

अमृतबिन्दु उपनिषद्
Amṛtabindu Upaniṣad
Verses 8 - 13

We have seen the inquiry about the Absolute nature of oneself is experienced in the merging of one's thoughts in awareness, in meditation. What does one comes to experience as Reality? So the next two verses are about what is experienced by a man has attempted this journey.

तदेव निष्कलं ब्रह्म, निर्विकल्पं निरञ्जनम् ।
तद् ब्रह्माहमिति ज्ञात्वा, ब्रह्म संपद्यते ध्रुवम् ॥८॥
निर्विकल्पमनन्तं च, हेतु दृष्टान्त वर्जितम् ।
अप्रमेयमनादिं च, यज्ज्ञात्वा मुच्यते बुधः ॥९॥

tadeva niṣkalam brahma, nivikalpam nirañjanam
tad brahmāhamiti jñātvā, brahma saṃpadyate dhṛvam (8)
nivikalpamanantaṃ ca, hetu dṛṣṭānta varjitam
aprameyamanādim ca, yajjñātvā mucyate budhaḥ (9)

Tat eva, that alone is *brahma*. *Bṛhatvāt brahma*, that is everything, the BIG, that which cannot be bigger than itself. Absolute! *Brahman*, this *brahman* is *niṣkalam*, part-less and because it is part-less, it can never depart. People come and go; other things come and go. We say this person departed from this world, the plane departed, the train departed. The *ātman*, *brahman* is part-less. Therefore it cannot depart. It has no arrival also. No arrival, no departure! It is limbless. It does not have different aspects, different qualities. It is homogeneous! The closest example is space. Space has no divisions, no parts. In its presence only everything else is present. *Avakāśam dadāti iti ākāśaḥ*, that which gives room for everything, *avakāśa*, accommodation, that is called space. That which accommodates everything, that is space.

Niṣkalam brahma, *Brahman* is part-less, this is realized by a person who has

meditated upon the Truth, using the mind, by merging the mind into that awareness. Why do I need the mind to merge? Yes it is the mind that is used to reach there, as *Pūjya Gurudev* gives the beautiful example of a pole vaulter. He takes the pole and runs toward the bar, picks up momentum as he runs and as he nears the bar, he sticks the pole to the ground and vaults himself in the air and as he does he drops the pole and clears the bar. He uses the pole to propel himself to a greater height than if he had not used it. Yet he has drop as he goes over the bar. When he is up in the air, if he looks at the pole and starts thinking, the dear pole has helped me to reach this height, how can I drop it unceremoniously to the floor. I will keep it with me. If he does that, he will not be able to clear the bar. He has to drop the pole if he wants to reach his goal.

In the same way, it is the mind that is used to reach the point of stillness. At that point when one has understood that mind is nearly an instrument to be used for reaching this height of awareness, to merge with that awareness, he has to drop the mind, drop the last thought also! From many thoughts about many things, to many thought of one thing, to one thought of one thing and even that thought has to go. You can't renounce that thought consciously, it has to drop by itself. It will, but that is where even great seekers have to wait. So when you reach that point, nothing else has to be done. Just wait! It requires great patience. That one thought has to go. This is not because of your volition. It happens!

Finally the one who exclusively chooses the Self, nothing else other than that is in the mind, to him is revealed, *ananyāḥ cintayanto mām, ye janāḥ pari-upāsate*, the one who exclusively thinks about me, *Bhagavān* says, I will take of that person. In *bhakti mārga*, that is what is said. Exclusively think about me, *mayyeva mana ādhatsva, mayi buddhim niveśaya, nivasiṣyasi mayyeva, ata ūrdhvaṁ na saṁśayaḥ*, keep your mind in me, intellect in me, I will take care of you. Have no doubts about it! So *tadeva niśkalaṁ brahma, nivikalpam*,

doubtless, *sandeha rahita*, no doubt about it; *nirañjanam*, no faults, spotless, taint-free, no dirt, uncontaminated, immaculate! *Tad brahma aham iti jñātvā*, knowing that *Brahman*, I am, *brahma saṁpadyate dhṛvam*, *dhṛvam* means firm, *sthiram*, *acalam brahma*, *saṁpadyate*, he attains. He attains that which is everlasting, eternal, steady, unmoved, changeless.

The person who understands this practice of *Om*, he knows where it takes him, the inner silence. First he recognizes the absence of sound, and then the presence of silence and the awareness of the inner nature. *Nirvikalpam anantaṁ ca*, it is not only beyond all doubts, *aham iti*, it is one's own personal experience. *Iti jñātvā*, having experienced in this manner, without any doubt, it also becomes *anantaṁ*, endless. Worldly experiences come and go. They are not everlasting. Here it is different. This experience is *anantaṁ*, there is no end to it, *ātyantikaṁ sukham*, absolute bliss! He does not deviate from that bliss.

This experience of the inner awareness of Self cannot be obtained purely from logic. No logic can prove this. Logic is at the level of the intellect. Logic is used to convince the intellect. Therefore, *hetu dṛṣṭānta varjitaṁ*, it is beyond *hetu*, logic, it is beyond *dṛṣṭānta*, comparison, example. It is not possible to show the Self as similar to something, cannot compare, cannot give some example to illustrate it. Anything we know has some qualities, properties and if want to tell you about something that you do not know, I can compare it something that you know in terms of its qualities and properties. I can thus give example to make you understand. It is not possible in this case. How can you compare anything to this quality-less, property-less, attribute-less entity? Closest comparison is that of space. Even that space has a quality, sound. Even that is not a perfect comparison. That which has no quality is only me! How can you compare it to anything?

So *hetu dṛṣṭānta varjitaṁ*, devoid of logic and comparison, so it is *aprameyam*, immeasurable. It is not a thing that can be measured in any way. *Yat jñātvā*,

knowing which, *buddhaḥ mucyate*, the one who is awakened to that awareness is *mucyate*, liberated. These two verses are beautiful description of *Brahman* and *brahmavit*, one is awakened to that Reality. So when one has reached that state of total abundance and identification with the Self, what exactly is that state? What happens there? We are curious! Suppose I get enlightened, I am realized, what will happen to me? We always want something to happen. So here, a person who has reached that state, what is that state? Continuing,

न निरोधो न चोत्पत्तिः, न बद्धो न च साधकः ।

न मुमुक्षुर्न वै विमुक्तः, इत्येषा परमार्थता ॥१०॥

na nirodho na cotpattiḥ, na baddho na ca sādhaḥ
na mumukṣurna vai vimuktaḥ, ityeṣā paramāthatā (10)

Eṣā paramāthatā, this state of supreme, absolute nature, this is the state of supreme Truth! What is that? *Na nirodhaḥ, na ca utpattiḥ, na baddhaḥ, na ca sādhaḥ, na vimuktaḥ*, this should be understood with a pinch of salt. Why I will tell you later. In this state of oneness with the Truth, *na nirodhaḥ*, no control. There is another word *niruddhaḥ*, no stopping, no blocking. Both words come from the root *rudh* which means to obstruct, block. So no control is necessary, no control is possible. *Na ca utpattiḥ*, no creation, *na baddhaḥ*, no bondage, one who recognizes that, he is no more bound. *Na ca sādhaḥ*, he is no longer a seeker, *na mumukṣuḥ*, not the one who is seeking freedom, *na vimuktaḥ*, nor is the liberated.

What is the meaning of all this? All that is described here are the various conditions of the mind. The one who has merged with that awareness, he is no longer controlling the thoughts. No new thoughts are gurgling in his mind. He is not bound by any thoughts, so naturally where is the question of trying to liberate himself, seeking freedom and the state of being free? So long as one has given reality to the mind, he has to practice control, seek freedom and all that. He cannot say never mind. He has to control, restrain, direct, coax, discipline. He has to use the mind to get there. Once he has

reached the state, he realizes all this was done to reach that point. Once that state is reached, there is no more a need to continue doing all those things.

I said earlier, take this with a pinch of salt, why? You don't say all that now; right now you cannot say, why should I control, I am not a seeker, I am not already free, I can do whatever I want! No! At present you cannot resort to that level of thinking. Mind is still impure, not disciplined, uncontrolled. You have to do the *sādhana*-s, you have to be a *sādhakaḥ*, you have to be a *mumukṣuḥ*, all the description is that of one who has already accomplished the goal. Till that it is still a goal to be reached. You should first study the scriptures, follow what is said there, meditate, make the mind pure and focused. Then you will reach that state naturally. Of course when you have reached that state, all that is not necessary. So what is described is the state of a realized master.

