

CHAPTER 3

CONCEPT OF ONENESS IN SĀMAVEDIC UPANIṢADS

There are several Upaniṣads related to the *Sāmaveda*. Among these, there are only two Upaniṣads of the *Sāmaveda* where *ādiguru* Saṅkarācārya has commented and which have been regarded as principal Upaniṣads. These two major Upaniṣads as mentioned by the *Muktikopaniṣad* are the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* and the *Kenopaniṣad*.¹ Here in this chapter an effort has been made to illustrate the nature of oneness as exposed in these two principal Upaniṣads.

(i) Concept of Oneness in Chāndogya Upaniṣad

The *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, comes after the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, belongs to the *Talavakāra Sākhā* of the *Sāmaveda* in its *Tāṇḍya Brāhmaṇa*.² There are eight chapters in this Upaniṣad. The fundamental teaching of this Upaniṣad is the *Brahman*, the Absolute Reality, which is identical with the *Ātman*, the individual self. From first chapter to eight chapter the Upaniṣad describes the concept of *Udgītha-vidyā*, *Madhu-vidyā*, *Gāyatrī-vidyā*, *Sāṅḍilya-vidyā*, *Agni-vidyā*, *Upakośala-Vidyā*, *Prāṇa-vidyā*, *Pañcāgni-vidyā*, *Vaiśvānara-vidyā*, *Ātma-vidyā*, etc. In this way, this Upaniṣad gives stress on the attainment of the immortality, i.e., *Parama Brahman* through these different *vidyās*.

The very first chapter of the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* narrates the glory of the syllable *Om* which should be meditated as the *udgītha*. The Upaniṣad states :

‘teneyam trayī vidyā vartata omityāśrāvayatyomiti

śamsatyomityudgāyatyetasyaivākṣarasyāpacityai mahimnā rasena//³

1. MKU., 30

2. Chowkulkar, Satish Shamrao., UK., p.59

3. CU., I.1.9

[Trans : By this does the threefold knowledge proceed; saying Aum one recites, saying Aum one orders, and saying Aum one sings aloud – all in honour of that syllable with its greatness and its essence.]⁴

According to the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad udgītha* is the name stands for the syllable *Om*.⁵ Because, this *udgītha* is understood as *praṇava* in the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* ⁶ and what *praṇava* means is nothing but *Om̐kāra* itself -‘*praṇava omīti*’⁷ The term *udgītha* which indicates the syllable *Om* has its different meanings as the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* mentions in its different *mantras*. The term *udgītha* which is derived from *ut+gī+tham*; here, *ut* indicates to *dyu*, *gī* indicates to *antarīkṣa* and *tham* indicates to *pṛthivī*.⁸ Again in this term *ut* means *prāṇa*, *gī* means *vāk*, and *tham* means *anna*.⁹ Again another *mantra* of the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, the term *udgītha* is explained in this way where *ut* means *Sāmaveda*, *gī* means *Yajurveda* and *tham* means *Ṛgveda*.¹⁰ However the term *udgītha* is applicable to the syllable *Om* where establish the whole, as these different names are the emblem of Supreme *Brahman*¹¹. This syllable *Om* is immortality itself as the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* declares :

‘..*yadetadakṣarametadamṛtamabhayaṁ tatpraviśya devā amṛtā abhayā abhavan*’¹²

[Trans : This *akṣara*, i.e., *Om* is immortal and fearless itself after entering in which the *Devas* (Gods) became immortal and fearless.]

4. Eng. Trans. from Sarma, D.S., TUA, pp.115-116

5. CU., I.1.5

6. Ibid., I.5.1., I.5.5

7. Ibid., I.5.1

8. Ibid., I.3.7

9. Ibid., I.3.6

10. Ibid., I.3.7

11. Ibid., I.1.5

12. Ibid., I. 4.4

In this way, the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* gives stress on meditating this syllable *Om*, i.e., *udgītha*, for obtaining the Highest, i.e., the Ultimate *Brahman*. Because, this syllable *Om* is all this and nothing apart from It.¹³ Everything come from It.

According to the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* in *Brahmaloka* the sun does not shine.¹⁴ In this way, the Ultimate Reality is not depended upon any kind of light for its movement, because, It reveals in its own light. On the other hand without the light of Supreme *Brahman*, the sun cannot shine. The Supreme *Brahman* is the source of all lights. No any things or beings exist without Its light, because this is the same light which is within the living beings as *Ātman*¹⁵ and which is the controlling force of all. The *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* states that :

‘*sarvaṃ khalvidaṃ brahma tajjalaniti śānta upāsīta*’¹⁶

Here in this *mantra*, the term ‘*tajjalān*’ expresses to the eternal *Brahman*, where from this creation comes, by which they live and into which they return at last. In this term *tajjalān*, *tat* indicates the Supreme *Brahman* and other *ja*, *la* and *ana* carry the meaning origination dissolution and maintenance. Therefore, the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* proclaims that one should worship *Brahman* as *tajjalān*, i.e., the Ultimate Reality of all beings.

