

Mandukya Upanishad, Class 16

Mantra # 11:

ॐ अकारो जगत् प्रकृत्या महाकारोऽमकारोऽप्यन्तरोऽन्तर्यामिः ॥

अकारो जगत् प्रकृत्या ॥

अकारो जगत् प्रकृत्या ॥

ॐ अकारो जगत् प्रकृत्या ॥

Pragya, whose sphere of activity is deep sleep, is M the third letter of AUM, because it is both the “measure” and also “that wherein all become one”. One who knows this identity of Pragya and M is able to know the real nature of things and beings, and also come to realize as being the Self of all.

Swamiji said the Upanishad is in Omkara Vichara from mantra # 8 onwards. In Mantra # 8 it pointed out that the four padas of Atma could be equated to four matras of Omkara; that is A U M and the silence following M is known as Amatra.

From mantra # 9 onwards, each matra was equated to each pada in progressive order. Thus Aa was equated to Vishwa or Virat. In Mantra # 10 the second pada Taijasa or Hiranyagarbha was equated to matra U.

In mantra # 11 the third pada of Pragya and Ishwara was equated to M kara.

Incidentally, after equating, the Upanishad prescribed three upasanas. Aim of Upanishad is not upasana but Vichara. Assuming some students may not be ready for Vichara the Upanishad prescribes the three upasanas. Shankaracharya says upasana is not main topic of the mantras.

The main two features of each of the three upasanas were then pointed out as:

□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□ □□□□□□□□□□□□ □□□□□□□□ □ □□ □

It is clearly seen that Taijasa is of the same nature as U in AUM, the common features being “superiority”. Another reason for fixing such an identity is “being in the middle”.

It is a summary of mantra # 10. Here upasaka is equating matra U with Taijasa, Hiranyagarbha, sukshma prapancha, invisible worlds; and in doing this, all minds must be visualized. With that the U is taken as a part of Omkara. Two common features here are:

1. Utkrishaha: In mantra # 10 superiority of subtle universe is described. It is cause of gross universe. Even as mind is more powerful than body, so is U superior to Aa at time of chanting. Aa resolves in U. U is resolution ground of Akara.
2. Ubhayatvam: means being an intermediary stage or in the middle. Thus, sukshma prapancha is between sthula and pragya. Similarly U is between Aa and M. This is also an aide to meditation.

Phalam will be discussed later.

Karika # 21:

□□□□□□□□ □□□□□□□□□□ □□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□ □
□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□ □□ □□□□□□□□□□□ □ □ □□ □

The identity of prajna and M is upon the clear common feature that they are the “measure”. The other reason for such an identity is because “ all become one” in both prajna and M.

Here M is equated with the third pada that is Pragya or Antaryami, or Karana prapancha or the Universe in its unmanifest form. Before big bang too there was a condensed universe, an unmanifest universe. This is to be visualized on sound M. To aide with this meditation two common features were described.

1. Mithi: Also called Manam in karika, meaning measure. Sthula, sukshma prapancha enter the measure and then come out of it as well. Utkatam means evident. Measure-ness.
2. Laya samanya; Gaudapada uses laya instead of Apithi as used in mantra # 11. Laya is resolution ground; Karana Prapancha is also resolution ground and upon dissolution it goes back to its potential state.

Law of conservation of energy is actually described in Upanishad. It says that sthula suskhma parapancha go back to Laya.

Also Aa and U resolve in M. When we say M is resolution ground it is from a practical point of view as technically M cannot be resolution ground; it has to be Aa alone. By nature of Aa it is the material cause of all other sounds, their karanam; as such all have to be resolved back in it alone.

Upanishad is indicating a practical reality that Mm is end of all talking. This is third Upasana prescribed for the unprepared students.

Karika # 22:

सर्वेषां सर्वेषु सर्वसत्त्वेषु सर्वसत्त्वेषु सर्वेषु सर्वसत्त्वेषु
 सर्वेषां सर्वेषु सर्वसत्त्वेषु सर्वसत्त्वेषु सर्वेषु सर्वसत्त्वेषु ॥ २२ ॥

He who knows without doubt what the common features are in three states, is worshipped and adored by all beings; and he is indeed the greatest sage.

