

Vedanta Madhuryam

Salutations to all.

Today we find ourselves in a world where everybody is running here and there; some in the name of name, others in the name of power, yet others in the name of money – since there is scope for running here and there in the name of anything and everything in the world, therefore people are constantly busy in this wild goose chase.

Why is going behind name or power or money a wild goose chase?

Because it will not lead to the ultimate goal of life as eternal bliss. It is eternal bliss, untainted by sorrow that we all are seeking knowingly or unknowingly in the entire world. But not knowing that this is the goal that is being sought out, we are running hither and thither. And do we really achieve this goal? Definitely no, as this goal cannot be achieved from the ever changing world.

We all have learnt about Don Quixote in school – the person who rode the horse and attacked the wind thinking it to be the enemy. We all are the same only – we are running behind one or the other thing in the world thinking that it will lead to eternal bliss. Not only that eternal bliss isn't achieved, we also experience only sorrow in this process. And before we know, time runs out – put beautifully by Sankara, time plays and we grow of age. Nobody can live eternally with the gross body and therefore we take birth again in order to fulfill the ultimate goal of life as eternal bliss. Not getting the ultimate goal fulfilled in this birth also, we again continue the process of birth and death. Thereby goes so many births and deaths.

The Lord says to Arjuna that many births have passed by, you don't know them but I know them. It is really a wonder that every day we get up in the morning and perform the same activities as previous day with no blissful result at all. It can be argued that activities are changed when we change job but still activity of work is similar alone. Or put in a generic sense, we perform work alone irrespective of whichever job we are doing (whether in IT industry or in politics or mathematics). Work is the constant thing we perform daily. And like fools we continue doing work again and again expecting to get eternal bliss out of it. The most foolish or astounding truth is that though we never get any bliss out of any activity in the world, we still keep thinking that we may get bliss and therefore perform

activities all over again. Such wonder is this world which is the creation of Maya, the illusory power of Ishwara that it deludes even the smartest person in the world.

©To take a very simple example, Steve Jobs the great pioneer behind Apple's revolutionary changes died. He died of a heart-attack while in a meeting. People all around the world started praising him like anything – for his works as well as for his dedication that he was able to get rid of his life while working (even that time he was engrossed in work alone). There are many swamijis in various missions who also are fans of such stalwarts. But looking from Vedanta perspective, Steve Jobs gave up his life while working – this means that he will be born again doing the same work he did in this birth. How foolish and stupid? Instead of using this human birth to perform activities and achieve satisfaction, he will continue all over again. Is there any satisfaction as a result of revolutionizing the entire world? Definitely no. Look at how the two great giants of Apple and Samsung are fighting it out in court for one or the other thing – there is absolutely no satisfaction whatsoever.

Swami Tejomayananda while lecturing on Siva Sankalpa Sookta made a direct attack at people following or praising Steve Jobs – guruji said that people like Steve Jobs, where do they get their talent from? From their mind – this shows the high capability of the mind. And such a mind which has high capability should surrender unto Siva so that everything is Siva's sankalpa or the mind should always want good or auspicious things so that it benefits oneself and others as well).

We have learnt few parts of Prakaashaatman's work. We have also looked at Ramanujacharya's attack on Avidyaa. Looking at all this (as well as the vast content we have seen on Vedanta), we can definitely say that the magnitude of depth of the mind can only be found in Vedanta and compared to Vedanta, all worldly sciences and worldly people are nothing at all. But worldly sciences and worldly people brag about themselves and their own achievements whereas we have the great master of Sankara saying at the end of Soundarya Lahari that he has used Devi's own words to describe Devi – humility and knowledge go hand in hand. True knowledge alone will lead to humility as all other knowledge (worldly knowledge) will lead to comparisons and differentiations with one another. Therefore there will always be a sense of pride and ego (I and mine). It is only with respect to Vedanta that we can find knowledge of oneness of the entire world. Even though one may not accept everything as one Brahman still accepting that the entire world is like five fingers in our hand, we will be able to accept and appreciate everything (rather

than comparing and grading). Then through respecting everything we will be able to co-exist in the world in a harmonious way. Thereby will spread peace and happiness in the entire world. Though this happiness isn't eternal still it will set the stage for eternal bliss to be spread to the entire world as a result of life being very smooth. Whenever too many problems are there in life we will not be able to start towards the goal of moksha as all focus is on getting rid of problems. But when life is smooth without much or any problems then we will be easily able to work towards the goal of moksha.

It is only through Vedanta that we can achieve the goal of moksha and until then we will experience only sorrows and sufferings. Therefore it is essential for all sadhakas to start learning Vedanta in order to ensure that this precious human birth isn't wasted in mere effort towards worldly pleasures that leads only to sorrow and leads to further births and deaths. Vedanta is a very beautiful science and a must for anyone who wants to make life very blissful – it wouldn't be wrong to say that Vedanta is the science that teaches us the art of living blissfully at all times.

This magazine strives to instill passion in sadhakas to learn Vedanta by bringing out the vastness and beauty of Vedanta. Once passion for Vedanta is developed then we will find that learning of Vedanta goes on without any break at all and we will be able to through learning and implementation of Vedanta achieve the ultimate goal of life as moksha here and now itself.

May we all strive to learn the system of Vedanta so that through implementation of Vedanta, by remembering the pivotal concept that one Brahman alone exists, 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

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Vishayadukhamayatva Siddhi

Ultimate goal of life - bliss

In the world that we are in today, everybody is going in their own direction towards their own goal. Each and every person has his own goal that might be same as another person or totally different from another person. Since the world is composed of infinite possibilities therefore goals are also infinite. A person who runs his life with no goal at all in mind will definitely not achieve anything at all.

But will those who lead their lives towards the various goals of life achieve what they want? Definitely they will achieve the goal but still the goal will keep on changing. Thus initially a person wants to get a degree; then it changes to a job; it further changes to promotion; further promotion – thus this goes on and on without any end at all. To put it briefly any goal of life doesn't lead to fulfillment instead it leads to more goals to be achieved in life. Thus when a person reaches the end of this life, still many desires are pending in the mind (as infinite possibilities are there from the world). Thus he takes birth again in order to fulfill these desires. But as desires never end, therefore the person takes birth over and over again – there is no end at all to this seeking of desire. As Sankara says a person takes birth, dies and then again takes birth. This never-ending chain of birth and death goes on and on (with result being just sorrow or discontentment experienced at all times).

Manu thus says that desires cannot be ended by just fulfilling them as in place of one desire, many more will take birth. Trying to put an end to desires by enjoying them is like trying to extinguish fire by pouring ghee into it. Fire will not be extinguished – instead it will burn more vigorously. Thus a person shouldn't enjoy more and more desires as it will only lead him to the endless chain of desires (it would be a like a maze out of which he can never come out at all).

Then what should be done?

We should find out what is the ultimate goal of life. When we analyze the ultimate goal of life, we will come to the conclusion that bliss or contentment or satisfaction or peace (all these words being synonyms) is the ultimate goal of life. Any desire and any goal is sought out in order to achieve this ultimate goal of life. If asked to anybody as to why he wants to work, the answer would be to earn – why to earn, the answer would be to enjoy life – why to enjoy, the answer would be to live blissfully. Thus bliss would be the final answer when

we put the questions about “why” with respect to goals in life to anybody (irrespective of whether it is a worldly person or a spiritual person – a child or a aged person – rich or poor person).

Swami Rama Teertha beautifully thus shows as to how happiness from the world keeps changing but all the while there is something more cherished than anything else in the world. For example, a mother loves her child the most. But there is something that the mother loves more than her own child (who is her most loved object in the world). What is it that the mother loves more than her own child? Swami says that when he was in the Himalayas once, he found the answer through an experience. Once there was flood in that place and water was creeping up into trees. A mother monkey was with her four children in the tree. There were on the top-most branch of the tree but water was still climbing. Water finally came to the top-most branch. To Swami’s surprise, the mother monkey put one of her child on the branch and stood on top of the child in order to stay above the water. When water was still rising, she kept on keeping more of her child under her feet.

In this example we find that the mother monkey had something which was loved more than ever her dear children. What was that? Her own Self. She loved herself much more than her most loved children. This is the case with the entire world – we love everything in the world but not more than our own very Self.

But due to wrong knowledge about our own Self, we try to protect the body, the mind etc. which aren’t really the Self as they also keep changing. The Self is that which never changes (ever unchanging in nature). Everything except the Self constantly changes – the Self is the “I” that pulsates at all times without any change at all. From the day of birth till the day of death, the Self never changes. It is this Self that is the mere witness of the three states of waking, dream and deep sleep. These three changes are mutually contradicting in nature – one is not there in the other two and other two are not there in one – thus they negate out each other but the Self ever remains the same in all these three states.

Due to wrong knowledge or lack of knowledge of the Self, we think ourselves to be the body, the mind etc. The body is changing, the mind is changing, sense organs change, vital forces change, intellect changes, ego changes – thus everything changes but pure I which isn’t associated with any of these doesn’t change at all. It is this pure I that is our very nature – our blissful nature. Until this Self is realized, there will be no bliss at all. Not

knowing that I am the most loved thing in the entire world, we try to seek bliss in the external world only to be disappointed over and over again. Until a person realizes that his very nature of Self is the ultimate goal of life as bliss, there will not be any bliss or contentment in life – life will go on whether we realize or not, but life will be pitiful. Today we find people who are 60-70 years old and retired but still their desires haven't ended yet. They have still so many desires to be fulfilled but no way whatsoever to fulfill them. Thus ending life in a pitiful state, they come back into this world in a pitiful way again trying to fulfill all their desires. But the next birth also goes on in the same way – ending pitifully.

Foolish are those who aren't able to strive towards eternal bliss as their very nature itself and instead seek the worldly pleasures of the world experiencing only sorrow at all times. We shouldn't be such people – instead being wise, we should first realize that the ultimate goal of life isn't part of the world but it is realization of our very nature of Self which is changeless and blissful in nature.

Why realization isn't part of the world?

Because the world is constantly changing and unreal. Ultimately one Brahman as our very nature of Self alone exists – everything else is just an illusion in this Self even as the entire dream world is just an illusion in the dreamer. Vedanta repeats again and again that even as various gold ornaments are mere names and forms in gold, similarly the entire world that we perceive now is just an illusion of names and forms in Brahman or Self. Without Brahma or Self as Consciousness, the entire world doesn't exist but even without the world Consciousness exists in the state of deep sleep. Thus Consciousness is real and independent whereas the world is unreal and dependent on Consciousness for its very existence.

Knowledge of Brahman as found in the scriptures is the way to realization – this is nothing but constantly remembering that one Brahman alone exists at all times. Ever contemplating on this truth that Brahman alone exists is the direct way to get rid of all sorrows and ever rejoicing in bliss. Scriptures directly or indirectly tell that Brahman alone exists – thus any person who remembers at all times that Brahman alone exists will attain moksha or the ultimate goal of life very soon itself in life.

If realization is very simple indeed then why don't we find many realized people?

One thing is that many don't strive for moksha, as the Lord says in Gita that out of thousands of people few alone strive for realization or perfection. As in any science or class,

out of those who strive only few will be able to attain the goal. Thus out of thousands of striving people only few are able to realize the goal.

Second thing which is also the reason for majority of people not striving for moksha is that the world poses a strong attraction towards people. That world which strongly attracts people will not allow them to concentrate on anything other than the world. Thus we find that many parents, friends etc. try to dissuade others from learning the scriptures or treading the spiritual path in one or the other way. Even if some of our friend is starting in the spiritual path, we will try to dissuade them from doing so. We will talk about how married life filled with worldly pleasures is etc. (without even ourselves knowing what it is truly as having no experience). If it is parents, then they will talk about the greatness of worldly pleasures through married life when their own married life will be in total turmoils (daily fighting for one or the other thing).

Here just an example married life is taken up – what is meant is anything that has to do with the world. The world means anything which is different from Brahman – anything related to Brahman is spiritual and anything where Brahman is not there is not spiritual. Thus we find that there are many people who frequently visit temples and many others who are in ashrams yet there is no spirituality at all with respect to them. They fight in the name of one or the other thing amongst each other. Instead of treading the spiritual path of sadhana and jnaana, they just do something or the other here and there. Thus they also are following a path different from Brahman – therefore they also experience only sorrow in the long run. Needless to say, such people in ashrams are suffering alone at all times and when their life ends they will continue the chain of birth and death with the same state of dissatisfaction as in the previous birth.

A wise person when moving from one job to another would ensure that the shortcomings of the previous job are removed and new improvements are added to the new job. But fools continue doing foolish things without any change whatsoever – they just do something or the other over and over again.

If we end this birth and start the next one doing the same thing over and over again, then we also have to be considered as fools. This precious human birth isn't to be wasted for mere worldly pleasures and discontentment. Instead it is to be used for realization and

putting an end to the chain of birth and death here and now itself (instead of waiting for the future).

If life is to be ended here and now by achieving the ultimate goal of life as moksha, then why aren't people able to do this?

The reason (as well for majority of people not following the spiritual path) is that majority of people are so much attached or affected by the world. Their attachment to the world is so strong that world or worldly pleasures cannot be removed even after struggling for a long period of time. It is to show this that Puranas talk about Vishwamitra falling a prey to a woman even after performing tapas for a long period of time.

Unless we gain knowledge about the real nature of the world, we will not be able to go beyond the world and focus on the ultimate reality of Brahman (follow the spiritual path). Many people in ashrams join ashrams as there is no other place for them to stay. Due to one or the other sorrow they join ashrams. Since there is no true knowledge about the real nature of the world therefore they aren't able to follow the spiritual path and fulfill their life itself (the goal of any ashram is also moksha alone).

World – temporary and sorrowful

The Lord very beautifully defines the world as temporary and sorrowful in nature. This nature of the world is constantly experienced by each and every person in the world but due to one or the other reason there is no focus on this – when focus is there, there is no conviction and hence the focus vanishes after a period of time. For example, temporary dispassion people gain when their near and dear ones die but after a while, they find new near and dear ones, therefore their dispassion vanishes and they start living life as if nothing really happened in the past.

In order to gain true dispassion from the world, one should analyze and assert the true nature of the world (not that which appears in front of us – as a source of happiness through one or the object or people in it).

Once a person is able to clearly understand the nature of the world to be temporary and sorrowful, then the world will not attract the person again. Thereby such a person will be able to quickly gain full focus on Brahman and the spiritual path. Thus such a person will

attain the goal of moksha in this very birth itself thereby putting an end to the chain of birth and death here and now itself.

Coming to the real nature of the world, it is temporary or changing and sorrowful. First let's analyze its temporary nature.

World – temporary in nature

That the world is temporary in nature doesn't require any analysis at all as we experience this each and every minute of our life. The only thing which is constant in the world is its changing nature. Every minute we find objects and people of the world changing. What more to tell, even our body keeps changing each and every moment. Science also agrees that everything in the world is constantly changing. Some changes are perceivable while others aren't. Those which cannot be perceived still can be inferred or understood by some logic. For example, though we cannot perceive changes in the Earth or Sun, still it can be proven that both Earth and the Sun are constantly changing.

To sum it briefly, the entire world is constantly changing. Whether this change is for the good or the bad, it doesn't matter – just the fact that the world is constantly changing requires to be remembered by sadhakas.

That world which is constantly changing is called temporary. That which is temporary isn't ultimately real as real is that which never ceases to exist (therefore never changes at all). Now it might be questioned as to what is the problem with the changing nature of the world. The answer is that, whatever constantly changes will lead to sorrow alone constantly. We all expect everything to remain the same as only then we will be able to derive happiness from everything. Since the entire world is constantly changing therefore it is sorrowful constantly.

World – sorrowful in nature

Even as the temporary nature of the world is constantly experienced by everybody, the sorrowful nature of the world is also experienced by everybody though few alone accept it whole-heartedly. Rest of the people just ignore the sorrowful nature of the world in the belief that some or the other part of the world will lead to eternal bliss. But down in their hearts, they too know that the world is constantly a source of sorrow alone.

That which is ever changing leads only to sorrow at all times. But its sorrowful nature can be beautifully explained through logic and by example.

The Lord says that sensual pleasures or pleasures obtained from sense objects of the world are sources of sorrow as they have beginning and an end. Pleasures have a beginning and an end because objects themselves have a beginning and an end. Thus that which comes and goes will not give us eternal bliss – it will not give us any happiness at all but it is just a source of sorrow (as everybody wants happiness that is everlasting or lasts for a long period of time).

Patanjali says beautifully that if we analyze as to the entire life-span or life-cycle of sensual pleasures we will find that it is sorrowful alone (and has no happiness at all in it). For example let's say that we have a car which is the source of happiness. The happiness is achieved or experienced when we possess the car – though after some period of time, the car will lead to sorrow alone as it will undergo change and eventually vanish itself. Now before getting the car, we experience sorrow through the efforts involved in achieving the car – getting anything in life is tough and requires lot of effort (through working a lot or earning money or getting a loan etc.). Once we possess the car, there is fear of losing the car in the future. Thus there is experience of sorrow only while possessing the car itself (instead of the car leading to happiness, it only leads to sorrow thinking about what will happen in the future). Lastly when the car is lost, we experience sorrow through remembrance of the time when we possessed the car (brooding over the happy time with respect to the car). Thus throughout we experience only sorrow with respect to the car – before possessing the car, while possessing the car and after losing the car. Therefore all pleasures of the world or the entire world itself is sorrowful alone (leads only to sorrow).

The three sorrows are called taapa dukha (caused by effort put in order to achieve the object of happiness), parinaama dukha (caused by the changing nature of the object of happiness) and samskaara dukha (caused by contemplation of the object and the time we possessed it in the past).

Thus logically it is proven very easily and convincingly that the entire world is sorrowful alone in nature. Mere remembrance of the entire world to be sorrowful is essential for a sadhaka.

Why is it important to remember the sorrowful nature of the world?

Because as long as the world is not remembered as sorrowful we will be running behind the world and its pleasures. As long as we are running behind world and its pleasures we will not be able to run behind the ultimate reality of Brahman and moksha. As long as we don't run behind moksha, we will not get it (through knowledge of the scriptures). Life itself becomes a waste if we aren't able to use it for the ultimate goal of life as moksha – if this birth is wasted, then we will be born again and again experiencing sorrow alone through the again and again performed actions of the world.

He is definitely a wise person who is able to overcome passion towards the world and utilize this precious human birth for moksha rather than wasting it for worldly pleasures. Such a wise person is able to easily overcome passion towards the world by remembering the world to be temporary and sorrowful in nature. Though this remembrance (of the world to be temporary and sorrowful) appears very simple, it is very tough indeed as each moment the world poses an obstacle towards sadhakas – each and every moment the world deludes people into thinking that there might be some happiness present in it. Only wise and courageous sadhakas will be able to go beyond the temptation of the world. Only such sadhakas will eventually be able to attain the ultimate goal of life as moksha and thereby will be able to ever rejoice in bliss here and now itself (instead of ever experiencing sorrow alone from the world).

May we all strive to remember that the entire world is temporary and therefore sorrowful in nature so that overcoming passions towards the world we will be able to progress towards the moksha and achieving it we 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).

Till now we have seen the arguments of the purvapakshin, now we will start with the siddhantin's reply and explanation of the meaning of the third sutra.

Literal Translation of the work

Even as a lamp's illuminating capability is given (or possible) to its material cause of fire which too gets the capability of illuminating, similarly capability of the scriptures (with words) to illumine all meanings/entities is given to its material cause of Brahman.

Siddhantin – Brahman is all-knowing

That Brahman is all-knowing can very easily be proved through realized masters who know through knowing Brahman know everything – they don't know everything at all times but whenever required they can gain knowledge about anything at all. Thus such great masters like AMMA are able to gain knowledge about even management including time management and many other fields as well. Thus many great people from their field visit great masters like AMMA and wherever they thought there was no solution possible, they are able to find out the solution with help from such masters like AMMA.

The great master of Ramana Maharshi was able to learn all the scriptures even without really going through them himself or through a master. The great Adi Sankara learnt all the scriptures by the age of 8 though he still continued studying from Govindapada until the age of 16. When we look at masters and their lives we will find as to how knowledge of Brahman makes them learn and adapt to anything and everything in the world.

The perfect example of how knowing the entire world as such leads to no real knowledge or effect and knowing Brahman leads to knowledge of the entire world is known through the disciple of Swami Vivekananda and his master of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa. Narendra,

as was the name of Swami Vivekananda in his purvashrama, went to Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa at a very young age and then itself he had knowledge of almost all the scriptures (even worldly sciences as well) but he had no knowledge of Brahman. So though he knew everything, he knew nothing at all. But facing him was the master of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa who knew nothing about the scriptures or worldly sciences still he knew everything. Here knowledge of Brahman lead to knowledge of everything and as a result, Ramakrishna had what is sought out by everyone in the world – eternal bliss.

We find the Chandogya Upanishad saying that even as through knowing a piece of mud, all objects of mud are known similarly through knowing the essence of the entire world as Brahman, everything (the entire world) will be known. Here knowledge isn't of names and forms of the world but of their essence as Brahman. This essential knowledge will remove sorrows completely and make one ever rejoice in bliss as duality as a result of experience of names and forms (considering them to be real) is the cause of sorrow and veiling the non-dual blissful Self.

Siddhantin – Brahman, the material cause of everything

We have already seen in the second sloka that Brahman is the material cause of the entire world. Though Brahman is also the efficient cause of the entire world, here we are interested in the material cause of the world.

For people who are new to the two different types of causes, any entity that is created is called effect and anything that leads to the effect's creation is called a cause. Causes are generally of two types – the material and the efficient cause. Material cause is that from which material for the effect is received, this is generally insentient in nature. Any effect can only be created with help from a sentient entity's involvement – the sentient entity that converts material into effect is called the efficient cause. Taking a simple example of pot being created, pot is the effect; mud is the material cause whereas the potter is the efficient cause (one who uses mud to create the pot).

With respect to the world as well, we need the material and the efficient cause. Since before creation only Brahman existed therefore Brahman alone has to be the material and the efficient cause of the effect of the world.

Brahman being the efficient cause is easy to understand but Brahman being the material cause raises a lot of objections. Firstly Brahman cannot be both sentient and insentient – therefore it cannot be both the material and the efficient cause. This argument is easily overcome through first knowing that ultimately there is no world at all created and empirically we find an entity itself becoming both material and efficient cause, as seen in spiders. Spider is both the efficient and material cause for the webs it creates. Similar to the spider, Brahman alone is both the material and efficient cause of the world. Secondly spider creates web for its own selfish purpose, is there any such purpose with respect to Brahman? If so, Brahman will become selfish and partial. To answer this, the example of earth giving rise to herbs and plants is used. Earth has no selfish motive at all – similarly Brahman has no selfish purpose whatsoever with respect to creation of the world. Thirdly (lastly) the objection that insentient world cannot come from sentient Brahman is raised; this is answered through example of hair coming out of the human being. Hair is insentient but it comes out of the sentient being – thus insentient world can definitely be created out of sentient Brahman.

