

Vedanta Madhuryam

Salutations to all.

Generally people in the world are amazed by how much science and technology have progressed. Amongst all the various sciences that are getting strengthened and new ones created, we get lost and become wonderstruck. But this is really nothing at all compared to what we have in our ancient scriptures. It is only lack of proper understanding of our scriptures that we think very great of current sciences. Along with being wonderstruck at sciences, people also get wonderstruck by other great stalwarts in various fields of science today. Thus many keep talking about how Steve Jobs died in the midst of a meeting – how great he was; ☺From a Vedantic perspective we have to feel pity for Steve Jobs, because he died while thinking about work so he will be born again working in the same field. Instead of doing certain activities in life and thereby feeling content and satisfied, he is going to continue the dissatisfied work over and over again. What a waste of intellect? If only such an intellect was endowed with discrimination, it would not only have lead to his own liberation but could have helped others get liberated by spreading the word of knowledge.

Contrast this with great masters like Swami Vivekananda and Swami Chinmayananda – these aren't avatara purushas but they are great realized masters who themselves got liberated and then through spreading of knowledge, even today help in liberation of a lot of people in the world.

We should always remember that today's science or stalwarts don't even come close (not even far they will come) with respect to the ancient scriptures and the various masters who have lived life according to the scriptures and provided their service to the scriptures.

Our Vedas are split into four and have had more than 1000 shaakhas or variations though only less than 10 are available today. Learning of one entire shaakha itself takes a lifetime. Then there are the prasthaana trays of ten Upanishads, Brahma Sutra and Bhagavad Gita. Mastery over these itself will take a long time. Then there are various puranas which themselves are vast texts. In order to gain mastery of any system or darshana, it is essential to learn the shad darshanas. Each of these darshanas have sutras written on them by various rishis – each of these sutras have commentaries and sub-commentaries on them without learning which mastery of the systems is impossible. There have been masters like

Vachaspati Mishra and Vijnana Bhikshu who have written commentaries on each of these systems. Learning these systems itself is very tough – let alone understand them and write commentaries on them.

We have had Adi Sankara who wrote the commentaries on prasthaana traya and thereby gave us a basis for judgement of the scriptures and their concepts. We have Sureshwaracharya who wrote the 12000 odd slokas in his vartika on Sankara's Brihadaranyaka Upanishad bhashya. These 12000 odd slokas along with other commentaries of Sankara has been commented upon by Anandagiri. Vidyaranya has condensed these 12000 odd slokas into a saara. If we start listing down all the advaita acharyas and their works, we will find that the list of works in Vedanta is vast indeed.

Just to give a perspective, we have had Ramanujacharya writing not one but three bhashyas on Brahma Sutras (Sri Bhashya, Vedanta Deepa and Vedanta Saara). These have been commented upon by Vedanta deshika. We have had Madhvacharya writing multiple commentaries on the Brahma Sutra which has been commented upon by Jaya Teertha, Vyaasa Teertha, Raghavendra and many others. Even minor works of Madhvacharya like the khandana traya have commented upon by other masters. Thus if we look at other Vedanta systems also we find that the list of literature is huge.

We don't have to look into other darshanas but there too we have a huge list of works and there have been great masters who have tread earth spreading their wisdom to the entire world through their works, words and actions.

In today's world, instead of offering our tributes to these masters and learning their life history and works in order to progress towards the goal of moksha, what is happening is just going more and more into the external world. The more we go into the external world and worldly sciences we will find that there is only more confusion and doubt arising in the mind. There are more questions unanswered than questions answered and concepts clarified.

It is not possible to change the entire world but we can try to change ourselves by paying our tribute to these masters and focusing on the internal world rather than the external world. Once the mind (internal world) is conquered then we will be able to ever rejoice in bliss irrespective of wherever we are. But if the mind is not conquered and even if we

conquer the external world, we will live and die in sorrow alone (like Alexander). The external world can never be conquered because it is dependent upon Brahman of the nature of Consciousness – that Consciousness which pulsates inside as I-exist, I-exist at all times. Some systems say it is real but dependent upon Ishwara but we say that it is just an illusion of names and forms in Ishwara. Even as dream world appears in the dreamer, similarly this external world appears as if existing in Ishwara of the nature of Consciousness. As long as our focus is on the external world we will experience nothing but sorrow alone. The moment we try to focus on the mind and bring our mind to focus internally on that Ishwara who pervades the entire world, we will find that mind slowly calms or quietens and as a result we will find ourselves slowly progressing towards the goal of moksha.

Whether we acknowledge or not, we all are seeking the ultimate goal of life as moksha – complete cessation of sorrow and ever rejoicing in bliss. Until this goal is achieved we will find ourselves immersed more and more in sorrow. Sorrows will not end in this world but it will continue from one birth to another without any end. It is in our hands if we want to get rid of sorrow and progress towards the goal of moksha. But in order to do that we have to seek Brahman as found in the scriptures or system of Vedanta. It doesn't matter whether we are learning the worldly sciences or not – it doesn't matter whether we are performing worldly activities or not – whatever we are doing externally in the world doesn't matter at all. What really matters is whether we are focusing our mind unto Brahman as found in Vedanta. In order for the mind to focus on Brahman it is important for the mind to become passionate about Brahman. The mind only focuses on that which it likes or is passionate about. There is no way to bring passion towards Vedanta other than to bring out the beauty in Vedanta. If we are able to bring out the beauty of Vedanta, then at least few sadhakas will be able to drink the beauty and thereby start getting immersed into the system of Vedanta. Thereby through learning Vedanta they will be able to achieve the goal of life as moksha here and now itself.

May we all through this magazine strive to develop passion for Vedanta so that through learning and implementation of Vedanta we will be able to ever contemplate on the ultimate reality of Brahman and thereby putting an end to all sorrows we will be able to ever rejoice in bliss here and now itself.

AUM NAMA SHIVAYA

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Kutastha Siddhi

Ultimate goal of life - bliss

Irrespective of all distinctions everybody is seeking just one goal of life, bliss. Whether it is a worldly person or a spiritual person – a rich person or a poor person – learned person or ignorant person – person on earth or any other world – everybody is seeking bliss untainted by sorrow. This means the state where sorrow completely vanishes and one is able to just rejoice in bliss is the goal of life. Unlike other goals of life which keeps changing as time passes by, this goal never changes. This goal is something that everybody seeks constantly, either knowingly or unknowingly. And once this goal is achieved then it will put an end to all other goals – this means that it is that goal which ends all goals and seeking of goals. Thus it is the ultimate goal of life.

Since currently we all are experiencing only sorrow and suffering in the world, therefore this goal is termed in the scriptures as moksha or muktih or liberation – liberation from the state of sorrow. In order to attain this goal, one needs to knowingly seek or desire it. Desire for moksha is called mumukshutva and one who has this desire is called a mumukshu. Even as a person who is seeking for a job in Apple alone will get a job in Apple (rarely we will find that somebody is offered job by Apple itself without even seeking job), similarly only a person who is seeking this ultimate goal of life will attain this goal.

What if this goal isn't achieved?

If this goal isn't achieved then we will be running behind other goals of life. Since all other goals of life are temporary and sorrowful in nature, therefore the seeking of eternal bliss will still continue. This search will be futile and before we know it, the time to give up this body will arrive. Thereby leaving this birth with desire for eternal bliss (and no contentment) we will have to born again. The cycle of birth and death continues over and over again until a person is able to remain content here and now itself. Contentment is just another perspective term for bliss – peace, satisfaction etc. are also synonyms alone.

The scriptures say that we will go from one birth to another depending on our actions and the knowledge that we have gained. Actions performed have appropriate results or reactions. If we perform good actions, we will get a better birth in the future and if we perform bad actions, we will get a bad birth in the future. Irrespective of whether good or

bad birth, there will not be any satisfaction or contentment or bliss in life unless we knowingly seek the ultimate goal of life.

If actions control births then how can we overcome the cycle of birth and death?

We can overcome through knowledge. Thus scriptures say that future birth is controlled by actions and knowledge. Knowledge here is knowledge of the scriptures or the subject-matter of the scripture along with implementation of this knowledge in day-to-day life. If we are able to gain and implement knowledge, then it is the way out of the cycle of birth and death. This itself means that knowledge is the way to moksha or fulfillment of the ultimate goal of life.

