

# JIVA YATRA

By Swami Paramarthananda

Transcribed by Swamini Svatmabodhananda

NOTE: Swami Paramarthananda has not verified the transcription of talks. The transcriptions have been done with Swamiji's blessings by his disciple.



Published by :

Arsha Avinash Foundation

104 Third Street, Tatabad, Coimbatore 641012

Phone: 9487373635

E mail: [arshaavinash@gmail.com](mailto:arshaavinash@gmail.com)

[www.arshaavinash.in](http://www.arshaavinash.in)

# *Jīvayātrā*

By

Swami Jnanananda Bharati

Talks of

Swami Paramarthananda Saraswati

A compilation

By

Swamini Svatmabodhananda Saraswati

## *jīvayātrā*

One of the questions asked by many people is, “Why did *Bhagavān* create this world?” For which the answer is - *Bhagavān* did not create this world for his own sake as He did not require anything from this world. He is *āpta kāmah*. You cannot also say *Bhagavān* created the world for the sake of the world; it is not possible. There will be *ātmāśraya doṣa*. The inert world cannot require anything for itself. By exclusion, we have to say *Bhagavān* created this world for the sake of *jīva* only. *Jīva* has to exhaust *punya* and *pāpa* accumulated by him. It is possible only through the creation. *Jīva* requires a world and body with the help of which it has to exhaust the *punya* and *pāpa*. *Punya* is exhausted through pleasurable experiences and *pāpam* is exhausted through painful experiences.

Then the next question that will arise is - How did the *jīva* get *punya* and *pāpam*? We answer: *Jīva* got *punya* and *pāpam* because of the previous creation. To exhaust them *Bhagavān* has to create this world. Then naturally the next question: How did the previous creation come? We will say it is because of the previous creation. Then the so called intelligent question will be, “How did the first creation come?” When this question is asked, the mindset of the questioner is this - He assumes that *Bhagavān* created the world for the first time and decided to put some *jīvas* inside and these *jīvas* were given some basic *punya**pāpam*. Some amount of equal *punya* and equal *pāpam* were given to all *jīvas*. So *Bhagavān* alone was there and world was created some time in history first and then *jīvas* were put and they were all given some basic amount of *karma* and were asked to enter into a race and start a family. This is the assumption of the mind of the questioner. As long as this mindset is there, one will never get the answer. *Śāstra* says there is a fundamental mistake in this approach. So what is the *śāstric* vision? *Jīva* does not have a beginning. Never question with the idea that “There was a time when the *jīva* was not there at all, *Bhagavān* alone was; then he decided to enjoy some game like world cup football and He created the *jīvas* and asked them to play “.

So *Vedic* first lesson we have to grasp and assimilate is *jīvaḥ anādi*.

There is a verse that enumerates six items that are *anādi*. *Jīva*, *Īśvara*, *viśuddha cit*, *jīveśaya citta*, *avidyā*, *avidyayā caitanya sambandhaḥ*. Just as *Īśvara* is without a beginning, *jīva* is also without a beginning. The only difference is *Īśvara* is free from *karma*, from the beginning. Why? He is *Īśvara*. *Īśvara* is without a beginning and without *karma*. He is *karmarahitaḥ*. *Jīva* is without a beginning but with *karma*. *Jīva* is *karma sahitaḥ*. *Jīva* requires the creation to exhaust *karma* and in the process acquire fresh *karma* also.

*Jīva* requires two things to exhaust *karma*: 1. a set up and 2. *śarīram*, a medium(*upādhi*). Through the body alone the *jīva* can interact with the set up and exhaust *puṇyam* and *pāpam*. That is why in deep sleep state when the body is not utilized and the set up is not contacted, we don't exhaust *puṇyam* and *pāpam*.

During deep sleep state, there is a *karma* suspension and again on waking up, the *jīva* acquires a body, contacts the set up, exhausts *puṇya pāpa*, and acquires fresh ones and again continues the journey. In any particular body and setup, only certain types of *karmas* can be exhausted. If wallowing in slum or mud is the *karma* required then buffalo body is required. Normally, human beings don't do that. This *karma* exhaustion requires acquiring a series of bodies.

Every *jīva* has gone through varieties of bodies. This *manuṣya śarīram* is not the first one. We have gone through millions of *manuṣya śarīram*, millions of donkey *śarīram*, millions of buffalo *śarīram* ... Thus *jīva* moves from *śṛṣṭi* to *śṛṣṭi*, set up to set up, body to body. This beginning less continuous movement of *jīva* is called *saṁsāra*. The violent continuous zigzag movement of *jīva* is called *saṁsāra*.

Our approach to *saṁsāra* will depend on how we look upon this movement, with what *bhāvanā*. Some people may look upon it as a beautiful travel. Because the *jīva* is moving from *loka to loka*, different experiences, body to body, family members to family members. This continuous movement can

be seen as a travel, as holiday tour moving from place to place. If a person looks upon this as an enjoyable tour, then it is a welcome thing, then we say wish you all the best. But if you analyze a little bit deeply, then this movement cannot be compared to a tour or travel. Why? It is because there is a very significant difference.

An important factor is conspicuously absent in the *jīva's* movement. What is it? With regard to any travel, it is I who decide to travel or not. I decide when to travel and where to travel. If I am bored I can break the travel and come back also. In all conducted tours, I am travelling as a master, as a free person with the power of decision. But *jīva's* movement is from *janma to janma, loka to loka*, without choice. We find we are here and we don't have a choice with regard to the future also. Whenever I am having problems and I am not able to solve them, I show my *jātakam* and people say 'you are going through 7 ½ Saturn' which I never asked for. If I want to stop the journey I don't know where the switch board is, to stop. It is going round and round without any control. So this cannot be compared to a travel which is always welcome.

For this the best example we can give is of a kidnapped person. Under the control of the kidnapper, the person is taken from place to place because the police is after the kidnapper. Veerappan kidnapped the actor Rajkumar. For several weeks he was in the forest. He moved from place to place. Can we say that Rajkumar had a conducted tour of the forest under the guidance of Veerappan? We don't say that. Police would not go to rescue if it is true. The very fact that we are talking of rescue is that the movement is helpless, without freedom or mastery. Therefore *samsāra* becomes a pain and a problem requiring a rescue operation.

Thus every *jīva* is a kidnapped *jīva*. Kidnapped by *Yamadharṃarāja!* In *Kaṭhōpaniṣad*, it is beautifully said by *Yamadharṃarāja* himself: "You are under my net; I take you from place to place, sometimes to hell and sometimes to heaven also". Therefore the *jīva* requires rescue. Once rescued it is called *mokṣaḥ*. Thus from beginningless time, the helpless *jīvas* are

moving, which is called *jīva saṁsārah*. And how many such *jīvas* are there? Infinite *jīvas* are there in motion. When we say *jīva*, don't take just the humans alone but all living beings are to be included. Including the micro-organisms, mosquitoes, ants in the list and that is why there is a difference in the population also. People ask the question, 'If *jīvas* are *anādi* and the same number of *jīvas* are there, then why this population explosion?'

Swami Chinmayanandaji gives a nice answer: All the forests are destroyed and the wild animals have no place to live and they have taken a human form and come and then name themselves Tigers proving themselves to be that. Of course lions and lionesses are there too. Even though this *jīva* is helplessly in constant movement called *saṁsāra*, there is a silver lining in this *jīva saṁsāra*. When *jīva* gets a human body, the *jīva* gets some control over the journey. In all the other bodies, the *jīva* has no control at all. Whether it is elephant, horse or cow, what the animals go through, they don't decide but the other human beings decide. They don't have free will; they don't have freedom.

But when the *jīva* has a rare opportunity of a human form, then the *jīva* has some freedom. I won't say total freedom, but *jīva* has got some freedom, which is called *puruṣārtha*. This is unique to *manuṣya*. In *manuṣya janma* the *jīva* can choose to regulate the movement of his life to some extent or to a greater extent. When we choose to regulate this movement, it is called *jīvayātrā*.

If I intelligently conduct the *jīvayātrā*, I can rescue myself from the helpless *saṁsāra* and give the slip to *yama dharma rāja* and save myself from the kidnapper *Yama*. That means, with the limited freedom I have to convert the unfavorable condition into favourable condition and rescue myself. This is the skillful *jīvayātrā* for which intelligent living is essential.

This is illustrated by an example of a princess who wanted to marry a prince from the neighboring kingdom. He was called Krishna Varman. Her father wanted her to marry another prince by name Rama Varman. The King

decided to resolve the problem by taking a lot in the assembly of all elders and ministers. The princess had to come and pick the lot and then the King would marry off his daughter to the one chosen by her from the lot. The King wants her to marry only Rama Varman so quietly, deceives and writes Rama Varman in both the slips. Somehow the information gets leaked like our examination papers. Some sympathetic insider gives the news. Now the princess is in a tight situation. If she exposes the king, then her father will get a bad name, which she doesn't want. And if she quietly chooses one she will be forced to marry Rama Varman. The princess here uses her skill. She picks a lot and secretly brings near her face and reads the name to herself. She immediately starts to jump up and down. She starts dancing by saying, "Oh Lord! You have saved me", and while doing that she crumples the paper and swallows the paper.

Then she comes to the King, her father and declares the name in the paper as Krishna Varman. She tells her father, 'You should help me marry him'. The King says, "You have not shown the paper to anyone. How do we know the name is Krishna Varman? You might be cheating". She insists, "No it is Krishna Varman only. If you don't believe it I will prove it". She calls the minister and asks him to read the other paper. It reads Rama Varman. "So the paper I swallowed is Krishna Varman". The King could not say anything and swallows his words. This is called intelligence.

In a tight situation you convert it to a situation favorable to you. Similarly this *jīva* even though caught up in *saṁsāra* with many unfavorable situations called *karma*, with the help of limited freedom directs the course of life and gets *mokṣa*. For this conducted regulated tour, we require guidance or help. This help alone is give by the *śāstras*, the *Veda*.

*Veda* is meant to help the *manuṣya jīva* to regulate and convert *saṁsāra* to a *jīvayātra* and reach the destination *mokṣa*. *Veda* can help help as Lord Himself as given the *Vedas*. Lord has given solutions for all problems. If there is hunger food is provided; if there are diseases medicines are provided. *Bhagavān* has provided solutions for all problems including the

*saṁsāra* problem. *Bhagavān* himself give it. It will work for us, if only we choose to make use of that. *Bhagavān* has provided the *vedic* solution. *Veda* is a *kāmadhenu*, it can milk all the *puruṣārthas* including *mokṣa puruṣāratha*.

*ṛṣis* have received this *vedic* teaching because of their extraordinary powers of their extraordinary *sātvic* minds. *ṛṣati jānati iti ṛṣiḥ*. The *ṛṣis* handed over this teaching to their disciples through the word of mouth and it has been coming down to us in the form of *karṇa paraṁpara* - and therefore it is known as *śruti*. So *śruti* helps us in the *jīvayātrā* by leading to *mokṣa*. We have innumerable secondary literature, which clarifies and expands the *Vedic* teaching. *Veda* is the original literature helping the *jīva yātrā*. We have innumerable secondary literature like *smṛti*, *purāṇa sūtra* and *itihāsas*.

There are small works of *ācāryas* condensing the *jīvayātrā* given by the *Veda* in a capsule form. One among them is this text by Swami Jñānānanda Bhārati associated with Sringeri Matha. He was a prolific writer in Sanskrit, Tamil, and English etc. one of his small works is *jīva yātrā*. In nine verses he presents a scheme by which a person can conduct his journey and reach the destination. This *vedic* scheme of life is called *varṇāśrama vyavasthā*. It is a beautiful scheme in which every human being is taken both as an individual with duties towards himself and also as a social unit with duties to the society, the macro setup. I am not an individual alone and I am not a social unit alone. I have got two sides. One is duty to myself and the other is duty towards the setup. And both the roles are very important because individual and society are interconnected. The individuals affect the society or the society affects the individual. What will be the answer? It will be very difficult to say which one affects the other. This is because of mutual dependence. Whether body affects the mind or mind affects the body, we cannot say as they are interconnected. The *jīva* and setup, the micro and macro personalities we have are interconnected. *varṇa dharma* is taking care of the social contribution and *āśrama dharma* is taking care of the contribution to ourselves. *Veda* gives a beautiful *varṇa āśrama* scheme in which the individual and society will go together and help the growth of

both. That is the *Vedic* scheme. Jñānānanda Bhārati condenses this *Vedic* scheme and gives us the *jīvayātrā* in nine verses.

The title *jīvayātrā* indicates the lifestyle prescribed by the *Vedas* - *Veda upadiṣṭa yātrā* by following which a person can put an end to *samsāra* and so this title is given to this text.

Verse 1

नित्यानन्दसुखं पदं सुविमलं प्राप्तुं समीहायुताः

सर्वे जन्म भृताः सदा व्यसनिनस्तत्स्थानसम्मार्गणे ।

एवं सत्यपि साध्यसाधनयुगं सम्यङ् जानन्ति ते

न प्राप्ता अधुनाऽपि सौख्यपदवीं यतः ॥ १ ॥

*nityānandasukhaṁ padaṁ suvimalaṁ prāptuṁ samīhāyutāḥ*

*sarve janma bhṛitaḥ sadā vyasaninastatsthānasaṁmārgaṇe ।*

*evaṁ satyapi sādhyasādhanayugaṁ samyaṅ jānanti te*

*na prāptā adhunā'api saukhyapadaavīṁ svābhīṣṭarūpāṁ yataḥ ॥.1*

In this first verse, the *ācārya* mentions that all the living beings including the human beings have only one goal according to the vision of the *Vedas*. Unfortunately the human beings are unaware of this goal. They don't even know what they really want. So first they have to know the goal and then they have to accomplish that goal. Oft repeated question in any question and answer session is: What is the goal of life? There are two goals. First discovering what the goal is, after discovering the goal accomplishing that goal. According to *Vedas*, there is only one goal for all the human beings, even though there appears to be many goals. Seemingly there are many. We condense these goals into four - *caturvidha puruṣārthaḥ* – being *dharma*, *artha*, *kāma* and *mokṣa*.

On further enquiry we say there is not even *caturvidha puruṣārthaḥ*, there is only one *puruṣārtha* - one goal. The author says, for *jīvaḥ*, for all living beings there is really one goal - *sukhaṁ padam*, goal or destination of happiness. How do we conclude that happiness is the goal of all the people when our experience

reveals that we all have different goals? One person wants to build a house, another person wants to get a degree and another person wants to marry someone like our princess. What is the logic for this conclusion? The logic being *anvaya and vyatireka* – co-presence and co-absence logic. A person desires for an object only as long as it is a source of happiness. It becomes his goal or object of desire. So we can make an *anvaya vyāpti – yatra yatra sukha janakatvam tatra tatra priya viṣayatvam or abhīṣṭa viṣayatvam*. As long as a thing is a source of happiness, it is an object of desire, sought after. This we can prove from our experience.

When a person wants to buy something or go to a place, his assumption is that he will be happy and comfortable there and when he goes nearby or possesses the object, afterwards he finds it is not a source of happiness, or still worse a source of headache. Then he rejects the very object, which he himself sought after. To remember our Swamiji's expression, first he says, ' I love you', thereafter 'I allow you' (to get lost). From this it is very clear that as long as it gives joy, I want it and the moment it stops giving joy, I don't want it. Therefore I am not interested in the object itself but the happiness generating capacity of the object.

This, Śāṅkarācārya gives through an example in *bhajagovindam* –

*yāvāt vitto pārjana sakttaḥ, tāvan nija parivāro rakttaḥ,  
paścāt jīvati jarjara dehe vārtān ko'api na pṛicchati gehe.*

A bitter truth, as long as the person earns money and is a productive member of the family, he is cared for. When money is gone care is gone. He is not loved. Now, what do I love? It does not require an extraordinary brain to understand that only money is loved. Like in a matrimonial advertisement- "A man with an agricultural land wants to marry a woman with a tractor, postscript - send photograph of the tractor". By *anvaya vyatireka* he is going to love not the wife but the tractor alone. Any object is loved when it is a *sukha janakam*, so every living being is interested in *sukham* only.

In *Maitreyī brāhmaṇam*, *Yājñavalkya* reveals this bitter truth that nobody loves his wife for wife's sake, no wife loves the husband for husband's sake, no mother loves children for children's sake, if so she should love all children, but for ones own happiness only - *ātmanastu kāmāya sarvaṃ priyaṃ bhavati*. So everyone loves only *ātmanā kāmāḥ* means *ātmanā bhogaḥ, ātmanaḥ sukham*. The author says that there is only one goal - *sukhaṃ padam*. They are full of this intense desire to attain the goal of happiness. Once he has got that happiness then he wants that happiness to continue.

As somebody said, first he wants status, then he wants quo i.e. status quo. Once happiness is there then I want to retain it permanently with me. If I hear a song and enjoyed, my next attempt is for continued enjoyment. I would like to take up a copy of that song so that I can repeatedly hear and retain that happiness. So not only *sukham* I desire, I want *nityānanda sukham*. A *sukham* that is in the form of *nithyānandaḥ*. That is also the reason why, when we are happy everything is favourable and all the neighbors appreciate, "You are indeed fortunate, wonderful husband, wonderful wife, good children all well settled". When a few people appreciate this fellow is frightened - *dr̥ṣṭi*. Have you heard of *kaṇ dr̥ṣṭi vināyakaḥ*? A recent innovation! This picture is kept in the front because there is a constant fear. Whatever happiness or comfort I have it should continue with me.

So, what is the goal of life? Happiness in the form of permanent joy, therefore only *suvimala*, free from all types of impurities. So, what is the impurity in happiness? Sorrow. *ānanda* unmixed with sorrow, sorrowless pure permanent *ānanda* is the only goal of every living being. Even when he claims that any other thing is his goal, then, infact, through these things, he is only seeking that *ānanda*. It need not be a material. When a scientist wants to continue the research, remember that is also a type of intellectual *ānanda* that he wants to gather. So *ānanda* need not be gross *ānanda* in the form of eating gulab jamoon, it can be subtle *ānanda* in the form of giving love, getting love or in the form of scientific discovery. The level of *ānanda* may differ but it is *ānanda* alone.

So, *sarve janma bṛtaḥ* – who are desirous of this goal, *sadā vyasaninaḥ* - they are constantly taking pains to fulfill this goal. This struggle is expressed in two forms – what I consider a *sukha hetu* and disposing off what I consider as non *sukha hetu* or *duḥkha hetu*. One is in the form of getting and another is in the form of getting rid of. This two fold effort in the form of *pravṛtti* and in the form of *nivṛtti* is constantly going on. If you feel comfortable in this camp what will you say, “It ends with eight days. It would have been nice if only it was for some more days”. But if there is some problem, health problem, food problem or any problem, then we want to go today evening itself. All the time what is the aim, *sukha prāpti sadā vyasaninaḥ*. All the time struggle in the pursuit of that goal, all the living beings are busy. The human beings have not discovered this goal very clearly. So instead of clearly identifying that *nitya ānandam* is what I want, they enumerate so many other goals. They identify everything else which indicates their vagueness in their thinking and they don't specify *nitya ānanda padam* is what I want.

Therefore he says, even though this is the fact that every living being including human being is interested only in one goal of *nityānanda*, the human beings are not very clear about what they want. Not only that, even if they have the vague knowledge that it is *nityānanda* that they want, they are not very clear about the nature of that *nityānanda*. Normally any *ānanda* is in the form of an experience. Once I seek *nityānanda*, I should clearly know that it could never be in the form of an experience. Why? Because any experience, which we can know from our experience, is subject to time. If you study your own personal experience, you have never had at any time a permanent experience of anything. So the very word experience indicates impermanence.

If *ānanda* is an experience, then the word *nityānanda* is an oxymoron. It is logically inconsistent because the word *nityam* and the word *ānanda* as an experience is not possible. What is experienced is *anityam* and what is *nityam* can never be in the form of experience. Therefore the nature of *nityānanda* cannot be in the form of an experience. Because people are very vague about this, there is a very big confusion in this field. They are looking for an external bliss, which is a logical contradiction. Because the word bliss is an experience

and an experience can never be eternal. Therefore we are not very clear whether we want *nityānanda*. Even if we know that we are seeking *nityānanda*, we don't understand that it is not a form of experience. *Nityānanda* experience is non-existent. *Nityānanda* cannot be any object in the world also. Why? Because any object in the world happens to be *anityam*. From an atom to the biggest star, everything is *anityam*. No object in the world can be *nityānanda* and no experience in the world can be *nityānanda*. It should be something other than that. So what is that? That also we don't know. Vague-o-vague. So, we don't know we want *ānanda* we don't know we really want *nityānanda*, and we don't know that *nityānanda* is not an experience at all.

Thus there is a lot of confusion regarding the goal itself. So if there is confusion regarding the goal, how can there be clarity regarding the means. For example, this fellow is asking which bus number he should take. He is new to Coimbatore. I can understand. "I will certainly help you but tell me where you want to go". He says, 'that also I don't know'. If the destination is not clear how can the means be clear? So human beings have got the problem regarding two fundamentals - *sādhyam* and *sādhana*, everything else he knows. Human being does not know what he wants, and he does not know what means to take. The pair - *sādhyā* and *sādhana*- they don't know. What is the result? Because of this consistent confusion even now the life struggle is not over. The destination of *nityānanda sukham* they have not achieved, which is really what is desirable. This is the human crisis.

Bhartruhari writes in *vairagya śatakam* – verse no.3 :  
*utkhānām nidhiśaṅkayā kṣititalam dhātā girerdhātayā*  
*nistīrṇaḥ saritām patinṛpatayo yatnena santoṣitāḥ*  
*mantrārādhana tatpareṇa manasā smaśāṇe niśāḥ*  
*prāptaḥ kāṇavarāṭako'api na mayā tṛṣṇe sakāmbhava*

(MEANING)The author says, "I dug the earth all over hoping to get some treasure somewhere, nothing happened, mining I did and produced a lot of materials, and I look at myself, nothing happened. Then I left everything and travelled abroad. To get the license I have to meet various MLAs and MPs and

please them I did all kinds of things to run my business and that also failed. I went to astrologers and performed many poojas and at the fag end of my life when I look at my progress, my progress is from finitude to finitude. Why? Because I am not clear about my *sādhana-sādhya*. Thus take the help of the *Veda* which has a board – “MAY I HELP YOU”.

## Verse 2

तत्रास्थै प्रभुसम्मिता अपि क्रुपया त्रय्यन्तसारान्विता

वल्ली काठकामध्यगा कविसमं प्रोत्साहयन्ती नरान् ।

एवं साधनकल्पानां रचयते सन्मार्गगानाम्

तद्विष्णोः परमं पदं च सहसागन्तुं मनीषावताम् ॥

*tatprāptyai prabhusammitā api kṛpayā trayyantasārānvitā*

*vallī kāṭhakāmadhyagā kavīsamāṅ protsāhayantī narān |*

*evam sādhanakalapanāṅ racayate sanmārgagānāṅ satām*

*tadviṣṇoḥ paramaṅ padam ca sahasāganturim manīṣāvataṅm ||..2*

*Veda* offers itself to be our consultant without any consultancy charges. Here the author refers to the *Kaṭhōpaniṣad* teaching. All our *śāstras* are classified into three groups of literature based on the method by which they help or guide the seeker. The first one is called *prabhu samhita* - that *śāstric* literature that can be compared to a master, a commander. *Veda* is called *prabhu samhita* because *Veda* commands the people to follow – a series of do’s and don’ts. If a person refuses to follow punishment is given - *prtyavāya doṣam* or *pāpam*. A second group of literature – *smṛtiḥ*, it does not use language of commandment; it gives suggestions like a friend. It advises and there is no threat involved. This is not good for you; this alone is good; why can’t you follow this; I am you well wisher etc. it is called *suhṛt samhita*. Third group of literature – *kāntā samhita* is comparable to a *kāntā*, which means an affectionate, loving or lovable woman, like a wife or mother. When a mother wants to ask the child to do something, she may use commandment. If the child does not listen then the mother uses good words, often the child does not listen. Then what the mother does is, mother does whatever the child likes first. Doing that in between, she does

what she wants to do like a sugar coated pill. All the *purāṇa* literature is called *kāntā samhita* with lots of stories. This method of communication is *kāntā samhita* method. It is infotainment, i.e. mixture of information and entertainment. If the babay does not like concentrated medicine, mix with entertainment. Here *Veda* itself comes down in *Kaṭhapaniṣad* and teaches through a very nice example. Even though comes under *prabhu samhita* capable of directly commanding and teaching, *Veda* gives up that status and becomes *suhṛt samhita* or *kāntā samhita* and through a beautiful example *Veda* communicates what is *sādhyam* and what is the *sādhanam*. What is this idea?

In the first verse the author talked about the limitation of the human beings. No doubt human beings are superior compared to all the other living beings. He has got a superior intellect and therefore science is possible. He has got two hands to implement all the scientific discoveries in the form of technology and machineries. Hands stand for technology because without hands we cannot do most of the operations. The animals have a disadvantage; they have to use the hands also as legs, being four legged one's they are. They say in evolution the greatest evolution was the freeing of the hands, because of man becoming erect. Animals have to use all the four legs. Monkey was the transition. They were using the forelegs of the fur legs in two ways: both as hands and legs. We are supposed to be evolved versions of monkeys. Therefore, in our case we stand erect. That means the hands are released and they don't have to play the role of legs. Because of that, we have a big disadvantage, and it is back pain, unique to human beings. Animals don't have that problem; it is new to human beings!

Technology represented by hands and science represented by head are indications of the superiority of human beings. The third one is the communication skill, which are not available to animals. Because of this we function collectively. We can share our science and technology with other communities, and therefore group effort is possible. Science, technology and collectivism because of communication make the human being the greatest living being on the earth, and we have almost conquered the earth because

of that. Even though all these superiorities are there, the greatest disadvantage is, he cannot understand the mystery of life, the purpose of life, the goal of life and the means by which that goal can be accomplished.

Therefore the author said the weakness is, *sādhya – sādhana yogam na jānanti* - there is ignorance of the goal and the means. This is the problem. At the same time, there is a blessing also. *Bhagavān*, who kept this limitation decided to help the human being by providing with *Vedic* scriptures. Intelligence or strength is recognition of weakness; it is a great strength. Once I recognize my weakness, I can choose to take the support or help from outside. That outside help is the *Vedic* scriptures. If only human being is willing to do that, he can become equal to God himself.

The 1<sup>st</sup> verse gave the limitation. The second and third verses talk about the external support available in the form of *Vedas*. *Vedas* are available to us in four parts in the form of *ṛg Veda*, *yajur Veda*, *sāma Veda*, and *atharvaṇa Veda*. *Yajur Veda* has two branches - *śukla yajur Veda* and *kṛṣṇa yajur Veda*. Thus we have got as good as five *Vedas*. In each of these *Vedas* there are several *śākhās*. Now only a few are available and many of them are lost.

In *kṛṣṇa yajur Veda*, there are two prominent *śākhās*: *kaṭha śākhā* and *taittirīya śākhā*. In each of the *śākhās* of each *Veda* there is a *karma kāṇḍa* portion as well as *jñāna kāṇḍa* portion. *Karma kāṇḍa* portion deals with *karma* leading to *anitya ānanda*. *Jñāna kāṇḍa* deals with *jñānam* leading to *nityānanda*. *Veda pūrva bhāga* deals with finite pleasures achievable through *karma* and *jñāna kāṇḍa* portion deals with *jñāna* leading to *nitya ānanda*, which can be gained through *jñānam*. This is the composition and topic of the *Vedas* and here the author deals with *Kaṭhōpaniṣad* which is the *jñāna kāṇḍa* portion of the *kāṭhaka śākhā* of *kṛṣṇa yajur Veda*. It has both *karma kāṇḍa* ritualistic portion as well as *jñāna kāṇḍa* the *upaniṣadic* or philosophical portion. That portion is called the *kāṭhaka upaniṣad* or *Kaṭhōpaniṣad*. It is a famous *Upaniṣad* belonging to the *daśōpaniṣad* commented by Ādi Śaṅkarācārya.

This *Kaṭhōpaniṣad* has two chapters called *adhyāyāḥ*. Each chapter is divided into three sections. Totally six sections are there in *Kaṭhōpaniṣad*. Each section is called a *valli*, which literally means a creeper, but in this context a section. The author in two verses summarizes the first chapter; the second and third verses are based upon the first chapter of *Kaṭhōpaniṣad* that is taken as a key to develop *jīvayātrā*. The first chapter is taken as the key.

In the second verse of *jīvayātrā*, the author summarises the first chapter of *Kaṭhōpaniṣad*, 1<sup>st</sup> *valli* and 2<sup>nd</sup> *valli*. Two *vallis* are summarized here. The *upaniṣad* starts with a story to introduce the *guru* and *śiṣya*. A great *brahmaṇa* *vājaśravas* is performing a great ritual called *viśvajit yāga*. This ritual can take the *yajamāna* to *svarga*; heaven is the *phalam*. In this *yāga* all possessions are given as *dakṣiṇā*. *Vājaśravas* performs the *yāga* and is giving all his properties as *dakṣiṇā*, and last comes the cows. They are old and they have no strength, looked like they were going to die. Somehow they were surviving. *Vājaśravas* has an intelligent son by name *Naciketas*, who is less than 10 years old. He knows all the *śāstras* reasonably well and he feels that the *dakṣiṇā* is improper. Because, he as the son of *Vājaśravas* can do better than these cows, goes to the father and asks his father – why can't you use me as *dakṣiṇā* to the priest instead of these dilapidated cows? If you have already planned, to whom are you going to give me as *dakṣiṇā*?" Father already busy and fasting because rituals means no eating, gets wild with his son and says, "I am going to give you to *Yama dharma rāja*", like we say "Go to hell". Even though father does not mean it, *Naciketas* takes it seriously because within the *yāga śālā*, you should not speak untruth. That does not mean we can speak untruth outside the *yāga śālā*. In the *yāga śālā* one of the *dakṣiṇā vratams* is *satyam*.

*Naciketas* takes it seriously, packs his things and goes to *yama loka*. When *yamadharma's* house is reached, he finds *Yama* has gone out. So *Naciketas* is forced to wait outside the house for three days, *Yama* comes and feels that a *brahmaṇa* guest had been kept waiting outside and he should be treated like God, and therefore, feeling guilty for keeping him waiting for three days, offers three boons to this boy in compensation. Through the first boon

*Naciketas* asked for his father's peace of mind since the father must be missing him. Through the second boon he asked for a ritual by which one can go to *svarga loka* or *brahmaloka* by combining with *upāsanā*.

As the third boon, he asked *nityānanda* or *ātmavidyā*. Twice he asked. What is that eternal reality? *anytradharmād, anyatra adharmād...* When this boon was asked *Yama dharma rāja* gives a big test for *Naciketas* to find out whether he has the qualification to receive this knowledge. First he tempts *Naciketas* to find out whether he has the qualification to receive this knowledge. First he tempts *Naciketas* by offering various sources of *anitya ānanda*, which we all value. All that the conventional people, lay people, value are offered: you want properties, movable – immovable properties, wealth, vehicles, power, position, and children: all of them, he offers free of cost.

In the language of the *śāstra*, *Yama* offered all forms of *artha and kāma puruṣārthas* for free. 'The biggest prime property in the prime location you can have and along life also. You can become the king of the whole if you want, and if you are not satisfied with all these, whatever else you want you can ask, mind you free of cost, the only condition being, you should not ask for *mokṣa*. We have to imagine what we will do in that position. We would jump at the offer and say – after all *mokṣa* is eternal and so can wait. Not only that, *artha and kāma* are *iha loka*. If you are not satisfied with *iha loka artha kāma*, I will give you *para loka artha kāma* also which is represented by *dharma puruṣārtha dharma* or *puṇya* stands for all the pleasures of *para loka*. In short *Yamadharma rāja* offers all – *dharma, artha and kāma* - all of them with one condition: 'You should not ask for *mokṣa*'. Now this is the ideal occasion to choose between the two – should I choose *anitya ānanda* or should I choose *nitya ānanda*

*Naciketas* passes the exam in flying colours and he says, "Everything is wonderful, you keep them with yourself". Somebody said *Naciketas* rejected all of them because he was his childish mind. Because of his immaturity he might have rejected them. But *Naciketas* clearly says, "I am rejecting them because I see *doṣam* in all of them". "*viveka janya vairāgyam* I have".