According to the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, *Brahman*, the Ultimate Reality is *monomaya*, as it is through the mind a person becomes active or inactive. The power which makes any one active or inactive is the *Brahman*. The *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* maintains that *Brahman* is *prāna-śarīra*. He is so called because, “What is known as the subtle body (*liṅgātmā*) is made up of strength (*śakti*) and *vijñāna* which means

13. CU., II.23.3

14. Ibid.,III.11.2

15. Ibid.,III.13.7

16. Ibid.,III.14.1

prāṇa.¹⁷ This *Brahman* is also *prakāśasvarūpa*,¹⁸ *satyasamkalpa*,¹⁹ *ākāśa-śarīra*,²⁰ *sarvakarma*,²¹ *sarvakāma*,²² *sarvagandha*²³ and *sarvarasa*,²⁴ which surrounds the whole, which is without the speech and also the beyond all kinds of desires.²⁵ This *Brahman* is *vyotisvarūpa* as He is the pure-consciousness, revealed in its own *vyoti* (light). *Brahman* is the self-illuminating principle that illumines without any external or internal help. *Brahman* is the *satyasamkalpa* in the sense of ‘whatever is wished becomes immediately materialised’.²⁶ *Brahman* is *ākāśa-śarīra*, i.e., *Brahman* which is a subtle principle of this universe, at the same time he is big of the bigs like *ākāśa*. As *ākāśa* has no limitations in the same way *Brahman* has no limitations. *Brahman* is *sarvakarmā*, i.e., He activates all works. He is *sarvakāma*, i.e., He contains all desires. He is *sarvarasa*, i.e., he contains all desires. He is *sarvarasa*, i.e., He contains all tastes. He is all penetrating Reality but in the sense of silent and unmoved. This *Brahman* which is smaller than a small seed of rice and is the bigger than this earth, sky and heaven is within our heart.²⁷

In the sixth chapter of the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, we find the conversation between Āruṇi and Śvetaketu, where Āruṇi explains the nature of Supreme *Brahman* to his son Śvetaketu by different beautiful examples. The twenty four years old son Śvetaketu who comes to the guru after completion his teaching, asks his father about that secret, knowing what, what is unknown becomes known, what is not heard becomes heard and what is unthought becomes thought. When Śvetaketu is not able to

17. C.U.,III.14.2

18. Ibid

19. Ibid

20. Ibid

21. Ibid

22. Ibid

23. Ibid

24. Ibid

25. Ibid

26. Date, V.H., UR., p.51

27. CU.,III.14.4

answer this question his father explains the nature of that secret very beautifully and says to his son that :

*'yathā somyaikena mṛtpiṇḍeṇa sarvaṁ mṛṇmayam vijñātam syādvācārambhaṇam
vikāro nāmadheyam mṛttiketyeva satyam//'*²⁸

Here, Āruṇi says to his son Śvetaketu that a person just knowing of one clod of clay knows all the things which are made by the clay. In the same way, by knowing that Immortal Truth one is able to know that which is unknown; able to hear that what is not heard and able to perceive that what is not perceived. The surrounding beings of different names emerge from our speech, but the truth is that reality is one and only, as clay is only the real thing in different articles of clay. In this way, the Upaniṣad establishes that one Spirit which is devoid of duality is behind the all creatures and source of all knowledge (*ekavijñānena sarvavijñānam*). This truth is highlighted in another *mantra* very clearly by Āruṇi when he states that :

*'yathā somyaikena lohamaṇinā sarvaṁ lohamayam vijñātam syādvācārambhaṇam
vikāro nāmadheyam lohamityeva satyam//'*²⁹

[Trans : Just as, my dear, by one nugget of gold, all that is made of gold becomes known, the modification being only a name arising from speech, while the truth is that it is just gold.]³⁰

According to *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, truth is one and that is secret form of anything else either it is conscious or unconscious. The modification of this one into various objects is the names originated from our speech, but reality is that there is only one secret, the source of all things. In this regard Rohit Mehta has remarked that, “When

28. CU.,VI.1.4

29. Ibid.,VI.1.5

30. Eng Trans. from Radhakrishnan, S., TPU., p.447

all modifications caused by verbalizations cease, then there remains only the One, the One without a second, the One without any name. When all the names drop away, then what remains is the Nameless Being; the Origin and Source of all things.”³¹

Elaborating the nature of that nameless being Āruṇi affirms to Śvetaketu that :

‘*sattveva somyedamagra āsīdekamevādvitīyam*’³²

The *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* proclaims that, before the creation of this universe, there was *sat* alone, one without a second. After that one came these manifold beings as perceived by us in different names and forms :

‘*tadaikṣata bahu syām prajāyeyeti tattejo ’sṛjat tatteja aikṣata bahu syām prajāyeyeti tadapo ’sṛjat*’³³

Thus, all these creatures have their origin in that Supreme *Brahman*, who is the support of all. Our real nature is not different from that Supreme *Brahman* as the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* mentions, ‘*tat satyam sa ātmā tatvamasi*.’³⁴

Illuminating the nature of that Reality, where from the whole universe and all the names and forms arise, Āruṇi clarifies to Śvetaketu with an example of *nyagrodha vṛkṣa*. Āruṇi asks Śvetaketu to bring a seed of a *nyagrodha vṛkṣa* and orders to break it. Śvetaketu does that according to the direction of the *guru*, but he does not see anything in that seed. Actually he is not able to realise this universal fact that in a small seed of that *nyagrodha* tree exists the great *nyagrodha* tree. Therefore, Āruṇi begins to teach the real fact to his son and says :

‘*tam hovāca yam vai somyositamaṇimānaṁ na nibhālayasa etasya vai somyaiṣo ’nimna evaṁ mahānyagrodhastiṣṭhati śraddhatsva somyeti*’³⁵

31. Mehta, Rohit., TCU., p.237

32. CU., VI.2.2

33. Ibid., VI.2.3

34. Ibid., VI.8.7

35. Ibid., VI.12.2

Here, Āruṇi has pointed out that subtle essence to his son Śvetaketu and says that in that subtle essence, the great *nyagrodha* tree exists. That *sat* which is subtler than the seed of the *nyagrodha* tree cannot be perceivable by our sense-organs. That is the essence of all, the Reality, and all beings are not separated from Him, all are mingled in that *Parama Brahman*.

We find in the seventh chapter of *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* the conversation of Nārada and Sanatkumāra where Nārada requests to Sanatkumāra to teach him the secret nature of *Ātman*. Nārada who claims himself as the knower of *Ṛgveda*, *Yajurveda*, *Sāmaveda*, *Atharvaveda*, *Itihāsa-puraṇa*, *Nyāya-Mīmāṃsā*, *Nitiśāstra* and so on and so forth. But, even after gathering lots of knowledge of different subjects, he feels himself as like a child to the knowledge of *Ātman* which is superior to all kinds of knowledge. Then *guru* Sanatkumāra replies that the knowledge gathered by him of different subjects are only the varieties of names. *Guru* asks Nārada to worship these names as the forms of *Brahman*. At the same time *guru* Sanatkumāra announces that *vāk* is greater than *nāma*. Again *manas* is greater than *vāk*, *saṃkalpa* is greater than *manas*, *citta* is greater than *saṃkalpa*, *dhyāna* is greater than *citta*, *vijñāna* is greater than *dhyāna*, *vala* is greater than *vijñāna*, *anna* is greater than *vala*, *āpa* is greater than *anna*, *teja* is greater than *āpa*, *ākāśa* is greater than *teja*, *smṛti* is greater than *ākāśa*, *āśā* is greater than *smṛti* and ultimately *prāṇa* is greater than *āśā*. The *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* says :

‘..yathā vā arā nābhau samarpitā evamasmin prāṇe sarvaṃ samarpitaṃ prāṇaḥ
prāṇena yāti prāṇaḥ prāṇaṃ dadāti prāṇāya dadāti prāṇo ha pitā prāṇo mātā prāṇo
bhrātā prāṇa svasā prāṇa ācāryaḥ prāṇo brāhmaṇaḥ!’³⁶

36. CU.,VII.15.1

Again, *‘prāṇo hyevaitāni sarvāṇi bhavati’*³⁷

Explaining the nature of *Parama Brahman*, which is Ultimate Bliss itself, Sanatkumāra says to Nārada that the happiness, which we want to achieve in this life cannot be gained by other limited things. Only the realisation of Supreme *Brahman* can give us the real happiness which is referred to here as *bhūmā*. This *bhūmā* is surrounding the whole whatever known or unknown, subtle or great, perceivable or not perceivable by our sense organs. Śaṅkarācārya, the great commentator explains this term *bhūmā* as ‘*Mahat and Niratiśaya*’³⁸ Narrating the majesty of the *bhūma*, the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* asserts that :

*‘yatra nānyatpaśyati nānyacchṛṇoti nānyadvijānāti sa bhūmā’tha yatrānyat
paśyatyanyacchṛṇotyanyadvijānāti tadalpaṁ yo vai bhūmā tadamṛtamatha yadalpaṁ
tanmartyaṁ sa bhagavaḥ kasminpratiṣṭhita iti sve mahimni yadi vā na mahimnīti’*³⁹

According to this *mantra*, where a person sees nothing else, hears nothing else and also understands nothing else, that is the *bhūmā*, the Ultimate Truth. On the other hand where a person can able to see a thing, can able to hear and also able to understand something else, that is call as finite, the completely opposite from *bhūmā*. Explaining the dignity of *bhūmā* the *Upaniṣad* says :

*‘sa evādhastātsa upariṣtātsa paścātsa purastātsa dakṣiṇataḥ sa uttarataḥ sa evedaṁ
sarvamiti..’*⁴⁰

According to the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, this *bhūmā* is below, above, behind, in front, south, north and all. One who understands the nature of this *bhūmā*, becomes realises

37. CU.,VII.14.4

38. Chowkulkar, Satish Shamrao., UK., p.69

39. CU.,VII.24.1

40. Ibid.,VII.25.1

the all secret, and nothing remains unknown to him. After realising this truth he becomes free from birth and death, illness, and sorrows and sufferings. That person gets salvation in this life.⁴¹

Realisation of the nature of *Ātman* or *Brahman* is to be declared as perfect knowledge among all kinds of knowledges. So, Satyakāma Jābāla postponed the graduation ceremony of his brilliant disciple Upakośala Kāmalāyana year after year.⁴² *Guru* Satyakāma did it because Upakośala was a curious one and *guru* felt it that his graduation ceremony will not be held until he will be free from the desire to know something again and again and to achieve it. A disciple was not declared as *snātaka* by *guru* until his realisation of Supreme *Brahman*. A person comes to the realisation of *Brahman*, the Ultimate Truth, when he will become free from all kinds of desires even he will be free from the desire to understand the nature of *Brahman*. The *Brahman* is the absolute knowledge where everything is established, '*tasmin viśvamidam variṣṭham*'⁴³

The eighth chapter of the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* carries the concept of *Ātman* and the means to realise it. The *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* states :

'.eṣa ātmā'pahata pāpmā vijaro vimṛtyurviśoko
vijighatso'pipāsaḥ satyakāmaḥ satyasamkalpo..//'⁴⁴

[Trans : This *Ātman* (soul) is beyond the sin, free from old age, without death, free from sorrow, free from hunger and thirst, *satya kāmah*, i.e., whose desire is real and *satya samkalpa*, i.e., whose *samkalpa* is real.]

41. CU.,VII. 26.2

42. Ibid., IV.10.1

43. Ibid.,III.15.1

44. Ibid.,VIII.1.5

The *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* announces that this *Ātman* is the bridge of all, whom day and night, sorrows and sufferings, *sukṛtam* (well doing), *duskṛtam* (ill doing) cannot touch. *Brahman* is free from all evils, as all evils return not having reached Him.

In this eighth chapter we find the conversation of Indra, the king of *devas*, Virocana, the king of *asuras* and Prajāpati, where Prajāpati delivers the concept of *Ātman* to Indra, who again and again approaches to him in this regard. Prajāpati tells :

‘*maghavanmartyam vā idam sarīramāttam mṛtyunā*

tadasyāmṛtasyāśarīrasyātmano ’dhiṣṭhānamātto ...na priyāpriye sprśataḥ!’⁴⁵

Here Prajāpati tells to Indra that our body which is mortal, i.e., temporary is held by the death. But all the surrounding beings have their existence in this world on account of the presence of body less and deathless *Ātman*. Our body which is momentary feels pleasure and pain but being the bodyless and immortal element He is free from all kinds of worldly things.

The *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* proclaims that one should not give up the path of *satya* or truth. Because, it is the truth by which one can attain the Supreme, i.e., *Brahman* which is truth of truths - ‘*brahmaṇo nāma satyamiti*.’⁴⁶ The term *satya* which comes from *sat*, *ti* and *yam*,⁴⁷ the syllable *sat* means *amṛta* (immortal), *ti* means *martya* (mortal) and *yam* indicates the meaning of both immortal and mortal together.

The *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* conveys the message of *abhaya* or fearlessness through the understanding the nature of fearless *Ātman* or *Brahman*, the Ultimate Truth. The *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* declares the Ultimate Reality, i.e., *Brahman* as

45. CU., VIII.12.1

46. Ibid., VIII.3.4

47. Ibid., VIII.3.5

eternal and fearless when it states that :

‘..etadakṣarametadamṛtamabhayam tatpraviśya

*devā amṛtā abhayā abhavan//*⁴⁸

Fear comes to that person who is not free from the fear of death. But *Brahman* being the endless entity have no fear to death. Therefore, He is *abhayam*.⁴⁹ By the realisation of *Brahman*, the everlasting truth, one gets *abhayam*, i.e., becomes free from all kinds of fears. When one is able to know the nature of *Brahman* which is nothing but one’s own individual self, his fear becomes passes away, i.e., he gets liberation.

The *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* also gives importance on performing the *brahmacarya* or continence. According to this Upaniṣad, it is *brahmacarya* by which man can get the abode of Supreme Truth, i.e., *Ātman* or *Brahman*. The Upaniṣad says:

‘*brahmacaryeṇa hyeveṣṭvātmānamanuvindate*’⁵⁰

Thus, the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* through its concept of oneness as revealed in its different *mantras* gives the message of universal brotherhood and understanding among the people. The *Chāndogya Upaniṣadic* concept of oneness shows the way to establish social harmony in the society, where no diversity prevails among the people irrespective of caste creed and religion.

(ii) Concept of Oneness in Kena Upaniṣad

The *Kena Upaniṣad* also known as the *Talavakāropaniṣad* and the *Brāhmaṇopaniṣad* belongs to the *Talavakāra Brāhmaṇa* of Jaimiṇi’s *Talavakāra*

48. CU., I.4.4

49. Ibid., I.4.5

50. Ibid., VIII.5.1

Sākhā of *Sāmaveda*. The Upaniṣad derives its name from the first word ‘kena’ incorporated in its first *mantra*. This Upaniṣad has four sections. In this Upaniṣad nature of Supreme *Brahman*, the Ultimate Reality is highlighted through the conversation between teacher and the disciple.

The *Kenopaniṣad* starts with the basic question by the disciple to the *guru*. The disciple enquires the teacher that, what is that force which impels all to their respective function. So, the first mantra of the *Kena Upaniṣad* says:

‘keneṣitāṃ patati preṣitāṃ manaḥ kena prāṇaḥ prathamāḥ praiti yuktaḥ/

keneṣitāṃ vācamimāṃ vadanti cakṣuḥ śrotraṃ ka u devo yunakti//’⁵¹

[Trans : Impelled and directed by whom does the mind light on its objects ? Commanded by whom does the first life breath move forward ? Prompted by whom do men utter this speech ? And what god directs the eye and the ear?]⁵²

Here, the disciple asks to the *guru* that, what is that Ultimate Force which propels all our sense-organs to do their respective functions ? The inquirer realises it very well that every activity has its controller who stimulates everyone to perform their respective functions. In the same way one eternal Spirit always guides all the sense-organs to accomplish their own functions. Without the control or guidance of that Spirit our mind is not able to think, our eyes unable to see, our vital breath not able to move, our speech cannot speak and the ear also unable to hear. Therefore, the disciple wants to know the mysterious nature of that Supreme Spirit from the *guru*. Then, illustrating the nature of that Supreme Spirit, which is behind the every action

51. Ken. U., I.1

52. Sarma, D.S., TUAA., p.37

in this world, the *guru* tells to the disciple in its second *mantra* that :

‘*śrotrasya śrotram manaso mano yadvāco ha vācam sa u prāṇasya prāṇaḥ/*

*cakṣuṣaścakṣuratimucya dhīrāḥ pretyāsmāllokādamṛtā bhavanti//*⁵³

In this *mantra*, the Supreme Energy who activates everything is said to be the ear of the ear, i.e., the Supreme Spirit, which is *Brahman* itself, is the hearing capacity of the ear. He is the mind of the mind, i.e., without It mind cannot think, as He is the thinking capacity of the mind. The speech also has its power of speaking because of the Supreme *Brahman*. The vital-breath also depends on its movement on that Supreme *Brahman*, because without the power of that Supreme breathing is not possible. He is the eye of the eye as we can see only for the power of that Supreme *Brahman*. By knowing the fact, i.e., the all pervading *Brahman* is the cause of everything, the wise becomes *jīvanmukta*, i.e., gets liberation while living and at last in the end of his life he gets *videhamukti*, i.e., becomes free from the cycle of birth and death. Explaining the secret nature of that *Parama Brahman*, *guru* again announces to his disciple in the third *mantra* of the first part thus :

‘*na tatra cakṣurgacchati na vāggacchati no mano na vidmo na vijānīmo*

yathaitadanuśiṣyādanyadeva tadviditādatho aviditādadhi / iti śuśrūma pūrveṣāṃ ye

*nastadvyācacakṣire//*⁵⁴

Here, the preceptor states that our five sense-organs, viz., *cakṣu*, *śrotra*, *tvak*, *rasana* and *ghrāṇa* cannot reach that Supreme *Brahman*. Because they have no capacity to reach in that Supreme. In the same way, our five *karmendriyas*, viz., *vāk*, *pāṇi*, *pāda* *pāyu* and *upastha* are also unable to reach that Supreme *Brahman*. These

53. Ken.,U.,I.2

54. Ibid., U.,I.3

jñānendriyas and *karmendriyas* have some limitations, as these are created things and have destruction also. *Brahman* being the eternal entity have no birth and death. Therefore, such an unlimited thing cannot be known by the limited things. On the other hand, without the power of that limitless *Brahman* the limited things have no existence in this world. In the same way, our mind also unable to ascertain this Supreme *Brahman*. By our limited knowledge or limited effort we are unable to grasp the Ultimate *Brahman*. *Brahman* cannot be known through hearing from other people, as *Brahman* is completely differs from known and also above the unknown. Swami Gambhirananda has rightly pointed out that, “Whatever is known is limited, mortal, and full of misery; and hence it is to be rejected. So, when it is said that Brahman is different from the known it amounts to asserting that It is not to be rejected. Similarly, when it is affirmed that It is different from the unknown, it amounts to saying that It is not a thing to be obtained.”⁵⁵

The *Kena Upaniṣad* describes that it is the quality of hearing, seeing, thinking and speaking of ear, eye, mind, and speech that encourage these organs to their particular works, i.e., ear to hear, eye to see, mind to think and speech to speak. Here quality indicates to Supreme activating agent who controls all. So, the quality of hearing, seeing, thinking and speaking never be controlled by, the ear, eyes, mind and speech. That is why, the *Kena Upaniṣad* says in its fourth *manta* of the first *khaṇḍa* :

‘yadvācānabhyuditaṃ yena vāgabhyudyate/

*tadeva brahma tvam viddhi nedaṃ yadidamupāsate//*⁵⁶

The nature of *Parama Brahman* is very mysterious. If we try again and again to understand its nature through our organs, we fail again and again in our attempt.

55. Gambhirananda Swami., E.UP., (Vol.I) p.50

56. Ken.U.,I.4

Without the power of Ultimate *Brahman*, a person cannot be able to speak a single word. That is why, our speaking power is to be known as *Brahman* and whom the people worship here is not *Brahman*. This *Parama Brahman* is beyond the ken of speech; but He is the propounder of speech. By our own effort, we cannot know the Supreme *Brahman*. Not only our speech but the limitation of all our organs have expressed in the *Kenopaniṣad* thus :

‘*yanmanasā na manute yenāhurmano matam/*

*tadeva brahma tvam viddhi nedaṁ yadidamupāsate//*⁵⁷

Again

‘*yaccakṣuṣā na paśyati yena cakṣūṁsi paśyati/*

*tadeva brahma tvam viddhi nedaṁ yadidamupāsate//*⁵⁸

These *mantras* of *Kenopaniṣad* express the esoteric nature of *Brahman* which is not ascertained by our mind and also our eyes, but he is the internal force, who activates mind and eyes to think and see. That is to be known as *Brahman*, the Ultimate Reality of this universe. To whom people here adore as *Brahman* is not the real form of *Brahman*, as He is beyond our mind and eyes. Reference may be cited in this context from the writing of Rohit Mehta where he states - “What man adores is what he has caught in his functional faculties. He adores the Immanent but forgets that the Spirit cannot be contained in the framework of the Immanent. That which makes the Immanent alive is the Transcendent – but the Transcendent cannot be caught.”⁵⁹

57. Ken.U.,I.5

58. Ibid.,I.6

59. Mehta Rohit., TCU., p.35

The last two *mantras* of first *khaṇḍa* also clarify the limitations of our organs as they completely fail to comprehend the nature of unlimited *Brahman* :

‘*yacchrotreṇa na śṛṇoti yena śrotramidaṁ śrutam/*

*tadeva brahma tvam viddhi nedaṁ yadidamupāsate//*⁶⁰

‘*yat prāṇena na prāṇiti yena prāṇaḥ praṇīyate/*

*tadeva brahma tvam viddhi nedaṁ yadidamupāsate//*⁶¹

These two *mantras* declare the origin of all, eternal and unlimited *Brahman* which is the source of our knowledge, whether it may come from hearing, testing or seeing. But the knowledge of Supreme *Brahman* cannot be gained by our ear. Because ear completely fails to achieve the knowledge of It. Again the Supreme *Brahman* also cannot be energised by the vital-forces but by the power of which vital forces are activated that is the Supreme *Brahman* and worship It.

The second part of the *Kenopaniṣad* starts with the following *mantra* :

‘*yadi manyase suvedeti dabhramevāpi nūnaṁ tvam vettha brahmaṇo rūpam/*

yadasya tvam yadasya ca deveṣvatha nu mīmāṁsyameva

*te manye veditam//*⁶²

[Trans : If you think “I know *Brahman* well” then surely you know but little of ITS nature; you know ITS nature only as conditioned by man or by the gods. Therefore, *Brahman*, even now, is worthy of your inquiry.]⁶³

60. Ken.U.,I.7

61. Ibid.,I.8

62. Ibid.,II.1

63. Eng. Trans. from Mehta, Rohit., TCU., p.35

The *Kena Upaniṣad* proclaims that he who knows *Brahman*, knows only a little portion of it, hence it is mind's illusion itself. This type of knowledge can be said as partial knowledge. "It deals only with the expressions of Brahman – and not with Brahman Itself. Surely all speculation about the Whole, based on the knowledge of the Parts is misleading. The Whole is not arrived at by just adding the Parts."⁶⁴

People for their ignorance say that they know the Ultimate Reality, but it is mind's illusion only, because *Brahman* is completely different from their knowing. Therefore, perhaps, it can be said that their knowledge regarding the *Brahman* is limited or imperfect. But he who thinks that he knows not, he is actually a wise one.

That is why, the *Upaniṣad* states :

'yasyāmataṁ tasya mataṁ mataṁ yasya na veda saḥ/

*avijñātaṁ vijñānatām vijñātamavijñānatām//'*⁶⁵

Brahman, the inanimating principle is not a subject of knowing, because all the sources of knowledge fail to attain Him. Such a person, who out of ignorance thinks that he has fully comprehended the nature of *Brahman*, he is misguided, because his knowledge regarding the *Brahman* is not proper, hence it is said to be insignificant. *Brahman* is not comprehensible for them on account of their *ajñāna* or ignorance. But, those persons who become free from ignorance and egoistic feeling, completely understand the nature of *Parama Brahman* and get salvation in this life. The *Kena Upaniṣad* says :

'nāhaṁ manye suvedeti no na vedeti veda ca/

*yo nastadveda tadveda no na vedeti veda ca//'*⁶⁶

64. Eng. Trans. from Mehta, Rohit., TCU.,pp.35-36

65. Ken.U.,II.3

66. Ibid.,II.2

[Trans : I do not think that I know it well. Nor do I think that I do not know it. Among us he who knows it – knows it. And he too does not know that he does not know.]⁶⁷

Here the disciple says to his *guru* that he cannot say that he has fully comprehended the nature of *Brahman* and also it cannot be said that his knowledge regarding the *Brahman* is totally void. He is in such a state where he neither knows nor does he not know – this is the state where *Brahman* can be ascertained.

The *Kenopaniṣad* states that it is the knowledge through which man can get liberation or immortality. Realising the existence of Supreme *Brahman* in every individual, man can comprehend the nature of *Parama Brahman*. Because, Supreme *Brahman* resides in every individual as the inner self. Man gets strength and power for obtaining the knowledge from Him. From the knowledge, i.e., realising *Brahman* in all *bhūtas* and knowing the fact that without *Brahman* there is totally vacuum, one attaining the Supreme, i.e., immortality :

‘*ātmanā vindate vīryam vidyayā vindate ’mṛtam*’⁶⁸

According to *Kenopaniṣad*, our ultimate aim of life is to realise the nature of Supreme *Brahman*, which is immortality itself. One who does not able to comprehend the nature of Supreme *Brahman* and one who wastes his time aimlessly giving greater interest in enjoying the worldly pleasure, is a foolish one and he will never get another opportunity to recover his mistakes. As a result he gets birth and death again and again in this world until his realisation of the Supreme *Brahman*. Therefore, wise people realise the existence of Supreme *Brahman* in every created beings and thus seeing oneness in the whole creation become free from sorrows and sufferings and

67. Eng. Trans. from Sarma, D.S., TUAA., p.39

68. Ken.U.,II.4

gain immortality in this life :

*‘bhūteṣu bhūteṣu vicitya dhīrāḥ pretyāsmāḷlokādamṛtā bhavanti/’*⁶⁹

Taking birth as human being, man must try his best to realise the existence of *Brahman* in the whole creation and without knowing the nature of Ultimate Reality no one can achieve the immortality. So, *Brahman* is the real thing and all others are an illusion or error, the main cause of bondage to this world. In this context following *mantra* of *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* may be mentioned :

*‘.yo vā etadakṣaram gārgyaviditvāsmāḷlokātpraitī sa kṛpaṇo ’tha ya etadakṣaram
gārgī viditvāsmāḷlokātpraitī sa brāhmaṇaḥ/’*⁷⁰

This *mantra* enumerates that, he who departs from this world without knowing the nature of *Parama Brahman*, is pitiable one (*kṛpaṇa*), but he who departs from his life with the knowledge of Supreme *Brahman*, regarded as *Brāhmaṇa*, i.e., the knower of *Brahman*. The *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* also declares that, *‘brahma veda brahmaiva bhavati,’*⁷¹ i.e., the knower of *Brahman* becomes *Brahman* himself.

Nothing can be achieved in life through arrogance. In the third part of the *Kenopaniṣad* there is a legend, where we find that the Supreme *Brahman* in the form of a *Yakṣa* asks the fire-god *Agni* and air-god *Vāyu* to burn and lift a piece of straw. But, they fail to do so. Their egoistic attitude stands in the way of obtaining the power of *Brahman*. Through the legend of *Agni* and *Vāyu*, the *Kenopaniṣad* suggests that without humility none can achieve the knowledge and power of *Brahman*. On the other hand when the knowledge of *Brahman* is attained one can gain strength, vigour

69. Ken.U.,II.5

70. BU.,III.8.10

71. MU.III.2.9

and immortality. Thus, *Brahman*, the all pervading Reality is only the real thing and knowing Him as only one Reality, he who becomes one with the soul of other human beings gets salvation. The *Śrīmadbhagavadgītā* says :

‘mattaḥ parataram nānyatkiñcidasti dhanañjaya/

mayi sarvamidam protam sūtre mañigaṇā iva//’⁷²

[Trans : There is nothing else besides Me, Arjuna. Like clusters of yarn-beads formed by knots on a thread, all this is threaded on Me.]⁷³

In this way, knowing *Brahman* as the only controlling force, who is not far but resides in our heart as self, and thus realising the absolute oneness of the *Ātman* we can be free from the cycle of birth and death and connect us with the Supreme *Brahman*. That is why, the *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* also states :

‘aṅguṣṭhamātraḥ puruṣo ’ntarātmā sadā janānām hṛdaye saṁniviṣṭaḥ/

hṛdā manvīso manasābhikṛpto ya etaviduramṛtāste bhavanti//’⁷⁴

The *Kenopaniṣad* suggests that *Brahman* is loved by all. The *Upaniṣad* states that love is the only way through which one experiences *Brahman*, the Supreme Reality :

‘taddha tadvanam nāma tadvanamityupāsitavyam sa ya

etadevam vedā ’bhi hainam sarvāṇi bhūtāni saṁvāñchanti//’⁷⁵

The *Kenopaniṣad* encourages us to live with love which give birth to sympathy and equality. This concept is very important for establishing the social harmony. As

72. ŚBG., VII.7

73. Eng. Trans. from ŚBG., Gitapress Gorakhpur, p.91

74. ŚU., III.13

75. Ken.U., IV.6

Brahman is said to be the *tadvanam*, i.e., beloved of all, therefore through love, co-operation and serving the mankind we can able to achieve the Supreme Being, i.e., the Supreme *Brahman*.

The *Kenopaniṣad* gives stress on attaining the knowledge of *Brahman*. One who achieves the knowledge of *Brahman*, realises the spirit of oneness. He becomes free from all kinds of sins. He obtains physical, mental and spiritual strength. At that time he becomes united with the *Brahman* and forgets hatred and all kinds of discrimination. He understands that the *Brahman* is the only motivating force that propels all activities of this universe. *Brahman* is the only Reality and the knowledge of *Brahman* is the Absolute Bliss that brings emancipation. One who realises that Supreme Reality is the only vital force that controls all the affairs of this universe, becomes united with the Supreme Energy. It is this Supreme Energy which activates everything. All the living and non living things are nothing but His various manifestations. Therefore, nothing is superior to It.

In this way, the *Kenopaniṣad* starts with the queries about one Supreme Authority under the command of which all are performing their respective works. These queries ultimately come to an end with a firm affirmation of the existence of one and only Supreme Being, who is motivating all the functions of this universe. This Supreme exist inside every one and controls the bodily functions of the creatures. Without the power of this Supreme *Brahman* nothing becomes activated. But, it is very difficult to realise the mysterious nature of the *Brahman* through our sense organs and even it cannot be ascertained by our mind. For our ignorance we become confused and try to comprehend It through the limited power of our sense organs. But, unlimited *Brahman* cannot be grasped by the limited things. When one feels the existence of *Brahman* everywhere, the very introductory question that started with the

term *kena* (by whom) ends with the answer *Brahmaṇ* (by the *Brahman*). When its nature is comprehended, the true knowledge is manifested. One who realises the true nature of *Brahman*, becomes free from the bitterness of racial discrimination, hatred and superstitions. Understanding the spirit of oneness he extends his helping hand to others and shares with all. In this way, by understanding the concept of oneness, human beings can overcome their ignorance and become one with the unlimited *Brahman*.