

Taitreya Upanishad, Class 43

Chapter 3 or Brghuvalli:

Chapter 3 preview:

Starting with his preview of Chapter 3, Swamiji said, Brahmavidya teaching was completed in Brahmanandavalli or chapter 2. Now the Upanishad focuses on some allied topics. Brahmavidya is not the focus anymore but it is discussed with other topics. The other topics are: Gyana Sadhanani or preparatory disciplines through which Gyana Vidhya occurs and remains in a person.

Two types of preparatory disciplines are indicated:

1. Remotely connected to knowledge.
2. Directly connected to knowledge or sakshat sadhanani or Vedanta vakya vichara. This is an important sadhana as it leads to knowledge and is also known as Pramana Vichara. Pancha Kosha vichara is highlighted here. The word Tapas is used again and again in this Upanishad in every section. Tapas, here means Vedanta vakya vichara or pancha kosha vichara. It is a direct means of self-knowledge. Although tapa also means penance and austerities, in this chapter it means Vichara.

Secondary disciplines, indirectly connected ones, are a few upasanas or meditations, for integrating the mind. Upasanas can't give direct knowledge. Vedanta vichara alone can give knowledge. Thus, Anjaneya upasana cannot give this knowledge. Anjaneya will bless upasaka with proper guru or the devata himself may also become his guru, if a guru is not found. The upasana devata can be any god including Anjaneya.

Vrthas or vows are also discussed. Four vrthas or austerities are discussed. Vrthas, upasanas and vichara are all Gyana Sadhanani. Vichara is a direct source of knowledge while Vrtha

and upsanas are indirect sources of knowledge.

Another topic in this chapter is Gyana Phalam. The benefit is that one will attain knowledge and its resulting benefits. This topic was also discussed in chapter 1 or shikshavalli. If so, why discuss it again? If a person studies Vedanta and still does not get knowledge, Upanishad wants to tell us that it is his own preparation that was not adequate.

To err is human but to put blame on another is even more human. If shastra's do not bless him with pramanam; Ishwara, Guru and shastra are not the problem. The problem is with the student who has not prepared enough for it. He probably does not know the sadhana chatushtaya sampathi. Shankaracharya asks students to check for their sadhana chatushtaya sampathi periodically during study of Vedanta vichara. Hence this chapter repeats importance of preparation.

Chapter 3, Shantipatha, Shloka #1:

Om, May he protect us both. May He help us both to enjoy the fruits of scriptural study. May we both exert together to find the true meaning of the sacred text. May our studies make us brilliant. May we never quarrel with each other.

The shanti patha is repeated as before. It is chanted by student and teacher in every class. It says:

1. It asks for an ideal relation with guru. Citing an example, without good relationship between husband and wife a family can't be functional. Similarly shishya must have shraddha and bhakti for Guru. Guru too must have compassion for student.
2. It is necessary for enough effort to be placed by both the student and teacher.
3. The teaching must culminate in Gyana prapthi.
4. Gyana phalam prapthi. The gyanam must be internalized and transforming.

All four should happen to me. If there are any karmic obstacles, please remove them, is the prayer.

Ch 3, Anuvakaha 1, Shloka 2:

Bhrgu, the well known son of Varuna, approached his father, Varuna and requested, “ O revered Sir, teach me Brahman.” Varuna said, thus, to him (Bhrgu),” Food, Prana, the eyes, the ears, the mind and the speech are Brahman.”

Starting chapter 3, swamiji said this Chapter is in prose. This is a Brahmano Upanishad; hence, it is in prose. Mantro Upanishads are in poetry. Chapter 3 is divided into paragraphs called anuvakahas. Chapter 3 has 10 anuvakahas. First word of shloka 2, anuvakaha 1,chapter 3, is Brighu, hence the chapter is named Brighuvalli.

It begins with introduction of guru and shishya. It is a guru shishya dialogue. Vedantic teaching is always in a guru shishya discussion format. This is to discourage learning Vedanta by self-study. In Taittiriya Upanishad, in the first two chapters, there was no guru or shishya, although later chapters did. In this chapter the Guru is the father and shishya, the son.