What are the *doṣas* in these things Bhartṛhari presents in *vairāgya śatakam*: in all sensory indulgences *bhoga*, there is a fear of ill health; health will go. If I belong to a well known family honoured by the society, then there is a constant stress and fear that family prestige should not be dented. No family member should do anything to tarnish the name of the family. So prestige means pressure. 'Prestige pressure cooker', they say! It will cook those people. Family news should not go out. They have to cover up some of the events.

*Kulam* has to be protected and it is a very big pain and stress. When there is lot of wealth, you have to worry about how to invest it properly, so that tax will not go. You have to calculate constantly. You have to work extra whenever the budget comes. *Vitte nṛipāt bhayam, māne dainya bhayam*. To have name and fame, it looks great, but to protect the fame is the toughest job. It is most fragile and bubbly thing. It can burst at any time. Honour is the most difficult thing; it is very difficult to protect honour. There is the constant fear of losing it. *Bale ripu bhayam*, if I am asking with a powerful army, I have to worry about neighboring kingdom

There is arms race always. You have to spend a lot of money for defence. People are starving but you have to spend so much for the army. Why? Because of the threat from neighbouring countries on all sides. If I am very conscious of my looks and my appearance, then any numbers of beauty parlors are not sufficient. Regularly you have to protect the skin with this and that lotion. Beauty industry is thriving because I want to maintain my body, which is not possible because old age is the greatest threat to my looks and appearance. If I become a great scholar there is always a *naiyāyika*, there is a *viśiṣṭādvaitin*, and there is a *dvaitin*. If we write any book, immediately there is a *pūrvapakṣa* book appears. Constantly there is a worry about other *vidvāns* who will threaten. Therefore they say *sannyāsi* should not get into any *vāda*. So in any *vidvat sadas* only *puṇḍitas* take part. *Vāda* is prohibited for a *sannyāsi*. If I am a person of values, then the person

without values is always an eyesore to me. If I am attached to the body, there is constant fear that *Yama dharma rāja* will take it away.

Therefore what is the conclusion? Other than *mokṣa*, everything in creation is a source of fear only. If you want *abhayam* what you require is *vairāgyam*. *vairāgyam eva abhayam*. *Naciketas* shows that he has *viveka vairāgyam* and an intense desire for this knowledge. *Nachiketas* will not choose anything else. So in the first two sections, we get the qualifications and the difference between *nitya ānanda* and *anitya ānanda*. One more important discrimination is revealed there. Through the second boon *Naciketas* asked for a ritual to reach *svarga, brahma loka etc*, from that it is indicated, *Veda pūrva bhāga* or *karma kāṇḍa* represents *anitya ānanda* and *jñāna mārḡa* asked for through the third boon represents *nitya ānanda*. *sādhyā viveka* and also *sādhana viveka*.

So there is not only *sādhyā viveka* – *nitya* or *anitya*. There is also *sādhana viveka*. Do you want *karma* or do you want *jñānam*? This *Yama* brings out very clearly in the second section in the name of *śreyo mārḡa* and *preyo mārḡa*. *Preyas* represents *karma* giving *anitya ānanda* and *śreyas* represents *jñānam* which leads to *nitya ānanda*. A *viveki* is one who is very clear about his *karma sādhanā* and *anitya ānanda*, *sādhyam*, *jñāna sādhanā* and *anitya ānanda sādhyam*. These ideas, the author packs in this one beautiful *śloka*. He says - *prabhu saṁhita kāṭaka madhyama bhāga valli* - that which appears in *Kaṭhapaniṣad* or *kāṭhaka Upaniṣad*, the first three *vallis* of the first chapter of the *upaniṣad*.

*Veda*, even though is like a master, it has to only command the human beings; it need not tell stories; it need not give examples. But still it comes down out of compassion and acts as though *suhṛt saṁhita* and *kāntā saṁhita* simplifies the teaching. Also by telling a beautiful story like a poet, it encourages, inspires and persuades all the people to come to *mokṣa mārḡa*.

This is the teaching available in all the other *upaniṣads* also. *Kaṭhapaniṣad* is only a sample. He says - *trayyanta sārāṁvitā*- *trayī* means *Vedas*, because it has group of three portions - *ṛg, yajus, sāma*. In this, naming of the *atharvaṇa*

*Veda* is excluded, as *atharvaṇa Veda* is not included in rituals. Only the three *Vedas* play a prominent role. *Ṛg Veda* priest is called *hotṛ*. *yajur Veda* priest is called *adhvaryu* and *sāma Veda* priest is called *udghāta*. They play a direct role in the ritual, he is made a supervisor. If he has to the role of a supervisor, he must know the other three *Vedas* too. Therefore *Brahma* (supervisor) is generally a *caturvedi*. They are very learned people knowing what has to be done and also *prāyaścitam*, if there is any mistake. Therefore *Veda* gets name *trayī*. *trayāntaḥ* means *Vedānta*. *Kaṭhōpaniṣad* has the *sāra* of all the other *Upaniṣads*.

*Kaṭhōpaniṣad* talks of *sādhyam* and *sādhanam* beautifully in the first three sections. What does it do? The third verse presents a beautiful imagery for conveying about spiritual *sādhana*. That imagery will come in the next verse of *jīvayātrā* and this comes in the third *valli* of the first chapter of the *Kaṭhōpaniṣad*. Imagery is *ratha kalpanā* - chariot journey imagery. For those people who are like *Naciketas*, that is, *Naciketas* like students. That means regularly we have to check ourselves – how? Those verses – name fame etc. imagine somebody is giving you free of cost and say you should not attend *Upaniṣad* classes- imagine what will be your answer – if you can answer like *Naciketas* then *Vedānta* can give full benefit. Those are the people who have full conviction about their goal – *mokṣa* and *tīvra mumukṣutvam*.

Generally we have a list of things we want to achieve. Generally it is a long list and it keeps on increasing also. If you can scan the list, *mokṣa* will not be there at all and they are called *mumukṣus* - where *mokṣa* is not there in the list. Already 5273 desires are there and the *mokṣa* is the last. Slowly it will climb the ladder. A day will come when it will be on the top of the list. The first one that I want will be *mokṣa*. When *mokṣa* has reached the top, it will start eating up other desires. Like a cannibal eating other member of the same species, it eats up all other desires and fattens itself. Then in the list, there is only one viz. *mokṣa* When that is the condition of mind, that person is called *tīvra mumukṣu* or *uttama mumukṣu*.

So one has to graduate from a *mumukṣu* to *mandha-mumukṣu*; then from *mandha-mumukṣu* to *madhyama-mumukṣu* and from *madhyama-mumukṣu* to *uttama –mumukṣu* and from *uttama –mumukṣu* to *muktaḥ*. He gains *viṣṇoḥ paramaṁ padam*.

In *Kaṭhōpaniṣad nityānandaḥ* is called *mokṣaḥ* or otherwise *viṣṇoḥ paramaṁ padam – viṣṇu svarūpam*. *viṣṇu* means *ātmā* and not the personal God. *Viṣṇu* here represents *pañcakoṣātīta ātmā*. *viṣṇu* is called *nityānanda*.

The logic here is *nityānanda* cannot be any form of experience. Any experience has to be *anityam* only. The most mystical experience happens in *samādhi* and is not there afterwards. When *samādhi* ends, he has to build up *samādhi* experience. So it is *anitya*. *Nityānanda* must be something other than the experiences in the world. Is there anything that is other than the world and its experiences? There can be only one thing. That conscious principle is aware of both the experience as well as the object. That *sākṣi caitanyam* alone has to be different from *anitya anubhava* and *anitya viṣaya*. That *sākṣi* is called *nityānanda*. Then how do we reach that *sākṣi*? It is not through the external journey. Through the internal journey called *pañcakoṣa viveka*, we have to arrive at the *nityānanda* as the *sākṣi svarūpam*. That is hinted by the author in the expression *viṣṇoḥ paramaṁ padam*.

Since we do not have the sufficient sources of knowledge to know the real goal of life and the means of attaining that goal, we have to necessarily take the support of *śāstra pramāṇam* given for or sake by the Lord Himself. And as an example the author talked about the *Kaṭhōpaniṣad* teaching, which occurs in the first three *vallis*, in which *Naciketas* serves as a model for us. If we follow *Naciketas* model we also become qualified seekers endowed with four-fold qualification.

The first one is discrimination between what is *nitya ānandaḥ* and what is *anitya ānandaḥ*, which is called *nitya anitya vastu vivekaḥ*.

The second one is *vairāgyam* – that is dispassion with regard to *anityānandaḥ*. That is deciding not to rely on *anityānandaḥ*. This decision to turn away from *anityānandaḥ* is called *vairāgyam*.

The third one is the decision to turn towards *nityānandaḥ*. It is a shift in priority. This turning towards *nityānandaḥ* is called *mumukṣutvam* or desire for *mokṣa*.

The fourth one is self-discipline to make us fit for the spiritual pursuit. It is making us worthy of spiritual pursuit. Of these we have seen the first three. The discipline will be mentioned in the next *śloka*. Those who have discrimination, dispassion and desire *mokṣa* are called *manīśavantaḥ*. *Manīshvantaḥ* means one who has got clear knowledge about what he wants. This clarity is extremely important.

First I should know *nityānandaḥ* is possible only by pursuing *mokṣa* there should be clarity. Secondly, there should be clarity that *mokṣa* is possible only through *jñānam*. Thirdly, there must be clarity that *jñānam* is possible only through *śāstra vicāra* under a guru. *mokṣa dvārā nityānandaḥ, jñāna dvārā mokṣaḥ, śāstra dvārā jñānam*. So *śāstra dvārā jñānam, jñāna dvārā mokṣaḥ, mokṣa dvārā nityānandaḥ!* *dvārā* means 'by means of'. In each one we have to add 'only'. These three fundamental principles must be clear and those who have the clarity are called *manīśāvantaḥ*. Therefore, they are interested in *tadviṣṇoḥ paramam padam gantum*.

There are three possible meanings for the word *viṣṇuḥ*. Here *viṣṇuḥ* is clearly defined as a finite deity in the verse like *meghaśyāmam.....nātham*. It is *ekarūpa Īśvaraḥ*.

In another verse *bhūḥpādauyasya....viṣṇuḥ* has abody of all the three *lokās*. It is *Viśvarūpa Īśvaraḥ; virāṭ Īśvaraḥ* as is in the 11<sup>th</sup> chapter of the *Gītā*.

As against this, in the third *valli* of *Kaṭhōpaniṣad*, *viṣṇuḥ* is *arūpa ātmā*. *viṣṇuḥ* is *nirguṇa ātmā nityānanda*, which is superior nature of *viṣṇuḥ*. The intelligent seekers seek that *padam*. Not only are they clear about *sādhyam*, they are

clear about the *mārgam*. Those who go in the right path are in *śreyo mārgaḥ*, which is *jñāna mārgaḥ*. What about *karma mārgaḥ*? It is *asanmārgaḥ*, it is *preyo mārgaḥ*. *jñāna mārgaḥ* and *karma mārgaḥ* are diagonally opposite. Intelligent people shun *karma mārga* and choose the *jñāna mārga*. Therefore only those seekers are called *satām* – fit people. The *Kaṭhopeniṣad* is giving the *ratha kalpanā*. In the next verse chariot imagery is given:

### Verse 3

आत्मानं रथिनं ब्रवीति निगमो बुद्धिं च तत्सारथिम्  
 देहं स्यन्दनमिन्द्रियाणि तुरगान् शब्दादि तद्गोचरान् ।  
 चेतः प्रग्रहमादरेण य इमान् वश्याम्स्तनोत्यात्मवान्  
 तस्यैवाप्यमिदं पदं सुखघनं पारं परं ह्यद्वनः ॥३॥

*ātmānaṁ rathinaṁ bravīti nigamo buddhiṁ ca tatsārathim  
 dehaṁ syandanamindriyāṇi turagān śabdādi tadgocarān |  
 cetaḥ pragrahamādareṇa ya imān vaśyāṁstanotyātmaṁvān  
 tasyaiṁvāpyamidaṁ padaṁ sukhaghanam pāraṁ paraṁ hyadhvanaḥ ||.3*

Here the chariot imagery is given in which the *jīva* is taken as a traveler and hence the title *jīvayātrā*. For this *jīva*, the traveler, to make the spiritual *yātrā* the journey, *bhagavān* himself has provided a very important vehicle. Vehicle with components is described in the third *valli* of *Kaṭhopeniṣad*.

Sri Jnānānanda Bhārati says – *ātmānam bravīti nigamaḥ, vedāḥ*. He refers to the third *valli* of the 1<sup>st</sup> chapter. *Kaṭhopeniṣad* compares the *jīvātmā* as the *rathinam*, meaning *rathasvāminam*, the master of the chariot, the owner, who travels with the help of the chariot. What is the *jīvātmā*? *Jīvātmā* is a technical word which we have to understand.

*Kaṭhopeniṣad* itself has introduced this in the beginning of the *valli*. I have to briefly define *jīvātmā* which is a technical word. According to *śāstra* – my real nature is called *ātmā*; the real self is nothing but pre *caitanya svarūpam* conscious principle. I am a non-material spiritual entity. I am amidst matter but I am not matter, a material principle. I am the consciousness principle known as *ātmā*. What is the nature of consciousness? Here we have to

remember that Consciousness is not a part or product or property of body or matter. Consciousness is an independent entity, which pervades and enlivens the inert material body. Consciousness is not limited by the boundaries of the body or material container and therefore, it is all pervading and formless. It is *sarvagataḥ* and therefore *nirākāraḥ*. Consciousness continues to exist and survive even after the disintegration of the material body. The surviving Consciousness is not recognizable, not because it is non-existent but because the medium of body is not available. It is existent but not manifest because of the absence of the manifesting medium.

Light is there all over the hall. It is there even 2 inches second above the desk. But you don't perceive the light above the desk because light is not absent but there is no medium to manifest the light. Suppose I keep the flower 2 inches above the desk, the light is recognizable. When the flower is removed, is the light removed? The light is present but not perceptible. So non-manifestation is not non-existence; *avyaktam abhāvah na bhavati*. If somebody asks you where are you? You should be saying I am everywhere. Even though I, the original *ātmā*, am all pervading, I don't manifest everywhere. Because the medium is not there everywhere but wherever the medium is there, I, the unmanifest consciousness is available in the material medium as manifest consciousness, which is recognizable in every part of the body.

If you have any doubt, pinch yourself. The sentiency recognizes the stimuli. The unmanifest consciousness is all pervading; the manifest consciousness is not all pervading. The manifest consciousness is available only where the manifesting medium is available. Therefore, in the body-mind-sense complex matter medium, I, the pervading *ātmā*, am available as manifest one. The manifest *caitanya* is called *cidābhāsaḥ* or *citpratibimbaḥ*, and this is called *jīvātmā*. I, as the *jīvātmā*, am localized in the body. I, as the original *ātmā*, am not localized. I am everywhere. Where am I residing now? *Jīvātmā* has a residence. What is the residence?

The individual medium becomes the abode of the *jīvātmā*. This *jīva ātmā* is the *rathasvāmi* residing in the *ratham*, the vehicle called the body. Can the *jīvātmā* travel or not? The answer is - the *jīvātmā* can move because when the medium or the body moves from place to place, the *cidābhāsaḥ* moves. As even the medium moves *jīvātmā* can have *yātrā*. *jīva yātrā* is possible. This *yātrā* is done with the help of a vehicle. Once a vehicle is there, you require a driver. You require the body for the vehicle; you require wheels, or in the case of a chariot, horses are required. They are all given here.

*Jīvātmā* is the traveler seated on the backseat and driven by a driver, who knows the destination and the route to reach the destination. Similarly the *jīva* also requires a driver, who knows both the destination and the route. Who is that? It is intellect which should not get confused with regard to the road map? The driver is employed by the *ratha svāmi jīvātmā cidābhāsa*. He says, *nigamaḥ buddhiṃ tat sārathiṃ bravīti*. What is the chariot, which holds, carries the master and moves? *Veda* picturises the physical body as the chariot; wherever the chariot moves, the *svāmi* also moves. Similarly wherever the body moves, the *cidābhāsa jīva* also moves. The body chariot takes me to places wherever required. Therefore *Veda* says the body is the chariot: *deham –sthūla śarīram, nigamaḥ deham syandanaḥ bravīti*.

It requires horses. The chariot cannot move without the horses dragging the chariot. Similarly the horses drag the physical body. And what are the horses? They are sense organs. When do I go to the dining hall? When the tongue wants to consume food, it drags me to the dining hall. When my ears want to hear the class, they drag me to the lecture hall. The eyes drag you to the temple. Sense organs drag the chariot. Therefore they are comparable to the horses.

For the horses to move you require the roads. Similarly the sense organs also require a field in which alone it can move. What are these roads or fields? *śabda prapañca* is the road, the field through which the *śrotrendriyam* moves. The world of touch is the road through which the organ of skin moves. Thus we have got five *indriyāṇi* and we have got five roads *śabda*,

*sparsā, rūpa, rasa and gandhāḥ*. And each sense organ can move only through that particular road. Just as a train can move only through a pair of rails, a car can move only through the road. The charioteer, the driver must control the sense organs, the horses. Otherwise they will move anywhere they like and for controlling, he requires an instrument or medium for controlling. In the case of the chariot the reins are used as the instrument of control. What are the reins for us? What controls the sense organs? Now when you are sitting in this hall all the sense organs are open. Your eyes are open. Whatever colors and forms are there in this area are all gate crashing through your eyes. Your ears are open; therefore there are varieties of sounds. All the noise is falling within the range of your ears. Similarly if there is any smell around all of them can enter. Now who decides which sensory stimuli should be attended to? What selects the sensory stimuli? In any gadget in which there are several machines, be it two in one or three in one, there will be a knob called selector. You have to turn the appropriate knob to use the radio or audio CD, video CD or mp3, CD or tape. In your personality, what is the selector knob?

*Upaniṣad* says – the mind has to be the selector knob. The intellect has to operate the mind selector knob. Then, there will be the decision whether you should hear the speech. Suppose a student comes late and enters through the front door, for one moment, if the mind decides to register the arrival of that person, the selector knob has gone to the late comer student for that one minute and my speech is blanked out. It is not registered. When you are concentrating on my talk, even though there are varieties of perceptible things behind me, your eyes do not register. There is *sāmanya jñānam*. Your eyes do not register because the mind has decided to hear the words. That is why when ever you are concentrating on some sound, the eyes are not registering any perception; there is a special look in the eye. We have a word for that in English – ‘blank look’. For some people eternally it appears like that. Blank look means what? The mind selector has decided not to use the eye to register. Thus the mind has the power.

I had an experience of an old Telugu lady attending my classes long before, in Chennai. She does not know English. But she comes and sits because some lecture is going on and it is very nice to sit there and there will be *punya*. She was more regular than the other students. One day at the end of the class she gave me a safety pin. Throughout the class I was adjusting the *aṅgavastram*. No one else noticed because they were interested in hearing and did not notice what my hands were doing. The selector knob is tuned to *śabdha prapañca*.

The perception remaining the same, the mind selects the field – *cetah pragrahaṇam*. In *Pañcadaśī Vidyāraṇya* uses the word *manodaśendriya adhyakṣaḥ*. *Mano adhyakṣaḥ* means the presiding principle, the selector, the director. It is like the traffic policeman who directs which traffic should flow at a particular time. Mind can be taken as the traffic police also. Otherwise there will be traffic jam in the mind. If all *śabdha sparśa rūpa rasa gandha* gatecrash at the same time we may go crazy. Therefore mind is the reins.

All these put together is the vehicle. They are not many vehicles, but one vehicle with all components. Once we have understood that this is the vehicle with which we have to make the journey, whether it is spiritual journey or material journey, the first thing we should notice is that the vehicle must be fit for travel. Never take a vehicle for any long journey and dangerous journey without seeing its fitness. Make sure that the whole vehicle is a fit one. That means what? Body should be fit; mind should be fit and the intellect should be fit. That means all of them must be in a healthy condition. That is called *śamādi ṣaṭka sampattiḥ*. In *Tattvabodha* we talk of this. It means fitness of all components of our personality. All layers of our personality must be fit. Therefore first concentrate on the fitness; thereafter you can start the journey. Don't start the journey in a hurry. Take your own time and make your personality fit.

That is said now in the third line – *yaḥ ātmavān – ātmavān* means thoughtful person who knows the importance of the instrument in any operation. A doctor knows the importance of the surgical instruments. He cannot be

careless. The doctor has to give utmost care to every micro instrument in microsurgery. That careful person is called *ātmavān*. A careful, thoughtful, mindful, deliberate person is called *ātmavān*. Śankaracharya translates it as *apramattaḥ traiguṇya viśayo vedāḥ*. What does a thoughtful person do first? He makes all of the fit. Instruments must not only be fit, they must be obedient to me. Fitness alone is not enough. They all must come under my control. They must be *karaṇam* and I must be *karta*. They should not become *karta* and I should not become their *karaṇam*. Who is master and who is not the master must be very clear. In several houses the maid or assistant comes and after some time, there is some confusion as to who is the mistress of the house. She takes over. Or he takes over. That should not happen.

This means spirituality requires physical health, emotional health, mental health and intellectual health. Without this threefold health or without this threefold fitness spiritual pursuit will become a fiasco, a failure. The author here does not say how to make them fit. He only says you should make them fit. It is mentioned in some other part of the scriptures.

In the second verse the author pointed out that if a person makes use of the Vedic guidance, he could very soon discover the real goal of life as *nityānandaḥ* or *mokṣaḥ* and acquire the required qualifications that we can know easily know by taking the example of *Naciketas*. Such a qualified student is *sādhana catuṣṭaya sampannaḥ*. He will not only know *mokṣa* as the destination and he will also know that *jñānam* is the only means to attain this goal. Therefore he is clear about the *sādhana* and *sādhyā*. The *jīva yātrā* has to begin and this *jīva* has to travel towards the goal *mokṣa* or *nityānanda*. For this spiritual journey called *jīva yātrā*, this *jīva* has been provided with the vehicle, which consists of five components.

1. *Rathi*, the *swāmi*, the traveler, the *jīvaḥ*.
2. *buddhi* the intellect.
3. Mind, the reins with which he has to direct the journey.
4. Sense organs comparable to horses, which will carry or the draw the chariot

## 5. Physical body is the body of the chariot.

Of them the third one is the *yātrā karta*, the traveler. The instruments happen to be four. This travel has to be conducted on the roads. The road is *śabdādi pañca vidha viṣaya prapañca*.

This is not part of *jīva*. We are not including them as components of an individual because the roads are outside. Having said this much based on the third *valli* of *Kāthopaniṣad*, the author says that any instrument can serve the purpose only under certain conditions. First of all they must be fit and healthy. Fitness of instrument is a must. Second the instrument must be obedient .i.e. it must be under my control. It is not only this. When there are a group of instruments, each one should function in coordination with others. Teamwork is essential. Wherever more members are required, the teamwork is important. If the team work is lacking, even if each member is great, that team cannot succeed.

Cricket lovers would have followed that there was a cricket match between the World team and Australia team. For the World team they had selected the best one from different countries. Each one is a giant but still they could not defeat Australia, as they worked as team. Here each one was great but as a team was weaker. Coordination is very important. Like an orchestra there must be integration. Therefore the body, mind, sense organs and the intellect must function as a team which the *Upaniṣad* calls *uktatvam* which means all the components are well organized as team. That is why we have the word organization. Every member functions as an organ. The different organs of the body work together in a concerted manner. The moment I eat something the digestion should start working. The various organs put together become one individual unit entity. Similarly one organization becomes one member. Suppose there will be nothing to digest. When I am not eating the digestion works when there will be nothing to digest. Suppose after a heavy *bhikṣā* the digestion does not work. Similarly the components should work like an organization.

This is said in *Kāthopaniṣad*. We have a few beautiful mantras in the third *valli*. Those mantras the author is condensing in one line. He says that person who is thoughtful, has a clear understanding that all his organs must be an integrated unit. That is why in English, the word 'disintegration' has two meanings: lack of integration and disintegration. Wherever integration is lacking, whether I is an organization or an individual or a nation, disintegration leads to destruction. Whoever has this knowledge is called *ātmaavān*, a thoughtful, careful person. Therefore what will he do? He will work hard to integrate the personality. Therefore he says *viṣayān tanoti*. He brings them under control. He makes them all function together like an orchestra. Imagine there is an orchestra with several instruments. Even if all the people play in chorus, one person is enough to destroy the whole thing. Even in *guru stotram* chanting, if there is one squeaky voice, you feel like running because that person is stone deaf as far as *śruti* is concerned. All *śruti* is *advaitam* for him. No *bheda darśanam*. Thus one organ destroys the individual. The author says that one should only organize them, integrate them but does not say how to do that. It is discussed elsewhere in *śāstra*.

The entire *aṣṭāṅga yoga* of *Patañjali* is one of the best systems to integrate the personality. But the eight *aṅgas* if you study, it deals with the different layers of the personality. *āsanās* take care of the *annamaya koṣa*. *Prāṇāyāma* takes care of the *prāṇamaya koṣa*. *Pratyahāra* takes care of the sense organs. *dhāraṇa*, *dhyāna* take care of the mind. Therefore *aṣṭāṅga yoga* is a very beautiful system designed for this purpose. That is why *Vedānta* accepts and accommodates the system of *aṣṭāṅga yoga*. Their philosophy we don't accept because they talk of several *ātmās*. There is only one *ātmā*. Why quarrel? Not only that, they prescribe *jñānam* through *samādhi*. That also we don't accept. *Samādhi* is not a means of knowledge. We differ from them and say- *jñānam* has to take place, *śāstra vākya eva jñānam* that is our contention. *Yoga śāstra* is useful as a preparation for *Vedānta śravaṇa*, *manana* and *nididhyāsana*. Not only in *yoga śāstra*, in *Vedānta* works also we have hints to develop this integration.

Kṛṣṇa talks of that in the Gītā when he says in the sixth chapter an unintegrated personality cannot succeed. Kṛṣṇa gives certain clues from the health of the individual. A few instances- one is physical health and another is mental health and another is intellectual health. Regarding physical health four things we have to take care of to be physically healthy. Because Kṛṣṇa mentions that we should note that it is important. This is also important because in *Vedānta* we often denounce *deha ātma buddhi* – don't identify with the body. Body is mortal, body is perishable and body is impure. Often we criticize the body. From that a person may think, body is *anātmā* we should not identify with the body and we should ignore the health. *Vedānta* says take care of the body as a means and don't get attached to it as an end in itself. Body is *sādhanam*. That is why all the *sānti pāṭhaḥ* includes prayer for health.

If class is increased from 1 hour to 1.5 hours, then so many complaints come. Body does not cooperate, mind does not cooperate, and sleep doesn't cooperate by not coming. Therefore all the Vedic prayers include prayer for health. *Vedānta* clearly warns, without basic health you cannot accomplish anything. So take care of health. Kṛṣṇa gives four methods put together in the 6<sup>th</sup> chapter, *yukta āhāra vihārasya* – four factors you observe. Proper diet is very important, not junk food, healthy diet. Proper exercise and movement of the body must be there. We have forgotten that. There should be a healthy occupation in life. Unless there is some healthy occupation whether money is required or not is not important. I should be engaged in something that is rewarding, which is contributory to others and which gives me also a self satisfaction, fulfillment. I should have an occupation that I love. Incidentally if it gives me money that I need, let the money be a by-product. The basic physical, mental, and intellectual health requires healthy occupation even for a *swāmi*. Generally the swamis ignore the exercise part and we end up as *guru* which word has two meanings. In Sanskrit *guru* means a Teacher and *guru* means overweight as *bhikṣā* keeps on entering. There is only input and no output. The extra food goes waste or to the waist. There is obesity and over weight. The fourth one is right, required amount of sleep. These for

will have to be observed for a healthy body. This is regarding physical health.

Next is emotional health. Kṛṣṇa gives a clue in 33<sup>rd</sup> and 34<sup>th</sup> verse of the second chapter. Sri Śaṅkarācārya in his *bhāṣyam*, writes regarding emotional health. He says every individual is a product of *prakṛti* and *prakṛti* has three *guṇas*. Every individual is a product of three *guṇas*. Every individual so has got three *guṇas*. The proportion varies from individual to individual. This proportion is caused by umpteen factors including our *pūrvā janma*, our upbringing, our culture, our family and our education. So many factors contribute to our *guṇa* composition. This *guṇa* composition alone expresses our *svabhāva*. From *prakṛti* we have to come to *guṇa* composition and from there we have to come to our own individual *svabhāva*. This individual *svabhāva* expresses in the form of our tastes, our inclinations or our preferences. If there is a buffet lunch or dinner, and there is chappati, idly and all varieties of food exist and suppose there is a Punjabi *jñāni*, Sardarji *jñāni*, there is a South Indian *jñāni* and West Indian *jñāni*, even though all of them are *jñāni* and all of them claim 'I am *nirguṇa brahma*', but as an individual with body-mind-sense complex, you will find that one will rush towards idly sambar, another will go to *parāṭha*, another will go for dokhla. Therefore *svabhāva* expresses in the form of tastes or inclinations or propensities, which alone is called *rāga dveṣa*. Even if somebody offers *parāṭha* to a South Indian *jñāni*, even though he does not hate it, he will say, "I don't want" with due respect. *Rāga dveṣa* is inevitable. It is an important lesson to note with regard to emotional health. We all have *rāga dveṣa*. They are definitely there. Once we have *rāga dveṣa*, every experience that we encounter our *rāga dveṣa* imbued mind is going to judge those encounters. It is going to pass its verdict, "It is not good", "it is bad", "terrible". This mental verdict based on *rāga dveṣa* will be passed with regard to every encounter. This mental verdict is alone in the form of emotions. All emotions are nothing but mental verdicts with regard to every encounter based on the *rāga dveṣa* scale. When there is a music programme, even if *jñānis* or *sannyāsis* are attending, you ask for their verdict, one will say 'Excellent', another will say, 'so so', and another will say, 'I was not there',

because there is a *rāga dveṣa* scale. *Rāga dveṣa* based emotions will definitely have influence on every mind including *jñāni*'s mind. Therefore Kṛṣṇa said – *ceṣṭate svasyāḥ prakṛteḥ jñānavānapi*.

