

The course on ***Nāsadīya-sūkta (Hymn of Creation)*** comprises four lessons. A detailed description of the topics covered in each lesson is provided below.

### **Lesson 1: Introduction**

- What is Veda?
- What is pramāṇa?
- Laukika- and alaukika-*viṣaya*
- Veda as pramāṇa
  
- Dharma- and Brahma-*viṣaya* in the Vedas
  - Sections of the Vedas that deal with dharma and Brahma
  - Role of śruti, yukti and anubhūti in determining dharma and Brahma
  
- Vedas are complex sound energies
- Rṣi - Seer of the Veda mantras

### **Lesson 2: Pralayakāla-paramātman – 1 (Mantra 1)**

- An introduction to the *Nāsadīya-sūkta*
- The seer of the *Nāsadīya-sūkta*
  
- The three occasions of the Paramātman:
  - Sṛṣṭi-kāla
  - Sthiti-kāla
  - Pralaya-kāla
  
- The nature of pralayakāla-paramātman as Sat-Cit-Ānanda
  
- Māyā as the causal factor for the world
  - Māyā is triguṇātmikā
  
- Pralayakāla-paramātman as Brahman with māyā
  - There is no duality, as śakti is not different from Parameśvara
  
- The relationship between Paramātman and māyā
  - Paramātman alone does not become the world
  - Māyā by itself cannot create
  - Paramātman along with māyā becomes the world
  - Paramātman does not undergo change to become the world
  - Even though both Brahman and māyā exist, the non-duality of Brahman is not compromised because māyā:
    - Does not have an existence independent of Brahman
    - Is similar to zero added to one, which makes no difference to the final count

- Māyā as anirvacanīya
- Before Creation:
  - There were no worlds in the beginning
  - There were no elements, as there was no place to stay or pervade
  - There were no jīvas; hence there was:
    - Absence of bhogya
    - Absence of bhoktā
  - There was no causal matrix

### Lesson 3: Pralayakāla-paramātman – 2 (Mantras 2 – 3)

- *Na mṛtyu āsīt* : The Lord of Death was absent in the beginning, there being the absence of jīvas
- The four types of pralaya:
  - Nitya-pralaya
  - Naimittika-pralaya
  - Prākṛta-pralaya
  - Ātyantika-pralaya
- *Na mṛtyu āsīt* is applicable to prākṛta-pralaya
- Nature of prākṛta-pralaya:
  - Happens when all the worlds including Brahma-loka come to an end
  - There is no cognition of day and night because of the absence of time
- *Ekam āsīt* - Brahman alone existed, along with māyā (svadhayā)
  - Just as a wave cannot be separated from water, māyā cannot be separated from Brahman.
  - Māyā rests in the Self without any differentiation and as 'one' with Brahman.
  - Māyā and Brahman exist just as a wave exists in water.
- Everything was covered in tamas, there was 'darkness'
  - As darkness covers objects, this māyā veils the perception of the Paramātmān
    - The entire worlds are there, but rolled up and hidden
    - Tamas overpowers the variety and stays in power
- Everything was 'apraketam'
  - The distinction between māyā and the jivās/worlds cannot be seen
  - The kārya is merged into the kāraṇa

### Lesson 4: Sṛṣṭikāla- and Sthitikāla-paramātman (Mantras 3 – 7)

## Srṣṭikāla-paramātman

- Māyā as 'tuccha'
  - It remains covering everything
  - It covers the Paramātman who is hidden by this māyā
- Creation of the worlds
  - The worlds emerged as a result of the tapas of Paramātman
  - Tapas is paryālocanā of the Paramātman
    - Paramātman envisages creation by His 'focus' (tapas)
  - Creation is because of the 'desire' of Paramātman
    - The impetus being fulfillment of the jīva's karma and vāsanā
      - The jīva's karma and desires are in latent form from the previous kalpa
      - The jīvas without knowledge of their real nature perform karma and because of this srṣṭi begins
      - At creation, Paramātman by tapas brings forth creation resulting in the fructification of the jīva's prārabdha
  - This theory of creation is revealed in the śruti
    - The Rṣīs, those who have conquered their mind have also arrived at the same conclusion about creation independently
  - The order of creation is both 'krama' and 'yugapad'
    - Creation happened all at one go and in order, like the rays of the sun at sunrise and the forks of the lightning respectively

## Sthitikāla-paramātman

- He appears in two forms: the bhoktā (jīva) and the bhogya (world).
- He appears as the sentient and the inert.
- He appears as māyā and the wielder of māyā
- Of the two forms, Paramātman appearing as the bhoktā is higher for:
  - Because of whom māyā functions - the 'prayati' (one who puts effort) is higher
  - The kartā is always higher
  - That which supports the bhogya prapañca is higher
- This incredibly complex and unimaginably perfect creation — no one can explain it
  - What is the nimitta and what is the upādāna for this creation, no one can know

- Śāstra is the only means to know that Paramātman alone is the nimitta and the upādāna for this creation
  - The devatas cannot know, for they came after
- An expression of wonder by the *Nāsadiya-sūkta* hymn on the Paramātman's creation
- This Paramātman is seated in one's own heart
- The intricacies of creation cannot be known, but the Paramātman as one's own Self can be known
- Thus knowing Paramātman in Truth as one's own Self, one crosses over this māyā and sees Paramātman in His true nature