

COMMENTARY ON THE PANCHADASI



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INTRODUCTION

The Panchadasi is a great masterpiece of Swami Vidyaranya. Prior to his *sannyasa*, he was called Madhava; and his brother was Sayana. They were two brothers. Sayana wrote Sanskrit commentaries on all the Vedas – the Brahmanas, Aranyakas and Upanishads. He cannot be regarded as a human being, really speaking. Superhuman work is Sayana's Sanskrit commentary. The stupendous scholarship that is behind these commentaries on the Vedas would make anyone feel that Saiyana was not a human being. He must have been a superhuman personality, to say the least.

The other brother was Madhava. There is a story behind Madhava. As Madhava before his *sannyasa*, he wrote many books. It appears that financially they were very poor. All great learned people are financially poor. It is a peculiar irony of fate. They had so much difficulty in maintaining the family. Madhava, it appears, did the Gayatri *purasharana* a number of times to have a *darshan* of Devi so that he could be freed from financial stress. After completing several *purasharanas*, he heard a voice: "You shall not have *darshan* of me in this birth." He became frustrated and gave up the *purasharana*. He got initiated into *sannyasa* and went away.

Immediately the Devi appeared before him. "What was that for which you were thinking of me?"

He replied, "How is it that you now give me *darshan*, when you had said that you will not give me *darshan* in this birth?"

She said, “This *sannyas* is another birth that you have taken. That is why I have come.”

“But anyhow, I don’t want anything. I have taken to *sannyas* and I want nothing. You can go.”

“No, I will not go,” Devi said, it seems, “When I come, I must always give and go.”

“But I cannot ask for anything as my needs are no more,” said Vidyaranya who was Madhava before his *sannyas*.

The Devi said, “As you want nothing, you shall have everything.” And she vanished.

He became omniscient in his knowledge. There is no subject on which Vidyaranya has not written. Every conceivable subject: aesthetics, ethics, civics, morality, *dharmashastra*, religion, medical science, anatomy, physiology, metaphysics, epistemology; there is nothing on which he has not written. And in every field, his book is the best. In every field, his work is the standard. It shows the mastery of both these brothers. And Vidyaranya is the person responsible for founding the Vijaynagar empire. He acted as the minister to the first kings of Vijaynagar, called Hakka and Bukka. He actually initiated the founding of the Vijaynagar empire, and he worked as a minister, as a spiritual guide, to these kings.

One of Vidyaranya’s great works is the Panchadasi. It is a masterpiece in Vedanta philosophy and spiritual practice. It contains fifteen chapters, which is why it is called Panchadasi. The book by itself has no name; it is named after the number of chapters. *Panchadasa* is fifteen and *panchadasi* is a work that contains fifteen chapters. These

fifteen chapters are classified into three sections of five chapters each. It is said that the Bhagavadgita, which contains eighteen chapters, is also classifiable into three sections: the first six, the middle six, and the last six. The first five chapters of Panchadasi deal with existence, or *sat* in Sanskrit. The second five deal with consciousness, or *chit*. The last five deal with *ananda*, or bliss. Therefore, the book as a whole is an exposition of *sat-chit-ananda* – the nature of the Absolute expounded in minute detail in his own novel way.

I think this is the third time that I am taking up study and discourse on the Panchadasi. In one course, when I was speaking in the Bhajan Hall, some people were taking down notes in shorthand. One of them gave me the typed manuscript of these lectures that he had taken in shorthand. I went through it, corrected it, and that book was published in the name of the Philosophy of the Panchadasi.

[Publisher's note: This series of discourses was given in 1989 after The Commentary of the Bhagavadgita, containing 51 discourses, was completed. This is a series of a verse-by-verse commentary on the Panchadasi which Swamiji continued for 42 sessions and ended in the seventh chapter.]

Discourse 1

CHAPTER 1: TATTVA VIVEKA – DISCRIMINATION OF REALITY, VERSES 1-5

The first two verses of the first chapter of the Panchadasi constitute a prayer to Swami Vidyaranya's Guru. In all ancient texts, the Guru is offered prayer first. This is a tradition which has been followed always, and the Panchadasi author also followed this respected tradition.

Namaḥ śrī śaṅkarānanda guru pādāmbu janmane, savilāsa mahā moha grāha grāsaika karmaṇe (1). Sankarananda was a great *sannyasin* under whom Vidyaranya appears to have studied. Sankarananda wrote, to our knowledge, two great works, one which is called Atma Purana, an epic type of description of the contents of the Upanishads. Actually, the authorship goes to Sankarananda, the great master. The other book by Sankarananda is "Commentary on the Bhagavad Gita". Very few people read that commentary; it is very tough and technical. This Sankarananda, the great master, is now offered obeisance. "Prostrations to the lotus feet of the Guru Sri Sankarananda, who is engaged in the great function of the destruction of that crocodile which harasses people everywhere in the form of illusion, delusion and ignorance, and dances in ecstasy in the form of this created world." This is a prayer to the Guru mentioning thereby the power of the Guru in dispelling ignorance. 'Sankara' has also been interpreted by the commentator as one who brings *sam*. *Samkaroti-iti sankara*. *Sam* is blessedness, peace, auspiciousness. *Kara* is one who brings it. It may be Lord Siva, or it may be the Supreme Being Himself who

brings us blessedness, auspiciousness and ultimate peace. So it may be a prayer to the almighty God also. We may take it in that sense, or take it as a prayer to the Guru Sankarananda, whose power is here delineated as the capacity to destroy the ignorance of disciples.

Tat pādāmbu ruha dvañdva sevā nimarla cetasām, sukha bodhāya tattvasya vivedo'yaṁ vidhīyate (2). Now the author says he is engaging himself, in the first five chapters, in the description of an important subject, called *viveka* or discrimination. The first five chapters are all designated *viveka*, or discrimination of something from something else. The middle five chapters are designated as *dipa* or illumination consciousness. The last five are designated as *ananda* or bliss. "I shall endeavour to write a textbook on the discrimination of reality, as distinguished from unreality, for the benefit of students who always wish to have easy textbooks, not with technicalities galore and very hard to understand. I shall free this text from unnecessary technicality and make it easy to understand – *sukha-bodhaya*. It is for students who are free from *mala vikshepa avarana*, that is, their minds are cleansed from the usual dross of attachments to things, desire and attachment – students who are devoted to this Guru Sankarananda." It may be, therefore, a textbook that has been specially written for the edification of other students who were also listening to the discourses of the great master Sankarananda; or it may mean all devotees of God. We can take it in either sense.

The *viveka* or the analysis, the discrimination that is spoken of here, is actually the analysis of consciousness. The very beginning verses go directly into the subject

without beating about the bush and giving us introductory passages or telling stories, etc. It goes to the very heart of the matter. The impossibility of denying the existence of consciousness is the main subject in the initial verses. We may doubt everything. We may even deny everything, but we cannot deny consciousness – because it is consciousness that is doubting and it is consciousness that is denying things. When all things go because of the denial of all things, then what remains? There remains the consciousness of having denied everything and the consciousness of doubting all things.

Even if we feel that we do not exist – we are annihilated or we are dead, for instance – even then, we will feel that at the back of our imagination of the annihilation of our personality there is a consciousness of the annihilation of personality. Even if we say that there is only a vacuum, and there is nil, and finally nothing exists in the world, there is a consciousness that affirms that nothing exists. Hence, it is impossible to obviate the predicament of a consciousness interfering with all things.

The first verse is engaged in a very interesting analysis of it being not possible to have duality, finally. If there are many objects of perception, as we have in the waking condition, there is a necessity for us to comprehend these multifarious objects in a single act of consciousness – or, we may say, conscious perception.

There are many trees in the forest, many stars in the heavens. Who is it that is aware of the manifoldness of the stars and the trees? How can we know that one thing is different from another thing unless there is an awareness

that brings these two different objects together in a single comprehension transcending both items of difference? If 'A' is different from 'B', it is not 'A' that is knowing that 'A' is different from 'B', because 'A' is different from 'B' as it has already been asserted; therefore, 'A' cannot know that there is 'B'. Nor can 'B' know that there is 'A' because it is not possible for 'B' to know 'A', as 'B' is different from 'A'. There being no connection between 'A' and 'B', neither 'A' can know 'B', nor 'B' can know 'A'. Who knows that 'A' is different from 'B'? That knowing principle cannot be 'A', and it cannot be 'B'. So the differences in the world, the dualities of perception, the multitudinous-ness and the variety of things is capable of being known by a consciousness that is not involved in any of the objects of perception. This is the aim of the first initial philosophical verse, to place in perspective, the third aspect ie the knowing principle.

Śabda sparśā dayo vedyā vaici tryāj jāgare pṛthak, tato vibhaktā tat saṁvit aika rūpyāṅna bhidyate (3). *Sabda sparsa* – there are five objects of cognition or perception: sound, touch, form or colour, taste, and smell. The eyes cannot hear. The ears cannot see. But there is someone who sees and hears at the same time. We can sometimes see, hear, touch, smell and taste at the same time, though the five functions differ from one another. One sense organ cannot perform the function of another sense organ. The ear cannot even know that there is such a thing called eye, etc. How does it become possible for someone to know that there are five kinds of perception?

That ‘someone’ is none of these perceptions. The one who knows that one perception is different from another is none of these. It is not the eye, it is not the ear, it is not any of these senses that proclaims, “I know, I see, I hear,” etc. This consciousness, which is essential for the perception of the unity that is behind the variety of sense functions, has to be different from the sense functions. *Vibhakta* means ‘different from’; ‘variety’ means *vaichitrya*. In the waking condition *jagara*, the variety of perception of objects, is made possible on account of the variegated functions of the sense organs. We know this very well. It does not require much of an explanation. Yet, it does not require much time for us to appreciate that the knower of the difference of these functions cannot be any one of these functions. That knower is awareness, pure and simple – consciousness, *samvid*. On account of the transcendence and the unitary character of consciousness above the diversity of the senses, consciousness has to be established in the waking condition as existing, transcending, ranging above the sense functions. We will realise that this is the state of affairs in dream also – *tatha svapne* in the next verse.

Tathā svapne’tra vedyaṁ tu na sthiraṁ jāgare sthiraṁ, tad behdo’tastayoḥ saṁvid ekarūpa na bhidyate (4). The difference between waking and dreaming is that waking looks like a longer experience, and dream is often considered to be shorter in comparison with waking. But that is a different matter. In the same way as we have diversity of perception in waking, there is diversity of perception in dream also. In dream we also have mountains and rivers and people, and all kinds of things. How do we

know them? We have got a dream eye, dream ear, dream taste, dream touch, and so on. The mind in dream manufactures a new set of senses which are not the waking senses; and these sense organs specially created by the mind in the dreaming condition become the sources of the diversity of perception of dream objects. Even here, in order to know that there is a variety and diversity of objects in dream, there has to be a consciousness. Just as in the case of waking, the consciousness in dream is different from the variety we see in dream.

Also, the same person wakes and the same person dreams. On the one hand, consciousness is different from the variety of objects and the sensations thereof; and on the other hand, consciousness is different from waking and dreaming. It is not involved either in waking or in dreaming because it knows the difference between waking and dreaming. We know that we dreamt; we know that we are awake. Who are we that make this statement that waking is different from dream?

So consciousness does two things at the same time. It distinguishes between objects and transcends the objects by standing above them. Secondly, it distinguishes the states of consciousness (waking, dream and sleep) and stands above them as *turiya* – that is, the fourth state of consciousness.

The difference between waking and dream is only a question of shorter or longer duration, though in dream also we can have long durations of experience. But in comparison with the waking, we find that we slept for a few minutes and had a long dream; and a few minutes are very short in comparison with the twenty-four hours of waking.

So apart from the fact of the difference in duration between waking and dream, the consciousness operating behind the senses of perception both in waking and dream is identical.

Supot thitasya sauṣpta tamo bodho bhavet smṛtiḥ, sã cãva buddha viṣayã'vabuddham tattadã tamaḥ (5). In waking, we have one kind of consciousness. In dream, we have another kind of consciousness. In sleep, we do not have any kind of consciousness. There is a darkness, a kind of ignorance in the state of deep sleep. But it is surprising that we all know that we were awake, we were dreaming, and we were sleeping. Granted, there was a kind of consciousness in waking, as it has been explained, and there was also the same consciousness operating in dream. But there was no consciousness in sleep. How did we know then, that we have slept? Knowledge of having slept cannot be there unless consciousness was there.

In waking, there are physical objects before consciousness. In dream there are mental objects before consciousness. The object before consciousness in sleep is ignorance; a cloud-like covering over consciousness is the object. The consciousness knows that it knew nothing. It is a negative kind of consciousness. It is worthwhile analysing into the circumstance of our being aware that we slept, because sleeping is an absence of consciousness. And the fact of our having slept coming to us as a memory thereafter is something interesting.

We know what memory is. Memory, or remembrance, is the aftermath of a conscious experience that we had earlier. We remember a thing after having experienced a thing before; and if we did not have any kind of experience

at all, the memory of it would not be there. So to assert that we slept yesterday, we must have had an awareness of having slept. But unfortunately, awareness of having slept is not possible because during sleep the consciousness did not actually 'know' the condition of sleep. We have to analyse by a fact of inference that consciousness must have been there because unconscious experience is unknown. All experience capable of a remembrance or memory afterwards has to be attached to consciousness.

By an act of inference, when we see muddy water in the Ganga, we infer that it must be raining upstream. And so in a similar manner we infer – not by direct experience, of course – by inference we realise and affirm that consciousness must have been there in deep sleep also – but for which fact, memory of sleeping would not be there afterwards.

So what follows from this? Consciousness was in waking, dream and sleep continuously. This is the reason why we feel we are the person who was awake; we are the same person that dreamt; we are the same person that slept. It does not mean somebody is waking, somebody else is dreaming, and yet somebody else is sleeping. It is not three different persons doing that. One continuous identity of personality is maintained by consciousness.

So what is the analysis now? Consciousness is continuously present in all the three states and, therefore, it constitutes a fourth state. It is not any one of the states. If consciousness were completely absorbed and identified with waking only, it would not be working in dream. And similarly, if it had been exhausted in one of the other

conditions, dream or sleep, it would not have known other conditions. Inasmuch as consciousness knows all three conditions, it shows that it is none of the three conditions. It is a fourth state of consciousness, a transcendent element in us, or a transcendent element which we ourselves are. We are that transcendent consciousness, basically. We are not that which is involved in waking, dream and sleep. We are consciousness. This is the analysis here by examining the conditions of waking, dream and sleep.

Inasmuch as consciousness alone was there in sleep, we have to know something about what kind of consciousness it was. It could not be a consciousness that was in some place only, in a particular location. The peculiar character of consciousness is that it cannot be located in a particular place. It cannot be only in one place. It has to be everywhere. If consciousness is assumed to be present in one place only, there must be somebody to know that it is not elsewhere. Who is telling us that consciousness is only inside the body and it is not elsewhere? Consciousness itself is telling that.

It is necessary for consciousness to overstep the limits of its bodily encasement in order to know that it is only inside. We cannot know that there is a limitation of something within a fence unless and until we also know that there is something beyond the fence. The consciousness of finitude implies the consciousness of the Infinite. The impossibility of dividing consciousness into parts, fragments, and locating it in particular individuals makes it abundantly the Infinite that it is.

So we are actually entering into the infinite consciousness in the state of deep sleep; but because of the potentials of our *karmas*, *prarabdha*, etc., which cover our consciousness as darkness – the unfulfilled desires, the unconscious layer, as it is called in psychoanalysis – because of this covering, we do not know what is happening to us. We are actually on the lap of Brahman in that state of deep sleep. But blindfolded we go, and therefore it is as good as not going.

Consciousness has been analysed in these three verses as firstly, distinct from objects of perception; secondly, distinct from the three states; thirdly, infinite in nature. Such is the grandeur of our essential being. We are basically infinite consciousness. This is the reason why we ask for endless things. We want to possess the whole world. Even if we become kings of the earth, we are not satisfied because the Atman inside is infinite. It says, “Do you give me only the earth? I want the skies.” If you give the sky, it will say, “I want further up.” That is the asking for infinitude.

The Atman is also eternity. It is not bound by time. Therefore, we do not want to die. That desire to be immortal, the desire not to die, the desire to be existing for all time to come, endlessly, is the eternity in us that is speaking. Therefore, every one of us is basically infinite and eternal, whose nature is consciousness; and it is Absolute because of the infinitude of its nature.

Discourse 2

CHAPTER 1: TATTVA VIVEKA – DISCRIMINATION OF REALITY, VERSES 6-13

Consciousness is the subject of analysis. This consciousness is further being studied now in the coming verses.

Sa bodho viṣayād bhinno na bodhāt svapna bodha vat, evaṁ sthāna traye'pyekā saṁvid tatvad dinān tare (6). Māsābda yuga kalpeṣu gatā gamye ṣvane kadhā, nodeti nāsta metyakā saṁvi deṣā svayaṁ prabhā (7). This consciousness is Self-conscious, *svayam prabha*. Objects in the world require consciousness in order that they may be known, but consciousness does not require another consciousness that it may be known. That is the meaning of 'Self-consciousness'. Objects cannot know themselves. They are known by another – the subject – which is endowed with consciousness; but the subject, which is consciousness, does not require another subject to know itself. That is the meaning of Self-consciousness.

Consciousness is not different from consciousness. While objects require a consciousness to know them, consciousness does not require another consciousness to know it, because consciousness is never an object. It ever remains a subject, pure and simple.

If we say that consciousness requires another consciousness behind it – because it is possible to extend this logic beyond the effects to the causes, and behind that cause to another cause – the problem will arise, namely, that 'that' which knows consciousness also should be consciousness as there cannot be two consciousnesses,

because we have already seen that consciousness cannot be divided into two parts. It cannot be split or fragmented, because the imagined fragmentation of consciousness is also to be known by consciousness only. The limitation of consciousness is known by consciousness; therefore, consciousness is not limited. That is to say, it is unlimited.

So, it is *svayam prabha*. It is Self-knowledge. Consciousness is not different from other consciousness, while consciousness is different from the objects. *Bodho viṣayād bhinno na bodhāt svapna bodha vat*: As it is in the case of dream, we have noted that consciousness itself appears as an object outside, and it is not different from itself. It is to be considered as a continuous link obtaining not only between the diversity of objects on one hand, but also between the variety of three states of waking, dreaming, and sleep.

Evam̐ sthāna traye'pyekā sarṁvid tatvad. Sthana traye means three states – waking, dreaming and sleep. Objectively, it is the cohering principle of the unity that is behind all diversity of perception; subjectively, it is a link bringing together, in a state of single apprehension, the three states of waking, dreaming and sleeping. Not only that – day in and day out, this consciousness persists, *dinan tare*. So many days we have lived in this world; from childhood to this time, we remember all the days through which we have passed. Don't we think there is one consciousness that is linking us into a single personality? I lived fifty years back, forty years back, thirty years back, twenty years back. I was a child and I am an elderly man, and so on. Who is saying this? Who is feeling this? Who is

conscious of this? This is one single consciousness maintaining itself as a self-identity throughout the days and the months and the years that we have passed.

Māsābda yuga kalpeṣu: Not merely through days and months and years is it continuing as a single link; it has been maintaining its continuity through ages and ages, through cycles of creation, through the Krita, Treta, Dvapara, Kali Ages. Through all creation, right from beginning, this one consciousness has been maintaining itself as a self-identical unitariness that we are. Here is a glorious message for all of us. We are not the little crawling insects that we appear to be on the surface of the earth. We are mighty in our inner essence. The potential of unlimitedness is singing its own celestial music within us, and wanting to reveal itself just now. But it is not allowed to reveal itself or manifest itself on account of a peculiar juxtaposition that has taken place between consciousness and matter – which is to say, the attachment to this body, and attachment to the ways of prejudiced thinking in terms of space, time and externality.

What do we think day in and day out? Space, time, objects. There is no fourth thing that we can think of. And all this conditioning arises on account of this body through which we start thinking. So the body-consciousness reads through the affirmation of space-time consciousness and object-consciousness. How would we have knowledge of the eternity that we are, the infinity that our consciousness is?

Nevertheless, it is worth knowing that this consciousness that we really are is a continuous link that is

maintaining itself as Self-consciousness through days and months and years and cycles of creation. From eternity to eternity, it is existing. We are deathless eternities, in essence. The coming and going, the fluxation of the universe, the varieties of creation in cycles do not affect this consciousness because it is consciousness that knows that there is fluxation and a coming and going of things.

How many times has God created the world? The scriptures say many, many cycles have come and gone. But who is saying this? Consciousness. Eternity is consciousness.

Gatā gamye ṣvane kadhā, nodeti nāsta metyakā: Neither does consciousness arise at any time, because it has no beginning, nor does consciousness end at any time. It has no death. Beginningless and endless, immortal is this consciousness which we, ourselves, essentially are.

Samvi deṣā svayam prabhā: This *svayam prabha*, Self-consciousness, is self proof. It does not require any other proof. We may require a proof to establish other things, but we do not require a proof to establish consciousness, because it is the presupposition of all other proofs. All proofs proceed from consciousness. It is self-proved, indubitable.

Iya mātma parā nandaḥ para premās padaṁ yataḥ, mā na bhūvaṁ hi bhūyā sam iti premāt manī kṣyate (8). Consciousness is Self-proof. It is Self-conscious. It is Self-conscious and also self-love. Consciousness has two peculiar aspects – intense affirmation of itself, and intense love of itself. It cannot love anything else. Immense love is

the nature of the self. It is the source of the love of all other things in the world. Nobody loves anything in the world for its own sake. All love is for one's own self. If we will carefully analyse our love, we will realise that we have loves for things because we love ourselves. And when everything goes, we would like to protect ourselves. When all things go – land, property, money, relations, all are destroyed – we would like to remain at least as beggars. We would not like to die. Love of self is supreme love, and all other loves are conditioned by this self-love.

Therefore, being the source of *para premas padam*, supreme love being the essence of the Self, it is supreme bliss itself in its nature. Consciousness cannot be limited, as it has been shown. Because it is not limited, it is ultimately free. It is limitation that puts a bar on our expression of freedom. When consciousness which we really are has no bar or limitation of any kind, it is absolutely free. And bliss and happiness mean the same as freedom. The more we are free, the more we are also happy. Inasmuch as the Self is totally free, it is total bliss; because it is eternally free, it is eternal bliss.

lyā mātmaṁ parā nandaḥ: This Self is supreme bliss. Para premās padaṁ yataḥ. It is also the source of the bliss that we apparently see in outer objects. What does one feel always? Mā na bhūvaṁ hi bhūyā sam: “Let me not, not be. Let me be. Let me not annihilate myself, and let not conditions arise to annihilate me. May I live always, and may I not, not live.” This is the feeling, the longing, the main desire of the Self. It is asserting its eternity. The eternity aspect of the Self always affirms itself in the desire

never not to be, and the desire always to be. Iti premāt manī kṣyate: This kind of love is always seen in the Self. When all things go, when the world itself goes, it would be good if we are alive – so the Self thinks. It is on the one hand Self-luminous, Self-conscious, Self-affirmative, and also Self-bliss. Eternal unending bliss – that is the Self.

Tat premāt mārtham anyatra naiva manyārtha mātmanah, atasat paramaṁ tena paramā nandata'tmanah (9). Tat premāt mārtham: All love is for its own sake. Anyatra naiva manyārthani: Self-love is not for the sake of another. Self-love is for its own sake. Therefore, we have to consider the Atman as the supreme bliss. And so we conclude that the Atman is basically bliss in its nature. Existence, Consciousness, Bliss are supposed to be the nature of the Atman or the Self. In certain things existence is manifest – for instance, stones and inanimate matter manifest existence. They do exist. Stones also exist, but they do not manifest intelligence. They do not manifest self-consciousness.

In human beings, existence is manifest; intelligence is also manifest. But bliss is not always manifest. The *tamas* aspect of stone, etc. prevents all other manifestations except existence. The *rajasic* aspect of man prevents the manifestation of bliss but allows the manifestation of existence and consciousness.

So we do exist and we are aware also that we are existing, and we are aware that many things exist, but we are not always happy. We do not feel free in this world. We are bound by several limitations. On account of the distractions caused by the manifestation of *rajas*, we have

distracted logical knowledge, sensory knowledge, objective knowledge, academic knowledge, and so on, but no knowledge which can be really called bliss in its nature. Learned people are not always happy people. They have neither happiness nor power in their hands.

Hence, all learning which is of an intellectual nature, because it is *rajasic* in nature, cannot manifest bliss. Bliss is revealed only in *sattva*, not in *tamas* and not in *rajas*. We have existence and consciousness on account of the *tamasic* and the *rajasic* qualities of *prakriti* manifesting themselves in us. We are rarely *sattvic* in our nature because we are always objectively conscious and rarely subjectively conscious. You can yourself consider for a few minutes how many times you think of yourself in a day. You always think of trains, buses, cars, bicycles, tickets, going here and there, office work, going to factories, and the many the engagements you have got. *You* have got. But what are *you*?

We have no time to think of ourselves. In a way, man has sold himself to objects. The subject has become the objects. We are objects much more than subjects. This is the predicament we have landed ourselves in. Would we like to be objects? It is the worst condition in which we can land ourselves. The intense consciousness of the external world and the continuous engagement in external affairs of the world is an indication that *sattva* is not always manifest in us. There is no equilibration in thinking. There is externalisation in thinking. Therefore, *sattva* is not manifest. Therefore, we are not happy. This is the corollary that is drawn from this nature of the Self being intensely bliss, and yet our being deprived of it.

It is a great wonder. Our nature is essentially eternal bliss, yet we are never happy even one day. We have always something to disturb our minds. This has to be analysed carefully: What is it that makes us so unhappy? How is it that we always feel like becoming something other than ourselves, and would not like to be our own selves?

Tat premāt mārtham anyatra naiva manyārtha mātmanah, atasat paramaṁ tena paramā nandata'tmanaḥ. All joy that we feel in respect of external things is actually a foisting of the basic Atman bliss upon the objects outside – the bliss of our own Self. The objects are not the cause of our happiness. We are the cause of the happiness that we wrongly feel in objects. So we conclude hereby that bliss supreme is the nature of the Atman. Therefore, we also conclude that the Atman is supreme bliss unparalleled, incomparable, non-temporal. Eternity is the nature of this bliss of the Atman that we are.

Itthaṁ saccitparānanda ātmā yuktyā tathāvidham, param brahma tayoś caikyam śrutyan teṣū paḍīsyate (10). Because of the universality of the consciousness of the Atman in us, it is Brahman also in essence. When we consider consciousness as present in us individuals, we call it the Atman. When we consider this consciousness present everywhere in the universe, universally, we call it Brahman. This Atman being the same in essence as the Universal Consciousness, the Atman is identical with Brahman: *ayam atma brahma*. Through analysis and logical investigation, it has now been proved that *sat-chit-ananda*, Existence-Consciousness-Bliss, is the nature of the Atman. It is also proved that it is basically bliss in its nature. That is the

nature of Brahman also. Brahman is Existence-Consciousness-Bliss Absolute. So is the Atman.

Satyaṁ jñānam anantam brahma (Tait. Up. II-1), says the Upanishad. This Brahman, the Absolute, is Truth-Knowledge-Infinity, and it appears to be locked up in this body and mind complex. That is the source of this individual consciousness. By *sruti*, or scriptural statement, and also by logical argument, we come to the conclusion that bliss and self consciousness constitute the essence of Atman.

All these verses that we have studied now, from the beginning to the ninth, is a kind of logical analysis which establishes the nature of the Self as independence, freedom, eternity, and bliss.

The scriptures also proclaim this. The Ishavasya Upanishad says, *īśāvāsyam idaṁ sarvaṁ* (Isa 1): All this universe is pervaded by God. And the Kenopanishad says, “Who is the thinker behind the thought? Who is the hearer of the ear?” etc. It establishes consciousness behind sense functions. The Kathopanishad and the Mundakopanishad established the existence of a Universal Consciousness prior to all concepts of space, time and objectivity. The Chhandogya and the Brihadaranyaka Upanishads highlight the greatness of Brahman as the only reality. So the scripture corroborates this philosophical, logical analysis through which we have arrived at the conclusion that Atman and Brahman are inseparable and they constitute one reality, namely, Existence-Consciousness-Bliss.

Now we have a peculiar quandary here. If this Self is not known at all, it would not be a source of joy and self love.

How could we love ourselves unless the Self is manifest in some way? If the Atman is totally obliterated from our experience, we would be like stones, rocks, granite. We would not even know that we are existing. Why do we love ourselves so much? The love that we evince in regard to ourselves shows that it has to be revealed in our life in some form.

Abhāne na param̃ prema bhāne na viṣaye sṛhā, ato bhāne'pyabhātā'sau paramā nandatā tmanaḥ (11). Abhāne na param̃ prema: The supreme bliss that we evince in regard to ourselves cannot be explained, cannot be accounted for if it is totally obliterated and we are oblivious of its very existence. But if we say that it is really manifest, why do we love objects of sense? The love that we evince in regard to the objects outside shows the Self is not manifest properly. But if it is not manifest, then why do we love ourselves? Here is a quandary before us. If it is manifest, the objects cannot attract us. If it is manifest, the objects cannot be the sources of apparent joy. If it is not manifest at all, we would be like inanimate objects. We will not have any love for ourselves. We must explain this situation. Why this dual situation in which we find ourselves? On the one hand, it appears to be revealed; on the other hand, it does not seem to be revealed at all.

Abhāne na param̃ prema: If it is not revealed, no self-love is possible. Bhāne na viṣaye sṛhā: If it is revealed, object-love is not possible. Ato bhāne'pyabhātā'sau paramā nandatā tmanaḥ: Therefore, the supreme bliss of the Atman is indistinctly revealed; it is not distinctly revealed. If it is distinctly revealed, we will never talk to

anyone in the world afterwards. We will never look at anything, and we will have no dealings with anything in this world. It is not so distinctly revealed, so our mind sometimes distracts us in the direction of an object outside. After all, it is not clear whether the Self is manifest or not. It is not clear whether it exists at all because it is not felt in the form of happiness in life; so it runs after objects.

But sometimes it appears that we are important persons. We have got self-respect. We feel very hurt if we are insulted. We love ourselves. How can we love ourselves if the Self is not manifest? This peculiar dual character of the Self requires a kind of explanation. The author of the Panchadasi has an illustration to tell us how there is a mix-up of two aspects in our self.

Adhyeṭṭṛ varga madhya stha putrā dhyayana śabda vat, bhāne'pyabhānaṁ bhānasya prati bandhena yujyate (12). He gives an illustration as an example. Suppose there is a large group of Vedic scholars, students chanting Veda mantras loudly: Sahasraśīrṣā puruṣaḥ sahasrākśaḥ sahasrapāt, sa bhūmim viśvato vṛtvā'tyatiṣṭaddaśāgulam (Purusha Sukta 1). Some fifty or a hundred boys are loudly chanting Veda mantras. There is a big chorus, and they are making a big noise. The father of one of the students is standing outside and listening to the chanting. In the crowd of the boys, he cannot distinctly hear the voice of his son. Yet by a little bit of concentration, he can indistinctly hear the voice of his son also. He must be a little concentrated – closing his eyes and listening to the loud chorus. In the big multitude of voices, he can sometimes hear the voice of his

own son. He can indistinctly hear his son's voice because of his acquaintance with that voice.

If twenty people are talking, I can hear the voice of some people with whom I am acquainted, whom I have seen, in spite of the big multitude of noises – but I cannot hear them clearly, because there is an overwhelming sound coming from others sources, due to which without proper concentration, I cannot hear them clearly. Obviously, openly, it is not audible. But with some concentration and attention specifically paid, it is possible to hear it.

In the case of the father hearing his son chanting Veda mantras in the midst of many other students in a large classroom where the voice of a particular student can be heard only indistinctly, and not distinctly, the voice is both revealed and not revealed. From one point of view, the voice of the son is not revealed. He cannot hear the voice of his son. Yet, it is revealed. Revealed, and not revealed – both define the character of the sound of one boy, in the case of the father who is listening to it.

So is the case with the Self. There is a big multitude of noise – a huge clarion call of sounds that the sense organs and the mind, with all its desires, make. In this multitude of noises made by the mind and the sense organs, we are not able to distinctly locate the voice of the Self inside us. There is some obstacle which prevents us from distinctly knowing that there is a Self inside. The large noise of the senses and the desires appears to drown the little voice of the Self, or the soul inside.

Thus, there is a big obstacle before the Self which wants to reveal itself. In spite of this difficulty faced in manifesting

itself – the large sounds made by the sense organs, etc. – it sometimes tries to reveal itself in intense longing for endless possessions, long life in this world, intense love of oneself, and a pleasure one feels in being alone by oneself. These are indistinct characters of the manifestation of the Self, but not distinct characters.

Because of the fact of the indistinctness of the manifestation of the Self in us, sometimes we feel entangled in the objects outside, and sometimes we feel fed up with the world. Every one of us has moments when we feel that we have had enough of things. But we also have occasions when we feel that it is not easily possible to withdraw ourselves from the world. Sometimes we feel the world is too much for us. We cannot be entirely free. Sometimes we feel we should not think of anything in the world. These two characteristics in our mind occasionally manifest themselves because of the dual character of the manifestation of Self – sometimes distinctly when we are totally Self conscious and introverted, as in meditation, and very indistinctly when we are thinking of the objects of sense, leading finally to a disgust with them.

Adhyeṭṛ varga madhya stha putrā dhyayana śabda vat, bhāne'pyabhānaṁ bhānasya prati bandhena yujyate: This obstacle that is preventing us from knowing ourselves is of two kinds, known as the *asti* and *bhati* aspects of the Self getting negated. Does God exist? He does not seem to exist, because there is nothing to show that a thing called God exists. Do we know God in some way? There is nothing to show that we have any knowledge of God at all. Thus, this ignorance, this obstacle before the Self, manifests

itself on the one hand as the denial of the existence of the basic Reality, and on the other hand the denial of the possible knowledge of the basic Reality.

The obstacle manifests itself on the one hand by a thing called *avarana*, and on the other hand by another thing called *vikshepa*. *Avarana* means the screening off of the universality of consciousness so that we can never have any occasion to know that there is anything called Universal Existence. *Vikshepa* is the compulsion that we feel that we individually exist and are involved in the objects of sense.

We have received two punishments. We are prevented from knowing that there is such a thing called the Universal, and we are totally brainwashed negatively into the compulsive feeling that we are individually existing. Well, let us not be conscious of the existence of the Universal. But why should we be further punished with this compulsion to know that we are bodily encased?

Thus, there is a double punishment meted out to us by something. No one knows how it happened. On the one hand, we do not know the reality. On the other hand, we know the unreality. It is enough for us. No further punishment is conceivable. The highest punishment has been meted out to us. Consciousness is obliterated by negating its universality on the one hand and, on the other hand, the externality through space and time in terms of objects is impressed upon us.

Prati bandho'sti bhātīti vyava hārārha vastuni, tanni rasya viruddhasya tasyot pādanam ucyate (13). The creation of a non-existent externality is the real bondage,

though it is caused by the absence of the consciousness of Universality.

Discourse 3

CHAPTER 1: TATTVA VIVEKA – DISCRIMINATION OF REALITY, VERSES 14-27

Tasya hetuḥ samānābhi hāraḥ putra dhvaniśrutau, ihā nādīra vidyaiva vyāmo haika niban dhanam (14). In the case of the father's indistinct hearing of the voice of his son chanting the Veda, the obstacle to a clear and distinctive hearing of it is the chorus of the voices of other students also mingling with the voice of that particular student. That is the obstacle in the case of the illustration cited. What is the obstacle in the case of the Atman? It is indistinctly felt in us, partially making us feel that we love our own selves, which is possible only if the Self is revealed or manifest in some way. If it is not manifest at all, in any way whatsoever, there would be no love of Self. We would deny our Self, rather than affirm our Self. That is to say that the Self is manifest in some form.

But if it is really manifest, we would not love objects of sense. Why do we run after objects if the Self is really distinctly felt inside as the source of all bliss? This shows that there is some obstacle covering the consciousness of the Self, causing an indistinct perception of it, sometimes making it appear that it is revealed as the source of freedom and bliss in us, and at other times making us feel that we do not have any idea of it and are only thinking of the objects of sense.

The cause of the obstacle in this case is *avidya*, ignorance. It is a word which is difficult to explain. It is something which covers consciousness and is explained in many ways. Some people say that the *avidya* consists of a

predominance of *rajas* and *tamas* over *sattva*; therefore, there is no illumination possible when the cloud of this *avidya* or ignorance covers the consciousness of the Atman. Others say that *avidya* is the residue of the potentials of all the karmas that one did in the past. In a way, we may say our *avidya* covering the Atman is nothing but our unfulfilled desires, whose impressions we have carried through several of our previous births. It may be that *avidya* is the end result of our unfulfilled desires which we could not fulfil through our different incarnations in this body. Or it may be, to explain the thing in a different way, *rajas* and *tamas* clouding *sattva*.

Sattva is indistinctly manifest in dream. So we have a hazy perception of things. *Sattva* is distractedly yet distinctly manifest in waking, so we can have a clear perception of things in the world. But we don't have any perception in the state of deep sleep. It is pure *avidya* covering – an abundance of *rajas* and *tamas* activity, minus the appearance of *sattva*.

Cidānanda maya brahma prati bimba saman vitā, tamo rajas satva guṇā prakṛtir divividhā ca sā (15). There is a thing called *prakṛiti*. We have come across this term in the Samkhya doctrine studies. In the Vedanta also, this *prakṛiti* is accepted, with a little modification of its definition. Brahman is Pure Existence, Consciousness – *sat-chit-ananda*. We have already established this fact. When this Supreme Brahman, which is *sat-chit-ananda*, is reflected in *prakṛiti*, which is constituted of *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas* *gunas*, the *prakṛiti* acts in two ways.

In what way does this *prakriti* act in a dual fashion? Yesterday we have heard that there is, on one hand, an obliteration of the consciousness of the universality of the Self. That is called the function of *prakriti* known as *avarana*, covering. The other aspect of *prakriti* is *vikshepa*, which causes the perception of an externality of the world. So it does two things: covering consciousness, and then distracting the consciousness in the direction of perception of objects outside in space and time.

When the *prakriti* operates cosmically and reflects the Universal Brahman consciousness in it, it is called *maya*. Ishvara is the name given to Brahman revealed, or manifest, or reflected through *prakriti's gunas*. When a predominance of cosmic *sattva*, overwhelming *rajas* and *tamas*, reflects the Universal Brahman in itself, that reflected consciousness in the universal *sattva* is Ishvara. The universal *sattva* itself is called *maya*. *Maya* is under the control of *Ishvara*, but *avidya* is not under the control of the *jiva* or the individual. The *avidya* controls the *jiva*, while *Ishvara* controls *maya*. That is the difference between *Ishvara* and *jiva*, God and the individual.

Satva śuddhya viśuddhi bhyāṁ māyā'vidye ca te mate, māyā bimbo vaśī kṛtya tāṁ syāstarvajña īśvaraḥ (16). Omniscience is the nature of God, or *Ishvara*, because *Ishvara* is a universally spread-out reflection of the Absolute Brahman in the all-pervading, equilibrated condition of the *sattva guna* of *prakriti*. As *sattva* is universally manifest, it has no divisions like *rajas* and *tamas*. Therefore, the reflection through it of Brahman consciousness, known as *Ishvara*, is the omniscient

knowing of all things at one stroke. For the same reason it is also omnipresent and omnipotent. So God is all power, all knowledge and all undivided presence: omnipresence, omniscience, omnipotence. This is the nature of Ishvara – God who creates this universe.

But the fate of the individual *jiva* is different. It is not omniscient; it is not omnipotent; it is not omnipresent. The *jiva*, the individual, is in one place only. While Ishvara is everywhere, the *jiva* is in one place only – like every one of us. We cannot be in two places at the same time. Our knowledge is distorted, reflected and conditioned to objects; and we have no power, because *avidya* controls us. Therefore, the individual *jiva* is the opposite of Ishvara. While bliss is the nature of Ishvara or God, unhappiness, sorrow, grief, suffering is the nature of the individual *jiva*.

Avidyā vaśaga stvanya stad vaicitryāda nekadhā, sā kāraṇa śarīraṃ syāt prājñas tatrā bhimāna vān (17). This *avidya*, or the causal body, which is also known as the *anandamaya kosha* in the individual, is of varieties and not of a uniform nature. The *avidya* of the human being, the *avidya* of an animal, the *avidya* of a plant or a tree, the *avidya* in stones and inanimate objects are variegated in their manifestation. They cause the variety of the species of individuals which are called 84 *lakhs* in number.

Jivas are 84 *lakhs* in variety. A *lakh* means one hundred thousand – so 84 one-hundred-thousands. So many incarnations through the varieties of species of beings is what each one takes! And then comes the end result of this incarnating through the 84 *lakhs* of species, which is that we attain the state of humanity. Human beings are the last

thread, knot, or the terminus of these 84 *lakhs*. Yet, evolution is not complete with humanity. We have to become divine beings. Merely being human beings is not sufficient, because even in the human being there is the operation of *rajas* and *tamas*. Pure *sattva* does not operate in the individual *jiva*. Therefore, there is unhappiness and a sense of finitude and limitation. Because of the subjection to *avidya* which, unlike Ishvara, is predominantly *rajasic* and *tamasic* in nature, and which is the varieties that are variegated in all the species of beings, there comes the causal body of the *jiva*.

The consciousness that is inherent behind this *avidya* in the causal body is called *prajna* in the technical language of Vedanta philosophy. *Prajna* is only a name which means 'the knower consciousness existing at the back of the totally covering and obscuring *avidya* in the state of deep sleep as it is manifest, and manifest in other states also, in different ways'. *Avidya* is not manifest only in sleep. In sleep it acts as complete obscuration, like an eclipse for the sun. But in the dreaming and waking states it manifests through the subtle body and the physical body, due to which we are conscious of our subtle body in dream and conscious of the physical body in waking. That also is an action of *avidya* because wherever there is externality of perception, there is *avidya* operating. And everything involved in this perception of outside things in space and time is working through *avidya*. It is only in the state of sleep that *avidya* completely covers the consciousness.

This consciousness in the three states – sleeping, dreaming and waking – is known by different names. The

consciousness that is behind the causal body, as manifest in sleep, is called *prajna*. The same consciousness operating behind the dream state is called *taijasa*. The same consciousness operating behind the waking state is called *visva*. *Visva*, *taijasa*, *prajna* are the names of the same Atman consciousness operating behind the screen of the waking condition, dreaming condition and sleep.

Tamaḥ pradhāna prakṛte stadbho gāye śrvarā jñayā, viyat pavana tejo'mbu bhuvo bhūtāni jajñire (18). The *jivas* or individuals – people like us, human beings – have been born into this body due to our past karmas, the fulfilment of which is to be worked out through this body and through any other body which may be compelled upon us on account of our not living a righteous and good life in this world at the present moment. For the sake of the experience of the past karmas of individuals, a field has to be created because experience is not possible unless there is a field, an area of action. This area of action for the working out of the karmas of the individuals is this vast world which God has created. The world of God, the creation of God, extends from the time of the will of God to create until God enters immanently in every created being. After this level, it is all bliss. It is Virat operating by its immanence in all beings; and variety is not a bondage there, because it is one Universal Consciousness beholding the variety of its manifestation – right from the will to create until the immanence and entry of this very same Universal Consciousness in all individuals of every species.

But tragedy starts when this individual, which is actually an immanent form of Ishvara Himself, somehow or

other, for reasons nobody knows, asserts an independence of its own. It is something like the Biblical story of the fall of Lucifer by asserting an arrogant independence over God. Something like that is also the story of the Upanishads and the Vedanta – namely, that the individual somehow or other foolishly starts asserting its independence and falls headlong into the mire of sorrow, with head down and legs up, as it were, like Trishanku falling from heaven.

Then what happens? The individual is completely oblivious of the Universal Consciousness which is immanent in it. And through the aperture or the distorted screen of this sleeping condition in which it falls down, with it manifests a faculty of individuality, called mind and intellect and sense organs, for creating a heaven in its hell. It says, as the poet tells us, “It is better to reign in hell than to serve in heaven.” It does not want to serve in heaven. It will reign as the president in hell. The world is hell, and we are like presidents, ruling the world. And we feel very happy. All is well with this hell. This is what we think.

This wondrous creation of God is constituted of the elements of earth, water, fire, air and ether, in their gross form; and in their subtle form they are *sabda*, *sparsa*, *rupa*, *rasa*, *gandha*, to which we made reference yesterday. This is the area of action, the world which God has created for providing individuals an opportunity to fulfil the residual karmas, due to which they have been born into this body.

Prakriti, which is stability and fixity in its nature, is brooded upon. God broods over the cosmic waters, says Genesis in the Bible. It is the very same cosmic water which is *tapas*, on which the Cosmic Consciousness broods and

manifests earth and heaven and all the worlds at one stroke for the purpose of the *bhoga* of the individuals – the individual’s experience of the fruits of its actions, whether good or bad. And what are these worlds? They are the five elements – earth, water, fire, air and ether. Such is the creation of God.

Satvā mśaiḥ pañcabhi steṣām kramād dhīn driya pañcakam, śrotra tvagakṣi rasana ghrāṇākhyam upajāyate (19). The sense organs, the sensations of knowledge – hearing, touching, seeing, tasting and smelling are the prominent activities of our sense organs – are created out of the *sattva* portions of the *prakṛiti*. Through *tamas*, the five elements are created. Through the *sattva gunas* of *prakṛiti*, independently and individually taken, the sense organs are created as mentioned; and they are the reason for our perception of the world by hearing, touching, seeing, tasting and smelling. These are the only activities of ours in this world through the sense organs. They are created out of the *prakṛiti* itself through its *sattva guna*, while the cosmic physical world is created out of the *tamas* quality of the same *prakṛiti*.

Tai rantaḥ karaṇam sarvai vṛtti bhedena tad dvidhā, mano vimarśa rūpaṁ syād buddhiḥ syān niśca yātmikā (20). The internal organ called the mind or *chitta* is also constituted of the total essence of the *sattva gunas* of *prakṛiti*. In an individual, this *prakṛiti sattva* becomes the cause of the manifestation of the five sense organs. Collectively taken, it becomes the cause of the manifestation of the mind itself which has four functions to perform – namely thinking, self-arrogation, memory, and

intellection – known as *manas*, *buddhi*, *chitta*, and *ahamkara*.

Manas, or the mind, does only the act of indistinct and indeterminate thinking. When we begin to feel that something is there in front of us, but cannot clearly know what it is that is there, it is called indeterminate thinking, which is the work of the mind. But when it is clear to us that it is a man that is standing there, or a tree is there, or a pole is there, that distinct and clear perception is the work of reason, or intellect, which is superior to the mind. *Mano vimarśa rūpaṃ syād buddhiḥ syān niśca yātmikā*. Decision and determination are the functions of the *buddhi* – intellect, or reason.

Rajoṃ'saiḥ pañcabhi steṣāṃ kramāt karmen indrayāṇi tu, vāk pāṇi pāda pāyupastha abhi dhānāni jajñire (21). We have mentioned what happens with the *tamas* and the *sattva* of *prakriti*. Now there is something else left, which is *rajas*. The *rajas* of *prakriti* becomes the cause of the organs of action – different from the senses of knowledge. The senses of knowledge are hearing, touching, seeing, tasting and smelling. The organs of action are five more – speaking, grasping with hands, locomotion with the feet, the genitals, and the anus – the organ of excretion. These are the five organs of action, which are the operating locations of *pranas*. The mind is not the cause here. The mind is directly connected with the senses of knowledge, whereas the *prana* is directly connected with the organs of action. Individually taken, this fivefold *rajas guna* becomes the organs of action that I mentioned.

Taiḥ sarvaiḥ sahitaiḥ prāṇo vṛtti bhedāt sa pañcadhā, prāṇo'pānaḥ samā naśco dāna vyānau ca te punaḥ (22). But collectively taken, this *rajas* becomes *prana* or vital energy in us with its fivefold functions of *prana*, *apana*, *vyana*, *udana* and *samana*. *Prana* works when we breathe out. *Apana* works when we breathe in. *Samana* works in the stomach, in the navel area, and causes digestion of food. *Vyana* causes circulation of blood; and *udana* takes us to deep sleep and also causes deglutition of food when we eat, also causing separation of the *jiva* consciousness from the body at the time of death. This fivefold function of the *prana*, known as *prana* in general, is the total cumulative effect of the *rajas guna* aspect of *prakriti*.

So we are now fully in possession of the knowledge as to how the *tamas*, *sattva* and *rajas prakriti* work under the control of Ishvara, the God who created the world.

Buddhi karmendriyaprāṇa pañcakair manasā dhiyā, śarīraṁ sapta daśabhiḥ sūkṣmaṁ talliṅga mucyate (23). The subtle body is inside us. It is the astral body, or *sukshmasarira*, and consists of the five senses of knowledge, the five senses of action, the five *pranas*, together with mind and intellect – totalling seventeen. These seventeen constituents are the substance of the *sukshma sarira*; that is the subtle body. Seventeen components go to form the subtle body within the physical body.

Prājña statrā bhimānena taijasatvaṁ prapadyate, hiraṇya garbhatā mīśas tayor vyaṣṭi samaṣṭitā (24). When consciousness manifests itself as a background of the sleeping condition of the causal body, it is called *prajna*, as we said. When it is there at the back of the dreaming

condition, it is called *taijasa*. Cosmically, this dreaming condition is animated by the Universal Consciousness, called Hiranyagarbha-tattva. Individually Hiranyagarbha is the dreaming consciousness, and cosmically he is called by such names as universal *prana*, *sutratma*, thread consciousness, Hiranyagarbha. Ishvara is the cosmical counterpart of the sleeping condition, while Hiranyagarbha is the cosmical counterpart of the dreaming condition. Virat is the cosmical counterpart of the waking condition. This is something important for us to remember, even for our meditation.

In meditation, what will we do? We merge the waking consciousness into the Virat Universal Consciousness, in the total waking condition of the cosmos. We merge the dreaming consciousness in the total causal dreaming condition of the cosmos in Hiranyagarbha. And in sleep we merge this causal condition into the universal causal condition of Ishvara. But in all the three states of sleep, dream and waking, we are conditioned, and we remain helpless; forcibly we are driven into these conditions by some factor of which we have no knowledge. Whereas that is the case with each one of us, a different state of affairs obtains in Virat, Hiranyagarbha and Ishvara. They have no compulsion. That is all freedom; it is all universality. It is all omniscience. It is all omnipotence. God dancing in his own glory, as it were, is Virat, Hiranyagarbha, Ishvara; but suffering *jiva* in a concentration camp, as it were, which is this world, is the fate of every one of us.

Hiraṇya garbhatā mīśas tayor vyaṣṭi samaṣṭitā. *Vyasti* is individual; *samasti* is total. Individually, we are *prajna*,

taijasa and *visva*. Cosmically, the same thing is known as Virat, Hiranyagarbha and Ishvara.

Samaṣṭi rīśaḥ sarveṣāṃ svātma tādātmya vedanāt, tada bhāvāt tato'nye tu kathyante vyaṣṭi saṃ jñayā (25). Because Ishvara has an identity of His own Self with everything that He has created, He is called Total Consciousness, or *samasti* in Sanskrit. Because of the absence of this identity of consciousness with all things at the same time in the case of the *jiva*, it is called *shakti* or a segregated individual. Identity with all things at one stroke is the nature of Ishvara, Hiranyagarbha and Virat. Identity only with this particular body, and not with anybody else, is the fate of the *jiva*, the individual. The great tragedy, a great travesty, a great sorrow has manifest before us is this individuality of ours.

Tad bhogāya puna bhogya bhogā yatana janmane, pañcīkaroti bhaga vān prayekaṃ viyadā dikam (26); dvidhā vidhāya caikaikaṃ caturdhā prathamam punaḥ, svasve tara dvitīyāṃ śaiḥ yojanāt pañca pañca te (27). It was mentioned that there are five potentials of the five elements – sound, touch, etc. These electrical energies, we may call it, that are at the back as the causative factors of the five elements and are mixed up by God Himself in some proportion – called *panchikarana*, or the process of quintuplication – due to which, the physical world of earth, water, fire, air and ether are manifest. Half of the *sabda*, or the hearing *tanmatra*, is mixed with one eighth of each of the other four remaining and, therefore, becomes half in its composition as *sabda tanmatra*; and one eighth of it consists of a little portion of the other, namely touch, colour, taste, and smell. In a similar manner are the other

elements also. When we take up the touch principle, half of it is touch principle. One eighth of the other four are taken into consideration and mixed with this half of the touch principle. It becomes *vayu*, or wind. *Sabda* becomes space by this quintuplication process, or sky as we call it, and the touch principle in its quintuplication process becomes wind, or air. Then the colour principle in the same process becomes fire, or light. The taste principle in the same process becomes water. The smell principle undergoing the same process of quintuplication becomes physical earth.

So the five gross elements – ether, air, fire, water, and earth – are constituted of some other elements also, and they are not entirely the original potentials wholly manifest in them due to a peculiar combination and permutation that became necessary for the chemical type of combination, as it were, causing the manifestation of five gross elements. Thus the whole physical universe has been cosmically created on one side, and individually created on the other side.

Discourse 4

CHAPTER 1: TATTVA VIVEKA – DISCRIMINATION OF REALITY, VERSES 28-43

Tairaṇḍa statra bhuvanaṁ bhogya bhogā śrayod bhavaḥ, hiraṇyagarbhaḥ sthūle'smin dehe vaiśvā naro bhavet (28). The five elements have been constituted by means of a process known as quintuplication, as we noted yesterday. Half of the particular *tanmatra* – sound, touch, etc. – is mixed with one eighth of each of the other elements so that every physical element – sky, wind, etc. – contains half of its own original *tanmatra*, and the other half consists of one eighth of the other elements. This process of mixing up the *tanmatras* is called *panchikarana* or quintuplication, by which the physical elements are formed.

The whole universe of physical substance is the body of Virat. The subtle cosmic universe is ruled by Hiranyagarbha. Now these fourteen realms of creation – all the levels of reality, all the worlds – were created by the Supreme Being for the purpose of finding a location for individuals in a particular atmosphere where alone is it possible for them to work out their past karmas.

So the world in which we are living is a proper atmosphere created by God in which every one of us inhabitants in this world will have ways and means of working out our karmas. Just as each individual has his own or her own karma, there is also a karma of species. All human beings are grouped together in one particular world only. It is not that some human beings are living here and some human beings are on Mars, etc. All human beings – men, women and children – though they have individually

their own karmas due to which they are born in a particular body, in a particular circumstance, in a family, etc., have also a collective karma due to which they are born in one world only.

So for the fulfilment of particular karma in potencies of individuals of a specific type of species, the world which is correspondingly suitable to act as an environment and field of action has been very intelligently and wisely created by God: bhogya bhogā śrayod bhavaḥ.

Here in this world of physical substance, Hiranyagarbha, the ruler of the subtle cosmos, becomes Virat, the ruler of the physical cosmos. Virat is also called Vaishvanara. This great Vaishvanara, this Virat, is the subject of the eleventh chapter of the Bhagavad Gita, of the Vaishvanara Vidya of the Upanishad, and of the Purusha Sukta of the Veda.

Taijasā viśvatām yātā deva tiryāṅ narā dayaḥ, te parāḅ darṣi naḅ pratyak tattva bodha vivar jitāḅ (29). As Hiranyagarbha becomes Virat cosmically, the *taijasa*, the ruler of the dream world in the individual becomes Visva, the ruler of the waking condition of the individual. And this happens in the case of all created beings, right from the gods in heaven, human beings in the world, and animals, birds, etc.: deva tiryāṅ narā dayaḅ.

The world of the gods which is called heaven, and the world which is this earth – the location of human beings and of other subhuman creatures, all come under this category of Visva or waking consciousness. All the living beings in the world that are conscious of a world outside are in a waking state. And all those who are feeling a world

inside them are in a dream state. And those who know nothing and sleep are in the causal body.

These individuals, *jivas*, whatever be their nature, whether they are gods in heaven or human beings or animals and birds, irrespective of the category into which they are born, they have one common character: they will only see things outside. They cannot see what is inside them. All created beings look outside. They are conditioned by space and time and objectivity, and bereft of the capacity to see what is inside them.

Parāg darṣi naḥ pratyak tattva bodha vivar jitāḥ. No one can know what is inside oneself. No one can know one's mind or Self; but one tries to know everything that is outside in the world by observation through the sense organs. This is the common factor in all created beings – that they will never know what is inside them. They will only try to know through the senses what is outside them. This is the difficulty in which every created being finds himself or herself.

Kurvate karma bhogāya karma kartuṁ ca bhuñjate, nadyām kīṭā ivāvartād āvartām tara māśu te, vrajanto janmano janma labhante naiva nirvṛtim (30). These *jivas*, these individuals, these born, created beings engage themselves incessantly in some action. They have to feed their stomach. They have to survive by eating food. Birds and insects are also seen struggling to find their grub. Even an earthworm is wriggling and writhing through its slimy body inside the earth to maintain itself by the absorption of the elements of the earth into its body through the skin. Insects, reptiles, animals and human beings are busy for

feeding their stomach to survive somehow or other, to protect themselves either by hibernation or running into some far corner of the world – or in the case of human beings, building a house, etc., for protecting themselves against the onslaught of nature and any other difficulty that may be expected from outside.

Such is the business of life – intense activity for survival, for enjoyment in this world, through this body. Survival means finding ways and means of continuing the joyous life of this earthly existence. They eat for the sake of being able to do work. And they work for the sake of eating. If we do not work, we cannot eat; and if we do not eat, we cannot work. So this is a vicious circle. And like insects caught in a whirl of a flooded river, viciously circling and unable to get out of the whirl on account of the force of the movement of water, these *jivas* who are caught up in this vicious circle of working and survival, and survival and working, find no peace of mind. From birth to death, from one birth to another birth, they move helplessly on account of this involvement in the desire to maintain their physical existence and work hard for the sake of the maintenance of their physical life. They will never have peace of mind. And all the transmigratory lives through which they have passed will be only a continuation of the problems and the difficulties which one faces in life.

It does not mean that the next birth will be a better birth, unless, of course, we live today a newly oriented kind of life. If the same drudgery continues throughout our existence in this world, it will be carried forward to the next world. The next world will be a better world for us; and our

life in the next world may be far better than this one, provided that the present life of ours is qualitatively transmuted through the perception of the higher values of life and by detachment of the senses and the emotions from involvement in the objects outside. If we cannot achieve this much of spiritual discipline, of sense control and mental stability and emotional peace inside, there will be only the animalistic instinct in man to continue the same routine of eat for work and work for eat.

Sometimes a good man with a compassionate heart sees some insect caught in a whirl and, taking pity on it, he lifts it and keeps it on dry ground. Then it somehow or other starts breathing and continues to live; otherwise, it will go into the whirl of water and nobody knows what will happen to it. In a similar manner, some good man comes in this world as a Guru, a teacher, a master, a preceptor, a guide and a philosopher. Taking pity on the suffering people, somehow he injects into them some knowledge of the ways and means of freeing themselves from this involvement in the world of *samsara*, earthly existence.

We are compared to insects, caught in a whirl of water, and we have no way of escape if that happens to us. But if some kind person helps the insect, its life is saved. So in the case of a spiritual seeker who is ardently searching for God and has had enough of this world, wants nothing more from this earth, and sees enlightenment in the art of living a higher life. In the case of such people, the Guru comes to that disciple automatically. The belief is that disciples do not go to the Guru. The Guru comes to the disciples somehow or other, by some miracle of God's working.

Sat karma pari pākātte karuṇā nidhinod dhṛtāḥ, prāpya tīra taru cchāyām viśrā myanti yatha sukham (31). As insects placed under the shade of a tree on dry ground are somehow or other able to survive, so by the fructification of good karmas that we did in the previous life, we come in contact with a great spiritual master. We find peace there under the shade of that vast tree who is the Guru, and who frees us from this world, from the flood of earthly existence by proper instruction – *upadesam*.

Upadeśa mavā pyaivam ācāryāt tattva darśinaḥ, pañca kośa viveka labhante nir vṛtim parām (32). By acquiring such knowledge from the Guru, from the master, one attains to a new kind of vision of life. The student begins to see the realities of life, and not merely the appearances, through the instructions that come from the Guru as light that is flashed on darkness.

Pañca kośa viveka labhante nir vṛtim parām. The Guru generally starts instruction from the lower stages of understanding, gradually, to the higher forms of it. The instruction commences mostly with an analysis of the composition of the personality – a study of the inner constituents of the individual.

“My dear disciple, do you know what you are, what kind of person you are? What is the stuff out of which you are made? What is the substance which constitutes your body, mind, etc.? Let us analyse this.” The initial instruction commences with an analysis of the human personality and individuality.

Annaṁ prāṇo mano buddhir ānanaśceti pañca te, kośā stairā vṛtaḥ svātmā vismṛtyā saṁsṛtim vrajet (33). The

individual is constituted of subtle sheaths. The outermost sheath is *annamaya kosha*, or the physical body that is sustained by the food that we eat. Internal to the physical body is the *pranamaya kosha*, or the vital body that is sustained by the water that we drink. There is again a further internal body inside the *pranamaya kosha*, or vital body; that is *manomaya kosha*, or the mental body, which is also sustained by the subtle elements of the diet that we take – food and drink, etc. Internal to the mind is the *buddhi* or understanding, which is the highly purified form of thought. Inside the intellect is the last *kosha* or sheath,, which is called the causal body – the ignorance, *avidya* as we call it, through which we experience a kind of bliss when we are fast sleep.

So *annam prano mano buddhir ananda* are the five sheaths. That is to say, the physical, vital, mental, intellectual, and causal are the sheaths. There are several corridors in a temple, as can be seen mostly in temples in southern India. We cross from corridor to corridor and after five, six or seven corridors we go into the innermost holy of holies where the deity of the temple is. Likewise, the deity of the Atman is located inside as the holy of holies within the darkness of the ignorance of the causal body.

In temples, the holy of holies is not lit with bright light. The lights are only outside in the corridors. As we go further inside, the light becomes less and less, so that in the holy of holies only one or two small lamps are there. The holy of holies is not flooded with bright electric lights; that is not the tradition.

These temples are constructed in the fashion of the physical body itself. This is called *vastu shastra*, the great science of temple construction, which is an outer symbol of the human body, or the cosmic Viratsvarupa. The science of it is that from the feet we gradually move inward, and then through the *koshas*, one after the other, just as we enter the corridors of a castle. Inward and inward we go until we find that there is very little light. A twinkling of the Atman is seen there as a ray penetrating through the otherwise-dark holy of holies, which is the causal body.

These *koshas* are covering the Atman, and on account of identification of the consciousness with these *koshas* – causal, etc. – the Self consciousness of the Atman is obliterated. Instead of the Atman knowing that it is Universal, it begins to feel that it is sleeping, or it is understanding through the intellect, thinking through the mind, breathing through the breath, or working and eating through the body. This is what the Atman begins to feel when it is by some mistake or other identified with these five sheaths. Then the *samsara* starts.

The *samsara*, worldly existence of suffering and sorrow, is the effect of the Atman getting identified with these five *koshas*. If we are identified with the body, we feel heat and cold. If we are identified with the *prana*, we feel hunger and thirst. If we are identified with the mind, we have doubt and disbelief and indecision. If we are identified with the intellect, we are logical, philosophical and decisive. And if we are identified with the *anandamaya kosha* only, we go to sleep, and we know nothing. These are the experiences that we pass through by consecutive or successive identification

of consciousness with these five sheaths, due to which we suffer in this world as mortals, *jivas*.

The identification takes place by a process called *adhyasa*, mutual superimposition. The character of the iron rod is superimposed on the fire which heats the rod; and the character of the fire which heats the rod is identified with the rod, so that the fire looks long when the rod is long. And the rod looks hot while actually the fire is hot. The heat of the fire is identified with the rod and we say the iron rod is very hot. It is not the iron rod that is hot; it is the fire that is hot. And conversely, we see a long beam of fire. The long beam is not actually a fire. It is the rod. This is called mutual superimposition of factors. The character of the consciousness is superimposed on the sheaths. The character of the sheaths is superimposed on the consciousness. We feel that we are existing because of the consciousness that is true existence. We feel that we are finite because of the consciousness getting identified with the finite sheaths. We are hungry and thirsty; we feel heat and cold. We have many other problems, of which we are conscious. Here is an important point for us to remember: The hunger and thirst, heat and cold problems in life, etc., are objects of our awareness.

The awareness does not actually become the object, as the rod does not become the fire. But in the same way as the rod is identified with the fire, consciousness is identified with the conditions of the sheaths. Then the consciousness feels, “I am sleeping”; the consciousness feels, “I am studying and logically understanding things”; the consciousness feels, “I am thinking and doubting”; the

consciousness feels, “I am hungry and thirsty.” Consciousness feels, “I am feeling heat and cold”; consciousness feels, “One day I will die.” Because the body is going to die, consciousness also feels that it is dying, so we all feel one day that we will die. This happens due to the mutual superimposition of qualities.

The fragility and the finitude and the problems of the sheaths are superimposed on the Atman. Then we say that we are hungry, we are thirsty, we are sorry, we are short; we are this, we are that; we are from the East, we are from the West, and so on. But conversely, we are conscious in all these levels. This mutual superimposition of characters between consciousness and the sheaths is called *tadatmya adhyasa*, or the visualisation of the character of one in the existence of the other.

Syāt pañcī kṛta bhūtoṭtho dehaḥ sthūlo’nnasaṁ jñākaḥ, liṅge tu rājasai prānaiḥ prānaḥ karmen indriyaiḥ saha (34). In the beginning of the commentary on the Brahma Sutra, Acharya Sankara makes a statement. In the first sentence of his commentary on the Brahma Sutra he uses the words *tadatmya adhyasa*, mutual superimposition, in the context of the explanation of there being no possibility of consciousness becoming matter or matter becoming consciousness. The knower cannot become the known, and the known cannot become the knower; but somehow or other we mix up these two aspects.

The known appears to be somehow or other moving in a direction of something in space and time and locating it outside, so that consciousness appears to be object consciousness, while it cannot become an object. And

conversely, we become attached to the object, as if we are the object itself. The more we are attached to an object, the more we become the object. The consciousness has lost its Self consciousness. It has moved into the object and become the object, so more is the attachment, more is the objectivity of ours, and more is the Self consciousness lost.

This physical body, which is made of the quintuplicated physical elements known as *annamaya kosha*, physical sheath, gross in its nature, is the outermost sheath. In the internal sheath, which is subtler, constituted of the *rajasic* principles of *prana* together with the *karmendriyas* enumerated yesterday, we have another body altogether. Pure physicality is in the outermost body.

The *rajasic* element is predominating in the subtle body which consists of the five senses of knowledge, the five senses or organs of action, together with the mind and the intellect. This is called *lingasarira*. It is called *linga* because it indicates what kind of person we are. The sense organs, ten in number, the mind and the intellect will indicate what kind of person we are. They are mostly shining through our face. The face is the index of personality. This is the subtle body, *linga*.

Sātvī kair dhīr indriyaiḥ sākāṁ vimar śātmā mano mayāḥ, taireva sākāṁ vijñāna mayo dhīr niścayā tmikā (35). The mental body is inside the physical and the vital bodies, and it consists of the mind and the five senses of knowledge. The five senses of knowledge and the mind constitute the mental body. The intellectual body also is constituted of the five senses of knowledge, plus the mind; and whatever is in the mind is also in the intellect, together

with the five senses of knowledge. That is, there is an intimate connection between the mental sheath and the intellectual sheath. They are like elder brother and younger brother. Internal to the subtle body is the causal body, as we have noted already.

Kāraṇe sattvamānanda mayo modādi vṛttibhiḥ, tattat kośaistu tādāt myād ātmā tat tanmayo bhavet (36). It is called *anandamaya kosha* because we feel bliss there when we enter into it. We have seen the joy of sleep. The bliss of sleep is superior to the bliss of a meal that we take, or a position that we occupy in society, or wealth that we may possess, etc. No joy of the world, food, land and property, money or social position can equal the happiness of sleep. If we do not sleep for days, we will see what happens. All our lunch and all the wealth, etc.. will vanish, and we would like to sleep rather than have anything else. The reason is that it is only in the state of deep sleep that the consciousness is totally dissociated from the sheaths. That is why we are so happy. In all other conditions, we are associated with the sheaths. Therefore, we cannot have so much happiness either in dream or waking.

In this *karana-sarira* we experience joy when we are fast asleep. This *ananda*, or the bliss of the Atman, manifests itself faintly in the outer sheaths also when we feel happiness in the presence of a desirable object. When that desired object is seen with the eyes we feel a happiness, called *priya*. When the object that is desired is coming near us, we feel a more intense happiness – more intense than the earlier happiness – which is called *moda*. And when the object is completely in our possession, we have the most

intense form of happiness, and that is called *pramoda*. These are the three degrees of happiness that we experience in this world – *priya*, *moda*, *pramoda* – when the desired object is seen, or moving near, or is under possession. This is how the *anandamaya kosha* works even in dream and waking. But otherwise, in deep sleep, it is total dissociation of consciousness. Therefore, the fastest sleep is the greatest happiness.

When the consciousness of the Atman is identified with the causal body, it looks like it is asleep. When it is identified with the intellect, it looks as if it is arguing, understanding, studying, etc. When it is identified with the mind, it is thinking. When it is identified with the vital body, it is breathing and living. When it is identified with the physical body, it is having all the problems of the outer world.

Anvaya vyati rekā bhyāṁ pañcakośa vivekatah, svāt mānaṁ tata uddhṛtya param brahma prapa dyate (37). We have to carefully analyse this state of affairs in order to know that the Atman consciousness is not any of these bodies. None of these five sheaths is to be identified with Pure Consciousness, which is Universal.

Consciousness is everywhere. We have studied it already. It cannot be located in one place. It has no divisions or fractions. It is infinite by itself. But each of the five bodies is limited and is the opposite or the contrary of the consciousness, which is all-pervading.

We have to lift this Atman out, free this Atman from involvement in the five sheaths, and attain to that infinity of ourselves which is the same as attainment of Brahman.

Brahman *sakshatkara* takes place. We have to argue within our own self: “How is it possible for me that I should be the body?” This analysis is called *anvaya* and *vyatireka*, positive and negative analysis of a particular situation.

When something is there, something else is also there. When something is not there, something else is also not there. This kind of argument is called *anvaya* and *vyatireka*. Here is an example of how such kind of positive and negative analysis can be carried on for the purpose of separating the consciousness from material involvements in the form of this body.

Abhāne sthūla dehasya svapne yadbhāna mātmanah, so’nvayo vyatirekas tad bhāne’nyā nava bhāsanam (38). Even when the physical body is not there in dream, there is consciousness in dream. That means to say, consciousness exists even independent of the physical body. This is *anvaya*. Because the physical body is not necessary for being conscious, because we are conscious in dream even without the physical body being there, it is now clear that consciousness is not the physical body. This is one argument. This is called *anvaya*, or the positive statement that we make, the understanding that we arrive at to conclude that consciousness can exist even when the body does not exist.

Vyatirekas tad bhāne’nyā nava bhāsanam. *Vyatireka* is the negating of the physical body – the absence of it, when the consciousness exists. The existence of consciousness when the body does not exist is *anvaya*. The non-existence of the body when the consciousness exists is called *vyatireka*. These are two ways of arguing the same position.

By both ways we conclude that consciousness is different from the body. There is another argument to prove that consciousness is not the body. It is here mentioned in the thirty-ninth verse.

Liṅga bhāne suṣuptau syād ātmano bhāna manvayaḥ, vyati rekastu tadbhāne liṅgasyā bhāna mucyate (39). In the deep sleep state, consciousness exists, but the dream world does not exist. That is to say, as the physical body was not necessary in dream, the subtle body is not necessary in sleep. So we can exist not only without the physical body, but we can also exist without the subtle body. This is seen in our sleep condition. The consciousness in the state of sleep has no consciousness of the subtle body or the physical body.

What do we prove by this? That we can exist minus the physical body and minus the subtle body also. So the consciousness existing independent of the subtle body is the *anvaya* aspect. The non-existence of the subtle body when the consciousness exists in sleep is called *vyatireka*. These are two ways of arguing the same position. Now comes further argument.

Tad vivekāḍ viviktā syuḥ kośāḥ prāṇa mano dhiyah, te hi tatra guṇā vasthā bheda mātrāt pṛthak kṛtāḥ (40). When we have separated consciousness from the physical and the subtle bodies, we have automatically separated consciousness from the *pranamaya kosha*, the *manomaya kosha*, and the *vijnanamaya kosha* also, because they are included in the subtle body. The elimination of the physical and the subtle bodies is also automatically an elimination of the vital, mental, and intellectual bodies, which differ only

in their functioning, location and specific characteristics. So we have now proof that consciousness, which is our real nature, can exist minus the physical body and minus the subtle body also. Now there is something more.

Suṣṭyā bhāne bhānantu samādhā vātmāno'nvayaḥ, vyati rekas tvātma bhāne suṣṭyā nava bhāsanam (41). In the state of *samadhi*, consciousness exists, but the causal body does not exist. So we have gotten rid of even the causal body now. Consciousness is there in *samadhi*, but the causal body is not there. This is *anvaya*. The abolition of the causal body, the negation of the causal body while the consciousness persists in *samadhi*, is *vyatireka*.

So what has happened now? We have proven that consciousness, which is our real nature, can exist independently of the physical body, independently of the subtle body, and independently of the causal body also. So what is our real nature? It is not the physical body, not the vital body, not the mental body, not the intellectual body, not the causal body.

Foolishly we identify ourselves with all these, and cry every day, “This is like this, this is like that.” We are not really connected with any of these bodies. It is a foolishness, a kind of internal *adhyasa*, a superimposition that has taken place by some internal error. This nature of error has also to be analysed. How have we got into this muddle, while we have now actually come to the conclusion that we are Pure Consciousness and can exist independent of all the sheaths? So consciousness existing in *samadhi*, and the causal body not existing there, is *anvaya*. And the abolition of the causal

body in the state of *samadhi* while consciousness is there is the *vyatireka* aspect.

Hence, all the *koshas* are revealed now, as the pith of a blade of munja grass is taken out from the stalk in which it is embedded. The stalk of the munja grass has a sheath, and inside there is a pith. The grass is used to tie the waistband during the Upanayana (sacred thread) ceremony of boys, and is also used during fasting, especially long fasts. The pinch of hunger is eliminated by eating this pith. Anyway, this is an illustration: The pith of the munja grass is separated gradually by the elimination of the covering; so too by the method adopted through *anvaya* and *vyatireka* we have noted just now, the Atman consciousness has to be gradually eliminated from involvement in the *koshas*, as the pith of the grass is removed completely from its involvement in the outer covering.

Yathā muñjā diṣi kaivam ātmā yuktyā samud dhṛtaḥ, śarīra tritayād dhīraiḥ paraṁ brahmaiva jāyate (42). Parā parāt mano revaṁ yuktyā saṁbhā vitai katā, tattva masyā divākyais sā bhāga tyāgena lakṣyate (43). The moment this is achieved – when we are successful in the elimination of consciousness by dissociating it from all the five *koshas* – we will realise that our consciousness inside is Universal Existence, Brahman Itself. This will lead us to the realisation of the Absolute Brahman.

Discourse 5

CHAPTER 1: TATTVA VIVEKA – DISCRIMINATION OF REALITY, VERSES 44-55

Jagato yadu pādānaṁ māyā mādāya tāmasīm, nimittaṁ śuddha sasattvām tāmucyate brahma tadgirā (44). This is the introduction to a system of analysis known as *jahad ajaha lakshana*. When we make statements, sometimes they are involved in certain associations which are not part of the conclusion that we have to arrive at. In Sanskrit, this method of elimination of unnecessary factors in a sentence and only taking the essentials is called *jahad ajaha lakshana*. *Lakshana* is a definition of a sentence, or a proposition that is made, where the literal connotation is abandoned or the spirit of the sentence, the *jahad ajaha lakshana*, is employed. The literal meaning is abandoned, and that is called *jahad*; *jahad* means ‘abandoned’. *Ajaha* means ‘not abandoned’, or ‘taken’. We take the spirit of the statement made, and not only the letter.

The general illustration in Vedanta philosophy is: Suppose there is a person called Devadatta, and he has a friend called Yajnadatta. Devadatta is living in Bombay, and Yajnadatta saw him in Bombay. After some years, Yajnadatta sees Devadatta in another place. The place has changed; the time has also changed. Firstly, instead of being in Bombay, he is now seen in Rishikesh. And instead of having seen him ten years back, he sees him now, after ten years. When Yajnadatta sees Devadatta in an audience, he makes a statement, “This is that Devadatta whom I saw in Bombay ten years back.”

Now, two places cannot be identical, and two times also cannot be identical. Bombay is not Rishikesh; and ten years back is not now, after ten years. The identity of the person is what is connotated here. The aspect of space and time are abandoned. The distance of space between Bombay and Rishikesh is ignored, and also the distance of duration, a gap of ten years, is abandoned. Therefore, the epithets that are used in the sentence, “This is the same Devadatta whom I saw ten years back” are unnecessary because ‘ten years back’ is unnecessary to define a person, and ‘this’ and ‘that’ are also unnecessary. It is the same person that is before us whether he was there in some other place, or whether he is here, and whether he was at that time, or whether it is this time.

In a similar manner, the doctrine says that we have to eliminate certain unnecessary descriptive factors associated with God as Creator and the individual as the isolated part. How can an isolated part become one with the Universal Being? It will be possible only in the same sense as a person seen in some other place is the same as the person seen in this place, if only we eliminate unnecessary factors. Now, what are these factors that condition God and make us feel that He is totally different from the individual? These factors are described here in the verses following.

Ishvara is the name of the creative principle. God is not only the instrumental cause of the world, but also the material cause. We must know the difference between an instrumental cause – or efficient cause, as it is called – and a material cause. The carpenter is the instrumental cause, or the efficient cause, of a piece of furniture because he causes

the furniture to manifest by his effort. In a similar manner, God causes the world to manifest by the force of His will, as the carpenter by the force of his will creates a shape or a structure of the furniture. But there is a difference between the carpenter and God in the sense that the wood that is the material of the furniture does not come from the body of the carpenter. He is not the material cause of the product – namely, the furniture. He is only the efficient cause, and not the material cause. Here in the case of a carpenter and the table, the material comes from somewhere else, outside the location or the personality of the carpenter. But in the case of God, there is no external material. There is no furniture, wood, steel, brick and cement, etc. that God can have outside Himself. He cannot have an exterior or totally outside material for the creation of the world. He is also the substance out of which the world is made. The Mundakopanishad gives the illustration of a spider spinning its web: The web is made out of the very substance that comes out of its own being.

Therefore, God is not only the instrumental cause, He is also the material cause. He becomes the material of the universe when He associates Himself as consciousness with the *tamasic* aspect of *prakriti* which becomes the five *tanmatras* – *sabda, sparsa, rupa, rasa, gandha* – and by the process of quintuplication, becomes the five gross elements of earth, water, fire, air and ether.

God is the creator of the material of the universe in the form of the five *tanmatras* and the five gross elements, by associating Himself with *tamasic prakriti*. By associating Himself with the *sattvic prakriti*, which is the *sattva guna*

manifest in a universal way, He becomes the instrumental cause. That is, the intelligence of Brahman is reflected through the universal *sattva* of *prakriti*, and that universally manifest intelligence is the causative factor, the instrumental or efficient cause, the intelligent cause of the universe. But the material is the very same Brahman associating itself with the *tamasic prakriti*. This is the meaning of this particular verse: Jagato yadu pādānaṃ māyā mādāya tāmasīm, nimittaṃ śuddha sasattvān tāmucyate brahma tadgirā. He becomes the *upadana* or material cause by associating Himself with *tamasic prakriti*. But He becomes *nimitta*, or the instrumental cause, by associating with *shuddha sattva pradhan prakriti*.

So the manner of the reflection of Brahman in the properties of *prakriti* (*sattva* and *tamas* differently) becomes the cause of God Himself appearing as the instrumental cause and the material cause together. Therefore, God is called *abhina nimitta upadana karana*. *Abhina* means non-differentiated. *Nimitta* is instrumental. *Upadana* is material. *Karana* is cause. God is the undifferentiated material and instrumental cause of the universe. This is how God appears as the creative principle of the cosmos; but He may appear as an individual also, by associating Himself with another thing.

Yadā malina sattvān tām kāma karmādi dūṣitām, ādatte tatparaṃ brahma tvam padena tadocyate (45). Here is the description of the statement of the Upanishad, *tat twam asi*. *Tat* is that Brahman Himself appearing as Ishvara creating the universe, both as an instrumental cause and a material cause. The word *tat* in that statement of the

Upanishad refers to Brahman appearing as Ishvara, causing the universe to appear as an instrument as well as material.

Tvam means 'you'. It refers to an individual. The individual is constituted of the very same Brahman consciousness reflected through *malina sattva*. *Shuddha sattva* is pure, universal *sattva*. Because of the purity of that *sattva* in the original cosmic *prakriti*, it is universal and it is not limited to any particular place. So the reflection of Brahman through that is also universal. Thus, Brahman manifesting in that way – becoming Ishvara – is omniscient, and knows all things.

But here, in the case of the individual, the *sattva guna* is contaminated by the overpowering influence of *rajas* and *tamas*. We individuals are more *rajasic* and *tamasic* than *sattvic* and, therefore, the universal character of *sattva* does not manifest in us. Only the discriminative, segregating, individualising character of *rajas* manifests. This is why we always feel that we are separate persons with no connection to the universality of existence. There is no connection between you and me, or anything whatsoever. That apparent dissociation and disconnectedness of one thing from another, one person from another person, etc., is a very faulty consciousness that has entered into us on account of Brahman consciousness working through *rajas*.

It is like sunlight, which is an indivisible whole, manifesting itself in split parts of water so that it looks like little, little pieces. Such is the case with this reflection of Brahman in the distracted *rajas guna* of *prakriti* which conditions the individual *jiva*, and so we do not feel that we are universal. We feel that we are particulars only. Brahman

knows that He is universal because He reflects Himself in cosmic universal *sattva*, whereas He feels that He is individual because He now reflects Himself through *rajas*, which is distracting, separating one thing from the other. And this *rajas* and *tamas* in the *jiva* is infected with desire and impulse for action, etc. *Avidya*, which is the obliteration of the universality of consciousness – causing distraction and individuality consciousness – is also the cause of desire and action.

So we can imagine what are the troubles befalling us. *Avidya*, *kama* and *karma* are the terms used to indicate our present predicament: firstly, *avidya* – the total ignorance of the universality of our nature; secondly, *kama* – desire for things external; and *karma* – the intense effort that we put forth to fulfil our desires in the direction of objects. This is the fate of individual *jivas*; yet, we are vitalised by Brahman consciousness only – unfortunately through *rajas* and *tamas*, and not through *sattva*. Ādatte tatparaṁ brahma tvam padena tadocyate: This kind of individuality is the second manifestation of Brahman as any one of us. Now, what has to be done?

Tritayī mapi tām muktvā paras paraviro dhinīm, akhaṇḍam saccidā nandaṁ mahā vākyena lakṣyate (46). Three kinds of factors are mentioned here. One is that God becomes the material cause of the universe by association with the five *tanmatras* and five gross elements. That is the first statement. The other statement is that He becomes the instrumental cause by associating Himself with *sattva* that is cosmic in nature. He becomes the individual also, by associating Himself with the *rajas* and *tamas* properties.

Now, ignore these association factors. Don't consider this *tamasic pradhan*, *vishuddha sattva pradhan*, or *malina sattva pradhan prakriti*. Don't consider the reflection aspect at all. Take Brahman as unreflected – not reflected in these three ways as mentioned. Tritayī mapi tām muktṵā: All the three factors may be abandoned for the sake of the direct knowledge of what Brahman is by itself. Paras paraviro dhi: This is because *tamas* and *rajas* and *sattva* cannot have any association, one with the other. They are totally different. The function of the one is different from the function of the other. Therefore, the self-contradictory factors of *prakriti*, namely *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*, should be abandoned while we are considering the nature of Brahman supreme. And when we eliminate the association aspect of Brahman in terms of *sattva*, *rajas*, *tamas*, we will find Brahman is *akhanda*, *eka rasa*, *sat-chit-ananda* – it is undivided. Therefore, it is called *akhanda*, not *khanda*. *Khanda* means divided. *Akhanda* is undivided. *Sat-chit-ananda* – pure Existence-Consciousness-Bliss is Brahman.

This is what is taught to us by the great statement *tat tvam asi* – Thou art That. ‘Thou art That’ means this individual which has taken the shape of a particular ‘I’ located in some place due to the *rajas* aspect of *prakriti* preponderating, is the same as that cosmic Brahman manifesting through, reflected through, *sattva guna prakriti* and *tamas guna prakriti*. If we dissociate *rajas* from the individual, and free Brahman’s reflection from *sattva* and *tamas*, we will find the essence of the *jiva* is identical with the essence of the supreme Absolute.

If we break a pot, the space inside the pot merges into the universal ether. Otherwise, the space inside the pot looks very little. In a little tumbler, there is a small space inside. This is something like the *jiva* of the individual. And there is wider space outside there. Now do we say that the individual space inside the pot is the same as the universal space, or different? We can say it is different because that space outside is so wide, and this space contained in the pot or tumbler is so small. This smallness is an appearance caused by the pot. If we break the pot, we will find there is the same Brahman universal space that appears as this little pot space.

So our consciousness, which is the Atman, is like the pot space. We seem to be small individuals because our consciousness is tied up within the walls of this body, just as space may look very little when it is inside the pot. We remove this association obtained through physical, vital, mental, intellectual and causal pots. These are the fivefold pots into which we have cast the consciousness of Brahman, as if in a mould.

In the previous session we realised how it is possible for us to dissociate this consciousness from the three states, from the five *koshas*, and ascertain the true indivisibility of our essential Self. *Tvam* which is individuality, or 'thou', is the basic consciousness appearing to be limited in one place on account of the action of segregating *rajas*, from which we have to dissociate consciousness carefully, as we tried to do yesterday. Then we will find that it is the same as the universal Brahman. Therefore, if we avoid association with

sattva, rajas, tamas, we will find that we are identical with the cosmic existence.

So'ya mityā divākyeṣu virodhāt tadi dantayoḥ, tyāgena bhāgayo reka āśrayo lakṣyate yathā (47) means that Devadatta of Bombay is this Devadatta in Rishikesh. We have avoided the association of Bombay and Rishikesh and identified the person as one single individual. In a similar manner, the identity of Brahman in the individuality of the *jīva* should be affirmed by the dissociation of factors which are secondary and not essential.

Māyā'vidye vihā yaivam upādhi para jīvayoḥ, akhaṇḍaṁ saccidā nandaṁ para brahmaiva lakṣyate (48): As mentioned, by dissociating consciousness from its apparent connection with *maya* in the cosmic sense and *avidya* in the individual sense, we will feel that, freed from these adjuncts or *upadhis* of cosmicity and individuality, what remains would be indivisible Sat-Chit-Ananda Parabrahma only.

We must free the consciousness from the association of the definitions of omnipresence, omniscience, omnipotence, etc. These definitions have meaning only so long as there is space and time and externality. Due to space, time and the objectivity visible to our eyes, we associate Brahman with such factors as omnipresence, omniscience, omnipotence, etc. God by Himself is more than omnipotence, and also more than omniscience and omnipresence. Also, He is not a particular individual.

Thus, the particularity of the individuality of a person and the universality of omnipresence, etc., of God are only factors arisen on account of perception through space and

time. If these screens of space, time and objectivity are lifted, the individual merges into Brahman in one instant.

Savi kalpasya lakṣyavte lakṣyasya syāda vastutā, nirvi kalpasya kalṣyatvaṁ na dṛṣṭaṁ na ca sambhavi (49). The Supreme Brahman – this is a kind of logical cliché that the author introduces here by saying that Brahman is either *savikalpa* or *nirvikalpa*. *Savikalpa* is associated with name and form, conceivable through the mind. And if we say that Brahman is associated with *nama-rupa* – that is, name and form – we will also be associating Brahman with space and time. In that case, this *lakshya*, or the supreme target of our concentration, will become a finite individual. Brahman also will become a personality like ourselves – maybe a large personality, yet nevertheless a personality only – because we have limited this concept of Brahman to perceptibility, cognisability, in terms of finitude created by space, time and objectivity.

Therefore, Brahman should not be considered as cognisable through the mind, and also not definable in terms of name and form. Else, He will become non-existent, *avastu*, a non-entity, because He has become a finite entity like any other finite individual. But – *nirvi kalpasya kalṣyatvaṁ na dṛṣṭaṁ na ca sambhavi* – can we say that He has no qualities at all? We cannot conceive of anything that has no attributes at all. All things that we can conceive in the mind have some character. So a quandary is being raised here, that we cannot conceive Brahman either with attributes or without attributes. If it is with attributes, it becomes finite. If it is without attributes, it becomes

inconceivable. Here is the difficulty in conceiving Brahman through human intellect or understanding.

Vikalpo nirvi kalpasya savilpkasya vā bhavet, ādye vyāhati ranyatrā navasthā'tmā śrayā dayah (50). Concept is possible either of the finite or of the infinite. But, the infinite cannot be conceived; and if we start conceiving the finite, we will enter into some peculiar logical quandaries in argument. That is, a finite thing is that which is associated with certain conceptual categories. That is to say, there cannot be a finite object or anything that is finite unless it has already been cast into the mould of conceptual categories. Now, to conceive a finite object which is already cast into the mould of a conceptualisation would be to argue in a *regressus ad infinitum*, as they call it; and many other logical fallacies will follow, such as circular reasoning, called *chakra*, or *anavastha dosha*, *regressus ad infinitum*, or *atmashraya* which means begging the question. We start assuming something which is yet to be proved – and so on are the difficulties that will arise if we start conceiving a thing that is already conceived to be finite. So God cannot be conceived as finite. Nor is it possible to conceive the infinite. This is a peculiar diversion that he has introduced here to make us feel how difficult it is for us to contact Brahman, in any way whatsoever, with our finite faculties. No contact with Brahman is possible, ordinarily.

Idam guṇakriyā jāti dravya sambandha vastuṣu, samam tena svarūpasya sarva meta ditīṣyatām (51). These problems that we raised just now of *vikalpatva* or *nirvikalpatva*, that is finitude or infinitude as associated with Brahman, may also be considered as futile arguments

in the case of anything whatsoever, such as quality, action, species, genus, objectivity, relation, and anything whatsoever. *Guna* is quality, *kriya* is action, *jati* is species, *dravya* is object, *sambandha* is relation, *vastu* is anything whatsoever. Hence, in any one of these categories that we find in this world, the same difficulty will arise if we start envisaging these things either as finite or as infinite.

Nothing finally can be looked upon as either finite or infinite. So what is the position of the thing at all? If we think that it is neither finite nor infinite, it is inconceivable. Such is the nature of this world. It is a relative world which is impossible to conceive in any manner whatsoever. Anything that is relative cannot be conceived. The modern science of relativity also takes us to the same conclusion that it is not as it appears to us. It is an unthinkable, peculiar mystery. That is why it is called *maya* – a jugglery-like thing that is appearing before us. If we try to probe into it, we will find it is not there at all, as night vanishes when the sun rises or darkness vanishes when the flash of a torch is thrown on it. It is because our knowledge is not operating that the whole thing looks very solid, so three-dimensional, so real. If we throw the flashlight on our understanding, we will find it vanishes. It cannot be conceived at all as either existent in this manner or existent in that manner – neither finite, not infinite, which means to say that it is not there at all. Such is this world.

Vikalpa tada bhāvā bhyām asaṁ spr̥ṣṭāt ma vastuni, vikalpi tatva lakṣyatva sambandhā dyāstu kalpitāḥ (52). In this case where it is a question of ascertaining the nature of a reality which is uncontaminated either with the concept

of finitude or infinitude, all these categories that we have been discussing are only foisted upon it. We say so many things about God. He does this, He does that, He did this, He is like this, He is like that. None of these statements that we make can apply to Him. Neither He did this, nor did He do that. He neither looks like this, nor does He look like that. All our intellectual categories are foisted upon God.

The category of finitude and the category of infinitude, and the category of relation of one thing with the other are all imagined by the conditioning factors of the mind. Brahman is above all that we can imagine in our mind. This kind of study that we have made is called *śravaṇa*. We have heard a lot about the nature of the world, the nature of the individual, the nature of Brahman. We have studied Ishvara, *jagat* and *jiva* in some measure. What is the nature of these great principles God, world and individual?

Itthaṁ vākyaḥ tadar thānu sandhā naṁ śravaṇaṁ bhaveta, yuktyā sambhā vita tvānu saṁdhānaṁ mana nantu tat (53). This kind of thing that you have heard and studied now is equal to hearing. You have studied by actual hearing. But mere hearing is not sufficient. When you return home, you must ponder over this deeply. The ideas that have been made to enter into your mind through the medium of your hearing should enter your heart. They should become objects of deep investigation, Self-investigation. The mind withdraws into itself all the ideas that it has collected by hearing and deeply bestows these considerations. That is called *manana*.

Śravaṇa is hearing, learning, studying. *Manana* is deep thinking. If you merely hear and go away and again hear

tomorrow, it will be what is humorously called ‘Eustachian philosophy’, which means that what you hear through one ear goes out through the other ear. Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj used to say there are Eustachian philosophers. They understand nothing. It does not go inside.

It has to go inside. Unless we bestow deep thought on what we have heard, that knowledge which we have gained by hearing will not be part of our nature. We will be sitting independently as we were earlier, and knowledge will be outside in space, or it will sit on top of the tree. So it has to be brought into the depths of our understanding by deep reflection. That process is called *manana*. Even that is not sufficient. We have to become that knowledge itself.

Tābhyāṃ nirvicikitsē'rthe cetasaḥ sthāpi tasya yat, eka tānatva metaddhi nidi dhyāsana mucyate (54). The deep association of ourselves with this knowledge is *nididhyasana*. Firstly, we hear and study. Secondly, we bestow deep thought and investigate into the substance and essentiality of what we have heard and studied, and make it a part and parcel of our daily thought and understanding. But when this process goes on continuously day in and day out, it becomes the very spirit of our nature. We do not merely know, we actually become the existence of it. Knowledge is not merely a property that we have gained by hearing or studying. It is not a quality of our intellect, as an academic qualification. It is our very substance. Knowledge is Being. *Chit* is *Sat*. So when knowledge that we have gained by *sravana* and *manana* becomes our very substance itself, we move like God Himself in the world. That is *jivanmukta lakshana*. That condition is *nididhyasana*

tattva, a continuous flow of knowledge without break, which becomes the essence of our person. This is called *nididhyasana*.

Dhyāṭṛ dhyāne pari tyajya kramād dhyeyaika gocaram, nivāta dīpa vaccittam samādhi rabhi dhīyate (55). Deep meditation, which is *nididhyasana* is, in the beginning, involved in three processes – the meditating consciousness, the object on which meditation is carried on, and the process of meditation. Therefore, three things are involved – *triputi*. There is someone who is meditating, there is something on which meditation is being carried on, and some process of knowledge is linking the subject with the object, connecting the meditator with the object meditated upon. So when we meditate, in the beginning we will have a consciousness of three things. We will feel that we are there contemplating, meditating. We will feel that there is something on which we are concentrating. And we will also know that there is a relation between us.

When by deep concentration – going further, deeper – the consciousness of our being there and the consciousness of a process going on also are dropped, our consciousness merges into that object, and we become the very object itself. The very *artha*, the very target, the very ideal, the very aim becomes us. We are not contemplating something; we have become that. That becoming of the identity of our consciousness with the very object which we are concentrating upon, losing the consciousness of an individuality and the process of concentration – the identity of the subject with the object, the merger of the

consciousness perceiving with the object concentrated upon – is called *samadhi*.

Discourse 6

CHAPTER 1: TATTVA VIVEKA – DISCRIMINATION OF REALITY, VERSES 54-65

Tābhyām nirvicikitse'rthe cetasaḥ sthāpi tasya yat, eka tānatva metaddhi nidi dhyāsana mucyate (54). When the ideas that we have gathered through hearing and studying from a preceptor are made to enter our feelings by deep reflection on the same, and when these ideas – that have become practically part of our nature by way of deep investigation, concentration and reflection – become inseparable from us, we become absorbed in them to such an extent that we think only these ideas. Our very outlook changes in terms of these ideas, and the whole world is envisioned by us in terms of these noble ideas only. *Nididhyasana* is this condition where knowledge acquired through study and hearing, and made one-pointed by reflection and investigation, becomes part of one's nature by delving into one's own heart and making the knowledge a part of one's being. This leads to deep meditation.

In the meditation process, the consciousness of the meditator absorbs itself wholly in the object of meditation. Here in this case, Brahman, the Universal Reality, is the object of meditation. The consciousness of the individual extricates itself from its encasement in the body, moves in the direction of the Universal Being, absorbs itself in It, and endeavours to be conscious only of It and nothing else.

In this stage of initial practice, the factors of meditation are threefold: the meditator, the object meditated upon, and the process of meditation. There is also a fourth factor prior to the direct act of meditation – namely, the elimination of

unnecessary thoughts from the mind. There are thoughts that are not conducive to the meditation process, such as internal impulses which are trying to gain access to the objects outside, or the problems of life, or many other entanglements in which one is involved. They are not connected with meditation at all; they are extraneous thoughts. Social situations, physical conditions and psychological repressions may intrude into the process of meditation. They have to be carefully brushed aside by a whole-souled onslaught of the consciousness on the Universal Being.

The love of the Universal Being will be a good panacea for the ills of the sense organs wanting pleasure of sense objects. “When you have a greater joy, why do you want a lesser joy? When you have a permanent joy, why do you want an impermanent joy? When you have a real joy, why do you want a false joy?” If we thus instruct the senses and the mind, the extraneous thoughts will wither away and die out. Then starts meditation with the threefold consciousness of the meditator, the object of meditation, and the process of meditation.

Dhyāṭṛ dhyāne pari tyajya kramād dhyeyaika gocaram, nivāta dīpa vaccittaṃ samādhi rabhi dhīyate (55). When, like a flame of a lamp placed in a windless place, consciousness flickers not and deviates not from the point of concentration on the Universal Reality – and transcends the triple awareness of the meditation process, the object of meditation, and the meditator – then the idea of oneself as meditator and meditating as the process, is transcended. The absorption is so intense that the consciousness is aware

only of the object, so that the aim has become part and parcel of the consciousness meditating. The aim is realised. That is to say, the Universal becomes our experience. Our aim is Universality. When consciousness identifies itself with the Universality, which is the object of meditation finally, we exist as Universal experience. This is *samadhi*.

Ṛtta yastu tadānīm ajñātā apyā tmago carāḥ, smaraṇā danu mīyante vyutthi tasya samut thitāt (56). *Samadhi* does not necessarily mean a sudden, abrupt merger into the Absolute. It takes place gradually, as we will find it described in the *sutras* of Patanjali. There are five or six stages or degrees of *samadhi*; and in the earlier stages of *samadhi*, one does not actually merge with the Absolute. Due to the predominance of the cosmic *sattva guna* in the mind of the meditator, there is an experience of Universality. But, after all, the *sattva guna* also is only a *guna*. It is a property of *prakriti*. So as long as we are involved in the qualities of *prakriti*, we have not totally merged with the Absolute.