It should be remembered that ultimately no world can ever be created from Brahman as Brahman alone exists, one without a second. There can nothing new as different from Brahman be created due to nothing apart from Brahman existing. There also can be no change happening to Brahman as Brahman is partless, eternal and therefore changeless. Thus there is no possibility at all of any creation happening out of Brahman. But then what is creation we perceive now? Creation is just an illusion of names and forms in Brahman – it is something that appears as if real but is ultimately unreal (like dream world which appears very real while experiencing but ultimately is known to be just an illusion after we wake up).

Brahman by being the material cause of the entire world is also the cause of scriptures or shabda pramaana as it has also come from Brahman alone. Now it cannot be argued that scriptures are also illusions and hence cannot take us out of this illusion of world – we find that a tiger in dream can wake us up or take us beyond the state of dream, we also find that for high jump a stick is used which is renounced or through away after we make the high jump; similarly though scriptures also are ultimately unreal still they help us go beyond the illusion of world through giving us knowledge about the world and about Brahman.

Siddhantin – analogy of lamp and fire

Wherever we have a lamp, the substratum or material cause of the lamp is the fire as without fire, lamp is impossible to exist. It is fire's illuminating capability that is given or imparted to the lamp. As a result a lamp that is lit is able to provide light to its surroundings (whether it be in a small room or a big room). This illuminating capability of the lamp is there in fire as well because fire is the material cause of the lamp. Thus through the illuminating capability of the lamp (which is the effect) we can infer that fire also has the illuminating capability. That this inference is valid (or true) is known through our experiences with fire. Wherever fire is there, there is illumination of everything in front of in proximity with fire.

Using this same analogy with scriptures and Brahman, we first already find that scriptures are all-knowing as they provide knowledge about everything in the world. If it is argued that computers are not known through the scriptures, it is wrong as the basics of computers is in mathematics and mathematics's root can be found in the scriptures. Thus any new science can be easily shown to be an extension from the scriptures in one or the other way. Even politics or management can be very well found in various niti shastras. Therefore it is not wrong to say that scriptures provide knowledge for everything under the Sun and even beyond the Sun to whatever world or worlds are present. If there are multi-verses then we can definitely say that knowledge about all of them are found in the scriptures in one or the other way.

Since scriptures are all-knowing or able to propound about anything in the world, therefore their material cause of Brahman also would have all-knowingness due to the reason of being the material cause. This is like lamp's illuminating capability shows us that fire which is the material cause of lamp also has illuminating capability. Thus beyond any doubt it is proven very easily that Brahman is all-knowing in nature.

Put in simpler terms, a Guru who teaches a disciple everything definitely has more knowledge than the disciple itself – this is easy to understand as the Guru is one who teaches or imparts knowledge to the disciple. The Guru thus knows everything that the disciple knows. Similarly Brahman which is the superset of the scriptures has all the qualities or capabilities that are found in the scriptures.

What is the use of proving Brahman to be all-knowing?

Brahman's all-knowingness is helpful in two ways – one is that it makes Brahman the ultimate goal to be sought by everybody; second is that which is the substratum of the world needs to know everything about the world, its all-knowingness has to be proven in order for it to be substratum of the world. Since Brahman was mentioned to the substratum of the world in the second sutra therefore it has to be shown through the all-knowing quality of the scriptures that Brahman also is all-knowing. Though it can be argued that there is a cyclic or inter-dependency with respect to Brahman, world and scriptures (Brahman is substratum of the world, scriptures are part of the world and Brahman is all-knowing due to being the cause of the scriptures), it isn't exactly inter-dependency because scriptures are only part of the world and not the world in whole. And through proving Brahman to be all-knowing by using the scriptures we are only asserting or confirming the statement of Brahman being the substratum of the entire world (this statement itself can be used to strengthen itself). In courts we find the statement of the convicted or to-be-convicted being used in order to prove his own innocence or the opposite – it is similar in this case as well.

We will continue with the siddhantin's views in the next edition of the magazine.

May we all strive to learn the scriptures so that we will be able to gain knowledge of Brahman thereby through knowing everything we will be able to put an end to all sorrows and will be able to ever rejoice in bliss here and now itself.

Upaadhi Dhyotanam

Advaita Vedanta – an overview

Before we start with the work of Upaadhi Khandanam and the answering of the same through Upaadhi Dhyotanam, it is essential to get a strong grasp of Advaita Vedanta and at least a brief of Dvaita Vedanta. Without understanding both to an extent, analysis of any work which crosses the line between both systems will be futile alone. Hence let's try to see a brief of Advaita Vedanta, Dvaita Vedanta and a brief comparison as well.

The world that we currently experience is filled with duality of all sorts. Whether it is with respect to beings or objects or gods, we have duality everywhere. That this duality in turn leads to sorrow is a fact – that which constantly changes will lead to sorrow alone eventually though it might appear as leading to happiness initially. Thus the entire world leads to sorrow alone in the long run though initially it might appear to lead to happiness. As Swami Rama Tirtha beautifully explains through his discourse that the object of happiness itself constantly changes as time passes by. An infant finds happiness in its mother's breast. A little later the child still finds happiness in its mother. But a few years afterwards, the child finds happiness in toys. Once the child grows of more age, it requires more bigger and better toys. Once the child grows into a youth, the child's happiness shifts to a partner of the opposite sex. And after a while, the young man marries the young girl. Thereafter happiness shifts to the wife. After a few years, his wife is carrying his baby. And the baby, a son, is born. Now all happiness has shifted to the son. He cannot live even a day without seeing his son – he cannot even remain few minutes without remembering his son. He is up for promotion and gets promoted, though he isn't yet informed of the same. Suddenly he gets a call from home and immediately his face shows anxiety, sorrow and fear. His boss drops in and informs him that he got promoted. This news which should have given him happiness doesn't give him any – why? Because he got the news from home that his house is on fire. His all focus is now on his son, as to how he is, whether safe or not etc. He runs to his house and outside his house, looks around. He finds his neighbors and his wife as well. But he cannot find his own son anywhere. Immediately he is tensed and asks for his son – he is told that his son is inside in the burning house. He starts weeping and shouting unto people for helping his son caught inside the house. He cries aloud "somebody please help my son".

Why doesn't he himself jump into the burning house to save his son? His son is his most precious object of happiness still he isn't willing to jump into the house to save his son? This could only mean that there is something more important than his own son. What is this important entity? Himself. He isn't ready to sacrifice himself for the sake of his son. Thus he values himself more than his son and this "himself" is the highest source of happiness for it is the most sacred or protected entity.

Unknown to himself, he is aware of himself being the most cherished treasure. Why? Because he is the independent blissful entity that is the very basis of the entire world.

The entire world constantly changes – such changes are impossible unless there is a changing substratum which is the basis for the changes. We say that we are moving in car – this is only possible assuming that earth is stationary. We say earth itself moves assuming that sun or solar system is stationary. Of course it can also be said that relative movement is enough and no absolute entity as substratum of change is essential – this is foolish, it is like saying that there is no foundation for a house needed, we can just have pillars supporting each other. Though theoretically it might be feasible, logically and in practice it is impossible. The changeless substratum behind the changes of the world is "I". I existing, all changes are apprehended and are possible. Let I resist any change and we will find that no change really happens.

Now there is confusion with respect to this I itself – is it related to the body, mind, intellect, objects and people of the world or is it independent of all these? In order to answer this, we have to analyze the three states that we experience daily. The first is the waking state where all gross objects are experienced. The second is the dream state where subtle objects are experienced by the creation of the mind. The third is the dreamless deep sleep state where nothing exists apart from "I" (that I which remembers the happy time in the state). In the two states of dream and waking, everything is mutually contrary but still there is a common-entity. This common-entity is I that experiences both the states. Needless to say there is the Ego I which is affected in both the states. But that which is affected cannot be a substratum or witness. Therefore I as the Self distinct from ego is the witness of the two states of dream and waking.

Now in the deep sleep state we say two things after waking up – "I slept well" and "I didn't know anything". Here the experiences are not of the Self but of the Ego alone. Another

similar experience is that I was blissful – this I which was blissful is the Self. The Ego took a rest by merging unto the Self and therefore it slept well and didn't know anything as a result of the same. The Self I was experienced directly because of lack of anything apart from the Self. Everything apart from the Self I rested during the state.

Now since only Self I was there in the deep sleep state, therefore it alone has to be the link between the three states. Thus it is this Self I that is the basis of the three states – the changeless substratum of all changes.

Self exists at all times, is ever shining and is never hated – therefore it is of the nature of Existence, Consciousness and Bliss. All duality is as a result of this Self alone. One may negate the entire world and even Ishwara or Brahman but Self can never be negated as it is the subject-witness of all objects and actions. The act of negation itself is only possible due to the Self as the negator which itself is never negated.

It is when a person identifies himself with the limited Ego I that sorrows are experienced (due to limitations and changes). The moment a person realizes his own very nature of Self – that very moment all sorrows will end and the person will ever rejoice in bliss. All sorrows are similar to the story of the prince who was lost and grew up as a peasant – he thought himself to be peasant until the minister found him and told him that he was a prince. He was ever a prince without any problems but he experienced all problems due to thinking that he was a peasant. There is nothing new gained by him as well – his very nature of prince that was forgotten earlier was reminded and through this realization, all his sorrows end and he rejoices in bliss.

In the same, our very nature of Self is forgotten and through realization of the same, all sorrows caused by the ego and the changing world will end. Really speaking there is no sorrow at all but one Self alone exists.

Now is this Self the same as Brahman?

Self is of the nature of Existence, Consciousness and Bliss. Brahman also is of the same nature and hence the Self is Brahman alone. The scriptures also emphasize this through many statements saying that the Self is Brahman.

But what about duality?

Duality doesn't really exist. It is only just an illusion in the Self even as the illusion of dream world is experienced in the dreamer. While experiencing the dream, it appears very real but once we wake up we realize that it was just an illusion. Similarly while experiencing the external world, it appears very real. But once we wake up from this wrong notion that the world is real, we will realize that it doesn't exist at all.

The scriptures clearly tell that before creation, only Existence existed, one without a second. This itself means that creation is something newly created and is just an illusion in this one entity of Brahman or Self.

If Brahman alone exists, then why am I experiencing sorrow?

Sorrow, as explained earlier, is due to not knowing oneself to be Brahman. This is termed as ajnaana or ignorance in Vedanta. This is the cause of all sorrow as it leads to superimposition of the Ego on the Self and thereby it deludes a person into the illusory world of happiness and sorrow. All the while, the person is the Self alone. Through knowledge of the scriptures, one will get rid of this ignorance and thereby will shine the Self (as it has ever shined but forgotten or as-if-veiled due to ignorance even as clouds appear as if veiling the Sun).

Two perspectives

Generally opponents of Advaita Vedanta argue that Advaita twists with scriptural statements but this is a wrong accusation. The scriptures themselves have two sets of statements – one that speaks about non-duality and lack of duality completely; and other about duality. How can this be harmonized? It has to be harmonized as scriptures are the ultimate authority and without any faults. The only way harmony can be brought into the scriptures is through one of these two sets of statements being not real ultimately.

Now which set of statement is not real – it is easy to take that the statements talking about non-duality alone are real and that which talks about duality is just an illusion in non-duality. This is something that we directly experience in the deep sleep state (where duality completely vanishes, even if it is temporarily alone). Moreover it is easy to prove that duality is just an illusion in non-duality as scriptures preach non-duality or vision of non-duality as sadhana. Such sadhana if not true wouldn't lead to any result at all. Lastly saying that non-duality came from duality is just foolish (everywhere we see many coming from

one – we rarely experience one coming out of many unless it is assembling of parts together).

Thus it is easily proven that the set of statements talking about non-duality alone is ultimately real. This doesn't mean that statements about duality are unreal but just that they are unreal from ultimate perspective. From empirical or this-world-perspective, they are real and have their purpose. In simple terms, one of their purposes is to make us understand their futility (as they only lead to sorrow) and thereby take us to their source of Brahman.

The two levels of reality or perspective have to be properly understood in order to avoid confusions in theory (which would lead to either doubts in the mind or objections in the form of purvapaksha). Ultimately Brahman alone exists at all times. This is clearly proven through the scriptural statements that say that Brahman of the nature of Existence alone existed before creation. That which alone existed before creation alone exists after creation as well. This means that creation or duality is just an illusion in that reality – creation just exists for a short period of time. Such entities which exist only for a short period of time isn't real (as real is that which exists at all times). Therefore ultimately Brahman alone exists – creation is just an illusion in Brahman.

But then what about the world when we experience it? Does it exist or doesn't it exist? Are there rules for the world or there are no rules at all?

The world when it appears as existing does exist but not ultimately. Empirically the world exists and has its own rules/laws etc. It is only when we look at the world from the ultimate perspective that it doesn't exist at all. From its own, empirical perspective, the world is accepted as existing.

That these two perspectives of ultimately Brahman alone existing and empirically the world too accepted as existing aren't contrary to each other – because they are two different levels itself. All objections raised by opponents are with respect to mixing these two levels – this is also impossible, we cannot mix one level of reality with another (as they are two different levels itself). If we try to mix both levels then it is as good as trying to mix the 5th standard students with the 9th standard students for exams – it will not work out as they are two different classes altogether.

It can be argued that such two different levels of reality cannot really be proven through any examples. Such argument is also invalid because any illusion is an example of the two levels of reality. When we see snake in a rope, the snake has its own reality (at least for a limited period of time) but ultimately (or higher than the snake, in this case) rope alone exists. The snake's rules apply when we perceive it and hence we get afraid as a result of it and even run away from it. But once we realize that there is no snake at all and only rope exists, then though we may still see snake in the rope we will not be affected. Similarly once the ultimate reality that Brahman alone exists is known then we will not be affected even while experiencing the world (or performing activities in the world).

The two levels of reality can be understood much better through the analogy of dream. A person goes to bed and while sleeping, he dreams. An entire dream world is created and a lot of activities happen in the dream world. Everything has its own rule in the dream world. But after waking up suddenly, the person realizes that there never was any dream world at all. The entire dream world was the dreamer alone. Ultimately dreamer alone exists at all times but empirically (during the state of dream), it has its own reality. The reality level of dream and ultimate of dreamer aren't contrary to each other (because even after knowing that only dreamer exists, we still dream again). Just because dream has duality and sorrow in it doesn't mean that dreamer has duality and sorrow. In order to get rid of duality and sorrow in the dream world, effort has to be made in the dream world alone as ultimately there is no duality and sorrow at all.

Similarly in order to get rid of sorrow in the waking world, effort has to be put in the waking world alone as ultimately Brahman alone exists. Thus what happens through Vedanta isn't newly attaining of Brahman but realization that Brahman alone exists ultimately. When this knowledge dawns, a person realizes that I am just a witness to all the activities in the waking world. Thus the waking world's sorrow aren't removed but it is known to be just an illusion in the one ultimate reality of Brahman. Even as though dreamer and dream world are two different levels, dreamer is the substratum in which the dream world appears, similarly Brahman is the substratum in which the waking world appears as existing.

Effort to get rid of ignorance is the goal of Vedanta and this is through knowledge of Brahman as found in the shastras. Already everybody is Brahman and Brahman alone. But this truth isn't remembered and therefore in the waking world, one gets affected by the illusory activities and sorrow. The shastras point out that I am Brahman, the mere witness

to the entire world. When this knowledge thus dawns, ignorance is removed and therefore the person ever rejoices in bliss at all times being at the plane of the ultimate reality (rather than the empirical reality level).

It can be asked as to how the world which is a product of ignorance can exist after ignorance gets destroyed through knowledge. The answer is that there is no world at all to be removed – there is no destruction of ignorance as well. Ignorance and the world doesn't really exist but only appear as existing. Therefore getting rid of them or destroying them is just remembering their temporary nature and one's own very nature of the ultimate reality of Brahman. Whether the world appears as existing or not, it isn't real and Brahman alone exists – not knowing this is ignorance and knowing this is knowledge (ignorance leads to sorrow whereas knowledge leads to eternal bliss).

Ramana Maharshi beautifully explains the purpose of different illusions used in Vedanta. The world is said to be an illusion in Brahman similar to a snake seen in rope. But then after knowing that there is no snake, it isn't seen again – this isn't the case with the world as after gaining little knowledge that the world is an illusion we still perceive it. Therefore the example of water in desert is used. Water appears as existing even after knowing that there is no water at all – similarly even after knowing that there is no world, it might still be perceived (but a person will not get affected by it). But the world we perceive now has purpose or utility whereas water in desert has no purpose at all (we cannot drink the water etc.). Therefore the example of dream is taken up – the dream world is just an illusion in the dreamer but it has its own purpose; we perform activities in the dream world and as a result enjoy or suffer as well. Similarly this world also isn't real but still it has purpose from its own level or perspective.

The three purushas

Since almost all of the objections with respect to the fundamental of Advaita Vedanta has been answered, we have to now explain the three purushas as explained by the Lord in the 15th chapter of Gita. This classification of three purushas is important in order to understand the concept of upadhi.

The first purusha is kshara purusha who experiences sorrow and happiness – who also constantly changes. Kshara word itself means one who changes or decays (means takes birth and dies eventually). This is the chidaabhasha or reflection of Consciousness in the

intellect. There appear many kshara purushas as many intellects as we can find in the entire world.

But kshara cannot really exist without akshara purusha – akshara means that which doesn't decay; thus it doesn't change and therefore is called kutastha. This is pure Consciousness which gets reflected in the intellect becoming the kshara purusha.

The third purusha is uttama purusha who is the basis of everything in the world (even kshara and akshara). The Lord says that uttama purusha is distinct from kshara purushas and special in akshara purusha. Uttama purusha thus is Brahman alone.

We can understand these three purushas only through an analogy – the analogy most commonly used is with respect to space. Space is the first entity that came from Brahman and space is also unlimited (pervades everything). The various bodies of the world are like pots. These pots have water in it – water is intellect or antah karana. Space though is infinite appears as if limited in the pot. This seemingly limited space gets reflected in the water of the pot. Thereby the water of the pot (and the pot) seemingly have space in it (like sun getting reflected in water).

Infinite space is Brahman and space which appears as if limited in the pot is akshara purusha. Akshara purusha gets reflected in the water of the pot thereby leading to reflection or jeeva. Though only one space exists, there appear to be as many pot-spaces as many pots are there. Similarly though only one Brahman exists, Brahman appears to be limited into various adjuncts of body and therefore as many kutasthas appear. Really speaking kutastha is one with Brahman but Brahman appears as a special kutastha (that which isn't limited by any adjunct). Empirically kutastha appears as different from Brahman but ultimately one Brahman alone exists.

Thus from the world's perspective, many kutasthas appear as existing and such differences can be accepted as valid except that ultimately (means after knowing kutastha's true nature) only one Brahman exists. It is due to the adjuncts of pot, body etc. that differences in space and Brahman or Consciousness come into existence. But since pot, body etc. are constantly changing therefore limitations or differences caused as a result of them aren't real (and only appears as if real).

The upaadhis or adjuncts of pot and body are essential to prove that Brahman alone exists as Consciousness in each and every being in the entire world. Though one may or may not accept that the same Consciousness pulsates in each person, still using the logic and example of adjuncts it is clearly proven that only one Brahman exists at all times. Differences are thereby explained from empirical perspective while ultimately they are proven to be unreal.

Thus the importance of upaadhi concept in Advaita Vedanta. It shouldn't be forgotten that all such concepts are in order to make sadhakas accept Advaita Vedanta and therefore focus on one Brahman – just because such concepts are necessary doesn't mean that their refutation leads to refutation of Advaita Vedanta itself. Advaita Vedanta is proven easily through sruthi, yukti and anubhava – but still in order to explain logically the different aspects for an initial sadhaka, all such concepts of upaadhi etc. are taken up.

Even as though we may never be able to prove that one dreamer alone became the dreamer world but still through direct experience it is clear that only one dreamer exists, similarly even though adjuncts may be proven wrong still direct experience will prove beyond doubt that one Brahman alone exists here.

In order to directly experience that one Brahman alone exists, one needs to follow the shastras with an open mind. Even a purvapakshin who is able to follow the system of Advaita Vedanta with faith will be able to directly experience the truth that one Brahman alone exists here. But the important condition here is that one should follow the system or advises of implementation of the system with full faith and no doubt. There is no harm done if one progresses with faith. Even as a person who follows a road with faith might or might not find the destination but no harm is done, similarly following the path propounded by Advaita Vedanta will not do any harm to any person at all. Therefore rather than getting into much arguments using logic, one should strive to at least follow the path set by Advaita Vedanta. Then it is personal conviction that one will be able to realize the ultimate truth that Brahman alone exists though the entire external world appears as if very real.

This conviction is that which has been tested by many masters in the past and the present. Just because many follow doesn't mean that it is truth but here it is the case as any person who tests out of the path of Advaita Vedanta will find himself realizing Brahman and ever rejoicing in bliss here and now itself.

It is not right to refute others views but still it has to be mentioned that as long as duality exists, there will be no eternal bliss (as a result of limitation or relativity caused by duality). Therefore if a person wants eternal bliss then one has to realize non-duality alone. Just merely knowing blissful Brahman will not make us blissful even as looking at Bill Gates will not make us rich. Even seeking Bill Gates will not make us rich unless or until we get all the wealth from Bill Gates. Similarly merely seeking blissful Ishwara will not give us bliss unless Ishwara passes on the entire bliss to us – which means that Ishwara is our very nature of bliss (as Ishwara's blissful nature is same as our blissful nature once bliss has been passed down to us from Ishwara).

Thus only when we are able to realize our own very nature of eternal blissful Brahman will we be able to get rid of all sorrows and ever rejoice in bliss. We will start with learning of Madhva's work

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

Jnaanam

Jnaanam is a very well know Sanskrit word which means Knowledge. We will analyze the word Jnaanam in this article. We will analyze what is Knowledge, what is the benefit of Knowledge and what are the ways to get Knowledge.

Vedas are broadly divided into two parts, the veda poorva (the front portion) and veda anta (the end portion). Of these, Veda poorva speaks with actions and meditation and Veda anta speaks about Brahman and hence can be understood as the knowledge part of Vedas. Vedanta through various Upanishads speak about the Ultimate Truth as Brahman. The Ultimate Truth is that Brahman alone is real and everything else is not real. Not just that, the individual in the world is no different from Brahman.

Brahma Satyam Jagan mithya Jeevo Brahmaiva naaparah

Brahman alone is real, this world is not real, Jiva is no different from Brahman (essentially).

This is the central theme of the scriptures and understanding this statement clearly is jnaanam. It is important to understand the benefit of this Knowledge before knowing about this Knowledge. When we understand why we should gain this knowledge, we will have a desire for the knowledge and only then the knowledge will be effective. Whenever we have a need for something, naturally we will try to put towards gaining it. A hungry person has a need for food and naturally he try to get the food to eat. In the same way, when we understand the need for this Knowledge, we will be able to try to gain this knowledge.

Why Knowledge of Brahman? What is the benefit of this Knowledge?

Everyone in this world wants to lead a happy life, irrespective of who they are or what they are doing. This want of happiness means that they don't have the happiness and whenever there is a need for something naturally there will be an effort towards gaining it. Since happiness is not an object itself, the person superimposes happiness on something in the world and thereafter strives to get that thing so that he can get that happiness. Based on this mechanism of gaining happiness, scriptures speak about 4 purusharthas or human goals .The 4 purusharthas are Dharma (righteousness), Artha (possession), Kama (pleasures) and Moksha (liberation). A person could see happiness in any one of these 4 goals and thereafter strive to achieve them. These are goals because they give happiness after achieving it, but scriptures also point that the happiness gained from Dharma, Artha

and Kama are not permanent and hence will go away after sometime. Scriptures also point out that the goal of Moksha is the Ultimate Goal as it would give happiness that will never perish. Scriptures are also very clear that Jnaanam alone will give liberation or Moksha.

Kaivalya Upanishad says

Sa eva sarvam yad bhootham yaccha bhavyam sanaatanam

Jnaatva tam mrutyumatyeti naanyaH panthaa vimuktaye

He alone is all that was, and all that will be, the Eternal; knowing Him, one goes beyond the sting of death; there is no other way to reach complete freedom.

Purusha sooktam says

Tam eva vidvaan amrta iha bhavati| na anyah panthaa vidhyate ayanaaya

He who Knows (the Truth) will become immortal. There is no other way for moksha.

The difference between human goal of Dharma-Artha-Kama and human goal of Moksha is that, the first 3 goals will only give a glimpse of happiness and hence how much ever effort is put towards achieving them will not be enough. This is because though the goals are broadly classified as Dharma, Artha and Kama, but when we look for more detail we would find that there are countless number of ways to achieve one of these goals. Every time we get happiness through one of the goal, say possessing something, and if we do possess something we desire we gain happiness. But when we something else which is higher than object 1, our desire would be diverted to the higher object and hence we would strive to get that one and so on. Even though there will be happiness in between our striving effort, there is constant struggle and sorrow and frustration more than the happiness we experience after achieving.

Whereas in the case of Moksha, there are not many ways to attain Moksha. There is only one way which is through the Knowledge mentioned in the scriptures. Once a person gains the Ultimate Knowledge of Brahman, he will be liberated and will be ever happy. All his want of happiness will be completely gone and he will relax and be peaceful ever.

Taitireeya Upanishad says

Brahmavid aapnoti param

Knower of Brahman attains the Supreme

Mundaka Upanishad says

Sa yo ha vai tatparamam brahma veda Brahmaiva bhavati na asya abrahmavitkule bhavati|

Tarati shokam tarati paapmaanam guhaagranthibhyo vimukto amrto bhavati||

Anyone who knows that Supreme Brahman becomes Brahman indeed. In his line is not born anyone who does not know Brahman. He overcomes grief, and rises above aberrations; and becoming freed from the knots of the heart, he attains immortality.

Lord Krishna says in Bhagavad Gita,

Yad gatva na nivartante tadaama paramam mama

That is My supreme Abode, reaching which they do not return.

Thus, Moksha is the Ultimate Goal of human life which will put an end to all sorrow and there by make the person happy all the time and the Moksha can be attained only through Knowledge. Thus, we can understand that Knowledge of Brahman will ever-lasting Anandam without any sorrow.

What exactly is the Ultimate Knowledge?

Since we saw that Moksha is the Ultimate Goal of all human which will give Anandam that will stay forever and since we saw that Moksha can be attained only through the Knowledge of Brahman, we have to then understand what exactly is this Knowledge. Scriptures point out very clearly in various ways that Brahman alone exists and there is nothing else. Everything in the world is pervaded in and out by Brahman. That Brahman which scriptures mention as the only Real, which scriptures mention as the essence of everything, also has to be known as ones' own Self. Scriptures adopt different ways to explain this, to make everyone understand this Truth. Everyone is very much used to the world, and hence scriptures start with the world and explain the creation process of Brahman to show that the world came from Brahman, reside in Brahman and also dissolve in Brahman at the time of dissolution. This form of explanation is called Chandrashakha nyaya, which means that the explanation starts with something that is very near and slowly leading to something very far.

To prove that Brahman alone is Real, we have to understand that Brahman alone exists at all times. Brahman alone was there before the creation of the world.

Sat eva soumya idam agre aaseet ekam eva adviteeyam

Existence alone was there before creation one without a second.

Above scriptural statement from Chandogya Upanishad explains that Brahman alone was there before creation of the world. This scriptural statement also clarifies that there was

nothing else but Brahman. If Brahman alone was existing before creation, what about after creation?

Isavasya Upanishad says

Isavasyam idam sarvam yat kinchit jagatyaam jagat

All this – whatsoever moves on the earth – is pervaded by the Lord

Lord Krishna says in Bhagavad Gita 7th chapter

Matah parataram na anyat kinchit asti dhananjaya

Mayi sarvamidam protam sutre maniganaa iva

O Dhananjaya! There is nothing else other than Me. All this is strung on Me like Pearls on a string

Lord Krishna says in Bhagavad Gita 18th chapter

Ishavara sarva bhoothaanam hrideshe arjuna thishtathi

O Arjuna! The Lord resides in the region of the heart of all creatures.

Thus, if Brahman alone was there before creation and Brahman alone is present when the world is seen, Brahman alone will exist after dissolution also. Brahman alone was the cause of the world, Brahman alone is the substratum of the world when the world is seen and Brahman alone is the abode unto to which the world will dissolve. Thus, we can conclude that Brahman alone is Real.

Is knowing Brahman alone Real enough to gain Moksha? Scriptures also point out through various statement that the Brahman which is the cause of the world, which is the substratum of the world is same as the individual Self. Everyone in this world is essentially Brahman only but this fact is forgotten. This forgetfulness is termed as Avidhya or Ignorance. Because of ignorance, the truth that the jiva is Brahman only is not known, which make him think that he is body-mind complex. Since he thinks himself to be body-mind complex, various good and bad experiences are considered to be his and therefore experiences happiness and sorrow. Therefore, only when a person knows that this individual Self is Brahman only, will he be liberated.

Scriptures through various statement called Maha vakyas explain that this identity of Self with Brahman. In Chandogya Upanishad father of uddalaka tells his son Shevataketu

Tat tvam asi

Thou Art That!

Here Tat refers to Brahman, which is of the nature of Sat-Chit-Anandam and tvam here refers to the individual Self. This individual Self seems to be limited by the body-mind complex. When we analyze if we are really body-mind complex or not, we will understand that we are not the body-mind complex but that which is beyond all limitations, which gives life to body and mind. Through Self Enquiry, by negating that we are not the body and mind and intellect, we will understand that we are unlimited Self whose nature is same as the Brahman.

Q: If a person knows that he is not the body and mind but Brahman, how can he know that everything is Brahman alone.

A: Lord Krishna says in 7th chapter that Lord alone is the essence in everything. That which pulsates within us as "I", that because of which we experience everything is Brahman. That Self which is within us is also there in everyone else. This Self not only pulsates within us, it is there in everything in the world. Even the inert things are pervaded by the Self, but the only difference between the living and the inert is the medium. Living things have the medium to know their own existence, which is the mind. But the inert things don't have the medium to know their own existence because it doesn't have the medium to know it. We can clearly know this from the way Mahatmas deal with everything in the world. Mahatmas do not differentiate between anything in this world. They see themselves in everything and thus they respect everything in the world without any differentiation. Thus, when we know the essence of ourselves, we will be able to know the essence of everything in the world. And knowing what is the essence of everything is the Ultimate Knowledge, when a person gains this knowledge he gets liberated.

What are the ways of gaining this Knowledge?

Scriptures are the only means to get this Ultimate Knowledge. Systematic study of scriptures for a length of time under a competent Guru is the only way of know about Brahman, this process is termed as Sravanam. After listening about Brahman, logically reflecting and validating for once own intellect is termed as Mananam. Mananam will give intellectual conviction about the truth and then once the intellect is convinced one has to assimilate the knowledge so that the knowledge stays in the mind forever which is termed as Nidhidhyasanam.

That knowledge of the scriptures that we get through the mouth of the Sadguru is called Paroksha Jnaanam or indirect knowledge. When we hear about Brahman as the substratum

of everything, and Brahman alone is our very nature, we understand and it stays in our mind as a knowledge. But until we own up that knowledge "I am Brahman" just like our conviction that 'I am human', it is just an indirect knowledge. But when we are convinced about the statement 'I am Brahman' just like we are convinced that 'I am human' it becomes a direct knowledge or Aparoksha Jnanam. For a Sadguru who teaches about Brahman, the teaching is through the Aparoksha Jnanam of the Guru. But for a student until he is convinced is just an indirect knowledge. Thus the way to gain this Knowledge of Brahman is through Sravanam, Mananam and Nidhidhyasanam.

Thus, the end of analysis of the word Jnanam.

Jagaddukha Nirupanam

ॐ जगद्दुःखनिरूपणं

om jagadduḥkhanirūpaṇam

शोककारणं मोहकारणम् ।

द्वैतरूपतो विश्वनामकम् ॥१॥

śokakāraṇam mohakāraṇam |
dvaitarūpato viśvanāmakam ||1||

1. That which is named as world due to being of the nature of duality is the cause of sorrow and delusion.

नित्यवर्जितं द्वन्द्वरूपकम् ।

कामरूपकं कर्षरूपकम् ॥२॥

nityavarjitaṁ dvandvarūpakam |
kāmarūpakam karṣarūpakam ||2||

2. It is devoid of eternality, filled with duality, of the nature of desire (arising desire) and attraction (attracting everything).

सत्स्वरूपकं ब्रह्मणैव तत् ।

सत्यवद्विभात्येव निश्चयम् ॥३॥

satsvarūpaka brahmaṇaiva tat |
satyavadvibhātyeva niścayam ||3||

3. The world is Brahman alone of the nature of Existence and due to Brahman alone appears definitely like real.

दोषदृष्टिरूपेण तत्च्युतिः ।

संभवः सुखं भावितं यदा ॥४ ॥

doṣadr̥ṣṭirūpeṇa tatcyutiḥ|
sambhavaḥ sukhaṁ bhāvitam yadā||4||

4. Through finding fault with the world, its destruction is easily possible if thought about fault with the world is there in the mind.

दोषभावनं दुःखकारणम् ।

सत्यवर्जितं सन्ततं जगत् ॥५ ॥

doṣabhāvanam duḥkhakāraṇam|
satyavarjitam santatam jagat||5||

5. Causing sorrow thus if we maintain vision of fault in our mind, then the world will be remembered always as devoid of reality.

विश्ववारितं यस्यमानसम् ।

तस्यदुःखदं नास्ति सर्वदा ॥६ ॥

viśvavāritam yasyamānasam|
tasyaduḥkhadam nāsti sarvadā||6||

6. One whose mind is devoid of thought about the world (and it being real), for him there is no cause of sorrow (by the world) at all times.

स्वात्मब्रह्मणा यस्यसंस्थितिः ।

तस्य नन्दनं दुःखवर्जितम् ॥७ ॥

svātmabrahmaṇā yasyasamsthitiḥ|
tasya nandanam duḥkhavarjitam||7||

7. One who abides as one's own Self of Brahman, his happiness is devoid of sorrow.

नित्यरूपक नन्दसंयुतः ।

नन्दनन्दनो नन्दनन्दनः ॥८॥

nityarūpaka nandasamyutaḥ |
nandanandano nandanandanaḥ ||8||

8. One who is with happiness that is eternal in nature ever rejoices in bliss, ever rejoices in bliss.

Hastamalaka Panchakam

३-मार्च -२०१३ - ॐ हस्तामलक पञ्चकं

3-mārc -2013 - om hastāmalaka pañcakam

करामलकवज्ञानं यस्यरूपंस्वतोऽप्येव ।

शंकरस्य च शिष्यो यो तं हस्तामलकं वन्दे ॥१॥

karāmalakavajñānam yasyarūpaṁsvato'pyeva |
śaṅkarasya ca śiṣyo yo taṁ hastāmalakam vande||1||

1. One whose nature is knowledge which is like the amla fruit in one's hand automatically and who is the disciple of Sankara, that Hastamalaka I prostrate.

ज्ञानसंयुक्तवागेशो विज्ञानयुतस्वात्मानः ।

आचार्यरूपशिष्यश्च तं हस्तामलकं वन्दे ॥२॥

jñānasamyuktavāgeśo vijñānayutasvātmānaḥ |
ācāryarūpaśiṣyaśca taṁ hastāmalakam vande||2||

2. One who is the God of words filled with knowledge, one who is the Self filled with wisdom (direct experience) and one who is the disciple similar to aacharya (or guru), that Hastamalaka I prostrate.

यस्यज्ञानस्थितिर्वेद सुवरेण्यं मनुष्याणाम् ।

आत्मतृप्तस्वरूपो यः तं हस्तामलकं वन्दे ॥३॥

yasyajñānasthitiṛveda suvareṇyaṁ manuṣyāṇām |
ātmatṛptasvarūpo yaḥ taṁ hastāmalakam vande||3||

3. One whose state of knowledge is known to be sought out by all people and who is of the nature of Self-content, that Hastamalaka I prostrate.

यस्यकृत्यास्तुभाष्यञ्च कृतंस्वस्यगुरोरेशम् ।

यतो ज्ञानविज्ञानञ्च तं हस्तामलकं वन्दे ॥४॥

yasyakṛtyāstubhāṣyañca kṛtaṁsvasyaguroreśam|
yato jñānavijñānañca taṁ hastāmalakaṁ vande||4||

4. One whose work's commentary has been written by his own Guru of Ishwara (Siva or Sankara) and from which work one gets knowledge and wisdom (direct experience), that Hastamalaka I prostrate.

प्राप्नोति ज्ञानस्थानञ्च यस्यानुग्रहलेशेण ।

ब्रह्मनिष्ठो मुनिर्यश्च तं हस्तामलकं वन्दे ॥५॥

prāpnoti jñānasthānañca yasyānugrahaleśeṇa|
brahmaniṣṭho muniryaśca taṁ hastāmalakaṁ vande||5||

5. By even little grace of whom, state of knowledge will be attained; one who is Brahmanista and muni, that Hastamalaka I prostrate.

Anukramaanika Nirdesham

1. Editorial – a general message
2. Vishayadukhamayatva Siddhi – an analysis of the world or objects of the world being filled with sorrow.
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. Jagaddukha Nirupanam - explanation of the world to be real sorrowful in nature. 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. Hastamalaka Panchakam – five slokas as an offering unto Hastamalaka. 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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