

Swami Vidyaranya's

PANCHADASHEE – 6.1

CHITRA DEEPA

PART 1/3: Verses 1-101 of 290

The Lamp of the Picture

MODERN-DAY REFLECTIONS

On a 13TH CENTURY VEDANTA CLASSIC

TEXT

47.06.1

by a South African Student
Swami Gurubhaktananda
2018



A FOUNDATIONAL TEXT ON VEDANTA PHILOSOPHY
PANCHADASHEE – An Anthology of 15 Texts by Swami Vidyaranyaaji

PART	Chap No.	TITLE OF TEXT	ENGLISH TITLE	No. Vers.
SAT: VIVEKA	1	<i>Tattwa Viveka</i>	<i>Differentiation of the Supreme Reality</i>	65
	2	<i>Maha Bhoota Viveka</i>	<i>Differentiation of the Five Great Elements</i>	109
	3	<i>Pancha Kosha Viveka</i>	<i>Differentiation of the Five Sheaths</i>	43
	4	<i>Dvaita Viveka</i>	<i>Differentiation of Duality in Creation</i>	69
	5	<i>Mahavakya Viveka</i>	<i>Fixing the Meaning of the Great Sayings</i>	8
Sub-Total A				294
CHIT: DEEPA	6.1/3	<i>Chitra Deepa</i>	<i>The Lamp of the Picture – PART 1/3</i>	290
	7	<i>Tripti Deepa</i>	<i>The Lamp of Perfect Satisfaction</i>	298
	8	<i>Kootastha Deepa</i>	<i>The Unchanging Lamp</i>	76
	9	<i>Dhyana Deepa</i>	<i>The Lamp of Meditation</i>	158
	10	<i>Nataka Deepa</i>	<i>The Theatre Lamp</i>	26
Sub-Total B				848
ANANDA:	11	<i>Yogananda</i>	<i>The Bliss of Yoga</i>	134
	12	<i>Atmananda</i>	<i>The Bliss of the Self</i>	90
	13	<i>Advaitananda</i>	<i>The Bliss of Non-Duality</i>	105
	14	<i>Vidyananda</i>	<i>The Bliss of Knowledge</i>	65
	15	<i>Vishayananda</i>	<i>The Bliss of Objects</i>	35
Sub-Total C				429
WHOLE BOOK				1571

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– Swami Gurubhaktananda

Om Namah Shivaaya!

Text
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पञ्चदशी-६/१: "चित्रदीप"

PANCHADASHEE – 06, Part 1/3

CHITRA DEEPA

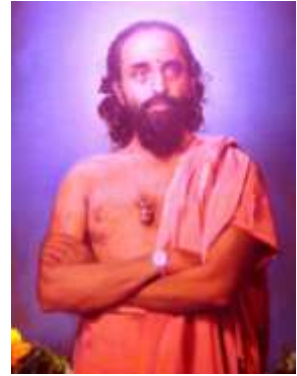
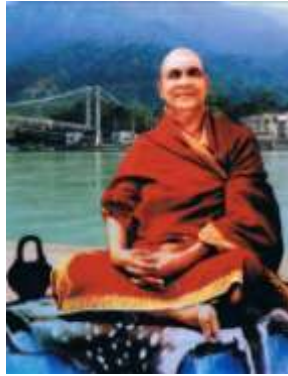
"The Lamp of the Picture"

13th Century Classic by Sri Swami Vidyaranya

MODERN-DAY REFLECTIONS

By Swami Gurubhaktananda

*Based on the 42 Lectures delivered
by Swami Advayanandaji (referred to as "Swamiji" in book),
Incharge, Chinmaya International Foundation, Veliyanad, Kerala.
from 18th September 2018 – 21st May 2019*



Adi Shankaracharya

Swami Sivananda

Swami Tapovanji

Swami Chinmayananda

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Personal Dedication

- 1. To my Parents, Smt Sharadaben & Sri Ratilalbhai Kapitan**
who inspired me to study in life, to stick to the path of Dharma and pursue the highest ideals; and swamped me with their abundant Love;
 - 2. To Puja Sri Swami Vimalanandaji Maharaj**
the President of the Divine Life Society of Rishikesh, Uttarakhand, India, who constantly encouraged and supported this effort;
 - 3. To Puja Sri Swami Tejomayanandaji (Guruji)**
for his boundless vision and inspiration to create a vibrant organisation;
 - 4. To Sri Swami Advayanandaji**
my Acharyaji at Sandeepany 2011-2013, who imparted his bountiful knowledge and wisdom with rare selfless Divine Love, as the Rishis of yore would wish to see. Where required, Acharyaji is referred to as “Swamiji” in the book.
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PANCHADASHEE – 06, Part 1/3

CHITRA DEEPA

“The Lamp of the Picture”

॥ पञ्चदशी ॥

PANCHADASHEE

by Swami Vidyananyaji

“INTRODUCTION to the Whole Book”

THE PANCHADASHEE IS COMPRISED of fifteen Books, together called *Megha Prakarana*. Panchadashee means, “*comprising of fifteen*”. The word “*Chapters*” is not accurate since the 15 Books do not link up like chapters in a book. Each one is independent. The only link for all the Books is the subject matter, ***Sat Advaitam***, the Non-Dual Reality.

The words in Samskrit grammar for short and long are *Laghu* and *Guru*. Panchadashee is a Laghu Grantha, a small text. But among all small texts, it is the Guru! That gives some idea of its standing in Vedantic literature.

There are Shastra Granthas which deal with all the topics in Vedanta, and there are Prakarana Granthas which deal with some of the topics only. Panchadashee is one of the latter type, but is the biggest among all the elementary texts. It is a foundation text, and some Vedanta teachers, such as Swami Tapovan, the Teacher of Swami Chinmayananda, begin the study of Vedanta with this text.

The Panchadashee’s 15 Books contain a total of 1571 verses. The whole book is split into 3 Parts, each with five Books. Each part deals with a particular aspect of the Truth:

PART	SIZE	MAIN TOPIC	DESCRIPTION
1 – Chap 1 to 5	294 verses	SAT	<i>Viveka</i> (<i>Discrimination</i>)
2 – Chap 6 to 10	848 verses	CHIT	<i>Deepa</i> (<i>Light</i>)
3 – Chap 11 to 15	429 verses	ANANDA	<i>Ananda</i> (<i>Bliss</i>)

The last Book of each Part is the shortest, for some reason. They are Book 5 (8 verses), Book 10 (26 verses) and Book 15 (35 verses). The two largest Books are in Part 2, namely, Book 6 (290 verses) and Book 7 (298 verses). These statistics are just for information in order to get a feel for what we are going to study. At Sandeepany Sadhanalaya, we studied only Books 5 and 10, the two shortest chapters.

General INTRODUCTION to Vedanta Topics

The five divisions in Vedantic Sadhana were listed by Swamiji at the outset, for the benefit of new students. They are:

1. **The Adhikari:** the stage up to qualification for entry; Sadhana Chatushtaya.
2. **Guru Upasadana:** the stage of approaching and serving one's Guru;
3. **The Upadesha:** the stage of Sravana; this is the teaching, and is divided into 3 parts: i) the Twam Pada, which answers, Who am I? ii) the Tat Pada, which answers. What is Reality? and What is the World? and iii) the Asi Pada, which establishes the identity between the two.
4. **The Sadhana:** the stage of digestion and absorption of the teaching. It is divided into two sections: i) Manana, reflecting upon the teaching; and ii) Nididhyasana, meditation.
5. **The Phala:** this is the fruit of the Sadhana, and has two parts: i) Jeevanmukti or liberation while living; and ii) Videhamukti or liberation from the cycle of births and deaths.

Difference Between Shastra & Prakarana Grantha

A Shastra is defined as a text which discusses all the topics listed above. There are three recognised Shastras in Hinduism: i) The **Upanishads** taken as a whole, which are the foundational texts; ii) The **Bhagavad Geeta**, in which Sri Veda Vyasa explains all the points raised in the Upanishads; and iii) The **Brahma Sootras**, wherein Sri Adi Shankaracharya answers in detail the doubts that may be raised on the issues raised in the Upanishads. Together, the above three Shastras are called the Prasthan Traya.

A Prakarana Grantha deals with only one topic very thoroughly. All the fifteen texts of the Panchadashee are each a Prakarana Grantha, standing independently. Even when taken all together, they do not make up a Shastra, as they deal only with the Teaching, i.e. they deal comprehensively with all three parts of the Teaching or Upadesha. The first five Prakaranas deal with **Sat**; the next five Prakaranas deal with **Chit**; and the last five Prakaranas deal with **Ananda**. The other four topics are not covered in Panchadashee.



॥ पञ्चदशी ॥

। षष्ठः परिच्छेदः १/३ ।

" चित्रदीप "

PANCHADASHEE – 06, Part 1/3

CHITRA DEEPA

"The Lamp of the PICTURE"

(Chapters 1-10, Verses 01-101 of 290 No.)

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

WE ENTER THE SECOND major part of the Panchadashee, named the **Chit Pada**, dealing with Consciousness. The Part prior to this dealt with Sat, and each text had the term *Vivekah* attached to it. The Part that follows this will deal with Ananda, and each text has the term *Ananda* attached to it. The present Part dealing with Chit, has the term *Deepa* attached to each of its five texts. 'Deepa' means Light, here referring to the "Light of Consciousness".

The Parts only roughly follow these three divisions. However, we have to remember that Sat, Chit and Ananda are not three separate independent descriptions of Reality, but jointly describe the same Reality in three ways. Hence, no hard and fast segregation of the Parts is intended by such classification. Each text will necessarily include all three terms of Sat-chit-ananda, and this is as it should be.

Book 4, named "Dvaita Vivekah", proved logically that Ishwara and Jeeva are the same in essence. It only needed the Jeeva to purify itself of all its ego-produced mental inclinations in order to recognise its identity with the Universal Consciousness. Then, Book 5, named "Mahavakya Vivekah", proved the same point scripturally, using the Mahavakyas. They spoke of identity at the deepest level. This is the very **Tatparya** or "bottom-line" of Vedanta, the essential purport of the Vedanta philosophy.

Now, in Book 6, named "Chitra Deepa", the same identity is shown through using the metaphor of a picture painted on a canvas. Once the metaphor is introduced, the text moves forward to explain the main point brought out by it, which is the ignorant notion of regarding the colourful painted picture as being real and totally ignoring the original clear canvas on which it was painted.

This text of 290 verses is considered to be the most important Book in Panchadashee due to the great depth in which our state of ignorance is analysed, yielding enormous clarity in our understanding of the human predicament. Its ultimate objective is to bring to the forefront of our intellect the Reality from its relegated position in the background.

THE PANCHADASHEE – Book 06, Part 1/3
Chitra Deepa (Verses 1-101 of 290)
“The Lamp of the Picture”

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PANCHADASHEE – 06

Chapter 1: (Verse 1-9, 9 No.)

The Metaphor of the PICTURE

EACH OF THE FIVE TEXTS in this Part takes up a different simile or metaphor and uses it to expound what Consciousness is in different ways. The present text is rooted in the metaphor of a Picture painted on a canvas cloth. Using this metaphor, Swami Vidyananyaji brilliantly shows us how Consciousness develops through four stages to eventually result in the gross manifested universe that we live in.

The most interesting part is to see how the metaphor is explored and elaborated to bring out pearls of wisdom from its depths. We see Sri Vidyananyaji's great acumen in this exploration of the metaphor. Enormous independent, creative, original thinking has gone into it. Sometimes Vedanta is accused unfairly of being a theology. This is far from true. A theology does not permit one the freedom of creative thinking. Theology remains fixed; it is elaborated upon by the theologian. Vidyananyaji's expositions are tremendously vibrant with original thoughts, but in this text we see his creativity blossoming forth with profusion. He charms our intellect by the sheer beauty of his presentation.

Clearly there is a key factor which makes us mistake the "painting" for the Reality.

The text revolves around the metaphor, teaching us ways of identifying ourselves with the Reality and thereby transcending the Samsaric existence of delusion, sorrow and suffering in which we are trapped. The logic Sri Vidyananyaji applies to this task is penetrating, convincing and unquestionable. The text that follows is sure to throw Light on our path and guide us to see past the visible multiplicity of creation and anchor our lives in the Reality that pervades and supports it.

Verse 1: *Introducing the Metaphor & its Application*

यथा चित्रपटे दृष्टमवस्थानां चतुष्टयम् ।

परमात्मनि विज्ञेयं तथावस्थाचतुष्टयम्

॥ १॥

yathā citrapaṭē dṛṣṭamavasthānāṁ catuṣṭayam |

paramātmāni vijñēyam tathāvasthācatuṣṭayam

॥ 1॥

1	<i>yathaa chitrapaTe drishhTam</i>	<i>Just as in the painting of a picture on a canvas</i>
2	<i>avasthaanaam chatushhTayam;</i>	<i>there are <u>four distinct stages</u> of development;</i>
3	<i>paramaatmani vijneyam</i>	<i>in the comprehension of the Supreme Reality,</i>
4	<i>tathaa avasthaa chatushhTayam</i>	<i>in the same way, there are <u>four distinct stages</u>.</i>

The verse introduces **1-2** the **Drishtaanta** and **3-4** the **Daashyaantika** – i.e. the metaphor and its application. The metaphor is the painting of a picture; the application is our comprehension of the Supreme Reality. Four stages are identified in the development of both of these. All four stages are named in the next verse.

Verse 2: Names of the Four Stages

यथा धौतो घट्टितश्च लाञ्छितो रञ्जितः पटः ।

चिदन्तर्यामि सूत्रात्मा विराडात्मा तथैर्यते

॥ २॥

yathā dhautō ghaṭṭitaśca lāñchitō rañjitah paṭah |

cidantaryāmi sūtrātmā virāḍātmā tathēryatē

॥ 2॥

1	yathaa dhautah, ghaTTitah, cha	For the Cloth : i) cleansing; ii) starching;
2	laanchhitah, ranjitah paTah;	iii) sketching; and iv) painting;
3	chit, antaryaami, sootraatmaa	For Consciousness : i) Pure Consciousness; ii) the Causal stage; iii) the Subtle stage;
4	viraaT aatmaa tathaa eeryate	iv) the Gross stage. These are the names.

1-2 The four names for the stages in the metaphor are given.

3-4 The four names for the stages in the application are given.

Verse 3: The Detailed Stages of the Metaphor

स्वतः शुभ्रोऽत्र धौतः स्याद्वट्टितोऽन्नविलेपनात् ।

मस्याकारैर्लाञ्छितः स्याद्रञ्जितो वर्णपूरणात्

॥ ३॥

svataḥ śubhrō'tra dhautah syādvṛṭtito'nnavilēpanāt |

masyākārairālāñchitah syādrañjitō varṇapūraṇāt

॥ 3॥

1	svatah shubhrah atra dhautah syaad	The Cloth is: i) <u>naturally</u> white and clean;
2	ghaTTitah annavilepanaat;	ii) then it is <u>stiffened</u> with starch;
3	masyaakaaraih laanchhitah syaad	iii) a thin <u>outline</u> in pencil is made; finally
4	ranjito varNapooraNaat	iv) the <u>painting</u> is filled with colours.

1 i) **Svatah**: “naturally clean”. It need not be *made* clean. It is not artificial, but natural, as Nature made it. It is pure white in colour. It is always the same in appearance.

2 ii) **Ghattitah**: “starched”. To prepare it for painting, it needs to be stiffened with starch. This is obtained from the water in which rice is boiled (**Annavilepanaat**).

3 iii) **Laanchhitah**: “outlined”. The outline is made lightly with a **Masyaakaara**, a tool resembling a pencil.

4 iv) **Ranjitah**: “painted”. The outlines are filled in with colours of great variety.

Verse 4: The Detailed Stages of the Application

स्वतश्चिदन्तर्यामी तु मायावी सूक्ष्मसृष्टिः ।

सूत्रात्मा स्थूलसृष्ट्यैव विराडित्युच्यते परः

॥ ४॥

svataścidantaryāmī tu māyāvī sūkṣmasṛṣṭiḥ |

sūtrātmā sthūlasṛṣṭyaiva virāḍityucyate paraḥ

॥ 4॥

1	<i>svatah chid</i>	<i>Consciousness is: i) naturally pure, uncreated;</i>
2	<i>antaryaamee tu maayaavee</i>	<i>ii) It receives the “inner creative impulse” (Antaryami), in association with the Causal Maya;</i>
3	<i>sookshhma srishhTitah sootraatmaa;</i>	<i>iii) in association with the Subtle creation, it forms the “thread of Creation” called Sootratma;</i>
4	<i>sthoola srishhTyaa eva viraaD iti uchyate parah</i>	<i>iv) and in association with the Gross creation, it forms the “cloth of Creation” called Virat.</i>

1 i) Svatah Chit: “Pure Consciousness”. Before creation only pure Consciousness existed. It is always there, exactly the same always, without any change. It is the all-pervading Reality, termed **Brahman**, that is non-dual, indestructible, changeless and eternal.

2 ii) Antaryaamee: “inner creative impulse”. The etymological meaning is: **Antah sthitva yam yati** – “seated within, it enables all functions”. With the Upadhi or conditioning of Maya (also known technically as Prakriti, and as Avidya with reference to ignorant humans), the Consciousness is at the Causal level, and is also termed **Ishwara**.

Maya consists of Sattwa, Rajas and Tamas, and Pure Consciousness is also called Sat-Chit-Ananda. Together we get Ishwara, the Creator of the Universe. Ishwara’s Creation is of three types: a) Uttama Deha – this is from Brahma up to the Devas, and is produced from Sattwa; here, Consciousness possesses Maya (Consciousness rules). b) Madhyama Deha – this is the human creation, which is a mixture of all three Gunas, but mainly Rajas; here, Consciousness is possessed by Maya (Maya rules). c) Adhyama Deha – this is the sub-human creatures from animals down to plants; Tamas predominates in these; the intellect is completely masked or shrouded at this level.

3 iii) Sootraatmaa: “the thread of Creation”. This is Consciousness associated with the Subtle level of creation, and is called **Hiranyagarbha**. The word literally means the “golden womb of Creation”. From Hiranyagarbha the five subtle elements are born. With the birth of the elements, the term **Sootratma** is used. ‘Sootra’ means “thread”; the elements are like the “thread” from which the fabric of Creation is constructed.

When Sootratma is seen from the angle of Shakti or power, it is also called Prana. When it is seen from the angle of Jnana or knowledge, it is called Hiranyagarbha; the knowledge “shines like gold (Hiranya)”.

4 iv) Viraat: “the Gross creation”. This is Consciousness associated with the Gross level of creation. The thread is now weaved into cloth, from which all items of clothing may be produced. This is the final stage of Creation. The gross universe with its panorama of colourful creatures, magnificent mountains and gushing rivers lies before us.

The etymological meaning of Virat is: **Vividham raajitam iti viraat** – “that which has a variegated appearance”. Multiplicity is the characteristic of Virat.

The Comparison of the Four Stages – Metaphor vs. Application

- i) The naturally clean and white canvas compares with Pure Consciousness.
- ii) The starching process represents the Causal level of creation. It is the preparation for the ‘painting’ of creation that is to follow. This is the design stage of creation.
- iii) The outlining process represents the Subtle level. This is invisible to the senses, but is the real operational level for all creatures. It is what fully controls the gross level.
- iv) The painting process represents the Gross level, when creation is completely manifested to the senses. The finished details of the universe become visible to the eye.

Verse 5: **The Varieties of Beings in Creation**

ब्रह्माद्याःस्तम्बपर्यन्ताः प्राणिनोऽत्र जडा अपि ।

उत्तमाधमभावेन वर्तन्ते पटचित्रवत्

॥ ५॥

brahmādyāḥstambaparyantāḥ prāṇinō:'tra jaḍā api |

uttamādhama bhāvēna vartantē paṭacitravat

|| 5||

1	<i>brahmaa-aadyaah stamba paryantaah</i>	<i>From the Creator (which includes Sustainer & Dissolver), all the way down to the <u>most trivial</u> item in creation,</i>
2	<i>praaNinah atra jaDaa api;</i>	<i>herein are <u>animate</u> as also <u>inanimate</u> beings, ranging</i>
3	<i>uttama adhama bhaavena</i>	<i>from the <u>topmost</u> to the <u>lowest</u> forms that exist;</i>
4	<i>vantante paTachitravat</i>	<i>just as is to be seen in a typical painting on a canvas.</i>

1 Brahma, the Creator, is the first Being that is created. “Brahma, etc” implies the inclusion of Vishnu and Shiva. The three together form the Trinity that create, sustain and dissolve the universe.

Stamba: “grass” or “post”. Here the meaning of grass is appropriate, as the idea is to describe the full range of creation all the way from Brahma right down to the blade of grass.

2 Prana denotes that the created item is a sentient or living being. Jada indicates the opposite type of item that is inert or insentient.

3 Uttama and Adhama: “topmost” and “lowest”. This refers to the quality of the life form, rather than the size. Beings are born due to their Prarabdha Karma. Those with good Karma are the topmost; those with bad Karma are the lowest. This is based on experiences in life. Good Karma manifests as intelligence and therefore knowledge, which in turn enhances our experiences; bad Karma manifests as dullness and therefore dense ignorance, which in turn limits our experiences.

The same threefold classification under Gunas, as seen under Antaryaami in the previous verse, is applicable to quality. The Devas enjoy the highest quality of life, humans have a middling type, and animals down to vegetation have a reducing type of quality of life.

Besides quality, the range also may be described in terms of freedom, with Devas enjoying the greatest amount of freedom, and plants the least.

Finally, Swamiji suggested that this verse applies only to living beings. In the case of the inert creation, it is quantity, not quality, that is the differentiating factor. We may

‘contrive’ a distinction in inert objects classifying mountains as Uttama and pebbles as Adhama; by taking the ocean as Uttama and drops of water as Adhama. But in Vedanta such differentiation has no significance.

4 The range in creation is comparable only in Stage 4 of the metaphor, i.e. when the painting is finally complete. That is when we see the full range of variety in the painting. It does not apply to the previous three stages.

In the next two verses, the metaphor is cleverly extended to bring forth a point that will take us forward into the matter that most concerns us – the removal of ignorance. First we look at the metaphor and then the application.

Verse 6: *The Clothes of Painted Men Appear Real!*

चित्रार्पितमनुष्याणां वस्त्राभासाः पृथक्पृथक् ।

चित्राधारेण वस्त्रेण सदृशा इव कल्पिताः

॥ ६॥

citrārpitamānuṣyāṇāṃ vastrābhāsāḥ pṛthakpṛthak |

citrādhārēṇa vastrēṇa sadṛśā iva kalpitāḥ

॥ 6॥

1	<i>chitra arpita manushhyaaNaam</i>	<i>Men in a picture are painted (on the canvas)</i>
2	<i>vastraa bhaasaah prithak prithak;</i>	<i>wearing imaginary clothes of different kinds.</i>
3	<i>chitraadhaareNa vastreNa</i>	<i>The clothes are so painted on the canvas</i>
4	<i>sadrishaa iva kalpitaah</i>	<i>that they appear as so many real cloths!</i>

Sri Vidyananya here introduces what may be called a metaphor within a metaphor. The painting is already a metaphor. Now the clothes painted on the human beings of the painting are conceived as a metaphor in their own right, teaching us a very special lesson about how our delusion operates on the phenomenal plane.

1-2 Human beings are painted on the cloth. All of them are wearing a variety of costumes of different colour, fashion and type. Men and women are colourfully dressed up. They seize the attention of the viewer.

3-4 The viewer is so captivated by their beauty that he is oblivious of the original canvas. The beautiful clothes appear very real – in fact, they appear more real than the canvas, which is completely overlooked. Actually, the canvas is the only thing there. But it is not there to the eyes of the viewer; the clothes, which are not there, appear so vivid as though they are actually present! What is the lesson we learn from this?

Verse 7: *The Jeevas of Superimposed Bodies Appear Real!*

पृथक्पृथक्चिदाभासाश्चैतन्याध्यस्तदेहिनाम् ।

कल्प्यन्ते जीवनामानो बहुधा संसरन्त्यमी

॥ ७॥

pṛthakpṛthakcidābhāsāścaitanyādyastadēhinām |

kalpyantē jīvanāmānō bahudhā saṁsarantyaṁī

॥ 7॥

1	<i>prithak prithak chidaabhaasaah</i>	<i>Reflections of Consciousness of different kinds</i>
2	<i>chaitanya adhyasta dehinaam;</i>	<i>of <u>bodies</u> are <u>superimposed</u> on Consciousness.</i>
3	<i>kalpyante jeevanaamaanah</i>	<i>These reflections appear as so many real Jeevas,</i>
4	<i>bahudhaa samsaranti amee</i>	<i>undergoing the <u>transmigration</u> cycle many times.</i>

1-2 The meaning of this ‘metaphor within a metaphor’ is now described. The painting as a whole represents Creation superimposed on the canvas of Consciousness. **Vastraah**, the clothing worn by the painted people, represents **Chidaabhaasaah**, or reflected consciousness or the Jeeva. This is item 5, and is added to our list of 4 stages.

3-4 Even as the clothes resemble the canvas but are actually totally unreal, so also reflected consciousness resembles Consciousness, but in fact is totally unreal. It creates an individual called the Jeeva who does not really exist, but only appears to exist!

The Jeeva is not there, yet, by ignorant beings, he is taken to be real, while Consciousness is not even thought of. So strong is the delusion, that the real Consciousness, the Substratum of all Creation, is ignored altogether.

The painted clothes are created at the will of the **Painter**. Tomorrow he may change them to another colour and another design or garment. Its reality fluctuates at the will of the painter. In the same way, reflected consciousness, the Jeeva or individual soul, changes from day to day as its Karma changes. The ‘painter’ is really one’s own Karma. Each Jeeva is shaped and ‘painted’ according to the Karma accumulated through its actions. The actions are all the thoughts, words and deeds performed by the individual.

A changing Jeeva also includes the changing circumstances of the Jeeva, from day to day, favourable one moment, unfavourable the next, all as determined or fashioned by one’s Prarabdha. This is the deeper interpretation of the ‘metaphor within the metaphor’.

Chitra Jyoti now becomes a very effective, eye-opening metaphor for us to recognise Reality behind Creation.

The next two verses make it very clear that this delusion is unique to man. Only man wears the ‘clothes’ of Karma, of individuality, of Jeevahood. The mountains and rivers have no such clothes to complicate their existence!

Verse 8: *Clothes – Sentient Humans Only*

वस्त्राभासस्थितान्वर्णान्यद्वदधाधरवस्त्रगान् ।

वदन्त्यज्ञास्तथा जीवसंसारं चिद्गतं विदुः

॥ ८॥

vastrābhāsaasthitānvarṇānyadvadādhāraavastragān |

vadantyajñāstathā jīvasamsāraṁ cidgatam viduḥ

॥ 8॥

1	<i>vastraa bhaasa sthitaan varNaan</i>	<i>The colour appearing on the imaginary <u>CLOTHES</u> –</i>
2	<i>yadvad aadhaara vastragaan;</i>	<i>to take it as being that of the <u>underlying canvas</u>,</i>
3	<i>vadanti ajnaah tathaa jeeva</i>	<i>is a statement made in ignorance; as is the <u>JEEVAS</u>’</i>
4	<i>samsaaram chidgatam viduh</i>	<i><u>transmigration</u> – to take it as applying to <u>Reality</u>.</i>

The error that is made by the whole of humanity is to mistake the clothes for the canvas substratum; to mistake the reflected consciousness known as the Jeeva as being the true Substratum, the Reality.

1-4 Now a third-level metaphor is added – we have a metaphor within a metaphor within a metaphor! The picture at the first level represented Creation; the clothes at the second level represented all the Jeevas; and now the colour of the clothes at the third level represents the **Transmigration** of those Jeevas. This is item 6, and gets added to our previous 5 items. We can see how the metaphor is getting extended little by little.

Other than the cloth, all else is unreal or false, meaning that they have an ephemeral existence. The canvas base alone is the Reality. To take anything else as being reality can only mean that one is in the realm of Ignorance or **Ajnaana**.

Transmigration, like bondage, can only be spoken of from the relative level. From the Absolute level there is no such thing. This applies to everything that has its roots in ignorance or the superimposition.

The question we ask ourselves is: Where is all this ignorance arising? What is the source of this ignorance which has a devastating chain following it? Tracking down the root cause of ignorance becomes the subject of the text henceforth.

In the briefest words, this ignorance may be traced back to the intellect of man. This is made clear in the next verse, which deals with inert objects not having an intellect.

Verse 9: No Clothes for Inert Objects & Animals

चित्रस्थ पर्वतादीनां वस्त्राभासो न लिख्यते ।
 सृष्टिस्थमृत्तिकादीनां चिदाभासास्तथा न हि ॥ ९॥

citrastha parvatādīnām vastrābhāsō na likhyatē |
 sṛṣṭisthamṛttikādīnām cidābhāsāstathā na hi ॥ 9॥

1	<i>chitra stha parvataadeenaam</i>	Located in a picture are inert objects like <u>hills</u> , etc.;
2	<i>vastraa bhaasah na likhyate;</i>	these are not dressed up in <u>imaginary clothes</u> . (Why?)
3	<i>srishhTi stha mrittikaadeenaam</i>	The reason is in the <u>inert objects</u> like clay, etc,
4	<i>chidaabhaasaah tathaa na hi</i>	reflected consciousness as in <u>Jeevas</u> is not there.

The three-level metaphor is neatly wrapped up by considering inert objects in this last verse of the chapter.

1-2 Parvataadeenaam: “objects like mountains, etc”. Inert objects have a blessing in disguise: they do not have intellects, so there is no chain of ignorance experienced by them – no ‘clothes’, no reflected consciousness, no accumulation of Paapa and Punya, no transmigration of birth and death, no pain and no sorrow.

When the sun is reflected in a bucket of water, children think that the sun has entered the water. They are innocent of the truth that it is only a reflection of the sun. The predicament of ignorant mankind is the same with regard to the Self.

The following table sets out the metaphor with all its levels and details:

Level	Stage	DRISHTAANTA The Metaphor, Canvas, Cloth		DAASHTAANTIKA The Application, Brahman, Reality	
1	i)	<i>Dhautah</i>	<i>Cleansed</i>	<i>CHIT</i>	<i>Pure Consciousness</i>
	ii)	<i>Ghattitah</i>	<i>Starched</i>	<i>Antaryaami, Ishwara, Prana</i>	<i>Causal Consc.</i>
	iii)	<i>Laancchhitah</i>	<i>Outlined</i>	<i>Sootraatmaa, Hiranyagarbha,</i>	<i>Subtle Consc.</i>
	iv)	<i>Ranjitah</i>	<i>Painted</i>	<i>Virat</i>	<i>Gross Consc.</i>
2	v)	<i>Vastraah</i>	<i>Clothes</i>	<i>JEEVA</i>	<i>Individual soul</i>
3	vi)	<i>Varnaah</i>	<i>Colours</i>	<i>Samsaaram</i>	<i>Transmigration, Births & Deaths</i>

**THREE LEVELS OF THE PAINTING METAPHOR
IN SIX STAGES OF ITS DEVELOPMENT**



PANCHADASHEE – 06

Chapter 2: (Verse 10-16, 7 No.)

The Outlines of SELF-ENQUIRY

Verse 10: The Journey of Self-Enquiry

संसारः परमार्थोऽयं संलग्नः स्वात्मवस्तुनि ।

इति भ्रान्तिरविद्या स्याद्विद्ययैषा निवर्तते

॥ १०॥

samsāraḥ paramārtho'yaṁ saṁlagnaḥ svātmavastuni |

iti bhrāntiravidyā syādvīdyayaiṣā nivartatē

|| 10||

1	<i>samsaarah paramaarthah ayam</i>	<i>This continuous suffering in life , when taken as</i>
2	<i>samlagnah svaatma vastuni;</i>	<i>well-established and belonging to the <u>Supreme Self</u>,</i>
3	<i>iti bhraantih avidyaa syaad</i>	<i>is a <u>delusion</u> due to Ignorance.</i>
4	<i>vidyaya eshhaa nivartate</i>	<i>It can be <u>removed</u>, but only by Knowledge.</i>

The nature of the problem of **Ignorance** is stated in this verse, with the only solution to its removal.

The Nature of Samsara

Swamiji firstly took great pains over describing the precise nature of Samsara, the daily grind of worldly life.

1 Etymologically, the word **Samsaara** means “moving continuously”; this implies “never being at ease”. The meaning can apply over a spectrum of life as follows:

i) **Change**: Change is the very nature of life on earth. Worldly existence is full of change. This gives it the basic name of Samsara.

ii) **Pain & Suffering**: This follows directly from the changing nature of Samsara. Life is centred around joy followed by sorrow. Man aims for joys but inevitably tastes the sorrow, too. It is unavoidable that both go hand in hand. In fact, the joys are only there so that we can experience the sorrows that follow them.

iii) **Unending Sorrow**: This sorrow goes very deep. It is unending. Although it is said, “Every sorrow lasts only for one night,” in reality it is a night that is very long; it can go on for years together. This is the sorrow of being in ignorance all through life.

iv) **Transmigration**: When the sorrow is not resolved at the time of death, it continues into the next birth, and the next. We now get an overview on many lives and see that it is riddled with sorrow through and through. There is no end until sorrow is removed by knowledge.

2 In this Pada, the key word is **Samlagnah**, “well established”. Sorrow has established itself well into every corner of our existence. In fact, it is so well established that we

take it to be inseparable from life. We completely identify with it and consider it as affecting 'me'. The identity we have of our self is that it experiences this sorrow without any end. We feel this being, **Swatmaa**, with which we identify is our true existence, **Vastuni**.

The Nature of Ignorance

3 There are actually two selves within each one of us – the Supreme Self and the Jeeva or individual, deluded self or Ego. Not knowing the former, we take the latter to be our real self. To take Jeevahood as being real is Ignorance.

What is Jeevahood? Jeevahood has three functions:

- i) **Jnaatritva**: “knowership”. Identifies with all that we know with our intellect.
- ii) **Bhoktritva**: “enjoyership”. Identifies with all joys and sorrows.
- iii) **Kartritva**: “doership”. Identifies with all actions performed.

This misplaced identity is the equivalent of taking the painted clothes to be the canvas upon which the painting is done. The canvas is really Dhautah or pure white and clean, but we superimpose the coloured clothes onto it and mistake them for Reality.

4 Firstly, this ignorance can be removed only through knowledge and in no other way. Other means may help us to understand the knowledge. That is as far as they can go. But it is the knowledge alone that clears the ignorance.

The knowledge required to achieve this has two aspects to it, and these are explained in the next verse.

Verse 11: **The Ultimate Objective of Self-Enquiry**

आत्माभासस्य जीवस्य संसारो नात्मवस्तुनः ।

इति बोधो भवेद्विद्या लभ्यतेऽसौ विचारणात्

॥ ११॥

ātmābhāsasya jīvasya saṁsārō nātmavastunah |

iti bōdhō bhavēdvidyā labhyatē:'sau vicāraṇāt

|| 11||

1	<i>aatmaabhaasasya jeevasya</i>	<i>Belonging to reflected consciousness, i.e. the <u>Jeeva</u></i>
2	<i>samsaarah na aatma vastunah;</i>	<i>is Samsara, and certainly not to the true Self.</i>
3	<i>iti bodhah bhaved vidyaa</i>	<i>This understanding is called knowledge.</i>
4	<i>labhyate asau vichaaraNaat</i>	<i>This is achieved through ENQUIRY (into one's Self).</i>

Two aspects of knowledge are stated here:

1 i) **Jeevasya**: “of the Jeeva”, i.e. the person to whom the Samsaric experience belongs. This is the first and fundamental error.

Aatmaabhaasasya: “reflection of consciousness”. It is wrong because this Jeeva is actually only the reflection of the Pure Consciousness. The clothes are a creation of the painter. Just as the clothes are only a painting on the pure white canvas, so also the reflection of consciousness is only a creation superimposed on Reality.

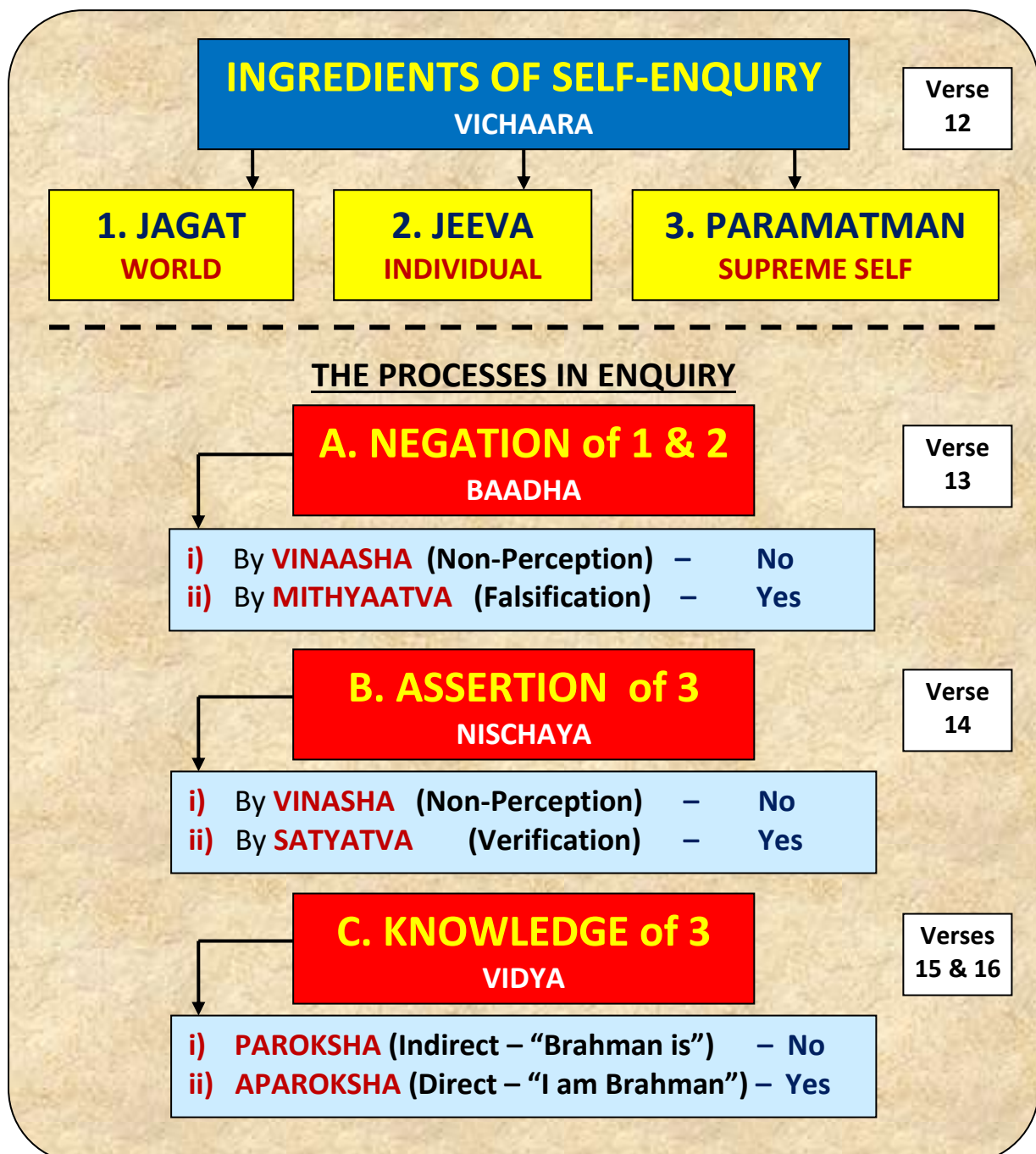
2 ii) **Samsaarah**: The second error is to consider Samsara as being something true. But knowledge tells us that Samsara is not true. It is **Na Aatma Vastunah**, it does not have the status of Reality. Samsara is a false superimposition, just as the Jeeva is.

Is a Partial Acceptance of Knowledge Possible?

Both these aspects have to be accepted together. One cannot accept one aspect and not the other. For example, it will not work if we simply say, "So what if Samsara is there. Let it be there; it does not affect me who am beyond it." This is what the Saankhya and Yoga philosophy says, and it has prevented them from reaching the Absolute Reality. They accept Samsara as another reality equal to Brahman. That is, they accept Duality, and so they can never reach Non-duality!

By the same token, it is not possible to see only Samsara as being false and accept Jeeva as true. That, too, will not work, for it refuses to accept Non-duality. Jeevahood is very much part of Samsara. In fact, Samsara is a trouble to the Jeeva only, not to anyone else!

Hence, a partial solution of accepting only one aspect of Knowledge is not possible.



Verse 12: The Threefold Ingredients of Enquiry

सदा विचारयेत्तस्माज्जगत्जीवपरात्मनः ।

जीवभावजगद्भावबाधे स्वात्मैव शिष्यते

॥ १२॥

sadā vicārayēttasmājjagatjīvaparātmanah |

jīvabhāvajagadbhāvbādhē svātmaiva śiṣyatē

॥ 12॥

1	sadaa vichaarayet tasmaat	Therefore, (as a seeker), always Enquire into
2	jagat jeeva paraatmanah;	the <u>world</u> , the <u>individual</u> , and the <u>Supreme Self</u> .
3	jeeva bhaava jagad bhaava	When the ideas of the individual and the world
4	baadhe sva aatma eva shishhyate	are <u>negated</u> , the pure Self alone <u>remains</u> .

As seen in the above diagram, this verse is called a Vastu Sangrah Vakya, which means that it is a defining verse for a number of others after it. It gives the content of the discussion that follows after it. **Enquiry** is the theme being expounded.

1 Tasmaat: “therefore”. Here, the word refers to the Enquiry which was named in the previous verse as being the cause of Knowledge. What has to be enquired into?

2 The verse lists three items – **World, Individual and Reality** – for enquiry.

3 The first two are Mithya or apparently real, and have to be negated. Truth can only be revealed when the False is discovered. The first step in Enquiry is to discover what is false. When we see the illusory snake, where do we start with our enquiry? We shine a light on the ‘snake’; only then do we realise that it is not a snake but a rope. We discover the falsity of the snake, and thereby establish the reality of the rope.

The Jagat and Jeeva are said to *become* false. This is because earlier they were regarded as being true. After enquiry, they are found to be false. Their status changes.

4 The third is Satya or the Reality, and has to be asserted. Satya does not *become* true; it is ever true; it was never untrue at any time. Only, we were not aware of it earlier. After enquiry, its Truth is established. Verses **13** and **14** explain the negation and assertion processes. Verses **15** and **16** explain the actual process of enquiry.

Verse 13: The Negation of Jagat & Jeeva

नाप्रतीतिस्तयोर्बाधः किन्तु मिथ्यात्वनिश्चयः ।

नो चेत्सुषुप्तिमूर्च्छादौ मुच्येता यत्नतो जनः

॥ १३॥

nāpratīṭistayōrbādhah kintu mithyātvaniścayah |

nō cētsuṣuptimūrcchādaū mucyētā yatnatō janah

॥ 13॥

1	na aprateetih tayoh baadhah	Negation of the two is not mere <u>non-perception</u> ,
2	kintu mithyaatva nishchayah;	but the firm conviction of their <u>Falsity</u> .
3	nah chet sushhupti moorchchhaadau	Otherwise in deep sleep or in a faint,
4	muchyetaa yatnato janah	people would be automatically liberated!

Tayoh: “both”. This refers to Jagat and Jeeva, the world and the individual soul. They are the first two ingredients in the enquiry process. Both need to be negated by enquiry.

Negation can be of two kinds: External or internal; without knowledge or with knowledge. The first is useless in rooting out ignorance; the second is the only way.

1 i) Aprateetih: “non-perception”. This is equivalent to Vinaasha or removal. It is hoped by some that removal of Jagat and Jeeva would render them non-perceptible, and therefore non-troublesome. A troublesome mosquito is killed to gain some peaceful sleep. A rat is caught in a trap and the problem is over. This is the idea. An ostrich buries its head in the sand and thinks the enemy is out of sight!

War is another example where Aprateetih is employed as a solution. The enemy is simply destroyed, thinking that his destruction solves the problem. Such a solution is no solution at all. Enmity only increases and perpetuates itself.

At best, Aprateeti is only a temporary solution. Not giving a drunkard money may help in some way to deny him his supply of alcohol for the time being, until he starts stealing to obtain it. What is the permanent solution?

2 ii) Mithyaatva: “falsity”. Falsity is removed. Something more is needed to remove falsity – Knowledge. Jeeva and Jagat need to be seen as false in order to remove their ‘sting’. The falsity of Jagat and Jeeva is seen by making an enquiry, using whatever knowledge we can obtain about them. Once the truth is known, false things lose their power to cause any fear or delusion in us. This is the permanent solution.

Swamiji gave the following examples to illustrate the supremacy of Mithyaatva over Aprateeti as a solution for the removal of Ignorance.

i) What happens to the snake when we realise it is a rope? The rope continues to appear to us in exactly the same manner as the snake did earlier. But we are no longer afraid of it.

ii) The mirage-water continues to appear even after we get the knowledge that it is a mirage. The only difference is that we cease to run after the mirage water.

iii) When the Earth is known to be round, it ceases to appear flat!

iv) When the blueness of the sky is known to be due to the presence of light and dust particles together, we understand that the sky is colourless, and blueness is an appearance.

iii) A spoon in a glass of water looks bent; knowledge of light refraction resolves it.

iv) A toy lion may frighten a child, but not an adult who knows better.

3-4 Why is the first method not applicable to the removal of Delusion?

It is inapplicable because there is no knowledge involved in it. It is a totally externalised solution for a problem that lies internally. If knowledge of the Self were obtainable merely by eliminating the world and the individual, then it would be possible to realise God every night in sleep; or whenever we faint; or when we go into a coma. Banging our head against a stone would be all that is needed to get illumination!

The very thought of such a crude, external method stultifies the spiritual quest.

Both Jeeva & Jagat Need to be Falsified

To see the falsity only of one of these two items, Jagat and Jeeva, is not possible. We have to do the enquiry on both of them and see both as being false. Both continue to

THE SCENARIO OF “NO JEEVANMUKTI”

The materialistic Charvakas have a reckless attitude towards the scriptures and towards the goal called **Jeevanmukti** set up by the scriptures. They wish to have nothing to do with these two, because they obstruct their path of pleasure and freedom of the senses. They seek Liberation of the Senses, not Liberation of the Soul!

It would suit the Charvakas perfectly if there were no such a thing as Jeevanmukti, and no such person as the Jeevanmukta. What a fine world that would make for sensually-minded folk like the materialists! They would see the world rid of the people whom they most detest. Jeevanmuktas would become “non-perceptible” to them!

The Charvakas cannot conceive of a world that is not perceptible. How can this world ever be taken away, not just from them, but even from their foes, the Vedantins? When they hear the Vedantins say, “The world is unreal”, they just love it. It gives them a chance to have a dig at their stupidity. They say to the Vedantins “So you wish to erase the world? How much more idiotic can you be! Fools you are to think you can do so! So long as we live the world will be there for us to enjoy.”

Wrapped up cosily in this blanket of ignorance, they have a hearty laugh at the Vedantins, as demons usually do. Well, Sri Vidyananyaji has very bad news for them . . .

“Yes,” he says, “the world can disappear – through knowledge of its Falsity. The world need not disappear literally, as you think we are foolish enough to believe. The world can disappear by having the right knowledge of its nature!”

In this way, Sri Vidyananyaji clamps down on the little hope that the Charvakas have to run amok with their senses, and their fatal philosophy. He knows that ‘No Jeevanmukti’ is the dream scenario of the Charvakas. It would mean no Jeevanmuktas. That would mean no one to teach the Vedanta philosophy, no Gurus to learn from. That would mean no purpose would be served by the scriptures. That would mean the scriptures become redundant and can be discarded. That would mean no more ‘dry Vedantic discussions’ for the world to listen to. What a perfect scenario for the Charvakas!

Sri Vidyananya’s answer to this scenario is **Knowledge**, a knowledge that dares to see through all Falsity and re-capture the Truth for those to whom It is still dear and sacred. Knowledge of the Self, he declares, is needed to see through the glitter of this world; to see its empty promise of happiness. When the world itself is seen to be false, and the Jeeva is discovered to be an impostor impersonating the Self, then the senses would quieten down and not run after their wares in the world.

Using the intellectual tool of **Enquiry**, Sri Vidyananyaji thus assures the true seeker of the surgical means to attain Jeevanmukti through acquiring the proper Knowledge.

On the firm foundation of Knowledge, Sri Vidyananyaji seeks to build up the edifice which all the Rishis embodied in themselves – the edifice of the Jeevanmukta, the liberated sage. Once the sage is there, everything else would fit into the right place. The whole Parampara would survive. Nothing daunts Sri Vidyananyaji to work towards this noble end.

He may be a small voice on this planet, but echoes of his message rebound from high up in the heavens and the sound gets louder and louder on earth – “*The profound Truth will never be obliterated.*” This is the unshakeable faith that keeps the ink flowing in his pen!

FALSITY & REALITY MARCH TOGETHER

For anything to be false, we must know that it has to have a Substratum of Reality. There has to be something Real upon which it is superimposed. Truth is the basis of Falsity. There can be no Falsity without the Truth.

In Vedanta we always see a 'Rainbow'. One end is Falsity; the other end is Reality. One end is Duality and the other end is Non-duality. The two always march together, albeit at two extreme ends. We have the famous line, "Brahma Satyam, Jagat-Mithya". When the text says "Paramatman alone remains", it does not mean that Jagat and Jeeva do not exist. It means that they are seen to be false. The assertion of Reality is completely in harmony with the recognition of Falsity.

Like bride and bridegroom, Reality and Falsity march down the aisle of Time hand in hand, inseparably wedded together and with no possibility of a divorce. Like black and white, together they make up the picture that is Creation. Neither can the negation of the world be taken literally as a physical destruction that is "non-perceptible", nor can the assertion of the Reality be taken literally to exclude the world from it.

Having dealt with the three things that need to be enquired into, namely, Jagat, Jeeva and Satya, we now move on to elaborate on the point of **Enquiry** itself.

Verse 12 said, "Always enquire." What does 'always' mean in this context? Does it mean go on enquiring for ever? No one takes up a project if he knows that it is to go on forever. Projects are only taken up by the wise if they are time-bound, i.e. they have a termination. Projects that will see no end are avoided. It is the same with Enquiry – is there an end to it?

The end of Enquiry depends on the advance of knowledge from a lower stage to a higher stage. The next verse explains it.

Verse 15: *The End-Point of Enquiry*

परोक्षा चापरोक्षेति विद्या द्वेधा विचारजा ।

तत्रापरोक्ष विद्याप्तौ विचारोऽयं समाप्यते

॥ १५॥

parōkṣā cāparōkṣēti vidyā dvēdhā vicārajā |

tatrāparōkṣa vidyāptau vicārō:'yaṁ samāpyatē

|| 15||

1	<i>parokshhaa cha aparokshha iti</i>	Obtained <u>indirectly</u> , and obtained <u>directly</u> – thus
2	<i>vidyaa dvedhaa vichaarajaa;</i>	twofold is the Knowledge born of enquiry.
3	<i>tatra aparokshha vidyaa aaptau</i>	When one obtains the <u>direct knowledge</u> ,
4	<i>vichaarah ayam samaapyate</i>	then Enquiry is said to come to an <u>end</u> .

The two types of knowledge are Paroksha and Aparoksha. Till the Aparoksha knowledge comes, the Enquiry has to go on. **Aparoksha Jnana** is the end-point of Enquiry.

SOME KEY DEFINITIONS

Paroksha: The word literally means “*seen by another*”. This is knowledge which is obtained through the senses and formulated in the mind. The senses could be one’s own or another reliable person’s, for as far as the Self is concerned, one’s own mind is regarded as ‘other’. Usually knowledge coming from one’s own self is called Pratyaksha. Pratyaksha is included under Paroksha.

Aparoksha: This word is the opposite of Paroksha. It refers to knowledge that is independent of the mind and senses. That means it has to be something that is seen directly by the Self, with no intervening assistance. No medium is needed to obtain this knowledge.

Vichara: The Samskrit definition of Vichaara is **Mithyatva Satyatva Nirmaya** = “*the determination between the true and the false.*”

Verse 16: *The Two Types of Knowledge*

अस्ति ब्रह्मेति चेद्वेद परोक्षज्ञानमेव तत् ।

अहं ब्रह्मेति चेद्वेद साक्षात्कारः स उच्यते

॥ १६॥

asti brahmēti cēdvēda parōkṣajñānamēva tat |

aham brahmēti cēdvēda sāṅkṣātkārah sa ucyatē

|| 16||

1	<i>“<u>asti brahma</u>” iti chet veda</i>	<i>In the case when one knows “<u>There is Brahman</u>”,</i>
2	<i>parokshha jnaanam eva tat;</i>	<i>such knowledge is called Paroksha or indirect.</i>
3	<i>“<u>aham brahma</u>” iti chet veda</i>	<i>In the case when one knows “<u>I am Brahman</u>”,</i>
4	<i>saakshhaatkaarah sa uchyate</i>	<i>such knowledge is called Aparoksha or direct.</i>

Sri Vidyananyaji has his own unique way of defining the two types of knowledge:

Paroksha: This is basically information. “There is Brahman” is information at the intellectual level. It is a fact borne in mind. It is very helpful to carry the intellect forward to a point from where it can make a leap into Aparoksha.

The seeker at this stage of knowledge does not know who he is in truth. However, he knows enough to know that he exists; he knows intellectually of the existence of Brahman.

Aparoksha: This is a direct experience of the Self. It is intuitive in nature. “I am Brahman” is a direct experience of Brahman. In it there is no doubt whatsoever. There is no intervention of any input from one’s mind. It is a “trans-mental experience”, also called here as **Saakshaatkaara**. One can identify with it as it comes as a direct experience and cannot be expressed in words, or conceived in thoughts.

This Aparoksha knowledge is of two types. The first type is purely intuitional and direct. It is the genuine Aparoksha knowledge. The second is an informational **Aham Brahmaasmi**, which classifies as Paroksha. However many times we may repeat “*Aham Brahmaasmi*”, as long as we have not experienced it, it only means “*Asti Brahma*”.

PANCHADASHEE – 06

Chapter 3: (Verse 17-24, 8 No.)

The FOURFOLD CONSCIOUSNESS

THE PREVIOUS CHAPTER has outlined the three ingredients of Self-enquiry and the three main Processes of Self-enquiry.

To re-cap, the three ingredients are: 1. Jagat, 2. Jeeva and 3. Atman (the World, the Jeeva and the Self). The three processes are: A. Baadha, B. Nischaya and C. Vidya (Negation, Assertion and Knowledge). All three processes were outlined in the previous Chapter. We now proceed further into the third process, Vidya, and examine how Consciousness (the Self) appears in four different ways. It is called the **Fourfold Consciousness**.

As this is the most crucial process within Enquiry, it is placed in a Chapter of its own.

Verse 17: *Towards the End-Point of Enquiry*

तत्साक्षात्कारसिद्ध्यर्थमात्मतत्त्वं विविच्यते ।

येनायं सर्वसंसारत्सद्य एव विमुच्यते

॥ १७॥

tatsākṣātkārasiddhyarthamātmātattvaṁ vivicyatē |

yēnāyaṁ sarvasaṁsārātsadya ēva vimucyātē

|| 17||

1	<i>tat saakshhaatkaara siddhyartham</i>	<i>For the attainment of that <u>direct knowledge</u></i>
2	<i>aatma tattvam vivichyate;</i>	<i>let us now enquire into the <u>nature of the Self</u>,</i>
3	<i>yena ayam sarva samsaaraat</i>	<i>through which from all our <u>worldly fetters</u></i>
4	<i>sadya eva vimuchyate</i>	<i>we will be immediately <u>liberated</u>.</i>

This verse summarises the ultimate objective of the process of Self-enquiry as declared in Verse 10.

1 Saakshaatkaara: This is Aparoksha Jnana, the end-point of Self-enquiry. More light is now to be thrown on the Knowledge aspect of the process of Self-enquiry.

2 Aatma Tattvam: “the principle of the Self”. We have not yet investigated into the actual principle of the Self. This is the agenda in the eight verses of this Chapter. The methodology by which we are going to do the enquiry into the nature of the Self is to clearly differentiate the four ways in which we can view the Self with the intellect.

3-4 We are strongly reminded of the reason why all this is being done. Without keeping our overall purpose in mind, our effort can easily go in vain. We are dealing with the way out of the suffering experienced in Samsara or worldly existence. This practical concern should always remain uppermost in our minds as we go into the theoretical details of how to achieve it.

Verse 18: The Fourfold Consciousness

कूटस्थो ब्रह्मजीवेषावित्येवं चिच्चतुर्विधा ।

घटाकाशमहाकाशौ जलाकाशाभ्रखे यथा

॥ १८ ॥

kūṭasthō brahmajīvēṣāvityēvaṁ ciccaturvidhā |

ghaṭākāśamahākāśau jalākāśābhrakhē yathā

|| 18||

1	<i>kooTastha, brahma, jeeva, eeshhau,</i>	<i>i) As <u>Kootastha</u>; ii) as <u>Brahma</u>; iii) as <u>Jeeva</u>; and iv) as <u>Ishwara</u> –</i>
2	<i>iti evam chit chaturvidhaa;</i>	<i>In this way Consciousness is divided fourfold.</i>
3	<i>ghaTa-aakaasha mahaa-aakaashau</i>	<i>i) Just as <u>pot-Space</u>; ii) as <u>all-embracing space</u>;</i>
4	<i>jala-aakaasha abhrakhe yathaa</i>	<i>iii) as <u>water-space</u>; and as <u>cloud-space</u>.</i>

On the heels of the main simile of this text, namely “Chitra Deepa”, we are now introduced to another remarkable original simile from Sri Vidyananyaji. His originality is indeed unquestionable, and stems from his deep love for the subject he is expounding. That love is closely entwined with the great purpose that this knowledge serves – the Liberation of man from all suffering.

1-4 The simile is once again an extended metaphor. Akasha or Space is compared with Consciousness. Both Akasha and Consciousness can be differentiated in two ways.

i) **Unconditioned & Conditioned**: In one dimension, Consciousness and Space can be seen as being unconditioned by the Upadhis or as being conditioned by them.

ii) **Individuality & Totality**: In the other dimension, they can be seen from the perspective of individuality (Vyashti) as well as from that of Totality (Samashti).

Thus the metaphor and the application each has four different names given to it, depending on the above differentiation. All eight names are listed in the present verse.

The whole classification is seen more clearly when laid out in diagrammatic form. The diagram (shown on the next page) summarises every verse of this Chapter. Hence, students should give it due consideration and refer to it frequently.

SIX “BEGINNINGLESS” PRINCIPLES

*Jeeveshwara vishuddhaachit, tathaa jeeveshayoh bhidaa;
avidyaa tatchito yogah, shad asmaakam anaadayoh.*

Meaning: *“i) Jeeva, ii) Ishwara, iii) Pure Consciousness;*

iv) the difference between Jeeva and Ishwara;

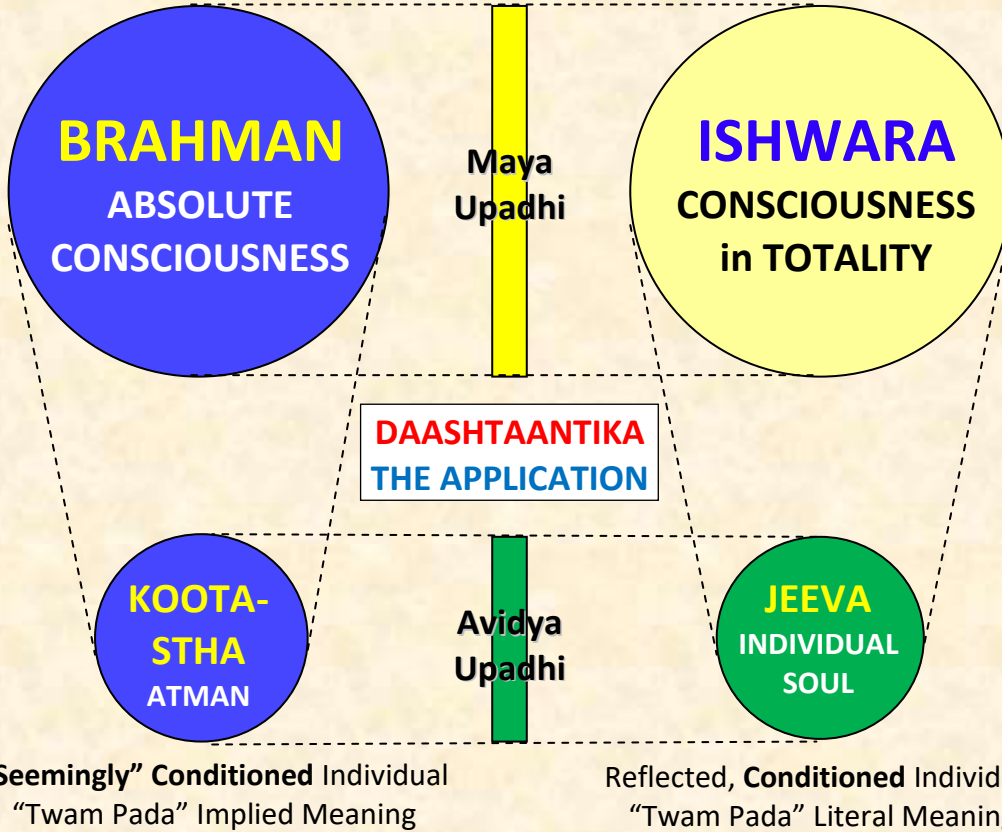
*v) Avidya, and vi) the connection between Avidya and Consciousness –
these are the six principles that are ‘Beginningless’.”*

The 6th principle is also called Adhyaasika Sambandha, “connection between Avidya and its superimposition on Brahman”, and is interpreted as Time.

Sri Vidyananyaji mentions the first three directly in verse 18. Kootastha is not mentioned. Where does Sri Vidyananyaji get his authority to list it? This is explained next.

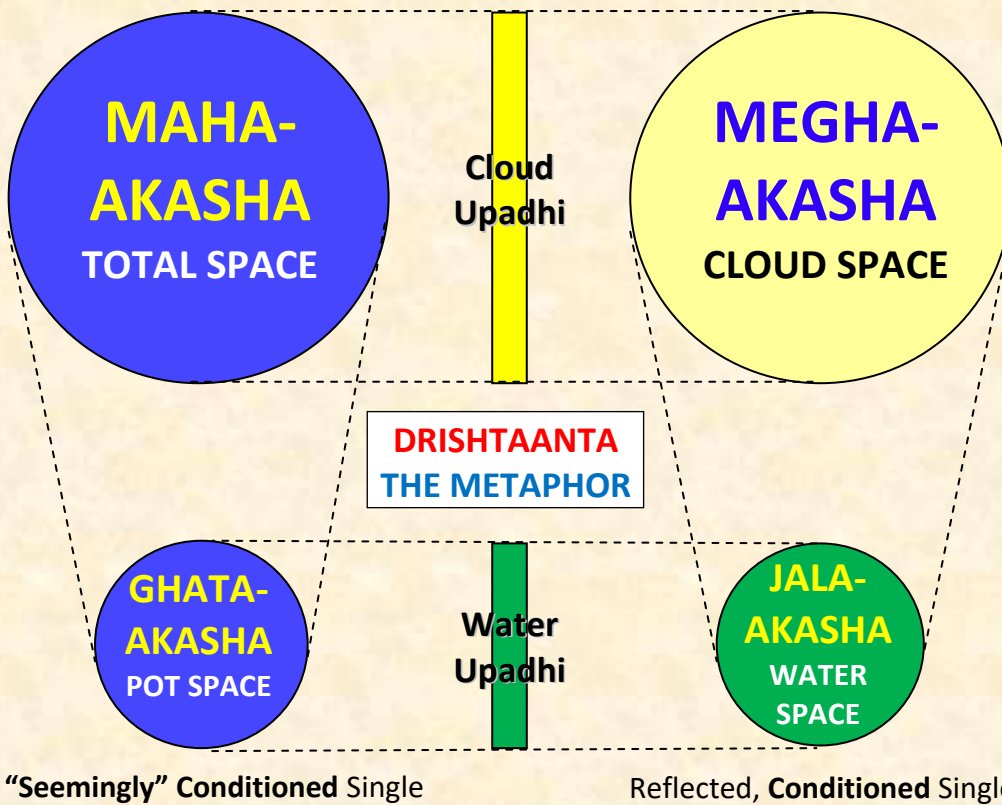
Unconditioned Total
"Tat Pada" Implied Meaning

Reflected, **Conditioned** Total
"Tat Pada" Literal Meaning



Unconditioned Total

Reflected, **Conditioned** Total



Verse 19: “Water-Space” Explained

घटावच्छिन्नखे नीरं यत्तत्र प्रतिबिम्बितः ।
साभ्रनक्षत्र-आकाशो जलाकाश-उदीर्यते

॥ १९॥

ghaṭāvachchinnakhē nīraṁ yattatra pratibimbitaḥ |
sābhranākṣatra-ākāśō jalākāśa-udīryatē

॥ 19॥

1	<i>ghaTa avachchhinna khe neeram</i>	<i>In the space <u>conditioned</u> by the pot, the water</i>
2	<i>yat tatra pratibimbitaḥ;</i>	<i>contained in that (pot) creates a <u>reflection</u> of</i>
3	<i>saabhra nakshhatra-aakaasha</i>	<i>the <u>sky</u> with clouds and the stars in it.</i>
4	<i>jalaakaasha udeeryate</i>	<i>This (reflection) is known as “Water Space”.</i>

The explanation begins with the example, at the level of **Individuality** with Ghata-akasha and Jalaakasha, which represent Kootastha and Jeeva respectively. The relationship between these two is crucial in the understanding of the metaphor.

1-2 Firstly, Swamiji took pains to explain that the water takes the place of the space in the pot. When we speak, we loosely say, “Give me a glass of water.” Strictly speaking, we should be saying, “Give me water in the space within the glass.” Except as a container, the water has no other connection with the glass, which is only the gross carrier of the water.

The water represents the subtle body and the glass represents the gross body. We are interested not in the connection between the gross body and the subtle body, but in the connection between the Atman and the subtle body, i.e. the space in the pot and the water in the pot. This distinction has to be noted carefully.

3-4 Without water, there is only pure space or **Ghataakasha** in the pot. With the water, *that space is still there*, but it is overshadowed by the reflection of space in the water. The reflection is called **Jalaakasha** or “Water Space”.

The reflection draws more attention than the original empty space. We forget all about the original space in the pot. This point is taken up further when we look at the application of the metaphor in verses **22-24**.

Verse 20 & 21: “Cloud-Space” Explained

महाकाशस्य मध्ये यन्मेघमण्डलमीक्ष्यते ।
प्रतिबिम्बतया तत्र मेघाकाशो जले स्थितः

॥ २०॥

mahākāśasya madhyē yanmēghamaṇḍalamīkṣyatē |
pratibimbatayā tatra mēghākāśō jalē sthitaḥ

॥ 20॥

1	<i>mahaakaashasya madhye yat</i>	<i>Within the total space appearing as the sky,</i>
2	<i>megha maNDalam eekshhyate;</i>	<i>is seen the mass of cloud which</i>
3	<i>pratibimbatayaa tatra</i>	<i>is but the <u>reflection</u> of that (sky)</i>
4	<i>meghaakaashah jale sthitaḥ</i>	<i>in its water particles – this is named “Cloud Space”.</i>

मेघांशरूपमुदकं तुषाराकारसंस्थितम् ।
तत्र खप्रतिबिम्बोऽयं नीरत्वादनुमीयते

॥ २१॥

mēghānśarūpamudakaṁ tuṣārākārasaṁsthitam |
tatra khapratibimbō:'yaṁ nīratvādanumīyatē

॥ 21॥

5	<i>meghaamsha roopam udakam</i>	<i>One way of seeing cloud is as <u>water in another form</u>;</i>
6	<i>tushhaara aakaara samsthitam;</i>	<i>it is water in a <u>subtle</u> form (tiny droplets).</i>
7	<i>tatra kha pratibimbah ayam</i>	<i>Therefore, the reflection of sky must occur in it, for</i>
8	<i>neeratvaad anumeeyate</i>	<i>after all, it is water only; it is reasonable to infer this.</i>

Still staying with the metaphor only, we now turn our attention to the **Totality**, with Mahaakasha and Meghaakasha, which represent Brahman and Ishwara respectively. We keep in mind how the water relates to the space in a pot, and on the same basis consider the relationship between the cloud and the total space.

1-2 “Within the total space” – here there is no gross body like the pot with which the connection of the cloud may be confused. It is clear that the cloud is located in the total space, simply called the sky.

3-4 Just as the pot-water reflects the space with the sun, stars and moon, so also the water particles in the cloud reflect the same space. In fact, it is that reflection which we are seeing as the cloud!

This cloud occupies all our attention and we do not see the **Mahaakasha** or original space that is *still there* in the sky. The reflected space, which is the cloud, draws all our attention. This reflected space in the water particles, which forms the visible cloud, is called **Meghaakasha** or the “Cloud Space”.

5-6 The cloud is nothing but tiny particles of water. They occupy the space in the sky. As with the water in the pot, these particles of water in the sky represent the totality of subtle bodies in the universe. Subtle bodies do not exist throughout the sky but where they do exist, we ‘see’ them as cloud; where they are not, it is cloudless.

7-8 Although the cloud is visible to us, Ishwara (whom it represents) is invisible and His presence has to be inferred. The cloud is a collection of water particles, and thus the “reflection of the sky” in it may reasonably be inferred. This is the significance of the word **Anumeeyate**, “it is inferred”. In these little ways, we see how meticulous, thoughtful and skillful Sri Vidyanaraya is in his usage and interpretation of the metaphor. For some students, it may be admitted that the metaphor is more difficult to grasp than its application!

Verse 22: The “Kootastha” Explained

अधिष्ठानतया देहद्वयावच्छिन्नचेतनः ।
कूटवन्निर्विकारेण स्थितः कूटस्थ उच्यते

॥ २२॥

adhiṣṭhānatayā dēhadvayāvacchinnacētanah |
kūṭavannirvikārēṇa sthitaḥ kūṭastha-ucyatē

॥ 22॥

1	<i>adhishhThaanatayaa deha dvayaa</i>	<i>Upon which is <u>superimposed</u> the two bodies (subtle and gross),</i>
2	<i>avachchhinna chetanah;</i>	<i>is the Consciousness that is <u>conditioned</u> by them.</i>
3	<i>kooTavat nirvikaareNa</i>	<i>Like an anvil, it is not subject to any <u>change</u> in it.</i>
4	<i>sthitah kooTastha uchyate</i>	<i>It is called the Kootastha Consciousness.</i>

We now shift our attention to the application of the metaphor. Space represents Consciousness, either in totality as Brahman, or in individuality as Atman or Kootastha. Verse 22 deals with Kootastha or Pure Consciousness at the individual level, and verse 23 deals with Jeeva or reflected consciousness at the individual level. Verse 24 compares and contrasts these two.

1 There are three bodies in the human being: the causal, subtle and the gross. Why are only two bodies mentioned? Which is the body that is left out?

The answer has to be inferred by us from the context of the discussion. We are dealing with the level of individuality where only the subtle and the gross apply. The causal applies at the level of Totality. Brahman's connection with Maya produces Ishwara at the total level. We are not dealing with that level.

1-2 Adhishtaana: "superimposition". Only the subtle and the gross bodies, both being created out of the five elements, can be superimposed on Consciousness.

Avachhinna: "conditioned". There are three words that describe the superimposition of one thing upon another: i) **Avacchedaka** is the conditioner or Upadhi, or that which conditions, in this case the subtle and the gross bodies; ii) **Avachhinna** is that which is conditioned by the conditioner, in this case Consciousness; and iii) the conditioning process which links the two. These three always go together.

3-4 The Consciousness, i.e. the Avachhinna that is conditioned by the two bodies, does not change, despite being 'seemingly' conditioned. When we see Consciousness in its unchanging aspect in the individual, then it is called **Kootastha**. This is the Atman, the Pure Consciousness residing in each individual being. It is the same in all beings.

Verse 23: *The "Jeeva" Explained*

कूटस्थे कल्पिता बुद्धिस्तत्र चित् प्रतिबिम्बकः ।
प्राणानां धारणाज्जीवः संसारेण स युज्यते

॥ २३॥

kūṭasthē kalpitā buddhistatra cit pratibimbakah |
prāṇānām dhāraṇājīvaḥ saṁsārēṇa sa yujyate

|| 23||

1	<i>kooTasthe kalpitaa buddhih</i>	<i>On the pure consciousness called Kootastha, is <u>superimposed</u> the imagined intellect.</i>
2	<i>tatra chit pratibimbakah;</i>	<i>In that intellect, the Kutastha gets <u>reflected</u>.</i>
3	<i>praaNaanaam dhaaraNaat jeevah</i>	<i>The reflection <u>animated</u> by vitality is called Jeeva.</i>
4	<i>samsaareNa sa yujyate</i>	<i>This Jeeva is the entity subject to Transmigration.</i>

Now we look at the **Jeeva**. In a nutshell, Jeeva is the same Consciousness as above, but seen in its changing aspect as different in different individuals, as well as continually changing even in the same individual. It is actually the reflected consciousness. The details are now given.

1 We said in the previous verse that Consciousness was conditioned by the two bodies. The most significant of this conditioning process happens in the **intellect**, which is the key component of the subtle body. The intellect is thus the major Avacchedaka or conditioner of Consciousness. Like all conditioners, the intellect is superimposed on Pure Consciousness. It is described as “imagined” because it is not real as Consciousness, but a conditioner of Consciousness.

2 Tatra: “there”, refers to the intellect. Being the major conditioner, the intellect is where the Light of Consciousness gets reflected.

Pratibimbakah: “reflection”. The ‘kah’ suffix indicates ‘smallness’ or a substitution of the original. It cannot be given the same status as the original, i.e. it is not real but false. A reflection is never the same as the original. Some deterioration is implied by the word. It is a duplicate copy of the original.

Swamiji gave this example: If I stand in front of a mirror, who is the real ‘me’? Is it the person in front of the mirror or the person in the mirror? In Sanskrit, the reflection is called *Kutsitah*, meaning a “demeaned” version, a caricature of the original. Another word for it is *Avamatah*, “belittled”.

3 Pranaanaam: “pertaining to Prana or the life-force”. **Dhaaranaat** means “due to the support given by”. It is the Consciousness that gives support for the various functions of life in the Jeeva. The reflected consciousness borrows **Prana** or vitality or sentiency from Pure Consciousness and thus obtains its quality of appearing animated. This animated consciousness is called the **Jeeva**, the individual soul.

Prana is not only breath. Breath is only its physical manifestation. It is the subtle life-force that keeps the subtle body and the gross body together, thus ensuring life.

The root of the word ‘Prana’ is *An*, “to go”. The senses ‘go out’ to bring in inputs to the mind. Hence the externalised senses are called Pranas in this context. Prana can also refer to the mind, when the same context is widened and internalised. The wide meaning of Prana is due to it functioning as a link between the subtle and the gross body. When the gross body moves, it is evidence of Prana. When the subtle mind thinks, it is evidence of Prana. Behind every human function is the presence of Prana.

The Experience of Samsara

4 Kootastha, since it does not change, cannot experience Samsara. It is the reflected consciousness or Jeeva which undergoes the Samsaric experience. Samsara is the realm of continuous change. One level of this change is seen in day-to-day affairs. Another level of change is seen in transmigration from birth-to-birth. The Jeeva holds on to the subtle body and the gross body to bring about the experience of Samsara. At the time of death, it is the reflected consciousness that draws together the whole subtle body and departs from the gross body to be reborn in another body.

Death is literally “kicking the bucket”, and getting a new bucket! The water (subtle body) from one bucket is poured into the new bucket to continue its evolution there. More about the relationship between Kootastha and Jeeva is discussed in the next verse.

Verse 24: Connection Between Kootastha & Jeeva

जलव्योम्ना घटाकाशोयथा सर्वस्तिरोहितः ।
तथा जीवेन कूटस्थः सोऽन्योऽन्याध्यास उच्यते ॥ २४॥

jalavyōmnā ghaṭākāśōyathā sarvastirōhitah |
tathā jīvēna kūṭasthaḥ sō:'nyō:'nyādhyāsa ucyatē ॥ 24॥

1	<i>jalavyomnaa ghaTaakaashah</i>	By the <u>space reflected</u> in the water, is the <u>pot-space</u>
2	<i>yathaa sarvastirohitah;</i>	<u>totally concealed</u> ; in the very same way, by the
3	<i>tathaa jeevena kooTasthah</i>	reflected <u>Jeeva</u> is the pure <u>Kootastha</u> concealed.
4	<i>sah anyonya adhyaasa uchyate</i>	This principle is called Mutual Superimposition .

We close this chapter by focussing on the individual. Within the individual, the link between the Kootastha and the Jeeva is being explained.

There is a difference between the way in which **Jeeva** or reflected consciousness enables the life functions, and the way **Kootastha** or Pure Consciousness enables the life functions. The former enables them through direct action; the latter enables them by its mere Presence. Reflected consciousness is the immediate enabler; Pure Consciousness is the remote enabler. Another term used for the Kootastha is “Sannidhi Maatrena”, which means “by its mere Presence”.

The Concealment of Kootastha by Jeeva

Why are we not aware of Kootastha? That is the problem we look into. This point was just mentioned in passing in verse 19. Now we explain it in greater detail. The principle behind the concealment is explained.

1-2 When we see an empty pot, its emptiness is clearly apparent. We describe it as an ‘empty pot’. When the pot is filled with water, it is now described as ‘a pot filled with water’. When that pot is shaken, we see the reflection of the moon and stars in it and it attracts our attention. We become oblivious of the emptiness altogether, although the same space is still there.

3 It is the same with Kootastha and Jeeva. In a saint with a pure mind, ‘empty’ of all thoughts, there is the awareness of Pure Consciousness. There is in him an ‘emptiness’ of thoughts; his mind is uncluttered; there is no preference in him for any particular object or absence of an object; he is balanced, calm and concentrated.

However, the mind of one who is impure and filled with thoughts behaves in the opposite manner. It is restless and disturbed. It has many preferences (likes and dislikes), it is cluttered; it is swayed in different directions by circumstances and by people. There is no one-pointedness in such a mind. Most importantly, it has no idea about the Kootastha, which is its very support or substratum. It is completely oblivious of it.

The Principle of Anyonya Adhyaasa

4 As usual, a name is attached to this phenomenon. Naming is not explaining, but at least it accurately defines the problem so that it can be analysed further.

Sah: “he” or “it”. This refers to the concealment spoken of above.

The concealment is named **Anyonya Adhyaasa**, or “*mutual superimposition*”. Anyonya itself is a combination of two words, namely, ‘Anya Anya’.

Other words for Anyonya are Parasparah and Itaretara. All three words are Sandhees or word combinations. We have seen Anyonya is split into ‘Anya Anya’; Parasparah is split into ‘Parah Parah’; and Itaretara is split into ‘Itara Itara’. All of them mean “*on each other*” i.e. “mutual”. Adhyasa means “*superimposition*”. To sum up, one thing is superimposed on another and the other is superimposed on it. There is “mutual superimposition”.

This is further explained as follows: In Anyonya Adhyaasa **A** appears as **B**, and **B** appears as **A**. That is the gist of it. In terms of the body, we say, “I am the body”. ‘I’ is taken to be the body, and the body is taken to be ‘me’. That is the principle at work. **A** takes the qualities of **B**, and **B** takes the qualities of **A**.

To us as the Jeeva, it appears as though Jeeva is hiding the pure Self or Kootastha. This happens in the overwhelming majority of people. Only God-realised saints do not experience this problem, as has already been explained, due to their pure mind.

We have merely defined the problem. The question that arises is, “Why is this so? What is Anyonya Adhyasa due to?” That is answered in the next Chapter.



PANCHADASHEE – 06

Chapter 4: (Verse 25-32, 8 No.)

The VEILING POWER of Nescience

ANYONYA ADHYASA IS the point we reached in the last Chapter. Mutual superimposition is what defined the problem of mistaking Jeeva for Kootastha. There is some “wall” in between these two which hides the Kootastha from the Jeeva. The concealment is such that it makes the Jeeva feel that it is Kootastha itself. The qualities of the Jeeva are superimposed on Kootastha, and *vice versa*.

In this Chapter we take a close look at this “Wall”. As usual, we begin by giving it a name – it is the **Wall of Avidya** or Nescience. In the Diagram before verse **19**, this Avidya is actually shown as a wall between the two states of individual Consciousness.

Verse 25: “Nescience” is Beginningless

अयं जीवो न कूटस्थं विविनक्ति कदाचन ।

अनादिरविवेकोऽयं मूलाविद्येति गम्यताम्

॥ २५॥

ayam jīvō na kūṭasthaṁ vivinakti kadācana |

anādiravivēkō:'yaṁ mūlāvidyēti gamyatām

|| 25||

1	ayam jeevah na kooTastham	(Due to this problem of mutual superimposition), “I am Jeeva, not the Kootastha”; saying thus,
2	vivinakti kadaachana;	never can it discriminate and realise what it really is.
3	anaadih avivekah ayam	This problem of non-discrimination is <u>beginningless</u> .
4	moola <u>avidya</u> iti gamyataam	Understand that it is due to Primal Nescience , AVIDYA .

