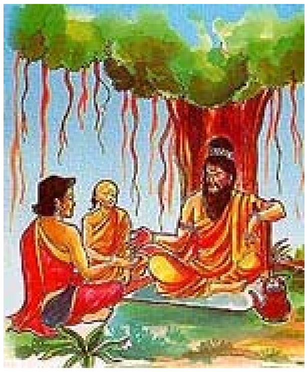

ईशावास्य उपनिषद

(Isa Upanishad)

UPANISHADS: AN INTRODUCTION

The word 'Upanishad' in Sanskrit language means *upa* (near), *ni* (down) and *shad* (to sit), which can be summed up as 'to sit down near' (and receive instructions). The teacher and student or a spiritual master and his disciples setting were not always prevalent in strict sense. In some cases, it was husband answering questions about immortality to his wife or a teenage boy was being taught by *Yama* (God of Death). The teachers, in some cases were women sages and the seekers of inspiration were kings. Besides dialogues, Upanishads also contain narrations, similes, metaphors, illustrations and symbolism.

In the quietude of caves and monasteries or ashrams situated on the banks of holy Ganges, this mystic knowledge was exchanged for centuries. It can be said that Upanishads are collection of writings representing oral transmission of such knowledge.

Most of the Upanishads are either commentary on or are an extension of four Vedas and in most cases constitute *Vedanta (*the end or an ultimate part of Veda). The characteristics of the Upanishads are their universality and the total absence of any dogmatism. Upanishads elaborate upon highest metaphysical state, beyond which is the realm of Silence.

Upanishads are considered as the backbone of Hinduism. The thoughts expressed inside Upanishadic cluster forms the core of Indian philosophy. One can find doctrines of *Karma* (action), *Yoga* (union), *Punarjanma* (rebirth), *moksha* (liberation), *atma* (soul) and *brahman* (super soul), inside these scriptures. Upanishads also gives valuable insight into Hindu belief system behind the creation of universe and the reasons behind its sustenance.

According to Historians, Upanishads were composed between year 800-400 B.C. Experts differ on total number of Upanishads, but most agree on 108. Major among them are *Chhandogya & Kena (Sam Veda); Aitareya & Kaushitaki (Rig Veda); Katha, Taittiriya, Brihadaranyaka, Svetasvatara, Isa & Prasna (Yajur Veda); Mundaka* & *Mandukya (Atharva Veda).* From various elaboration found inside Upanishadic verses, it can be said that, sages like *Yagnavalkya, Uddalaka, Aitareya, Pippalada, Sanat Kumar, Shwetaketu, Shandilya, Manu* and even *Maharshi Narada* disseminated Upanishadic knowledge and thus, can be said to be their authors.

Upanishads are acknowledged as pinnacle of human wisdom. None other scripture of that time can claim to contain such sublime and noble thoughts as found inside Upanishads. Written almost at the time of the dawn of civilization, Upanishads continues to evoke tremendous interest even today, among literates of both, East as well as West.

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॥ ईशोपनिषत् ॥

ॐ पूर्णमदः पूर्णमिदं पूर्णात् पूर्णमुदच्यते ।
पूर्णस्य पूर्णमादाय पूर्णमेवावशिष्यते ॥
ॐ शांतिः । शांतिः । शांतिः ॥

॥ अथ ईशोपनिषत् ॥

ॐ ईशा वास्यमिदँ सर्वं यत्किञ्च जगत्यां जगत् ।
तेन त्यक्तेन भुञ्जीथा मा गृधः कस्यस्विद्धनम् ॥१॥
कुर्वन्नेवेह कर्माणि जिजीविषेच्छतँ समाः ।
एवं त्वयि नान्यथेतोऽस्ति न कर्म लिप्यते नरे ॥२॥
असुर्या नाम ते लोका अन्धेन तमसाऽऽवृताः ।
ताँस्ते प्रेत्याभिगच्छन्ति ये के चात्महनो जनाः ॥३॥
अनेजदेकं मनसो जवीयो नैनद्देवा आप्नुवन्पूर्वमर्षत् ।
तद्धावतोऽन्यानत्येति तिष्ठत्तस्मिन्नपो मातरिश्वा दधाति ॥४॥
तदेजति तन्नैजति तद्दूरे तद्वन्तिके ।
तदन्तरस्य सर्वस्य तदु सर्वस्यास्य बाह्यतः ॥५॥
यस्तु सर्वाणि भूतान्यात्मन्येवानुपश्यति ।
सर्वभूतेषु चात्मानं ततो न विजुगुप्सते ॥६॥
यस्मिन्सर्वाणि भूतान्यात्मैवाभूद्विजानतः ।
तत्र को मोहः कः शोक एकत्वमनुपश्यतः ॥७॥
स पर्यगाच्छुक्रमकायमव्रण- मस्नाविरँ शुद्धमपापविद्धम् ।
कविर्मनीषी परिभूः स्वयम्भू-र्याथातथ्यतोऽर्थान्
व्यदधाच्छाश्वतीभ्यः समाभ्यः॥८॥
अन्धं तमः प्रविशन्ति येऽविद्यामुपासते ।
ततो भूय इव ते तमो य उ विद्यायाँ रताः ॥९॥
अन्यदेवाहुर्विद्ययाऽन्यदाहुरविद्यया ।
इति शुश्रुम धीराणां ये नस्तद्विचचक्षिरे ॥१०॥
विद्यां चाविद्यां च यस्तद्वेदोभयँ सह ।
अविद्यया मृत्युं तीर्त्वा विद्ययाऽमृतमश्नुते ॥११॥
अन्धं तमः प्रविशन्ति येऽसम्भूतिमुपासते ।
ततो भूय इव ते तमो य उ सम्भूत्याँ रताः ॥१२॥

अन्यदेवाहुः सम्भवादन्यदाहुरसम्भवात् ।
इति शुश्रुम धीराणां ये नस्तद्विचचक्षिरे ॥१३॥
सम्भूतिं च विनाशं च यस्तद्वेदोभयँ सह ।
विनाशेन मृत्युं तीर्त्वा सम्भूत्याऽमृतमश्नुते ॥१४॥
हिरण्मयेन पात्रेण सत्यस्यापिहितं मुखम् ।
तत्त्वं पूषन्नपावृणु सत्यधर्माय दृष्टये ॥१५॥
पूषन्नेकर्षे यम सूर्य प्राजापत्य व्यूह रश्मीन् समूह तेजः ।
यत्ते रूपं कल्याणतमं तत्ते पश्यामि योऽसावसौ पुरुषः सोऽहमस्मि ॥१६॥
वायुरनिलममृतमथेदं भस्मांतँ शरीरम् ।
ॐ क्रतो स्मर कृतँ स्मर क्रतो स्मर कृतँ स्मर ॥१७॥
अग्ने नय सुपथा राये अस्मान् विश्वानि देव वयुनानि विद्वान् ।
युयोध्यस्मज्जुहुराणमेनो भूयिष्ठां ते नमउक्तिं विधेम ॥१८॥

॥ इति ईशोपनिषत् ॥

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शांतिपाठ

ॐ पूर्णमदः पूर्णमिदं पूर्णात् पूर्णमुदच्यते ।
पूर्णस्य पूर्णमादाय पूर्णमेवावशिष्यते ॥
ॐ शांतिः । शांतिः । शांतिः ॥

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