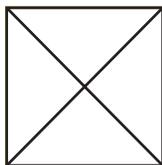


**UPANISHAD VAHINI**  
**(Essence of Vedic Knowledge)**

**by**

**BHAGAWAN SRI SATHYA SAI BABA**



PRASANTHI NILAYAM

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## **DEAR READER!**

Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba has come among men and is providing spiritual sustenance and guidance, in order to re-establish Truth, Justice, Peace and Love as the mainspring of individual, social and national life. He is using for this great task ancient and modern instruments, *Sanathana Dharma* and science. His writings, discourses and conversations which correct, communicate and convince are full of statements and commentaries on the discoveries of physical and metaphysical sciences.

This book which gives, in English, His articles (first published in Telugu in the *Sanathana Sarathi*) on the Ten Upanishads (invaluable textbooks on spiritual discipline and on the glorious fruit of spiritual adventure) will reveal to you the vast limitless mercy which impels Him to save us from trivialities and prompts Him to guide us along, until we reach the Goal of Life.

Making us tread the path discovered by the Sages of the past, inducing us to revere their light and their Message, illumining in us the flame of knowledge which dispels delusion—that is what Bhagawan, with His Supreme Love, does for us in this book.

Let us read it with care, recapitulate it with earnestness in the silence of our hearts and practise it with humility and faith in every turn of thought, in every tilt of tongue and in every digit of deed.

N. KASTURI

Prasanthi Nilayam, 21 Apr. 1968

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## UPANISHAD VAHINI

**M**an is essentially Divine. However, he believes himself to be an individual, limited and temporary, because he is entangled in the characteristics of the Five Elements, namely, sound, touch, form, taste and smell. This error brings about joy and grief, good and bad, birth and death. To escape from this association with the elements, to rid oneself of the pulls of their characteristics, is the sign of Liberation, called in Sanskrit as *Kaivalya*, *Moksha* or *Mukthi*. Names may change, but the achievement is the same.

While entangled in the five elements, man is attracted, distracted or disappointed by them. All this causes distress. Wealth, possessions—vehicles, buildings—all these are transmutations of the elements. Man craves for them. When he loses them or fails to get them, he spurns them.

Let us take the Five Elements, one by one. The living being has the first one, the Earth, as its base. Water, the second, is the basis for the earth. Water is produced from Fire. The third element, Fire itself emanating from Wind, the fourth. Wind or *Vayu* arises from Ether, or *Akasa*. *Akasa* emerges from the Primal Nature and the Primal Nature is but the manifestation of one aspect of the majesty of God, or the Supreme Sovereign *Atma*, the *Paramatma*.

Seeking to reach that *Paramatma*, the source and core of the Universe, the Individual or *Jivi*, who has entangled himself in the elements, has to overcome, by discrimination and steady practice of detachment, the bonds one by one. Such a person is a *Sadhaka*. He who wins in this struggle is the *Jivanmuktha*. “Liberated even while alive.”

For the process of such discrimination and for the visualisation of one’s innate reality, one has to study the *Upanishads*. They are collectively called *Vedanta*. They form the *Jnana Kanda* of the Vedas, the section that deals with the Higher Wisdom. Liberation from the consequences of Ignorance can be secured only by Knowledge, or *Jnana*. The *Upanishads* themselves declare, “*Jnaanaad eve thu kaivalyam*”; “By Knowledge alone can freedom be won.”

The Vedas are reputed to be “three sectioned.” “*Kandathrayathmakam*”; the three sections being *Jnana*, *Upasana* and *Karma*. These three are found in the Upanishads too. They provided the basis for the *Adwaita*, *Visishtadwaita* and the *Dwaita* systems of Philosophy too.

The name Upanishad denotes the study and practice of the innate truth: the name, *Brahma Vidya*, denotes the supremacy of spiritual contemplation. The name, *Yogasastra*, denotes the mental churning that brings success. What is the fundamental activity which is required of man? What is the basic thing to be known? It is only one’s basic reality. The Upanishads describe the various stages and the various modes of this search for realising this.

The name is full of significance. *Upa* means the process of studying with *Nishta* or steadfastness. *Shad* means the attainment of the Ultimate Reality. The name *Upa-ni-shad* arose for these reasons. The Upanishads teach not only the principles of *Atma Vidya*. They instruct the practical means of realisation also. They point out not only the duties and obligations one has to bear, but also the actions to be done and those to be avoided.

The Gita is but the essence of the Upanishads. Arjuna acquired, by the lessons of the Gita, the fruit of listening to the Upanishads. In the Upanishads, the

statement, “*Thath-thwam-asi*,” “That thou art,” is found. In the Gita, Krishna says to Arjuna, “I am Arjuna among the Pandavas,” that is to say. “I and You are the same.” This is the same as saying “Thou art That,” that Jiva and Easwara (God) are the same.

So, whether it is the Gita or the Upanishads, the teaching is Non-duality, not Duality or qualified Monism. The human eye cannot delve into the microcosm or the macrocosm. It cannot read the mystery of the virus or the atom or the stellar universe. Therefore, scientists supplement the eye with the telescope and the microscope. Similarly, sages are able to experience Divinity through the eye of knowledge, gained by following the *Dharma* of moral conduct and spiritual discipline. When the human eye stands in need of an extraneous instrument to observe even the insignificant worm and virus, how can man refuse to go through the process of *manthra* when he desires to see the omnipresent transcendent Principle? It is very hard to acquire the eye of wisdom. Concentration is essential for this. And for concentration to develop and stabilise itself, three things are very important: purity of consciousness, moral awareness and spiritual discrimination. These qualifications are difficult of attainment, to ordinary folk.

Man is endowed with the special instrument of discrimination, of judgement, of analysis and synthesis, which among all animals he alone possesses. He has to develop this and utilise it to the best purpose. Through this instrument he can realise the Immanent Divinity.

Instead, man pesters himself and others with the question: Where does God reside? If He is real, why is He not seen? Hearing such queries, one feels like pitying the poor questioners. For, they are announcing their own foolishness. They are like the dullards who aspire for university degrees, without taking pains even to learn the alphabet. They aspire to realise God without putting themselves to the trouble of the *Sadhana* (spiritual discipline) required. People who have no moral strength and purity, talk of God and His existence and decry efforts to see Him. Such people have no right to be heard. Spiritual Sadhana is based on the holy Sastras. They cannot be mastered in a trice. They cannot be followed through talk. Their message is summed up in the Upanishads; hence, they are revered as authoritative. They are not the products of human intelligence. They are the whisperings of God to man. They are parts of the eternal Vedas. The Vedas shine gloriously through all their parts. The Upanishads are authentic and authoritative, as they share the glory of the Vedas. They are 1180 in number; but through the centuries, many of them disappeared from human memory and only 108 have

now survived. Of these 10 have attained great popularity, as a result of the depth and value of their contents.

The sage Vyasa classified the Upanishads and allotted them among the four Vedas. The Rig Veda has twenty-one branches and each branch has one Upanishad allotted to it. The Yajur Veda has 109 branches and 109 Upanishads. The Atharvana Veda has fifty branches and fifty Upanishads were its share. The Sama Veda has a thousand branches and the balance, namely, 1000 Upanishads were its share. Thus, the 1180 Upanishads were assigned by Vyasa to the Four Vedas.

Sankaracharya raised the status of ten among the Upanishads by selecting them for writing his commentaries, and so they became specially important. Humanity stands to gain or fall by these ten. All who are seeking human welfare and progress are now apprehending whether even these ten will be forgotten, for neglecting them will usher in moral and spiritual disaster. There is no reason, however, for such fears. The Vedas can never be harmed. Pundits and those with faith should resolve to present before humanity these ten Upanishads at least. They are Isa, Kena, Katha, Prasna, Mundaka, Mandukya, Thaithiriya, Aithareya, Chandogya and Brihadaranyaka.

The remaining ninety-eight are Brahma, Kaivalya, Svethasva, Jabali, Hamsa, Garbha, Aruni, Paramahamsa,

Amrith-anada, Narayani, Amrithabindu, Atharvasikha, Atharvasira, Kasithara, Mathrayani, Nrisimhatapani, Brahmajabala, Maithreya, Kalagnirudra, Sulabha, Manthrika, Kshithi, Niralamba, Sarvahara, Vajrasuchika, Subharahasya, Thejobindu, Nadabindu, Dhyanabindu, Brahma Vidya, Atmabodhaka, Yoga, Thathwa, Narada-parivrajaka, Brahmana, Sita, Yogachudaamani, Nirvaana, Mandala, Dakshinamurthi, Skandaa, Sarabha, Adwaitha, Thaaraka, Mahanarayana, Sowbhagya-lakshmi, Saraswathirahasya, Mukthika, Bhavaricha, Rama-thapana, Ramarahasya, Mudgali, Vasudeva, Pingala, Sandilya, Mahabhikshuka, Yogasiksha, Sanyasa, Thuriyathitha, Parmaparivrajaka, Narasimha, Aksha-malika, Annapoorna, Ekakshara, Akshika, Adhathya, Surya, Kundisakhya, Aatma, Savithri, Parabrahma, Pasupatha, Thripurathapana, Avadhootha, Thripura, Devi, Bhavana, Katha, Yogakundali, Rudrahrdaya, Rudraksha, Bhasma, Darsana, Ganapathi, Thahasata, Mahavakya, Panchabrahma, Gopalathapani, Pranagnihotra, Garuda, Krishna, Datthatreya, Varahaa, Yajnavalkya, Sathyaayana, Aveyktha, Hayagriva, and Kalisantharna.

The Upanishads have also inspired other works on Geography, Astronomy, Astrology, Economics and Political Theory, as well as the eighteen Puranas comprising Skanda, Siva, Garuda and others. The Vedas and the Upanishads are the very foundation for Sanathana Dharma.

There is one interesting feature to be noted. This religion has no one Founder as the others have. That invisible unknown founder is God, the source of all wisdom. He is the Prophet of this Sanathana Dharma. He is the Founder. His Grace and His Inspiration manifested through the pure Sages and they became the spokesmen of this Dharma. When the moral purity of men degenerates, God is taking form as grace and inspiration in sages and teachers. He has also spoken through the Upanishads the *Sathya-Jnana*, the Wisdom concerning the Reality.

## ISAVASYOPANISHAD

**T**he Lord, intent on the regeneration of the world, communicated Vedas through *Hiranya-garbha*. Then, Hiranyagarbha, in turn, passed them on to His Ten *Manasaputhras* (Sons born out of the mind) including Athri and Marichi. From them, the Vedas spread among humanity, handed down from one generation to another. As time passed, ages accumulated and continents moved. Some Vedas got lost, or were neglected as too difficult for comprehension and only Four have survived into modern times. These Four were taught by Vedavyasa, the greatest among the exponents of the Vedas, to his disciples in the *Dwapara Yuga* (The era in which the Divine and the demoniac elements were in the same kingdom).

When Vyasa was thus expounding the Vedas, engaged in spreading the sacred scripture, one disciple of his, Yajnavalkya by name, incurred his wrath and as a punishment, he had to regurgitate the Yajur Veda that he had already learned, into the custody of his *guru* and leave the place to take refuge in *Suryadeva*, the treasure-house of the Vedas. Just then, the *Rishis* who revere the Vedas, flew into the place in the shape of Thiththiri birds and ate up the regurgitated Yajur Veda. That particular section of the Veda is called “Thaithiriyam.”

Meanwhile, *Suryadeva* was pleased with the devotion and steadfastness of the unfortunate Yajnavalkya. He assumed the form of a *Vaji* or Horse and blessed the sage with renewed knowledge of the Yajur Veda. The sections thus taught by the *Vaji* came to be called ‘*Vajasaneyi*.’ The Yajur Veda as promoted by *Vedavyasa* is called *Krishnayajur Veda* and that handed down by Yajnavalkya as the *Suklayajur Veda*.

In these, the first few chapters are *Manthras* connected with the *Karma Kanda* and the last few sections deal with *Jnana Kanda*. The *Isavasya Upanishad* is concerned with this *Jnana Kanda*. Since the opening mantra of this *Upanishad* starts with the words, ‘*Isavasyam*,’ the *Upanishad* is called by that name.

*Isavaasyamidam sarvam yathkinchajagathyaam jagath  
Thena thyakthena bhunjethaah, maa gridhah kasya  
swiddhanam.*

“All things of this world are transitory, the evanescent, are enveloped by the Lord who is the real Reality of each. Therefore, they have to be used with reverent renunciation, without covetousness or greed for they belong to the Lord and not to any one person.” This is what this *sloka* means.

That is to say, the Universe is the Immanence of the Lord, His Form, His Body. It is wrong to take the Universe and Its Lord as different. It is a delusion, a product of the imagination of man. Just as your image under the water is not different from you, the Universe (which is His Image produced on your Ignorance) is the same as He.

So long as man has this delusion, he cannot visualise the Reality immanent in him. On the other hand, he will slide into wrong thoughts, words and deeds. A piece of sandalwood if kept in water will produce a bad smell; but, if it is taken out and rubbed into paste, the former perfume will return. When the authority of the Vedas and Sastras is respected and when discrimination is sharpened on the practice of *Dharma Karmas*, the evil smell of wrong and wickedness will vanish and the pure innate perfume of the Atma will emerge. Then, the duality

of doer and enjoyer will disappear. Then, you reach the stage called *Sarvakarmasanyas*, the withdrawal from all activity. In this Upanishad, this type of *Sanyasa* is described as the pathway to Liberation or Moksha.

The *Sanyasa* which involves the destruction of the three urges (for a mate, for progeny and for wealth) is very difficult to attain without purity of the *chiththa* or mind.

In this Upanishad, the means for getting this is declared in the second manthra. That is to say, carry out the *Agni-hothra*, etc. prescribed in the Sastras, believe that for liberation one has to be actively engaged in such work and get convinced that no sin can cling so long as one is so engaged. Work without the desire for the fruit thereof slowly cleanses impurities like the crucible of the goldsmith. The pure mind is *Jnana*. It is the consummation of detachment.

If you are able to divest yourselves of desire when you are doing work, no impurity can touch you. You know the “Chilliginji” seeds when dropped into muddy water have the power of separating the dirt and depositing it at the bottom. The seeds too sink to the bottom and slip out of sight! In the same way, those who are adepts in doing *Karma* without attachment will have their minds perfectly cleansed and the results of their acts will lose effectiveness and sink to the bottom.

Out of the eighteen manthras in this Upanishad only the first two deal directly with the problem of Liberation and its solution. The other sixteen elaborate this solution and serve as commentaries thereon.

The Atma never undergoes any modification, yet it is faster than the mind! That is the mystery and the miracle. It appears to experience all states, but it has no growth, decline or change. Though it is everywhere it is not perceivable by the senses. It is because of its underlying existence and ever-present immanence that all growth, all activities, all changes take place. Cause and effect act and react on account of the Basic stratum of the Atmic reality. Why, the very word, “Isa” carries this meaning. The Atma is near and far, inside and outside, still and moving. He who knows this truth is worthy of the name, *Jnani*.

The ignorant can never grasp the fact of Atmic immanence. Those who are conscious can see things and can feel their presence near them. Those who have lost awareness will search for the lost jewels though they actually wear them at the moment. Though one may know all things, he conceives the Atma as existing in some unapproachable, unreachable place on account of loss of consciousness. But the Jnani, who is aware, sees the Atma in all beings and all beings as Atma. He sees all beings as the same and perceives no distinction or

difference. So he saves himself from duality.

The Isavasya makes this great Truth clear to all. The Jnani who has tasted that vision will not be agitated by the blows of fortune or the enticements of the senses. He sees all beings as himself, having his own innate identity. He is free from bondage, from Dharma and Adharma, and the needs and urges of the body. He is ‘*Swayamprakasa*’ (Self-luminous). So, the *Jiva-rupa* is not his genuine form, no, not even the gross and the subtle bodies called the *Sthula* (gross) and the *Sukshma* (subtle) *sariras* (bodies).

That is why in the first manthra of the Isavasya, the Jnana Nishta characterised by the absence of craving of any sort is expounded. This is the primary *Vedārtha*; but those who have cravings will find it difficult to get stabilised in that Nishta or state of mind. For such, the second manthra prescribes a secondary means, the *Karma Nishta* (steady pursuit of good deeds). The rest of the manthras elaborate and support these two nishtas (disciplines)—based on Jnana and Karma. Karma Nishta has desire and delusion as the cardinal urges. Jnana Nishta has *Vairagya*, the conviction that the world is not Atma, that is to say, not true, and therefore, it is profitless to have any dealings with it. Such an attitude to Vairagya is the gateway to Jnana Nishta. From the third to the eighth manthra, the real nature of the Atma is depicted, through

the condemnation of the *Avidya* (ignorance) which prevents the understanding of the Atma.

Thus the Isavasya teaches the lesson of renunciation through the first mantra and the lesson of “liberating activity” through Karma devoid of *Raga* (passion, attachment) and *Dweshha* (anger, hate, repulsion) in the second mantra. In the fourth and fifth mantra, it speaks of *Atmathatwa* (Faith in the Lord) and later of the fruits of the knowledge of that Atmathatwa. In the ninth mantra, the path of progressive liberation or *Karmamukthi* (useful for those who are too weak to follow the path of total renunciation but who are adepts in acts that are conducive to moral development and inner purification) is laid down. This is the path which coordinates all Karma on the principle of *Upasana* (worship or contemplation of God). Those who are engaged in acts contrary to *Vidya* (Knowledge) are full of *Ajnana* (Ignorance), it says. Those who confine themselves to the study and practice of divine forms are even worse, for their desire is for powers and skills. *Vidya* leads to *Deva Loka*; Karma leads to *Pithr Loka*, it is said. So the *Jnana* that results in *Atma sakshathkara* or Self-realisation is something quite distinct from these. No attempt to coordinate the two can succeed.

Of course, one should not engage in anything opposed to the Sastras; and all actions are classed as

Avidya, in the ultimate analysis. At best, Karma can help only to cleanse the mind and the Upasana of Gods can lead to single-mindedness. The Upasana has to rise to the level of the worship of the Cosmic Divinity, the *Hiranyagarbha*. It has to ripen and develop into *Jivanmukthi* (Liberated soul), before the end of this life.

The *Devatha-Jnana* and the Karma Nishta have both to be complementary and co-ordinated. Then, one can escape the round of birth and death and become Divine.

## KATHOPANISHAD

**T**he story of Nachiketha, who was initiated in spiritual discipline by Yama Himself, is found in this Upanishad. The same story is also mentioned in the Thaittiriya Brahmana and in the Mahabharatha too, in the 106th Chapter of the Anusasanaparva. This Upanishad has become famous on account of its clarity and depth of imagination. Many of the thoughts expressed in it can be found in the Bhagavad Gita. Since it belongs to the Katha Saakha of the Krishna Yajur Veda School, it is called Kathopanishad.

A very strict ritualist, Vaajasravas, also known as Gouthama, performed a *Yaga* (Sacrifice). As part of the sacrifice he gave away cows that were no longer able to eat grass or drink water, much less yield milk! They were too old for any useful purpose. Seeing this, his virtuous and intelligent son, Nachiketha by name, realised that his

father was in for a great deal of sorrow, as a consequence of the sinful gifts. The boy wanted to save his father from his fate as far as it lay in his power. So, he asked his father, to whom he intended to offer *him* as a gift! He importuned that he too should be given away to someone. At this the father got so incensed that he shouted in disgust, “I am giving you to the God of Death.” At this he resolved that his father’s words must not be falsified though they were uttered in the *Jiva Loka*, infected with birth and death. So he persuaded his father to offer him, in strict ritualistic style, as a gift to Yama. Nachiketha promptly proceeded to the abode of the God of Death. He had to wait three nights before he could see Yama. Yama felt sorry for the delay and promised Nachiketha three boons, one for each night he spent outside his doors.

Nachiketha wanted first, that when he returned to his native place and home at His behest, his father must welcome him gladly, bereft of all anger at his former impertinence, and full of mental equanimity. His second desire was to know the secret of the absence in heaven of hunger or thirst or the fear of death. Yama gladly gave him these boons. In addition Yama initiated him into a special ritual, and its Mystery. Nachiketha listened reverentially and grasped the details of that ritual quickly and clearly. Yama was so delighted with his new disciple that He gave the Yaga a new name, Nachiketha Agni! This was an extra boon for the young visitor. Nachiketha

said, “Master, man is mortal; but, some say that death is not the end, that there is an entity called Atma which survives the body and the senses. Others argue that there is no such entity. Now that I have the chance, I wish to know about the Atma from you.”

Yama desired to test the credentials of his questioner’s steadfastness and eagerness to know the Highest Wisdom. If he was undeserving, Yama did not want to communicate the knowledge to him. So, He offered to give him instead, various other boons, related to worldly prosperity and happiness. He told him that the Atma is something very subtle and elusive, that it is beyond the reach of ordinary understanding and He placed before him other attractive boons that could be enjoyed more quickly and ‘better.’ Nachiketha replied, “Revered Master! Your description of the difficulty of understanding it makes me feel that I should not let go this chance because I can get no teacher more qualified than You to explain it to me. I ask this as my third boon and no other. The alternative boons You hold before me cannot assure me the everlasting benefit that *Atmajnana* (wisdom of true self) alone can bestow.”

Seeing this *Sraddha* and this steadiness Yama was pleased, and He concluded that Nachiketha was fit to receive the highest wisdom. He said, “Well, My dear boy! There are two distinct types of experiences and urges,

called *Sreyas* and *Preyas*. Both affect the individual. The first releases. The second leashes. One leads to salvation the other to incarceration! If you pursue the Preya path, you leave the realisation of the highest goal of man, far, far behind. The Sreya path can be discerned only by the refined intellect, by *Viveka* (discrimination); the Preya path is trodden by the ignorant and the perverted. *Vidya* (knowledge) reveals the Sreyas and *Avidya* (ignorance) makes you slide into the Preyas. Naturally, those who seek the Sreya road are very rare.”

Yama continued: “The Atma is agitationless, unruffled. It is Consciousness, infinite and full. He who has known the Atma will not be moved by the dual ideas of ‘is’ and ‘is-not,’ ‘do-er’ ‘not-doer,’ etc. The Atma is not even an object to be known! It is neither knower, known nor knowledge. Discovering this is the most supreme Vision. Informing one of this is the most supreme instruction. The Instructor is Brahman. The instruction is Brahman and the Instructed is also Brahman. Realisation of this ever-present Truth saves one from all attachment and agitation, and so it liberates one from Birth and Death. This great Mystery cannot be grasped by logic. It has to be won by Faith in the Smritis and experienced.”

“The Atma is capable of being known only after vast perseverance. One has to divert the mind from its

natural habitat—the objective world—and keep it in unwavering equanimity. Only a hero can succeed in this solitary internal adventure and overcome the monsters of egoism and illusion! That victory alone can remove grief.”

The teaching of the Vedantha is that the Highest Truth is capable of being realised by all. All the texts proclaim so with one voice. They also say that the *Pranava* or the syllable *Om* is the symbol of the *Para* (higher) and the *Apara* (lower) *Brahmam*. They declare that the Upasana of the Pranava brings within your reach even the *Hiranyagarbha* (the manifestation of God) stage and helps you to attain two stages of Brahmam, too. The Hiranyagarbha is enveloped by the thinnest veil of *Maya* and through *Om*, it can be rent asunder, and both *Para* and *Aparabrahmam* realised.

The Kathopanishad also elaborates on the Atma in various ways. It says that the Atma is not measurable, that it can never be contained by limitations, though it appears so. The image of the Sun in a lake quivers and shakes due to the quivering and shaking of the water; the Sun is but a distant witness. It is unaffected by the media which produce the images. The Atma likewise is the witness of all this change in space and time.

The Jiva, the Individualised Ignorance, is the participant of the fruits of action, of right and wrong, of good and evil. The Jivi forges bondage through egoism

and loosens the bonds through *buddhi* (intellect), the counter force of ignorance. Realise that all is won the moment the *Indriyas* (external and internal) are put out of action. Discard them as false and misleading. Merge them all in the *Manas* (mind). Throw the *Manas* back into the *Buddhi* and the *Buddhi* or Individualised Intelligence into the Cosmic Intelligence of *Hiranyagarbha*. And, having reached that stage of *Sadhana*, merge the Cosmic intelligence in the *Atmathatwa* of which it is but a manifestation. Then you attain the stage of *Nirvikalpasamaadhi*, the perfect unruffled equanimity of Absolute Oneness which is your true Nature. That is the secret propounded by this Upanishad; that and the fact that all Creation is a proliferation of *Nama* (name) and *Rupa* (form).

Misled by the mirage, you are unable to see the desert waste. Frightened by the snake (superimposed by you on the rope) you are unable to discern the basic reality. The beginningless delusion that haunts the *Jivi* has to be broken through. The 14th Manthra of this Upanishad wakes up the *Jivi* from the sleep of ages and leads him on towards the goal.

The *Atma* is beyond *Sabda* (sound), *Sparsa* (touch), *Rupa*, *Rasa* (taste) and *Gandha* (smell); it knows no end. The senses are object-bound outward-bound.

The Atma is the prime instrument for all activity and knowledge, the inner motive-force behind everything. This delusion of manifoldness, variety, multiplicity, many-ness, has to die. It is born of Ajnana. The “many” is a mirage caused by “circumstances.” The feeling that you are separate from the One is the root of all this seeming birth and death, which the individual appears to go through. Yama then declared the Nature of Brahman to Nachiketha, to remove his doubts on that point.

Like a light hidden by smoke, the Thumb-sized Purusha (the *Angushtamaathra*) is eternally shining. As the torrent of rain falling on a peak is shattered downwards in a thousand streams, the Jivi, who feels many-ness and difference, falls down through many-ness and goes to waste. This Upanishad announces that there is nothing higher than the Atma or even equal to it. The roots of a tree are invisible. They are hidden underground; but their effect is evident in the flowers that are visible, is it not? So too, this *Samsaravriksha* (the tree of life). From that experience, you have to infer that the root, Brahman, is there as sustenance and as support, said Yama.

The Tree of Samsara is like the magician’s mango tree; it is just an illusion. He who has purified his Buddhi can see in it, as in a fine mirror, the Atma, in this very life. Brahman is the *Jneyam*, the thing known to the seeker

of knowledge. It is the *Upaasyam*, the thing attained by the seeker of attainment. The Jnani is liberated by his visualisation of Brahman, but the *Upasaka* reaches *Brahma Loka* after death. There, he merges in Hiranyagarbha and at the end of the *Kalpa* (Age), he is liberated along with the Hiranyagarbha Itself.

Nachiketha understood without a flaw this Brahma Vidya that Yama taught him, he was released by Death and attained Brahman. So far as this Brahma Vidya is concerned, even he who attempts to know what it is becomes thereby a better personality, free from the taint of sin.

This Upanishad has taught in many ways the fundamental subjects: *Pranavaswarupa*, Sreyas and Brahma Vidya. My resolve is to tell you now the essence of these teachings. Of course one Mantra is enough to save those who have sharpened intelligence and who are full of the yearning to escape. For the dull-witted, sense-prompted individual immersed in secular pleasure-seeking, advice, however plentiful is a waste.

The Atma is like the ocean. To instruct a person about it, you need not ask him to drink the entire ocean. A single drop placed on the tongue will give him the needed knowledge. So too, if you desire to know the

Upanishad, you need not follow every Manthra. Learn and experience the implication of one Manthra. You can realise the Goal without fail. Learn and practise. Learn to Practise. That is the secret of the Teaching.

## MUNDAKOPANISHAD

**T**his Upanishad begins with an Invocation, praying that the eye may see auspicious things, the ear may hear auspicious sounds, and that life may be spent in the contemplation of the Lord. The teaching of this Upanishad is referred to as Brahma Vidya, either because it describes first the message of Hiranyagarbha, the causal Brahma, or because the message relates the glory of Brahmam. This Upanishad speaks of Brahma Vidya as the mystery which only those with shaven heads and those who go through a rite of having Fire on the shaven head can understand. So, it is called Mundaka, or Shaven Head. Apart from this, this Upanishad is honoured as the crest of all, since it expounds the very essence of *Brahma Jnana*. It is assigned to the Fourth Veda, the Atharvana.

This knowledge has been handed down from teacher to pupil by word of mouth, enriched and confirmed by experience. It is also called Paravidya, the knowledge of the Other when it deals with the attributeless Principle. When it deals with the attribute-full, the *Saguna*, the materialised Principle, it is called Aparavidya, the knowledge of the Immanent, not the Transcendent aspect. These are the two that are found in this Upanishad. They were taught by Saunaka to Angirasa. That is what the text announces. The Vedas and the Vedangas deal with Aparavidya. The Upanishads deal specifically with Paravidya. But the interesting thing is: the Aparavidya leads on to the Para, the knowledge of Brahman, which is the goal.

The spider evolves out of itself the magnificent manifestation of the web. So too, this *jagath* (moving, changing world) is manifested from the causative Brahman. The *jagath* or *samsar* is the product of creator-creation complex. It is true and factual and useful, so long as one is unaware of the Reality. The utmost that one can gain by activity, that is to say holy or sacred activity, is Heaven or *Swarga*, which has a longer lease of life, but which has an end in spite of it. So, the seeker loses all yearning for Heaven. He approaches an elderly teacher full of compassion, who instructs him in the discipline for realising the Brahman.

All beings are Brahman and no other. They all do emanate from Brahman. As sparks emanate from fire, as hair grows on the skin but is different from it, so too beings originate from Brahman. Brahman causes the sun, moon, stars and planets to revolve in space. Brahman grants the consequence of all the acts of beings. The Jivi and the Easwara, the Individual and the Universal are two birds sitting on the same tree i.e., the human body. The Jivi acts, and suffers the consequences of those acts. The Easwara sits quiet, as a witness of the other bird. When the Jivi looks at the Easwara and realises that it is but an image, it escapes from grief and pain. When the mind is drawn by yearning to know the Easwara, all other low desires diminish and disappear. Then, knowledge of Atma is attained. The last mantra of this Upanishad declares that its aim is to make man attain that Jnana. *Munda* means head. This Upanishad is the Head of all Upanishads, we can say. So even the Brahma Sutra devotes two chapters to elaborate the inner meaning of the mantras of this Upanishad.

It has three sections, with two chapters in each. In the first section, the Aparavidya, and in the second, the Paravidya and the means of mastering it are dealt with. In the third, the nature of the Reality and of the release from bondage, is defined. The Karma that helps attain the Brahman is denoted in the mantras. That is why this Upanishad is respected as very sacred.

The spider, as already indicated, spins out the web from itself without any extraneous agency. It also takes in the web it has spun. So too, Creation was effected without an agent and the Universe emanated. This Nature or *Prakrithi* is but a transformation of the basic Brahman, like pot from mud, cloth from cotton, jewels from gold. So Brahman is called the *Upadana* cause of *Prakrithi*. It is also the *Nimiththakarana* (predetermined cause), or the *Nimiththa* (efficient) cause. For, this Universe can only be the result of a High Intelligence, an Intelligence that is all-comprehensive, a *Sarvajna*. Heaven is the highest attainable stage through Karma. Of such Karmas or rites, the worship of Fire called *Agnihotra* is the chief. The performance of such rites contributes to the cleansing of the mind. Such cleansing is a necessary preliminary to *Paravidya*. The flames that rise high from the sacrificial altar of fire appear to the performer as if they are hailing him on to realise the Reality or Brahman. He who does the rite with full awareness of the significance of the mantra is able to reach the Solar Splendour, through the offerings made. They take him to the region of Indra, the Lord of the gods.

The Vedas recommend two types of obligatory Karmas: *Ishta* and *Poortha*. The rite of *Agnihotra*, adherence to Truth, *Thapas* or Asceticism, *Vedaadhyayanam* or study of the Vedas, the service offered to guests in one's home—these are *Ishta*;

construction of temples, caravanserais, rest-houses, tanks, planting of avenue trees—such acts are Poortha. These give consequences that are beneficial; but all such cause-effect chains are transient. They are fundamentally defective.

The entire Creation is bound up with name and form and so, unreal. It can be described in words and so, limited and circumscribed by the intellect and the mind. The *Paramapurusha*, the Supreme Person alone is eternal, real, and pure. He is the prompter of activity and the dispenser of consequence. But He is beyond the eye, beyond the intellect. Like the spokes of a wheel that radiate from the hub, that lead from all directions to the centre, all creation radiates from Him.

To reach the central hub and know that all spokes radiate from it, the mind is the instrument. Brahman the target is to be reached by the arrow-mind. Have your mind fixed on the target and using the Upanishadic teaching as the bow, shoot straight and hard, to hit the Brahman and master. That is to say, the Pranava or the OM is the arrow. Brahman is the target.

