



THE CHHANDOGYA UPANISHAD

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Here, we have been taken gradually up to that point where it has been concluded that every effort is motivated by happiness. This is not merely a practical fact, but also a psychological truth. But the mere recognition of the presupposition of happiness behind every kind of activity does not solve the problem of happiness, its location, its whereabouts and the means of its acquisition. Normally in our workaday world, we are accustomed to think that happiness is an achievement, by means of an effort, in the direction of an object which is regarded as the location of happiness. It is strange, no doubt, that different subjects endeavouring in the direction of happiness have different objects wherein happiness is supposed to be lodged. It does not mean that one and the same object or every perceiving subject is the house or abode of the happiness of everyone. This is the irony of the whole affair. It seems to be present in every object, inasmuch as every object is the target of the approach of some subject or the other in this world, though it is true that no particular object can attract the recognition of all subjects at the same time. This is the reason behind a doubt that can arise in the mind as to where happiness lies.

Is it in me or is it in somebody or something else? If it is in the mind of the subject merely, as it is sometimes, no doubt, opined by psychologists, then there will be no point in the mind moving towards an object of sense for the acquisition of pleasure. The very fact that the mind is not satisfied with its own self and feels an obligation to move towards something outside should be indication enough that something is lacking in the mind itself. This lacuna in the mind is the cause for the movement of the mind towards something outside, searching for that which it is not able of discovering in its own self. So, there seems to be a flaw in the doctrine that the mind alone is the source of all happiness, because this doctrine is refuted by the very activity of the mind every day, which moves towards things other than its own self, viz., the objects in the world around us.

But the other doctrine that the world is the source of happiness also seems to be refuted by a deeper analysis that no object seems to be capable of attracting the attention of everyone at the same time, nor even one and the same subject at all times. So, there seems to be some mystery behind even the assumption of the

presence of happiness in the objects outside. But it must be somewhere. It cannot be neither here nor there, because the whole world of perceptive activity is a collaboration of the subject and object. And therefore, it has to be either this way or that way. By mere empirical analysis it is difficult to find out where happiness lies, because a mathematical or arithmetical analysis of the situation will lead us merely to the analysis of the mind inside and the objects outside. There is nothing else for us to discover in this world. But, we find that we cannot discover the happiness in the mind, nor can we discover it in the object of sense.

So, the question is, where is happiness? A very stimulating answer comes to this question from the great master Sanatkumara. It is not in the mind, nor is it in the object, taken independently by themselves. Happiness cannot be bifurcated as a property of some particular finite thing in creation. If it is regarded as a property of the mind, it becomes a finite content. If it is regarded as a property of an object of sense, again it is finite in its nature. If you regard the abode of happiness as a blend of the object and the subject in a finite manner, even then the joint action of two finites cannot amount to more than the finite. Two finites coming together cannot create anything more than a finite. A little larger magnitude, physically or spatially, may be added to the joint activity of a subject and the object, but the finitude in the product of these two does not cease. Happiness cannot be regarded as finite, ultimately, because we are not satisfied with finite pleasure in this world. No one asks for limited happiness, though logically it cannot be defined as to how it can be infinite. The impulse from within which seeks for happiness is an answer to this question. It answers its own question by saying that no one is satisfied with any amount of happiness which is bounded by finitude of any kind. So it is neither in the finite object, nor in the finite subject, merely because of the fact that the finite container cannot afford to lodge within itself that which exceeds the limit of finitude.

So Sanatkumara says, "My dear Narada, happiness is not anywhere and yet it is everywhere; it is in a completeness of Being that you can find happiness." It is not in any kind of accumulation of particulars that happiness can be found. It is not in any aggregate of finitudes that happiness can be discovered. The finitude of a particular situation does not get obviated merely because of the aggregate of finitudes. Even millions and millions of finite objects put together do not cease to be finite in the end. The finitude which is the character of things persists even in an aggregate of finitudes. Even the whole world put together is finite. It cannot be regarded as infinite, because it is limited by space, limited by time, and limited by the very presence of inner discrepancy within its own self. So, what is there which is not finite in this world? Nothing. Then where is happiness? Not in anything that can be conceived by the mind or perceived by the senses. Happiness cannot be in anything in this world, because everything in this world is finite. Its definition, of course, defies ordinary mental cognition. It is the 'spiritual fullness' which philosophers call the Absolute, which the followers of religion call God, and which psychologists call the supreme Spirit. The infinite Reality that is behind all finitudes, that alone can be regarded as complete by itself, because That alone is independent of any kind of contact with the finitudes. That infinitude is the source of happiness whose reflection in some manner or other in

the finite objects of sense becomes responsible for our belief that happiness is in the objects outside.

THE INFINITE

*Yo vai bhuma tat sukham, nalpe sukham asti, bhumaiva sukham,
bhuma tveva vijijnasitavya iti, bhumanam, bagavah, vijijnasa iti.*

“Happiness is plenum, happiness is completeness, happiness is the totality, happiness is in the Absolute,” declares the great master Sanatkumara. The term ‘Bhuma’ used in this Upanishad is a novel word of its own kind which cannot be easily translated. It has a pregnant significance within itself which implies absoluteness in quantity as well as in quality, an uncontaminated character, permanency of every type, immortality, infinity and eternity. All these ideas are embedded in the very concept of what the Upanishad calls ‘Bhuma’. Well, we can translate it in no other way than to call it the Absolute Being. The Brahman of all the Upanishads is the same as the Bhuma mentioned here in this Chhandogya Upanishad. That alone is happiness.

If that alone is happiness, why is it that we feel happiness in objects of sense? There must be some mystery behind the search for happiness in the objects of the world, if it is true that they themselves do not contain happiness. “*Nalpe sukham asti*,—the finite things do not contain happiness,” says Sanatkumara, the master. If finite objects do not contain happiness and it is only in the Infinite, then how do you explain the discovery of this happiness in the objects of sense? If it is absolutely impossible to discover it in objects, no person will go towards any object of sense. The reason is that the presence of this Bhuma is felt in every object, in some mysterious manner. Existence as such of the object, as they say, is the reason behind the discovery of happiness in the objects which are nothing but names and forms ultimately. There is something in the objects which is capable of indicating that behind them is this reservoir of happiness. The indication is due to their creating a situation of apparent completeness when they come in contact with the mind of the subject. Wherever there is a sensation of completeness, there is happiness. This completeness may be artificially brought about. And then, there may be an apparently conceived totality, not a real one, or there may be a true one. Whatever it be, even a mere semblance of the experience of this completeness becomes the source of the experience of happiness. The union, in whatever manner that be, between the seeking subject and object sought creates in the mind that is perceiving, cognising, and searching, a sensation of having achieved its purpose. And this sensation, attended with a thought of consciousness of having achieved one’s purpose, brings about a stimulation within, which is characterised by a feeling of completeness. A sensation of completeness, a feeling that something asked for has been obtained, is introduced into the mind. This feeling is capable of lasting only for a fraction of a moment, because the mind cannot be satisfied with the idea that its purpose has been fulfilled, merely because of contact with the object. It is induced into a false state of feeling, that the purpose has been served. And this state is momentary. The mind realises that a mistake has been committed unconsciously,

and it withdraws itself from this contact, hibernates itself into its own cocoon, searches for another source of happiness, and finds itself in a state of misery all in one moment. So every experience of happiness in this world is passing, fleeting, transient and momentary, of the character of a moment. It cannot last for five minutes. No one has experienced happiness for five minutes continuously because of the fact that there is an anxiety within and these anxieties are brought about by certain suspicions arising in the mind, together with the experience of this contact of itself with the object. The suspicions are brought about by the recognition that the contact is not actual union, because real union of the subject with the object is different from mere contact, be it physical or even psychological. There is a flaw in every type of union. Every coming together ends in a separation, whatever that be, either in this world or in the other world. This is the reason why there is only an apparent happiness in this world, in our coming in contact with things of the world. Even this apparent, momentary happiness is due to an awareness of the presence of this Bhuma in a flash of a moment of experience.

It is completeness of being that is the source of happiness. But where is this completeness of Being? It is not in the objects of sense, not in the union of one and two, or in the union of many. Social union is no union at all. They are coming together in a physical, psychological or social sense, no doubt, but they are not real union. Union is a real blend into a single Being. Whatever be the attempt of subjects in their coming in contact with objects, they never become one Being. We have never seen two persons becoming one, or two things becoming one, or a society of people merging into a single personality. Such a thing has never been heard of, nor is it practicable. Until that is practicable, happiness also is not practicable.

The search for happiness in this world is a search for the will-o'-the-wisp. It is the search for phantasmagoria of the concoction of one's own mind. Not in the finite is happiness to be found—*valpe sukham asti*. The Absolute, Fullness alone is Bliss—*bhumaiva sukham*. “So I reiterate, O Narada, this is the truth. The total union of Being as such which I regard as Bhuma, that is the real Bliss. So I say once again that Bhuma, the Fullness, is Bliss. How can you enter into this Bhuma unless you know what Bhuma is? You must, therefore, know what Fullness is,” says Sanatkumara.

“O great Master, please tell me what this Bhuma is. Please introduce me to this great mystery of Being that you call Bhuma. What is Bhuma? What is this Fullness? What is this completeness? If it is not to be found in the union of things in this world, where else can I find it?” asks Narada.

THE INFINITE AND THE FINITE

*Yatra nanyat pasyati nanyac-chrnoti nanyad-vijanati sa bhuma,
atha yatranyat pasyati anyac-chrnoti anyadvijanati tad-alpam;
yo vai bhuma tad-amrtam, atha yadalpam tan-martyam, sa,
bhagavah, kasmin pratisthita iti, sve mahimni, yadi va na
mahimniti.*

“Do you want to know what Completeness is? And do you want to know what finitude is? Here is the definition,” says Sanatkumara. “Where one sees nothing except one’s own Self, where one hears nothing except one’s own Self, where one understands nothing except one’s own Self, that is Bhuma, the Absolute; and where one sees something outside oneself, where one hears something outside oneself, where one understands or thinks something outside oneself, that is the finite.”

So here is the whole matter clinched in a single sentence, describing what is Fullness and what is not-fullness. What is immortal is the Bhuma alone, and what you call mortal or perishable, is the finite. “O great master, where is the Bhuma situated? Which place?” asks Narada. “You ask me where it is situated, this great eternal All-Presence! It is situated in Its own Glory. Well, or perhaps, It has no situation at all,” replies the master. “It cannot be that It is located in something else, that It is dependent on something else, that It has something else as its support, just as we have some support or the other in this world. How can the All-Being be supported by something else! It is the support of all things. What is this strange question that you are putting to me? Its support is Its own Self. Rather I say It has no support, for It is the support of all. What do you mean by support? What is the meaning of this question, ‘Where is it located, where is it situated?’ You have got some wrong notion in your mind, Narada, because you are thinking in terms of objects in this world.”

*Go-asvam iha mahmety-acaksate, hasti-hiranyam dasa-bharyam,
ksetranay-ayatananiti, naham evam bravimi bravimiti hovacanyo
hy-anyasmin pratisthita iti.*

People in this world regard cattle and horses as greatness itself. A man is very rich, well-supported and sustained if he has plenty of cattle, plenty of horses, elephants, and gold, if he has plenty of servants, attendants, palatial buildings, vast property, and a beautiful house to live in. This is called a well-to-do life in this world. This is called good support; this is called sustenance. Not so is this Bhuma supported. It does not require any of these things for Its support. Its being is not dependent on anything that is of the nature of support in this world.

“I am not speaking of the Absolute in the sense that you have in your mind, thinking that it requires something else to lean upon,” says the master. The relativity of things is the support of things in this world. Everything hangs on something else in this world. I hang on you, and you hang on me. That is how we live in this world. But, no such hanging is possible in the Bhuma. It is self-sufficient, self-supported, self-complete and self-existent. It is not any relative being. It is the absolute Being. While everything in this world is relative in the sense that everything is supported by something else, everything is defined by something else, everything is determined by the existence of something else, Bhuma does not exist in this sense. It is absolutely independent. Therefore, It is non-relative in every sense of the term. It is everywhere. It is difficult to say where It is, because the question ‘where’ implies the existence of space.

“O my dear Narada, your question itself is unfounded and unwarranted. Why do you ask where It is, as if It is in space? But if you want me to tell you where It is, I

say It is in space, It is in every nook and corner, in every pinpoint of space. There is no space where It is not; there is no space which It does not occupy.”

