

Prashna Upanishad

A QUEST



Nagesh D. Sonde

Prashnopanishad

Introduction.

In studying the Vedic scriptures, Upanishads and commentaries written by great Acharyas as well as books written by modern authors, I was initially guided by what Confucius had said - "I am not born endowed with Knowledge, I am a man who loves the ancients and has made every effort to acquire their Learning". Having taken that advice, and being receptive to all good tidings coming from diverse quarters have committed myself as Yajnyavalkya endorsed, through to listen, reflect and meditate on things known. Out of such approach I gained broad understanding of the foundational principles of Vedanta.

This helped me to translate some of the principle Upanishads with commentaries of Sri Madhva in English language. My intention was not rely on the traditional approach but to respond on the basis of what I have been able to understand as the basis principles, keeping in mind the modern readers and the terminology which they would understand. I am fully aware and conscious that in doing so my response was influenced by my understanding and there is every possibility of my response may not meet fully the intended meaning of the original seers. Inge like Tula or the Acharyas.

I have now taken Prashnopanishad, for study and for responding. My first impression was that this Upanishad deals with summarising what is discussed in details in other Upanishads. Therefore I have not attempted to translate the commentaries of any Acharyas but respond on the basis on my understanding the other Vedas and other scriptures. There is therefore every possibility of me erring in understanding and make mistakes in responding.

N. D. Sonde

प्रश्नोपनिषद्

ॐ तत् सत्

ओं भद्रं कर्णेभिः शृणुयाम देवा । भद्रम् पश्येमावशभिर्यजत्राः । स्थिरैरङ्गैस्तुष्टुवाँसस्तनूभिः । व्यशेम देवहितं यदायुः ॥

Om. May we listen with our auspicious ears, O divine beings; may we see with our auspicious eyes ; may we be established well in the body allotted to us ; may we offer to the divine beings praises during our life.

ओं शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥

Om let there be peace in body, mind and the spirit, peace! peace, peace.

Response :

शान्ति मन्त्र, is the Hymn of Peace which prepares the Questor seek clarification of the doubts in mind. Before any thing new could be acquired the mind needs to free itself from the earlier impressions, the opinions, the thoughts, the information earlier collected, the learning and make the free and unconditioned as the mind of a child. Only then as Yajnyavalkya said one can be perceive, listen, be receptive and meditative.

Brihad Aranyaka Up. says that the man of Wisdom having done with learning like a child (with unconditioned mind). After living in the state like a child and living with all his learning, becomes silent meditator, मुनि. Having done both non-meditative and meditative states, then he (is qualified to be) becomes a main of Wisdom -
"तस्मात्ब्राह्मणः पाण्डित्यं निर्विद्य बाल्येन तिष्ठासेत् । बाल्यं च पाण्डित्यं निर्विद्याथ मुनिरमौनं च मौनं निर्विद्याथ ब्राह्मणः ॥".

Therefore, every Questor should be श्रद्धावान्, be receptive to the essence, to the mystical truths behind the gross form of the communication. He should therefore required to be receptive with a silent and unconditioned Mind to be a good listener. Hence the Shanti Mantra, invocation for peaceful mind.

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॥ प्रथम प्रश्नः ॥

ओं सुकेशा च भारद्वाजः शैब्यश्च सत्यकामः सौर्यायणी च गार्ग्यः कौसल्यश्चाश्वलायनो भार्गवो वैदर्भिः कबन्धी कात्यायनस्ते हैते ब्रह्मपरा ब्रह्मनिष्ठाः परंब्रह्मान्वेषमाणा एष ह वै तत्सर्वं वक्ष्यतीति ते ह समित्पाणयो भगवन्तं पिप्पलादमुपसन्नाः ॥ १ ॥

Sukêsa, son of Bhâradvâja, Satyakâma, son of Sibi, Gârgya, a son of the Sun, Kausalya, son of Asvalayana, and Bhârgava of Vidarbha and Kabandhî, son of Kâtya all these being eager to be wise in Wisdom of Brahman, established in Brahman, seeking Brahman, approached the resplendent Pippalâda reverently with folded hands for being initiated.

तान्ह स ऋषिरुवाच भूय एव तपसा ब्रह्मचर्येण श्रद्धया संवत्सरं संवत्स्यथ यथाकामं प्रश्नान्पृच्छत यदि विज्ञास्यामः सर्वं ह वो वक्ष्याम इति ॥ २ ॥

To them the seer said: live for a year in austerity, performing actions as student of Brahman and be receptive and then inquire as they desire. He will surely communicate whatever he knows.

Response :

Quest for Wisdom is not being acquisition of information or being Knowledgable of things in on creation but is a journey which leads one from the gross non existence to the subtle Existence, from dark obscurity to luminous light, from mortality to immortality - "असतो ना सद्गमय, तमसो मा ज्योतिर्गमय, मृत्योर्मा मृतम गमय". Quest begins with inquiry of the things in creation, "को अद्वा वेद क इह प्र वोचाकृत आजाता कुत इयं विसृष्टिः" and culminates transcending the dark obscurity of things in creation, being luminous of the light beyond creation - "निष्कलं तच्छुभ्रं ज्योतिषां ज्योतिः" and experiencing that by which unheard becomes heard, unseen becomes seen and the Unknown becomes known - "येनाश्रुतं श्रुतं भवत्यमतं मतम् मनातेविज्ञानमिति . ."

अथ कबन्धी कात्यायन उपेत्य पप्रच्छ । भगवन् कुतो ह वा इमाः प्रजाः प्रजायन्त इति ॥ ३ ॥

Then Kabandhî, having approached Kâtyâyana asked: Resplendent One, whence are these creatures born?

तस्मै स होवाच प्रजाकामो वै प्रजापतिः स तपोऽतप्यत स तपस्तस्वा स मिथुनमुत्पादयते । रयिं च प्राणं चेत्येतौ मे बहुधा प्रजाः करिष्यत इति ॥ ४ ॥

To him he said: 'The Lord of Creatures desired of having creatures. He performed austerities and out of austerities arose the pair, the light and the effulgence, both making him create variously as his progeny.

Response :

Then, That One - तदानीम् obscured beyond recognition and there being nothing else. The Seers designated it simply as सत्य, Existence, a word derived from the root अस्, to be, to exist, there being nothing else to be related to. Then सत्य, the Prime Existence was undifferentiated to become differentiated as the essence (नाम) and the form (रूप), सत्य, the divine essence entering even to tip of the nails .
.. "तद्धेदं तर्ह्याकृतमासीत्तन्नामरूपाभ्यामेवव्याक्रीयतासौनामा मयमिदं रूपं इति .
. स एष प्रविष्टः । आनखाग्रेभ्यो . . . ". Therefore,

आदित्यो ह वै प्राणो रयिरेव चन्द्रमा रयिर्वा एतत्सर्वं यन्मूर्तं चामूर्तं च तस्मान्मूर्तिरेव रयिः ॥ ५ ॥

The Sun is प्राण, the essence and the Moon was reflection, रूप, the form, all these were मूर्त, the forms and अनुक्तं, the unspoken, formless essence, therefore, the form verily was the reflection of the essence.

Response :

सत्य as नाम, the essence is not seen - तं न पश्यति because he is incomplete - "अकृत्स्नो हि सः". He is known by the performance of actions, when breathing as प्राण, when speaking as वाक्, when seeing as चक्षु, when hearing as श्रोत्र, when thinking as मन -

"सप्राणन्नेव प्राणो नाम भवति । वदन्वाक्पश्यंश्चक्षुः श्रुण्वन्श्रोत्रं मन्वानो मनस्तान्यस्यैतानि कर्मनामान्येव ।". The Sun is not seen, everything is seen when the Sun spreads its luminous light of them. The Sun is not seen but illumined by the Sun, the Moon is seen.

अथादित्य उदयन्यत्प्राचीं दिशं प्रविशति तेन प्राच्यान्प्राणान्निषु सन्निधते । यद्वक्त्रिणां यत्प्रतीचीं यदुदीचीं यदधो यदूर्ध्वं यदन्तरा दिशो यत्सर्वं प्रकाशयति तेनसर्वान्प्राणान्निषु सन्निधते ॥ ६ ॥

Now the Sun when dawns illumines the eastern quarters, doing so he energises every thing in the east. When the Sun illumines the southern, the western, the northern, the lower and the higher, the middle quarters and the rest, by that all the quarters become illumined.

Response :

The Sun is not seen but all the things in creation are seen when the Sun becomes luminous. नाम, the essence is not seen but one becomes conscious of नाम, the essence when the forms, रूप, perform actions. If one desires to see the Sun, as नाम, the essence then one has to shift one's attention from the रूप, the forms in creation.

One should pray Pushan to remove the golden disc and gather the radiance of the luminous rays so that one may perceive your benevolent form - "हिरण्मयेन पात्रेण सस्यस्यापिहितं मुखम् । तत्त्वं पुश्यन्नपावृणुसत्यघर्माय दृष्टये ॥ पूषन्नेकर्षे यम सूर्यं प्राजपत्य व्यूह रश्मीन्समूह तेजः । यते रूपंकल्याणतमं तते पश्यामि ।".

स एष वैश्वानरो विश्वरूपः प्राणोऽग्निरुदयते । तदेतदृचाभ्युक्तम् ॥ ७ ॥

This is universal manifestation, universal form, the Prime Breath, the resurgent energy. That, verily is declared in hymns.

Response :

The gross elemental form (रूप) of अग्नि (fire) is not वैश्वानर , but the divine essence (नाम), the resurgent energy within the gross form is वैश्वानर. अग्नि became the symbol of resurgence because whichever direction one holds the fire it always shoots upward one and makes the universe luminous.

विश्वरूपं हरिणं जातवेदसं परायणं ज्योतिरेकं तपन्तम् । सहस्ररश्मिः शतधा वर्तमानः प्राणः प्रजानामुदयत्येष सूर्यः ॥ ८ ॥

Having universal form, luminous, omniscient, transcendental, singularly resurgent flame, energy, with thousand rays, manifest in hundred forms, the Prime Breath in entire creation, this very Sun.

Response :

वैश्वानर, अग्नि is universal in form, luminous in energy, enlightened as one wise in Wisdom, spiritual in essence manifest in many forms, the very breath of all beings, the luminous Sun that nurtures the creation.

संवत्सरो वै प्रजापतिस्तस्यायने दक्षिणं चोत्तरं च । तद्ये ह वै तदिष्टापूर्ते कृतमित्युपासते । ते चान्द्रमसमे व लोकमभिजयन्ते । त एव पुनरावर्तन्ते तस्मादेत ऋषयःप्रजाकामा दक्षिणं प्रतिपद्यन्ते । एष ह वै रयिर्यः पितृयाणः ॥ ९ ॥

The year verily is the lord of the creation; two-fold are his paths, the southern and the northern. Those who follow their desires, they perform actions. They attain the form similar to the Moon and return again. Therefore, the seers who desire progeny, follow the southern Path. They verily reach the world (form) of the ancestors.

Response :

वैश्वानर, अग्नि is not of the present moment but is of the three periods of Time. Those who desire are given to perform actions. They receive the rewards as their desires come to be. They come back to this world once the rewards are enjoyed.

अथोत्तरेण तपसा ब्रह्मचर्येण श्रद्धया विद्ययात्मानमन्विष्यादित्यमभिजयन्ते । एतद्वै प्राणानामायतनमेतदमृतमभयमेतत् । परायणमेतस्मान्न पुनरावर्तन्त इत्येषनिरोधः । तदेष श्लोकः ॥ १० ॥

Now by the northern Path, by austerity, by performing actions as student of Brahman, by being receptive, by being wise in Wisdom of the Self, they attain the form similar to the Sun. This verily is the abode of the Prime Breath, the immortal, fearless. It is transcendental, from where there is no return. As to this, here is the verse.

Response:

Those who follow the path through austerity and performing actions that lead to Brahman, being receptive to the words of Wisdom, becoming wise in Wisdom they reach the enlightened world, from where they do not return to this world.

पञ्चपादं पितरं द्वादशाकृतिं दिव आहुः परे अर्धे पुरीषिणम् । अथेमे अन्य उ परे विचक्ष्णं सप्तचक्रे षडर आहुरर्पितमिति ॥ ११ ॥

Some refer him as the father with five-fold reach and having twelve-fold form dwelling in the higher half of the heavens and dwelling therein while some others refer him as one within whom the whole worlds dwells, wise in all the seven days and the six seasons.

Response:

Some refer to this world as luminous world where the five gross elements - fire, air, water, earth and space along with the twelve subtlest essences - the five organs of senses and five organs of action, the mind, intellect and ego-sense come be gathered, the seven days and the six seasons.

मासो वै प्रजापतिस्तस्य कृष्णपक्ष एव रयिः शुक्लः प्राणः तस्मादेत ऋषयः शुक्ल इष्टं कुर्वन्तीतर इतर स्मिन् ॥ १२ ॥

Month verily is the Prajapati, dark half is his रूप, his form, the reflection. The bright half is नाम, his essence. Therefore seers prefer perform the bright period of the month while others prefer the other period.

Response:

अहोरात्रो वै प्रजापतिस्तस्याहरेव प्राणो रात्रिरेव रयिः प्राणं वा एते प्रस्कन्दन्ति ये दिवा रत्या संयुज्यन्ते ब्रह्मचर्यमेव तद्यद्रात्रौ रत्या संयुज्यन्ते ॥ १३ ॥

Day and the night, both are indeed, the lord of creation. Of that, the day is the प्राण (the essence, नाम), the night is the food (the form. रूप). They spill the essence who enjoin during the day; they become resurgent verily as student of Brahman, who enjoin during the night.

Response :

The contradictory forces in world need not necessarily be opposite to one another. They can as well be forces which complement each other. The essence (नाम) needs the form (रूप) to be proactive and the form (रूप) cannot be proactive without the the essence (नाम) being within the form (रूप). That is why Krishna says, "अजोऽपि सन्नव्ययात्मा भूतानामीश्वरोऽपि सन् । प्रकृतीं स्वामधिष्ठाय संसभवामि।युगे युगे ॥". When That Alone was there as existence, and incomprehension was enveloped by incomprehension, the creation came to be; out of darkness light comes to be, out of ignorance wisdom dawns.

अन्नं वै प्रजापतिस्ततो ह वै तद्रेतस्तस्मादिमाः प्रजाः प्रजायन्त इति ॥ १४ ॥

Food indeed, is the lord of creation; from that, indeed is the semen produced ; from that are all these creatures are born.

तद्ये ह वै तत्प्रजापतिव्रतं चरन्ति ते मिथुनमुत्पादयन्ते । तेषामेवैष ब्रह्मलोको येषां तपो ब्रह्मचर्यं येषु सत्यं प्रतिष्ठितम् ॥ १५ ॥ तेषामसौ विरजो ब्रह्मलोको न येषु जिह्ममनृतं न माया चेति ॥ १६ ॥

Thus, verily, is the process of procreation is undertaken and enjoining is disciplined. To them verily is the world of Brahman, in whom austerity and traversing the Path of

Brahman is assuredly is well founded. For them is the world of Brahman, with no crookedness, falsehood or delusion.

Response:

The scriptures do not speak of mortal creatures but of immortal sons - अमृतस्य पुत्राः. All creatures are verily born of Prajapati, the enlightened divinities and the unenlightened demons - "द्वया ह प्राजपत्या देवाश्चासुराश्च ।". The scriptures speak of the enlightened few, not the unenlightened many. The one who seeks solution to his problems is the one who is on the way to become the Questor, as said in Rigveda, "वि मे कर्णा पतयतो वि वक्षुर्वि इदंज्योतिर्हृदय आहितं यत् । वि मे मनश्चरति दूरआधिः किं स्विद् व क्ष्यामि किमु नु मनिष्ये ॥" - keeping my ears open to hear, eyes to see the light within myself which shines beyond; my mind roams with thoughts afar, what shall I speak, what shall I think. One who wants to the purpose and the goal of life. The scriptures are for him, not for one who prefers to groan under the weight of suffering and has no intention of desire to know why he suffering and how he can end the sufferings. Therefore, the enlightened persons, the अमृतस्य पुत्राः, for them is the austere life and traversing the Path that leads to Brahman. For such ones is the world of Brahman, with no crookedness, falsehood or delusion.

॥ इति प्रथम प्रश्नः ॥

Thus was the first question

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। द्वितीय प्रश्नः ॥

अथ हैनं भार्गवो वैदर्भीः पप्रच्छ । भगवन्कत्येव देवाः प्रजां विचारयन्ते कतर एतत्प्रकाशयन्ते कः पुनरेषां वरिष्ठ इति ॥ १ ॥

Then Bhargava from Vidarbha asked, Resplendent One, how many divinities support the creations? , How they illumine and who among them all is the greareonse:

Response :

The Questor was eager to earlier as he is eager to know now and will be eager to know in future. The true Questor inquires out of wonder, he is not inquisitive, nor is he bewildered from what he. Sees, knows and experiences. The Rigvedic seer says, I hearken you till the end of the world, I ask where the centre of the earth is, I ask you of the inexhaustible energising seed. I ask the highest heavens where the abiding space of the Supreme ? –

"पृच्छामि त्वापरमंतं पृथिव्याःपृच्छामि यत्र भुवनस्य नाभिः । पृच्छामि त्वा वृष्णो अश्वस्य रेतःपृच्छामि वाचः परमं व्योम ॥". The Kena Upanishad acquired it name because of such quest: "ॐ केनेषितं पतति प्रेषितं मनः केन प्राणः प्रैति युक्तः । केनेषितं वाचमिमां वदन्ति चक्षुःश्रोत्रं क उ देवो युक्ति ॥" - By whom willed and directed does the Mind becomes energised to seek the clarity of the objects ? By whom commanded does the first one move? At whose will do the people speak the Speech ? Who it is that prompts the eye and ear? The quest ends when when the Knowledge is communicated, elucidated and experience, whereupon the Questor exclaims "वेदाहम् पुरुष महांतम् आदित्यवर्णं तमसः परस्तात् ॥".

तस्मै स होवाच । आकाशो ह वा एष देवो वायुरग्निरापः पृथिवी वांग्मनश्चक्षुः श्रोत्रं च । ते प्रकाश्याभिवदन्ति वयमेतद्वाणमवष्टभ्यः विचारयन्तेः ॥ २ ॥

To him, he said, space verily is the only divinity, air, fire, water, earth, speech, mind, eye and ear as well? Having made every thing else luminous, they declare - We sustain and support this body.

Response :

The space, air, fire, water, earth are the gross elements and speech, mind, eye and the ear are gross medium and the organs of action. When the divine essence within them energises these elements and organs, they become luminous the divine instruments, the Gods and become proactive to perform actions to uphold and sustain the creation. But human beings in their own arrogance interfere in the activities assigned to these gross elements and the organs of action, thereby create imbalance in divine purpose ending I'm havoc and destruction.

तानवरिष्टः प्राण उवाच । मा मोहमापद्यथाहमेवैतत्पंचधात्मानं प्रविभज्यैतद्वाणमवष्टभ्य विधारयामीति ॥
३ ॥

Greatest among them all is प्राण, the Prime Breath, he said" do not Breath. Do not cherish this delusion. Dividing myself five-fold I sustain and support the body.

Response :

Greatest among al the elements if प्राण, the prime Breath. Therefore, Chhandogya Upanishad says, verily he who knows the oldest and the best becomes himself the oldest and the best: प्राण, the Prime Breath, indeed, is the oldest and best - "ॐ यो ह वै ज्येष्ठं च श्रेष्ठं च वेद ज्येष्ठं हवै श्रेष्ठश्च भवति प्राणो वाव ज्येष्ठश्च ॥". Much earlier in Rigveda it was mentioned that : Without breathing That One alone existed with self-impulse, other than That One, there was nothing else - "अनीदवातं स्वधया तदेकं तस्माद्दान्यत्र परः किंचनास ।". The Puranas explained graphically that before creation begins the Supreme Being, Narayana reposes on शेष, the remainder. अनंत, for the period with out end in Yoga Nidra with only his Breath reverberating in life. Thus the close association of प्राण with the Supreme Being having been established, प्राण, the Prime Breath being the oldest and the best.

तेऽश्रद्धमाना बभूवुः । सोऽभिमानादूर्ध्वमुत्क्रामत इव तस्मिन्नुत्क्रामत्यथेतरे सर्व एवोत्क्रामन्ते तस्मिंश्च प्रतिष्ठामाने सर्व एव प्रतिष्ठन्ते । तद्यथा मक्षिकामधुकरराजानमुत्क्रामन्तं सर्वा एव प्रातिष्ठन्त एवं वांग्वनश्चक्षुःश्रोत्रं च ते प्रीताः प्राण स्तुवन्ति ॥ ४ ॥

They were not receptive. Being proud, he rose upward from the body, as it were. On his rising above all others also rose upward from the body; his being established, others too were established. Even as the bees rise upward when the presiding ruler rises up, they settle down when the presiding ruler settles down, even so speech, mind, sight and hearing settle down. Being pleased they praise प्राण, the Prime Breath.

Response :

Death comes to those who identify themselves with gross form (रूप) of the body that decays, degenerates and come to be destroyed, not to those who identify themselves with the essence (नाम) within which neither decays, degenerates nor is destroyed. Therefore when body decays, degenerates and is destroyed, the eye, the ear, the speech and the mind also come to decay, degenerate and destroyed. But the प्राण, the Prime Breath which is within is neither decays, degenerates nor is destroyed.

Brihad Aranyaka Upanishad says that when Death takes possession of speech, eye, ear, it does not takes possession of the one who was central to all, प्राण, the Prime Breath saying this is the greatest among them all, since whether moving or not moving, is not perturbed, is not injured - "अयं वै नः श्रेष्ठो यः संचरश्चासंचरश्च न व्यथतेऽथोक रिष्यति . . .". Therefore, one prays Shiva, the three-eyed Shiva, the who is aware of the past, present and the future to deliver him from the bondage of the decaying, degenerating eye, ear, speech and the mind but not from the immortal प्राण, the Prime Breath within.

एषोऽग्निस्तपत्येष सूर्य एष पर्जन्योमघवानेष वायुः । एष पृथिवीरयिदेवः सदसच्चामृतं च यत् ॥ ५ ॥

As Agni he burns. He is the Sun. He is Indra, who showers rain. He is the Air. He is earth, the luminous divinity. He is existence and non-existence and the immortal as well.

Response :

As long as प्राण, the Prime Breath exists and makes the organs of senses resurgent that long the body survives and is active. The moment प्राण, the Prime Breath leaves the body, there is none other which energises the body to survive and become active. It is प्राण, the Prime Breath as the thread, सूत्र, the Primary instrument by which the Supreme Being enables the eye to see, the ear to hear, speech to speak, mind to think - "वायुर्वै गौतम तत्सूत्रं वायुना वै गौतम सूत्रेणायं च लोकः परश्च लोकः सर्वाणि च भूतानि सन्दृब्धानि भवन्ति तस्माद्गौतम पुरुषं प्रेतमादुर्व्यस्रंसिषतास्यांगानीति वायुना हि गौतम सूत्रेणायं संदृब्धानि भवन्तीति . . .".

अरा इव रथनाभौ प्राणे सर्वं प्रतिष्ठितम् । ऋचो यजूषि सामानि यज्ञः क्षत्रं ब्रह्म च ॥ ६ ॥

Like spoke in the centre of the wheel, every thing becomes centred in. प्राण, the Prime Breath, as Rik, Yujus and Sama hymns, the sacrifice, valor and Wisdom.

Response :

The importance of प्राण, the Prime Breath is further emphasised showing the प्राण, being the centre, the focus, the fulcrum around which the whole creation revolves - "ॐ यो ह वै ज्येष्ठं च श्रेष्ठं च वेद ज्येष्ठश्च ह वै श्रेष्ठश्च भवति प्राणोवाव ज्येष्ठश्च ॥" says Chhandogya Up.

प्रजापतिश्चरसि गर्भं त्वमेव प्रतिजायसे तुभ्यं प्राण प्रजास्त्विमा बलिं हरन्ति यः प्राणाः प्रतिष्ठसि ॥ ७ ॥

As Prajapati, you verily move in the womb, you, verily is one who is born again. Having offered you, O प्राण, the creatures here become established.

Response :

What is the source of every creature. Brihad Aranyaka Up. says do not say that the semen is the source, in that case from what source does a mortal springs forth when he is dead ? When born he is not born for who. Should create him again ? It is Wisfom, Bliss and Brahman Wisdom that creates a new creatures come to be -
"रेतस इति मा। वोचत जीवतस्तत्प्राजयते ?

.. जात एव न ज्ञायते को न्वेनं जनयत्पुनः । विज्ञानमानंदं ब्रह्म रतिर्दातुः परायणं तिष्ठमानस्यतद्विद इति ॥" .

देवानामसि वह्नितमः पितृणां प्रथमा स्वधा । ऋषीणां चरितं सत्यमथर्वागीरससामसि ॥ ८ ॥

Among the divinities you the Agni, bearer of the offerings, to the parents being the principal one, you are, indeed, the true Atharva and Angira.

Response:

Saying among divinities प्राण, the Prime Breath, is Agni, the resurgent attribute of the प्राण is highlighted, since Agni is the पुरोहित, the forerunner and Vishnu is the ultimate effulgence, repeatedly emphasised in Bramanas and Puranas. Even so प्राण is said to be Atharva and Angira and Brihaspati, the Lord of effulgence, further clarifying that Speech is Brahman, that is to say that when becomes effulgent it becomes wisdom, therefore he is the Lord of Wisdom - Brahmanapati, the Wisdom, creatures -
"एष उ एव बृहस्पतिर्वाग्वै बृहती तस्या एषपतिस्तस्मादु बृहस्पतिः ॥ एष उ एव ब्रह्मणस्पतिर्वाग्वै ब्रह्म तस्या एष पतिस्तस्मादु ब्रह्मणस्पतिः॥".

When the other organs of senses were incapable of uttering Udgitha in the face of the Asuras, प्राण, the Prime Breath alone could do so, and the demons asked where प्राण, the Prime Breath has gone, they were told that प्राण, he is established in the mouth, and in Brihad Aranyak Upanishad he is referred as Ayasa Angiras, for he is the essence of the limbs, yes प्राण, the Prime Breath. Therefore from whichever limb प्राण, the Prime Breath departs, that indeed dries up, for it is really the essence of the limb -
"सोऽवास्य आंगीरसोऽगानां हि रसः प्राणो हि वा अंगानां रसः प्राणो हि अंगानांरसस्तस्माद्यस्माच्चांगात्प्राण उत्क्रान्ति तदेव तच्छुष्यत्येष हि वा अंगानां रसः ।" .

