

Vedanta Madhuryam

Salutations to all.

We are in a world where there is scarcely time for anything except our normal routines which include getting up, doing daily activities and mainly earning money through work. Of course there is time for chit-chatting or keeping up with our friends and relatives. But that also is part of regular activities that are to be done definitely without any break. In such a busy schedule it is impossible to spend any time for Ishwara or temples, let alone learn the system of Vedanta. But all this easily changes if there is urgency towards something. Let's say that our son is seriously ill then we will find all the time in the world to take care of our son until he is fully well and back to normal. Maybe a week, maybe a month but still we will have the time for the same. Thus urgency is what provides us with lot of time irrespective of how much busy we are or our schedule is.

What is so urgent about learning Vedanta?

The urgency has been put beautifully and in simple terms by Sankara through the very first sloka of Bhaja Govindam that death is lurking around us – we are slowly moving towards death. Death is of course not an end but just a continuation into the next birth. But whatever we have accumulated in this birth will end. The only two things we carry into the next birth is results of our actions and knowledge. If knowledge is complete (this means that we are able to abide as Brahman at all times) then there is no next birth. But if this isn't the case then results of actions is continued along with whatever knowledge we have accumulated. According to these two we will take appropriate next birth. And if these both are positive then we will be born in a good place or environment which allows for continuing in the spiritual journey.

Let's say we are provided with a great job with great salary now. But we reject it and say that we will try for the job after few months then we are to be called fools. Even though the job may still be available after few months still postponing things for the future is foolishness and that too when opportunity is readily available for us. Opportunity is readily available in today's world to learn and implement Vedanta. So if we just postpone it for later time in this birth or later births then we are to be called fools and it will definitely be a great loss to us.

We have been trying to bring out the beauty of Vedanta through this magazine but really speaking Vedanta is beautiful by itself. The beauty of Vedanta also means that it is both simple and tough – it is direct and yet deep as well. It depends on how we want to apprehend it. For those who don't have enough time, Vedanta can be learnt very easily provided we have gone through the required pre-requisites that will allow our mind to focus on Brahman. But Vedanta can also be learnt through advanced works.

Years ago when we went to Ramana Ashram in Tiruvannamalai, Nochur Venkatraman was giving discourses on Bhagavatham, specifically on the bhārata-rahugana samvaada. One day after the discourse was over, I approached him and asked as to where can we find the sankhya sutras (and other darshana sutras). To this, Nochur simply replied that why other darshanas when Vedanta (vedantic literature) itself is like an ocean? Of course this answer didn't deter me from buying or learning in brief other darshanas. But that Vedanta itself is very vast like an ocean also slowly dawned in me while buying and reading through various literature in Vedanta.

Thus that which has been summarized by Sankara in just one-half sloka has also been explained in depth by acharyas in many works. Vedantic literature is so vast that it will take more than a life-time to learn and imbibe all these works. Here we aren't talking about scholars or researchers who learn works for getting a degree or earning money but we are talking about filling our mind with Brahman in different ways which would enable a person to get rid of all doubts and continuously focus on Brahman.

Many sometimes tend to ignore logic saying that it will not lead to moksha – many even tend to ignore knowledge saying that it is dry or without love – and many others tend to ignore devotion saying that it is meekness. A true sadhaka will not ignore any of these – each of these have a place in the spiritual path even as all the components of a car have a place in the car and therefore are essential for running of the car.

Morning while going through the Sunday Magazine of news paper, read a simple article of message of AMMA. AMMA was saying that logic or questioning is generally considered as wisdom but too much questioning is wrong and too less questioning is also wrong. There are times when we must use logic and questioning in order to ascertain things and there are times when we should go by our heart (or love and devotion to Ishwara as pervading the entire world) while experiencing situations in life. Thus when a sad person approaches us as

a result of problems in his work, we cannot use logic and tell him to get rid of the job or renounce the world and go to ashrams. Instead during such times we should feel compassion towards the person and therefore suggest what is ideal for the person at the time (rather than using logic).

When we encounter a person copying in the exam hall, shouting at the person or throwing the person out is the most logical way to deal with it but this would make the person a serious crime-committer in the future. Therefore just advising the person mildly and lovingly would not only help the person for his future but it would also help the person not to commit the same mistakes again. Thus logic has its use but even love also has its use in life (and spiritual path as well).

Vedantic literature is very huge and when we go through them we will find our mind getting cleared more and more. And eventually we will find our mind totally getting fixed on Brahman as pervading the entire world. In the future editions of the magazine we will strive to learn more and more works of Vedanta which would inspire sadhakas to at least read the vast set of literature of Vedanta (if not thoroughly study them). If we are able to imbibe even little bit of the various works of Vedanta we will find ourselves getting more and more convinced of the ultimate reality of Brahman. And ultimately we will be able to ever contemplate that Brahman alone exists here as the non-dual reality of Consciousness.

May we all through learning of Vedanta strive to contemplate on Brahman at all times so that we will be able to get rid of all sorrows and will be able to ever rejoice in bliss here and now itself.

AUM NAMA SHIVAYA

Jan 2nd

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Yoga Siddhi

Ignorance and delusion

Just technically speaking, ignorance is lack of knowledge of something and delusion is that which is caused as a result of ignorance. Delusion will lead to sorrow alone as it is when things are seen as what they aren't. The common example for ignorance and delusion is seeing snake in rope. While walking in the evening when light isn't strongly there, there is lack of knowledge of rope (perception of something like a rope is there but it isn't known as the rope). This ignorance of the rope leads to superimposition of snake on the rope. Delusion arises as a result of ignorance – thereby we get deluded by the snake (which is not present in the rope). This delusion leads to sorrow as we think that the snake is raising its hood, it's moving and towards us – therefore we will start shouting hysterically and run away from the place. Though getting far from the snake will get rid of problem from the snake, still delusion affects the mind. As a result we will be mentally troubled for a while. We will find ourselves looking here and there checking if the snake is coming towards us, whether it is going to bite us etc. Thus only sorrow is experienced if ignorance and delusion are present.

This applies not just to snake in rope but to anything in the world itself. Ultimately the world itself being considered as real is as a result of delusion caused by ignorance that the ultimate reality of Brahman alone exists as the substratum of the illusory names and forms of the world. Even as various gold ornaments are mere names and forms in gold, even as various objects made of mud like pot, wall etc. are mud alone, similarly the entire world made up of names and forms is nothing but Brahman alone. Forgetting this ultimate truth that Brahman alone exists leads a person to experience sorrow – the only difference with respect to this sorrow as compared to other delusions in the world is that this sorrow spans multiple births. As a result of ignorance that Brahman alone exists, a person will take birth over and over again in order to fulfill desires in the mind (the ultimate desire being complete cessation of sorrow and ever rejoicing in bliss). And in each of these births a person experiences only sorrow.

From a worldly standpoint yet having value with respect to the spiritual path, there are few terms which have been oft-misunderstood by everybody. One such term is the term of Yoga. This term is so vast that it is even added with other terms like bhakti, karma, dhyana, jnana etc. Of course grammatically a word can have multiple meanings

depending on the context but here we are trying to analyze the meaning of the term yoga from vedantic standpoint.

Confusions about Yoga

Though the Lord clearly defines Yoga in Bhagavad Gita still Yoga is often misunderstood with the definition provided in Patanjali's Yoga Sutras, or the definition is provided as per the Yoga Darshana (one of the six darshanas or philosophical systems that are based on the scriptures). If yoga's meaning was taken from the yoga sutras then also it would have been fine but today yoga has been reduced to just one of its eight limbs (eight parts that lead to the peak of yoga), the asana. Today when somebody asks us whether you are going for yoga we may reply yes if we are doing physical exercises. Needless to say these physical exercises are just pre-requisites for the goal of yoga (as per yoga sutras).

Then there are many others who know the meaning of yoga is union as it is from the dhaatu or yuj and meaning samaadhi or absorption. Thus they will very easily say that yoga is union of jeevatma with paramaatma (individual Self with the total Self). As to what is jeevatma and paramaatma there will be no knowledge whatsoever.

Finally there are others who going by the Lord's usage of words of yoga and sankhya say that it is the yoga darshana that is meant through the term of yoga (and this is also supported by the analysis of prakriti and purusha as found in the 13th chapter of Gita). That yoga and sankhya aren't ultimate or absolute has been thoroughly analyzed in the Brahma Sutras.

Yoga darshana

Two of the six darshanas are the sankhya and yoga darshana. The sankhya darshana emphasizes on theoretical knowledge whereas yoga darshana emphasizes on practice of samaadhi. Both accept two entities as ultimately real – prakriti and purusha. Prakriti is insentient matter consisting of the entire world of gross and subtle objects whereas purusha is sentient being. Prakriti's objects are used by purusha for enjoyment. Prakriti is one whereas purusha is many. When purusha alienates himself from prakriti then purusha attains the state of kaivalya or absolute-hood. Here absolute just means that purusha is not in the clutches of prakriti and is independent, therefore blissful.

Subtle differences between yoga and sankhya as well as yoga and Vedanta cannot be discussed here for fear of confusing sadhakas.

Patanjali defines yoga as removal of the thoughts of the mind. Thoughts are of five kinds, some good and others bad. These are – means of knowledge, wrong notion, imagination, sleep and memory. These are removed through samaadhi which itself is of different types. The sadhana for samaadhi is split into eight parts and is called eight-limbed-yoga (asta anga yoga) – the eight limbs are yama, niyama, asana, pranayama, pratyahara, dharana, dhyana and samaadhi. The physical exercises which we generally call as yoga is just asana or postures alone. Patanjali defines posture as that which is easy and steady (without any movement – sthirasukhamaasanam). Asanas help to control the body so that we can go beyond the body to control the prana, indriyas and mind. But foolishly people just stick on to asana and think they are stalwarts in yoga. This isn't the case even from yoga darshana perspective itself.

Astaanga yoga – sadhana for Vedanta as well

Sadhana is that which helps in attaining sadhya or a goal. The goal in Vedanta (which is the ultimate goal of life itself) is moksha characterized by complete cessation of sorrow and ever rejoicing in bliss. This goal is achieved only through knowledge of non-duality, not through any other means. Upanishads repeat this over and over again. The reason why only knowledge can lead to moksha is because bandha is caused by ignorance. Really speaking, there is only Brahman here and we are already liberated (nitya mukta) but we don't realize this and this is due to ignorance. This ignorance has to be removed through knowledge of Brahman as our own very nature of Consciousness. Even as darkness can be removed by light alone similarly ignorance can be removed through knowledge and knowledge alone.

But for knowledge to be effective Vedanta prescribes sadhana chatustayam or the four sadhanas of viveka or discrimination between real-unreal, vairagya or dispassion towards the entire world, shamaadi shatka sampatti (six fold qualities of mind like shama etc.) and mumukshutvam or burning desire for liberation. These are jnaana sadhanas but in order to even implement these one requires a strong mind. Therefore pre-requisite for jnaana is gaining control over the mind. This can be said to be in two steps – purification of the mind and one-pointedness of the mind. Any sadhana that helps in purification and concentration of the mind can be used in Vedanta. Astaanga yoga as put forth by Patanjali thus is a sadhana in order to purify and concentrate the mind. Majority of people are focused only on

sensual pleasures and their own body – this is removed easily through yama, niyama and asana.

It being said that astaanga yoga is a sadhana for purifying and concentrating the mind, it can never lead to moksha as moksha is attained only through jnaana or knowledge.

Vedanta – non-duality

Before starting to understand as to what is Vedanta's definition of yoga, we need to understand very clearly what Vedanta preaches. Vedanta says that the entire world of different objects and people isn't real because it is constantly changing. Since it is constantly changing therefore it is also sorrowful in nature (will always lead to sorrow alone). In this changing world a person thinks he is the body and as a result desires for perfection, completion, satisfaction, peace and bliss. This desire for perfection, knowingly or unknowingly (as majority of people have this desire unknowingly alone) leads to performance of actions. Actions are the way to attaining or fulfillment of desires. But actions are always in the plane of the temporary world and therefore cannot lead to eternal bliss. Instead they will lead to sorrow alone. Desire for perfection leads to more actions when previous actions don't give the desired fruit of perfection. Thus continues the chain of actions. But one cannot go on doing actions in a particular birth as the equipment of body isn't capable to perform actions after a particular age (as it has decayed like an instrument after a period of time). Though body isn't capable of performing actions there are still desires in the mind which have to be fulfilled. Desires can only be fulfilled if the next birth is taken up (next new body which is capable of performing actions). Thus continues the chain of birth and death in order to fulfill the ultimate desire in the mind. But with these births and deaths as well as actions, can one attain perfection? Definitely no as all these are at the planet of temporary world alone.

Only very few wise people are able to instantly realize the temporary-sorrowful nature of the world and thereby they will start seeking their own Self as the substratum and Seer or subject of the world. Such people alone are able to reach the ultimate reality of Brahman. Brahman is the cause-substratum of the illusory world which appears in Brahman. Ultimately Brahman alone exists – everything that is seen, heard, touched etc. are nothing but Brahman alone. This is easily proven through the logic of anvaya and vyatireka. Anvaya is that if Brahman exists the entire world exists. Vyatireka is that if Brahman doesn't exist then the entire world will cease to exist. Thus the world is just an illusion in Brahman.

Vedanta says that the world is just names and forms in Brahman even as various gold ornaments are mere names and forms in gold, various objects of mud are mere names and forms in mud etc.

Brahman is of the nature of Existence, Consciousness and Bliss. Brahman is of the nature of Existence as Brahman always exists. In order for Brahman to always exist, it has to be of the nature of Consciousness as Consciousness is the only light which illumines existence (temporary or ultimate). That which always exists is complete in all aspects. That which is complete in all aspects is blissful as it is unlimited. Therefore Brahman is of the nature of Existence, Consciousness and Bliss.

Even as the entire dream world is seen in the dreamer, similarly this entire world is seen in this one ultimate reality of Brahman.

If Brahman alone exists, what about me?

I am of the nature of Brahman. Here I is pure Consciousness which pulsates inside as I-exist, I-exist at all times. This I isn't identified or associated with the body, mind, intellect, objects or people of the world. This I ever remains the same at all times. This I is the only thing unchanging in the three states of waking, dream and deep sleep where bodies keep changing, coming and going. When a sadhaka realizes his own very nature of Brahman, then such a sadhaka attains moksha. Realization here means ever abiding in the state of moksha (ever abiding as Brahman). Thereafter no sorrows affect the person as there is no duality at all – duality might appear as existing but it is known as just an illusion in I or pure Consciousness.

Thus summarizing Vedanta says that one Brahman alone exists and is our very nature of Consciousness – the moment we realize this and are able to ever abide as Brahman, that very moment all sorrows end and we will be able to ever rejoice in bliss.

Yoga as samatvam – as per Vedanta

Though the word of Yoga is used in multiple perspectives in Gita, the final meaning of yoga is equanimity of the mind. The entire world which came from Brahman and exists in Brahman is nothing but Brahman alone. But unwise people don't apprehend this truth that everything is Brahman alone. Thus forgetting Brahman, they perceive differences in the world. Differences lead to likes and dislikes. Likes and dislikes become strengthened to

attachments and aversions. These only lead to sorrow in the long run as they are based on external objects which are continuously changing.

Vidyaranya gives a beautiful short story to illustrate as to how the mind is the cause of all problems. Once there were two friends Rama and Krishna who went to a foreign country. Few years passed by and Rama died. Telegram was sent from both Rama's and Krishna's parents about their state – Rama's parents to be informed that Rama died and Krishna's parents to be informed that Krishna was doing good. But unfortunately the telegram got mixed up. Rama's parents got the information that their son is doing good whereas Krishna's parents got the information that their son died. Thus Rama's parents were very happy whereas Krishna's parents were very sad. This clearly shows that happiness is the mind and not in the external world. Though Rama was dead still his parents were happy as in their mind he wasn't dead.

The entire world we perceive is Brahman alone but if this truth is forgotten then we will see only differences. As a result of differences in the mind we will experience only sorrow. Sorrow thus can be removed only through the mind focusing on Brahman. Many times we tend to control the external world. Many are there who in the name of social service strive to change the entire world. If questioned then they will say that masters like AMMA are doing and hence we are also doing. We should remember that masters like AMMA are ever unaffected irrespective of whether social service happens or not. Instead of being unaffected by actions through remembering that Brahman alone exists and the actions here as just a role in a movie, these so-called social service people struggle day and night for changing the entire world. Can they change the entire world? Definitely no, as many masters of the past have tried but in vain (including Krishna, Jesus and many others). All those who have tried to change the world have been utter failures. The only difference between these social service people and these great masters of the past is that these masters were ever happy irrespective of the result of their social service.

Sadhakas should always remember that Brahman alone exists and all activities in the world are just roles in a movie (they aren't real). If we think the world is real and try to change the world then it is as futile as trying to purify water seen in desert. There is no water at all present so what to purify? There is no world at all present so what to change?

Instead of trying to change the world a sadhaka should strive to see the entire world as filled in and out with Brahman. This is the way to eternal bliss. Vision of non-duality or Brahman as pervading the entire world isn't a mere vision but it is the ultimate truth. A realized masters sees everything as Brahman effortlessly while a sadhaka sees everything as Brahman with effort (practice). The more and more a sadhaka sees the entire world as filled with one entity of Brahman, the more and more blissful such a sadhaka will be.

All sorrows stem out of difference or duality. If everything is seen as just one, then where is there any delusion? Where is there any sorrow? Thus there will be only bliss at all times.

Vision of equanimity or non-duality is Yoga as this alone changes the state of the mind. That mind which sees only duality will be running here and there experiencing only sorrow in the long run. But that mind which sees non-duality will ever be calm and blissful. Yoga isn't removal of thoughts of the mind but removal of thoughts of duality from the mind – it is the state where thoughts can exist in the mind but they should always be associated with a background thought of non-duality.

The Lord terms such yoga as ananya chintanam or bhajanam – thinking about Brahman alone, nothing else. This just means that Brahman alone is remembered as real – everything else that passes through the mind are remembered to be just illusions in Brahman.

Put in Prof. Balakrishnan Nair's very simple words, just remembering that Brahman alone exists is Yoga. A person who remembers that Brahman alone exists will be unaffected in the mind at all times.

Yoga – state of unaffected

Yoga is the state of non-duality wherein a person through remembrance of Brahman as alone present is unaffected at all times. Irrespective of whether good happens or bad happens, praise comes or curse comes, fame comes or defame comes etc. such a person will be unaffected. This unaffected-state is that of the mind and not external. Externally such a person might appear as crying, shouting etc. Even as an actor portrays his role to perfection in a movie while always remembering himself to be his real nature, similarly a person in Yoga will remain unaffected at all times even though externally demonstrating emotions (like a normal person).

Equanimity and unaffected-state goes hand in hand. If one is there, the other also will be there. Thus those who falsely claim that they are implemented equanimity aren't really implementing it if their mind is affected by situations posed by the world.

May we all strive to go beyond karma through nishkaama karma and through jnaana realize our very nature of blissful non-dual Brahman so that we will be able to get rid of all sorrows and will be able to ever rejoice in bliss here and now itself. As AMMA says we can fool everybody in the world but we cannot fool our own conscience. If we are internally affected then we will not be able to ever rejoice in bliss; if we are internally unaffected then irrespective of whatever happens in the world we will be able to ever rejoice in bliss.

Yoga – performance of actions with attitude of surrender or knowledge

Vedanta through the Lord in Gita says that yoga is also performance of actions with the right attitude. Only when the mind is focused on oneness, can there be bliss as a result of any action. Here actions may or may not lead to success but since the mind remembers that one Brahman alone exists therefore the mind is ever blissful at all times. In order to achieve this state of mind, with respect to actions as well one needs either surrender or knowledge. Both aren't different but emphasis changes in both. In surrender emphasis shifts to Ishwara or Brahman whereas in knowledge emphasis shifts to oneself.

Karma becomes karma yoga when it is offered unto Ishwara (while remembering Ishwara to be all-pervasive Brahman) or when it is performed remembering one's own very nature of unaffected Brahman (that Brahman which alone exists here). Such karma yoga not only purifies the mind but also eventually sets the stage for jnaana (through partial implementation of jnaana as well). Karma yoga is essential to overcome karma as without overcoming karma, we will not be able to implement jnaana in the mind. Karma means duality as there is a doer who does action with instruments in order to attain a fruit – each component of karma is different from each other (thus there is automatically duality in karma). Duality will only lead to sorrow and hence it has to be removed through surrender or knowledge – in both, non-duality is brought into the mind. Though actions still happen like before, still the mind remains unaffected at all times. Through surrender a person considers everything as Ishwara's blessing (whether good or bad); through knowledge a person considers everything as blissful Brahman (just illusions in Brahman). Thus either way, there is only bliss in the mind. Ultimately yoga in karma also leads to unaffected state and non-duality but it is important to remember to implement yoga not just at the mental

level but at the level of karma (though level of karma here also means mentally only but it is more related to karma than the mind). This would ensure that karma is overcome first before implementation of knowledge in the mind. Thereby the mind will easily be able to directly implement equanimity and non-duality.

Yoga – ever blissful state

Though all the various perspectives provided here about yoga all are similar or related closely still it is essential to see these various perspectives to ensure that we are able to gain a proper understanding of yoga. Ultimately yoga is ever blissful state. Such ever blissful state, as has been proved earlier, is only possible through remembrance of Brahman as the non-dual reality behind the world. As Sankara points out in Vivekachoodamani, one may perform actions, one may learn shastras, one may worship devatas etc. but only through knowledge of non-dual Brahman as one's own nature a person will be able to attain eternal blissful state (which is the ultimate goal of life).

If any person is able to remain blissful at all times irrespective of external situations, conditions and environment then such a person is implementing yoga and therefore he is a true yogi. This alone is true yoga as all other yoga including physical or patanjali's yoga darshana will not lead to eternal bliss. Eternal bliss is only possible through remembrance of non-dual reality of Brahman (abiding as Brahman at all times naturally).

Though Yoga is defined loosely by majority of people as union of jeevatma and paramaatma we can say that yoga is nothing but realization that there is no individuality but only Brahman exists. The terms of jeeva and parama for Atman or Self is not really needed as it is only in this illusory world – remove the world or upaadhis and we will find that one Brahman alone exists even as when adjuncts of pot and room are removed, what remains behind will be infinite space (which seemed to be limited as a result of the adjunct of pot and room). Ultimately only Brahman exists – remembering and abiding as Brahman is yoga which will lead to instant eternal bliss. This eternal bliss isn't something that is attained through any other means that vision of non-duality in the mind. Since the ultimate goal of life is eternal bliss therefore all sadhakas should strive to achieve this yoga of oneness (equanimity). If we are able to start implementing oneness now then we will be soon be able to ever rejoice in bliss in this very birth itself.

May we all strive to implement yoga of remembrance of Brahman as the non-dual reality behind the world so that we will be able to get rid of all sorrows and will be able to ever rejoice in bliss here and now itself.

Chathussutra Prakaashah

Shareeraka Nyaaya Sangraha

Third Sutra

शास्त्रयोनित्वात् ।

śāstrayonitvāt

Because shastras are the source (of Brahman).

In the previous magazine we started with the purvapakshin statements of Prakashatman. Vedanta says that scriptures are the ultimate authority for Brahman (only source for Brahman as well) but the purvapakshin raised objections with respect to the scriptures being authority for Brahman. The main argument is that Vedas aren't authoritative because a) things can be known through other pramaanas, b) shastras have paurusheyatva (authorship) as they are created in the world and c) shastras are based on words which themselves are based on raga or attachment. Thus Vedas don't have validity. Let's now continue with the purvapakshin's statements.

Literal Translation of the work

Though Brahman's knowledge, which is desired and is the essence of the entire Vedas, being eternal and the attachment towards activities (sadhana) towards desiring goal being real, the effect of such attachment which is the shadba pramaana including injunctions with respect to real attachments being real, it would lead to praamaanya because of lack of pramaana in vibhaagakarana; (such a statement is not valid) because real knowledge which is based on sadhana for attaining desired results being not established, there being obstacle/contrary-ness due to attachment being unreal, vibhaagakarana also talks about attaining things through other pramaanas and vibhaaga of literature with respect to import on attachment being not established;

Siddhantin - Brahman's ultimate authority is scriptures

We have seen previously as well that the ultimate authority for Brahman is the scriptures. Scriptures are the very breath of Brahmaa and the experiences of seers during times of intense meditation or contemplation. Scriptures don't objectify Brahman but they only talk about Brahman as the subject and substratum of everything. That which is the subject of everything is never objectified but still can be pointed out this way. Brahman is never an

object as objects are dependent and ultimately thereby will cease to exist (dependent means changing which also means subject to birth and death). Brahman is also the substratum of the entire world of names and forms – though Brahman is the cause of the world, still this cause isn't like a worldly cause which will either change or vanish to give place to the effect; instead this cause is the substratum of the world as the world is just an illusion in the substratum of Brahman. Illusions are that which aren't real but appears as real when perceiving it. Common examples of illusions are snake seen in rope, water seen in desert and the dream world seen in the dreamer.

Brahman as the subject and substratum of the entire world is pointed out in the scriptures as one's own very nature of pure Consciousness. Thus there is no objectification of Brahman but still there is mentioned clear way to attain or realize Brahman (along with mentioning clearly about the goal of Brahman itself).

Brahman as a result of being found in the scriptures is all-knowing. Such all-knowingness is essential to prove that Brahman is the essence or substratum of the entire world. That which is the non-dual reality in which the world appears should know each and everything about the world (all-knowingness of the world). But if Brahman's authority as the shastras is disproved and if shastras themselves are disproved to be valid or authoritative then Brahman wouldn't be all-knowing (sarvajna).

In such a case where Brahman is proven to be not all-knowing, entire system of Vedanta will fall apart (as Vedanta emphasizes on Brahman being all-knowing and being the one ultimate cause of the entire world).

Siddhantin – shastras have praamaanya

Shastras have praamaanya because knowledge of Brahman is real, attachment towards desire for realization of Brahman is real and the effect of such attachment towards realization through knowledge is also real.

Brahman being real it is clear that knowledge of Brahman is also real. And the attachment towards desire for realization of Brahman that is the ultimate desire for everyone and the very essence of the scriptures is also real. The effect of such attachment is realization of Brahman which is also real – therefore we can conclude that shastras have validity.

The above arguments are raised by the purvapakshin himself in order to refute it.

Purvapakshin – Knowledge being real is not established

It cannot be claimed or proved or established that knowledge is real. Knowledge of Brahman is not attained by many people, instead is attained only by a few rare people and such people cannot talk about Brahman therefore this would make knowledge of Brahman itself being not established (or its reality being not established). Brahman may be real but Brahman's knowledge need not be real and this doubt about knowledge of Brahman being not real becomes stronger when we know that Brahman is something that cannot be objectified. This means that any knowledge of Brahman will not be real.

Add to this the Vedantic standpoint that once a person realizes Brahman, knowledge of Brahman also vanishes after destruction of avidyaa. This itself means that knowledge of Brahman is not real – for it were real then it would always exist. Since it doesn't always exist and vanishes after a period of time therefore it has to be concluded such knowledge of Brahman being real isn't established (though it isn't necessary to prove that such knowledge doesn't exist – proving that such knowledge's reality isn't established is enough to negate the authority of such knowledge).

Purvapakshin – attachment or desire for realization isn't real

The desire for realization of Brahman cannot be proven to be real because it will have to end at some point or the other (when the desire is fulfilled). That which cannot be proven to be real need not be taken resort to. If taking resort to that which isn't real, then whatever we are trying to prove will be doubtful, illogical and invalid as well. Therefore Vedantin's argument that desire for Brahman is real is invalid and that will not lead to authoritative nature of Brahman.

This also leads to contrary-ness – we will have to conclude that desire for realization isn't real which itself means knowledge of Brahman isn't real which itself means that authority of the scriptures isn't real (as scriptures say that we have to strive to realize Brahman).

Purvapakshin – Other pramaanas are valid and enough

Vibhaagakarana which was used by the siddhantin to prove the authority of scriptures for Brahman (or Brahman being the source of the scriptures or scriptures coming out of Brahman) goes for a toss because such vibhaagakarana talks about other pramaanas being used in order to attain things in the world. Wherever there is scope for other pramaanas, there is no necessity to depend on the shabda pramaana.

Shabda pramaana may be used but other pramaanas are also as valid as shabda pramaana. The contention of Advaita that shabda pramaana alone is the ultimate authority for Brahman and no other means can lead us to realization of Brahman isn't right as other pramaanas can be valid in everything and therefore should be used for realization of Brahman as well. It could also be argued that through the Brahma Sutras, those who want shabda pramaana alone to be ultimate are arguing with incomplete or improper logic to establish supremacy or excellence of shabda pramaana.

Though we will continue with purvapaksha and siddhantapaksha for this sutra in the next magazines, it is important to understand as to how different systems look at pramaanas. This would make us understand as to why it is essential for Vedanta to establish that shabda pramaanas alone are the ultimate authority for Brahman (or eternal bliss as the ultimate state of moksha).

Various systems of philosophy (darshanas)

There are generally accepted six systems which are called aastika and six others which are called naastikas. Some opine that aastikas are who accept Ishwara whereas naastikas are who don't accept Ishwara. Others opine that aastikas depend on the scriptures or accept scriptures as a pramaana whereas naastikas don't accept scriptures as a pramaana or valid means of knowledge.

Among the naastika systems we can find the various chaarvaka systems which say that the body is the Self, indriyas are the Self, prana is the Self etc. – these systems accept the Self as insentient entities which are in fact triggered or powered by the Consciousness or presence of the Self. The rest of the naastika systems are the Buddhist and the jain systems. In Jain we have the differentiation of Svetambara and Digambara (former wearing white dresses whereas the latter wearing no dress). In Buddhist systems we have hinayana and Mahayana – split further into sautrantikas, vaibhasikas, madhyamaka and vijnaanavadins. The one main similarity in these systems is that they don't accept shabda pramaana or scriptures as a valid means of knowledge. Forget accepting scriptures as the ultimate means of knowledge they don't even accept scriptures a means of knowledge.

Among the shad aastika darshanas we have nyaaya-vaisheshika, sankhya-yoga, purva mimamsa-uttara mimamsa (or Vedanta). All these systems accept scriptures as a valid means of knowledge but it is only Vedanta which accepts Vedanta as the ultimate means of

knowledge (that means of knowledge which alone will take to the blissful state of moksha as no other pramaanaas can direct us to Brahman which is the subject-substratum of the entire world).

Pramaanaas – variously accepted by different systems

Pramaanaas are six in number – though we have seen these in depth in previous magazines, we will see them very briefly here. First is pratyaksha where knowledge is gained through sense organs coming in contact with sense objects. Second is anumaana or inference where knowledge is gained indirectly of that which cannot be directly perceived but through perception of something which is directly related to this object (that cannot be directly perceived). Third is anumaana where knowledge is gained through similarity with some other known entity. Fourth is arthaapatti where knowledge is gained in order to make a statement valid (without this knowledge or presumption the other statement which is directly perceived becomes invalid). Fifth is anupalabdi where lack of existence of an entity is perceived. Sixth and last is shabda pramaana or verbal testimony. This is of two types – one is words of elders or words that are proven earlier and second is the scriptures.

Not all systems accept all the six pramaanaas. Only the two systems of purva mimamsa and Vedanta (only the bhatta system of purva mimamsa) accept all the six pramaanaas. Vaisheshikas, Sankhya and Yoga accept only the three pramaanaas of pratyaksha, anumaana and shabda. Nyaaya accepts four pramaanas of pratyaksha, anumaana, upamaana and shadba. Prabhaakara adds the one pramaanaa of arthaapatti to the list of five accepted pramaanaas.

Thus we find that pramaanaas are variously interpreted and used by different systems of philosophy. It is only Vedanta which accepts shabda pramaana as the ultimate authority. All other pramaanaas are sublated or overruled by shabda pramaana. This is because scriptures are the very breath of Brahmaa and apaurusheya – that which is authored by a person is faulty whereas that which doesn't have any authorship but exists eternally will be without any fault. Scriptures also are authoritative because they have been tested time and again by various realized masters of the past. Last but not the least any person who follows the scriptures (teachings of the scriptures) will be able to eventually attain the blissful state of moksha – that there is no doubt in this is being mentioned by the scriptures themselves in many places.

The Lord promises in many places of Gita that one who follows the words of the Lord will be able to attain the blissful state of moksha and there is no doubt in this aspect.

But if a person just follows the scriptures and doesn't find any effect in it, then one main reason is that there is lack of faith. Faith or open-mindedness is required in order to benefit from learning and implementation of the scriptures. It is the scriptures promise also that there is no way to eternal bliss than knowledge of Brahman as found in the scriptures. The scriptures aren't boasting through these words but it is the truth which can be directly experienced by any person through simple testing in one's own life itself. As we will see in future magazines, scriptures are the ultimate authority to know Brahman and since Brahman is the ultimate reality therefore all sadhakas should continuously strive to realize Brahman through knowledge and implementation of the scriptures.

May we all strive to learn the scriptures which is the ultimate authority on Brahman so that through knowing Brahman we will be able to get rid of all sorrows and will be able to ever rejoice in bliss here and now itself.

Avidyaa Prakaashah

We have thus completed analysis of the seven types of illogicalities of avidyaa and the answering of the same from the work of avidyaa prakaashah. In this issue we will try to see a summary of this entire work.

Advaita – ultimate truth

Our experience spectrum constantly leads us to duality or differences. Irrespective of where we are, what we are doing etc. we find only duality everywhere. Needless to say it is this duality that leads to sorrow. Whenever duality is perceived there will be likes and dislikes created as a result. Likes and dislikes get strengthened as attachments and aversions. Attachments and aversions will lead to happiness and sorrow – when something good happens to attached entity then we become happy and when something bad happens to attached entity then we become sad; similarly when something good happens to averted entity we will become sad and when something bad happens we will become happy. Thus as a result of attachments and aversions we will be constantly whirled between happiness and sorrow.

And when attachments or desires aren't fulfilled we will become sad. Not just this but then we may also take resort to adharmic or wrong way of fulfilling those desires. Thus thieves aren't born thieves but as a result of their desires not getting fulfilled through normal means, they take resort to adharmic way. Whether we take resort to dharma or adharma in order to fulfill desires, desires will multiply. Desires are like cells – when one dies, many others take its place. The single desire of buying a car is fulfilled when the car is bought but then this one desire leads to many more desires like beautifying the car, showing it to friends, taking it for a long trip, having a partner and children in order to fill the car etc. Desires can never end by just fulfillment. Thus Manu says that getting rid of desires by enjoying or fulfilling them is like trying to extinguish fire by pouring ghee on it – instead of being extinguished, fire will burn more vigorously, similarly instead of all desires getting exhausted more desires will get created in the mind. This chain of never-ending desires will lead to never-ending births with sorrows and sufferings as the only experiences.

Thus we see that sorrows can be traced back to duality. If duality is put to an end then sorrows also will be instantly ended. But is it possible to put an end to duality? If duality is ended then will it not lead to another duality being created as that which dies will again be

created? It is possible to put an end to duality and such ending will not lead to rebirth of duality – this is because the end of duality is not through terminating it but through knowledge. Knowledge that there is no duality at all here will instantly end duality even as knowledge that there is no water in desert will instantly put an end to water in the desert. Duality is just an illusion in non-duality. The scriptures clearly prove that non-duality alone exists at all times. The ultimate reality of non-duality is the way to eternal bliss here and now itself – therefore everybody who wants eternal bliss should strive to gain knowledge of non-duality.

Advaita – proven through sruthi, yukti and anubhava

Now anything that has to be proven has to be proved through sruthi or scriptural statements, yukti or logical analysis and anubhava or experience.

Sruthi says that before creation only non-duality existed – Existence alone existed, one without a second. And creation is mentioned to be just names and forms. Even as various names and forms of gold are mere illusions in gold, similarly names and forms of the world is just an illusion in the non-dual reality of Brahman. The world is just created in Brahman, exists in Brahman and after destruction merges unto Brahman. Thus it is very clear that the world is nothing but Brahman alone. Since Brahman alone exists therefore non-duality is directly proven. Sruthi also says variously that there is no duality at all here and he who sees duality as if existing will go from death to death.

The Lord also says in Gita that there is nothing apart from here, I am the beginning, middle and end of all beings; the Lord also says that I am the indwelling Self or essence of all beings. These statements make it very clear that non-duality of Brahman alone exists at all times. And anybody who sees duality is just under illusion and therefore he will suffer (illusorily as ultimately Brahman alone exists).

Yukti can be applied in many ways to prove that Brahman alone exists. First way is through analysis of the cause of the world of duality. The world comes from the cause of Brahman, exists in it and merges unto it. Thus before creation of the world, Brahman alone existed and after destruction of the world, Brahman alone will exist – thus only in between the world of duality appears to be existing. That which doesn't exist in the beginning and at the end also doesn't exist in the middle. Even if it appears as existing, its reality status is just that of an illusion (as it only appears as existing – if it really exists then it has to always

exist rather than existing for a temporary period of time alone). Thus duality is just an illusion in non-duality which alone really exists at all times.

Second way is through names and forms. Even as various names and forms of gold are just illusions in gold and gold alone exists; similarly the entire world of names and forms is just an illusion in Brahman. That the entire world is just names and forms is known as their existence is only as a result of Brahman's nature of Existence, Consciousness and Bliss. That which keeps changing is mere names and forms – it will be created and destroyed. Only ignorant people will get affected by such names and forms (considering it to be real) whereas knowledgeable people will not get affected as they know the essence alone to be always present. Thus normal people go to the goldsmith and are sad that their ring broke but the goldsmith is unaffected as he knows that gold alone is real – the name of ring and the particular form isn't real so it will vanish; therefore he happily takes the ring and makes a new one for the person. A learnt person is one who remembers that everything is just an illusion of names and forms in non-duality of Brahman like goldsmith remembers all gold ornaments to be mere names and forms in gold.

Third way is through the logic of anvaya and vyatireka. Anvaya is co-existence and vyatireka is co-absence. Through these two, independent entity among two entities is found out and the dependent entity as well is found out. When we analyze the world, we will find just two entities alone – the Seer of Brahman and the seen of the world. Using anvaya yukti, if Brahman exists then the world exists. Using vyatireka yukti, if Brahman doesn't exist then the world doesn't exist. Thus it is very clear that the world is dependent entity and it depends on the independent entity of Brahman. That which is independent alone is real – dependent entity is just an illusion in the independent entity even as variable is just an illusion in a constant (a variable is only a constant at all times). Thus anvaya vyatireka yukti shows that the world is dependent on Brahman and therefore is just an illusion in Brahman. This means that Brahman alone exists at all times – non-duality alone exists and is proven through logic as well.

Anubhava or experience clearly shows non-duality daily to us – this is through the deep sleep or sushupti state. We find that in this state there is no duality at all; everything completely merges unto the non-duality of Brahman or Consciousness. Yes, it is true that everything is resting but this experience directly proves that non-duality alone is real as everything else come and goes – that which comes and goes isn't real but is just an illusion

in reality. The dream state also shows as to how the waking world is just an illusion in Brahman. In the dream state a dreamer sees an entire world which appears very real while experiencing it but after waking up the dreamer realizes that there never was any dream world and there will never be any dream world as all that was just the dreamer alone. Similarly this entire world that we experience is just one dreamer of Brahman alone. Everything appears very real now as we are dreaming. Once we wake up from this long dream, through knowledge, we will realize that Brahman alone exists and the entire waking world is just an illusion in Brahman.

Any person who is willing to follow the words of the scriptures and implement knowledge in day-to-day life will be able to realize soon itself the eternal bliss that is present in non-duality – implementation of knowledge is as simple as remembering that one Brahman alone exists here. This will take us to direct experience or aparoksha anubhava of Brahman.

Two perspectives

Thus non-duality or advaita is proven through sruthi, yukti and anubhava. Now it is important to understand the two perspectives that are present in all of these, one being that of non-duality and another which includes duality temporarily.

We find that many scriptural statements are contrary in nature. In one place sruthi says that the world is created by Ishwara and goes on to explain how creation has happened; whereas in another place sruthi says that there is no duality and whoever sees duality as if existing will go from death to death (will experience only sorrow). Such contrary statements can only be understood properly by remembering the two perspectives that are present with respect to illusions.

We are waking in the desert and we see water in desert. When we see water in desert, water appears as existing and it has reality. But after knowing that there is no water in desert, water is non-existent. First is the empirical perspective or vyaavahaarika satyam whereas second is ultimate perspective or paaramaarthika satyam. These two have to be remembered with respect to all illusions.

Dream is a proper analogy to explain these two perspectives (as well as compare with the current waking world). When dream is going on, it is very real and everything appears very real but after waking up, we realize that there never was any dream and there never can be

any dream. Knowing this, still we may dream again but then we know that dream is not real – though we will enjoy everything in dream, still we will remember that it is not real. Thus in dream, it is given empirical status and from ultimate standpoint it is considered as unreal. After waking up as well, in order to explain as to what dream is, it is given empirical reality status – it appears as existing but doesn't really exist.

Why is empirical reality required?

Because majority of people are constantly in this perspective alone. In order for such people to come out of illusions, it is essential to accept empirical reality. If a dreaming person says that there is no dream at all then can he ever come out of dream? Definitely no as he doesn't even accept dream to try to come out of dream. Similarly unless empirical reality to the external world isn't accepted it will be impossible to come out of the external world. It shouldn't be argued that we don't want to come out of the external world as the external world is temporary and sorrowful, therefore everybody knowingly or unknowingly desires to come out of the external world.

Empirically the external world, its creation and its activities are accepted. The only purpose we can attribute to the world empirically is in order to come out of the sorrowful world and realize ultimate reality of Brahman. But ultimately Brahman alone exists and the world doesn't even exist to be removed or overcome. From this ultimate perspective saying that the purpose of world is to overcome is foolish – it is like saying that snake is seen in the rope in order to get rid of snake and realize the rope. But these two perspectives of empirical and ultimate shouldn't be mixed – if they are mixed, then we will not be able to even accept duality, let alone overcome it and the sorrows that are caused as a result of it.

No or improper understanding of these two perspectives

No understanding or improper understanding of these two perspectives will cause only confusions. And these confusions will be so huge and strong that anything will be undertaken in order to prove statements and theories to be wrong. What will such people attain as a result of such undertakings? Nothing but they themselves will get deluded in sorrow at all times – as Sankara beautifully says in Bhaja Govindam, seeing Brahman they will not apprehend Brahman, though their very nature is blissful Brahman they will still be suffering at all times.

As to why the world is perceived and why non-duality isn't perceived, Vedanta says that it is due to ignorance (avidyaa). When Brahman is not known or forgotten, avidyaa comes into existence and from avidyaa, everything is considered to be real (Brahman's reality is superimposed on the entire unreal world). As a result, sorrows are caused. In order to get rid of sorrows, it is essential to get rid of avidyaa. Avidyaa can be removed only through knowledge even as darkness can be removed only through light. Knowledge is knowledge of Brahman as found in the scriptures. Scriptures are the ultimate authority for Brahman (as it is the breath of Brahmaa and has been tested by various rishis of the past – they have been given to us also by rishis during their times of intense contemplation or absorption). Logic and experience has to follow scriptures rather than the other way around. Mere using high-end or hair-splitting logic will take us nowhere at all. When knowledge of Brahman is gained and it is implemented regularly in life then such a person will get rid of avidyaa and will thereby ever rejoice in bliss (realizing that Brahman alone exists, even though he might perceive the world even as a person might perceive water in desert even after knowing that there is no water, such perception will not affect the person at all).

As to from where avidyaa came, what is its nature etc. – these cannot be sufficiently answered unless we remember the two perspectives. Thus Sankara says beautifully that avidyaa is there for one who is ignorant and ultimately it doesn't exist at all. This is like saying – the dream world exists for dreamer but ultimately it doesn't exist at all. There is no illogicality at all with respect to this explanation of avidyaa (as avidyaa itself is beyond any explanation – the moment we try to explain ignorance, ignorance vanishes as we come to know what we were ignorant about). There cannot be argument that two perspectives itself means non-duality as empirical reality doesn't really exist – but it is just attributed to that which appears as existing. Ultimately only ultimate perspective or reality of Brahman alone exists – therefore there is no deviation into duality.

It is not understanding or improper understanding of the two perspectives even with respect to avidyaa that many vedantic acharyas have attacked Advaita Vedanta. It is very simple indeed to understand avidyaa. It exists only for ignorant people who should strive through knowledge of scriptures – when knowledge of Brahman is gained, it will remove non-existent but appearing-to-exist avidyaa. But at all times Brahman alone exists as the mere substratum witness of everything that appears in it. Even as the dream world is terminated by a dream lion, similarly this entire world is terminated by knowledge of the scriptures.

Scriptures though are ultimate authority they themselves work only in empirical perspective as ultimately Brahman alone exists, nothing apart from Brahman exists.

With the analysis above let us now try to look at the seven illogicalities as raised by Ramanujacharya.

Seven illogicalities

Ramanujacharya in his Sri Bhashya puts forth seven illogicalities with respect to avidyaa. The analysis is to prove that avidyaa itself is illogical. And if avidyaa is illogical then the entire system of advaita Vedanta will collapse.

Any system is dependent upon the four of adhikaari or apt person to follow the system, vishaya or subject-matter, prayojana or fruit and sambandha or relation between vishaya and prayojana. If avidyaa itself is illogical then there is no adhikaari as ignorant person isn't there (due to avidyaa not being there). There is no prayojana as well because it is removal of avidyaa – avidyaa itself doesn't exist so how can there be any fruit of removal of avidyaa? There is no vishaya as Brahman cannot be spoken about (beyond words and thoughts as the subject) and avidyaa is illogical. Since there is no vishaya and prayojana, there is no sambandha as well. Thus there is no four anubandha chathustayam – as a result, Advaita Vedanta system itself instantly collapses and shouldn't be followed any person seeking happiness.

Though attack on anubandha chathustayam is undertaken mostly by Dvaitins, we can explain it with respect to Ramanujacharya's words as well.

Ramanujacharya says that avidyaa is illogical with respect to the below seven perspectives:

1. Asraya – support – there is no support for avidyaa as it cannot abide in Brahman (this would lead to duality) and it cannot abide different from Brahman (as Brahman alone really exists, as per Advaita).
2. Tirodhana – veiling of Brahman – avidyaa cannot veil Brahman as Brahman is self-luminous and if such veiling is possible then its removal will not be eternal (there can be future veiling and unveiling).

3. Svaroopā – nature of avidyā – avidyā cannot be bhaavarūpa or existent in nature for then it cannot be removed, it cannot be abhaavarūpa or non-existent as such entities don't really exist and will not cause sorrow; it cannot be said that avidyā is both bhaava and abhaava or neither bhaava nor abhaava as such entities aren't known (former is contrary and as good as saying light and darkness go hand in hand and latter is unknown to exist).

4. Anirvachaniyā – inexplicability of avidyā – avidyā is said to be inexplicable but such inexplicability isn't known and it is contrary to say that avidyā is inexplicable as this itself is an explanation (explaining avidyā to be inexplicable is illogical and contrary).

5. Pramaāna – validity of avidyā – avidyā is not proven through any pramaānas of pratyakṣa, anumāna and sruti as it is inexplicable as well as through any other means. Moreover saying that the world created by Ishwara is a result of avidyā is automatically refuted or contradicted in the scriptures.

6. Nivartaka – remover of avidyā – there is nothing to remove avidyā. It cannot be knowledge as then knowledge will be newly attained and hence will be lost too. If it is already existing knowledge then it doesn't now remove avidyā so why should it remove avidyā after sometime or later?

7. Nivritti – removing of avidyā – it is impossible to remove avidyā as avidyā is accepted as bhaavarūpa or existent by advaitins (including Chitsukhacharya).

Seven logicalities

It should be remembered that avidyā exists empirically for an ignorant person but ultimately it doesn't exist (as ultimately only Brahman exists). With this in mind let us briefly find the seven logicalities of avidyā.

1. Asrayā – support of avidyā – avidyā is supported in Brahman but it doesn't affect Brahman as Brahman is ultimately real whereas avidyā is empirically real (even as snake is seen in rope but rope alone is ultimately real whereas snake is empirically real when it is perceived). Avidyā is proven through direct experience and no other proof is required than this.

2. Tirodhana – veiling of Brahman – avidyaa’s veiling of Brahman is similar to clouds veiling the Sun. There is no real veiling but empirical veiling appearing to be there while always Brahman alone existing.

3. Svaroopaa – nature of avidyaa – empirically avidyaa is real whereas ultimately avidyaa is unreal therefore it is neither real nor unreal. Such entities do exist and they are called illusions. Snake in rope is not unreal as it is seen and it isn’t real as it will vanish once rope is known. Similar is avidyaa as well.

4. Anirvachaniya – inexplicability of avidyaa – avidyaa cannot be explained as such as it doesn’t exist ultimately; since it empirically exists therefore there is illogicality in saying that it is inexplicable. Any illusion like water in desert is inexplicable though a matter of direct experience.

5. Pramaana – validity of avidyaa – avidyaa is proven through all pramaanas but more than this it is that it doesn’t require any proof as it is directly experienced by an ignorant person and ultimately it doesn’t exist therefore it requires no proof ultimately.

6. Nivartaka – remover of avidyaa – knowledge is the remover of avidyaa, this knowledge is of Brahman in the mind. It is as illusory as avidyaa but by meaning of the same reality status of avidyaa it removes avidyaa while the ever-present Brahman remains behind (as mere witness).

7. Nivritti – removal of avidyaa – ultimately there is no avidyaa but empirically when avidyaa is experienced then it can be removed and its removal isn’t temporary but ultimate as it is knowing that there is no avidyaa at all. This way of removal of avidyaa is logical alone as we experience similar removal with respect to worldly illusions (like snake in rope is removed through knowing that there is no snake at all – this removal itself is an illusion but it removes the illusory snake thereby serving its purpose and leaving behind the ever-present ever-unaffected snake).

Through the above analysis it is very easily proven that the seven illogicalities of avidyaa aren’t illogicalities but misunderstandings of avidyaa. A wise person will easily be able to understand that avidyaa doesn’t exist ultimately but empirically appears as existing (since is directly perceived). Instead of trying to analyze where from this illusory avidyaa has or what

is its nature wise sadhakas should strive to get rid of avidyaa through knowledge of Brahman as found in the scriptures. Such sadhakas alone will be able to overcome the bondages and sorrows caused by avidyaa not just for one birth but for many births. Birth and death itself is an illusion caused out of avidyaa. Since the ultimate goal of life is ever rejoicing in bliss therefore all sadhakas should strive to get rid of illusory avidyaa through knowledge of the ultimate reality of Brahman, that which alone exists as our very nature of Consciousness which pulsates inside as I-exist, I-exist at all times.

With this we have come to the end of this series of avidyaa prakaashah. We will start with another series from the next magazine.

May we all strive to get rid of illusory avidyaa which causes sorrow through knowledge of Brahman as found in the scriptures so that we will be able to get rid of all sorrows and will be able to ever rejoice in bliss here and now itself.

Vedanta Shabda Vicharanam

Jagat

The word Jagat comes from the root 'gam' which means 'moving' or 'movable'. The word Jagat means "world" and in some places it Jagat may also mean the entire universe. In this article we will analyze the word Jagat.

The world that we see consists of movable and immovable living and non-living things. In order to know about the world, we have to know from where this world came into existence, what is the nature of the world and what is the purpose of the world. Scriptures point out that before the world was created there was only Brahman one without a second.

Chandogya Upanishad says that

"satevasowmyaidamagreaseetekamevaadviteeyam"

Existence alone was present before creation one without a second"

Scriptures also then point out that the world came into existence from that Brahman.

Taitereeya Upanishad says,

TasmaadvaaetasmaataatmanaaakaashaHsambhootah.Akaashaatvaayuh.Vayoragnih.Agniraa pah.Adbhyahprtivi.Pritivyaashadayah.Oshadheebhyonnam.Annaatpurushah.

From that Brahman, which is this Self, was produced space. From space emerged air. From air emerged fire. From fire emerged water. From water sprang up earth. From earth were born the herbs. From the herbs was produced food. From food was born man.

Aitareya Upanishad says,

Saeekshatalokaannusrujaaiti

It (Self) thought, 'Let Me create the worlds'.

For anything to be created, there requires an efficient cause and material cause. To create a pot, there has to be a pot maker who is the efficient cause and clay which is the material cause which are different. But in the case of the creation of the world, both efficient cause and material cause are the same. Scriptures also use the example of spider which is the efficient cause and the material cause of the web that it creates.

*YathorNanaabhiHsrujategrhnateca
 YataaprtivyaamoshadhayaHsambhavanti
 Yathaasatahpurushaatkeshalomaani
 taThaaksharaatsambhavateehavishwam
 As a spider spreads out and withdraws
 As on the earth grows the herbs (and trees),
 And as from a living man issues out hair,
 So out of the Imperishable does the Universe emerge here.*

Brahman which is complete, without any guna cannot really create the world. Therefore, scriptures say that there was a Shakti or power as it were called Maya and Brahman through the power of Maya created this world.

Svetasvatara Upanishad says that

*Maayamtupraktimviddinmaayinatumaheshvaramsamaayisrujathi
 Know Maya as Prakrti and Brahman associated with Maya as the great Isvara. It is He who
 creates the world.*

Maya which is just an illusory power has got 3 gunassattva, rajas and tamas. That Maya with three gunas is the bheejam or seed from which the entire universe came into existence. Maya do not exist separate from Brahman, it depends on Brahman for its existence.

Shankaracharya in Tattvabodhatells that

*brahaashrayaasatvarajastamogunaatmikaamayaaasti
 Depending on Brahman, Maya exists, which is of the nature of the three qualities of Sattva,
 Rajas and Tamas*

Brahman reflected in Maya is called Isvara or God. Isvara controls Maya and using the power of Maya created this world which consists of movable and immovable things. After creating everything, Isvara himself gave life to everything.

World that we see do not exist separate from Brahman. When we say Maya is dependent on Brahman, we have to understand that Maya is not a separate entity from Brahman. From the perspective of the world, Maya Shakti is like heat in fire. Heat cannot be separated from

fire, likewise Maya in Brahman. Thus we can say that world which was created using the power of Maya cannot exist separate from Brahman. If Brahman exist, world exists, if Brahman do not exist, the world cannot exist. And we can also say that Brahman is the substratum of the entire world.

Thus, it is clear the world came from Brahman and reside in Brahman. It can also be extended that world will resolve into Brahman.

Brahman is of the nature of Anandam and if the world came from Brahman, there has to be Anandam only. But the Jiva who lives in the world, do not see the world as it is. Every individual in the world sees the world very differently from one another. The individual jiva which is essentially Brahman alone, which has the body and mind created from Brahman, is ignorant of the Truth that he is Brahman alone. Because of this ignorance, the world is seen separate from Isvara and himself. Thus, there are 3 entities for the jiva, the individual I, the world and Isvara. Since the duality is perceived, desires creep into the mind of the individual which in turn drives him to do actions. The actions either give favorable result or unfavorable. If he gets a favorable result he gets happiness and if not he gets sad. Thus, the world which scriptures say as filled in and out with Isvara, becomes a place of happiness and sorrow. Thus, the individual who sees the duality enjoys the happiness and sorrow and this continues birth after birth.

In Katha Upanishad Yama says that

Manasaivedamaaptavyamnaiha nana astikinchana

Mrttyohsamrtyumgacchatiyaiha nana ivapashyati

This is to be known through the mind indeed that there is no duality here whatsoever. He who sees as though there is difference here, goes from death to death.

So, if the world is not giving the happiness all the time, it means that there is no permanent happiness in the world. This shows that the object in the world which are perceived and desired by the individual do not have happiness all the time. Thus the nature of the world is transitive or temporary.

Lord Krishna says that *anityamasukhamlokam – temproray sorrowful world*. Thus, we can conclude that though the world is created from Brahman which is of the nature of Ananda, is not permanent. The nature of the world is temporary only.

If nothing in the world is permanent and hence can give only sorrow, what is the purpose of this world? As mentioned earlier, the world that is seen by each individual is not the same. It depends upon the mental state of the person. Scriptures point out that there are 4 goals for human and the person can choose any one which are dharma, artha, kama and moksha. Out of these 4 Moksha is the ultimate goal that everyone should strive to get. This is because, the other 3 goals are related to the world and worldly thing, which we have analyzed as something temporary and hence do not have the capability to give permanent happiness. But the goal of Moksha is different, this goal of Moksha is liberation from this cycle of birth and death which have been the case until the world and the objects were desired.

To attain the goal of Moksha, Knowledge of Brahman is the only means. Knowledge of Brahman can be attained from scriptures and Guru. When the world was created, the secret (knowledge) to come out of the world was also given.

Lord Krishna says in 4th chapter that

Idamvivasvateyogamproktavaanahamavyayam

Vivasvaanmanavepraahamanurikshvaakaveabraveet

I imparted this imperishable yoga to vivasvaan. Vivasvaan taught this to Manu, and Manu transmitted this to Iksvaaku.

Thus, scriptures also came into existence along with the world and thus through the study of scriptures we can get the Ultimate Knowledge of Brahman. We can say therefore that the world and our life in this world is to attain this goal of Moksha through the study of scriptures and thereby living by the knowledge of the scriptures.

Thus we can say that the world is not completely useless, it is useful but only if we see from the perspective of attaining the goal of moksha.

Vidhyaranya in Panchadasi 4th chapter says that

Abaadhakamsaadhakamcadvaitamisvaranirmitam

Apanetumashakyamcetyaastaamtadvishyatekutah

The world of duality created by Isvara is rather a help than an obstacle to a direct knowledge of non-duality. Moreover, we cannot destroy the creation, so let it be. Why are you so much opposed to it?

Thus, we conclude the analysis of the word Jagat.

Dhyaana Nirupanam

ॐ ध्याननिरूपणं

om dhyānanirūpaṇam

भेदभावनं शोककारणम् ।

तस्यवारणं ध्यानरूपतः ॥१॥

bhedabhāvanam śokakāraṇam |
tasyavāraṇam dhyānarūpataḥ ||1||

1. Notion of duality is cause of sorrow and it should be removed through dhyāna.

चित्तशोधनं एकचिन्तनात् ।

शीलनं सदा मोक्षकांक्षुकः ॥२॥

cittaśodhanam ekacintanāt |
śīlanam sadā mokṣakāṅkṣukaḥ ||2||

2. Control of mind through one-pointedness (or thought of one) should be practiced always by desires of moksha.

रागवर्जितं प्रेमसंयुतं ।

यस्यमानसं ध्यानहेतुकम् ॥३॥

rāgavarjitaṁ premasamyutaṁ |
yasyamānasam dhyānahetukam ||3||

3. Whose mind is devoid of attachment to the world and with love towards Ishwara/Brahman, such a mind is caused of dhyāna (leads to dhyāna).

देवशासितः आसनान्वितः ।

यः स्थितो नरः ध्यानसिद्धिदम् ॥४ ॥

devaśāsitaḥ āsanānvitaḥ |
yaḥ sthito naraḥ dhyānasiddhidam ||4||

4. That man who remains controlling the indriyas (devas here means indriyas) and positioned in an asana, for him dhyana will be established or achieved.

इष्टदेवता पूजनं सदा ।

बन्धनं मनो नान्यथा हि वै ॥५ ॥

iṣṭadevatā pūjanaṁ sadā |
bandhanaṁ mano nānyathā hi vai ||5||

5. Control of mind is through worship of Ista devataa (favorite deity) at all times definitely and not through any other means.

क्षिप्तमानसं द्वैतचिन्तनम् ।

ध्यानबन्धनं दुःखदायकम् ॥६ ॥

kṣiptamānasaṁ dvaitacintanam |
dhyānabandhanaṁ duḥkhadāyakam ||6||

6. Distracted mind and thought of duality (dual thoughts) are bondages for dhyana and will lead to sorrow.

कालवर्जितं देशवर्जितम् ।

चिन्तनं तु ध्यानस्य मुक्तिदम् ॥७ ॥

kālarjitaṁ deśavarjitaṁ |
cintanaṁ tu dhyānasya muktidam ||7||

7. That thought which is devoid of time and space (at all times and in all places), that

will lead to liberation of dhyana (means it will take to the goal of dhyana or beyond dhyana itself).

सर्वव्याप्तब्रह्मैव चिन्तनम् ।

सर्वदा तु भक्त्या हि पालनं ॥८॥

sarvavyāptabrahmaiva cintanam |
savadā tu bhaktyā hi pālanam ||8||

8. Thought that all-pervasive Brahman alone exists should definitely be implemented at all times.

नित्यध्यानरूपं हि स्वात्मनः ।

ज्ञाननामकं नन्दकारणम् ॥९॥

nityadhyānarūpaṁ hi svātmanaḥ |
jñānanāmakam nandakāraṇam ||9||

9. Ever-meditation form of one's own Self, named as knowledge, definitely is the cause of happiness.

ध्यानमग्नचित्तं तु चेतनम् ।

द्वैतवर्जितं सत्यरूपकं ॥१०॥

dhyānamagnacittaṁ tu cetanam |
dvaitavarjitaṁ satyarūpakam ||10||

10. But that mind which is immersed in dhyana is pure Consciousness alone, devoid of duality and of the form of reality.

यस्य मानसं ध्यानसंयुतं ।

नन्दनन्दनो नन्दनन्दनः ॥११॥

yasya mānasam dhyānasamyutam
nandanandano nandanandanaḥ||11||

11. One whose mind is filled with dhyaana, such a person ever rejoices in bliss, ever rejoices in bliss.

Chitsukha Panchakam

०१-फ़ेब्र-२०१३ - ॐ चित्सुखपञ्चकं ।

01-feb-2013 - om citsukhapañcakam|

श्रीहर्षमार्गद्योतकं युक्तिसुपोषकम् ।

यः तत्त्वप्रदीपकः चित्सुखं तं नमाम्यहम् ॥१॥

śriharśamārgadyotakam yuktisupoṣakam|
yaḥ tattvaprādīpakaḥ citsukhaṁ taṁ namāmyaham||1||

1. One who illuminated the path put forth or tread by Sri Harsh; one who nourished logic;
One who wrote tattvaprādīpika (or one who illumined concepts), that ChitSukha I prostrate.

बहूनां हि कृतीनां यः वेदान्ततत्त्वदातारः ।

तर्कसाम्राज्यदीप्तिश्च चित्सुखं तं नमाम्येव ॥२॥

bahūnām hi kṛtīnām yaḥ vedāntatattvadātāraḥ|
tarkasāmrajyadīptiśca citsukhaṁ taṁ namāmyeva||2||

2. One who gave the concepts of Vedanta in many works;
One who is the light of the kingdom of logic, that Chitsukha I prostrate.

सर्वतत्त्वसुज्ञातो यः ब्रह्मतत्त्वसुवर्णितः ।

न कदा व्यभिचारो हि चित्सुखं तं नमाम्येव ॥३॥

sarvatattvasujñāto yaḥ brahmatattvasuvarṇitaḥ|
na kadā vyabhicāro hi citsukhaṁ taṁ namāmyeva||3||

3. One who knows well all concepts, one who has well explained Brahman;
One who definitely never deviates, that Chitsukha I prostrate.

न्यायखण्डनध्वंसं हि कृतं सुखेन यस्माच्च ।

अद्वैतरक्षणं येनैव चित्सुखं तं नमाम्येव ॥४ ॥

nyāyakhaṇḍanadhvaṁsaṁ hi kṛtaṁ sukhena yasmācca |
advaitarakṣaṇaṁ yenaiva citsukhaṁ taṁ namāmyeva ||4||

4. One who destroyed the attack made by Nyaaya system very easily;
One who protected Advaita, that Chitsukha I prostrate.

अद्वैतसागरस्य यः नागवत् रक्षणं कृतं ।

मामकः प्रियरूपकः चित्सुखं तं नमाम्यहं ॥५ ॥

advaitasāgarasya yaḥ nāgavat rakṣaṇaṁ kṛtaṁ |
māmaḥ priyarūpaḥ citsukhaṁ taṁ namāmyahaṁ ||5||

5. One who protected the ocean of advaita like a shark;
One who is the dear form of me (my dear formed person), that Chitsukha I prostrate.

Anukramaanika Nirdesham

1. Editorial – a general message
2. Yoga Siddhi - an analysis of term of yoga (as per Vedanta being the main focus).
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. Vedanta Shabda Vicharanam – thorough analysis of one word of Vedanta.
6. Dhyaana Nirupanam - explanation of dhyaana. This section is dedicated to original work written but not explained in depth in order to help sadhakas in reflection of the concepts themselves.
7. Chitsukha Panchakam – five slokas as an offering unto Chitsukhacharya. This section is dedication to small offering to great acharyas of the past.

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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