THE EGO AND THE SELF

Sa evadhastat, sa uparistat, sa pascata, sa purastat, sa daksinatah, sa uttaraah, sa evedam sarvam iti, athato' hamkaradesa eva, aham evadhastat, aham uparistat, aham pascata, aham purastat, aham daksinatah, aham uttaratah, aham evedam sarvam iti.

“If you go down below, you will find It. If you go above, you will find It there. If you go behind, you will find It there, also. If you go in front of you, It is there. To the right of you, It is there. To the left of you, It is there. O Narada, what can I tell you about It? The whole cosmos is filled by It. It is not merely feeling that It is everything. It is everything. All these things that you see with your eyes are nothing but configurations of Its own Being. Are you satisfied?”

Now, a doubt may arise in the minds of people. Grammatically the word ‘It’ implies third person. Is It then a third person other than me? No, it is the subject only that is doubting thus. The subject that imagines that It is perhaps a third person, is also included in It. The thinking subject also is that very thing which we have referred to as the Bhuma. It is not merely the transcendental. Just as we can say, “It is all things”, “It is here”, “It is there”, “It is everywhere”, even so, the subject also can be said to be everywhere—“I am here”, “I am there”, and “I am everywhere.”

But here again a doubt may arise: what is this ‘I’? Is it the individual ‘I’, the ego? Is it the empirical subject, asserting itself as the all? No, the Atman in the subject is that which is identical with the Bhuma that is cosmic. So, a distinction is to be drawn between the individual subject and the subjectness universally present behind the individualities. That is called the Atman. So, it is not the *jiva* that is identified with the Bhuma here, but the Atman, even as they say the space within a vessel is identical with the space in the universe outside. There is no distinction between a pot space or the space in a tumbler and the space outside, because the distinctions that we create are imaginary. Really no two things exist as inner space and outer space. So is this identity of the Atman with Bhuma. If there is any kind of doubt that it may be the *ahamkara*, the individual subject that is implied here, in order to remove that the teacher says:

Athata atmadesa eva atmaivadhastat, atmoparistat, atma pascata, atma purestat, atma daksinatah, atmottaratah, atmaivedam sarvam iti. Sa va esa evam pasyan-nevam manvana evam vijanannatma ratir-atmakrida atma-mithuna atmanandah, sa svarad-bhavati tasya lokesu kamacaro bhavati, atha ye'nyathato viduh, anyarajanaste ksayya-loka bhavanti. Tesam sarvesu lokesu-akamacaro bhavati.

“The universal is also the Atman in all things. It is the essential subject of everything. So, that which is cosmically present as the total object is also the total subject. It is the subject and object at one stroke, in a universal sense. This is

what I mean by Bhuma. Here only is happiness, nowhere else. What else can be said? Whatever is required, all that has been said. O Narada, what more can I tell you? One who has such realisation or knowledge as this that I have mentioned to you just now,—one who can see things in this manner, think in this manner, or understand in this manner as I have expounded just now,—such a person is the most happy person conceivable. Such a person is delighted within his own Self, such a person plays with his own Self, such a person enjoys his own Self, such a person is rooted in the bliss of his own Self.”

Now, what is this ‘own Self’? It is not my self. It is not your self. It is not the bodily self. It is not the individual self. It is the Universal Being, the All-Being, the All-Presence, Bhuma. This is what is called the Self. And when we say the person enjoys himself, it is the Absolute that is enjoying Itself. That is what we are speaking about, and not Mr. So-and-so, not this person or that person enjoying. This is a very great distinction that we have to draw when we try to understand these passages of a highly mystical character. A person of this nature endowed with this knowledge, acquiring this realisation, becomes a master of himself, which means to say a master of all things. Self-mastery is mastery of the universe. He becomes Self-emperor, Self-king, ruling over the Self. To rule over the Self is to rule over everything that has the Self within itself, and this Self is everywhere. So he rules over everything everywhere. It is cosmic rulership that is intended by the word ‘self-kingship’,—*Atma-svarajya*. *Atma-svarajya* mentioned here is Universal Lordship. It is the experience of God-Being. Such is the experience that is bestowed upon this blessed Soul who has entered into the bosom of this knowledge, this realisation, this experience. This person can enter into every realm at any moment. Just as you can move from one room to another room of your house without any kind of impediment or obstruction, as you are the free master of your own house, so does this soul acquiring this knowledge enter into every plane of existence. Every realm of being becomes a free passage to this great one who has acquired this knowledge. He becomes possessed of cosmic freedom.

But what about those people who do not have this knowledge? They are subjected by other people and controlled by them. They are limited from all sides. It is they that take rebirth by pressure of circumstances. Whoever imagines that there are things outside one’s own self, he is naturally controlled by those things which are outside him. If one is living in a world of externalities, those externals shall compel one to subjugation to their own laws and mandates. This cannot be escaped. They are not Self-kings, which means to say that kings are outside them and they themselves are not kings. They are subjects and not kings. Their worlds are perishable. Whatever they get in this world is mere dust and ashes. They only reap sorrow in this world. They cannot get happiness, because they live in a world of finitude. They cannot have free entry into other worlds. They are limited to the circle of their own experience. These are the *jivas*, the bound souls who are bereft of this great knowledge we are speaking of.

THE PRIMACY OF SELF

Tasya ha va etasyaivam pasyatah, evam manvanasya, evam vijanata atmatah pranah, atmata asa, atmatah smarah, atmata akasah, atmatas-tejah, atmata apah, atmata avirbhava-tirobhavau atmato'nnam atmato balam, atmato vijnanam, atmato dhyanam, atmatas-cittam, atmatah samkalpah, atmato manah, atmato vak, atmato nama, atmato mantrah, atmatah karmani, atmata evedam sarvam iti.

To such a blessed one everything comes, rises from his own Self. He need not go hither and thither in search of things, because he has this knowledge. He does not have to go to things, but things go to him. The ocean does not go to the river, the river goes to the ocean. Whoever is endowed with this great experience, this knowledge, the possession of this wisdom, for such a person everything that has been mentioned in the gradation of the categories earlier, right from 'name' onwards up to the point we are discussing now, arises automatically from his own Self, because the supreme cause contains within itself everything else mentioned as its own effects. All these worlds, space, time and the five elements, all created beings, everything that we have been studying up to this time in the various stages of development of thought,—all this need not be approached separately or individually for satisfaction. They all come simultaneously rising from his own Self, the true Self, the Bhuma, because that Self being all, contains all, and therefore, all things come to that person who ceases to be an individual person any more. He is only a lodgment, apparently looking like a person in this world. He is a *Jivanmukta*, as they call him. He is really a repository of the absoluteness that he has realised. Everything comes to him, everything flows from his own being, because he himself is the all.

Tad-esa slokah: na pasyo mrtyum pasyati na rogam nota duhkhatam; sarvam ha pasyah pasyati sarvam apnoti sarvasah; iti.sa ekadha bhavati, tridha bhavati, pancadha saptadha navadha caiva punas-caikadasah smrtah, satam ca dasa caikas-ca sahasrani ca vimsatih ahara-suddhau sattva-suddhih, sattva-suddhau dhruva smritih, smrtilambhe sarva-granthinam vipra-moksah; tasmai mrdita-kasayaya tamuasah pararm darsayati bhagavan sanat कुमारah; tam skanda ity-acaksate, tam skanda ity-acaksate.

The chapter is here concluded. The Bhuma-Vidya has been expounded. One who has this realisation is free from every kind of affliction—physical, mental or otherwise. To him there is no death, no transmigration and no sorrow. No grief, no *adhibhautika*, *adhyatmika*, *adhidaivika* sorrow can afflict this person. Becoming all, this person sees the all. Having known this, he knows the all, because he is the all. Everything is attained at one stroke, not in succession as we hear of in this world. In every manner everything comes to him. Things come to us only in certain ways, not in every way. All things do not come to us at the same time. Certain things alone come to us, not all things. And even those certain things come to us at some times, not all times. And even at those times, they

come not in every way but only in a certain manner. But in his case, everything comes at all times, in every way. This is the great result that follows from this realisation.

In every manner of manifestation, in every possible pattern of existence or being, things flow into this person, because this person is inclusive of every pattern of being, of every place of existence, of every realm conceivable. That is the meaning of *sarvam apnoti sarvasah*. The Upanishad reiterates this very same meaning by saying that he becomes all,—one, two, three, four, a thousandfold, a millionfold,—whatever you can think of. All things are contained in this single experience, is the meaning which is made out by this exclamation of the Upanishad: “It is onefold, it is twofold, it is threefold, it is fivefold, it is sevenfold, it is ninefold, it is hundredfold, it is thousandfold, it is millionfold, as wide as this creation itself.” Such is the glory of this creation. The sun has one ray or seven rays or a million rays.

Interpreters of the Upanishad try to find a specific intention behind these numbers. They say that It is onefold as the one, non-dual Being. It is threefold, being *adhyatmika*, *adhibhautika* and *adhidaivika* or the three elements fire, water and earth. It is fivefold as the senses can catch, and sevenfold as the constituents of the body. It is ninefold as the five sense-organs and the four subdivisions of the mind. It is elevenfold as the ten organs and the mind. It is hundred and tenfold, and a thousand and twentyfold, when It includes many other categories. All these things are comprehended within this single Being. The manifoldness mentioned here is merely a categorising of this singleness of Being through the channels of perception and experience in various manifestations,—human, celestial, subhuman, etc. As is the nature of the incarnation, so is the nature of perception and experience. So all these categories are consumed by this single Being. What you call the inanimate world or the vegetable kingdom or the animal world, what you call the human level and superior worlds of celestials right up to *Brahma-loka*,—all these are comprehended within this single Reality in which there are no different levels of Being. It has no inanimate or animate category there. It has no distinction of subject and object, and It is the seer as well as the seen. This knowledge comes if your effort is properly directed. It does not suddenly drop from the sky, like a fruit that falls from the branch of a tree. Great effort is needed to acquire this knowledge.

Aharasuddhau sattvasuddhih—Purity of thought is a consequence of purity of diet. Here, some people are of the opinion that it means that we must take pure food—*sattvik* diet. But other thinkers opine that if you think wrongly and see evil things, even if you eat good pure food as cow’s milk, fruits, etc., it is not going to help you. So Sankaracharya particularly is of the opinion that it is an exhortation to receive pure things through every sense-organ including the mind. We must see purity, hear purity, touch purity, think purity, and sense purity. And what is purity? Purity is that which is compatible with the nature of the Absolute. This alone is purity. What is that which is compatible with the nature of the Absolute and what is not? Whenever we cognise a thing, perceive a thing, that thing should, from the point of view of our cognition or perception, be capable of being harmonised with the Absolute. We should not be incompatible with nature. That

thing alone is purity, and when that purity arises in the mind, there will be that capacity of concentration of mind which retains the consciousness of the Bhuma. That is the perpetual retention of memory, the *smriti* which this *mantra* mentions. We can never forget the Being, the Absolute in our own Being.

Then all *granthi*s, the knots of the heart, get broken. The knots of the heart are *avidya*, *kama* and *karma*—ignorance, desireful movement of the mind, and activity towards the fulfilment of desire. Sometimes they are called *brahma-granthi*, *vishnu-granthi* and *rudra-granthi*, all meaning one and the same thing, viz., the ties of the mind, the psychological knots by which we are tethered to earthly experience. They break immediately, and we enter into the ocean of Being.

Thus, Bhagavan Sanatkumara, the great master, initiates Narada who is free from all impurity of every kind, a fit disciple to be instructed by an exceptionally great master, into this great mystery of the Supreme Being, and takes the disciple across the ocean of sorrow. “This Sanatkumara,” says the Upanishad, “is called Skanda—*tam skanda ityacaksate*.” Sanatkumara is called Skanda, because he has crossed or leaped over the phenomenal existence, which is one interpretation of the word ‘Skanda’. There is also a story that Sanatkumara himself was born as Skanda or Kartikeya, the second son of Lord Siva, for the purpose of fulfilling a great purpose of the gods, as we read from the Puranas and epics. Whatever it be, we take the great master either as that divinity that took birth as Skanda in the next incarnation, or one who has crossed the ocean of sorrow, jumped into the Absolute across the phenomenality of life. To that divine person is our obeisance. He is Skanda,—he has reached the Absolute, and he takes us to the Absolute.