

Tattva Bodha of Adi Sankaracharya – A Vedantic Primer : Part 2 (contd.)

(Lecture Notes compiled by Venkat Ganesan from the series of
SVBF Lectures given by Dr. S. YEGNASUBRAMANIAN)

The discussion on the mahAvAkya ‘tat-tvam-asi’ was concluded in the last article of this series (*Paramaartha Tattvam Issues 5.1 & 5.2*). We will continue with the discussion of *jeevanmukta* in this article.

6. Fruit of Self-Knowledge – *jnAnaphala*

This section enumerates the benefits of the Knowledge of the Self. One who realizes the identity between *Jiva* and *Isvara* identifies himself with *Brahma* or Pure Consciousness. This Knowledge of *vedAnta* should be imparted by a *Guru*. Only a *Guru* can indicate the subtle meaning behind *vedAnta* and make one realize the Self. The knowledge can be gained in three different ways - *pratyaksha*, *paroksha* and *aparoksha*. *Pratyaksha* knowledge is direct knowledge which is gained by direct perception of an object by any of the sense organs. The object is ‘near’ the knower or perceiver. *Paroksha* knowledge is indirect where the object of knowledge is not in the vicinity of the perceiver but the means of knowledge is through inference – for example, if there is smoke, there should be fire. The third one is *aparoksha* which is neither direct nor indirect, but immediate.

The immediate knowledge is to realize that the object of knowledge already exists in oneself.

Knowledge of the Self can only qualify such an immediate definition and can only be imparted by a *Guru* by his teachings. When the *jiva* realizes he is *brahma* or *Suddha caitanyam*, he becomes a *jivanmukta* in this birth and *videhamukta* after this human life. So, as a result of this knowledge the *jiva* becomes a *jnaanI* and is liberated. The liberation referred here is from *samsara* or *karma phala*..

एवं च वेदान्तवाक्यैः सद्गुरुरूपदेशेन च सर्वेष्वपिभूतेषु
येषां ब्रह्मबुद्धिरुत्पन्ना ते जीवन्मुक्ताः इत्यर्थः ।

Hence, by the vedAntic teachings (words) imparted by a vedAntic teacher (sadguru), those in whom the Knowledge of Brahma with respect to all beings is born, they are the jivanmuktas (liberated while living itself)

वेदान्तवाक्यैः by vedAntic teachings

सद्गुरुरूपदेशेन च With the teachings of a vedAntic
(सत् - आत्मा) teacher

सर्वेष्वपिभूतेषु येषां ब्रह्मबुद्धिरुत्पन्ना Those in whom the
Knowledge of brahma is born with respect
to all beings

जीवन्मुक्ताः इत्यर्थः I are known as jivanmuktas –
liberated (from samsara) i.e, the Knowledge
that ‘I am poorNa’

Then, the student will ask -

ननु जीवन्मुक्तः कः ?

Then, who is a jivanmukta:?

यथा देहोरूढं पुरुषोरूढं ब्राह्मणोरूढं

शूद्रोरूढमस्मीति दृढनिश्चयस्तथा

नाहं ब्राह्मणः न शूद्रः न पुरुषः किन्तु असंगः

सच्चिदानन्द –स्वरूपः प्रकाशरूपः सर्वान्तर्यामी

चिदाकाशरूपोरूढमस्मीति

दृढनिश्चय-रूपोरूपरोक्षज्ञानवान् जीवन्मुक्तः ॥

Just as the one who has the firm belief that ‘I am the body, a man, a Brahmin, a Sudra’- in the same

way, one who has the firm belief (*aparoksha jnAna*) that 'I am not a Brahmin, not a Sudra, not a man, but am unattached, of the nature of *saccidAnanda*, effulgent, the inner spirit of all, the formless awareness – is the *jivanmukta*.

The term *अपरोक्षज्ञानम्* is the immediate knowledge and is nothing but *आत्मज्ञानम्* itself.

किन्तु असंगः But free from all associations

सच्चिदानन्द –स्वरूपः Of the nature of *sat* (existing in all three time domains), *cit* (of the nature of *caitanya*) and *aananda* (of the nature of *poorNa*)

प्रकाशरूपः Self effulgent

सर्वान्तर्यामी In and through everything in creation.

As *कारणम्* (cause) is in and through all *कार्यम्* (effect) – like gold is in all the ornaments. Since 'I am Brahma, the cause, I exist in all' as the *अन्तर्यामी* – the indweller.

चिदाकाशरूपः 'I am space-like awareness – the Formless Consciousness. (Here *caityanyam* is compared to all pervading space).

Physically there is no visible difference between a *jivanmukta* and others.

Now on, the author elaborates on who a *jivanmukta* is.

ब्रह्मैवाहमस्मीत्यपरोक्षज्ञानेन निखिलकर्मबन्ध-

विनिर्मुक्तः स्यात् ।

By the immediate knowledge (aparoksha jnAna) that 'I am brahma' one becomes free from samsara of all karmas.

ब्रह्मैवाहं-अस्मि-इति-अपरोक्ष-ज्ञानेन By the immediate knowledge that 'I am brahma'

निखिल-कर्मबन्ध-विनिर्मुक्तः स्यात् । one becomes free from bondage (of all actions)

7. Karma

There are three different types of *karma* detailed here – *sancita karma*, *praarabdha karma*

and *Agami karma*. Every action done has a result (merits - *punyam* /demerits - *paapam*) depending on the motive and gross action. Some results are visible (*drishTa phalam*) and some are not visible (*adrishTa phalam*) and subtle. These subtle results of action are called *karma* or *karma phalam* and that gives rise to cycles of birth and death or *samsara*. The subtle elements come into picture as long as the notion of doer-ship is associated with the actions. These subtle elements should be experienced in a form and field of experience. The form and environment will be dictated by the magnitude of merits and demerits together. *sancita karma* is the component which is a cumulative of merits and demerits on all the births together. *prArabdha karma* is the component which is the fructifying portion of *sancita karma* responsible for this birth. *PrArabdha* can only be exhausted by experience of pleasures (merits) and sufferings (demerits). *Agami karma* is the component which gets accumulated from any moment onwards in this birth; in other words, all the subtle results which contribute to the *sancita karma* from this moment onwards in this birth. There can be a portion of *Agaami karma* which may get fructified in this *janma* (birth) itself.

Jiva, by ignorance (which was basically the reason for this birth) has the notion of doer-ship of actions. The *jiva* has a firm conviction like 'I am a man', 'I am strong', 'I am the body' etc. So, *sancita karma* gets accumulated and when the gross body is exhausted with the *praarabdha*, the *jiva* takes another birth (field of experience) with the fructified *sancita karma* and with subsequent actions and sense of doer-ship *Agaami* continues. Thus, there is no escape from this cycle of *samsara* without Self realization. *Agami karma* is prevalent only in the human form because of free will and cognition. Animals and other living beings live based on instincts and there is no ego or the notion of doer-ship and hence there is no *Agami karma* for them.

कर्माणि कतिविधानि सन्तीति चेत्
आगामिसञ्चितप्रारब्धभेदेन त्रिविधानि सन्ति ।

*If it is asked : How many kinds of karma are there?
(the answer is); there are three kinds of karma,
namely, AgAmi, sancita and prArabdh.*

ज्ञानोत्पत्त्यनंतरं ज्ञानिदेहकृतं पुण्यपापरूपं
कर्म यदस्ति तदागामीत्यभिधीयते ।

*The results of actions good or bad, performed
through the body of the jnAnI after the dawn of
knowledge is known as AgAmi.*

सञ्चितं कर्म किम् ? What is sancita karma ?

अनन्तकोटिजन्मनां बीजभूतं सत् यत्कर्मजातं
पूर्वार्जितं तिष्ठति तत् सञ्चितं ज्ञेयम् ।

*The result of actions performed in (all) the previous
births which are in the seed form to give rise to
endless crores of births (in future) is called sancita
(accumulated) karma.*

प्रारब्धं कर्म किमिति चेत् ।

If it is asked: what is prArabdh karma? then:

इदं शरीरमुत्पाद्य इह लोके एवं सुखदुःखादिप्रदं यत्कर्म
तत्प्रारब्धं ।
भोगेन नष्टं भवति प्रारब्धकर्मणां भोगादेव क्षय इति ।

*Having given birth to this body, the actions which
give results in this very world, in the form of
happiness or sorrow, and which can be destroyed
only by enjoying or suffering them, is called
prArabdh karma.*

8. Liberation – Freedom from bondage

A Jivanmukta or jnAnI has a strong conviction like 'I am not a man', 'I am not the body', 'I am unattached' and he has the vision of pure Consciousness or Brahma in all beings. He does not differentiate from one being to another and is established in sat-cit-Ananda svarUpam. He does not have any sense of doer-

ship or does not claim result for any of his actions. With the advent of knowledge of Self, his sancita is burnt. He has to live through his prArabdh because prArabdh karma should be exhausted. But, the pleasures and sufferings of his own prArabdh does not affect him because he has no happiness or sorrow. He is always in Ananda or equanimity. Since there is no association from the results of action, AgAmi has no effect on his kAraNa SarIram. But, whatever actions are done by a jivanmukta with their subtle results, are distributed to others since he disowns them. The merits are distributed to those who praise him, adore him or worship him. And, the demerits (if any) are distributed to those who criticize him, abuse him or hurt him. His sUkshma SarIram (subtle body) departs when the prArabdh is exhausted and sthUla SaIiram (gross body) dies. There is no kAraNa SarIram since the sancita karma is burnt and a jivanmukta is also a videhamukta (no gross body) after the prArabdh is exhausted. Thus, the knower of the Self is free from the cycles of birth and death and he is one with the Brahma or Ananda.

सञ्चितं कर्म ब्रह्मैवाहमिति
निश्चयात्मकज्ञानेन नश्यति ।

*The sancita karma is destroyed by the firm
Knowledge 'I am brahma'.*

आगामि कर्म अपि ज्ञानेन नश्यति

*And the AgAmi karma is also destroyed by Self
Knowledge.*

किंच आगामि –कर्मणां

नलिनीदलगतजलवत् ज्ञानिनां सम्बन्धो नास्ति ।

*And the jnAnI is not affected by it just as a lotus
leaf is not affected by the water on it.*

किंच ये ज्ञानिनं स्तुवन्ति भजन्ति अर्चयन्ति
तान्प्रति ज्ञानिकृतं आगामि पुण्यं गच्छति ।

In addition, those who praise, worship and adore the *jnAnI*, the results of the good actions of the *jnAnI*, go to them.

ये ज्ञानिनं निन्दन्ति द्विषन्ति दःखप्रदानं कुर्वन्ति
तान्प्रति ज्ञानिकृतं सर्वमागामि क्रियमाणं यदवाच्यं कर्म पापात्मकं
तद्गच्छति ।

Those who abuse, hate or cause sorrow to a *jnAnI*, the results of the unspeakable future sinful actions of the *jnAnI*, go to them.

तथा चात्मवित्संसारं तीर्त्वा ब्रह्मानन्दमिहैव प्राप्नोति ।

Thus, the knower of the Self, having crossed *samsAra*, attains Supreme Bliss here itself.

The author concludes the *prakaraNam* with a quote from the *Sruti* and *smriti* to affirm the fruit of this Knowledge. *Sruti* says 'one who realizes *Atman* is free from sorrows'.

तरति शोकमात्मवित् इति श्रुतेः ।

Thus the *Sruti* affirms : ' The knower of the Self goes beyond all sorrows'.

Smriti says 'It does not matter if a *jnAnI* sheds his gross body in a holy place like *KaaSi* or in a *caNDaala*'s house because he is free from *dehAbhimAnam* (association with the body or the notion 'I am the body') after Self-realization. It is a belief from religious teachings that one should die in a sacred place. But, for a *jnaani* it is immaterial because he has no *sancita karma* to attach with another subtle and gross body.

तनुं त्यजतु वा काश्यां श्वपचस्य गृहेरूथ वा ।

ज्ञानसंप्राप्तिसमये मुक्तोसौ विगताशयः ।

इति स्मृतेश्च ।

Let the *jnAnI* shed his body in *kASi* (a sacred place) or in the house of a dog-eater (*caNDaala*), (it is immaterial because), at the time of gaining Knowledge (itself) he is liberated being freed from all results of actions. So asserts the *smriti* too.

इति तत्त्वबोधप्रकरणं समाप्तम् ।

Thus ends the *prakaraNa* called *tattvabodha*.

Source material:

1. *Tattvabodha* of Sankaracharya, Central Chinmaya Mission Trust, Bombay. 1995.
2. *Tattvabodha - Lectures* by Swami Paramarthananda, Madras.

Summary:

The discussions could be broadly classified into five topics:

1. Introduction
2. Analysis of Individual
3. Analysis of Creation
4. Analysis of the Identity between *jiva* and *Iswara*
5. Fruit of Self Knowledge

I. Introduction: उपोद्घातः

After the initial *mangala sloka*, the subject matter is introduced. The author then outlined the four-fold qualifications (*sAdhana-catusTaya-sampatti*) namely,

- a. *viveka* (discrimination),
- b. *vairAgya* (Detachment from the non-eternal);
- c. *SamAdi-shaTka-sampatti* -six-fold attributes for self control: *Sama, dama, uparama, titiksha, Sraddha, samAdhAnam*
- d. *Mumukshutvam* – strong yearning for liberation

AtmA alone is the Truth and all others are *mithyA*, is the essence of the whole teaching. The rest of the topics are presented in the form of a discussion between student and teacher.

II. Analysis of Individual: जीवविचारः

The individual is broadly classified as *AtmA* and *anAtmA*. The *anAtmA* is looked at from three angles:

1. *SarIratrayam (3)* – *sthUla, sUkshma, kAraNa SarIras*

2. *avasthAtrayam* (3) – *jAgrat*, *svapna*, *sushpti*
3. *koSapancakam* (5) – *annamaya*, *prANamaya*, *manomaya*, *vijnAnamaya*, *Anandamaya koSas*.

AtmA differs from all these eleven.

Following differences are inferred between *AtmA* and *anAtmA*:

<i>AtmA</i>	<i>anAtmA</i>
Subject - 'I'	Object of Knowledge
Witness, Changeless, <i>nirvikAra</i>	All 11 subject to change <i>savikAra</i>
<i>cetana</i> <i>tattvam</i>	Is modified form of matter <i>jaDam</i>
'I' the <i>AtmA</i> is different from <i>anAtmA</i>	

Q. If 'I' am different from *anAtmA*, then what is 'my' nature?

A. सच्चिदानन्दस्वरूपः I am of the nature of

- चित् , being the witness
- सत् , changeless, existence
- आनन्दः – पूर्णः - not limited by time and space.

एवं सच्चिदानन्दस्वरूपं स्वात्मानं विजानीयात्।

Thus one should know oneself to be of the nature of *sat-cit-Ananda-svarUpa*.

III. Analysis of Creation - सृष्टिविचारः

Two concepts are introduced namely, *Brahma* and *mAyA*.

<i>Brahma</i>	+	<i>mAyA</i>
↓	↘ <i>Iswara</i>	
- <i>caitanya</i>		- whole material creation in <i>kAraNa</i> form
- All pervading		- Unmanifest
- Not bound by Time & space		- Causal condition

anAdI

- Fundamental matter is beginning less
- Fundamental Consciousness also is beginningless.

So, *Iswara* also is *anAdI*.

Differences between *Brahma* and *mAyA*

<i>Brahma</i>	<i>mAyA</i>
- <i>cetana</i>	<i>acetana</i>
- <i>nirvikAra</i>	<i>savikAra</i>
- <i>nirguNa</i>	<i>saguNA</i>
- <i>satya</i>	<i>mithyA</i>
(independent existence)	(dependent)

- Creation is nothing but *mAyA* undergoing modifications and through various stages *mAyA* becomes the full fledged universe.

- Creation is the modification of the unmanifest *mAyA* to become the manifest universe

~~- In and through all processes, *Brahma* does not do anything or change. In Its presence, *mAyA* is capable of doing every thing.~~

• Topic of *srishTi* talked in four stages:

1. *panca sUkshma bhUta srishTi*
2. *sUkshma SarIra* and *sUkshma prapanca srishTi*
3. *panca sthUla bhUta srishTi*
4. *sthUla SarIra* and *sthUla prapanca srishTi*.

No *kAraNa prapanca* or *kAraNa SarIra SrushTi*, since they are *anAdi*.

- *sthUla SarIra* and *sthUla prapanca* are similar since both are matter.
- *sUkshma SarIra* and *sUkshma prapanca* are similar since both are also matter.

I.e, *vyashTi* (individual) and *samashTi* (total) are similar /

पिण्ड ब्रह्माण्डयोः ऐक्यं संभूतम्

Thus is concluded the *srushTi prakriyA* or the analysis of creation.

IV. Analysis of the Identity Between *Jiva* and *Iswara*

- The most important topic - central theme of *tattvabodha*.
- Identity originally revealed in the *Upanishad*

Tat	tvam	asi
□	□	□
Iswara:	jIva:	aikyam

This is also known as *mahAvAkyavicAra*

Here, both *jiva* and *Iswara* are clearly defined.