Then Śaṅkarācārya in his *bhāṣyam* raises a question, “What is the role of our free will?” He answers that this generation of emotions will happen according to *prakṛti*. Freewill cannot do anything. In fact, even before the freewill is aware of that these verdict based emotions have arisen in the mind. Certain dishes you put in the mouth. Whether you want to tell or not the facial expression will show even if you don't want to express. That is what is called body language. Therefore we need not feel bad if different types of emotions arise in our mind when we encounter people, situations or objects. That is most natural. This rise of emotions is based on the mental verdict, which is based on *rāga dveṣa*, which is based on *svabhāva* which is based on *prakṛti*. What is the role of freewill? Śaṅkarācārya says, the rise of emotions is not under our control, because it is *svabhāva* based. Whether the emotions should continue in the mind, whether I should perpetuate those emotions, nourish those emotions; build up those emotions and be completely overwhelmed by that emotion is in my hand. The rise of emotion is not in my hand because it depends upon umpteen factors over many of which I don't have any control as *Swāmiji* says certain childhood problems may be there in the core personality of them which is very difficult. That is why sometimes the conduct of certain *jñānis* also, other people may wonder why such a behaviour takes place. Some of them may be controllable. Some of them may not be controllable. The rise of emotions we cannot control but the continuity of the emotions Śaṅkarācārya says, ‘it is dependent on my *puruṣārtha*’. Therefore I can scan the emotions as they arise and then I can decide whether this is a healthy emotion which deserves continuity or not and every emotion is weak when it is arising, like a ripple arising on a lake. Ripple is powerless but when the wind keeps on blowing, it becomes a huge wave, tsunami wave and no body can stop it. Whether ripple should become a Tsunami is in the hands of *puruṣākāra*. Śaṅkarācārya says, with the help of *śāstra* what ever is unhealthy emotion, you decide to not cooperate with them. Start non-cooperation movement of

Gandhiji because every emotion is a thought. I don't say every thought is an emotion. Every emotion is a thought and a thought can survive, a thought can grow only if I support. Therefore use one method or the other. Śaṅkarācārya uses the word *pratipakṣabhāvena* – by countering, by neutralizing, distracting and one method or the other which requires my conviction. Others cannot help. Nobody can help if you have decided to nourish that emotion. Because whether the emotion should be nourished or not, only you can decide. No *swāmi* can decide. No *bhagavān* can decide. It is purely 200% in our hands. Others can support if I have decided to take care of that. For this conviction, I should know that these emotions if they are perpetuated, they are harmful to me. I should be convinced. 1. It does not help in changing the set up. 2. It doesn't help changing me also. "It is not good for me", I should be convinced. Above all most importantly, they can affect the performance of my intellect. This is the most important thing we have to note, because intellect is the *sārathi*. Intellect has to judge the situation. Intellect has to intelligently act. If I am overwhelmed by the emotions, if the subjectivity colors vision, there will be false judgement, false action and I am going to suffer. So the immunity of the intellect is possible only when I don't allow the emotions to grow too much. The problem is, once the emotion has been well nourished and it has become too powerful, like panic attack, a rage etc. we cannot do anything, and then the intellect will begin to justify. Because if you cannot fight the enemy, join the enemy. Once the intellect has learnt to justify then nobody can do anything except prayer.

*Vanāni dahato vanheḥ, sakhā bhavati mārutaḥ |  
sa eva dīpa nāsāya, kuruṣe kasyāsti sauhṛdam ||*

When the fire is in the form of a flame it is feeble. Then the wind can easily put it out. But suppose the flame has become a huge conflagration in a forest fire then the wind cannot put it out. Then do you know what the wind does? Now that it cannot fight with the fire, it will join the fire. Any emotion in the feeble state the intellect can handle. A stitch in time saves nine. If I have allowed this, thereafter I will be overwhelmed.

*Jāta mātram na yāśśatruṃ vyādhiṃ vā praśamaṃ nayet.  
Atipuṣṭāṅgayukto'api sa paścāt hā tena hanyate.*

A *vyādhi* or *śatru* - a disease or an enemy, *jātamātram*- the moment a disease or enemy is born *praśamaṃ nayet* – better handle. Otherwise what? *atipuṣṭāṅga yukto'api* – even if a person is very, very healthy, *paścāt tena hanyate* – if the disease is not handled I the beginning *paścāt* – the unhandled, nourished disease or nourished enemy will kill that person, *hā* – that careless person *tena hanyate* – is destroyed by that. This is applicable to every unhealthy emotion. What is Kṛṣṇa's solution for emotional problems? Never feel guilty if unhealthy emotions or unhealthy thoughts arise. Need not feel guilty, because that is because of *svabhāva*. What is important is whether I should support the emotions or thought I can decide. If I allow that to continue it is my mistake. Kṛṣṇa says, *tayoḥ vaśam na āgachet* – don't be overwhelmed by emotions. *tau hi asaya paripanthinau*. This is for emotional health.

We have seen two: physical health and emotional health. Then what is the next one? Intellectual health: For that a clue is given – *airime gurubhiḥ pūrvam pada vākya pramāṇataḥ vyākātā sarva vedāntāḥ tannityam praṇato'smyaham*. In his *Taittirīya bhāṣyam* introduction writes this *dhyāna śloka* a beautiful *śloka* – what is the intellectual qualification required for everyone in general and a *Vedānta* student in particular. One skill a healthy intellect should develop is learning skill. The skill of using varieties of sources of knowledge. We can gather knowledge with the help of several instruments or means. Developing the capacity to use these different means and learn is called learning skill. In our *śāstra* we talk about six *pramāṇas* – *pratyakṣa*, *anumāna*, *arthāpatti*, *upamāna*, *anupalabdhi* and *śabdha pramāṇa*. – *pramāṇa vicāra* – learning about the *pramāṇa* and how they function. What are the fallacies, wrong operation of *pramāṇa*? How it will lead to wrong knowledge? This is called *pramāṇa vicāra* learning skill. In our tradition before studying any subject matter, *pramāṇa vicāra* is the first one. Then *prameya vicāra* is the subject matter and then *prayojana vicāra*. These are

the three *vicāras*. The *śāstram* is called *pramāṇa śāstram*. Generally they study the *tarka śāstra* to develop the skill. *Pada vākya pramāṇataḥ pramāṇam*.

Then the second one is communication skill or language skill because the exchange of knowledge and nourishment of knowledge is often done through dialogue, teaching discussion and communication. Therefore language skill is extremely important. Communication skill is extremely important. Language includes grammar also which is generally a headache for people. But what to do? Language means Grammar and Grammar also. Because it is said:

*ācāryāt pādām ādatte pādām śiṣyassvamedhayā |*  
*pādām sabrahmacāribhyaḥ pādām kāla krameṇa ca ||*

When you learn from a teacher, you get only 25% of the class it seems. This is very, very disappointing, but this is what it says - *ācāryāt pādām ādatte*, that is why you have to continue *śravaṇam* for years because 25, 26, 27 and when are we reaching 100? *Pādām śiṣyassvamedhayā* - the next quarter the *śiṣya* has to gather by his own independent thinking. Passive listening is not enough active participation is required, participatory listening. *pādām sabrahmacāribhyaḥ* - by exchange or discussion with other students. Interestingly we will discover often, the student will say the teacher made the statement and we will find that we never heard that. At least now we can play the cassette and see if this true or not. But certain statements, there will be black out. In the tape recorder, head cleaning they say. Not only tape recorder in the head also requires regular cleaning!

Discussion or dialogue means what? Language is involved because knowledge is an intangible entity. The only carrier of knowledge is words. My thoughts, I have to carry to you only by means of words. I convert my knowledge into words and you have to convert not your knowledge into words but my words into knowledge. If both conversions have been done properly then my knowledge and your knowledge would tally. Otherwise I would have talked of *Gaṇapati* and you will end up in *Āñjaneya*. That is

called communication gap. Only means of transference of knowledge is language.

In fact we are able to understand Śaṅkarācārya's thinking after 1200 years minimum because of the language and words. Last quarter is understood only in course of time. They say, after cooking the dish must be in the vessel for some time and then it gathers a taste. Somebody said this and it seems to be nice. Last quarter – *kāla krameṇa* – means teaching. We learn a lot when we try to share or communicate. Because when you start communicating, in the middle of the class, suddenly we get a doubt, which we never got when we were listening. You have to clarify. Then alone you can communicate comfortably. The second component of intellectual health is communication skill. Thought and words are interconnected. Therefore clarity of thought will improve clarity of words. And clarity of words will improve the clarity of thought. So they are complimentary. Therefore both skills are intellectual health.

Learning skill is called *pramāṇa śāstram*. Communication skill is called *vyākaraṇa śāstram* or *śabda śāstram* or *pada śāstram*. In *śabda mañjari* book, in the beginning it is given, suppose a person wants to teach or talk in public, he has got all qualifications except communication skill. He doesn't have clarity with regard to words and he tries to communicate. His attempt to communicate can be compared to what? Suppose this person has got a small filament like string taken from a flower. The flower has got a filament and out of that filament he has made string and with that string he goes to Anaikatty to the wild elephant. It is like that to talk in public without communication skill.

The third and most important skill is interpretative skill. It is very important. Even in day to day interaction if I don't know how to take the words of others, we can always attach a wrong motive. In fact many of the problems in the family is because of attaching wrong motives because of wrong interpretation. In institutions the problems happen, in families it happens. Everywhere when you cross check with the other person, he says I

never meant that but they think I thought and therefore they are spreading that. There would be utter confusion. Each one you independently listen, there seems to be no problem. So interpretation can create problem. A spiritual student has to learn from the *śāstram*. Therefore *śāstric* interpretation becomes extremely important and that is called *mīmāṃsa śāstram* or *pūjita vicāraḥ* or reverential enquiry into the *śāstra*, which is called *vākya vicāra*. So there are *pada śāstram*, *vākya śāstram* and *pramāṇa śāstram*. *pada śāstram* stands for communication skill, *vākya śāstram* stands for interpretation and *pramāṇa śāstram* for learning or thinking skills.. All these three are required for a healthy intellect and if all these three are there, then we are ready for *śāstra vicāra*.

After summarizing the first two *vallis* of *Kaṭhōpaniṣad* in the second verse, now in the 3<sup>rd</sup> verse, the author is summarizing the essence of the third *valli* of *Kaṭhōpaniṣad* in which the spiritual journey in the form of self-knowledge is presented. The *jīva* is said to be the traveler and the pursuit of knowledge is taken as a form of travel, and for this knowledge travel, we have got four-fold instruments: body, sense organs, mind and intellect. The traveler is the *cidābhāsa jīvātmā*. Thereafter, the *Upaniṣad* said, since these components part of the instruments; one should make sure that all these components are healthy, all of them are under our control and all of them function in coordination. Health is important and their obedience, *vaśyata*, is important. Their coordinated functioning is important. The author mentions the second one that they all must be in the *karta's* control.

Therefore he said – *yaḥ imān vaśyan tanoti* – and talked about the health of each one of them: physical health, emotional health and intellectual health. Thereafter, the next one is keeping them under our control. All forms of *tapas* that we have are meant for mastering or own organs. Any form of *tapas* is willful self-denial to establish one's mastery over one's own organs. *Upavāsam* is to control one's eating tongue; *maunam* is to control over our habits like bodily comforts etc. so any *tapas* is willful self-denial to make sure that they obey one's command. This is for *vaśyata*.

For coordination, we have varieties of practices like *aṣṭāṅga yoga*. We have varieties of rituals. That is also meant for coordination. When I do *pūja*, the body is involved in the *pūja*, the mouth is chanting and the mind is supposed to focus on the working hands. In *Bharatanāṭyam* they say, *yātrā hastaḥ tatra cakṣuḥ tatra manaḥ*. Wherever the dancer's hands go, the eyes should go there. These are all for coordination only.

Thus by various *sādhanas*, whoever acquires health, control and coordination, *tasya eva*, only for that master, *idam adhvānaḥ param pāram padam āpyam* – the ultimate goal of *mokṣaḥ* is attainable, accessible or possible. The ultimate goal or final destination is possible only for the seeker of self-control. What is that goal? *Nityānanda sukhaḥ* – the happiness that is unmixed with sorrow. He alone can attain pure, homogenous and uncontaminated *ānanda*. The author uses *Kāthopanīṣad* verse to remind us, which mentions *adhvānaḥ param* and *tad viṣṇoḥ paramaṁ padam*. All these are to indicate that this is borrowed from the *Vedas*.

#### Verse 4

प्राप्यं तत् परं सुखं हि मुनयो मोक्षं समाचक्षते  
जीवेशानजगद्विशेषरहितं ज्ञानैकसाध्यं ध्रुवम् ॥  
येनात्मन्यतिरोहितः स्वमहिमानन्दात्मको भासते  
मिथ्याध्यासमितश्च येन गलति ज्ञानं तदेवामलम् ॥४॥

*prāpyaṁ tat paraṁ sukhaṁ hi munayo mokṣaṁ samācakṣate  
jīveśānajaḡadvīṣeṣarahitaṁ jñānaikasādhyāṁ dhruvam |  
yenātmanyatirohitaḥ svamahimānandātmako bhāsate  
mithyādhyāsamitaśca yena galati jñānaṁ tadevāmalam ||.4*

In the previous two verses the necessity of *jīva yātrā* has been talked about. Here in this verse, the author says, what exactly the nature of *jīva yātrā* is. Normally any *yātrā* or any journey is a physical travel from one place to another which is physically away. A physical distance between two points is covered by a physical journey. From your room, you travel and reach the lecture hall. From Chennai you travel and reach the Anaikatty Āśram. Even

after death, the *jīvātmā* is supposed to travel by *Kṛṣṇa gatiḥ* and reach *svarga loka* and by *śukla gatiḥ* reach *brahma loka* and by *adho gatiḥ*, he is supposed to reach *naraka loka*. In all these instances *jīva yātrā* is a physical journey where in there is a physical movement covering a physical distance.

Here in *Vedānta* also, in the case of *mokṣa*, we are using the word *jīva yātrā*. The title of the text is *jīva yātrā* which means *jīva's* travel towards *mokṣa*. Because of our orientation we may think *mokṣa* is also such a destination, which is physically far, and the *jīva* has to travel and attain *mokṣa*. This orientation based misconception is natural. Not only that we read in the *purāṇās* and the biographies of the *bhaktas* but also that the *bhakta* attained *viṣṇu padam*, *śiva padam* etc. we have that expression. Therefore the author wants to say here, the *jīvas* journey towards *mokṣa* is not a physical journey as we think, covering a physical distance, but it is a travel from ignorance to knowledge. It is a figurative journey which one travels from ignorance to knowledge. It is because *mokṣa* happens to be my real nature.

Therefore *jīva yātrā* towards *mokṣa* is a cognitive journey in the form of knowledge and the reason is simple because the distance between *mokṣa* and me is not in terms of space. A spatial distance can be covered by physical travel. The distance between *mokṣa* and me is not even in the form of time, like a person who is 50 years and wants to be a retired person or wants to have *śaṣṭīabdapūrṭi*. This is a distance in time and therefore he has to wait it out. But the distance between *mokṣa* and me is neither spatial nor temporal. Therefore there is no physical journey. Then what is the distance? Distance is ignorance. When *ajñānam* is the distance, (Pujya Swāmiji gave the example of the tenth man), the distance is covered in terms of knowledge. Therefore in this verse, the author says the journey is in the form of *jñānam*.

Naturally the next will be, what type of knowledge constitutes this journey? The author is condensing the *Vedāntic* knowledge in this profound *śloka*, and so, this is the central, the most important and profound *śloka* of the *jīva yātrā śloka*. It is therefore, the most difficult *śloka* for me to communicate also. But of those who have been exposed to *Vedānta* for sometime, this will be

relatively easier. If they are totally new people, it may appear totally an indigestible *śloka*.

Here we are going to approach this knowledge in four stages. Four important ideas are going to be conveyed which constitute the *Vedantic* teaching. I will just tell you those four important ideas and then we will deal with them one by one:

1. *aham caitanya svarūpaḥ asmi*. I am of the nature of consciousness.
2. *aham nirguṇa svarūpaḥ asmi*. I am free from all attributes or properties.
3. *aham satya svarūpaḥ asmi*. I am the only reality in the creation, only substance in the creation.
4. *aham ānandasvarūpaḥ asmi*. I am of the nature of *ānanda*.

We have to assimilate these four statements. These are also said in *Kaṭhopanīṣad* in the form of *pañcakōṣa viveka – indriyebhyaḥ parā hyarthāḥ sā kāṣṭhā sā parā gatiḥ*. The real you the *ātmā* is some one beyond the body, beyond the sense organs, beyond the mind, beyond the intellect; you are *pañcakōṣa vilakṣaṇo'asi*.

To understand this we use various principles of *Vedānta*. The first principle we have to apply to know this is: I am different from whatever I experience. What is the logic behind it? I am the experiencer, and whatever I experience, is an experienced object. Therefore the logic is, the experiencer, the subject has to be necessarily different from the experienced, the object. The subject cannot be the object.

I am experiencing variety of things in the world and I never get confused. I know I am different from the world. If it all there is any doubt in the mind, you apply to a donkey; then it will be very clear. I am experiencing the donkey, and thank God I am not one. So, the experiencer is not the experienced, the knower is not the known, and the subject is not the object. This is the first lesson, and using this principle we have to decide the first point: I am *caitanya svarūpaḥ*.

How do we do that? Applying the first principle, you go on negating every object of experience. I am not the Sun, I am not the Moon, I am not the stars, I am not the Earth, I am not the mountain, I am not the carpet, I am not the desk, I am not the watch, I am not the microphone – we keep on negating. What is the principle? Anything experienced is not 'I', the experiencer. Up to this the journey is comfortable; we won't raise the eyebrow.

Then *Vedānta* asks the question, what about your own physical body? Is it an object experienced by you or not? What should be our answer? I also intimately experience the body. My hunger I know; my thirst I know. When I sit down and get up, my knee joint pain I know well – it is intimate and intense. So *Vedānta* says if body is an object of experience it is also not you; so I am not the world, I am not the body.

Then you have to extend this to the mind also and ask the same question, "Do I experience my mind or not?" What will be the answer? In fact that is my problem – I am experiencing my mind too much. All my anxieties, worries, pains, and depressions; all of them including happiness are intimately experienced. Therefore I am different from the mind also. Then who am I? Then we say, "I am the consciousness principle who is aware of all of them". *sākṣi caitanya svarūpaḥ aham asmi*, and everything else is *sākṣyam* – aware by me. This is the first lesson.

Then we have to arrive at the second one, for which we have to apply the second principle of *Vedānta*. What is the second principle? Any experienced attribute like colour, form, smell, taste or any property or attribute belongs to an experienced object only, and it never belongs to the experiencer – the subject. I am experiencing the flower; it is an object of my experience. I am experiencing the color; it is an experienced attribute. The experienced colour belongs to what? It never belongs to I the experiencer. When I experience the red color it does not belong to me.

Similarly, I am experiencing a variety of attributes. *Vedānta* says all attributes; you know are all experienced attributes. It belongs to some experienced object or the other. It can never belong to the experiencer subject. Therefore I do not have any attribute at all. The moment you name an attribute, I will ask you the question, “Do you know it or not?” Suppose you say, “No, or don’t know”. Then how can an unknown attribute belong to you? It cannot! Then to avoid it you say, “No, No, I know it”. I ask you, “How do you know it?” “I have experienced”. If you say it is an experienced attribute, it either belongs to the experienced world or it belongs to the experienced body or to experienced mind. Always, it belongs to object *anātmā*, never to the subject – *ātmā*. *Aham nirguṇa svarūpaḥ asmi*. This is the second important lesson.

The third one is still deeper and subtler. There are two things now,

1. I the experiencer which is *caitanya svarūpaḥ asmi*, of the nature of consciousness.
2. Everything else that is experienced

What are they? The world comes under the experienced category. The body comes under the experienced category; the mind also comes under the experienced category and all the attributes belonging to them come under the experienced category. In *śāstra* the word used is ‘I’ the *ātmā* and the experienced object, the *anātmā*. I the *ātmā* is *cetana svarūpaḥ* and everything else is the *acetana svarūpaḥ*. World is *acetanam!* Body is *acetanam* by itself and the mind is also *acetnam*.

Now the next question will be between the *ātmā*, the experiencer, the subject and everything else the *anātmā*, the experienced object. What is the relationship between them? *Vedānta* says, the relationship is *ātmā* is the *kāraṇam* – everything else is product, *kāryam* born out of *ātmā*. *Kāryam* means a product. That is very clearly said *taittirīya Upaniṣad*, “*tasmāt vā etasmāt ātmana ākāsha sambhūtaḥ!.....annāt puruṣaḥ*”.

Everything is born out of *ātmā*. So what is the relationship? *Kārya kāraṇa* relationship. Once I know that I, the *ātmā*, I am *kāraṇam* and everything else is *kāryam*, then one important corollary I can derive. What is that? No product can exist separate from its cause because every product is nothing but cause with different names and forms e.g. gold; the cause is there, ornaments, the products are there. The ornamental products cannot exist separate from gold. Why, ornaments cannot exist separate from gold? It is because every ornament is gold itself in a particular form and has an appropriate name. Gold in a particular shape is called bangle, gold in another shape is called ring, gold in yet another shape is called chain. Therefore *kāraṇam+nāma rūpa = kāryam*. Now what does *Vedānta* say, “*ātmā is kāraṇam* and everything else beginning from space, that is all *kāryam*”. That means what? *ātmā* + varieties of *nāma rūpa* are everything else. That is the object. Therefore the object depends upon the subject for existence.

The *kāryam* depends upon *kāraṇam*; *anātmā* depends upon *ātmā* and object depends upon subject for its existence. That means the object or objective world has got a dependent existence and the subject has got an independent existence. Gold does not depend on bangle *nāma* or *rūpa* for its survival. If gold depends on bangle *nāma* and *rūpa* for its survival what will happen? Whenever you melt the bangle, gold will not disappear. Therefore the conclusion is *ātmā svatantraḥ* and therefore *satyaḥ*, whereas *anātmā is mithyā*. *Caitanyam is satya svarūpaḥ* and *jadaprapañcaḥ is mithyā svarūpaḥ*. Since I am the *caitanya svarūpaḥ*, I am the *ātmā*, and I can boldly say, *aham satya svarūpaḥ asmi. Mayyeva sakalaṁ jātam.....ahameva idaṁ sarvaṁ*. I am all! This is the third lesson. All these Jñānānanda Bhārati has condensed in this one verse.

Now we come to the fourth one – *aham ānanda svarūpaḥ*. *Vedānta* says only what is limitless or full alone can be of the nature of *ānanda*, fullness alone can be *ānanda* and *ananta* alone can be *ānanda*. As long as there is finitude, as long as there is limitation, as long as there is something wanting or missing there cannot be *ānanda*. Therefore limitation or finitude is sorrow. So *alpatvam = duḥkham*, and *purnatvam = sukham*. This is said in the seventh chapter of *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, called *Bhūmā vidyā – yo vai bhūmā tat sukham*.

What is infinite alone can be *ānanda*. *Na alpe sukhamasti*. What is finite doesn't contain even an iota of *ānanda*. According to this principle *Vedānta* says no object in the creation can have even an iota of *ānanda*. Because every object in the creation is *alpam – alpe sukham nāsti*. As Pujya Swamiji said, "If an object has got happiness in it, then every one should get it and one and the same person should get it all the time". If I love gulab jamoon I may love it but the 25<sup>th</sup> gulab jamoon I will run away! It is not possible to like everyone. After sometime that is not a source of *ānanda* and therefore the world does not have it. According to *Vedānta* the only source of *ānanda* is *pūrṇa ātmā, 'I'*.

Then the question will be, if I am *ānanda svarūpaḥ* how come I am not experiencing? We say, because you are *ānanda svarūpaḥ* you are not experiencing. Like you can never see your own original eyes, try! Therefore original *ātmā ānanda* is myself: original *nitya ānanda* is myself. There is no question of experiencing it as it is myself. Then the next question will come, if I alone am the source of *ānanda* and if the world does not have an iota of *ānanda*, then how come I am getting *ānanda* from the world now and then? Nice music gives me *ānanda*, nice food gives me *ānanda*, and an interesting class gives me *ānanda*, if it is interesting and understandable, otherwise problem. They will say today's class went three feet above the head. How come? For that we have this example: the dog and the bone. Bone does not even have a drop of blood, bone is bone dry. How much? It is bone dry. The dog bites the bone and because of the sharp edges of the bone, the dog hurts in his own mouth, and from the mouth blood comes. Before biting the bone there was no blood, after biting the bone there was blood. Therefore bone alone is the source of blood. This is dog's logic. Dog can afford to have such logic. What *Vedānta* says is the human beings also commit the same blunder. Before enjoying the programme, no *ānanda*, after experiencing the programme there is *ānanda*. Therefore the programme is the source, we conclude. *Vedānta* says the programme is the bone, programme has not produced *ānanda*. Programme has helped in the manifestation of my own *ānanda* or we can call it the reflection of my own *ānanda* in a quiet *sātvik* mind.

When the external world quietens the mind, it does not produce *ānanda*; my *ānanda* is manifest like the blood coming out. Therefore all the time whenever I am experiencing *ānanda*, I am enjoying my own *ānanda*. Imagine when the mind is disturbed again, the reflected *ānanda* goes away but not I the original *ānanda*. When the mirror is kept the reflection is there, when the mirror is removed the reflection goes away. I the original one ever remain. Every sensory pleasure is a Xerox copy or a poor carbon copy of my own *ānanda* whether it comes or not, *aham nitya ānanda svarūpaḥ asmi*. So if you ask, “Swāmiji, I have understood my nature is *nitya ānanda*, how to get *nitya ānanda*, please tell me?” If you ask such a question what will I do?

*pūrṇamadaḥ pūrṇamidam pūrṇātpūrṇamudcyate | pūrṇasya pūrṇamādāya pūrṇameva avaśiṣyate ||*

In this significant verse of this text, the *ācārya* points out that the *jīva yātrā* primarily in form of *jñānam* only because the destination happens to be my own real nature, which destination is seemingly away because of ignorance. This notion of distance caused by ignorance can be removed only by knowledge. Therefore, *jīva yātrā* is pursuit of *jñānam* of *jñāna yogaḥ*. What is the essence of this *jñānam*? We saw the four important steps of understanding.

First I know that I am the *sākṣi caitanya svarūpam*. The observer or the experient and every thing else is an observed object which included the world, which includes my own body and my mind also. *Aham caitanya svarūpaḥ*.

The second one we saw: *aham nirguṇa svarūpaḥ*. Because all known attributes or all experienced attributes should belong to the experienced objects only. So, all attributes should belong to the world which is an object or the body which is an object or the mind which is also an object. Therefore, all objects are *saguṇa* and ‘I’ the subject has to be *nirguṇam* only. *Kaṭhapaniṣad* said – *aśabdāṃ, aspāśam, arūpam, avyayam* etc. The second point was – *aham nirguṇa svarūpaḥ asmi*.

The third big jump was – *aham satya svarūpaḥ asmi*. Because ‘I’, the *ātma* happens to be the *kāraṇam* as revealed by the words, ‘*tasmāt vā etasmāt*’ etc. and everything else including the body and the mind are all *kāryam*. So any *kāryam* is only *kāraṇam*

*nāma rūpa*. I, the subject and varieties of names and forms alone are the world. I, with *nāma rūpa* alone is the body; I, with *nāma rūpa* alone is the mind. Everything else *nāma rūpa* – I am the only substance. Substance can exist independently, therefore I am *satyaṁ*. *nāma rūpa* will have to rest on the substance; they are dependent and therefore *mithyā*. *aham satya svarūpaḥ* is the third one.

The fourth and most important one is: *ātmā*, the limitless one; I am *ānanda svarūpaḥ*. How am I limitless? We should remember if I am *nirguṇa svarūpaḥ*, I don't have any limiting attributes. Limitations are always caused by attributes. Attributes specify an object. Specification is limitation. The moment you say this is flower; automatically this is not a table, this is not a hall, this is not a pen nor is this is book. Any attribute specifies, particularizes an object and therefore *guṇa* means finitude, whereas 'I', the *ātmā* being *nirguṇa*, there is nothing to limit me. Therefore, *aham ananta svarūpaḥ*. Therefore, only I am *ānanda svarūpaḥ*. If *ānanda* or happiness is my nature it has to be *nitya* because whatever is natural is never lost like the heat of the fire. Why do we say, what is natural is never lost? It is because whatever is lost is not natural. Therefore I am *ānanda svarūpaḥ* also.

From that we find a corollary: if I am *ānanda svarūpaḥ*, being *pūrṇaḥ – anantaḥ*, no object in the creation can have an iota of *ānanda*. Therefore, any *ānanda* I experience anywhere is my own *ānanda* manifested by the object and not produced by the object. You have to differentiate between production and manifestation *abhivyājjakaḥ and utpādakaḥ*. When I keep the hand here you are able to see the light here. The hand does not produce this light but the hand makes the already present light in this point where the hand manifests. Therefore *hastāḥ na prakāśasya utpādakaḥ* but *prakāśasya abhivyājjakaḥ*.

Similarly, no object in the creation is the producer of *ānanda*. Why? They don't have the power unfortunately. What can they do? Depending upon my *rāga dveṣa* they can create a conducive mind. The objects bring about a conducive mind in which my own *ānanda* is reflected or manifested. We call it *pratibimba ānanda*. In *Taittirīya Upaniṣad*, we study this very elaborately: *tasya priyameva śiraḥ, modo dakṣiṇaḥ pakṣa*. Not only that, this reflected *ānanda* would have gradation also, depending upon the reflecting medium. Finer the surface greater is the reflection. Thus when the mind

calm *priya ānanda*, when the mind is calmer *moda ānanda* and when the mind calmest *pramoda ānanda*. So they are all experiential pleasures which are manifestations of my own *ānanda*. Nobody can say I have not experienced *ātmānanda* because any *ānanda* we experience is *ātma ānanda*. You cannot experience *anātmānanda* because *anātmā* does not have *ānanda*. Therefore, every one is all the time experiencing *ātmānanda*.

How? When the objects come the mind becomes quiet; my own *ānanda* reflects in the mind. Every experiential pleasure is my own carbon copy. Suppose a person asks 'Swāmiji, I am only experiencing the reflected *ānanda* in the mind? How can I experience the original *ānanda*?' *ānanda hetu* teacher will give *duḥkham*. Okay, you say all the experiential pleasures are my own expressions in a calm and quiet mind (or use Pujya Swamiji's expression 'a non-demanding mind'), but I am seeing only my reflection.

The original *ānanda* can never be an object of experience because the original *ānanda* happens to be the very subject 'I'.

If you say, "Swāmiji, I want to experience my beautiful face." It is very simple. I will show you a mirror; you can see yourself or I will take a photograph you can see for yourself. Then you ask the question, "Swāmiji, I am experiencing only my reflected face; how can I experience my original face? I cannot help you out. You are the original face. You can never objectify it. Another *Bṛhaspati* says, "If I cannot see my original face, what is the proof that there is an original face?" If the original face is not there, you cannot see the reflection. So every *ānanda* presupposed 'I', the original *ānanda*. We don't require any proof for that because I am that *ānanda svarūpaḥ*. This is called *jñānam*. When I have discovered the fact that I am *ānanda svarūpaḥ*, I have attained what I want to be in life, I have claimed my birth right. This is the essence of the fourth *śloka*.

The meaning is that *para sukhaḥ* which is *nitya ānanda is ātma svarūpam*. It is the nature of *ātma*. It is destination to be attained, which is my nature and which is considered to be the destination of *jīva yātrā*. That *nitya ānanda* alone is called *mokṣaḥ*. If people say I don't want *mokṣa* it is only because they don't know or understand the

definition of *mokṣa*. If *mokṣa* is *nitya ānanda* who will say I don't want? There are many people who say I don't want *mokṣa*. When I say I want to go to some loka and enjoy pleasures there, they don't understand that pleasure alone is *mokṣaḥ*. The *Āchāryas* define it as *mokṣa*. *Mokṣa* is *nitya ānanda* and it is *ātma svarūpam*.

What is the nature of that *mokṣa*, *nitya ānanda*, which is the *ātma svarūpam*? That *nitya ānanda* is *nirguṇa*, free from all attributes. All the possible attributes are divided into three categories or attributes belonging to *jīva*, attributes belonging to *jagat*, and attributes belonging to *Īśvara*. *jīva*, *Īśena jagat viśeṣa rahitam*. *viśeṣa* means distinct attributes or distinguishing characteristics. So the attributes belong to *jīva*, *Īśvara* and *jagat*. He is *karta*. That is how he starts. He is *bhokta*, *pramāta*, *sukhi*, *duḥkhi*, *kāmi* and *krodhi*. With limited knowledge and limited power, they are all attributes of *jīva*. *Īśvara* also has *karṭṛtvam* – big *karṭṛva* like *jagat karṭṛva*, *śriṣṭi karṭṛva*, *sthiti karṭṛva*, *laya karṭṛva*, *sarvajñatva*, and *sarveśvaratva* *adi*. They are all bigger superior attributes of *Īśvara* like omniscience and omnipotent. What are attributes of *jagat*? *Śabd*, *sparsā*, *rūpa*, *rasa* and *gandha*. The world is made up of *pañca bhūta*, and each *bhūta* contributes to each *guṇa*. Thus *śabdādi jagat guṇaḥ sarvajñatvādi Īśvara guṇa alpjñatvādi jīva guṇaḥ*, all attributes will fall within these categories.

What about *ātmā*? *ātmā* is free from all these attributes. All of them are *nāma rūpa*. *ātmā* is free from all these attributes then how many *ātmās* are there? *ātmā* is only one in which there is neither *jīva* status, no *jagat* status nor *Īśvara* status. These three statuses belong to empirical *nāma rūpa* plane. In the original *ātmā* all these are absent. How can we arrive at there? It is attainable only through *jñānam*; by gaining this knowledge one knows that everything else is *nāma rūpa*.

This particular question disturbs people: “Is *Īśvara satyam* or *mithyā*?” We say that if you apply the fundamental principle, there is no problem. The fundamental principle is observer is *satya* and observed is *mithyā*. Then the question is asked, “Is *Īśvara* an object of experience or the experiencer the subject?” You ask, “Is *Īśvara satyam* or *mithyā*?” before I answer the question, I will ask a counter question, “What do you understand by the word *Īśvara*?” If you say *Īśvara* is an object in the universe, who appears once in a while for *bhaktas*, smiles, has a dialogue for sometime and there after disappears; if he is arriving and departing, objective

principle, then without hesitation we will say that Īśvara of your definition is also *mithyā*. When we say this, we have *Kenopaniṣad* support – *nedam yadidam upāsate*. The *vākya* gives us support. But if you redefine Īśvara as not an object, but the very *sākṣi caitanyam* in every *jīva*, *īśvarassarva bhūtānām hr̥ddeśe arjuna tiṣṭhati*. You understand Īśvara as *sākṣi caitanyam*, and *gopis* themselves in *Bhāgavatam* worship Kṛṣṇa as personal God and thereafter when they describe Lord Kṛṣṇa in the *Gopikā gītā*, they make a statement – “Hey Kṛṣṇa, even though we enjoy playing with you, we know you are not son of *gopikā*, you are not a person with a date of birth and date of expiration but you are the inner observer in every one”.

So, is Īśvara *satyam* or *mithyā*? Depends! As an object – *mithyā* as a subject – *satyam* whichever way you want to take. Incidentally, when Īśvara is seen as object He is *saguṇaḥ*, and when Īśvara is understood as I the subject, then Īśvara is only one. This is why Kṛṣṇa tells in seventh chapter of *Gītā* – 4 stages of *bhakti*: *ārthaḥ*, *arthārthijñāsu* and *jnāni*. He says *jnāni bhaktaḥ* is one who is not different from me – *jnāni ātmaiva me matam*. It is attainable only through *jñānam*, definitely. What is *jñānam*?

What is the definition of *jñānam*? *jñānam* has two fold functions:

1. It reveals the object, which was covered by ignorance – *āvṛtta viśayasa anāvāraṇam* unfolding the cover.
2. Because of ignorance, misconceptions known as *adhyāsaḥ*, are all negated by *jñānam*.

When rope is not very clearly seen in semi darkness there is ignorance, which covers the ropeness of the rope. Because of the covering of the ropeness misconception came. Rope was mistaken as a snake or a mala or a piece of pipe. Truth is one and misconceptions are many. When I switch on my torch light and go near and see, the first thing that happens is, the ropeness becomes uncovered. Ropeness becomes evident; I see rope as well. This is called *anāvāraṇam*.

Thereafter the second function of *jñānam* which is a consequential function is the removal of all misconceptions that it is a snake or a mala or a piece of pipe. All misconceptions are negated. So what is the definition of *jñānam*? *jñānam* is that which reveals the object and negates the misconception. That is said here in the third an

fourth line of the *śloka*. He says, *ena jñāne*, by knowledge, ones own glory is revealed. Before *jñānam* that glory was concealed or covered and after *jñānam* that concealed self-glory is revealed. The glory which is in the form of *ānanda svarūpam* is a very important discovery that in the whole creation there is only one source of *ānanda*. What is that? I am that. You can tell when ever you are smiling, I am giving the *ānanda*. My own glory of *ānanda svarūpaḥ*, which is concealed, is uncovered and revealed by this *jñānam*. It is very clear to me. I don't have any doubt about it. What is the proof that a *jñāni* has discovered that I am *ānanda svarūpaḥ*? Lord Kṛṣṇa gives proof in Gītā – *ātmanaiva ātmnā tuṣṭhaḥ*.

The second function is full of *adhyāsa jñānam*, which is erroneous cognition or misconception like *sarpa darśanam* on rope, which is false. False misconception falls because it is false. It goes away. Such a thing alone is called clear *jñānam*, pure valid knowledge. That alone is clear knowledge that reveals my *ānanda* nature and which negates all false misconceptions that I am the body, the mind, *karta* and a finite entity. Such misconceptions are stated as *viśva taijasa prājñā* in *Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad*. Taking world as real is misconception. So, after study of *Vedānta* I look upon the world as non-substantial name and form. It is hollow, empty *nāma rūpa*.

It says that this hollow world does not contain joy of its own. People run after and think it is giving *ānanda* while they are enjoying their own *ānanda*. A child which used to mothers milk has been weaned from the mother and craves for mothers milk. What does it do? It sucks the thumb. When it sucks the thumb what comes of it? Nothing comes ; but it sucks and swallows its own saliva. What is the source? Itself is the source. Taking the saliva from itself the child seems happy, thinking that it is getting milk from the thumb. *Vedānta* says the whole world is the thumb. We all keep on sucking and we get *ānanda*. What *ānanda*? Our own saliva *ānanda*! You may falsify it but for the baby it is a very serious thing. You keep the thumb off its mouth again it will put it back. *Vedantic* teacher takes the student off and again the student goes back. Who says? *Shastra* says – that is knowledge. This is the essence of the fourth verse, the deepest verse in this *jīva yātrā* text.

With the fourth verse, the first part of *jīva yātrā* topic is over. This is the main *jīva yātrā*, the liberating *jīva yātrā* consisting of *jñāna yogaḥ*. In this portion the author established the following points:

First he established that *nitya ānanda* alone is the only goal of every living being, including the human being.

Secondly he established that *nitya ānanda* is attainable only by the pursuit of the *ānanda puruṣārtha* which is the only *puruṣārtha*. The other three *puruṣārthas* are really pseudo *puruṣārthas*. They don't deserve the name *puruṣārtha* .i.e. the human goal. *ānanda* is the only *puruṣārtha* which can give *nitya ānanda*.

Then he established that this *ānanda* is possible only through self-knowledge. He said this in the second line of the fourth verse as *jñāna eka sādhanam*.

Then the fourth point that he established was: this *jñānam* can be gained only with the help of *guru śāstra upadeśa*. By taking the example of *Naciketas in Kaṭhopanishad*, he said that *jñānam* is attainable only with the help of *guru śāstra upadeśam*. There is no other means of getting this knowledge.

The fifth and final point is: this *jñānam* can be attained through *guru śāstra upadeśa* only when a person has the required qualifications, preparations or *yogyata*. Without the *yogyata*, the *guru śāstra upadeśa* cannot fructify into knowledge just as sowing seeds in a barren land will not produce any benefit. *Yogyata* means fitness, preparedness or the qualification. We said the *yogyata* is in the form of *sādhana catuṣṭaya sampatti; viveka, vairagya, ṣaṭka sampatti* and *mumukṣuttvam*. In English, it is discrimination, dispassion, discipline and the desire for *ānanda*. Later the discipline was high lighted through the *ratha kalpanā* – the chariot imagery. The chariot has to be in fit condition for taking the *ratha svāmi* to the destination. Here the discipline consists of physical health, sensory health, emotional health and intellectual health. Not only the various organs must be healthy, they must be under

control – *vaśyān tanoti*. Not only they must be under my control, they must work in coordination also. Health is compulsory, controllability is compulsory and coordination is compulsory. All these will come under discipline, the third qualification.

Thus if discrimination, discipline, dispassion and desire are there, and if such a person pursues or takes to *guru śāstra upadeśa*, then he will get knowledge, through which he will get *nitya ānanda*. This is the essence of the teaching given in the first four verses. This is the *jñāna* yoga journey which is the direct means to liberation.

From the fifth verse we are entering the second phase or the second stage of teaching. Suppose a person says, “I am not convinced of all these five stages you talked about, any one or more stages. I am not convinced”. There are people who claim, “I am not interested in *ānanda*.” One student in Chennai openly said, “*Swāmiji*, I am attending the class because it is intellectually stimulating; really speaking I am not that much interested in *ānanda* and all.” So, every one need not be interested in *ānanda*. In fact *Bhāgavatādi purāṇas*, the *bhaktas* declare, “o! Lord I don’t want *ānanda* because in *ānanda* there will be *advaitam*. *Advaitam* means *bhagavān bhakta* relationship is threatened.” In fact a *bhakta* writes in a religious magazine – “oh lord, *gururvāyurappa*, never bring *Vedānta* in my life, I don’t want a *Vedānta* which falsifies your beautiful form”. So, many are not convinced of *ānanda*.

Many want *ānanda* but they don’t think that *jñānam* is the only means. They think there are other alternative methods of getting *ānanda*. There are others who think *jñānam* gives *ānanda* alright but for *jñānam śāstra vicāra* is not required – it is enough if you just do some meditation, *jñānam* will dawn. Either they say it will come from down – up or from up-down. They believe in *jñānam* but they don’t think *jñānam* requires rigorous scriptural study. They don’t believe that. There are some people who believe in all of them but they don’t accept the qualification. Thus they can be many people who cannot accept one or more of the above five steps. In fact, many will come under that category. There may be some people who accept all the five

steps; they will say it is very logical and very systematic and accept all of them. *Nitya ānanda* is the goal; *ānanda* is the means, *jñānam* is the means for *ānanda*, *sāstra vicāra* is the means for *jñānam* and *sādhana catuṣṭhaya sampatti* is the qualification for that. All of them we agree. Our problem is we don't consider we are ready for that. All your steps are wonderful Swamiji, but we don't consider we are ready for that. This is the second category.

The second category is convinced of the steps but they feel they are not ready. Then, what to do? *Veda* says, no problem; i expect such a response. That is why *jñāna yoga* has been kept at the end of the *Vedas*. The *śruti* mother has expected such a response from the majority of humanity, therefore, *Veda* says don't introduce *Vedānta* in public – it may confuse people. That means what? *Veda* has understood the problem. When people are not convinced of *Vedānta* and are not prepared for *Vedānta* then *Veda* says “I have got *Veda pūrva bhāga* through which I can lift you up and bring you to this *jñāna yoga* or *Vedānta*. This *Veda pūrva bhāga* consists of two steps or stages of *sādhana*, one is *karma yoga sādhana* and the second one is *upāsana yoga sādhana*. *Karma yoga + upāsana yoga gives jñāna yogyatā*. If you are not ready for *jñāna yātrā* then let us change the train and take to *jñāna yogyatā yātrā*. *Karma yoga + upāsana yoga will give jñāna yogyatā*. This is going to be talked about from verse five onwards. There after the author will connect this to *jñāna yoga* and conclude the teaching.

In *jīva yātrā*, *jñāna yoga* is introduced assuming that everyone is *yogyaḥ*. Let the student say “we are not fit”; then introduce *karma* and *upāsana*. In fact, Lord *Kṛṣṇa* uses this method in the *Bhagavad Gītā*. He starts the teaching with *jñāna yoga* only – *aśocyān anvaśocyatvam*. Then from *natvevāham*..... *jñāna yoga* is concentrated. Then perhaps *Kṛṣṇa* saw *Arjuna* was raising his eye brows, therefore he starts – *eṣā te abhihatā sāmkhya*..... if you feel uncomfortable, listen to *karma yoga*. Whatever be the order, what is important is we should know these three *yogas*: *karma yoga*, *upāsana yoga* and *jñāna yoga*.

Now we will enter into *karma yoga* for the unfit people for *jñāna yoga*:

## Verse 5

आस्तिक्यं दृढमूलमेव मनुजाः सम्पादयत्वादितः  
कर्माचारयुतस्ततश्च भवतु स्वर्गादिभोगेच्छया ।  
स्वर्गादावपि च क्रमेण गमितो नैराश्यमेवास्थिरे  
नित्यानित्य विचारेण सवाधिकृतस्तत्त्वं समन्विच्छतु ॥  
*āstikyaṃ dr̥ḍhamūlameva manujāḥ saṃpādaytvāditāḥ*  
*karmācārayutastataśca bhavatu svargādibhogecchayā ।*  
*svargādāvapi ca krameṇa gamito nairāśyamevāsthire*  
*nityānitya vicāreṇa svādhikṛitastatvaṃ samanvicchatu ॥ ..5*

Here the *Ācārya* says – all the three *yogas* are teachings given by the *Vedas*. Therefore you are employing the *Vedic* books or *Veda śāstra* as a guide for you. Before you start making use of the *Vedas*, first make sure you have a proper attitude towards the *Veda*. If the attitude towards the scriptures is improper, then it will not bless you completely. In all these things, the blessings you get are directly proportional to the healthy attitude that you have.

In the *Veda mantra*, in sacred rivers, in the *brāhmaṇa* you employ for rituals, in *Īśvara*, in the astrologer, medicine and last but not the least in the *guru*; in all these seven, whatever be your *bhāvanā*, that will decide the benefit. Therefore, one should have a healthy positive attitude towards the scriptures, towards the *Vedas* if one has o benefit. If one does not have the *bhāvanā*, *Veda* does not insist, it says, “If you don’t have the *bhāvanā*, better don’t use it and waste your time”. If you want to use them and benefit, it will be better develop a proper *bhāvanā*, which is called *śraddhā*, which thee author calls this as *āstikya buddhiḥ*. So the first step is to understand what is *Veda*. A human being has this privilege. It is because animals won’t study *Veda*. Without *pramāṇa vicāra*, entering into *prameya vicāra* and *prayojana vicāra* is futile. Therefore the first and foremost that a human being has to do is to develop *śraddhā*, a healthy attitude towards *Veda*. He must have affirm

and unshaken *śraddhā* – not a wobbly or a vague and fragile *śraddhā* but a firm and unshaken one.

What do you mean by *śraddhā* towards the *Veda*? By *śraddhā*, we mean we should learn to look upon the *Veda* as the sixth sense organ. We already have five sense organs: eyes, ears, nose, tongue and skin. We should look upon the *Veda* as the sixth sense organ. It is *daive cakṣuḥ*. It is indicated by our *tilakam*. It indicates our additional eye – *daivam cakṣuḥ Veda*. What do you mean by this? If you study the sense organ we find that every sense organ has the power to reveal unique set of sense objects. Eyes can reveal colors, ears can reveal sound, nose can reveal smell, tongue can reveal taste and skin can reveal touch. First thing that we notice is, every sense organ reveals a unique *prameya* of its own. Every sense organ is absolutely valid and unchallengeable in its field of operation. Its validity is unchallengeable and unquestionable. Once the eyes have revealed the color of this flower, this color knowledge is a valid knowledge, no other sense organ, the nose, the skin, or the ears – none of them have the power to challenge the colour revealed by the eyes. Why the others don't have the power to challenge? Why? Because they don't have an access to the colors; they have their access to their unique field. They have no jurisdiction, no power, no authority, and no capacity to enter the field of color. Therefore they cannot challenge.

Therefore, eyes enjoy unchallenged, unrivalled validity in the field. Therefore whether I use the other sense organs or I don't use the other sense organs, the color is a fact which need not be proved and which cannot be disproved by the other sense organs. Therefore, once a sense organ has generated knowledge, that knowledge is a fact and we should never ask for further proof. We don't call it blind faith. We don't ask for the proof of the color. We accept the color knowledge as an absolute fact without questioning that knowledge. But still we don't call it blind faith because it has nothing to do with faith. It has something to do with a fact that every sense organ is valid in its own field. It is undisputable authority in its field.

Suppose I see some clothes under the sodium vapor lamp on the road, when you see the clothes under that light the colors are all distorted. The orange cloth you will see as yellow only. Suppose I have a doubt regarding the validity of the colors, then I will never question the validity of my eyes. Suppose I question the eyes or doubt the eyes, I will have a problem. Suppose I have doubt in the eyes and I decide to take the help of the other sense organs, the other sense organs can never help me resolve the doubt with regard to color. If I doubt the eyes and take to other sense organs, they can never help in resolving the doubt; therefore I should never doubt the eyes. Then what can I doubt? If at all I should doubt in the field of colors I should never doubt the eyes but I can doubt if the conditions for the operation of eyes are proper or not because the sodium vapour lamp is not an ideal condition. I can doubt the conditions of the operation of the eyes; I can doubt the conditions with regard to the obstacles for the eyes; whether there are obstacles like cataract or something. I can question everything with regard to the propriety of operation I should never question the validity of the eyes because eyes are the only valid instruments of knowledge in the field of colors.

Thus I operate all the five sense organs and keep on gathering knowledge without questioning the validity, or without asking for further proof. Even the most questioning scientist will never question the validity of eyes with regard to colors. Do you call a scientist a blind believer? No, it is not blind belief. It is based on fact that a primary source of knowledge is self-valid and you should not question. Eye is the primary source of knowledge with regard to colors. It is not blind belief; it is based on fact. Don't question!

What is the fact? A primary source is self-valid in its field. Similarly ear self-valid in its field of sound. Never question the ears with regard to that. This not blind faith, then this is what? *śraddhā*. There is no translation for the word *śraddhā*. If it all you want to translate *śraddhā*, it means the attitude towards a primary instrument of knowledge as unquestionably valid in its field – this is called *śraddhā*. The looking upon the primary source of

knowledge as self-valid and which does not require further validation or proof – this *bhāvanā* is called *śraddhā*.

*upajīvyā pramāṇa svataḥ prāmāṇya jñānam – śraddhā*. So looking upon a primary source of knowledge as valid in its field is called *śraddhā*. Every sense organ is a primary source of knowledge in its field and so *upjīvyā pramāṇa*. It has to be accepted as it is. So we should also know *Veda* also comes under *upajīvyā pramāṇa*; it is often called *pratyakṣam*. In *Brahma sūtra* Vyāsācārya uses the word *pratyakṣam* in the place of the *Veda*. That means what? *Veda* has got a unique field of knowledge that is not accessible to the other five sense organs. It is the sixth sense organ, which reveals a unique thing. Since it is not accessible to the other five, they can neither prove nor disprove; the other five cannot challenge. Not only the other five cannot challenge, even modern science cannot challenge because it is based on the five sense organs. Since the five sense organs cannot challenge the sixth sense organ, the modern science that is based on the five sense organs, we call it *pauṛuṣeya pramāṇa*. So the modern science which is *pauṛuṣeya pramāṇa* has no capacity to challenge the sixth *pramāṇa*, so science can neither prove nor disprove.

One such important topic is God or *Bhagavān*. Knowledge of *Bhagavān* is a unique knowledge. It is accessible to only the sixth sense organ that is the *Veda*. The five sense organs or the sense organ based science can never prove God. It can never disprove God also. This is called *Vedasya svataḥ prāmāṇyam*. *Veda* is valid in its own unique field.

Suppose I refuse to operate the sixth sense organ the *Veda* – what will happen? Nothing will happen. Suppose a person refuses to use the fifth sense organ, eyes, like *Gāndhāri*, for that person that segment of creation, *rūpa prapañca*, the whole field of colors will get out of her field, the other four will be there. It is not that she cannot survive; she can happily survive because many blind people are surviving. Suppose this person says, “I want to understand the *rūpa prapañca* but I won’t use my eyes”. You should explain the *rūpa prapañca* in terms of the other four. We can never

communicate to him, if the person refuses to use his eyes; that person can survive with other segments, no problem.

Similarly if I am an atheist and I don't accept the *Veda*, I can happily survive no problem. Five sense organs are available; science is available; without I can happily manage. But I will be deprived of a whole lot of other unique and wonderful things which can improve the quality of my life. Similarly, if I don't have *Veda*, I will be deprived of a huge lot of things. If I bring in *Veda*, it can never be threat to science, the absence of *Veda* will not affect science or the presence of *Veda* will also not affect science because science has a different field. What is the field of *Veda*? It is the sixth sense organ – this is called *Veda prāmāṇya jñānam*.

We should clearly know this *Veda prāmāṇya*. If this basic thing is not understood I will try to verify every Vedic teaching with the help of science – it will never be possible. I will have doubt if I am a blind believer, there will be all kinds of problems. This will not come if I understand *Veda* is a *pramāṇam* in its field and science has no access to that. The author says, this is the first lesson of *Veda*. This topic is not discussed very elaborately in *Vedānta granthas* because this topic is discussed in the *Veda pūrva*.

In the *pūrva mīmāṃsa sūtras*, *Veda prāmāṇyam* has been clearly discussed. There is a *sūtra* called *autpattika sūtra*; in that *sūtra* *Veda prāmāṇyam* has been clearly discussed. Therefore Śaṅkarācārya assumes that everyone who comes to *Vedānta* knows the fundamental principle that *Veda* is the sixth sense organ. One should not compare science with *Veda*. It is like comparing eyes with ears – it will be ridiculous. Therefore he says, “first and foremost, may you acquire the firm understanding with regard to *Veda prāmāṇyam*”. Once *Veda* is approached properly then you will utilize every *sādhana* properly.

What is the first *sādhana*? He says, “The first lesson is not *jñāna yoga*, but it is karma yoga way of life in which *Veda* will never say *ānanda* is your goal”. Because that is his problem; *Veda* will not open the mouth about *ānanda*. We

shall look at it later. May you fulfill all your personal ambition, what ever be your desire, whether it is instinctive desire, whether it is acquired, or deliberate desire you can pursue them. But when you act in the world, I will give you certain conditions. Just some edited version of your life. We won't ask you to run to the *Āśrama* and take *sannyāsa*! Enjoy your children or newly acquired grandchildren.

I will present it in a package form in the form of some principles to remember. The four basic principles of *karma yoga* and four-fold benefits of *karma yoga*:

1. Gradually reduce all the *adhārmic* actions in your life. How do I know what is *adhārmic* action? Whatever I do is *dhārmic* only – others do *adhārmic* actions. The simple definition we have is, Oh human beings! May you understand the crux of dharma and may you assimilate it well. What is that? What you don't want others to do to you, you don't do to others. If you say others should not lie to me, I should not lie to others. If you say others should not cheat me, I should not cheat others. If I say others should not insult me in public, I should not insult others in public/ private also.

You be in others position and allow the others in your shoes. Change the shoes and mentally do a rehearsal. Many of the *adhārmic* actions we tend to do will come down. There are certain *adhārmic* actions we always try to justify, saying that in *kali yuga*, that is the practical way of living. For that, our answer is always, you scan your *adhārmic* action and ask the question sincerely, "Is it avoidable or not?" We need not prove to any one; it is for our own conscience. Can I avoid? If I am sincere and with a little bit extra sacrifice, may be sacrificing some time, energy or money, we will be able to avoid. Gradually remove the avoidable *adharma*. Let there be unavoidable *adharma* temporarily. Gradually remove avoidable *adharma*, to our surprise we will see almost everything will become avoidable. *Bhagavān* will come to our rescue. This is the first principle of *karma yoga*. – "Reduce *adharmic* actions gradually".

2. Include *dhārmic* actions gradually, which are compulsory duties prescribed by *śāstras* called *niyata karma*, *vihita karma*. *śāstras* prescribe gradually include the *dhārmic* actions. There are innumerable duties prescribed in the *śāstras*. It is very simple: before every action, temporarily reverse the role. I generally mention five of them: they are *pañcamahā yajña* or the five fold *yajña* which are reverential contribution to others. Reverence is involved, contribution is involved, reverential contribution or a worshipful contribution to others is called *pañca mahā yajña*. What is this? We will see in the next lecture.

In the first four verses the author talked about the only goal of life i.e. *mokṣa* and the only means of attaining that *mokṣa* in the form of *jñānam*, as well as the required qualification. But the *Veda* is aware of the fact that the majority of humanity does not recognize *mokṣa* as the goal in the beginning, and even if some how they recognizes, they do not have the required qualifications to pursue and therefore they have to be helped out. Therefore, *veda* gives *Vedānta* only at the end portion and the preparatory disciplines are given in the beginning.

Firstly, one has to discover *mumukṣutvam*, and then only one can discover *mokṣa*. *mumukṣtva prātiḥ* is the first goal; *mokṣa prāptiḥ* is the second goal. Therefore, for gaining that qualification, from the fifth verse, the author is summarizing the teaching of the *Veda pūrva bhāga* consisting of *karma yoga* and *upāsanā yoga*. Before that he mentioned that *Veda* and its teaching can bless a person only when he understands the status of *Veda*. That status is that it is a primary source of knowledge and it should not be treated as a secondary source of knowledge.

In the case of secondary source of knowledge you are allowed to question and verify; it is verifiable by a primary source. That is what a secondary source of knowledge is. If we try to verify a primary source, we don't have a supra -primary source. Our approach will miserably fail. When we have learnt something from inference, like for e.g., because I smell and see the

smoke I infer there is some fire. Inference is a secondary source of knowledge, and I can afford to doubt that knowledge whether there is fire or not. Whether my inference is correct or not I can question because is secondary source and this doubt can be clarified with the help of the primary source. I have to just walk down and see whether there is fire or not.

There are secondary sources and there are primary sources. Secondary sources can be questioned and we confirm, whereas primary source can never be questioned and confirmed. Whether we like it or not eye is a primary source, ear is a primary source, nose is a primary source. Similarly, *Veda* happens to be primary source. What tradition tells is *Veda* can never be questioned if it is approached as a secondary source. Don't waste your time using the *Veda* as a secondary source. Either use the *Veda* as a primary source or don't use it. Therefore have *āstikya buddhi* or *śraddhā* in this primary source.

The knowledge that the *Veda* is a primary source is important before we enter the field of scriptures. That is why *pūrova mimāṃsa*, in the beginning portion itself, introduces the *Veda prāmāṇya sūtram* or *autpattika sūtram*. Thereafter the first *sādhana*, the *Veda pūrova* has introduced to the human being is *karma yoga*. And I said *karma yoga* can be explained in several ways from several angles but for remembering *karma yoga* we can present it in the form of four-fold principles of *karma yoga* and four-fold benefit of *karma yoga*. The first principle is: gradual reduction of all *adhārmic* actions by regularly scanning our activities and asking the question which is *dhārmic* and which is *adhārmic*. Once I have identified the *adhārmic* actions, I should sincerely ask is it avoidable or unavoidable? And if we are sincere we will find several actions are avoidable. If we start trimming those avoidable *adhārmic* actions gradually the list will increase and more and more *adhārmic* actions we will identify; that is gradual growth.

The second principle is: include the *dhārmic* actions that are compulsory duties prescribed by the *Vedas*, know as *vihita karma* or *nitya naimittika*

*karma*. In the third chapter of the *Gītā*, Kṛṣṇa uses the word *niyatam kuru karamatvam*. There are too many *nitya naimittika karmas* but for our convenience, we take the five important ones known as the five – *mahā yajñāḥ*. The first *mahā-yajña* is: *deva yajñāḥ* i.e. regular worship of Lord in any way that we know. If we know *vedic* rituals, it is fine. But it is not compulsory. If we know *āgama* method of *pūjā* like *pañcāyatana pūjā* it is wonderful. Even if we don't know any regular ritual in any form, we may do the minimum offering of a few flowers, showing *ārati*, and doing *namaskāra*. This is the simplest form of worship. This *deva yajña* is invoking my relationship with Lord, which is the most important. This is the only stable relationship for the *jīva*. *Jīvas* relationship with any other *jīva* is not permanent. Maximum it can last for one life. Next life, these two may not even be human beings even. Therefore *jīva jīva sambandha* is unpredictable.

*Jīva-Īśavara sambandha* alone is the only answer for invocation of that relationship which is called *deva yajñāḥ*. Any relationship is invokes or expressed only by action. Any expression is through the action, *kāyikam* or *vācīkam*. *Mānasam* is the invocation and re-bonding like a mother re-bonding with the child or like regularly fondling the child which is *kāyikam karma*. While fondling the child no mother is silent. You can always see the mother also babbles like the babies. It is okay in front of the baby; other times also she should not babble. So what is babbling? *Vācīkam karma*. Fondling is *kāyikam karma* and is like baby *sūktam*. Fondling is like varieties of *upacāra, śodaṣa upacāra pūjā*. The ritual is going on; the purpose is to make the bond stronger. If mother does not do that baby mother bond can never be formed. Even though she is the biological mother, bond can never be formed, preserved or nourished. Any bond is formed or preserved and nourished only through *trividha karma – kāyika, vācika and mānasa karma*. Rituals are nothing but bonding with the Lord. Now the psychologists are saying if you don't know rituals invent fresh rituals. That means what? The physical expressions become as much important as verbal expressions and mental thoughts or feelings. Therefore *deva yajña* in any form we know is a daily bonding process.

Then the second one is – *pitr yajña*. It is reverential bonding with the *pitr's*, the parents, and the grandparents; in short, the entire *parampara* of forefathers. It is also meant for the same propose of family unity. If parents are not alive, then *Veda* prescribes varieties of rituals like *śrāddhā*, *tarpaṇa* etc. if they are alive, we should not do *śrāddhā*. Then it is nothing but giving our care, love, time etc. in short, it is maintenance of the family unity. Now this issue is becoming more and more important. Because of all the societies which were governed by religious laws, whether it is Christian, Hindu or Islam or even tribal – any society that was governed by religious laws always considered family as the basic unit of society. They never considered an individual as a basic unit; this is very important because individuals can never normally survive without the family cushioning.

A child, for the initial growth of the body and mind, requires a family support; and old people also when they are physically invalid and emotionally needy require the family support. Childhood requires it; old age requires it. There is only one small intermediary period between the two. In fact, then also it requires to a great extent. Therefore, if the family support is not there, the individual can never be psychologically, totally healthy. Therefore they considered family as the basic unit. All the duties prescribed were from the standpoint of the family unit only. Now what is happening? All the societies that are based on the modern democracy don't look upon the family as the basic Unit.; they are taking individual as the basic unit and they are talking of man's rights, woman's rights and child's rights. Therefore all the rights are wrongs. All the rights are taking human beings as an individual. And wherever family unit is not considered as basic and wherever the modern democracy thrives all over the world, you can find sooner or later, individual freedom will be highlighted and families will fall apart, the families are disintegrating and India is not much different; it will not be much different because the more the individual freedom is highlighted, family cannot survive. Individual freedom is very attractive but they have found sociologically it is disastrous; because families will dies and there will be no mental health for future generations. Now the Sociologists are discovering this truth and they and they are trying

to emphasize the importance of the family; but after discovering individual freedom, again coming back to the family is very, very difficult because to be in the family we have to voluntarily curtail or sacrifice some freedom. Voluntary sacrifice of freedom is required for the maintenances of the family. Our *vedic* scheme gave importance to family unit and most of the values were transmitted not from individual to individual but only through families. That is why *Arjuna* said, *kulakṣaye vinaśyanti kuladharmāḥ sanātanaḥ*..... Once families are gone many important values preserved only through *kula santati* will be destroyed. Therefore everyone should do regularly some rituals to maintain the family unit. All such rituals meant for maintenance of family are called *pitṛ yajña*. *Pitā* represented the family. *Pitā* is a symbolic word for family. So *pitṛ yajña* is very important both individually and sociologically, and they say, if there is a religious function like any *pūjā* and *śrāddham* in the family, always the *pitṛ karma* should be given importance and not the religious function. It is because family unit is important.