The Brahman illumines the Jivi by getting reflected in the inner consciousness or *Antahkarana*. One has only to turn that consciousness away from the objective world, contact with which contaminates the mind. Now, train the inner consciousness to meditate on

the OM with single-pointed attention. Meditate on the Atma as unaffected by the Jivi, though in him and with him and activating him. Meditate on Him in the heart, from which radiate countless nadis, subtle nerves, in all directions. If this process is followed, one can attain Jnana or Wisdom

The Universe is an instrument to reveal the majesty of God. The inner firmament in the heart of man is also equally a revelation of His Glory. He is the Breath of one's breath. Since He has no specific form, He cannot be indicated by words. Nor can His mystery be penetrated by the other senses. He is beyond the reach of asceticism, beyond the bounds of Vedic rituals. He can be known only by an intellect that has been cleansed of all trace of attachment and hatred, of egoism and the sense of possession.

Jnana alone can grant self-realisation. *Dhyana* (meditation) can confer concentration of the faculties. Through that concentration, Jnana can be won, even while in the body. The Brahman activates the body through the five vital airs or *Pranas*. It condescends to reveal itself in that same body as soon as the inner consciousness attains the requisite purity. For the Atma is immanent in the senses, inner and outer, as heat in fuel and as butter in milk. Now, the consciousness is like damp fuel, soaked in the foulness of sensory desires and disappointments.

When the pool in the heart becomes clear of the slimy overgrowth, the Atma shines in its pristine splendour. He who acquires the knowledge of this Atman is to be revered. For, he is liberated. He has become Brahman, that which he strove to know and be.

## MANDUKYOPANISHAD

**T**his Upanishad is the kernel of Vedantha. It is the most profound among all the Upanishads. It is also the chief, having the distinction of being recommended as, by itself, enough to lead man to salvation. It is very brief, consisting of just a dozen manthras! They are divided into four sections, Agama, Vaithathya, Adwaitha and Alathasanthi. In the Agamaprakarana, the secret doctrine of Pranava which is the key of self-realisation is expounded. In the second Prakarana, the doctrine of Dualism, the great obstacle to liberation is discussed and rebutted. In the third, the Adwaitha or non-dual Unity is propounded. The last Prakarana describes certain mutually contradictory Non-Vedic doctrines and rejects them.

No sound is beyond the ken of Om; they are all permutations and products of Om. Brahmam too is Om,

identified by It and with It. The Brahman, which is beyond Vision, is manifest for the vision as Atma.

The distinctions of *Viswa*, *Tajasa* and *Prajna* are but appearances imposed on the Atma. That is to say the Atma continues the same, unaffected by the waking, the dreaming and the deep-sleep stages of man's existence. This Atma and the Atma which one refers to as 'I' are both the same. The 'I' or the Atma swims like a fish in the river, paying no regard to this bank or that, though the waters are limited and guided by them. In deep sleep, all the *vasanas* or impulses are suspended and though they still persist, they are not manifest or active. In dream, man follows the impulses and wins satisfaction in the process. All the manifold pulls and attractions of the sensory world, which impel man towards the objects around him, are born during the waking and the dream stages. The mind is full of agitations and these are the fertile fields where the *vasanas* grow, multiply and strike root. As a matter of fact, it is the agitating mind that causes Creation, that is behind all *Srishti* (creation).

There is however a Fourth stage, distinct from these three: it is named *Thuriya*! This stage cannot be described by words or even imagined by the mind, for it is beyond both *Buddhi* and *Manas*. The experience is inadequately described as *Santham*, *Sivam*, *Adwaitam*; that is all. It is Peace. It is Grace. It is Oneness. The mental agitations

are stilled and so there is no more mind. It is the conquest of the mind, its negation, the *Amanaska* stage. What a victory it is! For, in deep sleep the Mind is latent. In dream, the Mind is restless with agitations. In the waking stage, it is active and motivating. In all the three stages, Truth remains unknown. The objective world is but a delusion of the agitated mind, the superimposition on the rope of a non-existent snake. The world is not born, nor does it die. It is born when you are ignorant. It dies when you become wise.

The AUM of the Omkara, representing the Viswa, Taijasa and Prajna aspects of the waking, dreaming and deep sleep stages of existence, have each a particular role in Sadhana. Upasana which A emphasises more, makes one realise all desires. If U is concentrated upon, then Jnana increases and if M is specially dwelt upon in the Upasana, the final merging of the Soul in the Supreme is effected. The Upasaka of Pranava will also earn the knowledge of the Truth of the world and Creation. The Upasaka, therefore, of the Pranava draws unto himself the reverence of all.

The A U and M proceed from one to the other in the Pranava and finally merge in an *Amanthra*, a letterless resonance which thins out into silence. That is the symbol of the Santham, the Sivam and the Adwaitham, the

merging of the individualised soul in the Universal, after the shedding of the limiting particulars of name and form. This is not all. The Karikas 24-29 of this Upanishad praise Pranava as the cause of Creation. It is extolled as quenching all grief. Why? He who ruminates on the Om, ever aware of its significance, can steadily move on to an Awareness of the Real behind all this unreal Appearance, of the *Paramatmathatwa* Itself.

In the first section, the Adwaithic uniqueness of the Atma is established in a general way. In the second, as has been said, the positing of two entities, God and the World, is shown as empty and evanescent. In the section called specifically Adwaitha, the doctrine is established by arguments and affirmations. At first, the world was latent and unmanifest; Brahma is Himself an effect; and so, reflection on the effect will not lead man to the source of all things. The Brahma revealed in this Upanishad is not the Effect. It is the Primal Cause. It is not born, nor limited. It is not broken into all this many.

The Atma is like Akasa or Ether, all-pervasive. It may seem enclosed in certain limits, like a pot or a room and may be spoken of as so individualised. But in that limitation, there is no truth. The body too is like the pot, which limits the sky enclosed in it, for all appearances. There is no innate distinction between the sky in the pot and the sky outside. Take away the limiting factor, and

they are One. When the body is destroyed, the Jivi merges with the Universal or the Paramatman. It is the limitation that appears to qualify the Atma, otherwise it is the Paramatma itself. The Jivi can never be considered a limb or an *avayava*, an adaptation or *Vikara* of the Paramatma.

The birth and death of the Jivi, his wanderings in space and from one Loka to another, are all unreal. It is appearance, not reality. Go deeply into the matter and you will find that Dwaitha is not opposed to Adwaitha. The opposition is between various Dwaithic religions and schools of thought. For the Adwaithin, all is Parabrahman and so he knows no opposition. For the Dwaithin, there is always the atmosphere of attachment and pride and hate. For where there are two there is always fear and attachment and all the consequent passions. Adwaitha is the Highest Truth; Dwaitha is a certain mental attitude. So, dualism can move you only so long as the mind is active. In sleep or in *Samaadhi*, there is no cognition of "Two." When Avidya prevails, difference is rampant. When Vidya is established, Union is experienced. So, there is no opposition or quarrel between Dwaitha and Adwaitha. The rope is the Cause of all the Illusion and Delusion. Brahman is the Cause of all this Illusion and Delusion connoted by the word, World, or Jagath.

It is not correct to say that the Paramatma is born as Jagath, for, how can one's essential quality, the

*Swabhava* be changed? Manifoldness is not the characteristic of Paramatmathatwa. The Sruthis declare this in many contexts. Why, they even condemn those who see It as many. The Witness of all the phases of the mind, of even its annihilation, can never be known by the Mind. That witness alone is eternal, unaffected by Time and Space. That is the *Atmachaitanyam*, the *Sathyam* (real). The rest is all unreal.

Turn the mind away from the sensory world through the practice of discrimination and non-attachment. Then, you attain the *Amanobhava*, the no-mind experience. Well, you have to remember another thing: trying to control the mind without a clear understanding of the nature of the sensory world is a vain valueless effort, the attachment will not end, the agitation will not cease so easily.

They will sprout at the first chance. What has to be done is to develop the inertness of the mind during the deep sleep stage into a stage of permanent ineffectiveness. When the conviction that all sensory experiences are unreal is well and truly stabilised, the mind will no longer function as a distracting agency. It will lie powerless, as a defunct limb. However hungry a man may be, he will not certainly crave for excreta, will he?

To know that the Atma, which is the goal of realisation, is devoid of sleep, birth, name, form

and so on, that It is eternally Self-effulgent, *Nithyaswayamprakasa*, to know this is to transcend all Vikaras or agitations of the Mind. Attempting to curb the mind without the aid of discrimination, or to make known to man the unreality of *Vishaya* objects is like the attempt to empty the ocean by means of a blade of grass, foolish and fruitless. Be firmly fixed in the conviction that the world is a myth and then, you can aspire for *Prasanthi* and *Abhaya*, Peace and Fearlessness.

As the motivating force behind every birth or product, there should be a purpose, either Sath (existence) or Asath (non-existent, unreal) or Sath-asath, isn't it? What exactly is the transformation that happens? The cause or *Karana* undergoes a change or vikara and gets transformed into the *karya* (effect, deed). Well, Sath has no Vikara and so no birth is possible from Sath. Asath is void and nothing can emanate from it. Sath and Asath are inconceivable together. Therefore, logically, nothing can be born or produced. *Karana* cannot become *karya*.

When you remember fire, you do not feel the heat. It is only when you hold it in your hand that you experience the heat. So too, all objects are different from Jnana about them. Knowledge is one thing, actual experience is another. Moreover, the search for the First Cause is an endless adventure. For, even in the complete absence of the snake, one sees it in the rope. It is all a figment of the imagination.

In dreams, with nothing concrete, all the joy and sorrow of manifoldness are undergone. For the machinations and inferences of the mind, no basis or explanation is needed. Irresponsible inferences about the unreal world will pester the mind so long as the illumination of Truth is absent. Clinging delusion is the fate of those who are steeped in Avidya or Ajnana.

This Upanishad has declared in unambiguous terms that the Sath can never be the Cause for the karya viz. Asath. The external world is created by our own chiththa (mind), like smoke emanating from a burning scent-stick. Everything is appearance, an *Adhyasa* (superimposing one thing upon another), an *Abhasa*, something mistaken to be there, but really, non-existent. The atmosphere of Ajnana is the fertile field for their birth and multiplication. Samsara, which has the dual characteristic of evolution, of origin and ruin, is the fruit of this mistake.

Since Paramatma is *Sarvaatmaswarupa* (embodiment of all Atmas), there is no possibility of Cause-Effect or Wish-Fulfilment or Purpose-Product appearing in it. For him who has had the Vision of Atma, all is Atma. The maya-infected seed will sprout into a maya-infected tree. Both are false and fleeting. So too, the birth and death of the Jivi are both false. They are mere words, signifying nothing. The things seen in dreams are not distinct from the dreamer, are they? They may appear as different and as outside the dreamer, but really,

they are part of the dreamer, arising out of his own consciousness. He who is the witness has no beginning or end. He is not bound by duties or obligations, right or wrong. To know this, and to get firm in that knowledge, is to attain liberation from the shackles. It is the quivering of the Chiththa that causes things to originate. *Chiththa-spandana* is the cause of *Uthpaththi*.

## BRIHADARANYAKOPANISHAD

**T**he Brihadaranyakopanishad is affiliated to the Sukla Yajur Veda. It has six sections, of which all except the third and fourth, describe Upasana or Worship associated with Karma or ritualistic Action. The third and the fourth sections deal with the teachings of Yajnavalkya on spiritual Truth imparted to Janaka. The grandeur of the intellectual eminence of that sage is impressively evident in this Upanishad. For aspirants eager to reach the goal of Liberation, this part of the Brihadaranyaka offers the best guide. The sections are therefore referred to as Yajnavalkya Kanda. It is the last of the famous Ten Upanishads. On account of its size, it is named Brihath or Big;. Since it is best studied in the silence of the forest or Aranya, it is an Aranyaka. It instructs in Brahma Jnana and so is classed as an Upanishad.

Scholars have designated the first two sections of this Text as Madhura Kanda, the next two as Muni Kanda and the last two as Khila Kanda. Khila means appendix and hence the name is appropriate. The first section deals with the basic principles, as they are. The second proves their truth by reference to experience. The third shows how to practise the same and get mastery over it. The first section teaches Jnana, essential for spiritual progress; it is related to the paths of Karma and Upasana. It is not mere dry intellectual discipline.

For those eager to earn Jnana, there are four instruments or media for acquiring this wisdom. They are: *Pada*, *Bija*, *Sankhya* and *Rekha*. Pada means the Vedas, and the Smrithis that attempt to explain them. Bija connotes the entire gamut of manthras learnt directly from the Guru. Sankhya is of two kinds, *Vaidika* and *Loukika*. Vaidika-sankhya means the calculations and quantitative analysis of the various manthras. Loukika-sankhya refers to the numbers and their interrelations so far as they are related to the external world and the interrelations of human activities. Rekha too has two such categories, the Vaidika-Rekha being a part of the Upasana activity mentioned in the Vedas and Loukika-Rekha being the part of the Mathematics of the Universe.

The Madhura Kanda describes the *Brahma-thathwa* or the Brahmam Principle in the light of the categories accepted as authoritative by the Scriptures.

Purusha is the Primeval Person, from whom or on whom all this Name-Form manifoldness has emanated. We conceive the horse in the *Aswamedha* (Horse sacrifice) as *Prajapathi* (Lord of Creation) Himself. He is directed to impose on the Horse the characteristics and attributes of *Prajapathi*, so that he might acquire the fruits of that ritual. This portion is known also as *Aswa-Brahmana*. Again, the Fire which is the central figure in the sacrifice is also to be felt and consecrated as *Prajapathi* and there are descriptions attributing the qualities of *Prajapathi* to the *Agni*. So this is called *Agni-Brahmana*.

This *Jagath*, taken as true by the deluded, is just a jumble of Names and Forms devoid of the permanence that *Atma* alone can have. Hence, it breeds disgust and discontent and causes renunciation to grow. The mind is soon free from attachment to the objects of sensory pleasure and it moves along its natural bent to *Brahmam* itself. All sounds are names; *vaak* or voice is the cause for its emergence. *Rupa* or form is the result of vision or sight. It emerges from the eye. *Karma* similarly has the body as its source. The body is just a context for *vaak* and other instruments. Contemplation on such truths helps the process of *Atma vichara* (Inquiry into nature of *Atma*) to start and progress.

The *Prana* or Vital Air, the *Sarira* which is its basis, the *Siras* (head), which is the seat of the instruments of acquiring knowledge, the strength that is derived from food—all these are considered in this *Upanishad*.

As the sweetness of a thousand flowers is collected into honey, this Jagath is a concatenation of the elements. Dharma, Sathya and such abstract principles, men and such concrete living beings, the *Virat-Purusha* and such conceptions—all these again are the effects of the same Brahmathathwa, that is, an immortal changeless Thathwa (principle). The realisation that the Thathwa inheres in every individual is Brahma Jnana.

Janaka, the King of Videha, celebrated a Sacrifice giving away vast wealth in gifts. Many Brahmins attended this Yaga from the Kuru-Panchala territory. The King had a thousand cows decorated with anklets, necklaces and hornlets of gold. He announced that they would be donated to whomever taught him the Brahmam. But such Brahmins, though great scholars in their own line, hesitated to claim the cows, through fear of failure. But Yajnavalkya was so confident that he asked his students to drive the cows to his Ashram! The other Brahmins got enraged at his audacity and started testing his scholarship and experience.

The first to come forward to challenge Yajnavalkya was the family priest of Janaka. The answers that the sage gave to his questions clarify the method of attaining the Atma encased in the pranas, through the conjoint yogas of Karma and Bhakthi. In the Yajna, the Rithwik's voice is Agni, the Kala is Vayu, the Mind of the performer is

Chandra—such is the manner in which one has to grasp the meaning of ritual and free oneself from the limitations of mortality.

The next to accost the sage was Bujyu. His questions were: Is there an Entity called Purusha who is ruled by the senses and who is entangled in this current named Samsara? Or is there no Purusha of this type? If there is one such, what are his characteristics?

Yajnavalkya answered him thus: Your Atma is the Entity you inquired about. Just as a wooden contrivance cannot operate on its own, but must be moved by some outside power or inside force, or just as this arm can move like this only when the will operates on it, so too, unless a superspiritual power presides, the body cannot act nor can the vital airs function as they do. He is the seer of the seeing function of the body. He hears, and not the ear. That *Chethana* or Superconsciousness that sees and hears and feels is but a reflection of the Atma on the mind. That Chethana sees even the Seer; what happens is that the Chethana reflected in the mind moves out through the senses and grasps the external world of the five elements and so it appears as if the Chethana is engaged in activity. Really speaking, it has no activity.

That Chethana is the Atma. It is beyond the reach of the senses, it is above and beyond the subtle and even the causal Sariras. It has been understood by experience

where the Atma is, and what its nature is. It is the same in all. The Atma is to be attained by total renunciation. Attachment to children, riches, wife, etc.—all have to be given up. These originate in *Kama*, Desire. Why, all activities whether ordinary or ritual or worshipful are basically the products of Kama. The desire for the fruit is present in Karma-sadhana also. There is no denying this. And hence they are opposed to true Sanyasa.

Light and darkness cannot be together, at the same place and time. So too, Karma – activity and Atma-jnana cannot be together. Sanyas is *Sarvakriya-parithyaga* (renunciation of all activities); begging for food is a Karma and against Sanyas. The Brahmins of ancient days knew this. They gave up attachment, and through the path of *Nivritti* or withdrawal, realised the Reality. He alone is a Brahmin who has detached himself from all things which are concerned with non-Atmic ends. All other credentials are secondary.

In this Upanishad, the *Sarvantharyamithwa* (all-pervasiveness) of the Atma is described. All this earth becomes habitable through association with water, or it would fall apart like a lump of rice flour. Gargi asked Yajnavalkya on what is the earth based. This question and the answer given inform us that Earth, Water, Akasa, Surya, Chandra, Nakshatra, Deva, Indra, Prajapathi, Brahma Loka—all these, one from the other, were woven

out of the *Paramatmathathwa*, which is the warp and woof, the garment of Creation. Such truths are beyond the reach of the imagination of man. They have to be imbibed from the Sastras by a clarified intellect.

Yajnavalkya refuted the arguments of Gargi for her questions could not be solved by mere intellectual feats. They could be solved only by intuition, earned by the guidance of a Guru. The earth is pervaded and protected by Vayu, or air. The individualised Universal, individualised according to the impressions of experience in previous lives, is associated with the five *Karmendriyas*, five *Jnanendriyas*, the five Pranas, Manas and Buddhi—these seventeen instruments. The concrete body is a vikara or mutation of the Earth. It is pervaded by vayu or ‘air.’ There are forty-nine ‘earth-bits,’ or *angas* which can be identified in the body and like a string that holds pearls together, ‘air’ holds these together as one co-ordinate whole. When the ‘air’ leaves the body for good, the *angas* become distinct and derelict. The body then, becomes a ‘corpse.’ There is however an *Antharyami*, the immanent spirit in the body-complex abode, the mystery that is beyond the reach of that complex, the motivating force of the impulses and intentions of that complex; that *Antharyami* has no death; It is Atma.

Gargi put her second question, after taking due permission from the gathering, for, it is not courteous to

hurl problems without such notice. Her question was: On what does the Inner Core—the Atma—rest in the Past, Present and Future, in this Dual World? The intention of Gargi was to bring about the discomfiture of Yajnavalkya, for he would be forced to admit, “The timeless Entity is beyond words and cannot be described at all”. This also shows that Gargi too was an adept in Brahma Jnana and hence you can infer that in the field of Brahma Vidya, there is no place for distinctions based on sex.

“The *Brahmavids* or masters of Brahmie wisdom declare that the Parabrahma is immanent in the unmanifested Akasa” said Yajnavalkya, thus escaping from the trying situation into which Gargi wanted to drive him. Then, he described the nature of that Indestructible Akshara thus: It has no gross, subtle or such changes. It has no material qualification like colour, smell, shape, etc. There are no measures to comprehend It. Time is but the execution of Its Will. Why elaborate? The Sun and the five elements all carry out Its Will. Gargi then asked the assembled Brahmins to bow before Yajnavalkya and acknowledge his supremacy. That stopped further questionings.

The Atma is Effulgent, as the Sun is, by its very nature. People say that they “see” the Atma or Its effulgence. But there is no seeing It. Since It has no second, nothing is outside It. It is neither seen nor can

It see. It has no organs of sight or smell; nor has it any part, which when co-ordinated can perform any function.

From the lowest joy to the highest Brahmanandam, each step is an increase of the feeling. Words like Paramanandam indicate only stages of *Anandam* (bliss). As a matter of fact, all types of Anandam are derived from the primary basic source of Brahmanandam. Yajnavalkya explained all this to Janaka, for he took great delight in instructing the King on all that he knew.

Like a tree sprouting from a tiny seed the body grows and the seed in the fruit grows into another tree. When the body, like a ripe fruit, falls to the ground, the *vaak* and other Indriyas also follow him. The breath too takes to its own path. The Atma alone is not affected, one way or the other. It remains as ever: unmoved, immovable.

Through sinful deeds, sin; through meritorious deeds, merit—thus *paapa* and *punya* accumulate. They produce the impulses for a new body, as the primary motive force of the Sarira. The Atma leaves the old body, with its vision directed to the new one it occupies, like the caterpillar which fixes its forelegs on a spot, when it lifts up the hind legs. The *Atmajnani*, however, has no impulse towards bodily activities and so the Atma in his case is not bothered by a new body at all. The Jnana Marga is the path of the Brahmaavid, the knower of

Brahmam.

The Karma-enthusiasts are led on to Thapas, the Atmajnani has escaped from Kama or desire and so his mind knows no anguish or agony or yearning, which is the mark of Thapas. He is the *Viswakartha*—the very Artist who has evolved the Viswa or Creation. He who has attained the vision of Brahmanhood has nothing further to attain or realise or guard or seek.

The instruction that Yajnavalkya gives in this Upanishad to Maithreyi, his consort, reveals to us clearly the Atmajnana which comes after a study of the Sastras with *Tarka* (logic) as a constant companion. It also describes the principles of Sanyas, which is the instrument for getting that Jnana. The entire sensory world and the senses too have to be equated with the dream-reality only. There is no use pursuing them, as ultimate and valuable.

The Atma alone has to be loved. All other things are loved for the sake of the Atman. When the Atman is understood, everything else is understood. All effects are subsumed by the Cause. The ocean is the goal of all the waters, so too all tastes find their goal in the tongue. All forms realise themselves in the eye. All sounds are for the ear. All resolutions have the mind as their goal. That is to say, the entire Jagath merges in Brahmam.

In his reply to Bhujyu, Yajnavalkya reveals his knowledge of the process of evolution of the Universe, the *Brahmanda-nirmana*. In his reply to the two questions of Gargi, he reveals and instructs the Swarupa of Brahman, which is *Aparoksha*. In the Sakalyabrahmana, the sage has astounded everyone by his erudition in spiritual mysteries. He earned victory in the Hall of Janaka from the wisest of the land. He sanctified it by his teaching. He met the hard tests of the crooked Bhujyu and the harder tests of the eager inquirer, Gargi, with equal equanimity and skill. He was acclaimed as the crown jewel of scholars. Of course, he himself acknowledged greatness wherever he recognised it. He was generous enough to recognise the greatness of the teachers who were instructing Janaka till then. Lastly he felt that he had no more to learn or earn and so, he became a monk. Realising that Maitreyi, his consort, was also eager to attain Realisation, he instructed her in Brahma Jnana, for in those days, women were considered equally fit to practise the Jnana Marga, which leads to Liberation.

Contemplate on this and reach up to the Thuriya stage of consciousness. Then Nama, Rupa, Vasthu, Bhava, all get merged in the One All-pervasive All-inclusive Atma.

The Upanishad teaches man the essential philosophy, in the briefest terms. It does not refer in the least to Karma or Kindred subjects. It concerns itself purely with the Science of Atmathathwa.

7

## PRASNOPANISHAD

**T**he Prasnopanishad is an appendix of the Atharvana Veda. It is named so, since it is in the form of questions (*Prasna*) and answers. By this means, it discusses more elaborately some topics dealt with briefly in the Mundakopanishad. It has thus become a commentary on the Mundakopanishad.

For example, the Mundaka says that Vidya is of two types: Para and Aparā, and that Aparā Vidya is of two kinds: Karma and Upasana. Of these, the second and third Prasnas in this Upanishad deal with Upasana. Since the discipline of Karma is fully covered in the Karma Kanda it is not elaborated here. When both Karma and Upasana are practised, regardless of the fruits thereof, they promote renunciation and non attachment. This is the conclusion arrived at by the First Prasna. So, if the

Prasnopanishad is studied after the Mundaka, the subject would become clearer.

Of the two entities, *Parabrahma* (God, Universal Oversoul) and *Aparabrahma* (The lower self unrelated to the Oversoul), the *Aparabrahma* is incapable of conferring the *Purusharthas* (goals of life), which are of lasting value. Realising this, and eager to attain the Eternal *Parabrahma*, the aspirants approached the competent Teacher, Pippalada. The word *Anveshamaanaa* (seeking) used here to signify the attitude of the disciple shows that these, attached to the *Aparabrahma*, fail to identify their own basic truth as the Atman. That is why they still “seek” it, somewhere outside the truth of their being! The eternal unique *Parabrahma* principle can be known only through the discipline of the Sastras, directed personally by a Guru or Teacher.

The seekers have to approach the Guru, as a “*Samithpaani*”; that is to say not simply “holding the ritualistic fuel, the sacrificial fire”. It also implies the presentation of worthy desirable offerings. The seekers meet Pippalada and he tells them, “The rare and precious teaching related to the fundamental mystery of the Universe and the Self, known as *Brahma Vidya*, cannot be imparted to the uninitiated. The students have to be first kept under observation and tested for a year.”

When the year was over, Kathyayana asks Pippalada thus: “On account of what reason are beings born?” Those who wish for progeny are the *Prajakamas*; the wish is basically to become oneself the progeny, to perpetuate oneself. Hiranyagarbha who is non-separate from Parabrahma, is the Prajapathi. Hiranyagarbha, as Prajapathi, wishes for progeny. He has traces of Aparavidya attached to Him from past origins that induce in Him the wish.” This is the reply of the Guru.

Surya or the Sun with His Rays illumines all beings in the ten regions. Surya is the very Self of Prajapathi, and hence, all beings—both in the regions so illumined—become the very “self” of Prajapathi. The word “Prana” therefore refers to Adithya Itself, for Adithya (the Sun) gives Prana (the Vital Essence). Since all beings are able to live by consumption of food, etc., the Sun is also known as Viswanara. The whole Universe is of His Nature and so He is also known as Viswarupa. *Samvathsara* or the year, is an indicator of Time, according to the position of the Sun. Time is but a series of days and nights, and these are phases caused by the Sun. The rotation of the Moon causes *Thithis* or stages in fullness. The twin Forces, the Sun and the Moon, are the products of Prajapathi and so, Time, which is marked out by the tropics, the seasons, the months, etc. is also of the same essence. Prajapathi has the Northern and the Southern cycles also.

The contemplation and worship of Prajapathi in this universal aspect is referred to as “Jnana” itself. He, who is endowed with this Jnana and who has mastery over the senses as well as faith in the Vedas, can easily convince himself that he is the very Atman. Pursuing the *Uttaramarga* or the Northern Path, he reaches the spiritual stage known as *Surya Loka*. That Loka is the refuge of all living beings. Only those who worshipfully engage themselves in their daily duties, without any desire for the fruits thereof, can enter that Loka.

The seasons like *Vasantha* or Spring are the Feet of the Sun, the symbol of Time. The twelve months are His Personal Traits. He is the Cause of the worlds—these are truths expressed in the fourth and sixth mantras. The rains too are caused by the Sun. So, He is the master of another Loka too, the third, the *Dyu Loka*.

Akasa, Vayu, Agni, Jala, Bhumi—the elements which compose the body have their presiding deities. The “activating” senses like speech and the “knowing” senses like the eye have also their deities which reside in them and promote their functions. The mind and the intellect too have their deities. They are all pillars which support the Being and prevent the structure of the body from falling asunder.

The body is a complex produced by a combination of the five elements. The Jnanendriyas are the

consequences of this combination. So the body is a bundle of consequences and causes. Like the spokes of the wheel, they are fixed in the hub of Prana. So too, the Riks, the Yajur Vedic manthras, the Sama Vedic manthras, the Yajnas where they are employed, the *Kshathra* which protects the people from danger, the Brahmanic Force consecrating the Yajnas—all these are of the nature of Prana. When Prajapathi becomes the Cloud and pours rain, all beings rejoice and are enabled to live. “All things that contribute to happiness are bound to You; cherish us therefore as the Mother. You cause all wealth and welfare, related to spiritual and physical protection. Give us that wealth and that wisdom.” The Rig, Yajus, Sama manthras are the Brahmanic wealth. Riches are the Kshatriya wealth. Thus, the Upanishad elaborates on the Prana, as Prajapathi and its functions and attributes.

Thereafter, Pippalada takes up the question of Bhargava, and, later, Kosalya, the Aswalayana, asks him about Prana. Then, Pippalada says, “My dear boy, like the shadow caused by a person, the Prana is produced by the Atma. The Prana dedicates itself to the Atma through the *sankalpa* (resolve) of the *Manas* (mind). Like a ruler who arranges for the governance of his possessions, the Chief Prana appoints different Pranas, assigning functions and areas of work for each. The Mukhya Prana or the Chief has Adithya and other Gods

as its Impelling Force. Like sparks leaping out of the flames of a raging fire, beings emanate from the Imperishable Paramatma. They lose themselves in the selfsame Fire.” This is mentioned in the Mundaka, (II-1-1).

Then, Pippalada answered Gargi thus: “The rays of the setting sun merge in the Sun itself. They emanate and spread again, when the sun rises the next day. In the same manner, during dream, the sensory world gets merged in the consciousness-reflecting Mind and when one wakes from sleep, the sensory impressions emanate as of old and move out in their native form. That is why the Self or Purusha does not hear or see or touch or enjoy. He does not walk or talk.

The Atma, which is Pure Effulgence during the dream Stage, sees, hears and experiences, as Vasanas, whatever it sees, hears and experiences during the waking stage. When the statement is made that “The Atma is the base of everything,” the impression is created that everything is different from It. But the distinction that is apparent between the “Base of All,” and the “Jivas” that rest upon It is merely an illusion caused by circumstances. It is mental, not fundamental. Pippalada also said that whatever Loka is connoted by the deity worshipped through Pranava, that Loka will be attained.

Next, Sukesha, the son of Bharadwaja questioned the master, and his answer ran thus: “The Purusha you inquire about is in this body itself, as the resident of the Inner Sky, the Heart. It is on account of His being there, that you are shining forth in full splendour of attainment and personality. They emanate from Him and merge in Him. Like milestones, progressively increasing and interdependent, the Earth, *Durga*, Food and Purusha—all four Principles originate from the other (according to the second section of the *Thaithiriya*). The origin might not be evident to the eye but, since the origin of the *Jnanendriyas* and the *Karmendriyas* has been described already, the origin of the Purusha is as good as said. All rivers join the sea and lose therein their Names and Forms. The rivers are thereafter called the “sea.” So too, only the Purusha remains. He is without any attainment and traits or changes. He is imperishable, endless. That is all I know about Brahman and that is all there is to know,” said Pippalada to Kadandhi and other disciples.

This Upanishad ends with the respectful homage paid by the disciple to the master. The father gives but the body. Pippalada gave them the *Brahma-sarira* by teaching them the *Atmathatwa*. The six disciples, Kadandhi, Vaidarbhi, Kosalya, Souryayani, Sathyakama and Sukesha finally ask six questions in all. These questions

and answers bring out the implications of the Mundaka and serve as a nice commentary on the succinct text.

The six questions are:

1. What exactly is Para and Apara?
2. Who protects and guards created beings?
3. How does Hiranyagarbha emerge from Paramatma?
4. How does Creation take place from Paramatma?
5. How does the Chaithanya-full principle, the Prana, enter the body and get diverted into five channels?
6. Which are the senses that operate in the three stages—the waking, dreaming and sleeping?

These are the lines of inquiry that are followed in this Upanishad.

## KENOPANISHAD

**T**he Kenopanishad is ascribed to Sama Veda and its Thalavakara branch and hence it is also referred to as the Thalavakaropanishad. The name Kena is derived from the first word of the stanza of the first section of the Upanishad: *“Keneshitham pathathi preshitham manah, Kena praanah prathamah praithityuktah, keneshithaam vacham imam vadanthi, chakshuhsrothram kaudevo yunakthi?”* “Who impels the mind to alight on its object? Enjoined by whom does the vital force proceed to function? At whose behest do men utter speech? What intelligence, indeed, directs the eyes and the ears?”

The ear, skin, eye, tongue, nose—these five senses are able to cognise sound, touch, form, taste and smell respectively. Objects of knowledge are cognised through these five only. The world is experienced through these

instruments, which stand intermediate between the knower and the knowable. The inner capacity to understand objects is named mind, or Manas. The Manas moves out through the Jnanendriyas aforesaid and attaches itself to objects and at that time, by that very occurrence, the manas assumes the form of that object. This is called a *vritti* or function. The manas is *achethana* and so, its transformations and manipulations or vikaaras are also achethana, non-intelligent, non-vital. A wooden doll has only the property of wood. A sugar doll has just the property of sugar. The A-chethana manas cannot achieve the knowledge of Chethana or of the Supreme Intelligence that pervades the Universe.

Just as the unintelligent chariot is directed by a charioteer, there must be a Charioteer who directs the unintelligent Manas, seated in it and having it as His vehicle. The Motive Force that activates the Inner Instruments, the Senses of Action, the Senses of Knowledge, the Five Pranas, that Force is God. The question quoted above implies that this Force is distinct from the Senses. Naturally, therefore, the Motivator of the entire group of senses must be distinct from the Manas too, is it not? Those who seek to know the Eternal, convinced that all acts and activities are ephemeral, will not worry about the Eternal.

That Eternal Entity is agitationless and so it is not moved by the Threefold urge. It does not order the senses

about for this purpose or that. Then the question arises: “Do the Manas, the Prana, the Vaak, the Eye, the Ear, etc., carry out their respective functions, prompted by the Law of Cause and Effect? Or do they act so, moved by the wish of a conscious force?” That is the doubt.

The ear has the capacity to know sound, the eye is endowed with the skill to know and distinguish form. The other senses are also similarly equipped. When the manas passes out through the knowing-senses towards objects and envelopes them, you acquire knowledge about them. The five senses and the manas are all, therefore, instruments of knowledge. How could they manage to perform this intelligent function, being themselves devoid of intelligence?

Well, the answer is: Due to the presence of the Atma, due to the reflection of the effulgence of the Atma on the Antahkarana. The Sun illumines the world and makes it active in a thousand ways. So too the Atma, by its *Thejas* (effulgence), activates and illumines the World. All instruments of knowledge are activated by the Atma. The current of electricity energises the machines and does various operations—printing, etc.—but it is not visible or concrete. The electric current is the Mover of the movement, the Machine of the Machine. So too, the Atmic *Tejas* (splendour) is the Ear of the ear, the Eye of the eye. That is the activating current.

The wonder is: the Atma is inactive and without qualifications. It does not get anything done with the manas or the senses, remember. They get activated by the very presence of the Atma! The rays of the Sun are not aware at all of the activity they invoke. The Atma is not responsible for the activity of the senses. (This teaching was given by Varuna to his son, Bhrigu).

The eye, when illumined by the splendour of the Atma, is able to grasp form, which is its sphere. It can never hope to illumine the Atma, which is self-luminous. The lamp illumines objects; but the objects cannot, in their turn, illumine the lamp. The Vaak can describe or denote only such as possess qualifications, like name, form, *guna* (quality), *kriya* (action, deed), etc. How can it describe or define that which has no qualifications, no name, no form, no characteristic—viz. the Paramatma? You cannot describe sweetness or similar tastes by means of words. The Atma is not a subject for description. The non-intelligent Manas cannot experience the Intelligence. There is no knower who can know the Knower at all. He is beyond all knowable things. When known, He is no longer Knower or Knowledge.

Brahmam is Jnanam itself: so, it can never be “known” by a “knower”. By the process of knowing, other things can be known, not Knowledge itself. The lamp will not crave for another lamp to see itself nor will

it crave for its own light. It has light, it is light—that is all. It sheds light on other objects. It does not shed light on its light. So too you are Light, you are Atma. The Atma in you is of the same nature as the Atma in all beings. It is the only one Reality. It has no limitation or attribute or qualification.

The Atma can be cognised by the study of the Sastras and by following the injunctions laid down there. That which cannot be illumined by words or speech or by the senses, that which illumine the word and speech and all the senses—that is Brahman, or Atma. The first Kanda of this Upanishad makes clear that Brahman is incapable of being limited or discarded or overlooked.

So, for those who claim that they have seen Brahman, “It” is yet a subject for further investigation and inquiry. They have not reached the final stage. For, theirs is not authentic Jnana. Theirs is but a delusion. The Atma of the person who knows, is itself the very Brahman. That is the undoubted verdict of Vedantha, is it not? Fire cannot burn itself. How can Atma know Atma, how can the knower know Himself? Therefore, the statement, I have known Brahman, is an indication of delusion, not of real knowledge.

It is said that Brahman has various cognisable and countable forms; but, that is only in the limited sense of being qualified by Name and Form. By Itself, the Absolute

has not got sound or smell or taste or touch or form. It is ever-existing. In whatever activity you become aware of its presence, that activity lends its appropriate characteristic. In whichever sphere the Sastras discuss and decide, that sphere becomes for the particular Sastras, the characteristic of Brahman. The Consciousness which becomes apparent when it is limited by certain bounds or vessels—that *Chaithanya* is Brahman. *Chaithanya* is attachmentless; but yet, when associated with objects like the physical body, It gives the impression that It is attached. From the fact that when the waters of the lake are agitated the image of the Sun under the water shakes, you cannot infer that the Sun in the sky, which is remote and afar, also shakes! The Sun and the sheet of water are unrelated. No relationship can be posited between these two. Similarly when the body undergoes growth, decay, destruction, etc., it gives the impression that the Atma too is so affected; but, the Atma is unaffected. Brahman is beyond the reach of the intellectual seeker. It can be reached only by those who give up the intellect as a useless instrument. Experience alone is the method of approach, the proof, the result. The ultimate state of Brahma Jnana is the end of all enquiry, all search. Actual Realisation, *Sakshathkara* is the fruition thereof. This highest stage is reached in Samadhi, the quietening of all agitations in all levels of consciousness, though of course, the preliminary steps of *Sravana*, *Manana* and

*Nididhyasana* are concerned with Buddhi or the Intellect. One will acquire the *Sathya Swarupa* if he understands the nature of the Atma. If he does not, then, it is a big loss, no doubt. The Jnani recognises in every being and every object the Principle of the all-pervading Atma and when he leaves the world, he becomes free from birth and death.

*Brahma Jnaana* (knowledge of the absolute) is the heritage of man. He is entitled to it. If he is aware of this and if by his efforts, he achieves the Jnana or Brahman, adopting the above-mentioned methods, then verily, his career in this world is worthwhile. Otherwise, it is all a waste. The Atma, when cognised in the Consciousness, flashes like a streak of lightning. In a second it will reveal its brilliance and splendour. It is impossible to grasp its full majesty. Manas is the cloak of the Atma. It conditions the Atma, or rather appears to. So, it seems to be very close to the Atma, and makes you believe that it attains It. It is incapable of doing so. Since it is closest, the Sadhaka imagines that his mind has realised the Atma and yearns for the experience again and again. This, of course, is good, for it fosters the search for the merger with Brahman.

For the Brahmajnani, the opposites of Dharma and Adharma, of Merit and Demerit, are non-existent. Dharmic life offers the Upper Lokas after death and Adharmic life leads one to the Lower Lokas. But both

are shackles for the aspiring Sadhaka whose eye is on the removal of ignorance and realisation of Truth. He has to seek to snap the strings that bind the heart to the objective world. So, he wants an answer to the question with which this Upanishad starts: By which does the mind grasp things, etc.? To attain the Jnana of Brahman, Thapas, Self-control, Vedic Rites, Image Worship, are all good helps. Jnana has Sathya as its location.

This Upanishad gives all seekers the Upadesa of Brahma Jnana; it deals with Brahman, which is Sathya, *Jnanam* (Highest wisdom) and *Anantham* (without end).

## CHANDOGYA UPANISHAD

**T**his Upanishad is incorporated in the Sama Veda. It has eight sections, the first five dealing with various Upasanas or Forms of approaching the Ideal and the last three explaining the manner of acquisition of true Knowledge. Purity of the Consciousness is the essential prerequisite for Upasana. Single-minded concentration is essential for Knowledge of Brahman. These can be got by Karma and Upasana. Thus is Brahma Jnana won. That is the reason why in the Sastras, Karma is first described and Upasana next and Jnanam last.

In the First Chapter of the Chandogya, the Upasanas which form part of the Sama Veda are detailed. In the Second, the entire ritual of Sama is described. In the Third, the Upasana of Surya known as Madhuvidya, the Gayatri Upasana, and the Sandilya Vidya are all given. In

the Fourth, the Samvarga Vidya, and the sixteen-phased Brahma Vidya are taught. In the Fifth, the three Vidyas, Prana, *Panchagni* and *Vaiswanara* are elaborated.

Uddalaka taught his son, Swethakethu, the knowledge which if known, all things can be known. The knowledge of mud and of gold will give the knowledge of all pots and pans, as well as of all bracelets and necklaces. The mud and the gold are the truth. Their modifications and transformations are temporary, mere name-forms. So too, the world, like the pot and the bracelet, is just an effect, the cause being “Sath.” Sath means “Is-ness” is common to all objects; the pot “is”, the “bracelet” “is”. “Is-ness” becomes manifest through association with the pots and pans, the bracelets and necklaces. The “is-ness” may not be apparent to gross intelligences, for, it needs subtlety to realise it. The rosy colour which is manifested in the rose “is,” even in the absence of the flower.

Similarly, the “is-ness” that is the Universal character of all objects persists even in the absence of objects. Prior to creation, there was only just this “is-ness.” There was no void then. There was this “is-ness” everywhere! When the “is” was reflected in Maya or Primal Activity, it resulted in Easwara who partook of that activity to manifest as the Universe with the three elements of Fire, Earth and Wind. All creation is but the permutation and combination of these three.

The line of Uddalaka is steeped in the study of the Vedas, and so it is famed as a noble high-born family. But Swethakethu, the son, was wasting precious years after *Upanayana* (rite of leading pupil to preceptor), in idleness, without using them for Vedic Study. This caused concern for Uddalaka, for he who neglects the study of the Vedas, being born as a Brahmin, does not deserve that appellation. He can only be called *Brahmanabandhu*, one who has Brahmins as his relatives! So, Uddalaka took him to task and forced him to go to a teacher. There, by the exercise of his superior intelligence, he mastered, before he turned twenty-four, the Four Vedas with their meanings. He returned, proud and pompous, swelling with egoism, declaring that there was no one to equal him in scholarship and righteousness.

In order to prick his pride, Uddalaka asked him one day, “You have become haughty that you have no equal in learning and virtue. Well, did you seek from your teacher the message that reveals the Absolute, the lesson that only the practice of the Sastras can impart, the message which when heard makes you hear all things that are heard, which when imagined makes you imagine all things imagined? Did you learn that? That message would have shown you the Atma which is the fulfilment of all Study and Scholarship.”

The Atma is the base of individuals like Swethakethu. The pure Consciousness becomes

apparently limited into a variety of individuals. In deep sleep, the variety disappears and each individual lapses back into this “is-ness.” Then, all the manifold activities, and experiences, like, “I am Ranga”, “I am Ganga”, “I am father”, “I am son”, etc., are destroyed. The sweetness and fragrance of many flowers are collected and fused into one uniformly sweet honey, where all the manifold individualities are destroyed. The names Ganga, Krishna, Indus are all lost when they enter the sea.

They are thereafter called “the sea.” The Jivi who is eternal and immortal is born again and again, as a transitory mortal. He continues to accumulate activity, prompted by inherited impulses and the activity produces consequences which he must shoulder and suffer. It is the body that decays and dies, not the Jivi or the Individualised Soul. The banyan seed will sprout even if it is trampled upon. The salt placed in water, though not available to the grasp, is recognisable by the taste!

The Jivi, befogged by Ajnana, is unable to recognise his Reality. Discrimination will reveal the truth. A millionaire is kidnapped and left alone in the jungle, but he discovers the way out and comes back into his home. So also, the Jivi is restored to his millions! Once the Jivi reaches its real status, it is free from all the change and chance that is involved in Samsara, or the flow of time and space, of name and form. If he does not reach that

status, then, like the happy sleeper who wakes into the confusion of the day, he will be born into the world of decay and death.

Brahmam is described as *Ekam Eva Adwithiyam*; all this visible world is denoted as *Thathswarupa* or the Form of Brahmam. It can be realised by *Sagunopasana*, or worship of the limited qualified Divinity, just as Sathyakama and others did. The path of Brahmopasana is called the Sushumna Marga also. The Omnipresent Brahmam can be enclosed and discovered in the firmament of the heart! It is the capital of that Raja. Since He is seated there, the heart is called Brahmavesma, or the House of Brahmam. That firmament cannot, of course, limit or set boundaries to the illimitable Brahmam!

Yogis who are turned away from the objective world can attain the Parabrahmam, with Its splendour of realised knowledge, in the pure clear sky of their hearts. The worlds are fixed as the spokes of the wheel in the hub of Brahmam. Decline, decay and death do not affect It. Since that Supreme Entity can achieve whatever It decides on, It is called *Sathyakaama* and *Sathyasankalpa*. Now, what exactly is the Parabrahmam? We can know it by a single test. That which remains, after everything is negated as 'Not this', 'Not that'—that is Brahmam.

This is the Truth that all aspirants seek. Attaining It, they get the status of emperors and can travel wherever

they like. The Jnani who is established in the pure Reality sees all desires that dawn in his heart as expressions of that Truth only.

The Atma transcends all the worlds. It is uncontaminated. He who is aware of only the Atma is ever in Bliss. The *Brahmacharya* stage is an important step for attaining Atmic Wisdom. *Yajnas* (sacrifices), fasts and other vows are also equally helpful. The solar energy surges through the countless nerves of the body. The senses merge in the mind, at the moment of death; the Jivi who has realised that it was all this, while limited by the mind, then escapes into the *Hridayakasa* through the nerves. At last, on the point of death, the Jivi moves out of the *Sushumna* into the solar rays and from thence to the Surya Loka itself. The journey does not end there. It reaches out into Brahma Loka too.

But the Jivi who is caught in the mire of Ajnana, who is identified with the mind and its vagaries, escapes through the ear or eye or other senses and falls into Lokas, where Karma rules. The feeling of content and joy one gets in deep sleep is the result of Ajnana persisting in the individual.

The Chiththa is the source and support of Resolution. All resolutions, decisions and plans are the products of the Chiththa. They are of its form. They originate there. They are registered there. That is why when death overtakes a scholar of all Sastras, he becomes

but the equal of ordinary men and his fate is the same as that of the Ajnani. The Chiththa has to be saturated with Brahmic endeavour. Then only will it be an instrument of Liberation, freed from the shackles of Sankalpa. The mind etc., cannot free itself, as the Chiththa can. The Chiththa discriminates between resolutions. It tests them as duty and not-duty, and justifies with proper reasons the classification it has made. Once this selection is made, the word utters it, the name signifies it. The special sound-forms or manthras incorporate the resolutions, accepted as duty, by the purified Chiththa; the rites become one with the manthras. There can be no proper Karma without Chiththa.

Next, about Dhyana, which is even superior to Chiththa. Dhyana is the fixing of the Buddhi on the Divine, when it transcends such inferior helps as images, idols or saligrams. In Dhyana, all agitations cease, all modifications are unnoticed. On account of the effect of the *Thamo Guna*, and even of the *Rajo Guna*, all created things like the waters, the hills and mountains, the stars and planets, men with the spark of the Divine in them, all are agitation-bound, change-bound.

*Vijnana* is better than Dhyana. Jnana based on scholarship steeped in the Sastras is referred to as Vijnana. It is attained by Dhyana and, hence, it is more valuable than Dhyana.

Superior to Vijnana is Balam—Strength, Fortitude, Vigour. It illumines the objective world, it sharpens the *Prathibha* or Intuition. Prathibha is the power by which you can sense the Consciousness in all knowledge objects. Now there is one thing superior even to Prathibha: *Annam*, Food, Sustenance. It is the support of life. Deprived of it for ten days, man becomes powerless to grasp anything. It is life that makes possible study, service of the teacher, listening to his teaching, cogitation over what he has taught, and the earning of Thejas.

Thejas or Illumination is higher than Intuition, Prathibha or food. Thejas is fire, heat and light. Thejas creates water and water produces food. Thejas can make even wind lighter. It shines as lightning and sounds as thunder.

Akasa is superior to Thejas, remember. It is through Akasa that sounds are transmitted and heard. Love and play are products of Akasa. Seeds sprout on account of Akasa.

Now, consider this. *Smarana*, memory, is superior to Akasa. Without it, all experience is meaningless, all knowledge is a waste, all effort is purposeless. Nothing can be experienced without the help of memory. Objects like the Akasa will be unrecognised in its absence. It can be said that memory creates the Akasa and other objects.

Thus analysing the value and relative importance of objects and powers, man must give up identification of self with the physical body and recognise his real Reality. Such a man rises to the height of an *Uttamapurusha*, the noblest of men, laughing, playing and moving without regard to the needs or comforts of the body. The body-bound man is caught in Samsara. For the one who is free from that bondage, *Swaswarupa* (One's reality) is the field of activity. The wind, the lightning and the thunder have no permanent existence. When the rainy season comes on, they appear in the sky and get merged in it. So too the particularised Jivi appears as separate for a time against the background of Brahman and gets merged in It, at last.

This Ashtaadhyayi Upanishad teaches the series of evolved objects from Hiranyagarbha, Kasyapaprajapathi, Manu and Manushya. This lineage and the lessons to ennoble it are vital for mankind. It has to be learned by sons and students from father and teachers.

## AITHAREYOPANISHAD

**T**his Upanishad is incorporated in the Rig Veda. It shines bejewelled by six chapters which describe the absolute Atmic Principle. It is therefore famous as the Atmashataka, or the Atmic Six. The Vision of the Atma which results from the destruction of delusion and ignorance is made possible for the aspirant by this Upanishad. The term is used in two ways: *Vyavahara* and *Visishta*. Used in the *Vyavahara* sense it indicates the Jivi. In every Jivi, the Atma expresses itself through the senses of perception or the jnanendriyas into the outer world. The word is derived from the root *Ath*—which indicates “expansion, consumption, movement,” among other things. So, the word Atma denotes universal immanence, universal assimilation and perpetual movement. That is to say, it connotes the Brahman itself.

In the waking stage, it enjoys all the experiences. In the dream stage, all the senses of perception and action hold back their activities, but it creates its own forms and names on the basis of experiences and impressions collected from the outer world. In the “deep sleep” stage, it becomes immanent everywhere and assumes its basic role of pure bliss, unaware of anything outside or inside. The meaning of the world is in conformity with the experience of the three stages. On account of the apparent limitation in time, space and condition, the Atma too is taken to be conditioned and limited; but that is not its real nature. It is endless, beginningless, changeless. It knows all, can achieve all. It has no attributes. It is eternal, unsullied, conscious, free. It has no second. It is unique, whole, without parts.

The external world is cognised through direct perception, etc. So, all that is capable of being pointed out as this or that, or of being indicated by a name or a form is subsumed by the idea of “Creation,” Srishti. Creation means an act, a result. What then was before that act? “*Idam agre, Atma eva aaseeth*”—“Before this, the Atma alone was”. The Jagath or World is a product which was latent; later it becomes patent. In the latent stage, it was unmanifest in the Atman itself. When the urge to manifest has appeared, the multiplicity of names blossomed forth and all this variety arose to view. Being perceptible by the senses—this is the test of manifestation.

Name is fundamentally sound, manifesting as word. In the statement, this is Ranga, when the sound Ranga is produced, the listener turns to the person indicated before him and identifies him as Ranga. The word and its meaning are inseparable. They two were both non-existent before Creation. Therefore, the Atma and the unmanifested Jagath were unreachable by the Intelligence, and the world which it fashions. After Creation, since Name and Form became the essence of all this, everything can be grasped by words and meaning. The Non-dual which was and is and will be, is the Atma. The multiple manifestation of variety proliferating in name and form, is Jagath. But basically, it is just one Unique Vasthu, or Substance.

The one uniform Ocean appears as foam, bubble, wave and wavelet. So too, Creation made manifest the apparent manifoldness from the changeless One. Manifoldness is due to myopia, ignorance. There is no need to posit a second entity, other than the Atma. The ignorance or myopia or Maya is but a product of the will of the Atma. It is not distinct from the Atma. Strength is not distinct from the strong person, is it not? The Atma is devoid of distinctions from the same kind or from different species or from one's own characteristic. It is categorically declared as *Ekah eva*: One Only.

But, it does not become clear so soon that all this is one. The idea is just like the rope appearing as the

snake, or the mirage deluding. The Atma too is misleading us as Jagath. It is all a magician's tricks, manipulated by the wish of the Absolute. The rope is the prime cause for the illusion of the snake on the rope. The Atma is beyond the reach of the senses. It has no limbs or body. Only the explanation that it is all an unreal illusion can satisfy the critic who questions how the Jagath can emanate from the Atma, which is pure Consciousness only.

Everything is Atma, even Maya, which is the delusion of variety. It is so strong that it causes the execution of deeds through instruments like the sensory organs. You then declare that it is our will and power that did that deed, though it is the delusion that was manifested by Atma that accomplished it.

The world thus created is devoid of Consciousness and so, it has to be fostered like a yantra. How can a machine operate after its manufacture and even installation, without a mechanic or machinist? He created the *Viratpurusha* (Cosmic person), from out of the five elements. He also endowed him with head and limbs. Like the figure of clay made by the potter from earth dug up by him, the *Viratpurusha* was produced from the elements. From the limbs of that *Purusha*, the *Lokapalas* were created. Then, each sense was separated and

equipped with an appropriate deity. In front, the face and the mouth, with Agni as the deity of the Vaak or speech which is the function of the mouth, the nose, the eyes. In this manner, the senses and their respective deities were created and assigned.

These deities bless the senses and see that they function properly. The external appearance of the eye, the nose and the ear may be quite right but yet without the help of the presiding deity, they may not function at all. The cow and the horse were created from the waters and offered to the gods. But they were yet discontented; so, to answer their prayers, the Purusha was created similar to the Viratpurusha. Since that Purusha was associated with discrimination or Viveka, the gods were delighted. All bodies other than human are merely instruments for the experiencing of the fruits of action. The human is the only instrument for liberation.

The Lord after entering the body becomes the ruler of the conjunction of the senses and the mind with the objective world. Like an actor, He contacts the outer world and experiences all the lessons of the previous births. In the Presence of the Lord, danseuse Buddhi dances her steps keeping to the timing of the senses, moving from one object to another.

Thus, the Lord illumines everything through the form of the Jivi. The Paramatma, who is limited as Jivatma has three areas of recreation: the eye, the throat and the heart. The eyes shine with a special splendour when the realisation of Brahman is achieved or even attempted. This is an evident fact. When the Jivi has earned the knowledge of its reality, it may not be able to describe how all is nothing besides Atma; but it will achieve the knowledge that Brahman itself is appearing as all this. He who delves deep into the unity of the Jiva and the Brahman has certainly discovered the goal of Life. There is no doubt of that.

The stages of wakefulness, dream and deep sleep are unrelated to the Atma. They are concerned only with the physical sensory causes and effects. Every human being has two bodies. One's own and that of the progeny. The duties of study, teaching, japam and these assigned tasks are handed down by the father to the son at the time of his death and they are carried on by him as the representative of the father and on his behalf. Then the father leaves this body, assumes another, more in conformity with the actions and tendencies cultivated and established in this birth. That is the third birth of the father. The first three mantras speak about the two births, the

physical and the spiritual. Now, a third one is added; the continuation by the son.

Vamadeva Rishi understood the Atmaswarupa in this form and became liberated from all the constant flux of the objective world.

## TAITTIRIYOPANISHAD

**B**rahma Vidya is the specific theme of this Upanishad. It has three sections: Siksha Valli, Ananda Valli or Brahma Valli, and Bhrigu Valli. The latter two sections are very important for those seeking Brahma Jnana. In the Siksha Valli, certain methods to overcome the obstacles placed in men's way by *Devas* and Rishis and to acquire one-pointedness in mental exertions are detailed. This Valli has twelve *Anuvakas*, or Sections. In the other two Vallis, the same Instruction, the *Vaaruni Vidya*, is given, which leads to Liberation and so they are practically the same; for convenience of study, it is dealt with in two Sections, that is all.

In the Siksha Valli, subjects like *Samhitha* which are not antagonistic to Karma, and like Upasana which are associated with Karma are dealt with. These lead to

*Swarajya* (Self rule). But, by just these, the complete destruction of Samsara or flux will not be accomplished. Upasana exists along with desire. So, like Karma, even Upasana cannot bring about Liberation. All this flux, this Samsara, is due to Ajnana. Bondage is the result. So, when the Ajnana is destroyed, then the bonds loosen and Liberation is attained. Ajnana is there, persisting, through natural causes. It is just like the delusion that it is your train that is moving, when the truth is your train is stationary and the train on the adjacent rails is moving! Watch your train only and you know the truth. Watch the other train, and you are deceived. There is no use seeking to know the cause of this delusion. Seek how to escape from it. This Ajnana, which is the seed out of which Samsara sprouts, can be destroyed only by Brahma Jnana. There is no other method.

All that is caused, everything that is a result, is short-lived. This is evident from the Sastras as well as experience and reason. The Sastras speak of aspirants who discarded even higher regions like Heaven, which are attainable by persons who perform the prescribed rites; for, Liberation is beyond the reach of those who dwell therein. Heaven and Hell are results of actions. They are created objects, and so they cannot be eternal. They are conditioned by birth, growth, decay and death. They do not exist from the very beginning. They were made. Before that act, they were not. That which once was not and later will not be is as good as “not” even in

the present. The fruit of Karma shares this quality and so, it cannot grant eternal joy.

No effort can result in the creation of Akasa now. Nothing can produce anew what already exists. Moksha exists and is there self-evident. It cannot be produced anew by any Karma. The moment the Ajnana which hides it from experience disappears, that moment you are liberated and you know your Reality. You are free from bondage. Prior to that moment, you were free, but you imagined you were bound and you behaved as if you were bound. How then are you to get rid of this idea that you are bound? By listening to the teachings of the Vedas with faith therein. Then only can Ajnana perish. That is the task which the Brahma Valli has placed before itself, in this Upanishad.

It is in the nature of things that ignorance prompts men to crave for plentiful fruits through the performance of actions. Then they become despondent that they only bind them more and do not help to make them free. That craving for fruit, is hard to shove off, though this fearful flux of growth and decay makes them shiver in dread.

In this Upanishad, the three words, Sathyam, Jnanam, Anantham—are meaningfully affixed to Brahman, to explain its characteristics. They are three distinct words, signifying qualities, seeking to mark out the One from the rest, the One Brahman from other types

of Brahman which have not these traits. That is to say, Brahman is not to be confused with anything that is not Sathyam, Jnanam and Anantham. All that are limited by time, space and objectivity are *jada* (inert), material apparently different from Brahman. The characteristics of Sathyam, Jnanam, Anantham, help to differentiate and distinguish from kindred and similar phenomena the real Brahman. Whichever rupa a thing is determined to have, if that rupa is unchanged, then it is referred to as Sathyam. If that rupa undergoes change, then it is Asathyam. Modification is the sign of untruth. Absence of modification is the sign of Truth.

Brahman is Sathyam, that is to say, it has no modifications. It is *nithyam*, it is unaffected by time. All that is not Brahman—that is, Jagath, is subject to change. All objects are subject to the triple process of the intellect: known, the knower and knowledge. Hence, the intellect or Buddhi is spoken of as a *guha* or cave, where the threefold process resides.

In the Taittiriya Brahmana as well as in this Upanishad, Dharma too is treated elaborately. It has three forms: Kamya, Naimittika, and Nithya. The Sastras seldom command that Karma has to be pursued. There is no need to do so for Karma comes naturally to man. Kama (desire) is the prompter of such Karma and man gets various fruits thereby. The Sastras teach only the

ways of directing this natural activity to ensure desirable objects.

The Upanishad exhorts you not to swerve from duties of learning and teaching. “Swerve not from the true and the truth”, it says. “From the true, it will not do to swerve, nor from Dharma, nor from welfare and well-being, nor from duties to Devas and *Pitris*. Treat thy mother as God. What works are free from fault, they should be resorted to, not others....” This is what the Upanishad teaches.

Listening, rumination and concentration are the three steps in Realisation. Listening refers to Vedas, which have to be revered in faith and learnt by heart from a Guru. This confers the knowledge of the Unknowable. Manana or rumination is the Tapas taught in the Bhriguvalli. By this process, the Brahma Atmaswarupa can be fixed in the mind. Concentration helps the development of single-minded attention on the Principle so installed. In the two Vallis, Brahma and Bhrigu, Brahma Vidya or the discipline which ensures the Realisation of Brahmam is expounded. The Brahmavalli teaches. The Bhriguvalli proves by experience.

Bhrigu, the son of Varuna, tells him that Brahmam is food, Prana, the senses, Manas, Vaak, etc. But since the son soon learns that these are not Brahmam he declares that Brahmam is that from which these are born and by

which they live and function. He first believed that Annam or food is Brahman since all beings exist on food, but later he feels that Brahman is much more inclusive. He asks for direct teaching of the Real, the Brahman.

Thereafter, he was told that Thapas is Brahman, for it is that by which Brahman the Reality is known. He discovered by Thapas that Vijnana is Brahman, for Vijnana is that in which creatures are born and it is that by which creatures live.

Thus it is announced that, of all disciplines and subjects of study, the Brahma Vidya is the most sacred, holy and esoteric. Annam is not to be decried. That should be the vow of the Wise. The vital airs are all Annam. The physical body is the gift of Annam. The Prana or vital airs have the body as the vehicle. So, Annam should not be slighted. That should be the resolution. The waters in conjunction with the fire in the stomach become food. In the water that comes down as rain the “fire” of lightning is inherent. So, whoever is established in the *Aapojyothi* or the Splendour of water is aware of the Splendour of Annam and is persuaded to revere it. Annam is the Guru, for it leads you on to the knowledge of Brahman. It should not therefore be treated with disrespect. That must be observed just like a vow by the aspirant.

Since the physical body is the transformation of food, it has an *Annamaya Kosa* (food sheath). The vital

airs form another sheath, the *Pranamaya*. It weighs between good and bad, right and wrong in the sheath of mind, or *Manomaya Kosa*. When it fixes upon a step, with a purpose in view, it is the function of the *Vijnanamaya Kosa*. When the joy of achievement is tasted, it is the *Anandamaya Kosa* that functions.

To progress with the Brahmic outlook, that you are Brahman and not the body, etc., the *Pranamaya* is the first instrument. It is subtle and separate and different from the body. It is activated by *Vayu* and is saturated with it. It pervades and subsumes the entire *Annamaya Kosa*. You can say that the *Pranamaya* is the soul of the *Annamaya*, for it makes it function from head to foot. It cannot survive without the *Prana*. It is the motive force. It has five varieties: *Prana*, *Apana*, *Vyana*, *Udana* and *Samana*. By contemplating that the *Pranamaya* is the *Atma* of the *Annamaya*, the notion that the body is the Self will disappear. You rise from the gross to the subtle. *Prana* is like the molten metal in the crucible. By effort, the *Pranamaya Kosa* can be experienced.

*Prana* appears in the form of the breath. *Prana* activates the head, *Vyana* the right, *Udana* the left, *Samana* the central and *Apana* the lower parts of the body. The *Prana* moves from the heart through the nerves to the face, the nose, etc., and reaches the head. From there, it

motivates the various nerves flowing through the body under different names with distinct names and distinct functions. The Prana that functions round the navel is, for example, called Samaana.

For the Manomaya Kosa, the Yajur Veda is the head. The *Riks* form the right wing; Sama is the left wing, Brahmanas are the soul; the Atharvana Veda is the tail. The Manthras of the Yajur Veda are used very much in Yagas. With them, food is offered ceremonially in the sacrificial Fire. Hence, it is considered as the Head. The sound of Yajus produces modifications which are auspicious. That is the reason for the significance attached to the other Vedas also. Thus all manthras become the causes of mental modifications. These in turn illumine the splendour of the Atma. Thus the Vedas and the Mystery of their Syllables belong to the Science of the Atma itself. The Vedas become, therefore, eternally valuable and eternally existent. The Atharvana Veda treats of various rites to win relief from evil forces and ailments and so it is described as the tail.

