

भारत स्वातन्त्र्य स्वर्ण-जयन्ती ग्रन्थमाला-४८

PATH OF LIBERATION

(Sanskrit Text, English Translation with Notes
of Eight Minor Upanishads)

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P R E F A C E

ॐ गणेशाय नमः । सरस्वत्यै नमः ।

श्री गुरुभ्यो नमः । हरिः ओम् ॥

The Upanishads are the culmination of the Vedas. There is no philosophy higher than that of the Upanishads. Brahman can be known through Upanishads alone and not through other philosophies like Nyaya, Sankhya, Yoga, etc. The Ritualistic portion (*Karma Kanda*) of the Vedas is incapable of granting eternal peace. Therefore, the Vedas delineate Brahma Vidya for the seekers of eternal Truth. The Knowledge portion (*Jnana Kanda*) of the Vedas which deal with Brahma Vidya is known as Upanishads. Each branch of the Vedas has got one Upanishad. The Muktika Upanishad mentions about the names of 108 Upanishads. Of these, the ten Upanishads on which Bhagavad Pada Sri Adi Shankracharya had written his commentary are known as the Principal Upanishads and the remaining are called the Minor Upanishads. These minor Upanishads are in no way inferior to the principal Upanishads in terms of their content and philosophical import. These are called 'minor' because no authentic commentaries are available on these Upanishads and we have to depend upon the commentaries of the principal Upanishads in order to understand the true import of their teachings. This book presents translations and notes on eight minor Upanishads in the light of commentaries on ten principal Upanishads. Commentaries written by Bhagavad Pada Sri Adi Shankracharya on Brahma Sutra and Bhagavad-Gita have also been referred to wherever necessary. Sanskrit texts with the English translation and notes have been presented here in such a manner so that the true inner significance is not lost.

The Upanishads reveal the four facets of the glorious Aryan ideals practised by the ancient seers and sages. These four facets are described as Morality, Meditation, Wisdom and Liberation. It is due to lack of understanding on these four facets that the embodied soul undergoes cycles of births and deaths and finds no deliverance from the worldly afflictions. The Upanishads say that by leading a righteous and moral life of non-craving and non-attachment the mind becomes

do not tread on the path of the world. Rising above the world, wise people avoid recognition from the world.

The desire for learning is related to the study of scriptures, performance of rituals and knowledge of many disciplines. Attached to such secular and religious learning, people identify themselves with profession, lineage, clan, caste, community, and fail to realise the goal of life. Ritualists go on worshipping many Gods and Goddesses but they do not know their own Selves. Scholars, well versed in the knowledge of science and technology, consider themselves superior to those who have a religious inclination. People who are attached to rituals and charity consider Self-knowledge as unnecessary and quote various scriptures to justify their hypothesis. It is said to be an impure desire since it is the cause of pride resulting in false notions of superiority and inferiority. Deluded people who delight in such learning fall again and again into old age and death.

Desire for the body arises because people want to covet a faultless body. Musicians struggle hard to acquire a melodious voice. Teachers strive to acquire good skills of oration. People use various cosmetics to acquire beauty. Ritualists purify the body by sprinkling and sipping water and the like. This type of Vasana is impure because it signifies false identification of the Self with the body. Those confounded fools, who are in love with this body which is but a conglomerate of flesh, bones, blood, muscle, etc., will also be fond of hell.

Wise seers of Truth have thus warned us against pursuing these three types of desires. These three desires though may appear acceptable to indiscriminating people are said to be obstacles for the wise in the attainment of Self-knowledge.

Rejection of Non-Self and Reflection on Self:

स्वात्मन्येव सदा स्थित्या मनो नश्यति योगिनः ।

युक्त्या श्रुत्या स्वानुभूत्या ज्ञात्वा सार्वान्यमात्मनः ॥४॥

Knowing, through reasoning, scriptures and one's own experience, that there is (only) one Self in all beings, the mind of the Yogin becomes extinct as it constantly dwells in Self alone. (4)

मन एव मनुष्याणां कारणं बन्धमोक्षयोः।
बन्धाय विषयासक्तं मुक्तं निर्विषयं स्मृतम्॥

“The mind alone is the cause of bondage and liberation of human beings; when engrossed in sense-objects (mind leads) to bondage; when released from sense-objects (mind leads) to liberation. So they (the wise) think.”

Amritbindu Upanishad (2)