एकैवात्मा मन्तव्यः, जाग्रत्-स्वप्न-सुषुप्तिषु ।

स्थान-त्रय-व्यतीतस्य, पुनर्जन्म न विद्यते ॥११॥

ekaivātmā mantavyaḥ, jāgrat-svapna-suṣuptiṣu

sthāna-traya-vatītasya, punarjanma na vidyate (11)

That *ātman*, that is your own Self, that you possess, that you have realized as you, is not exclusive to you. It is not something that you have and others do not. *Eka eva ātmā mantavyaḥ*, this *ātmā*, *mantavyaḥ*, should be understood as *eka eva*, one alone. There is only one *ātmā*. It is only one, in, *jāgrat-svapna-suṣuptiṣu*, in waking, dream and deep sleep. One who has realized this fact, *sthāna-traya-vatītasya*, he who has gone beyond the three states of experience, *punarjanma na vidyate*, for him there is no rebirth. *Mokṣa* is not freedom that one enjoys in this present life. There is more freedom, it leads to no further births, *punarjanma na vidyate*.

Many people think that the release from the cycle of birth and death comes first and then the present freedom. That is not true. First and foremost is the

freedom from the shackles and the limitations of one's own limited mind. One seeks freedom right here and now. One does not know whether he will be born again, in the next life or not. One cannot be sure of that. So he wants the release now. *Jīvan api muktiḥ*, liberated while living. A student of *vedānta* need not worry about being born again or not. Let that be what it may be. Just focus on how free I am right now. Right now I am conditioned, limited by my own thoughts and feelings. So upon realizing his true Self, he becomes free here and now.

Further, *punarjanma na vidyate*, there is no rebirth. For whom? *Sthāna-traya-vatītyasya*, the one who has transcended the three states of experience. If we analyze the waking, dream and deep sleep states of experience, we will come to know that there is one and only one *ātmā* in all the three states. This analysis can be *ātmā anātmā vicāra*, *pañcakośa viveka*, *dṛg-dṛśya viveka*, or *avasthātraya viveka*. All of them analyze from various standpoints, but come to the same conclusion. There is only one *ātmā*. Here it is said, in the three states of experience that we go through every day, we should recognize the presence of that one Self. This one Self is untouched by anything that happens in any state. The same *ātmā* that is present now, in the waking state, was present in dream, and will be present when I go to sleep at the end of the day. There is one *ātmā* present in all three states.

The Self is the same; same means it does not get influenced by any of the things that happen in the these states. Unfortunately we have given so much importance to the waking state and identify with pain and pleasure therein. We carry that to a great extent in the dream state as an extension of the waking state. We do not experience all that in deep sleep because it is a state of total ignorance. When we give reality to waking and dream, the force of the two states is very strong. Many people wonder whether *mahātmā*-s sleep or not. Of course they do, the body needs the rest. *Jñāni* or an *ajñāni*, the *ātmā* is always there, always awake in all the three states.

So the *upaniṣad* says, to that *ātma*, that Self, the awakened one, *sthāna-traya-vatītya*, for him, *punarjanma na vidyate*, there is no rebirth. The one who has identified with the state of awakening, the one who is awakened to that state of knowledge and understanding, for him there is no rebirth. Why is it so? *Punarjanma* is something like one went to sleep at night with certain thoughts and he wakes up the next morning. He will wake up with similar thoughts. A doctor goes to sleep, he will wake up the next day as a doctor. A lawyer goes to sleep, he will not wake up the next day as an engineer. The next day is determined by the thoughts you had, the memories you had, the intellect you had, by your tastes, likes and dislikes. The one who has realized that I am the pure awareness/consciousness alone and lives up to that state of knowledge, and even while living I have not given any reality to the word and therefore there are no likes and dislikes, for him all *vāsanā*-s are exhausted. For him where is the question of coming back? It is the forgetfulness of the Self, the ignorance of the Self that is the cause of *punarjanma*. When that cause is removed where is the question of rebirth? The idea that there is only one *ātmā* is further explained in the next verse.

एक एव हि भूतात्मा, भूते भूते व्वस्थितः ।

एकधा बहुधा चैव, दृष्यते जल-चन्द्रवत् ॥१२॥

eka eva hi bhūtātmā, bhūte bhūte vyavasthitah
ekadhā bahudhā caiva, dṛṣyate jala-candravat (12)

Eka eva hi, indeed one alone, *bhūtātmā*, that *ātmā* that has become subject to birth, we are all *bhūtā*-s, we have all become, so *bhūtātmā*, the born Self, the conditioned Self, *bhūte bhūte vyavasthitah*, it is present in every being. It is prominently present in all beings. Even though it is prominently present, we have the ability to forget it! It is present as the life essence, as the substratum of this matter. *Eka eva hi vyavasthitah*, one alone is that Self and it is present in all beings. This one alone is there in every Self. *Ekadhā bahudhā caiva*, that one alone, *ekadhā*, even though it is one, *bahudhā ca iva*, it is as though

many, in various names and forms, *jala-candra vat*, just as one moon in the sky appearing as many moons in different buckets of water. One appears as many. There is only one moon, but there are many reflections of that one moon in waters. This example illustrates *prati bimba vāda*. In the same way, *bhūte bhūte vyavasthitaḥ api*, even though it is present in every being, it looks *bahudhā caiva dṛṣyate*, as many, *ekadhā hi ātmā*, the Self is indeed only one.

One appears as many. When the appearances are negated, when the names and forms are removed, they are all reflections of one and only one. The one who realizes that, such a person is free. He has no hatred, no attachment, no fear, no attraction! He who sees the one, *samaṁ paśya*, the same Lord as being present in all he is liberated. This is the state of enlightenment where one knows the nature of the Self as immutable, indivisible, one homogeneous presence. First he recognizes the presence in him, as the one that is present in waking, dream and deep sleep. This he should recognize first before he can understand that the same Self is in all beings also. That is why *vedānta* starts with personal perfection. First understand the truth in yourself. Then it is possible to see presence in everyone and everywhere.

One may say, I understand that I am the Self and the reflection of that one Self is there in all beings. Do I carry the Self in me? Within the *pañca kośa*, deep inside all these layers is the *ātmā* and I take it wherever I go. This is the idea most people have. There is the sense of possessiveness also, my *ātmā*, my dear *ātmā*! The teacher says, do not have such ideas. Now let us see here.

घटसंवृतमाकाशं, नीयमाने घटे यथा ।

घटो नीयेत नाकाशं, तथा जीवो नभोपमः ॥१३॥

ghatasamvṛtamākāśaṁ, nīyamāne ghate yathā

ghato nīyeta nākāśaṁ, tathā jīvo nabhopamaḥ (13)

Yathā, just as, *ghate nīyamāne*, while the pot is moved, what happens to the space inside the pot? Does the space inside the pot also move? Think and

answer! No! Are you sure? How sure are you? If there is space inside the pot and you move the pot, the pot-space, does it move or not? What moves? What does not move? That is why it is said, *ghataḥ nīyeta na ākāśam*, the pot moves, but not the space. *Tathā*, in the same way, *jīvaḥ nabha upamaḥ*, like space, *jīva* does not move. In all the movements when your body moves, as your mind moves thinking various thoughts, the reflected consciousness, *jīva* does not move. Like the space that is inside the pot as well as outside the pot, consciousness is inside and outside, *antarbahiśca tat sarvam*, it is within and without, everywhere. It is within all and outside also. So the space of consciousness is not located somewhere within you. You are in it. This is the difference between *vedānta* and science. Science says consciousness is what is experienced in your brain. If the brain is functioning, consciousness is there, awareness is there. When the brain stop functioning, that is the end of that story. *Vedānta* says I am that consciousness that ever is. There is no end to it.

One point, even though *ātmā* is compared to space, remember space is used only as an example. Just as space pervades the inside and outside of all objects and that all objects are in space, *ātmā* is all pervasive. Do not add anything more to the example. Space still has one quality, that of sound. *Ātmā* does not have any quality. It is subtler than space also. It is *nirguṇaḥ*, no qualities, no attributes, no properties. Space is brought here only as an example. Space has its limitations. It is inert. The inertness of space is brought out in the next verse.