

Hindi / English / Gujarati

केनोपनिषद्



Shri Shankara's Introduction

Adoration to the brahman.

Om Tat Sat.

This ninth chapter is begun for the purpose of publishing the Upanishad beginning with Keneshitam etc., and, treating of the Brahman. Before the beginning of the ninth chapter, all Karma has been explained and the different forms of worshipping Prana, the source of all activity, have been laid down and all about the Sarnaus (songs) preliminary to the rituals have been given. Next the Gayatra Saman has been explained and the genealogical list of preceptors and disciples has been given. All this Karma and Knowledge (of the deities) properly observed, as enjoined, tend to purify the mind of one who being-free from desires, longs for emancipation. In the case of one who cherishes desires and has no knowledge, Karma by itself as laid down by the Srutis and the Smritis secures for him the southern route and return to Samsara. Activity following natural impulses and repugnant to the Sasiras entails degradation into low births from beasts down to immovables.

The Sruti says:

“Travelling by neither of these two paths, these small creatures are constantly returning, of whom it may be said: ‘Be born and die.’ This is the third course.”

Another Sruti says

“The three kinds of living beings (going by neither of these two paths) reach this miserable state.”

The desire to know the Brahman springs only in the person whose mind is pure, who is free from desires and who, free from deeds done in this birth or in previous ones, becomes disgusted with the external, ephemeral medley of ends and means.

This Brahman is depicted in the Upanishad beginning with Keneshitam. etc., appearing in the form of questions and answers. Kataka says

“The self-existent has made the senses external in their activity and man therefore looks outward, not at the self within.”

Some wise man having turned his eyes inward and being desirous of immortality saw the inner self.

“Having examined the worlds reached by Karma, let the Brahmin grow disgusted (and learn to think that) nothing which is not made can be reached by Karma. In order to know that, let him, Samidh (sacrificial sticks) in hand, approach a preceptor, who is well read in the Vedas and who is centred in Brahman.”

Thus in the Atharvanopanishad. In this way, and not otherwise, a man free from desires becomes qualified to hear, contemplate and acquire knowledge of the inner self. By the knowledge of the inner self, ignorance, which, is the seed of bondage, and the cause of Karma performed for the realisation of desires, is entirely removed.

The Srutis say:

“There is no grief or delusion to one who sees this unity.”

“He who knows the Atman overcomes grief.”

“When He. that is both high and low, is seen, the knot of the heart is cut, all doubts are resolved and all Karma is consumed.”

If it be urged that even by knowledge coupled with Karma this result is attained, we say no; for the Vajasaneyaka shows that that combination produces different results.

Beginning with “Let me have a wife,” the texts go on to say,

“by a son should this world be gained, not by any other means: by Karma, the abode of the manes (Pitris); and by Knowledge, the world of the deities;”

thus showing how the three worlds different from the Atman are reached. In the same place we find the following reason urged for one becoming a Sanyasin:

“What shall we, to whom this world is not the Atman, do with offspring?” The meaning is this: What shall we do with offspring, Karma, and Knowledge combined with Karma, which are the means to secure the world of the mortals, the world of the manes, and the world of the Gods; and which do not help us in securing the world of the Atman? For, to us none of the three worlds, transitory and attainable by these means, is desirable. To us that world alone which is natural, unborn, undecaying, immortal, fearless and neither augmented nor diminished by Karma, and eternal, is covetable; and that being eternal cannot be secured by any other means than the removal of ignorance. Therefore, the renunciation of all desires preceded by the knowledge of the Brahman who is the inner Self should alone be practised by us. Another reason is that the knowledge of the inner Self is antagonistic to Karma and cannot therefore coexist with it. It is well known that the knowledge of the Self, the one Atman of all, which abhors all perception of difference, cannot possibly co-exist with Karma whose basis is the perception of the difference of agent, results, etc. As knowledge relating to the reality, the knowledge of the Brahman is independent of human efforts. Therefore, the desire of a person, who is disgusted with visible and invisible fruits achievable by external means, to know the Brahman which is connected with the inner Self, is indicated by the Sruti beginning with Keneshitam, etc. The elucidation of the Brahman in the form of a dialogue between the preceptor and the disciple is, considering the subtle nature of the theme, for the easy understanding thereof. It will also be clearly pointed out that this knowledge is not to be attained solely by logical discussion.

The Srutis say

“This state of mind cannot be obtained by logical discussion.”

“He knows who has studied under a preceptor.”

“Such knowledge only as is acquired by studying under a preceptor does good.”

The Smriti lays down also “Learn That by prostration.”

It should be inferred that some one duly approached a preceptor centred in Brahman and finding no refuge except in his inner Self and longing for that which is fearless, eternal, calm and unshakable, questioned the preceptor as expressed in ‘Keneshitam. etc.’

Invocation

All-Hail To The Brahman.

Om Tat Sat.

केनोपनिषत् असहनाववतू सह नौ भूनक्तु सहवीर्यं करवावहै ।

तेजस्विनावधितमस्तु माविद्विपावहै ॥ १ ॥

ॐ शान्तिः । शान्तिः । शान्तिः ।

sahanvavatu saha nau bhunaktu saha viryam karavavahai |

tejasvinavadhitamastu mavidvipavahai || 1 ||

om santih | santih | santih |

1. May (Brahman) protect us both. May (Brahman) enjoy us both. May we work together. May the self-luminous Brahman be studied by us. May we not hate each other.

Om Peace! Peace!! Peace!!!

आप्यायन्तु ममाङ्गानि वाक्प्राणश्चक्षुः श्रोत्रमथो बलमिन्द्रियाणि छ सर्वाणि सर्वं
ब्रह्मोपनिषदं माहं ब्रह्म निराकुर्यां मा मा ब्रह्म निगकागेदनिरकारणमस्त्वनिराकरणं
मेऽस्तु तदात्मनि निरते य उपनिषत्सु धर्मास्ते मयि सन्तु ते मयि सन्तु ॥ २ ॥

ॐ शान्तिः । शान्तिः । शान्तिः ।

apyayantu mamangani vakpranaschaksuh srotramatho balamindriyani cha

sarvani sarvam brahmaupaniṣadam maham brahma nirakuryam ma ma

brahma nigakagedanirakaranamastvanirakaranam me'stu tadatmani

nirate ya upanisatsu dharmaste mayi santu te mayi santu || 2 ||

om santih | santih | santih |

2. May my limbs, speech, prana, eye, ear, strength and all my senses grow vigorous. All (everything) is the Brahman of the Upanishads. May I never deny

the Brahman. May the Brahman never spurn me. May there be no denial of the Brahman. May there be no spurning by the Brahman. Let all the virtues recited by the Upanishads repose in me delighting in the Atman; may they in me repose!

Om Peace! Peace!! Peace!!!

Part One

Verse 1

ॐ केनेषितं पतति प्रेषितं मनः केन प्राणः प्रथमः प्रैति युक्तः ।
केनेषितां वाचमिमां वदन्ति चक्षुः श्रोत्रं क उ देवो युनक्ति ॥ १ ॥

om kenesitaṁ patati presitam manah kena pranah prathamah praiti
yuktah |

kenesitam vacamimam vadanti caksuh srotram ka u devo yunakti || 1 ||

1. By whom willed and directed does the mind light on its subjects? By whom commanded does prana, the first, move? By whose will do men speak this speech? What Intelligence directs the eye and the ear?

Shankara's Commentary:

Com.—‘Kena,’ ‘by what agent ‘Ishitam,’ ‘desired or directed.’ ‘Patati,’ ‘goes,’ i.e., ‘goes towards its objects.’ As the root Ish cannot be here taken in the sense of ‘repeat’ or ‘go,’ it must be understood to be used in the sense of ‘wish.’ The It suffix in Ishitam is a case of Vedic license. The word Preshitam is derived from the same root, with pra before it, when it means ‘direct.’ If the word Preshitam were alone used without the word Ishitam, questions as to the nature of the director and direction might arise, such as, by what sort of a director and by what sort of direction. But the use of the word Ishitam sets these two questions at rest, for then the meaning clearly is: “By whose mere wish is it directed, etc.” It may be objected, that if this meaning were what was intended to be conveyed, the use of the word Preshitam is rendered superfluous, as the meaning intended is conveyed by Ishitam alone. It may be also objected that as the use of more words should convey more meaning, it is only reasonable to

interpret the text as meaning ‘By what is it directed, by mere will, by act or by word?’ Both these objections are unsound. From the mere fact of the question having been asked, it is apparent that the question is asked by one who is disgusted with the ephemeral conglomeration of causes and effects, such as the body, etc., and who seeks to know something other than that—something unchangeable and eternal. Were it otherwise, the question itself, seeing how notorious in the world is the fact that the body directs by means of will, act or word, would be meaningless. If it be objected that even on this view there is nothing gained in the sense, by the use of the word Preshitam, we say no. The word Preshitam adds to the sense when we think that a questioner really entertains a doubt. To show that the question is prompted by a doubt in the questioner’s mind, as to whether, as is notorious, the body—the collection of causes and effects—directs the mind, etc., or whether the mind, etc., is directed by the mere will of anything other than these combinations of causes and effects and acting independently, the use of both the words Ishitam and Preshitam is justifiable. If, however, it be urged that the mind itself, as every body knows, independently lights on its own object, and that the question is itself irrelevant, the argument is untenable. If the mind were independent in the pursuit of its objects or in desisting from pursuit, then it is not possible for any one to contemplate evil; but man, conscious of evil results, wills evil, and the mind though dissuaded, attempts deeds of serious evil consequences. Therefore the question Keneshitam, etc., is certainly appropriate.

By whom directed does Prana go, i.e., about its own business? Prathama is an appropriate adjective of Prana, as the activity of all the sensory organs presupposes it. By whom prompted is the speech which men in the world make use of? And what Intelligence directs the eye and the ear towards their respective objects?

श्रोत्रस्य श्रोत्रं मनसो मनो यद्वाचो ह वाचं स उ प्राणस्य प्राणश्चक्षुषश्चक्षुः ।

अतिमुच्य धीराः प्रेत्यास्माल्लोकादमृता भवन्ति ॥ २ ॥

srotrasya srotram manaso mano yadvaco ha vacam sa u pranasya
pranascaksusascaksuh |

atimucya dhirah pretyasmallokadamrta bhavanti || 2 ||

2. It is the ear of the ear, mind of the mind, tongue of the tongue, and also life of the life and eye of the eye. Being disabused of the false notion, the wise, having left this body, become immortal.

Shankara's Commentary:

Com.—To the worthy (disciple) who had thus questioned him, the preceptor in reply says: “Hear what you ask for—what intelligent Being directs the mind and the other senses towards their respective objects, and how it directs them.” Ear is that by which one hears, i.e., the sense whose function is to hear sounds and distinguish them. He, you asked for, is the ear of that.

May it not be objected that while the reply ought to run in the form, ‘So-and-so, with such-and-such attributes, directs the ear, etc.,’ the reply in the form ‘He is the ear of the ear, etc.,’ is inappropriate? This is no objection; for he (the director) cannot otherwise be particularized. If the director of the ear, etc., can be known by any activity of his own, independent of the activity of the ear, etc., as a person who directs another to give, then, indeed, would this form of answer become inappropriate. But we do not here understand a director of the ear, etc.,

having any activity of his own, like a mower. The director is inferred by logical necessity from the activity manifested by the ear and others combined, such as deliberation, volition, determination enuring for the benefit of something distinct from them all (the ear, etc.). As things combined necessarily exist for the use of some other thing not so combined, we argue that there is a director of the ear, etc., distinct from the ear, etc., and for whose use the whole lot—the ear, etc.,—exists in the same manner as a house exists for somebody's use. Hence the reply 'It is the ear of the ear, etc.,' is certainly appropriate.

Again it is asked what is the meaning of the expression: "It is the ear of the ear, etc." And it is said that one ear does not want another, just as one light needs not another. This objection has no force. The meaning here is this. The ear has been found capable of perceiving objects and this capability of the ear depends upon the intelligence of the Atman, bright, eternal, intact, all-pervading. Therefore the expression 'It is the ear of the ear, etc.,' is correct. To the same effect also, the Srutis say, "He shines by his own brightness." "By his light is all this Universe illumined." "By that light illumined, does the sun shine, etc.," and so on. The Bhagavad Gita says "As the light in the sun illumines the whole world, so does the Atman (Kshetri) O Bharata! illumine all the body (Kshetrum)." The Katha also says, "He is the eternal among the non-eternal and the intelligence among the intelligent." The 'ear, etc.,' have been by all confounded with the Atman and this false notion is here dispelled. The reply of the preceptor: there is something indescribable, cognisable only by the intelligence of the wise, occupying the deepest interior of all, unchangeable, undecaying, immortal, fearless, unborn and 'the ear of the ear, etc.'—the source of all their functional capacity, is appropriate and the meaning also. Similarly it is the mind of the mind. It is evident that the mind, if not illumined by the bright intelligence within, will be incapable of performing its functions of volition, determination, etc. It is, therefore, said that it is the mind of the mind. Both the conditioned intelligence

and mind are together contemplated by the word ‘mind’ in the text. The word yat in ‘Yadvachohavacham’ means ‘because’ and should be read along with the words Srotra (ear), manah (mind), etc., thus: ‘because it is the ear of the ear,’ ‘because it is the mind of the mind,’ etc. The objective case (vacham) in ‘Vachohavacham’ should be converted into the nominative case, for we next read ‘Pranasyapranah.’ It may be said that conformably to the expression ‘Vachohavacham’ the following ‘Pranasya-pranah’ may as well be read as ‘Pranasyapranam.’ It cannot be, for conformity to the majority is desirable. So ‘vacham, should be read as ‘vak’ in conformity to ‘Sah’ and ‘Pranah,’ in ‘Sa?u?pranasya-pranah.’ because it then conforms with two words and conformity to the majority is preferred. Besides, the substance asked about can be best denoted by a noun in the nominative case. The substance asked about by you is the prana of prana, i.e., it is that substance which endows prana, with the capacity to discharge its functions, i.e., to infuse activity; for there can possibly be no activity where the Atman does not preside. “Who could live and breathe if there were not the self-luminous Brahman and “He leads Prana up and Apana down” say the Srutis. It will also be said in this Upanishad, “You know that to be the Brahman which infuses activity into Prana.” It may be said that, in a context speaking of the ear and other senses, the mention of Breath would be more appropriate than that of Prana. Truly so; but in the use of the word Prana. breath is meant to be included.

The Sruti thinks thus:—the gist of this portion is that that is Brahman for whose use the aggregation of the senses exerts its combined activity. Similarly it is the eye of the eye, &c. The capacity of the eye to perceive form is found only where the intelligence of the Atman directs it. Therefore it is the eye of the eye. After this expression in the text, the expression ‘having understood the Brahman as above defined, i.e., as the ear of the ear, &c.,’ must be supplied by the reader, as the questioner should be supposed to be anxious to know what he asked about.

Another reason why the expression should be supplied is the enunciation of the result ‘they become immortal;’ for it is only by wisdom that immortality is attained and it is only by knowledge one can attain emancipation. Having given up all the sensory organs; (It is by confounding the ear and other sensory organs with the Atman that man is born subject to these conditions, dies and thus rotates) means ‘having learnt that the Atman is the Brahman defined as the ear of the ear, &c.’ Atimuchya means ‘having given up the false notion that the ear, &c., is the Atman; for, without the aid of the highest intelligence, it is impossible for one to give up the notion that the ear, &c., is the Atman. ‘Pretya’ means ‘having turned away’, ‘Asmallokat’ means ‘from this world’, where the talk is always of ‘my son,’ ‘my wife,’ ‘my kith and kin.’ The drift is ‘having renounced all desires.’ ‘Become immortal’ means ‘enjoy immunity from death.’ The Srutis also say “Not by deeds, not by offspring, not by wealth, but by renunciation did some attain immortality”; “The senses were made to perceive only external objects;” “Having turned his senses inwards for desire of immortality”; “When all desires are driven forth, here they attain the Brahman” &c. Or, seeing that the word Atimuchya necessarily implies ‘renunciation of all desires,’ the expression ‘Asmallokat pretya” may be interpreted as ‘having left this mortal body.’

verse 3

न तत्र चक्षुर्गच्छति न वाग्गच्छति नो मनो न विद्मो न विजानीमो
यथैतदनुशिष्यादन्यदेव तद्विदितादथो अविदितादधि ।

इति शुश्रुम पूर्वेषां ये नस्तद्व्याचक्षिरे ॥ ३ ॥

na tatra caksurgacchati na vaggacchati no mano na vidmo na vijanimo
yathaitadanusisyadanyadeva tadviditadatho aviditadadhi |

iti susruma purvesam ye nastadvyacacaksire || 3 ||

3. The eye does not go there, nor speech, nor mind. We do not know That. We do not know how to instruct one about It. It is distinct from the known and above the unknown. We have heard it so stated by preceptors who taught us that. (3).

Shankara's Commentary:

Com.—For the reason that the Brahman is the ear of the ear, i.e., the Atman of all, the eye cannot go to the Brahman; for it is not possible to go to one's own self. Similarly speech does not go there. When a word spoken by the mouth enlightens the object denoted by it, then the word is said to go to that object. But the Atman of that word and of the organ that utters it is the Brahman. So the word does not go there. Just as fire that burns and enlightens things does not either enlighten or burn itself, so the mind, which wills and determines in respect of external objects, cannot will or determine in respect of its self, because its Atman is also the Brahman. A thing is cognised by the senses and the mind. We do not, therefore, know the Brahman, because it cannot be an object of perception to these; and we do not, therefore, know what the Brahman is like, so as to allow us to enlighten the disciple about the Brahman. Whatever can be perceived by the senses, it is possible to explain to others by epithets denoting its class, its attributes and modes of activity; but the Brahman has no attributes of class, etc. It, therefore, follows that it is not possible to make the disciple believe in the Brahman by instruction. The portion of the text beginning with 'Navidmah' (we do not know) shows the necessity of putting forth great exertion in the matter of giving instruction and understanding it, in respect of the Brahman. Considering that the previous portion of the text leads to the conclusion that it is impossible by any means to instruct one about the Atman, the following exceptional mode is pointed out. Indeed it is true that one cannot be persuaded to believe in the Brahman by the evidence of the senses and other inodes of proof; but it is possible to make him believe by the aid of Agamas

(Scriptures). Therefore the preceptor recites Agamas for the purpose of teaching about the Brahman and says: ‘It is something distinct from the known and something beyond the unknown, etc.’ ‘Anyat,’ ‘something distinct’; ‘Tat,’ ‘the present theme i.e., that which has been defined to be the ear of the ear, etc., and beyond their (ear. eye, etc.,) reach. That is certainly distinct from the known. ‘The known,’ means ‘whatever is the object of special knowledge;’ and as all such objects can be known somewhere, to some extent and by some one and so forth, the whole (manifested universe) is meant by the term ‘the known;’ the drift is, that the Brahman is distinct from this. But lest the Brahman should be confounded with the unknown, the text says: ‘It is beyond the Unknown.’ ‘Aviditat’ means ‘something opposed to the known;’ hence, unmanifested illusion (avidya) the seed of all manifestation. ‘Adhi’ literally means ‘above’ but is here used in the derivative sense of ‘something different from for, it is well known that one thing placed above another is something distinct from that other.

Whatever is known is little, mortal and full of misery and, therefore, fit to be abandoned. Therefore when it is said that Brahman is distinct from the Known, it is clear that it is not to be abandoned. Similarly, when the Brahman is said to be distinct from the Unknown it is in effect said that the Brahman is not fit to be taken. It is to produce an effect that one seeks for a cause. Therefore there can be nothing distinct from the knower, which the knower could seek for, with any benefit. Thus, by saying that the Brahman is distinct from both the Known and the Unknown and thus disproving its fitness to be abandoned or to be taken, the desire of the disciple to know anything distinct from Self (Atman) is checked. For, it is clear that none other than one’s Atman can be distinct from both the Known and the Unknown; the purport of the text is that the Atman is Brahman. The Srutis also say: “This Atman is Brahman:” “this Atman who is untouched by sin.” “This is the known and the unknown Brahman;” “This Atman is within all;” etc. The preceptor next says how this meaning of the text, that the Atman of

all, marked by no distinguishing attributes, bright and intelligent, is the Brahman, has been traditionally handed down from preceptor to disciple.

And Brahman can be known only by instruction from preceptors and not by logical disquisitions, nor by expositions, intelligence, great learning, penance or sacrifices, etc. We have heard this saying of the preceptors who clearly taught us the Brahman.

Verse 4

यद्वाचानभ्युदितं येन वागभ्युद्यते ।

तदेव ब्रह्म त्वं विद्धि नेदं यदिदमुपासते ॥ ४ ॥

yadvacanabhyuditam yena vagabhyudyate |

tadeva brahma tvam viddhi nedam yadidamupasate || 4 ||

4. What speech does not enlighten, but what enlightens speech, know that alone to be the Brahman, not this which (people) here worship.

Shankara's Commentary:

Com.—When by the text “It is something distinct from both the known and the unknown,” the preceptor conveyed that the Atman is Brahman, the disciple doubted how the Atman could be Brahman. The Atman, as is well known, being entitled to perform Karma and worship (of the gods) and being subject to births and re-births seeks to attain Brahma or other Devas, or heaven, by means of Karma or worship. Therefore, somebody other than the Atman, such as Vishnu, Isvara, Indra or Prana, entitled to be worshipped, may well be Brahman; but the Atman, can never be; for it is contrary to popular belief. Just as logicians

contend that the Atman is distinct from Isvara, so the votaries of Karma worship Devas, other than the Atman, saying: 'Propitiate this Deva by sacrifice' and 'Propitiate that Deva by sacrifice.' Therefore it is only reasonable that what is known and entitled to worship is Brahman and that the worshipper is other than that. The preceptor inferred this doubt running in the disciple's mind either from his looks or from his words and said: 'Do not doubt thus.' Yat means 'that which is intelligence itself.' Vale is the organ presided over by Agni (Fire) occupying eight localities in the body, such as the root of the tongue, &c. The letters are intended to express the meaning to be conveyed and are subject to laws as to their number and order. The word which is produced by them is called Vak (speech.) The Sruti says "The letter a is all speech, which being produced by the use of letters, divided into sparsa, antastha and ushma becomes diverse and assumes many forms." The Rik, Yajur, Sama and truth and falsehood are its modifications. By such speech, enclosed in words and conditioned by the organ of speech, Brahman is not illumined or explained. 'Yena,' 'by the Brahman.' Brahman by its brightness illumines speech, and its organ. It has been said here that, That (Brahman) is the speech of speech. The Vajasaneyaka says 'Brahman is within the speech and directs it.' Having said 'Speech in man is the same as that in the letters and that some Brahmin knows it,' the Upanishad, in answer to a question anticipated, says "That is speech, by which one speaks in dreams." The speakers power of speech is eternal, and is by nature of the same essence as Intelligence. The power of speech of the speaker knows no decay. So says the Sruti. Know this Atman to be the Brahman, unsurpassable, known as Bhuma. Brahman, because it is big, all-pervading; know this through its conditions of speech, etc. The following expressions 'speech of speech,' 'eye of the eye,' 'ear of the ear,' 'mind of the mind,' 'doer,' 'enjoyer,' 'knower,' 'controller,' 'governor,' 'Brahman is knowledge and bliss,' etc., are used in popular language of the unspeakable Brahman, devoid of attributes, highest of all, unchangeable. Disregarding these, know the Atman itself to be the unconditioned Brahman. This is the meaning. Brahman is not what people here worship, such as Isvara,

which is not the Atman, and which is conditioned and referred to as ‘this.’ Though it had been said ‘know That to be Brahman,’ still it is again said: “and not this, etc.,” thus repeating the idea that what is not Atman is not Brahman. This is either to lay down a Niyama (a rule restricting the choice to a stated alternative when several others are (possible) or for Parisankhyana (exclusion).

Verse 5

यन्मनसा न मनुते येनाहुर्मनो मतम् ।

तदेव ब्रह्म त्वं विद्धि नेदं यदिदमुपासते ॥ ५ ॥

yanmanasa na manute yenahurmano matam |

tadeva brahma tvam viddhi nedam yadidamupasate || 5 ||

5. What one cannot think with the mind, but by which they say the mind is made to think, know That alone to be the Brahman, not this which (people) here worship. (5)

Shankara’s Commentary:

Com.—‘Manah,’ ‘mind.’ By the word ‘Manah’ here, both mind and intelligence are meant. ‘Mauah’ means ‘that by which one thinks.’ The mind is equally connected with all the sensory organs, because its sphere includes all external objects. The Sruti says: ‘Desire, volition, deliberation, faith, negligence, boldness, timidity, shame, intelligence, fear, all these are mind.’ The modes of activity of the mind are desire, etc. By that mind, none wills or determines that intelligence which enlightens the mind, because as enlightener of the mind, that is the mind’s controller, the Atman being in the interior of everything, the mind

cannot go there. The capacity of the mind to think exists, because it is enlightened by the intelligence shining within, and it is by that, that the mind is capable of activity. Those who know the Brahman say that the mind is pervaded by the Brahman. Therefore know that to be the Brahman which is the Atman, the interior intelligence of the mind. ‘Nedam, etc.,’ has already been explained in the commentary on the last verse.

Verse 6

यच्चक्षुषा न पश्यति येन चक्षूषि पश्यति ।

तदेव ब्रह्म त्वं विद्धि नेदं यदिदमुपासते ॥ ६ ॥

yaccaksusa na pasyati yena caksumsi pasyati |

tadeva brahma tvam viddhi nedam yadidamupasate || 6 ||

6. What cannot be seen by the eye, but by which the eyes are able to see. That alone know thou to be the Brahman; not this which (people) here worship.

Shankara’s Commentary:

Com.—‘See’ means ‘perceive as an object.’ By the light of the Atman, connected with the activities of the mind, man perceives the activity of the eye, varying with the activity of the mind.

Verse 7

यच्छ्रोत्रेण न शृणोति येन श्रोत्रमिँश्रुतम् ।

तदेव ब्रह्म त्वं विद्धि नेदं यदिदमुपासते ॥ ७ ॥

yacchrotrena na srnoti yena srotramimsrutam |

tadeva brahma tvam viddhi nedam yadidamupasate || 7 ||

7. What cannot be heard with the ear, but by which the ears are able to hear, That alone know thou to be the Brahman; not this which (people) here worship.

Shankara's Commentary:

Com.—‘What cannot be heard with the ear’ means ‘which the world does not perceive as an object with the organ of hearing, presided over by Digdevata, produced in Akas and connected with the activity of the mind.’

By which the ears are able to hear,’ it is well known that it is perceived as an object by the intelligence of the Atman. The rest has been already explained.

Verse 8

यत्प्राणेन न प्राणिति येन प्राणः प्रणीयते ।

तदेव ब्रह्म त्वं विद्धि नेदं यदिदमुपासते ॥ ८ ॥

yatpranena na praniti yena pranah praniyate |

tadeva brahma tvam viddhi nedam yadidamupasate || 8 ||

8. What none breathes with the breath, but by which breath is in-breathed, That alone know thou to be the Brahman; not this which (people) here worship.

Shankara's Commentary:

Com.—‘What none breathes with the breath’ means ‘what none perceives, like odour, with the earthly breath filling the nostrils and connected with the activity of the mind and life.’ ‘But by which, etc.,’ means ‘by the enlightening intelligence of the Atman, breath is made to move towards its objects.’ All the rest ‘tadeva, etc.,’ has already been explained.

॥ इति केनोपनिषदि प्रथमः खण्डः ॥

|| iti kenopanisadi prathamah khandah ||

Here ends the first part.

Part Two

Verse 9

यदि मन्यसे सुवेदेति दहरमेवापि नूनम् ।

त्वं वेत्थ ब्रह्मणो रूपम् यदस्य त्वं यदस्य देवेष्वथ नु मीमाँस्यमेव ते मन्ये विदितम्

॥ ९ ॥

yadi manyase suvedeti daharamevapi nunam |

**tvam vettha brahmano rupam yadasya tvam yadasya devesvatha nu
mimamsyameva te manye viditam || 9 ||**

9. If thou thinkest ‘I know well’ it is certainly but little—the form of the Brahman thou hast known, as also the form in the Devas. Therefore I think that what thou thinkest known is still to be ascertained.

Shankara’s Commentary:

Com.—The preceptor, fearing that, the disciple persuaded to believe that lie is the Atman, i.e., the Brahman not fit to be abandoned or acquired, might think ‘I certainly am the Brahman, I know myself well,’ says for the purpose of dispelling that notion of the disciple Yadi, etc. Then, is not an accurate conviction ‘I know (Brahman) well’ desirable? Certainly it is desirable. But an accurate conviction is not of the form ‘I know (Brahman) well.’ If what should be known becomes an object of sense-perception then it is possible to know it well, just as an inflammable substance can be consumed by the consuming fire.

But the essence of fire cannot itself be so consumed. The well-ascertained drift of all Vedanta is that the Self (Atman) of every knower is the Brahman. The same has been here explained in the form of question and answer by the text ‘It is the ear of the ear, etc.’ The same has been still more clearly determined by the text: “What is not enlightened by speech, etc.” The traditional theory of those who know the Brahman has also been declared by the text: “It is something different from both the known and the unknown.” This Upanishad will also conclude by saying “It is unknown to those who know, and known to those who do not know.” It is, therefore, certainly proper that the notion of the disciple, ‘I know Brahman well’ should be dispelled. It is evident that the knower cannot be known by the knower, just as fire cannot be consumed by fire. There is no knower other than the Brahman, to whom the Brahman can be a knowable, distinct from himself. By the Sruti: “There is no knower other than that,” the existence of another knower is denied. The belief, therefore, ‘I know Brahman well’ is an illusion. Therefore well did the preceptor say ‘Yadi, etc.’

‘Yadi’ means ‘if perchance.’ ‘Suveda’ means ‘I know Brahman well.’ Because some one whose sins have been purged and who is really intelligent may properly understand what is taught and others not, the preceptor begins with a doubt ‘Yadi, etc.’ Such cases have also been found to occur. When he was informed ‘This purusha who is seen in the eye, this is the Atman; this is the immortal, fearless self,’ Virochana, the son of Prajapati and the lord of the Asuras, though intelligent, misinterpreted this instruction, on account of his natural defects and understood that the body was the Atman. Similarly, Indra, the lord of the Devas, not being able to comprehend the Brahman, at the first, second and third instructions, did, at the fourth, his natural faults having been removed, comprehend the very Brahman that he was first taught. It has been found in the world also, that, of disciples receiving instruction from the same preceptor, some understand him properly, some misinterpret his teaching, some interpret it into the exact contrary of the teacher’s view and some do not

understand it at all. What more need we say of the knowledge of the Atman which is beyond the reach of the senses. On this point, all logicians, with their theories of Sat and Asat, are in conflict. The doubt, therefore, expressed in ‘Yadi manyase,’ etc., with which the preceptor begins his discourse is certainly appropriate, considering that the disciples, in spite of the instruction that the Brahman is unknowable, might have misunderstood him.

‘Dahara’ means ‘little’; ‘Vettha’ Means ‘knowest’; i.e., thou knowest surely little of Brahman’s form. Has Brahman then many forms, great and little, that it is said ‘daharam, etc.’? Quite so; many, indeed, are the forms of Brahman produced by conditions of name and form, but none in reality. By nature, as the Sruti says, it is without sound, touch, form, destruction; likewise, tasteless, odourless, and eternal. Thus with sound, etc., form is denied. But it may be said that, as that by which a thing is defined, is its rupa or form, the peculiar attribute of Brahman by which it is defined, may be said to be its form. We thus answer: Intelligence cannot be the quality of the earth, etc., either of one or all of them together, or under any modifications. Similarly, it cannot be the quality of the sensory organs, like the ear, etc., or of the mind. ‘Brahmano rupam,’ Brahman is defined by its intelligence. Hence it is said: “Brahman is knowledge and bliss;” ‘Brahman is dense with knowledge’; ‘Brahman is existence, knowledge and infinity’; thus the form of Brahman has been defined. Truly so; but even there, the Brahman is defined by the words ‘knowledge, etc.,’ only with reference to the limitations of mind, body and senses, because of its apparent adaptations to the expansion, contraction, extinction, etc., of the body, etc., and not on account of its own essence. According to its essence it will be concluded in the subsequent portion of this Upanishad that it is unknown to those who know, and known to those who do not know. The expression ‘Yadasya brahmano rupam’ should be read along with what precedes it. Not only dost thou know little of the form of Brahman. when thou knowest it, as conditioned in man, but also when thou knowest it as conditioned in the Devas; so I think. Even

the form of Brahman as it exists in the Devas is little, because it is limited by condition. The gist is that the Brahman limited by no conditions or attributes, passive, infinite, one without a second, known as Bhuma, eternal, cannot be known well. This being so, I think that you have yet to know Brahman by enquiry.'

'Atha nu,' 'therefore.' 'Mimamsyam,' 'worthy of enquiry.' Thus addressed by the preceptor, the disciple sat in solitude all composed, discussed within himself the meaning of the Agama as pointed out by his Guru (preceptor), arrived at a conclusion by his reasoning, realised it in himself, approached the preceptor and exclaimed "I think I now know Brahman."

Verse 10

नाहं मन्ये सुवेदेति नो न वेदेति वेद च ।

यो नस्तद्वेद तद्वेद नो न वेदेति वेद च ॥ १० ॥

naham manye suvedeti no na vedeti veda ca |

yo nastadveda tadveda no na vedeti veda ca || 10 ||

10. I do not think I know well; I know too; not that I do not know. He of us who knows that, knows that as also what is meant by 'I know too; not that I do not know.'

Shankara's Commentary:

Com.—On being asked how, the disciple says: "Listen. I do not think I know Brahman well." "Then is the Brahman not known by thee?" Thus questioned, the

disciple says “Not that I do not know, I know too;” the word too in ‘I know too’ means ‘I do not know too.’ Is it not contradictory: ‘I think I know not Brahman well etc.?’ If thou dost not think thou knowest well, how then dost thou think thou knowest also? If again thou thinkest thou certainly knowest, then how dost thou think thou knowest not well? To say that a thing is not known well by the man who knows it is a contradiction, the cases of doubt and false knowledge being left out of consideration. Nor is it possible to lay down a restrictive rule that the knowledge of Brahman should be doubtful or false. It is well known that under any circumstances, doubtful or false knowledge works great evil. Though thus attempted to be shaken in his conviction by the preceptor the disciple was not shaken. From the tradition which his master had explained to him, i.e., that the Self is something other than both the known and the unknown, from the reasonableness of the doctrine and from the strength of his own experience, the disciple loudly exclaimed, showing the firmness of his knowledge of the Brahman. How he exclaimed is thus stated. ‘He of us,’ i.e., my co-disciple, who correctly understands what I have said, knows That (Brahman). The words he referred to are ‘not that I do not know. I know too.’ What was defined by the expression ‘that is something other than both the known and the unknown’, the disciple discussed and decided from inference and from experience; and in order to see whether the preceptor’s views agreed with his own and to counteract any false conclusion, which dull persons may have arrived at, he expressed the same in different words: ‘not that I do not know; I know too.’ The confident exclamation of the disciple ‘He of us. etc.,’ is accordingly appropriate.

Verse 11

यस्यामतं तस्य मतं मतं यस्य न वेद सः ।

अविज्ञातं विजानतां विज्ञातमविजानताम् ॥ ११ ॥

yasyamatam tasya matam matam yasya na veda sah |

avijnatam vijanatam vijnatamavijnatam || 11 ||

11. It is Known to him to whom it is Unknown;. he knows it not to whom it is known. (It is) Unknown to those who know, and Known to those who do not know. (11)

Shankara's Commentary:

Com.—Turning from the concurring views of the preceptor and the disciple, the Sruti speaking for itself conveys in this text the view about which there is no disagreement. The purport is that to the knower of the Brahman whose firm conviction is that the Brahman is unknowable, the Brahman is well known. But he, whose conviction is that the Brahman is known by him, certainly knows not the Brahman. The latter half of the text only states those two distinct conclusions of the wise and ignorant man more emphatically. To those who know well, the Brahman is certainly (a thing) unknown; but to those who do not see well, i.e., who confound the Atman with the sensory organs, the mind and the conditioned intelligence [Buddhi], Brahman is certainly not known, but not to those who are extremely ignorant; for, in the case of these, the thought ‘Brahman is known by us’ never arises. In the case of those who find the Atman in the conditioned organs of sense, mind and intelligence, the false notion ‘I know Brahman’ is quite possible, because they cannot discriminate between Brahman and these conditions and because the conditions of intelligence, etc., are known to them. It is to show that such knowledge of the Brahman is fallacious that the latter half of the text is introduced. Or, the latter half ‘Avijnatam, etc..’ may be construed as furnishing a reason for the view propounded in the former.

प्रतिबोधविदितं मतममृतत्वं हि विन्दते ।

आत्मना विन्दते वीर्यं विद्यया विन्दतेऽमृतम् ॥ १२ ॥

pratibodhaviditam matamamrtatvam hi vindate |

atmana vindate viryam vidyaya vindate'mrtam || 12 ||

12. (The Brahman) is known well, when it is known as the witness of every state of consciousness; for (by such knowledge) one attains immortality. By his Self he attains strength and by knowledge, immortality.

Shankara's Commentary:

Com.—It has been settled that it is unknown to those who know. If Brahman be not known at all, it will then come to this, that there is no difference between the worldly-minded and those who know the Brahman. To say that It is unknown to those who know is also a contradiction, how then could that Brahman be well-known? This is explained in this text, 'Pratibodhaviditam' means 'known in respect of every state of consciousness.' By the word 'bodha' is meant 'mental perception.' That by which all states of consciousness are perceived like objects is the Atman. He knows and sees all states of consciousness, being by nature nothing but intelligence and is indicated by these states of consciousness, as blended with every one of them. There is no other way by which the inner Atman could be known. Therefore when the Brahman is known as the witness of all states of consciousness, then it is known well. Being the witness of all states of consciousness, it will be clear that it is intelligence in its essence, subject to neither birth nor death, eternal, pure, unconditioned, and one in all things,

because there is no difference in its essence, just as in the essence of the Akas, in a vessel or mountain cave, etc. The drift of the passage from the Agamas [traditions] is that the Brahman is other than both the known and the unknown. It is this pure Atman that will be described at the close of the Upanishad. Another Sruti says “He is the seer of the eye, the hearer of the ear, the thinker of thought, and the knower of knowledge.” But some explain the expression ‘Pratibodhaviditam’ in the text as meaning ‘known by its defining attribute of knowledge,’ on the view that Brahman is the author of the act of knowing and that Brahman as such author is known by its activity in knowing,’ just as the wind is known as that which shakes the branches of the trees. In this view the Atman is an unintelligent substance having the power to know and not intelligence itself. Consciousness is produced and is destroyed. When consciousness is produced, then the Atman is associated with it; but when it is destroyed, the Atman, dissociated from consciousness, becomes a mere unintelligent substance. Such being the case, it is not possible to get over the objection that the Atman is rendered changeable in its nature, composed of parts, transient, impure, etc. Again according to the followers of Kanada consciousness is said to be produced by the combination of the Atman and the mind and to adhere to the Atman. Therefore, the Atman possesses the attribute of knowledge but is not subject to modifications. It simply becomes a substance just like a pot made red. Even on this theory the Brahman is reduced to an unintelligent substance and therefore, the Srutis ‘Brahman is knowledge and bliss, etc.,’ would be set at naught. Moreover the Atman having no parts and being omnipresent and, therefore, ever connected (with the mind), the impossibility of laying down a law regulating the origin of recollection is an insurmountable objection.

Again that the Atman can be connected with any thing is itself repugnant to the Srutis, Smritis and logic. ‘The Atman is not connected with anything else; ‘The

Atman unconnected with anything supports everything; so say both the Sruti and the Smriti. According to logic, too, a thing having attributes may be connected with another having attributes and not with one dissimilar in class. To say, therefore, that a thing having no attribute, undifferentiated and having nothing in common with anything else, combines with another unequal in class is illogical. Therefore, the meaning that the Atman is, by nature, knowledge and light, eternal and undecaying, can be arrived at, only if the Atman be the witness of all states of consciousness, and not otherwise. Hence the meaning of the expression ‘Pratibodhaviditam matam’ is just what we explained it to be. Some, however, explain that the drift of this portion of the text is that the Atman is knowable by itself. There the Atman is thought of as conditioned and people talk of knowing the Atman by the Atman, distinguishing as it were, the unconditioned Atman from the Atman conditioned by intelligence, etc. Thus it has been said “He sees the Atman by the Atman” and “O Best of men! know the Atman by the Atman, thyself.” It is clear that the unconditioned Atman, being one, is not capable of being known either by itself or by others. Being itself the knowing principle, it cannot stand in need of another knowing principle; just as one light cannot possibly require another light. So here. On the theory of the followers of Buddha that the Atman is known by itself, knowledge becomes momentary and no Atman as its knower is possible. It is well known that the knowledge of the knower knows no destruction, being-indestructible. Again the Srutis: ‘Him who is eternal, omnipresent and all-pervading,’ ‘This is He, great, unborn, Atman, undecaying, deathless, immortal and fearless,’ etc., would be set at naught. Some, however, construe the word ‘Pratibodha’ to mean ‘causeless perception’ as that of one who sleeps. Others yet say that the word ‘Pratibodha’ means ‘knowledge of the moment.’ (We answer) whether it has or has not a cause, whether it occurs once or is often repeated, it is still Pratibodha itself or knowledge itself. The drift is that the Brahman known as the witness of all states of consciousness is well-known, because by such knowledge, one attains immortality, i.e., being centred in one’s self, i.e., emancipation. The knowledge

that the Atman is the witness of all states of consciousness is the reason for immortality. Immortality cannot possibly be the fact of the Atman becoming something other than itself. The immortality of the Atman, consisting in being Atman, is causeless; thus the mortality of the Atman consists in the mistaken belief of no 'Atman' induced by ignorance. How again, it may be asked, does one attain immortality by the knowledge of the Atman as already explained? It is therefore, said as follows: 'Atmana' means 'by one's own nature;' 'Vindate' means 'attains;' 'Viryam' means 'strength or capacity.' The strength gained by wealth, retinue, mantras, medicinal herbs, devotion and yoga cannot overcome mortality, because that is produced by things themselves mortal. The strength gained by the knowledge of the Atman can be acquired by the Atman alone and not by any other means. Because the strength produced by the knowledge of the Atman does not require any other aid, that strength alone can overcome death. And because one acquires by his Atman alone the strength produced by the knowledge of the Atman, therefore he attains immortality by the knowledge of the Atman. The Atharvana Upanishad says "This Atman cannot be attained by one devoid of strength."

verse 13

इह चेदवेदीदथ सत्यमस्ति न चेदिहावेदीन्महती विनष्टिः ।

भूतेषु भूतेषु विचित्य धीराः प्रेत्यास्माल्लोकादमृता भवन्ति ॥ १३ ॥

iha cedavedidatha satyamasti na cedihaavedinmahati vinastih |

bhutesu bhutesu vicitya dhirah pretyasmallokadamrta bhavanti || 13 ||

13. If one knows (That) here, then there is truth. If one knows not (That) here, there will be great loss. The wise, seeing the one atman in all created things, having turned away from this world, become immortal. (13)

Shankara's Commentary:

Com:—It is, indeed, hard to suffer birth, old age, death, sickness, etc., owing to ignorance, being one of the crowd of living beings, such as Devas, men, beasts. (pretas), etc., full of the miseries of Samsara. Therefore if a man, even in this world being authorised and competent, knows the atman as defined, in the manner already explained, then there is truth; i.e., there is in this birth as a mortal, immortality, usefulness, real existence. But if one living here and authorised does not know the Brahman, then there is long and great misery for him, i.e., rotation in Samsara—one continuous stream of births and deaths. Therefore the Brahmins who know the advantages and the disadvantages as above pointed out, perceive in all things in the universe, immoveable and moveable, the one essence of the atman, i.e., the Brahman, turn away with disgust from this world, the creature of ignorance consisting in the false notion of 'I' and 'mine' and having realised the principle of unity, the oneness of the atman in all, become immortal, i.e., become Brahman itself; for, the Sruti says "He who knows that highest Brahman becomes Brahman itself."

॥ इति केनोपनिषदि द्वितीयः खण्डः ॥

॥ iti kenopanisadi dvitayah khandah ॥

Here ends the Second Part.

Part Three

Verse 14

ब्रह्म ह देवेभ्यो विजिग्ये तस्य ह ब्रह्मणो विजये देवा अमहीयन्त ।

त अइक्षन्तास्माकमेवायं विजयोऽस्माकमेवायं महिमेति ॥ १४ ॥

brahma ha devebhyo vijigye tasya ha brahmano vijaye deva amahiyanta |

ta aiksantasmakamevayam vijayo'smakamevayam mahimeti || 14 ||

14. The Brahman won a victory for the Devas and in that victory of the Brahman the Devas attained glory. They thought ‘the victory is ours and this glory is ours alone.’

Shankara's Commentary:

Com.—From the passage that ‘It is not known to those who know,’ some fools may argue that whatever is, can be known by proofs, and whatever is not cannot be so known and is, therefore, non-existent, as the horns of a hare, and Brahman, being unknown, does not exist. In order that they may not fall into that error this parable is introduced; for, the subsequent passages clearly show the folly of thinking that that Brahman who is controller of all in every way, Deva, even superior to all Devas, Lord over lords, not easily known, the cause of the victory of the Devas and of the defeat of the Asuras does not exist. Or (it is related) for eulogising the knowledge of Brahman. How? By showing that it was, indeed, by the knowledge of the Brahman that Fire, etc., attained pre-eminence among the Devas; and Indra specially more than the rest. Or. it shows how difficult it is to

know Brahman, because even Fire, etc, with all their great powers, and even Indra. lord of the Devas knew the Brahman only with considerable difficulty. It may be that the whole Upanishad to follow is intended to lay down an injunction (to know the Brahman) or the story may have been intended to show the fallacious nature of the notion of doer, etc., found in all living beings, by contrasting it with the knowledge of the Brahman—fallacious like the notion of the Devas that the victory was theirs. The Brahman already defined won a victory for the benefit of the Devas; the Brahman in a battle between the Devas and the Asuras defeated the Asuras, the enemies of the world and the violators of the limitations imposed by the Lord and gave the benefit of the victory to the Devas for the preservation of the world. In this victory of Brahman the Devas, Fire, etc., attained glory, and not knowing that the victory and glory belonged to the Paramatman, seated in then own Atman, the witness of all perceptions, Lord of the universe, omniscient, the dispenser of the fruits of all Karma, omnipotent, and desirous of securing the safety of the world, looked upon the victory and the glory, as achieved by themselves—the Atman enclosed within the limitations of their own forms, Fire. etc.; that the glory—their being Fire, Air, Indra and the like, resulting from the victory—was theirs and that neither the victory nor the glory belonged to the Lord, over all the Atman within them. So they cherished this false notion.

verse 15

तद्धैषां विजज्ञौ तेभ्यो ह प्रादुर्बभूव तन्न व्यजानत किमिदं यक्षमिति ॥ १५ ॥

taddhaisam vijajnau tebhyo ha pradurbabhuva tanna vyajanata kimidam
yaksamiti || 15 ||

15. He knew this notion of theirs and appeared before them. What that Great Spirit was they did not know.

Shankara's Commentary:

Com.—The Brahman evidently knew this false notion of theirs. Brahman being omniscient and director of the senses of all living beings knew of the false idea of the Devas and in order that the Devas might not be disgraced like the Asuras by this false notion, out of pity for them and intending to bless them by dispelling their false notion, appeared before them for their benefit in a form assumed at will, in virtue of its power—a form unprecedentedly glorious and astonishing and capable of being perceived by the senses. The Devas did not at all know the Brahman that appeared before them. Who is this Yaksham, i.e., this venerable Great Spirit.

verse 16-19

तेऽग्निमब्रुवन् जातवेद एतद्विजानीहि किमेतद्यक्षमिति तथेति ॥ १६ ॥

तदभ्यद्रवत्तमभ्यवदत्कोऽसीत्यग्निर्वा अहमस्मीत्यब्रवीज्जातवेदा वा अहमस्मीति ॥

१७ ॥

तस्मिँस्त्वयि किं वीर्यमित्यपीदँसर्वं दहेयं यदिदं पृथिव्यामिति ॥ १८ ॥

तस्मै तृणं निदधावेतद्दहेति तदुपप्रेयाय सर्वजवेन तन्न शशाक दग्धुं स तत एव
निवृत्ते नैतदशकं विज्ञातुं यदेतद्यक्षमिति ॥ १९ ॥

te'gnimabruvan jataveda etadvijanihi kimetadyaksamiti tatheti || 16 ||

tadabhyadravattamabhyavadatko'sityagnirva ahamasmitiabravijjataveda
va ahamasmiti || 17 ||

tasmimstvayi kim viryamityapidamsarvam daheyam yadidam prthivyamiti

|| 18 ||

**tasmai trnam nidadhahetaddaheti tadupapreyaya sarvajavena tanna sasaka
dagdhum sa tata eva nivavrte naitadasakam vijnatum yadetadyaksamiti ||**

19 ||

16. They addressed the Fire thus “O Jataveda! Find out what this Great Spirit is.”
He said “yes.”

17. He ran to That. That said to him “who art thou?” He replied “I am Agni or I
am Jataveda.”

18. That said “what power, in thee so named, is lodged.’ He replied “I can burn
even all this, on the earth.”

19. That placed a straw before him and said: ‘Burn this.’ He approached it with
all haste but was not able to burn it. He immediately returned from thence to the
Devas and said I was not able to learn what this Great Spirit is.”

Shankara’s Commentary:

Com.—The Devas not knowing what that Spirit was, being afraid of it, and
desirous to know what it was, thus addressed Agni who went before them and
who was little less than omniscient. “O Jataveda, learn well what this Great
Spirit now in our view is. You are the brightest of us all.” “Be it so” said Agni
and ran towards the Spirit. Seeing him approach near, with a desire to ask
questions of it, but overawed into silence in its presence, the Spirit asked him:

“who art thou?” Thus questioned by Brahman, Agni replied: “I am Agni well known also as Jataveda”; as if in self-complaisance at being so well known by two names, Brahman said to Agni who had thus replied: “what power is in thee who ownest such well-known and significant names.?” He replied: “I could reduce to ashes all this universe and all immoveables, etc., on this earth.” The word ‘earth’ is illustratively used; for, even what is in the air is burnt by Agni [Fire]. The Brahman placed a straw before Agni who was so vain-glorious, and said: “Burn but this straw in my presence. If thou art not able to burn this, give up thy vanity as the consumer of all.” Thus addressed, Agni approached the straw with all the speed of overweening confidence but was not able to burn it. So he, Jataveda, being unable to burn it, covered with shame and bathed in his resolution, returned in silence from the presence of the Spirit and told the Devas: “I was not able to learn more, concerning this Spirit.”

verse 20-23

अथ वायुमब्रुवन्वायवेतद्विजानीहि किमेतद्यक्षमिति तथेति ॥ २० ॥

तदभ्यद्रवत्तमभ्यवदत्कोऽसीति वायुर्वा अहमस्मीत्यब्रवीन्मातरिश्वा वा अहमस्मीति ॥

२१ ॥

तस्मिँस्त्वयि किं वीर्यमित्यपीदँसर्वमाददीय यदिदं पृथिव्यामिति ॥ २२ ॥

तस्मै तृणं निदधावेतदादत्स्वेति तदुपप्रेयाय सर्वजवेन तन्न शशाकाऽऽदतुं स तत एव

निववृते नैतदशकं विज्ञातुं यदेतद्यक्षमिति ॥ २३ ॥

atha vayumabruvanvayavetadvijanihi kimetadyaksamiti tatheti || 20 ||

tadabhyadravattamabhyavadatko'siti vayurva

ahamasmitiyabravinmatarisva va ahamasmiti || 21 ||

tasmimstvayi kim viryamityapidamsarvamadadiya yadidam prthivyamiti ||

22 ||

tasmai trnam nidadhavetadadatsveti tadupapreyaya sarvajavena tanna

sasaka''datum sa tata eva nivavrte naitadasakam vijnatum

yadetadyaksamiti || 23 ||

20. The Devas then said to Vayu: “Learn O Vayu! what this Great Spirit is” He said: “yes.”

21. He ran to That. That said: “who art thou”? lie replied: “I am Vayu or Matarisva.”

22. That said “what power is in thee; so well known?” He replied: “I can blow away all the universe and all that is on the earth.”

