

Vedanta Darshanam

Salutations to all.

We are into yet another month. As we approach the peak of summer and the slow start of raining season, it is important to bring our focus back on to the ultimate goal of life. Without this goal of life, everything will be futile (and useless). The goal of life isn't to just eat, drink and sleep in one birth and continue the same in the next births as well. The goal of life is to get rid of all sorrows through realization of one's very nature of non-dual reality of Brahman. Realization is only possible through the scriptures as scriptures are the only source of Brahman. The system of Vedanta thus has to be properly learnt and implemented by ardent sadhakas. Then alone the ultimate goal of life will be fulfilled.

Today we all are in a very busy world filled with activities of all sorts. Everybody is busy in their own micro world. There is nothing wrong in getting oneself busy with one's own world but if this is through forgetting the ultimate goal of life, then what will be experienced is sorrow and sorrow alone in one or the other form. Though worldly achievements might be achieved and one may attain the peaks of life, still there will be no contentment at all. Without contentment or peace or happiness, life will always be filled with a void (even though sorrows may not be there).

Once a person starts learning the system of Vedanta, he will find that it is the easiest to implement in day-to-day life. Rather than changing the external world, Vedanta just changes our perspective of the world (making us realize that the world is temporary and sorrowful and that one should constantly live with this knowledge of the world).

Once a person starts implementing Vedanta, bliss will slowly pervade the person's very existence. Thus through the rising of the Sun of the Self (as explained in Vedanta), the rain of bliss will soon follow it. Since we are in the month of May where the Sun is at its peak and slowly transition to rain starts, therefore we should strive to use this time to progress towards the goal of moksha through learning of Vedanta.

More and more Vedanta we learn, lesser and lesser our problems will become (we will not be affected by any problem at all). Eventually thus we will be able to ever rejoice in bliss amidst all problems of life. Thus our life will be fulfilled here and now itself.

May we all strive to learn and implement Vedanta so that through the rising of the Sun of the Self and the showering of bliss we will be able to get rid of all sorrows and will be able to ever rejoice in bliss here and now itself.

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Aukramaanika

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Upanishad Vivaranam

Mundaka Upanishad – 1-1-8

तपसा चीयते ब्रह्म ततोऽन्नमभिजायते ।

अन्नात् प्राणो मनः सत्यं लोकाः कर्मसु चामृतम् ॥८॥

tapasā ciyate brahma tato'nnamabhijāyate।

annāt prāṇo manaḥ satyaṁ lokāḥ karmasu cāmṛtam॥8॥

Brahman is nourished by austerity; from it is produced prakriti or primal material; from Prakriti, Prana is created; from Prana the mind is created; from mind, the elements (pancha bhootas); from the elements, the worlds; from worlds, works or actions and from actions, their results.

Brahman – non-dual reality

Why is it that focus falls on the non-dual reality of Brahman at all times?

This is because there is nothing apart from Brahman existing here. Though the world of duality appears as very real, still it is just an illusion alone because of being temporary in nature (constantly changing in nature). Those who seek refuge in the ever-changing world will experience only sorrow. Hence the scriptures again and again talk about renunciation of the world. This renunciation is not wearing the ochre robe or meditating in a cave but renunciation of the reality status of the world. Majority of people always consider the world of duality as being very real. This thought in turn makes them depend on the world most of the times. At times when the world fails to provide happiness and support, such people depend on Ishwara with temporary dispassion. This dispassion vanishes the moment they get happiness and support from something else in the world. Such people foolishly experience only sorrow because even the temporary happiness of the world is sorrowful in nature (leads to sorrow before, while and after experiencing them). Hence wise people don't depend on the world.

If the ever-changing world appears as existing, it does require a changeless eternal substratum. This substratum is the cause of the world – that from which the world has come, that in which the world exists and that unto which the world merges after its destruction. This cause-substratum is termed in the scriptures as Brahman and is of the nature of Existence, Consciousness and Bliss. Brahman is one without a second – devoid of all dualities.

Anytime our focus shifts from the reality of Brahman, we will experience only sorrow as then we focus on the illusory world. Any illusion only leads to sorrow – taking a simple example, the moment we fail to apprehend the rope as rope, we will apprehend it as a snake and thereby we will experience sorrow alone. Therefore at all times our focus should be on the non-dual reality of Brahman alone.

Hence the great master of Prof. Balakrishnan Nair would always talk about Brahman alone. Irrespective of whether he is giving discourse on the gita or the Upanishads or Bhagavatham or Vaasishtam, he will always talk about Brahman and Brahman alone. Though this conviction that Brahman alone exists at all times is gained only after learning the scriptures for a period of time and spiritual practices are also performed, it definitely doesn't do any harm to remember initially itself the ultimate truth that one Brahman alone exists. A sadhaka who remembers that Brahman alone exists will be able to quickly progress, through the Lord's grace, towards the goal of moksha.

Such a sadhaka might or might not learn the scriptures but definitely will be progressing quickly towards the goal of moksha (as the direct way to moksha is constant contemplation of the non-dual reality of Brahman as pervading the entire world).

Though ultimate truth is that Brahman alone exists, still the world has to be explained. That which is an illusion also has to be explained. Without explanation of the illusion, sadhakas will not be able to get rid of the sorrow caused by the illusion – though they may know that it is an illusion (as they may not gain conviction on this truth that the world is an illusion and Brahman alone is real). Since the illusion of world is experienced by all, therefore it has to be explained sufficiently (along with its creation) for initial sadhakas to gain conviction in the scriptures and the truth of the scriptures that Brahman is the cause of the world.

It is through explanation of the world that one has to be taken to the cause of Brahman; though at that time, the world is completely negated as being just an illusion in Brahman, still initially it is essential to explain the world (as explained earlier, in order to gain conviction for initial sadhakas). Therefore we find the Upanishad providing a brief creation theory in this sloka (as to how the world is created from Brahman).

Brahman and tapas

Though the word of tapas is interpreted as austerity, it also means strong practice or ways of burning oneself (or taking oneself to the peak). Brahman through austerities leads to Prakriti or primal material. Symbolically we can say that anything that is required in life requires austerities or practices that are followed strictly. Without any effort (austerities), nothing can be achieved in life.

If Brahman did tapas and thereby Prakriti was created, what is the motive for tapas? Without any desire there is nothing that is performed by anyone at all. If Brahman is filled with desire to create, then that would mean that Brahman is imperfect (as only imperfection leads to desiring for perfection which in turn leads to all other desires). Such a Brahman wouldn't be non-dual as well as eternal.

Vedanta answers this by saying that really speaking there is no Prakriti created. Ultimately only Brahman exists and no world can ever be created from Brahman (as Brahman itself is changeless and nothing apart from Brahman exists for Brahman to create the world from). But empirically the world exists and therefore a genesis of creation is provided which is apt and valid only from empirical perspective. The moment a person realizes that ultimately Brahman alone exists, that very moment the world and its creation ceases to exist (or have any reality). This is similar to a dream world. The dream world exists when we are dreaming. For a dreaming person, it has to be answered as to how dream world is created. The dream world is created in the mind through thoughts and vasanas of things that have been thought about previously in the mind. This creation genesis is valid only considering dream to be existing. The moment a person wakes up from dream, there never was any dream world and from this perspective, there is no creation of dream world at all. Thus ultimately no dream world exists but while experiencing it, it has to be explained – both are not contrary or contradicting in nature; just that empirical vanishes at the ultimate perspective. Similar is the case with the waking world that we currently perceive. It appears as existing and therefore there is a creation genesis that is explained in the shastras. But ultimately there is no world at all therefore no harm is done to Brahman at all.

Brahman thinking to create and thereby through austerities leading to creation is what is called as Maya, the power of Brahman. This power cannot really be explained as it is only known through its effect of the world. This power isn't an independent power but dependent on Brahman at all times. But this power doesn't affect Brahman at all as it is only valid empirically; ultimately it is not at all there even in Brahman.

While learning creation theories, a sadhaka should always remember that ultimately Brahman alone exists and therefore there is no creation whatsoever but empirically the world exists and therefore creation theories are valid empirically. Only initial sadhakas require explanation of the creation process as the advanced sadhakas know that there is no world at all but Brahman alone exists (the Upanishad itself will proclaim that Brahman alone exists at the end).

As we have seen, Brahman's tapas leads to Prakriti or the primal material from which the entire world is created. Prakriti leads to Prana which in turn leads to mind which in turn leads to various elements (or pancha bhootas).

Creation – macro and micro

Micro is just considering an individual whereas macro is considering the entire world or creation as a whole. It goes without saying that whatever is present in the macro is also present in the micro. The entire world appears mainly of earthly matter whereas it consists mainly of watery matter – the same applies to the human body which appears of earthly matter but internally consists mainly of water. The entire world has the lights of Sun and Moon whereas we have the two eyes. Thus everything present in the macro can be found in the micro as well.

Here creation is explained from macro perspective alone. Primal material first creates prana or vital force. We all know very well that without vital force, there is no life at all possible (empirically of course). The prana that is the total of all pranas and of the entire world is called mahat tattva, vishwa manas, mukhya prana and hiranyagarbha. This mukhya prana or main vital-force creates mind – the mind can really be called as part of the mukhya prana (or associated with the mukhya prana). Mukhya prana is also called as Brahma, the creator. It is from Brahma that the entire world comes into existence.

When we analyze creation individually we find that everything first starts with Consciousness or the Self or Brahman. Without Consciousness, absolutely nothing is possible. This Consciousness when gets into tapas or austerity desiring for perfection, then individuality is created. This desiring for perfection is due to avidyaa or ignorance – not knowing one's own very nature of Brahman. As to how this ignorance came into existence, from where it came to existence etc. cannot really be answered as ignorance isn't ultimately real. It just appears as real empirically and for a person who experiences ignorance, effort

has to be put to get rid of ignorance through knowledge of Brahman (as found in the scriptures). Consciousness as a result of tapas creates primal material or the source of all creation. From there comes the prana and the mind – we can say that both of these together make up the individuality or ego or jeeva. It should be remembered that without Consciousness, none of these have any existence at any point of time. Remove Consciousness and all of these will just cease to exist.

Till mind, everything is in subtle state. Subtle state can never remain in the same state; it has to become gross. Thoughts are subtle and so are desires; both of them can never remain in the subtle state. Eventually either they are removed or destroyed in the mind or they are converted into actions in the gross state. But for actions to be performed, the gross objects are essential or required. Thus from the mind comes the five elements of ether, fire, air, water and earth.

As Vedanta says, no element is just filled with itself. All elements contain a part of other elements. Thus even a stone has some amount of water in it. The five elements initially undergo a process called panchikarana. In this process, they split into two and one half again gets split into four. Then the $1/4^{\text{th}}$ part of one half is married or merged to other elements. Thus each element consists of itself $1/2$ and $1/8^{\text{th}}$ portion as all other elements. Taking an example, earth element consists of $1/2$ earth and $1/8^{\text{th}}$ of all other elements of ether, fire, air and water. Similar with other elements also.

From these elements (that have parts of other elements) is created the entire worlds. The three main worlds are that of bhoo or earth, bhuva or land of forefathers and suva or the land of heaven or gods. There are in total 14 lokas, 7 upper lokas and 7 lower lokas. We can say that earth is the middle loka and there are 6 higher lokas and 7 lower lokas with respect to earth.

Without worlds, elements would remain as element. World means elements get into different names and forms or objects. Thus lot of variety is found in any particular world. Taking the example of earth we have so many different items like wood, stone, trees, mountains, rivers etc. World is the source of enjoyment for people of the world. Thus it is said that for enjoyment of individuals, this world is created.

We should always remember that ultimately there is no world at all – for those who enjoy the world, there will be birth and death in the various worlds. They will be constantly enjoying alone in the various worlds. This enjoyment is seed of sorrow alone as the worlds are constantly changing (that which is created will undergo change and ultimately die). Therefore wise people remembering always that the world is seed of sorrow will seek the cause-substratum of the world as Brahman.

It isn't enough to just create the worlds, it is essential to sustain the world. What sustains the world? The world is sustained by actions or activities. Thus the Lord says in Gita that the entire world is a karma bhoomi (or land of actions) and that not even for a moment a person can remain without performing actions or activities in the world. Actions lead to results or fruits of actions. Fruits lead to more actions and they in turn lead to more fruits. Thus the never-ending chain of action-fruits (action-reaction) sustains the world continuously.

The world exists or remains in existence until pralaya or destruction (temporary destruction of the world). Then again creation starts leading to pralaya. This continues or goes on without any end at all. The world constantly only leads to sorrow at all times, also because actions can have diverse or contrary results. There is no guarantee that the same action performed twice will lead to the same result. Instead it might lead to different result each time it is performed. Therefore happiness even if achieved through action will be temporary and is equivalent to sorrow alone.

