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:
  - Srṣṭi-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 once 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