The Kosa thus described merges in the Vijnanamaya and later into the Anandamaya and finally, the aspirant passes beyond even that, into the region of pure Sath.

1 2

# BRAHMANUBHAVA UPANISHAD

**T**he Sruthis declare “*Ekam eva Adwithiyam Brahma*” (Brahmam is One Only, without a second). That is to say, there is nothing besides Brahmam. Under all conditions, at all times, everywhere, Brahmam alone is. In the beginning, there was just Sath and nothing else, says the Chhandogya. The Mandukya names it as Santham, Sivam, Adwaitham. Only the evolved or the manifested can appear as two. That which is seen is different, one from the other and all from the seer. Moreover, the seen is the product of the seer’s likes and dislikes, his imagination and feelings, his impulses and tendencies. When the lamp is brought in, the “snake” disappears and the rope alone remains and is understood as such. When the world is examined in the light of Brahma Jnana, the “illusory picture which attracted

and repelled, the picture of Duality” disappears.

It is the “Two” that causes fear. If one is oneself the listener, the seer, the doer, the enjoyer, how can fear arise? Consider your condition when asleep! The external world is then absent. You are alone with yourself. The state is “One, without a second.” Contemplation of that One and worship of that One leading to the realisation of Secondlessness gives you that experience. Like the other, He is Immanent; like the vital air, He is the *Chith*, the secret of all consciousness, activity, movement.

Sath, Chith Ananda, *Paripurna*, *Nithya*—Brahmam is described by these five attributes. Through an understanding of these, Brahmam can be grasped. Sath is unaffected by time. Chith illumines and reveals itself as well as all else. Ananda creates the utmost desirability. Paripurna knows no defect or diminution or decline, or defeat. Nithyam is that which is unaffected by the limitations of space, time and objectivisation.

In the light of this Brahma Jnana, the World is a mirage, temporary, unreal, negated by knowledge. The World is but another name for “things seen, heard, etc.” But “You,” the Jiva, the seer are “Sath Chith Ananda Brahmam”—remember. Get fixed in that assurance. Meditate on the Om which is its best Symbol. Become aware from this moment that you are the Atma. When the

fog of ignorance vanishes, the Atma in each will shine in its native splendour. Then you know that you were pursuing a mirage in the desert sands, that you were taking as “real”, objects that had a beginning and therefore had an end.

The mind becomes bound with attachment when it dwells upon an object, or desires it or dislikes it. To get free from such bondage, the mind should be trained not to dwell on any object or desire it or dislike it. It is the mind that binds and unbinds. If dominated by *Rajas*, it easily falls into bondage. If *Sathwa* predominates, it can achieve freedom.

He, who feels one with the gross body, pursues feverishly the pleasure derivable through the senses. Desire is the consequence of identification with the physical frame. Give that up and you are given up by desire. Joy and grief are like right and wrong, to be transcended. Affection and hatred are of the nature of the internal instruments of man. They do not belong to the “Liver” who lives with them, the Jivi or to the Atma, the essential reality of the Jivi.

The Atma is ever pure, ever free from attachment, for there is no second to get attached to. The Mundakopnishad (III-i) manthra says: Two birds, ever together, with significant and subtle wings, are perched on a tree. (The tree is the body and the twin birds are Jivatma and Paramatma). One bird is engaged in tasting

the fruits, (The Jivatma experiences the joy and grief from the deeds it engages itself in). The other just watches. (The Paramatma is subtler than the Subtlest and is just a Witness).

How can this gross physical frame of plasma and pus be the pure, the self-luminous, the ever-witnessing Atma? This is built up by food. This is ever in a flux. It was not before birth nor is it after death! It is perishable any moment. It can live on without a limb or two but the moment the vital air stops its flow, it starts to decompose. So, the body should not be taken as the chief or as the Be-all and the End-all.

The Yoga you should practise is: watch the agitation in the mind as a witness, free yourself from resolutions and even decisions, for and against. Have your mind and its journeys always under control. Yoga is the parallel progress of the Jivatma, every step in tune with the Paramatma. The goal is the merger of both. Then all grief ends. He who steadily takes up yoga with faith and who is prodded on by unswerving renunciation (non-attachment) can certainly win victory.

Chith in Sath-Chith-Ananda means Vijnana, the Super-knowledge that confers perfect equanimity and purity, in fact, the Atmajnana which can be experienced by one and all. In common parlance Vijnana is used to indicate the sciences but really it means the Higher Wisdom. In that Swarupa, "Self-form", there is no room

for “impressions from Karma” nor for wishes that prompt Karma. Wishes vitiate the mind. Wishes lead to action, action leaves a scar, a Vasana on the Mind. Be alone with yourself, and then the mind can be negated. It is for this reason that Yogis retire into caves.

The Vasanas or impressions fall into two categories. “*Subha*” or beneficent and “*Asubha*” or maleficent. Beneficent Vasanas help liberation. Japa, Dhyana, good works, charity, justice, unselfish service, fortitude, compassion—these are all beneficent. The maleficent tendencies of anger, cruelty, greed, lust, egoism have to be uprooted with the help of the beneficent. Finally, as the thorn with which the thorn in the foot is removed, is also thrown away, the Vasanas that were used to overcome the Vasanas that hurt are also to be discarded. The *Subhavasanas* are the products of attachment and produce further attachment which may persist through many births. The Jivanmuktha too has to conquer the Subhavasanas. For him, they should be like a burnt rope that cannot bind. In fact the entire group, sensual craving, desire, greed, gets burnt, the moment the Atma is visualised. He will not be inclined towards anyone or anything; nor will he be attached. Where the sun sets, there he lays himself down for rest. He moves among men unknown and unrecognised, seeking no recognition, why even avoiding it.

When the seer and the seen are both the same, the joy is described as that of the fourth stage, the Thuriya

stage. Beyond this, the Atma is certain to be reached. By dwelling constantly on the Atma and its reality, the attachment to the world will fall off. The Sadhana must be without break. The genuine Sadhaka must, with all his resources, redirect the mind from the affairs of the world and the objects that entice the senses, and concentrate on the austere purpose of knowing Brahman.

*Tamasic* resolutions spell grief, *Sathwic* resolutions promote Dharma and help sustain society and the individual. The *Rajasic* ones plunge you into the worldly flood. Give up these three and then you become entitled to the honour of Brahma Jnana.

Brahman is of immeasurable depth. How can it be measured and comprehended by this petty mind? It is *Aprameya*, beyond all possibility of being described by categories. It is *Aparichhinna*, without limit. It is *Avyapadesya*, beyond denotation. To grasp It through the senses is an impossible task.

“The Brahman, which the Vedanta declares can be spoken of as only ‘Not-this, not-this’ is I-Myself; My reality is the Brahman in the cavity of my heart; I am that Brahman which Sadhakas strive to know and succeed in reaching. Brahman is that which remains after subtracting the body, the mind, the vital airs, the brain, etc.” This knowledge is reached by the discipline of negation. Just as by this method of elimination, you arrive at the conclusion, “So, this is Devadatta,” by this principle of

“*Jagrathajagratha*,” the truth, “*Thath thwam asi*” “That thou art” is established. When the veil hiding the Jivi is removed, the Jivi is revealed as Paramatma or Parabrahmam. The Jivatma is of the essence of Paramatma.

“I” refers to this Reality, the Sath-Chith-Ananda. It is only ignorance that can use it to indicate the body! This ignorance and this wrong identification are the causes of continuous chapters of grief and joy. So, use the word “I” with discrimination to mean only your Brahmic reality. That will win Atmajnana for you.

For experiencing the Atma as your Reality, control of the senses, removal of physical attachment and truth are essential. The Brahmam is the Brihaspathi prompting the buddhi, the Manas of the manas, the Ear of the ear, the Eye of the eye, the Illuminer of All the Self-luminant One. His splendour is the light from which everything else emanates. He is the basic support and sustenance. In the Mind, He is wisdom. The Manas and the Buddhi do envelop the senses. Without Him, the Manas and the Buddhi are helpless to function. They emerge from Him and merge in Him like grass that is born from the earth and becomes part of it. Iron placed in fire becomes red and turns black again when cooled. So too, Buddhi becomes resplendent with Jnana by dwelling on Parabrahma who is Jnanaswarupa.

God is encased everywhere as the child in the

womb. Some declare that they will believe only in a God that can be seen or demonstrated. This is the usual argument of the worldly-minded. But it is not easy to see, with gross physical eyes, the Paramatma which is subtler than the subtlest. You must first get command over a powerful microscope, fit for the purpose. Either the *Jnana Chakshu* or the *Prema Chakshu* is wanted, the Eye of Wisdom, the Eye of Love. Only with these can you see God. Can you show others what the thing called “pain” is, or “sweetness”? The eye cannot see an abstract thing like love, pity, mercy, virtue, faith. It is beyond its capacity.

But by words, actions and behaviour, we infer that a person has Love in his heart. So too it is possible to judge whether a person is a *Brahmavid*, how deep he is established in his own Reality, whether by fits and starts or steadily and securely. Divine Wisdom, Divine Treasure, Harmony with Nature, through these He can be identified and discovered. Therefore, endeavour by all means to earn either the *Jnana Chakshu* or the *Prema Chakshu*.

Just as sugar in cane-juice, or sweetness in sugar, the Paramatma is ever Immanent in creation. He is the inner core of all Beings. He is everywhere, always in everything, He has no form; Atma is “A-thanu” “without body”. It is the in-dweller, the Purusha. Only by throwing

off the attachment to the body, and purifying the Mind and the Buddhi, can you merge in your Truth and earn the eternal Bliss, highest Prasanthi, the purest Wisdom. Thus only can man earn liberation from the bondage of birth and death.

“*Deha*,” the word which means the body, is derived from the root “*dah*” meaning “burn.” It implies that which has to be burnt. But the Jnani has three bodies, the gross, the subtle and the causal. What is it then that is burnt? The fuels, *Adibhouthika*, *Adideivika* and *Adhyatmika* called the *Thaapathraya* or the *Hridaya-Kaashta* can burn and consume the three bodies quicker and more completely than fire. However informed a person may be, if he identifies himself with the body, he must be pronounced foolish. On the other hand, a person who is fixed in the faith that he is Sath-Chith-Ananda will be transformed into Divinity Itself. Do not identify the Jivi with the gross body of flesh and bone or even with the subtle and causal. The Atma must be identified with the Paramatma alone. Then only can permanent Bliss emerge. Joy and grief, good and bad belong to the realm of the mind, not to you. You are not the doer or the enjoyer of the fruits of the deeds. You are ever-free.

Virtue is Dharma. Vice is adharma. These are products of the mind, strings that bind the heart. When Man experiences this higher Truth, he becomes free from

both, and achieves the vision of Reality. As the silk worm gets entangled and imprisoned in the cocoon that it spins around itself, so Man too spins a cocoon of wishes around himself and suffers.

The Atma is ever disentangled. It is “*A-samsari*”. “Not-bound by flux”. Its nature is purity, wholeness, joy, wisdom. Where Ego is, there bondage persists. Where there is no “I”, there freedom holds sway. The “I” is the real shackle.

There are three obstacles in the path of the seeker after Atmajnana; obstacles of the past, the present and the future. These must be overcome. The Jivanmuktha is not worried over these. He has gone beyond the triple distinction of the seer, the seen and the sight. He has known that the distinction is artificial, a product of the mind. Once you have conquered the Triple illusion of *Triputi*, you will experience Brahman in all things at all times.

# GLOSSARY

**Aapojyothi** - The Splendour of water.

**Abhasa** - Something mistaken to be there, but really non-existent.

**Abhaya** - Fearlessness.

**Achethana/Achetana** - Unintelligent, inert.

**Adharma** - Neglect of morality and virtue. Unrighteousness.

**Adhyathmic** - Refers to the aspect of jiva, spiritual, metaphysical. Elimination of animal traits still clinging to man and unification with the Divine.

**Adhyatmika** - Spiritual, metaphysical.

**Aditya/Adithya** - The Sun.

**Adwaita** - Non-dualism. The philosophy of absolute oneness of this world and the entire creation.

**Agnihotra** - Worship of Fire.

**Ajnana** - Ignorance (which prevents perception of the Reality).

**Akasa/Akasha/Aakasha** - Ether, Space, Sky. All-pervasive.

**Amanaska** - The one without the mind. Bliss of the Divine

Atma. Living steadily in the state of 'I' and trying to know the truth. One who has merged his mind in the mould of Divinity.

**Amanobhava** - The no-mind experience.

**Ananda/Anandam** - Divine bliss. Unending source of joy. The state of unalloyed bliss which is pure and permanent.

**Anandamaya Kosa** - Spiritual or bliss sheath.

**Anantha(m)** - Without end, countless, unlimitedness, infinity, eternity.

**Angas** - Limbs. Earth bits, auxiliaries.

**Angushtamaathra** - Thumb sized.

**Annam** - Food, sustenance.

**Annamaya Kosa** - Gross body or Food sheath.

**Antahkarana** - Mind, intelligence and ego together. One's own inner equipment, inner consciousness. The internal indriyas (sense faculties).

**Antharyami** - The inner consciousness. The inner motive force (Atma).

**Anuvakas** - Sections.

**Anveshamaanaa** - Seeking.

**Apara** - Lower.

**Aparabrahma** - The lower self unrelated to the oversoul.

**Aparichhinna** - Without limit.

**Aparoksha** - Direct, visible perception.

**Aprameya** - Beyond all possibility of being described by categories.

**Asamsari** - Not-bound by flux.

**Asath** - Non-existent, unreal. Only relatively real, not absolutely real.

**Asubha** - Maleficent tendencies—anger, cruelty, greed, lust, egoism which have to be uprooted with the help of the beneficent tendencies.

**Atharvana Veda** - One of the four Vedas that teaches the possibility of man acquiring certain powers and mysteries by his own effort and exercises.

**Atma** - Self; Soul, the inner motive force in everything, with no limitations.

**Atmajnana** - Wisdom of true self. Knowledge earned through the intellect illumined by the Atma. The knowledge of Self. The knowledge that reveals the unity in multiplicity, the eternal in the perishable.

**Atmajnani** - One who has attained Atmajana.

**Atma sakshathkara** - Self-realisation.

**Atmaswarupa** - God Himself. The very embodiment of Bliss. Divine Essence. One who is able to give you happiness under all conditions of both pain and pleasure.

**Atmathatwa** - The Atmic Principle. Faith in the Lord.

**Atma vichara** - Inquiry into nature of Atma.

**Atma Vidya** - The Education that culminates in Self-realisation.

**Avayava** - Limb.

**Avidya** - Ignorance. Absence of wisdom.

**Avyapadesya** - Beyond denotation; to grasp Brahman through the senses is an impossible task.

**Balam** - Strength, fortitude, vigour.

**Bhava** - Feelings.

**Bhumi/Bhoomi** - Earth.

**Brahmacharya** - Desisting from marriage, soaking in holy love for the Divine, through sincerity, unselfishness, pure consciousness and holy thoughts. Moving ever in Brahma.

**Brahma Jnaana** - Knowledge of the absolute.

**Brahma Loka** - Region of the Divine.

**Brahmanabandhu** - One who has Brahmins as his relatives.

**Brahmandanirmanā** - Process of evolution of the Universe.

**Brahmathathwa** - The Brahma Principle.

**Brahma Vidya** - The acquisition of spiritual experience as a perpetual treasure. Education relating to our conduct in the other world. Knowledge of

Brahmam. Knowledge solely connected with Atma. Science of the self.

**Brahmavids** - Masters of Brahmic wisdom.

**Buddhi** - Intellect; intelligence; faculty of discrimination.

**Chaithanya** - Knower, Seer, pure consciousness, Effulgence of divinity. Awareness or intelligence of consciousness.

**Chandra** - Deity of the moon.

**Chethana** - Superconsciousness.

**Chith** - Full knowledge, awareness.

**Chiththa(m)** - Past impressions. Seat of intellect. The levels of consciousness. Mind stuff.

**Deha** - Body.

**Deva Loka** - Higher, sacred regions.

**Devathas** - All those with good qualities. Those who observe sathya (truth) as their vratha (vow) in daily life.

**Devas** - Gods. The shining ones.

**Dharma** - Righteousness; religion; code of duties; duty; essential nature of a being or thing. It holds together the entire Universe. Man is exhorted to practise Dharma to achieve material and spiritual welfare. The Vedas contain the roots of Dharma. God is naturally interested in the reign of Dharma.

**Dharma Karmas** - Activities that sublimate the lower instincts and impulses and transform every deed into an act of dedication.

**Dhyana** - Concentration or meditation on the glory of God.

**Durga** - Goddess who is the Protector of the Life Forces.

**Dwaitha** - Dualism.

**Dwapara Yuga** - The era in which the Divine and the demonic elements were in the same kingdom.

**Dweshha** - Anger, hate, repulsion.

**Easwara** - The Almighty God.

**Ekah eva** - One Only.

**Ekam Eva Adwithiyam** - What exists in reality is only one, no second exists.

**Gandha** - Smell, fragrance.

**Guha** - Cave.

**Guru** - Spiritual guide; a knower of Brahman, who is calm, desireless, merciful and ever ready to help and guide the spiritual aspirants who approach him.

**Hiranyagarbha** - The golden womb, the first manifestation of God. Cosmic womb. The immanent principle that has willed to become manifest and multiply.

**Hridayaakasha** - Space in the spiritual heart in which the self is imagined in meditation and prayer.

**Indriyas** - Senses

**Jada** - inert, inactive.

**Jagath** - The moving, changing world.

**Jala** - Water.

**Jiva/Jivatma/Jivaathma** - The individual soul in a state of non-realisation of its identity with Brahman. It is the self-deluded, bound spirit unaware of its own true nature.

**Jivanmukthi** - Attaining Liberation even while alive.

**Jivi** - Individual soul, individual Atma. A live individual.

**Jnana** - Sacred knowledge; knowledge of the spirit, pursued as a means to Self-realisation. It is direct experience of God, as the Soul of the souls. Jnanam makes a man omniscient, free, fearless and immortal.

**Jnana Chakshu** - Eye of Wisdom.

**Jnana Kanda** - The cantos in Vedas dealing with the spiritual Wisdom.

**Jnanam** - Highest wisdom.

**Jnananishta** - A state of mind without craving of any sort.

**Jnanendriyas** - Internal senses of perception or knowledge.

**Jnani** - A sage possessing Jnanam (unitive spiritual knowledge and experience).

**Jneyam** - The thing known to the seeker of knowledge.

**Kaivalyasoukhyam** - Joy when liberated by mergence with the Lord.

**Kalpa** - Age.

**Kama** - Desire.

**Karana** - Cause. Circumstances necessitating the presence of God.

**Karma** - Action; deed; work; religious rite; the totality of innate tendencies formed as a consequence of acts done in previous lives. Every karma produces a lasting impression on the mind of the doer, apart from affecting others. Repetition of a particular karma produces a tendency (vasana) in the mind. Karma is of three kinds: (i) Prarabdha: which is being exhausted in the present life: (ii) Aagami, which is being accumulated in the present life, and (iii) samchitha, which is stored, to be experienced in future lives. Akarma is action that is done without any intention to gain the consequences. Vikarma is action that is intentionally done.

**Karma Kanda** - The section of Vedas dealing with Karmas.

**Karmamukthi** - Path of progressive liberation.

**Karma Nishta** - Steady pursuit of good deeds. Steady devotion to duties of one's stage of life.

**Karmendriyas** - External senses. Organs of action.

**Karya** - Effect, deed.

**Khila** - Appendix.

**Kriya** - Will, action, deed.

**Kshathriya** - Warrior class.

**Lokapala** - He who fosters and protects the world.

**Manana** - Ruminating over what has been heard.

**Manas** - Mind.

**Manasaputhras** - Sons born out of the mind.

**Manomaya-Kosa** - Mental sheath. One of the five sheaths enclosing the soul. It consists of the mind and the five subtle sensory organs. It is endowed with the power of will.

**Manthra/manthram** - A sacred formula, mystic syllable or word symbol uttered during the performance of rituals or meditation. They represent the spiritual truths directly revealed to the Rishis (seers). The section of the Veda which contains these hymns (Manthras) is called the Samhitha.

**Maya** - The mysterious, creative and delusive power of Brahman through which God projects the appearance of the Universe. Maya is the material cause and Brahman is the efficient cause of the Universe. Brahman and Maya are inextricably associated with each other like fire and its power

to heat. Maya deludes the jivas in egoism, making them forget their true spiritual nature.

**Moksha/Mukthi** - Liberation from all kinds of bondage, especially the one to the cycle of birth and death.

**Munda** - Head.

**Mundaka** - Shaven Head.

**Nama** - Name.

**Nididhyasana** - Concentration on the truth about the Self after hearing it (sravana) from the guru and reflecting on it (manana). It is thus the third step on the Path of Knowledge (Jnana-Yoga).

**Nirvikalpasamaadhi** - The perfect unruffled equanimity of Absolute Oneness which is your true Nature.

**Nishta** - State of mind or steadfastness; disciplined or regulated behaviour, practice, steady pursuit.

**Nithya/Nithyam** - That which is unaffected by the limitations of space, time and objectivisation. Indestructibility, timeless, permanent, eternal.

**Nithyaswayamprakasa** - Eternally Self-effulgent.

**Nivritti** - Withdrawal of senses to realise the Reality.

**Om** - AUM. Divine sound. Pranava, the manthra for persons conscious of the Atma in them.

**Paapa** - Sin. Demerit acquired by evil doers. Sinful and vicious.

**Panchanga** - Almanac. The new year's calendar; five senses of man.

**Panchagni** - Five fires.

**Pandit** - A learned man, scholar. One who has discrimination.

**Para** - Higher. Superior.

**Parabrahma** - God, Universal Oversoul.

**Paramapurusha** - The Supreme Person.

**Paramatma** - The source and core of the Universe. The over-soul, the universal soul, the sovereign Atma, God. Creator, the Supreme Self, the Universal Absolute, the Lord. The absolute from which everything has emanated, in which all exists, into which all this merges, the yarn of which the cloth prakriti is formed.

**Paripurna/Paripoorna** - Fullest, complete, wholeness. That which knows no defect or diminution or decline or defeat.

**Poortha Karma** - Obligatory Karma comprising construction of temples, caravanserais, rest houses, planting of avenue trees, yielding beneficial consequences.

**Prajakamas** - Those who wish for progeny to perpetuate themselves.

**Prajapathi** - Lord of Creation.

**Prajna** - Deep sleep stage of existence.

**Prakriti/Prakruthi** - Nature; the universe.

**Prana** - Vital air, vital breath, vitality, the vital essence. It

is the motive force. It has five varieties: Prana, Apana, Vyana, Udana and Samana.

**Pranamaya Kosa** - Vital air sheath. Sheath of vital energy. It consists of five vital principles and five subtle organs of action.

**Pranava** - Om; the sacred seed-sound and symbol of Brahman; “the most exalted syllable in Vedas.” It is used in meditation on God. It is uttered first before a Vedic manthra is chanted.

**Prasanthi** - Highest type of Peace.

**Prasna** - Question.

**Prathibha** - Intuition.

**Prema Chakshu** - The Eye of Love.

**Preyas** - Pleasing, worldly glory of power, status and wealth. This is available for human effort as a fruit of action.

**Punya** - Good deed / Merit.

**Purusharthas** - Goals of life, four goals of life, dharma—righteousness, artha—wealth, kaama—desire, moksha—liberation.

**Raga(s)** - Passion, attachment.

**Rajas/Rajo Guna** - One of the three gunas (qualities or dispositions) of Maya or Prakriti. Rajas is the quality of passion, energy, restlessness, attachment and extroversion. It results in pain.

**Rasa** - Taste, purest emotion, indivisible sweetness. The true characteristic of the Divine. Essence of all substance.

**Rig Veda** - One of the four Vedas containing hymns, mastery of which promotes humility and dedication as reflected in one's speech.

**Rishi** - A person leading a life without desires, with attachment only to the Atma, serving as an example to others by promoting a spirit of sacrifice and equality. One whose understanding of the Atma shines fully and with splendour because his manas and buddhi have been purified by japam and dhyaanam. Sage.

**Roopam/Rupa** - Form, shape.

**Saadhaka/Sadhaka** - Spiritual aspirant. One who is practising the discipline of conquering his egoism and greed. The sense of 'I' and 'mine'. Devotee.

**Sabda** - Sound. The authority of revealed scriptures. Authoritative voice when it emanates from experience and from honest communication of that experience.

**Sadhana** - Spiritual discipline or effort aimed at God realisation. The Saadhaka (aspirant) uses the spiritual discipline to attain the goal of realisation.

**Saguna** - Attribute-full. One with attributes, Worship of form with attributes. Endowed with qualities.

**Sagunopasana** - Worship of the limited qualified Divinity.

**Sakshathkara** - Direct perception of God.

**Sama Veda** - One of the four Vedas containing hymns, mastery of which grants intuitive vision.

**Samhitha** - Collection. That portion of Vedas which contain manthras for beneficial Divine Instructions.

**Samithpaani** - Holding the ritualistic fuel for the sacrificial fire, as presentation of worthy and desirable offerings.

**Samsara** - Birth-life-death cycle. Worldly life; life of the jiva through repeated births and deaths. Liberation means getting freed from this cycle.

**Samsaravriksha** - Tree of life.

**Samvathsara** - The year, is an indicator of Time, according to the position of the Sun.

**Sanathana Dharma** - Eternal universal religion. A descriptive term for what has come to be called Hinduism. It has no single founder or text of its own. It is more a commonwealth of religious faiths and a way of life.

**Sankalpa** - Resolve, plan of action, Will of God, mental conclusions, intentions. Determination behind the resolution.

**Santham** - Peace, equanimity.

**Sanyaasi** - One who has renounced everything, given

up all desires. He is unmoved, unaffected by the temptations of sound, touch, form, taste, smell and other attractions of the senses.

**Sanyasa/Sanyaasa** - Life of renunciation, being above and beyond all promptings of pleasure. Work done without regard to success or failure.

**Sariras/sareeram** - The human body.

**Sarvajna** - All beings. All-comprehensive intelligence. He who is all-knowing.

**Sarvakarmasanyas** - The withdrawal from all activity.

**Sarvakriya-parithyaga** - Renunciation of all activities.

**Sarvantharyami** - All-pervasiveness present and immanent in everything. The eternal witness.

**Sarvathmaswarupa** - Embodiment of all Atmas/Souls.

**Sastras** - The Hindu scriptures containing the teachings of the Rishis. The Vedas, the Upanishads, the Itihasas (epics), the Puranas and the Smritis (codes of conduct), etc., form the Sastras of the Hindus. They teach the precepts of practical living.

**Sath** - Existence, Is-ness. Unaffected by time, being, which is both beyond subject and object, cogniser and cognised, ever conscious. That which persists in past, present and future.

**Sathwa** - One of the three gunas (qualities and dispositions) of Maya or Prakriti. It is the quality of purity, brightness, peace and harmony. It leads

to knowledge. Man is exhorted to overcome thamas by rajas, and rajas by sathwa and finally to go beyond sathwa itself to attain liberation.

**Sathwa Guna** - Quality of calm serenity.

**Sathwic/Sathwika** - Pure, good and pious, calm, unruffled, unagitated. The “white” quality, unaffected. One’s talk, conduct and behaviour are untinged by passion of emotions like hate or pride.

**Sathya Swarupa** - Expression of truth.

**Sathyam** - Real, absence of modification. The basic reality of all. Law of the universe.

**Sathya Sankalpa** - Expression of truth through word of mouth.

**Shad** - Six.

**Siras** - Head.

**Sivam** - Auspiciousness, Grace.

**Smarana** - Memory, recollection, visualisation.

**Sparsa** - Touch. Touching the Holy Feet. Contact with the Divine.

**Sraddha** - Steady faith.

**Sravana** - Listening.

**Sreyas** - Spiritual merit. Commendable.

**Srishti** - Creation.

**Sthu(oo)la** - Gross.

**Subha** - Beneficent.

**Subhavasanas** - Beneficent or pure impulses such as japa, dhyana, charity, service, compassion, etc., help one's liberation.

**Sukshma** - Subtle, that which expands. The dream.

**Surya** - The Sun.

**Surya Loka** - That Loka is the refuge of all living beings. Only those who worshipfully engage themselves in their daily duties, without any desire for the fruits thereof, can enter that Loka.

**Swabhava** - Essential quality.

**Swarajya** - Self rule. Freedom from the degrading dependence on passions and emotions. Identification with the self-effulgent Brahman. Political independence.

**Swarga** - Heaven.

**Swaswarupa/swaswaroopa** - One's reality. The real form of the reality.

**Taijasa** - Dreaming stage. Luminosity. Individual subtle body.

**Tamasic/Thamasic/Thamasica** - Promoting sloth and dullness.

**Tarka** - Logic, argument.

**Tejas** - Splendour. Inner light, luminosity. A light that shines in a dream state.

**Thaapathraya** - The threefold affliction i.e. illness, growth and decay.

**Thamo Guna** - Dullness, ignorance, and all the evils that arise from these. Thamo Guna cannot grasp the reality. A sign of Thamo Guna is the giving up of action since you cannot benefit from the fruit.

**Thapas** - Austerity for sense control and mind control.

**Thath Thwam Asi** - "That thou art."

**Thathswarupa** - The Form of Brahmam, the visible world.

**Thejas** - Effulgence, illumination.

**Thithis** - Stages.

**Thuriya** - This stage cannot be described by words or even imagined by the mind, for it is beyond both Buddhi and Manas.

**Triputi** - Integral unitive reality of man, God and world.

**Upa** - Near.

**Upaasyam** - The thing attained by the seeker of attainment.

**Upadana** - Cause.

**Upanayana** - Rite of leading pupil to preceptor. Being led to Guru or Preceptor for spiritual training. Ceremony of initiation in the Gayatri Mantra.

**Upanishads** - Ancient scriptures of spiritual wisdom. The essence of Vedas.

**Upasana** - Worship or contemplation of God. Worship associated with ritualistic Action.

**Uttamapurusha** - The noblest of men, laughing, playing and moving without regard to the needs or comforts of the body.

**Uttaramarga** - The Northern Path.

**Vaak** - Voice, word, speech.

**Vairagya** - Renunciation, detachment, realising that attachment is through ignorance, detachment follows through this illumination.

**Vaiswanara** - God who is resident in our body as power to digest the food we take and supply strength thereby to various limbs of body. The Lord enters the body of every being to consume food, digest and supply nourishment to all parts of body.

**Vaji** - Horse.

**Vasanas** - Impulses.

**Vasantha** - Spring.

**Vasthu** - Object, substance.

**Vayu** - Wind, air.

**Vedaadhyayanam** - Study of the Vedas.

**Vedanta** - Means “the end of the Vedas.” It is the essence

of the Vedas enshrined in the Upanishads. The philosophy of non-dualism, or qualified non-dualism, or dualism based on the Upanishadic teachings, is denoted by this term.

**Vedas** - The oldest and the holiest of the Hindu scriptures, the primary source of authority in Hindu religion and philosophy. They are four in number—the Rig, Sama, Yajur and Atharvana Veda.

**Vidya** - Education, knowledge. The same as jnana, it has two aspects, vijnana (understanding the world around us, science) and prajnana (the higher learning), the art of controlling the inner feelings and the many layers of consciousness.

**Vijnana.** - Jnana based on scholarship steeped in the Sastras is referred to as higher wisdom.

**Vijnanamaya Kosa** - One of the five sheaths known as intellectual sheath.

**Vikara/vikaara/vikaaram** - Adaptation, changed, transformed, agitations.

**Viratpurusha** - Cosmic person. Supreme sovereign person.

**Vishaya** - Sense objects, worldly desires.

**Visishta** - Special and unique.

**Viswa** - The waking stage of existence.

**Viswakartha**—The Artist who has evolved the Viswa

or Creation.

**Viveka** - Discrimination; the reasoning by which one realises what is real and permanent and what is unreal and impermanent.

**Vritti** - Function, work, occupation, activity.

**Vyavahara** - Natural conclusions, angle of change. Day to day activity, Practical purposes.

**Yaga** - sacrifice.

**Yajur Veda** - One of the four Vedas that lays down the rights and duties of man, the dharma which ensures peace and prosperity both here and hereafter.

**Yama** - God of Death.

**Yogasastra** - Denotes the mental churning that brings success in union of the individual with the Divine.