1 The Jeeva, so to say, suffers from a diseased condition: It is unable to recognise its true nature of Pure Consciousness. It cannot even imagine such a state of being which has no limits, and which is eternal, pure and perfect in every way. Something is there which makes it accept an identity that is diametrically opposite its true original identity.

2 On its own, the Jeeva has no clue as to its limitless origin. Its power of discrimination is disabled, as it were. Until such time as it gets some direction from the scriptures via a saintly soul whom it is fortunate to meet with, there is no possibility of discovering its true identity.

3 To manage the individual “I” is a full-time job for the poor Jeeva. It never ends. The whole day goes in attending to its needs. Even at night we try to keep it going till as late as possible before it finally gets some respite during sleep. On awaking, the whole mill starts rolling another cycle all over again. Indeed, this has been going on from time immemorial.

Anaadi: “causeless, beginningless”. The implication is that it is natural for us to think of ourselves as this limited, diseased state. We do not have to be taught that we are Jeeva. We know it from birth, since we were babies. We were manufactured in this condition!

4 This non-recognition of our original state of Kootastha is something we are all born with. This state is called **Avidya**, and is a state of root Ignorance. The Anyonya Adhyasa problem is due to Avidya.

Moola Avidya: “root ignorance”. This is the deepest level of ignorance that exists. From it arise all other superficial layers of ignorance called Toola Avidya. Toola Avidya is due to Moola Avidya and ramifies in all directions from it.

Moola Avidya says “*I am the body*”; it is ignorance at the very core of our being. It is primary, intrinsic, the source of all dysfunction at the level of the intellect. It relates to “me”.

Toola Avidya, on the other hand, says “*These are all mine*”; it relates to the objects of the world. It is secondary, extrinsic, and peripheral or superficial.

Gamyataam: “please understand”. This is to make us pay careful attention to the subject at hand. Avidya is not easy to grasp. A little later we shall see that most people would prefer to deny its very existence – and with it come to great grief.

Verse 26: The Two Functions of Nescience

विक्षेपावृत्तिरूपाभ्यां द्विधाऽविद्या व्यवस्थिता ।

न भाति नास्ति कूटस्थ इत्यापादनमावृत्तिः

॥ २६॥

vikṣēpāvṛtirūpābhyāṁ dvidhā: 'vidyā vyavasthitā |

na bhāti nāsti kūṭastha ityāpādanamāvṛtiḥ

|| 26||

1	<i>vikshhepa-aavriti</i>	As the power to <u>conceal</u> and the power to <u>project</u> –
2	<i>roopaabhyaam dvidha avidyaa prakalpita;</i>	these are the two forms or manifestations of Avidya, the originator of all that is <u>illusory</u> .
3	<i>na bhaati na asti kooTastha</i>	“ Kootastha is not <u>experienced</u> , nor does it not <u>exist</u> ” –
4	<i>iti aapaadanam aavritih</i>	such thinking is the result of AAVRITI , the <u>veiling power</u> .

1 The two functions of Avidya are:

- i) **Aavritti Shakti** – the power of veiling the Reality; it is also called Aavarana.
- ii) **Vikshepa Shakti** – the power of projecting the Unreality.

If the power is seen as operating in time, then Aavarana would come first, followed by Vikshepa. Here the order is reversed purely to suit the poetical meter of the verse.

Swami Chinmayanandaji would say, “When a new person is seen, the first reaction is to say ‘I don’t know him.’ This is followed by ‘I think he is a crook.’ The first is due to Aavarana; the second is a projection due to Vikshepa.” We don’t stop at just not knowing; it is our nature to add our tuppence worth of opinion in the bargain!

The prefix ‘aa’ in Aavritti is to maximise the degree of veiling. The veiling is to the fullest degree; it is complete. It is so complete that to most people there is no trace of the Self in existence. They are completely shut off from the Light of Consciousness.

Similarly, the prefix ‘vi’ in Vikshepa maximises the limits of projection. The root ‘kship’ means “to throw, or scatter, or to project”. So Vikshepa means “to project oneself to the maximum degree.”

2 It is usual to give terms to these two aspects. But Sri Vidyananyaji says it is more correct to see them as two manifestations of Avidya. They are Avidya’s mind and body.

3 Now Vidyananya fine tunes just the first manifestation, Avarana. It is split into two parts: i) **Na Asti**: “it does not exist”; and ii) **Na Bhaati**: “it is not experienced.” The ‘it’ refers to the Pure Consciousness or Kootastha. The statements are with reference to the ignorant person who has no idea about what the Self is.

It is strange that Kootastha is described in this manner by the ignorant person. For Kootastha is the only thing there is and the only thing that really knows. Look at the irony! Avarana turns the tables around completely, and says, “It is not, and I don’t know it.”

4 Aapaadanam: This is that which makes a certain experience possible. In the case of Avarana, we have two types of Aapaadanam:

- i) *Asatva Aapaadanam Avarana*: the kind that says **Na Asti**, “It does not exist;” and
- ii) *Abhaana Aapaadanam Avarana*: the kind that says **Na Bhaati**, “I do not know it.”

The above will certainly appear to be too intellectual an approach to something that every human being experiences in practice every moment of his life. The following verse brings out the practical significance of the theory described in this verse. What does Avarana mean in day-to-day life?

Verse 27: The Experience of Avidya

अज्ञानी विदुषा पृष्ठः कूटस्थं न प्रबुध्यते ।
न भाति नास्ति कूटस्थ इति बुद्ध्वा वदत्यपि ॥ २७॥

ajñānī viduṣā pṛṣṭhaḥ kūṭasthaṁ na prabudhyatē |
na bhāti nāsti kūṭastha iti buddhvā vadatyapi ॥ 27॥

1	<i>ajnaanee vidushhaa prishhTah</i>	<i>If a wise man asks an ignorant man about Kootastha,</i>
2	<i>kooTastham na prabudhyate;</i>	<i>the answer will be, “There is <u>no such thing</u>!”</i>
3	<i>na bhaati naasti kooTastha</i>	<i>“Kootastha is not <u>experienced</u>, and it does not <u>exist</u>” –</i>
4	<i>iti buddhvaa vadati api</i>	<i>This he says despite being the <u>Kootastha himself</u>!</i>

Here is a little exchange between a Vidushaa (a wise person) and an Ajnani (an ignorant person). Through this example, Sri Vidyananyaji brings out the practical experience of Avidya in the majority of mankind, who are Ajnanis.

The significance of the exchange is that it highlights the Indian approach to philosophy. It is not an intellectual pastime, but a practical quest for Reality. In fact, Swamiji told us that the word used in Sanskrit to describe such a quest is **Darshana**, which means “a particular angle of vision to look at life”. There is no word for philosophy in the Indian tradition. A phrase for it has to be coined, such as *Bauddhika Vyapahaara*, meaning “a kind of intellectual exercise”.

The block below gives us an insight into what is Avidya:

AVIDYA – POSITIVE OR NEGATIVE ENTITY?

In Vedanta, Avidya is a technical term with a very specific meaning. Swamiji spent some time to explain what it meant exactly:

Definition of Positive & Negative Entities or “Objects”

A Positive object is something *present* before us, either as something that actually exists, or as something whose effects we can perceive and feel. A Negative object does not exist at all, but is known only by the *absence* of another positive object.

The following two illustrations were given by Swamiji:

1. Language: The knowledge or ignorance of a language illustrates this subtle point: Take a language like German. Knowledge of German is a positive entity. We can hear it, we can write it, we can convey messages through it. On the other hand, ignorance of German is a negative entity. It is only the absence of German. Only German exists; its absence does not exist. So German is a positive entity, and Ignorance of German is a negative entity.

2. Light: This is another example illustrating the same point. Light is a positive entity. When it is present, we can see other things due to its presence. Its absence is Darkness. There is no such entity as Darkness; it is only absence of light. Thus light is a positive entity but darkness is a negative entity.

Two Types of Absence in Vedanta

From these examples, we may be tempted to guess that Avidya, being “Ignorance” or the absence of knowledge, would be a negative entity. However, Vedanta pursues absence a bit deeper. It differentiates Absence into two types. Using his familiar watch and handkerchief as examples, Swamiji illustrated the two types as follows:

i) Absence due to a thing not being present. A watch lies in front of me. It is present. One day I leave the watch at home. Its absence is due to it ‘not being present’.

ii) Absence due to some other positive entity concealing its presence. The watch is present, but its presence is concealed by the handkerchief that happens to lie over it. The absence of the watch is due to the handkerchief ‘concealing it’.

Avidya is like the handkerchief over the watch. It is a positive “something” that obscures the Self. The technical definition of Avidya is not just “absence of knowledge” but “*that which causes the absence of knowledge*”. Defined in this way, Avidya is a positive entity, a **Bhaava Vastu**. It is like an ‘object’ which conceals the Self.

THE SELF – WHAT DOES “SELF-REVEALING” MEAN?

Now we look at the second term, the Self, which is said to be self-revealing. An ordinary light bulb lights up a room. Does it also light up itself? We don’t think of it that way. However, the self-effulgence of the Atman also illuminates Itself. It is always effulgent, even to itself. Yet, the Ajnaani says he can neither ‘see it’, nor can he ‘experience it’.

Is this not proof that there is a ‘handkerchief’ that is concealing the Self? Is this not clear proof that a positive entity called **Avidya** is concealing the Self? The very thing that thinks the Self is not there, is the Self! This is the glaring Truth which Logic should explain.

1-2 When the wise man puts forward the question *Kootastha Jaanaasi Kim?* – “What do you understand about Kootastha which is your Self?”, the reply that comes forth is rather shocking: The ignorant man blinks and replies, “I don’t know what you are talking about. It does not exist as far as I am concerned. To my knowledge it is not there.”

The wise man wonders to himself: “That’s funny! Did I ask him about Kilimanjaro? (Kilimanjaro is the tallest mountain in Africa, about which most people are ignorant.) His answer would be appropriate if I did. But I asked him about himself – and he says he does not know himself! What could be the matter with him?”

3 This is the same line as in the previous verse. The truth is that, before enlightenment, the wise man was in the same shoes and would have given the same answer then. The ignorant man says he does not know; it follows that he has not experienced it. To him Kootastha is as good as being Kilimanjaro – a place he has never heard of!

4 Of course, this is most strange. Through the Kootastha alone does the man have all his experiences, yet he says he does not know it! That is why Sri Vidyananyaji says, Buddhavaa Api, “even though he is experiencing it, he says he does not know it.” What more proof is needed to confirm the very existence of Avidya!

Swamiji gave an example of his own to drive home the absurd situation caused by Avidya: A dark cloud blocks the sun. When asked, “Is the sun there?”, a child answers, “What sun? I do not see any sun.” Even to know that the sun is not there, requires the light of the sun. How can it not be there? Only a child will say it is not there.

Another example is this: A person is sitting in front of a bowl. He is asked, “Do you see any light?” He answers, “No, I do not see light; I see only this bowl.” Despite being able to see the bowl only because of the light, he denies the existence of the light! This is precisely how Avidya’s veiling power operates. That is why the veiling is also called **Delusion** in some texts.

Due to this experience of Avidya in practice, Swamiji was tempted to tell us that the word *Buddhu* (meaning ‘an idiot’) ironically comes from a root that means “to know”.

The next verse shows that the denial of Avidya can have other sinister motives behind it. It is a ploy to deny the whole of spiritual life. Let us see what it is all about.

Verse 28: *The Sinister Aim of False Logic*

स्वप्रकाशे कुतोऽविद्या तां विना कथमावृतिः ।

इत्यादितर्कजालानि स्वानुभूतिर्ग्रसत्यसौ

॥ २८ ॥

svaprakāśe kutō:'vidyā tāṁ vinā kathamāvṛtiḥ |

ityāditarkajālāni svānubhūtirgrasatyasau

|| 28||

1	<i>svaprakaashe kutah avidyaa</i>	(This line is said by the ignorant man described above.) “If <i>Kootastha</i> is <u>self-revealing</u> , how can there be Avidya?
2	<i>taam vinaa kathamaavritih;</i>	Without Avidya, where is the question of <u>veiling</u> ? ”
3	<i>iti aadi tarka-jaalaani</i>	And so it can go on . . . a net of <u>ingenious arguments</u> !
4	<i>svaanubhootih grasati asau</i>	Direct experience (of Self) ‘swallows’ this whole chain.

From this verse begins a revelation on the theme of False Logic employed to defeat the purposes of all Sadhana for spiritual evolution. It is an ingenious trick inherent among so-called intelligent but worldly-minded people. Sri Vidyananyaji takes the precaution of warning us against such a kind of argument.

If we are careless, we can be caught up quite easily by such half-baked logic that denies experience and chooses to take the route of pure logic. If pursued, this route demonstrates the ruthlessness of sheer logic devoid of any foundation on actual experience.

An “Innocent-Looking” Philosophical Bait

1-2 The man of sheer logic based on intellectual acumen puts forward the following:

“You say that the Self is self-revealing. If that is so, then nothing can stop it from shining. How can Avidya have the power to hide it? There is something wrong with your theory of Avidya. There is no need for the positing of Avidya. It is quite unnecessary. In fact, we can positively say that there is no such thing as Avidya, and no such a thing as Kootastha.

“It is sufficient for us to take our *individuality* as being what you call the Kootastha. Nothing hides that from us – no Avidya, no Avarana, nothing whatsoever! Everyone agrees that his individuality is most precious to him. It is the most cherished of all things in life. It is always there in each person. It is Kootastha to us.

“As for Avidya, there is also no such thing. You wish to remove Avidya, but you cannot. It is our individuality that you wish to take away from us, our Egoism. But there is no sense in doing that. Without Avidya, where is the question of veiling? No Avidya means no veiling. There is no such threat of veiling in our life. It is all a fabrication of your philosophy.”

Does the Vedantin Swallow the Bait?

3 The Vedantin immediately recognises the defect in the man’s thinking. A chain reaction of illogical arguments is inevitable. This is what is most likely to happen if the man is allowed to get a foothold:

- i) & ii) He has himself come to doubt the existence of Avidya and Aavritti (veiling);
- iii) The next steps will be: If Aavritti is not there, where is Asatva and Abhaana?
- iv) If Asatva and Abhaana are not there, where is Vikshepa?
- v) If Vikshepa is not there, then where is Jeeva Bhava? Where are Kartritva and Bhoktritva?
- vi) If Jeeva Bhava is not there, where is the question of Samsara?
- vii) If Samsara is not there, then how can there be any sorrow or even pleasure?
- viii) When sorrow is not there, then where is transmigration? Where is birth and death?
- ix) Without transmigration, where is the need for Knowledge of the Self?
- x) If knowledge of the Self is not required, then what is the purpose of the Shastras?
- xi) And if Shastras are redundant, then why have all the Gurus and Acharyas? Why study Vedanta?

And so on and so forth . . . this is the endless chain of “ingenious arguments” that is going to follow the line of logic initiated by the above man, the Taarkikah, the believer in sheer logic for logic’s sake!

The whole chain described here with eleven stages, is called “**Shashtra Aanarthakya Dosha**” or **S.A.D.** for short, meaning “*the defect of purposelessness of the Shastras*”. It would be a SAD day, indeed, for mankind if this defect is permitted to go unchallenged. Sri Vidyaranya brilliantly arrests this wave which threatens to grow into a tsunami. He foresees the trend in the ignorant man’s argument, and nips it in the bud immediately.

4 He has but one answer to cut short the whole chain in a single stroke – it can be achieved only through **Swaanubhuti**, “one’s own direct experience” of the Self, of Kootastha, his true nature as Pure Consciousness. With Swaanubhuti, the whole chain gets **Grasati** or “*swallowed up*” in one single bite!

This point is expanded and fortified in the next verse.

Verse 29: Experience Snaps the Trail of Logic

स्वानुभूताविश्वासे तर्कस्याप्यनवस्थिते ।

कथं वा तार्किकं मन्यस्तत्त्वनिश्चयमाप्नुयात्

॥ २९॥

svānubhūtāvaviśvāsē tarkasyāpyanavasthitē |

katham vā tārṇikam manyastattvāniścayamāpnuyāt

|| 29||

1	<i>svaanubhootau avishvaase</i>	<i>If one does not believe in one’s own experience,</i>
2	<i>tarkasya api anavasthite;</i>	<i>one is forced into an <u>endless trail of logic</u>.</i>
3	<i>katham vaa taarkikam manyah</i>	<i>Then how is one, by mere baseless <u>reasoning</u>,</i>
4	<i>tattva nishchayam aapnuyaat</i>	<i>going to know the Truth with any <u>certainty</u>?</i>

The problem we are addressing is that of relying solely on **Logic**, without the basis of **Experience** to support it.

Lack of Faith in Oneself

1-2 The onset of the S.A.D. chain of defects is lack of faith in oneself, in particular in one’s experience of Avidya, which has been shown to be irrefutable earlier (verses 26-27). He doubts his own experience and rejects its validity. He claims that the only Kootastha that exists is his own ego personality, the Jeeva. That is ‘Real’ to him. Since he is completely identified with it, there is no way he can accept that it is being hidden by something called Avidya. Thus he is neither willing to accept the true Kootastha nor Avidya, and settles for Jeeva as the only ‘Reality’ for himself.

Anavasthita: “*having no independent existence*”. Reason is not an independent faculty. It has to be anchored to Truth as given in the scriptures in the absence of direct experience of it. Even though the reasoning may sound very reasonable, it is unreliable, for it lacks the foundation of experience.

3-4 The Vedantin tries to explain the man’s illogical stand with the following words: “You think you are logical, but there is no basis for your reasoning. You are not a true Tarkikah or logician. By shunning the valuable input of your experience, you are rendering your logic very fragile. A fragile logic will never arrive at a firm conclusion. You will never be certain of the Truth if you follow this whimsical pattern of logic.

Verse 30: Superiority of Experience Over Logic

बुद्ध्यारोहाय तर्कश्चेदपेक्षेत तथा सति ।

स्वानुभूत्यनुसारेण तर्क्यतां मा कुतर्क्यताम्

॥ ३०॥

buddhyārōhāya tarkaścēdapēkṣēta tathā sati |

svānubhūtyanusārēṇa tarkyatām mā kutarkyatām

|| 30||

1	<i>buddhau aaroahaaya tarkah chet</i>	<i>If reason is employed then <u>clarity</u> in the intellect</i>
2	<i>apeksheta tathaa sati;</i>	<i>is expected to arise as a result of it.</i>
3	<i>sva anubhooti anusaareNa</i>	<i>One should <u>scrutinise</u> one's experience of Avidya,</i>
4	<i>tarkyataam maa kutarkyataam</i>	<i>by <u>using</u> the power of logic, not by <u>misusing</u> it.</i>

This verse brings together the two ingredients available to the **Intellect**, namely **Experience** and **Logic**, and shows the superiority of the former over the latter.

THE “PESTLE & MORTAR” ANALOGY

Experience of a phenomenon is a crucial input upon which Logic can be employed by the intellect to obtain further clarity. To discard experience is an incomprehensible error. It does not make sense to discard valuable evidence. Yet it is being discarded by this ignorant man. Ditching of evidence itself shows how intense the power of Avidya can be!

An analogy to explain how all three terms in bold relate to each other is as follows: To pound any substance, we have a pestle and a mortar. The mortar is the container in which the substance is placed and pounded with the pestle.

The mortar represents the intellect; the substance represents an experience; and the pestle represents the power of logic. All three are needed to get the job of pounding done.

However, the substance is most important in comparison to the other two. When the job of the pestle and the mortar is done, it is the substance that we keep for our use. Next in importance would be the mortar, as it is still needed to hold the substance long after the pounding is done; only third in importance comes the pestle, since the pounding can be done in any other alternative way, or need not be done at all.

This order of importance well illustrates this verse.

1-2 A true logician is one who uses logic in order to get more clarity regarding his experience. He pounds his experience in the mortar of his intellect until all the large lumps are crushed to a powder so that it becomes easily digestible, i.e. comprehended.

3-4 Experiences have to be retained. None should be discarded. To throw away a substance simply because it is hard to crush into powder is to take the path of least resistance. The powdering has to be done well in order for the experience to be comprehended well. The pestle of logic should not be misused. If it is found to be not rugged enough for the task, a stronger pestle should be used, rather than discarding the unpounded lumps of experience.

Verse 31: Kootastha & Avidya not Contradictory

स्वानुभूतिरविद्यायामावृतौ च प्रदर्शिता ।

अतः कूटस्थचैतन्यमविरोधीति तर्क्यताम्

॥ ३१॥

svānubhūtiravidyāyāmāvṛtau ca pradarśitā |

ataḥ kūṭasthacaitanyamavirōdhīti tarkyatām

॥ 31॥

1	<i>sva anubhootih avidyaayaam</i>	<i>The Experience one gets when <u>Ignorance's</u></i>
2	<i>aavritau cha pradarshitaa;</i>	<i><u>veiling power</u> is active has already been shown.</i>
3	<i>atah kooTastha chaitanyam</i>	<i>Hence, that Kootastha or Pure Consciousness</i>
4	<i>avirodhi iti tarkyataam</i>	<i>is <u>not contradictory</u> (to Avidya), is what we can deduce.</i>

The intellect should be applied to reconciling the apparent contradiction of having a self-revealing Self juxtaposed with an obscuring veiling power of Avidya. This is the purpose to which our intellect should be put. That would be its legitimate use. The reconciliation will be successful if it is shown that the Self is not contradictory to Avidya.

1-2 When Avidya veils, i.e. when the Aavritti aspect of Avidya is active, then the experience of veiling of the Self has been shown in verse 27. Even though the ignorant person is using his Consciousness to draw such a conclusion, he still says that he does not experience it. This proves the existence of the veiling power of Avidya.

3-4 The conclusion that should be drawn from this experience can be threefold:

- i) From the Viewpoint of Avidya: the Self does not exist and cannot be experienced;
- ii) From the Self's Viewpoint: that Avidya does not exist.
- iii) From the Viewpoint of one's Experience Combined with Scripture: that the Self and Avidya both co-exist and are not contradictory to each other.

This verse guides us to draw the third conclusion and accept that the Self and Avidya are both always present in the ordinary human being.

Where is the proof of this conclusion? That is given in the next verse.

Verse 32: Viveka & Avidya are Contradictory

तच्चेद्विरोधि केनेयमावृतिर्ह्यनुभूयताम् ।

विवेकस्तु विरोध्यस्यास्तत्त्वज्ञानिनि दृश्यताम्

॥ ३२॥

taccēdvirōdhi kēnēyamāvṛtirhyānubhūyatām |

vivēkastu virōdhyasyāstattvajñānini drśyatām

॥ 32॥

1	<i>tat chet virodhi kena iyam</i>	<i>If the Self were <u>contradictory</u> (to Avidya), then who is</i>
2	<i>aavritih hi anubhooyataam;</i>	<i>the <u>experiencer</u> of this veiling power? (This tells us that)</i>
3	<i>vivekah tu virodhee asyaah</i>	<i>Discriminative knowledge is the true <u>opponent</u> of Avidya,</i>
4	<i>tattvajnaanani drishyataam</i>	<i>The knower of Truth (in whom there is no Avidya) is visible (living, undeniable) <u>proof</u> of this.</i>

This is a very important verse, and it brings the discussion on Avidya to a point where the true opponent of Avidya is revealed. We are told exactly what is really contradictory to Avidya – it is not the Self, but Knowledge of the Self.

In this verse, we see the correct application of Logic to the problem at hand. Experience is brought to bear from two fronts:

- i) From the perspective of an ignorant man, it is confirmed that Avidya exists.
- ii) From the perspective of the enlightened man, it is confirmed that the Self exists.

By the happy conjunction of both experiences, we arrive at the true factor that is contradictory to Avidya, and that is **Knowledge** of the Self, or Self-realisation.

The method of Anvaya-Vyatireka is used to show up exactly which of three factors are contradictory to each other. The method is laid out in the following box:

		THE CANDIDATES		
	THE EXPERIENCER	CHIT CONSCIOUSNESS	JNANA KNOWLEDGE	AVIDYA IGNORANCE
1	AJNANI <i>The Ignorant Man</i>	✓ as Jeeva (Reflected Consciousness)	✗	✓
2	JEEVANMUKTA <i>The Enlightened Man</i>	✓ as Atman, Kootastha (Pure Consciousness)	✓	✗

**ANVAYA-VYATIREKA TABLE
TO IDENTIFY CONTRADICTIONARY FACTORS**

From this table we see that Jnana and Avidya are incompatible, they cannot co-exist.



AVIDYA'S ASHRAYA AND VISHAYA

Swamiji brought out the following finer details to sum up our study so far.

Avidya's Ashraya or support is the Atman. Being something that is unreal, it has to have Reality as its basis in order to exist.

Avidya's Vishaya or object upon which it acts is also the Atman. What is the first thing that Avidya does? It veils its own Ashraya, the Atman. It treats it as an object and covers or conceals it.

The situation can be expressed more forcefully as follows: The Atman is **Swaprakasha** or self-luminous to begin with. But due to Avidya, it is rendered **Aprakasha** or lacking luminosity. This is something very odd. We can understand an object being veiled, but how do we understand being the object that is veiled? I am veiled to myself, to such an extent that I do not recognise my original self!

If I were Jada or inert, I can understand being veiled to myself, but I am a sentient, thinking being and yet I get veiled to myself – how is this possible? It is odd, indeed. It is some kind of infliction of self-torture. How could I be so cruel to myself?

Truly we must thank Vedanta for bringing to our attention this fundamental experience of non-recognition in such a glaringly lucid manner. Had it not been for such help from the scriptures, we would never even have dreamt that we are bound in this manner.

Coming Out of Bondage

Vidyaranya further gives us an assurance that we can get out of this bondage in a most logical manner if we understand what predicament we are in. He says that the Self is not antagonistic to Avidya. Avidya and Self can happily co-exist.

To understand this, think of a rope. It has no objection at all to being considered a snake. The snake's view is quite interesting. The snake, too, has no fear for the rope. In fact, if it were not for the rope, the snake would not exist. The rope is its very support. It must surely feel a sense of gratitude towards the rope! However, what it is terribly afraid of is Mr Knowledge. Knowledge is its real enemy.

Knowledge is deadly to this particular snake, made of a rope. The snake has to pray every minute that the Jeeva does not seek knowledge, that it does not desire to study, that it does not even hear of the 'dreadful' Sandeepany Course. While Jeeva is in ignorance, Avidya's existence is guaranteed, and it lives in bliss!

There are crimes that get a three-month suspension sentence. More serious crimes get a three-year banning order. but seeking knowledge is so serious a crime that it deserves a life-time banning order! As far as the snake is concerned, the highest ban should be placed on knowledge. It should be banned for life. If such a law is passed, all snakes will celebrate.

The Veil of Avarana – Ugly or Attractive

The veil can be *ugly* or *attractive*. It can make our life a hell – full of violence, crime, thugery, maliciousness, bitter jealousy, etc. Or it can veil with an attractive wrapper of success, wealth, comfort, etc. There are other even more attractive forms used in religion. That is already enough said. The rest is better left to the imagination.

PANCHADASHEE – 06

Chapter 5: (Verse 33-41, 9 No.)

The PROJECTING POWER of Nescience

Verse 33: The Definition of Vikshepa

अविद्यावृतकूटस्थे देहद्वययुता चितिः ।

शुक्तौ रूप्यवदध्यस्ता विक्षेपाध्यास एव हि

॥ ३३॥

avidyāvṛtakūṭasthē dēhadvayayutā citiḥ |

śuktau rūpyavadadhyastā vīkṣēpādhyāsa ēva hi

|| 33||

1	<i>avidyaa aavrita kooTasthe</i>	<i>On Kootastha, covered or veiled over by Ignorance,</i>
2	<i>deha dvaya yutaa chitih;</i>	<i>the subtle and gross bodies project the <u>Jeeva</u>,</i>
3	<i>shuktau roopyavat adhyastaa</i>	<i>like <u>silver</u> superimposed on a “mother-of-pearl”.</i>
4	<i>vikshhepa adhyaasa eva hi</i>	<i>This is called VIKSHEPA or “Power of Projection”.</i>

Stage 2: The Projecting Power, Vikshepa

1 Stage 1 of the work of Avidya is **Aavriti** or the veiling of the Kootastha or Pure Consciousness, also called as Atman, the inner Self of man. This has been covered thoroughly in Chapter 4. The subject of this Chapter is what happens as a result of the veiling.

2 Deha Dvaya Yutaa: “the conglomerate of the two bodies”. The two bodies referred to here are the Sookshma and Sthoola Shariras, namely, the subtle and the gross bodies. The Karana Sharira or causal body is not mentioned here because it is Avidya itself. The conglomerate is then put into a wrapper called the Ego or “I”-sense. That is its essence.

The projection of these two bodies is the work of the Projecting Power, and is done purely as a consequence of the veiling already done by the Veiling Power. The classic terms used by Pujya Swami Chinmayanandaji for the veiling is Non-Apprehension of the Reality. When Reality is not apprehended, then its logical consequence is the projection, which Swamiji refers to as Mis-Apprehension of the Reality, and which produces the entire creation of Unreality.

Chitih: “the reflected consciousness”. The combination of the subtle and gross bodies form the ‘prism’, as it were, through which the Light of Consciousness passes. What comes out on the other side of the prism are the rainbow colours of reflected consciousness, which we familiarly know as the **Jeeva**, or the individual soul.

Simile of “Mother of Pearl”

3 An example which becomes the simile used to illustrate projection in this Chapter, is now introduced. It is the **Shukti** or oyster shell which is mistaken to be **Roopya** or silver.

Adhyastaa: “superimposition”. When one thing is veiled or covered over, then another thing, known to us from past experience, replaces it in the eye of the observer. This is clearly an error and has to be always recognised as such. The thing which takes the place of the original thing is called a superimposition. It is not actually present before us, but due to some semblance of what is actually present but not recognisable, this other thing is imagined to be present. This is typical of any superimposition.

In Vedanta, this whole universe is considered to be a superimposition upon Brahman, the Supreme Reality. That gives us some idea of the magnitude of what we are dealing with in this Chapter. Of course, we will not be concerned with the whole universe, but only a part of it, the individual Jeeva or a single human being.

The Shukti in the example represents **Kootastha** or Pure individualised consciousness, while the Roopya (also called Rajata) or silver represents the **Jeeva** or individual soul.

4 The above projection of the unreality over the Reality is Vikshepa. In other words, Vikshepa and Adhyastaa is actually the same thing.

For Samskrit enthusiasts, Swamiji went into the details of the origin of the two words to show their identical meaning. Those not versed in Samskrit can move on to the next verse:

The root of **Adhyaasa** is *As*, “to throw”. Another word for throw is **Kshepana**. *Adhi* means “on” or “upon”. Thus the full word means “to throw something on something else.”

The technical definition of Adhyaasa is given as: “

Atasmin tad buddhi – “in not that, that **Buddhi**”. Literally taken, this means “in **A** which is not **B**, we see **B**.” That is, we see something as something else.

Now the second word, Vikshepa. The root is *kship*, “throwing”, from which we get **Kshipyate**, “to throw”. *Viparita* means “something else”. Putting them together we get **Viparita Kshipyati** = “to throw something else”. This is condensed to **Vikshepa**.

Thus the equality is seen between Adhyasa (or Adhyastaa) and Vikshepa. So closely linked are Vikshepa and Aavriti, the two functions of Avidya, that in the Shankara Bhashya on the Brahma Sootras, in the opening section called Adhyaasa Bhashya, Sri Shankaracharya jumps over the bridge and calls Avidya as Adhyasa directly, as though the terms were synonymous. Of course, only a Shankaracharya has the license to do that!

Others have gone to the extreme in their own way. They claim, “There is no Avidya other than Adhyasa.” This is, of course, not true and we have to be careful of such sweeping statements. If this were true, then in deep sleep, when we know there is no Adhyasa, does that mean that there is no Avidya, too? No, Avidya is there in deep sleep. So Adhyasa cannot be equated to Avidya, except of course by a Shankaracharya; he can afford to ‘cut corners’ because he lives at the Centre!

SAAMAANYA & VISESHA AMSHAS

In the ensuing discussion, the above are two key terms used. Every object possesses two aspects, namely, Name and Form:

- i) **Name** is the Saamaanya Amsha – refers to the thing as a whole; its “this-ness”;
 - ii) **Form** is the Vishesh Amsha – refers to the particulars of the thing as perceived by the senses; its shape, colour, texture, etc.
-

From this point, in seven verses various ways are used to illustrate facets of the superimposition process. Each verse brings to light different characteristics of the superimposition. The same simile of ‘shell and silver’ is used throughout the discussion. The Drishtanta and the Dashtantika are shown in parallel, enhancing the clarity of the picture presented to our mind.

The following diagram shows the full breakdown of the simile and the application:

Vs	ITEM DESCRIPTION	DRISHTAANTA (Simile)	DAASHTAANTIKA (Application)
34	Substratum , the real object (proximate)	<i>Shukti, shell</i>	<i>Kootastha, pure Self</i>
	Superimposition , the appearance (remote)	<i>Roopya, Rajata, silver</i>	<i>Jeeva, reflected self</i>
35	<u>Name</u> : Saamaanya Amsha , “this-ness” stays	<i>“shell-ness”</i>	<i>“Self-ness”</i>
	<u>Form</u> : Vishesha Amsha , the form is lost	<i>blue back, triangle</i>	<i>aloofness, bliss</i>

Verse 34: Name Aspect: Seen as Some Other Thing

इदमंशस्य सत्यत्वं शुक्तिं रूप्य ईक्ष्यते ।
स्वयन्त्वं वस्तुता चैवं विक्षेपे वीक्ष्यतेऽन्यगम् ॥ ३४॥

idamaṁśasya satyatvaṁ śuktigaṁ rūpya īkṣyatē |
svayantvaṁ vastutā caivaṁ vikṣēpē vīkṣyatē:'nyagam ॥ 34॥

1	<i>idam amshasya satyatvam</i>	The ‘ <u>this</u> ’ portion is the <u>shell-ness</u> that is there;
2	<i>shuktigam roopya eekshhyate;</i>	it is perceived as ‘ <u>silver</u> ’ which appears in its place.
3	<i>svayantvam vastutaa cha evam</i>	So also, ‘ <u>Self-ness</u> ’ is the <u>Reality</u> that alone is there,
4	<i>vikshhepe veekshhyate anyagam</i>	but is perceived as <u>Jeeva</u> which appears in its place.

This verse refers to the Name aspect of the object. It is the portion called **Saamaanya Amsha**. The whole object is seen (**Eekshhyate**) as something else, having some other name, which is the thing superimposed upon it.

1 Simile: First the simile. The **Idam Amshasya** is the “this-ness” portion related to the name aspect, representing the very existence of the shell. It is **Satyatvam**, i.e. the reality that is actually present and that is being seen. The word ‘this’ also indicates proximity or nearness. It is the object that is ‘here’.

2 Roopya is actually Roopye (7th case); the vowel following it changes it to Roopya. Another word for it is Rajata. It is the superimposition that appears in the place of the Shell. It is ‘that’ silver which is remote or far away. Roopya implies “that-ness”. The word **Shuktigam** means “the shell in which there is the presence of . . . (silver)”.

3 Application: Now the application of the simile. **Swayantvam** is the “Self-ness”, Atman or Reality which is alone present in an individual being. It refers to Pure Consciousness. It is the support upon which the Jeeva is superimposed.

4 Somehow, the Self is not perceived as Self, but as the Jeeva, the reflected consciousness that is not there. Jeeva takes the place of shell. Jeeva is remote; there is a “that-ness” in it. It replaces the proximate Self which is equivalent to “this-ness”.

Verse 35: Form Aspect: Not Seen at All

नीलपृष्ठत्रिकोणत्वं यथा शुक्तौ तिरोहितम् ।
असङ्गानन्दताद्येवं कूटस्थेऽपि तिरोहितम्

॥ ३५॥

nīlapṛṣṭhatrikōṇatvaṁ yathā śuktau tirōhitam |
asaṅgānandatādyēvaṁ kūṭasthē:'pi tirōhitam

॥ 35॥

1	neelapṛishhTha trikoNatvam	The <u>blue back</u> and <u>triangular form</u>
2	yathaa shuktau tirohitam ;	in <u>mother-of-pearl</u> – just as they are lost to the vision;
3	asanga aanandat aadi evam	so too, the ' <u>unattachedness</u> ' and ' <u>blissness</u> '
4	kooTasthe api tirohitam	of the <u>Kootastha</u> are also lost to our vision.

This verse refers to the Form aspect of the object. In comparison to the Name aspect discussed above, which is fixed, the Form aspect is a variable. Form varies and is detected by the senses. This portion is called **Visesha Amsha**.

Under the influence of Avidya, we saw that the first Amsha, although it still remained 'fixed' to its "this-ness", it had some other object superimposed upon it due to the deluding influence of Avidya. Now in the second Amsha, the variable one, something else happens.

1 Simile: Firstly, what is the Visesha Amsha of the simile? The shell has a triangular form and it has sort of humped back that appears blueish in colour under normal light.

2 This form appears differently when light strikes it at a particular angle. The normal form as described above, having a blue colour and a triangular shape, is not seen at all; it is veiled or lost (**Tirohitam**) to our vision. It appears as something else. The shell has a blinding shine to it which is silvery in colour and circular like a disc, reminding one of a rupee coin. Both the original characteristics of the form are lost, and in their place two different characteristics are projected. The loss of the original shell's form is due to the superimposition upon it of the new form of the silvery rupee coin.

3 Application: Now what is the situation in the Application? The qualities of Pure Consciousness are its aloofness from any superimposition. It is untouched by the thing superimposed. Secondly, it has the nature of Bliss in it. We need not go into too much details about this Bliss in the present context.

4 Both these qualities of the Self are not even recognised when a person is under delusion of Avidya. It is the projection of the superimposed Jeeva which wipes away all traces of these two original qualities. What they are replaced by is not the point here. The point is that the original qualities simply vanish (**Tirohitam**).

Verse 36: Name Aspect: Only a Name Change

आरोपितस्य दृष्टान्ते रूप्यं नाम यथा तथा ।
कूटस्थाध्यस्तविक्षेपनामाहमिति निश्चयः

॥ ३६॥

ārōpitasya dṛṣṭāntē rūpyaṁ nāma yathā tathā |
kūṭasthādhyastavikṣēpanāmāhamiti niścayaḥ

॥ 36॥

1	<i>aaropitasya drishhTaante</i>	<i>That which is superimposed in the <u>illustration</u> (shell)</i>
2	<i>roopyam naama yathaa tathaa;</i>	<i>is <u>named</u> ‘silver’; in the same way that which is</i>
3	<i>kooTastha adhyasta vikshhepa</i>	<i>superimposed on <u>Kootastha</u> by the projecting power</i>
4	<i>naama aham iti nishchayah</i>	<i>is <u>named</u> ‘I’ or Jeeva, the sense of individuality.</i>

This verse looks at the same facts as given in the above two verse, but from the angle of naming. There is an investigative touch that begins with this verse. Is the superimposition phenomenon sufficiently explained in terms of the name change that occurs to the object? True, a name change does take place due to the influence of Vikshhepa, and that is explained in this verse. Everything else is actually just the same. Nothing real is lost; only something unreal is gained – a new **Name**.

1-2 Drishtaanta: The new object that is superimposed on the shell is called “**silver**”. The shell is still there in the same place as “this”. All that has really happened is that a new name has been given to the “shell”, but it has not changed the shell.

3-4 Daashtaantika: The ‘object’ that is superimposed on the Kootastha is called “**Jeeva**”. Kootastha, the Self, is still there in the same place as “this”. All that has really happened is that a new name has been given to It, but It has not changed the Self at all. The change that has taken place is purely an illusion. Nothing real has changed.

A wise person takes away an important lesson from this verse: **Name** is really not important. It relates only to the superficial. It’s the substance that counts. The substance should determine our opinion of a thing, not its name. A man is judged by what he is, and not by any ‘name’ attached to him.

Verse 37: Name Aspect: An Error in Cognition

इदमंशं स्वतः पश्यन् रूप्यमित्यभिमन्यते ।

तथा स्वं च स्वतः पश्यन्नहमित्यभिमन्यते

॥ ३७॥

idamaṁśaṁ svataḥ paśyan rūpyamityabhimanyatē |

tathā svaṁ ca svataḥ paśyannahamityabhimanyatē

|| 37||

1	<i>idam amsham svatah pashyan</i>	<i>Though people really see the “<u>this-ness</u>”</i>
2	<i>roopyam iti abhimanyate;</i>	<i>they erroneously <u>cognise</u> it as being ‘silver’;</i>
3	<i>tathaa swam cha svatah pashyan</i>	<i>so also, though people ‘see’ the <u>Self</u> (Kootastha),</i>
4	<i>aham iti abhimanyate.</i>	<i>they erroneously <u>cognise</u> it as being the Ego (Jeeva).</i>

The investigation into the cause of the superimposition phenomenon continues. The change of Name is true; yes, it does change. But that does not explain the phenomenon; it merely tags a name onto it. This verse takes the investigation to its root level. It is an error in **Cognition** that leads to the superimposition of another object onto the object before us.

Once again the layout of the logic is as before:

1-2 Drishtaanta: The experience we have of the shell is the appearance of silver. This is no fault of the shell nor of the silver. It is due entirely to our non-cognition of the shell.

If the cognition is erroneous, then an error is made in identifying the object. A perceptual error leads to an error in naming. That primary error necessitates the name-change we give to the object. The naming, telling, saying follows the cognising, the knowing, the recognising.

Where does cognition happen? In the intellect of the cogniser – that is where our investigation has to turn to locate the error.

3-4 Daashtaantika: In this case, the Self is erroneously cognised as the Jeeva. This error happens in the human intellect. If a mirror is clean, the reflection will be quite accurate and faithfully produce the original light. But if there is dust on it; and added to that the mirror is cracked; and in addition its surface is warped – then all these factors produce an unfaithful reflection in which we cannot even recognise the original.

That is what happens in the intellect. Pure Sattwa there would be like a clean mirror. But Rajas and Tamas are impurities that distort what the intellect beholds. The cognition error is due to too much presence of Rajas and particularly of Tamas. That is where adjustments and corrections need to be made in order to rectify the image of the Self.

HELPFUL NEW SYNONYMS

At this point Swamiji taught us how to recognise certain terms used frequently in these verses. This will give clarity to the student unfamiliar with Samskrit:

Idamtva and **Idantaa** both mean the same thing, “this-ness”.

Roopya and **Rajata** both mean “silver”.

Roopyate and **Roopyataa** both mean “silver-ness”.

Ahante or **Ahantaa** both means “ego-ness”.

A SIGNIFICANT “T-JUNCTION”

The discussion comes to an important turn in this verse. It arrives at a T-junction. Turning left is a sign that reads “Saamaanya Amsha” and turning right is a sign that reads “Visesha Amsha”. These two terms were introduced at the very beginning of the discussion, but at that stage it was seen only in its Name and Form aspects.

The current context is very different. The left turn is where Sri Vidyaranyaaji is directing our attention, as it deals with the Reality, the Fixed Part. The right turn becomes less and less significant from here onwards as it concerns the Unreality, the Variable Part.

The “this-ness” of the **Samaanya Amsha**, which refers to shell-ness or Self-hood remains the same as when we started. So, too, does the reference to the form as the **Visesha Amsha**, which refers to the object’s outer qualities that are lost.

The new consideration that is introduced with this verse is that “this-ness” is fixed, whereas form is variable. The Self is changeless, common and fixed in every object, whereas the superimposed forms vary from object to object. This is now made very clear.

Sri Vidyaranyaaji swings our bus to the left and waves ‘good-bye’ to the right!

Verse 38: Saamaanya is Fixed, Vishesha is Variable

इदंत्वरूप्यते भिन्ने स्वत्वाहन्ते तथेक्ष्यताम् ।

सामान्यं च विशेषश्चेत्युभयत्रापि गम्यते

॥ ३८॥

idam̐tvarūpyatē bhinnē svatvāhantē tathēkṣyatām |

sāmānyam̐ ca viśēṣaścētyubhayatrāpi gamyatē

|| 38||

1	<i>idamtva roopyataa bhinne</i>	<i>'This-ness' is different from 'silver-ness';</i>
2	<i>swatva ahante tathaa eekshhyataam;</i>	<i>so too, 'Self-ness' and 'Ego-ness' are different.</i>
3	<i>saamaanyam cha visheshhah cha iti</i>	<i>A fixed part and a variable part in each</i>
4	<i>ubhayatra api gamyate</i>	<i>of the above two cases are seen to exist.</i>

3-4 This is to introduce us to the T-junction just described in the above block.

A. Saamaanya Amsa – the Fixed Part

1 Drishtaanta: Firstly, what is common or fixed about “this-ness” in the oyster shell? Originally, i.e. before the Vikshepa or superimposition takes place, it refers to the shell. When the superimposition takes place, the same “this-ness” refers to the silver rupee coin.

Thus we see that the “this-ness” remains fixed. It is common to both shell and silver.

2 Daashtaantika: In the case of the application, “this-ness” originally applies to the Kootastha or Self. After superimposition takes place, the same “Self-ness” mistakenly refers to the Jeeva. The “Self-ness” is common to both Self and Jeeva.

B. Vishesha Amsa – the Variable Part

1 Drishtaanta: Secondly, what is particular or variable about form that is seen on the oyster shell? Before the superimposition takes place, it refers to the blueness and triangular form of the shell. When the superimposition takes place, the same form is seen as the round silver rupee coin. Thus we see that the attributes of the form have varied.

2 Daashtaantika: In the case of the application, the Kootastha or Self is of the ‘form’ of detachment and Bliss, i.e. the Self’s attributes. After superimposition takes place, the same form is mistakenly seen as attached and full of transitory joy or sorrow, i.e. the Jeeva’s attributes. Once again the attributes of the form have varied.

The Three Meanings of “Saamaanya”

- i) Its meaning as “general”, referring to “this-ness”, the fact of it being an object;
- ii) Its meaning as “common”, referring to it applying to both shell and silver;
- iii) Its meaning as “pervasive”, referring to being the same everywhere and in everything. This is the meaning we are now dealing with, starting with this verse.

In giving the above three meanings of Saamaanya, Swamiji said that in no other philosophy would we see this kind of analysis in such detail! He paid a glowing tribute to the ancient Rishis who approached the search for Truth with such dexterity and scientific precision. Rarely does one see this trend in the world’s religious literature. The opposite of this trend is Dogmatism, and we have no dearth of that in religious literature.

Verse 39: The ‘Self’ is in Everything

देवदत्तः स्वयं गच्छेत्त्वं वीक्षस्व स्वयं तथा ।

अहं स्वयं न शक्नोमीत्येवं लौके प्रयुज्यते

॥ ३९॥

dēvadattaḥ svayaṁ gacchēttvaṁ vīkṣasva svayaṁ tathā |

ahaṁ svayaṁ na śaknōmītyēvaṁ laukē prayujyātē

॥ 39॥

1	<i>devadattah svayam gachchhet</i>	For <u>Devadatta</u> , we say “He himself is going”.
2	<i>tvam veekshhasva svayam tathaa;</i>	For <u>you</u> , we say “You yourself see this.” Similarly,
3	<i>aham svayam na shaknami iti</i>	For <u>me</u> , we say “I myself am not capable”.
4	<i>evam lauke prayujyate</i>	In all our transactions in the world, we see this.

The left turn at the T-junction opens up the vista to a grand scenic panorama. The beauty of the Vedantic concept of Self or Reality is seen at its best in verses 39-41, with which we conclude this Chapter.

1-3 Svayam: “self”, in its sense as referring to all persons, is seen here to describe three persons – 1st person ‘he’, 2nd person ‘you’ and third person ‘I’. Here we have used the Samskrit notation in the numbering of the persons, where ‘I’ is placed as third person to emphasise that it is least important! In English ‘I’ is placed as 1st person. Even in Samskrit Grammar we find the presence of philosophy!

4 The above trend is universal, and covers animals and birds as ‘itself’ and the plural as ‘themselves’, ‘yourselves’ and ‘ourselves’. The next verse sees it cover inert objects, too.

The integrating effect of simple word usage is something novel in philosophical circles. Sri Vidyaranyaaji is breaking new ground in this respect.

Verse 40: ‘This-ness’ & ‘Self-ness’ Linked to Everything

इदं रूप्यमिदं वस्त्रमिति यद्वदिदं तथा ।

असौ त्वमहमित्येषु स्वयमित्यभिमन्यते

॥ ४०॥

idaṁ rūpyamidaṁ vastramiti yadvadidaṁ tathā |

asau tvamahamityēṣu svayamityabhimanyatē

॥ 40॥

1	<i>idam roopyam idam vastram</i>	‘ This ’ <u>silver</u> ; ‘ this ’ <u>cloth</u> ; and so, too,
2	<i>iti yadvad idam tathaa;</i>	various other (inert) things are ‘ this ’. In the same way,
3	<i>asau tvam aham iti eshhu</i>	the 1 st person ‘he’, 2 nd ‘you’, and 3 rd ‘I’ – to these
4	<i>svayam iti abhimanyate</i>	the common suffix ‘-self’ is attached or applied.

1-2 As with the word ‘self’ in the above verse, we now see the extension of the idea in the word ‘this’. The application broadens out to the inert objects. Nothing is left out. The Self is uniformly present in all beings and objects in creation.

3-4 This point has already been covered in the previous verse.

Verse 41: **Conclusion: Kootastha is the Self in Everything!**

अहन्त्वाद्भिद्यतां स्वत्वं कूटस्थे तेन किं तव ।
स्वयं शब्दार्थ एवैष कूटस्थ इति मे भवेत्

॥ ४१॥

ahantvādbhidyatām svatvaṁ kūṭasthē tēna kiṁ tava |
svayaṁ śabdārtha ēvaiṣa kūṭastha iti mē bhavēt

॥ 41॥

1	<i>ahamtvaad bhidyataam svatvam</i>	<u>Doubt:</u> <i>Let I-ness, etc, be different from Self-ness;</i>
2	<i>kooTasthe tena kim tava;</i>	<i>but what has that to do with Kootastha?</i>
3	<i>svayam shabdartha eva eshhah</i>	<u>Reply:</u> <i>The word ‘Self’ alone indicates that very</i>
4	<i>kooTastha iti me bhavet.</i>	<u>Kootastha.</u> <i>This is what I deduce (from all this).</i>

The crest of the “Vikshepa-wave” has been reached in this concluding verse of the Chapter. Beginning with just one example of superimposition of silver on the shell, we end in grand style with every ounce of creation put into the shopping basket of superimposition.

1-2 Strangely, it seems that the questioner has not yet seen the significance of the sweeping phase we have entered on this topic. He has not yet got the message that the Vedantin has just poured forth with such gusto. The flags and festoons on the highway of Vedanta leave him unmoved, untouched, just as it does to Brahman Himself, the “Great Grandfather of Creation”, known as Purushottama in the Geeta, who is unperturbed and unmoved by anything under the sun!

3-4 The Vedantin is startled that the fever has not been caught by the doubter. His words come out as though in desperate disbelief that such a universal fact has not been comprehended by the man standing right beside him.

The chasm between ignorance and knowledge has just been sketched with glaring irony!



PANCHADASHEE – 06

Chapter 6: (Verse 42-52, 11 No.)

Vikshepa: SENTIENT & INERT

INTRODUCTION

SENTIENCY IS STILL ONE of the little understood subjects among people in general and even among seekers. There is a common tendency to confuse **Sentiency** with the concept of Consciousness. In the minds of many, the two are considered to be synonymous. This is a common misunderstanding. In this chapter, Sri Vidyananyaji enters a side-issue on Vikshepa that helps us to differentiate sentient objects from inert ones.

We ended the last Chapter with the whole of Creation placed in the basket of superimposed objects. In particular, we noted that inert objects were included even as all sentient beings were. The use of the suffix ‘self’ seems to be associated with sentient beings, whereas the similar use of the words ‘this’ and ‘that’ appears in the eyes of the doubter to be reserved for inert objects.

Somehow, due to not grasping the idea of Reality properly, it is a common notion that only living entities possess Consciousness, not inert objects. This is now looked into in close detail, and who better than Sri Vidyananyaji himself to help us resolve – or better still, *dissolve* – this wrong notion in our intellect.

Verse 42: “Exclusion of Others” is the Self!

अन्यत्ववारकं स्वत्वमिति चेदन्यवारणम् ।

कूटस्थस्यात्मतां वक्तुरिष्टमेव हि तद्भवेत्

॥ ४२॥

anyatvavāraṇam svatvamiti cēdanyavāraṇam |

kūṭasthasyātmataṁ vakturiṣṭamēva hi tadbhavēt

|| 42||

1	anyatvavaarakam svatvam	Doubt: ‘-Self’ merely <u>excludes</u> every other idea.
2	iti chet anyavaaraNam;	Reply: That ‘Exclusion of Everything Else’
3	kooTasthasya aatmataam vaktuh	is itself the Self of Kootastha. What you are saying
4	ishhTam eva hi tadbhavet	is perfectly in line with our thinking!

1 The Poorvapakshee is trying to come to terms with the big statement we ended with in the last Chapter. The Vedantin, when asked about the relevance of the word ‘Self’ to the discussion, claimed that it was in fact the **Kootastha**. This surprised the Poorvapakshee, who was all along equating the word to **Jeeva**, not knowing what Kootastha is.

When the extension ‘-self’ is used in words like ‘myself’, ‘yourself’ and ‘himself’, the meaning comes through that we are talking of the Jeeva. In such a case, the word rightfully excludes every other person. ‘Myself’ excludes you and him; ‘Yourself’ excludes me and him; and ‘himself’ excludes you and me. This is the common understanding of the word ‘self’.

The objector’s observation is a perfectly valid one from his present understanding. How is it possible for the Self to be all-pervasive and at the same time exclude everything else? Now the ball is in the Vedantin’s court to correct the doubter’s erroneous viewpoint.

2-4 Having in mind the Self as the all-pervading Consciousness no different from Kootastha, the Consciousness associated with the individual, the Vedantin takes up the idea of “exclusion of all others” from his understanding of Kootastha, not from the perspective of Jeeva.

The Vedantin knows that the doubter will not be prepared to accept the idea that Consciousness is all-pervading if it comes to him suddenly. The doubter’s mind has to be prepared to receive this Truth. Hence, he mildly suggests that “exclusion of others” is an idea that is actually very favourable to Vedanta’s idea of Kootastha.

The Vedantin is heading towards the Non-dual truth about Kootastha, which would certainly exclude everything else, because other than the Non-dual Reality, there is no second thing to take the stage! Vedanta’s Reality is Non-dual and is declared to be *one without a second*. What can be more exclusive than such a Reality!

The “Neti-Neti” Doctrine of Negation

The Vedantin is rather pleased that the Poorvapakshi has stated something that is very favourable to the Vedantic technique of arriving at the Reality. In fact, **Denial** is the main methodology by which we can arrive at the Truth.

Swamiji brought forward the ‘Neti-Neti’ doctrine of negation or denial, which is essentially a structured method of excluding everything possible until all that is left is the Self. In the technique of ‘Neti-Neti’, all the five sheaths from the Food sheath down to the Bliss sheath are stripped of everything that is **Anatma** or not-Self, leaving only the **Atman** or the Self as the sole survivor of the negation process.

This brings us face to face with the words Atman and Self. This is now taken up . . .

Verse 43: ***‘Self’ & ‘Atman’ are Synonymous***

स्वयमात्मेति पर्यायस्तेन लोके तयोः सह ।

प्रयोगो नास्त्यतः स्वत्वमात्मत्वं चान्यवारकम्

॥ ४३॥

svayamātmēti paryāyastēna lōkē tayōḥ saha |

prayōgō nāstyataḥ svatvamātmatvaṁ cānyavāarakam

|| 43||

1	<i>svayam aatmaa iti paryaayah</i>	<i>‘Swayam (Self)’ and ‘Atman’ are used <u>synonymously</u>;</i>
2	<i>tena loke tayoh saha;</i>	<i>This is accepted by people. Both terms <u>together</u> are</i>
3	<i>prayogah na asti atah svatvam</i>	<i>therefore never used. In fact, the terms ‘Swayam’</i>
4	<i>aatmatvam cha anyavaarakam</i>	<i>and ‘Atman’ both exclude the idea of ‘another’.</i>

Non-duality would have been too hard for the poor Poorvapakshi to ponder over. The Vedantin takes him forward slowly in a step by step manner until the Self will eventually be clearly seen as the Non-dual Reality.

1 The first step is to accept that Self and Atman refer to the same thing. There are synonyms in English such as ‘brinjal’ and ‘egg-plant’, both of which refer to the same vegetable. Swayam and Atman are not exactly like that, since they are derived differently.

Atman = “the indwelling Presence”;

Swayam = “that which excludes all else”. It can exclude everything but the Atman.

2-3 The two words, being synonyms, are never used together. We never say Swayam Atman, “the Self itself”. That would be superfluous.

To understand this we can use a modern simile. The words ‘mobile’ and ‘cell-phone’ refer to the same gadget. ‘Cell-phone’ is derived having the technology in mind; a cell is created in space to which a phone call is anchored. The word ‘mobile’ is derived having the methodology in mind. It moves with the user, so it is a *mobile*. Hence, we never say ‘my mobile cellphone’. It is the same with Atman and Swayam. They are derived differently. Swayam is derived from its function to exclude, whereas Atman is derived from its Presence within. Both refer to the same item, and so they are never used together.

4 Both words exclude other things. Swayam excludes by its very definition, and Atman excludes by the fact that it is the inner Reality, which can only be one.

Verse 44: *Application to Inert Objects*

घटः स्वयं न जानातीत्येवं स्वत्वं घटादिषु ।

अचेतनेषु दृष्टं चेद्दृश्यतामात्मसत्त्वतः

॥ ४४॥

ghaṭaḥ svayaṁ na jānātītyēvaṁ svatvaṁ ghaṭādiṣu |

acētanēṣu dṛṣṭaṁ cēddṛśyatāmātmāsattvataḥ

|| 44||

1	<i>ghaTah svayam na jaanaati</i>	Doubt: “The pot <u>itself</u> does not know (i.e. is inert)” –
2	<i>iti evam svatvam ghaTaadishhu;</i>	<i>the word ‘-self’ is being applied to objects</i>
3	<i>achetaneshhu drishhTam chet</i>	<i>that are <u>inanimate</u> in this example.</i>
4	<i>drishyataam aatma sattvatah</i>	Reply: Yes, because Atman is present even in <u>pots</u> !

The Poorvapakshi now steps into the main subject of this section. He adds “itself” to the list of words with ‘-self’ given earlier. This is the first time ‘-self’ is paired with ‘it’ to relate to inert objects. This is where we see the Poorvapakshee’s ignorance of the meaning of sentiency:

1 A pot is inert, no doubt about that. It does not even know that we are attaching to its name the esteemed word ‘self’. If only it knew, it would blush and say, “Thank you, I did not realise I was so important!” Then it will teach us a lesson or two:

“To me, I only exist. I am not disturbed by ‘I’-ness and ‘mine’-ness because I have no mind. I have been born like this. I do not have the trouble you have. I have no ego to complicate my life. You humans think too much of yourselves. That is not something we envy in you, but something we pity you for. If only you realised how peaceful we are!”

2-3 Inability of the pot to know is taken as a sign of insentiency. That is correct. But here is the error: He complains about attaching the word ‘self’ to the pot, because he feels that ‘self’ should be used only for sentient beings, not for inanimate things. In other words, he is saying that inert objects have no Self, no Consciousness. That is where he is completely mistaken, and needs the Vedantin’s insight.

4 The Vedantin says there is no problem in using ‘self’ in their case also – the Atman or Consciousness is present in them, too. Thus the fundamental misconception of inert objects is being cleared. This is taken up in greater detail in the next verse which is crucial.

Verse 45: *Difference Between Sentient & Inert*

चेतनाचेतनभिदा कूटस्थात्मकता न हि ।

किन्तु बुद्धिकृताभासकृतैवेत्यवगम्यताम्

॥ ४५॥

cētanācētanabhidā kūṭasthātmakṛtā na hi |

kintu buddhikṛtābhāśakṛtaivētyavagamyatām

|| 45||

1	<i>chetana achetana bhidaa</i>	<i>The difference between <u>animate</u> and <u>inanimate</u></i>
2	<i>kooTastha aatmakrita na hi;</i>	<i>is certainly not the doing of Kootastha or the Atman,</i>
3	<i>kintu buddhikrita aabhaasa</i>	<i>but rather of the <u>intellect</u> where the Consciousness is</i>
4	<i>kṛita eva iti avagamyataam</i>	<i>reflected producing sentiency. Please understand this.</i>

Swamiji said this verse had to be highlighted since it was so important. In fact, he spent two lectures on this verse alone. It gives much-needed clarity especially to beginners in Vedanta on the difference between Consciousness and Sentiency.

What is Life?

If one were to ask, “What is Life?”, the first answer would be “**Sentiency**”.

The second question would then be, “What is Sentiency?” It is the power to know and to respond. If this is sentiency, how can we make the error to equate it with Consciousness, with the Atman? Atman is not that. It is something else. Atman enables sentiency to manifest, but it is not sentiency.

Presence or Absence of CONSCIOUSNESS

1-2 The answer that explains the difference between animate and inanimate cannot be Consciousness. It has nothing to do with Consciousness. Consciousness is everywhere and is the support of everything, whether animate or not. Consciousness is also unchanging; it is the same in everything at all times. It cannot be responsible for the presence or absence of sentiency in objects.

Presence or Absence of SUBTLE BODY

3-4 The answer to the difference between animate and inanimate lies in whether there is a subtle body or not. Here are **three actual examples** to illustrate this:

i) The pot does not have sentiency because it does not have a mind; it has no subtle body, so it cannot experience life. If my intellect is taken away, I will be just like a pot!

ii) At night when I am fast asleep, I am not aware of my subtle body. It is not available to me. In that condition a mosquito may come and sit on me. Then it goes and sits on a pot. Both the pot and I are not aware of the mosquito. We are both the same in that condition of deep sleep. This is proof that sentiency depends not just on the presence or absence of the subtle body, but, even if the subtle body is there, it must be available to us; then only are we in a sentient state.

iii) When a person dies, we say he has “kicked the bucket”. What actually has happened? The ‘bucket’ is the subtle body complex. It has been “kicked out” of the body.

Here are **two similes** that illustrate how the subtle body enables sentiency:

i) **Sunlight on a Mirror**: We have sunlight present everywhere; this represents Consciousness, which is also everywhere. The sunlight falls on a rock and nothing happens. The sunlight falls on a mirror and we get a reflection of the sun produced in the mirror. The mirror represents the subtle body of a living being. The quality of the image produced depends on the quality of the mirror, the dust on its surface, etc. Similarly, the quality of the reflected consciousness depends on how clear (pure) is our intellect.

ii) **Electromagnetic Sound Waves & a Radio Set**: Radio frequency waves pervade the air space. They represent Consciousness. They fall on a tree, on a stone, on the ocean, and even on the human ear, but nothing happens. We do not get any sound. Someone with a radio set switches it on and tunes it to the available frequency. It produces sound that corresponds to the frequency of the waves. The radio set represents the subtle body.

The radio set has got the electronic circuitry to convert the waves into sound through the diaphragm of a loudspeaker. As far as the electromagnetic waves are concerned, only radios are sentient. All other objects, even though pervaded by the waves, are effectively “insentient”. They cannot receive the waves, nor respond to them.

Interaction Between Consciousness & Subtle Body

Consciousness is a contributing factor in producing sentiency, but it is the intellect of the subtle body that directly produces sentiency. There will be no sign of life unless there is the subtle body present in an object. The intellect produces the reflected consciousness which has to be supported by Consciousness. Without the intellect, the reflected consciousness cannot be produced. And without reflected consciousness, there can be no **Jeeva**.

Once the reflected consciousness has been produced in the intellect, its effect filters down through the rest of the subtle body until it reaches the gross body and activates it. In the Jnanendriyas (the organs of knowledge), the senses receive the sensory data and send them to the mind. The mind receives all the five sensory inputs and comprehends the full picture. The intellect **recognises** the object and says, “It’s a rose flower.” Once the rose is cognised, the work of Jnana Shakti is done. Then Ichhaa Shakti takes over to produce the desire from the cognition. It **wants** the flower. Once the desire has been formed, the job of Ichhaa Shakti is done, and we arrive at the third stage – Kriya Shakti. This takes over and busily sets the body into motion to respond to the stimulus. It **acquires** the flower. This appeases or pacifies the desire, at least for the time being.

To sum up, the following lists the whole chain from Perception to Fulfillment:

1. The Organs of Knowledge; 2. the Mind; 3. the intellect; 4. the desire in the mind; 5. the Organs of Action; 6. the acquisition of the object; 7. the enjoyment of the object.

THE TRANSMIGRATING JEEVA

The SUBTLE BODY & the “CHAIN OF SENTIENCY”

At the top end of the spectrum is Consciousness, which is indestructible and eternal. It is aloof from what happens to the Jeeva. Due to this, Consciousness cannot transmigrate. Yet, everything happens in Consciousness, which can be said to be the permanent address of the sentient Jeeva, but does not participate in Jeeva’s activities. It cannot be counted in the “Chain of Sentiency”.

At the bottom end of the spectrum is the gross body which is Tamas predominant. The body, too, does not transmigrate; at the end of a life, it is dissolved into the elements. Yet, it houses the subtle body. The gross body may be said to be the temporary address of the Jeeva. It gives its full co-operation to the “Chain of Sentiency” but is not part of it.

In between the above two lies the Subtle Body which is responsible for the three stages that are known here as the “Chain of Sentiency”. It is the subtle body that transmigrates. The Jeeva is essentially the subtle body. What are the three functions of the “Chain of Sentiency”? They are Jnana, Ichhaa and Kriya, which we have already described.

i) **Jnana Shakti**: This is Sattwa predominant. It is the Vijnanamaya Kosha. It produces the element of Knowledge. Its function is ***Jaanaati***, “to know”. The intellect and the Jnanendriyas (organs of knowledge) are the field for this Shakti.

ii) **Ichhaa Shakti**: This is a mixture of Sattwa and Rajas. It is the Manomaya Kosha. It produces the Desire in the Jeeva. Its function is ***Ichhati***, “to desire”. The mind is the field for this Shakti.

iii) **Kriya Shakti**: This is Rajas predominant. It is the Pranamaya Kosha. It produces the Action. Its function is ***Yatate***, “to function”. The Karmendriyas (organs of action) and the Pranas are the field for this Shakti.

All these three Shaktis together are responsible for our experience of Life. They write the autobiography of each Jeeva. All the three Shaktis do their function with the help of the **Chidabhasa** or reflection of consciousness which is produced in the intellect and works its way through the rest of the body upto the gross body.

The Yatharthha Jeeva is the Chidabhasa and forms the essential Jeeva. It requires Chit at one end and reflected consciousness or Jeeva at the other.

The Samsaaric Jeeva is the Jeeva that transmigrates. It comprises the entire subtle body, i.e. all the Koshas excluding the gross body.

The following classification concerns the twofold cause of sentiency.

The **Sadharana Karana** (General Cause for sentiency): is Chit or Consciousness.

The **Asadharana Karana** (Particular Cause for sentiency): is Chidabhasa.

The actual proof of sentiency is Chidabhasa, not Chit.

Verse 46: ***Similarity Between Sentient & Inert***

यथा चेतन आभासः कूटस्थे भ्रान्तिकल्पितः ।

अचेतनो घटादिश्च तथा तत्रैव कल्पितः

॥ ४६॥

yathā cētana ābhāsaḥ kūṭasthē bhrāntikalpitaḥ |
acētanō ghaṭādiśca tathā tatraiva kalpitaḥ

|| 46||

1	<i>yathaa chetana aabhaasah</i>	<i>Just as the animate <u>Jeeva</u> (reflection of Consc.) is</i>
2	<i>kooTasthe bhraantikalpitaḥ;</i>	<i>an illusion imagined on the <u>Kootastha</u> (Pure Consc.);</i>
3	<i>achetanah ghaTa aadih cha</i>	<i>inanimate objects like the <u>pot, etc.</u>, are also</i>
4	<i>tathaa tatra eva kalpitaḥ.</i>	<i>imagined in the same way by the very same illusion.</i>

The previous verse brought out the **difference** between sentient and inert objects. The difference is from the perspective of the Jeeva, which is part of the Unreality. This verse is meant to point out the **similarity** between sentient and inert objects. The similarity is from the perspective of the Kootastha, which is part of the Reality.

1-2 Sentient beings are superimposed on the Reality due to the influence of an illusion produced by the power of delusion or Avidya.

3-4 In exactly the same way, inert objects are also superimposed on the Reality due to the influence of the illusion produced by the same power of delusion or Avidya.

As far as the Reality is concerned, there is no difference between sentient and inert things – for Reality is in both of them and both are Unreal superimpositions. This is the main thrust of this verse.

Verse 47: **Doubt:** *Can ‘That’ & ‘This’ be Self?*

तत्तेदन्ते अपि स्वत्वमिव त्वमहमादिषु ।
सर्वत्रानुगते तेन तयोरप्यात्मतेति चेत्

|| ४७||

tattēdantē:'pi svatvamiva tvamahamādiṣu |
sarvatrānugatē tēna tayōrapyātmātēti cēt

|| 47||

1	<i>tattaa-idantaa api svatvam</i>	<u>Doubt:</u> <i>‘That-ness’ and ‘this-ness’ are like ‘self-ness’</i>
2	<i>iva tvam-aham-aadishhu;</i>	<i>which is used with ‘you’, ‘I’, etc. They, too,</i>
3	<i>sarvatra anugate tena</i>	<i>can be combined with <u>everything</u> else. For that reason,</i>
4	<i>tayoh api aatmatah iti chet</i>	<i>why can’t we take objects denoted by them as being Self?</i>

1-2 The Poorvapakshee now tries to draw a parallel between the pair of words ‘that’ and ‘this’, and the word ‘self’. The latter word was found to be used with ‘I’, ‘you’, ‘he’ and ‘it’. From that common usage, it was deduced that ‘self’ stands for the Atman, which is common in all objects, whether animate or inanimate.

3-4 The argument he puts forward is that those words can also be used with everything else, just as ‘self’ can. For instance, we can say ‘this you’, and ‘that you’; or ‘this me’ and ‘that me’; or ‘this thing’ and ‘that thing’. For that very reason of common usage, he argues that all the things referable by ‘this’ and ‘that’ should also be given the status of being Self!

Verse 48: *Reply: No, they are Not Synonyms*

ते आत्मत्वेऽप्यनुगते तत्तेदन्ते ततस्तयोः ।

आत्मत्वं नैव सम्भाव्यं सम्यक्त्वादेर्यथा तथा

॥ ४८॥

tē ātmatvē:'pyanugatē tattēdantē tatastayōḥ |

ātmatvaṁ naiva sambhāvyāṁ samyaktvādēryathā tathā ॥ 48॥

1	<i>te aatmatva api anugate</i>	<i>Reply: But used even in conjunction with Self</i>
2	<i>tattaa-idantaa tatah tayoh;</i>	<i>are 'that-ness' and 'this-ness'. Therefore, the two</i>
3	<i>aatmatvam na eva sambhaavyam</i>	<i>cannot be <u>synonymous</u> with Atman, but they are</i>
4	<i>samyaktva-aadeh yathaa tathaa</i>	<i><u>opposites</u> like 'correctness' and 'incorrectness'.</i>

In verse 43, we came to the conclusion that synonyms are never used together. If they are, then they cannot be synonyms. The latter conclusion is now brought to account.

1-3 In the case in question, the words 'this' and 'that' can be used in conjunction with 'self'. This in itself implies that they are not synonyms, and they cannot refer to the Self. However, this may not be accepted as conclusive proof by some as it is based merely on common usage of words.

Swamiji gave the logical reason also why everything that is accompanied by 'this' or 'that' cannot be synonymous with Atman. 'This' and 'that' are used with so many things. The approach to define a thing merely on the basis of what words accompany it is not sound. It is called Adhika Desha Vrittivam – “Improper ascribing of a quality to an object.” The terms 'this' and 'that' are used in far too many cases of a general nature to permit a meaningful classification of what they accompany.

4 By far the most logical proof of all on this point is given in this Pada. If the words did refer to the Self, then both the words – 'that' and 'this' – would have to mean the same thing. But, clearly, they do not mean the same thing. On the contrary, they are actually opposites. 'This' is always used as an opposite to 'that'!

The next verse throws more light on this aspect.

Verse 49: *Word Pairs Representing Opposite Ideas*

तत्तेदन्ते स्वतान्यत्वे त्वन्ताअहन्ते परस्परम् ।

प्रतिद्वन्द्वितया लोके प्रसिद्धेनास्ति संशयः

॥ ४९॥

tattēdantē svatānyatvē tvantāahantē parasparam |

pratidvandvitayā lōkē prasiddhēnāsti saṁśayaḥ ॥ 49॥

1	<i>tattaa-idantaa svataa-anyatva</i>	<i>'This-ness' and 'that-ness'; 'Selfhood' and 'otherness';</i>
2	<i>tvantaa-ahantaa parasparam;</i>	<i>'you-ness' and 'I-ness' – these <u>pairs</u> are in mutual</i>
3	<i>pratidvandvitayaa loke</i>	<i><u>opposition</u> to each other. In common transactions, this</i>
4	<i>prasiddhe na asti samshayah</i>	<i>is well known. You have <u>no doubt</u> over this, do you?</i>

The point made in the last verse is further substantiated in this verse, in order to prepare us for the next verse.

1-2 Three examples of word-pairs which are used in the sense of opposites are given at the outset. They are:

- i) 'This' always excludes 'that'.
- ii) The Atman or Self always excludes 'others' since it is Non-dual in nature.
- iii) 'You' always excludes 'me', and vice versa.

3-4 The manner in which these Padas are presented, indicate that Sri Vidyananyaji is preparing the student's mind to receive something related to the statement made in this verse. It is going to be an important point that follows this verse, so Sri Vidyananyaji is making sure that the present point is well understood, before he launches the point that is based on it in the next verse.

Verse 50: Kootastha & Jeeva – the Exact Difference

अन्यतायाः प्रतिद्वन्द्वी स्वयं कूटस्थ इष्यताम् ।
 त्वन्तायाः प्रतियोग्येषोऽहमित्यात्मनि कल्पितः ॥ ५०॥
 anyatāyāḥ pratidvandvī svayaṁ kūṭastha iṣyatām |
 tvaṁtāyāḥ pratiyōgyeṣō:'hamityātmani kalpitah ॥ 50॥

1	<i>anyataaayaah pratidvandvee</i>	<i>The opposite of 'other-ness' is</i>
2	<i>svayam kooTastha ishhyataam;</i>	<i>'Self-hood', which we know is the same as Kootastha.</i>
3	<i>tvamtaayaah pratiyogi eshhah</i>	<i>The opposite of 'you-ness', however, is this</i>
4	<i>aham iti aatmani kalpitah</i>	<i>'Jeeva-hood', which is superimposed on Kootastha.</i>

What is the important point that Sri Vidyananyaji wishes to make? In clear terms he brings out the essential difference between Kootastha and Jeeva. Four aspects of Consciousness were given earlier in verse 18. They are:

- i-ii Pure Consciousness at individual and total level, viz. **Kootastha** and **Brahman**;
- iii-iv Associated Consciousness at individual and total level, viz. **Jeeva** and **Ishwara**.

Kootastha is the ultimate cause of Sentiency; Jeeva is its immediate cause.

Here, in a manner which brings out the exact difference between them, Kootastha and Jeeva, are juxtaposed together with their own opposites. This use of striking contrast is a very effective way to bring out the difference between them. Note that they are different but they are not opposites. The fact that they are different is rammed home by using the terms Svayam and Aham together in the same sentence (as we did before in verse 39).

1-2 The second pair of opposites, **Svataa-Anyatva**, of verse 49 is in focus here. Svayam is known so far to be Atman. That same Svayam is said to be Kootastha, the pure Self, the opposite of 'other-ness' since there is no 'other' to the Pure Self. This helps to bring out the exact meaning of Kootastha as Non-dual, "excluding all else".

3-4 The third pair of opposites, **Tvantaa-Idantaa**, of verse 49 is the focus here. When we speak of 'you' and 'I', it can only be at the individual level and associated with the individual equipments. This brings out the exact meaning of Jeeva.

Verse 51: 'I'-ness & the Self

अहंतास्वत्वयोर्भेदे रूप्यतेदन्तयोरिव ।
स्पष्टेऽपि मोहमापन्ना एकत्वं प्रतिपेदिरे

॥ ५१॥

ahamntāsvatvayōrbhēdē rūpyatēdantayōriva |
spaṣṭē'pi mōhamāpannā ēkatvaṁ pratipēdirē

॥ 51॥

1	<i>ahamtaa svatvayoh bhede</i>	<i>The difference between 'Jeeva-hood' and 'Self-hood',</i>
2	<i>roopyataa idantayoh iva;</i>	<i>is like that between 'silver-ness' and 'this-ness',</i>
3	<i>spashhTe api mohamaapannaa</i>	<i>which is very <u>clear</u>. Yet, people in the <u>grip of delusion</u></i>
4	<i>ekatvam pratipedire</i>	<i>consider them (Jeeva and Kootastha) to be the same.</i>

Why was it so important to show the exact difference between Kootastha and Jeeva in the last verse? It is because the Poorvapakshee, who represents man in a deluded state, was insisting in his arguments that Self-hood and Jeeva-hood are one and the same. He tried many ways to show they are the same. The Vedantin now hits the final nail in the coffin of the Poorvapakshi's arguments by showing clearly their difference.

In addition, this verse ascribes the arguments of the Poorvapakshee to sheer **Delusion**. Only under delusion will someone mistake Jeeva, an Unreal creation, to be the Kootastha, which is the Reality Itself, the pure unassociated Consciousness.

1-2 In the simile of the shell, a person is looking at the shell. There is no silver there at all. Yet he sees silver instead of the shell. This is sheer delusion. In exactly the same way, a deluded person sees the Jeeva where only Kootastha exists in reality. There is no reality in the Jeeva, yet that is what is seen in place of the pure Consciousness or Kootastha.

3-4 The punchline of the argument is that silverness is so obviously not there, yet it is seen to be there. The error as well as the delusion is seen with crystal clarity! Perhaps for this reason the word **Spashte**, "very clearly", is placed in between **Roopyataa** and **Moha**, "silverness" and "delusion", because it applies to them both. This is called Dehali Deepavat, meaning a lamp placed in between two rooms so that both rooms are lit by it.

Verse 52: The Result of Negating Nescience

तादात्म्याध्यास एवात्र पूर्वोक्ताविद्यया कृतः ।
अविद्यायां निवृत्तायां तत्कार्यं विनिवर्तते

॥ ५२॥

tādātmyādhyaāsa ēvātra pūrvōktāvidyayā kṛtaḥ |
avidyāyām nivṛttāyām tatkāryam vinivartatē

॥ 52॥

1	<i>taadaatmya adhyaasa eva atra</i>	<i>Identification due to <u>superimposition</u> of one on another</i>
2	<i>poorva ukta avidyayaa kritah;</i>	<i>has already been treated; it is caused by Nescience.</i>
3	<i>avidyaayaam nivrittaayaam</i>	<i>When the Nescience is <u>negated</u>,</i>
4	<i>tatkaaryam vinivartate</i>	<i>the effects of Nescience are also <u>terminated</u>.</i>

Having traced the Poorvapakshi's error to Moha or Delusion in the last verse, Sri Vidyaranyaaji takes the logic back to the very first error, the cause of the Delusion itself – namely, Avidya or root Ignorance. By doing so, the whole topic of Superimposition or Vikshepa is brought to a fitting end. It is well rounded off by bringing the discussion back to Avidya where we began at the beginning of Chapter 4 in verse 25.

This structure in the arguments presented is a feather in the cap of Sri Vidyaranyaaji. He is unsurpassed in his systematic presentation of the logic behind the truths of Vedanta.

Taadaatmya – Identification to the Superimposition

1-2 From the point where we began our discussion of Avidya and its two powers of Avritti and Vikshepa, the topic has been covered in fine detail. We have seen how man is first veiled by the Avritti or Veiling power. As a result of this veiling, the second phase of the work of Avidya begins, namely, the Vikshepa Shakti or the Projecting power.

3 To overcome these two powers of Avidya, it is found necessary to acquire the knowledge of the Self which is the only antidote to Avidya or Nescience.

4 A step is placed into the next Chapter wherein we deal with the **Effects of Avidya**. We shall see that before these effects are terminated, they persist even as a vehicle continues to move a little further even after the brakes have been slammed, due to its own momentum.



PANCHADASHEE – 06

Chapter 7: (Verse 53-57, 5 No.)

Vikshepa: Its SLOW DEATH

THE MAIN TOPIC since the beginning of Chapter 4 is **Removal of Avidya**. It began with Aavriti, the veiling power. The topic of Vikshepa took the stage in Chapter 5. Chapter 6 was a “Side-Issue No.1”, to clear a doubt regarding the difference in status between sentient and inert objects, both of which are part of the projection of Vikshepa. It was shown that the difference has nothing to do with the Self, but is solely due to the presence or absence of the Subtle Body in an object.

At the end of Chapter 6, “Removal of Avidya” was recalled to signal the end of Side-Issue No.1. It was affirmed that the removal of Avidya necessarily meant the termination of all the **Effects of Vikshepa**. This becomes “Side Issue No.2”, and is dealt with in this Chapter.

In the five verses that follow, we remain focussed on this termination. The death of Vikshepa is not ‘instantaneous’. Although Avidya may end instantaneously, it is seen that Vikshepa dies a ‘slow death’ whose duration lasts until the end of the realised person’s Prarabha Karma.

Yes, this is another feather in the cap of Sri Vidyanaraya. He looks at this ‘Slow Death’ with the eye of a true spiritual scientist, using Shruti, Yukti and Anubhuti (see v. 56) to prove that his conclusion is not just a wild guess. It’s a short but absorbing chapter, and a tribute to the analytic intellect of the illustrious author of *Panchadashee*.

Verse 53: *The Effects of Nescience Outlive It*

अविद्यावृत्तितादात्म्ये विद्ययैव विनश्यतः ।

विक्षेपस्य स्वरूपं तु प्रारब्धक्षयमीक्ष्यते

॥ ५३॥

avidyāvṛttitādātmyē vidyayaiva vinaśyataḥ ।

vikṣēpasya svarūpaṁ tu prārabdhakṣayamīkṣyatē

॥ 53॥

1	<i>avidyaa aavriti taadaatmye</i>	<i>The <u>veiling</u> caused by Nescience and the wrong <u>identification</u> resulting from it</i>
2	<i>vidyayaa eva vinashyatah;</i>	<i>can be destroyed only by Knowledge of the Self.</i>
3	<i>vikshhepasya svaroopam tu</i>	<i>However, the Effects of the <u>illusory projection</u></i>
4	<i>praarabdha kshhayam eekshhyate</i>	<i>continue, awaiting the destruction of <u>Prarabdha</u>.</i>

1 Avidya’s by-products are Aavriti and Taadaatmya. The first is the Veiling Power, and the second is indirectly a reference to the Projecting Power or Vikshepa. Both these must logically come to an end when Avidya comes to an end.

The full logical sequence runs as follows:

1. **AVIDYA** (**NESCIENCE**)
 - 2. **AAVRITI** (**VEILING**)
 - 3. **VIKSHEPA** (**PROJECTION**)
 - 4. **ADHYAASA** (**SUPERIMPOSITION**)
 - 5. **TAADAATMYA** (**IDENTIFICATION**)

Taadaatmya – Identification with the Projections

Aavruti needs no further explanation here as Chapter 4 has taken care of it. In short, it means that we no longer mistake the Jeeva to be the Self, and vice versa.

However, Taadaatmya needs to be tied to Vikshepa. Once Vikshepa projects the superimpositions upon the Self, like silver is superimposed on the shell, then it is the natural tendency of the Jeeva to become attached to these superimpositions insofar as they relate to his own existence.

This attachment to the effects of Vikshepa in one's life is Taadaatmya, which literally means "*identification*". The Jeeva becomes totally identified with the projections.

3-4 The list of these projections is endless, but an interesting point arises in their classification. In the context of this Chapter, the projections of Vikshepa have to be classified into two categories:

- i) **Kevala Vikshepa**: "*only projections*", i.e. Vikshepa *per se*.
- ii) **Prarabdha Sahita Vikshepa**: "*projections associated with one's Prarabdha Karma*".

In the case of the first type, it is due purely to mis-apprehending the Jeeva to be the Self. In other words, it is due to solely to erroneous cognition. That no longer takes place once knowledge has dawned. Hence, this first type of Vikshepa dies a "*sudden death*" as soon as Avidya, its cause, is removed. All wrong notions die immediately, instantaneously.

The second type comes under focus in this Chapter. It is declared that Vikshepa of this type continues to exist until the Prarabdha Karma comes to an end, which means until the physical death of the saint concerned. What are the items that fall into this category?

There are three main items in this category of Prarabdha Sahita Vikshepa:

i) **The Gross Body** – this is the counter which comes into existence to transact one's Prarabdha. It is the direct result of one's Prarabdha.

ii) **The Subtle Body** – this is the mind-senses complex which is the key constituent of the Jeeva. The Jeeva is more the subtle body than the gross body.

iii) **The Reflected Consciousness** – this is the reflection of the Pure Consciousness. It is the essential Jeeva. The Jeeva cannot exist without this reflected consciousness; only a Jnani is not identified with his reflected consciousness. In deep sleep, the subtle body may not be available, but the reflected consciousness has to be there.

These three form the second category of Vikshepa and are determined by one's Prarabdha Karma. They cannot die when the mis-apprehension ends. As they are tied to one's Prarabdha, they have a "*slow death*" until Prarabdha itself ends at the time of death.

After the above sweeping statement is made by the Vedantin, we can presume what is going on in the mind of the Poorvapakshee. Swamiji described it graphically as follows:

“Hey, wait a minute, what do you take me for? Who are you trying to fool? Prarabdha is also a part of Vikshepa. It was produced by the Jeeva when he interacted with the Vikshepa by his erroneous cognition of it. So it, too, has to die when Vikshepa ends. You are trying to hoodwink me into this far-fetched idea that some Vikshepa still remains due to Prarabdha. What do you get by resorting to clever terms like Prarabdha Sahita Vikshepa? You are just trying to con me into submitting to your belief by using high-sounding terms. I am also a skilled logician, a **Taarkikah**; don’t you try your tricks with me!”

Faced with this retort from the Poorvapakshee, the Vedantin, as it were, ‘pays him in his own coin’! He takes a logic by which the Naiyayikas swear, and extends its use to the case at hand. The next two verses have to be taken together.

Verse 54: The Body-Effect Outlives its Cause . . .

उपादाने विनष्टेऽपि क्षणं कार्यं प्रतीक्ष्यते ।
इत्याहुस्तार्किकास्तद्वदस्माकं किं न सम्भवेत् ॥ ५४॥

upādānē vinaṣṭē:'pi kṣaṇam kāryam pratīkṣyate |
ityāhustārkikāstadvadasmākaṁ kiṁ na sambhavēt ॥ 54॥

1	<i>upaadaane vinashhTe api</i>	<i>Even though the <u>material cause</u> is destroyed,</i>
2	<i>kshhaNam kaaryam prateekshhyate</i>	<i>the effects are seen to persist for a little longer.</i>
3	<i>iti aahuh taarkikaah tadvad</i>	<i>Thus proclaim the <u>logicians</u>. By the same logic,</i>
4	<i>asmaakam kim na sambhavet</i>	<i>why can't this body persist after nescience ends?</i>

Verse 55: . . . Even as Cloth Outlives its Thread

तन्तूनां दिनसंख्यानां तैस्तादृक्क्षणे ईरितः ।
भ्रमस्यासंख्यकल्पस्य योग्यः क्षण इहेष्यताम् ॥ ५५॥

tantūnām dinasamkhyānām taistādṛkṣaṇa īritah |
bhramasyāsamkhyakalpasya yōgyaḥ kṣaṇa ihēṣyatām ॥ 55॥

5	<i>tantoonaam dina-samkhyaaanaam</i>	<i>Made of thread having a lifespan <u>countable</u> in days,</i>
6	<i>taih taadrik kshhaNa eeritah;</i>	<i>cloth keeps its form for the <u>next second</u>. Similarly,</i>
7	<i>bhramasya asamkhyaa-kalpasya</i>	<i>when the delusion of <u>uncountable</u> years ends surely</i>
8	<i>yogyah kshhaNa iha eeshhyataam</i>	<i>the body may persist <u>proportionately longer</u>!</i>

The Nyaya philosophy is based strongly on cause and effect, i.e. Kaarana and Kaarya. Vedantins often use this logic system because of the precision with which it is laid out. We see a ‘give and take’ spirit amongst the various schools of thought. There was no copyright on their ideas. They never behaved like the way today’s political parties do.

The Vedantin uses the Nyaya logic in **1-2**, assisted by the example in **5-6**, and drives home his own conclusion in **7-8**. **3-4** bonds the Naiyayika’s logic to that of the Vedantin.

The Vedantin's Argument

1-2 This statement of logic comes from the Nyaya school of thought, which is one of the six schools which take their authority from the Vedas. The other schools are Vaiseshika (closely related to Nyaya); Saankhya and Yoga (which are a closely related pair); and Poorva and Uttara Meemamsa (which is another related pair). The logic is explained using the example in **5-6**.

The thread (**Tantoo**) is the material cause of the cloth (**Patta**). When the thread is destroyed, the cloth also is destroyed. However, the Naiyayikas have looked at the whole thing very carefully, and they have come up with the following definition for Kaarya (cause):

Kaarya niyata poorva vrititvam kaaranatvam.

Meaning: “*Kaaranatvam (Cause) is that which exists before Kaarya (Effect)*”.

According to this definition, the thread has to be destroyed before the cloth is declared as destroyed. Logically, therefore, the thread gets destroyed first, and then a fraction of a second later, the cloth can be declared destroyed! The two events cannot happen at the same time. The “before” in the definition dictates that there should be a time lag between the two events. Of course, it is a technicality, splitting hairs, if you like. But nevertheless it is a fine requirement of the process of logic.

3 The Naiyayika has to accept this statement, since it is coming from his own system. The Vedantin is ‘paying him back in his own coin’. He uses the same logic, modified to suit his example, and stumps the Naiyayika.

4 The example the Vedantin wants to apply this logic to is now put forward in a nutshell and detailed later in **7-8**. The thread is compared to Nescience, the cause; the cloth is compared to the body, the effect. If the Naiyayika can accept that the death of the cloth comes after the death of the thread, then why can't he accept that the death of the body also comes after the death of nescience (Avidya)?

5-6 Now follows an unusual bit of logic from the Vedantin: The thread has a lifespan that can be counted in days. In any case we can know when it was made, and we know that it is not indestructible. The point is it has a small, fixed lifespan. Relative to that short lifespan, the cloth's destruction a second after the thread's is considered to be reasonable.

7-8 But here is the crunch . . . The Vedantin brings in his example. His ‘thread’, the Nescience, is something which is beginningless. It may be crores of years ago. It is an infinite period from “beginningless time”. Taking that huge unknown lifespan into account, what is a few years of time lag between the dawn of knowledge and the death of the body!

Thus, the Vedantin, by using the Naiyayika's own logic, takes the wind out of his argument. However, it is not his intention to do that. Here follows his real argument . . .

Verse 56: ***The Proof of Vedantic Statement***

विना क्षोदक्षमं मानं तैर्वृथा परिकल्प्यते ।

श्रुतियुक्त्यनुभूतिभ्यो वदतां किन्तु दुःशकम्

॥ ५६॥

vinā kṣōdakṣamaṁ mānaṁ tairvṛthā parikalpyatē |

śrutiyuktyanubhūtibhyō vadatāṁ kinnu duḥśakam

|| 56||

1	<i>vinaa kshhoda kshhamam maanam</i>	Doubt: Without verifying the <u>means of knowledge</u>
2	<i>taih vrithaa parikalpyate;</i>	the logicians assume the <u>truth</u> of their theory. But:
3	<i>shruti yukti anubhootibhyah</i>	Reply: Based on <u>scripture, experience and logic,</u>
4	<i>vadataam kinnu duhshakam</i>	is our stand. What is impossible to understand?

Now for the real point in the Vedantin's case. It is well considered and structured, and his conclusions are well tested. This is not so in the Naiyayika's argument.

Rhetoric and point-scoring were staged in the last verse. The Vedantin now shows the solidity of his case using conventional logic, not rhetoric. Vedanta is not in need of any 'trick' to prove its theories. The above was only to quieten the opponent. Now the truth is told in no uncertain terms.

1-2 This is where the argument of the Naiyayika hangs – on improper means, no verification and a conclusion without any proof.

The subject matter that we are dealing with is in the realm of metaphysics. It cannot have ordinary sense perception to verify it. The means used by Naiyayikas, namely, Logic, is an improper means to be applied in the case of things like Self and Avidya, which do not fall in the realm of sense perception.

Secondly, when the wrong means are used, then the wrong conclusions are bound to be arrived at. In fact, it is not possible to verify transcendental matters by using logic as a means.

Thirdly, the nature of the subject is such that proof for it cannot be obtained by sense perception or logical analysis. It is impossible for them to come to any verifiable conclusion, using the means that they resort to.

3-4 On the other hand, the Vedantins have tried and tested their conclusion by using three infallible methods:

i) **Shruti:** Foremost among the means is the Shruti or the relevant scriptures concerning the Self. These are the Upanishads of the Jnana Kanda, not any other portions of the Vedas. Which citations from scriptures support the conclusion of the Vedantin?

Swamiji gave two passages as examples. The first is from **Chhandogya Up** (6.14.2):

Tasya taavad eva chiram, yaavan na vimokshe; atha sampatsya.

Meaning: "For a Jnani, so much alone is the waiting, as long as the body does not fall; thereafter, the merging is final".

The physical body and the subtle body of a Jnani persist for some time. When the body finally falls, there is no question of him appearing as an individual again. The merger is complete and final. It is the Jnani's last ever death in a body. There is no return to it again.

The second passage is from the **Katha Upanishad** (2.2.1):

Vimuktashcha vimuchyate. **Meaning:** "One whose body drops, gets liberated".

In this way, the Shruti points out how the subtle and gross body persist even after realisation. Vedanta's stand is based on such affirmative declarations made by the Shrutis.

ii) **Yukti**: An example using Yukti is the thread-cloth case described in verse 54-55, where the Nyaya philosophy's logic was used to explain the lingering of the effects.

Another example of Yukti is found in the *Viveka Choodamani*. There is a verse in which it is said that an arrow which leaves a bow cannot be stopped in mid-air. It has to continue and hit the target. There is no way that this can be avoided. The bow represents Sanchita Karma. From it, the arrow of Prarabdha is shot for the current birth, and it has to expend its energy by hitting its target, namely, death. The path taken by the arrow is the lifespan of the person from birth to death.

iii) **Anubhuti**: Actual experience of the truth is the best and most convincing means. Every Jeevanmukta still experiences his body. What more proof need there be?

Swamiji quoted an example from the life of Samarth Ramdas, the Guru of Shivaji Maharaj. Samarth Ramdas once had a high fever. He asked to be taken to a Vaidya (doctor) for a check-up. However, he was informed at that moment that Shivaji himself was on his way to see him on an urgent matter related to the security of the State. The meeting had to take place. Ramdas could not avoid it. But what about the fever? Ramdas transferred his fever to his *kambal* (shawl) until the meeting was over. When this was done, the shawl started shivering due to the fever! After the meeting with Shivaji, Ramdas took back the fever from the shawl, which immediately stopped 'shivering'. At that moment, Shivaji again started to shiver with fever.

The above incident was to illustrate that the Prarabdha Karma had to be undergone, even if it meant transferring it temporarily to another object!

Anubhuti can also be combined with Yukti as in this case. If **A** has experienced something, then under the same conditions, **B** can also experience the same thing. Logically, an experience is like an experiment: If the conditions can be replicated, then the same experience has to take place again.

Verse 57: Controversy with the Unreasonable Logicians

आस्तां दुस्तार्किकैः साकं विवादः प्रकृतं ब्रुवे ।
स्वाहमोः सिद्धमेकत्वं कूटस्थपरिणामिनोः ॥ ५७॥

āstāṁ dustārkikaiḥ sākaṁ vivādaḥ prakṛtaṁ bruvē |
svāhamōḥ siddhamēkatvaṁ kūṭasthapariṇāminōḥ ॥ 57॥

1	<i>aastaam dustaarkikaih saakam</i>	<i>With the logicians who have gone astray</i>
2	<i>vivaadah prakritam bruve;</i>	<i>it is useless to enter into <u>controversies</u>.</i>
3	<i>svaahamoh siddham ekatvam</i>	<i>Oneness between Self and Ego is an established fact –</i>
4	<i>kooTasthapariNaaminoh</i>	<i>the first is <u>Kootastha</u>, the second is its <u>modification</u>.</i>

The Chapter ends with two invaluable lessons to be learnt from it:

1-2 i) “The Illogic of the Logicians”: Logicians and magicians are supposed to be poles apart. The first goes strictly by reason and the second defies reason. However, in this verse the logician who does not follow the correct means and who thus goes astray from the path of true logic, becomes as good as a ‘magician’. No sense can be made of his conclusions.

It is advised by Sri Vidyanaranya, on the variety of false arguments produced by such logicians, that it is safest to keep them an arm's length away. This is an indictment not of the logicians but of the use of incorrect means to arrive at a conclusion. The true scientific spirit never attacks the man, but the falsity he espouses. We find that Sri Vidyanaranyaji always hits at the sin, not the sinner. Here his attack is on the logic, not the logician.

The first two Padas bring the present Chapter to its conclusion. It is a small matter – the 'slow death' of the effects of Nescience upon the dawn of Knowledge. Small as it is, in terms of its size as well as its significance, it brings home to us the danger of going astray in employing logic without the correct means of knowledge.

Having concluded the immediate topic of this Chapter, the last two Padas are spent in drawing our attention back to the overall topic:

The Distinction Between Kootastha and Jeeva

3-4 Kootastha and Jeeva, the Self and the Ego, the Pure Consciousness and the reflected consciousness – these are synonymous pairs of opposites. That is what Vikshepa teaches us about Reality. The projections of Vikshepa are mere superimpositions upon Reality. Jeeva is a superimposition on Kootastha. That is the message of the last three Chapters taken together.

The Oneness between them is that both are in essence Pure Consciousness. But to arrive at that Oneness, first Avidya needs to be negated. The Jeeva has to be stripped of all its five sheaths. Only then can Kootastha be equated to Jeeva, not until then. While Jeeva still hangs on to the **Parinaamin**, the modifications clinging to it, it can never be the same as Kootastha. That is the truth established in Chapters 5, 6 and 7.

A Final Word on Avidya

Swamiji had an important final word to say on Avidya. The word is translated as "Ignorance" in English, but that is yet far from the correct meaning of Avidya. True, it does have ignorance as one of its functions – it keeps us ignorant of the Reality. But Avidya is called as such because it can be put to an end by Knowledge of the Self. That does not equate it to Ignorance. Avidya and Vidya are not related as Darkness is related to Light. Darkness is something that does not exist. Avidya is not like that.

Avidya is a Bhava Vastu having its own unreal existence superimposed directly upon Brahman. Its function is to mask the Reality, Brahman. It is really Sattwa, Rajas and Tamas. It has to be thought of as an 'object' that conceals Reality. Hence, it is spoken of as being destroyed by knowledge. If it were like darkness, then it cannot be destroyed, even as darkness cannot be destroyed.



PANCHADASHEE – 06

Chapter 8: (Verse 58-77, 20 No.)

Seven VIEWPOINTS on the Self

VEDIC & NON-VEDIC SCHOOLS OF THOUGHT

THE TOPIC BEFORE THE deviation on the ‘slow death’ of Prarabdha-related Vikshepa goes back to verse 52 where we were discussing **Taadaatmya** or *identification* with the superimposition. That identification originates all the way back in verse 24 where we came to understand **Anyonya Adhyaasa**, the *mutual superimposition* by which the Jeeva is unable to recognise itself as Kootastha.

When the Jeeva cannot recognise that it is in truth Kootastha or the Self, then various other interim concepts about what that Self is begin to arise. In this Chapter seven different viewpoints of the Self are discussed. They are graded, beginning with the gross body and ending with the Infinite Self, the Vedantic concept.

Before we actually enter into these graded viewpoints, in the next two verses we classify all the seven viewpoints into two major categories, viz, Vedic and Non-Vedic. The **Vedic** schools take their authority from the Vedas, and so they are termed Aasthika or Theistic in nature. The **Non-Vedic** schools take their authority outside the Vedas, and so they are termed Naasthika or Atheistic in nature. This classification by itself is of not much significance and is not intended to be taken in a spirit of denouncing any school. It is only a guide as regards the sources of the viewpoints.

Verse 58: Non-Vedic Schools: Fallacious Logic

भ्राम्यन्ते पण्डितमन्याः सर्वे लौकिकतार्किकाः ।

अनादृत्य श्रुतिं मौख्यात्केवलां युक्तिमाश्रिताः

॥ ५८ ॥

bhramyante paṇḍitaṁmanyāḥ sarvā laukikatārkikāḥ |

anādṛtya śrutim maurkhyātkēvalāṁ yuktimāśritāḥ

|| 58||

1	<i>bhraamyante paNDitam manyaah</i>	<i>They fall into a deluded state (run hither and thither) who consider themselves to be very <u>learned</u>,</i>
2	<i>sarve laukika- taarkikaah;</i>	<i>such as successful worldly people, and hair-splitting Logicians (i.e. Non-Vedic schools).</i>
3	<i>anaadritya shrutim maurkhyaat</i>	<i>They overlook the authority of the <u>Vedas</u> due to their foolishness, and</i>
4	<i>kevalaam yuktim aashritaah</i>	<i>rely solely on their own <u>fallacious reasoning</u>.</i>

1 Bhraamyante: The fate befalling this type of person is given in the first word, which means “one who runs about hither and thither”. Why does this befall such people?

Panditam: It is because of an egoistic pride which makes them consider themselves very learned and superior. *Panda* is a root that means knowledge. A Pandit is one who is full of knowledge. That in itself is not a problem.

2 But here the context of such a person is twofold:

i) **Sarve-Laukika:** It could refer to a worldly man who has achieved great success in the field of his activity. He may be a business tycoon, a corporate executive, a great scientist, a great writer – in fact, a “great achiever in the world” who had made a name for himself. Such a person then allows his success to go ‘to his head’. The subtle pride of success makes him feel that he is a cut above the rest.

ii) **Taarkikaah:** Into this type fall the “logicians” whom we have encountered in the previous chapter. They are extremely intelligent and have a razor-sharp intellect, but with a defect that is only too common among them:

3 They do not give any credibility to the scriptures such as the Vedas. They are so filled with egoism, that they assert their own views above those of the scriptures, even in matters which are beyond the scope of the intellect, i.e. transcendental matters.

Maurkhyaat: “due to folly”. Too much knowledge can prevent us from becoming truly wise. This is what has happened to these people.

4 The end result is that they comprehend only what their own spiritual evolution limits them to. They may give such comprehension big names and make them appear to be major breakthroughs in the field of philosophy! But in reality they have come nowhere near the truth; they have only been true to their own imagination!

Intellect – An Input/Output Mechanism

The principle of operation for any intellect was presented by Swamiji. It takes an input from a given means of knowledge (the Pramana). Working on that input, it produces an output. If the means supplies an incorrect input, the output will also be incorrect.

Verse 59: Vedic Schools: Shameless Misquoting

पूर्वापरपरामर्शविकलास्तत्र केचन ।

वाक्याभासान्स्वस्वपक्षे योजयन्त्यप्यलज्जया

॥ ५९॥

pūrvāparaparāmarśavikalāstatra kēcana |

vākyaābhāsānsvasvapakṣe yōjayantypyalajjayā

|| 59||

1	<i>poorva apara paraamarsha vikalaah</i>	The discussions <u>completed</u> and those yet to <u>follow</u> (w.r.t. study of Vedas) are not taken into cognisance of,
2	<i>tatra kechana;</i>	by persons other than the above (i.e. Vedic schools).
3	<i>vaakya abhaasaan sva-sva pakshhe yojayanti</i>	They take some isolated passages from the Vedas which suit their own views, in support of which
4	<i>api alajjayaa.</i>	they <u>shamelessly quote</u> them, even out of context.

2 Here we are specifically dealing with those philosophers, seekers, Upasakas, Karma Kandis, etc, who go to the **Vedas** for their basic support. And, the surprising thing is that everyone of them, from the one holding Viewpoint 1 to the one holding Viewpoint 7, finds some passage or other that supports his particular viewpoint!

All the viewpoints differ, yet they all claim to be taking their support from the Vedas. How is this possible? This verse explains how:

Quoting Passages Out of Context

1 It is like this: There is a build-up of thought. First there is the preamble, then there is a body of facts and evidence, and thirdly there follow the conclusions. This is the preferred layout in any text dealing with an important subject matter, be it in a secular science field or in the field of metaphysics.

What many readers do is that they accept what they wish to accept within the body of factual data. Their intention is not to take recourse to the Vedas, but take support from them. In other words, they use the Vedas for their own purposes, rather than allow their intellects to be guided by them. So they latch on to a single idea alone, to the exclusion of what was said in the preamble and what is yet to be said in the conclusion. Regardless of what is said on either side of this fact that attracts them, they accept it as a truth in its own right.

3 Clearly, they have taken the fact in isolation from its context. They have opted to accept an interim stage of the development of the thought on the truth. This would be considered a deliberate falsification of the truth, but even granting that it is not deliberate, the blunder is committed: A partial view of the truth or an interim stage of the final truth is accepted as the final truth itself. The Vedas have no intention to leave a truth half-told.

Swamiji gave a personal example of quoting out of context. His physical training instructor once said to the class, "Swami Vivekananda has said that no philosophy will enter an empty stomach." The PT instructor then blew this statement out of context and said, "So you see, we must eat well!" Swami Vivekananda did not mean to say that specifically. He meant that India had to take care of its poor and destitute families before ever hoping to bring philosophy to their homes. It is true that we must all eat well, but that was not what Swami Vivekananda had in mind when he said those words.

4 Now comes the worst part of the above misdeed. Having no consideration for the context of the half-truth, they shamelessly quote it to support their philosophical stance. What could be more unworthy than this act of bringing the Vedas into disrepute by misquoting them to suit one's own fancy!

All truth seekers are put on guard against such practices. Just because the Vedas are quoted, it does not mean that the quoter is correct. We have to judge that for ourselves, by taking the full context into account. Sri Vidyaranyaaji puts us on the alert against malpractices of this nature.

The Vedas need to be seen as a whole, not as isolated statements. The Poorva Meemamsakas, for example, take only the Karma Kanda and follow it religiously. They totally ignore the Jnana Kanda. Or, they consider the Jnana Kanda only as a eulogy to glorify the Supreme Being. Their main interest lies only in the good things the Lord gives, not in the Lord Himself.

1. The Body is the Self (Dehaatmavadins)

Verse 60: *The “Lokaayatas” (Charvakas or Materialists)*

कूटस्थादिशरीरान्तसंघातस्यात्मतां जगुः ।

लोकायताः पामराश्च प्रत्यक्षाभासमाश्रिताः

॥ ६०॥

kūṭasthādīśarīrāntasaṅghātasyātmataṁ jaguḥ |

lōkāyatāḥ pāmarāśca pratyakṣābhāsamāśritāḥ

|| 60||

1	<i>kooTastha aadi shareera anta</i>	From the <u>Kootastha</u> down to the <u>gross body-</u>
2	<i>samghaat asya aatmataam jaguh;</i>	<u>conglomerate</u> – we take up (of these seven items) each one and consider it to be the <u>Self</u> .
3	<i>loke aayataah paamaraah cha</i>	The “ <u>Lokaayatas</u> ” are people of <u>vulgar habits</u>
4	<i>pratyakshha abhaasam aashritaah</i>	who depend on superficial <u>perceptual evidence</u> .

The Seven Viewpoints on the Self

1-2 From Viewpoint 1 to 7, we now go through an absorbing intellectual investigation of how our concept of the Self evolves according to our spiritual evolution. It is a growth curve from spiritual infancy when nothing can be understood, to spiritual maturity when understanding blossoms into wisdom. These two extreme points mark the full length of the spiritual Path. The 7 Viewpoints take us from the Annamaya to Anandamay Kosha.

The real basis that differentiates the ten viewpoints is the individual’s Stage of Evolution. The viewpoints go higher and higher till we come to Kootastha. The higher viewpoint always finds a valid ground to refute the lower viewpoint. Sri Vidyananyaji makes a special effort to bring out this point, and we see it feature in every case. The refutation of one school by its immediate successor is on behalf of all the successive schools.

The Lokaayatas or Charvaakas

3-4 The technical definition of this school is *Chaitanya visishta deha aatmaa* – “*The conscious body is the Atman.*” Or they may simply be called Dehaatmavadins.

Lokaayataah: This is actually *Loke Aayatah*, “*well spread in the world*”. This school will never be short of supporters in this world. The majority of people fall into this category.

Paamaraah: “*simple, illiterate people*”. This is translated here as people of vulgar habits by implication. When simplicity is overdone a person becomes a ‘simpleton’. When illiteracy goes too far, it borders on the vulgar. Common experience also tells us that vulgarity is rife among people who take their body as the Self. They live in the body, and have personal habits and tastes that are ‘of the flesh’.

The basic principle of this school is given at the outset. They only accept one means of knowledge and that is direct sense cognition. If they do not see it, it is not there! That is the basic premise of their belief. “Seeing is believing” is their slogan.

By adopting this condition, they shut their eyes to a world of rich inner experience and data. All the other five other means of knowledge are closed to their eyes. Of course, there are serious problems posed by such a superficial, simplistic view of life, that fails to account for a huge chunk of human experience obtained by any other means.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE FLESH

AN ALTERNATIVE NAME for this school is **Charvakas** (pronounced 'Chaarvaakas'). This term is used in *Vedanta Sara* by Sri Sadananda Yogindra.

The word comes by combining 'Charu Vaaka', which means "sweet words". Their philosophy tells you what you would like to hear, things such as "Be Happy!"; "Live a joyful life!"; "Get up at any time – whenever you are feeling fresh, even if it is after sunrise!"; "Sleep when you are tired, even if it is well after midnight, or during the day."

There are no rules of discipline in this school. Just do as you please and Be Happy. Eat whatever you like. Eat as much as you want – this is typical Charvaka philosophy. Sounds familiar? It is only too familiar in modern civilisation. It is so familiar today, that in order to be different, some people have cleverly added some touches of discipline to it for fear of appearing too ordinary otherwise. This includes a gymnastic routine, some cycling, some walking in the morning sunshine, taking the dogs for a walk, etc. The good health is so that they can enjoy life to the brimful, every precious moment of it!

One of the features of this school's belief is that there is no rebirth. "This life is lived only once; so enjoy it" – this is their commitment to life, for life! One does not have to worry about running up the bills. "Live as much as possible on credit. I am not going to come back after death to pay anybody."

Is there a difference between Lokaayatās and Charvakas? Yes, the former believe in five elements; the latter believe only in four. They do not have space as an element. Perhaps space is something too subtle for them to conceive of. What difference does that make? That's the joke – no difference at all. Both can live as merrily as they wish to!

Verse 61: ***The Belief: "The Gross Body is the Atman"***

श्रौतीकर्तुं स्वपक्षन्ते कोषमन्नमयं तथा ।

विरोचनस्य सिद्धान्तं प्रमाणं प्रतिजज्ञिरे

॥ ६१॥

śrautīkartuṁ svapakṣante kōṣamannamayam tathā |

virōcanasya siddhāntaṁ pramāṇaṁ pratijajñire

|| 61||

1	<i>shrauteekartum svapakshhan te</i>	<i>To get scriptural <u>support</u> for their view</i>
2	<i>koshham annamayam tathaa;</i>	<i>which is "the Gross body is the Atman",</i>
3	<i>virochanasya siddhaantam</i>	<i>passages like the "<u>Virochana Siddhanta</u>"</i>
4	<i>pramaaNam pratijajnire</i>	<i>are <u>partially quoted</u> by them as scriptural authority.</i>

1-2 The basic belief of the Lokaayatās is to take the gross body as the Self. They are called **Dehaatmavadins**. Instead of removing their ignorance, they have built a philosophy around it! Not only that, but they have managed to accomplish this feat by finding, in a dubious way, a suitable scriptural quotation to support their theory. That is something like the devil quoting scripture to support his devilry!

3-4 The passage they have found is called "**Virochana Siddhanta**":

PART 1: “VIROCHANA SIDDHANTA” – THE BODY-SELF

This story appears in the Chandogya Up. 8.8. It is a very long story, but the Lokaayatas cut it off as soon as their hero, the Asura Virochana, exits the scene.

The story goes that Brihaspati was teaching both Virochana and Indra about what the Self is. Its proper name should be “**Brihaspati Siddhanta**”, but because we are only concerned with Virochana’s interpretation of it, and that too only up to a certain point, the name used is “**Virochana Siddhanta**”.

Virochana was the king of the Asuras, and Indra the king of the Devas. Prajapati (Lord Brihaspati) was like a father to both the Asuras and the Devas. He once declared, “He who knows the Ajara Amara Atman, i.e. the unborn, undying Self, he wins all desires and all the three worlds belong to him.” The news of this statement spread everywhere like wild fire, among the Asuras as well as the Devas. Both became very eager to know what the Self was.

The Asuras saw in it an opportunity to fulfil all their numerous desires. They thought, “What if the Devas come to know this first? Then they will conquer all the three worlds!” The very same thought crossed the Devas, too. Virochana and Indra both went in haste to Prajapati, each one not knowing of the other’s trip. At the door of Prajapati, both arrived at about the same time! Giving each other a good stare, they went inside.

Prajapati knew the minds of his visitors very well. He asked both to stay with him for 32 years, after which he asked them, “Why did you come?” They wanted to see the Atman.

Prajapati then asked them to dress themselves really well with all the trappings of their high positions. They happily did this. Prajapati then asked them to look at themselves by seeing their reflections in water. As they looked, he said, “This is the Self!” Both of them thanked Prajapati profusely, did Sashtang Namaskars to him and went away satisfied.

Virochana was thrilled to learn that his beautifully dressed body was the Self, Ajara and Amara. He ran back to the Asura camp. “Come, come,” he announced to them. “I have good news for you. The Upanishad secret is out. Do you know what the great guarded secret is? The body is God – come on, start the party!” All the Asuras started celebrating by drinking and dancing and enjoying themselves the whole night, glad to know that at last it was confirmed that the Body is God, and that they would now live forever. Surely, that was reason enough to celebrate. It was the biggest party ever held by the Asuras!

That is where the “**Virochana Siddhanta**” ends.

But Indra paused just as he walked out of the door. He thought to himself, “How can this be so? The body cannot be Ajara and Amara. There is some mistake. My understanding for a split-second was clouded.” He turned and went straight back to Prajapati . . . (contd.)

2. The Senses are the Self (Indriyaatmavadin)

Verse 62: ***Refutation of School 1 by School 2***

जीवात्मनिर्गमे देहमरणस्यात्र दर्शनात् ।
देहातिरिक्त एवात्मेत्याहुर्लोकायताः परे

॥ ६२॥

1	<i>jeevaatma nirgame deha</i>	<i>"When Life departs from or leaves the body</i>
2	<i>maraNasya atra darshanaat;</i>	<i>it is declared to be dead and decays" – others point out.</i>
3	<i>deha atirikta eva aatma iti</i>	<i>"So something other than the body must be the Self."</i>
4	<i>aahuh lokaayataah pare</i>	<i>Thus say another faction of the Lokaayata School.</i>

4 This school of thought is only a step improved from the first school. By name, they go as another faction of the Lokaayatas. They are so close to each other, that another name is found to be unnecessary for them! They are Lokaayatas No.2. They live on the other side of the same street as the Lokaayatas No.1. They are neighbours to each other.

This is too close for peaceful co-existence. Quarreling with each other is the order of the day. No.2 picks on No.1's philosophy, and rails it down as non-sensical! What is the argument all about?

1-2 "You are such idiots! Can't you just think what will become of you when you grow old and eventually die. You cannot live forever in this fool's paradise called the 'Body'. Who has ever heard of this body lasting for ever? It's ridiculous and shameful on you to think you are going to live in it for Eternity! It is clearly seen to die and then it becomes a thing that attracts flies and worms. That is why we burn or cremate dead bodies. You have not understood Prajapati properly, due to your worship of the thick-skinned body.

3 "Surely, there must be something other than the body that is the Self. Just *think!*"

PART 2: "BRIHASPATI SIDDHANTA" – THE DREAM-SELF

So Indra returned to Prajapati who asked, "What is the matter?" Indra was apologetic at once, and then laid his mind open to Prajapati.

He said, "You made us believe the body is the Atman. It can't be. Something is not right about that. Either you have made a mistake, or I have not understood you correctly."

Prajapati once again said, "O, I see – good, stay here for another 32 years, practising Brahmacharya and all the other virtues and doing all the menial services."

Indra complied willingly, and at the end of yet another 32 years, he asked to know the Self. Prajapati instructed, "Look in *dream* – that is the Atman."

Indra said, "Wow, of course, why could I not have thought of that myself? I never thought of a '**dream-Atman**'! Yes, this dream-Atman cannot be killed like the waking-Atman." Indra was delighted and thanking Prajapati profusely for opening his eyes, he headed straight for the doorway to return to his heaven and to the other Devas who were patiently waiting for him since 64 long years!

However, just as he stepped out, a thought flashed in his mind as before. "It is fine for the dream-Atman not to die, but surely that is only so long as I am still dreaming. Dream itself has to come to an end. Where is the Ajara and Amara then?" Indra stood as though transfixed. He simply had to turn back again to have his doubt cleared . . . (contd. on p97)

Verse 63: The Revised Belief: “The Senses are the Atman”

प्रत्यक्षत्वेनाभिमतहं धीर्देहातिरेकिणम् ।

गमयेदिन्द्रियात्मानं वच्मीत्यादिप्रयोगतः

॥ ६३॥

pratyakṣatvēnābhimatāhaṁ dhīrdehātirēkiṇam |

gamayēdindriyātmānaṁ vacmītyādiprayōgataḥ

|| 63||

1	<i>pratyak shhatvena abhimataa</i>	<i>Clearly experienced as being distinct from</i>
2	<i>aham dheeh deha atirekiNam;</i>	<i>and other than the <u>body</u> are the intelligent <u>senses</u>.</i>
3	<i>gamayed indriya aatmaanam</i>	<i>Indicating that “the senses are the Atman”</i>
4	<i>vachmi iti aadi prayogatah</i>	<i>are expressions such as “I speak, etc”</i>

After having quarrelled with his No.1 in the previous verse, the No.2 Lokaayata, bearing the tag name of **Indriyaatmavadin**, presents his version of the Self to his neighbour. No.2 shows No.1 the next higher step – from the gross body to the senses is not a big jump up. But to the No.2, it’s a matter of holding a higher rank and a few more privileges.

Being neighbours, both schools share a common playground of sensuality. Both of them enjoy indulging but with one difference – No.1 sits on the turf drinking *toddy*, while the higher ranked No.2 sits up in the stands with his imported drink!

Body is Experienced Differently from the Senses

1-2 We experience the body in a way that is different from the way we experience our senses. Body experiences are seen in statements like, “I am lying down”, “I am tired”, “I am sick”, “I feel so energetic”, “I am hungry or thirsty”, etc. This is one category of experiences that concerns the body as a *whole*.

3-4 However, there is another order of experiences that compel us to take note of the senses. These are what may be described as Sensory experiences, not body experiences. Examples of these are: “I see, I hear, I taste, I touch, and I smell.” These refer to the organs of perception only. Then there are experiences such as: “I grasp, I walk, I speak, I enjoy and I let go.” These refer to the organs of action. Together, these ten sense functions are different from the earlier experiences. They are at a deeper level. They are more than what the body alone can do. They require senses to experience them.

With a twist of his moustache, the No.2 Lokaayata interprets this difference as follows: “This tells me that senses are my Self, not just the body. My body may appear not to do anything, but I can still see, I can still hear, I can still smell, etc. It means that sensory experiences are subtler than mere bodily experiences. They require more intelligence than what the body conglomerate requires. They enable me to know and to respond to that knowledge through actions. In other words, they enable my body to show ‘signs of Life’, they are what gives me my **sentientcy**.”

When it is said that the senses are the Self, the No.2 Lokaayata is careful to point out that he is not referring to the physical sense organs as seen on the body. Those would be part of the gross body. He is specifically referring to the sense functions performed through those sense organs situated on the gross body. There is some other power which operates through the physical senses. That power is what he takes to be the Self.

3. The Prana is the Self (Pranaatmavadins)

Verse 64: *Refutation of School 2 by School 3*

वागादिनामिन्द्रियाणां कलहः श्रुतिषु श्रुतः ।

तेन चैतन्यमेतेषामात्मत्वं तत एव हि

॥ ६४॥

vāgādināmindriyāṇāṃ kalahah śrutīṣu śrutah |

tēna caitanyamēteṣāmātmatvaṃ tata ēva hi

|| 64||

1	<i>vaak aadinaam indriyaaNaam</i>	<i>The tongue and the other Senses are always</i>
2	<i>kalahah shrutishhu shrutah;</i>	<i>quarrelling – in the Shrutis we hear of such cases.</i>
3	<i>tena chaitanyam eteshhaam</i>	<i>By this is implied they have Consciousness.</i>
4	<i>aatmatvam tatah eva hi</i>	<i>Hence, by this fact alone they are equated to the Self.</i>

1-2 We have not yet finished the story of “Brihaspati Siddhanta”. That will be continued at the very end. For now, the story of the “Quarrel among the Senses”, followed by the victory of Prana, well illustrates the superiority of School No.3 over School No.2. It is from the Brihadaranyaka Up, 6.1. 7-14, and appears in the block on the next page.

This is a story dearly loved by the **Pranatmavadins** as it helps their cause, which is to raise Prana to the level of the Self. By the very fact that the senses can have such a quarrel among themselves, the Pranaatmavadins claim that the senses cannot be Atman. They have a jab at the Indriyatmavadins by adding: “Why would the senses want to quarrel with each other for supremacy? That clearly tells us that senses cannot be the Self.”

3-4 This argument is put forth by School 3: They say that School 2 have raised the senses to the level of Self merely on the strength of the senses displaying some *sentiency*, which the body as a whole does not display. If it is sentiency that entitles them to view the senses as the Self, then that is all the more reason to crown **Prana** as the Self, for Prana is what provides the power for the senses to function.

Their arguments to support their case are given in the next two verses.

Verse 65: *The Revised Belief: “The Prana is the Atman”*

हैरण्यगर्भाः प्राणात्मवादिनस्त्वेवमूचिरे ।

चक्षुराद्यक्षलोपेऽपि प्राणसत्त्वे तु जीवति

॥ ६५॥

hairanyagarbhāḥ prāṇātmaadinastvēvamūcirē |

cakṣurādyakṣalōpē:'pi prāṇasattvē tu jīvati

|| 65||

1	<i>hairaNyagarbhaah praaNaatma-</i>	<i>“Prana is the Self” – followers of the Hiranyagarbha</i>
2	<i>vaadinah tu evam oochire;</i>	<i>School hold this view alone. They point out that</i>
3	<i>chakshhuh aadi akshha-lope api</i>	<i>when the eye, etc, are <u>inoperative</u>, even then</i>
4	<i>praaNa sattve tu jeevati</i>	<i>the Prana <u>continues to function</u> to sustain Life;</i>

“QUARREL AMONG THE SENSES” – PRANA WINS

There are ten senses in all, of knowledge and action together. Anyone knows that among human beings, “two is company; three is a crowd”. This is supposed to tell us that as the number of members in a group increases past three, there tends to build up some tension among them. It is inevitable. What to speak of ten senses living together!

One day, the tension built up among the senses to such an extent that they all decided to have a competition among themselves to show who is the boss. This is the natural way to establish a leader among the senses. Each sense secretly thought within his mind, “Now I will show my true power. They will realise they cannot do without me. That will put them all in their places!”

Starting with the **organ of speech**, each sense went away on leave for a whole year. Upon returning, the tongue asked the others, “How did you manage without me?” They all echoed one answer, “Just as a dumb man gets along even though speechless.” The tongue was disappointed by the answer, and huddled away into one corner of the room, afraid of showing its face that had turned red after this embarrassing defeat.

This happened in turn with every other sense. When the **eye** went, the rest carried on as a blind man carries on. When the **ear** left, they carried on as a deaf man does; and so on. Then the **mind** thought it will teach them all a lesson. How could they possibly live without a mind for a whole year! When it returned, they all said firmly and unashamedly, “We lived like idiots, but at least we lived, and did not die!”

The **generative organ** now thought they could never do without him. How is it possible to live without sexual pleasure even for a week, let alone a whole year, he thought.

When he returned a year later, he was curious to know how they managed without him. They all said, “We were fine! We lived the life of Brahmacharya as celibates do. In fact, we enjoyed the austerity very much. It kept us in perfect health all year – no problems at all, not even a sneeze, let alone a cold or a fever. We grew in strength, had more concentration on our work and on study, and we could even meditate better. That is how well we managed without you, my dear!” And they all waved their fat thumb at him and teased him until he felt hopelessly small, with his pride fallen, and suffering this humiliating defeat!

In a **football team**, a similar thing is seen. When a player gets a red card, he has to leave the field. He cannot play for the rest of the game, and may even face suspension for a few other matches thereafter, depending on how serious his misbehaviour has been. When he is out of the game, the game does not end for the rest of the team. They just carry on playing without the red-carded player. Each player may have to work harder, to make up for the lost player, but somehow they manage.

Finally, came the turn of the **Prana**, the vital force that provides all the senses with motive power and as well as power of perception. When Prana stood up to leave, all the others felt like a brand new car parked away in the garage, sitting idle there because the petrol pumps were on strike! They could not display themselves at all. They all just froze into inaction. If it went on like that any longer, they would all simply have to fast unto death.

Prana was quick to claim victory, which the others were just as quick in conceding, lest the powerful Prana decides to remain on strike for even a day longer! In this way, the supremacy of Prana over the other ten senses was proved beyond all doubt.

1 Firstly, the naming ceremony for School 3 is formally done. The supporters of this School go by the name of **Hairanyagarbhaah**. This term refers to those Upasakas who are engaged in the Upasana or worship of Prana. From materialism to devotional worship – we are clearly moving into a new, higher realm altogether. As Prana is invisible, the worshippers of Prana believe that they are worshipping the Self. At once, an element of religiosity enters the scene.

The Meaning of “Hiranyagarbha”

This word is used to denote Consciousness associated with the Total Subtle Body. The following table summarises the ten basic terms for Consciousness associated at different levels, both in the Totality and in individuality:

LEVEL	TOTALITY	INDIVIDUALITY
1. PURE	Brahman, Purusha	Kootastha, Atman, Self
2. CAUSAL	Ishwara	Prajna
3. SUBTLE i) Mind ii) Prana	Hiranyagarbha <i>Hiranyagarbha</i> <i>Sootratma</i>	Taijasa <i>Pranatma</i>
4. GROSS	Viraat, Vaishvaanara	Vishwa
2. 3. & 4.	Ishwara	Jeeva

1-2 A special point is to be noted at the Subtle level. We see that it can be sub-divided into two components: i) the mind/intellect level; and ii) the Prana level. Each of these are given different names. Sootratma and Pranatma are introduced for the Prana level at the totality and individuality levels respectively.

Yukti Abhaasa – “Semblance of Logic”

This verse presents **Yukti Abhaasa**. This concept needs to be explained. Yukti is logic. That is what is used to prove that Prana is Life and (for the present context) can be taken to be the Self. Abhaasa is to convey the idea that it is only a “semblance of logic”, not true logic as the Shrutis would want. Abhaasa also indicates that this is a temporary usage of logic to prove a lower standpoint. This kind of logic is seen in the Shrutis as a temporary measure. We know that Prana is not the Self, but here it is declared to be the Self as a temporary standpoint of the Pranaatmavadins.

3-4 The argument posed by the Pranaatmavadins is that during dream and deep sleep, the external Golaka or residence of the senses is shut down, or takes a rest. The senses are not available or inoperative (**Akshha-Lope**) at these times. Yet, the Prana goes on without taking a second’s break even through dream and deep sleep. It is the Prana which keeps the sense organs alive, while the senses are taking a rest.

For this reason, Prana is superior than the senses. It must, therefore, be installed as the Self, above the senses and the gross body.

At a secondary level, they also argue that it is the Prana which is responsible for life. A dead body also has all the physical Golakas of the senses, but those Golakas are powerless to do anything because there is no Prana in them. When Prana withdraws, it means the death of the body. Hence, Prana is the Self. That is the third interim belief.

Verse 66: Scriptural Proof of the New Belief

प्राणो जागर्ति सुप्तेषु प्राणश्रैष्ठ्यादिकं श्रुतम् ।

कोषः प्राणमयः सम्यग्विस्तरेण प्रपञ्चितः

॥ ६६॥

prāṇō jāgarti suptēṣu prāṇaśraishṭhyādikaṁ śrutam |

kōṣaḥ prāṇamayāḥ samyagvistarēṇa prapañcitaḥ

|| 66||

1	<i>praaNah jaagarti supteshhu</i>	i) The Prana remains 'awake' even in <u>sleep</u> ;
2	<i>praaNa shraishhThi aadikam shrutam;</i>	ii) Prana is given a high status in some Shruti passages;
3	<i>koshhah praaNamayah samyak</i>	iii) The Vital sheath is given pre-eminence
4	<i>vistareNa prapanchitah</i>	and dealt with in great detail.

After the **Yukti Abhaasa** of the last verse, this verse continues with **Shruti Abhaasa** where temporary statements are made in the Shrutis to prove a lower standpoint, e.g. Prana is the Self. Three scriptural proofs are now given to uphold the temporary standpoint.

1 i) From the Prashna Upanishad 4.3, we have:

Praana aadayah eva etasmin pure jaagarati;

Meaning: (During sleep) "It is the flames of Prana alone that keep awake in this 'city' of the body."

During dream, the senses of the subtle body are not available, only the mind is available and explodes into unrestrained activity. One can fly in the air in dream, one can travel instantaneously to far away places. One can even take on the personality of other creatures, i.e. imagine oneself to be a donkey, etc. However, there are no live sensory experiences in dream; the experiences are all from the memory of sensory experiences that took place during the waking state at some point of time in the past.

During deep sleep, not only are the senses not available, but the whole mind also becomes inoperative. At this time, only the Prana remains as the 'watchman' to keep the body alive. If Prana also were to leave, then we would all die during sleep.

The point being made is that the Prana is certainly superior to the senses.

2 ii) From the Brihadaranyaka Up., 5.13.1 comes the following praise of Prana:

Uktham; praano vaa uktham; praano heedam sarvam utthaapayati;

Meaning: "Uktha – the vital force is verily the Uktha, because it upholds all this universe."

The high status given to Prana is seen in the Chandogya Upan 5.1:

Praano vaava jeshtashcha shreshtashcha;

Meaning: "Prana is indeed the eldest and the supreme-most."

An indirect appreciation of Prana is given in the following line:

Yasmin vaa ukraante, shareeram paapishtataram iva drishyate.

Meaning: "When that (the Prana) leaves, the body appears despicable (it dies)."

The point made through the above three citations is that a very high status is given to the Prana. While Schools 1 and 2 were like neighbours to each other, there is a big gap between them and School 3. We have crossed a bridge, as it were, and are now in a different territory from the materialistic Lokaayata schools.

3-4 iii) The eminence given to the Pranamaya Kosha is seen in the Taittiriya Upanishad, 2.2.1, and described there in great detail (**Vistarena**). It says:

- 1. Anyah antarah aatmaa praanamayah.**
 - 2. Tena esha poornah**
 - 3. Sa vai eshah purusha-vidhah eva;**
 - 4. Tasya purusha-vidhataam; anu ayam purusha-vidhah.**
 - 5. Tasya praana eva sheerah;**
 - 6. Vyaanah dakshinah pakshah; Apaanaah uttarah pakshah;**
 - 7. Aakaashah aatmaa;**
 - 8. Prithivee pucchham pratishthaa.**
- 1. "There is another self within the previous self made of Prana (Air).**
 - 2. By that (of Air) is this one (of Food) filled.**
 - 3. That self, which henceforth is this, is also verily of the human form.**
 - 4. Its form (the one of Air) takes after the human form of the previous one of Food.**
 - 5. Of this (the Air form), Prana is indeed the head;**
 - 6. Vyana is the right side; Apana is the left side;**
 - 7. The central portion is Space or Samana, representing the Self;**
 - 8. and the Earth is the tail that stabilizes."**

Here, the entire Pranamaya Kosha is shown to be head and shoulders superior to the gross Annamaya Kosha. The Annamaya Kosha is encased by the Pranamaya Kosha, showing that it is completely under the control of the latter.

The Taittiriya Upanishad's treatment of the Five Koshas is recognised to be the most comprehensive to be found in the Upanishads. It is excelled in detail only by the Panchadashee Book 03 named "**Pancha Kosha Vivekah**".

4. The Mind is the Self (Manaatmavadins)

Verse 67: **Refutation of School 3 by School 4**

मन आत्मा इति मन्यन्त उपासनपरा जनाः ।

प्राणस्याभोक्तृता स्पष्टा भोक्तृत्वं मनसस्ततः

॥ ६७॥

mana ātmā iti manyanta upāsanaparā janāḥ |

prāṇasyābhokṛtā spaṣṭā bhokṛtvaṁ manasastataḥ

|| 67||

1	<i>mana aatmaa iti manyanta</i>	<i>There are those who consider "Mind is the Self."</i>
2	<i>upaasana paraa janaah;</i>	<i>They are given to performing <u>Upasanas</u> (worship).</i>
3	<i>praaNasya abhoktritaah spashhTaa</i>	<i>It is clear that the Prana has no power <u>to enjoy</u>,</i>
4	<i>bhoktritvam manasah tatah . . .</i>	<i>but mind has this power to enjoy. Therefore . . .</i>

5. The Intellect is the Self (Kshanika-Vijnanavadins)

Verse 69: **The Revised Belief:** “*Intellect is the Self*”

विज्ञानमात्मेति पर आहुः क्षणिकवादिनः ।

यतोविज्ञानमूलत्वं मनसो गम्यते स्फुटम्

॥ ६९॥

vijñānamātmēti para āhuḥ kṣaṇikavādinah |

yato vijñānamūlatvaṁ manasō gamyatē sphuṭam

|| 69||

1	<i>vijnaanam aatma iti pare</i>	<i>Others say that the intellect (not the mind) is the Self.</i>
2	<i>aahuh kshhaNikavaadinah;</i>	<i>This is what the Kshanika Vijnana Vadins believe.</i>
3	<i>yatah vijnaana moolatvam</i>	<i>This is because the intellect is the source or basis of</i>
4	<i>manaso gamyate sphuTam</i>	<i>the mind. Through it the mind grasps its matter clearly.</i>

A brief background of the Bauddhistic Schools will help to understand this verse. The Pitakas or “baskets” were formed at a Council held about 200 years after Buddha’s death:



The Bauddhistic schools are called Naastika (atheistic) not in order to run them down, but simply to tell us that they take their authority from Non-Vedic sources. In Hindu tradition, it is not derogatory to call a philosophy Naastika.

We now come to the third Bauddhistic school termed Yogachara School, commonly known as the Kshanika Vijnana Vadins, as they take the Self to be the **momentary intellect**.

1-2 So far the refutation of the previous school was done first, followed by the statement of the revised belief. In this case the procedure is reversed. The new belief of the Kshanika Vijnana Vadins is presented first. The viewpoint that “Mind is Self” is raised higher up to that of the intellect. This implies that the new understanding is raised high enough to recognise that intellect’s role in the process of thinking is greater than that of the mind. The revised belief is “**Intellect is the Self**”.

3 The explanation for intellect’s superiority is now briefly stated, and then further elaborated in the four verses from 70-73. This gives us an idea of the complexity that lies ahead in differentiating mind from intellect. A distinction is drawn between the intellect and the mind. This is also accepted by Advaita Vedanta; it is not an idea novel to the Kshanika Vijnana Vadins.

Moolatvam: “the root cause or basis”. The intellect is classed as the **Kartaa**, doer of thinking; while the mind is classed as **Karana**, the instrument of thinking, or at best as **Kaarya**, the effect of thinking. This shows that the Intellect is at a higher level than the mind. As the Kartaa, intellect is shown to be in control of the mind. This control entitles the intellect rather than the mind, to be regarded as the Self. This is sufficient to serve as a refutation of the previous school. The explanation of this part is explored in verses 70-71.

4 The purpose for now is simply to say intellect has a case to claim superiority over the mind. The mind is an instrument that needs the help of the intellect for obtaining experiences. But the experiences themselves are for the intellect to enjoy. The intellect claims doership for all experiences of the mind. This is clearly explained in verse 71.

Verse 70: Intellect & Mind are Two Distinct Functions

अहं वृत्तिरिदं वृत्तिरित्यन्तःकरणं द्विधा ।

विज्ञानं स्यादहंवृत्तिरिदंवृत्तिर्मनो भवेत्

॥ ७०॥

aham vṛttiridaṁ vṛttirityantaḥkaraṇaṁ dvidhā |

vijñānaṁ syādahamvṛttiridaṁvṛttirmanō bhavēt

|| 70||

1	aham vṛttih idam vṛttih	The “I”-consciousness, and the “this”-consciousness –
2	iti antahkaraNam dvidhaa;	thus is the <u>inner instrument</u> divided twofold.
3	vijnaanam syaad aham vṛttih	The first Vritti constitutes the <u>intellect</u> ;
4	idam vṛttih manah bhavet	the second Vritti constitutes the <u>mind</u> .

This verse lays the foundation upon which is based our understanding of the distinct roles played by intellect and mind. We see in this verse that the technical Sanskrit terms translated as ‘intellect’ and ‘mind’, actually convey much more meaning than their English equivalents. In this we see the paucity of the English language to convey subtle ideas.

The Twofold “Inner Instrument”

1-2 The Antahkarana is the inner instrument. In basic Vedantic texts such as *Tattwa Bodha* and *Vedanta Sara*, Antahkarana is said to have four components: the Ahamkara, Buddhi, Manas and Chitta. These are respectively the “I”-sense, intellect, mind and memory. For the purposes of the subject at hand – namely, Who is the Self? – the Antahkarana is divided into two parts as follows:

i) **The Aham Vritti**: This is the subjective “I”-thought, concerning the *knower*. It consists of the Buddhi and the Ahamkara jointly; in short, this is translated as the **intellect**. Other names for it are Chidabhasa, Chit Pratibimba, Jeeva, and the Ego-sense.

ii) **The Idam Vritti**: This is the objective thought of the *object known*. It consists of the Manas and the Chitta jointly; in short, this is translated as the **mind**.

It will be shown that Aham Vritti is the controller of the Idam Vritti. Thus, if we were to choose between intellect and mind, we would choose intellect to be the Self, not mind.

The Technical Term “Vritti”

3-4 Vritti is defined as, *Antahkarana Parinaamo Vritti –*

Meaning: “a particular modification, formation, appearance of the Antahkarana.”

From the twofold division of the Antahkarana, we get two Vrittis, one for each division. These are the **Aham Vritti** and the **Idam Vritti**.

Secondly, Vritti is a term used in the context of knowing. Every knowledge has two parts to it – the subject and the object. In the context at hand, the Aham Vritti is the subject or *knower*, and the Idam Vritti is the object or that which is *known*.

The Antahkarana is constituted of the Sattwa portion of all the five subtle elements, without any differentiation. In contrast, the five Jnanendriyas are respectively constituted of the Sattwa portion of each of the five subtle elements, taken separately, not jointly. This fact, is to tell us what we are actually dealing with when we speak of the Antahkarana.

Three facts emerge from this.

- i) Sattwa alone has the ability *to know*, for example, the organs of knowledge.
- ii) The Antahkarana alone has the ability *to know completely*, not differentially like the five organs of knowledge.
- iii) The Aham Vritti of knowership is the function of the intellect, while the Idam Vritti of knowledge of the object is the function of the mind.

When the word Vritti is used, all the above three aspects are involved. Thus we see how inadequate it is to translate the two Vrittis simply as ‘intellect’ and ‘mind’!

The Objects of the Mind

Normally, we assume the objects to be in the external world. The mind receives the information about them through the five sense organs of perception. But the ‘object’ could also be an internal one in the mind. There is a verse in the Brihadaranyaka Up. which says:

Kaama sankalpa sandeha vichikitsaa shraddhaa ashraaddhaa hreeh dheeh bheeh ityetat sarvam manaiva.

Meaning: “Desire, firmness, doubt, wellness, faith or its absence, hesitation, decisiveness, fear – all these are internal objects (that are part of Idam Vritti).”

Verse 71: Refutation of School 4 by School 5

अहंप्रत्ययबीजत्वमिदंवृत्तेरितिस्फुटम् ।

अविदित्वा स्वमात्मानं बाह्यं वेत्ति न तु क्वचित्

॥ ७१॥

ahampratyayabījatvamidaṁvṛttēritisphuṭam |

aviditvā svamātmānaṁ bāhyaṁ vētti na tu kvacit

|| 71||

1	<i>aham pratyaya beejatvam</i>	The ' <u>I'-thought</u> is the ' <u>source-ness</u> ', as it were,
2	<i>idam vritteh iti sphuTam;</i>	of the ' <u>this'- thought</u> . How is this so clearly to be seen?
3	<i>aviditvaa svam aatmaanam</i>	Without cognising one's self (i.e. without the ' <u>I'-thought</u>),
4	<i>baahyam vetti na tu kvachit</i>	it is not possible to cognise even a little of the outer world.

The statement made in verse 69 about the intellect being the source of the mind, is now expanded and explained. It is the main reason for declaring intellect to be Self.

1-2 This line is called the **Pratijna**, meaning that it contains the proposition that is to be proved; it is that which is sought to be established. This term is used in Nyaya philosophy, where each step in the logic process is given a technical term for the sake of clarity.

The Aham Vritti (or **Pratyaya**, as used here) is going to be shown to be the **Beeja** or “seed” of the Idam Vritti. **Beejatvam** actually means “seed-ness” and is a refinement on the use of the term Beeja, but in English we rarely see the use of such fine-tuning of words.

Cause “A” Must Precede Effect “B”

3-4 This line gives the explanation of why the Aham Vritti is considered to be the ‘seed’ of the Idam Vritti. This statement in Nyaya logic is termed **Hetu**.

The logic goes as follows: There are two events, **A** and **B**, which must follow each other. When **A** happens, only then can **B** happen. **A** is said to be the “trigger” for **B**.

An example of this is: Event **A** is the accumulation of water in the river; event **B** is the flow of the river. The river first has to have water before it can flow. This is Nyaya logic.

In the case we have, event **A** is to have the “I”-sense; event **B** is perception of the external world. Before one can perceive even a wee bit (**kvachit**) of the external world, one has to have the “I”-sense to perceive it. Only in the presence of the sense of individuality can one perceive the relative world of one’s environment. The environment is defined with respect to the individual. Each person carries his own environment, since his internal or mental world is also considered as a part of his environment.

Since the above is a sequence from event **A** to event **B**, a cause-effect relationship is established. The Aham Vritti becomes the cause for the Idam Vritti. It controls the latter.

What Type of Cause is “A”?

A cause could be either **Upadana** or material cause like gold for the ornaments; or it could be **Nimitta** or efficient cause like the potter for the pots. An Upadana Karana pervades the effect; whereas a Nimitta Karana initiates or enables the effect.

The intellect-mind relationship resembles the second type. Intellect is the **Nimitta Karana** for the mind. It provides the “I”-thought as a stable reference point without which the mind will not have its bearings to observe the world.

Verse 72: *The Momentary State of the Intellect*

क्षणो क्षणे जन्मनाशावहंवृत्तेर्मितौ यतः ।

विज्ञानं क्षणिकं तेन स्वप्रकाशं स्वतो मितेः

॥ ७२॥

kṣaṇē kṣaṇē janmanāśāvahanvṛttērmītau yataḥ |

vijñānaṁ kṣaṇikaṁ tēna svaprakāśaṁ svatō mītēḥ

|| 72||

1	<i>kshhaNe kshhaNe janmanaashau</i>	<i>At every moment <u>birth</u> and <u>death</u></i>
2	<i>aham vrittiḥ mitau yataḥ;</i>	<i>is observed in the “I”-thought. Because of this,</i>
3	<i>vijnaanam kshhaNikam tena</i>	<i>the <u>intellect</u> is said to have a momentary existence.</i>
4	<i>svaprakaasham svataḥ miteḥ</i>	<i>It is self-luminous and can be cognised by itself.</i>

The “Moment-to-Moment” Model of the Intellect

1-2 We deal now with the secondary reason to take the intellect as the Self. The Kshanika Vijnana Vadins (KVV’s for short) consider the intellect to be the Atman. They cannot extend their understanding far enough to reach the Self. They stop at the intellect and declare it to be the Self. In this respect, they differ from the Vedantins. The Vedantins are prepared to go right up to the level of Brahman in search of the Self.

The KVV’s have a peculiar model for the intellect. They believe that it is like the flame of a lit lamp. The flame appears continuous because each flame has a short lifespan and the next flame rises up immediately after. It is like a motion picture on a screen. The picture frames in a spool are flashed so quickly one after the other that the motion picture we see appears to be continuous.

It must not be thought that the intellect is born in one moment and dies in the next moment. That would be too long! It is thought to be born and to die in the same moment. That is how the name *Kshanika* comes about. The lifespan of an ‘element’ of intellect is one moment, not two!

One of the flaws in this theory is that the intellect, defined in this momentary manner, has to have a substratum of Time upon which its existence is superimposed. In such a case, how can it be equated to the Self? Surely the substratum has to be the Self, even if it be taken to be Time. This flaw is not there in the Vedantin’s model of intellect.

The “Self-Luminous”, “Self-Cognised” Model of the Intellect

3-4 Linked to the “momentary” model, is implied the “self-luminous” and “self-cognised” model of the intellect. The intellect of the KVV’s is not in need of any external aid to make it known to anything or to know anything. It stands as an independent entity. This is clearly drawing on features of the real Self in order to give this model the appearance of being genuine. Swamiji brought to our attention the reason for bringing out this point.

Sri Vidyananyaji is warning Vedantins of how Vedanta can be used by other schools simply to create credibility for themselves. The KVV’s do not take authority from the Vedas; this is not a problem to Vedantins. However, they seek to use the Vedas to justify their stand and mislead Vedantins into their camp! That is the danger which we are warned of.

The use of the word Vijnana instead of Aham Vritti for intellect is a ruse to appear in line with the Vedas, which uses the term Vijnanamaya Kosha for the intellect sheath.

Verse 73: Intellect is Equated to Jeeva Himself

विज्ञानमयकोशोऽयं जीव इत्यागमा जगुः ।

सर्वसंसार एतस्य जन्मनाशसुखादिकः

॥ ७३॥

vijñānamayakōśō:'yaṁ jīva ityāgamā jaguḥ |

sarvasaṁsāra ētasya janmanāśasukhādikah

|| 73||

1	<i>vijnaanamaya koshah ayam</i>	<i>The intellect sheath is the Self.</i>
2	<i>jeeva iti aagamaa jaguh;</i>	<i>The <u>Shrutis</u> declare it to be the Jeeva itself.</i>
3	<i>sarva-samsaara etasya</i>	<i>The whole <u>Samsaric world</u> is a product of its cognition.</i>
4	<i>janma naasha sukhaadikah</i>	<i>Birth and death, pleasure and pain affect it (the Jeeva).</i>

The KVV's extend their devious naming technique a bit further in this verse.

1-2 They try to appear in line with the Vedas by quoting a statement from the Taittiriya Upanishad, which speaks of the Vijnanamaya Kosha as being the Jeeva. This is intended in the spirit of Shruti Abhaasa, i.e. stating an interim truth in order to refute a lower statement. The KVV's claim this as a statement of the final truth.

This sort of intellectual dishonesty is strongly repudiated by Vedantic philosophers.

The KVV's bring in the Jeeva's close association with the intellect to appear to be in line with the Vedas. This is like saying the Prime Minister of a country is the country itself; or like taking the CEO of a company as being the company itself. Even so the intellect is taken to be the Jeeva itself.

The Samsaric Experience of a Jeeva

3-4 As though they were not content with misquoting the Taittiriya Upanishad to gain scriptural support, the KVV's now go even further.

They equate the whole experience of the Jeeva to gain greater credibility.

Jnaataa, Kartaa and Bhoktaa are the threefold experiences of a Jeeva that is enmeshed in Samsara. The whole existence of a Jeeva consists in these three things – knowing, acting and enjoying. All three of these bring about the bondage of the Jeeva to Samsara or worldly existence. Birth and death are the endless fruit of such an unenlightened view of life. The repeated cycles of birth and death are effectively a repetition of the endless round of pleasure and pain that the Jeeva experiences.

Why is all this being said in the context of the KVV's? It is to make them appear sympathetic to the message of the Vedas, where emancipation means ending the cycle of births and deaths, and thereby ending the experience of pain and sorrow once and for all. The KVV's are saying that all this is rendered redundant just by taking the intellect to be the Self, and giving it all the power and allegiance one possibly can.

To the KVV's, the Almighty intellect can lead us to the highest spiritual good of man! Sri Vidyaranyaaji is fully aware of the big claims which the Yogachara School of the Bauddhists is prepared to make in order to claim more adherents to itself.

Swamiji drew our attention to the huge ground covered in the West by the Bauddhists. The Shoonyavadins (the next school), have covered even more ground.

6. The Void is the Self (Shoonyavadins)

Verse 74: *Refutation of School 5 by School 6*

विज्ञानं क्षणिकं नात्मा विद्युदभ्रनिमेषवत् ।

अन्यस्यानुपलब्धत्वाच्छून्यं माध्यमिका जगुः

॥ ७४॥

vijñānaṁ kṣaṇikaṁ nātmā vidyudabhranimēṣavat |

anyasyānupalabdhatvācchūnyaṁ mādhyaṁikā jaguḥ

|| 74||

1	<i>vijnaanam kshhaNikam na aatmaa</i>	<i>The intellect is not the Self; it is momentary</i>
2	<i>vidyud abhra nimeshha-vat;</i>	<i>like lightning, cloud and the wink of an eye.</i>
3	<i>anyasya anupalabdhatvaat</i>	<i>Any other Self is not experienced. So the Self must</i>
4	<i>shoonyam maadhyamikaa jaguh</i>	<i>be a Void. This is the belief of the Madhyamikas.</i>

Now we come to the fourth school among the Bauddhists. It is the Madhyamika School, also known commonly as the **Shoonyavadins**, for they believe that **Shoonya** or the Void is the Self. They are cousins of the previous school, the Kshanika Vijnana Vadins (KVV's). A tussle between these two is like a local derby in football – the two teams become fierce rivals of each other!

1 The Shoonyavadins are quick to go on the attack. They cannot accept a momentary intellect as the Self. How can the Self be something that has a birth and dies in the very same moment? It seems absurd just to think of the idea. Here again, the new school is tempted to resort to the Shrutis to support their stand:

The Shrutis say that there are six modifications of the gross body itself, let alone the innumerable variations of the subtle body. The six are: i) Asti; ii) Jaayate; iii) Vardhate; iv) Viparinamate; v) Apaksheeyate; and vi) Vinashyati. These translate as: Existence, birth, growth, maturity, decay and death.

This is quoted to show that between birth and death there are three other modifications which have to be undergone. How is it possible to go from birth to death in the same moment! If we look at it the other way, i.e. between death and birth, there also there is a period of time in Existence before rebirth takes place. Either way, there is no instant death after birth, or instant birth after death.

2 The Shoonyavadins have three examples lined up to fortify their case:

i) **Flash of Lightning:** This is no doubt very fleeting – just a flash and it is over, followed only by rumblings of thunder which are heard a good few seconds later.

ii) **A Cloud:** By this example, another aspect of existence is brought out. As the cloud builds up at one end, it could be discharging at the other end. This is an unusual example to show that as it is being born, it is also dying!

iii) **A Wink of an Eye:** Here is another example taken from our own experience. In a wink, the moment an eyelid drops, it immediately rises up again without any time gap in between. It is quite smart of the Shoonyavadins to have such ready examples at hand.

3 The intellect is essentially the “I”-sense. If it dies every moment, what would our experience of the intellect be like? Are we there now and not there in the very same

moment? Do we experience this sort of existence? The KVV's give the example of the flame of a lamp. It is apparently continuous, but in reality each flame has only existence for a flashing moment. Even so, is the intellect experienced continuously in the same way? The Shoonyavadins say No, we do not experience life like that.

4 At the same time, there is nothing higher that they know of that can be the Self. Hence, they posit that the Self must be a **Void**. This is their alternative to the intellect.

When we ask a Shoonyavadin if his Self is always present, by his own definition of Self, he has to say, "Yes, 'nothing' is always present; it is the substratum of everything; it is always there!" And they are quick to pull out a quote from the Shrutis to prove their point:

Verse 75: *The Revised Belief: "Void is the Self"*

असदेवेदमित्यादाविदमेव श्रुतं ततः ।

ज्ञानज्ञेयात्मकं सर्वं जगद्भ्रान्तिप्रकल्पितम्

॥ ७५॥

asadēvēdāmitiāḍāvidamēva śrutaṁ tataḥ ।

jñānājñēyātmakam sarvaṁ jagadbhāntiprakalpitaṁ

॥ 75॥

1	<i>asad eva idam iti aadau</i>	<i>"In the beginning all this was Non-existence" –</i>
2	<i>idam eva shrutam tatah;</i>	<i>this is what the Shruti says. Therefore,</i>
3	<i>jnaana-jneyaatmakam sarvam</i>	<i>all <u>perception</u> and all the <u>objects of perception</u></i>
4	<i>jagadbhraanti prakalpitaṁ</i>	<i>are mere <u>creations of illusion</u>!</i>

The Shoonyavadins, like all the other Poorvapakshins, are ready with their pet quote from the Shrutis, although they are a non-Vedic, Naastika school. Here we see how the only interest of these people in the Vedas is to obtain support from it to draw more followers to their school. They have no other interest in the Shrutis. It confirms most explicitly the earlier remark about these schools "quoting shamelessly" from the Shrutis.

1-2 What do they quote? In the Taittiriya Upanishad, 2.7.1, there is a discussion about how creation began. Some say it began from Existence and some say it began from Non-existence. Both options are weighed in all fairness. The statement is made about Non-existence as follows: "In the beginning was verily this Non-existence. From that Existence was born." This statement is purely an option being investigated by the Upanishad, not a declaration of the Truth. The Shoonyavadins use it to justify their belief in the Void being the Self. It is the best case so far of 'the devil quoting scriptures'.

3-4 To add greater credibility to their cause, the Shoonyavadins now take up the clarion call of Vedanta and brazenly trumpet it as if they are in harmony with the Vedas.

They do this by taking up two key statements made by Vedanta:

i) Jnana & Jneyam are mentioned, while Jnaataa is to be taken as understood. These mean knowledge, the object of knowledge and the knower of knowledge. These are the Tripuris, which Vedantins say merge when one attains realisation. The Shoonyavadins declare them to be products of illusion.

ii) They also declare the whole of creation as a product of illusion. They have to do this to confirm that the Void is the Self.

Verse 76: Refutation of School 6 by the Vedantin

निरधिष्ठानविभ्रान्तेरभावादात्मनोऽस्तिता ।

शून्यस्यापि ससाक्षित्वादयथा नोक्तिरस्य ते

॥ ७६॥

niradhiṣṭhānavibhrāntērabhāvādātmanō:'stitā |

śūnyasyāpi sasākṣitvādanyathā nōktirasya tē

|| 76||

1	<i>niradhiṣṭhānavibhrāntē</i>	i) Without a real substratum , an illusion
2	<i>abhaavaad aatmanah astitaa;</i>	cannot exist; due to this requirement, the existence of an Atman has to be admitted .
3	<i>shoonyasya api sah saakshhitvaad</i>	ii) Even the Void has to have a witness ;
4	<i>anyathaa na uktih asya te</i>	else, how can one say, " There is a Void "?

The refutation for the Shoonyavadins is done by the Vedantin himself, not by the next School of thought. Only the Vedantin can challenge the theory which says there is no substratum for this illusory world. All other schools grope in the dark on this point.

Before giving the Vedantin's refutation, it is important to say that the Vedantin sees no problem in much of what the Shoonyavadin believes. The Vedantin has no problem with the latter's refutation of the KVV's theory of the momentary intellect. He agrees fully with that. He also agrees with the dissolution of the Triputis (knowledge, the knower and the object known). These are also illusory from the highest perspective. And he agrees wholeheartedly that the whole of Creation is illusory! It ties up with his "**Jagat Mithya**" theory.

So what does the Vedantin disagree with? Two objections are put forward by the Vedantin (who is also known as the Siddhantin as opposed to the Poorvapakshin):

1-2 i) A Real Substratum: The first reason is based on Anumana (logic). It is illogical for there to be no substratum for creation. If there is no substratum, then creation itself has to be taken as its own substratum. This will fail the test that a substratum has to be unchanging, because creation is ever-changing.

If it is granted that Creation is illusory, then it has to have a substratum which is Real. The logic is that there cannot be an illusion without a Real substratum. Void cannot be a substratum for creation, for Void itself is an illusion of creation!

3-4 ii) Who Witnesses the Void? The second reason is based on Anubhuti (experience). Who is there to declare that there is a Void? There has to be somebody present to experience this Void. That experiencer will then be the Reality, not Void.

Is the Shoonyavadin aware of his Shoonya? In deep sleep, we say everything is Shoonya. We can admit that as an experience, but has anybody witnessed it? No, Shoonya has no one to experience it. Hence, there cannot be a Shoonya as Reality. Shoonya is possible but it is part of Unreality, not Reality.

It thus turns out that the very experience of Shoonya in sleep proves the existence of the Self as the Reality.

After the following delightful story on "Nothingness", we see the true face of Shoonya from the Vedantic perspective, only to find that yet again it masquerades as the Self in the eyes of some philosophers . . .

STORY TO ILLUSTRATE “NOTHINGNESS”

There was an Arabian King named Akbar who had a wise minister named Birbal. One day another wisecrack came to the court to belittle Birbal in the presence of the king.

The wisecrack asked the king, “Can you give me anything?”

“Yes,” said the king, according to his nature. “Anything. Just ask.”

The wisecrack said, “Alright, give me nothing.”

The king was stumped. How was he to give ‘nothing’? The wisecrack added, “If you are not able to give me what I ask for, then I will strike off your head and take it, as it will be as good as taking ‘nothing’.”

This was quite a startling turn of events, and the king took it seriously, without any offence. That is the reputation he was well-known for and had to maintain. The king looked around for help. The ever-loyal Birbal stepped up at the right time to deliver the goods.

Birbal said, “And if you are not able to *take* it, the king will strike off your head, agreed?” The wisecrack had to agree, as his honour, too, was at stake.

Birbal then said to him, “Do you see that carpet over there?” and he pointed to the carpet on which the throne of the king was placed. The wisecrack said, “Yes, I do.”

Birbal then said, “Lift a corner of that carpet.” The wisecrack became suspicious, hesitated for a moment, and then hesitatingly obeyed the order.

Birbal firmly asked, “What do you see underneath the carpet?” The wisecrack looked carefully and eventually had to say, “Nothing, Sir.”

Birbal announced to him, “You see nothing? Well, that’s what you wanted, didn’t you? So, take it, it’s yours!”

Now the wisecrack felt ashamed. He knew he was beaten at his own game. How was he going to take away the ‘nothing’? If he could not, then his head was going to be cut off by the king! He begged to be forgiven for his foolishness. Birbal was all too pleased to do that on the king’s behalf, and in addition asked the king to employ him in his court. Such a bold person who could stand up and challenge the king would be very useful in the king’s court.

Thus was spared the head of the wisecrack, and the reputation of the king was raised skyhigh in the bargain as a wise and generous ruler!

The point of the story is, of course – “Nothing can raise a man’s status – if it is handled with wisdom and a forgiving heart!”

7. “Bliss” or Ignorance is the Self (Poorva Meemamsakas)

Verse 77: **The Revised Belief: “Bliss is the Self”**

अन्यो विज्ञानमयत आनन्दमय आन्तरः ।

अस्तीत्येवोपलब्धव्य इति वैदिकदर्शनम्

॥ ७७॥

anyō vijñānamayata ānandamaya āntarah |

astītyēvopalabdhavya iti vaidikadarśanam

॥ 77॥

1	<i>anyah vijnaanamayatah</i>	<i>Beyond the <u>intellect sheath</u> there is yet another known as</i>
2	<i>aanandamaya aantarah;</i>	<i>the “Anandamaya Kosha”, more internal & subtler.</i>
3	<i>asti iti eva upalabdhavya</i>	<i>It is something that actually exists and can be experienced.</i>
4	<i>iti vaidika darshanam</i>	<i>Thus says a Vedic school of thought (Poorva Meemamsaka).</i>

That which was interpreted as Shoonya by the earlier school, is now seen in its rightful Vedantic colours. It is nothing but **Avidya** or root Ignorance. Hence, we do not require another refutation of it – the Vedantin has already done that. We simply have a restatement of what the Self is. As Avidya, we see it differently from the way we see Shoonya. The closest we get to experience it is in deep sleep. Then we are very happy experiencing it and “enjoy” it greatly! For this reason, this sheath is named the Bliss sheath.

1-2 But Bliss is only a name given to it in ignorance of its true nature. Shoonya is Avidya, from which the whole world appears. It is not nothing, but everything! Shoonya or Avidya is the whole world in potency form, like a seed which contains the potential to be a big tree. Avidya is what is called the fifth sheath or Anandamaya Kosha, whose experience is had in deep sleep. What we are experiencing in sleep is not really the ‘Bliss’ of the Atman, but nothingness, that primal state of Avidya which is not manifest yet, which is still in a state described as “a homogenous mass of Consciousness”. Sleep, wherein there is nothing – no world, no thoughts, no disturbance whatsoever – is experienced as bliss or happiness. That is all there is to sleep, nothing else.

Aantarah: “inside or internal to”. This is the locus of the Bliss sheath in relation to the Intellect sheath. The former is further inwards, meaning it is more pervasive than the intellect sheath; it is also more internal to the intellect sheath. If the intellect sheath is removed, the bliss sheath will still be there. The intellect sheath is also completely encompassed or controlled by the bliss sheath. Ignorance as Avidya completely limits the working of the intellect. This actually means that we cannot understand the bliss sheath with the intellect as we can understand the Manomaya Kosha with it. The knowledge to destroy Avidya does not come from intellect, it has to come from a higher source.

3-4 There is something unique about this state of ‘Nothingness’. It is not a state like darkness where there is no light. Darkness is actual ‘nothingness’. It does not exist. It may be called the absence of light, but darkness itself does not exist. This Avidya is not like that. It is not the absence of knowledge, but in its presence, knowledge is obstructed or hidden.

It is more like a handkerchief, which is a real object. When a handkerchief is placed over a watch, we cannot see the watch. We may see the shape of the watch as taken by the handkerchief, but we do not see the watch directly. Similarly, Avidya is like that handkerchief placed over the Self. Because of its presence, we are not able to see the Self. The Self is kept hidden by the ‘handkerchief’ of Avidya. Something needs to be done to lift the handkerchief and then we shall be able to see the Self.

That something is Knowledge of the Self. That reveals the Self! However, the Poorva Meemamsakas do not know that. They see the ‘handkerchief’ and, like the Shoonyavadins, they mistake it to be the Self. This school of thought is expounded by people like Prabhakara. The Naiyayikas, through their philosopher named Bhatta, take as Self not Avidya, but Consciousness associated with Avidya, i.e. the **Jeeva** is taken to be the Self. We shall return to this in the 10th Chapter.

PART 3: “BRIHASPATI SIDDHANTA” – CONCLUSION

Now we are ready for the final instalment of the story of “**Brihaspati Siddhanta**”.

Indra once more returned to Prajapati who looked surprised: “Back again a third time? Come, come . . . What’s the matter now?” Indra opened up to him at once.

He said, “You made me accept the dream-Atman. I believed it and went away. But I reflected over what you said. What happens when the dream comes to an end? Surely that will also bring an end to the dream-Atman!”

Prajapati once again said, “O, so you seem to be a very thoughtful person – good, that is what I like to see. Now you stay here another 32 years, practise . . .” There was no need to hear more. Indra went with his bags up to his room and settled in. There was no escaping the austerity. He wanted the knowledge, and Brihaspati’s order was law to him.

At the end of yet another 32 years, he asked again to be explained what is the Self. Prajapati instructed, “You see, beyond dream there is what you call deep sleep. That is the experience which reveals the Atman.”

Indra was very pleased with the answer, as he recalled how much he enjoys a good nap. That must be why – because the Atman is experienced during sleep! He was eager to rejoin his fellow Devas in heaven who will be thrilled to see him after 96 long years! But he did not go far, when another thought struck him.

“Bliss in deep sleep? May be, but who ever sleeps for ever? When I get up from sleep, however cozy and carefree I felt, I am the same ignorant fool who went to sleep. There is no change in me. I just feel more refreshed that is all. No, it cannot be the Atman.”

Indra went back again for the fourth time! He had a quick interchange with Prajapati along similar lines as before. Only, now Brihaspati seemed to be the one more enthusiastic about giving the answer than Indra was to receive it. Indra had resigned himself to stay another 32 years without any hesitation but Brihaspati said, “No, 5 more years will do. By now, I can see you are a ripe student to know the Truth. Just 5 more years will do!”

So, after 101 years since the day he first arrived at the door of Brihaspati, Indra opens his lips with a palpitating heart and with 100% concentration on what his Master is about to say. He was never that attentive ever before, and never did he feel so much *desire* to know the Truth. Brihaspati welcomed him with a glowing smile.

“Today I will tell you the secret about Atman. Be ready to receive the knowledge.” Then followed a most amazing discourse from Brihaspati expounding in detail all about the Pure Consciousness which lies even beyond deep sleep. The Master explained that the Self is what underlies the waking, dream and deep sleep states. He taught Indra how to become aware of this Consciousness in any of these states. It is an eternal state, present even when he finally leaves his body! Indra, was not just transfixed but totally transformed by Brihaspati’s answer. More than anything else, it was Brihaspati’s compassionate heart that thrilled him. For had he not to wait 101 years, too, to give this answer! How painful must it have been for him to wait so long for his disciple to catch the Truth!

The thought of Virochana flashed in Indra’s mind. “I wonder if he is still alive!”

PANCHADASHEE – 06

Chapter 9: (Verse 78-86, 9 No.)

The SIZE of the Self

SIZE IS A PARAMETER we would normally associate with material objects, not spiritual entities. It may raise many eyebrows to know why whole chapter has been dedicated to this topic. We remind ourselves that we are in the hands of Sri Vidyaranyaaji, an author who is among the most meticulous in his analysis. He envisages every factor that may influence our thinking. He addresses every type of thinker imaginable.

Verse 78: *The Nature of the Dispute on Size*

अणुर्महान्मध्यमो वेत्येवं तत्रापि वादिनः ।

बहुधा विवदन्ते हि श्रुतियुक्तिसमाश्रयात्

॥ ७८॥

aṇurmahānmadhyamō vētyēvaṁ tatrāpi vādinah |

bahudhā vivadantē hi śrutyuktisamāśrayāt

॥ 78॥

1	<i>aNur-mahaan-madhyamo vaa</i>	Whether <u>atomic</u> , <u>infinite</u> or somewhere <u>in between</u> –
2	<i>iti evam tatra api vaadinah;</i>	even on this topic (of <u>Size</u>), various philosophers,
3	<i>bahudhaa vivadante hi</i>	indeed, have presented numerous <u>arguments</u> ,
4	<i>shruti-yukti samaashrayaat</i>	basing their <u>Theories</u> on the <u>Shrutis</u> or on <u>logic</u> .

1 We begin a new section dealing with the “Size” of the Atman. The word for size is **Parimana** (not to be confused with *Parinama*, which we came across earlier meaning modification).

This verse introduces us to the three categories in which the topic is divided:

- i) **Anu-Parimana:** Atomic-sized Self – this belief is held by the Antaraalas;
- ii) **Madhyama-Parimana:** The Body-sized Self – this belief is held by the Digambaras;
- iii) **Mahaan-Parimana:** The Infinite-sized Self – this belief is held by the Vedaantins.

2-3 According to people’s level of understanding, they hold a certain belief about the Atman’s size. Swamiji expressed much surprise at the varieties of opinions held by various philosophers on the matter of the size of the Atman. It appeared ludicrous that there should be such hearty, animated discussions on the *size* of Spirit, as though we were dealing with some material object! But people’s conceptions are generated by their understanding (or lack of it), and their own biased predilections.

4 Quotations flash furiously and “shamelessly” as before, to promote each one’s pet theories. They support the conception of each school and are included in the discussions.

1. The Atomic-Sized Self (The Antaraalas)

Verse 79: *The First Belief: "Self is Atom-sized"*

अणुं वदन्त्यन्तरालाः सूक्ष्मनाडीप्रचारतः ।

रोम्णः सहस्रभागेन तुल्यासु प्रचरत्ययम्

॥ ७९॥

aṇuṁ vadantyantarālāḥ sūkṣmanādīpracārataḥ |

rōmṇaḥ sahasrabhāgēna tulyāsu pracaratyayam

|| 79||

1	<i>aNum vadanti antaraalaah</i>	<i>The Antaraalas say that the Atman is atom-sized</i>
2	<i>sookshhma naaDee prachaaratah;</i>	<i>because it moves in fine, subtle Nadis (channels)</i>
3	<i>romNah sahasrabhaagena</i>	<i>that are the size of 1/1000th part of a hair!</i>
4	<i>tulyaasu pracharati ayam</i>	<i>In conduits of such size this Atman moves.</i>

1 Antaraala: "intermediate space". The strangeness of having an atom-sized Self will itself explain in due course why believers of this school of thought are called by this name.

Firstly, the Self is considered atom-sized, meaning that it is incredibly small. That fact, when seen in the light of the vast size of the universe, leads to some logistic problems which the Antaralas have to find an answer for. (See block at end of verse 81.)

2 Why does the Atman have to be conceived as being so small? Well, there is the need to travel to every conceivable part of the body, let alone the universe for now. The body has many very tiny conduits throughout itself. These conduits are called Nadis, which do not have an English equivalent, but we shall try and get some idea of what they are.

We can start by thinking of all the physical blood vessels, down to the very fine capillaries that exist in the circulatory system. They convey blood, so we are definitely looking at something physical. Next we can think of the nervous system, which is another amazing network of nerve-fibre which conveys, not blood, but electrical pulses of information from one part to any other part of the body. This network is very hard to imagine, even for a neurologist who deals with them daily.

3 Can we imagine something that is a thousandth part of a hair! We have to put aside both the above ideas, and consider some 'conduit' that is completely invisible to the eye, even the eye of a microscope, along which travels the 'Spirit' or Atman. Now we can understand why the Atman has to be atomic in size for these philosophers. An Atman bigger than an atom cannot be conveyed through such tiny passages!

4 Such are the sizes conceived of during the ancient period when Vedanta was still in its infancy. Now we can see why the term Antaraalas was used to describe this school.

Verse 80: *Support from the Shrutis*

अणोरणीयानेषोऽणुः सूक्ष्मात्सूक्ष्मतरं त्विति ।

अणुत्वमाहुः श्रुतयः शतशोऽथ सहस्रशः

॥ ८०॥

aṇōraṇīyānēṣō:'ṇuḥ sūkṣmātsūkṣmataram tviti |

aṇutvamāhuḥ śrutayaḥ śataśō:'tha sahasraśaḥ

|| 80||

1	<i>aNoraNeeyaan eshhah aNuh</i>	<i>"Smaller than the smallest" – is this atomic Atman!</i>
2	<i>sookshhmaat sookshhmataram tu iti;</i>	<i>"More subtle than the most subtle", indeed!</i>
3	<i>aNurvama aahuh shrutayah</i>	<i>Such Shruti passages on the atomic Atman are quoted</i>
4	<i>shatashah atha sahasrashah</i>	<i>of which there are <u>hundreds</u>, nay, perhaps <u>thousands</u>!</i>

Does the Shruti have anything to say about the atomic size of the Atman. We are surprised when we realise how much is said about this in the Vedas.

1 The most common quotation is from the Katha Up, 2.20. It says:

Anoraneeyan mahatomaheeyan

Meaning: "Smaller than the smallest; greater than the greatest."

The Antaraalas are careful to quote only the first word and put on their blinkers thereafter so as not to read the second word! Swamiji said it is amazing how "myopic vision" is displayed by ordinary philosophers. Their eyes can pick only what their minds want to see, and nothing more, no matter how close it is!

2 There are many other examples quoted, usually in the form of similes that would be understood by the agricultural people of those times. One common simile is a barley or millet seed. The Atman is compared to it in size. The seed is the more important part of this simile, not the size, as it also conveys the enormous potency locked in the Atman to explore and expand on ideas and thoughts.

3 There is another from the cobbler's profession. He deals with leather to make shoes. He uses a very fine needle called an 'awl' to prick holes into leather. The Atman is compared to the tip of one of these awls!

4 In this manner there are literally hundreds, if not thousands of such examples scattered throughout the Vedas. The Antaraalas have a wide field to choose from to gain scriptural support for their atom-sized Atman.

Verse 81: *The Jeeva is Like a 'Hairton'!*

वालाग्रशतभागस्य शतधा कल्पितस्य च ।

भागो जीवः स विज्ञेय इति चाहापरा श्रुतिः

॥ ८१॥

vālāgrāśatabhāgasya śatadhā kalpitasya ca |

bhāgō jīvaḥ sa vijñēya iti cāhāparā śrutiḥ

|| 81||

1	<i>vaalaagra shata bhaagasya</i>	<i>From the tail of a horse, cut one strand into a hundred;</i>
2	<i>shatadhaa kalpitasya cha;</i>	<i>then cut one of those 'hairlets' into a further hundred;</i>
3	<i>bhaago jeevah sa vijneya</i>	<i>that so-called 'hairaton' is the size of the <u>Jeeva</u>!</i>
4	<i>iti cha aaha aparaa shrutih</i>	<i>And thus say other Shrutis.</i>

This is one of the best quotes that supports the atomic-sized Atman. And it beats all the previous "hundreds and perhaps thousands" of quotes in imagination. But for us it needed someone like Swamiji to squeeze out every atom of juice from it!

People who go gambling in the horse-racing circuits, proverbially come back only with the “horse’s tail in their hands”. This is the subject of this quote:

1-2 The man has already lost his bet and returns home in a desolate mood with the ‘horse’s tail’. Now he sits and pulls out one of the hundreds of strands on the tail. He takes this strand and starts cutting it into a hundred pieces, to which we can give the name ‘hairlets’. Then, to forget his losses, he starts cutting a hairlet into a hundred pieces, to which we can give the name ‘hairtons’!

3 Now one of these ‘hairtons’ is compared to the size of the Jeeva. To the man who has lost his fortune on the horses, perhaps that is exactly the size he feels himself to be!

4 If one is not acquainted with Samskrit Sandhees, he may think, “What is this ‘*Chaahaaparaa Shruti*’? I have never heard of an Upanishad by that name.” No, there is no Shruti by that name! When the Sandhee is split as shown in Pada **4**, the meaning is clear.

This verse is from Swetasvatara Upanishad, 5.9. The last line of the original quote says, “and it is also the largest”. This portion is cautiously omitted from the quote! Perhaps it’s a case of ‘atomic-sized brains’!

“LOGISTICAL PROBLEMS” FOR ATOM-SIZED SELF

LOGISTICAL PROBLEMS HAVE already been referred in the text earlier. Here are details which Swamiji regaled us with, and enlivened the class with in the process . . .

With an atomic-sized Atman, many logistical difficulties arise. Suppose I am thinking; then my Atman has to be in my brain. If an ant bites me in the leg, my Atman has to run there to scratch it. If my foot is on fire, it becomes an emergency to be dealt with without delay; the Atman has to travel at a very brisk pace to get there on time. For this reason the Antaraalas have added in their philosophy that their Atman travels very fast. They say, “The smaller the Self is, the quicker it can travel.”

Notwithstanding this rule, suppose I want to see; my Atman has to travel to my eyes. Suppose I then want to listen to some music; my Atman has to quickly go to the ear. Suppose I want to see and hear at the same time; my Atman has to do some acrobatic work to shuttle back and forth from eye to ear at an incredible pace – it will be something like a Bollywood dance! “But Nature has taken care of that,” say the Antaraalas. “She has ensured that the eye and ear are not too far away; just around the corner, in fact!”

Suppose I want to eat an ice-cream while ambling in the mall. Would I not need two Atmans to cope with the situation? The Antaraalas have an answer for that: “It is in the Shastras that one should not perform any actions while eating.” God bless the Antaraalas for being so thoughtful to relieve the traffic problem for their Atman!

Anyway, the next school have come up with an even better solution to the logistical problem of travel. They have proposed an ‘elastic’ Atman that fits exactly and fully in the body. It is the “**Body-sized Atman**”. It fits smugly in the body from head to toe and arm to arm. “Now,” say their supporters, the Digambaras, “there are no travel problems for the Self. Everything is within reach instantly, as our Creator intended it to be.”

Truly, it would be hard to find an Swamiji who could bring so much fun and humour into a topic such as Vedanta. Who says Vedanta is a dry subject?

2. The Medium-Sized Self (The Digambaras)

Verse 82: *The Second Belief: “Self is Body-sized”*

दिगम्बरा मध्यमत्वमाहुरापादमस्तकम् ।

चैतन्यव्याप्तिसंदृष्टेरानखाग्रश्रुतेरपि

॥ ८२॥

digambarā madhyamatvamāhurāpādamastakam |

caitanyavyāptisaṁdṛṣṭērānakhāgrāśrutērapī

|| 82||

1	<i>digambarāa madhyamatvam</i>	<i>The Digambaras say that “Atman is medium-sized”,</i>
2	<i>aahuh aapaada-mastakam;</i>	<i>because from the feet to the head, we are able to</i>
3	<i>chaitanya vyaapti samdrishhTeh</i>	<i>feel the presence of the Self pervading the body –</i>
4	<i>‘aa nakha agra’ shruteh api</i>	<i>“up to the tips of the nails” as quoted in Brih Up.</i>

1 The Digambaras are a Jain sect who travel about without any clothes. The name itself tells us this. *Dik* means the “spatial directions”, and *Ambara* means “clothes”. Together that means “those who have space as their clothes”, i.e. those who do not wear anything!

2-3 This sect of the Jains say that “Atman is the size of the body (medium-sized).” Their main objection to the previous school’s concept is on logical grounds. If the attention goes to the foot, it would leave the head in an inert state until the Atman returns to it!

The logical reason is also based on our actual experience. We do feel the sentience of the Self throughout the body, not just in one point of it. Every Jeeva has this experience. It is conscious of everything that is happening to its body, and not conscious of anything happening outside it. From ‘head to foot’ is a neat way to say throughout the body.

4 Here we have the Shruti citation from the Brihadarany Up, 1.4.7, has this phrase, the underlined part of which is quoted in this Pada.

Sa eshha iha pravishta aa nakhaagrebhyah.

Meaning: *“That Self entered here (into all bodies) up to the tips of the nail ends.”*

Verse 83: *Self Pervades the Body Down to Capillaries*

सूक्ष्मनाडी प्रचारस्तु सूक्ष्मैरवयवैर्भवेत् ।

स्थूलदेहस्य हस्ताभ्यां कञ्चुकप्रतिमोकवत्

॥ ८३॥

sūkṣmanāḍī pracārastu sūkṣmairavayavairbhavēt |

sthūladēhasya hastābhyāṁ kañcukapratimōkavat

|| 83||

1	<i>sookshhma naaDee pracharah tu</i>	<i>In order to travel through the subtle, tiny channels</i>
2	<i>sookshhmaih avayavaih bhavet;</i>	<i>the subtle sized parts perform this function; while</i>
3	<i>sthooladehasya hastaabhyaam</i>	<i>for the grosser functions like moving the arms, the</i>
4	<i>kanchuka pratimoka vat</i>	<i>Self enters them as a man’s arms slip into his coat!</i>

The Antaraala may at this point be doubting the new version of the Atman's size. If it is the size of the whole body then how does it travel through the capillaries and Nadis, the very tiny parts of the body? He questions the Digambara about this problem.

1-2 The Digambara explains, "Of course, there is no problem in travelling through the subtle Nadis in the body. The Self may be of the size of the body in total, but it can also operate in parts. Travelling through the tiny Nadis is done by the tiniest parts of the body-sized Atman."

Naturally, the Antaraala is also curious to know about travel in the bigger parts . . .

3-4 The Digambara has a ready answer for that. He says, "That is easy. The Self is the whole body; the arm is part of the body; it is smaller than the Self." The **Kanchuka** is a blouse or a *kurtaa* or a coat. The important point is that it is *smaller* than the body. The arm can go through it, but the stomach cannot. The Digambara explains further, "The 'arm' part of the Self just slips into the physical arm and enables the functioning of the arm. How? Just as the physical arm itself slips into the arm of a *kanchuka* that it wants to wear!"

This is a rather surprising example to come from a Digambara, who does not wear clothes! Nevertheless, it is a very effective and convincing example, and at a time when technology was not available it would have sounded very convincing. Today, examples would be easier to find. We could say, "As a man gets into his car and drives it from within"; or, "As family members get into their home and start making it come alive by switching on the lights, fans, TV, geyser, air-conditioner, stove, etc; by lighting the fire in the fireplace; by opening the windows, and so on."

However, what is the need for postulating an Atman that is Madhyama-Parimana? This is explained in the next verse.

Verse 84: Self Adjusts to Size of Each Part of Body

न्यूनाधिकशरीरेषु प्रवेशोऽपि गमागमैः ।
 आत्मांशानां भवेत्तेन मध्यमत्वं विनिश्चितम् ॥ ८४॥

nyūnādhikaśarīreṣu pravēśō:'pi gamāgamaiḥ |
 ātmāṁśānāṁ bhavēttēna madhyamatvaṁ viniścitam ॥ 84॥

1	<i>nyoona adhika shareereshhu</i>	<i>Into <u>small</u> and <u>big</u> bodies</i>
2	<i>pravesah api gama aagamaih;</i>	<i>the Atman enters, by reducing or enlarging its size.</i>
3	<i>aatma amshaanaam bhavet tena</i>	<i>The Atman has parts that can adjust to any size.</i>
4	<i>madhyamatvam vinishchitam.</i>	<i>The logical conclusion is Atman is medium-sized.</i>

This verse is a statement that lays down the logical basis for Atman being medium-sized. The Digambara shuts the doors of the other two viewpoints and establishes his view with emphatic logic. After a verse like this, we can put away the atomic-sized Atman theory as well as the Infinite Atman theory, and gladly accept the smug medium-sized Atman.

1 The Atman is actually seen to occupy small bodies, such as those of the ant, fly or mosquito; and also the largest of bodies, such as those of the elephant, the bullock and the blue whale. To fit all sizes, we have to accept that the Atman is stretchable and collapsible.

2 How does the Atman achieve this? It cannot be point-sized as a point has no flexibility to adjust to different sizes of bodies. Nor can it be infinite-sized, say the Digambaras, as that would make the ‘body’ too vast. If someone anywhere in the world touches anything, we would feel that he is touching ‘my body’. Conversely, if we touched anything in the world, we would feel that we are touching ‘my body’. This is certainly not our experience. We can feel only our own body. Therefore, it has to be in the medium-sized range to be able to reduce in size when it enters a small body, and expand when it enters a large body.

3 Thus we have all the evidence to tell us that the Atman is made up of parts that enable it to adjust itself or adapt itself to any sized body. It is the experience of every creature to feel the sensation limited to touching its own body. There is a clear distinction between ‘my body’ and ‘someone else’s body’.

4 Hence, we can safely draw the conclusion that the Atman, has to be of “medium-size” with parts that enable it to either expand or contract to fit any size of body.

Having thus laid down the logical basis of his belief, the Digambara is confident that the others will accept his theory and discard their own. But the unexpected happens . . .

3. The Self is Infinite (Mahaan-Atmavadins)

This is when the Vedantin has to get up, and get up quickly to bring some sense into the proceedings. Otherwise, everyone will get carried away by such ideas which definitely make one believe that the Atman is some sort of “magical” material phenomenon!

Swamiji himself explained why we were taking so much trouble to explain other theories instead of going straight to the Advaitic viewpoint. He said such discussions are necessary to know what has been discarded and why, so that our conviction or foundation of our belief is not shaken by people who present to us these discarded beliefs.

School 1 has been refuted by School 2. Now School 3 refutes School 2, stating clearly why it is unacceptable. We move on to the Vedantic concept of an Infinite-sized Self, explaining the logical as well as scriptural basis of such a concept.

Verse 85: Refutation of School 2 by School 3

सांशस्य घटवन्नाशो भवत्येव तथा सति ।

कृतनाशाकृताभ्यागमयोः को वारको भवेत्

॥ ८५॥

sāṁśasya ghaṭavannāśō bhavatyēva tathā sati |

kṛtanāśākṛtābhyāgamayōḥ kō vārakō bhavēt

|| 85||

1	<i>saamshasya ghaTavat naasho</i>	<i>Any object that has got parts, like a pot, is <u>perishable</u>.</i>
2	<i>bhavati eva tathaa sati;</i>	<i>If the object is the Self, the following will result:</i>
3	<i>kṛita naasha akṛita-abhyaagamayoh</i>	<i>i) (The fruit of) what is done, gets <u>destroyed</u>; and ii) (The fruit of) what is not done, gets <u>experienced</u>.</i>
4	<i>ko vaarako bhavet</i>	<i>What device is there to ward off these two fallacies?</i>

A Self with Parts

Parts can apply only to that which has dimensions. Of the three cases we are discussing, a Self with dimensions applies only to the “medium-sized” Self. The “atom-sized” Self is defined as a single dimension (a point) which cannot have parts. The atomic Atman actually does not have anything to do with size. Mathematically, a point has no size. Infinity also has no size. Infinity has no dimensions.

The atomic-sized Self is as good as being Shoonya, and this has already been refuted. In addition, the Digambaras have refuted the Antaralas in their own way, by resolving the logistical problems of an atomic Atman. This verse is a refutation of the “medium-sized” Self only, and the refutation concerns the parts of the Self. Only the “medium-sized” Self has a size and, therefore, parts.

“Medium” should not be taken literally as “middle”. If we have a count from 0 to 100, then the middle is 50. But from 0 to infinity, where is the middle? Middle has to be understood as everything in between the other two, i.e. that which has size and dimensions.

Refutation of Self with Parts

1-2 To begin with anything that has a size, has to have dimensions and shape. That makes it an object. Any object will have to have at least two parts, the outer surface and the inner substance. It must have a shape which can be broken up into parts such as a base, a top, the sides, etc. That is what is meant by parts in this context.

When it is an object, it means it will also have a lifespan. No object lasts forever. Thus destruction of something with parts is inevitable. And if that object happens to be the Self, then the destruction applies not only to the ‘object’, but also to the Karma Phala that the ‘object’ is responsible for.

The Two Logical Fallacies

3 The Karma Phala are the fruits of the actions done by the Self. Regarding their destruction, the following logical fallacies arise:

i) **Krita Naasha**: “*What is done, is destroyed*”. The implied meaning here is that the Karma which the Atman has produced during its spell on earth, gets destroyed. It is unable to come to fruition. This is not just unfair, but violates cosmic law and is illogical.

ii) **Akrita Abhyaagama**: “*What is not done, is experienced*.” The implied meaning here is a bit more difficult to grasp. Suppose a new Atman is born. According to the theory of the Digambaras, it has no connection to previous births since the Atman is considered to be destroyed at death. This new Atman starts experiencing Karma which was done by ‘someone else’. It could not have done the Karma since it is a new Atman just born. Yet it undergoes some unknown Karma that was produced by some other Atman. Again, this is not just unfair, but violates cosmic laws of justice.

All Karmic reactions are due to merit and demerit done by some Atman. The parts theory necessarily means destruction of the Atman at death, and creation of a new Atman at birth. There is no way to link the two, since the “medium-sized” Self is unique in each birth. The merit and demerit are Adrishta, i.e. unseen by the eyes, but we know that they are there by the joys and sorrows that we experience due to them.

The principle violated is that the **Kartaa** has to be the **Bhoktaa**; the one who commits the action must be same person who reaps its results. That is justice.

The fallacies can be restated more clearly as follows:

- i) The Kartaa is not the Bhoktaa. The cause that produced the fruit is not its enjoyer.
- ii) The Bhoktaa is not the Kartaa. He who is enjoying the effect was not its producer.

Again, to make it more clear:

- i) The Kartaa of today has to be the Bhoktaa of tomorrow; and
- ii) The Bhokta of today has to be the Kartaa of yesterday.

The Only Logical Solution

4 This principle can only be fulfilled if we have a Self which is indestructible. This is possible only if it is a Self without parts. This is possible only if the Self is **Infinite**, and does not die when the body dies. It outlives one body and takes rebirth in another body to continue reaping the unsettled Karmic account.

The requirement for Justice is: The doer should be responsible for his deed; and the enjoyer should be deserving of his enjoyment. There is no other justice required.

If this requirement is not met, the fallacies remain unresolved. They lead to more and more unbearable social problems. No Karma Siddhanta (divine law-book) or Justice Department (human law-book) will be able to stop the rot in human society:

i) Joy and sorrow, if they are not experienced by the doer of the merit or demerit, would be regarded as merely accidental in nature. Then, no law on earth or in heaven will be able to regulate human life.

ii) Secondly, man will begin to believe that he is not responsible for what he does or does not do. His entire action becomes irresponsible. If everything we do or experience is considered to be accidental, it opens the doors ajar for irresponsible behaviour. The laws are recklessly violated. This results in a sick society with no recourse to justice and fair play. Only immorality can thrive under such conditions.

This is what makes Karma Siddhanta one of the greatest contributions of the Indian tradition. Nothing happens by chance, nothing happens capriciously, everything is regulated by the Law of Karma.

The word Karma has gained currency in the West. It has become a household word. It is now even in the English dictionary as an official word. The word has wide usage, yet it must be said that the full implication of the Law of Karma is not as widely understood.

Verse 86: The Third Belief: "Self is Infinite"

तस्मादात्मा महानेव नैवाणुर्नापि मध्यमः ।

आकाशवत्सर्वगतो निरंशः श्रुतिसंमतः

॥ ८६॥

tasmādātmā mahānēva naivāṇurnāpi madhyamaḥ |

ākāśavatsarvagatō niraṁśaḥ śrutisaṁmataḥ

|| 86||

1	<i>tasmaad aatmaa mahaan eva</i>	Therefore, the Self has to be regarded as <u>Infinite</u> .
2	<i>na eva aNuh na api madhyamah;</i>	It cannot be just <u>atomic</u> , nor even <u>medium-sized</u> .
3	<i>aakaashavat sarvagatah</i>	Like Space , it has to be <u>all-pervading</u> and
4	<i>niramshah shruti sammatah</i>	<u>partless</u> . This view accords with the Shruti .

1-2 Mahaan Eva: “only infinite”. Finally we come to the Vedantin’s “size” of the Atman. It can only be Infinite, and infinity is not a size. In order that it is not partless, it has to be defined as being Infinite. The other two cases are ruled out. The atomic Atman is ruled out because it is equivalent to Shoonya. The “medium-sized” Atman is ruled out because it has parts and therefore is destructible.

When we speak of Brahman (neuter noun), then we use the neuter adjective **Mahat** for infinity. When we speak of Atman (masculine noun), then we use the masculine adjective **Mahaan** for infinity. Another commonly used word for infinity is **Vibhu**.

3 The only good comparison that can be made to the Self is to think of it as Space, which has no limits and is infinite. This simile for Self is widely used in the Indian scriptures.

4 When defined as being Infinite, the Self accords with the Shrutis in every way. It becomes fully compliant with the statements of the Shrutis. That is what really matters in matters of a spiritual nature. **Shabda Pramana** or Scriptural authority is the foremost means of knowledge for matters connected to the Self.

Conclusion: Paramatman & Jeevatman

The clarification of these two terms is necessary at this point.

The sun is one, but many are its reflections. Even so, There is only One Infinite Paramatman; but there are an *infinite* number of Jeevatmans.

This is the line of thinking that is set up to take us forward on this topic. At this point, we are more concerned with eliminating all the inapplicable concepts of the Self, not to elaborate on the qualities of the Self. Clarity on the Self will be arrived at when all wrong notions about it are eliminated. That is the method of approach of Sri Vidyananyaji.

We still have a long way to go to the end of this text. A lot more wrong notions need to be eliminated before we can get clarity on what Consciousness is. It may be painstaking to go through, but the gain in clarity will make the whole exercise worthwhile.



PANCHADASHEE – 06

Chapter 10: (Verse 87-101, 15 No.)

Is Self CONSCIOUS or UNCONSCIOUS?

THREE OPINIONS ON THE SELF'S INTELLIGENCE

Verse 87: *Overview of the Debate*

इत्युक्त्वा तद्विशेषे तु बहुधा कलहं ययुः ।

अचिद्रूपोऽथ चिद्रूपाश्चिदचिद्रूप इत्यपि

॥ ८७॥

ityuktvā tadviśeṣe tu bahudhā kalahaṁ yayuḥ |

acidrūpō:'tha cidrūpāśchidacidrūpa ityapi

|| 87||

1	<i>iti uktvaa tad visheshhe tu</i>	So, we have established that “ Atman is Infinite ”; but we have yet to discuss its <u>nature</u> .
2	<i>bahudhaa kalaham yayuh;</i>	Many positions have been taken up on this point:
3	<i>achidroopah atha chidroopaah</i>	i) Some say, “It is unconscious (inert) ”, ii) Others say, “It is conscious (sentient) ”,
4	<i>chid-achid roopa iti api.</i>	iii) Still others say, “It is both conscious and unconscious ”.

1 Iti Uktvaa: “having thus established”. This introductory phrase tells us quite a bit about the person for whom the following discussion applies. Firstly, it picks up the conclusion of the previous discussion on size. The conclusion was that the Self has no size, and may be described as infinite. This discussion is for those who accept that the Self is infinite, not for those who still think it is atom-sized or body-sized.

The next step forward is then stated: We are going to discuss the nature of the Self which we agree to be infinite in size.

2 The nature being investigated is whether the Self has “intelligence” or not. On this point there has been an on-going debate and philosophers have still not been able to settle the issue. They go on arguing and arguing.

3-4 Their arguments can be put into three categories:

i) **Achit:** “unconscious, inert, insentient”.

ii) **Chit:** “conscious, sentient, knowing”.

iii) **Chid-Achid:** “both conscious and unconscious”.

We are now going to explore each opinion, who are the promoters of the opinion, and what is the basic belief of the opinion. With regard to refutation, the successive school takes responsibility to refute the predecessor, as we have been doing all along.

1. Self is Unconscious (Taarkikas & Praabhakara School)

STORY: BHATTA & HIS DISCIPLE, PRABHAKARA **(Founders of the Bha_uatta and Pra_aabhakara schools respectively)**

Kumarila Bhatta had a disciple named Prabhakara. Both were Poorva Meemamsakas, which dealt mainly with the Karma Kanda rituals of the Vedas. There is an interesting story about the relationship between these two intellectual giants of their time.

Once a philosophy class was going on, conducted by Bhatta. The topic happened to be the rituals pertaining to the Shraadh (death) ceremony. Prabhakara differed with his Guru on a certain point of the ceremony. The discussion became a bit heated. Eventually, Bhatta said rather forcefully, "Look here, my boy, whilst in this class you have to accept my understanding on this topic, or you should leave the classroom." As his doubt was an honest intellectual one, Prabhakara honourably got up and walked out of the class.

That night he decided to end his life rather than remain alive with his difference with his Guru. He duly took a drug that would take his life. The next morning, his fellow students found him lying unconscious on his bed, with a note on his body saying what he had done and why. The students took his body and reported the whole matter to Bhatta.

Bhatta was extremely sad to lose his brightest disciple over a trivial matter such as this. He was emotionally overcome. The students asked him a daring question, "Sir, how should we perform his ceremony – according to *his* method, or according to what you have taught?" The Guru's answer was quite enlightening, though unexpected.

"Of course, you have to do it according to his method. It is his body, and we have to respect his wishes." This was the nobility of character found amongst philosophers in those days. They never took anything personally. What transpired in class did not hold outside the class in such matters.

Just at that point, Prabhakara slowly came back to consciousness. The drug, though intended to take his life, was not the full dosage and had only lulled him into a temporary coma. He had heard everything that was said while in that state. He got up and fell prostrate at the feet of his Guru, overcome by the love and justice his Guru had shown towards him!

Prabhakara eventually set up his own school of thought and called it 'Guru Matah'. Through this name he had dedicated his philosophy to his Guru, Bhatta, because Bhatta had accepted his method. Later Bhatta also accepted his disciple's exposition of Meemamsaka.

The Pra_aabhaakara school (founded by Prabhaakara – note the elongation in the first 'a' syllable), is different from the Bha_uatta school (founded by Bhatta, note ditto). The two interpretations remain under the Meemamsaka school of thought, but are considered as its sub-divisions. The Praabhaakaras believe that the "Self is Jada" or inert. The Bhaattas, however, believe that the Self is partly conscious and partly inert. That will be explained from verse 95. For now we are looking at the philosophy of the Praabhaakaras, which is one division of the Meemamsaka school. The Taarkikas (logicians), i.e. the Naiyayikas and Vaisheshikas, also accept that the "Self is Jada". Both these schools have a common view on the Self, although they differ on other philosophical issues.'

With this background, we are ready for the next verse.

Verse 88: *The First Belief: “Self is Unconscious”*

प्राभाकरास्तार्किकाश्च प्राहुरस्याचिदात्मताम् ।

आकाशवद्द्रव्यमात्मा शब्दवत्तदुणश्चित्तिः

॥ ८८॥

prābhākarāstārlikāśca prāhurasyaācidātmataām |

ākāśavaddravyamātmā śabdavattadguṇaścitiḥ

|| 88||

1	<i>praabhaakaraah taarkikaah cha</i>	The <i>Praabhakar</i> as (division of Poorva Meemamsa) and the <i>Taarkikas</i> (Nyaya & Vaiseshika schools)
2	<i>praahuh asya achidaatmataam;</i>	state that the nature of the Atman is unconscious .
3	<i>aakaashavad dravyam aatmaa</i>	They take Atman to be a substance like Space,
4	<i>shabdavat tad guNah chitih.</i>	and, just as <u>sound</u> is a quality of Space, so is <u>sentientcy</u> taken as a quality of Atman.

1-2 This line has explained at the end of the above block. It is to be noted that both these schools are part of the Shad Darshanas or the six schools which take their authority from the Vedas. So their error would be one of taking sayings from the Vedas in isolation from their true context.

3 The Atman is considered to be an inert substance in the same way as Space is an elemental, inert substance. As Space is all-pervading and infinite, so also the Self is all-pervading and infinite. Purely on the basis of these two common features, they have equated Self with Space and consider them both to be **Inert**!

These are purely Anumana or “*inferential statements*”, having no experience to back them. How dangerous it is to resort to pure reason without taking experience into account!

An example of an inferential statement is this: “The mountain is on fire, because I see smoke on it, and smoke is always present with fire.” The equivalent statement here is, “The Atman is inert, because it is all-pervading like Space, and Space is always inert.”

Space is in the transactional realm, while Self is in the transcendental realm. These are two different reality realms and cannot be compared on the same level. We can presume that Space itself is being mistaken for the Self due to its similarity to the Self.

4 A second error is now added to the first. How does one account for the conscious principle or sentientcy that we see in the Atman? For the Taarkikas and Praabhaakaras, that is no problem to explain. They say that just as *sound* is a property of space, so also, *consciousness* is a property of the Self!

An example to grasp this point was given by Swamiji. A flower may be fragrant or have a very attractive colour, but the fragrance or colour are not the flower, they are properties of the flower. In the same way, consciousness is regarded as a property of the Self. This is like putting the cart before the horse: an inert thing becomes the support for something that is sentient. Inertness is placed on a pedestal above that of sentientcy! We shall see later that Vedanta’s standpoint is the very opposite.

Once the blinkers are placed to look only at a material object and ignore the spiritual reality of the Self, then the Self begins to appear as a ‘material’ object. That is due to the blinkers worn by the analyst; it does not come from anywhere else.

Verse 89: “Properties” of the Unconscious Self

इच्छाद्वेषप्रयत्नाश्च धर्माधर्मौ सुखासुखे ।

तत्संस्काराश्च तस्यैते गुणाश्चितिवदीरिताः

॥ ८९॥

icchādvēṣaprayatnāśca dharmādharmau sukhāsukhē |

tatsaṁskārāśca tasyaitē guṇāścitivādīritāḥ

॥ 89॥

1	¹ ichchhaa ² dveshha ³ prayatnaah cha	¹ Likes and ² dislikes, ³ effort (will);
2	⁴ dharma- ⁵ adharmau ⁶ sukha- ⁷ asukhe;	⁴ virtue and ⁵ vice, ⁶ pleasure and ⁷ pain;
3	tat ⁸ samskaaraah cha tasyaite	and also the latent ⁸ impressions of the Atman –
4	guNaah ⁹ chitivat eeritaah	these, too, are said to be qualities like ⁹ consciousness.

This verse expands on the properties of the “inert Self”.

1-4 Nine qualities or properties are listed, and they are all regarded as attributes of the Self as defined by the Praabhakaras. The Self is thought to be inert, but these properties make it appear sentient.

How did all these “properties” come to be associated with the inert Self? The next verse explains the whole philosophy behind this . . .

Verse 90: Manifestation & De-manifestation of Properties

आत्मनो मनसा योगे स्वादृष्टवशतो गुणाः ।

जायन्तेऽथ प्रलीयन्ते सुषुप्तेऽदृष्टसंक्षयात्

॥ ९०॥

ātmanō manasā yōgē svādṛṣṭavaśatō guṇāḥ |

jāyantē:'tha pralīyantē suṣuptē:'dṛṣṭasaṁkṣayāt

॥ 90॥

1	aatmano manasaa yoge	Self and the mind combine together as a result
2	sva adrishhTa vashato guNaah;	of one's Karma ; from this contact, the properties
3	jaayante atha praleeyante	are manifested. Afterwards, they de-manifest again
4	sushhupte adrishhTa samkshayaat	in deep sleep when the Karma ceases to operate.

This verse provides the overall cause, or impetus, or driving force which produces or manifests the nine properties listed in the above verse. The de-manifestation of the properties is also described in the second half of the verse.

The Crucial Meeting of Self & Mind

1-2 Adrishta: “the Prarabdha Karma”. Although the meaning can be both good and bad Karma, usually the term Adrishta is taken to mean *fortuitous* Karma or ‘good luck’ in colloquial usage in Indian languages. However, that is not the main point here.

In the present context, Adrishta is the primary cause that brings about the contact of Self with the mind. This is what this school of thought believes. Adrishta is dependent on Time. When the time is ripe, Karma starts bearing fruit. Until then it remains inactive.

4 When reaping the fruit of his actions, he plays the role of Bhoktaa or **Enjoyer** of the fruits of actions. He reaps either ⁸ sorrow for his bad actions, or ⁹ joy for his good actions. Here, too, there is no choice in the matter. There is no escape from facing these reactions. The Law of Karma is inexorable and totally just. No one is spared from its operation.

1st Gear: The cycle begins in 1st gear with Jnana Shakti (knowledge of one's Desire);
2nd Gear: It moves into 2nd gear with Ichhaa Shakti (Will-power, craving or wanting);
3rd Gear: It gets into 3rd gear with Kriyaa Shakti (Action or acquisition of desire); and
4th Gear: It goes into top gear with Bhoga (Enjoyment of the desire).

For the followers of this particular school who take the Self to be inert, Mukti is simply “not touching the mind”. In effect, a *good sleep* would be Liberation for this group! They enjoy sleep very much. It is like being in Bliss. Mukti is to become totally shut off from the mind. The moment they wake up, they cannot help contacting the mind, for Adrishta compels them to when it becomes active again. From that contact, all their problems resume from the point they left them the previous night.

The Vedantin's Question

Before the next verse, the Vedantin poses a silent question to the Naiyayikas and Meemamsakas: “You believe like us that Atman is Vibhu or infinite (everywhere). You also believe that Atman is Nitya or eternal (at all times). You also believe that Punya and Paapa are from beginningless time. We agree with you on these points. But our question to you is: The Atman should always be experiencing sorrow and joy from the above two facts, even after death in subsequent births. If Atman is all-pervading, how does it take different bodies? How does an all-pervading Atman leave one body and enter into another?”

In the next two verses, we find a very interesting revelation from the Praabhakaras and Naiyayikas as they try their utmost to defend their theory . . .

Verse 92: ***Karma Determines Place, Time and Body***

यथाऽत्र कर्मवशतः कादाचित्कं सुखादिकम् ।

तथा लोकान्तरे देहे कर्मणेच्छादि जन्यते

॥ ९२॥

yathā:'tra karmavaśataḥ kādācitkaṁ sukhādikam |

tathā lōkāntarē dēhē karmaṇēcchādi janyatē

|| 92||

1	<i>yathaa atra karma-vashatah</i>	<i>Just as in <u>this life</u>, because of the power of Karma,</i>
2	<i>kaadaachit kam sukhaadi kam;</i>	<i>there is the occasional experience of <u>sorrow and joy</u>;</i>
3	<i>tathaa lokaantare dehe</i>	<i>so also, in another world and in <u>another life</u> (body),</i>
4	<i>karmaNa ichchhaadi janyate</i>	<i>also due to the Karma, all the various <u>properties</u> arise.</i>

1 Central to the experience of sentiency, leading to the onset of all the sentient properties mentioned, is ***Karma-Vashatah***, “*the power of Karma*”.

Atra: “here”. This word has deeper meaning in this context. It refers to three things:

- i) the Loka in which the whole experience is taking place;
- ii) the particular Time when the experience is taking place; and
- iii) the particular Body-mind in which the experience is taking place.

All of these three factors are controlled by **Karma-Vashatah**, the package of Karma, of Punya and Paapa, of merit and demerit, which is left behind by the individual being.

2 The power of Karma is irrepressible. Nothing can stop it from fulfilling itself. It is a Law that is inexorable in Nature. Every action performed, if it is not performed in a selfless spirit, has reactions that are certain to follow. The power of Karma is the power of Dharma and Adharma. It is sure to lead one to joy and sorrow. This means the power of Karma is bound to set off the whole sequence mentioned under the previous verse.

3-4 At death, the body and mind terminate. The Atman, which is believed to be all-pervading and eternal, remains as it is. The seeds of Karma survive death and produce another body-mind complex in a world and at a time suitable to it.

A point has to be noted about this explanation. The continuity of the Karma in subsequent births is the full responsibility of the Karma. The Atman is a universal inert substance according to this belief, having only the property to convey sentiency when in contact with the mind. It cannot and need not take the burden of responsibility for continuity onto itself. Nor does the mind have to carry the Karmic burden; it can be new in the new birth. Everything is dependent on the **Karma-Vashatah**. This is crucial to the theory of this school of thought.

When the new body takes birth – wherever, whenever and in whatever body – according to the Karma-Vashatah, the Atman gets into contact with the new mind in accordance with the old package of Karma. Then the whole sequence of properties as determined by the previous Karma, is set into motion, ending in the experience of the joy and sorrow deserved by the new body and mind.

This is the theory of the Praabhakaras, and they need a pat on the back for being so meticulously thoughtful about all the details of their theory. It sounds very convincing indeed. What is more, is that they claim to have the full backing of the Karma Kanda of the Vedas. In their case they don’t lean on the Vedas; it is the Vedas which lean on them!

Verse 93: **“The Karma Kanda Supports Us”**

एवं सर्वगतस्यापि सम्भवेतां गमागमौ ।

कर्मकाण्डः समग्रोऽत्र प्रमाणमिति तेऽवदन्

॥ ९३॥

ēvaṁ sarvagatasyāpi sambhavētāṁ gamāgamau |

karmakāṇḍaḥ samagrō'tra pramāṇamiti tē'avadan

|| 93||

1	<i>evam sarvagatasya api</i>	<i>In this manner, despite its <u>all-pervasiveness</u></i>
2	<i>sambhavetaam gama-aagamau;</i>	<i>the “<u>coming and going</u>” of the Atman just happens.</i>
3	<i>karma-kaaNDah samagrah atra</i>	<i>“The whole ritual part of Karma Kanda of the Vedas</i>
4	<i>pramaaNam iti te avadan</i>	<i><u>supports</u> this theory” – this is what they claim.</i>

The Vedantin's Question Answered

1-2 To answer the Vedantin's question, the going and coming of the Atman from the old body into the new body need not be taken literally. There is no such need to 'move' anywhere. The Atman is an inert substance and cannot be expected to take this responsibility, as mentioned earlier. The Karma sees to the management of the movement from the old body to the new. The Karma is like the Master-card or Aadhar Card. Wherever it goes, there the whole history of the soul follows. It contains within it the full record of the Jeeva's Karmic account.

The all-pervasiveness of the Atman does not obstruct it from serving its function. Most important for the Praabhakaras is that the Atman, like Space, is an all-pervading inert substance not required to do anything except convey consciousness when in contact with the mind. It does not have a task as such. Everything just happens in its all-pervading presence.

The Support of the Vedas

3-4 After hearing this amazing theoretical account of the unconscious Atman, the Vedantin is impressed and has become curious. He asks the Poorvapakshin, "What you have said sounds fantastic! Have you got any proof for what you have just described to me?"

Proof? The Praabhakaras are ready with not just a few isolated quotes from here and there, but the whole Karma Kanda which comprises more than 80 % of the entire Vedas!

They claim that the whole of the Karma Kanda is the Pramana for their theory. The Karma Kanda is that portion which is not the Jnana Kanda or Upanishads. So it comprises the Mantra Samhitas, Brahmanas and the Aranyakas, an impressive body of knowledge. They also say that the whole of the Vedas have their basis in the Karma Kanda, i.e. without the Karma Kanda, the Vedas would be worth nothing. This is effectively their view of the Jnana Kanda portion – they set it at zero value.

Indeed, they daringly claim that at best, the Jnana Kanda is only a glorification of the Supreme Being, intended only to praise Him and please Him, but not to attain Him. "I am Brahman" is just to make one feel good about himself. Brahman is only the glorified ideal sitting at the top like a figurehead receiving all the glory, but unconcerned with human welfare and affairs!

Verse 94: ***Vedantic Assessment of Unconscious Atman***

आनन्दमयकोषो यः सुषुप्तौ परिशिष्यते ।

अस्पष्टचित्स आत्मैषां पूर्वकोशोऽस्य ते गुणाः

॥ ९४॥

ānandamayakōṣo yaḥ suṣuptau pariśiṣyatē |

aspāṣṭacitsa ātmaīṣāṁ pūrvakōśō:'sya tē guṇāḥ

|| 94||

1	<i>aanandamaya koshhah yah</i>	<i>The Anandamaya Kosha, which</i>
2	<i>sushhuptau parishishhyate;</i>	<i>alone remains or persists in <u>deep sleep</u> with a</i>
3	<i>aspashhTa chit sah aatma eshhaam</i>	<i>dull consciousness, is taken by them as Atman;</i>
4	<i>poorvakoshah asya te guNaah</i>	<i>The first sheath is 'Atman' with these as its properties.</i>

Now the Vedantin, having fully heard the explanation of the Poorvapakshee, steps forward to present his assessment of their theory of the “Unconscious Atman” in the light of Vedanta. Two clues guide him to make his assessment:

The first clue is the inertness and all-pervasiveness of their Self. This points to Avidya, which is also inert and all-pervasive.

The second clue is the fact that consciousness in their theory only manifests when mind comes in contact with their ‘Atman’. In Vedanta, Pure Consciousness comes in contact with Avidya in the Bliss sheath and gets reflected as the sentient Jeeva which then has all the properties as described in the above theory. The reflected consciousness produced by this contact produces the sentiency we see in the Jeeva. This contact is what has been misinterpreted by the Praabhaakaras as contact between mind and their ‘**inert Atman**’. The contact is actually between Consciousness and **Avidya** respectively, at the individual level.

1-4 From these two clues, the Vedantin deduces that the inert ‘Unconscious Atman’ of this school of thought is actually Avidya, which alone remains in the state of deep sleep. As Avidya is the only constituent of the Anandamaya Kosha, the Vedantin deduces the ‘inert Atman’ to be the **Anandamaya Kosha**.

That ends the discussion on the inert Atman or “Unconscious Self”. Now we move on to the Bhaatta school of thought, that of Kumarila Bhatta, also of the Meemamsaka school of thought. We recall that Bhatta is the Guru of Prabhakara, who named his school as ‘Guru Mata’ after having obtained the consent of Bhatta for his theory.

2. Self is Conscious & Unconscious (Bhaatta School)

With the above misinterpretation by Prabhakara fresh in our mind, we may precede the discussion of Bhatta’s “Unconscious & Conscious Atman” by suggesting that this is also actually the **Reflected Consciousness**, mistaken to be the ‘Atman’. Reflected consciousness can be thought of as being both inert in one way and sentient in another. It is a modification of sentient Consciousness born from its contact with inert Avidya.

Verse 95: *Consciousness – Hidden and Present*

गूढं चैतन्यमुत्प्रेक्ष्य जडबोधस्वरूपताम् ।
आत्मनो ब्रुवते भाट्टाश्चिदुत्प्रेक्ष्योत्थितस्मृतेः ॥ ९५॥

gūḍhaṁ chaitanyamutprēkṣya jaḍabōdhasvarūpatām |
ātmanō bruvatē bhāṭṭāścidutprēkṣyōtthitasmṛtēḥ ॥ 95॥

1	<i>gooDham chaitanyam utprekshhya</i>	Having inferred “ <u>Consciousness is hidden</u> ”, (during
4	<i>chit utprekshhya utthita smriteh</i>	sleep), and inferred “ <u>Consciousness is present</u> ”, from its <u>remembrance</u> on waking up, we
2	<i>jaDa-bodha svaroopataam</i>	conclude that both inert and sentient is the nature
3	<i>aatmanah bruvate bhaaTTaah</i>	of the Atman. This is declared by the Bhaatta School .

Padas **1** and **4** refer to two sides of the same coin of Consciousness (Chit). It would have been nice if they were placed side by side, but poetry may have dictated their placement. However, we discuss them together. The experience of deep sleep is twofold:

1 i) The first experience of deep sleep is “*Consciousness is hidden*”. This refers to our inert state during deep sleep, when we experience nothing. From this experience, the Bhaatta school deduces the inertness of the Atman. This is, in fact, the experience of Avidya. Up to here, Prabhakara and Bhatta agree.

4 ii) The second experience of deep sleep is “*Consciousness is present*”. This is known only upon getting up. The same deep sleep experience is now described from a recollection of it upon waking up. It is a post-mortem of the deep sleep experience. The Bhaatta school followers examine the remembrance of the deep sleep. That remembrance itself is possible only because there was something conscious while we slept.

This is where Bhatta and Prabhakara differ. The Bhaattas at least recognise that to experience something requires consciousness. The Praabhakaras did not think that way. To them experience required only the contact of their ‘inert Atman’ with the mind. The Bhaatta school is thus a slight improvement on the Praabhakaras’ position.

2-3 Hence, the Bhaatta school are able to go forward in their thinking by a small step by acknowledging this in their view of the Self. They are able to declare the Self to be both “Unconscious & Conscious”, i.e. inert and sentient.

The deep sleep experience is further clarified in the next verse, with a touch of emphasis to inertness, that is absent in this verse . . .

Verse 96: Experience if Inertness Confirms It

जडो भूत्वा तदास्वाप्समिति जाड्यस्मृतिस्तदा ।
विना जाड्यानुभूतिं न कथंचिदुपपद्यते

॥ ९६॥

jaḍō bhūtvā tadāsvāpsamiti jādyasmṛtistadā |
vinā jādyānubhūtiṁ na kathamcidupapadyatē

|| 96||

1	<i>jaDo bhootvaa tadaa asvaapsam</i>	<i>In deep sleep: “I became unconscious and <u>slept</u>” –</i>
2	<i>iti jaaDya smritih tadaa;</i>	<i>this expresses memory of that inert state.</i>
3	<i>vinā jaaDya anubhootim na</i>	<i>Without inertness, the experience of it is not possible.</i>
4	<i>katham chid upapadyate</i>	<i>How can consciousness experience it unless it is there!</i>

The twofold experience of deep sleep is carefully reviewed once again, but an emphasis has been added to it. This verse tells us precisely why the Bhaatta school considers the Atman to be “Unconscious & Conscious” at the same time. There is a greater emphasis on why it has to be considered **Unconscious** than on being Conscious.

1-3 “*I became unconscious*”. In the deep sleep state, ‘unconsciousness’ is the content of the experience. When we get up, we say, “I slept like a log”. [Swamiji mentioned that in Tamil the saying is “I slept like a buffalo!”] The point is that nothing but unconsciousness is the content of what we experience in sleep. We are in very close contact with **Avidya**, the Anandamaya Kosha. All other Koshas are unavailable in sleep.

From this, they deduce that inertness has to be an aspect of the Atman. Jadataa is established without any doubt in this verse. The only thing 'known' in sleep is Ignorance.

4 The presence of **consciousness** is clear enough from the fact of having remembered the experience of sleep. More importantly, the inertness that is experienced cannot be denied. This fact is brought out with great emphasis.

To summarise, we can say: the remembrance of the experience proves the **conscious** aspect of Self, but the content of the experience proves its **inert** aspect.

Katham: "How?" This introduces a rhetorical question, i.e. a question whose answer is obvious. The idea is to emphasise the presence of inertness. Bhatta is saying, "How can we say we experienced nothing, unless there is a 'Nothing' to be experienced?"

Once the inert content of the experience is established, then the next step can be taken up. Remembrance presupposes an experience; and an experience presupposes a sentient or conscious knower. From that is established that consciousness is also present. Thus both inertness and consciousness are established.

What is Being Experienced as the "Atman"

i) **Atman's Inertness:** The inert aspect of Atman is due to the presence of Avidya alone, while all the other four sheaths are not available. They have gone into a withdrawn dormant state. If Avidya also went into a dormant state, sleep would mean illumination.

ii) **Atman's Consciousness:** Because Avidya is still present, the conscious aspect of the Bhaattas' Atman can only refer to reflected consciousness, not Pure Consciousness. This filters through Avidya and appears as a dull, soiled (**Aspashta**) version of the original. Reflected consciousness is the Jeeva himself. The Jeeva mistakes itself for the Atman.

In "All States", at the "Same Time", & at "All Times"

If Atman is "Unconscious & Conscious", then surely this has to be true for all three states and also at the same time, and all the time. It is not that during sleep, the Atman is inert and when we awaken, the Atman becomes conscious. No, the two are present simultaneously, regardless of which state we are in. The real test of the Bhaata school's theory is that in all three states it must be shown that we are partially inert and partially conscious. This is now examined:

i) **Inertness** comes from experiencing Avidya as delusion in the waking and dream states, and as ignorance in the deep sleep state. Vedantins can explain this by saying Avidya is always in man, until he destroys it through Knowledge. But the Bhaattas have no idea of the Vedantin's concept of Atman. To them, Avidya is taken as an aspect of their Self.

ii) **Sentiency** comes from experiencing consciousness directly in the waking and dream states, and inferring its presence in the deep sleep state from its remembrance.

The Bhaattas acknowledge this consciousness in the Atman. However, they are unaware that they are speaking of "reflected consciousness", which they mistake to be the Pure Atman. This is an important point when we compare various theories.

In deep sleep we experience only Avidya and nothing else; in the waking and dream states we experience only Avidya's effects, and nothing of the Reality. Thus, Avidya pervades all the three states. At the same time, reflected consciousness, too, is present in all three states. The experience of Pure Consciousness is not on the agenda for the schools discussed so far. That enters the scene only when we come to the Vedantic viewpoint.

Verse 97: The Atman is Like a “Fire-fly”!

द्रष्टृर्द्रष्टे रलोपश्च श्रुतः सुप्तौ ततस्त्वयम् ।

अप्रकाशप्रकाशाभ्यामात्मा खद्योतवद्युतः

॥ ९७॥

draṣṭurdṛṣṭēralōpaśca śrutah suptau tatastvayam |

aprakāśaprakāśābhyāmātmā khadyōtavadyutah

॥ 97॥

1	<i>drashhTuh drishhTeh alopah cha, shrutah suptau</i>	<i>The <u>seeing</u> (consciousness) of the (conscious) <u>Seer</u>, has <u>no cessation</u>, even in sleep, say the Upanishad.</i>
2	<i>tatah tu ayam;</i>	<i>Therefore, indeed, this (the Atman) is</i>
3	<i>aprakaasha-prakaashaabhyaam</i>	<i>both dark (unconscious) and luminous (conscious)</i>
4	<i>aatmaa khadyota-vad yutah</i>	<i>The Atman may be thought of to be like a fire-fly!</i>

A prelude to this verse may be assumed to have happened: The Vedantin wants to know, “How can two contradictory things be present in the same thing, the Atman? That is not reasonable. What if they fight each other and one of them destroys the other? If inertness puts an end to sentiency, it would be disastrous!”

1-3 The Bhaatas, in their reply, give a Shruti citation to support their viewpoint. As expected, they find one from the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad, 4.3.23, which is part of the well-known Maitreyi Upanishad. The relevant portion quoted by Sri Vidyananyaji is:

Na hi drashtuh drishte viparilopah vidyate’vinaashitvaat /

Meaning: “*Owing to the fact of changelessness of Consciousness, there is no cessation of seeing of the Seer (even in deep sleep).*”

Drashhtuh: (6th case of *Drashtru*) “of the seer”, i.e. of the conscious subject, the experiencer of the Self.

Drishte: (6th case of *Drishti*) “of seeing”, i.e. of consciousness, the means to see, the seeingness or power of knowing of the Self, or its knowledge.

The point made is that there is no reduction in the power of seeing (consciousness) nor of the seer or knower (the conscious entity). Even in a state like deep sleep, where one would expect there to be a reduction, there is really none whatsoever.

The above appears logical if not checked out closely. The Vedantin is not moved by this explanation, for to him the Self is not only irreducible, but also Non-dual. There is no other Self that can ‘steal’ away its consciousness. So there is no threat to its power. That, to the Vedantin, actually proves that inertness is not there, that inertness is false. But the Bhaattas, who have no idea of the Non-dual nature of the Self, use this as a flimsy argument in all seriousness to prove their theory of an “Unconscious-Conscious” Atman.

Also, to the Bhaattas, the absence of perception in sleep is taken literally to mean no sense perception. Yet they are quoting this verse where the perceived object is the Self, not an object. The Self is ‘seen’ quite differently from how an object is seen.

4 As though the citation is not enough, the Bhaattas go to the extent of finding an example to strengthen their case. They say the Atman is like a fire-fly. Swamiji gave other terms for a fire-fly from regional languages. In Tamil the word is *minmin*, meaning “shine-shine” ; in Malayalam it is *minaa-mini*, meaning “not shining-shining”.

3. Self is Conscious Only (Saankhyans)

Verse 98: *Refutation of School 2 by School 3*

निरंशस्योभयात्मत्वं न कथंचिद्वटिष्यते ।

तेन चिद्रूप एवात्मेत्याहुः सांख्या विवेकिनः

॥ ९८॥

niraṁśasyōbhayātmatvaṁ na kathamcidghaṭiṣyate |

tēna cidrūpa ēvātmētyāhuḥ sām̐khyā vivēkinah

|| 98||

1	<i>niramshasya ubhaya aatmatvam</i>	A 'partless' Atman having as its nature both
2	<i>na katham chid-ghaTishhyate;</i>	<u>inertness</u> and <u>sentientcy</u> – how is this possible? Thus,
3	<i>tena chidroopa eva aatma iti</i>	Atman can have the nature of consciousness only .
4	<i>aahuh saamkhyaa vivekinah.</i>	This is what the ever-discerning Saankhyans say.

1 The Saankhyan school is playing the role of refuting what the Bhaatta school has postulated about a double-natured Atman. Only something having parts can meet this requirement, whereby each part can have its own nature. But here, by definition of it being Infinite, the option to have parts is ruled out. Atman is 'partless', that is a pre-condition.

2 To be both inert and sentient at the same time is ruled out in the case of a partless Atman. Even the example of a fire-fly quoted by the Bhaattas illustrate this truth. The fire-fly fluctuates between bright and dark in a time cycle. True, it is inert for one half-cycle, and conscious for the other half-cycle, but never both inert and sentient at the same time.

3 For this reason, Atman can be either inert only or conscious only. The inert only case has already been refuted. There cannot be an Atman that is inert. So, the only other option is for the Atman to be declared as **"Conscious only"**.

4 The very name Saankhya means "to differentiate", or "to count":

***Sankhyaam prakurvate chaiva, prakritim cha prachakshate;
Chaturvimshati tattvaani, tena saankhyaa prakeertitaah.***

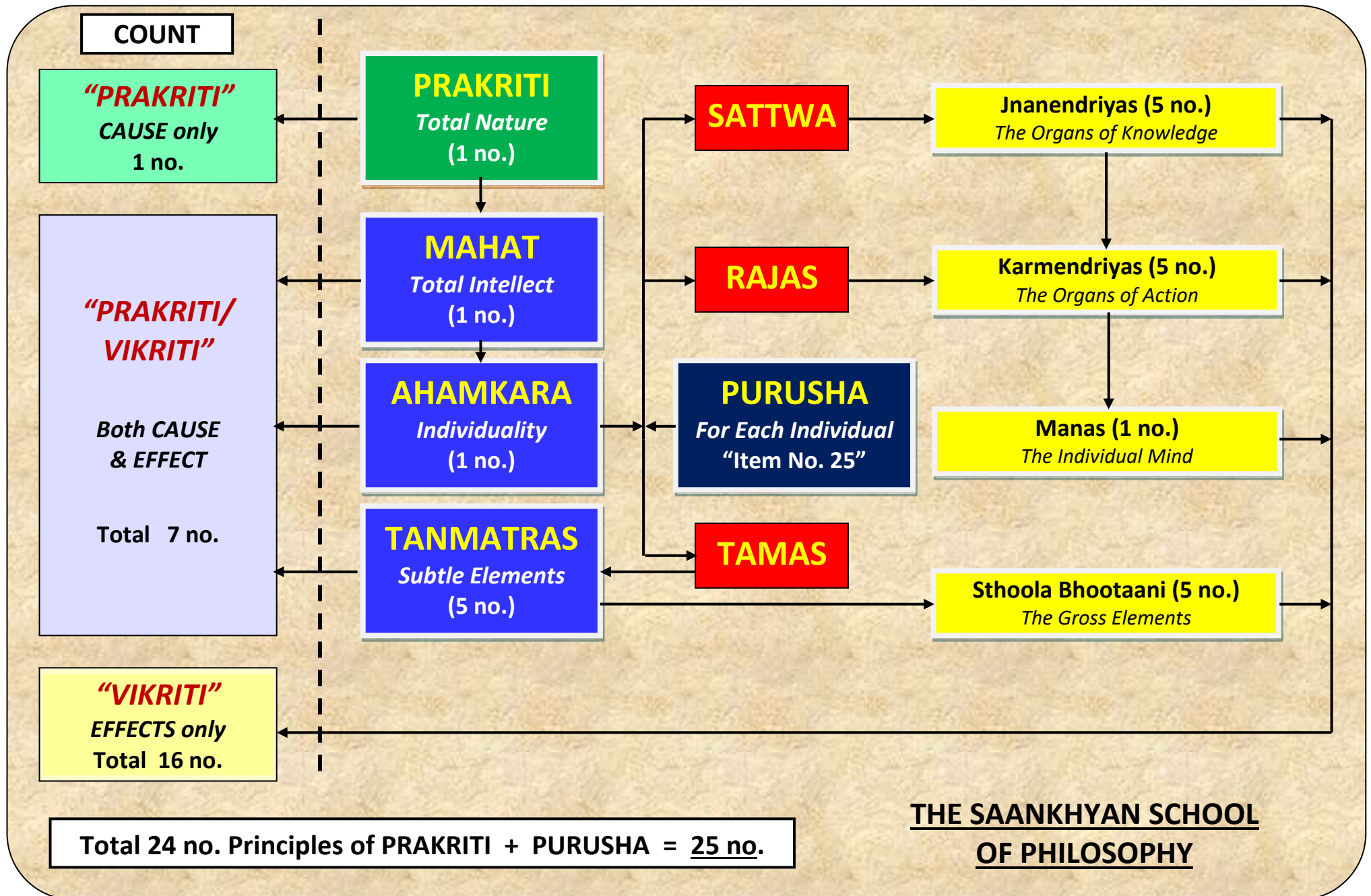
Meaning: *"They who do differentiation, and moreover, speak of Prakriti;
as having twenty-four principles – owing to these, they are called Saankhyas."*

The Saankhyans specialise in differentiating, categorising and enumerating things. In this instance, the reference is the differentiation of **Prakriti** and **Purusha**. The Saankhyans postulate Prakriti and Purusha to be independent of each other. This is where they differ with Vedanta, which sees Prakriti as an inseparable 'consort' or partner of Purusha.

The problem of explaining the experience of inertness still remains. If Atman is not Jada, then how does one explain the experience of deep sleep, which is certainly of Jada?

THE SAANKHYAN CONCEPT OF PRAKRITI & PURUSHA

In the diagram that follows, the Saankhyan school's 24-component model of Prakriti is shown. Although the terms, Prakriti and Purusha are used in both Saankhya and Vedanta, their meanings are entirely different in each philosophical system. Swamiji forewarned us to be wary of this difference and not allow it to confuse us.



POINTS OF DIFFERENCE: SAANKHYA & VEDANTA

The Diagram represents the Saankhyan School of Philosophy. We note the following variations with Vedanta:

1. **Prakriti** is at the Total level of Creation. From it, arise Mahat (the Total Intellect or Cognition or Thought) and Ahamkara, the individuality. Prakriti is Supreme. **Purusha** only comes in at the individual level. There are many Purushas, one for each individual. The alternate term for Purusha is **Chitah** (see Pada 3).

In Vedanta, Purusha is only at the Total level and precedes Prakriti. Prakriti functions as a 'Consort' of Purusha. There is always only One Purusha. Purusha is Supreme. The alternate term for Purusha is **Brahman**.

2. In Saankhya, the **Three Gunas** come under Ahamkara, i.e. after the birth of individuality. In Vedanta, the three Gunas come under Prakriti directly.

3. There is no creation when the Gunas are in equilibrium. This state is called Saamyavastha. Creation comes about only when there is a disequilibrium from this state.

4. Note that in Saankhya, the **Antahkarana** (Intellect, Ahamkara, Mind and Chitta) and the **10 Senses** are not made of the Tanmatras or subtle elements; in Vedanta, they are.

When we are studying Saankhya, we should see all terms with respect to the Saankhya philosophy only. This may require some effort in the beginning.

Verse 99: *Inertness Belongs to Prakriti, not Purusha*

जाड्यांशः प्रकृतेरूपं विकारि त्रिगुणं च तत् ।

चितो भोगापवर्गार्थं प्रकृतिः सा प्रवर्तते

॥ ९९॥

jādyāṁśaḥ prakṛtē rūpam vikāri triguṇam ca tat |

citō bhōgāpavargārtham prakṛtiḥ sā pravartatē

|| 99||

1	<i>jaaDya amshah prakrite roopam</i>	<i>The <u>inert aspect</u> has to be ascribed to Prakriti, which</i>
2	<i>vikaari triguNam cha tat;</i>	<i>is <u>ever-changing</u> and composed of the <u>three Gunas</u>.</i>
3	<i>chitah bhoga apavarga artham</i>	<i>For gaining <u>experience</u> and <u>release</u> of the Atman –</i>
4	<i>prakritih saa pravartate</i>	<i>these are the (two) functions of Prakriti.</i>

Having clarified the difference in the naming between Saankhya and Vedanta, we are now ready to resolve the question mark over the inertness experienced in deep sleep. To whom does the inertness belong – to the Atman (Spirit) or to Prakriti (Matter)?

1 The first point made is that Prakriti is responsible for the inertness.

The reasoning behind this conclusion is this: The Bhaatas have already taken likes and dislikes, effort, good and evil actions, Paapa and Punya, and Sukha-Dhukha as being qualities superimposed on their 'inert Atman'. The Saankhyans are suggesting to them that unwittingly they have done the right thing by placing these qualities as belonging to the inert Prakriti or Avidya. There is no need to consider this Prakriti to be the Atman. That is the function of Purusha, not Prakriti. Let Prakriti remain the possessor of inertness; that is the rightful source of all inertness.

2 The Saankhyans further justify their stand by giving the term **Vikaari** to Prakriti. Vikaari means “*modifications*”, and refers to the innumerable modification of Sattwa, Rajas and Tamas. The Ajnana, or Avidya, or Prakriti itself is the foremost of these modifications. All modifications are a result of this root modification.

When the Gunas are in equilibrium, the state is called Samya Avastha, and no creation is forthcoming in such a state. When disequilibrium sets in, then the Gunas begin to take innumerable modifications.

3 Chitah: “*Atman*” or “*individualised Purusha*”. This term for Purusha is unique to Saankhya philosophy. Two purposes of the inertness of Prakriti are given in this Pada:

i) **Bhoga:** “*enjoyment*” or “*experience*” of the Chitah. This refers to all the transactions between the Atman and the world of objects.

ii) **Apavarga:** “*release*” or “*liberation*” of the Chitah. The whole purpose of worldly transactions is to have ‘a learning experience’ so that one can make necessary adjustments in life to bring about the release of Chitah from worldly entanglements.

4 This is the only purpose of Prakriti – to enable one to gain experiences by which the release of the Chitah is attained. This whole department of life is governed by Prakriti. Chitah, the Atman of the Saankhyans, does not play any active role in the release process. It has to simply wait for Prakriti to bring about the necessary Vikaari or change so that Avidya is recognised for what it is. The Chitah’s release immediately follows this recognition. For this to happen, a proper knowledge of Spirit and Matter (Purusha & Prakriti) is needed. By the knowledge of differentiating Chitah from Prakriti, the Chitah attains its liberation.

ON MEANING OF “PRAKRITI”

Swamiji further went into detail about the word **Prakriti**. He described three ways in which Samskrit words can convey their meanings:

i) **Yogika:** The meaning is derived etymologically, i.e. from the root of the word. An example is ‘Rama’, the meaning of which is derived from the root *ram*, “*to delight in*”. Therefore, Rama means “*one who delights*.”

ii) **Roodhi:** The meaning taken is the commonly established usage of the word, unconnected with the root. An example is the word ‘Mandapa’, the meaning of which is commonly established as “*an open hall*”. No reference is made to the root of the word.

iii) **Yoga Roodhi:** The meaning taken is a combination of the above two. Both, the root as well as the established usage play a role in obtaining the meaning.

The word **Prakriti** is an example of this third type. The root meaning is “*that which effectively does or creates*”. The established meaning is **Avyakta** (used in this verse), which means “*not manifested to the mind or the senses*”. Both these meanings are combined in the word Prakriti. It has to be taken in both senses.

For our information only, Swamiji gave an example (unrelated to the text) of the word ‘Pankaja’. The root meaning is “*that which is born out of mud*”. The established meaning is “*the lotus flower*”. Both are combined to give the full meaning as “*the lotus is a flower that grows in muddy water*”.

Verse 100: Bondage & Liberation of Chitah by Knowledge

असङ्गायाश्चितेर्बन्धमोक्षौ भेदाग्रहान्मतौ ।

बन्धमोक्षव्यवस्थार्थं पूर्वेषामिव चिद्विदा

॥ १००॥

asaṅgāyāścīterbandhamōkṣau bhēdāgrahānmatau |

bandhamōkṣavyavasthārtham pūrvēṣāmiva cidbhidā

|| 100||

1	<i>asangaayaah chiteh bandha</i>	Although the Chitah is unattached, its <u>bondage</u>
2	<i>mokshhau bheda agrahaan matau;</i>	and <u>release</u> , due to its difference (from Prakriti or mind) not being comprehended, is postulated.
3	<i>bandha-mokshha vyavasthaa artham</i>	The concepts of bondage and liberation have this as their <u>contextual origin</u> or presence.
4	<i>poorveshhaam iva chit bhidaa.</i>	Like the earlier schools (Nyaya and Poorva Meemamsa), the Saankhyans , too, speak of “ <u>multiple Atmans</u> ”.

The reason for bringing in the Saankhyans as school No.3, is to refute school No.2. That task was done by attributing inertness to Prakriti, not Atman. The Saankhyan concepts of bondage and liberation are also in alignment with Vedanta. The similarities being acknowledged, this verse shifts to the major difference between the Saankhyan school and Vedanta, thereby launching the refutation of the Saankhyan school as well, and heading towards Vedanta's Non-dual Brahman as being the ultimate concept of Consciousness.

Similarities Between Saankhya and Vedanta

In addition to the brief differences mentioned earlier (pg 122), we now go into greater detail, firstly of all the similarities and later of their key differences. The similarities place Vedanta's rubber stamp on the refutation of School No.2 by the Saankhyans.

1 Like Vedanta's Purusha, the Saankhyan **Chitah** is also unattached to the manifested world. There remains an aloofness in the Chitah from the world. This compares with the 'Aspashtah' or “untouched-ness” of Purusha. [For clarity we use, in the discussion below, the word 'Spirit' when referring to both Purusha and Chitah.]

The question that arises is: “How can the concepts of bondage and liberation be raised for something which remains undisturbed and aloof from all taint of worldliness? How can such an entity ever be bound? How can there ever be the need for its liberation? These questions and their answers are valid in Saankhya as they are in Vedanta.

2 Bheda Agrahaan: “the difference is not comprehended”. What is the difference being referred to here? In the waking and dream states, the difference between Spirit and the active mind is not comprehended. In the deep sleep state, the difference between Spirit and an inactive Prakriti is not comprehended. For this reason, bondage and liberation are introduced as intellectual pegs upon which to hang our thoughts.

3 Both schools could well do without the terms bondage and liberation. They agree that to speak of bondage and liberation of an unattached entity is unnecessary. Our intellect can grasp only the material aspect, not the spiritual aspect. Only a very subtle, purified intellect can grasp the difference between the two.

Up to here, the Saankhyan school and Vedanta run in agreement with each other.

Primary Difference Between Saankhya and Vedanta

4 Now we look into the two key differences between the two. Both points are just introduced here, and will be considered in detail in the next Chapter when the Yoga school enters the debate. There are two major differences between Saankhya and Vedanta:

i) **The Idea of “Multiple Chitas”:** *Chit Bhidaa*: “multiple Atmans”. Saankhya speaks of multiple ‘Chitas’, and each one is infinite! Relative to Vedanta this appears illogical, but the Saankhyans do not see that, owing mainly to the way they have defined Prakriti above Chitah. Prakriti is universal, but Chitah to them is viewed solely in relation to an individual.

ii) **The Concept of Ishwara**: This difference appears in the next verse, but mention is made of it here for completeness within Part 1. The Saankhyans do not make any provision in their system for Ishwara. This is because their Prakriti operates independent of Purusha. In Vedanta, Ishwara is defined as the Supreme Brahman in association with His Shakti or Prakriti. The Yoga philosophy in the next Chapter will refute the Saankhyan school’s absence of an **Ishwara** in their system.

Verse 101: *Differentiating Mahat, Prakriti & Purusha*

महतः परमव्यक्तमिति प्रकृतिरुच्यते ।

श्रुतावसङ्गता तद्वदसङ्गो हीत्यतः स्फुटा

॥ १०१॥

mahataḥ paramavyaktamiti prakṛtirucyate |

śrutāvasaṅgatā tadvadaśaṅgō hītyataḥ sphuṭā

॥ 101॥

1	<i>mahataḥ paramavyaktam</i>	<i>“Higher than Mahat is undifferentiated matter . . .”,</i>
2	<i>iti prakritih uchyate;</i>	<i>in this way Prakriti is explained (in the Shruti).</i>
3	<i>shrutau asaṅgataa tadvad</i>	<i>Similarly, in the Shruti, the detachment (of Purusha)</i>
4	<i>asangaḥ hi iti ati sphuṭā.</i>	<i>is clearly brought out by “but this Self is unattached”.</i>

The previous verse highlighted the difficulty in comprehending the difference between the **Spirit** (Chitah or Purusha) and the material superimpositions of the waking, dream and deep sleep states. **Mahat**, the total intellect and mind, is the superimposition that appears in the waking and dream states. In deep sleep state, **Prakriti** herself is the superimposition as all other superimpositions recede into a dormant state.

The three entities, Spirit, Mahat and Prakriti are clearly related to each other in the first three Padas of the verse. The hierarchy is as follows, from the lower to the higher:

1 Mahat: “total intellect”, representing the effects of Prakriti, described in the diagram as “Prakriti/Vikriti”.

2 Prakriti: “the primal cause”, representing that which only produces effects but which has no cause for it.

3 Asangataa: “the detachment of Spirit”, representing the consciousness principle or Atman, which provides sentiency to the human being. This is especially mentioned here to contrast with the ‘contact of mind and Atman’ theory put forward by the first two schools. It also tells us that Spirit is neither a cause nor an effect.

Swamiji quoted a famous Saankhya Karika to illustrate this three-way relationship:

***Moola prakritih avikritih; mahadaadyaa prakriti-vikritayah sapta;
Shodakastu vikaarah; na prakritih na vikritih purushah |***

Meaning: “Root Ignorance (Avidya) is not an effect; starting from Mahat, etc, we have the 7 principles which are both cause and effect; then we have 16 principles which are only effects (not causes); and neither a cause nor an effect is the Purusha.”

Shrutau: “in the Shruti”. A point about the placement of this word is interesting. It refers to the two Shruti quotations cited in the verse. One is on Prakriti, and the other on the taintless Purusha. ***Shrutau*** is placed right in between the two references. This is called “Deheli Deepavat Nyaya”, a logic derived from a lamp placed between two rooms to light up both rooms. The two Shruti citations are as follows:

i) From the Katha Upanishad

1-2 The first citation is from Katha Upanishad, 1.3.11. Apart from Mahat and Prakriti, it also includes Purusha:

***Mahatah paramavyaktam, avyaktaat purushah parah |
Purushaanna param kinchit, saa kaashtaa saa paraa gatih ||***

Meaning: “Beyond Mahat, is the unmanifested (Prakriti); beyond the unmanifested is the Purusha. Beyond the Purusha there is nothing; that is the end, the highest Goal.”

i) From the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad

3-4 The second citation is an extract from the Brihadaranyaka Up, IV.3.15:

Asangah ayam purusha iti | Meaning: “. . . because this Self is unattached.”

॥ इति चित्रदीपोनाम षष्ठः परिच्छेदः ॥ ६.१/३ ॥

END OF BOOK 6, Part 1/3

॥ ॐ तत् सत् ॥

Om Tat Sat



An Introduction to the Next Part

The Saankhyans are sufficient to refute the previous two viewpoints on the nature of the Self. The subject matter of this Chapter on the nature of the Self regarding its inertness or intelligence, is thus well rounded off.

From here we continue with the **Yoga School**, which refutes the Saankhya school on the matter of multiple Chitas, and introduces the key concept of Ishwara by which the hierarchy given above is clearly seen. Ishwara becomes the topic of discussion in the first chapter of the next Part.

The Saankhyans come closest yet to the Atman, but not fully. But the Saankhya's Chitah is different for each individual soul. The Yoga school comes even closer in their view of Atman. The Yoga school then is brought in to refute the Saankhya's viewpoint.

Finally, the Vedantic viewpoint is used to refute the Yoga school as well. This is just to give an idea as regards the flow of thought on entering Part 2 of Book 6 of the *Panchadashee*.

Uniqueness of Vedanta's Concept of Atman

We have seen thus far what the different schools take the Atman to be. Starting with the body, we came up to Avidya.

In Vedanta, Purusha or Brahman is the One universal Supreme Reality. Vedanta's Atman and Brahman are actually the same entity. It is not as if Atman is a 'part' of Brahman. Atman is merely the term used when we speak of Reality with reference to an individual.

The Vedantic concept of Atman is unmatched by any other school.