Knowledge – way to moksha

The scriptures very clearly mention over and over again that knowledge is the one and only way to moksha (or ultimate goal of life as bliss). There absolutely doesn't exist any other way to eternal bliss than knowledge. As to why, we have to remember that in order to attain eternal bliss we have to attain an entity which is eternally blissful in nature. That which is temporary and sorrowful in nature will only give us sorrow whereas that which is eternally blissful will give us bliss.

The entire world is constantly changing and therefore sorrowful in nature. It is a matter of experience for everybody in the world that the world will lead to only sorrow as it has constantly lead us to sorrow. Though there are times when we get happiness from the world, it is so short-lived and sandwiched between sorrow that it is sorrowful alone. If the changing world is sorrowful in nature then definitely the changeless substratum of the world has to be blissful in nature. Any changing entity requires a changeless substratum – it is impossible for any changes to happen or be perceived unless there is a changeless substratum. We say that a car is moving only by assuming ground or earth to be not moving. If we consider that earth also is moving, we cannot apprehend the movement of the car. With respect to this changing world, there has to be a changeless substratum.

Why can't we assume a changing entity as the substratum of the world and assume it to be changeless?

Because then we have to find a changeless entity for the changing substratum of the world. We have to ultimately find a changeless substratum for sure – it is due to simplicity that we can assume the substratum of the world itself to be changeless.

This changeless substratum of the world is termed in the scriptures as Brahman and variously called as Ishwara, Atman, Paramatman, Bhagavaan etc. It is that from which the changing world has come, in which the changing world exists and unto which the changing world merges at the time of its destruction. Scriptures clearly talk about such an entity being present and logic-experience also prove such an entity existing.

All the other notions or theories that there isn't any changeless substratum to the world and that the world ever existed or came into existence of its own or due to atoms etc. can be easily negated as we do experience the cessation of the world, temporary, daily in the state of deep sleep. When we sleep and there is no dream perceived, the entire world temporarily vanishes and after we wake up, the entire world reappears. This itself is proof that the world ceases to exist in an ultimate entity which is not insentient but sentient in nature. That anything can come out of insentient entities is foolishness alone. If it is argued that an idol is made out of an insentient stone, then it is only due to a sentient being (a sentient being's effort converts the stone into an idol).

Brahman or the changeless substratum of the world thus is of the nature of Consciousness and since it always exists it is also of the nature of Existence. That which ever-exists is also unlimited and therefore blissful in nature (that which is limited leads to sorrow whereas that which is unlimited in nature leads to bliss). Thus Brahman is of the nature of Existence, Consciousness and Bliss.

Brahman being the changeless substratum of the world is the substratum where the illusory world appears as existing – for if the world be real then Brahman would be affected by the changes. Even as the entire dream world appears in the changeless substratum of dreamer, similarly the entire world appears in the changeless substratum of Brahman.

Now if Brahman is newly attained then it will be lost as anything which is newly attained will be lost. If Brahman is already present then the goal of moksha itself is invalid and one would already be realized which would mean that one's sorrowful state (which is the state now) will never be removed. Thus either way, the concept of Brahman as the ultimate goal of life to be attained itself falls apart.

Brahman – ever attained

Vedanta clearly says that Brahman is not newly attained as it is ever-attained. The entire world is just an illusion of names and forms in the substratum of Brahman. This means that at all times Brahman alone exists here. Scriptures thus repeat again and again that one Brahman alone exists pervading the entire world of names and forms even as gold pervades all ornaments of gold and dreamer pervades the entire dream world. Thus Brahman is not newly attained but ever-attained Brahman is realized (saakshaatkaara).

Realization of Brahman means that Brahman is our very nature. Logic clearly proves that the I which pulsates inside us constantly is Brahman alone. I always exists (there is no time when it ceases to exist), I am ever shining or sentient in nature and I am never hated (I am always liked) – thus I am Brahman of the nature of Existence, Consciousness and Bliss.

If I am Brahman then why it is the goal of life?

Brahman is never the goal of life as Brahman is life itself but somehow we have forgotten our very nature of Brahman and therefore we have to realize the ultimate goal of life as Brahman, our very nature of Consciousness. As to why we have forgotten, it is called ignorance which cannot really be explained or defined. Truly speaking there is no ignorance at all but it appears as existing when we are ignorant. This is similar to darkness. There is really nothing called darkness but darkness does exist for a person experiencing it. But once the person brings in light, darkness instantly vanishes and it can never be proved that darkness did exist (as it never ever existed but appeared as existing). Similarly ignorance doesn't really exist but appears as existing for an ignorant person. Once the person gains knowledge of his own very nature of Brahman from the scriptures then ignorance vanishes and the person realizes that there never was any ignorance at all. Whatever existed at all times was blissful Brahman and Brahman alone – thus is the realization of a realized person.

Many people try to analyze ignorance and unless it is proven, they will not proceed further. This is foolishness – ignorance can never be fully analyzed and it is already proven through one's experience, if one gains knowledge then ignorance will itself vanish and realization will dawn that there never was any ignorance at all – whatever existed at all times was Brahman alone.

Thus Vedanta says that Brahman alone exists at all times as our very nature of Consciousness but somehow due to inexplicable ignorance, we appear to have forgotten our

very nature of Brahman and therefore appear as experiencing sorrow. Through knowledge we will again be able to realize our very nature of Brahman thereby putting an end to all sorrows and ever rejoicing in bliss.

Now with respect to Brahman and realization, there are many objections raised by opponents (these are also doubts that can arise in the mind of sadhakas). Is Brahman the nature of all sentient beings? If so does one Brahman exist or multiple Brahman exists? How can Brahman which is the substratum of the entire world be limited into this world – that world which appears as existing in the substratum of Brahman (this is like saying desert appears in the water which is seen in desert)? While the world and worldly activities continue, what happens to Brahman, is Brahman affected or unaffected? After realization, do worldly activities continue or not?

All these doubts/arguments can only be removed through the concept of kutastha or saakshi.

Kutastha - witness

There always is required a witness to anything and everything that we perform. Even the slightest of activities (subtlest) requires a witness. Without a witness nothing really happens. This witness is different or distinct from the doer (who performs activities). The doer performs actions in order to get objects (results). This triputi or trio of doer-action-results requires a substratum which is a mere witness to these three. Even as any crime requires a witness, similarly each and every activity requires a witness. This witness cannot itself be dependent on something else or temporarily a witness because it has to experience all activities in the world. Thus this witness is an ever-witness. For it to be ever-witness it definitely has to be one with Brahman (as Brahman alone is the changeless substratum of the entire changing and inter-dependent world). Thus witness of all activities is one Brahman alone.

But can one Brahman be witness to all activities of seemingly sentient beings?

Directly no but indirectly yes.

Each and every sentient being we see in the world has sentience and this sentience has to only come from Brahman. So one Brahman serves the entire world of sentient beings. This is similar to one Sun getting reflected in different buckets of water. Thus one Brahman gets

reflected into the various adjuncts or upadhis of intellect (or antah karana). Even as proximity to fire makes a piece of iron appear fiery, similarly intellect as a result of reflection of Brahman appears as sentient (though it has no sentience of itself).

But if reflection of Brahman alone gives sentience, then how can such sentient beings ever realize as they are just reflections or illusions of Brahman (rather than being Brahman itself). Thus Vedanta says that Brahman also appears as limited in the adjuncts of body-mind-intellect while it gets reflected as well in the intellect. The reflection and the presence of Brahman (as-if-limited) gives sentience to the body-mind-intellect. If not for Brahman-as-if-limited, the body-mind-intellect would be insentient like any rock.

It is this aspect of Brahman that appears as if limited in adjuncts that is called kutastha or saakshi. It is a mere witness to the activities performed with the adjuncts by the Ego (jeeva or reflected Consciousness). Though all activities happen, still this kutastha remains a mere witness (unaffected at all times). One Brahman appears as if many and limited in as many adjuncts are available. Thus really only one Brahman exists but it appears as many for the many sentient beings we perceive.

How can one Brahman appear as if limited and many?

Anything and everything is possible in this world which is an illusion in Brahman. In an illusion anything and everything is possible. Thus we ourselves are sometimes surprised by the dream or dreams we see – anything and everything goes in there. A beggar dreams himself to be King, a fool dreams himself to be a scholar and a normal human being dreams that he is Ishwara. Since dream is an illusion therefore anything and everything is possible – similar is the case with this entire world.

But just because anything and everything is possible in the world doesn't mean that one Brahman appearing as limited in many adjuncts cannot be proven or logically explained.

Logical explanations can be classified broadly into two categories – one is where logic or logical arguments are used to the core and other is where examples are given in order to show similarity and with similarity explanations are made.

Akaasha – analogy for kutasha

Akaasha or space is generally used to explain kutastha concept in Vedanta. Space as we know is unlimited and infinite at all times. Space doesn't have parts and therefore cannot have any association with anything else that we perceive. Though space is all-pervasive still it is the very basis of existence of everything. Everything is in space – but for space, there wouldn't be any place for everything to exist.

Such a space is present everywhere yet when it is inside a pot or a room it appears as if limited. Thus we have infinite-space which is never limited and pot-space, room-space etc. which are limited by the adjuncts of pot and room. The limitations of pot and room make it appear that space is limited by them. Thus when pot, room etc. are there we have different spaces though essentially there is only one infinite space and all these spaces aren't real (just illusions caused due to the adjuncts). Whether adjuncts are there or not, one infinite space alone always exists. When adjuncts are removed or destroyed, then infinite space alone remains behind – then there is no scope for even seeming limitation due to pot, room etc.

Summarizing, there is only infinite space at all times but due to adjuncts of pot, room etc. space appears as many and limited. When adjuncts are removed then infinite space alone remains behind – though even when adjuncts are there only infinite space exists, it appears as if there are different spaces limited by adjuncts.

Now using this analogy with respect to Brahman and adjuncts of body-mind etc, though Brahman alone ultimately exists Brahman appears as if limited due to the adjuncts of body-mind etc. That Brahman which appears as-if-limited due to adjuncts is called Kutastha and Brahman is that which never is limited (Brahman is infinite space and Kutastha is pot-space, room-space etc.). Ultimately Kutastha is also Brahman alone – difference is only with respect to the adjuncts of body-mind etc. Remove these adjuncts and then we will realize that kutastha is one with Brahman (kutastha is Brahman alone).

Even as pot-space, room-space etc. are unaffected by whatever happens with the pot, inside the pot etc. similarly kutastha is totally unaffected by whatever happens with the adjuncts of body-mind etc. Thus kutastha is ever a witness to whatever activities happen with adjuncts.

Considering that adjuncts themselves are ultimately unreal, kutastha is ever one with Brahman. There aren't many kutasthas even as there aren't many spaces – Brahman or kutastha is one alone, but appearing as many due to adjuncts. When adjuncts are there, Brahman appears as kutastha whereas when adjuncts are removed, Brahman appears as one alone. The space inside a pot and a room are the same infinite space alone – in the same way, the Consciousness or kutastha in each adjunct (each individual) is same Brahman alone.

There cannot be raised objections as to then why what is inside one mind is not known through another mind (kutastha being the same) because kutastha is a mere witness to the adjuncts. That which is a mere witness will not know anything – knowing about everything else means imbibing in the mind or memory (and then processing it). Kutastha merely throws its light on the adjuncts therefore making them as-if-sentient.

As many adjuncts are there, so many kutasthas appear as if existing. Each of these kutasthas gets reflected in the adjunct to become various jeevas. But since adjuncts themselves aren't real therefore jeevas aren't real as well. Since kutastha is one alone, therefore there is no scope for duality or many-ness. Empirically many might appear as existing but ultimately there is one Brahman alone (empirically as well there is only one which appears as many – even as one dreamer appears as many in the dream world).

Thus all the doubts and objections with respect to one Brahman are answered easily and convincingly by the concept of kutastha. Kutastha or saakshi bhaava isn't something created by some Advaita masters but is found in the scriptures itself.

Kutastha – supported by scriptures

Svetashvatara Upanishad uses the word of saakhi in order to point out to the ultimate Self or Brahman of the nature of Consciousness. But we find the best explanation of Kutastha, Brahman and Jeeva in the 15th chapter of Gita (titled Purushottama Yoga).

The Lord calls jeeva as kshara purusha, kutastha as akshara purusha and Brahman as Uttama Purusha. Jeeva or ahamkaara is kshara purusha because it is not eternal – it is just reflection of Brahman or Kutastha in the intellect. Kshara or decaying also means that it constantly changes; therefore those who take resort to jeeva (or identify themselves with this jeeva of ego) will experience only sorrow. But akshara is without any decay – this is

kutastha which appears as if limited but is essentially unlimited and one with Brahman. The moment we identify ourselves, jeeva, as kutastha (and not limited reflection of Brahman) that very moment we will get rid of sorrows and will be able to ever rejoice in bliss by being a mere witness to everything happening in the illusory world. Uttama Purusha is Brahman which is never limited at all – this is infinite space which ever remains infinite. Kutastha appears as limited whereas Brahman never appears as ever limited – essentially Kutastha and Brahman are one (akshara and uttama) but due to adjunct they appear as different; thus the Lord says that Uttama is a special akshara purusha (that which never appears as limited as well). Brahman or Uttama Purusha is the basis or support for the entire world whereas Kutastha is basis or support for individual alone, while ever remaining unaffected. Though Brahman is support of the entire world, Brahman isn't affected by the world or activities in the world by being the mere substratum in which the illusion of world is perceived. Ultimately Brahman alone exists though kutastha appears as if existing based on adjuncts – even while appearing as different from Brahman, kutastha is Brahman alone (just appearing as if different, that's it).

Now comes an important question as to what is to be done with this knowledge of kutastha being unaffected, unlimited and indifferent from Brahman at all times.

Kutasha – realization leads to bliss

Generally majority of people are always identified with the adjuncts of body, mind etc. Thus they think they are the limited jeeva which is reflection of Brahman in the intellect. Since this jeeva constantly changes, they too change and therefore experience only sorrow. The moment they realize that jeeva is reflection of Kutastha and therefore is Kutastha alone, that very moment all problems or sorrows will end. One who thus identifies himself as the Kutastha, witness of everything, will be able to get rid of all sorrows.

Ultimate goal of life as moksha is achieved when a person always remembers his very nature of Kutastha (not the limited reflection). That I am this Kutastha instantly will make us remember the entire world to be just illusions in Brahman – thus whatever happens in the world, we will be able to ever rejoice in bliss even as an actor is unaffected at all times while portraying a role in a movie (as he knows his true nature and that the entire movie is just an illusion, not real). Even as a dreamer experiences the entire dream world while remaining unaffected at all times, similarly a person identifying himself with Kutastha will be able to remain unaffected at all times while actions are happening in the external world.

This unaffected blissful state is the ultimate goal of life and hence all sadhakas has to achieve this state by remembering themselves to be a mere witness of everything that is happening here. Though this attitude of witnesshood is very tough, the alternative of seeing everything as one Brahman will instead lead a sadhaka easily to the goal of moksha (ultimately one will realize oneself to be saakshi though as a means of sadhana, it is very tough to implement saakshi bhaava).

It should be remembered that even as pot-space is always infinite-space alone, similarly kutastha's witnesshood also is temporary and it is always Brahman alone. When adjuncts are there, infinite space appears as different spaces, similarly when adjuncts of body-mind etc. are there Brahman appears as kutastha. Essentially and at all times, kutastha's real nature is Brahman and Brahman alone.

Even a few moments abiding as the witness of everything will lead to unaffected and blissful state, so what to speak about if we are able to abide as kutastha at all times? A realized master is one who is ever abiding as kutastha-brahman while experiencing the entire world, knowing that one Brahman alone exists, the world is just an illusion and therefore ever rejoicing in bliss.

May we all strive to remember our very nature to be kutastha-Brahman so that we will be able to get rid of all dualities, sorrow and will thereby be able to ever rejoice in bliss here and now itself.

Chathussutra Prakaashah

Shareeraka Nyaya Sangraha

Third Sutra

शास्त्रयोनित्वात् ।

śāstrayonitvāt

Because shastras are the source (of Brahman).

Previously we have seen various arguments which all directly or indirectly relate to the authority of the scriptures (scriptures being the source of Brahman). Let's now continue with the last part of the purvapakshin's statements.

Literal Translation of the work

Like a teacher, creation's (a work's) all-knowingness being not established; special perception as a result of knowledge born out of the scriptures which being natured as Consciousness of Brahman, leading to all-knowingness isn't special or distinctive with respect to special perception as a result of other sources of knowledge; Brahman being the cause of scriptures, this alone not establishing all-knowingness; Brahman is not all-knowing because of being the source of scriptures, thus is concluded.

Siddhantin – Brahman the source of scriptures

There is another meaning that can be taken from the third sutra which is that Brahman is the source of scriptures. It is well known that scriptures cover all the topics or sciences that we can find in the world. New sciences like computer etc. are also directly or indirectly included in the scriptures. Therefore a person who has learnt all the scriptures automatically gains knowledge of the entire world itself (there wouldn't be anything that the person doesn't know or lacks knowledge of). We find this clearly with respect to masters who have not just learnt the scriptures but have written commentaries on the scriptures (such masters like Sankara, Sayana etc. are masters who know everything under the Sun).

Though it might be argued that today we can't find people who know all the scriptures, this is a wrong argument as the tradition of Sankaracharyas continue even to this day and these acharyas all are well-versed in all aspects/parts of the scriptures. There have also been great acharyas in the lineage of Ramanujacharya and Madhvacharya as well – such masters

and other lesser-known masters also tread the earth even now though are comparatively unknown in this busy world where everybody's world is just their spectrum (that which they like or which appeals to them).

Scriptures themselves are an encyclopedia of all knowledge and Brahman by being the source of scriptures becomes all-knowing in nature. It is essential to prove that Brahman is all-knowing because only such a Brahman can be the cause-substratum of the entire world. He who is the creator of a program knows everything about the program because it is his creation. In the same way, Brahman by being the creator of the world needs to have all-knowledge.

If it be proven that Brahman doesn't have all-knowingness then Brahman being the cause-substratum would be proven wrong – thus the system of Vedanta which emphasizes on Brahman's knowledge leading to bliss will be proven wrong. The upanishadic statement of that by knowing which everything becomes known also will be proved wrong. Hence the purvapakshin tries to prove the authority of the Vedas or scriptures is wrong and Brahman having all-knowingness as a result of being the cause of the world is also wrong.

Purvapakshin – Teacher isn't all-knowing

Though we find teachers or guidance providers in every walk of life today, they are only stalwarts in their area. The same teachers aren't experts in all walks of life. Thus one who teaches computers will not know much about nuclear physics and one who knows physics will not know much about chemistry; those who know a lot about certain aspect of scriptures will not know other aspects of scriptures or worldly sciences and those who know worldly sciences will not have mastery over the scriptures. Thus a teacher can never be all-knowing in nature.

If it be argued that teachers or gurus are all-knowing, such statements are proven only from the scriptures (whose authority itself is under question); therefore we cannot say that teachers or gurus are all-knowing.

Purvapakshin – Teacher's creation of scriptures isn't all-knowing

Scriptures are creations of great masters. Each scriptural text or part of scriptural text is associated or attributed to certain rishis or sages. Since teachers themselves aren't all-knowing therefore the creation of such teachers also will not be knowing. Since scriptures

are creations of teachers or great masters, therefore it is proven that scriptures aren't all-knowing in nature.

If it be argued that scriptures encompass all the knowledge that we can find in the world, this is also not proven as many sciences of today aren't found in the scriptures. Many sub-sciences that have developed also aren't found in the scriptures. Taking a simple example, computer science isn't something that can be found in the scriptures. If it is answered that the basics of computer science which is mathematics is being dealt in the scriptures, then that still doesn't make scriptures all-knowing. All-knowing means knowing everything and such knowledge therefore can never be found in the scriptures.

Purvapakshin – scriptural knowledge is special or distinctive

As we have seen previously there are different sources or means of knowledge. Vedanta accepts six means of valid knowledge – they are perception or pratyaksha, inferential knowledge or anumana, comparison or analogy or upamaana, verbal testimony or shabda, presumption or arthaapatti and non-cognition or anupalabधि. Scriptural knowledge is just part of verbal testimony.

There cannot be a contention that knowledge out of the scriptures is very special for such knowledge can be achieved through other means of knowledge as well. Anything and everything that we find in the world can be known the various pramaanas (means of knowledge) – there is no necessity that scriptures alone can prove the entire world.

If it is argued that scriptures alone can prove the validity of Brahman, then this also isn't true as Brahman can be directly experienced. Direct experience in the form of intuition is part of pratyaksha. Since such pratyaksha itself can prove Brahman therefore there is no need of scriptures to prove Brahman.

A means of knowledge is very special and effective in that there are no other means possible to give knowledge of an object. In this case it cannot be argued that scriptures are special because whatever has been explained in the scriptures can be proven or known through other means of knowledge (other than scriptures). Thus scriptures ultimately authority itself is under question and not valid.

Purvapakshin – scriptures aren't all-knowing

It has been proven through different arguments or logics that scriptures aren't all-knowing and simple analysis itself will show that scriptures don't contain everything under the Sun. Yes, scriptures might talk about the essence of the entire world as Brahman but this doesn't make scriptures all-knowing as they still don't talk about everything.

Purvapakshin – Brahman being source of scriptures doesn't lead to all-knowing

Since scriptures aren't all-knowing therefore Brahman being the source of scriptures doesn't make Brahman all-knowing. If there is a science that deals with computers, then a knower of such a science (or creator of such a science) becomes all-knower with respect to computers. But since this science only deals with computers and there are many other sciences that are untouched by this science, therefore this science isn't all-knowing and the creator-knower of computer-science doesn't become all-knowing as well.

Using the same way of analysis, since scriptures aren't all-knowing therefore Brahman who is the source or creator of the scriptures isn't all-knowing.

Purvapakshin's conclusion – Brahman isn't all-knowing

We can conclude here saying that Brahman isn't all-knowing. Such a Brahman (who isn't all-knowing) will not be able to lead to eternal bliss and cannot be cause-substratum of the world. Therefore such a Brahman isn't to be known (enquiry into such a Brahman isn't valid or isn't to be followed by seekers who want eternal bliss).

The ultimate goal of life irrespective of who we are, where we are etc. is eternal bliss – that bliss which is ever present and untainted by sorrow. The two aspects of complete cessation of sorrow and ever rejoicing in bliss is what each and every person in the world is seeking, knowingly or unknowingly. And Vedanta says that this goal can be achieved through knowledge of Brahman – in order to gain knowledge of Brahman, enquiry into Brahman is essential. Brahman leads to eternal bliss in that Brahman is the cause-substratum of the entire world. Knowledge of such a Brahman, all-knowing, will lead to knowledge of everything – there would be nothing remaining to be known. The promise that Vedanta makes in many places is that knowing Brahman, a person knows everything and there remains nothing else to be known. Such a knowledge alone leads to the ultimate goal of life as ever rejoicing in bliss. But for this to be true, Brahman has to be all-knowing. Brahman is said to be all-knowing because of being proven through the scriptures or because of being

the source of scriptures (that are all-knowing or encompassing all knowledge). But it has been clearly proven that scriptures aren't authoritative and all-knowing. Thus Brahman's validity itself is put into question. This being the case, such a Brahman's enquiry will not lead to eternal bliss – to put it correctly, it cannot be proven that such a Brahman's enquiry will indeed lead to eternal bliss.

Brahman and knowledge of Brahman leading to eternal bliss is the main concept of Vedanta and this being proven wrong, Vedanta itself is proven wrong. Thus the system of Vedanta itself isn't to be started (starting of such a system doesn't have any subject-matter or real fruit or a qualified person).

We have seen the purvapakshin's statements/arguments in the 3rd sutra – we will see the reply of siddhantin from the next edition of the magazine.

May we all strive to learn the scriptures with focus on the subject-matter of non-dual Brahman so that through constant contemplation of Brahman as pervading the entire illusory world, we will be able to get rid of all sorrows and will be able to ever rejoice in bliss here and now itself.

Upadhi Dhyotanam

Ultimate goal of life

Today we are in a world where goals are considered differently by different people. Scientists have a goal, businessmen have a goal, politicians have a goal – thus everybody has a goal of their own. And individual goals are also split into short-term and long-term goals. Short-term goals are those which are sought out in the near future whereas long-term goals are those which are sought out for a long period. Long-term goals are considered the goal of one's life itself.

Now little bit of analysis will prove that this categorization of goals is faulty. Let's say that I am a mathematician and I have a goal of proving an unproven theorem and thereby to get some world award. But is this goal really the end-goal or is it in between another end-goal? End-goal is that which will make us contented rather than leading to yet another goal. End-goals can be considered as the final destination in our travel rather than just stops in between flight changes on the way to the final destination. It is pretty clear that end-goal cannot be just proving the theorem as sometimes as a result of this we are still not happy. And even if we are happy, the goal is happiness and not proving the theorem. If we are able to prove the theorem easily and still there is no happiness, then it cannot even be considered as a goal (by ourselves itself). Thus end-goal in this case is happiness.

If we take another example of end-goal being becoming a doctor (for a student). The student struggles for many years and finally succeeds in becoming a doctor. But after this also if there is no contentment then the goal ceases to be a goal and will be dropped out quickly. Thus here too the goal is happiness.

When we analyze each and every goal in life we will find that it can all be traced back to happiness. This happiness isn't the same happiness we get from the external world because happiness from external world is temporary (and therefore seeds of sorrow alone). The world itself is constantly changing therefore happiness from the world isn't happiness at all – it only serves to stir-up our mind (like waking up a sleeping person only to tell him to sleep again). This happiness is long-lived or eternal. This happiness is untainted by sorrow or associated by complete cessation of sorrow.

Thus knowingly or unknowingly we all are seeking the goal of life as complete cessation of sorrow and ever rejoicing in bliss. This is the ultimate goal of life and termed in Vedanta as moksha or realization. Until this goal is achieved there will be unhappiness, discontentment, sorrow and lack of peace in life. Many people run hither and thither in search of happiness but unless they realize that their goal is moksha, they will never achieve this goal. Instead they will only keep on suffering again and again. Happiness from the world or from sensual pleasure is like adding salt to a wound as it will only cause more harm than any help at all.

Since the ultimate goal of life is moksha, how can we attain it?

Moksha – in eternal entity alone

Moksha being the ultimate goal of life is only possible from an entity which is eternal. Eternal here means that it ever exists without any change. Anything that changes is subject to birth and death; therefore such an entity will eventually die off (subject to death). That which doesn't even exist after sometime cannot give us happiness but will only give us sorrow. But that which exists the same at all times will give us eternal bliss (as it is without any change). Imagine that our favorite car remains exactly the same at all times; then we will be ever blissful with the car. Such a never-changing-car should be present for us ever rejoice in bliss. Such an entity which remains ever the same alone will give us moksha (or lead us to moksha).

Does such an entity exist?

This is a question asked by many people in the world. Those who just enjoy killing life by sensual pleasures of the world hide behind this question to prove that there is no such entity which never changes and therefore we should just be content with sensual pleasures of life. Life should be enjoyed to the fullest.

There are also many people who though attend discourses on spiritual topics cannot apprehend that moksha is not from this world and from an eternal entity – therefore they enjoy all sensual pleasures and spiritual discourses are just a way to spend or kill time. Such an uncle once said to me “When in Rome, you have to be Roman – so once you go to United States of America, then you should strive to live like there”. Imagine the surprise of the uncle when he met me in USA after a couple of years expecting me to change a lot but perceiving absolutely no change except long hair tied in the back. The point here is that people tend to ignore scriptural statements for worldly pleasures of this world or other

world. They aren't able to seek out the eternal entity realizing which a person attains moksha and therefore attains the ultimate goal of life.

When we look around in the world we will find that rarely people are able to remain happy or blissful. It is almost impossible to remain happy at all times hence AMMA says that what is required in life is to remain happy irrespective of external situations. The only people who are able to ever rejoice in bliss at all times are realized masters who are not only well versed in the truth of the scriptures but abide as the truth that is propounded in the scriptures at all times.

As to whether there is a real entity or not, it is very easily proven by the scriptures that such an entity definitely exists. There need to be a changeless real entity for all changes to be perceived. If we take the standpoint that everything is changing then what is the basis or reference point for these changes? There will be none and if there is none then changes itself cannot be perceived or apprehend – then it is as good as saying that nothing is changing thus leading to the destruction of their own system (which believes that everything is changing but leads, through logic, to the conclusion that nothing is changing). The ever-changing world definitely requires a changeless substratum. It cannot be said that Sun is the changeless substratum for Earth as Sun itself is changing – we have to then find out a changeless substratum for the Sun and this would have to be continued till we find a changeless entity. Due to simplicity it is easy to find the changeless entity with the changing Earth itself and such an entity will cater even to Sun or any other changes in the entire world.

This changeless entity of the world has to be that in which changes of the world are perceived or happens. By being the substratum of the changing world, this changeless entity is thus the cause of the world as well. Thus this entity is that from which the world has come, that in which the world resides and that unto which the world merges at the time of its destruction. This entity is termed in the scriptures as Brahman and variously called as Atman, Ishwara, Vishnu, Bhagavaan, Paramaatman, Siva etc. Names do change but the eternality of this entity doesn't change. Whether one is called Hari or Vishnu or Siva, the person remains the same – the name may be as a result of environment or surrounding or with respect to different people but the person remains exactly the same.

Now what is the nature of this changeless cause-substratum of the world?

Brahman – of the nature of Existence, Consciousness and Bliss

For the changeless entity of Brahman to be changeless, it has to exist at all times (never ceasing to exist). Such an entity therefore should be of the nature of Existence – if existence is a quality that remains in the entity for a period of time then it wouldn't be real (or changeless). Therefore existence is definitely the very nature of Brahman. Existence is not possible without a light source falling upon it. The light source which illumines all existence is Consciousness for if Consciousness doesn't exist, nothing exists and if Consciousness exists, everything exists. Thus the light of Consciousness has to fall upon Brahman at all times. This is only possible if Consciousness is the very nature of Brahman (for if it is a quality then it wouldn't be always present in Brahman and thereby would make Brahman not changeless or ever-existing). That which is of the nature of Existence also is unlimited for limitation is that which makes an entity exist only for a period of time. Therefore Brahman is unlimited and that which is unlimited is blissful in nature – that which is limited is only sorrowful or has temporary happiness but that which is unlimited is blissful in nature. Therefore Brahman is of the nature of Existence, Consciousness and Bliss.

That these three of Existence, Consciousness and Bliss aren't three different but exist together in an entity is easily known through the truth that when one exists the other two also exist. If existence is not there, Consciousness wouldn't exist. If Consciousness isn't there, existence will not be there. If both aren't there then bliss will not exist. Thus it is clear that though these three give different perspectives to Brahman they all are together and don't create duality in Brahman (hence Brahman is called akhanda or without any divisions – also that which has divisions is changing in nature and therefore will not be eternal).

Realization of Brahman of the nature of existence, consciousness and bliss is moksha and this alone will lead us to the ultimate goal of life. Ultimate goal of life means it alone will get rid of all sorrows and make us ever rejoice in bliss. Since we all are knowingly or unknowingly seeking this ultimate goal of life therefore we all should strive to achieve this goal here and soon itself (before this birth ends and then we will not even know where we will born next).

But now the question comes as to how to achieve this ultimate goal of life?

There are innumerable ways to attain anything in life today. But Vedanta says that the ultimate goal of life can be attained through one and only one mean of knowledge.

How can this be true when various masters of the past have propounded different ways to attain the ultimate goal of life as moksha?

Yes, there are different paths but the final step is knowledge and knowledge alone. It doesn't matter which master made a contradictory statement but what matters is whether it is valid or not. With respect to valid means, the highest authority is given only to scriptures. This is very clear from the various works of Sankara (who is traditionalist to the core). A guru or a master is essential in as much as to provide us with the right interpretation for the scriptures. Scriptures are very vast and they cover a lot of areas therefore there can be confusions as to what is the main view-point or subject of the scriptures. Even as only a driver (who knows well to drive) alone can teach driving to another person; even as only a good swimmer can teach swimming to another person, similarly only a realized master who has not only interpreted the scriptures but is a living embodiment of the scriptures can teach the right interpretation to another person (shishya). But once the shishya starts learning from the Guru, the shishya realizes that focus is always on the scriptures (not on the Guru). We find AMMA again and again emphasizing that there is nothing new to be told here as in sanaatana dharma everything that needs to be told has already been told – we can only rephrase or explain with different analogies and through different perspectives for better understanding of people of current day-world.

It is important to remember that a true Guru will put emphasis on the scriptures or the subject-matter of scriptures as the ultimate reality of Brahman or Ishwara – any person who puts emphasis on himself isn't a true Guru but one who wants benefits for himself in one or the other way.

Though there are many ways in order to attain things in life, these means are not possible to lead us to the ultimate goal of life as eternal bliss and complete cessation of sorrow. This is because the ultimate goal is one which is already achieved but forgotten. We are all always devoid of sorrow and ever filled with bliss – it is this state that we all constantly experience in the state of deep sleep (daily). If bliss weren't our very nature we wouldn't be able to experience it at any time – let alone daily in a state. Thus ignorance makes us think that we are limited and as a result we strive for unlimited and perfect state. This ignorance can only be removed by knowledge even as darkness can only be removed by light and through no other means.

In order to reach a destination of a meeting place, we have to get into the building and the room. Though we may take a car or a bus or walk to the building, still the final step is to get into the building. Even as car, bus etc. are just means but not the goal, similarly all means in the world are mere means which will indirectly help us in moksha (ultimate goal of life). But moksha is attained through knowledge and knowledge alone as bandha (that which obstructs moksha) is out of ignorance alone – our very nature at all times is moksha alone.

There can be many scriptural quotations quoted here to show that the means to moksha is knowledge and knowledge alone. This knowledge isn't mere knowledge of Brahman – there are many in the world who think that just by repeating "Who am I" or doing dhyana we will attain moksha. Knowledge is knowledge of Brahman as found in the scriptures because scriptures alone are the ultimate authority for Brahman. The above words aren't attacking Ramana Maharshi as Maharshi believed in the scriptures – his work of Upadesa Saram is an essence of the teachings of the scriptures. Maharshi's vichara or self-enquiry isn't mere asking of who am I but it is the scriptural way of negating everything that is not-Self (object) and asserting whatever remains behind as the Self (Subject I which can never be negated). Sankara and others therefore say clearly that knowledge of Brahman isn't mere knowledge as achieved from somebody in the world but it is knowledge of Brahman as found in the scriptures.

If we give authority to a person, let the person even be a realized master, then we will have to give authority to any and every person in the world. Thus authority is only to the scriptures which are eternal and have been testing time and again by many masters. Thus true masters will always put emphasis unto the scriptures.

Now, if I am already blissful then why don't I experience it?

Ajnaana – cause of sorrow

Ajnaana or ignorance of one's very nature of Brahman is the cause of all sorrows (and not experiencing one's own nature of bliss). As to what is ajnaana's nature, it cannot be really defined as it doesn't really exist. It is like darkness which doesn't exist at all but appears as existing for a person experiencing it. Bring in light and we will come to the conclusion that there never was any darkness at all. Similarly ignorance exists only for an ignorant person – once knowledge dawns, then the person realizes that there never was any ignorance and there never can be any ignorance at all.

If ignorance doesn't exist at all, then who appears as suffering?

The suffering person is called the ego or I which identifies itself with the body-mind-intellect. This I superimposes itself on the real I of Brahman.

But can Brahman ever be limited or subject to superimposition?

Really no but empirically yes.

But how can we explain the very many individuals in the world with just one Brahman?

Vedanta says that the many individuals are just reflections of Consciousness in the adjuncts of body-mind-intellect. These adjuncts themselves aren't real and therefore reflection also isn't real. Then what about the Consciousness that stands to get reflected? Is it one alone or many?

It is one Consciousness or Brahman which appears as if limited due to adjuncts but isn't really limited (is unlimited at all times). Even as infinite space appears as limited due to adjuncts of pot, room etc. similarly one Brahman appears as limited in the various adjuncts of the world. Due to adjuncts, each witness Consciousness (that which appears limited but ultimately is unaffected) appears as different from one another but they are one with absolute or one Consciousness or Brahman alone.

The witness Self which appears as if limited but is ever unlimited is called kutastha in Vedanta. Kutastha is one with Brahman but appears different as a result of adjuncts of body etc. and since adjuncts themselves aren't real therefore there is no duality or many-ness caused.

Knowledge of kutastha-Brahman

Once knowledge of one's own very nature of kutastha-Brahman is gained, then though the reflected Consciousness as well as adjuncts are existing (or present), still they don't affect the person. Then the entire world and its activities are nothing but a drama happening or a long dream. In a drama, though the person is enacting or portraying a role, still the person is unaffected as he knows his real nature as distinct from the role being portrayed. In a dream, the dreamer perceives an entire world of his own. The entire world is nothing but himself empirically but ultimately the entire dream world doesn't exist at all – if knowledge that the entire dream world doesn't exist as the dreamer of I alone exist is there then even while experiencing the dream world there will be no sorrow (will not be affected at all).

Abiding as witness-Brahman at all times, a person will be devoid of any sorrow and will ever rejoice in bliss at all times. Even the gravest of sorrow will not move the person even a little. Thus through knowledge, a person will be able to achieve the ultimate goal of life as moksha here and now itself.

Advaita Vedanta – dependent only on Brahman

Though the system of Advaita Vedanta takes into account many terms for explaining the state of sorrow and the path towards moksha, still here the fundamental principle is that one Brahman alone ultimately exists. Empirically duality which appears as existing is fine as long as one's very nature of witness-substratum-Brahman is remembered. There is absolutely no dependency on any term of Vedanta or other terms for Advaita Vedanta as it depends only on Brahman – and this Brahman is beyond doubt self-established as pure Consciousness which pulsates inside each one of us as I-exist, I-exist at all times. Anything and everything can be doubted or not established but I which pulsates inside can never be doubted – it is ever established and ever present. Just as a result of not knowing this I to be blissful, one experiences sorrow. Knowledge dawns and then the person realizes that I was and will ever be blissful non-dual reality of Brahman.

Other systems of Vedanta

It is impossible to even mention the other systems of Vedanta as they are all full systems but the two most prominent systems of Vedanta (other than Advaita Vedanta) are Vishishtadvaita and Dvaita. When these systems came into vogue, the only system that was in vogue was Advaita Vedanta. Therefore in order to establish these systems as separate systems, the other acharyas had to first refute Advaita Vedanta (prove that it isn't a valid system). This refutation was done very strongly and in a logical way – but all such refutations are easily refuted or proved wrong through the fundamental of Advaita Vedanta (which is that one Brahman alone exists here).

Though many concepts have been attacked by opponents, it is ajnaana that has got most of the attack. We have already seen the work of avidyaa prakaashah which answers the objections of Ramanujacharya (the sapta vidha anupapatti of vidyaa). The contention of opponents is that if some critical terms of Advaita Vedanta is proven wrong, then the system itself is proven wrong and therefore such a system itself doesn't exist. That this contention itself is wrong is known easily through the fundamental of Advaita Vedanta that Brahman as one's Consciousness alone exists here. If Consciousness isn't there, the entire

world ceases to exist and if Consciousness exists, the entire world exists. And as if we find in the deep sleep state, even though the world might not exist still Consciousness will exist. Thus Consciousness alone is eternal whereas the world of duality is just an illusion in Consciousness. That which isn't eternal just appears to exist but doesn't exist at all ultimately – thus one Brahman of the nature of Consciousness, that which pulsates inside us as I-exist, I-exist alone exists at all times.

Madhva's khandana trayam

Dvaita Vedanta was propagated by Madhvacharya and he wrote three khandana works refuting Advaita Vedanta. Mayavada khandanam refutes the system of mayavada itself (by proving that there is no anubandha chatustayam of vishaya, adhikaari, prayojana and sambandham the system is proven as non-existing). Anumaana khandanam or prapancha mithyaatva anumaana khandanam refutes the inference used to prove the illusory nature of the world. Finally Upaadhi khandanam refutes the concept of upaadhi of adjuncts (which is essential to show that I am kutastha who is one with Brahman except for upaadhis of body etc.).

Mayavada khandana has been already answered through the work of Mayavada Darpanam. In this section of the magazine we will try to answer the work of Upaadhi khandana.

Upaadhi khandanam

Upaadhi khandanam is a poem-style short-work of Madhvacharya. It has been commented upon by Padmanabha Teertha in his Upaadhi khandana tika and exhaustively explained by Jaya Teertha in his Upaadhi Khandana Vivaranam.

Upaadhi Dhyotanam

This is a work in which we will see Madhva's Upaadhi khandanam and answer the objections raised by Madhva as well. Upaadhis are supported by sruthi, yukti and anubhava though ultimately upaadhis themselves don't exist. It should always be remembered that one Brahman alone exists – everything else is just an illusion in Brahman that appears as existing temporarily. Empirically accepting the world is fine as long as we remember that ultimately the world doesn't exist at all. Forgetting that one Brahman alone exists makes a person go from one birth to another – therefore such a person experiences nothing but sorrow alone. The sad pitiful state is that such a person experiences sorrow whose very nature at all times is blissful Brahman. Thus everybody who wants moksha or eternal bliss

should strive to learn Vedanta and remember that one Brahman alone exists so that sorrow will instantly vanish. Through remembrance of Brahman naturally at all times, a person will be able to ever rejoice in bliss here and now itself.

May we all strive to remember our very nature of blissful Brahman as the mere witness of the entire world through the illusory adjuncts of body etc. so that we will be able to get rid of sorrow and will be able to ever rejoice in bliss here and now itself.

Vedanta Shabda Vicharanam

Adhyasa

The word Adhyasa means superimposition. In Vedanta another term called Adhyaropa is used in many places which means erroneous attribution of one thing over another thing. We will analyze the word Adhyasa in this article. We will analyze what Adhyasa is, the cause of adhyasa, and what is the purpose of knowing adhyasa

Scriptures point out very clearly that Brahman is the Ultimate Truth which is of the nature of Sat Chit and Anandam. Sat means Existence, which means Brahman alone exists at all point in time and everywhere. Chit means Consciousness, which means Brahman is sentient which knows its own existence and also illumines everything else. Anandam means Bliss Absolute, which can be understood as bliss or peace that comes out of completeness or desirelessness. Scriptures also point out that Atman or Self is identical with Brahman, this means that Atman also is of the nature of Sat Chit and Anandam. Scriptures also say at many places that there is duality at all and in some places in the scriptures there is also mention that there was no creation and no jivas.

Katha Upanishad says

naiha nana astikinchana

There is no duality here whatsoever.

Gaudapadacharya says in MandukyaKarika(Chapter 1 sloka

Bhogarthamsrishtitanyekreedarthamitichaapare

Devasyaishasvabhaavoyamaaptakaamasyakaaspruha

(some say) Creation are for the enjoyment (of the Lord), some others say for the sake of sport, (some others say) this again is the very nature of Lord, but what desire can there be (for the Lord) whose desires are already fulfilled?

Gaudapadacharya also says in Chapter 3 sloka 48

Na kashcitjaayatejeevaHsambhavoasyanavidhyate

etatadutamamsatyamyatrakincitnajaayate

No jiva ever comes into existence. There exists no cause that can produce it. The supreme truth is that nothing is ever born.

This is the Paramarthika Satyam or the Ultimate Truth that there is nothing at all whatsoever apart from Brahman. Though this is the Ultimate Truth, this truth seem to completely contradictory to the current experience of a jiva. Even though jiva's nature is essentially one with Brahman, still Jivahave a contrary experience. Jiva thinks himself to be born and thinks that he would die. He thinks himself to be limited and also sees many things in this world. Scriptures on one hand says that Brahman alone exists, this individual Self is Brahman alone, but jiva on the other hand experiences that he is limited and sees everything else which is totally contrary. Because Jiva thinks himself to be limited to the body and mind, he experiences happiness and sorrow from the body and mind and thus goes from birth to birth in this world again and again. Scriptures point out that this contrary experience is because of the superimposition of unreal entity over real entity. This is called Adhyasa.

Shankaracharya explains about superimposition at the very beginning of the Brahma Sutra Bhashya as below.

*YushmadasmadpratyayagocharayoHvishayavishayinoHtamaHprakaashavadviruddhasvabhaavayoritharaitharabhaavaanupapattausiddhaayaam, tat
dharmaaNaaapisutaraamitaraitarebhaavaanupapattiH -
ittyataHsmatpratyayagocarevishayiNicidaatmakeyuShmatpratyayagoracarasyavishayasya
tat dharmaaNaaamcaadhyaasaH, tad viparyayeNavishayiNaH tat
dharmaaNaaamcavishayedhyaasomityetibhavituMyuktam|
tathaaapianyonyaasminnaanyonyaatmakataamanyonyadharmamshchaadhyasyaitaretaraav
ivekenaatyantaviviktayordharmadharminNoH, mithyaaajnaananimittaH,
satyaannrtemituneekrtya, 'ahamidam, mamedam' itinasargikoyamlokavyapaaraH.*

Of the spheres of the two concepts of "Thou" and "I" the object and the subject, with their natures opposed to each other like darkness and light, when it is established that one cannot intelligibly be of the nature of the other, the more is it unintelligible for their attributes too to be (in the substrate of) the other; on this account, the superimposition of the object, the sphere of the concept of "Thou", and of its attributes, on the subject, the intelligent self, the sphere of the concept of "I", and (conversely) through an error in respect of that, the superimposition of the subject and its attributes on the object, can properly be only an illusion. Yet, after superimposing on each the nature and the attributes of the other through non-discrimination of each from the other in the case of its attributes absolutely distinct (among themselves) as also of substrates (similarly distinct), there is this

natural empirical usage like, "I am this" and "This is mine" coupling the true with the nature, with its cause in illusory cognition.

There are two entities, Consciousness and Matter. Matter is the body and mind complex. Body mind complex is known only through the illumination of Consciousness. Here shankaracharya says that Consciousness and Matter have completely contrary nature, like light and darkness. But for some reason this contrary nature is not remembered. When the real nature of Matter and Consciousness is not remembered, then one is mistaken of the other. Thus, we identify ourselves with the body and mind. When something happens to our body, we say "I am in pain", "I am hungry" etc. Thus, we somehow mistake body and mind as I and thereafter whatever happens to the body and mind we consider it as our experience. This is called superimposition.

What is the cause of this superimposition?

Consciousness and Matter are of contrary nature like light and darkness. If this fact is not known or remembered then we end up identifying ourselves with the body and mind. This lack of discrimination leads to the identification of the Jiva with body and mind. This lack of discrimination is caused by ignorance of the real of the Self. Thus, the cause of superimposition is Avidya or Ignorance of the real nature of the I or the Self. If ignorance is the cause of the superimposition, the only way to come out of it is through knowledge or remembrance of the real nature of the Self.

Q:*Everyone knows that they are not body or mind since people use the expression "This body". Does it just know that Jiva is not the body and mind enough?*

A: No, this is not always true. Even though at times Jiva uses the expression "This body" which may seem like he thinks himself to be different from body, still at different times he identifies himself with the body when he says "I am fat", "I am in pain" etc. Fatness, Pain etc belong only to the body. Thus, there is confusion between what the real I is, whether the I is the body or not. Even if jiva knows that he is not the body and mind, mere knowing is not enough, Jiva should also know what his real nature is. He should be able to know that He is not the body-mind complex, but Sat Chit Ananda Atman. Until then, the Jiva will experience happiness and sorrow.

What is the purpose of knowing about Superimposition?

As explained previously, Jiva forgets his own nature of Self and because of that gets identified himself with body-mind complex. And through this identification with body-mind complex, he gets the notion "I am so and so", "These are mine". This "I" and "Mine" causes the jiva to experience happiness and sorrow and make the jiva go birth after birth experiencing happiness and sorrow. The only way to get rid of this bondage and thereafter to attain liberation is to get the knowledge that "I am not the body-mind, I am Brahman". There is a wrong knowledge about oneself that jiva is body-mind complex, and there is forgetfulness of the real nature. To get to a state of getting the true knowledge about oneself, the jiva must be aware of his wrong knowledge about himself. Only when the jiva understands that considering himself to be body-mind is wrong, would the jiva try to get the right knowledge. Thus, understanding about superimposition and the cause of superimposition is very essential.

Brahma Sutra's first sutra is Athatho brahma jijnaasa – Now, therefore, the enquiry into Brahman. Before entering into the commentary of first sutra, Shankaracharya explains about superimposition in Adhyaasabhashya. Thus, before entering into knowing what is the right thing to be known it is important to know about the wrong knowledge. Thus, knowing about superimposition is very important before enquiring into Brahman.

Q: *If knowing ones own nature as Brahman is the Ultimate Goal, why should one know about the superimposition and there-by get rid of it. Why not directly know about Brahman?*

A: Scriptures speak about four fold qualification required by the seeker in order to start the enquiry into Brahman. They are Vivekam (Discrimination), Vairagyam (Dispassion), ShamadiShatkaSampattih (Sama ,dama, uparama, titiksha, shraddha and samadhanam) and mumukshutvam (desire for liberation). Though, our real nature of Brahman only, still since we have the wrong knowledge about ourselves, we have to perform sadhana to get rid of the wrong knowledge. These four fold qualification are mentioned so that the identification with the external world is reduced and thereby there is a qualification to turn inward to know about the Self. When the identification with world is reduced, agitation of the mind will reduce and thereafter enquiry into Brahman will be effective through the study of scriptures under the guidance of a Guru. That is why the first sutra of Brahma Sutra start with "Now, Therefore, Enquiry into Brahman". It means saying to the seeker "since you have eligibility to know Brahman, enquiry into Brahman can be started". The eligibility here is the mental eligibility to be able to comprehend the Truth. If on the other hand, the

enquiry into Brahman is started without the four fold qualifications, the seeker is still more identified with the external world and hence the knowledge of Brahman will not be effective to such a seeker.

Thus, when we understand that this identification with the body is wrong and thereafter remember that our real nature is Self, which is of the nature of Anandam, we will be liberated from the continuous cycle of birth and death. Thus, the end of analysis of Adhyaasa or Superimposition.

Saakshi Nirupanam

ॐ साक्षिनिरुपणं

om sāksinirupaṇam

सर्व कर्मणां सत्वभावनम् ।

यस्य कारणात् तत्त्वहं चितिः ॥१॥

sarva karmaṇāṃ satvabhāvanam |
yasya kāraṇāt tattvahaṃ citiḥ ||1||

1. All actions are real due to whom that, conscious "I" I am (here I isn't Consciousness or Self but reflected Consciousness or Ego).

तस्य सत्यता यस्य सन्निधेः ।

साक्षिरूपतोऽहंस्वरूपतः ॥२॥

tasya satyatā yasya sannidheḥ |
sākṣirūpato'haṃsvarūpataḥ ||2||

2. It's (Ego's) reality is because of whose presence, that witness natured I am (that Saakshi whose presence makes Ego real or existing temporarily).

साक्षिवर्जितो यस्तुवर्तते ।

तस्य मानभावस्तु नास्ति वै ॥३॥

sākṣivarjito yastuvartate |
tasya mānabhāvastu nāsti vai ||3||

3. He (or that) who exists without witness or Saakshi, his validity or proof or reality is definitely not there at all (anything is proven only when Saakshi or witness is there).

सर्वप्राणिनां भानरूपकः ।

चित्स्वरूपकः साक्ष्यहं सदा ॥४ ॥

sarvaprāṇinām bhānarūpakah|
citsvarūpakah sāksyaham sadā||4||

4. That which illumines all beings, that Saakshi of the nature of Consciousness I am always.

मे विना न सत् सर्वदा जगत् ।

सत्स्वरूपकः साक्ष्यहं सदा ॥५ ॥

me vinā na sat sarvadā jagat|
satsvarūpakah sāksyaham sadā||5||

5. Without me, the entire world isn't existing or appearing as real, that Saakshi of the nature of Existence I am always.

दुःखवर्जितो नन्दरूपकः ।

ब्रह्मरूपकः साक्ष्यहं सदा ॥६ ॥

duḥkhavarjito nandarūpakah|
brahmarūpakah sāksyaham sadā||6||

6. Devoid of sorrow, of the nature of bliss and Brahman, that Saakshi I am always (I am Saakshi of the nature of bliss and Brahman).

कूटवत्स्थितिः कूटन्यायतः ।

साक्षिरूपतो ब्रह्मनिर्गुणः ॥७ ॥

kūṭavatsthitih kūṭanyāyatah|
sākṣirūpato brahmanirguṇah||7||

7. Existing like a false and proven due to pot-logic (logic related to pot and space), Saakshi is of the nature of Nirguna Brahman (only seemingly appearing as limited).

व्योमवत्सदा साक्षिनिःस्पृहा ।

बन्धवत्स्थितिः स्वप्नवत्सदा ॥८॥

vyomavatsadā sāksiniḥsprhā |
bandhavatsthiṭiḥ svapnavatsadā ||8||

8. Saakshi is always untouched or unaffected like space; its bonded-like nature is always like dream (like dreamer is unaffected by dream, similarly is saakshi's bonded or limited nature – seemingly appearing limited alone saakshi is).

ज्ञानसंयुत मानवस्सदा ।

साक्षिरूपकः नन्दनन्दनः ॥९॥

jñānasaṁyuta mānavassadā |
sākṣirūpakaḥ nandanandanaḥ ||9||

9. That man who is with knowledge at all times, he is of the nature of saakshi and therefore ever rejoices in bliss.

Vidyaranya Panchakam

१६-फ़ेब्रु-२०१३ - ॐ विद्यारण्यपञ्चकं

16-feb-2013 - om vidyāraṇyapañcakam

यस्यानुग्रहमात्रेण मूढो भवति ज्ञातारः ।

तत्त्वं वर्णयति सुष्ठुर्यो विद्यारण्यं भजेहं तम् ॥१॥

yasyānugrahamātreṇa mūḍho bhavati jñātāraḥ |
tattvaṁ varṇayati suṣṭhuryo vidyāraṇyaṁ bhajehaṁ tam ||1||

1. By whose grace alone, an ignorant person becomes well-learned; who explains concepts very well, that Vidyaranya I worship.

न क्रियते वृथा युक्त्या वाक् युद्धं सदा यस्तु ।

शास्त्रानुश्रित्ययुक्तिं च विद्यारण्यं भजेहं तम् ॥२॥

na kriyate vṛthā yuktyā vāk yuddhaṁ sadā yastu |
śāstrānuśrityayuktiṁ ca vidyāraṇyaṁ bhajehaṁ tam ||2||

2. One who doesn't use yukti without any purpose (just arguing for argument's sake), doesn't indulge in verbal fight and uses logic as per the scriptures, that Vidyaranya I worship.

नानामतसुवर्णितं द्वेषभावविवर्जितम् ।

राज्यकार्यसुपोषकं विद्यारण्यं भजेहं तम् ॥३॥

nānāmatasuvarṇitaṁ dveṣabhāvavivarjitaṁ |
rājyakāryasupoṣakaṁ vidyāraṇyaṁ bhajehaṁ tam ||3||

3. One who has explained well all views (systems) without any notion of hatred and one who nourished the activities of country, that Vidyaranya I worship.

अद्वैततत्त्ववर्णनं कृतंपञ्चदशीकृतौ ।

ब्रह्मण्येव स्थितं सदा विद्यारण्यं भजेहं तम् ॥४ ॥

advaitatattvavarṇanam kṛtampañcadaśīkṛtau |
brahmaṇyeva sthitam sadā vidyāraṇyam bhajeham tam ||4||

4. One who explained well Advaita concepts in the work of Panchadashi while ever abiding in Brahman, that Vidyaranya I worship.

ब्रह्मविद्याप्रचारकं अद्वैततत्त्वपोषकम् ।

सर्वज्ञातमुनिं सदा विद्यारण्यम् भजेहं तम् ॥५ ॥

brahmavidyāpracārakam advaitatattvapoṣakam |
sarvajñātamuniṁ sadā vidyāraṇyam bhajeham tam ||5||

5. One who spread the knowledge of Brahman, one who nourished the concepts of Advaita and one who is Muni knowing everything, that Vidyaranya I worship always.

Anukramaanika Nirdesham

1. Editorial – a general message
2. Kutastha Siddhi - an analysis of term of Kutastha.
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. Upaadhi Dhyotanam – a multi-part series with slokas explaining madhvacharya's upaadhi khandanam and answering of the same.
5. Vedanta Shabda Vicharanam – thorough analysis of one word of Vedanta.
6. Saakshi Nirupanam - explanation of Saakshi. 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. Vidyaranya 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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