

Vedanta may be considered as Upanishads. Upanishads are the last literary products of Vedic period. Upanishads discuss the philosophical problems. Upanishads were also considered as aranyakas or forest treaties to guide men who retire into forest and try to understand the reality of life.

Upanishads are the culmination of the Vedic speculation. Literally, Upanishad means that which destroys ignorance and brings near to God or teacher. Upanishads are regarded as inner/ secret meanings of the Vedas (rahasya). there are many Upanishads and originated from various Vedic schools at different times places. In Upanishads there were many and many differences. So to systematize this knowledge Badarayana wrote Vedanta sutras or Brahma sutras or Sairaka sutras; in other words it was called Uttar mimamsa.

In conclusion Badarayana affirms

A monistic view of the world, while accepting the two views of the Brahman i.e saguna and nirguna Brahman.

Based on Upanishads and Bhagavadgita various schools of Vedanta have developed. The popular schools are –

Sankara's----- Advaita-----Monism

Madhava's-----Dvaita-----Dualism

Ramanuja's-----Visista advaita-----qualified dualism

Nimbarka-----dvaitadvaita

Vallabacharya-----Suddhadvaita

And many more such schools existed on the basis of one question i.e what is the nature of the relation between self (jiva) and God (Brahman)?

Upanishads shift the centre of interest from the vedic Gods to the self of man. The real self is pure consciousness. The real self is called atman. Self is concealed in all things but does not appear.

He realization of self i.e atma vidya or atmagana or para vidya is the highest knowledge of all. it can be attended through sravana, manana, nididhyasana i.e study of reasoning and repeated meditation.

The vedic belief in sacrifice was shaken by Upanishads. Mandukya Upanishads says that these sacrifices can not help in achieving the highest goal . it can be attained through the knowledge of self and God. Brahman is the ultimate source of all joy. Self realization is the greatest joy. the world is created out of Brahman or the self.

The essence of self is pure consciousness. This pure consciousness is bliss. Brahman is pure consciousness and the ground of both the self and external world. Maya or avidya is the principle of limitation and multiplication of the one Brahman into many selves.

Realization of the identity between the self and the Brahman is liberation from bondage. This liberation is possible even when the soul is associated with the body. After liberation the body is also continue of its karmas i.e prarabdha karma.

Karma could be of 3 types:-

1. Prarabdha karma—lives the karma gathered from the past life lives.
2. Sancita karma-----those that still die accumulated.
3. Sanciyamana-----which have been gathered in this life.

The knowledge about reality will destroy the second and prevents the third with the result that rebirth can be avoided where first one has to take its natural course as it has already took birth.

The Vedanta conception of God-can be perceived unanimously in two aspects i.e.

God pervades the world, but not exhausted in the world. During Upanishads 'all God theory ' was popular i.e pantheism. Pantheism is a doctrine which identifies God with the universe or regards the universe as a manifestation of God and the worship or tolerance of many Gods.

Brahman is the absolute reality.

Throughout Upanishads and later Vedanta, the two aspects of God persist i.e God pervades in the world and also beyond it. God is both immanent and transcendent.

### **Vedanta and education:-**

The whole concern during the Vedantic/ upanishadic period is to impart knowledge to liberate an individual and realization of an individual and great importance was also given to teacher taught relationship. The training provided in gurukulas enabled an individual to acquire all vedic rituals prescribed for complete development of an individual.

### **Aims of education:---**

- Achieve knowledge about the Brahman the supreme, the ultimate reality.
- Develop character and personality.
- All round development of an individual.
- Bring in spiritual enlightenment.
- Acquaint with the culture, tradition and values.
- Understand real self.
- Liberate the self from bondage.

### **Curriculum:--**

- The students are taught both paravidya and aparavidya. Paravidya is relation between God and self. Aparavidya includes scriptures like veda, vedangas. rituals, astronomy, history, puranas, ethics, military science and so on.

### **Methods:--**

- Discussion is the popular method.
- Debates or vada.
- Sravana.
- Manana.
- Nididya.
- Intuition / revelation.
- Mostly individualistic methods were used.

### **Teacher:--**

- Guru is the supreme and he used to provide knowledge.
- Who used to be Brahma, Vishnu, Maheshwara, Parabrahman, mother, father and everything for the child.
- Teacher is an ideal model before the child.
- He is everything for the child.
- He always encourages the child to attain the true knowledge.
- Trains with absolute self-discipline.
- Has total control on the disciple and used to be observant.
- He used to teach truly all that is known to his disciple.
- He used to maintain transparency and never used to conceal anything.

### **Student:--**

- Student is expected to abide by Brahmacharya.
- He used to go for alms and provide sacred fire.
- He used to serve the Guru in all his household works like a family member.
- Devotion to Guru.
- He used to go to study only after the work.
- He used to develop—
  - 1) self-restraint
  - 2) self-denying.
  - 3) patient, tolerant.
  - 4) Self-discipline.

