

The Science of Upanishads – Part 30: Why Did God (Brahman) Create This Universe? Is He Too Lonely and Thus Needs Company? Would Moksha (Liberation) Ever Be Needed If There Were No Births, No Sufferings, No Deaths, Nor Reincarnation? Why Would an Ever-Loving God Put All Living Beings of His Own Creation Through Countless Ailments and Agonies?

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Upanishads have the answers to each of the above questions that are thought-provoking, logical and common. **The short answer is that Brahman is not responsible for the births, deaths, reincarnations or sufferings of either humans or any other living beings!** As per Upanishads, these things do not have any real existence, instead, they are part of the illusion associated with the Brahman, generally referred to as **Maya** (see below). As discussed earlier repeatedly, the Brahman is the Ultimate Reality of this Universe, and is the **only one who has neither the beginning (birth) nor the end (death)**, and has no form nor characteristics. He is **the eternal Truth, Conscience, and Bliss (Sachhidananda)**. The Advait Philosophy presented in many Upanishads is that the individual Atman and the universal Brahman are made of the exact same material. They differ only in quantity but not quality. So, when a person achieves Moksha or liberation, Atman returns to Brahman, to the source, like a drop of water returning to the ocean. **Therefore, the main question that needs to be addressed in order to provide answers to the above title questions is “how did the Atman separate from the Brahman and covered itself with various bodies of living beings, including but not limited to, those of human beings?”**

Before addressing the issue of separation of Atman from Brahman, it is necessary to explain what Maya is. **Maya** means an illusion that has no real existence but it is available only for viewing experience. **It is like a mirage in the desert, which gives the false impression of water being in there but there is actually no water at all! It is only sand, which is real. Just the same way, Maya is part of the Brahman, but has no real existence. Therefore, while ordinary people confuse Maya as something with real existence, the accomplished Yogis who were able to attain Moksha would not even see Maya at all, but instead they only see the Brahman!** Just like the mirage water, **Maya gives a false impression of glowing with numerous little sparks of Atman emanating from Brahman.** Furthermore, because of their infinitesimally small size, these sparks appear to be extinguished and covered with ashes as they fall on the ground. The appearance of each spark would depend upon its size, shape, as well as how much ash it is covered with. **In this example, sparks are the little, individual Atmans of animals, plants, microscopic organisms or any other living entities, and the ashes are the bodies of those living entities.** Therefore, just as one needs to remove the covered ashes to see the real sparks beneath it, one needs to uncover the body to see the Atman within and reunite it with the Brahman, which the accomplished yogis do. In short, all the human sufferings, births, and deaths are simply an illusion or Maya, taken as real by ignorance. **The recognition of Atman as the only real thing in one’s body and as part of the universal Brahman, through knowledge and Self realization via Jnana, Karma, or Bhkti yoga path, would lead one to Moksha (liberation) and invalidate all of the above questions contained in the title.**

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