23. That placed a straw before him and said “Blow it away.” He approached it with all speed but was not able to blow it. He returned immediately from there and told the Devas “I was not able to learn who this Great Spirit is.”

Shankara’s Commentary:

Com.—They next addressed Vayu thus: ‘know this, etc.’ The vest bears the same meaning as in the last passage. Vayu [Air] is so named from the root which means ‘to go’ or ‘to smell.’ Vayu is also called ‘Matarisva’ because it travels [svayati] in space [matari], ‘Adadiyam’ means ‘can take.’ The rest is explained as in the previous passage.

अथेन्द्रमब्रुवन्मघवन्नेतद्विजानीहि किमेतद्यक्षमिति तथेति तदभ्यद्रवत्तस्मात्तिरोदधे ॥

२४ ॥

स तस्मिन्नेवाकाशे स्त्रियमाजगाम बहुशोभमानामुमाँहैमवतीं ताँहोवाच
किमेतद्यक्षमिति ॥ २५ ॥

**athendramabruvanmaghavannetadvijanihi kimetadyaksamiti tatheti
tadabhyadravattasmattirodadhe || 24 ||**

**sa tasminnevakase striyamajagama bahusobhamanamumamhaimavatim
tamhovaca kimetadyaksamiti || 25 ||**

24. Then they said to Indra: “Maghavan! learn what this Great Spirit is.” He said “yes” and ran to That. That vanished from his view.

25. He beheld in that very spot a woman, Uma, very beautiful and of golden hue, daughter of Himavat. He said to her “What is this Great Spirit?”

Shankara’s Commentary:

Com.—Atha, etc., has already been explained. Indra, lord of the Devas, Maghavan, (being the most powerful of them) said yes, and ran to That. But That vanished from his sight, when he was near the Brahman and did not even talk to him, because it wished to crush altogether his pride at being Indra. In the very spot where the Spirit showed itself and from which it vanished and near the place where Indra was at the moment the Brahman vanished, Indra stood discussing within himself what that Spirit was, and did not return like Agni and Vayu. Seeing his attachment to that Spirit, knowledge in the form of a woman

and of Umu appeared before him. Indra beheld knowledge. fairest of the fair,—
this epithet is very appropriate in the particular context—as if adorned in gold.
'Himavatim' may mean 'the daughter of Himalaya' and being ever associated
with the Lord (Siva) the omniscient, and having approached her, asked: "Who is
this Spirit that showed itself and vanished?"

॥ इति केनोपनिषदि तृतीयः खण्डः ॥

॥ iti kenopanisadi trtiyah khandah ॥

Here ends the Third Part.

Part Four

Verse 26

सा ब्रह्मेति होवाच ब्रह्मणोवा एतद्विजये महीयध्वमिति ततो हैव विदाञ्चकार ब्रह्मेति

॥ २६ ॥

**sa brahmeti hovaca brahmanova etadvijaye mahiyadhvamiti tato haiva
vidancakara brahmeti || 26 ||**

26. She said “It is Brahman indeed. Attain glory in the victory of Brahman.”
From her words only, he learned that it was Brahman.

Shankara’s Commentary:

Com.—The particle ‘Ha’ means ‘verily.’ Glory in the victory of the omnipotent Lord (for the Asuras were defeated only by Brahman). Etat modifies the predicate. Your notion that the victory and the glory are yours is false. From her words alone Indra learned that it was Brahman. The force of ‘only’ is that Indra did not know of himself.

Verse 27

तस्माद्वा एते देवा अतितरामिवान्यान्देवान्यदग्निर्वायुरिन्द्रस्ते ह्येनन्नेदिष्ठं पस्पर्शुस्ते
ह्येनत्प्रथमो विदाञ्चकार ब्रह्मेति ॥ २७ ॥

**tasmadva ete deva atitaramivanyandevanyadagnirvayurindraste
hyenannedistham pasparsuste hyenatprathamam vidancakara brahmeti || 27
||**

27. These Devas Agni, Vayu and Indra therefore much excel others, because they touched the Brahman nearest. They it was who first knew the Spirit to be Brahman.

Shankara's Commentary:

Com.—Because these Devas, Agni, Vayu and Indra approached the Brahman nearest by conversing with and seeing That, they surpass the others considerably in the matter of power, quality and affluence. The particle 'Iva' either has no meaning or has the force of 'certainly.' Because these Devas, Agni, Vayu and Indra approached nearest the most desirable Brahman, by such means as the conversation aforesaid, and because they were the first who knew the Brahman, they are foremost.

Verse 28

**तस्माद्वा इन्द्रोऽतितरामिवान्यान्देवान्स ह्येनन्नेदिष्ठं पस्पर्श स ह्येनत्प्रथमो विदाञ्चकार
ब्रह्मेति ॥ २८ ॥**

**tasmadva indro'titaramivanyandevansa hyenannedistham pasparsa sa
hyenatprathamam vidancakara brahmeti || 28 ||**

28. Therefore also does Indra considerably excel other Devas because he approached Brahman nearest and because he first knew the Spirit to be Brahman.

Shankara's Commentary:

Com.—Because even Agni and Vayu knew Brahman from the words of Indra and because Indra first heard of the Brahman from the words of Uma, therefore does Indra so excel the other Devas. He approached Brahman nearest because he was first who knew the Brahman.

Verse 29

तस्यैष आदेशो यदेतद्विद्युतो व्यद्युतदा उ इतीन् न्यमीमिषदा उ इत्यधिदैवतम् ॥ २९ ॥

tasyaisa adeso yadetadvidyuto vyadyutada u itin nyamimisada u
ityadhidaivatam || 29 ||

29. Thus is That inculcated by illustration—that it flashed like lightning—that it appeared and vanished as the eye winketh. This is the illustration of the Brahman used in respect to the Devas.

Shankara's Commentary:

Com.—Of the Brahman the subject discussed, this is the Adesa. Adesa is instruction by means of illustrations. The illustration by which the Brahman, the like of which does not exist, is explained is said to-be its Adesa. What is It? That

which is well-known in the world as the flash of lightning. To add ‘kritavat’ is inconsistent. Therefore we understand it to mean ‘the flash of lightning’. The particle ‘A’ means ‘like.’ The meaning is ‘like the flash of lightning.’ We find another Sruti saying ‘As if a lightning flashed.’ It just showed itself to the Devas like lightning and vanished from their view—or the word ‘Tejas’ [bright] should be supplied after ‘Vidyutah’ [of lightning]. The meaning then is that It shone for a moment like a dazzling flash of lightning. The word ‘iti’ shows that it is an illustration. The word ‘ith’ is used in the sense of ‘and’ or ‘else’. This is another illustration of it. What is it? It winked as the eye winks. The nich suffix has no distinct meaning from the meaning of the root. The particle ‘a’ means ‘like’. The meaning is that it was like the eye opening and closing to see and to turn from its objects. This illustration of the Brahman is taken from the activity of the deities.

Verse 30

अथाध्यात्मं यद्वेतद्रच्छतीव च मनोऽनेन चैतदुपस्मरत्यभीक्षणम् सङ्कल्पः ॥ 30 ॥

athadhyatmam yaddetadgacchativa ca mano'nena
caitadupasmaratyabhiksnam sankalpah ॥ 30 ॥

30. Next illustration, from the Atman within the body—as speedily as the mind goes to Brahman—as speedily as one thinks of Brahman by the mind, and as speedily as the mind wills.

Shankara's Commentary:

Com.—‘Atha’ means ‘next’. We offer illustrations from the Atman within the body. ‘Goes to’ means ‘perceives as an object’. As speedily as one (worshipper)

thinks of the Brahman as near. ‘Abhikshnam’ means ‘very much’. ‘Wills’, i. e., about the Brahman. By the volition, recollection of the mind, the Brahman as hounded by the mind is perceived as an object. Therefore this is an illustration of the Brahman taken from within the body, as lightning and winking from the activity of the powers. And as those illustrations show that Brahman flashes instantaneously, so these illustrations show that Brahman’s appearance and disappearance are as quick as the perceptions of the mind. These illustrations of the Brahman are given because it can be understood by dull persons only if so illustrated. It is well-known that the unconditioned Brahman can be known by persons of inferior intellect.

Verse 31

तद्ध तद्वनं नाम तद्वनमित्युपासितव्यं स य एतदेवं वेदाभि हैनं सर्वाणि भूतानि
संवाञ्छन्ति ॥ ३१ ॥

**taddha tadvanam nama tadvanamityupasitavyam sa ya etadevam vedabhi
hainam sarvani bhutani samvanchanti || 31 ||**

31. The Brahman should be worshipped by all and is hence called Tadvana. As Tadvana, It must be worshipped. Who thus knows Brahman, is loved by all living beings.

Shankara’s Commentary:

Com.—‘Tat’ means ‘Brahman’. ‘Ha’ means ‘as is well-known’. ‘Tadvanam’ is a compound of tat and vanam. It means ‘which deserves to be worshipped as the one Atman of all living things’. The Brahman is well-known as Tadvanam and

should, therefore, be worshipped as Tadvana, a word denoting its virtue.

‘Worshipped’ means ‘contemplated.’ The Sruti next declares the fruit attained by one who contemplates the Brahman by this name. He who contemplates the Brahman already defined as possessed of this virtue, him (this worshipper) all living things love, i.e., pray to him as they would to Brahman.

Thus instructed, the disciple addressed the preceptor in the following manner.

Verse 32

उपनिषदं भो ब्रूहीत्युक्ता त उपनिषद्ब्राह्मीं वाव त उपनिषदमब्रूमेति ॥ ३२ ॥

upanisadam bho bruhityukta ta upanisadbrahmim vava ta

upanisadamabrumeti || 32 ||

32. (The disciple). (O Preceptor!) “Teach me the Upanishad”. (The preceptor). “We have told thee the Upanishad.” We have certainly told thee the Upanishad about Brahman”

Shankara’s Commentary:

Com.—When the disciple said “O holy one! Teach me the secret that should he thought of,” the preceptor replied “the Upanishad has been taught thee.” “What is that Upanishad?” The preceptor replied “The Upanishad treating of Brahman, the supreme Self, has been taught thee who excel in knowledge”. The latter half is introduced for decisively asserting that the knowledge of the supreme Prammatman, the Brahman already explained, is the Upanishad. Now what is the real significance of the disciple, who has already heard, explained to him, the knowledge of the Brahman, asking the preceptor to tell him the Upanishad? If

the question was about what was already explained, then the question itself becomes redundant and meaningless like Pishtapeshana. If, however, the Upanishad had been only partially explained, then the concluding it by reciting its fruits: “Having turned away from this world they become immortal,” is not reasonable. Therefore, the question, if asked about the unexplained portion of the Upanishad is also unsound, because there was no portion yet to be explained. What then is the meaning of the questioner.

We answer thus: The disciple meant to say:

“Does the Upanishad already explained stand in need of anything else which should combine with it to secure the desired end, or does it not stand in need of any such thing? If it does, teach me the Upanishad about what is so required. If it does not, assert emphatically like Pippalada in the words—There is nothing beyond this—.”

The preceptor’s emphatical assertion, “The Upanishad has been told thee” is but proper. It may be said that this cannot be construed as an emphatic assertion, as already explained, for something yet had to be said by the preceptor. It is true that the preceptor adds ‘Tasyi’, etc., but that is not added as a portion combining with the Upanishad, already explained, in accomplishing the desired end, nor as a distinct aid for achieving the end with the Upanishad, but as something intended as a means to the acquisition of the knowledge of the Brahman; for, tapas, etc., are apparently of the same importance with the Vedas and their supplements, being mentioned along with them. It is well known that neither the Vedas nor the supplements are the direct complements of the knowledge of the Brahman or concomitant helps to it. It is urged that it is only reasonable to assign different offices according to merit, even to many mentioned in the same breath. Just as the mantras for invoking the gods, where more than one is named, are used to perform the function of different deities according as the god to be invoked is this or that; it is urged it is to be inferred that tapas, peace, karma, truth, etc., are either complements or concomitant helps to the knowledge of

Brahman, and that the Vedas and their supplements, elucidating meanings, are only helps to the knowledge of Karma and Atma. They urge that this distribution is only reasonable from the reasonableness of the applicability of their purport to this distribution. This cannot be, for it is illogical. This distinction is impossible to bring about. It is unreasonable to think that the knowledge of the Brahman, before which all notions of distinctions of deed, doer, fruit, etc., vanish, can possibly require any extraneous tiling as its complement or concomitant aid in accomplishing it. Nor can its fruit, emancipation, require any such. It is said: “One desirous of emancipation should always renounce karma and all its aids. It is only by one that so renounces that the highest place (can be reached).

Therefore, knowledge cannot consistently with itself require karma as its concomitant help or its complement. Therefore, the distribution on the analogy of the invocation in Suktavaka is certainly unsound. Therefore, it is sound to say that the question and answer were intended only to make sure. The meaning is “what was explained is all the Upanishad, which does not require anything else for ensuring emancipation.”

Verse 33

तसै तपो दमः कर्मेति प्रतिष्ठा वेदाः सर्वाङ्गानि सत्यमायतनम् ॥ ३३ ॥

tasai tapo damah karmeti pratistha vedah sarvaṅgani satyamayatanam ||

33 ||

33. Devotion, self-control and Karma are its pedestal, as also the Vedas and their supplements. Truth is its abode.

Shankara's Commentary:

Com.—Of the Upanishad about Brahman which has been already taught, devotion, etc., are helps to the acquisition. ‘Tapas’ means, ‘control of the body, the sensory organs and the mind.’ ‘Dama’ means ‘freedom from passions.’ ‘Karma’ is Agnihotra, etc. It has been seen that knowledge of the Brahman arises indirectly through the purification of the mind in the person, who has been refined by these. Even when Brahman is explained, those who have not been purged of their faults, either disbelieve or misbelieve in it, as in the cases of Indra, Virochana, etc. Therefore, knowledge as inculcated arises only in him who has, by tapas, etc., performed either in this birth or in many previous ones, purified his mind. The Sruti says: “To that high-souled man whose devotion to the Lord is great and whose devotion to his preceptor is as great as that to the Lord, these secrets explained become illuminated.” The Smriti says: “Knowledge arises in men by annihilation of sinful deeds.” The word ‘iti’ is used to show that the mention of tapas, etc., is only by way of illustration; for it will show that there are other aids than those mentioned to the acquisition of knowledge, as freedom from pride, hatred of pomp, etc. ‘Pratishta’ means ‘legs.’ For, when they exist, knowledge is firmly seated just as a person goes about with his legs, the four Vedas, all the six supplements, i.e., Siksha, etc. The Vedas being the enlighteners of the knowledge of karma and the supplementary scriptures being intended for their protection are called ‘legs’ of the knowledge of Brahman. Or the word ‘Pratishta’ having been construed as legs, the Vedas must be understood as all other parts of the body than the legs, such as the head, etc. In this case it should be understood that in the mention of Vedas, the Angas, siksha, etc., are in effect mentioned. When the trunk [angi] is mentioned, the limbs [angas] are included; because the limbs live in the trunk. The place where the Upanishad rests is Truth. ‘Satyam’ (Truth) means ‘freedom from deceit and fraud in speech, mind or deed’; for knowledge seeks those who are good-natured and free from deceit and not men of the nature of the Asuras and the deceitful;

for, the Sruti says: ‘Not in whom there is fraud, falsehood or deceit.’ Therefore, it is said that Truth is the resting place of knowledge. The mention again of Truth as the resting place of knowledge, notwithstanding its implied mention as ‘the leg on which knowledge stands’ along with devotion, etc., is to indicate that Truth excels others as a help to knowledge; for, the Smriti says: “If a thousand Asvamedha sacrifices and Truth were weighed in the balance, one Truth spoken will outweigh the thousand sacrifices.”

Verse 34

योवा एतामेवं वेदापहत्य पाप्मानमनन्ते स्वर्गे लोके ज्येये प्रतितिष्ठति प्रतितिष्ठति ॥

३४ ॥

**yova etamevam vedapahatya papmanamanante sarge loke jyeye
pratitisthati pratitisthati || 34 ||**

34. He who knows this thus, having shaken off all sin, lives firmly seated in the endless, blissful and highest Brahman. He lives firmly seated. (34)

Shankara’s Commentary:

Com.—‘This’ means ‘the knowledge of Brahman as explained in ‘keneshitam’, etc., and highly eulogised in the text ‘Brahmaha Devebhyo,’ etc., and the source of all knowledge. Although it has been already said that by such knowledge one attains immortality, the fruit of the knowledge of Brahman is again stated at the end. ‘Sin’ means ‘the seed of Samsara whose nature is ignorance, desire and karma’ ‘Anante’ means ‘boundless.’ ‘Svanye loke’ means ‘in the Brahman who is all bliss’ and not ‘in heaven because of the adjunct ‘boundless.’ It may be said

that the word ‘boundless’ is used in its secondary sense. Therefore the Sruti adds: ‘Jyeye,’ ‘highest of all.’ The purport is that he is firmly seated in the unconditioned Brahman, i.e., does not again revert to Samsara [worldly existence].

॥ इति केनोपनिषदि चतुर्थः खण्डः ॥

॥ iti kenopanisadi caturthah khaṇḍah ॥

Here ends the Fourth Part.

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Thus ends the Commentary of Sri Sankara Charya.

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