

LONG WEEKEND FAMILY VEDANTA RETREAT

with

Swami Vidadatmanandaji

on

Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad

Passages 3-8-6 to 12

With

Śāṅkarabhāṣya

(*devanāgarī* copy)

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॥ॐ बृहदारण्यकोपनिषद्भाष्ये तृतीयोऽध्यायः॥

सा होवाच, यदूर्ध्वं याज्ञवल्क्य दिवः, यदवाक् पृथिव्याः,
यदन्तरा द्यावापृथिवी इमे, यद्भूतं च भवच्च भविष्यच्चेत्याचक्षते,
कस्मिँस्तदोतं च प्रोतं चेति ॥ ३-८-६^१ ॥

Translation→ 6. She said, 'By what, O Yājñavalkya, is that pervaded which is above heaven and below the earth, which is this heaven and earth as well as between them, and which they say was, is and will be?

शाङ्करभाष्य→ व्याख्यातमन्यत् । सा होवाच यदूर्ध्वं
याज्ञवल्क्येत्यादिप्रश्नः प्रतिवचनं च उक्तस्यैवार्थस्यावधारणार्थं पुनरुच्यते। न
किञ्चिदपूर्वमर्थान्तरमुच्यते ॥६॥

Translation→ All this has been explained. The question and the answer are repeated in this and the next paragraph in order to emphasize the truth already stated by Yājñavalkya. Nothing new is introduced.

स होवाच, यदूर्ध्वं गार्गी दिवः, यदवाक् पृथिव्याः, यदन्तरा
द्यावापृथिवी इमे, यद्भूतं च भवच्च भविष्यच्चेत्याचक्षते, आकाश एव
तदोतं च प्रोतं चेति, कस्मिन्नु खल्वाकाश ओतश्च प्रोतश्चेति ॥ ३-८-
७ ॥

Translation→ 7. He said, 'That, O Gārgī, which is above heaven and below the earth, which is this heaven and earth as well as between them, and which they say was, is and will be, is pervaded by the un-manifested ether (space) alone.' 'By what is the un-manifested ether (space) pervaded?'

¹ ३ अध्यायः - ८ ब्राह्मणम् - ६ कंडिका

॥ॐ बृहदारण्यकोपनिषद्भाष्ये तृतीयोऽध्यायः॥

शाङ्करभाष्य→ सर्वं यथोक्तं गार्ग्या प्रत्युच्चार्य तमेव
2 पूर्वोक्तमर्थमवधारितवानाकाश एवेति याज्ञवल्क्यः। गार्ग्याह ---- कस्मिन्नु
खल्वाकाश ओतश्च प्रोतश्चेति। आकाशमेव तावत् कालत्रयातीतत्वाद्
4 दुर्वाच्यम्, ततोऽपि कष्टतरमक्षरं यस्मिन्नाकाशमोतं च प्रोतं च,
अतोऽवाच्यमिति कृत्वा, न प्रतिपद्यते सा अप्रतिपत्तिर्नाम निग्रहस्थानं
6 तार्किकसमये; अथावाच्यमपि वक्ष्यति, तथाऽपि विप्रतिपत्तिर्नाम निग्रहस्थानं;
विरुद्धा प्रतिपत्तिर्हि सा, यदवाच्यस्य वदनम्; अतो दुर्वचनं प्रश्नं मन्यते
8 गार्गी॥ ७॥

10 Translation→ Yājñavalkya repeated Gārgī's question as it was, and emphasized
what he had already stated by saying, 'By the un-manifested ether (*space*) alone.' Gārgī
12 said, 'By what is the un-manifested ether (*space*) pervaded?' She considered the
question unanswerable, for the un-manifested ether (*space*) itself, being beyond time
14 past, present and future, was difficult to explain: much more so was the Immutable
(Brahman) by which the un-manifested ether (*space*) was pervaded; hence It could not
16 be explained. Now, if Yājñavalkya did not explain It for this reason, he would lay himself
open to the charge of what is called in the system of logic 'non-comprehension', if, on
18 the other hand, he tried to explain It, notwithstanding the fact that It was a thing that
could not be explained, he would be guilty of what is called 'a contradiction'; for the
20 attempt to explain what cannot be explained is such a contradiction. **Therefore, Gārgī
considers this question as unanswerable.**

22 तद् दोषद्वयमपि परिजिहीर्षन्नाह-

24 With a view to evading both the charges, he said:

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28
30
32

॥ॐ बृहदारण्यकोपनिषद्भाष्ये तृतीयोऽध्यायः॥

2 स होवाच, एतद्वै तदक्षरं गार्गि ब्राह्मणा अभिवदन्ति, अस्थूलम्-
अनणु-अह्रस्वम्-अदीर्घम्-अलोहितम्-अस्नेहम्-अच्छायम्-अतमः-
4 अवायुः-अनाकाशम्-असङ्गम्-अरसम्-अगन्धम्-अचक्षुष्कम्-
अश्रोत्रम्-अवाक्-अमनः-अतेजस्कम्-अप्राणम्-अमुखम्-अमात्रम्-
6 अनन्तरम्-अबाह्यम्, न तदश्नाति किञ्चन, न तदश्नाति कश्चन
॥३-८-८॥

8 Translation→ 8. He said: O Gārgī, the knowers of Brahman say, this
10 Immutable (Brahman) is that. It is neither gross nor minute, neither short nor
12 long, neither red color nor oiliness, neither shadow nor darkness, neither air
14 nor ether (**space**), unattached, neither savour (**to have taste**) nor odour (**to
have smell**), without eyes or ears, without the vocal organ or mind, non-
luminous, without the vital force or mouth, not a measure, and without
interior or exterior. It does not eat anything, nor is It eaten by anybody.

16 शाङ्करभाष्य→ स होवाच याज्ञवल्क्यः- एतद् वै तद् यत् पृष्टवत्यसि
कस्मिन्नु खल्वाकाश ओतश्च प्रोतश्चेति। किं तत्? अक्षरम्-यन्न क्षीयते न
18 क्षरतीति वाऽक्षरं- तदक्षरं हे गार्गि ब्राह्मणा ब्रह्मविदोऽभिवदन्ति।
ब्राह्मणाभिवदनकथनेन-नाहमवाच्यं वक्ष्यामि न च न प्रतिपद्येयम्-इत्येवं
20 दोषद्वयं परिहरति। एवमपाकृते प्रश्ने पुनर्गार्ग्याः प्रतिवचनं द्रष्टव्यं - ब्रूहि किं
तदक्षरम्, यद् ब्राह्मणा अभिवदन्ति? इत्युक्त आह-

22 Translation→ Yājñavalkya said: O Gārgī, the knowers of Brahman say, this is
24 that about which you have asked, By what is the un-manifested ether (**space**) pervaded?
What is it? The *Immutable*, i.e. which does not decay or change. By referring to the
26 opinion of the knowers of Brahman, he evades both the charges by suggesting that he will
say nothing objectionable, nor that he has failed to comprehend the question. When he
28 thus answered her question, Gārgī must have rejoined, ‘Tell me, what is that Immutable
which the knowers of Brahman speak of?’ Thus addressed, Yājñavalkya said:

30

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अस्थूलं तत् स्थूलादन्यत्, एवं तर्ह्यणु - न, अनणु, अस्तु तर्हि ह्रस्वम् -
2 अह्रस्वम्; एवं तर्हि दीर्घम्, नापि दीर्घमदीर्घम्; एवमेतैश्चतुर्भिः
परिमाणप्रतिषेधैर्द्रव्यधर्मः प्रतिषिद्धः, न द्रव्यं तदक्षरमित्यर्थः। अस्तु तर्हि
4 लोहितो गुणः, ततोऽप्यन्यदलोहितम्; आग्नेयो गुणो लोहितः; भवतु तर्ह्यपां
स्नेहनं - न अस्नेहम्; अस्तु तर्हि च्छाया, सर्वथापि अनिर्देश्यत्वात् छायाया
6 अप्यन्यत् अच्छायम्; अस्तु तर्हि तमः - अतमः;

8 *It is not gross, i.e. is other than gross. Then It must be minute? No, nor minute.*
Then is It short? *Neither short.* Then It must be long? No, *nor long.* By this fourfold
10 negation of size all the characteristics of a substance are denied of It; in other words, this
Immutable is not a substance. Is It then red colour, which is a quality? No, It is different
12 from that too --- *neither red colour*; red colour is a quality of fire. Is It then the oiliness of
water?² No, *nor oiliness.* Is It then a shadow, being altogether indescribable? No, It is
14 different from that too --- *neither shadow.* Is It then darkness? No, *nor darkness.*

16 भवतु वायुस्तर्हि - अवायुः; भवेत्तर्ह्यकाशम् - अनाकाशम्; भवतु तर्हि
सङ्गात्मकं जतुवत् - असङ्गम्; रसोऽस्तु तर्हि - अरसम्; तथा गन्धोऽस्तु-
18 अगन्धम्; अस्तु तर्हि चक्षुः, अचक्षुष्कम् - न हि चक्षुरस्य करणं विद्यते,
अतोऽचक्षुष्कम्; “पश्यत्यचक्षुः” इति मन्त्रवर्णात्। तथाऽश्रोत्रम्; “स
20 शृणोत्यकर्णः” इति; भवतु तर्हि वाक् - अवाक्; तथा अमनः;

Let It then be air. No, *neither air.* May It then be the ether? No, *nor ether (space).*
22 Is It then sticky like lac? No, It is *unattached.* Is It then savour? *Neither savour.* Let It
then be odour. No, *nor adour.* Has It then eyes? No, It is *without eyes*, for It has not
24 instrument of vision; as the Mantra says, ‘He sees without eyes’ (Sv. III. 19). Similarly It
is without *ears*, as the Śruti puts it: ‘He hears without ears’ (Ibid). Let It then have the
26 vocal organ. No, It is *without the vocal organ.* Similarly It is without the *mind.*

² It is an assumption of the Vaisesika philosophy that oiliness is the quality of water.

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तथा अतेजस्कम्-अविद्यमानं तेजोऽस्य तत् अतेजस्कम्; न हि तेजः
2 अग्न्यादिप्रकाशवत् अस्य विद्यते; अप्राणम्-आध्यात्मिको वायुः
प्रतिषिध्यतेऽप्राणमिति; मुखं तर्हि द्वारं - तत् अमुखम्; अमात्रम्-मीयते येन
4 तन्मात्रम्, अमात्रं मात्रारूपं तन्न भवति, न तेन किञ्चिन्मीयते; अस्तु तर्हि
च्छिद्रवत्- अनन्तरम् नास्यान्तरमस्ति; सम्भवेत् तर्हि बहिस्तस्य, अबाह्यम्;
6 अस्तु तर्हि भक्षयितृ तत् - न तदश्नाति किञ्चन; भवेत् तर्हि भक्ष्यं कस्यचित्, न
तदश्नाति कश्चन; सर्वविशेषणरहितमित्यर्थः; एकमेवाद्वितीयं हि तत् - केन किं
8 विशिष्यते॥ ८॥

10 Likewise It is *non-luminous*, for It has no lustre like that of fire etc. It is without
the vital force; the vital force in the body is denied of It. Has It then a mouth or opening?
12 No, It is without a *mouth*. Not a *measure*: It does not measure anything. Is It then porous?
No, It is *without interior*. Then may be It has an exterior? No. It has no *exterior*. Is It then
14 an eater? No, *It does not eat anything*. Then is It anybody's food? No, *nor is It eaten by anybody*.
In other words, It is devoid of all attributes, for It is one only without a second;
16 so what is there that can be specified, and through what?

18 एतस्य वा अक्षरस्य प्रशासने गार्गि सूर्याचन्द्रमसौ विधृतौ
तिष्ठतः, एतस्य वा अक्षरस्य प्रशासने गार्गि द्यावापृथिव्यौ विधृतौ
20 तिष्ठतः, एतस्य वा अक्षरस्य प्रशासने गार्गि निमेषा मुहूर्ता
अहोरात्राण्यर्धमासा मासा ऋतवः संवत्सरा इति विधृतास्तिष्ठन्ति;
22 एतस्य वा अक्षरस्य प्रशासने गार्गि प्राच्योऽन्या नद्यः स्यन्दन्ते श्वेतेभ्यः
पर्वतेभ्यः, प्रतीच्योऽन्याः, यां यां च दिशमनु; एतस्य वा अक्षरस्य
24 प्रशासने गार्गि ददतो मनुष्याः प्रशंसन्ति, यजमानं देवाः, दर्वी
पितरोऽन्वायत्ताः ॥ ३-९-९ ॥

26
28 Translation→ 9. Under the mighty rule of this Immutable, O Gārgī,
the sun and moon are held in their positions; under the mighty rule of this
Immutable, O Gārgī, heaven and earth maintain their positions; under the

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2 mighty rule of this Immutable, O Gārgī, moments, Muhurtas³, days and
nights, fortnights, months, seasons and years are held in their respective
4 places; under the mighty rule of this Immutable, O Gārgī, some rivers flow
eastward from the White Mountains, others flowing westward continue in
6 that direction, and still others keep to their respective courses; under the
mighty rule of this Immutable, O Gārgī, men praise those that give, the gods
depend on the sacrificer, and the manes on independent offerings
8 (Darvihoma).⁴

10 शाङ्करभाष्य→ अनेकविशेषणप्रतिषेधप्रयासात् अस्तित्वं
तावदक्षरस्योपगमितं श्रुत्या; तथापि लोकबुद्धिमपेक्ष्य आशङ्क्यते यतः,
12 अतोऽस्तित्वाय अनुमानं प्रमाणमुपन्यस्यति-
एतस्य वा अक्षरस्य। यदेतदधिगतमक्षरं सर्वान्तरं साक्षादपरोक्षाद्ब्रह्म, य
14 आत्मा अशनायादिधर्मातीतः, एतस्य वा अक्षरस्य प्रशासने-यथा राज्ञः
प्रशासने राज्यमस्फुटितं नियतं वर्तते, एवमेतस्याक्षरस्य प्रशासने ---
16

18 Translation→ The Śruti, by attempting to negate various attributes of the
Immutable, has indicated Its existence. Yet, anticipating the popular misconception about
It, it adduces an inferential evidence in favour of Its existence: *Under the mighty rule of*
20 *this Immutable*, the Brahman that has been known to be within all, immediate and direct -
-- the self that is devoid of all attributes such as hunger,
22

हे गार्गी सूर्याचन्द्रमसौ, सूर्यश्च चन्द्रमाश्च सूर्याचन्द्रमसौ
24 अहोरात्रयोर्लोकप्रदीपौ, तादर्थ्येन प्रशासित्रा ताभ्यां
निर्वर्त्यमानलोकप्रयोजनविज्ञानवता निर्मितौ विधृतौ च, स्याताम्---
26 साधारणसर्वप्राणिप्रकाशोपकारकत्वात् लौकिकप्रदीपवत्।
तस्मादस्ति तद्, येन विधृतौ ईश्वरौ स्वतन्त्रौ सन्तौ निर्मितौ तिष्ठतः
28 नियतदेशकालनिमित्तोदयास्तमयवृद्धिक्षयाभ्यां च वर्तेते; तदस्ति एवमेतयोः
प्रशासितृ अक्षरम्, प्रदीपकर्तृविधारयितृवत्।

³ Equivalent to about 48 minutes

⁴ A class of offerings that have neither any subsidiary parts nor are themselves subsidiary to any sacrifice.

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2 *O Gārgī, the sun and moon, which are like two lamps giving light to all beings by*
3 *day and night respectively, are held in their positions, as a kingdom remains unbroken*
4 *and orderly under the mighty rule of a king. They must have been created for the purpose*
5 *of giving light by a Universal Ruler who knows of what use they will be to all, for they*
6 *serve the common good of all beings by giving light, as we see in the case of an ordinary*
7 *lamp⁵. Therefore That exists which has made the sun and moon and compels them,*
8 *though they are powerful and independent, to rise and set, increase and decrease,*
9 *according to fixed place, time and causes⁶. Thus there exists their mighty Ruler, the*
10 *Immutable, as the lamp has its maker and regulator.*

11 एतस्य वा अक्षरस्य प्रशासने गार्गी द्यावापृथिव्यौ – द्यौश्च पृथ्वी च
12 सावयवत्वात् स्फुटनस्वभावे अपि सत्यौ गुरुत्वात् पतनस्वभावे संयुक्तत्वाद्
13 वियोगस्वभावे चेतनावदभिमानिदेवताधिष्ठितत्वात् स्वतन्त्रे अपि --
14 एतस्याक्षरस्य प्रशासने वर्तेते विधृते तिष्ठतः। एतद्धि अक्षरं सर्वव्यवस्थासेतुः
15 सर्वमर्यादाविधरणम्, अतो नास्याक्षरस्य प्रशासनं द्यावापृथिव्यावतिक्रामतः;
16 तस्मात् सिद्धमस्यास्तित्वमक्षरस्य; अव्यभिचारि हि तल्लिङ्गम्, यद्
17 द्यावापृथिव्यौ नियते वर्तेते; चेतनावन्तं प्रशासितारमसंसारिणमन्तरेण
18 नैतद्युक्तम्। 'येन द्यौरुग्रा पृथिवी च दृढा' इति मन्त्रवर्णात्।

19 *Under the mighty rule of this Immutable, O Gārgī, heaven and earth maintain*
20 *their positions, although they are by nature subject to disruption because of having parts,*
21 *inclined to fall owing to their weight, liable to separate, being a compound, and are*
22 *independent, each being presided over by a conscious deity identifying itself with it. It is*
23 *this Immutable which is like a boundary wall that preserves the distinctions among things*
24 *--- keeps all things within their limits; hence the sun and moon do not transgress the*
25 *mighty rule of this Immutable. Therefore Its existence is proved. The unflinching sign of*
26 *this is the fact that heaven and earth obey a fixed order; this would be impossible were*
27 *there not a conscious, transcendent Ruler. Witness the Mantra, 'Who has made heaven*
28 *powerful and the earth firm' (R. X. cxxi. 5).*

⁵ As from a lamp we infer the existence of its maker, so from the sun and moon we infer the existence of an omniscient God, 'the Immutable'.

⁶ Adrṣṭa or the resultant of the past work of beings.

॥ॐ बृहदारण्यकोपनिषद्भाष्ये तृतीयोऽध्यायः॥

एतस्य वा अक्षरस्य प्रशासने गार्गी, निमेषाः मुहूर्ताः इत्येते कालावयवाः
2 सर्वस्य अतीतानागतवर्तमानस्य जनिमतः कलयितारः - यथा लोके प्रभुणा
नियतो गणकः सर्वमायं व्ययं चाप्रमत्तो गणयति, तथा प्रभुस्थानीय एषां
4 कालावयवानां नियन्ता। तथा प्राच्यः प्रागञ्चनाः पूर्वदिग्गमना नद्यः स्यन्दन्ते
स्रवन्ति, श्वेतेभ्यः हिमवदादिभ्यः पर्वतेभ्यः गिरिभ्यः गङ्गाद्या नद्यः - ताश्च
6 यथा प्रवर्तिता एव नियताः प्रवर्तन्ते, अन्यथापि प्रवर्तितुमुत्सहन्त्यः,
तदेतल्लिङ्गं प्रशास्तुः। प्रतीच्योऽन्याः प्रतीचीं दिशमञ्चन्ति सिन्ध्वाद्या नद्यः,
8 अन्याश्च यां यां दिशमनुप्रवृत्ताः तां तां न व्यभिचरन्ति; तच्च लिङ्गम्।

10 *Under the mighty rule of this Immutable, O Gārgī, moments, Muhurtas, etc. --- all*
12 *these divisions of time, which count all things past, present and future that are subject to*
14 *birth --- are held in their respective places. As in life an accountant appointed by his*
16 *master carefully calculates all items of incomes and expenditure, so are these divisions of*
18 *time controlled by their master, the Immutable. Similarly some rivers, such as the Ganga,*
flow eastward from the White Mountains, the Himalayas, for instance, and they,
20 *notwithstanding their power to do otherwise⁷, keep to their original courses; this too*
indicates a Ruler. Others flowing westward, such as the Indus, continue in that direction,
and still others keep to their respective courses, do not deviate from the courses they
have taken; this is another indication.

किञ्च ददतः हिरण्यादीन् प्रयच्छतः आत्मपीडां कुर्वतोऽपि प्रमाणज्ञा
22 अपि मनुष्याः प्रशंसन्ति; तत्र यच्च दीयते, ये च ददति, ये च प्रतिगृह्णन्ति,
तेषामिहैव समागमो विलयश्च अन्वक्षो दृश्यते; अदृष्टस्तु परः समागमः,
24 तथापि मनुष्या ददतां दानफलेन संयोगं पश्यन्तः प्रमाणज्ञतया प्रशंसन्ति;
तच्च, कर्मफलेन संयोजयितरि कर्तुः कर्मफलविभागज्ञे प्रशास्तरि असति, न
26 स्यात्; दानक्रियायाः प्रत्यक्षविनाशित्वात्; तस्मादस्ति दानकर्तृणां फलेन
संयोजयिता।
28

⁷ Since the deities identifying themselves with these are sentient beings.

॥ॐ बृहदारण्यकोपनिषद्भाष्ये तृतीयोऽध्यायः॥

Moreover, even learned *men praise those that give* gold etc., even at a personal sacrifice. Now the conjunction and disjunction of gifts, their donors and their recipients are seen to take place before our eyes in this very life. But the subsequent recombination (of the donor and the fruit of his gift) is a matter we do not directly see. Still people praise the charitable, for they observe on other evidence that those that give are rewarded. This would be impossible were there no Ruler who, knowing the various results of actions, brought about this union of the giver and the reward, for the act of giving obviously perishes then and there. Therefore there must be someone who connects the givers with the results of their charity.

10

अपूर्वमिति चेत्, न, तत्सद्भावे प्रमाणानुपपत्तेः। प्रशास्तुरपीति चेत्। न, आगमतात्पर्यस्य सिद्धत्वात्; अवोचाम हि आगमस्य वस्तुपरत्वम्। किञ्चान्यत्, अपूर्वकल्पनायां च अर्थापत्तेः क्षयः, अन्यथैवोपपत्तेः। सेवाफलस्य सेव्यात् प्राप्तिदर्शनात्। सेवायाश्च क्रियात्वात्, तत्सामान्याच्च यागदानहोमादीनां सेव्याद् ईश्वरादेः फलप्राप्तिरुपपद्यते। दृष्टक्रियाधर्मसामर्थ्यमपरित्यज्यैव फलप्राप्तिकल्पनोपपत्तौ दृष्टक्रियाधर्मसामर्थ्यपरित्यागो न न्याय्यः। कल्पनाधिक्याच्च -- ईश्वरः कल्प्यः, अपूर्व वा? तत्र क्रियायाश्च स्वभावः सेव्यात् फलप्राप्तिः दृष्टा, न त्वपूर्वात्; न चापूर्वं दृष्टम्; तत्रापूर्वमदृष्टं कल्पयितव्यं, तस्य च फलदातृत्वे सामर्थ्यम्, सामर्थ्ये च सति दानं चाभ्यधिकमिति। इह तु ईश्वरस्य सेव्यस्य सद्भावमात्रं कल्प्यम्, न तु फलदानसामर्थ्यं दातृत्वं च, सेव्यात् फलप्राप्तिदर्शनात्। अनुमानं च दर्शितम् - 'द्यावापृथिव्यौ विधृते तिष्ठतः' इत्यादि।

24

Objection: Cannot the extraordinary result of an action (A-purva) serve this purpose?

26

Reply: No, for there is nothing to prove its existence.

Objection: Does not the same objection apply to the Ruler too?

28

Reply: No, for it is an established fact that the Śrutis seek to posit His existence.

30

We have already said that the Śrutis aim at delineating the Reality. Besides, the implication on which the theory of the extraordinary result depends is out of place, for the fruition can be otherwise accounted for. We observe that the reward of service is obtained from the person served; and as service is an act, and sacrifices, gifts, offering oblations in the fire, etc., are just as much acts, it is fitting that the reward for their performance

32

॥ॐ बृहदारण्यकोपनिषद्भाष्ये तृतीयोऽध्यायः॥

should come from those in whose honour they are performed, viz God and so forth. Since we can explain the obtaining of rewards without sacrificing the directly observed inherent power of acts, it is improper to sacrifice that power. Moreover, it involves a superfluity of assumptions. We must assume either God or the extraordinary result. Now we observe that it is the very nature of an act of service that it is rewarded by the person served, not by the extraordinary result; and no one has ever actually experienced this result. So (in your view) we have to assume that the extraordinary result, which nobody has ever observed, exists; that it has the power to confer rewards; and that having this power, it does in addition confer them. On our side, however, we have to assume only the existence of the person served, viz God, but neither His power to confer rewards nor His exercise of it, for we actually observe that the person served rewards the service. The grounds for inferring His existence have already been shown in the text: Heaven and earth maintain their positions, etc. (this text).

तथा च यजमानं देवाः ईश्वराः सन्तो जीवनार्थेऽनुगताः,
चरुपुरोडाशाद्युपजीवनप्रयोजनेन, अन्यथापि जीवितुमुत्सहन्तः कृपणां दीनां
वृत्तिमाश्रित्य स्थिताः -- तच्च प्रशास्तुः प्रशासनात् स्यात्। तथा पितरोऽपि
तदर्थं, दर्वीं दर्वींहोमम् अन्वायत्ता अनुगता इत्यर्थः, समानं सर्वमन्यत्॥९॥

Likewise *the gods*, although they are so powerful, *depend on the sacrificer* for their livelihood --- for such means of subsistence as the porridge and cakes. That in spite of their ability to live otherwise they have taken to this humiliating course of life, is possible only because of the mighty rule of the Lord. Similarly the *manes* depend for their subsistence *on independent offerings*. The rest is to be explained as before.

यो वा एतदक्षरं गार्ग्यविदित्वाऽस्मिँल्लोके जुहोति यजते तपस्तप्यते
बहूनि वर्षसहस्राणि, अन्तवदेवास्य तद्भवति; यो वा एतदक्षरं
गार्ग्यविदित्वास्माल्लोकात्प्रैति स कृपणोऽथ य एतदक्षरं गार्गि
विदित्वास्माल्लोकात्प्रैति स ब्राह्मणः॥ ३-८-१० ॥

Translation→ 10. He, O Gārgī, who in this world, without knowing this Immutable, offers oblations in the fire, performs sacrifices and undergoes austerities even for many thousand years, finds all such acts but perishable; he, O Gārgī, who departs from this world without knowing this Immutable, is miserable. But he, O Gārgī, who departs from this world after knowing this Immutable, is a knower of Brahman.

॥ॐ बृहदारण्यकोपनिषद्भाष्ये तृतीयोऽध्यायः॥

2 शाङ्करभाष्य→ इतश्चास्ति तदक्षरं, यस्मात् तदज्ञाने नियता
संसारोपपत्तिः; भवितव्यं तु तेन, यद्विज्ञानात् तद्विच्छेदः, न्यायोपपत्तेः। ननु
4 क्रियात् एव तद्विच्छित्तिः स्यादिति चेत्? न - यो वा एतदक्षरं हे गार्गी
अविदित्वा अविज्ञाय अस्मिन् लोके जुहोति यजते तपस्तप्यते यद्यपि बहूनि
6 वर्षसहस्राणि, अन्तवद् एवास्य तत् फलं भवति, तत्फलोपभोगान्ते क्षीयन्त
एवास्य कर्माणि। अपि च यद्विज्ञानात् कार्पण्यात्ययः संसारविच्छेदः,
8 यद्विज्ञानाभावाच्च कर्मकृत् कृपणः कृतफलस्यैवोपभोक्ता
जननमरणप्रबन्धारूढः संसरति -- तदस्ति अक्षरं प्रशासितृ; तदेतदुच्यते - यो
10 वा एतदक्षरं गार्ग्यविदित्वा अस्माल्लोकात् प्रैति स कृपणः, पणक्रीत इव
दासादिः। अथ य एतदक्षरं गार्गी विदित्वा अस्माल्लोकात् प्रैति स
12 ब्राह्मणः॥१०॥

14 Translation→ Here is another reason for the existence of the Immutable, because
until one knows It, one is bound to suffer transmigration; and That must exist the
16 knowledge of which puts a stop to it, for this is but logical.

Objection: May not rites alone do this?

18 Reply: No, *he, O Gārgī, who in this world, without knowing this Immutable offers*
oblations in the fire, performs sacrifices and undergoes austerities even for many
20 *thousand years, finds all such acts but perishable.* After he has enjoyed their fruits, those
rites are inevitably exhausted. Besides, that mighty Ruler, the Immutable, exists by
22 knowing which misery is at an end --- transmigration is stopped, and not knowing which
the ritualist is miserable --- enjoys only the results of his rites and moves in an endless
24 series of births and deaths. So the text says: *He, O Gārgī, who departs from this world*
without knowing this Immutable, is miserable, like a slave etc. bought for a price. But he,
26 *O Gārgī, who departs from this world after knowing this Immutable, is a knower of*
Brahman.

28

30 शाङ्करभाष्य→ अग्नेर्दहनप्रकाशकत्ववत् स्वाभाविकमस्य प्रशास्तृत्वम्
अचेतनस्यैवेत्यत आह -

32 Translation→ It may be contended that like the heat and light of fire, the rulership
of the Immutable is natural to the insentient Pradhāna (of the Sāṅkhyas, and not to
Brahman). The reply is being given:

34

॥ॐ बृहदारण्यकोपनिषद्भाष्ये तृतीयोऽध्यायः॥

तद्वा एतदक्षरं गार्ग्यदृष्टं द्रष्टुं, अश्रुतं श्रोतृ, अमतं मन्तृ, अविज्ञातं
विज्ञातृ; नान्यदतोऽस्ति द्रष्टुं, नान्यदतोऽस्ति श्रोतृ, नान्यदतोऽस्ति
मन्तृ, नान्यदतोऽस्ति विज्ञातृ; एतस्मिन्नु खल्वक्षरे गार्ग्याकाश ओतश्च
प्रोतश्चेति॥ ३-८-११ ॥

Translation→ 11. This Immutable, O Gārgī, is never seen but is the Witness; It is never heard, but is the Hearer; It is never thought, but is the Thinker; It is never known, but is the Knower. There is no other witness but This, no other hearer but This, no other thinker but This, no other knower but This. By this Immutable, O Gārgī, is the (un-manifested) ether (space) pervaded.

शाङ्करभाष्य→ तद्वा एतदक्षरं गार्गि अदृष्टम्, न केनचिद् दृष्टम्, अविषयत्वात्, स्वयं तु द्रष्टुं दृष्टिस्वरूपत्वात्। तथा अश्रुतं श्रोत्राविषयत्वात्, स्वयं श्रोतृ श्रुतिस्वरूपत्वात्। तथा अमतं मनसोऽविषयत्वात्, स्वयं मन्तृ मतिस्वरूपत्वात्। तथा अविज्ञातं बुद्धेरविषयत्वात्, स्वयं विज्ञातृ विज्ञानस्वरूपत्वात्। किं च नान्यत् अतः अस्मादक्षरात् अस्ति - नास्ति किञ्चिद् द्रष्टुं दर्शनक्रियाकर्तृ; एतदेवाक्षरं दर्शनक्रियाकर्तृ सर्वत्र। तथा नान्यदतोऽस्ति श्रोतृ; तदेवाक्षरं श्रोतृ सर्वत्र। नान्यदतोऽस्ति मन्तृ; तदेवाक्षरं मन्तृ सर्वत्र सर्वमनोद्वारेण। नान्यदतोऽस्ति विज्ञातृ विज्ञानक्रियाकर्तृ, तदेवाक्षरं सर्वबुद्धिद्वारेण विज्ञानक्रियाकर्तृ, नाचेतनं प्रधानम् अन्यद्वा। एतस्मिन्नु खल्वक्षरे गार्ग्याकाश ओतश्च प्रोतश्चेति। यदेव साक्षादपरोक्षाद्ब्रह्म, य आत्मा सर्वान्तरः अशनायादिसंसारधर्मातीतः, यस्मिन्नाकाश ओतश्च प्रोतश्च, एषा परा काष्ठा, एषा परा गतिः, एतत् परं ब्रह्म, एतत् पृथिव्यादेराकाशान्तस्य सत्यस्य सत्यम्॥११॥

॥ॐ बृहदारण्यकोपनिषद्भाष्ये तृतीयोऽध्यायः॥

Translation→ *This Immutable, O Gārgī, is never seen by anybody, not being a sense-object, but is Itself the Witness, being vision itself. Likewise It is never heard, not being an object of hearing, but is Itself the Hearer, being hearing itself. So also It is never thought, not being an object of the mind, but is Itself the Thinker, being thinking itself. Similarly It is never known, not being an object of the intellect, but is Itself the Knower, being intelligence itself. Further, there is no other witness but This, the Immutable; this Immutable Itself is everywhere the Witness, the subject of vision. Similarly there is no other hearer but This; this Immutable Itself is everywhere the Hearer. There is no other thinker but This; this Immutable Itself is everywhere the Thinker, thinking through all minds. There is no other knower but This; this Immutable Itself --- neither the insentient Pradhāna nor anything else --- is the Knower, knowing through all intellects. By this Immutable, O Gārgī, is the (unmanifested) ether (space) pervaded. The Brahman which is immediate and direct, which is the self within all and is beyond the relative attributes of hunger etc., and by which the (unmanifested) ether (space) is pervaded, is the extreme limit, the ultimate goal, the Supreme Brahman, the Truth of truth (the elements) beginning with earth and ending with the ether (space).*

सा होवाच, ब्राह्मणा भगवन्तस्तदेव बहु मन्येध्वं यदस्मान्नमस्कारेण
मुच्येध्वम्; न वै जातु युष्माकमिमं कश्चिद्ब्रह्मोद्यं जेतेति; ततो ह
वाचक्रव्युपरराम ॥ ३-८-१२ ॥
॥ इति अष्टमं ब्राह्मणम्॥

Translation→ 12. She said, Revered Brāhmaṇas, you should consider yourselves fortunate if you can get off from him through salutations. Never shall any of you beat him in describing Brahman. Then the daughter of Vacaknu kept silent.

शाङ्करभाष्य→ सा होवाच - हे ब्राह्मणा भगवन्तः शृणुत मदीयं वचः;
तदेव बहु मन्येध्वम्; किं तत्? यदस्माद् याज्ञवल्क्यात् नमस्कारेण मुच्येध्वम्
मुच्येध्वम् अस्मै नमस्कारं कृत्वा, तदेव बहु मन्येध्वम् इत्यर्थः; जयस्त्वस्य
मनसापि न आशंसनीयः, किमुत कार्यतः; कस्मात्? न वै युष्माकं मध्ये जातु
कदाचिदपि इमं याज्ञवल्क्यं ब्रह्मोद्यं प्रति जेता। प्रश्नौ चेन्मह्यं वक्ष्यति, न वै
जेता भविता - इति पूर्वमेव मया प्रतिज्ञातम्; अद्यापि ममायमेव निश्चयः -
ब्रह्मोद्यं प्रति एतत्तुल्यो न कश्चिद् विद्यत इति। ततो ह वाचकनव्युपरराम॥

॥ॐ बृहदारण्यकोपनिषद्भाष्ये तृतीयोऽध्यायः॥

2 Translation→ She said: ‘Revered Brāhmaṇas, listen to my words. You should
3 consider yourselves fortunate if you can get off from him, Yājñavalkya, through
4 salutations, by saluting him. You must never even hope to defeat him, much less do it.
5 Why? Because never shall any of you beat him, Yājñavalkya, in describing Brahman. I
6 already said that if he answered my two questions, none could beat him. I still have the
7 conviction that in describing Brahman he has no match.’ Then the daughter of Vacaknu
8 kept silent.

9 अत्र अन्तर्यामिब्राह्मणे एतद् उक्तम् - यं पृथिवी न वेद, यं सर्वाणि
10 भूतानि न विदुरिति च। यमन्तर्यामिणं न विदुः, ये च न विदुः, यच्च तदक्षरं
11 दर्शनादिक्रियाकर्तृत्वेन सर्वेषां चेतनाधातुरित्युक्तम् - कस्तु एषां विशेषः, किं
12 वा सामान्यमिति। तत्र केचिदाचक्षते - परस्य महासमुद्रस्थानीयस्य ब्रह्मणः
13 अक्षरस्य अप्रचलितस्वरूपस्य ईषत्प्रचलितावस्था अन्तर्यामी;
14 अत्यन्तप्रचलितावस्था क्षेत्रज्ञः यः तं न वेद अन्तर्यामिणम्; तथा अन्याः
15 पञ्चावस्थाः परिकल्पयन्ति; तथा अष्टावस्था ब्रह्मणो भवन्तीति वदन्ति। अन्ये
16 अक्षरस्य शक्तय एता इति वदन्ति, अनन्तशक्तिमदक्षरमिति च। अन्ये तु
17 अक्षरस्य विकारा इति वदन्ति।

18 In the section dealing with the Internal Ruler it has been said, ‘Whom the earth
19 does not know,’ and ‘Whom no being knows.’ Now what is the similarity as well as
20 difference among the Internal Ruler whom they do not know, those who do not know
21 Him, and the conscious Principle which, being the subject of the activities of vision etc.
22 of all things, is spoken of as the Immutable?

23 Regarding this⁸ some say: The Internal Ruler is the slightly agitated state of the
24 ocean of Supreme Brahman, the Immutable, which never changes its nature. The
25 individual self, which does not know that Internal Ruler, is the extremely agitated state of
26 that ocean. They also imagine five⁹ other states of Brahman; again they maintain that
27 Brahman has eight¹⁰ states. Others say that these are but the powers of the Immutable,
28 which according to them, has unlimited powers. Still others maintain that these are
29 modifications of the Immutable.

⁸ Some sectional views within the Vedantic school itself are being presented.

⁹ Viz the individual, species, Viraj, Sutra and destiny

¹⁰ Viz the above five together with the Undifferentiated, the Witness and the individual self.

॥ॐ बृहदारण्यकोपनिषद्भाष्ये तृतीयोऽध्यायः॥

अवस्थाशक्ती तावन्नोपपद्येते, अक्षरस्य
2 अशनायादिसंसारधर्मातीतत्वश्रुतेः। न हि अशनायाद्यतीतत्वम्
अशनायादिधर्मवदवस्थावत्त्वं च् एकस्य युगपदुपपद्यते; तथा शक्तिमत्त्वं च।
4 विकारावयवत्वे च दोषाः प्रदर्शिताश्चतुर्थे। तस्मात् एता असत्याः सर्वाः
कल्पनाः।

6 Now the states and powers are inadmissible, for the Śrutis declare the Immutable
to be beyond the relative attributes of hunger etc. Certainly one and the same thing cannot
8 simultaneously be both beyond hunger etc. and subject to those conditions. The same
argument applies to the Immutable having powers, while the flaws in attributing
10 modifications and parts to the Immutable have already been pointed out in the second
chapter. Hence all these views are wrong.

12

कस्तर्हि भेद एषाम्? उपाधिकृत इति ब्रूमः; न स्वत एषां भेदः अभेदो
14 वा, सैन्धवघनवत् प्रज्ञानघनैकरसस्वाभाव्यात्, 'अपूर्वमनपरमनन्तरमबाह्यम्'
'अयमात्मा ब्रह्म' इति च श्रुतेः। 'सबाह्याभ्यन्तरो ह्यजः' इति च आथर्वणे।
16 तस्मात् निरूपाधिकस्य आत्मनो निरूपाख्यात्वात् निर्विशेषत्वात् एकत्वाच्च
'नेति नेति' इति व्यपदेशो भवति। अविद्याकामकर्मविशिष्टकार्यकरणोपाधिः
18 आत्मा संसारी जीव उच्यते। नित्यनिरतिशयज्ञानशक्त्युपाधिः आत्मा
अन्तर्यामी ईश्वर उच्यते।

20

What then is the difference among them? It is all due to the limiting adjuncts, we
22 reply: intrinsically there is neither difference nor identity among them, for they are by
nature Pure Intelligence, homogeneous like a lump of salt. Witness the Śruti too:
24 'Without prior or posterior, without interior or exterior'. 'This self is Brahman' (II. v.
19); also in the Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad: 'It includes the interior and exterior, and is unborn'
26 (II.i.2). Therefore the unconditioned Self, being beyond speech and mind,
undifferentiated and one, is designated as 'Not this, not this'; when It has the limiting
28 adjuncts of the body and organs, which are characterized by ignorance, desire and work,
It is called the transmigrating individual self; and when the Self has the limiting adjunct
30 of the power of eternal and unlimited knowledge (i.e. Māyā), It is called the Internal
Ruler and Īśvara.

32

॥ॐ बृहदारण्यकोपनिषद्भाष्ये तृतीयोऽध्यायः॥

स एव निरूपाधिः केवलः शुद्धः स्वेन स्वभावेन अक्षरं पर उच्यते, तथा
2 हिरण्यगर्भाव्याकृतदेवताजातिपिण्डमनुष्यतिर्यक्प्रेतादिकार्यकरणोपाधिभिर्वि-
शिष्टः तदाख्यः तद्रूपो भवति। तथा 'तदेजति तन्नैजति' इति व्याख्यातम्। तथा
4 'एष त आत्मा' 'एष सर्वभूतान्तरात्मा' 'एष सर्वेषु भूतेषु गूढः' 'तत्त्वमसि'
'अहमेवेदं सर्वम्' 'आत्मैवेदं सर्वम्' 'नान्योऽतोऽस्ति द्रष्टा' इत्यादिश्रुतयो न
6 विरुध्यन्ते। कल्पनान्तरेषु एताः श्रुतयो न गच्छन्ति। तस्मात् उपाधिभेदेनैव
एषां भेदः, नान्यथा। 'एकमेवाद्वितीयम्' इत्यवधारणात् सर्वोपनिषत्सु॥१२॥

8 इति तृतीयाध्यास्य अष्टमं ब्राह्मणम्॥८॥

10 The same Self, as by nature transcendent, absolute and pure, is called the
Immutable and Supreme Self. Similarly, having the limiting adjuncts of the bodies and
12 organs of Hiraṇyagarbha, the Undifferentiated, the gods, the species, the individual, men,
animals, spirits, etc., the Self assumes those particular names and forms. Thus have we
14 explained this through the Śruti passage: 'It moves, and does not move' (Is. 5). In this
light alone such texts as, 'This is your self (that is within all)' (III. iv. 1-2; III. v. 1), 'He
16 is the inner Self of all beings' (Mu. II. i. 4), 'This (self) being hidden in all beings,' etc.
(Ka. III. 12), 'Thou art That' (Ch. VI. viii. 7), 'I Myself am all this' (Ch. VII. xxv. 1),
18 'All this is but the Self' (Ibid. 2), and 'There is no other witness but Him' (III. vii. 23), do
not prove contradictory; but in any other view they cannot be harmonized. Therefore the
20 above entities differ only because of their limiting adjuncts, but not otherwise, for all the
Upaniṣads conclude: 'One only without a second' (Ch. VI. ii. 1).

22

List of abbreviations:

24 Ch. Chāndogya Upaniṣad Is. Īśāvāsya Upaniṣad
Ka. Kaṭha Upaniṣad Mu. Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad

26 English translation from the book 'The Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad' by Swami Madhavananda, Advaita Ashrama,
Calcutta.

॥ॐ बृहदारण्यकोपनिषद्भाष्ये तृतीयोऽध्यायः॥



- 2 Scene from the first Congress of Indian philosophers convened by Janaka
Janaka and Yājñavalkya, showing also Maitreyi, Gārgī, Saulbha and Ashtavakra.
- 4 Artist--Shri S. Dhanapal, Madras., Artist Supervisor--Shri K.C.S. Paniker, Madras.

॥ॐ बृहदारण्यकोपनिषद्भाष्ये तृतीयोऽध्यायः॥

Key to Transliteration and Pronunciation

- 2 Since Sanskrit is a highly phonetic language, accuracy in the articulation of the letters is important. This is the international transliteration guide to the proper
4 pronunciation of Sanskrit letters in the *devanāgarī* script.

6	अ	a	but	ॠ	ṛ	ṛ	an <u>th</u> ill*3
	आ	ā	calm	30	इ	ḍ	<u>ḍ</u> art*3
8	इ	i	i <u>t</u>		ॡ	ḍh	god <u>h</u> ead*3
	ई	ī	bee <u>t</u>	32	ण	ṇ	un <u>d</u> er*3
10	उ	u	pu <u>t</u>		त्	t	pa <u>t</u> h*4
	ऊ	ū	pool	34	थ	th	<u>t</u> hunder*4
12	ऋ	ṛ	r <u>h</u> ythm		द्	d	<u>t</u> h*4
	ॠ	ṝ	mar <u>i</u> ne	36	ध्	dh	breath <u>e</u> *4
14	ए	e	pl <u>a</u> y		न्	n	<u>n</u> umb 4
	ऐ	ai	h <u>i</u> gh	38	प्	p	sp <u>i</u> n 5
16	ओ	o	g <u>o</u>		फ	ph	looph <u>o</u> le*5
	औ	au	l <u>o</u> ud	40	ब्	b	<u>b</u> in 5
18	क्	k	sk <u>a</u> te 1		भ्	bh	abh <u>o</u> r* 5
	ख्	kh	block <u>h</u> ead*1	42	म्	m	<u>m</u> uch 5
20	ग्	g	g <u>a</u> te 1		य्	y	<u>y</u> oung
	घ्	gh	log <u>h</u> ut* 1	44	र्	r	dr <u>a</u> ma
22	ङ्	ṅ	si <u>ng</u> 1		ल्	l	<u>l</u> uck
	च्	c	<u>ch</u> unk*2	46	व्	v	<u>v</u> ile
24	छ्	ch	catch <u>h</u> im*2		श्	ś	<u>sh</u> ove
	ज्	j	jo <u>h</u> n 2	48	ष्	ṣ	bush <u>el</u>
26	झ्	jh	hed <u>g</u> ehog*2		स्	s	<u>s</u> o
	ञ्	ñ	bun <u>ch</u> 2	50	ह्	h	<u>h</u> um
28	ट्	ṭ	st <u>a</u> rt*3				
52		ṁ	<i>anusvāra</i> (nasalization of preceding vowel)k				
	:	ḥ	<i>visarga</i> (aspiration of preceding vowel)				
54	ऽ		<i>avagraha</i> (marking the elision of A at the beginning of a word)				
	*	No	exact equivalent for these letters				
56			1 – guttural; 2 – palatal; 3 – lingual; 4 – dental; 5 – labial				