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A Study Of Educational Implication Of Upanishads

“Those wise ones who sees that the consciousness within them is the same is the conscious within all beings, attain peace”

Katha Upanishad

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Abstract

Upanishad is considered as the end part of the Vedas. It is the ultimate truth of all the four Vedas. It is the highest philosophy of life where the human beings reach at the end of their knowledge. All four Vedas have their own Upanishads. Recorded by different Rishis and enlightened person. Total number of Upanishads are one hundred and eight. In this paper the scholar will discuss the seven Upanishads. It is often termed as Vedanta i.e. end part of the Vedas. These are the treaties which dealt with the ultimate problem of life and their goals. It literally means sitting near the Guru and attaining his wisdom through the process of teaching and learning. It provides very basic answers to those question which some day or the other emerges in ones mind. It tends to give answers to those question which can lead a person to live his life to the fullest.

Keywords: *Upanishad, Knowledge, Jiva, Isvara, Jagat.*

Introduction

Upanishads are the highly philosophical treaties which can help the human being to deal with their ultimate problem. It has taken different approach to impart knowledge. For instance the Prashna Upanishad, the teaching learning process are systematically arranged in six questions. Each question was asked by one student. Guru gives them the answer in such a way the students will be enlightened. If we look into the Kath Upanishad then it is the story of a boy named Nachiketa. This Upanishad describes the journey of Nachiketa to know the truth about death and immortality. Similarly Chandogya Upanishad and the Brhadaranyaka-Upanishad are the large

compositions which brings together several messages, anecdotes, and teachings on multiple issues that one faces. Brhadaranyaka-Upanishad gives conversation between king Janaka and Yajnavalkya. At the end of the conversation it was said by the sage that Janaka attained fearlessness. 'Satyam Eva Jayate' is the bold proclamation mentioned in Mundaka-Upanishad.

The common theme on which the Upanishads focusses is the knowledge of Brahman. It shows the indepth study of human beings in relation to their psychology and nature. It gives detailed description of the relationship between the living being (Jiva), the Universe that forms the context for the living being (Jagat), and the all-encompassing diving force which is always in action (Isvara). It basically full of ultimate pronouncements or Maha-vakyas.

Vedic corpus originally had over 1,180 Upanishads, several of them are lost. Now one can locate two hundred Upanishads, and can list one hundred and eight under the four Vedas. Ten are considered as the Principal Upanishads, as they were often used by the spiritual masters to support any argument. It not only provide deep spiritual and philosophical insight but also serve as a fountain of knowledge and Wisdom in order to lead a successful life and pursue material benefits.

In the last anuvaka in Siksavalli of Taittiriya Upanishad there is the mention of final address by the Guru to his students as they were moving out of the Gurukul. It is equivalent to the modern day convocation address given by the Vice Chancellor of the University. It left us with thw idea of seven waves of thought which a Guru wants to give to their students as follows;

- Advice on mode of living with reference to society and oneself
- Maintaining proper relationship with the previous and present generation
- Relationship with his teacher and with himself
- Regarding the attitude towards the learned and wise person in the society
- Laws of giving and Charity
- Remedy for doubts related to their own duty and conduct in life
- Doubts related to one's own relationship with others which is falsely accused in the world

Shankaracharya gave the term Brahavidya to Upanishad. He wrote commentary on ten principal Upanishad namely Isha, Kena, Katha, Prashna, Mundak, Mandukya, Aettareya, Taittareeya, Chandogya, and Brihadaranyak. According to him, Upanishad destroys all the darkness of this world gives the knowledge of Brahma. It it is source through which one can know the Brahma. It is the ultimate part of Vedas. Different Vedas have different Upanishads as follows;

Rigveda- It consists of 10 Upanishad

Yajurveda- In Shukla Yajurveda- 19 Upanishads

In Krishna Yajurveda- 32 Upanishads

Samaveda- 16 Upanishad

Atharvaveda- 31 Upanishad

Yoga Upanishad- 20

In this research paper author will deal with the ten Upanishads one by one with their educational implication in one's own life.

1. Issavasyo Upanishad- Fortieth chapter of Shukla Yajurveda is termed as Ishavasyopanishad. It starts from Ishavasyam word hence termed as Ishavasya Upanishad. It is the smallest Upanishad. It consists of 18 Mantras. Out of eighteen, eight Mantras are given below.

Its main Mantra is “**Ishwara**”. According to this whatever living and non-living form is available in this earth, everything is included in Ishwara. One must understand this concept and live with detachment from all the worldly material.

The other Mantra is “**Karma**”. It ensures that in this world one must expect to live for 100 years by actively doing their karma. It should be done without attachment. There is no other way than this.

Next mantra is “**Aatma harta ki Gati**”. According to this whoever commits suicide put himself in great darkness.

The other important Mantra is **Sarvavyapta**. It means that energy which can have movement and can also be stable. It is near as well as far. It is inside as well as outside.

The next Mantra is **Ekatwa**. According to this Mantra the one who can perceive same energy in every biotic and abiotic components of the world can perceive the same energy everywhere.

Next Mantra is **Vidya and Avidya**. This Mantra tells us that those who follows Avidya enters into Darkness. On the contrary to this those who follows only Vidya enters in the worst situation than those who follows only Avidya. It further elaborates that the one who understands that He is that one whoe is Vidya and Avidya at the same time, is went through the death and can attain Moksha.

The other Mantra is **Sambhuti Vinasha**. It states that one who understands that he is birth and death at the same time can attain Moksha.

Prayer to Agni Dev is the next Mantra. This is the request from Agni Dev to save us from material attachments and live a purposeful life.

2. Katha Upanishada: Katha Upanishad is taken from Krishna Yajurveda's Katha Shakha. It consists of two chapters and each one has three parts. It consists of conversation between Nachiketa and Yama. In this, Nahiketa was given three blessings by the Yama. First was that Nachiketa's father should accept him with peace. His second wish was to get the knowledge of Swargik Agni. When Nachiketa asked for the third wish to get the knowledge of Death. At this Yama asked Nachiketa to change his wish. But Nachiketa was not ready to change his wish. Here Yama tell's Nachiketa about two things Shreya and Preya. He further tells him about the difference between Vidya and Avidya. He further explains him that the ultimate truth is “Om”. Om is Brahma. He elaborates that the body is a chariot, Buddhi is the one who controls it. Mind is the strap attached to the Chariot.

3. Kena Upanishad: Kena Upanishad is the ninth chapter of Talvakar Brahman is taken from Samaveda. It is also termed as Brahmanopanishad and Jaiminya Talwalkar Upanishad. It starts with “Kenashita” hence termed as Kena Upanishad. Its main Mantra is Prashna, from whom we can hear, we can think, we can talk, that is only life. Person who has ultimate knowledge attains Moksha at the end. Here it explains that which can be expressed can be termed as Brahma. Its main mantra is Brahma, that cannot be seen from eyes, but can be seen the process of watching. It is that which cannot be heard from ears but can see the process of hearing. At the end it explains that tap, Aatma-Vijay and Karam are the bases of this knowledge and Truth is its original place.

4. **Taittiriya Upanishad:** It is taken from Krishna Yjurveda's, Taittiriya. Three vallies are Shiksha, Brahmananda, Bhriгу.

- Shiksha Valli: It tell us details about varna, swara, surataratwa (quantity), prayas (Bal), samatana (Saam) and satatya (santan). Along withis it talks about getting knowledge of Brahma by both teacher and student. It further describes about Mahasamhitas such as Adhilokam, Adhijyotipam, Adhividyam, Adhipragyanam, and Aadhyatma.
- Brahma Valli: It discusses Aatmatatwa.
- Bhriгу Valli: It consists of story about Varun's son Bhriгу. Bhriгу once asked his father about Brahma. Varun's answer cover details about Brahma.

5. **Prashana Upanishad:** It is Brahman grantha of Peeplad branch of Atharvaveda. It is conversation between the people seeking question to Maharishi Peeplad. Number of questions are six. It starts with the arrival of Rishis who were engaged in the research of Brahman. The names of Maharishis are Bharadwaj Sukesha, Shaivya Satyakam (son of Shivi), Suryavanshi Gargya, Son of Ashwal Kaushalan, resident of Vidarbha Bhargav and Katyayan kabandhi. All of them went to Peeplad and said He is the one who will tell us about 'Sarvam'.

Rishi Peeplad told them to follow Brahmacharya for one year and then ask question. He told them after completing one year if he will capable to answer he will give answer.

After one year Katyayan Kabandhi asked his first question to Rishi Peeplad was from the living being came into existence on this earth. To this question Rishi Peeplad answered that the Prajapati wished and through His meditative power he produced pair of animals i.e life which is Punsatva and Rayi i.e Stritva and said that this will produce the living beings on this earth. He further elaborates that Sun is energy and Moon is Rayi and both are Jadatattva. He explains that this Agni is energy which is also said in the Rigveda. He further said that 'Anna' is Prajapati and from Him Beej (Retas) came into existence and from that Beej this whole living being evolved.

Second question was asked by the Bhargava of Vidarbha. He asked How many Gods take care of these living beings and who is the most powerful among them ? to this question Peeplad replied that these Gods are Aakash, Vayu, Agni, Jal, Prithavi, Vaak, Mann, Chakshu and Shrotra. All these nine Gods help these living beings. Hence one day all of them proudly said that we help Bhagwan conserve all living and non living being. The the Prana said that he is the one who can divide everything into its five form. Hence I am the conserver of all living and non living beings off this world. But nobody took him seriously.

Third question was asked by son of Ashwal i.e Kaushal. He asked from where this Prana come into existence and how it enteres in a body, how it moves and how it enters into external and internal body. To this question Rishi Peeplad gives the answer that from the 'Aatma' 'Prana vayu' emerges. Prana emerges through Aatma and it moves inside the body through the reaction of Mann. Vayu consisted of Nimna Vayu. In Chakshu, Karna, Mukha and Nasika there is Mukhya Vayu. In between there is Madhyavarti Vayuit helps in burning and hence helps Annahuti. Through this only seven types of Agni came into existence.

Rishi Peeplad further adds that by understanding about Prana, how it came into existence, its position, its five field, its relation with Aatma, by knowing everything one can attain wisdom and Moksha.

Five Prana are as follows:

- **Prana**:-It holds Sun- From Nose to heart- Vaani, Shrotra, Chakshu, Mann
- **Apana**: It holds Earth element- Kidney and Upastha- throwing out waste materials from the body.
- **Samana**- It holds Aakash element- From heart to Navel- process of digestion
- **Udana**: It hold Agni- Sushumna , from heart to Mind- Energy
- **Vyana** – It holds Vayu- from heart to every part of the body.

Fourth question was asked by Sauryayani Gargya. He aske who is that ultimate Purush, who see this dream and all this happens for whose pleasure and in whom all these energy gets accumulated. To this question the answer given by the Peeplad Rishi are as follows:

- All the consciousness (Indriya) sleeps.
- Five Agnis are awake
- Jeevatma see the dreams
- When Tejas completes Jeevatma attains pleasure.
- Everthing which cannot be destroyed accumulates in Brahma.

Fifth question was asked by Shivi's son Satyakama. He asks after if a person who meditates over 'Omkar', lands into which Loka? To this question Rishi Peeplad answers that Om is the only Parabrahma. Ekmatrik meditation of 'Omkar' leads to Manushya Loka. Dwimatrik meditation of 'Omkar' leads to Somaloka. Trimatrik meditation of 'Omkar' leads to Brahmaloaka.

Sixth question was asked by son of Bharadwaj Sukesha. He asks who is this 'Purusha'? to this question Rishi Peeplad gives answer that Purusha is inside every living being and hence all the sixteen kala emerges inside him.

6. Mandukya Upanishad: It is the smallest Upanishad in Atharva Veda. It consists of only twelve Mantras. It consists of different stages of Om and its criticism.

In the first Mantra, it states that Om is Akshar Shabda. It is past, present and future. Whatever is beyond this three kala is 'Om'.

In the second Mantra it is said that this whole world is Shashwat-Brahma. This Aatma is Brahma Atma is Chaturvidha, it has four ways.

The third Mantra states that first way is conscious state, who understands the material world who has seven organs, who has nineteen doors, who experiences the material happiness is the first way (Paad).

Fourth Mantra states that whose place dreamland, who understands the internal world, who has seven organs, has nineteen doors, can experience the micro level happiness and resides in mind is the second way (Paad).

In the fifth Mantra it is explained that when some one sleeps without any wish, without any dream, he is in Sushupta Awastha. Whose place is Sushupti, he is in the state of Nirpeksha Aananda that is the third way (Paad).

Sixth Mantra elaborates that this is Sarveshwar. It is the reproductive part of the world i.e womb. It the origin and end of the world.

Mantra seven explains it is not inside and not outside. It is inside and outside at the same time. It known and unknown at the same time. It accumulates everything inside. This is the fourth way (Paad). It is the 'Aatma' the only one which should be known.

Eighth Mantra states that it is 'Atma' and 'Akshar shabda' is 'Om' its limbs are its Varnakshar and Varnakshar are its Paadansha i.e 'Akaar', 'Ukaar' and 'Makaar'.

In the ninth Mantra it is said that in the awakened state, Vaihsua purush is Akaar because of its breadth. It is the first varnakshar. Those who understands it in this way attains all his wishes and becomes its origin.

The tenth Mantra that those who were in unconscious state resides in Tejomay Mann. It is in the middle state hence it is the Dviteeya varnakshar. It rises from the differences and in his kula his descendent are 'Abrahmaavid' (not the one who does not know Brahma).

The eleventh Mantra talks about the Sushupta Awastha. It is the last level i.e 'Makaar'. It is the third varnakshar. The one who understands it in this way can measure this whole world and becomes one with Brahma.

Twelfth Mantra explains about the fourth place i.e 'Awarnakshar', which is not in a behavioural form. It is the end part of the world, it is Adweeteeya, Adwait. It states that Aatma, through Aatma enters into Aatma and the one who understands Aatma understands this.

7. Mundako Upanishad- It is taken from the Shaunakeeya branch of Atharva Veda. It consists of three Mundakas. every Mundak has two parts. Mundak means Mundan i.e liberation from Avidya. Rishi Angira gave the knowledge of Para and Aparavidya to Shaunak.

Mundak one states that under the category of Gods the first one emerges is the Brahma. He is the creator and preserver of this world. He narrated the Brahma vidya which consists of all the vidyas to his elder son Atharva. This knowledge was further transferred from Atharva to Angira. Angira transferred this knowledge to Bharadwaj Satyavaha, from Bharadwaj to Angirasa. Angirasa further transferred this knowledge to Shaunak.

Shaunak arrived to Angirasa to get his studentship, he asked him what is there to know by knowing which nothing is left to be known. Angirasa gave answer to this question that there two types of vidya which must be known i.e Para and Aparavidya.

Aparavidya consists of Rigveda, Yajurveda, Samaveda, Atharva veda, Shiksha, Kalpa, Nirukta, Chanda, Jyotisha. Para vidya is that which leads to 'Akshar Tatva'. Person with wisdom can see which is not visible, not related, not descriptive, cannot be seen or heard, without hands and limbs, which is micro in size, which is the origin of every living being.

The way spider make its web and folds it inside itself, the way earth produces herbs and any hair grows on human body in the same way everything is produced by 'Akshar Tatva'.

Brahma is enhanced by Tapa, through this 'Anna' is produced. From Anna, Prana, Mann, and lokas. From Karma eternity is attained. That which is prevalent everywhere, that whose meditation is filled with wisdom, from him only this Brahma, and Anna is produced.

Those who are prisoned with Avidya. Who thinks that they are the knower of everything. They are in fact stupid and suffers like a blind person. They are under the control of Avidya and they feel proud just like a child. They are distracted from the goal due to their attachment towards the material world. This type of people enters in the lower loka.

On the contrary to this the one who meditates in forest with peace and has left all his desire they reach where there is 'Amrut Purush'. That purush is the truth inside out. That is beyond this prana and beyond the 'Akshara' is the only 'Paramtattva'.

Mundak 2

Mundak two states that from this 'Paramtattva', Prana, Mann and various senses originates. From this earth also originates which carries Aakash, Vayu, Agni, Jal. Agni is its forehead, Moon is its eyes, all the directions are its hearing power and Vedas are its Vaani. Vayu is its Prana. World is its heart. In its leg, Earth is placed. That is the internal Aatma of this whole arrangement.

Agni originated through this whose sameedha is Surya. From Soma rain happens and from Earth different herbs originated. In male and female sperms are originated and in this way Parmatma tattva originates. From that Parmatma Tattva Rigveda, Samaveda and Yajurvedas Richa and Mantras originates, Deekshas, all type of Yagya and Yoga Karma and Daan Dakshina all are Samvatsar, Yajmaan, Loka Lokantar in that the light of Sun and Moon are spread.

From that tattva different Devgan originated. From that different Sadhugan, human being, birds and animals originated, Prana and Apaana Vayu, Dhaana and jaun, Tapa, Shraddha, satya, Brahmacharya, and vidhi-vidhanon everything originated from the same source.

From that same source seven Prana originated. Seven Jwalas originated, different sameedhiyan, seven Homa, and this Santa Loka in which Prana, hruday, Guha everything accepting and moving around, everything are in group of seven.

From the same source all seas and every mountain, all type of rivers flows through the same source. From the same source all the flora and fauna originates and resides peacefully.

This 'Purusha' element is the whole world. That is only Karma, Tapa and parama and eternal form of Brahma. Those who knows this truth can go beyond this Avidya granthi in this Loka only.

That which is like a light, which is smaller than atom, under which everything is prevalent that is Brahma. That is only the word and Mann that is the eternal truth. Further it is said that 'Om' is bow and Aatma is Arrow that is said by keeping Brahma as a goal. One should attain this goal without attachment. The way arrow enters its goal, human beings should enter into Brahma.

Mundak 3

This Aatma gets benefit from truth, self control, complete and proper wisdom, celibacy. This Aatma resides inside body. It is good and enlightened and can be perceived by the Tapasvees. It further says that Truth must win not the wrong. Through the truth only journey of Gods spread every where. Through the truth Rishies rise above where truth is prevalent. Those who expects about their wishes and think only about it gets birth in the same place but those who win over their wishes attain their Atma. All their wishes diminished in this Loka only. This Atma does not get benefit from lecture not from the power and not from getting detailed information about any weapon. Only those can understand it whom it chooses. It revels only to them. This Atma is not benefited by weak people but when a person tries to attain it, it enters Brahma Dham.

Conclusion:

Upanishads consists of the answer to those questions which can follow anyone in their journey of this life. Some of the Upanishad even talk about what could make our life successful as a human being by attaining the knowledge of eternal truth. It is given in the form of question and answer. It gives the answer for the origin of this universe. Which type of knowledge one must attain to live eternal life. It gives insight into the mysterious things into this world and establishes scientific relationship among different elements.

References:

Bhagvagita chapter 10, verse 39

Ishopanishad, verse 2

Ishopanishad, verse 3

Ishopanishad, verse 5

Ishopanishad, verse 6

Ishopanishad, verse 9

Ishopanishad, verse 11

Ishopanishad, verse 14

Ishopanishad, verse 18

Katha Upanishad, verse 1