Normally Upasana is for manda adhikari's. This may give the student an inferiority complex; hence Gaudapada is trying to boost the student by glorifying the upsaka.

That meditator who clearly knows the equation based on common features in all three upasanas becomes a revered one. The three upsanans correspond to the three states of experience.

Thus Akara is Jagrat; U kara is Swapna and M kara is Sushupti. This upasaka becomes a revered person among human beings. He becomes worthy of worship. In our culture Upasakas's are worshipped. Maha muni means great upasaka. What is phalam of this? Phalam was not described.

Karika # 23:

ॐकारो ऋकारो उकारो मकारो वाचस्पतिः ॥
ॐकारो ऋकारो उकारो मकारो वाचस्पतिः ॐकारो ऋकारो उकारो मकारो वाचस्पतिः ॥

The sound letter A helps the meditator to attain a well-developed waking personality (vishva). The meditator on U attains a well-developed Taijasa (mind and intellect) and for one who meditates on M reaches Prajna. In the " soundless" state, after Mkara, there remains no attainment

Therefore this upasana can be practiced as nishkama or sakama upasana. Nishkama makes him ready for Turiyam Gyanam. For Sakama upsaka there also benefits in this life as well as in after life.

Ihaloka Phalam:

As stated by mantra # 9, he will become superior to others and become a common person acceptable to all. For third upasana he will be able to measure and judge. He will become one with God.

Paraloka phalam is not described in Upanishad. Gaudapada says, Akara Upasana does not mean meditating on Akara alone, it means Akara Pradhana Omkara Upasana and how to practice it has not been described. Shankaracharya also does not give importance to upasana.

This upasana will take upasaka after death to Vishwam or Virat Aikyam or oneness with Virat Ishwara. It is like a river merging in ocean. He will lose individuality temporarily until his punyam lasts.

Similarly U kara pradhana Omkara Upasana is when U is equated with Hiranyagarbha. It will lead after death to Taijasa or Hiranyagarbha aikyam. Shikshavalli also describes this aikyam.

Third is M kara pradhana Omkara Upasana will lead after death to Pragya or Antaryami Aikyam. He will merge into God. It is not a Gyani's merger. Upasaka's merger lasts only until his punyam and then he starts again while Gyani, after merger, do not come back.

How about Amatra and Turiyam? One who comes to Amatra does not travel after death as he becomes one with Brahman here and now. This is fourth matra.

Let us assume one has practiced this Upasana and prepared the mind for enquiry. How to do the enquiry? What is difference between Upasana and enquiry?

Aa is invoked as sthula prapancha and U is invoked as sukshma prapancha. Normally a word is used to reveal an object. Word is padam and object is padartha. Every padam represents a padartha.

Vedanta asks us to enquire into truth of this, asking us in effect to perform a Vichara.

Padam is a word. Four words are used: Bangle, Chain, Ring and Gold. Each padam must reveal a padartha. Bangle reveals bangle padartha. Ring reveals ring padartha. Chain reveals chain padartha while Gold reveals Gold padartha. Thus four padams reveal four padarthas. But upon enquiry I find gold is substance in front of me, but in the word bangle there is no padartha. Ring also has no padartha, chain too has no padartha. Therefore, upon enquiry three padarthas are dismissed; that is bangle, chain, ring; thus substance is dismissed. Once three padartha's are negated the corresponding padam's are also negated as they have no object to reveal. Therefore enquiry leads to dismissal of padartha and later padams as well.

Enquiry leads to resolution of padams and padarthas. So other than Turiyam, the only substratum, all other substances just do not exist. There is no substance called Sthula, Sukshma, Karana Prapancha and correspondingly sthula, sukskma karana Padams are also not there. What is left is Pada padartha vilakshanam or Turiyam. This Turiyam can be represented by silence. So, enquiry leads to dismissing of padam and padartha.

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy