

Inner Realization Paves the Way to Infinite Bliss

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Abstract:

Since time immemorial every human being has been in quest of scholarly pursuit for the attainment of peace, happiness, power and wisdom etc. The prime objective of all spiritual scriptures is to seek union of the soul with the Divine. As the comprehensive exposition and branches of learning have sprung from Veda because Veda is unfathomable ocean of wisdom. In spiritual evolution Specialized schools of Yoga recognize yoga as a modification of manifold activities of incoherent mind. A divine scripture Yogavaśiṣṭh¹ was taught by Maharṣhi Vasistha to Rāmachandra about the knowledge of the self. But; Yogasūtra of Patañjali is a codified document of art, science and philosophy of life which is the established system of Rājayoga. It reveals that Yoga is a conscious process of gaining control over mind: ‘citta vṛtti’² for self-realization. According to patañjali – the seer is established real self ‘svarūpa’ – When complete compendium of modification of mind are inhibited. While presenting a brief description of Vedānta in Aparokṣānubhūti Sankrāchārya depicted³ - I am verily Brahman, being equanimous and by nature absolute existence knowledge and bliss. I am not the body which is non-existence itself. This is called true knowledge by the wise, which relates to the realization of the highest truth or direct perception of one’s own self.

Keywords: Veda, Upanisads, Bhāgavad Gītā, Yogasūtra, Philosophy, Salvation, Devotion.

Introduction:

Prime objectives of spiritual treatises are to attain Ātmajñana (Knowledge of the self) or Brahmajñāna (Knowledge of the supreme absolute). Gautam Ṛṣi says - “ज्ञानाधिकरणमात्मा”⁴ Knowledge is inherent in the soul. This knowledge means eternal self-knowledge which is the supreme, the infinite. Metaphysical experience is not the knowledge, it is science of Yoga to be unified with spiritual transformation and eternal self-knowledge. Yogic sādhanā tends energetic practice and overwhelms self-perfection and self-realization in Samādhi⁵. The path of devotion aims at supreme love, bliss through self-consecration. In the journey of realizing the supreme goal of life one can acquire the true knowledge through the path of devotion. The way of knowledge tends to self-realization or supreme self. For realizing the divine consciousness and one’s own infinite potential Guru (Spiritual teacher) is prime source of inspiration. So the influence and graciousness of Guru inevitable for eternal knowledge and successive realization. According to Gītā⁶ - न हि ज्ञानेन सदृशं पवित्रमिह विद्यते। There is nothing in this world as pure as knowledge. Praśn Upanishad describes conception governing supreme consciousness lies in our reverential devotion. In Kenopaniṣad⁷- यस्या मतं तस्य मतं, मतं यस्य न वेद सः अविज्ञतं विजानतां विज्ञातमविजानताम् । Only He knows the Reality or Absolute (ब्रह्म). He thinks himself unaware of it. He who professes to know the absolute knows it not. He is unknown to those who profess to know him and is known to those who do not profess to know. According to Kenopaniṣad⁸ - प्रतिबोधविदितं मतममृतत्वं हि विन्दते आत्मना विन्दते वीर्यं विद्यया विन्दतेऽमृतम् । Brahman can be realized with reference to every single act of consciousness. Aurobindo says⁹ – The status of knowledge, then, which Yoga envisages is not merely an intellectual conception of the truth.

In the Sanskrit scriptures saints and sages are considered as the eternally Divine and become God realized through devotion and grace of God. The knowledge of Vedas & Upanisads was transmitted from Rṣi – Those Rṣis being divine personalities were capable of retaining the divine knowledge of Vedas. Thus, the Vedas are called śhruti (श्रुति)¹⁰ which means to have laid down in the divine mind simply by listening and were called the perceiver or seer of truth. (मन्त्रद्रष्टा)¹¹

The Vedas have three (3) sections, 1-Mantra or saṁhītā (मन्त्र-संहिता), 2-Brahman (ब्राह्मण) & 3-Āraṇyak (आरण्यक). Mantras are the invocative sentences. Brahman section describes the details of the performance of the Jajnas. But in some mantras of it there is description of the worship of various forms of God. Āraṇyak is the essence of the knowledge of Veda. It describes about reverential devotion and supremacy of God. The Upanisads are philosophical treatises, Sadānanda in Vedāntasāra has depicted- वेदान्तो नाम उपनिषत्प्रमाणम् | The Upanisads are often called Vedanta. Literally Vedanta means the end of Veda, the highest and ultimate teaching of Veda is received by pupils sitting near preceptor (Guru) devotedly. There are four Vedas: Ṛgved, Yajurved, Sāmved and Atharva ved. All these are considered as 1180 Upanisads of Brāhman section. But out of these 108 Upanisads are still available.

Vedānta tradition consists of different concepts with unique interpretation and distinct understanding. This tradition is well organized for the emergence of Dveita Darśan with the recognition and reflection of dualistic system of Vedānta.

Divine Doctrines of the ĀCĀRYAS:

The principal subject of Brahmsūtra explained by different commentators. The summary of this section is as follows-

Commentator भाष्यकारः	Name of Commentary शांकरभाष्यम्	Doctrine सिद्धान्तः
Śankar	Śankarbhāṣyam	Advaita
Bhāskar	Bhāskarbhāṣyam	AupādhikBhedāved
Rāmānuja	Śrībhāṣyam	Viśiṣṭadvaita
Madhwācārya	Pūrnapraṇjabhāṣyam	Dvaita
Nimbārka	Vedāntapārijātsaurabh	Dvaitādvaita
Śrīkāṇṭha	Śaivabhāṣyam	Śaivaviśiṣṭādvaiṭa
Śrīpati	Śrīkarbhāṣyam	Virasaivābiśeṣādvaita
Ballava	Anubhāṣyam	Suddhādvaita

Prasthān Trayī consists of three fundamental texts of Vedānta philosophy and they are indeed Upanisads, Brahmasūtra and Bhāgavad Gītā. The significance of philosophical and theological essence of prasthantrayī is presented by saints with the perspective revelations.

Divine existence and omnipresence of absoluteness, the grace, the kindness and blissfulness of supreme form of God are the general outlines of six Darśhan Śāstras the revelations and interpretation of spiritual concepts and conceptions are represented in sacred scriptures such as- Vedas, upaniṣads, vedāṅgas, purāṇas etc. Pristine saints have perceived the Vedic mantras. Some other sages have conceived the vedāṅgas individually through their divine intellect. The Yogi Vivekānda says – RājYoga¹² enables to attain that fine state of realization in which men can sustain all the different mental states. There must be mental perception of all of them. One can perceive how the sensation is travelling, how the mind is receiving it, how it is going to the determinative faculty, and how this gives it to the Puruṣa. As each science requires certain preparations and has its own method, which must be followed before it could be understood, even so in Rāja-Yoga. According to Śivānand RājYoga¹³ is a universal science. He says the Yoga Sūtras of the great sage Patañjali describes the system of mental discipline and the technique to turn the mind away from the passing cosmic world and to direct it towards the eternal reality. In Yoga Sūtras of Patanjali the Yogic vision and knowledge of man's realities are reasonably explored.

Vedic Religion for Domestic Equilibrium:

Out of six Vedangas Kalpasūtras are also the important part of Vedāṅga 'Part of body of the Veda' which are concise form of Vedic religion and sacrificial rituals. Out of 1180 branches of four Vedas kalpasūtras are considered as the most significant. Kalpasūtras are of four kinds:¹⁴ Śrautsūtra, Gṛhasūtra, Dharmasūtra, and Śulbsūtra. Śrautsūtra, Gṛhasūtra are presently available which are related with the vedic revelation but the availability of dharmasūtra & shulbsutra is comparatively very less. Out of the available sutras: Āśvalayan's śrauta and gṛhasūtras, Śankhāyan's śrauta and gṛhasūtras, Apastamb's śrauta, gṛha, Dharm, and Śulvasūtras, Baudhayana's śrauta, gṛha, Dharm, and Śulvasūtras, Katyayana's Śrautasūtra, Vashishth's Dharmasūtra, Gautam's Śrautasūtras, and Bharadwāj's Gṛhasūtra are important.

1. Śrautsūtra describes rule and regulations of yajñas, Gṛhasūtra describes rituals for domestic life, Dharmasūtra ascertains the religious and social ethics of an individual and Śulvasūtra describes the formation of altar of yajña. The agniṣṭom, daśpūrṇmas, agnihotra which are the general and special ceremonies get observed in family life and pitṛuyajña fire ceremony for the ancestors in the family, these system of yajña are described in śrautasūtra.
2. Gṛhasūtra- the general occasional religious ceremonies are prescribed in gṛhasūtra which are related with Vedas for instant sandhyā vandanaṃ (daily prayer). Atithisevā (Hospitality to guest), Swādhyāy (study of the scriptures), Gṛhapraśeṣ (entering to new house), mundana (hair saving ceremony), vivah, murti pratistha, establishment of deity in temple and many more activities are described in gṛhasūtra.
3. Dharmasūtra-it describes the duties of an individual from a king to common people of the family. Here Vedic disciplines are science of duties mentioned for the observation.