So *deva yajñah*, *pitṛ yajñah*, *manuṣya yajñah* and *ṛṣi yajñah* or *brahma yajñah* are important. They are my reverential contribution to the *Vedic* culture. Just as they do culturing to grow the micro organism, healthy human being can grow only when they have the appropriate culture. So *Vedic* culture has to be preserved and preservation of the *Vedic* culture is through the preservation of the scriptures. It is the compulsory duty of every *vaidika* to reverentially contribute his might for the preservation, prorogation and promotion of the scriptural teaching. Minimum is we can learn and share with a few others. Or support *gurukulams* that are doing the task. Therefore *brahma yajñah* or *ṛṣi yajñah* is study of scriptures.

Suppose a person listens to *Vedānta* without the qualifications mentioned in the *śāstra*, then it will be a form of karma yoga. With qualification, if a person listens to *Vedānta*. It becomes *jñāna yoga* and the result is *mokṣa*. Without qualifications, if a person listens even to the sound, then *śāstra* says, even for listening without qualification and without understanding, it will give *citta śuddhi* and *svarga loka*. So for *Vedānta śravaṇam*, minimum *phalam* is

heaven and maximum *phalam* is *mokṣa*. So *Vedānta śravaṇam* can always happen because either it will serve as karma yoga and *brahma yajña* form of *karma yoga*. Therefore study of scriptures is the third *yajña*.

The fourth one is *manuṣya yajña*. It is my reverential contribution to fellow human beings.

Then the final one is *bhūta yajña*. It is my reverential contribution to animals and plants.

The five *mahā yajñas* are greatly glorified in the *Veda*. In *bṛhadāraṇyaka*, 1<sup>st</sup> chapter, it is mentioned. In *Taittirīya* also this is hinted where *agnihotra* stands for *deva yajña*, *mānuṣaṅca* stands for *manuṣya yajña*, *prajāśca – prajānaśca* stands for *pitṛ yajña* and *svādhyāya pravacaneca* stands for *brahma yajña*. Thus, four *yajñas* are mentioned there. *Brahma yajña* is highlighted in the *Vedas* very much. So that becomes the second important principle in *karma yoga*. When we talk of five *mahāyajñas*, we don't say that other *kāmya karmas* should be stopped. *Veda* says and the author also says you can pursue your personal ambition. All your worldly desires, you can continue and along with that add and let it not replace or displace. Let *kāmya karma* continue but find time for *nitya karmas* otherwise called *pañca mahāyajña* according to your capacity. This is the second principle of *karma yoga* – include *dhārmic* action.

The third principle of *karma yoga* is, dedicate all actions to the Lord with *īśvarārpaṇa bhāvanāya*; doing all *karmas*, whether they are *kāmya karma* or five *mahā yajñas*. This is said, so that we will do all *karmas* wholeheartedly and also we know all the *karmas* whether it is *laukikam* or *vaidikam*, ultimately go to *Bhagavān's* department only. It has to go to *Bhagavān's* department because *Bhagavān* is the examiner. Wherever you write the test, it will all be sent where? To the examiner, he alone corrects the paper and gives the marks. Similarly any *karma* done anywhere, it has to go to Him. As He alone is the *karma adhyakṣa*, *karma phala dātā*, the Lord and the Lord alone has to decide the *phalam* according to the laws of *karma*, and once we remember it is going to the Lord, we will be confident that there will be no injustice and

the result will be appropriate. Therefore the third principle is dedicate all actions to the Lord.

Then the fourth principle is, experience everything as *prasāda* coming from the Lord, based on my action. Any experience that I undergo – minor or major – always receive with *prasāda buddhi* or *prasāda bhāvanā*. Taking as *prasāda* means *rāga dveṣa* is not allowed to judge the result. Judgement leads to reaction and non-judgmental acceptance leads to serenity. *Prasāde sarva duḥkhānām hāniḥ*. It is easy to remember: reduce *adhārmik* action, include *dhārmik* action, dedicate all actions to the Lord and experience everything as *īśvara prasāda*.

What is the principle of *karma yoga*? Ride the horse of *karma yoga*. If a person follows or rides properly, then it will give four-fold benefit. First benefit is satisfaction because when I do my duty to others whether to the family, religion, culture, nation or environment, the very performance of my duties gives a satisfaction. This satisfaction is a great fulfillment. It is like nay parent who settles the children properly is so much satisfied and relieved even though they don't know if the children are going to reciprocate or not. They might have even sold their ornaments and their house. Even now in India man parents do that. They become pauper by the time they settle their children. There is no guarantee that the children will take care. But the very performance of duty gives satisfaction. This is *karma ānanda*. The very *karma* gives *ānanda* and that *ānanda* is instantaneous and superior to *karma phala ānanda*. *Karma phala ānanda* will come sometime in future and again unpredictable whereas *karma ānanda* is in the present, predictable and satisfactory. This is *phalam* number one.

The second one is serenity of mind. Whatever be the *karma phala*, first of all, he is not concerned too much because *karma* itself has given *ānanda*. *Karma phala ānanda* has become secondary. A musician enjoys the very singing and not concerned at the clap that comes or not; sometimes clap comes and some other times they have slept off, *Nilāmbari rāgam* he has sung; but if the clap comes, it is a bonus because he has enjoyed singing. So for a *karma yogi*,

*karma phala ānanda* becomes secondary. Therefore he is not obsessed and its arrival or non-arrival will not make a major difference, and therefore, there is serenity in the mind. Also he accepts the result as *prasāda*.

Satisfaction is number one and serenity is number two. The third important benefit is social harmony is the result, because a *karma yogi* is aware of the totality. He never looks upon himself as an individual the very five *mahā yajña* indicate he is aware of family members – *pitṛ yajña*; he is aware of animals and plants – *bhūta yajña*; he is aware of fellow human beings – *manuṣya yajña*. All the five *mahā yajñas* make his mind expanded. Therefore, he does all his family duties, social duties etc. properly a *karma yogi* is never an isolated individual; he is a cosmic citizen; he makes sure that he maintains the universal rhythm and harmony.

Then the fourth and most important advantage from the standpoint of *mokṣa* is spiritual growth in the form of purification of the mind because at every stage he is remembering God with his *īśvarārpaṇa bhāvanā* or *prasāda bhāvanā*. God is intimately associated with him all the time and this association makes him more divine with the increase of *daiivī sampat* and decrease of *āsurī sampat*, which is otherwise called *samskāraḥ*. It comes in the form of *adr̥ṣṭa phalam*. That is what is said in *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* – whoever follows this way of life, he will helplessly fall in love with *Vedānta*. Unknowingly he will get attached to orange clothes.

The four-fold benefit is – satisfaction, serenity, social harmony and spiritual growth. Therefore, the author says, start this *karma yoga*.

May you take to *karma*! May you include your personal *karma* for fulfilling your personal ambitions in life. Whether it is money or house or ornaments or guest house in all hill stations, you can go from one place to another. Whatever worldly desires you have, you should fulfill in *dhārmik* manner. Important thing to note is, don't confine to *kāmya karma* only. Never forget the five *mahā yajña*. You should find time for that. Then what will happen? Naturally because of this effort, this person will get an opportunity to enjoy

all sense pleasures. Gradually he is taken to various pleasures one by one according to his *karma* like *svarga* etc. when such a *karma yogi* fulfils his desires what happens? We say a *karma yogi* will be able to learn from life's experiences. It is because one of the benefits of *karma yoga* is serenity. Serenity means calmness and a calm non-reacting mind is in a learning mode and it learns from every experience, from the University of Life. Whereas a non-*karma yogi* mind is a reacting mind, stressed out mind, tantrum throwing mind. Such a reactive mind can never learn anything from life. *Karma yogi* enjoying serenity does the *parīkṣya* of his experiences – *parīkṣya lokān karma citān*. Examination requires a serene mind. If its learning takes place, then this learning mind discovers certain important truths which are very important for turning towards *Vedānta*. What are the truths?

One truth is *sarvaṁ paraivaśaṁ duḥkhaṁ sarvaṁ ātmavaśaṁ sukham etat vidyāt samāseṇa lakṣaṇaṁ sukha duḥkhaḥ*.

Anything in which there is dependence on external factors whether it is physical or emotional or moral or psychological is *paraivaśam* and *duḥkham*. Wherever there is dependence or need, there are expectations. Wherever there are expectations, here are possibilities of disappointments. Wherever there are disappointments, there are shocks and depression. Anytime I am disturbed, you always see some expected response did not come from the family member, you say, 'my own son did not do that. I have done so much'. Then you may also add, 'he is good, but that girl who came you know'. My son is naturally good only; but after that girl came became a spoilt brat. Dependence means expectations. Expectations mean disappointments. Disappointment means frustrations and disappointments mean depression. Depression in Bay of Bengal is useful, depression in the mind also brings water – tears. any intelligent person will understand that the problem is not with the world but the problem is that I depend and expect things from outside. Therefore instead of blaming the unpredictable world, and instead of blaming the people with their own *rāga dveṣa*, I blame my self.

After presenting *jñāna yoga*, which is the direct, means of liberation in the first four verses, from the fifth verse onwards the *Āchārya* has entered into *Karma* and *upāsanā yoga*. These two *yogas* are not a means of liberation but they are a means to come to *jñāna yoga*. *Karma-upāsanā yogas* are a means to *jñāna yoga* and *jñāna yoga* is the direct means to liberation. *Karma* and *upāsanā* are called *paramparā kāraṇam* for *mokṣa*; *jñānam* is called *sākṣāt kāraṇam* for *mokṣa*. We saw what *Karma yoga* is and we also saw that is the benefit of *Karma yoga* – satisfaction, serenity, social harmony that includes environmental harmony also, as well as spiritual growth.

The spiritual growth expresses in the form of *sādhana catuṣṭaya saṃpatti* and here the *Āchārya* is referring to the prominent one in *sādhana catuṣṭaya saṃpatti* namely *vairāgyam*. *Vairāgyam*, in everything finite, from worldly pleasures up to *svarga lokah*. *Śaṅkarācārya* says in *Aparokṣānubhūti* – “suppose there is some crow dropping and we push it aside” and we don’t declare to everyone that I have *vairāgyam*. It is an effortless thing because for me it does not have any value. Similarly all the 14 *ślokas* from the standpoint of infinite are *kāka viṣṭa samānah*. That is said in the third line of this *śloka*: *nairāshyam eva asthire- asthire* is finite. This is an adjective to *svargādau* – *asthire svargādau*. With regard to everything I the creation beginning from heaven which is all ephemeral or finite and with regard to all objects of the world – *nirāśayam gamitaḥ bhavati*. May a human being be brought to *vairāgyam* with regard to the impermanent worldly thing. Not only he should have this *vairāgyam*, but also he has to understand that anything accomplished by *Karma* is going to be finite in nature; whatever has a beginning has an end also.

Naturally he mind will have a question: if everything is ephemeral, is there something permanent at all? Unfortunately all the instruments of knowledge that are at our disposal can reveal only the finite thing. All the *pramāṇams* other than *Veda pramāṇam*, all the *pauruṣeya pramāṇam* have got access to only ephemeral thing and we can never know if there is something infinite. Since he has got *śraddhā* in *Veda pramāṇam* he goes to *Veda* and asks the question. *Veda* to his satisfaction says, here is a thing, which is eternal – *brahmavid āpnoti param satyam jñānam anantaṃ brahma*. The *Veda* says there is something which is

eternal. He has got clear knowledge. The worldly experience has revealed the *anitya vastu*. *Veda pramāṇam* has revealed the *nitya vastu*. So he clearly understands there are two things – one is *anityam* revealed through the *pauruṣeya pramāṇam* - all our instruments of knowledge, reveals *anitya vastu* and *apauruṣeya pramāṇam* *Veda pramāṇam* reveals *nitya vastu*. With the help of these two *pramāṇams*, he clearly knows there are two things – *nityam* and *anityam*. Therefore the author says in the 4<sup>th</sup> line – *nityānitya vicāreṇa svādhikṛtā bhavatu*; this *Karma yogi* should gradually enter into *nitya anitya vastu viveka*. Let him be well qualified and committed to enquiry into *nitya and anitya*. Having thus become qualified, thereafter he should embark upon the major spiritual journey called *shreyo mārga* in *Kaṭhopanīṣad*. Let him turn his attention towards *nitya vastu*, *tasmai sa vidvān.....* In *Muṇḍaka Upanīṣad* it is said – when the student is mature and he wants to know the infinite, *tad vijñānārtham saḥ gurumevābhigacchet*, let him go to a *guru* and the *guru* will reveal the infinite, *tatvām* the reality, let him thoroughly enquire – *anviccatu, vicāryatu*. This is the first part of preparation known as *Karma yoga* preparation and he has to talk about *upāsanā yoga* preparation also which he will speak in the next *śloka*. Thus 5<sup>th</sup> *śloka* is *Karma yoga pradāna śloka*.

### Verse 6

ज्ञानाप्तैः परिपन्थिनौ किल मलो विक्लेषदोषस्तथा  
चेतोनिष्ठा महारिपु प्रथमतश्चोन्मूलनीयौ यतः ।  
कामं दूरमपास्य कर्मनिरतो मालिन्यरिक्तास्ततः  
चित्तैकाग्र्यसुसिद्धये च भजतां निष्कामनोपासनम् ॥६॥

*jñānāpteḥ paripanthinau kila malo vikṣepadoṣastathā  
cetonīṣṭhā mahāripū prathamataśconmūlanīyau yataḥ ।  
kāmaṁ dūramapāsya karmanirato mālīnyariktastataḥ  
cittaikāgryasusiddhaye ca bhajatām niṣkāmanopāsanam ॥ .. 6*

He has to talk about the *upāsanā yoga* as the second stage and after that one has to go to *jñāna yoga* which will lead to liberation. Before entering the *upāsanā yoga* topic, the author wants to take a diversion and take a bird's eye view of where

we stand now. He is worried because he introduced *jñānam* first then came back to *Karma*, now wants to go to *upāsana*. Even though we are intelligent students and won't get confused, the author feels diffident and wants to go back and have a bird's eye view. This is called *simhāvalokana nyāyaḥ*. It is once in a while stopping and taking stock of totality of the situation. This is a small diversion but a beautiful picture, which is generally given in the *śāstra*.

According to *śāstra* – *mokṣa* the ultimate goal or *nitya ānanda* is not a destination that we have to reach in time by travel but it happens to be our very *svarūpa*. So, *mokṣa*, whether we call it absolute peace or absolute security or absolute *ānanda*, happens to be or *svarūpa*, intrinsic nature. Our problem is not lack of *mokṣa* but our problem is this: we have disowned or disclaimed because it is covered by obstacles. Because of the concealment, we are not aware of the fact that whatever we seek, we already have. Therefore we are seeking. Like in *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* 8<sup>th</sup> Chapter, the example is given: just as a person has a huge treasure underneath his feet. He has a small piece of land and underneath his feet he has *hiranya nidhi* – the treasure is down below and the owner of the land does not know that is there. He is begging for money from others. Similarly we have got the *hiranya nidhi* of *mokṣa* and it is concealed. In the case of treasure it is concealed by mud rock and clay etc. therefore we have to find and claim the treasures. How? By removing, all the concealing layers.

In *Vivekacūḍāmaṇi Śaṅkarācārya*, talks about that – *āptoktim khaṇanam tadopariśīlāt utkarṣaṇam svīkṛtim....* In the same way have to unearth; in the case of treasure, concealment is because of clay, mud, rock etc. in or case what is the concealing layer? You cannot say clay in the head!! Here the *śāstra* says – we have three layers of covering which have to be chipped off or removed. One layer is the grossest layer, the next one is the subtler one and the third layer is the subtlest one. The grossest topmost layer is called *malam* or *malaḥ*, which indicates *rāga* and *dveṣa*; *rāga* and *dveṣa* based emotional disturbances. *rāga* and *dveṣa* are otherwise called *kāma* and *krodha*. *Kṛṣṇa* repeatedly says – they are big obstacles. That is the grossest layer called *malam*. Next subtle layer is *vikṣepa*, which means the extrovertedness of the mind or restlessness of the mind. We can call it – wandering nature, extroverted nature, distracted nature, turbulent nature or

restless nature. This is the second layer of obstacle. The third layer is called *āvaraṇam*, the subtlest layer of concealment. The grossest one is the outermost layer, the second one is the middle layer and *ajñānam* is the innermost layer. We have to chip off these and what is there is *mokṣa* already.

Like the treasure example another beautiful example of a sculptor creating a beautiful idol is given. But if you see what he creates, he doesn't create anything. In the rock the idol is already there. What is his job? He does not create Kṛṣṇa, he just removes layers and layers; he chips off. First he takes a bigger chisel and removes bigger pieces and next he takes finer ones and removes further. You have already got Kṛṣṇa. Thereafter he uses very fine chisel and brings out Kṛṣṇa fully. When it was a rock no body did *namaskāra*; in fact, only crows sit on it. Same rock when it is unfolded, it becomes Kṛṣṇa. It goes to the temple; has daily *abhiśekam* and people stand in queue for *darśanam*.

According to *Vedānta* we are all rocks. Inside us is hidden *Bhagavān*. Though nobody is willing to believe looking at us, nobody believes *Bhagavān* is inside us but *sāstra* says chip off and the *Bhagavān* is carved out. The sculptor uses the appropriate chisel. *Karma yoga* chisel removes the mala obstacle, *upāsana yoga* chisel removes the *vikṣepa* obstacle and *jñāna yoga* removes the *āvaraṇa* obstacle. *Karma yogena mala nivrittiḥ*, *upāsana yogena vikṣepa nivrittiḥ* and *jñāna yogena āvaraṇa nivrittiḥ*. *Mala nivrittiḥ* is positively called *citta śuddhiḥ*. *vikṣepa nivrittiḥ* is positively called *citta ekāgratā*. Impurity has gone means purity has come. Distractions have gone means what? Focus has come. Similarly *āvaraṇa nivrittiḥ* positively put is *jñāna praptiḥ* or *mokṣa praptiḥ*.

So what are we doing? We are only unburdening ourselves, removing obstacle, when layers and layers of obstacles are removed and when the three layers are gone we ourselves are Brahman. That, the author reminds here – *jñānāpteḥ paripanthinau kila malo vikṣepadoṣastathā* – for the practice of *jñāna yoga*, for the attainment of *jñānam*, there are two obstacle and they are all said in the *sāstrās*. What are they? *mala* and *vikṣepa* – *mala* is literally impurity in this context, the *rāga dveṣa* dirt; *vikṣepa doṣa* – the defect of distraction. If you want to write something on a black board, before writing two things are important. Whatever is already written on the board has to be removed i.e. cleansing; otherwise you

cannot write. Otherwise what will happen? You will overwrite, and you do not know what is old and what is new. Many people overwrite. They know what is over written but a later person will not know if 7 was written over 8 or 8 was written over 7. Similarly from the mind, *rāga dveṣās* have to be wiped out. Now the board is clean, but imagine it is hanging from the roof top and not clamped on the wall. You write on that board, it is a clean board but not steady. Therefore to write on the board it has to be clean and steady. Similarly the mind of the student must be clean and steady. Then the teacher can write. By the time the teacher wants to write *tat tvam asi* and he writes *tat*, the mind has gone somewhere else. He cannot write at all. Therefore he says *malaḥ* and *vikṣepa doṣaḥ* are obstacles. These obstacles are resting where? They are two great enemies, powerful obstacles. *Kṛṣṇa* uses the word *vairī* and here it is *ripū*. Both of them are in the mind. It is mental impurity and mental distraction. It is located in the mind. *cetaḥ* means mind, and *niṣṭhaḥ* means located.

From this we get an important corollary also. We are removing the impurities and obstacles from the mind because they are obstacles for the rise of knowledge. If the obstacles for the rise of knowledge are located in the mind, then where should the knowledge arise? If the knowledge should arise somewhere else, you need not cleanse the mind. You have to wash the plate if you have to serve the food on the plate. Imagine you wash the plate and keep it aside and take another plate for food. It will be foolish. So if the mind if washed for *Vedānta* study it is very, very clear that the mind alone is the locus of knowledge. This is very important because there is a wide and wild misconception that spiritual knowledge does not take place in the mind. Therefore they advise the students that you have to transcend your mind and thereafter gain the knowledge. If you are going to transcend the mind, the question is – where will the knowledge take place? If the knowledge is going to take place elsewhere, why should we cleanse our mind wasting our time? *sāstra* elaborately talks about cleansing the mind.

From that, it is clear that any knowledge, material knowledge or spiritual knowledge should take place in the mind. So if somebody asks what is the locus of spiritual knowledge? We should say locus of spiritual knowledge is mind

alone. Then why do you call it spiritual knowledge? Many people think that spiritual knowledge should take place in the spirit. Why? Remember it is called spiritual knowledge, not because it takes place in the spirit, spiritual knowledge has to take place in the mind. It is a mental knowledge. It is called spiritual because it is about the spirit. It is intellectual knowledge about the spirit. It is knowledge that takes place in the intellect. Spiritual knowledge is intellectual knowledge only. The knowledge is dealing with the spirit. It is knowledge that takes place in the intellect. Spiritual knowledge is intellectual knowledge only. The knowledge is dealing with the spirit. Take it in the right spirit. Spirit means the *ātmā*. Spiritual knowledge is intellectual knowledge. Dayananda Swamiji repeatedly says. "Every knowledge is intellectual only. There is no dental knowledge etc". Let there be no confusion in anyone.

In which *avasthā* does the knowledge take place? Four *avasthās* are there – *jāgrat avasthā*, *svapna avasthā*, *susupti avasthā* and *samādhi avasthā*. In *svapna avasthā*, the intellect is not under our control. Intellect is not functioning; only memory is functioning. So *svapna avasthā* is ruled out. What about *susupti avasthā*? What knowledge is available also goes away. So the *susupti avasthā* cannot be the *avasthā*. What about *samādhi avasthā*? *Samādhi avasthā* is an *avasthā* where everything is suspended. It is an *avasthā* where the intellect is not available; it is suspended. Therefore in *samādhi avasthā* also it is not possible. Therefore it should be in the *jāgrat avasthā* only. In the waking state, when the intellect is fully alert and active, the *Vedānta vākya pramāṇa* coming from the mouth of the *guru* has to produce knowledge, and if it does not produce knowledge nothing else can it produce. If it does not produce knowledge, then what do we do?

*Upaniṣad* says, listen for a second time. But *Swāmiji*, "Knowledge did not take place", then listen a third time. How long? Till you die. But *Swāmiji* throughout this life, it did not take place! Continue in the next birth you will have better luck. There is no other way. Intellect is the location of knowledge. Therefore, you may clean the intellect of this two-fold dirt. Of these two, which one should be removed first? Always in any cleaning process, the grosser ones are removed first; thereafter only the subtler ones. Even while washing cloth, first you have to dip in water and remove the superficial impurities; thereafter whatever lotion or

detergent you use later. Similarly the grosser one is mala *doṣaḥ* and first we have to remove them.

So *prathamataḥ*, firstly, both of them should be removed in that order – *mala* first then *vikṣepa* next. Therefore you have to make use of *Karma yoga sādhana* first, mentioned in the previous *śloka*. By practicing *Karma yoga*, riding the horse of *Karma yoga*, there also we said, initially *kāmya Karma* will also be there and along with that *niyata Karma*, *pañca mahā yajña* will exist. Gradually *kāmya Karma* will come down and *pañca mahā yajña* will increase. The proportion of *kāmya Karma* *niṣkāmya Karma* will gradually tilt. Therefore he says, *Karma nirataḥ san, kāmam* one should throw away *kāma*. *kāma* means attachment towards finite things of the creation. Here *kāma krodha*; *kāma krodha* represents *rāga dveṣa*. That is why in the third chapter of the *Gītā*, when Kṛṣṇa says, “*kāma eṣa krodha eṣa ....*” Kṛṣṇa had introduced *kāma krodha* which should be in dual number, Kṛṣṇa uses singular number. Doesn't Kṛṣṇa know Sanskrit Grammar? So we say *kāma* and *krodha* are not two separate things. *kāma* alone gets converted to *krodha* when some one obstructs it. Like *iñji*(ginger) and *sukku*(dry ginger), where it is grown. In school they asked and some of us did not know that *sukku* is dried ginger. Similarly when *kāma* itself is obstructed is *krodha*. Here *kāma* refers to *kāma krodha malam*. *apāsya* means pushing aside, having thrown *kāma* and *krodha*, by practice of *Karma yoga*, he becomes what? *mālinya riktastataḥ* – free from *malam*, *samaḥ bhavati*.

This *Karma yoga* that he mentions is the same as the *Karma yoga* mentioned in the previous *śloka*. Having removed *rāga dveṣa malam* through *Karma yoga*, what should he do? He has to come to *upāsanā yoga*. That is said here. Thereafter, he has to enter into second layer of *vikṣepa* by the practice of *upāsanā*. That he is introducing in the fourth line. *aikāgryam* - means concentration, one pointedness, focus is called *aikāgryam*. *Citta aikāgryam* means mental concentration in the positive language. In the negative language, it is presented as *vikṣepa nivrittiḥ* – freedom from distraction. Concentration means freedom from distraction. For attaining this concentration, for total mastery of the mind, a person should resort to *bhajatām* – a person should resort to, to take to, to employ and let the seeker employ the following *sādhana*. What is that?

*niṣkāma upāsanam* – meditation. *upāsanā* is also divided into two types – *sakāma upāsanā* and *niṣkāma upāsanā*. Like two knobs whichever knob you want you can turn on. *sakāma upāsanā* means the practice of meditation for material benefits like higher *lokas* as well as mystical powers. By the practice of meditation, a person can get varieties of *siddhis*. In *Uddhava Gītā*, which is a portion in the *Bhāgavatam*, we saw the whole chapter was dedicated to the enlisting of *siddhis*. Kṛṣṇa elaborately talks about *siddhis*. Not only that, He also says which particular *upāsanā* will give which miraculous power. Having enumerated all of them, at the end Lord Kṛṣṇa says, “If you are as serious spiritual seeker, never pay attention to any *siddhi* because *siddhis* will also come under *anātmā* or finite benefits”.

*niṣkāmatā* – means freedom from desire for *siddhis* also. Thus *siddhis*, *svarga loka*, *brahma loka* etc, are the result of *sakāma upāsanā*, and *niṣkāma upāsanā* will give what? Not material benefit but spiritual benefit. What do you mean by spiritual benefit? *Citta ekāgrata* – it will give. Not only that, it will give spiritual *punyam* by which a person will get more interested in *Vedānta*. He will get an opportunity to listen to the *śāstra* and he will get an ideal *guru*. These are all the benefits of *niṣkāma upāsanā*.

Therefore, the author says – *niṣkāma upāsanam bhajatām* – may one resort to. The author does not talk about what is *upāsanā*. He only says May one practice *upāsanā*. I would like to give a brief not about *upāsanā* because meditation is a very big thing today. Anywhere and everywhere there are meditation sessions. When a spiritual *Vedānta* student approaches meditation, he should be clear about certain fundamentals.

In *Vedantic* field, meditation is never practiced for mystical powers or mystical experiences. A *Vedantic* student is never interested in any mystic or extraordinary powers because both of them are obstacles. Why? Because, both of them come under *anātmā*; any mystic experience is what? Mystic *anātmā*, because it is an object of experience, the very fact that it came and the very fact that it went away indicates it has nothing to do with *sākṣi caitayam*. Will *sākṣi caitayam* come, smile at you and go away; can never do. If anything comes and goes,

however extraordinary it maybe, I should have nothing to do with that. Therefore we should never be interested in mystic experiences or mystical powers.

Secondly *Vedantic* meditation is never meant for *mokṣa*; because we don't have to get *mokṣa* through meditation - because *mokṣa* is already our nature. Why should I get *mokṣa* through meditation? Then is meditation meant for *jñānam*? Either *parokṣa* or *aparokṣa* – very important; here also we clearly say, meditation is not meant for knowledge also. Whether it is direct or indirect, whether it is spiritual or non- spiritual no meditation can produce any knowledge; because any knowledge is gained through an appropriate means of knowledge called *pramāṇam* and the *śāstra* talks about various means of knowledge – *pratyakṣam*, *anumānam*, *upamānam*, *arthāpatti*, and *anupalabdhi*. Various *pramāṇās* are enumerated. Meditation never included as a means of knowledge.

If meditation is a means of knowledge all the schools ad colleges should have what? Only physics meditation hall! And the student does one year meditation, first year physics course over. Doesn't take place! When ordinary knowledge cannot take place through meditation, how can extraordinary knowledge take place through meditation? So we have to remove misconceptions, if there are any, that meditation gives knowledge; it is not meant for *jñānam*, not for mystical experiences, not for miraculous powers, not for *mokṣa* and not for *jñānam* also. Then why should we practice meditation? That we will see in the next installment.

We saw that *mokṣa* being our true nature, there is no necessity of acquiring *mokṣa*. Only there is a necessity for removing the obstacles for claiming *mokṣa*, which is our true nature. This alone we name as discovery. Discovery is a beautiful word, which reveals the process of removing the cover. We saw *śāstra* talks of three types of covers – *mala vikṣepa* and *āvaraṇa*. *mala* meaning *rāga dveṣa* – the impurities of the mind; *vikṣepa* is the restlessness of the mind and *āvaraṇa* is self-ignorance. Three *sādhana*s have been prescribed for their removal; *karma yogena mala nivrittih*; *upāsana yogena vikṣepa nivrittih*; *jñāna yogena āvaraṇa nivrittih*. Of these three, the author has talked about *karma yoga* in verse number

5 and first three lines of verse number 6. Now in the fourth line of verse 6, the author is briefly introducing *upāsanā yoga* by saying *niṣkāmapāsanam bhajatām*. May a seeker resort to *niṣkāma upāsanā*.

*upāsanā* means meditation. Meditation can be practiced for varieties of material benefits. Meditation can be practiced for preparing the mind for *jñāna yoga*. When meditation is practiced for material benefits it is called *sakāma upāsanā*. The author does not give the details of that meditation but we can see that from different portions of the scriptures. We can see four types of meditations which will be useful to us for four types of preparation. The mind has to develop various faculties for gaining the knowledge. For developing each faculty, we can design an appropriate form of meditation because after all meditation is a mental exercise. Just as we can design varieties of physical exercises to improve or physical health, we can have varieties of mental exercises, all meant to develop different faculties of mind. There are four types of exercises, which will help people in general as well as people who are spiritual seekers. I will briefly mention these four forms of meditation. All of them are preparatory for *jñāna yoga*.

The first one is relaxation meditation, which is to train the mind to relax. The mind is generally active and our lifestyle is becoming faster and faster. In addition to the body, mind requires relaxation and any form of mental exercise to invoke relaxation or to induce relaxation is called relaxation meditation. In any form of meditation we are not directly interested in thoughtlessness. We don't give too much importance to thoughtlessness. If it happens that is a different thing. It is not the aim of *Vedānta*. *Vedānta* is not interested in that. All forms of meditation involve entertaining thoughts. All or preparatory meditations involve entertaining thoughts. We only decide what type of thought we can entertain. We are interested in regulating the thought. We are interested in directing the thought. We are not interested in removing the thought.

In relaxation meditation, we choose such thoughts, which will invoke or induce mental relaxation. By this, we mean that there are no disturbing thoughts. We don't say that there are no thoughts; there are no disturbing thoughts, there is

relaxation. For example, in visualization of nature or forest or river or ocean or sky or mountain or animals or birds, you watch anywhere in the creation, there is relaxation and there are no disturbing thoughts. The only place where there is tension is the spring of the watch and the human mind! Nowhere else there is tension.