But in order to survive in the world, a person has to perform actions continuously. Even as one has to earn continuously in the world in order to get food to eat, similarly in order to survive in the world, one has to perform actions continuously.

Actions never end and leads to the chain of birth and death. When the physical body that performs actions is incapable of performing actions, then the next birth is taken up (another physical body). Until this physical body is capable of performing actions, the next birth is continued. And then again another birth is taken up. Thus continues the never-ending chain of birth and death.

If birth and death never ends, then how can we overcome it and get rid of sorrows completely?

Sorrows are removed only through knowledge – the knowledge that Brahman alone exists as my very nature of pure Consciousness. The entire world that appears as real isn't real but temporarily existing alone. Even as the dream world appears real during dream but is just an illusion in the dreamer, similarly this entire waking world is just an illusion in the non-dual reality of Brahman. Through knowledge of this truth, a person gets rid of birth and death and all sorrows – as all of them are just illusions alone.

Remembering the truth that Brahman alone exists, a jnaani performs actions in the world like an ignorant person but he doesn't get affected by actions as he knows that everything is just an illusion in Brahman. Thus externally living like a worldly person, the jnaani ever rejoices in bliss internally.

Sadhakas should always remember that the entire world is just an illusion in Brahman. Creation thus doesn't even happen – everything is just an illusion in Brahman. Creation theories and explanations are only for initial sadhakas – since the entire world has come from Brahman and exists in Brahman, therefore it goes without saying that nothing but Brahman alone exists. A wise person thus will be able to remember the theory that there is no creation at all. Everything appears to be created but absolutely nothing is created.

Ignorance of the truth that Brahman alone exists makes a person think that creation is real and therefore requires explanation of creation (how creation happened etc.). A sadhaka with a little bit of intellect will easily be able to negate all creation theories and assert in the mind that one Brahman alone exists. Initial sadhakas also need not worry as later scriptures themselves will tell very clearly (beyond doubt) that one Brahman alone exists and this entire world is nothing but an illusion in Brahman.

Sadhakas who want to quickly progress towards the goal of moksha should strive to always remember that the non-dual reality of Brahman (as one's very nature of Consciousness) alone exists at all times. This remembrance at all times will make them overcome the entire world itself very easily. The truth about the temporary-sorrowful nature of world and the eternal state of the non-dual reality of Brahman is true dispassion. Such dispassion is essential in order to progress in the spiritual path towards the goal of moksha.

Rather than merely performing actions desiring something or the other in the world, sadhakas should perform actions as an offering unto Brahman or Ishwara and without

craving for any fruits. This will slowly purify the mind. Such a mind will thereby find itself easily focusing on the non-dual reality of Brahman through learning of the scriptures. Once the scriptural truth becomes clear in the mind, it will be very easily implemented in day-to-day life. Implementation of Vedanta (through remembrance that one Brahman alone exists) is moksha and will make the sadhaka get rid of all sorrows and ever rejoice in bliss here and now itself.

Though appearing very tough to learn and implement, Vedanta is very simple indeed. As Prof. Balakrishnan Nair used to say, what is required for a sadhaka is just the desire for moksha (to get rid of all sorrows and ever rejoice in bliss). If this desire is there, then such a sadhaka will very soon be able to achieve the goal of moksha here and now itself. Unlike all other worldly goals, this doesn't require any money or time or even effort – even as a lover is able to remember his love at all times in the mind, similarly a sadhaka who remembers Brahman to the non-dual blissful reality will be able to easily remember Brahman at all times (through devotion or love unto Brahman). Thus instead of saying that Vedanta is very tough to learn and implement, sadhakas should strive to learn and implement Vedanta slowly. Then at least by the end of this birth, they will be able to put an end to all sorrows and will be able to ever rejoice in bliss here and now itself (through going beyond the chain of birth and death).

May we all strive to remember that the entire world is just an appearance in Brahman and Brahman alone exists so that we will be able to get rid of all sorrows and will be able to ever rejoice in bliss here and now itself.

Gitaamritham

Bhakti Yoga

We saw in the 8th sloka the Lord summarizing devotion as the direct way to moksha. This devotion is fixing the Lord in the mind and intellect. Fixing the Lord in one's mind means constantly contemplating on the Lord and fixing the Lord in one's intellect means the assertion or knowledge that Lord alone exists as the non-dual substratum of the illusory world of names and forms. A person whose mind and intellect are focused on the Lord at all times will attain the Lord very soon itself. Realization of one's very nature of Lord is moksha and this is the ultimate goal that everybody is seeking in the world. This will fulfill our lives, get rid of all sorrows and will make us ever rejoice in bliss.

As simple as it seems to fix the mind and intellect on the Lord, it is often very tough to concentrate on the Lord amidst the world and worldly activities. Therefore the compassionate Lord provides easier ways to implement remembrance of Ishwara in our mind at all times in the next three slokas.

Sloka 9, 10, 11 – Alternatives to remember the Lord at all times

अथ चित्तं समाधातुं न शक्नोषि मयि स्थिरम् ।

अभ्यासयोगेन ततो मामिच्छाप्तुं धनञ्जय ॥९॥

atha cittam samādhātuṁ na śaknoṣi mayi sthiram |
abhyāsayogena tato māmicchāptuṁ dhanañjaya ||9||

9. Thus to fix the mind unto me, if you are not able to steadily, then through the yoga of practice, try to attain me O great among archers.

अभ्यासेऽप्यसमर्थोऽसि मत्कर्मपरमो भव ।

मदर्थमपि कर्माणि कुर्वन्सिद्धिमवाप्यसि ॥१०॥

abhyāse'pyasamartho'si matkarmaparamo bhava |
madarthamapi karmāṇi kurvansiddhimavāpyasi ||10||

10. If even practice you are not able to do, then perform activities which are focused on me. Through performance of such activities, you will attain the state of perfection.

अथतदप्यशक्तोऽसि कर्तुं मद्योगमाश्रितः ।

सर्वकर्मफलत्यागं ततः कुरु यतात्मवान् ॥११॥

athatadapyaśakto'si kartuṁ madyogamāśritaḥ।
sarvakarmaphalatyāgaṁ tataḥ kuru yatātmavān||11||

11. If you are not even able to perform actions that are focused on me, then try to perform all actions with renunciation of the fruits of actions.

Devotion – very simple yet very tough

Anything in the world is both simple and tough or complex as well. That which we don't know really is very tough or complex and that which we know is very simple indeed. When we start learning to drive a car, we find that it is very tough to control the steering as well as drive itself. But once we master the art of driving then it becomes very easy and simple. Thus knowledge and practice makes anything very simple and easy to implement. But until knowledge is perfect, practice is essential.

Though moksha is as simple as remembering that the non-dual reality of Lord alone exists here, it is very tough indeed to implement. Majority of people in the world don't have the strong conviction of knowledge that the world is temporary and sorrowful and the Lord alone is real and blissful. Until this knowledge is very strong, a person will be struggling to avoid the world amidst seeking the Lord constantly.

Thus even those who renounce the world and join ashrams find it very tough indeed to remember the Lord as passions with respect to the world constantly pulls them away from the Lord. Though they might remember vaguely that the world is temporary-sorrowful and therefore shouldn't be sought out, still the passion of the world is strong enough to pull them into it more and more. Until the conviction grows that the world is temporary and sorrowful, a person will be constantly deluded by the world.

Gaining conviction or knowledge is like knowing that the cup of tea is filled with poison as a lizard fell in it. This conviction if strong will make us not drink tea. But the world isn't a cup of tea and passions of the world are much stronger and powerful. Hence Sankara says in Maya Panchakam that Maya deludes even the learned pundit or scholar who is able to critically analyze scriptures and even has written many texts on the subject – even such a scholar is very easily deluded into the notions of my wife, my children, my wealth etc.

Though true knowledge always has conviction, such knowledge is very tough to attain. Sadhakas therefore should strive to develop devotion unto the Lord along with knowledge. Prayers should be unto Ishwara that the passions of the world don't affect us. Such strong prayers will give us strength internally and externally Maya also will not affect us much (as the Lord is the controller of Maya – even as a magician who is friend of ours will not delude us with his magic, similar Maya will not delude us if we are devotees of Ishwara).

Vedanta is very simple in theory but very tough to implement. Though the Lord says that it is very simple to implement, taking into consideration the vast majority of people who are always focused on the external world it is very tough indeed to implement Vedanta.

Who can provide us with alternatives to contemplation of Ishwara at all times than Ishwara himself? Therefore the Lord provides us three alternatives that will slowly strengthen us and make us implement devotion (contemplation of Ishwara) easily. Sadhakas who find it tough to implement devotion should follow these alternatives (one after the other – in case the first alternative doesn't work out).

The three alternatives that the Lord provides are with gradation. If the first works, then there is no need of following the rest two. But if the first doesn't work then one should try to implement second. If second also doesn't work then one should try to implement the third. If third also doesn't work out, then it means that such a sadhaka has no desire for liberation and nothing, absolutely nothing, will work for the sadhaka (to implement devotion). Such sadhaka should strive to gain desire for liberation so that at least the third alternative works out.

First alternative - practice

As the age-old saying goes, practice makes man perfect. Rome wasn't built in a day – nothing can happen quickly. We have added vasanas since many births and therefore it is very tough to get rid of all them at once. It will take time to get rid of vasanas. What is required is not to get dejected that I am not able to remember the Lord but one should put effort to remember the Lord – practice is essential. Practice means constantly trying to remember the Lord and never giving it up. When the Lord is forgotten, then the Lord should be remembered when one remembers that the Lord was forgotten. Thus forgetting and remembering – and forgetting and remembering – slowly one will eventually be able to remember the Lord at all times.

How long does one have to practice remembrance of the Lord?

As long as it takes to remember the Lord effortlessly, so long one has to practice remembrance of the Lord. When a child starts to walk, it will fall down again and again. It keeps on trying to walk until it is able to walk easily. This practice until perfection is something that we find implemented in all walks of life. Very few are able to get jobs in campus interviews itself – others attend many interviews until they get a job. Similarly in order to get a partner for marriage, one keeps on searching for partners until a suitable partner is achieved. Thus practice has to be continued until remembrance of Lord becomes natural.

The stronger the vasanas of a person, the longer practice is required to remember the Lord. The Lord has to come into our heart – the room of heart. But this room is already filled with items (thoughts about the world). As much as the room is filled, the longer it will take to remove them and bring in the Lord. Some people might have a room less filled than others. There shouldn't be any comparison in the spiritual path.

The entire world today is encouraging only comparisons at all levels. Just by terming comparisons as constructive doesn't make it good. In ancient times, there were no comparisons. Instead each and every person would be considerate of others and therefore all used to live blissfully. Today comparison or competition is causing rivalry even in children – though rivalry might appear to be good initially, it will only lead to sorrow or harm in the long run. Therefore in spirituality a sadhaka shouldn't compare himself with anybody else. As long as it takes one to remember the Lord in the mind at all times, so long practice has to be continued without any break.

Care should be taken to ensure that practice isn't broken intermittently. Taking a simple example, let's say that we start jogging 15 minutes a day. But after jogging for 2-3 months then we stop it for a couple of weeks. Then when we again start jogging we will find it tough – it wouldn't be like starting all over again but it would be like trying to catch up with where we were before. Hence there shouldn't any break in practice (in any field). If we are going through a busy phase of our life, still we should try to keep up the practice of remembering the Lord (at least few times a day – maybe just before partaking food). Also once there is a break in practice, then routine is spoiled and therefore laziness will creep in. Thereby it will not let us get back into the routine of practice.

Therefore sadhakas should try to implement practice of remembrance of Ishwara as much as possible (and without any break).

For some people, even practice will not help. They try to put effort into remembrance of Ishwara but it still doesn't work out. Practicing for hours, they will be able to remember Ishwara for few minutes. Thus they need to follow the second alternative.

Second alternative – do actions with Ishwara in it (predominantly)

As Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa used to say, devotion towards Ishwara is similar to love of a lover towards his love. How does the lover try to remember his love at all times? He strives initially to remember but somehow if he isn't able to remember, then he performs activities which automatically brings in the thought of his lover. Thus he takes a stroll to the park where he spends time with his lover, he listens to the song that he used to listen with his lover, he eats the food that his lover likes the most etc. Thus through performing activities which automatically are filled with thoughts about his lover, he remembers his lover. In the same way, a sadhaka has to perform activities in which remembrance of Ishwara is automatically present.

Those activities which have Ishwara in them (or are focused on Ishwara) will automatically make us remember Ishwara. Though many people get into a mechanical way of performing activities which automatically make us remember Ishwara, for those who are struggling to remember Ishwara such actions will not be mechanical; instead such actions are practices to remember Ishwara at all times.

Sanaatana Dharma and the scriptures knew that it isn't very easy to remember the Lord at all times in our mind. Hence from childhood we are born with performance of activities that are focused on Ishwara. Such activities thereby makes us automatically remember Ishwara.

What are the activities that make us remember Ishwara automatically?

There are many activities but we can say that this includes japa, dhyana, pooja, going to the temple etc. Though such activities fall under the category of religious, they become spiritual the moment focus is on Ishwara. When a person just goes to the temple in order to fulfill his desires, it is a religious activity. But when a person goes the temple with the desire

to remember Ishwara, then it is a spiritual activity – such spiritual activity will soon take the person towards the goal of moksha (as it is implementation of devotion).

Since the list of activities wherein focus is on Ishwara a lot, therefore sadhakas should choose a few of these and try to regularly implement them in day-to-day life. It is tough to find out which one of these to implement. If possible one should approach a sadguru and perform activities that the sadguru instructs us (as the sadguru alone will know our state of mind and as to what sadhanas are good for us to implement). But if sadguru is not available, we can try performing each of these sadhanas one by one. Through trying to implement, we will find out slowly as to what is appealing to our mind, what works out and what doesn't work out. Of course, only ardent sadhakas who have some purity of mind will be able to find out as to what sadhanas work out for them.

If none of these work, then we should just follow the basic sadhanas that are prescribed by great masters. Sankara thus says that one should daily chant the gita and sahasranama, whether it be lalita sahasranama or Vishnu sahasranama or any other sahasranama of our beloved deity; one should regularly practice dhyana or meditation on our beloved deity or on nirguna Brahman; one should spend time in the presence of masters or in the presence of sadhakas who discuss about Ishwara alone (satsanga); one should give money or anything else that is required by people who genuinely need it (daana).

These sadhanas, as mentioned by Sankara, aren't very tough to implement. If we find it attractive then we can try to listen to the stories of the lord, sing the glories of the lord, give speeches about the lord, write about the lord etc. Any activity which is directed towards the Lord (or the Lord is focus point of the activity) is to be practiced by sadhakas who wish to ultimately remember the Lord in their minds at all times.

Though it is very easy to perform activities focusing on the Lord, many will still find it very tough. For example, a lot of people work in the IT (Information Technology) field where office work itself is around 10 hours daily. Therefore they will not find any time for activities that focus on the Lord (though they want to perform such activities). Since they are focused on their work alone, therefore practice of remembrance of the Lord also doesn't work out. Therefore the Lord provides the third alternative for them.

Third alternative – renouncing the fruits of actions

Actions generally bind us to its fruits. Therefore as Vidyaranya says, a person performs actions for enjoyment and enjoys to perform actions – this chain of actions and enjoyments goes on without any end.

But since action is just an illusion in Ishwara therefore there should be a way out of actions, through actions itself. This way out is renunciation of the fruits of actions.

Actions bind us only because we seek the fruit of actions. Seeking the fruit we constantly struggle in pain or suffering alone as mostly our expectations aren't met. Even when expectations are met, they are so short-lived that soon they will lead us to sorrow alone. Therefore the Lord says in the 2nd chapter that one should perform actions and never expect the fruits of actions (which are not in our hand).

Since each and every person in the world is forced to perform actions every minute (nobody can remain without performing actions, even for a moment) therefore actions itself can be used as a sadhana that takes us to devotion and moksha.

How does action become a sadhana for devotion?

As Ramana Maharshi says in Upadesa Saram, that action which is offered unto Ishwara and performed without desiring for its fruits, purifies the mind and leads to moksha.

The Lord here just says renunciation of the fruits of actions – this means just not desiring for the fruits of actions or being content with whatever is the fruit of actions. This is only possible when either we remember that I am not the doer but the witness Self-Lord or through offering the action unto the Lord. Since this alternative is only for those who aren't able to remember the Lord at all times in their mind, therefore there is no scope of the knowledge that I am not the doer but the witness Self-Lord. Hence offering actions unto the Lord is required in order to renounce the fruits of actions.

Many fear that even offering actions unto the Lord can be mechanical and therefore there will be no thrill or joy in it. This is wrong – a person who desires to realize the Lord (is devoted to the Lord) will always joy in offering everything unto the Lord. A lover finds it joy to perform anything and everything for his lover, irrespective of whether the action will cause harm or pain to himself. Similarly a sadhaka who loves the Lord will only find joy in offering all actions unto Ishwara.

Though offering actions unto the Lord isn't very easily possible, it is definitely possible through practice. Slowly if we start offering one or two actions a day unto Ishwara, in a few months we will be able to offer all actions unto the Lord. When all actions are performed unto the Lord, then there is no desire for the fruits thereof. All fruits are completely renounced and the sadhaka will thus be able to ever remain unaffected by the fruits, whether they are good or bad.

As AMMA says, an action offered unto Ishwara means that the results are Ishwara's prasada. Therefore if good results happen, then it should be considered as Ishwara's blessing and if bad results happen then it should be considered as Ishwara's will – either way, everything is Ishwara's prasada alone.

Any prasada that we get from the temple brings joy alone to us – this joy isn't temporary happiness but that which remains always. Thus the offering of all actions will lead to the prasada of eternal bliss at all times.

Through performing our normal activities itself therefore we will be able to slowly progress towards the goal of moksha. Since all activities are offered unto the Lord therefore we will remember the Lord. Since results are not expected and all are considered as Lord's bliss, therefore they will not cause any sorrow in us. The ultimate goal of life is to get rid of all sorrows and ever rejoice in bliss. This rejoicing in bliss is directly achieved through offering of all actions unto the Lord (at all times).

It shouldn't be thought that actions lead to moksha – actions can never lead to moksha as moksha is realization of the truth that the Lord alone exists here. When a person offers all actions unto Ishwara, then the action (because of lack of association with the action and desire for the fruit thereof) purifies the mind and thereby remembrance of the Lord as the non-dual reality behind the world will lead to moksha. Thus here too moksha is achieved through remembrance of the Lord and not through action.

Since we are constantly involved in performing actions of one kind or the other, therefore offering of actions unto the Lord (along with renunciation of the results of actions) is the simplest way to remember the Lord at all times (and attain moksha).

If this is the simplest way, then why didn't the Lord mention this initially?

Because ultimately only the Lord exists – there is no action at all. A true devotee will directly focus on the Lord and such a devotee doesn't need the simplest way of remembering the Lord through actions (which is simple only for majority of people in the world). A true lover will directly remember his love instead of trying to remember his love through activities of his love. Similarly a true bhakta remembers the Lord at all times directly in the mind.

But majority of people cannot remember the Lord directly and therefore they have to remember the Lord through the various alternatives and the third alternative of offering all actions unto the Lord is simplest for all people in the world. Therefore all sadhakas should strive to remember the Lord through offering of all activities unto the Lord.

What about bad activities? Should they also be offered unto the Lord?

Yes, bad activities also have to be offered unto the Lord. All actions, irrespective of whatever they are, should be offered unto the Lord. Sankara says in many of his works as to how we can offer all actions unto the Lord – walking is pradakshina, eating is offering unto the lord, sleeping is prostration etc. – we don't have to exactly follow the thought-process put forth by Sankara. We just have to offer all actions unto the Lord.

Narada says in Bhakti Sutras that both desire and aversion also have to offered unto the Lord – directed towards the Lord. Thus great people like Kamsa were able to realize the Lord through vidvesha or aversion unto the Lord – as they were constantly remembering the Lord through this emotion of aversion. It doesn't matter how the Lord is remembered, it just matters as to whether the Lord is remembered or not.

When we are able to offer all actions unto the Lord, slowly and eventually our minds will be abiding in the Lord. Through a mind that is fixed unto the Lord and the intellect remembering the Lord alone to be real, a sadhaka will very soon be able to get rid of sorrows and ever rejoice in the state of moksha.

Compassionate Lord

Sadhakas should always remember as to how compassionate the Lord and Guru is. The Lord doesn't benefit from our worshipping the Lord or remembering the Lord but still the Lord tries to help us in whatever way possible. This is contrary to the world today where

everybody is trying to misuse others for one's own benefit. Even if some small help is given to others, it will be expected back in double or triple. Even though who help the world through social service claim to be helping the world – thus they are seeking name and fame in return for their help. This is contrary to the Lord who doesn't want anything from us. Irrespective of whether we respect the Lord or thank the Lord, the Lord also ever remains unaffected and blissful. The Lord also could be like jnanis, ever the witness of the entire world – this would mean that the Lord will not provide his help to the people of the world. But we find that the Lord ever tries to help the people of the world – remaining a witness, the Lord helps out the entire world.

We can remember as to how Jesus Christ helped the entire world though he didn't need anything at all from the world. The compassionate nature of the Lord is to be remembered as this will strengthen our devotion and thereby we will be able to remember the Lord more and more in our mind.

Remembrance of the Lord even through the alternatives will not work out unless we know the Lord to be non-dual reality behind the world or we know the Lord to be the utmost compassionate master of the world – who ever helps out the world in whatever way possible.

Though mere remembrance of the compassionate nature of the Lord will not make us seek moksha, still if we have desire for moksha then remembrance of this nature of the Lord will increase the strength of the desire and therefore we will be able to progress quickly toward the goal of moksha.

May we strive to remember the Lord at all times in the mind, if not directly then through the alternatives mentioned by the Lord, so that we will be able to get rid of all sorrows and will be able to ever rejoice in bliss in abundance in our very nature of non-dual blissful Lord here and now itself.

Prakarana Prakaashah

Dakshinamurthy Ashtakam - 7 – Changeless Self among all changes

बाल्यादिष्वपि जाग्रदादिषु तथा सर्वास्ववस्थास्वपि
 व्यावृत्तास्वनुवर्तमानमहमित्यन्तः स्फुरन्तं सदा ।
 स्वात्मानं प्रकटीकरोति भजतां यो भद्रया मुद्रया
 तस्मै श्रीगुरुमूर्तये नम इदं श्रीदक्षिणामूर्तये ॥७॥

bālyādiṣvapi jāgradādiṣu tathā sarvāsvavasthāsvapi
 vyāvṛttāsvanuvartamānamahamityantaḥ sphurantaṁ sadā |
 svātmanaṁ prakaṭīkaroti bhajatāṁ yo bhadrayā mudrayā
 tasmai śrīgurumūrtaye nama idaṁ śrīdakṣiṇāmurtaye ||7||

He who is ever pulsating without any changes in the ever changing states of waking, dream and sleep as well in the stages like childhood, youth etc.; and he who through good indications (hints) makes one intuitively experience the Self, unto such a Dakshinamurthy my prostrations.

Brahman (Atman) – the ultimate reality

It is very rare to find masters like Gaudapadacharya who are ever focused on the non-dual reality of Brahman. For them, even temporary existence of the world isn't there. For them, whatever exists at all times is the non-dual reality of Brahman alone. Hence Gaudapadacharya boldly says that there is no jeeva or individuality created and there is no possibility of individual being created as well. Acharya also says that the entire world is an illusion or maya (magical) – non-duality alone is ultimate.

Prof. Balakrishnan Nair was a master who would always remain focused on the non-dual reality of Brahman. Irrespective of whatever be the subject of discussion with him, he would always talk about Brahman. In all his discourses one could just find Brahman and Brahman alone. Irrespective of whether the discourse was on Bhagavatham or Vaasishta or Upanishads or Gita or any work of Sree Naaraayana Guru devan, the subject-matter was always Brahman alone.

He used to say in his own discourses that people used to ask him as to why always Consciousness, Consciousness, Consciousness. The reply used to be that there is nothing apart from Consciousness or Brahman here.

A sadhaka should always remember that apart from Brahman, nothing really exists here. Therefore focus should always be with respect to Brahman. It doesn't matter whether we are learning about creation or about the indriyas or about sadhana, all should be focused on Brahman and as they can lead to contemplation of Brahman (and strengthening contemplation of Brahman). Those who learn the entire scriptures but leave out the non-dual reality of Brahman will experience nothing but sorrow alone. Their life itself, thus, will be in vain.

The purpose of life isn't to just enjoy worldly pleasures and take birth over and over again. Purpose of life is to get rid of the chain of birth and death – it is to get rid of all sorrows and ever rejoice in bliss here and now itself. This is only possible through realization of Brahman and therefore focus should always be on the non-dual reality of Brahman.

How can we realize Brahman? How can we even know that something called Brahman exists?

This is being answered beautifully in this sloka by Sankara.

Since our focus is currently on the external world therefore it is from the world that one has to be taken to the non-dual reality of Brahman. The way to do this is through analysis of the nature of the world itself. Though scientists and many others claim to have known the world, their knowledge is not just limited but it is wrong itself – the first thing that strikes us about the world is that it is constantly changing. That which is constantly changing will lead to sorrow alone (as it undergoes birth and death). Therefore the nature of the world is temporary and sorrowful – without knowledge of this nature of the world, there is no knowledge of the world. And all other knowledge of the world will only lead to sorrow. But this knowledge about the world to be temporary and sorrowful will develop dispassion in our mind (regarding the world) – therefore we will longer seek the world; even as a person who knows that the coffee is poisoned by a lizard falling in it will not consume it, similarly a person who knows the world to be temporary and sorrowful will not depend on the world anymore.

As AMMA says, such a person though living in the world will constantly be aware of the nature of the world. This is similar to a bird sitting on the branch of a tree. The bird lives in the tree – it has its children in the branch, it eats its food, sleeps etc. on the branch itself but

it knows that when a strong wind blows the branch will not support it. Therefore it is always alert and ready to fly away when a strong wind blows. Similarly a person with dispassion towards the world will be living in the world but always alert, like a person driving on the road when it is raining or snowing heavily. Alertness and cautiousness leads to not too much dependency on the world.

But can we just live with the knowledge that the world is temporary and sorrowful?

No, as this will only make us aware of sorrows (and anticipate it constantly); it will not lead us to the state of eternal bliss. The ultimate goal of life is to get rid of all sorrows and ever rejoice in bliss. Thus just getting rid of sorrows through anticipating it isn't enough, one has to experience bliss as well. This is only possible through seeking that entity which is eternal (or never changes).

How can we find out that entity which is changeless or eternal?

Any change requires a changeless substratum. A variable requires a constant always for its existence. Thus the changing world requires a changeless substratum. This changeless substratum has to be eternal and therefore is of the nature of Existence, Consciousness and Bliss. This eternal changeless substratum of the world is termed in the scriptures as Brahman. Attaining Brahman will make us ever rejoice in bliss as Brahman is changeless and blissful in nature.

How can we attain Brahman?

There is no attaining of Brahman but figuratively, from our state of ignorance, Brahman is attained. Ultimately Brahman alone exists and therefore a person just realizes the changeless substratum of the entire world. This Brahman due to being of the nature of Consciousness is that which pulsates constantly inside us as I-exist, I-exist. Though the entire world can be negated or ignored, Consciousness can never be negated or ignored as it is our very nature.

How is the pulsating Consciousness Brahman?

Here Sankara beautifully says that amidst all changes that happen to an individual, this Consciousness alone remains unaffected.

Changeless Consciousness amidst all changes and differences

The Consciousness which pulsates inside as I-exist, I-exist is without any changes and differences. At all times it remains the same. If it is argued that I become sad and happy,

therefore undergoing changes; this I which changes is the Ego that identifies and associates with the body-mind-intellect. Even when we say I am sad and I am happy, this I remains ever the same, without getting affected by both sorrow and happiness (else the same I cannot be sad at one time and happy at another time). Thus "I" or Consciousness is ever changeless at all times.

We undergo various stages in life like infancy, childhood, youth, middle-age, old-age etc. Amidst all these changes, Consciousness ever remains the same. What happens is that upon this changeless I, the body is superimposed. Therefore the changes of the body are considered changes for myself. Thus the statements of "I am young, I will be old etc." Essentially a person is unaffected by all these various stages.

In a day itself we undergo the three states of waking, dream and deep sleep. These three states are constantly changing and negating each other. Waking is negated in dream and deep sleep; dream is negated in waking and deep sleep; deep sleep is negated in waking and dream. Thus such contrary states aren't real and they require a changeless substratum for their very existence. This substratum is Consciousness or "I". I who was dreaming earlier am now awake. Thus we find that "I" am changeless and due to association or superimposition with the three states, I feel as if I too change in these three states. This is the state of ignorance. Knowledge instantly will make us realize ourselves as the changeless substratum of the three states and that the three states are just illusions in me or "I".

Changing entities and changeless Self

At any point of time there are changing entities and the changeless Self. Changeless Self alone is real and changing entities are unreal (as they undergo birth and death). It is this subtle truth that is propounded by the Lord in the 9th chapter through saying that the world is temporary and sorrowful and therefore seek me as Brahman or changeless Self.

Unless we are able to drill down the entire spectrum of experience into these two of changing entities and changeless Self, we will not achieve anything at all and will ever be suffering alone. This is what we find the entire world experiencing – they constantly suffer alone because they fail to apprehend these two entities of changing world and changeless Self.

Proof of changeless Self

Changeless Self or Consciousness or Brahman is known through the pulsation that happens constantly inside. This pulsation that just exists as "I, I" at all times is direct proof of changeless blissful Brahman. But majority of people fail to apprehend or accept this I and thereby they experience only sorrow.

Many find it tough to apprehend or accept this "I" as it isn't experienced like any other object in the world. That which is experienced as an object or person can be directly believed (as it is gross and objectified). That which is not experienced cannot be believed or trusted. Therefore people don't accept Brahman and only accept the world. Even those who have learnt the scriptures fail to apprehend or accept Brahman as they don't experience Brahman.

But it is a wrong notion to say that one doesn't experience Brahman. Brahman is constantly experienced as Consciousness that pulsates inside oneself at all times. It is ever present as "I". But this I is the subject of everything – therefore it is never objectified. Can we see our own faces? Though we may see in a mirror, the mirror image of our face isn't our true face. Even as one's face cannot be seen, similarly Consciousness or "I" which is the subject of all objects cannot be directly perceived (as an object). This doesn't mean that I doesn't exist. I exists at all times as the subject of all objects. It is also experienced intuitively as oneself – but since this experience isn't the same as experience of objects of the world, therefore people aren't able to accept this Self or Brahman.

In order to intuitively experience the Self, one just needs to temporarily get rid of all changes. This is possible through the practice of dhyana. In dhyana a person gets rid of all dualities and eventually whatever remains behind is the Self. This Self thus is directly experienced (unlike worldly experiences which are as different from oneself) and known through practices.

Any sadhaka who is willing to follow the path set forth by the scriptures will be able to directly experience the Self here and now itself. But this requires total faith in the scriptures as well – not just mere intellectual knowledge of the scriptures for the sake of name and fame in the world. True sadhakas thus will be able to get rid of all changes (set them aside as unreal) and will be able to intuitively experience their very nature of Consciousness.

A sadhaka who progresses towards the goal of moksha might need hints that give him faith that he is moving in the right direction (even as when we drive to a destination we find boards showing as to how far away we are from the destination).

Divine sounds and visions

Sankara thus says here that a sadhaka who progresses in the spiritual path will get divine sounds and visions that tell that he is moving in the right direction (and not in the opposite direction). These sounds and visions can be that of great masters of the past or of revelations of scriptural statements. It should be kept in mind that a sadhaka learns the scriptures and therefore scriptural truths aren't revealed for the first time for him through divine visions and sounds (which would then mean that learning the scriptures is futile). Such visions and sounds will not help the sadhaka progress further in the spiritual path directly but it will give the sadhaka faith in the mind. Knowing that one is progressing in the right direction will make one put more effort towards the goal of moksha. This is unlike a person who waits and waits with no idea whether progress in the spiritual path is there or not.

What if I don't get any visions?

It should be remembered that one who progresses in the spiritual path will be experiencing more and more bliss of Brahman. This bliss which is as a result of the state of silence of Dakshinamurthy is that which will propagate the sadhaka to progress further and quickly towards the goal of moksha.

The more one progresses in the spiritual path, the more calmer also one will be. Though problems will still persist in the world, problems will affect a sadhaka. The sadhaka will remember that ultimately one changeless eternal Brahman alone exists and I am this Brahman. Therefore all problems will be faced boldly while ever remaining calm. Such a sadhaka also will be devoid of any desires as the desire of moksha itself keeps him going (with experiencing more and more bliss in the world). Contentment, satisfaction and peace are other qualities that we can find the sadhaka experiencing more and more while progressing in the spiritual path,

AMMA beautifully says that happiness of the Self or Brahman is devoid of any conditions. Thus a person who is more and more happy as a result of earning more and more money isn't progressing in the spiritual path as his happiness depends on money. A true sadhaka

will be blissful at all times irrespective of external situations. This bliss will only keep increasing as the sadhaka progresses towards the goal of moksha.

Even as when one moves towards fire, one will feel the heat, similarly a person who progresses towards the goal of moksha will feel the bliss of Brahman slowly pervading one's life. This bliss alone is the fuel that takes the sadhaka towards the goal of moksha.

True sadhakas through ever rejoicing in bliss in trying to contemplate on Brahman will not need anything else at all in life. When asked or questioned as to what is needed, they will answer in the negative. They will be content with whatever is there in life – this doesn't mean that they will renounce everything and not perform actions; actions will be performed by them like any worldly person but they will be ever blissful at all times, unaffected by the actions or activities. Since ever rejoicing in bliss is the ultimate goal of life therefore a sadhaka should always strive to remember the non-dual reality of Brahman in the mind so that eventually he will be able to ever rejoice in bliss at all times.

May Dakshinamurthy as Brahman or Self, the changeless Self of all changes, make us realize our very nature of Consciousness that pulsates inside as I-exist, I-exist at all times so that by getting rid of all sorrows we will be able to ever rejoice in bliss here and now itself.

Madhuraamritham

Hanuman Chalisa - 7

विद्यावान गुनी अति चातुर ।

राम काज करिबे को आतुर ॥७॥

vidyāvāna gunī ati cātural
rāma kāja karibe ko ātura ॥7॥

You are well learned in all scriptures; endowed with all good qualities; highly intelligent; and ever ready to carry out the missions of Rama.

Hanuman – well learned in the scriptures

Many people think that scriptures aren't essential to be learnt and that we can do with actions or devotion or some other means like meditation etc. The scriptures clearly tell that there is no other alternative to moksha or liberation than the scriptures. Action, devotion, meditation and everything else is just means whereas knowledge of Ishwara or Brahman as our very nature of Consciousness is the goal to be achieved. For a true devotee, the Lord himself provides knowledge and thereby helps to progress towards the goal of moksha.

Narada himself says in Bhakti Sutras that there is no lack of knowledge of glory of the Lord for a devotee. True devotion isn't different from true knowledge but the knowledge that the one Lord or Brahman or Consciousness alone exists is essential and inevitable for a sadhaka who wants to achieve the ultimate goal of life as getting rid of sorrow and ever rejoicing in bliss.

What is the advantage of learning the scriptures?

The scriptures will give us conviction that one Lord alone exists here. As the conviction grows, so much stronger we will become. And thereby all sorrows will end and we will be able to ever rejoice in bliss. Also knowledge of Brahman or the Lord is knowledge of the essence of everything (the Lord being the cause-substratum of the entire world). Thus through knowledge of the Lord, a person will gain knowledge of everything. There will not be anything that a knower of the Lord will not know or will not be able to learn and know. Thus we find here Tulasidas saying that Hanuman is knower of everything – Hanuman by

being well-versed in the scriptures and implementing the scriptures is a true brahma-jnaani. Such a brahma-jnaani knows everything and there isn't anything he doesn't know.

So how do we gain from knowing Hanuman knows everything?

The moment we seek Hanuman we will be guided by him at all times in anything and everything that we need. If not seeking Hanuman, knowing that Hanuman has gained all-knowing as a result of devotion to Rama we will also be able to develop devotion to Rama. There isn't anything that a devotee cannot gain as has gained the non-dual reality of Lord. Therefore knowing everything and ever remaining content, such a devotee (like Hanuman) will be able to ever rejoice in bliss at all times.

Hanuman – filled with good qualities

Of what use is knowing everything under the Sun if we aren't filled with good qualities? As the Lord says in the 16th chapter, it is the good qualities that take us closer towards the goal of moksha. A person or his character is known through the good qualities that he possesses. The more and more a person develops these qualities, it becomes easier to focus on the Lord – since the direct way to realization is constant contemplation on the Lord as the substratum of the entire world, therefore a person with good qualities will be able to easily focus on the Lord at all times.

A person with good qualities not only helps himself progress towards moksha but helps set a good environment in the world as well. This is unlike majority of people in the world today who are filled only bad qualities of desire, anger, aversion, jealousy, pride etc. Bad qualities cause sorrow to us as well as sorrow to the entire world whereas good qualities lead to happiness within us and in the world as well.

A person endowed with good qualities will be perceiving the entire world as filled in and out with the Lord – such a person eventually will go beyond both good and bad, therefore not differentiating between anything in the world. We can find this trait in Hanuman. Hanuman just did his actions to perfection without getting into any emotions unwontedly with people. Even with Ravana, Hanuman didn't get into any aversion until Ravana refused to give up Sita. As a result of Hanuman's good qualities, Ravana got up from his seat when Hanuman was caught and brought to his palace – even Ravana was able to see the good qualities in Hanuman.

Generally qualities are not that easy to apprehend in people but a subtle sadhaka will be able to identify qualities in people very easily. Good qualities can be perceived through the happiness that reflects in the person's appearance or very presence itself whereas bad qualities can be perceived through the sorrow that reflects in the person's very presence. As the Lord says, around a brahma-jnaani bliss will be dancing. Since a person with good qualities will eventually become a brahma-jnaani therefore happiness will be experienced in the presence of such a person.

Through even little bit of knowledge a person will be able to develop all good qualities and get rid of all bad qualities – therefore it is simple to apprehend that Hanuman, who was learned in all the sciences, was filled with all good qualities. Such a Hanuman is definitely a role-model for all the people of the world who also, like him, are striving for moksha through devotion or constant contemplation of the Lord (as pervading the entire world).

Intelligence – as a result of good qualities

When a person is endowed with all good qualities then automatically such a person becomes intelligent. This intelligence isn't with respect to any particular science but with respect to all sciences (with respect to everything). Taking an example, if a person is endowed with all good qualities with respect to programming then the person will become intelligent in programming. Intelligence in programming will ensure that he is able to write programs with ease, anticipate bugs thereby fixing them at the outset itself and writing very efficient programs that provides output much more than what is expected normally from a program.

Similarly intelligence in whole will ensure that a person is able to perform actions to perfection in the world. Desires will be nourished appropriately and thereby results will be positive for oneself and others. These desires and actions performed for fulfillment of desires will not taint the person as it is performed intelligently (in such a way that it doesn't serve just oneself but others as well). Actions taint a person when it is performed with selfish motive. That action which is selflessly performed for the welfare of the entire world will not taint a person as there is no likes-dislikes with respect to the action. Thus intelligence in actions ensures that it doesn't harm anybody and benefits everybody.

If we look at Hanuman's activities we will find that all his activities were for the benefit of the entire world and caused no harm to anybody at all. Intelligence thus ensures that one very quickly progresses towards the goal of moksha.

But sometimes we find that so-called-intelligent people falter through selfish activities and thereby try to cause good to their own people and bad to theirs though this bad may be inadvertently caused. Such harm to others have to be avoided at all costs. And this is only possible when there is focus on the non-dual reality of Lord as pervading the entire world.

Herein comes the effect of learning the scriptures. The scriptures repeat again and again that whatever exists is the non-dual reality of Lord alone. The duality or differences in the world are just names and forms in the Lord. Even as various names and forms of gold makes it appear as if different ornaments are different from one-another, similarly names and forms of the Lord makes it appear as if the entire world is filled with duality. A goldsmith knows that all gold ornaments are nothing but gold alone as names-forms have no reality whatsoever of their own. Therefore he remains unaffected at all times irrespective of whether an ornament breaks or a new one is created. Similarly a jnaani through the scriptures knows that the entire world is just names and forms in the Lord. Therefore he doesn't get affected by the birth and death of names and forms. Moreover at all times he sees everything as the Lord, essentially. As a result of this perspective, he performs all actions intelligently and himself realizing, he helps others in realization as well.

Vedanta also uses the analogy of dream to explain as to how the entire world we are perceiving now is just an illusion in the Lord. This world is like the dream world which appears in the dreamer. A person goes to dream and thereby dreams an entire world. Everything in the dream world appears very real – he eats, drinks, sleeps etc. – he leads an entirely new life in the dream. But after waking up, he realizes that there never was any dream world. This knowledge that there never is any dream world will make him unaffected by the dream world. Else he will cry when something bad happens in the dream world – the dream world activities will affect him and make him suffer constantly in the dream. But knowledge that dream world doesn't exist and is the dreamer alone will make him ever rejoice in bliss at all times. Similarly a person who knows that the entire waking world is just an illusion in the non-dual reality of Lord will be able to ever rejoice in bliss, remaining unaffected by all activities in the world.

It is when we are affected by activities that we will falter in our activities. A judge doesn't make any mistake with respect to his judgement because he doesn't have involvement with the parties affected in the case. Similarly when we are able to pull ourselves away from the world through knowledge of the scriptures that everything is one Lord alone, then we will

not only be able to remain unaffected by activities but we will be able to perform activities to perfection in the world.

Ever performing activities for the Lord

Of what use are activities or results of activities in the world unless they are offered unto the non-dual reality of Lord?

Generally all activities of people in the world are for their own benefit in one or the other way. Seeking benefit for oneself we will be causing harm in one or the other way to the rest of the world. Often wanting to build a big house we cut trees, thereby causing harm to nature. This harm to nature affects us in return through natural calamities like tsunami, hurricanes etc. Though we think we can handle such calamities we find that even great nations like US or Japan are totally unequipped to handle them in any way. When the great nations of the world struggle to handle man-made calamities like terrorist attacks then what to talk about natural calamities? Man-made calamities can be averted or avoided to some extent but it is almost impossible to avert natural calamities.

Nature is the divine mother (the Lord alone) giving us everything we need and seeking nothing in return. But if we don't let the mother herself live then the mother will revolt back – not for our harm but to make us understand our mistakes and to ensure that we don't cause long-term harm to ourselves. And when mother nature revolts back, there will be absolutely no answer from us for the same.

Thus all actions should be for welfare of the entire world rather than for harming people of the world or the world itself. Though it can be argued that the entire world is just an illusion then why care about protecting the world, it can be counter-argued that why protect the body when it is just an illusion – negative arguments will not serve anybody at all. This entire world is an illusion but ultimately it is the non-dual reality of Lord and hence we have to take care of the world as much as possible. This is not like taking care of one's own parents and family but taking care of the entire world in the same way as taking care of one's own family.

What better way to take care of the world than through performing actions for the Lord? We find this in Hanuman who performed all activities for the Lord alone. If we look at the activities of Hanuman after he met Rama, we will find that everything was for Rama alone.

Entire life of Hanuman was for Rama therefore Hanuman performed all activities for Rama and was ever ready to perform activities for Rama.

The moment we surrender unto the Lord and offer our entire life to the Lord, we will automatically be filled with good qualities, we will perform intelligent actions and we will be serving the entire world itself. Serving the entire world by perceiving it as the Lord, we will slowly progress towards the goal of moksha and will set bliss to pervade the entire world itself. This is the ultimate goal of life wherein we are able to progress towards moksha and we pervade the entire world with bliss.

Can the entire world be pervaded with bliss?

The entire world is pervaded in and out by the Lord who is the cause-substratum of the world. Since the Lord is blissful in nature therefore the entire world is pervaded by bliss. But due to our ignorance of this truth (as propounded in the scriptures) we consider the names-forms of the world to be real. Getting into likes and dislikes, we experience happiness and sorrow in and from the world. Though the entire world is blissful alone, still we experience sorrow as a result of perception of duality (and through ignoring the non-dual reality of Lord as pervading the entire world). All the while, the entire world is blissful alone.

Thus through knowledge we will be able to perceive the world as it is – blissful Lord pervading it in and out. The moment we perceive the world as Lord, we will perform all activities as an offering unto the Lord. As Ramana Maharshi says, actions performed as an offering unto the Lord and without craving for results of actions will purify the mind and lead to moksha.

What more is required for a devotee than to ever contemplate on the Lord and perform all actions for the Lord? The very thought of the Lord in the mind will lead to rejoicing in bliss. The more and more a person performs all activities for the lord the more and more blissful one will become.

The Lord isn't present here for me to perform activities for him, like Hanuman did?

Yes the Lord isn't present here as such (like in Rama avatara) but the entire world is pervaded by the Lord. Therefore the entire world is the Lord alone. Any activity that is performed for the welfare of world is performing for the Lord. Such activities are different from the so-called social service of the world today – these social service organizations

(except very few) care about the result of the action. This is contrary to true social service where the service is offered unto the Lord and therefore one doesn't get egoistic about serving the world and one doesn't worry about the result of the service (whether people are benefitted by the service or not, people are happy and give name-credit for the service they get etc.).

Though it appears very simple yet remembering the Lord in one's mind and performing all actions as an offering unto the Lord itself will lead to eternal bliss instantly. Therefore all sadhakas should constantly strive, like Hanuman, to perform all actions unto the Lord – this is possible only when knowledge of the scriptures is there and all good qualities are also imbibed. Eventually through implementation of constant contemplation of the Lord and all actions as an offering unto the Lord, a person will be able to ever rejoice in bliss.

May we all like Hanuman strive to learn the scriptures, imbibe all good qualities, develop true intelligence and thereby perform all actions as an offering unto the Lord who pervades the entire world so that we will be able to get rid of all sorrows and will be able to ever rejoice in bliss here and now itself.

Praadeshikam - I

Hari Naama Keerthanam – 7

Garbasthanay bhuvijanicchum maricchum
 Udakapolapole jananaantena nitya gati
 Tvadbhakti vardhanamudikkenamen manasi
 Nityam thozhaay varika naaraayanaaya nama

Getting into the womb of a mother, taking birth and death on earth;
 Like bubbles always getting into birth and death;
 Let devotion unto you grow in my mind,
 So I worship you always, prostration unto Narayana.

Brahman – the ultimate reality

In order to find out that which is ultimately real, we have to find that which never changes. The entire world that we currently experience is always changing. That which changes isn't real as it will cease to exist (after a period of time). But that which changes requires a changeless substratum. The world is constantly changing and therefore isn't real. But such a world requires a changeless substratum – this changeless substratum is termed in the scriptures as Brahman and of the nature of Existence, Consciousness and Bliss. The world has come from Brahman, exists in Brahman and merges unto Brahman after its destruction.

Thus Brahman is the ultimate reality behind the world. Brahman is one alone, without any second as there is nothing apart from Brahman. Scriptures say that Brahman is without any differences – internal, similar and dissimilar. Logic also shows that the entity of Consciousness alone ultimately exists – nothing apart from it or different from it exists.

It is realization of this ultimate reality of Brahman that will take a person beyond sorrow and make the person ever rejoice in bliss. Brahman as Consciousness isn't really different from the Consciousness that pulsates inside each one of us as "I-exist, I-exist". There cannot be multiple Consciousness and hence the scriptures repeat again and again that Brahman is the Consciousness that is present in each and every individual. The Lord also says that I reside in the heart of all beings – this means that whatever is present is essentially the non-dual reality of Brahman or Lord alone.

If I am Brahman and everything is Brahman, then why don't I rejoice in bliss?

Rejoicing in bliss is only as a result of realization of one's very nature of Brahman. Though Brahman alone exists, this truth has been forgotten somehow. This is termed as ignorance. Ignorance is beyond logic and cannot really be defined. Ignorance is just present in an ignorant person and an ignorant person has ignorance – there cannot be any more explanation for this. Ignorance is like darkness – we cannot prove darkness as when we try to prove it with light, it will just vanish. But when we experience darkness, it appears as existing (though not really existing). Bring in light and darkness will instantly vanish – we will then realize that there never was any darkness and there never can be any darkness also. Similarly there is no ignorance at all but it appears as existing (when the non-dual reality of Brahman is not known or realized). Instead of trying to, in futile, analyze the nature of ignorance one has to get rid of ignorance through knowledge. If we are sick and we refuse to take tablet until we know the entire history of the tablet, then we will not get well. When we are sick, we will just take tablet in order to get well. Similarly an ignorant person should just strive to gain knowledge and get rid of ignorance.

How do I know I am ignorant?

Any person who isn't able to ever rejoice in bliss is ignorant as he doesn't realize his very nature of eternal bliss. Such a person should through knowledge get rid of ignorance. Thereby he would realize that there is no ignorance but one Brahman alone exists. Knowledge is found in the scriptures and can be summarized as "Brahman alone is real, the world is unreal and I am Brahman" – or in short, Brahman alone exists as the substratum of the world and as my very nature of Consciousness. The more and more a person gains conviction of this knowledge, ignorance will vanish and thereby the person will be able to rejoice in bliss more and more.

Vedanta says that the three steps of sravana, manana and nidhidhyasana are required for knowledge. Sravana is listening again and again to the scriptures with focus on Brahman. Manana is reflecting through proper logic about whatever has been heard (that Brahman alone exists). Nidhidhyasana is constant contemplation of the truth that Brahman alone exists. Once a person follows these three steps, then the person will be able to ever abide in Brahman and therefore will ever rejoice in bliss at all times.

The ultimate goal of life is to realize our own very nature of Brahman and through getting rid of all sorrows, ever rejoicing in bliss.

If realization is very simple, then why don't we see many realized masters in the world?

Many people consider knowledge as very tough to gain but it is very simple indeed. The Lord also says that it is very simple to implement knowledge. Thus knowledge is very simple to implement in our day-to-day life. But majority of people don't want knowledge. The reason is that they are getting temporary happiness from the world and are content with the same. Instead of struggling for an unknown Brahman it is easy to achieve known world and gain temporary happiness. It is only when experiencing sorrow after the temporary happiness that people gain temporary vairagya or dispassion from the world. This dispassion is so short-lived and hence when the next happiness is achieved, it instantly vanishes. Until true dispassion through the nature of the world being temporary and sorrowful is achieved, people will hop from one object of the world to another while experiencing temporary happiness.

Swami Rama Teertha beautifully says as to how happiness from objects change as we grow of age. When an infant, happiness is in the mother. Slowly it shifts to toys, game, partner and children. Even when we are not happy with a particular partner, we seek happiness from another partner. Since probably-partners are infinite in the world therefore there is no scarcity of searching for happiness from the world. Similar to partners, possibilities of sources of happiness are infinite in the world and hence people aren't able to seek knowledge (and Brahman).

What is the problem of temporary happiness from the world?

Temporary happiness, as the Lord points out, is seed of sorrow. It will eventually lead to sorrow. Such happiness which is temporary will cause only sorrow even when we experience it (as we will always be worried about when the happiness will be lost). But though it is sorrowful, still it is better than the unknown and seemingly impossible eternal bliss. Therefore people always go for temporary happiness and rarely go for eternal bliss in Brahman.

But the problem of temporary happiness isn't that simple. It goes from one birth to another. The more and more we seek the world and depend on the world, the more and more we are diving into the ocean of samsara characterized by birth and death. Thus the more we enjoy the world, the more we will have to take birth again and again.

How can we say that rebirth is there?

Though scriptures clearly say rebirth is there, we can prove through simple logic as well. Many times we find very young children sharp in certain walks of life – for example, a 5 year old boy sings beautifully, shakuntala devi is able to calculate much better than a calculator, Sri Sri Ravishankar used to recite the entire Gita at the age of 3. These examples are almost impossible scenarios unless it has been carried from the previous birth.

Karma or action follows the rule that wherever action is there, there is a reaction. Wherever there is a reaction, there is an action. Thus the chain of action and reaction goes on forever. People say this is Newton's third law – such laws are written in the scriptures ages ago; Newton just brought it forth to the modern public. The Lord says in Gita that within the empirical perspective (where duality is accepted as real, though ultimately unreal), the rules of action are eternal and therefore never broken.

When a child is born it demonstrates certain habits or characters. Such habits cannot be developed so soon, yet it is demonstrated by the child showing that something previous from this birth should be there for the same. Thus the previous birth is required and proven. Also there are many actions that we perform in this birth but don't get the results in this birth, thus we have to say that we have to enjoy the results – therefore next birth is also essential. Thus rebirth is inevitable in the plain of karma (action and reaction).

Samsaara – birth and death, over and over again

As long as a person doesn't realize his very nature of Brahman, he will be falling deep into the ocean of samsaara. In this ocean a person takes birth again and again. The chain of birth and death continues, without any end. We cannot find out where it started and where it lies – nothing is known about this ocean. But as long as we don't realize Brahman, we will be continuing in this chain of birth and death.

Will we not get better births due to merits?

Yes we may get. But all such merits are like bank balances. Once we start enjoying them, it will slowly deplete until it is no more. Merits lead to higher worlds and demerits lead to lower worlds. Higher worlds have enjoyments whereas lower worlds have suffering. Such enjoyment and suffering can be found on earth itself. The more one goes to western countries, there is more enjoyment and the more one goes to developing or under-developed countries there is only suffering. But both are temporary – only on earth there is

a mix of both. Thus earth can be said to be the middle place or balanced place. Merits will take us to higher worlds and after enjoyment we will return back to Earth (or the zero-world for results of action). Demerits will take us to lower worlds and after suffering we will return back to Earth.

Thus again and again we will take birth on Earth, without any end. Though we may think that we are enjoying on Earth, there is no enjoyment at all. We just need to look at the world and we will find as to how much suffering is there throughout the entire world. Political issues, natural calamities, terrorist attacks, and economic crisis – you name it and we have it in the world. The suffering-world is where we will be if we are in ignorance and aren't able to realize our very nature of Brahman.

Sankara beautifully says in Bhaja Govindam that one takes birth again and again on Earth; and this ocean of samsaara is very tough indeed to conquer.

How can we conquer this ocean of samsaara when we think there are infinite possibilities of conquering all problems from within the world itself? Every now and then, there are spiritual reforms started by so-called realized masters. Every now and then we find new means towards moksha (like meditation etc.) are developed. And the followers of each of these claim that it leads to moksha – needless to say the masters themselves are suffering and have no answers to their own sufferings, let alone remove the sufferings of others.

Then is there no way out of samsaara?

Even as a maze which constantly deludes us inside has a way out, similarly samsaara also has a way out. The way out is knowledge which gets rid of ignorance. This knowledge is of the scriptures – through learning the scriptures again and again, we will gain conviction of the non-dual reality of Brahman. The more and more the conviction, the lesser and lesser sorrows will be. Slowly we will find ourselves rejoicing in bliss, irrespective of external situations and conditions. Eventually through abiding in knowledge at all times, we will cross over samsaara and we will ever rejoice in bliss.

Though knowledge appears very simple, it is very tough indeed unless we have devotion unto the Lord or Brahman. Thus there are many great orators who speak Vedanta but there is absolutely no implementation. All knowledge does is to boost the ego and as a result, sorrows become more. Therefore many people think that knowledge is dangerous and

therefore shouldn't be learnt. It isn't knowledge that is dangerous but the people who aren't able to implement knowledge that are dangerous. They lack devotion unto Brahman and as a result, knowledge serves only the intellect and ego instead of implementation in real life.

Therefore instead of seeing the entire world as one Brahman, they think they know about Brahman and others don't know Brahman. As a result of superiority complex, they experience only sorrow while trying to dictate things unto others.

May your devotion increase

Knowing that knowledge might lead to ego and therefore devotion unto the Lord or Brahman is essential, here ezhuttacchan says that may devotion of Ishwara increase.

Why does he say that devotion should increase, rather than devotion be cultivated?

Sanaatana dharma is very unique in that everybody in it have devotion unto Ishwara in one or the other extent. Some may have strong devotion whereas others may have weak devotion. Some may be devoted unto Ishwara through aversion to Ishwara – but nobody ignores Ishwara and therefore devotion is there in all people.

It is through listening to the glories of Ishwara through puranic stories and other means that we have cultivated devotion in our mind. What is therefore required is not to develop devotion but to increase devotion. Just having love to a partner isn't enough – we have to increase it to such extent that we ourselves rejoice in bliss in the love and our partner as well is able to rejoice in bliss in the love. Similarly it is required to increase devotion more and more.

The more the devotion, the more closer we will get to realization or moksha. Devotion towards Ishwara will only increase when we gain knowledge about Ishwara. When we know that Ishwara is the non-dual reality behind the illusory world, then devotion will automatically increase. Then we will know that Ishwara is the only way out of all sorrows and since this Ishwara alone pervades the entire world, therefore I will increase my devotion towards Ishwara.

Devotion is increased also through offering actions unto Ishwara. Any and all actions have to be offered unto Ishwara. Irrespective of whatever activities we are doing, we should remember and do it as pooja unto Ishwara. Better than externally or physically performing

poojas unto the Lord is performing pooja unto the Lord mentally. We will not be able to spend all of our time in a temple (to perform physical pooja to Ishwara at all times) but we can convert all actions as a pooja – just mentally remembering Ishwara and offering the action unto Ishwara makes it a pooja. The result of such pooja is the prasaada of Ishwara. Prasaada irrespective of whether it is good or bad is always blissful alone. Thus when we go to temple, irrespective of what is the prasaada we just partake it and it fills us with bliss. Or as AMMA says we should consider all results as Ishwara’s bliss alone – if something good happens, it is Ishwara’s blessing and if something bad happens, it is Ishwara’s will; since everything is related to Ishwara, therefore it will only lead to more and more bliss.

Along with trying to perform all actions as a pooja unto Ishwara, we should also perform activities that are filled with Ishwara. This includes physical pooja, chanting of Ishwara’s names, singing the glories of Ishwara and discussion of glories of Ishwara. Such activities are filled with Ishwara and therefore devotion automatically will increase, as long as we remember Ishwara to be the non-dual reality behind the world (the ultimate goal of life). For initial sadhakas it would be very tough to perform all actions as pooja unto Ishwara and therefore trying to initially perform activities which are filled with Ishwara will bring our focus unto Ishwara (from the world). Then through constant practice, we will be able to perform all actions as a pooja unto Ishwara.

Devotion – leads to constant contemplation of Ishwara

It might be asked as to what is so important or great about devotion. Devotion leads to more and more contemplation of Ishwara. Devotion unto one’s car will make a person think about the car more and more. Devotion to one’s partner will make one think about the partner more and more. Such devotion wherein the object of devotion is of the external world is mere worldly love and not devotion. True devotion is that which is directed towards Ishwara or Brahman (as Ishwara or Brahman alone is real and will alone lead to eternal bliss).

More the devotion, more will be contemplation on Ishwara. The more and more we are able to contemplate Ishwara in our mind, the more and more closer we will progress towards moksha. As explained earlier, knowledge alone gets rid of ignorance and knowledge consists of sravana, manana and nidhidhyasana. Nidhidhyasana is constant contemplation of the non-dual reality of Brahman. This is achieved only when there is devotion towards Brahman or Ishwara.

The more devotion or the purer devotion is, the more will be contemplation of Ishwara. And when a person is able to contemplate on Ishwara at all times, then such a person has attained the ultimate goal of life. Such a person has crossed over samsaara and the chain of births and deaths. Such a person knows that this entire world, samsaaram and births-deaths are just illusions in the non-dual reality of Brahman or Lord. Since such a person realizes himself to be the non-dual reality of Brahman, therefore such a person gets rid of all sorrows and ever rejoices in bliss.

Harinaamakeerthanam says thus beautifully in the form of a prayer to the Lord that devotion unto the Lord be increased so that the devotee will cross over the ocean of samsaara and thereby through constant contemplation of Ishwara, the devotee will ever rejoice in bliss here and now itself.

May we all strive to increase our devotion unto the Lord so that through constant contemplation of the Lord we will be able to get rid of all sorrows and we will be able to ever rejoice in bliss here and now itself.

Praadeshikam - II

Kanda Shashti Kavacham - 6

Asurarkudikeduthaayyavaruga

Ennaiaalumulaiyonkaiyi

Pannirendaayuthampaashangushamum

Parandhavizhigalpannirendilanga

Virandhuenaiakaakavelonvaruga

Please Come Lord who spoiled the lives of Asuras,

O Lord, who rules over me

Who has twelve weapons in his hands with Pasha and Angusha

Who has twelve wide open eyes

Please come quickly to protect me!

Lord Muruga is considered as the Senapathi of the Devas. Lord, being the leader of the army, destroys all the asuras and protects Devas. Devas are not just those in Deva Loka, every party in our body is ruled over by a Devata. In order for every part to function properly, we need protection from the Devata. Constant remembrance of the Lord is the most required thing to be done, and in order to have constant remembrance of the Lord we need conducive environment in which there is cooperation from our body and mind, and also from everything around us. When there is distraction, there will be imbalance which will cause obstacle for constant remembrance of the Lord. These distractions are the asuras that bothers the sense organs and mind. Only Lord can protect us from these asuras of distraction so that we are able to remember the Lord.

Even though we want to have constant remembrance of Lord, we don't have any control over anything around us, not even our body and mind. In such situation only thing we can do is to surrender unto the Lord who is the controller of the whole world. Lord who is of the nature of Anandam, would want everyone in the world to rejoice in that Anandam. Therefore, Lord would do anything to take care of the devotees who seek Lord to experience Anandam. Seeking Lord is nothing but constant remembrance of the Lord. Thus, the poet here mentions that Lord holds twelve weapons.

There is no one as watchful and caring as the Lord. Lord never closes His eyes even for a fraction of a second. If Lord closes His eyes even for a moment, the whole universe will

collapse instantly. The entire universe exists as it were only because of the constant watch of the Lord. Whether we seek the Lord or not, Lord is always there watching us, waiting to help us. Since we are not aware of this infinite compassion of the Lord, we think that Lord is not helping us during difficult times or feeling egotistic about all our achievements. But the fact is during the difficult times, Lord was the one who helped us to cross over. But in order to feel the presence of the Lord, there is no other way than to surrender unto the Lord and remember the Lord all the time. When we remember the Lord, we will be able to feel the presence of the Lord. We will have the firm conviction that Lord is always there for us all the time protecting us. Thus, the poet says that Lord through His twelve eyes watching us.

When would we want the Lord to protect us? When we are undergoing a painful situation, we want a solution that would resolve the situation instantly. We would want something to happen that would change the situation or a miracle to happen that removes the sorrow completely. This clearly means that we need protection from the Lord right now, this moment. But on the contrary, when a person is enjoying happy situation for a very long time, he never wishes he would be sad for some time since he was happy for long time. He would only want happiness to continue all the time and never desire for sad. Thus, we always seek the protection from the Lord so we can feel safe that no situation would affect us. This does not mean that everything would change for us, but it just means that we would be able to handle any situation with strength. There is no greater strength than having Lord on our side and hence the poet requests Lord to come as quickly as possible to protect.

Aiyumkiliyumadaivudansauvum

Uyyolisauvumuyiraiyumkiliyum

KiliyumsauvumkiLaroliaiyum

Nilaiptrenmunnitthamolirum

Of the Aaim, kleem and saum

Saum represent bright light

Kleem represent the life

Kleem, saum and sweet sounding Aaim

Be firm and shine before me

In these lines, the poet speaks about the Bheeja mantra of Lord Muruga. Bheeja mantra are the root mantra from which every other mantra comes forth. Every devata has a Bheeja

mantra to invoke the devata and likewise in the Bheeja mantra of Lord MurugaAaimkleem and saum are used. Since Bheeja mantra are the root of every other mantra, they are very powerful and can grant any boons when repeated focusing on the devata. Here the poet also explains what these words mean. The word Saum represent the bright light, the light which illumines everything in the world. That light which is termed as the Consciousness and is the basis of everything in the world. Kleem here is the life, the life of everything, the life that makes everything in the world to function. We need to get these bheeja mantras in our mind very firm along with the focus on the Lord in order to get the full benefit of it.

One of the way of remember the Lord is by repeating the name of the Lord. The name of the Lord which is basically a Mantra that start with AUM and end in Namah is very powerful that would remove all obstacles and purify our mind. When we repeat the mantra more and more, our mind would naturally would be able to focus on the Lord. Initially, it may be mechanical but as the time goes by with our practice, we would be able to remember the mantra with the thought of Lord which would lead us towards the goal of Moksha. Whether we chant the bheeja mantra of the Lord or the mantra with the name of the Lord in it, the important focus point is the Lord only. So whichever way makes it easier to remember the Lord we should try to practice it more and more.

Sadhaka Samkshepa

Sadhaka

Previously we saw a summary of sadhana (that is to be performed in order to attain the ultimate goal of life as moksha). Thus it is apt that we see a brief summary of sadhaka this month.

Sadhya is the goal of moksha to be attained by each and every person in the entire world. Sadhana is the means to attain this goal of sadhya. A person who through sadhana attains sadhya is a sadhaka.

The very first quality essential of a sadhaka is desire for the goal of moksha. Without desire for sadhya, sadhana will not be performed and therefore such a person isn't a sadhaka at all. Today we think that people who are living in ashrams are sadhakas or people who visit temples are sadhakas or people who are sanyaasis are sadhakas. Truth is that none of these are sadhakas unless the desire for moksha is strongly present in them. There are many people who will have desire for moksha in their mind but this desire is so weak and therefore all other desires overpower this desire. What is the use of having desire for moksha in the mind when one isn't struggling to fulfill this desire? This is like a person who has a TV in home but never watches it – so what is the point of the TV?

It is very simple to understand that a sadhaka needs to not only have the desire for moksha but should also perform necessary sadhana that will take him closer to the goal of moksha. As we saw previously, sadhanas include selfless actions that will purify the mind, sadhanas like dhyana that will lead to concentration of the mind and lastly jnaana (learning, reflecting and implementation of jnaana). A sadhaka with strong desire for moksha and performing sadhana properly will eventually be lead to the goal of moksha (absolutely nothing else is required for such a sadhaka).

Four-fold qualifications of a sadhaka

A true driver is one who when starting to learn driving grasps it on the first day itself and therefore becomes a very good driver the second day itself. Similarly a true sadhaka is one who is able to attain moksha the moment he starts gaining knowledge – thus when he listens from his guru the mahavakya that "you are that", that very moment the sadhaka realizes. Though it is impossible to become such a true sadhaka (very tough and rarely

found), still if we are able to find the qualifications of such a true sadhaka then even though we may be a sadhaka, we can strive constantly to become a true sadhaka (thereby we will attain moksha instantly itself).

Sankara and other acharyas therefore say that there are four-fold qualifications for a sadhaka who wants to gain knowledge and moksha through knowledge. Without these four-fold qualifications, even though one might gain knowledge or be a sadhaka, the sadhya of moksha will not be achieved.

What are the four-fold qualifications?

They are viveka or discrimination between real and unreal, vairagya or dispassion towards the world, shamaadi shatka sampatti or the six qualities of the mind and mumukshutva or burning desire for liberation.

Viveka – discrimination between real and unreal

That which constantly changes is unreal (as it eventually will cease to exist). That which never changes is real. A quick analysis will instantly tell us that the world is temporary and therefore unreal. If the changing world is unreal, it definitely requires a changeless real substratum. The real substratum of the world is called Brahman.

Knowing the differentiation between real Brahman and unreal world is viveka or discrimination. Unless we have this discrimination, we will constantly be seeking the world though for a short period of time alone we may seek Brahman. Majority of sadhakas don't even have viveka – the first qualification required for a true sadhaka. Without this, all activities will be directed towards the world alone and therefore they will lead to sorrow alone. Though one can claim to be a sadhaka by seeking Brahman, such seeking will be futile and will not even give temporary happiness as there is no discrimination (and constantly worldly pleasures alone will be sought out).

Vairagya or dispassion

Vairagya or dispassion can be split into two as para and apara. Apara is lower and is dispassion towards the world knowing it to be temporary and sorrowful. Para is higher and it is passion towards real Brahman (knowing that Brahman alone will lead to bliss).

Many people though might know that Brahman is real and the world is unreal, they aren't able to implement it in their lives – thus they lack vairagya, as a result of which they experience only sorrow (and ultimately there are chances of they getting dejected with the spiritual path itself).

We can say that viveka is theoretical and implementation of the same is vairagya. Vairagya is renouncing the unreal world and seeking the real Brahman.

Shamaadi shatka sampatti

It is the mind that has to implement viveka and vairagya; as well as remember the non-dual reality of Brahman at all times. So unless the mind has good qualities (that lead to its own strength), viveka and vairagya cannot be implemented properly.

The main obstacle to implementation of viveka and vairagya is that mind which constantly runs behind the external world. The mind runs behind the external world as sense organs constantly perceive the external world.

The first three qualities of the mind are to do with control of the mind and the sense organs. Sama or calmness of the mind is when the mind is devoid of distractions from the mind (it is in a controlled state). Dama is control of sense organs – restraining sense organs from going into the sense objects and experiencing sensual pleasures. Uparati is withdrawal of the sense organs (which is only possible when sama and dama is there – external and internal control of the mind).

That mind which is perfectly controlled will easily be able to implement viveka and vairagya. Though this is the case, sometimes we find that as a result of our previous actions we may face problems in the world (though we may have done nothing wrong at all). Such times are tests for us in the spiritual path and during these times we need the third quality of titiksha or forbearance. Without this quality, if something doesn't go well or in the right way for us, we will immediately get upset and down goes all the effects of previous sadhanas performed in the spiritual path. This is similar to a person filling a pot with water and then getting upset with somebody else, then breaking the pot in anger.

Lastly we also need faith in the scriptures and one's Guru. This is called sraddha. Finally tranquility of mind where it doesn't dwell on external objects is also required – this is called

samaadhana. These six qualities of the mind ensure that viveka and vairagya are implemented properly.

How will car without fuel run? Similarly without the fuel of mumukshutva, a sadhaka cannot progress in the spiritual path or even be in the spiritual path.

Mumukshutva – burning desire for moksha

Desire for moksha is essential in order to develop viveka, vairaga and shamaadi shatka sampatti. Without moksha, there is no goal at all in sight for a person and therefore there will be no effect towards moving anywhere at all.

Majority of people in the world are living a life without any aim or goal. Though worldly goals are there, are they really goals? No, definitely they aren't goals as they are of that world which is temporary and ultimately unreal. Since people only seek worldly goals in life, therefore they are all going on a wild-goose chase which will eventually lead to only sorrow.

Life is precious to be wasted in just enjoyment of sensual pleasures. Life is to be used for the ultimate purpose of getting rid of all sorrows and ever rejoicing in bliss. Until this purpose is fulfilled, there will be desires pending in the mind and therefore such a person will take birth again and again. Going round and round in the cycle of birth and death, such a person experiences only sorrow. Though temporary happiness will be achieved, they are all seeds of sorrow. Only fools will really seek temporary happiness from the world. Wise people will realize the ultimate purpose of life and that only through seeking the goal of moksha will there be utility and fulfillment of life. Such wise people will slowly develop the desire for moksha and strengthen it.

It is not that on a particular day a person immediately gets the strong burning desire for moksha. Strong desire for moksha will take time to be developed. Until it is strong, a person has to try to implement viveka and other qualifications. All the four qualifications go hand in hand – when one is implemented, others also will follow suit. When one is strengthened, others also will become strong. Therefore sadhakas should always strive to strengthen these four qualifications and in particular should try to focus on the goal of moksha, as if the goal of moksha is strengthened, then moksha is within sight and will be achieved very soon itself.

The ultimate goal of life is to realize the blissful Self that is our very nature. It is this blissful Self that we all are knowingly or unknowingly we are seeking. Thus we are all sadhakas only – but very few alone realize this and focus on being a true sadhakas, the rest of the world ignores this truth and thereby start seeking the world alone.

Each and every moment we miss trying to be true sadhakas, we will be going deep into the ocean of samsaara (birth and death) and experience only sorrow. Therefore without delay, we should strive to become true sadhakas and thereby attain the goal of moksha here and now itself.

May we all strive to be true sadhakas through achieving the four-fold qualifications so that we will be able to, through realization of our very nature of Brahman, get rid of all sorrows and will be able to even rejoice in bliss here and now itself.

Acharyasmrithi

Madhusudana Saraswati

Many opine that history plays an important role in various acharyas writing works on Advaita and the emphasis of certain aspects of advaita in their works. Though this may not be completely true, it is true to an extent.

Ultimately Advaita or non-duality alone is real as we find it alone to be proven through sruthi or scriptures, yukti or logic and anubhava or experience. Anything that has to be proven to be true has to be proven through these three. Scriptures clearly say that before creation, non-dual Brahman alone existed. Thus creation is just an illusion of names and forms in the non-dual reality of Brahman. The simple logic that an entity which temporarily appears to be existing is just an illusion – a changing entity is just an illusion in its changeless substratum – easily prove that non-dual Brahman alone exists. This Brahman is not subject to experience like worldly objects – instead Brahman is experience intuitively as one's very nature of Consciousness. We all directly experience this Brahman in the state of deep sleep where everything else temporary vanishes (there is no duality absolutely in the deep sleep state).

If it be questioned as to why we aren't able to experience Brahman and bliss in the waking state, then the answer is that it is due to superimposition of ego on the Self. The Self or pure I is not known and everything else is superimposed on this I. The I of ego which identifies and associates itself with the entire world is superimposed on the Self and therefore we experience only sorrow as the ego I constantly changes. It is direct experience that all these changes of the ego I is also perceived by I or me. This itself means that I am not the ego I but the pure Self which is a mere witness of the entire world (due to being the substratum of the entire world).

Even as the dream world is just an illusion in the dreamer who ever remains a mere witness to the entire dream world, similarly this entire world is just an illusion in Brahman. Once a person gains this knowledge, as found in the scriptures, then such a person will be able to get rid of all sorrows (remembering internally or mentally that the entire world and its sorrows are just illusions alone) and will be able to ever rejoice in bliss.

Advaita or non-duality is that which never changes. Thus theories of Advaita cannot really change – just the emphasis on concepts or theories might change (for the benefit of the people). Whatever needs to be mentioned about Advaita is already found in the scriptures and has been explained beautifully by Sankara. But as time passes by, more and more doubts will arise in the mind of sadhakas. These doubts could be depending on the time or era in which the sadhakas are living. In order to answer such doubts, acharayas started writing works in the lines of Sankara.

Also after Sankara's time, nyaaya system become dominant and started attacking Advaita. Therefore acharyas like Sri Harsha, Chitsukha and others had to write works on Advaita answering the objections raised by naiyyayikas as well as refuting the concepts of nyaaya system itself. Naiyyayikas rebounded by creating the navya nyaaya system which almost negates the objections raised by advaita acharyas against prachina nyaaya. Later advaitins and even vedantins started using navya nyaaya in their works.

Then came the two rivaling systems of Vishistaadvaita and Dvaita. The former was propounded by Ramanujacharya and latter by Madhvacharya. Both these systems as well as acharyas of the systems oppose Sankara strongly. Their systems start with criticism of Advaita through the logic that Advaita is faulty and hence has to be corrected before propagating one's own views. It can be said, beyond doubt, that Advaita was well established and hence had to be proven wrong in order for people to follow these new systems of Vedanta.

During these times when the various Vedanta systems were attacking one another, a great advaita acharya was born. This was none other than the famed Madhusudana Saraswati. Anything that can be said about Madhusudana Saraswati will fall short (as we can go on and on about this great acharya). Of course each and every acharya is unique in their own aspects.

Madhusudana Saraswati's Advaita guru was the great Rama teertha who wrote vyaakhyaas on various works of Advaita (including Sankshepa Sareeraka).

Advaita Siddhi

Though Madhusudana Saraswati has written many works still he is known for his magnum opus of Advaita Siddhi.

Following the footsteps of Madhva, Vyaasa teertha wrote the work of nyaayaamritam refuting the tenets of Advaita. This work was unchallenged until Madhusudana Saraswati wrote the reply to it in his Advaita Siddhi. Though there have been many commentaries and sub-commentaries to the works of Nyaayaamritam and Advaita Siddhi, what is important for sadhakas is to remember that there was written a work which answers the objections put forth in nyaayaamritam. Though these objections themselves might have been refuted or attacked later, still it only means that any and every objection against Advaita can be sufficiently answered. This is because Advaita is the ultimate system and direct experience of oneself as pure Consciousness pulsating inside as I-exist, I-exist at all times. Anything and everything can be refuted except oneself – the I that is the non-dual reality of Brahman.

We will not get into the topics discussed in Advaita Siddhi or even a summary of this great work as it is definitely beyond the grasps of normal sadhakas (and normal sadhakas don't necessarily have to learn such nyaaya-oriented works).

Advaita and Bhakti

Madhusudana Saraswati was a great baalakrishna bhakta and wrote the very beautiful balamukundaastakam. He thus shows that Advaita isn't dry or without any scope for devotion. Advaita is nothing but true and complete devotion unto Brahman. This Brahman though is ultimately nirguna can be accepted as having a guna or a form. Thus one's ishta devataa can be considered as Brahman and as pervading the entire world. Therefore even while learning the scriptures or implementing the scriptures, one can be devoted to one's own favorite deity.

Such devotion as found in Advaita isn't normal devotion where differentiation is accepted between Ishwara and oneself; also such devotion is the devotion we find in normal people which includes just daily visit to the temple or chanting the names of the lord daily once etc. This highest devotion based on Advaita and jnaana is that in which there is no duality. Such devotion unto Brahman is definitely required for sadhakas to progress in the spiritual path and attain the goal of moksha (if there is no devotion on the goal, then the goal will not be achieved as there will be no push to move towards the goal).

This great acharya thus follows the footsteps of Sankara who wrote many devotional works while ever remaining or sticking on to Advaita. If we read the work of

baalamukundaastakama we will find as to how Advaita is found in it, while explaining the glories of baala Krishna (little Krishna).

Nyaaya master

Though many stories are spread about great masters, some may be true and some may not be. Whatever it be, the story goes that once Madhusudana Saraswati went to Navadveep which is sort of the head-quarters of navya nyaaya. Seeing Madhusudana Saraswati, Tarka vaagisha and Gadaadhara bhatta both became scared and terrified. These two are giants of navya nyaaya and still they got scared because Madhusudana Saraswati was well versed in navya nyaaya.

Through the work of Advaita Siddhi itself we can know the master of Madhusudana Saraswati on the navya nyaaya system. Such mastery of logic in no way harms Advaita. Many think that devotion and jnaana shouldn't include logic as it is born out of the intellect. Yes logic has its limitations and will not directly lead us to moksha (it is secondary to the scriptures) but this doesn't mean that it shouldn't be used. Without logic we will not be able to gain conviction on the scriptures or Brahman. Even if we go to Guru, logic will help us gain faith in the Guru (without that, we will doubt the Guru constantly).

A knife can be used to cut vegetables and also to kill people – as to how it is used matters. Similarly logic can be used in futile arguments or to gain conviction and progress in the spiritual path. Proper logic is that which is in sync with the scriptures. Navya nyaaya thus can and should be used but ensuring that it goes in sync with the scriptures and to prove the scriptures, not the opposite (to disprove the scriptures and to prove its own superiority over any other means in the world).

The same logic that is used by Vyaasa Teertha to refute Advaita is used by Madhusudana Saraswati to support Advaita.

How was this great master able to gain mastery of all sciences?

Because of focus on Advaita and devotion on the Lord as Brahman. Wherever we find knowledge and devotion, there will be nothing lacking at all – whether it is pleasures or money or name or fame or knowledge. Ultimately such a person who is full of knowledge and devotion will be able to ever rejoice in bliss at all times.

Gita dhyaana slokas

Though this master is known for Advaita Siddhi, he has contributed much more than Advaita Siddhi to people of the world. The Gita dhyaana slokas that are generally chanted today are from Madhusudana Saraswati's bhashya on the Gita – the work called Gudaartha Dipika. These slokas are very beautiful – he says that Krishna is the milker who milks knowledge out of the cow of Vedas using the calf of Arjuna and provides us with the essence of Vedas. There cannot be any better way to explain the importance of Gita (or summarizing as to what is Gita).

In the work of Gudaartha Dipika we find Madhusudana Saraswati explaining many slokas of the sixth chapter using Patanjali's Yoga Sutras. This is a very bold move as one can easily get distracted from Advaita. But this master ensures that he is focused on Advaita while using Patanjali's Yoga Sutras. There is no harm in using any work or system as long as it is harmonized with Advaita – for then it will definitely lead to conviction of Advaita.

Humility

Today what is lacking in the entire world is humility. Though there are masters who are well learned in different walks of life, they lack humility. Thus, though they may be working in spiritual organizations, they will boast about their own and others achievements. Unlike such people, Madhusudana Saraswati's humility is easily found in his Gita bhashya. He says while differing from Sankara that he is nothing at all compared with Sankara (Sankara is like gold kept on one side of a balance – I am nothing compared to the great Sankara).

Though many people attack Madhusudana Saraswati for deviating from Sankara in few places in Gita, the total meaning of Gita isn't altered and focus always falls on Advaita alone. Therefore instead of trying to get into these attacks and counter-attacks, sadhakas should try to imbibe whatever is appealing to our mind and will help us focus more on Advaita. Then alone they will be able to quickly progress towards the goal of moksha.

Other works

One other important work of Madhusudana Saraswati is the bhagavad bhakti rasayana where bhakti is explained in depth using various quotations from great works like Bhagavatham. Again we can find how this great master easily harmonizes Advaita and devotion as both aren't different, as is considered by many people. True devotion means that one Lord alone exists and this is the pinnacle or goal of Advaita.

Though many people, including Advaitins, claim that Madhusudana Saraswati leads to different new concepts in Advaita or concepts being explained differently than how Sankara explains it (as per his work of Advaita Siddhi), ardent sadhakas will just be wary of it and will forget it. What is important is the legacy that has been left behind by this master. Whatever seems appropriate to us and will take us more towards the goal of moksha can be accepted and imbibed; rest need not be refuted but just ignored. It is not our job to find fault with the entire world. Our job is just to remain focused on the goal of moksha through learning of the scriptures. Whatever helps in understanding the scriptures and the clarifying the concepts of the scriptures can be directly imbibed. Everything else can be just ignored.

Anything and everything about this master of Madhusudana Saraswati is less alone but we cannot go on forever in just one article, therefore we will stop here☺.

May we all offer our prostrations unto this great master of Madhusudana Saraswati so that through his grace we will be able to develop conviction and devotion unto the non-dual reality of Brahman and will be able to through realization of Brahman ever rejoice in bliss here and now itself.

मधुसूदनदेवो यो बालकृष्णस्य भक्तश्च ।

वन्दे सदा यतोऽद्वैतसिद्धिमाप्नोति मुक्तिश्च ॥

madhusūdanadevo yo bālakṛṣṇasya bhaktaśca |
vande sadā yato'dvaitasiddhimāpnoti muktiśca |

I prostrate always the god of Madhusudana who is also the devotee of baala Krishna and from which a person attains perfection of Advaita and liberation also.

Vedanta Pariksha

This month all questions are on Brahma Sutras (and commentaries on the same).

- 1) As per Advaita, how many sutras are there in Brahma Sutras?
 - a) 543
 - b) 523
 - c) 555
 - d) 540
- 2) In the first four sutras how many adhikaranas (sections) are there?
 - a) 1
 - b) 2
 - c) 3
 - d) 4
- 3) Which is the first complete sub-commentary on Sankara's Brahma Sutra bhashya?
 - a) Panchapadika
 - b) Bhamati
 - c) Shareeraka Nyaaya Sangraha
 - d) Parimala
- 4) Which is the incomplete sub-commentary on Sankara's Brahma Sutra that is supposed to be written by Padmapada (and has commentary only till the first four sutras)?
 - a) Panchapadika
 - b) Bhamati
 - c) Advaita Kaumudi
 - d) Advaitaamoda
- 5) Which sutra comes under the adhikarana of janmaadyadhikarana?
 - a) 1
 - b) 2
 - c) 3
 - d) 4
- 6) Who wrote the famed Kalpataru Parimala on Brahma Sutras?
 - a) Sankaracharya
 - b) Vachaspati Mishra
 - c) Appayya Dikshitar

- d) Madhusudana Saraswati
- 7) Who wrote the short Sastra Darpana and the long Vedanta Kalpataru on the Brahma Sutras?
- a) Appayya Dikshitar
b) Amalananda
c) Madhusudana Saraswati
d) Vachaspati Mishra
- 8) Who wrote the Bhamati sub-commentary on Sankara's Brahma Sutra Bhashya?
- a) Appayya Dikshitar
b) Vachaspati Mishra
c) Amalananda
d) Madhusudana Saraswati
- 9) How many parts does an adhikarana of Brahma Sutra have?
- a) 2
b) 3
c) 4
d) 5
- 10) What is the name of Sankara's introductory commentary on the Brahma Sutras?
- a) Adhyaropa Bhashya
b) Apavada Bhashya
c) Jnaana Bhashya
d) Adhyaasa Bhashya

Watch out the next magazine for answers to this quiz. Email your responses to admin@vedantatattva.org and find out how good your scores really are.

Answers to previous months' quiz

1. c Sankaracharya
2. d Ramanujacharya
3. d Kumarila Bhatta
4. a Bhaskaracharya
5. c Jaya Teertha
6. d Vyaasa Teertha
7. c Vishistaadvaita
8. d Sri Bhashya
9. b Anu Bhashya
10. b Gauda Brahmananda

Marks for quiz

Nikhila - 4

Aparna - 5

Congrats to all who answered this very tough quiz and scored at least a respectable score.

Anukramaanika Nirdesham

1. Editorial – a general message
2. Upanishad Vivaranam – verse-by-verse explanation of Upanishad (Mundaka Upanishad)
3. Gitaamritham – verse-by-verse explanation of a chapter of Gita (Bhakti Yoga, 12th chapter)
4. Prakarana Prakaashah – illumination of a prakarana grantha (Dakshinamurthy Ashtakam)
5. Madhuraamritham – a devotional/song work explained verse-by-verse (Hanuman Chalisa)
6. Praadeshikam – detailed explanation of two regional works (Hari Naama Keerthanam and Kanda Shashti Kavacham)
7. Sadhaka samskhepa – a brief analysis of Sadhaka
8. Acharya Smrithi – remembering an acharya through brief life-history and works
9. Vedanta Pariksha – Q & A

1. Comments
2. Suggestions
3. Corrections (word, sloka, content etc.)
4. Would like to see specific content
5. Would like to contribute (through research from websites, don't need to write up the content yourself)

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