

Concept of *Ātmā* in *Ātmopaniṣad*

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Abstract- This *Upaniṣad* is related to the tradition of *Atharvaveda*. The term like *Brahmaveda*, *Amṛtaveda* and *Ātmaveda* is also used for *Atharvaveda*. This Veda consists of spell and charms. In *Patañjali Mahābhāṣya* the Atharva has already attained to such an assured position that is even cited as the head of the *Vedas* and occasionally as their only representative. The different positions of Soul, internal soul and the supreme soul to the element of soul has been made clear in this *Upaniṣad* as per name given to it. The *Upaniṣadic* philosophers regard the *Ātman* as identical with *Brahman* the world ground which is the absolute. The *Ātman* is Self-conscious and *Brahman* is identical with the *Ātman* the Self-consciousness. The *Brahman* is like a fire and the *Ātmā* is the small sparks that fly out of the fire.

Keywords- *Brahma*, *Upaniṣad*, *Ātmā*, *Sattcidānanda*, *Māyā*.

INTRODUCTION

The term *Upaniṣad* literally means, "Sitting down near sitting close to" and implies listening closely to the mystic doctrines of a (guru) or a spiritual teacher, who has recognized the fundamental truths of the universe. It points to a period in time when groups of pupils sit near the teacher and learnt from him the secret teachings in the quietude of forest '*Āśrams*' or hermitages.

In another sense of the term (*Upaniṣad*) means-The word *Upa*. Is a noun formed originally by the combination of the prefixes *Upa*, *ni* and root *ṣad*, the scholars from very ancient time have also analyses and interpreted? *Upaniṣad* means 'knowledge', by which ignorance is annihilated. Some other possible meaning of the compound word, *Upaniṣad* are "placing side by side" a "near approach" secret wisdom or even "sitting near the enlightened". *Upa* - *ni* - *ṣad* form the root *sad* to sit down, preceded by the two prepositions in down and *Upa*. Near, so that it would express the idea of session on assembly of pupils of sitting near their teacher to listen to his instruction in the, *Trikāṇḍaśeṣa*, *Upa*. is explained by *ṣamīpasadana*, sitting down near a person. The *Upaniṣadic* values are unique

investments in the present which will yield good results in future. *Upaniṣads* approach the subject of self-realization rather stoically, they do not undermine the importance of moral purity and spiritual preparation achieving on senses with *Brahman*. The composers of the *Upa*. Were able to receive and channel the knowledge of the cosmic self effectively into human terms because they were able to identify themselves completely with *Brahman*, transcending their ordinary nature and removing all traces of individuality, objectivity, duality and distinction. The *Upa*. Speak of the existence of universal cosmic soul, the *Brahman*, who is the cause and origin of all origins and God of all Gods, and try to describe the indescribable to the human language permits and the intellect admits. They refer to the *Ātman*. The individual soul that suffers from the vision of diversity and the impact of *māyā*, the illusion that keeps it claimed to be a sense driven world. The *Samhitā*, *Brāhman*, *Āraṇyaka* part of the *Vedas* are no way less important than the *Upa*. The *Bhagavad Gita* is actually a summary of the knowledge contained in the *Upa*. And is treated technically as *Upa*. by itself. *Upa*. are part of revealed knowledge (*Śruti*) they are not man made. According to the Indian tradition there are one hundred and 8 *Upaniṣads* but their number in fact exceeds over two hundred. The *Upa*. are said to be eleven in number. They are *Īśa*, *Kena*, *Kaṭha*, *Praśna*, *Mūakṇḍa*, *Māṇḍukya*, *Taittrīya*, *Āitareya*, *Chāndogya*, *Brhādāraṇyaka*, and *Śvetāśvetara* on which *Śaṅkara* has commented. The other *Upa*. are minor *Upa*. They are not alike. The dialogue method is Prominent. It helps us to think systematically and progress in our thought which is not possible through the lecture method.

When we go through the reading of the *Upa*. Generally, a question comes to our mind "who are the author of the *Upa*." It is very difficult to know the names of the mythological Gods and the Indian sages like *Prajāpati*, *Indra*, *Yama*, *Varuṇa*, *Yājñavalkya*, *Āruaṇi*, *Sāṅḍilya* and *Sanatkumar* etc are used in *Upa*.

Whom certain philosophical ideas have been associated in Upa. But it is very difficult to say if they are the real authors or not.

The Upa. Provides the background under which the Indian mind has begun to search for a satisfactory solution of a problem like the origin of the universe, the power lies behind the universe, the cause of the ignorance and the various ways by which the ignorance can be spoiled. The Upa. Are not remote from popular belief. They are great literature of the country and at the same time the vehicles of the great system of thought. The aim of the Upa. Is no so much to reach philosophical truth as to bring peace and freedom to the anxious human spirit? It can lead a man from the unreal to real, from darkness to light, from death to immortality. We get various teachings from Upa. It also helps to develop our mental condition and also changes our behavior.

Concept of *Ātman* -

The soul aim of the Upa. is the knowledge of *Brahman*. In all religions *Brahman* is accepted as omnipresence, omnipresence and omnipotence. Hinduism translates these ideas into Sat, Cit, and *Ānanda* in one word called *Sattcidānanda*. *Sat*, *Cit* and *Ānanda* are not in fact three distinct features they are inseparable like the three angles of a triangle. *Sat* is *Cit* and *Ānanda* also they are mentioned separately because we experience them separately due to our ignorance. The *Brahman* is plenitude and infinity. "The Upa. Describes *Brahman* as a threefold feature. He is said to be the enjoyer, enjoyed and the power which brings about the enjoyment."¹ The *Brahman* is subtler than the subtlest. He is the visas of the variegated forms. He is the most ancient being without any form. He has the power of creation. He moves and grasps without feet and hands. He sees without eyes and hears without ears. He is alone the knower of various *Vedas* and their innumerable *Slākhās* religious sins and merits are not for him *Brahman* is devoid of the three things called time, place and object. In the *Veda Brahman* is explained as *Puruṣa*. Fire is his head, the sun and moon his eyes, the religions his ears, the open *Vedas* are his voice, the air is his vital breath, and

the whole world is his heart the earth springs from his feet, for this is the inner soul of all living things. The Gods in various orders, the *sādhyas*, men, beasts and birds the breath and vital function, rice and barely, self for true faith, truth continence and the prescriptive usages all issue out of *Puruṣa* (God).

The Upa. Describes *Brahman* as the establisher of earth, sky, water, fire, *vāyū*, the giver of life and birth."² India scholars say if one knows all things. For instance, by knowing the "clay the variety fashions of pots and pans by the potter must be known to him". By knowing him one can live a higher life release from all sorrows of the heart with an everlasting peace.

The Supreme Soul (*Puruṣa*) known as *Āṅgira* under an outlook of the organ, organ holder and expert to know the organs appeared in trio-from i.e. Soul, internal Soul and the Supreme Soul. ³That Supreme purity, benevolent, exclusive, unique from of *Brahma* known as the Soul perceives as only the *Brahma*.⁴ *Brahma* is self-laminating and the Vedas, Scriptures, Puranas and all living- organisms are meaningful only through the light of *Brahma*.⁵ The *Brahman* is seen even when the discrimination of teacher and disciple etc. is taken for consideration. Indeed, the *Brahma* in the form of light of purity is existed everywhere.⁶ *Ātman* possesses a distinct position in Hindu religion. Indian philosophy gives it (*Ātman*) to the equal position with *Brahman*. But *Ātmā* is generally used in most essence in man whereas *Brahman* is reserved to denote the former sense. From *Ātmā* the mind, all sense organs, ether, air, fire, water born. All the being possesses the same self. It is only the ephemeral bodies which are different and the basic substratum of all being is the same. Due to our ignorance, we think that self is just the aggregate of body, senses and mind.

As the knowledge of the matter put in front of the eyes need no proof to have knowledge, the Soul always proved appears in its apparent from there is no need of proof for *Brahma* because everything of this *Brahma* is in the form of *Brahma*. ⁷The Upa. Declares that "there is only one self which is present in different beings, as the moon is one, but looks manifold when reflected in waters".

"*eka eva hi bhūtatmā bhūte bhūte vyavasthitāḥ*

¹ *Sveta.Upa.* - 12

² *Adhyātma Upa*, p. 153

³ *Ātmo.Upa.* 1

⁴ *Ātmo. Upa* – 1(e)

⁵ *Ātmo. Upa* - 9

⁶ *Ātmo. Upa* - 3

⁷ *Ātmo. Upa* - 6

ekathā vahudhā caiva drśyate jalacandrāvat" ||⁸

Ātmā is eternal, fire from sin, from old age from death, from grief, from hunger, inexpressible, unspeakable, begin less, endless, immeasurable unchangeable, enlightened, action less, unburned, indifferent, eternal without any reduction.

As the sun always remain constant, never rises nor sets, but due to lack of our knowledge generally we think sun sets and rises like that we think man born and die but this die and born is only for the phenomenal body not for *Ātmā*. The soul is the smallest of the small and greatest of great.

"*aṇoraṇiyāṇ mahato mahīyān
ātmāsya jāntoh nihitam guhāyām |
tam akraṭuḥ pasyati vītaiśoko
dhātuḥ prasādāt mahimānamātmanah*"||⁹

"The knowledge of *Ātmā* cannot be gained by much learning, teaching of the *Vedas* and not by simple understanding. But the man can able to know the nature of the self whom it (*Ātmā*) chooses".¹⁰ *Ātmā* is always silence and peace "*sāntoyamātmā*". With the knowledge of *Ātmā* everything becomes known. The highest temple of worship is the human soul neither forest, nor cave, nor does holy Benares give clear vision.

The person poor in worldly view always feels contentment when he presumes his Soul present everywhere and who satisfies with his soul and the helpless person too thinks himself most mighty.¹¹

The *Ātmā* refers to the individual living entity as a spirit soul. The *Ātmā* is one in quality with the *Brahman* that is he is of the same spiritual nature, but in quantity he is infinite symbol. It is like a drop of ocean water and the ocean. Though a drop of ocean water may contain the same minerals as the ocean. We cannot consider the drop of ocean water to be the ocean. They are not in quality, different in quantity. There are unlimited individual *Ātmās* some philosophers consider the individuality of the *Ātmā* to be eternal, others believe the *Ātmā* eventually merges back into the *Brahman* and loses its individuality.

⁸ *Śiva. Upa* – 5.15.

⁹ *Katha. Upa*- 1.2.20.

¹⁰ *Katha. Upa*. – II.

¹¹ *Ātm. Upa*. 12

The nature of Soul that rotates with the eyes of birth and death by means of the skin, flesh, hide, hair, thumb, fingers, back, nails thighs, belly, navel, genius, waist, pubic, forehead, eyebrow, skill arms, collaterals parts, head, and eyes.¹²

The *Brahman* is like a fire and the *Ātmā* is the small sparks that fly out of the fire. Due to their microscopic nature, the small sparks have attendance to be extinguished. In similar matter the infinitesimal *ātmās* have a tendency to be over powered and covered by illusion, or *māyā*. The illusion that covers the *Ātmās* true knowledge cause him to falsely identify himself as a product of matter. To accommodate the polluted consciousness of the soul, the nature creates a series of coverings, or *kosas*, moving from subtle to gross. The congregate of these coverings is what is generally referred to as the body. According to the pollution of the soul's consciousness he will be given a suitable body, either as a human, animal, plant or any one of 8,400,000 species of life.

Atman is free from seer seen and sight, as the decay less and *ātmā* is full like the ocean at the end of a kalpa.

draṣṭrdarśanadrśyadibhāvaśūnya nirāmaye

kalpāṇva ivatyantaṁ paripurne cidatmani ||¹³

The *ātman* is full, begin less, endless, immeasurable and unchangeable.

"*paripūraṇamanādhyantamaprameyamavikriyam*"¹⁴

Ātman replete with *sat*, *cit* and *ānanda*, decay less, the one essence, the eternal, the differentiated, the plenum, the endless, having its face every where

"*sādhanaṁ cidhanam nityamānandaghana
mavyayam*

pratyagekarasaṁ pūrṇamanatam sarvato mukham"
||¹⁵

In *Praśna Upaniṣad*, *Pippalāda* describes the self as *Puruṣa* with sixteen parts. He said to *Sukeśa*; The

¹² *Ātm. Upa* 1. ii

¹³ *Adhyatma Upa*. 23

¹⁴ *Adhyama Upa* - 60

¹⁵ *Adhyama Upa*- 61

person he from whom these sixteen parts arise is verily here within the body. He created Prana; from Prana faith, space, air, fire, water, earth, the organs, mind, food, from food virility, austerity, the Vedic hymens, sacrifice, the worlds; and in the worlds he created names.

Like *Brahman*, the *Ātman* was also postulated as the world ground by the *Upaniṣadic* philosophers. Finally, these two world grounds, *Brahman* and *Ātman*, are not different and separate. We find it directly stated: 'verily' that great unborn Soul, undelaying, undying, immortal, fearless, is *Brahman*. As oil (exists) in sesame seeds, butter in milk, water in river- beds and fire in wood, so the self is realized (as existing) within the self, when a man looks for it by means of truthfulness and austerity that is the *Brahman*. The *Upaniṣadic* philosophers regard the *Ātman* as identical with *Brahman* the world ground which is the absolute. The *Ātman* is Self- conscious and *Brahman* is identical with the *Ātman* the Self- consciousness. Prof. R.D. Ranade says here we have unmistakably the ontological argument, namely, that ultimate existence must be identified with Self- consciousness. Thus, by a survey of the different approaches to the problem of Reality, namely, the cosmological, the theological, and the psychological, we see that the *Upaniṣadic* philosophers try to establish Reality on the firm footing of Self-consciousness to them is eternal verily. God to them is not God, unless he is identical with Self- consciousness existence is not existence if it does not mean Self- consciousness. Reality is not reality, if it does not express throughout its structure the marks of pure self-consciousness. Self-consciousness thus constitutes the ultimate category of existence to the *Upaniṣadic* philosophers.¹⁶ "This ultimate reality or *Ātman* is described as *Puruṣa*. We are told that *Ātman* shaped a *Puruṣa* and drew him forth from the water, and brooded upon him. From the mouth of this *Puruṣa* came Fire; from his nostrils, air, from his eyes, the Sun; from his ears, the quarters of heaven; from his skin, plants and trees; from his heart, the moon; from his navel, death; and from his virile member, water, and in creating man, we are told that the deity ordered and from his virile member, water. And in creating man, we those various elements in the external world to enter into man, and entered the mouth. Wind became breath and entered the nostrils. The sun

became sight and entered the eyes. The quarters of heaven became hearing and entered the ears. Plants and trees became hairs, and entered the skin. The moon became mind, and entered the heart. Death became the out breath (*apāna*) and entered the navel. Water became semen and entered the virile member. What is not worthy is that both the self and the not-self, which seem so entirely different from each other, are here regarded as having a mutual correspondence, since both of them are permeated by the same forces which emanated from the primeval *Puruṣa*. Further, the old Rg. Vedic idea of cosmic *Puruṣa*, from the parts of ends in the universe are regarded as emanating an idea which occurs frequently in the *Upaniṣads*, as well as later Indian writings is here assimilated by the *Ātman* theory. The view that ultimate Reality was *Puruṣa* or presiding genius of the universe appears thus to have developed side by side with the view that it was *Ātman*. May more, as evidenced by these early *Ātman* theories, it would appear that the distinction between *Puruṣa* and *Ātman* was not maintained, the two being freely identified with each other. Thus, the *Upaniṣadic* philosophers describe cosmic *Puruṣa* as identical with *Ātman* whose body various elemi and already said that *Ātman* is not different from *Brahman*. *Ātmā* reveals in the heart of all living creatures. *Ātmā* is the scene of all seeing, the hearer of all hearing and the knower of all knowledge. He sees but is not seen, bears but is not heard, knows but is not known. "He is like a lump of with no inner of outer", 2" Bliss is not an attribute of it but it is bliss itself. And he who has reached this bliss is beyond any fear it is dearer to us than son, brother, wife or husband, wealth or prosperity. *Ātmā* it bridges to immortality.

"*yasmin dyauḥ pṛthivī cantarīksaṁ ātmā manaḥ sa ha prāṇaisca sārvaḥ tam eva ekuṁ jānatha ātmānam anyā vaco vimuñcathamṛtasya eṣa setuḥ*"||28¹⁷

The human soul is divine in nature due to the evil of the ignorance he is not able to know the real fact. *Ātmā* is not property of any person. A man who sees his own self seated in the selves of all human beings and all human beings seated in one's own self attain the supreme *Brahman*. One should be realized the *Ātmā*. "The knowledge of *Ātmā* cannot be gained by much learning, teaching of the Vedas and not by simple

¹⁶ *Tait. Upa-* II. 6

¹⁷ *Muṇḍ. Upa-* II- 25

understanding. But the man can able to know the nature of the self whom it (*Ātmā*) chooses".³¹ *Ātmā* is always silence and peace "*śāntoyamātmā*". With the knowledge of *Ātmā* everything becomes known. The highest temple of worship is the human soul neither forest, nor cave, nor does holy Benares give clear vision.

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CONCLUSION

This *Upaniṣad* is related to the tradition of *Atharvaveda*. The different positions of Soul, internal Soul and the Supreme Soul to the element of Soul has been made clear in this *Upaniṣad* as per name given to it. The active sense in body and the sensory organs etc., has been stated as Soul. The Soul residing in various factors, the five elements of the nature has been stated as internal Soul and the flow of sensitively beyond all those factors has been stated as the Supreme Soul. As the Sun is seen gripped by the demon head but actually it seldom grips the Sun, in the similar fashion it seems gripped by ignorance. However, actually it does not happen. The Saint has thus revealed the facts of life coincide to the facts of solar eclipse. The worldly confusions and the easy liberated stage of the Soul has been explained with the examples of confusing snake on a chord and the

process of get rid of the snake from the slough. The *Brahman* has been proved by resorting to the basis of names, word meaning and the comparative materials. That *Brahman* is not beyond the birth because it appears with the body that takes birth. One thing to bring in notice is that the birth is taken by the body and nor by the sensitivity as a number of vessels usually are made and broken time to time but the water kept on them is free to cycle of birth and decay. Hence, it is unborn with the same spirit, we can't say that *Brahman* has emancipated and not desirous of emancipation or free from the ties. Life is vital for each one. There is a path of grants, success and achievement of the final goal. Among *puruṣārthas*, one has to attain the last one i.e., mokṣa. This is very much need for an individual. Hence, one must, therefore, identify a necessary condition for the working of the mechanism of bondage, something removal and in whose absence the mechanism will cease to function. That condition, says the Advaitin, is *avidyā*. It is only as long as *avidyā* operates those desires for things and ends are formed in us. Without desires the *vāsanās*, or tendencies, will not be carried through into action, and without functioning *vāsanās* the karmic residues cannot determine birth, length of life, and experiences.

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¹⁸ *Ātmo. Upa. 12*