Vedas are the root of all divine knowledge and spiritual experience. There are four Vedas: Ṛgved, Yajurved, Sāmved and Atharvved. The prominent of Ṛgved are Agni, Indra, Sūrya. The mitra, sabitru, Rudra, Vruna, Viṣṇu are the celestial gods, four types of priests are engaged in the yajñas. They are ऋत्विज् (Rtvij) होता (Who invokes God with mantra) अध्वर्यु (performer of rituals of yanja) according to Yajurved.

Yajurved –The Vājasaneī (वाजसनेयी) and Madhyandini (माध्यन्दिनी) brāhmanas are described as important out of 109 branches. Isavasyaupaniṣad is the 40th chapter of Yajurved. Sāmved- out of 1000 branches only two branches are available. They are Kauthumīya (कौथुमीय), Jaiminīya (जैमिनीय).

Atharvved- out of 50 branches only one branch Shaunak (शौनक) is available. The penance (प्रायश्चित्त) and lot of prayers and mantras are described in Atharvved for observances of some rituals for fulfillment of material needs.

Monism of Vedanta Philosophy:

The Advaitins ascertain that bound up "to know" is "to be"; that one acquires knowledge only in a way of conscious being which is the content of direct experience. Sankara notes, A disease does not leave off if one simply utters the name of Medicine without taking it, similarly without realization of the Absolute, 'Brahman' one cannot be liberated by the mere alternance of the word Brahman. न गच्छति विना पानं व्याधिः औषधिशब्दतः¹⁵ "Disease is not cured by pronouncing the word 'medicine,' but by taking it." Advaita Vedānta is a religion as much as it is a technical philosophy; it is a way of spiritual enlightenment as well as a system of perception. According to Advaita Vedānta, Brahman is a name for that fullness of being which is the "content" of non-dualistic spiritual experience. The characterization of Brahman as Saccidānanda as infinite being (sat), consciousness (cit), and bliss (ānada). Ātman (or paramātmā, the highest Self), for Advaita Vedānta, Ātman is pure, undifferentiated, self-shining consciousness: It is a supreme power of awareness, mental consciousness, aware only of the Oneness of being. According to Indian philosophy, and especially as developed in the Nyāya system, a pramāna is a "means of valid knowledge." A pramāna is that which produces knowledge with reality; it is that by which the subject knows an object. Following the Bhatta school of Mimāmsa, Advaita Vedānta proclaims six pramānas or "means of valid knowledge." These are pratyakṣa (perception), upamāna (comparison), anupalabdhi (non- cognition), anumāna (inference), arthāpatti (postulation), and sabda (testimony). In terms of pratyakṣa (perception), which is annotated by Vedānta as the going out of the manas (mind) or antahkaraṇa (internal organ) through the indriyas (senses) to the object and the assuming of its form, it is clear that karma cannot be established.

Muṇḍak Upaniṣad¹⁶ reveals – There are two kinds of knowledge, The higher knowledge Parāvidyā and the lower knowledge Aparāvidyā, which is of phenomenal world. The knowledge of the Absolute 'ब्रह्म, आत्मा' is called पराविद्या । The knowledge of the world is अपराविद्या । According to Advaita Vedānta – Parāvidyā is unique and intuitive vision of non-duality. All the philosophical learnings are based on above fundamental system in the Upaniṣad- Ātmā is self-luminous and self-effulgent Parāvidyā is that by which the self is attained as it is the infinite richness of spiritual being.

According to the classification of Muṇḍak Upaniṣad¹⁷ Vedas and Vedāngas like Vyākaraṇa, Chandas, jyotiṣa etc are represented as Aparāvidyā. Metaphysics teaches us the material knowledge (अपराविद्या).

But Aksara or Brahman is attained by Parāvidyā. Kṛṣṇa explains to Arjun in Gītā.¹⁸ द्वाविमौ पुरुषौ लोके क्षरश्चाक्षर एव च । क्षरः सर्वाणि भूतानि कूटस्थोऽक्षर उच्यते ॥

Gītā classified puruṣa in to two division: Kṣara (क्षरः) and Akṣara (अक्षरः) is unchanging and superior abode. Gītā¹⁹ says – अक्षरं ब्रह्म परमम् । Akṣara is distinguished from Kṣara as it is Brahman and Superior.

The Advaitic concept of Salvation (Mokṣa or Mukti) is attained through the mental spiritual discipline of Jñana Yoga. The fundamental system of thought in Vedanta elaborates that a set of four general qualifications of four-fold discipline (साधन चतुष्टय) and three spiritual disciplines (श्रवण-मनन-

निदिध्यासनम्) explicitly important for spiritual realization. The four qualifications are: नित्यानित्यवस्तुविवेकः – Discrimination between these spiritual and superficial. इहामूर्त्रार्थफलभोगविरागः | Dispassion or remonetisation for sensuous. Self – satisfaction शमदमोपरतिः शमः – Mental tranquil, दमः – Self-control, उपरतिः – Dispassion, तितिक्षा – Endurance, समाधान – Intentness of mind, श्रद्धा– Faith.

1st stage

1. श्रवणम्– Hearing or listening.

1. To listen the sage

2. To study the Vedāntic texts. One must follow the mahāvākyas (great sayings) of Veda.

2. मननम्– Thinking (The Advaitic seeker is called upon to appropriate inwardly)

2nd stage (with the help of guru) by means of philosophical principle of Advait and by own living faith.

3. निदिध्यासनम् – Constant meditation After following the above general stages of mental – spiritual discipline of Jñana Yoga one can attain this the self-knowledge or knowledge of Brahman.

Śankar says²⁰ – Brahman is omniscient and omnipotent from which occur the birth, continuance and dissolution of this universe that is manifested through name and form. In Indian Philosophy the supreme value of Mokṣa is annotated as the concept of freedom for the attainment of self-knowledge or liberation. For Advait Vedānta Atman is highest self “Paramātmā” as it is Self-luminous and self- shining consciousness. According to Patañjali there are eight disciplines or ‘Aṣṭāṅga Yoga’ eight-limbed Yoga on the path of realization. It is also the communion of the human soul with Divinity.

Conclusion:

In non-dualistic doctrine of Vedanta Śankar’s viewpoint is the nature of jñana is the knowledge of Brahman (ब्रह्ममार्ग) as it is a means for attaining liberation (मुक्तिः). So Brahmajñāna diminishes the ignorance (अविद्या)²¹ and pre-actions (प्रारब्ध) and this is greatest and ultimate, Cause of real bliss and beatitude Rāmānuja and many other schools of Vedānta philosophy emphasize that devotion (bhakti) and refuge (प्रपत्तिः) are the way of attaining liberation as it has a significant role for acquiring favour or grace (कृपा) of almighty God. The highest purpose or the ultimate reality of life is the knowledge of real self or self–realization. The philosophical doctrines and scientific comprehension of the Vedas, Upaniṣads, Brahman sūtra and Gītā are the source of system of knowledge which means Divine perfection. Many people are sufficiently endowed with metaphysical intuition studying metaphysical texts. They can perceive intuitively the self-evident truth of creation of thought but cannot be represented by any perceptible by any entity. So, Yoga is an internal vision it is highly maueled by ancient sages. It is eternal and infinite. Hence, Yoga is an union of Individual soul with the Supreme soul on the way of divine transformation for spiritual realization.

List of abbreviations:

A - Aparokṣānubhūti

Ch. Up - Chhāndogyaopaniṣad

Bs - Brahmasūtra

Mund. Up - Muṇḍakopaniṣad

Gi - Gītā

Isa – Up - Isāvāsyopaniṣad

KU	- Kenopaniṣad	Svet. Up	- Śvetasvetoropaniṣad
SY	- Synthesis of Yoga	Ait. Up	- Aitareyopaniṣad
LY	- Light on Yoga	Tai – Up	- Taittiriya – Upaniṣad
LP	- Light on Pranayan		
VS	- Vedānta Sāra		
Y.S	- Yoga Sūtra		
TU	- Taittiriyaopaniṣad		
G.S	- Gheraṇḍa Saṁhitā		
S.D.S	- SARVA – DARŚANA - SAṂGRAHA		
THRI	- True history and the Religion of India		

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