



CHAPTER 8

annaṁ brahmeti vyajānāt

Anna: the first manifestation of Brahman

kevalāgho bhavati kevalādī

मोघमन्नं विन्दते अप्रचेताः । सत्यं ब्रवीमि वध इत्स तस्य ।
नार्यमणं पुष्यति नो सखायं । केवलाघो भवति केवलादी ॥

*moghamannaṁ vindate apracetāḥ
satyaṁ bravīmi vadha itsa tasya
nāryamaṇaṁ puṣyati no sakhāyaṁ
kevalāgho bhavati kevalādī¹*

Food that comes to the one who does not give is indeed a waste. This is the truth. I, the ṛṣi, say it. The food that such a one obtains is not only wasted, it in fact comes as his very death. He feeds neither the devas nor the men who arrive at his door as atithis, abhyāgatas and friends. Eating for himself alone, he becomes the partaker of sin alone.

So says ṛṣi Bhikṣu Āṅgīrasa in the bhikṣu-sūkta of the tenth maṇḍala of Ṛgveda. Bhikṣu Āṅgīrasa's teaching that the one who partakes of food himself, without sharing it with the rest of creation, partakes only of sin, *kevalāgho bhavati kevalādī*, is probably the strongest indictment – to be found anywhere in the classical Indian literature – of those who dare to violate what classical India takes to be the inviolable discipline of feeding before eating.

This, the sixth ṛca of bhikṣu-sūkta, is perhaps the strongest in its condemnation, but every one of the nine ṛcas of the sūkta is a sonorous indictment of those who do not give before eating. Thus,

¹ Ṛksamhitā 10.117.6, p. 739.

in the first ṛca we hear the ṛṣi saying that this kṣudhā, the hunger, that the gods have created is verily the death itself, of not only those who do not get enough to eat, but also of those who eat without first feeding the hungry: *na vā u devāḥ kṣudhamidvadham dadururāsītamuṣa gacchanti mṛtyavaḥ*.² In another ṛca the ṛṣi says that one who refuses food to the hungry seeker knows no peace of mind, finds no rest in his soul: *mardītāraṁ na vindate*.³ And in yet another ṛca, the ṛṣi warns that the friends and dependents of the one, who does not look after them, to leave such a one alone to himself and seek shelter elsewhere. The house of such a one does not remain home to anyone. Because, as Sāyaṇācārya commenting on the ṛca says, the home is a house that is filled with friends and dependents: *sadanam hi bandhubhiḥ parivṛtam*.⁴

Annadevatā teaches the discipline

In the Taittirīyabrāhmaṇa of the Kṛṣṇayajurveda we hear annadevatā, the god residing in food, himself speaking about the importance of food and of the inviolability of the discipline of giving before eating, in words that are often reminiscent of the teachings of Bhikṣu Aṅgīrasa. The eighth anuvāka of the eighth prapāṭhaka of the second aṣṭaka of the brāhmaṇa quotes the annadevatā proclaiming thus:⁵

अहमस्मि प्रथमजा ऋतस्य । पूर्वं देवेभ्यो अमृतस्य नाभिः ।

यो मा ददाति स इदेव माऽऽवाः । अहमन्नमन्नमदन्तमग्नि ॥

ahamasmi prathamajā ṛtasya. pūrvam devebhyo amṛtasya nābhiḥ. yo mā dadāti sa ideva mā' vāḥ.
ahamannamannamadantamadmi.

I, the annadevatā, am the first progenitor of yajña: the first yajña was born of me. It is I who, at the earliest times, become the nucleus of amṛta for the devas.

The one who gives me is in fact the one who obtains me. On the other hand, the one who does not give is consumed by me. I am the annadevatā, I eat the one who does not give anna.

² Rksaṁhitā 10.117.1, p. 737.

³ Rksaṁhitā 10.117.2, p. 737.

⁴ Sāyaṇācārya on Rksaṁhitā 10.117.4, p. 739.

⁵ Taitt Br 2.8.8.1-8, pp. 830-4.

पूर्वमग्रेरपि दहत्यन्नम् । यत्तौ हाऽऽसाते अहमुत्तरेषु । व्यात्तमस्य
पशवः सुजम्भम् । पश्यन्ति धीराः प्रचरन्ति पाकाः ॥

*pūrvamagnerapi dahatyannam. yattau
hā' 'sāte ahamuttareṣu. vyāttamasya paśavaḥ sujambham.
paśyanti dhīrāḥ pracaranti pākāḥ.*

The one who eats before giving is consumed by the food that he eats, even before the food itself is consumed by the digestive fires. Between the one who gives before eating and the one who eats without giving, the former is the worthy one. I am with him. The other is indeed like an animal. For such animal-like ones the sharp-toothed jaws of the annadevatā are wide open. The wise know this; while the ignorant continue to indulge in eating without giving.

जहाम्यन्यं न जहाम्यन्यम् । अहमन्नं वशमिच्चरामि ।
समानमर्थं पर्येमि भुञ्जत् । को मामन्नं मनुष्यो दयेत ॥

*jahāmyanyam na jahāmyanyam. ahamannam
vaśamīccarāmi. samānamartham paryemi bhujjat.
ko māmannam manuṣyo dayeta.*

I forsake the one who eats without giving, I never forsake the one who gives before eating. I am the annadevatā. I come and go according to my own discipline. I nurture the one for whom giving carries the same significance as eating. To him I reach in plenty. I remain out of reach of the other, who eats without giving. Who amongst men can deter me, the annadevatā, from my course?

पराके अन्नं निहितं लोक एतत् । विश्वेदेवैः पितृभिर्गुप्तमन्नम् ।
यदद्यते लुप्यते यत्परोप्यते । शततमी सा तनूर्मे बभूव ॥

*parāke annam nihitam loka etat. viśvairdevaiḥ
pitr̥bhīrguṣṭamannam. yadadyate lupyate yatparopyate.
śatatamī sā tanūrme babhūva.*

The food that is offered in this world – for the devas, bhūtas, pitṛs, and manuṣyas – becomes the food set apart for the giver in the world hereafter. The devas of the world and the pitṛs keep such food securely preserved for the giver. The food that is eaten, that which decays, and that which is given

away, does not amount to even a hundredth part of the total extent of mine: I, annadevatā, am much larger than all the food that is eaten, wasted or given in this world.

महान्तौ चरू सकृद्दुग्धेन पप्रौ । दिवञ्च पृथिवीं च साकम् ।
तत्संपिबन्तो न मिनन्ति वेधसः । नैतद्भूयो भवति नो कनीयः ॥

*mahāntau carū sakṛddugdhena paprau. divaṅca pṛṣṇi
pṛthivīm ca sākam. tatsampibanto na minanti vedhasah.
naitadbhūyo bhavati no kanīyah.*

Just as the cow fills great pots of milk in no time, so does a little food offered by the giver suffuse both this world and the world hereafter. The wise, partaking of the food that has been first offered to the devas, bhūtas, pitṛs and manuṣyas, do no injury to the anna or to themselves. The food consumed by the wise that follow such discipline is neither so much as to cause indigestion, nor so little as to fail to assuage hunger.

अन्नं प्राणमन्नमपानमाहुः । अन्नं मृत्युं तमु जीवातुमाहुः ।
अन्नं ब्रह्माणो जरसं वदन्ति । अन्नमाहुः प्रजननं प्रजानाम् ॥

*annam prānamannamapānamāhuḥ. annam mṛtyuṃ tamu
jīvātumāhuḥ. annam brahmāṅo jarasam vadanti.
annamāhuḥ prajananam prajānām.*

Anna is said to be both prāna and apāna, the two forms of the breath of life that permeate the body. Anna is the giver of life, and also the extinguisher of it. Those who know āyurveda, the science of life, know anna to be the cause of aging. Anna is said to be the progenitor of all progeny.

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arrive at his door as atithis, abhyāgatas and friends. Eating for himself alone, he becomes the partaker of sin alone.

अहं मेघस्तनयन्वर्षन्नस्मि । मामदन्तहमद्मद्यन्वान् ।

अहं सदमृतो भवामि । मदादित्या अधिसर्वे तपन्ति ॥

ahaṁ meghastanayanvarṣannasmi.

māmadantyahamadmyanyān. ahaṁ sadamṛto bhavāmi.

madādityā adhisarve tapanti.

I am the cloud that thunders and pours rain on earth. Those, who give before eating, eat me; I eat the others, who partake of me without giving. For the former I become amṛta, the preserver of life. The great fire of the suns of the universe indeed arises from me.

*Vedavākya*s are inviolable

Hearing these vedavākya, authoritative teachings of the vedas, one begins to understand why the wise grandparent Bhīṣma is so solicitous to ensure that his descendants never neglect the giving of food; why Śrīkṛṣṇa offers the cryptic advise of *dadasvānnaṁ* *dadasvānnaṁ* *Yudhiṣṭhira*; why ṛṣi Agastya narrates the tragic story of king Śveta to Śrīrāma; why the mongoose of Kurukṣetra reminds Yudhiṣṭhira that howsoever great may be the annadāna one performs, the giving can never be enough; why Manu lays down such a rigorous and detailed discipline of giving before eating; and, in general, why the gr̥hasthas and kings of classical India are so persistently advised to make certain that within their domain of responsibility there remains no hunger and no want.

Vedas are the font of all knowledge and wisdom. The lives of the great kings and sages recounted in Indian literature are illustrations of the teachings of the vedas; the teachings of the great sages are expositions of the teachings of the vedas. No great king, no great sage, and probably no *avatāra*, would disregard the vedavākya. And since both Bhikṣu Āṅgīrasa in the Ṛgveda and the anadevatā in Taittirīyabrāhmaṇa lay down the unconditional precept of *kevalāgho bhavati kevalādī*, it is no wonder that all the kings and sages, and even ordinary gr̥hasthas of India, are so worried about avoiding the taint of becoming *kevalādī*, of becoming the one who eats while others around remain hungry. To the great

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sons of a civilization, that has heard the chillingly definitive pronouncements of the annadevatā and equally definitive teachings of Bhikṣu Āṅgīrasa, it would have indeed seemed an unthinkable sacrilege to stray, even unwittingly, from the discipline of feeding others before eating.

ANNA AND BRAHMAVIDYĀ: TAITTIRĪYOPANIṢAD

Precepts about the importance of food and the giving of food occur repeatedly throughout the vaidika corpus, including the saṁhitās, brāhmaṇas and upaniṣads. The Taittirīyopaniṣad, in particular, presents a comprehensive discourse on the place of anna in the plan of the universe, and in the human efforts to achieve a darśana, an immediate vision, of the whole.

The upaniṣads, which form the concluding texts of the vedas, are concerned with brahmavidyā, the knowledge of Brahman, the creator who at the beginning manifests himself as the universe and retracts the whole of creation back into himself at the end, only to begin the process again, at the beginning of another cycle of creation and dissolution. But the objective of the upaniṣads is not merely to narrate the story of creation, or merely to describe the essential principles through which India understands creation and the place of man in it. The upaniṣads do narrate the story and describe the principles, of course. But their objective is much larger. Their effort is to help the seeker have an immediate perception of the reality of the universe, to help him see for himself what has been seen by the seers of the upaniṣads.

Such immediate seeing of the reality of the universe is darśana. It is also jñāna, knowing in its entirety, which is mokṣa, the ultimate state of freedom that Indians are taught to always strive for. The objective of all Indian philosophy is to help man along the path of such immediate seeing. That is why philosophy in India is called darśana, the *seeing*. And upaniṣads are probably the epitome of the Indian seers' efforts to clear the path of seeing for others.

Amongst the upaniṣads, the Taittirīyopaniṣad undertakes the task in an especially systematic and orderly manner. The upaniṣad, as we shall presently see, holds the seeker by the hand, as it were, and guides him slowly, one step at a time, through the intricacies of brahmavidyā, towards darśana, jñāna and mokṣa. And in this step

by step ascent of the seeker under the helpful guidance of the seer, anna and manifestations of anna keep appearing almost at every step; and at the end of the path, we find the seer entering into an intensely worshipful teaching of the greatness of anna, and the seeker bursting into a joyous celebration of his having become one with anna, singing thus: *ahamannam ahamannam ahamannam*.⁶

For the seer of the Taittirīyopaniṣad, anna and manifestations of anna form the entrance to the edifice of brahmavidyā; and what is enshrined at the centre of that edifice is also anna. It is indeed of great significance that anna should occupy such a primary place in a venerated text of brahmavidyā, a text whose concern is mokṣa. There could have been no higher measure of the importance that Indian civilization places on anna, and on the discipline of obtaining it in plenty and sharing it in plenty.

Preparing the seeker for the search: śīkṣāvallī

The Taittirīyopaniṣad forms a part of the Taittirīya school of Yajurveda. This reading of the veda consists of a saṁhitā and a brāhmaṇa, from which we have taken the annasūkta above, and whose concluding ten prapāṭhakas form the Taittirīyāraṇyaka. The seventh, eighth and ninth prapāṭhakas of the Taittirīyāraṇyaka constitute the three lessons of the Taittirīyopaniṣad. The tenth, and the last prapāṭhaka, is known as the Mahānārāyaṇopaniṣad.

The first lesson of Taittirīyopaniṣad, śīkṣāvallī, the lesson concerning instruction, seeks to intellectually equip the seeker after brahmavidyā and to properly orient him towards his seeking. Such equipping and orientation begins with the very first anuvāka – the unit of instruction enunciated by the teacher and repeated by the student – of the upaniṣad. As in all properly ordered texts, the first anuvāka of the Taittirīyopaniṣad is a śāntipāṭha, an invocation for the quieting of obstacles in the way of the task ahead, which in this case happens to be the acquisition of learning. And, it is probably to inculcate the attitude of learning in the student, that the śāntipāṭha invokes the pleasure and protection of gods upon the preceptor and the seeker together. This sentiment of the teacher and the student being one in their seeking and their achievements

⁶ Taitt Up 3.10, p. 245.

keeps appearing again and again throughout the Taittirīyopaniṣad, especially in the śikṣāvallī.

The śāntipāṭha

The śāntipāṭha of śikṣāvallī begins by calling upon mitra, varuṇa, aryamā, indra, bṛhaspati, and viṣṇu of the great strides, to be pleased upon the world, to bestow their bliss upon us. Then the seeker pays obeisance to Brahman, the ultimate object of his seeking, and to vāyu, the god of winds, whom the seeker resolves to regard as the direct and immediate representative of Brahman, and therefore of ṛta and satya. Regarding him thus, the seeker prays for himself and the teacher: May he, vāyu who is Brahman, protect me. May he protect the teacher. May he protect me. May he protect the teacher. And, may all obstacles be quieted. *tanmānavatu tadvaktāramavatu. avatu mām. avatu vaktāram. Om śāntiḥ śāntiḥ śāntiḥ.*⁷

Śikṣā

Immediately following the śāntipāṭha, the upaniṣad takes the seeker through the essentials of śikṣā, the science of correctly comprehending the spoken word, which obviously needs to be mastered prior to all other learning. In a passage of unsurpassable brevity, the seer, in the manner of a wise guide pointing out the milestones on a long path, quickly recounts the six basic constituents of the science: sound, accent, measure, emphasis, euphony and compounding, and concludes with the assertion that the chapter on śikṣā has thus been stated: *śikṣām vyākhyāsyāmaḥ. varṇaḥ svaraḥ. mātṛā balam. sāma santānaḥ. ityuktaḥ śikṣādhyāyah.*⁸

This is teaching at its best. There is no imparting of instruction here; only an invitation to the seeker to recall what is already known, to open oneself to the knowledge that is ever present.

The mahāsamhitās

The third anuvāka opens with the seeker once again praying jointly for himself and the teacher, beseeching the gods that the honour and glory that come from nearness to Brahman may be bestowed upon him and the teacher together, at the same time.

⁷ Taitt Up 1.1, p. 21.

⁸ Taitt Up 1.2, p. 25.

And then the seer invites the seeker to meditate upon the basic elements of the universe and their coming together in the image of the elementary sounds and their compounds that are dealt with in the science of the spoken word, śīkṣā.

The seer thus draws attention to how the earth and the heavens are joined together in the skies through the agency of vāyu to form the universe of terrestrial worlds; how the fire and sun are joined together in water through the agency of lightning to form the universe of celestial objects; how the teacher and the student are joined together in learning through the agency of instruction to form the universe of knowledge; how the mother and the father are joined together in the progeny through the agency of procreation to form the universe of future generations; and how the lower jaw and the upper jaw are joined together in speech through the agency of the tongue to form the universe of the self. In these five mahāsamhitās – the five great comings-together – of different elements of the universe, the first element in the terminology of śīkṣā is the pūrvarūpa, the first sound; the second, the uttararūpa, the second sound; the third, the compound – saṁdhi – of the two; and the fourth is the agency of compounding, saṁdhāna.

The seer ends the anuvāka with the blessing that the one who meditates on these great samhitās of different elements attains abundant progeny, great wealth in cattle, abundant anna, the glory that arises from nearness to Brahman, and finally, the great worlds hereafter.

Āvahantī homa

The next, the fourth, anuvāka is a long prayer by the seeker for agility of body, acuity of senses, and clarity of intellect, necessary for the proper comprehension of brahmanvidyā; and for prosperity, wealth and fame necessary for pursuing the path of darśana. The prayer begins with an invocation of Brahman through Om, the first sound that for an Indian represents the whole of reality. The seeker addresses his prayers to Om thus:

“Om, who is the bull amongst the vaidika sounds, who in its form encompasses the whole universe, who is born of the immortal vedas as their very essence, may such as him, who is also indra – the granter of all desires – bless me with intellect and wisdom. May I become the bearer of immortality that flows from the knowledge of Brahman. May my body be fit and agile, may my tongue be suffused

with sweetness, may I hear well and fully through my ears. May you, Om̐, who are the receptacle of Brahman and who are hidden from view by the worldly intellect, protect the knowledge I have heard.”

After having invoked Om̐ and sought strength of mind and body in the pursuit of brahmayidyā, the seeker begins a homa, mainly for prosperity and abundance in worldly attainments. Since a brahmacārin seeker shuns all worldly acquisitions, this homa for physical wealth and worldly fame as a teacher can only be on behalf of the preceptor; or perhaps for the sake of the future times, when the seeker, having had the darśana, would become a preceptor himself. The prayer of the upaniṣad, now taking the form of hymns sung at the homa fire, continues thus:

“And then, having preserved for me the knowledge I have learnt, bring me śrī, the goddess of prosperity, who would bestow upon me great wealth without delay; and having bestowed, would keep increasing my prosperity: prosperity in ever available food and drink, prosperity in clothing, prosperity in cows, and prosperity in cattle and sheep. svāhā.

“May the brahmacārins come to me. svāhā. May the brahmacārins be unassuming towards me. svāhā. May the brahmacārins attain perfect knowledge. svāhā. May the brahmacārins keep their senses in control. svāhā. May the brahmacārins be in control of their mind. svāhā.

“May I attain fame amongst the people. svāhā. May I be praised amongst the wealthy. O Bhagavan, may I enter into you. svāhā. And, may you enter into me. svāhā. O Bhagavan of thousands of manifestations, may I cleanse myself in you. svāhā.

“As the water flows towards the lowlands, as the days merge into the year, so may, O the upholder of all, the brahmacārins come to me from all directions. svāhā.

“May you, who are the resting place for all, be revealed to me; may I attain you.”

The vyāhrtis

Having led the seeker through an intense prayer and homa, the seer now, in the fifth anuvāka, invites him to once again meditate on the basic elements of the universe. The first such meditation, presented in the third anuvāka, consisted in imagining the coming together of the elements of the universe in the way the basic sounds

come together and join in śikṣā. In the present meditation, the universe is to be imagined in the form of a multitude of worlds, represented by what are called the vyāhṛtis.

Bhūḥ, bhuvaḥ, suvaḥ are the three vyāhṛtis that are well known to tradition. The seer of Taittirīyopaniṣad begins by drawing attention to these three, and then adds that ṛṣi Māhācamasya knows of a fourth vyāhṛti, mahaḥ. Mahaḥ, says the seer, is Brahman, who is the universe, is the self inherent in creation; and all the devas form his limbs.

Having recalled the vyāhṛtis, the seer now leads the seeker through a series of meditations upon different constituents of the universe by successively associating them with the four vyāhṛtis in a definite order. First, the seer says, bhūḥ is this world; bhuvaḥ is antarikṣa, the empty space; suvaḥ is the world beyond; and mahaḥ is the sun: through the sun indeed do all the worlds flourish. Second, bhūḥ is the fire; bhuvaḥ is the wind; suvaḥ is the sun; and mahaḥ is the moon: from the moon indeed do all the luminescent objects obtain their brilliance.

Third, says the seer, bhūḥ is the ṛgveda; bhuvaḥ is the sāmaveda; suvaḥ is the yajurveda; and mahaḥ is Brahman: from Brahman indeed do all the vedas arise. Fourth, bhūḥ is prāṇa, the wind in the upper body that keeps one breathing; bhuvaḥ is apāna, the wind in the lower body that clears the wastes; suvaḥ is vyāna, the wind that suffuses the body and keeps the diverse limbs moving and alive; mahaḥ is anna, the food: from food indeed do all the winds of life obtain nourishment.

Each of the four vyāhṛtis, says the seer, are thus fourfold; and together these form four groups of four each. The one who knows the vyāhṛtis thus knows Brahman; and the devas endeavour to propitiate such a knowledgeable one.

Meditation on the hṛdayākāśa

The sixth anuvāka continues the meditation that is initiated in the fifth, but the seer now makes the seeker turn inwards, makes him turn his gaze from the Brahman manifest in the external worlds to Brahman dwelling within. Thus the seer begins:

“In the midst of the heart, there is this ākāśa, elementary space. Within this space dwells he, the puruṣa, the one who suffuses all. He is manomaya, of the manas, because he is known only through

manana, meditation on valid knowledge. He is amṛta, immortal. He is hiraṇmaya, full of light.”

And having introduced the seeker to the dwelling of the Brahman within, the seer leads him through a meditation that begins from within and moves on to encompass the whole of creation. The seer says:

“In the middle of the palate, there is this uvula, hanging like a teat. From here up to the point where the hair part and the skull is cleft is the indrayoni, the path for the realization of Brahman. Passing out from this path the indwelling puruṣa becomes one with the fire that permeates the world in the form of bhūḥ-vyāhṛti; then with the winds that permeate in the form of bhuvaḥ-vyāhṛti; then with the sun that permeates in the form of suvaḥ-vyāhṛti; and finally with Brahman that permeates in the form of the mahāḥ-vyāhṛti.

“Thus the indwelling puruṣa attains svārājya, becomes his own master. He attains mastery over the mind, speech, eyes and ears of all of creation, and over all kinds of knowledge in the world. And then going beyond all these, he, the puruṣa, becomes Brahman, whose body is the ākāśa, whose self is the truth, who makes the winds of life move, who fills the mind with ānanda, bliss, who is full of quietude and who is immortal.

“Thus should you worship, O prācīnayogya seeker, you who have been made capable of such a seeking through your efforts of several lives.”

The pāṅktas

The seventh anuvāka invites the seeker to another meditation on the basic elements of the universe, now presented in the form of six sequences of five elements each. These sequences of five are called pāṅktas. Leading the seeker through this meditation on the universe successively imagined as constituted of a series of pāṅktas, the seer first draws his attention to the pāṅkta of the lokas, consisting of pṛthivī, the earth; antarikṣa, the empty space between the worlds; dyau, the world above; diśaḥ, the primary directions; and avāntaradiśaḥ, the intermediate directions. Next, he mentions the pāṅkta of the devas, consisting of agni, the fire; vāyu, the winds; āditya, the sun; candramā, the moon; and nakṣatrāṇi, the stars. Third, he points out the pāṅkta of the bhūtas, consisting of āpaḥ, the waters; ośadhayaḥ, the herbs; vanaspatayaḥ, the

vegetation; ākāśa, the elementary space; and ātmā, which here stands for virāt, the body of Brahman that encompasses the whole of physical universe. These three pāñktas are the ādhibhautika-pāñktas: the universe when looked upon as an entity external to the viewer seems constituted in the form of these sequences of five.

Next the seer presents a series of three ādhyātmikapāñktas, the three sequences that seem to constitute the universe of the individual self. He thus draws the attention of the seeker to the pāñkta of prāṇa, vyāna, apāna, udāna and samāna, the five vāyus, the winds, that help the living body perform its various functions; next, to the pāñkta of cakṣu, śrotra, manas, vāk and tvak, the five indriyas, the sense organs connected with seeing, hearing, thinking, speech and touch, respectively; and finally, to the pāñkta of carma, māmsa, snāyu, asthi and majjā, the five dhātus – roughly translated as skin, flesh, muscle, bone and marrow – that constitute the physical body of the individual self.

Having helped the seeker imagine the universe as constituted of these six pāñktas, the seer affirms that all that there is, the whole universe, is indeed constituted of the pāñktas. The seeker therefore, says the seer, ought to fill the ādhibhautikapāñktas with the ādhyātmikapāñktas: he ought to so expand his individual self as to permeate the universe outside, to become one with the universe.

Meditation on Om

In the previous seven anuvākas, the seer has led the seeker through a series of meditations on the external universe and the universe of the self, imagined successively in the form of definitely ordered sequences of the saṁhitās, vyāhṛtis and pāñktas. Now, in the eighth anuvāka, the seer invites the seeker to pay worshipful obeisance to the universe in its entirety, represented by Om. Leading the prayer, the seer sings:

“Om is Brahman. Om is all that there is. Om prevails in the world as the anukṛti, the agreed sign of consent amongst the priests conducting a homa; and the preceptors initiate the vaidika recitations with the command, ‘Om, let us hear.’ Those who sing the *sāmans* begin their singing with Om. Those who recite the *śāstras* begin their recitation with ‘Om śom’: ‘Om, let all obstacles be quieted.’ The *adhvaryu* priest conveys his encouragement for each karma at a yajña with the utterance of Om. The *brahmā* priest conveys his consent with the utterance of Om; and he ordains the beginning

of agnihotra, the offering to the fire, with Om̐. A brāhmaṇa, before beginning his recitation, utters Om̐, and resolves: 'I shall attain Brahman'. He indeed attains Brahman."

Laying down the discipline for the seeker

Meditation on the universe in its different aspects and different forms is over with the eighth anuvāka. The next three anuvākas of śīkṣāvallī lay down a rigorous discipline of daily observances, perpetual devotional recitations and scrupulous fulfilment of worldly obligations for the seeker after brahmavidyā.

In the ninth anuvāka, the seer advises the seeker to always observe and practise the following: ṛta, righteous conduct determined by careful reflection on what is said in the śāstras and what happens to be the proper action in a given context; satya, fulfilling of ṛta through speech and bodily actions; tapas, subjecting the body to severe austerities in the pursuit of brahmavidyā; dama, bringing the external sense organs under control; śama, quieting the cittavṛttis, the activities of the mind; agni, keeping the fires burning; agnihotra, making the proper offerings to the fire; atithi, offering proper hospitality to those who arrive at one's door; mānuṣa, maintaining proper conduct in the society of men; prajā, bringing up sons and daughters; prajana, engaging in the process of procreation; prajāti, looking after the welfare of the future generations; and svādhyāya and pravacana, disciplined study of the knowledge ordained for one and propagating such knowledge through disciplined teaching.

In these various observances that the seeker is advised to carefully practise, svādhyāya and pravacana occupy a specially exalted place. The seer draws the attention of the seeker individually to each of the observances listed above, and every time he mentions one of these, he also reminds the seeker of the observance of svādhyāya and pravacana. The teaching of the seer goes thus: *ṛtaṁ ca svādhyāyappravacane ca. satyaṁ ca svādhyāyappravacane ca. tapaśca svādhyāyappravacane ca*, and so on.⁹

After reciting the series of observances above in this manner, the seer recalls that Rathītara's descendant ṛṣi Satyavacā says that practising satya alone is enough; Puruṣiṣṭa's descendant ṛṣi Taponitya

⁹ Taitt Up 1.9, p. 61.

says that practising tapas alone is enough; and Mudgala's descendant ṛṣi Nāka says that the practice of svādhyāya and pravacana alone is enough. The seer adds that these, svādhyāya and pravacana, indeed are tapas, these are tapas.

Japamantra for the seeker

The tenth anuvāka presents the seeker with a mantra for repetitive recitation, japa, as another aid to preparation of the mind for comprehending brahmadevīyā. This mantra, the seer says, was first sung by ṛṣi Triśaṅku after having attained jñāna. Following ṛṣi Triśaṅku, and imagining himself to have attained oneness with Brahman, the seeker sings:

“I am the mover of this tree of the universe. My glory rises like a mountain peak. I am born of the pure Brahman. Like sun, the source of all anna, bears amṛta, so am I the bearer of amṛta. I am the resplendent wealth; I am the pure intellect; I am immersed in amṛta.”

Ācāryānuśāsana

The eleventh anuvāka lays down the discipline to be inculcated in the brahmacārins who have completed their study of the vedas under a preceptor, and are thus accomplished enough to go out and live the life of a gṛhastha. Śrī Śaṅkara, commenting upon this anuvāka, says that after being instructed in the learning enshrined in the vedas, a seeker must diligently perform the śrauta- and smārtakarmas, the worldly obligations laid down in the śruti and smṛti, before he attains the realization of unity with Brahman. Because, as Śrī Śaṅkara says, the discipline enjoined in the śruti and smṛti is for inculcating saṁskāras, proper dispositions of the mind, and the one who has acquired the saṁskāras and has cleansed his intellect attains jñāna, the knowledge, without effort.

Recalling the moment when formal learning at the feet of a preceptor ceases, and the seeker begins his journey into the world, the seer says:

“Having taught the vedas, the ācārya, the preceptor, directs the students thus:

“Speak the truth. Follow dharma. Never neglect svādhyāya. Having offered abundant wealth to the ācārya, make sure that you do not sever the continuing line of progeny. Never stray from truth.

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Never stray from dharma. Do not be indifferent towards your own welfare. Never neglect propitious observances. And, never neglect svādhyāya and pravacana.

“Do not be careless about observance of the pitṛyajña and devayajña. Let the mother be a goddess unto you. Let the father be a god unto you. Let the ācārya be a god unto you. Let the atithi be a god unto you.

“Practise the karmas that are above reproach, not the others. Among the acts of the ācāryas, follow those that are commendable, not the others. Comfort, with respectful hospitality, those of the brāhmaṇas whose repute is higher than ours, the ācāryas.

“Make your offerings with śraddhā, respectful devotion. Never make an offering with aśraddhā, without respect for the receiver. Make your offerings in a measure that equals your wealth. Make your offerings with modesty. Make your offerings with a feeling of awe for the receiver. Make your offerings with a feeling of friendship.

“Whenever you are in doubt about the action or behaviour proper to any context, then do what the brāhmaṇas there – those of them who are given to proper deliberation, who are adept in the performance of their karmas, who are not under the direction of others, who follow the straight path and who are solicitous for dharma – do in that context.

“And in the context of those who have been accused of any violation, act the way the brāhmaṇas there – those of them who are given to proper deliberation, who are adept in the performance of their karmas, who are not under the direction of others, who follow the straight path and who are solicitous for dharma – act with respect to them.”

And, the ācārya concludes this rigorous teaching of the discipline with the emphatic assertion of the inviolability of what has been laid down, saying:

एष आदेशः । एष उपदेशः । एषा वेदोपनिषत् । एतदनुशासनम् ।

एवमुपासितव्यम् । एवमु चैतदुपास्यम् ॥

*eṣa ādeśaḥ. eṣa upadeśaḥ. eṣā vedopaniṣat. etadanuśāsanam.
evamupāsitaḥ. evamu caitadupāsyam.*¹⁰

¹⁰ Taitt Up 1.11, p. 71.

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This is the way. This is my advice to you. This is the essence of vedas. This is the discipline enjoined upon you. Follow it worshipfully. And, be steadfast in it.

The śāntipāṭha.

The twelfth, and the last anuvāka, is a śāntipāṭha, which is identical to the one with which the śikṣāvallī was begun, except that the verbs in the second part of the śāntipāṭha are now changed to the past tense. Thus what at the beginning was a worshipful prayer for quieting the obstacles in the path of learning, now, at the end of śikṣāvallī, becomes an offering of thanks to vāyu – who was addressed as Brahman, ṛta and satya by the seeker – for having protected the seeker and preceptor together during the course of learning encompassed in the śikṣāvallī.

A summary of the teaching so far

The śikṣāvallī has been taught to prepare the seeker, both in intellect and disposition, for his seeking. And the preparation, as we have seen, is indeed intense. The seeker is first invited to recall the science of properly comprehending the spoken word, without which no learning is possible. Then he is led through a series of meditations on the external universe as well as the universe of the self, imagining these in analogy with the concepts of saṁhitā, vyāhṛti and pāṅkta, which are supposedly known to the seeker from his earlier training. And at the end of each meditation on the essential constituents of the universe imagined in the form of either the saṁhitās, or the groups of vyāhṛtis, or the pāṅkta sequences, the seeker is invited to reflect on the entire universe in its wholeness, often symbolized in the sound of Om, and to engage in intense veneration of it.

Having accomplished this series of meditations on the essential constituents, alternated with intense veneration of the unitary whole, the seeker is prescribed a rigorous discipline of learning, teaching and self-control; and advised to continually recite the mantra describing the state of being of the one who has achieved oneness with Brahman, and thus deeply etch his ultimate goal on his consciousness. And, then, he is asked to go into the world, live a disciplined life, scrupulously fulfilling all his worldly obligations and perpetually engaging in svādhyāya and pravacana, so as to acquire the saṁskāras and learning that would make him fit for the darśana.

All this, as we have said, is preparatory to the acquisition of brahmavidyā. The teaching of brahmavidyā – of the way Brahman manifests himself as the universe in successive layers of greater and greater elaboration, and the way these layers of manifestations begin to successively open up for the accomplished seeker, finally revealing the un-manifest unitary Brahman at the core of all creation – such teaching of brahmavidyā is taken up in the next two lessons, brahmānandavallī and bhṛguvallī, of the upaniṣad.

And, as the instruction in brahmavidyā begins to unfold, anna comes to occupy a central place in the teachings of the seer. So far, in the śikṣāvallī, the seer has had only a few occasions to mention anna. The most significant mention is that in the fifth anuvāka where anna appears as the mahah-vyāhṛti, which is synonymous with Brahman. There the seer sings: *maha ityannam. annena vāva sarve prāṇā mahīyante*.¹¹ “Anna is mahah-vyāhṛti; from anna alone do all the winds of life obtain their nourishment.”

Besides this advise to meditate on anna as one of the synonyms of Brahman, there are only two other occasions when anna is referred to in this lesson. First, at the end of the third anuvāka, the seer, offering his blessings to the one who meditates on the coming together of different elements of the universe in the image of the saṁdhi in the science of language, says that such a one obtains abundant progeny, great wealth in cattle, plenty of anna, the glory that arises from nearness to Brahman, and finally the great worlds hereafter: *saṁdhīyate prajayā paśubhiḥ. brahmavarcaśenānnādyena suvargeṇa lokena*.¹² Later, in the tenth anuvāka, the sun is referred to as vājini, the source of vāja, which is another name for anna. And the seeker perpetually reciting the japamantra of this anuvāka sings: I am born of pure Brahman. Like the sun, the source of all anna, bears amṛta, so am I the bearer of amṛta. I am the resplendent wealth; I am the pure intellect; I am immersed in amṛta. *ūrdhwapavitro vājiniṅva svamṛtasmai draviṇam savarcasam*.¹³

These are the only references to anna in śikṣāvallī. In the next two lessons, the lessons concerned with the exposition of brahmavidyā, however, anna seems to be everywhere. Anna, as we shall see, is encountered at the beginning of instruction in brahmavidyā

¹¹ Taitt Up 1.5, p. 42.

¹² Taitt Up 1.3, p. 28.

¹³ Taitt Up 1.10, p. 65.

in brahmānandavallī as also at the threshold of realization by the accomplished seeker in the bhṛḡuvallī. And after the seer leads the seeker through realization of ānanda, the bliss of nearness to Brahman, in the bhṛḡuvallī, the seer and the seeker begin an extended singing in veneration of anna, which they realize to be the same as Brahman. And, this is how the upaniṣad ends.

Instruction in brahmavidyā: brahmānandavallī

The śāntipāṭha

The teaching of brahmānandavallī begins with a brief śāntipāṭha, with the seer and the seeker together praying for protection, livelihood, strength, brilliance in studies, and freedom from mutual rancour, and finally for the quieting of all obstacles in the path of learning that is to follow. The śāntipāṭha reads:

ॐ सह नाववतु । सह नौ भुनक्तु । सह वीर्यं करवावहै ।

तेजस्वि नावधीतमस्तु मा विद्विषावहै ॥

ॐ शान्तिः ! शान्तिः ! शान्तिः !

*Om saha nāvavatu. saha nau bhunaktu. saha vīryam
karavāvahai. tejasvi nāvadhītamastu mā vidviṣāvahai.
Om śāntiḥ śāntiḥ śāntiḥ.*¹⁴

Om. May he, the Brahman, protect both of us together. May he provide for both of us together. May we together acquire strength. May we together attain brilliance in what we study. May we never entertain any rancour towards each other. Om, may all obstacles be quieted.

Object of the teaching

Immediately following the śāntipāṭha, the seer, to help the seeker concentrate his mind on the object to be achieved, recalls the phala, the ultimate fruit, of the learning being pursued. In a cryptic formulation of the phala accruing to the one who is well-versed in brahmavidyā, the seer says:

ॐ ब्रह्मविदाप्नोति परम् । तदेषाभ्युक्ता । सत्यं ज्ञानमनन्तं ब्रह्म । यो वेद निहितं
गुहायां परमे व्योमन् । सोऽश्रुते सर्वान् कामान् सह ब्रह्मणा विपश्चितेति ॥

¹⁴ Taitt Up 2.1, p. 94.

*Om brahmavidāpnoti param. tadesābhyuktā.
satyaṃ jñānāmanantam brahma. yo veda nihitam
guhāyām parama vyoman. so 'śnute sarvān kāmān
saha brahmaṇā vipaściteti.*¹⁵

Om. The one who knows brahmavidyā attains paramātma, the ultimate un-manifest Brahman. About him it is said that he, Brahman, is satya, truth; jñāna, knowledge; ananta, unbounded, all-pervading and without a beginning or an end. The one who knows the Brahman dwelling in the paramākāśa, the infinite space of pure intellect and in the elementary space in the midst of the heart, attains—in complete unison with the all-knowing Brahman—the instantaneous fulfilment of all his desires.

Sṛṣṭikrama

Having stated the phala, the seer begins the teaching of brahmavidyā, starting with an exposition of how Brahman creates and manifests himself in the universe. The seer says:

तस्माद्वा एतस्मादात्मन आकाशः संभूतः । आकाशाद्वायुः । वायोरग्निः ।
अग्नेरापः । अद्भ्यः पृथिवी । पृथिव्या ओषधयः । ओषधीभ्योऽन्नम् ।
अन्नात्पुरुषः ॥

*tasamdīvā etasmādātmana ākāśaḥ sambhūtaḥ.
ākāśādvāyuh. vāyoragniḥ. agnerāpaḥ. adbhyah pṛthivī.
pṛthivyā ośadhayaḥ. ośadhībhyo'nnam. annātpuruṣaḥ.*¹⁶

From that Brahman, who is also this ātmā, the individual self of the seeker, was born ākāśa, the elementary space. From ākāśa was born vāyu, the elementary winds. From vāyu was born agni, the elementary fire. From agni were born āpaḥ, the elementary waters. From āpaḥ were born ośadhī, the elementary vegetation. From ośadhī was born anna, the elementary food. And from anna was born puruṣa, the man.

The annamayapuruṣa

The puruṣa here stands for the man—for the individuated self—according to Śrī Śaṅkara. But since, as has already been said, the

¹⁵ Taitt Up 2.1, p. 97.

¹⁶ Taitt Up 2.1, p. 97.

self is also the Brahman, the puruṣa being referred to above and in the following anuvākas can also be thought of as the one that fills the whole of creation. The seer, however, is keen to make the seeker realize beyond the possibility of any doubt that the puruṣa, that fills the whole of creation and also the individual self, is not a mere abstraction: this puruṣa is made of anna, which appears at the end of the sequence of manifestations of Brahman recounted above. To emphasize the annamayatva, the attribute of being born from anna, of the puruṣa the seer says:

स वा एष पुरुषोऽन्नरसमयः । तस्येदमेव शिरः । अयं दक्षिणः पक्षः ।

अयमुत्तरः पक्षः । अयमात्मा । इदं पुच्छं प्रतिष्ठा । तदप्येष श्लोको भवति ॥

*sa vā eṣa puruṣo'nnarasamayah. tasyedameva śiraḥ.
ayam dakṣiṇaḥ pakṣaḥ. ayamuttaraḥ pakṣaḥ. ayamātmā.
idaṁ puṣṭham pratiṣṭhā. tadapyeṣa śloko bhavati.*¹⁷

That, this puruṣa, is indeed formed of anna and rasa, food and the vital essences derived from food. Of him, the puruṣa, indeed is this head; of him is this right side; this left side; of him is this middle torso; and of him is this lower torso. It is about him that the following śloka is said.

Thus does the seer make the seeker concentrate on the annamaya body and see it as the manifestation of Brahman. Thus is anna encountered, as we have been saying, at the threshold of brahmavidyā, as the first step in comprehending the creation as a series of manifestations of Brahman. Later, the seer will show how the annamayapuruṣa that is encountered here as formed of anna, is also formed of prāṇa, the vital winds; of manas, the intellect; of vijñāna, the detailed knowledge of action in the manifest world; and of ānanda, the bliss arising from the nearness of Brahman. But all these other puruṣas fill the annamayapuruṣa, and indeed take their form from it. The perception of these other puruṣas is possible only in the form of the annamaya, and therefore these can be perceived only after having perceived the annamayapuruṣa as a manifestation of Brahman.

The seer reveals the annamaya-, prāṇamaya-, manomaya-, vijñānamaya- and ānandamayapuruṣa, sequentially, in the manner

¹⁷ Taitt Up 2.1, p. 97.

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of removing layers of husk to reveal the grain of rice, as Śrī Śāṅkara puts it. But in the beginning, and providing form to all those others, is the annamayapurūṣa. It is this, the annamayapurūṣa, that the seer celebrates in the next anuvāka. It is about him, as the seer says, that the following is said, *tadapyeṣa śloko bhavati*.

The greatness of anna

The next, the second, anuvāka begins with the seer singing in celebration of the greatness of anna, thus:

अन्नाद्वै प्रजाः प्रजायन्ते । याः काश्च पृथिवीऽश्रिताः । अथो अन्नेनैव
जीवन्ति । अथैनदपि यन्त्यन्ततः अन्नं हि भूतानां ज्येष्ठम् ।
तस्मात्सर्वौषधमुच्यते । सर्वं वै तेऽन्नमाप्नुवन्ति येऽन्नं ब्रह्मोपासते ।
अन्नं हि भूतानां ज्येष्ठम् । तस्मात्सर्वौषधमुच्यते । अन्नाद्भूतानि जायन्ते ।
जातान्यन्नेन वर्धन्ते । अद्यतेऽस्ति च भूतानि । तस्मादन्नं तदुच्यत इति ॥

*annādvai prajāḥ prajāyante. yāḥ kāśca pṛthivīm śritāḥ. atho
annenaiva jīvanti. athainadapi yantyantataḥ annam hi
bhūtānām jyestham. tasmātsarvausadhamucyate. sarvaṁ
vai te'nnamāpnuvanti ye'nnam brahmopāsate. annam hi
bhūtānām jyestham. tasmātsarvausadhamucyate.
annādbhūtāni jāyante. jātānyannena vardhante.
adyate'tti ca bhūtāni. tasmādannam taducyata iti.*¹⁸

All that is born, is born of anna indeed. Whatever exists on earth is born of anna, lives on anna, and in the end merges into anna. Anna indeed is the first born amongst all beings; that is why anna is called sarvausadha, the medicine that relieves the bodily discomforts of all.

Those who worshipfully venerate anna as Brahman, indeed attain all anna.

Anna alone is the first-born amongst all beings; that is why it is known as sarvausadha. All beings are born of anna; and being born they attain growth from anna.

All beings eat anna; and anna eats them all: at the end all of them become anna again. Since it is eaten, *adyate*, and it eats, *atti*, that is why it is called anna.

¹⁸ Taitt Up 2.2, p. 124.

The prāṇamayapurūṣa

Having thus revealed the annamayapurūṣa as the first-born of creation, the seer leads the seeker on to the next step in brahmavidyā, instructing him about the prāṇamayapurūṣa, the self formed of vital winds, that fills the annamayapurūṣa. The seer says:

तस्माद्वा एतस्मादन्नरसमयादन्योऽन्तर आत्मा प्राणमयः । तेनैष पूर्णः ।
स वा एष पुरुषविध एव ॥

*tasmādvā etasmādannarasamayādanyo'ntara ātmā
prāṇamayah. tenaiṣa pūrṇah. sa vā eṣa puruṣavidha eva.*¹⁹

Different from and inside this annarasamayapurūṣa, there is another, the prāṇamaya. This, annarasamayapurūṣa, is filled with that, the prāṇamayapurūṣa. And that prāṇamaya is indeed of the same form as this annamaya.

To emphasize the identity in form of the annamaya- and prāṇamaya-puruṣa, the seer repeats that the prāṇamaya takes the form of annamaya; the way molten metal filled in a mould takes the form of the latter, as Śrī Śaṅkara puts it. The prāṇamaya is of the same form as the annamaya: like the annamaya it has its various limbs; and the seer goes on to point out how the various winds, with their different attributes, form different limbs of the prāṇamayapurūṣa. The seer says:

तस्य पुरुषविधतामन्वयं पुरुषविधः । तस्य प्राण एव शिरः । व्यानो
दक्षिणः पक्षः । अपान उत्तरः पक्षः । आकाश आत्मा । पृथिवी पुच्छं
प्रतिष्ठा । तदप्येष श्लोको भवति ॥

*tasya puruṣavidhatāmanvayam puruṣavidhah.
tasya prāṇa eva śirah. vyāno dakṣiṇah pakṣah. apāna
uttarah pakṣah. ākāśa ātmā. pṛthivī pucchaṁ pratiṣṭhā.
tadapyesa śloko bhavati.*²⁰

This prāṇamaya attains its man-like form from the man-like form of the annamayapurūṣa. Of that prāṇamayapurūṣa, prāṇavāyu is the head; vyānavāyu is the right side; apānavāyu is the left side; ākāśa is the middle torso; and pṛthivī is the

¹⁹ Taitt Up 2.2, p. 124.

²⁰ Taitt Up 2.2, p. 124.

lower torso. It is about him, this prāṇamayapurusa, that the following śloka is said.

The manomayapurusa

The next, the third, anuvāka begins with a celebration of prāṇa, the vital winds. The seer sings thus:

“The devas, the gods that dwell in the various elements of nature, acquire their activity from prāṇa; and so do all men and animals. Prāṇa indeed is the life of all beings. That is why prāṇa is called *sarvāyusa*, the life of all. Those who worshipfully venerate prāṇa as Brahman, indeed attain to the fullness of age. Prāṇa indeed is the life of all beings. That is why prāṇa is called *sarvāyusa*.”

Having thus revealed the prāṇamayapurusa that enlivens and activates the annamaya, the seer takes the seeker to the next step in brahmavidyā, instructing him about the manomaya, the puruṣa formed of manas, the intellect, that fills the prāṇamaya. The prāṇamaya, says the seer, is the ātmā, the self, of the annamaya. And different from the prāṇamaya and within it is another, the manomaya, which fills the prāṇamaya, and takes its form. Like the annamaya and prāṇamaya, the form of manomaya too is defined by its five limbs: yajus is its head; ṛk is its right side; sāma is its left side; ādeśa, the brāhmaṇa part of the vedas, is its middle torso; atharvan of ṛṣi Atharvāṅgīrasa is its lower torso.

The vijñānamayapurusa

The seer begins the fourth anuvāka by recalling the inscrutability of the Brahman whom the seeker is trying to comprehend. He, the Brahman, says the seer, is such that vāk and manas, words and intellect, turn back from him without reaching near him; but the one who knows such Brahman, who is indeed ānanda, unqualified bliss, knows of no fear ever.

And then, continuing with the instruction in brahmavidyā, the seer reveals the vijñānamayapurusa that fills the manomaya. Of the prāṇamaya, says the seer, the manomaya is indeed the ātmā, the self. And different from this, the manomaya, there is another, the vijñānamaya, which fills the manomaya and takes its form. The man-like form of vijñānamaya arises from the man-like form of manomaya; and like the manomayapurusa, the form of vijñānamayapurusa is also defined by its five limbs: śraddhā is its

head; ṛta is its right side; satya is its left side; yoga is its ātmā, the middle torso; and mahat is its lower torso.

Vijñāna, śraddhā, ṛta, satya, yoga and mahat are some of the basic defining concepts of Indian darśana. Śrī Śaṅkara, commenting on the above anuvāka, explains vijñāna as the intellect that arises from certitude about the meaning of vedas and leads to corresponding action. Vijñāna is thus an attribute of antaḥkaraṇa – the Indian term for the entirety of the mental complex – that is characterised by adhyavasāya, engaging in action. In Śrī Śaṅkara's words: *vedārthaviśayā buddhirniścayātmikā vijñānam tattcādhyavasāyalaṅkaṣaṇamantaḥkaraṇasya dharmah.*²¹

Sāyaṇācārya commenting on an earlier anuvāka explains manomaya and vijñānamaya thus: *tamomiśraḥ sattvaguṇo manomaya-kāraṇam. ato manomaye tāmasabhāgadarmā rāgadveśādaya upalabhyante. rajomiśraḥ sattvaguṇo vijñānamayahāraṇam. ato vijñānamaye yajñādīnām vaidīkākriyānām kṛtyādīnām laukīkākriyānām ca kartṛtvamupalabhyate.*²²

Creation, according to the Indian understanding, is constituted of three guṇas, fundamental attributes: sattva, rajas, tamas; roughly translated, sattva is knowledge and truth, rajas is action, and tamas, inertia towards both knowledge and action. Manomayapurūṣa, says the ācārya, is formed of a mixture of sattva and tamas. That is why *rāga*, attachment, *dveṣa*, jealousy, and similar other attributes, which are characteristics of tamas are found in the manomaya. Vijñānamaya is formed of a mixture of sattva and rajas. That is why the performing of vaidika yajñas, as also of the worldly activities, like agriculture, etc., arises from the vijñānamayapurūṣa.

Śraddhā, according to Sāyaṇācārya, is absolute faith in the truths taught in the śāstras and by the teacher. Śrī Śaṅkara says śraddhā is the resolution to act that arises in the one who has attained vijñāna. Ṛta, as we have explained earlier in śikṣāvallī, following Śrī Śaṅkara, stands for righteous conduct determined by careful reflection on what is said in the śāstras and what happens to be the proper action in a given context; and satya is the fulfilling of ṛta through speech and bodily actions.

While commenting on the term *yoga*, Sāyaṇācārya recalls the *samprajñāta*- and *asamprajñātasamādhis*, the two ultimate states of

²¹ Śrī Śaṅkara on Taitt Up 2.4, p. 139.

²² Sāyaṇācārya on Taitt Up 2.2, in Taitt Araṇyaka 8.2, p. 599.

mind taught in the Yogasūtra of Patañjali. Śrī Śaṅkara explains the meaning of yoga in this context more simply as the accomplishment of action: *yogo yuktiḥ samādhānam*.²³ This meaning of yoga is of course strongly reminiscent of Śrīmadbhagavadgītā's teaching: *yogaḥ karmasu kauśalam*, yoga is the skill of accomplishing action.²⁴

Mahat is the first element born of Brahman, according to sāṅkhyadarśana, from which are formed all other basic constituent elements of the universe and which is the source of all distinctness of identities of the worldly forms. Mahat thus, says Śrī Śaṅkara, is the first cause of vijñāna.

To summarize then, vijñāna is the intellect that leads to action in the world; and such action is based in śraddhā, ṛta, satya and mahat. Vijñānamayapuruṣa is the ātmā, the self, that fills the manomaya and makes man act. Śraddhā, ṛta, satya, yoga and mahat are the limbs of this vijñānamayapuruṣa, of the man in action: there cannot be a valid action that is not informed of these attributes. This is the fourth anuvāka of brahmānandavallī.

The ānandamayapuruṣa

The fifth anuvāka begins with a celebration of vijñāna. Vijñāna, says the seer, leads to the yajñas and the karmas; all the devas worship vijñāna as the first-born of Brahman; and the one who knows vijñāna as Brahman, and makes no mistake about it, is indeed freed of all his bodily errors and attains the complete fulfilment of all his desires.

Continuing the fifth anuvāka, the seer leads the seeker through the next and the penultimate step of his instruction in brahmavidyā, revealing the ānandamayapuruṣa that fills the vijñānamaya. The vijñānamaya, says the seer, is the ātmā of the manomaya; and different from this, the vijñānamaya, there is another, the ānandamaya. This ānandamaya is the ātmā of the vijñānamaya. It fills the vijñānamaya, and takes its form. Like the puruṣas spoken of earlier, the ānandamayapuruṣa also has five limbs: priya, the feeling of pleasure that arises from seeing desirable objects, is its head; moda, the feeling of pleasure that arises from obtaining desirable objects, is its right side; pramoda, the feeling of moda enhanced multi-fold, is its left side; ānanda,

²³ Śrī Śaṅkara on Taitt Up 2.4, pp. 139–40.

²⁴ Śrīmadbhagavadgītā 2.50, in Mahā bhīṣma 26.50, p. 2607.

the undifferentiated feeling of pleasure of which *priya*, *moda* and *pramoda* are specific instances, is its *ātmā*, the upper torso; and Brahman is its lower torso.

Brahman manifests the world

The seer begins the sixth *anuvāka* with a celebration of Brahman, who is *ānanda*, and who is revealed when the layers of *annamaya*, *prāṇamaya*, *maṇomaya*, *viññānamaya* and *ānandamaya* are comprehended and seen through one by one, as the seer has been helping the seeker to do. The seer sings: *asanneva sa bhavati. asadbrahmeti veda cet. asti brahmeti cedveda. santamenam tato viduriti. tasyaiṣa eva śārīra ātmā yah pūrvasya.*²⁵ The one who knows that Brahman is not, ceases to be; and the one who knows Brahman is, is: so say the wise. This, Brahman, who is *ānandamaya*, is the *śārīra-ātmā*, the indwelling-self of the preceding one, the *viññānamaya*.

The seer's instruction in *brahmavidyā* through the unravelling of different layers of reality—all of which are manifestations of Brahman and all of which must be sequentially seen through in order to see the un-manifest Brahman dwelling at the core as *ānanda*—is now complete. The rest of the sixth *anuvāka* is concerned with the answering of a query that the seeker raises at this stage about the fate of those who know, and those who do not. Does the one who does not know, attain Brahman after departing from this world? And does even the one who knows, attain him? Such are the questions of the seeker.

The seer does not answer these questions directly. Instead, he begins a discourse on the nature of Brahman and the creation that arises from him. It is a long discourse that the seer initiates here; and it occupies not only the rest of this *anuvāka* but also the next two *anuvākas* of the *brahmānandavallī*.

He, the one Brahman, says the seer, wished to become the many. With such a resolve he undertook great *tapas*. Through such *tapas* he created all this that exists. And then, he himself entered the creation. Having entered the creation, he became both the manifest and the un-manifest, both the say-able and the unsaid, the concrete and the abstract, the sentient and the insentient, and the true and the untrue. The Brahman, who is *satya*, the truth, became all these.

²⁵ Taitt Up 2.5, p. 150.

THE FIRST MANIFESTATION OF BRAHMAN

That is why those who know call all that is there by the name of satya.

Continuing the discourse initiated above, through the next, the seventh, anuvāka, the seer says that in the beginning all was asat, un-manifest; from that asat, un-manifest, did the sat, the manifest world, arise: the un-manifest Brahman created himself as the manifest creation. That is why he is called *sukṛta*, the one who is created of oneself.

That *sukṛta*, says the seer, is indeed *rasa*, the primary joy; the one who attains it becomes *ānandī*: he is suffused with *ānanda*, bliss. If this *ānanda* were not dwelling in the elementary space in the midst of the heart, wonders the seer, then who else would have carried on the activity of *prāṇa*? Who would have made the winds of life move? He, Brahman, who is the *sukṛta*, indeed spreads *ānanda*, which makes the winds of life move.

The one who attains to the state of fearlessness, says the seer, in the secure knowledge of oneness with the un-manifest, un-seeable, un-sayable and un-supported Brahman, he alone attains fearlessness; the one who deviates even slightly from this state of oneness is immersed in fear. Brahman, says the seer, indeed becomes fearful for those who do not know of their oneness with him.

Brahmānanda

The seer continues with the description of this fearsome aspect of Brahman in the opening stanza of the eighth anuvāka. It is the fear of Brahman, says the seer, that makes the winds blow and the sun rise; it is the fear that makes *agni*, the fire, and *indra*, the foremost amongst gods, work diligently; and it is the fear that makes *mṛtyu*, the god of death, run.

And then the seer begins a worshipful description of the blissful aspect of Brahman: of the incomparable *ānanda* that flows from his nearness. If there be a man, says the seer, in the prime of youth, who is gentle, who has studied well in his proper discipline of learning, who is filled with hopes for the future, who is well-built, whose body is brimming with energy, and to whom the earth has rendered all her wealth – the *ānanda* of such a one may be taken as the measure of *mānuṣa-ānanda*, the human bliss. Multiply such *mānuṣa-ānanda* a hundredfold, and that, says the seer, is the measure of *manuṣyagandharva-ānanda*, the bliss of men who attain the world of *gandharvas*, the celestial beings who are known

to be especially skilled in the fine arts that effuse pleasure and joy. Multiply such ānanda a hundredfold, and that is the measure of devagandharva-ānanda, the bliss of those who are born as gandharvas. Multiply such ānanda a hundredfold, and that is the measure of bliss enjoyed by pitṛs, the ancestors, who dwell in the ciralokas, the worlds of eternity.

Multiply the bliss of pitṛs a hundredfold, and that, says the seer, is the measure of the bliss of ājānājānadevas, the gods that are born in heavens; a hundredfold of that is the bliss of karmadevas, of those who attain the world of gods through their actions on earth; a hundredfold of that is the bliss of devas, the gods who have a share in the yajñas of men; and a hundredfold of that is the bliss of indra, the first amongst the devas.

Multiply the bliss of indra a hundredfold, and that, says the seer, is the measure of the bliss of bṛhaspati, the preceptor of devas; multiply that a hundredfold, and that is the bliss of prajāpati, who is Brahman in the aspect of creator; multiply that too a hundredfold, and that is the measure of brahmānanda, the bliss of Brahman.

Such is the bliss of Brahman; it encompasses and exceeds manyfold the bliss that is accessible to manuṣyas, gandharvas, pitṛs, devas and even the king and the preceptor of devas. The brahmānanda, and also all the lesser ānandas, are all available of their own, says the seer, to the akāmahata-śrotṛiya, the one who is well-read in the vedas and is not even slightly touched by desire.

Having described the fearsome and the blissful aspects of Brahman, the seer brings the seeker back to the thought of the essential oneness of the whole of creation. He who is here in this human body, says the seer, and he who is there in the sun, are one. The one who knows this transcends this world and attains the annamaya self; attains the prāṇamaya self; attains the manomaya self; attains the vijñānamaya self; and attains the ānandamaya self.

In the ninth and the last anuvāka, the seer once again describes the state of mind of the one who has attained the ānandamaya self, which is Brahman. He, the Brahman, says the seer, is such that vāk and manas, words and intellect, turn back from him without reaching near him; but the one who knows such Brahman, who is indeed ānanda, unqualified bliss, knows of no fear ever. *yato vāco*

THE FIRST MANIFESTATION OF BRAHMAN

*nivartante aprāpya manasā saha. ānandaṃ brahmaṇo vidvān na bibheti kutaścaneti.*²⁶

And, such a one, who has attained Brahman, is never afflicted by doubt; he does not have to ask why he failed to perform the good deeds, or why he indulged in error. For him, the one who knows both these – the good deeds and the errors – are the same, both are forms of the self, the indwelling Brahman. Knowing this he strengthens the self. This, says the seer, is knowledge, this is the upaniṣad.

Leading the seeker to darśana: Bhṛguvallī

In the śikṣāvallī the seer, as we have seen, has sought to intellectually equip the seeker for the acquisition of brahmavidyā, and to inculcate in him the proper orientation, attitude and discipline for such a seeking. In the brahmānandavallī, he has offered the seeker complete instruction in brahmavidyā: he has revealed to him the ānandamayapuraṣa, who indeed is Brahman himself, dwelling at the core of man and the whole of creation, behind layers of annamaya-, prāṇamaya-, manomaya-, and vijñānamayapuraṣa, who also are, as the seer explains, manifestations of the one unmanifest Brahman. The preparation and the learning are now accomplished, and the seeker is ready to see for himself, to have a darśana of, what he has been taught. The bhṛguvallī is taught to lead the seeker to such direct seeing, to darśana. And, as we shall see, what the seeker sees at the beginning of bhṛguvallī is Brahman in the form of anna, and what he celebrates and worships in the end is also Brahman in the form of anna.

Bhṛgu's tapas and darśana

The seer begins the bhṛguvallī with the story of Bhṛgu's quest for Brahman. Once upon a time, says the seer, the reputable Bhṛgu, son of Varuṇa, approaches his father and implores him to lead him to the knowledge of Brahman. Varuṇa indicates to him the food, the winds of life, the eyes, the ears, the mind and the speech, which together constitute the six gateways to the knowledge of Brahman. Varuṇa puts this instruction very cryptically: *annam prāṇam cakṣuḥ*

²⁶ Taitt Up 2.9, p. 208.

*śrotram mano vācamiti.*²⁷ And, then he advises the son to firmly resolve to know the one of whom all beings are born; having been born, from whom all of them obtain sustenance for their living; and having lived, towards whom they proceed and merge into at the end. Know him well, says Varuṇa, because he indeed is Brahman: *yato vā imāni bhūtāni jāyante yena jātāni jīvanti. yatprayantyaabhisamviśanti. tadvijijñāsasva. tad brahmeti.*²⁸

Bhṛgu accepts the advise, and undertakes tapas to concentrate his mind and all his senses on the object of his quest. And, having accomplished the tapas, he, first of all, sees anna as verily the Brahman that his father, Varuṇa, has advised him to look for. As the seer puts it:

अन्नं ब्रह्मेति व्यजानात् । अन्नाद्धयेव खल्विमानि भूतानि जायन्ते ।
अन्नेन जातानि जीवन्ति । अन्नं प्रयन्त्यभिसंविशन्तीति ॥

*annam brahmeti vyajānāt. annāddhyeva khalvimāni
bhūtāni jāyante. annena jātāni jīvanti. annam
prayantyaabhisamviśantīti.*²⁹

He saw anna as Brahman. For, it is of anna indeed that all beings are born; having been born, it is from anna that they obtain the necessary sustenance for living; and having lived, it is into anna that they merge at the end.

Having seen thus, Bhṛgu goes to Varuṇa again and repeats the request to be led to the knowledge of Brahman. And Varuṇa advises him to resolve to know of him through tapas, because tapas indeed is Brahman. Bhṛgu, accepting the advice, undertakes tapas again, and this time he sees prāṇa, the winds of life, as Brahman:

प्राणो ब्रह्मेति व्यजानात् । प्राणाद्धयेव खल्विमानि भूतानि जायन्ते ।
प्राणेन जातानि जीवन्ति । प्राणं प्रयन्त्यभिसंविशन्तीति ॥

*prāṇo brahmeti vyajānāt. prāṇāddhyeva khalvimāni
bhūtāni jāyante. prāṇena jātāni jīvanti. prāṇam
prayantyaabhisamviśantīti.*³⁰

²⁷ Taitt Up 3.1, p. 214.

²⁸ Taitt Up 3.1, p. 214.

²⁹ Taitt Up 3.2, p. 218.

³⁰ Taitt Up 3.3, p. 220.

THE FIRST MANIFESTATION OF BRAHMAN

He saw *prāṇa* as Brahman. For, it is of *prāṇa* indeed that all beings are born; having been born, it is from *prāṇa* that they obtain the necessary sustenance for living; and having lived, it is into *prāṇa* that they merge at the end.

Having seen thus, *Bhṛgu* goes to *Varuṇa* again and repeats his request; and *Varuṇa* again advises him to undertake *tapas*, because *tapas* indeed is Brahman. *Bhṛgu* undertakes *tapas* again, and now he sees *manas* as Brahman:

मनो ब्रह्मेति व्यजानात् । मनसो ह्येव खल्विमानि भूतानि जायन्ते ।
मनसा जातानि जीवन्ति । मनः प्रयन्त्यभिसंविशन्तीति ॥

*mano brahmeti vyajānāt. manaso hyeva khalvimāni bhūtāni jāyante. manasā jātāni jīvanti. manah prayantyaabhisamvīśantīti.*³¹

He saw *manas* as Brahman. For, it is of *manas* indeed that all beings are born; having been born, it is from *manas* that they obtain the necessary sustenance for living; and having lived, it is into *manas* that they merge at the end.

Having seen thus, he goes to *Varuṇa* again, again makes the same request, and is again advised to undertake *tapas*. And at the end of his *tapas* he sees *vijñāna* as Brahman:

विज्ञानं ब्रह्मेति व्यजानात् । विज्ञानाद्ध्येव खल्विमानि भूतानि जायन्ते ।
विज्ञानेन जातानि जीवन्ति । विज्ञानं प्रयन्त्यभिसंविशन्तीति ॥

*viññānam brahmeti vyajānāt. viññānāddhyeva khalvimāni bhūtāni jāyante. viññānena jātāni jīvanti. viññānam prayantyaabhisamvīśantīti.*³²

He saw *viññāna* as Brahman. For, it is of *viññāna* indeed that all beings are born; having been born, it is from *viññāna* that they obtain the necessary sustenance for living; and having lived, it is into *viññāna* that they merge at the end.

³¹ Taitt Up 3.4, p. 221.

³² Taitt Up 3.5, p. 222.

Having seen thus, Bhṛgu goes to Varuṇa again, repeats his request, and is again advised to undertake tapas; and having accomplished the tapas, he, finally now, sees ānanda as Brahman:

आनन्दो ब्रह्मेति व्यजानात् । आनन्दाद्धयेव खल्विमानि भूतानि जायन्ते ।

आनन्देन जातानि जीवन्ति । आनन्दं प्रयन्त्यभिसंविशन्तीति ॥

*ānando brahmeti vyajānāt. ānandāddhyeva khalvimāni bhūtāni jāyante. ānandena jātāni jīvanti. ānandam prayantyaabhisamviśantīti.*³³

He saw ānanda as Brahman. For, it is of ānanda indeed that all beings are born; having been born, it is from ānanda that they obtain the necessary sustenance for living; and having lived, it is into ānanda that they merge at the end.

Bhṛgu thus directly sees all that the seer has taught in the brahmānandavallī about the un-manifest Brahman and the way he manifests as creation. Bhṛgu sequentially sees, just as the seer has instructed, Brahman manifesting as anna, as prāṇa, as manas, as vijñāna, and finally, as ānanda, which is perhaps the nearest approach to the one un-manifest Brahman.

With such seeing, with the darśana of Brahman in his varied manifest forms and as the un-manifest ānanda that dwells within, the quest of Bhṛgu is accomplished. The seer signals the completion and recites the phala, the ultimate beneficence, accruing to the one who attains such vidyā, thus:

सैषा भार्गवी वारुणी विद्या परमे व्योमन् प्रतिष्ठिता । स य एवं वेद

प्रतिष्ठिति । अन्नवानन्नादो भवति । महान् भवति प्रजया

पशुभिर्ब्रह्मवर्चसेन । महान् कीर्त्या ॥

*saiṣā bhārgavī vāruṇī vidyā parame vyoman pratiṣṭhitā. sa ya evaṁ veda pratiṣṭhati. annavānannādo bhavati. mahān bhavati prajāyā paśubhirbrahmavarçasena. mahān kīrtyā.*³⁴

This is the vidyā, knowledge, of which Bhṛgu is the seer and Varuṇa the preceptor. It, this vidyā, resides in the elementary

³³ Taitt Up 3.6, p. 223.

³⁴ Taitt Up 3.6, p. 223.

space within the heart. Anyone who realizes it becomes securely established in Brahman. He attains anna and enjoys anna. He attains greatness, greatness that arises from cattle, children and grandchildren, and from nearness to Brahman. And, he becomes great in his glory.

Recalling the primacy of anna

The completion of Bhṛgu's quest is also in a way the completion of the teaching of the upaniṣad. The seeker has been equipped, disciplined, and instructed; and finally the path of darśana, of directly seeing for oneself, has been illuminated for him through the illustration of the path taken by the reputable Bhṛgu. And now, in the last four anuvākas of the upaniṣad, the seer begins to instruct the seeker afresh in the rigorous discipline of food and eating; the discipline of respecting and caring for anna; and of producing, collecting and distributing anna in great quantities. And along with this discipline, the seer teaches another meditation: meditation on anna manifesting as diverse elements of the universe and the human body.

It indeed is greatly meaningful that this discipline and the meditation are being taught to a seeker, who has already been led through such elaborate and intense training and instruction, who has been shown the path of darśana, and who probably already has become the seer himself. Śrī Śaṅkara says that this teaching of the discipline of anna and the veneration of anna is begun at this stage because anna is the gateway to Brahman: Brahman is known through anna. *kim cānnena dvārabhūtena brahma vijñātam.*³⁵ And Sāyaṇācārya says the same: *yasmādannena dvārabhutenopāsitenā brahmajñānaṁ labhate.*³⁶

annaṁ na nindyāt

The seer begins his teaching of the rigorous discipline of anna, from the beginning of the seventh anuvāka of bhṛguvallī, with the advice that anna should never be looked down upon; and then leads the seeker through a meditation on anna manifesting as both the body and the winds that breathe life in it:

³⁵ Śrī Śaṅkara on Taitt Up 3.7, p. 226.

³⁶ Sāyaṇācārya on Taitt Up 3.7, in Taitt Araṇyaka 9.7, p. 680.

अन्नं न निन्द्यात् । तद्ब्रतम् । प्राणो वा अन्नम् । शरीरमन्नादम् । प्राणे
शरीरं प्रतिष्ठितम् । शरीरे प्राणः प्रतिष्ठितः । तदेतदन्नमन्ने प्रतिष्ठितम् ।
स य एतदन्नमन्ने प्रतिष्ठितं वेद प्रतिष्ठति । अन्नवानन्नादो भवति ।
महान् भवति प्रजया पशुभिर्ब्रह्मवर्चसेन । महान्कीर्त्या ॥

*annam na nindyāt. tadbratam. prāṇo vā annam.
śarīramannādam. prāṇe śarīram pratiṣṭhitam.
śarīre prāṇaḥ pratiṣṭhitah. tadetadannamanne pratiṣṭhitam.
sa ya etadannamanne pratiṣṭhitam veda pratiṣṭhati.
annavānannādo bhavati. mahān bhavati prajāyā
paśubhirbrahmavarcaśena. mahānkīrtiā.³⁷*

Do not look down upon anna, the food. That is the inviolable discipline for the one who knows. Prāṇa, the winds of life, are indeed anna, and śarīra, the body, is the partaker of anna. Śarīra is secured in prāṇa, and prāṇa is enshrined in śarīra. Being dependent on each other, the two are anna for each other, and thus it is indeed anna itself that is secured and enshrined in anna. The one who knows this, that it is anna that is enshrined in anna, is securely established in his repute. Such a one becomes annavān and annāda — is blessed with anna and the opportunity and capacity to partake of anna. He attains greatness, greatness that arises from cattle, children and grandchildren, and from nearness to Brahman. And, he becomes great in his glory.

annam na paricakṣīta

The next anuvāka continues the teaching of the discipline of anna, with the seer advising the seeker never to neglect anna; and then leading him through a meditation on anna manifesting as the elementary water and fire:

अन्नं न परिचक्षीत । तद्ब्रतम् । आपो वा अन्नम् । ज्योतिरन्नादम् । अप्सु
ज्योतिः प्रतिष्ठितम् । ज्योतिष्यापः प्रतिष्ठिताः । तदेतदन्नमन्ने प्रतिष्ठितम् ।
स य एतदन्नमन्ने प्रतिष्ठितं वेद प्रतिष्ठति । अन्नवानन्नादो भवति ।
महान् भवति प्रजया पशुभिर्ब्रह्मवर्चसेन । महान्कीर्त्या ॥

³⁷ Taitt Up 3.7, p. 226.

*annam na paricakṣīta. tadvrataṃ. āpo vā annam. jyotirannādam. apsu jyotiḥ pratiṣṭhitam. jyotisyaṅgāḥ pratiṣṭhitāḥ. tadetadannamāne pratiṣṭhitam. sa ya etadannamāne pratiṣṭhitam veda pratitiṣṭhati. annavānannādo bhavati. mahān bhavati prajāyā paśubhirbrahmavarcasena. mahānkīrtiā.*³⁸

Do not neglect food. That is the inviolable discipline for the one who knows. Because, water indeed is anna, and jyoti, fire, is the partaker of anna. Fire is enshrined in water, and water in fire. Thus, it is anna itself that is enshrined in anna. The one who knows this, that it is anna that is enshrined in anna, is securely established in his repute. Such a one becomes annavān and annāda – is blessed with anna and the opportunity and capacity to partake of anna. He attains greatness, greatness that arises from cattle, children and grandchildren, and from nearness to Brahman. And, he becomes great in his glory.

annam bahu kurvīta

The ninth anuvāka begins with the unconditional advice to ensure an abundance of anna all around; and continues with a meditation on anna manifesting as the elementary earth and space:

अन्नं बहु कुर्वीत । तद्व्रतम् । पृथिवी वा अन्नम् । आकाशोऽन्नादः ।
पृथिव्यामाकाशः प्रतिष्ठितः । आकाशे पृथिवी प्रतिष्ठिता । तदेतदन्नमन्ने
प्रतिष्ठितम् । स य एतदन्नमन्ने प्रतिष्ठितं वेद प्रतितिष्ठति । अन्नवानन्नादो
भवति । महान्भवति प्रजया पशुभिर्ब्रह्मवर्चसेन । महान्कीर्त्या ॥

*annam bahu kurvīta. tadvrataṃ. pṛthivī vā annam. ākāśo'nnādaḥ. pṛthivyāmākāśaḥ pratiṣṭhitāḥ. ākāśe pṛthivī pratiṣṭhitā. tadetadannamāne pratiṣṭhitam. sa ya etadannamāne pratiṣṭhitam veda pratitiṣṭhati. annavānannādo bhavati. mahān bhavati prajāyā paśubhirbrahmavarcasena. mahānkīrtiā.*³⁹

³⁸ Taitt Up 3.8, p. 228.

³⁹ Taitt Up 3.9, p. 229.

Multiply anna many-fold. That is the inviolable discipline for the one who knows. Because, pṛthivī, the earth, indeed is anna, and ākāśa, the sky, is the partaker of anna. Ākāśa is secured in pṛthivī, and pṛthivī is secured in ākāśa. Thus, it is anna itself that is enshrined in anna. The one who knows this, that it is anna that is enshrined in anna, is securely established in his repute. Such a one becomes annavān and annāda, is blessed with anna and the opportunity and capacity to partake of anna. He attains greatness, greatness that arises from cattle, children and grandchildren, and from nearness to Brahman. And, he becomes great in his glory.

na kām̐cana vasatau pratyācakṣīta

The next and the last anuvāka of the upaniṣad is resplendent with respect for anna, with the discipline of offering anna to all those who arrive at the door, and with descriptions of the joy and bliss of the one who follows the discipline, realizing the crucial place of anna in the universe and seeing anna as Brahman. The anuvāka is so laden with these sentiments and is so emphatically expressive of the greatness of anna and annadāna that quotations from it have kept appearing in the earlier chapters.

The anuvāka begins by further elaborating the discipline of anna with the injunction that a guest should never be turned away from the door. And the seer continues with the insistence that a seeker ought to obtain a plenty of food somehow or the other, so that no guest ever needs to return un-sated from his door:

न कंचन वसतौ प्रत्याचक्षीत । तद्व्रतम् । तस्माद्यया कया च विधया बह्वन्नं
प्राप्नुयात् । आराध्यस्मा अन्नमित्याचक्षते । एतद्वै मुखतोऽन्नं राद्धम् ।
मुखतोऽस्मा अन्नं राध्यते । एतद्वै मध्यतोऽन्नं राद्धम् । मध्यतोऽस्मा
अन्नं राध्यते । एतद्वा अन्ततोऽन्नं राद्धम् । अन्ततोऽस्मा अन्नं राध्यते ॥

*na kām̐cana vasatau pratyācakṣīta. tadvr̐tam. tasmādyayā
kayā ca vidhayā bahvannam̐ prāpnuyāt. ārādhyasmā
annamityācakṣate. etadvai mukhato'nnaṁ rāddham.
mukhato'smā annaṁ rādhyate. etadvai madhyato'nnaṁ
rāddham. madhyato'smā annaṁ rādhyate. etadvā
antato'nnaṁ rāddham. antato'smā annaṁ rādhyate.*⁴⁰

⁴⁰ Taitt Up 3.10, p. 230.

Do not turn away anyone who comes seeking your hospitality. This is the inviolable discipline for the one who knows. Therefore, obtain a great abundance of anna, exert all your efforts to ensure such abundance; and welcome the guests with the announcement that the food is ready. Because the one who prepares and gives food in abundance, with high care and veneration, obtains food in abundance with the same high care and veneration; the one who prepares and gives food in a moderate measure, with moderate care and veneration, obtains food in the same moderate measure and with similarly moderate care and veneration; and one who prepares and gives food in a small measure, with low care and veneration, obtains food in the same small measure and with similar indifference.

The concluding meditation

The seer concludes this intense teaching of the discipline of anna and annadāna with another prayer and meditation in veneration of Brahman in his diverse forms. Leading the seeker through this final meditation and prayer the seer sings:

य एव वेद । क्षेम इति वाचि । योगक्षेम इति प्राणापानयोः । कर्मेति
हस्तयोः । गतिरिति पादयोः । विमुक्तिरिति पायौ । इति मानुषीः
समाज्ञाः । अथ दैवीः । तृप्तिरिति वृष्टौ । बलमिति विद्युति ॥

यज्ञ इति पशुषु ज्योतिरिति नक्षत्रेषु । प्रजातिरमृतमानन्द इत्युपस्थे ।
सर्वमित्याकाशे । तत्प्रतिष्ठेत्युपासीत । प्रतिष्ठवान् भवति । तन्मह इत्युपासीत ।
महान् भवति । तन्मन इत्युपासीत । मानवान् भवति ॥

तन्नम इत्युपासीत । नम्यन्तेऽस्मै कामाः । तद्ब्रह्मेत्युपासीत । ब्रह्मवान्
भवति । तद्ब्रह्मणः परिमर इत्युपासीत । पर्येणं म्रियन्ते द्विषन्तः सपत्नाः ।
परि येऽप्रिया भ्रातृव्याः । स यश्चायं पुरुषे यश्चासावादित्ये स एकः ॥

*ya evaṃ veda. kṣema iti vāci. yogakṣema iti prāṇāpānayoḥ.
karmeti hastayoḥ. gātiriti pādayoḥ. vimuktiriti pāyau. iti
mānuṣīḥ samājñāḥ. atha daivīḥ. tṛptiriti vṛṣṭau. balaṃiti
vidyuti.*

*yaśa iti paśuṣu jyotiriti nakṣatresu. prajātiramṛtamānanda
ityupasthe. sarvamityākāśe. tatpratiṣṭhetyupāsīta.
pratiṣṭhāvān bhavati. tanmaha ityupāsīta. mahān bhavati.
tanmana ityupāsīta. mānavān bhavati.*

*tannama ityupāsīta. namyante'smai kāmāḥ.
tadbrahmetyupāsīta. brahmavān bhavati.
tadbrahmanah parimara ityupāsīta.*

*paryeṇam mriyante dviṣantah sapatnāḥ. pari ye'priyā
bhrātrivṛyāḥ. sa yaścāyam puruṣe yaścāsāvāditye sa ekah.⁴¹*

The one who knows such discipline and glory of anna attains his seeking; such a one meditates on Brahman thus:

He, Brahman, resides in speech as kṣema, as the disposition to preserve what has been attained. He resides in prāṇa and apāna as yoga and kṣema, as the disposition to acquire and to preserve what has been attained. He resides as karma, the disposition to act, in the hands. He resides as gati, the disposition to move, in the feet. And, he resides as vimukti, the disposition to relieve, in the excretory organs.

This is the meditation on Brahman manifesting in the human body. Here begins meditation on Brahman manifesting in the natural elements:

He, Brahman, resides as tṛpti, the disposition to satiate, in the rain; and as energy in the lightning. He is there as the splendour of the animals, and fire of the stars. He resides as the disposition to progeny, immortality and ānanda in the procreative organs. And, he resides in space as all that is.

Offer veneration to him as the foundation on whom all that is is founded; and you shall be securely anchored. Offer veneration to him as the mahah-vyāhṛti; and you shall attain mahattva, greatness. Offer veneration to him as maṇas, the faculty of thought; and you shall attain facility of thinking.

Offer veneration to him as namaḥ, the disposition to humility; and all desirable objects shall humbly present themselves before you. Offer veneration to him as Brahman; and you shall attain Brahman. Offer veneration to him as the parimara of Brahman, as that into which Brahman dissolves

⁴¹ Taitt Up 3.10, pp. 230-1.

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himself; and all your envious adversaries and all the kin whom you dislike shall dissolve away.

He who is in this puruṣa, the human person, and the one who is in the āditya, the sun, are one. He is one.

Ahamannam

And then the seer recounts the phala, the consequence, of this final meditation; which, apparently, is also the ultimate phala that accrues to the seeker at the end of all the phases of preparation, instruction, meditation and disciplined observance through which he has been led this far. The seer says:

स य एवंवित् । अस्माल्लोकात्प्रेत्य । एतमन्नमयमात्मानमुपसंक्रम्य ।
एतं प्राणमयमात्मानमुपसंक्रम्य । एतं मनोमयमात्मानमुपसंक्रम्य ।
एतं विज्ञानमयमात्मानमुपसंक्रम्य । एतमानन्दमयमात्मानमुपसंक्रम्य ।
इमौल्लोकान्कामाग्नी कामरूप्यनुसंचरन् । एतत्साम गायन्नास्ते ।
हा३वु हा३वु हा३वु ॥

*sa ya evaṁvit. asmāllokātpretya.
etamannamayamātmānamupasaṁkramya. etaṁ
prāṇamayamātmānamupasaṁkramya. etaṁ
manomayamātmānamupasaṁkramya. etaṁ
vijñānamayamātmānamupasaṁkramya.
etamānāndamayamātmānamupasaṁkramya.
imāullokāṅkāmannī kāmārūpyanusāncaran. etatsāma
gāyannāste. hā3vu hā3vu hā3vu.*⁴²

He who thus knows Brahman, leaves behind this physical world, to attain and transcend the annamaya self, the prāṇamaya self, the manomaya self, the vijñānamaya self, and the ānandamaya self. Having attained and seen these different selves, he becomes kāmānnī and kāmārūpa, the one who has attained command over all anna and all forms. And thus he moves around these diverse worlds, singing the sāman: *hā3vu, hā3vu, hā3vu.*

⁴² Taitt Up 3.10, p. 241.

And finally in the last stanza of the tenth anuvāka and of the upaniṣad the seer speaks of the sāman that such a seeker, who has passed through this great teaching of brahmanvidyā and has seen the diverse manifestations of the one Brahman as the several worlds and the several selves, and has transcended them all, sings. And the song the seeker who has thus become the seer sings is almost exactly the same song that we, at the beginning of this chapter, have heard annadevatā, the god residing in anna, himself singing in the Taittirīyabrāhmaṇa. The seeker sings thus:

अहमन्नमहमन्नमहमन्नम् । अहमन्नादोऽहमन्नादोऽहमन्नादः ।
 अहं श्लोककृदहं श्लोककृदहं श्लोककृत् । अहमस्मि प्रथमजा ऋताऽस्य ।
 पूर्वं देवेभ्योऽमृतस्य नाऽभायि । यो मा ददाति स इदेव माऽवाः ।
 अहमन्नमन्नमदन्तमाऽग्नि । अहं विश्वं भुवनमभ्यभवाऽम् । सुवर्नं ज्योतीः
 य एवं वेद । इत्युपनिषत् ॥

ahamannamahamannamahamannam.
ahamannādoḥhamannādoḥhamannādaḥ. ahaṁ
ślokakṛdahaṁ ślokakṛdahaṁ ślokakṛt. ahamasmi prathamajā
ṛtāḥsya. pūrvam devebhyo'mṛtasya nāḥbhāyi. yo mā dadāti
sa ideva māḥvāḥ. ahamannamannamadantamāḥdmi. ahaṁ
viśvam bhuvanamabhyabhavāḥm. suvarna jyotiḥ ya evam
veda. ityupaniṣat.⁴³

I am anna, I am anna, I am anna. I am annāda, the partaker of anna, I am the partaker, I am the partaker. I am ślokakṛt, I bring anna and annāda together, I bring them together, I bring them together.

I am the first progenitor of yajña: the first yajña was born of me. It is I who, at the earliest times, become the nucleus of amṛta for the devas.

The one who gives me is in fact the one who obtains me. The one who does not give is consumed by me. I am anna, I eat the one who does not give anna.

I bring this whole world to dissolution; and in my brightness, I shine like the sun.

⁴³ Taitt Up 3.10, p. 245.

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- The one who knows thus, attains his seeking. This is the upaniṣad.

The seeker who attains his seeking thus becomes one with anna, who is also Brahman. Such is the greatness of anna that the Taittirīyopaniṣad teaches.

*Om śam no mitraḥ śam varuṇah.
śam no bhavatyaryamā. śam na indro bṛhaspatiḥ. śam no
viṣṇururukramah. namo brahmaṇe. namaste vāyo. tvameva
pratyakṣam brahmāsi. tvāmeva pratyakṣam brahmāvādiṣam.
ṛtamavādiṣam. satyamavādiṣam. tanmāmāvīt.
tadvaktāramāvīt. āvīnmām. avīdvaktāram.*

Om śāntiḥ śāntiḥ śāntiḥ.

ॐ शं नो मित्रः शं वरुणः । शं नो भवत्वयमा । शं न इन्द्रो बृहस्पतिः ।
शं नो विष्णुरुक्रमः । नमो ब्रह्मणे । नमस्ते वायो । त्वमेव प्रत्यक्षं
ब्रह्मासि । त्वामेव प्रत्यक्षं ब्रह्मावादिषम् । ऋतमवादिषम् । सत्यमवादिषम् ।
तन्मामावीत् । तद्वक्तारमावीत् । आवीन्माम् । आवीद्वक्तारम् ॥

ॐ शान्तिः ! शान्तिः ! शान्तिः !