A Brief Study on Śvetāśvataropaniṣad

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ABSTRACT
Upaniṣads are the highest portion of Veda and upaniṣads are called as vedānta. It is the compound word of Sanskrit like upa-ni-sad, which denotes sitting at the feet or presence of a guru. The upaniṣads are called disclosure of god. There are one hundred and eight upaniṣads in Indian philosophical tradition. But their numbers exceed two hundred. Among of them 11 number of upaniṣads are treated as major upaniṣads. The śvetāśvataropaniṣad is a major upaniṣad and there are 113 mantras in this upaniṣad and which belongs to krṣṇayajurveda. The śvetāśvataropaniṣad describes the yoga, its usages and merits vividly. There are seen many more descriptions of the supreme soul and the descriptions about the individual soul in this upaniṣad very beautifully.

Keywords: svetasvataropanisad, mundaka upanisad, brahman, krśnayajurveda, adisankaracarya, sankarananda

INTRODUCTION
The upaniṣad presents the highest portion of Veda and ancient Indo-Aryan thought and their culture. Upaniṣad is the wisdom portion of Vedas. In every of four great Vedas viz.Rk, sām, yajur, and Atharva and there is a large portion which relates mainly with rites and rituals. Every Vedas has another portion which called as upaniṣad. The upaniṣads are called as vedānta, means the end or the final achievement of wisdom

The name like upanisad has interpreted from various aspects. Somebody says that it is a compound word of Sanskrit up-ni-sad, which denotes sitting at the feet or in the presence of a guru. At the same time, according to others, it means 'to smash or ruin' the manacles of ignorance. Ādiśaṅkarācārya, the great Indian philosopher and commentator say regarding the term of upaniṣad that, the word like upanishad is denoted from the root 'sad' and that prefixed by 'upa' and 'ni' and then followed by suffix 'kwip'. So that relieves bondage of rebirth, old age, etc. and which empowered the man to meet with Brahman and ruins rebirth, death etc. and that is called Upanishad.

Saderupanipūrvasya kvipī copaniṣadbhavet/ mandikaraṇabhbāvāṁca garbhādeḥ śātanāttathā//1

The upaniṣads are called as 'srutis, means what is heard, the term is generally used as the secret disclosed to others. The upaniṣads are commenced for dispersing the knowledge of Brahman and by which the ignorance might have vanished and the existing of transmigration has removed and that comes to an end forever.

No date is fixed for the origin of upaniṣads. Prof. max.muller tells in his lectures on Vedanta philosophy 'one feels certain that behind all these lightning-flashes of religious and philosophic thought there is a distant past, a dark background of which we shall never know the beginning'. Some researcher says that the Vedic period as far back as 4000 or 5000 b.c and other says from 2000 to 1400 b.c. But some conservative admit it predates, the Buddhist period which starts in the sixth-century b.c.

According to Indian philosophical tradition, there are one hundred and eight (108) upaniṣads but their number exceeds over two hundred (200). Except this, others are called as minor upaniṣads. Among the one hundred and eight upaniṣads, the eleven(11) number of upaniṣads like iṣa, kena, katha, praśna, mūṇḍaka, māṇḍukya, Taittiriya, Aitareya, chāṇdogya, Bṛhadāraṇyaka and śvetāśveta on which saṅkar has given his commentaries.

The śvetāśvetaopaniṣad is a upaniṣad which consists of 113 mantras and divided into six chapters and it belongs to krṣṇayajurveda. The name of the upaniṣad comes from the
name of the sage, which name is śvetāśvetara who has been taught to his disciple (chapter-6, mantra-21). But according to śankarānanda ‘śvetāśvatarā’ means who controlled his senses. There are many passages in this upaniṣad which are associated to dualism, non-dualism, Advaita and that also related to other branches of vedānta but yoga and sāṅkhya ideas are occupied a significant place in some verses and this upaniṣad is also gained as the place of major upaniṣad in upaniṣadic calculations.

The whole universe is a wheel which has one felly and triple tires
The śvetāśvataropaniṣad describes that, the whole universe is like a wheel and which has one felly and triple tires and sixteen extremities, fifty spokes and twenty counter spokes and twenty counter spokes with six sets of eight and that wheel runs on the three different types of roads with the help of a belt which is also a single but manifolds and which each revolution gives increase to two.

Tamekanemini trīṛṭaṁ sodasaṁtām
Satārdhāraṁ vinīśatpriyāṛābhīṁ/
asṭakaṁ ṣadabhirviśvarupaikapāsaṁ
trimārgabhedaṁ dvinimittaikamoham//3

Brahman is the endless wheel and everything lives and takes rest in this. The devoted soul travels about that. For knowing the individual soul, so far called as separated. Itself is the moving force or god and favored by him and it gains immortality.

Sarvājīve sarvasaṁsthe bṛhante asmin haṁso
immortality.

When the person is well known to the god, at that time his all manacles are declined with the decreasing of ignorance, birth and death come to an end. The body became more conscious by the practicing of meditation and someone gains the third stage like the universal lordship. By this, his all desires are satisfied and he become able to get the attachment of that supreme soul.

Jñātvā devaṁ sarvapāśapahāniḥ kṣiṇaiḥ
klesārjanamamṛtyupahāniḥ/
tasyābhidhiḥ-āṇāttraṁ dehabhede viśvaśravanāṁ kevala āptakāmaṁ//8

The supreme soul or paramātmā is alone the protector of the universe at the proper time. He exists in the inner hearts of all beings. All the saints who are the knower of Brahma and all the gods are merged with him. One can able to remove the fetters of death by realizing the supremacy of that supreme soul.

Praṇava and its meditation
Firestick is not realized as the cause of the fire, till that ignited by the collision. The fine nature of fire, normally it is not absent in the stick. Fire can be gained from that source like fire stick, by the action of striking. The realization of ātman is like that fire and the ātman is realized with a meditation on praṇava (the symbol oṁ).

Vanheryathā yonigatasya mūrtirna
Drśyate naiva ca liṅgānāśah/
Sa bhūya evendhanayonighyā-
Stavodbhayāi vai praṇavena dehe//9

This upaniṣad describes regarding praṇava that, you can make your own body as the lower piece of the wood and the syllable oṁ or praṇava, make the upper piece of the wood and one should realize the presence of God by practicing churning in the mode of the meditation and one can able to see which is the secret.

Supreme Brahman is imperishable and the knower of that Brahman became free from all the bondage or chains.

This is explicitly announced as supreme Brahman and that Brahman is strong in the triad and that is imperishable. For the inner essence, the brahmavid (the knower of the Vedas) sacrifices himself to that Brahman and they merge in it and became free from birth.

Udgītametpataramaṁ tu brahma tasmaṁstrayamaṁ
supratiṣṭhāḥ kṣharaṁ ca/
atrāntaraṁ brahmavido viditvā līnā brahmaṁ
tatparāḥ yonimuktāḥ//6

The universe is supported by the lord. That is the perishable and imperishable, manifest and unmanifest. Whereas the ātmā (the self) cannot able to know the lord and became attached with the worldly objects but when he knows the reality of the supreme soul, at that time he can able to be free from all the bondage of the world.

Sānīyuktmatet kṣaramakṣaraṁ ca vyaktāvyaktāṁ
bharate viśvāṁmah/
anīśascātmā badhyate bhoṅṭrţiḥ-pāṭā jñātvā devaṁ
mucyate sarvapāśaiḥ//7

Regarding praṇava mūndaka upaniṣad says that oṁ is the bow and arrow is the human mind. The object which is hit by us, that is Brahman and that object can hit by a concentrated mind. The mark hits by the arrow and it can enter into the object and become united. Hence the arrow and the mind and which thrown to the object, that became merges with him.

Praṇavo dhanuḥ sarvaḥ hyātmā brahma
tallakṣhyamuyate/
aprampatrena veddavyāṁ śaravat tanmayo bhavet//11

Supreme soul is omniscient, omnipresent, self-luminous, pure conscious and destroyer of ignorance.
This śvetāśvatara upaniṣad says that as sesame oil in sesame seeds, as butter exists in curds, as the stream of water available in the underground, as fire is seen in wood and the self is known in the self. The self can able to see him frequently by means of concentration of mind, and truthfulness. He, who is all-pervading like butter and he is supreme Brahman, the destroyer of ignorance and the cause of self-knowledge and meditations.

That is the quality of immanent soul who is omniscient, omnipresent, great and self-luminous. He is known to the limited persons who undergo spiritual practices and disciplines. The wise men can able to control the mind and intellect and that supreme bliss is only obtainable through the meditation and concentration.

So he is divine lord who is all-pervading omnipresent and benevolent. He resides in the inner hearts of all and he possesses the power of making use of all faces.

God is one who pervaded the whole universe and he is the supreme Brahman, the destroyer of ignorance and the cause of self-knowledge and meditations.

A controlled mind can gain supreme bliss
The self-luminous immanent soul manifested by the controlled mind. We will strongly take attempt for the attainment of bliss.

Their mind gets perfection, where the fire is created, where the air is controlled and where soma juice overfilled.

Description of yoga and its merits
This śvetāśvatara upaniṣad describes the yoga, its usages, and its merits vividly. Controlling the senses which is a good effort and regulating the activities of the body. One should take breathe through nostrils and that activity became gentle. The knowing person should control his mind like the reins which attached to edgy horses.

The forms like snow, smoke, sun, fire, wind, Firefly, lightning, crystal and moon and these are the manifestations of Brahman in the practice of yoga.

A controlled mind can gain supreme bliss
The self-luminous immanent soul manifested by the controlled mind. We will strongly take attempt for the attainment of bliss.

The personal Brahman is the infinite supreme Brahman. He covered in all the living creatures of this universe. Although he is single, yet he pervades the whole universe. The person who knew him as the lord in real, he becomes immortal.

The forms like snow, smoke, sun, fire, wind, Firefly, lightning, crystal and moon and these are the manifestations of Brahman in the practice of yoga.

The forms like snow, smoke, sun, fire, wind, Firefly, lightning, crystal and moon and these are the manifestations of Brahman in the practice of yoga.

Man's body is a combination of five elements like air, earth, light, water, and ether, these are the perception of yoga and that lightness of the body, healthy, thirstless, complexion of body's clearness, pleasant smell, melodious voice and crunch of excretions are the first signs of entering to yoga.

By practicing the yoga man get a lot of merits and it is said that lightness of the body, healthy, thirstless, complexion of body’s clearness, pleasant smell, melodious voice and crunch of excretions are the first signs of entering to yoga.
Laghu tvam śvemulolpatvaṁ varnasprādāṇaḥ svarasaūthavānaḥ
gandhaḥ subho mūtapuruśasamalaṇaḥ yogaparvṛttīṁ
prathamāṁ vadanti//24

Yoga makes a man just like dust free and cleaned. He shines brightly and he realizes the oneness and the truth of the soul (Ātmā) as self-luminous, eternal, unborn and free from all the adaptations of prakṛti and also he can able to be free from all type of sins.

Yadātmatattvaṇaḥ tu brahasmatatvaṁ dīpapameneha
ajāṁ dhruvaṁ sarvatvairviśuddhaṁ jñātvā devaṁ muceyate sarvappāpaiḥ//25

The description of the difference between the individual soul (jīvātmā) and the supreme soul (paramātmā). The two birds who are inseparable and birds of beautiful feathers and they both resides on the same tree. One eats the fruits and other looks without eating. Here the body is a tree and the individual soul (jīvātmā) and the supreme soul (paramātmā) both reside in the same body. Jīv-Ātmā enjoys the worldly objects and suffers the consequences but the supreme soul or paramātmā although reside in the same body he stays as non attached to actions and their results and he is the witness of this extraterrestrial play.

Dvā suparnā sayujā sakhāyā samānaṁ vrksaṁ
pariṣasvajāte/
tayoranyāḥ pipalaṁ svādvatyaṁ naśannanyo
abhicākaśīti//26

The same description has seen in the mundaka upaniṣad. The vedānta philosophy is almost the same story. There are two birds on the branch of the same tree but one silent, calm and resides on the top level and he is majestic and submerged in the self-glory. But on the other hand, the bird who sits on a lower and that bird eats fruits and feels happy but stays in miserable conditions.

Dvā suparnā sayujā sakhāyā samānaṁ vrksaṁ
pariṣasvajāte/
tayoranyāḥ pipalaṁ svādvatyaṁ naśannanyo
abhicākaśīti//27

Further, this śvetāśvataropaniṣad describes that the supreme soul is smaller than the smallest, greater than greatest and he resides in the inner heart of all the creatures. He is free from all the sorrows. And all worldly desires and also he is the great lord by the grace of the creator.

Samāne vrksaṁ puruṣo nīmagnō niśyā śocati
muhyaṁmaṁahā/
juṣṭaṁ yadā paśyatanyamiśamasaya mahimānami
vītāsokah//28

The same description has described in muṇḍaka upaniṣad like this.

Samāne vrksaṁ puruṣo nīmagnō niśyā śocati
muhyaṁmaṁahā/
juṣṭaṁ yadā paśyatanyamiśamasaya mahimānami
vītāsokah//29

Description of the supreme soul in śvetāśvataropaniṣad
The supreme soul is the fire, the sun, the air, and the moon also and that is called as Brahman (Hiranyakarβha) that is prajāpati brahma and that is the waters and that is also the starry firmament.

Tadevānīśadāditya stadhā÷yastaduḍcandramāḥ/
tadevāsukraṁ tad brahma tadāpataḥ prajāpatiḥ//30

The supreme soul possesses hands and feet everywhere and he has eyes, heads, and mouths in everywhere and his existence has seen in every object of the whole universe.

Sarvataḥ pāṇīpādaṁ tat sarvataḥ kṣīriṣiṣvaham/
sarvataḥ śrutimalloke sarvamā̄vṛtya tiṣṭhāti//31

The same description of the supreme soul has been seen in śrimad Bhagavadgītā. Bhagavān says that the supreme soul has many more hands, feet, eyes, heads, faces, and ears. Paramātmā (supreme soul) pervades the whole universe like this.

Sarvataḥ pāṇīpādaṁ tat sarvataḥ kṣīriṣiṣvaham/
sarvataḥ śrutimalloke sarvamā̄vṛtya tiṣṭhāti//32

The unlimited being possessed a thousand of heads, a thousand of eyes and a thousand feet. He pervades the whole universe from all sides and he has possessed a beyond of ten fingers.

Sahasraśīrṣā puruṣaṁ sahasrabāṁ tiṣṭhati//33

The śvetāśvataropaniṣad describes that the supreme soul is smaller than the smallest, greater than greatest and he resides in the inner heart of all the creatures. He is free from all the sorrows. And all worldly desires and also he is the great lord by the grace of the creator.

Aṇoraṇīyaṁ mahato mahiyānāṁ guhāyāṁ nīhito.sya
jantoh/
tamkratuḥ paśyati vītāsoko dhātuḥ
prsadānāmāvṛtya mahimānāmi//34

God is imperishable and immortal but the matter is perishable. The individual soul and the matter which is perishable, that is overpowered by god. One can cease all the illusion (mayā) by meditation, by uniting and becoming one with him.

Kṣharaṁ pradhānamamṛtākṣharaṁ haraḥ
kṣharaṁ nanāmāvīśate deva ekaḥ/
tasyābhidhiḥ anādyoṇānātattvabhāvah vītāsoko
mahimānāvṛtya viṣvamāyānīśam//35
This is known that Brahman has eternally existed in one's own self. Beyond this, there is nothing to be known, consequently, due to meditation, the enjoyer, the enjoyed and which gives the enjoyment, these all are the three aspects of Brahman.

Etajjñeyaṁnityamevātmasaṁsthaṁ
Nātaḥ paraṁ veditavyaṁ hi kiñcit/
bhoktā bhogyam preritāraṁ matvā
Sarvaṁ proktaṁ trvidhaṁ brahmetat//37

Conclusion
From the above discussions, it is concluded that God is very powerful and he is the supreme soul, imperishable, omniscient, omnipresent, and omnipotent. He is the brahman who is like an endless wheel. He is like a tree who rooted in his own glory and he is alone but immovable. The person who knows him as lord in real, he becomes able to be free from all the adaptations of nature and free from all type of sins in this earth forever, there is no doubt at all.

Footnotes
1. upadeśa sāhasrī.26.
2. upadeśa sāhasrī.25.
3. śvetāśvataropaniṣad.chapter.1, mantra.4.
4. śvetāśvataropaniṣad.chapter.1, mantra.6.
5. muṇḍaka upaniṣad.22.6.
6. śvetāśvataropaniṣad.chapter.1, mantra.7.
7. śvetāśvataropaniṣad.chapter.1, mantra.8.
8. śvetāśvataropaniṣad.chapter.1, mantra.11.
9. śvetāśvataropaniṣad.chapter.1, mantra.13.
10. muṇḍaka upaniṣad.22.4.
11. muṇḍaka upaniṣad.22.11.
12. śvetāśvataropaniṣad.chapter.1, mantra.15,16.
13. śvetāśvataropaniṣad.chapter.2, mantra.4.
14. śvetāśvataropaniṣad.chapter.3, mantra.7.
15. śvetāśvataropaniṣad.chapter.3, mantra.11.
16. muṇḍaka upaniṣad.2.2.11.
17. śvetāśvataropaniṣad.chapter.6, mantra.11.
18. śvetāśvataropaniṣad.chapter.2, mantra.2.
19. śvetāśvataropaniṣad.chapter.2, mantra.6.
20. śvetāśvataropaniṣad.chapter.2, mantra.9.
21. śvetāśvataropaniṣad.chapter.2, mantra.10.
22. śvetāśvataropaniṣad.chapter.2, mantra.11.
23. śvetāśvataropaniṣad.chapter.2, mantra.12.
24. śvetāśvataropaniṣad.chapter.2, mantra.13.
25. śvetāśvataropaniṣad.chapter.2, mantra.15.
26. śvetāśvataropaniṣad.chapter.4, mantra.6.
27. muṇḍaka upaniṣad.3.1.1.
28. śvetāśvataropaniṣad.chapter.4, mantra.7.
29. muṇḍaka upaniṣad.3.1.2.
30. śvetāśvataropaniṣad.chapter.4, mantra.2.
31. śvetāśvataropaniṣad.chapter.3, mantra.6.
32. śrimadbhagavadgītā.chapter.13, mantra.14.
33. śvetāśvataropaniṣad.chapter.3, mantra.9.
34. śvetāśvataropaniṣad.chapter.3, mantra.14.
35. śvetāśvataropaniṣad.chapter.3, mantra.20.
36. śvetāśvataropaniṣad.chapter.1, mantra.10.
37. śvetāśvataropaniṣad.chapter.1, mantra.12.

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