It is like seeing the Absolute through a clean glass. We are seeing the total Universal through a transparent medium. We are seeing it, of course. It is as good as being it. Yet there is a glass pane, as it were, preventing us from actually merging with it. Therefore, after this kind of *samadhi* where the experience is through the *sattva guna* of *prakriti*, there is a rising up from *samadhi* – *utthana* it is called. We will not always be merging. We will wake up due to the stirring of *sattva* caused by *rajas prakriti*, which is also there, submerged. In deep *samadhi*, the powerful Universal *sattva* drives down the impulses of *rajas* and

tamas. But how long will they remain inside? They are in ambush; they are living underground, and after some time they slowly create a disturbance which causes the awakening of the person from *samadhi*, and one remembers that one was in the state of *samadhi*.

Smaraṇā danu mīyante: In the state of actual *samadhi*, there is no thought process. There is no remembering that “I am in the state of *samadhi*,” and so on. We do not go on thinking that we are awake. We are awake now, but do we go on remembering and thinking that we are awake? It is so spontaneous that there is no need of thinking that we are awake. It is a part of our nature, so we do not need to think it.

Similarly, thought is not there in *samadhi*. There is no conscious operation of the psyche. But when we wake up from *samadhi*, we will have a memory of it. The memory is caused because of the presence of the mind in the state of *sattva*. If the mind were not there at all, absolutely, there would be no coming up. We would have attained absolute liberation, *videhamukti*. But the *sattva guna* persists in the lower kind of *samadhi* which is known as *savikalpa* or *samprajnata*, as the case may be. The awakening is caused by the *rajas* principle; and the memory of having had the experience of *samadhi* is caused by the *sattva* quality of *prakriti*, which was the means or the medium through which the *samadhi* was experienced. We can remember that we had a good experience, just as we have a memory that we slept yesterday.

Vṛttī nāma nuvṛttistu prayat nāt pratha mādapi, adrṣṭā sakṛda bhyāsa saṁskāra sacivād bhavet (57). These

memories of *samadhi* persist on account of various factors, such as the effort involved in the very practice itself and the association of ideas caused by meritorious deeds that we performed in the previous birth. Experience comes through two factors – or three, we may say. Sometimes we say four.

Firstly, there is the effect of the effort that we put forth. We are so anxious, so eager and honest in this practice; this practice produces an effect. Secondly, there is God's grace itself. Thirdly, there is the blessing of the Guru. Fourthly, there is the effect of the *purvapunya*, or the meritorious deeds that we performed in the previous birth. All these factors come together in causing our experience of *samadhi* and also the memory thereafter of having experienced it.

Yathā dīpo nivāta stha ityādibhi ranekadhā, bhagavā nima mevā rtham arjunāya nyarū payat (58). There is a quotation in the sixth chapter of the Bhagavad Gita: yathā dīpo nivāstho neṅgate sopamā smṛtā, yogino yata-cittasya yuñjato yogam ātmanaḥ (Gita 6.19), and that verse is quoted here. As the flame of a lamp placed in a windless place is fixed and never oscillates, in the state of *samadhi* consciousness gets fixed in identity with Universality.

What happens in *samadhi*? All the karmas that we did in the past – *crores* and *crores* of karmas that we did through all the series of births that we have passed, endless migrations and transmigrations – these actions get burnt up. They get dissolved, just as every particle of darkness is dissolved before the light of the sun and every particle of mist gets dissolved when the sun rises. Every little karma that we did gets pounded to dust and dissolved, even if these karmas were accumulated stuff through centuries and

eons of our transmigratory life. In one second they are destroyed, as a spark of light from a matchstick can reduce to ashes even a mountain of straw. It may look like a mountain, and the matchstick is so small; but the quality of the fire that is in the matchstick is enough to reduce the entire heap to ashes. The heap of karmas will be destroyed in one instant by the experience of this identity of consciousness with the Universal, though it is only a temporary experience and there is a rising up from it afterwards.

Anādā viha saṁsāre sañcitāḥ karma koṭayaḥ, anena vilayaṁ yānti śuddho dharmo vivar dhate (59). *Dharma-megha samadhi* is the word used in Patanjali's Sutras. *Dharma-megha samadhi* supervenes. Righteousness rains on our head, as it were. Here righteousness does not mean merely good behaviour and nice speech, polite conduct, etc. Here righteousness which rains upon us like torrential clouds, *dharma-megha*, is actually the identity of our consciousness with cosmic order and law. In the Vedic language, we get identified with cosmic *satya* and *rita*. That is, we don't have to be instructed, "Do this, do that." We will know what is to be done.

This state of affairs supervenes mostly in Krita Yuga where, as they say, righteousness rules the world. Righteousness is the nature of the cosmic order of things, identified with which everyone knows his duty. And in Krita Yuga – the Golden Age, as they call it – there was no governmental system. There was no ruler and there was no instructor. There was nobody to say, "This must be done, and this is not to be done," because all were identical in

their knowledge and capacity, and everyone was identified with the Cosmic Truth. This kind of knowledge, this kind of power, this kind of experience will be our blessing when *dharma-megha samadhi* ensues. This is the earliest stage of *samadhi*, where we have a sudden lifting up of our consciousness to a Universal state of the perception of the integratedness of all things, the interrelatedness of all things, and we are identical with every little bit of matter, and all space and time – entire galaxies. We will feel that everything, including the sun and the moon and the stars, is hanging on our body. Such Universality will be experienced: *śuddho dharmo vivar dhate*.

Dharma megha mimaṁ prāhus samādhiṁ yoga vittamāḥ, varṣa tyeṣa yato dharmā mṛta dhārā ssaha sraśaḥ (60). This experience in *samadhi* is called *dharma-megha*. *Megha* is a cloud; a cloud that rains *dharma* is called *dharma-megha*. As it happens in *samadhi*, that *samadhi* is called *dharma-megha samadhi*.

Samādhiṁ yoga vittamāḥ: Knowers of yoga call this great, wonderful experience as *dharma-megha samadhi*. Why is it called like that? *Varṣa tyeṣa yato dharmā mṛta dhārā ssaha sraśaḥ*: Millions of torrents fall on the consciousness of the meditator in the form of a nectarine bath of the consciousness of law and order, *satya* and *rita*. That is, we begin to feel, to face, as it were, the very face of God, because *rita* and *satya*, law and order – not to be identified with the law and order of the national governments of the earth, but a cosmical law and order – which, when it becomes the experience of our consciousness, identifies us with everything, even with a

leaf. Even the leaf of the tree and every little sand particle will start dancing before us. Nectar falls like rain. It comes from all places. The Universal rain drenches and inundates this consciousness of the meditator, and we are bathed in this nectarine experience of cosmic Universality.

Amunā vāsanā jale niśśeṣaṁ pravi lāpīte, samūlon mūlite puṇya pāpākhye karma sañcaye (61). Vākya maprati baddham sat prāk parokṣā vabhāsite, karā malaka vad bodham aparokṣaṁ prasūyate (62). In the earlier stages of knowledge, knowledge is indirect. Now you know something about all that has been talked about. You are hearing it, and have made a study of it. This knowledge is indirect knowledge because the knowledge that you are gaining just now is not identical with the object of knowledge. The object is still away from you. That Supreme Brahman is not identical with the knowledge that you have gained merely by hearing or even by studying – even by deep reflection, ratiocination. With all these, you will find you are still not very near the Supreme Reality, because the mind keeps you cut off. The existence of the mind, the operation of the mind with all its *vrittis*, keeps you away from direct contact with the reality. But the *vasanas*, or the impressions of the mind, are dissolved in this state of *samadhi*.

A *vasana* is a kind of impression created by some action that we perform; and that *vasana* creates a *vritti*, or a groove in the mind like an impression created in a gramophone plate. The vibrations of thought, like the vibrations of sound, create an impression or a groove in a gramophone plate. The vibrations are the *vasanas*, and the

vrittis are the grooves; and once the grooves are formed, we can go on playing the record any number of times and hear the same music.

Likewise, once the grooves in the mind are formed by certain impressions created by sense perception, they will become causes of rebirth; and in the next birth also, the same 'gramophone record' will play out. That means to say, the old, old ideas will persist and want expression in the next birth also. And in that next birth, if we too continue the same process of creating grooves in the mind, there will be an endless heap of grooves, one over the other; then there will be no remedy for it.

But once these grooves are dissolved – say we throw this gramophone plate in boiling water – it melts altogether, and all the grooves also go. Likewise, we throw this mind with all its grooves in the heat of the knowledge of this Universal experience. When this happens, *samūlon mūlite puṇya pāpākhye karma sañcaye*: all the karmas that we have accumulated in the form of good and bad deeds are uprooted.

It not only because of bad deeds that we get reborn. Even good deeds will take us to rebirth. It is the deed that causes birth, good or bad. It may be that bad deeds cause inconvenience, pain, suffering, sorrow, and so on, and good deeds produce such effects as joy, satisfaction, security, happiness, etc. That is true. Notwithstanding the difference between the products of good deeds and bad deeds, the character of causing rebirth will be there equally in either case. Just because we have done good deeds, it does not mean that we will not be reborn. Only, we will be born as a

better person. But that also has to go. It is not enough if *rajas* and *tamas* are destroyed. *Sattva* also has to go.

As I mentioned, the screen in front of us, even if it is transparent, has to be lifted. Otherwise, there cannot be identity with the object. So when even the *punya* and *papa karma phala* get dissolved by this experience – they are totally uprooted – this knowledge which is indirect at present, acquired through hearing from the preceptor or teacher, will become direct knowledge. We will see this whole universe as if it is sitting on the palm of our hand. Karā malaka vad: Suppose we keep a fruit on our palm; we can see it so clearly that it does not require any proof for its existence. Such kind of clarity of vision of the existence of the Universal will be our blessing and glory when all the karmas are destroyed – the products of good and bad deeds – and indirect knowledge that we have gained through study and investigation enters into the very source of our being. Knowledge becomes our existence, and our existence becomes our knowledge. In other words, unfettered becomes our being. Free we are totally. Consciousness is our nature, and our existence becomes Universal Existence. That is to say in short, we become *sat-chit-ananda*, Absolute Existence-Consciousness-Bliss.

Parokṣaṁ brahma vijñānaṁ śābdaṁ deśika pūrvakam, buddhi pūva kṛtaṁ pāpaṁ kṛtsnaṁ dahati vahnivat (63). Even this little knowledge that we have gained through hearing has a great effect. It purifies the mind. It does not mean that indirect knowledge is useless. That knowledge which was gained through the teacher or the preceptor, though indirect, will be able to destroy all the karmas, at

least in some measure. The total uprooting will take place afterwards. The harassment caused by the karmas will cease.

Don't we feel that we go away happy after hearing a spiritual discourse? We have a good sleep, we have good thoughts, and we wake up with noble thoughts. Don't we think that some karmas have been simply driven away? Otherwise, we will worry, scratch our head, think all sorts of things, and take a sleeping pill to go to bed. This will not be necessary after hearing all of this. We will be calm, quiet, happy, and composed, and never get angry with anybody. We will be satisfied with all things. That is, even this indirect knowledge has such an effect. It will destroy the worrying habit of the mind and the unnecessary interference of these negative karmas.

But when the knowledge becomes direct, it is a wonderful thing. What will happen? It will destroy the night of ignorance totally. Just as there is no night in the midday sun, there will be no night of this ignorance before us. We will not see the world. This night of ignorance which is causing the perception of an externality of the world, the desire for objects, and the running after them in action, will dissolve immediately.

Aparo kṣātma vijñānaṃ śābdaṃ deśika pūrva kam, saṁsāra kāraṇa jñāna tamasaś caṇḍa bhāskaraḥ (64). *Aparoksatma vijñana* is not indirect knowledge that is attained merely by study, but direct experience – as the experience of the waking condition just now.

Śābdaṃ deśika pūrva kam. This knowledge that has fructified into a maturity of direct experience after having

been received though this teacher – what does it do now? *Samsāra kāraṇa jñāna tamasaś caṇḍa bhāskaraḥ*. It becomes the blazing midday sun to destroy the Universal ignorance which has caused this perception of *samsara*, or earthly turmoil. The world will vanish just as dreams vanish when we wake.

Itthaṁ tattva vivekaṁ vidhāya vidhi vanmanas samādhāya vigaḷita saṁsṛt bandhaḥ prāpnoti paraṁ padaṁ naro no cirāt (65). This chapter is now concluding – the first chapter. Having deeply considered the nature of reality as has been described up to this time – properly hearing it, carefully thinking it deeply and making it a part of our routine of the day – and by a disciplined process, we have made this knowledge a part of our thinking process itself. That is to say, when we think anything, we will think only from this point of view – like a businessman thinking only from the point of view of profit and loss, like a shopkeeper thinking only in terms of the weight of gold, an official thinking only in terms of promotion and salary. There is no other way of thinking. Here we will start thinking only from this point of view. Whether we are working, taking our meals, going for a walk, or taking a bath – whatever we may be doing, we will see it from the point of view of this great knowledge that we have acquired.

We will have a new perception of things; our vision will change. Such a person is called a philosopher. A philosopher is one who views the whole world from the point of view of eternity. That will be our experience after having listened to this wisdom, this knowledge, and having made it a part and parcel of our very outlook of life. *Vigaḷita*

samsṛt bandhaḥ. All the shackles of bondage will fall down. All the chains that were binding us to this earth will break in one instant. Prāpnoti paraṁ padaṁ naro no cirāt. Sankara says we may get this experience very early – not after many, many years – provided our eagerness is very intense.

Here we have to remember a *sutra* from Patanjali's Yoga Sutras: Tivra samvegānām āsannaḥ (1.21): This experience is very near us, provided our ardour for having it is very intense. Ardour means anguish, impossibility to exist without it, breathlessness because it is not there, crying because we have lost it, and as if we are being drowned in water and wanting a little air to be provided to us. It is such an anguish of having separated ourselves from God, such an ardour for wanting it. This word 'samvega' that is used in Patanjali's *sutra* cannot be easily translated into the English language. The best translation is 'ardour'. Intense zealotry and the heart jumping out of our body, as it were, to catch it – that is called ardour.

If this is possible for you – and if you convince yourself that there is no other goal for you except this – when you drown yourself in this feeling and thought, everything will come to you automatically. You need not go and beg for things, like a beggar. Everything will be at your feet. If this conviction is in your mind, quickly will this experience come. And what happens? Prāpnoti paraṁ padaṁ: You attain the supreme state of eternal beatitude.

The first chapter is concluded.

Discourse 7

CHAPTER 2: PANCHA MAHABHUTA VIVEKA – DISCRIMINATION OF THE ELEMENTS, VERSES 1-18

Sad-advaitam śrutam yat-tat-pañca-bhūta vivekataḥ, boddhum śakyam tato bhūta-pañcakam pravi vicyate (1). In the Chhandogya Upanishad's sixth chapter, Uddalaka instructs his disciple and son Svetaketu and pronounces a great statement, Sad eva, saumya, idam agra āsīd (Chhandogya 6.2.1): "Being alone was." To understand the meaning of this statement, "Being alone was" (before the creation of this world), we have to conduct an analysis of the involvement of Being in creation through the study of the five elements which are the stuff of this world, the *panchbhutas*, the five elements – earth, water, fire, air and ether. A study of the inner constitution of these five elements will also enable us to know what kind of involvement there is of this Pure Being in these five elements. Therefore, for the sake of understanding the true meaning of this proclamation "Existence alone was", we try now to go into an investigation of the nature of the five elements. This is the subject matter of the second chapter.

What are the five elements? The gross elements are space or sky (*akasha*), air, fire, water, earth; and the inner constituents are *śabda*, *sparsa*, *rūpa*, *rasa*, *gandha*. These words must be remembered because they will be coming again and again.

Śabda-sparśau rūpa-rasau gandho bhūta-guṇā ime, eka-dvi-tri-catuh pañca guṇāḥ vyomādiṣu kramāt (2). The qualities of these elements are, in respective order: sound, which is the quality of space; touch, which is the quality of

air; form, which is the quality of fire; taste, which is the quality of water; and smell, which is the quality of earth. These are the qualities of the five elements.

Only one quality can be seen in space: it can reverberate sound, but we cannot touch it, taste it, smell it, etc. Space can only cause an atmosphere for creating a vibration of sound so, as nothing else is possible there, sound alone is the quality of space. But of air, there are two qualities: air can make sound, and also it can be felt. It can be touched. Sound is the quality of space; sound and touch are the qualities of air. But fire has sound, touch and has form, as we can also see it. And water: we can hear its sound, we can touch it, we can see it, we can taste it. But we cannot taste fire, taste air, taste space, etc. Earth has five qualities: it can create sound, it can be touched, it can be seen, it can be tasted, and it can be smelled. Smelling is the quality of only earth, so that earth has five qualities. Water has four, fire has three, air has two, and space has only one quality. This is the meaning of the second half of the verse: eka-dvi-tri-catuh pañca guṇāḥ vyomādiṣu kramāt. Now it is said that certain of these elements make sound, etc. What kind of sound do they make?

Prati-dhvanir viyacchabdo vāyau bīsīti śabdanam, anuṣṇā-śīta saṁsparśaḥ vahnau bhugu-bhugu-dhvaniḥ (3).

Uṣṇa-sparśaḥ prabhā-rūpaṁ jale bulu-bulu dhaniḥ, śīta-sparśaḥ śukla-rūpaṁ raso mādhyam īritaḥ (4).

Bhūmau kaḍakaḍā-śabdaḥ kāṭhinyaṁ sparśa iṣyate, nīlādikam citra-rūpaṁ madhurāmlādikō rasaḥ (5).

Prati-dhvanir viyacchabdo. Space does not make sound by itself. It causes refraction and reverberation of sound – an echo. Echo is the sound that is produced by space. And

what kind of sound is made by air? It goes whoosh. He has put ‘vees’ here: *bīsīti śabdanam*. And what is the touch? It is neither hot nor cold. Air has no quality of this kind. It is hot when it is charged with heat; it is cold when it is charged with cold: *anuṣṇā-śīta saṁsparśaḥ*. And fire can also make sound. When it flames forth, it makes a sound like *bhugu-bhugu*: *vahnau bhugu-bhugu-dhvaniḥ*.

And what is the quality of fire? Heat: *uṣṇa-sparśaḥ*. The touch of fire is heat, and its form is radiance: *prabhā-rūpaṁ*. And what is the sound that water makes? *Bulu-bulu*: *jale bulu-bulu dhaniḥ*. Its quality is cold when we touch it; and its quality is also white. White is the colour of water; and its taste is very sweet. That is why we drink water. What is the sound that earth makes? *Kada-kada* is the sound it will make if something breaks, something falls. *Bhūmau kaḍakaḍā-śabdaḥ*: this is the earth sound. And hardness is its touch, and its colour is green, blue, yellow, etc. Varieties are the colours of objects made of earth: *citra-rūpaṁ*. And its taste – sweetness, bitterness and other things are all qualities of objects, things made of earthly substance. It has also got a smell – a good smell, a bad smell, a fragrance or a very bad odour. These are the qualities of earth, five in number.

There are five qualities in earth, four in water, three in fire, two in air, one in space. This is how we have to understand the manner of the functioning of these elements. Only earth has all the qualities of the original causes from where it has come.

This group of five elements can be perceived only through the sense organs which are correspondingly

connected with these elements. And the sense organs connected with these elements respectively are: surabhī tara gaṇdhau dvau guṇāḥ samyag vivecitāḥ, śrotraṁ tvak cakṣuṣi jihvā ghrāṇaṁ cendriya pañcakam (6). Sound can be heard only by the ear, touch can be felt by the skin, form can be seen by the eyes, taste can be felt by the tongue, and fragrance or smell can be received by the nose, through the nostrils. These are the five sense organs.

There is a connection of the sense organs with the five elements. In the Bhagavad Gita there is a statement, beautifully made: guṇā guṇeṣu vartante (Gita 3.28). Qualities or properties of *prakṛiti* move among properties of *prakṛiti* when any perception takes place. The *sabda tanmatra*, the potential of sound that is outside in space, comes in contact with the very same *tanmatra* in the eardrum, and then there is a correspondence between the two and we hear the reverberation of sound.

So is the case with the other sense organs. The corresponding object of sensory perception in each case is respectively the connection between the quality of one particular element in relation to one particular sense organ which is also made up of the same element. So it is as if waves are dashing on waves in the body of the ocean. The element inside in the form of sense organs dashes against, or comes in contact with, the same element outside in objects. So *prakṛiti* is perceiving *prakṛiti*. Sense organs come in contact with the objects. We generally say, “I am seeing the objects.” It is a confusion of statement. It is not ‘I’. Don’t bring that sentence. It is the sense organs that come in contact, as the Bhagavadgita says. The principles of

matter constituting outside objects as well as internal sense organs bring about the feeling of these sensations of heat, cold, sound, touch, etc.

Karṇādi golakasthaṁ tacchabdādi grāhakaṁ kramāt, sauksmyat kārayānumeyarṁ tat prāyo dhāved-bahir-mukham (7). These senses are located in certain organs which are physical in their nature. The sense of sight is in the eyeballs. The sense of hearing is in the eardrums, etc. All the senses are subtle forces that are operating through physical media which are called the sense organs. The eardrum does not hear. The eyes don't see. They are only the medium of expression of a force which causes the perception of colour, sound, and the like. These senses cannot be seen with the eyes. As we have studied in the first chapter, these senses of knowledge are constituted of subtle potentials of the *sattva guna* of *prakriti*; therefore, *sattva* not being an object of perception, the senses cannot be seen. They are the perceivers and, therefore, who will perceive them? The eye cannot see itself and the ear cannot hear itself on account of the intense subtlety of these senses, because of their being made of *sukshma tattvas* – that is, *tanmatras*.

Tanmatras cannot be seen. They are subtle. They are made of the *sattva* portion of the cosmic *prakriti*. *Sattva* is an equilibrium of force; therefore, it cannot be seen. Equilibrium cannot be seen. Only distraction, objectivity, can be seen with the eyes. Therefore, on account of the subtlety of the senses involved, due to their being constituted of the *sattva guna* of *prakriti*, they cannot be

seen as we see objects. What is the actual function of the senses? Running outside: *prāyo dhāved-bahir-mukham*.

They have only one work and, like dogs running here and there, they will never keep quiet. The senses run continuously from morning to night. Right from the time we wake up till we go to sleep, the senses run out and compel our consciousness to lodge itself in things which are other than its own Self. The Atman becomes the *anatman*, as it were, due to the force of the senses that drag the mind and the consciousness outside in space and time. They are extroverted totally.

Kadācit-pihite karṇe śrūyate śabda āntaraḥ, prāṇa vāyau jāṭharāgnau jalapāne'ṇna-bhakṣaṇe (8). Sometimes when we close the nostrils and both ears we can hear the internal sound. This is a kind of *mudra* in yoga, and if we go on doing this for a long time we will hear a kind of subtle vibration-like sound from inside the body; *anahata sabda* it is called. It is not a sound created by contact of one thing with another thing. It is a sound automatically created by the movement of *prana* inside. We can hear this by closing the nostrils and the eyes and ears for some minutes.

When the *pranas* move inside, when the gastric juice is operating, when we drink water or eat food, we can feel some sound. There is an internal sound. We can feel it when we eat or drink, or when the gastric juice is acting or the *pranas* are moving.

Vyajyante hyāntarā sparśā mīlane cāntaraṃ tamaḥ, udgāre rasa gandhau ca ityakṣaṇā māntara grahaḥ (9). We can see darkness when we close our eyes and press our eyeballs. There is a kind of perception – a perception of not

colour, but of absence of colour, just as in sleep there is perception not of anything, but of nothing.

Udgāre rasa gandhau: We can also have taste inside, by belching or hiccough. When we belch, sometimes there is some taste coming up from the stomach. There is also smell – so, taste and *gandha* both. Ityakṣaṇā māntara grahaḥ. These are the descriptions of the manner in which we can also see the operation of senses inside, apart from their operation outside.

Pañcokty ādāna-gamana visarg-ānandakāḥ kriyāḥ, kṛṣi-vāṇijya-sevādyah pañcavantar bhavanti hi (10). Whatever we have spoken of just now refers to the senses of knowledge. But there are senses of action also, namely: grasping with the hands, moving with the legs, excretion through the aperture, etc. All the actions such as agriculture, industry, office work also come under these categories of five active organs. Speaking, walking or locomotion, grasping, excretion and generation – these are the external actions. And every other work that we do is included within these five. Even when we do office work, we are only grasping something or moving, etc. So nothing in the world can be outside the purview of these five activities of the five *karmendriyas*, or active organs, apart from the five senses of knowledge.

The five senses of knowledge give us knowledge of things outside; they cognise things or see things. The five organs of action create movement of varieties, as mentioned; and so we have ten organs – five of knowledge and five of action. Every other activity comes under these. The whole world is nothing but a huge conglomeration,

permutation and combination of the activities of these sense organs. They are ten in number. The whole world is this much only – entirely sensory.

Vāk-pāṇi-pāda-pāyūpasthair akṣais tat kriyājaniḥ, mukhādi-golakeṣv āste tat karmendriya pañcakam (11). The organs of action are located, as in the case of the senses of knowledge, in certain parts of the body. Grasping is of the hands, locomotion of the feet, speech of the tongue, and excretion and generation of the lower organs. They are forces in the same way as the senses of knowledge are forces, but lodged in certain parts of the body; that is the physiological system. The physiological system is the location for the action of both the senses of knowledge and the organs of action. They are all situated in the face, eye, etc., as it has been already described.

The mind is something very strange. It is different from the sense organs which give us knowledge and which also act. It is the king. It is Indra. Allegorically explained, the gods are actually the senses. Indra, the ruler of the gods, is the mind.

Mano daśendriyā dhyakṣaṁ hṛt-padme golake sthitam, taccāntaḥ karaṇaṁ bāhyeṣa svātantryāt vinen-driyaiḥ (12). The mind is the ruler of the ten senses. The senses of knowledge and the organs of action are ruled, controlled, directed by the mind: mano daśendriyā dhyakṣaṁ. And where is the mind situated, mostly? In the heart. It is actually pervading the whole body, as a light pervades the entire room here. Yet it has a location, as the light is the bulb. Though the bulb is the location of the light, it nevertheless pervades the entire room. So is the mind

having a temporary location in the heart, but it actually pervades the entire body, as light does.

Hṛt-padme golake sthitam, taccāntaḥ karaṇaṁ: It is called ‘internal organ’. Bāhyeṣa svātantryāt vinen-driyaiḥ: As it cannot operate without the assistance of the senses in respect of objects outside – it cannot act directly in respect of objects without the help of the senses – it is called an internal organ. The senses are external organs; the mind is the internal organ. That is why it is called *antahkarana*.

Antahkarana, internal organ, generally known as mind or the psyche, has mostly four functions to perform, and it is called *manas-buddhi-ahamkara-chitta*. Thinking is a mental process. Intellection is the *buddhi*'s. Arrogation, self-affirmation is the work of the ego, *ahamkara*. *Chitta* is doing the work of memory. *Manas-buddhi-ahamkara-chitta*: thinking, understanding, affirmation or arrogation, and remembering are the functions of these four aspects of the internal organ known as *manas-buddhi-ahamkara-chitta*.

Akṣeṣvarthār pite ṣvetad guṇa doṣa vicārakam, sattvaṁ rajas tamaś cāsyā guṇā vikriyate hi taiḥ (13). When the mind is lodged in the sense organs and it operates through any particular sense at a particular time, it begins to judge the pros and cons of objects outside. “This is something; this is not something. This object is like this; this is not like this. This is the quality of this object; this is the quality of that object.” It begins to argue, ascertain and differentiate values associated with the various things in the world when it operates through the sense organs.

Internally the mind has the properties of *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*. Therefore, it modifies itself continuously. The mind is *chanchala*, as they say. It is very fickle. It is fickle because it is constituted of the *gunas* of *prakriti* – *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*. *Sattva* is very rarely experienced by the mind because if the *sattva* is really revealed, we will be happy. But how many times in the day are we happy? If we count the minutes of real happiness, we will find that it is so fragmentary, so negligible. Our moments of joy in this life on a particular day are so small that we may say that *sattva* is practically not operating at all in the mind. We are always distracted, worried, and thinking of something. That is the reason why it is said that mostly only *rajas* and *tamas* are operating in the mind, though *sattva* is also there. Sometimes when we are calm and quiet, we are philosophically-minded and very charitable, very good natured and dispassionate, and at that time we will feel happiness inside. So it is not that *sattva* is not there. But rarely is it manifest; mostly it is *rajas* and *tamas*. These qualities are *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*; with these it changes its condition moment to moment. It is fickle due to this reason.

Vairāgyam kṣāntir-audāryam ityādyās-sattva-sambhavāḥ, kāma-krodhau lobha-yatnau vityādyāḥ rajaso-tthitāḥ (14). What are the characteristics of the *sattva guna*? Suppose we are endowed with *sattva*; how do we behave? Our behaviour under *sattva* is explained here: dispassion. The more are we *sattvic* in our mind, the less is the desire for things. Dispassion is *vairagya*. This is one quality that we will see as *sattva* predominates. And forbearance,

tolerance and absence of a sudden reaction to things outside is the quality of *sattva*. There is large-heartedness, charitableness, compassion, and a feeling of goodness towards people. Many other qualities are also there. *Ityādyās-sattva-sambhavāḥ*: They are the qualities manifest in us on account of the preponderance of the *sattva guna*.

But if *rajas* is predominant, what happens to us? *Kāma-krodhau*: Suddenly some desire inside us erupts: “I want this.” And if we cannot get it, we are angry, *krodha*. First there is desire, and anger follows when there is no chance for the fulfilment of desire. Anger, desire and greed, *lobha*, are characteristics of *rajas*. Desire of a passionate nature is called *kama*. Irascibility, anger, is called *krodha*. Greed for material wealth, money, land, house, etc., is called *lobha*. *Kama, krodha, lobha* – these are the qualities that we reveal in ourselves when *rajas* predominates. Apart from this, we become very active. *Vityādyāḥ rajaso-tthitāḥ*: Very agitated, distracted – we cannot keep quiet even for one minute and are always running about here and there, and are tremendously excited. That is our nature when *rajas* is predominant.

Ālasyam bhrānti tandrādyā vikārās tamasot thitāḥ, sāttvikaiḥ puṇya niṣpattiḥ pāpot pattiś ca rājasaiḥ (15). When *tamas* is there, *alasyam*, we think like this: “Meditating doesn’t matter. Let us see tomorrow. What is the urgency about it? The day after tomorrow is all right. Why worry? Go slow, go slow.” We will be simply brooding. That is *alasya*, lethargy; and *bhranti* is not perceiving things properly, wrongly calculating things,

misplacing facts, misjudgement. All these are qualities of *tamas*, in addition to actual sleep.

So here it is. He says how we will behave in this world when we are under the subjection of one or the other of these *gunas*, properties of *prakṛiti* – *sattva*, *raja* and *tamas* respectively. If we are *sattvicly* endowed, we will be a virtuous and righteous person: *sāttvikaiḥ puṇya niṣpattiḥ*. Good deeds are not possible when we are *rajasic* in nature. We will always do wrong things. When we are in the state of *sattva*, we have an inclination to do virtuous deeds; we become righteous in our behaviour. But if we are *rajasic*, we do sinful actions, erroneous deeds: *pāpot pattiś ca rājasaiḥ*.

Tāmasair-nobhayaṁ kintu vṛthāyuh kṣapaṇaṁ bhavet, atrāhaṁ pratyayī karteti evaṁ loke vyavasthitiḥ (16). But in *tamas*, we do no action. It is a waste of time: *vṛthāyuh kṣapaṇaṁ bhavet*. In *rajas*, we do something; in *sattva*, we do something greater. But in *tamas*, we do nothing, so the author says in the *tamas* condition we are really wasting our life.

Atrāhaṁ pratyayī karteti. In these characteristics mentioned, through the manifestation of *sattva*, *rajas* or *tamas*, there is a principle inside which says, “I am like this. I am happy. I am unhappy. I am full of desire. I am angry. I am torpid in my mind. I am righteous. I do this action. I do that action.” This principle of consciousness that is asserting these movements through the three qualities of *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas* is called *karta*, or the doer of things, the agent of action, *ahamkara*, ego, intellect, reason, whatever we call it. Intellect, reason, ego all go together. And it is the knower, the doer, the assumer of everything

into itself. The agency in action is attributable to this particular principle of egoism and its associated intellect. This is how we have to explain the nature of the sense functions, the organs of action, the properties of *prakriti*, *sattva-rajās-tamas*, how they act upon us and how they are all appropriated into our own personality by a principle in us called ego: *kartritva bhavana*.

Spaṣṭa śabdādi yukteṣu bhauti katva mati sphuṭam, akṣā dāvapi tat sāstra yukibhyām avadhāryatām (17). We know all the objects of the world are actually physical in their nature. There is no need to argue on this matter. How do we know that objects are material? We can touch them, see them, taste them, smell them, and the like. They are solid substances. That the world is made up of physical matter is something obvious. But how do we know that the sense organs are also made up of the same category of materiality?

As it was mentioned, we cannot actually perceive the materiality of the sense organs because here, in the case of the senses of knowledge at least, the materiality is of a *sattvic* nature – rarefied matter. Rarefied matter is *sattva*, distracted matter is *rajas*, and stable, fixed matter is *tamas*. Because of their internality and the constituency being totally inside, we are unable to know that they exist at all. But by inference, we can know that they do exist because if there is no correspondence between the sense of perception (sense of seeing) with colour or light, light would not be seen. Inasmuch as there is a possibility of coming in contact with the light, it is necessary to infer that there is something

in us which is corresponding in frequency to the principle of light in our own selves.

So is the case with hearing. We cannot hear every kind of sound. Only a particular frequency of sound can be heard by the eardrums. Similarly, taste – our tongue cannot feel every kind of taste. We are placed in a particular frequency level of the world. High frequency actions cannot be contacted, and lower frequency actions also cannot be contacted. Neither can we see heaven, nor can we see hell. We can see only the earth, because heaven is a high-frequency existence. It is beyond the level of the frequency of our mind and intellect. And we don't see hell, because we are superior to it. We see only the middle portion, which is corresponding to the frequency of the objects of the world, the world as a whole. By inference we can conclude that the senses of knowledge and the mind also are constituted of a similar material substance, because similars attract similars; dissimilars repel. The fact of there being such a thing called sensory perception should prove that the senses are also made up of the same categories as the objects themselves. By inference we can know it.

Ekādaśen driyair yuktyā śāstreṇā pyava gamyate, yāvat kiṃcit bhavet idam śabdo ditam jagat (18). It was mentioned that Sage Uddalaka declared that all this was Pure Being alone. *Idam* – all this; what do we mean by all this? The word 'this' is explained in this eighteenth verse. Whatever is cognisable by the senses of knowledge, whatever is contactable through the five organs of action, whatever is conceivable by the mind, whatever can be known through scripture or instruction from a teacher – all

this put together, this whole universe of perception and knowledge is called *idam* – this. The entire universe of cognition, perception and action – *nama, rupa, kriya, prapancha* – name, form, action, world, everything, whatever is conceivable, contactable, measurable or worth dealing with in any way whatsoever, is included within this vast inclusiveness, the whole world of *jagat*; and the term used to demonstrate this vast universe is *idam*. This wonderful thing, this whole thing that we see and we can conceive is Pure Existence. This is the instruction of Uddalaka to Svetaketu, the meaning of which is being studied further in the following verses.

Discourse 8

CHAPTER 2: PANCHA MAHABHUTA VIVEKA – DISCRIMINATION OF THE ELEMENTS, VERSES 19-34

This second chapter and also the following one, the third, have two different purposes. The second chapter analyses the nature of universal intelligence as distinguishable from the five elements which constitute the whole universe – earth, water, fire, air, ether. Towards that end, we are moving through this long introduction commencing with the definition of Ultimate Existence as Pure Being: One alone, without a second – Being, and not non-being. From this, certain controversial ideas arise which the author also takes into consideration, especially in relation to those doctrines which consider non-existence as the beginning of things, and not Existence as the beginning of things.

Nothingness is the original condition of all things. *Shunyata* is the Sanskrit word for it. Nil, zero, vacuum, nothingness is the original state of things. All the world will be reduced to a vacuum when dissolution takes place, or when the effects are resolved into their causes. The idea behind this is that the world is as much a vacuum as its cause is. The Madhyamika doctrine, which is a section of Buddhist philosophy, emphasises this aspect of the original nothingness of all things and, incidentally, also the nothingness of everything that is apparently visible to the eyes. This question is taken up by the author of the Panchadasi, with which we proceed.

Itaṁ sarvaṁ purā sṛṣṭer-edam-evā-dvitīyakam, sad-ev-āsīn-nāma-rūpe, nāstām-ity-āruṇer-vacaḥ (19). Aruni, which is the name of Uddalaka, the teacher of Svetaketu in the sixth chapter of the Chhandogya Upanishad, says that in the beginning, all this was Existence, pure and simple: One alone, without a second. Sad-ev-āsīn: Existence alone was. Nāma-rūpe, nāstām: The names and the forms of the world did not exist. The whole world of perception is constituted of name, form and action. Inasmuch as names and forms could not be there in the origin of things because names and forms were created later on in terms of the manifestation of space and time – names and forms cannot be there unless there is space and time; and in Pure Existence, space-time cannot be there – therefore, it is concluded that there were no names and no forms whatsoever, no categorisation into particulars in the original state of Being, which was One alone, without a second. It has no internal differentiation, external variety or any kind of contact with anything.

There are different kinds of variety or separateness which all will be denied in the nature of the Ultimate Being. We know there are things called difference in this world. A branch of a tree is different from another branch of a tree. Within the tree itself, there is internal difference. One branch is not like another branch; one twig is not like another twig. Even one leaf is not like another leaf. There is also internal difference in our body. The hand is different from the legs. The legs are different from the nose, and so on. This difference that is observed within the body of a single entity is called *svagata bheda*. *Svagata* means internal

variety, as is the case with the differences we see among the branches of a tree.

Vṛkṣasya svagato bhedaḥ patra puṣpa phalādi-bhiḥ, vṛkṣān tarāt sajātīyo vijātīyaś-śilāditaḥ (20). A leaf is different from a flower. A flower is different from a fruit, etc., in the tree. This is a difference that is internal to the organism of the tree. But one tree is different from another tree. This is not internal difference, but external difference. Hands may be different from the feet of the same person, but one person is different from another person. This is called *vijatiya bheda*, external differentiation. *Svagata bheda* is internal differentiation, as among the limbs of a body; *vijatiya bheda* is differentiation between contraries, totally different things, as between one tree and another tree, though of the same species. One person is different from another person, notwithstanding the fact that all persons are of the same species.

But there can be difference of variety in species also. A tree is different from a stone. Here, difference is among the species itself. Firstly it was *svagata bheda*, internal differentiation within oneself. Secondly it is external differentiation among the same species. Thirdly, it is differentiation among different species, like tree and stone. So there are three kinds of difference which we can imagine in our minds.

But none of these differences can apply to Pure Existence. Pure Being is indivisible in its nature. The indivisibility of its character prevents any kind of internal differentiation within itself. It has no limbs. We cannot say that one part of Existence is different from another part of

Existence as one limb is different from another limb of the body. So internal differentiation is not possible in Existence.

External differentiation also is not possible, such as itself being different from another of its own species, because there is no species equal to Existence. It is unique by itself. Hence, the external type of differentiation also does not apply. The third variety, which is the difference of variety in species, also does not apply to Pure Being because while there can be a stone outside the tree, there cannot be anything outside the Pure Being – externality not there being. The three kinds of difference are denied in Pure Being; thus the three kinds of difference are negated in Pure Being.

Tathā sad-vastuno bheda trayam prāptam nivāryate, aikyā vadhāraṇa dvaita prati śedhai sribhiḥ kramāt (21). We have refuted the possibility of there being any kind of difference within or without Pure Existence. Why? Aikyā vadhāraṇa dvaita prati śedhai sribhiḥ kramāt: One, alone, without a second. These three terms, *ekam*, *eva*, *advaita*, deny three kinds of difference. ‘One alone’, *ekam*, refutes the possibility of internal variety. ‘Alone’ refutes the possibility of external differentiation. *Advaita*, ‘secondless’, refutes the third possibility, which is difference from another species. The one sentence refutes three kinds of difference. Aikyā vadhāraṇa dvaita: “One alone without a second.” Thus is the instruction of the great Sage Uddalaka to his disciple Svetaketu, as we have it elaborately described in the sixth chapter of the Chhandogya Upanishad.

Sato nāva yavāś śaṅkyās tadamśasyā nirūpaṇāt, nāmarūe na tasyāmśau tayo radyā pyanud bhavāt (22). We should not even dream that there can be limbs inside Existence because even limbs must exist and, therefore, there cannot be a differentiation in Existence itself, as if there are parts of Existence. We cannot doubt that perhaps there are varieties or differentiations within Pure Existence – tadamśasyā nirūpaṇāt – because we cannot conceive fraction, divisibility, part, segmentation, in indivisibility.

Nāmarūe na tasyāmśau: Name and form, the variety of creation, cannot be regarded as part of Existence because they did not exist prior to creation. Tayo radyā pyanud bhavāt: They have not started; they have not even originated to be. Therefore, names and forms which constitute the substance of this world cannot be associated with this Universal Existence in any manner whatsoever and should not make us feel that perhaps the names and the forms and the variety of this creation may introduce a kind of difference. Such a thing is not possible.

Nāmarūpo dvhava syaiva sṛṣṭi tvāt sṛṣṭitaḥ purā, na tayo rudbhavas tasmāt niramśam sad yathā viyat (23). Creation is nothing but the manifestation of name and form. When designation, epithet, and concretised presentations of forms arise, we begin to feel that creation has started. And creation is nothing but variety, which is essentially form and designation. But such a thing could not be there prior to creation. Hence, we should not associate the differentiating characters of name and form with Existence, which was there even prior to the commencement of creation. Na tayo rudbhavas: There was

no origin of names and forms then. Therefore, what do we conclude?

Niraṁśaṁ sad yathā viyat: As space is divisionless and it is homogeneously spread out, so Pure Existence is homogeneous and undivided in its nature – niraṁśaṁ: without any kind of part within itself.

Sadantaraṁ sajātīyaṁ na vailakṣaṇya varjanāt, nāma rūpo pādhi bhedaṁ vinā naiva sato bhidā (24). If there is some Existence second to that Existence – another Existence different from the Existence we are considering – then we can say that there is variety in the same species. But such a thing is not possible, as we have already noted – na vailakṣaṇya varjanāt – because specification of Existence as constituting something other than itself is not possible. There cannot be any kind of difference of one Existence from another Existence since two Existences cannot be there, because even the difference imagined between two Existences so-called has to be existing. The imagined difference between two Existences should be existing; therefore, Existence is uniform.

Nāma rūpo pādhi bhedaṁ vinā naiva sato bhidā. The differentiations that we are thinking of in our mind are only in terms of name and form. We are repeating it again and again. Because of the fact that names and forms could not be there prior to creation, no difference of any kind can be imagined in Pure Existence.

Vijātīya masattattu no khalva stīti gamyate, nāsyātaḥ prati yogitvaṁ vijātīyāt bhidā kutaḥ (25). Anything that is other than Existence is non-existence; therefore, it is a non-entity. We cannot imagine that something can be there

outside Existence, because that which is imagined to be outside Existence is other than Existence, equivalent to non-existence. So we should not bother about anything external to Existence as it is only affirming non-entity, which has no sense at all.

Nāsyātaḥ prati yogitvaṁ: There is no opposition to Pure Existence. Contrary to Existence, nothing can be; opposed to Existence, nothing can be; and second to Existence, nothing can be. Vijātiyāt bhidā kutaḥ: What to talk of the difference between Existence and something other than Existence? That is, three types of difference are denied here in respect of Pure Being.

Ekamevā dvitīyaṁ sat siddha matra tu kecana, vihvalā asadevedaṁ purā sīdityā varṇayan (26). People cannot conceive of Pure Existence because the mind always objectifies whatever it thinks. Even after hearing a thousand times that Existence cannot be divided, that it has always to be divisionless, the conscious mind, which always imagines its contents as something standing outside, brings into force the argument that Existence is divided between the subject and the object, between the perceiver and the perceived, or that it is a content of somebody's awareness.

Pure Existence is equal to non-existence. This is what the German philosopher Hegel said. To say that Existence alone is, is another way of saying that non-existence alone is, because his idea is that we cannot conceive Existence in the mind except as an object or a content of itself. Anything that we think, even when we assert existence, is a part of our thinking process. But if we say it is a part of the thinking process, it becomes divided between the subject

and the object. Then it ceases to be universal. The moment we say it is not an object at all – it is not a content of mind – it becomes a featureless, meaningless, a non-entity, as it were, because of its not being a content of anybody's awareness. This is a peculiar argument that arises due to inexperience. Intellectual philosophy is not enough. We must have direct experience of this truth by intuition, which Hegel did not have.

So something like this is also the argument of the nihilist philosophers who say that the relativity of things, the factor of one thing hanging on another thing, denies the substance of anything. Everything in the world is conditioned by everything else; nothing is independent by itself. The existence of one thing is possible on account of the existence of something else. If that is the case, nothing is absolutely existing; therefore, there is no such thing as Absolute Existence. What finally exists? Zero, nil, vacuum – that is Ultimate Reality. This is one kind of argument.

Magnasy-ābdhau yathā-kṣāṇi vihvalāni tathāsyā dhīḥ, akhaṇḍaika rasam śrutvā niṣpracārā bibhetyataḥ (27). The author says that as a person drowned in deep waters cannot open his eyes and see anything, a person whose mind is expected to drown itself in the ocean of Existence closes his eyes and begins to see darkness in front of him, rather than Pure Existence. The waters in which we are drowned cannot be seen with our eyes because we have closed our eyes, because we are inside. So people who try to conceive Pure Existence with their understanding suddenly close the eyes of their consciousness and imagine that it is like darkness – as a closed eye inside the waters may think that

there is nothing inside, while it is filled with water. *Akhandaikarasa* is the original nature of things – undivided essence. *Akhanda* is undivided; *ikarasa* is pure essence. Undivided pure essence is the nature of Ultimate Existence.

By hearing this, the mind is baffled. It is unable to contain this thought. How is it possible to expect the mind which is a located, cognising entity, to comprehend within itself that which is everywhere and inclusive of even itself? The mind is included even within the principle of Existence; therefore, the mind cannot conceive it. This is the reason why the baffling of the intellect takes place and we begin to feel that Existence is like non-existence.

Gaudapada Acharya in his *Mandukyakarika* says if we put children in an empty space and nobody is there in front of them, they will cry. They are afraid. If we place a child in the wilderness where there is nobody to be seen and there is nothing outside, it will start crying. It is crying not because it is afraid of something that is there. It is afraid because there is nothing there. It is the fear of non-entity, rather than the fear of entities.

Gaudapada Acharya, the great Guru of Sankaracharya, says *gauddācāryā nirvikalpe samādhā vanya yoginām, sākāra brahma niṣṭhānām atyantam bhaya mūcire* (28). When we enter into *nirvikalpa samadhi*, or abstract meditation where the mind itself is dissolved in the equilibrium of pure awareness, it sees nothing in front of it, and gets frightened. There is agitation of the consciousness in the same way as the child is agitated because it can see nothing in front of it. The fear arises on account of there being no object in front, not because of the presence of

something. Usually, fear arises on account of the presence of something outside. This is a peculiar kind of fear arising out of there being nothing at all. Such a kind of predicament of there being nothing outside Pure Existence is the reason why baffled minds imagine that non-existence is the origin of things, instead of Pure Existence: *sākāra brahma niṣṭhānām atyantam bhaya mūcire.*

This yoga which Gaudapada Acharya mentions is called *asparsa* yoga. It is a yoga, or union, of no union. Yoga is contact; *asparsa* is non-contact. It is the contact of no contact – if we do not come in contact with Brahman and yet we come in contact with it in some way. Generally contact is of one thing with another thing; but here, consciousness which is contacting Brahman is not something outside Brahman; therefore, we cannot say consciousness is contacting Brahman. It is the Self contacting itself. It is, therefore, a non-contactual contact. Hence, it is called *asparsa* yoga – wherein placed, the mind is frightened. It cannot anymore conceive such a state, and it cannot stand there for more than a minute.

Asparśa yogo nāmaiṣa durdarśas-sarva-yogibhiḥ, yogino bibhyati hy-asmād-abhaye bhata darśinaḥ (29). This is very difficult to attain. Ordinary so-called yogis cannot attain that state of total immersion in utter Universality where the mind also gets dissolved. Ordinary yogis cannot attain to that state: *durdarśas-sarva-yogibhiḥ. Yogino bibhyati hy-asmād:* Even yogis are frightened even to hear of this transcendent state. *Abhaye bhata darśinaḥ:* because they see fear where there is really no cause for fear.

Bhagavat pūjya pādāśca śuśka tarka paṭūnamūn, āhur mādhyamikān bhrāntān acintye'smin sadātmani (30). Bhagavadpada Acharya is Acharya Sankara. He, in his commentaries, in his writings, refers to these arguments which are bereft of substance – empty quibbling of the Madhyamikas and the relativists who begin to affirm the existence of non-existence. They do not know what they are speaking about; and this happens to them because of the incomprehensibility of the Absolute, the unthinkability of Universality.

Anādṛtya śrutim maurkhyād-ime bauddhā tamasvinaḥ, āpedire nirāt matvam anumānaika cakṣuṣaḥ (31). One of the nihilist arguments is that the Self does not exist; there is no such thing as Self-consciousness. This assertion is totally contrary to scriptural arguments such as in the Vedas, the Upanishads and the Bhagavad Gita. They imagine that they know everything. By pure argument and the force of logical analysis of the relativity of things, they come to an unfounded conclusion that ultimately not only is there nothing in the universe, there is not even the thinker – not even the person who affirms that there is nothing.

The feasibility of this argument is very clear: the doubter denies and doubts himself. The negation of a thing is also negated. First of all, it is negated. Existence is negated. It is converted into non-existence: only non-existence was. Now inasmuch as non-existence was, the person who makes that statement also is non-existent, which means to say that the argument fails. So there is a self-contradiction in the very statement that non-existence was, instead of Pure Existence was. This is the fate of people

who rely purely on dry logic without having internal experience.

Śūnyam-āsīd iti brūṣe sadyogaṁ vā sadātamatām, śūnyasya na tu tadyuktam ubhayaṁ vyāha-tatvataḥ (32). When you say that nothingness is, do you mean to say that nothingness is associated with Existence, or nothingness is independently existing? There are only two possibilities. The so-called nothingness that you are affirming has either to be associated with Existence, or it is by itself Existence. Now you cannot associate non-existence with Existence, because they are contraries. As light and darkness cannot be brought together, Existence and non-existence cannot come together. Therefore, the possibility of the association of non-existence with Existence is ruled out.

Now you may say that non-existence exists. If that is the case, what is your great argument? You were just saying that non-existence exists. And we are telling you the same thing: there was Existence, and you may call it by any name you like. But you cannot define it as some particular thing like non-existence, because Existence is a generality of foundation for anything that you can talk of, think of or imagine in the mind and, therefore, to say that non-existence exists is not to introduce a duality between non-existence and Existence; actually you are refuting your own argument and denying the meaning of non-existence. Virtually you are falling on Pure Existence only.

Na yuktas tamasā sūrya nāpi cāsau tamomayaḥ, sacchūnyayor-virodhi tvāt śūnyam āsīt-kathaṁ vada (33). As sunlight cannot be associated with the darkness of night, you cannot associate Existence with non-existence. The sun

is not either associated with darkness, nor is he himself darkness. In a similar manner, there is such a contradiction between light and darkness. The same is the case with the contradiction between non-existence and Existence. How on earth could you imagine the association of non-existence with Existence, or assert the existence of non-existence as different from Existence? It is virtually affirming the very same position that we have been maintaining, that Existence alone was, which the great Uddalaka proclaimed many, many years back.

Viyadāder nāmarūpe māyayā suvikalpīte, śūnyasya nāmarūpe ca tathā cet jīvyatām ciraṃ (34). The nihilists may say that universally spread-out objects like space appear to be visible and perceptible on account of the illusion of there being name and form for them. We see space, for instance; we can know there is space there. It has not really got name and form, but we assume some sort of name and form in it as extendedness, depth, infinity, and so on. It is pure illusion that has been foisted upon an otherwise non-existent infinity or extension which is space. And if you say the *siddhāntin* speaks to the opponent, if you say that even the categorisation of non-existence as something different from Existence is due to the association of descriptive characters of non-existence, then we are agreeable to your argument. We will remove the descriptive characters of name and form from non-existence and we will have only Existence afterwards.

So any way, in any circumstance, with any argument whatsoever, wherever you go, you are cornered into the acceptance of the fact that Ultimate Reality is Pure Being,

and the great statement of Uddalaka stands valid forever and ever. Pure Being is the only reality.

Discourse 9

CHAPTER 2: PANCHA MAHABHUTA VIVEKA – DISCRIMINATION OF THE ELEMENTS, VERSES 33-52

The relationship between Existence and non-existence was held to be impossible. *Na yuktas tamasā sūrya nāpi cāsau tamomayah, sac-chūnyayor-virodhi tvāt śūnyam āsīt-katham vada* (33). The sun is neither associated with darkness, nor is he himself an embodiment of darkness. In such a case, how would it be possible for anyone to say that there was such a thing called non-existence? How could it be meaningful to assert that, once upon a time, there was non-existence? Non-existence cannot be conceived. The moment it becomes conceived, it becomes existence. If it cannot be conceived, it is not there. So the affirmation of a thing which is contrary to common sense and the principles of logic should not be admitted into the field of a reasonable way of understanding the great statement of the Upanishad: One alone, without a second, was.

Viyadāder nāmarūpe māyayā suvikalpīte, śūnyasya nāmarūpe ca tathā cet jīvyatām ciram (34). It may be argued that things like space appear to be perceptible on account of association with names and forms falsely foisted upon space – such as dimension, colour, depth, etc. There is no measurable dimension of space; also, no depth is conceivable, and it has no colour. In spite of its being of this nature, commonsense perception seems to hold the view that there are these characteristics in space. They are falsely assumed. If non-existence also is conceived in a similar manner and its untenability is due to association of

negative characters, then we ask you to remove those negative characters; what remains is the positive character of non-existence. Minus 'non', only 'existence' remains.

Sao'pi nāma rūpe dve kalpite cet tadā vada, kutreti niradhiṣ ṭhāno na bhramaḥ kvatcit ikṣyate (35). Even the concept of existence is sometimes objectified. For instance, when we say, "The world exists," we forget that we are also a part of the world and, therefore, we cannot make a statement like that. Yet, we assume a sort of subjectivity of consciousness in our own selves. We feel that we are the perceivers of something which is not our own selves, and which we call the world. This is, again, an instance of foisting characteristics of externality onto a thing which is not really external. The world is not an external object. It is not outside us. It is not outside us, and yet we see it outside. This is a mistake that we commit. It is an error in the very structure of perception.

In a similar manner, if we say that non-existence has been conceived properly, we ask the question again, "Where does non-existence exist?" Which is the *adishthana* or the substratum of non-existence? It must exist somewhere. Even non-existence, in order that it may have any significance, must exist. If it exists, it is no more non-existence. So the argument of the nihilist is refuted.

Sadāsī diti śabdārtha bhede vai guṇya māpatet, abhede punarukti syāt maivam loke tathekṣaṇāt (36). The statement of Uddalaka in the Upanishad is, "Existence alone was": sad eva asi. Now the objector raises a question. "Why do you say, 'Existence was', as if it is not, now?"

What is the purpose of the teacher making this statement in this manner, as if it was there once upon a time?

To this, the answer is: It is only a metaphorical way of expressing a fact which requires to be properly understood by the mind of an ordinary human being. The objection is that 'existence' and the verb following it, *asi*, or 'was', are to be separated as two different connotations; then there would be duality. And if we say that the verb is identical with existence, it would be tautological. It is like saying, "What is, is 'is'"; or "What was, was 'was'." What was, was; what is, is. This is called a tautological argument. So we are involved in a repetitious way of describing a thing in a way which the word 'sentence' seems to connote – namely, *sat asi*. *Asi* is a Sanskrit word. It is the past tense of *asti*, 'exists'. Existence existed. It seems to be the meaning. We should not make statements like that because nobody says, "Existence existed." That is a repetitious way of making a statement. That is called tautological. So either it is a tautology or it is characterised by duality. The word '*asi*', or 'existed', should not be there.

The answer is that every sentence requires a verb. We cannot merely make a statement with one word: existence. The teacher cannot convey any sense to the student by saying, "My dear boy, existence." A sentence has to be uttered, and whenever a sentence is formed, there is a subject and a predicate. There is a noun and a verb; otherwise, the sentence does not convey any sense. So to create meaning in the statement that the Guru makes, the verb is used. It is not intended to create a duality, nor is it intended to be tautological, but it is only a metaphorical

way of expressing a sentence which cannot be grammatically expressed in any other manner.

For instance, when we say, "The deed is done; the speech is spoken; the burden is borne," statements like this are not to be considered as tautological. "The deed is done." Do we not say that? It has a meaning of its own. "The deed is done," means the deed has been executed. "The speech is spoken," and "The burden is borne." The great teacher Uddalaka has employed that same means of expression when he said "Existence alone was" as is employed in these common expressions such as "The deed is done", etc.,

The idea of 'was', or past tense, is to take into consideration the standpoint of the student because students like us are likely to feel that the world has been created, and it is filled with names and forms that have an origin. And before the origin of names and forms in the form of this world, there were no names and forms. What was there then? Pure Existence was. It does not follow that Existence is not now. It is even now, but from our standpoint of an acceptance of there being such a thing called creation in terms of name and form, it is to satisfy our curiosity and sentiment that statements of this kind are made: "Existence was." Existence was, in the sense that there was only existence, minus association with name and form as they appear to be now in the form of the world of perception. So for our elucidation and instruction such statements are made; but they are not to be taken literally. Any illustration should not be stretched beyond limits.

The superimposition of the world over Brahman has taken place. It is said that as the snake is superimposed on

the rope, the world is superimposed on Brahman. This analogy is only intended to convey the act of superimposition, but it does not mean that the world is long like a snake or curved like a rope, and so on. That is called an extension of illustration beyond the permissible limit.

In a similar manner, we have to understand the intention of the author when he says that Existence was. The spirit of the argument is more important than the letter. We should not linguistically, grammatically construe the meaning of that sentence and say it is tautological, or it implies duality, and also Existence could not be a past tense, it should be universal, and so on. It is correct, but the student cannot understand it. The student's point of view is more important than the teacher's point of view in educational policy.

Kartavyam kurute vakyam brute dharyasya dharamam, ityadi vasana vistam pratyah satsadi tiranam (37). As we say "the deed is done," etc., so it was said by Uddalaka, "Existence was, and Existence alone was" because there was no time at that time. During creation, there was no time. Time is an evolute. Time is something that proceeded later on as an effect. In Pure Existence, prior to the manifestation of name and form, there was no time. The idea that *pura*, once upon a time, in ancient days, God alone was, Existence alone was – statements of this kind imply the timelessness of God, the non-temporality of Existence.

Kalabhave pure tyuktih kala vasanaya yutam, shishyam pratyeva tenatra divityam nahi samkyate (38). When we say, "Originally, God only was," the term 'originally' means

beyond time. For the elucidation of the student who is not able to understand anything except in terms of visible objects, creation, name and form, etc., such statements are made; so please understand the spirit in which it is said and do not take it literally.

All argument, all questioning is on a dualistic basis. We cannot have a non-dualistic question or a non-dualistic answer. *Codyaṃ vā parihāro vā kriyatām dvaita bhāṣayā, advaita bhāṣayā codyaṃ nāsti nāpi taduttaram* (39). *Chodyam* is the question. *Parihara* is the answer. We raise questions in the language of duality because questions are raised in the form of sentences. Sentences are divided into subject and predicate. So the very question implies duality in a grammatical proposition, and the answer also has to be given in a sentence, in a similar manner. So any kind of question, whether philosophical, metaphysical or religious, is based on the concept of duality on account of the fact that expression is not possible unless consciousness is rooted in duality. So is the case with the answer. But in pure indivisibility, no question arises and no answer is necessary.

In the beginning, there was a total equilibrium of forces. This is what the Nasadiya Sukta of the Veda tells us, which is quoted here in the fortieth verse. *Tadā stimita gambhīraṃ na tejo na tamastatam, anākhyā manabhi vyaktaṃ sat kiñcit avaśiṣyate* (40). Originally, what was there? It was pure stability, profundity, stillness, absence of any kind of movement, no light, no darkness. We cannot know what was there. It is impossible to describe, impossible to conceive. There was Pure Being as the potential of future creation.

The Nasadiya Sukta of the Vedas says: nāsādāsī`nnosadāsitta`dānī (1). There was neither existence nor non-existence, because there was nobody to conceive the factor of existence or non-existence. Nobody was there to say that existence was. Nobody was there to say that nothing was. Therefore, in the absence of any kind of awareness of there being either this or that, it could not have been described in any other manner except as neither existence nor non-existence. Pure Being, as such, was.

Nanu bhūmyā dikarṁ mā bhūt paramāṇ vanta nāśataḥ, katharṁ te viyato'sattvarṁ buddhimā rohatīti cet (41). The question is, we can imagine the subtlety to which all physical objects like elements can be reduced. They can be reduced to such subtlety that they may be not there at all, for all practical purposes. They get reduced to powder, dust, atoms, forces, so that the gross elements are not there. So we can conceive such a state of affairs where the visible physical objects, such as the five elements, become invisible to the senses.

Can it be said that space is also of the same nature? How could we say that space is an inconceivable object? How do we conceive space? Does space exist, or does it not exist? The existence of space has been accepted on account of its being visible to the eyes and our experiencing spatiality, or room, around us. There is a consciousness of room around us, accommodation; therefore, we feel that there is space. Or because of the fact that we can see also some greater distance apart from us, we feel that there is space. It is actually bereft of any kind of concreteness or solidity.

Atyantam nirjagad vyoma yathā te buddhi māśritam, tathaiva sannirākāśam kuto nāśrayate matim (42). The question was raised as to how Pure Existence could be conceived in the mind. It is conceived in the same way as space is conceived. Though space is not an object of perception and yet it is considered as an object of perception by the senses, Pure Existence is not an object of perception and yet it can be conceived in such a manner as to include the perceiving consciousness also, and yet remain as a temporally conceivable object – as space is in front of the sense organs.

Nirjagad vyoma dr̥ṣṭam cet prakāśa tasmā vinā, kva dr̥ṣṭam kinca te pakṣe na pratyakṣam viyat khalu (43). All these arguments are connected with the nihilists. We are going on arguing over the same point again and again. They all pinpoint the question of the nihilist asserting that there is such a thing called non-existence, and Advaitins want to refute the position because the question of non-existence does not arise. So in connection with that, a further argument is raised.

The empty space which is supposed to be a perceptible object is really not a perceptible object. It appears to be perceptible on account of light and darkness. If there is no association of space with light and darkness, there would also be no perceptibility of space. So the concept that space can be conceived or perceived is not true. In a similar manner, we can say that non-existence is also not a conceivable or perceivable concept. It is impossible to have any notion of non-existence, either as a perceptible object

or as a conceivable one. Pure Existence is uncontaminated by the notions of space, time and object.

Sadvastu śuddhan tvasamābhiḥ niścittair anubhūyate, tūṣṇīm stitau na śūnyatvaṃ śūnya buddheśca varjanāt (44). When we are calm and quiet in our own selves, withdrawn inward, without any kind of distraction or disturbance in our mind, we are fully contented and perfectly happy. When we are seated in that calm and quiet mood in our own room, without any disturbance from outside, we feel a sense of purity of existence in us. If we sit calm and quiet in a particular posture for a long time – seated in an *asana* or a meditation pose for some time, half an hour, one hour without moving the body, with the spine, neck and head erect in one column – we will feel that we are slowly beginning to expand our dimension into largeness greater than, wider than the body. We will even feel that we are something like a big mountain sitting there – a heavy weight, stable, unshakable – and we are pure being, uncontaminated with externality. Even in our own psychological state we can have some sense of Pure Existence, provided that we can purge our mind of desires and be able to sit alone for some time, free from anxieties of any kind, which are the characteristic of the mind. Tūṣṇīm stitau na śūnyatvaṃ śūnya buddheśca varjanāt: Pure non-existence cannot be conceived. Again we say the same thing.

Sad buddhi rapi cennāsti māstvasya sva prabhat vataḥ, nirmanaskatva sākṣi tvāt san mātraṃ sugamaṃ nṛṇām (45). Consciousness of Existence should not be construed in the sense of some intelligence or intellect conceiving the

object outside. It is not *buddhi* or our understanding that is asserting the existence of Existence, because Existence is Self-conscious: *sva prabhat*. All objects in the world require the intelligence of the perceiver or the understander in order that they may be known; but in the case of Existence, the perceiver is not necessary.

As a matter of fact, no perceiver can perceive Pure Existence. Who can perceive Existence? Not any individual, inasmuch as Existence includes all individuals. Then who is conscious of Existence? Existence itself is conscious of Existence. It is Pure Existence being conscious of itself. *Sat* becomes *chit*: *sva prabhat*. This is an experience that we too have, when we are free from anxieties, distractions of *rajas*, and we remain as pure witnesses in our deepest consciousness.

Mano jṛmbhaṇa rāhite yathā sākṣī nirākulaḥ, māyā jṛmbhaṇataḥ pūrvam sattathaiva nirākulam (46). The pure witness consciousness in us is seen to be stable, calm and contented within itself, provided that the mind does not expand itself into the region of its desires and anxieties. Free from desires and all the psychological impurities of the mind, the pure witnessing Consciousness will be in the state of contentment and never get disturbed by anything else.

In a similar manner, Pure Existence was uncontaminated by names and forms before the origin of *maya shakti*. *Maya* is the power of Ishvara. It is the cosmic *sattva* of *prakriti* which becomes the body, as it were, of Ishvara consciousness; and before the manifestation of *maya* took place – that is to say, before Brahman

consciousness got reflected through the pure *sattva* of *prakriti* – there was Existence, pure and simple, in the same way that before consciousness in the individual got reflected or identified with the *avidya*, it was very happy. We also can have a little inkling of Pure Existence if we exert a little bit to free our mind from thoughts of every kind and be true to our own selves. “To thine own self be true.”

Nistatvā kārya gamyāsyā śaktir māyā’gni śaktivat, na hi śaktiḥ kvacit kaiścit budhyate kāryataḥ purā (47). There is a power of God called *maya*, a *shakti*. It is difficult to understand what this *shakti* is. When we say that God has a power, a *maya shakti*, we are likely to imagine that *shakti* is different from the owner of that *shakti*. “God wields *maya*.” When we make statements of this kind, we are likely to wrongly assume that God is wielding something externally, like an instrument, like a fountain pen, like a weapon, etc. None of the illustrations hold good. *Shakti*, or the power of something, is inseparable from the thing in which *shakti* inheres. Na hi śaktiḥ kvacit kaiścit budhyate kāryataḥ purā.

We cannot know the power of a thing unless the power is manifest. For instance, there is a strong person. We cannot know the extent of the power of that person unless that power is manifest in action. So is the case with the *maya shakti*, or the great universal power of God, whose operations cannot be known unless they are actually revealed. By themselves, they are identical. Siva and Shakti are supposed to be androgynous, as it were – an inseparable, bipolar existence which is very much adumbrated in Tantra philosophy especially.

Na sadvastu sataḥ śaktiḥ na hi vahneḥ svaśaktitā, sadvilakṣaṇa tāyām tu śaketeḥ kiṁ tattva mucyatām (48). The power of Existence is not Existence itself, just as the power of a person is not the person itself; nor is it that the power is standing outside the person. We cannot keep the person here and the power of the person somewhere else; nor can we say that the power is the same as the person. When a strong man comes, we do not say that the strength is coming. We say the person is coming. The strength can come only when the person is there. The power, or strength, or *śakti*, is such an inscrutable association that it cannot be considered either as different from the owner of it or as identical with it. It is not the same as Existence: na sadvastu sataḥ śaktiḥ na hi vahneḥ svaśaktitā.

The heat of fire is not the same as fire, yet the heat of fire cannot be separated from fire. The heat of fire is not fire, and yet it is not separable from fire. Such is the case with the *maya* of Ishvara. It is not identical with Ishvara, and yet it is not separable from Ishvara. Sadvilakṣaṇa tāyām tu śaketeḥ kiṁ tattva mucyatām. In this inscrutable position in which we find ourselves in the definition of *maya*, or *śakti*, what are we supposed to do?

Śūnyatva miti cet śūnyaṁ māyā kārya mitīritam, na śūnyaṁ nāpi sadyādṛk tādṛkiva miheṣyatām (49). We may say that it is a non-existence. Power independent of the owner of the power is like *śunya* – non-existence. It cannot be said to be non-existent because it manifests itself. It acts. Its manifestations can be seen, as the power of a bulldozer can be seen when it moves. It can crush, it can

break, and so on. When it is not moving, its *shakti*, or power, is absorbed into itself.

Therefore, the power of a thing is not non-existent. It is not *shunya*. It is a kind of manifestation which can be best described as inherence. The colour of a flower is inherent in the flower. It is a characteristic of the flower which cannot be separated from the flower, and yet the flower is different from the colour. The flower is a substance in which the quality of colour inheres; and inherence being such a thing that it cannot be isolated from the thing in which it inheres, the inscrutability of inherence arises. *Maya* is, therefore, inscrutable power; it is neither existence nor non-existence, nor a combination of existence and non-existence: *sad-asad-vilakshana*. It is quite different from the concepts of both existence and non-existence.

Nāsadā sīnno sadāsīt tadānīm kiṃ tvabhūttamaḥ, sadyogā ttatmasaḥ sattvaṃ na svatasta nniṣe dhanāt (50). Again he is quoting that ancient text of the Rig Veda, the Nasadiya Sukta. “Neither existence was, nor non-existence was,” says the great mantra of the Veda – which is to say, indescribable was that state where the power of God remained unmanifest. Creation did not yet take place.

Nāsadā sīnno sadāsīt tadānīm kiṃ tvabhūttamaḥ: Darkness prevails. It is a kind of darkness which could not be perceived by anybody. In absence of any kind of distinguishability, we call it darkness. Sadyogā ttatmasaḥ sattvaṃ na svatasta nniṣe dhanāt: Even darkness must be existing. It is a condition which is neither existence nor non-existence. As light was not there to illuminate anything, we could not have defined that condition either

as existence or as non-existence, neither light nor darkness. This is the Nasadiya Sukta of the Veda.

The power of a thing, therefore, does not create duality. The strength of a person does not make a distinction between a person and the strength. The *maya shakti* of God does not create duality between Ishvara and *maya*. So many critics hold that *maya* is a dual principle, that the moment we introduce a system called *maya*, we are unnecessarily interfering with God's indivisibility, and it looks as if there is something outside God. There is no such thing. We are not introducing divisibility or duality in God when we say that there is such a thing called *maya shakti* in Ishvara. It is like saying that there is power in that man. When we say that there is power in that man, we are not introducing duality in the concept of the individuality of that person. It is a description of the power or the potentiality of that person, indistinguishable from the person himself.

Ata eva dvitīyataṁ śūnya vanna hi gaṇyate, na loke caitra tat shaktyor jīvitam likhyate pṛthak (51). When we want to pay salary to a person, we do not pay salary to the person and separately to his ability: so much for your ability, and so much for you. They are identical. The ability of a person manifest in work is what draws salary. Therefore, there is obvious identity of the ability of a person (or power of a person) with the person himself as is seen in drawing salary, etc.

Śaktyā dhikye jīvitam cet vardhate tatra vṛddhi kṛt, na śaktiḥ kiñ tu tat kāryam yuddha kṛsyā dikam tathā (52). We may say salary increases by the increase in ability. When the power of a person to execute work increases, salary also

increases. It does not mean that the power has increased. He has manifested the power in a larger degree when certain conditions arise. That is the reason why he draws more salary. His power is still there. He has not increased the power. One cannot increase the power of one's own self. It is a quantum that is equilibrated; but it is manifest fully or partially, as the case may be. So when we manifest it a little, it is capable of drawing very little income. When we fully manifest our power, we draw more salary.

Thus, power is not capable of division within itself, nor is it capable of division between itself and the person owning it. It is identical, notwithstanding the fact that we feel that power is a quality inherent in the substance in which it inheres. In the same way, we have to understand the relation between Ishvara and *maya*. *Maya* is not something that exists. *Maya* is a word that we use to explain the inscrutability of the manner in which God creates the world.

Discourse 10

CHAPTER 2: PANCHA MAHABHUTA VIVEKA – DISCRIMINATION OF THE ELEMENTS, VERSES 53-66

Sarvathā śakti mātrasya na pṛthak gaṇanā kvacit, śakti kāryam tu naivāṣṭi dvitīyam śaṅkyate kaṭham (53). The discussion was centring around the question of the relation of a substance to its quality – such as fire and its heat, a person and his ability, strength, etc. This verse tells us that the quality cannot be considered as independent of the substance, in the same way as the strength of a person cannot be considered as separate from the person, because strength or quality by itself does not effect any special activity, consequence, etc. Minus substance, the quality cannot produce any special effect.

If we separate the person from his ability, and the ability is made to stand independently by itself, it will not do anything. That ability is a vacuum; it is an abstraction. So *shakti*, power, ability, minus the substance in which it inheres, is a non-entity. It is also not a second principle. All these arguments through which we have passed in the previous discourse hinge upon the point that the quality of a substance is neither separable from the substance nor can it be identified with the substance. The strength of a person is not the same as the person. They are not identical, and yet they are not separable. Dvitīyam śaṅkyate kaṭham: the duality of the two – substance, and quality or property – cannot be doubted.

Now, a question arises in the fifty-fourth verse: Does *maya* work in the whole of Brahman, or only in a part of

Brahman? Brahman is universally present. Is *maya* also universally present? Or is there some part of Brahman where *maya* does not work?

Na kṛstna brahmā vṛttiḥ sā śaktiḥ kiṁ tveka deśa bhāk, ghaṭa śaktir yathā bhūmau snigdha mṛdyeva vartate (54). The author's view is that *maya* does not work in the whole of Brahman; it is only in certain aspects of Brahman that we can see *maya* operating. Eka deśa bhāk means 'located in some part, but not operable everywhere', just as the capacity of the earth to modify itself into a pot is not to be seen generally in every part of the earth. The potential for the earth to get transformed into a form called a pot is localised in the sense that it requires the assistance of a maker of the pot. Certain other factors are also necessary. The earth will not automatically rise into the shape of a pot. That is to say, the pot-ness of the earth is not a universal existence; otherwise, everywhere, wherever there is earth, pots will come up. There are certain locations, conditioning factors, where alone the pot can come up out of the earth. And generally, we cannot see the pot form coming up everywhere in physical existence.

In a similar manner, under conditions, *maya* operates. It does not mean that it is unconditionally operating everywhere in the whole of Brahman, the entirety of the Absolute. In the Purusha Sukta of the Veda it is mentioned that one fourth of the Absolute, as it were, is manifest as this creation. Pādo'sya sarvā bhūtāni tripādasti svayaṁ prabhaḥ, ityeka deśa vṛttitvaṁ māyayā vadati śrutiḥ (55). Metaphorically – not to be construed in a precise mathematical fashion – the Veda mantra, the Purusha

Sukta, says that a fraction, one fourth as it were, of the supreme Absolute is all this creation, and three-fourths is transcendent, untouched by *maya*, the creative process. Pādo'sya sarvā bhūtāni tripādasti svayaṁ prabhaḥ: Transcendent radiance is the uncontaminated Brahman, the Absolute, ranging above all creative process; and only one fourth is this whole cosmos.

If the whole of Brahman has become the world, assuming that such a thing has taken place – supposing that the *maya shakti* has pervaded the whole of Brahman, and the entirety of Brahman has become this world – then there would be no Brahman left beyond the world. If that is the case, there would be no such thing as the liberation of the spirit in Brahman, because there is no Brahman at all. It has all become the world. As milk that has become curd cannot become milk once again, the Brahman that has become the world would cease to be Brahman on account of its modification into the names and forms entirely, if we suppose that the whole thing has become the universe.

That doctrine which holds that the entirety of God has become the world is called pantheism. It is a defective doctrine which merges God with the creative process and does not accept another God, transcendent. There is no transcendence of God. There is only immanence of God for the pantheistic doctrine, which cannot be accepted on account of the fact that transcendence is always there and but for which, individuals involved in the creative process will not have an aspiration for God. Our aspiration for the Transcendent Reality is actually an indication of there being such a thing as a Transcendent Being. If such a thing

does not exist – if it is all immanence only, and all the parts of God are merged in the parts of creation, including our own selves – we will be like locked-up persons inside a prison, and there would be no consciousness of even freedom from the prison.

Pādo'sya sarvā bhūtāni tripādasti svayaṁ prabhaḥ, ityeka deśa vṛttitvaṁ māyayā vadati śrutiḥ. *Sruti* is a Veda; it means the Purusha Sukta, which affirms that only a fraction of Brahman should be regarded as involved in creation, not the entirety. In the Bhagavad Gita also, this is confirmed.

Viṣṭa bhyāham idam kṛtsnam ekāṁśena sthito jagat, iti kṛṣṇo'rju nāyāha jagata stveka deśatām (56). “I have enveloped this entire creation,” says the great Lord of the Bhagavad Gita, “and I am sustaining this entire cosmos by a fraction of Myself. I do not involve Myself entirely in the act of creation.” Even when we work, when we are very occupied with certain works – office work, industrial work, manufacturing work, etc. – we always remain something at the back of this work. We don't completely merge ourselves and then cease to be what we are, even if the work is very heavy. There is a transcendent element in us, to which we revert after the work is over. If we have merged ourselves in the work, there would be no personality in us; we would be only work. The entire personality would be nothing but the manifestation of work. There is a transcendent background to which we revert when the work is finished, though for the time being it appears that we are immersed in the work. We never get totally immersed in anything; we have a transcendent element in us always. So is the case with God.

In the Bhagavad Gita, Bhagavan Sri Krishna says that by a fraction of his power he is able to sustain the whole cosmos. Then Lord Krishna describes to Arjuna the fractional character of creation, even though it appears so large, so big.

Sa bhūmiṃ viśvato vṛtvā atyaṭiṣṭha daśāṅgulam, vikārāvartī cātrāsti śruti sūtra kṛtor vacaḥ (57). Again the Purusha Sukta is quoted here. Having enveloped the whole of creation, the entire earth, the whole world, the Supreme Being transcends creation by ten fingers' length. Even if it is by one inch, it is nevertheless transcendence. It is only to indicate that God is above the world and always maintains His Self-identity in spite of His being immanent in all parts of creation.

The word *dasangulam*, or 'ten fingers', is interpreted in many ways. The word 'ten' is a figure which exceeds numerology. There are no ten numbers; numbers are only nine. Ten is nothing but one and zero, so the number ten is indicative of a numberless state of being; and a numberless state of being is infinite being. So to say that God transcends the world by ten fingers is to say that He transcends the world infinitely and there is no end for His transcendence. Sa bhūmiṃ viśvato vṛtvā atyaṭiṣṭha daśāṅgulam.

The Brahma Sutra also corroborates this view when it says that there is something above all modifications. All these quotations from the Veda, the Bhagavad Gita and the Brahma Sutra are to suggest that the whole of Brahman is not involved in creation. *Maya* does not pervade the entirety of the Absolute. It is localised only in certain

conditioned parts of Brahman. The transcendence of Brahman is not affected. God remains transcendent in spite of the vastness of creation and the inscrutability of His power, *maya*.

Niramśe'pyamśa māropya kṛtsnemśe veti pṛcchataḥ, tad bhāṣayo ttaram brūte śrutiḥ śrotṛ hitaiṣiṇī (58). You may ask the question, "Can you divide God into two parts – three-fourths somewhere, one-fourth somewhere else – transcendence and immanence being two different aspects of God?" This difference is not a mathematical difference. It does not follow that you can actually divide God into two parts as the transcendent and the immanent. It is only an answer befitting the question itself.

The question itself implies the possibility of *maya shakti* being somewhere or not being somewhere. We have already assumed in our question the location of *maya*, or the fractional area that is supposed to be occupied by *maya*. When we have already assumed this kind of fractional consideration of the location of *maya*, we have also to give the answer accordingly. So we say it is only fractional, and not the whole of Brahman. Here, the question of the whole and the part should not be taken in the sense of measurement in geometry and arithmetic. Geometry and arithmetic do not apply to God because measurements of every kind and computations of every type refer to things which are in space and in time. Timeless and spaceless Existence cannot be geometrically measured or computed arithmetically. So it does not follow that there is a physically discernable part of God which is transcendent and some physically discernable part which is involved in

creation. Our questions and answers are in terms of the manner in which we express ourselves. It is a metaphorical way of speaking.

It is not factually true that there is division of God. It is indivisible Existence – in the same sense as some part of our mind is affected with a certain anxiety, etc., and yet we remain unaffected in certain other aspects of the mind, thereby indicating that we cannot split the mind into two parts. We have an integrated personality. We feel that we are one single whole, and yet many a time we feel that we are little finite fractions in the world of society and engagement. This is a logical distinction that we introduce into our mental operation, and it is not a mathematical distinction. Mathematical parts are different from logical parts. They are conceptually construed for the purpose of the understanding of the spirit involved in the situation. It is not to be understood literally. The fraction that is supposed to be of God manifested in the form of creation is a logical part, and not a mathematical part.

Sattattva māśritā śaktiḥ kalpayet sati vikriyāḥ, varṇā bhitti gatā bhittau citraṁ nānā vidhaṁ tathā (59). This *shakti*, the power of God, associating itself with Pure Existence, creates the variety as names and forms of this world in the same way as colours painted on a wall may present portrayals of pictures which are different from one another. Varieties of colours may look like varieties of forms on a canvas or a wall when a painting is done in that manner. In a similar way, this *shakti*, which acts like the colouring medium in terms of names and forms, works this

great variety of creation on a base – a canvas or a wall or a background – which is Pure Existence.

Maya also has to exist; otherwise, there would be no presentation of variety in the form of this creation. On the basis of Universal Existence which is Brahman, varieties in the form of this colourful creation are created by the *shakti* which is the power of God, which is neither to be identified with God nor considered as separable from God.

Ādya vikāra ākāśaḥ so'va kāśa svarū pavān, ākāśo'stīti sattattvam ākāśe'pyanu gacchati (60). What does *maya* create? In order that creation may be possible and conceivable, there should first of all be space and time. If there is no space and time, no creation is possible. Before conceiving the order of creation in terms of names and forms or in terms of the variety that is to be manifest, a background of the possibility of the manifestation of name and form has to be thought first.

The world cannot exist unless there is space and time, because what we call 'world', what we call 'creation', is nothing but extension and duration. Extension is space; duration is time. If there is no extension and there is no duration, there would be no existence of anything. All objects in the world, including our own bodies, are combinations of spatiality and temporality together with externality, characteristic of space itself. Hence, the origin of creation is nothing but the manifestation of space first.

Many philosophies and religions hold the view that God created the world out of nothing. It is another way of saying that there was a necessity to project an emptiness in the beginning of things. We may call it space if we like, because

space is something like emptiness. God could not manifest Himself as the world either by modifying Himself into creation or through the instrumentality of something other than Himself. There was the difficulty.

What is the material out of which God creates the world? There is no material external to Him. Nor could it be His own body. Will He rip His body and then manufacture the world out of it? We cannot conceive either of these possibilities. Therefore, religions which would prefer to defend the integrality of God even when accepting the possibility of creation hold that God created everything out of nothing.

Again we come to the point of nihilism. A kind of vacuum was there in the beginning. In the same sense as in dream, we first of all create a vacuous spatial and temporal condition in which we manifest names and forms by the projection of thought. God created the world in the same way, perhaps, as we create mental dreams.

The first creation, therefore, is spatiality. What is the quality of space? Accommodation, room, extension, the possibility of anything to exist – that is called *avakasha*. The quality of *akasha* is *avakasha*. Accommodation, room is the quality of space. This is the first evolute: *akasha*, space.

Ākāśo'stīti sattattvam ākāśe'pyanu gacchati. We say, "Space exists." When we make a statement like "Space exists," we understand that the spatiality of creation has also to be rooted in Existence, which is Brahman. Even the vacuous concept of space has to be rooted in Brahman, Pure Existence. If Brahman, which is Existence, is not to be associated with space, there would be no existence of space

– which is another way of saying that it is non-existence of space. So even to imagine a vacuum, an emptiness or a sheer extension like space, we have to associate that concept of spatiality with Existence. That is why we say, “Space exists.” The quality of space is, therefore, dual. It exists, and it is extended. Existence and extension are the two qualities of space.

Eka svabhāvaṃ sattattvam ākāśo dvi svathāvakaḥ, nāva kāśaḥ sati vyomni sa caiṣo’pi dadvayaṃ sthitam (61). Existence has only one quality – namely, Existence itself. Existence cannot have a quality other than existence. Therefore, unitary-ness is the nature of Existence. It has only one character: Eka svabhāvaṃ sattattvam. But space has two qualities: existence and spatiality.

Nāva kāśaḥ sati: Spatiality is not to be found in Brahman. Brahman is not extended like space, and is not measurable like the distance that we can see in space. Immeasurable is Brahman, whereas spatial extension is measurable by a foot ruler or a chain. That is the difference between space and Brahman Existence. Brahman is not measurable, while space is measurable. Vyomni sa caiṣo’pi dadvayaṃ sthitam: Oneness is the quality of Brahman; duality is the character of space – that is, existence and spatiality.

Yadvā prati dhvanir vyomno guṇo nāsau satī kṣyate, vyomni dvau sad dhvanī tena sadekam dviguṇam viyat (62). Reverberation of sound is also the quality of space. It can echo sounds. But no such echo is possible in Brahman, the Absolute, because extension in the form of spatiality is unthinkable in Brahman. Echo, sound production, reverberation, are not to be found in Existence, pure and

simple, while it can be seen in space. Existence and sound are both to be seen in space; but in Existence, no sound is there. Existence is one. Space is pure.

Yā śaktiḥ kalpayed vyoma sā sadvyomnora bhinnataṁ, āpādya dharma dhamitvaṁ vyatya yenāva kalpayet (63). *Maya* has a peculiar quality of distorting facts. It makes us feel that Truth is untruth, and untruth is Truth. A total distortion of fact is necessary in order that we may be forced to believe in the reality of the world. It has to convert us into fools first and brainwash us totally before we are forced to accept that there is such a thing called the world outside. What does it do?

That *shakti*, that power, that *maya* which has become responsible for the creation of space as extension, somehow or other creates in our mind an illusion that spatiality and Existence are inseparable. Do we in our perceptual process ever recognise that Existence is different from spatiality? We see spatiality extendedness, of course, in front of us. But do we believe that this cannot be the nature of Existence? We confirm every day in our lives that Existence is the same as space; space is the same as Existence. And what do we say? Space exists.

Here we commit a great mistake even linguistically speaking, because when we say, "Space exists," we consider 'space' as a noun, the subject of the sentence, and 'existence' as the predicate. We give a secondary importance to Existence, and a primary importance to space. Space exists, building exists, table exists, this exists, that exists. The form which is actually a subsequent effect of Existence is given primary importance, and the original cause which is

responsible for the manifestation of this form is given a secondary importance.

This is what *maya* does. It prevents us from recognising the fact that Existence is prior, and space is posterior. But what do we say? We always feel that Existence is posterior and the objects (space, etc.) are prior. So we give the importance of a substantive, or a noun, in a sentence to space, etc., and give the secondary importance of predicate to the Existence. Actually, Existence is the noun; space is the quality of Existence. But we make a confusion and reverse the order of cause and effect when we say, "Space exists." Space is not the noun; Existence is the noun. And Existence is not a quality of space; it is space that is the quality of Existence. So by reversing the order or precedence of cause and effect, *maya* creates the confusion in our heads.

Yenāva kalpayet: Topsy-turvy perception is the nature of human perception. That which is universal appears as an external thing; that which is a product, like individuality, looks like the subjective originality. We are late products; man came very late in evolution, and yet he thinks that he is primary, and he starts judging everything, even that which existed prior to him. *Dharma* and *dharmi* are substance and quality. The mix-up of issues in terms of substance and quality is taking place due to the operation of *maya*. Substance is Existence; quality is space. But in our statements, we always consider wrongly that space is substance and Existence is a quality. That is why we say that space exists. The sentence itself is erroneous in its construction. This is how *maya* works in us.

Sato vyomatva māpannaṃ vyomnaḥ sattām tu laukikāḥ, tārīkā ścāva gacchanti māyāya ucitaṃ hi tat (64). What has happened? After all, poor Existence has become space. It has been reduced to the vacuous condition of extension – while Brahman Consciousness, which is indivisible, cannot become vacuous, and it cannot become an extension.

Logicians like the Nyaya and the Vaishesika philosophers, thinking like ordinary children, caught up in this *maya* of the confusion of issues between substance and quality, assert that space is one of the ultimate categories of Existence. According to Nyaya philosophy or Vaishesika philosophy, there are nine realities: earth, water, fire, air, ether – the five elements – then time (they consider time also as an independent existence), extension (that is seven), mind (which is eight), soul (which is nine). These are the nine independent substances accepted to be ultimately independently real by themselves, according to the Nyaya and the Vaishesika philosophies.

Space also is considered as an Ultimate Reality. That is, they have mixed up between two issues. The Naiyayikas and the Vaishesikas, the logicians, wrongly think, like prattling children, that Existence is the quality of space, while actually Existence is not a quality of space. We should not say, “Space exists.” The sentence itself is wrongly construed. It is a work of *maya*.

Yadyathā vartate tasya tathātvaṃ bhāti mānataḥ, anyathātvaṃ bhraṇeti nyāyo’yaṃ sārva laukikaḥ (65). Right perception alone can give us a vision of Reality as it is in itself. But *maya* will not permit us to have right

perception. The processes of sensory perception, inference, and all logic based on the duality of concepts – all these are based on *maya* because they are based on certain assumptions which are unfounded, basically.

The externality of the world is taken for granted, while the world is not external, it is Universal Existence; and the perceiving consciousness is also considered as totally independent of the object that is perceived. This is the defect of modern science. This also is the work of *maya*. Neither does the consciousness perceive independently of the object of perception, because by assuming such a thing, we will not perceive anything outside at all, nor is it true that the world is external. It is total inclusiveness. So, how does *maya* work?

Right perception is impossible under ordinary conditions of sensory operation and intellectual activity. Only direct intuition independent of the senses and mind will give us an idea as to what truly exists. The senses, intellect, and argumentation based on intellectually construed logic can never give us an idea as to what truly exists. We are always blindfolded and move from place to place, walking in darkness, groping for a little grasp of Truth, and finding it nowhere in the world. Blind men are led by blind men in search of light. This is the analogy before us. All our search for Truth in this world is like a blind man groping in darkness for a little ray of light, which he will never find. This is how the *maya* works. Anyathātvam bhraṇeti nyāyo'yaṁ sārva laukikaḥ.

Thus, evaṁ śruti vicārāt prāg yathā yadvastu bhāsate, vicāreṇa viparyeti tatas taccintyatām viyat (66). We have

to thoroughly investigate into this situation, like a medical diagnosis. What has actually happened to us? How could it be that we make such a blunder in commonsense perception where we say that this body exists, I exist, etc.? Existence is considered as a predicate even in the case of our own individuality. Therefore, both in the case of the objective world of the five elements and in the case of the subjective world of the five sheaths, a thoroughgoing analysis is to be conducted in order to separate Pure Existence from the imagined externality, temporality and objectivity – which subject is taken up in the following verses.

Discourse 11

CHAPTER 2: PANCHA MAHABHUTA VIVEKA – DISCRIMINATION OF THE ELEMENTS, VERSES 60-77

The first manifestation of *maya* is space. Ādyo vikāra ākāśaḥ so'va kāśa svarū pavān, ākāśo'stīti sattattvam ākāśe'pyanu gacchati (60). He says, "Space exists, ether exists," by wrongly attributing to Existence the character of a quality of ether. Instead of saying, "Ether exists," it would be better to say, "Existence ethers." That is a better way: "Existence ethers," not "Ether exists."

Eka svabhāvaṃ sattattvam ākāśo dvi svathāvakaḥ, nāva kāśaḥ sati vyomni sa caiṣo'pi dadvayaṃ sthitam (61). There is only one quality in Existence, and that is existence only. There is nothing in Existence except existence. But space has the quality of existence plus spatiality. There is dimension. There is no dimension in Pure Existence. Dimension is a quality of space. So while Existence has only one character, space has two characters – that is to say, existence and dimension. Nāva kāśaḥ sati: There is no spatiality in Existence. Vyomni sa caiṣo'pi dadvayaṃ sthitam: Both these characters of existence and spatiality can be seen in sky, ether.

Yadvā prati dhvanir vyomno guṇo nāsau satī kṣyate, vyomni dvau sad dhvanī tena sadekaṃ dviguṇaṃ viyat (62). Apart from dimension, which is a quality of space, there is also the quality of reverberation of sound, which we can hear in space; but reverberation of sound is not a quality of Pure Existence. So, three qualities can be seen in space – existence, dimension and reverberation of sound –

whereas in Pure Existence, there is no dimension and no sound. Sadekaṁ Existence is one only. Dviguṇaṁ viyat: Double-characterised is space.

Yā śaktiḥ kalpayeḍ vyoma sā sadvyomnora bhinnataṁ, āpādyā dharma dhamitvaṁ vyatya yenāva kalpayet (63). We have studied this verse previously. *Maya* as a *śakti* of Ishvara, having created this dimension called space and having identified space with Existence, and making us feel that space exists, also creates an additional erroneous notion in our mind – namely, the attribution of quality to Existence and the substantive nature to space. We consider space as a substantive or a noun and Existence as a predicate or a quality. This happens when we utter a sentence like, “Space exists.” We should not say, “Space exists.” It is an error, philosophically speaking, in the very construing of the sentence, because Existence is not a predicate of space. It is prior to space. *Maya* distorts facts.

Sato vyomatva māpannaṁ vyomnaḥ sattāṁ tu laukikāḥ, tārnikā ścāva gacchanti māyāyā ucitaṁ hi tat (64). Great is the wonder in which *maya* distorts facts. Now logicians like the Naiyayikas and Vaishesikas consider space as an eternal reality, considering that it is an existence by itself. They regard space as Existence independently by itself by committing the same mistake that is made in a common sense by people when Existence is predicated to space, whereas, space is the subsequent evolute of Existence. We cannot give precedence to the effect and posterior importance to the cause. This is what happens by the working of *maya*.

Yadyathā vartate tasya tathātvaṁ bhāti mānataḥ, anyathātvaṁ bhraṇeti nyāyo’yaṁ sārva laukikāḥ (65).

Right perception is possible only by intuition, independent of sensory and mental cognition. Whatever is there should be known to be there as it is really there, not as it is not there. This is called right knowledge. *Yadyathā vartate tasya tathātvam bhāti*: We must know a thing in the state in which it is. It is necessary to know anything from the point of view of its own existence and not from the point of view of our mental activity. This is not possible in this world of sense perception, inasmuch as we have no other faculty of knowledge except the senses. We cannot enter into the substance of things independently by themselves, and knowledge of Reality is not possible as long as we think in terms of mind and sense organs. We are befooled by the distortion contrived by the sense organs.

Anyathātvam bhraṇeti nyāyo'yaṁ sārva laukikaḥ: An illusion is presented before our eyes by the sense organs which tell us firstly that things are outside us, and secondly that Existence is a quality of name and form. We have to bestow deep thought on the nature of this involvement of Existence in name and form and carefully distinguish Existence also from the involvement in all the five elements: ether air, fire, water, earth.

Evaṁ śruti vicārāt prāg yathā yadvastu bhāsate, vicāreṇa viparyeti tatas taccintyatām viyat (66). Please bestow deep thought on the nature of space with the help of scriptural statements like the Upanishads and the Brahma Sutras, and by exercising your own reason. The nature of this analysis by which we distinguish between Existence and its involvement in the five elements is the subject of the following verses.

Bhinne viyatatī śabda bhedād buddheśca bhedataḥ, vāyvādi śvanuvṛttaṁ sat na tu vyometi bhedadhīḥ (67). Existence and space are two different things. They are different from each other on account of the reasons already mentioned. Firstly, there is the special definition of space as extension, or spatiality, and the cause of the reverberation of sound, which quality we cannot see in Existence. For this reason at least, we must distinguish between space and Pure Existence.

Buddheśca bhedataḥ: Our intelligence also says that extension cannot be the quality of Pure Being because divisibility is inseparable from extension. You can divide space into little parts. We measure our land, for instance, into so many hectares, so many acres, and we say so many kilometres long, etc. This kind of measurement is a division that we introduce into space, but we cannot do this kind of dividing of parts in Pure Existence. Anything that is divisible is perishable because it is cut into parts and, therefore, it ceases to be an indivisible whole by itself. Anything that is not indivisible is destructible; hence space, which is measurable in terms of distance, is to be considered as a finite object and it is not infinite indivisible Existence.

The same is the case with the other elements, such as air. Vāyvādi śvanuvṛttaṁ sat na tu vyometi bhedadhīḥ: For instance, space is not in air, but Existence is in air. We will not find the quality of extension and the production of sound by reverberation, in the element of space which occupies a lesser space than space proper. But Existence is there in air also; air exists, as space exists. So Existence is an

invariable concomitant of all the elements like space and air, but space and air by themselves have independent qualities. On account of having independent qualities, they differ from each other. But Existence, being invariably present in both, does not differ between itself. It is uniformly present in all the elements like space and air. Vāyavādi śvanuvṛttaṁ sat na tu vyometi bhedadhīḥ: The extension that we see in space cannot be seen in air. But the Existence that is in space can be seen in air. By this method of *anvaya* and *vyatireka* we can conclude that Existence is permanently present behind all things, whereas the special characteristics of elements are independent only for themselves.

Sadvas tvadhika vṛttivāt dharma vyomnastu dharmatā, dhiyā sataḥ prthakkāre brūhi vyoma kimātakam (68). Inasmuch as Existence is uniformly present behind everything, it should be considered as something prior to the manifestation of all other things. It is the *dharmi* or the substance, and not the quality or *dharma*.

Vyomnastu dharmatā: Space and other elements should be considered as *dharma*, or a quality of Existence – that is, particular forms or manifestations of Existence. They are posterior, subsequent to Existence. Therefore, we should consider space and other elements as attributes. The Primary Existence is prior to the manifestation of space and name and form.

Sadvas tvadhika vṛttivāt dharma vyomnastu dharmatā, dhiyā sataḥ prthakkāre: When we distinguish by penetrating understanding between Existence and space (that is, Existence and spatiality), we will find there is no

Existence in spatiality. If we separate Existence from spatiality (which is the quality of space), there would be no existence of spatiality. The so-called existence of space is an illusion introduced into our mind by the wrong association of emptiness (which is the quality of space) with Pure Existence. But by intellectual analysis, if we can separate the element of Pure Existence from spatiality, we will find that spatiality is a non-entity. The space itself does not exist. The Existence is something different from what appears to be there in front of us. *Dhiyā sataḥ pṛthakkāre*: What is space? Please tell me. If it is divested of Existence, it is non-existence.

Avakāśā tmakaṁ tat cet asattaditi cintyatām, bhinnam sato'sacca neti vakṣi ced vyāhati stava (69). We may say space exists as a dimension. It cannot exist; that is what I am saying. Even dimension cannot exist without its association with Pure Being. If Pure Being is separated from the spatiality of space, then the dimension of space also falls down. It does not exist any more.

Asattaditi cintyatām: Consider space as *asat*, non-existence, unreal when it is divested of Pure Being. *Bhinnam sato'sacca*: We cannot say that space is separate from Existence and is existing by itself. These are contradictory statements. Either it is associated with Existence, or it is not. If it is associated with Existence, it is a wrong association, because space which is particularly characterised by qualities which are not of Existence cannot be associated with Existence; but if we say that it need not be so associated, it becomes unreal. So either way, space does not exist independently by itself.

Bhinnaṃ sato'sacca: We may say, "Space is visible to my eyes. How can I deny it?" Visibility is not the test of reality. We can see a phantasmagoria. We can see castles in the clouds. We can see a snake in the rope. We can see water in the mirage. It does not mean that because we see something, it is there. So we shouldn't bring the argument that because I am seeing space, it must exist. If we apply our understanding, we will come to the conclusion that our seeing is defective. Our understanding will rectify our erroneous perception of the so-called existence of space, and will conclude that it does not exist at all.

Bhātīti cet bhātu nāma bhūṣaṇaṃ māyiksya tat, yadasad bhāsa mānaṃ tat mithyā svapna gajādi vat (70). As we see elephants in dreams, so we see the world of space. Elephants are moving about in the forest or jungles of the dream world. Are we not seeing them? But do we believe that they really exist there? So don't say that I am seeing space and, therefore, it must exist. Perceptibility is not the criterion of reality. The world is real in the same sense that elephants in dream are real.

Jāti vyakti dehi denau guṇa dravye yathā pṛthak, viyat sato stathai vāstu pāṛthakyaṃ ko'tra vismayaḥ (71). The species, or genera, is different from its particular. The body is different from its limbs. The substance is different from the quality. In the similar way, Existence is different from space.

As we distinguish between quality and substance, we have to distinguish between space and Absolute Existence. As the substance is not the quality, Existence is not space, and space is not Existence.

Buddho'pi bhedo no citte nirūḍhim yaṭi cetadā, anaikāgryāt saṁśayād vā rūḍhya bhāvo'sya te vada (72). You may say, "I am not able to understand what you are saying. After all, I am seeing space. You are putting forth some arguments to prove that logically space cannot exist. Maybe, but it does not enter my brain." Why does it not enter your brain? Is it because you have doubts, or you have no strength to concentrate your mind properly? If you cannot concentrate, please develop the art of concentration.

Apramaṇo bhava dhyānāt ādye'nyāsmiṁ vivecanam, kuru pramāṇa yuktibhyāṁ tato rūḍha tamo bhavet (73). The inability to distinguish between Pure Existence and the form which it has taken as space is due to the inability to concentrate the mind properly. We do not have sufficient logical capacity to distinguish between things; the real and the unreal get mixed up in our understanding, and we do not have that perspicacity of understanding by which such distinction can be arrived at. So the author says that we must develop the power of concentration. We must be very strong in our will, and we must be able to come to decisive conclusions through logical apprehension, if our difficulty is due to absence of concentration of mind.

Ādye'nyāsmiṁ vivecanam: But if we have doubts, our doubts cannot be removed unless thorough investigation is made into our own psychic condition. Why do doubts arise in the mind? There is a muddle in our thinking. So psychological analysis is necessary in the case of doubts in the mind. And if it is absence of concentration of mind, meditation is prescribed.

Kuru pramāṇa yuktibhyāṃ tato rūḍha tamo bhavet: If this practice is resorted to, we will succeed in apprehending the great fact that Pure Existence pervades all things, and space, time, etc., are its apparent manifestations.

Dhyānāt mānāt yuktito'pi rūḍhe bhede viyat satoh, na kadācit viyat satyaṃ sadvastu cchidra vanna ca (74). After a deep investigation into the nature of fact, what do we conclude? By meditation, by the proper application of the right means of knowledge, by logical methods, we distinguish very clearly between Existence and form, and we will never again make the mistake of confounding Existence with space, or vice versa – space with Existence. The idea is repeated again and again to drive into our minds the Ultimate Reality of something which we cannot see with our eyes, and the unreality of that which we are seeing with our eyes.

Jñasya bhāti sadā vyoma nistattvo llekha pūrvavat, sadvastvapi vibhā tyasya nicchidratva puraḥ saram (75). People with wisdom and insight, who are called *jñasya*, can see right in front of them the pervasion of Universal Existence behind all things. Just as we can see light spread out everywhere when the sun shines, the *jivanmukta purusha*, the great realised soul, can actually, visibly, see God pervading all things. There is no necessity to argue about the existence of God. There is no necessity to go on investigating into the nature of Existence as different from space. The knower, *jñani purusha*, directly beholds Pure Existence as an inundating Universality, and he will not see space at all. He will see light and radiance flooding itself everywhere, and never see dimension, distance, etc.

There is no distance between things. Millions and millions of light years do not make any difference to Pure Existence, which connects all things together. In one second we can contact even the stars, though they may appear to be so far away, physically speaking. Physical distance is only an illusion created by the so-called dimension called space. So we must go deep into this matter and not get caught up in the illusion of there being such things called dimension and distance, which really are not there.

Vāsanāyaṃ pravṛddhāyāṃ viyat satyatva vādinam, sanmātrā bodha yuktaṃ ca dr̥ṣṭvā vismayate budhaḥ (76). The wise ones laugh at these people who go on arguing about the existence of space and name and form of the world, etc., again and again. Just as mature persons smile at the ignorant prattle of little babies, people endowed with the wisdom of the world smile at the ignorant statements made by the people of the world who see only the form and not the substance.

The child sees an elephant made of sugar. It is the mature mind that knows that it is only sugar; there is no elephant there. We can have a railway train, a fish, a biscuit or an elephant made of sugar. But the little child says, “I want elephant, I want biscuit, I want toy,” not knowing that there is no such thing as a toy, electric train, etc. Its substance is just sugar. A mature father or mother pays no attention to the prattle of the child who says, “I want elephant,” because they know there is no such thing as elephant; there is only sugar.

So too, the wise sage smiles at the prattle of ignorant people in the world who say, “We want this, we want that,” in the same way that children want toys made of sugar. Yet sugar is the Pure Existence out of which all those things are made; and whenever we ask for things, we are actually asking for the shape that Pure Existence has taken, not knowing that all the shapes are Existence only, and it is immaterial whether we get this or that. All things are equal in this world. Sanmātrā bodha yuktaṁ ca dṛṣṭvā vismayate budhaḥ: Wise people laugh at ignorant persons.

Evamā kāśa mithyātve sat sat yatve ca vāsīte, nyāye nānena vāyvādeḥ sadvastu pravi vicyatām (77). Having finally ascertained the non-existence of space by this *yukti* or logic and investigating method, we have to apply this very same investigation, this method of argument, to arguing the other elements like vayu, air, fire, water, earth, etc. These solid elements, which are before us and seem to be threatening and frightening us every moment, really do not exist, and are like a lion made of sugar which is terrifying us with its long teeth and claws made of sugar. So is this terrific world of earth, water, fire, air and ether appearing to be solid and existing in front of us, contacting us. Really we are not contacting any one of these things. We are contacting Pure Existence even when we are contacting the earth.

When we worship the five elements or worship anything whatsoever as a divinity, and prostrate ourselves before an asvattha tree or a holy stone or a temple or anything whatsoever which we regard as sacred, actually what is intended behind this religious instruction is that we

are prostrating ourselves before the substance of that form before which we actually offer our prostrations. We do not worship idols, just as we do not take into consideration the lion aspect of sugar. It is only the sugar aspect that we are taking into consideration.

So the wisdom of the sage tells us that all the world is worth adoring. Everything is divine. The whole world of name and form is scintillating Pure Existence and we can worship anything whatsoever, right from a pinhead to the solar system. It is all the same thing, just as different items made of one substance do not actually make a difference because of the uniformity of substance.

When we see the form, we cannot see the substance. When we see the substance, we cannot see the form. There is an ancient philosopher called Tirumulan; in his great poem he says, "Embrace the tree." His instruction to students is, "Embrace the tree." What is meant by this statement? He means to say, "Come in contact with the wood and not the furniture made by it."

Another sage said, "When there is dog, there is no stone; when there is stone, there is no dog." This is an enigmatic statement which is a spiritual instruction. The dog is actually a dog made of stone. That is what the sage says. When the stone is seen there, the dog is not there. When the dog is seen, the stone is not there. That is the meaning of saying that when there is dog, there is no stone and when there is stone, there is no dog. Or, embrace the tree; see the wood and not the furniture. See the gold and not the ornament. See the substance and not the quality.

See Pure Existence and not the five elements. That is the analysis.

Discourse 12

CHAPTER 2: PANCHA MAHABHUTA VIVEKA – DISCRIMINATION OF THE ELEMENTS, VERSES 78-99

Sadvastu nyeka deśasthā māyā tatraika deśagam, viyat tatrāpyeka deśa gato vāyuḥ prakalpitaḥ (78). The whole of Brahman is not occupied by *maya*; that is what was stated earlier. Only certain conditioned aspects of Brahman are affected by *maya*. And space does not occupy the whole of *maya*. A fraction of Brahman is the location of *maya*, a fraction of *maya* is the location of space, and a fraction of space is the location of air. It does not mean that air is everywhere in space; it is only in certain locations.

Existence is everywhere. That is Pure Being, Brahman the Absolute. An aspect of it is covered by *maya*. An aspect of *maya* is covered by space; an aspect of space contains air. Vāyuḥ prakalpitaḥ: So *vayu* occupies a very little space in comparison with Existence, *maya*, and space. The quality of air is described in the next verse.

Śoṣa sparśau gatir vegah vāyu dharmā ime matāḥ, trayaḥ svabhāvāḥ sanmāyā vyomnām ye te'pi vāyugāḥ (79). The character of absorbing moisture, drying of things, is one quality of air. Tangibility, touch or the tactile sense is another quality of air. Speed and motion – these are the qualities. Drying, touching, speed and motion are the attributes of air, which occupies some fraction of the area of space. It has the quality of Existence because we feel that air exists; but independently, it does not exist. Therefore, it is only a manifestation of *maya*. It produces sound and, therefore, it also has a quality of space. Existing (as it does),

it is characterised by the reality of Brahman; as a vacuum by itself, independent of Brahman, it has a character of *maya*; and as something that produces sound, it is an effect of space.

Vāyu rastīti sadbhāvaḥ sato vāyau pṛthak kṛte, nistatva rūpatā māyā svbhāvo vyomago dhvaniḥ (80). We say, “Air exists.” By a transferring of values from one to the other, Existence (which is the substantive) is here wrongly considered as a predicate when we say, “Air exists.” The Existence of air is a mix-up of values which is created by a wrong perception through the sense organs because Existence actually is an attribute of the Absolute Brahman. By identifying the Existence of Brahman with air, we say, “Air exists.” If we separate airness from Existence as such, we will find that air is non-existence. By itself, it is not existing. It is a vacuum. It is the quality of *maya* presenting a form and a name and a picturisation, while actually there is no background for it. It is a phantasm that is created by *maya*. And the sound that the air makes when it moves is borrowed from space, which is the cause of the reverberation of sound. The Existence aspect is pervading all things. Wherever we go, we will find something is existing; non-existent things we cannot conceive.

Sato’nuvṛttiḥ sarvatra vyomno neti pure ritam, vyomānu vṛtti radhunā kathaṁ na vyāhataṁ vacaḥ (81). It was said earlier that space does not follow the other evolutes like air, fire, etc. That is, the dimension which space has is not to be found in the case of other elements. Space is spread out in all directions; but *vayu*, air, fire, etc., are not spread out in that manner. So it was said earlier in

some other verse that space does not get associated with any of the further evolutes. It stands by itself, while Existence is associated with every evolute. When it is said like this, what is intended is that, extension, which is the character of space, is not to be found in other subsequent evolutes like earth, etc.; but the other aspect of space, which is reverberation of sound, can be seen in other evolutes also.

Vyomānu vṛtti radhunā katham na vyāhataṁ vacaḥ. A question is raised here: “Once you said that space does not follow the evolutes. Now you say it follows.” The idea is that one aspect of space does not follow; the other aspect of space follows. The aspect of extension does not follow the other elements, but the aspect of sound production follows every other subsequent element.

Chidrā nuvṛttir netīti pūrvokti radhunā tviyam, śabdānu vṛtti revoktā vacaso vyāhatiḥ kutaḥ (82). We have already mentioned that the association of space with anything is twofold: either as an extended something, or as a property which produces sound. So when we say that the other elements have the character of space, we have to take only one quality – namely, sound production – and we should not take the extension aspect of space.

Nanu sadvastu pārthakyāt asattvaṁ cettadā katham, avyakta māyā vaiṣamyāt amāyā maya tā’pi no (83). Don’t you think that Existence dissociated from space or air reduces space and air to non-existence? Some objector raises the question: “Can you not conceive air as real by dissociating it from *maya* – because only when you associate it with *maya*, a kind of vacuous presentation, it

appears to be unreal. Can you not say that air exists independently by itself?”

We have already mentioned that air independently cannot be regarded as real because it has no independent existence except as motion, which is one of its properties borrowed from space, and sound also borrowed from space, and the independence aspect, is false – because nothing in this world is totally independent. If we consider something as independent, such as air, it is finite. And if it is finite, it is perishable; therefore, it cannot be regarded as an eternal substance. It is not real.

Nistattva rūpatai vātra māyātvasya prayojikā, sā śakti kāryayo stulyā vyaktā vyaktatva bhedinoḥ (84). The non-entity aspect of anything is the essential feature of *maya*. The final non-entity character is the quality of *maya*, whatever be that object in this world. And this unreality of the product of *maya* is similar, both in the case of its immediate effects or subsequent effects. The immediate effect is space; subsequent effects are air, etc. So the unreality which is the nature of *maya* is to be found not only in the cause which precedes the effect, but also in the effects that follow the cause. Here the word *shakti* is used. *Shakti* means *maya*.

The character of cause, which is the *maya* aspect of things, is to be found in all the effects that it produces. There is finally, therefore, the character of non-entity in all its products, right from space onwards up to the earth. Whether they are manifest or unmanifest, it makes no difference, because a thing that is not real may be either manifest or unmanifest – as the water seen in a mirage. We

may perceive it or we may not perceive it; nevertheless, it does not exist there, finally.

The character of water in a mirage in the desert is something that is not to be associated with Existence. It is so even if we perceive it, and it is so even if we don't perceive it. It will be the same thing. The water will be shining there even if we don't perceive it. So perception and non-perception do not make a difference to objects which are ultimately not real.

Sadasatva vivekasya prastu tatvāt sa cintya tām, asato'vāntara bheda āstām tat cinta yātra kim (85). Anyhow, here we are not concerned with the products of *maya*. We are concerned with the way in which it actually acts and creates an illusion of externality of things, substantiality of things, and independence of things. *Maya* has three qualities. Firstly, it externalises everything, while the Ultimate Reality is universal. Secondly, it solidifies the non-entity into objects of perception and causes them to be felt by the perceiver as independent by themselves. Independence, externality, and objectivity – these are the characters finally foisted upon a non-entity by a peculiar action of the power of God, which we call *maya*.

Sadvastu brahma śiṣṭomśo vāyur mithyā yathā viyat, vāsayitvā ciram vāyor mithyātvaṁ marutaṁ tyajet (86). We have discussed enough about space. And we have also understood something about the character of air. What is it that we have understood? Existence is Brahman – *sad-vastu brahma*. Everything else that follows from it, like space, air, etc., is not real. Having driven into our mind the conviction that properties which are outside Pure Existence cannot be

regarded as real, we have to finally reject the reality of space and air.

Mithyātvaṁ marutaṁ tyajet: Abandon the concept of the reality of air, as well as the reality of space. In the same way, we have to consider fire as well. It also does not exist independantly. We say, “Fire exists.” Unless Existence is there, fire itself has no meaning. Minus Existence, there is no fire. And Existence, which is the fire, is borrowed from the Pure Existence of Brahman.

Cintayet vahni mapyevaṁ maruto nyūna vartinam, brahmāṇḍā varaṇe ṣveṣā nyūnā dhika vicāraṇā (87). One tenth of the area occupied by *maya* is said to be the area occupied by space. One tenth of the area occupied by space is occupied by air. One tenth of the space occupied by air is occupied by fire. Air can be seen moving about everywhere, but we cannot see fire moving about. So it is very fractional in comparison with its precedents.

Brahmāṇḍā varaṇe ṣveṣā nyūnā dhika vicāraṇā. In the structure of this Brahmanda, or cosmos, this is the arrangement made among the elements: each succeeding one is less by one tenth in comparison with the one preceding. One tenth of the area of Brahman is perhaps occupied by *maya*. Though we cannot actually measure Brahman, logically we can conceive a fractional aspect of Brahman. So is the case with everything. One tenth of Brahman is *maya*. One tenth of *maya* is space. One tenth of space is air. One tenth of air is fire. One tenth of fire is water. One tenth of water is earth. And this earth which is so much reduced from the original cause is the source of all the fourteen worlds. So we can imagine how small this

universe is in comparison with the Pure Existence which is Brahman.

Vāyor daśāṃ śato nyūno vahnir vāyau prakalpitaḥ, purāṅoktaṃ tārātamyāṃ daśāṃ śair bhūta pañcake (88). One tenth of *vayu* (air) is fire. Friction, motion in air can create heat, and that becomes fire. The Puranas are full of descriptions of the difference that is there among the five elements. In the Srimad Bhagavata Purana especially, it is mentioned that the elements that follow are only one tenth of the preceding ones.

Daśāṃ śair bhūta pañcake. We must read the third book of the Bhagavata Purana to understand the details of these things where we have a great, grand detail of the process of creation.

Vahni ruṣṇaḥ prakāśātmā pūrvānu gati ratra ca, asti vasniḥ sa nistātvaḥ śabdavān sparśa vānapi (89). The quality of fire is heat and also it is radiance; it shines. Heat exists; fire exists – and it exists in some place, which is the character of space. It produces sound when it burns with flames. That is also something that is borrowed from space. And it has the character of air, which is motion. All the qualities of the earlier elements can be found in fire, which is the subsequent one, after air.

What do we say? Asti vasniḥ: We say, “Fire exists,” by which we identify fire with Brahman. Sa nistātvaḥ: By itself, fire is *nistattvah* – non-entity. Subtract Pure Existence from fire and we will find that it is a non-entity. Śabdavān sparśa: We can touch fire, we can hear the sound produced by fire. All these qualities are there no doubt, but all this is foisted

on Pure Existence, minus which, it is not there, as is the case with space and air.

Sanmāyā vyoma vāyvaṁśair yukta syāgner niḥo guṇaḥ, rūpaṁ tatra sataḥ sarvam anyad buddhā vivicyatām (90). Through the power of reason we may analyse the situation of the elements in this manner. Existence, *maya*, space and air – these condition fire. And fire has a special quality of its own which we cannot see in the preceding elements – namely, visibility. We cannot have visibility of space and air. We cannot see either space or air as an object as clearly as we can see fire. It has visibility and it has radiance; therefore, we can see it. All other characters which are foisted upon it should be separated from it, and finally it is to be regarded as unreal.

Sato vivecite vahnau mithyāṭve sati vāsite, āpo daśāṁśato nyūnāḥ kalpitā iti cintayet (91). Having understood the non-entity aspect of fire independently by itself, minus existence, we have to understand the same thing in the case of water. One tenth of the space occupied by fire principle is the space occupied by the water principle. Having understood clearly the properties of space, air and fire, and rejecting the reality aspect in them (minus Existence), now we consider what water is – which is only one tenth of the area occupied by fire. We say, “Water exists.” The existence aspect of Brahman is wrongly associated with water. As we have made the mistake of substantive and predicate in the case of the earlier elements, the same mistake we make here also. Existence is an originality; it is not a product of an element, though wrongly we utter sentences like, “Water exists.”

Santyaṅpo'mūḥ śūnyatattvāḥ saśabda sparśa saṃyutāḥ, rūpavatyo'nya dharma nuvṛtṭyā svīyo raso guṇaḥ (92). Non-entity is the nature of water finally, minus Existence. The quality of water is sound and also tangibility, and also it can be seen and tasted. The special quality of water is that we can taste it, but we cannot taste fire, we cannot taste air, we cannot taste space. All the qualities of water come from the earlier elements which preceded water; but it has its own special quality, which is taste.

Sato vivecitāsvapsu tanmithyātve ca vāsite, bhūmir daśāṃsato nyūnā kalpitā psviti cintayet (93). One tenth of water is earth. And earth has all the qualities of the earlier elements like extension. We can measure the earth by distance, and we can touch it as we can touch air. We can see it with our eyes, as we can see fire. We can taste substances made out of earth, material objects. One special quality of all things made of the earth principle is that we can also smell it.

We cannot smell water. There is no smell in it – no smell in fire, no smell in air and no smell in space also. So while the earlier elements had one, two, three, four qualities, the last one, which is the fifth element earth, has five qualities. We can visualise in this particular element, which is earth, all the qualities of the earlier elements plus the character of smell or odour, which is only available in the earth principle. As we say, “Space exists,” etc., we also say, “Earth exists.” But minus existence, earth also is not really there.

Asti bhūstattva-sūnyā'syām śabda-sparśau sarūpakau, rasaśca parato gandho naijaḥ sattā vivicyatām (94). Sound, tangibility, form, taste and smell are the characteristics of

earth. *Naijaḥ sattā vivicyatām*. What is the essential nature of earth? Remove all the preceding qualities; dissociate earth from Existence itself. We will find there is no such thing as the earth principle. All creation vanishes as mist before the sun if we make this analysis of dissociating these wonderful presentations of the five-elemental world from Existence pure and simple, which is Absolute Brahman.

Ṙṥhakkṛtāyām sattāyām bhūmir mithyā'vaśiṣyate, bhūmer daśāṃśato nyūnaṃ brahmāṇḍaṃ bhūmi madhyagam (95). The whole cosmos of physical elements is constituted of the earth principle. Fourteen worlds are mentioned in the Puranas. All these are modifications of earth only by permutation and combination.

Brahmāṇḍa loka deheṣu sadavastuni ṣṥṥhak kṛte, asanto'ṇḍādayo bhāntu tadbhāne'pīha kā kṣatiḥ (97). In this Brahmanda, which is the macrocosm, the entire realms of beings, hang. As beads are strung on a thread to make a garland, so too all the realms of being, the worlds fourteen in number, are strung as beads, as it were, in this thread-like connection of material principle, physicality, earth principle.

All living beings like us human beings, sub-human creatures, plants – all these created elements are living in this Brahmanda, in this cosmos. So we occupy a very little part, a very little space of this entire creation. The real creation is very big. Do we know how big this earth is? Even the entire earth is not populated by people. A very small part of the earth is occupied; the major part of the whole globe is water. The entire ocean is occupying a larger part of the globe than the earth element. And even the earth

principle is visible because the real solid matter is not occupied by living beings entirely.

And what is this earth, after all? It is such a small speck, as it were, in this astronomical universe; and we are living here like small crawling creatures on the surface of a little patch of earth principle, not knowing that the world is vaster – vaster and vaster as we go higher and higher, until it becomes incomprehensible and most deep, beyond the concept of the mind with all its furthest stretches of imagination.

Bhūta bhautika māyānām asattve'tyanta vāsīte, sad vastva dvaita mityeṣā dhīr viparyeti na kvacit (98). If we separate the entire cosmos from Pure Existence, we will find that God has created the world out of nothing. There is some point, therefore, in the doctrine of certain religions that God created the universe out of a vacuum, because we have now reduced the whole cosmos into a vacuum. The cosmos, this creation that we are thinking of is constituted of five elements: space, air, fire, water, earth. By an analysis of their inner constitution, we have found that minus Existence, they do not exist. So like a magician, God has created this cosmos out of nothing. There are magicians who simply open their palm and some reptile will crop up, or a bird will fly, and so on. Such is the way in which God seems to have conjured up this creation.

He alone is. The world finally is not existing. To prove the existence of God solely and totally, and to remove the wrong idea that there is something outside God, this great analysis of the five elements is being conducted by the great author of Panchadasi. The great effort of analysis is only to

prove God's Ultimate Existence, and that nothing else can be there.

The world appears, we may say. Let it appear. After all, it is an appearance. An appearance is not the same as reality.

Sadadvaitāt pṛthagbhūte dvaite bhūmyā dirūpiṇi, tattadartha kriyā loke yathā dṛṣṭā tathaiva sā (99). After this investigation into the nature of things, we come to the conclusion that all elements and the products of these elements are independently by themselves non-entities, and the consciousness then fixes itself in the unitary existence of itself. What finally exists is consciousness. Materiality, externality cannot be there because consciousness, being indivisible in its nature, has to be infinite.

Infinite is consciousness. As there cannot be two infinities (there can be only one infinite), the world outside consciousness cannot exist. The whole world is, therefore, a dazzling form of consciousness itself. The so-called five elements are only appearances of consciousness itself, both inwardly as well as outwardly.

Sadadvaitāt pṛthagbhūte dvaite bhūmyā dirūpiṇi, tattadartha kriyā loke yathā dṛṣṭā tathaiva sā (99). We have to live in this world in the light of this knowledge. We should not get involved in the appearances of things after having conducted this difficult analysis of the separation of Existence from the five elements. As is befitting the conditions prevailing, so we should behave in this world. The appearance of space, air, etc., should not create any kind of muddle in the process of thinking, in terms of the belief in the reality.

We may see a thing but not believe in its reality. It does not mean that just because we see a thing we should get involved in it. Do we get involved in the water that we see in the mirage? Do we want to occupy a room in the building that we see in the clouds? We see the clouds looking like buildings, but we know that there is no building there.

So is the case with the *jivanmukta purusha*, the man of wisdom who has awakened to the consciousness of Pure Existence alone being there; yet he sees the world. As long as the sense organs are operative, the mind thinks and the wise man also may see the world. But he will see it like a dead snake, and not like a living one. And he will see it like the water that is in a mirage. He sees it but does not want to drink it. He is never associated with what he sees. The deluded people, those who are involved in it, run after it. Deer in the desert, seeing apparent water, run in search of that water. And they get exhausted running. Whatever be the length of the distance that they run in the direction of that mirage water, they will not find that water because as they run in each direction, it recedes further and further. They get exhausted and die there, but they will not find water. So is the case with people in the world. They run after the pleasures of senses; they will run and run until they perish, but the pleasures of the world they will not find because the world is a mirage.

Discourse 13

CHAPTER 2: PANCHA MAHABHUTA VIVEKA – DISCRIMINATION OF THE ELEMENTS, VERSES 100-109

Sāṅkya kāṇāda bauddhā dyair jagad bhedo yathā yathā, utprekṣyate'nekayuktyā bhavatveṣa tathā tathā (100). By the analysis of the five elements which constitute this cosmos, we have come to the conclusion that there is an element of Existence pervading all things, and this pervasive principle is always associated with every kind of name and form. No name, no form can exist without Existence. This Existence, known as *sat*, is the nature of Brahman, the Supreme Being.

But there were other schools of thought, like the Nyaya, Vaishesika, Samkhya and the schools of nihilism who describe the nature of the world in different ways. The logical school of Nyaya and the realistic pluralism of the Vaishesika philosophy asserted that there are many realities in the world, and Existence is not one uniform continuity.

Nine realities were posited by the Naiyayikas and the Vaishesikas. Samkhya boiled down all these nine categories of the Nyaya and the Vaishesika into only two principles: *purusha* and *prakriti* – consciousness and matter. Though there can be nine objects which may look like reality from the point of view of our sense perception, they are all capable of being grouped into a single category, called 'object'; and all object is material in its nature. This is the reason why the Samkhya concludes that we can have only two ultimate principles: matter and spirit, *prakriti* and *purusha*.

The duality of consciousness and matter is also a questionable proposition because in the same way that the multiplicity of the Nyaya and the Vaishesika does not stand the test of scrutiny (because of there being the necessity for a knowing consciousness behind the multiplicity so posited), so too, it requires some third principle above the duality of *purusha* and *prakriti* in order to know that *prakriti* and *purusha* exist at all.

Who is it that is making the statement that there are two realities? It is not *prakriti*, and it is not *purusha*, because it has been already assumed that *prakriti* and *purusha* are two different things. So neither the Nyaya, the Vaishesika, nor the Samkhya stand the scrutiny of deep investigation.

So is the case of the nihilistic doctrine, which asserted that nothing can exist finally, because the consciousness of their being nothing is also a kind of existence. Nobody can outright deny all things, because the denial of such a thing assumes the consciousness of the denial of all things – which must exist. So finally, consciousness exists. *Sat is chit*. This is Verse 100.

Avajñātaṃ sadadvaitaṃ niśśamkair anyā vādibhiḥ,
evaṃ kā kṣati rasmākaṃ tadvaitam avajānatām (101). It may be contended that there are people who argue only on the basis of duality because the world is constituted of duality. The knower and the known are two different entities. The world outside and the knowing consciousness are not identical. It is something well known to common sense. “Let it be there,” says the author.

The assertion that there is a palpable, obvious reality between the knowing consciousness and the object outside is again a faulty assumption because there should be an umpire between the knowing consciousness and the object outside – neither belonging to the subjective side, nor the objective side. Therefore, this umpire which will belong neither to the subjective side nor the objective side, will be a third element altogether. The third element includes both the subjective and the objective sides.

So again the non-duality of Reality comes up. Any amount of assertion of the final duality of things does not stand the test of reason because all consciousness of duality requires a previous consciousness, a preceding element of awareness which beholds duality as an object and, therefore, it stands independent of the duality of things, and even behind the consciousness that asserts that there is duality. So we cannot escape the unitariness of consciousness.

Dvaitā vajñā susthitā ced advaite dhīḥ sthirā bhavet, sthairye tasyāḥ pumāneṣa jīvanmukta itīryate (102). He is the *jivanmukta purusha*, the liberated soul who beholds through the sense organs the same variety, same duality and multiplicity as the commonsense man sees, but he sees it as bereft of vitality. It is like looking at a corpse, a body with no life in it. The duality will be seen as long as the sense organs operate. The *jivanmukta purusha* also sees it. He will see the world as a burnt cloth, a dead snake or a devitalised object. They have only appearance, but they do not exist substantially.

The Existence which is the direct content of the *jivanmukta's* consciousness is Brahmatattva. He practices *brahmabhyasa*. Tat chintanam tat kathanam anyonyam tat prabodhanam, eta deka paratvam ca brahmābhyāsam vidur budhāḥ. (7.106). *Brahmabhyasa* is the highest *sadhana* that one can think of in this world. The practice of the presence of Brahman is called *brahmabhyasa*. Brother Lawrence wrote a small booklet called 'The Practice of the Presence of God', and this amounts to the same thing – the practice of the presence of the Absolute: *brahmabhyasa*.

It means thinking of that always – tat chintanam – and no other thought enters the mind – tat kathanam. When we speak to people, to our friends in discourse, we talk only on this theme – anyonyam tat prabodhanam. We awaken ourselves mutually on this important theme, and do not talk on anything else. Eta deka paratvam: always depending on this finally, as if a drowning man is depending on a single breath, and he has no other desire. Having had enough of things in this world, to surfeit, there is only one longing left – namely, the unity of the soul with the Universal Soul. This is total dependence on Ultimate Reality.

This kind of practice, continuously carried on day in and day out as the only occupation in life, is *brahmabhyasa*. Such is the practice of a *jivanmukta purusha* who sees, as it were, the dualities, multiplicities, etc., of the world as ordinary people do, but he does not believe in their existence.

As I mentioned the other day, varieties of objects made of sugar do not attract the attention of people who are

mature in mind. Let it be an elephant, let it be a horse, let it be a dog. What does it matter? It is sugar. But children do not understand that. For them it is a dog, it is an elephant, and so on. So children in this life of spirit behold the variety of names and forms and cling to these forms as children cling to forms of the same substance, not knowing that the whole universe is constituted ultimately of one basic substance, *sat-chit-ananda swarupa*. Such a person who knows this is called a *jivanmukta*. Sthairye tasyāḥ pumāneṣa jīvanmukta itīryate.

The Bhagavad Gita, towards the conclusion of the second chapter, says *eṣā brāhmī sthitiḥ pārtha nainām prāpya vimuhyati, sthitvā'syām antakāle'pi brahma nivārṇa mṛcchati* (103). Bhagavan Sri Krishna speaks to Arjuna and towards the end of the second chapter of the Gita, having described the essentials of Samkhya and Yoga, concludes his teaching by saying, “Arjuna, this is the ultimate state. *Eṣā brāhmī sthitiḥ*: This is the final resort of all created things. It is the state of the Absolute. Therefore, it is called *brāhmī sthitiḥ*.”

Nainām prāpya vimuhyati: No delusion will overtake a person after having attained the good state. Just as a person who has woken up and sees the light of day will not once again be deluded by the objects of dream which he saw earlier, so too this awakened person who is established in the Universality of Godhood will not any more be deluded by the forms and names of the world.

Even if we cannot attain this state now – immediately, today – if it could be possible that we should be established in this state even at the time of passing, that also is good

enough. Sthitvā'syām antakāle'pi brahma nivārṇa mṛcchati: Even if for a moment one is established in this state at the time of the departure from this body, that is sufficient to destroy the bundle of ignorance and the heap of all desires, and one attains to Brahmanirvana – merger in Brahman.

This verse from the Bhagavad Gita is quoted by the author of the Panchadasi here, and in the next two verses he tries to explain what is the actual import of this verse.

Sadadvaite'nṛte dvaite yadanyo nyaikya vīkṣaṇam, tasyānta kālas tadbheda buddhi reva na cetaraḥ (104). At the time of passing, at the last moment – the word used in the verse of the Bhagavad Gita means 'having established oneself at the last moment'. Now, what is this 'last moment'? It has two meanings.

It can be the moment when discrimination between the real and the unreal has arisen, in which case it can be even today itself. Once knowledge arises in the person, ignorance is destroyed simultaneously, at the same time, and this discrimination is what is called wisdom. The end of ignorance is called 'the last moment'. The last moment of the prevailing of ignorance in this world, the last moment of desires in this world, the last moment of clinging to the objects of sense – this is the meaning of 'the last moment'. And if this moment is to be attained, it can be the source of one's liberation – not necessarily at the departure of the body; it can be even earlier. This is the meaning, the import of this verse, says the author of the Panchadasi.

Or, it can be the usual meaning: When the *prana* departs from this body, may we be established in this Great

Being. Then we shall not be reborn. We attain to Brahmanirvana, Universal Existence.

Yadvāntakālaḥ prāṇasya viyogo'stu prasiddhiḥ, tasmin kāle'pi no bhrānter gatāyāḥ punarā gamaḥ (105). The esoteric meaning has been explained that it can be even today, provided that ignorance ends just now. But otherwise, we take it in the literal sense of the last moment of the body. Even at that time, if we are established, it is good for us and there will be no rebirth. Whatever be the physical condition of a person, that is immaterial to the consciousness that is attained to this Universality of experience.

Nīroga upaviṣṭo vā rugṇo vā viluṭhan bhuvi, mūrchito vā tyajatveṣa prāṇān bhrāntirna sarvathā (106). A great question which sometimes arises in our minds is answered here. Is it necessary to be aware of the Supreme Being only at that particular moment when the *prana* is cut off from the body? Suppose we are unconscious at that time and for two or three days we are not thinking. What will be the last thought from the point of view of this instruction?

The verse that follows makes out that the consciousness that was maintained by the person prior to becoming unconscious is to be considered as the real state of consciousness. And what was that state of consciousness? If the person is totally unaware of things, one cannot be held responsible for anything that takes place to that person. It is consciousness that is the cause of any kind of effect or product that may be produced in terms of that particular individual. So the kind of consciousness that one maintains (or one has been maintaining) prior to the comatose

condition (that may sometimes intervene in certain cases) will determine the future of the person.

A person may be very healthy, or he may not be healthy physically. He may have some kind of illness. He may be standing, he may be sitting, or he may be lying down on the ground. He may not be even conscious. It does not matter. If he casts off the body in any of these conditions, not knowing that actually the body is cast off – because of his not being aware of what is happening – it does not matter, because the determining factor is the consciousness that he was maintaining, even if it be days before. Therefore, it is important to know what was the last thought that a person maintained when he was conscious. And if that is identical with Brahman Consciousness, he is freed forever, though subsequently he might not be aware of it.

Dine dine svapna suptyo radhīte vismr̥te'pyayam, para dyur nāna dhītaḥ syāt tadvad vidyā no naśyati (107). Even if there is a momentary unconsciousness or even if it be for some days together, it cannot destroy the knowledge that one has acquired earlier, in the same way as the long sleep of unconsciousness into which we enter every night does not obliterate the learning of the previous day. All our knowledge is intact the next morning, in spite of our total unawareness and unconsciousness for hours together in the state of deep sleep. So the unconscious condition is not in any way a deterring factor to the fructification of the nature of the consciousness that one was maintaining prior to the occurrence of unconsciousness, as in the case of waking and deep sleep. Knowledge cannot be destroyed once it is attained.

Pramāṇo tpāditā vidyā pramāṇam prabalaṁ vinā, na naśyati na vedāntāt prabalaṁ māna mīkṣyate (108). By the deep study of the Vedānta doctrine, the Vedas, Upanishads, Bhagavad Gita, when the conviction has been driven into the mind and it has been planted in the heart by *sravana*, *manana*, *nididhyasana*, and this knowledge or conviction has become part and parcel of one's own life, one lives that knowledge, as it were. One becomes an embodiment of this knowledge; it is a moving wisdom that we can see in the form of a person. If this is the case, no other experience can refute this knowledge. All illusions that may present themselves for different reasons subsequent to the acquirement of this great wisdom will not affect the conviction that has once been driven into the mind by right knowledge, *pramana*; and no *pramana*, or right knowledge, can equal the Vedānta Śāstra.

Tasmād vedānta saṁsiddhiṁ sada dvaitam na bādhyate, antakāle'pyato bhūta vivekān nirvṛtiḥ sthitāh (109). There is nothing that can refute the consciousness of non-duality once attained by the study of scriptures or by the analysis that we have conducted in the manner of the study of the second chapter; and the future state of a person is decided even long before the actual departure from the body. Tasmād vedānta saṁsiddhiṁ sada dvaitam na bādhyate: The consciousness of non-duality is not refuted under any circumstance. Antakāle'pyato bhūta vivekān nirvṛtiḥ sthitāh: Moksha is certain; Brahmanirvana is assured. There is no need of having any doubt in the mind, provided that this knowledge has become our direct experience. This is the last moment. So if our ignorance has

not been destroyed entirely – ie, the mind is still operating in terms of objects outside – it does not matter. We may hope that a day may come at the time of the departure of this soul from this body, and one may be established in that.

Whatever we hope for, sincerely and intensely, we will certainly get. Therefore, may there be a deep aspiration, as students who are well up always aspire to be first in an exam and never go there with the idea that they will be second or third. They may be second, but the expectation is to be first. So let there be the expectation of certain liberation in this birth: “There is nothing wrong with me; I have been very diligently practicing the *Yoga Vedanta sadhana*, and my mind is clear. The perception of the world is perspicacious and even now, in a way, my consciousness is established in the conviction of God being the only Reality.” If this conviction is there in us, we are freed forever.

Discourse 14

CHAPTER 3: PANCHA KOSHA VIVEKA – DISCRIMINATION OF THE FIVE SHEATHS, VERSES 1-10

Guhāhitaṁ brahma yat tat pañcakośa vivekataḥ, boddhuṁ śakyaṁ tataḥ kośa pañcakaṁ pravi vicyate (1). In the second chapter we had conducted an objective analysis of the Universal Consciousness as being different from the five elements of earth, water, fire, air and ether. In a similar manner, here in this third chapter an analysis is being conducted which distinguishes the Pure Consciousness in the individual from the body of the individual which is constituted of five sheaths, known as *annamaya*, *pranamaya*, *manomaya*, *vijnanamaya* and *anandamaya* – the physical, vital, mental, intellectual and causal sheaths. The investigation into the real nature of these five sheaths will enable one to know that Pure Consciousness, which is the essential nature of all things, is independent of the five sheaths, and the human individual actually is not a bundle of these sheaths.

Inasmuch as it is possible to know the deepest Atman hidden in the cave of the heart by distinguishing it from the five sheaths, we now undertake the task of knowing what these five sheaths are. They are: dehād abhyaṅ taraḥ prāṅḥ prāṅā abhyaṅ taram manāḥ, tataḥ kartā tato bhoktā guhā seyaṁ paramparā (2). We have heard the phrase ‘cave of the heart’. The cave is nothing but a five-corridor holy of holies, the names of these corridors being the names of the five sheaths. The outermost sheath is the physical body that is visible to the eyes. Internal to the

physical body is the vital body, which is made up of *prana* – the breath, the vital energy. Internal to the vital sheath is the mental sheath, which contains the mind and the senses of knowledge.

Internal to the mind is the intellect, which has the consciousness of the doership in actions. We begin to feel that we are doing something – we are going, we are sitting, we are such and such. This appropriation of individuality and doership in actions is the function of the intellect, which is inseparable from the ego.

Internal to the intellect is the causal body. It is also known as the *anandamaya kosha*. *Karta* and *bhokta* are the words used here to designate the intellectual sheath and the causal sheath. It is on account of the operation of the causal sheath that we feel happy. We had occasion to know something about the working of these internal sheaths when we studied the first chapter.

In the causal sheath, there is a balancing of the properties of *prakriti* – *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*, whereas in the other sheaths there is an imbalance of the properties. Some one or the other of the properties of *prakriti* gets accentuated or emphasised in the outer sheaths, whereas in the innermost level, the causal sheath, they are in an almost equilibrated condition. That is why we feel happy when the causal sheath works, especially in deep sleep. The doer is the intellect with the ego; the enjoyer is the causal sheath. That is why the two sheaths are called *karta* and *bhokta*, the doer and the enjoyer.

Pitṛ bhuktā nnajād vīryā j̄jāto'nnaiva vardhate,
dehaḥ so'nnamayo nātmā prāk cordhvām tada bhāvataḥ

(3). The physical body is the product of the essence of the food consumed by our parents, and it is also sustained by the intake of food every day. It is purely material in its nature. It is constituted of a material force, and it is subsequently sustained also by a material force. The physical body is pure matter; it has no consciousness.

Inasmuch as it is material, it cannot be identified with the Atman, which is consciousness. This physical sheath is called *annamaya kosha* – that is, the physical encasement. Dehaḥ so'nnamayo nātmā: This is not the Atman, because the body was not there before it was born, and it will not be there also when it is cast away. It has a beginning and it has an end. Therefore, it cannot be the Atman, which is infinite, eternal. The body is perishable. It was caused by certain circumstances, and it will be destroyed by certain other circumstances. Hence, none of the qualities which we perceive in a physical body can be considered as qualities of the Atman. It is perishable, and it is inert. Therefore, this body is not the Atman. Our essential nature is not the physical body and, therefore, a description of a person in terms of physical relation is not a correct way of evaluating him.

Pūrva janma nayasann etaj janma saṁpādayet katham, bhāvi janman yasan karma na bhuñjī teha sañcitam (4). There must have been some cause for the production of this body. How did it suddenly rise up, and why does it perish? What is the reason? Some forces are at the back of this event. We cannot say that the physical body has suddenly risen into action without any kind of cause whatsoever. The joys and sorrows of life which are also experienced through

this body cannot be regarded as effects of nothing. Nothing produces nothing. Do we sometimes experience happiness and grief through this body? How is it that we sometimes feel very comfortable physically and at other times are irking and very grief-stricken physically?

The body has not brought anything when it came, yet it feel the pinch of the troubles of life; and sometimes it also feel comfortable. So how could there be this effect of feeling through the body unless there is a cause behind it? That is one aspect of the matter.

Secondly, through this body we do so many actions. Some are good actions, some are bad actions. Do we mean to say that these actions will not produce any result? Good actions are rewarded; bad actions are punished. Now, where comes the field? Where is the field for the reward of the good actions done through this body or the field for the suffering of the consequences of the bad actions, if the body is to cease immediately after death?

There is, therefore, something which is the true individuality of a person, the operation of which alone can explain how it is that we have various kinds of experiences in this world, and also why we do good actions, etc. Why do we do good actions if the end of the body is also our own end? The end of the body may occur even tomorrow or the day after. But people do large philanthropic deeds; they contemplate large projects for the welfare of humanity, and various other things. After all, what is the purpose of these welfare projects if the reward for these actions is not to be experienced because of the possible death of the body the next day itself?

If the body is to be considered as the true identity of the human individual, we cannot explain how the joys and sorrows of life have come up on a particular individual in a particular way, or account for the results of their good and bad deeds. There is some continuity of personality from before the coming of the body. Because of the continuity of the person prior to the manufacture of this body, we can explain how we can have experiences of various types the other through this body.

One person's experience is different from another's. Though physically all the bodies are made of the same stuff, the experiences are different. The experiences, therefore, should not be identified with the physical body. The experiencer is not the body. Also, the nature of the experience has to be accounted for. There must be a cause for an effect. The effect is the experience, and the cause is not visible.

So by argument of inference, we conclude that there is something prior to the coming of the body; and because of the necessity to reward actions, we have to also conclude that there is something that persists even after the death of the body. All this shows that the body is not the Atman.

Akritabhyagama and *kritanasa* are the two terms used to describe the incongruity that may follow if the body is to be identified with the Atman – because the body has a beginning and an end. Therefore, the experiences of the body will be identical with the time of the rise of the body.

How does it follow that a person should suddenly have undeserved sufferings and joys, as we may say, in this life, if there is no cause prior to it? That is called *akritabhyagama*,

the coming of that which is not deserved, and the going of that which is actually deserved. So, if there is no prior cause and posterior existence for a person, then the result of good actions also will go unrewarded, and the results of actions which he has not done too will come upon his head. The person is, therefore, different from the body.

Pūrño dehe balaṁ yacchan akṣaṇām yaḥ pravartakaḥ, vāyuḥ prānamayo nāsou ātmā caitanya varjanāt (5). Internal to the physical body is the vital sheath, known as *pranamaya sarira*. This vitality it is that gives strength to the system. The energy that we feel in ourselves is due to the *prana* moving through the body. The strength of the *prana* is also the strength of the body. If the *prana* is weak, the body will also be weak. And, it energises the sense organs as well; therefore, clarity of vision, clarity of audition, and clarity and ability of the other sense organs are also caused by the energy quantum of the *prana*, the vitality in us.

The extent of vitality that we have in our system will determine the extent of health that we enjoy, the ability that we have, the strength that we have, and the like. This vital sheath is the subtle aspect of the air principle. But this vital sheath – the *prana*, which is inside the physical body – also cannot be identified with the Atman, because *prana* has no consciousness. It is like electric energy; it works, but it does not know that it is working.

Even in the state of dream and sleep, the *prana* is working, but we are not conscious that the *prana* is working. As we are not conscious of the physical body, so also we are not conscious of the breathing process.

Therefore, neither the physical body nor the vital sheath can be regarded as identical with the Atman.

What is our essential nature? It is not this body, not even the breath. There is something else in us. What is inside the vital sheath then?

Ahantām mamatām dehe gehādau ca karoti yaḥ, kāmādyā vasthayā bhrānto nāsā vātmā manomayaḥ (6). Mind is internal to the vital sheath. What does the mind do? Full of desires is the mind; fickle is the mind. It is never stable at any time. And the mind will not rest in a single condition continuously even for a moment. It is deluded, mostly. The mind of a person does not perceive things correctly. It requires a lot of deliberation to understand our perceptions, whether they are valid or not.

Attachment is the nature of the mind. It clings to properties, like house, wealth, family, etc. I-ness and my-ness are the essential features of the mental body. It always feels “I am. I am coming, I am doing, I am this and I am that.” It also feels, “This is mine. This is not mine.” The sense of ‘I’, which is egoism, and the sense of ‘mine’ in respect of things which it considers as its property, are the features of the mental body. But the mind is unconscious in the state of deep sleep; therefore, it cannot be identified with consciousness.

There are conditions when the mind is not working at all. In utter delusion, in coma, in swoon, in sleep, even in death itself, the mind does not function – but the person continues. Therefore, even as the physical body and the vital sheath are not to be identified with Pure Consciousness, the mind also has to be distinguished from

our essential nature, which is Pure Consciousness. Consciousness is not the body, not the vital breath, also not the mind.

Līnā suptau vapurbodhe vyāpnuvād ānakhā gragā, cicchāyo peta dhīr-nātmā vijñāna maya śabda bhāk (7). There is a sheath internal to the mind, which is called the intellectual sheath. While the mind just thinks, the intellect can understand, decide and judge. It is the ratiocinating faculty in us. This also is not the Atman, because it has a beginning and an end. It is not perpetually operating in us.

In deep sleep, the intellect also is dissolved, as is the case with the mind. Only in the waking condition do the mind and the intellect pervade the whole body. We seem to be feeling that this body is me; right from head to foot, we identify ourselves with this visible sheath on account of the pervasion of the mind and the intellect continuously in the waking condition. But in deep sleep, the intellect also does not work. It ceases, but we do not cease.

If in the deep sleep state we cease, we would not wake up the next morning. So even when the body ceases, the vital sheath ceases, the mind ceases and the intellect ceases to operate and ceases to be a content of our consciousness, we exist nevertheless in the state of deep sleep. Therefore, the intellectual sheath also is not the Atman; it is not consciousness. So we have eliminated four sheaths – the physical, the vital, the mental, and the intellectual. All these sheaths, these enclosures of the body which we hug as very dear and consider as identical with our own true nature – really speaking, they are not identical with us. They are

external coverings like a shirt or a coat that we put on, which cannot be identified with our own selves.

Kartṛtva-karaṇatvā-ghyām vikriye-tāntarin driyam, vijñāna-manasī antar-bahiś-caite parasparam (8). The mind and the intellect have the similar characteristic of fickleness. We do not always go on thinking anything definitely; nor are we always judging things rationally. There is torpidity of thought. There is mostly absence of the function of the mind and the intellect when we are woolgathering and thinking of nothing particular. That is to show that we are existing even without the active operation of these mental and intellectual sheaths.

Instrumental is the mind; and the agent of action is the intellect. The mind is external to the intellect; the intellect is internal to the mind. They act as internal operator and external instrument. that is the only difference between the intellect and the mind. But actually, as far as the non-conscious nature is concerned, they are identical. They are, finally, a product of matter only.

Kāci-dantar-mukhā vṛttir-ānanda-prati-bimba-bhāk, puṇya-bhoge bhoga-śantau nidrā-rūpeṇa līyate (9). Now comes the last one, the causal sheath. In this condition, where the causal sheath predominantly operates, as in the case of deep sleep, the *vrittis* or the psychosis – that is, the operations of the psyche – get internalised completely, and externalisation of these mental operations ceases. In the waking and the dreaming conditions, the mind operates in an external fashion through the sense organs. But in the state of deep sleep, there is an inwardising activity of the mind and the intellect taking place. That is, these activities

of the mind and the intellect cease completely. They get dissolved, as it were, into their cause, and the *rajas* and the *sattva* aspects also are buried in a complete oblivion of everything – *tamas* – a darkness and absence of any kind of awareness, which is what we experience in the state of deep sleep. We feel very happy.

The reason why we are so happy in the state of deep sleep has been a very intriguing question in psychology because any amount of empirical answer will not suffice in accounting for the reason why we feel so energised, fresh and relieved when we wake up in the morning. Even a sick person feels a little better early in the morning. A tired person wakes up with energy which was not there earlier. We would like to sleep and would not like to wake up so easily.

The reason for the happiness is the internalisation of the psyche – the inwardness of our activity in the direction of the Atman that is our real nature. Our faculties are nearer to our true nature than they are in the waking and the dreaming states. We are pulled out of our own Self, as it were, in a wrong direction of externality, mostly in the waking state; and we lose our Self-identity in the waking condition, when we are object-conscious. The more are we object-conscious, the less are we Self-conscious. Therefore, we are very much distracted in the waking condition. We run about here and there in search of a little relief and peace, which we cannot find on account of it being not possible to see happiness outside. It is a condition of the Self.

There is a temporary cessation of externalised activity of the senses, the mind and the intellect in the state of deep sleep. The psychosis, or the mental *vrittis*, seem to be licking the taste of the bliss of the Atman in the state of deep sleep – though unconsciously, as it were. They are dumbfounded. It is as if somebody has given them a blow on the cheek and they have lost their consciousness. Nevertheless, they have fallen on the lap of that Pure Existence, which is the Selfhood of all persons.

This is the reason why we feel happy when we are in a state of sleep. Happiness is the nature of the Self. It cannot be found in anything that is not the Self. All joy is in us; it is not in anything else. So all the activity of the world, externally projected, is to be considered as futile, finally, in the acquisition of happiness in this world. It is just a pursuing of the will-o'-the-wisp as they call it, water in the mirage. The more we run after the world, the more we will be disappointed; and we will get nothing, not even a husk, finally.

The internal settlement of the mind and the intellect in the state of deep sleep identifies our personality, for the time being, with the true Self of ours. We enjoy a bliss that we cannot expect in anything else in this world. This happiness is to be attributed partly to the good deeds that we performed in the previous birth. If we had been a completely bad person, we would not have even one minute's happiness in this world. We would be tearing our hair, but get nothing. But if we feel convinced that there is some happiness in this world – sometimes we feel relieved and there is some internal joy caused by certain things in

the world – we should conclude that we have done some good deeds in the previous birth. That is why we come to the Himalayas, to the Ganga and to ashrams and listen to glorious thoughts instead of going to distracting places where we become worse and worse in our psychic functions.

When there is satiety or surfeit of experience – when we have had enough of things – the senses are exhausted and we collapse, as it were, mentally. In that condition also, negatively we go into our own Self. We want nothing at that time; the mind is collapsing due to the fatigue of the activity of the sense organs. That is another aspect of the reason why we feel a little relieved when we go nearer to our own Self, either by force or by some deliberate effect taking place.

Kādācit-katvato na-ātmā syād ānanda mayo'pyayam, bimba-bhūto ya ānanda ātmā'sau sarvadā sthiteḥ (10). But unfortunately, even this causal sheath that we experience in the state of deep sleep is not the true Self because the true Self is directly conscious. It is not merely indirectly happy, as we have it in the state of deep sleep. This happiness of sleep is negative. We are not conscious of it positively, and also we are not always in that condition. The causal sheath does not operate always. There is a fraction of the day when we seem to be falling into that particular state of causality; and it has a beginning and an end. There is a beginning for the event of our entering into that causal body and also there is an end of it when we wake up in the morning. As it has a beginning and an end, it cannot be regarded as

eternal; therefore, it is not Atman. It is non-eternal in its nature.

So, what remains afterwards? If not the physical body, not the vital body, not the mental body, not the intellectual body, not the causal body – what remains? Is there anything in us other than these? Practically, we will find that nothing remains. We will feel that when we go on peeling an onion, peels after peels will come out, and inside there is nothing – no pith. It will look as if we have no pith at all; only sheaths are being removed by the analysis of non-identity of consciousness and their externality. If we peel out the causal sheath and the other sheaths, we will find that we do not know what is happening to us. We will be in utter darkness.

“All things have gone. I have found nothing.” This kind of feeling may sometimes temporarily arise in our mind when everything has gone: the body has gone, property has gone, money has gone, house has gone, relatives have died, and nobody wants to look at us. “All things have gone. Then I am nothing.” People sometimes make the statement: “I am nothing; all things have gone. I am nothing. Only the breath is remaining, and that also is about to go.”

Sometimes we begin to wrongly feel that when our possessions are taken away, we become a zero – as if we are the possessions. But we are the possessor; we are not the possessions. So why do we say that we are nothing when the possessions are taken away? It is because of the intense attachment to the possessions that we begin to wrongly feel that we are ourselves the possessions; and when they are taken away, we wrongly feel that we are not there at all, that

all things have gone. “All things have gone. I have gone. I am no more.”

But it is not so. We will still remain if everything in the world goes. Even if the entire solar system goes and all the worlds vanish, we will still be there. Let us see what remains.

Discourse 15

CHAPTER 3: PANCHA KOSHA VIVEKA – DISCRIMINATION OF THE FIVE SHEATHS, VERSES 11-23

All that we appear to be in our own selves, such as the body, the vital breath, the mind, the intellect and the causal body, have been proved to be outside consciousness. These apparent sheaths of personality are not our essential nature. They are contents of consciousness, but they are not consciousness itself. They stand outside consciousness; therefore, they are known by consciousness as existing. Consciousness knows that there is a body and that there are other similar sheaths, but there is no one who can know consciousness. It stands by itself, unrelated to anything else – pure subjectivity, totally independent, and immortal in its nature.

When we gradually isolate the association of consciousness with the five sheaths, we may feel that there is nothing left afterwards. If we analyse the detached state of consciousness as isolated from the five sheaths, we will not be able to know that there is a consciousness at all. When all things have gone, nothing remains. We will feel that nothing in us remains, because everything that we considered ourselves to be has gone. We have been under the impression throughout our lives that we are this body, and if it has gone, we have also gone; so, we cannot come to any other conclusion other than, that when we eliminate from consciousness all contact with the five sheaths, we will arrive at some kind of self-annihilation, as it were.

The feeling of nothingness, or a kind of vacuum within ourselves, arises on account of our habit of being conscious only of something, and never being adequately self-consciousness. All our consciousness is 'of' something. There is a word 'of'. "I am aware of something." But who are 'we'? That is the question. We are aware of something. Are we that thing of which we are aware? Are we the object which is the content of our awareness? Can we say that we are the object? If not, what are we?

The thing that is aware is different from that of which one is aware. The body, the vital breath, the mind, intellect and the causal body are known by consciousness; therefore, they stand external to consciousness. How could we be outside our own self? We cannot be anything other than what we really are. And yet, because of the habit of consciousness getting identified with what it knows, and there being nothing here, in this case, of which it can be aware, there is a temporary lull and the negation of all existence, as it were; and we feel deprived of the very support even to think.

It is not that there is nothing. There is everything there. It is only the inability of the mind to think its own source. We are unable to assert that there is something other than the five sheaths – because there is no means of knowledge adequate enough to be aware of what there is, that is independent of the five sheaths. How can we know – by what means can we know – whether there is something or not, independent of the five sheaths? The faculty of knowledge – which is the reason, the mind and the intellect – comes under the sheaths, which have been eliminated.

So the highest faculty of knowledge is also gone. Therefore, there is a feeling of nothingness. When the faculty of knowledge itself has gone, knowledge of everything has also gone. So it is that we feel a kind of darkness, a kind of emptiness, as if we have ceased to be, while really we are very, very much there – only, as they say, due to the excess of light, everything looks dark. If the light frequency rises beyond a certain limit, we will see only pitch darkness, and light will not be there. Only a low frequency light can be caught by the retina of our eyes.

Nanu deham upakramya nidrā nandānta vastuṣu, mā bhūdā-tmatvam-anyastu na kaścīd-anubhūyate (11). The disciple is telling the Guru, “I am not seeing anything, if everything has gone. If the five sheaths have gone, I don’t see anything there.”

Bāḍhaṁ nidrādayaḥ sarve’nubhūyante na cetaraḥ, tathā’pyete’nubhūyante yena taṁ ko nivārayet (12). The Guru says, “My dear boy, you are saying that you know nothing, but do you know that you know nothing? Or do you not know even that? Are you aware that you are not aware of anything? Do you know the contradiction involved in your statement? You said, ‘In deep sleep I did not know anything’; but are *you* making a statement that you did not know anything? Who is making this statement? You are aware of the fact that you are not aware of anything. This is what you are not able to catch. So even in the deep sleep state, where abolition of consciousness apparently takes place, there is something remaining which makes you subsequently feel that you did sleep.” Even the negation of consciousness requires a consciousness to

negate it and, therefore, nobody can negate consciousness. It is an untenability.

Svaya-mevā-nubhūti-tvād-vidyate nānu-bhāvyatā, jñātr-jñānān-tarā bhāvāḍ-ajñeyo na tva-sattayā (13). We are unable to locate the existence of something independent of the five sheaths on account of there being no process of knowing. This is a mass of knowledge, but not a process of knowledge. In our normal waking condition, there is a process of knowledge. Somebody is there, knowing that there is something which is to be known. And also, there is a process which is the intellect operating in connection with the subject of knowledge and also the object outside. But where the knower alone is, as the very essence of consciousness, how would that knower know anything other than itself? Therefore, the apparent fear that nothing seems to be there upon the elimination of contact with the five sheaths arises because the knowledge process has been shut out, together with all the faculties that caused this process of knowledge. There is no knowledge of anything there; it is only a sea of knowledge.

On account of there being no distinction between the knower and the known, between the seer and the seen, it is impossible for anyone to know that anything is existing there at all. The apparent non-existence of things is a consequence that follows from the absence of the usual empirical processes of knowledge, and not that knowledge is not there.

Mādhuryādi-svabhāvānām-anyatra sva-guṇār piṇām, svasmin-stad-arpaṇā-peḥṣā no na cā-stya nyadar pakam (14). Sugar, which is very sweet, can make other things

sweet. But it does not require any other substance to make itself sweet. In a similar way, consciousness can render consciousness to other things which have no consciousness, but nobody can give consciousness to consciousness. Nobody can know consciousness. Consciousness can know everything, but the things which consciousness knows cannot render any assistance to consciousness. It is independent, as sugar does not require the assistance of something else in order to make it sweet.

Arpakāntara-rāhityepi astyeṣāṁ tat svabhāvatā, mā bhūttathā'nubhāvyatvaṁ bodhātmā tu na hītyate (15). Even if there is no element which can increase the sweetness of sugar, the sweetness of sugar continues. Even if there is no object of which consciousness may be aware of, still consciousness remains, independent of objects.

The usual identification of consciousness with objects and the wrong notion that knowledge is always of something other than consciousness is the reason why we feel helpless when we eliminate the object from pure subjective awareness. After eliminating all things, even going to the extent of accepting that there is nothing whatsoever after the elimination of the five sheaths, there remains the consciousness that makes this statement. So there is an undeniable reality at the back of all things, even if we suppose for a moment that we ourselves do not exist. If we can stretch our imagination to that extent and strongly imagine that we do not exist, we will feel that there is a consciousness which is affirming that we do not exist. So nobody can go behind consciousness. It is the last, ultimate residuum of reality.

Svayaṁ jyotir-bhavateṣa puro'smād bhāsate'khilāt, tameva bhāntam-anveti taḍ-bhāsā bhāsyate jagat (16). Self-luminous is consciousness, like the sun. The sun is self-luminous. It does not require another candle to illumine it. No oil lamp is necessary to increase or reveal the light of the sun. Self-conscious and self-luminous is consciousness. It knows not only others, but it knows itself also. It is self-conscious, and also other-conscious. It is aware that it is there, and it is aware that other things also are there.

This is a quotation from the Katha Upanishad and the Mundaka Upanishad. Na tatra sūrya bhāti, na candra-tāarakam (Katha 2.3.15, Mundaka 2.2.11): In that state of absolute luminosity, the sun and the moon and the stars do not shine. All the greatest radiance that we can think of in this world is like darkness before that supernal light. All the light that we can imagine in our mind is borrowed light – borrowed from that eternal light. The eternity itself does not require any light from the world. All light comes from that Supreme Being, and by Itself It is self-luminous. The whole world is illuminated by Its existence.

Yenedaṁ jānate sarvaṁ tatkenānyena jānatam, vijñātāraṁ kena vidyāt-śaktam vedye tu sādhanam (17). Yajnavalkya, the great seer of the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad, is quoted here in this verse. He declares that, “Where there is another, other than oneself, one can see the other. Where there is something other than oneself, one can hear the other, touch the other, taste the other, smell the other, and so on. Where there is nothing outside one's own consciousness, what will be seen there in front of oneself? Who will see what? Who will hear what? Who will touch

what? The universality of consciousness precludes any possibility of knowing that something is there outside.

While all things can be known by the knower, who can know the knower? If we say that the knower is known by another knower behind – the consciousness that knows the world is perhaps having another consciousness behind it – then who will be aware of that second consciousness? So we can go on arguing indefinitely by way of an infinite regress, where we will come to no conclusion. There is a consciousness behind consciousness; ultimately there is only consciousness, and nothing else.

Who can know That, with the help of which everything else is known here? Who can know the knower? *Vijñātāraṁ kena vidyāt-śaktaṁ vedye tu sādhanam*: Knowledge is possible only when there is something other than the principle of knowledge. When the principle of knowledge has flooded the whole cosmos, who will know what? There is just pure Eternal Subjectivity, the nature of consciousness.

Sa vetti vedyaṁ tat sarvaṁ nānyas tasy-āsti veditā, veditā-viditābhyāṁ tat pṛthag-bodha-svarūpakam (18). All that is to be known is known by it. That which cannot ordinarily be known by available means of knowledge also is known by it. Even the apparently unknowable is known by It. *Vidita* and *avidita* are the terms used in the Kenopanishad. *Vidita* is that which is known; *avidita* is not yet known. The not-yet-known may also be that which cannot be known.

The fact that we are asserting that something is incapable of being known implies our having known it in

some way. The negation of the knowledge of something is indirectly an acceptance of the possibility of knowing something, because no one can deny a non-existent thing. It must be there in some form; else, nobody will make a denial of it.

It is a universality that is covering the entire existence, part of which is the object of our empirical knowledge and the larger part of it is left unknown to empirical means of knowing – unknown because of the fact that our faculties (intellect, mind, etc.) have a limited area of action. Their jurisdiction is limited. They cannot go beyond the horizon of knowledge. That is the reason why we seem to know very little, and even that little that we know seems to be faulty knowledge. It is not a genuine and ultimately reliable thing.

But here is one principle behind us that is enveloping all things, outside as well as inside. By enveloping things outside, it becomes the source of the knowledge of objects externally there; and being inside everything, it becomes the source of knowledge itself. It connects the object with the subject because of its all-pervasiveness. It knows all things because it exists as the knower in each individual. It is the pure subjectivity in us and, therefore, it is the knower of all things.

On account of its universality, it also becomes the connecting link between the knower and the known. For the same reason, it also becomes the object itself, even as one single mass of water (which is the ocean) is at the back of the rising of one wave and another wave, wherein one collides with the other and also acts as the medium of the connection of one with the other. The one wave is the

ocean; the other wave is also the ocean. The action of colliding is also the ocean because of the ocean being there at the back, at the bottom of the two waves.

So is the case with this collision of consciousness, if we can put it in that way. The subjectivity aspect of it becomes the knowing principle, the objectivity aspect of it becomes the object of knowledge, and the link that is there as necessary for the purpose of knowing anything at all is also itself, as the ocean is between the two waves.

Bodhe'pya-nubhavo yasya na kathañcana jāyate, tañ kathañ bodhaye-cchāstrañ loṣṭañ nara-samā-kṛtim (19). After having said so much, if we say, "I cannot understand what consciousness is," it is impossible to instruct us. The author says if a person is more like a stone rather than an intelligent individual, what kind of instruction can be imparted to that person? Despite there being a direct perception of consciousness in daily life – which is obvious because of the very fact of knowing things – yet we put a question, "Where is consciousness?"

How could we put a question, "Where is consciousness?" unless we are already conscious of the question that we are raising? So the question becomes redundant. We cannot instruct a person who is unable to argue properly in a syllogistic manner, and who is like a person who has a tongue putting a question whether there is a tongue or not – because if there were no tongue, the question itself would not have arisen; he would not have spoken a word. So is the person who puts a question, "Is there consciousness?" If consciousness had not been there,

he would not have even spoken. Even the question would not have arisen.

Jivhā me'sti na vetyuktiḥ-lajjāyai kevalaṁ yathā, na budhyate mayā bodho boddhavya iti tādr̥ṣī (20). It is a meaningless, absurd question to ask whether the tongue exists or not because if the tongue is not there, how would we speak? Similar is this absurdity behind the question of whether consciousness can be known or not. It is directly known, and is at the background of even the question whether it can be known or not. It is at the background of even the doubt whether it exists or not. Therefore, any attempt at refuting the ultimate existence of consciousness is impossible.

This consciousness is the Atman. This is the pure Self. And inasmuch as it is not in one place only, it is not your Atman, my Atman and somebody else's Atman. It is the Atman of every little atom in the cosmos. Therefore, it is the universal Atman. Because of the universality of the Atman, we call it Brahman, the Absolute. When Brahman is conceived as the subjective principle of individuals, it is called Atman. When the Atman is known as an all-pervading Universal Principle, we call it Brahman. Therefore, Atman is Brahman.

Yasmin-yasminn-asti loke bodhas-tat-tad-upekṣaṇe, yad-bodha-mātraṁ tad-brahmeti-evaṁ dhīr-brahma-niścayaḥ (21). Here the author gives a practical suggestion for daily routine. We can eliminate the involvement of consciousness in objects by a little bit of concentration in daily life.

If you are aware that there is a tree in front of you, try to put a question to your own self: “Who is it that is aware that there is a tree in front?” Eliminate the objective aspect of the tree being there as something outside in space and time. Eliminate even the process of knowing, which also is in space and time. Also eliminate all the five sheaths through whose medium the consciousness seems to be aware that there is a tree outside. Go inside gradually, stage by stage: from the tree, withdraw into the process; from the process, withdraw into the perceptive organs; from the organs, go inside into the mind; from the mind, go into the intellect, and finally to that which is causing the intellect to shine.

The intellect and the mind are like mirrors. A mirror has no light of its own. A mirror does not shine by itself; it shines only when light falls on it. Similar is the case with the intellectuality, or the rationality, or the intelligence of the intellect. The intelligence in the intellect is the light that is shed on it, as on a mirror, by the Atman that is within, but because of the confusion that has taken place between the Atman and the medium which is the intellect, we begin to feel that we know things.

By a careful analysis of the objectivity involved in knowledge, we can go into the deeper subjectivity of it. This is the practice that we have to carry on every day in order that we may not get involved unnecessarily in the world of objects. This is called *Brahma-niscayah*, the ascertainment of the existence of Brahman. Every minute we have to be conscious that Brahman exists. It is another way of saying consciousness exists – not merely consciousness of mine or yours, but consciousness as such.

All knowledge, whether it is of a positive nature or a negative nature – by affirmation or negation, whatever it be – all knowledge is a manifestation of a principle that defies definition in any type of language. It is *Brahma-niscayah*.

Pañca-kośa parityāge sākṣi-bodhā-vaśeṣataḥ, svarūpaṁ sa eva syāt-śhūnyatvaṁ tasya durghaṭam (22). If we go deeper and deeper, from the physical body inwardly until we reach the causal body, and then eliminate contact even with the causal body itself, with great power of discrimination we will realise that we are there as an uncontaminated awareness.

The condition of deep sleep is a great instance here on the point. Ordinarily this kind of elimination of objectivity from consciousness is difficult. It is like peeling one's skin. We cannot do that. It is part of our body. How will we do it? So objects have become so much a part of our consciousness that this talk of eliminating objectivity from consciousness is impractical for all ordinary persons, unless there is assiduity behind the practice; and the success will be there only after years and years of such a practice.

It is only in deep sleep that we can have some inkling of the possibility of our being totally independent of connection with objects. Here is a practical illustration before us that we were there, isolated from objects of every kind in the world. Even if we were an emperor, a ruler of the whole world, with all the wealth of the continent – what does it matter? We have been isolated from it in deep sleep. All the glory of which people are generally proud vanishes in one second when they go to sleep because all this external glory is a foisted association. It is not the true

nature of oneself. In spite of there being no food to eat, nothing to drink, no money to touch, no friends to talk to, nothing that we can call our own – in that condition we are so happy, while we are miserable when we have so many things in the waking world. With all the appurtenances of life, people are grief-stricken, while with nothing available in sleep, we are very happy. Therefore, the possession of objects is not the source of happiness. The non-possession is the source of joy – so that when we possess nothing, not even the body, we remain as isolated, uncontaminated bliss. We have been in that state in deep sleep, but we never go into the mystery of what is happening to us. We get up in the morning, and what do we do? We plunge into the daily activity which was left unfinished the previous day. So the earliest activity of ours is work only, and then there is no thought of what actually happened to us in deep sleep.

In the early morning it is necessary for us to sit quiet for a few minutes and put a question to our own self, “Where was I for so many hours when I was not aware of myself? Was I aware? No. Was I existing? Yes.” In what condition were we existing?

We did not exist in sleep as an emperor of the world. We did not exist as a rich person or a poor person, neither as a healthy person nor as a sick person, neither this nor that. What was it that we were existing as? That is our essential nature. If contemplation of this kind can be carried on for a long time, we will really be detached from the world and we will want nothing afterwards. Everything will come to us spontaneously.

Asti tāvat-svayaṁ nāma vivādā-*viṣaya-tvataḥ*,
svasminn-*api vivādas-cet prativādy-atra ko bhavet* (23).
The conclusion, therefore, is: There is such a thing as the
Self. All this study has led us to the conclusion that there is
such a thing called the Self. It has to be there, and it is there.
It must be there; it is very clear that it is there. It is not the
object of argument, doubt or any kind of disputation
because argument, doubt and disputation are conducted by
the very consciousness about which we are carrying on this
disputation. Therefore, indubitable, indisputable, and
firmly established certainty is this Self which is not in
possession of consciousness, but is itself consciousness. The
Self is not conscious; the Self *is* consciousness. The very
substance of the Self is consciousness. If we can doubt our
own Self, then who can instruct us? Who can teach us?

No one doubts one's own Self. No one thinks, "Do I
really exist?" Nobody feels like that. The certainty that is
there at the back of one's feeling of one's own existence is
the proof of the Self being there. And the possibility of
existing even independent of the five sheaths in deep sleep
is proof enough of it being consciousness. So what is
established now is that there is the Self – and it is Pure
Consciousness.

Discourse 16

CHAPTER 3: PANCHA KOSHA VIVEKA – DISCRIMINATION OF THE FIVE SHEATHS, VERSES 21-37

Yasmin-yasminn-asti loke bodhas-tat-tad-upekṣaṇe, yad-bodha-mātram tad-brahmeti-evam dhīr-brahma-nīśayaḥ (21). Whatever be the object of consciousness in the process of perception, it should be incumbent upon the seeker of Truth to eliminate the consciousness aspect in perception from involvement in the object aspect of perception. There is an element which is the *seen* aspect; and there is another which is the *seer* aspect. Since the seen cannot become the seer, and the seer cannot become the seen, the conjunction of the two in the act of perception should naturally be considered as a sort of confusion taking place between the characteristics of the seeing consciousness and the seen object. The element of externality should be dissociated from consciousness, and the element of consciousness should be dissociated from the object. This is a difficult technique, but it is a very useful method: the dissociation of consciousness from objects.

Pañca-kośa parityāge sākṣi-bodhā-vaśeṣataḥ, svasvarūpaṁ sa eva syāt-śhūnyatvaṁ tasya durghaṭam (22). The dissociation of the five sheaths – the physical, vital, mental, intellectual and causal – from one's own conscious experience will land one in a state of pure featureless transparency of consciousness. And it should not be imagined that if the sheaths are eliminated from perception or experience, there would be nothing left, because the

consciousness of nothing is an impossibility. Consciousness must exist nevertheless.

Asti tāvat-svayaṁ nāma vivādā-viṣaya-tvataḥ, svasminn-api vivādas-cet prativādy-atra ko bhavet (23). There is such a thing called self. Every thing, every person, every living being in the world asserts its selfhood. There is a self-identity upheld by everyone. Nothing would like to become another thing. Even vegetation like a plant or a tree would not like to be interfered with in its desire to maintain itself as that particular thing, whatever it is. The crawling insect would like to be a crawling insect only. If we tell it, “I will convert you into an elephant,” it will not want it; an insect is an insect. The self-identity that a little creature, even a crawling ant, maintains is as vehement and as important to it as a mountainous mammoth would affirm in regard to its own self.

Nobody would like to become another person. What I am, I am; and what you are, you are. Neither can I be you, nor can you be me. One element cannot be another element. Every atom distinguishes itself from every other atom. This is the character of self-identity, or what we call selfhood. The self never wishes to become a not-self. This is the whole thing. *A* is *A*; *A* cannot be *B*. Such a thing called the self must exist, and it does exist.

Asti tāvat-svayaṁ nāma vivādā-viṣaya-tvataḥ: There cannot be any argument in regard to that, because any argument for or against will be an affirmation of the self once again – because whoever argues will be the self. And there is nothing beyond that. Svastinn-api vivādas-cet

prativādy-atra ko bhavet: Who can doubt one's own self? The doubter must exist, and that existence is the self.

Svāsattvaṁ tu na kasmai-cid-rocate vibhramaṁ vinā, ata eva śrutir-bādhaṁ brūte cā-sattva-vādiṇaḥ (24). Except in a state of delusion and complete chaos of thought, nobody would like to annihilate oneself. One cannot even imagine the non-existence of one's own self. The possibility of self-annihilation is the worst of things that one can imagine because it is contrary to the deepest root of our being. Neither would one wish self-annihilation, nor one would be able to imagine such a possibility. Ata eva śrutir-bādhaṁ brūte cā-sattva-vādiṇaḥ. The *sruti* of the Upanishad, therefore, contradicts any such possibility of the assertion of a non-entity, or vacuum, as the Ultimate Reality.

The Upanishad quoted here is the Taittiriya Upanishad, which says asaḍ-brahmeti ced-veda svayam-eva bhaved-asat, ato'sya mā bhūḍ-vedyatvaṁ sva-sattvaṁ tvabhyu peyatām (25). Whoever affirms the non-existence of Brahman would himself become non-existent, because that is the affirmation of the non-existence of one's own self. So we cannot deny God and then exist safely here. When God goes, we also go together with it. The denier of God will also go with the object that is denied.

The character of 'being known' cannot be found in the Self. It is never the known thing. It is a pure Knower. Let all things be known; but that which is the Knower of all things cannot itself be known. What kind of thing is the Self then? Neither is it of this kind, nor is it of that kind. What sort of definition can apply to the Pure Self?

Kīdṛk-tarhīti-cet-ṛcched-īdṛktā nāsti tatra hi, yad-anī-dṛg-atādṛk-ca tat-svarūpaṁ viniś-cinu (26). The Self is neither this nor that, because any kind of characterisation as ‘this’ or ‘that’ would be to attribute some quality to the Self which does not belong to it. Any definition of a thing is in terms of qualities that actually do not belong to that thing. The distinction of one thing from another thing in a definition is carried on by the association of certain qualities with that object – qualities which do not inhere in it, that belong to something else.

When we say some object is blue, the knowledge that something is blue can arise only when there are objects in the world which are not blue. If the whole universe is blue, there will be no perception of blueness. Therefore, the definition of an object in terms of quality has relevance by excluding characteristics which do not belong to itself – neither this, nor that. No such definition is possible in the case of the Atman.

Yad-anī-dṛg-atādṛk-ca tat-svarūpaṁ viniś-cinu: Know that which is neither of this character nor that character. How would we know that? The methods will be described in the forthcoming chapters.

Akṣāṇām viṣaya-stvī-dṛk-parokṣas-tādṛg-ucyate, viṣayi nākṣaviṣayaḥ svatvān-nāsyā parokṣatā (27). When we say, “This is something,” we are referring to something which is visible to the eyes. When we say, “That is something,” we are referring to something which is not visible to the eyes. Nearness and remoteness of objects are indicated by the demonstrative pronouns ‘this’ and ‘that.’ But the Self cannot be regarded either as something remote or as

something near. It is not remote because it is very near. But because of its universality, it looks like something remote.

Viṣayi nākṣaviṣayaḥ: That which is the seer of things cannot become the object of perception. Svatvān-nāśya parokṣatā: As it is the Self, it cannot be a remote object; and inasmuch as it is the Self, for the very same reason, it also cannot be an object of sensory perception. Neither is it a far-off thing, because of it being the soul of all beings, nor is it the perceptible object, because it is the perceiver itself. This is an intriguing character of the pure Selfhood.

Avedyo'pya-parokṣo'taḥ sva-prakāśo bhava-tyayam, satyaṁ jñānam-anantaṁ ceta-astīha brahmā-lakṣaṇam (28). Even if the Self is unknowable for reasons mentioned, it is capable of direct experience. Mediate, it cannot be known; immediately, it can be known. Mediate knowledge is that knowledge we acquire through the instrumentality of the sense organs. Immediate knowledge is that which we acquire independent of the operation of the sense organs. That is called insight. 'Intuition', '*anubhava*' are the terms used for this kind of non-mediate direct apprehension.

Avedyo'pya-parokṣo'taḥ sva-prakāśo bhava-tyayam. Though unknowable for the sense organs, the Self is knowable for other reasons because it is self-luminous. It does not require illumination from any other proof of knowledge. The Self, which is light in its essential nature, sheds its radiance to the sense organs; and with that borrowed light, the senses become conscious of that which is outside – the world, the objects, etc. But the Self is light itself. It does not require the assistance of any other

instrument to know itself. Self-knowledge is knowledge of the Self, by the Self. It needs no other assistance.

Satyam̃ jñānam-anantaṃ ceta-astīha brahmā-lakṣaṇam: The Taittiriya Upanishad has defined Brahman, the Absolute, as *satyam jnanam anantam*. Truth, knowledge, infinity is Brahman. Ultimate Truth is Brahman because it is unchangeable. Perishability is the character of untruth. Relativity is the character of untruth. Externality and objectivity is the character of untruth. Truth is all-pervading, self-luminous, non-relative, absolute. And because of its being the Universal Reality, it is also conscious. And because it is conscious of the universality of its being, it is also freedom.

Because of the freedom that is the nature of the true Self, which is all-pervading, it is bliss, *ananda*. Only when we are free will we be happy. And the greater is the freedom, the greater also is the joy that we will feel. The ultimate freedom is only in the experience of direct, Universal Selfhood. It is in that state that we have the immensity of the experience of eternal bliss. This is the characteristic of Brahman: *astīha brahmā-lakṣaṇam*.

Satyatvaṃ bādha-rāhityaṃ jagad-bādhaika-sākṣiṇaḥ, bādhaḥ kiṃ-sākṣiko brūhi na tva-sākṣika iṣyate (29). That which cannot be contradicted in the three periods of time can be regarded as Truth. Anything that passes away sometimes cannot be regarded as Truth. Today something is; tomorrow it is not there. That cannot be called Reality at all. In that sense, we will not find anything that is true in this world. Even the world has a beginning, and one day it will pass. Therefore, nothing in this world can be regarded

as finally true. It has a past, it has a future, and it has only a temporary present. The whole creation is of this nature. It is not the Ultimate Being. What is Ultimate Being? That which is uncontradicted in the three periods of time – past, present and future – that is *satya*, Truth. *Satyatvaṃ bādha-rāhityaṃ*: Non-contradiction is the test of Truth, according to logic.

Jagad-bādhaika-sākṣiṇaḥ, bādhaḥ kiṃ-sākṣika: that which reigns supreme as the witness of all the changes taking place in the cosmos. Who can be a witness of that greatness? This eternity reigned supreme even before the origin of time. Even before creation, God did exist. And who can define that Being, since all definition is in terms of things seen by us – things in this world?

Witness consciousness is the nature of the Self. It is the consciousness that is behind all kinds of perceptions, memories, feelings, etc. When all feelings, all apprehensions, all volitions cease, that survives. That persists. Even an imagination to the extent of the cessation of the whole of creation will be witnessed by a consciousness which is equally large.

The world is vast; creation is vast enough. To conceive such a vastness as space and time, there must be a consciousness which cannot be less vast than space and time. A little finite spark of consciousness cannot apprehend the vastness of space and time. We can imagine even infinitude. How could we, with a little mind working inside our skull, imagine what is endlessness unless there is a potentiality of endlessness in our own self? Our mind is

basically endless because it is a medium through which endless consciousness reflects itself.

Apanīteṣu mūrteṣu hyamūrtaṁ śiṣyate viyat, śakyeṣu bādHITE-ṣvante śiṣyate yattadeva tat (30). When we eliminate earth, water, fire, air, etc., we will find only empty space remains. We can stretch our imagination and feel the earth has gone, water has gone, fire has gone, air has gone. We will find space remains. We cannot feel that space also does not exist, because all thought is conditioned by space and time.

In the same way as there is a residuum of space consciousness when all the other elements are eliminated by the rejection process, we will find that there is something remaining cosmically operative when all perceptible objects, including the five elements, are done away with. When the whole cosmos is not there in front of us, there will be a consciousness that knows the absence of cosmos. That consciousness is cosmic consciousness, which is the nature of the Self.

Sarva bādhe na kiñcic-ceḍ-yanna kiñcit-taḍeva tat, bhāṣā evātra bhidyante nirbādhaṁ tāva-dasti hi (31). When everything goes, the objector will again say that there does not appear to be anything remaining at all; nothing remains. But as we already mentioned, it appears that consciousness of nothing is itself consciousness, so do not bring in that point again and again.

Ata eva śrutirbādhyam bādhitvā śeṣaya-tyadaḥ, sa eṣa neti netyeātmeti-atad-vyāvṛtti rūpataḥ (32). The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad says *neti-neti*. Brahman cannot be known by any positive definition. We cannot say, “It is

like this,” because it is not like anything that we have seen in the world. Then how can we define it? By eliminating everything that is possible of conception – ‘not this’: It is not that which can be seen with the eyes; it is not that which can be heard with the ears; it is not that which can be tasted with the tongue; it is not that which can be sensed in any manner whatsoever. It is not that which we think in our mind; it is not that which our intellect is arguing about. Thus we eliminate all the possible objectivity and conceptualisation. Let something remain after eliminating all thought, all feeling, all volition, and all objects. Something will remain. Concentrate on that residual basic Being.

Idaṁ-rūpaṁ tu yadyāvat-tat-tyaktuṁ śakyate’khilam, aśakyo hyanidaṁ-rūpaḥ sa ātmā bādha-varjitaḥ (33). We can eliminate all things that we can see with our eyes. “I don’t want this, I don’t want that. I shall leave this, and I shall go elsewhere. I shall have that thing.” We can go on eliminating, relatively speaking, things in this world, and move to some other thing. But here is a kind of elimination that is expected of us, which is elimination of all things. It is not moving from one place to another place. It is not rejecting something and acquiring something else. It is an elimination of all possible conceptualisation and objectification, including this body-consciousness.

Objectification does not mean only the consciousness of that which is far away. Even this body is an object because we can see it. We can sense it; we can feel it; we can touch it. Inasmuch as sensation is the means of knowing the existence of this body, the body also should be considered

as an object. So when the elimination process of objectivity is carried on, it does not mean that we ignore the world and cling to our body. When the world goes, our body also has to go with the world, because the body is constituted of the same five elements as the world. When the world has gone, this body also has gone with it.

What remains is pure awareness of the fact of everything having gone away. The consciousness of 'everything having gone' remains. We will not be non-existent. We will be aware that something is there, but not this body. We have already studied in the earlier chapters that we are wrongly imagining that we are this physical sheath and other sheaths by a confusion of characters. It is only in the state of deep sleep that we are having some inkling as to the fact that there is a chance of our existing independent of the sheaths. Minus all the sheath-consciousness, we are existing in the state of deep sleep. It is only there that we are able to have some idea as to what we are really; but in all other states we are confused with identity of the physical sheaths and other sheaths.

Siddham brahmaṇi satyatvaṃ jñānatvaṃ tu pureritam, svayam-evā-nubhū-titvā-dityādi-vacanaḥ sphuṭam (34). What do we conclude now? The establishment of the existence of Brahman is certain. We have attained the certainty and an incontrovertible truth of there being such a thing called non-relative Being. While everything is relative, there is something non-relative in order to be aware that things are relative. We say the whole world is relative. But that thing which knows the relativity of things itself is not relative. Change does not know itself. The

knowledge of change arises on account of there being something which does not change.

We cannot know motion unless we ourselves are not in a state of motion. If everything was moving and everything was relative, there would be no one to know that something is moving and something is relative. The consciousness of the transitoriness of things and the relativity of objects itself cannot be relative. Else, there would be no one to say that things are relative or something is transient. Such a certainty has been established.

Siddham brahmaṇi satyatvaṃ jñānatvaṃ tu pureritam. We have already concluded that our nature is Pure Consciousness. Svayam-evā-nubhū-titvā-dityādi-vacanaīḥ sphuṭam. In earlier sections we have repeated the same truth that the Self is Consciousness. This has been the subject of study right from the first chapter. Self Consciousness means the Self being Consciousness itself in its essence. It does not shine due to some other factor being associated with it. It is not like a bulb shining. A bulb does not shine; it shines because of some other thing moving through it. But the Self does not require any other externalised association, for it is that flame which requires no oil or wick. Eternity is the radiance of the Self.

Na vyāpitvāt dyeśato'nto nityatvān-nāpi kālataḥ, na vastuto'pi sārvātmyād-ānantyaṃ brahmaṇi tridhā (35). It is not limited either by space, time, or object. There are things in the world which can be found in one place, but they cannot be found in other places. Such things which can be seen in one place only and not in all places are said to be limited by space. There are certain things which can

be found in certain conditions – in some season, for instance. We cannot see them always; this is the limitation by time. And certain things are totally different from certain other things; that is limitation by objectivity. Things are limited in three ways: by space, time, and object. That we are in one place and not in another place is limitation by space. That we are at some time but not always is limitation by time. That we are somebody and not somebody else is limitation by personality, individuality, objectivity.

These limitations do not obtain in Brahman. Brahman is all-pervading; therefore, it is not limited by space. It is there endlessly, timelessly; therefore, it is not limited by time. It is pervading all things; therefore, it is not limited by any object. Neither space, time, nor objectivity can limit Brahman. Always it is unlimited, in every way.

So the infinity of Brahman is of three kinds – spacelessness is one kind of infinity, timelessness is another kind of infinity, and objectlessness is the third kind of infinity – whereas we are limited in all the three ways. We human beings, individuals, are the direct contradiction of this Ultimate Reality because we are bound by space, time, individuality, and the body.

Deśa-kālāyṇa-vastūnām kalpita-tvācca māyayā, na deśādi-kṛto'ntosti brahmā nantyaṃ sphuṭaṃ tataḥ (36). “Endless is Brahman,” is what we have said because the problem has arisen on account of there being something called space outside; and as we know, time goes together with space. When we think of space, time also comes there – as it happens in dream, for instance.

How did space arise in dream? Where was the time factor in dream? How did things appear to be outside us in dream? There was no space, actually speaking. The distance that we see between ourselves and an object outside in dream is a false imagination of the mind. One can feel, in dream, that one is caught in a forest and a tiger is pursuing; and the person in dream runs and climbs a tree. The tiger is a modification of the mind of the dreamer. The fright also is a modification of the mind of the dreamer. The tree also is manufactured by the very same mind. The tree is different from the tiger and one's own self, and that difference also is created by the same mind. The action of climbing the tree also is a mental activity. This is an illustration to show how things are in this physical world also, though it is an empirical reality, in contradistinction with the dream reality.

Even as the individual mind has wrongly projected a space in dream and imagines a tree or a tiger, an elephant or a mountain, and gets caught in the false joys and sorrows of the dream life, so the scriptures say the Cosmic Mind is dreaming, as it were, this whole world. And you and I are the dream objects of this Cosmic Mind. We have friends and enemies even in dream. We see many people, big societies in dream. Do we not see people in dream? All those persons, all the things, all the objects that we see in dream are manufactured by our dreaming consciousness. The externality, the totality, the integrality, the reality – all these things in dream are actually the big drama that is played by the waking consciousness. When we wake up, all

these things get merged into the waking mind, and we do not see any one of them in the waking state.

So is the principle of Self-realisation. This Cosmic Mind dreams, as it were, this vast world of difference – of space, time and objects, including our own selves. When the consciousness of objectivity is withdrawn, the individual minds merge into the Cosmic Mind, and that is the real waking from this dream of the world. There we will find no world at all. All this great wonder, this dramatic performance of this earthly life will vanish into thin air, just as all the problems of the dream world vanished in a second when we woke up into waking consciousness. So too, the entire earth-consciousness will vanish when our individual mind merges into the Cosmic Mind, which is called ‘the real waking’.

Satyam̐ jñānam-anantaṁ yad-brahma tad-vastu tasya tat, īśvaratvaṁ ca jīvatvam-upādhi-dvaya-kalpitaṁ (37). We shall take up this subject tomorrow.

Discourse 17

CHAPTER 3: PANCHA KOSHA VIVEKA – DISCRIMINATION OF THE FIVE SHEATHS, VERSES 37-43

Satyam̐ jñānam-anantaṁ yad-brahma tad-vastu tasya tat, īśvaratvaṁ ca jīvatvam-upādhi-dvaya-kalpitaṁ (37). The Supreme Brahman, the Absolute – this Universal Existence which has neither anything inside nor outside – such a Being is regarded by us as the creator of the world on the one hand, and as having become all the individuals in creation on the other hand.

When this Supreme Brahman is visualised as the cause of this universe, Brahman is known as Ishvara, the creative principle. When the same Brahman is viewed as the principle immanent in every living being in the world, in all individualities, it goes by the name of *jiva*. Ishvara is the cosmic manifestation of Brahman; *jiva* is the individualised manifestation of Brahman. Only our viewpoints differ; and on account of the differences in viewpoint caused by the extension and all-pervading nature of Ishvara and the limited location of the *jiva*, or the individual, we make such a distinction.

Really, there is no such distinction in Brahman. The difference between Ishvara and *jiva* – God and the individual – is, according to one analogy, something like the distinction we draw between cosmic space and the space that is imagined to be contained within a vessel. The vessel ether is very limited within the walls of the vessel; the cosmic ether is not so limited. The consciousness of Brahman is limited within the five sheaths – about which

we have made some study earlier. When this Universal consciousness of Brahman appears to be contained within the five sheaths, as it were, it goes by the name of individual consciousness, *jiva* consciousness, isolated consciousness.

When the very same Brahman, the Absolute consciousness, is cast in the mould of the creative will that is at the back of all manifestation, we call that consciousness God, the creator, Ishvara. Therefore, the distinction between Ishvara and *jiva* is created by a kind of *upadhi*, or adjunct – cosmic adjunct and individual adjunct, differing one from the other.

When we view Brahman as pervading the whole cosmos and determining its activities – creating it, preserving it, and destroying it – we call it Ishvara. When the same Brahman is reflected through the physical individuality of the five sheaths, we call the same Brahman as *jiva*. This is, therefore, a tentative distinction that is drawn between Ishvara and *jiva*, by the situation of the *jiva* himself.

Īśvaratvam ca jīvatvam-upādhi-dvaya-kalpitam: *Maya* and *avidya* are the two *upadhis*, on account of whose operation, distinction is drawn between Ishvara and *jiva*. The cosmic determining factor is *maya*; the individual determining factor is *avidya*.

We have to remember everything that we have studied earlier because the subject here is so intricate and concentrated that what has been told earlier will not be repeated afterwards. So people who come casually to listen to these lectures and go away the day after tomorrow will not know at all what it is that is being said. And there is a disadvantage in easily listening to these things piecemeal –

because half knowledge is a dangerous thing, as they say. Either we study it thoroughly, or we do not listen to it.

As it has already been explained earlier, *maya* is the *shuddha sattva pradhan* of *prakriti*, the cosmic determining factor through which the Universal Brahman is reflected and becomes the *jiva* or the Ishvara – the creative principle of God, and is the very same thing reflected through *avidya*, which is predominantly *rajasic* and *tamasic*. *Malina sattva* is submerged and becomes the *jiva*, or the individual. This is the distinction between *maya* and *avidya*, determining Ishvara on the one side and *jiva* on the other side.

Śaktir-asty-aiśvarī kācit-sarva-vastu-niyāmikā, ānanda-mayam-ārbhya gūḍhā sarveṣu vastuṣu (38). There is a tremendous power called *shakti* in this cosmos, right from the causal body down to the individual physical body. And right from Ishvara down to Virat there is a deciding principle operating everywhere in the whole of creation, in all nature – due to which, everything happens in the manner it has to happen. Nothing happens in the way it should not happen. Everything in the world happens exactly in the way it ought to happen.

Human individuals that we are cannot understand that this is the truth. We, many a time, feel that things that ought not to have happened have taken place. We complain against God and nature. Many times we feel that things which did not take place ought to have happened. “This man ought to have been promoted. He has been demoted. Great injustice is being caused. This man ought to have been punished, and he is promoted.” This also exists. “The world does not seem to be kind to people. God has not

created a good world. Either God has no eyes, or He is not God at all.” All kinds of difficulties arise in the human individual, sunk in ignorance of the universal power that is operating ubiquitously and impartially everywhere.

Such a power exists in nature, due to which plants grow, oceans have tidal waves, rivers flow, mountains rise up, and the sun and the moon shine and rise and set in the proper way. Everything is precise and mathematically correct. The best of things and the worst of things are all destined by the requirement of the operation of the universal nature, into whose mysteries man has no way to enter. That is why we are complaining.

Such a power does exist, says the author. Śaktir-astyaiśvarī kācit-sarva-vastu-niyāmikā: The determining factor of all things is the *shakti*, or the power of God; and it is operating through all the sheaths, right from the causal onwards, and is operating even in the cosmos, right from Ishvara downwards.

Vastu-dharmā niyamyeran śaktyā naiva yadā tadā, anyonya-dharma-sāṅkaryād-viplaveta jagat-khalu (39). If this *shakti* were not to operate in a systematic, precise manner, chaos would take place. Someone said, “If this world has a creator at all, he must be a devil. Such a wretched world is this that its creator, if at all there is a creator, must be a demon of the first water.” Another philosopher gave a reply to it. “This world is not created by a demon. It is created by God. If a demon had created the world, do you know what would happen to you?” The philosopher gave a humorous answer as a retort to the feeling of the man who said that a demon must have

created the world because of the sufferings and wretchedness that we see here. “But if a devil had created the world, do you know what would have happened? With every step that you take, the ground would split into pieces. It does not happen. Therefore, a devil has not created it. If you touched any leaf in the tree, it would cut you like a knife. It does not happen. Therefore, a devil has not created the world. If you drank water, it would burn you like molten metal. That does not happen. Therefore, God has created the world.”

Some such answer is very humorous, and draws a distinction between a devil and God. The idea of devil, evil, and the necessity and the non-necessity of things – the great comments that we pass on the creation of this world – are actually unwarranted on the part of people who have no knowledge of anything. We should say nothing unless we are cosmically aware. Only Cosmic consciousness has the right to make statements; and as no human being is cosmically conscious, nobody should pass judgements on anything in this world. Judge not, lest ye be judged.

There would be tremendous confusion if this universal *shakti* were not to work systematically. There is, after all, a cosmic justice operating in the minutest of things, though we may not be able to understand what it is that is working. We are unilateral in our thinking, partial in our outlook, and incapable of thinking in a universal manner. Therefore, these secrets are not accessible to us.

Cicchāyā-veśataḥ śaktiśr-cetaneva vibhāti sā, tac-chaktayu pādhi-saṁyogāt-brahmaive śvaratām vrajet (40). Brahman is apparently considered as Ishvara, or the

creative principle, when the Brahman consciousness reflects itself through the cosmic property of *prakriti* – which is *sattva*, as has already been mentioned. On account of the *upadhi*, or adjunct, which is cosmic *sattva*, Brahman appears as Creator, Preserver, Destroyer – Brahma, Vishnu, Siva, Ishvara.

Kośo-pādhi-vivakṣāyām yāti brahmaiva jīvatām, pitā pitāmahaś-caikaḥ putra-pautrau yathā pratī (41). If the cosmic *maya*, which is *shuddha sattva*, becomes the cause of God – Brahman appearing as Ishvara – the very same policy is followed here in the creation of the *jīva*, or the individual. That is, when Brahman is reflected through the five sheaths – the physical, vital, mental, intellectual, and causal – the Universal Brahman appears like a man walking on the street.

In the Svetasvatara Upanishad there is a mantra which says, *tvam strī tvam pumān asi, tvam kumāra uta vā kumārī; tvam jīrno daṇḍena vañcasi, tvam jato bhavasi viśvato-mukhaḥ* (Svet 4.3): “Lord, you are the boy; you are the girl; you are the old man tottering on the road with a stick in hand. Thus Thou deceivest everybody.” A devotee cries, “God, You deceive us by appearing like a school boy, as a girl walking on the road, and as a man with a bent back leaning on a stick, crawling with weakness. With these appearances You are trying to deceive us; but we know that it is You appearing as these things. You look like the little boy and girl, and the man with the bent back. Deceivest Thou everyone here, by putting on the appearance of an old hunchback with a stick, while Thou art really Universal, all pervading.”

Somebody is called a father, and the same person is called a grandfather in relation to his grandson. The designations of the human being are relative to circumstances in connection with things outside. A person is an official, a person is rich, a person is poor, a person is a father, a person is a mother. These are relative descriptions of a single individual who, by himself or herself is independent – unrelated, basically.

Putrā-dera-vivakṣāyām na pitā na pitāmahaḥ, tad-van-neśo nāpi jīvaḥ śakti-kośā'vivakṣaṇe (42). If the son is not there, we cannot call a person a father. If the grandson is not there, we cannot call the person a grandfather. So there is no such thing as father and grandfather. They are only names that we employ to describe the social situation of a person in relation to something relevant.

Tad-van-neśo nāpi jīvaḥ śakti-kośā'vivakṣaṇe. In the same way, Ishvara and *jīva* do not exist. Does a father exist? If the son is there, the father must be there. If the grandson is there, the grandfather also is there. If *maya* (*sattva guna* of *prakṛiti*) does exist, and Brahman is cast in the mould of that *sattva*, Ishvara does exist. But if that *maya sattva guna* does not exist, Ishvara does not exist. If the five sheaths exist, individual being exists; if the five sheaths do not exist, the individual also does not exist. So the existence of the creative principle of God and the individuality of persons is conditioned by the *upadhis*, or limiting adjuncts, without which they do not exist at all, just as father and grandfather do not exist unless there are children and grandchildren.

Ya evaṁ brahmā vedaiṣa brahmaiva bhavati svayam, brahmaṇo nāsti janmātaḥ punareṣa na jāyate (43).

Whoever knows Brahman in the manner described in these verses becomes Brahman itself. We will not become Brahman merely by hearing it. We have to hear, we have to contemplate deeply after hearing it, then sink these ideas into our feeling, merge these ideas into our experience, and we veritably become an experience of this knowledge. Knowledge that we have gained by study becomes part of our very nature. We become Brahman because our thought is fixed in Brahman. What we think we are, that we really are. If our thought is always of Brahman, we cannot be anything else.

Brahmaṇo nāsti janmātaḥ: Brahman has no birth; therefore, one who knows Brahman also will not be reborn. Punareṣa na jāyate: Only those who are identified in their consciousness with Brahman will not be reborn. Otherwise, we will have the same transmigratory sorrow which we are experiencing now and which we have been experiencing since many ages past. If we want to put an end to this grief-stricken earthly involvement, may our consciousness get rooted in Brahman. With this, we conclude the third chapter.

CHAPTER 4: DVAITA VIVEKA – DISCRIMINATION OF DUALITY, VERSES 1-9

The fourth chapter is called Dvaita Viveka, the discrimination between the nature of the world as created by Ishvara, or God, and the world of bondage that is deliberately created by the individual – that is to say, the objective world and the subjective world. Realistic and idealistic, metaphysical and psychological are the distinctions we may make, if we wish to.

The world of Ishvara is a metaphysical existence in the sense that it is really there even if we do not think of it. But there is a world which we are creating by our mental reaction in regard to the world of Ishvara. That is our bondage, called *jiva srishti*. *Ishvara srishti* is God's creation; *jiva srishti* is man's creation. The distinction between these two is drawn in this chapter, the fourth, known as Dvaita Viveka: Duality of Creation. Ishvara's creation and *jiva*'s creation – this duality is distinguishable, and its nature is studied.

Īśvareṇ-āpi jīvena sṛṣṭam dvaitam vivicyate, viveke sati jīvena heyo bandhaḥ sphuṭi-bhavet (1). There seems to be a distinction between man's creation and God's creation. We must now study what this distinction is. How does man's creation differ from God's creation? If this distinction can become clear to our consciousness, we may perhaps be able to free ourselves from the bondage of life.

The muddle that we have created in our own minds by confusing between our creation and God's creation is the

source of sorrow. Let us distinguish between the two and see if we can be free from the sorrow of life.

Māyāṁ tu prakṛtiṁ vidyāt-māyinaṁ tu maheśvaram, sa māyī sṛjati-tyāhuḥ śvetāśvatara-śākhinaḥ (2). The Svetasvatara Upanishad says, “God creates the world like a magician; and *prakṛiti* – the so-called *prakṛiti* about which we have hearing so much through the Sankhya and other philosophies – is the medium of the expression of that magical power of God. The Vedanta doctrine considers *prakṛiti* as a magical power of God, and not a totally independent existence as the Sankhya classical doctrine would hold. Therefore, the Svetasvatara Upanishad says, “*Prakṛiti* is *maya*; *maya* is *prakṛiti*.” *Maya* is another name for *prakṛiti*. *Maya* is another name that Vedanta uses for the very substance that is called *prakṛiti* of three *gunas*. *Maya* has three *gunas*, and *prakṛiti* has three *gunas*: *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*.

Māyinaṁ tu maheśvaram: The magic of *maya* is wielded by the magician, Ishvara. Ishvara is the magician. Sa māyī sṛjati-tyāhuḥ śvetāśvatara-śākhinaḥ: The Svetasvatara doctrines tell us that God, the magician, performed this magical trick of creation, and He can withdraw it if He wants, just as a magician can withdraw his tricks anytime.

The various doctrines and stories of creation adumbrated in the various Upanishads are now mentioned briefly in the following verses. How is this world created? Different Upanishads say different things. What do they say? These views held by the different Upanishads regarding creation are stated here.

Ātmā vā idam agre'bhūt sa īkṣata sṛjā iti, saṁkalpenā sṛjallokān sa etāniti bahvṛcāḥ (3). The Aitareya Upanishad says that the universal Atman alone was there. It willed, "Let me create this world." In the beginning of creation, there was nothing except the Atman. It willed, as it were, "Let me become many." It *willed*. That is important to note. And by the way of mere will, it manifested all these worlds of five elements – earth, water, fire, air and ether. This is briefly the statement made by the Aitareya Upanishad of the Rig Veda.

Khaṁ-vāyvagni-jalorvyoṣadhi-annadehāḥ kramādāmī, saṁbhūtā brahmaṇas-tasmād-etasmādātmano'khillāḥ (4). Bahusyāham-evātaḥ prajāyey-eti kāmataḥ, tapas-taptvā'sṛjat-sarvaṁ jagad-ity-āha tittiriḥ (5). The Taittiriya Upanishad has another doctrine altogether. It says satyaṁ jñānam anantam brahma (Tait 2.1.1): Truth, knowledge, infinity is the Absolute. It was alone there. Suddenly it willed; it became space. It became emptiness, the repository of further creation. Space became air, air became fire, fire became water, water became earth. Earth produced all the vegetables, plants, trees, etc. – the articles of diet for living beings; and the food that we eat becomes the substance of this physical body, which is verily constituted of the very food that we eat. This is the kind of creation that the Taittiriya Upanishad describes gradually.

This physical body of our individuality is constituted of the stuff of the diet that we take, which is mainly that which is drawn from the vegetable and plant kingdom which grow on the earth – which is the condensed form of water, which is the condensed form of fire, which is the friction created

by air, which is the movement in space, which is the will of God. This is the series, the linkage of the creational process.

Thus, the Atman has become all these things. “May I become the many.” The Atman willed in this manner. But the Taittiriya Upanishad describes it in a different manner. It willed, and that will is called *tapas*. The universal concentration of Brahman consciousness is the original *tapas*, whose heat manifested this world of five elements; thus the Taittiriya Upanishad tells us.

Idam-agre sad-evāsīd-bahutvāya tad-aikṣata, tejo’bannāṇḍa jādīni sasarjeti ca sāmagāh (6). The Chhandogya Upanishad has another story altogether. “Pure Being alone was,” the Upanishad says. Pure Being agitated, as it were. It set up a vibration within itself, and the vibration condensed itself into the formative principles called *śabda*, *sparsa*, *rupa*, *rasa* and *gandha*, which concretised into the five gross elements of earth, water, fire, air and ether. This is briefly what a section of the Sama Veda – namely, the Chhandogya Upanishad – tells us about creation.

Viśphuliṅgā yathā vahner jāyante’kṣaratastathā, vividhāścijjāḍā bhāvā ityāthar vaṇikī śrutiḥ (7). The Mundaka Upanishad, which is a part of the Atharva Veda, says: “Creation is something like sparks emanating from a large conflagration of fire. For instance, millions and millions of sparks jet forth when there is a huge forest fire. In a similar manner, the cosmic fire of God’s will ejects millions of sparks – scintillating, having in their essence the same quality of God, but individually scattered in different directions as parts of a whole. As sparks emanate from fire,

individuals emanate from God. This is the Mundaka Upanishad doctrine.

Even the inanimate objects are manifestations of consciousness only. The Upanishad here reconciles the so-called contradictory doctrines of materialism and idealism, realism and idealism, pragmatism and philosophy, etc. The so-called unconscious things in the world are not really bereft of consciousness. Consciousness is said to sleep in unconscious matter such as stone. It is sleeping; but it is still there. This very consciousness which is sleeping in inanimate things like stone breathes in plants and vegetables. It starts dreaming in animals. It starts thinking clearly in the human individual. The same consciousness is there in everything, whether it is animate or inanimate.

Jagad-avyākṛtaṁ pūrvam-āsīḍ-vyākriyatādhunā, dṛśyābhyām nāma-rūpābhyāṁ virāḍādiṣu te sphuṭe (8). Virāṇ-manur-naro gāvaḥ kharā-śvā jāvayas tathā, pipīlikā vadhi dvandvam iti vājasa neyinaḥ (9). The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad tells us that creation took place in this manner. Originally, it was an undifferentiated mass. Scientists call it nebular dust. Nebular dust has no shape; it is a pervasive potential. It is disturbed. Nobody can say why it is disturbed. The *sattva-rajās* doctrine is not known to scientists. There is something taking place. The heat of all the galaxies, the stars, the sun, and the black holes or the white holes, as they say, are all condensation of this original nebular dust. Such a condition is unmanifest.

The Manu Smṛiti tells us: In the beginning, what was there? Darkness only prevailed. No light was there, because light is condensation of energy. Unless there is a

disturbance in the distribution of heat, there will be no energy available for action. This is the entropy theory of modern physics. If there is equal distribution of heat, the whole universe will become cold in one instant. There is concentration of heat in some places, and that becomes the stars, that becomes the sun, that becomes fire. But if we distribute the entire available heat in the whole cosmos equally, it will be cold, and there will be the end of creation.

Similarly, the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad tells us about the creation of the universe as having been totally unmanifest, once upon a time. Then it became manifest by gradual condensation into name and form, specification into individuality, visible or even invisible. This Cosmic Unmanifest becomes the well-known principles of Ishvara, Hiranyagarbha and Virat, whose natures we will be studying in the sixth chapter of the Panchadasi, which will come later.

Such is the way in which this original Unmanifest gets revealed in detail, that not only does it become Ishvara, Hiranyagarbha and Virat cosmically, it becomes the denizens in heaven. It becomes the angels and the fairies and the gods in the higher regions. It becomes the demons and devils or evil persons, as we think. It becomes human beings. It becomes plants and animals. It becomes even the ants that are crawling. The consciousness of Brahman goes even to that level in creation. This is what the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad tells us. There are varieties of theories of creation.

Discourse 18

CHAPTER 4: DVAITA VIVEKA – DISCRIMINATION OF DUALITY, VERSES 10-26

We have, in earlier verses of this chapter, seen how the different Upanishads describe the process of creation in different ways. The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad says that the world came from God in one way. The Taittiriya Upanishad says something different; and so do the other Upanishads, such as the Mundaka and Chhandogya. Anyway, whatever be the difference in the minor details, whatever be the speciality that can be seen in the wordings of the different Upanishads, the program of creation in its general perspective has been stated to be the same. This whole universe, this manifestation, this creation, is an appearance of God Himself. This is the conclusion.

Kṛtvā rūpāntaram jaivam dehe prāviśad-īśvaraḥ, iti tāḥ śrutayaḥ prāhur jīvatvaṁ prāṇadhāraṇāt (10). Particularly the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad says that after having cosmically entered the whole of creation in His immanence, the Supreme Being entered each individual person also. Every little particle, every small creation, every human individual has the element of this Supreme Universality in it, in some modicum, in some degree, in some way.

The only difference is – a tremendous difference indeed which has to be taken note of – when God has entered the cosmos, nothing drastically different has taken place, in the same way as a face reflected in a clean mirror gives a fairly good picture of the original without being distorted in any way. So too in the cosmic setup of things, where everything is universally construed, the reflection of Brahman

Consciousness therein also presents a universal appearance, so that Ishvara is Cosmic-conscious. The *jiva* is not Cosmic-conscious, in spite of the fact that the very same Brahman is manifesting itself as the individual. The very same Brahman is reflected in the cosmic substance and becomes Ishvara. The very same thing enters the *jiva*, and yet tremendously marks a difference between Ishvara and *jiva*.

The difference is that *rajas* and *tamas* do not dominate in Ishvara. There is no duality, no multiplicity-consciousness because the distracting, dividing factor (*rajas*) is absent in Ishvara. Nor is it ignorant, like the *jiva*, because *tamas* is absent in Ishvara. There is only *shuddha sattva pradhana*, pure *sattva* of *prakriti*. So there is transparency in the whole of creation, as far as Ishvara is concerned. But there is a mix-up and muddle in the case of the *jiva*, because the *sattva guna* is buried deep down by the action of *rajas* and *tamas* in the *jiva* individual.

Caitanyaṁ yada-dhiṣṭhānaṁ liṅga-dehaś-ca yaḥ punaḥ, cicchāyā liṅga-dehasthā tatsaṁgho jīva ucyaṭe (11). What is the *jiva*, we may ask? How does it differ from Ishvara? The definition of *jiva* is given here in this Verse 11. Pure Consciousness of Brahman at the back; its reflection through the intellect, and the reflection of the same through the subtle body consisting of the mind and the sense organs, put together constitute what we call individuality.

Individuality is a very intriguing term. It is a mix-up of different elements. The individual – ourselves, myself, and everybody – are not simple substances. They are complexes, constituting different elements. Firstly, the individual has to

be conscious. That is the distinction between a human being and other inanimate creatures. The consciousness aspect of the human individual comes from the very same Brahman consciousness that illumines Ishvara cosmically. But there is something else in the individual which is not just consciousness. There is a limiting, finitising faculty which is the intellect, a product of *rajas* and *tamas*. So the universal consciousness of Brahman passes through a little aperture of the limited intellect, as it were, and we have only a small consciousness of our being an individual totally isolated from others.

The light of the sun in the vast clear sky is an indivisible mass radiating throughout space. But suppose we have a curtain with a hundred little holes. The vast light of the sun which is indivisibly spread in all space will be seen to be peeping through a little hole, and each peek of the streak of light will be different from another, according to the size or even according to the medium that may be there in this little hole. One single universal light of the sun may look like different little streaks of light, different in quantity as well as quality – different in quantity because of the many holes, and in quality because of the difference in the media through which it passes.

So we are different from one another not only in quantity, but also in quality. This great tragedy has befallen the *jiva*, distinguishing it from the great, grand cosmic Ishvara. This is the definition of individuality or *jiva*.

Māheśvarītu māyā yā tasyā nimārṇa śaktivat, vidyate mohā śaktiś-ca taṁ jīvaṁ mohayaty-asau (12). As *maya* cosmically becomes the instrument of universal

activity of Ishvara, its distorted individualised form which is *avidya* becomes the confounding medium in the *jiva*. *Avidya* is confounding, while *maya* is cosmically reflecting universal consciousness. Here is again another aspect of the difference between Ishvara and *jiva*.

Mohād-anīśatām prāpya magno vapuṣi śocati, īśa-sṛṣṭam-idaṁ dvaitaṁ sarvam-uktaṁ samāsataḥ (13). Due to delusion, immersion in this distorting medium of *avidya*, the individual weeps in sorrow, helplessly lodged in this body, finite in every way, and with no strength of its own to change this world on account of the predomination of *rajas* and *tamas* and the absence of *sattva guna*. Human beings that we are, we rarely think in clear terms. There is always confused thinking. There is no proper consideration of the pros and cons of issues. We suddenly jump to conclusions on account of the action of *rajas* and *tamas*. Pure impersonal judgment is rarely made by people on account of the fact that the *sattva guna* very rarely manifests itself.

Up to this time, whatever we have said is the description of God's creation. There is another creation called individual creation. God's creation does not cause trouble to anybody. God is not a troublemaker, because Universality does not create problems. Problems arise on account of individual consciousness. So whatever we have said up to this time is the work of Universal Ishvara, down to His entry into every little individuality. *Īśa-sṛṣṭam-idaṁ dvaitaṁ sarvam-uktaṁ samāsataḥ*: The author says, "Up to this time I have briefly told you how God has created the world and in what way He has entered every little particle."

Now comes the other story – namely, the story of the *jiva*, or the individual, which also creates a world of its own. There is a world under every hat, as people generally say. Everybody has his own view of the world. No two persons will completely think alike, on account of the difference in the structure of the mind itself. Various karmas are the causes behind it.

The same thing evokes different emotions in different persons – the same thing, which will be described in the further verses. Different reactions are produced from the mind of different people in respect of one single object only, on account of the varieties of the structural pattern of their emotions and their intellects.

Saptāna brāhmaṇe dvaitaṁ jīvasṛṣṭaṁ prapañc itam, annāni sapta jñānena karmaṇā'janayat pita (14). In the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad, a statement has been made that there are seven kinds of diet, called *saptanna*. *Anna* is a food. Ishvara does not require food, but *jivas* require food. The limitation, the finitude of individuality cries for the means to make good this lacuna that is felt by its finite individuality. We cannot rest with finitude even for a moment. We struggle hard from moment to moment to overcome the barrier of this finitude in various ways.

The ways that we adopt are generally contacts with certain things in the world, which act like plastering the falling citadel of this finitude of personality, as we try to support an old wall by plastering it again and again. So every day we have to plaster this body by diet of some kind or other; otherwise, it will croak and fall down. Now, what are the diets?

God has created seven kinds of diet, says the Upanishad. Martyāna mekaṁ devāne dve paśvannaṁ caturthakam, anyat tritayam ātmārtham-annānām viniyojanam (15). Martyāna mekaṁ: For the mortals, there is one food. Devāne dve: For the gods, there are two kinds of food. Paśvannaṁ caturthakam: There is another food for animals. Anyat tritayam ātmārtham: There are three other kinds of food intended for the *jiva*'s sustenance. Annānām viniyojanam: These are the seven classified forms of food for mortals, generally speaking – for gods, for animals, and for the *jiva* consciousness.

Vrīhy-ādikaṁ darśa-pūrṇa māsau kṣīraṁ tathā manaḥ, vāk prāṇāśceti spatatvam annānām avagamyatām (16). Vrīhy-ādikaṁ: The ordinary mortal food is grain – corn, etc. Rice, wheat, pulses are the usual mortal food necessary for this frail mortal body. Darśa-pūrṇa māsau: The offerings made in the sacrifices called *darsha* and *purna-masau* – that is, special worships and sacrifices conducted on the new moon and full moon – are supposed to be the diet of the gods. This is a very difficult subject, which cannot be entered into now – how our offerings reach the gods, and how it is necessary for us to repay our debts to the divinities that sustain even our sense organs. If this kind of obligation is not extended by us to the various divinities that are supporting us, we would be thieves, according to the Bhagavad Gita. So these offerings made during the sacrifices of *darsha* and *purna-masau*, the new moon and the full moon, become the diet or the food of the gods in heaven. Milk is the food of animals – cattle, actually. Here, by 'animal' he means cattle. Cattle live on their own milk.

Then the *jiva* has another threefold food; mind, speech and *prana* are the sustaining factors of the individual. Actually, 'food' means anything that sustains, without which we cannot survive. We cannot live merely on grains or milk. There is something else necessary for us to survive – namely, more important than grains, etc., is the breathing process. If we have all the grains in the world but we cannot breathe, what will happen to us? We can drink milk, but our mind is not working and our speech has stopped.

By the operation of speech, we come in contact with things outside, especially human beings. By *prana*, we sustain this body. And the mind is a link that consciously establishes a contact between us and things in the world outside. If these media are absent, there would be no chance of the survival of individuality in this world. So mainly, here we are concerned not with grains and milk, etc., which are a different matter altogether, but with the way in which mind, speech and *prana* act upon us and control us in such a manner that without them we would not be able to even exist.

Īśena yadyapy-etāni nirmītāni svarūpataḥ, tathāpi jñānakarmābhyām jīvo'kārṣāttadannatām (17). Actually, the trouble does not arise from Ishvara who created these things. Grains, etc., are not manufactured by us; they are the action of God. We only throw the seed on the ground, but we cannot produce the grain. That is done by the will of God, and the offerings reach the divinities due to some operation of the will of God Himself. Even the milk production from cattle is not our action, and the cows do

not deliberately think the process. Some natural process takes place, which is also to be attributed to God.

The mind, the process of speech and the breath are all phases, aspects of the five elements *sabda, sparsa, rupa, rasa, gandha* – *prithivi, apah, tejas, vayu, akasha* – about which we have already studied in the earlier chapters. All these are God-made. How is it that they cause trouble to us? The reason is that in spite of the fact that things, including even the mind, the speech and the *prana*, are products of God's will, what happens is that we appropriate these to our own selves. "This is my field, this is my cow, this is my house, and this is my body." This 'my' business has started, which is not to be attributed to Ishvara.

There is no 'my' consciousness in Ishvara because there is no outside object and, therefore, nothing can be called 'mine' in Ishvara. We see things outside and isolate ourselves from other individuals, and create a situation where we begin to feel that something belongs to us, something does not belong to us. We like certain things because they appear to belong to us, and we dislike certain things because we think that they are not ours.

Tathāpi jñānakarmābhyām jīvo'kārṣāttadannatām: The very thing that God has created becomes the source of sorrow for the human individual on account of the creation of 'my-ness' in things – attachment, in simple terms. God has no attachment, but individuals are nothing but bundles of attachments.

Īśākāryam jīvabhogyam jagad dvābhyām samanvitam, pitṛjanya bhartṛbhogyā yathā yoṣit tathe ṣyatām (18). The world is created by God, but it is enjoyed by the individual.

God does not enjoy this world. The question of enjoyment does not arise, because God is Pure Being. And this Pure Being beholds; God simply beholds, and that is His satisfaction. But we will not be happy merely by beholding a thing. It has to become our personal property. It has to become part and parcel of our personality. Our ego has to be satisfied. Here is the difference between *jiva* consciousness struggling in the mire of ignorance, and Ishvara consciousness which is just looking, unconcerned – like the bird which is described in the Mundaka Upanishad.

For instance, a woman is born as a daughter to her father, but she becomes the wife of somebody else. The very same person is viewed in two different ways and it appears as if the woman has two personalities, when viewed by the husband and by the father. And such a difference is created by these two persons (father and husband) that she looks like two individuals, while really she is one independent person and cannot be viewed in two different ways.

So is the case with this world. Though it is one universal substance, it is viewed in one way by the Father, the Supreme Being, who wants nothing from the daughter or the son. And here, the *jiva* is in the sense of possession of property, making a distinction between itself and Ishvara.

Māyā vṛtṭyā tmako hiśa kaṁkalpaḥ sādhanam janau, mano vṛtṭyātmako jīv asaṁkalpo bhoga sādhanam (19). Creation of the universe is the act of God through the instrumentality of *maya* which is *shuddha sattva pradhana*. Mano vṛtṭyātmako jīv asaṁkalpo bhoga sādhanam: The idea of enjoyment and possession arises on account of there being no *shuddha sattva pradhana* in the *jiva*. There is only

the mind, which is characterised by *rajas* and *tamas*; therefore, it wills in terms of longing – like and dislike. The *jiva* wants to enjoy. It cannot be happy merely by being. We cannot be happy by merely existing in the world, whereas God is happy merely existing. This is the difference between us and God Almighty. We can never be happy merely existing. Here is the point.

Īsanirmita maṇyādau vastu nyekavidhe sthite, bhokṭṛ dhīvṛtti nānātvāt tadbhogo bahu deṣayate (20). For instance, there is a gem, a jewel dug from the earth – a precious stone. It is created by God; we cannot manufacture a gem like that. It is identical to everybody's perception. A monkey can see it, a dog can see it, a man can see it, and even an insect can crawl over it. It is self-identical, unconcerned, existing by itself as what we call the gem. But it is viewed in different ways by different perceivers – those who think that they can possess it, and those for whom it has no meaning at all.

Hṛṣya ty eko maṇim labdhvā drudhya ty ano hyalā bhataḥ, paśyaty-eva virakto'tra na hṛṣyati na kupyati (21). A person who possesses the gem is happy. But the one who loses it is very angry. See how it is that the very same object can cause happiness in one person and anger in another? Paśyaty-eva virakto'tra: But a sage is indifferent to the existence of the gem. The very same gem causes joy in one person, anger in another, and indifference in a third person. How can we explain this?

The explanation does not lie in the gem. The gem itself is unconcerned with the feelings of these people. But the trouble has arisen on account of the reaction produced by

the minds of the three different categories of people. The sage simply sees, beholds. Na hṛṣyati na kupyati: Neither is he happy if it is in his hand, nor is he unhappy if it is lost.

Priyo'priya upekṣya sceti ākārā maṇigās trayah, sṛṣṭā jīvair-īśa-sṛṣṭam rūpaṁ sādharmaṇam triṣu (22). The quality of a gem, therefore, is threefold: desirable, not desirable, or an object of complete neglect. If the jewel is ours, it is desirable. If the jewel has gone into somebody's hand, it is not desirable. And in the case of a sage, it is an object of total unconcern.

Sṛṣṭā jīvair-īśa-sṛṣṭam rūpaṁ sādharmaṇam triṣu: The world of God, this creation which is the manifestation of God, is viewed in a similar manner in various ways by the individuals on account of the difference in their mental structure – though the object, the world as such, is the same for everybody. Right from creation until dissolution, it will not change its substance. It is the same. But this human history has demonstrated the turmoil through which people can pass in regard to the very same thing that has been existing throughout eternity.

Bhāryā snuṣā nanāndā ca yātā māte tyanekadhā, pratiyogi dhiyā yoṣid bhidyate na svarūpataḥ (23). A person says, "This is my wife." Another says, "This is my sister-in-law." Another says, "It is my daughter-in-law." Another says, "It is my niece." And someone else says, "It is my mother." Now, what is this woman by herself? We mostly define ourselves in this manner.

Who are we, sir? We cannot say anything about ourselves, truly speaking. All our definitions are meaningless definitions because they are in connection

with what we are not. "I am the son of Mr. So-and-so." Otherwise, what are we, if we are not the son of So-and-so? Are we also something? Why should we say that we are the son of So-and-so? "I am an officer in the government." "I am a shopkeeper." "I own a tea shop." "I am a labourer."

We have no way of describing what we are except in terms of what we own or what we do. Independent of what we do and what we own, are we also something? Suppose we own nothing and do nothing. Do we become non-existent? See how confusedly we define ourselves: we say this person is something to us though for another person, the same individual is another thing altogether.

Pratīyogī dhiyā yoṣid bhidyate na svarūpataḥ: On account of the perceivers' difference in mentality, on account of ownership and changes in doership, the same individual looks different. Now, does the individual really become different?

There is a judge in the Supreme Court, and he looks thus to the lawyers and the clients. He is another thing when he comes home and has a little child to take care of. Has he become a different person? He is really a different person, in one way. The way he thinks in the court is different from the way he thinks in the home. And he thinks about himself in a third way altogether when he is totally alone in a bathroom, for instance. He has some peculiar view of himself there. Now what kind of person is he individually? We can have hundreds of definitions for the same person on account of external relationships and changes of circumstance.

Nanu jñānāni bhidyantām ākarastu na bhidyate, yoṣid vapuṣya tiśayo na dr̥ṣṭo jīva nirmitaḥ (24). Our idea of a thing may change, but the thing itself cannot change. Therefore, do not unnecessarily create problems in life. This is an instruction for us. Pratiyogi dhiyā yoṣid bhidyate na svarūpataḥ: As in the case with a woman or a father or a mother, etc., individually they are the same individuals. They never become different on account of the relationship. Yet on account of the perception of only the relation, minus the individuality of the person, we create problems in life.

There is a daughter who is very happy with her father. After marriage she goes to her in-laws, and hell descends on her immediately. Why should it be like that? This is what happens every day in this world.

Maivaṁ māṁsa-mayī yoṣit kācid anyā mano mayī, māṁsa mayyā abhede'pi bhidyate he mano mayī (25). Though the mother and the wife are identical individuals, they differ totally on account of the experience, as in the case of the daughter. She will cry because of the suffering she has in her in-laws' house; and she will become very happy when she goes to her mother. What has happened to her? She is the same person, the same mind, same intellect, same body. External relationship has transformed her individuality into a false definition of herself, which is also the false definition imputed to her by other people. Mental creation is different from the physical creation of God.

To a tiger, every human being is only food. It does not think that it is a king, a child, a man, woman; no such idea is there. It is food. That is the viewpoint of a tiger.

Bhrānti svapna manorājya smṛtiṣ vastu mano mayam, jāgran manena meyasya na mano maya teti cet (26). A

great difficulty arises now. Does the mind really change the object? Really speaking, the mind cannot change the object. It cannot change a tree into something else. And yet, the mind seems to be determining the object to such an extent that all our sorrows are due to the mental reaction produced in respect of things outside. Life would be meaningless if mental reactions were not there. These things are to be there, and are to be viewed exactly in the way they exist independently by themselves. In spite of the fact that objects are just what they are by themselves, they appear to be totally different – without which factor, life would not be the sorrow that it is.

Discourse 19

CHAPTER 4: DVAITA VIVEKA – DISCRIMINATION OF DUALITY, VERSES 26-37

. . .the creation of God (*Ishvara srishti*) and the creation of the individual (*jiva srishti*). God's creation is impersonal. It makes no distinction between one and another. But we, with an individual's perception, make distinctions. One person's perception is not the same as another person's perception of an identical object or situation. But God's (*Ishvara's*) creation is universally impartial.

The problems of life are not created by God. This is the great answer that this text gives us. There is no problem for God because there is no duality there, and no tension between aspects. There is no contradiction of phases, and there is no perception of the world at all, inasmuch as the world becomes a content of Universal Consciousness. In the case of the *jiva*, the world is not a content of its consciousness. It stands outside. Here is a basic metaphysical difference between God's thought and human thought. The whole universe is inside the consciousness of God; but in the case of the individual *jiva*, the world is outside the consciousness of the perceiver.

The question has been raised again and again: Does the world exist independent of human thought, or does human thought modify the object to some extent? We have seen that there is a lot of difference created by the perceiving process, due to which an object appears to be desirable or otherwise. It becomes an object of like, dislike or neutrality on the part of people. If a person likes it, it is good. If he doesn't like it, it is bad. In the case of a *jivanmukta purusha*,

a realised soul, the thing is neither good nor bad. It has no value at all because he maintains a neutral position in respect of all things perceived on the background of universality of perspective.

Bhrānti svapna manorājya smṛtiṣ vastu mano mayam, jāgran manena meyasya na mano maya teti cet (26). It may be felt that, in the state of dream, the world of perception is entirely mental. We see it when we wake up. Is it the case with waking life also? Is the world that we see in front of us – these buildings, these hills and mountains, these things that we perceive with our eyes – also mental, or do they exist in themselves?

We have already tentatively answered this question. The substantiality and the basic neutrality of objects is God's creation. The mountains do exist. They are not created by the mind of any person. The solar system exists. The rivers flow. People exist there, outside us. These are creations of God. But the attachments and emotional relationships which condition the perception of such impersonal objects of God's creation are the *jiva's* creation. The manner in which we look at a thing is not God's creation. The thing itself is God's creation, but the way in which we look at it is our creation. And therefore, here comes the distinction between an individual's world and God's world.

Does the world exist independently? Yes, it does exist, because it is Ishvara's creation. But it has also another aspect, which is galvanised by the thought processes of the individuals when emotions and perceptual processes condition the object being perceived.

Bāḍhaṁ mane tu meyena yogāt syād viṣayā kṛtiḥ, bhaṣya vārtika kārābhyaṁ ayam artha udīritaḥ (27). Acharya Sankara is Bhasyakara and Vartikakara is Sureshvara Acharya. Both these people have held identical opinions in regard to this question of how the object is determined by mental processes.

When the objects are perceived by the mind, they produce an impression on the mind. As the impressions are created, the mind cognises the object in terms of the shape that it has taken, on account of the impression created on it by the object. There is, therefore, a secondary kind of perception that the mind is having in respect of object. It is held that we do not directly see anything as it is in itself.

All the objects of the world are seen by us coloured by our mental *vriddhis*, just as the nature of the lenses in a pair of spectacles will determine the way in which we see the object. If it is coloured, then we will see objects coloured; or it can be concave or convex. It can be broken or dented, or some sort of distortion can be there in the lens, and we will also see the object with ups and downs, on level ground, etc., though these distortions are not accountable in terms of the objects by themselves. The determining factor of the mind by the objects is in terms of the impression created by them. As in a photographic camera, an impression is created by the object outside, and a picture of it is then made visible.

So we are supposed to see a picture of the world as a secondary perception of the object, and not a primary perception. We can never know the object as it is in itself, independent of our mental cognition. We cannot stand

totally outside the object and see it. We are somehow or other, consciously or unconsciously, connected with the object through psychic processes and they whitewash, as it were (or colour wash or some kind of wash is done by the mind over the object), and then we pass judgements on things. Our judgement on any matter, or on any object whatsoever, is in the light of how we receive the objects into our mental process in a given condition. Our mental moods will tell us what kind of thing the world in front of us is. This has been explained by Acharya Sankara (Bhasyakara), and Vartikakara (Sureshvara Acharya, his own disciple) by an illustration.

Mūṣā siktaṁ yathā tāmraṁ tannibhaṁ jāyate tathā, rūpādīn vyāpnuva ccittaṁ tannibhaṁ dṛśyate dhruvam (28). When molten metal is cast into a crucible, the metal takes the shape of that crucible. The metal by itself has no shape. The world of objects, which is the creation of Ishvara by itself, does not present any differentiatedness in form. But it appears to be differentiated when it is cast in the mould of the *vritti*, or the psychosis of the mind of the cogniser, and that mould is the reason why we see things in a particular manner.

The mould is the mental makeup, and it differs from one person to another person. It differs even in the same person under different psychological conditions. A child sees the world in one way; an adult sees it in another way. An enthusiast sees it in one way, a drooping spirit sees it in a third way, a dying man sees it in a fourth way, though the world is the same.

Vyañjako vā yathā"loko vyaṁgyasy-ākāratā-miyāt, sarvārtha-vya-ñjakatvād-dhīḥ arthākārā pradṛśyate (29).

When sunlight falls on an object, we say the object shines. It falls on a pot, and the pot shines. Actually, the pot does not shine. It is the light that shines. The light of the sun, which has by itself no shape or form, appears to take the shape of that pot, and we see the illumination also taking the shape of that pot. There is a rotundity of light on the neck and mouth, etc., on which the light falls. And if we can closely observe the manner in which the object or the pot shines, we will find that there is an apparent taking of a similar form of an object, by the light that falls on it, on account of the pot having a shape, although the light itself has no shape.

In a similar manner, the world by itself has no shape or form. It is universally spread out in an equal fashion, but it takes a form as light takes a form when it falls on a particular object. Even in this case, the mind is the producer of the form; the world by itself is formless – it is ubiquitous, all-pervading. But the mind has a form. The desires of the mind cause the forms which the mind puts on under given conditions. Actually, this body of ours is also one form that our mind has taken. That is why bodies differ; it is because minds differ. And therefore, everything differs from one person to another person, from one thing to another thing.

Mātur manābhi niṣpattiḥ niṣpannam meyam-eti tat, meyābhi saṅgataṁ tac-ca meyābhatvaṁ prapadyate (30). The process of the mind in the act of perception moves out of itself and envelops the object outside. The enveloping of the mind in terms of the object outside is called *vritti vyakti* – the enveloping of the *vritti*. The mind itself cannot

cognise a thing because it is not conscious. The consciousness has to be borrowed by it from the Atman inside. Just as a copper wire itself cannot be regarded as the flow of electricity – though the copper wire is necessary for the flow of electricity – the mind too is not the consciousness. Even if we connect the wire from one place to another place, the electricity need not flow through it unless another element is there to make that possible.

The consciousness of an object is a dual process. On the one hand, the mind has to take the shape of the object. The object has to be cast in the mould of the mind. But that does not mean that we are conscious. The consciousness is an element which is drawn from the soul inside, the Atman, which automatically moves together with the movement of the mind in terms of the object outside. And therefore, when we perceive an object it does not merely mean that the mind moves. We ourselves seem to be moving towards it.

The consciousness is our own self. And so when the perception takes place, we appear to feel very much affected by the perception of the object. We are affected, which means to say that the consciousness is affected. Our very self is moulded. We get disturbed or we feel happy, as the case may be – a state of experience which is attended with consciousness. And there is a dual action taking place: *vritti vyakti*, which is the modification of the mind enveloping the object outside, and *phala vyakti*, which is consciousness following the movement of the mind in terms of the object. *Vritti vyakti* and *phala vyakti* are two terms used to designate the mental envelopment of the object outside and

the consciousness illuminating that process of mental envelopment. *Vritti vyakti, phala vyakti* – thus, the object becomes illumined and we begin to perceive and cognise the nature of the object.

The movement of the mind in respect of an object outside is something very significant. It shows that the mind is not only inside the body; it moves outside. The perception of a mountain in a distant place has to be accounted for. How do we see a distant star? The stars do not enter our eyes; they are very far away. The hill also is not inside the eyeball. How do we see the object when it is so far away? There is some connection between the perceiving eye and the perceived object, though there is a spatial distance between one and the other. How come? How do we explain it? The consciousness of that distant object, while it has no physical contact, is the perception of the senses.

What happens is that the mind moves with regard to the object. The mind can move even up to the skies; it can reach heaven. There is no distance for the mind. It is all-pervading. In this way, we may know that our mind is connected with the Cosmic Mind. If the Cosmic Mind is not acting, we cannot perceive a thing even if it is one foot away from us. We cannot see anything because that 'one foot away' is a distance creating a gulf between the knower and the known. And that gulf has to be bridged by something. As that something can be neither us nor the object (they cannot connect the two), there is a third element there which is neither the object nor the subject.

That third element is the Cosmic Mind, whose presence is not known to us.

The Cosmic Mind is an invisible, superintending principle that causes all perception. The mind connects itself with the Cosmic Mind and only then the distance of the object is obviated. Even if the object is very far away, the mind can know because it sees through the operation of the Cosmic Mind. The mind moves towards the object. Thus, the enveloping process has been explained as *vritti vyakti* and *phala vyakti*.

Saty evaṁ viṣayau dvau sto ghaṭau mṛṇmaya dhīmayau, mṛṇmāyo mānameyaḥ syāt sākṣi bhāsyas tu dhīmayāḥ (31). There are two kinds of objects in the world: physical objects and psychological objects. A physical object is that which is there independently by itself, like a building; but it is also a psychological object for a person who owns the building. It is a psychological object for the person who wants to auction that building. It is the owner's attachment to the building that makes that building a psychological object to him. It is no more a physical object. "It is *my* building." And if we have borrowed money from the bank and we do not pay it back, it will become the object of auction by the bank. There also, it becomes psychological. Whether we want it or do not want it, either way it is a psychological object.

But the building itself does not know what is happening. It does not know that somebody owns it. It does not know that somebody is auctioning it. It may not even know that it is being broken, because the building is made up of little bricks and mortar and steel and other things.

These parts of the building may not be conscious that the building exists at all.

The building exists in the mind of a man, as the land exists in the mind of a person. Somebody says, "This is my land. I purchased the land yesterday." What do we mean by "purchased the land"? The land was there even before we purchased it. How did it become ours now? What is that consciousness of 'myness' that we have suddenly developed? Did it become ours yesterday? Now it has become ours and we are happy that so much land is there, as if it was not there yesterday. It was there yesterday also. Why did we say it was not there? It is because we felt in our mind that the land belonged to another.

The whole process is the question of belonging. The very land that was not ours has become ours. How did it become ours? Does that land stick to our skin? Are we carrying it on our head? The land is there as it was. What is the difference now? We have signed before some person whom we call an authority, on a paper on which some words are written, and suddenly he says, "This land is yours." The whole thing is a psychological process: someone saying, "It is not mine from today," and another saying, "It is mine from today," and a third person confirming, "Yes, it is yours." The third person is the registrar; the other person who says "It is not mine" is the seller, and the third person who says "It is mine" is the purchaser.

So, what is this? Nothing has happened. Three people are speak three words, and those words have created a world of difference; and we sleep well today with a large

body of land in our mind, while the land does not know that any registration has taken place, that somebody has sold it or somebody has purchased it. This is how the world goes on.

There are two kinds of objects, physical and psychological, as the pot is physically made of clay but is mentally made of the mental reaction of the owner of that pot. Mṛnnmayo mānameyaḥ syāt sākṣi bhāsyas tu dhīmayah: By actual sensory perception, we can know the physical object; but the mental aspect behind the activity of the sense organs is what makes it a psychological object, in spite of it being a physical object as known by these senses.

Anvaya vyatirekā bhyāṁ dhīmayo jīva bandhakṛt, satya smin sukha duḥkheṣṭaḥ tasmin nasati na dvayaṁ (32). By *anvaya* and *vyatireka*, positive and negative analysis, we can know that our mind is the cause of our troubles. The land has not caused us any trouble. Our mind has caused the trouble because when we feel that something is ours, or when we feel that something is not ours, we have a disturbance in the mind. Our feeling is the cause of the disturbance. Either it is ours, or it is not ours. In any case, it is a disturbance to our mind. If it is ours, it becomes a problem to maintain it and see that it is not taken away from us. If it is not ours, the problem is that it is not ours. So either way it is a problem, whether it is ours or it is not ours.

Satya smin sukha duḥkhe: When this mind persists, we have joy and sorrow; otherwise, we have neither joy nor sorrow, if things are not connected with us either sensorially or through the mind.

Asaṭ-yapi ca bāhyārthe svapn-ādau baddhyate narah, samādhi-supti-mūrcchāsu satyapya smin-na baddhyate (33). The objects do not bind us. This is something very clearly observable by certain illustrations like dream, etc. In dream, objects do not exist. These non-existent objects in dream can cause sorrow and joy to us. We can jump in fright if a tiger pounces on us. We can yell out if a burglar enters our mental world. We can feel happy if we are crowned a king in dream. We have joy and sorrow in dream even if the dream objects do not exist. So our joys and sorrows can be there, even if the objects do not exist. But in the state of deep sleep, in the state of *samadhi*, or even in the state of swoon, the objects may be existing but they will not trouble us and we will not have any sense of joy or sorrow.

In deep sleep, for instance, the world does exist in the same way as it existed in waking. But we neither feel happiness nor unhappiness in sleep. Why does the object not harass us in the state of deep sleep if it caused joy and sorrow in waking? If it was really the source of joy and sorrow, it must be perpetually causing this state in all conditions of ours. But in one condition (deep sleep) it does not affect us either in the sense of joy or in the sense of sorrow.

So objects may not exist, as in the dream state, and yet they may be sources of joy and sorrow. But objects may exist and yet they may not cause us any trouble, as in the case of *samadhi*, God-realisation, sleep, swoon, etc. So objects are not the cause of joy and sorrow. They may be

existent or not; it is immaterial. Our mental reaction is the cause.

Dūra deśaṁ gate putre jīvatyē vātra tat pita, vipra laṁ bhaka vākyena mṛtaṁ matvā praroditi (34). Suppose there is a father whose son has gone to a foreign country. He receives false news that the son had died in a plane crash. The father will have a heart attack. Actually, nothing has happened; the news was false. The son is getting on well. So, even if nothing has happened to the son, the father can have such sorrow that he may break down. The breaking down of the father's mind is not caused by anything that is happening to the object (son), because nothing has happened. On the other hand, if the son has really died but for ten years the father has not received the news, he will be happy. How is it that the death of the son does not cause sorrow to the father? And why did sorrow come to the father while the son did not really die?

So do we say that the object is the cause of joy and sorrow? It is not. Merely because our mind has reacted in a particular manner, it looks like either this or that condition. If the son is alive but the father receives the wrong information that he is dead, the father's doom is near. But even if the son is really dead and the news has not reached, the father will not weep; he will be as happy as he was.

Mṛte'pi tasmin vārtāyam aśrutāyāṁ na roditi, ataḥ sarvasya jīvasya bandha kṛṇ mānasam jīgat (35). What is the conclusion, therefore? All bondage of every kind in this world is caused by the mind only. The mind is bound when it is attached to an object; the mind is free when it is not attached to the object. The dirty mind is that which has

attachment to things; the pure mind is that which has no attachment to things. The world is mental in a very, very important sense indeed.

Mṛte'pi tasmin vārtāyam aśrutāyām na roditi, ataḥ sarvasya jīvasya bandha kṛṇ mānasam jigat: For everyone in this world, the source of sorrow is the internal mental modification. Do we mean to say that the world is inside our mind?

Vijñāna vādo bāhyā rthavaiarthyaṭ-syād iheti-cet, na hr̥dyā-kāra-mādhātuṃ bāhyasy-āpekṣit-tvataḥ (36). When we see a snake in the rope, do we really see the snake or do we see the rope? What are we seeing there? We cannot see two things. Either we are seeing the rope or we are seeing the snake. Now, what is it that we are actually seeing? We cannot easily give an answer offhand. We cannot say, "I am seeing the rope." If that were the case, we would not have cried in fear and jumped over it. But if we had really seen the snake, it would have been there even after the light was brought and the clear perception was there.

In this sense, this answer is given to the question whether the objective world is conditioned by the mind in a specific manner or entirely. The doctrine is very clear: Ishvara *sriṣhti* is independent of the mind. The world of perception, which consists of solid objects – the five elements earth, water, fire, air, ether – is not created by the mind of any individual. But the meaning or the value that we attach to the objects is the creation of the individual mind. There cannot be appearance without reality. There cannot be a snake without a rope. There cannot be perception unless there is something outside. Though we

may not perceive that something in a proper manner because of a peculiar defect in our mental process, it does not follow that nothing is outside.

Vijnanavada is a subjectivist position maintained in certain schools of Buddhism which holds that the world does not exist even physically. They do not believe in Ishvara *srishti*, or God's creation. What they say is that even the brick that we see is not really a solid brick. It is only a conditioned concretised form of the mental operation in connection with a larger mental operation called *alayavijnana*. *Alayavijnana* is a word in Buddhist psychology which corresponds to what we call Cosmic Mind.

The world is ultimately mental. Even in the sense of it being there objectively, it is to be considered as mental. It is not physical. But in the sense of actual perception by the individual, it is secondarily mental. Primarily also it is mental. Now here the subject has been dealt with in a different way. The author of the Panchadasi says that while it is established that the world of perception is basically a creation of God's mind, we cannot consider it as a product of individual psychology. The world exists independent of the mental operations of the individual, but we can say that the whole world is mental in the sense that it is God's mind appearing as the universe.

So, finally it is mental. But as the philosophers say, it is metaphysically mental, not psychologically mental. If God's mind can be regarded as a mind at all, then we may say that the whole world is mental because it is the will of God. But it is not mental in the sense of our thinking. We cannot

produce a tree by merely thinking that there is a tree. So there is a distinction between the pure subjectivism of the Vijñānavāda of the Buddhists and the metaphysical idealism of the Vedānta philosophy, which accepts that the world exists as a creation of Ishvara (the Cosmic Mind), yet it is conditioned by the perception of the individual mind.

Vaiyārthya mastu vā bāhyaṁ na vārayitu mīśmahe, prayojana mapekṣante na mānānīti hi sthitiḥ (37). We cannot do the world, or undo the world. There is a common perception of all people in respect of certain things. A general perception of the world in a uniform manner by all people shows that the world is there independently of individual perception. The world is not there merely because of our whim and fancy. We cannot say, "Let it be there," and it would be there; and if we say, "It should not be there," it is not there. It cannot be like that. So a very careful distinction has to be drawn between what is called the psychological world and the physical world.

The Vedānta doctrine is not subjectivism. It is not Mayāvāda in the sense of a silly understanding of the nature of the world as total non-existence. Achārya Sankara does not say that, and no Vedānta doctrine says that. But they accept that this is finally the will of God that appears as this cosmos. In that sense, it is Pure Consciousness. The Vedānta is a peculiar doctrine which accepts the existence of the objective world in one way, as the product of the will of God, and on the other hand it also accepts that it is only the nature of consciousness.

In spite of its existence as an outside something, it does not cease to be consciousness. From our point of view, from the individual point of view, it is a solid, physical thing. We can hit our head against a wall, and say that it is not mental. But from the point of view of the substance out of which the whole world is made, it is Universal Consciousness. Therefore, it is not physical. The physicality vanishes in the eye of Ishvara. It manifests itself only when there is space and time and externality from the point of view of the perceiver or the subjective mind.

This is a very difficult subject. We are likely to mix up two issues and either say the world does not exist, or like a materialist say only the world exists. Both arguments are not correct. Neither is it true that the world exists independent of the mind, nor is it true that it is created by the mind. There is a relativity of action and reaction between the mind which is cognising and the object that is perceived. A very important distinction is drawn between God's creation (*Ishvara srishti*) and individual creation (*jiva srishti*), which is the subject of this chapter.

Discourse 20

CHAPTER 4: DVAITA VIVEKA – DISCRIMINATION OF DUALITY, VERSES 38-56

Bandha ścen mānasam dvaitaṁ tanni rodhena śāmyati abhya sed yoga mevāto brahma jñānena kiṁ vada (38). It has been stated earlier that the mental *vrittis*, psychic operations, have caused the bondage of the *jiva*; they foist certain qualities on Ishvara *srishti*, qualities which are really not there in Ishvara *srishti*. The individual's interpretation of the world created by God is a personal affair arising from likes and dislikes and imperfect perception.

If the mind is the cause of the sufferings of people, a question is raised here: "We can suppress the mind by a kind of yoga where the will is applied in an act of powerful concentration, and we can see that the mind does not function. What is the purpose of knowing God, *Brahma jnana*, and such relevant matters about which we discussed?"

This is a question that arises from an ignorant mind. Suppression of the *vrittis* does not mean yoga. The word 'yoga' should not be applied to such a process at all. Suppression is a negative activity. Yoga is a positive union, and it is not enough if the mind does not function. It has also to function in relation to God's existence.

The difference between mental restraint and God-consciousness is this: while the *vrittis* or the functions of the mind are inhibited, the mental qualities that describe the objects outside may appear to be not there. Not seeing something is not knowledge. There is also a necessity to see

what is really there. When the mind is withdrawn, it will not see what it was earlier seeing as imposed upon the objects of the world, the creation of God. But it cannot see the creation of God. Brahma *jnana* is the vision of God's creation, God Himself. Therefore, a negative activity in the form of the suppression of the *vrittis* in any manner whatsoever, voluntarily, will not suffice.

Not seeing the world is not yoga. Yoga is seeing the world in the proper perspective. It is the vision of the creation of God as it is in itself, and not merely a negative withdrawal of the mind from perceiving it. Thus arises the necessity for Brahma *jnana*, God-consciousness, and not merely a negative activity of mental restraint.

Tātkā lika dvaita śāntau apyāgāmi jani kṣayaḥ, brahma jñānaṁ vinā na syād iti vedānta ḍiṇḍimaḥ (39). The Vedānta proclaims loudly that there is a temporary cessation of the functions of the mind when they are restrained by the will or an act of concentration on some particular given object. But this cessation of the faculties or the functions of the mind so arrived at will be a temporary achievement, and it does not mean that the mind will keep quiet like that for eternity without functioning.

The mere absence of the functioning of the mind is different from the withdrawal of the activity of the mind. We can wind up our action and adjourn it for tomorrow. It does not mean that we have ceased to think of what is to be done. There is a potential, a possibility of our continuing that action tomorrow, though we are not doing it just now.

A moving snake and a coiled-up snake mean one and the same thing. They are identical. We do not say that only

when it moves it is a snake, and when it is lying down it is not a snake. A thief is a thief, whether he is active or sleeping. Similar is the tentative comfort that we may seemingly obtain by the cessation of the activity of the mind through vigorous concentration on an object. That is a negative achievement that we are thinking of here.

But God-consciousness is different from that. It is an entry into the very substance of the universe in the manner in which it is, or as it appears through God's eyes. If we behold the world as God beholds it, if we work in the world as God works, if we love things as God loves, that would be God-consciousness. But merely withdrawing the mind, not thinking anything and being in a state of negativity cannot be regarded as yoga. So do not make a mistake in thinking that attaining mental cessation is the aim of life. God-consciousness is the aim. That the Vedanta proclaims.

Anivṛtte'pīṣa sṛṣṭe dvaite tasya mṛṣā tmantām, buddhvā brahmā dvayaṁ śakyaṁ vastvaikya vādinaḥ (40). It is not the visible object that is the cause of bondage. The vision is not the source of our suffering; the sorrows arise on account of the way in which our mind takes these objects. Illustrations have already been given earlier that a particular object evokes different kinds of emotions and feelings in different persons, actively or otherwise. A person who desires an object has one kind of feeling towards it. He interprets it in one way and also values it in one way. A person who has lost it is grieving because he has lost it, and his thought is of a different nature altogether. And the person who has no need for it is neutral, and no reaction

arises from his mind in respect of that object which evokes other emotions in the case of other people.

The objects of the world are there for every living being to see. From ant to elephant, from man to God, everybody has the same perception of things. But we do not perceive the thing as it is in itself. It is coloured by the concepts of the mind. The conceptualisation of the object is different from the actual perception of the object. Here is the difference between *Ishvara srishti* and *jiva srishti*, as has already been adumbrated.

God has become the objects. He does not see the objects. The body of the universe is the body of God, we may say. We need not have to go on looking at our body in order to know that it is there. It has become part of our consciousness. We have to go on searching for the property that we have, but we need not search for our own body. We will not lose it, as is not an object in the sense of some property. But for us, objects in the world are properties that we would like to possess or reject.

In the case of God, the universe is His body and, therefore, there is no reaction mentally from God in respect of what He creates. If we can visualise the world as God visualises it, let the world be there; it cannot bind us. The binding character of things is because of their externality and the capacity in them to evoke possessiveness, inklings of love, hatred, etc. That is the cause of sorrow. God's creation does not cause bondage. It is our attitude towards it that causes bondage.

So let the world be there. Why are we cursing it? But we should see it as God sees it. He must also know everything.

In His omniscience in all detail, He will know what is happening in the cosmos. Is God in grief? No. We are in grief.

The conception of the two birds on a tree, mentioned in the Upanishads, is an illustration that can be taken here as something very relevant. We are eating the fruit of *samsara*, what they usually call ‘the fruit of the forbidden tree’. It is not the tree that is forbidden, but it is actually the fruit. The fruit is forbidden. We should not eat the fruit. We must be able to enjoy the world without possessing it. We can enjoy a flower without plucking it. We can enjoy gold without owning it. We can enjoy everything without being a part and parcel of its relation externally.

Mere existence of things should give us joy. The sun is shining merely as an existence. The activity of the sun and the existence of the sun are the same. It does not have to move with hands and feet. So is the work of God. The work of God is without hands and feet.

A-pāṇi-pādo javano grhītā paśyaty acakṣuḥsa śṛṇoty akarṇaḥ (Svet 3.19). The Svetasvatara Upanishad tells us that God grasps things without hands. He need not have fingers like us. He can run faster than us, without feet. He can see things without eyes. He can hear without ears and He can act without a body or a limb. Vṛkṣa iva stabdho divi tiṣṭhaty ekas tene’dam pūrṇam puruṣeṇa sarvam (Svet 3.9). That Being fills all this cosmos, and the very Being of that Almighty is the activity of that Almighty. If we also can be like that – if we can be happy merely with the perception of the world and the knowledge of things as they are, and our involvement in the world is not one of possession or

rejection but of identity – if we can identify our consciousness with the things and enter into their substance in a state of what yoga calls *samadhi*, the object will be our consciousness. The consciousness will be our object. There will be no sense of possession or rejection. Then what happens to the object? It no more causes sorrow.

The idea is that the world does not cause sorrow by itself. It is our mental operation – placing the object outside somewhere in space and time – that is the source of our difficulty. Thus, we should reorient our way of thinking and not make complaints about the creation of God. It is perfectly in order; there is nothing wrong with it. What is wrong is the way of our perception. There is a distorted vision with which the mind of the human being envisages things in the world. Let there be the integral vision that God has in respect of things. We will see the world as heaven itself, while for the mind that has placed the world outside, it looks like hell.

Pralaye tan nivṛttau tu guru śāstrady abhāvataḥ, virodhi dvaitā bhāv’pi na śkyam boddhum advayam (41). Merely non-perception of duality is not the same as freedom from it. We may not be conscious of a problem, but does not mean the problem is not there. It is there, but we are not aware of it. It should not be there. The point is not that we are not aware of it; the point is that the problem should not be there at all.

Likewise, if we merely say, “Unconsciousness of the existence of the objects outside, which is achieved by the restraint of the mind, is the aim of life,” that can be seen in

the state of deep sleep also. In a way, the mind is restrained there automatically. Do we mean to say that we are free because the mind is not perceiving the world outside? The mind will again jump on the objects when we wake up.

Even in *pralaya*, or the dissolution of the cosmos, salvation is not attained. The cosmic dissolution at the end of things is like a cosmic sleep, where all individuals are in a state of slumber; and slumber is not freedom. We go to sleep. We seem to have no problems when we are asleep, but we create the problems the moment we wake up in the morning, as if nothing has happened to us in sleep. So unconsciousness is not freedom. Freedom is consciousness of the absence of every kind of limitation, which we cannot have merely by the unconsciousness of the presence of things.

Jīva dvaitam tu śāstrīyam-aśāstrīyam-iti dvidhā, upādādīta śāstrīyam ātattvasyā vabodhanāt (43). Here the author tells us that the duality that is created by the individual's mental perception also is of two kinds. It does not mean that everything that we see is a source of trouble. There are certain things which may help us in advancing on the path of the spirit – though certain things which we think in our mind are deleterious for our spiritual advancement.

In the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali, two kinds of *vrittis* have been distinguished: functions of the mind that cause sorrow, and functions of the mind which do not cause sorrow. We have to make a distinction between these two things. So it does not mean that every kind of mental perception is only sorrow-giving.

For instance, when we see the world as an independent existence consisting of the solar system, the sky and the heaven, the stars, the hills and the dales, and the rivers and the oceans – when we perceive the world that is in front of us in this manner, we are not necessarily disturbed. Rather, we will feel elated by the perception of this vast expanse of the sky and the scintillating stars. This is one kind of perception which is not necessarily disturbing. But there are disturbing perceptions which are caused by emotional attitudes – namely, the perception of things linked to the feeling that it is ours or it is not ours. The world as a whole is not of that nature. We do not want to possess the hill or the solar system, but yet we perceive it.

So there are non-pain-giving *vrittis* or faculties called *aklishta vrittis*, and pain-giving *vrittis* called *klishta vrittis*. The *aklishta* or the non-pain-giving functions of the mind are the processes of general perception, as has been mentioned. But those which are causing pain to us are those functions of the mind which are charged with emotions of love and hatred, the sense of I-ness and my-ness.

We may take advantage of the perception that is of utility to us, but that kind of perception which is totally useless and is harmful should be abandoned. What are these two kinds of *vrittis*? They are explained here.

Ātma-brahma-vicārākhyāṁ śāstrīyaṁ mānasam jagat, buddhe tattve tacca heyam iti śrutyanu śāsanam (44). When we meditate on the relationship between ourselves and God, a function takes place in the mind. The thought of God also is a mental function, but it is a helpful function. It

will not bind us. This particular salubrious ennobling function of the mind which is God-thought, though it is also a function of the psyche, is not binding. It is liberating.

Buddhe tattve tacca heyam iti śrutyānu śāsanam. But when we actually enter into God, the thought of God also ceases. So the particular mental function, though it was a function like any other function, has helped us in freeing ourselves from the bondage of life and enabled us to enter into God-consciousness.

All meditation in the beginning is a mental function. But the aim of meditation is to not continue the mental activity. The aim is to merge the subjective consciousness in the object. The mental function continues so long as the object is outside the perceiving subject. Even if we think of God as something outside us, the mind will be thinking as if God is some kind of object. But when identity takes place, in a state of *samadhi* or union of consciousness with the object (it may be any object or with God Himself), the mental functions cease. Until that time, these good *vrittis* or helpful functions may continue.

Śāstrāṇya dhītya medhāvī abhyasya ca punaḥ punaḥ, paramaṁ brahma vijñāya ulkāvat tānya thoṭ sṛjet (45). Grantha mabhyasya medhāvī jñāna vijñāna tatparaḥ, palālam iva dhānyārthī tyajed grantham aśeṣataḥ (46). Tam-eva dhīro vijñāya prajñāṁ kurvīta brāhmaṇaḥ, nānu dhyāyād bhaūn chabdān vāco viglāpanaṁ hi tat (47). With these quotations, the author tells us how certain functions of the mind are helpful to us, like the learning of the Veda, the study of the Upanishads, the absorption of knowledge in the Bhagavad Gita or of any religious scripture which will lift our soul to the higher values of human life, and any

kind of knowledge which illumines us, enlightens us, gives us intellectual strength and broadens our vision. These are all only mental operations, but they are very helpful ones. Study, education, and culture are all mental operations, but they are positive – very, very necessary for the progress of the individual soul.

But when the object is attained, the identity of consciousness with the final object is complete. There is no necessity for further study of scripture. We need not be in a school or a college for a lifetime. If the education is already over, then put it into practice. After the study is over, the books must be thrown away. They are not of any utility to us. They are only helpful for gaining knowledge in the beginning; afterwards, they become a burden, and we give all the books to the library.

As a person who takes the pith of a grain then throws away the husk and does not run after the husk, in the same way all study, learning, academic qualification, etc., should be finally abandoned as husk after we have entered into the very substance of that knowledge – where consciousness becomes the very aim or purpose of all education and study. Otherwise, endless study is a waste of energy. *Vāco viglāpanaṁ*: a waste of time and energy.

The Upanishad says, *tam evaikaṁ vijānītha hyanyā vāco vimuñatha, yaced vāṅ manasī prājña ityādhaḥ śrutayaḥ sphuṭāḥ* (48): Know that alone, and do not go on talking too much about it. Close your mouth for some time and be concerned with that great goal of life. On that let your mind rest, and speak not very much because energy is wasted by too much talking.

Yacedd vān manasī prājña ityādhāḥ śrutayaḥ sphuṭāḥ. The Kathopanishad tells us that the sense organs which are perceiving the world and are entangled in this perception have to be slowly withdrawn and settled in the mind. The mind is to be settled into the intellect; the intellect should merge in the cosmic intellect; the cosmic intellect should finally settle in Brahman, the Absolute.

Aśāstrīya mapi dvaitam tīvram mandamiti dividhā, kāma krodhā dikam tīvram mano rājyam tathe tarat (49). Up to this time, we have been describing certain faculties or functions of the mind which are non-obstructive. They are helpful. Now we are being told there are certain obstructive faculties – functions of the mind which are deliberately harmful. They have to be abandoned. What are they?

These harmful functions also are of two kinds, intense and mild: *tivram mandam*. Very intense, harmful functions of the mind are desire, anger, greed, etc.; and the mild obstacles are building castles in the air, imagining something unnecessarily, moving in the skies with no purpose whatsoever. Both of these are obstacles. Neither should we be angry, nor full of passionate desire, nor have greed, nor should we build castles in the air. Even if the mind is not actively doing any destructive work by building castles, it is actually paving the ground for such activity later on.

Just because a person keeps quiet and does nothing, says nothing and thinks nothing, it does not mean he is a wise person. He is like an idiot from where the seed of harmful activities may emanate. People who keep quiet and

do not do anything at all are dangerous persons. They must do some work.

Ubhayaṁ tattva bodhāt prāk nivāryaṁ bodhā siddhaye, śamaḥ samāhitatvaṁ ca sādhanēṣu śrutaṁ yataḥ (50). Both these *vrittis* have to be abandoned for the sake of knowledge of God. What are they? They are building castles in the air, and actual active manifestation of desire, anger, etc. *Shama, dama, uparati, titiksha, sraddha, samadhana* are certain virtues that have been adumbrated in the Vedanta philosophy, similar to the *yamas* and *niyamas* in the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali, as necessary methods that can be employed for restraining the mind both in its active harmful aspect as well as the mild harmful aspect. When by actual habituation to the process of deep meditation the knowledge arises, these faculties also will cease. Thereafter there will be nothing left in the world, in the mind.

Bodhād ūrdhvaṁ ca tadheyaṁ jīvan mukti prasiddhaye, kāmādi kleśa bandhena yuktasya na hi muktatā (51). Whatever be the remnant of the mind, even if it is very subtle and mild, it will cause some trouble one day, as a seed lying on barren ground may not be visible at all to our eyes; but when rain falls that barren ground becomes wet and fertile and the seed which was not visible to anybody's eyes shoots up into a little plant and becomes a tree afterwards. A thing that is mild and is keeping quiet, not doing anything, is a *tamasic* condition of the mind. It is not *sattva*; it is not positive. Therefore, absence of mental activity should not be considered as wisdom.

Jīvan mukti riyāṁ ma bhūt janmā bhāve tvahaṁ kṛtī, tarhai janmāpi te'stveva svarga-mātrāt-kṛtī bhavān (52).

Someone may say, “All these qualities that you are mentioning here – of absence of the mental *vrittis* which cause harm, etc. – are applicable to a *jivanmukta purusha*. What is the harm if they are there as long as I am alive, provided that I am assured of liberation after death?” This question, this point, is also meaningless, because nobody who has the least remnant of desire of any kind, even in a sleeping condition, will attain God.

It does not mean that we can live a free and abandoned life in this world and then attain God-realisation after death. It will not come because the kind of life that we live in this world is an indication of the kind of life that we will be living after death. It is not that another kind of tree will grow there, when one kind of seed is sown here. Whatever the seed is, that is the tree. This is the life we are living in this world, which is like a seed that we are sowing for a large plantation that will shoot up in the next birth. And whatever fruit will be attained and eaten in the next birth will be of the same nature as the seed that we have sown here.

Thus, our attitudes, our thoughts, our feelings, our actions, our outlook in this world will tell us what kind of person we will be in the next birth. So we must be cautious and live in this world in the same way as we would like to be received in the next world.

Kṣayā tiśaya doṣeṇa svargo heyo yadā tadā, svayaṁ doṣataym ātmāyaṁ kāmādiḥ kiṁ na hiyate (53). There are people who think that going to the heavenly world is also a kind of attainment, that it is good enough. The attainment of heaven is defective because it is like a bank balance

which will not be eternally there and will get exhausted as long as we do not positively contribute something further to it.

The Swargaloka or heaven that we speak of is a realm of experience where we enjoy the desirable, happy fruits of the good deeds that we performed in this world. But all deeds have an end in themselves. Every work is perishable; therefore, the fruit that will be yielded by that particular action that we have done, even if it be good, will have an end one day. And then what happens? When the momentum of the good deeds that we have performed in this world ceases to produce its effect in heaven, we will fall back to this world again and be reborn here. So the idea of going to a heavenly world in the sense of an enjoyable field of comfortable existence should be given up. What we require is God-consciousness, God-realisation, and not merely joys, even in higher worlds.

Tattvaṃ buddhvāpi kāmādīn niḥśeṣaṃ na jahāsi cet, yatheṣṭā caraṇaṃ te syāt karma-śāstrā tilaṅghinaḥ (54). Desires persist even in a subtle form, even at the last moment of life. Sometimes we cannot even know that there are desires. Very subtle propensities continue, and sometimes they create impressions in the mind which are not necessarily compatible with the existence of God.

It is difficult for the mind to entertain the thought of God always, because God is not a heaven. He is not a realm. He is not a stage of life. He is not any kind of region which we have to reach. These ideas of reaching God, going to God, have to be first of all purified in the beginning itself because even when we think of God, sometimes we think

like children, as if He is somebody sitting somewhere in a corner and there is a long distance between us spatially. The existence of God is nothing but the existence of what we call the Universal Principle. Inasmuch as it is everywhere – not only in some places – the reaching of it is a process of inward transformation, and not a movement in some direction.

When we reach the waking state from dream, though there is some sort of a distance between dream and waking consciousness, we do not have to travel by a vehicle. It is an inward transmutation of consciousness that is taking place, and suddenly we are in a different world. So is God-consciousness. It is an inner transmutation of consciousness from the lesser dimension to the highest dimension possible. This distinction should be drawn between actual God-thought and the imagined God-thoughts of most people.

Buddhā dvaita sva tattvasya yatheṣṭ ācaraṇam yadi, śunām tattva dṛṣām caiva ko bhedo'śuci-bhakṣaṇe (55). Bodhāt purā mano doṣa mātrāt kliśnā syathā dhunā, aśeṣa loka nindā ceti aho te bodha vaibhavam (56). The author here criticises the imaginary ideas of certain untutored minds, who are not properly educated in this line, who believe that the last thought may be enough to lift them to the state of God after death, and so in this life they may live in any manner whatsoever. The author says this is not possible because our thoughts are what we call life. Our life in this world is nothing but the way in which our mind operates. Physically moving about is not life. The mental *vrittis* are the actual life.

What we think in our mind is the kind of life that we live and, therefore, if we believe that we can have freedom of choice in this world – which is completely unrestrained – and we can expect a fruit of complete discipline after death, this will be not possible. Otherwise, we will be like animals living in the world and expecting God-realisation after death. The mind which is completely unrestrained and given to abandon, and goes for things in the manner of an animal going for his grub or food – if that is the case with the mind of an ordinary human being, his fate will be the same as the fate of an animal. We do not expect a buffalo to reach God. Sudden change will not take place at the time of death. Sudden changes never take place. Nature always moves in a progressive way. It is evolution. Revolution does not take place in nature. It is a gradual, step-by-step movement.

So in the next birth we cannot be something totally different, entirely different from what we are. Just as tomorrow we will not be totally different from what we are today, in the next birth we will not be angels. How can we become angels in the next birth when we are animals in this birth? An animal does not become God. A gradual process of evolution takes place from animal to man, from man to good man, from good man to unselfish man, saintly man, God-man, and finally God Himself. These are the stages of development and, therefore, we have to undergo this spiritual education in the manner prescribed.

Discourse 21

CHAPTER 4: DVAITA VIVEKA – DISCRIMINATION OF DUALITY, VERSES 58-69

Kāmyādi-doṣa-dṛṣṭayā dhāḥ kāmādi tyāga hetavaḥ, prasiddho mokṣa śāstreṣu tān anviṣya sukhī bhava (58). If we have to be free from desires, we have to first of all investigate into the basic defects of the object of desire. Desires arise in respect of things, on account of not properly recognising the nature of the things themselves. The world is not as it appears to be; things are not what they seem. The mind's longing for a particular object or a group of objects is based entirely on a misconstruing of the nature of things, like a moth which sees beauty in a flame and runs after this beauty; and we know what happens to that moth.

There are no desirable objects in this world. Objects are neither desirable nor undesirable from their own point of view. They are Ishvara *srishti*, God's creation. An impartial God has not created partial objects, where some of them are desirable and some are not desirable. God does not create unnecessary things, useless things, etc., which means there is nothing that we need not desire. Everything has to be desired at one stroke. The whole creation has to be desired, if that is the case. But desire is not generally directed to the whole of creation. It is a partial attitude of the mind in regard to certain chosen things only, which happens on account of a wrong notion the mind has in regard to those chosen things, which present a false picture before the mind on account of a tentative relationship established between the prevailing condition of the object and the

prevailing mood of the mind. No object can attract unless the present condition of the object, the structure of the object, fits in properly with the condition of the mind at that particular moment. If the mood of the mind changes tomorrow, that very same object will be an object of disgust.

Today we want it, and tomorrow we want to throw it away. What has happened? The same thing is there, but only our mood has changed; our needs have differed. Not only do our moods determine whether we want a thing or not, the object itself also determines our reaction to it in different conditions.

A presentable form of the object is required in order that the mind may create the idea that it is a desirable thing. Unpresentable, distorted, totally misplaced things will not attract the mind. All this shows that desire is a relative activity of the mind in respect of relative conditions of the world. Therefore, whatever pleasure we hope to have from such a kind of relative contact will be as fleeting as the lightning in the sky.

Desires can be subdued only by detecting the defects of the objects of the senses. *Kāmyādi-doṣa-dṛṣṭayā dhāḥ kāmādi tyāga hetavaḥ*. This is the moksha *śāstra*. Scriptures on moksha tell us this.

Tyajyatām-eva kāmādiḥ-maronorājye tu kā kṣatiḥ, aśeṣa-doṣa-bījatvāt kṣatir bhagavate ritā (59). I understand that desire, anger, greed must be abandoned because they are active manifestations of the mind which are deliberately harmful. But what about building castles in the air, woolgathering? Is it bad? Woolgathering is a torpid state of

the mind, a *tamasic* condition, which will one day burst into *rajasic* activity; and the harmful desires will reveal themselves one day.

An unconscious condition of the desires is not an absence of desires. If we are unable to think properly and we are in a stasis, the mind is unable to think and it has withdrawn all its activity and adjourned its processes. When this happens to the mind, it does not follow that the desires also have gone. The potential of the desires to manifest themselves in active operation has been postponed for a future suitable condition. Therefore, *manorajya*, what is called building castles in the air, is also to be considered as equally harmful. It is potentially harmful.

Bhagavan Sri Krishna mentions this fact in the second chapter of the Bhagavad Gita. What does he say? That is quoted here in the following verses of the Panchadasi.

Dhyātyato viṣayān-puṁsaḥ saṁgas-teṣūpa-jāyate, saṁgāṭ-saṁjāyate kāmaḥ kāmāṭ-krodho'bhijāyate (60). When we think of some object, there is a desire to go near it. Saṁgāṭ-saṁjāyate kāmaḥ: Nearness creates desire. Kāmāṭ-krodho'bhijāyate: Anger follows every kind of desire.

Śākyam jetum manorājyam nirvaikalpa-samādhitaḥ, susaṁpādaḥ kramāt-so'pi savikalpa samādhinā (61). The potential of the desires in the mind can be totally eradicated only in *nirvikalpa samadhi*. *Nirvikalpa samadhi* is the highest state of *samadhi* that one can reach, where the mind ceases to exist, getting dissolved in Pure Consciousness. But one cannot easily reach that state. Therefore, we have to

attain that *nirvikalpa* state through the penultimate condition, which is known as *savikalpa samadhi*.

Susaṃpādaḥ kramāt-so'pi savikalpa samādhinā. Through the graduated steps of meditational practice as prescribed by Sage Patanjali in his *sutras* by means of the *samadhis* – *savitarka*, *nirvitarka*, *savichara*, *nirvichara*, *ananda*, *asmita*, *savikalpa*, *nirvikalpa* are the stages of *samadhi* mentioned in Patanjali's *sutras* – we have to rise gradually from the lower *samadhi* to the higher. Thereby, we will be able to overcome the impulsion of desires. The desires will be totally destroyed by attaining a state of *samadhi*.

Buddha-tattvena dhī-doṣa śūnye naikānta vāsinā, dīrhaṃ praṇava mucchārya manorājyaṃ vijīyate (62). If we want to get rid of all these *tamasic* conditions of the mind into which it gets sunk many a time, what should we do? First of all, we must segregate ourselves a little from conditions, atmospheres which are disturbing in nature. A little bit of *ekantavasa* is necessary – living in a sequestered place, a place where disturbances are less and the mind does not have occasion to contemplate too much on objects of desire, and there is also a chance for our intellect to operate in a clarified manner. In that condition, where we are alone in an isolated place, we should chant Om several times. Om, Om, Om, with deep inhalation, with deep breath, we take this elongated Pranava as our guide to dispel the darkness which causes the fixity of the mind in a state of *tamas* and may engender the movement of the very same condition into an active *rajasic* state. Thus we can

overcome this torpid state called *manorajya*, building castles.

Jite tasmin-vṛtti-śūnyaṁ manastiṣ-ṭhati mūkavat, etat-padaṁ vasiṣṭhena rāmāya bahudhe ritam (63). Like a dumb person, the mind will keep quiet at the time when we chant the mantra Om (Pranava) deeply, with intense feeling from the bottom of our heart, right from the navel itself.

Etat-padaṁ vasiṣṭhena rāmāya bahudhe ritam: Rama, who is the student in the Yoga Vasishtha, has been instructed by a yoga teacher, the yoga master Vasishtha, in the following manner. These are some verses that are quoted from the Yoga Vasishtha.

Dṛśyaṁ nāstīti bodhena manaso dṛśya mārjanam, saṁpannaṁ cet tadut pannā parā nivārṇa nivṛtiḥ (64). We cannot free ourselves from desire for objects as long as objects do exist – as long as we feel that the objects are there outside us, standing in front of us, to be received by us. There are no objects in this world of God's creation because the creation of God is a universal vast extension, and it has no externality. As God's creation is universal, it has no externality; therefore, there cannot be an object in the creation of God. The object is nothing but a concoction of the individual mind, which places the universally placed object in an externalised condition. That which is universal is considered as an external thing by the wrong activity of the individual mind.

The objects that we desire are not outside us; they are connected with us. They are internally connected to everything in the world. The whole universe is an organic oneness. That is how God would look at the universe. And

inasmuch as the universe is an organic completeness, there cannot be externality anywhere. No part of the body can be regarded as an object of some other part of the body. The leg is not an object of the hand. The hand is not an object of some other part. Notwithstanding the fact that we see an object, it need not attract us. Do we feel attracted to our feet, to our hands or fingers, to our nose? We do not feel attracted to them because they are identical with our organic centre, which is the body. The universe is one single organism. Therefore, where comes the necessity for an object? Who told us that there are objects in the world? They do not exist! Then the desire ceases immediately.

This is the instruction of Vasishtha to Rama. *Dr̥śyaṁ nāstīti*: The objects do not exist. *Bodhena*: Thus having the knowledge, *manaso dr̥śya mārjanam*: the objectivity consciousness of the mind is totally obliterated. Very great instruction from Vasishtha to Rama. Wonderful is the Yoga Vasishtha! Everybody should read it.

If this state can be attained by us, we have attained moksha at that moment. The moment we feel that the objects of the world are not there, the externality of space-time also vanishes. Bondage ceases; in one instant we are in a state of liberation. The bliss of moksha is attained then and there, with no distance of time between now and afterwards.

Vicāritam alaṁ śāstraṁ ciram udgrā hitaṁ mithaḥ, samtyakta vāsanān maunād ṛte nāstyū ttamaṁ padam (65). Whatever I have to study, I have studied. Whatever I have to consider deeply after the studies, I have considered deeply and withdrawn myself into an inward consideration

of all the studies that I have made. The mind has been settled. My education is now complete. The mind is calm and quiet. It does not want to know anything further. Therefore, it is fixed with a satisfaction of having known whatever is to be known. Then there is no further desire. Whatever is to be known, is known; whatever is to be obtained, is obtained; whatever is to be done, has been done. All the *vasanas* vanish. Then the mind becomes calm and quiet. Beyond that, there is no higher state. The highest state is the cessation of the activities of the mind. It acts because of the objects outside. Really, objects do not exist. We are unnecessarily worried over things which are not there.

Vikṣipyate kadācid-dhīḥ karmaṇā bhoga-dāyinā, punaḥ samāhitā sā syāt tadaivā-bhyāsa-pāṭavāt (66). Sometimes, in spite of all this practice, the mind gets disturbed because we cannot be in a state of meditation throughout the day. There are twenty-four hours in the day. Can we be meditating all the twenty-four hours? So when we are not in the state of meditation, suddenly the impulses from inside which were there earlier, which insist on the enjoyment of objects, will again crop up. What do we do?

Again close your eyes and sit for meditation at that time. If the mind is disturbed by certain thoughts which were there earlier but should not be there now, sit quiet. Wash your face with cold water, deeply chant Pranava Omkara, and sit for meditation once again until the mind comes down to its normal condition. And until that state is reached, until you are satisfied that the mind has come

down and the *vikshepa* or the distraction has ceased, do not cease from meditation; continue the meditation.

Ābhyāsa-pāṭavāt: By continuous practice in this manner, you will find that the mind can be restrained; and by daily meditation, by gradually prolonging the time of meditation, you will find that the impact of such a meditation upon the mind will be such that there will be very little occasion for the impulses to rise once again. They will get burnt up automatically.

Vikṣepo yasya nasty-asya brahma-vittvaṁ na manyate, brahmai vāyam iti prāhuḥ munayaḥ pāra darśianaḥ (67). Such a person who has no desires has not simply known Brahman; he is Brahman Himself. The Godman is not simply seeing God as some object outside, he is established in God. Total absence of desires of every kind is virtually identity of oneself with Ishvara Himself.

Darśanā darśane hitvā svayaṁ kelvala rūpataḥ, yas tiṣṭhati sa tu brahman brahma na brahma vit svayaṁ (68). When a person sees not anything in this world in front of him as an object, or even space and time, when neither does he want to see anything nor does he have any desire not to see anything, the question of seeing does not arise. Objects are not there. Then, what will he see? And then what happens? He remains alone, himself. When objects do not exist, we alone remain in a Universal state. We do not remain as a Mr., Mrs.; we are not an individual existing at that time. The body-consciousness also vanishes together with the object-consciousness. Then *kevala*, the aloneness of Universality, alone remains in our consciousness, having brushed aside all object-consciousness. Such a person is not

merely a knower of Brahman, he is verily Brahman Himself.

Jīvan-mukteḥ parā kāṣṭhā jīva-dvaita-vivarjanāt, labhyate-sāvato'tre dam īśadvaitād vivecitam (69). For the sake of helping students, the author says that to enable us to become a *jivanmukta* as early as possible, by the elimination of *jīva srishti*, differentiating *jīva srishti* from Ishvara *srishti* – that is, distinguishing between God's creation from our own mental creation – we will immediately become established in a state of awareness which is more than personality consciousness. The consciousness of personality is connected with the consciousness of objects. And if the objects are not there, by the deep consideration of the nature of God's creation, Ishvara *srishti*, as a universally spread-out something, and having come to a conclusion that our body also is one of the objects as any other object is, therefore neither the body can be considered as ours, nor the object should be considered as ours. Nothing belongs to anybody here. In this total setup of God's creation, nobody owns anything. Neither is there an owner, nor is there an object that is owned. In this state of Universal stability of consciousness, we have attained *jivanmukti*. Here we conclude the fourth chapter.

**CHAPTER 5: MAHAVAKYA VIVEKA –
DISCRIMINATION OF THE MAHAVAKYAS,
VERSES 1-8**

The fifth chapter is very short. It describes the four *maha-vakyas*: *prajnanam brahma*, *aham brahmasmi*, *tat tvam asi*, *ayamatma brahma*. *Prajnanam brahma*: “Consciousness is Brahman.” This is a statement that occurs in the Aitareya Upanishad of the Rig Veda. *Aham brahmasmi* is the mantra “I am Brahman, identical with Brahman”. It is a mantra, a statement that occurs in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad of the Yajur Veda. *Tat tvam asi*, “thou art That” is a statement that occurs in the Chhandogya Upanishad of the Sama Veda. *Ayamatma brahma*: “this Self is Brahman”, is a statement that occurs in the Mandukya Upanishad of the Atharva Veda. These four *mahavakyas* are culled from the Upanishads belonging to the four great Vedas.

What is the meaning of these four statements – *prajnanam brahma*; *aham brahmasmi*; *tat tvam asi*; *ayamatma brahma*? The meaning of these *mahavakyas* is elucidated briefly in the fifth chapter.

Yenekṣate śṛṅḥo-tīdaṁ jighrati vyākaroti ca, svādva svādū vijānāti tat prajñānam udīritam (1). Consciousness is Brahman. That is what the Upanishad says. What does it mean? Consciousness is that through which we see things, hear things, smell things, understand the variety of things, taste things, and understand the very existence of things. That which enables us to know that something is, is consciousness.

We have, first of all, a consciousness that we are existing. After that, we have a consciousness that the world is existing outside, and that people are existing outside. And we have a consciousness that we see, we hear, we touch, smell and taste. We have a consciousness that we perceive the world. This consciousness is what is meant by *prajnana* in this great statement of the Upanishad when it says *prajnanam brahma*: Consciousness is Brahman. Inasmuch as consciousness is universal, it cannot be located in one particular place; it has naturally to be identical with the Universal Absolute. So it is simple enough to understand that consciousness is the same as Absolute Brahman, which is of the nature of consciousness.

Catur-mukhendra-deveṣu manuṣyā-śva-gavādiṣu, caitanya mekaṁ brahmātaḥ prajñānaṁ brahma mayyapi (2). This Brahman is consciousness and the consciousness is also in me, through which it is that I become aware of all things outside. Right from the creative principle of Brahma with four heads, right from the gods in heaven such as Indra, including all people, humans, animals, etc., among all these there is one consciousness pervading. There is instinct, there is impulsion, there is desire, there is understanding, there is thinking, there is volition, there is ratiocination – all these are various degrees of the manifestation of awareness in a larger degree or lesser degree, a more intense degree or a mild degree. That is, right from the creative Brahma onwards to the lowest category of living beings, even to the ants, we will see the Universal consciousness pervading in different degrees of manifestation. One consciousness is there everywhere.

Caitanya mekaṁ: Because of the universality of its being, it is Brahman the Absolute. Therefore, prañānaṁ brahma: consciousness is Brahman. It is everywhere, and it is also in me. That is the meaning of this great statement prañānaṁ brahma: consciousness is Brahman. This consciousness which is within me is also the consciousness that is everywhere.

Paripūrṇaḥ parātmā-smin-dehe vidyā-dhikāriṇi, buddheḥ sākṣi-tayā sthitvā sphuran-naha mitir yate (3). *Aham brahmasmi*. Who is this *aham*? The deepest consciousness in us, which is more internal than any of the sheaths that we have – consciousness which is aware of the five sheaths, the nature of which we have studied in the first chapter of the Panchadasi – verily is *aham*, ‘I’. “I am there.” “I am coming.” “I am here.” “It is I.” When we make statements like this, to what ‘I’ do we actually refer? Not this body; the first chapter and the third chapter have clarified this subject very well.

The physical body, the vital body, the mental body, the intellectual and the causal body cannot be consciousness; therefore, they cannot be ‘I’. The body is not the ‘I’; the breath, the mind, the sense organs, the intellect, and the causal sheath are also not the ‘I’. The ‘I’ is that which is aware of an absence of all things in the state of deep sleep. That awareness which knows nothing external to itself in the state of deep sleep, is our real nature.

Our real nature is not to be seen in the waking state, in which we identify with the five sheaths. Our real nature is seen only in deep sleep, in which we are dissociated from all objects. That real consciousness which is uncontaminated

by association with the bodies, and therefore incapable of division into parts, and therefore everywhere – that is *aham*. “I am coming.” This ‘I’ is actually the Universal Being asserting itself, not the Mr. Body.

Svataḥ pūrṇaḥ parātmā’tra brahma-śabdena varṇitaḥ, asmī tyaikya parāmarśas tena brahma bhavā myaham (4). *Aham brahmasmi* – the meaning of ‘I’, or Brahman, in the individual has been explained. What is this ‘I’? What is *aham*? What is Brahman – *aham brahmasmi*: I am Brahman? How can we be Brahman unless Brahman itself is in us? Here is a great danger in immature students chanting this mantra *aham brahmasmi*. It should not be like an ant saying, “I am an elephant.” Even if an ant always says “I am an elephant”, it cannot become an elephant merely because it chants that.

“I am Rockefeller.” If we go on saying that, we do not become rich. What is the good of chanting mantras? We must be able to understand their meaning. This verse in the Panchadasi takes pains to explain that this *aham* ‘I’ is not Mr. So-and-so. It is not ‘I’ which is visible here. So do not say “I am Brahman” means “I, this person sitting here, is Brahman”. This is not the meaning of the mantra.

We are not to be identified with the Universal Being as an individual. The Universal alone can be identified with the Universal. The Universal in us is identical with the Universal that is everywhere. That is the meaning of *aham brahmasmi*. It does not mean that one person is equal to Brahman. Such mistakes should not be committed; it is an immaturity and enthusiasm of thought. Otherwise, we will have suffering afterwards.

That which is self-sufficient, *svatah-purnah*, the Supreme Self, all-pervading in nature, which is called Brahman, is identified with this Universal present in the individuals also – the very same Universal present in the individual also. The identity-consciousness of these two is called *asmi*, “I am.” This verb, this copula as we call it, I-am-ness, is only a conjunction, a link that is there between the Universality appearing to be in us and the Universality that is everywhere. The space in the pot is identical with the space that is everywhere. Inasmuch as there is no such thing as space inside the pot, there is also no personality of the individual. So we should not say that “I am Brahman” means this person is Brahman. It is Universal that is identified with Universal – God being conscious of God. That is *aham brahmasmi*. Be careful in knowing its true meaning. Otherwise, you will run into trouble.

Ekameva advitīyaṁ san nāma rūpa vivarjitam, sṛṣṭeḥ purā-dhunā’py asya tādrk tvam tad itīryate (5). *Tat tvam asi. Tat:* That – That which was there even prior to creation, One alone without a second, as described in the Chhandogya Upanishad as without name and form differentiation because prior to creation, there were no names, no forms, no diversity, no space, no time. In that precondition of creation, that which was there as One alone without a second, and exists even now through and in the midst of all things in the world as immanency – that is called *tat*.

“That thou art.” What is ‘That’? That which is now as an immanent principle, and which was also there before

creation as One alone without a second, That is not different from us.

Śrotur-dehe indriyā-tītaṁ vastv atra tvam̐ pade ritam, ekatā grāhyate'sīti tad aikya manu bhūyatām (6). *Tvam*: 'thou', 'yourself' – this word implies that consciousness, which is the very thing that is behind the sense of 'I', that which is internal to the organs such as hearing and the sheaths such as body, etc., that which is the deepest 'I' consciousness as explained earlier, is the *tvam*. *Aham brahmasmi* and *tat tvam asi* mean the same thing. They are only two ways of expressing the same truth. That Universal in us is identical with that Universal which is everywhere. So both these, *aham brahmasmi* and *tat tvam asi*, mean one and the same thing, and are only two different words.

Tat tvam asi: Thou art – this 'art' is the verb which links the consciousness immanent in us with the consciousness that is everywhere. *Tad aikya manu bhūyatām*: Please experience this identity in yourself.

Svaprakāśā parokṣa tvam ayami tyukti to matam, ahaṁ kārā'di dehāntāt pratyag ātmeti gīyate (7). *Ayamātma brahma*: I am This, the Self is that Brahman. What is 'This'? This is again the same question. This *aham*, this 'I,' this *tvam*, or 'you', is also the same as 'This'. *Svaprakāśā parokṣa tvam*: The self-identical immediacy of consciousness which is self-luminous in us is the established Consciousness, which is referred to as 'This'. This consciousness in us here, which is universally pervading everywhere, also appears to be within us, free from egoism, free from the consciousness of the body, internal to the five sheaths, internal to the body, internal to

consciousness of even personality like egoism – that consciousness is Atman, *ayamatma*.

Dr̥śya mānasya sarvasya jagatas tattva mīryate, brahma śabdena tadbrahma svaprakāśā-tma-rūpakam (8). This Atman is that Brahman. It is another way of saying this consciousness which is ‘I’ is the same as that consciousness which is Universal Brahman. Of all the visible universe, there is an essence which is immanent. The pervading reality behind all this visible world is called Brahman, as we already know. Self-consciousness is its nature. Self-luminous is it. That Brahman is identical with this Atman that we ourselves are. Now we know the meaning of these four sentences. *Prajnanam brahma*: Consciousness is Brahman. *Aham brahmasmi*: I am Brahman (a very dangerous mantra – we should not utter it too much). *Tat tvam asi*: Thou art That. *Ayamatma brahma*: This Atman within us is the same as that Universal Brahman. With this we conclude the fifth chapter.

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CHAPTER 6: CHITRADIPA – LIGHT ON THE ANALOGY OF A PAINTED PICTURE, VERSES 1-18

The sixth chapter is called Chitradipa. This is a very important chapter of the Panchadasi, and very long, which practically lays the foundation for the whole philosophy of Vedanta. Philosophically, it is the most important of all the chapters. It has to be studied with great concentration.

Yathā citra paṭe dr̥ṣṭam avasthānām catuṣṭayam, para mātmani vijñeyam tathā'vasthā catuṣṭayam (1). The creation of the world is a process, something like the process involved in the painting of a picture. There are four stages in painting a picture; similarly, there are four stages in creation. This is the comparison between a painting and creation. What is the comparison? It is illustrated here.

Yathā dhauto ghaṭṭi taśca lāñchito rañjitaḥ paṭaḥ, cidantar yāmī sūtrātmā virāṭ cātmā tather yate (2). The first stage in painting is to have a cloth, a canvas. The second stage is to stiffen it with starch, because a piece of cloth with holes between the interwoven threads would not be suitable for the purpose of painting. The cloth has to become thick, and impervious to the ink. For that purpose, the cloth is stiffened with a smearing of suitable starch. This is the second stage in painting.

In the third stage in painting, the artist draws on this stiffened canvas, a pencil sketch or a light sketch in some form, barely visible and indistinctly cognisable as to its real features. We have some idea as to what is coming up when we have a perception of this faint outline that he has drawn on the canvas. This is the third stage in painting.

The fourth stage is the fair copy. The lines are filled with ink in different forms. Different types of colour are touched and filled as would be necessary to present the requisite pictorial scene. The variety, the beauty and the attraction of the picture is in the manner of the spreading of the ink in the requisite proportion. This is the fourth stage in painting, and then the painting is complete.

Likewise, there are four stages in the process of creation. Just as a background of cloth is necessary for painting a picture, an eternal unchangeable background is necessary for even the appearance of such a thing called the world. Even appearance cannot be there unless there is a reality behind it, and even falsity is so defined on account of its relationship with the truth, from which it is distinguished. There is an all-pervading, unchangeable background which, as we have studied earlier, is Pure Consciousness. That is the first stage in creation. It has to exist, as cloth has to exist.

The second stage in creation is the stiffening of the cloth, as it were, here in this process of creation. The Consciousness that is Universal gets stiffened, as it were, by a concentrated will of the Cosmic Being. The featureless transparency of the universality of consciousness gets concentrated, as it were, with the stuff of the futurity of creation. This is what we call the will of God.

In Pure Being, there is no question of will. It is just existence as such. In the second stage, there is a determination in consciousness as to the nature of the creation that is to take place in the future. The third stage is the drawing of the outlines. That is the faint picture of the

cosmos that can be seen in the state of Hiranyagarbha. The stiffened form is Ishvara; the Pure Consciousness is Brahman.

So Brahman manifests itself as Ishvara. Ishvara becomes Hiranyagarbha, where the subtle cosmos can be faintly seen as an outline drawn to present the actual shape of the visible cosmos. The actual shape is not visible in the Sutratma, Hiranyagarbha. Only a faint outline is seen. But the fourth stage is the gross manifestation of the universe with all the variety, the grandeur, the beauty and majesty, with all the colours. The phantasm that we see in this cosmos is God filling in the variety of ink, as it were, on this outline that was drawn in the state of Hiranyagarbha – prior to which there was a will to do, prior to which there was the background of the Absolute. So here are the four stages of creation, almost similar to the four stages of the painting of a picture.

Svataḥ śubhro-tra dhautaḥ syāt ghaṭṭito'nna vile panāt, maṣyā kārair lāñchitaḥ syāt rañjito varṇa pūraṇāt (3). The cloth is pure, uncontaminated by any kind of starch, etc. It becomes a little different from what it is in itself by the smearing of the starch, and it becomes a feature of an indistinct nature when it is in the form of outlines. It becomes a concrete presentable picture when colour is filled into it.

Svataś cidantar yāmī tu māyāvī sūkṣma sṛṣṭitah, sūtrātmā sthūla sṛṣṭyaiva virāḍi tyucyate paraḥ (4). By itself, Consciousness is Pure Absolute, Pure Being. Pure Brahman becomes the potential cosmos, as if the universe is sleeping. Our potentiality is in the condition of deep sleep.

The manifested form is in the waking. The subtle outline is in the dreaming condition. So we, too, pass through four stages every day.

The eternal consciousness that we really are, on which we fall, as it were, in the state of deep sleep, is Pure Being. That darkness, that potential of future action which is the sleeping condition, is the second stage. The outline of future action in dream is the third stage. The actual perception of the world in waking is the fourth stage. So cosmically, as well as individually, there are four stages.

The four stages are designated in the Vedanta philosophy as Brahman, Antaryami or Ishvara, Hiranyagarbha or Sutrātma, and Virat or Vaishvanara. These terms are well known to us.

Brahmādyāḥ stamba paryantāḥ prāṇino'tra jaḍā api, uttamā dhama bhāvena vartante paṭa citra vat (5). All kinds of things can be seen in the picture. There are human beings, gods, mountains, flowing rivers, sky, shining stars, the sun and the moon. Actually, they are not there. There is only ink, yet we can see a beautiful face, a beautiful landscape, how the rising sun looks in the picture. We enjoy it. The rising sun is not there. Only the ink is there, but it looks like the rising sun.

In a similar manner, all wonders in creation, right from the creative principle of Brahma down to the lowest green grass in the meadow and a particle of sand – right from that supreme creative principle down to the littlest atom in the world all beings, in all the variety of species and gradations of reality in the categorisation of high and low, etc. – are

presented in this picture which Brahman has painted over itself.

Citrārṇpita manuṣyāṇām vastrā bhāsāḥ pṛthak pṛthak, citrā dhāreṇa vastreṇa sadṛśā iva kalpitāḥ (6). People painted in a picture wear different types of clothing. We can see someone tying the cloth in one way, and another dressing himself or herself in another way. Varieties of dress, presentations, embellishments are seen on the people, who also are variegated in the picture. Do we not see them? They look so variegated, multifarious, that we actually believe in the reality of these objects. We will not be able to take our eyes away from a beautiful painted picture. It may be a Renoir, a Michelangelo, as the case may be. We go on gazing and gazing and gazing, and never tire of gazing.

Are we gazing at the ink? Are we gazing at the cloth? Wonderful is the creation! The beauty of the presentation is what attracts the mind, but where does that beauty arise? Where does it lie? What is it that attracts us in a painted picture? Is it the cloth that attracts us? Is it the starch that attracts us? Is it the outline of ink that attracts us, or the colours?

Ink cannot attract us. We can have bottles of varieties of ink; nobody bothers about them. Not the outline or the pencil sketch, not the starch, not the cloth – who bothers about them? But what else is there in the picture which attracts our attention and stuns us, practically? It looks as if life is there.

So is the cinema in our own modern times. There is nothing there except a canvas, a hanging cloth, and a

shadow of movement. But nobody believes that it is that. Really, these persons are there. They speak to us; they stir our emotions, they distress our mind. They can change the very life of a person, such is the power of these illusions. Illusions can change our life itself. Our real life changes by the perception of unreal things. How is it possible?

Here is a great philosophy. Are we really perceiving an unreal thing, a non-existent thing? In this case, we are fools of the first water. How could we be affected so seriously by seeing that which is not there? There are no mountains, no people, no clothes, no sun, moon, or stars. Knowing that, why are we looking at it? We are seeing something there which is not the ink. How can we see something which is not there? This is the mystery of creation.

The attraction that we feel for things in the world is not because Brahman is there in all things. We are not attracted to Brahman. Brahman is not seen at all. We do not see Virat, we do not see Hiranyagarbha, we do not see Ishvara; but except these things, there is nothing in the world. The whole of creation is Brahman, Ishvara, Hiranyagarbha, Virat, but none of them attract us. There is nothing to attract us, because we have not seen them. We see something else. We see the colour, the dress, the variety, the contour, the presentation, and something which is mysterious. That mystery is the meaning of creation.

Pr̥thak pr̥thak cidā bhāsāḥ caitanyā dhyasta dehinām, kalpyante jīva nāmāno bhaudhā saṁsa rantyamī (7). An individual, or a *jīva*, is a peculiar formation arisen out of the reflection of Pure Consciousness on the intellect of individuality. The Pure Consciousness is the same in all

cases, but the medium of reflection differs from one person to another person; and because of the media differing from person to person, we see different people in the world who think differently, look differently, behave differently, and require things in a different manner.

Many people exist in this world. This many-ness is due to the many-ness in the variety of the structure of the reason or the psyche of the individuals, through which one consciousness reflects itself in many ways, as one uniform ink spread over a single cloth can create a picture scheme of a variety of things, while the variety is not there; it only seems to be there. Endless variety can be seen in a picture, though there is only one uniform thing – ink and cloth.

In a similar manner, the intellect and consciousness are the reason for the differences among individuals, and this law applies to every species of being, right from an ant up to an elephant, or even to the gods in heaven. The subtlety, grossness and structural pattern of the intellect – through which consciousness manifests itself – differ, and then it is that we feel that there are varieties of living beings.

The variety is an action of the structural peculiarity of the medium through which consciousness passes in different individuals. And because of this variety, the individuals get stuck. Consciousness gets identified with the intellect, as it were, and becomes egoism, *ahamkara*, I-consciousness, body-consciousness, mind-consciousness, etc.; and then they enter into the world of suffering. *Samsara* is the name of this kind of entanglement.

Vastrā bhāsa sthitān varṇān yadvadā dhāra vastra gān,
vadantya jñāstathā jīva saṁsāraṁ cit gataṁ viduḥ (8).

Ignorant children, when they look at a picture, think that the people are actually sticking to the cloth. The cloth itself has become the people appearing to be there, painted on the cloth. In a similar manner, ignorant people imagine that this world is actually sticking to God, or Pure Consciousness.

The cloth does not even know that there is ink on it; and it does not see the beauty. Perhaps if there was a mechanism which would enable our mind to enter into the screen in the cinema, we would not see the picture. We are outside it, at a particular distance. We must be outside, and at a particular distance. Both these conditions have to be fulfilled; otherwise, we cannot see what is happening there.

Suppose we are inside the screen itself, by some means; we will not see the dancing pictures. So is the futility of attributing the activity of the world to God, as it is futile to attribute the dancing pictures in a cinema to the screen which is behind them, though without it they cannot dance.

Citrastha parvatā dīnām vastrā bhāso na likhyate, sṛṣṭistha mṛttikā dīnām cidā bhāsas tathā na hi (9). In the picture, mountains are not dressed with saris, clothes, etc.; clothes are there only for human beings. In a similar manner, *chidabhasa*, the reflection of consciousness mentioned in the case of the *jiva*, is not to be seen manifest in inanimate things like stone, earth, etc. Consciousness is not reflected in stone, in inanimate objects. It is feebly felt as the breathing process in plants, instinct in animals, and actual intellect only in the human being; but the actual *sattva guna* is in the gods residing in heaven.

Saṁsāraḥ parmārtho'yaṁ saṁlagnaḥ svātma vastuni, iti bhrāntira vidyā syāt vidyayaiṣā nivar tate (10). This *samsara* is real; this world is exactly as it is visible to the eyes – these buildings, these colours, these phantasms, these varieties, these pictures of this world that attract our sense organs every day. The feeling that they are absolutely real is called bondage. This is the outcome of *avidya*, or ignorance of the nature of reality. This ignorance can be dispelled only by *vidya*, or true knowledge. This chapter is dedicated to elucidate the ways and means of acquiring the knowledge by which we can dispel this ignorance through which it is that we see the variety of creation, though really it is not there.

Ātmā bhāsasya jīvasya saṁsāro nātma vastunaḥ, iti bodho bhavet vidyā labhyate'sau vicāraṇāt (11). The belief in the variety of creation as it is presented to the sense organs is called *avidya*, or ignorance. But what is knowledge? *Vidya*, or knowledge, is the conviction that bondage is not attributable to Pure Consciousness, as the five sheaths do not stick to Pure Consciousness in the state of deep sleep. We exist independently of the five sheaths. In a similar manner, God is independent of the variety of creation and our soul, Atman, also is free from bondage. This knowledge is called *vidya*.

Sadā vicārayet tasmāt jagat jīva parāt manaḥ, jīva bhāva jagat bhāva bādhe svātmaiva śiṣyate (12). Every day we have to spend a lot of time in thinking deeply over this important matter that will enable us to know the distinction between God and creation, and their proper relationship. Cosmically, the relation between God and creation, and

individually, the relation between the Atman and the five sheaths, is to be clear before our mind. The relation between consciousness and the five sheaths has been explained in the third chapter. Now, in this sixth chapter, we learn something about Ishvara.

Nāpratīti stayor bādhaḥ kintu mithyātva niścayaḥ, no cet suṣupti mūrcchādau mucyeta yatnato janaḥ (13). Another point driven into our mind again and again, as was done earlier, is that the non-perception of the world is not freedom from bondage. Freedom from bondage lies in the perception of the unreality of creation. There is no harm in seeing the mirage looking like water; but running after it as if it is water, is ignorance. Even when we know that it is a mirage and we do not run after it, it is still seen.

Even after we have seen that it is only a rope and not a snake, it will nevertheless look like a snake. The only difference will be that we have understood that it is not a snake. The water in the mirage will still appear even to the person who knows that it is not water.

Similarly, even for a wise person, the world may be visible. Even a *jivanmukta* will see the world, but he will know that it is not there; and, therefore, he will not be attached. If mere non-perception of a thing is freedom, we would be freed in deep sleep, in a coma, or in a swoon. We could get liberation without any effort if the mere non-perception of things could be regarded as freedom, as happens every day in deep sleep. But this is not so. Non-perception of the existent thing is not freedom. The recognition of the unreality of an existent thing is freedom. Let it be there; but we do not get attached to it on account

of knowing what it is made of, really speaking. Perception itself is not bondage; the ignorance attached to the perception is bondage.

Paramātmā vaśeṣo'pi tat satyatva viniścayaḥ, na jagat viśṛjir no ceñ jīvan muktirna sambhavet (14). The unreality of the world is, at the same time, an affirmation of the reality of God. When the forms and names are brushed aside as finally not valid in this process of creation, we will get awakened to the consciousness of that background. When we do not see the ink, we will then see the cloth. Even in a cinema we can see the screen behind the film if we concentrate our mind properly. We have to adjust our eyes in such a way that we refuse to focus on the dancing of pictures. We can see the cloth in spite of the movements.

In a similar manner, we can see the consciousness of the Absolute pervading all things, notwithstanding the fact that there is a variety of names and forms. This condition of seeing the variety and yet being conscious of the Universal Being at the same time is called *jivanmukti*.

Parokṣā cāparo kṣeti vidyā dvedhā vicārajā, tatra parokṣa vidyāptau vicāro'yaṁ samāpyate (15). Indirect knowledge and direct knowledge are two kinds of knowledge – two kinds of *vidya*, as the Mundaka Upanishad has already told us. The higher knowledge is called 'direct knowledge', or is sometimes known as 'immediate knowledge'. The lower knowledge is called 'indirect knowledge' or 'mediate knowledge'.

When direct knowledge is attained, all our suffering ceases, and our effort at investigation into the nature of things also ceases. There is nothing for us to do afterwards,

once direct knowledge appears. Indirect knowledge is that knowledge we obtain of things in the world through the media of the instrument of perception. Eyes are necessary, ears are necessary, light is necessary; so many things are necessary to know that a thing is there outside. That is called 'mediate knowledge'. There is a medium between the perceiver and the perceived. This is lower knowledge.

But when we actually become the object itself by entering into it, that is direct perception. Actually, it is not perception; it is actual being of the object itself. There we are really liberated.

Asti brahmeti ced veda parokṣa jñāna meva tat, aham brahmeti ced veda sāṅskātkāraḥ sa ucyate (16). God exists. This is one kind of knowledge. But what does it matter to us if God exists? In what way are we different? Merely knowing and being convinced that God exists is one kind of knowledge, but it is indirect knowledge through the understanding, through the reason, through the intellect, through knowledge acquired by study. Liberating knowledge is not merely the conviction that Brahman exists, but that we are inseparable from it. Direct realisation is necessary, and not merely knowing that something exists there. Entry into the very substance of Brahman is freedom. Merely knowing that it exists is not sufficient, though the conviction that it exists is a help in the gradual movement of our mind towards actual realisation.

Tat sāṅskāt kāra siddhyartham ātmatattvaṁ vivicyate, yenāyaṁ sarva saṁsārāt sadya eva vimucyate (17). For the purpose of the direct realisation of the Supreme Atman, we now engage ourselves in a study of this great subject of

Ishvara, *jiva* and *jagat* – God, the individual and the world, which is the theme of this sixth chapter.

Yenāyaṁ sarva saṁsārāt sadya eva vimucyate. By a deep study of this subject, a profound contemplation on it and making this knowledge part and parcel of our very existence in life, we shall be liberated perhaps in this life itself.

Kūṭastho brahma jiveśau ityevaṁ cit catur vidhā, ghaṭākāśa mahākāśau jalākāśā bhraṅke yathā (18). Consciousness manifests itself as four different phases of experience. The consciousness that is independent of the five sheaths as the witness of the five sheaths – for instance, as we have it in the state of deep sleep – is Kutastha. Independently existing, immutable consciousness at the background of the five sheaths is *atma tattva*, *kutastha chetanya*; that is one phase. Brahman is the Universal Existence with no connection with any part of creation. *Jiva* is that very same immutable Kutastha consciousness getting identified with the five sheaths. Ishvara is the Brahman Universal appearing through the pure *sattva guna* property of *prakriti*.

As we have noted earlier, the pure *sattva* of *prakriti* is ubiquitous, all pervading. It is like a clean mirror spread out everywhere in space, and the whole sky is reflected there. That becomes Cosmic-conscious. Ishvara, therefore, is the Cosmic-conscious principle arising as a feature on account of Brahman Universal getting reflected through the pure *sattva* of *prakriti*. So there are four varieties of manifestation: Brahman and Ishvara cosmically, Kutastha and *jiva* individually.

Ghaṭākāśa mahākāśau jalākāśā bhraṅkhe yathā. The illustration to make this point clear is given here. The pure immutable Atman is like space in a pot. It looks limited, but it is not really limited. The vast space outside is Brahman. If there is water in a pot and space is reflected in that water, we would call it individual consciousness, *jiva* – not pure space, but reflected space in the water which we have filled in the pot. And Ishvara is something like the whole sky reflected in thin clouds that we see during rainy season.

The pure sky is Brahman. The sky inside the pot is Atman. The pure sky reflected in an all-pervading screen of thin cloud is Ishvara. And the Kutastha, the pot ether that is reflected through water filled in the pot, is *jiva*. This is a fourfold illustration to make clear as to what we mean by saying that there are four phases of the manifestation of consciousness as Brahman, Ishvara, Kutastha and *jiva*.

Discourse 23

CHAPTER 6: CHITRADIPA – LIGHT ON THE ANALOGY OF A PAINTED PICTURE, VERSES 19-35

Ghaṭā vacchinna khe nīraṃ yat tatra prati bimbhataḥ sābhra nakṣatra ākāśo jalākāśa udīryate (19). In a pot or a vessel, space appears to be limited to the area of the pot or the vessel. If water is poured on it, that space inside the pot gets reflected through the water. Also, the entire sky at the top – the stars and the entire firmament – gets reflected. This phase that is so reflected through the water in a pot is called *jalakasha*, or water ether. And in the context of its being reflected in water in a pot, it is an illustration of the nature of the *jiva*, or the individual, which also is a limited reflection of the all-pervading Kutastha Atman consciousness in the limited pot of the intellect, being reflected through all the impressions, *vasanas*, and potentials of desires and actions.

Thus, this *jiva*, this individual, is on the one hand limited in quantity due to its getting circumscribed to the location of this body and the intellect; and on the other hand, it is also a reflection. It has a dual defect. Qualitatively it is inferior to the original because it is a reflection; it is also quantitatively inferior to the original because it is located in one place – within the walls of the body – and it does not appear to be outside at all. Such a condition is *jiva* consciousness, *jalakasha*.

Mahākāśasya madhye yat megha maṇḍala mīkṣyate, prati bimba tayā tatra meghākāśo jale sthitaḥ (20). In that universal space, the vast sky above, we see clouds. Through these thinly spread clouds, we also see the sky reflected. The

sky in its purity is not seen, but it is seen as conditioned by the description of the clouds, both in quantity and quality. That space, that all-pervading sky, which is reflected through the spread-out clouds, is known as *meghakasha*, comparable to Ishvara, who is a reflection of Brahman consciousness through the universal *sattva* quality of *prakriti*.

Meghām śārūpa mudakaṃ tuṣārā kāra saṁsthitam, tatra kha pratibimbo'yaṃ nīratvāt anumīyate (21). We can infer the reflection of the sky in the water particles of the clouds because of the fact that water particles in thinly spread-out clouds act as a kind of reflecting medium, like a mirror. When the clouds are very thick, the reflection is not there. They must be a very thin, faintly visible sheet through which the sky can be reflected. That is *meghakasha*, comparable to Ishvara.

Adhiṣṭhāna tayā deha dvayā vacchinna cetanaḥ, kūṭa vannir vikāreṇa sthitaḥ kūṭastha ucyate (22). That consciousness which is at the root of our personality, our very being, *adhithana*, the very substratum of both the bodies, the gross and the subtle, that consciousness that is at the root of both the physical and subtle bodies – that is to say, the physical, the vital, mental and intellectual bodies – that consciousness which gives an appearance of intelligence and reality to these bodies, is independent of them; and that independent consciousness lying at the back of these two bodies is called *Kutastha*, immutable consciousness.

Kūṭasthe kalpitā buddhiḥ tatra cit prati bimbakaḥ, prāṇānām dhāraṇāt jīvaḥ saṁsāreṇa sa yujyate (23). This

intellect, which is the reasoning faculty in the individual, is the medium through which the Kutastha, the immutable consciousness of the Atman, is reflected; and this reflected consciousness gives life and vitality to the whole body. We feel we are alive. We are living, moving, and are conscious. This feeling arises in us on account of the vitality and the intelligence of the immutable consciousness inside getting reflected through the medium of our individuality, which is the intellect or reason. This reflected consciousness goes by the name of *jiva*, and it is this that entangles itself in *samsara*, worldly entanglement.

Jala vyomnā ghaṭākāśo yathā sarvas tirohitaḥ, tathā jīvena kūṭasthaḥ so'nyo nyādhyāsa ucyate (24). The pure ether that is inside a pot is obscured by the presence of a medium, such as water, that fills it. The water entirely covers the pure ether that is inside the pot. In a similar manner, this *jiva* that is the individuality, or the finitude of ours, obscures the innermost consciousness that is all-pervading. The space that is all-pervading appears to be located inside a pot. That was mentioned several times. Now it is said that even this little space in the pot cannot be seen properly. It gets obscured on account of the water in it, a material medium that prevents our perception of the pure ether. We have this kind of medium in our individuality – the intellect, the reasoning faculty, the individual consciousness. It obscures the awareness of the larger consciousness that is behind, as water obscures the presence of ether.

Ayaṁ jīvo na kūṭasthaṁ vivinakti kadācana, anādira viveko'yaṁ mūlā'vidyete gamyatām (25). This *jiva* can

never know that there is a Kutastha. We are *jivas*; we are psychophysical individuals, as it is called. We can never know that we have an Atman inside us. A hundred times, a thousand times it is being told to us that we have a Universal Atman in the root of our being, but we can never apprehend it.

In our daily life, there are no indications in us that the Atman exists. The identity of this consciousness of the Kutastha with the limiting adjuncts is so intense that the one is mistaken for the other. This limitation is identified with the consciousness, and we feel only the limitation consciousness as identical with ourselves. The other Universal Consciousness is obliterated completely from our perception and experience. The Atman, for all practical purposes, does not exist in our life. It is as good as not existing because we are wholly occupied with the identification of consciousness with the reason, the mind, the functions of the inner organ with all its impressions of past karmas, unfulfilled desires, and so on – umpteen things. Thus, we are completely handicapped from knowing that there is anything above us or beyond us.

Anādira viveko'yaṁ mūlā'vidyeti gamyatām. This inability on our part to know that there is an Atman inside us is called *anadi avidya*, the original ignorance. *Mula avidya*, the root ignorance – the power of distraction by which we are pulled in the direction of outside things – prevents the inwardness of consciousness. We are always outwardly conscious – conscious of this body and the world outside – and are never for a moment conscious of anything that is inside us. This is the work of *avidya*.

Vikṣepā vṛtti rūpābhyām divindhā'vidyā vyavasthitā, na bhāti nāsti kūṣastha ityā pādan māvr̥tiḥ (26). Ignorance, or *avidya*, works in two ways: obscuration and distraction. *Avrt̥ih*, or *avarana*, is the Sanskrit word for obscuration, veiling. A curtain is hung, as it were, just on the face of this Universal Consciousness. That is *avarana*, or the covering of consciousness by a veil of ignorance. What happens is, we do not feel that anything exists at all. It is a feeling that nothing exists. That is *avarana*, or a veiling of consciousness.

But this 'nothingness consciousness' becomes an objective consciousness when the Universal Consciousness passes through the aperture of the manifestations of this very *avidya* known as intellect, etc. Just as a potential disease can become an actual disease and a passive person can become a violent person, this nothingness consciousness may become an active objective consciousness – which it does. That is called *vikshepa*, or distraction, by which we are given a double blow by *avidya*.

It is a blow on the one cheek by not allowing us to know that anything exists at all; the reality is obscured. And there is another blow on the other cheek which makes us feel that what is not there is really there. The unconsciousness of what is there is the veil; the consciousness of what is not there is the distraction. So we can imagine our predicament, where we stand.

Ajñānī viduṣā pṛṣṭaḥ kūṣasthaṁ na prabudhyate, na bhāti nāsti kūṣastha iti buddhvā vadatyapi (27). The ignorant man says, "Do you know the Atman?" He says, "I do not know anything about the Atman. I have never seen

the Atman. I do not know the Kutastha. Neither is it known to me, nor can I even recognise its existence.” The existence and consciousness aspects of the Kutastha are obliterated by the action of *avidya*, which functions dually as *avarana* and *vikshepa*, veil and distraction.

Svaprakāśe kuto’vidyā tām vinā katha māvṛtiḥ, ityādi tarka jālāni svānu bhūtir grasatya sau (28). This *avidya* is a very peculiar and notorious principle whose nature cannot be easily ascertained. If *avidya* or ignorance is self-conscious, there cannot be a covering. The covering or veiling of the reality by *avidya* is possible only when it is not self-conscious. The veil itself is not conscious; it is not intelligence. So we cannot attribute self-consciousness or self-luminosity to *avidya*, which acts as a veil.

But without this *avidya*, there cannot be a veil. How do we know that there is a veil? We say that there is a veil over consciousness. The knowledge that there is a veil over consciousness implies some connection of consciousness with this veil. If it is a total aberration of consciousness, an entire negation of it, just darkness *per se*, there cannot be an idea that there is such a thing called darkness.

“I knew nothing in sleep.” Now, this statement implies that *avidya*, which is the so-called darkness or nothingness that covers the consciousness in sleep, can become the object of some sort of awareness, on account of which it is that we have a memory later on of having slept soundly earlier in the day. It has a peculiar eluding, chameleon-like quality. It has no consciousness of its own; therefore, it covers. It is not totally disconnected from consciousness; therefore, it enables us to have a memory of having slept,

and enables us to know that there is such a thing called ignorance. It enables us to make a statement that we do not know anything. So here again *avidya* is a peculiar trickster. It plays a trick and will not allow us to catch it, just as we cannot know the true colour of a chameleon. Only direct realisation can enable us ascertain what this *avidya* is.

Svānu bhūtāva viśvāse tarkasyā pyana vasthiteḥ, katham vā tārīkām manyāḥ tattva niścaya māpnuyāt (29). If we say that direct experience is not possible and logic is also futile, there would be no way of knowing anything in this world. Either we should have the power of proper reasoning of a positive nature which will give us some kind of indirect knowledge of what is happening, or we should have direct experience or realisation. If we deny both aspects, then neither logic is possible nor experience is practicable, and we will then be in the same old condition of ignorance. Spiritual progress would not be possible.

Logical arguments, ratiocination and intellectual study are finally not of any utility in Self-experience. But it gives this support to us in the sense that it can lead us to a higher experience in the form of an indication of what is above it. The limited consciousness indicates that there is something that is beyond limitation. The finitude that we are experiencing is suggestive of something that is not finite. In that sense the reason is helpful, even if by itself it is not ultimately valid.

Buddhyā rohāya tarkaścet apekṣeta tathā sati, svānu bhūtyanu sāreṇa tarkyatām mā kutarkyatām (30). Arguments of any kind should not go against scriptural ordinance. Every kind of logical deduction should be in the

direction of a positive attainment of truth. We should not be led to nihilism, *regressus ad infinitum*, circular reasoning, or vicious arguments, etc. That is not proper argument. All logic should be a proper deduction from premises that are accepted, and they should be positive in the sense that they will lead us to Truth; otherwise, what is the use of arguing? Where is the need for logic and argumentation? Why should we apply our reason at all, if that is not going to lead us to any conclusion? Uncontrolled and unbridled reasoning will take us to no conclusion. Well-conducted reasoning will lead us to a kind of conclusion that will indicate the nature of Truth. All logic has to be based on the veracity of self-experience or scripture.

Svānu bhūtira vidyāyām āvṛtau ca pradarśitā, ataḥ kūṭastha caitanyam avirodhīti tarkyatām (31). Tacet virōdhi keneyam āvṛtir hyanu bhūyatām, vivekastu virodhasyāḥ tattva jñānini dṛśyatām (32). There are two kinds of consciousness, defined in two ways, namely, *svarupa jnana* and *vikshepa jnana*, *vritti jnana*. The knowledge of the Atman that we have in the state of deep sleep is not adequate to destroy the ignorance that is there in sleep. It is Universality, and therefore it will not act. Ignorance can be destroyed only by the action of consciousness. Just as an ocean that does not have any kind of contact with anything will not move in any particular direction, the Universality of consciousness that is in the state of deep sleep will not destroy the ignorance in sleep. This ignorance can be destroyed only by *vritti jnana*, actual meditative consciousness.

Consciousness that is other than Universal has to be focussed as a direct action along the lines of concentration on a single thought of the Universal. Only when there is activity of consciousness is there a possibility of the dispelling of ignorance. This distinction is made in Vedanta between general consciousness and particularised consciousness. General consciousness cannot destroy ignorance, because it does not act. There is no *rajas*; nothing is possible there. The destruction of ignorance is possible only when action is associated with consciousness – that is, meditation.

Pure Universal consciousness is not opposed to ignorance. What is opposed to ignorance is *vritti jnana*, or the action of consciousness through the reason and the process of meditation. *Viveka* – discrimination, direct meditation – is the opposition of *avidya*.

Avidyā vṛta kūṭasthe deha dvaya yutā citiḥ, śuktau rūpya vada dhyastā vikṣepā dhyāsa eva hi (33). This dual body, *deya-dvaya*, the gross and the subtle body – or rather, this body complex, we may say – is superimposed on the Kutastha Atman just as the quality of silver is superimposed on mother-of-pearl. We know what mother-of-pearl is – a kind of shell. It is also called nacre. When it is kept in sunlight, it shines; and from a distance, it looks like a silver piece. As the non-existent silver-ness is superimposed on the existent shell which is the mother-of-pearl, and the existent shell-ness is superimposed on the non-existent silver-ness, there is a mutual superimposition taking place – unreality getting superimposed on reality, and reality getting superimposed on unreality. It is the reality of the

mother-of-pearl getting superimposed on the silver-ness that is perceived is the reason why we feel that the silver is real. If the nacre or the shell was not there, the silver would also not be visible.

So the reality that we attribute to the perceived silver-ness is due to the actual reality of its background – namely, the mother-of-pearl. Conversely, the silver-ness is superimposed on the mother-of-pearl and we seem to feel that the mother-of-pearl itself has become silver.

In a similar manner, superimposition takes place in our own person. The bodies, the *koshas*, are superimposed on the Kutastha Atman. “I am existing.” This statement that we sometimes make is a confusion of two factors. What is really existing, is not clear when this statement is made. It is like saying, “I am seeing silver.” We are seeing the mother-of-pearl, but not the silver; but the possibility of seeing the silver could not be there if the mother-of-pearl was not there. So two factors are necessary; appearance and reality are both essential to perceive real-like appearance.

This body complex, the five sheaths, are said to be real, and we feel their existence. “I am tall, I am short, I am hungry, I am tired, I am thinking, I am understanding, I am sleepy.” These statements that we make are associated with the five sheaths. The five sheaths have to exist first of all, in order that we may make any statement in regard to them. They appear to exist (*sat*) on account of the existence aspect of the Kutastha Atman being superimposed onto them. The sheaths themselves are really nothing. They are an accretion that has grown on consciousness. They have no substance,

but they appear to have a substance in the same way as silver in the nacre appears to have a substantiality.

So when I say, "I am existing," it is a confused statement where there is a mix-up of two qualities – the Pure Existence aspect of the consciousness of the Kutastha getting mixed up with the tentative physical or psychological I-consciousness, over which it is superimposed.

Similarly, when we say, "I am existing," there is a converse superimposition. The finitude of this physical complex is superimposed on the consciousness. On the one hand, the existence aspect of consciousness is superimposed on the sheaths, which is why we feel that the sheaths are existing and alive, they are kicking, and everything is well with them. But the other side is that we feel we are finite and limited and sitting in one place only. That is the finitude of the body getting superimposed on the Universal consciousness. This is called mutual superimposition.

The Universal consciousness is superimposed on the finite body. Then the finite body appears to be existing. On the other hand, the finitude of the body is superimposed on consciousness. Then the consciousness appears to be finite. So then we make a statement, "I am existing; I am Mr. So-and-so." This Mr. So-and-so does not exist, really speaking. It is a hallucination, a mix-up that has been conjured up by a superimposition of two factors; and if we separate the two, we will find that this Mr. So-and-So personality vanishes into thin air. We will cease to exist in one moment if discrimination arises in us.

Idamaṁ śaśca satyatvaṁ śuktigaṁ rūpya īkṣyate, svayaṁ tvaṁ vastutā caivaṁ vikṣepe vīkṣyate'nyagam (34). “This is silver,” we say, when we see some shining piece in front of us. The this-ness does not appear to be silver. This-ness is actually an indication of that which is really there. So when we say, “This is silver,” the demonstrative pronoun ‘this’ appears to be connected to the mother-of-pearl, rather than to the silver.

Idamaṁ śaśca satyatvaṁ. The reality of the silver consists in the this-ness or the real existence of the mother-of-pearl, and it is seen shining, as it were, in the imagined silver. Svayaṁ tvaṁ vastutā caivaṁ vikṣepe vīkṣyate'nyagam. In a similar manner, the real I-consciousness, which is attributable only to the Universal Being, is transferred to the finitude of the body-mind complex, similar to the transference of the mother-of-pearl’s existence to the imagined silver.

The Universal Consciousness is the real ‘I’; the body is not the ‘I’, the mind is not the ‘I’, this visible person is not the ‘I’. The real ‘I’ is that which says, “I am what I am. I am that I am, indescribable Universality.” That is the real ‘I’ which says, “I am coming.” Who are they? Who are you? ‘I’. Who is that inside? ‘I’. This ‘I’ is actually the retort coming from the Universal that is inside us. But when we open the door, it is not the Universal that is opening it; it is the finitude over which it has been superimposed.

Nīlapṛṣṭha triko ṇatvaṁ yathā śuktau tirohitam, asaṅgā nandatā dyevaṁ kūṭasthe'pi tirohitam (35). The concave or triangular shape and the green-ness, etc., of the shell is transferred to the imagined silver, and the silver appears to

have that concave or triangular shape. Like that, the immutable blissful Atman inside, this Kutastha Atman, is superimposed on the body and gets obscured by the consciousness of the body. The silver consciousness obscures the mother-of-pearl consciousness. Similarly, this body-mind complex consciousness obscures the real Universality that is within us. That is what has happened to us.

Discourse 24

CHAPTER 6: CHITRADIPA – LIGHT ON THE ANALOGY OF A PAINTED PICTURE, VERSES 38-54

Idantva rūpyate bhinne svatvā hante tathe śyatām, sāmānyam ca viśeṣaśca hyubhaya trāpi gamyate (38). In that mother-of-pearl which was shining like a silver piece, the real aspect is only of the mother-of-pearl, and the silver-ness is foisted upon it. The silver is quite different from the mother-of-pearl.

“This is silver.” When we make statements of this kind, the word ‘this’ demonstrates the reality that is there, which we are actually perceiving as a substratum which is the mother-of-pearl; but the silver-ness is not actually there. We have superimposed the shining character of the object on the substance of the object, and the substantiality of the object on the shining character. The shining thing is understood to be a silver piece. Actually, the luminosity is the cause of this misconception.

There is a generality and a particularity in this perception of silver. The generality is what is really there, and the particularity is what is not there. What is really there is the mother-of-pearl; and what is not there is the silver. We make a confusion of two issues and then utter a sentence, “This is silver.” The unreal and the real are brought together – appearance and reality are jumbled up – in all perceptions of this kind.

Even when we say, “This is the world; here is the world,” the same mistake is committed. “This is the world.” This-ness, the substantiality that we attribute to this world, is the Brahman consciousness that is at the back of all

things. But the world-ness is like the silver seen in the piece of mother-of-pearl. Here the mother-of-pearl is Brahman; the silver is the world. We superimpose the externality and multiplicity characterising the world upon Brahman which is indivisible; and we superimpose the existence aspect of Brahman on the multiplicity and externality of the world and say, "The external world exists. Multiple objects exist." This is a wrong statement because the multiple objects do not exist, in the same way as silver does not exist. What exists is something else; and what appears is another thing altogether. This is the difference between the general existence and the particular appearance.

Deva dattaḥ svayaṁ gacchet tvaṁ vikṣasva svayaṁ tathā, ahaṁ svayaṁ na śaknomīti evaṁ loke prayujyate (39). The word 'Self,' 'Svayaṁ': When we refer to the Self, we use the Sanskrit word Svayaṁ. "Devadatta will himself go. You yourself please look into this matter. I myself cannot do this work." In all these statements we have used the word 'self' unconsciously. "He himself is responsible for all this. I myself am not in a position to do this work"; and, "You yourself please look into this matter." Why do we go on saying 'self, self, self'?

The idea is that we cannot escape the association of a peculiar thing called selfhood, either in referring to ourselves, to another person, or to someone else. Here, the selfhood of a thing comes into high relief whether or not we are aware that such a thing is happening. No one can make any statement without the association of a nominative, substantive selfhood in the sentence.

Idam rūpyam idam vastram iti yad vad idam tathā, asau tvamaha mityeṣu svaya mityabhi manyate (40). In the same way as we say, “I myself, you yourself, he himself,” etc., we are used to making statements of another kind. “This is silver, this is cloth, this is of this kind, this is of that kind.” Here in this second variety of statements, the word ‘self’ is not used. It is an externality that is emphasised. Only objectivity is taken into account when it is said, “This is silver, this is cloth, this is a pot, this is a building, this is this kind of thing, this is that kind of thing.”

Ahantvāt bhidyatām svatvam kūṣasthe tena kim tava, svayam śabdārtha evaiṣa kūṣastha iti me bhavet (41). Therefore, on the basis of the analogy of the mother-of-pearl and silver, the world and Brahman, etc., we should distinguish between the Self and I. Though the real Self is the I, and the real I is the Self, we mistake this physical body for the I and make statements of personality involved in action, speech, etc., when we say, “I shall do this work.”

The individuality which is characterising the ‘I’ here, is a false manifestation of the true Self, which is Svayam, through the intellect that represents the personality of the individual. What is Self? Svayam is itself Kutastha, the primary Atman of the individual.

Anyatva vāraṇam svatvam iti ced anya vāraṇam, kūṣastha syātmantām vaktuḥ iṣṭa meva hi tad bhavet (42). When we say, “I myself,” etc., or use the word ‘self’ anywhere in a statement, we distinguish between self and anything other than the self. *Idam, tat*, etc., ‘this’ and ‘that’ – demonstrative pronouns of this kind – are distinguishable from selfhood. Anything that is external or far away, which is designated as this and that, is not connected with the

word 'self'; only self-identical individuals are referred to as 'self,' such as 'I myself, you yourself, he himself', etc.

The second-ness of anything is set aside by the word 'Svayam', or 'Self.' The word 'self' distinguishes itself from anything that is not self. All that is conceivable, perceivable or contactable is not Self. Anything that can be contacted through the sense organs, or thought by the mind as an external object, or even understood by the intellect as something outside is a not-self. The Self is that which is the light at the back of even these conceptions and perceptions. The externality of the world or the individuality of the person is created by the limitation of consciousness through the perceiving or cognising medium that is the intellect representing the five sheaths.

Kutastha *chaitanya*, Atman, and Self mean one and the same thing. Different words are used to designate one and the same reality. The purpose of Kutastha, Atman, Self, or Svayam is to abrogate any kind of external association with it. The concept of 'I' is so very intensely self-identical with itself that we cannot for a moment imagine that we are other than what we are.

We may have large properties or belongings, but we will never say that the belonging is myself. We always say, "I have this property; I own this thing; it is mine." We say, "This book is mine," not, "This book is I." Even in ordinary parlance, we make a distinction between our true self-identity and that which we are attached to – objects, property, etc. We never say, "This building is I; this property is I; this land is I; this money is I." Nobody says that. They say, "It is mine."

So even when we make a mistake, we somehow or the other introduce a distinction between the I-ness and the non-I-ness, or the Self and the not-self; and the I can be attributed only to the self-identical consciousness, and not to anything that it appears to possess or is related to it.

Svaya mātmeti paryāyau tena loke tayoḥ saha, prayogo nāstyathaḥ svatvaṁ ātmatvaṁ cānya vārakam (43). The words ‘Atman’ and ‘Svayam’ mean one and the same thing. We do not use Atman and Self at the same time. ‘Atman’ is a Sanskrit word; ‘Self’ is an English word. They mean one and the same thing. The non-externalisable Self-identical existence, pure perceiver, incapable of externalisation and incapable of becoming an object in any way – that is Atman, that is Svayam, that is Self.

Therefore, there is no possibility of connecting anything in the world with the Self. Otherwise, we would be feeling that the whole world is hanging on our body because it is our Self. The Self distinguishes itself from anything that is not itself; consciousness is distinguishable from matter, and all that is known by consciousness is of a material nature.

Ghaṭaḥ svayaṁ na jānāti evaṁ svatvaṁ ghaṭādiṣu, acetaneṣu dṛṣṭaṁ cet dṛṣyatā mātma sattvataḥ (44). Sometimes we say, “The pot itself has no consciousness.” The pot has no consciousness, but we sometimes use the word ‘self’ there also. The idea is that even inanimate objects have a selfhood in them in a potential form.

Inanimate things are Pure Consciousness itself in a sleeping condition, in a state of *tamas*. Where *rajas* and *sattva* are not manifest even a little, even in a smallest measure – there is only fixity, stability, and immovability of

the *tamoguna* – consciousness also appears to be stable, fixed, immovable, lifeless. What we call life is only a manifestation of consciousness through the medium of the subtle body. The stone has no subtle body, it is entirely physical and, therefore, consciousness cannot reveal itself through anything that is subtler than the physicality which is its body.

Therefore it is that the stone, pot, etc., cannot have self-consciousness; yet consciousness is there at the back in the form of existence. Pure existence is there, but consciousness is not there; freedom is also not there. Stones exist, but stones do not know that they exist, whereas we exist, and we know that we exist. That is the difference between inanimate matter and an animate being which is conscious of itself.

Yet we cannot completely ignore the fact that consciousness, being universal, is present even at the back of all inanimate things; otherwise, if it is to be considered as absent in inanimate things, there would be division in consciousness and some part of the world would be divested of connection with consciousness. Consciousness would become finite. That is not the case. Whether it is manifest or not, Consciousness is present in all things, and therefore we unwittingly use the word ‘self.’ We use the word ‘self’ even in respect of pot, etc.: “The pot itself does not know.”

Cetanā cetana bhidā kūṣasthātma kṛtā na hi, kintu buddhi kṛtā’bhāsa kṛtai vetyava gamyatām (45). This difference between animate and inanimate things is not created by consciousness or Kūstha itself. It is the

distinction drawn between the reflection of the Atman in the intellect and the absence of it in certain things.

Chetana, or living entity, is that where, in its subtle body in the minute manifestation of thought or mind, consciousness gets reflected. If the reflection is not there and it is zero, there would be no feeling of sensitivity, instinct, or even the sense of life. The distinction between life and non-life is not due to the presence or absence of consciousness. It is present everywhere unanimously. The distinction is because of the fact that Universal consciousness in certain places or objects cannot manifest itself via the subtle body, as the subtle body itself is absent there; only the gross body is there, as in stone. But it manifests itself where there is a subtle body – as in living beings, like animals, human beings, etc.

So the distinction between animate and inanimate is not brought about by consciousness as such. It is caused by the reflection of consciousness in the medium of the subtle body, whatever be the degree in which it is manifest in living beings.

Yathā cetana ābhāsaḥ kūṭasthe bhrānti kalpitaḥ, acetano ghaṭādiśca tathā tatraiva kalpitaḥ (46). Just as ‘individuality consciousness’ is falsely imputed to the Universal consciousness, in a similar manner the pot-ness, stone-ness and pure objectivity are also falsely superimposed on Universal consciousness. This body is like a stone, really speaking. It is as inanimate as any object without sense or sensation. Therefore, this superimposition of materiality and externality on the Universal consciousness is common in both cases – in the case of

one's own Self, where the body is superimposed on the Self, or in the other case where inanimate objects, like stone, etc., are superimposed on the Self and then we say the stone exists.

The stone cannot exist unless the existence aspect of Brahman manifest there is in a *tamasic* form. Else, the stone will not exist. One aspect of Brahman is manifest in existence, and another aspect is manifest in existence-consciousness. Only in the *devatas*, the gods, can we find all three manifest – existence-consciousness-bliss. In inanimate objects, only existence is there. In human beings like us, there is only existence-consciousness. We do not have bliss. We are very unhappy people. It is only in the divinities, the gods in heaven, that the bliss aspect is supposed to be manifest. *Sattva guna* is only in heaven, not in the mortal world.

Tatte dante api svatvam iva tvama hamā diṣu, sarvatrā nugate tena tayo rapyātma teti cet (47). Te ātmatva'pyanugate tattedante tatastayoḥ, ātmatvaṁ naiva saṁbhāvyam samyak tvāder yathā tathā (48). Wherever the word 'Self' gets associated in a statement made in regard to any object, we may say Selfhood is present there either manifestly or unmanifestly. But the Selfhood is not present in the case of such statements that we make using 'this' or 'that' because the demonstrative pronouns 'this' and 'that' refer not to the Self, but to something that is other than the Self.

When we say, "This is something," we refer to some object that is near; and when we say, "That is something," we refer to an object that is far off. Nevertheless, both the

terms 'this' and 'that' refer to something other than the Self, whether it is near or far. Therefore, in these cases, in the employing of such terms as 'this' and 'that', the word 'Self' is not used, indicating thereby that anything that is outside the Self is non-self, and therefore it is unconscious. Not-self is unconscious; therefore, it becomes the object of consciousness. The Self which is consciousness knows the not-self; but the not-self itself cannot know itself. It is divested of consciousness.

Ātmatvaṃ naiva saṃbhāvyam: The *idam-ta*, or this-ness and that-ness, are something like quality or attribute that is associated with consciousness such as propriety or impropriety, etc. *Samyat* means propriety; *asamyat*, impropriety. These qualities are attached to substances and things and persons, etc. – not identifying it with persons, but existing as something external to them. *Atmatva* or Selfhood, therefore, cannot be associated with anything which is designated as 'this' and 'that' because it is definitely outside the Self.

Tatte dante svatā nyatve tvantā hante paras param, prati dvandva tayā loke prasiddhe nāsti saṃśayaḥ (49). That and this, Self and not-self, you and I, are opposed factors in experience. The remoteness of a thing is indicated by the term 'that'. The nearness is indicated by the word 'this'. Selfhood is indicated by the word 'self', and externality is indicated by the two demonstrative pronouns 'this' and 'that'. 'You' and 'I' also mean the same thing. The word 'you' implies a not-self. 'I' refers to the self.

The term 'you', even if it is applied to a human being, does not carry the conviction of selfhood being there

because 'you' is distinguished from 'I'. The statement "I wish to see you" implies the thing indicated by the term 'you' as being different from the 'I'; and the whole point made out here is that consciousness cannot get identified with anything which is outside. Hence, two people cannot be real friends, because 'I' and 'you' are involved there. Whatever be the thickness of intimacy or friendship, as long as one is I and the other is you, both cannot be I. Both cannot be you, either. No two persons can think alike, and no two persons can be eternal friends. You is outside, and I is inside.

Anyatāyāḥ prati dvandvī svayaṁ kūṣṭha iṣyatām, tvantāyāḥ pratiyo gyeṣo'hami tyātmani kalpitaḥ (50). We have been mentioning again and again that Kutastha-chaitanya is the opposite of the externality of anything whatsoever. Know this very well. The you-ness in a thing is different from the I-ness in a thing. As externality is different from the Kutastha Atman, 'you' is different from 'I', and so you should not use the word 'you' in future unless you want to distinguish that person from yourself.

Ahantā svatvayor bhede rūpya tedanta yoriva, spaṣṭe'pi moha māpannā ekatvaṁ prati pedire (51). That the I associated with the body-consciousness is different from the true Self that is Universal is something that has been clarified now by this analysis. In spite of that, ignorant people confuse the truth; they attribute the permanency of Universal consciousness to the I, and imagine that they are not going to die. Nobody believes that he will die one day or the other. After all, the time has not come. Why it has not come? Because consciousness proper, Universality as

such, cannot perish, and that imperishable Atman somehow or other gets reflected through this false I-hood attached to this body and compels this false I to also feel that it is perhaps deathless.

There is a dual consciousness in the physical I-ness. On the one hand, there is the feeling that nobody will die tomorrow – there is still some time, it is not immediate – though there is no guarantee that it is so. On the other hand, one knows that any day one can go. So we always believe two things at the same time. The mortality of the body with which the I is connected compels us to convince ourselves that one day we will go, and it can be even tomorrow. But at the same time, the Universal consciousness which is imperishable tells us that we will not die tomorrow, that it will be after a long time, maybe a hundred years.

So we have two kinds of feeling always: the fear that we may die any moment, and the feeling that we will not die like that so easily. We live in a state of conflict between the fear of death and the hope of not dying immediately. Ignorant people make a mistake of identifying the mortal ‘I’ with the infinite consciousness.

Tādātmyā dhyāsa evātra pūrvoktā vidyayā kṛtaḥ, avidyāyām nivṛttāyām tat kāryam vini vartate (52). Mutual superimposition as has been described between the Self and the not-self is called *tadatmyadhyasa* in Sanskrit. *Tadatmyadhyasa* means the imposition of a character of one thing on another thing to which it really does not belong. Selfhood cannot belong to objects, yet we love objects as if they are our own self. We hug objects and love

them as our own self because there is *tadatmyadhyasa*, or identity between the true Self and the object that is outside, through the medium of mental cognition and sensory perception.

On the other hand, there is a reverse order taking place. The objectivity is identified with the Universality of consciousness and we begin to feel that the movements in the world, the historical process and anything that changes here, is also a change in consciousness. That is why we say, “I am moving.” The body is moving; the Universal consciousness in us does not move. All the statements that we make in regard to ourselves are wrong because they are applicable only to the body; but we somehow apply them to the true Self to give them some meaning. Similarly, the deathless nature of Universal consciousness is wrongly transposed to the perishable body and objects in the world and they are imputed a sort of unreliable permanence, though we cannot say that anything in the world is permanent even for two days.

Avidyā’vṛti tādātmye vidya yaiva vinaśyataḥ, vikṣepasya svarūpaṁ tu prārabdha kṣaya mīkṣate (53). The veiling aspect of the *avidya* and the *vikshepa*, or the distracting aspect of *avidya*, both can be destroyed by *vidya* or knowledge. The veiling aspect and the distracting aspect were studied in the previous discourse.

Avidya has two functions: It prevents us from knowing what is there – we do not see anything at all as real – and then it compels us to see what is not there. Brahman which is there is not seen; the world which is not there is seen. This is *avarana* and *vikshepa*, veiling and distraction, that

avidya does. This action of *avidya* can be destroyed only by *vidya*, true knowledge – insight into the nature of reality.

Vikṣe pasya svarūpaṁ tu prārabdha kṣaya miṁṣate. This body, which is also a part of *vikshepa* or distraction, continues for some time like any object in the world. The objects in the world also appear to be continuing for some time, but not for all time. This body persists and appears to be continuing for as long as *prarabdha karma* continues. This body is a hardened form of the potencies of actions that we performed in the previous births, out of which a portion has been allotted for experience in this world. That portion has concretised itself into this solid body, and this body will continue to exist and live here in this world as long as that karma's potency or momentum is not consumed, exhausted.

When the momentum is over, or when the potter releases his hand from the wheel, it stops movement. Similarly, the potter should not go on pushing the wheel again and again, otherwise there will be no cessation of movement. We are the potter, and the karma is, of course, what we do. If any momentum that is created by the pushing of the wheel – by a potter that we were in the previous birth – continues, the body will also continue. And when the potter does not interfere with it anymore and keeps quiet, the movement will cease one day, and the body will perish.

But if we push it again by adding further karmas, called *agami* karma, the wheel will go on moving again and again; there will be no cessation at all. Again rebirth will take place. So do not add further karmas; do not be like a potter,

pushing the wheel again. Let the momentum that was there be there and let it cease by itself, just as fire subsides when fuel is not anymore added to it.

Upādāne vinaṣṭe'pi kṣaṇam kāryam pratīkṣate, ityāhus tārīkīkā stavvad asmākaṁ kim na sambhavet (54). Naiyayika and Vaiseshika philosophers, and some other philosophers also, are likely to feel that even if the cause ceases, the effect may continue for some time. They are called Tarkikas. For a moment we will find the effect there. If we keep an onion in a pot, the whole pot smells of onion; and if we remove the onion and throw it away, even then the smell will not go. For three days the smell of onions will remain. So the cause has gone, but the effect continues.

In a similar manner, Tarkikas (the Naiyayikas) say the continuance of the body should be explained as something practicable or possible even if the causes cease to exist. The Vedanta doctrine says that the *prarabdha* karma does not actually obstruct the realisation of God. It does not persist as the Naiyayikas say, obstructing the Consciousness itself. We have an idea that *prarabdha* is always undesirable, obstructive, and a nuisance, but it is not like that.

Prarabdha is only a name for the residuum of karma; and karma need not necessarily be a bad karma. We must have done some good karma also; otherwise, how would it be possible for us to have knowledge in this birth, if the *prarabdha* was only obstructive – *tamasic* and *rajasic*? We have a body caused by *prarabdha*, but are we not also illumined? Somehow or other, we have consciousness of a higher life and are aspiring for God, in spite of the *prarabdha* being there.

This shows that all *prarabdha* is not bad. *Sattvic prarabdha* will permit the manifestation of a consciousness of a higher life, even aspiration for God. Only the *rajasic* and *tamasic* aspects obstruct. And in most of us, by God's grace we should say, the aspiration for God has arisen. That means our *prarabdhas*, notwithstanding the fact that they are there in the form of this body, are not always obstructive. If they were totally obstructive, we would not have thought of God. The idea of religion and spirituality would not arise. We would only be muddled in the world and get sunk in *samsara*. That this has not happened to many of us means *sattvic prarabdha* is working. The Vedanta doctrine says that it does not mean that *prarabdha* is always obstructive. It is sometimes very helpful also, as in the case of when the *sattvic* aspect of it manifests, it permits the manifestation of knowledge.

Discourse 25

CHAPTER 6: CHITRADIPA – LIGHT ON THE ANALOGY OF A PAINTED PICTURE, VERSES 54-72

Upādāne vinaṣṭe'pi kṣaṇam kāryam pratikṣate, ityāhus tārnikā stadvad asmākam kim na sambhavet (54). Tantūnām dina saṅkhyānām taistādṛk kṣaṇa īritah, bhramasyā saṅkhyā kalpasya योग्याḥ kṣaṇa iheṣyatām (55). The *prarabdha* karma, which is the cause of this present body, permits the continuance of this body for some time, as long as the force of this *prarabdha* has not exhausted itself. The Naiyayikas, or logicians, also hold the view that when the effect is produced from a cause, the nature of the cause persists in the effect for some time, even if it be only for a moment. In a similar manner, the continuance of this body, though it be for some years, should really be considered as only a continuance for a moment in the light of eternity and the long duration of the astronomical cosmos.

If we are able to live in this world for fifteen years, it cannot be regarded as a great achievement because what are fifteen years, twenty years or even thirty years in this vast universe where the sun has been shining for millions of years and the stars have been there for millions of years? Even this mountain in front of us has been there – for how many years, nobody knows. So many people have come and gone; this mountain has seen them in this place.

Therefore, there is no need for any kind of extra exultation on the body's being there and continuing for some time. The continuance of the body is no advantage to the soul. It is only the lingering of an illness. Even after a

person has been declared fit and is discharged from the hospital, something lingers.

Anyway, the Upanishads proclaim that ‘such’ a person will not have rebirth. The description here is in regard to a *jivanmukta purusha* who has no *sanchita* karma or *agami* karma left in him, but *prarabdha* continues. What causes rebirth is not *prarabdha*, because *prarabdha* is that particular allotted portion of karma which is to be worked out only through this body. It is not to be carried forward to the next body. What causes the birth of the new body is the fresh allotment of karma that is made out of the storehouse of *sanchita* karmas – the accumulated potencies of past actions lying in the deep unconscious level of our personality in the *anandamaya kosha*. This has been burnt up in the case of the *jivanmukta purusha*.

There are three kinds of karmas. All the potentials of past deeds are stored up as in a granary, and a little of these items in the storeroom are brought forward to the shop front for retail selling. The shopkeeper does not bring the entire stock to the forefront. When the commodities kept for retail sale are exhausted or are about to be exhausted, he brings fresh stock from the storeroom.

Sanchita karma is like this storeroom which contains all the potencies of our deeds performed in thousands of births that we have taken earlier. Inasmuch as one single body cannot experience the fruits of all these actions, it has been arranged that many, many bodies have to be taken in order that different kinds of karmas may be experienced. Else, if all the karmas have to be worked out through one body only, the karmas will crush this body to such an extent that

it will not be there even for a moment. The body will crumble immediately due to the weight of these karmas.

Hence, the arrangement of cosmic law is so very careful. Wishing that all karmas have to be worked out, and yet it is not possible for any person to individually work out all karmas through one body, the arrangement is that we will have many, many bodies. One particular body will be able to undergo the fruit of one kind of karma; another body will be necessary to work out the fruit of another kind of karma. And so, a systematic arrangement has been made in this manner.

When a particular body is born due to the working of the 'retail' or shopfront karma that has been taken out from the storehouse of *sanchita*, the consciousness of the person gets identified with the body very intensely; and due to the attachment to this body, further karmas are done. More and more deeds are performed. That is, we have been born into this world with this body due to some karma of the past. But are we keeping quiet now? We are busy doing something even in this birth, even through this body. This 'being busy' is also a cause for adding further karmas to the storeroom. Thus, the store of karmas will never be exhausted.

Now in the case of the *jivanmukta* – the person who has been illumined with the nature of God, Brahman – the old store of karmas has been burnt up and, therefore, there is no chance of another body being born for him. The *agami* karma, or the karma created by fresh actions, will also not be there because he is wise enough not to entangle himself in any fresh action. So neither will he do any fresh action to

add to the old store, nor is the old store there; it is burnt up. The only thing that remains is this *prarabdha*. When that is exhausted, he will attain *videhamukti*, Universal salvation.

Vinā kṣoda kṣamaṁ mānam tair vṛthā parikalpyate, śruti yuktyanu bhūtibhyaḥ vadatām kiṁ nu duḥ śakam (56). Āstām dustār kikaiḥ sākam vivādaḥ prakṛtaṁ bruve, svā'hamoḥ siddha mekatvaṁ kūṣastha pariṇāminoḥ (57). This verse deals with some quibble that the author has brought in the middle, which is not connected with the actual subject of discussion – the difference between the Naiyayikas and the Vedantins with regard to the effect that is produced by the cause, and the cause persisting in the effect for some time, etc. It is a diversion from the main subject. Now we come to the main subject.

The main theme is: The Self and the I-consciousness attached to this body have been identified one with the other, and then we begin to feel that we are an individual personality. Kutastha is the innermost Universal Atman; *parinami* is the ego-consciousness, the transient personality. These two have been mixed up together; and then what happens? The permanency of the Kutastha *chaitanya* makes us feel that we are here to live for a long time, but the brittleness of the body makes us sometimes suspect that long life is not possible. Yet, the point is, the Self is different from the body-consciousness or from the 'I' that is attached to the body.

Bhrāmyante paṇḍitaṁ manyāḥ sarve laukika tairthikāḥ, anādṛtyā śrutiṁ maurkhyāt kevalām yukti māśritāḥ (58). Here mere logic does not work. People who are accustomed to rely only on logical arguments, not basing the logic on the conclusions of the *śruti* or the Upanishads, do not come

to any conclusion in regard to the relationship between the true Self and the false self.

There are three kinds of self, known as *mukhyatman*, *mithyatma* and *gaunatman*. The *mithyatman* is the false encumbrance that has grown over the Primary Self, the Kutastha or the *mukhyatman*, in the form of the five sheaths – *annamaya*, *pranamaya*, *manomaya*, *vijnanamaya*, *anandamaya*. These five sheaths are false superimpositions and, therefore, they are called *mithyatman*, unreal self.

The Kutastha, or the real Atman inside, is called *mukhyatman* or the primary Self. There is a third Atman called the *gaunatman*, the object that is attractive and is loveable. One hugs an object of affection by pouring selfhood on that object. People say, “Oh my dear, this is my very self!” The mother tells the child, “You are my very self.” How could the child become the self of the mother? She has transferred her selfhood into the object, which is the child. Gold and silver are the self of the money-minded businessman. There are so many things in this world over which we pour our selfhood.

Unless we pour our selfhood on something, we cannot love that thing. Love is nothing but the movement of the self in respect of an object outside; and to the extent that the self is lost inside and it is poured more and more outside, to that extent we seem to be less significant and the object seems to be more significant. This is a travesty of affairs where the object seems to become the subject, and the subject has been completely annihilated. This is called *gaunatman*, or the secondary self, the object that is

affectionate. The false self is the five sheaths. *Mukhyatman* is the primary Self, which is the Kutastha Atman, the Universal Being within us.

Pūrvā para parāmarśa vikalā statra kecana, vākyā bhāsān sva sva pakṣe yojayantya pyalajjayā (59). Kūṭasthādi śarīrānta saṅghāta syātma tām jaguḥ, lokāyatāḥ pāmarāśca pratyakṣā bhāsa māśritāḥ (60). Foolish people have no proper understanding of the distinction that is really there between the Kutastha Atman and the false self, which is the five sheaths, and not knowing the distinction between these two, they consider this personality as the real being. “My friend is coming. Here is my father. This is so-and-so.” These statements are a mix-up of ideas because when we say, “This is my father,” we do not know what actually it is that we are demonstrating by pointing to some personality. The Universal Atman cannot be regarded as a father. The five sheaths are also not the father, because they have no consciousness. Actually, we cremate the body of the father when he is dead.

Now, the sheaths are not the father; and the Atman is also not the father. Who is it that we call the father? It is an imaginary concoction of ideas in the brain by mixing up two issues: the foisted superimposed false self of the five sheaths over the real Universality on the one hand, and the transferring of the character of permanency or Universality to the individuality of the five sheaths.

Human beings are, therefore, not existent entities. They are only a complex of two issues – the phenomenal and the noumenal. The phenomenal is not the real, and the noumenal cannot become the particular. So actually, no

individual can be regarded as real by itself. It is a false appearance – yourself, myself, and everything in the world. They become appearances because they have no substance by themselves except by a mix-up of two issues: partly the noumenal, and partly the phenomenal.

Ignorant people, unlettered individuals, atheists and materialists consider the body itself as the reality. They think the physical body consisting of the five elements is the only thing that is visible to the eyes, and that which is not seen is not real. If it is not seen, it cannot be real. This is the pure materialist point of view; it is based on observation and experiment. And all observation, experiment and investigation scientifically conducted are based on the visibility of the object. Invisible things cannot be made the object of scrutiny in this manner.

The material concept has gone so deep into the minds of people that we sometimes call them materialists or *lokayatas*, worldly people who, following the example of the great leader called Virochana, consider the body as the final reality.

It appears that once upon a time Prajapati, the great creator, made a statement: “This Atman is to be contacted, realised and experienced. Then everything that one wishes becomes one’s own.” This was heard by Indra and the gods, and the demons led by Virochana. “Oh there is something called the Atman, by knowing which we can have everything that we want. Let us have it!” So Indra and Virochana both went to Brahma. Said Prajapati, “How have you come, sir?”

Indra/Virochana: “We have heard that the Atman must be known; and if it is known, whatever we want, we will get. Please teach us.”

Prajapati: “Stay here for thirty-two years, observing self-restraint. I shall tell you what it is.”

They stayed there with Brahma for thirty-two years. After that, they said, “Please teach us the Atman. Please teach.”

Prajapati: “Go and look at yourself in the water, and what you see there is the Atman.” Indra and Virochana went, and they saw themselves reflected in the water. What did they see? The physical body – this is the Atman. Very surprising! Virochana said, “This is the Atman! Wonderful! This is the Atman. This is the body.” He returned and proclaimed to the demons, “I have known the Atman. This very thing that you are seeing with your eyes is the Atman.”

But Indra did not feel satisfied. A big story it is! He went several times to Brahma and then got initiated into the true Atman. Anyway, Virochana is the one who was misguided by the first instruction of Brahma and thought that the physical body is the Atman. His followers are called *lokayatas*, materialists who do not believe in anything except the physical elements.

Śrautī kartuṃ svapaḥṣaṃ te kośa manna mayam tathā, virocanasya siddhāntam pramāṇam prati jajñire (61). *Annamaya kosha*, or the physical sheath, is regarded by them as all-in-all. Eat, drink and be merry. This is a statement that is readily attributed to the *lokayatas*, or the materialists.

Jīvātma nirgame deha maraṇa syātra darśanāt, dehāti rikta evātmeti āhur lokāyatāḥ pare (62). There are certain polished materialists who do not believe that this body is really the Self, because they feel that the body perishes. That would mean that the Atman also perishes. Such a self is useless, undesirable. There must be something which persists after the destruction of the body. That something which is a subtle potential – a subtle element, which is supposed to be there after the passing of the body – should be considered as the Self; this is something that is opined by certain well-educated materialists.

Pratyakṣatva nābhimatā haṁdhīr dehāti rekiṇam, gamaye dindri yātmānam vacmī tyādi prayogataḥ (63). There are others who feel that the body cannot be the Self because the body is moved by the sense organs. Visibly we can see that the consciousness of I-ness is associated with some activity that is not entirely capable of identification with a physical body. Sensations, the perceptions, are the functions of certain principles in us which cannot be identified with the body.

Indriya, or the self which is constituted of the sensations, should be considered as reality. This doctrine that holds sensations to be the Ultimate Reality is called sensationalism. Materialism is the doctrine of the reality of matter only. Sensationalism is the doctrine that suggests that the senses constitute the criterion of judgement of any kind of value in the world.

Vāgādīnā mindriyāṇām kalahaḥ śrutiṣu śrutaḥ, tena caitanya meteṣām ātmatvaṁ tata eva hi (64). In the Upanishads there are anecdotes where the sense organs such as the eye, the ear, etc. supposedly contended among

themselves which is superior, because the *prana* started saying, "Who among us is superior? He, by the exit of whom others cannot exist, may be regarded as superior. Let somebody quit; after that, if the rest of us become miserable, then we may say that person (sense) is superior."

So the eye left; he went away. But even if the eyes were not there, there was no problem. The ears could hear, nose could smell, the tongue could taste, etc. Then the ear said, "I am very important. Let me quit, and let us see what happens." The ears left, but nothing happened. If the ears were not there they could not hear, of course, but they could see, and many other things could be done.

So it was found that none of the organs could be regarded as more superior than the others. But when the *prana* said, "I am superior, and I shall quit," then all the senses started shaking. It looked as if the whole building was cracking because when the *prana* goes, the senses break down immediately. So all the senses said, "Don't go, don't go! Please, we accept you as superior." Then they all worshipped him.

This kind of contention among the sense organs is a story that is recorded for us in the Upanishads, on account of which we may say that there is some reality in the sense organs; and so a kind of selfhood may be attributed to the senses, but not necessarily to the body.

But there are others who say, "*Prana* is the real Self, not merely the sense organs, because it has been illustrated and proven in this analogy, the story of contention among the senses, that *prana* is superior. The senses are not superior, so we cannot consider the senses as the Self. It is the *prana*

that is the real Self, the vital Self. The physical self, the sensational self, all have gone. Now the vital self presents itself. It is a manifestation of the cosmic *prana*, Hiranyagarbha. Those who worship Hiranyagarbha say, “*Prana* is the supreme Self.”

Hairanya garbhāḥ prāṇātma vādina stveva mūcire, cakṣurādya kṣalope’pi prāṇa sattve tu jīvati (65). Even if all the senses are not there, even if we are blind, deaf and dumb, but if the *prana* is there, we are alive. So the *prana* should be considered as the true Self, because *prana* is alive even when we are asleep. Even when the senses are stifled, as it were, as in the state of sleep, and are not conscious, the *prana* is awake like a watchman; and so we must consider the *prana* as superior to all the senses.

Prāṇo jāgarti supte’pi prāṇa śraīṣṭhyā dikam śrutam, kośaḥ prāṇamayaḥ samyak vistareṇa prapañcitaḥ (66). Even in sleep, the *prana* is awake. The *pranamaya kosha* should be considered as the Self. The vital sheath is the reality; vitality is the Self. This is one doctrine of the vitalists. In the West also there are certain philosophers called vitalists who hold that there is a kind of protoplasmic energy which is present in all living beings, and it is the final reality in the individual. Those who hold that vitality is the ultimate value, call their doctrine vitalism – not materialism, not sensationalism, but vitalism. Bergson comes under this category.

Mana ātmeti manyanta upāsana parā janāḥ, prāṇasyā bhokṛtā spaṣṭā bhokṛtvam manasas tataḥ (67). There are idealists who say that *prana* cannot be the Self. What is the *prana*? It has no consciousness of its own. You are saying it

is awake during sleep; let it be awake. But it is not aware that it is awake. It has no consciousness; it cannot think. It is a kind of action, minus thought. So thought is more important; minus thought, what is the good of life? You may be breathing, that is all right, but you don't think. Is it a proper life? The mind is the real Self, not the *prana*, say the idealists who consider the mind as the supreme function in the human individual.

Mana eva manuṣyāṅām kāraṇaṁ bandha mokṣayoḥ, śruto manomayaḥ kośas tenātmētī ritaṁ manaḥ (68). In the Upanishad also, it is said that mind is the cause of the bondage and the liberation of a person. If the mind is filled with the desire for objects, it is for our bondage; if the mind is free from desire for objects, it is for our liberation. So the mind is superior, and it is the source of our joys and sorrows. It is the true Self, is what the idealists say – not the *prana* or the vital substance.

There are others who think that this is not a final solution of things. Mind is, of course, there; it is very essential, and it is superior to the *prana*, but mind is there even in animals. There is a kind of instinctive mind working there; there is an indeterminate process of thinking. Indistinct thought is the work of the mind. Decisive, determined, logical conclusions cannot be arrived at by the mind. The reason, intellect, is necessary.

We consider the intellect as superior to the mind. The Vijñānavādins are Buddhist idealists who consider reason as the final reality; all the objects of the world are considered as manifestations or concretisations of certain processes of the intellect itself. This philosophy is called

subjectivism, which considers the internal processes of the intellect or the reason as determining factors of even objects outside in the world.

Vijñāna mātmeti para āhuḥ kṣaṇika vādinaḥ, yato vijñāna mūlatvaṃ manaso gamyate sphuṭam (69). The world is transient; it is momentary because the little bits of process that is the intellectual function are also transient. So the world, looking like a solid substance, is really not solid. It is like a piece of cloth which is made up of little threads, and so the appearance of solidity in the cloth is an illusion. Actually, it is a complex of little inner components which are the threads.

The world is not a solid object. Nothing, not even this body and the objects outside, are solid objects. They are temporary complexes constituted of certain bits of intellectual process called *vijnana dhara*; thus the Buddhist idealists hold. Intellectual process is the Ultimate Reality. There is nothing beyond. No Self exists for them; only process exists.

Ahaṃ vṛtti ridam vṛttiḥ ityantaḥ karaṇam dividhā, vijñānam syādahaṃ vṛttiḥ idaṃ vṛttir mano bhavet (70). I and mine, I and this, are certain processes of the psyche. The affirmation of the I is to be attributed to the ego, which is a part of the intellectual function, and the this-ness that is attributed in perception is to be attributed to the mind. The mind is a kind of instrument of the reason. There are two functions of the psyche – the determining, and the pure thinking. The indeterminate thinking process is attributed to the mind; the deciding and determining function is

attributed to the intellect. The intellect is interior to the mind; the mind is exterior to the intellect.

The mind is a kind of crude intellection, and the intellect is the purified form of the mind. *Vijnana* is the intellect which is the cause of the feeling of I-ness in us, and the sense of this-ness, mine-ness, etc., are attributed to the mental function. The mind and the intellect are primary in our nature psychologically.

Ahaṁ pratyaya bījatvam idaṁ vṛtte riti sphuṭam, aviditvā svamā tmānaṁ bāhyaṁ vetti na tu kvacit (71). The consciousness of this-ness, mine-ness, etc., is actually traceable to the consciousness of I-ness, which is a characteristic of the ego. If 'I' is not there, 'mine' will not be there. In order that we may possess something and feel a sense of mine-ness, ownership in respect of anything, we must exist first of all. Not only should we exist, we must also know that we are existing. Self-consciousness, which is the consciousness of one's own existence, is prior to the consciousness of anything outside as belonging to oneself, etc.

So the I-consciousness is the root of the other types of consciousness, such as mine-ness, this-ness, etc. Unless we know that we are existing, we cannot know that others are existing. Self-consciousness is primary; other consciousness is secondary. This is also a great instruction to us that, knowingly or unknowingly, we consider ourselves as superior to all other people. And all our welfare or activities outside are only a kind of camouflage of our egoistic action. Finally, when everything is drowning, we will try to save ourselves.

Kṣaṇe kṣaṇe janma nāśau ahaṁ vṛtter mitau yataḥ, vijñānaṁ kṣaṇikaṁ tena svaparakāśaṁ svato miteḥ (72). It is a doctrine that there is a momentary function of the intellectual process, as has been already indicated; and if we are going to agree with the doctrine that the intellectual process is constituted of a kind of process or movement made up of little bits, there can be a continuity of little bits also, just as a chain is made up of little links. A chain is a continuity, but the links are separate. One link is separate from another link. So in spite of there being continuity, there can be a gap or breakup of parts in the middle.

So if we consider that the world, or the perception of the world, is a transitory process of intellectual function, as the idealists of Buddhism hold, then there would be no self-consciousness. Self-consciousness is not made up of little parts. If the intellect is the final reality, as these people hold, and reason is everything and yet it is fractional – made up of little bits, as threads constitute the cloth – then every moment we would be feeling that we are little-little pieces put together. But we never feel like that.

We would feel that we are jumbles of little pieces of matter, little bits of intellectual process, little parts of ideation, and that we are never a single whole. I cannot say, “I am coming” or “We are coming”; I have to say, “The bundles are coming.” We never feel that we are bundles of little-little pieces of idea or material substance. We feel that we are one indivisible thing – indivisible and impossible of fraction. We never feel that we are transitory. We do not feel that we are a movement. We feel that we are solid existences. That is a phenomenon that has to be explained,

and it cannot be explained by the doctrine that there is only process in the world, and there is nothing prior to the process.

Discourse 26

CHAPTER 6: CHITRADIPA – LIGHT ON THE ANALOGY OF A PAINTED PICTURE, VERSES 70-77

There is a gradual development of thought in the chapters of the Panchadasi, as you would have noticed during our studies. It is not that any specific order is indicated anywhere in different chapters. It is important to connect the thoughts into a systematic whole in order that the entire presentation may become a guideline for our whole life. People who listen to these discourses may not have been able to notice the inner coherence of these teachings. The coherence aspect of the teachings is based on the coherence of the structure of life itself. It is not that we do anything we like, right from morning to evening. There is a system in our activity, in our mode of thinking, in our general outlook of life.

The nature of the world determines the behaviour of people in respect of the world. It is a cosmological system, if we can put it so – the methodology of the gradual descent of reality, stage by stage, until it reaches the lowest category of earth consciousness. We are now bound to the world of earth consciousness in the sense that we are perpetually aware of a material world outside us. In such an intensity do we become conscious of the world outside; and the world seems to be flooding us with its variety and compulsion to such an extent that many a time we forget that we exist at all. Our existence is drowned in the existence of the world. We are concerned with the world very much, not paying sufficient attention to the fact that

this concern for the world would not have any meaning if we ourselves do not exist.

This is the reason why the very first chapter starts with the fundamental question of our existence itself. Let the world be there or not; that is a different question. Are you existing? If you are sure that you exist in a convincing manner, on the basis of that conviction, you can develop further relations with things outside – the world, etc. The first chapter was, therefore, devoted to the establishment of a fundamental reality behind the human individual independent of the three states of waking, dreaming and sleeping. This is the subject of the first chapter, if you can recollect what you have heard.

Consciousness is externalised in the state of waking, internalised in the state of dream, totally stifled, as it were, in the state of sleep; nevertheless, it persists as a continuity in all the three states of waking, dream and sleep. Because of its continuity in the three states, we are able to recollect our identity the next morning when we wake up from sleep. If this consciousness were not continuously present in the three states, there would be no awareness of our identity as a person who slept yesterday. We would be aware of somebody else.

Essentially, the first chapter dealt with the nature of the fundamental consciousness which is our essential nature, into which we enter in the state of deep sleep, where our consciousness is not connected to any of the sheaths – neither to the causal, nor the intellectual, mental, sensory, vital or physical. It appears to be existing there as an unadulterated, pure, featureless Universality. Our essential

nature is Universal Consciousness – not body consciousness or world consciousness or object consciousness. This is the quintessence of the first chapter. The establishment of the existence of a reality behind the individual is the primary theme of the first chapter.

In the second chapter, the objective analysis of the world was taken up: the world of five elements. Though we are to some extent conscious that our essential nature cannot be a physical embodiment in the form of this body, mind etc., and that we are basically a consciousness that is imperishable, the world is too much for us, many a time. The world is constituted of five elements: earth, water, fire, air and ether. The second chapter engaged itself in the distinguishing of the form taken by these elements and the reality that is behind them.

The point that was essentially made out there was: When we say, “Ether exists, fire exists, water exists, earth exists,” etc., we are likely to consider existence as a kind of predicate or an adjunct to space, air, etc. Existence is not a quality of space. It is space that is a quality of existence. In our statements like, “The building exists, this exists, that exists,” we wrongly attribute a qualitative character to Pure Existence that is at the back of all things, and give substantiality to that which is really a quality.

The existence aspect of anything is primary. The form of that thing is secondary. Space, air, fire, water, earth are forms taken by Pure Existence in an objective fashion. Existence has to be separated from the forms taken by existence in the shape of these five elements. Pure Existence is universal, as distinguishable from the five elements.

Objectively also, universality of consciousness is established, as subjectively it was established in the first chapter.

In the third chapter, the analysis was practically in the direction of what we call, “Who am I?” Are we the body or anything that we consider as this psychophysical complex? With analysis of this situation, it was proven that we are not the physical body because it has no consciousness. In the dream state, we are not even aware that the physical body is existing. That is to say, we can exist even minus consciousness of the physical body.

In the state of deep sleep, even the consciousness of mind being there is not there. In dream, the mind is operating; the body is not there. But in deep sleep, even the mind is not there. When the body and the mind both are not there, what is there in the state of deep sleep? Something is there. Do you exist in sleep? Yes, I exist. In what form do you exist? Not as the body, not as the mind. But we always consider ourselves as a complex of body and mind. Psychophysicality is regarded as the true nature of our personality, while really we are neither of these. This has been established in this analysis of the third chapter, or the enquiry into the nature of the individual, who is none of the five sheaths – not the physical, not the vital, not the sensory or the mental, not the intellectual, not the causal – Pure Universality.

So in all the three chapters, we have this one single theme driven into us, that Universality, which is the pure Brahman Consciousness, is at the back of the three states on the one side, and at the back of the five elements on

another side, and at the back of the five sheaths on the third side.

In the fourth chapter, a very important one, we were introduced into the concept of Ishvara and *jiva* – creation of the world by God, and the creation of the individual psychologically. The world of five elements, this entire cosmos, is created by God. It is an objective reality. The presentation of these objects in our perception through the sense organs is what we call actually consciousness of an object. The object is there independently by itself, unconcerned with what we are thinking about it.

The mountain is there, the river is there, the sun is there, the moon is there, stars are there. They are not bothered about what we are thinking about them. That is one aspect of the matter. Objective reality is the creation of God Almighty – Ishvara-srishti it is called. Ishvara-srishti is God's creation, impersonal in its nature, and it is not concerned with the viewpoints or whims and fancies or emotions of people individually. This is the objective character of creation, known as Ishvara-srishti.

But there is also the subjective side, which is the world created by our own selves. Our sorrows are not caused by God. He does not create anything specially for certain persons. The experience of joy and sorrow is a personal matter. It is engendered by the reaction of the mind of the individual in respect to the objects outside, which are all God's creation, Ishvara-srishti.

Loves and hatreds are the cause of sorrow. Certain things in the world are regarded by the individual mind as its own, and it segregates everything else as not its own.

What it considers as its own, it clings to; and what it considers as not its own, it rejects.

The reason for clinging to objects is a peculiar juxtaposition of values between the mind and the object concerned; and this juxtaposition does not continue for all times. The relationship between our mind and the object is not a permanent one. As the mood changes, as evolution progresses onward, as age grows, our wisdom increases, and we will find that our ideas about the world go on changing and what we wanted yesterday may not be the thing that we want today.

So it is very funny that one should cling to some things under the impression that they are the source of happiness, while actually they are fickle in their location. Not only our mind is fickle, but even the situation of the object is fickle. The object will not be there for all eternity for us to be attracted to. As the mind changes and progresses in the evolutionary process, the objects of the world also change. We won't always have the same thing to cling to. So subjectively and objectively, there is a mistake in the attachment of the mind to objects of sense. This attachment is the source of sorrow. That world of psychology created by the individual is called *jiva-srishti*, individual creation. This distinction was drawn in the fourth chapter.

The fifth chapter concentrated on the elucidation of the four great sentences of the Upanishads: *prajnanam brahma, aham brahmasmi, tat tvam asi, ayamatma brahma. Prajnana brahma*: Consciousness is Brahman; the ultimate nature of reality is Pure Consciousness. This is the

definition of Brahman as we have it in the Aitareya Upanishad of the Rig Veda.

And *aham brahmasmi*: The fundamental consciousness in us is identical with the Universal Consciousness. This is a statement that occurs in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad of the Yajur Veda. *Tat tvam asi*: Thou art that. This individual is basically identical with the Absolute. This is a statement that comes in the Chhandogya Upanishad of the Sama Veda. *Ayamatma brahma*: This Self is Brahman verily, basically, fundamentally. This statement comes in the Mandukya Upanishad of the Atharva Veda. This is the substance of the fifth chapter.

It is when we enter the sixth chapter that we actually wallow through a large body of thoughts right from the subject of creation, which was compared to the process of the painting of a picture. That is how the sixth chapter started. We have a canvas, first of all, for the purpose of painting, and then the canvas is stiffened with starch; that is the second stage. And then on the stiffened cloth, outlines are drawn for painting. That is the third stage. And lastly, ink is filled in at the fourth stage.

So is creation. In the beginning, there was no creation. The Absolute Being alone was. That background of everything which is uncontaminated with the creative process is Brahman, the Absolute Being that wills to create, as it were. That willing process is something like the stiffening of the Universality of consciousness, as by starch the cloth is stiffened. That condition of the concentration of the will of Brahman towards the future creation is the state of Ishvara.

And then the drawing of the outline of the future creation is in the state of the Hiranyagarbha-tattva, where as in a dream, we see the objects of the world faintly, but not clearly. The outline of the future creation is seen in Hiranyagarbha-tattva. In Virat, the final form of creation, the entire world occurs and variety is seen.

Now the details in regard to this are the theme of the sixth chapter. God, the world and the individual – Ishvara, *jagat* and *jiva* – are the subject of this chapter. Ishvara creates this world through His *maya shakti*, which is another name for the pure *sattva guna*, the property of equilibrium of *prakriti*. Inasmuch as pure *sattva* is universal in its nature, Brahman reflected in that *sattva* is also universal. Therefore, Ishvara is universal; therefore, He is also omniscient; therefore, He is omnipotent also. But when the *sattva* of *prakriti* is submerged by the activity of *rajas* and *tamas*, individuality crops up. *Rajas* is the distracting power of *prakriti*. It divides things, one from the other. So we are all divided. Each person is different from every other person. Every atom is different from every other atom. Segregation is the action of *rajas*.

This has been done; and so each one, each entity, each item, thinks that it is different from the other. On account of this division of consciousness, and the feeling of individuality or isolation in each one, there is a difficulty that arises spontaneously – namely, the impossibility to exist in a finite condition. The separation causes the consciousness of finitude. Each one thinks, “I am limited.” Now who would like to be limited? It is a sorrow to be in a state of limitation of freedom. In order that this limitation

can be made good, the individual that is finite engages itself in certain actions by which it comes in contact with the objects of the world, and creates a relative atmosphere of inclusiveness of the objects with itself.

When we associate ourselves with people outside or things in general in a social form, there is a false appearance of our finitude getting expanded. We feel more comfortable in a society, in a body of an organisation, as a citizen of a nation, than when we are totally individual. It does not mean that the nation or the organisation has expanded our finitude. There is a false feeling of security on account of an externalised or foisted increase in the dimension of personality. Life is a falsehood ultimately because of the false assurance given to us that we are secure in this world by associations with external objects and persons and things, while we are totally insecure finally. We are basically finite. The finitude does not go.

It cannot go by any kind of external contact. It can go only by the internalisation of consciousness. The infinity that we are asking for, the infinity that is the opposite of finitude that we are, is not outside. It is inside. It is in Selfhood and, therefore, any kind of external contact does not bring this security that we seek in this world.

The explanation of the nature of God's creation is over and the nature of the *jiva* individual is taken up; and tentatively it is mentioned that the mistake of the individual or *jiva* is to identify itself with its personality, individuality. This is the subject which we were discussing till yesterday.

This individuality of ours (this is *sloka* number 70) is constituted of an involvement of consciousness in the five

sheaths already mentioned – causal, intellectual, mental, vital and physical. The intellectual body is also the source of the ego-consciousness, the consciousness of personality that we entertain.

Ahaṁ vṛtti ridam vṛttiḥ ityantah karaṇam dividhā, vijñānam syādaham vṛttiḥ idam vṛttir mano bhavet (70). "I am, and this is mine." These are the two statements generally that we make in respect of our life. "This is me, and this is mine." The statement "This is me" is made by the ego-consciousness, which is operating through the intellect. The statement "This is mine" is made by the mind, which is a secondary instrument of the intellect. The mind is objective to the intellect or reason. The intellect is subjective, internal, to the mind. In the same way as our property – the ownership that we have in respect of things – is external to our true being, I-ness comes first; my-ness comes afterwards.

Ahaṁ pratyaya bījatvam idam vṛtte riti sphuṭam, aviditvā svamā tmānam bāhyam vetti na tu kvacit (71). I-consciousness comes first; all other consciousness of the world comes afterwards. If we are not aware that we are existing, how would we know that other things are existing? When we wake up from deep sleep, sometimes we do not know where we are. It takes some few minutes for us to be aware that we have woken up and we are self-conscious. When a person is in deep sleep and he wakes up, he takes a few minutes to know that he is existing at all. He is dozing, very giddy, rubbing his eyes, and does not know at all that even the body exists. Slowly, he becomes conscious that his body is there. Afterwards, slowly he begins to perceive that

something is there outside. What is there outside is not very clear. Then it becomes clear; it is a door that is in front.

Sometimes people who are in very deep sleep cannot suddenly know the direction of a door or a window, when they wake up in the middle of the night. If they want to go to the bathroom, for example, they hit their head against the wall because they think it is a door. Such is the effect of consciousness that is not there at all in respect of the body.

So gradually, from I-consciousness, body-consciousness, personality-consciousness, there is consciousness of externality, something being there, indistinctly at first; and afterwards, distinctly we begin to perceive that it is so-and-so. This is the action of these two principles inside – the intellect and the mind. After we know ourselves, we begin to know that something is there outside.

Kṣaṇe kṣaṇe janma nāśau ahaṁ vṛtter mitau yataḥ, vijñānaṁ kṣaṇikaṁ tena svaparakāśaṁ svato miteḥ (72). The intellect is a process, as Buddhist psychology will tell us. It is not a continuity, as the flow of oil from a pot; it is an apparent continuity. Even the flame of a lamp is not supposedly a solid mass. It is, as modern science tells us, constituted of little particles, packets of waves or particles, as they call it in our so-called quantum theories. We will not find continuity, in the sense of a solidity, in anything in this world.

Even the intellectual process is such a movement of little bits of thought, ideations, moving in the direction of a particular object or the world outside, and giving the impression that there is a flow. Every minute there is

cessation of the earlier bit of ideation, and a new bit starts manifesting itself, giving an impression of its connection with the earlier bit, so that a continuity, or a chain of thoughts, is maintained though the chain is made up of different links, one link being different from the other.

The sub-consciousness of the intellect is not actually the consciousness of the intellect by itself, because anything that is made up of little bits cannot be conscious of itself as indivisibility. Something else, which is self-luminous, is at the back of it and gives it the impression that it is self-conscious.

Vijñāna maya kośo'yaṁ jīva ityāgamā jaguḥ, sarva saṁsāra etasya janma nāśa sukhā dikaḥ (73). Scriptures and certain philosophical thoughts affirm that this *vijnanamaya kosha*, intellectual sheath, is the real *jiva*. What we call individuality, personality, *jiva*-hood, is the name of this intellectuality, this egoism, going together in a single action. All *samsara*, world entanglement, is caused by this.

Birth and death also are caused by this consciousness of body, which is created by the intellectual identification of ego with the body. The whole entanglement is to be attributed to this personality-consciousness.

Vijñānaṁ kṣaṇikaṁ nātmā vidyu dabhra nimeṣa vat, anyasyā nupa labdhatvāt śunyaṁ mādhyamikā jaguḥ (74). As it was already mentioned, this intellectual consciousness is momentary. It is made up of bits of thought. Therefore, it cannot be identified with the Atman, which is indivisible. It flashes forth like a lightning in the sky. But it does not stay there for a long time.

There are some people who feel that finally we enter into a nothingness. If we go on abrogating all the sheaths, including the causal sheath, including the intellectual sheath, what remains? If we disentangle ourselves from our reason and understanding, what remains? We will find that practically nothing will remain there. We will feel like nil, a zero, a darkness, a thoughtless vacuum. This is what people say is nil, or *shunya*.

There is one school of thought that holds that a vacuum is the Ultimate Reality: Everything is nothingness, finally. The whole solid universe can be reduced to nothingness ultimately by reduction of the effects into causes. This is one thought and one school of belief.

Asadevda mityāda vidameva śrutam tataḥ, jñāna jñeyā tmakaṁ sarvaṁ jagad bhrānti prakalpitaṁ (75). This philosophy which holds that ultimately everything is nil quotes a peculiar scripture from the Upanishad which says, “Nothingness was there ultimately.” The Upanishad, when it says, “Nothingness was there,” does not mean that really there was nothingness. It means that the world was not there.

The manifestation of names and forms was not there at the beginning of creation. Non-existence of the variety of creation in the form of names and forms is called *asat*, or non-existence. What was there in the beginning? Non-existence was there. Non-existence does not really mean non-existence of everything. It is only the non-existence of variety, creation, solidity, externality, name, form. The vacuous philosophers mistakenly conclude this statement means that nothing really exists, finally. But it cannot be.

Mere vacuum is inconceivable. How can we know that nothing is there unless there is somebody who says that nothing is there? There must be an awareness that nothing is there; therefore, we cannot say consciousness also is not there. The statement that nothing is there finally is a statement made by consciousness, and that itself cannot be nothing. So the vacuous philosophy does not hold water. There is something behind even the concept of nil, or zero, and that is the 'That which is'.

Niradhi ṣṭhāna vibhrānteḥ abhāvā dātmano'stitā, śūnyasyāpi sasākṣitvāt anyathā noktirasya te (76). There must be a witnessing consciousness of even the nothing that is there. If everything has gone, let it go. But somebody should know that everything has gone. Or, if there is nobody to know that everything has gone, how would we say that everything has gone? The statement is irrelevant. There is a witness consciousness necessary to observe the phenomenon of non-entity, even taking for granted that the whole entire world can be reduced to nothingness one day in the state of *pralaya* or dissolution.

Anyo vijñāna mayata ānandmaya āntaraḥ, astī tyevo palabdavya iti vaidika darśanam (77). The Mimamsa doctrine is another school of thought which holds that intellect is not the final reality, and there is no use of going on haranguing on the nature of the intellect or even the concept of *shunyatva* or nil, which is untenable. There is the causal sheath or *anandamaya kosha*, which is the fundamental criterion of the individuality of a person. That individuality is permanent. We need not identify individuality with the intellect, the mind, the senses, the

prana and the body, taken for granted; but there is something which is behind them that is the primary individuality called *anandamaya kosha*. This is the doctrine of the Mimamsakas, which we will take up afterwards.

Discourse 27

CHAPTER 6: CHITRADIPA – LIGHT ON THE ANALOGY OF A PAINTED PICTURE, VERSES 78-100

Aṅur mahān madhyamo veti evaṁ tatrāpi vādinah, bhaudhā vivadante hi śruti yukti samā śrayāt (78). There is a lot of controversy in regard to the definition of the Atman. It does not mean that every school of thought holds the same view. Some think it is atomic in nature, some feel it is universal in its nature, some feel that it is medium sized, etc. These are the various opinions held by different systems of thinking.

The doctrine which considers the Atman to be of the size of an atom is called the Antarala doctrine. Aṅuṁ vadan tyānta rālāḥ sūkṣma nāḍī pracārataḥ, romṇaḥ sahasra bhāgena tulyāsu praca ratyayam (79). Because of the fact that through the immensely large number of nerve currents it moves in a very, very subtle form, it should be considered as very subtle, very atomic indeed – because in the Upanishads it is said that the Atman pervades the whole body and penetrates through all the nerve currents which are very subtle. It is impossible to conceive the subtlety of these. The Universal Atman can penetrate through a needle's eye, for instance. It is therefore possible (according to these people) that the Atman's nature is minute, especially as the Upanishads many times say it is subtle like an atom.

Aṅoraṇīyā neṣo'ṇuḥ sūkṣmāt sūkṣma taram tviti, aṅutva māhuḥ śrutayaḥ śataśo'tha sahasraśaḥ (80). Smaller than the atom, subtler than the minutest particle – such are the scriptural statements of the Upanishads. These

statements make people feel that perhaps it is atomic or minute in size. The scriptural statement is quoted here.

Many are the scriptures and statements which make out that the Atman is subtler than the subtlest, more minute than the smallest conceivable particle of atom; nothing can be as subtle as that, and no atomic particle can be smaller than that. This is corroborated by the *srutis*, the Upanishadic statements.

One of the statements in the Upanishad is quoted here:: Bālāgra śata bhāgasya śatadhā kalpitasya ca, bhāgo jīvaḥ sa vijñeya iti cāhā'parā śrutiḥ (81). If you split a hair lengthwise a hundred times, you can imagine how fine it will be, how subtle it will be. Sometimes the definition goes even further than this. The little hair is split lengthwise a hundred times into a hundred lengthwise pieces and each of these one hundred is again split into one thousand pieces; and through that the Atman passes. Such is the *jīva* consciousness, impossible to conceive in gross terms. This is the quotation from the Upanishad.

Digambarā madhya matvam āhurā pāda mastakam, caitanya vyāpti sarṁdrṣṭeḥ ānakhāgra śrute rāpi (82). In the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad it is said that the Supreme Being penetrates everything right from the head to the foot, up to the nail ends; and also because of the pervasion of the consciousness through the whole body, it is supposed to be as big as the body itself. It is of medium size. This is one of the schools of Buddhism, called Digambaras. Unless the Atman is of the size of the body, it cannot envelop the body and make the body get identified with Itself and also get Itself identified with the body.

We feel that consciousness pervades the whole body, and we cannot feel its presence outside; it is confined to the encasement of the body. This is the reason why one is enabled to feel that it is perhaps limited to the bodily structure only, and it is of the size of the body.

Sūkṣma nāḍī pracārastu sūkṣmai ravayavair bhavet, sthūla dehasya hastā bhyāṁ kañcuka pratimoka vat (83). Though medium is the size of the Atman, as adumbrated by thinkers of this kind, they also explain how it is possible for a medium-size Atman to enter into the minutest subtle *nadis*. The comparison or illustration that they give is that just as we thrust our hands into the sleeve of a shirt, the Atman can enter into the little tiny *nadis*, or nerve currents, in spite of the fact that it is medium in size.

Nyūnādhika śarīreṣu praveśo'pi gamāgamaiḥ, ātmām śānām bhavetena madhya matvaṁ viniścitam (84). It is also believed that the Atman takes the size of whatever body it identifies itself with. In ants, it is only of the size of an ant. In other creatures, it is of the size of that kind of creature. It can be as big as an elephant when it identifies itself with an elephant, and it is of the size of human bodies when it is identified with the human body. Therefore, it has a shape, or a size, which is not fixed in nature. It expands or contracts according to the identification which it establishes with the particular body to which it enters in various stages or processes of transmigratory life.

Sāṁśasya ghaṭa vannāśo bhavatyeva tathā sati, kṛta nāśā'kṛtā bhyāga mayoḥ ko vārako bhavet (85). There is a defect in all these doctrines because whether the Atman is conceived as atomic in size, or medium, or very small – as

small as the size of the nerve currents – what follows from this definition is that consciousness becomes mortal; it will perish. The Atman would be subject to destruction if it is conceived as finite. Even if it is as large as an elephant, it is finite nevertheless. It should not be limited to any particular location. Finitude is the character of anything outside which something exists. If the Atman has something outside it, it would be finite, even if it is as large as space itself. The consciousness of there being something outside it, will make it finite.

Therefore, as a pot breaks, the Atman also will break, if – according to these doctrines that have been adumbrated – it is regarded as finite in its nature. Also, perishability of the Atman is inconceivable. The *jiva* would be destroyed. There would be no beginning or end for it. Suddenly the *jiva* has assumed a body for no reason whatsoever, because we have assumed no prior existence on account of the finitude of the consciousness. Also, all the good deeds that we have done in this world will not be rewarded. We will die together with the body, and all our good deeds also will perish if the Atman is not to continue after the death of the body.

There is an explanation for the assumption of certain particular bodies by different individuals, and why experiences of people differ from one another, and why there is an impulsion to do good actions in this world. Because of these reasons, it is necessary to assume the prior existence of the Atman, and also the posterior existence of it. If prior existence is not accepted, it would mean that we are suffering unnecessarily or people are enjoying

unnecessarily, for no reason whatsoever. An effect will follow without a cause. And if it does not exist after death, all our good deeds are futile. Why should we work hard in this world if tomorrow we are going to pass away, and if with our passing, all our good deeds also pass? This predicament will follow on the assumption of the finitude of the Atman; therefore, it has to be considered as infinite in nature.

Tasamā dātmā mahā neva naivāṇur nāpi madhyamaḥ, āsāśavat sarvagato niraṁśaḥ śruti saṁmataḥ (86). Therefore we conclude, refuting all these doctrines mentioned earlier, that the Atman is endless, infinite, unending and eternal in its nature. It is not atomic in size, nor is it possible to say that it is of medium size. It is not of the size of a body that it assumes. Assumption of the size of the body is an apparent predicament, as space may appear to assume a shape of the pot in which it appears to be located. All-pervading, like space, is this Atman, without parts. This is declared by the *srutis*, Vedas and the Upanishads.

Ityuktvā tadviśeṣe tu bhaudhā kalahaṁ yayuḥ, acidrūpo'tha cidrūpaḥ cidacidrūpa ityapi (87). Even if it is granted that the Atman is infinite, what is its essential characteristic? Some say it is consciousness in its essentiality. Some say consciousness is only a quality of the Atman, thereby concluding that the essential nature of the Atman is other than consciousness. What is other than consciousness would be unconsciousness. The Mimamsaka doctrine of ritualism often holds this peculiar doctrine of the unconscious nature of the Self and its assuming of

consciousness only by coming in contact with the mind, on account of karmas that it did in the past. Some say that it is consciousness, some say it is unconsciousness, some say it is a mixture of both. It has a quality of consciousness as well as unconsciousness, as a firefly may shine sometimes or not shine at all.

Prābhākarā stārikikāśca prāhu rasyā cidātmatām, ākāśavat dravyam ātma śabda vat tad guṇa ścitiḥ (88). Prabhakara is a doctrine of Mimamsa. The Vedic ritualistic doctrine is called Mimamsa. One school of these Mimamsakas holds that consciousness is a quality or an attribute. It is a spark of illumination that arises from the contact of the Atman with the mind after it has taken birth through the body. By itself, it is a universal unknowingness.

The Prabhakaras, or the Mimamsakas, consider the Atman as also one of the substances, whereas the Vedanta does not regard the Atman as a substance; it is not a thing at all. As space has sound as its quality, these people consider consciousness to be the quality of the Atman.

lcchā dveṣa prayatnāśca dharma dharmau sukhā sukhe, tat saṁskā rāśca tasaite guṇā ściti vadī ritāḥ (89). Not only that, these Mimamsakas and Naiyayikas, logicians of the ancient times, have another doctrine of the nature of the Atman, that it is practically the *jiva* or the individual consciousness that they are speaking of, though they appear to be defining the Atman as such.

Firstly, they think that the Atman is a substance. Secondly, it is believed by them that it is characterised by desires, love and hatred, effort, consciousness of righteousness and unrighteousness, and it experiences

pleasure and pain. All the properties that follow from such experience also are considered as qualities of the Atman.

Actually, the Mimamsakas are mistaking the individual self for the Universal Self. This definition of the Atman having qualities like desire, etc., cannot apply to the Universal Being. So there is a confusion of definition in the case of the Mimamsaka doctrine, which has to be rejected.

Ātmano manasā yoge svādr̥ṣṭa vaśato guṇāḥ, jāyante'tha praliyante suṣupte'dr̥ṣṭa saṁkṣayāt (90). The Mimamsaka doctrine is continued now. When the Atman comes in contact with the mind on account of certain potencies of the previous actions of earlier births continuing, the Consciousness comes in contact with the mind in different ways, so that sometimes it is very intelligent and sometimes it is not intelligent. The increase or decrease of the intelligence of people is attributed to the increase or decrease in the virtuous deeds that people performed in the earlier days; and it is completely abolished, as it were, in the state of deep sleep.

Citimatvāt cetano'yaṁ icchādveṣa prayatnā vān, syāt dharma dharmayoḥ kartā bhoktā duḥkhādi mattvataḥ (91). Pure Consciousness, we have to repeat once again, is the nature of the Atman. The Naiyayikas somehow add the word that it has desire and also effort as part of its quality. There is experience of joy and sorrow; therefore, they think that the agency consciousness as well as the enjoyer consciousness is to be attributed to the Atman only.

The Mimamsa doctrine is very much involved in the concept of deeds – good and bad deeds. The whole of this doctrine is nothing but an expatiation of what is goodness

and what is badness, what is dharma, what is adharma, etc. So dharma, or righteous deed, produces a peculiar transparent potency in a next birth, on account of which consciousness comes in contact with the mind in the form of a superior intelligence. It feels that “I am doing”. It also feels that “I am enjoying”.

These doctrines also attribute *kartritva*, or agency in action, and *bhoktritva*, or the feeling of enjoyership of the fruits of action, to the Atman which is otherwise Universal in its nature.

Yathā'tra karma vaśataḥ kādā citkaṁ sukhādikam, tathā lokāntare dehe karmaṇe cchādi janyate (92). All the happiness in this world, according to this doctrine, is like a flash. It is momentary in its nature. Perpetual contact with the Consciousness – that is to say, perpetual contact of the Atman with the mind – is not possible because according to these doctrines, the contact is brought about by the effect of karmas of the past. Inasmuch as the uniform type of action is not performed by anyone in any particular birth, it is not possible to expect that a uniform experience can be had in the life that follows afterwards.

We do not have the same kind of experience every day throughout our life. The argument of these doctrines is that the variety that we pass through in experience in this world is due to the variety of deeds that we did in the past, in earlier lives. Somehow or other, they do not want to leave this doctrine of karma being the cause of our experiences of every kind, identifying the whole experience with the pure Atman itself.

Evam ca sarvagasyāpi sambhavitām gamāgamau, karma kāṇḍaḥ samagro'tra pramāṇa miti te'vadan (93). They are called Karmakandans. Purvamimamsa is called Mimamsa proper, and the Uttaramimamsa is also a Mimamsa by itself, but it is also called by the name of Vedanta doctrine. The Purvamimamsa is the theme that is discussed here.

The idea of this kind of definition of the Atman is given by the Mimamsakas, who involve in the conclusion that the all-pervading Atman also has coming and going. Birth and death cannot be attributed to that which is infinite in nature. And if we say that it is not infinite, it will be perishable. The consequences of the assumption of finitude of the Atman are very serious. What is the seriousness? There would be finitude, and we cannot explain how experiences originate at all without causes behind them; and also, what it is that impels us to feel that they will continue in the next birth also?

Ānandamaya kośo yaḥ suṣuptau pari śiṣyate, aspaṣṭa cit sa ātmaishām pūrva kośo'sya te guṇāḥ (94). The Mimamsa is once again taken up for discussion in some detail, where the definition is that the *anandamaya kosha* is the Atman, and not the physical body, not the vital, mental or intellectual bodies. The Mimamsakas consider the causal body as the Atman because it is more imperishable than the other bodies which are perishable.

The *anandamaya kosha* does not die even when the body dies. And also it has a dual function to perform: consciousness and unconsciousness. Only in the state of deep sleep are we aware that there is such a state as the

causal body, *anandamaya kosha*. It has the characteristic of consciousness because we begin to realise that we slept. We remember the fact of having slept the previous day. Unless there was consciousness even in the state of deep sleep, a memory of that experience would not have been possible. So consciousness must have been there. On the other hand, it is unconsciousness because if consciousness had been really there, we would have been aware of the fact of sleeping. So there is a dual function of consciousness in the Mimamsaka doctrine – Bhatta Mimamsakas – that the *anandamaya kosha* sometimes acts as consciousness, and sometimes as unconsciousness.

Gūḍhaṁ caitanyam utprekṣya jaḍa bodha svarūpa tām, ātmano bruvate bhāṭṭā ścit utprekṣo tthita smṛteḥ (95). Hidden is this Atman in the *anandamaya kosha*. And its characteristic or quality is both unconsciousness and consciousness, *jada* and *bodha*. *Jada* means insentiency and *bodha* is sentiency. Both these qualities can be found as illustrated in the causal body, manifested in the state of deep sleep.

Bhattas are Purvamimamsakas of a different type. There are two kinds of Mimamsa doctrines: Prabhakara and Bhatta. We need not go into all these details. Anyway, the Bhatta doctrine says that consciousness is a partial manifestation of the Atman, the other aspect being unconsciousness.

Jaḍo bhūtvā tadā'svāpsam iti jāḍya smṛtis tadā, vinā jāḍyānu bhūtiṁ na kathañcid upapadyate (96). The consciousness of the fact of having slept is not there at the time of sleeping. Therefore, that aspect which prevents us

from knowing the fact of sleeping is unconsciousness. But the fact that we remember having slept shows that there is consciousness – double consciousness. The Atman has a double function. It can act as consciousness, and it can also act as unconsciousness, as it happens in sleep.

Draṣṭur dr̥ṣṭera lopaśca śrutaḥ suptau tāsas tvayam, aprakāśa prakāśa bhyām ātmā khadyota vat yutaḥ (97). There is a total misconstruing by these doctrines of certain statements of the Upanishad, such as the Brihadaranyaka statement where the Yajnavalkya doctrine says it sees and it does not see.

The idea behind this intriguing statement is that it is Cosmic-consciousness; therefore, it sees everything. ‘It does not see’ means that there is no object in front of it. When it says that the Atman does not see, it does not mean that it is unconscious, as the Mimamsakas hold. There is no question of its capability to see, because it is there everywhere. It is beholding itself. So while it sees, it sees not, says Yajnavalkya. But the Mimamsakas misconstrue this statement, (like the Virochana doctrine of the Chhandogya) and conclude that the seeing and the not seeing definition of the Atman given by Yajnavalkya in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad is to be construed in the sense of a double function of the Atman – consciousness and unconsciousness – as was explained earlier.

Niraṁ śasyo bhayāt matvaṁ na kathañcit ghaṭiṣyate, tena cidrūpa evātmēti āhuḥ sāṅkhya vivekinaḥ (98). Now we cross over all this muddle of Nyaya, Vaisesika, Mimamsa, etc., empirical doctrines of philosophy, and

come to the Samkhya, where we have a little room to breathe.

The Samkhya doctrine rejects all these assumptions of the Nyaya, Vaisesika, and the Mimamsa. Because of the fact of the partlessness or the impartite nature of consciousness, the Samkhya avers that *purusha* is the nature of consciousness. To the Samkhya doctrine, *purusha* is the name of consciousness infinite; infinite consciousness is *purusha*. Because of the infinitude, it is not possible to say that it has two qualities. Infinite is infinite always. It cannot be infinite sometimes and not infinite at other times. Therefore the doctrine that the Atman is conscious sometimes and not conscious at other times is erroneous. It is not correct.

Why we are not able to have consciousness in the state of deep sleep is another subject altogether. From this we cannot conclude that consciousness is absent or it is unconscious at that time. That argument is not feasible here. The reason for our not knowing that we are sleeping is another matter altogether, to be discussed later on. The Samkhyas conclude that the Atman being infinite, *purusha* being its nature, divisibility of its substance cannot be accepted. Also, it cannot be of two qualities at the same time – consciousness and unconsciousness, simultaneously. What is the nature of the Atman, *purusha*, then? *Chidrupa*: Pure consciousness is the nature of the Atman. This has to be hammered into our minds again and again, say the Samkhyavadins.

Jāḍyāmśa prakṛte rūpaṁ vikāri triguṇaṁ cat tat, cito bhogāpa vargārthaṁ prakṛtiḥ sā pravartate (99). The

unconsciousness that we sometimes experience is not to be attributed to the consciousness of the *purusha*. The *prakriti* which has the qualities of *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*, with which the consciousness of the *purusha* gets identified in some manner, is the reason why we often feel unconscious, distracted, etc. When the *purusha* consciousness somehow or the other is juxtaposed with the *tamas* or inert quality of *prakriti*, it appears as if there is no consciousness of anything – as we have in deep sleep. But when the *purusha* consciousness gets identified with the *rajas* or distracting medium of *prakriti*, we run about here and there and we are very active, busy people. It is only when the consciousness is reflected through the *sattva* of *prakriti* that it becomes transparent and all-knowing in its nature, and in that condition it is called *mahat* by Samkhya philosophy.

The modifications that we experience in our life, all the sufferings, all the changes that we undergo, are not to be attributed to the Universal Atman. What are these changes, then? These changes are of *prakriti* – *sattva*, *rajas*, *tamas*. Our body, all the five sheaths, are constituted only of the three *gunas* of *prakriti* – *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas* – in various proportions. In a very concentrated proportion the three *gunas* constitute the physical body. In another proportion, these *gunas* constitute the other bodies; and all the five sheaths, which are the determining factors of our individuality, are *prakriti*'s products.

In identifying itself with these five sheaths, consciousness appears to be feeling, wrongly, that it cannot know anything in sleep when it is identified with *anandamaya kosha*; and it feels that it is self-conscious, or

individuality consciousness is there, when it identifies itself with the ego or the intellect. It has doubts and difficulties when it identifies itself with the mind. It feels that it has vitality in the system when it is identified with the breathing process. And when it is identified in the physical body, it feels that it is this little tabernacle only. Hence, we have to explain why such difficulty has arisen for us. But we should not come to a sudden conclusion that consciousness has two qualities, which is not a fact.

Cito bhogāpa vargārthaṁ prakṛtiḥ sā pravartate: *Prakṛiti* is a field of experience of the *puruṣa*. We are born into this world for working out our karmas; and this world is nothing but the field of *prakṛiti*'s three *gunas* in certain proportions, in various permutations and combinations. The three *gunas* of *prakṛiti* manifest themselves as this solid world of experience, and this field of action has been presented before us for the purpose of working out our karmas – else karmas cannot be worked out, because working out of a karma is nothing but passing through certain experiences. And experience is possible only when there is an environment or an atmosphere. And atmosphere is nothing but the field of action, which is *prakṛiti*. So *prakṛiti* constitutes the field of activity for the experiences of the *jīva* that has performed various deeds in the past and has to work out their effects in the present birth.

Asaṁgāyāḥ citer bandha mokṣau bhedaḥ grahān matau, bandha muktī vyavasthārthaṁ pūrveṣā miva cid bhidā (100). *Asanga* is unattached. Consciousness is unattached. “This infinite *puruṣa* is unattached,” says Yajñavalkya in

the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad. Therefore, bondage and liberation of that which is unattached is unthinkable. It is not the Absolute Brahman that is being born and is dying. It is not the infinite consciousness that is in bondage and seeks liberation. That which is bound and which is seeking liberation is entangled consciousness – the very same infinite that seems to be involved in the five sheaths – due to which fact, we appear to be individuals, and due to which consciousness itself appears to be located in one part.

Discourse 28

CHAPTER 6: CHITRADIPA – LIGHT ON THE ANALOGY OF A PAINTED PICTURE, VERSES 99-125

Jāḍyāmśa prakṛte rūpaṁ vikāri triguṇaṁ cat tat, cito bhogāpa vargārthaṁ prakṛtiḥ sā pravartate (99). There is a doctrine of the Samkhya which posits two realities, *purusha* and *prakṛiti* – *purusha* being universally conscious, and *prakṛiti* being objectively active. *Purusha* is inactive consciousness, and *prakṛiti* is unconscious activity.

The inert character of experience, the unconsciousness that we sometimes experience in our life, is due to the interference of the *gunas* of *prakṛiti*, which are three in number – *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*. For the purpose of bringing about experience in consciousness or the *purusha*, *prakṛiti* acts through its three *gunas*.

Asaṁgāyāḥ citer bandha mokṣau bhedā grahān matau, bandha muktī vyavasthārthaṁ pūrveṣā miva cid bhidā (100). Unattached is *purusha*-consciousness – *asanga*. It appears to be bound on account of its association with *prakṛiti*. Consciousness and matter cannot get united, being of dissimilar character. When it is difficult for the experiencing consciousness to distinguish between its own experience and that which causes the experience, bondage is caused. Bondage is caused by not distinguishing between *purusha* and *prakṛiti*. That is the cause of bondage and liberation. Bondage is the association of *purusha* with *prakṛiti*; liberation is the dissociation of *purusha* with *prakṛiti*. Both are eternal, both are universal, the difference being one is conscious and the other is unconscious.

Mahataḥ param̐ avyaktam̐ iti prakṛti rucyate, śrutā vasaṅgatā tad vad asaṅgo hītyataḥ sphuṭā (101). The Samkhyas quote the Kathopanishad to prove that there is such a thing called *prakṛti* because the Kathopanishad says that beyond *mahat-tattva*, the cosmic intelligence, there is another reality called *avyakta* (unmanifest), and *avyakta* is identified with *prakṛti-tattva*, whose existence is thus proved in the light of these passages of the Upanishad itself.

The the Upanishad establishes the existence of both *purusha* and *prakṛti* when it says that there is an *avyakta-tattva* – an unmanifest reality beyond the *mahat-tattva* – as we have it in the Kathopanishad. It is proved that *prakṛti* is there. And when the other Upanishad says that consciousness is unattached, *asanga*, the existence of *purusha* is proved.

Cit sannidhau pravṛttāyāḥ prakṛter hi niyāmakam̐, īśvaram̐ bruvate yogāḥ sa jīve bhyaḥ paraḥ śrutaḥ (102). There is no concept of Ishvara in the Samkhya philosophy. They have only two realities – consciousness and matter. With the manipulation of these two principles, everything is explained. But the Yoga System of Patanjali brings in Ishvara because it became difficult to find out how justice can be dispensed to the individuals or *jivas* in regard to their good deeds and bad deeds. Who will do it? *Purusha* itself cannot do that because it is the doer of the deeds; and *prakṛti* cannot do it because it has no consciousness. There is, therefore, a necessity of a third dispensing judicious principle, which was established to be Ishvara by the Yoga System. And this Ishvara is superior to the *jiva*. The

Upanishad also establishes this statement in some other way.

Pradhāna kṣetrajña patiḥ guṇeśa iti hi śrutiḥ, āraṇyake'sambhrameṇa hyantar yāmyu papā ditaḥ (103). In the Svetasvatara Upanishad it is mentioned that God is above *pradhana* and *chetanya*. Ishvara is superior to both *prakriti* and the experiencing consciousness. *Chetanya* is the experiencing consciousness, and *pradhana* is the *prakriti*. Beyond both and superior to both is Ishvara; thus the Upanishad says. And in the Antaryami Brahmana of the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad, the glory of Ishvara is described as the indwelling principle in all things.

Atrāpi kalahāyante vādinaḥ svasva yukti bhiḥ, vākyā nyapi yathā prajñam dārḍhyā yodā haranti hi (104). While the existence of Ishvara is found to be unavoidable, and it is necessary to accept the existence of Ishvara for reasons which are obvious, the definition of Ishvara varies from one school to another school.

The definition of Ishvara according to the Yoga System of Patanjali is: kleśa karma vipākai stad āśayai rapya saṁyutaḥ, puṁ viśeṣo bhavedīśo jīva vatso'pya saṅga cit (105). Patanjali's *sutra* is that Ishvara is a special state of consciousness which is uncontaminated by actions or their residues. No action will touch Ishvara, and also the consequences of action will not have any impact upon Him. There is no residual impression of karma to be experienced as in the case of the *jīva* for Ishvara. Totally independent and unconcerned is Ishvara; that is the definition of the Yoga System.

Tathāpi puṁ viśeṣatvāt ghaṭate'sya niyantrtā, avyavasthau bandha mokṣāu āpatetā mihānyathā (106). It

is impossible to get on without the concept of an Ishvara. We see differences, varieties, and unconnected things in the world, and these differences have to be harmonised in a state of symmetrical action; otherwise, the universe will become a chaos in one minute. Even our body is ruled by some central principle; otherwise, the limbs of the body will not function harmoniously. The whole universe will be in a state of confusion in one second if there is no system and method of working and anything can happen at any time, in any manner whatsoever. That is not the case with the universe. And because of the observation of method, symmetry and precision in the working, and reliability in the function of nature, we have to infer that there is some power that is operating behind the natural functions.

Bhīṣā'smādi tyeva mādaṁ asaṅgasya parātmanah, śrutaṁ tadyukta mapyasya kleśa karmādyā saṅgamāt (107). The Kathopanishad also says that by fear of that Being, everything is automatically working. Oceans do not overstep their limits, the sun does not fall on our heads, and everything happens in a methodical way. We can know, to some extent, what will be the nature of things tomorrow; otherwise, the moment of death will be uncertain. This determining factor of past, present and future in the state of harmony and equilibrium is Ishvara.

Jīvānā mapya saṅgatvāt kleśādir na hyathāpi ca, vivekā grahataḥ kleśa karmādi prāgu dī ritam (108). The individuals also are basically, essentially, consciousness. They are *asanga*, unattached; but because of the karmas in which they are involved, good and bad deeds, their intellect gets muddled. Their discrimination fails, and they cannot

distinguish between the consciousness of *purusha* and the materiality of *prakriti*. Thus, they get bound.

Nitya jñāna prayatnecchā guṇā nīśasya manvate, asaṅgasya niyantṛtvam ayukta miti tārīkāh (109). Naiyayikas, Vaisesikas, etc., are called *tarkikas* or logicians. They say God has eternal knowledge and He is engaged in eternal effort in maintaining this cosmos. He has an eternal desire to see that everything goes on in perfect order, and He has the eternal quality of being fit to manage this universe. Such is God. Though He is unattached and not connected to anything, He is the controller of all beings. Without these qualities, God would not be God.

A totally detached God, unconcerned with things as Patanjali's Yoga System would say (verse 105), would have no arm to reach the world. An extra-cosmic God cannot have cosmic relations. Therefore, a God who is only an instrumental cause with no material relationship to creation will not be a proper restrainer of things. The concept of Ishvara as totally detached, as propounded by Patanjali, cannot be regarded as a final definition because total detachment of God from all that is in the form of the creation would make Him unfit to govern the universe. So the Naiyayikas, or the logicians, say that He has a connection, and total detachment should not be attributed to Him.

Puṁ viśeṣa tvama pyasya guṇai reva na cānyathā, satya kāmaḥ satya saṅkalpa ityādi śrutir jagau (110). *Satya-kamah* and *satya-sankalpa* are the attributes of God, as we have it in the Chhandogya Upanishad. On account of the

qualities of *prakṛiti* associating itself in a particular manner, Ishvara is called *puruṣha* not because He is a male or a person like us, but a pure person, pure individual; and the definition of this pure individual, Absolute individual we may say, is in terms of the three *gunas*.

He is *satya-kamah*. His wishes are unobstructed. If He thinks and wills, it must happen immediately. That is called *satya-kamah*. *Satya-sankalpa* is the will, volition, which also has its immediate effect. If He wishes something, it immediately happens. If He wills something, it materialises itself all at once. Thus, the *sruti* (the Upanishad) says.

Nitya jñānā dimatve'sya sṛṣṭi reva sadā bhavet, hiraṇyagarbha īśo'to liṅga dehena samuktaḥ (111). There are other people who say Ishvara, in the sense of the definition that we have given of Him, cannot be regarded as the creator of the world because Ishvara is the latency of all future possibilities. Nothing is manifest there in Ishvara. And hence, if that condition of the unmanifest state of all things is to be regarded as the cause of the world, there would be a sudden emergence of every kind of thing in the form of creation, while creation is not such an emergence.

A select particular variety from the total ocean of potentials in Ishvara becomes the cause of this particular universe. It does not mean that God can create only this kind of universe and not any other kind. There are potentials for an infinite number of varieties of universes in Ishvara's bosom. So if Ishvara suddenly, from out of Himself, becomes the creator of the cosmos, we do not know what kind of thing will come out.

So certain thinkers feel that Ishvara should not be considered as the creator of the universe, and that Hiranyagarbha should be considered as the creator of the universe. Hiranyagarbha is the specified outline – the determined portion of the large sea of potentials in Ishvara, and therefore only a particular universe can be manifest, and not anything and everything. So Hiranyagarbha worshippers conclude that Ishvara by Himself in His essential universal potential nature should not be regarded as the direct creator. Hiranyagarbha as a specified director of the universe should be regarded as creator. Hiranyagarbha īso'to liṅga dehena saṁuktaḥ: Cosmic *linga-deha*, or subtle body, is called Hiranyagarbha.

Udgītha brāhmaṇe tasya mähātmyamati viśṛtam, liṅga satve'pi jīvatvaṁ nāsyā karmādyā bhāvataḥ (112). Udgitha Brahmana is a particular passage in the Brahmana portions of the Vedas where Hiranyagarbha, *maha-prana* or Cosmic *prana*, is glorified in abundant ways. It shows that Hiranyagarbha does exist, and He should be considered as the creator of all beings.

Even if there is a subtlety of the body of Hiranyagarbha, He should not be identified with any particular individual. He is not a *jiva*, because Hiranyagarbha has no karma. The karma potentials do not act on Ishvara or Hiranyagarbha, because Hiranyagarbha and Ishvara are Universal Beings. Universality cannot work or act in any particular direction of objects of senses. Hence, they are free from the botheration of *karmaphala*, or the effects of actions.

Sthūla dehaṁ vinā liṅga deho na kvāpi dṛśyate, vairājo deha īso'taḥ sarvato masta kādi mān (113). There are

others who feel they have never seen the subtle body becoming the cause of anything at all. Have we seen the subtle body of a carpenter manufacturing furniture? It is the gross body; the actual body of the carpenter manifests itself. Any action in this world, whatever it be, is the outcome of the physical body of somebody working. Have we seen merely a subtle body working? Therefore, Hiranyagarbha as a subtle potential of the cosmos should not be regarded as direct creator of the universe. Virat is the creator because He is the cosmic physical body.

Sahasraśīrṣā puruṣaḥ (Purusha Sukta 1.1). Everywhere are the eyes, everywhere is the head, everywhere are the limbs are the descriptions of Virat, the cosmic manifestation as we have it described in the eleventh chapter of the Bhagavad Gita.

This Virat, the cosmic body, should be regarded as the real creator of the universe – not Hiranyagarbha – because mere subtle body cannot directly act on the physical universe. Virat, who is the physical universe animated by consciousness, should be regarded as the cause of the physical universe.

Sahasra śīrṣe tyevaṁ ca viśvata ścakṣu rityapi, śruti mityāhu raniśaṁ viśva rūpasya cinta kāḥ (114). Sahasraśīrṣā puruṣaḥ, says the Rig Veda, Yajur Veda. Such a great *puruṣa*, with all eyes, with all ears everywhere, does exist; and also the Rig Veda says that all hands, all feet, all eyes are spread out of this Great Being. Such definitions apply to the Virat-puruṣa, Vaishvanara, who should be considered as the creator of the universe.

In the Rudradhaya of the Yajur Veda we also have a variety of cosmically-oriented descriptions of God; and Vishvarupa, therefore, becomes a fitting instrument for the manifestation of this cosmic physicality.

Sarvataḥ pāṇi pādātve kṛmyāde rāpi ceśatā, tataś catur mukho deva eveśo netaraḥ pumān (115). The others say neither Hiranyagarbha nor Virat is the creator of the universe. What is the use of saying that He had many eyes, many ears, etc.? That is not a great point because creativity requires a particular attention on specific details. Virat is not specific, but general consciousness, as is Hiranyagarbha. General consciousness cannot create specific objects. Particular things in the world with all the variety that they have cannot be attributed to a general creative principle. Therefore, even Virat should not be regarded as the real creator – not Ishvara, not Hiranyagarbha, nor Virat, but Brahma, the four-headed Being who has the specific consciousness of what is going to be created. That Brahma, one of the trinity of Brahma, Vishnu, Siva, hailed in the Puranas as the real creator of things, should be regarded as the true creator. Tataś catur mukho deva eveśo netaraḥ pumān: Four-headed Brahma is the real God.

Putrārthaṁ tamupāsīnā eva māhuḥ prajā patih, prajā asrjatetyādi śrutim codā harantyaṁ (116). Many scriptures proclaim the greatness of Prajapati, Brahma, as the creator. For the sake of prosperity, progeny, wealth and long life, etc., people offer prayers and perform *tapas* for *darshan* of this great being, this Brahma. The Upanishads themselves, the scripture itself, should be regarded as

authority enough to show that Brahma is the creator of the Universe – not Ishvara, Hiranyagarbha, Virat, etc.

Viṣṇor nābheḥ samud bhūtaḥ vedhāḥ kamalaja stataḥ, viṣṇu reveśa ityāhuḥ loke bhāga vatā janāḥ (117). But there are others who think that Brahma cannot be regarded as the final creator because Brahma came from the navel of Vishnu. This is the description of the Puranas. Narayana, Vishnu, was the original being. He was sleeping on the cosmic waters at the end of the dissolution of the universe. And from his navel, a cosmic lotus emerged. On the lotus Brahma was seated; Brahma, therefore, is the manifestation from Narayana, Vishnu. Vishnu is the cause of Brahma, so how could we say that Brahma is the final creator? The Vaishnavas say Vishnu is the creator; Narayana is the creator because He is the source of Brahma also.

Śivasya pādā vanveṣṭurṁ śārṅgya śaktastataḥ śivaḥ, īso na viṣṇu rityāhuḥ śaivā āgama māninaḥ (118). Saivas, worshippers of Lord Siva, say Vishnu cannot be regarded as the creator of the universe. Siva is the creator because there is a story that Lord Siva appeared as a column of light which ran from the nether regions up to the heaven; Vishnu and Brahma tried to locate the origin or the beginning of this column of light, and Vishnu found that it was not possible to locate it. Inasmuch as Vishnu himself could not locate the origin of this column of light which was Lord Siva himself, we cannot regard Vishnu as the creator of the universe. Siva is All-in-All. Therefore, Saivas come into force here.

Puratrayaṁ sādaituṁ vighneśaṁ so'pya pūjayat, vināyakaṁ prāhu rīśaṁ gāṇapatya mate ratāḥ (119). Even

Siva is not the original creator. This is what the devotees of Ganapati or Ganesha say, because when Lord Siva had to go to war against the Tripura demons, he worshipped Ganesha first. But for that worship, he would not have succeeded in winning victory over the Tripuras. Ganesha is always worshipped first, and all the other gods come afterwards. Hence, Ganesha, and not any other being, should be regarded as the Supreme Being – not Brahma, Vishnu, Siva. This is the opinion of the Ganapati worshippers.

Eva manya sva sva prakṣābhi mānenā nyathā'nyathā, mantrārtha vādakalpādī nāsritya pratipedire (120). Thus, there are hundreds and hundreds of varieties of arguments and definitions of what God could be. These definitions pertain to the way in which people think in their minds, their predilections, their limitations, their religious proclivities, cultural background. All these things decide the concept of God in the minds of people. Nobody can define God impersonally without some prejudice. These prejudices arise on account of various conditioning factors in which people live, geographically, culturally, historically, etc. And one can quote anything in support of one's own opinion: this scripture says this, that scripture says that, all the Vedas say that, the Siva Purana says that, Bible says this, and Koran says that. Well, they may all be saying different things and, therefore, are we to conclude that there are varieties of gods, many gods? How will we reconcile these various concepts? Here is a quandary before the definition of Ishvara.

Antaryāmiṇa mārabhya sthā varānteśa vādinah, santya śvatthār kavamśādeḥ kuladaivata darśanāt (121). There are

people who worship anything and everything as an object of their religious adoration. Right from the indwelling Universality, right through Ishvara, Hiranyagarbha, Virat, Brahma, Vishnu, Siva, Ganapati, there are people who also worship even trees like asvattha or bamboo, or anything whatsoever – even a little piece of stone – as a deity determining the welfare of one’s family. There is nothing that people do not worship and regard as final, a symbol of their own God.

Tattva niścaya kāmena nyāyā gama vicāriṇām, ekaiva pratipattiḥ syāt sā’pyatra sphuṭa mucyate (122). But we have to come to some conclusion. We cannot go on wading through this tangle of definitions, and we shall try here to give a most reasonable definition of Ishvara, or God, with no detriment to the definitions given by different religions of the world.

Māyām tu prakṛtiṁ vidyān māyinaṁ tu maheśvaram, asyā vayava bhūtaistu vyāptaṁ sarva midam jagat (123). The Svetasvatara Upanishad is quoted here in this verse. *Prakṛiti* should be considered as *maya*; *maya* should be considered as *prakṛiti*, which is the objective power of God. And the wielder of this *prakṛiti* or *maya* is *mayi*, that is Maheshvara, the Supreme Lord. All this universe is studded in the cosmic body of this Being as pearls are studded, beads are studded or linked through a thread in a garland.

The entire cosmos is hanging, organically related to God. He is not extra-cosmic or outside the world, uncontaminated or unconnected. The very cosmos is His body. The very intelligence that pervades the cosmos is God, Ishvara. There is no God outside the universe,

transcendentally, unless of course we also accept the immanence of God at the same time. Because God is not exhausted in the creation of the world, we call Him transcendent; but because He is immanently present in all little things also, we call Him immanent. He is everywhere in the universe, and yet beyond the universe. He is, therefore, immanent and transcendent both at the same time.

Iti śrutyanu sāreṇa nyāyō nirṇaya īśvare, tathā satya virodhaḥ syāt sthāvarānteśa vādinām (124). Inasmuch as everything in the universe is pervaded by God, there is no harm in people taking up any particular item in the universe as their object. We can reach the Absolute through any item in the world because when we touch anything in the world, we are actually touching a part of God – whatever that object be. It may be inanimate or animate, as the case may be; it does not matter. Even inanimate objects cannot exist unless the existence of Ishvara is there at the back.

So there is no objection to people worshipping God in various ways according to their own predilections, provided that they believe honestly that this is the final God and they do not have any distractions in their mind carrying them away in some other direction. The defect in meditation is not the choice of the object, because any object is very good. The defect is in the movement of the mind in another direction altogether than towards the object of meditation.

Māyā ceyam tamo rūpā tāpanīye tadīraṇāt, anubhūtiṁ tatra mānaṁ prati jajñe śrutiḥ svayam (125). *Prakriti* and *maya* – which is the power of God which He wields in His

omnipotence; it was said, this *maya* is essentially *tamora*, darkness in nature, because when the *gunas* of *prakriti* or *maya* are not disturbed in the process of creation, they remain in a state of harmony. In this state of harmony, *sattva* does not specifically manifest itself; therefore, there is no illumination at all. The cosmic condition of dissolution of the universe, where nothing is specifically visible, is one of darkness because *tamas* predominates there. So *maya* can be regarded as essentially inert, dark, and obstructive to light.

Where does it exist? We can know it in our own experience in the state of deep sleep. Why do we not know anything in the state of deep sleep? What is the obstacle? That obstacle is the darkness characteristic of this *maya tattva* operating in our own individual case also, in the state of deep sleep.

Discourse 29

CHAPTER 6: CHITRADIPA – LIGHT ON THE ANALOGY OF A PAINTED PICTURE, VERSES 125-153

Māyā ceyam̐ tamo rūpā tāpanīye tadīraṇāt, anubhūtiṃ tatra mānam̐ prati jajñe śrutiḥ svayam (125). There is a power of Ishvara which is known as *maya*, which manifests itself as *avidya* in the human individual. It cannot be described in ordinary language. It cannot be established by logic or argument. It cannot be proved or disproved. Such a peculiar phenomenon is this *shakti*, and the only proof of its existence is one's own experience. For instance, in the state of deep sleep we have an experience of there being such a thing as darkness, an enveloping power which prevents the consciousness from knowing itself and knowing anything else. By any other proof, we cannot establish its existence. Everyone knows that such a thing is there, for what reason no one can understand. There is inability of one's knowing one's own self even in the state of deep sleep. Let alone knowing other things, we cannot know even our own self. Such an obscuring of consciousness in the individual is the work of *avidya*, and cosmically it is known as *maya*.

The definition of *maya* is given in Tapanīya and other Upanishads as: jaḍam̐ mohātmakam̐ tat ca ityanubhāvayati śrutiḥ, ābāla gopam̐ spaṣṭatvāt ānyantyaṃ tasya sā'bravīt (126). It is inert in its nature. It covers consciousness in a *tamasic* way, and therefore it is defined as *jada* or unconscious and deluding in its character. It is not merely inert in the sense of an obscuration of consciousness; it is also confusing in the presentation of illusions in front of us,

such as the varieties of forms and distinctions of things in the world – one differing from the other in every way, causing distraction of consciousness in respect of this variety of things and making one believe that there is something outside.

This is the work of *maya*. It doesn't allow us to be conscious of the universality of God. It compels us to know what un-God is – the anti-Christ, as they call it – which is the consciousness of objects rather than the consciousness of a universal subject. Everyone knows that it exists by direct experience. Even children know it.

Acidātma ghaṭādīnām yat svarūpaṁ jaḍam hi tat, yatra kuṅṭhi, bhaved buddhiḥ sa moha iti laukikāḥ (127). People say that inertness is that peculiar feature where consciousness is never manifest in any way whatsoever – as, for instance, we will not see consciousness manifest in a clay pot. Where the intellect fails to understand the actual position and we face a dark wall, as it were, in front of us in understanding anything whatsoever – logic fails, understanding doesn't work anymore – that state is a kind of manifestation of *maya*.

There are things in the world which cannot be properly understood. Any amount of argument will not bring us to any conclusion. Cause and effect relationship, the origin of things, the reason for bondage and liberation – all these are questions which are beyond the human intellect. Reason is not to be applied here, where the subject of discussion is something that is prior to the manifestation of reason itself. The question 'why' arises on account of an affirmation of duality of cause and effect and seer and seen. Having

already run into the duality of the seer and the seen which is really not there, we raise a question as to why it originated. That will be like begging the question; hence this noumenon cannot be explained except by direct experience.

Itthaṁ laukika dṛṣṭyaitat sarvai rapyanu bhūyate, yukti dṛṣṭyā tvanir vācyam nāsadā sīditi śruteḥ (128). Ordinary people with their worldly understanding can say only this much about *maya* – that we cannot understand what it is. Yet we experience that something is there. Everybody has some occasion when they can say, “I cannot understand this. This is beyond me.” Everyone has to say this some time or the other. That thing which prevents us from knowing features correctly and compels us to say, “Oh, it is beyond me. I cannot understand,” that *moha shakti*, deluding factor, is the *maya shakti* of God.

It is indescribable if we try to understand it by logic, like darkness. We cannot say whether darkness is existing there as a substance or it is not there. We cannot say darkness is something like an object; we cannot touch it. But it is so very deeply and concretely present in front of us that we seem to be seeing it.

We are seeing darkness. Actually, we are seeing absence of light. It is a negative perception that is taking place. We are not seeing anything particularly specifically there. Darkness is not seen, just as blueness in the sky is not seen. There is no blueness in the sky. It is a peculiar phenomenon of light action that causes us to perceive a colour of the sky. So is the case with the definition of super-intellectual phenomena.

Nāsadā sīt vibhā tatvāt no sadā sīcca bāadhanāt, vidyā dr̥ṣṭyā śrutam̐ tucchar̐ tasya nitya nirvṛttitaḥ (129). There is a great mantra of the Rig Veda, called Nasadiya Sukta, where the Veda says a non-existence was not there. Now, for instance, in deep sleep, we cannot say that ignorance was non-existent, because we can experience ignorance there. As it is a factor that is a content of actual experience by someone, we cannot call it non-existent because it is experienced. Nor can we say it really exists, because it is refuted on awakening.

When consciousness manifests itself properly, this ignorance is dispelled. We cannot say that it is existing there. As it is subject to sublation, it cannot be said to be existing. But as it is daily experienced by people, it also cannot be said to be non-existing. Vidyā dr̥ṣṭyā śrutam̐ tucchar̐ tasya nitya nirvṛttitaḥ: Only in the light of great knowledge, spiritual illumination, it flees completely, as darkness before the rising sun.

Tucchā'nirvacanīyā ca vāstavī cetyasau tridhā, jñeyā māyā tribhir bodhaiḥ śrauta yauktika laukikaiḥ (130). There are three definitions of *maya*: *tuccha*, *nirvachaniya*, and *vastavi*. For some people, *maya* is non-existent. For some people, it is indescribable. For some people, it is very real. For people like us who are totally ignorant mortals, it is very real indeed. This world is very real. Attachments to things also are very real. Desire for things is very real. Entanglement is very real; freedom from entanglement is also a real aspiration in us. All things look real. The creation of the world also is very real. This is the definition of *maya* by an ignorant person.

But for a logician, philosopher, it is an intellectual full stop. He cannot say anything as to what it is. It is an indescribable thing; neither is it existing, nor is it non-existing. It cannot be said to be non-existing because it is experienced in the form of ignorance of things. It cannot also be called existing because it vanishes in Self-realisation. This is the philosopher's definition. But for the person who has actually entered into the nature of Brahman, it does not exist, *tuccha*. Futile, meaningless, is its existence.

Jñeyā māyā tribhir bodhaiḥ śrauta yauktika laukikaiḥ: To the person who is endowed with the wisdom of the Veda (indirect realisation), it is *tuccha*; for the logician, it is 'nirvachaniya; for the *laukika*, or the worldly man it is *vastavi*, or very real.

Asya sattvama sattvaṁ ca jagato darśaya tyasau, prasāra ṇācca saṅkocāt yathā citra paṭa stathā (131). It can manifest the world and also withdraw the world. It unfolds the world and also enfolds the world. As a painted picture drawn on a canvas can be made visible or invisible by opening or folding the canvas, so does *maya* play with this creation. It can fold it up and then not allow it to be seen by anyone, or it can unfold it and we will see all the variety here.

Asvantantrā hi māyā syāt apratīter vinā citim, svatantrā'pi tathaiva syāt asaṅgasyā nyathā kṛteḥ (132). Independently, it does not exist, because if it exists totally independent, it will be a contender to Brahman. It cannot be experienced unless there is a consciousness that experiences it. Inasmuch as it is dependent on consciousness, it cannot enjoy an independent existence.

It appears to be sometimes independent because it has the capacity to twist consciousness into the belief of things which are not really there; unattached consciousness, *asangatata*, is made to believe that it is attached. Consciousness cannot be attached to anything because it is not of the nature of any substance or object. Attachment is possible only if there is something in the object of attachment, a character which is similar to consciousness. But that consciousness which is of the nature of pure subjectivity cannot be expected to become an object of itself. It is like one thing becoming another thing – consciousness becoming an object, or thought becoming matter.

It is therefore, from one point of view, totally dependent on consciousness. On the other hand, it sometimes appears to be very independent, causing the mischief of the externalisation of consciousness.

Kūṭasthā saṅga mātmanām jagattvena karoti sā, cidābhāsa svarūpeṇa jiveśā vapi nirmame (133). *Kutastha chaitanya*, which is the deepest Atman in us, is bewildered by the perception of the world caused by this action of *maya*. It causes a distinction between Ishvara and *jiva*. Cosmically, it veils Brahman, and that reflected Brahman-consciousness in the veil is called Ishvara. It is also the cause behind the *jiva* consciousness in us, which is the product of its being a medium through *rajas* and *tamas* for the reflection of the very same Brahman. False distinction is created by the external and the internal, between the macrocosmic and the microcosmic, Ishvara and *jiva*.

Kūṭastha manupa drutya karoti jagadā dikam, durghaṭaika vidhā yinyām māyāyām kā camat kṛtiḥ (134). *Kutastha-chaitanya* creates the world without affecting consciousness, really speaking. It may appear that consciousness is affected by the perception of things, but actually it is not so affected. If there has been a real change in consciousness, in the perception of an object, that change would be permanent. Bondage also would be there forever and there would be no hope of salvation. The fact that freedom of consciousness in its Universal state can be experienced one day or the other, shows consciousness was never non-Universal. It was always Universal, and it appeared falsely to be limited to certain particular conditions.

Durghaṭaika vidhā yinyām māyāyām kā camat kṛtiḥ: What is the name of *maya*? Mystery. Actually, *maya* does not exist as an object. It is only a word that we use to describe a peculiar difficulty. *Maya* is a difficulty that we are facing, and difficulty is not an object. It is a situation. It is a consciousness, an apprehension of a condition taking place, an inability on our part to know the relation between appearance and reality. That inability is itself *maya*.

We are unable to distinguish between appearance and reality, or ascertain the relation between appearance and reality. This difficulty, this inability, this is *maya*. But it does not exist as a thing hanging on a tree. It is not an external object.

Dravatvam udake vahnāu auṣṇyaṁ kāṭhinyaṁ aśmani, māyāyām durghaṭatvaṁ ca svataḥ siddhyati nānyataḥ (135). The liquidity that we see in water, the heat that we see in fire, and various characters that we see attached to

things, these are the manifestations of *maya* itself, because when we reduce the effects to their original causes, these characters or things vanish. We can reduce water to its original cause, and we will find that it is not liquid; and fire is only a friction that is created by the movement of intensely moving particles in high velocity.

Solidity can be converted into energy by transference of property; yet when we perceive a thing with our own eyes, the thing appears to be quite different from what it is essentially in its basic substantiality. As long as people do not know what this mystery is, so long people are entangled in this world. Hence nobody can know what this *maya* is.

Na vetti loko yāvattām sākṣāt tāvat camat kṛtim, dhatte manasi paścat tu māyai śetyupa śāmyati (136). The Bhagavad Gita says, “This *maya* is a mysterious power wielded by God Himself and, therefore, it is as difficult to understand as God Himself is difficult to understand.” As long as this unintelligible, un-understandable mystery takes hold of a person, he suffers. And one does not know what really is there – *na vetti*. But once it is known by the flash of the light of consciousness, it subsides. This arising and subsiding is also a mystery by itself.

Prasaranti hi codyāni jagat vastutva vādiṣu, na codanīyaṁ māyāmāṁ tasyā ścodyaika rūpataḥ (137). People put all kinds of questions about *maya*. Does it reside in Brahman or does it reside outside Brahman? Did it exist prior to Brahman or did it exist posterior to Brahman? Does it exist far from Brahman or near to Brahman? Is it identical with it or is it separate from it? These questions should not be raised because it is like asking about a

problem before us: Is this problem a part of us or is it outside us? We cannot say anything about it because it is not actually there, perceived as some thing or an object. It is a situation that is created in the consciousness and, therefore, we cannot raise questions as to where it is located. It is not located anywhere, yet it is experienced.

Codye'pi yadi codyaṁ syāt tvaccodye codyate mayā, parihāryaṁ tataś codyaṁ na punaḥ prati codyatām (138). The question cannot be questioned. *Maya* itself is a great question mark, and we are putting a question about it. As the question itself cannot be questioned, the reason for the appearance of *maya* cannot be queried. Can I ask how this question arose? Who raises the question, etc? Questions will not be answered because there is a reason for raising a question. And there also is a reason for making a statement.

Parihāryaṁ tataś codyaṁ na punaḥ prati codyatām. Don't raise the question again, because the very process of questioning is involved in the untenable doctrine of cause and effect relationship, which by themselves do not exist.

Visma yaika śarīrāyā māyāyā ścodya rūpataḥ, anveṣyaḥ parihāro'syā buddhimat bhiḥ prayatnataḥ (139). In the Yoga Vasishtha, Rama is supposed to have raised a question to Vasishtha, the sage: How did *maya* come? "*Maya*, how did it come, you are asking? Don't ask me," is Vasishtha's reply. "Don't ask me how it came. 'How can I get over it' – ask this question. I can give you suggestions which are of practical utility to you in overcoming this problem, but you should not ask how it arose."

The same thing is quoted here. Wonder is this *maya*, and its nature cannot be ascertained, but we can consider

the ways and means of overcoming it in our daily spiritual meditations.

Māyātva meva niśceyam iti cet tarhi niścinu, loka prasiddha māyāyā lakṣaṇam yat tadī kṣyatām (140). If we say we have to deeply consider the pros and cons of the arising of *maya*, we can go on arguing like that. This kind of problem that we are posing is intellectually also a part of *maya* itself. It presents a situation which cannot be understood and then it also compels us to raise a question as to how it arose, not permitting us to get an answer to it. Such is the work of *maya*. It compels the question to rise but will not allow us to answer it.

Na nirūpayituṁ śakyā viśpaṣṭam bhāsate ca yā, sāmāyetīndra jālādau lokāḥ samprati pedire (141). Nobody can clearly say as to what it is, though it is visible to the eyes, like a magician's performance. We can see the magician's performance. Very clearly we can see it in a solid form. But how it arose? From nowhere something is presented by the magician. How does he effect it? This we cannot understand. 'Magic' is the word that is used to describe what *maya* is. It is a trick, as it were, of consciousness, and tricks cannot be explained logically. It is a sleight of hand, as they say.

Spaṣṭam bhātī jagaccedam aśakyam tannirūpaṇam, māyā mayam jagattasmāt īkṣasvā pakṣa pātataḥ (142). Very clearly we can see the world but we cannot say how it came, from where it arose and what is its real cause. There our intellect ceases to function. We can only be contented by the conviction that it is beyond us.

Nirūpayitu mārabdhe nikhilai rāpi paṇḍitaiḥ, ajñānam purata steṣām bhāti kakṣāsu kāsucit (143). We had many

learned people in ancient days who tried to understand what this *maya* is. They wrote many books but came to no conclusion finally, because all intellectual processes which endeavour to understand this mystery arise on account of the existence of this mystery itself. *Maya* cannot be questioned, because the very process of questioning is caused by *maya* itself. And when they try to understand it, they face a thick curtain in front of them as *ajnana*, an impossibility to understand. Everybody has failed in properly explaining how this world came.

Dehendri yādayo bhāvā viryeṇot pādītāḥ katham, katham vā tatra caitanyam ityukte te kimuttaram (144). We see that a little drop of liquid-like substance manifests itself into a baby, and then we see that it walks with two legs and raises its head and begins to appear to be a totally independent important entity in this world, while its origin is so very mysterious. How can we explain this great wonder?

Vīryasyaiva svabhāva ścet katham tadviditam tvayā, anvaya vyatirekau yau bhagnau tau vandhya vīryataḥ (145). We cannot say how consciousness enters into this substance. Sometimes it enters, and sometimes it does not enter and we find the birth of the child does not take place as expected. We have only to say that we don't understand.

Na jānāmi kimapyetad ityante śaraṇam tava, ata eva mahānto'sya pravadtā nra jālataḥ (146). *Indrajala* is the magic of Indra. He can conjure up appearances. Brahman, like Indra, conjures up this world. What do we say about it? Na jānāmi kimapyetad: I don't understand what is happening; I am bewildered. How does the magician suddenly project a solid substance in front of us?

He throws up a rope and climbs up to heaven. How is it possible, sir? We can see it, but our seeing it is not a proof of its existence. What a wonder!

Etasmāt kimivendra jāla maparam yad garbha vāsa sthitaṁ, retaś cetati hasta mastaka pada prod bhūta nānān kūrām, paryāyeṇa śīśutva yauvana jara veṣai ranekair vrtaṁ, paśya tyatti śṛnnoti jighrati tathā gaccha tyathā gacchati (147). What a wonder! What can be a greater wonder than this peculiar phenomenon, for instance, that some mysterious thing that appears to be inside the womb of the mother begins to assume intelligence and starts moving. How does it move? From where has the intelligence come? Nobody knows from where the intelligence arose and started making it move about. And then it manifests certain limbs – head, hands, feet. Like tendrils of a plant manifesting shoots in different ways, the limbs of the little would-be baby start projecting themselves.

How does this happen? Who is the cause behind this? What kind of intelligence is there to see that only a requisite number of limbs and only in a particular manner should be manifested? Afterwards what happens? It grows into a little baby, and it becomes a young person; it becomes old, and it passes through all sorts of experiences in this world. It eats, it sees, it hears, it smells, it goes and comes. What is this that is happening? From where has this little phenomenon cropped up suddenly? From unknown sources it has come, and to unknown sources it vanishes. Its peculiar phenomenon-like existence in this world is only for a few years, but it vainly puts on the contour of something great and important. Such is human life. What can be a greater

wonder than this? Etasmāt kimivendra jāla maparam: What can be a greater magic or a wonder than this little explanation of human life itself?

Dehavad vaṭa dhanādaṁ suvicārya vilokyataṁ, kva dhānā kurta vā vṛkṣaḥ tasmāt māyeti niścinu (148). Have you seen the *banyan* tree? Have you seen the seed of a *banyan* tree, how small it is? You cannot even see it with your eyes. In that littlest of tiny particles – the seed of the *banyan* tree – is hiddenly present that mighty giant that shakes up our buildings with its roots. What a wonder! How can we explain that a mighty giant rises up from this little invisible seed? Where was it sitting inside? Where is the place for that tree to sit inside that seed? Can we apply our reason and give a satisfactory answer? A wonder indeed is this also; a great miracle it is.

Nirūktā vabhimānaṁ ye dadhate tārīkā dayaḥ, harṣa miśrā dibhi stet u khaṇḍandādaṁ suśikṣitāḥ (149). Logicians still persist in arguing, and want to somehow or other satisfy themselves that things can be explained by mere argument only. That all logic is finally futile has been established by great thinkers like Shri Harsha, who wrote a masterly logical text called Khandana-Khanda-Khadyam. He refutes all the validity of logical arguments presented by logicians, or the Naiyayikas and the Vaiseshikas. You may say anything, but there is a defect in your saying. You may try to prove anything, but there is also some defect in that proof. And if you say that your finding a defect in me also is full of defect, he accepts that also, so that there is nothing that can be clearly said in this world. Thus all logical arguments are set aside, and what this two-volume book

finally says is that we can say nothing except that we know that nothing can be known.

We can know that nothing can be known, that is the only certainty; but any other thing cannot be known. Only consciousness remains. Harsha Misra establishes the unitary nature of consciousness by refuting every kind of argument of the logicians. Khaṇḍandādaḥ suśikṣitāḥ: Khandana is the name of the book. *Khandana-khadyam* means sweetmeat, and *khandana* means refutation. It is the sweetmeat of refutation. Such a difficult language it is that nobody can understand what he is saying. And he mentions in one place, “Deliberately I have made this book immensely difficult for people to understand so that fools who think that they are wise may not touch it.”

Acintyāḥ khalu ye bhāvā na tāmstarkeṣu yojayet, acintya racanā rūpaṁ manasā’pi jagat khalu (150). Therefore, don’t be proud in this world; don’t be so proud as to imagine that you can answer every question. Even by the furthest stretch of the imagination, you cannot know how this world appeared. Why do you argue unnecessarily?

Acintya racanā śakti bījaṁ māyeti niścina, māyā bījaṁ tadevaikaṁ suṣuptā vanubhūyate (151). This indescribability, as has been mentioned already, is *maya*. It is not existing anywhere as something solid, like an object, but it is there as a tremendous problem before us which we cannot face easily.

The seed of this *maya* is experienced in the state of deep sleep every day. We cannot see *maya* with our eyes, but we can feel it in one condition at least, in deep sleep. We do not know what is happening to us. We go to sleep every day

without bothering as to what is actually happening and why it happens. Why is it necessary for us to sleep every day? It is as important as life and death. We may have nothing else but only a good sleep, and that is enough. But if we have everything else minus sleep, it is like hell or worse than hell.

What is the importance of sleep? This, logic cannot explain. We enter into our deepest source in the state of deep sleep, and in all other conditions of dream, waking, etc., we come out of our real nature and become other than what we are; we become a not-self, an artificial self, a false self, in perceptions that we have in dream and waking. It is only in sleep that we really become what we are. That is why we are so happy. To be one's own self is really a great thing, and to be other than one's self is the sorrow of life.

Jāgrat svapna jagat tatra līnaṃ bīja iva drumah, tasmā daśeṣa jagataḥ vāsanā starta saṁsthitāḥ (152). As the whole *banyan* tree can be said to be inherently, potentially present in the little seed, waking and dream experience is hidden in deep sleep. All the causes that are responsible for our dreaming and waking experience are potentially present in sleep. Because every kind of cause is present there, we are unable to locate that distinction between one and the other, so it looks like a homogeneous darkness. Everything is heaped up in a hodgepodge manner. Therefore, it is impossible to decipher any particular *vritti* distinctly. The distinctness of *vrittis*, or mental functions, arises only in dream and waking; then this distinctness vanishes and everything becomes indistinct in sleep. That is why the intellect does not function there. And so, intellectual consciousness not being there, and no other

consciousness being with us, we know nothing there. All the potentials for creation cosmically can be found in *maya*, and all the potentials for human experience can be found in the state of deep sleep.

Yā buddhi vāsanā stāsu caitanyaṃ prati bimbatī, meghākāśa vada spaṣṭa cidābhāso'nu mīyatām (153). As particles of water constitute a cloud, little particles of ideation constitute our intellect; and through this screen of water particles of intellectual ideation, consciousness reflects itself and then presents the variety of this world, as we can have a kind of false variety made visible if we put on glasses which are broken or dented.

Sunlight is vaguely and indistinctly seen when clouds are covering the sky, and sometimes we can see varieties of colours and features falsely imputed or transferred to the existence of the sun on account of the movement of clouds. We have seen that when the cloud is moving, it looks as if the moon is moving. If we go on looking at the moon on a bright night when clouds also are there, we will see that the moon is moving a little. The moon is not moving; the clouds are moving.

This is what happens to us when we intellectually perceive this world which is, after all, a water particle-like screen through which the consciousness of *Kutastha* manifests itself. We are muddled in our perception on account of the identification of consciousness with the intellect. The intellect also is not a solid substance. It is made up of little bits.

Even thought is not a solid substance. It is made up of little, little bits of thinking process. They are so many in

number and they are so consecutively arranged, with such rapidity of movement, that it looks as if we have one solid mind. Actually, it is *chanchala*; movement is its nature, fickle is its essentiality. It is made up of little particles. As threads constitute the cloth, little mental functions constitute what is called the psyche. We are always restless on account of there being no internal solidity in us. We feel very unhappy, as if we are moving but not really existing.

Discourse 30

CHAPTER 6: CHITRADIPA – LIGHT ON THE ANALOGY OF A PAINTED PICTURE, VERSES 157-174

Māyā dhīna ścidābhāsaḥ śrutau māyī maheśvaraḥ, antaryāmi ca sarvajño jaga dyoniḥ sa eva hi (157). Ishvara is the origin of the universe; He is the source of all things. He works through His *maya shakti* and He is glorified in the scriptures as Maheshvara, the Lord of all beings. He is called Antaryami, the Indweller of all, Knower of everything. Such is Ishvara, as glorified in the Upanishads and all the scriptures.

Sauṣupta mānanda mayam prakra myaivam śrutir jagau, eṣa sarveśvara iti so'yaṁ vedokta īśvaraḥ (158). In the Mandukya Upanishad, the glory of this Great Being is sung in such words as: Eṣa sarveśvara, eṣa sarvajñah, eṣo'ntāryami, eṣa (Mundakya 6). Such are the words of the Mandukya Upanishad. The bliss of the sleep experience is a fraction, as it were, of the bliss of God. There is a tremendous difference between the cosmical causal condition of Ishvara and the individual causal condition of *avidya* experienced by everyone in the state of deep sleep.

While *maya* is the medium through which Ishvara manifests Himself as the omniscient and omnipotent ruler, *jiva*, under the subjection of the *rajasic* and *tamasic* qualities predominant in *avidya*, is subject to *avidya*. In that state of deep sleep, which is the causal condition of individuality, we know nothing, whereas Ishvara, through *maya*, which is the causal condition of the universe, knows everything. There is a topsy-turvy experience in the state of *jiva*, notwithstanding the fact it was in a causal condition;

and Ishvara is also in a state of causal condition. The difference is that Ishvara's causal condition is determined by *sattva guna* – the pure *sattva* transparency quality or property of *prakriti* – whereas in the case of the *jiva*, the individual, it *rajas* and *tamas* are the medium. This is the difference between Ishvara and *jiva*. Ishvara knows everything; *jiva* knows nothing.

Sarvajñatvādike tasya naiva viprati padyatām, śrautār thasyā vitarkyatvāt māyāyām̐ sarva sambhavāt (159). Scripture is the authority for the assuming of the existence of a Great Being like Ishvara. Physically with the eyes, we cannot see such a Being. Even intellectually, it is difficult to ascertain the real character of Ishvara because the intellect, being a medium of individual perception accustomed to reports received through the sense organs, is not competent enough to fathom the depths of that which is super-individual, Universal. The individual intellect cannot think of Universality. Whenever we try to think of the Universal, it looks like an abstract something, whereas the objects of the world look very concrete. But the reverse is the case, in fact. The Universal is the real concrete existence which manifests itself – or rather appears as – the visible objects of the world.

Ayam̐ yat sṛjate viśvaṁ tadanya thayitum̐ pumān, na ko'pi śaktas tenāyam̐ sarveśvara itīritah̐ (160). Why is He called *sarveshvara*? Why is God called omnipotent? Because what He has created, He has created forever, and nobody can change it. We cannot change even a little leaf in a tree; it has to be there in the manner it has been created by God. Even a hair on our body cannot be changed. Our every

wink is counted by the Great Being. Whatever He has willed, He has willed forever, and nobody can amend it and change the constitution of God.

In the Ishavasya Upanishad there is a famous statement in this regard. Yāthātathyato'rthān vyadadhāc chāśvatībhyaḥ samābhyaḥ (Isa 8). When God willed this universe, He has willed it in such perfection, going to such extreme details, that for eternity there is no necessity to change the law that He has established. All the future occurrences and events and possibilities are already known to Him prior to the act of creation, so something else cannot suddenly take place tomorrow. The determining will of Ishvara is so powerful that until the end of creation no amendment of its constitution is essential and nobody can interfere in these laws. Therefore, He is called all-knowing and also all-powerful – sarveśvara itīritaḥ.

Aśeṣa prāṇi buddhīnām vāsanā statrā samsthītāḥ, tābhiḥ kroḍi kṛtaṁ sarvaṁ tena sarvajña īritaḥ (161). All knowing He is. Every bit of process that is taking place in the universe is a content of His immediate awareness. The littlest events, the most insignificant occurrences in the world are known to Him directly in immediate perception. The knowledge of Ishvara, or the wisdom of God, is not attained by successive inferences or arguments. It is a process of immediate apprehension. Identity-consciousness is the nature of this perception of Ishvara.

The evolution of the cosmos and the events in history are immediate contents of Ishvara's consciousness. All the impressions of the intellects of people – aśeṣa prāṇi buddhīnām vāsanā – all the impressions, or the *vasanas* as

they are called, the vague potentials of future action in the individuals, deposited in their intellect and in their causal body, are all included in the body of Ishvara. Everybody's intellect is clubbed together into an integrated whole in the supreme intellect of Ishvara Himself. And all the individuals are strung on His body, as the cells of the body are strung in the personality of individuals. As various minute particles of self constitute the body and they cannot stand outside the body of an individual, so nothing in this world can stand outside Him. He is the Saririn, or the Universally-embodied. And everything else is the *sarira*, or the body of Ishvara.

Therefore, on account of His being an inclusive factor of all the events taking place even in the brains and the intellects of people, there is nothing that He does not know. Not only does He know what we are thinking, He also knows what we are going to think tomorrow. Even the future is known to Him in immediate presence. All the future for us is an immediate presence for Him. There is no future or past for God; it is an eternal present. That is the difference between ordinary individuals, *jivas*, and Ishvara, the all-knowing Being.

Vāsanānām parokṣatvāt sarvajñatvaṁ na hī kṣyate, sarva buddhiṣu tad dṛṣṭvā vāsanā svanu mīyatām (162). We may be under the impression that the impressions created by the actions of *jivas* and deposited in their intellects have their potency for future action only, and that presently their futurity cannot be known. That may be the case with people like us. We cannot know what are the impressions imbedded in our own intellects, and perhaps

many of us cannot know what we are going to think tomorrow. Suddenly thoughts will arise on account of occurrences of events in the world, and so on. But not so is the case of Ishvara.

There is no futurity and there is no potentiality; it is an actuality for everything. For Ishvara, everything is an actuality, and nothing is latent or potential in His case. For us it may be a potential for future action; for Him it is a direct experience of what is taking place just now, because what is going to take place even millions of years afterwards is an act of knowledge to Him just now. For Him, millions of years afterwards are like just now. The future also becomes the present in the case of Ishvara. That is why He is called All-knower.

Vijñāna maya mukhyeṣu koṣeṣva nyatra caiva hi, antasti ṣṭhan yamayati tenān taryā mitāṁ vrajet (163). In the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad there is a marvellous description of Antaryami, or the indwelling spirit. We can read it by heart, as a *mantra japa* – so purifying, so ennobling and touching is the description of God's immanency in this great section of the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad called Antaryami Brahmana.

Within everything is God – not only within the objects of the world, but within even the sheaths of the body. Within the physical body, vital body, mental body, intellectual body, causal body, within our mind, within our intellect, within our ego, He is present as an immanent controller. He regulates the operation of even the intellects of people. And we cannot think in any manner which is opposed to or contrary to the Will that He has exercised at

the beginning of creation. Therefore, He is called the immanent principle, not only controlling the world from outside as the creator, but also restraining us from inside even in the act of our thinking and reasoning. Nothing outside Him can be; and nobody can interfere with His action and His will.

Buddhau tiṣṭha nnāntaro'syā dhiyā nīkṣyaśca dhī vapuḥ, dhiya mantar yamayātīti evaṁ vedena ghoṣitam (164). *Vedahere* represents the Upanishad, the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad particularly. Inside the *buddhi*, or the intellect, God is sitting as the intelligence in the intellect. The intellect is different from the intelligence that is inside it. Intellect is the sheath or the body of psychic function through which intelligence is manifest. That intelligence belongs to Ishvara Himself, God Himself. It manifests itself through the peculiar structure of human individuality, which is the intellect, and within the intellect He seats Himself. Seated inside the intellect of all beings, He controls their movements. But the intellect cannot know Him. The intellect can function only in the light of the reflection of that intelligence through it, but it cannot go back to its cause.

We are intelligent, but we cannot know why we are intelligent. Intelligence is a principle that is prior to the act of intelligent understanding. As the effect cannot know the cause, we as individuals working only through the intellect cannot know from where we get the intelligence because we cannot see our own backs. Ishvara is seated in the intellect and the reason of all people, unknown to the intellect and

reason. The reason also must be reasonable. Why should it be reasonable?

We say, “This does not stand to reason.” But why should anything stand to reason? That also must have a reason behind it. Why should rationality be respected? Because there is reason behind the respect that we have to give to rationality. What is the reason? What is the reason behind the goodness of reason and the applicability of reason? That is beyond us, because the impelling force which compels us to accept reason is something beyond reason itself. That is the Universal consciousness operating, into which we cannot probe properly for the same reason that the effect cannot know the cause. He is the reason behind the rationality of things.

Tantuḥ paṭe sthito yadvad upādāna tayā tathā, sarvo pādāna rūpatvāt sarvatrā yama vasthitaḥ (165). Ishvara is also the material cause of creation. His very substance is the substance of this world. As threads are the very substance of the cloth, Ishvara’s existence is the very substance of everything in creation. He is the material of the very manifestation of this world, as threads are the material of this cloth. As threads are immanent in the cloth – they pervade the whole cloth and the cloth is not outside the threads, the thread itself is the cloth – so is the case with Ishvara. He permeates the world. He does not stand outside the world. He is the material cause of the world. Verily, He Himself is the world.

Paṭā dapyāntara stantuḥ tanto rapyamśu rāntaraḥ, āntaratvasya viśrāntiḥ yatrā sāvanu miyatām (166). Internal to the cloth is the thread. Internal to the thread is

the fibre. What is there internal to the fibre? Minute particles of cotton. What is there internal to the minute particles of cotton? Go on investigating like this into the deeper constitution of this cloth. Go on and on, investigating deeper and deeper into the original cause of this cloth. Where the intellect fails to go further and we have reached the last limit of our understanding beyond which our mind cannot go into the substance of the very cloth itself, there Ishvara arises.

Where intellect fails, religion commences, as they say. Religion begins when intellect fails. As long as intellect is active, religion is inactive; it won't work. So religion is nothing but the acceptance of God's existence from the bottom of one's heart. There ceases intellectual activity completely. The cause of causes, the ultimate impossible cause, behind which there cannot be any other cause – that is Ishvara, the All-knowing Being.

Dvitrānta ratvaka kṣāṇām darśane'pyaya māntaraḥ, na viṣyate tato yukti śrutir bhyāmeva nirṇayaḥ (167). We will find that we cannot apply our intellect to finding out the cause of even the cloth itself. What is the substance out of which the cloth is made? We will find our brain ceases to work when we go on investigating into the ultimate cause of even the particles of fibre, which is the cotton of which the cloth is made.

What are these particles made of? We may say they are from atoms. What are the atoms made of? Nobody knows. They are certain energy constitutions. What is this energy made of? Nobody knows. We are arguing from effect to cause; but effect, however much it may try to touch the

cause, it cannot touch it as long as it remains as an effect. That is to say, as long as we remain as individual observers and thinkers, independent of the cosmic whole, we shall not succeed in entering into the ultimate cause of things. Only scripture and higher reason are our aid here.

Paṭa rūpeṇa saṁsthānāt paṭas tantor vapur yathā, sarva rūpeṇa saṁsthānāt sarvam asya vapus tathā (168). Because of the fact that threads constitute the cloth, we say cloth is the body of the threads. Threads have assumed a form in the form of the cloth. In the same way, we may say, as God Ishvara constitutes the inner essence of all things, He exists in every form. We can say that the world is His body. As the cloth is the body of the threads, the universe is the body of Ishvara. Such analogy is very near what we can make out in regard to the relationship of effect and cause, world and Ishvara. There is something more about Ishvara than what we can make out from the illustration. Analogies are analogies, after all. They cannot be the ultimate truth; they give some symptom of what truth can be.

Tantoḥ saṅkoca vistāra calanadau paṭas tathā, avaśya meva bhavati na svātantryaṁ paṭe manāk (169). Whatever happens to the threads will happen to the cloth. The cloth has no independent existence. If the threads shrink, the cloth shrinks. If the threads expand for any reason, the cloth expands; and if the threads start shaking, the whole cloth also shakes. Whatever happens to the threads happens to the cloth. There is no independence for the cloth, it being totally dependent on its inner constituents.

In the same way, tathā'ntar yāmyayaṁ yatra yayā vāsanayā yathā, vikriyeta tathā'vaśyaṁ bhavateva na saṁśayaḥ (170). This analogy also applies to this world and

Ishvara. The world changes only according to the change instituted by the will of Ishvara in the inner constituent of the forms of the world. The evolution of the cosmos, as we hear it said – the processes of human history, occurrences in nature, the coming and going of things, birth and death, joy and sorrow, every blessed thing in this universe – is something that happens to things in this world, just as something may happen to the cloth on account of the occurrences in the threads.

The will of Ishvara, which has the knowledge of past, present and future, decides that something has to take place in the interest of the total universe. Its interest is not only for particular persons. God does not exist for somebody's welfare and for the harm of somebody else. The interest of God is universal, as the organism of the human personality has the interest of the total well-being of the personality. There is no partiality in respect of any limb of the body, or the organism.

So tragedies and comedies, rises and falls of empires, kings going to dust, emperors vanishing into a condition of beggary tomorrow, unthinkable occurrences in the world, mysteries and wonders, thunderstorms and cyclones and droughts – nobody can imagine what kind of things these are, how they appear and why they appear. We cannot understand what is the cause behind all these things because we think in terms of space-time, and sometimes we think in such narrow limits of nation, community, village, family, etc. The whole of the universe is not before our eyes.

But Ishvara has the whole universe before Him. And in the interest of the stability of the cosmos, to maintain the

organism of the structure which He has willed in His original concept of creation, He sees that the balance is maintained. And sudden shake-ups can take place in history – natural history as well as human history. There is no pleasure and pain, good and bad, necessary and unnecessary, etc. as we conceive them, in the mind of Ishvara because His thought is a total thought and, therefore, any kind of partial intervention from the social, economic or ethical side cannot apply to Ishvara.

Ishvara is not a social individual, He is not an economic unit, and He is not an ethical person. These laws apply only to human beings. He is a universal integration, to which we cannot apply any norm of human conduct. His will changes the whole cosmos as the change in the threads will change of the entire cloth.

In the Bhagavad Gita, the Lord says, *Īśvaraḥ sarva bhūtānāṃ hṛd-deśe'rjuna tiṣṭhati, bhrāmayan sarva-bhūtāni yantra rūḍhāni māyayā* (171). This verse is bodily lifted here. Bhagavan Shri Krishna speaks in the Bhagavad Gita to Arjuna. What does he say? “Hey Arjuna, Ishvara, the Lord, is within the heart of all beings. Operating from within the heart of everyone, He works the future and destiny of everyone, forcing all individuals to move as if they are mounted on a moving wheel. Compulsorily we are put under subjection to certain experiences in the world, as that which is caught up in the movement of a mechanical wheel has no independence whatsoever; and we move together with the movement of the wheel because we are stuck in the wheel.

Here the wheel is nothing but the will of Ishvara, and He mounts every individual on that machine, as it were, which is His will in such a powerful way that there seems to be no personal choice for *jivas*. They are stuck in it. Like a fly who is stuck in a moving wheel runs round and round with the wheel and cannot go out because of the force of the wheel, so we are stuck, as it were, in this wheel of movement of the whole structure of things, which is decided by the will of Ishvara. He does this work by being seated in the heart of everybody. From within us He is working and compelling us to think in a particular manner, and also forcing us to do certain actions in the way that they are necessary for the balance of the cosmos.

Sarva bhūtāni vijñāna mayāste hṛdaye sthitāḥ, tadupādāna bhūteṣaḥ tatra vikriyate khalu (172). Within the intellect is Ishvara seated; and all individuals can be regarded as modifications of the form of the intellect. Our actions and our thoughts are the ways in which the intellect operates. Our life is controlled by the way in which we think and act. And our thoughts are decided by the intellectual illumination, the degree of illumination that we are endowed with. As this degree varies from individual to individual, the way in which people manifest their personality also changes; and everybody does not behave in the same way in the world, as we know very well.

Even the variety of this behaviour of individuals through their *vijnana*, or their intellect, is willed by Ishvara. If I behave in one way and you behave in another way, it is also willed by Him for a certain purpose. The purpose of God is beyond human reason. We cannot question why.

Sometimes we do question why should this happen. “Why should the waves rise up twenty feet high and then destroy large areas of Andhra Pradesh and Orissa? This should not have happened.” We say that; but God says it should happen, for some reason which is not our business to question. And He knows what it is.

Dehādi pañjaraṃ yantraṃ tadāroho’bhimānitā, vihita prati śiddheṣu pravṛttir bhramaṇaṃ bhavet (173). This wheel, this machine, is this body itself, actually speaking. Dehādi pañjaraṃ yantraṃ: He is working through this body of our individuality and He is sitting on it as somebody is riding on a horse; and as is the control exercised by the rider of the horse, so is the movement of the horse. Thus on this horse-like machine which is this body, the Lord seems to be riding and pressing forward the direction of the movement of this machine. And wherever the stirrups hit the horse, in that direction the horse moves. The reins are also controlled by the rider of the horse. He pulls the reins in a particular manner and the horse turns his neck and runs in that particular direction. We are like that. We may be horses on which God is riding, or we may call it a machine which is operated by God. In either case, we seem to be helpless finally.

Does God do bad actions and good actions? Nothing of the kind is applicable to God because goodness and badness are ethical concepts which are socially oriented to a large extent, which way of thinking is not applicable to Ishvara. Ishvara is a Unitary Being, and social laws cannot apply to God. Our constitutions of political government, etc., should not be applied there because these laws are valid only so

long as we live as individuals in a social body. God is not a social body; He is an integrated existence. Indivisibility is the nature of God, whereas separateness is the nature of human organisations.

Therefore, don't apply any of our laws there. And it is better to keep quiet and accept what is happening, because our reason cannot plumb into the depths of the action of that which is totally integrated and indivisible, while we are accustomed to thinking only in terms of body and human relations – even going to such crude concepts as economics determining human values. There are philosophies in this world who conclude that the destiny of man is in economic conditions, which is the last step that wrong philosophy can take.

Vijñāna maya rūpeṇa tat pravṛtti svarūpataḥ, svaśaktyeśo vikriyat māyayā bhrāmaṇaṁ hi tat (174). The work of God through the intellects of people is a very peculiar mode of His operation. He does not contradict the potentials that are already present in the form of *karmas*. He only adds like sunlight, to give an example, which allows the actions in the world according to the potencies of different individualities – such as the growth of a plant from a seed, the movement of an animal in the forest, the work of people in the world, and any kind of activity in which we are engaged. Everything in the world is controlled by the light of the sun to a large extent, perhaps in every way, yet the sun does not directly interfere in the operations carried on by individuals, whatever be those operations.

In one way, without the sunlight, without any heat, without an existence, life itself would be impossible. Yet the

modifications of individuals in the form of activity, etc., cannot be imputed to Ishvara – or to the sun, in the case of the analogy. In the same way, everything is controlled by the determining will of Ishvara operating through the intellect, *vijnanamaya*; yet, He stands apart. We will be given justice in the form of the desserts that we deserve.

Justice is the nature of God. He is not partial. He acts as an impersonal justice. ‘Impersonal’ justice is the word that is to be used in respect of God – no partiality whatsoever. He has no friend and no enemy and, therefore, we should not apply our human feelings of prejudice, like and dislike, etc., in the case of judging what is happening in the world through the will of God.

Discourse 31

CHAPTER 6: CHITRADIPA – LIGHT ON THE ANALOGY OF A PAINTED PICTURE, VERSES 175-194

Antaryamayatī tyuktyā'yame vārthaḥ śrutau śrutaḥ, pṛthivyā diṣu sarvatra nyāyo'yaṁ yojyatām dhiyā (175). The Internal Ruler is Ishvara, known as Antaryami. Internal to all things is His seat. He is seated within the intellect of people and regulates even the understanding of all *jivas*, individuals. This is what was mentioned in the earlier verse.

Now it is said in the light of the Antaryami Brahmana description of the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad that internal to everything is Ishvara – not merely the intellect of people, internal to all things conceivable – antaryamayatī. The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad says that He who is within this earth and regulates the movement of the earth, who the earth does not know, but who regulates the earth and is the soul of the very earth – that is the Antaryamin.

Similar is the statement in respect of many other things also. He who is in the sun, but who the sun does not know, who being within the sun, regulates the sun, He is the Antaryamin, the Inner Controller of all beings. He who is within wind, He who is within fire, He who is within water, He who is within space, He who is within time, but whom no one knows, that is the Inner Controller of all, the Antaryamin, the Inner Regulator and the restrainer of all beings. This is from the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad.

Jānāmi dharaṁ na ca me pravṛttiḥ jānāmya dharmāṁ na ca me nivṛttiḥ, kenāpi devena hṛdi sthitena yathā niyukto'smi tathā karomi (176). This verse is apparently

quoted from the Mahabharata and is generally attributed to Duryodhana. Duryodhana said, it seems, "I know what is right, but I shall not pursue it; and I know what is not right, but I pursue it. Something inside me propels me to act in this particular manner. That is why I behave in this way." This is what Duryodhana is supposed to have said.

This something that propels a person to act in a particular manner is the Antaryamin. Now, the propulsion of the Antaryamin or Ishvara is neither in a good direction nor in a bad direction. The engine of the car has no direction to move; it is the wheels that determine which direction the car is to take. So the engine is something like the Inner Controller and regulates the movement of the vehicle, but the direction in which it has to move depends upon the structure of the wheels. In a similar manner, the Inner Controller, Ishvara, works in an impersonal, regulative, orderly manner, but the goodness or the badness of it, the direction in which the movement takes place, depends upon the medium through which the Lord operates.

The medium may be an individual human being; it may be a saint; it may be a god. And according to the individuality, the structure of the personality, the makeup of the thing concerned, the action will manifest itself. Electricity is like the inner controller of certain activities. It can burn, it can move, and it can freeze. In a refrigerator, electricity freezes. In a stove, electricity burns. In a railway train, it moves. Now, electricity itself does not perform any such operation of freezing, etc. The inner force that is necessary for these functions to take place is provided by

the electrical current, but the manner in which the effect is produced depends upon the medium through which it passes. So God may work through Duryodhana or Arjuna, or it may be through anybody else. The matter is entirely dependent upon the medium of expression.

Nārthaḥ puruṣa kāreṇeti eva mā śaṅkyatām yataḥ, īśaḥ puruṣa kārasya rūpeṇāpi vivartate (177). Does it mean then that human beings have no free will? All this that has been said up to this time in so many verses appears to drive us to a conclusion that everything is done by Ishvara and we have no free will. Is it so?

We should not say that there is no free will, because it is the will of Ishvara that works as free will in individuals. When the universal will of Ishvara passes through the human individuality, through the medium of the intellect of the individual, it becomes effort. The manner in which Ishvara's will works through you or me is called effort. So there is effort, and yet that effort is propelled by Ishvara's will. Unless He wills, even effort is not possible.

So effort is there, and yet it is not there. In two different ways we can conceive this proposition. The consciousness of agency in action is called effort, and this agency is attributable to the intellect of human beings. Egoism is associated with intellect. Wherever there is intellect there is also ego, and when the cover of understanding, intelligence which is really Ishvara's nature, passes through this intellect, it assumes agency by itself. The work of Ishvara is appropriated to itself by the ego and begins to feel that it is doing the action.

Action is done by Ishvara, but the ego feels that it is doing it. That feeling of the ego is the reason for there being such a thing called effort. Now, whether there is effort or not, it is up to anyone to decide. Ishvara Himself appears as human effort.

Īdṛg bodhe neśvarasya pravṛttir maiva vāryatām, tathāpī śasya bodhena svātmā saṅgatva dhījaniḥ (178). The effort of human individuals does not in any way limit the omnipotence of Ishvara. It does not mean that we have free will and we can do whatever we like, contradicting the original will of Ishvara. That is not possible. The original will is the final determining factor, and our free will is a concession given only to the extent of the ability exercised by our reason; beyond that the free will also is absent. It is a limited freedom.

The moment we realise the dependence of even human effort on Ishvara's will, we find ourselves detached completely from every kind of thing in the world. Our attachment arises on account of assuming a wholesale agency of action on our behalf and minding not there being anything that is universally operative everywhere. Once it is realised that even our agency, the spirit of agency or the sense of agency in action (or *kartritva bhavana*, as it is called) is only an appropriation by the ego of the personality of what actually is done by Ishvara Himself, detachment takes place immediately. When we know that whatever we are doing is actually done by Ishvara Himself, our egoism ceases, and attachment also goes with it.

The knowledge of this truth itself is freedom and liberation of the *jiva*. Liberation takes place the moment we

realise that God does everything and there is no one doing anything else. No one at all exists except as participants in the cosmic body of Ishvara. The knowledge of this fact is the liberation of the individual.

Tāvātā mukti rityāhuḥ śrutayaḥ smṛtaya stathā, sruti smṛtī mamai vājñe ityapi śvara bhāṣitam (179). Srutis and Smritis, Vedas, Upanishads, and Dharma Shastras like Manu Smriti, Yajnavalkya Smriti, Mahabharata, Ramayana, Bhagavata all tell that Ishvara is All-in-All. And God has Himself stated that the word of the scripture is actually His word.

Ājñāyā bhīti hetutvaṁ bhīṣā'smā diti hi śrutam, sarve śvaratva metat syāt antaryāmitvataḥ pṛthak (180). The Taittiriya Upanishad has said, as has the Kathopanishad, that by the fear of this universal regulator, everything is functioning in a systematic manner. There is no confusion in the world. The work of nature is precise, mathematically perfect. It is so because of the regulating order that is issued from the internal substance of creation itself. Thus is the conclusion that He is Sarveshvara, All-in-all.

He is internally controlling all and also externally controlling everybody. Externally He controls the whole creation as its creator; internally, He controls everything as its Self, itself. The maker of all things appears to be operating, as it were, from outside the created object. But here, the maker of the object, being also the very material and the substance of the object, is also the soul and the very self of the object. So the control of Ishvara is both from inside as well as outside. It is a total control He is exercising on all things.

Etasya vā akṣarasya praśāsana iti śrutiḥ, antaḥ praviṣṭaḥ śāstā'yaṁ janānā miti ca śrutiḥ (181). In the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad, Sage Yajnavalkya proclaims, "By the command of this great Being, rivers flow in given directions. By the command of this great Being, winds blow, the sun shines, and all nature performs its function in an appropriate manner. If this supreme order were not to be obeyed by nature as a whole, the whole world would crumble in one second.

Ishvara's order is not issued through any assistant or peon, or some official. There is no second to Ishvara. He does not issue orders by any kind of external medium. His very thought is enough to act directly upon every little thing in the world. And it immediately, personally, without any assistance from outside, determines the required functions. Outside, He is the emulator, controller of all the cosmos. Inside, He is the determining will of our very intellect, our mind, our very breath itself.

Jagadyonir bhava deṣa prabha vāpyaya kṛttvataḥ, āvirbhāva tirobhāvau utpatti pralayaḥ matau (182). He is the source, the very womb of all creation. This is what the Mandukya Upanishad tells us. He is the source from which the universe has proceeded and He is the end of all things, into which the universe will one day return and merge.

The creation of the world and the dissolution of the world are the work of Ishvara and they correspond to the manifestation or the withdrawal of the form of any particular thing. Creation means the manifestation of what was already there. What was potentially there is revealed as objects of perception; that is creation. When the whole

thing is rolled up as if a mat and nothing is visible, we call it involution, and that is dissolution of the universe.

Āvir bhāvayati svasmin vilīnaṃ sakalaṃ jagat, prāṇi karma vaśādeṣa paṭo yad vat prasāritaḥ (183). When the *pralaya* or the cosmic dissolution takes place, everybody is dissolved, as when a flood takes place everything is thrown hither and thither by the violent waters. And seeds of different plants and trees are also thrown in various ways. When the waters subside, the things that were earlier disturbed by the moving waters, settle in some place or the other, and gradually they will emerge from the earth as little tendrils, plants, vegetables, etc., according to the nature of the seed. This earth provides the field for the action of the seeds. The act itself does not produce vegetables. The seeds are the causes, but the propulsion, the power, the vitality, the energy, the sustenance that is necessary for the manifestation of the seed into a plant, etc., is provided by the earth.

In a similar manner, when the cosmic dissolution takes place, which is like a flood of the universe, everything is dissolved into these cosmic waters. Then what happens? All the seeds, or the potentials for future action of the *jivas* or individuals, also get submerged.

When creation starts after a long, long time, Ishvara becomes the cause of the manifestation of a universe which is of such a nature that it will be just fitted for providing a field of experience for the *jivas* who were unliberated at the time of the dissolution of the universe and were lying like seeds in that condition. Now they are to germinate into action and a set of *jivas*, or individuals – a particular

category of individuals – is grouped together for the purpose of the necessary experience in that given field; and so the kind of world in which we live is fitted exactly to the kind of *karmas* that we are supposed to work out in this world.

It is a very, very necessary world for people like us. It is necessary for the kind of people that we are. If we were different types of people, this world would not have been suitable for us. We would have been born in some other world – some other realm of being, higher or lower.

So Ishvara's creation is not actually a direct manifestation of non-existent things. The existent potentials of *jivas* existing unliberated at the time of previous dissolution have to be given a chance to express their *karmas*, and creation is nothing but the providing of the field for the working out of the *karmas* of the individuals. And so we may say Ishvara creates the world, or we may say these seeds of individuals create the world, as the case may be. The earth is the cause of the plant, or the seed of the plant is the cause. Either way, we may say this or that is the cause.

Punas tirobhāvayati svātmanyē vākhilam jagat, prāṇi karma kṣaya vaśāt saṅkocita paṭo yathā (184). After the drama of creation is over for many, many millions of years, He withdraws the whole thing into Himself, though here also the withdrawing is not done by Ishvara by His whim and fancy. As creation is not a whim, just as it is determined by the potential *karmas* of *jivas* who have to find a field for the expression of their *karmas*, in a similar manner, dissolution does not take place suddenly like that.

It will take place only when the *karmas* of all the *jivas* living in a particular world are over and they cannot any more find a suitable atmosphere for the fructification of their other *karmas*. They want to have another world altogether. This world is unsuitable. Just as the body is cast off when the *karmas* cannot be worked out through the body, the world is also cast off, withdrawn completely into the original source, and again dissolution takes place.

So this is a cycle of creation and destruction eternally going on, as it were; neither has it a beginning nor has it an end. Such is the drama of endlessness in beginning and endlessness in dissolution. From eternity to eternity is this drama of creation and destruction.

Rātri ghasrau supti bodhau unmīlana nimīlane tūṣṇīrṁ bhāva manorājye iva sṛṣṭi layā vimau (185). As are night and day, as are sleep and waking, as are closing the eyelids and opening the eyelids, as are keeping quiet and then thinking erratically, so are creation and dissolution. Creation is the light of things; dissolution is the darkness of things. Creation is the waking of things; dissolution is the sleeping of things. Creation is the opening of the eyes of all things; dissolution is the closing of the eyes. Creation is the activity of all things; dissolution is the stillness of all things.

With every winking of the eye of Ishvara, millions of Brahmandas or universes are created, they say. Millions of Brahmandas or cosmoses are created and destroyed in the time Ishvara winks His eyes.

Āvirbhāva tirobhāva śakti matvena hetunā, ārambha pariṇāmādi codyānām nātra sambhavaḥ (186). Naiyayikas or logicians say that creation is absolutely a new coming of

something which is not already in the cause. They say cloth is not just a bundle of threads. They have a peculiar view of the causal relation of thread and cloth. We cannot say that cloth is only just threads. Threads do not directly manifest themselves as cloth. The character of cloth cannot be seen in threads. This is the peculiar notion of the Naiyayikas.

We know the difference between threads and cloth. The function that threads perform and the function that the cloth performs are different. We can wear a cloth, but we cannot wear threads. So the effect is totally different from the cause. This is the Naiyayikas' argument.

The Samkhyas say the effect is not a new beginning. It is something manifest already existing in the cause. That which is not existing in the cause cannot manifest itself at all. Otherwise, anybody would reap any fruit if the effect has no connection with the cause. We may do some action and somebody else will reap the fruit of it. This should not happen. Everyone will have to bear the fruit or the dessert of one's own actions. Therefore, the argument that effects are totally new and unconnected with the cause is untenable.

The modification of the cause into the nature of the effect, as the Samkhya also holds, is not correct because when Ishvara creates the universe, neither does He manifest something totally new and non-existent earlier, nor does He modify Himself into the world – as milk turns into curd, for instance. Ishvara does not become converted into the world. Otherwise, there would be death of Ishvara. Milk dies when curd is manufactured; curd cannot become milk once again. But an effect can go back into the cause. Else,

salvation would not be possible. We cannot have God-realisation if God is no more there, if He has already become the world. This does not happen.

Actually, God has become the world as the rope has become the snake. So the rope is still there and it is not affected in any way by the manifestation of the snake of this world. Doctrines do not apply here.

Satyam̐ jñānam̐ anantam̐ yat brahma tasmāt samutthitāḥ, kham̐ vāyvagni jalor vyoṣaddhi annadehā iti śrutih̐ (191). In the Taittiriya Upanishad, the Brahmanandavalli says that the nature of the Absolute is satyam̐ jñānam̐ anantam̐ (Tait. 2.1.1): truth, knowledge, infinity is Brahman. From that Supreme Being, the knowledge of which will enable a person to have immediate knowledge of all things in the world, was the source and the creator of all the elements.

The Taittiriya Upanishad says, tasmād vā etasmād ātmana ākāśas sambhūtaḥ (Tait. 2.1.1): From that Supreme Brahman-Atman, space was created. Ākāśād vāyuh: From *akasha*, *vayu* came. Vāyor agniḥ: From *vayu*, *agni* or fire came. Agner āpaḥ: From fire, water came. Adbhyaḥ pṛthivī: From condensed water, we have earth. Pṛthivyā oṣadhayaḥ: From earth we have all the plantations, the vegetables, the trees, etc. Oṣadhībhyo annam: From these plantations we have food. Annāt puruṣaḥ: From the food that is eaten, man is born. This is how creation is described in the Taittiriya Upanishad, as arising from Brahman directly up to the body of the human individual. It is one big chain of causation.

Āpāta dṛṣṭitas tatra brahmaṇo bhāti hetutā, hetośca satyatā tasmāt anyonyā dhyāsa iṣyate (192). Brahman does not directly create as a carpenter manufactures things, but His presence is necessary for the manufacture of this world. His existence itself is action. This is the difference between activity of individuals and the activity of Ishvara. The very being of God is His action. He just is, like the sun. His existence is all the activity of His.

There is a superimposition of characteristics of creativity and dual existence when we consider the Absolute itself directly being the cause of things. This is why philosophers have introduced a principle called Ishvara, which is a description of that condition of Brahman where creativity (which is otherwise not applicable to the Supreme Absolute) becomes a necessary feature of that which will become the cause of this world.

A principle called *prakriti* or *maya* has been introduced only to explain how the unmanifest can manifest itself – how the unattached Brahman can appear to be attached to the world – how the featureless Absolute can become Ishvara or the God of creation. This kind of transference of qualities from one to another is called *anyo 'nyadhyasa* or the superimposition of characters of one thing upon another – the Brahman qualities on Ishvara and Ishvara's qualities on Brahman.

The creativity of the world is attributable to Ishvara and not Brahman; but the Universal consciousness that is there in Ishvara is of Brahman and not of somebody else. So there is a mix-up of two issues, two qualities joined together, as it were, in a mutually superimposed manner. Anyonyā dhyāsa

is the name given to it. Thus, creation takes place. The creative activity together with the omniscience of Brahman becomes what we call the God who creates the world.

Anyonyā dhyāsa rūpo'sau anna lipta paṭo yathā, ghaṭṭi tenaikatā meti tadvat bhrāntyai katām gataḥ (193). As cloth is superimposed on the starch in the painted canvas and the starch is also superimposed on the cloth (this is anyonyā dhyāsa again here), the background of the cloth is superimposed on the stiffening starch and the starch is superimposed on the cloth so that we do not make a distinction between the starch and the cloth when we say, "Here is a canvas."

The canvas is Ishvara, the cloth is Brahman, and the stiffening is the creative activity. This is the illustration through an analogy of a painted picture in respect of God's creation.

Meghākāśa mahā kāśau viviceyete na pāmaraiḥ, tadvat brahme śayo raikyam paśyantyā pāta darśinaḥ (194). Just as to the naked eye the distinction between pure sky and the sky reflected through the clouds is not discernable, the distinction between Brahman and Ishvara is not easily discernable to the naked perception. When we see the canvas, we don't distinguish between the starch and the cloth. We see both and we call it 'canvas', a new name altogether. Neither do we call it starch, nor do we call it cloth; we have a new name – canvas – for that particular appearance. So is a new name given to that particular appearance of creativity of Brahman, and that name is Ishvara.

The canvas does not exist; what exists is cloth and starch. Yet the canvas does exist; without it, painting cannot take place. So too is Ishvara. He does not exist independent of Brahman, but some sort of independence is there, as we assume a sort of independence of the canvas to merely a cloth and starch. This is an illustration again of superimposition – Brahman-consciousness getting identified with creativity or will, thus becoming Ishvara-consciousness.

Discourse 32

CHAPTER 6: CHITRADIPA – LIGHT ON THE ANALOGY OF A PAINTED PICTURE, VERSES 187-209

Acetanānām hetuḥ syāt jāḍyāmsene śvara stathā, cidābhāsām śata steveṣa jīvānām kāraṇam bhavet (187). Ishvara is the cause, both of the universe and the individual *jivas*. By adopting the *tamasic* quality of *prakriti* as the material for the manifestation of the universe, He becomes the creator thereof. By reflecting Himself through the intellects of individuals, He becomes the cause of the individuals themselves.

The physical universe has no self-consciousness. That is why it is supposed to be caused by the *tamasic* aspect of *prakriti*, whereas *jivas* (individuals) have self-consciousness. That is due to the fact that Ishvara's consciousness is reflected through the intellect – that reflected consciousness being called *chidabhasa*. So He is the cause of both the universe externally and the *jiva* subjectively.

Tamaḥ pradhānaḥ kṣetrāṇām cit pradhānaś cidātmanām, paraḥ kāraṇatā meti bhāvanā jñāna karmabhiḥ (188). The Supreme Being, Brahman, becomes verily the cause of the objective universe rooted in the *tamasic* aspect of *prakriti*, *tama-pradhana*, and is also the cause of the individual *jivas* who are self-conscious on account of intelligence being reflected through them. They differ from one another on account of their feelings, by their ideation, by their action.

The attitudes, the ideas and the actions of people cause the difference of one person from another person. Though

the same consciousness is reflected everywhere – the same *prakṛiti*, in its *tamasic* aspect, becomes the cause of the physical universe – yet we will find the earth is not the same everywhere. Different kinds of material can be found in different parts of the earth and in this physical cosmos which is so vast. It is not that one uniform element is present everywhere.

Even in inanimate material, there is internal difference. Somewhere we will find gold ore, somewhere we will find iron, somewhere we will find something else. Somewhere we will find marble and somewhere some jewel or gem; and the earth too is of a different nature – somewhere arid, somewhere fertile, etc.

In the case of conscious individuals, they differ on account of their psychological attitudes. Their outlook in general varies. Though we all do see the same world with our eyes, our idea of the world differs from person to person. It is not a uniform notion that we have about things. Our understanding of the world also differs from one another; and our actions in respect of things in the world naturally is determined by our idea about things and our feelings for them.

Iti vārtika kāreṇa jaḍa cetana hetutā, paramātmāna evoktā neśvarasyeti cecchṛṇu (189). Vartikakara Sureshvara Acharya is one of the disciples of Acharya Sankara. He is one of the most voluminous of writers, and has written a huge commentary on the Brihadaranyaka Bhashya of Sankara and many other very important works such as Naishkarmya-siddhi, Pranava Vartika, Manasollasa,

etc. 'Vartika' is a huge commentary and the one who writes such a Vartika is endowed with the title 'Vartikakara'.

In one place in this Vartikakara, Sureshvara Acharya, the disciple of Sankara, appears to make out vaguely that Brahman is directly the cause of the universe. As he does not use the word 'Ishvara', some doubt may arise in the mind whether there is a principle called Ishvara creating the cosmos or whether it is Brahman itself – the Absolute itself – directly becoming the world, congealing itself into things. Is it so?

To this, the author of the Panchadasi says that we have to understand Sureshvara properly. It cannot be that Brahman directly becomes the cause. Causation cannot be applied to Brahman directly. Brahman is neither the cause of anything nor the effect of anything, because to attribute causality to Brahman would be to attribute some character to it, specifically in relation to that which is going to be manifested afterwards. In that case, Brahman would be tainted with the touch of modification.

So the Panchadasi's author, Vidyaranya Swami, says that when the great author Sureshvara apparently made mention of Brahman as the cause of the universe, it appears that there was already in his mind this *adhyasa*, or the internal superimposition of characters as regards to the causality of the world. That is to say, he had in his mind what we call Ishvara, though the word used by him is Brahman, because for all practical purposes, Ishvara and Brahman are not capable of differentiation – the reason being, there are certain qualities in Ishvara which are to be found in Brahman only. The universality of Ishvara is a

character of Brahman. Omniscience, omnipotence, omnipresence are also characteristics of Brahman only, and they are to be found in Ishvara.

We have to read between the lines of Sureshvara's statement when he says Brahman is the cause of the universe. The Upanishads also say that Brahman is the cause, but they qualify it subsequently by saying that He willed. The God we call Ishvara is nothing but this willed Brahman. Brahman, associated with the will, is Ishvara; and if we free Ishvara from willing, he becomes Brahman directly.

Anyonyā dhyāsa matrāpi jīva kūṣastha yoriva, īśvara brahmaṇoḥ siddhaṁ kṛtvā brūte sureśvaraḥ (190). So Sureshvaracharya has not directly made any such statement that Brahman is directly the cause. The idea behind his statement is that the will of Brahman is the cause. And this will it is that we designate as Ishvara.

Satyam̐ jñānam̐ anantaṁ yat brahma tasmāt samutthitāḥ, kham̐ vāyvagni jalor vyoṣaddhi annadehā iti śrutih̐ (191). This is the definition of Brahman in the Taittiriya Upanishad: Truth, Knowledge, Infinity is Brahman. From that Brahman, all the elements arose – space, air, fire, water, earth and all the plantations, all the vegetables, all foodstuff, by eating which organic beings come into life. This is what the Taittiriya Upanishad says, making it appear that Brahman is the direct cause. It does not use the word 'Ishvara' here.

Āpāta dṛṣṭitas tatra brahmaṇo bhāti hetutā, hetośca satyatā tasmāt anyonyā dhyāsa iṣyate (192). Here also we have to understand when we read the lines of the Taittiriya Upanishad, Brahman is actually defined in terms of Ishvara

only, though the word 'Ishvara' is not used. Whether the word is used or not, the definition, the characterisation, is of Ishvara only. Here again the mutual superimposition is to be applied. The causality of the universe requires a kind of thought, will, volition, or some such concentration on the part of the cause. Our point is that Ishvara is only a name that we give to the very same Brahman associated with that *tapas*, that concentration, that will or determination to create.

Anyonyā dhyāsa rūpo'sau anna lipta paṭo yathā, ghaṭṭi tenaikatā meti tadvat bhrāntyai katām gataḥ (193). As we create a confusion between the cloth and the starch and then call it a canvas, we confuse Brahman and the will thereof and call that mutually superimposed principle as Ishvara. Just as when we speak of canvas we do not clearly think of the distinction between the starch and the cloth, so also when we speak of Ishvara we do not make a distinction between Brahman and will. Either way, this is only a matter of putting things in proper style or language. The idea behind the statements of the Upanishads that Brahman is the direct cause or our statement here that Ishvara is the cause practically amounts to the same thing. The differences appear to be purely linguistic.

Meghākāśa mahā kāśau viviceyete na pāmaraiḥ, tadvat brahme śayo raikyam paśyantyā pāta darśinaḥ (194). Just as children cannot make a distinction between the clear sky and the sky that is reflected through a thin layer of clouds, and say it is sky though actually it is a reflected sky that they are seeing through the clouds, in the same way, spiritually illiterate persons not well qualified do not know the

distinction between Brahman and Ishvara. They identify one with the other. The difference is just simple.

Brahman reflected through this thin cloud-like layer of *shuddha sattva*, pure *sattva* of *prakriti*, is Ishvara. Otherwise, we would not be able to attribute creatorship to Brahman. If we attribute creatorship to Brahman, we would have to attribute all kinds of spatiality, temporality, etc., which are not to be associated with Brahman in any way. We say that God is all-pervading, Ishvara is all-pervading. The all-pervadingness is a definition that has meaning only if there is space. If there is no space, there is no question of all-pervading. Similarly, we say He is eternal. This also is a thought that is connected with time. All-powerful – He can do many things. The question of doing many things does not arise as He Himself is the All. This is how we have to distinguish between Ishvara and Brahman.

Upakramādibhir liṅgaiḥ tātparyasya vicāraṇāt, asaṅgaṁ brahma māyāvī srjatyēṣa maheśvaraḥ (195). The conclusion, therefore, of all this analysis is that by reading between the lines of all these great texts and authors like the Upanishads, Sureshvaracharya, etc., we have only one conclusion to draw: Brahman is totally unattached. It is not affected by the changes taking place in the world, whereas it is Ishvara that is directly responsible for the modifications of things in the world. They are two different things in principle.

Satyam jñānam anantaṁ ceta upakra myopa saṁhṛtam, yato vāco nivartanta itya saṅgatva nirṇayaḥ (196). The same Upanishad, Taittiriya, defines Brahman as truth, knowledge, infinity, commencing its statement from

this definition of Brahman as ‘satyaṁ jñānam anantaṁ’, ends with saying nobody can contact Brahman. Speech and mind return baffled when they contemplate Brahman or try to describe Brahman. Speech is baffled when it tries to describe Brahman; mind is baffled when it tries to think Brahman. So either way, right from the beginning to the end, the same Upanishad seems to be emphasising the unattached character of Brahman, which is not to be associated with the will to create.

Māyī sṛjati viśvaṁ san niruddhas tatra māyayā, anya ityaparā brute śruti stene śvaraḥ sṛjet (197). Ishvara is the cause. The eternal Absolute is not the cause because the Srutis, namely the Svetasvatara Upanishad, is referred to here: asmān māyī sṛjate viśvam etat tasmīns cānyo māyayā saṁniruddhaḥ (Svet 4.9). This statement is quoted here in brief by this verse. The Svetasvatara Upanishad says that the one who wields *maya* as His instrument or power creates this cosmos, and the other one who is controlled by *maya* is the *jiva* or the individual. This is, therefore, in confirmation of our definition of the creative principle as Ishvara – and not as Brahman, the Absolute.

Ānanda maya īśo’yaṁ bahu syāmi tyavai kṣata, hiraṇyagarbha rūpo’bhūt sūptiḥ svapno yathā bhavet (198). Ishvara willed, “Let Me become many.” This is how the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad, in its first chapter, describes the process of the creation of the universe. “May I become many” – this is the will of Ishvara. The moment He willed in this manner, He became Hiranyagarbha, or the cosmic subtle body, in the same way as sleep may manifest itself slowly into dream consciousness.

Krameṇa yuga padvaiṣā sṛṣṭir jñeyā yathā śruti, dvividha śruti sadbhāvāt dvividha svapna darśanāt (199). Did God create the world abruptly: “Let there be light and there was light” – like that? Or was it a gradual evolution? There are two theories or doctrines of creation. Most of these statements that we have heard from the scriptures are in terms of gradual manifestation. He willed, He became Ishvara, He became Hiranyagarbha, He became Virat, He created space, from space came air, from air came fire, from fire came water, from water came earth, from earth came all living beings. Now, is this not a gradual process of evolution of the universe? Or is it just one thought: “Let all things manifest themselves” and they are there in one minute?

The Upanishads are not very clear as to how creation took place. Most of the scriptures rely upon this gradual manifestation of things. Only very rarely we hear it said that God suddenly manifested Himself as all the variety. Now the author of the Panchadasi says there is no objection to both these doctrines.

We have dream, for instance. Sometimes we dream things gradually, stage by stage. Sometimes suddenly we find a mountain, rivers, elephants, people – everything in dream. In one stroke we will find the entire world of people and all things in dream. That is also one way of creation by the mind. But sometimes it is not so. We gradually begin to visualise indistinct things first, and distinct things afterwards, and details much afterwards.

In the same way as dream can be gradually a manifestation of things in a systematic manner or it may be

a sudden eruption, God's creation can also be a sudden will. Let there be this, and it is there. God can create like that; He has such a power. He does not have to depend upon gradual evolution, etc. He is not a scientist waiting for the gradual manifestation of effect from cause. He is much more than that. Yet His sudden will may take into consideration the necessity of the evolution of the effect from the cause, as in the case of dreams of people which can be suddenly manifesting themselves or gradually taking place from indistinct things to distinct things. This is some way of digression. It does not matter to us in what way God has created the world. The point is, there is a creation, and whether it is sudden or gradual is immaterial for practical purposes.

Sūtrātmā sūkṣma dehākhyāḥ sarva jīva ghanāt makāḥ, sarvāhaṁ māna dhāritvāt kriyā jñānādi śaktimān (200). From this supreme Ishvara who created by will, we say, by sudden will, this very same Ishvara is called Hiranyagarbha, Sutratma as we have already mentioned it in earlier verses, in whom all the *jivas* are strung together as beads or pearls in a garland, or cells, as it were, in an organism. Sutratma is the cosmic *prana*, same as Hiranyagarbha who is the cosmic subtle body in which we have brief outlines of the whole physical universe to be manifested; and He feels "I am": sarvāhaṁ māna dhāritvāt kriyā jñānādi śaktimān.

When Hiranyagarbha feels "I am", everything feels "I am" at once. All the atoms, all the sand particles, all the leaves, all the trees, all living beings, Gods and demons and human beings, everything suddenly begin to feel "I am". This I am-ness in me and in you and in everybody, even an

ant, is in fact the I am-ness of Ishvara – Hiranyagarbha’s I am-ness. He feels “I am”, and immediately everybody starts feeling “I am”. When He breathes, we breathe. When He manifests, we manifest ourselves. When He withdraws, we are withdrawn. He has the power to create the universe, modify it as it is necessary, and has a clear concept as to what kind of universe is to be manifested for a given purpose.

Pratyūṣe vā pradoṣe vā magno mande tamasyayam, loko bhāti yathā tadvad aspaṣṭam jaga dīkṣyate (201). In this condition of Hiranyagarbha, the world is indistinctly seen. In dust or early in the morning when there is very little light, we do not see things properly; we see objects indistinctly. In a similar manner, the forms of the cosmos are indistinctly visible as outlines, as it were, in the body of Hiranyagarbha. Aspaṣṭam jaga dīkṣyate: Indistinctly, not clearly, is the world seen in Hiranyagarbha.

Sarvato lāñchito maṣyā yathā syāt ghaṭṭitaḥ paṭaḥ, sūkṣmā kārai stathe śasya vapuḥ sarvatra lāñchitam (202). Hiranyagarbha becomes Virat, the visible multi-formed cosmos. As the stiffened cloth becomes canvas, on the canvas outlines are drawn and the outlines become a visible colored painting, in like manner, this subtle Hiranyagarbha manifests Himself as a solid, visible, concrete, universe. Animated by the same consciousness, this animating consciousness of the physical universe is called Virat.

Sasyam vā śākajātam vā sarvato’ñkuritam yathā, komalam tadvade vaiṣa pelavo jagadañ kuraḥ (203). Hiranyagarbha is very subtle, like a tendril or a tiny plant that is very tender, very soft to touch; such is the form of the universe. Like a soft tendril, Hiranyagarbha’s condition

is. When sunlight falls on things everything becomes clear, and such clarity is in the Virat-consciousness, as if strong sunlight is shed on objects.

Ātapā bhāta loko vā paṭo vā varṇa pūritaḥ, sasyaṁ vā phalitaṁ yadvat tathā spaṣṭa vapur virāṭ (204). When plants become trees and start yielding fruits, they become completely mature. The universe, completely mature in itself, in all its forms, in all its fructifications, is Virat-consciousness. As bright sunlight is, as colored painting is, as a plant becomes a tree and is there with all its fruits, so is this majestic manifestation of Virat in the form of this universe that we behold with our own eyes. Actually, when we open our eyes and see, we are seeing Virat only. Wrongly we think it is a world outside.

Viśvarūpā dhṛyā eṣa uktaḥ sūkte'pi pauraṣe, dhātrādi stamba paryantān etasyā vayavān viduḥ (205). In the Visvarupadhyaya of the Veda, in the Purusha Sukta of the Veda, the glory of the Virat has been described as constituting everything right from the creative Brahma up to the blade of grass. All things are studded in that Virat-svarupa. This is described for us in the eleventh chapter of the Bhagavad Gita in a more poetic grandiose manner. Brahma, Rudra, all the Gods, all the denizens, even hell and heaven, and even little grass – everything we will find there in the body of Virat: dhātrādi stamba paryantān etasyā vayavān viduḥ.

Now Ishvara, Hiranyagarbha and Virat have been described. All things, whatever is in this world, is indistinguishable, finally, from the body of Ishvara,

Hiranyagarbha or Virat. All is God: sarvam khalvidam brahma. This is the truth that we arrive at by this analysis.

Īśa sutra virāḍ vedhaḥ viṣṇu rudendra vahnayaḥ, vighna bhairava mairāla mārikā yakṣa rākṣasāḥ (206). Vipra kṣatriya viṭ śūdrā gavāśva mṛga pakṣiṇaḥ, aśvattha vaṭ cūtādyā yava vrīhi tṛṇādayaḥ (207). Jala pāṣaṇa mṛt kāṣṭha vāsyā kuddā lakā dayaḥ, īśvaraḥ sarva evaite pūjitāḥ phala dāyinaḥ (208). We may worship God as Ishvara or Hiranyagarbha or Virat, or Brahma the Creator, or Vishnu or Siva, Rudra, or as fire, *agni*, or as Vighneshvara or Bhairava, or some demigods like Mairala, Marika, etc., or other demigods like Yakshas and Rakshasas, as Brahmana, Kshatriya, Vaishya, Sudras, as cows, as horses, as deer, as birds, as trees like the asvattha, pipal, banyan or mango tree, or grains, the harvest of grains like paddy or rice, or grass or stone or water or wood, or chisel or axe or shovel – anything is God, and provided we have the faith that this is God, they will start speaking to us. A little stone will start speaking to us. Why should it not, because it is one little piece of the existence of this Supreme Ishvara-consciousness only.

Hiranyagarbha, Ishvara, Virat are present in all these things. The Puranas tell us that from a brick wall, Narasimha came out. Such a mighty being, coming out roaring, from brick! Can we imagine? God exists in the stone, so why not in other things? Īśvaraḥ sarva evaite: All these things that we have listed here, right from the top to the bottom, excluding nothing whatsoever, they are God only, Ishvara only. And if we really worship them with feeling and our devotion is sincere, they may respond to our devotion, and our expected fruit will follow.

Yathā yatho pāsate taṁ phala mīyu stathā tathā, phalot karṣāpa karṣau tu pūjya pūjānu sārataḥ (209). As our feeling is, so is the response from God. In what manner we adore God, in that manner only He will respond to us. It depends upon our mind, finally. The quickness of the response from God or the slowness thereof, the nature of the fruit that will be granted to us by God and various other factors in respect of the grace that may come from God, all depend upon our attitude towards God – what we feel about a thing – and that will be paid back to us in a similar manner. Thus, there is no place in this world, no location, no point in space, where God cannot be worshipped, and where our prayers will not be answered.

Discourse 33

CHAPTER 6: CHITRADIPA – LIGHT ON THE ANALOGY OF A PAINTED PICTURE, VERSES 209-230

Yathā yatho pāsate taṁ phala mīyu stathā tathā, phalot karṣāpa karṣau tu pūjya pūjānu sārataḥ (209). As is our attitude towards Ishvara, so is the way in which we will have response from Him. The quickness or the slowness of the response from God depends upon the intensity of the feeling of devotion to God. If it is a very intense feeling, the response is very quick. If the feeling is comparatively mild, the response will also be mild and it will take a longer period of time to act.

But muktistu brahma tattvasya jñānādeva na cānyathā, svapnabodhaṁ vinā naiva svasvapno hīyate yathā (210). We may worship any god and we may receive the fruits of our devotion in some way, but liberation is a different matter altogether. It is not a worship; it is not an attainment of any particular thing. It is not the fruit of our action. It is Being as such. To enter into Pure Being is moksha, or liberation. But this is not easy, because the nature of Pure Being excludes all that is outside or external. Neither myself, nor yourself, nor the world, nor anything this kind will be there – because the perception of duality, multiplicity and externality contravene the nature of Pure Being.

All perception that is natural to us, what we consider as normal, is unnatural to the state of Pure Being. The best of our actions cannot touch it. All our deeds pale into insignificance in its abundance, in its radiance, in its purity. Our very existence is an obstacle to the realisation of that

Pure Being. Let alone our desire for objects, our desire to even exist as this person – to continue in this personality, this love for our own self – is also an obstacle. Perhaps, it is the greatest obstacle.

We may be free, to some extent, from desire for the world of objects outside, but our desire to live as a person does not go with the other desires. So as long as this personal desire to maintain itself continues, it will act as a great hindrance in the entry of consciousness to Pure Being. Until this state is achieved, moksha is impossible.

Unless we wake up into the consciousness of our own person, we will have no freedom from the turmoil of dream perception. To rise from the difficulties we face in the dream world, we do not have to perform any action there. Many sorrows may be there confronting us in the dream world. How will we get out of them? Any effort will not help us. Any work, any effort, any deed, anything in any direction done in the dream world would be a part of the dream world itself. It cannot contradict the dream world.

So anything that we do in this world with the means available in this world would be a worldly action only and it cannot help us in rising above the world. A *modus operandi* which is non-earthly, non-externalised, non-personal and non-individual has to be employed. Here is the difficulty in realising the Absolute. Ordinarily it is not possible because there are no means of approach to it and all our means are worldly, including this body.

Advitiya brahma tattve svapno'yam akhilaṃ jagat, īśa jīvādi rūpeṇa cetanā cetanāt makam (211). This whole world is something like a dream in the light of the Absolute.

And to rise from this world-consciousness to the Absolute-consciousness or Brahman-consciousness would be something like waking from dream. Nothing that we do in the dream world will be a help to us in the act of waking. An internal modification of consciousness itself is the means, not any external object. Any amount of worship in the dream world will be, after all, a dream worship. It will not be real. And, therefore, is this world not a help to us in the realisation of the supreme Brahman, because to that Brahman, this world is like a dream; and all that we do in this world is a dream activity. It cannot cut ice with that eternal state.

The distinction that we draw between Ishvara and *jiva*, a distinction between animate and inanimate beings, gets wiped out in one moment in the act of waking from dream. All the good things and bad things, all the delectable things, all the painful things, even birth and death in the dream experience, are washed out in one minute because of our having woken up from dream. There is nothing like awakening. All other things come afterwards; they are secondary. The act of awakening from world-consciousness to God-consciousness is the principle spiritual practice. It does not consist in employing any means of the world. The world cannot help us in getting out of the world. How would we expect the world to be of any assistance to us in rising above the world – because the means would be part of that which we want to overcome. Hence, this world, including this very body itself, is no more a help; it is an obstacle.

Ānandamaya vijñāna mayā vīśvara jīvakau, māyayā kalpitā vetau tābhyām sarvaṁ prakalpitaṁ (212). The causal and the intellectual sheaths, cosmically as well as individually, are the causes of the appearance of such principles and beings as Ishvara, Hiranyagarbha and Virat, or internally as *jīva*, consisting of the consciousness of *prajna*, *taijasa* and *visva*. They are created by *maya* only. Distinctions do not obtain finally, as they do not obtain in the dream world in comparison with the waking one.

Īkṣaṇādi praveśāntā sṛṣṭi rīśena kalpitā, jāgradādi vimokṣāntaḥ saṁsāro jīva kalpitaḥ (213). Ishvara willed to become many. This is said to be the beginning of creation. Then there is the manifestation of this will in the form of Hiranyagarbha, Virat. Then there is space-time consciousness. Then there are the *tanmatras* – *śabda*, *sparsa*, *rupa*, *rasa*, *gandha*. Then there are the five elements – earth, water, fire, air, ether. Then the individuals manifest themselves.

From the time Ishvara willed to create up to His entry into the individuals who are off-shoots of this final act of creation – from the will of Ishvara down to the entry of Ishvara to the lowest possible limits of individuality – we can say it is God’s creation. None of these are created by the *jīva*, or the individual. Neither Ishvara is our creation, nor Hiranyagarbha nor Virat, nor space, nor time, nor *tanmatras*, nor the physical world of the five elements, nor is our own body, which we cannot manufacture according to our will. Up to this level, it is God’s creation.

From the time of the will up to the entry into particulars, God’s creation is complete. But individuals, *jīva*

creation, commences afterwards. Suddenly there is an externalised waking consciousness emanating from the created individual. The created individual, as far as it forms part of the Virat consciousness, would not be a bondage. As long as it is part of the Universal existence, there is no bondage consciousness. But when it asserts itself, each one begins to feel “I am this and you are that.” Immediately there is a consciousness different from Universal consciousness, and that is called waking consciousness.

Waking consciousness is caused by the projection of the internal Atman through the intellect of the individual and working through the sense organs of the individual personality. Being exhausted by this activity of the individual personality through the sense organs, the individual falls into dream and sleeping states, and after the sleep is over, it again wakes up. Through great effort, liberation is attained.

Right from the waking consciousness down to dream and sleeping and then the final act of liberation, are all working of the *jiva* only. There is neither bondage nor liberation for God Himself. The consciousness of having entered into bondage and the necessity to liberate oneself – all these come within the area of individual effort. Thus, in a single verse the distinction between God’s creation and individual creation has been described.

Advitīyaṁ brahma tattvam asaṅgaṁ tanna jānate,
jiveśayor māyikayor vṛthaiva kalahaṁ yayuḥ (214). Not knowing that non-dual existence, which is the truth of Brahman, is unattached and detached from all things in every way, people quarrel over what kind of God it is, who

God is, what kind of Ishvara it is that created the world, who is Ishvara, what is *jiva*. These questions and answers thereon are all unnecessary difficulties, problems created by logistic minds that are not able to probe into the real truth of Brahman that is Universally unattached. Once the consciousness identifies itself with Universal existence, questions like who is God, who is Ishvara, who is *jiva* will not arise. These questions themselves are part of the ignorance of the true nature of Brahman.

Jñātvā sadā tattva niṣṭhān anumodā mahe vayam, anuśocāma evā nyān na bhrāntair vivadāmahe (215). It is a great joy to come in contact with persons who have this knowledge of Brahman. Others who are apparently not fortunate enough to have attained this state are really objects of mercy and pity. But there is a third category, who do not even deserve pity; they are totally ignorant people who live like animals, and we shall not have any dealings with them.

Tr̥ṇārcakādi yogāntā īśvare bhrānti māśritāḥ, lokāyatādi sāṅkhyāntā jive vibhrānti māśritāḥ (216). There is confusion in the mind of everyone in regard to the nature of Ishvara when they start worshipping varieties of things as God. Stone is worshipped, grass is worshipped, trees are worshipped, animals are worshipped, human beings are worshipped, celestials are worshipped. Varieties of formations conceptualised by the human mind as superior to itself are taken as gods. All these varieties of conceptualisations of God arise on account of non-awareness of the true nature of God.

People who are accustomed to deny the other world, like the atheists, materialists, agnostics, etc., up to the Nyaya, Vaisesika, Samkhya, Mimamsa, etc., may be said to be confused in the nature of the individual. Some are confused by the definition of *jiva*-hood; some are confused by the definition of Ishvara-hood. The complete concept, free from every defect, is difficult to have as long as concepts arise from the intellect, which is a limited, finite, faculty.

Advitīya brahma tattvaṁ na jānanti yadā tadā, bhrāntā evākhilā steṣāṁ kva muktiḥ kveha vā sukyam (217). Where is the question of *mukti*? Where is moksha, as long as we go on quibbling, arguing, and wander about from place to place in search of what we call a god for our freedom? With stability of the mind, a settled state of emotion and feeling, and a conviction that Ishvara can be realised at any spot in this world, there is no desire to move about. When this state of affairs is reached, when the mind is completely controlled in all its anguishes, desires and pursuits, it realises the non-dual Brahman just at the very spot where it is sitting. We need not move one inch from this place. Else, there will be confusion, confounded-ness, and *mukti* or moksha will be far, far away.

We may say these categories of philosophy are not actually falsehoods. They are degrees of reality. One thought is a lesser reality than the other one, which is the higher. But this argument also does not hold water much.

Uttamā dhama bhāva ścet teṣāṁ syādastu tena kim, svapnastha rājya bhikṣābhyāṁ na buddhaḥ spr̥śyate khalu (218). The degrees of reality is also only a kind of confusion

of thought. For instance, in dream there is a degree of reality between a beggar and a king; a king is certainly superior to a beggar. Inasmuch as either of them is only mind-stuff, dream-stuff, we will find that there is no distinction between a beggar and a king – though they may appear as beggar in one case and king in another case – because both are dream-stuff. There is no difference between them.

Therefore, the degrees of reality are also not a great consolation for us, though it is better to be a Badshah in dream than a beggar in dream. It is a good idea no doubt, but when we wake up the Badshah also goes, along with the beggar. He will not be there for a long time just because he is a Badshah or an emperor. So the idea of degrees of reality goes together with the non-reality of dream world.

Tasmāt mumukṣu bhirnaiva matir-jīveśa vādayoḥ, kāryā kintu brahma tattvaṃ vicāryaṃ budhyatāṃ cat tat (219). Too much haranguing, questioning and running about in trying to know what is this, what is that, is of no utility finally. “I cannot understand what is God, I cannot understand what I am, I cannot understand what is spiritual practice.” If we go on questioning, and go on receiving umpteen answers, finally we will reach no place. We have to stick to one particular ideal, and that ideal has to become a conviction. Afterwards there should be no doubt as to the veracity of that conviction that has been achieved.

It does not matter what is our concept of God. We should not compare our concept with another’s concept. It has already been mentioned that any concept is very good.

All are equally good or equally bad and, therefore, comparison is not of much utility here. So we should stick to any concept. Whatever notion we have about ourselves, that is the stand on which we have to take the beginning of practice.

We know where we stand, what are our problems, what are our difficulties. That stand is the real stand for us, and we should not compare ourselves with another person or compare our concept of God with another's concept. Our concept of liberation is good enough for us, and through that we can attain moksha. After all, spiritual progress is an individual affair; each one has to tread one's own path, and there is no question of comparison. No two persons will go to moksha together. Therefore, we should stick to one reality and utilise our time profitably in meditation on Brahman as such, without too much of arguments.

Pūrva pakṣa tayā tau cet tattva niścaya hetu tām, prāpnuto'stu nimajjasva tayor naitā vatā'vaśaḥ (220). These tentative definitions of God and *jiva* may look like steps leading to higher concepts and, therefore, we may be under the impression that they are of some use. We may consider them as of some utility to us, provided they enable us to rise from the lower concept to the higher concept. But if we get sunk in that lower concept itself, then that concept is not going to liberate us. The degrees of reality are also good enough, provided we consider them as steps in the ladder of higher evolution. If the evolutionary process is not progressing onward or upward, our concept of this deity, or the *prima facie* utility of the different concepts of God, would not help us much. The test of spiritual progress is the

freedom that one feels inside oneself and the betterment that one feels in body and mind.

Asannga cid vibhur jīvaḥ sāṅkhokta stādṛgīśvaraḥ, yogoktas tatvamor arthau śuddhau tāviti cet śṛṇu (221). The Samkhya says that consciousness is *purusha*; *purusha* is consciousness, and it is unattached. It is universal. Universal is *purusha* consciousness and it is unattached, says the Samkhya philosophy, and our definition of Ishvara appears to be practically of the same nature – universal, and consciousness.

Na tattvamo rubhā varthau asmat siddhāntatām gatau, advaita bodhanā yaiva sā kakṣā kācidi syate (222). There is a difference between our definition of Ishvara here and the apparent similarity between the notion of Ishvara and the *purusha* of the Samkhya philosophy. God is only one; Ishvara cannot be two. But the Samkhya *purushas* are many in number. This is the difference between the Vedanta concept of God and the Samkhya concept of *purusha*. Both are universal, both are unattached – perfectly true. But one is absolutely alone; the other is one among the many. Therefore, the Samkhya *purusha* cannot be identified with the Brahman or the Ishvara of the Vedanta.

Anādi māyayā bhrāntā jiveśau suvilakṣaṇau, manyante tad vyudāsāya kevalam śodhanam tayoh (223). All this study is intended to cleanse our mind of erroneous notions regarding the aim of life, the ultimate goal that we have to reach – that is, the relationship between *tat* and *tvam*, the relation between us and the universe. That relation obtaining between us and God has to be clarified first. And the clarification should not lead finally to a further

confusion as to the nature of ourselves or Ishvara as we have the difficulties in Samkhya, Nyaya, Vaishesika, etc. What should be the conclusion? Our study should lead us to the conclusion of the unitariness of consciousness and the aloneness of it. One alone, without a second.

Ata evātra dṛṣṭāntaḥ yogaḥ prāk samyagīritaḥ, ghaṭākāśa mahākāśa jalākāśābhra khātmakaḥ (224). Again and again the illustration of the relation between *jiva* and Ishvara is brought out here by the analogy mentioned for the clarification of the concept. We may forget it, so it has to be repeated again and again.

The innermost Atman in us, called Kutastha, is comparable to the space in a pot appearing to be limited to the walls of the pot. That is the Pure Consciousness, the Kutastha in us. The vast space outside, unlimited in any manner, is Brahman. What is the difference between our deepest consciousness and Brahman? Nothing; the difference is notional. The same space that is inside the pot is also outside. The largeness of space does not in any way get diminished by its apparent location inside a pot. The space is not inside the pot. It is only our imagination. If the pot walls are broken, nothing happens to the space which was apparently inside. It merges with the universal ether.

If this individual consciousness caused by the sheaths is to be transcended by the breaking through all the sheaths, the pot of this body will break and the space-consciousness, which is the Kutastha inside us, will merge with Universal consciousness. That is the difference between Kutastha and Brahman, the difference between pot ether and universal ether.

But suppose there is a pot filled with water and space is reflected through that water; that is *jīva*. It is not pure ether, but reflected ether – not Kutastha consciousness pure and simple by itself, but the same consciousness reflected through the intellect which acts as a water medium, as it were, in this pot of the body. And Ishvara is the universal reflection of the same space through the sheet of clouds. So we have now some understanding as to what difference there is among these principles of Brahman, Kutastha, Ishvara and *jīva*.

Jalābhro pādhyā dhīne te jalākāśābhra khe tayoh, ādhārau tu ghaṭākāśa mahākāśau sunirmalau (225). Though there is an apparent reflection of space in the pot filled with water and through the clouds in the sky, really the sky is not capable of reflection like that, nor is the space in the pot reflected through the water. The space remains space; the clouds do not in any way contaminate the universal space. The water in the pot also does not in any way affect the space there. Space cannot be affected by any kind of movement or contamination of things in space. Space is unattached.

That ether in the pot is the source, the origin, of even the reflection thereof through the water. Similarly, the vast ether is the source of even the reflection of the very same thing through the clouds in the sky. There are, therefore, really no permanent reflections. They depend upon the cloud on the one hand and the water on the other hand. If the media are lifted up, Ishvara and *jīva* merge into the unity of Kutastha and Brahman. The One alone remains at once.

Evamānanda vijñāna mayau māyādhiyor vaśau, tada dhiṣṭhāna kūṣastha brahmaṇī tu sunirmale (226). In the same way, this consciousness in us which is inside the *anandamaya kosha* and is reflected through the intellectual sheath – both these aspects of our consciousness are based finally on the ultimate substratum of Kutastha consciousness and Brahman consciousness.

Etat kakṣopa yogena sāṅkhya yoga matau yadi, deho'nna maya kakṣatvāt ātmatvenā bhyu peyatām (227). If you begin to feel that this definition of the distinction between Ishvara and *jīva* or Brahman and Kutastha is similar to the definition of the same through Samkhya, we say it is not so. There is a great difference because the Samkhya sticks to its original concept of the multiplicity of individuals, and multiplicity can be conceived only in terms of body consciousness, finite consciousness, like this physical body-consciousness. Inasmuch as we are likely to enter into greater and greater muddles by accepting the finitude and the divisibility of consciousness according to Samkhya, we cannot compare this conclusion of ours drawn through these analogies to anything that Samkhya has said. Otherwise, we will enter into body-consciousness afterwards.

Ātma bhedo jagat satyam īśo'nya iti cet trayam, tyajyate tasitadā sāṅkhya yoga vedānta sammatih (228). In order for Samkhya, Yoga and Vedanta to shake hands and have a single roundtable conference, something has to be done. Samkhya should get over the idea that the *purushas* are many in number, and it should also get over the idea that the world is an external reality; and the Yoga of

Patanjali should get over the idea that Ishvara is simply transcendently sitting somewhere beyond the created world. If these three notions – the multiplicity of *purushas*, the reality of an externalised world, and a transcendent Ishvara – were abandoned by Samkhya and Yoga, Samkhya, Yoga and Vedanta would merge into a single doctrine. There would be no difference among them. There would be no Samkhya, no Yoga, no Vedanta. There would be one unitary philosophy, a single religion of the world, provided these finitising notions are got over. The transcendental, extra-cosmic character of Ishvara, the externality of the world of perception, and the multiplicity of individuals – these three are the obstacles before us to realise the Ultimate Being.

Jīvo'saṅgatva mātrena kṛtārtha iti cet tadā, srak candanādi nityatva mātrenāpi kṛtārthatā (229). Yathā sragādi nityatvaṁ duḥ saṁpādyam tathātmanaḥ, asaṅgatvaṁ na saṁbhāvyaṁ jīvator jagadīśayoḥ (230). The Samkhya doctrine has come forward and said, “What does it matter if the *purusha* is multiple, provided it is unattached? Unattached is *purusha*; the detached character of *purusha* itself is sufficient to bring it liberation. If there are many, in what way is the harm?”

This is like arguing that the ordinary material objects in the world, such as sandalwood, flower garland, etc., are manifold in number, and it does not matter if they are manifold provided the one is different from the other. This argument will not hold good because the unattached character of the *purusha* is not possible as long as there is a world outside and there is a God above. The above-ness of

God will control the *purusha* to such an extent that there would be no detachment of the *purusha*. It will be completely controlled by the ordinances of Ishvara on the one hand, and on the other hand, the externality of the world will impinge upon it so vehemently that there cannot be detachment.

Therefore, there is no use merely saying detachment is good enough. Universality is important, not merely detachment, because as long as there is finitude, detachment is not possible; and the *purusha* of the Samkhya is finite. Merely because we say that they are universal, it does not amount to anything because universal beings cannot be multiple in number. Their multiplicity defies their universality. As long as the *jiva* is there, subject to the externality of the world and the controlling power of God or Ishvara above, there would be no freedom for anyone. So subjection to God and subjection to the world outside follow as a concomitant feature of the acceptance of the Samkhya doctrine of the reality of the world and the Yoga doctrine of the transcendental nature of an Ishvara unconnected with the world.

Even if liberation is attained according to the Samkhya, the *purusha* will get into bondage again as long as *prakriti* is there, because *prakriti* is eternal, so what good is this liberation? What is liberation according to the Samkhya? It is the detachment consciousness of *purusha* from *prakriti*. What is the use of this detachment consciousness if it cannot be omniscient?

It is said that *purusha* is omniscient because it is universal. How could it be omniscient when *prakriti* is

contending in front of it? If the *prakriti* exists as an eternal substance, as real as the *purusha* consciousness itself, there can be no universal consciousness. And therefore, the *prakriti* which is eternally there, as eternal as the *purusha*, will contend with the *purusha* eternally, and the bondage of the *purusha* will also continue. There will be no salvation for the *purusha* as long as *prakriti* exists.

Thus, the doctrine of the eternity of *prakriti* and the eternity of *purusha* simultaneously cancel each other, and the doctrine of the Samkhya falls because it cannot take us to the true concept of liberation.

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CHAPTER 6: CHITRADIPA – LIGHT ON THE ANALOGY OF A PAINTED PICTURE, VERSES 231-248

Avaśayaṁ prakṛtiḥ saṅgaṁ pure vāpādayet tathā, niyaccha tyeta mīśo'pi ko'sya mokṣas tathā sati (231). The doctrine of the Samkhya is taken up for consideration once again, here especially in regard to its concept of moksha or liberation. The Samkhya doctrine holds that bondage is the union of *purusha* with *prakriti* – consciousness and matter; and freedom or moksha, liberation, is the separation of consciousness from matter – the withdrawal of the *purusha* consciousness from *prakriti*. Here the Panchadasi takes up this issue as to whether this is a feasible definition of moksha, because freedom is either complete or it is worth nothing. A little freedom is more annoying than having no freedom at all.

Complete freedom is called moksha, liberation. How would we expect the *purusha* consciousness to be absolutely free and be in a state of liberation when *prakriti* is there, contending with its own existence? The infinite *prakriti* will stand opposed to the infinite *purusha* always. Secondly, omniscience would be impossible unless the *purusha* consciousness knows *prakriti* also. If *prakriti* is something that the consciousness of *purusha* does not know, there would be no omniscience because there would be something which the *purusha* does not know. But if *purusha* knows *prakriti*, it will come in contact with *prakriti* once again as it did earlier, so bondage would be there – no freedom.

Thus, the very definition of moksha according to the Samkhya is defective because *prakriti* will certainly restrain the *purusha* as it did earlier and cause it to have contact with *prakriti* in order that it may be an object of its awareness. If *prakriti* is known, it causes bondage. If it is not known, *purusha* is not omniscient. So either way, there is a problem.

And Ishvara, who is considered by the Yoga doctrine as something transcendent, extra-cosmic, will also control the *purusha* as He was controlling it earlier, because unrelated objects are the sources of fear. If there is some relation, we can adjust ourselves harmoniously in terms of that relation. If there is no relation whatsoever, it is difficult to make out what sense is there between one thing and another thing. What kind of moksha is this, moksha then? Ko'sya mokṣas tathā sati.

Aviveka kṛtaḥ saṅgaḥ niyama śceti cettadā, balādā patito māyā vādaḥ sāṅkhyasya durmateḥ (232). The Samkhya doctrine may retort by saying that the contact of *purusha* with *prakriti* a second time is not permissible because it has already had an experience of the suffering caused by such a contact; and actually, the contact itself is inexplicable, since two dissimilar entities cannot come in contact with each other. And a contact so-called, between *purusha* and *prakriti*, is only a matter of non-discrimination. If this is accepted by the Samkhyas, it is actually landing itself on the *maya* doctrine of the Vedanta philosophy. Somehow or other, the Universal Brahman cannot be totally avoided from any concept of philosophical doctrine, and Samkhya is refuted here hereby.

Bandha mokṣa vyavasthārthaṁ ātma nānātva miṣyatām, iti cenna yato māyā vayavasthā payiturṁ kṣamā (233). For the sake of the freedom that one has to attain in order to reach moksha, the distinction between Atman and *anatman* has to be entered into, because the multiplicity of the *purushas* as adumbrated by the Samkhya stands as a great obstacle in knowing the true difference between *purusha* and *prakriti*, consciousness and matter.

The distinction between the knower and the known is not very clear when consciousness comes in contact with matter. As the illustration of the Samkhya goes, when a red flower is brought very near in juxtaposition with a clear crystal, the crystal assumes the color of the flower; it becomes red in its nature. The whole crystal becomes red. Now, crystal can never become red, inasmuch as the redness that is perceived is only due to an apparent contact of the color of the flower brought near it – apparent contact. Really the flower has not entered into the crystal.

In a similar manner, it is to be understood how bondage has taken place. Consciousness cannot enter the object because of the dissimilar characters between the two. The object is that which is not consciousness. If the object also is regarded as a face of consciousness, that should not be regarded as an object any more. The definition of consciousness is non-objectivity and, therefore, when we perceive an object and get attached to it, we should not be under the impression that we are beholding consciousness itself. Consciousness differentiates itself from everything that is external to it, and the objects are nothing but the externality of consciousness.

Durghaṭam̐ ghaṭayāmīti viruddham̐ kim na paśyasi, vāstavau bandha mokṣau tu śrutir na sahate tarām (234). This is again a refutation of the Samkhya doctrine. An impossible thing cannot be made possible. The coming in contact of *purusha* with *prakriti* is actually an impossible occurrence – impossible because of the two being totally different in nature, one being pure subjective awareness and the other being pure objective unconsciousness. It is a contradiction. Don't you realise that in your attempt to make feasible what is otherwise impossible, you are bringing about a contradiction? Viruddham̐ kim na paśyasi.

Vāstavau bandha mokṣau. Actually speaking, even bondage and liberation are not to be regarded as spatio-temporal occurrences. Bondage is not a spatial or a temporal reality. It is something above space and time. That is why the bound soul also becomes conscious of there being such a thing called space and time. Even moksha is not something that is achieved in the future.

Moksha is liberation, attainment of eternity – timelessness in eternity. As eternity cannot be a matter of the future as eternity has no past, present and future, the attainment of eternity, which is really moksha or liberation, cannot be a matter of tomorrow. It is an eternity just now at this very moment – here and now. This has been confirmed by certain scriptures like the Karikas or the commentary written by Gaudapada Acharya on the Mandukya Upanishad, where he has quoted a very important verse.

Na nirodho na cotpattir na baddho na ca sādhaḥ, na mumukṣur na vai muktaḥ ityeṣā paramārthatā (235). The Ultimate Reality being Brahman, all processes, whatever

they be, that applicable to this world of experience cannot be applied to Brahman. There is no dissolution of the cosmos ultimately, nor is there a creation of the universe, in the same way as a rope which is indistinctly seen in twilight looks like a snake, but really it has not become a snake. The snake is not created by the rope; there is no creation of the snake at any time, though it appears in the rope. So appearance of something can be possible, even if it is not really there. Also, there is no withdrawal of the snake into the rope. That never took place; therefore, withdrawal also is out of point.

So is the nature of this world. It is not an actual manifestation in concrete substantial form. It is an appearance, as subtle forces which constitute this cosmos in a large continuum of spacelessness and timelessness may look like objects like the five elements – earth, water, fire, air, ether – little atomic particles which are inwardly forces and are continuous in their nature. Therefore, defying even the concept of space and time they become the causes of solid spatio-temporal objects like the five elements of earth, water, fire, air and ether. Basically, originally, neither is there creation nor withdrawal of the universe.

Therefore, nobody can be considered as ultimately bound and ultimately attempting for freedom from bondage. Nobody aspires for moksha and nobody is attaining moksha if it is understood in a spatio-temporal sense, because moksha is not a movement in space. It is also not an occurrence in time. So when the thing is neither in space nor in time, where is it then? It cannot be regarded as

anything comparable to that in the world or conceivable to our mind.

Originally, when we wake up from the state of dream, for instance, we will find the objects that we saw in dream were never created and were never withdrawn. The experiences caused in dream did not actually take place, though they appear to be taking place very, very, solidly. A very solid and real experience may not actually be there at all. This is what is happening in creation, finally. God alone is, and outside Him nothing can be.

Māyākhyāyāḥ kāma dhenor vatsau jiveśvarāvubhau, yathecchaṁ pibatāṁ divaitaṁ tattvaṁ tvadvaita meva hi (236). If *maya* can be regarded as a cow, Ishvara and *jiva* are the products, the two babies born to this *maya shakti*. Because of the fact Ishvara is a reflection of Brahman through the *sattva guna* of *prakriti*, and *jiva* is the very same Brahman reflected through the *rajas* and *tamas* qualities of *prakriti*, *prakriti* is *maya* from the Vedantic point of view.

Hence, both the Ishvara concept and the *jiva* concept are possible only when there is a reflection of Brahman consciousness through the qualities of *prakriti*. That is why it is said that *prakriti*, which is *maya*, is the mother, as it were, of these two babies that were born to it, Ishvara and *jiva*.

Yathecchaṁ pibatāṁ divaitaṁ tattvaṁ tvadvaita meva:
Let these children, these calves born to this cow, drink of the milk of duality as much as they can. Yet non-duality reigns supreme. The very concept of duality implies a

precedence of a consciousness that itself is not dual, but non-dual.

Kūṭastha brahmaṇor bhedaḥ nāma mātrāt rte na hi, ghaṭākāśa mahākāśau viyujyete nahi kvacit (237). We have already mentioned earlier that the Kutastha consciousness, or the deepest Atman in us, and the supreme Brahman are not separable in any way whatsoever, as the pot ether cannot be separated from the large ether.

Moksha will be the merging of the pot ether in the Universal ether. But the pot ether never exists and, therefore, neither can its creation be regarded as real, nor can its merger be regarded as an event that is taking place. In the same way as the creation of a pot ether or the merger of it in the Universal ether cannot be regarded as events taking place, so is the nature of this world coming from Brahman or the return of this world to Brahman. They appear to be going on as events in space and time, but really no such event takes place – because if events take place, God’s unitary existence would be foiled.

Yada dvaitam śrutam sṛṣṭeḥ prāk tadevādyā copari, muktā vapi vṛthā māyā bhrāmayatyā khilān janān (238). That unitary Being – Absolute Brahman, which was there prior to the apparent creation – is even now in the same condition. After the creation, Brahman has not become something else. It is existing in the same eternal state even after the apparent creation of the world as it was prior to the act of creation. Even in the state of moksha it will remain the same eternity that it was.

Delusion, *maya*, somehow or other confuses people and makes them run about hither and thither in search of

things, as if they are the causes of bondage or they are the sources of their liberation. Nothing of the kind is finally true, because we have emphasised again and again that the existence of Brahman does not permit the existence of any event taking place outside it. Nor can any event take place within it. Therefore, no event takes place anywhere.

This is something like the modern theory of relativity coming to the staggering conclusion that events do not take place in space or time. If they do not take place in space or time, where on earth are they taking place? They do not take place – a very great consoling truth for us.

Ye vadantī thāmetē'pi bhrāmyante vidyayātra kim, na yathā pūrva metēṣām atra bhrāntera darśanāt (239). Even after we hear all these discourses on the great truth of Brahman, we will find that we are still in the same bondage of suffering. But, the author says there is a difference. There is a difference between us – people who have listened to this for a long time and people who have never heard of it at all, even once. Though we also have hunger, thirst, suffering, sorrow, anxiety and many other difficulties as other people have, there is some strength in us which will stand us in good stead on account of the knowledge that has been impregnated into our mind and the deep contemplation that we have practiced on this truth for a long time, which will be of great utility to us even in the worst of suffering.

Thus, it does not mean that merely because there is an apparent suffering caused by body consciousness, the knowledge that we have acquired is useless. It will stand us in good stead one day or the other because knowledge is different from ignorance, and one who knows nothing

about things is certainly not the same as one who knows these things – notwithstanding the fact that, physically speaking, they look alike.

Aihikā muṣmikaḥ sarvaḥ saṃsāro vāstavas tataḥ, na bhāti nāsti cādvaitam itya jñāni viniścayaḥ (240). Ignorant people do not even know that there is a world other than this world. And even if they are told there is something like that, they believe in the reality of an earthly existence and the solid reality of a heavenly world. The *samsara*, this bondage, this suffering of life, is considered as permanently valid by ignorant people. Neither do they know what is above the world, nor do they have any idea of the non-dual character of the Ultimate Reality. This is the essence of ignorance, *ajnana*.

But the *jnanin*, or the knower, is of a different character. He knows that this world and also the other realms such as heaven, etc., are degrees of reality – apparently there but really not there, for reasons already mentioned in earlier verses.

Jñānino viparīto'smāt niśayaḥ samyagī kṣyate, svasva niścayato baddho mukto'haṃ ceti manyate (241). Ultimately, nothing affects the *jnanin*. If he gains something, it is all right for him. If he loses something, that is also all right for him because he feels that any material gain is not going to make a person really happy. And inasmuch as nothing that comes can make him happy, nothing that goes can make him unhappy. This is what the *jnanin* really feels.

On account of a lack of clarity in understanding, one feels that he is bound; the other feels he is free. The freedom

and the bondage of the soul are actually caused by the variety of thinking processes taking place in the mind. The mind thinking in terms of objects is what is bound. The mind thinking in terms of soul consciousness, independent of the objects, is what is free.

Nādvaitam aparokṣaṁ cet na cidrūpeṇa bhāsanāt, aśeṣeṇa na bhātaṁ cet dvaitaṁ kiṁ bhāsate'khilam (242). It may be held that this unitary consciousness that is non-dual is not visible to the eyes. Why not? The very nature of consciousness is of the character of non-duality. We cannot say that non-duality is not visible. Our consciousness itself is a demonstration of this unreality. Do we feel that we are two persons because we have got two hands or two ears or two legs? Do we feel that we are a multiple complex individual because our body is made up of many, many little parts, fractions, or cells? Do we not feel that we are one indivisible consciousness?

When we go into deep sleep, all the associations of the consciousness with the five sheaths are obliterated completely. Do we not feel at that time that there is one single bliss-like experience? We had a wholeness of feeling in the state of deep sleep. That wholeness is nothing but indivisibility. Indivisibility is nothing but non-duality of consciousness. So the non-duality of consciousness is actually demonstrated before our very eyes every day in our day-to-day experience.

Aśeṣeṇa na bhātaṁ cet dvaitaṁ kiṁ bhāsate'khilam: The only thing is, it is not entirely clear to us. That is the case with the dual world also. Do we see the dual world entirely with our eyes? The astronomical universe is so

large that even the most powerful telescope cannot fathom it. But have we seen the entire dual world? If that is the case, why complain that the non-dual consciousness is only partially being felt? It is partially felt because of the encumbrance of the *karma* potencies that are heaped up in the layer called the causal body, which obscures the consciousness in the state of deep sleep. But for that, we would have seen the entirety of the unitary consciousness. This is the reason why we have the experience only in fraction and not in wholeness.

Diñmātreṇa vibhānaṃ tu dvayorapi samaṃ khalu, dvaita siddhi vada dvaita siddhiste tāvatā na kim (243). Fraction is the nature of our experience. Neither the dual world nor the non-dual consciousness can be experienced by us completely and, therefore, they stand on an equal footing. There is the dual perception of the world of astronomy or the non-dual perception of consciousness. Therefore, there is no comparison of superior or inferior in respect of our awareness of the dual world or the non-dual consciousness. Both of them are known only in fraction, for reasons already mentioned.

Dvaitena hīna madvaitaṃ dvaita jñāne kathaṃ tvidam, cid bhānaṃ tva virodhyasya dvaita syāto'same ubhe (244). Actually, we in our ignorance may imagine the non-duality is an abstraction, that it is an absence of duality. This is not so. The origin of duality presupposes the existence of a non-dual consciousness. In order that we may know that two people are sitting, our consciousness should rise above the concept of these two people. Otherwise, our consciousness will be also divided into two persons, one on this side and one on the other side. How do we, in a single

grasp of our awareness, know that two persons are sitting in front of us? As the one is totally different from the other, it is not possible for anyone to know that both are simultaneously sitting. The simultaneity of the awareness of two people sitting together or many things being there is because of there being consciousness in us which clubs them together; and the multiplicity of the world can also be seen in one stroke. With one stretch we can see the whole thing because our consciousness, which is Kutastha-chetanya, is basically Brahma-chetanya. It pervades the entire cosmos.

Unknowingly, it does the work of providing us with the knowledge of the totality of the world, though they are multifarious in their nature. Very difficult is this notion. We have to go deep into the subject for understanding its true meaning.

Dual consciousness is totally impossible because when things are actually two, it is not possible to know that there are two things. The consciousness of two things is possible only if there is a consciousness which is not two. If there are only dualities or multiplicities, as the dualists contend, there would be nobody to know that these dualities exist at all. So even in our contention that the dual world exists or that many things in the world do exist, we are unwittingly accepting the existence of an awareness of all these dualities. We are falling into non-duality, whether we want it or not.

Evam tarhi śṛṇu dvaitam asan māyā mayatvataḥ, tena vāstava madvaitaṁ pariśeṣāt vibhāsate (245). Now what is the conclusion, sir? After hearing all this, the non-dual

consciousness is the Ultimate Reality. Brahman is the supreme truth, and it is in our own heart scintillating, radiating as Atman. Advaita, the non-dual character of consciousness, is the final reality, and all that is dual hangs on it because the very knowledge of duality would be impossible without a transcendent consciousness which is not dual.

Acintya racanā rūpaṃ māyaiva sakalam jagat, iti niścitya vastutvam advaite pari śeṣyatām (246). Impossible it is for anyone to understand how this world is made. Any amount of intellectual jugglery, argumentation or scientific observation will not lead us anywhere. The mystery of the world remains always a mystery. Having realised that there is a fantastic mystery that is operating behind this so-called apparent world, we should withdraw our consciousness from it and be non-attached to it. May we be established in the consciousness of that unitary existence by disconnecting our consciousness from all that is contrary to it, knowing well that this wonderful world is a magical performance and its variety is no proof of its real existence.

Punar dvaitasya vastutvaṃ bhāti cettvaṃ tathā punaḥ, pariśīlaya ko vātra prayāsa stena te vada (247). Even if we go on meditating on the unitariness of the Absolute, when we open our eyes we will see many things in front of us. The dual consciousness cannot leave us or give us rest. Again and again we will see many things in the world, causing love and hatred, attraction-repulsion, etc. Though we are meditating for one hour, two hours, three hours, we will see the world is too much for us in spite of our meditation. Then what should be done?

Our time for meditation should increase. If we are meditating only for one hour, we should increase it to two hours; if it is two hours, we should make it three hours, four hours or five hours. At least five hours of meditation is necessary. Ordinary people will find it difficult to find time, but the attempt has to be made, at least in bits of process of meditation. Again and again we must habituate ourselves to this contemplation on *sarvam kalvidam brahama* – the All is the Absolute. And then, gradually, we will find the harassing duality-consciousness will leave us one day or the other.

Kiyantaṁ kāla miti cet khedo'yaṁ dvaita iṣyatām, advaite tu na yukto'yaṁ sarvā nartha nivāraṇāt (248). How long should I meditate? In the Brahma Sutra a question of this kind is raised. We may go on meditating either till Self-realisation or till death, whichever is earlier. Why should we put a question like that, “How long should I meditate,” as if it is a job for which we are paid? We have to spend the whole life in meditation. We have no other duty. So don't put a question – kiyantaṁ kāla: How long?

Would we ask a question: How long should we go on looking at the world? We are never tired of seeing the beauties and the distractions of life. Why did we not put a question “How long will I see them?” And now when we are asked to meditate, we say “how long?” as if it is something thrust upon us. Our duty is contemplation. The Atman is made of contemplation in substance, and action is not its essential nature. Action, work, bondage of any kind born of that is the character of the physical sheath, the subtle body, the causal body, etc. The Atman by itself is

unattached and, therefore, it works not. Its very existence is its activity.

Therefore, we should go on meditating until we attain Self-realisation. Even if death snatches us up before Self-realisation takes place – because in most cases Self-realisation may not take place in one life, and death may overtake a person – it does not matter. This question was raised by Arjuna in the sixth chapter of the Bhagavadgita when Bhagavan Sri Krishna gave the answer, “There is no loss of any good work.” Even if we have meditated sincerely for only three days, it will be a great asset for us which will be carried forward in our positive balance sheet of action in the next birth. Because of the continuous meditation that we have practiced in this life, in the next birth we will find it very easy.

Have we not seen people in this world, even little children, suddenly appearing to be very precocious, quickly understanding things? Many young boys and girls suddenly take to spiritual life without any kind of practice earlier in their lives. What could be the reason? They have been practicing it in previous births. That great yogis suddenly became masters within a few years after their birth can be explained only in terms of the great *sadhana* that they did in their previous lives.

So is the case with people who may not attain Self-realisation in this life; and therefore, we should not be afraid. There is no need for despondency, melancholy, etc. We should let the meditation go on, and be sure that our primary duty in life is this only. There is nothing else.

Discourse 35

CHAPTER 6: CHITRADIPA – LIGHT ON THE ANALOGY OF A PAINTED PICTURE, VERSES 248-262

Kiyantaṁ kāla miti cet khedo'yaṁ dvaita iṣyatām, advaite tu na yukto'yaṁ sarvā nartha nivāraṇāt (248); kṣut pipāsā dayo dṛṣṭā yathā pūrvaṁ mayīti cet, macchabdā vācye'haṅkāre dṛśyatām neti ko vadet (249). Such afflictions like hunger and thirst will continue as long as there is this body, in spite of the fact that one has acquired a kind of knowledge of the difference between the Atman and the body. The associations are of three kinds, and these associations are known in Sanskrit as *adhyasa*. The first one is known as *bhramaja adhyasa* – superimposition caused by sheer ignorance. The second one is *sahaja adhyasa* – superimposition which is natural to existing conditions. The third is *karmaja adhyasa* – superimposition that is the outcome of the existence of the body itself.

The first one, known as *bhramaja adhyasa* – superimposition brought about by sheer ignorance – is the transference of values between the intellect and the Atman, pure and simple. The universality of the Atman, which is eternity in its essential nature, is wrongly transferred to the individual principle known as the intellect, and then there is a false feeling that the individual is longstanding – eternity itself.

We do not feel that we are going to die tomorrow. That feeling never enters our mind because of the transference of the perpetual or eternal character of the Atman to the individuality principle that is our intellect. If this transference of values were not to be there, every moment

we would be in fear of death and there would be no incentive to work; even for a moment we would not lift even a finger.

On the other hand, there is the transference of the qualities of the individuality principle (intellect) upon the Atman, pure and simple, on account of which we begin to feel that we are limited in location. We are in one place only; we are not in different places. We are ignorant; we are not omniscient. We are very helpless, not omnipotent, and we are located in one place only. That is finitude.

Finitude in space, finitude in knowledge, and finitude in power – all these three kinds of finitude are imposed upon us by the transference of the individuality character of the intellect onto the Atman. Because of the Atman's character getting reflected or transferred to the individuality principle, we feel that we are going to live for endless years. There is a sense of permanency to our existence on account of this other kind of transference, the transference of the Atman's character upon the intellect. This kind of mutual transference of values from Atman to intellect and intellect to Atman is called *bhramaja adhyasa* – superimposition of characters caused by sheer ignorance, bereft of proper understanding.

The second one is called *sahaja adhyasa*, or the natural superimposition taking place between the consciousness reflected through the intellect and the ego principle. When the Atman consciousness gets reflected through the intellect, it assumes the awareness of individuality. We feel “I am” in our personal character, and the consciousness of personality, or I am-ness, is simultaneous with the

consciousness of egoism – intense attachment to the personality itself. The consciousness of personality is identical with attachment to personality. This is natural superimposition, or *sahaja adhyasa*.

Karmaja is the third superimposition, the transference of the characters of finitude upon the physical body, and the transference of characters such hunger-thirst, heat-cold, etc., which are felt by the body, upon the intellect.

Now in the case of the *jivanmukta*, or the person who has realised the Self, the first *adhyasa* is checked off. He will not feel that this personality is transferrable to the Atman or the Atman is transferrable to the individuality principle. On account of this severance of the original *adhyasa*, which is based on ignorance, he will not take rebirth. But he will continue to be in this world with this personal body as long as the other two *karmas* persist. The reflection of consciousness of the Atman through the intellect will continue in the case of the *jivanmukta purusha* also – that is, he will know that he is existing as a person. And he will also feel the pinches of hunger and thirst, heat and cold, as long as the *prarabdha karma* continues – that is, the third kind of *adhyasa* – *karmaja*, persists.

This is with reference to this particular verse which says hunger and thirst, etc., will be seen to be present even in the case of those who are enlightened; but this feeling of hunger and thirst, etc., is to be attributed to the ego consciousness rather than to the original Atman itself.

Cidrūpe'pi prasa jyeran tādātmyā dhyāsato yadi, mā'dhyāsaṁ kuru kintu tvam vivekaṁ kuru sarvadā (250). We have to be constantly in a state of meditation to

convince ourselves that our experiences, which are either joyful or miserable as the case may be, are attributable to the physical sheaths. Bodily existence actually does not belong to the Atman, pure and simple. All the processes of analysis to which we have been introduced in these chapters, right from the beginning itself, will be helpful in convincing ourselves and establishing ourselves in the consciousness that basically we are unconcerned with the affections which the finite body feels.

Jhaṭitya dhyāsa āyāti dṛḍha vāsana yeti cet, āvartayet vivekaṁ ca dṛḍhaṁ vāsayitum sadā (251). In spite of our daily meditation, suddenly the *prarabdha* will rise up into action and we will begin to feel that we are the body only. Sometimes this also happens in the case of very great people; their *prarabdha* works, though at other moments they are universally conscious. No one can be universally conscious twenty-four hours of the day, not even the greatest of saints, because their *prarabdha* gives a pinch now and then to make them feel that there is a body.

There is a story about a king, Sage Vasishtha. He was a great mastermind. The world could not stand before him, such was his power. He had a son called Shakti who was killed by a demon, a Rakshasa. *Prarabdha* started working in a peculiar way and Vasishtha, the omniscient man, wanted to commit suicide. Immediately he jumped into a flaming fire; the fire became cool, like cold water. He jumped into a river; the river dried up immediately. He hung a rope around his neck; it became a garland of flowers. Brahma immediately came down and said, “You cannot commit suicide, because all the five elements are

under your control. That is why the water dried up, fire became cold, and the rope became a flower garland.” He had such a power that all the five elements were under his control and even if he wanted to commit suicide it was not possible to do it – yet the *prarabdha* worked and he was grief-stricken because his son died.

Shakti was a Brahmana. He was passing through a narrow passage, a little footpath where only one person could walk, and from the front the king of the country was coming. As two persons could not walk on that little precipice, the king thought he must be given way by this Brahmin because he is a king. The Brahmin thought the king must give way because he is a Brahmin. Neither would give way, and the king got angry and whipped this Brahmin – Shakti, the son of Vasishtha. The Brahmin said, “You behave like a Rakshasa. I curse you to become a Rakshasa just now. Immediately the king turned into a demon, and he ate this boy Shakti. That is how Vasishtha’s son died, over which he tried to commit suicide.

After some time, the daughter of Vasishtha was strolling on the rear garden of the cottage, and the same demon started pursuing her. She yelled out. Then Vasishtha came and saw the demon, the very same demon who ate his son. He took a little water from his water pot, sprinkled it and threw it on the face of the demon. That demon immediately returned to his form as the old king. This is the power of Vasishtha. Nothing could stand before him – not all the three worlds. Yet, *prarabdha* sometimes gives a prick even to such great people, though it does not always work like that. That they sometimes begin to feel hunger,

thirst, sleep, fatigue, and so on, is demonstrated in this interesting story.

Viveke dvaita mithyātvaṃ yuktyai veti na bhāṇyatām, acintya racanātvasya anubhūtir hi sva sāksikī (252). When we habituate ourselves to discrimination, constant brooding over the universality of the Atman, day in and day out thinking only this aspect and thinking nothing else in our mind, for some time it may remain a kind of intellectual activity, a mental operation. It may not actually delve deep into the feeling. The practice should go deeper than intellectual cogitation. Meditation is not merely thinking through the mind. It is a transmutation of the very being itself.

In meditation, the whole personality gets transmuted – the will, the understanding, the feeling. The most important part of the operation is feeling. It is not enough if we think that there is a Universal Being; we must also *feel* that it is like that. When the understanding or the conviction that “the Universal is existent, and is the only existence” becomes a part of our feeling also, life gets transformed into the very experience of the Universal. A great mystery is the working of *prarabdha karma* and the effect produced by meditations.

Cidapya cintya racanā yadi tarhyastu no vayam, citim sucintya racanām brūmo nityatva kāraṇāt (253). A wonder is the working of this *prarabdha* and a wonder is also the working of this Pure Consciousness. How it sometimes manifests itself in great consolation to us, and how it sometimes withdraws itself, is difficult to explain. However, on account of the permanency of the consciousness that is

our essential nature, it will overcome the limitations of *prarabdha*. In the earlier days there will be a tussle for some time between the meditating consciousness and the suffering caused by *prarabdha*. Sometimes the balance will tilt on one side and other times the balance will tilt on the other. Often we will feel that this meditation is not working well, and we will be very much grieved because of the body consciousness. At other times, the other aspect will come up and we will feel elated, enthused, and we will feel as if God is very near us. This is the power of consciousness. It is also a great mystery.

Prāgabhāvo nānubhūtaḥ citer nityā tataś citiḥ, dvaitasya prāga bhāvastu caitanyenānubhūyate (254). The prior non-existence of consciousness cannot be experienced by us. We cannot feel that once upon a time consciousness was not existing. That feeling cannot arise in us because the consciousness of the ‘imagined non-existence of consciousness’ sometime earlier is also a postulation of the existence of consciousness even prior to that apparent non-existence. We cannot conceive the non-existence of consciousness because that conception is attributable to consciousness itself. It is consciousness itself assuming that it did not exist sometime. Therefore, the prior non-existence of consciousness – sometime in the early days, long, long ago in the past – is inconceivable.

But the non-existence of duality can be conceived. Duality is the manifest form of creation. When creation did not take place, consciousness – which was prior to the awareness of duality – did exist. Yesterday, as we noted, the consciousness of duality implies the consciousness of unity.

The awareness that there are two things or many things is impossible unless there is that awareness which is above the duality or the multiplicity of the objects. If everything is different from everything else, nobody would know that such is the state of affairs, because differentiated things cannot know each other. And nobody will know that another person is sitting near if the difference is complete. But actually, there is no such difference finally. It is an apparent duality; and because of its apparent-ness, and not a permanency of its character, there is a consciousness of there being many people, many things, two things, etc. One consciousness can comprehend a hundred things at a time. This shows it is basically transcendent to the otherwise multiple or dual character of the objects. There is a beginning for duality, but there is no beginning for consciousness as such.

Prāg-abhāva yutaṁ dvaitaṁ racyate hi ghaṭādivat, tathāpi racanā'cintyā mithyā tenendra jālavat (255). Objects can have prior non-existence – like a pot. Before the pot was manufactured, it was non-existent. That is called prior non-existence. The non-existence of a pot before it was manufactured is called prior non-existence. When the pot is broken, afterwards it becomes non-existent. This is called posterior non-existence. Prior to creation, it is one kind of non-existence. After destruction, it is another kind of non-existence. The non-existence of the pot prior to its manufacture has no beginning, but it has an end. When the pot comes into being, the non-existence of the pot prior to its manufacture comes to a cessation.

Here is an illustration of non-existence without a beginning, but with an end.

But the posterior non-existence has a beginning, but no end – the other way around. When the pot is broken it becomes non-existent, but this kind of non-existence has no end; for ever and ever it will be non-existent. So this is an instance of non-existence with a beginning but no end.

There is another kind of non-existence, called mutual non-existence. The tree is not in the stone; the stone is not in the tree. The tree is non-existent in the stone; the stone is non-existent in the tree. This mutual non-existence is called *anyonya abhava*.

A fourth kind of non-existence is called *atyanta* – like the horns of a human being. A human being does not have horns; they are absolutely non-existent.

Therefore, four kinds of non-existence can be attributed to all perceptible objects. Consciousness cannot be attributed to any such character. It is consciousness alone that cannot cease to be at any time, under any given conditions. All other things involved in duality and multiplicity are involved in these kinds of non-existences defined.

Cit pratyakṣā tato'nysya mithyātvaṁ cānu bhūyate, nā'dvaita maparokṣaṁ ceti etanna vyahataṁ katham (256). Consciousness is a matter of direct experience, and the world of transiency is also a matter of direct experience. We daily experience the futility of things if only we are to bestow some thought upon what happens in the world. By experience through age, we come to realise finally that the world cannot fulfil its promises. It promises all kinds of

pleasures, delights, and even permanency of existence. It uses a false promise that we will live here in this world for a long time; but the next moment the life is cut off. The world is a false promise-giver. This we come to realise when our hairs become grey and we become old. In earlier days when we are warm-blooded youths, we felt that the earth is permanent, we are permanent, and our achievements are also going to be permanent. This transiency, which is at the back of all things in the world, is not visible to the eyes of a young man. They become faded by the experience of age. And consciousness is at the back of this experience.

During our babyhood, our adolescence, our adult age, old age – through all these stages of our life – we will find one consciousness continuing. Every day that we have is an experience of the continuity of consciousness and the non-continuity of experiences in the world. In a way, daily we have this experience of the unity of consciousness and the disunity character of that which is not consciousness – namely, the objects in the world of space and time.

Itthaṁ jñātvā'pya santuṣṭāḥ kecit kuta itīryatām, cārvākādeḥ prabuddhasyāpi ātmā dehaḥ kuto vada (257). In spite of these expositions of the nature of consciousness, many a time doubts arise in the mind, as in the case of Charvakas or materialists. What do they say? “Satisfaction does not arise by a mere thought of this kind of analysis that we have conducted, that the world is transient.” The transiency of the world is not a direct object of perception every day as long as the senses are very active and they manage to pull the consciousness in the direction of their activity towards objects.

The permanency of things, the false notion that joys and sorrows in life from objects are also permanent in their nature, arises on account of consciousness following the activity of the mind and the sense organs. We have noted this feature sometime earlier when it was observed that in the object perception – the consciousness of an object – two processes are involved, namely, the mind enveloping the object and taking the shape of the object, and consciousness following the mind together with the sense organs and illumining that consciousness. Not only is there a perception of the form of the object on account of the enveloping of the object by the mind, there is also a consciousness that it is so. We begin to feel the location of the object.

The consciousness aspect of perception is due to the Atman consciousness through the intellect proceeding through the mind in terms of the sense organs. But the shape of the structure of the object that is perceived is due to the enveloping of the mind in terms of the object. The mind enveloping the object is called *vritti vyakti*, and the consciousness following the mental operation is called *phala vyakti*. The Charvakas, etc., are materialists and they consider the body alone as the real Self.

Samyak vicāro nāstyasya dhīdoṣā diti cettathā, asantuṣṭāstu śāstrārthaṁ na tvaikṣanta viśeṣataḥ (258). Proper discrimination is absent in the case of those who believe in the permanency of things – the reality of this world. It is due to a mistake or error in the working of the intellect itself. Their genius is very muddled.

Those who are indulging in the sense and mental operations in terms of objects will have no desire to study scriptures. They will not have the mind to go to *satsanga*. They will not have any kind of inclination towards the existence of things above this world. *Prarabdha* can be very *rajasic* and *tamasic* in many cases, where even the longing for the realisation of God cannot be there. Even the thought of God cannot arise in the minds of people whose *prarabdha* is entirely *rajasic* and *tamasic*. It is only where *prarabdha* is a little bit *sattvic* that awareness of a higher world arises and we begin to see the lacuna or the insufficiency of things in this world.

Yadā sarve pramu cyante kāmā ye’sya hṛdi śritāḥ, iti śrautaṁ phalaṁ dṛṣṭaṁ neti cet dṛṣṭa meva tat (259). This is a quotation from the Kathopanishad, which makes out that when all the desires of the heart are entirely released, one experiences Brahman consciousness at once. This is the scripture statement in the Kathopanishad. At once, at this very moment, the experience of Universal Brahman would be possible – provided that all the longings of the heart are pulled out and the desires cease entirely.

Desires must cease – not merely in their obvious operative form, but also in the submerged, latent form. In the operative form they are visible in the waking state and dream state. In the submerged form they are there in the state of deep sleep. The desires should not be there, either as operative or non-operative, active or latent. They should be totally thrown out by the awareness of all things being pervaded by one consciousness. Because of the pervasion of

one consciousness through all things, desires for objects should cease of their own accord.

Yadā sarve prabhidyante hr̥daya granthaya stviti, kāmā granthi svarūpeṇa vyākhyātā vākya śeṣataḥ (260). This is also a quotation from the Kathopanishad. When the knots of the heart are broken, Brahman is experienced instantaneously. What are these knots of the heart? Ignorance, desire and action.

The non-perception of reality is called ignorance. This is one kind of knot with which we are tied to this earthly existence. When we are unconscious of the existence of a Universal reality, we suddenly become conscious of the existence of an unreality of the world. When the Universal is not an object of our consciousness, the externality of the world becomes at once the opposite experience. This is desire.

Ignorance is the non-perception of the Universal; desire is the perception of the particular. And the running after the particular objects for fulfilment of those desires is action, *karma*. Three knots are mentioned: *avidya-kama-karma* – ignorance, desire, action. These three words are repeated many times by Acharya Sankara in his commentaries as the source of all problems in life: *avidya-kama-karma* – a threefold knot of the heart, to which the consciousness is tied in terms of empirical experience.

Ahaṅkāra cidātmā nāu ekī kṛtyā vivekataḥ, idaṁ me syād idaṁ me syāt itīchāḥ kāma śabdītāḥ (261). What do we mean by desire? It is defined here. By the identification of egoism – personality consciousness – and not being able to distinguish it from the Universal consciousness which is

reflected through it, one begins to feel that this is a very good thing; let me have it. This is not at all a good thing; let me not have it. The desire to have something and the desire not to have something is the desire spoken of, and this kind of dual desire – wanting some things in terms of what is desirable or pleasurable, and not wanting some things which are not pleasurable – is a twofold manifestation of desire. Wanting or not wanting – both these are obverse and the reverse of the same coin. They come under the same desire. This is called *kama*, the outcome of *avidya*, and the cause of action directed in terms of fulfilment of desires.

Apraveśya cidātmānaṁ pṛthak paśyanna haṅkṛtim, icchāṁstu koṭi vastūni na bādho granthi bhedataḥ (262). Merely experiencing bodily aches, such as the temporary feeling of hunger and thirst, does not preclude Universal consciousness. *Jivanmuktas* also eat food; they also feel thirsty. When they feel fatigue, they go to sleep. These are natural effects following from the *karmaja adhyasa* mentioned, the superimposition of the ego consciousness, personality consciousness with the body and the body with the ego; but they do not have the other kind of consciousness which mistakes the personality for the Universal and the Universal for the personal.

Thus, there is a distinction drawn between ordinary human experience, which is born of *karmaja adhyasa*, and the real spiritual experience, which has no *bhramaja adhyasa*, causing no rebirth in spite of a temporary feeling of the body and its consequent appurtenances of feeling hunger, thirst, etc.

Discourse 36

CHAPTER 6: CHITRADIPA – LIGHT ON THE ANALOGY OF A PAINTED PICTURE, VERSES 263-284

Granthi bhede'pi sambhāvya icchāḥ prārabdha doṣataḥ, buddhvāpi pāpa bāhulyāt asantoṣo yathā tava (263). Even if one overcomes the impulses of these *granthis*, or the knots of the heart – that is, *avidya-kama-karma* – their effect does not completely leave a person on account of the impulse of *prarabdha* itself. We have already noticed the extent to which *prarabdha* can act upon even a *jivanmukta purusha*. The *sanchita karmas*, the accumulated store of actions, are burnt up by knowledge. Therefore, there is no future birth for a *jivanmukta*. The cause for another birth, which is the remnant of the storehouse of desire, is no more there, so the *jivanmukta* will not be reborn into this world.

There is another kind of *karma* called *agami karma* – fresh actions performed every day and added to the existing storehouse of *sanchita*. The *jivanmukta* does not perform fresh actions. He is a detached person and, therefore, there is no action with a desire behind it, in his case. The only thing that persists with him is *prarabdha*, which has given birth to this body and so on. Account of the persistence of this *prarabdha*, some kind of desires, peculiar impulses, longings, etc., may be seen even in a *jivanmukta*.

Varieties of *jivanmuktas* are there. They are all curious persons. One does not behave in the same way as the other behaves. Jadabharata was like an idiot. He would not talk to anybody; he sat there like a stone. He was a *jivanmukta*. Vasishtha was a *jivanmukta*, but was a great ritualist. Every

day he would perform *yajnas*, *havanas*, *agnihotras* in the most traditional Mimamsa fashion, though he was also a great *jivanmukta*. Shuka was a *brahmanistha*. He did not even know that he had a body. Clothes used to slip away from his body, and he would not know that the clothes had gone. He would walk like a raving mad man, and children would pelt stones at him, thinking that he was crazy. Such was the condition of Shuka, a *jivanmukta*.

Vyasa was a *jivanmukta*. He was a poetic writer, great litterateur, who wrote all the scriptures; he was another kind altogether. Lord Krishna was a *jivanmukta*, and we know what kind of person Krishna was – impossible to describe. There are various causes behind the different behaviours of these great men. The kind of personality that they assumed – either the personality was assumed deliberately as an incarnation, as in the case of Lord Krishna, or the personality had been thrust upon them somehow or other by the *prarabdha karma* – in either case, the propulsion from the nature of the personality varied. That is why different great men behave differently. They do not have uniformity of thinking, and sometimes they look like contradictory.

We may say that Jadabharata and Lord Krishna were opposites, and yet they were equal in knowledge and power. The power of these people is unthinkable. Jadabharata was a hefty, stout boy. He was sitting quiet, without talking to any person, and one night some dacoits caught hold of him. They wanted to offer him to Kali and behead him. He would not say anything. They dragged him; he wouldn't speak one word, though he was being dragged. They tied

him with a rope; he would not utter one word. Then Jadabharata was tied to a pillar where he was to be offered, and the priest sprinkled holy water on his body. Even then he would not utter one word. He was just blinking as the sword was lifted by the priest to behead him. Immediately that image of Kali burst forth, and the real Kali came out. She pulled the sword from the hand of the priest and beheaded all those dacoits, and nobody was left alive except for this Jadabharata. She untied him, and left.

What is this mystery? Can we imagine that such a thing is possible? This story is in the Bhagavad Mahapurana. What power these people have! What power! Yet, their *prarabdha* is there, which goes on harassing them with this little body. In the previous talk I told you the story of Vasishtha, and today I told you the story of Jadabharata. They are peculiar people, but wonderful people – Godmen, all equal.

Ahamkāra gate cchādyaiḥ deha vyādhyādibhi stathā, vṛkṣādi janma naśairvā cidrūpāt mani kiṁ bhavet (264). Nothing worries them. If somebody is cutting a tree in the forest, we are not bothered. Let them cut it. Nothing is happening, though the tree in the forest is being cut by somebody. So many are collecting fuel; women are climbing trees and chopping off branches for fuel. Are we worried about all these things? We look at these events taking place as if they are not taking place at all. Many events in the world which are causes of great anxiety to people like us are no events at all for these Godmen, to whom these events happen. They are as if they do not take place. If the *prarabdha* which is working through this body

manifests itself in the form of some experience – as Jadabharata had an experience, for instance – it matters not to these Godmen. Whether they are alive or dead, it makes no difference, because they cannot die essentially. And even if they are alive, it is not a great virtue for them because, after all, what is this life except through this body born of *prarabdha*? Birth and death mean the same thing.

Granthi bhedaṭ purā pyevam iti cettanna vismara, ayameva granthi bhedaḥ tava tena kṛtī bhavān (265). The breaking of the knots of the heart, the destruction of *avidya*, *kama*, and *karma*, is an eternal event. Actually, *avidya-kama-karma* do not exist at all, just as a limitation to vast ether does not exist, even if it appears that the ether is thrust into the pot, as it were. This knowledge that *avidya-kama-karma* did not even exist right from the beginning itself, is itself the destruction of *avidya-kama-karma*. When we know that the world was never created, the world does not exist for us. Only when we believe that it is there in front of us like a hard wall or a rock, it harasses us. The destruction of the *granthis* – *avidya-kama-karma* – is virtually the same as the realisation of the fact that they never existed at all at any time.

Naivam jānanti mūḍhās cet so'yaṁ granthir na cāparaḥ, granthi tad bheda mātrena vaiṣamyam mūḍha buddhaoḥ (266). But ordinary people are not aware of the fact that *avidya-kama-karma* have no substantiality. The not knowing this fact itself is *granthi*. This is the bondage of these people who have no proper illumination. For the illumined person, the *granthis* did not exist at any time at all and, therefore, they do not exist even now. But the

ignorant person who cannot believe that they did not exist at any time considers them as solid realities.

The difference between an ignorant person and a learned person is this: that a non-existent thing is considered to be existing in the case of the ignorant person. And in the case of the enlightened person, even that which appears to be existing is known to be non-existing finally. This is the difference between an illumined person and an ignorant one.

Pravṛttau vā nivṛttau vā dehendriya manodhiyām, na kiñchidapi vaiṣamyam astya jñāni vibuddhayoḥ (267). But outwardly they are all the same. When we see a person, we cannot know whether he is a fool or a Godman. They look the same. They – the Godmen – eat the same food as the fool eats, they speak the same language, and they behave practically in the same way – like children, like fools, like wise men. With old men, they are like old men; with children, they are like children; with youth, they are like youth; with ignorant people, they behave like ignorant people; with wise men, they behave like wise men; and with a person whose back is bent, they will have a bent back. There is no personality for them.

Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj was like that. He had no personality of his own. He was just the same person who he saw in front of him. Whatever we are, that he was at that time, as he had no personality for himself. If we cried, he would sympathise. If we laughed, he would say “wonderful”. Both were good, equally nice.

The *pravritti* and *nivritti*, the action-oriented behaviour or the absence of action in the case of these people, makes

no difference to them. The coming and going of things, and the evolution and involution of the universe are great matters for us. They are matters of great consequence. These Godmen see a thing there, of course, but they do not make any difference between the *jnani* and the *ajnani*. The outward behaviour cannot be regarded as the criterion for the inner character of a person. This is the definition here. We cannot know a person by merely looking at that person from outside. Outwardly, they look the same.

There was a doctor, S. K. Krishnan. He was the director of the National Physical Laboratory, a very famous facility. One day he came here, wearing a turban. Swamiji said a special seat must be arranged for him, and every arrangement was made to give him a comfortable seat just behind Gurudev. When Dr. Krishnan was about to sit on that seat, the boy who was preparing the seat said, “Don’t sit here. This is meant for Dr. Krishnan.” “Oh, I see, I see,” he said, “Ok, Ok.” He went and sat on the other side, in the corner.

Look at this. This is the greatness of a man. He did not say, “I am Dr. Krishnan.” “Oh, I see,” he said. And when Gurudev arrived for *satsanga*, he called Dr. Krishnan and made him sit. All were stunned because this was the same man who they had shut out. Great people are like simple children.

Vrātya śrotiyayor veda pāṭhā pāṭha kṛtā bhidā, nāhārā dāvasti bhedaḥ so’yaṁ nyān’tra yogyatām (268). In the case of one who is learned in the Vedas and one who is not at all proficient in the Vedas, the difference is in the knowledge – the proficiency in the Vedic wisdom and the

ignorance of it. But in the matter of eating food, we are same. The person who is enlightened in Vedic knowledge and the one who knows nothing about the Vedas eat the same food and speak the same language. Outwardly, they behave in the same manner.

Great *jivanmuktas*, therefore, cannot be recognised. Those whom we cannot understand, on them we should not pass any comment. The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad says, “Lest he be a great person and his curse may fall on you, make no comments on people whom you cannot understand.”

Na dveṣṭi sampra vṛttāni na nivṛttāni kāṅkṣati, udāsīna vadāsīna iti granthi bhido cyate (269). This is a verse from the Bhagavad Gita. If something comes, he does not dislike it. He does not ask why it has come. And if something goes, he does not ask why it has gone. Neither he exults if something comes to him, nor he grieves if something goes. Let it come, let it go, because the coming is not a gain and the going is not a loss.

Udāsīna vadāsīna: Like an idle person concerned with nothing, he sits quiet. Iti granthi bhido cyate: This is the characteristic of people whose *granthis* have been broken. *Avidya-kama-karma* have been destroyed.

Audāsīnyam vidheyam cet vacchabdā vyarthatā tadā, na śaktā asya dehādya iti cedroga eva saḥ (270). When it is said that they look like idle people, it does not mean that they are really idle. They ‘look like’; the word ‘vat’ is used here. They look like, they appear to be like idle people; but they are very active people. Somebody went and asked Ramanamarshi, “Why don’t you do some work for the

world?” He said, “How do you know that I am not working for the world?”

Great people work through their thoughts. The greater a person is, the less he speaks and the more he thinks, and the works that people do with their hands and feet are nothing before this thought that emanates from these great men. One thought is sufficient; it will vibrate until eternity. And that service that the person does to humanity is greater than all the politicians that the world has seen up to this time.

He is not sitting quiet like a sick man. He is very active, very powerful he is, but looks almost like a nobody in this world. He goes unwept, unhonoured and unsung, as it were; but the gods will sing his glories.

Tattva bodham kṣayam vyādhiṃ manyante ye mahādhiyaḥ, teṣāṃ prajñā tiviśadā kiṃ teṣāṃ duḥśakaṃ vada (271). We should not be under the impression that being a *jivanmukta* necessarily means keeping quiet. It does not follow that the moment a person becomes a *jivanmukta* he is obliged to keep quiet without doing anything. That is only one aspect of the behaviour of certain categories. There were immensely active persons like Lord Krishna, for instance, or like Janaka. Janaka was a king, and we know the activity of a king. They cannot keep quiet like idle men. Janaka was a *jivanmukta puruṣa*, but even then another, greater *jivanmukta*, a lady called Sulabha, found fault with him.

The story is in the Shantiparva of the Mahabharata. Sulabha was a *dandi-sanyasini*. For the first time we hear of a *dandi-sanyasini* in the scriptures – an old lady who heard

that Janaka was a *jivanmukta*. She wanted to have a *darshan* of this great man, so she came and did *namaskars*. He was sitting on the throne, and could not actually recognise who this lady was. He thought she was some beggar. So what she did was, she immediately entered him through her subtle body. But he was also a great man; he could understand that something was entering him. He said, “You are a woman. You have committed a sin by entering me, who is a man.”

Sulabha replied, “Oh, I see. I came here to know only this much – whether Janaka is a *jivanmukta purusha* or is he a man. You are a man. I am going from this place. I do not want to see you again. You have called me a woman and you call yourself a man; but people said you are a *jivanmukta*. Thank you very much. I will go from this place.” Immediately King Janaka came down from his throne knowing that this was not an ordinary person, and prostrating himself before the lady, said, “Please excuse me, I did not understand who you are.” Subsequently, there was a great conversation between Sulabha and Janaka. The wisdom that she poured upon him was such that it is worth studying in the Shantiparva of the Mahabharata. These are all the interesting varieties of *jivanmuktas* that we have got, looking like anything in this world.

Bharatādera pravṛttiḥ purāṇokteti cettadā, jakṣan kṛiḍan ratirṁ vindan nitya śrauṣīrna kiṁ śrutim (272). Jadabharata and others sat like idle people. Why do not all *jivanmuktas* behave like that? The Upanishad says there are *jivanmuktas* who dance and sing, eat and make merry; that is also one kind of *jivanmukta*. As a matter of fact, a

jivanmukta is not bound to any particular kind of behaviour. We cannot constrain that person and say, “this must be your conduct”. A *jivanmukta* is a free person. The whole cosmos is his body, and so any event that is taking place in the world anywhere can be regarded as his own action. He may be dancing and singing and making merry, or he may be keeping quiet like an idle man. We cannot constrain him. A constrained person cannot be regarded as a *jivanmukta purusha*.

Na hyāhārādi santyajya bharatādyaḥ sthitāḥ kvacit, kāṣṭha pāṣāṇavat kintu saṅgabhītā udāsate (273).
Jadabharata did not keep quiet without eating anything. He was not starving. He had some morsel of food, though he did not pay much attention to it. It is only because of the earlier experience that he had as a deer, he withdrew himself from contact with everything. They say this deer, which was Jadabharata, would not touch even a leaf in the forest because of *jatkesvara*. It was *jatkesvara*; it had the memory of past lives. To track the chain, there was a King Bharata, who due to attachment to a little deer, became a deer; and this deer, who was Bharata, being conscious of what happened to it, would not touch even a leaf on a bush when it moved in the forest. Then it left its body, and in the third birth he became this great Jadabharata whom dacoits caught, etc. He was not concerned with things because he had the feeling that attachment is bad, and not because he felt that it was necessary to sit like an idle person.

Saṅgī hi bādhyate loke niḥ-saṅgaḥ sukha maśnute, tena saṅgaḥ parityājyaḥ sarvadā sukha micchatā (274).
This is a verse from the Yoga Vasishtha. All people who are

attached to things are bound forever. And those who are free from attachments will have no bondage whatsoever. Therefore, attachment should be given up if we want happiness in this world.

Ajñātvā śāstra hṛdayaṁ mūḍho vaktya nyathā nyathā, mūrkhāṇāṁ nirṇaya stvāstām asmat siddhānta ucyate (275). Let people say whatever they want to say, and don't bother about it. Now, let me conclude this discourse; listen to what it is. The author of the Panchadasi, concluding this sixth chapter, says, "Forget all this wrangling. Now listen to what I am telling you in conclusion – a very important thing."

Vairāgya bodho paramāḥ sahāyāste parasparam, prāyeṇa saha vartante viyujyante kvacit kvacit (276). The greatness of a *jivanmukta* is seen by the abiding in him of three great qualities: *vairagya* or detachment, *bodha* or wisdom, *uparama* or cessation from activity. Three qualities will be found in these great people. They will not engage themselves in any work. They will not be attached to anything in this world. Inwardly, they will be highly illumined. *Vairagya*, *bodha*, *uparama* – these three qualities are found in great *jivanmuktas*. All the three qualities are not found in every *jivanmukta*. In some, one or two may be there, but only in the greatest we will find all the three combined.

Hetu svarūpa kāryāṇi bhinnā nyeṣāma saṅkaraḥ, yathā vada vagantavyaḥ śāstrārthaṁ pravicyatā (277). *Vairagya*, *bodha* and *uparama* – these words must be remembered always. *Vairagya* is non-attachment; *bodha* is knowledge; *uparama* is cessation from activity. All these three have a cause, a nature and an effect. *Vairagya* has a

cause, it has a nature, and it has an effect. Knowledge also has a cause, it has a nature, and it has an effect. Cessation from action also has a cause, it has a nature, and it has an effect.

What is the character of non-attachment? What are its causes? What is its nature? What is its result? *Doṣa dr̥ṣṭir jihāsā ca punar bhogeṣva dīnatā, asādhāraṇa hetvādyā vairāgyasya trayo'pyamī* (278). The cause of detachment is the perception of defects in things. Everything in the world is full of defects. There is not one perfect thing anywhere in the world. Therefore, it is futile to get attached to anything in this world. The source, or the cause of detachment from things, is the perception of defect in the objects of sense. And the nature of detachment is the absence of further desire in respect of objects outside. The result is total distaste for things. These are the three characteristics of *vairagya*.

Knowledge has a cause, it has a nature, and also has an effect. *Śravaṇādi trayam tadvat tattva mithyā vivecanam, punar granther anudayo bodhasyate trayo matāḥ* (279). *Śravaṇādi trayam: Sravana, manana, nididhyasana* – listening from a preceptor, deeply contemplating on what is heard, and intense meditation on the great subject – this is the cause of knowledge. *Tattva mithyā vivecanam*: The nature of knowledge is the non-perception of the reality of an external world and the perception of its total unreality. And the result is that *avidya-kama-karma* never again rises. This is the threefold character of knowledge.

Yamādir dhī nirodhaśca vyavahārasya saṅkṣayaḥ, syur hetvādyā uparateḥ itya saṅkara īritaḥ (280). Now cessation

from activity has a cause – *yama*, *niyama*, *asana*, *pranayama*, *pratyahara*, *dharana*, *dhyana*, *samadhi*. The practice of these limbs of yoga is the cause of absence of indulgence in any kind of activity. The restraint of the mind is the nature of the cessation from all activity. And having no concern with anything in this world, taking no initiative at all in respect of anything, is the result of absence of activity. These are the threefold characteristics of *vairagya*, *bodha* (knowledge) and *uparati* or cessation from action.

Tattva bodhaḥ pradhānaṁ syāt sāḁṣāt mokṣa pradatvataḥ, bodhopa kāriṇā vetau vairāgyo paramā vubhau (281). Of the three qualities, knowledge is primary. *Vairagya*, knowledge and cessation from action are all good. If we have *vairagya*, we are detached and we are also free from action, but if knowledge is absent, that is no good. *Pradhana* – the most important of the three is knowledge because the direct cause of moksha is knowledge. Other things are only accessories. *Vairagya* and cessation from entanglement in action, etc., are accessories to intensify the nature of knowledge, but they themselves cannot bring moksha. Knowledge is the real cause.

Trayo'pyatyanta pakvā ścet mahatas tapasaḥ phalam, dūritena kvacit kiñcit kadācit prati badhyate (282). If all the three are there in a great man, he is a Godman. It is very difficult to find such people. Sometimes in the case of *prarabdhas* which are touched with a little of *rajas*, etc., one quality may be lessened. Knowledge may be there, he may be living like a royal emperor or he may be having cessation from all action, but the other two qualities may be absent. Something may be there; something else may not be there.

We will not find in everyone all the three qualities; usually one thing is missing. But the great point is that even if one or two are missing, knowledge should not be missing, because knowledge is the direct cause of moksha.

Vairāgyo paratī pūrṇe bodhastu prati badhyate, yasya tasya na mokṣo'sti puṇya loka stapo balāt (283). Suppose *vairagya* is there, great detachment is there. He is not concerned with anything and he is not involved in action, but knowledge is obstructed. For such a person, there is no moksha. Therefore, mere austerity is no good. Keeping quiet without doing anything is also of no utility. It is wisdom, illumination, that is necessary. If we have the other two qualities but no knowledge, we will not get moksha. We may go to heaven or some higher region because of the great austerity that we have performed, so it is not useless, but moksha is far off.

Pūrṇe bodhe tadanyau dvau pratibaddhau yadā tadā, mokṣo viniścitaḥ kintu drṣṭa duḥkhaṁ na naśyati (284). Suppose a person is completely illumined, but he is not putting forth any special effort to detach himself from things or from action which is the usual concomitant of the physical existence. Very busy he is, doing work, and he is not bothered about austerity, etc., but inwardly he is illumined. Such a person will certainly have no rebirth. He will attain moksha, no doubt. But because of his entanglement in things, he will have some suffering in the world also. So we can choose whichever one we like.

Discourse 37

CHAPTER 6: CHITRADIPA – LIGHT ON THE ANALOGY OF A PAINTED PICTURE, VERSES 285-290

Vairagya, *bodha* and *uparati* were considered as important qualities that can be seen in a *jivanmukta purusha*. *Vairagya* is detachment, *bodha* is knowledge, and *uparati* is cessation from activities. Each one of them has a cause, a nature, and a result. This we studied yesterday.

Brahmaloka tṛṇīkāro vairāgyasyā vadhīr mataḥ, dehātmatvat parātmatva dārḍhye bodhaḥ samāpyate (285). What exactly do we mean by *vairagya*? It is obviously known as a kind of not getting attached to things. But here the author gives a definition of non-attachment in a superior way: The joys not only of this world but also of the other world should not attract us.

According to Patanjali's *Sutras*, *dr̥ṣṭa ānuśravika viṣaya vitṛṣṇasya vaśīkārasamjñā vairāgyam* (YS 1.15): *Vairagya*, or non-attachment, is to be in respect of all those things which are seen with our eyes and also which are only heard of through the scriptures – like the joys of heaven. One should not engage oneself in sacrifices, *yajnas*, etc., for the sake of going to heaven, because anything which is reachable is also perishable. That which is visible is destructible. Anything that we can conceive in our mind also is a kind of object. The joys of Brahmaloka are also not to be aspired for.

The joy of Brahmaloka is indescribable. No words can tell us what the bliss of Brahmaloka is. It is what they call the Kingdom of Heaven, usually speaking. We may call it the Kingdom of God. The words 'bliss', 'joy', 'satisfaction',

etc., are poor apologies for the tremendous experience that Brahmaloka is. Not to have attachment even to that, and to concern oneself only with the pure, Universal existence is supposed to be the height of *vairagya*, or detachment. Brahmaloka tṛṇīkāro vairāgyasyā vadhīr mataḥ, dehātmatvat parātmatva dārḍhye bodhaḥ samāpyate.

What is knowledge of Brahman? Do we know how intensely we feel that we are the body? Let each one close one's eyes for a few minutes and think how intense is the feeling that the body is myself. It is not merely the body is myself; the body is I. The body has become me. Such is the intensity of the identification of consciousness with the body, and vice versa.

If such an attachment as is seen between consciousness and this body can be there between consciousness and the Absolute, then moksha is there in our hand, even if we don't want it. This is the height of wisdom. The height of *vairagya* is the rejection of even the joys of Brahmaloka. The height of knowledge or bliss, perfection, the height of wisdom, is the identity of consciousness with the Universal as intensely as one feels identity with one's body.

Supti vad mismṛtiḥ sīmā bhavedupa ramasya hi, diśānayā viniśceyaṁ tārātamyā mavāntaram (286). The *parakashtha*, or the end result of cessation from all activity, is complete oblivion as to what is happening in the world. Let the world be there or let the world not be there, it makes no difference. Events are taking place in this world; events are not taking place. Certain events are taking place; certain others are not taking place. All these do not affect the person – just as a person who is asleep is not concerned

with what is happening outside in the world. To be totally unconcerned with the events in the world as if one is fast asleep is the *parakashtha*, or the highest reach of the consciousness of cessation from activity.

This is an indication, briefly given, in order that we may be enabled to know where we stand in our spiritual life. Each one has to check oneself. What is the stage of evolution which one has reached? The attachments are the main touchstone. Bodily attachment is so intense that the less said about it the better. And the author says we should have such attachment in our consciousness to the Absolute Brahman.

Such attachment to Brahman also may be practicable provided we spend all our day in meditation on the Absolute only and think not an external thing. The whole day, throughout the conscious hours of the lifetime of a person, whenever there is a respite from work, one should try to keep at the back of one's thought the Brahman consciousness upon which one rests. These indications are enough for a good seeker.

Ārabdha karma nānātvāt buddhānā manyathā'nyathā, vartanaṁ tena śāstrārthe bhramitavyaṁ na paṇḍitaiḥ (287). Yesterday I mentioned that there are varieties of *jivanmuktas*. All are not of the same type. They do not behave in a uniform manner. We should not have a set rule that the *jivanmukta* should behave in this way only and if we find somebody behaving in that way, we can say he is a *jivanmukta*. That is not the case.

Each individual is unique in character, and that uniqueness is because of the fact of *prārabdha* karma

nānātvāt – due to the variety in the functioning of the *prarabdha karmas* of the persons, whose body continues as long as the *prarabdha* continues, even if they are *jivanmuktas*. The difference in the function and the nature of the *prarabdha karmas* of people make them appear or look different from one another. Internally, they are one and the same.

Therefore, ignorant people should not start judging great people because no one who has not delved into the mysteries of this reality, the structure of the world and God and Ishvara and *jiva*, can have the competency to make a judgement of this kind.

Savasva karmā nusāreṇa vartantām te yathā tathā, aviśiṣṭaḥ sarvabodhaḥ samā mukti riti sthitiḥ (288). Let them behave in any way they like. Let one behave like Lord Krishna or Shri Rama or Jadabharata or Janakaraja or Vasishtha or Shuka or Vyasa. Let anyone behave in any manner whatsoever; that is immaterial to the consciousness which they are maintaining in themselves.

Knowledge and power are equal in the case of all these *jivanmuktas*. What one can do, others also can do. What one feels inside, others also feel; and what one is experiencing inside, another also experiences. But outwardly, they are different because the bodily behaviour is conditioned by differences in *prarabdha karma*.

Jagac-citraṁ sva-caitanyaḥ paṭe citra mivār pitam, māyayā tadu pekṣaiva caitanyaṁ pari śeṣyatām (289). In this chapter, which is called Citradipa – that is, illustration by the analogy of a painted picture – the unreality of the world finally in relation to the Supreme Brahman has been

explained in all detail. Having known this, let consciousness fix itself in Brahman only, the background of all experience, and let not the consciousness run after the varieties of movements of shadows. And let not anyone be carried away by the picturesque presentation of ink on the canvas, but habituate oneself to the background of the presentation – the pure cloth, in the case of the painted picture, and Brahman Universal here in the case of the illustration.

Citra dīpa mimam̃ nityam̃ ye'nu sandadhate budhāḥ, paśyanto'pi jagac-citraṃ te muhyanti na pūrva-vat (290). Here the author gives us a great promise: Whoever daily studies this sixth chapter and contemplates its meaning every day, such people, even if they behold the world with their own eyes, will not again be attached to the world as they were earlier. The delusion that was earlier will not pursue them again, provided deep contemplation is bestowed on the meaning of this chapter, Citradīpa, which has been explained in great variety of detail.

Citradīpa, the sixth chapter of Panchadasi, here concludes.

CHAPTER 7: TRIPTIDIPA PRAKARANAM – LIGHT ON SUPREME SATISFACTION, VERSES 1-15

Then comes the seventh chapter, which is called Triptidipa, Light on Satisfaction. The sixth chapter was called Light on the Analogy of a Painted Picture, Citradipa. Now it is called Triptidipa – Light on Satisfaction. What actually is satisfaction? In the beginning, a verse is quoted from the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad.

Ātmānaṁ cet vijānīyāt ayam asmīti pūrusaḥ, kimicchana kasya kāmāya śarīraṁ anu sanjvaret (1). This is from the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad. If one has realised one's own Self and has convinced oneself as to the certainty of the Self being everything, then for what purpose, desiring what, with what intention will a person run after things in the world and why should one take a birth into this body? This is the meaning of this verse.

Brahmaivedaṁ aṁṛtaṁ purastād brahma paścad brahma, dakṣiṇataś cottareṇa, adhaścordhvaṁ ca praśṛtaṁ brahmaivedaṁ viśvam idaṁ variṣṭhaṁ (Mundaka 2.2.11) is a mantra from the Mundakopanishad. From above, from below, from the right, left, top and bottom, Brahman is flooding us from all sides. What is it that we want in this world? In the middle of the ocean, we are asking for water. So is the case with a person desiring objects in the world. While he is flooded with that original source of all things which is the granter of all boons and blessings, when he is inundated with that from all sides and directions, like a fish inside the ocean asking for drinking water, will a person run after things in the world? Will that

have any meaning whatsoever? Such a predicament will not arise in the case of one who has attained the Self.

Asyāḥ śrute rabhi prāyaḥ samya gatra vicāryate, jīvan muktasya yā tṛpiḥ sā tena viśadāyate (2). Now, the purpose of this seventh chapter is to investigate into the meaning of this great sentence of the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad. What does this mantra mean, actually? If this *purusha* knows the Self as identical with one's own self, for what purpose, and desiring which item, will one enter into this body? This is a literal translation of this great mantra of the Upanishad. It has tremendous implications. These implications and profundities are now being discussed throughout the seventh chapter.

Māya bhāsenā jīveṣau karotīti śrutatvataḥ, kalpitā veva jīveṣau tābhyāṁ sarvaṁ prakalpitaṁ (3). A verse meaning almost the same as one that we studied in the sixth chapter is now once again told to us. By the reflection in twofold ways in the properties of *maya* that is *sattva* or *rajas*, there is the manifestation of Ishvara and *jiva*. The creative principle and the individual sufferer are projections of the same Brahman consciousness, the *jiva* being the reflection of Brahman consciousness through the *rajasic* and *tamasic* qualities of *prakriti*, and Ishvara being the reflection of the same Brahman consciousness through the pure *sattva* of *prakriti*. And the whole world is flooded with only these two things: the creative operative force of Ishvara working everywhere and the desires and the sufferings of *jivas* which they undergo everywhere. The entire world is nothing but a scenery of the operation of Ishvara on the one hand and the

indulgences of the *jiva* on the other hand. This is the world, briefly put.

Īkṣaṇādi prave śāntā sṛṣṭir īśena kalpitā, jāgradādi vimokṣantah saṁsāro jīva kalpitaḥ (4). We have also read this verse in the previous chapter. Right from the will of Brahman to concentrate on the future possibility of creation becoming Ishvara thereby – hence starting with will, then becoming Hiranyagarbha, then becoming Ishvara, then manifesting itself as space and time, then *sabda tanmatra*, etc., and the five elements, until the Brahman consciousness manifests itself through all these degrees of evolution, and also until it enters into each one of them by way of immanence – God’s creation is complete. This is called *Ishvara-srishti*.

But when the individual, which is also pervaded by the same Brahman consciousness, begins to assert its independence somehow or other for reasons unknown, it gets severed from its relationship with the Universal consciousness. It falls. There is a fall, as they call it. And the fall is the headlong descent of a topsy-turvy awareness of *jiva* consciousness which mistakes the external for the internal and the internal for the external, the right for the left and the left for the right, and becomes artificially conscious of a world apparently outside it. This is called the waking state. Up to the conclusion of *Ishvara-srishti*, there is no such thing as waking consciousness. It is eternal consciousness. The waking consciousness is characterised by externality of perception, whereas in Ishvara *tattva* there is no externality. Here is the difference.

So the *jiva* falls headlong, down into *samsara*. There is waking consciousness of an external world, and it is again seen in the dream world, and due to fatigue it becomes exhausted and falls into sleep and wakes up from sleep and again becomes entangled in the waking consciousness. This cycle of *samsara* continues in the *jiva*. These are the two kinds of creation, *Ishvara-srishti* and *jiva-srishti* – God’s creation and individual’s creation.

Bhramā dhiṣṭhāna bhūtātmā kūṣasthā saṅga cidvapuḥ, anyonyā dhyāsato’saṅga dhīstha jīvo’tra pūruṣaḥ (5). In the mantra quoted from the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad, the word *purusha* is used – where this *purusha* is to know the Atman as identical with one’s own Self. Now, who is this *purusha*? The *purusha* is nothing but the *jiva*. It is the *jiva* that is aspiring for the knowledge of the Self. That consciousness which is rooted in a substratum called *Kutastha-chaitanya*, really unattached as the Kutastha Himself is, consciousness which is detached from everything else – though this is the essential nature of the *jiva* consciousness in terms of the Kutastha which is its substratum, yet what happens is that there is *anyo’nyadhyasa*, mutual superimposition of characters. We need not go into the details of all this because we have studied it already in the earlier chapter – how one thing is superimposed on the other.

The Universality of consciousness, which is the Kutastha nature, is superimposed on the *jiva* so that the *jiva* wrongly begins to feel that it is not going to die. It will always be there, perpetually living this world; and conversely, the limitations, the finitude which is of the *jiva*

is transferred to the *Kutastha-chaitanya* and one beings to feel “I am small, I am short, I am high, I am low,” and so on are the descriptions of oneself.

This dual, mutual superimposition is called *anyo'nyadhyasa*, subject to which one becomes the individual *jiva*. This *jiva* it is that is referred to by the word *purusha* in this quoted verse from the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad.

Sādhiṣṭhāno vimokṣādaḥ jīvo'dhikriyate na tu, kevalo niradhiṣṭhāna vibhrānteḥ kvāpya siddhitaḥ (6). It is not the *Kutastha-chaitanya* that is asking for moksha, because *Kutastha chaitanya* is Universal consciousness appearing to be limited within this pot-like limitation of our body. And what is it then that actually aspires for moksha? It is not the ether that is in the pot; it is the ether that is reflected in the water that is poured into the pot that aspires for moksha. It is a reflected consciousness that goes by the name of *jiva* which aspires for freedom and liberation. The Pure Consciousness that is the *Kutastha* itself need not aspire, because it is unconnected with things. The sorrows of life are also experienced by the *jiva*, and the aspiration for liberation also is an exercise of the *jiva* consciousness only.

Adhiṣṭhānāmśa saṁyuktaṁ bhramāmśam avalambate, yadā tadā'haṁ saṁsārīti evaṁ jīvo'bhimanyate (7). When this *jiva* which is superimposed on the *Kutastha* begins to identify itself with that limited personality, it begins to cry: “I am involved. I am in *samsara*. I am in the ocean of suffering.” And then it wants freedom from suffering.

Bhramām śasya tiraskārāt adhiṣṭhāna pradhānatā, yadā tadā cidāmtmāham asaṅgo'smiti buddhyate (8).

When by deep meditation one is enabled to detach the consciousness from this finitude of experience and convince oneself that we are basically the *Kutastha chaitanya*, then one feels happy inside. If we are day in and day out concerned only with this identity of ours, with this *jiva* consciousness, then sorrow is the only thing that we can reap in this world. There cannot be a moment's rest and peace or respite here. But there are occasions when, due to spiritual education, we are reminded of the fact of our not being so very identical with the body as it is made to appear – that our essence is something else.

So even if we die, actually nothing is lost. This consciousness, this conviction, keeps us alive and gives us a little peace of mind for some time. Otherwise, if the *jiva* consciousness is a hundred percent our heritage, we will not enjoy peace here, even for three minutes.

Nāsaṅge'hankṛtir yuktā kathām asmīti cet śrṇu, edo mukhyo dvāva mukhāv ityārtha strividho'hamah (9). How is it possible for the unattached *Kutastha chaitanya* to get identified with *ahamkara*, or egoism? How does the infinite become the finite? How does *ahamkara* enter into this Universal *Kutastha-chaitanya*? For this we must understand what this *ahamkara* is.

What is egoism? The egoism is of three kinds. According to Yoga Vasishtha, the three kinds of *ahamkara* are as follows. "I am this body." This is one kind of *ahamkara*. "I am nothing." This is another kind of *ahamkara*. "I am everything." This is a third kind of *ahamkara*. The teacher of the Yoga Vasishtha tells us there is no harm if we feel that we are nothing. There is also no

harm if we feel that we are everything. But if we feel that we are only something, then we are caught.

Sankaracharya was inside, and his disciple came and knocked at the door. Sankaracharya said, “Who is that?”

“I,” replied the disciple.

“Let it either expand to infinity or let it annihilate itself.” This is what the Guru spoke from inside. “I – Let it either expand itself to infinity, or let it annihilate itself. But let it not identify itself only with something. Either you are nothing or everything, but not something.” These are the three kinds of *ahamkara* according to the Yoga Vasishtha.

Anyonyā dhyāsa rūpeṇa kūṭ asthā bhāsa yorvapuḥ, eki bhūya bhaven mukhyas tatra mūḍhaiḥ prayujyate (10). One kind of *ahamkara* is the obvious one that we are experiencing every day. That is caused by the mutual superimposition of qualities, *anyo'nyadhyasa*. That is, the *chidabhasa chaitanya* is identified with the Kutastha and Kutastha is identified with the *chidabhasa chaitanya*. This word *chidabhasa* occurs several times in the Panchadasi. We must know what this word means. *Chidabhasa* means reflection of consciousness. *Chid* means consciousness; *abhasa* is reflection.

The Kutastha Universal Atman getting reflected through the *buddhi*, or the intellect, is called *chidabhasa*. The reflected consciousness through the *buddhi* is called *chidabhasa*. This *chidabhasa* is many a time identified with the personality. It assumes an egoism. The moment the consciousness of Kutastha reflects itself through the *buddhi*, egoism comes in. *Chidabhasa* and *ahamkara* are juxtaposed. They cannot be separated. When the one is, the

other also is there. We cannot have *ahamkara*, or ego consciousness, unless there is a reflection which is *chidabhasa*. The moment *chidabhasa* takes place, the ego also crops up. This is one kind of *ahamkara* which has to be known.

Prthagā bhāsa kūṭasthau amukhau tatra taṭva vit, paryāyeṇa prayunkte'haṁ śabdaṁ loke ca vaidike (11). The other *ahamkara* is the feeling, consciousness that "I am *Kutastha-chaitanya* and I am not associated with the reflection." That is also a kind of *ahamkara* because there is a feeling "I am something". The feeling or the conviction that the reflected consciousness is not in any way connected with the original *Kutastha* consciousness and the one is different from the other – the awareness of the distinction between these two types of awareness – that is the second variety of *ahamkara* variety.

The *jivanmukta purushas* generally are in this condition where they have a consciousness of their existence; they know that they are living in this body, but they know that they are not identified with the body. As we noted earlier, the *karmaja adhyasa* is operative even in the case of a *jivanmukta*, but the *bhramaja* and the *sahaja adhyasas* are not operative in the *jivanmukta purusha*. These terms should be kept in mind always since they occur many a time.

Laukika vayvahāre'haṁ gacchāmī tyādike bhudaḥ, vivicaiva cidā bhāsaṁ kūṭasthāt taṁ vivikṣati (12). "I am coming in a few minutes." When we say this, whom are we referring to? 'I'. It is a complete mix-up of *chidabhasa* and

ahamkara with this body consciousness. This is the third kind of *ahamkara*, which is entirely lodged in the body.

Asaṅgo'haṁ cidātmāham iti śāstrīya dṛṣṭitaḥ, ahaṁ śabdaṁ prayuṅkte'yaṁ kūtasthe kevale budhaḥ (13). The knowledgeable person, the enlightened one, knows that he is the totally unattached Pure Consciousness. This Knowledge that has arisen by deep study of scriptures and by learning from the Guru and by *sravana*, *manana*, *nididhyasana* – this *ahamkara* of the *jivanmukta* is pure *shuddha ahamkara*, which is the feeling of “I am Pure Consciousness”. The feeling “I am Pure Consciousness” also is a kind of *ahamkara*. This is another variety altogether.

Jñānitājñānite tvātmā bhāsasyaiva na cāt manaḥ, tathā ca kathamā bhāsaḥ kūṭastho'smīti buḍhyatām (14). Knowing and not knowing the truth as it is, is a character of the reflection of consciousness. Kutastha does not have these qualities. The immortal Atman that we are, Kutastha as it is called, neither has a desire to know, nor is it in a state of ignorance at any time. Who is it that is in ignorance then? It is this *chidabhasa* – consciousness getting reflected through the intellect and becoming an individual personality. So only in that condition of reflection there is a possibility of not knowing truth and then aspiring for truth.

Nāyaṁ doṣaś cidā bhāsaḥ kūṭasthaika svabhāva vān, ābhāsatvā sya mithyā tvāt kūṭasthatvā avaśeṣaṇāt (15). Let the seeker go on, therefore, dwelling upon this great truth that Kutastha is unattached, though without its existence even the *chidabhasa* cannot exist. Without its existence, without the light of the Kutastha *chaitanya* on *chidabhasa*,

ahamkara or ego also cannot exist. And the body also cannot move without the light of that Kutastha. Though this is the fact, Kutastha is totally detached, as the sun in the sky is totally detached in spite of the fact that all movements in the world are attributable to his existence.

The *abhasa*, the reflection, *chidabhasa*, is an apparent illumination, like a light falling on a mirror. The reflection, the conditioning, the characterisation or the limitation of the reflection is caused by the medium through which the reflection takes place – in a mirror, for instance, or here in the case of the individual, the intellect. The intellect varies from person to person because the intellect is the residuum of the whole *prarabdha* of *jivas* – and so as is the difference in the working of the *prarabdha karma* of *jivas*, so is also the feeling of *ahamkara* different from one another for the same reason.

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CHAPTER 7: TRIPTIDIPA PRAKARANAM – LIGHT ON SUPREME SATISFACTION, VERSES 16-22

Kūṭastho'smīti bodho'pi mithyā cenneti ko vadet, na hi satyatayā bhīṣṭam rajju sarpa visarpaṇam (16). A question is generally raised: “How does knowledge arise in a person?” It cannot be due to the effort of the person, because effort in the right direction is not possible unless there is some knowledge. We cannot say that human effort is the cause of the rise of knowledge in a person, because that effort itself requires some knowledge at the back of it. How does knowledge arise? This question was also raised by Acharya Sankara in his Brahma Sutra commentary. There is no answer to this question.

How does evolution take place? We are told that there is a movement of life from the rudimentary stages up to the higher levels – from mineral to plant, plant to animal, animal to human being. Who causes the push of this evolutionary process? Does the plant one day start thinking, “Tomorrow I shall become an animal?” No. The plant has no consciousness of that futurity. Does the animal think that it should become a human being after some time? Is it the animal's effort that transforms it into a human being? No.

Whose effort is it then? If there is no cause at all to end its operation, it would mean that effects can follow without causes. Anything can happen at any time with no meaning at all. But the world does not seem to be working in a chaotic manner. Nothing irrational or meaningless takes place in the world. On a careful investigation, logically and

scientifically, we realise that the world is perfect in every sense. In that perfect world, how can there be irrational elements such as something coming from nothing? Therefore, how can a human being evolve from the lower species unless there is an impulse caused by something which is responsible for the push of consciousness from the lower to the higher level? Nobody can answer this question. Even great rationalists like Acharya Sankara had nothing more to say than that perhaps it is the grace of God.

The ultra-monistic type of thinking, which is the characteristic of philosophies like Acharya Sankara's, also brings in the grace of God. All the while it has been told us that God, this creative principle Ishvara, is only a tentative manifestation of the Absolute Brahman through the *mulaprakriti's sattva guna* quality. That means to say, no special importance has been given to this reflected consciousness known as Ishvara. All the importance has gone to Brahman. Yet, when we feel confronted with the terrible question like this, we resort to God. "Bhagavan *ki iccha*." We always say that.

This verse that we read just now has some relevance to a question of this kind. Who is it that attains salvation? The *Kutastha chaitanya*, the pure Atman inside which is Universal in its nature, need not have to strive for liberation. The physical body does not attain liberation, and not even the mind which gets dissolved in liberation. The five sheaths are also cast off. After the five sheaths we have only the Atman, pure and simple. There is nothing in between.

If the moksha that is spoken of in such glorious terms is not what is attained by the Kutastha Universal consciousness and not by the five sheaths, who attains it? Is there anything called attainment? “It is the *jiva* that attains it” is a tentative answer; but what do we mean by the *jiva*? It is a makeshift arrangement between the five sheaths on one side and the Atman consciousness, Kutastha, on the other side. There is no such thing as *jiva* independently by itself. It is apparently there as a kind of reflection of the Kutastha Atman in the intellect, which is the purified form of the five sheaths.

Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj used to tell a story in connection with this peculiar *jiva* which neither belongs to the five sheaths nor belongs to the Kutastha, yet wreaks havoc. There was a marriage feast. Hundreds of people were running hither and thither, and there was dinner on the table. Hundreds were sitting, and nobody knew who was sitting and eating. In this crowd, how can one know who is eating, because each one was thinking that a person there sitting at the table must be belonging to either of the two parties – the girl’s side party or the boy’s side party. There were only two parties at the wedding and if someone was not recognisable by one party, they thought that perhaps he belonged to the other party, so why should they unnecessarily talk to him? Also, it is not polite to ask, “Who are you?” And the other party also thought that they should not talk like that, as he may be a person from the other side and they should not be impolite by asking him, “Who are you?” on that auspicious occasion.

When the wedding was over all the people departed, one by one, but there was one person who would not go. He remained in the in-laws' house. They did not say anything; they were embarrassed. They thought perhaps he is one of the members of the other party that had left. They could not enquire if he belonged to the other party, because politeness is important. So he went on eating and living there, and having all the enjoyments. This went on for days together. He wouldn't budge. They were very much upset as it was very difficult situation. One day they could not bear it any more. They said, "Please let us know from where you have come." The next day he ran away from that place. He did not belong either to that party or this party; he made a good bargain of this chaos of the wedding feast and enjoyed life very well for days together, creating a false impression that he belongs to some party. So is this *jiva*.

There are some people, very simple, ordinary persons, who come to know somehow or other that a VIP is coming at such and such a time, on such and such a railway train. He knows that when they arrive there will be big garlanding and photographing and so on, so suddenly he will put a garland on himself and stand nearby and get photographed with everybody. Afterwards he will show the photograph and say, "I was also a VIP and my photograph was taken." If many photographs are taken, he is a very big man because he has been photographed with so many VIPs. He himself purchased the garland, put it on and then stood there to be in the photographs.

This is how the *jiva* works here – belonging neither to Brahman, the Absolute, nor to this physical world. How

does moksha take place? Is it a real attainment, or is the attainment itself an unreal process? This has been illustrated by an analogy. Suppose we are fast asleep and we are dreaming that a tiger is pouncing on us. It roars so loudly that we yell and get up from sleep. That tiger did not really exist. The roar of the tiger was also not really there. But our waking up was real.

An unreal cause can produce a real effect. Is it possible? Sometimes we feel like we are falling from a tree. Such a thud! We feel that we have fallen from a tall tree; after waking up we start rubbing our knee to see whether it is alright – such pain we feel. How could an unreal tiger's roar create a real waking? Is this not a contradiction of the relation between cause and effect? Can an unreal cause produce a real effect? But here is an example of such a case. An unreal tiger produces a real waking. Otherwise we would have simply kept quiet, listening to the roar.

They say the Guru is like the tiger; his teaching is like a roar. And we are living in this dream world. The Guru is also inside the dream world; he is not outside. He is like the tiger. That is the only difference. We are like an ordinary person; the Guru is like a tiger. His teaching is like a roar. It is enough to shake us up from our slumber and create an experience that is transcendental. Though the *jiva* that is aspiring for moksha is itself not a real entity, it can attain real salvation in just the same way as the fright created by the roaring of a tiger in dream was not a real fright, but that unreal fright created a real waking.

The world is unreal, finally. Neither our scriptures, nor the Guru or the teaching can be regarded as finally valid in

the light of the Absolute Brahman. There is a homeopathic saying in Latin, "*similia similibus curentur*". Like cures like. Our ignorance is not a real state of affairs. It is a kind of obscuration caused by certain factors which cannot be regarded as ultimately real. To remove that obscuration, we do not require a real cause.

There was a boy who was having his lunch – a little kid. He saw a lizard moving on the wall. He was taking his meal and going on looking at the lizard. It was moving this way and that way. After a few minutes, he found it was not there. He looked from all sides. The lizard was missing. He thought it had gone inside him. He felt that the lizard had gone inside his stomach. He vomited, yelled, cried, and beat his breast at what had happened. The parents came. "Oh, the lizard has gone inside me!" he cried. They called the doctor, who gave some emetic. The boy vomited, but no lizard came out. So bad and so sick he became, that they thought there was no cure for him because the lizard was inside the stomach. After a few minutes, suddenly the boy saw the lizard on the wall. "Oh it is there, it is there!" And in a minute he was alright. The doctors had to go away, as there was no need for a doctor at all. An unreal sickness does not require a real treatment. But the sickness was so realistic that he was vomiting. How could vomiting, which was so real, be regarded as an unreal phenomenon?

It is real from the point of view of the experience of the person, but totally unreal from the point of view of its real cause. When the real lizard was seen, immediately the illness vanished. The doctors had to quit, and no fees had to be paid because they did not have to treat the boy.

This question that is raised in Vedanta philosophy is very crucial. The unreality of a thing or the reality of a thing is not a glib question and a glib answer. We cannot simply raise this question and expect one answer to it. There are great authors on Vedanta and metaphysics, such as Madhusudana Saraswati who wrote Advaitasiddhi, a large text that gives at least nineteen definitions of what unreality can be.

Unreality is not just as we think. The unreality of horns on the head of a human being is different in nature from the unreality of the snake seen in a rope. Both are unreal, but there is a difference between these two kinds of unrealities because the horns of a human being are never seen at all. They are *atyanta abhava*, meaning absolutely non-existent. But the snake in the rope is not absolutely non-existent; it is relatively non-existent. As long as it is perceived, it is there; when it is not perceived, it is not there. So it has a relative non-existence and also a relative existence. It is not like a tail of a human being or horns of a hare.

Varieties of unrealities are there. What kind of unreality do we attribute to this world? Is it like a horn on a human being's head? It is not so, because horns cannot be seen. We are seeing the world. The illustration is that it is something like the snake in the rope. Misconception – wrong, erroneous perception – is the cause of the appearance of something outside us as the world.

As the appearance of bondage in the form of the perception of the world outside is a relatively valid experience and not an absolutely valid experience, we

require only a relatively valid treatment for it – like the teaching of a scripture or the word of a Guru, or the thoughts that we entertain in the meditation process, though all these activities come within dream only. It does not mean that dream is totally unreal because if we have hunger in dream, we can have a dream lunch and we will be satisfied with that. If we are thirsty in dream, we can have dream water; it will quench our thirst. It does not mean that it is totally meaningless, because corresponding causes are producing corresponding effects. The verse that follows tells us: “As is the god, so is the offering.”

Kūṣastho’smīti bodho’pi mithyā cenneti ko vadet. The consciousness that we are the Kutastha Atman also is a part of the dream world. It is as unreal as the snake in the rope, but it is very real as the snake in the rope. It is unreal because the rope cannot become a snake. It is real because we jumped over it in fear. An unreal, non-existent thing cannot cause a real jumping in fright. It was there for the time being. So there is an indescribable, inexplicable phenomenon which is relatively real and relatively unreal. As is the case of the relation between the rope and the snake, that is the relation between the world and God.

Tādṛśenāpi bodhena saṁsāro hi nivartate, yaksā nurūpo hi balir ityāhur laukikā janāḥ (17). We do not require an absolutely real cause to remove an ignorance which is not ultimately real. If our ignorance is also an eternal substance, then nobody could remove that ignorance by any effort, because eternity cannot be destroyed. Since it is not eternal, it is subject to *badha*, or destruction. It is not to be considered as real because that

which is subject to destruction, that which has an end, cannot be regarded as real. Since it is not ultimately real, we do not have to bring in a real treatment for it, and the comparatively unreal treatments such as study of scriptures, Guru *seva*, etc., are sufficient.

Yaksā nurūpo hi balir ityāhur laukikā janāḥ. If we worship a demon, we have to offer that particular sacrament which is to the liking of the demon. If we worship a goat, we have to give only green leaves to it. If we worship a cow, we may give it only grass. If we worship an elephant, we will give it tender trees. And if we worship a human being, we give a good meal.

Now, what is the meaning of worship? It is the offering of that which is necessary under a given condition in respect of the nature of that thing which we are adoring. The offering is to be in accordance with the nature of that which is going to receive our offering. Here, the offering is made to the ignorance that obscures our knowledge of the Supreme Being – and it is like a demon sitting in front of us. Inasmuch as it is not a god, its power is very little.

Therefore, relatively valid treatments of knowledge through the scripture and Guru's instruction may be valid. We cannot make a sudden statement as to what kind of world it is in which we are living. Nobody can say whether it is real; nobody can say whether it is unreal. If it is true that we are really bound, there is no hope of salvation or freedom. If our bondage is real, how can it be removed, because already we have accepted that it is real. Real things cannot be destroyed. And an unreal thing need not be

destroyed. What are we destroying then? Here is an enigma before us.

Tasmā dābhāsa puruṣaḥ sakūṭastho vivicya tam, kūṭastho'smīti vijñātum arhatī tyabhyadhāt śrutiḥ (18). It is the *abhāsa puruṣa*, *chidabhāsa*, reflection of the *Kutastha chaitanya* in the intellect, which pretends to be independent by itself, notwithstanding the fact that it cannot exist for a moment without the reflection being there from the *Kutastha*. That *jiva*, which is an upstart that has suddenly erupted between the five sheaths on the one hand and the *Kutastha* on the other hand, is that which is aspiring for liberation, and is that which has the feeling that it is bound.

Asandigdḥā viparyaya bodho dehātamanī kṣyate, tadva datreti nirṇetum ayamitya bhidhī yate (19). As is the intensity of the feeling of identity of oneself with this body, so is it that we are trying to achieve in the realisation of Brahman. This point has been touched upon earlier. We have no doubt whatsoever that we are this body. We do not require proof to establish the truth of our identity with this body; it is so obvious.

Our feeling and experience of our identity with Brahman should be as obvious. One need not have to rack one's head and scratch one's body again and again and try to find out how to get identity with Brahman. We have to do meditation, we have to do *japa*, we have to pray, we have to do so many things to convince ourselves that there is such a thing called the Absolute Brahman – and even more difficult is the experience of identity. The nature of the identity that we feel with our body will also explain the

nature of the difficulty in realising Brahman. How hard is this body consciousness! So hard is this path to Brahman.

Dehātma jñāna vajjñānaṁ dehātma jñāna bādhakam, ātmanyeva bhava dyasya sa necchaṇapi mucyate (20). If the intensity that one feels in terms of identity of consciousness with this body is also felt in relation to Brahman, *mukti*, moksha is in our hand. It will be ours even if we do not want it. When we wake up, the sunlight is on our face whether we want it or not. Necchaṇapi mucyate: Even if we don't want it, it will come to us.

Ayamitya parokṣa tvam ucyate cetta ducyatām, svayaṁ prakāśa caitanyam aparokṣaṁ sadā yataḥ (21). This is a commentary on the verse from the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad that was quoted in the beginning; and that has to be kept in mind always. "I am." When this Atman realises itself as "I am", or this *purusha* realises this Atman as "I am", why should anyone desire anything in this world, and why should anyone wish to enter into this body once again, as if one would like to have fever again and again?

This "I am" *sabda*, this *purusha* – the demonstrative pronoun 'this' – indicates the Self-luminous Atman. It is a directly experienced something. This Atman that is within us is sometimes felt to be directly experienced, sometimes indirectly felt. For all practical purposes, it is not directly felt at all. We feel only the body directly – the world, and the body, and all its relations. But if enquiry is conducted into the nature of the consciousness, which is what is actually operating through us in all the three states of waking, dreaming and sleep, we will realise on an analysis

of these three states that consciousness could exist as a Self-luminous independent something in the state of deep sleep, with no relation whatsoever with the three states or relation with the five *koshas*.

Parokṣa maparokṣaṁ ca jñāna majñāna mityadaḥ, nityā parokṣa rūpe'pi davayaṁ syād daśame yathā (22). Knowledge is direct and indirect, as the case may be. There can be knowledge, and also absence of knowledge. Even if there is something which is directly observable, one can be oblivious of that fact. One can be oblivious of even a directly observable something, as in the case of the tenth man – daśame yathā.

The story of the tenth man is well known. Ten very wise men crossed a river, wading through the waters with some difficulty. Their wisdom was so much that after crossing they began to doubt whether or not all of them had crossed or whether some of them had gone into the water, so one of them started counting. They stood in line while one began counting. He counted the men before him: one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine. Nine? Only nine. Again he counted, several times. There was no tenth person; only nine were there. Then another man said, “Let me count,” so this gentleman went and stood in the line; and the other man also found only nine.

They started crying, beating their breasts, thinking that one of them must have gone into the water. Now here, *avarana* and *vikshepa* acted on them. *Avarana* is the unconsciousness of the fact of their being such a thing called a tenth man. The tenth man was not visible because the tenth man was not one of the objects being

counted. The tenth man was not the counted thing, but the counter himself and, therefore, it was not possible for them to know that the tenth man existed.

The unconsciousness of the existence of the tenth man is called veil, or *avarana*. The crying and the weeping and the hitting of the head against the wall and the bleeding caused thereby is the *vikshepa*. This unreal unconsciousness of the presence of the tenth man caused a real bleeding of the head. Here again is an illustration of a peculiar situation where an unreal cause produces a real effect. The point is that the cause was relatively real, as is the case with the perception of a snake in the rope; and the wound may continue for some days, as the *prarabdha karma* may continue for some days.

Continuing our earlier story, another man, who was walking past, saw them crying and beating their breasts. Going up to them he said, "What is the matter with you all? Why are you are crying?" "No, a very sorry state of affairs. One of us has been drowned in the river."

"I see. How many were you?" "Ten." "Ten? But you are ten now. I am seeing you." "No, we are only nine." "Ten. You are ten." Then one of them said, "No, please see." They again counted, and said there are only nine. "You foolish man! You are the tenth man. You stand there. I will count." And all the ten were there. Then the sorrow vanished immediately.

They had been so grief-stricken, and the sorrow was real; the sorrow was not unreal. The real sorrow vanished in one second by the admonition that they got from a good Samaritan Guru. The Guru is the passer-by who sees the

crying of the people and then points out that the Atman is not somewhere else, and we need not run from the Himalayas to Rome or from San Francisco to Rishikesh to find this Atman. It is right there where we are sitting. We are carrying it wherever we go, and we are searching for *ourselves* – like a musk deer which is supposed to be running in all directions to find the source of the fragrance of the musk, while actually the musk is from its own body; or like a person searching for the necklace which she is wearing, thinking it to be lost. Many times I myself have searched for spectacles that were on my eyes! Some kind of delusion took place because I was wearing them yet I was searching for where I had put them. It took some time to realise that I was wearing them.

Such is the dramatic experience we are passing through. This world is a mystery indeed. These stories, these analogies, these comparisons, these humorous stories that I told you are all to point out that we need not be so much worried about this world as we are wont to, because one day or the other it is going to vanish. Nobody can be eternally sick. One day the sickness has to go – and if God exists, everything shall be well.

Discourse 39

CHAPTER 7: TRIPTIDIPA PRAKARANAM – LIGHT ON SUPREME SATISFACTION, VERSES 23-40

Nava saṅkhyā hṛta jñāno daśamo vibhramāt tadā, na vetti daśamo'smīti vīkṣya māṇo'pi tān nava (23). In the case of the illustration of the ten persons crossing a river and wanting to know if all are alive, one of them counted the rest of them and found there were only nine. And every time the counting showed only nine in number; one was missing.

The concentration of the mind on the nine persons was so intense that the mind had lost its awareness of its abode being in the counter himself. We never feel that we are anything worth the while in this world in comparison with the vast figure of this mighty world in front of us. The number outweighs the quality of the counting individual.

Quantitatively the world is bigger than every individual; it is perfectly true. The astronomical universe is so large that it can pound to dust even the strongest of persons in the world. But this person who is capable of being pounded by the majesty and the power of the cosmos is aware that he is being pounded, whereas the universe does not know that it is pounding this person. If a stone falls on a person and crushes him, it does not follow that the stone is superior to that person. The stone does not know that it is crushing a person, whereas the person is aware that he is being crushed. Here is the difference between the two categories. Quantity is not always the criterion of the judgement of value. Quality is superior. The quality of consciousness in

the human individual surpasses all other quantitative numbers in other species of beings.

Coming back to the story of the man who counted nine men, the concentration of the mind was on the number nine because he was seeing nine people – as his eyes were fixed on the nine people – and whatever was seen with the eyes was alone considered as real and whatever was not visible did not exist. The person who was counting the nine people did not exist at all because existence is identified with perceptibility. That which is seen is there; if it is not seen, it is not there. Such is the illusion that is cast by the engagement of consciousness on external quantity, forgetting completely the qualitative importance of its otherwise so-called individuality.

Na bhāti nāsti daśama iti svam daśamaṁ tadā, matvā vakti tadajñāna kṛtam āvaraṇaṁ viduḥ (24). The people who do not find the tenth man, what do they say? They say that such a person, the tenth one, does not exist. He is no more there, as he is not seen. He is not seen and, therefore, he is not there. This veil of ignorance that prevents the person who counts from knowing (counting) himself is called *avarana*, or a veil projected by the ignorance of the presence of that person.

First of all there is an abolition of the consciousness of one's own existence on account of the intense consciousness of only other people. The annihilation of self-consciousness in respect of oneself covers the consciousness of one's own self. That covering is called veil. The ignorance as such is called *ajnana*. *Ajnana* and

avarana are two aspects of not knowing a thing which is really there.

Nadyāṁ mamāra daśama iti śocan praroditi, ajñān kṛta vikṣepaṁ rodanādirṁ vidur buḍhāh (25). The tenth man has been drowned in the water, and so all the people start crying because one person has been drowned in the river. The ignorance of the tenth person being there causes the *vikshepa* or the distraction, the outward consciousness of grief and crying, etc. There is, first of all, no knowledge at all of that which is there. Now, secondly, there is knowledge of the fact of grief caused by the absence of the person who is not visible.

Firstly, there is an ignorance, then there is a veil, and then there is an actual engagement in some action, which is called *vikshepa* or distraction. In the case of this illustration, the distraction or the *vikshepa* is the act of crying, hitting the head against the wall, causing a bleeding wound, etc. These are the outcome in the form of *vikshepa*, of the ignorance of the fact of there being the tenth person.

Na mṛto daśamo'stīti śrutvāpta vacanaṁ tadā, paroḁṣa tvena daśamaṁ vetti svargādi lokavat (26). Suppose some passerby says that all the ten are alive, and he shows by an actual demonstration of counting that the ten are there. He tells the man who counted to also stand in the line, and then he says, "See, you are ten." This is called indirect knowledge. The tenth man is existing. Here the knowledge is indirectly gained by hearing the words of a reliable person who came that way.

The tenth man is not dead; the tenth man is alive. This is the good word that they heard, as a word that comes

from the Guru. This kind of knowledge is indirect knowledge. Direct experience is not there, but at least there is a conviction born of the words heard from a reliable person that the tenth man does exist. “The Atman does exist,” says the Guru. Nobody has seen the Atman, but even this good word is sufficiently comforting and a solace.

Seeing the Atman separately, independently by experience, is a different matter. That is called direct knowledge. But indirect knowledge is also good enough because it gives some kind of satisfaction: After all, it is there; it is not that it is not there. This kind of knowledge, obtained secondarily from someone, is called indirect knowledge – *paroksa jnana*.

Tvameva daśamo’sīti gaṇayitvā pradarśitaḥ, aparokṣa tayā jñātvā hr̥ṣyatyeva na roditi (27). Then that gentleman who counted the ten says, “You are the tenth.” First it was said that the tenth person does exist. Now he says, “You, yourself, who was counting, are the tenth.” That person has now become conscious of his own self as the tenth person. The missing one is one’s own self. Therefore, the knowledge arises here directly, apart from the indirect knowledge obtained earlier by merely listening to the truth that the tenth man existed.

We are searching for the Atman in this world. We go to Brindavan, Mathura, Kashi, etc., in order to search for the Atman. We may run about anywhere, but we will not find it. “Ayodhya *dhoondha*, Mathura *dhoondha*,” says Kabir in his poem, “and I found not anything there. I found it in the same place where I was sitting.” So we are in search of our own selves in our large pilgrimages, large tours. We are

searching for our own selves sitting where we are. We have lost our own selves. The tenth man cannot be found by any amount of travelling and moving about in pilgrimage, etc., because it is an awareness that is necessary for the purpose of dispelling that ignorance of the tenth man not being there.

Ajñānā vṛti vikṣepa dvidvidha jñāna tṛptayaḥ, śokāpagama ityete yojanīyā ścidātmani (28). This *jiva* consciousness passes through seven stages of experience. The whole of the seventh chapter of the Panchadasi is an exposition of these seven stages. The first stage is total ignorance of there being such a thing called the Atman. The second stage is a veiling of the consciousness and making one feel that it is not existing because it is not seen. The third stage is the distraction or the activity that is generated by the ignorance of one's own self. The fourth stage is the indirect knowledge that we receive from a Guru or a good, reliable person. The fifth stage is direct knowledge, actual experience. The sixth stage is the vanishing of all sorrow. The seventh is immense satisfaction.

Ajnana is first. *Avriti* is second. *Vikshepa* is third. *Paroksa jnana* is fourth. *Aparoksa jnana* is fifth. *Tripti* is sixth. *Shokapagama*, the abolition of all sorrow and the coming of happiness, is the seventh stage. These seven stages are the processes which the *jiva* consciousness passes through in its transmigratory life in search of truth.

Saṁsārā sakta cittaḥ sanś cidā bhāsaḥ kadācana, svayaṁ prakāśa kūṭasthaṁ svatattvaṁ naiva vettyayam (29). The *jiva* consciousness, notwithstanding the fact that it is existing only on account of a reflection that it receives

from the Kutastha, knows not the Kutastha. As we cannot see our own back, the *jiva* consciousness cannot know the Kutastha. The Kutastha is at the back of the *jiva* consciousness. It is the real light that is shed on the *jiva* medium. And what does the *jiva* feel? It identifies itself with the reflection only and cannot know wherefrom this reflection has come. It concludes, “I do not know the Kutastha.”

Na bhāti nāsti kūṣasthaḥ iti vakti prasaṅgataḥ, kartā bhoktā hamasmīti vikṣepaṁ prati padyate (30). Neither do I see the Kutastha Atman, nor do I feel that it exists at all. This is one side of the matter. The other side of the matter is the *jiva* begins to feel, “I am the doer of all deeds. I am the enjoyer of all experiences. I am the enjoyer and I am the doer.” This is the feeling, wrongly, which the *jiva* associates with itself. On the one hand, it denies the existence of the Atman or the Kutastha because it is not known. On the other hand, it assumes a false notion of itself being an individual doer and an enjoyer of things. It is like a mirror crying “I am very bright.” The mirror is not bright because it cannot shine in darkness. It shines because of the light that is falling on it. So this boast of the *jiva* that it is the doer and the enjoyer of things is totally unfounded.

Asti kūṣastha ityādaḥ parokṣaṁ vetti vārtayā, paścāt kūṣastha evāsmī tyevaṁ vetti vicārataḥ (31). By a gradual process of spiritual education, this *jiva* begins to realise through instructions received from the Guru or the master and the scripture that the Kutastha does exist. The Atman is. God is. For all practical purposes, we are deniers of God and the Atman. Nothing is seen about God; nothing is there

about the Atman. How can we know that it exists? By certain methods of argument, proof and scriptural evidence, the Guru manages to convince the student that God does exist and the Atman is. This is indirect knowledge. Direct knowledge is the actual sinking of oneself into the Kutastha Atman and attaining God-consciousness by itself. That is direct knowledge, *aparoksa jnana*.

Kartā bhokte tyeva mādi śokajātaṁ pramuñcati, kṛtaṁ kṛtyaṁ prāpaṇīyaṁ prāpta mityeva tuṣyati (32). After having attained this direct knowledge, the illusory feeling “I am the doer, I am the enjoyer” is cast aside. An illumined person will no more feel that he is the doer of things or the enjoyer of things. The whole universe is acting, and there is only one action taking place in the whole cosmos. Many activities are not taking place, and all enjoyments are also the enjoyments of the central will of the cosmos. Neither you, nor I, nor anybody else has any prerogative either to do a thing or to enjoy a thing.

“I have done what is to be done, I have enjoyed what is to be enjoyed, and I have obtained what is to be obtained.” This kind of threefold satisfaction arises after direct experience of the Atman. *Kratakṛitya*, *praptaprapya*, *jnatajneya* – these are the three qualities of an enlightened person. *Kratakṛitya* is one who has done whatever is to be done; nothing is left now. *Praptaprapya* is one who has obtained whatever is to be obtained and nothing more remains in the world to be obtained. *Jnatajneya* is to have known everything that is to be known; there is nothing

further to be known. Such illumination arises after deep experience.

Ajñāna māvṛtis tadvad vikṣepāśca parokṣa dhīḥ, aparokṣa mātiḥ śoka mokṣa śṛptir nirāṅkuśā. (33). Saptā vasthā imāḥ santi cidā bhāsasya tās vimau, bandha mokṣau sthitau tatra tistro bandha kṛtaḥ smṛtāḥ (34). These seven stages are repeated here once again: *ajnana* or ignorance, *avarana* or veiling, *vikshepa* or distraction, *paroksa jnana* or indirect knowledge, *aparoksa jnana* or direct experience, *shoka-moksha* or freedom from sorrow, and *tripti* or immense eternal bliss.

These stages are to be associated only with the *chidabhasa*, and not with Brahman. Brahman does not undergo these seven stages. The reflected consciousness which we call *chidabhasa* – or *jiva*, as we may call it – is what passes through these seven stages. All the seven stages which are mentioned are conditions of the *jiva* only. They are not to be attributed to Brahman in any manner.

The bondage and the freedom of the *jiva* are included within this sevenfold process. The first three refer to bondage; the other ones refer to liberation. *Ajnana*, *avriti* and *vikshepa* are the three stages of bondage, and the remaining four are the stages of gradual liberation. Of the seven stages, the first three stages are processes, stages, of bondage. The remaining four are the gradual movement towards freedom. They all belong to *chidabhasa*, *jiva chaitanya*.

Na jānāmī tyudāsīna vyavahārasya kāraṇam, vicāra prāga bhāvena yukta majñāna mīritam (35). *Ajnana* (ignorance) – “I do not know. It does not exist.” This kind

of prating of the *jīva* is possible only before the rising of pure discrimination. No such statement of ignorance can be made after discrimination rises.

Amārgeṇa vicāryātha nāsti nobhāti cetyasau, viparīta vyavahṛtir āvṛteḥ kārya miṣyate (36). By wrong discussion, erroneously conducting the sense organs along the wrong path, one begins to feel that this is not there, and this is not known. What is the proof that God exists? Who has seen God? These are the stock arguments of atheists, agnostics, etc. Their arguments are based on a wrong foundation of logic. The very hypothesis of their logic is wrong and, therefore, such questions arise – questions which are themselves untenable.

The wrong actions one engages oneself in – such as in the case of the tenth man, ten people hitting their heads against a wall and causing them to bleed – in the case of all people, it is intense activity in the world. Outward movement in the direction of objects – this is the *vikshepa* that is caused by the *avarana* that is veiling prior to the arising of discriminative knowledge.

Deha dvaya cidābhāsa rūpo vikṣepa īritaḥ, karṭṛ tvādya khilaḥ śokaḥ saṁsāra khyo'sya bandhakaḥ (37). In the case of we individuals, *vikshepa* is nothing but the physical and subtle body. We are suffering due to the operation of these two bodies. The subtle body contains the mind and the sense organs. The physical body – of course we know very well what it is. The physical body has its own problems, sufferings, sorrows, illnesses; and the mind is, of course, worse than that. All the problems are created by the mind and the sense organs. The identification of the *chidabhasa*

or consciousness with the two bodies (*deha-dvaya*), namely, the subtle and the physical – this identification is called *vikshepa* or distraction. *Chidabhasa*, reflected consciousness which is *jiva* consciousness, identifies itself with the subtle body and the physical body. It moves outward in the direction of something other than its own self. Therefore, it is *vikshepa*, distraction. All the bondages, thousands of sufferings that we are facing in this world arising out of agency in action and enjoyership of fruits of actions – all this grief is attributable to this *chidabhasa* entering into relationship with the two bodies, namely, the subtle body and the gross body.

Ajñānam āvṛtiś caite vikṣepāt prāk prasiddhyataḥ, yadda pyathā pyavasthe te vikṣepa syaiva nātmanaḥ (38). A very important question is raised here. Ignorance and veiling have caused the *vikshepa*, or the distraction. You have to listen to me carefully. This is a very moot question. Ignorance or *ajnana*, and *avarana* or veiling, are the causes of the third stage, which is *vikshepa* or distraction. Now, what is this distraction?

It has been explained in the previous verse, the thirty-seventh verse, that the identification of *chidabhasa* consciousness with the subtle body and the gross body is called *vikshepa*. Now, who is it that is experiencing the ignorance and veil? Is it this distracted consciousness? The distracted consciousness is actually the *jiva* consciousness. It has arisen as the third entity here, in the process of the seven stages. So how can the third entity become associated or become the cause of the earlier two stages, *ajnana* and *avarana*? It is not Brahman's ignorance, and it is not

Brahman's veiling. It must be somebody else's. That somebody is not to be found here. Who is this somebody?

The child that is not yet born cannot be the cause of our sorrow; only after it is born some difficulties may arise. Why should we attribute anything at all to it when it is not even born? The birth of the *vikshepa* takes place as the third process, the third link in the chain of these seven categories. Now, the question is raised here: Who is it that is experiencing the ignorance and the veil? Not Brahman, not even the *vikshepa*, and not *jiva* because *jiva* has not yet been born. Who is the ignorance or the covering veil? To this the answer is given in this verse.

We have to conclude that these earlier two stages of ignorance and *avarana*, or veil, are stages of the *vikshepa* or the *jiva* only. They are not stages of anybody else, because who is the 'anybody else'? The only other one is Brahman. So we cannot attribute these stages to Brahman. We have to attribute it only to *jiva*, notwithstanding the fact that it is a posterior eruption in the seven stages. How do we explain this quandary? How are we attributing a prior thing to a posterior thing?

For this, the answer of the verse is though the *vikshepa*, the *jiva* consciousness, has manifested itself in a conscious form as a third stage, in a rudimentary form it existed in the earlier stages also. Even before we actually feel the sickness in our body, we are sick inside without our knowing it. There is an illness which arises from the deepest recesses of the *koshas*. The *avarana*, which is the *anandamaya kosha*, itself creates some disturbance. We cannot know it because there is no direct consciousness. Merely because we are not

conscious that we are ill, it need not mean that we are not ill. The consciousness that we are ill arises afterwards when the illness projects itself outwardly into the conscious levels of the subtle and the gross bodies.

When the fruit ripens, we find that the peel becomes reddish. It does not suddenly become red just like that. It has been growing gradually from inside. Ripening was taking place from the very root itself, but we could not see it. When it was greenish outside, we concluded that the fruit was unripe. The ripening process started gradually from inside until it became manifest outside on the peel. Then we say it has ripened. Similarly, when we actually feel pain in the physical body, we say we are sick. But even without feeling pain we might be sick inside for other reasons of which we may not be conscious because the illness has not become an object of our consciousness.

So the answer to this peculiar question is that *ajnana* or *avarana* – ignorance and the veiling – should be considered as part and parcel of the *jiva* only as prior conditions of its manifestation. Even before the child becomes conscious, it exists in the mother's womb in a rudimentary form. Unconscious states cannot be regarded as somebody else's states. They are also states of the *jiva*. It becomes conscious later on; that is a different matter. The unconscious conditions are also its states, though they are not direct objects of perception. So the first three stages, which are the causes of bondage, belong to the *jiva* only – not to Brahman.

Vikṣepot pattitaḥ pūrvam api vikṣepa sanskr̥tiḥ,
astyeva tada vasthātavam aviruddhaṁ tatas tayoḥ (39).

Even before the *vikshepa* manifests itself, the *samskara* or the *vasana* or the potency, the latency of the *vikshepa*, existed earlier in the form of this ignorance and *avarana*. So the individuality consciousness of bondage has two phases – the conscious phase and the unconscious phase. The unconscious phase is prior to the conscious phase; and that is there without one being aware of it. When we become aware of it, it has already manifested itself in active form.

Brahmaṇyā ropita tvena brahmā vasthe ime iti, na śaṅka nīyaṁ sarvaśāṁ brahmaṇye vādhi ropañāt (40). We should not raise a question, “Why should we not regard it as a part of Brahman’s experience?” Everything is rooted in Brahman; that is true. When the snake is superimposed on the rope, the snake may also appear to be moving. We can see it moving because we have superimposed all the qualities of a snake on it. Otherwise, it cannot be a snake. And we may even feel the bite of it if we have concluded that it is really a snake and we trod on it. But actually, the rope never bit us. It did not move. It was our imagination. Therefore, these characteristics of the seven stages, attributable to the *jiva*, should not be superimposed on Brahman. It is a different subject altogether. Brahman is unattached, and the stages belong only to the *jiva*.

Discourse 40

CHAPTER 7: TRIPTIDIPA PRAKARANAM – LIGHT ON SUPREME SATISFACTION, VERSES 40-56

Brahmaṇyā ropita tvena brahmā vasthe ime iti, na śaṅka nīyaṁ sarvaśāṁ brahmaṇye vādhi ropaṇāt (40). The seven stages – namely, ignorance, veil, *vikshepa* or distraction, indirect knowledge, direct knowledge, freedom from sorrow, and attainment of bliss – these seven stages are the stages through which the *jiva* has to pass. They are superimposed on the *jiva*, and there is *tadatmya adhyasa* – mutual superimposition – between the condition of the *jiva* and the stages mentioned.

It should not be supposed that Brahman, the Absolute, has anything to do with these stages. We may not argue that the stages are superimposed on the imperishable Brahman. That would be to argue that clouds are obstructing the sun. The clouds are not obstructing the sun at all. They are obstructing our vision of the sun. The clouds are not superimposed on the sun so that the sun may be affected by the clouds. Hence, in spite of the fact that there is a complete darkness, as it were, as sometimes when there are thick monsoon clouds during the day, we cannot say that these clouds have affected the sun in any way whatsoever. The sun may not even be aware of what is happening in the world.

Thus, these processes, these seven stages – ignorance onwards until liberation – are conditioning factors of the *jiva* only and are not to be imagined as being superimposed on Brahman because in that case the whole universe is

superimposed on Brahman. There is nothing special about it.

Saṃsārya haṃ vibuddho'haṃ niḥśoka stuṣṭa ityapi, jīvagā uttarā vasthā bhānti na brahmagā yadi. (41). Tarhyajño'haṃ brahma sattva bhāne maddr̥ṣṭito na hi, iti pūrve avasthe ca bhāsete jīvage khalu (42). All these stages, such as the feeling, “I am *samsari*, I am bound to earthly existence” and “I am liberated, I am free, I am endowed with knowledge, I am now free from sorrow and I am enjoying bliss or happiness” – are subsequent stages of the *jiva* only. They are subsequent to the preceding stages, namely, *ajnana* and *avarana*, ignorance and veiling. They may appear to be superimposed on Brahman, yet they should not be considered as really connected with Brahman in any way whatsoever because the feelings “I am ignorant” and “I am free” cannot arise in Brahman. Even if there is an eclipse of the sun, the sun is not affected by it. The eclipse is only for us who perceive it.

It is a very difficult situation before us when we have to face this quandary of finding a location for these seven stages. All these arguments of the verses arise on account of this peculiar difficulty, namely, where do these seven stages find their location? They must be existing somewhere. Even a process should have some background in order that the process may have some meaning. If the river is flowing, there must be a riverbed that is not flowing.

Now, these seven stages are like processes. They cannot be considered to be moving as processes on Brahman as the base – though, in a way, we may say Brahman is the substratum for all things. To bring the analogy of the sun

and the clouds, etc., we may say that everything is caused by the sun. Even the movement of the clouds and the darkening that is caused by the movement of the clouds are all to be attributed only to the sun, of course. Yet nothing is to be attributed to the sun.

Though nothing can exist here in this world – neither bondage nor freedom can exist without Brahman's existence – yet Brahman is uncontaminated with these processes. They are connected only with the *jiva*. As there are only two principles before us, Brahman and *jiva*, the processes should belong to one of them. As it is not possible to attribute these stages to Brahman, they have to be attributed only to the *jiva*. There is no other alternative for us.

Ajñāna syāśrayo brahmeti adhiṣṭhān tayā jaguḥ, jīvā vasthātvam ajñānā bhīmā nitvā davā diṣam (43). Is not ignorance rooted in Brahman? Is Brahman not the source of *avidya*? Where is *avidya* located? Where is its support? We accept that even ignorance has to find a support; and the ultimate support being Brahman itself for all things, we may in a way concede that Brahman is the support even of ignorance. Yet, it is only a theoretical concession given to Brahman being the substratum of ignorance. Direct organic connection between ignorance and Brahman cannot be there because if a real connection is to be established between ignorance and Brahman, Brahman would be ignorant. It wouldn't be conscious of anything whatsoever.

In order to consider Brahman as the ultimate source of all things, including the *jiva* and its seven stages, we have said that Brahman is the source of all; but when we say that

Brahman is the source of all, we do not actually mean that it is contaminated by the seven stages. Neither is Brahman bound, nor does it aspire for liberation. It only has a relation with *jiva*. Inasmuch as ultimately everything has to be based on Brahman, we said everything, including the *jiva* and its ignorance, are also rooted in Brahman. But this is a theoretical concession. Practically, they are not related.

It is something like saying that the sun is the cause of theft taking place in a house. Because there was sunlight, the thief had free access into someone's house. If it was pitch darkness, midnight, it would have been difficult. The sun has contributed to the theft that took place in the house because without its light, the thief would not have succeeded. Can we say the thief has collaborated with the sun? Can we say that some part of the offense goes to the sun because he gave the light? Such is the argument here when we impose the qualities of *jiva*, such as the seven stages, on Brahman, though without Brahman the stages cannot be there.

Jñāna dvayen naṣṭe'sminn ajñāne tat kṛtāvṛtiḥ, na bhāti nāsti cetyeṣā dvidihāpi vinaṣyati (44). When the two types of knowledge arise in a person, namely indirect knowledge and direct knowledge – that is to say, knowledge derived through study of scriptures and knowledge derived from instruction through a Guru, which is called indirect knowledge, which is to be succeeded by direct knowledge or actual experience – when these two types of knowledge properly take effect, *ajnana* and all its effects, such as *avarana*, are destroyed. Then that original ignorance which caused the feeling that Brahman does not exist or Brahman

is not known at all – these two types of erroneous feelings also go away, together with the ignorance which was their cause. The two types of knowledge, indirect and direct, dispel ignorance and all the effects of ignorance, such as the wrong notion that God does not exist or that there is no proof for the existence of God because God is not visible. This kind of erroneous argument based on ignorance also gets dispelled when knowledge dawns in a person in both indirect and direct forms.

Parokṣa jñānato naśyet asattvā vṛti hetutā, aparokṣa jñāna nāśyā hyabhāna vṛti hetutā (45). There are two kinds of ignorance, two phases of ignorance, rather: *asattavarana* and *abhāna avarana*. Due to the *avarana* of *maya*, known as *asattavarana*, one has no consciousness of even the existence of Brahman. Even the remote idea of their being such a thing as Brahman cannot arise in the mind due to this *avarana* called *asattavarana*. *Avarana*, or veil, instils the wrong notion into the mind so that one is made to feel it does not exist. The indirect knowledge which is obtained through study as well as instruction from a Guru is capable of destroying that secondary ignorance which makes us feel that God does not exist, Brahman does not exist, etc. The proper instruction received from the Guru will dispel this peculiar secondary ignorance which is the cause of the feeling that God does not exist or Brahman is not there.

The other one is *abhāna avarana*, the veil that covers the consciousness of there being such a thing at all called Brahman. Direct knowledge or actual experience of Brahman dispels the other kind of ignorance which covers the consciousness of Brahman. That is to say, direct

knowledge or experience makes one immediately conscious of Brahman as identical with one's own self.

Abhānā varaṇe naṣṭe jīvatvā ropa saṁkṣayāt, kartṛtvā dyakhilaḥ śokaḥ saṁsārākhyo nivartate (46). This great problem of life, which is called *samsara* with all its concomitants like the feeling of agency in action, *kartritva*, and *bhoktritva* or enjoyment of fruits of action – all these appurtenances connected with the very existence of people in the world, *samsara*, all vanish in one minute when *abhana avarana*, the veil that covers the consciousness in respect of Brahman's existence, is dispelled by direct experience.

Nivṛtte sarva saṁsāre nitya muktatva bhāsanāt, niraṅkuṣā bhavet tṛptiḥ punaḥ śokā samudbhavāt (47). When the entanglement of the *jiva* in the world and the feeling that one is entangled in *samsara* vanishes on account of the other feeling that one is now free from all these entanglements, unlimited bliss arises inside because no sorrow can once again inflict the person. Once ignorance has vanished, it cannot come again. Then the happiness that we experience at that time, the bliss of experience, is indescribable, unthinkable, passing understanding.

Aparokṣa jñāna śoka nivṛttyākhyā ubhe ime, avasthe jīvage brute ātmānaṁ cediti śrutiḥ (48). If the verse that was quoted in the beginning of this chapter from the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad: ātmānaṁ cet vijānīyāt ayam asmīti pūrusaḥ, kimicchan kasya kāmāya śarīram anu sanjvaret is understood and appreciated in its true meaning, the meaning that comes out is this: The Atman that is referred to in this verse of the Brihadaranyaka

Upanishad, indicated by the word *purusha*, is the same *jiva* about which we have been talking about and describing in the earlier verses, whose ignorance is to be dispelled by indirect knowledge derived from scripture, Guru's instruction, and direct experience. The conditions of sorrow which are supposed to be dispelled by the indirect knowledge derived from scripture and the grace of the Guru are associates of the *jiva* consciousness only.

Ayamitya parokṣatvam uktaṁ tad dvididhaṁ bhavet, viṣaya svaparakāśatvāt dhiyā pyevaṁ tadikṣanāt (49). Ayam asmīti pūruṣaḥ: The word '*ayam*' is used in this verse of the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad. What is "this *purusha*"? Who is "this"? The word 'this' here indicates the direct awareness of the *jiva*'s experience, which is of a twofold character. The experience of the Atman in us is of a twofold nature – that is, it is indirect sometimes and direct at other times. It is impossible to gain its meaning through intellectual arguments. When the intellect tries to comprehend the nature of the Atman, the Atman looks like something *paroksa* – that is, an object of consciousness to be known in the future – and that is why we, who use our reason and argument and study, etc., for the purpose of knowing the truth, still have the feeling that it is a future experience that is going to take place. That is, God-realisation is something that is yet to take place, either tomorrow or the day after, or later.

The idea itself is unfounded because the idea of tomorrow or the day after cannot arise in Brahman, because it is eternity. Ideas of tomorrow, etc., are connected with the time process. Timeless eternity does not have

‘tomorrow’, etc.; therefore, the experience of Brahman is not a future experience that is yet to come. It is an indescribable at-one-ment now, here, and not somewhere else and not tomorrow. It is just now.

But also, at the same time, we feel it is identical with our own selves – *sva-prakasa*. We cannot alienate ourselves into something else. We always feel that we are what we are. The consciousness that I am is so very intensely felt by me that it cannot be an object of my intellectual argument or ratiocination. It is a direct, immediate experience.

So the Atman consciousness even here is partially a direct experience in the case of our own feeling of identity with ourselves and *per se* it is indirect also, when the intellect begins to feel that it has to be realised sometime in the future.

Parokṣa jñāna kāle’pi viṣaya svaprakāśatā, samā brahma svaprakāśam astī tyevaṃ vibodhanāt (50). Even when we receive instruction from a Guru or study a scripture, some kind of illumination takes place. It is not that study is entirely useless or *satsanga* is useless or instruction from the Guru is useless. That is not the case. They have the capacity to create in us an indirect apprehension of the nature of reality. Though it is indirect, it is an apprehension nevertheless. We believe that God exists. We have not contacted God, no doubt, but our belief is so firm that it has become a conviction in us and it is certainly a knowledge.

The indubitable conviction that is in our mind that God must exist and is certainly there – Brahman is there, and has to be there – is not, of course, direct experience, yet it is

a kind of experience. It is of great utility in further progress because even in this indirect stage of knowledge, the light of Brahman illumines itself through the words of the Guru on the one hand, and *manana* – the intellectual investigative process – and *nididhyasana* conducted by the disciple.

Ahaṁ brahme tyanullikhya brahmā stītyeva mullikhet, parokṣa jñāna metanna bhrāntaṁ bādhānirūpaṇāt (51). “God exists. God is inseparable from me.” These two statements have two different meanings. God may exist, and yet He may be separable from us. He may be very far away, so many light years distant from us that he may look like an unreachable Being; yet the belief that God exists, persists. But that God’s existence is inseparable from our existence is a greater consolation to us than merely the knowledge that God exists. *Asti Brahma* means Brahman exists. *Aham Brahma* means I am verily that. After the assertion or the conviction that Brahman is, the other experience has to dawn in the person – namely, “I am that very thing. I am that.”

This kind of experience which is for the time being designated as indirect knowledge is not to be shunned as of no utility, because this indirect knowledge itself gradually ripens into direct experience. The direct experience does not negate the indirect knowledge that we have already acquired. It only fructifies in a more mature manner. The earlier experience of the fact that Brahman exists will become more mature and get fructified in the subsequent experience, “I am verily that.” *Asti Brahma* and *Aham Brahma* – “Brahman is” and “I am verily that” – are not two contradictory experiences. The one leads to the other.

Brahma nāstīti mānaṁ cet syāt bādhyet tata dhruvam, na caivaṁ prabalaṁ mānaṁ paśyāmo'to na bādhyate (52). The feeling that sometimes arises in people that Brahman does not exist is a feeling that is contradictable, but this feeling is not a real proof as to the non-existence of Brahman. We cannot deny Brahman merely because we have a feeling that it does not exist. The existence of Brahman is not denied or refuted by any kind of feeling that it may not exist at all. The feeling is refutable by the subsequent experience that is to follow – namely, that it does not merely exist, it is inseparable from the experiencer himself.

Vyaktya nullekha mātrena bramatve svarga dhīrapi, bhrānti syāt vyaktya nullekhāt sāmānyo lledha darśanāt (53). Indirect knowledge which only provides us information as to the existence of a thing is of great utility indeed. We cannot say it is useless. We hear from the scriptures that such a thing called *swarga*, or heaven, exists. This knowledge is not unreal merely because we have not reached heaven. Reaching heaven is a greater experience, no doubt, but the knowledge that such a thing as heaven exists is also useful.

Hence, the existence aspect of Brahman which becomes the content of indirect knowledge should not be considered as ignorance. Many people feel that intellectual knowledge, learning, are absolutely useless. It is not so because there is an organic connection between the lower knowledge and the higher knowledge. The genius that a person is when he grows into maturity may not reject the childhood in which he was once upon a time, though there is a world of difference between the babyhood that he was and the

genius that he is today. That little baby grew into this genius.

Therefore, the great difference that is observable between the two states is no argument for the non-utility of the earlier stage. All knowledge which is rational, intellectual, scriptural and that which is obtained through the Guru is very useful. It will itself mature into direct experience later on. The lower knowledge becomes higher knowledge by growth in its dimension and in its quality.

Aparokṣatva yogyaṣya na parokṣa matir bhramaḥ, parokṣa mityanu llekhāt arthāt pārokṣya sambhavāt (54). The knowledge that God exists is a great solace even to the ignorant man. It gives us some comfort that there is a protecting force somewhere. Also, the conviction that God, wherever He be, is also omnipotent gives us a further comfort that He is capable of redressing our sorrows. The very existence of a protecting power and the existence in that power of the capacity to protect is a solace indeed. So the knowledge that is obtained through the Guru and the scripture is of great utility. It is not to be dubbed as indirect and *paroksa*. It is the pedestal on which we have to stand to rise above it, beyond its ken of experience. There is a higher knowledge which rises above it, no doubt, but does not contradict it. The higher rises above the lower, but the higher does not contradict or negate the lower.

Añśā grhīter bhrānti ścet ghaṭa jñānaṁ bhramo bhavet, nirañśa syāpi sāñśatvaṁ vyāvar tyāñśa vibhedataḥ (55). One may feel that indirect knowledge is of not much use because it gives only partial knowledge; the entire knowledge is not available through indirect experience. This is also not true because if we have a partial

perception of a pot that is placed in front of us, it does not mean that we are not seeing the pot. The partiality in perception does not negate the reality of the perception. And so, the argument that indirect knowledge will provide only a partial aspect of knowledge of Brahman is not an argument against its utility.

Even if Brahman has no parts, no phases, there are logical phases. Mathematically or geographically calculable phases are not there in Brahman. We cannot measure the length and breadth of Brahman, that is true. But we can conceive aspects of Brahman from the point of view of the degree in which we can comprehend the reality in accordance with our mental capacity.

Thus, the partial knowledge that the indirect knowledge provides us does not negate its utility. It is as good as the whole, just as the perception of a part of an object is not anything else than the perception of the object itself, though not of the entire object.

Asattvāmśo nivarteta parokṣa jñānata stathā,
abhānāmśa nivṛtṭiḥ syāt aparokṣa dhiyā kṛta (56).
Asattavarana and *abhana avarana* are the two kinds of veil, as I mentioned. The *asatta* aspect, or the non-existence aspect of Brahman, which is a part of the ignorance, is dispelled by indirect knowledge. But the unknowableness of Brahman, which is caused by the other aspect of ignorance – *abhana avarana*, is dispelled by direct knowledge. *Asattavarana* and *abhana avarana* are the two veils which are dispelled respectively by indirect knowledge and direct knowledge.

Discourse 41

CHAPTER 7: TRIPTIDIPA PRAKARANAM – LIGHT ON SUPREME SATISFACTION, VERSES 57-67

Daśamo'stīti vibhrāntaṃ parokśa jñāna mīkṣyate, brahmā stītyapi tadvat syād ajñānā varaṇaṃ samam (57). When a person who has been under the impression that one of the ten people is missing is told that the tenth person is also there, the knowledge that the tenth person is there is called indirect knowledge. The tenth person has not been seen yet. There is no direct knowledge. But it has been told that the person is still alive, existing. This indirect knowledge leads further on to direct knowledge subsequently.

In the same way, when we are told by a Guru that God exists, our ignorance about the existence of God vanishes because the word comes from a reliable person. Many people might not have seen a far-off country, for instance. But when a person who has visited that country says that the country exists because he has actually experienced it, the person who has heard this and yet not gone there personally takes it to be a fact. “Oh, I see. That country exists, because this knowledge has come to me through a person who is reliable, who is not going to mislead me, and who has had a direct experience of it.”

In a similar manner, when we are told God exists, the statement comes from a person who is reliable, who is not likely to mislead us into wrong notions. Brahman exists. This knowledge removes the *avarana*, or the veil, which is known as the obscuration of the consciousness of there being such a thing called Brahman.

Ātmā brahmeti vākyārthe niḥśesaṇa vicariate, vyakti rulli khyate yadvad daśama stvama sīyataḥ (58). Direct knowledge is, “You are the tenth man, sir. I am not telling you that the tenth man simply exists; I am telling you that *you* are the tenth person. You have been counting nine people, forgetting yourself as already there. Now I am telling you, you are the tenth one.”

“Oh, I am the tenth one.” The knowledge ‘I am the tenth one’ is direct experience. In a similar manner, when it was told that Atman is, Brahman is, we have only an indirect knowledge by way of reliable sources of information. But when it is applied to one’s own direct experience – the Atman that exists is our own self, the Brahman that exists is the largest dimension of our own consciousness – it becomes an experience. Then it becomes direct, an efflorescence of the indirect knowledge obtained earlier.

Daśamaḥ ka iti praśne tvame veti nirākṛte, gaṇayitvā svena saha svameva daśamaṁ smaret (59). Where is the tenth man? Suppose the tenth man, who has not counted himself, puts this question to the passerby. He is told, “You are yourself that. Count yourself first, and then count others. Don’t start counting only those people whom you are seeing with your eyes. Why have you not counted yourself first? Are you not alive? Count yourself first: one. Then the other nine may be counted, and so you will have ten people.”

The value of the whole world consists in the value that is recognised in the Atman first. A soul-less world, a soul-less society, a soul-less object does not exist, because

anything that has no soul is virtually not existing. And if we consider that the soul is only within us, and it is not anywhere else, and that we can utilise everything other than our own selves as an instrument for our own purpose, what are we actually employing as our instrument? Do you know? It is that which is not a soul, because if we think that the instrument that we are employing for our own purpose is also a soul, it would be a self-contradiction because a soul cannot employ another soul for its own purpose, as they stand on par. They are on equal status.

The soul cannot be a servant of another soul. It is a non-soul that becomes the servant of a soul. The master always thinks that he is the soul and the servant has no soul. He can be sold as a commodity, like a bag of rice, and he will fetch interest. This is how we treat other people, how we treat things in the world, how we treat the world itself as a tool, as a non-self, a soul-less existence, as if we are the only soul.

Now, this is what has happened to the poor man who forgot himself and counted all the non-selves, being nine; and even if nine were there, the sorrow of the tenth man missing was so intense that they could not survive without beating their heads. The soul is the meaning that gives value to everything else in the world which looks like a soul-less existence. Who is the tenth man? You yourself are that. Where is the Atman? Inside you. What are the other things then? They also have a soul like you.

The world is a kingdom of ends; it is not a kingdom of means. This is something that we have to remember always. Nothing in the world, no person, is a means to somebody

else. Every person is an end in itself. Everybody has self-respect and would not like to be denied the prerogative of having a respect for one's own self – because the soul asks for respect. Only a soul-less thing has no respect; and if we think that another person has no soul, so much the credit to our wisdom.

Daśamo'smīti vākyotthā na dhīrasya vihanyate, ādi madhyā vasāneṣu na navatvasya saṁśayaḥ (60). Once the consciousness "I am the tenth man" arises, it cannot be obliterated afterwards. He will never forget that he is the tenth person. He can count from the beginning, from the middle or from the end, in serial order or reverse order; he will always find that it is ten. Whether the world is the subject and you are the object or whether you are the subject or the world is the subject, whatever be the case – consider yourself as the subject and the world as the object or consider the world as the subject which looks at you as the object – it makes no difference provided that there is a soul in all things.

A soul-less thing cannot exist. And anything that exists has a soul. Therefore, our attitude towards the world, as it has been obviously and well said, should be the same as our attitude towards our own selves. How do we treat our own selves? That is how we have to treat even a leaf on the tree, what to talk of people in the world. We have no business even to pluck a leaf from the tree. We have no such authority. It has a self-existence of its own. Why are we interfering with it? Otherwise somebody can pluck our ear, and we would not like it.

Sadeve tyādi vākyena brahma sattvaṁ parokṣataḥ, grhītvā tattva masyādi vākyāt vyaktiṁ samullikhet (61). In the Upanishads there are two types of description of reality. One definition is called *avantara vakya* and another is called *mahavakya*. *Avantara vakya* is the statement which merely tells us that something exists. It will not tell us where it is. Brahman exists: *asti brahma*. This is *avantara vakya*, an intermediary introductory statement made by the Guru in front of the disciple before actual initiation is done. We studied *mahavakya* in the fifth chapter of this book.

In an *avantara vakya* of the Chhandogya Upanishad, the Guru speaks to the disciple. Uddalaka Aruni speaks to his disciple, his own son, Svetaketu. Existence alone was prior to the act of creation – One alone, without a second. This is *avantara vakya*. And the identity of that existed prior to creation, with our own self is the *mahavakya*. Its existence merely as such, as an object of our knowledge, is indirect knowledge born of *avantara vakya*, intermediary, introductory definition. When it is said that we are inseparable from it, right from eternity, the *mahavakya* – the great statement of instruction – has been communicated.

Ādi madhyā vasāneṣu svasya brahmatva dhīriyam, naiva vyabhi caret tasmāt āparokṣyaṁ prati ṣṭhitam (62). One alone without a second did exist. Therefore, we cannot exist outside it. It is not necessary to add another sentence that we are identical with that. We have a little common sense to understand that it must be the fact. One alone, without a second, was there. And inasmuch as we stand as a second to it, we will be a redundant existence in the

presence of that “all-pervading, all-inclusive, One alone, without a second”. Therefore, it is understood, it is implied, that we are inseparable from that. This is *aparoksa* experience, direct knowledge.

Janmādi kāraṇa tvākhyā lakṣaṇena bhṛugh, purā pāroksyeṇa grhītvātha vicārāt vyakti maikṣata (63). There was a Guru called Varuna. He had a son called Bhrigu, who was also a disciple. This is an illustration taken from the Taittiriya Upanishad. “Teach me Brahman,” said the disciple to the Guru. “That from which everything comes, that in which everything subsists, that to which everything returns is Brahman. Meditate on this,” was the instruction. After meditating, the disciple went to the Guru again, “Teach me Brahman.” “Contemplate this physical sheath as Brahman.” He meditated, and went again, “Please teach me Brahman.” “Contemplate the vital sheath as Brahman.” He meditated on that, and went again and said, “Please teach me Brahman.” “Contemplate the mental sheath as Brahman.” He meditated thus, and went again to the Guru and said, “Please teach me Brahman.”

Why did he go again and again? What was the matter? There was some defect in the instruction and also in the experience thereby – that is to say, in considering physical, vital, or mental sheaths as Brahman. Again the disciple went, “Please teach me Brahman.” “Meditate on the intellectual sheath as Brahman.” He again meditated on that, and went again to the Guru and said, “Teach me Brahman.” “Meditate on the bliss of Brahman.” After that he did not go again. When bliss has been experienced, why should we go to the Guru afterwards? The Guru is rejected

because bliss is a greater Guru than the Guru who brought us the bliss. What do you say?

In the beginning, it was only a definition by way of an indirect instruction. Brahman is that which is the cause, sustenance and the end of all things, and it is that which is pervading the physical body, that which pervades the vital, mental, intellectual sheaths, that which is the ultimate bliss that we experience in the state of deep sleep. Having consciously entered into that sleep, if we can be conscious that we are sleeping, we are in direct contact with Brahman. As we cannot be conscious that we are sleeping, that contact is not possible. We come back in the same way as we went into it. The fool went in, and a greater fool came back.

Yadyapi tvamasīyatra vākyam noce bhṛgoḥ pitā, tathā pyannaṁ prāṇamiti, vicārya sthala muktavān (64). The Guru Varuna did not directly tell Bhṛigu what Brahman was. He wanted the disciple to work his own way, by his personal effort, and so he only lead him gradationally, stage by stage, through the levels of experience, right from the conceptual idealisation of God (Brahman) as that which exists as the volition, the sustenance, and the end of all things, that which is in the physical and other sheaths, that which is the ultimate bliss. This is how a graduated instruction was imparted to the disciple by the Guru as we have it recorded in the Taittiriya Upanishad.

Anna prāṇādi koṣeṣu suvicārya punaḥ punaḥ, ānanda vyaktim īksitvā brahma lakṣmāpya yūjujat (65). Bliss in an indication of Brahman; it is not Brahman itself. The word used here by the author of the Panchadasi is that the bliss of

the causal sheath which the disciple experienced is an indication of Brahman's bliss. It is not Brahman itself. That is to say, when we enter the state of deep sleep, we are not experiencing Brahman, though maybe, theoretically, it may be equal to our landing ourselves in Brahman.

If our plane suddenly requires fuel it lands somewhere, at some airport, and we do not even know which country it is, whose airport it is. We are not very much bothered about that detail because we are in the crucial condition of fuel exhaustion. Under an international charitable feeling this kind of landing is evidently permitted, as far as I am given to understand. When the pilot cries from the plane over a wireless that fuel is exhausted, they do not ask him to quit from that place because there is a human feeling, a humanity and understanding, a United Nations dictum or whatever it is, and he is allowed to land.

If we do not even know where we have landed, and simply know that we have landed, that is something like an indirect jumping into the Brahman state. But actually, landing in sleep – that blissful experience of the condition of sleep – is not Brahman experience because we wake up from sleep into the mortal experience of the physical existence. If we had really gone to Brahman, we would not have woken up.

Therefore, the causal experience of Brahman is only an indication and not a direct experience, says the author here. This experience has been undergone gradually through the physical, vital, and other sheaths. It is a final indicator of Brahman's existence. It is a signpost which tells us that Brahman is appearing, but Brahman has not yet appeared.

Satyam jñānam anantaṁ ceti evaṁ brahma svalakṣaṇam, uktvā guhāhitvena, koṣe śvetat pradārśitam (66). The Taittiriya Upanishad says satyam jñānam anantaṁ brahma: Truth, Knowledge, Infinity is Brahman. This is another way of saying sarvaṁ khalvidaṁ brahma: God is Brahman. If all is Brahman, what does it matter to us? It matters very much because we are not outside it. After having being told that Brahman is Truth, Knowledge, Infinity, we are instructed into a further reality of the fact of our being non-separate from that Brahman which is Truth, Knowledge, Infinity. This is how gradual instruction is imparted by the Guru to the disciple in the process of what is known as initiation.

Pāroḁṣeṇa vibudhyendro ya ātmetyādi lakṣaṇāt, aparokṣī kartum icchan ścantur vāraṁ gurum yaṇau (67). Indra went to Prajapati four times to learn what the Atman is. Prajapati did not give the answer immediately.

There was a great yogi in Tibet, called Milarepa – a very poor boy. His father died early and left a little land, but his uncle surreptitiously swallowed the entire property and he and his mother were living in utter poverty. The little child that Milarepa was did not know that they had been duped by his uncle. He was playing with children outside, and laughing. His mother gave a blow to the child. “What makes you happy when we are really miserable?” He did not understand what the misery was. He was happy with the other children. “What is the misery, Mother?” he asked. “I will tell you what the misery is! Come. Sit. Your father had so much property. When he passed away, your uncle took away the whole thing. Until you destroy him, I cannot have peace.”

“How will I destroy him?” “Go and learn black magic.” Milarepa went to a teacher of black magic and stayed for some years. Many disciples were learning black magic under this Guru. After three years, he disposed of all the children. “Now you can go. The instruction is over.” But this boy did not go. He was persisting because he did not feel that he had understood anything. He had to apply it by destroying the uncle, and that he could not do. He did not know what the matter was. “Why are you sitting? Go. All have gone. Why have you not gone?”

“For three years I have been serving you, but what is it that you have taught me?” “What do you want to learn? All the other students have learned. All have learned and have gone. You have also learned.” “No. I have a problem. I must get rid of that problem. This is the story.” “Oh, I will not teach you such things. You want to destroy people. No, no, nothing of the kind,” the Guru said. “I am not here to destroy people, so will I teach you that kind of thing? No. Go, go, go. I have taught people something good. I will not teach this kind of thing.” But Milarepa persisted, and cried and sat; and finally the Guru taught him. Then he went.

What Milarepa generally did was to create a hail storm and destroy the crops and bury the houses of people in ice. In this way his uncle and family and all their property went. After that, the locality came to know that this boy knows this magic. Whenever they had some enemy, they would call him. “Please destroy that man. I will give you so much.” Milarepa went on doing this, and destroyed enemies of people.

Afterwards, when Milarepa grew up, he felt so bad. “What have I done? How can I now be happy that I have got the property back? I have destroyed property, destroyed people, uncle, everybody. Mother was crying, and we are still crying. I must have wisdom of the Great Reality. What is the good of this black magic?” And he found out that great Marpa teacher was the knower. He went and sat on the veranda of this great master. The master would not come out.

He was an omniscient man. He knew the black magician; he would not impart wisdom to him. After some time he came out, and kicked him with his boot. “Get out from this place.” “I have come for this purpose.” “Go.” The persistence of the disciple Milarepa is really wonderful to hear. He would not go like that. He persisted. “You kick me, cut me, do anything. I have surrendered myself to you. You may even remove my head; I have no objection. But once I have surrendered myself to you, the great master, I am your property. You have kicked me, and my head may also go, but I am sitting here at your door. I am not going.”

Many days passed like this. Milarepa had not eaten anything. Wounds started developing on his back; worms, maggots were growing. “Go. Go from here and build a house for me on the top of a hill. Carry up the material yourself.” It was very difficult. He had not eaten for days together, and had wounds on his body. Anyhow, the order of the Guru is really to be obeyed. He carried the stones. When the other disciples saw this torture, they thought that it was an awful thing. How could this boy carry stones like that? So they helped him. They all helped him, and

somehow or other, after one or two months, the house was built with the help of many other disciples of Marpa – which was done without his knowledge because if he knew, he would not have permitted it.

Then the disciple came, “Master, the house is ready.” “Is it ready? Let me see it. Oh. Who helped you in building it? You could not have done it yourself.” “It was done with the help of other disciples.” “Did I tell you? Break it, and take all the stones back down, and again build it, with your own effort.”

Anyway, I will make the long story short because the whole story of Milarepa is a big volume by itself. It is a Tibetan text translated into English by a great Oxford scholar called Dr. Evans Wentz. He was a great Tibetologist, an Oxford man. The biography of Milarepa written by Dr. Evans Wentz is worth reading by every disciple.

Marpa would not give initiation to Milarepa even after this torture of building the house a second time. His mother felt pity. When the Guru went away on a tour without uttering a word, Milarepa’s mother stealthily called him to the back door and gave him some buttermilk so that he would not perish, because only torture was going on and no initiation was taking place.

The mother felt that the Guru would not teach and the boy would die, so she forged a letter with the signature of the husband to carry in a shawl which was worn by the master, and addressed that letter to the nephew of this master who was also a competent Guru who could initiate people into the wisdom. The letter said: This is my right

hand disciple. I am sending him to you for the purpose of initiation because I am very busy with other work. You please initiate him. As a token of my letter, I am also sending my upper cloth. She put the signature of the husband. Now the boy thought the work is done. He ran from that place.

Milarepa saw the nephew master giving a discourse. When he showed the letter, the nephew was very surprised that he could not initiate him. “But I heard that you are a black magician.” “No,” he said, “Don’t say that about me. I have come for initiation.” “But no, I want to see how you kill people with your black magic. Kill all these birds. There are so many birds and sparrows sitting on the tree. Kill all of them with your mantra.” “No, I will not do it. It is a sin.”

“Sin! No sin.” And that Guru said “Shuk!” Instantly, all the sparrows fell dead in one minute. Again he said, “Shuk!” and they rose and flew again. “So where is the sin?” he said. “Why did you say so? It is a sin only if you can only destroy and cannot create. Only destroy? That is sinful. But if you can also create, where is the sin? See, I have killed them, and I revived them once again and they flew. Anyway, come.”

When he was about to make arrangements for the initiation, the the real Guru came to know what was happening. “Where is the dog?” he told this *mataji*. “Where is the dog?” he said, referring to Milarepa. “You have insulted him, you have penalised him, you have tortured him, poor boy, how long can he live? He has run away from this place.” He closed his eyes and found out by his

intuition what the mother has done. He scolded her, “Some mischief you have played.”

The nephew Guru actually initiated Milarepa. The other Guru had already initiated him. “On the third day you will have this experience, on the fifth day you will have another experience, on the seventh day a third experience. I will personally come to you and verify the experience.” The third day was over, but no experience came. The nephew Guru came. “What experience have you had? No, I cannot believe it. I gave you initiation properly. Let us see.” He came on the fifth day. “What is the experience?” Nothing. “There is something wrong,” he said. “My initiation is correct.” On the seventh day also there was no experience, and he said, “Now I suspect something. You are not a genuine boy. There is some mischief behind this. Perhaps the permission from the real Guru has not come. Some hanky-panky is there behind this.”

While he was saying this, a letter came from the real Guru, “Please send the dog back.” The nephew Guru realised something was amiss. “Hey! He is calling you a dog. What is the matter? Tell me the truth.” Milarepa trembled, and told him the truth. “Go from here. Don’t look at my face again. Go.” He went.

Milarepa went and sat outside on the veranda, and when the Guru came, he would not look at him. He simply went away – gave one blow to him and went. It is a very long story.

The graduated technique adopted by Gurus in teaching disciples varies from person to person, from individual to individual, and from one state of evolution to another state

of evolution. And this case of Varuna teaching Bhrigu to pass through all these stages of Brahman being immanent in the five sheaths, and experiencing the final bliss of Brahman as it is manifest in the state of sleep, is one category of graduated instruction by the Guru to the disciple.

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CHAPTER 7: TRIPTIDIPA PRAKARANAM – LIGHT ON SUPREME SATISFACTION, VERSES 67-81

Pārokṣeṇa vibudhyendro ya ātmetyādi lakṣaṇāt, aparokṣī kartum icchan ścantur vāraṁ gurum̐ yayau (67). Indra went to Prajapati four times to know the Atman. Once Prajapati made a declaration in his hall: This Atman is immortal. Whoever knows it shall have everything that he wants. Indra, the ruler of the gods, and Virochana, the ruler of the demons, both heard this and wanted to obtain everything they desired, so they went to Prajapati to get initiation into the nature of this Atman.

As mentioned earlier, Virochana was satisfied with just one instruction. Indra was also given the same instruction: “For thirty-two years you must stay here, observing self-restraint.” He stayed with Brahma for thirty-two years, observing self-restraint. After that, the initiation that was given was strange: “The Atman is that which you see when you look at yourself in water.” This was the instruction.

Virochana, the demon king, took this instruction as relating to the physical body, and thought that the physical body is the Atman. He never had any doubt afterward. He proclaimed to all his associates, “Now I know the Atman. The physical body is the Atman. Eat well, be happy, and keep this body secure.”

Indra also got this instruction, but when he was halfway home, he had a difficulty. How could the physical body be the Atman? This question never arose in the case of Virochana, the demon king. Indra had a doubt. “The Atman is said to be immortal. If this body is to be identified

with the Atman, the Atman also would be perishable, like the body. The body has illnesses; the Atman will also have illness. The body has many defects; those defects will be in the Atman also. The body dies; the Atman also will die. No, I do not think this instruction is all right. I will go back.”

So again he went to Brahma, and Brahma said, “How do you come again, sir, after receiving instruction on the Atman? What is the matter?” “Great master, this instruction does not seem to be all right, because this physical body cannot be the Atman. If that is the case, the Atman will die with the body.” “Alright, stay here another thirty-two years, with restraint.” After the second thirty-two years, Brahma said, “What you see in dream, that is the Atman. Now go....”

Indra left, and he went on brooding over this matter. “What is the good of this Atman that I see in dream? It is all chaos, confusion, mutilation, transmutation, change. Even death can take place in dream. I don’t think this instruction is all right.” So he went back to Brahma.

Brahma said, “Why have you come again?” “This instruction does not seem to be all right, master, because even in dream, one can die. If that is the case, the Atman dies.” “Ok,” said Brahma, and for a third time he said, “Stay here for thirty-two years more, with self-restraint.” And what was the instruction? “That which you see in deep sleep is the Atman.” Indra left, feeling happy. On the way, he had a doubt: “What kind of Atman is this that knows nothing about itself or others? In sleep one neither knows oneself nor anybody else. What is the good of this Atman? It is as if

it is dead. We feel as if we are dead in the state of deep sleep. This kind of Atman is no good.”

He went back to Prajapati. Prajapati said, “Again you have come?” He said, “Sir, this instruction too seems to have some defect because in sleep we seem to be nothing, so the Atman would be nothing.” “Oh. Stay here another five years.” Prajapati reduced the punishment from thirty-two years to five. Indra had to stay for a hundred and one years for this final instruction. “Now I shall tell you what the Atman is.”

This story appears in the Chhandogya Upanishad. It is not the physical body, not the dream world, and not the sleep. It is a transcendent radiance from which one attains everything that one wants and which rises above the three bodies – physical, vital, subtle and causal. Immortal is this essence, and it cannot be identified with either the waking, the dreaming or the sleep states. Several times Indra went to Prajapati and got this direct experience of the Atman, as we have it in the Chhandogya Upanishad.

Ātma vā idam ityādaṁ parokṣam brahma lakṣitam, adhyā ropāpa vādābhyām prajñānam brahma darśitam (68). “The Atman alone was in the beginning,” is the statement made in the Aitareya Upanishad. This statement is *paroksa jnana* because what is said is that Atman exists and it has been there for ever and ever, and prior to creation, nothing was except the Atman. This kind of knowledge that we have about the Atman in regard to its existence is indirect knowledge. We have only a faith that it exists, but we do not have direct knowledge – experience – of it.

After having made this statement, the Aitareya Upanishad goes deeper and deeper. We have to read the Aitareya Upanishad to understand the implication of this statement. By the description of an entire process of the creation of the world, and pointing out how the Universal, or Virat, enters into every detail of creation as the immanent principle therein, it finally proclaims that consciousness is Brahman. The pervading consciousness in everything, in the whole cosmos, is Brahman, the Absolute. This is the final instruction of the Aitareya Upanishad after a long, long story of the creative process described therein, subsequent to the original statement, “The Atman alone was, and nothing else was, prior to the creation of the cosmos.”

Avānareṇa vākyena parokṣā brahma dhīr bhavet, sarvatraiva manāvākya vicāra dāparokṣa dhīḥ (69). *Avantara vakya* is the introductory statement, like sarvaṁ khalvidaṁ brahma: All indeed is Brahman. Satyaṁ jñānam anantam brahma: Truth-Knowledge-Infinity is Brahman. In the beginning, prior to creation, the Atman alone was. These statements are *avantara vakyas*, definitive statements introducing the mind of the student to the main subject of discussion. Afterwards, through the *mahavakyas* which we have studied in the fifth chapter of this book, direct experience is entered into.

Brahmā parokṣya sidhyarthyaṁ mahā vākya mitī ritam, vākya vṛttā vato brahmā parokṣye vimatir na hi (70). *Vakya-vritti* is one of the small treatises attributed to the authorship of Adi Sankaracharya. In that work, the author says the *mahavakyas* of the Upanishads intend to create in

the mind of the student a direct experience of Brahman. A school of thought in the Vedanta holds that mere repetition of this mantra *aham brahmasmi, tat tvam asi* will lead to actual realisation, provided the meaning of it is clear to the mind of the student – as has been explained in the fifth chapter of the Panchadasi. It should not be a mere parrot-like repetition, but a heartfelt, feeling-filled concentration.

Ālambanatyā bhāti yo'smat pratyaya śabda yoḥ, antaḥ karaṇa sambhinna bodhaḥ sa tvam padābhidaḥ (71). *Tat tvam asi* : Thou art That. In this statement of the Chhandogya Upanishad, the word 'tvam' – or 'thou', 'yourself' – means that individualised consciousness which stands in between, as it were, the consciousness of 'I' and 'mine' and is defined by the qualities of the internal organ, *antahkarana* – which means to say, the indication of the term 'I' or 'you' is that it is a state of consciousness which is defined by the circumference of the mental activity of the person. 'Thou', 'you', 'I' imply an individual. The individuality is nothing but the assumed finitude of consciousness on account of its being limited to the mental functions. The mental functions are limited. They are not all-pervading and, therefore, the reflection of the consciousness through the mental functions also appears to be limited to that extent. This limited consciousness operating through the internal organ or the psyche is the indication of the terms 'I' or 'you'.

Māyopādhir jagadyonih sarva jñātvādi lakṣaṇaḥ, parokṣya śabalaḥ satyādyā ātmakas tat padābhidaḥ (72). *Tat* means That. 'That' means Ishvara, the god of creation who wields *maya* as his instrument of action through the

sattva guna of *maya*, *shuddha sattva pradhan* of *prakriti*. By this, Brahman reflected through the pure *sattva* of *prakriti* becomes the creation, sustenance and the dissolution of the universe in Himself. God becomes the creator, destroyer, the preserver, and everything connected with the world by His transcendence on the one hand and immanence in the world on the other hand. As God is not exhausted in this world, He is transcendent. But as He is present in every atom of creation, He is also immanent. He is omniscient. *Sarvajnatvadi* means ‘omniscience, omnipotence and omnipresence’. God is all-pervading, so we call Him omnipresent. He is all-knowing, so we call Him omniscient. He is all-powerful, so we call Him omnipotent.

To the *jiva*, Ishvara appears as a remote object, impossible of accession – impossible even to conceive in the mind. The remoteness of Ishvara is the result that follows from the consciousness in the *jiva* operating through its own finitude. Because of the location of the individual in that structure of finitude, consciousness operating through that finitude makes it a single entity located somewhere, and Ishvara is made to appear as a universal, remote existence beyond space and time. So the Ishvara of this character as described here is the indicative meaning of the word ‘*tat*’ in that statement *tat tvam asi*, Thou art That.

Pratyak parokṣatai kasya sadvitiyata pūrṇatā, virudhyete yatas tasmā llakṣaṇā sampra vartate (73). The identity of Ishvara and *jiva* is difficult to explain because of the dissimilar characters of Ishvara and *jiva*. Remote is Ishvara; immediately experienceable is the *jiva*. There is a second to the individual finitude. There is no second to

Ishvara. These are the dissimilarities observable in Ishvara and *jiva*. How could one be the same as the other? The identity of these two can be explained only by analogies, illustrations. And one of the illustrations is called *bhagatyaga-lakshana*.

The definition of an object is metaphorically possible in three ways. Let us see them. “There is a village in the Ganges.” Sometimes we make statements of this kind. We know that a village cannot be in the Ganges, because the Ganges is water. What we actually mean is that the village is on the bank of the Ganges. Here we reject some word and add another word in coming to a correct apprehension of the meaning of that statement. This way of understanding the meaning of a sentence where we reject something and add something else is called *jahat-lakshana*. In Sanskrit, the word ‘*jahat*’ means abandoning something. The word ‘Ganges’ has to be abandoned because the village cannot be on the Ganges. It has to be implied that the village is on the bank, *jahat*.

There is another way of speaking where we do not abandon some word, but simply add something non-existent, such as when we say “umbrellas are going”. When we say “umbrellas are going”, we actually mean that people holding umbrellas are going. But we make statements, “The caps are going; the umbrellas are going; the red is running.” It means the red horse is running. We add one word which was absent. This is *ajahat*, which means non-abandoning but actually taking in some other word. These are the two ways of describing two different types of expression – *jahat-lakshana* and *ajahat-lakshana*.

The third way is *jahat-ajahat-lakshana*, where we abandon something and, at the same time, take something else – as is the well-known example of someone being the same person who was seen a long time ago in some other place and is now seen here at another place, with such a difference of space and time. We abandon the limiting characters of space and time, and then we say, “This is that person.”

This cannot be that. The demonstrative pronouns ‘this’ and ‘that’ mean different things. ‘That’ is a remote thing and ‘this’ is an immediate thing. How could this be that? It is like saying ‘A’ is ‘B’. ‘A’ can be ‘B’, provided the limiting characters of the two terms are lifted up and their essentiality is taken up. This is done in the case of the understanding of the true meaning of the great *mahavakya* sentence, *tat tvam asi*: thou art that.

The remoteness of Ishvara is caused by our assumption that Ishvara is involved in space and time. The fact is that Ishvara is not involved in space and time because space creates distance and time creates the idea of duration. Ishvara controls space and time. And because of the same operation, the *jiva* also looks finite. The all-pervadingness of Ishvara is due to the spatial character of Ishvara, and the omniscience of Ishvara is due to His non-temporality, eternity.

But the opposite is the case with the *jiva*, or the individual. The individual has no such powers. It is located only in one place in space, and it can exist only for some time and not for all times. The rejection of the spatio-temporal limitations and the taking in of only the essential

consciousness is called *bhagatyaga-lakshana* or *jahat-ajahat-lakshana*, dividing and abandoning – abandoning and taking in. We abandon spatio-temporal distinctions and take in only Pure Consciousness. Then, in the light of Pure Consciousness, which is the substance of both Ishvara and *jiva*, we find that they are non-separate.

Tattva masyādi vākyeṣu lakṣaṇā bhāga lakṣaṇā, so'ya mityādi vākyastha padayoriva nāparā (74). So this Devadatta is the very same Devadatta that I saw in some other place, which illustration we have explained earlier when we studied the first chapter. We need not go into it once again.

Saṃsargo vā viśiṣṭo vā vākyārtho nātra sammataḥ, akhaṇḍaika rasatvena vākyārtho viduṣāṃ mataḥ (75). The relationship between Ishvara and *jiva* is neither contact nor quality. Neither Ishvara nor *jiva* can be regarded as objects capable of coming in contact with something else. They are unique substances by themselves. The identity of Ishvara and *jiva* in their essentiality as consciousness cannot be regarded as a contact. It does not mean that the consciousness in the individual contacts the consciousness in Ishvara. There is no such thing. It is a merger of the similar substance which is the substratum of both the *jiva* and Ishvara. Therefore, contact is not the way in which to describe the union of Ishvara and *jiva*, *jiva* with Ishvara.

Also, *jiva* is not a quality of Ishvara. He is not an attribute. They are identical. *Samsarga* and *vishesha* mentioned here in this verse imply contact and quality. There are certain schools of thought which hold that this world is a quality of God's existence, as the body of the

human individual – something like a quality or attribute of the soul inside. The body is not identical with the soul. The world is not identical with God. This kind of concept is called qualified monism, wherein what is held is that there is an identity of Ishvara and the whole world of individuals, but with the distinction that they are not identical.

As the body is not separable from the soul, yet it is not the soul, this kind of attributive unity of the two is called *visishtadvaita*. In the case of the identity of the substance of the two, consciousness merging in consciousness, this attribute and contact aspect should be completely abandoned because consciousness cannot be a quality of another consciousness, nor can consciousness contact another consciousness, inasmuch as consciousness has no second.

Akhaṇḍaika rasatvena vākyārtho viduṣām mataḥ. It is like a river entering the ocean or one arm of the ocean touching another arm of the ocean. Here contact is not the word; nor can we say they are qualities. It is one thing becoming one thing. That is all we can say when we use the word *akhandaika-rasa*, undivided essence of consciousness.

Pratyag bodho ya ābhāti so'dvayā nanda lakṣaṇaḥ, advayā nanda rūpaśca pratyag bodhaika lakṣaṇaḥ (76). The internalised consciousness of ours, the innermost Atman of ours, we may say, is actually non-separate from anything. Our own Atman, our own consciousness also is indivisible in its nature. Consciousness cannot be divided into parts. There cannot be a fraction of consciousness because we know very well the simple argument that the assumption that there can be a part in consciousness is

unfounded on account of the fact that the partite quality of consciousness also has to be known only by consciousness. Therefore, it is non-partite. Such non-partite consciousness, which is the nature of the Atman in the *jiva*, is identical with the blissful state of Ishvara, who is also eternal Atman basically, inseparable from the Atman of the *jivas*, as one part of the ocean cannot be different from another part of the ocean.

Ittha manyonya tādāmya prati pattir yadā bhavet, abrahamatvaṁ tvamarthasya vyāvartena tadaiva hi (77). Tadarthasya ca pāroksyaṁ yadyevaṁ kiṁ tataḥ śṛṇu, pūrṇāna daika rūpeṇa pratyag bodho'vatiṣṭhate (78). In this way, by an analysis of the characteristics of both *jiva* and Ishvara by the abandoning of the limiting characteristics of both, we come to the conclusion of the identity of the macrocosmic substance and the microcosmic substance.

That which is inside the atom is also in the whole cosmos. This realisation will accrue after we come to a conclusion of the identity of everything with everything else through this definition, or *lakshana*, known as *bhagatyaga-lakshana* – the rejection of the redundant characters superimposed on the essence and the taking in of the pure substance only, which is Pure Consciousness.

Evaṁ sati mahā vākyāt parokṣa jñāna mīryate, yaisteṣāṁ śāstra siddhānta vijñānaṁ śobhate tarām (79). Having come to this conclusion of the non-separate character of consciousness in the *jiva*, or the individual, it is futile for anyone to argue again and again that consciousness is not immediately experienced. “Consciousness is an object of indirect knowledge” – this is

not true. Every day we experience this as a direct immediacy when we feel a self-identity with our own selves.

If consciousness was a non-mediate something, we would feel that we are not self-identical individuals. Instead of feeling “I am here”, I might feel that I am somewhere else. If consciousness is something that is remote from my own self – it is not immediately experienced but is mediately communicable, as any object in the world is – then the non-immediate character of consciousness will immediately make us feel that we are not in ourselves; we are somewhere else. We will begin to see ourselves somewhere else, as if there is an illusion. Since this does not happen, it is very clear that consciousness is immediate and everybody is experiencing it in one’s own consciousness. When we know that we are self-identical, it is clear that consciousness cannot be outside us. It is not mediate, but immediate.

Āstām śāstrasya siddhānto yuktyā vākyāt parokṣa dhīḥ, svargādi vākya vannaivaṃ daśame vyabhi cārataḥ (80). When we say “God exists” or “Brahman is”, we do not make statements like “heaven is there”. Heaven is a place which is to be reached by effort. We have to reach heaven because of the distance between our present location and the location of heaven, which is not in this physical world. God’s existence is not like the existence of heaven. Inasmuch as God is all-pervading, the question of reaching God does not arise.

Nobody reaches God. One can reach Delhi, one can reach some other place, because of the spatial distance between two locations; but we cannot reach God. What do

we do then when we speak of God? It is a kind of attainment, a kind of at-one-ment, we may say. Here, in the absence of distance between God and His creation, nothing in creation has to traverse a long distance in order to attain God. God-experience is an inner illumination, something like the waking into consciousness of the world after having risen from dream.

In one way, there is a long distance indeed between the dream world and the waking world. When we are in the dream world, we cannot even be conscious that there is such a thing called waking. We do not even imagine that waking is possible. Such is the distance that we seem to be feeling between the dream world and the waking world. Such is the distance between man and God also. As there is really no distance between the dream world and the waking world, there is no measuring rod to find out the distance between waking consciousness and dream consciousness. It is a vertical illumination of the same consciousness, an expansion of the dimension of the same consciousness. There is no distance between dream and waking. Therefore, one in dream does not reach waking. It is immediately awakening, as we call it.

So God-realisation is an awakening from within. It is not a travelling by distance, and it does not require a vehicle to reach God, though sometimes God appears as very far away. As I mentioned, waking consciousness may look very far away from dream. Not only does it look far, it may even look as not existing at all. We sometimes feel that God does not exist at all, as the dreamer does not have any consciousness of the waking condition. Such is the

difference and such is the similarity between God consciousness and ordinary human consciousness.

Svato'parokṣa jīvasya brahmatva mabhi vāñ chataḥ, naśyēt siddhā parokṣa tvam iti yuktir mahatyaho (81). “The consciousness that is in us, is an immediate fact of experience”; it is something that has to be reiterated again and again. On account of our identity with this physical body extensively, we do not always find time to appreciate the fact that our consciousness – which is what is called the nature of the Atman in us – cannot be something other than our own selves. Do not say “my Atman” or “my Self”. The Self is not your object of possession. You do not *possess* the Self; you *are* the Self. And, therefore, “my Self” is not a proper description of the Self that you yourself are.

The selfhood is the description of your very existence. Your existence is the existence of the Self. It is not ‘your’. Do not use the possessive case here. “My Atman is inside.” Such statements are untenable and redundant because it is not your Atman that is inside. It is you yourself which is there as neither inside nor outside. You are neither inside yourself nor outside yourself. You are just what you are. This is what is perhaps the meaning of that great dictum, “I am what I am.” I am not inside myself; I am not outside myself.

So the Atman in you, the Self in you, is not inside you. It *is* you. If this fact cannot be appreciated even after so much of discussion and eliminative analogies, metaphors, etc., it is really a wonder and a discredit to the intelligence of human beings. The non-mediacy and the direct immediacy of your own Self as consciousness is proof of its

being the Absolute Self. The Absoluteness of the Self that you yourself are, is also at once the proof of the existence of God, who is Absolute.