इन्द्रस्त्वं प्राण तेजसा रुद्रोऽसि परिरक्षिता । त्वमंतरिक्षे चरसि सूर्यस्त्वं ज्योतिषां पतिः ॥ ९ ॥

You प्राण are Indra the resplendent one, you are Rudra the saviour, you are the Sun, the supreme Lord shining in the mid-region.

यदा त्वमभिवर्षत्सथेमा : प्राणते प्रजाः । आनंदारूपास्तिष्ठन्ति कामायान्नं भविष्यतीति ॥ १० ॥

When you shower rains then the creatures breathe with bliss, hoping to be nurtured with food.

ग्रात्ययत्त्वं प्रणैकर्षिरता विश्वस्य स्त्रिः । वयमायस्य दातार पिता त्वं मातरिष्वा नः ॥ ११ ॥

प्राण, O Prime Breath, you are pure, seer in solitude, the real Lord of the Universe. We offer what is to be offered, you are the father, O Matarishva.

या ते तनूर्वाचि प्रतिष्ठिता या श्रोत्रे या च चक्षुषि । या च मनसि सन्तता शिवां तां कुरुवोत्क्रमीः ॥ १२ ॥

Or you are the one established in speech, or in ear, or in eye, or ever in mind, make that auspicious, onto leave us.

प्राणस्येदं वशे सर्वं त्रिदिवे यत्प्रतिष्ठितम् । मातेव पुत्रान्नक्षस्व श्रीश्च प्रजां च विधेहि न इति ॥

All this verily is under the protection of प्राण, the Prime Breath, that which is established in the three worlds. Like mother protect us your sons, giving wealth and wisdom.

Response:

The verses eight to twelve while speak of the all comprehensive and all pervading reach of प्राण, the Prime Breath, it also reminds us of the description of Devi as the energy in every thing in universe, as described in Devisukta, where she is described as विष्णुमाया, the formatting power of Vishnu, and present within every thing in Creation - "या सर्वभूतेषु विष्णुमायेति संस्थिता ...

बुद्धिरूपेण .. निद्रारूपेण .. क्षुधारूपेण .. छाया रूपेण ..क्षुधारूपेण..छाया रूपेण..शक्तिरूपेण.. तृष्णारूपेण .. क्षान्तिरूपेण ..लज्जारूपेण.. शान्तिरूपेण..श्रद्धारूपेण..कान्तिरूपेण..लक्ष्मीरूपेण..वृत्तिरूपेण..स्मृतिरूपेण..दयारूपेण..तुष्टिरूपेण..मातृरूपेण..भ्रान्तिरूपेण..etc.

Speaking of the role of the various divinities in spiritual evolution Sri Aurobindo said, "The importance of Vedic gods has not to be measured by the number of hymns devoted to the or by the extent to which they are invoked in the thoughts of the Rishis, but by the functions which they perform. Agni and Imdra to whom majority of hymns are addressed are not greater than Vishnu and Rudra, but the functions which they fulfil in

the internal and external world were the most active, dominant and directly effective for the psychological discipline of the ancient Mystic s; this alone is the reaso of their dominance".

॥ इति द्वितीय प्रश्नः ॥

Thus was the second question.

ooooo

॥ तृतीय प्रश्नः ॥

अथ हैनं कौसल्यश्यायनः पप्रच्छ । भगवन्कृत एष प्राणो जायते कथमायात्यस्मिंशरीर आत्मानं वा प्रविभज्य कथं प्रातिष्ठते केनोत्क्रमते कथं बाह्यमभिधत्तेकथमध्यात्ममिति ॥ १॥

Then Kaushalya, son of Ashwala asked – O Resplendent One, from where this प्राण, the Prime Breath is born? How does it come into this body as the Self, and how does it become established having been divided itself, how does it depart ? What is said to be external and what is internal?

तस्मै स होवाच अतिप्रश्नान्पृच्छसि ब्रह्मिष्ठोऽसीति तस्मात्तेऽहंब्रवीमि ॥२॥

To him he replied, you are asking highly mystical questions. However since you are inclined to know Brahman, I will speak to you.

Response:

Only when the one who desires Wisdom of Brahman approaches in proper manner with tranquil mind and peace in heart a teacher who is wise in Wisdom will initiate. Wisdom of Brahman is not information acquired or Knowledge gained but indescribable bliss experienced. Brahman is mystical in essence not accessible to the organs of senses. Brahman is first known and later experienced as the very Existence, the beginning and the end of all Wisdom. When he is experienced, his true nature as सत्य, the Prime Existence becomes revealed - "अस्तिति एवोपलब्धव्यस्तत्वभावेन चोभयं । अस्तिति एवोपलब्धस्य तत्वभावः प्रसीदति॥".

आत्मन एष प्राणो जायते । यथैषा पुरुषे छायेतस्मिन्नेतदाततं मनोकृतेनायात्यस्मिन्शरीरे ॥३॥

From the Self verily प्राण, the Prime Breath is born. Just as reflection is extension of Purusha, the man, प्राण is extension of the Self. Having been the action of the mind, it comes in the body.

Response :

The Self referred here is not the individual self, but the Supreme Self, the Prime Existence of all existences and प्राण, the Prime Breath verily is the existence, that verily is the Prime Existence - "तस्योपनिषत्सत्यस्य सत्यमितिप्राणा वै सत्यं तेषामेष सत्यम् ॥". The Self referred here is Brahman, the Supreme Being, who is the source from which all are born, in whom all live and in whom all becomes integrated. That is Brahman, on who becomes effulgent -

"यतो वा इमानि भूतानि जायन्ते । येन जातानि जीवन्ति । यत्सप्रयन्त्यभिसंविशन्ति । तद्विजिज्ञासस्व । तद्ब्रह्मेति ॥" as said in Taittiriya Up. As spider moves along the thread, as small spark comes from the fire, from this Self come all breaths, all worlds, all divinities, all beings says Brihad Aranyak Up. -

"स यथोर्णनाभिस्तन्तुनोच्चरेद्यथाग्ने क्षुद्रिमिश्राण्यसकृदावर्तानि विस्फुल्लिंगाव्युचरन्त्येवमेवास्मादात्मनः सर्वे प्राणाः सर्वे लोकाः सर्वे देवाः सर्वाणि भूतानि व्युचरन्ति ।". The Brahmin, the Kshatriya, these worlds, these gods, these Vedas, these beings, all these things are this Self - "इदं ब्रह्मेदं क्षत्रमिमे लोका इमे देवा इमे वेदा इमानि भूतानीद सर्वं यदयमात्मा ॥" says Brihad Aranyaka Up. Therefore , he who knowsप्राण, the Prime Breath of the breath, Eye of the eye, Ear of the ear, Mind of the mind, they have surely realised the ancient primordial Brahman -

"प्राणस्य प्राणं उत चक्षुश्च चक्षुः उत श्रोत्रस्य श्रोत्रं मनसो ये मनो विदुः । तेनिचिक्युर्ब्रह्मपुराणमग्र्यम् ॥"

यथा साम्राडेवाधिकृतान्विनियुक्तं एतान्ग्रामानेतान्ग्रामान् अधिष्ठिस्वेत्येवमेतैष प्राण इतरान्प्राणान्पृथक्पृथगेव सन्निधत्ते ॥ ४ ॥

Just as a King directs his officials directs them to be established in the villages and preside over them, प्राण, the Prime Breath directs other breaths to be established in different organs and preside over over their activities.

Response :

Brihad Aranyaka Up says that when the undifferentiated Supreme Brahman became differentiated as नाम and रूप and saw that he verily is all that which has be come effulgent and that there were no one else in creation. Therefore he exclaimed , "अहं ब्रह्मास्मि, अहं वावसृष्टिरस्मि". Supreme Self indeed is the maker of the universe, he is the maker of all. He is the world, indeed he is the world itself - "स विश्वकृत, सर्वस्य कर्ता, तस्य लोकाः स उ लोक एव।".

Yajnyavalkya says to Gargi, "एतदक्षरं गार्ग्यदृष्टं दृष्टश्रुतं श्रोत्रमतं मन्त्रविज्ञातं विज्ञातृ नान्यदतोऽस्ति द्रष्टृ नान्यदोऽस्ति श्रोतृमान्यदोऽस्ति मन्तृ नान्यदोऽस्ति विज्ञात्रेतस्मिन्नुखल्वक्षरे गार्ग्याकाश ओतश्च प्रोतश्चेति ॥" - verily that Imperishable is unseen but is the seer, is unheard but is the hearer, unthought but is the thinker, Unknown but the knower. There no other seer but this, no other hearer but this, no other thinker but this, no other knower but this. By this Imperishable, O Gargi, is the Space woven like warp and woof.

