

Vedanta Madhuryam

Salutations to all.

We have come to yet another month which proves to be very interesting with respect to different religions claiming that the world will end and thereby mahatmas asking everybody to increase their prayers for the welfare of the entire world. But we should remember that these same mahatmas have often spoken about the importance of learning the shastras and that all sorrows are caused due to lack of knowledge of shastras. Knowledge of the shastras make a person remember at all times that this entire world (and experiences of the world) are just illusions like a dream and that one entity of Brahman alone exists – that Brahman which pulsates inside each one of us as I-exist, I-exist.

Constant contemplation of this truth that I am that Brahman which alone exists is the direct way to instant moksha or liberation. But in order to remember at all times that Brahman alone exists here, intellectual conviction is required. And conviction is gained only through repeatedly learning Vedanta. Though truth is one alone yet when it learnt over and over again in different terms, ways and perspectives conviction grows and thereby we will be able to contemplate on Brahman at all times.

Through constant contemplation we will be able to ever rejoice in bliss irrespective of where we are and what we are doing in the world. Since bliss is what we all are seeking knowingly or unknowingly therefore we all should put effort in order to learn, understand and Vedanta so that we are able to attain the ultimate goal of life and fulfill our life itself.

May we all strive to see and enjoy the beauty of Vedanta so through learning and implementation of Vedanta we will be able to put an end to sorrows and will be able to ever rejoice in bliss here and now itself.

AUM NAMAH SHIVAYA

Dec 2nd

Aukramaanika

Vedanta Madhuryam	1
Sanyaasa Siddhi.....	3
Chathussutra Prakaashah	13
Avidyaa Prakaashah	20
Bhakti Nirupanam	30
Aukramaanika Nirdesham	33

Sanyaasa Siddhi

Ultimate goal of life

The ultimate goal of life is same irrespective of various distinctions of caste, creed, money etc. This ultimate goal can be put into two as complete cessation of sorrow and ever rejoicing in bliss. Each and every person in the world (rather being in the world) is seeking this ultimate goal of life alone. Until this goal is sought, a person will still have desires pending in the mind. If we try to jot down all the desires in our mind and trace back to one desire, we will find that this one desire is desire to achieve the ultimate goal of life. Vedanta terms this desire as moksha or liberation (from bondages of the sorrowful and suffering-filled world). It is only when desire for moksha is fulfilled that a person becomes ever content. Only such a person's all desires are fulfilled and nothing else remains to be achieved or performed (as all achievements and actions are in order to attain moksha).

Moksha itself is defined variously by different philosophies but all agree that moksha is ever rejoicing in bliss (bliss which is untainted by sorrow). Though there are differences of opinion with respect to how this goal of moksha is achieved, there is no opinion difference that moksha is the ultimate goal of life. If it be asked as to then why world and worldly science isn't acknowledging moksha as the ultimate goal of life, then there is no answer – we can just say that the ancient seers who formulated various philosophies were wise people who thought beyond the externally perceived world whereas today's people and science is only limited to the external world (that which is perceived). Since perceptions are always limited because there are innumerable things in the entire world, therefore there will never be any moksha or scope for moksha. This is contrary to various philosophies (that base itself on the Vedas) which try to find out a common-ness in the many-ness that is perceived.

Vedanta is that philosophy which successfully shows us the way to moksha (that moksha which is eternal bliss and once attained will never be lost again). Vedanta explains moksha as knowledge of the entire world put together. We can definitely say that ignorance is the cause of bondage because the more and more we analyze the world, we find that the world has a sentient cause. Though rules are broken constantly in the external world still some rules are maintained as there is a sentient set of people, the police, who watch the actions in the world. The entire world in itself runs very smoothly – the Sun, the Moon, the stars etc. shine of their own and they perform their duties to perfection. How is this possible

unless there is a sentient being policing them? But this sentient being doesn't get involved at all because the entire world is his creation. His creation is obviously controlled by him – he cannot sell it to somebody else because he is the only sentient being present. This sentient being who is the cause of the world and because of whom the world itself exists is termed in Vedanta as Brahman and variously termed as ishvara, paramatman, bhagavan etc. His nature is Existence, Consciousness and Bliss. Needless to say, there is nothing apart from him (as there cannot be anything other than him in the entire world). Though science might talk about multi-verses (many universes), the ancient scriptures say that there is only one sentient being who controls everything that is there (that appears as existing). Lalitha Sahasranama thus says that Devi is the mother of millions of world (ananta koti brahmaanda janani) – we should keep in mind that this was written many centuries ago (and only now science has come to the point of talking about multi-verses).

The one entity of Brahman alone is sentient and the world is insentient in nature. Thus we find that the world is constantly changing. Such changes are impossible unless there is a changeless substratum which is the basis of the changing world. This changeless substratum is the sentient entity of Brahman.

Sorrows are caused as a result of dependency on the changing world (and considering the changing world to be real) and sorrows can be removed when the substratum of the changing world is realized. Even as the problems caused by water seen in desert is removed when the desert is perceived (or water is known to be nothing but desert alone), similarly once a person knows that this entire world is its cause-substratum of Brahman then sorrows end. Thus moksha is realization of the world to be nothing but Brahman as its substratum.

Then what about duality perceived?

Duality perceived is just an illusion of names and forms. Even as various gold ornaments are mere names and forms of gold, similarly this entire world is names and forms of its cause of Brahman. Remove Brahman and the entire world will subside. We experience in the deep sleep state that even if the world doesn't exist, Brahman as our own very nature of Consciousness (that which pulsates inside as I-exist, I-exist) exists. Thus it is clear that Brahman is real whereas this world of names and forms is just an illusion (that which appears to be real but in essence or ultimately is unreal).

The world is often compared with the dream world. At night a person goes to bed and dreams. He sees an entire new world with lot of things and activities. He lives a long life in the dream and experiences both happiness and sorrow. All of a sudden he wakes up and thereby realizes that the entire dream world was unreal. Then what was the dream world? The dream world was he himself – he himself became the entire world. While experiencing the dream world it appeared very real but after waking up the person realized that the dream world doesn't exist at all. Similar is this waking world that we experience now. It appears very real now when we experience it but once we wake up, we will realize that this world doesn't exist at all. A little logic itself clearly tells that this world isn't real and even as the dream world is the dreamer alone similarly this waking world is the ultimate reality of Brahman.

Realization of Brahman happens through the two steps of understanding the world to be temporary-sorrowful and knowing Brahman as the substratum of the world. This knowledge of the world and Brahman is termed as jnaana and is found only in the scriptures. As Vyaasa says shastras are the source of Brahman – there is nowhere else that we can find mention about Brahman or direction towards realization of that Brahman which is the subject of everything (cause-substratum of everything) and is never objectified (as it is the substratum).

Sanyaasa - defined

Mere shastra jnaana alone is also not enough as implementation or living by the shastra jnaana is required. This implementation can be put in one word as sanyaasa. This term of sanyaasa is often misunderstood and misinterpreted. The word means proper renunciation.

Renunciation is generally only considered or known as renouncing of the world and wearing ochre robe. This is just one part of renunciation alone. And this one part is an external one. Real sanyaasa or tyaga as found in the scriptures are quite different from external sanyaasa.

True sanyaasa or tyaga is renunciation of the world. Since the world doesn't really exist therefore there is no real renunciation possible. Renunciation thus only means renunciation of the reality-status of the world. Put in Prof. Balakrishnan Nair's words, renunciation of names and forms of the world is sanyaasa. The moment we renounce the world, then we are without any support as currently we cling on to the world for support. But once the

world is renounced, then we have the real entity of Brahman as the only support. Thus true sanyaasa is renunciation of the world and clinging on to Brahman. This means mentally renouncing the world and clinging on to Brahman. This is through knowledge alone – not through mere external renunciation. Knowledge tells that this world is unreal and Brahman alone is real. If we have conviction about this knowledge then we will renounce the world instantly in our mind and will cling on to Brahman in our mind through constant contemplation of Brahman – thereby the mind will be filled in and out with the truth that Brahman alone exists as the substratum of the world, that substratum which pervades the entire world.

Sanyaasa – two as external and internal

If true sanyaasa is renunciation of the world in our mind then what is external sanyaasa and what is its purpose?

It is easy to say to a person to renounce the world in the mind but it is very tough indeed to implement. In order to be able to implement true or internal sanyaasa, a person needs strong conviction. It becomes tougher if and when the person is still in the world performing activities (as each moment then creates a vasana and relationship with the entities of the world). Thus it always helps to have external sanyaasa. For majority of people, internal sanyaasa directly is possible without external sanyaasa. What external sanyaasa serves is to set the standards for knowledge (focusing only on Brahman either through the shastras or through social service activities which are performed as an offering unto Ishwara).

External sanyaasa is generally attained through initiation from another sanyaasi. The tradition of sanyaasa was formalized by Sankara into ten different sects like puri, giri, saraswati etc. A sanyaasi who is initiated generally gets into one of these sects and given an appropriate name. Though today it is possible to get sanyaasa easily from the north of India still ideally sanyaasa should be given only to those who are able to renounce the world externally. A sanyaasi shouldn't have any possessions of his own – instead he lives on alms or help provided by other people. A sanyaasi shouldn't have desires of his own – instead he works towards fulfillment of others desires. The two-fold goal of sanyaasa is to realize the Self and serve the world (atmano rakshaartham jagat hitartham or jagat hitaaya). Though there are many false sanyaasis who lead a smooth life, life much smoother than even worldly people (living like rich businessmen) this isn't true sanyaasa. A true sanyaasi (external sanyaasa) doesn't crave for anything at all. His goal is to realize the Self through learning and sadhana while constantly serving the world. Serving the world helps the

sanyaasi to stay in the world while curbing the ego (as all actions and results are offered unto Ishwara or considered as Ishwara's blessings). Through no real duty per se with the world, the sanyaasi serves whoever really needs help. Thus truly speaking a sanyaasi's duty is much more than a normal person's as a normal person takes care of a limited set of people whereas a sanyaasi takes care of the entire world. And the sanyaasi's focus is constantly on the goal of moksha. Therefore the world doesn't pose an obstacle and the sanyaasi is also able to progress towards moksha.

Rarely there are people who don't require external sanyaasa as internally they are sanyaasis. Such sanyaasis don't require external situations. They constantly offer all actions and results unto Ishwara – and therefore they are also constantly focusing on Ishwara. The Lord thus says that know him to be nitya sanyaasi who never gets angry or sad – beyond all dual-notions such a nitya sanyaasi soon easily conquers bondage.

External sanyaasa should slowly and gradually lead to internal sanyaasa. It is impossible to be in the world without performing actions, even for a moment. But through external sanyaasa, majority of actions of the world (which generally binds a person) are renounced. Thus achieving internal sanyaasa is easy for an external sanyaasi.

Though there are many rules with respect to sanyaasis, we will not delve into those as those are all for external sanyaasis. Internal sanyaasa is truly what is to be sought after and this just requires renunciation of all actions and results of actions.

Renunciation of action – possible through two ways

Renunciation of action is possible through either knowledge or through attitude of offering. Through knowledge a person remembers constantly that all actions are performed by the ego, the mind and the sense organs and that I am witness Brahman. Though sounding very simple, this is very tough indeed to implement. Therefore attitude of offering is simpler instead. Here a person performs actions as pooja or offering unto Ishwara and the result of actions are considered as Ishwara's blessings. As AMMA says if something good happens such a person considers it as Ishwara's blessings and if something bad happens then it is considered as Ishwara's will. Since either way the person is unaffected therefore renunciation of action becomes implemented completely.

Whichever way a person is comfortable and is able to easily implement, that should be taken up in order to implement internal sanyaasa. Internal sanyaasa, as mentioned, is essential in order to go beyond the world characterized by actions and thereby focus on Ishwara.

Ultimately the goal of all renunciation is to remain focused on Brahman – if this isn't achieved then renunciation is futile. If a person is able to attain internal sanyaasa then such a person will definitely be focused on Brahman (as the world is renounced by such a person and therefore there is nothing other than Brahman to focus on, for the mind can never remain idle or without anything to focus on).

Four types of sanyaasis

Based on external activities performed, sanyaasis can be categorized as four. First is the kutechaka – such sanyaasis just stay in a hut. They don't travel at all but remain established in a particular place. They could either be doing social service from the particular place itself or could be doing intense sadhana for realization of Brahman.

Second is the bahudaka – such sanyaasis constantly roam around the world. Such sanyaasis, contrary to kutechakas, are never in a particular place. One of the reason why such sanyaasis don't remain in a particular place is that they may get attached to the particular place (and that would defeat renunciation of the entire world). Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa's advaita guru of Totapuri was such a sanyaasi who wouldn't stay in a particular place for more than a few days.

Third is the hamsa – such sanyaasis aren't bound by much rule and therefore they might either stay in place or roam around. They are also jnanis who are constantly abiding in Brahman unlike the other two types of sanyaasis who aren't yet realized.

Fourth is the paramahansa – such sanyaasis are beyond all rules. They may not even wear ochre robe. They are truly beyond all rules yet true realized masters. They are ever blissful and they create huge changes in people and the world. Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa, Saduguru Mata Amritanandamayi devi are examples of paramahansas.

Four ashramas and Atyaasramis

As we all are aware of sanyaasa is one of the four ashramas, the other three being brahmacharya, gaarhastya and vaanaprastha. This ashrama system was established so that gradually a person can progress towards moksha in this very birth itself. Gaining knowledge through sadhana and shastra jnaana is only possible when we are young. The more older one becomes it is tough to learn anything (or even remember anything). Thus very young children who are of age to perform sadhanas and understand things are sent to gurukula in the brahmacharya ashrama. Here they master the scriptures while performing sadhana. After coming out of the gurukula, they have gained knowledge and therefore know how to lead life in the world. Thereby they can now progress to live while remaining focused on goal of moksha (so that by end of life they will attain moksha). Now there are two options available; if desires are still pending, such a brahmachari takes up grihastha ashrama; if no desires are there, then such a brahmachari directly takes sanyaasa. In grihastha ashrama a person enjoys sensual pleasures while remaining focused on Brahman (imparting knowledge to one's partner also helps in gaining conviction for himself as well for mutual progressing towards moksha). After growing of age, the person goes to the forest in the vaanaprastha ashrama in order to perform intense sadhanas so that the mind is able to purify itself of all attachments and remain focused on Brahman. Lastly when the time is apt (when he is ready) the person takes up sanyaasa and thereby realizes Brahman through constantly remaining focused on Brahman alone (having renounced everything externally and through practice internally as well).

Thus we find that the ashrama system is beautifully set to take a young child till the state of moksha in a systematic way. But sometimes there are mahatmas who are beyond the ashrama rule. They aren't part of any ashrama and never can be part of as well. This is because such people are ever abiding in Brahman and are realized. Example in the puranas for such a person is Shuka, the son of Vyaasa. Another example in recent time is the great Ramana Maharshi. Such people who are beyond ashramas are called atyaashramis.

Moksha – the goal of sanyaasa

It doesn't matter whether we are external sanyaasis or internal sanyaasis or any type of sanyaasi, the goal of sanyaasa or renunciation is moksha. Moksha as explained earlier is getting rid of all bondages and thereby ever rejoicing in bliss. This is only possible through knowledge – that knowledge that the world is just an illusion of names and forms in the underlying substratum of Brahman.

A person who constantly contemplates that Brahman alone exists here is a true sanyaasi as such a person has renounced the doership, association with action and the results of action. Thereby such a sanyaasi alone will be able to ever rejoice in bliss.

How do we know we have internal or true sanyaasa?

Sanyaasa can be judged through the bliss or peace pervading one's mind. If we truly are true sanyaasins or at least implementing true sanyaasa for even a minute then we will find that our mind is filled with bliss in that one minute. If for one minute we are able to rejoice bliss, then it will instigate us to experience it more and more. If worldly addictions have so much power then what to speak about the addiction of Brahman and bliss of Brahman? Thus those who are able to implement true sanyaasa even for a minute will be able to soon ever implement sanyaasa and thereby they will be able to ever rejoice in blissful Brahman at all times.

Can shudras and women take up sanyaasa?

There are many controversial topics that can be discussed as a result of learning the shastras. Such topics are well ignored or negated as they serve no purpose at all. If a shudra or woman is asking this question then the answer is just that internal sanyaasa doesn't require any rules and anybody can implement at any point of time. And this internal sanyaasa will give eternal bliss now itself – then is there any need of external sanyaasa? Only fools will still say that external sanyaasa is required for me.

Those who say that discussion of such topics is required in order to clear doubts in the mind or as sruthi has discussed this, they are also fools because there may be many things that sruthi talks about but are they all required? The ultimate goal of life is moksha and it can be attained by ignoring all these discussions. Then only fools will still stick on to such controversial topics.

Women who want to take up sanyaasa can take up sanyaasa as per various missions who provide sanyaasa to women. But a wise woman or man is one who is able to work towards internal sanyaasa here and now itself (rather than seeking for mere external sanyaasa). Such wise people alone will be quickly able to progress towards moksha.

Lastly, ultimately speaking Brahman alone exists. So what does it matter whether shoodras or women are given sanyaassa or not? A wise person will understand this and therefore will

strive to focus on Brahman through learning of shastras so that the ultimate goal of life of moksha will be attained soon and here itself.

Conclusion

Ultimate goal of life as eternal bliss untainted by sorrow and termed as moksha is possible only knowledge of Brahman as found in the shastras. In order to focus on Brahman sanyaasa is required. External sanyaasa just provides a conducive environment for real internal sanyaasa. True sanyaasa is renunciation of the world (to be real) and thereby focusing on Brahman as the substratum of Brahman. In this there is neither doership or association with action nor craving or getting affected by the fruits of actions. It is this true sanyaasa that sets the stage for a person to attain moksha here and now itself.

Rather than trying to analyze the rules about external sanyaasa and spending time in futile over discussions a wise sadhaka should strive to implement internal sanyaasa and thereby attain moksha here and now itself. And this only requires the mind and nothing in the external world or externally needs to change – therefore it is very easy to implement provided a person has the strong desire for moksha (and therefore is wise as well).

May we all strive to attain internal sanyaasa so that we will be able to through attaining moksha put an end to all sorrows and will be able to ever rejoice in bliss here and now itself.

Anumaanas used

सन्यासो मानसस्थितिः, मिथ्याजगतस्त्यागस्य मनसैव सम्भवात् मरुमरीचिवत् ।१।

sanyāso mānasasthithiḥ, mithyājagatastyāgasya manasaiva sambhavāt, marumarīcivat|1|

1. Sanyaasa is mental state, because of possibility of renunciation of the illusory world through the mind alone, like water in desert.

ब्रह्मणा स्थितिरेव सन्यासः, अवशिष्टन्यायात् सुषुप्तिवत् ।२।

brahmaṇā sthithireva sanyāsaḥ, avāśiṣṭanyāyāt, suṣuptivat|2|

2. Sanyaasa is abiding as Brahman, due to the logic of reminder, like deep sleep (even as in deep sleep, only Brahman remains behind after world temporarily merges similarly when world is renounced only Brahman remains behind).

वादः त्याज्यमेव, अनित्यविषयत्वात् निष्फलत्वाच्च,गन्धर्वनगरविचारवत् ।३।

vādaḥ tyājyameva, anityaviṣayatvāt niṣphalatvācca,gandharvanagaravicāravat|3|

3. All arguments (controversial discussions) are to be renounced alone, because of being on objects that are temporary and without any fruit, like enquiry into a town in space.

Summarizing Sloka

सन्यासो जगतस्त्यागः ततो मोक्षस्सुखेनैव ।

लभेच्च मनसानन्दं जन्मसाफल्यप्राप्तिश्च ॥

sanyāso jagatastyāgaḥ tato mokṣassukhenaiva |
labhecca manasānandaṁ janmasāphalyaprāptiśca ||

Renunciation of the world through the mind is sanyaasa; and through sanyaasa, a person attains moksha easily, bliss and fulfillment of life as well.

Chathussutra Prakaashah

Shareeraka Nyaaya Sangraha

Second Sutra

जन्माद्यस्य यतः

janmādyasya yataḥ

(Brahman is) that from which creation etc. (creation, protection and destruction) of the world happens.

Purvapaksha

Brahman is the creator-protector-destroyer of the world – this is thatastha or upalakshana of Brahman.

Due to the below reasons, this lakshana is illogical/invalid and Brahman cannot be defined:

1. Since only upalakshana is given, svaroopā lakshana of Brahman is not known and impossible.
2. Svaroopā of Brahman which is non-dual and infinite goes against upalakshana of being creator-protector-destroyer of the world.
3. Illusory world cannot have upalakshana.
4. If Brahman qualified by Maya is the creator-protector-destroyer of the world then the world becomes Brahman (and therefore definition is not required or not valid).

Before we begin explanation of the Siddhantin as per Prakaashatman, let's try to understand the different types of lakshanas with respect to Brahman (and with respect to sruthi statements and logic).

Types of definition or lakshana

We have already seen previously but again in brief, there are three types of definition with respect to any entity. As to why definition itself is required, it is pretty clear – that which is doubtful has to be enquired into. And enquiry shouldn't be vague but should be complete in such a way that all doubts are expelled and the entity is explained very clearly. Such definitions are characteristics of the ancient scriptural system which based itself on logic and experience. Therefore acharyas whenever trying to explain any concept, give definition with respect to sruthi (scriptural statements), logic and experience. Only when these three are

used does the explanation become complete and faultless. Definition itself has a lot of rules as per nyaaya (and we will not delve with this here).

First type of lakshana is vyaavritta lakshana. In this an entity isn't directly defined but defined with respect to other related entities and through the mode of negation (negating that which the entity isn't).

Second type of lakshana is thatastha lakshana. Here an entity is defined with respect to something else (not through negation like vyaavritta lakshana). This lakshana is also called upalakshana to show that it is a secondary definition (and not a primary definition of the entity).

Third type of lakshana is svaroopalakshana where the entity is defined with respect to its nature. This is the primary definition and without this an entity cannot be proven to exist. Many cases we will find that there will only be svaroopalakshana (though other lakshanas also may be possible).

Example of lakshanas with respect to a house painted in green are: vyaavritta lakshana is that houses which aren't green are not the house; thatastha lakshana is that the house is one upon which a bird is sitting; svaroopalakshana is that the house is one painted in green.

Lakshanas of Brahman

Vyaavritta lakshana of Brahman is provided through neti neti or not this, not this prakriya. Whatever can be objectified (the entire world) is negated (as not Brahman). This is because anything that is an object is temporary and Brahman isn't temporary; Brahman is eternal.

Thatastha lakshana of Brahman is provided in two ways – one is that Brahman is the creator-protector-destroyer of the world and second is that Brahman is the witness of all activities happening in the world (including one's body, sense organs, prana, mind, intellect, ego and ignorance).

Svaroopalakshana of Brahman is that Brahman is of the nature of Existence, Consciousness, Bliss and Infinite/Unlimited.

Sruthi support

Sruthi says in many places that Brahman is not that which is objectified, Brahman is not that which is seen through eye, heard through the ear, spoken through words and thought through the mind. Brahman is beyond all sense organs. Kena Upanishad says to reject anything that is pointed out as "this" to be not Brahman. This is because Brahman is the power behind all of these activities. Everything is powered by the Conscious Brahman which is the light behind all existences (temporary existences as well).

Sruthi also says that all objects that we perceive are illusions in the substratum of Brahman. This is because Brahman is the cause of the entire world. The world is constantly changing whereas its substratum of Brahman is eternal or changeless. This itself means that the changing world is just an illusion in changeless Brahman (this is thatastha lakshana). Sruthi also says that Brahman is the witness of the entire world. Brahman as the cause-substratum of the world is definitely a mere witness to activities of the world and the world itself even as the rope is a mere witness to activities of the snake seen as appearing in the rope.

Sruthi says satyam jnaanam anantham brahma or Brahman is Existence, Consciousness and Infinite. Infinite means that blissful in nature (as Chandogya Upanishad says that which is perfect or complete or infinite alone is blissful as there is no real happiness in limited entities).

Thus Sruthi clearly supports all the lakshanas of Brahman and therefore it cannot be argued that Brahman's lakshanas are not possible through Sruthi.

Yukti support

Brahman is found out through analysis of this world. The world is constantly changing (there needs no proof for this ever-changing nature of world as it is directly experienced by each and every person). This changing world cannot exist of its own even as a changing variable cannot exist of its own at all times. Thus it requires a changeless substratum. This changeless substratum obviously is the cause of the changing world. This substratum is termed as Brahman as it is very big in that it pervades the entire world. As any cause pervades its effect (like mud pervades its effect of pot), Brahman pervades the entire world.

This Brahman which pervades the entire world is still not the world (the limited entities of the world). Thus it is clear that anything we take in the world, we will have to say that it is not Brahman. Brahman by being not part of the world also isn't objectified as the world is what is objectified.

Brahman is pointed out as the cause-substratum of the world. But how are we related to Brahman? What do we gain by knowing Brahman?

Brahman is eternal because of being changeless in nature. That which is eternal is Existence in nature (Sat) as it exists for all times. That which is eternal needs an eternal light to illumine it. The light of all lights is Consciousness which illumines all existence. For Brahman to eternally exist, Brahman also has to be Consciousness in nature. That which is eternal is also unlimited (that which is limited is non-eternal). That which is unlimited is blissful in nature as there are no limitations – it is due to limitations of the world that we experience sorrow from the world (temporary happiness and thereby sorrow). Thus Brahman is of the nature of Existence, Consciousness, Bliss and Unlimited/Infinite.

Now when we analyze the I that pulsates inside us we find that I am eternal (ever existing), I am ever shining (and aware of my own existence) and I am never hated. Thus I am of the nature of Existence, Consciousness and Bliss. I am also unlimited but association with the body, mind, intellect makes it appear as if I am limited. There cannot be two entities that are unlimited or of the nature of existence, consciousness and bliss. Thus I am Brahman in nature (because of being of the same nature of Brahman – Existence, Consciousness and Bliss).

By knowing Brahman, thereby I realize my own very nature. Currently I associate myself with the body, mind and intellect thereby experiencing nothing but sorrow. Through knowing Brahman, I realize my own nature of bliss (and therefore the ultimate goal of life is fulfilled).

This I or Brahman is a mere witness to all activities by being the substratum (unaffected substratum). This saakshi bhaava or the cause-hood of Brahman is not eternal as it is present only when the world is there for which Brahman can be a witness or a cause of. Thus this is the thatastha lakshana of Brahman and the svaroopalakshana of Brahman is that it is of the nature of Existence, Consciousness, Bliss and Infinite.

Thatastha and svaroopā not contrary or against each other

It might appear that the thatastha lakshana and svaroopā lakshana are contrary to each other. This isn't the case. That Brahman which is unlimited cannot definitely be the cause of a world because that would mean that Brahman changes. But considering that the changing world is illusory in nature therefore Brahman can be the cause of the illusory world. Since this cause-hood isn't eternal (or eternally accepted) therefore there is nothing wrong in accepting Brahman as the cause of the world and this doesn't in anyway harm the nature of Brahman.

If the world is unreal (illusory) then why even give the thatastha lakshana?

Thatastha lakshana is given when a person is perceiving the world as existing and therefore needs an explanation for the world. Moreover using Chandra shaakha nyaya, shaastras talk about Brahman using upalakshana and not directly.

It is impossible for a person who perceives the objects of the world and is considering them as real to apprehend or even understand Brahman which is beyond everything (and the non-dual reality). Therefore it is essential to take the sadhaka from the known or perceived world to unknown and unperceived Brahman. This is similar to a mother pointing out the moon through the branch of a tree as the child cannot directly perceive the moon which is far. Normal sadhakas cannot apprehend the ever-present and all-beyond Brahman therefore it is essential to take them through the perceived world to Brahman. This is exactly what the shaastras do. Such an explanation is meaningful as well for the sadhakas who are perceiving the world – once Brahman as the cause of the world is pointed out, the sadhakas will be told that such a changing world cannot be a real effect of Brahman and therefore is just an illusion in Brahman; which also will mean that Brahman alone exists and cause-hood of Brahman was also illusory (and is present when the world).

Even as when father is there a person becomes son for the father, similarly when the world is there Brahman becomes witness and cause of the world. But essentially and naturally Brahman alone exists and there is neither witness-hood nor cause-hood for Brahman.

Anubhava

Though we constantly experience the entire world, nobody ever says that I am the world. Thus automatically we are able to negate ourselves from the world. At times we also find ourselves as a mere witness to activities in the world. For example, Obama is elected the

president of United States but we aren't in United States and don't care about it at all. Thus we are a mere witness to Obama being elected the president. Thus witness-hood automatically ensues for us (the only problem is that this witness-hood isn't for the entire world but it is selective, that is it is only for a particular portion of the world which we don't care about).

Though rarely people realize that they are of the nature of Brahman, still unknowingly we do experience Brahman as existence, consciousness, bliss and infinite. It is in the deep sleep state that we experience this nature of ourselves. Nobody can say that they don't experience or that they don't want to experience. The very nature of Brahman is experienced as bliss in the deep sleep state as there is recollection of bliss. Such recollection is only possible when I was there in the deep sleep state. And I was there only when I as consciousness is shining. Thus it is clear that I as existence, consciousness and bliss was present in the deep sleep state. Since there is no duality at all therefore I was also unlimited or infinite in the deep sleep state (there is nothing to limit me). Thus we all experience Brahman in the deep sleep state.

If it is argued that there is also the experience that I didn't know anything then this ignorance is for the ego or individuality. Individuality or ego was resting or sleeping and hence there was no experience of anything (and therefore this ignorance is shown through the statement of I didn't know anything). That I which says that I was blissful is the Self as Self alone is blissful in nature. The ego merged unto the Self and therefore bliss alone was experienced in the state, along with ignorance. Ignorance is present in the waking and dream state and therefore this ignorance continues unto the deep sleep state. Once we wake up, we come back with ignorance as we went into the deep sleep state with ignorance. For a jnani, the deep sleep state also is a temporary state as at all times he is the mere witness Brahman. For him, Brahman alone exists and these temporary states are all just illusions, like a long dream. Knowingly we will be able to ever rejoice in bliss here and now itself – unknowingly we all experience ourselves to be Brahman in the deep sleep state.

Thus anubhava clearly proves the three lakshanas of Brahman, beyond any doubt.

Conclusion

Through analysis of the three lakshanas of Brahman, we can conclude that the various lakshanas of Brahman are valid and exist. Though ultimately Brahman alone exists

(svarooapa lakshana) still the other lakshanas are valid and useful for sadhakas. The scriptures give thatastha lakshana of Brahman because only this can be easily apprehended and understood by sadhakas. And since the world upon which the thatastha lakshana is based is an illusion therefore this lakshana doesn't harm or contradict the svarooapa lakshana. And since thatastha lakshana takes us indirectly to the svarooapa of Brahman therefore svarooapa lakshana not mentioned isn't wrong as well.

We will see in the next magazine the siddhantins answering of purvapakshins objections.

May we all strive to remember that ultimately Brahman alone exists but the world as an illusion in Brahman doesn't harm non-dual substratum of Brahman so that we will be able to perceive Brahman as pervading the entire world and thereby will be able to ever rejoice in bliss here and now itself.

Avidyaa Prakaashah

We have seen in the previous couple of magazines illogicality of avidya with respect to its support (asraya), its veiling of Brahman (tirodhana), its nature (svarupa) and its indeterminability (anirvachaniyatva).

Asraya

The purvapakshin says that avidyaa cannot be supported by Brahman because Brahman is self-luminous in nature and will lead to duality (as avidyaa becomes another entity). Avidyaa also cannot be supported by jeeva who himself isn't real and dependent on avidyaa itself for his very existence. Thus, the purvapakshin concluded that avidyaa is illogical and so is the system of Advaita Vedanta which bases itself on avidyaa.

The siddhantin replied saying that the support for avidyaa is Brahman alone as there isn't any real entity apart from Brahman. And since avidyaa isn't real therefore duality isn't affected at all. Avidyaa since it is just a matter of experience for an ignorant person and really not real therefore it doesn't cause any harm to self-luminous nature of Brahman (and also doesn't lead to duality or another real entity like Brahman).

Tirodhana

The purvapakshin said that veiling of Self or Brahman is not possible as Brahman is self-luminous in nature. That which ever shines and is Consciousness in nature can never be veiled. Thus avidyaa can never veil Brahman and therefore avidyaa itself is purposeless (avidyaa is that which veils the Self, so says Advaitin).

The siddhantin replied saying that avidyaa is only for person who is ignorant. Really speaking avidyaa doesn't exist and it cannot ever veil Brahman. And it doesn't ever veil Brahman. But for an ignorant person, the Self appears as veiled by ignorance. This is from an empirical view point. After realization of Brahman through knowledge (which removes ignorance), a person realizes the ultimate view point that Brahman alone exists. Even as light is seemingly veiled by darkness and Sun is veiled seemingly by clouds, similarly the Self is veiled by ignorance (from an empirical view point). Until knowledge of the shastras (that Brahman alone exists) dawns a person experiences ignorance (which is proven through direct experience for an ajnaani) and since ultimately Brahman alone exists, therefore there is no illogicality whatsoever.

Svarupa

The purvapakshin said that avidyaa's nature cannot be neither bhaava (existence) nor abhaava (non-existence). It cannot be bhaava because then it can never vanish (or be nullified or negated) and it cannot be abhaava because it isn't something merely non-existent (or lack of something) by being experienced (by ignorant people). It goes without saying that an entity cannot be both bhaava and abhaava. Thus avidyaa's nature cannot be determined and therefore the system which bases itself on avidyaa is illogical.

The siddhantin answered by saying that we say that avidyaa isn't abhaava and hence term it bhaava. It is neither bhaava nor abhaava but it appears as existing for an ignorant person (ultimately for a knower it doesn't exist at all). Terming avidyaa as existing (or bhaava rupa) is just for teaching purposes alone. Ultimately avidyaa has no reality at all and it just appears as existing in my Consciousness (Consciousness is changeless whereas avidyaa is changing - this itself means that avidyaa is just an illusion in Consciousness, temporarily appearing but ultimately not existing).

Anirvachaniyatva

The purvapakshin said that avidyaa which is said to be anirvachaniya by advaitin is illogical. This is because an entity has to either sat or asat. There cannot be postulation of a third type of entity and proving that such an entity is also not possible. And that which cannot be explained is illogical and therefore it is destroyed (by itself). When avidyaa gets destroyed then the system of Vedanta itself becomes illogical.

The siddhantin answered by saying that there are two levels of reality – one is ultimate perspective or paaramaarthika and second is empirical or vyaavahaarika. From ultimate perspective avidyaa doesn't exist as one Brahman alone exists; from an empirical viewpoint, avidyaa appears as existing. But since empirically as well avidyaa appears as existing, it cannot be asat (as asat has no existence whatsoever). Avidyaa also cannot be sat as it will vanish after knowledge dawns. Thus it is that which appears as existing while experienced but doesn't really exist. Such an entity is termed as indeterminable or indescribable. And such an avidyaa is postulated only for an ajnaani (who alone directly experiences avidyaa). Ultimately avidyaa doesn't exist at all (this is realized through knowledge which destroys non-existent avidyaa in the form of "there is no avidyaa at all existing" and therefore there is neither illogicality nor destruction of either avidyaa or Advaita Vedanta.

Let's now see the next illogicality with respect to avidyaa.

4. pramANAnupapattiH- Illogicality with respect to the pramaana (means of knowledge) of avidyaa

मानवर्जितो ज्ञाननाशकः ।

दृश्यवारितः लिंगवर्जितः ॥१७ ॥

mānavarjito jñānanāśakah |
dṛśyavāritaḥ liṅgavarjitaḥ ||17||

17. Avidyaa (destroyed of knowledge) is without any valid means of knowledge as it is devoid of any objectification (perception) and without linga (relation with any entity that is perceived).

नागमादपि तस्यबोधनं ।

सत्यरूपविश्वस्यकारणात् ॥१८ ॥

nāgamādapi tasyabodhanam |
satyarūpaviśvasyakāraṇāt ||18||

18. It is not possible to prove avidyaa through scriptures as well because of the world being real (mentioned as real in the scriptures).

यस्तुस्वात्मना विद्यते सदा ।

तस्यमानभावो हि नास्ति वै ॥१९ ॥

yastusvātmanā vidyate sadā |
tasyamānabhāvo hi nāsti vai ||19||

19. That which exists of its own always, its valid means of knowledge is definitely not required (as it is a matter of direct experience).

ईशभावितः लोककारणं ।

ज्ञाननाशकः नास्त्यनित्यतः ॥२० ॥

īśabhāvitaḥ lokakāraṇam |
jñānanāśakaḥ nāstyanityataḥ ||20||

20. That which creates the world (which is imagined by Ishwara) doesn't (really or ultimately) exist as it is temporary in nature (the world is also temporary and avidyaa also is temporary).

Sloka

The first two slokas explain the illogicality with respect to anirvachaniyatva of avidyaa. The first two slokas (17th and 18th) thus are purvapaksha statements whereas the last two (19th and 20th) slokas answer the objections and the siddhantha or advaitic view-point.

Pramaana – valid means of knowledge

Though today science has progressed quite a lot yet it hasn't been able to reach anywhere near the ancient systems of philosophy. This is because science constantly limits itself to the external world whereas the ancient systems went beyond the external world into one's own existence of body-mind-intellect. Through analysis of oneself from different perspectives, rishis who formulated the various systems or darshanas were able to perfect everything from the categorization of the world, knowledge about the world and knowledge of oneself from all possible perspectives.

Knowledge is inevitable in any place or time. Even a simple layman requires knowledge. This knowledge isn't just knowledge of any science but knowledge of objects as such. We are endowed with five sense organs that help in perception and five that help in action. Perception is one of the ways of knowing objects. Knowledge of objects, needless to say, makes life smoother, peaceful and bliss.

Knowledge or way of knowing has to be formalized in such a way that it doesn't depend upon people and time. Many times what one person knows is contradicted by what another person knows. And what one person knows is contradicted by the same person at a different time. Such knowledge isn't true knowledge. True knowledge of any entity is that which isn't contradicted (or over-ruled by something else or ever sublated). The entity in itself is called prameya (that which is to be known). The knower or the ego is called pramaata. And the means by which a person gains knowledge is called pramaana. The true knowledge itself is called pramaa.

Pramaanas are already well defined in systems and these have to be used in order to prove anything to be existing (or real). Anything which isn't based on pramaana isn't pramaa but bhramaa (delusion or illusion). Bhramaa leads to sorrow whereas pramaa leads to happiness (which in itself is temporary with respect to the world and eternal bliss with respect to Brahman).

Though many systems differ in the number of pramaanas, Vedanta accepts six pramaanas. Other systems which accept lesser number of pramaanas incorporate the ruled-out pramaanas inside the other accepted pramaanas whereas Vedanta, as per its definition of pramaanas, says that six pramaanas are essential.

Ramanujacharya's system of vishista advaita accepts three pramaanas.

1. Pratyaksha or direct perception – anything that comes in contact with the sense organs or is directly perceived is proven through pratyaksha pramaana (provided this knowledge isn't sublated or contradicted at a later time). Common examples are seeing of a pot or a house which is in front of us (with our eyes we see the pot or the house).

2. Anumaana or inference – anything that isn't subject to perception (cannot be perceived by sense organs) is subject to inference. Inference is when we see the entity of B directly and thereby infer A which should also be present wherever B is. Common example is inference of fire in a hill. We see smoke in the hill but we don't see fire. But wherever smoke is there, fire is also present. Hence we infer that the hill has fire (because of direct perception of smoke).

3. Shabdha or verbal testimony – where perception and inference fails, shabdha pramaana is used. This is generally through knowledge achieved from words. We can broadly split this into two of aaptavachanam and aagama. Aaptavachanam is words of elders or trust-worthy people and aagama is scriptures (or knowledge from scriptures).

It should be remembered that all pramaanas directly or indirectly are related to pratyaksha (except scriptures though scriptures also have to be heard or learnt directly).

Now if avidyaa is to be proven to be logical then it has to be proven through some pramaana. The purvapakshin tries to show that avidyaa cannot be proven through any pramaana.

Purvapakshin – avidyaa not proven through pratyaksha

Avidyaa is mentioned by Advaitin as that which is neither sat nor asat and therefore is indescribable. Such an indescribable entity therefore isn't subject to contact with sense organ (either existence or non-existence can be cognized). Therefore it is very clear that avidyaa isn't known through perception. Thus pratyaksha pramaana doesn't prove the existence of avidyaa.

Purvapakshin – avidyaa not proven through anumaana

As explained before, anumaana or inference requires a relationship between the entity that is perceived and the entity that is to be inferred. In the case of fire in hill, smoke is perceived and fire is inferred because there is a relation between perceived smoke and unperceived fire in the form of "where there is smoke, there is fire". But there is no entity that can have any relation with avidyaa because avidyaa is indeterminable. Therefore due to relation not existing there is no possibility of inference of avidyaa.

Purvapakshin – avidyaa not proven through shabdha

Aagama or scriptures also cannot prove avidyaa which is the cause of the world. This is because the scriptures preach about a world which is real and which is controlled by a real Ishwara (who is as real as the world). The scriptures don't talk about the world being unreal let alone about avidyaa which is the cause of the unreal world.

If it be argued that the scriptures talk about avidyaa then we say that it is only about ignorance of Ishwara (and about the world being part of Ishwara or Ishwara's real creation). Since such an avidyaa is not accepted by the advaitin therefore advaitin's avidyaa isn't proven by the scriptures.

Purvapakshin – avidyaa not proven through any pramaana

If required, it can also be proven that avidyaa cannot be proven through the other 3 pramaanas accepted by Vedanta but we will not dwell into this for fear of confusing readers.

Avidyaa isn't proven through perception as avidyaa doesn't come in contact with senses or there is no direct perception for it being different from sat and asat. Avidyaa cannot be proven through inference as well because there is no relation that can be proven by anything and avidyaa (anything that is perceived and avidyaa). The scriptures also don't

prove the avidyaa that advaitin talks about. This is because scriptures talk about a real world and a real Ishwara who controls the world.

Thus it is clear that avidyaa isn't proven through any pramaana.

Purvapakshin – avidyaa apramaa

That which isn't pramaa or valid knowledge is apramaa or invalid knowledge. Since avidyaa isn't proven through any pramaana therefore it isn't pramaa and is apramaa. Or in other words, avidyaa is bhramaa or delusion. It is thus a delusion in the mind of the advaitin who tries to work around scriptural statements and logic trying vainly to prove that avidyaa does exist. This is an unsuccessful attempt by the advaitin to protect the system of advaita Vedanta because if avidyaa is proven to be invalid or illogical then advaita Vedanta itself becomes invalid and illogical.

Since avidyaa is invalid therefore the conclusion is that Advaita Vedanta which bases itself on avidyaa is also invalid (and illogical). Therefore such a system needs to be renounced (or not followed).

Till now thus we have seen the purvapakshin try to show that avidyaa isn't proven through any pramaana and therefore is invalid (due to lack of pramaana). Now we will see the siddhantin's reply to the arguments.

Siddhantin – avidyaa, a matter of direct experience

Avidyaa is a matter of direct experience for an ignorant person. Though proving of avidyaa isn't possible, there is no need of proof for avidyaa because it is directly experienced by an ignorant person. That which is directly experienced doesn't need to be proven – anubhava or svaanubhava (experience of oneself) is the highest proof. Therefore we don't need to look for any proof for avidyaa (as it is self-proven or exists of its own).

Even as darkness is directly experienced and doesn't require any proof, similarly avidyaa which is directly experience also doesn't require any proof.

If avidyaa is directly experienced, still it is sublated and hence it isn't valid?

Yes, we accept that avidyaa isn't valid. But this is from the ultimate perspective or perspective of knowledge. Only after gaining knowledge can one say that there is no avidyaa. Until then avidyaa exists (empirically) and therefore has to be accepted. Until

sublation by knowledge, avidyaa is valid and accepted to be so. Such acceptance isn't illogical as it is in order to get rid of it. It cannot be argued that getting rid means avidyaa's removal is temporary, as this getting rid of avidyaa is through knowledge of its substratum of Brahman (and knowledge that there is no avidyaa but Brahman alone exists). Acceptance of avidyaa thus is in order to get rid of it and ultimately it doesn't even exist therefore this acceptance is only with respect to an ignorant person.

Who is an ignorant person?

Any person who isn't blissful and experiences sorrow is an ignorant person because he doesn't realize his very nature of non-dual blissful Brahman (that Brahman which alone ultimately exists). And for such a person avidyaa exists (and proven through direct experience) and effort to get rid of avidyaa through knowledge of Brahman is to be undertaken.

Siddhantin – avidyaa proven through pramaanas

Though there need be no proof for avidyaa which is directly experienced still avidyaa also can be proven through various pramaanas. Such pramaanas don't disturb the anirvachaniya aspect of avidyaa as this is only with respect to its reality status. And when it is said that we cannot really speak about avidyaa it is just that it will vanish eventually (like water in desert) and not because it cannot be spoken or proven from empirical viewpoint.

Pratyaksha or direct experience shows that avidyaa does exist for an ignorant person. Anumaana or inference also proves as sorrow is experienced only when avidyaa is there. Since sorrow is experienced therefore we can infer that avidyaa is also present. Avidyaa is also proven through scriptures. The scriptures talk about the world to be temporary and sorrowful – this itself means that the world is illusory and unreal – not real, as that which is real will not undergo changes (or be temporary in nature). Also scriptures clearly tell that before creation, the world didn't exist and after destruction, the world will not exist. This means that the world isn't real (as it doesn't exist at all times – real is that which exists at all times). Such an unreal world appears as if real – why? The scriptures say clearly that this is due to ignorance. Ignorance cannot be really defined or explained as it is compared to darkness. And Ishwara as the creator-protector-destroyer of the world is nothing but Brahman which is the substratum of ignorance. Scriptures also talk about ignorance removed through knowledge of the substratum of Brahman. Thus avidyaa is proven through scriptures as well.

Siddhantin – avidyaa valid and Vedanta valid

Thus we can say, beyond doubt, that avidyaa is proven and thereby it is not invalid as the purvapakshin claims. And since avidyaa is valid therefore the system of Advaita Vedanta is also valid. Of course ultimately neither avidyaa exists nor Vedanta exists but one Brahman alone exists. But this doesn't mean that empirically avidyaa or Vedanta is negated or nullified. He who is in ignorance will have to go through Vedanta in order to get rid of ignorance through knowledge of Brahman. And after knowledge of Brahman he realizes that there never was any ignorance, there never is any ignorance and there never will be any ignorance – as one non-dual Brahman alone exists as one's very nature of Brahman.

After realization, the world might still be perceived even as after knowing that there is no water in desert, still a person perceives water in desert. Such empirical perception doesn't in any way taint the ultimate perspective. A realized master performs activities in the world knowing that the world doesn't exist and as if portraying a role in a movie – ultimately Brahman alone exists therefore is no problem at all from empirical perspective accepting the world.

If it be argued that after ignorance vanishes or is removed, the world which is the effect of ignorance also has to be removed, then the answer is that ignorance's removal isn't accepted. "Removal of ignorance" is just a phrase used to explain things from an ignorant person's perspective. Really speaking, ignorance is just sublated through knowledge that it doesn't exist. Once a person realizes that Brahman alone exists, then he abides as Brahman while the non-existent Ego performs activities in the world. Ignorance is present when there is association with the ego (when really a person is blissful Brahman of the nature of pure Consciousness).

Conclusion

Avidyaa is a matter of direct experience and one who experiences ignorance should strive to get rid of it through knowledge of Brahman as found in scriptures or Vedanta. Then the person realizes that ignorance doesn't exist at all and one Brahman alone exists. After this the world doesn't exist for the person as the person sees the entire world of names and forms as its substratum of Brahman. Though externally performing actions, internally the person ever remembers that Brahman alone exists. Thus ego performs actions whereas the person rejoices in bliss internally at all times.

Avidyaa since is a matter of direct experience is already proven but it can also be proven through other pramaanas. Thus it isn't illogical with respect to pramaanas. Since avidyaa is valid therefore the system of Advaita Vedanta is also valid. Ultimately only Brahman exists and therefore removal of avidyaa or acceptance of Vedanta, knowledge etc. from empirical viewpoint doesn't harm Brahman at all. And once a person realizes his very nature of Brahman then such a person ever rejoices in bliss while performing actions in the world even like lotus leaf which is not wet by water and an actor isn't affected by actions performed in a movie.

May we all strive to remember that avidyaa is a matter of direct experience for an ignorant person and hence is proven as valid through pramaanas; and though it is ultimately unreal, we should strive to get rid of it (if we experience it) through knowledge of the scriptures (Vedanta). Eventually through contemplation of the ultimate truth that Brahman as the I which pulsates inside us, may we all strive to ever rejoice in bliss here and now itself.

Anumaana used by purvapakshin and siddhantin

Purvapakshin

अविद्यायाः प्रमाणानुपपत्तिः सत्यं, प्रमाणाभावात् अनिर्वचनीयस्य अप्रत्यक्षत्वात् लिंगाभावात् प्रपंचस्य सत्यत्वश्रुत्या उक्तत्वाच्च, मरुमरीचिवत् ।

Avidyaa's illogicality with respect to pramaanas is true, because of lack of pramaanas, that which is indeterminable isn't subject to perception, lack of linga (rules out inference) and the world is termed by scriptures as real (thus avidyaa as cause of illusory world isn't proven through scriptures), like son of a barren woman.

Siddhantapakshin

अविद्यायाः प्रमाणानुपपत्तिः सत्यमेव, अज्ञस्यानुभूतित्वात् शोककारणत्वात् श्रुत्युक्तत्वाच्च, अन्धकारवत् ।

Avidyaa's logicality with respect to pramaanas is truth alone, as it is the experience of an ignorant person, and is the cause of sorrow (inferred through sorrow) and is spoken about in the scriptures (as the cause of temporary-sorrowful world), like darkness.

Bhakti Nirupanam

ॐ भक्ति निरूपणं

om bhakti nirūpaṇam

भावसंयुत ईशपूजनं ।

भक्तिनामकं कामवर्जितं ॥१॥

bhāvasamyuta īśapūjanam |
bhaktināmakam kāmavarjitam ||1||

1. Worshipping of Ishwara along with bhaava (attitude) is termed as bhakti and is devoid of desires.

ईश्वरस्तु चिन्मात्ररूपकः ।

नामवर्जितः नित्यरूपतः ॥२॥

īśvarastu cinmātrarūpakah |
nāmavarjitaḥ nityarūpataḥ ||2||

2. Ishwara definitely is of the form of Consciousness alone; devoid of name due to being eternal in nature.

सर्वव्याप्त ईशस्यपूजनं ।

ज्ञानमेवतत् मुक्तिदायकं ॥३॥

sarvavyāpta īśasyapūjanam |
jñānamevatat muktidāyakam ||3||

3. Worshipping of all-pervasive Ishwara is knowledge alone and it is provider of liberation.

कर्तृरूपकः जीवनामकः ।

अर्पणात् हि स ईश्वरं व्रजेत् ॥४॥

karṭṛrūpakah jīvanāmakah |
arpanāt hi sa īśvaram vrajet ||4||

4. That named as jeeva which is of the form of doer attains Ishwara definitely through arpana or offering (himself).

क्षेत्रदर्शनादन्यकर्मणा ।

आप्नुयात् हि निष्ठेश्वरे सदा ॥५॥

kṣetradarśanādanyakarmanā |
āpnuyāt hi niṣṭheśvare sadā ||5||

5. Through visiting of temples and other activities a person attains establishment in Ishwara always.

ज्ञानसंयुतः निष्ठयापुमान् ।

आप्नुयात्सुखं दुःखवर्जितं ॥६॥

jñānasamyutaḥ niṣṭhayāpumān |
āpnuyātsukhaṁ duḥkhavarjitaṁ ||6||

6. That establishment, in Ishwara, along with knowledge (of Ishwara's nature), a person attains bliss which is devoid of sorrow.

द्वैतसंयुत भक्तिभावनं ।

ईश्वरेण त्याज्यं हि निष्ठया ॥७॥

dvaitasamyuta bhaktibhāvanam |
īśvareṇa tyājyaṁ hi niṣṭhayā ||7||

7. That thought of devotion which is with duality (in the form of I am different from

Ishwara) is renounced through Ishwara by being established in Ishwara.

द्वैतवर्जित ईशभावनं ।

ब्रह्मभावनं शास्त्रदर्शितं ॥८॥

dvaitavarjita īśabhāvanam |
brahmabhāvanam śāstradarśitam ||8||

8. That notion of Ishwara devoid of duality is notion of Brahman as propounded by the shastras.

ईशभावना नन्दभावना ।

नन्दनन्दनो नन्दनन्दनः ॥९॥

īśabhāvanā nandabhāvanā |
nandanandano nandanandanaḥ ||9||

9. Notion of Ishwara (that Ishwara alone exists) is a notion of bliss; and a person who implements is a blissful person, is a blissful person.

Anukramaanika Nirdesham

1. Editorial – a general message
2. Sanyaasa Siddhi - an analysis of sanyaasa or renunciation.
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. Bhakti Nirupanam - explanation of devotion through a simple set of 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)

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