

## Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad with Gauḍapāda's Kārikā

### माण्डूक्य उपनिषद् गौडपाद कारिका सहित

From *Atharvaveda*, *Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad* is short (12 verses), but considered for advanced study. It is generally studied quite late in the sequence of texts. Traditionally it is taken up just prior to the *Brahma Sutras*. In 12 verses, it summarizes the gist of Self Knowledge, but requires prior background on the part of the students for understanding. For the same reason, it requires considerable explanation on the part of commentators as well as in the classroom.

*Upaniṣads* are in the knowledge section of the *Vedas* (*Vedas* have 3 segments - *karma*, or right action, *upāsana*, or right attitude and right knowledge) which are revealed to the *Ṛṣis* (therefore Arsha Vidya Center - meaning the center for study of the knowledge of the *Ṛṣis*) by *Īśvara*. So *Vedas* are not created by human being, but revealed to those with the appropriate minds, capable of receiving the subtle knowledge)

*Kārikā* is an original work commenting on the *Upaniṣad*. (*Vārttika* is also an original work, except it is on the *bhaṣya*, or commentary on the *Upaniṣad*)

*Gauḍapāda's Kārikā* is considered to be one of the rare works that precede *Ādi Śaṅkarā*. *Gauḍapāda* is the *guru* of *Śri Govinda*, who is the *guru* of *Ādi Śaṅkarā*.

According to tradition, the lineage of *Vedāntic* teaching starts with *Īśvara* (as in the verse "*sadā Śiva samārambhām....*": *Nārayaṇa* -> *Brahmāji* -> *Vasiṣṭha* -> *Śakti* -> *Parāśara* -> *Vyāsa* -> *Śuka* (up to now there is a father-son relationship. Thereafter several more *gurus* in-between *Śuka* and *Gauḍapāda* -> then *Gauḍapāda* -> *Govinda* -> *Śaṅkarā* -> then the 4 direct disciples, *Padmapada*, *Hastamalaka*, *Totaka* and *Suresvaracarya*).

The *Upaniṣad* has 4 sections, *Āgama prakarṇa*, *Vaithatya prakarṇa*, *Advaita prakarṇa* and *Alāta śānti prakarṇa*.

The first *prakarṇa* intersperses with the *Kārikā*. Thereafter the *Kārikā* is on its own, adding clarity to the earlier thought.

*Swami Maheshananda* has written a very extensive 2-volume book on the *Upaniṣad* and the *Kārikā*, in highly sankritized Hindi. I found Swamiji's work very revealing. My earlier study with *Swami Dayananda* at the Piercy course prepared me for a better comprehension of *Swami Maheshananda's* work - Hindi makes the grammar easier and faster to grasp, and the highly sanskritized Hindi makes it possible to retain the highly technical nature of the subject matter that gets compromised by translation into a 'worldly' language.

All are welcome, but those that are dedicated and single-minded will be the true target of this advanced study. If you know some Sanskrit, you will get more out of it. Between the teacher and student, we will fill in the gaps.

What I would ask is that you are not casual about it. If you miss a class, please go over the recording before the next class. If you are so busy that it can be difficult to maintain continuity, better not even start. I am going to put a lot of effort into it, and I expect the same from you. I would prefer the new students to write to me, explaining what they have studied so far.