There is a *vedic mantra* which says there is *śānti* everywhere. So when I invoke the natural *śānti* which is everywhere, by a sympathetic vibration or by the law of association, the mind also quietens. Thus by visualization of nature or by visualization of *āśrama* or by visualization of *mahātmā* who are embodiment of *śānti*, there is mental quietude. Ramaṇa Maharshi was an embodiment of silence. Visualizing him brings mental quietude. And you feel you are in his/her presence. Thus visualize or entertain any thought which is not meant for concentration on anything; we invoke quietude of the mind. Alternatively it can be any form of *mantra* which induces quietude. Any *śānti mantra* can invoke *śānti*. Alternatively we can visualize or *iṣṭa devata*, the Lord of our heart. All our tension, strain and stress are released from me. By dedicating at the feet of the Lord we unburden all our mental tensions. By several such methods, I induce relaxation or I invoke relaxation. This form of meditation is called relaxation meditation.

The second form of meditation is to develop the faculty of the focusing power of the mind, which is totally opposite of relaxation. Relaxation is defocusing. Relaxation is a faculty of the mind. The second form of meditation is I develop the faculty of concentration or the focusing capacity of the mind and improving my attention span. Sometimes we can concentrate only for five minutes. Not only should I have the power to focus but also I should have the capacity to retain. That is why in *aṣṭāṅga yoga*, *dhāraṇa* is focusing, *dhyānam* and *samādhi* are retaining the focused condition. For this purpose we can give any particular exercise to the mind and ask the mind to do that job for a length of time, undistracted. Generally, because we are spiritual seekers, we want to connect the works that we do to the Lord in one way or the other. Otherwise it will become a secular mental exercise.

We want to make it meditation by bringing in the Lord. Therefore we give *mānasa pūjā* as a form of exercise. We have got various *stotrams* written by *Acharyas*; like *śiva mānasa pūjā stotram* where we don't have any physical material but the whole *ṣodhaṣa upacāra pūjā* is done mentally. I visualize the invocation of the Lord, then *abhiṣeka*, then *alankāra* and then *naivedyam*. We can do it elaborately with expensive material because no expenditure, *mānasa pūjā* only. If we have a lot of time, we can have *ekādaśa rudrābhiṣekam* or *ekavāra rudrābhiṣekam* with 11 materials, we can perform very elaborate *mānasa pūjā*. Or we can have a short *mānasa pūjā*; either in the form of my performing the *pūjā* or the priest performing the *pūjā* in the temple and I am visualizing the *pūjā*. If I don't have the habit of doing *pūjā*, then it is difficult to visualize mentally. I have never done *pūjā* in my life and try to do mentally; it won't work. If I regularly do *pūjā* and *sandhyāvandanam* for that matter, what I do physically I can visualize mentally. Otherwise it is almost impossible. So for those people who do not have the habit, they would have gone to the temples and watched the *pūjā* done or gone to the Śāṅkara maṭham and the Śāṅkarācārya himself performs the *pūjā*, they might have watched. In one form or the other the mind remains in a *pūjā* session.

If I am not comfortable in *mānasa pūjā*, then the very same *mānasa pūjā stotram* can be chanted as a *pārāyaṇam*. Instead of involving the materials, instead of using the materials mentally, I just chant the stotram itself mentally, which is called *mānasa pārāyaṇam*.

So *mānasa pūjā* is one type of mental exercise, *mānasa pārāyaṇam* is another type of mental exercise or *mānasa japa* is yet another type of mental exercise. *Cittajam japa dhyānam uttamam*. I take a short *mantra* like *Om nama śivāya* or *Om namo nārāyaṇāya* or any *mantra* including *Gāyatri* and I repeat. The difference between *pārāyaṇam* and *japa* is – in *pārāyaṇam*, it is a flowing chant of various verses and in *japa* we don't have variety but only one *mantra* – *mantra āvṛittiḥ japaḥ*. When you do it vocally, it will become *vācika japaḥ*; when you do it mentally it becomes *mānasa japaḥ*. *mānasa japaḥ* is a form of *upāsanam*.

Thus *mānasa pūjā* is an exercise, *mānasa pārāyaṇam* is an exercise and *mānasa japa* is an exercise. All these exercises will help me to retain my mind in a particular field for a length of time. In *mānasa pūjā* we have a wide variety of things. In *mānasa pārāyaṇam*, it is restricted; as things are not there only words are there. In *mānasa japa* not even words, only one word. Therefore gradually the field is getting shorter and shorter, when you go from *mānasa pūjā* to *pārāyaṇam* to *japa*. Thus all the three forms of meditation will come under concentration meditation or focusing meditation. Relaxation meditation is what? Defocusing meditation and concentration meditation is focusing meditation. Two opposite faculties we develop through two different types of meditation.

Then there is a third form of meditation, where I learn to expand my mind to visualize the totality, to visualize the *virāt Īśvara*, the *viśvarūpa īśvara*. Many *vedic* meditations are of this nature. In *Taittirīya śikṣāvalli* we have several such *upāsana* – *samhitopāsana*, *vyāhṛti upāsana*, *pāñkta upāsana*, *barhma upāsana* and many *vedic* meditations are in the form of expansion of the mind. Similar meditations are there in *Chāndogya* and *Bṛhadāraṇyaka*.

The idea is, you should not confine your mind to family and a few relatives, a small narrow street in Coimbatore or Chennai. Forget your family; forget all relationships with the individual; look at yourself as a cosmic citizen; an integral part of nature. Visualize the galaxies; knowledge of Astronomy will be useful. The astronomers say there are billions of galaxies and each galaxy is a cluster of stars. Among billions of galaxies one galaxy is our milky way with millions of stars. Each galaxy is a cluster of millions of stars. Milky Way is not even the biggest, its one of the just ordinary one. Among the millions of stars there is the just ordinary star that is the powerful Sun; that is not even the biggest one. It is billions of miles away and its summer heat, we are able to feel all over. 45-46 degrees we complain. From the galaxies to our Galaxy, to our star and around the sun there are so many planets and our earth is not even the biggest planet. Only an ordinary planet; and in the planet there are so many continents, one is Asia and inside there are so many countries and one such is India hanging somewhere. A big tsunami the whole thing will wash away; and within India, there are so many states, so many districts and so many villages. They are one

dot of dust. If you take the totality of the cosmos, we are not even a dot of dust. 70 years or 90 years of our life, we are preoccupied with this dot and we are missing the *Viśvarūpa* of *Bhagavān*. What a tragedy? Preoccupied with the dot we are missing the universal glory of the Lord, which cannot be appreciated by the local elephants. No animals can do! We alone have that power but we refuse to enjoy that glory because we blow up our mosquito bite problem. Our minor problems we blow up and all these wonderful things we are missing. Even when we come for camps often we don't see the mountains and trees around. Either preoccupied with tea or preoccupied with some family affairs.

*Viśvarūpa upāsanā* is dilution of the ego and allowing the cosmic *Īśvara* to enter my mind, to occupy my mind. May the cosmic *Īśvara* occupy my mind and make the problems of the ego individual insignificant nothing! This *viśvarūpa upāsanā* is extremely important because ultimately the knowledge I have to gain is *aham brahma asmi*. When I gain the knowledge I have to learn to visualize all these galaxies as existing in me; that is the knowledge – *maiyyeva sakalam jātam mayi sarvam pratiṣṭhitam* ..... I have to expand to such an extent that galaxies must be seen as bubbles appearing and disappearing. In *ātma bodha* Śaṅkarācārya says, when you take the whole cosmos from the standpoint of *Brahman*, the whole cosmos is a bubble and if I have to see the whole cosmos as a bubble, what must be the size? When I have to see the whole cosmos as bubble that is *Vedantic* teaching, I am missing that. I am seeing the small bubble in the body as cosmos. I am making a mountain out of a molehill instead of making a mountain of a molehill. Everything is getting reversed.

*viśvarūpa upāsanā* is the reversing process. Instead of seeing myself as an insignificant creature in the world, I have to see the whole world as an insignificant bubble in me. Such a transformation, the mind has to undergo. So *viśvarūpa upāsanā* is for expansion - *citta viśālata*. *viśāla* means expanded. This is called *viśvarūpa* meditation. The 11<sup>th</sup> chapter of the *Gītā* we can learn by heart and chant that. For all meditations we will have to learn at least some part of *mantras* and *ślokas* by heart even if you don't learn everything by heart. But a few *mantras* if you learn, it is very useful because we can bring that in meditation. This is the third form of meditation.

The fourth one is purification meditation or value meditation. We have discussed earlier relaxation meditation, concentration meditation, expansion meditation and now we will discuss purification meditation. In purification meditation I take any value that is very, very relevant to me in my life. We all have got our own problems. We are deficient in certain values and very rich in some wrong values. We take any value that is relevant to our life and see the importance of that value for spiritual knowledge. It can be *amānitvam, adambhitvam, ahimsā, śāntiḥ* or any value. I see its importance for spiritual knowledge and after dwelling upon the importance, I see that I am gaining that value in meditation. I visualize myself as being endowed with that value. We can even visualize the Lord as blessing me with that value. If intolerance is my problem, then I visualize the Lord. You can also go highly imaginative; you can imagine from the Lord's hand tolerance coming, so the ray comes and blesses you and you are tolerant. Visualize somebody insulting and see that I am unaffected.

*Pūjya Swāmiji* talks about a beautiful prayer – the serenity prayer which is useful to all of us. It is, 'Oh Lord! Give me the serenity to accept that which cannot be changed'. In fact, in life, most of the things cannot be changed. When we find it difficult to change ourselves, how can you imagine changing other people? So you can rule out changing the family members. 'Lord! Give me the courage to change what can be changed'. We can work for the change. Thirdly, 'The wisdom to know the difference between what can be changed and what cannot be changed'. Otherwise, what cannot be changed, we keep on working at it: otherwise what can be changed we keep on accepting. Both are foolish. You need not accept anything lying down, we can certainly work. This is a very important value. In fact this one value will take care of the other values. So *Pūjya Swāmiji* talks about this in meditation.

This should not become another *japa*. After saying that we can visualize various situations in life; we have to regularly interact with some irritating members. We cannot avoid being part and parcel of the society. We can

bring all these people and mentally say, 'I accept this person. I accept this person, and that person may be able to change or may not be able to change. But I will not allow my mind to be disturbed'. It is self - immunization. Instead of improving the set up, it is better to immunize one self. Serenity prayer is self-immunization prayer.

Thus we can take any value and dwell on that, and at the end, I give the powerful autosuggestion that, I have now got that acceptance. We ourselves may have doubted it. As *Pūjya Swāmiji* says, "Fake it and make it". Even though it may not be true, I repeat to myself – I have gathered this value as a result of this meditation. I am now more serene more immune mentally. I can face the challenges of the day better. With the autosuggestion I conclude the value meditation. The autosuggestion is the crucial culmination. I have to see myself as being endowed with the value. If diffidence is the problem then, I say, 'I have confidence', still shaking. Doesn't matter you tell. After sometime the statement will become true. This is value meditation or purification meditation. All these four will come under preparatory meditation. We can call it *niṣkāma upāsanam*.

By this we enjoy a mind for *Vedānta śravaṇa manana nidhidhyāsanam*. Such a prepared mind is not an enlightened mind; it is a prepared ignorant mind. Before that it was unprepared ignorant mind. Now I have got *mala niṛṭtiḥ*; I have got *vikṣepa niṛṭtiḥ* and I am ready for *āvaraṇa niṛṭtiḥ*. That is going to be talked about in the next verse:

### Verse 7

कर्मापासनतो विशिद्ध-हृदयस्तत्त्वार्थ-संसिद्धये

स्वाचार्यं परिचर्यं शास्त्रविधिना तस्मच्च विद्यां पराम् ।

श्रुत्वा समयानुत्तये च मौनं स्थाग्ने निध्यासनम्

अभ्यस्य क्रमशः समाधिनिलयः प्राप्नोति शान्तिं ध्रुवम् ॥७॥

*karmopāsanato viśuddha-hṛdayastattvārtha-samsiddhaye*

*svācāryaṁ paricaryaṁ śāstravidhinā tasmācca vidyāṁ parām ।*

*śrutvā samayānuttaye ca mananaṁ sthāgne nididhyāsanām*

*abhyasya kramaśaḥ samādhinilayaḥ prāpnoti śāntiṁ dhruvām ॥. 7*

*Karma yoga* is over, *upāsanā yoga* is over; so the student has done *mala vikṣepa nivṛtṭiḥ*. To put it positively he has got *citta śuddhi* and *citta ekāgratā*. In simple English, one has got a pre steady mind. Such a mind alone is called in *Vedānta śāstra* as *sādhana catuṣṭaya sampanna adhikāri*, the mind that has got the four-fold qualifications. The mind is now ready for *Vedānta vicāra*, i.e. one is ready for self-knowledge. Here, one has to remember certain fundamentals. Any knowledge can be gained by using only an appropriate instrument of knowledge, which is called *pramāṇam* in Sanskrit. *Pramāṇena pramā siddhiḥ* or *jñāna prāptiḥ*. Without using *pramāṇam* any idea you gather will be an imagination, you cannot call it fact or knowledge. If I want to know the color of something that is behind than I will have to use my eyes, turn towards the object and see the colour. Without that if I say that it may be yellow, green or red; it is an idea, a speculative idea; it can never be called self-knowledge. We have got several instruments of knowledge. I don't want to go into the details of the instruments. But in the *śāstra* we talk about, *pratyakṣa*, *anumāna*, *upamāna*, *arthāpatti*, *anupalabdhi* and *śabda – śaḍ pramāṇam*. To gain any knowledge we have to employ or operate one of the means of knowledge. Once this idea is assimilated dwell, the question is what means of knowledge would I employ or operate? Because six are there, it is not dependent on my wish; it depends on the object I want to know. *Pramāṇam* will depend on the *prameyam* that I want to know. The choice of *pramāṇam* depends upon the *prameyam* and does not depend upon our choice.

Like early morning, if you have got several dresses, you stand in front of the bureau and ask, should I wear yellow or orange or blue? Then decide this will be okay. There it is your choice. But in the case of knowledge you cannot say – I have operated *pratyakṣa* all the time and for a change I will operate *anupalabdhi*. It is not our choice. If I want to know colour I have to use the eye only, if I want to know smell I have to use nose only. Therefore *pramāṇam* depends upon the *prameyam* I want to know. In this context what I want to know is *ātmā*. I am a seeker of *ātmā jñāna*. I am an *ātmā jijñāsu*. Therefore I have to choose an appropriate *pramāṇam* and all the *pramāṇams* that we do have with us are all meant to see the *anātmā*.

Unfortunately our sense organs are turned extrovert. Therefore they see the objective universe and they are not designed to see the subject. Therefore *pratyakṣa pramāṇam* is ruled out.

In *Kaṭhōpaniṣad* it is said – *parāñcikāni vyatṛṇat....* Once *pratyakṣa pramāṇam* is ruled out then all the other *pramāṇams* are ruled out because they are all based on *pratyakṣa*. Inference is based on what? *pratyakṣa* data. How does the doctor diagnose the disease? He gets data – blood report, urine report etc., and having gathered the data he infers the disease. So, all the other instruments are based on *pratyakṣa*. If *pratyakṣa* is ruled out all the others are ruled out. Then what about all the scientific books available in the field of various sciences? All the sciences are based on experimental data. How do they study the moon? There is a Moon mission, they gather the stone and based on this they study. Therefore all the *pramāṇams* are ruled out. We have now the only one outside *pramāṇam* i.e., the *Veda*, the sixth sense organ.

So *Veda pramāṇa* is a unique *apauruṣeya pramāṇa* which has access to the field, which field is inaccessible to other *pauruṣeya pramanam*. Therefore we have to turn our attention to *Veda*. Every spiritual student will have to turn his attention to *Veda*; because nowhere else it is accessible. Once a person turns to the *Veda* he finds two portions - *Veda pūrova* and *Veda anta*. *Veda pūrova* is also dealing with *anātma prapanca* only. The *karma khāṇḍa* deals with various *karmas*, various *karma phalams*: are they all *ātmā* or *anātmā*? Śaṅkarācārya uses the expression – *kriyā karaka phala rūpāṇi*. So *Veda pūrova* is also useless. That means we have only one way out - *Veda antaḥ*. Therefore *atātho brahma jijñāsā* – we have to come to.

By the practice of *karma yoga* and *upāsana*, the student has attained all the qualifications – *sādhana catuṣṭaya sampattiḥ* – and also he is very clear that, what he is seeking is *ātma jñānam*. Previously he was a *mumukṣu* – a seeker of *mokṣa*, and now, he has a clear idea that *ātma jñānam* alone will give *mokṣa*. Therefore, what he wants is *ātma jñānam*. Thus the desire gets gradually refined. First, he was having *ānanda icchā*. Then he knew that *mokṣa* alone will give *ānanda*, and therefore, he had *ānanda icchā* and that

desire got refined to *mokṣa icchā*. Thereafter, he came to know that *mokṣa* is attainable only through *ātma jñānam*, and therefore, *mokṣa icchā* got converted into *jñāna icchā*. Thereafter, he struggles to get the knowledge, and after long struggle, he has come to know that any *jñānam* can be gained only through appropriate *pramāṇam*. All the conventional – *pauruṣeya pramāṇams* – function only in the field of *anātmā* and therefore, only *Veda śabda pramāṇam* can help me.

Even *Veda śabda* is of two types: 1. *Veda pūrva bhāga*, 2. *Vedānta bhāga*. Of this the *Veda pūrva bhāga* is dealing only with *anātmā* in the form of *kriyā kāraka phalams* – various materials, various rituals and various *lokās*. They all come under *anātmā* only. Therefore *Veda pūrva* is not useful to me. Therefore there is only one source and that is *Vedānta śabda pramāṇam*. Thus *jñāna icchā* will get converted into *pramāṇa icchā*. This *Vedānta pramāṇam* otherwise called *Upaniṣad pramāṇam* alone is the source of knowledge because that alone deals with *ātmā svarūpam*. Therefore the author says – ‘By the practice of *karma yoga* and *upāsana yoga*, a person becomes *viśuddha hṛdayaḥ*’.

Here *śuddhi* includes *ekāgratā* also. So *śuddha hṛdayaḥ ekāgra hṛdayaśca bhavati*. In other words, he is *sādhana catuṣṭaya saṁpanna adhikāri* for attaining the knowledge of *tattvārtham*. *Tattva* refers to the real ‘I’, which is the ultimate *arthaH*, ultimate *vastu*. *tattvārthaḥ* is *satya vastu*; for that sake he has to go in search of the *pramāṇam*, and we say, *Vedānta* or the *Upaniṣads* is the *pramāṇam*. In the *Vedas*, there are several *Upaniṣads*. Originally they say there were 1180 *Upaniṣads*. Thereafter 108 were taken up for study. Of them, ten alone are considered primary because Ādi Śaṅkarācārya’s commentary is available. These ten *Upaniṣads* become the primary source. They are supported by two other texts viz. *Bhagavad Gītā* and *Brahma Sūtra*. These two are the fundamental sources of Self-Knowledge. These are popularly known as *prasthāna tryam*. *Upaniṣad* is called *Śruti prasthānam*. *Bhagavad Gītā* is called *Smṛti prasthānam*. *Brahma Sūtra* is called *Nyāya prasthānam*. Ādi Śaṅkacārya has written commentaries on all these three. These three are the basic sources.

Once I decide to learn from the *śāstra*, I get into another difficulty. What is that? I am not able to extract the teaching out of the *Upaniṣad* by myself. An independent study of *śāstra* cannot help me at all. Either I don't understand anything at all or I end up in confusion because there are varieties of seeming contradictions in the *śāstra*. If you take the *Upaniṣads*, in some place *Brahman* is said to be the *kāraṇam* and in some place *māyā* is said to be the *kāraṇam*. So, the confusion is, "Is *Brahman* the *kāraṇam* or *māyā* the *kāraṇam*?" In another place, it is said *Brahman* is not a *kāraṇam* at all. Now the question is, "*Brahman* is the *kāraṇam* or not *kāraṇam*?"

In one place the *Upaniṣad* says, words cannot describe or reveal the *ātmā*; and all the *Upaniṣads* are in the form of words. So if the words cannot reveal *ātmā*?

And in another place, the *Upaniṣad* says, 'the mind cannot understand the *ātmā*' – *yan manasā na manute*, in another place, the *Veda* says, 'through the mind alone you can know the *ātmā*'.

Now what do you get? We get confusion and not knowledge. Thus in the *Upaniṣad*, we find seeming contradictory statements.

If you go to the *Bhagavad Gītā*, the problem is the same. In the third chapter, Lord Kṛṣṇa says, '*svadharme nidhanam śreyah*', meaning you have to continue your duties even if death is the consequence and don't give up your duty. The same Kṛṣṇa says in the 18<sup>th</sup> chapter, '*sarva dharmān parityajya*', give up all *dharma*.

Generally we don't see the contradiction because when we read the third chapter, we don't know the 18<sup>th</sup>, and when we come to the 18<sup>th</sup> chapter, 17<sup>th</sup> itself is trouble and how are we to remember the 3<sup>rd</sup> chapter? Therefore harmonization of the *śāstra* becomes extremely tough. The Scriptures therefore say 'never study *śāstra* independently, it is counter productive'. Therefore the *Upaniṣads* themselves declare, 'one should necessarily go to a *guru* who has two-fold skills.

1. He has got the knowledge
2. He has the method of communication also. *Brahma niṣṭhā* means one who is established in the knowledge *aham brahma asmi* and *śrotriyah* means the one who has got the method of communication.

To such a *guru* one should necessarily go. In the *Bhagavad Gītā*, Kṛṣṇa reinforces this; '*tadviddhiḥ pranipātena*'. Thus *pramāṇa icchā* is refined to *guru icchā*.

Remember where we started. *ānanda icchā* becomes *mokṣa icchā* and then the *jñāna icchā* becomes *pramāṇa icchā* and ultimately to *guru icchā*. So my ultimate desire is to get a *guru*. Unfortunately I don't know who is a *guru*. It is because *śāstra* never talks of physical features of a *guru* for me to keep a standard and measure. A *guru* has to be *jñāni* and *jñānam* is not visible. So how are we to find out a *guru*? We have only one way; whoever comes in the tradition and who has been a *śiṣya*, he alone deserves to be *guru*. The one who was a *śiṣya* deserves to be a *guru* because that *śiṣya* knows both the knowledge as well as the method of communication. Thus we choose such a traditional person. Whether that traditional person has properly understood or not, I have no way of knowing; because there are – *vishishtādvaita* tradition, *dvaita* tradition and *advaita* tradition also, and each one starts a tradition from *Bhagavān*. How do we know which *guru* is the right *guru*? There is no way of knowing. The only way is surrendering to the Lord. 'Oh! Lord may my *guru* be a proper *guru* so that I am guided properly'; so getting a *guru* is not the result of our *puruṣārtha*.

*Puruṣārtha* plays only a limited role. It is primarily *pūrva janma puṇyam*. That is why Śaṅkarācārya said in *Vivekacūḍāmaṇi* - '*durlabham trayamevaitat daivānugraha hetukam, manuṣyatvaṁ mumukṣutvaṁ mahā puruṣa saṁśrayaḥ*'. Human birth is rare, desire for *mokṣa* is rarer and getting a *guru* is the rarest thing. Having got such a *guru* with the help of our *prayatna* as well as our *pūrva janma puṇya*, one should approach such a *guru*. When he says *guru*, he includes the *śāstra*. *Guru* is going to communicate only with the help of *śāstra pramāṇam*. Therefore he says, '*sva ācāryaṁ paricarya*' – may such an

*adhikāri* go in search of a *guru* and having got a *guru*, serve him for sometime. Why is *paricarya* or *śuṣrūṣā* highlighted? Even though we are gaining the knowledge from a *guru*, we should remember, *guru* is not giving a knowledge derived by his intellect. If so, it will become *pauruṣeya pramāṇam*. *Guru* only gives the knowledge coming from the *śāstra*, which he has gathered from his *guru*. Therefore, *guru* represents *śāstra pramāṇam*, *śāstra pramāṇam* represents *Bhagavān* himself because *Bhagavān* alone is the source of *śāstra* and *Brahma vidyā*. Therefore when I look at the *guru*, for me, it is not the person who is in front, but it is the *śāstra* coming from *Bhagavān* which is going to rescue me. Therefore I should look upon *guru's* words as *śāstras* words; *śāstra* being the sixth sense organ and an independent *pramāṇam*, the *guru's* words are also straight away *pramāṇam*, a source of knowledge which does not require verification with the help of other instruments of knowledge. The very same *prāmāNya buddhi* which I should have in the *śāstra* is transferred to *guru*.

That is why while defining *śraddhā* we say *guru śāstra vākyaṣu śraddhā*. How can I develop *śraddha* in the words of the *guru*? There is only one way. I have to practice worshipping the *guru* so that I don't look upon the *guru* as a person but I look upon the *guru* as an embodiment of *śāstra pramāṇam*. My *namaskāra* goes to the *guru* not as a person but my *namaskāra* goes to the live *śāstra pramāṇam* which is talking to me, revealing. This *bhāvanā* cannot be developed easily. So for sometime the *śiṣya* has to do service to the *guru*. It is said *sva ācāryaṁ paricarya – praṇipātana sāṣṭāṅga namaskāra śuṣrūṣā*. The purpose is elevating the *guru* to the *śāstra pramāṇa* level.

From this it is very, very clear that the *guru* has to be live person, because there are people who talk about the invisible *guru's* giving teaching through different peculiar modes and if we are gathering knowledge from such invisible sources; how do we know if we have understood properly or not? Not only we should have a *guru* but the *guru* should be a live one. Even the greatest *Mahātmā* who is not physically available cannot serve as a *guru* because no dialogue is possible. They can be inspirers but not teachers.

Therefore, learning is always in the form of a dialogue or discussion; therefore '*sva achāryam paricaraya*'.

Having done that, he has to ask the teacher, which is called *paripraśnam* – *adhīhi bhagavo brahma vidyām variṣṭam* – please give me *Brahma vidyā*. Up to this is preparation, and thereafter, the teaching has to start. That is said here, '*śāstra vidhinā paricarya*' – serving him as described in the *śāstra* (*samitpāṇiḥ* etc) thereafter the study to begin. *Vedāntic* study consists of three levels. First level is called *śravaṇam*. The second level is called *mananam*. The third level is called *nidhidhyāsanam*. One has to go through all of them gradually.

Literally *śravaṇam* means listening. Technically *śravaṇam* means a thorough analysis of the *śāstra* to arrive at the central teaching of the *Upaniṣad*. It is analytical study of the *śāstra*. So *tātparya avadhāranam śravaṇam* is ascertainment of the central teaching. For that there is a technical method said in the *śāstra*. It talks about six clues, six parameters to be taken into account. With the help of these six parameters we have to analyze the *śāstra*. The six clues are known as '*śadvidha tātparya bodhaka lingāni*'. "*upakramo upasamhāraḥ abhyāsaḥ apūrvatā phalaṁ arthavādaḥ uppatti*" ( the beginning, the end, repetition, uniqueness, the fruit or benefit, glorification and condemnation for emphasis, and intelligibility in the light of reasoning- this is my addition for ease of understanding)

*Lingam* means clues or indicators or pointers to arrive at the central teaching. This is important because often in the *śāstra*, the central teaching is not clear. The best example is when the election speech is going on, they talk of so many things, but what is the central theme? Vote for my party! We have to crystallize the bottom line.

Similarly what is the teaching of the *Bhagavad Gītā*? There are people who say, *karma yoga* is the central teaching; there are people who say *bhakti* is the central teaching; there are people who say *jñānam* is the central teaching; and there are people who say *yoga* is the central teaching. The text remaining the same there is confusion. Therefore we should have an

appropriate method and this method of analysis is called *mīmāṃsā*. Keeping the six *liṅgas*, when we analyze the *śāstra* to arrive at the central teaching, that is called *mīmāṃsā*. That *mīmāṃsā* alone is called *śravaṇam*. How much time will it take? Even *jīva yātrā* is going on and on and on.... just nine *ślokas*! Imagine the *Upaniṣads* are there, *Bhagavad Gītā* is there. It is not a crash programme. Whatever you gather through a crash programme will crash down after sometime. It will not stay. It is a long term project. That is why I say – Self-knowledge is a spiritual education programme. Like any other subject matter whether it is Economics or Physics, spiritual pursuit is a spiritual education programme taking years of serious study. There, the purpose is getting some job or something. But here, the purpose is self-transformation. Therefore it is much more serious.

If we go through such a *śravaṇam*, what will we learn? That we already summarized in verse no.4- the central teaching in the form of four basic lessons or teaching:

1. I am the *sākṣi caitanya svarūpam*. I am of the nature of observing consciousness different from the observed world which includes my own body and mind. Very important.
2. I, the observing consciousness, am free from all the observed attributes because any attribute I experience belongs to the experienced object.  
Each one is a very big stride like *trivikrama avatāra*. Each one will take a lot of time to assimilate.
3. The observing consciousness is the only substance in the creation. Everything else is *kārya, nāma, and rūpa*. The so called tangible world is only appearing tangible but it is non-substantial *nāma rūpa*. Scientists themselves say – the tangible universe is nothing but the non-tangible energy in motion. The whole world is energy in motion.

Here we go one step further and say, it is consciousness in seeming motion. Therefore I alone am the *satyam*. I am the only stuff in the universe. Everything else is *nāma* and *rūpa* sitting on me. They are all dependent *mithyā*. I am independent *satyam*. This is the next big jump. A corollary we derive is, whatever is *mithyā nāma rūpa*, cannot affect the *satyam*. The destruction of bangle *nāma rūpa* is not the destruction of gold. The change of bangle *nāma rūpa* is not the change of gold. Gold was, gold is and gold ever will be. It is not affected by the events happening in *nāma rūpa*. Therefore I am *asaṅga satya caitanya svarūpaḥ*. I am the only source of *ānanda* in the creation because anything finite can never be a source of *ānanda*. Therefore whatever *ānanda* I derive from the world should be compared to the dog example. Any sense pleasure that I experience is *ātmānanda*. In *pañcadaśī*, in the last five chapters, *Vidyaraṇya Swāmi* shows, any *ānanda* that we get anywhere, in any form is *ātmānandaḥ*.

*viśayānandaḥ = ātmānandaḥ,*

*yogānandaḥ = ātmānandaḥ*

*vidyānandaḥ = ātmānandaḥ*

Any *ānanda* is my own *ānanda*. When the *ānanda* comes and goes, it is only the reflected version that comes and goes.

4. This claiming of *nityānandaḥ* is the final step – *aham brahmānandaḥ asmi, ānando brahmeti vyajānāt*

These are the four steps we saw in the 4<sup>th</sup> *śloka*. Of course, this is presented in different forms also – as *jīvātma paramātma aikyam, mahā vākya vicāra* etc. I am not entering into those aspects as it will get into another big discussion. Since we have already discussed these four principles, we can remember that in this context. Receiving this four level teaching is *śravaṇam*. Therefore the teacher says *tasmāt*, ‘From that *guru* whom you have served for a long time, *parām vidyā śrutvā* – may you receive the teaching for a length of time until you arrive at the *advaita ātmā*. It should culminate in *advaitam*. If you remember the fourth *śloka*, the second line is a significant line, *jīva Īśāna jagat*

*viśeṣa rahitam* – that, I am the *ātmā* on which there are three types of *nāma rūpa*: *Īśvara* is a *nāma rūpa* upon me, (mind boggling statement) world is a *nāma rūpa* upon me, and *jīva* is a *nāma rūpa* upon me. Remove all the three *nāma rūpas* I am *jīva jagat īśvara vilakṣaṇa nirguṇa caitanyam asmi*. That I am the *adhīṣṭānam* of all these three is the discovery; very profound.

Then what should we do? As even listening to the teaching several doubts keep coming up; because *Vedantic* study is not for believing but it is for grasping, understanding and knowing. Wherever knowledge is involved, doubts will come initially. Until I complete one cycle of study, whatever doubt comes I note it aside. First class itself I don't raise a doubt; then the teacher can never go to the second class. Therefore I should complete one cycle of study where I have understood *jīva*, I have understood *Īśvara*, and I have understood *jagat*. That *vicāra* must be completed once and where doubt comes I note it aside saying this I cannot accept, anyway we will keep it as it is. Having done a comprehensive study the teacher himself says ask any question you want. Thus we have to remove all possible doubts. This doubt removal process is called *mananam*.

The teacher says, '*saṁśaya nuttaye*', - *saṁśaya* means doubt; it can be with regard to anything. The doubt can be based on *jīva*, the doubt can be centered on *Īśvara* or the doubt can be centered on the *jagat*. These are the tripods. All the doubts we have to remove. *nuttiḥ* means to remove, *nudati* – means to push, to eliminate, - for the sake of elimination of doubts. What should you do? *mananam*; one has to practice and resort to *mananam*. Initially we will see several contradictions in the teaching. Our *pratyakṣa pramāṇa*, the sense organs reveal that there is duality in the world. Every sense organ reveals plurality: different colors, different forms, and different smells. Sense organs are revealing plurality. *śāstra* is revealing non-duality *advaitam*.

The fundamental question will be how can there be *advaitam* when we are seeing *dvaitam* all the time? Isn't there a contradiction? Sense organs are also the primary source of knowledge. *śāstra* is also primary. How can two

primary sources of knowledge give contradictory teaching? Therefore *dvaita* philosophers are saying that *Upaniṣads* are not teaching *advaitam*, they are teaching *dvaitam* only. Logic is, *Upaniṣads* cannot contradict *pratyakṣa pramāṇa* because sense organs are revealing duality. We have to resolve it. How? We say – there is no contradiction because both of them are primary sources of knowledge but functioning in two different planes. Sense organs function in the relative empirical *vyāvahārika* plane whereas *Upaniṣads* want to find out the ultimate absolute reality the *pāramārthika*. Where is the question of contradiction? Therefore we say, sense organs reveal *vyāvahārika dvaitam* and *śāstra* reveals *pāramārthika advaitam*. Where is the contradiction?

What is the example we give? The waking and the dream; we go to bed in the night, the whole room is dark, and have a dream; it is bright daylight in the same room. Where is dream light, when in the room there is darkness? How can light and dark co-exist? If asked what is the answer? Darkness belongs to the *jāgrat* plane and *svapna* belongs to *svapna* plane; they can happily co-exist because they belong to two different orders. Similarly while he is sleeping he does not move at all but in dream he travels a lot. How can it happen together? From the waker's plane he is motionless. From dreamers plane he is moving. There is no contradiction. Thus we have to introduce two orders of reality. *advaitam* is *pāramārthikam* and *dvaitam* is *vyāvahārikam*.

Similarly all the logical contradictions are also resolved in this manner. Logic functions in empirical plane. Science functions in empirical plane. *śāstra* – *Vedānta* functions in *pāramārthika* plane. How can there be contradiction between *Vedānta* and all other sciences? Therefore we have to resolve all the seeming contradictions by *mananam*. Therefore, he says – *samshaya nuttaye* – for removing all the doubts – *mananam abhyāsa*. How long should this *mananam* continue? Till the doubt is removed from my intellect; that process is called *mananam*. *samśaya rahita jñānam* is called conviction. In the tradition we have several books written by several *Acāryas* and they are all meant to remove such doubts.

*Brahma Sūtra* is *Nyāya prasthānam*. It is exclusively dedicated to remove the intellectual obstacles. Especially in the second chapter, second *pāda* – *Vyāsāchārya* brings various other systems of philosophy and all the questions raised by them, he brings and answers all of them. This is *mananam* process.

Thereafter what should we do? ‘*nidhidhyāsanam abhyāsaḥ*’, this doubtless knowledge has to be internalized. It should be digested or assimilated because digested food alone nourishes me and not eaten food. This digestion is required because until I came to *Vedānta* I have been using the word *aham* identified with the body-mind complex which we call *ahaṅkāra* ‘I’, which is localized ‘I’, which is mortal ‘I’ and which is related to various people and various things. ‘I am husband, I am wife’. Every personality is an *ahaṅkāra*. This *ahaṅkāra* ‘I’ has been internalized so much, it is deep in the subconscious that in day –to-day life, *ahaṅkāra* alone rules. Therefore they say – *Swāmiji*, I know I am fine; I know I am *Brahman*, but my wife is not alright. Now does *Brahman* have a wife? So on one side we say, “I am *Brahman*”, and next moment we say – my wife! That means what? Between first sentence and second sentence, the meaning of the word ‘I’ has slipped down from *sākṣi* ‘I’ to *ahaṅkāra* ‘I’. The slip keeps on happening. Until the slip is stalled, one has to internalize. This process is called *nidhidhyāsanam*.

After talking about karma yoga and *upāsana yoga* up to verse no.6, from the 7<sup>th</sup> verse onwards, the author is talking about *jñāna yoga* for gaining the knowledge which he has already talked about in the fourth verse. Such a *jñānam*, that *ātmā caitanya svarūpaḥ, ātmā nirguṇa svarūpaḥ, ātmā satya svarūpaḥ, ātmā nitya ānanda svarūpaḥ, tādr̥ṣaḥ ātmā aham asmi*. This is the content of the knowledge, which liberates a person, which he has already talked about in the fourth verse.

The topic in the seventh verse is: what is the type of pursuit i.e. the nature of *jñāna yoga* required to gain that knowledge? The 4<sup>th</sup> verse talks about *jñāna svarūpam* and 7<sup>th</sup> verse talks about *jñāna sādhana*. The *sādhana* is the pursuit of *śāstra pramāṇam* under the guidance of a *guru*, he pointed out. That

pursuit is divided into three stages. One is *śravaṇam*, another is *mananam* and another is *nidhidhyāsanam*. Then he talked about *śravaṇam* in the second and the third line. Then he talked about *parāvidyā* which one should listen and gather. After receiving the knowledge from *śāstra pramāṇam* one has to practice *mananam* which is nothing but removal of all form of doubts either centered on *jīva* or centered on *jagat* or *Īśvara*, or *pramāṇa* or *jñāna* or *mokṣa*. There are two prominent doubts, which will have to be necessarily clarified before thinking of *nidhidhyāsanam*.

The first one is, by the thorough study of the *śāstra*, I have clearly gained the knowledge. But is this knowledge enough for liberation? Or is something more required? The general notion is that by the study of *Vedantic* scriptures, the knowledge that I get is only intellectual knowledge or book knowledge or theoretical knowledge, and therefore incomplete. Knowing about Gangotri or Mānsarovar from a book is only secondary knowledge. One has to get the direct experience of Gangotri. Then alone is called direct knowledge. Similarly one has to get *ātma anubhava*; then alone it is called *ātma sākṣākāra*. Then alone it is called Self-Realization. So, the question is, I have got Self-knowledge from study. I require self-realization or self-experience for liberation.

This is a powerful question. I have got *ātma jñānam*, but how can I get *ātma anubhava*? For this we answer that there is no such thing called *ātma anubhava* separate from *ātma jñānam*. There is no such thing called self-experience other than *ātma jñānam*.

Why do we say so? Because, conventionally, we see knowledge is the first step and experience is the next step. Orange is sweet; mango is sweet; knowledge is first step. Putting the mango in the mouth and enjoying the sweetness is the next step. Knowledge and experience are two progressive steps. Shouldn't we admit this experience in the case of *ātma* also? And for that, we strongly firmly and categorically say "NO".

The confusion comes because we have forgotten the definition of the word A. we are only using the word *ātmā* loosely doing a lip service. We are assuming that *ātmā* is something like *Gangotri* or mango.

The first definition of *ātmā* is '*ātmā caitanya svarūpaḥ*'. So we ask the student to focus on the word '*caitanya svarūpaḥ*' and don't use the word without knowing the significance of the definition. The word '*caitanayam*' means 'Consciousness'. Consciousness is the only thing that is ever experienced by everyone. Everyone experiences consciousness. He refers to himself as a conscious being. Thus consciousness does not require specific experience. It is the ever – experienced principle.

That is why in *Kena Upaniṣad* it was said, *pratibodha vidtaṁ matam*. In every knowledge, the common factor is Consciousness. Pot knowledge means, I am conscious of pot. Man knowledge means I am conscious of man. *Consciousness* being an ever-experienced fact, *ātma anubhava* is not separately required. What *Vedānta* is teaching us is that the ever-experienced *Consciousness is nirguṇam*. The ever-experienced *Consciousness is satyam jñānam ānandam*. That is the teaching.

*Vedānta* never puts you on a trip of experiencing *Consciousness*. Every *Upaniṣad* says *ātmā* is ever-experienced *Consciousness* principle. All the time *Consciousness* is there in all the *avasthās*. In fact, every other step of *Vedānta* says *ātmānubhava* we have; we don't have to seek *ātmānubhava*. We have only to remove the misconceptions regarding the ever *anubhūta ātmā*. So, there is no *ātmānubhava* separate from *jñānam*. We don't require a separate *anubhava* from *ātma jñānam*. There is no separate *sādhana* required for *ātmānubhava*. This has to be understood through *mananam*. There is NO *ātmānubhava* other than *ātma jñānam*. This is the prominent misconception that has to be knocked off by the teacher. It is the teacher's responsibility. Poor student does not know. The teacher has to raise this and knock off.

The second misconception is : that consciousness is ever experienced; it is available in the form of *ātmā* 'I' ; but I am experiencing this consciousness

along with the dualistic world, which includes the body mind etc. ;that means I am only in the of *dvaita anubhava* whereas scriptures say *ātmā* is *advaita svarūpam*.

During *śravaṇam*, I say *ātmā* is *advaitam*. But I don't have *advaita ātmā anubhava*. The *ātmānubhava* is along with what? It is with the world, the thoughts, the body, and the people. Therefore *ātmā* is one of the things in the Universe! That means I am in *dvaita prapanca*. *ātmā* is *advaitam – jñānam*. But I don't have *advaita ātmā anubhavam*. So, shouldn't I work for *advaita ātmānubhava*, which I don't have?

We ask the question, "You want to have *advaita ātmānubhava*? My blessings! Wish you all the best! Tell me what do you propose to do?"

He answers, "As long as I am in the *jāgrat avasthā*, *dvaitam* is there. I have to go to another *avasthā*, ie. *Samādhi avasthā*. By going to another mystic extraordinary *samādhi avasthā*, I want to have *advaita ātmānubhava*.

Then I ask, "How do you want to accomplish that?"

He says, "It is very simple; because of the presence of *dvaitam* I am missing *advaitam*. *Advaitam* is freedom from *dvaitam*. For *advaitam*, you have to remove *dvaitam*."

You hope to remove *dvaitam* in some extraordinary state? By removal of *dvaitam*, you hope to have what? Wherever you see, you see *advaita ātmā*.

Okay! Your attempt is removal of *dvaitam*.

I ask, "what *dvaitam* do you want to remove?' *vyāvahārikam dvaitam* or *pāramārthikam dvaitam*? By going to some state you want to remove what *dvaitam*?"

He says, "I want to remove *vyāvahārikam dvaitam*."

Then we say, “*vyāvahārikam dvaitam* being *vyāvahārikam satyam*, you can never remove because it is *vyāvahārikam satyam*.”

In any *avasthā* you may go to, *vyāvahārikam* and *dvaitam* will continue. You go to *susupti*; *dvaitam* is there in unmanifest form. You go to *pralaya*, *dvaitam* is there in unmanifest form. You go to *samādhi*, *dvaitam* is there in unmanifest form. You may go to any *avasthā*; you have not removed *dvaitam*. Whatever you do, *dvaitam* will continue either in *avyakta rūpam* or in *vyakta rūpam*. That is why we call it *vyāvahārikam satyam* i.e. *vyāvahārika dṛṣṭyā abhādyam* – not negatable. Even in the highest *samādhi* you have not removed *dvaitam*. Mind continues; body very much continues. What is the proof? Fortunately or unfortunately he wakes up! So, where is the question of eliminating *vyāvahārika satyam*? It is impossible even for *Bhagavān* because what is *satyam* cannot be negated.

He says, “No, no I am removing *pāramārthikam dvaitam*”.

*Pāramārthikam dvaitam* need not be removed. Why? It is not there! *Vyavaharically dvaitam* cannot be removed. *Pāramārthically dvaitam* need not be removed. Therefore, never attempt to remove *dvaitam* for *advaitānubhava*. It does not work. Logically there is no *advaita anubhava* possible. There is no *advaitānubhava* other than *advaita jñānam*.

What is *advaita jñānam*? I, the *caitanyam* am *satyam* and the *dvaita prapanca* is *mithyā*. *Mithyā dvaitam* cannot disturb the *satya advaitam* which is always *advaitam*. *Mithyā dvaitam* cannot create a dent, a disturbance for me because the *mithyā dvaitam* cannot be added to *satya advaitam*. One man and his *mithyā* shadow cannot make two men. Even when I experience the shadow, I count only the *advaitam*. I was *advaitam*, I am *advaitam* and I will ever be *advaitam*. This understanding alone is possible and this alone is sufficient. Other than that you can never remove *dvaitam*, either *vyāvahārically* or *pāramārthically* to experience *advaitam*. Therefore *ātmanubhava*, separate from

*ātma jñāna* is a misconception. What we require is *advaita jñānam* which we can happily get with the help of *śravaṇam* and *mananam*. Therefore, with *śravaṇam* and *mananam*, *jñānam* is complete. It means *jīva yātrā* is complete.

What is *jñānam*? I am *nitya mukta svarūpaḥ*. Suppose a person says, 'I am *nitya mukta svarūpaḥ* and I am continuing my journey towards *mokṣa*'. With *jñānam*, the journey ends. With *śravaṇam mananam jīva yātrā* is over. *Nidhidhyāsanam* is not continuation of the journey; it is not part of the journey at all. Then what is *nidhidhyāsanam*? It is internalizing the end of the journey or internalizing the fact that I don't require journey for *mokṣa*. I am *nitya śuddha buddha mukta svabhāvaḥ*. I am enjoying the home coming. Relishing the end of the journey is *nidhidhyāsanam*.

Otherwise because of journey orientation, we continue to think it is on. Like, if you have travelled by train for two days in the fast trains, after two days you get down from the train and one full day you feel you are journeying. So to get out of the journey mode of thinking we require *nidhidhyāsanam*. Therefore, it is talked about. So the author says – *sthāmane – sthama menas* steadiness, *niṣṭhā – steadiness, jñāna niṣṭhā or sthira prajñā*. Here *sthama* means *jñānasya balam or jñānasya stairayam or jñānasya niṣṭhā*. I have reached the end of the journey by the knowledge that I am ever free. I don't require any more freedom because I am the *nitya mukta ātmā*.

What about *ahaṅkāra*? From the standpoint of I, the *ātmā ahaṅkāra* is *mithyā* and *mithyā ahaṅkāra* going through *mithyā prārabda*, is an insignificant event and it is not worth getting obsessed over. We need not be worried about it. Seeing *ahaṅ satyam* and seeing *ahaṅkāra mithyātvam* and thus not being over concerned about *ahaṅkāra* is *nidhidhyāsanam*; because we know, *ātmā* is ever free; *ahaṅkāra* is never free. Even *jñāni's ahaṅkāra* has to go through *jñāni's prārabda*.

This internalization can be done in any method. It is dwelling upon the teaching in one way or the other. There is no particular method. Whatever method one chooses to see, it is OK. What is the main crux of *nidhidhyāsanam*?

The mind should dwell upon the teaching. What teaching? As *ātmā*, I am ever free. The *mithyā ahaṅkāra* is never free. Let it go through its episode or event. Somebody can choose to dwell upon the teaching by reading the *śāstra* again and again, of course with the mind internalizing. It can be in the form of mutual sharing. It can be in the form of teaching. It can be in the form of regular meditation, mentioned in the 6<sup>th</sup> chapter of the *Gītā*. I can choose to sit quiet in *padmāsana*. But remember they are not important. If you have good *āsanam* and think of everything other than myself! They are incidental. In a controlled condition I choose to dwell upon the teaching. We don't insist that one should sit in *padmāsana* or one should close the eyes. if a person wants sitting meditation is ok.

In fact repeated *śravaṇam* is a form of *nidhidhyāsanam*; because in *śravaṇam* also we dwell upon the teaching; because in *śravaṇam* also we dwell upon the teaching. That is why *nidhidhyāsanam* is defined as '*tat cintanaṁ tat kathanam anyonyaṁ tat prabodhanam etat eka paratvaṁ ca brahmābhyāsaṁ vidhuḥ budhaḥ*'. It is dwelling upon the teaching in any way. It may be mutual dialogue or through discussing being committed to the knowledge. Therefore, the author says '*abhyāsa*'. Then what will happen? The internalization becomes natural and effortless. This teaching is available spontaneously at all times in my worldly transactions. Effortless availability of knowledge at all times is called *sahaja samādhi*. This is the result of internalization. If this internalization has not taken place, then during the class I will claim '*ahaṁ brahma asmi*' and at other times the *mithyā ahaṅkāra* will dominate and the saty *ātmā* is pushed down.

There is a humorous story. It seems there was an association of barbers. They wanted to celebrate their anniversary. As apart of that they chose to enact the story of *Ramayanaṁ*. They had elaborate rehearsals. One barber or the other plays all roles. D-day came with a big audience. Then the crucial scene comes where *Viśvāmitra* comes to ask Rama for *yāga samskāram*. *Daśaratha* is seated on the throne. *Viśvāmitra* enters. *Daśaratha* should come down and welcome him reverentially, ask him to be seated and also ask him 'what do you want?' remember *Viśvāmitra* is a barber and *Daśaratha* is also

a barber. *Vishvāmitra* is a rishi, so naturally having along *dādi* and lot of hair. This *Daśaratha* has *keyuram*, *kavacam*, *kundalam* and all those things. At the crucial moment, *Daśaratha* comes down and welcomes *Viśvāmitra*, 'please come' and asks, 'please be seated and what do you want? Hair cutting or face shaving?' this is called the inner I. the outer I, the face, is emperor *Daśaratha*. In the heart, what is there, is barber!

Similarly what happens? We all become the *Daśaratha*, the Brahman, having *nitya śudha buddha mukta svabhāvah*. But at the crucial moment, the barber comes out. This is called *viparita bhāvanā. samādhi nilayaḥ – jñāna niṣṭhā* is , ever residing as *Daśaratha* without becoming the old barber.

What is the advantage of that in my life? Even though *ahaṅkāra* also continues, the *ahaṅkāra aṁśa* is not dominant. It is insignificant. It is *mithyā*. It has got a functional role to play. I am not *ahaṅkāra pradhānaH*. It is the *sākṣi* I, the *lakṣyārtha* I that is dominant. Therefore, I look at myself as ever free I. ths the seeker after attaining the *niṣṭhā – samādhi nilayaḥ* – permanently enjoys *dhruvaṁ śāntim*. Let me claim the *pāramārthikaṁ śānti*, which is the intrinsic nature of I, the *ātmā*. Even if the *ahaṅkāra* goes through turbulent conditions, the turbulence of *ahaṅkāra* cannot touch the *śānta ātmā*. Just as the noise of the dream cannot be recorded by the waker's tape recorder, *vyāvahārikam* silence cannot be disturbed by *prātibhāsika* sound. Similarly *vyāvahārika* turbulence cannot disturb the *pāramārthika aham*. That *śānti* is called – *dhruvaṁ śānti*. May one claim the *śānti* of the real I. thus *śravaṇa manana nidhidhyāsana* discussion is over.

### Verse - 8

ब्रह्मज्ञोऽपि स वासनाक्षयमनोनाशौ विधाय क्रमात्  
स्वात्मारामपरोऽनिशं सोखघनो मुक्तः स जिवन्नपि ।  
प्रारब्धे क्षपिते च देहविलये मुक्तिं विदेहं गतः  
सच्चित्सौख्यमये ह्युपाधिरहिते मञ्जत्यपारे परे ॥८॥

*brahmajño'api sa vāsanākṣayamanonāśau vidhāya kramāt  
svātmārāmaparo'aniśaṁ sukhaghano mukttāḥ sa jīvannapi |  
prārabdhe kṣapite ca dehavilaye mukttim videhām gataḥ  
saccitsaukhyamaye hyupādhirahite mañjatyapāre pare || .. 8*

If a seeker goes through *śravaṇa manana* properly, it will give clear knowledge, *advaita ātma jñānam*. If he clearly claims that I am *nitya mukta ātmā*, by that very knowledge itself gained by *śravaṇam mananam*, the journey is over. *Nidhidhyāsanam* is only internalizing of the end of the journey. It is not part of the journey. If this is what is happening really, when I do *nidhidhyāsanam*, I will not look forward to *mokṣa* as a future event. Since *nidhidhyāsanam* is an internalization of the end of the journey that I am ever free *ātmā*, a *nidhidhyāsaka* should not look forward to *mokṣa* as a future event to happen. This is the normal condition. But in the case of some *sādhakas* even though the *jñānam* is very clear, they don't feel their journey is over. They always say, 'there is *jñānam*, *Swāmiji*, it is very, very clear *Swāmiji*, but I can never claim I am a liberated person who has reached the destination. I don't have the courage to claim that, even though I have clear knowledge'. They give credit to the teacher. There is no place for any doubt; therefore, if such people practice *nidhidhyāsanam*, again *nidhidhyāsanam* will be looking for something to happen. It will be looking forward to some event, may be mystic experience or extraordinary something or other and this looking forward to some experience will continue in *nidhidhyāsanam* in the case of some people.

They also claim that, 'We have got very clear knowledge, *Swāmiji*, if you want I will repeat the entire *jīva yātrā* you have taught. I can say – *ātmā is caitanya svarūpaḥ, nirguṇa svarūpaḥ*, I can repeat. I can teach others also'; but what about you? In the *Āśrama*, after one or two years after the two year course completion, *Swāmiji* asked all of us to start discussing. Take any *Gītā śloka* or some *Upaniṣad śloka*. Each one will have group of ten and start discussing. *Swāmiji* will sit in one of the groups; just *sākṣi*. We had a discussion of the 14<sup>th</sup> chapter. We were discussing *guṇātītaḥ* portion. One student was talking about that. Suddenly *Swāmiji* stopped and asked the

question, are you *guṇātītaḥ*? Nobody expected this question. The student was stunned. What to say? He did not have the courage to say I am *guṇātītaḥ*; at the same time he felt sympathy for *Swāmiji* as *Swāmiji* has taught for two years; and how to say no? Therefore he doesn't want to say yes and no also. This dilly dallying business is there. What to do in the case of such people? Where is the snag? The student with clear knowledge should claim I have reached the destination. How come some students claim I have clear knowledge but I have not reached the destination? Why?

There can be only one reason. *Tattva bodha* has been forgotten. They have completed *Māṇḍūkya Kārika*, even *Brahma Sūtra*. Only *Tattva Bodha* is forgotten. In *Tattva Bodha* it is said, '*sādhana catuṣṭaya saṁpanna adhikāriṇām mokṣa sādhanā bhūtaṁ tattva viveka prakaraṇam*'. *Jñāna* will give liberation to that seeker who is endowed with *sādhana catuṣṭaya saṁpatti*, the four-fold qualification. The problem is that the students have come and when *sādhana catuṣṭaya saṁpatti* is lacking, any amount of clear knowledge will not give the sense of *pūrṇatvam* or the end of the journey. Because when *sādhana catuṣṭaya saṁpatti* is lacking, an *ahaṅkāra* which does not have *sādhana catuṣṭaya saṁpatti* is a heavily loaded *ahaṅkāra*. That is a powerful *ahaṅkāra*. You cannot ignore that *ahaṅkāra* by simply saying it is *mithyā*. Ignoring the *ahaṅkāra* as *mithyā* is possible only when the *ahaṅkāra* is *sādhana catuṣṭaya saṁpannaḥ*. When that is missing, *ahaṅkāra* is a loaded *ahaṅkāra*. Therefore the person will be *ahaṅkāra pradhāna puruṣaḥ*. For such a person ignoring the *ahaṅkāra*, as *mithyā* doesn't work. Even though the word *mithyā* is used, it is only a word, it does not happen. Therefore *ahaṅkāra* is prominent and the ever free *ātmā* is underneath. Therefore *ahaṅkāra mithyātvaṁ* is possible only when *sādhana satuṣṭaya saṁpatti* is there. The student is missing that and the teacher doesn't want to say, 'you are an unfit student' because it will hurt. Therefore the teacher has to find the method of handling his backdoor entry. That is the problem which is going to be handled in the next *śloka*, which we will see next.

If a qualified student gains the knowledge comprehensively from the *sāstra* through *śravaṇam* and *mananam*, that *jñānam* itself is capable of directly

giving liberation. It is because the knowledge is, "I am already free". Not only have I had the knowledge regarding my freedom. I am able to look at the *ahaṅkāra* as an insignificant one. Therefore I become a *sākṣi pradhāna puruṣaḥ*. *Ahaṅkāra* is only an incidental *veśaḥ* that I have. As somebody nicely said, I am a spiritual being incidentally having a human experience and I am not a human being seeking a spiritual experience. Therefore, for a qualified student, *śravaṇa* and *manana* convert him into *sākṣi pradhāna puruṣaḥ* and his *ahaṅkāra* becomes a *veśa*.

Once I am *sākṣi pradhāna*, I am able to claim liberation as my *svarūpam* and I cannot imagine *mokṣa* as a destination to be reached through a journey. When I am a *sākṣi pradhāna puruṣaḥ*, I claim liberation as my nature, and I cannot imagine *mokṣa* as a future destination to be reached. Therefore the *jīva yātrā* is over with *śravaṇam* and *mananam* itself. *Nidhidhyāsanam* is not the continuation of the journey, as there is no question of journey. *Nidhidhyāsanam* is internalizing and enjoying the end of the journey. *na me dveṣa rāgo, na me lobha moho.... cidānanda rūpaḥ śivo'haṁ śivo'ham*. *Nidhidhyāsanam* is internalizing this fact. A *sādhaka* who is able to accomplish this is an *uttama adhikāri*, as he has got *sādhana catuṣṭaya saṁpatti*. But when a person doesn't have *sādhana catuṣṭaya saṁpatti*, then *ahaṅkāra* is a heavy *ahaṅkāra*, a loaded *ahaṅkāra*. Therefore ignoring *ahaṅkāra* as *mithyā* is not easy.

The word *mithyā* will only have a verbal existence; its meaning is not clearly seen. Naturally *ahaṅkāra* becomes dominant for such a person. *sākṣi* cannot be dominant. I can never claim that I am a *muktaḥ*. I feel that I is not yet over. I always feel that *mokṣa* is something to come, something to happen. When a person is in such a condition, that *sādhaka* is called *madhyama adhikāri*, who is deficient in *sādhana catuṣṭaya saṁpatti*. He is still an *ahaṅkāra pradhāna puruṣaḥ*. *sākṣi* is a *veśa* for him. During *Vedānta* class I have *sākṣi veśa*, and all smiles. At other times I am *ahaṅkāra*. The question is am I *ahaṅkāra* with *sākṣi veśa* or am I *sākṣi* with *ahaṅkāra veśa*.

For *uttama adhikāri*, 'I am *sākṣi* with *ahaṅkāra veṣa*', and for *madhyama adhikāri*, 'I am *ahaṅkāra* with *sākṣi veṣa*'. Since such a *madhyama adhikāri* feels the journey is not yet over, that student has to be helped by the *śāstra*. *śāstra* cannot ignore such a student. Therefore *śāstra* says, "Your journey is not yet over". Because even if the teacher says your journey is over, he is not going to accept. Therefore, the teacher joins the student and says, 'your journey is not yet over'.

The teacher defines *nidhidhyāsanam* in a slightly different way. For the other *adhikāri* what is *nidhidhyāsanam*? – it is internalizing the end of the journey. But for this *adhikāri*, end of journey has not come, so *nidhidhyāsanam* has to be redefined by which one with deficient *sādhana catuṣṭaya saṁpatti* will have to be filled up. You cannot send back the student to *karma yoga* again. So what we do is give it a new name taking care of the deficient *sādhana catuṣṭaya saṁpatti*. I.e. *vāsanākṣaya manonāśa adhyāsaḥ*; he is asked to continue *śravaṇa*, *manana* and *nidhidhyāsa*: also he is prescribed *nidhidhyāsanam*, which is dwelling upon the teaching in one way or the other.

In addition to that, may you practice *vāsanākṣaya* and *mano nāśa*. Therefore, the author says, '*brahmajñā api*'. Here, what type of *brahmajñā*? You have to differentiate with the previous *brahmajñā*, who had all the qualifications in full measure, whereas in this *śloka*, *brahmajñā* refers to the student with deficient qualification – *madhyama adhikāri*. So this *brahmajñā*, who has done *śravaṇam*, *mananam* and who claims, 'I have clear knowledge', but still feels the *jīva yātrā* is not over. What should he do? *vāsanākṣaya manonāśau vidhāya*. *vidhāya* means he should resort to practice '*dur vāsanākṣaya*'. i.e. all the *āsuri saṁpat*, which were mentioned in the 16<sup>th</sup> chapter of the *Bhagavad Gītā* as obstacles to spirituality have to be dealt with suitably.

In the 16<sup>th</sup> chapter of the *Bhagavad Gītā*, we have a huge list of mental traits or tendencies. One group was mentioned in three verses. It is a huge list of virtues mentioned as *daivī saṁpat*. Thereafter, Kṛṣṇa talks about a list of *āsuri saṁpat* also ending with the verse, '*trividham naraksyedaṁ dvāraṁ.... tasmāt etat trayam tyajet*'. Thus we have *daivī* and *āsuri saṁpat* list given, and Kṛṣṇa

said – *daivī sampat vimokṣaya nibandhaya.... daivī sampat* is *Vedānta* friendly, conducive to *śravaṇa*, *manana* and *nidhidhyāsanam*, whereas *āsurī sampat* has a retarding effect. Now this person has to go back to the 16<sup>th</sup> chapter of the *Gītā* which he might have read 15 years before and forgotten!

Then what should he do? All those *dur vāsanās* enumerated in the *Gītā* as *āsurī sampat*, he should weaken and all the *daivī sampat* mentioned herein has to be re-nourished by leading an alert life. Every moment of life I should examine my response to the life situation and see whether it is closer to *daivī sampat* or closer to *āsurī sampat*. *Swāmiji* says, ‘one of the important components in *nidhidhyāsanam* is a deliberate alert living which means I am aware of my responses and I monitor and scan my responses; come closer to *daivī sampat* and farther from *āsurī sampat*. This exercise is called *vāsanākṣaya*.

Kṛṣṇa talks about it in the second chapter of *Gītā* also in the context of *stithaprajñā*. There Kṛṣṇa gives a warning, even if a person has gained spiritual knowledge, he cannot be complacent in life; he has to be alert all the time. These famous verses are there in the 2<sup>nd</sup> chapter – *dhyāyato viṣayān pumsaḥ.....* all these advices are give not to an *ajñāni* but to the one who has gained knowledge; but still one who is unsteady. Kṛṣṇa talks about mind control and sense control there – *tāni sarvāṇi samyamya....* That *jñānam* becomes *pratiṣṭhitam*. Therefore *vāsanākṣyam* means maintenance and improvement of *sādhana catuṣṭhaya sampatti* and an alert living.

Thereafter what? ‘*manonāśaḥ ca*’. In this context, it means, after the *durvāsanās* are weakened, the mind should not regenerate those *dur vāsanās*. The mind’s incapacity to regenerate those *durvāsanās* is called *mano nāśaḥ*. This we can understand in the context of various addictions. When they have certain addiction, people do give up the addiction by being alert, by taking vow etc. but after some time, when they are complacent or careless, they violate and again get back to the addiction. That means what? There is a possibility of relapse. That is why the example of Mark Twain’s statement “who said smoking is difficult? I have given up several times”. It means

what? It comes again. I give up certain *dur vāsanās* and again there is a relapse.

When the mind is incapable of again relapsing into the old mode of behaviour, it is *manonāśah*. The *śubha vāsanā* has become spontaneous or has become second nature. In *Māṇḍūkya Kārika* Gaudapādā says, 'For a *niṣṭhā puruṣah*, *śama dama* etc are natural or spontaneous'. Until that spontaneity comes, one has to be alert. When the mind is incapable of relapsing into old ways, it is called '*mano nāśah*'. That means *jñāni* has a mind, which is predominantly *śubha vāsanā pradhāna*. So when the mind has got such *śubha vāsanā pradhānam*, it is called '*mano nāśah*'. If a person practices this *vāsanākṣya* and *mano nāśah*, in our own language it is nothing but *sādhana catuṣṭhaya saṁpatti*. When there is *sādhana catuṣṭhaya saṁpatti*, *ahaṅkāra* is no more loaded. When *ahaṅkāra* is no more loaded then seeing or ignoring *ahaṅkāra* as *mithyā* becomes easier. When he keeps on listening to *Vedānta* and when he listens to "*sarvaṁ mithyā, neha nānāsti kincana*", that *ahaṅkāra mithyātvaṁ*, he is able to see because *ahaṅkāra* has become lighter because of this. This is the process in which *nidhidhyāsanam* has to be practiced by a *madhyama adhikāri*. '*vasānakṣaya manonāśau kramāt*'.

Then what should he do? Let him learn to depend more and more on *ātmananda* or *vidyānanda* rather than *viṣayānanda*. *parāh* means committed, engaged in *svātmā rāmaH*, *ārāmaH* means relaxation, recreation, revelry, happiness; where? *svātmani*. '*yastu ātmā ratirevasyāt ātmā tṛptaśca manavaḥ ātmanyeva ca santuṣṭhaH* is called *svātmā rāma parāh*; how long? *aniśam* – for ever. Because the possibility is, if the mind gets used to some type of dependence unknowingly, the mind has glue; the mind is a gummy mind. Anything it does continuously for some time, it gets hooked to that. A particular chair you sit for two days, you say, 'my chair, please get up'; we have come here for seven days! Mind is so powerful that it can easily get hooked to anything – *satatam bhavatu*. When we talk of *svātmārāmaparatvaṁ*, we have gone back to *uttama adhikāri*, because after *vāsanākṣya*, *manonāśaH*, he is as good as *uttama adhikāri*. So *nidhidhyāsanam* will no more be a journey. It will be enjoying the end of the journey. That is the only

difference. Such a person is called by a new title – *saḥ sukhaghanah jīvan api muktaḥ bhavati*.

Such a person who has become an *adhikāri* now, who has internalized the teaching and who has also become a *sākṣi pradhāna*, for whom *ahaṅkāra* is only an incidental *veṣa*, to use *Swāmiji's* expression, “It is all role playing”. Wife is a role, husband is a role and mother is a role. It becomes simple role playing. Such a person is given the title, ‘*sukha ghanah*’, - one who is an embodiment of *ānandaḥ*, *sukha svarūpaḥ*. When we say *jñāni* is *sukha ghanah*, what type of *ānanda* are we referring to? We are not referring to the arriving-departing experiential pleasures; because they are reflected pleasures, subject to arrival and departure. *Jñāni* is not obsessed with that experiential pleasure but he is interested in claiming the source of that pleasure which is ‘I’ myself – *nityānandaḥ*. How do you experience that pleasure? That ‘I’? The original *nityānandaḥ* is not an object that I am. So *nityānandaḥ saḥ jīvan api muktaḥ*. He is free even when he is alive with a body, with a *prārabdha*. He is *jīvan muktaḥ*, which means *mokṣa* does not require travel after death. It is discovery of my *svārūpaḥ* even when I am alive.

*Jīvan mukti* is a unique teaching in *advaita*. *Viśiṣṭādvaitam* does not accept *jīvanmukti*. *Dvaita* does not accept *jīvan mukti*. They say first one has to die; that is the first qualification for *mukti*. They say, travel, go to *Vaikuṅṭha* and enjoy. They don’t have *jīvan mukti* whereas we talk about *jīvan mukti*. Thereafter what happens to such a *jñāni*?

The biography of such a *jñāni* is talked about by introducing *karma*. All the *jīvas* have three types of *karma* known as *sañcita*, *prārabdha* and *āgāmi*. Here the word *karma* refers to *karma phalam*, which is in the form of *puṇyam* and *pāpam*. This *puṇya pāpam* is categorized into three groups.

One is *sañcita*, another is *prārabdha* and another is *āgāmi*.

*Sañcita* : whatever *puṇya pāpam* we have acquired in all the past human *janmas* is called *sañcita* – accumulated. Animals never accumulate *puṇyam* or

*pāpam* so we should remember that this is not the first *manuṣya janma*, we have had infinite human *janma* and in all of them we have accumulated *sañcita*. Out of that accumulated *sañcita*, apportionment has fructified and has given birth to this physical body. And that bundle of fructifying *karma* is called *prārabdha puṇya pāpam*. The very word *prārabdha* means that which has started fructification. That *prārabdha* alone decided the body. That *prārabdha* alone decided the duration of life, that *prārabdha* decided many of the life's experiences. Many things are decided by *prārabdha* and in addition to *puruṣārtha*. We should not get *puruṣārtha*. So that is called *prārabdha puṇyapāpam*. While we are exhausting the *prārabdha puṇya pāpam*, we don't keep quiet. We keep on doing fresh *karmas* and that is called *āgāmi puṇya pāpam* – the arriving *puṇya pāpam*. In the case of an *ajñāni*, what happens is *sañcita* remains; *prārabdha* is getting exhausted. A portion of the *āgāmi* is exhausted in this *janma* itself. Some of the *āgāmis* are not exhausted in this *janma*. Those unexhausted *āgāmis* join *sañcita* at the time of death. At the time of death, *prārabdha* is exhausted. Unexhausted *āgāmi* joins *sañcita* and *sañcita* alone is there. Out of that *sañcita* another bunch becomes ready. This is the story of Law of *karma*.

Now the question is, what happens to a *jñāni*? We say in the case of a *jñāni*, all the *sañcita karmas* are burnt by the power of knowledge. Just as the radiation therapy of cancer, the radiation kills all cancerous cells. *jñānam* is a special therapy, which will destroy all *sañcita karma*. In this *sañcita karma*, is included, whatever *karma* has been accumulated in this *janma* itself, up to the period of *jñānam*. In the case of a *jñāni*, *sañcita karma* includes not only the past but in this *janma* also up to the gaining of knowledge. Whatever he has gathered in the form of *āgāmi* is also treated as *sañcita* and all of them are burnt down. How do you know? As though you have seen, you say, it is burnt down! Then I ask, 'How do you know *sañcita* has been accumulated?' nobody can see the *sañcita karma*. It is not *pratyakṣa pramāṇa viṣaya*. That I have *sañcita* is known with the help of *śāstra pramāṇam*. If *śāstram* is the *pramāṇam* to know *sañcita*, the very same *śāstram* is the *pramāṇam* for the destruction of *sañcita* also.

If you say, 'I don't accept the *śāstra pramāṇam* in the destruction of *sañcita*,' then please don't accept both or accept both. With regard to *sañcita* existence, I accept the *śāstra paramāNa*; and with regard to destruction of *sañcita*, if I don't accept, then it will be *ardha jarinyāya*, that will not be correct. Therefore from *śāstra* we know. But how do we convince the intellect? For that we give the *svapna* example.

In *svapna*, I have done varieties of *karma*. Some of them were criminal ones also. The police have caught me, and after trial ten years RI is given. The police push me into the prison and I fall and wake up. Now what happens to ten years R.I. The whole thing is falsified when I travel from *prātibhāsika* to *vyāvahārika*. The whole *prātibhāsika* is instantaneously negated. Similarly when I shift from *vyāvahārika* to *pāramārthika*, the entire *mithyā prapañca* is instantaneously negated. Therefore *sañcita* is burnt.

What about *āgāmi*? Because the *jñāni* does not have *dehātma budhhi* or *ahaṅkāra*, his *karmas* do not produce *puṇya* or *pāpa phalam*. It is not born out of any motive, like the actions of an animal. Actions of animals do not produce *puṇya pāpa* because they don't have *deha abhimāna*, the self-conscious "I". Similarly in the case of a *jñāni*, *karma* dissolves without producing the *phalam*.

Another example given is the roasted seed. It looks exactly like the original seed, but the only difference is that the normal seed is capable of germinating but a roasted cannot germinate. So a *jñāni*'s action is roasted by *jñānāgni*, and therefore, it does not produce *āgāmi*. So *sañcita* is gone, *āgāmi* is gone. What about *prārabdha*? From the standpoint of *jñāni*, when everything is dismissed, *prārabdha* is also dismissed. From the standpoint of other ignorant people, *jñāni*'s *prārabdha* continues. From *jñāni*'s angle that is also falsified. How long does the *prārabdha* continue? It is said here. When that remaining *prārabdha* is exhausted, *deha vilaye*, *prārabdha* is the oil that keeps the flame of *śarīram* continuing. When the oil is exhausted, the flame of the individual life of the *jñāni*, which is dependent on the *prārabdha* oil, goes.

*ahaṅkāra sthūla sukṣma kāraṇa śarīra* are all resolved into *samaṣṭhi*. The micro merges into the macro. In the case of *ajñāni* all the three *śarīram* will not resolve. The *sthūla śarīram* goes away, *sukṣma* and *kāraṇa śarīram* maintain their individuality and that is the one that travels by the *śukla gati* or *kṛṣṇa gati* or *adho gati* or some *gati* or the other. In the case of *jñāni*, there is no travel. Where does the *ātmā* travel? *ātmā* does not travel anywhere. The *jñāni* has become one with *Brahman*, free from any form of body, free from *punarjanma*. What is the example given in the *śāstra*? When the pot is broken, the pot space merges with total space without any motion. Merging is a verb we use but it is a verb that does not indicate any action. Similarly a *jīvan mukta* merges into *Brahman* without motion, which is called *videhamukti*.

Incidentally we should know that both the words *jīvan mukti* and *videha mukti* are from the standpoint of *mithyā ahaṅkāra* only. From the stand point of *prārabdha karma*, it is called *jīvan mukti*, and from the standpoint of absence of *prārabdha karma*, it is called *videha mukti*. From the stand point of *ātmā* there is neither *jīvan mukti* nor *videha mukti*. There is only one *nitya mukti*. *jñāni* does not say, 'I am now a *jīvan mukta* and after some time I will become *videha mukta*'. They are not at all *jñāni*'s concern. *jñāni* claims, 'I am *nitya mukta ātmā*'. Not only does *jñāni* claim, 'I am *nitya mukta ātmā*', *jñāni* is not bothered about the biography of the *mithyā ahaṅkāra*.

Even if somebody says, 'No, no, your *ahaṅkāra* will take *punarjanma*', he will say, 'let it be; what is it for me'. So even if argues that *ahaṅkāra* may take *punarjanma*, he is not concerned because his concern about *ahaṅkāra* is gone with this knowledge that I have nothing to do with *ahaṅkāra*. The beauty is, when I am not concerned about *ahaṅkāra*'s *mukti*, *ahaṅkāra* gets *mukti*. Definitely it gets *mukti*. Thereafter what? Let that *jñāni* immerse himself in that *Brahman*, merge into that *Brahman*, which is *sat cit ānanda svarūpa*, which is free from three-fold body. Here *upādhi* is *śarīra trayam*. In fact, *upādhi rahite*, you can say only from the standpoint of *jñāni*'s body. But remember the other bodies of other *ajñāni*'s are going to continue. But from the standpoint of that *jñāni*'s body, he is *upādhi rahitaḥ. pare* – the absolute, *apare*

– shore less, limitless *anante brahmaṇi*. This is the *phalam* for both *uttama adhikāri* and *madhyama adhikāri*. The only difference is, for *uttama adhikāri*, we don't talk of *vāsanākṣaya manonāśa*, but for *madhyama adhikāri* we include that also; ultimately all of them join the blessed group of *jīvan mukta and videha mukta*.

Before entering the ninth verse I would like to consolidate the entire teaching, the Author has given so far.

In the first verse, the author talked about the human struggle because of his ignorance regarding the ultimate goal of life and consequently the means of attaining it. *sādhyā sādhanā ajñānam* – because of that the human beings are groping in the darkness through out the life. From this it is very clear that the sources of knowledge available for the human being are not sufficient to help the human being. The *pauruṣeya pramāṇams* are insufficient to help the human being, at least with regard to the ultimate goal and the means to attain that. This human predicament or problem was presented in the first verse.

Then in verse numbers 2 to 4, the *Āchārya* based upon the *apauruṣeya Veda pramāṇa* very clearly said what is the goal of every human being is; whether he recognizes it or not, whether he pursues it or not, based on the *Veda pramāṇam*, what is the human goal. The *Āchārya* took the help of the first chapter of *Kaṭhōpaniṣad* to establish this. The goal according to *Veda pramāṇa* is abiding in the *advaita ātmā svarūpam*, which is nothing but *advaita – ātmā svarūpa jñānam*. By the word *advaita*, we mean the *ātmā* which is free from the three –fold distinction of *jīva, jagat and Īśvara*. Therefore, the destination is *jīva jagat Īśvara viśeṣa rahita advaita ātmā svarūpa avasthānam*. *Avasthānam* is the same as *jñānam*. This alone in the worldly parlance is called *nitya ānandaḥ*. All these words are synonymous. *advaita ātmā svarūpa avasthānam = advaita ātmā svarūpa avasthānam = advaita ātmā svarūpa jñānam = nityānandaḥ* is the *sādhyam* of human life. The *sādhyam*, the goal, was established in verses 2, 3 and 4.

While talking about that, the author talked about the chariot imagery given in the *Kaṭhōpaniṣad* which has got two-fold significance. By revealing the chariot imagery, the author justifies the title of the text *sādhana*. The *ratha* imagery goes well with the *sādhana*; because when the word *yātrā* comes, we will ask, what is the transport? The second incidental significance the Author indicates is that our instruments in the form of the body, mind, sense organs and intellect, which are comparable to the components of the chariot, should be kept healthy, organized and fit. Thus chariot imagery was highlighted and the goal was mentioned as *advaita jñānam*

Having mentioned the goal based on the *Veda* in 3 verses, 2 to 4, from the 5<sup>th</sup> verse onwards the author concentrated on the means or *sādhana*. The three stages of *sādhana* are highlighted in these verses. The fifth verse talked about *karma yoga sādhana* for *mala nivṛttiḥ* or *citta śuddhi prāptiḥ*. Purify the mind through *karma yoga*. This is *sādhana* stage one.

Then the sixth verse talked about *upāsanā yoga sādhana* meant for *vikṣepa nivṛttiḥ* or *citta ekāgrata prāpti*. Gaining concentration by removing the restlessness or extrovertedness of the mind through *upāsanā yoga* is the content of the sixth verse.

In the seventh verse *jñāna yoga sādhana* is mentioned as a means of *āvaraṇa nivṛttiḥ* or *jñāna prāptiḥ* – removal of ignorance and acquisition of *jñānam*. *jñāna yoga* in three-fold exercises was pointed out as *śravaṇam*, *mananam* and *nididhyāsanam*. Thus *sādhyam* is mentioned in verses 2, 3, and 4 and *sādhana* is mentioned in verses 5, 6, 7; both are based on *Veda pramāṇa*.

In the eighth verse, the author talked about the *phalam*. The benefit of this *jñāna prāpti* through *sādhana* is nothing but *muktiḥ* or liberation. From the *jñāni's* angle, *mukti* is instantaneous – *sadhyo mukti*. From *jñāni's* angle, there is no question of two *karmas* going and one - *karma* remaining. From *jñāni's* angle there is only one *sadhyo muktiḥ*, which is freedom from *trividha karma*.

Even though *jnāni* looks upon himself as *ātmā*, which is *nitya muktaḥ*, the *ajñāni*'s don't recognize the *nitya mukta ātmā*. Therefore, from *ahaṅkāra* angle we talk of two-fold *mukti* called *jīvan mukti* and *videha mukti*.

What is the definition of *jīvan mukta* from the *ahaṅkāra* angle? It is – *ahaṅkāra* continues to survive for some more time; *ahaṅkāra* continues to have *prārabdha karma* for some more time; *ahaṅkāra* continues to have *śarīra* for some more time. But, that *ahaṅkāra* is not disturbed by or overwhelmed by the presence of *karma* and *śarīra*. The surviving enlightened *ahaṅkāra* is a lightened *ahaṅkāra*. *Jñāni ahaṅkāra* survives but not overwhelmed by the ups and downs – *duḥkeṣu anudvignamanaḥ sukheṣu vigatasprḥaḥ* .... This survival of the enlightened *ahaṅkāra* without being overwhelmed by life's challenges and situations is called *jīvan mukti*.

What about *videha mukti*? This is also from the angle of other *ajñānis*. *Videha mukti* is also from the standpoint of *jnāni*'s *ahaṅkāra*; what is the definition of *ahaṅkāra's videha mukti*? The enlightened *ahaṅkāra's videha mukti* is, it is non-travelling at the time of death. Normally the unenlightened *ahaṅkāra* travels after death. The enlightened *ahaṅkāra* does not travel after death. The *ahaṅkāra* ends the travel and the *ahaṅkāra* merges into the *samaṣṭhi*. This *ahaṅkāra's* merger is called *videha mukti*. So both *jīvan mukti* and *videha mukti* are from the standpoint of *ahaṅkāra*, *vyavahāra dṛṣṭhi*. From *jnānis dṛiṣṭhi ahaṅkāra* itself is negated. Where is the question of *jīvan mukti* and *videha mukti*? – *na nirodho na ca utpattiḥ.... ityeṣa paramārthathā*, I was *Brahman*, I am *Brahman*, I will be *Brahman*, *sadyo muktiḥ* from *pāramārthika dṛiṣṭhi*. This is the *phalam* from *jñāni*'s angle. All those *phalams*, the Author mentioned in the 8<sup>th</sup> verse. So *sādhyam* topic is over, *sāadhanā* topic is over, *phalam* topic is over, *jīva yātrā* over. Therefore, the camp also must be completed and concluded. Therefore in the ninth verse the *Ācārya* concludes the *jīva yātrā*.

## Verse 9

इत्थं वेदवचोभिरेव नियते मार्गे वयं यात्रिका  
धर्माख्ये च सनातने कृतपदा वर्णाश्रमाचारिणः ।  
गच्छामः क्रमशश्च मोक्षपदवीं आनन्दरूपं यथा  
श्रद्धाभक्तिमतस्तथा दृत्तियुतान् अस्मान् विदध्याद् गुरुः ॥९॥  
*itthaṁ veda-vacobhireva niyate māрге vayaṁ yātrikā*  
*dharmākhye ca sanātane kṛtapadā varṇāśramācāriṇaḥ ।*  
*gacchāmaḥ kramaśaśca mokṣapadaṁ ānanda rūpaṁ yathā*  
*śraddha-bhaktimatastathā dhṛtiyutān asmān vidadhyād guruḥ ॥.9*

Concluding, the *Ācārya* says, 'We are all fortunate people who have got the *Vedic* guide map and we have chosen to follow that *vaidika mārgaḥ*'. That is why we the Hindus are called *Vaidika*. *Vaidika* means those who have chosen to lead a lifestyle as prescribed by the *Vedas*, which is called *vaidika mārgaḥ* or *sanātana dharmāḥ*. *mārgaḥ* means path and here path refers to lifestyle, which is specified by the *Veda vākyaṁ* or *Veda pramāṇam*. So it is a path paved by the *Vedic* teaching. It has got another name also: '*sanātana dharmāḥ*'. The word *darmaḥ* is a technical word, which means any teaching given by the *Veda* and all the scriptures – *Veda* in particular and all the scriptures in general. The teaching, the instructions, is called *darmaḥ*.

*Jaimini* in *Pūrova Mīmāṃsā* defines *dharma* as *codanā lakṣaṇaḥ arthataḥ dharamāḥ*. *arthataḥ* means an instruction for which *codanā* is the *lakṣaṇam*. *codanā* is *vaidika vākyaṁ*, *lakṣaṇam* means *pramāṇa*. An instruction which is based on the *vedic* teaching or *vedic* statement is called *dharma*. Since *Veda* is eternal, the *vaidika dharmā* is also eternal. We assume the *Veda* is eternal because we look upon the *Veda* as the very breath of the Lord – *yasya aniśvasitam Veda*. *Veda* has existed with the Lord all the time. So in the eternal *Īśvara*, *Veda* eternally resides. No human can invent or has invented the *Veda* and the time of the creation of the *Vedas* which were in the Lord potentially. That potential *Vedas* are manifested and activated again. During *paralaya*, in what form does the *Vedas* exist? *avyakta rūpeṇa* it exists. Therefore, what I want to say is, *Īśvara* is eternal, *Veda* is also eternal,

therefore *Vaidika dharma* is also eternal. We therefore give a special adjective to *vaidika dharma* which is *sanātana dharmaḥ* – the eternal teaching. We have all placed our feet, set our foot so that we can start the journey. So we have all stepped on that *vaidika mārga*. Therefore we are all having the *vedic* journey together, the destination being *nitya ānandaḥ*.

Once we have accepted the *vaidika mārga*, we have to take a two-fold designation based on our spiritual level and based on our occupation. Occupation based designation is called *varṇaḥ* and spiritual level based designation is *āśramaḥ*. All the occupations are broadly classified into four. We have to contribute to the society through one occupation or the other. So *varṇa* represents our social responsibility. It is our contribution. All the occupations are very intelligently classified.

One type of occupation is associated with knowledge – production, preservation or propagation of knowledge. Knowledge occupation or work is called *brāhmaṇa karma*, be it secular knowledge or sacred knowledge. Any person who is directly or indirectly occupied with production, preservation of knowledge is a *brāhmaṇa*.

The second type of occupation is production, preservation or propagation of the infrastructure required for both. It is the infrastructure providing occupation for *Sarasvatī* production and *Lakṣmī* production. This is called *kṣatriya karma*. Providing the infrastructure for knowledge workers and providing the infrastructure for wealth producers. All the occupations are directly or indirectly connected with infrastructure provision, and that is called *kṣatriya karma*. Without the strength of infrastructure, the other two are not possible.

Then the third type of occupation is production, preservation or propagation of wealth. It is wealth production, wealth preservation and wealth distribution. That is called *vaiśya karma*.

The biggest problem in India is the lack of this infrastructure. Without this, phones will not work; roads will be full of pot holes; electricity will not be there. A country doesn't have strength to produce knowledge and wealth, if infrastructure is missing. Infrastructure is associated with what? Health and strength of *Pārvatī* workers; they provide the infrastructure. Even law and order maintenance is what? Infrastructure; they provide the infrastructure to *Sarasvatī* profession, *Lakṣmī* profession and the *Parvatī* profession.

The fourth one is the labour force or the implementation force. Those people who implement and support, the supportive force, are the *śūdras*. They are not decision makers. They are the implementers of *Sarasvatī* work, the *Lakṣmī* work and *Parvatī* work. There is no fifth profession possible. All have to be in one field or the other. These are called *catur vidha varṇa*. Through any *varṇa*, if it is based on heredity it is called the caste system. We need not follow the caste system. We may abolish the caste-based occupation but we cannot abolish occupation itself. Based on the occupation, we all have to be *brāhmaṇa*, *kṣatriya*, *vaiśya* *śūdra* based on the *Vedic* scheme. It is called *varṇa vyavastha*.

Then the spiritual level based classification is *āśramaḥ*. In *brahmacarya āśramaḥ*, a person is supposed to understand the *Vedic* scheme regarding the *sādhyam* and *sādhanaṁ*. Therefore if *Veda* is not there in the education scheme, the graduates will get lots of skill and knowledge. They will never know what the goal of life is. If the educational system includes the *vaidika dharma*, then the students will get various skills, the most important thing they will know is what is *sādhyā* and *sādhana*. They will know *sādhyā* is *mokṣa* and *sādhana* is *karma yoga + upāsana yoga + jñāna yoga*. So *brahmacharya* is *Vedic* scheme education. I am at the level learning the scheme of life.

*Grhastha āśramaḥ* is the *karma yoga pradhāna āśramaḥ*. It is because in *grhastha āśramaḥ*, a person has all the resources to implement the *pañca mahā yajña*. The *pañca mahā yajña* can never be implemented in any other *āśramaḥ*.

*Vānaprastha āśramaḥ* is *upāsanā yoga pradhāna āśramaḥ* where the extrovert *karmas* are heavily reduced. The life becomes *upāsanā pradhāna*. *Muṇḍakopaniṣad* mantra 1 to 10, just before *parikṣya lokān*, indicates *vānaprastha āśramaḥ*.

Finally *sannyāsa āśramaḥ* is *jñāna yoga pradhāna āśramaḥ* in which *karmas* are heavily reduced. *Upāsanās* are reduced heavily. There are some minimum *karmas* and minimum *upāsanās*. Predominant *sādhana* is *śravaṇa manana nididhyāsana*.

Whether a person physically goes through the *āśramas* are not, in terms of lifestyle or *sādhana*, one will have to go through *karma pradhāna* life, *upāsanā pradhāna* life and *jñāna pradhāna* life.

Finally, we should remember that even if we are following all the *sādhana*s, it is not watertight scheme that we complete *karma yoga* first, and then you renounce *karma* totally; then exclusively do *upāsanā* and exclusively do *jñānam*. It is not that way. Even a *karma yogi* listens to *Vedānta*. *Vedānta* exposure is there but predominant thing is *karma*. That is why I said – *gr̥hastha āśramaḥ* is not *karma yoga pradhāna āśramaḥ*. *Gr̥hastha* also has *upāsanā*; he also attends camps. That means what? - Exposure to concentrated *jñāna yoga*.

Similarly *vānaprastha* doesn't drop *karma* and *jñāna*. In every *āśramaḥ*, *karma* is there, *upāsanā* is there, and *jñānam* is there. In the proportion there is a difference. That is why we use the word *karma yoga pradhāna* life, *upāsana yoga pradhāna* life.

Based on that one is either a *brahmacāri* or a *gr̥hastha* or a *vānaprastha* or a *sannyāsi*. Based on that one has got this two-fold designation: occupation based and *sādhana* based; Occupation based designation is *varNa* and *sādhana* level based designation is *āśramaḥ*. When I have this two-fold designation, I am called *varṇāśramacāri*. Therefore the Author says, we are all *varṇāśramacāriṇaḥ* belonging to one *āśramaḥ* or one *varṇa*.

Let us all continue our journey. If the journey should be successful, we should do our work. Our *prayatna* is important. In addition to that we require the grace of *Īśvara* and *guru*. Therefore, may we have the grace of *Īśvara* in addition to our own effort! That is said in the fourth line, *guruḥ* – means *guru* that includes *Īśvara* also because for a seeker, there is no difference between *Īśvara* and *guru*.

For this journey what should the *guru* do? Let us have the confidence and willpower. If we are diffident and if we think this journey is too overwhelming, the Author says, 'May the Lord inject us with confidence and willpower'. Let us go and travel with the thought – "I will and I can travel and reach the destination'. Let us not be fatalistic. Let us believe in ourselves. May *Bhagavān* give us the will! May *Bhagavān* bless us with *śraddhā* and *bhakti* towards the *sāstram*, *guru* and *Bhagavān*. Let me look upon the *sāstra* as the *sāstra indriyam*. Let me look upon the *sāstra* as an independent *pramāṇa*, a self-valid *pramāṇa* and let me reverentially approach the *sāstra* with *śraddha* and *bhakti*.

That is why in many *āśramas*, they don't keep the book on the ground. Keeping the book on the ground is supposed to be disrespect. They either keep a cloth and over which they place the book or they have got a stand to keep the book. Here what do we do? If one of the legs of the table is shorter we keep the book as support for that. If it is raining, the book is used as an umbrella. If the book gets wet, its okay but I should not get wet. This is our attitude. I should not do that. I should get wet and protect the book.

May we develop and nourish towards *bhāvanā* or *śraddhā* towards *sāstram*, *guru* and *Bhagavān*. May *Bhagavān* bless us with will power and *bhakti* to travel not to places like Chennai or Poona but to *mokṣa padavī*. That is said in the third line – *gaccāmaḥ*. Let us travel and reach how? *kramaśaḥ* – gradually. As Swāmi Chinmayananda says – spiritual growth is not a revolution but it is an evolution. It should happen gradually like ripening of a mango. If mango is quickly ripened artificially, then it will not taste that sweet.

Therefore *kramaśah* means gradual process. Therefore, we should have patience.

Let us enjoy the travel rather than asking how long it will take. In childhood, when then the books are given, we read page after page, and that's how we study several lessons. When, after growing up we get a book, the first thing we do is look at the last page first to know how many pages are there. Is it possible here? No. Therefore let us not bother whether liberation is in this life or next life or after 100 lives, which is none of my business. I am happy that I have come to *Vedānta* and therefore I enjoy the journey. Let us enjoy the journey and reach the goal of *mokṣa*, the state of *mokṣa*.

What is that *mokṣa*? Here the author reminds us the first verse – *nityānanda padam*, which is *svarūpa ānanda*. We are not talking about experiential pleasure; we have already said no experiential pleasure is *nityānanda*. Here we are talking about *svarūpa ānanda* which is claimed as myself. Thus let us all travel together in the *jīva yātrā* and gain *Brahman*. *jīvātmā* to *paramātmā aikyam*. This is the concluding verse.

Thus with grace of the Lord and our effort let us all have a successful *jīva yātrā*. The *jīva yātrā* text, written by *Jnānānada Bhārati* is over.

Concluded

[www.arshaavinash.in](http://www.arshaavinash.in)

WEBSITE FOR FREE E-BOOKS ON VEDANTA & SANSKRIT



Pujya Swami Dayananda Saraswati launched Arsha Avinash Foundation's website [www.arshaavinash.in](http://www.arshaavinash.in) on Dec 31, 2014.

All the E-books available on the website can be downloaded FREE!

**PUJYA SWAMI DAYANANDA SARASWATI- A BRIEF BIOGRAPHY BY N. AVINASHILINGAM.** It is available in English, Tamil, Hindi and Portuguese.

**SWAMI PARAMARTHANANDA'S TRANSCRIBED CLASS NOTES:** Available class notes are Introduction to Vedanta, Tattva Bodha, Bhagavad Gita (3329 pages), Isavasya Upanisad, Kenopanisad, Kathopanisad, Prasna Upanisad, Mundaka Upanisad, Mandukya Upanisad with karika, Aitareya Upanisad, Chandogya Upanisad, Brihadarnyaka Upanisad (1190 pages), Brahma Sutra (1486 pages), Atma Bodha, Vivekachudamani (2038 pages), Panchadasi, Manisha Panchakam, Upadesha Saara, Saddarsanam, Jayanteya Gita, Jiva Yatra, Dhanyastakam, Advaita Makaranda, Dakshinamurthy Stotram, Drg Drsya Viveka and Naishkarmya Siddhi.

**BRNI MEDHA MICHKA'S BOOKS ON SANSKRIT GRAMMAR:** Enjoyable Sanskrit Grammar Books- Basic Structure of Language, Phonetics & Sandhi, Derivatives (Pancavrttayah), Dhatukosah, Astadhyayi, Study Guide to Panini Sutras through Lagu Siddhanta Kaumudi, Sanskrit Alphabet Study Books- Single Letters, Conjunct Consonants.

There are many more books and articles on Indian culture and Spirituality, Chanting, Yoga and Meditation. There are also books in Tamil on Vedanta.



**Arsha Avinash Foundation**

**104 Third Street, Tatabad, Coimbatore 641012, India**

**Phone: +91 9487373635**

**E mail: [arshaavinash@gmail.com](mailto:arshaavinash@gmail.com)**

**[www.arshaavinash.in](http://www.arshaavinash.in)**