When son is interested in knowledge and father is a wise man this, a guru-shishya relationship can happen and it is seen happening here.

Once upon a time there was a great sage called Bhrgu. Even Sri Krishna acknowledges him in chapter 10 of the Gita. Brghu was born twice. First as manas-putra, son of Brahma and a second time, as son of Varuna. Thus, Varuni Brghu is son of Varuna.

What did this Brghu do? He approached his father Varuna. Why the emphasis on how son approaches father in Upanishad? Other sons also approach their fathers for many other things; however here son approaches father for brahma vidya in a proper manner. He does so with shrddha and bhakti. He addresses

his father not as father but as, O Lord, May you teach me Brahman. Swamiji says, in Upanayana ceremony too the father becomes a guru. The formal mode of address by student indicates an evolved student; one who has Vairgyam, mumukshatvam and sadhana chatustaya sampathihi. He understands Brahma Gyanam can occur only through Guru upadesha. He is an advanced student.

Father certainly knows the condition of his son. He then taught the following to his son. He gives clues to pancha kosha viveka. The clues are:

Annam: Annamaya kosha.

Pranam: Pancha pranas

Vacham: Pancha Karmendriyani

All these together, Prana and vacha are pranamaya kosha.

Chakshu and stotram: Eye and ear are both gyanendriyas.

Manaha: the mind.

Mind with gyanendriyas is Manomaya kosha.

Vijnanamaya and anandamaya koshas, we have to supply.

First clue as per Shankaracharya is Brahma Upalabdi Dwarani to Brahma Gyanam.

Later he defines Brahman as shown in chapter 2 as Satyam, gyanam and anantam. This Brahman is also called swarupa lakshanam or a short or direct definition.

Ch 3, Anuvakaha 1, Shlokas 3:

To him (Bhrgu) he (Varuna) again said: that from which these beings are born; that by which, having been born, these beings live and continue to exist; and that into which, when departing, they all enter; that seekest thou to know. That is

Brahman.” He Bhrgu performed penance; and after having done penance....

Now an indirect definition is also given. This is one reason why Taittiriya Upanishad is so important. In this important mantra it says, Brahman is Jagat, srishti, sthithi and laya karanam. Vyasa in bhagavatham also gives the same definition.

Yataha in shloka means Brahman. Sthiti karanam means cause of preservation; Prayanti means destruction or all beings are resolved in Brahman; It also means Brahman is Laya karanam. Jatani means having been born. Jivanti means live.

Explaining further swamiji says:

Srishti: Brahma

Sthiti: Vishnu

Laya: Shiva

Brahma, Vishnu and shiva are all names for one Brahman alone. It does not mean that there are many Gods. They are three functional names of one Brahman. Furthermore, we have, in our confusion, even started comparing them by creating names of shaivism and vaishnavism. Vedanta does not consider any one of the trinity superior; they are all one Brahman. Vedantins are called smarthas, who are neither shaivas nor vaishnavas. Wearing Vibhuti on forehead does not mean one is a shaiva. Scriptures say if anyone compares gods and grades them they will get an upset stomach. So, all are one Brahman. Therefore Brahman alone is srishti, sthiti and laya karanam. May you know him through tapas, keeping the clues in mind. Thus Brghu started his teaching.

When we talk of self-enquiry, it is enquiry into Guru vakya or shastra vakya or it's vichara. Many people miss this and start self-enquiry through a questioning approach of, who am I? This independent enquiry without a guru is not in Vedic tradition.

Vedic enquiry is always inquiry with guru shastra vakya. Atma vichara is guru shatra vichara. It is also known as pramana vichara. Rejecting Guru and shastras; and practicing self-enquiry does not lead to Vedantic knowledge.

The word tapaha means enquiry based on Brahma Lakshanani and two of them were discussed: Brahma Upalabdi Dwarani and Swarupa lakshanam

The student, Brghu, having contemplated on the teaching now comes back with some of his doubts.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy