

# MAN IN THE MIRROR OF BRHADARANYAKA

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*Brahman and self are one and the same. The aim of life is 'to know'  
Brahman as identical with oneself.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Vedic literature include a corpus within it called the Upanishads, which are philosophical and theological. They are very central to Hinduism, so much so all the systems and philosopher-theologians after the Upanishads, developed and commented on the doctrines found in them. Of the Upanishads, Brhadaranyaka is very important for its content and length.

The Brhadaranyaka Upanishad, one of the principal Upanishads, consists of three parts.<sup>1</sup> The main teaching of the first part, called Madhu-kanda, is advaita and it is of the nature of upadesa. It acts as an introduction to the following parts and treats the appearance of Universal Self and self. The second part, the Muni-kanda, deals about Brahman with logical arguments and explanation. The third part, Khila-kanda, deals with certain upasanas or modes of meditation.

A portion of the Brhadaranyaka Upanishad deals with sacrifice, its origin, significance, etc. But sacrifice is not the central stage. It might be

that gods, sacrifices, etc. are the remnants of Vedic religion. Though the Upanishadic rishis wanted (would have wanted) to replace sacrifice completely with philosophical doctrines, they were prevented from

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doing so, on account of the vast majority who were not learned. Mere philosophic doctrines arrived at through intellectual gymnastics would not satisfy the common man. Offering a sacrifice in a temple would give one more psychological satisfaction (of having fulfilled his duty to God) than would a profound doctrine concerning the unity of Brahman and Atman. Another probable reason is that, it would have gone against the sacred tradition of the past which had thrived on sacrifices. To go against the tradition

might have been detrimental even to their own philosophical speculations as it would have resulted in social uprisings.

In the holy Vedic tradition, the teaching concerning the Atman was to be handed down as a secret teaching by word of mouth to a son or to a pupil. (VI.2.1,3) There was even an explicit prohibition on revealing this teaching to one who is not a son or to one who is not a pupil. (VI.3.12) Because of this prevalent social structure, Brahmins had an upper hand and were the learned of the day. It was not common for other sections of the society to engage in scholarly dialogue and discourses concerning Brahman. But around the time of the Upanishads we find that kings as well as women discussing and arguing with learned brahmins about Brahman. Thus we find Janaka engaged in discussions with Yajnavalkya, the stalwart of Brhadaranyaka Upanishad, concerning Brahman. When Janaka offered a sacrifice, brahmins of the Kurupancalas were gathered together there. Among them there was even a lady, Gargi, the daughter of Vacaknu, who questioned Yajnavalkya concerning Brahman. When they questioned Yajnavalkya, she spoke up as if she was the final authority, "Revered *brahmanas*, I shall ask him two questions. Should he answer me these, none of you can ever beat him in describing Brahman." (III.8.1.)

Some kings were even more learned, equipped and qualified than brahmins so as to accept Brahmins as their students and teach them. Svetaketu, the grandson of Aruna and his father went to Pravahana, son of Jivala, as students. (VI.2.4-7) Ajatasatru accepted to teach Gargya with the words, which reveals the prevalent conditions of those times: "It is contrary to usage that a *Brahmana* should approach a Kshatriya thinking 'He will teach me about Brahman'. However, I will instruct you." (II.1.15) And what is more God-talk was not a vain talk but the only talk. And they held discussions concerning Brahman betting on their own heads. Thus we read that Sakalya's head 'fell off' as he knew not the answer. (III.9.26.)

All these tell us that Brahman knowledge was held in high esteem and as the only thing that mattered in one's sojourn on this earth. For example, the king of Videha, offered himself and all his subjects as servants to Yajnavalkya, in return for teaching him the knowledge regarding Brahman. Again Maitreyi would be willing to forego the whole earth filled with wealth for Brahman knowledge, for that and that alone would make one immortal. (II.4.2.)

## 2. THEORY OF REALITY

The most recent concern of the nations is the environment (ecology).

Technological progress has led to speedy growth in some fields. Indiscriminate use of technology has led to the detriment of the environment. Late have we realized that Newton's third law of motion that every action has an equal and opposite reaction is applicable to nature too and that if we do not behave well with nature, it is not bound to behave well with us either. That which led to our present environmental crisis is the philosophy which denies the unity of nature, of the universe and the greed of the human beings to acquire more and more. Sharply, in contrast to this Brhadaranyaka Upanishad affirms the oneness of reality.

Brhadaranyaka Upanishad affirms that there is an order in the universe. The sun rises in the morning and sets in the evening. The stars function according to their make. Animals are born, they live and they die. Insects are brought into existence, sustained in existence and taken out of existence. So do human beings. They have a beginning, and they have an end. What an order! Perfect! Organic whole is the world. Not only is there order in the macrocosm but also in the microcosm. In each thing that is on the face of the earth there is an order.

An effect should have a cause. The order in the world is the effect. Who or What is responsible for this order? Is this order put in there by

someone or did it come up by itself? Reason tells us that it may not have come up by itself (by chance) because of the presence of purpose in the world. Brhadaranyaka Upanishad affirms that the foundation of such an order is Brahman. How? Brahman is the cause of the world and of world order. Brahman caused the world into existence. He 'produced' all things in the universe and all the beings on the face of the earth and he holds them in existence. All these worlds, even of the gods are woven warp and hoof on Brahman, explains Yajnavalkya to Gargi. (III.6.)

Further, it is asserted that Brahman appeared as Brahmana, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Sudra. (I.4.15). Hence the Brhadaranyaka Upanishad makes it very clear that all people are expressions, manifestations of the same divine being, Brahman. Not only man but all creatures are his manifestations. What is the meaning of such an affirmation? Brahman is in all things. Brahman is the Self who is in the Macrocosm (earth, water, fire, air, sun, quarters of heaven, moon, lightning, cloud, ether) and in the corresponding microcosm (body, organ of generation, organ of speech, nose, eye, ear, mind, heart, sound, space in the heart). (II.5.1-10) Having created the world he entered into it. "This Self has entered into these bodies upto the tip of the nails-as a razor may be put into case, or as fire, which sustains the world,



may be in its source. People do not see It, for (viewed in Its aspects) It is incomplete. When It does the function of living, It is called the vital force; when It speaks, the organ of speech; when It sees, the eye; when It hears, the ear; and when It thinks, the mind. These are merely Its names according to functions." (I.4.7) Thus it is not you who live but Brahman who lives in you or rather you are the self. It is the same Brahman who is living and acting in all beings and things.

Brhadaranyaka Upanishad asserts that the pantheon of Vedic gods, 3306 of them, are all expressions of this One Brahman. (III.9.1-9) Upanishadic rishis also considered the gods to be the offsprings of Prajapati (Brahman). What is more telling is that even Asuras (whom we would normally discount from the list of gods) are the offspring of Prajapati (I.3.1), meaning to say that there is nothing in this world which is unclean or evil. Everything is controlled by Brahman. "Just as all the spokes are fixed in the nave and fellow of a chariot-wheel, so are all beings, all gods, all worlds, all organs and all these (individual) selves fixed in this Self." (II.5.15.)

That which is clear from the above is that the Brhadaranyaka Upanishad preaches a vision of reality which is non-dualistic. All things and beings in this universe are bound

together into a unity by and in Brahman.

The advaitic assertion of the illusoriness of the world has its source in the Upanishad. The doctrine of illusoriness of the world does not affirm that all the things we see in the world are illusions and that they don't exist or that they are the subjective creations of the perceiving mind. The things of the world are real. They exist quite independent of the perceiving mind. The perceiving mind does not create them. It only perceives them. Therefore the illusoriness of the world means that the things of the world do not have reality apart from and independent of Brahman. Independence of creation from Brahman is an illusion. It is an illusion to see things of the world (everything including human beings) as existing apart from Brahman. It is same as the Christian concept of dependence of the world on God. The whole creation depends on God for its existence. It is he who sustains them in existence. And apart from him they do not have any reality.

### 3. MAN, A SOCIAL BEING

Concentration on knowledge of Brahman and the way to the realization of Brahman as atman, has left but little space to deal with man as a social being. But texts reveal well-established social relationships. They were not a wandering folk but a well-established

community. That they had clear distinctions of functions in the society and that they had an established system according to functions in the society bears testimony to the well-ordered social setting. They had also a class of priests versed in sacred lore and philosophers versed in philosophy. These tell us about the developed social setting in which they lived. The four asramas too tell us of the well-regulated social life.

Brhadaranyaka Upanishad affirms that man is a social being. It holds that man is to be in a society and that he cannot find fulfilment except in a society. This is symbolically presented in the following text: "He was not at all happy. Therefore people (still) are not happy when alone." (I.4.3) The four asramas of one's life too indicate the importance of life in a society. They are not to leave the society but to do their service to the society first. Thereby affirming man's need and vocation to be in a society. It demanded that one remained in the society and brought up the society. And the punishment meted out to a wrong doer was that of being cast out of the social set-up. To be an 'outcast' meant that he had to live excluded from the community. He had no dealings (relationship) with the community. They rightly thought that one cannot live outside the society, which would as well mean death.

Man and woman are complementary. (I.4.3) They are to be one. The relationship between them is to be one in one, to be part and parcel of the other.

Foundation of these social relationships is of course Brahman who is in all. On this is based his equality with other beings. Since it is Brahman in all, all are equal and are to be valued as such. But how is that we find the society divided based on caste? That was a division based on the work one does, which he chooses to do according to his gunas (varna). But basically all are equal. But that this remained only in the minds of some thinkers and not in practice is evident. That this division degenerated into the infamous caste system, even in the time of the Upaniads, is unfortunate.

Upanishadic society has definitely been male dominated although women figure in the Brhadaranyaka Upanishad concerning crucial matters like knowledge of Brahman. They always considered the birth of a son to be a blessing and not that of a daughter. It is because of the belief that the father is increased in the son,<sup>2</sup> that father continues to be perpetuated in the son (I.5.16) and that the son frees the father from all his wrong doings (I.5.16-17) that they longed for a male offspring. A woman had to do the wish of man. She had no say. Male domination is more firmly established in the following



text. "If she is not willing, he should buy her over; and if she is still unyielding, he should strike her with a stick or with the hand and proceed, uttering the following Mantra, 'I take away your reputation,' etc. She is then actually discredited." (VI.4.7) Women were not given equal status with men in society and an etiological story has been written to the effect of the same. "Prajapati (Lord of creatures) bethought himself 'Come, let me provide him a firm basis!' So he created women. When he had created her, he revered her below. Therefore one should revere woman below." (Hume, VI.4.2.)

It is asserted without any ambiguity that the four classes of Brahmins, Kshatriya, Vaisya and Sudra are creation (manifestation) of Brahman. (I.4.11-13) It is the self-same Brahman who manifests himself in all these divisions of society. But the prevalent social situation then was that some of the castes claimed to be superior to others. And to support their claim, they asserted that it is through their caste that Brahman pre-eminently appeared: "Therefore, people desire a place among the gods in Agni, among men in a Brahmana, for by these two forms [pre-eminently] Brahma appeared." (Hume, I.4.15) Why would they have longed for a place among the Brahmins if not for their social superiority? People would have wanted (desired) to belong to that caste not because it is a better manifestation of

Brahman but because of social superiority and privileges they enjoyed.

Social structure was not restricted to the four broad divisions. There were castes and sub-castes. Each had rules and regulations peculiar to them and along with that each had peculiar relationship to each other. The Brhadaranyaka Upanishad mentions some sub-divisions of the priestly class: Hotri priest (singer of Rig verses); Adhvaryu-priest (offerer of oblation); Udgatri-priest (singer of saman); Brahman priest; (III.1.2f) Ritvij priest (I.3.25) and Prastoti priest (praiser). (I.3.28.)

Incantation in the ceremony for the attainment of a great wish, does not include the two lower castes Vaisya and Sudra. (VI.3.3) This raises some questions in our minds: Did they consider varnasrama to be merely division of labour according to one's gunas? If they did, why did they not mention the Vaisyas and Sudras in the Incantation? In a similar vein, we find Yajnavalkya in conversation with his wife Maitreyi explaining the highest doctrine that it is for the love of the soul is all dear. Here too there is mention of Brahmana and Kshatriya and not of the others (II.4.5; IV.5.6), thus bearing testimony to the fact of despisement of the lower strata of the society. Therefore we see the difference between the teaching of the Upanishads and the actual practice. The teaching

of the Upanishads regarding the innate equality of all beings, because they are all manifestation of Brahman, is an excellent doctrine. But it did not find its way into the lives of the people. This contrary practice of the doctrine threw Hinduism in a bad light in the eyes of the world.

#### 4. MAN'S NATURE

One of the deepest longings of man is to know himself. This is expressed in the Upanishadic man too. Questions like 'which part of the body is superior to others?' is expressive of such a search to know one's true nature. Among all bodily functions prana was noticed to be superior. (I.5.21) It is clear from the fight between the gods and asuras at the sacrifice of Udgita, as the asuras were unable to pierce it with evil. (I.3.1f) In I.5.3. mind is said to be the chief of senses. But slowly they realised that superior to vital breath and mind is the self whose instruments and manifestations they are. Yajnavalkya said to Janaka, "The self serves as his light. It is through the light of the self that he sits, goes out, works and returns." (IV.3.6) Ultimately man is his self.

Is man to be identified with the body which would mean denial of everything else like the soul as the materialists would claim? Or is he to be identified with a little more subtle functions of the body, the senses, which

are part and parcel of man and appear to be more important than the body? It is true that man is all these but he is not only these! He is the limitless one, expressing Itself through the little finite forms of the body. This limitless one in man is the same in all beings and things. He expresses himself differently throughout the universe.

What we perceive of a human being is his external appearance but the essence of man does not lie in his external appearance (matter, body, etc). The essence of man (and from this he gets his value) is Brahman who is at the basis of his being. He is nothing but an expression, manifestation of that being. But this self is unknowable: "You cannot see that which is the witness of vision; you cannot hear that which is the hearer of hearing; you cannot think that which is the thinker of thought; you cannot know that which is the knower of knowledge. This is your self that is within all." (III.4.2)

Now this self, the inner reality is not something residing in some part of the body. It is not something in the heart but is the substantial form of the body. Every part of the body has its existence because of the self. "When It does the function of living. It is called the vital force; when It speaks, the organ of speech; when It sees, the eye; when It hears, the ear; and when It thinks, the mind." (I.4.7.)



Individual self is identical with Brahman. What about the body? Is it something evil? No. They never advocate such a theory. Body (matter) is not something evil and to be dispensed away with, as found in many philosophies. According to them matter too is a manifestation of God. It too is God/Brahman. Hence there is no duality in man.

Now what exactly is this self? We experience dream and deep sleep. When not asleep we are awake. These are called three stages of the self: waking, dream sleep and deep sleep. While awake the self sees objects and identifies itself with the body which senses objects and feels as if incomplete without them. Here the self is the sensing subject. In dream sleep (swapna), self sees itself to be suffering or joyful in relation to the imaginary dream objects. But when awake self realizes that the pain and joy of the dream are not real. Here the self is dreaming subject. In deep sleep (susupta) the self experiences no desire or fear or pain. Here the self seems to be an abstract principle without consciousness. Sruti answers saying, "Verily, while he does not there see [with the eyes], he is verily seeing, though he does not see (what is [usually] to be seen); for there is no cessation of the seeing of a seer, because of his imperishability [as a seer]. It is not, however, a second thing, other than himself and separate,

that he may see." (Hume, IV.3.23) Here the self is pure consciousness. Consciousness here is not to be understood as the cerebral activity or thought, which need a subject and an object. It is the same self which is in all three stages. Thus the self is the ground of waking, dream and sleep states.

It is this 'self' which is the subject matter of the article. Though titled 'Man in the Mirror of Brhadaranyaka', it deals with the self which is the ground of all three states. Whereas in our normal understanding 'man' would be restricted only to the waking stage. If we restrict 'man' only to the waking stage we are touching only the tip of the iceberg.

The nature of man is 'pure consciousness' (Self, Brahman), unaffected by anything (karma) as in deep sleep.

## 5. BRAHMAN AND INDIVIDUAL SELF

### i. Brahman

Brahman is the originator of the world and each and everything in the world. (I.4.1-4) He is considered in an anthropomorphic way to be a person, producing the world out of himself. He is not only the producer but also the sustainer. At His command the sun and the moon stand apart, the earth and the sky stand apart. (III.8.9) These are the only two things we are able

to say of Brahman in positive characterization. The Upanishadic sages used the negative characterization (neti neti) such as 'neither gross, nor minute' (III.8.8. III.9.26; IV.2.4) for Brahman.

There is mention of 'gods' in the Brhadaranyaka Upanishad. Now these gods, who were popularly worshipped, are reduced to One by Yajnavalkya. This is philosophical and not for popular devotion. (III.9.1f) So they speak of Prajapati as god whose offsprings are gods and devils. They are from folklore and for popular devotion.

If the world emanated from Brahman all in the universe would be part of Brahman. Each and everything would be god, i.e., Pantheism. Is God affected by this emanation? What is the relation of the emanated universe to Brahman? Brahman is both immanent and transcendent. He is in all creatures as well as above all creatures. First of all Brahman is not in anyway affected by the emanation of the world. (V.1.1) Secondly, Upanishadic doctrine is not pantheistic. "Pantheism is the view which identifies God with the sum of things and denies transcendence. If the nature of the absolute is exhausted completely by the course of the world, if the two become one, then we have pantheism."<sup>3</sup> But Brhadaranyaka Upanishad V.1. asserts that the nature

of reality is not exhausted by the world process and that the existence of the world does not take away from the perfection of the absolute. What is actually affirmed by Upanishadic doctrine of emanation is that "God is the fundamental reality of our lives, and that we cannot live without him. It is the doctrine of the indwelling of the divine."<sup>4</sup> But pantheism in this sense is an essential feature of all true religion. All that the Upanishad affirms is that all things spring from the same source, from which they derive their sustenance. Those who forget or deny this truth are said to be in maya.<sup>5</sup>

### ii. Relationship

Brahman who is the Self in all things is one's own self (atman). (III.4.1; V.6.1) Brhadaranyaka Upanishadic doctrine is identity of Brahman and atman. Brahman and self are one and the same.

Aim of life is 'to know' Brahman as identical with oneself. (IV.4.19) This knowledge is not mere speculative knowledge as one of experience and realization. But the path of knowledge of Brahman is compared to a narrow and difficult path. But that is the only path to Brahman. (IV.4.8-9) And this is the most difficult thing to achieve. One may be a sannyasin but will find it difficult to let go of everything and cling to God especially in times of trial and difficulties.



This knowledge of Brahman is the only thing that would satisfy man. If only one knows this, all what he does will have value, if not, not. "He, O Gargi, 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; ..." (III.8.10. I.4.15) And this knowledge alone wards off repeated death. (III.3.2) The importance of knowledge of Brahman is highlighted by the fact that even gods (they are also creatures of Brahman but superior to human beings) are engaged in pursuit of Brahman knowledge. Thus we find the gods and asuras coming to Prajapati as students of knowledge. (V.2.1.)

But the knowledge of which Brhadaranyaka Upanishad speaks is not merely intellectual knowledge but actually faith, belief and complete confidence in Brahman as the source as well as existence of one's being. From the intellectual knowledge of Brahman one should proceed further and make it part of his being. One should be able to see Brahman in all things of the world. This is spiritual enlightenment. "He who knows it as such becomes self controlled, calm, withdrawn into himself, enduring and concentrated sees the Self in his own self (body); he sees all as the Self." (IV.4.23) Of course, it is a natural consequence of Brahman knowledge

that once Brahman is known all else becomes secondary, even his own body. (IV.4.12.)

The scientific inventions have made man think that he is able to do these quite independent of Brahman. He thinks that he is the creator and that it is he who does things. It seems as if it is not God who is active in the world but man who achieves by his intelligence. This makes him forget his dependence on Brahman. The more he progresses, the more he is alienated from Brahman. It is this which is called ignorance. It is out of this, we are called to extricate ourselves by learning (knowledge) of the true relationship between man and Brahman. This and this knowledge alone can give man peace and joy, that is worth its name.

## 6. AFTER LIFE

Upanishads hold that if someone died young it was due to some sort of punishment. And to enjoy full length of life, to live up to ripe old age, was considered a blessing. (II.1.12) However long one may live he has to face death some day which is the truth about human existence. And when a person died, they burnt the body little away from their dwelling. (V.11; V.15.1) By the funeral rite of cremation the man was believed to return to various elements of the universe. (III.2.13) Is that all? Do things come to an end with death? No. There is

something in man which is incorruptible by death or subsequent cremation: the self. The Brhadaranyaka Upanishad speaks of two possibilities of the self after death. It either becomes one with Brahman (liberation) or goes from death to death (transmigration).

### i. Liberation

The one who while alive knew Brahman and had no other desire but the Self, goes to Brahma. "Being but Brahman, he is merged in Brahman." (IV.4.6) Various terms are used to denote this: going to or reaching Brahma, becoming immortal, ending repeated death, becoming Brahman. (IV.4.25) Individual self merges with the universal Self (from fullness to fullness). This is the state of perfect bliss (ananda). This is also spoken of as absence of consciousness, (II.4.13-14) in the ordinary sense of the word. But Brahman is consciousness. It is unitary consciousness. But how is it? We do not know. We depend on sruti here.

The Upanishad speaks of the self's journey to the Brahma world from where there is no coming back. The self ascends to wind, sun and moon and then to the world that is without heat, without cold. There he lives eternal years. (V.10; VI.2.15) There is also a description of the bliss of the Brahma world. Bliss of Brahma world is 1000,000,000,000 times the bliss of the human world. (IV.3.33)

We realize that it is only a feeble analogy to give a glimpse of the ananda of the Brahman world. Belief in the heavenly world too is folklorish, keeping in line with the thinking that gods dwelt in another world full of joy (which is to be longed for).

There is a curious text which draws our attention. "Do you know how the other world is never filled by so many people dying thus again and again?" (VI.2.2) It could mean that not many manage to make it up to that world. Or it could mean that in the Brahman world we do not speak of aggregation of selves but of merger of self and Self.

The texts speaking of becoming one with Brahman, going to Brahma world and becoming atman should not make us think that Brhadaranyaka Upanishad is a conglomeration of diverse doctrines and that it has no unity in its doctrines. They are different ways of saying the same thing of attainment of Brahman. The doctrine of identity of Brahman-atman and the problem of individual selves causes them to put the same doctrine in different words to satisfy each section. It is an entry into the fullness called Brahman. By this entry neither the individual nor the Self is affected. It is difficult to understand this. So they have used three different phrases to qualify this relationship: entry into the Brahma world (where it seems that



one's individuality will be maintained); becoming Brahman (where one is raised to the level of Brahman, realize oneself to be Brahman); and becoming one with Brahman (lose one's identity in Brahman). It is a mystery. We do not know.

Actually speaking liberation does not take place after death. It happens while on earth. If one realizes Brahman as foundation of all things and eliminates the sense egoism, he is called a jivvanmukta. (IV.4.7.)

#### ii. Transmigration

Those who had no knowledge of the Self do not go to the Brahman world but come back to the earth. By this another chance is given to know Brahman. The cycle of birth and death would continue to function uninterrupted till one attains the knowledge of Brahman. (III.3.2; IV.4.4&19) And it is from this reincarnation that people longed to be released. Starting point of all Indian Philosophy is this: We are in the cycle of birth, death, and suffering. We do not know how it started. But the fact is that we are in it. And we are finding a way out of it.

Bṛhadaranyaka Upanishad attempts to give a detailed account of the movement of the self back to the earth. "Reaching the earth they become food. Then they are again offered in the fire of man, thence in the fire of

woman, whence they are born (and perform rites) with a view to going to other worlds. Thus do they rotate." (VI.2.16) And the state of one's next life depends on the state of the self in the present life. The state of the knowledge of Brahman one has reached and the good/bad works he performed are accrued to the self. "One indeed becomes good through good work and evil through evil work." (III.2.13; IV.4.2&5) The karma theory embraces in its sweep men and gods, animals and plants.

There are three possibilities for the self after death: annihilation, eternal retribution in heaven or hell and transmigration. The goal of man, the Upanishad says, is to attain oneness with Brahman, to reach the Brahman world, as a result of one's true knowledge of Brahman. Eternal retribution in hell for the ignorant souls looks disproportionate to the short span of life of the self in the world. Annihilation of the soul is not imagined as soul is an emanation/manifestation of Brahman. So they opt for transmigration. This seems to be reasonable. Here, in the mercy of the infinite, the self is given any number of chances (lives on earth) to know him. And hence this is a very satisfactory position of the Upanishad. Eternal retribution in heaven/hell is accepted by Christians only in the context of revelation. Without revelation transmigration is a

reasonable solution to the problem of the soul after death.

#### 7. CONCLUSION

Man is a manifestation of Brahman. In essence man is Brahman, i.e., foundation of man is Brahman. Man is constantly held in being by Brahman. So man has a divine nature. Man is part of a reality which is again

a manifestations of Brahman. Man is called to live with other men who are themselves manifestation of Brahman. Therefore man is not called so much to do many things but to be man, to realize his being in relation to Brahman. This is the primary goal in life. From this all his actions flow. If action flows from such an understanding this world will truly be a paradise.

#### END NOTES

1. Swami Madhavananda (tr.) *The Brhadaranyaka Upanisad with the Commentary of Sankaracarya* (Calcutta: Advaita Ashrama, 1965), p.xiii. All references are from Madhavananda's translation, except where mentioned otherwise.
2. VI.4.21. Robert Ernest Hume, *The Thirteen Principal Upanisads* (Madras: Oxford University Press, 1962).
3. Radhakrishnan, *Indian Philosophy*, Vol.1., (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1962), p. 202.
4. Ibid., p. 203.
5. Cf., *ibid.*, p. 192.