Both consist of three aspects:

1. All pervading Consciousness - *sarvagata caitanyam*, *bimba* or *sAkshi caitanyam*, - changeless, *nirvikAram*
 2. All pervading Consciousness, reflected or manifested form, *pratibimba caitanyam*
 3. For reflection, a medium is needed - *upAdhi*
- *Iswara*: □ *samashTi upAdhi*
i.e *sthUla*, *sUkshma*, *kAraNa prapanca* - totality of *upAhi*.

i.e *Iswara*: = *bimba caitanya* +
pratibimba caitanya +
samashTi upAdhi

In the case of *jiva*:

- Also has all the three aspects, EXCEPT that the reflecting medium *vyashTi upAdhi* - individual and not total.

For the sake of convenience, the three are viewed as two, namely:

pratibimba caitanyam + *upAdhi* □ *ahamkAra* (*ego*)

So, "I" is a mixture of *sAkshi caitanyam* and *ahamkAra*.

To put it concisely,

Jiva = *sAkshi caitanyam* + *vyashTi ahamkAra*

Iswara = *sAkshi caitanyam* + *samashTi ahamkAra*

ahamkAra varies from individual to individual because the *SarIram* and the *pratibimba caitanyam* are different.

So, all differences of *jivas* are based on *ahamkAra*.

However, the *bimba* or *sAkshi caitanyam* is same in all beings.

When the term "I" is used, there can be two options:

1. Identity with the *ahamkAra* portion , OR
2. Identity with *sAkshi caitanyam* portion.

When "I" = > *sAkshi* , then "I" am the *sAkshi* in and through all beings, bodies etc - i.e "I" am *brahma*

When "I" = > *ahamkAra* , then, "I" am finite, will have birth, death etc. - *samsArI*

The knowledge should be that "I" can use *ahamkAra* for my transactions with the world, but "I" am NOT *ahamkAra*.

To elaborate this , the teacher asks:

Q. "How can 'I' and *Iswara* be identical?"

A. The word '*aham*' has a common meaning and a special meaning.

If *aham* □ *ahamkAra* - common meaning, then the *jiva* is limited, etc. and the *iswara* is all - knowing etc. - *saguNa*

But, when the *jnAnI* says *aham*, it has the special, implied meaning of *sAkshi caitanyam* - so also, *Iswara* - *nirguNa*.

There is no difference between *nirguNa jiva* and *nirguNa Iswara*.

V. Fruit of Knowledge:

जीव-इश्वर-ऐक्य-ज्ञान-फलम्

The benefit is *jIvanmukti* (being liberated while living) initially, and *videhamukti*, after death (no more birth).

Even though *jIvanmukti* could be defined in so many ways (like freedom from fear, wants, sorrow, limitations etc.), the author defines it as freedom from *karma*.

Three types of *karma* are defined:

1. *sancita karma* - all *karma* accumulated in the past countless births and in this birth, upto the time of Self Knowledge.
2. *prArabdha karma* - the fructifying portion of *sancita karma* that gives this body, longevity, varieties of experience etc.
3. *AgAmI karma* - while *prArabda* is exhausted, what is added in this human birth.

Q. what will happen to each of these *karmas*, in the case of a *jnAnI*.

- *sancita karma* is totally destroyed by Knowledge as *karma* in dream is destroyed by waking.
- *PrArabda* cannot be avoided; so the body will continue; but, because of detachment, he is not affected by pleasure or pain.
- *JnAnI* really does not have *AgAmi*.

Hypothetically, if acquired, will be distributed to praisers and criticizers.

This stage is called *jIvanmukti*

Once *prArabda* is exhausted, the body has no function or need. So, when the body falls, all three *SarIras* will vanish too. So he gets *videhamukti* too.

Whereas, in the case of an *ajnAI*, only the gross body vanishes while the other two remain for rebirth.

The author gives support from *Sruti* and *smriti*.

- Everyone who wants to cross the ocean of *samsAra* should acquire *jnAnam*.
- Once a *jnAnI*, it does not matter how he lived or died (shed the body)
- Whether his body falls in an auspicious place or in a *caNDAla*'s house, it is immaterial, because he is already *Brahma* and, after the fall of the body also, he is *Brahma*.

With this, the topic of *jnAnaphalam* is concluded.

Om, SAnti: SAnti: SAnti: