

## Vedanta Madhuryam

Salutations to all.

Each and every moment of life we experience only sorrow from the world. All activities whether worldly or spiritual is in order to get rid of sorrows. Getting rid of sorrows and ever rejoicing in bliss is the ultimate goal of life of any person. And this goal is termed as moksha or liberation from all bondages, sorrow etc. wherein a person then rejoices in bliss.

This bliss is not something newly attained as it is our very nature of pure Consciousness or I that pulsates inside as I-exist, I-exist. This pure Consciousness is the basis of everything including the notion of body, the notion of mine with respect to objects and people of the world. That which covers, as if, the bliss which is our very nature is called ignorance. This ignorance is a matter of experience for an ignorant person even as darkness is a matter of experience for a person perceiving it. But once light is brought in, then darkness instantly vanishes. Similarly ignorance vanishes when Self-knowledge is attained. This Self-knowledge is only found in Vedanta - Vedanta is both the text of Upanishads as well as the philosophy which makes us realize our own very nature of Brahman.

Many think that Vedanta is dry because of all the logic used, no importance given to worldly experiences etc. but this is wrong. Vedanta is where logic is used in its peak and such logic is found even in the world - for example when getting alliances for marriage, a person uses logic to find out the right partner. Vedanta is where logic reaches its peak state and there is a natural beauty in this. Vedanta doesn't negate the worldly experiences but just says that the world and its experiences aren't eternally real. It is through this knowledge that a person becomes a mere witness of the entire world. And then ensues real enjoyment of the world. Hence Ishavasya Upanishad says tena tyaktena bhunjeethaah or through renunciation, enjoy. Here renunciation means renouncing the notion of the world to be real and then enjoying the world as its substratum of Brahman. Even as a movie appears very interesting and we enjoy it thoroughly as long as it doesn't involve us (the moment it involves us we will be affected and will not enjoy the fun in it), similarly only a person with knowledge of Vedanta will be really able to enjoy the entire world.

Many claim - Vedanta means knowledge and I am predominantly bhakthi oriented in order to get rid of ego. This is wrong. AMMA says that in bhakthi through prema or love we get rid

of the ego and in knowledge we get rid of ego through viveka. Either way what remains behind is non-dual Brahman alone. Krishna himself says the greatest bhaktha is a jnaani who is not different from me and he goes on to say that such a jnaani who sees the entire world as Brahman is very rare indeed.

Through knowledge of the ultimate reality of Brahman as the indwelling Self (or in devotion, realization of that Ishwara as residing in our heart) and all-pervasive Consciousness alone we will be able to get rid of all sorrows and rejoice in bliss. This Brahman is the subject of all objects and hence Vedanta is the only source of Brahman. Vedanta doesn't directly point out to Brahman like any object but Vedanta points out to Brahman as the subject of all, as the shishya's very nature.

The more and more a person starts learning Vedanta, its beauty will be revealed and enjoyed more and more. Literature or works and concepts in Vedanta are a lot -- their beauty or sweetness can only be enjoyed when we dive deep into Vedanta. This is what the goal of this magazine is.

This magazine titled Vedanta Madhuryam tries to bring out the sweetness or beauty of Vedanta through concepts and texts of Vedanta. Vedanta also is a sweet topic to write works or slokas and hence that also is a part of this magazine (like sristi nirupanam work which is a set of few simple slokas explaining creation).

A word of caution here that this magazine explains advanced concepts and hence care should be taken that the reader shouldn't get distracted or confused with respect to concepts. The magazine can of course be relished by advanced sadhakas and normal sadhakas as well because it just brings out the sweetness of Vedanta. Even as sweetness of honey is enjoyed by people beyond all distinctions, similarly the sweetness of Vedanta can be enjoyed by all sadhakas.

May this magazine which brings out the sweetness of Vedanta help sadhakas to learn, understand and enjoy Vedanta thereby helping to ever rejoice in the ultimate reality of blissful Brahman here and now itself.

AUM NAMA SHIVAYA

Oct 1<sup>st</sup>

## Aukramaanika

Vedanta Madhuryam .....	1
Mithyaatva Siddhi .....	4
Chathussutra Prakaashah .....	10
Avidyaa Prakaashah .....	15
Sristi Nirupanam .....	22
Aukramaanika Nirdesham .....	24

## Mithyaatva Siddhi

### Mithyaatvam

Each and every moment of our life we perceive the entire world. This perception is instrumental in happiness through worldly pleasure as well as indirectly leading us to eternal bliss. Worldly pleasures are seeds of sorrow as they have a beginning and an end; or they are temporary because of the world itself being temporary. Eternal bliss is only possible through realization of Brahman as Brahman alone is of the nature of Existence, Consciousness and Bliss.

Brahman is defined in the shastras as that from which this world has come, in which the world resides and unto which the world merges at the time of its destruction. Thus we can say that Brahman is the cause of this world. This cause is an unchanging cause. Realization of this cause alone can lead to eternal bliss as Brahman alone is eternal (that which is eternal is infinite and that which is infinite alone will lead to eternal bliss).

Though majority of people in the world have heard about Brahman and learn about Brahman, still very few are able to progress towards realization of Brahman. The reason for this is the obstacle that we call as the world. Though the world as a creation of Brahman is blissful, it is the duality in the world which causes sorrow when we consider it to be real. Therefore in order to progress towards eternal bliss (or moksha) a sadhaka has to first get rid of attachment towards the duality that is the world.

We should remember that the world as pervaded by Ishwara is blissful and not an obstacle but the world of names-forms which is considered as real is an obstacle to progress and will lead constantly to sorrow alone.

Removal of attachment to the world is called dispassion and this is possible through two ways. One is through dosha dristi or finding fault with the world - that the world leads to sorrow alone will make a person develop dispassion towards the world. But this is temporary alone as the dispassion will vanish after a period of time. Therefore the second way of knowing the world to be an illusion is essential in order to gain full dispassion.

Vedanta by saying that the world is an illusion doesn't negate activities and enjoyments in the world. The world is unreal or non-existing from the state of Brahman alone. From the

empirical view-point, the world exists even as dream world exists for a dreamer, the water in desert exists even for a person who knows there is no water and like the drama world is real for an actor. Since this empirical vision doesn't affect the ultimate state of existence in the mind where the person remembers that Brahman alone exists, therefore there is no illogicality at all.

But in order for a sadhaka to progress towards the state of moksha in the mind while performing activities in the world, it is essential to know the world to be an illusion. Illusion of the world has to be proven through sruthi, yukthi and anubhava. Illusion is that which appears as existing when experiencing but doesn't really exist. Sanskrit word for illusion is mithyaa and mithyaatva siddhi is proving the illusory nature of the world or proving the world's illusion (world to be an illusion).

#### Proving through Sruthi

Sruthi says that before creation only Brahman existed and after creation Brahman alone will exist. And the world exists in Brahman - thus it is very clear that the world is an illusion because it doesn't exist in the beginning and at the end, its normal appearance or existence in the middle is just an illusion.

Sruthi also says that duality doesn't exist at all. Therefore it is clear that the duality of names and forms isn't real but mere appearances alone in Brahman. Therefore it is clearly proven through sruthi that the world is an illusion.

#### Proving through anubhava

Anubhava or experience clearly shows that the world doesn't exist eternally. The waking world is negated or contradicted in the dream state and the dream world is negated or contradicted in the waking state. If it is argued that the waking world is again perceived in the same way once a person wakes up, the deep sleep state shows that there is a state of relaxation or bliss in that state where both worlds are negated. What is natural alone is eternal and therefore it is clear that the world we experience is not real (it constantly changes) as it leads to sorrow alone. Since shastras also relate the state of moksha to the state of sushupti or deep sleep and a person who follows the spiritual path can directly experience the state of moksha where the world is known to be an illusion.

Proving through yukthi

After learning the shastras and treading the path, a sadhaka might still have doubts about the world being an illusion. Hence it is essential to prove the world to be an illusion through logic. This also is essential in order to refute the various opponents of Advaita Vedanta who are either externally in physical form or internally as doubts/confusions of the mind.

There are many logics (and anumaanas or inferences) given by various acharyas in order to prove the illusory nature of the world. But we find that the beautiful logic given by Chitsukhacharya in his work of Tattvapradipika or Chitsukhi is the best and hence it is quoted in Vedanta Paribhasha while proving the illusoriness of the world through anumaana.

We will see an analysis of this sloka of Chitsukhi.

सर्वेषामपि भावानां स्वाश्रयत्वेन संमते ।

प्रतियोगित्वमत्यन्ताभावानां प्रति मृषात्मता ॥

**tattvapradīpikā (citsukhī) - citsukhācarya**

sarveṣāmapi bhāvānām svāśrayatvena sammate |  
pratiyogitvamatyantābhāvānām prati mṛṣātmatā ||

In all cases of existence, illusoriness is when something is the adversary of complete non-existence in its substratum.

सर्वेषामपि - in all cases

भावानां - of existence (all existence)

स्वाश्रयत्वेन - with respect to its substratum (support)

संमते - it is accepted

प्रतियोगित्वम् - being the adversary

अत्यन्ताभावानां - of complete non-existence (non-existence at all times)

प्रति - with respect

मृषात्मता - illusoriness |

Existence and pure existence

Existence by itself is pure and such an existence is termed as Sat or Brahman in the shastras. It is this existence that pulsates constantly as I-exist, I-exist - pure Consciousness which illumines itself and other entities as well. Without this Consciousness, nothing can exist at all.

All other existence, other than pure existence, bases itself on pure existence. As to whether they are real or not, has to be ascertained through its nature. The Lord says in Gita that the real never ceases to exist. This world isn't real as it ceases to exist temporarily during the states of dream and deep sleep - and also as it constantly changes. The world isn't unreal as well because it is currently experienced. Therefore it is something different from real and unreal.

Analysis through substratum

That the world is an illusion has to be known through analysis with respect to its substratum. The world has for its substratum Brahman from which the world has come and in which the world resides. Anything and everything in the world is in the substratum of Brahman of the nature of existence and consciousness. Now is there a possibility of this world to exist in Brahman?

Mere appearance doesn't make an entity real. When we are walking in the desert, we see water but just because water appears in the desert doesn't make it real.

The world and Brahman are contrary in nature like darkness and light. The world is temporary, sorrowful and many whereas Brahman is permanent, blissful and one alone. Thus it is very clear that the world cannot exist in Brahman even as darkness cannot exist in light. Thus the world doesn't really exist in its substratum of Brahman.

Atyanta abhava - absolute non-existence (non-existence at all times)

Abhava is a term given to that which doesn't exist. That which doesn't exist at all times has atyanta abhava (it never exists). Examples of atyanta abhava are castle in space, son of a barren woman, horns of a hare etc.

The world has atyanta abhava in its substratum of Brahman because of being contrary in nature. The world cannot ever exist in Brahman as Brahman alone exists. Can the world

ever exist in Brahman in the future? Definitely no because nothing can ever exist in Brahman. Then why does the shastra say that the world resides in Brahman? The world appears as existing in Brahman, this is what the shastra says. That which comes from Brahman, resides in Brahman and merges unto Brahman is nothing but Brahman alone. Hence there is no world at all ultimately. If the world does appear as existing in Brahman while having the quality of non-existence at all times, then it is called an illusion.

#### Definition of mithyaatva

The very beautiful definition Chitsukhacharya gives is - that which is the counter-correlate of its own total non-existence in its substratum is an illusion.

Taking the example of water in desert - water in desert is the counter-corelate of its own total non-existence in the substratum of desert and therefore it is an illusion.

The world as we have shown doesn't ever exist in Brahman. But still it appears in the substratum of Brahman and therefore it is an illusion or mithyaa (even as the water never exists in its substratum of desert but appears as existing).

We can find this anumaana being used by Chitsukhacharya in the sloka:

जगन्मिथ्या, तदधिष्ठानब्रह्मणि अत्यन्ताभावप्रतियोगित्वात्, रज्जुसर्पवत्

jaganmithyā, tadadhiṣṭhānabrahmaṇi atyantābhāvapratiyogitvāt, rajjusarpavat

The world is an illusion, by being the pratiyogi (counter-corelate or opposite) of the absolute non-existence in its substratum of Brahman, like snake in rope.

There is no hetu asiddhih or cause not being proven as the sruthi statements and logic are proofs for the reason that the world is absolutely non-existent in Brahman (sruthi says that there is no duality whatsoever here "neha naanaa asthi kinchana", sruthi also says that there is only Brahman here "sarvam brahma mayam", "sadeva soumya idamagre aasett ekamevaadviteyam"; logic shows clearly that world and Brahman are opposed that they cannot exist together, since Brahman alone is eternal therefore the world doesn't exist as it opposes Brahman;). There cannot be any objection that snake and rope are similar but world and Brahman aren't similar as an example shouldn't be extended to everything - here



the example is only used to show that the snake is totally non-existent in rope and therefore the world also is non-existent in Brahman.

Thus the definition of mithyaatva is "that which absolutely doesn't exist in its substratum".

### Conclusion

Sruthi, yukthi and anubhava clearly prove the world to be an illusion - that which appears as existing but doesn't really exist in its substratum at all times. Such a world which is an illusion shouldn't be depended upon. Once we gain knowledge and conviction about the world being an illusion, we will be able to develop full dispassion towards the world. Thereby we will be able to seek and contemplate on Brahman at all times, leading us to the blissful state of moksha here and now itself.

May we offer prostrations unto the great Chitsukhacharya so that through gaining conviction about the world to be an illusion, we will be able to contemplate on Brahman alone as existing and will be able to ever rejoice in bliss here and now itself.

द्वैतध्वान्तदिवाकरः न्यायपूर्णचिदम्बुधिः ।

आचार्यश्चित्सुखेति यः प्रसिद्धः तं नमाम्यहं ॥

dvaitadhvāntadivākaraḥ nyāyapūrṇacidambudhiḥ |  
ācāryaścitsukheti yaḥ prasiddhaḥ taṁ namāmyahaṁ |

One who is the Sun dispelling darkness of duality, who is the ocean of Consciousness full of logic and who is famous as Chitsukhachaya, I prostrate him.

## Chathussutra Prakaashah

### Shareeraka Nyaaya Sangraha

Since the various Upanishad statements appear contradictory in nature therefore Veda Vyaasa wrote the Brahma Sutras which is a logical analysis of contradictory statements. To the Brahma Sutras Sankara wrote an exhaustive bhashya. This was later commented by many acharyas.

The sutras of Brahma Sutras are put into various adhikarana or topics. There is always a need to summarize each adhikarana or topic to easy learning, understanding and remembrance. We have the beautiful work of Adhikarana Ratna Mala (also known as Vaiyyasikya nyaaya mala) of Bharathi Tirtha which summarizes each adhikarana into two slokas. But even before Bharathi Tirtha's time was written a work with summaries of various adhikaranas by the great Prakashatman (who wrote the Vivaranam on Panchapadika). The work is titled Shareeraka Nyaaya Sangraha.

We will be learning this work of Prakashatman for the first four sutras, spanning across multiple issues of the magazine in order to make a deep study.

### Chathussutri

First four sutras of Brahma Sutras are considered the summary of the entire Brahma Sutras. A clear understanding of these four Sutras means that a sadhaka has understood the entire Brahma Sutras - which means the sadhaka has understood the entire scriptures and thus will be able to easily contemplate on Brahman and realize Brahman soon itself.

The first sutra explains about the necessity to know Brahman. The second sutra defines Brahman. The third sutra tells the source and validity of Brahman. The last sutra summarizes the rest of the sutras of Brahma Sutras.

### **First Sutra**

अथातो ब्रह्मजिज्ञासा

athāto brahmajijñāsā

Now, therefore let us desire to know Brahman.

Literal Translation of the work

*Having prostrated the immutable Vishnu who destroys the sorrows of those who worship him, am doing a collation of the logic, in brief, used in the shareeraka sutras.*

*Here (in this world) vidhi or injunction is everywhere performance of activities including the three anubandha of a specific adhikaari to attain an un-attained object and a fruit through attaining the object, following the rule like "should perform yajna". That which is about to be explained, being experience of Brahman as Self after bondage dropping off, is not attained through mere known means, therefore with respect to the means of realization as enquiry into the statements of Vedanta the three anubandha have been mentioned.*

Anubandha Trayam

Even as a job has different aspects like eligible person, work involved and the money received as pay, similarly a work also has different aspects. These aspects though generally is mentioned as four factors, here they are mentioned as three (because the fourth is a relation between two factors). Since Brahma Sutras represent the scriptures therefore the scriptures themselves have the three factors as mentioned here.

## 1 - Adhikaari

Any work has eligibility criteria with respect to learning it. This is akin to a job having prerequisites in order to get the job (like post graduate). If a person who is not an adhikaari with respect to Vedanta learns Vedanta then the fruit of moksha will not be achieved. Thus we find many people learning Vedanta yet only few are able to attain moksha - this is because many aren't adhikaaris with respect to Vedanta. It is essential for a sadhaka thus to become an adhikaari before starting to learn Vedanta (to quickly realize Brahman).

## 2 - Vishaya

Vishaya or subject-matter is also important with respect to a work. An adhikaari should choose a work which has desired subject-matter. For a Vedanta adhikaari, any work which emphasizes on the subject-matter of Vedanta as Brahman is to be learnt (because any distraction from Brahman even the slightest will lead to downfall).

Vishaya of a work for an adhikaari is something which isn't already attained. Else there will be futility with respect to learning the work.

But if Brahman is newly attained, then wouldn't it become temporary or unreal?

Yes it would. Here attained is only from an empirical view-point even as a person who has forgotten that he already has his spectacles is attaining something which he didn't have. In Vedanta Brahman is already achieved as one's very nature. Through learning of Vedanta, the ignorance that seemingly veils Brahman is removed. And this newly gained knowledge of Brahman isn't Brahman itself but knowledge in the mind which removes ignorance in the mind. Thus through this, there is no harm to already realized Brahman. There is no harm to advaita or non-duality as well because Brahman alone always exists - the ignorance which appeared as existing is removed through knowledge of the shastras and since both are in the empirical plane therefore there is no harm at all for non-dual Brahman. As Sankara says, ignorance is removed by knowledge even as alum removes impurity in water - always existing Self-Brahman is then realized.

Lastly, a person who is ever abiding as Brahman doesn't need even the shastras. Hence Sankara says in Adhyaasa Bhashya that it is taking avidyaa or ignorance into consideration that everything including the vedas (knowledge) is undertaken. Gaudapada says that when Vedanta says that ignorance is there, the world is created etc. all these are for instruction alone, after having known Brahman non-dual Brahman alone exists.

### 3 - prayojana

The rule that without getting any fruit, even a fool will not work is valid for any work or learning as well. For Vedanta, prayojana or fruit is realization of Brahman and ever rejoicing in bliss. Since this bliss (fruit) isn't something newly attained therefore there is no fault of it being temporary. As Sureshwaracharya says in Naishkarmya Siddhi, not knowing the Self is the cause of sorrows and knowledge of the Self through Vedanta removes this ignorance and makes us ever rejoice in bliss in already attained-realized-ever-present Self.

### Getting rid of bondage

The goal of life for all beings is getting rid of bondage which causes sorrow. Bondage means sticking on to the illusory world which is temporary and therefore will lead to sorrow. Sticking on to the illusory world also means forgetting Brahman or Self.

Since the ultimate goal of life is getting rid of sorrow therefore all activities should be with respect to this goal. Any work or activity which doesn't lead to this ultimate goal isn't worth following for a sadhaka.

This getting rid of sorrow or bondage also is the same as ever rejoicing in bliss as once sorrow-bondage is removed then we will automatically be able to ever rejoice in bliss (as what remains behind then is ever-present blissful Self-Brahman).

#### Knowledge - only way

The only way to get rid of sorrow is knowledge because sorrow is caused due to ignorance of the ever blissful Self. Knowledge alone removes this ignorance even as light alone removes darkness. The shastras also repeat again and again that knowledge alone can get rid of all sorrows.

Vedanta reiterates again and again that all cause of sorrow is ignorance of one's nature of blissful Brahman - that Brahman which alone exists as the substratum of the entire world and is the I which pulsates inside as I-exist, I-exist.

#### Vedanta - only means of knowledge

Knowledge which removes ignorance is about Brahman. Since Brahman is the light which illumines everything therefore there is nothing in the entire world that can illumine Brahman, except the shastras. The shastras or Vedanta is the mirror which points out to our own very nature of Brahman.

Vedanta doesn't tell us about something we don't know. Vedanta only tells us about our very nature of Brahman which has been forgotten due to ignorance. This ignorance cannot really be explained as really speaking it isn't there. It just appears as existing due to lack of knowledge of Brahman. Once knowledge of Brahman is gained then automatically ignorance vanishes. Ignorance is like darkness which cannot be explained or proven. When light comes in, then darkness vanishes instantly. Similarly open gaining knowledge as found in Vedanta, ignorance vanishes and a person will be able to ever rejoice in bliss.

If after knowledge of Vedanta ignorance vanishes then why haven't I been able to ever rejoice in bliss?

This is because ignorance hasn't vanished. If ignorance vanishes then instantly rejoicing in bliss will happen. And as to why ignorance hasn't vanished even after knowledge of Vedanta, the answer is that Vedanta hasn't been strengthened. A sadhaka has to go through sravana or listening, manana or reflecting (which removes doubt) and

nidhidhyasana or contemplation. Until conviction is gained, a sadhaka will not be able to contemplate on Brahman at all times. Until then Vedanta hasn't become really fruitful.

In order to learn Vedanta a sadhaka has to first desire to know Brahman and hence the first sutra says "let's desire to know Brahman".

May the master of Prakashatman illumine the Self inside us through knowledge of Vedanta so that we will be able to get rid of sorrow and will be able to ever rejoice in bliss here and now itself.

## Avidyaa Prakaashah

The ultimate goal of life is rejoicing in bliss at all times. Since the ultimate reality of Brahman of the nature of Existence, Consciousness and Bliss alone exists and it is one's own very nature of Consciousness that pulsates inside as I-exist, I-exist, therefore bliss is ever available. That which obstructs this bliss to be intuitively experienced is called avidyaa or ajnaanam or ignorance. Ignorance cannot really be defined as it is like darkness that doesn't really exist but appears as existing in the absence of light. When the Self is not known, then ignorance appears as present. And as a result a person experiences sorrow in the world. Removal of this sorrow and rejoicing in bliss is through knowledge of the Self as found in Vedanta. This knowledge doesn't really create a new knowledge but it just helps in removing ignorance - that ignorance which doesn't really exist but appears as existing.

Ignorance is only a matter of experience for a ignorant person. It cannot withstand logic but we can use logic as secondary to the scriptures in order to understand ignorance. Without ignorance being proven, it is not possible to start learning of Vedanta. And without learning Vedanta, we cannot get rid of ignorance. Though ignorance doesn't really exist still it is proven through one's own experience. Put in Ramana Maharshi's style, if a person experiences ignorance then he should learn Vedanta and if he claims he isn't ignorant then Vedanta is of no use to him - ultimately it is upto an individual whether he wants eternal bliss really or is content with fooling everybody that he is already blissful.

This concept of ignorance isn't something that has to be analyzed thoroughly. Instead a sadhaka should focus on getting rid of ignorance through Vedanta even as trying to figure out about darkness is futile and a person should just bring in light to realize that there is no darkness at all.

Concepts like what is the nature of ignorance, what is its support, what is its object and what happens to the world after realization are the matter of discussion for later acharyas of Advaita Vedanta. Though there are different diverse views on this, what is to be remembered that irrespective of the difference in each of these views the fundamental concept that Brahman alone exists always stands true. Even though we may reject anything and everything in the world through logic, we can never reject the Consciousness that pulsates inside as I-exist, I-exist as it is self-proven (and needing no other external proof).

Vedanta accepts two levels of reality - first is the ultimate level where Brahman alone exists at all times. The second is the empirical level where the world is accepted as real - the world doesn't exist ultimately though empirically it is accepted like dream or drama is accepted at its level though ultimately doesn't exist. If these two levels are remembered then all doubts, confusions and arguments will instantly vanish. Ultimately Brahman alone exists - empirically ignorance, the world etc. exist (they aren't ultimate). The moment empirical level alone is considered as real, the ultimate reality of Brahman is forgotten and thereby a person experiences only sorrow. The moment ultimate reality is known (as the only reality existing) then though ignorance, world etc. might appear as existing they don't affect a person even as a person who runs behind water in desert isn't affected after not getting water as he knew that there is no water at all.

Knowledge of Vedanta also is as unreal as the world. But since ignorance is experienced empirically therefore knowledge has to be empirically gained. And this knowledge removes ignorance and as it is about the ultimate reality, therefore the ultimate reality of Brahman still exists and this knowledge is capable of removing ignorance. There is no illogicality whatsoever if Advaita Vedanta is understood properly and a person remembers that logic has its limit and it should be used along with sruthi and anubhava. Though sruthi might point out to shoonyatva or voidness and yukti can very easily be used to prove it, experience goes against it and therefore the yukti or logic has to be faulty.

It cannot be argued that the dual world is experienced and hence real. Because we should use sruthi and logic as well. Both prove the world to be temporary and therefore unreal. And experience shows very clearly that the world changes constantly (and since is contradicted in the dream and deep sleep states) therefore it isn't real.

Ultimately that Brahman alone exists is clearly proven through sruthi, yukti and anubhava. But still many opponents in order to establish their own system, used refutation of Advaita first (because Advaita was well established as the system of Vedanta from ancient times and after Sankara very strongly). That Advaita alone is the traditional system of Vedanta has been explained beautifully by Sacchidanandendra Saraswathi of Holenarsipur in his Shuddha Shaankara Prakriyaa Bhaaskarah.

Among the various opponents of Advaita Vedanta, the first was Bhaskara who wrote a bhashya on the Brahma Sutras and propagated the philosophy of Bhedhabhedha Vedanta.



But concepts of his philosophy was refuted even by many of earlier Advaita acharyas. Until Ramanujacharya's advent, Advaita Vedanta didn't face any opposition other than various other darshanas. Ramanujacharya propagated the philosophy of Vishistadvaita. And in order to propagate this philosophy which can be considered as a mix of Vaishnavism and Vedanta, Ramanujacharya criticized Advaita Vedanta rather vehemently. He wrote three commentaries on the Brahma Sutras - Vedanta Saara, Vedanta Deepa and Sri Bhashya. Prime work of his is the Sri Bhashya in which he devotes a long section first stating the stand of Advaita Vedanta (called mahapurvapaksha) and refutation of the same elaborately after that (called mahasiddhantapaksha). Major attack from Ramanuja (and Madhva) is towards ignorance or ajnaanam or avidyaa which is illogical - since ignorance cannot be proven therefore Advaita itself becomes invalid. But this is wrong - ignorance can be explained logically (though its illogicality itself is a proof of its ultimate non-existence and its proof is one's direct experience). The purpose of this series is to explain the objections against avidyaa called as saphavidaanupapattih or seven untenable of avidyaa.

Madhva's attack on the anubandha chathustayam (adhikaari or eligible student, vishayam or subject-matter, prayojanam or fruit and sambandha or relation between vishayam and prayojanam) has been already answered in the work of Mayavada Darpanam which can be found under vedantatattva.blogspot.com.

### **1. asraya anupapatti - Illogicality with respect to asraya or support of avidyaa**

ॐ अविद्या प्रकाशः

om avidyā prakāśaḥ

ज्ञानहीनकस्याश्रयस्तु किं ।

नैवब्रह्मद्वैतस्यहानतः ॥१॥

jñānahīnakasyāśrayastu kiṁ |

naivabrahmadvaitasyahānataḥ ||1||

1. What is the support of ignorance which destroys knowledge? Not Brahman, as that will lead to losing of duality (if Brahman is the support of ignorance then ignorance is as real as Brahman - then two real entities of Brahman and ignorance exist, thereby leading to duality).

नापि सत्यतावर्जितः जीवः ।

युक्तिहीनकार्यं स्वविस्मृतिः ॥२॥

nāpi satyatāvarjitaḥ jīvaḥ |  
yuktihīnakāryaṁ svavismṛtiḥ ||2||

2. Not jeeva who is devoid of any reality. This ignorance, forgetting of oneself, is thus without any logic (cannot be proven through logic and hence is a concept not to be accepted).

ब्रह्मसत्यभावेन विस्मृतिः ।

ब्रह्मण्येवसा कल्पितस्य च ॥३॥

brahmasatyabhāvena vismṛtiḥ |  
brahmaṇyevasā kalpitasya ca ||3||

3. By knowing that Brahman alone exists, ignorance is in Brahman alone; and there is no duality as it is just for imagined (for one who perceives ignorance).

नास्तिहानिब्रह्मैवसर्वदा ।

विस्मृतिस्तु ज्ञानेन नश्यति ॥४॥

nāstihānibrahmaiva sarvadā |  
vismṛtistu jñānena naśyati ||4||

4. There is no destruction (of Advaita) as Brahman alone exists always; ignorance is definitely destroyed through knowledge (and hence also there is no duality with Brahman and ignorance both existing).

#### Slokas

The first two slokas explain the illogicality with respect to asraya of avidyaa. The first two slokas thus are purvapaksha statements whereas the last two (3rd and 4th) slokas answer the objections and the siddhantha or advaitic view-point.

Avidyaa - without asraya

When we analyze this world, we find that there are three entities that are explained different by the various schools of Vedanta. These three entities are Ishwara (or Brahman), jeeva (individual) and jagad (the world). Jagad being insentient cannot be the support of avidyaa as support has to be sentient in order to sustain something in it. Thus avidyaa cannot have jagad as its asraya. Therefore asraya has to be either Ishwara or jeeva.

Avidyaa's asraya cannot be Brahman because Brahman is of the nature of Self-luminosity and such an entity cannot be veiled by ignorance. And even if assume that this is possible, it would be harmful for Advaita as it will lead to dvaita or duality in that avidyaa becomes a separate entity like Brahman (in par with Brahman). Only when avidyaa is of the same level as Brahman (not one vyaavahaarika or empirical and another paaramaarthika or ultimate) can it make Brahman its locus or support.

As Sloka 1 says, avidyaa thus cannot have Brahman as asraya. The other option is jeeva. But jeeva is without any reality (it is the reflection of Brahman in intellect and therefore isn't real like the reflection of face in a mirror isn't real). And such a jeeva which is without reality cannot be the asraya of Brahman. Moreover if jeeva is the asraya of avidyaa, then avidyaa itself is dependent on jeeva and jeeva is born out of avidyaa; thus there will be mutual dependency error (anyoya asraya dosha). Therefore jeeva also cannot be the asraya of avidyaa.

Thus, concluding the purvapaksha statement in the second half of 2nd sloka, it is said that avidyaa is without any logic. Avidyaa is defined as forgetting of oneself - this is how Advaita defines avidyaa (forgetting of oneself and subsequently there is mixing of Self and not-Self).

Avidyaa - without logic

The final statement of purvapakshin that avidyaa is without any logic is exactly what Advaita defines avidyaa. Avidyaa cannot be explained in words or thoughts. But this doesn't mean that avidyaa isn't there as it is matter of experience for an ajnaani. Now, are there differentiations between jnaani and ajnaani - not really but even as differentiations are there in dream, similarly in the world too. A jnaani is like an actor who knows that all the roles he portrays in a movie aren't real whereas an ajnaani is an actor who thinks that the roles are real. Really speaking ajnaana is not at all there but still if it is experienced by a

person, such a person should work towards getting rid of it through knowledge that it doesn't exist at all.

If avidyaa doesn't exist then how can various realized masters write works?

Various realized masters just portrayed their role in this drama or movie of the world. Irrespective of whether their work is appreciated or not, they are ever blissful. And hence there is no fault at all here.

And realized masters never internally perform any actions as they are mere witness to the actions of the ego. Therefore AMMA says that AMMA isn't doing anything at all as there is no world at all. This is at the ultimate level and from the empirical level, actions are accepted and there is no harm in it at all. Even as a dreamer finds dreaming people and awakes people in dream, similarly in this world an ajnaani finds both jnaani and ajnaani whereas a jnaani though might experience and perform actions in the world knows beyond doubt that there is no duality but Brahman alone exists.

Even as water seen in desert cannot really stand logic, same is the case with avidyaa. Because avidyaa doesn't really exist. That which doesn't really exist but appears as existing is called mithyaa. And such entities will not stand logic. But still proper logic can be applied with respect to avidyaa without losing focus on its nature of unreal.

#### Brahman - asraya of avidyaa

When a person remembers that Brahman alone exists, then avidyaa is in Brahman alone. This is because there is nothing real apart from Brahman for support for avidyaa. That which is real alone has to be support for avidyaa in order to maintain non-duality status of Brahman.

But then wouldn't avidyaa affect Brahman's self-luminosity?

No, avidyaa doesn't affect Brahman because avidyaa is only there for an ajnaani who himself is an imagination (as ever-realized Brahman alone exists here as the very Consciousness of all beings). Since Brahman alone exists at all times therefore there is no fault at all in the form of destruction of non-duality of Brahman.

It has to be always remembered that there is no real avidyaa and only real Brahman exists at all times. Avidyaa making a person experience sorrow is like a person experiencing

sorrow in the state of dream where there is no sorrow as only dreamer exists. But as long as a person experiences sorrow, avidyaa is a matter of experience and therefore has to be got rid of. Since this avidyaa itself is an imagination and accepted only empirically (for an ajnaani) therefore there is neither any illogicality of its support nor any destruction of non-duality.

#### Avidyaa - removed through jnaana

Avidyaa which has for its support Brahman is removed through knowledge. Knowledge here is knowledge of Brahman as found in the shastras or Vedanta. This knowledge is like a mirror which reveals one's own face. Since Vedanta points out to Brahman as the substratum and subject of everything therefore there is no objectification of Brahman (Brahman still remains that which is beyond words and thoughts). Brahman is clearly mentioned as the indwelling Self of all beings that appears as veiled through ignorance. The moment a person learns about Brahman, then ignorance vanishes and the person realizes that Brahman alone existed at all times. *More on this aspect of avidyaa (being removed by knowledge) will be dealt later in another illogicality discussion of avidyaa.*

#### Shaastras - only source of Brahman

Brahma Sutra says that shastras are the only source of Brahman. There is no other source of Brahman as Brahman is the subject of all beings. Shastras being eternal (and breath of Brahma) and due to being the direct intuitive experience of mahatmas is beyond any fault and the only thing that explains about Brahman beyond words and thoughts. Those who look at shastras as mere words or thoughts therefore will not be able to realize Brahman or even understand about Brahman - shastras are to be heard, reflected and contemplated with focus on the subject-matter of non-dual Brahman; only then will they lead to the fruit of realization of Brahman (and getting rid of sorrows and ever rejoicing in bliss).

We will continue with the next illogicality in the next magazine.

May the ultimate reality of Brahman help us through constant contemplation of Brahman as pervading the entire illusory world of names and forms so that we will be able to get rid of ignorance (which doesn't really exist but appears as existing in Brahman) and will be able to ever rejoice in bliss here and now itself.

## Sristi Nirupanam

ॐ सृष्टि निरूपणं

om sṛṣṭi nirūpaṇam

ईशभावितं विश्वमेवतत् ।

(ईश्वरेण सृष्टंजगत्सदा ।)

नास्तिसर्वदा सत्यवर्जितं ॥१॥

īśabhāvitam viśvamevatat |

(īśvareṇa sṛṣṭaṅjagatsadā |)

nāstisarvadā satyavarjitam ||1||

1. This world which is imagined by Ishwara doesn't exist at all times as it is devoid of reality.

मार्गबाधकं सत्यभावनं ।

तत्त्यजेत्सदा साधकः पुमान् ॥२॥

mārgabādhakam satyabhāvanam |

tattyajetsadā sādhaḥ pumān ||2||

2. Reality notion (considering the world to be real) is an obstruction in the path and a seeker who is man (with manhood qualities or of the nature of Brahman) should renounce it (reality notion) at all times.

मोक्षसाधकं ब्रह्मभावनं ।

विश्वव्याप्तसच्चित्सुखस्यतु ॥३॥

mokṣasādhakam brahmabhāvanam |

viśvavyāptasaccitsukhasyatū ||3||

3. Notion of Brahman (that I and this world is Brahman alone) is conducive to the goal of moksha as it is of Existence, Consciousness, Bliss natured Brahman which pervades the entire world.

स्वप्नतुल्यप्रपञ्चकारणं ।

ब्रह्मनामकं द्वैतवर्जितं ॥४॥

svapnatulyaprapañcakāraṇaṁ |  
brahmanāmakam dvaitavarjitaṁ ||4||

4. The cause of the world which is like dream is named Brahman who is devoid of dualities.

नामरूपक विश्वस्यसदा ।

ब्रह्मभावमेतत्तु मोक्षदं ॥५॥

nāmarūpaka viśvasyasadā |  
brahmabhāvametattu mokṣadam ||5||

5. The notion of the name-form world being Brahman always definitely is bestower of moksha.

ब्रह्मण्येव त्वं तिष्ठसंततं ।

विश्वदूरस्थानं ब्रजेस्सुखं ॥६॥

brahmaṇyeva tvaṁ tiṣṭhasantataṁ |  
viśvadūrasthānaṁ vrajessukhaṁ ||6||

6. You abide in Brahman alone always; then you will attain easily the state far away from the world (blissful state).

द्वैतरूपतः विश्ववर्जितः ।

नन्दनन्दनो नन्दनन्दनः ॥७॥

dvaitarūpataḥ viśvavarjitaḥ |  
nandanandano nandanandanaḥ ||7||

7. A person who is devoid of the world which is dual in nature will ever rejoice in bliss, will ever rejoice in bliss.

## Anukramaanika Nirdesham

1. Editorial – a general message
2. Mithyaatva Siddhi - an analysis of mithyaatva and application to the world (with respect to the definition given by Chitsukhacharya).
3. Chathussutra Prakaashah - a multi-part series on illumination of the first four sutras of Brahma Sutra through learning of the work of Shaareeraka nyaaya sangraha of Prakashatman.
4. Avidyaa Prakaashah - a multi-part series with written slokas explaining the illogicality of avidyaa as per Sri Bhashya and the answering of the same.
5. Sristi Nirupanam - explanation of creation through a set of simple slokas. This section is dedicated to original work written but not explained in depth in order to help sadhakas in reflection of the concepts themselves.

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)

Mail [admin@vedantatattva.org](mailto:admin@vedantatattva.org).

Feel free to forward this to anyone who might be interested.

Online download of the magazine can be found at <http://vedantatattva.org/vedantagroup/VedantaMadhuryam>

Subscribing and unsubscribing can be done by mailing [admin@vedantatattva.org](mailto:admin@vedantatattva.org).