The Self is the Lord of the elements, the organs of sense and the organs of actions operate under the command of the the Supreme Lord, at the command of that

Imperishable the Sun and the Moon . . Heaven and earth . . Moments, hours, days, and nights, half-months, seasons, years stand in their respective positions. Some rivers flow to the east, some flow from snow peaks, some flow to the east, some flow from snow peaks, some flow to the west . . . Men praise the charitable, Gods desire offerings and fathers desire oblation. Taittiriya Up. says that from fear of him the winds blow, the Sun rises, from fear of him of him the fire, Indra or the Death become resurgent - "भीषास्माद्वात पलते । भीषोदेति सूर्यः । भीषास्मादग्निश्चेन्द्रश्च मृत्युर्धावति पंचमः॥".

पायपस्थेऽपानं चक्षुःश्रोत्रे मुखनासिकाभ्यां प्राणः स्वयं प्रातिष्ठते मध्ये तु समानः । एष ह्येतद्भुतमन्नं यमं नयति तस्मादेताः सप्तार्चिषो भवन्ति ॥ ५ ॥

In the excretory and the generative region is established अपान, the downward breath, in the eye, ear and the mouth is established प्राण itself, in the middle the समान, which balances the food offered, from where arise the seven enemies.

Response :

How does one search Supreme Being since he is unseen ? The Supreme Being is not seen but is to be experienced in the actions performed by him in Creation through the actions performed through the elements and organs of senses and of action - "अकृत्स्नो हि स प्राणान्नेव प्रणो नाम भवति । वदन्वाक्पश्यंश्चक्षुः श्रुण्वन्श्रोत्रं मन्वानो मनस्तान्यस्यैता नि कर्मनामान्येव ।".

The Supreme Being as प्राण, the Prime Breath operates by dividing itself in five-fold manner as - "प्राणोऽपानोव्यान उदानः समानोऽनइत्येतसर्वप्राण एव". The Supreme Self is within all these being breath who as प्राण breathes in when one breathes in, who as अपान breathes out when one breathes, as व्यान breathes about when one breathes about, as who as उदान breathes upward when one breathes upward - "सर्वान्तरो यः प्राणेन प्राणिति स त आत्मा सर्वान्तरो योऽपानेनापानीति स त आत्मासर्वान्तरो योव्यानेन व्यानीति स त आत्मा सर्वान्तरो यउदानेनोदानीति स त आत्मा सर्वान्तर एष त आत्मा सर्वान्तरः ॥".

हृदि ह्येष आत्मा । अत्रैतदेकशतं नाडीनां तासां शतंशतमेकैकस्या द्वासप्ततिर्द्वासप्ततिः प्रतिशाखानाडीसहस्राणि भवन्त्यासु व्यानश्चरति ॥ ६ ॥

In the heart verily is आत्मा, the Supreme Self, wherein are the hundred and one arteries, within which are the hundred arteries, from which are the further seventy-two thousand arteries, through which moves व्यान.

अथैकयोर्ध उदानः पुण्येन पुण्यं लोकं नयति पापेन पापमुभाभ्यामेव मनुष्यलोकम् ॥ ७ ॥

Upward rises उदान, merits leading ones to meritorious worlds, demerits leading one to demeritorious worlds, both in the world of human beings.

आदित्यो ह वै बाह्यः प्राण उदयत्येष ह्येनं चाक्षुषं प्राणमनुगृह्णानः । पृथिव्यां या देवता सैषा पुरुषस्यापानम
वष्टभ्यान्तरायदाकाशः स समानो वायुर्व्यानः ॥ ८ ॥

The Sun verily, is the external प्राण, by whom the eyes become energised. The divinity which abides in and supports the earth is अपान. That which is between the two is समान. वायु, the Air is व्यान.

तेजो ह वा उदानस्तस्मादुपशान्ततेजाः । पुनर्भवमिन्द्रियैर्मनसि संपद्यमानैः ॥ ९ ॥

Energy verily is उदान, from which the extinguished energy become born again along with the senses merged in the mind.

यच्चित्तस्तेनैष प्राणमायाति प्राणस्तेजसा युक्तः । सहात्मना यथासंकल्पितं लोकं नयति ॥ १० ॥

Which Mind merges with प्राण, the Prime Breath which, becoming luminous and enjoined with आत्मा, the Self leads the one to the world as desired.

Response :

Though प्राण is the Prime Breath, when it becomes operational it is designated as प्राण, the in-breath, as अपान, the downward breath, as व्यान, the bond that sustains life when there is neither inhaling or exhaling, as समान to indicate both inhaling and exhaling, as उदान to indicate the state when the soul is led to deep sleep.

य एवं विद्वान्प्राणं वेद न ह्यास्य प्रजा हीयतेऽमृतो भवति तदेष श्लोकः ॥ ११ ॥

The one who understands the various aspects of operation of प्राण, the Prime Breath, his progeny never become diminished but would be immortal. There is the verse relating there to :

उत्पत्तिमायतिं स्थानं विभुत्वं चैव पंचधा । अध्यात्मं चैव प्राणस्य विज्ञायामृतमश्नुते विज्ञायामृतमश्नुत इ
ति ॥ १२ ॥

The one who is wise of the origin, the path and the goal, together with its five-fold manifestation, the spiritual Self and the wisdom of प्राण, the Prime Breath, the wisdom and attains immortality.

॥ इति तृतीयः प्रश्नः ॥

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चतुर्थ प्रश्नः

Fourth Question

अथ हैनं सौर्यायणी गार्ग्यः पप्रच्छ । भगवन्नेतांस्मिन्पुरुषे कानि स्वपन्ति कान्यस्मिंजाग्रति कतर एष देवः स्वप्नानन्पश्यति कस्यैतत्सुखं भवति कस्मिन्नु सर्वसम्प्रतिष्ठिता भवन्तीति ॥ १ ॥

Then Gârgya, descendent of Surya asked him, O Resplendent One, in Purusha what are those that sleep, what are those that keep awake, what are those luminous being that see the dreams, whose are the happiness, in whom do all these are all established?

Response :

The distinguishing feature of human soul is his quest for Knowledge that will lead to be wise in Wisdom. Those who accept the things and events as they come, believing them to be the effect of the actions performed or as ordained by divine dispensation and therefore, neither desire Knowledge nor to be wise in Wisdom, are the one's who as blind ones leading the blind ones. They have neither learning, nor austerity or charity, neither knowledge nor character, neither nobility nor righteousness, but wander in the world like animals in human form - " येषां न विद्या न तपो न दानं ज्ञानं न शीलं न गुणो न धर्मः । ते मत्र्यलोकेभुवि भारभूताः मनुष्यरूपेण मृगाश्चरन्ति ॥". The wise one desires to know from where he has come, where he has to go, what he does when he is awake and who is it that keeps when he is asleep.

तस्मै स होवाच । यथा गार्ग्य मरीचयोऽर्कसास्तं गच्छतः सर्वा एतस्मिंतेजोमण्डल एकीभवन्ति ताः पुनः पुनरदुयतः प्रचरयन्त्येवं ह वै तत्सर्वं पर देवे मनस्येकोभवन्ति । तेन तर्ह्येष पुरुषो न श्रुणोति न पश्यति न जिघ्रति न रसयते न स्पृशते नाभिवदते नादते नानन्दयतेन विसृजति नेयायते स्वपितीत्याचक्षते ॥ २ ॥

To him he replied, even as, O Gârgya, all the rays of the setting Sun become one with the luminous orb, and they spread at dawn spread across again and again, even so all these प्राणाs become one with the luminous mind. In that state the person does not hear, see, smell, taste, touch, speak, give, rejoice, resurges or move. This state is said to be sleep.

Response :

When one is awake then all his प्राणाs, the breaths are proactive, living in all the stages of consciousness. When one is asleep then one is not proactive, his all organs of action being be Inge at rest, but the प्राणाs alone being proactive .

प्राणाग्नय एवैतस्मिन्पुरे जाग्रति । गार्हपत्यो हवा एषोऽपानो व्यानोऽन्वाहार्यपचनो यद्गार्हपत्यात्प्रणीयते
प्रणयनादाहवनीयः प्राणः ॥ ३ ॥

प्राण, the Prime Breath like resurgent energy (like the seer Will) alone remains awake in the body. अपान, the out-breath remains as the गार्हपत्य sacrificial fire. व्यान, the bond that balances the inhalation and exhalation remains as the अन्वाहार्यपचन fire. प्राण, the in-breath remains as the आहवनीय fire, both sourced from the गार्हपत्य fire.

Response:

In evolving the human spirit अग्नि and सूर्य play important part, the first one as पुरोहित, the one who leads, as ऋत्विज the presiding deity and the later one as one who pervades and illumines the path to the successful completion of the sacrifice. In sacrifice अग्नि has important role to play. अग्नि is the spark of life; it is in man as well as in beasts; it is in trees and plants; it is in Soma and butter, in the sun, flames, altar, hearth. There are three kinds of sacred sacrificial fires - गार्हपत्य,अन्वाहार्यपचन and आहवनीय. The first is the sacred household fire which is ever kept burning. The second is the southern sacrificial fire kept for offering oblation to ancestors. The third is the eastern sacrificial fire kept for invoking the gods.

The human life is compared to a great sacrifice - "पुरुषो वाव यज्ञस्तस्ययानि चचुर्विंशतिधा वर्षाणितत्प्रातःसवनं .. अथ यानि चतुश्चत्वारिंशद्वर्षाणि तन्मा ध्यंदिनं सवनं .. अथ यान्यष्टाचत्वारिंशद्वर्षाणि तत्तृतीयसवनम्।" - verily Person is a sacrifice. His first twenty four years are the morning libations . . . Now the next forty four years are the midday libations . . . Now the next forty eight years are the third libation.

The human body is compared to पुर, a city. The one who dwells within the पुर is पुरुष. The body has eleven apertures - two eyes, two ears, two nostrills, mouth, navel, top of head, organs of excretion and generation. प्राण, energy is compared to sacrificial fires. प्राण, the Prime Breath is as important as the Garhapatya fire and therefore is ever kept alive and never never allowed to be extinguished.

यदुच्छ्वासनिःश्वासावेतावाहुती यमं नयतीति स समानो मनो ह वाव यजमानः । इष्टफलमेवोदानः स एनं यजमानमहरहर्ब्रह्म गमयति ॥ ४ ॥

That which leads the in-breath and the out-breath breaths as the offering in disciplined manner is समान, the mind being the one who presides, the desired fruit is उद्यान, which the presiding person leads day and night to Brahman.

Response :

Krishna says every action needs to be performed as and by way of sacrifice or else one becomes bound by the actions performed - "यज्ञार्थात्करमणोऽन्यत्र लोकोऽयं कर्मबन्धनः ॥". प्राण, the Prime Breath being the oldest and the best - "प्राणो वाव ज्येष्ठश्चश्रेष्ठश्च ।", it is considered as important or verily Brahman, himself as the one who breathes in with your breathing, . . . as the one who breathes out with your breathing out . . . who breathes about when you breathe about . . . when you breathe up - ". . . यः प्राणेन प्राणिति . . . योऽपानेनापानीति . . . यो व्यानेन व्यानीति . . . य उदानेनोदानीति स त आत्मा . . . ॥".

अत्रैव देवः स्वप्ने महिमानमनुभवति । यत् दृष्टं दृष्टमनुपश्यति श्रुतं श्रुतमेवार्थमनुश्रुणोति देशादिगन्तरैश्च प्रत्यनुभूतं पुनः पुनः प्रत्यनुभवति दृष्टं चादृष्टं च श्रुतं चाश्रुतं चानुभूतं चाननुभूतं च सच्चासच्च सर्वं पश्यति सर्वः पश्यति ॥ ५ ॥

Verily here in the deep sleep itself, does the enlightened one experiences greatness. He sees again whatever he has seen, hears again whatever he had heard, whatever was earlier experienced is experienced again in different places and directions. Whatever is seen and not seen, whatever is heard and not heard, experienced and not experienced, existing and not existing; he sees them all, being everything he sees all.

Response :

Here देव, the enlightened one is he who is energised by the Supreme Self. It is the Supreme Self as the divine essence within the individual self who energises to see, hear, smell, touch and think when he is awake, even so he energises him when he is asleep. The dream world is the reflection of his waking world, where energised by the Supreme Self he sees and desires, enjoys and sorrows, fears and suffers. Thus everything that happens and is experienced in waking world the same is found as reflection in the dream world. In the intermediate hiatus is third world of dreams. Purusha, the Supreme Self stands in the intermediate hiatus, between the two worlds, the world of sensory experiences and the other world of supra-sensory experiences. When the individual self goes to sleep the Supreme Self becoming luminous himself tears apart the experiences of the sensory world and himself builds up them up in the supra-sensory world as dreams.

स यदा तेजसाभिभूतो भवति । अत्रैव देवः स्वप्नान्न पश्यत्यथैसतयमन्शरीर एतत्सुखं भवति ॥ ६ ॥

When he (the individual self) becomes endowed with enlightenment, he sees no dreams but revels in bliss here in this very body itself.

Response :

The enlightened one is the individual self who, becoming aware how the dreams play their role, is freed from seeing dreams, sees no dreams. That by which one becomes aware of the state of dreams and the state of waking, having known the great omniscient Self, the wise one does not grieve -
 "स्वप्नान्तं जागरितान्तं चोभौ येवानुपश्यति । महान्तम् विभुमात्मानं मत्वा धीरो न शोभचि ॥".

As Brihad Aranyak Up. says, all the desires are that dwell in the heart are cast away and the mortal becomes immortal and attains Brahman here itself -
 "यदा सर्वे प्रमुच्यन्ते कामा येऽस्यहृदि श्रिताः।अथ मर्त्येऽमृतो भवति, अत्र ब्रह्मसमश्नुते।।". Then becoming aware that the Supreme Self is the maker of the world, maker of all and indeed is the World. Verily while we are here we may know of him, if we do not then great will be destruction. Those who know become immortal while the others become miserable -

"यस्यानुवित्तः प्रतिबुद्ध आत्मा अस्मिन्देहे गहने प्रविष्टः । स विश्वकृत्स हि सर्वस्य कर्ता तस्य लोकः स उ लोक एव ॥ इहैव सन्तोऽथ विद्मस्तद्वयं न चेदवेदिर्महती विनष्टिः । ये तद्विदुरमृतास्ते भवन्त्यथेतरेदुःख नोवापियन्ति ॥".

स यथा सौम्य वयांसि वासोवृक्षं सम्प्रतिष्ठन्ते । एवं व है तत्सर्वं पर आत्मनि य म्प्रतिष्ठते ॥ ७ ॥

Even as birds take refuge in the trees, even so every thing here takes refuge in the Supreme Self. They all find refuge in the Supreme Self.

Response :

When one is awake one is attached to desires, to the actions performed, becoming trapped to the cycle of cause and effect. But in deep sleep the individual self is freed from the attachment to desires and to the actions performed and takes refuge in the Supreme Self, even as birds take refuge at night in the tree, after flying and feeding the. Through out the day.

पृथिवी पृथिवीमात्रा चापश्चापोमात्रा च तेजश्च तेजोमात्रा च वायुश्च वायुमात्रा चाकाशश्चाकाशमात्रा च चक्षुश्च द्रष्टव्यं च श्रोत्रं च श्रोतव्यं च घ्राणं च घ्रातव्यं च रसश्चरसयितव्यं च त्यक्च स्पर्शयितव्यं च वाक्च च वक्तव्ये हस्तौ चादातव्यं चोपस्थश्चानन्दयितव्यं च वायुश्चविसर्जितव्यं च पादो च गन्तव्यं च मनश्च मन्तव्यं च बुद्धिश्च बोधव्यं चाहंकारश्चाहंकर्तव्यं च चित्तं च चेतयितव्यं च तेजश्च विद्येतयितव्यं च प्राणश्च विधारयितव्यं च ॥ ८ ॥

Earth and the elements of the earth, water and the elements of the water, fire and the elements of the fire, air and the elements of the air, ether and the elements of the ether, eyes and what can be seen, ears and what can be heard, nose and what can be smelt, taste and what can be tasted, skin and what can be touched, speech and what can be spoken, hands and what can be grasped, organ of generation and what can be

enjoyed, organ of excretion and what can be discharged, feet and what can be traversed, mind and what can be thought, intellect and what can be conceptualised, the self-sense and what can be egoistic, intelligence and what can be intellectualised, radiance and what can be Illumined, प्राण, the Prime Breath and what can be supported.

Response:

All these are the things are those which lead one to become attached to the empirical mind. The one who becomes attached to all the desires and action performed by the body, then one is mortal. Freed from the body along with the desires and actions performed, one becomes immortal.

एष हि द्रष्टा स्प्रष्टा श्रोता घ्राता रसयिता मन्ता बोद्ध कर्ता विज्ञानात्मा पुरुषः । स परेऽक्षर आत्मनि सम्प्रतिष्ठन्ते ॥ ९ ॥

He verily is the one who sees, touches, hears, smells, tastes, perceives, knows, does, thinking self, the person,. He becomes established in the supreme, immutable Self. In the state of bliss, not the individual self but the Supreme Self becomes the one who sees, touches, hears, smells, tastes, perceives, knows, does, thr individual self having taken refuge in the Supreme Self. Therefore, Krishna says, "मन्मना भव मद्भक्तो मद्याजी माँ नमस्कुरु । मामेवैष्यसि युक्त्वैमात्मान मत्परायणः ॥ . सर्वधर्मान्परित्यज्यं मामेकं शरणं व्रज । अहं त्वा सर्वपापेभ्यो मोहयिष्यामि मा शुचः ॥".

परमेवाक्षरं प्रतिपद्यते स यो ह वैस तदच्छायमशरीरमलोहितं शुभ्रमक्षरं वेदयते यस्तु सौम्य । स सर्वज्ञः सर्वो भवति तदेष श्लोकः ॥ १० ॥

He who knows the shadowless, formless, colourless, pure, un-decaying (individual) self attains verily the supreme, immutable (Supreme) Self. He who know s thus becomes the all-knower, the knower of all. As to this there is this verse:

विज्ञानात्मा सह देवैश्च सर्वैः प्राणा भूतानि सम्प्रतिष्ठन्ते यत्र । तदक्षरं वेदयते यस्तु सौम्य स सर्वज्ञः सर्वमेवाविवेशेति ॥ ११ ॥

He who is wise to the (individual) self, along with all the luminous beings, the प्राणाs and elements established in the immutable (Supteme) Self he is the knower of all, enters all.

Response :

The Supreme Self is the all pervading, all enveloping, all comprehensive. This is the state which is free from craving, free from evils, free from fear . . . That verily is the state in which his desires are fulfilled, in which his self is his desire, in which he is without

desire, free from all miseries - "तद्वा अस्यैतदतिच्छन्दा अपहृतपाप्माभयं रूपम् . .
 . अस्यैतदासकामामात्मात्मकाममकामं रूपं शोकान्तरम् ॥". That is his highest goal, his highest
 treasure, highest world, his greatest bliss, on a particle of this bliss all other creative live -
 "एषाऽस्य परमा गतिरेषाऽस्य परमा सम्पदेषोऽस्य परमो लोक एषोऽस्य परम आनंद एतस्यैवानंदस्या
 न्यानि भूतानि मात्रामुपजीवन्ति ॥".

॥ इति चतुर्थः प्रश्नः ॥

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॥ पंचम प्रश्नः ॥

The Fifth Question

अथ हैनं शैब्य सत्यकामः पप्रच्छ । स यो ह वै तद्भगवन्मनुष्येषु प्रायणान्तमोँकारमभिध्योत । कतमं वाव स तेन लोकं जातीतु ॥ १ ॥

Now, Satyakama, the descendent of Shibi, asked him, Resplendent One, which world among human beings does one attain who meditates on ॐ, the sound less Sound till the end of his breath.

Response :

ॐ, the soundless Sound was there when Time was with neither beginning -अनादि nor end - अनंत, resonating in the heart of Narayana, as he rested on शेष, the remainder after the creation was dissolved leading Mandukya Up. say, "ॐ इत्येतदक्षरमिदं सर्वं तस्योपव्याख्यानं भूतं भवति भविष्यदिति सर्वमोँकार एव तच्चन्यात् त्रिकाला तीतं तदप्योँकार एव ॥".

As the sound of वायु, the winds howled across the earth, as the waves of water lashed the shores, as the clouds rolled across the sky, as the rains poured on the hills and dales, as the earth growled as it shifted its sides, as rivers streamed towards the oceans, as the fish in the seas swam in abundance, the worms and reptiles crawled, as the animals ran across the lands, as the birds flew in the sky ॐ, the soundless Sound became vocal अवाक्, the Speech. When seer Brihaspati found it, he divided every sound uttered to manifest as essence (नाम) and a form (रूप) to reveal the mystery concealed there in -

"बृहस्पते प्रथमं वाचो अग्रं प्रैरत नामधेयम्ददानाः । यदेषां श्रेष्ठं यदरिप्रमासीत् प्रेणा यदेषां निहितं गुहाविः ॥".

In spite of the passage of generations and centuries, वाक् has not been an effective medium to reveal the mystery of the essence (नाम) concealed within the form (रूप), leading some seers to declare - "यतो वाचो निवर्तन्ते अप्राप्यमनसा सह". It is no wonder that Nachiketa in the spirit of a Questor asked that Wisdom by which the unheard becomes heard, unseen becomes seen and the Unknown becomes known - "येनाश्रुतं श्रुतं भवत्यमतं मतम् मनुतेविज्ञानमिति . ." and Yama, the deity presiding over Death, instructed the same saying,

" सर्वे वेदा यत्पदमामनन्ति तपांसि सर्वाणि च यद्वदन्ति । यदिच्छन्तो ब्रह्मचर्यं चरन्ति तत्ते पदं संग्रहेण ब्रवीम्योमित्येतत् ॥".

तस्मै स होवाच । एतद्वै सत्यकाम परं चापरं च ब्रह्म यदोकारः । तस्दिद्वानेतेनैवायतननेनैकतरमन्वेति ॥

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To him he replied. Satyakama, all these are verily the higher and the lower and ॐ, alone being theBrahman, with that support alone one reaches one or the other.

Response :

विद्या - Wisdom is both higher and lower, formless and formed, immortal and mortal, spiritual and temporal, transcendental and existential. With Knowledge one becomes equipped, with Wisdom one becomes perfect. Therefore Krishna initiates Arjuna both saying, "इदं तु ते गुह्यतमंप्रवक्ष्याम्यनुसूयवे । ज्ञानं विज्ञानसहितं यज्ञात्वा मोक्षयसेऽशुभात् ॥".

One access ॐ, the soundless Sound through श्रद्धा, being receptive, दर्शनेन, श्रवणेन, मत्या, निदिध्यासितव्येन - through seeing, listening, reflecting and meditation because ॐ is, "एष सर्वेश्वरः एष सर्वज्ञः एषोऽन्तर्यामि एष योनिः सर्वस्य प्रभवाप्ययौ हि भूतानामंतरपुरुष ॥".

स यद्येकमात्रमभिध्यायीत स तेनैव संवेदितस्तूर्णमेव जगत्यामभिसम्पद्यते । तमृचो मनुष्यलोकमुपनयन्ते स तत्र तपसा ब्रह्मचर्येण श्रद्धया सम्पन्नोमहिमानमनुभवन्ति ॥ ३ ॥

If one meditates on one constituent, he enlightened even by that, he swiftly comes back in this world and being led by the Rigvedic hymns he performs austerity, enjoined to the study of Brahman with full receptivity he revels in great feeling.

Response :

Meditation of all the constituent syllable of ॐ, is undoubtedly beneficial but even meditating on one constituent - अ, he becomes only a good listener. श्रोत्रिय, coming back to this primordial world performing recommended rites and rituals becoming additionally austere in performing actions leading to the knowledge about Brahman, becoming receptive and great in qualification.

अथ यदि द्विमात्रेण मनसि सम्पद्यते सोऽन्तरिक्षं यजुर्भिरुन्नीयते सोमलोकम् । स सोमलोके विभूतिमनुभूय पुनरावर्तते ॥ ४ ॥

Now, again by two constituent syllables अ and ङ then he becomes enriched in Mind, whereupon the Yajurvedic hymns lead him to intermediate space, the world of the Moon. Having revelled in the world of Moon with great feeling he comes back to this primordial world.

Response :

The Path to Perfection is sharp as the edge of the razor, and hard to cross, difficult to tread, "क्षूरस्य धारा निषिता दुरत्यया दुर्गम् पथस्तत्कवयो वदन्ति ।". Therefore wise ones commend that having scrutinised the worlds won by performance of actions, one inclined to the Wisdom of Brahman, should be non-attached, because the world that is not by performance of actions, cannot be gained by performance of actions - "परीक्ष्य लोकान्कर्मचितान्ब्राह्मणोनिर्वेदमायान्नास्यकृतः कृतेन ।". travel becomes gradual stage by stage not in one step to the destination.

: पुनरेतं त्रिमात्रेणमित्येतेनैवाक्षरेण परं पुरुषभिध्यायीत स तेजसि सूर्ये सम्पन्नः । यथा पादोदरस्त्वचा विनिर्मुच्यत एवं स है स पाप्मना विनिर्मुक्तः ससामारुन्नीयते ब्रह्मलोकं स एतस्माज्जीवघनात्परात्परं पुरी शायं पुरुषमीक्षते । तदेतो श्लोको भवतः ॥ ५ ॥

Again when he meditates on म, the third constituent syllable, then he attains the transcendental पुरुष, the Person, who is resplendent like the Sun. Even as a snake is freed from its skin, even so he is freed from his demerits. He is led by the Samavedic hymns to the world of Brahman, greater than the assembly of जीव, the indweller, the पुरुष. As to this, this is the verse:

Response :

On meditating on म, the third constituent syllable he becomes enlightened having known Brahman, as assembly of जीव, as one superior than the supreme, as the indweller, पुरुष, the Person. But seeing is not experiencing, Knowledge is not Wisdom. One may become released from demerits by meditation म, the third constituent syllable but release from repeated cycle of births and deaths remains yet to be accomplished.

तिस्रो मात्रा मृत्युमत्यः प्रयुक्ता अन्योन्यसक्ता अनविप्रयुक्ताः । क्रियासु बाह्याभ्यन्तरमध्यमासु सम्यक्प्रयुक्तासु न कम्पते ज्ञः ॥ ६ ॥

The three constituent syllables meditated separately are the form of death, but meditated together with internal, external and intermediate actions performed he becomes well established and would not waver.

Response :

The Path to Perfection is variously indicated. Brihad Aranyak Up. says that the one who departs the world without knowing the temporal world, that one is not protected by the temporal world, even as not knowing the Vedas or recommended actions not performed do not save him. It is only mediating on the Supreme Self as the world that his world is not exhausted because out of that very Self that he fulfils all his desires - "अथ ये ह अस्माल्लोकात्स्वलोकमदृष्ट्वा प्रैति स एनमविदितो न भुनक्ति यथा वेदो वाऽननुक्तोऽन्यद्वा कर्माकृतम् यदिदं वाअप्यनेवंविन्महत्पुण्यं कर्म करोति तद्वास्यान्ततः क्षीत एवात्मानमेव लोकमुपासीत स य आत्मानमेव लोकमुपास्ते न हास्य कर्म क्षीयते । अस्माद्भ्येवात्मनोयद्यत्यामयतेतत्सृजते तत्सृजते । ।".

ऋग्भिरेतं यजुर्भिरन्तरिक्षं सामभिर्यत्तत्कवयो वेदयन्ते । तमोकारेणैवायतनेनान्वेति विद्वान्यत्तच्छान्तमजरममृतमभयं परं च ॥ ७ ॥

With Rigvedc hymns the wise one attains this world, with Yujus formulas he attains the intermediate space, with Saman he attains that which seers perceive. With ॐ as the refuge one attains that one who is tranquil, unaging, immortal, fearless and Supreme.

Response :

Apart from the primary constituent syllable - अ, उ, and म, there is another constituent syllable referred as अर्धमात्रा being silent no unspoken, which signifies the तुरीय state of pure Consciousness, the subtle, formless. Immortal Brahman, which Mandukya Up. speaks as ॐ - "ओमित्येतदक्षरम सर्वं ... ह्येतद्ब्रह्म ह्यायमात्माब्रह्म" - ॐ this immutable word is all this. All this verily is Brahman, this Self is Brahman. ॐ stands for all the state of human consciousness.

इति पंचमः प्रश्नः ॥

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षष्ठः प्रश्नः

Sixth Question

अथ हैनं सुकेशा भारद्वाजः पप्रच्छ । भगवन्निहरण्यनाभः कौसल्यो राजपुत्रो मामुपेत्यैत प्रश्नमपृच्छत । शोडशकलं भारद्वाज पुरुषं वेत्थ । तमहं कुमारमब्रुवं नाहमिमंवेद यद्यहमिममेदिषं कथं ते नावक्ष्यामिति । समूलो वा एष परिशुष्यति योऽनुनूतमभिवदतितस्मान्नार्हाम्यनूत वक्तुम् । स तृष्णीं रथमारुह्य पवत्राज । तं त्वापृच्छामि क्वासौ पुरुष इति ॥ १ ॥

Now Sukesha, belonging to Bharadwaj family, inquired of him, Resplendent One, Hiranyagarbha, prince of the royal family of Kosala, approached me and asked this question - do you know the Person with sixteen constituents ? To that I replied, I do not know him. If I know him then why would I not tell you about him ? One, verily, Withers to the roots who speak untruth. Then without speaking further, he climbing his chariots went away. There I ask you about him who is the Purusha?

तस्मै स होवाच । इहैवान्तःशरीरे सोम्य स पुरुषो यस्मिन्देवा षोडश कलाः प्रभवन्तीति ॥ २ ॥

To him he replied, here, verily within the body is the Purusha, with sixteen constituents.

Response :

Purusha in one in who pervades the entire creation as well as the one envelopes the entire creation. There is therefore nothing that is not pervaded by him nor any thing got enveloped by hi. Therefore, he is said to have अहंब्रह्मास्मि, अहं वाव सृष्टिरस्मि - I am the effulgence, I am the creation. Krishna says that "भूमिरापोऽनलो वायुः खं मनो बुद्धदेव च । अहंकार इतीयं मे भिन्ना प्रकृतिरष्टधा ॥ . . मत्तः परतरं नान्यत्किंचिदस्तिधनंजय । मयी सर्वमिदं प्रोतं सूत्रं मणिगणाइव ॥".

Therefore, Purusha is to be without in nature as well with one's own self. Channdogya Up. is clear on this when said that here in the city of Brahmanis an abode in the form of small flower, within it is a small space, what is therein that should be sought, for that assuredly ideathe one should desire to understand - "अथ यदिदं अस्मिन् ब्रह्मपुरे दहरं पुण्डरीकं वेश्म दहरोऽस्मिन् अंतरिक्षः तस्मिन् यद् अंतः तद् अन्वेष्टव्यम् तद्वाविजिज्ञासितव्यम् ॥". Katha Up. Endorses that the city with eleven gates, unborn, un-crooked, intelligent, by knowing whom one does not grieve but the delivered ones (Jivanmukta) become the delivered one (Videhamukta).

स ईक्षांचक्रे कस्मिन्नहमुत्क्रान्त उत्क्रान्तो भविष्यामि यस्मिन्वा प्रतिष्ठिता प्रतिष्ठास्यामीति ॥ ३ ॥

He (the Purusha) reflected, on whose departure would I have to depart? Or on whose being established, I would remain established ?

Response:

Purusha, being being within the gross body, reflects when and on whose departure, should be depart from the body, by whose being established within the body Purusha could remain established.

स प्राणमसृजत प्राणच्छ्रद्धां खं वायुर्ज्योतिरापःपृथिवीन्द्रियः मनः । अन्नमन्नाद्वीर्यं तपो मन्त्राः कर्म लोका
लोकेषु च नाम च ॥ ४ ॥

He made प्राण, the Prime Breath to become resurgent. From प्राण, receptivity, space, air, light, water, earth, senses, mind and nourishment became rose (to be resurgent). From nourishment, the regenerative vitality, austerity, hymns, performance actions and worlds and from the worlds नाम, the divine essence (became resurgent).

Response :

It the प्राण, the Prime Breath, on whose departure the Purusha would depart, even on प्राण being established, Purusha becomes and continues to remain established ? On प्राण being established, the space expands within the heart, the heavens and earth to come to be, both fire and air, the Sun and the Moon, lightening and the stars, whatever is there and what ever is not there all that contained therein - "यावान्वाअयमाकाशस्तावावनेषोऽन्तर्हृदय आकाशठभे अस्मिन्वावापृथिवी अन्तरेव समाहिते उभावग्निश्च वायुश्च सूर्याचन्द्रामसावुभौ विद्युन्नक्षत्राणि यच्चास्येहास्ति यच्चनास्ति सर्वं तदस्मिन्समागितमति । ।". All these becomes resurgent, Purusha having made प्राण, the Prime Breath to become resurgent.

स यथेमा नद्यः स्यन्दमानाः समुद्रायणाः समुद्रं प्राप्यास्तं गच्छन्ति भिद्येते तासां नामरूपे समुद्र इत्येव प्रोच्यते । एवमेवास्य परिद्रष्टुरिमाः षोडश कलाः पुरुषायणाःपुरुषं प्राप्यास्तं गच्छन्ति भिद्येते चासां नामरूपे पुरुष इत्येवं प्रोच्यते स एषोऽकलोऽमृतौ भवति तदेषश्लोकः ॥५ ॥

Even as rivers streaming towards the sea, reaching the sea, become scattered and come to be referred in essence (नाम) and form (रूप), as the sea, even so these sixteen constituents having reached the abode of the Purushaa and becoming scattered in essence (नाम) and form (रूप) and come to be referred as Purusha without the constituents and as the immortal. Therefore, this verse comes to be.

Response:

The rivers are on essence the water, therefore though they appear different in the beginning loose their form (रूप) as the river when reach the sea, they loose their distinctive for, and become one in essence with the sea.

अरा इव रथनाभौ कला यस्मिन्प्रतिष्ठताः । तं वेद्यं पुरुषं वेद यथा मा वो मृत्युः परिव्यथा इति ॥ ६ ॥

As the spokes of the chariot, the constituents become firmly established. One should be enlightened of him as one to be known where upon death may not create sorrow for him.

तान्होवाचैतावद्वामेतत्परं ब्रह्म वेद । नातः परमस्तीति ॥ ७ ॥

He said to them, thus far do I know of the Supreme Brahman, there nothing higher than this.

Response:

The teacher cannot communicate more than that which he has been possessed. Unequal in quickness of spirit are friends (teachers) endowed with sight and hearing. Some look like tanks that reach the mouth or shoulder, others are like lakes of water fit to bathe in -

"अक्षणवंतः कर्णवंतः सखायो मनोजवेष्वसमा बभूवुः । आदघ्नास उपकक्षास उ त्वे हृदा इव सात्वा उ त्वे ददृश्रे ॥", thus has been spoken in Rigveda.

ते तमर्चयन्तस्त्वं हि नः पिता योऽस्माकमविद्यायाः परं पारं तारसीति । नमः परमऋषिभ्यो नमः परमऋषिभ्यः ॥ ८ ॥

They worshipped him saying, you are truly our father, who takes us across to the other shore. Salutations to the supreme seers. Salutations to the supreme seers.

इति षष्ठः प्रश्नः ॥

Thus the Sixth question.

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