

PĀTANJALI YOGA SŪTRĀS

PREFACE

The Man and His Destiny

While venturing to evaluate the destiny of Man, we need to keep aside the view of man being the ‘Modern Man’; because the modernity has obscured the real problem of man and has projected a series of manmade artificial problems. His entanglement in modernity is giving birth to newer and newer problems — a kind of artificial, unnatural problems — that man is being forced to spend and end his life fighting with them without any positive gain. Why I call these problems as *artificial-like* is because they are not natural and, unattended they turn to be hazards and in trying to solve them we land in problems of more serious consequences.

Whom do we call ‘Modern Man’? It is he who has forgotten himself as a part of Mother Nature, who has forgotten his duties and responsibilities towards himself and the Mother Nature. It is he who is endlessly running forth on the edge of the world thinking that he would climb to the summit unrestrained, not knowing the world is round and, sooner or later he has to come back to the starting point! He brushes aside the words of the wise as foolishness. Living intensely in the immediate present of the ever changing baseless gross physical existence, he has forgotten his divine heritage and the purpose of human life. The whole humanity with its glorious past has been made to enter the dusty clouds of what he calls as ‘historical speculations’ or without thought of investigation shuns it as ‘not applicable to modern times’. The heaven above and the world next is entirely lost in the ‘primordial mists’ whirling down the human race.

All who are living in the world presently do not belong to the cadre of the ‘Modern Man’. Only a section of people are ‘Modern’. They are separating themselves from the rest who live naturally, or live with natural simplicity or with traditional ideas. Thus separating they are rushing forward to the cliff edge of the world, as if to say we are at the Brim, for they are but with a few gross physical attainments and with a few physical inflictions conquered, with all noble ideas and ideals discarded. Before them stands now the greatest void from which there is neither a way to escape nor any outcome.

The present world is an admixture of varieties of people. We may classify them into six strata from the ‘nearly primitive’ to the ‘most-modern’, and the beyond :

- i. Those belonging to the lowest strata live an unconsciousness guided life, close to that of the primitives. They seem to be with very low intellectual evolution and more guided by Nature.
- ii. The next higher strata live in building up the essentials as in the early stages of human civilisation and culture. They live a conscious life with a bit of higher intellectual evolution. Most of them live for themselves and for others as well.

- iii. There are people who live in an intense human awareness— living only for principles and ideals vowed to moral integrity. Of course they form a very small section of people. They try to draw a congruity with Nature.
- iv. The rest whom we may call the highest strata live looking to themselves being intensely conscious of the present, as the ‘Modern Man’.

Distinct from these four strata, though very rare, there are two sections of people :

- i. Those seeking freedom and peace are in search of the Truth, the Eternal, and the means to transcend the ever limiting Nature. These are of the fifth strata, and
- ii. Those who have attained Freedom and Peace — the Realised ones, the ‘Ever Free’ who fall under the ultimate, the sixth stratum.

When we analyse man and his life in this vast Nature with a metaphysical and philosophical basis then we clearly see two movements: one movement towards bondage and suffering, and other, towards Freedom, Peace and Bliss. Both proceed from Nature, the former being the process of involution and the latter, of evolution. The destiny of man is an option between these two courses *after* one attains certain degree of maturity in Nature’s cradle (which may sometime pass through many lives), and, till then is an imperative set and governed by Nature. Beyond these two courses is the spiritual existence of Man — untouched and unstained by Nature, its products or its process — The Ever Blissful, the Ever Free and ever established in Peace Absolute — The Eternal being beyond time and space, is termed as *Ātman* (आत्मन्) by *Rṣis* (ऋषिः), the Seers while pointing It through an embodiment, and is termed *Brahman* (ब्रह्मन्) when indicated without any reference point or while pointing It through the Cosmos. This One Truth stands as the fundamental basis of Hinduism in its purest unalloyed form, and is the essence and basis of the whole of Hindu philosophical, metaphysical, spiritual, religious, theological, even of ethical and social codes to the minutest individual way of living.

Stepping down to the practical aspect of living our individual lives, we need to strike a balance between the man’s destiny and his Real Existential aspect. Then we invariably come to the one conclusion — that it is imperative to strive to transcend all that is external, whatever that be, and reach the Real and The Eternal without fail. And, mind you, it is possible only in human life. Thus does Bhagavān Śrī Rāmakṛṣṇa Deva again and again through his life and teachings pin points that the only purpose of human life is to attain God.

In his commentary on Pātanjali Yoga Sūtrās [II .25] Swami Vivekananda writes: “Each soul is potentially Divine. The goal is to manifest this Divinity within, by controlling nature, external and internal. Do this either by work, or worship or psychic control, or philosophy— by one, or more, or all of these and be free. This is the whole of religion. Doctrines, or dogmas, or rituals, or books, or temples, or forms, are but secondary details”.

It is to reach that Supreme goal of life hundreds of paths have been discovered, and have been advocated from time immemorial. The Hindu scriptures top them all in number, in varieties, in the ways of approach and suitability to the taste, nature and capacity of individuals. Those text that deal

with these which divert the course of life of man God-ward are called *Śāstrās* (शास्त्राः). They apprise and expound the Truth and the path logically, give guidance as well as instructions and also help the *Sādhakās* (साधकाः) in all possible ways for his safe and effective journey. All *Śāstrās* have common goal and the common end.

The science of *Yoga* according to Patanjali, which is our current subject, finds an important place among the Hindu *Śāstrās*. It is a definite path to Perfection, path to Eternal Freedom, path to everlasting Peace and Bliss.

The approximate equivalent term in English for '*Śāstrās*' is 'Scriptures'. The term 'Scriptures' originates from the western context where in Religion is an 'should not be questioned' imperative, a dictatory instruction, an inductive process triggered by a 'Prophet' or a 'Messenger', which whoever bears faith in it, is supposed to follow in his/her life. It limits itself to religious boundary, and is obligatory. On the other hand, the term '*Śāstrās*' is derived from the root *Śās* (शास्) — meaning 'to apprise, to impart knowledge, to inform, to instruct, to present percepts or codes, or injunctions. It is a message of knowledge and guidance for all, and a means for the 'seekers', from the 'Attained'. It is especially applicable to the 'seekers of everlasting peace and eternal freedom', the *Sādhakās*. They are applicable to all aspects of life without limiting itself to religious boundaries. For a lay man too it serves his purpose of having a safe and secured life here and hereafter.

The purport or essential contents of the Hindu scriptures are:-

- i. Knowledge of the perceivable and transcendental Existence.
- ii. The man and his relationship to the entire existence — the *Jīva* [जीव, individual Souls], the *Jagat* [जगत्, Universe] and the *Īśvara* [ईश्वर, the Supreme Power that governs the Universe].
- iii. The functions and the utilisation of human system consisting of physical, psychic, intellectual and emotional bearings.
- iv. The means to transcend all limitations and attain the state of Perfection.

So, generally we may say—It is a combination of science, philosophy, psychology and spirituality.

The principle governing the western Religious thought is that the man by birth and by life is a sinner and needs an external help for his Redemption. The acceptance and surrender to the Redemptive Power leads to the everlasting blissful life and the rejection, to the eternal condemnation. The life, birth to death, is but a single opportunity given without any alternative. Such negative approach to Religion and Spirituality is not found in Eastern spiritual concepts especially in Hinduism [Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Taoism and Shintoism which prevails in Asia are five main religious and spiritual streams together generally termed as the 'Eastern'. Their main common feature is to conceive The Divine, The Absolute, as being ultimately impersonal, and all individual souls as ever Divine. About half of the world's population contribute to these five streams together. The rest half of the mankind, though not exclusively but predominantly contribute to what we generally call—the Western Religious Faiths comprising of Judaism, Christianity and

Islam. They origin from a common root, the Bible, and share the biblical concept of God as the Absolute in person, as being ultimately personal. They form the mono-theistic section.]. Neither there is the Buddhistic attitude of regarding the life as the misery-bound. The principle that governs and the theme that is projected in all Hindu scriptures is that the man is essentially Divine, but is ignorant of his *real nature*, the Truth. This root ignorance (*Mūla Avidyā*-मूल अविद्या) imparts to him or projects in him a false ego because of which he himself involves in the world of senses, which in turn, impels him to act and be responsible for his own actions that yield him joy or suffering and also create the bondage of *Vāsanās* (वासनास). His involvement too is apparent like an external play going on or like the ripples on the surface of water. The life, birth to death, is but a single link of an endless chain of births and deaths. This course of repeated births and deaths is a cyclical process of evolution till one attains the spiritual perfection by realising one's own Real Nature. The God is the Ultimate Reality which is free from all limitations, beyond time and space and causation, Eternal and is the Pure Consciousness (चैतन्य), the formless attributeless Absolute. Being without any limitation, It may manifest Itself to take up a name and a form. This vast universe comprising of perceivable and imperceivable aspects is but, 'as if a tiny manifestation' of that Absolute Reality, cycling through repeated projection, sustenance and retraction. The Man, nay, every being in it, in reality, is verily that Absolute Reality, the Indestructible, The Blissful Truth. So, we clearly understand that every problem of man has a common cause — and it is not knowing himself, the 'root ignorance' and subsequent erroneous identification with bodily existence. Therefore there cannot be any permanent solution to any of his problems except through the Self-Realisation. Any other solution would merely mean jumping from one problem to another, perhaps a newer one. Because, in this world, with every good thing there is bound to be corresponding evil, and nothing good can be brought into this world without bringing co-related evil. This is where modern science is failing disastrously. It only creates a temporary phase of elation, to be immediately followed by the low ebb of unseen diversity. “सर्वारम्भा हि दोषेण धुमेनाग्निरिवावृताः”, (*Sarvārambhā hi doṣeṇa dhūmenāgnirivāvṛtā*) ‘All undertakings are bound to be covered with defects [or evils] as the smoke covers fire.’ [B.G. 18th chapter / 48th sloka]. So, real permanent solution for any of the human problems lies only in his spiritual quest. Surely, every soul is bound to come to this state of understanding in one life or the other — and then the introspection begins followed by the earnest search for the release, the return to the Cause.

But the goal to be reached is beyond the range of human perception and human understanding. The only source of information of that Realm, the Realm of the Divine can be had from two sources — from scriptures and from the mouth of the Realised soul. Let us have an overall view of the Hindu scriptures, their classification and the place of the *Yoga Sūtrās* amidst them.

The Hindu Scriptures

The Hindu scriptures can be classified into six categories:-

i.	Śruti	श्रुति	iv.	Itihāsās	इतिहासास
ii.	Smṛtis	स्मृति	v.	Āgamās	आगमास
iii.	Purānās	पुराणास	vi.	Darśanās	दर्शनास

I. The *Śruti* (श्रुति) :-

When a person realises the Truth, the experience, the knowledge that spontaneously springs up in the depths of his consciousness / the heart of the person— is called *Śruti*. Owing to the absence of the individual ego of the person during such transcendental experiences, it is metaphorically identified as hearing *Śruti*. Or once experienced he returns not to the old ways any more, The Light of Knowledge continues for ever श्रुत्यारब्धमनुरणनम् (*Śrutyārabdhamanuraṇanam*), like the continuance of a bell sound after the bell is rung. That is how a Realised Soul continues to live and transact with the world, with the Light of Supreme Knowledge enshrined in his mind, body, senses and intellect. Knowledge is his reference point of every transaction and action. In Indian music too the term *Śruti* is used in the same sense — prolonged unwavering tone of reference and base. So, *Śruti* refers to the Supreme Knowledge and spiritual secrets, the words grounded and established in Realisation. Thus the *Vedās* [four in number, the *Rgvedā*, *Yajurvedā*, *Sāmavedā* and *Atharvaṇa Vedā*] alone are referred to as *Śruti*. They are the Spiritual Truths discovered and not invented or composed.

II. The *Smṛtis* (स्मृति) :-

Keeping the above Spiritual Truths as the basis and background, and the fact that the life is inevitable, everything that leads man towards a peaceful, joyful, contented life here in this world as well as in the next, and everything that makes way for his onward spiritual evolution, and everything that promises to impart a friendly atmosphere of love and service with security and peace to the society is called '*Dharma*' (धर्म)¹. *Smṛtis* are those portions of scriptures (शास्त्राः) which fulfil this human need through codes, laws, rules, regulations, injunctions and instructions. They expound man's personal, civic and social duties and responsibilities. They include all sections of life — politics, trade, commerce, warfares, day-to-day living as well as ways of self atonement of sins and crimes, and punishments. They are also called '*Dharma Śāstrās*' (धर्मशास्त्राः).

Smṛtis have evolved from the *Śruti*. The *Rṣis* kept the Grand Truths in the *Vedās* in memory through a definite procedure and taught them systematically to their disciples and to the seeking people. As human society developed, observing the need for a disciplined life and a disciplined society, *Smṛtis* evolved over a period of time, with *Śruti* as the basis. With the change of time, need and circumstances, the *Smṛtis* too changed their external form keeping intact the inner thread, that is the man's welfare, evolution and spiritual attainment.

The word *Smṛti* has its etymological origin from root स्मृ-(आध्याने) [*Smṛ*-(*Ādhyāne*)] meaning remembrance, or recollection, or contemplation of past experience, or knowledge risen in the mind owing to the tendencies created by past experiences. Thus, in scriptural terminology, '*Smṛti*' means the Reminders to live the way, or aids to keep in memory. [while '*vismṛti*' (विस्मृति) means forgetfulness or loss of memory.]

¹ The closest equivalent term in English being 'Righteousness'. The term '*Dharma*' used to represent the word "Religion" is precisely in the same context as above, though it has presently gained an independent meaning to mean a Faith when used in the context of Faiths and Religions. The term *Dharma* is used to mean the nature of any particular thing or of a being, or their tendencies. In philosophy however, *Dharma* represents an organised social order set to remain in tune with the cosmic laws of Nature and the Reality.

From the time a *Jīva* (जीव) enters into the mother's womb, on to its birth, then growth, education, marriage/ *Sannyasa* (सन्यास), running the household, duties to family and society, and at last to the cremation— the *Smṛtis* lay down in minute details all that has to be done. It gives an obligatory chart which man should follow daily from the waking up before day break till he goes to sleep at night.

Manu (मनु), Parāśara(पराशर), Yājñavalkya (याज्ञवल्क्य), Gautama (गौतम), Harita (हरित), Yama (यम), Viṣṇu (विष्णु), Śanka (शङ्क), Likhita (लिखित), Bṛhaspati (बृहस्पति), Dakṣa (दक्ष), Angīrasa (अङ्गीरस), Pracetasā (प्रचेतस), Samvarta (संवर्त), Asanas (असनस्), Atri (अत्रि), Āpasthamba (आपस्थम्ब), Śatatapa (शततप) — these 18 *Maharṣis* (महर्षिs) had grasped the essence of all the *Vedās* and of the secrets of life, through their superhuman efforts and understanding, and for the benefit of mankind have put them in their compilation which are called the '*Dharma Śāstrās*' or *Smṛtis*. Thus we have 18 *Smṛtis*, each named after the *Rṣi* who compiled it as— *Manu Smṛti*, *Parāśara Smṛti*, *Yājñavalkya Smṛti* etc., .

In addition to the 18 *Smṛtis* there are 18 supplementary texts called '*Upa Smṛtis*' (उप स्मृतिs). To remove doubts, disparities, apparent contradictions or omission — there are separate texts entitled '*Dharma Śāstra Nibandhanās*' (धर्म शास्त्र निबन्धनाs). These *Nibandhanās* have appeared as a result of the labour of great men who had studied all the *Smṛtis* reconciled the variations and have formulated the conclusions without leaving any room for doubt.

III. *Purānās* (पुराणाs) :-

A brief exposition of an idea fails to make a deep and lasting impression on the normal human mind. To inform about the Vedic Truths and secrets, and to infuse them into life of a common man so as to induce in him the urge to transcend the Nature and become Free, they are magnified and elaborated in the form of interesting stories or anecdotes that are from a natural setup, or from well known historical facts, or from traditionally flowing down life story. *Purānās* face two questions from modern men: — are *Purānās* true or fabricated? and, have they any historical basis?

From the Hindu way of life, their ideals and thinking, especially of the *paurāṇik* period, we find six factors constituting *Purānās*:- (a)The historical element, (b) the human element [human tendencies and behaviour, human values and human purpose and goal], (c) the happenings in the cosmic counterpart, (d) the cosmic truths, its laws and its plans, (e) the Divine domain, (f) symbolisation

The western trend of history mostly confines to political and social limits and events like accidents, calamities etc., which has no chance of recurrence. Therefore it fails to guide our future. The Indian trend is not to confine history to these limits. All things have a history, all beings and life have a history, and they have a future too. The recollection of past/history that guides our future to a happy peaceful living alone has real value. So the Epics and *Purānās* keep *Dharma*[ethics] as the central theme and weaves a beautiful pattern, using lives and deeds of illustrious men as well as of the villainous, demonical and also of the common simple and innocent people. A study of *Purānās* reveals not only the then social order and state of government then existing but gives an insight into the cultural life, arts, science, human values and eternal principles governing human life

and beyond. Their main theme is *Dharma* and metaphysics; and the main purpose is to induce and guide man to a righteous living and spiritual attainments.

IV. *Itihāsās* [इतिहास—History] :-

The term इतिहास means — [इति-हास = इतिह पारम्परोपदेशेन आस्तेऽस्मिन्] recorded facts handed down to posterity by way of teaching or informing in an organised and systematised way [say, as psalms or metrical compositions easy to remember and pass on to others]. It narrates what happened in the bygone days, but is invariably found to be conveying eternal truths or at least a moral along with the fact. It is not merely informative history but, educative history. Thus, ‘History’ is included as a part of Scriptures, giving it a religious and spiritual status. These histories [*Itihāsās*] cannot be written by ordinary intellectuals or historians — because ordinary intellect however sharp, fails to convey the true import and spiritual truths contained in *Vedās* and *Upaniṣads* (उपनिषद्स) to common man through historical events. *Rāmāyaṇa* (रामायण) and *Mahābhārata* (महाभारत) and other texts associated with lives of great men fall under *Itihāsā*.

V. *Āgamās* (आगमास) :-

The Human Ideals and goals are vividly brought out in *Purāṇās*. When *Purāṇās* and *Itihāsās* are studied with humility and respect and with a view to derive benefit from them, then we find that we are silently impelled to emulate those ideals, goals and noble qualities enshrined in them. Yet, we find it impossible to stick to them under all circumstances, because there are other old tendencies living within us. So, in order to purge ourselves from undesirable tendencies, most of us especially those living a common way of life need a methodical approach. *Āgamās* provide a systematic way of life and procedure which clean the mind, build up character and noble behaviour, and keep the mind and heart tuned to the Divine. This helps man to transcend the nature and reach spiritual perfection. The texts dealing with these procedures are known as *Āgamās* (आगमास). The *Vedās* are called *Nigamās* (निगमास) which extol the Supreme and the Supreme Goal; while the actual practices to reach that Goal are laid down in *Āgamās*. All household duties, social responsibilities, personal work, even bathing, eating or sleeping etc., have to be done in order and as laid down in the *Śāstrās*.

The Hindu *Śāstrās* are so devised that all aspects of human activity are made conducive to self-evolution and self-realisation. It links and involves all aspects of life with religion and spirituality. Sleeping in particular way, dressing in a particular way, building house in a particular way etc., are all to make the life comfortable and a joyful journey to The Immortal. In Hinduism secular and spiritual are not separated; religious and secular are not separated. Secularism is a part of the religious obligations in Hinduism. Whatever be it — action is done, thought in mind or felt in heart should necessarily have religious or spiritual basis. Just as secularism and religion/spirituality have been unified in personal life of an individual for one’s own salvation, the ingredients for social welfare as also the well being of the whole world, are inbuilt in Hindu *Śāstrās*. *Āgamās* contain variety of subjects like devotion, meditation, philosophy of *Mantrās* (मन्त्रास), temple building, symbolisation, image making, charms and spells, mystic diagrams, domestic observances, social rules, public festivals, etc., .

We find four constituents in *Āgamās* :-

- a. The spiritual knowledge [*Jñāna*]
- b. Internal yogic practices [*Yoga*]
- c. External action oriented observances like Pūjā, Homa, temple construction etc [*Kriyā* (क्रिया)]
- d. Life oriented— implementation of teachings of scriptures in daily life, morality, nobility, good behaviour etc., [*Caryā* (चर्या)]

Āgamās are of three kinds [forming 3 sects] :-

- *Vaiṣṇava Āgamās* [2 in number *Pāncarātra* (पाञ्चरात्र) and *Vaikhānasa* (वैखानस)]
- *Śaiva Āgamās* [28 in number]
- *Śākta Āgamās* [*Tantrās* (तन्त्राः) 64 in number]

VI. *Darśanās* (दर्शनाः) :-

There are two approaches to discover The Truth— the path of reason [the head-way] and the path of faith and love [the heart-way]. The former has lead to various schools of philosophy, and the latter to various systems of Theo-philosophies that help devotion and therefore are called the Bhakti schools. Philosophy is the use of reasoning in seeking truth and knowledge or reality; it bears special reference to — the causes, the nature of things, the governing principles of existence, the material universe, the living beings, the man and the perception of physical phenomena. The Indian philosophies deal with three ultimate entities — the *Jīva* (जीव), *Jagat* (जगत्) and *Īśvara* (ईश्वर). On the other hand the Theo-philosophies are systems concerned with personal God having infinite attributes, whose grace alone is said to give salvation to the *Jīvas* involved in *samsāra* (संसार). Here, in these systems, there is no scope for intellection or intellectual coign of vantage. It is belief, faith, devotion and dedication that is demanded. It is ‘Feeling of Heart’ and ‘Deep seeking’ that are of prime need. Therefore they are called Bhakti (Devotional) Schools. Traditionally, there are six *Darśanās* [philosophies] of Bhakti schools, the Theo-philosophical systems in Hinduism — *Śaiva* (शैव), *Vaiṣṇava* (वैष्णव), *Śākta* (शाक्त), *Saura* (सौर), *Vaināyaka* (वैनायक) and *Skanda* (स्कन्द).

Going to the other track mentioned earlier, the pure philosophies with reasoning and intellection as their basis, we have six different systems and are collectively called the ‘*Ṣaḍ-Darśanās*’ (षड्दर्शनाः). On one side is the hidden secret that is covered by the glittering and expressive world. On the other side are the limitations of human senses and mind and its engrossive nature to remain immersed in the worldliness. Both of them force man not to get even an inkling of the Reality beyond. So, taking world as the point of reference, the explication or explanation that try to make the ‘Beyond’ known to human intellect, or at least indicate its presence is called ‘*Tattva* (तत्त्व)’. So these *Ṣaḍ-Darśanas* are *Tattva* giving texts that only make man to cogitate on the Truth beyond; because the Truth is beyond mind and words. With the hint given in their systems man is supposed to walk and discover the Truth himself. Why I am emphasizing on this point is — because you may not find the Ultimate Truth, what we generally call God, is being explained or brought out in some

of the *Darśanas*. In these texts no place is kept for man's feelings; feelings are also expressed through intellect as an endearing of an idea or fact. The six philosophies are *Nyāya* (न्याय), *Vaiśeṣika* (वैशेषिक), *Sāṅkhya* (साङ्ख्य), *Yoga* (योग), *Pūrva-mīmāṃsā* (पूर्वमीमांस) and *Uttara-mīmāṃsā* (उत्तरमीमांस).

1. ***Nyāya*** :— The science of logic and expediency. This was composed by the Sage *Gautama*. Its main object is to establish by means of disputation that *Parameśvara* (परमेश्वर) is the creator of this universe. It establishes the existence of God by inference. Thus, it is a *Śāstra* whose chief instrument is deduction: — this process of arriving at a conclusion is called *Nyāya*. The devices used to establish Vedic postulates are called *Nyāya*.
2. ***Vaiśeṣika*** :— We draw a distinction between any two objects because of the presence of some particular or peculiar characteristics in them, each having some attributes not found in the other. This distinguishing attribute is called *Viśeṣa* (विशेष), *Rṣi Kaṇāda* (ऋषि कणाद) founded a system in which the main basis of examination is these attributes or the *Viśeṣa*. And therefore this system is called *Vaiśeṣika*.

The earlier system — the *Nyāya* philosophy which proceeds mainly on scientific lines, joins this *Vaiśeṣika* philosophy at the stage where spiritual matters such as *Jīva* [Individual Soul], *Jagat*[Universe], *Īśvara* [the Lord of the Universe] and *Mokṣa* [Liberation] are dealt with. Both these philosophies use logic [*Tarka*—तर्क] and philosophical insight [*Tattva* — तत्त्व] for its deductive process; philosophy being enunciated through the medium of logic.

3. ***Sāṅkhya*** :— *Sāṅkhya* (साङ्ख्य) is derived from the word '*Sankhya*' (सङ्ख्य) meaning number. The system lists and numbers the evolutes of Nature and the elements while dealing with process of creation of this universe. Thus the system is named *Sāṅkhya*. Its origin is assigned to *Rṣi Kapila Muni* (ऋषि कपिल मुनि). This philosophical system, with minor alterations has been adopted, making it as their foundation by all Vedantic philosophies and also by the *Yoga* which is our actual subject matter. Therefore, I shall briefly mention the fundamentals of the system.

Sāṅkhya says that the *Ātman*, which is the uninvolved cause of this universe, is the '*Puruṣa*,' and the Power *Śakti* which gets activated and evolves Herself into this material world is '*Prakṛti*' (प्रकृति). *Prakṛti* being self empowered by the mere presence of '*Puruṣa*,' is all capable of self-managing and self-governing in Her own planned way. Thus the system do not bring into the picture The *Īśvara* (ईश्वर), The Lord of the universe who is supposed to govern and control the universe. Thus it enumerates two ultimate entities— the '*Prakṛti*' and '*Puruṣa*'. It goes on to say that world consists of 24 *Tatwās* [the primary cosmic principles] including the *Prakṛti*.

Prakṛti is the first *tatwa*, which is the Primal Matter and the Matrix of the universe from which this universe evolves. Where as, *Prakṛti* Herself constitutes of the *Triguṇās* (त्रिगुणाः) — *Satva* (सत्त्व) [the source of peace, calmness, happiness, contentment, light of clarity, purity etc.], *Rajas* (रजस्) [the source of activity, urges, movement, attachment, aversion, etc.] and *Tamas* (तमस्) [the source of lethargy, grief, fear, laziness, darkness of ignorance etc.]. They continue to pervade every evolute and object in different proportions. In humans the moods, feelings and state of mind is said to

change constantly as the hues of these three *Guṇās* (गुणाः) change. The *Prakṛti* from its dormant primal state gets activated like a seed put in water, swollen and about to germinate. This activated state is the second *Tattva* called *Mahat* (महत्). From this *Mahat* the third *Tattva* called *Ahaṅkāra* (अहङ्कार) evolves. It is the ego-sense which identifies its own individual existence, called the Self. This bears the dichotomy : on one side it is animate with life and knowledge, the *Jīva Caitanya* (जीव चैतन्य) and on the other, the inanimate *Jada* (जड) or the material existence, the gross material body comprising of *Pancatanmātrās* and *Pancabhūtās* (पञ्चतन्मात्राः and पञ्चभूताः) — five subtle elements and five gross elements. This combination helps *Jīva* to function or indulge directly in action. The further evolutes that follow are the mind, the five organs of perception, their respective five objects of perception, five organs of action and five gross elements together making the *tatwās* 24 in number.

Puruṣa is in a state of temporary entrapment as a result of its association with *Prakṛti*. The goal is to put an end to the influence of *Prakṛti* by aloofness from Her. To remain aloof and alone by itself by its own right and volition without being mixed up with anything else is called ‘*Kevala*’ (केवल). The state of being so is called *Kaivalya* (कैवल्य). The *Jīva* or the self transcends the twenty four Cosmic Principles and gets free from the inanimate or *Jada* and stays by itself at the level of the *Puruṣa* Alone in Its own Bliss and Freedom. This is called *Kaivalya*.

The system does not recommend the worship of *Īśvara* , self surrender or introspection as the means to attain the state of liberation.

4. **Yoga** :— *Sāṅkhya* says that the *Puruṣa* has to be realised as separate from *Prakṛti* and leaves it at that. On the other hand, the *Yoga*, now a days commonly called as *Rāja Yoga* (राज योग), which is our main topic, starts from where *Sāṅkhya* has left off. It tells us the method as to how such a separation can be brought about. The Sage *Patanjali* has given highly systematised steps leading to *Kaivalya*. The only deviation from *Sāṅkhya* philosophy is that the *Yoga* accepts the existence of *Īśvara* , the Lord of the universe. *Patanjali* in his *Yoga* system advocates devotion to God [*Īśvara*] as an imperative discipline (II .32) and also as an independent path to attain perfection (I . 23).

This school prescribes eight fold path, *Aṣṭāṅga Yoga* (अष्टाङ्ग योग), towards the attainment of the Supreme Goal. This system created a great impact on the practical aspect of spiritual endeavour of every Indian system, and has been adopted by almost all schools to fill their blanks and needs. This is purely a spiritual path and not to be confused or mistaken for the wide prevalent *Yoga* practices for physical fitness and health which is a part of another ancient system called *Hata-Yoga* (हट योग), involving in physical purification and physical exercises.

5. **The Pūrvamīmāṃsā** :— This school emphasises the ritualistic part of the *Vedās*. It recognises the *Vedās* to be Eternal, Divine and the sole Authority. It advocates strict adherence to *Vedic* injunctions and directives and performance of *Vedic* rituals and sacrifices accordingly. The over emphasis of ritualistic part while overlooking the pure divine knowledge, the Knowledge Supreme that leads directly to liberation, came forth as a need of the age when Sage *Jaimini* (जैमिनि) wrote the

Sūtrās. Any act to come in force, it presupposes the existence of an opposite state of affairs. During the Vedic and post Vedic period the whole community lived a balanced life of intense activity and calm undisturbed state of mind — following the model Vedic life in which *Karma* [कर्म, action, rituals, etc.,] and *Jñāna* [ज्ञान, Pure Knowledge] sections of *Vedās* are combined. Man's desire for luxury and his lethargy made the knowledge a scape goat to renounce ritualistic actions as meaningless and yielding a temporary fruit. The actions, the work is always associated with problems and is labourious. So, avoidance is but natural. Shielding themselves with spiritual dictums like body is ever dirty and *Ātman* is ever pure, people started avoiding even purity and cleanliness and thus dirty and lowly practices entered. Materialism tempted the mankind. Then to lift the masses again to atleast a good noble life, the Sage *Jaimini* seems to have reinstated with vehemence the vedic rituals *Karmakānda* (कर्म काण्ड) with a reasonable and needy scoffing at *Jñānakānda* (ज्ञान काण्ड). Thus rose the *Pūrvamīmāmsa* philosophy.

6. ***Uttaramīmāmsa* :—** The term '*Mīmāmsa*' means— enquiry or deep analysis of a subject. The *Pūrvā* and *Uttara* [of the *Pūrvamīmāmsa* and *Uttaramīmāmsa*] refer to the earlier and the latter portions of the *Vedās* which correspond to the *Karmakānda* and *Jñānakānda* portions. The *Pūrvamīmāmsa* stresses the importance of sacrifices and rituals mentioned in the *Karmakānda* while the *Uttaramīmāmsa* emphasises the importance of Self-Realisation, which is the main theme of the *Jñānakānda* of the *Vedās*.

Uttaramīmāmsa is generally known as Vedanta. And, the Vedanta is commonly assigned to Advaita. Where as Vedanta forms the basis on which all other Dvaitika philosophies too stand. *Ṛṣi Bādarāyaṇa* [*Vyāsa*] wrote Aphorism (सूत्रस) as a part of this enquiry into 'Reality' which expound the Upanishadic Truths. These, along with the Upanishads of the Vedas, and the *Bhagavat Gītā* form the authoritative texts of the *Uttaramīmāmsa* collectively called the *Prasthāna Traya* (प्रस्थान त्रय).

The *Karmakānda* of the *Vedās* prescribe a way of life which would make it possible for realisation of its philosophy. If one lived according to its dictates, it would impart purity of mind, when one is ready for the withdrawal from mundane activities of life. If, at this stage, one dedicates oneself for the studies of Upanishads and its application in life, then, it would be living a spiritual life which would eventually lead to establishing and realising one's direct relationship with God, the Ultimate Reality. It is in the last stages that we take recourse to knowledge that makes it possible for man to meet God within himself.

All the above six systems and their off shoots accept the ultimate authority of the *Vedās*. Thus they are called *Vaidika Darśanās*.

There are three more philosophies which in its strict sense do not form apart of the Hindu panorama, yet, being its off shoots are sheltered in the Hindu context. They are, but, not based on the Vedic Truths nor is concerned with the *Vedas* being the Ultimate Authority. Therefore they are called *Avaidika* (अवैदिक).

- ❖ *Cāruvāka* (चारुवाक) — This philosophy preaches materialism and denies the existence of God.
- ❖ *Baudha* (बौध) — As propounded by *Bhagavān Buddha*.

❖ *Jaina* (जैन)— As propounded by *Bhagavān Mahāvīr*.

None of these scriptures deny the life of man in this world nor do they belittle it; they only say that is not the Ultimate. Life in the world is but a two days play. What stands after matters much. So also, how long you live matters not; how you live really matters. Mould your life in such a way as to live a complete life here and travelling in and through that make way for the next, to enter into the everlasting changeless state of Prefection which alone ensures a life of ultimate Bliss and Freedom that enters into Eternity.

We had a bird's eye view of the whole of the Hindu scriptures just touching the external fringes. This was needed to show where exactly the Yoga of Patanjali finds its place in the Hindu Pantheon of scriptures. It has its place among the *Six Darśanas* . It shares an important place as the pride of the Hindu Scriptures.

The etymology of the term Yoga

Philosophically speaking, and also, as the common man's understanding goes, the term 'Yoga' (योग) refers both to — 'a spiritual state' and to 'the means, the path to its attainment'. It depicts former meaning when used as a noun and the latter when used as a verb. 'Spiritual State' is a state of human consciousness which transcends the three common human states of waking, dream and deep sleep, and in which man directly experiences the Truth. So, the term *Yoga* in this sense simply means a Super Conscious state in which one experiences the Absolute Reality either subjectively as one's own True Self or objectively as, what we generally call The God, independent of commonly perceived physical existence. In the latter sense the same word *Yoga* is understood as a verb which is derived from the root 'Yuj' (युज्) to mean the path [i.e., strivings] for attainment of the State of *Yoga*. This state proceeds from detaching ourselves from some holdings, bindings, assumptions or from our normal state of existence, and attaining to a state independent of all these.

In either case, this real-looking universe with all its glory and achievements and even our own bodily existence, is perceived as a mere shadow without any reality or essence in it. Or is seen as One Undivided Divine Existence, name and form being mere fictitious, as if to say "Ātman alone abides". This experience is as clear as an object seen in bright day light, beyond all doubts — and unfading — landing us into the Eternal.

So, *Yoga*, instead of calling it as 'union' or as 'separation', we may take it, as the common intelligible understanding goes, to just mean — 'sublimation of the relative existence' that is the sublimation of universe and all that we perceive or know, into The One Undivided Eternal Existence — The Divine.

The Scriptures are meant for a common man, naturally their import will be simple, direct and clear. Look at the Gospel of Śrī Rāmkṛṣṇa — how simple, how natural and sweet, at the same time it contains all that a *sādhaka* needs from his early formative stage to the final state of attainment — and even thereafter. We need not search or strive to dig out an uncommon meaning though it might match well. The search itself is precisely for our own intellectual understanding and formulation of basic convictions. Later on when real seeking begins the heart gets filled and engulfed by uncontrollable spasms of longing wherewith, everything looks meaningless. So, let us study to understand it in such a way as to convert the understanding into a dynamic state of SEEKING. The actual problem is not much with the path but with the indescribable end — the *Anirvacanīya Satya* (अनिर्वचनीय सत्य).

Sometimes I used to feel the need of western psychology to help us in our *Sādhana*, and to understand the principles of *yoga*. But then soon I found that it itself is standing on a wrong footing which takes the human mind as an integral part of human existence. It is mainly because the *Ātman* (आत्मन्) concept has not yet reached their understanding and heart. On the other hand, in the Indian or Hindu concept the mind is merely an entirely separate entity, but firmly gripping the Self. Thus it was found by our ancient masters that analysis of mind is not as much important as of the 'Self'. Generally to know mind — its nature, what it is and how does it function — was found enough. It is enough if we can identify it knowing its background and ways, tame it, help it come out of its bindings and limitations, and use it for travelling to the unknown far off Goal. Moreover mind is

like cloud, one cannot determine its shape or size or its formation or disappearance. Because, it is a constantly changing entity. It is sufficient to know about the cloud — that it is water alone, it has come from the waters and it goes back to the waters again. So also, it is enough to know — that mind manifests *from* *Ātman*, takes different modes and plays in various ways *in* *Ātman* and merges back *into* *Ātman*. Being spiritual aspirants, let us give more emphasis on the spiritual existence of man than on this physical existence comprising of body-mind-complex, which is nothing but a few moments play of projection and rejection.

The ancient tradition of *yoga* has been systematically and methodically put in the form of ‘*Sūtrās*’ by Patanjali with a definite purpose to serve the seekers of Eternal Freedom. *Sūtrās* are Aphorisms with minimal use of words to project an idea or thought. They have the advantage of brevity, easy to memorise but needs conceptual elaboration. The simple common meaning of *Sūtra* is thread or yarn. In *Sūtra* Aphorisms, minimal unavoidable words are strung together sufficient to indicate clearly the vast intended meaning. Naturally, often being incomplete sentences, they fail to comply with grammatical obligations in their formulation. So, they demand deep reflection to tap out their true purport. Or else, we need to depend on standard explanations or commentaries by men of wisdom expertised in that field. Nevertheless, we have to take up the original Aphorisms and study in order to intimately know their exact import for our practical purposes. We shall enter with faith and confidence so that our life becomes enriched and we move fast towards our Goal. *Yoga* is an unflinching path to the ultimate perfection which has developed through centuries as a result of the constant efforts, practise of meditation encountering the Nature’s trends and ways, along with their simple, pure and uncompromising devoted life. The *yogis* and *ṛṣis* lived in remote solitudes of forests or hilltops and dedicating their entire life for the One end, the transcendence of Nature. The condensed, simplified and perfected version has been handed over to us in the form of present *Yoga Sūtrās*. They are error free, being the end product of the experiments, experiences and is the life-essence of *Ṛṣis*, *Munis* and *Yogis* through ages.

Before we enter the main text, let us peep into the meaning of the term *Yoga* (योग). It is derived from the Sanskrit root ‘*Yujir*’ (युजिर्) and ‘*Yuj*’ (युज्).

युजिर् is used to mean ‘to unite’ or ‘to join’ (योगे) and become a part of seventh conjugation [गण- *Gana*] taking its present tense form as — *Yunakti* (युनक्ति) and *Yunkte* (युङ्क्ते).

‘*Yuj*’ (युज्) takes two forms :

- i. युज् to mean — Concentration and perfect placement [समाधौ – *Samādhau*] and forms a part of first conjugation taking its present tense form — *Yojati* (योजति).
- ii. युज् to mean — Self-control, knotting and binding [संयमने – *Samyamane*] and forms a part of tenth conjugation taking the present tense forms [योजयति – *Yojayati*, योजयते – *Yojayate*].

In *R̥gveda* [I-54, III-27, VII-67] the term *Yoga* is used in the dual sense — meaning : (i) to rein by fastening with bridle and (ii) to succeed in achieving a generally impossible end. In the sense of fastening it is mainly used in *Śatapatha Brahmana* (शतपथ ब्राह्मण) [I-11, XIV-7] and in *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* (बृहदारण्यक उपनिषद्) [III, I, 7-61, III-8 to 10]. In Upanishadic period when *Tapas* (तपस् – austerities) and sense-control (इन्द्रिय निग्रह – *Indriya Nigraha*) were understood as the

best means for the spiritual unfoldment, *Yoga* term bore a special meaning to convey ‘Life of austerities and self-control’.

Deeper when we dive into Upanishadic concepts, we see the sworn conclusive statements upholding the non-dual oneness of the Individual Soul (*Jīvātman* – जीवात्मन्) and the Supreme Reality, the Absolute Truth (*Brahman* – ब्रह्मन्). They take man, teaching and explaining in various ways, from the meaningless manifold appearance to the underlying oneness, from the artificial external oneness to the transcendental inherent oneness. And this oneness is what is designated as *Yoga* — the *Yoga* of the Upanishads. This is again what is termed as *Nidhidhyāsana* (निदिध्यासन) by the Advaitic System.

Where as, when we enter the *Bhagavad Gita*, the term *Yoga* emerges out from its restricted meaning to cover widest range to lovingly embrace every aspect of Divinity and all that helps its manifestation. *Bhagavad Gita* itself is called *Yogaśāstra* (योगशास्त्र). Therefore to tap the essence of *Bhagavad Gita*, the various colours and tinges of the broad spectrum projected by the term ‘*Yoga*’ becomes essential.

The equanimity of mind under all circumstances (in pain and pleasure, in loss and gain, in victory and defeat, in attainments and failures etc.) as an outcome of ‘Spiritual Enlightenment’ is termed as *Yoga* [समत्वं योग उच्यते II-48, युक्त इत्युच्यते योगी VI-8]; the skill by which one acts yet one does not get bound by one’s *Karmās* is again called *Yoga* [योगः कर्मसु कौशलम् II-50]; selfless work where in there is no attachment to the fruit, and the doer-ship is absent is called *Yoga* [सन्यासः कर्मयोगश्च....etc., V-2, VI-2 to 7]; to remain in unbroken union with God internally is also *Yoga* [सब्रह्मयोगयुक्तात्मा V- 21]. In sixth chapter, the *Yoga* is used as a synonym of *Dhyāna* (ध्यान). Even the purificatory process of mind through concentration and sense-control is called *Yoga* [आत्मविशुद्धये VI-12]; the state of calm repose of mind in the Self, The *Ātman* is termed *Yoga* [VI-18, 19]; the total cessation of mentation and the consequent state of experience of Bliss of *Ātman* is also called *Yoga*, it is an exact version of the Patanjali— [यत्रोपरमते चित्तं निरुद्धं योग सेवया VI-20]. *Dhyāna Yoga* prescribed in *Bhagavad Gita* is unbroken flow of Pure Divine Awareness likened to the incessant flow of Oil. With this understanding we can understand what that term *Yoga* may mean to a person brought up in their particular tradition.

Finally the meaning of ‘*Yoga*’ shall remain incomplete without bringing into picture as to what a model would a *Yogi* remain, or what ideal a *Yogi* would show, or in what state does a *Yogi* remain in, after he attains the state of *Yoga*? Does the *Yogi* who has separated himself from every aspects of *Prakṛti* remain without again coming in contact with the body, mind and senses in which he lived and attained that *Kaivalya* State? Is the *Viyoga* (वियोग) attained from products of Nature (*Prakṛti* – प्रकृति) is eternal?

The fact is that once a *Yogi* realises his existence independent of the body-mind-complex which is a product of subtle and gross aspects of Nature, the transformations like pain, suffering, old age, death etc., does not bother him. By burning down all earlier understandings in the fire of Realisation, he attains a new personality which is, though clutched to products of Nature remains

insulated from its effects and consequences. Moving about in the world, interacting through mind and senses he remains unstained and unaffected.

The transcendence of our physical existence and getting established in our spiritual existence make us realise that behind all appearances, beyond the illusion of separateness and diversity, we are one. This supreme knowledge dawns only when we realise our Divine Existence. When we learn to see Divine in everyone, Divine everywhere, *The One Reality* supporting, possessing and pervading everything, then the Real Love flows out breaking all bonds, it plays infinite melodies. Notes of exultation, delight and grace unite in a sacred harmony.

Then we unfailingly gain that knowledge too that the universe has come into being out of love, and the love is behind this creation, it is sustaining the world and is the essence of life.

William Wordsworth, the poet writes – “Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting, the soul that rises with us, our life’s star hath elsewhere its setting”. When the *Jīva* wakes up from that ancient sleep, it sets in ocean of love, the ocean of Immortality. That pure taintless love, the love Divine, the Immortal Ocean is in everyone of us, we only need to remove the obstructions that stand in its way of flowing out – that is the only duty every human has. For that man has to understand, accept and find out his Divine heritage which transcends even his human nature, and that is to find his way back to the Source of his own being.

In this state, *Yogis* who have attained *Kaivalya* remain blessing the world, serving a Divine purpose and pouring their love on one and all. How then can we call *Yoga* as *Viyoga*? When we see the final end, we see their re-union with *Prakṛti* and other *Jīvās* in an unerring spiritual bondage of love and transcendence. Shall we not call this supreme state of *Love –giving* as the culminating state of *Yoga*?

With this understanding of *Yoga*, we shall enter the main text: which is an invaluable treasure unrivalled in its technique and revelation of the highest Truth, delivered with fundamental wisdom, clarity, simplicity and adoptability.

THE YOGA SŪTRĀS

Part – I

समाधिपाद¹ [*Samādhipāda* – The course of Transcendence]

1

अथ योगानुशासनम् ॥१॥

(*Atha Yogānuśāsanam*)

“Now (I shall narrate) the Yoga-Commandments”.

There two types of texts (i) the narrative (*Jijñāsātmaka* – जिज्ञासात्मक) and (ii) the instructive (*Śāsanātmaka* – शासनात्मक), the former is to enhance knowledge while the latter is a set of directives to follow. The Patanjali Yoga Sūtra is of the latter type, a set of directives. In this, one cannot expect or search for stimulating ideas, theories or intellectual funds. One is expected to walk with faith and follow the instructions with precision. Why directives, why instructions? Because the essence of what is being told – the raw materials, the process and the end product — is not in its words but is within the *Sādhaka* himself. The Spiritual Master takes his student by stages uncovering the inner secrets and helping to overcome the inner strategies, so as to reveal to him that realm of Spiritual Existence of the Supreme Abode which is within himself.

Thus is the text rendered as an instructive message. By the very term instruction / directive, we should know that there is no room for any discussion or debate or questioning. It being from a person who has himself tread and mastered the path, will be extremely clear, vivid and doubt-free.

Anuśāsanam (अनुशासनम्) implies ‘an unquestionable Authoritative directive or instruction’ (शासनम् – *Śāsanam*) which has come down from past and to be followed in future (अनु). The term *Anu* on one hand shows an unbroken succession of adherence and surety of success, and on the other hand wards off the limitation of time and place for its application, making it universal. Moreover the spiritual message we get from the Enlightened ones have made their appearance from stillness of consciousness and silence that transcend Nature (which for the use and understanding of common man is told to have come from ‘Śiva’ or ‘Īśvara’ or Lord Himself) and thus cannot limit itself to any particular religion or spiritual tradition, but is immediately accessible to the whole humanity. The term *Anu* (अनु) and *Atha* (अथ) imparts an added sense of urgency. Especially the term *Atha* (अथ) seems to be a clamour for attention. We must understand that the expansion and transformation of

¹ The whole text is divided into four parts, each is called a quarter [पाद – *Pāda*]. The first quarter is *Samādhipāda* which explains the course of *yoga* path. We may call it ‘*Yoga, its aims and modes*’. The second quarter is *Sādhana-pāda* (साधनापाद) which deals with the practical aspects, the actual procedure to be adopted to achieve the goal. We may call it ‘*Yoga and its practice*’. The third quarter deals with the potentiality of the *yoga* methods to produce supernatural powers. We may call it ‘*Yoga and its powers*’. Finally the last quarter imparts the attainment of the supreme state of *Kaivalya*, we may call it ‘*The Yoga, The Enlightenment or Liberation*’.

human consciousness to higher levels, in order to discover its own Divine-hood, is not a privatised supply meant and made available to a few isolated individuals, but is an immediate necessity for the whole mankind if it is not to destroy itself or wants not to be destroyed by other sources.

When we go to any spiritual teacher as his pupil with genuine interest, he never waits to convince you with theory or till convictions are formed. He gives strict instructions to follow and then as and when time provides occasion, expounds theoretical concepts. Because, the Teacher knows the value of time, and he does not want to waste a single minute of the life of his disciple. Life and every moment in it is so precious, he expects his disciple to hurry up and dive into *Sādhana* so that before the fall of the body the disciple shall attain the Immortality. The intense love and compassion expresses as ‘firm instructions or commands’. So, the term *Anuśāsanam* (अनुशासनम्) implies and carries the silent pleading “Waste no more time, my child, hurry up”.

There are only three words in this *Sūtra* :— *Atha – Yoga - Anuśāsanam* (अथ – योग – अनुशासनम्). What the word *Yoga* means we have hitherto seen. In conjunction with the word *Anuśāsanam* we have to take its verb meaning aspect which represent the Yogic path to Perfection. The path vibrantly alive and active which constantly reminds you who you really are, and stands ever pointing to the way back Home. However, the word *Atha* which just means – ‘Now’ bears the sense of continuance of a past sequence. Suppose we say – ‘now, let us go for a Cup of Coffee’ the word ‘now’ shows that some situation was prevailing hitherto from which we are going to enter into another, hereafter. Likewise, what does the term *Atha* indicate in the *Sūtra* ? It indicates completion of certain requirements the aspirant is supposed to possess before taking up the path. The fact that he has come to seek spiritual wealth is the credential of his being qualified. Thus the term *Atha* – in its expanded version means – “Now that you have come as a qualified seeker,.....”. The whole *Sūtra* would then mean : ‘Now that you have come as a true seeker, let me instruct and explain to you the definite path to reach that perfected state of *Yoga*’.



2

योगश्चित्तवृत्तिनिरोधः ॥२॥

(*Yogascittavṛttinirodhah*)

“Yoga is cessation of mentations”.

Ever lost in thought is the condition of every human. Imprisoned within the confines of his own thought man spends his entire life. Throughout the waking and dream states mind functions incessantly, for it is its very nature. The nature of the ego and intellect [*Ahaṅkāra* (अहङ्कार) and *Buddhi* (बुद्धि)] is to jointly identify themselves with thoughts, the reactive patterns that the mind displays. The mind displays patterns owing to the stimulations or impacts received from the world outside, or from the past memories stored inside, or may be due to the needs of bodily existence or an emotional drive, or may be the urges created by the force of the tendencies acquired through lives

after lives, or may be analysis, planning or search, or could be mere imagination or day dreaming. With every thought or mentation its counterpart ego too appears with its intimate companion, its prime minister, the *Buddhi* (intellect) which is the discriminative faculty that examines every perception of mind and decisively concludes and interprets. Mind too incessantly looks for its recognition and identity, its sense of self, and the ego fulfils it. This is how the ego enters into perpetual existence. The mind, the intellect and the ego intimately mingle with each other to form one composite whole called mind-stuff which is termed by Patanjali as the *Citta* (चित्त). *Citta* is the screen on which thoughts play, and thoughts themselves that rise and fall like waves in an ocean, are called the *Vṛttis* (वृत्तिस). It is those thoughts that limits man to a narrow personalised awareness of the ‘Self’ and make him remain conditioned by his past. This screens his Inner Glory.

The *Citta*, like a sheath, is covering the Self, the ever pure Immortal Being, the Pure Consciousness, the *Caitanya* (चैतन्य). When we dive within into depths of our own being we transcend various external coverings and through a tiny entrance at the core of our being [called *Dahra* (दह), or is called the tenth door with reference to the gross physical body which has nine aperture / doors], we ultimately enter into an unknown dimension, a spaceless timeless Existence which IS, and is an Ocean of Bliss and Peace ultimate, the Eternal, the Immortal and the Infinite, the Absolute Existence. It is Pure Awareness, Pure Consciousness, the active presence of which renders the body-mind conscious and living. *Yogis* call It *Ātman*, *Sāṅkhyās* call It *Puruṣa* (पुरुष), *Vedantins* call It *Brahman* and devotees call It *Antaryāmin* (अन्तर्यामिन्) – the God living within man, and the philosophers call It – the Real Man within. Every being from an amoeba to supernatural beings is but ‘That’ in essence and in reality. The proximity of *Prakṛti* (Nature, consisting of causal, subtle and gross aspects of material world) creates an ego sense and identification with the products of *Prakṛti* [gross, subtle and causal bodies] and casts a spell of being a limited self with bodily existence.

So, we find that every being is a combination of Spirit and Matter, the *Caitanya* / *Puruṣa* and *Prakṛti* (प्रकृति). In Man there is the highest manifestation of consciousness because of which he intensely feels conscious of himself and his environment. The matter engulfing the Spirit, as it were, extends through layers of grossification. The first layer is the ‘limiting spell’ by the *Māyā* (माया) – *Śakti* (शक्ति), and is known to be ‘*Prakṛti*’ Herself, which imparts the *Jīvatva* [जीवत्व = individuality, which can be tallied with *Ajñāna* (अज्ञान) of the Advaitins]. Then comes the *Mahat* [which may be compared to the *Ānandamaya kośa* (आनन्दमय कोश)], then the *Ahaṅkāra*, the ego sense which has its counterpart the *Buddhi* (बुद्धि), the intellect [which may roughly be equated to *Vijñānamaya kośa* (विज्ञानमय कोश)] and then comes the *Manas* (मनस्), then follows the sense organs, the organs of actions along with the *Prāṇās* (प्राणास) and finally the Gross physical body. All these coverings engulfing the Pure *Ātman* is nothing but the *Prakṛti* and its evolutes. The whole unit / complex backed by the pure consciousness, becomes sentient and living. All parts function independently as if they are by themselves conscious entities, together forming an organism. The Ego with its stigma of doer-ship [*Kartṛtva* – कर्तृत्व] and enjoyer-ship [*Bhokṛtva* – भोक्तृत्व] pervades the entire unit claiming its ownership.

The subsequent play and the course of the *Jīva* (जीव) entirely rests on a single receptor, the chief manager and key player – ‘the mind’ – without which there is no ego, no perception, no thoughts, no world. Through its fancy dance it binds to itself the ego and the intellect on one side, and the senses and the body on the other. The ego with its counterpart intellect [*Buddhi*] assumes the hues and patterns of mind to be of its own and experiences joys and sorrows, fears and desires, and various moods, and there by displays anger, lust, likes, dislikes, etc., which drive him to action. Thus it is this **I**, that builds-up, ‘me and my story’, being prompted, provoked and tossed by mind, and finally gets entrapped in it! The story that the ‘I’ develops is infact a meaningless tiny ‘—’ (dash) between the date of birth and date of death on the gravestone — centred around its own insignificant life without any reference to the vast external universe outside or to the inner Immortal Blissful Existence. Fleeting and unreal was that ‘I’ and so was the mind unsubstantial! When the Vedānta says the universe is combination of 24 Cosmic Principles, it is not the world that we commonly see, but is the world which really EXISTS and is non-different from God, the Ultimate Reality; the world that each one of us see is what our mind interprets it to be. So, the world that one man sees is entirely different from what the other man sees; and, has no resemblance even to what it really Exists as. What an Illumined Soul, the man of Realisation sees is what it really Exists as. So mind not only develops a false story of itself, but also builds up an unreal story of what exists around it. It is in this sense that the world is said to be Unreal. Thus, we see a man begins his life in False-hood, lives in False-hood and dies in False-hood. We say this ‘False-hood’ as *Bhrānti* (भ्रान्ति), meaning ‘delusion’. That is why the scriptures plead man to come out of this delusion, and they always stand pointing to the TRUTH beyond our perceptions and cognition and, identify the Ultimate Reality Itself as ‘The God’. How to see that Reality, how to perceive that Truth? The scriptures reply – Transcend! Transcend!!; transcend your present state, transcend the range of perception, go beyond all that you presently know and know to ‘be’. You know mind has created this false-hood and has kept it ever alive in an unbroken succession. ‘Go beyond it’ says the *Vedānta*, and, ‘cease it’ says the *Yoga*. That is what the ‘*Citta Vṛtti Nirodha*’ (चित्तवृत्ति निरोध) means. When mind ceases, that is, when it becomes *Niruddha* (निरुद्ध), the false I, the pretending ego too disappears – and what Remains, remains; the Truth Shines forth, the Real I appears in all its Glory, the Immortal One. It is the ‘I’ that has nothing to do either with the past or future, nor has the present to experience — it is Eternal, beyond the sense of Time, beyond our understandings. This is the *Yoga* state.

Primarily we need to keep certain awareness vibrantly alive at all times in us :

- i. To see what all we witness, think or perceive, learn or imbibe – as mere वृत्तिस (thought waves) of mind; with every thought recognising it as mere thought we must try to peep beyond, peep within.
- ii. Similarly a part of awareness must always be filled with the transitoriness of all that happens and exists in this physical world.
- iii. Be fully aware of the underlying unity, the imperishable Divine.



Having thus defined *Yoga* objectively, its subjective counterpart is being mentioned in the next aphorism.

3

तदा द्रष्टुः स्वरूपे अवस्थानम् ॥३॥
(*Tadā Draṣṭuḥ Swarūpe Avasthānam*)

“In that state the seer reposes in his own Real Existence”.

The verbatim meaning: Then (तदा–*Tadā*) [भवति effects] the reposefulness (अवस्थानम्–*Avasthānam*) in his own real nature / Existence (स्वरूपे – *Swarūpe*) : Then effects reposefulness [calm and peaceful resting] of the seer in his own real nature.

For a man in the world his thoughts absorb his attention completely, that means, he has identified himself with the voice of his mind, that is he has invested his ego-sense in his thoughts. This is the mind-created ‘me’. Dipped in the false-hood and false perceptions, this ‘I’ always feels incomplete, insecure and precarious which in turn generates fear, wants and aversions. They turn out to be the predominant emotions and motivating forces behind all that man does. Identifying himself with the stream of thinking as happening to himself, he spends his life in his own dream world of gains and losses! Because of the falsity behind, seeking never ends. The seeking plunges the man in compulsive preoccupation with future.

Nature has its own devices to turn man to the Realities. To wake up from the age long slumber and dreaming, man may need a jolt, a snatching away of same thing on which his heart is set, or some calamity beyond one’s capacity to bear, or an event which is capable of effecting spiritual conversion — whatever it be, it is a blow from Mother Nature, an alarm to wake up. While, the Nature that gives a blow, She gives an unseen support too to lead him further, say a holy company or divine intuition. This is a situation when man’s attention is pinned to that very moment of living where in all world way diversions are blocked. To continue living, he has to lift himself, that means to retract and transcend. It is in this junction that a Supreme Intelligence hitherto unknown to the egoic mind enters the life–force. From it dawns the wisdom and the discriminative power, they condone the egoic mind to humility and yoke its doer-ship to striving for Freedom: so begins the search for Truth.

When wisdom dawns it recognises the illusory aspect of life and this earthly existence. All that happened, all that is happening and all that is likely to happen – it understands as mere mental abstractions — past is a mere memory without any substance. Every moment, the ‘now’ is entering the past, and moment by moment the future is becoming the present event and without waiting, is entering into past — time eating away everything — everything looks a mere passing show. Wisdom is not denial of what is needed in one’s life, but trying search for the Truth, to see what fulfils it really, fully and eternally. It tries to acknowledge the realities of life, now purged of its animal nature, the life unfolds with ease in the Divine. It understands that nothing in the world needs any attention or importance. The living — with past memories, reacting intensely to the

present and with lots of future plans – was the source constant undercurrent of unease, tension and discontent. It was dishonouring life, dysfunctional way of living. Now that the wisdom has dawned and discriminating power has acquired some momentum, that the old ways disappear. Now emerges a new life with a new Goal and renewed vigour. Life is taken now with due seriousness and responsibility. Life moves in alignment with Nature, not to argue with what is happening, but to search for the Truth. Noise and Voice of the mind abates, the humble ‘I’ in the light of new understanding tries to peep beyond the surface appearances. All happenings in the universe, good or bad, is seen to be meaningful with a definite purpose. Every being, every event of life now seems to indicate there is an underlying Truth, an underlying Unity. A simple but radical spiritual practise is to be aware of That and try to commune or feel It intimately. Then we acquire the alertness, the alertness of a *Sādhaka* which makes the aspirant fully awake to reality; wake up from the dream of thoughts crowding the mind, the dream of past and dream of present events of life and dreams of future hopes and plans. He wakes up with purity, with clarity, and with simplicity. He realises the life is valuable, life is sacred. Everything looks reflecting sanctity. He is said to be developing spiritual sensitivity. It empties the contents of the old mind and inspires the soul. Now and then – deep within – some Awareness of stillness, vastness and a sense of eternity project forth with waves of peace and transcendental joy. Now and then it hides. Mind now either overlooks or remains disinterested with what is happening in the life outside. It is busy in the inner search and inner absorption. Body being healthy or sick, strong or aging, whether success or failure, whether loss or gain, whether victory or defeat, the inner awareness of that ‘I AM’ continues to remain unchanged at its deepest level, even while attending to the unavoidable external needs and duties. The deep inner sense of ‘Being’ which was hitherto obscured by external circumstances and the stream of thinking, now slowly expresses Itself filling the Heart with Pure Awareness of the ‘Self’. He finds himself rooted in the Being, the Divine Reality Within. It may be called our Buddha Nature or it is the Inner Christ Alone when the outer Christian ‘dies’. He understands he is not the thought waves of mind, not the earthly emotions of the heart, not the demands and perceptions of senses nor the experiences of the day to day life. ‘I am’ substratum of all these, ‘I am’ the Pure Consciousness. This understanding, this knowledge, this experience slowly takes deep roots in the Truth, and eventually matures into Realisation. Realisation of one’s true nature, independent of all products of Mother Nature, the *Prakṛti*. In this profound direct Spiritual Experience the old identity with bodily existence completely dissolves. This is the state of *Yoga* described in the second *Sūtra* (I.2) and in which state the seer being totally rid of the external adherences of *Prakṛti* (Nature) remains in a restful repose of his own Glory in Bliss and Peace. Technically this state is called *Samādhi* (समाधि). We shall see its varieties and status latter on elsewhere in the text. Now it is in this Awareness that the life continues and unfolds its future contents without affecting the realisation or knowledge. The life of an illumined soul is a life of grace, of Peace, Love and Beauty.

The knowledge is of two kinds : the knowledge of an object as it IS independent of the observer and the knowledge of an object as understood / perceived by the observer on the screen of his mind — The former is called the *Vastujñāna* (वस्तुज्ञान) and the latter, the *Vṛttijñāna* (वृत्तिज्ञान).

Vastujñāna is possible only through total identity with the object, that is, when in deep transcendental concentration the triad – the observed, the observer and observation – dissolve into One homogenous Existence where in the knowledge of the object as it *Is* shines forth.

The Aphorism तदा द्रष्टुः स्वरूपे अवस्थानम् ॥३॥ is the *Vastujñāna* of the One's own Inner Self, the *Ātman*. Therefore this *Sūtra* is the keynote of the whole text, both of theory and of practice. The *Vṛttijñāna* is the knowledge that we receive as a product of thoughts (वृत्तिस) that rise in mind owing to thinking, and sense perceptions or through studies.



The next *Sūtra* discusses to what state a man is reduced to when he is not in the state of *Samādhi* (समाधि).

4

वृत्तिसारूप्यमितरत्र ॥४॥
(*Vṛttisārūpyamitaratra*)

“At other times, remains identified with thought stream”.

Excluding the state of *Yoga*, at all other times (इतरत्र – *Itaratra*) man remains totally and continuously identified (सारूप्यम् – *Sārūpyam*) with his thought- stream (वृत्ति – *Vṛtti*).

The *Citta* (चित्त) [i.e., the mind backed up by *Buddhi* (बुद्धि), the intellect, and possessed of by the ego-sense] is like a camera screen. The five sense organs are like five different types of camera holes from which the image of the external world falls on that common screen. There may be other internal projections on the screen too. All images received by the mind and recognised by the *Buddhi* are illumined by the *Puruṣa* or the *Ātman*, the Pure Consciousness. Every object perceived is illumined by the consciousness, otherwise, there will not be perception of that object at all. Similarly every thought that passes through our mind and the feelings that it creates are illumined by consciousness, otherwise thoughts fails to carry any meaning and we fail to feel. The illumination by the Pure Consciousness produces an ego-sense which identifies with the thoughts and feels. It is the proxy for the Real Self, the *Ātman*, the *Puruṣa*, the uninvolved witness. This is how the *apparent beginningless association* of the *Puruṣa* with the mind – creates identity of mental modifications with the ego-sense and generates the knowledge that ‘I am happy, I am angry’ etc., in a man.

Man never objectifies his thought stream nor looks at it being an uninvolved witness. Instead he subjectifies the thought stream to be himself and totally remains immersed in it. Identifying himself unconsciously with the thought waves that rise and fall every moment, he assumes various hues, moods, feelings and drives. Like the endless waves of an ocean, they keep him constantly shaken, tossed and thwarted, driving him to various resolutions and actions, and to various conclusions and decisions. Here in this process nothing is intentional; the mind is designed by Nature to be so. This keeps him far from realities and inner peace. The mind is the pivot of man's empirical existence. Therefore we, as *Sādhakās*, have to cultivate the habit of being an uninvolved witness of our thought stream. Alertness and awareness are the gripping factors to dissociate the on-crowding thoughts. Thoughts in the mind are not mere verbal but are vividly

pictorial too. *Buddhi* with ego get passionately attached and identified with them. Though fickle-bound are thoughts, their fickleness is not noticed because ego is desultory by nature i.e., the ego assisted by *Buddhi* goes on changing itself smoothly and fitfully from one thought to the next, so much so that it looks as if the ego itself is flowing down as thought stream. This is called *Vṛttisārūpyam* (वृत्तिसारूप्यम्). Implanting constant alertness in *Buddhi* and implanting the awareness of one's own Real Nature in the ego with clarity and firmness beyond the voice of the mind, we will be learning to transcend the mind and eventually reach the Goal.

The mind is the key-man; the man's life, his states and his destiny rests on his mind. Thinking creates enormous momentum. This momentum arrests the whole attention and submerges man in his thought-world of imaginations and conceptions. Man not only identifies himself with his thought waves but also remains entrapped in the prison house of conceptions and imaginations. This is the *emotional man*, the man standing behind the screen of mind and bubbling in emotions. The emotions and the personality remains rooted in *Vāsanās*, the past tendencies. The urges ejecting out as a part of Nature [hunger, sleep, biological urge, moral urge etc.,] also arouse thought current in the mind. So do the situations, environment and the three *Guṇās* (गुणः) of Nature. Many more factors act on mind. Every drive passes through the heart and every thought kindles the heart. Man is where he is physically stationed, but mentally he dwells where *his* thoughts are and where *his* heart is pinned. Man is not the body that we see, man is what his psychic being is, what his emotional being is. Because, he identifies totally with his thought patterns [*Vṛttisārūpya* – वृत्तिसारूप्यम्]. That is why it is extremely difficult to cross the mental barrier. There is another lock binding the mind – the gross body. The feelings and emotions kindled by the thought world drives the ego to action, or creates a tendency to act which intensifies the bodily existence. When base instinctive emotions like lust or anger possesses man, he intensely becomes the body. More body we are, less spiritual we are rendered. More spiritual we are proportionately less body we are.

One more factor that matters much is the characteristic quality or the distinctive nature of mind — i.e., whether it is *Sātvik* (सात्त्विक), *Rājasik* (राजसिक) or *Tāmasik* (तामसिक). The flow of thoughts in a person of *Sātvik* mind radiates within himself — serenity, calmness, kindness, joy and imparts a pleasant disposition. It is like clean water flowing. In a *Sātvik* man everything is *Sātvik*. The eyes are *Sātvik*, they view in a *Sātvik* way, mind grasps in a *Sātvik* way, intellect interprets in a *Sātvik* way, similar to child's view of the world. Everything is pure, fine and nice. Whereas the flow of thoughts in *Rājasik* mind is like that of muddy water and is full of waves and ripples — activity, attachment, cravings and restlessness. It lands him in a state of discontent, cravings and on-rush of activities. While the flow of thoughts in *Tāmasik* mind is like that of dirty water wildly moving with staggering gait of lethargy now and then releasing splashes of rage, vengeance, egotism, lust etc., which keep him stationed in grief, rudeness, delusion and darkness of ignorance and indolence. Though every person passes through all these three states, each person possesses predominance of one of these three qualities which is identified as his or her distinguishing nature. So some are calm and serene — the *Sātvik*, some indulgent rushing with pride, the *Rājasik*, others are dull, lazy and wild, the *Tāmasik*. The *Rājasik* and *Tāmasik* nature hardly contain spiritual aspiency. The majority of the *Sātvik* do. The *Sātviks* alone can succeed in peeping beyond the visible world or reach the deeper layers beyond the world of thoughts and the mind. In *Bhagavad Gita* Kṛṣṇa instructs Arjuna

to be *Nityasatvastha* (नित्यसत्त्वस्थ) — *ever established in Satva* that is not to enter into *Rājasik* or *Tāmasik* nature [B.G 2 / 45].

In this *Sūtra* only nature of ego and of mind are described as in the last *Sūtra* , the nature of *Samādhi*. It is not in respect of being good or bad, superior or inferior. It is to inform us their nature and status, knowing which we shall utilise them and transcend them. The process of thinking is also a magnificent power generating process. Thinking mind is a powerful tool. It is with this power and instrument we transcend our nature to reach the Real. It is with this power that we tear away from *Prakṛti*. It has much to do in *Sādhakās* life. The main thing being what type of *Vṛttis* we should have as *Sādhakās*, with which we identify. On reading the Gospel of Sri Ramakṛṣṇa, we understand the *Vṛttis* of *Jñāna*, *Bhakti*, *Vairāgya*, *Tyāga* etc., to rise in the mind and identification with them is verily welcome. Similarly, in the path of Advaitins, constant cogitation on *Brahman* which ultimately leads to *Akhaṇḍākāra Vṛtti* (अखण्डाकार वृत्ति), the thought wave that expands and in trying to be *Brahman* (ब्रह्मन्), the infinite, vanishes itself leaving the Truth to shine forth, is most welcome.

All dualistic philosophies and devotional schools take this as a blessing of Nature, a gift of benevolence or as Grace of God. If man be what his thoughts are, then think Divine and be Divine. Unceasing prayer, constant *japa*, trying to see God in all beings, serving man as God, Idol worship, every object in world as manifestation of Divine, looking upon rivers, mountains as holy and Divine, religious rites and rituals etc., are various ways to fill the thoughts with Divine, to raise the consciousness to Divine, to manifest the Divine, and to invoke the Divine. Through obliteration of *Prakṛti* (प्रकृति) we peacefully dwell in our own Inner Divine nature and is called *Yoga*, on the other hand through sublimation of the *Prakṛti* we can see Divine everywhere in the external world and is called *Sahaja Yoga* (सहज योग) or *Karma Samādhi* (कर्म समाधि) [see ब्रह्मार्पणं..... 4th chapter / 24th sloka]

The Western Religions preaching ‘Love and serve your neighbour as yourself’, and ‘The prayer of the heart’ is as much to anoint the mind and soul with the Divine, as to seek the Divine Grace. They have not probed to know the principle working behind these preaching’s. Communion with God, the Almighty is *Yoga*.



5

वृत्तयः पञ्चतयः क्लिष्टाऽक्लिष्टाः ॥५॥

(*Vṛttayah Pañcatayyah Kliṣṭākliṣṭāh*)

“Thought waves are of five kinds, some are potentially painful others are not”.

The thought waves of the mind (*Vṛttayah*– वृत्तयः) are of five kinds (*Pañcatiayyah* – पञ्चतयः), some are pain-inducing [*Kliṣṭāh*–क्लिष्टाः — afflicted, distressful, unpleasant] others are not pain-inducing [*Akliṣṭāh*–अक्लिष्टाः —not afflicted, pleasant, friendly or harmless].

Nature not only sustains our needs but also shows us the way *Home*. We are bound by the *Nature*, and it is She who has provided a plan too to free us from the prison of our own minds. Lost in the whirlpool of problems and in a maze of complexity, we have forgotten to BE, every moment we are running in the realm of becoming getting lost in thinking, remembering, anticipating and acting. To save *Jīvās* from utter ruin the Nature expresses dualities from within *Herself*. So, we have the good – the bad, the virtue – the vice, the loving – the hating etc., So also we have *Kliṣṭāḥ* (क्लिष्टाः) and *Akliṣṭāḥ* (अक्लिष्टाः), two diverse impressions perceived, felt and experienced as an effect of our association with the thought stream.

The words *Kliṣṭa* and *Akliṣṭa* are from the word *Kleśa* (क्लेश) which generally means afflictions. Technically the meaning of the term *Kleśa* is explained in *Sūtra* II.3 as impurities of *Citta* which impart pain. They are the *wrong understanding* of things (*Avidyā* – अविद्या), *egoism* (*Asmitā* – अस्मिता), *attachment* (*Rāga* – राग), *aversion* (*Dveṣa* – द्वेष) and *clinging to life* (*Abhiniveśa* – अभिनिवेश). It is nice to understand the two words as potentially harmful and potentially harmless. Before classifying the *Vṛttis* [thoughts/mentations] under specific heads [in the next *Sūtra*] Patanjali divides the mentations into two broad divisions — painful and not painful. This classification is based on the nature of the thoughts, what effect it creates on man. While the next classification into five heads is their functional aspects. The former is how it effects man and the latter is how it functions within itself. The former classification into *Kliṣṭa* and *Akliṣṭa* is to escape from the effects of thought streams and the latter division into five heads is to help their suppression. We have to take recourse to or foster the ‘*not painful ones*’ to free ourselves from the ‘*painful ones*’ and their effects. The pain can be the cause or an effect of thought — that is, a thought can cause a pain or pain can cause a thought — in either case the thought is said to be ‘*painful one*’. The thought that brings peace, relief, reconciliation, happiness, contentment etc., or relieves pain and suffering are ‘*non-painful ones*’. They are amiable and amenable. The painful ones originate from latent tendencies [like *Avidyā* etc.,–*Vāsanās*] or ignorance or from the harms hurled by external factors. While *Jñāna*, knowledge, dispassion, love, dedication, sacrifice, forbearance etc., yield the ‘*non-painful*’ ones. The Buddha’s eightfold path — the Right view, Right intention, Right speech, Right action, Right livelihood, Right efforts, Right mindfulness and Right concentration are for removal of the painful inflictions of mind and also save us from the guilt of sin and wrong doings. Guilt and complexes fall under the painful ones that rot man from within. We have to escape from the ‘*painful ones*’ by holding on to the ‘*not-painful ones*’ so that our mental framework remains peaceful, *Sātvik* and pleasant and conducive for the pursuit of diving within, for the inner Journey. In *Bhagavad Gita*, Kṛṣṇa says about the *Prasanna Citta*. The *Buddhi* of the one endowed with tranquil mind, soon rests firmly in the Truth [B.G II.65]. Those thoughts, modifications of mind, that impart tranquillity (*Prasanna Citta* – प्रसन्नचित्त) are called the *Akliṣṭāḥ* (अक्लिष्टाः). They reflect purity, love and Truth and remain unperturbed.

Even these are to be got rid off — they are but our ladder to get established in the pure *Ātman* within.



6

प्रमाण-विपर्यय-विकल्प-निद्रा-स्मृतयः ॥६॥
(*Pramāṇa-Viparyaya-Vikalpa-Nidrā-Smṛtayah*)

“[Those are] right cognition, wrong apprehension, abstraction, sleep and remembrance”.

The five kinds of thought waves are : *Pramāṇa* (प्रमाण) — right cognition [what the thought is depicting is correct], *Viparyaya* (विपर्यय) — wrong cognition [misapprehension or delusion], *Vikalpa* (विकल्प) — indeterminate [abstract or indefinite], *Nidrā* (निद्रा) — sleep [dreamless deep sleep] and *Smṛti* (स्मृति) — memory [recollection of the past happenings].

“*Know thyself, and thou shalt know everything*”; and “*Knowing thyself, thou shalt be Immortal and FREE for ever.*” have been the universal exhortations true for all ages and all climes.

It is the mind alone that builds, retains and subscribes to the binding that lies between the *Puruṣa* and *Prakṛti*. Its dissolution promises liberation. At the very outset of the spiritual journey, in this path of *Yoga*, we find on the frontier boldly stands the primary opponent — the mind. Its conquest is a long haul. Mind acquires different modes; bolt one, it re-appears in a different mode. We have seen during our efforts to meditate, on trying to stop the mentations, we smoothly enter into sleep! If we know closely all the modes it can take then we can impose a blockade on all of them together so as to stop all mentations. Specially for this purpose the thought waves (*Vṛttis*) have been divided into five types.

We commonly see that many of the thoughts that rise in our mind or our perceptions or understanding is right and correct, therefore valid. Many a times we misapprehend and is invalid. Sometimes we land in abstract thinking, indefinite and vague. For example: ‘we must be good and noble’, ‘we should be great’ — which are uncertain in extent, amount or nature and are called ‘indeterminate’. Apart from these three types of thoughts which are respectively called *Pramāṇa*, *Viparyaya* and *Vikalpa*, we may either be recollecting or brooding over the past or the mind may enter into sleep. The thoughts of recollections is called *Smṛti* and the state of mind that enters into sleep is called *Nidrā*. So, we have altogether five functional modes of mind the *Pramāṇa*, *Viparyaya*, *Vikalpa*, *Nidrā* and *Smṛti*. These are the types of *Vṛttis* that we have to block to enter into meditative process leading to *Samādhi*. There are other higher *Vṛttis* which are the fruits of our efforts to transcend *Nature*. Example: *Prajñā Vṛtti* (प्रज्ञावृत्ति) which reflects the Truth or *Vivekakhyāthi* (विवेकख्याति) which is a special type of intuitive *Vṛtti* the Light of which totally segregates the *Puruṣa* and *Prakṛti*. These higher types of *Vṛttis* are not brought into picture here because they are neither our opponents nor are to be suppressed. The thing is, we can never find contentment or fulfilment in our lives as long as the very purpose of our coming to this earth has not been achieved through the bodies the Nature has been providing for us. What bars us from reaching to this saving wisdom is our mind endlessly posing with one or the other of five types of thought waves. So, they need to be ceased and plugged off, which is rather impossible. Yet, it has to be achieved. Achievement of the impossible is the greatest source of grace in this world. Grace vouchsafes the cherished Goal.

The five modes are individually defined through the next five aphorisms:

7

प्रत्यक्षानुमानागमाः प्रमाणानि ॥७॥
(*Pratyakṣānumānāgamāḥ Pramāṇāni*)

“Direct perception, inference, testimony constitute the evidences”.

Direct perception (*Pratyakṣa* – प्रत्यक्ष), inferences (*Anumāna* – अनुमान), testimony (*Āgamāḥ* – आगमाः) constitute the *Pramāṇās* (प्रमाणाः) —the proof/ the thoughts/ perceptions being right.

For any sensible person, to take up anything as right, valid and true he/she must have personally experienced it [for example: seeing an object, tasting, smelling, touching or directly hearing a sound — that is, direct sense perceptions]. The thoughts that rise in mind and the knowledge that is gained through that direct perception is called *Pratyakṣa*. In this the seer harbours no doubt at all. In this type of perceptions, apart from certain general features of the object perceived certain special features, depending on the bent of mind of the perceiver, are predominantly gathered. That stands as the impression created on the mind. When I see a flower, I have the picture of the flower in my mind, its knowledge and a feeling or impression left over. They may induce conation [desire to act] or volition [the exercise of will] or may remain neutral as mere understanding without any impulse.

The form/picture aspect of the thought wave is called *Rūpavṛtti*¹ (रूपवृत्ति)
The knowledge aspect is called *Jñānavṛtti* (ज्ञानवृत्ति) or *Prakhyā* (प्रख्या).

} These two aspects enter into memory [*Smṛti* – स्मृति]

The feeling aspect is called *Bhāvavṛtti* (भाववृत्ति)

} Gets stored within as potential tendencies [*Samskāra* – संस्कार] to pounce upon when proper situation appear.

The conative impulse is called *Kriyāvṛtti* (क्रियावृत्ति) or *Pravṛtti* (प्रवृत्ति).

} Actions performed by conative impulse enters *Karmāśaya* (कर्मशय) waiting for its maturity to impart joys and sufferings or cause rebirth.

This is true with all types of *Vṛttis*. The difference is that in *Pramāṇa* the effect is very powerful more stable and firm. In others it is not so strong; they vary according to their influential

¹The form aspect [the picture of the flower] is with respect to sight. The perception can be through the any of the channels the ear, skin, eye, tongue or nose. They create corresponding thought reflexes or *Vṛttis* of sound, touch, form, taste or smell viz., *Śabda Vṛtti*, *Sparśa Vṛtti*, *Rūpa Vṛtti*, *Rasa Vṛtti* or *Gandha Vṛtti* respectively.

nature and determinative character. The above is the analysis of thought-wave and its consequences — that is, the action-reaction analysis. Just see what a load a *Jīva* acquires by its simple act of a single perception! They bear the potency to raise *Vṛttis* with slightest remote suggestion and create floods of thoughts, feelings, worries and moods or even drive into action. They in turn strengthen or create new *Samskāras*. This is the feedback wheel of thoughts stream versus tendencies — the *Vṛtti-Samskāra-Cakra* (वृत्ति-संस्कार-चक्र).

The whole human system is mere *Prakṛti*, the Matter. The intellect, mind, sense organs and the gross physical body — is the material aspect of man. The proximity of the *Puruṣa*, Its mere presence generates an ego in them collectively, and prompts all parts to function naturally. Nature is spontaneous. Eyes are prompted to see, ear to hear, mind to record, intellect to interpret and so on. This is cause or source of action, natural and spontaneous. In return the reaction, the feed back from Nature becomes the huge burden for the *Jīva* and cause of imprisonment in the cage of *Karma* and *Vāsana*. Now, we are trying to understand the secrets of our living and the Nature's ways, the working of Nature in such a perfect and definite way, so as to enable ourselves to free from that cage. The other factual evidence which a man accepts as true is *Anumāna* (अनुमान) – inference. It is to deduce or conclude through certain facts and reasoning. It is based on generally fool-proof logic. Example (i) seeing smoke rising up at a far off distance, to confirm the presence of fire there which is not visible. (ii) though not visible, to affirm the presence of cloud above when it is raining. Here there is no contradiction no doubt. Such uncontradicted knowledge about a real object is called *Pramā* (प्रमा). The way of getting or the proof of being the correct knowledge is called *Pramāṇa* (प्रमाण). Nevertheless they are all mere *Vṛttis* in the mind.

There is another set of evidence of a knowledge being true. It is the words of a reliable person or a body who desires to convey his cognition to the hearer, and is called the *Āgamā* (आगमा). People whose words are accepted with absolute trust as true and genuine are called *Āptās* (आप्तः) or reliable persons. Untruth can never flash in their mind nor comes out through their mouth. The words conveying sure knowledge from an *Āpta* bears the capacity to produce similar sure knowledge in the hearer, then it is called *Āptavākya* (आप्तवाक्य) or *Āgama* or verbal testimony. This is also a *Vṛtti* which registers the knowledge as true.

So, there are three types of factual evidence/proof (i) *Pratyakṣa* [direct perception] or (ii) *Anumāna* [inference] or (iii) *Āgama* [verbal testimony]. They are the three sources of correct knowledge which give us accurate and faithful presentation of the object under consideration or of perception.

The divine visions perceived during spiritual trances and other super-sensuous perceptions fall under *Pratyakṣa*.

The classification of *Vṛttis* is to enhance our capacity to deal with various types of thought streams in order to effectively eliminate them and prevent their formation or reappearance. The thoughts bear certain degree of inbuilt or innate strength. Suppose I tell a man that this world is unreal, he does not accept it because it contradicts what he has been directly experiencing. The strength and power of his thoughts, and the vehemence with which they oppose my statement are derived from his own direct experience. We find that this innate strength is one of the factors of

classification. The three factors that constitute the classification of *Vṛttis* are: (i) what prompts a thought, (ii) what strengthens the thought and (iii) what is the result or how it culminates. Total conquest of mind is possible only when we overcome all these factors. It is then we get a break through and be able to transcend the barrier of mind.

Thoughts are power packed, and can create a havoc or a calm sublime mood of pleasant serenity. They can rouse pangs and drown us in misery or can disperse the light of wisdom within and scale us to the summit of peace. They shake the man from the root.

To overcome the *Pramāṇa Vṛttis* (प्रमाण वृत्तिस) — the thoughts empowered by right knowledge, since they are based on evidential facts, we have to look upon them as mere mentations pertaining to the realm of the phenomenal world [what senses and mind notice]. The entire universe is a phenomenal truth and nothing more. We have to go beyond. We must make our mind understand that what all it has known hitherto as right, valid or true regarding this universe is not only phenomenal but also transient, a constantly changing flux of impermanency. This kind of superior understanding which washes down the validity of even *Pramāṇa* [proof] is an aspect of *Buddhi* which originates from true spiritual aspirancy and is called *Viveka* (विवेक), the discriminative faculty. Speaking to the audience, *Buddha* said “world, worldly pursuits and worldly life are misery-bound”. One of the hearer retorts “I have three wives, four children, health, wealth and youth, I have never found my life misery-bound”. Turning to the monks *Buddha* said “Look at him, in him *Viveka* is totally absent”. Then addressing the person he said “but, sir, you know, all that you are clinging to is changing, everything that is changing is misery-bound, all that causes misery is verily misery, the happiness on which you have mounted and riding now, are undoubtedly carrying misery in its womb”. Śri Ramakṛṣṇa used to say “God alone is Real, all else is illusory, two days play” “to know Him is alone wisdom, all else is ignorance”. Holy company and intense prayer awaken this kind of *Viveka* in us. Holy company is an external aid and intense prayer is an internal aid. They clear the dross covering the intellect, make it open to receive the *light* of the *Puruṣa* illumining the *Buddhi*. *Vāsanās* cloud the intellect and prayers and holy company scatters those clouds and allow the light of the Sun, the *Ātman* to fall on the intellect.



8

विपर्ययो मिथ्याज्ञानमतद्रूपप्रतिष्ठम् ॥८॥
(*Viparyayo Mithyājñānamatadrupapraṭiṣṭham*)

“Miscomprehension is erroneous knowledge of a thing as other than what it is.”

When we see an aeroplane flying high in the sky it looks as small as a toy plane. A man at the foot of a high hill looks as small as of a thumb size viewed from its top. This is called *Viparyaya*, wrong knowledge of a thing as other than what it is. But in the above example the *Buddhi* knowing it as mere appearance instantaneously corrects the perception. It comprehends the

Truth, gets the right understanding within itself that the thumb size appearing man is actually five and a half feet tall. This inference is beyond all possible doubts and therefore converts the *Viparyaya* [wrong knowledge] into the *Pramāṇa* [right knowledge]. There is another type of misapprehension — mistaking a rope for a snake or a tree stump for a man standing. Though it is a direct sense perception, there is an error. But such day to day misunderstandings are short lived, on a bit closer investigation we get the Truth.

There are the third type which are deep rooted in our consciousness. For example : people consider their land, property and belonging as solely and exclusively belonging to them, and when they die all things remain where they were, now being claimed by others as ‘mine’. The ‘mine’ness was a wrong knowledge, *Viparayaya*. In this sense the term *Viparayaya* is translated as illusion or delusion. Similarly to understand or think of one’s body itself as one’s own self is surely a misapprehension. Likewise to retain the awareness of being a man or woman is whirlpool of misconception, *Viparyaya*. This wrong knowledge or *Viparayaya* is not by itself the five afflictions, (*Kleśās* – क्लेशः) is definitely the cause of those afflictions viz., nescience *Avidyā*, egoism (*Asmitā*) attachment (*Rāga*), hatred (*Dweṣa*) and fear of death/clinging to life *Abhiniveśa* (अभिनिवेश) [see sutra II.3].

Coming out of *Viparayaya* is a tougher task since it is standing on a mistaken notion. Though it is false knowledge, though mistaken notion, yet it seemingly offers security [money, people, etc as security] and enjoyments [as sense gratifications, luxuries etc.,]. Thus *Jīvas* remain caught in the mire of afflictions and transmigration. Patanjali calls only this type of misapprehension as *Viparyaya*; and we need to come out of it. Once we come of it, we feel how foolishly we were trying to get rid of a thing which was false all through. We wonder how a simple wrong notion was causing such a massive hue and cry. *Sādhakās* struggling to overcome the sex idea is one of this type, having transcended they get amused to see they were fighting for years with a thing which never existed! There was neither a man nor a woman, there was a wrong notion and an identification with that wrong notion. When the real identity is found, the wrong notion drops off along with the manhood or the womanhood! But in case of sex-drive there is not only the individuals wrong cognition but also there is the nature’s drive, which is evident when we observe other animals and insects. Nature has equally a great part to play in the individual’s life and his existence.

The only way to overcome the *Viparyaya Vṛttis* is to cultivate intense dispassion towards the worldly ways and turn the torch of awareness to ones own real nature. For that, we have to take recourse to *Śāstrās*—scriptures and the utterances of the Enlightened ones.

Why Patanjali begins the *Yoga Sūtrās* with *Samādhi Pāda* instead of *Sādhana Pāda* is because he wants to make us known ourselves first: our status, our position, our goal, our path, our helplessness, our hidden strength and capacities, and our release. Making us know what we are, where we are and where we are to go, he will be telling us how to proceed in our path in the second part, the *Sādhanā Pāda*.



9

शब्दज्ञानानुपाती वस्तुशून्यो विकल्पः ॥१॥
 (Śabdajñānānupātī Vastuśūnyo Vikalpaḥ)

“*Verbal–abstraction* is knowledge projected (in the mind) by words representing a thing which lacks material correlate”.

Vikalpa is (*Vikalpaḥ*–विकल्पः) the thought waves that carry the knowledge in form of words (*Śabdajñānānupātī*: Śabda–Words + Jñānā–Knowledge + Anupātī–Following) of a thing which cannot be perceived by senses (वस्तुशून्यः *Vastu-śūnyah*).

All that is object of mind and not the object of senses, fall under this category. Things like wetness of water, *Puruṣa's* consciousness (water and its wetness mean the same, *Puruṣa* himself is Consciousness) which are tautological expressions, negative concepts (e.g. ‘Nobody is here’ etc.), fantasies and abstract concepts, are a part of *Vikalpa*. We have no specific word in English language which connotes such a variety of thought or mental modification which corresponds to the term ‘*Vikalpa*’. We may take it as ‘Verbal-abstraction’ because, man’s thinking process (except of the dumb and deaf) is mostly verbal and man lives more a mental and emotional life than at the physical level.

Vikalpa (विकल्प) is pure ideation. The whole understanding of the spiritual world and metaphysical concepts are *Vikalpa*, without a corresponding reality tangible to senses. But, for us that is the only source of knowledge of the beyond.

Vikalpa forms in various ways – they are thoughts carrying meaning and fulfilling some purpose. Pointing to a car if I say ‘that car is not moving’, the visibility of the car is evidential fact (*Pramāṇa*) but its ‘*absence of motion*’ is a mental abstraction, *Vikalpa*. Here the theme of the sentence is not about the car, but is about the motionlessness of the car, which is an abstraction. However, the abstraction of the motionlessness is compensated by the stationery-ness of the car, which again is visible. Where as when we say ‘This is John’s horse’, horse is visible part, an evidential fact (*Pramāṇa*) but the *belongingness* to John is merely an idea, a thought wave in the mind. It has no compensating factor like the ‘stationery-ness’ in the previous example. We find a higher degree of *Vikalpa* in this present example. When we come across the sentences like ‘I am sure, it will not rain tomorrow’ the whole thing is mere abstraction. There is an intangible future prediction, an absence (of the rain) and the rain which is neither visible nor is going to be visible. *Herein* the degree of *Vikalpa* is much greater. Finally when we come to metaphysical and spiritual concepts, it is a world of pure ideation, the mind reaching its ultimate fringes of expansion. It is an effort to conceive an object which is far beyond the understanding of the mind. Yet, it has its own matchless value to ultimately break its own constraints and limits and be open to Truth. In fact it is this understanding that leads man to the realm beyond the range of the senses and mind; the only demand, apart from the understanding of the Supreme, is dispassion towards the world. Even

otherwise constant cogitation on the ultimate Reality and the search eventually leads us to dispassion.

Similarly in the sphere of man's physical existence too, most of the mental space and time remains occupied by abstract thinking. It is especially true of the modern times: the world of computers, designing of softwares etc., the field of economics, the young world influenced by TV living in their own fancies and imaginations and the life of present world in general — is all *Vikalpa*. The only difference being, the Spiritual and Divine *Vikalpas* help release while the worldly *Vikalpas* keep man deluded and bound to the physical world. There is an added strain too in the latter. It is the burden of anxiety and tension leading to frustration, depression and other psychological problems. The warnings of the psychologists and the forerunners in human welfare that the technological revolution would land up the entire humanity in series of insoluble psychological problems are coming true. We know not where we are heading to. There is an emergency in everyone's life to attain peace; but where is it? In today's world there is every thing to tempt mind, to excite senses, to enjoy and to live for. But there is nothing that can give Peace and Freedom except the *Yoga*. The *Yoga* says stop at once the furtherance, restrain, retreat. Turn back and walk your way Home and be Free, enjoy eternal Peace, enjoy Bliss. We need a healthy mind, the mind filled with purity, light, love and wisdom. If we impartially analyse ourselves, honestly evaluate the life we have spent so far and the interactions we had with the world, we see that the only cause of our suffering was lack of such a healthy mind. We are trying to become masters of the outer world, we have never paid any heed to master ourselves. We need self-mastery. Why I am telling all this is to make ourselves understand the magnitude of the force acting on our psychic being and the load on our hearts we are carrying.

We must control all thought waves. To control *Vikalpa* is rather a tougher challenge. Except spiritual abstraction and thought waves connecting to the Divine, all other *Vikalpas* are to be eliminated. It has been found that it is easier to get rid of the unwanted *Vikalpas* by linking our conscious mind to our emotional bearing [that is, to love Divine]. Many thoughts arise and disappear without leaving impressions. For example, I am on my usual route for a walk, I witness so many men and things on the way. I am unconcerned about them and thus they do not stay in my memory. They are called transitory thought waves. Those thoughts that get connected to heart / emotional being are called 'moods'. Those that prompt action are called 'drives' or 'urges'.

Everything that reaches mind produces a wave of knowledge, the thought. Every thought carries knowledge, every knowledge express as thought. Sense perceptions create corresponding knowledge and is called '*objective knowledge*'. Abstract words bereft of a material correlate, heard or thought of, produce knowledge and is called '*verbal knowledge*'. The knowledge carried by thoughts concerning The Self beyond the body-mind is called the '*Subjective Knowledge*' or '*Self-Knowledge*'. The verbal-knowledge (*Vikalpa*) is to be divinized and linked to heart, our emotional aspect. For this purpose Patanjali introduces *Īśvarā* (the Lord of the universe) concept. Devotion, dedication and surrender to *Īśvarā* (*Īśvarapraṇidhāna* ईश्वरप्रणिधान) is an imperative in *Yoga* (II .32). On one hand is the heart, the emotions — tanatious, and on the other is Divine. Divine linked to heart is called *devotion* to God. It is the bridge from the *Prakṛti* to *Puruṣa*, the Consciousness. Hindus are urged by their wise elders to bring Divine into every aspect of life, to see the Divine

everywhere and to speak about the Divine always to everyone. When a man consciously lives upto it and The Divine predominates his awareness, then he is said to possess *Divine Consciousness* (similar to Krishna Consciousness, Buddha Consciousness etc.). It is smooth normal life with new vision and new Awareness. It is like *Puruṣa* consciously living in *Prakṛti*, though helplessly. Later through the practice of meditation, he can easily dislodge the *Prakṛti* aspect (material aspect) from his Pure Being.

* * *

Positive thoughts kill the negative ones; Divine thoughts kill them both.

Spiritual awareness dissolves the Divine thoughts and itself culminates in Peace and Bliss.

* * *

Words are container and knowledge is the content.

Divine be the container, Divine shall be the content.

* * *



10

अभाव-प्रत्ययालम्बना वृत्तिर्निद्रा ॥१०॥
(*Abhāva-Pratyayālambanā Vṛttirnidrā*)

“Thought wave filled and engulfed with nothingness is *Nidrā*”.

The thought wave / mental modification (*Vṛttiḥ*– वृत्तिः) clinging to or holding on to, or leaning over i.e. filled with (*Ālambanā*–आलम्बना) nothingness (*Abhāva-Pratyaya*: *Abhāva*–Nothingness, *Pratyaya*–Accretion / something added to or filled with) is *Nidrā* (deep dreamless sleep).

Here *Nidrā* (निद्रा) refers to *Suṣupti* (सुषुप्ति) dreamless deep sleep. Because dreams get classified under *Viparyaya*, the ‘Wrong understanding’. The term *Ālambanā* literally means ‘leaning over something’, ‘basis’ or ‘foundation’. That is to say, absence of all other *Vṛttis* is the basis of the mental modification as sleep; it is the necessary precondition of dreamless deep sleep. *Pratyaya* is derived from the root ङ –to go, with a prefix *Prati* (प्रति) — to mean ‘going to meet’. A thing which goes and attaches itself to something else is called *Pratyaya* (प्रत्यय). *Abhāva* means ‘not existing’ ‘absence of a thing’ or ‘nothingness’. ‘*Abhāva-Pratyayālambanā*’ therefore means: *Vṛtti* getting itself attached to nothingness or experiencing an unchanging idea of nothingness left by the cessation of all other mental process.

What is conveyed through the *Sūtra* is that deep sleep is one of the mental processes, a modification, which is distinct and separate from transcendental state. Nothing can be attained in or through this state; it is an impediment in spiritual path. It has to be restrained i.e. to be overcome by those who aspire to attain the state of *Kaivalya* (कैवल्य). Patanjali here specifically uses the term *Vṛtti* (which he does not do at other places of this classification) to ward off any possibility of understanding it as transcendental state and to affirm it to be a natural *mental* process; since absence of thought waves (*Citta-Vṛtti-Nirodha*) assures transcendental state.

The waking up man's recollection 'I slept well, knew nothing' is taken as the experiential proof of the deep sleep being a 'mental modification' *Vṛtti*. The fact that 'Mr. Jack, the fool' getting up from sleep does not become 'Mr. Jack, the Saint' but remains the same 'Mr. Jack, the fool', is also the proof that sleep is not a transcendental experience or the *Samādhi* (समाधि).

So, sleep being a *Vṛtti*, what causes its appearance? For a *Vṛtti* to appear there should be a sense perception or another thought wave stimulating the latent *Samskārās*. For, no stored *Samskāra* can re-appear as a thought all of a sudden by itself without a suggestion. There is a third factor — the Nature's inducement. A baby lizard just coming out of an egg catches its prey and gulps without any previous experience (*Samskāra*) and without being taught. That is Nature's inducement — the instinctive nature inbuilt in everybody. Many things happen in human system too without any previously formed *Samskāra*. For e.g., a wound in the flesh gets healed up. Similarly Nature heals the wounds of the mind and heart too. Generally no agony, however severe be it, lasts more than twelve days.

Sleep too has two factors in its formation. One is the *Samskāra* (habit), the other is Nature's prompting (the *Tamas* engulfing the soul). Usually for a healthy adult body six hours are considered to be optimum (1/4 of the day span of 24 hrs). Sleeping more than that is considered as habitual and disgraceful. *Sādhakās*, because of their less involvement in the world and less attachment/aversion need less sleep. So, for *Sādhakās* four hours of sleep is supposed to suffice.

As *Sādhakās* we must remember that certain physiological conditions can influence sleep. Lack of physical exercises, over exertions, excited movements and thinking, food intake more than bodily need, excessive sweets consumption, low water intake, other *Tamasic* nature like intense dislike, rage, lust etc., do create sleeping tendency. On contrary, tension, anxiety, fear, shocks etc., create insomnia. We need to avoid both extremes and take up the middle path advocated by *Buddhā*. In *Bhagavad Gita* (VI.17) also *Kṛṣṇa* advises this middle path "He who is moderate in food and movements, in his involvements in actions, and in his *sleep* and *wakefulness*, attains to *Yoga* which destroys misery."

Though it is said that there rises only one thought at a time and the whole mind itself takes the form of thought, mind and thought can be differentiated. Mind is like a screen and the thought is as if a projection on that screen. If we keenly observe we find three sections: the previous thought fading away, present thought predominantly pervading and new thought germinating. Below the layer of conscious mind there is a subconscious mind with list of engagements and immediate future plans. In the deepest layers, unseen and inaccessible is the unconscious mind or the stored latencies.

In mind we find a complicated structure of thought pattern. There are five senses working together, there is inner programmed relay too which is generally a reactive pattern. There is pending *Sukha–Duhkha* (सुख-दुःख – pleasure and pain) that has come to maturity which imparts *Bhoga Vṛttis* (भोग वृत्तिस). There are latent *Samskāras* which brings forth the concerned memory. All these happen at once. Though we assume that there will be one thought at a time, how complicated its structure is! And suppose you are witnessing a T.V., then hearing and seeing are taking place at the same time along with imaginations and understanding. Look at the speed at which the thought waves move! Mind can accommodate a lot of things at the same time and also run very fast and expand to infinite dimensions!

When sleep *Vṛtti* appears all other *Vṛttis* disband themselves and disappear. There will be no more previous *fading away* thought wave or the *germinating* next. The subconscious mind too dissolves forthwith. There will be a single *Vṛtti* (thought wave) of ‘pure nothingness’ occupying the whole mind. The mind now has only one thought of ‘nothing’ and has the knowledge of that ‘nothing’, being aware of that one ‘nothing’ understands nothing but ‘nothing’. The ego and the *Buddhi* trying to identify themselves with it enter into *nothingness*. Just like sugar dissolved in water can no more be seen independent of water, this ego along with the *Buddhi* dissolve in that nothing and attain nothingness and remain unaware of itself and its focus, the mind. Thus all activities and the possibility of action too remain suspended. That is why once the sleep *Vṛtti* gets it hold, it cannot be controlled, because it does not allow the controller [ego + *Buddhi*] to exist or appear. All other types of *Vṛttis* can be controlled, suppressed and eliminated even after they appear, but not the sleep *Vṛtti*.

Sleep is the primary enemy of every *Sādhaka*. It is first blockade imposed by the Nature. Ninety percent of the *Sādhakās* get trapped here, they cannot cross over owing to lack of grit and yearning. They sit, drowse and spend the hour of meditation. Conquest of sleep is the first lesson in self-control, *Samyama* (संयम); sleeping beyond the minimum need of body and mind, and drowsing during the meditation are poisons for a spiritual aspirant.

Hindu philosophers affirm mind to be subtle matter, being itself a product of *Rajas aspect* [active principle] of *Prakṛti* [material cause of the universe]. That is the reason why mind is ever active, always working. Whenever *Tamas* [crudeness and inactive principle] predominates, *Rajas* retreats and mind becomes dull or inactive. Sleep is a product of *Tamas* and the mind is of *Rajas*. With the appearance of sleep mind becomes dull and incapable of activity, and is unable to overpower the dominating sleep. A *Sātvik* man [calm, collected, radiating light] can control his activities, inner urges as well as sleep. That is, *Satva* can control *Rajas* and *Tamas*, likewise *Rajas* can control *Tamas*, while *Tamas* has neither the control over itself or on others. To control *Nidrā* during meditation we have to cultivate *Sātvik* way of living at all times. We have to undergo a radical transformation, a structural rebuilt of the whole system.

Sleep is not the only projection of *Tamas*. Those who are preys of excessive sleep, especially those who are overpowered by sleep during meditation are victims of other defects projected by *Tamas* too. In them we can find lack of dedication (*Aśṛddhā* – अश्रद्धा), procrastination, laziness, grief, fear, wrong understanding, egoistic tendencies etc.,. These qualities definitely cause hindrance in practice of meditation and *yoga*. So, they need to rebuild their entire system, the base

itself to be changed. They have to forcibly come out of *Tamas* and move towards *Satva* if they are sincerely seeking salvation. If the seeking is intense and deep to the core, the way out from *Tamas* can never remain hidden to the searching eye of the mind. Firm resolution, prayers of a longing heart, understanding others needs, feeling for them and serving them, rousing of the *Rājasik* and *Sātwik* tendencies those that can kill *Tāmasik* base, deep studies etc., do help us. One should never try to control sleep while sitting for meditation. At least one and half hour before sitting for meditation one must sit in a place and fight out sleep. *Sādhakās* keep different devices to overcome sleep. For some, bath alone is sufficient to refresh. Some may need a walk, some may depend on rigorous physical exercises, some rouse their feelings through singing devotional songs, some look intently at the vastness of Nature like gazing at the sky or a sea, some take to fasting or light food and avoid that type of food that induce *Tamas* and *Rajas*, some take vow not to sleep and punish oneself in case of transgression. Since it is an impulse from Nature, austerities and penance of one kind or other is required. After the mind is free from the qualities of *Tamas*, one has to continue sitting for meditation for the control of mind. Then through devotion to God, *Guru*, the tradition of the holy path, and love for all beings one must get rid of the *Rājasik* tendencies too. This is what Śrī Kṛṣṇa calls ‘यत्चित्तात्मा’ (*Yatacittātmā*) which he advocates before oneself sitting for meditation (*Dhyāna* – ध्यान, B.G. VI/10).

One is not to sleep or drowse during spiritual practices be it worship, *Japa*, prayer or meditation, studies or service. It is highly binding in the life of a renunciate. Sleeping or drowsing is *Asṛddhā* (अश्रद्धा), insincerity. Insincerity in *Sādhu*’s life bears a stamp of deception; he not only deceiving himself but the society in which he lives, his parents, his life supporters, the entire human race and the Lord who has given him shelter. There is no hope of regeneration of such people. Since my early contact with Math and Mission say about forty years back, it is a disgusting and pitiable sight for me that, I have been witnessing most of the *Sādhus* and *Bramacharins* drowse, sleep and spend their hour of meditation. What image do they project to an onlooker and to the world? And it is my bad luck that even now I am to witness the same. Often I feel miserable. As for me, I find it extremely difficult to bear the sight of insincerity. Thakur, for the same reason slapped *Rāsamaṇi* and Christ beating with a stick and driving away ingenuine people at the holy place of Jerusalem not only because they ruin their own life but also they spoil the atmosphere around and pollute other minds. With so many pleadings, requests, entreats and threats people in the temple of Jehovah have not mended their ways even purely for their own good. What is the use of advices, instructions or classes for those who are insincere in spiritual practices? They are not ready to sacrifice — sacrifice a little sleep and laziness during meditation. Sleep is a subtle type of enjoyment, an internal secret enjoyment that entices the *Jīva*, and it has to be shunned. It needs tremendous will, grit and self control. Those can be got only from *Tapasya* (that is, Austerities, penance and sacrifice). Loose way of living, being indisciplined in rest, activities and food will not do. Strict disciplined life of austerities and self-giving should accompany practice of *Yoga*. Looking at the great sacrifice that, Śrī Rāmakṛṣṇa, Holy Mother and Swamiji has done for us, and others doing presently for us, we must be able to sacrifice to remain sincere and prove our integrity and loyalty to them, otherwise all help and supports will be withdrawn. I am writing this with a pained heart. Nature being Herself in a position of a mother, gives a long rope to change our ways; if we fail to take advantage, then we shall be great losers. A man who cannot control the lowest subjective impulse — the sleep, that too just for an hour or two during meditation, how can he

overcome higher passions dependent on external factors! Such people will be always impatient, restless with no capacity to tolerate other's advice, much less the harsh words or insults. They remain busy in proving their worth in the world. Their prestige, their status, their pride and their power they want to retain and enhance! So, Mother Nature allows them to 'play' in the world. Thus they lose the kingdom of God. Now we clearly understand what does *Māyā* (माया) mean for *Jīva*, when *Sādhakās* who have left their home and hearth could get enticed by a piece of drowsiness and sleep so as to give up God and goal, imagine the plight of a common man. There comes the need of worship of Power – the Mother worship, pleading to give the right understanding and to lead along the right path. It is an appeal to the Divine Mother, the Power that removes the spell on *Jīva*, the *Vidyā Māyā* (विद्या माया), and is the essence of the famous *Gāyatrī* (गायत्री), “Dhiyo yo nah pracodayāt” (धियो यो नः प्रचोदयात्) an imperative in life of a Novice [*Brahmacharin*] to awaken the latent powers in humans to reach Spiritual Perfection. Mother in one of Her aspects as *Avidyā Māyā* (अविद्या माया) binds the *Jīva*, and She in Her another aspects as *Vidyā Māyā* redeems the *Jīvās*

11

अनुभूतविषयासम्प्रमोषः स्मृतिः ॥११॥
(*Anubhūta Viṣayāsampraṁoṣaḥ Smṛtiḥ*)

“The mental modification as a memory is an unforgotten experience
re-appearing in the conscious mind”

Anubhūta (अनुभूत) means previously experienced or perceived. The *Viṣaya* (विषय) designates any object that falls within human understanding and experience. *Asampraṁoṣa* (असंप्रमोष) [a + sam+ pra+ moṣa] : a –indicative of negation, gives the meaning of ‘un’ – or ‘non’ – ; –sam– gives the idea of totality; –pra– reaching an event; –moṣa is from the root मुष् (*Muṣ*)– used in the sense of ‘stealing, driving away or causing to lose (*Steye* – स्तेये)’, and we have to take the meaning ‘causing to lose’. The term *Asampraṁoṣa* finally means — *not totally lost*, in other words ‘remaining as *Samskāra* (संस्कार) – latent impressions’. ‘Not totally lost’ does not mean something partially lost. It is like a misplaced book in a library, not totally lost but lost from its own place and is placed elsewhere which is inaccessible without an suggestion. Swami Vivekananda translates it as those that ‘do not slip away’. Pacing with time, in an unbroken continuity the mind registers and leaves behind the series of experiences most of which go and settle down its own unseen depths. Each experience as *Vṛtti* appears in mind and in no time disappears but is ‘not totally lost’, for, is retained back as latent impression, to reappear in mind under some specific suggestion, as ‘memory’. This reappearance of an earlier experience not totally lost [not forgotten] in the form of a *Vṛtti* in the mind is *Smṛti* (स्मृति), the recollection/remembrance/memory.

Smṛti differs from the original experience in only one sense and that is, apart from the object experienced and the experience undergone then, there is a new added awareness now that ‘ I am knowing this’. While experiencing earlier there was a subjective awareness – the ego – being aware

of ‘I am experiencing’. Now the ego is both subjective and objective, subjectively bearing the awareness of presently ‘being a knower’ and objectively as having experienced earlier. This dual role of ego gives vehemence in thought wave. When a man says “my life was full of thorns, there is no end to my suffering” how intensely he might be witnessing himself and his experiences! He is objectifying himself, his life and his good and bad experiences and subjectively stands witnessing it. This makes memories extremely difficult to erase or to overcome. The most difficult *Vṛtti* to overcome is *Smṛti*, the memory. The classification *Pramāṇa* (प्रमाण), *Viparyaya* (विपर्यय), *Vikalpa* (विकल्प), *Nidrā* (निद्रा) and *Smṛti* (स्मृति) are placed in the order of the degree of their toughness to deal with. So, there are five parts in *Smṛti*, memory — the object experienced earlier, the experience undergone then [that is, the knowledge of the object], and the present awareness of having witnessed it, the joys or sorrows the memory would bring about presently, and perhaps an impulse for certain action. Therefore it is almost impossible to eliminate them. *Advaitins* do not give validity to any physical experience, *Bhaktas* accept them assigning it to the Will of God and transform them into medium to intensify Divine thoughts, Yogis try to detach themselves from them by rejecting them as belonging to *Prakṛti*.

A memory can be of anything. It may relate to any experience existing (*Vidyamāna*—विद्यमान) or non-existing (*Avidyamāna*—अविद्यमान), real (*Bhāvita*—भावित) or unreal (*Abhāvita*—अभावित), of the dream state (*Swapnātmaka*—स्वप्नात्मक) or of waking state (*Jāgratātmaka*—जाग्रतात्मक), can be of an imagination or of a concocted story (*Kalpita*—कल्पित) or a previously planned future event (*Samkalpita*—संकल्पित or *Yojita*—योजित) whatever they are, being mentations, *Vṛttis*, are invariably associated with (i) pleasure (ii) pain (iii) *Moha* (मोह—delusion, stupefaction – the thoughts that fail to give a clear and distinct experience of pleasure or pain — example : the awareness of the thought – “My son, dear to me, is living in a far off country”). Being associated with pleasure, pain and *Moha*, they rouse the feelings of love, attachment, hatred, fear etc., which in turn give rise to actions in mind. Thus bearing all the potentiality to drift or drown.



12

अभ्यासवैराग्याभ्यां तन्निरोधः ॥१२॥

(*Abhyāsa – Vairāgyābhyām Tan-nirodhaḥ*)

“Through constant practice and non-attachment is their cessation.”

Abhyāsavairāgyābhyām = *Abhyāsenā* (अभ्यासेन) + *Vairāgyeṇa* (वैराग्येण) : Through constant efforts for stability, purity and perfection [*Abhyāsenā*] and through non-attachment for worldly objects and secular life [*Vairāgyeṇa*] we surely attain restraint of the very mental process of thought formation *Nirodhaḥ* (निरोधः) where in all the five types of thought patterns *Vṛttis* (*Tat-Teṣām*— तत्-तेषाम्) get eliminated.

To realise this end both means, *Abhyāsa* and *Vairāgya* are necessary and that each one would separately be insufficient for such an effect. They must be faithfully observed and earnestly maintained during the entire course of the *Yogic* process till *Nirodha* reaches its final stage. As soon as the crescendo of the *Nirodha* is achieved then there can be neither the efforts which constitutes *Abhyāsa* nor the awareness of mastery which stands for *Vairāgya*, since the peak of *Nirodha* is the absolute and total emptying of *Prakṛti's* reflections from the consciousness. What is needed is unerring and untiring perseverance for, it may not be a short term course but years and years of struggle.

To reach the grand goal the *Advaita* takes up Knowledge as basis and intellect as tool; *Dwaitins* pledge their heart invest their love and take faith as their basis; while in *Rāja Yoga* we find the faculty of 'Will' is predominantly made use of with discriminative faculty *Viveka* to achieve self control, self-mastery and self-reliance, and finally to tear away from *Prakṛti*.

In this *Samādhi Pāda* we are being given intellectual training to expand our intellectual base. This gives a picture of the path we are going to tread and gives us the precise knowledge of our inner structure. As our understanding deepens and reaches our feelings and emotions, it releases us from our instinctive nature to a great extent. And when feelings deepens and joins the will and work together, then the intuitive faculty gradually unfolds which is end finder.

Instinctive nature → Intelligence → Feeling + WILL → Intuition



13

तत्र स्थितौ यत्नोऽभ्यासः ॥१३॥

(*Tatra Sthitau Yatno 'bhyāsaḥ*)

“There (in previous *Sūtra*), *Abhyāsa* (practice) is constant efforts to attain that state of stability (in which there are no *Vṛttis*).”

Tatra (तत्र) – there in, i.e., of the two *Abhyāsa* (अभ्यास) and *Vairāgya* (वैराग्य) stated in the previous *Sūtra*, the *Abhyāsaḥ* means *Yatnaḥ* (यत्नः) – constant efforts to attain *Sthitau* (स्थितौ) – that state of perfect stability in which there are neither the *Sātwik ṛttis* nor the mind, the *Puruṣa* by Itself shines entirely independent of the *Prakṛti*.

Grammatically *Sthitau* is locative case of 'Sthiti (स्थिति) – state of existence/being'. It may refer to any state – a calm state of mind, state of sleep, an agitated state of mind or any other state including the *Samādhi* states. Referring to the context and the earlier *Sūtra* wherein there is specific mention of the term '*Nirodhaḥ*' (निरोधः), we have to take it to mean the state of *Nirodhaḥ*, that is to mean 'the state of *Absolute restraint* of thoughts'; or in other words it means '*cessation of all thoughts*'. The whole *Sūtra*, therefore means : *Abhyāsa* is constant efforts to **reach** the absolute

vṛtti- free state of mind – which is the ultimate State of *Yoga* – the *Kaivalya*, and thereafter to attain stability to remain in that State.

There are three natural states — the unstable, neutral and stable. A cone standing on its vertex is example of unstable state, and can be compared to the mind of the common man in the world. After some amount of spiritual struggle man understands the true nature of this world and its prospects as well as life and its worth and value. From it he acquires the power of discrimination

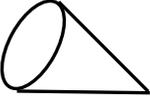
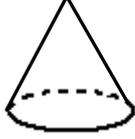
		
<u>Unstable</u>	<u>Neutral</u>	<u>Stable</u>
Normal mind (आसक्त or आसक्त)	उदासीन Free from attachments and aversions, indifferent to world and its ways.	The Samādhi state समाधिस्थ

Table 1

and dispassion towards the world. A sense of contentment and pleasant composure of mind to remain undisturbed by dualities of gains and losses, pleasure and pain etc., is acquired called the *Prasannacitta* (प्रसन्नचित्त) which can be compared to the neutral state of a cone in which it lies on its side. In this state though the cone moves and rolls around at any point of time it presents the same posture to an onlooker and to within itself. This *Prasannacitta*, the serenity of mind under all circumstances is one of the most exalted ideals of the Indian culture and of the human excellence. There is still another state, the State of Absolute Perfection in which he attains oneness with all that exists, the One without a second which can be compared to the stable state of a cone on its base — immovable and in perfect stability.

Mind being a continuous flux, is naturally unstable like flowing water stream, a constant unending series of mental processes and of emotional moods and conative determinations. We have to bring it to the ‘neutral state’ and then proceed to the ‘stable state’. And the only way to attain it is through *Abhyāsa* (practice) and *Vairāgya* (dispassion). In Bhagavad Gita solving Arjuna’s problem that “the yoga advocated by you seems to be impossible to attain because the mind is ever restless, turbulent, strong and obstinate like the sweeping powerful wind”. Śrī Kṛṣṇa too gives the same instruction “no doubt mind is restless and hard to control, yet through **practice** (*Abhyāsa*) and **dispassion** (*Vairāgya*) it can be surely brought under control [B.G VI–33 to 35].

There are two aspects of our physical existence (i) the life-force in us which keeps an awareness in us that ‘I am’ along with a ceaseless striving to preserve that ‘I am’ which is otherwise called the clinging to life (*Abhiniveśa*), and (ii) the process of living. The both have to be dissolved in the pure Awareness of the *Ātman*, the *Puruṣa*

The present I of the ‘I am’ is a false ego that appears from no where owing to the proximity of *Prakṛti* with *Puruṣa*, and disappears with their so called separation. The only thing we need to do presently is to instill in it (in the ego) the ideal of the attainment of the Supreme State of everlasting Freedom. The resolution to dedicate the life for that one cause is the first part of *Abhyāsa*. The dissolution of our second aspect, the process of living can be said to be the dissolution of its base, the mind which means the *Citta Vṛtti Nirodha*.

And for that, we have to bring the mind to a stable state, a *Sthira sthiti* (स्थिर स्थिति) — which presents itself in three forms in relation to the three functions of mind. The mind has three functions— Perception, emotionalisation and conation.

— (i) the first form of stability is regarding perceptions and understandings — it refers to the intellective and cognitive life. Each thing it perceives or understands makes the mind run restless, in hundred ways. The dedication, his loyalty, his integrity to the ideals — to the exclusion of all others make it remain calm and undisturbed.

— (ii) the second form of stability is with respect to our emotional life. Emotional stability is a human attitude, an achievement, indeed, an expression of Divinity of a man. The aspirant changes his attitude towards his surroundings and towards himself. He naturally finds a diminution in the intensity of his emotions. He foments dispassion in his heart which generates indifference towards the worldly happenings around. Thus he frees himself from all worldly emotions save a little love and attachment for God and for the suffering beings as a part of his *Niyama* (नियम) [*Īśvarapraṇidhāna* (ईश्वरप्रणिधान) -I-23].

— (iii) The third form of stability is with respect to our conative life, the life of activities, and of will to do or not to do. The aspirant reduces his personal needs to the minimum just required for his survival and for *Sādhana*. He attends to the activities which are unavoidable keeping himself off from the sense of doership. Keeps the mind pitched to the Highest Reality, the Goal to be achieved by him so that work does not stain him or leave any impression behind. And whatever little he does, he does it as an offering to the Lord of the universe, the *Īśvara*, who has ordained the world and beings to move and act. He understands the secret of action that any act of selfishness binds and any act of unselfishness releases the soul free. So, when there is a demand, an act of unselfishness is calling or a person is seen helplessly suffering, a yogi hesitates not to act; but acts without personal involvement. It sets his conscience free. Thus he shields himself from all possibilities of the binding nature of actions. If work can bind, then it can release too, provided the attitude is changed. This makes him attain a higher stability — an harmony between his internal and external life, and with his environment.

These three forms of stability are intimately related to each other, each helping the other in turn.

This state of stability and harmony help him to restrain all type of *Vṛttis*, without much struggle or strain. This eventually makes him progress towards the total *Nirodha* state. The term *Abhyāsa*’ includes in itself the eagerness, the desire, the will, the struggle, the untiring efforts, the serious intention directed to that one aim — the *Kaivalya* state. It is to set heart and soul devoid of fluctuations on the one end, the Goal to be attained to the exclusion of all other things that can occupy that place. It is this that generates the irresistible Power, the power of intense longing which Śrī Ramakṛṣṇa calls as *Vyākulata* (व्याकुलता), the only condition for attaining the Supreme, ‘The

God'. This *Vyākulata* he calls as the 'dawn of Realisation', the 'Sun of Realisation' is bound to appear soon.

14

स तु दीर्घकाल-नैरन्तर्य-सत्काराऽऽसेवितो दृढभूमिः ॥१४॥
(*Sa tu dīrghakāla-nairantarya-satkārā'sevito dṛḍhabhūmiḥ*)

“Whereas that (*Abhyāsaḥ*-practice) being continued for a long time uninterruptedly and with devotion becomes the firm ground.”

Where as (तु) that (सः) (i.e., *Abhyāsaḥ*-practice) when pursued (*Āsevitaḥ*- आसेवितः) for a long time (*Dīrghakāla*- दीर्घकाल) without a break (*Nairantarya*- नैरन्तर्य) and with devotion/dedication (*Satkāra*- सत्कार) becomes unshakable/firm (*Dṛḍha*-दृढ) ground (*Bhūmiḥ*-भूमिः) i.e., it gets firmly established.

The fluctuating state of mind under the sway of latent impressions persists all the time even in dream state, constantly. The disease is old and deep, the medicine too should be strong and for a long time without a break and with utmost care. To maintain that earnestness, that one pointed devotion to the ideal, that total dedication, there must be a constant source of inspiration and a suitable environment. Then we find great enthusiasm, great energy for the long sustained efforts. We can find such a spirit in school children going for a trip or picnic; we must pick that spirit. It is the path of self-conquest. The aspirant must be filled with valour (*Vīryam*-वीर्यम्), power (*Balam*-बलम्) and enthusiasm (*Utsāhaḥ*-उत्साह). We can find such a grand combination in international sports persons practicing gymnastics; the long dedicated practice makes them display heart thrilling and graceful physical agility and co-ordination. Here we can understand what is meant by getting firmly grounded in practice. The practice that they do in the external world at physical level, we need to do in our internal world at the mental plane. Once Śrī Ramakṛṣṇa visited a circus (Gospel : 15-11-1882). There were various feats. A horse raced around a circular track over which large iron rings were hung at intervals. The circus rider, and English woman, stood on one foot on the horse's back and as the horse passed under the ring, she jumped through them, always alighting on one foot on the horse's back. The horse raced the entire circle, and the woman never missed the horse or lost her balance. Referring to it Śrī Ramakṛṣṇa said to M: “Did you see how the English woman stood on one foot on her horse, while it ran like lightning? How difficult that must be! She must have practiced a *long time*.” It is exactly what the present *Sūtra* implies. To firmly get established one needs long time practice with devotion and without a break. In Mahabharata epic we come across a similar incident. During their boyhood days in *Gurukula* (school) Arjuna seeing Bhima stealthily eating food in pitch darkness asks him ‘nothing is visible to me, and how is that you are able to eat? Don't you miss the plate or the mouth?’ Bhima replies — ‘It is all practice, mouth is in its place and plate too is in its own place. Only the hand is moving from plate to mouth. And mind you my brother, it is nothing but practice, practice and practice.’ Hearing it Arjuna gets the clue for success

in his archery. At once he decides ‘right now I should begin the practice’. Runs out with his bow and arrow in that dark night and fixes up an effigy under a tree and sincerely begins the practice. Night after nights all alone in a solitary place he practices. *Guru* too pleased at his sincerity and painstaking blesses him and makes him the best archer, the second to none of his time. In Thakur’s life we see how at every night when all are asleep, irrespective of if it being hot, chill or raining he would get up and run all alone to a solitary place in the woods (to which people would not dare to go even during daytime) and throwing aside all shackles that can bind the soul, would sit firmly for meditation till an hour or two before the daybreak and reach back his room before anybody could wake up. What a dedication!, what a devotion!, what a regularity! And, this continued through years till the Supreme knowledge dawned; and this is practice, the unabated rigour, the untarnished faith, the untiring efforts, the vibrantly progressing spirit.

This is what we need now and immediately. Time is fleeting and human life is short. We are to harvest when the sun is still shining. Even a little slack would push the goal far off, and defeat the purpose of life and render the life meaningless. We have to be alert now, wake up from the slumber and strive incessantly lest we should repent later. That is what practice means; that is what the whipping words of Swami Vivekananda — ‘Arise, Awake and stop not till the Goal is reached’ means. Through it we need to attain the *Dr̥ḍhabhūmi* (दृढभूमि)— the firm ground, the firm foundation, the unshakable substratum for *Samādhi*, for experiencing that Supreme state of *Kaivalya*. All that aids this end in view is practice. It equips us with certain qualities, strength, power and capacity which expel our hitherto acquired and inherited *Samskāras* (tendencies), latent impressions, natural imperfections, incidental impurities and even the qualities of Nature (the *Triguṇās*), and makes us eligible to acquire that supreme knowledge and reach that state of Perfection. That is the One Ideal the Ramakrishna Math and Mission stands for. Thakur has Himself lighted and placed the lamp of ‘Realisation of God, the Supreme Truth’. All Direct disciples and many other subsequent monks and devotees have kept that tradition alive till today through their life of love and sacrifice. And it is our turn now to pledge our lives to give our all, sacrifice our all for that Supreme Goal and that Supreme Ideal. Let us be the worthy children of Sri Thakur, Sri Sri Ma and Swamiji. All this and every bit of this constitutes ‘Practice’.

What more are we to practice, and how long— it is seemingly endless. To eradicate pride or ego is a practice, to overcome desires is a practice, to free ourselves from natural urges and inner drives is a practice, to be pure, simple, unassuming is a practice, to cultivate devotion and selfless love is a practice, to discriminate between the good and bad, the permanent and impermanent, the real and the unreal is the practice, to cultivate the spirit of renunciation is practice, to renounce what is bad, impermanent and unreal is practice, to acquire knowledge and wisdom is practice, to achieve tranquillity of mind at all times is a practice, to enter *samādhi* and make it spontaneous is practice, to move about and serve mankind with that Supreme Knowledge as *Jeevan Mukta* is a practice. The *Paramahansa Avastha* too comes to a *Jīva* only through practice.

The second part (*Sādhana pāda*) is entirely dedicated to the practice. There Patanjali gives clear and specific observances to follow. They are universal Truths which we may say are the standardized practice determinates — applicable for all people at all places at all times.

The *Abyāsa* has a necessary inevitable counterpart, the *Vairāgyam* which is taken up in the next aphorism.

15

दृष्टानुश्रविकविषयवितृष्णस्य वशीकारसंज्ञा वैराग्यम् ॥१५॥
(*Dṛṣṭānuśravika-viṣaya-vitr̥ṣṇasya vaśīkārasajñā Vairāgyam*)

“Of the mind that has lost all desires for objects seen and heard, the state of complete mastery over it is called *Vairāgyam* (वैराग्यम्), non-attachment.”

The state of complete mastery (वशीकारसंज्ञा) of the utter desirelessness (वितृष्णस्य) of the seen (दृष्ट) and of the heard (अनुश्रविक) objects (विषय) is called *Vairāgyam* : Dispassion/or non-attachment.

In any path to spiritual realisation, the pivot of the entire scheme of *Sādhana* is this *Vairāgya* – dispassion towards everything other than the Divine and the Spiritual. It is applicable through out the course at every point of *Sādhana*. So, we need to deeply absorb this principle, our every cell reflecting it in fullness. In the Hindu context and on the Indian soil this ideal of dispassion has been upheld as the most essential ideal of human existence. It stands out as the most powerful ideal of India, one of those ideals that are the prime characteristics of its culture. Beginning with Upanishads it has been an object of traditional teaching and has been adopted and promoted by all the classic doctrines of Indian origin. It finds its fullness and culmination in the life and teachings of Śrī Ramakṛṣṇa, the flag reaching its paramouncy. The next *Sūtra* speaks of the highest form of *Vairāgya* — the *Parā Vairāgya* (पर वैराग्य). Śrī Ramakṛṣṇa’s *Vairāgya* seems to have crossed even those limits : He could not bear the touch of coin or metal even when he was in deep sleep totally unconscious of Himself and His surroundings! Holy Mother Sri Sarada Devi says that the Renunciation was the only ornament He wore. He was all *Vairāgya* in bodily form; He was breathing in and breathing out *Vairāgya* at every moment of life, from His appearing in this world with body smeared with ashes till to ashes it was rendered! Towards the fag end of His Divine life, one day Swami Vivekananda asks Him whether renunciation is essential for God realisation. To which, unable to speak owing to throat cancer, He answers by making gestures and signs— placing one leg over the other he points to lower leg and indicates that to move the lower leg one has to remove the upper one. That is to say, to attain God one has to empty the world that is lying within, to reach The Spirit one has to empty the mind of the latent *Samskārās* it has accrued, to realise the *Puruṣa* within one has to sever oneself from *Prakṛti*. What accomplishes this is the *Vairāgya*. We have to acquire the same status of *Vairāgya* now if we really seek the spiritual wealth. First we have to develop a feeling of being totally disinterested in worldly matters and remain aloof never to get involved in them in any way. Thakur used to say “if I hear people speaking worldly matters, at once I would leave that place.” Without feeding our ego, without developing a dislike for anything in this world, without hurting anyone, we must tactfully escape from such situations and such people. We must clearly understand that we have come to this world not to receive or take anything but to empty

ourselves, to give to this world and go. Our life is to give and not to take or receive. Let us give, let us serve and quit. We must be aware that our participation in this world is only to serve beings that too trying to see God in them. *Vairāgya* is dispassion towards the world, the entire creation. Human mind revolts to such an idea and remain dissatisfied. The heart needs something to cling to. Therefore, with dispassion for the world we must constantly aware of the *end product*, the state of everlasting peace and eternal Freedom from the Nature. We must passionately get attached to the Divine, the Ultimate Truth. Thakur says there are two sides of the renunciation like the obverse and reverse of a coin, inseparable. ‘*Jagate Virāg Bhagavāne Anurāg*’ (‘जगते विराग् भगवाने अनुराग्’)—extreme dispassion towards the world and intense passionate attachment for the God, the Divine. It is this that we have to cultivate.

Vairāgya passes through many stages like those of the academic courses in one’s educational career. It begins with small sacrifices for others like helping a friend or giving alms. Sacrifice mature in renunciation and renunciation leads to the perfected *state* of dispassion, the *Vairāgya*.

In man’s life the seed of *Vairāgya* is sown through three rudimentary sacrifices — *Yajña*, *Dāna* and *Tapas* (यज्ञ, दान and तपस्) :

- *Yajña* (यज्ञ) is any sacrifice done for the Divine or for the Nature, be it a worship or pilgrimage, or an act of service to beings intending God, or a vow to lead a righteous life.
- *Dāna* (दान) is any sacrifice that serves the purpose of other beings. It may be monetary help, giving of food or education or any other type of help.
- *Tapas* (तपस्) is any sacrifice to serve one’s own purpose to rid oneself of defects that stand in the path to one’s spiritual attainments. Austerities, penance, to silently bear inevitable odds of life, vigils, abstaining from seeking comforts, etc., form a part of *Tapas*.

In the eighteenth chapter of Bhagavad Gita which deals with the path of Communion through renunciation, the Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa explains these three disciplines as sanctifying the individual and the mankind. *Vairāgya* at this rudimentary stage is called *Sāṅketika* (साङ्केतिक) – ‘indicative’. Here how much we have done quantity-wise does not matter. What matters is how much our heart has expanded, how much and how deep we feel— is all that matters. There is the danger of boosting up of ego or pride. We know that ego or pride comes before a fall. If we do a small sacrifice or a bit of spiritual practices sincerely, immediately pride and ego appear! That is the test, can we stand aloof unstained? Again it is training : an opportunity to practice alertness, to guard oneself from the fall, to practise humility, to practise to be a genuine aspirant free from hypocrisy. All these are changes in the occupancy— the stored tendencies. We need to undergo structural or the elemental change also. The whole of our gross and subtle existence is made up of the three *Gunās*, the *Satva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas* which is nothing but the *Prakṛti*. As far as possible we have to continuously wash down the *Rājasik* and *Tāmasik* tendencies in us and practice to remain in *Satva*, always calm, undisturbed in mind. No doubt it is an effortful practice. With so much of doing, the journey has not yet begun. All these are just setting out for preparation! When these side by side disciplines practised with *Yajña*, *Dāna* and *Tapas* with due faith and devotion, it gradually matures into a steady spirited *sacrifice* with a perfectly disciplined life of love and dedication. Mind finding some deviation to a new sphere of engagements that are giving hopes of light and solace, develops tendency not to rush

towards worldly enjoyments and worldly occupations – we may call it sprouting of renunciation. This stage is called the *Upakalpita* (उपकल्पित= Inductive) stage. The very fact of turning away one's face from the bodily comforts, physical enjoyment and sense pleasures, though still under their dominance, one starts feeling closeness to anything that is Divine, pure and sanctifying. On the other hand the aspirant gains some inner strength, courage, knack and more free time to probe within and search for the Truth. It also gives him the unique capacity of self-management of inner upsurges. At this stage the aspirant becomes fully confident that 'I can lead this life, whether or not I will be able to reach the goal, I shall dedicate my life for it'. This is the beginning of the journey, the life of renunciation begins – he resolves, he takes vows, if possible the formal vows. This stage is called the (दीक्षित) *Dīkṣita* or प्रकल्पित (*Parikalpita*) (the Initiated or specially set out) stage. It needs lot of maturity. In Ramkrishna math, a Brahmachari is initiated into the formal vows of Sannyāsa after successful nine years of training, most of which is un-aided self upliftment. The danger we face at this stage is involvement in activities and external contact. They imperceptibly entice the aspirant and capsule him. The aspirant turned extrovert would be feeling comfortable with enthusiastic approach. His spiritual practices degenerate into a sort of monotony perhaps with the same regularity but deprived of essence. Time fleets unnoticed. By the time he comes back to his senses, it would be too late with no time left to compensate or restart. This is what happens with very many monks. The only cure is to be vigil at all times as if in a warfield, and remain surrendered to the Divine, the ideal and the tradition (*Buddham śaraṇam gacchāmi, Dharmam śaraṇam gacchāmi, Saṅgham śaraṇam gacchāmi* - बुद्धं शरणं गच्छामि, धर्मं शरणं गच्छामि, सङ्घं शरणं गच्छामि). Coming out successfully from this stage the aspirants *Vairāgya* reaches a higher stage of called the *Yatamāna* (यत्मान- striving). From here onwards we can clearly see the external signs of *Vairāgya* in the aspirant— simplicity, pure unassuming attitudes, introversion, not commenting, criticising or judging others, calm and collected while working, loving to be alone etc.,. Internally, now he will be face to face encountering his own mind, thoughts, feelings trying to use various defensive methods to control or to overcome them. The strength of a chain is determined by its weakest link. The weakest link in man where all his power, ego, strength, knowledge, greatness and glory fail is the lust (sex) and his desire for power and possession. There are four *principles* operating in our lives. Being life-governing principles of *Nature* they are innate in every living being and sets the lives in a particular pattern. They are :

— (i) The Reality Principle: It is set forth through ego and governs ego. The universe that we see and live in is a combination of the Real and Unreal. Man holds on to the unreal, and whenever he gets a blow he unwillingly turns his face to the reality of life, Nature always trying to force him to accept it. This non acceptance or acceptance decides the bondage or salvage of the Jīva. Whatever be the understanding of the God, 'God alone is Real and Eternal, all else is mere appearance' — is what stands behind this principle.

— (ii) The survival principle: It is set forth through activities and possessiveness. All activities of the body including breathing is struggle for either survival or for pleasure seeking. We know how we are gripped by it when we are sick or wounded or facing a life threat. The metabolism, the self-repairing, replacement of depleted cells, the defence system, etc., of the body are workings of this principle. Fear that haunts man at all times and his normal possessive nature originates from this. Possessions can be for enjoyment also. Both fall under the common head –*Kāñcana* (काञ्चन) – lucre. Possessions for survival is inevitable and has to be attended to, but there cannot be any place of

possessions for enjoyment in the life of an aspirant. If the aspirant is fully aware that his life is pledged to God, his survival is for Realisation and for the service of others, he remains safe and unstained. That is the commitment to the ideal the aspirant living for. Human activities being triggered by *survival principle* is a biological necessity. What we need is to give it a spiritual turn. A definite way of investing our energies for a spiritual purpose as shown by Thakur is to divert all activities to God and serve man seeing God in him, make life an oblation into the Divine. This is to substantiate our spiritual strivings. Activities must be supplementary and complementary to spiritual evolution. The desire for name and fame has to be driven away from the mind, not leaving even the slightest traces. The eternity of the *Ātman* innate in *Jīva* is what stands behind this *survival principle*.

— (iii) Pleasure principle : Set forth through Libido and reproductive impulse at the deeper layers of consciousness, and as fun, joys, merriment and enjoyments at its upper surface layers. Out of Fullness, the fullness of Bliss that this creation has come into existence. In the Bliss of Fullness, says the Upanishads, an Idea appeared ‘Let me be many’, thus emerged this creation. That very Idea that appeared in the consciousness to multiply Itself is permeating through every *Jīva* since the creation of this universe as the reproductive impulse, the Libido or sex. This is going to remain ever as the prime inherency in every *Jīva* operating instinctively. Though momentary the *Jīva* finds intense eluding joy that silences the mind and intellect. It involves the consciousness and binds man (the ego) to his lower self and makes it dwell on the lower three centres of consciousness. (see foot note 1)¹².

This is the most powerful and irresistible instinct in man. Social awareness puts certain amount of external check, but is not without hundreds of loop holes. Transcendence of this Pleasure Principle gives immediate knowledge of the Self. Other three principles govern the continuance of life and can some how be managed by directing the life force to the Divine. But this pleasure seeking principle is a direct opponent standing in the way to Realisation. Thus from ancient times in

1

These three centres correspond to gross bodily life pertaining to *Manipura* (eating and sleeping), *Swādhiṣṭhāna* (sex), and *Muladhāra* (evacuation). There are six *cakrās* in all beings. They work at gross, subtle and causal level. Beyond that is Pure Consciousness expanding from zero point to infinity.

Cakrās		Awarenessess		
		Gross level	Subtle level	Causal level
<i>Mūlādhāra</i> (मूलाधार)	Lower	Evacuation	Movement (<i>Gati</i> -गति)	पृथ्वी तत्व (Elemental earth)
<i>Swādhiṣṭhāna</i> (स्वाधिष्ठान)		Sex	Pleasure (<i>Rati</i> -रति)	जल तत्व (Elemental water)
<i>Manipura</i> (मणिपुर)		Eating and sleep	<i>Prāṇa</i> -bodily needs :thirst hunger; energy: hot-cold.	अग्नि तत्व (Elemental fire)
<i>Anāhata</i> (अनाहत)	Higher	Desires/seeking	Attachments, love (<i>Āsakti</i> - आसक्ति/ <i>Prema</i> -प्रेम)	वायु तत्व (Elemental Air)
<i>Viśuddha</i> (विशुद्ध)		Conscience	Dispassion (<i>Vairāgya</i>)	आकाश तत्व (Elemental space)
<i>Ājñā</i> (आज्ञा)		The persisting knowledge- ‘I am’ and awarenesses.	Knowledge(<i>Jñāna</i>)/ understanding.	ॐ कार

In animals and other lower species only lower three centres of consciousness functions. The upper three remain totally sealed off. Therefore thinking (knowledge) and dispassion are ruled out from their life. At heart level (attachment and love) it functions as mother instinct, and in case of tamed animals, they express friendly instinct.

all religions and spiritual paths the vow of celibacy has been considered as the highest virtue and an essential discipline for the spiritual aspirant. For, it lays open the hidden Truth. It is living close to Reality, in other words living close to God. It amounts to saying that '*reality principle*' over powers the 'Pleasure principle'. Surrender to Divine, awareness of our Real Nature independent of bodily existence, motivation derived from right understanding, vow of celibacy and a pure atmosphere (like that of monastery) keep the Libido at a sub-liminal inoperative state. The *Sādhaka* can peacefully devote himself to higher practices (ध्यान etc.) which eradicates the pleasure principle from the *Jīva*'s *software* and replaces it with the Bliss of the *Ātman*; the aspirants gets the Ultimate Fulfilment with which all seekings here and hereafter find their grand and final end. Then the Aspirant, now a Illumined soul, understands that he was althrough fighting with a thing which never existed! For, he now knows that what all that exists is nothing but the God, the ultimate Reality. Śrī Ramakṛṣṇa to bring that immeasurable Bliss to the mental understanding of a common man in the world explains in terms of the common man's own language and measure as surpassing the joy one would derive if one were to have sexual intercourse in every pore of one's body all at the same time!

— (iv) The awareness principle: set forth through the three states of existence the *Jāgrat* (जाग्रत्—waking), *Svapna* (स्वप्न—dream) and *Suṣupti* (सुषुप्ति—deep sleep). The three states correspond to three levels of the cosmic existence — the gross, the subtle and the causal. Once *Caitanya* (चैतन्य), the Pure Consciousness yields to *Jīvatva* (जीवत्व) in the presence of *Prakṛti*, it enters into the realm of the relativity, the Nature comprising of gross, subtle and causal levels of existence. So, the *Jīva* is bound to live identified with one of these levels. To be in tune with the Cosmic Existence, the individual souls, *Jīvas* develop three bodies— the gross physical body, the subtle body comprising mind, intellect, sense organs, *Prāṇās* (energies) and, the causal body where all awarenesses and subtle evolutes (mind etc.) dissolve in pure ignorance (absence of knowledge of Oneself as *Ātman*). Identification of the egoic consciousness with each of the body renders the *Jīva* to a particular state existence. Thus total identification with gross body as 'myself' keep him in waking state, being himself aware of the Reality as the external physical world perceivable by mind and senses. Gross body always includes the subtle and causal bodies interlocked with each other and working in unison. When the consciousness is withdrawn from the gross physical body and the identification shifts to subtle body – the *Jīva* enters into dream state. Still further withdrawal of consciousness from the subtle body makes one land in dreamless deep sleep – called the *Suṣupti* (सुषुप्ति) state. All these processes are governed by the *awareness principle* and function involuntarily.

Transcendence of these three states, i.e., the awareness principle makes man enter into a fourth state, a transcendental state in which one transcends the Nature in all Her three levels of existence, and is called the *Samādhi* state.

In our 'cognitive maps' of human consciousness these changes are remaining as totally accepted facts without a question or a probe — so smooth and so natural. The thought of the validity of our perception or transcendence of these states never arises in our minds. They are the 'mazeways' of human consciousness for the mind to go round and round, — round of small circles of day-to-day life, larger circles of waking, dream and deep sleep and, the never ending largest circles of births and deaths.

Drawing inspiration from scriptures and life of saints when we stand aside and have a gaze through it, we see the ‘Mazeway’ is but a map of space and time, the Relativity and duality. And deeper we see, it tells us who we are, where from we come and to where we are going — our origin and our culmination. From it we understand how nature has charted and kept ready the individual personal paths by which each of us can make our own way through ‘space and time’ and go beyond to the other shore.

To stand by and watch ourselves and this world and the universe, without involvement is *Vairāgya*. How nice it is, how wonderful it is to stand aside and witness and watch! That is the only way to reach Truth beyond. Nature from its origin to its culmination is so beautiful to watch that way. Every bit of it, every moment of it is filled with intense beauty. The beauty we witness that way is percolation of the Truth beyond which persists through Nature at every point at all times and is called by the Seers as *Rtam* (ऋतम्). The ‘*Mauna*’ (मौन—silence) of the Munis and the ‘being a witness’ of the *Advaitins* and ‘pure devotion’ to God of the devotees is to perceive this and reach the Beyond.

Patanjali through the term *Vairāgya* implies the combination of these three visions in our lives with reference to the ‘*awareness principle*’ governing our lives. If man’s existence is primarily governed by the Reality principle and awareness principle, then man’s emotional life is governed by survival principle and pleasure principle. Now at this *Yatamāna* stage of *Vairāgya*, the aspirant gives his focus to transcendence of limitations binding him. Nature makes him understand the underlying principles that are keeping him in bondage and limitations. Now his *Vairāgya* takes to a higher level called *Vyatireka* (व्यतिरेक) ‘distinctive separation’. At this stage a kind of subtle divine awareness dawns in the heart which throws a thin screen of distinction separating him from the external world — some rare kind of awareness ‘I am here in this world, but I do not belong to this world’ shines forth in awareness. This as the basis the intellect seals off each of the old memories that reappear, as a separate ‘package unrelated to me and my future’. He is slowly gaining higher refined dispassion. He carefully connects the present events and perceptions including pains and misfortunes to the Divine and to the spiritual life, and as training or teaching offered by the compassionate Nature. This attitude disconnects the memories from their natural trend to recharge themselves or to create impulse. *Smṛti* – memory cannot any more create a *Bhāvavṛtti* (भाववृत्ति) and put us into a particular mood nor can it create a *Kriyāvṛtti* (क्रियावृत्ति) and yoke us to action. The memories (*Smṛti*) without impulse are mere ‘passing shows’ — a flux of unsubstantial characteristic. Most of the present too joins that stream and flow off without creating a new *Samskāra*. Divine things and divine *Samskāras* alone would be forming then. This stage of *Vairāgya*, dispassion is called *Ekendriya* (एकेन्द्रिय). The main feature of this stage is introversion – mind always remains indrawn and feelings too directed inward. This stage is like leaving the milk undisturbed for curdling, or the materials left in an oven for baking. The next stage is a matured stage called *Vaśikāra* (वशीकार) which is the topic of the present *Sūtra*. Here the *Yogi*’s ego attains the high degree of transparency. The Light of *Puruṣa* pervading the ego. He remains totally indifferent even to the senses or their perceptions, with nothing either to grasp or avoid. Much of the impulse creating *samskāras* having been reduced to inactive state (*Tanu*— तनु) and the rest got burnt down (*Dagdhbija* – दग्धबीज) state, their arousal is out of the question. It looks as if the Mother Nature, the *Prakṛti* has loosened all Her grips one by one and preparing for his final Release. The *yogī*’s mind at

this stage is *Vairāgya* the aspirant has transcended all aspects of Nature, all Her products and evolutes, the effect. The next *Sūtra* takes up the transcendence of the cause itself — the three *guṇas*.



16

तत् परं पुरुषख्यातेर्गुणवैतृष्यम् ॥१६॥
(*Tatparam Puruṣakhyāter Guṇavaitṛṣnyam*)

“Superior to that (*Vairāgya*) is the cessation of desire for (adherence to) the constituents of *Prakṛti*, set forth by the knowledge of the *Puruṣa*, the *Ātman*.”

Indifference (वैतृष्यम्—being free from attachments and aversions) to the constituents of *Prakṛti* (*Guṇās*—गुणाः) achieved through the knowledge of the True Nature of *Puruṣa* (पुरुषख्यातेः) is called the Supreme (तत्परम्) dispassion/detachment. (वैराग्यम्).

In accordance with Sankhya philosophy we have known the *Prakṛti* is primordial matter (*Jaḍa*—जड) from which the empirical reality originates. She is said to be constituted by the three *Guṇās* – *Satva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas*. The term ‘*Guṇa*’ means ‘quality’; generally matter and its quality are different. In the present context in Sankhya philosophy *Guṇa* refers to the factors or elements that constitute the *Prakṛti* (i.e., the *Satva*, *Rajas*, and *Tamas*). They intermingle to evolve into the universe. Each of these has its own distinct characteristics and functions. *Satva* generates Light, knowledge, and manifestation; it makes objects to appear before consciousness. It imparts peace, joy and contentment. The wise and the noble ones embrace this quality with gratitude and thanks giving, for, it is the ultimate friend of man that redeems man and releases him from bondage. *Rajas* originates activity and movements, drives man and mind to run after the world. Attachments, pain, efforts and disorderliness are its products. *Tamas* — is source of inertia; lethargy, grief, rudeness, rage, error etc., are its products. Everything of this universe is composed of these three *Guṇās*. Things differ from each other owing to different combination of these *Guṇās*. Preponderance of a particular *Guṇa* determine the nature of a thing.

On reaching *Vaśīkāra Vairāgya* (previous *Sūtra*) the aspirant is free from the clutches of all evolutes of *Prakṛti*. Now what remains to transcend is their casual forms— the unmanifested state of *Prakṛti*. To understand this, as an example, we may take the instance of our entering into deep sleep— therein we become totally free from all manifestations of ignorance (like the mind, senses, body or world) but yet they remain in their causal form to reappear on our waking up. Likewise after freeing ourselves from Nature’s evolutes, still their causal forms remains in unmanifested state. Up to the *Vaśīkāra* all stages of *Vairāgya* (dispassion) are *Apara* (अपर) lower as opposed to the supreme detachment mentioned in this *Sūtra* . Till we reach this *Vaśīkāra* stage we cannot even comprehend what this causal aspect of *Prakṛti* is. Otherwise, if we could see and remove the cause

earlier itself, the effects also would have surely gone away. This stage is like the one of having reached the *Ājñā cakra* (आज्ञा चक्र) (in Tantric path) wherein Truth is closely perceived but not yet 'reached'; similar to a burning lamp kept in a glass case and a moth is struggling to reach it. That is a state of complete withdrawal from all external things, and is totally ready to be internalised and focused on the *Puruṣa*.

Further, from the practice of discernment, there arises correct insight into the nature of *Puruṣa* and an utter distaste towards all mutations of the *Guṇās* including things like the omniscience etc., pertaining to *Prakṛti*. Previously, there was only complete stoppage of modifications. By constant practice of this state now i.e., *Abhyāsa* joining it with intensity, the spiritual adept clearly witnesses the *Puruṣa*, devoid of all external awarenesses. This is called the *Samprajñāta Samādhi* (सम्प्रज्ञात समाधि). Side by side there is bound to be the formation of latent impressions of cessation of all modifications of mind and of the *Samprajñāta samādhi*. Though the knowledge of *Puruṣa* is direct, immediate, clear and free from fluctuations, it is still an objective knowledge. In this knowledge the extremely pure and refined *Buddhi* exists as *Drṣṭā* (दृष्ट) or the seer. Then too the sentient, mutative and static principles of *Prakṛti* do not die out but only their activity due to their non-equilibrium that was taking place remains ceased. No doubt this stage assures the annihilation of even faint traces of attachment, yet it does not bring about *Kaivalya* or liberation. The discriminative enlightenment that dawn here (when he attains *Vaśīkāra*) being continued, awakens new Awareness called the *Viveka Khyāti* (विवेक ख्याति) in which the yogi discerns the separateness of the *Puruṣa* from the *Guṇās*, the unmanifested *Prakṛti*. This ends up in *Prajñā Vṛtti* (प्रज्ञा वृत्ति) wherein there is the elimination of the latent impressions of *Samprajñāta Samādhi*. Now, the discriminative knowledge never gets lost i.e., it is ever present (*pratyuditakyāthi*—प्रत्युदितख्याति) which moves the spiritual adept to the pure subjective experience of *Puruṣa*. This brings about a perpetual peace and a complete separation from the *Guṇās* and their possible mutation. This *Nirbīja* (निर्बीज – all *Vāsanās* and *Karmāśaya* have been burnt) state is the highest state called *Asamprajñāta Samādhi* (असम्प्रज्ञात समाधि)¹. This Ultimate Knowledge is inseparable from the highest kind of non-attachment, the supreme dispassion and is called the '*Paravairāgya*' (पर वैराग्य). It is only through this *Paravairāgya* or the supreme renunciation final and complete cessation of all miseries and getting established in perpetual peace and unending Bliss is possible. The yogi witnesses the severance of the continuity of *Karmāśaya* (vide II.12) without a break that was sustaining the cycles of births and deaths. Thus the knowledge culminates in supreme *Vairāgya* and it is an outcome of *Pūrṇtava* (पूर्णत्व—Fullness). Cessation of suffering is the measure and goal and culmination of true Knowledge².



¹ *Nirbīja* is the highest form of *Asamprajñāta samādhi*, in lower stages there remains some harmless *samskāras*, which if not destroyed may lead to *Videha* (विदेह) or *Prakṛtilīna* (प्रकृतिलीन) states

² Knowledge is not the appropriate term, because it brings about an understanding of objectivity : the knower—knowledge— and the known. Here it is a knowledge of its own kind, Pure Subjective Knowledge, pure Awareness of Being. It has nothing to do by experience, much less with erudition and accumulation of information. It is knowledge of himself in Himself.

True *service* is that which destroys ego.
 True *wisdom* is that which renders man Divine.
 True *devotion* is that which leads to surrender.
 True *meditation* is that which FREES the soul.
 True *love* is that which ensures union.



17

वितर्कविचारानन्दास्मितानुगमात् सम्प्रज्ञातः ॥१७॥
 (Vitarka–vicāra–ānanda–asmita–anugamāt samprajñātaḥ)

“The *Samprajñāta* is superior understanding attained by a progressive spiritual deliberation through examination (of gross objects), through investigation (of subtle objects), through analysis of the inner peace radiating joy, and through enquiry into one’s own being.”

Spiritual deliberation through examination (*Vitarka*– वितर्क), the spiritual deliberation through probe and investigation (*Vicāra*– विचार), the spiritual deliberation through analysis of inner innate joy (*Ānanda*– आनन्द) and the spiritual deliberation through enquiry into one’s own pure unalloyed Self-awareness (*Asmitā*– अस्मिता),—the final culminating unwavering state attained through each one of these or step by step through their progression (*Anugamāt*– अनुगमात्) is called the *Samprajñāta*.

In Patanjali Yoga system all forms of concentration and meditation are objective, even the enquiry into the self (*Asmitā*– अस्मिता). We do not find the direct subjective enquiry into the Self (subjective contemplation or subjective meditation) as in *Advaitik* path.

Our aim of *Yoga* is to reach the Self, the *Ātman*, the *Puruṣa*. Whereas our mind is accustomed to perceive through the senses and think on its basis. This understanding falls within the range of time and space. When we perceive anything of this universe including ourselves and our inner world, through mind, through thinking, we fail to sense its aliveness, its pure beingness. Since we dwell in Relativity, we see the ‘form’ only and are unaware of the ‘life’ within the ‘form’ — the sacred mystery. This gross sight throws the ancient forest into timber, birds, animals and life into a research project, the ancient Wisdom and Truth into dogmas or fictions. The normal vision reduces the Nature to a commodity to be used in pursuit of our gains and comforts or at the most, of knowledge.

When we perceive a thing with spaces of no thought, no mind, it responds to us and participates in the expansion of consciousness, reveals its existence in Realm of Consciousness. This is called ‘spiritual deliberation’. For this vision we have to recede back along the focal points of our perception and the mode of perception : from sense perception of gross objects to mental perception of subtle objects, from there still behind to intellectual discernment, and still more back to intuitive perception of our existential being. These four stages of the gross, gross to subtle, subtle to causal, causal to existential — are represented as the above mentioned progressive stages viz., the *Vitarka*, the *Vicāra*, the *Ānanda* and the *Asmitā*.

In spiritual path of the Tantras, we find six centres of consciousness, the *Cakrās* (चक्राः). Meditation on each of them leads to *Suṣumnā* (सुषुम्ना), the core of our individual Existence linking to the Absolute, the *Caitanya* (चैतन्य), at various levels of Consciousness. They form their point of attention and their basis of the path they adopt. In a similar way, here in *yoga* path we have four entities that feed and keep the mind perpetually alive: (i) sense perceptions (ii) abstract thinking— (these two belong to the objective range), (iii) delightfulness, the innate peace radiating joy often clouded by our worries and engagements, (iv) the pure unalloyed I-sense — (these latter two belong to the subjective range). Focusing on any object of interest from these four occupants of mind to the exclusion of all other thoughts and awarenesses in the mind, one attains the one-pointed (*Ekāgra*—एकाग्र) unwavering state of mind called *Samādhi* (समाधि) in which the objects shine forth in their transcendental aspects. The knowledge thus received is called *Samprajñāta*.

The following picture gives us an understanding of the mind, its modes of function and its other phase of the possibility of the concentration and transcendence.

There are, on one side these four human centres of consciousness that remain involved in Nature, the *Prakṛti*, and on the other side is the uninvolved Pure Consciousness, the *Puruṣa*. These centres of consciousness are the links with which the *Jīva* holds on to both the sides and manifests its *Jīvatva*, the self assumed ‘me’. Thus, if we can take hold of any of these and establish good authority and have a pleasant mastery over it, then its activities can be conveniently channelized to reach Ultimate Perfection.

Thus, *Vitarka* range of external world of perception rooted in movements and activities can be channelized to realise the path of *Karmayoga*. The *Vicāra* range of psychic process rooted in intellect, mind, will and senses, can be channelized to realize the path of *Raja yoga*. The *Ānanda* range of self-evident joy rooted in the peace, contentment and love centred round the heart, can be channelized to *Bhakti yoga*. And the *Asmitā*, the self-existential aspect rooted in Eternity and Immortality can be channelized to *Jñāna yoga*. Each one of these persuits individually bear full potential to make the aspirant rid of all *Vāsanās* and reach the Ultimate goal, the Freedom. However, these four, in the traditional path of *Raja yoga*, are brought under *Samprajñāta samādhi* wherein the mind is kept alive but made one pointed. Then, it is upgraded to higher states through elimination of mind (*Asamprajñāta*) and total elimination of *Samskāras* (*Nirbīja*—निर्बीज).

Samādhi is a technical word in *yoga* and is technically defined as : एकाग्रतया मनसः स्थापनरूपो ध्येयमात्र स्फुरणरूपः ध्यान-विशेषः ॥ (*Ekāgratayā manasaḥ sthāpanarūpo dhyeyamātra sphuraṇrūpaḥ*)

dhyāna viśeṣaḥ) i.e., defined as a process of meditation (*Dhyāna Viśeṣa*) in which fixation (*sthāpanarūpo*) of the mind (*manasaḥ*) is achieved through its one-pointedness (*Ekāgratayā*) wherein the object of concentration alone (*dhyeyamātra*) shines forth (*sphuraṅrūpa*) to the exclusion of all other things. Grammatically it is a combination of सम्+आ+डुधाञ्+‘ किः’ । सम् = rightly, आ=firmly, डुधाञ् = the verbal root used in the sense of holding or nourishing, किः= the state of. Altogether here in this context it means ‘Right and clearway of firmly placing the mind’.

‘*Samādhi*’ is not an ordinary word nor does it represent an ordinary state. It is that State in which we transcend limitations of normal mind and enter into a different dimension, a different realm altogether which millions and millions of humans miss and is even far beyond their imagination. Many may not attain even after much struggle. To go beyond the thought barrier, beyond the realm of space, time and causation is, if not impossible, surely next to impossible. How strong must be their renunciation, how deep might be their love, how genuine must be their dedication, how true their holding on to the Reality. A few handfull do succeed. The normal tendency to avoid trouble and escape from difficulties must be given up. We must stand up to face all dangers and sufferings bravely and boldly, with self-confidence and trust in the Divine. Let us not err anymore, deceive ourselves anymore by laying down the arms and fostering the pleasures of the glittering world of senses. Let us sincerely strive, and by God’s grace, success shall be ours.

There are two types of *Samādhi* — the *Samprajñāta* (सम्प्रज्ञात) and *Asamprajñāta* (असम्प्रज्ञात). They are akin to *Savikalpa* (सविकल्प) and *Nirvikalpa* (निर्विकल्प) of the *Advaitins* but not identical with them. *Samprajñāta* is a *transcendental* State in which the triad — the inner difference among the *Jñātṛ* (ज्ञातृ) – the knower, *Jñāna* (ज्ञान) – the knowledge and the *Jñeya* (ज्ञेय) – the known, remain though the mind is totally free from all other things. When they dissolve in the One Homogenous Reality it is called *Asamprajñāta Samādhi*.

Samprajñāta (सम्+प्र+ज्ञात; सम्= rightly, clearly, प्र=specifically, ज्ञात =felt, known, understood) and is defined as सम्यक् प्रकारेण ज्ञातो त्रिपुटी भेदो वा वस्तुस्वरूपो वा यत्र (*Samyak prakāreṇa jñāto tripuṭi bhedo vā vastu svarūpo vā yatra*) – where the triad (त्रिपुटी= refers to three way difference – knower, known and the knowledge; or the grasper, the grasped and the grasping i.e., where the dichotomy between the seer and the seen remains) is in a clearway (*Samyak Prakāreṇa*) noticed (*Jñāta*) or (*Vā*) true nature of an object (*Vastu svarūpa*) is known (*Jñāta*–ज्ञात). In the language of philosophy the subjective understanding is known as Knowledge (*Jñāna*) while the objective understanding is called grasping (*Grahaṇa*–ग्रहण). So in *Samprajñāta* we find the *Tripuṭi* (triad) as *Grahītṛ* (गृहीतृ) – grasper, *Grāhya* (ग्राह्य) the grasped and *Grahaṇa* (ग्रहण) grasping. This trichotomy continues to remain through the *Samādhi* experience. Yet the mind remains *Ekāgra* (एकाग्र) on the object (ग्राह्यवस्तु). In this *Samādhi* a single *Sātvik Vṛtti* remains as a part of *Buddhi* (intellect), the whole process being illumined by the ‘Light’ of *Puruṣa*. It is this ‘Light’ in *Buddhi* (as we shall see later on) that culminates as *Vivekakhyaṭi*.

- a. When the *Samprajñāta* state originates by focusing the mind on gross object, it is known as *Vitarkānugata Samprajñāta Samādhi* (वितर्कानुगत सम्प्रज्ञात समाधि) .¹
- b. On tuning the focus to subtler objects, those that do not fall within the perception of senses, a mere idea or an abstraction, like ‘Divinity’, longing, love etc, then state of illumined absorption obtained is called — *Vicārānugata Samprajñāta Samādhi* (विचारानुगत सम्प्रज्ञात समाधि)
- c. When the same focus is diverted to the causal range — i.e., to the innate ānanda, the peace radiating joy ever present within, the aspirant enters into *Ānandānugata Samprajñāta Samādhi*. (आनन्दानुगत सम्प्रज्ञात समाधि)
- d. Finally when the pure ‘I-sense’ *Asmitā* (‘I am’ness) is taken as the focal point for mind’s submergence, the Samādhi achieved is known as the *Asmitānugata Samprajñāta Samādhi* (अस्मितानुगत सम्प्रज्ञात समाधि).

As we reach higher and higher degree of refinement , of detachment, of perfection, the closer we move towards the Self — from *Vitarka* to *Asmita* states. The *Samprajñāta* state is possible for one who has attained the capacity to render the mind one pointed (*Ekāgra*). A significant and determinant factor in *yoga* is *Vairāgya* (dispassion) and *Tyāga* (renunciation). It signifies the termination of all emotional occupations and dealings in Temporal life, and passionate seeking of the Ultimate Divine State. From the heart of our hearts, we must root out the desire for anything of this world. “I do not want anything of this world, I will never enjoy this world in any way at any time” — must enter the depths of our being and must become a part of our all-time awareness. This *Vairāgya/Tyāga* and the awareness of our pure Spiritual Existence independent of our bodily existence must enter every cell of our body and every corner of our mind and get reflected in every thought that passes through our mind. At the same time we must feel true love, compassion for all beings. Seeking their welfare must become a part of our nature. Our hearts should pour out blessings. All experiences in life, pain, pleasure or otherwise are imperatives from Nature to lead us to Perfection. Now that the entire purpose of Nature being over, our conscience gets dissolved and our consciousness freed from Nature’s occupancy. Each time when we sit for the practice of meditation we must sit with deliberation that ‘At any cost, I must get rid of all *Vāsanās*’, then turn the mind to the Absolute Truth, the *Puruṣa*, enshrining the supreme dictum in the heart — सत्यं परं धीमहि – *Satyam Param Dhīmahī* – ‘On The Ultimate Reality, that we do meditate’.

Asmita is the subtlest object the mind can reach. Its range ends, there is nothing beyond that for it to reach. Any effort to go beyond makes the mental activity cease by merging itself in the *Dhyeyavastu* (ध्येयवस्तु) object of meditation. The *Tripuṭi* – triad dissolves in one Homogenous Existence. This state is called the *Asamprajñāta samādhi*.

That is the subject matter of next *Sūtra* .



¹ The commonly despised by the aliens as ‘idolatry’ in its grossest aspect finds a relevance here. In its subtler aspects, it contains the centering of our feelings, in vocation of the Divinity and offering of our loving services.

18

विरामप्रत्ययाभ्यासपूर्वः संस्कारशेषोऽन्यः ॥१८॥
(*Virāmapratyayābhyāsapūrvah saṁskāraśeṣo 'nyah*)

“Different from that (different from *Samprajñāta*, i.e., *Asamprajñāta*) is the one which is an outcome of practice of holding on to thoughtlessness wherein only latent/sub-liminal impressions remain.”

Preceded by (*Pūrvah*—पूर्वः) the practice of (*Abhyāsa*—अभ्यास) of cessation of thought (*Virāmapratyaya*—विरामप्रत्यय) is the other (*Anyah* अन्यः—referring to *Asamprajñāta Samādhi*) in which the latent impressions (*Saṁskāra*) alone remain (*Śeṣah*—शेषः).

All the *Sūtrās* in *Samādhi Pāda* has direct or indirect reference to the ultimate state of absolute निरोध (*Nirodha*) mentioned in the second *Sūtra* ‘*Yogaḥ cittavṛtti nirodhaḥ*’. It is the contextual reference for all *Sūtrās* in this section. In the light of this understanding the traditional commentators have assigned the earlier *Sūtra* to refer to *Samprajñāta Samādhi* and the present one to the *Asamprajñāta Samādhi*. They do not refer them to ordinary *Niruddha* state but to an highly advanced state of *Samādhi*. From their way of dealing the subject and the authority with which they explain, we are but forced to believe that behind their commentary stands their personal experience of the states.

We have seen earlier in the *Sūtra* 10, the term *pratyaya* means ‘an entity for the mind to hold on or dwell upon’. Now, coming out successfully from the *Samprajñāta*, for advancing further towards *Kaivalya* (कैवल्य) the mind is being trained to stillness without any object to dwell upon. In *Samprajñāta* state of *Yoga* the adept progressively climbs the steps beginning from gross matter (*Vitarka*) to the final stage of reaching the pure I-sense (*Asmitā*). Now, the practice of *Para Vairāgya* (पर वैराग्य) begins with discarding these stages including the pure I-sense. With this begins the arrested state of mind. It goes upto the discarding of the *Guṇās* (गुणाः) of the *Prakṛti*, when *Prakṛti* gets completely obliterated and the *Puruṣa* alone (*Kevala*—केवल) shines in his own glory. For *Samprajñāta Samādhi*, *Ekāgratā* (एकाग्रता) (one pointedness of mind) and *Vaśīkāra Vairāgya* (वशीकार वैराग्य) are sufficient. But for the *Asamprajñāta Samādhi* uncompromising *Para Vairāgya* has to be practiced. So much so, even the Supreme Knowledge is discarded if knowership were to be there behind it! *Virāma pratyaya abhyāsa* (विरामप्रत्यय अभ्यास)= practice of gripping the ‘total cessation’ is to stop the *Vṛtti* formation as well as not to give any object to dwell upon. It is stopping all functions of mind. *Virāma* (विराम) means ‘final termination’ — aiming at closing the account once for all with Nature and its products.

Samprajñāta Yoga is attained by diverting the functions of mind and channelizing its capacities to the highest possible activity of the mind, that is to perceive the spiritual version of the objects. But the latent *Saṁskārās* that are not burnt down persist waiting for the occasion to arise again. It is *Yoga* formed by diverting the whole attention elsewhere. It is similar to a man’s

attention diverted while seriously fighting. He is as if an entirely changed person with his old personality and awarenesses dissolved. When the fighting is over, he is his old person again. Gradual upheaval in *Vairāgya* upto *Vaśīkāra* which led the aspirant to *Samprajñāta yoga*, has destroyed most of *Samskāras* that stand in the path of *Yoga*. Yet a few remain that obstruct reaching the higher state of *Asamprajñāta*. They are removed by practice of *Para Vairāgya*. Even after that some *Samskāra* that are not detrimental to the *Asamprajñāta* state do remain. His fall back to *samsāra* is however, wiped out like that of the one who has reached *Ājñā cakra*. When by constant dwelling in the *Puruṣa* principle, even those get burnt down making him climb to the final stage of *Nirbīja Samādhi* [we shall know about this towards the end of this section].

No Yoga, No Advaita, yet *Jīva* rests in God!

On 31st July 2010, I happened to go to Ananda Ashrama, Puttur. I came across an inmate there, an old lady, 97 years — wonder was she, indeed! Body had been reduced to mere skin and bone weighing eighteen and a half kilograms, of fair complexion. Glowing through that frail body was her inner transparency. As we looked at her, every one of us could see ‘Light’ shining through her eyes. There was no psychological suffering left, no mark of pain or want on the face. She was a surrendered soul, no *Yoga*, no Advaita! The inner person too was surrendered, the mind-made egoic ‘me’ had already dissolved and the true devotee ‘me’ was in constant communion with her beloved Lord. She belonged to those who ‘died before they died’ and we could lively witness her having found the deep inner peace which is the realisation of the *deathless* within herself. Being fully conscious, she has been remaining unaware of the external world, mild clapping of the hands or tapping of the fingers matching with repetition of *Mantra* that continued day in and day out. There was neither sleep nor waking — sleep was put to sleep and the waking, left to the world. She was unaware of her own body, not even a slight awareness of it even when she was declodded to show us the condition of that mortal coil! She took her supper, a few spoons of rice and dal unaware of the surroundings leaning over the attendant. Yet, her kindness, love and concern for others remained unaltered. With two brilliant eyes glittering like sapphire she asked us to have coffee! I felt she shall be born again as a saint to serve people. Her inner awareness and her Divine communion was so evident and vibrant on that calm serene face that everyone could not only feel the atmosphere charged with divine but also could feel the Divine in their own hearts. It is in such moments that we find a rapture in our space-time bound awareness to peep beyond. These experiences fills us with confidence and faith in the possibility of our own attaining such divine heights, and forces us to pledge our lives earnestly for that supreme cause. Next day I took all the inmate of our Bailur Ashrama to show them how man becomes totally free from bodily bindings and mental moorings, gets released from the *Kāmik* load and thrust of *Vāsanās*. I entreated them all to strive to attain, having left home and hearth, nothing less than such a state].



19

भव-प्रत्ययो विदेह-प्रकृतिलयानाम् ॥१९॥
(*Bhava-pratyayo Videha-prakṛtilayānām*)

“Presence of worldly existence, if any, leads the aspirant to the disincarnate state or the state of being merged and one with the Nature.”

Even a slightest link (*Pratyaya*– प्रत्यय) with this creation, the worldly existence, the *Prakṛti* in any of Her aspects (*Bhava*– भव) shall render the aspirant to acquire a disincarnate state (*Videha*–विदेह –body free state) or to get merged in the calmness and pleasantness of the vast Nature (*Prakṛtilīna*– प्रकृतिलीन).

The term *Bhava* (भव) has clear and specific meaning in Sanskrit literature. It refers to the whole of creation, the Cosmic Existence or the realm of Relativity. With respect to the *Jīva* it is a battle field of war and peace, of victory and defeat, of pain and pleasure — and a source of bondage and ground for transmigration, the cycles of birth and death. The meaning of the word *Bhava* becomes more clear to us if we look at the Arati song ‘खण्डन भव बन्धन’. The total severance of the *Jīva*’s bonds with it ensures Liberation. Śrī Rāmakṛṣṇa says that even a harmless single desire to eat a sweetmeat were to remain, then one is bound to be born and again into this world of transmigration.

The crux of all human problems lies in man’s unconscious demands (of his soul) for the three primary requisites — Freedom, peace and happiness. The quest for the self begins only when the seeking turns out to be a conscious effort for their attainment. Very often it comes to such a state that it is ‘well begun and half done’. At every stage there is the chance of deviation from the path owing to Nature’s pull or by the gravity of *Karma* and *Vāsanā*. Every moment the *Sādhaka* must be equipped with higher and higher degrees of discrimination (*Viveka*–विवेक), dispassion and renunciation (*Vairāgya*–विवेक, *Tyāga*–त्याग) as he proceeds to higher and higher levels of attainments. It is governed by an inevitable law which demands renunciation at every point throughout the journey. Even the attainments and the consequent joys are to be renounced before we can take the next step. Nature is Perfect and demands perfection from all points of view before she gives the passport. Every *Jīva* possesses visa but to earn the passport is an herculean job involving disclaim, resignation and abandonment. Here too, at the penultimate stage, just before the flag of freedom be hoisted, there is a possible deviation which withholds the Final Deliverance. That is being highlighted in the present *Sūtra* as a red signal of warning to be alert.

So, if the spiritual adept who has attained to such heights as *Asamprajñāta samādhi* in which traces of *Samskāra* that are not detrimental to that *samādhi* remains, which he could not get rid of for whatever reason, then what would be the consequent state the aspirant reaches is being mentioned through this *Sūtra*. In the early stages of *Asamprajñāta Samādhi* (prior to the attainment of *Nirbījatva*– निर्बीजत्व), though the separation from *Guṇās* is said to have been attained, yet the residual *Samskāras* themselves register traces of *Rajas* or *Satva* in the existential awareness of the

Sādhaka. *Tamas* is understood to be existing only because, life is continuing, but it remains always tending to zero without any manifestation owing to his *Para vairāgya* (परवैराग्य) state. Now, there are only two possibilities (i) traces of *Rajas* joins the residual *Samskāras* and pause the journey or (ii) traces of *Satva* joins the residual *samskāras* and pause the journey. भव (*Bhava*) with reference to a *Jīva* is nothing but *Prakṛti* in general and, the *Triguṇās*, the *Vāsanās* and the *Karmās* in particular. These remaining even in residual form, in subliminal inactive form, the *Jīva*, however evolved be it, remains within the jurisdiction of *Prakṛti*. Thus in the former case, the *Rajas* blended with the pure harmless *Samskāras* (like Naren's desire to remain ever in *Samādhi*, or the awareness of having safely transcended the entire network of *Māyā* etc.) create a 'Divine' individuality established in one's own bliss and without being subjected to an ever changing physical body (Somatic existence), the source of pain and bondage. These super souls who have crossed over the farthest limits of Nature are called *disincarnate gods*. They are not the power-endowed gods of the Hindu pantheon such as the Śiva, Viṣṇu or the Varuṇa, Indra etc.,. They are like spheres of Bliss freely floating in Nature. Distinct from these are the second type in whom the traces of *Satva* being blended with similar pure harmless *Samskāras*, create the highest type of satisfaction and a kind of great fulfillment owing to which the need to step further to the *Kaivalya* (कैवल्य) state gets barred. Their ego gradually dissolves in its cause, the *Prakṛti*, and all forces too get dissolved in it. They remain thus merged in the vast Nature of immeasurable dimensions experiencing the peace and calmness, the pleasantness and a kind of self contained bliss of non-dependence. They are called the *Prakṛtilīna Puruṣās* (प्रकृतिलीन पुरुषाः).

Both these types are free from the impulse creating forces within. Therefore their individuality remain free from cognition, emotion, volition and conation. Thus they are free from the senses and the limitations of the mind. Yet, this is not the state of *Kaivalya*. A suitable force from the Nature (like a massive transformation in Nature, a massive catastrophe, a curse, a prayer, an earnest call, Divine will etc.) can arouse this dormant state to a dynamic state and yoke to cognition and volition.



A General note : when a man in bondage (not liberated) dies, his 'spiritual aspect' remains, as it were, entrapped in the subtle body and gets subjected to reincarnation cycles. During this process of transmigration the apparently trapped spiritual entity accompanies subtle body. The life in the subsequent incarnation is governed by the subliminal impressions and the *Kārmik* load that the subtle body happens to carry with it.

In case of a *Jeevan Mukta* (जीवन मुक्त— the liberated soul) his 'spiritual entity' which had already known its true identity merges back in its own Real Self, the *Ātman* or the Brahman. It is like reflection merging back in the original when reflector is destroyed. The subtle body without the support of the 'spiritual entity', regress, on account of its being a mere material entity, to its primal cause, the primordial matter, the *Prakṛti* and dissolves itself in it.

A third situation arises when there is the cosmic regression. The universe is subjected to repeated cycles of evolution and involutions, the *Sṛṣṭi* (सृष्टि) and *Pralaya* (प्रलय). With cosmic dissolution all individual subtle bodies collectively get dissolved back into the *Prakṛti*. At the beginning of the next cycle, un-liberated *Jīvās* return to the cycle of reincarnations. Their spiritual aspect, 'the spiritual entities' find a similar state of repose like the *Kaivalya* (a pseudo-*Kaivalya*) throughout the 'period' of dissolution. It is something like our deep sleep (*Suṣupti*— सुषुप्ति). While a *Jīva* is in *Suṣupti* the creation is continuing but not being perceived by the *Jīva*, on the other hand, in *Pralaya* there is no creation and therefore not perceived by *Jīva*. In *Suṣupti* there is ignorance engulfing the *Jīva*, in *Pralaya* knowledge which retains the individuality engulfs the *Jīva*.

There is yet another concept about liberation in Advaita Vedanta, called *Krama-mukti* (क्रम मुक्ति) or *Avāntara-mukti* (अवान्तर मुक्ति) [Liberation by stages]. According to this concept a person who has intensely meditated on *Īśvara* (The *Saguṇa Brahman*) using the sacred *Om* or other prescribed methods such as *Dahara-vidyā* or through *Mantra dīkṣa* goes to *Brahma loka* (the realm of *Īśvara* = the causal state of universal consciousness after death). There the aspirant

20

श्रद्धा-वीर्य-स्मृति-समाधि-प्रज्ञा-पूर्वक इतरेषाम् ॥२०॥
(*Śraddhā-Vīrya-Smṛti-Samādhi-Prajñā-Pūrvaka Itareṣām*)

“The Faith endowed dedication, valourous energy, constant recollectedness, concentration followed by spiritual absorption and illumined awareness these form the course for others who want to follow a systematic path.”

The course that runs through (*Pūrvaka*– पूर्वक) the dedication sustained by dynamic faith (*Śraddhā*–श्रद्धा), the valorous energy that sustains the long spiritual struggle (*Vīrya*–वीर्य) constant recollectedness (*Smṛti*– स्मृति) and concentration followed by spiritual absorption (*Samādhi*– समाधि) and illumined awareness (*Prajñā*– प्रज्ञा) — is for others (*Itareṣām*– इतरेषाम्) who want to follow a definite systematic course.

Generally in all pursuits, be it learning or farming or acquisition of a quality, there are two ways — one, the natural way and the other is programmed cultivation. In almost all *Sādhakās* we find a natural inclination towards spiritual life. It is determined by the *Jīvās*’ spiritual status depending on their stage of evolution. More evolved we are, less is our fascination for the world and more comfortable we feel with divine and spiritual. Such people follow a natural sequence of spiritual unfoldment and progressive outblaze of dispassion. There are others who see, hear, come to know and admire that noble ideal of Liberation or the life dedicated to God and God-Realisation, and resolve to take to that grand life. Patanjali having mentioned earlier the normal course of development regarding all the aspirants of *Yoga* generally, now, here in this *Sūtra* mentions the specific course for those who have resolved to take to the path of *Yoga* but are in need of a systematic approach. The actual prescribed course shall be found by us in the next section, the *Sādhana Pāda*, here equipage for upgrading ourselves to the highest state of *yoga* is alone mentioned.

The code of yogic discipline are mentioned here to be five fold.

(I) *Śraddhā* (श्रद्धा) :- is commonly translated as ‘faith’. For faith the Sanskrit word is *Viśvāsa* (विश्वास). *Śraddhā* is not exactly faith, but includes faith. It can be explained to be special quality in

attains the knowledge of *Nirguṇa Brahman* under the intuitive knowledge supplied by spiritually exalted Being, The *Īśvara* as *Hiraṇyagarbha* (हिरण्यगर्भ). The same state may be attained by a pious religious man too by the merit of his noble self-less deed and life, by which he attains higher *Lokās*. Since in any of the higher *Lokās* (planes of existence in the universe), there is no acquisition of *Karma* (except in human body there is no *Karma* acquisition in any other bodies, lower animals etc., or higher gods, angles etc.). They can go to still higher *Lokās* by merit of their renunciation in each of these *Lokās*. For e.g. a *Jīva* out of the merit of good *Karmas* in human birth reach *Maharloka* [महर्लोक- of the six higher *Lokās* above the *Bhū* (भू) *Loka* in which we live namely, *Bhuvah*, *Svahaḥ*, *Mahaḥ*, *Janaḥ*, *Tapah*, *Satyam* (भुवः, स्वहः, महः, जनः, तपः, सत्यम्)], then if he wilfully renounces all enjoyments there then, he reaches the next higher *Loka* which ensures higher joy, higher enjoyments, higher peace and higher freedom. There too if he can renounce the joys and enjoyments he goes to the next higher. Finally he reaches the highest renunciation and higher *Loka*, the *Satyaloka* or *Brahmaloka* or the *Īśvara* at his causal state. This is also called the *Kramamukti*. They enjoy intense Bliss of being one with *Īśvara* and free from *Samsāra* (transmigration). Staying as long as the creation stands, finally when the entire universe is dissolved at the end of the *Kalpa* (an immeasurably long periodic cycle of creation and dissolution), the individual Soul becomes one with *Nirguṇa Brahman*, the Absolute Brahman.

man which impels him to dedicate his heart and soul, and is generally found to originate from his burning faith in the ideal to which he is dedicating himself. To acquire this quality we have to be in constant touch and thought of that ideal so that it enters the deeper layers of our being. For example, the ideal of renunciation, *Tyāga* (त्याग) or of God-Realisation. We have to deeply study again and again the life of Thakur, Holy Mother and Swamiji and other Direct Disciples where the ideal is vividly and lively brought out. It creates deep impression on our hearts and intellect. We start judging everything in terms of that ideal. We develop a taste for it. Then all disciplines to nourish it have to be incorporated in our lives. A strict disciplined life we ought to begin bound by certain rules and regulations which are known as *Niyamās* (नियमस). After a period we get established in them and they become habitual and spontaneous and we find it difficult and uneasy now to be without them. This tendency not to miss the disciplines is called *Niṣṭha* (निष्ठा) — ‘the well grounded’. *Niṣṭha* being faithfully followed matures into *Śraddhā*, an irresistible drive towards the ideal, a kind of longing for that ideal. It is as if something pushing us from within to realize that ideal, then we are said to be possessed by *Śraddhā*. It is just like ghost possessing a man or anger or rage or lust possessing man and forcing him to act. And it is this *Śraddhā* that we are to acquire and manifest.

(II) *Vīrya* (वीर्य) :- In Sanskrit ‘*Vīra*’ (वीर) means the ‘valiant’. *Vīrya* means valiancy or valor. We are on the path of self conquest and also transcendence of Nature, *Prakṛti*. Every moment, every point, every stage we face opposition, obstruction and dominance. None of these forces are visible, all work at imperceptible level, otherwise we could have used our muscular strength or used some mechanical or nuclear power. What we need is *Vīrya*, the valor that springs up from our Spiritual existence. Spiritual Power alone can conquer the forces of Nature and takes us beyond it. And that Spiritual Power that projects out and acts through our external sheaths – the mind, intellect and senses is called *Vīrya*.

For bringing out this to functional level we must suppress our physical and psychic existence and bring forth our spiritual existence to a lively awareness —as if to say ‘I am pure spiritual being; body, mind and senses are my instruments through which I act.’ Physical austerities, penance and bodily mortifications like fasting etc., are done with the same objective to suppress material existence and rouse the spiritual existence and in absence of this objective it is mere torturing the body and mind. Prayer of the heart, witnessing the lives of saints or their personal contact help us to bring out this power of conquest, the *Vīrya*.

(III) *Smṛti* (स्मृति) :- is recollectedness. It is not just bringing some past event to memory. It is extended thought of definite nature with a spiritual purpose. *Smṛti*, also called *Smaraṇa* (स्मरण) is common factor pervading all types of *Sādhana* anywhere under the sky, of every type of practices of all religions. The goal to be reached must be brightly shining in our minds and intellects and must become the main concern, heart longing for it. Then there must be constant awareness of our Divine Nature, our Divine existence independent of body and mind. The vows and resolution must be actively awake in me to guide my life and actions, my moods and feelings. I must be fully conscious of my duties and responsibilities so that I move in harmony with Nature and environment. If I am living a community life like in a monastery, I must be aware of the rules, regulations and needs of the community— all these are collectively called *Smṛti*.

The nature of the common man in the world is to connect even the good, the noble and the Divine to *Swārtha*—his own selfish ends and forget them all at once. *Vismṛti*—forgetfulness is nature of *Jīva*. But they never forget what is bad, evil, harm done by others and the unwanted things like that. Whereas as a *Sādhaka* has to move in the opposite direction— not to forget anything that is connected to God and spiritual and forget everything that belongs to the ephemeral. The most important of all is the ultimate goal to be reached, the Truth, ones' own Divine Nature and the instructions of *Guru*. When they dwell in us predominantly as a part of our awareness constantly, it is called *Smṛti*.

IV) *Samādhi* (समाधि) :- we have already grasped the import of this term *Samādhi* (under the *Sūtra* 17). *Samādhi* is concentration followed by spiritual absorption. It is a process of going beyond the thinking mind. It is a success in our effort to still the mind and to land in the inner silence. It is practice to transcend all external sheaths and come in contact with 'God', the indwelling spirit. When we get a glimpse of it, we feel as if we have entered into eternal present overthrowing thousands of births of collective human conditioning. Some time back we went to a nearby hill, an un-inhabited forest, with small shaven places like tiny meadows. At a very high altitude we were and from there vast horizon and landscape deep below could be seen. Such peaceful atmosphere that we felt the whole earth was dipped in silence. It was throwing us to ecstasy. My mind leaped back to primordial state of the universe when it still remained enveloped in peace, silence and bliss of Eternity. Every tree, every plant, stone and flower were communing with Stillness, deeply rooted in the Blissful Being. This is also a practice of *Samādhi*, opening us to spiritual insight, spiritual vision, within or without.

The actual meaning of the term '*Samādhi*' is conscious placement of mind calmly, pleasantly, on certain object or on an idea, especially a spiritual entity, without any preoccupation, distraction and fluctuation in the mind. First of all we must learn to function and live in this world without any involvement, pure by heart, clear by thought and unstained by deeds. We must create and develop within ourselves such understandings, awarenesses and feelings that we can move in harmony with Nature and the environment we are placed in. We must know the knack of living with the people around us. To live with animals is easy. To live with humans is difficult because man is an emotional being with self interest. As we go ahead in our path, we will be given to understand everything in this universe is happening according to definite law which man can neither have a hold nor manipulate. When the *Sādhaka* knows that every situation is beyond his control, then he seeks Divine help, Divine protection.

Now his trust and dependence being matured and genuine, the Divine grace and Divine help does come. Whatever happens in the aspirants life good or bad, problems or calamities, he understands, is Lord's grace to teach and train him, to make him stronger. So, with peace he turns inward. True spiritual aspirant has no complaints regarding the world outside, for, he sees the world outside but does not judge, and has no comments.

Any way, mind must be free from the external holdings. The one who wants to practise a contemplative life, practise *Samādhi*, must develop certain amount of indifference towards the external world. Then one must suspend all awarenesses, suspend all future plans and engagements. One has to dissolve the subconscious, screen the past and being undisturbed, be totally in the pure

present at every moment and peacefully dedicate oneself to the cause of attainment of *Samādhi* state. *Samādhi* is a state like waking state or of sleep, wherein the *Sādhaka* like peeling a banana, peels off his material aspect and the bonds of Nature, tears off from obligations and rights, and places himself in the bowl of consciousness. *Samādhi* is self-giving to some aspect of The Pure Self. Whatever be his act or mode of dedication, he remains in the Pure unalloyed present — the ever fresh ‘now’.

Samādhi is transcending all known experiences and knowledge of this world and leaving behind the senses and perceiving things in stillness of mind. When we come back to our normal external awareness of this time-space-causation bound world of variety, the memory and sweetness of inner stay in the Stillness and Silence of the inner world hangs over us. Often we happen to perceive that stillness in the outer world too. Our inner Stillness calls for the Stillness in which man and matter are standing. When we see a tree or stone or a bird we perceive its Stillness too! We feel an intimate oneness, an unforgettable oneness with what we perceive. It is Stillness witnessing Stillness, Peace experiencing Peace, Silence observing Silence and Bliss enjoying Bliss. This feeling of utter oneness of ourselves with all things is true love, the Love Divine.

(V) *Prajñā* (प्रज्ञा) :- Indian psychological analysis speaks of eight types of inner faculties apart from the mind and its functions. The mind (*Manas*— मनस्) always works backed up by *Buddhi* except when possessed by animal nature like anger, rage, lust etc.,. If not backed by *Buddhi*, mind becomes purely instinctive like those of animals. *Buddhi* or the intelligence is what differentiate man from all other beings on this earth. With this intelligence as base there arise many other faculties some are of spiritual importance and others, of the secular. Thus we have (a)*Buddhi* (बुद्धि) (b) *Mati* (मति) (c) *Pratibha* (प्रतिभा) (d) *Dhṛti* (धृति) (e) *Dhīḥ* (धीः) (f) *Medhā* (मेधा) (g) *Smṛti* (स्मृति) and (h) *Prajñā* (प्रज्ञा).

a) *Buddhi* (बुद्धि) : is the common intelligence which in all normal humans develops since birth and is supposed to grow (according to modern psychologists) only upto the age of five or six. Thereafter what grows is knowledge and not the intelligence. The range of intelligence (I Q) gets fixed. Again after the age of sixty it slowly retards back merges in weakened mind. During the active period it serves man in every of his normal activity from the search for food and self protection to planning for a future or inventions.

b) *Mati* (मति) : Generally the mind and intellect work together. When they intermingle intimately and take the role of guiding and leading the person, then it is called *Mati*. The *Mati* which leads along a noble/righteous path is called *Sanmati* (सन्मति) and that which leads along the ignoble path is called *Durmati* (दुर्मति).

c) *Pratibhā* (प्रतिभा) : is that faculty by which man displays expertness in arts and versatility in skills. They contribute a lot towards the cultural aspect of the society and towards Arts to develop and sustain. *Pratibhā* gives a status of self-confidence and ensures great deal of contentment. It offers untiringly working and striving capacity and taking to new ventures with ease and enthusiasm. We could see this trend in the boy Gadadhar (Śrī Rāmakṛṣṇa) at Kamarpukur, latter it makes him venture to realize and enjoy the Bliss of God realization through various paths in various ways.

d) *Dhṛti* (धृति) : is the faculty of exercising one's will. It is the bull dog tenacity not to leave any act taken up unaccomplished. If once mind is set on a particular job, it will not rest until it is finished. This too has much to speak on aspirants life. The efforts, endeavors and strivings are kept full of vigor to cope with rapid spiritual progress. In its fullness it drives away sleep and hunger, and the desire to rest a while. It converts the dreams into facts by filling life with our resolutions, vows and determinations, and working them out without compromise.

e) *Dhīh* (धीः) : is used as a synonym to *Buddhi*. *Dhīh* has a greater spiritual significance. *Dhīh* is awakened intellect. With spiritual awakening *Dhīh* attains its fullness. It sees everything beyond the physical version of the ordinary intellect. Gives an alternative spiritual version of this world and happenings. Thakur says 'I saw all people were moving with *Nimnadṛṣṭhi* (निम्नदृष्टि –mind set on filling stomach and on bodily pleasures) but one or two were moving with *Ūrdhvadṛṣṭhi* (ऊर्ध्वदृष्टि – mind fixed on God or higher human ideals) – this elevated sight is itself the pious act of the *Dhīh*.

f) *Medhā* (मेधा) : is a faculty that *awakens* in spiritual aspirants as a result of their total withdrawal from physical life of sense pleasure and maintaining it for a long stretch of period. Mind attains purity, clarity and sharpness. Then awakens the *Medhā* — which alone bears the capacity to understand the metaphysical truths like the laws governing the Nature, the *Kārmik* secrets, God and spiritual truths. *Medhā* is the power of comprehending spiritual truths and the true import of scripture, the power of their retention and the power of their proper application. This aspect has great part to play in an aspirants life. However, *Medhā* functions at physical plane as well, in the day to day life, as an exceptional quality supposed to be found as human excellence, especially in woman viz.,

- *Cetanā* (चेतना) – bright and vibrant wakefulness to one's immediate surroundings.
- *Preraṇā* (प्रेरणा) – intuitive understanding to do right things at the right time.
- *Utsāha* (उत्साह) – a joyful, striking enthusiasm in all endeavours.

g) *Smṛti* (स्मृति) : we have already learnt about this faculty in detail.

h) *Prajñā* (प्रज्ञा) : from our extremely gross physical body upto the most subtlest part of our being, the *Buddhi* — the whole of our physio-psychic existence — belongs to *Prakṛti*, the Nature. Opposed to it stands our pure Divine Nature, the *Caitanya* or the Pure Consciousness. In between these two as if a no-man's land stands *Prajñā*. It is like the halo of the moon, the halo of *Caitanya* or *Puruṣa*. It is the bridge between the pure spiritual existence and our external extended aspect of body-mind complex, between the *Puruṣa* principle and the *Prakṛti* principle in us. This is the Transrelative plane before we land and identify our Eternal Existence. To make this point clear, we can see through our Thakur's unique experience. Speaking about the descent of Naren, He says "One day, while I sat for meditation my mind started soaring to higher higher realms, passing through various planes of existence, I came to the end of this relative existence. Before I could enter the Absolute I saw a Luminous Region separating the Relative from the Absolute. There I saw seven *Ṛṣis* sitting in deep *Samādhi* where even gods dare not to peep

The above mentioned is an existential aspect at cosmic level, and the same Luminous Region at the individual level in every being is called ‘*Prajñā*’. In *Prajñā* nothing of the material world, of *Prakṛti* can enter. An idea, an ideal or a concept in its purely spiritual form shines in that when backed up by spiritual experience. The main part of *Prajñā* is to retain and keep brightly illumined the spiritual experience of a soul. All experiences of this physical world can be stored in mind (*Citta*– चित्त) . There is no room for spiritual experience in it, because spiritual experience take place in the absence of mind – either it is still or is nil. Since *Prajñā* plays the part of witnesser of the spiritual experience, it also possesses the capacity to keep the experience in memory. The main difference is that the mind keeps its experiences stored in it as memory illumined by the light of *Buddhi* where as *Prajñā* keeps the memory of its experience illumined by the light of *Ātman*, the *Puruṣa*. The memories of mind are short lived; some remain for a few weeks, some a few months, some remain for a few years. With onset of old age they leave the ego and merge back in its cause the mind like the line drawn on water by a steamer merges back in water. While the memories in *Prajñā* remain forever manifesting the inner Divinity to the grossest level— the body, and merge back in the Great Cause the Pure *Caitanya* along with the Divinised EGO of the Illumined soul, at the time of *Nirvāṇa*, the *Mahāsamādhi*.

Prajñā germinates in us with constant thought of our Divine Nature, of Eternity, of Immortality, of God. The awareness created by persistent thought of these ideas (is called *Manana*– मनन – cogitation and contemplation) nourishes the germinated *Prajñā* and makes the ground ready for spiritual experiences. Spiritual experiences take place on the platform of this *Prajñā*.

When I happen to glance through western psychology, I find that they deal the subject at two levels — the normal and the abnormal, each being the reference point for the other. The normal is normal with reference to the abnormal, and the abnormal is abnormal with reference to the normal one. In Indian psychology the reference point is a point beyond the normal and abnormal. From that reference point, even the ‘normal’ is ‘abnormal’. The difference then would be less abnormal and more abnormal or in other words – ‘less normal or more normal’. The western psychology tries to avoid any abnormality to appear and to bring back the abnormal to the normal. Where as the Indian psychologists try to impress upon transcendence of the normal and the abnormal states and reach absolute perfection. Therefore metaphysical concepts, philosophy, religion and spirituality become inevitable in psychology.

When Freud realized the fact that ‘normally there is nothing we are more certain of than the feeling of our self, our own ego as sharply outlined against everything else’ – we see him coming close to the door of spirituality. Seeing the doors closed for him falls back upon the mind, in the most relative way. He aspired to find a fruitful solution for the problems of man, of philosophy, but despised the role of philosopher and spiritualists — because the western philosophy and their spirituality with which he was in touch, were not wholesome. So he turned to the scientist’s method, but found it inadequate. Though metaphysical truths are inseparable from human psychology, western psychologists find difficult to accept that fact since those truths are beyond scientific range of mind and senses. Time and again they are facing with problems which demand metaphysical or spiritual explanations. I was thinking, if Freud were to have come in contact with the Indian classical psychology, he would have been a leading yogi of the times; the

western psychology and western religions would have had a new outlook of man and the ray of Truth would have been shining in the field of psychology. He would have solved not only the psychological problems, but all problems of man and of himself for ever.



21

तीव्र-संवेगानाम् आसन्नः ॥२१॥
(*Tīvra– Saṁvegānām Āsannaḥ*)

“For those endowed with Intense ardour, the Goal is near.”

For the *Sādhskās* with intense (*Tīvra– तीव्र*) ardour (संवेग– Momentum acquired by burning enthusiasm and urgency to reach) the goal is near at hand (आसन्नः– *Āsannaḥ*=close by or fast approaching).

Śrī Rāmakṛṣṇa says that *Vyākulata* (व्याकुलता – intense longing) is the only condition for God-Realisation. When yearning for God becomes irresistible, unbearable, it forces God to reveal Himself. The *Tīvra– Saṁvega* (तीव्र-संवेग) signifies such a longing. Explaining further He gives the example of a man whose head is forced under water — the way in which he pants for breath without which he is going to die : such an acute state in which he can not live even a moment more without God — he calls as ‘intense longing’–*Vyākulatā*.

Tīvra (तीव्र) means intense and *Saṁvega* (संवेग = सम्+वेग — सम्= along with, endowed with; वेग= speed, momentum gathered up by heart) is hastening with intense longing and irresistible pull, towards the Goal Supreme. *Saṁvega* always applies to the heart and not to the brain. Heart is core of man’s being where all levels and aspects of man are centred. Thus pulling the heart is pulling the entire existence of the man. For attainments, entire man must move. *Saṁvega* presupposes intense dispassion towards world, aptitude for moral perfection and a reverential acceptance of the Ideal. The resultant inner drive would gather momentum as one proceeds along the prescribed path with intensity, full of enthusiasm and is called *Saṁvega*. The ‘*Tīvra Saṁvega*’ is that tremendous momentum which unifies the whole organism into a unitary base of seeking the Truth, the Goal, the Liberation. The onrush of anguish brings about a profound inner transformation virtually dissolving all old identity and radically changes the course of life. The refined intellect grips the instructions with precision and with uncomplicated clarity each time he retires for the practice of his inward journey through meditation.

To acquire this essential quality, we must deeply contemplate on the human life, its significance, its purpose, its origin, its destiny, its fulfilment and its culmination. Then we will know how precious is human life. We must also know about the impermanency and vanity of this world and of worldly pursuits. Then we must clearly discern the uncertainty of this world and of our lives in it, the short human span that appears and disappears like a lightening as well as the fleeting nature of time. Then we will know what the *Bhavasamudra* (भवसमुद्र) – the ocean of transmigration

is and how we are happily drowning in it every moment! Where are we to go and where are we going . Then mind longs for the way out of this bondage and suffering into peace and Bliss — the state of Absolute freedom. That is termed in Vedanta as *Mumukṣutva* (मुमुक्षुत्व). This longing to go beyond Nature and enter into Eternity and Immortality is marked by speedy urge of irresistible longing and is technically termed as — *Tīvra Saṁvega*. The *Sūtra* says that to such souls, the Goal is very close, as if at hand, no delay for their attainment. Śrī Rāmakṛṣṇa compares longing to the dawn, the sun of knowledge is bound to rise soon.



22

मृदु-मध्य-अधिमात्रत्वात् ततोऽपि विशेषः ॥२२॥

(*Mṛdu–Madhya–Adhimātrtvāt Tato 'pi Viśeṣaḥ*)

“There again lies the distinction of being low, moderate and larger degrees.”

Tato 'pi (ततोऽपि) there again (referring to previous *Sūtra*) *Viśeṣaḥ* (विशेषः)lies the distinction *Mātrtvāt* (मात्रत्वात्)according to degrees of being *Mṛdu* (मृदु)- low, *Madhya* (मध्य)– moderate and *Adhi* (अधि)large.

In every field, the application of efforts are always two fold – the quality wise and quantity wise. The term *Vega* (वेग) – in the previous sutra implies quality and the term *Mātra* (मात्र) in this *Sūtra* indicates quantity. As there is difference in intensity, so there is difference in the amount of *Sādhana*. I may feel intensely very often but not at times, say, during work and activities it may drop down while for another person it may remain the same. He has both quality and quantity. Similarly in meditation, quality wise I may be perfect, but quantity wise how much I will do, maintaining same quality, is what is expressed by the term *Mātra*, (meaning measure), *Samvega* (संवेग)means momentum. Momentum depends on both factors the speed (ardour to hasten forward) and mass (the quantity of *Sādhana*, the turn over).

It is not enough to have mere longing, but we must be up and doing also. In the world too, we see people aspire for so many things, sincerely and intensely. How many put efforts to attain with same sincerity and intensity? Thakur used to express such intensity, the heart rending intensity during day time but at night he would gather up himself and with all strictness sit firmly like the Bhairava image and meditate – it is paying the price. Seeking must be accompanied by paying the price. In the word *Tīvra Saṁvega* the term *Tīvra* (intense) indicates that there are other lower intensities – the *Manda* (low) and the *Madhya* (moderate). Similarly in paying the price too there are three distinctions. Seeking may be *Tīvra* in all, but its other half, the paying its price can be *Mṛdu* low, *Madhya* moderate and *Adhi* - large. This is indicated by the term *Tato 'pi Viśeṣaḥ* (ततोऽपि विशेषः) ‘there again lies a distinction’. Who does not want Realisation? But where are people who are ready to sacrifice their all to attain it. Thakur used to say “all want to eat, but they expect me to

peel the plantain and put in their mouth, even peeling they do not want to do!” So, Patanjali says those who are with intense ardour attain soon, but there is an hitch; one must give in *Adhimātra* (अधिमात्र) as is the seeking.

23

ईश्वरप्रणिधानाद्वा ॥२३॥
(*Īśvarapraṇidhānādvā*)

“Or by unconditional surrender to *Īśvara*”

Vā (वा) = or by, *praṇidhānāt* (प्रणिधानात्) = by total surrender, *Īśvara* (ईश्वर) = to the Lord, [the Supreme state be reached].

Patanjali is bringing the *Īśvara* concept and the surrender concept and , a few *Sūtras* later we see the *Japa* is also brought in the *Yoga* system. Similarly many concepts of Vedanta (*Avidyā* अविद्या, *Ekatatvābhyāsa* (एकतत्वाभ्यास) etc.,) also we can find in this. The thing is these great men put forward a definite path but at the same time they are aware every one cannot follow it. Their main purpose of placing the path before the world is to save mankind from suffering. Their compassion does not limit to the qualified. They provide an alternative path for others too. Shankaracharya after establishing Advaitic path wrote number of works to serve the pure Bhakti path of self-surrender. They are matchless. Thakur taught Advaita to his sannyasi disciples and simple Bhakti path for the house holders. Kṛṣṇa said that from *Jīva* to *Jīva* there is no difference but, each man has his own path to reach perfection. Again, in perfected state too they are equal. A Brahmin through renunciation, a Kṣatriya by performing his duties and a śūdra through serving others shall reach the same Goal (B.G. 18/45). So with the term *Vā* in the above *Sūtra* , Patanjali is presenting an alternative path effectively leading to the same end, the *Asamprajñāta Samādhi*. In the previous two *Sūtrās* he affirms the need of intensity and magnitude in *Sādhana*. On the other hand he also understands the sad plight of a common man and his incapability to pay the demanded price. The weakness, helplessness and limitations of man he understands and provides a way that assures man of his reaching the goal, as well as attainment of fearlessness in his inevitable secular life.

Patanjali does not limit the *Īśvara* in any way. He mentions some of His characteristics to clarify our understanding and identify His existence. He does not give any limiting statements negating any aspect, like saying that He is not the Controller of universe. Whatever was necessary was given without denying any attribute that limits Him in anyway. The main thing is to surrender, and this ‘surrender’ demands 100 percent Trust. If any attribute can help developing the trust and faith, it should be acceptable to Him and is welcome.

The *Īśvara* in this *Yoga* system is the one who is not identical with liberated soul. He is the all knowing, not limited by time, who is compassionate to every *Jīva* and responds to their call and helps the *Jīva* by controlling the *Prakṛti* to which *Jīva* is bound. By presenting *Īśvara* with these

qualities, Patanjali is transcending the limitations of Sāṅkhya and entering the boundary of the Theology of the Bhaktās.

The engrossment in a material body and engagement in material activities goes on increasing the ego-bound Jīva's pages of history and its *kārmik* load. Pure spiritual-life and spiritual activities cannot begin unless these material bondages break. The freedom and prestige that man attempts to achieve in this world are illusory and ever eluding. The ego, the thoughts or the feelings, and activities bring their own good or bad fruits; no one can escape the laws of Nature, the Power that governs and controls the entire universe. The whole scene changes when the ego dissolves; if there be no player, then there is no play either. An easy and simple way for all classes of people to achieve that end is to lay down the arms, surrender to *Īśvara* unconditionally which will open a new field of *Sādhanā* and activities. Smelted in the furnace of the consciousness of being an eternally surrendered soul, the metal flows out – the purified ego which is rid of all dross and, of past ignoble and disgraceful *Samskāras*. And this purified ego is a marvel with its unflinching devotion and is eligible to enter the kingdom of God. Thakur call this ego as the ripe-ego (*Pākā āmi*).

The very meaning of the word *Īśvara* is 'The Ruler' or 'The Governer'. All schools of Vedānta and other Indian systems take the term in the same sense. They accept the existence of such a Power – which creates, sustains and retracts the universe. As against this, the *Sāṅkhyas*, who look upon the *Prakṛti* (Primordial Nature) and *Puruṣās* (individual souls) as independent reals, consider these two alone as sufficient to account for this creative process and not finding the need for a God, have eliminated *Īśvara* from their system. A minor section among them accept the existence of God, the *Īśvara*. No doubt, as a philosophical base Patanjali draws facts from *Sāṅkhyās* but as a apart of spiritual base, a resting place for the weary *Jīvās*, he follows the path of the vast majorities and of the living spiritual consciousness. He was not a person interested in building a mere intellectual structure. He wanted practical result bearing theory to provide a real spiritual destiny for man to be attained through the yogic disciplines enlivened and enlightened by love, knowledge as well as grace of God. When life is still continuing, the man must reach the Lord beyond with life in nature. That is The Goal. The Vedas confirm this view. The Existence, The Nature's functions and attributes as well as His place in man's and *Sādhakās* life are understood only through the revealed scriptures or from the experiences of the Enlightened souls.

Jīva as a person can comfortably approach *Īśvara* in his Personal aspect. We should not feel that it limits *Īśvara*, it adds beauty to His Impersonal aspect. We have to understand his personal aspect as pervading everything and as beyond the anthropomorphic understanding. He has no particular material form and can manifest in unlimited ways, even as mere 'Divine Grace'. He is the centre of all compassion, power, will, goodness, grace and responsiveness. His essence, His being, His attributes are to be understood in an infinite and absolute sense. He is both Knowledge and Knower, Bliss and Blissful. The substance of His being are *Caitanya* and *Ānanda* (Consciousness and Bliss). We can then see two aspects, the personal and the Impersonal pleasantly blended. He remains transcendental, Absolute, unaffected and is at the same time approachable and known to respond to our call and prayers. His impersonal aspect does not deny His Personal aspect, neither His Personal aspect shadow His Impersonal. This conception of *Īśvara* is identical with that of *Īśvara* of the Bhaktās, yet in its own right, blissfully enters the heart of the Yogis. In Indian tradition we find this type of unique combination of theology, philosophy and practice of religion.

This trend we seldom find in the west. Western philosophers were not concerned with the ultimate destiny of man. They were free lancers in speculative thought. This attitude alienated philosophy from theology in the west. In Indian tradition, however, philosophy need not be necessarily extravagantly speculative nor theology be dogmatic and authoritarian. Both of them are allies mutually helping to give man a genuine path to freedom. They merge in pure spiritual tradition beyond all difference and demarkation — keeping one view— man must be lifted. They supply data derived from observation, experiment and supersensuous perception. Such encompassing world views are called *Darśanās* — the insights into and outlooks on life. Patanjali Yoga system is one such, in which intellectual cum devotional foundation has been developed for its yogic superstructure. Many modern thinkers on this subject feel that *yoga* can stand independent of an *Īśvara*, there was no need to bring *Īśvara* in this context. Then they try to interpret *Īśvara* in a queer way trying to reconcile with *Sāṅkhya* system. Patanjali has not brought the ideal of surrender to *Īśvara* because his *Yoga* system needs Him. It is precisely because, the *Jīva* needs Him. *Yoga* system can stand without *Īśvara*, but *Jīva* in bondage cannot stand without *Īśvara*. Such a sad plight has befallen *Jīva*, and is because of *Avidyā*, the ignorance of his own real nature. But *Avidyā* too is inert, and it can function only by the Will of the Lord. Thus we may say, by Lord's Will the *Jīva* has entered bondage and, Lord's Will alone can release him too. The aim of the *yoga* too is same, to release the *Jīva* from the bondage by making realise his true nature independent of mundane *Prakṛti*.

We have to slowly and steadily develop the requisite qualifications for attaining the *Kaivalya*. First and foremost of these is *Vairāgya* or freedom from worldly attachments and aversions, they being the cause of our bondage. Spiritual progress is possible when they get attenuated. Sound ethics is the rock foundation on which the grand edifice of spirituality stands. Less involved we are in the world, more close we feel with the Divine. We then develop faith in God, the Supreme Independent Being and also dependence on Him. We become receptive to spiritual values. Then the desire to hear about spiritual matters and practise them in one's own life begins. Very often the *Sādhakās* come across such impediments which are beyond human efforts to cross over. Then, in helpless condition they seek external help and Divine Grace. Strong aspiration and prolonged and assiduous *Sāadhanā* brings them to complete unconditional surrender and is called the *Īśvarapraṇidhāna* (प्रणिधान).

The term '*Īśvara*' — the Ruler, the Lord, implies that he is all powerful Divine Head who can do and undo anything in this universe. And that he is the Lord of all *Jīvās* who controls the destiny of every *Jīva*. He is all, in all as for the *jīvās* are considered; — the Saviour, the Redeemer, the Illuminator and Liberator. In this trust alone that the *Jīva* loves to love and loves to surrender unconditionally, and that is real *Praṇidhāna* (प्रणिधान) — प्र + नि + धा + न . The verbal root धा is: *to hold, to keep or to support*. नि + धा is: *to leave the hold and place down*. Our primary hold is on ourselves, we are holding ourselves, our holding onto other is only for the sake of that 'I', the supreme hold and the holder. To place 'him' down, i.e., to place that 'I' at the feet of the Lord is that निधान (*Nidhāna*). प्र is to mean totally, finally, once for all etc.,. So प्र + नि + धा + न = प्रणिधान is the total, final placing of one's own self, once for all. That is to mean – the unconditional self-surrender. *Prapatti* (प्रपत्ति), *Śaraṇāgati* (शरणागति) are synonyms used by different Bhakti schools.

This sense of resignation to God, God's Will and the understanding that 'I have surrendered my all to God and God alone should release me from this *Samsāra*' does not make the aspirant sit idle. It helps him to wash his dirt within, his earlier views, his earlier tendencies and help him in higher disciplines of meditation on Him — The Untainted, all Powerful, Ever Free *Puruṣa*. There is an added element of Pure Love and intimacy to the stern yogic path. Because of strong philosophical background and *Vairāgya* (the spirit of renunciation), dedication to God and surrender does not engender an element of exclusiveness and fanaticism as is found in almost all forms of theism. Long and intensive practice of *Dhyāna* (ध्यान), to which he engages himself in, gradually leads to direct realization (*Aparokṣānubhūti* – अपरोक्षानुभूति). We have already seen that the intensity of one's aspiration and effort has a special significance in this system. He is not a mere devotee now, but a yogic-devotee.

The first stage of *Sādhana* in *Īśvarapraṇidhāna* is the performance of one's duties (day-to-day life + spiritual practices + noble acts of service) without any desire and as an offering to God. This must be accompanied by renunciation of all worldly enjoyments and comforts-seeking tendencies. This is the stage of offering physical life to God; his body senses and *prānās* (energies) are directed to God.

We have various levels of existence. Physical mental, intellectual emotional and spiritual. *Praṇidhāna* is offering oneself at all these levels the man can dwell in, and also all the states the man exists in viz., waking (*Jāgrat*—जाग्रत्), dream (*Svapna*—स्वप्न), deep sleep (*Suṣupti*—सुषुप्ति) and transcendental (*Turiya*—तुरिय).

The second stage of *Praṇidhāna* is offering the mind to God. The mind that constantly dwells on the world only to safeguard one's own interests — livelihood, enjoyments and self-defence. Having offered the physical existence to God, continuing that dedicated life of love and service, he must divert his intellect to know the nature and qualities of God and open himself to the realities of this world and of Nature. Then he understands God is the real doer, all are but instruments in His hand, and that the world is ephemeral, and life is but two days play in this world. Now his dependence on God, the *Īśvara*, gets reinforcement. For his needs and attainments, in pains and problems he turns his face to God. Now, the mind safely rests in God and, anchored in Him it attends to world when necessary. Usually *japa*, repetition of *Mantra* accompanies this resting of mind in God, so that latter on it may totally merge in Him. This is *Praṇidhāna* at the psychic or mental level.

The third stage of *Praṇidhāna* is at the intellectual level. The unique faculty that digs out the secrets, understands, reasons, imagines, plans, discovers and invents new new techniques in the external world, is diverted to the inner world to Search and discover the spiritual truths. He turns to a higher discipline called the Meditation, *Dhyāna*. He becomes indifferent to external world, for name sake he attends to his external needs and the so called duties. Thakur assures that in such cases God reduces his duties and responsibilities as he moves closer to Him and deeper in absorption. His whole attention rests in his inner world — the world that transcends the mind and senses. With eyes open or closed, his intellect is fixed on his inner being, always struggling to penetrate through and go beyond. Thakur compares the yogi's eyes to those of a bird sitting on its eggs for hatching — indrawn and seeing with blank gaze. The *Dyāna* is introduced first through

external *pūjā* and then is internalised through *Upāsana* (उपासना). And then, is targeted to the inner Reality. This is *Praṇidhāna* – self offering of our intellectual being to God.

The fourth stage is regarding our emotional being. This is the main subject of all devotional schools. This is an independent channel of every *Jīva*, prominently acting in man and is dormant in all other beings with occasional short term manifestation like while living with their offsprings. It is not given much importance in pure intellectual paths but is the prime factor of every Bhakti school. Love is the most powerful natural drive that springs forth from the depths of one's own being, the core of one's being, from the spiritual essence in man. In its gross external form, at the physical level, it tries to grab and possess, but in its purest form it is giving, it is all sacrificing discarding all that is I, mine and for me. The love is always between the “I” and the “You”. It begins with “I” something and “You” something more. Then, through stages it grows, gets refined and, reaching the pure spiritual level, the “I” becomes zero and the “You” becomes The Infinite. “You” alone remains as the All, and nothing remains of this “I” at all. In such love the contrast between *Bhakti* and *Jñāna* disappear. We see again, that knowledge generates love and love strengthens knowledge. They form each other's constituents. Together they form a single force directed to *yoga*. To love God as one's own and to make Him a part of one's own life and existence is *Praṇidhāna* at emotional level. Thakur says, the essence of human life is to love God.

The final stage of *Praṇidhāna* is at spiritual level. A drop of water that separated from an ocean ages back, returning to its Home. Offering of one's spiritual being to God, the Absolute and the Ultimate Reality. It is, as the Upanishads expound, a river entering into the ocean; when it reaches the end point it rushes forward and joins it with wide opened arms — the limited river at once becomes the unlimited. Till the last point the river had a name and form, it discards its name and form (*Nāmarūpe viḥāya*—नामरूपे विहाय) and merges in the ocean. Similarly *Jīva* enters into *Satcitānanda* (सत्चितानन्द), the Existence– Knowledge– Bliss– Absolute, giving up its name and form, with which it lived in the *Samsāra* for millions of years and millions of lives. It is said once the *Jīva* fully recognises its spiritual existence, an irresistible pull draws him or rather sucks him into the Absolute existence. Or in other words, we need to transcend our outer sheaths one by one and enter within. Arriving at the last point, you just have a ‘look’ at the Absolute, and at that very moment you are sucked in by an irresistible pull from within the Absolute. This final offering is the *Īśvarapraṇidhāna* at the pure spiritual level. Each stage preceeds other, and presupposes the fulfilment and completion of the earlier stage. The final stage includes all others. If one is able to give his or her spiritual identity to God or the real Self-offering is done, then nothing else is there to be achieved, no other stages to be passed through. This Self-offering is *Sannyāsa*. But we cannot arrive at this final all of a sudden. Stages we offer ourselves, we evolve, and go on unfolding our inner glory and bliss, and finally come to the culminating stage.

Let us train ourselves in such a manner that we walk the noble path, the path of Divine Love, of renunciation, of devotion, dedication and the unconditional self-surrender so as to fulfil our earthly mission and the Lord's Mission to save the mankind.

— Those who belong to God shall renounce —



24

क्लेश-कर्म-विपाक-आशयैः अपरामृष्टः पुरुषविशेषः ईश्वरः ॥२४॥
 (Kleśa-karma-vipāka-Āśayaiḥ aparāmr̥ṣṭaḥ puruṣaviśeṣaḥ Īśvara ḥ)

“Īśvara is the particular *Puruṣa* untouched by afflictions, deeds, result of action or the latent impressions thereof.”

Kleśa (क्लेश) the five common human afflictions — viz., *Avidyā* (अविद्या—nescience), *Asmitā* (अस्मिता—egosense), *Rāga* (राग—attachment), *Dveṣa* (द्वेष—aversion) and *abhiniveśa* (अभिनिवेश— clinging to life : vide II.3), *Karma* (कर्म) good or bad deeds, *Vipāka* (विपाक) reactions to actions imposed on the doer (the *Karmaphala*) which determines the kind of birth (*Jāti*—जाति), life span (*Āyu*—आयु) and experience of pain and pleasure (*Bhoga*—भोग), *Āśaya* (आशय) subliminal imprint or *Vāsanā* resulting from and corresponding to each of the fruits of *Karma* (viz., *Jāti-Vāsanā*, *Āyurvāsanā*, *Bhoga Vāsanā*) — by these *Aparāmr̥ṣṭaḥ*(अपरामृष्टः)The One who is untouched and unstained, *Īśvara* (ईश्वरः) is Īswara.

Through this Patanjali wants to convey that the *Īśvara*, the Lord or the Ruler is beyond the Nature and its inflictions. God, being beyond time and space, is outside the reach of man’s senses and intellect. Man can however, understand something of this Nature — Patanjali is adopting the *neti neti* – ‘not this, not this’ process of identification by pointing through The Nature. So, he is telling us — ‘till now you have known a vague and incorrect expression of Consciousness through living beings and you understand there is the Pure Consciousness in everyone of them. Yet they are all bound in cage of Nature and chained by five fold afflictions – *Kleśa-karma* (क्लेश-कर्म) etc., Now try to identify that Unlimited Consciousness which is never subjected to Nature and can never fall into its cage. Even the realized souls have a similar quality but they bear the stigma of having been in the prison earlier. Moreover they, though free, do not have a control over *Prakṛti* or on its evolutes. Where as He was never at any time under the *Prakṛti* nor can ever fall into its cage. He is everfree and is all Powerful, Omnipotent. And being Consciousness Itself – the *Puruṣaviśeṣa* (पुरुष विशेष) – He understands your prayers, your love and humility, your needs and aspiration, your path and your goal. Understand Him, try to identify Him through the hints I am giving to you.’ Patanjali is giving the *Jñāna* to us to awaken our Bhakti, the love in us. Preceded by deep clear understanding of God, His Divine qualities, His Eternal Freedom, His Omnipotence , His Omniscience and His majesty, when heart incessantly flows liquified by love and reverence for Him, cherishing Him as the most supreme value — it is called Bhakti, the Love of God. We vibrantly see this aspect in Śrī Rāmakṛṣṇa.



25

तत्र निरतिशयं सर्वज्ञत्वबीजम् ॥२५॥
(*Tatra Niratiśayam Sarvajñatwabījam*)

“In Him the seed of omniscience is unsurpassed.”

Tatra (तत्र) = In Him, in *Īśvara*, *Niratiśayam* = unsurpassed is the, *Bījam* (बीजम्) = seed of, *Sarvajñatwam* (सर्वज्ञत्वम्) All knowing, Omniscience.

The word *Bījam* is an important word in Indian philosophy, literature and sciences pertaining to Nature – like the biology, medicine etc., Nature has a system of its own, to preserve and fulfill its objectives. Though it is limited by time and space or by the law of *cause and effect*, yet it lies in the Unlimited and carries the ‘Unlimited’ with it. For example : vegetation or stars, we do not know when did they appear. A tree is extremely limited; it is born and it dies. But before it dies it leaves behind many more of its kind to preserve vegetation, and its type in it and also leaves behind with them the secret to continue that trend which has been a mystery to man at all times. This process of cyclic / motion from the manifest to the unmanifest and again from the unmanifest to the manifest, or from the casual to the gross and gross to the causal is made possible through a process called – the *seed formation*. When things move from the manifest to unmanifest state or from gross to subtle, they carry all their ways of functioning, their trend, their nature etc., with them and we say it has entered the *seed* form – the process is called involution. The tree in its subtlest form with all its nature and know-how enter a tiny seed storing all those necessary informations in its own secret codified way to be able to evolve into a tree again. The cyclic motion in the Nature, be it of matter or beings, finds its success owing to this seed formation process. Nature is fully codified and programmed — there is no clash, no overlapping, no confusion, no interference. There is provision for change and alterations too, but it too is according to the codified and stored programme or law. Similarly knowledge and memories in us are stored in same unknown codified ‘seeded’ way. When we need it, we manifest, bring back to mind and use it. In computers too we store all knowledge in an unmanifest way, whenever whatever we need, we call to screen. All *jīvās* are manifestations of the same consciousness – The *Caitanya* (चैतन्य). Even the liberated souls, whether they are retaining their individuality or not are one with that Absolute Reality. So also is the *Īśvara*. The *Sarvajñatwa* (सर्वज्ञत्व) the omniscience is intrinsic nature of the Absolute, the Pure Consciousness. Yet the *Jīvās* have no access to it because of their *Jīvatwa* and the liberated souls have no access to it because they have no instrument to tap out the available seeds and manifest it as knowledge; they remain submerged in their own *Pūrṇatva* (पूर्णत्व–Fullness) and repose in Bliss and peace. They know their True Nature, the Consciousness intimately, they have *Pūrṇa jñāna* (पूर्णज्ञान) – Full knowledge, direct knowledge of the *Caitanya*, the Absolute Consciousness, yet the *sarvajñatwa* of *Īśvara* they do not possess. Because they are like the salt dolls that dissolve before they can tap knowledge. *Īśvara* is not the salt doll, but made of a special substance that does not dissolve in the Absolute. What retains His individuality inspite of *Pūrṇatwa* and *Sarvajñatwa* is the *Viśuddha Satva* (विशुद्ध सत्व) which is but the reflection of the *Prakṛti* in that cosmic *Caitanya*; in His compassionate ‘Heart’, the consciousness solidified, as it were, shines every *Jīva*. This concept of

love and compassion of God , His Consciousness filled with *Jīvās* existence is expressed by Swami Vivekananda in his Śiva stotra ‘हृदि प्रणयति विश्वं, व्याज मात्रं विभूत्वं’ (*Hṛdi praṇayati viśvam, vyāja mātram vibhūtwam*) – ‘The Lordship is mere pretence, while He cherishes the entire universe in His Heart out of intense love for *Jīvās*. Unlike the *Jīva*, *Īśvara* bears such an identity that He pervades and engulfs the entire *Jīva-jagat* (individual soul and the universe) as the cosmic *Caitanya*. So, in Him alone rests the All-knowingness, Omniscience. The Omniscience and Omnipresence always go together.

So, all knowledge – of His own Eternal untainted Nature on one side, and on the other, of the entire universe and every *Jīva* in it — their past, present and future, the repeated cycles of creation, sustenance and retraction— each cycle passing through millions of millions of *Yugās* (युगस) — all this knowledge He possess in its absolute sense.

The thing to know specially here is that ‘the Lord knows me intimately and is ever present with me and in me in entirety. He loves me, is concerned about me and cares for me. I have nothing to fear, nothing to worry but to renounce my ego and be at His Feet in His thought.’



26

(सः) पूर्वेषामपि गुरुः कालेनानवच्छेदात् ॥२६॥
(*Pūrveṣāmapī Guruḥ Kālenānavacchedāt*)

“He is (सः), *Guruḥ* (गुरुः) the Preceptor, Teacher of , *Api* (अपि) even the, *Pūrveṣām* (पूर्वेषाम्) of the ancient, primeval teachers. *Anavacchedāt* (अनवच्छेदात्) being not limited, *Kālena* (कालेन) by time.”

Here in this *Sūtra* two more important characteristics of *Īśvara* are mentioned – as not limited by Time and as being Preceptor of even the primeval ones.

Īśvara does not exist in time, He is beyond time but pervades even time, He has neither the beginning nor the end – *Anādi* (अनादि), *Ananta* (अनन्त). All *Jīvās* appear in time, live in time and disappear in time. Patanjali supplies us with another identification mark to identify *Īśvara*. He is making us peep beyond time, beyond Nature. By identifying the Omnipresence of *Īśvara*, he has already given us the hint to go beyond space, now he is prompting us to go beyond the time. The time begins with creation and ends with creation. *Īśvara* is a silent Witness of both. Time and space both belong to *Prakṛti*. They are two dimensions of Her playground. By contemplating and surrendering to *Īśvara* who is beyond all these, we transcend time and space i.e., leave the playground of the *Prakṛti*.

Till now Patanjali has broken all limitations that man can think of and *Prakṛti* can impose. Now a new positive concept of *Īśvara* being the Illuminator of all *jīvās* and Himself as the source of

Illumination for all other reflectors (*Gurus*) that exist in the realm of *Prakṛti*, is being made known through this *Sūtra*. In every field of activity or ventures we can have a companion or comrade to move with us who offers some amount of comfort and give company. But in spiritual path we are all lonely treaders. We may live together, but in our inward journey no one can accompany us. Thus Patanjali is introducing to *Īśvara* as the only companion in the long tiresome unending-like journey to the Eternal. Since ancient times He has guided every step of even the *Gurūs*, the *Rṣis* who have brought you the message of existence of God, of Eternity and Immortality. The ancient *Gurūs* have brought the tradition of God realization to you, but they too were guided, informed and illumined by the One Supreme *Guru*, the *Guru* of all *Gurūs*, the *Īśvara*. By introducing *Īśvara* as the Supreme *Guru*, Patanjali is invoking trust and faith in us. The One who has illumined the millions and millions throughout the immeasurable span of time shall illumine you also, worry not, fear not, God be with you, what more need of anything else be for you?

Guru is like thousand mothers taking care of the disciple in every possible way, working at various levels from physical to spiritual, even at cosmic levels to manage the disciples *Karmās* that stand in the way of the disciples *Sādhanā*. He blesses the disciple in various ways. He supplies him with knowledge and informations, guides him at every stage, and reveals so many secrets of Nature and of the spiritual realm. He protects him from pit falls and helps cross hurdles that stand in the way. The *Guru* stands behind the disciple as a constant source of inspiration. He clears all intellectual doubts and remains in the place of a loving mother where disciple can unburden his heart. He alleviates the pain and fills with comfort and confidence. He stands as the valid authority to certify the achievements of the disciple. Till the aspirant discovers the *Guru* within himself, if there be no *Guru*, then the aspirant in the spiritual path feels himself like an orphan walking alone in an unknown place. So, by introducing *Īśvara* as *Guru* of all the *Gurūs* even, from times of inconceivable past, Patanjali assures us that the Lord, the *Īśvara* is like a mother with you; He shall be your Guide, *Guru* and Illuminator. The insecurity, helplessness, loneliness and the doubt regarding the possibility of one's own attainments which usually aspirants experience are warded off by introducing a loving compassionate God, the Omnipotent, Omniscient and Omnipresent *Īśvara* as the *Guru*. Thakur Śrī Rāmakṛṣṇa also used to say "God alone is *Guru*", He may work through any media or may intuit or even personally appear and lead.

‘By God’s grace we attain *Guru*, and by *Guru*’s grace we attain God’



27

तस्य वाचकः प्रणवः ॥२७॥

(*Tasya Vācakah Praṇavaḥ*)

“The syllable that designates Him is *Om*”

Vācakah (वाचकः) The sacred word or the expression that designates *Tasya* (तस्य) Him is *Praṇavaḥ* (प्रणवः) or the Mystic syllable *OM*.

We have more or less a clear mental picture of *Īśvara*. But it is purely intellectual and about an entity which is an intangible Reality. Now Patanjali introduces the traditional process of tuning ourselves to and coming in contact with that Reality. *Om* is the vedic concept that has penetrated into every aspect of Hinduism and Indian way of life.

A few years back I stayed at Nasik for a few months for my *Cāturmāsya* (4 months of rainy season when the traditional sannyasins stay in one place and devote to contemplative life). In that place there was a school for the dumb and deaf. A meeting was arranged by one of their teachers in which I was to meet the students to inform them about Religion and spiritual matters. It was an informal meeting in which we could freely and intimately mix and exchange our feelings and understandings. They had so many questions to ask and doubts to be cleared. Now my problem was how to communicate. I have only one medium, of language and words. I, of course can convert my thoughts and ideas into words and express; that is the only means and the way that I possess but the tragedy is that they have no medium to receive, they cannot hear. We sat in silence for a few minutes gazing at each other. They were all girls beaming with joy. But with a slight drawback they can neither hear nor speak. That, however, did not bar them from expression, they had their own way to communicate their thoughts and feelings through facial expression, gestures, through signs and movements of hands and fingers. They knew I cannot understand their mode of expression. A girl studying in tenth standard stood up and made some hand and finger signs and some gestures too. I could not understand anything of that. Their teacher who was with us became the mediator. She transcribed her expressions into language and conveyed it to me. The question was “when did love begin in the universe”. I had to explain to her about this Creation and appearance of *Jīva* in it — the Absolute, the relative, the gross, subtle and causal states of Creation and their corresponding aspects in *Jīva*. Then I had to tell her about the *Ātman* concept and finally love as an expression of this pure *Ātman* inseparable from *Jīva* which when directed towards the impermanent world, though gives some temporary satisfaction and fulfillment, causes bondage and suffering and when directed towards the Everlasting, the Immutable One, the Eternal which is generally called God, which is again your True nature, and the True nature of this world, it ends in eternal Freedom, the state called *Mukti* (मुक्ति). All these matters were conveyed to her by her teacher after completion of every sentence of mine, through signs and gestures of body, hands and fingers. The meeting lasted for several hours with other students asking various questions — adopting the same method of language to sign and sign to language conversion method. Now, they used certain signs to express their ideas or thoughts that appeared in their mind, where as I used *words* to express my ideas or thoughts that appeared in my mind. Be it the *sign* or the *word*, whatever things that was used to express or

indicate an idea or thought or an object is called *Vācaka* (वाचक) [indicator, signifier, designator] and the idea or thought or the object in itself is called the *Vācya* (वाच्य) [the indicated, the signified or designated]. Suppose by a wink of an eye I beckon you to come by my side, then the wink of the eye is *Vācaka* (वाचक) and the meaning it conveyed ‘please come by my side’ is *Vācya*. When any object as a part of Creation makes its appearance, it expresses itself and this expression is grasped by conscious beings through mind and senses. The object that has expressed itself is *Vācya* and its grasping in the mind of the conscious being is *Vācaka*.

Such an occasion rises between two conscious beings as well when one of them wants to convey some matter or thought that presently cannot be presented to be grasped through the sense perceptions, say, of a past or a future event, or of a relationship or of metaphysical concept or of a far off country. I can show the working of a steam engine but not of the computer. I can show what is happening in our front now but not what had happened yesterday. I can show a boy but to make know his relationship with me as my brother I need some *Vācaka*, either speech or signs. Ninety nine percent of our dealings take place through the *Vācaka* process of conveying through language.

We, who are endowed with all natural human system intact, from our infancy associate all objects, actions, movements and happenings with ‘words’ and their combination, and learn to speak, express, convey and converse freely and fluently through what is called a language. And as a matter of habit all thinking process and mental activities takes place through a language along with a pictorial element attached to it. When I speak to someone about my trip to Egypt, my mind will be viewing the scenes again. Rethinking too, all alone, will be pictures with linguistically expressed ‘commentary’ like understanding itself is flowing like a stream — it is almost an audio-visual both *Vācaka*+ ‘*Vācya*’ arising together in mind. So, whenever thoughts arise they come usually with pictures and vice versa. In case of the dumb and deaf too they have their own thinking without association with speech/language. They give more emphasis on actualities (happenings) than on the signs they use to convey — this ‘*as is grasped recording*’ is called ‘functional form’. We, during our early infancy onwards are made to associate all these ‘functional forms’ with ‘speech form’ called the *Vāk*. Thanks to the Mother Nature for having provided the knowledge and capacity to humans to convey their ideas to others through a matchless unique medium of speech, the *Vāk*.

Wherever there is manifestation of Consciousness, wherever there is life, be it as an insect, bird, animal or man, it bears an understanding of its internal and external existence. Life demands interaction with the world outside. This is possible only when external perception and its understanding are there. In other words in whatever way this perception and understanding get registered, be as ‘function form’ or otherwise, there is the *Vācaka* and *Vācya*, the signifier/indicator and the signified/indicated. When we go back to the Causal State of the universe, we find the Cosmic Consciousness, the Supreme Cosmic ‘I’, the *Īśvara* alone just manifesting. The manifestation of this ‘Cosmic Consciousness’ presupposes existence of *Vācya-Vācaka* (वाच्य-वाचक) but is yet in its causal form undifferentiated and as the source of all name and form, word and its meaning, or in general, the cognitive understandability and its objective correlate. Here we find the word and its meaning are yet one, undifferentiated. *Om* is said in the *Sūtra* to be the *Vācaka* of *Īśvara*. The *Om* like a missile carrier, carries us and which when leaves the limits of linguistic barrier (of word-sound-symbol patterns), transports us to this source, The *Īśvara*.

The Advaita Śaiva philosophy of Kashmir gives a detailed account of the stages of evolution of this *Vācya-Vācaka* aspect. According to this system the creative descent is described in the following way: The Divine Consciousness is not simply cold, inert intellection. It is rather ‘*Spanda*’ (स्पन्द) active, dynamic, throbbing with life, the creative pulsation, which is but the outcome of It’s Fullness in Itself (*Pūrṇatva*— पूर्णत्व), as if bursting forth. There is an unbounded potency in the Absolute, the Pure Consciousness which is the basic continuum of Power which is known as *Nāda* (नाद). This condenses itself into dynamic point or centre, called *Bindu* (बिन्दु). The condensation is not a process in time or space, it is yet when there is the neither time nor space.¹ This is said to be the source of all manifestation. At this stage, at source, i.e., the *Nāda-Bindu* stage, the *Vācaka* and *Vācya* (वाचक-वाच्य; the indicator and the indicated, the word and object) are one. Then follows six *Adhvās* (अध्वास) steps of creative descent. The six together are known as *Ṣaḍadhvās* (षडध्वास). First of all, there is the polarity of *Varṇa* and *Kalā*². It is here that things begin to differentiate from an integrated whole. *Vācaka* and *Vācya* (index and object) which were one at the ‘causal state’ (also called the *Parāvāk* (परावाक्) or *Nāda-Bindu* stage) begin to differentiate. The first step (*Adhvā*) of this differentiation is the polarity of *Varṇa* and *Kalā*. *Varṇa* literally means a letter (alphabet) or colour or class. But here we have to take as ‘functional form’ (as elaborated earlier) of the object projected from *Bindu*. *Varṇa*, therefore, connotes ‘the characteristic measure-index of the *function form* associated with the object’. *Varṇa* is the ‘functional form’, *Kalā* is the creative phase ‘predicable’. The next *adhvā* (step) is in subtle plane – the *Mantra* and *Tatva*. From *Varṇa* and *Kalā* at causal level, *Mantra* and *Tattva* emerge out at subtle level. *Mantra* is ‘appropriate functional form’ or ‘basic formula’ and *Tattva* is the inherent principle which has manifest as subtle structural descent. The third polarity is of *Pada* (पद) and *Bhuvana* (भुवन). *Bhuvana* is the universe as it appears to apprehending Centres of Consciousness like ourselves. *Pada* is the actual formulation of that universe by mind-reaction and verbal speech or, is the gross ‘function form’.

The *Ṣaḍadhvās* (षडध्वास) may be briefly be indicated in the table form as:

<u>Creative descent</u>	<u><i>Vācaka</i> or ‘function-form i.e., <i>Śabda</i> (शब्द—word)</u>	<u><i>Vācya</i> or objective correlate i.e., <i>Artha</i> (अर्थ—meaning)</u>
Causal level	<i>Varṇa</i> —energy level	<i>Kalā</i> —Creative phase
Subtle level	<i>Mantra</i> —power level	<i>Tatva</i> —Principle
Gross level	<i>Pada</i> —sound level (words/language)	<i>Bhuvana</i> —Universe

It may look a bit complicated to hear. An example will make it simple and clear. I am peacefully resting with no needs — then my state is like the *Absolute*. After a while I feel hungry. An urge to eat arises in me, at this, I may be compared to the causal level of *Varṇa* (desire at energy

¹ The timeless spaceless existence is impossible to conceive through mind. It, at most, tries to locate some remote imaginary point within time and space itself as if titled to be ‘timeless-spaceless’ because mind’s range is invariably within time and space. The moment I say ‘basic continuum of Power’, or ‘condenses into dynamic point we imagine in terms of time and space.

² Primarily, *Kalā* (कला) is that aspect of Reality by which it manifests Itself as part for evolving universe. The transcendental aspect of Reality is known as *Niṣkalā* (निष्कला), for it transcends *Kalā* or creative phase.

level) and *Kalā* (getting ready for some decision, creative phase). I decide to buy a bread, at this I have reached the subtle level (as idea only) of *Mantra* (formula) and *Tattva* (principle). Then I set out to buy bread, at this I have reached the gross state of *Pada* (verbal expression) and *Bhuvana* (world and activity). Similarly at the Cosmic level a creative urge is followed by an Idea and actual manifestation i.e., from the Pure Consciousness → to Power → from Power → To Matter. This is identified to be an act of the Power of Consciousness, *Citśakti* (चित् शक्ति) (which is not different from consciousness) and has been identified by the *Rṣīs* to be the *OM*. *Om* is as if a power packed vehicle, which goes on creating objective manifestations, first, of an Impersonal base and then in it, a combined structure of the perceivable and imperceivable objective ‘realities’ that are suitable for conscious centres (*Jīvās*) to live in and perceive through their wrappers which is the complex structure of ‘Intellect-mind-senses-body-unit’ (the physical and material aspect of *Jīvas*). Furthermore while stationed in such a system as of the human’s, the *Jīvā* can understand the secrets of creation, search for and avail the way back to the Cause through the same power which brought down the creation, the *Om*. So, the path to liberation is the path of creation reversed, that is the ‘*Om*’, the ‘missile carrier’ with its direction reversed. Thus the ‘*Om*’ is selected as the *Vācaka* the indicator or signifier of the *Īśvara* who is the *Vācya*, the indicated, the signified or, in other words as the meaning conveyed by ‘*Om*’. Even if the aspirant takes the ‘*Om*’ as ‘name’ of the *Īśvara*, the ‘named’, and then hangs on to and clings to it, then too he shall reach the same end, the Goal. As we go deeper and deeper transcending the nature’s effects present in us, we shall be reaching the point where ‘word’ and the ‘object’ indicated by it or the ‘meaning’ carried by it are not different but One Undivided Reality.

There are two ways by which the *Īśvara* is contemplated upon. They pertain to the two aspects of *Īśvara*¹.

- I. *Īśvara* as the sustainer of the universe, i.e., with attributes —*Saguna* (सगुण).
- II. His attributeless aspect identical with Brahman, the Pure Consciousness, the *Śuddha Caitanya* (शुद्ध चैतन्य) — *Nirguna* (निर्गुण).

Since our aim is to reach the *Puruśa*, the Pure Consciousness, we begin with attributes and reach the attributeless aspect. By introducing *Om*, the Vedic ideal and Vedantic traditions are brought in the Yogic system. The Upanishads declare : *Om* is Brahman and *Om* is all this— the creation including its Unmanifest Cause. (Tai.U. 1-8; Mā.U. 1,2). This *Om* is the shortest syllable which can represent every word at the universal level (of any place and of any language) that represents objects, things, ideas, events, movements and experiences. Apart from the fact that it is a Revelation to the Yogis, *Rṣīs* and *Munīs*, when we analyse we find that the phonetic construction of the *Om* is such that it can encompass in itself all words the man can coin in order to express and understand anything and everything of all times, including the unmanifest cause. It is so owing to the fact that the entire spectrum of phonetic effort is included in pronouncing *Om*, in a compact way. The science of speech and articulation says that six organs of pronunciation are involved in sound production or pronunciation: the throat, the palate, roof of the mouth, teeth, lips and the nose. The

¹ Swami Vivekananda in his Aratrik Stotra uses the epithet – *Nirguna-guna-maya* (निर्गुण-गुण-मय) to signify both of these aspects of *Īśvara*.

voice produced by sound box in the throat is modulated through these six organs along with the tongue's inevitable assistance.

In any language the alphabets/ consonants/ letters pronounced from throat are called **gutturals**; those pronounced from palate are called **palatals**; those pronounced from the roof of mouth are called **cerebrals**; those from the teeth are called **dentals**; those from lips are called **labials** and those through the nose are called **nasals**.

In uttering *Om*, the sound produced practically touches all these organs of pronunciation. It starts at the base root, the throat, and rolling down through the cavity of mouth reaches the lips and ends as a nasal sound with lips closed. Thus we see, the actual pronunciation of *Om* consists of a fusion of three parts अ (a, pronounced like 'u' in the word 'but'), उ (u, pronounced like 'u' in the word 'put') and म् (m, pronounced like 'm' in the word 'him'). The phonetic sound production begins with blowing of air from the throat which is precisely the pronouncing of अ (a) and is the basic *effort* in making any articulate sound. The final *phonetic effort* is the culmination of the flow of the blown air by closing the lips with a nasal outlet which is precisely the म् (m). All other articulations intervene these two, and is conveniently represented by उ (u) which rolls from the very root to the end. The arrangement of Sanskrit alphabets is in the same order of articulation. The *Om* is the only syllable endowed with this unique feature that includes the beginning, middle and ending phonetic efforts of pronunciation. Therefore it is found to be the simplest and convenient syllable fit to represent all the names/words which collectively convey the entire Creation. The Chandogya Upanishad has told (II 23.3) this with an illustration "Just as the leaves are filled with their fibers, so are all the universal words/names by *Om*. All this is really the sacred *Om*". Thus, knowing *Om* as a principle behind a law, if the same *Om* is perceived at an higher Cosmic level, then it is found to be expressing as the beginning (*Sṛṣṭi*—सृष्टि, creation), the middle (*Stḥiti*—स्थिति, sustenance) and the end (*Pralaya*—, retraction) of the universe. That is, from the Unmanifest, to the Manifest and from the Manifest to the Unmanifest, the cycles of creation, sustenance and retraction of the universe. Thus we find at this juncture, The *Om* being the cause of the gross, subtle and causal aspects of the Creation in its entirety as well as of the effects—the universe in its entirety. Thus we arrive at the *Om* being identified with Power and Consciousness. Moreover the macrocosmic body is the Body of *Īśvara*, Who is endowed with the various qualities and powers. Therefore the *Om* is told to be the *Vācaka* (signifier, indicator) of the *Īśvara*, who is the *Vācya* (the signified, the indicated).

The gross, the subtle and the causal aspects of the creation in their entirety are conveyed respectively by the constituent letters अ (a), उ (u), म् (m) of the sacred word 'Om'. The ॐ (*Om*) as a whole indicates the entire Creation in its vividness. It applies to the microcosm level also अ, उ, म् (AUM) representing the three states (waking, dream and deep sleep) and the three bodies (gross, subtle and causal) of every being. Just for practical purpose and our understanding the microcosmic and the macrocosmic aspects of the Creation at the three levels are separated and dealt with. But they remain established in mutual identities as one inseparable unit. The seeker has to bear all these details clearly analysed by himself foremost in his mind so that path becomes easy and pleasant. We begin our journey with the verbal expression of *Om* to be the *Vācaka* of *Īśvara* with a clear understanding of His qualities and features as described earlier. Transcending stage by stage, we

travel from the gross physical level towards the Grand Ultimate reality. Thus four *Mātrās* of expression (one *Mātrā* is one beat, the time taken to utter one syllable, i.e., say almost one second) are assigned to *Om*; It is said to be constituted of four *Mātrās*. They are also called four quarters (*Pādās*) by referring to four stages of unfoldment. Power alone can create a change, and change alone does register ‘time’. And it is the ‘time’ that recognizes and records change and power. Thus identification of *Om* with time by placing it in the frame work of time (as of four *Mātrās*), confer upon it an identification with Power too. Identification with Power is the Identification with Consciousness. As the Power and Consciousness are the only two *real entities*, and all else is but their combination and various levels of their manifestation, so also is the *Om*: It is verily everything from the Absolute to Universe and the *jīvās* that live in it. So strange it looks to know that *Om* is not only *Vācaka* (indicator) of *Īśvara*, but of everything from the Absolute onwards to a tiny grain of sand and a blade of grass. But in and through all that, *Om* always bears an independent identity and an honourable position in the Indian tradition to refer to the Absolute, the Ultimate Reality. Thus all *Mantrās* begin with *Om* and the entire spiritual and religious province place the *Om* as their forerunner to invoke Eternity and the Ultimate Truth as the background of their moves and presentations. So also, placing *Om* behind any word makes it represent the Absolute, bearing the capacity to lead its votary to the Absolute. The word *Rāma* refers to King Daśarathā’s son. By adding *Om* to ‘*Rāma*’, it becomes ‘*Om Rāma*’ which at once points to the Absolute, making the same *Rāma* represent the Absolute. ‘*Om Rāma*’ is then a manifestation of the Absolute which is bound to lead His votary to the Ultimate Truth, the Source. By adding ‘*Om*’ to any word or object, we peel off the ‘name and form’, and what then remains is the Ultimate Reality, the Absolute. Thus the Hindu tradition puts ‘*Om*’ before all *Mantrās*; and all *Mantrās* do ultimately merge in that ‘*Om*’. Thakur says “Sandhya (external performances) merges in *Gāyatri* (the *Mantra*) and the *Gāyatri* merges in *Om*”. Here *Om* is the threshold of the Absolute, where no duality is perceived and is on the verge of merging in the *Saccidānanda* (सच्चिदानन्द) the Existence knowledge Bliss Absolute, after that ‘what remains’, Remains — the Bliss and Peace enveloped in Itself, The Ultimate Truth.

Of the four *Mātrās* assigned to *Om*, only three *Mātrās* are enumerated. The fourth is called *Amātrā* (अमात्रा), the Inexpressible, which is beyond space and time, even Causation (or the creative impulse), no duality of any type can exist there. There too, the final half of the *Mātrā* is left inexpressed and un-enumerated and un-discussed as it represents the Absolute. The other half is conceived with Its Power, the *Cit śakti* (चित् शक्ति) in absolute oneness with the Absolute totally non-different from each other — The *Mahākāla*¹, The Great Time and The *Mahākāli* His Great Power are in absolute union; and is called the *Ardhamātrā*² (अर्धमात्रा). Taking this अर्धमात्रा also into count, *Om* is regarded to be constituted of three and a half *Mātrās*. The complete fourth *Mātrā* (the *Amātrā*) of the *Om* is the Absolute in Itself. And, in comparison with Creation is the pure Impersonal Aspect of *Īśvara*. The appearance of *Nāda* and *Bindu* (नाद and बिन्दु) prior to the beginning of the Creative activity, the *Avyakta* (अव्यक्त) state, corresponds to third *Mātrā* of ‘*Om*’ or is also said to be the third quarter (third *Pāda*). When the creative activity begins with the expansion of the

¹ When there was neither the creation nor the sun....., and when darkness was enveloped in darkness, then the Mother, the Formless One, *Mahākāli*, the Great Power, was one with *Mahākāla*, the Asolute. (Gospel : pg 135- October 27, 1882)

² The Divine Mother (the *Citśakti*, the *Mahākāli*) is said to remain in Her Eternal Immutable Status as this *Ardhamātrā*. *Ardhamātrā sthitānityā* (अर्धमात्रा स्थितानित्या).....Durga Saptaśati-I-24).

Bindu, 'Time' appears. *Om* is found to expand engulfing and pervading the Time which is said to correspond to its second *Mātrā* or the second quarter (*Pāda*). As the final stage, the first *pāda*, universe evolves and projects forth the 3 levels –the causal, subtle and gross levels — of the material world, and is said to correspond to the first quarter or first *Mātrā* of *Om* that covers the Personal aspect of *Īśvara*. We are presently at this end of creation, at the final *Bhuvana* (universe) and *Pada* (पद=words/language) level of existence. The *Mātrās* are arranged from 'this' end to 'That' end. We begin with the syllable *Om* as a sacred word at its gross level the sound *Om* as the *Vācaka* of *Īśvara*. By stages we transcend the creation by traversing through the first, second, third *Mātrās* and reach the first half of the *Amātrā* – अमात्रा also called as *Ardhamātrā* (अर्धमात्रा) and enter the Pure Consciousness, the *Puruṣa* in the final half.

The whole scheme has been put in a table form to facilitate easy understanding:

...P.T.O...

Aspects of <i>Īśvara</i>	The <i>Pranava</i> Or The 'OM'	The Existence and the <i>Creation</i>	Remarks
Pure Impersonal aspect of <i>Īśvara</i>	<p>'Om' emerges and merges Itself in the Ultimate Truth. [The Existence-Consciousness-Bliss-Absolute]</p> <p>Indicated by the final half <i>Mātrā</i> (मात्रा) of three and a half <i>Mātrās</i> of <i>Om</i>.</p>	<p>The Absolute</p> <p><i>Śuddha Caitanya</i> (शुद्ध-चैतन्य) – The Pure Consciousness</p> <p>↓</p> <p><i>Spandana</i> (स्पन्दन), The Creative Pulsation</p>	<p>Where <i>Īśvara Caitanya</i> and the <i>Jīva Caitanya</i> are absolutely one.</p> <p>Consciousness (<i>Caitanya</i>– चैतन्य) and Power of Consciousness are non-different.</p>
Trans-Relative aspect of <i>Īśvara</i>	<p>Indicated by penultimate third <i>Mātrā</i> of the three and a half <i>Mātrās</i> of <i>Om</i>.</p> <p><i>Om</i> is <i>Nāda</i> (नाद); the Cause of all sounds; perceived by Yogis as <i>Anāhata Dhvani</i> (अनाहत ध्वनि).</p> <p><i>Om</i> is <i>Bindu</i> (बिन्दु); <i>Om</i> as the Cause of all forms.</p> <p><i>Om</i> is <i>Avyakta</i> (अव्यक्त), the Unmanifest. <i>Om</i> as the Cause of the universe.</p> <p>Indicated by second <i>Mātrā</i> of three and a half <i>Mātrās</i> of <i>Om</i>.</p> <p><i>Om</i> is engulfing and pervading Time, becoming <i>Kālātma</i> (कालात्मक)</p>	<p>↓</p> <p>(नाद) — <i>Nāda</i></p> <p>↓</p> <p>(बिन्दु) — <i>Bindu</i></p> <p><i>Nāda-Bindu</i> (नाद-बिन्दु)</p> <p>Here the <i>Vācaka</i> (वाचक—the 'word') and <i>Vācya</i> (वाच्य—the meaning) are One – i.e., they are undifferentiated one</p> <p>↓</p> <p>Time appears with <i>Bindu</i> expanding in <i>Nāda</i> into its evolutes.</p>	<p>The Unbounded Potency of Absolute fullness <i>Pūrnatva</i> (पूर्णत्व) expressing as Basic-Continuum of Power and Bliss.</p> <p>This is appearance of the Dynamic centre of Evolution.</p> <p><i>Nāda</i> and <i>Bindu</i> are considered together. It is as if the Consciousness is throbbing with life and overflowing with Bliss.</p> <p>Creative Phase begins.</p>
The Personal aspect as <i>Īśvara</i> , the Omnipotent, Omniscient and Omnipresent Lord of the Universe.	<p>Indicated by first <i>Mātrā</i> of the three and a half <i>Mātrās</i> of <i>Om</i>.</p> <p><i>Om</i> is <i>Īśvara</i> in His Personal aspect.</p> <p><i>Om</i> as the approachable Power of Consciousness that creates, sustains and retracts the universe, i.e., the <i>Īśvara (Kālātmakaḥ Varṇaswarūpa – कालात्मकः वर्णस्वरूप)</i></p> <p><i>Om</i> is all pervading consciousness (<i>Tatwātma mantra swarūpa – तत्वात्मक मन्त्र स्वरूप)</i></p> <p><i>Om</i> is symbol and the sound <i>Om</i>. (<i>Bhuvanātmaka pada swarūpa – भुवनात्मक पद स्वरूप)</i></p>	<p>कला – <i>Kalā</i></p> <p>↓</p> <p>Creative descent</p> <p>↓</p> <p><i>Vācaka</i> or 'function form' i.e., शब्द (<i>Śabda</i>; word)</p> <p>↓</p> <p><i>Vācya</i> or objective correlate i.e., अर्थ (<i>Artha</i>; meaning)</p> <p>↓</p> <p>Causal level <i>Varṇa</i> (वर्ण) { <i>Vāk</i> (वाक्)(speech/function form); at energy level }</p> <p>Subtle level <i>Mantra</i> – (मन्त्र– <i>Vāk</i>; at power level)</p> <p>Gross level <i>Pada</i> (पद – <i>Vāk</i>; at sound level, as words or language)</p>	<p><i>Kalā</i> (कला – primary creative phase)</p> <p><i>Tattva</i> (तत्त्व – Principle underlying creation)</p> <p><i>Bhuvana</i> (भुवन – the universe)</p>

This table is however, not meant for describing the creative process. It is to know the reversal path, to trace back the Cause whence we appeared in this universe. The mode of Creation runs with *Om* and it is to show that the vehicle to return too is the same, only direction is reverse. Aided by love and devotion to God and contemplating on the Everlasting Immutable *Caitanya*, this technique serves as a pleasant means to maintain the desired thought conforming to our own true nature, the *Puruṣa*, the *Ātman* non-different from Brahman and the Impersonal aspect of *Īśvara* too. This technique remains as the *Upasana* with the *Īśvara* in His personal aspect, serving the early purpose, then enhances our eligibility to enter into higher types of meditation of His attributeless Aspect. The inseparable relation between a name and what it conveys is utilised at every stage of progress. Important Upanishads like *Praśna*, *Katha*, *Taittiriya*, *Manḍukya*, *Munḍaka*, etc., and all Vedantic schools, especially the Advaitic system extol *Om* as an effective means of transcending *Samsāra* (transmigration). *Om* not only signifies the Absolute Reality but serves as the means to reach It. In it lies its greater importance. As a part of derivation, *Om* is viewed in two ways : one as word and other as an un-compounded syllable.

As a compound, *Om* is derived from the verbal root अक् (*Av*) – to protect, to know, to favour etc.,. According to a grammar rule –*Uṇādi Sūtra* (1-142) a suffix मन् (*Man*) is added to अक् (*Av*) which finally becomes ओम् (*Om*) meaning ‘The One that protects (*avati iti Om*)’. Here the protection is taken in terms of lending existence (*Sat*– सत्), Consciousness/knowledge (*Cit*– चित्) and unending happiness (*Ānanda*– आनन्द); for, the real protection is ensured only when *Jīva* gets these three. As a source of these three *Om* can mean – The *Brahman*, or Its Power, the Divine Mother, or the *Īśvara*. All the same, it indicates the same Principle, same Power and same Substratum, and leads to the same end.

As an un-compounded syllable it is अ (a), उ (u), म् (m̐) phonetically fused and uttered together as *Om*. Based on the fact that the name (*Nāma*–नाम) and what is indicated by it (*Nāmī*–नामी) are identical, the entire Creation is gradually eliminated by upward motion through chanting of *Om* aiming it at Pure Consciousness. This is the rationale behind every *Mantra* including the *Om*.

Om is regarded with high esteem and reverence as most sacred word. To keep up its sanctity and its effectiveness it is used in a restricted way as either a part of *Mantra* or of some sacred text. In all other general places of mentioning, another word ‘*Pranava*’ (प्रणव) is used to denote *Om*. *Pranava* is प्र+नव (*Pra+nava*) = ‘ever fresh, ever new’, an indirect way of point to consciousness — which remains the same at all times, ever fresh, pure and new, the *Om* and as a symbolic representation it is written as “ॐ”.



28

तज्जपस्तदर्थभावनम् ॥२८॥
 (Tajjapastadarthabhāvanam)
 (Tat-Japaḥ-tat-artha-bhāvanam)

“Its repetition must be made with due feelings contemplating on its meaning.”

Its (*Tat*– तत् i.e., of the sacred syllable “*Om*”), repetition (*Japaḥ*– जपः) should be done with feelings (*Bhāvanam*– भावनम्) contemplating on (objects depicted by) its meaning (*Artha*– अर्थ).

There are three practices involved in this instruction — (i) Repetition of the sacred *Mantra* ॐ, (ii) *Īśvara* being with attributes in his Personal Aspect, the feelings to be centred around Him, for, it is easy to love and adore a personal *Īśvara*, and (iii) to be aware of the entire path and the Goal represented by the ॐ, filling the mind and intellect with the Destination where we are going to land and Be one with It.

First we have to take up a positive position in our thinking pattern. We should not think that we are bound, life is but a suffering, and that I want to escape from it. Instead we have to look upon ourselves in the same manner how a Realised Soul looks upon himself; and the world too, as far as possible, to be looked upon in the same way as how an Illumined Soul would look at it. That is to strip off our old ways of understanding and habitual dealings from our True Nature, the Divine. This develops a natural affinity of love, the *Bhāvana* towards the Supreme Soul, the *Īśvara*. It is a simple law of Nature that the love, attraction and intimacy are possible between two beings of the same species; an ant can love an ant and an elephant can love an elephant. An ant cannot love an elephant nor can an elephant, a dog. Awareness of our Divine Nature makes us love God in a most natural way, because we are ever aware of His Divinity. As we connect *Īśvara* to *Om*, we have to connect Him to ourselves. We have to carefully practice this method of raising the thoughts of relationship with Him in a common Divine base, and through practice we get established in it. We should never think this spiritual path to be time consuming affair. Many of us often feel it impossible to spare so much of time for such a pursuit when there are many other things demanding our attention. The thing is that we do not know how to set our priorities in life properly. Second thing is that we forget that our life story is like a line drawn on water that is going to be completely erased without a trace. We must learn to convert our very life into a *Sāadhanā*. We need not change much of our life style, but do only what is inevitable and offer it as an oblation into the Supreme Reality. That is the purpose of bringing *Īśvara* and the *Om* into the yogic path. We shall, as we go ahead, see how it washes down our defects, removes obstructions and hurdles on our way and makes us enter our inner world of glory and eternity.

Yoga is a practical path, with definite techniques to transcend Nature, internal and external, and attain absolute Freedom. It is not skimming Vedānta or a Religion with some curiosity. The *Yoga* system is, rather an experiment which is bound to ripen into an experience. It has to be learnt first and lived thereafter. It is a way of thought that becomes a way of life. This life, the true Yogic

life fuses the varieties of understanding and experiments into a single harmony which ultimately eliminates the ‘natureness’ of the Nature (the *Prakṛti*) which is evident from the Yogi’s life after his attainments. Good number of *Sādhakās* feel they do a lot but no much progress. The thing is that their quality is very poor. Where there is dedication, where there is perfection the result is bound to be there. Even five minutes of meditation they never do perfectly; sitting for meditation, they invest their mind elsewhere. Second thing is, they do not release their holds. Always holding something or the other of this world. Obviously, though they have gathered genuine seeds of knowledge, they are sowing them in a barren land. We need to prepare the ‘land’ through the two fold remedy mentioned earlier : the *Abhyāsa* (अभ्यास)— of perfection and dedication, and the *Vairāgya* (वैराग्य)— dispassion, releasing the holds. An impartial evaluation of sense pleasure and their objects, that they are incapable of giving happiness is an essential prelude to *Vairāgya*. We have had superimposed ourselves in the other way about, now with right vision those superimposed attributes (I am doer, I am enjoyer etc.) leave us, keeping us untouched and unstained by objects, beings and events. Mind having discovered this fact learns to discard the crutches of sense objects and becomes independent and self-capable to turn inward and begin the journey. Sense objects do not fascinate a mature mind, it can terminate all desires with ease [“*Prajahāti yadā kāmān sarvān pārtha manogatān – प्रजहाति यदा कामान् सर्वान् पार्थ मनोगतान् (B.G 2 / 55)*]; this is natural for the Realised Souls and is a practice for us]. This disposition of absence of longing for the worldly things is called *Niḥspr̥ha* (निःस्पृहः) [B.G 2/71]. *Vairāgya* is a right perspective that naturally and spontaneously appears in a healthy and mature mind. *Abhyāsa* is a constant practice in a right manner.

This *Sūtra* has its focus on ‘meditation or contemplation’. It provides a thorough technique for constant practice of contemplation. In spiritual parlance *Japa* with *Bhāvana* (the heart joining one pointed mind) is *Sagunādhyāna* (सगुणध्यान) leading to *Savikalpa samādhi* (सविकल्प समाधि) and, is in par with *Upāsana* (उपासना). It is fixing the mind on the *Īśvara* with utterance of ॐ identified with His existence wherein there is an unintermitent steady flow of identical thoughts without the intermingling of even a single dissimilar thought. What is meditated upon is called *Dhyeya* (ध्येय) or *Upāsya* (उपास्य). It is *Īśvara* with its *Vācaka* (indicator) *Om*.

Consonants cannot be pronounced without the help of vowels or in prolonged continuity. Vowels can stand independently and can be pronounced in prolonged continuity. *Om* is extremely easy syllable to pronounce. It is natural sound. Animals and insects sounds too, being natural sounds, move in close proximity to this *Om* sound; so it is of the infants. So, it moves effortlessly both when uttered orally or mentally. It is a syllable that can be clearly uttered. Continuity of a single thought in the mind to the exclusion of all others becomes clear and spontaneous if it accompanies continuity in the utterance of words/syllables. The resonance that is created in the ‘heart’ of man when he utters mentally the *Om* – the deep, clear and continuing for a long time – links the intellect to the world beyond. The Yogīs utilise this for their contemplation on *Īśvara*. While repeating *Om* we dwell upon and be aware of His existence alone and not upon His diverse qualities with a possibility of causing distraction. His qualities mentioned earlier are just to know Him and establish a Divine relationship with Him. The *Bhāvanā* part of the practice dissolves all His qualities and takes us closer to Him. Though God/*Īśvara* is an object of love, it is a ‘*Divine to Divine*’ love in DIVINE. Himself being endowed with a form is not given much of an importance. However, *Īśvara*’s omnipotency to appear through a form to satisfy the need or desire of a devotee

is not denied. So, if an aspirant prefers to approach Him through a form, it is permitted; most of the beginners are advised to adopt this method because for all humans the only instrument they possess for *Īśvara-praṇidhāna* (ईश्वर-प्रणिधान) is *Buddhi* (बुद्धि), and this *Buddhi* is in unbroken association with mind (*manas*) and sense organs (eyes, ears, etc.). To contemplate on an anthropomorphic form is therefore easy and natural, smooth and pleasant. At the outset the exact relation between *Praṇava* (*Om*) and its meaning is established through the form we adopt (it can be *Viṣṇu*, *Kṛṣṇa*, *Rāmakṛṣṇa*, *Buddha* or any other form with which we can find intimacy, love and a sense of oneness). *Īśvara-praṇidhāna* is always practiced and accomplished in Heart. [What is this 'Heart'? This heart is Spiritual heart. We possess three hearts : physical heart, an organ placed in the chest that pumps blood; deeper inside the chest is the psychic or feeling/emotional heart that feels pleasure, pain and love and hatred; and in the deepest inside is the Spiritual heart, the Heart, which is the seat of the Spirit, the Divine, the God, it is the core of one's own being, the pivot of our very existence. The physical heart lies in our gross body, the feeling heart in our subtle body and the Spiritual heart is beyond the causal body as the pivot of the three bodies we possess.] We have to go to the deepest layer of our being, the process is called meditation. The feeling heart itself cannot be located anatomically then, what to speak of the spiritual heart? By following our feelings we can move to their source, the *feeling heart*. Through the feeling heart we have to trace the Spiritual Heart, the pivot of our existence. That is why '*Bhāvanā*' is added to *Japa* with its meaning, the '*Artha*' in this *Sūtra*. Our I-sense is, in our normal human state, related to body. And, mind being the centre of our mental activities, the basis of our life and physical activities, the I-sense seemingly lingers somewhere in our thought stream in the brain. When mind takes a repose in activity-free restful calmness, when mental fluctuations abate towards a stoppage we see the ego-sense going down to the Heart. It is as if we move from the *becoming* to the *Being*. *Japa* finds its inevitable position mainly because of its ability to stabilize the mental fluctuations when done with reverential love and dedication. Constant *Japa* with its meaning helps us to maintain an unbroken link with the Supreme Spirit, the *Īśvara* and, *Bhāvanā* helps us to identify and locate Him and grip Him in our hold. When *Om* is associated with His wide range of aspects and innumerable manifestation, the *Om* is regarded as 'mystic syllable *Om*'. *Om* just standing by itself as a symbol gives the meaning 'May Him be benevolent to all' or something like 'Hail' or 'Amen'. When it represents the Divine, it become 'sacred-syllable', when associated with *Īśvara* it is 'mystic syllable'.

As we enter deeper and deeper layers of our being, the *Om* remains the same unaltered, only its meaning goes on changing from the gross form to formless Absolute. That is why we are instructed to move with meaning (*Artha*). According to one's spiritual stage of evolution one may begin anywhere between the form and formless.

In order to begin with form of God, the *Īśvara* should be thought of as manifested in the Heart in certain definite luminous Divine form, the face beaming with love and compassion, the Pure Consciousness (*Caitanya*) radiating Bliss and Supreme Knowledge. One must find oneself in close association and in agreement with that Supreme Being. We first imagine, then visualise with clarity. As it deepens we become oblivious of the external existence which matures into Meditation and ripens into *Samādhi*. The whole process should accompany simultaneously repetition of the mystic syllable *Om* (*Japa*) to avoid any diversions or distractions and to maintain the link. *Om* is in fact the vehicle we have mounted ourselves which is on its move towards the Ultimate. We cannot

alight from it till it merges itself in the Absolute. The repetition maintains the *Ekāgratā* (एकाग्रता –one pointedness) which reveals the subtler and subtler inner meanings of the *Om* to the Yogin. At each stage, *Japa* continues with newly acquired subtler and subtler meanings of the *Mantra OM*. *Japa* contributes to and makes one get established in the steps of *Yoga* and at every step *Yoga* brings about perfection in *Japa*— each strengthening the other, the process continues till ultimately the Supreme spirit, the *Paramātman* is revealed when with the spiritual aspirant attains the True knowledge of his own Self.

How to pronounce this *Om*? *Om* is generally pronounced with ओ (O) running through two *Mātrās* (two beats) ending with म् (m). According to grammer (Pāṇiniya sūtra 8-2-87) the vowel ओ (O) in *Om* is prolonged to more than two beats (*Mātrās*— मात्रास) only when it is in the beginning of a *Mantra* (sacred formula) or Vedic text. The prolonging continues for three *Mātrās* – thrice the unit of time required to utter a single short vowel (one-*Mātrā*). Prolonging a articulate sound for more than two *Mātrās* is called *Pluta* (प्लुत). As a *Mantra* by itself, *Om* is uttered through three and a half *Mātrās*. There is however scriptural sanction for prolonging for three *Mātrās* or more of *Om* even if it is not at the beginning of a *Mantra* or the Vedic Text, provided it is used as a means to get absorbed in the aspect of God indicated by it. The Upanishads like *Varāha* (वराह) and *Dhyāna-Bindu* (ध्यान बिन्दु) enumerate different results with changing of the *Mātrās* in uttering the *Pranava (Om)*. *Kṣurikopaniṣad* and *Amṛtānandopaniṣad* (both from *Kṛṣṇa-Yajurveda*) recommend the prolonging of *Om* to twelve *Mātrās*. In such cases *Om* is prolonged like the resonating sound of a bell [*Dīrghaghāṇṭa-ninādat* (दीर्घघण्ट निनादवत्) – V.U 5-69, D.B.U.18]. It is in accordance with scriptures, though not in conformity with Sanskrit grammer. This is advised as a means to control vagrant mind.

The sound of an aeroplane taking off is a nice illustration to demonstrate the way of chanting the prolonged *Om*. As it picks up the speed, the pitch goes on increasing and when airborne it stabilises and remains at the same pitch, and as it moves away the volume (not the pitch) decreases and slowly vanishes. The duration of prolonging can be conveniently adjusted to one's own suitability. While chanting loudly, lengthening of *Om* should not be beyond one's capacity so that gasping for breath and consequent distraction can be best avoided. It should make us calmly rest in a feeling of godliness and fill our mind with Divinity and place us in a blissful state fit for contemplation and meditation. It is always advisable to repeat it mentally instead of articulately.

The main thing is that the seeker has to be intensely eager to have a direct experience of the Ultimate Truth. He must possess deep reverential love, intimacy and the feeling of oneness with *Īśvara*. He must cultivate intense dispassion to the world and worldly life.

Often the practitioner overpowered by his *Samskāras* may fall into low spirits. The Lord being the essence of heart and all-knowing, all capable, The Yogi can derive great benefit through intense prayer. Prayers with deep inner anguish bear powers that work miracles far from human understanding. They set right the things that have gone wrong, destroy *Vāsanās*, drive away monkeys and crows of mind, and work in mysterious way to arrange for the *Sādhakā*'s physical, mental and spiritual needs. Śrī Rāmakṛṣṇa gave highest importance for prayers in life of an aspirant.

Prayer invokes Divine grace. God becomes a loving friend in success and failures, pleasure and pains. This gives us emotional strength to love Him and maintain inner harmony and balance.

Creation presupposes the involvement of three factors viz., knowledge, action and matter. The three constituents of *Prakṛti* called the *Guṇās* (गुणः) account for these three factors. They are also called *Māyā*, the creative power of Brahman. They are *Satva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas* respectively. As all beings are, so also man too (apart from his spiritual existence) is but the product of these three *Guṇās*. Mind, the key player of the human system can enter into various alien moods under the influence of *Guṇās*. The devotional singing, singing the names and glories of God with devotional fervour keeps us free from the influence of *Prakṛti's Guṇās*. It maintains a constant divine mood directed to the Supreme Lord.

Japa, the repetition of the sacred *Mantra Om* consists in rhythmic and uninterrupted repetition of *Mantra* with love (*Bhāvanā*) and total dedication (giving oneself entirely to God). This repetition is usually mental, and oral in unavoidable cases. *Om* is the *Vācaka* of the *Īśvara*, the Lord. The utterance of *Om* which is associated with *Īśvara* instantaneously brings to our awareness His various aspects and various attributes which we have known through scriptures and *Guru's* mouth. This is the *Artha*, the meaning part of *Mantra*. It fills the heart with reverential love, which is said to be the *Bhāvanā* part of the *Mantra*. Reverential love always maintains an attitude of surrender. It is this that makes us to cling to and remain mounted on the *Mantra*, the *Om*.

Self surrender is an essential part of *Īśvara -pranidhāna*. The very nature of mind is to be restless and refuse to be under a discipline or regulation. It is so because it is always under the sway of *Vāsanās* (वासनाः). Ego naturally joins the mind. It is our ego and our mind that deny our entry to the realm of the God. But the very mind which seemed to deny our entry into the transcendental limits, through surrender (it is ego that surrenders) becomes an opening into that Grand Realm of God. In surrender there is neither this 'I' nor mine, neither 'want' nor 'don't' —those that were responsible to cut us off from the Divine power working within us, the Power of life. Now whatever be our situation— good or bad — how free we remain to go ahead in *Sādhanā*, once we surrender. With surrender comes benediction; Peace. When *wisdom* is awakened it leads us to surrender. Then every illusion reminds us of God. Every illusion, the enemy that was deluding us becomes our friend, our wellwisher to help us in our journey to God.

Before we enter into observation of the retracing steps back to the Source, let us make ourselves clear how the cycle of projection and retraction take place. Let us go back to the table in page 85.

Imagine that we were working hard since morning, now it is noon. We take some food and are freely resting now. Suppose till now we were working with some figures and calculations; where is that intellectual power now? We were digging the earth there after; where is that physical power now? We were planning so many things; where is that mental power now? Now as we are taking rest (or that we are asleep now) all these powers have got merged and dissolved in our own being and is totally unseen and unrecognised. This state can be compared to the Absolute when whole Creation retracts back into the time-less, spaceless existence. [It is only an analogy just for our understanding, we cannot equate the two states, as the resting or sleeping is within the time-

space bound Nature of dualities.]. After the rest when we just wish to go back to work and about to get up we see our energies, power and strength reappearing ready to work again. We have not yet got up but we feel the energy and power present in us as if pulsating. It is like the state where *Caitanya* (चैतन्य) and *Citśakti* (चित्शक्ति) are seen non different yet the presence of the power, the *Citśakti* is recognised. It is the second row (in the table page 85) where the creative pulsation is depicted. Next is the appearance of *Nāda* (नाद). *Nāda* is unbounded potency of the Absolute in its fullness existing as basic continuum of Power and Bliss. To understand this let us see how we enter deep sleep, the *Suṣupti* (सुशुप्ति). Let us imagine a cone with its vertex pointing to our heart and its base on the other side expanding into the outer world, pervading it. When we are in waking state we see objects outside (the *Vācya*) and there is their understanding in our mind (which is the *Vācaka*, the ‘functional form’ in mind). When we are entering into sleep just see how we withdraw ourselves within and the whole cone too shrinks back and collapses into the vertex-point within the depths of our being; the external world ceases to exist. Its understanding in mind too moves along with the objective-world-cone and the *Vācya*, *Vācaka* (the world cone of external world that we were perceiving = *Vācya*, and its understanding in mind *Vācaka*) become one point of Consciousness deep within ourselves and then we slowly expand ourselves through that point again into our infinite inner Being – where there is neither time nor space nor the sense of causation! –Bliss in Itself. Our existence, our power, our knowledge is continuing in that time-less Existence. This we may say, is the basic continuum of Power and Bliss and is called the *Nāda*. Now shifting this understanding to cosmic level we arrive at the third row of the table, the *Nāda*. [In deep sleep we enter into *Īśvara*; and at cosmic level the *Īśvara* enters into the Absolute]

When we happen to wake up from that expanded state of lying in our blissful inner self, we condense back into a point and then the point expands outwardly, stretches out and gradually taking the cone shape projects out to pervade the universe. Simultaneously as the point expands into the objective world, its subjective understanding (*Vācaka*) separates out: subjective *Vācaka* (वाचक) remains with the subject (i.e. in our mind/awareness), and the objective *Vācya* (वाच्य) pervades the objective world. The point into which we collapse and from which we emerge out is called the *Bindu* (बिन्दु). In a similar way, during *Pralaya* (dissolution of the universe) the entire universe retracts, shrinks and collapses into a *Point* in the Pure Consciousness, The Ultimate Eternal Existence then taking the *Nāda* form merges itself in that Absolute Existence. When the next cycle begins it takes the *nāda* form and then condenses itself into a *Point* and that very point expands into the universe. This point into which the universe in its entirety collapses and from which it emerges out is called the *Bindu*. This *Bindu* has been given the highest importance in *Śāktha* schools and in their diagrammatic representation of Universal Powers and Power of Consciousness (चित्शक्ति). Those diagrams are called the *Yantrās* (यन्त्राः). The centre most point of every *Yantrā* is this *Bindu*, the Cause of the universe, the *Viśvayonī* (विश्वयोनी).

The *Bindu* expands itself into the universe and collapses back to the same centre, remains in the timeless, spaceless Existence for a ‘timeless period’, and then again the next cycle begins. This rhythmic expansion to the vast multifarious Creation, and on its return, the same ‘step-backward’ rhythmic contraction which takes place through various phases (like the waxing and waning of moon) is called the *Kalā* (कला). The fifth and the last row in the table are these major stages of *Kalā*

(the causal, subtle and gross descents). The Absolute, The Pure Infinite Consciousness, Śuddha Caitanya is called “*nāda-bindu-kalā- atīta*”, ‘beyond and ever free from *Nāda, Bindu and Kalā*’ i.e. to say ‘beyond and ever free from any aspects or modes of Power’.

Now let us understand what are these *Avyakta* (अव्यक्त) and *Vyakta* (व्यक्त), and the causal, subtle and gross levels. For that let us take the example of seed germination. The principle is same, whether it is a seed or the universe. The seed away from Nature (water and sunlight) is in its absolute condition with all knowledge and power to manifest into a tree, hidden within itself in a dissolved condition. Putting it in water, the moment it touches the water the expansion (swelling up) begins; the time has come into existence with respect to the seed. When the expansion has just begun, the time is just setting out from its zero point on its journey through the Creation, the *Bindu* has already made its appearance — this *Nāda-Bindu* stage (5th row) is called *Avyakta*. Time extends itself as the *Bindu* expands.

Say, at the end of the three days of expansion of the seed, when the sprout projects out, with it ‘I’ too starts manifesting. At the cosmic level this ‘I’ is the *Īśvara* with various attributes like the omnipresent, omnipotent etc. At the individual level it is the transmigratory soul, the *Jivātman*. We have already seen how while waking up from deep sleep we condense into a point (the *Bindu*) and then project out, while the awareness stretches out like a cone and pervades the entire world. In that process, as the *Bindu* expands and what appears first, the sprout, is that I, the ego. It is followed by appearance of intellect, mind, senses and *Prāṇās* (प्राणाs, energy level); that is our subtle body, subtle level of our existence. It can be compared to the seed shedding of its husk once the sprout appears. At the Cosmic level also, in a same way, the subtle aspect of creation appears. Finally the seed splits and leaves appear. This is the gross level. At the cosmic level too interaction of the constituents of the subtle universe makes gross level to emerge out. The universe we perceive and are aware of is the gross level of the Creation, but we can perceive only an insignificant part of this gross level of the Creation. The whole creation is called the *Vyakta*, ‘The manifest’. This is the *Īśvara*’s Personal aspect represented by the first *Mātrā* (मत्रा) of the *Om*. We have to go back from the gross level to the subtle, the subtle to the causal and the causal to the Unmanifest and from the Unmanifest to the Absolute. That covers the entire three and a half *Mātrās* or *Pādās* (the quarters) of *Om*, and makes us land in the Ultimate.

The *Om* or a Sacred-*Mantra* ^{*1} when received from a *Guru*, is at the gross level, as mere words (sound level) representing a particular aspect of God, the Reality. With *Om* goes The Universal form of God (universe itself is the physical body of the Universal Soul, *Īśvara*) and with Sacred-*Mantra* ^{*} goes the personal form of the Deity which is equated to the Absolute by adding *Om* ² before the Sacred-*Mantra* ^{*}.

¹ Sacred-*Mantra* ^{*} is a small compact formula of the chosen Deity, usually beginning with *Om*, like the *Om Klīm Kṛṣṇāya Namaḥ* or *Om Hrīm Dōm Durgāyai Namaḥ* etc., meant for repetition with meditation on the forms of their respective Deities. It is generally called ‘*Mantra*’. The same term *Mantra* is used to represent the subtle level of the *Vācaka* (see table on page 85 lowest row, middle). Therefore to distinguish the former from the latter I am using the term Sacred-*Mantra* ^{*} to indicate the Sacred formula of the Deities.

² In addition to *Om* the Deity may be equated to the Universal Body being the gross manifestation of the Supreme

The Sacred-*Mantra** or the *Om* has a purpose and value for the one who is seeking the Eternal Freedom. When we repeat the Sacred-*Mantra** or the *Om* with our hearts set upon that one end in view and with total surrender to that ideal, we get absorbed in it and gradually become oblivious of the external world. We develop an inner awareness, the inner world gets lit up. We witness the inner beauty of this world, the inner meaning of the Sacred-*Mantra**/*Om*. The gross world merges in its immediate cause, the subtle universe. Actually, the *Vācaka* and *Vācyā* from their gross level (*Pāda* and *Bhuvana*) move back to the subtle level (*Mantra* and *Tatva*). It is very simple phenomenon; an example will make it easy to understand. There is a principle on one side which is descending in successive steps of Power-forms right from the Absolute. There are, on the otherside innumerable formulas in accordance with which the principle manifests in various different ways as objects. Thus, behind all objects there is common principle, and individually there are different formulas behind every object which imparts to it an existence distinct from all other objects. For example let us take electricity and its manifestation. Electricity is a principle, an aspect of power which manifests as light through a bulb, as heat through a stove, as coldness through a refrigerator, as mechanical energy through a motor etc., The bulb, stove, refrigerator, motor etc., each of them is a formula. The common principle behind the manifestations is called *Tatva* and the formula that decides and is responsible for the particular manifestation is called the '*Mantra*'. By the repetition of *Om*/Sacred-*Mantra** we transcend the name and form and reach the power and principle behind the universe or the Deity. Thus we can take any name or any form of God or just *Om*, we reach the same *Tatva* lying behind them. We understand that *Kṛṣṇa*, *Rāma*, *Buddha* or Jesus, are but different formulas for One Divinity to manifest. At this stage the Sacred-*Mantra** is a power that had made the Divine principle to manifest; and God is the principle behind this Universe or the Holy Form.

When we dive to deeper layers through the rhythmic repetition with one pointed mind (एकाग्रता) and one pointed devotion, we transcend the subtle level and land in the causal level wherein *Vācaka* and *Vācyā* take the *Varṇa* (वर्ण) and *Kalā* (कला) form. That is, from the power level we go to the energy level. Energy is what precedes power. For example: the food we take gets converted into energy, we convert this energy into power to work. Energy is causal level, power is subtle level, and work is the gross level. *Kalā*, the *Vācyā* here, is the primary creative phase, the Sprout appearing. Beyond this we go, we reach the *Bindu* — the *Avyakta* / Unmanifest. Here the *Jiva*, *Jagat* and *Īśvara* (the individual souls, the universe and the Lord) merge into One Reality, The Unmanifest—the *Bindu*, indicated by the third *Pāda* or *Mātrā* of the *Om*, the penultimate one. Every stage from the Gross onwards our freedom, peace and bliss go on multiplying to reach an intense Blissfull state at this point, the *Bindu*. That makes one stretch oneself and dissolve in the Consciousness. It is here the *Jiva* experiences the 'ultimate' of The Supreme Power of

Power, the *Hrīm* (The Power Inconceivable in terms of magnitude and capabilities) or other Power Heads indicated by syllables like ऐं(*Aim*) श्रीं(*Śrīm*) etc. So that each time the aspirant repeats the Sacred-*Mantra** or the name of the God/the Deity or each time he sees the form/picture of the Deity, simultaneously the Ultimate Reality, The Supreme Goal must come to his mind. So also It must make him feel the universe and all beings are but the manifestation of the One Truth, The God.

Consciousness, the Divine Mother, finding absolute one-ness with Her. Finally the *jiva* merges along with Her in the Absolute to be the Absolute Itself.

***Karma* brings fruit from Nature;
Sādhana brings fruit from the very source of Nature, the *God*.**



29

ततः प्रत्यक्चेतनाधिगमोऽप्यन्तरायाभावश्च ॥२९॥

(ततः प्रत्यक्-चेतना-अधिगमः अपि अन्तराय अभावः च)

[*Tataḥ Pratyak-Cētanā-Adhigamaḥ Api Antarāya Abhāvaḥ Ca*]

“Thus comes the Realisation of One’s own inner Self (the indwelling Pure Consciousness)
and the obstacles too get resolved into nought”

From *Īśvara -Pranīdhāna* involving the repetition of *Om* with utmost reverential love and dedication while contemplating on its meaning (ततः), the indwelling pure spiritual Existence (प्रत्यक्-चेतना) is Realised (अधिगमः) and (च) the obstructions to yogic state (अन्तराय) too (अपि) cease to exist (अभावः).

The चित्= चैतन्य or *Cētanā*(चेतना) cannot be objectified, because it precedes the very instrument (*Buddhi*) with which we objectify, and is the sole support of the existence of this *Buddhi*. Therefore it is called *Pratyak* (प्रत्यक्) - the indwelling, internal. Opposite to प्रत्यक् is पराङ् (*Parāṅg*) or पराक् (*Parāk*) meaning the external. How exactly we turn inward, take up the journey and reach the destination, we have already seen in detail in the previous *Sūtrā* itself.

How easy we felt the path, how smooth and pleasing. But for the mind, which is under the sway of *Vāsanās* (वासनाs), it would have been really so. When try to put into practice, we face a lot of problems as if we are bound by something unknown, that we are not able to enter within, let alone the sinking and reaching deeper layers. The obstruction or the impediments that stand in our path and hinder our journey are called the *Antarāyās* (अन्तरायs). It is believed that the system through which transcendence was first successfully attained was through *yoga* in which *Īśvara* s grace was repeatedly invoked for the obstructions to be destroyed. If the *Yoga* is considered generally in a gross way, it is the union of individual Consciousness and the Cosmic Consciousness (i.e. union of *Jīvā* and *Īśvara*). When we observe the process from our own individual stand point as an aspirant, it is unification of our mental processes and the Consciousness, by retaining one *Vṛtti* – the Pure *Īśvara* through the repetition of the *Vācaka* – *Om*. In this way, the mind merges in *Buddhi* and one *Buddhi Vṛtti* alone remains trying at every stage, at every level to unite itself, to dissolve itself in the

Infinite Consciousness, the Impersonal aspect of the *Īśvara*, the essence of *Om*. According to the *Yoga* system, the individual Consciousness (*Jīva-Caitanya*) is a partial expression of Cosmic Consciousness, the Divine Reality which is immediately understandable and available as *Īśvara*. The *partial* is searching for its own 'parental Whole'. In *Upaniśad* it is allegorically represented by two birds parching on the same tree, one often eating sweet and bitter fruits and the other remaining uninvolved in its own Glory.

Finally the aspirant reaches the Essence, wherein *Jīva-Caitanya* (जीवचेतन्य, Individual Consciousness) the *Īśvara -Caitanya* (ईश्वरचेतन्य, the Cosmic Consciousness) and the *Śuddha-Caitanya* (शुद्धचेतन्य; the Pure Consciousness) are one and are indivisible. This One which is within one's own self is called the 'प्रत्यक्चेतना' (*Pratyak-Cetanā*). Where as the two – *Jīva* and *Īśvara* (the Individual and the Cosmic Souls) are separated by the *Jīva*'s subjectivity, and with the dissolution of this subjectivity, the 'I-ness', or the Individual Consciousness dissolves – leaving the Absolute Pure Consciousness, the Non-dual alone to abide, this is indicated by the term 'अधिगम' in the *sūtrā*. The subjectivity is responsible for our animal and human nature and limited vision. In the language of *Yoga* it is called the 'mind trap'.

Man is his mind; approach to mind is approach to man. There are two approaches to mind, the introvert and the extrovert, the subjective analysis and the objective analysis. The *yogis* take up the former and the latter is taken up by the scientists & psychologists. When objective approach is followed, samples are taken from others in the society. And it invariably connects to and ends up with the behavioural patterns, environmental conditioning, inherent nature, and 'manufacturing defect', the natural deformations. Thus the only solution is sedatives, tranquillizers, antidepressants etc.,. On the other hand the subjective analysis, the introvert approach of the *Yogi* connects it to Consciousness, the realities and elimination of root cause, the ignorance and its effects – the *Vāsanākṣaya* (वासनाक्षय, destruction of *Vāsanās*) and *Karmāśayakṣaya* (कर्माशयक्षय, destruction of *Karmās*). This purified state is known as 'अन्तराय-अभाव' (*Antarāya- Abhāvaḥ*) in the present *Sūtrā*. This alone establishes the permanent Cure, ever lasting Peace and eternal Freedom, taking us beyond the transmigratory processing of Nature and assures Immortality.

The original *Yogic* formula is to discover the self through Self-research holding on to the only available instrument the mind. Apart from seeking his own end, he contributes much to the society and Nature, he is a darling child of Nature. He radiates Spirituality, Love and Peace. Apart from Spiritual significance, the philosophy of *Yoga* has a moral value and is of utter need in man's daily life. *Yogi* is an embodiment of morality, people derive inspiration, wonder at him. How people used to admire and surrender looking at the life of Sri Rāmakṛṣṇā! In his principles lies the foundation stone for a happy individual life and for better human relations on spiritual platform and collective peace. The basic *Yogic* dictum is सर्वेभवन्तु सुखिनः, सर्वेसन्तु निरामयाः, सर्वेभद्राणिपश्यन्तु, मा कश्चित् दुःखभाग् भवेत् । (*Sarve bhavantu sukhinaḥ, sarvesantu nirāmayāḥ, sarve bhadrāṇi paśyantū, mā kaścit duḥkhabhāg bhavet*) "May everyone be happy, may all be free from afflictions, may everyone witness good everywhere, let none encounter suffering".

Yogic path is not the path of isolation; isolation from *Prakṛti* is just for the Freedom of the Soul. There runs parallel the life and existence of himself and of the Universal body. His *freedom*

makes him wholly participate in it freely with ease and purity, keeps him unstained. Otherwise this *Yoga Sūtrā* would not have seen today's light at all. The principles established by collective Yogic philosophy are universal and provide full scope for overall development of man and advancement of all faculties of the mind for the welfare of mankind. Restrictions are during aspirancy, *Sādhanā*. He is made to grow through Yoga to such a state that he acquires the ability to stop at will all mental modifications and rest in absolute peace – called '*Yoga-Nidrā*'. His capabilities make him centered within himself or in God and remain quiet and pleasant at all times. It also quiets '*inner dialogue*' without effort. The fruit of *Yogic Sādhanā* is the ability to remain free from afflictions, to be in communion with the transcendental realm, since the *Yogi* knows to transcend the cognitive faculties, the perceptual world and the attachment to the body and the senses. *Yogi*'s mind is of habitual one-pointedness, undivided attention, perpetual peace and enlightened. The fast-paced, high-tech age on one hand, and the religious and political intolerance on the other, have set peace to pieces. In us is all the power, the Spiritual and the Divine. We must understand our latent potential and bring it out now. It is the time, the time for self-expansion, self-expression for re-establishing peace within and around us. That is the very purpose of *Sri Rāmakṛṣṇā Devā*'s advent to this world of mortals.

All physical sciences, however good they may look to be, tend to tear and divide man and mankind into many parts, it is Spiritual science the *परविद्या(Parāvidyā)*, the self-knowledge that unites; makes man and mankind into a whole. All differences dissolve when we as microcosms discover our relationship with the Macrocosm. It is absolutely necessary to analyse ourselves as *parts* to reach the goal. It is equally necessary to create a whole from these parts and to recognize one's own place in relation to all other beings, who are but similar parts. This is the purpose of *Īśvara -Prāṇidhāna* and *Pratyak-Cētanādhiḡamaḥ*. It destroys subjectivity, individualism, monopoly, importance to one's own interests which are evils, which close the doors of nobility and open-heartedness. It is most important factor in community life of a monk or of a renunciate. Community life demands unity in thought and in action. Too much of self-importance and over emphasis on individuality will degenerate itself into a sort of loneliness, self dejection and pessimistic attitude, especially with the advancing of age. *Sādhanā* continues through a long term, each one of us must get immediately rooted in God, the common platform for all to live in and attain.

When Patanjali composed the *sūtrās*, the *Nirguṇa (Advaitic)* and *Saguṇa (Dvaitic)* aspects of *Īśvara (ईश्वर)* were very much in use, the *Karma yoga* concept also was in vogue. The *Sāṅkyā-yoga* sect adopted these grand concepts to easily come out of the obstacles on the path to *Yoga*. Some took up straight to *Nirguṇa (निर्गुण)* ideal, some got to the *Nirguṇa Īśvara* through *Saguṇa Īśvara*. The *Saguṇa Īśvara* of *Sāṅkyā-yogins* is a calm, pleasant, loving and friendly Being filled with compassion, Knowledge and Renunciation in their absolute sense and moving one with the Pure Consciousness as if always leaning over It. The *Yogi*'s Ideal too is same, something like that of the *Śivā*. The contemplations involved in *Prāṇidhāna* is conducive to *Yogi* in every way. It is a combination of *Jñāna, Bhakti* and *Yoga*. It reflects in many ways the teachings of *Sri Rāmakṛṣṇā*. Imagine what would be the result of enshrining and constantly meditating on such an *Īśvara* Who belongs to all and all belong to Him. The *Yogin* develops an understanding and a feeling that he himself is in everything and everything is in himself, or in other words, the *yogi* himself is a manifestation of the *Saguṇa Brahman*, the *Īśvara* (see B.G. VI.30).

**In this world of mortals all things – every work, every action
happens only when there is mind.
On the other side, in our inner world,
the world of immortality, all things (Meditation, *Samādhi*, Visions etc.)
happen only when there is no mind.**



30

व्याधि-स्त्यान-संशय-प्रमाद-आलस्य-अविरति-भ्रान्तिदर्शन-
अलब्धभूमिकत्व-अनवस्थितत्वानि चित्त-विक्षेपास्तेऽन्तरायाः ॥३०॥
(*Vyādhi-Styāna-Saṁśaya-Pramāda-Ālasya-Avirati-Bhrāntidarśana-
Alabdhabhūmikatva-Anavasthitatvāni Citta-Vikṣēpāstē'ntarāyāḥ*)

“Illness/sickness, listlessness/apathy, doubt, delusion, sloth, non-abstention from sense enjoyments, false perception, non attainment of any definite *yogic* state or inability to climb to next higher plane, and slipping down from a state when attained — these distractions of the mind are the impediments to *Yoga*”

These impediments are true for all paths of all times and at all places specific to man where-so-ever he exists whether devoted to *Yoga* or not. We have known them now, we know their cause too and we know their remedy also now. They were all acquired by us effortfully through our negligence and misdeeds and supplied by Nature spontaneously. Our addictions to worldly life, worldly ways and worldly objects have cast an iron curtain on our divinity and have created deep grooves of *vāsanās*, the worldly tendencies, deep within our hearts. They are deeply carved grooves, we have to grind to erase them; if they were to be mere writings we could have dusted them out without a trace, but being grooves need grinding, each time we grind, yet a bit remains! They turn out to be the अन्तरायाः (*Antarāyās*) as we walk on the path of *yoga*. Our hearts must become a clean slate again with only *Om* written on it — this is the essence of तत् जपः तदर्थं भावनम् (*sūtrā* 28).

Mind can fluctuate under the influence of any one of these. Mind remains absolutely free from fluctuations only when they are totally extinct. They are foes of *Yoga*. *Japa* (constant repetition of Lord's name) contemplating on its meaning with love is said to be the remedy for all these nine obstacles; it is meant to root them out. They are mentioned in the order of their appearance on the progressive way to the Supreme goal of *Yoga*. They are like nine gates appearing one after the other in the same order. Once we cross over, we can go ahead to some distance when

we see the next one that we have to cross over in order to advance further. We shall briefly see through them so that we can cross over them with ease and confidence.

1. *Vyādhi* (व्याधि) : The first one is sickness: when body ails no spiritual practice is possible, especially concentration. *Sādhaka* can only call on God or perform *Japa*. It may directly kill illness or He will give the right understanding how to overcome it. He may bring us in contact with a good doctor or arrange for some means or timely by medicine to reach the aspirant. He is all knowing and all capable. Even mere faith can cure diseases. Most of our ill health or sickness are of psychological origin, especially of modern times. Tension, anxiety, fear, suppressed feelings and repressed conflicts do act adversely on body and health. Faith in God, love for all and compassion for the suffering resolves these internal problems and health is restored. One who truly loved God, does love all, loves himself too. Love of God saves us from self-pitying grief, taking refuge in self-assumed sickness, displays of weakness, physical inability, headaches etc.,. They are caused by the body and mind whose nature is to resist all unaccustomed disciplines owing to sloth or acquired tendencies. But when we attain *Sādhakatva* (true aspirancy) we shall see the table turned over and the same body and mind readily venture into any discipline while it shrinks at worldliness, anything that is not divine and spiritual.

We need good body, good health. If by chance there be some born defects or acquired deformation (accidental), or old age gripping, nothing to worry, let us cope up with it, by Lord's grace we all shall succeed. Some physical exercises, good habits nourishing food, hygienic living and cheerful mind can maintain a good health. There are some simple untiresome Yogic postural exercises which are part of *Hata Yoga* (हट योग). They tone up the whole physiological system and, energise mind keeping it calm and pleasant. We can choose some of them that suit us individually for our daily requirements. The mind which has come out of the vicious circle of 'gains and losses' can remain cheerful. Health and strength we seek is not for worldly enjoyments but are totally reserved for the spiritual struggle, the journey to the Eternal.

2. *Styāna* (स्त्यान) : *Styāna* is a kind of natural unwillingness. Mind always seeks newer and newer things, does not like strict disciplined routine which it feels a burden and a 'monotony'. A school boy has competency and capability to sit and study, but he generally remains inclined to play or watch a T.V. rather than to sit in corner and study. This mental trend is called *Styāna*. Convincing the mind of the Ultimate Goal, end product, the fruits that we reap at the end of *Sādhana*, that is the conquest over the Nature and attainment of the Everlasting Bliss and Freedom, not only makes us renounce this disinclination and unwillingness but also put forth all our efforts to attain it. Inspiring anecdotes, reminiscences of our senior adepts, and holy company or the company of an inspiring soul helps us to eradicate *Styāna*. In absence of all these, we need to intensely pray and do *Japa*.

3. *Samśaya* (संशय) : Having come out of *Styāna*, an aspirant finds himself encountered by doubts. The main cause of doubts regarding the spiritual matter is that the man tries to reason out the spiritual with the help of self made yardsticks. He witnesses, observes and understands a few laws of the world of matter and tries to apply the same reasoning to the world of spirit. With that we can no doubt analyse and understand only a few spiritual concepts, rest we have to walk on with faith. We must know that the spiritual realm is *beyond the thinking of mind*. That does not mean

that we should walk blindly; there is definitely a place for reasoning. It is only to form clear conceptions. Where as the reality is one unified whole, in which all things are interwoven—conceptual bits and pieces sum up to form convictions. Intellectual convictions are absolutely necessary to make us enter whole heartedly and dive into *Sādhana*. A competent *Guru*, preceptor removes every doubt of his disciple and infuses faith and confidence in his heart. In absence of such a *Guru*, if we earnestly seek, the help shall come. When there is need, where there is a demand or seeking, there is bound to be the supply, the Nature or God shall arrange for every bit of information needed without fail. It is an inevitable law.

4. *Pramāda* (प्रमाद) : *Pramāda* displays three meanings in this context : Lack of prudence, inadvertance and error. Not being careful to avoid undesired consequences is the lack of prudence. A young spinster devotee of Math at Bangalore, dedicating her whole time in spiritual practices was advised by Rev. Swami B– Mj. To devote small hours of everyday in some kind of service because without expansion of base through work and activities, spiritual heights cannot be scaled. Accordingly she started offering two hours of service to the nearby convenient, needy school for the mentally retarded children. A month later when the Swami came to know of it, he told her to immediately stop that work and to serve else where that befits spiritual aspirant. He wrote, “It is not a wise decision. It is alright for social workers and advanced *Sādhakās*. It will harm your spiritual life. You are like a tender plant that needs a fencing now. When you get firmly rooted in *Sādhanā*, you will be able to do any sort of work. Living with mentally retarded your mind tries to match with theirs and their behavioural pattern and becomes unfit for penetrating into spiritual realm. Be prudent in selecting the next.” Surely, she had taken the decision with a noble cause but was ‘*imprudent*’. This is *Pramāda*. Many a times we leave the essence but follow the instructions. The ritualistic worship of a Deity in a temple is an expression of love. The essence of worship is to love God, bereft of love it is but *Karma*. But most of the people perform worship, perhaps with all ritualistic perfection but without love, it is *Pramāda*. Doing *Japa* without *Artha* (अर्थ; contemplating on meaning) and *Bhāvanā* (feelings) it is *Pramāda*. There was a Sadhu who was exposed to the ideals of Śrī Rāmakṛṣṇa from his boyhood days. One of the important ideal of *Karma yoga* is to serve God in man, and to work renouncing the ego, as a mere instrument in the hands of God, and to offer every bit of work and its fruit to God. With this very ideal we all enter into the field of activity, of service. We are advised very often to keep the ideal bright and burning while working, negligence of which shall prove to be deadly poison. The sadhu too was fully aware of this. In our high spirits and enthusiasm we overlook this warning while working. It so happened that the sadhu was sent to a relief camp to rescue the flood affected people. Needs of the affected people was being supplied – food, clothes, temporary shelter etc.,. When after months the relief work was coming to an end, a victim committed suicide because all members of his household were carried away by flood. The sadhu was given to understand that the victim hanged himself to death using the cloth given by him. Hearing this news the sadhu lost his mental balance for ever. He was inadvertent regarding the warning that preceded the field of service and the principle that stands behind the *Karma Yoga*. This is *Pramāda*. If he was aware of his being an instrument, the fact and the theme that he has served the God alone in that man, if he had offered the work and its fruits to God he would not have got affected; in turn, irrespective of the consequence, he would have had his spiritual upliftment. Partially taking up an instruction is *Pramāda*, negligence or carelessness is *Pramāda*, indifference or irregularity in *Sādhana* under some pretext (be it a play of mind) is a

Pramāda. A devotee, a high official, used to visit President Mj. Each time he visits he used to prostrate with humility. Once he came with family and friends. He did not even bow down, it was a matter of prestige for him! To do a thing because someone is seeing or not to do a thing because others are looking at him, to give up one's duty or regular performance thinking what others would think of him is *Pramāda*, an error. Sw. Yatishwaranandji Mj. scolded a Brahmachari for not giving attention to studies. The Brahmachari felt insulted before all and did not attend to evening prayers and meditation. The swami called the Br. and told him lovingly "How is that because I scolded you, you have given up spiritual practices. This is called *Pramāda*. There is no hope for a man if he gives up his spiritual practices; he will be doomed. Don't do like this. You are my own child, I scold you for your good. Change your attitude and your ways. Then only you shall advance with quick pace." A devotee stopped his regular and daily worship and going to temple because he lost his son. These are examples of *Pramāda*. Non-performance, headlessness, absence of efforts, lack of enthusiasm are all *Pramādās*. We must be always alert, uncompromising, perform all practices with precision. We see this trend clearly in the life of Śrī Rāmakṛṣṇa. We must be wise to avoid dangers and accidents in spiritual path. We must seek Divine help and protection; that is to pray to giving up the ego in the same way as Thakur, who was entirely dependent on Mother for everything. Thakur used to say 'If you depend on God you have nothing to fear', 'if you trust a noble man, he will not harm you'.

5. *Ālasya* (आलस्य) : *Ālasya* is defined as "शक्तस्य कर्मसु अनुत्साहः" (*Śaktasya karmasu anutsāhah*) meaning , 'Being oneself capable in every way yet, lacking in spirit to exert or achieve.' Resources are stored within but there is no willingness to exploit them. This unwillingness to put forth one's efforts and capabilities, relaxing from perseverance, lack of determination to rush forward and achieve, lack of fortitude, a kind of disinterestedness to venture upon is *Ālasya*. Spiritual life is a life of adventure and spirit. There is the call for real strength, vigour and valour. Man must be up and doing. *Sādhaka* has to gird up his loins, laziness has to be shunned once for all. Swamiji's call to 'arise awake and stop not till the goal is reached' is to shun this sloth, this *Ālasya*. It is excessive *Tamas* that induces heaviness in body, and pleasure seeking induces heaviness in mind. we have to come out of this *Tamas* (inertia, lethargy) and pleasure seeking. We must have a clear understanding of human life and purpose. स्वाध्याय (*Svādhyāya* –studies and self analysis) on one side and तपस्य (*Tapasya*–austerities) on the other, help to overcome this *Ālasya*. Climatic conditions also can induce *Tamas*. We must remain more tuned to our inner world than to the outer world and its changing conditions. So that there is constancy in our *Sādhana*. Physical exercises are the must that keep the body fit and active. Certain food also can create *Tāmasic* tendencies, we must choose the food that keep our mind and body in a *Sātwik* condition.

6. *Avirati* (अविरति) : The human mind incessantly looks not for wisdom but for sense pleasures. It seeks freedom of senses but not freedom from senses. It is the identification with the lower self that makes the ego cling to the enjoyership (भोक्त्व-*Bhoktrva*) which continuously re-creates itself and keeps the consciousness perpetually bound to the lower channels of worldly enjoyments. This is known as *Avirati*. Feeling restless, fearing and guilt are its predominant emotions while the wanting or the craving instigated by *Vāsanās* is the motivating force. It is vicious circle in which *Vāsanās* drive man to enjoyment and enjoyments feed back and invigorate the *Vāsanās*. Desires never quench, with each enjoyment they multiply with higher and higher

magnitude and gusto. This unceasing drive is *Avirati*. It is inner thirst arising out of addiction to sense objects. By birth we are taught to be extroverts. No one directed our mind to our inner world. It has gathered momentum, and we are carrying the huge momentum of our previous lives as well. We have to stop this flywheel and reverse its direction. It requires tremendous strength. Man remains in an intoxicated state of self-forgetfulness being immersed in worldly occupations and enjoyments. Holy company intervenes to separate him from the tempting and binding world. Śrī Rāmakṛṣṇa advises us to seek holy company and to enter into solitude now and then. This awakens the perennial source of strength lying dormant within, develops taste for the spiritual ideals, and generates the power of discrimination, *Viveka*. They gradually and naturally dispel *Avirati*, just as the dawn dispels darkness of night. When craving for enjoyment falls below the liminal level, new awareness of one's own immaculate purity and divinity makes its appearance and pervades one's whole being. The aspirant experiences at this stage divine moods, often deep mystical moods. This escape from *Avirati* is one of major cleansing of the soul which is the necessary precondition for enjoying the bliss of union with God.

7. *Bhrānti darśana* (भ्रान्ति दर्शन) : is error in perception, a false understanding. They are unconsciously designed and projected by the mind to fill up the blanks in our always deficient sense of self through seeing or perceiving or experiencing something that is not true. It could be sometimes to place ourselves in a position of imagined superiority and thus strengthen our false sense of self, the ego. Through habitual mental judgement and emotional needs, we develop a reactive understanding of our spiritual practices and expect something unusual to happen. So, people get all sorts of mind-created “visions”, but they are not recognized as such because to the ego they are satisfying. The ego enhances while the real Self contracts through such reactivity and over emphasis on ‘experience’ or seeking quick progress. Actually, for a long time we move without positive ‘gains’. It is a period of emptying our old acquisitions. This is most difficult period when no progress is perceived, though maximum achievements — emptying old records takes place in this period. Once most of the emptying is over, the revelations of the True Self begin, genuine spiritual experiences are released. Before such a high state is achieved whatever we find on the way for example, experiencing effulgence or ‘bliss’ in meditation or having some so called ‘visions’ or gaining of a little supernormal power (which often leads a *sādhaka* to think that he has attained high states) are either projections of the unconscious mind or condensation of intense thoughts or the witnessing of a speck of the cleansing process. They are not true spiritual experiences but mental projections, though they are actually experienced. They are like the ‘waking dreams’ or ‘day dreams’. Sometimes an aspirant may get a spiritual experience even in the premature stage as a gift from Nature or God to strengthen the faith and intensify efforts. They are but green signals to ‘go ahead’ and it also indicates “you are moving in the right direction”. Thakur used to pray to the Divine Mother to bestow some spiritual experiences to his devotees. He would pray, “If you keep them in the world, Mother, then please reveal Yourself to them now and then. Otherwise, how will they live? How will they be encouraged if they don't see You once in a while?” (Gospel pg. 381). To know whether an experience is genuine or is mere *Bhrāntidarśana* we have to see its effects. A genuine spiritual experience transforms the entire personality of the aspirant, there is a radical change. His outlook towards himself, towards the beings, towards God are replaced by a new higher understanding. His attitude towards life entirely changes. His goal gets firmly grounded in his

consciousness. It opens the door to self surrender, love towards all beings and desire to serve God in Man.

If our love towards God is true, there cannot be any *Bhrāntidarśana*, for love is a sacrifice where there is no seeking, it is the essence of *Īśvarapraṇidhāna*. In the path of *Jñāna* there is denial of all dualities and there is no seeking. But there must be sincere unceasing efforts to transcend every stage. In the mind of one who holds on to truth, no falsehood can appear, there can never be a *Bhrāntidarśana*. We find this truth in Thakur's life. Swami Yatishwaranandaji Mj used to emphasise on studies of the sacred scriptures everyday so that false notions are cleared off and the mind may not play any fool or engage in self-deception.

8. *Alabda Bhūmikatva* (अलब्ध भूमिकत्व) : Non-attainment of any definite *Yogic* state or inability to climb to next higher plane. We remain rooted in our *Vāsanās*, the acquired latent tendencies, good or bad. Most of us are unable to enter into meditation because of their back pull. It is like rowing an anchored boat. How can we free ourselves from this deep-seated unconscious identification with that lower self caught in *Vāsanās*. We must recognize it, become aware of it. Then re-establish our Divine identity. Keeping our contact with this world only to serve, we have to close our accounts with it once for all. Past has got to be left behind like snake discarding its slough. New Divine 'I' must emerge out. I met a sannyasini who in her premonastic life had left behind her baby daughter and come away taking to monastic life. I asked her whether the thought of her left behind baby bothers her presently. She said, "I have buried my past never to reappear any time. The one who had given birth to the baby and lived as the householder is not this I. She is dead and gone. I am an entirely different person unrelated to her in any way. Now I know I am the child of God alone and nothing else". That is the spirit with which the *sādhakā* has to live. Once the lower bindings are released, the mind soars high. He gains ground (भूमि) for meditation, is able to climb to the higher and higher planes. The more free we are from *Vāsanās*, from the worldly tendencies, more easily and more spontaneously we do find the ground. Other possible cause of *Alabda Bhūmikatva* is the influence of the qualities *Rajas* (activity) and *Tamas* (inertia) of the Nature. Their presence either keep the mind restless or impart dullness rendering it incapable of finding the ground for meditation. It is external Nature controlling the mind. The Nature has its influence on every being, it has its own laws, ways and purpose to fulfill and is independent of *Jīvā's karma* and *Vāsanās*. We have to practice virtues like humility, truthfulness, and love for beings etc.. *Yama* and *Niyama* (II.30,32) are meant to transcend the influence of both internal and external Nature. To remain in an attitude of self surrender and cultivation of prayerful-attitude helps us to become independent of the influence of Nature and find the required ground.

9. *AnavasthiTatva* (अनवस्थितत्व) : The previous hindrance was our inability to enter into a particular state while the present obstacle is what hinders us from maintaining ourselves in it. Like a ball placed on a slope runs down, the *Buddhi* slips down from the state no sooner than a state is reached. This lack of stability to stay in any of the *Yogic* state is called *Anavasthiti*. This is the last obstacle in the path of *Yoga*. Repeated practices and continued efforts are the only way to overcome it. It is the ego in the causal form absolutely imperceptible that causes this instability. It is the same ego that had appeared, that felt itself independent of or different from the Absolute Existence, when it first appeared in the realm of the Nature. Again, now, it is the last that the *Jīva* eliminates to enter

the Ultimate, the Home, the Pure Spirit. This is how the ego comes into existence, constantly tries to maintain its false identity, always engaged in seeking something or the other in this world, finally ends its seeking in seeking its own self and dissolves in the real I, the One without a second, the *Pūrṇa* (पूर्ण). With it end all the fearings and wantings the *Jīva* was being tossed with. And its compulsive preoccupation with past or future too dissolves in this Eternal Present. There shall be no more stories, the fictions from which the *Jīva* was deriving its false sense of ‘Self’. It has at last proclaimed its Eternal Freedom — where there is neither past nor present nor future. The One Undivided Bliss. How foolish it was, lives after lives it was searching incessantly for peace, love, joy and freedom in this world of mortals! It has attained them in their absolute sense, and was within itself. It is end of the suffering, the state of Buddha.

All the above mentioned nine obstacles signify general weaknesses and incapacities of human nature. In the previous *Sūtra*, Patanjali assures us destruction of all these obstacles just by repetition of Lord’s name or the Om along with contemplation of its meaning and with feeling of reverential love. He honours and heartily advocates the ancient tradition of *Japa*, a common observance of all faiths. According to him it not only removes the impediments (*Antarāyās*—अन्तरायः) but is the entry pass for the inward journey too leading to the final stage (*Pratyak cetanādhigama*—प्रत्यक् चेतनाधिगम). So, we have nothing to fear. For every problem, for every disease we have medicine with us — the *Guru* given *Mantra*. When *Guru* initiates a disciple, he hardly knows what he has received. He has received the solution for everything, — for his life, for his attainment and all his problems and for his Freedom. With that small piece called *Mantra* he can transcend Nature and attain Immortality. At Kamarpukur a boy of eleven got initiated. I asked him whether he will be able to remember the *Mantra*. The boy with tearful eyes said, “Swamiji, what are you asking? Is there ever a possibility of forgetting the seed of Immortality?”. I felt myself small before that boy. He was brought up in the right way, with right understanding.

Prayer, *Japa* and remembrance of God (*Smarana*—स्मरण) can be practiced by one and all any time anywhere and under all circumstance. Nobody should find it impossible for him for whatever reason. We may be busy with compelling duties that we cannot go to the holy shrines to sit calmly and pray. But whatever we are we can at will intimately call on God. It is like possessing a mobile, nothing to worry if we cannot reach the land line, wherever we are, moving in car or sitting in office room we can call. The thing is we must know how to link ourselves to God. When we are physically engaged with some routine work, say sweeping or cleaning, we can give our minds to God. When mentally engaged, say writing accounts or designing a building, we can give our heart to God. Thakur gives the example of the one who has tooth ache; attends to all the activities but the tooth remains aching. I saw a young woman who had just then lost her husband. She was a working-woman, she used to go to the office, while at home attend to all household duties, all the while intense pangs would be continuously raising in her heart. That is giving the heart. We as *sādhakas* give our heart to God. Thus we can keep our link with God ever fresh. Whether we are in journey or in a market place or in office, we can pray, we can call on him, we can do *Japa*, we can maintain constant remembrance of Him in any of His aspects— with form, without form, with qualities or without qualities. By the power of the invocation of the name of God, the sacred *Mantra* or the *Om*, all that we do— every bit of our action through body, mind or speech — becomes an oblation into the Divine, and we would be training ourselves to the uninterrupted thought of the

Divine. Thus we manifest our inner Divinity. Through experience we gradually come to know that this is sole means of Salvation, the perfect state of *Yoga*.

When an aspirant through *Japa* or prayer or mere remembrance is able to dwell constantly on the Divine, he derives a deep satisfaction and great consolation that he feels himself blessed for ever, because lives after lives he has been wallowing in the mud of the world with scars of pain, wounds of the heart and stinks of deeds. All wounds heal, scars and stinks disappear, shackles break and the freed soul manifests purity and peace; he is able to hear the inner call. He sees the prayer/*Japa*/remembrance which he was forcibly doing is spontaneously emerging out of its own accord from within. Now, he is standing on a Divine platform in the same world, uninvolved, unstained like a lotus in the pond.

In prayer we move from frequent vocal prayer to mental prayer and then from mental prayer to the prayer of the heart which opens the Golden Gate to the Beyond. In *Japa* we have seen earlier (table on page 85) how we connect *Mantra/Om* to *Īśvara* and reach the Absolute through cosmic awareness. Instead of connecting to cosmic aspect of *Īśvara*, suppose we connect to the *Īśvara* as the indwelling spirit (*Antaryāmin*— अन्तर्यामिन्), then we take a slightly different course. When we speak or animals make sounds, *Vāk*, the speech, originates from the Consciousness, flows out in a strange way to reach the mind where it manifests as words and then flows out through the mouth as verbal sound. When it is emerging out from Consciousness it is called *Parā* (पर), while moving on its way to reach the mind it is known as *Paśyanti* (पश्यन्ति) and when it appears in the mind as words, it is called *Madhyamā* (मध्यमा) and finally when it appears as sound from mouth, it is called *Vaikharī* (वैखरी). *Japa* begins with *Vaikharī*, the oral repetition. Mind's nature is to move out in straight lines like light emitted from a source. *Japa* gives a tangential force to it and makes it revolve in a circular motion within itself, with God as its centre. As the absorption deepens the circle becomes gradually smaller and smaller to reach the smallest circle – and is called *Ekāgra* (एकग्र), one pointed. The mental repetition reaches almost an arrow-head targeted to the indwelling Spirit. Only *Mantra* to the exclusion of all other thoughts remains in calm recess of mind springing up in an unbroken succession. This mental repetition is at *Madhyamā* (मध्यमा). Persistent repetition with loving relationship of intimacy with *Īśvara*, the *Antaryāmin*, makes *japa* flow out from heart out of its own accord which when matured into continuous unintermittant flow is called *Ajapajapa* (अजपजप). At this stage the Silent Witness within, the *Sākṣhī* (साक्षी) awakens which is but the *Buddhi* in its pristine form on which the light of the *Ātman* is directly falling. *Japa* now leaves its subtle mental form and goes to its causal form of *Paśyanti* (पश्यन्ति) stage, it is same as *Varṇa–Kalā* stage at cosmic level (table 85). Still deeper absorption leads us to *Parā* stage of *Vāk* which equal to the *Bindu* stage. Reaching it the *Japa* the expands into the pure consciousness as *Nāda* and then becomes one with the Absolute, The Pure Consciousness (*Caitanya*).

What we have seen hitherto is the attainment part of *Japa*. There is another important part played by the *Japa*; that is the cleansing of the inner chamber. Whatever enters our inner chamber, the unconscious mind or what rests within as sub-liminal-impressions creating varied tendencies off and on, have entered through our hearts. Be it an anguish of fear or craving for pleasure or an impulse of hatred or desire to possess — it is what we intensely felt in the depths of our hearts or have experienced with deep involvement of the heart time and again earlier. Thus did we soil our

hearts with worldliness which now is creating unceasing worldly tendencies of materialistic life. Now we have to sterilize ourselves to save ourselves from the onrush of its infectious growth. The first thing is to tactfully abstain from all worldly contacts without hurting anyone's feelings. External contacts too have to be limited to mere continuance of life in this world and to serve others, without any compromise to the ideal. The second thing is to keep our body clean, tidy and fit through bath, physical exercises and proper food habits; keep it pure and unstained by not yielding to physical enjoyment like eating for pleasure, excessive sleep, sex and luxuries; the third thing is to tune our whole being to our spiritual existence through austerities and unceasing prayer or *Japa* and, to come in contact with our spiritual being through meditation. Prayer makes us stretch ourselves to the Divine within and the *silent prayer of the heart* helps us to pierce the Divine and tap out the Divine, while meditation helps us to enter into It. On the other hand *Japa* releases us from the clutches of our *Vāsanās* in a silent imperceptible way. Patanjali insists that *Japa* must be accompanied by *Artha* (meaning) and *Bhāvana* (love). Contemplation on the meaning brings the Divine to the top of our awareness. It serves to sublimate our secular personality into Divinehood. And the *Bhāvana*, love of God, impels the involvement of heart. When heart is involved, the purpose is achieved. Awakened heart can achieve anything it wants — it has the Power of Consciousness behind it and power of mind, intellect and body in its front. In this type of *Japa* there are three streams flowing (i) the stream of intellect projecting and illumining the progressive meaning of the *Om* or the sacred *Mantra*, (ii) the stream of love from the heart, (iii) stream of self-giving that accompany each repetition. The confluence of these three streams makes them flow together as a magnificent river of invincible spiritual force that invades and pervades the nooks and corners, the secret hideouts and tunnels in the inner chamber. It is Divine entering secret storehouse. It destroys many of the old stubborn tendencies and impressions (*Vāsanās*) and divinizes every bit of the *Vāsanās* that are left over. The desire to build a house would now make him build a temple or church. The desire to live with family and friends would now make him seek the company of devotees and holymen. The desire for name, fame and wealth would make him seek God. Śrī Rāmakṛṣṇa says “is the name of God an ordinary thing, it purifies body and mind”. Holy Mother says “*Japa* destroys bonds of *Karma* and releases the soul”. While at Kamarpukur I met a disciple of Holy Mother by name *Vāsanā Devi* who had the fortune of living with Her. When I met her she was in her 115th year of age! She said, she had once asked Holy Mother as to what was her path and what *Sādhanā* should she do. The Mother replied “*Japa* alone will do. Always remember the Master (Śrī Rāmakṛṣṇa) and be repeating the *Mantra*. *Japa* is the beginning, *Japa* is the means, the path and *Japa* is the end too. *Japa* carries man to the very gates of God, love makes him Enter”. To someone else Mother said “To the devotees who repeat Lord's holy name at all times unceasingly with love and faith, God keeps open His doors Himself; whether he knows or not, be sure he is sitting on His lap”. Rev Shantanandji Mj used to say “*Japāt siddhiḥ* (जपात् सिद्धिः)” “*Japa* alone is sufficient to reach the Ultimate Goal.” The only thing we need is unflinching faith and deep love backed by which the holy name must incessantly flow.

**Let us go forward! Let there be unceasing effort to master our field.
Let us always try to do a thing beyond what we have already mastered.
That is how we keep on advancing .
Let us hurry up, waste no more time, and reach the Goal, the Home,
before the great evening of life sets in.**



31

दुःख-दौर्मनस्याङ्गमेजयत्व-श्वासप्रश्वासा विक्लेषसहभुवः ॥३१॥

(*Duḥkha-daurmanasya-aṅgamejayatva-śvāsa-praśvāsā Vikṣepa-sahabhavaḥ*)

“Grief, dejection, shaking or tremours of the body, heavy or irregular breathing accompany the distractions caused by the above impediments.”

Grief (दुःख), despondency/low spirits (दौर्मनस्य), bodily unsteadiness due to despondency and grief (अङ्गमेजयत्व), taking in and expelling heavy breath or irregular breathing (श्वासप्रश्वास), are concomitants of mind distracted by the obstacles (विक्षेपसहभुवः) mentioned in the previous *Sūtra* .

Nothing could be more normal than dejection and grief when effortfull endeavour fails to give the desired fruit. The constant repetition Lord’s name — the sacred *Mantra* or *Om* — while forming mental picture of His various aspects, backed up by love is an unfailing powerful tool to ward off all obstacles to *Yoga*. Whenever we digress from the main stream, whenever we miss the track, obstacles appear to bring us back to the track, to remind us to be wide awake. When any obstacle comes it comes with one or more of its family and friends. They are these grief, dejection, bodily quivers and heavy breathing like a sigh of sadness. We must immediately know the purpose and jump back to the track with renewed vigour. There will be relapses, phases of struggle and period of dryness. Some impurities cause them. They come to remove these impurities and impart strength and wisdom needed to attain higher states. We truly seek the ultimate state of *Yoga*. So these things need not bother us much.

The *Īśvara* , the Lord we have known to be the embodiment of compassion and love for beings, we also know Him to be all capable, Omnipresent and Omniscient. We are practising *Sādhana* with self surrender, *Prāṇidhāna*. So, any time we can call on Him, imploring His grace and with an unperturbed calm mind we can proceed with our *Sādhana*. There is a Power that protects, serves, helps and looks after sincere *sādhakās*. It is the Power of *Īśvara* and generally termed *Vidyāmāyā*. When we implore for help and grace, it is this Power that intervenes and through intuition or otherwise help us to know the cause and remedy. The next *Sūtra* gives a general remedy for counteracting those effects of distractions, grief etc.,.

A positive attitude is a powerpacked unfailing escalator, it cannot be stopped by external forces. Mount it, it takes you where you should be.



32

तत्-प्रतिषेधार्थमेकतत्त्वाभ्यासः ॥३२॥
(*Tat-pratiṣedhārtham ekatattwābhyāsaḥ*)

“To ward them off, practice of concentration on a single principle/entity should be done”.

Abhyāsaḥ (अभ्यासः) The practise of concentration has to be done, *EkaTattva* (एकतत्त्व) on a single principle or any single entity that suits us and links us to the Ultimate goal *Pratiṣedhārtham* (प्रतिषेधार्थम्) to ward off *Tat* (तत्) the distraction that cause grief etc.,

Īśvarapranidhāna (surrender to *Īśvara*) and *Tajjapatadarthabhāvanam* (repetition of His ‘Name’ with meaning and feeling) are wholesome means to remove every obstacle in the path of *Yoga*. Yet, seeing there are different builds in mankind, and to give them the freedom to choose anything that suits the individual built, Patanjali advocates undivided concentration on any thing but one and only one thing, and that it should not be a diversion from the goal. Because it is not known what built of mind man would have in future or in ages to come. This *Sūtra* breaks the limitation one would imagine if he were to have constrained understanding of *Īśvara*, thus making it universal. The term *EkaTattva* is an important term in the *Sūtra*. तत्त्व=तत्+त्व; तत् means ‘That’ meaning the Ultimate Reality, our Ultimate Goal and our Real Nature, the *Puruṣa*. त्व means ‘—ness’ (as in उष्णत्व =hotness). So *Tattva* means “Thatness”. The term *EkaTattva* thus refers to the ‘principle’ that has manifested as objects of this world. Thus we may choose any object that suits our inner built and is in harmony with ‘law of our being’ (things that keep our being comfortable) but should be always indicating or depicting our Goal, the *Puruṣa*. Here only the format is changed but the meaning it conveys remains the same as *Tajjapa* (*Sūtra* I-28). We have seen earlier that *Om* represents everything from a blade of grass to the Absolute. So, *Om* is the easiest route for us.

Whatever might be the object contemplated upon — *Īśvara* or anything else — that should be taken up as the sole principle aiming to *Puruṣa*. एक (*Eka*) refers to ‘a single principle or entity or object of contemplation’ and also to one-pointed unwavering concentration, and is known as *Ekatattwābhyāsaḥ*. We have to stick on to one particular method, one particular path, one particular principle with unswearing tenacity: then that kind of concentrated attention is called the meditation on one principle. This type of meditation eliminates fluctuation of mind. Thought relating to God or the pure ‘I’-sense, the ever Divine I, is the best. It is very soothing, purifying and mind easily becomes tranquil. And afflictions do not perturb us.

We must know that the place where we are venturing to go, the realm of Spirit, to that place nothing of this world we can take. We have to all alone go as pure ‘Spiritual Beings’. If slightest ego or traces of desire remains we can’t get an entry. We can’t keep anything pending here either,

that I shall return and attend to. The *Prakṛti*, the world must become zero in us. The impediments or the distractions we face indicate that there is something pending, some dirt lingering. God must be the one unconditional refuge and shelter and nothing of this world, neither body nor our puny intellect.

Just two *Sūtrās* behind (I-30) we have seen each of the obstacles in detail — they, their cause, their effects and their remedy. Take for example pain and suffering during sickness; the restlessness caused by it and the longing to overcome it and regain normal health is drawing all the attention of the Yogin. More intense is the pain, more difficult it is to divert the mind from the body. We have seen in the life of Śrī Rāmakṛṣṇa how such a perfected Yogi as Totapuri himself decides to give up the body unwilling to comply with stomach ache, which is an obstruction to Yoga. Mind gets preoccupied with various thoughts which in itself contains an element contrary to Yoga. [This explains why the post-Patanjali Yoga picked up Hatayoga principles and gave such great importance to health of the Yogin, so much that it makes one forget the main purpose of *Yoga*. The treatises on, generally what they call now-a-days as Yoga, often give the impression that *Yoga* is mere health-care and body-fitness.]. Thus we see each of the obstacles causes mind to disperse, scatter and run hither thither in hundred ways. As a result there arises a constant flux of manifold and diverse thought-impulses, being the representations (*Pratyaya*) conveyed to the consciousness. [This can be called polyideism – derived from the word ‘idea’].

When mind strives to establish itself in only one entity, become unwaveringly fixed on it, the thought-impulse of this sole entity alone takes up the entire field of consciousness and prevents all other thought formations intruding into it. Infact this is what happens in every act of undivided attention [this is called monoideism.] : only one thought-impulse (*Pratyaya*) monopolises the consciousness in a more or less intense way, to the exclusion and inhibition of all other thoughts which could reach it. More intense it is, more is the absorption; intense absorption leads to ecstasy. Thus for example, in the case of sickness (as in the case of all other obstacles) by means of *Ekatatwābhyāsa* (monoideism fostered by *Abhyāsa*, practice) even the physical pain and sensations of disease do not reach the consciousness. We may call it “anesthesia of ecstasy” of the mystics. We vividly see this phenomenon in the life of Śrī Rāmakṛṣṇa during his last days of sickness, the throat cancer; every now and then entering into ecstasy (*Samādhi*) inspite of excruciating pain in the throat. Similarly mental discomfort, effects of external inflictions too can be overcome. What is necessary in Yogic path is an undisturbed, clean and clear mind. There is the implicit need of the serenity of mind at all times under all circumstances. The next *Sūtra* hints at maintaining the mind in such a condition.

**Success shall be ours when we can
look back in forgiveness
look forward in hope
look up with gratitude
and loop down in humility.**

We are truly successful when we have fully manifested our Divinity.



33

मैत्री-करुणा-मुदितोपेक्षाणां सुख-दुःख-पुण्यापुण्य-विषयाणां
भावनातश्चित्तप्रसादनम् ॥३३॥

(*Maitrī-karuṇā-muditopekṣāṇām Sukha-duḥkha-puṇyāpuṇya-viṣayāṇām
Bhāvanātaścittaprasādanam*)

"The feelings of Amity, compassion, delight and indifference cultivated towards the happy, miserable, virtuous and unrighteous people respectively imparts serenity of mind."

The mind remains pure, clear and, the serenity of mind too (चित्तप्रसादनम्-*Cittaprasādanam*) arises spontaneously from the expression of feelings (भावनातः-*Bhāvanātaḥ*) of intimacy (मैत्री -*Maitrī*) towards the pious and the happy (सुख-*Sukha*), kindness and compassion (करुणा -*Karuṇā*) towards the grief-stricken (दुःख-*Duḥkha*), delight (मुदित-*Mudita*) towards the virtuous/righteous (पुण्य-*Punya*), and indifference (उपेक्षा-*Upekṣā*) towards the unrighteous/demerited (अपुण्य-*Apunya*).

Mind has its natural reactive pattern of functioning. The Nature has built the human structure in that way. In every organism there are six characteristic features that binds him to Nature and are detrimental to spiritual unfoldment. They are the six foes of every aspirant — काम (*Kāma*; unquenching desires), क्रोध (*Krodha*; rage), लोभ (*Lobha*; greed), मोह (*Moha*; delusion), मद (*Mada*; egoistic pride, conceit), मात्सर्य (*Mātsarya*; envy, hatred). The above feelings counteract them not allowing to show their face wherever there is a chance of their occurrence.

These four qualities are not only meant to remove the imperfections in us. It has special significance in awakening our Divinity within and expressing it at gross physical level of day to day life of interaction with world and people. These are the divine qualities of a loving mother towards her children. She is happy when her children are happy, she is compassionate while children are in pain, she is delightful seeing the virtue, righteousness, nobility and greatness in them, and she possesses a benevolent indifference overlooking their faults and misdeeds, though she tries in every way to make them understand and correct. The mind of a Yogi who has cultivated these things lives in perfect harmony with external nature, pouring benevolence, love and blessing on one and all and thus his soul finds itself free from the shackles of nature and he is internally at peace. He can now being in the world with all others give himself entirely to his inner pursuit being in tune with the Divine, the Inner Spiritual Being, at all times while in solitude or otherwise. This saves every bit of his energies and the precious time, makes him move with faster paces.

There are two important channels through which man interacts with his external world — the heart channel of emotions and the head channel of intellection. In this *Sūtra* emotional stability is

aimed at. The following *Sūtras* deal with intellectual stability. When head and heart are stable the Yogi can shift his awareness from ‘*becoming*’ to ‘*being*’.

Self-mastery, Self-knowledge and Self-sacrifice — these three alone lead life to a sovereign supremacy and everlasting Bliss.



34

प्रच्छर्दन-विधारणाभ्यां वा प्राणस्य ॥३४॥
(*Pracchardana-vidhāraṇābhyām Vā Prāṇasya*)

“Or the serenity of mind arises from expulsion and retention of the breath”

By methodical exhalation (प्रच्छर्दन –*Pracchardana*) and methodical retention (विधारण–*vidhāraṇa*) of breath (प्राणस्य– *Prāṇasya*), the serenity of mind can as well (वा–*Vā*) be attained.

Here we have taken the word ‘*Prāṇa*’ to mean breath, as the common way the people understand. The actual word for breath is *Śvāsa* (श्वस). *Prāṇa* actually means energy. It has special reference to living beings to mean the energy that maintains life in an organism. There are two sources by which this vital energy, this life force, is gained and maintained — the food intake through eating and oxygen intake through breathing. By stopping food for a couple of days nothing much difference is felt except perhaps a little exhaustion. But, if breath is stopped for a minute or two, there is bound to be blackout and red-alert at every level of our being, the vital power (power that sustains life) itself getting strangled and trying to vacate the body for good. This vital-power or the vital force or the vital-energy is essential for existence and functioning of an organism, without which life cannot continue, and is called *Prāṇa*. *Prāṇa* is the energy-level in the body without which body fails. This *Prāṇa* is entirely dependent on breath, the oxygen we breathe in. Food is like fuel we supply to a vehicle. To convert that fuel into power which runs its engine, it needs oxygen for combustion. Through breath we get this oxygen for combustion of the food we eat. In any vehicle fuel alone is stored to certain limit and oxygen is not stored but continuously supplied through the air it sucks in. Similarly food we take is converted into “*fuel*” and stored in the body, and oxygen is continuously supplied through breathing for converting it into power that keeps the vehicle of our body running and functioning. Body contains stored energy sufficient to continue life for many days – as many as seventy days without further food intake. But it cannot keep the engine running (the life continuing) if supply of oxygen (breathing) is stopped for a few minutes. This extreme dependence of life-principle on breathing is utilized to control mind and its ways, to suppress matter and awaken the spirit and is called *Prāṇāyāma* (प्राणायाम). The dependence of life-principle on food (which is rather very mild when compared to breathing) is also utilized to calm down the senses through fasting which is a common practice in all Religions. But the Indian Yogis under the ‘Hindu’ banner discovered the functioning of various forces in the body including that of

mind to the minutest level, even to the subtle imperceptible level, in relation to breathing. They have formulated methodical way of controlling or restraining breath to regulate the functioning of mind and awaken its latent powers in order to transcend Nature and attain Freedom Eternal. This is called *Prāṇāyāma*. At the gross level *Prāṇāyāma* can be used to control the vital elements and vital functions at bodily level to enhance vitality, maintain good health or extend longitivity or cure diseases. This part is widely in vogue as a part of physical-*Yoga* not much related to spiritual end.

The *Pracchardana* (प्रच्छर्दन) – exhalation and *Vidhāraṇa* (विधारण) – retention is a technical term of *Yoga* and has a definite methodical way of performing it. *Pracchardana* is extremely slow expulsion of breathed in air; according to *Yogic* science it is slow release of breath extending through thirty two seconds (*Mātrās*). *Vidhāraṇa* is comfortable holding of breath as long as one can without straining nervous or circulatory system. We shall see the details after three paragraphs.

Wherever there is an action, movement or motion there is bound to be energy behind it : it is known as *Prāṇā*. Water from overhead tank flows through a tap, there is the waterhead, the potential energy in the stored water. Body functions, moves and works there is gross *Prāṇā* behind it, the physical energy, physical strength. Mind and senses too work, there is subtle *Prāṇā* behind them making them function. We enter into deep sleep where even mind is absent and wake up, causal *Prāṇās* are functioning there. At gross level gross *Prāṇās* serve, at subtle level subtle *Prāṇās* serve and at causal level causal *Prāṇās* serve. When we sleep and dream, gross *Prāṇās* are completely at rest and subtle *Prāṇās* are active. When we enter dreamless deep sleep (*Suṣupti*), subtle *Prāṇās* also quieten and causal *Prāṇās* alone remain watching over. Through *Prāṇāyāma* all these three levels of *Prāṇās* can be brought under control. In every particle and every cell of body there is *Prāṇā*, the stored energy. They are set in diverse directions, and engaged diversely to serve different purpose and functions in the body. Where there is diversity there cannot be concentration. For the purpose of attaining concentration these diverse energies are to be mobilized, stream-lined and directed to the heart, which is the core of our being seeking the transcendence of present state. And that purpose of streamlining and directing the diverse energies (*Prāṇās*) in our system is accomplished by systematised methodical breath control and is called *Prāṇāyāma*.

Controlling the inaccessible diverse *Prāṇās* by controlling easily accessible breath (knowing that neither of them can exist without the other) is, in fact, a process of black-mailing. It is like demanding from a father to fulfil certain conditions by kidnapping his son with a threat to kill him otherwise. Breathing being a gross physical activity, there is nothing of the beyond we get from it, because we are seeking Spirit which transcends all physical activities. Yet we approach it because through it we can control the *Prāṇās* which are subtle and invisible, which in turn can control the mind which is more subtler than these *Prāṇās*. When *Prāṇās* are diverse and diversely functioning, mind remains dispersed. When *Prāṇās* are stream-lined and are made unidirectional to serve a common divine purpose of attaining a peaceful state of transcendence, most of the *Prāṇās* rest peacefully leaning over the ‘heart’. Other *Prāṇās* engaged in life continuance activities like heart beats, blood circulation, respiration etc., function in perfect harmony and pleasant calmness that the whole body and the functioning of the entire physical system functioning becomes imperceptible to mind and mind remains concentrated on the spiritual entity undisturbed. Pure love of God, excessive love or emotion on a Pure Spiritual entity too brings about the same result.

The *Jīvātman* – i.e., the Self encased in the body-mind-complex is intensely attached to every level of its being — the physical bodily level, the vital (*Prāṇic*-energy) level that gets engaged in speech, activities and functions within the body, the sense level of perceptions, the psychic level of cognition and thinking, the intellectual level of knowledge, will and decisions, its transactional level and level of interaction with external world and environment for its survival and the collective existential level of our individuality. With this unit, the self is at all times in the search of the joy, peace and freedom; the world with its glitters is eluding him life after life. To attain everlasting peace, Bliss and Freedom we have to enter the realm of the Spirit. For that we have to unify all these levels of our being and direct them to one point, the centre, the core of our being from where we can slip into the realm of the Spirit. Just as, while entering into sleep, the self withdraws the whole being (all levels of our being) to one point and enter into the world of the Spirit. Even if one level or part of our being lags behind or dwells elsewhere, we cannot get a breakthrough. This unification and focusing to the centre is achieved through *Prāṇāyāma*¹. When breath is held every cell of the body reacts to it, all levels of our being at once ‘stand at attention’ with full military readiness. The best example of the state of *Prāṇāyāma* is a tiger in its final position to jump on its prey — its mind, one pointed; eyes and senses, one pointed; body position, one pointed like an aimed arrow; all faculties directed to achieve that one end, to devour the prey — nothing else shines in its mind. It is in that position, that state of undivided attention and of penetrating unification that we can dive within and break the thought barrier. A tiger first fixes its attention on the prey, carefully studies its movements and then fixes its right position. In a similar manner we too have to first fix our mind to our goal i.e., bring our ideal lively to our awareness, then the immediate goal to reach, there after fix the mind in a particular state with a definite attitude, rouse pleasant, pious smoothly flowing emotions of love and peace in the heart and then joyfully, cheerfully with enthusiasm begin the *Prāṇāyāma* to set the mind for practice of *Samādhi*. (If needed, to bring body to a steady position it can be preceded by bending the trunk (in the squatting meditative posture itself) forward as much as it goes then backward, then bringing to normal position and then bending rightward and then leftward, and finally coming to the normal position. Three such rounds will be sufficient. Then with neck fixed one may revolve the head clockwise and anticlockwise, each way five times. That is sufficient to bring the body to a steady position.) *Prāṇāyāma* practised without such mental state and fixation would get more disturbed instead of becoming calm. With every effort for regulating breath, mind should be maintained in such graceful state. Every inhalation must accompany a particular Divine thought that blesses oneself. *Śāstras* insist that the breath should be attuned to a conception of the Divine. Inhalation and exhalation with mind accompanied by the Divine thought alone calms the mind, not otherwise.

Prāṇāyāma for the purpose of meditation has three constituents — (i)² to keep the body *still* and relaxed in any convenient posture (ii)¹ mind to accompany some Divine thought that leads to

¹ *Prāṇāyāma* (प्राणायाम) = *Prāṇa* (प्राण) + *āyāma* (आयाम); *Prāṇa* = Energy that sustains life, *āyāma* = restraining in a definite prescribed way. The Seers have discovered various ways of restraining breath which regulate various nerve currents and divert the energies from all over the system to a common point to serve a definite purpose. Different purposes including preventing, checking or curing a disease are being served through various procedures, so also to enter into meditation.

² Sitting still consists of sitting firmly (preferably squatting on a *Āsana* on floor) but in a relaxed way with bones immovable as if they are locked. When we normally breathe our shoulders move up and down mildly, chest expands and contracts in a mild way. When we sit for meditation these movements are suspended, there should be none of these

absorption in Divine (iii) mild and slow measured way of breathing without affecting the stillness in the body. This is a beautiful way of synchronising body, mind and energies (*Prāṇa*) and tuning it to the Divine. In this method breathing moves so smooth there is no effort in taking or in breathing out. The main thing is that the body must get released of its presence in the awareness; i.e., the body awareness must be eliminated. To achieve it the whole body and the chest should be kept still and the inhalation and exhalation should be done by the very mild movement of abdominal muscles. At the time of exhalation the entire volume of the air within the lungs is not ejected. Lungs are allowed to retain some air. With each breathing only a *small* measured quantity of air alone moves in and moves out. And thus there will be always some amount of air retained within — this is the *retaining of breath* even while breathing — and is called विधारण—(*vidhāraṇa*— retention) in the *Sūtra*. Here the breathing and retention go together. This must be carefully mastered. Within a few days it becomes natural and spontaneous. During practise it has to been seen that body remains still and mind is freely resting in the Divine. This is the actual procedure for practise of meditation to transcend the physical existence entirely and enter *Samādhi*.



35

विषयवती वा प्रवृत्तिरुत्पन्ना मनसः स्थितिनिबन्धनी ॥३५॥
(*Viṣayavatī Vā Pravṛttirutpannā Manasaḥ Sthitinibandhanī*)

“Extra-ordinary sense perceptions produced can also cause firmness-bound tranquillity of mind.”

Uncommon sense perceptions (विषयवती प्रवृत्ति— *Viṣayavatī Pravṛtti*) produced (उत्पन्ना— *Utpannā*) can also (वा—*Vā*) cause firmness-bound (स्थितिनिबन्धनी— *Sthitinibandhanī*) tranquillity of mind (मनसः— *Manasaḥ*).

In the previous *Sūtra* we saw how serenity of mind required for practice of *Yoga* is attained through emotional stability. Next five *Sūtrās* 35 to 39 give us how it can be attained through stability (*Sthiti*) of mind in its intellectual-cognitive aspect. They all aim at the same end the चित्तप्रसादनम् (*Cittaprasādanam* preceding 33rd *Sūtra*) indicated by the particle *Vā* ('Or by'). Patanjali

movements. Small quantity of air is drawn in without moving body or chest and if needed held for few comfortable seconds and expelled very slowly without moving any part of the body. This slow, measured and mild way of breathing keeps both body and mind in a pleasant, totally calm and undisturbed condition.

¹ It can be *Om* itself being associated with various aspects of *Īśvara* or it can be a personal Deity with name and form, or the *Īśa Devata*. It can be God as the indweller. It can be the love and compassion of God that is taking us to Him. I met a Swami who was by birth a Muslim. He used to repeat the *Guru* given Ramakṛṣṇa *Mantra* and meditate upon Him as Greatest and Ultimate Power which can in no way be limited. According to him :- 'It is this Power, out of love and compassion for beings send time and again personalities like Mohammed or Jesus. It is this Power that manifests as Allah for Muslims, as the Father in the Heaven for Christians and as *Īśvara* for the Hindus, and can manifest Itself too in any way. Yet the Power remains unaltered. For me that Supreme Power is Ramakṛṣṇa. The Ramakṛṣṇa with name and form is His earthly manifestation to take us to our eternal Abode of Bliss and Peace'. It is an excellent balanced view of the Reality especially suited for a person born and brought up in alien culture. He had beautifully reconciled Allah and Ramakṛṣṇa dissolving the conceptual limitations imposed on 'God'.

is giving so many alternatives so that according to one's own nature the practitioner may pick up any one of them. It is not necessary to practice all these though all lead to the same end. We may pick up any one of those that suits us and we are capable of practising it and go ahead.

All these are the process of *Dhāraṇa* — withdrawal of mind from the external objects and fixing it on the inner Spiritual Entity. Previous *Sūtra* we entered through the gateway of emotional stability, in this *Sūtra* it is through the sensory and sensorial route.

There are some aspirants who have active sensorial (sensory apparatus including the nerve-system) base. In them when mind is withdrawn from external objects and fixed under conducive atmosphere¹ on the internal being, then within a few months of practise, it leads them to certain extra-ordinary sense perceptions like seeing unknown places, rare visions or hearing some strange divine sounds, or getting wonderful fragrance etc., which are either mystical or psychic origin. They being at mental or psychic and sensory level are not spiritual experiences. These self-developed (*Utpannā*) perceptions (*Pravṛttis*) are called 'विषयवती प्रवृत्तिः -*Viṣayavatī Pravṛtīḥ*'.

Many aspirants we hear reporting regarding meditation : "I never knew where I was, I clearly saw such and such things happening". What all they say refers to the sense objects शब्द (*Śabda*—sound), स्पर्श (*Sparsa*—touch), रूप (*Rūpa*—form), रस (*Rasa*—taste), गन्ध (*Gandha*—smell) within the range of time and space — thus they are called *Viṣayavatī* (relating to objects of senses). Being linked to the Divine, the range and capacity of mind extends to perceive uncommon higher sense-perceptions. Though they have no spiritual significance, being modification of purified and refined *mind* linked to the divine, they develop firm faith in spiritual concepts like God realisation, *Karma*, salvation, *Sādhanā* etc., they eradicate many common doubts. It encourage them in the path of *Sādhanā* and lights the lamp of hopes. They gain strength and wisdom that generates *Vairāgya* (dispassion) towards worldly prosperities. They do not depend on worldly supports of money, men and power. As a result they gain strength, faith, energy, divine awareness — and serene steady mind that helps concentration. Now the concentration backed by faith quickly develops higher insight and enhances the will which are the doorways to meditation. And this build up of mind arising from tiny extra-ordinary experiences is called स्थितिनिबन्धनी - (*Sthitinibandhanī*), the firmness-bound tranquillity.

With our normal capacity to concentrate (like that of the scientists while modifying a mobile or observing a life) we can derive such above mentioned super natural delightful perceptions. The usual procedure is to fix the mind on nerve end preceeding the sense organ, the eye, ear etc.,. With whole mind fixed on palate various colourful visions are experienced since the optic nerve is situated right above the palate. Concentrating the whole mind with undivided attention on the route of the tongue makes us hear various heavenly pleasing sounds since the route of tongue is the central point between the two aural nerves behind the ears. Similarly concentration on tip of nose for novel perfumes; tip of the tongue for marvelling taste; centre of the tongue where sense of touch is most developed, for thrilling sensations of touch. This practice is renowned as *Viṣayavatī* in Yogins' language. Fixing the mind on external luminous objects like moon, jewel, flame of a lamp etc is which produce some rare perceptions (*Viṣayapravṛttis*) is also a common practice. When mind

¹ They are practised by slow degrees for a fortnight or two first then intensified entering into solitude with meagre diet at a place where there are no interruptions and with undivided attention, concentrations on any sense objects as Divine.

reaches a *Sātvik* state and reveals supernatural perceptions transcending what is normally apprehended through the sense organs, is called *Pravṛtti*. Through *Viveka* or some higher experience or by Divine grace an aspirant is able to renounce the sense enjoyments, the *Pravṛttis* start appearing in that pure mind. *Pravṛttis* make the aspirant get established in *Vaśīkāra Samjña*. These special *Sātvik Vṛttis* (the *Pravṛttis*) is regarding external objective perceptions (*Śabda, Sparṣa, Rūpa, Rasa, Gandha*) then they are called *Viśayavatī*. If it is regarding inner “Light” it is called *Jyotiṣmati*, dealt in next *Sūtra*.

These *Pravṛttis*, however, show up in some aspirants possessing requisite ability. They lead to stability of mind which naturally develops an inclination to practice meditation. With unfoldment of *Vairāgya* (dispassion), it develops spiritual insight which is the prelude to *Samādhi*.

36

विशोक वा ज्योतिष्मति ॥३६॥
(*Viśoka Vā Jyotiṣmati*)

“Or, the perception produced by fixing the mind on Inner Light which is Radiant and free from sorrow, the serenity and stability of mind can be attained.”

From the external world of senses Patanjali is taking us to the inner world. Since these are early stages of *Sādhana*, the nature and inclination of the aspirant counts. Those who have extrovert tendencies may prefer the either *Sūtrās* and the introverts may find the present one comfortable.

This way of fixing the mind on *InnerLight* is called दह विद्या (*Dahra Vidyā*) in the Upanishads. Since it is impossible to conceive the *Nirguṇa* (निर्गुण) aspect of God, the One beyond the time and space through mind or intellect (mind and intellect can conceive only the ideas within time and space and not beyond; one has to cross the thought barriers to reach the beyond), scriptures such as Chandogya and Mahanārāyaṇa Upanishads instruct the aspirant to worship and meditate on Brahman as It can be conceived or appears in space and time, an entity endowed with certain attributes and dwelling in the heart of the man (and all other beings as well). The procedure of this kind of meditation and worship is restricted to seeking aspirants and maintained as something precious and secret.

In Mahanārāyaṇa Upanishad¹ the exact process — where to, how to and on what to meditate is being given : “There is a pure sinless (विपापम्-*Vipāpam*) ‘Lotus’ in man (in all beings) which is the residence of the Supreme. There too within that is a sorrowless space (विशोकम् गगनम्-*Viśokam Gaganam*) which has to be constantly meditated upon.”

¹ दहं विपापं परमेष्ठभूतं यत् पुण्डरीकं पुरमध्य-संस्थम् । तत्रापि दहे विशोकं तस्मिन् यदन्तस्तदुपासितव्यम् ॥ (M.U. 12-16)

Hindus (especially those who are in their primers and those who have not shifted their paradigm from religious to spiritual) worship God objectively in Nature or in artistically conceived and symbolised objects like idols or diagrams for the purpose of adoration as sanctioned by the authority of scriptures or rarely, one's own intuition. They aid constant remembrance and generate love and reverence in the heart and keep the ideal alive during activities and secular occupations. However, greater importance is attached to the subjective worship of the Divine which chiefly consists in contemplation on Him within one's own 'heart' or contemplation on one's own Divinity which is not different from Him. And the Spiritual Entity, one's own Divinity, 'the God within' is, for the purpose of identification, mentioned as The Effulgent Light, The sinless 'Lotus', the sorrowless space, the 'light of lights' etc.,. The underlying principle is this : since the Absolute (परब्रह्म) is unlimited by time and space, the *space* in which a man tries to come in contact with *It* is not of much importance. Whether it is small or vast or a mere point it matters not. It can be a small space within the heart or a tree outside or an image or a large mountain. He can be identified and accosted in core of one's own being, the heart, which is the easiest and direct method or can be invoked in any material object outside. Heart is where His presence can be perceived pulsating at all times under all conditions throughout the life. Because of it, the inner most core of one's own being, the space beyond the body and mind, where His living presence remains ever manifest is qualified as sinless, pure, effulgent and grief-less. Constant meditation would reveal Him in His true form. The other fact is that when the Supreme is approached through contemplation within one's own self, one realises the true nature of one's own self. And, knowing his true nature man verily knows that he is and all through he was sinless, pure to the core, his very nature is *Viśoka* (विशोक) – sorrowless ever Blissful. These two are the important directives of the Upanishads to know and think oneself as sinless and sorrowless (*Vipāpam* and *Viśoka*). It counteracts the very roots of his understanding and awareness which man, though he can as well discard, keeps it filled with a sorrowful tendency holding on to the sufferings and humiliations he has undergone and also forgetting the good part of life, hidingly preserves within it the acts of sins and misdeeds. It is the false ego that has generated this kind of false understandings. With this new way of thinking, new way of understanding, new way of meditation, he cleanses himself through and through thoroughly and sees himself standing on a new platform of purity and divinity loving himself and all beings. Constant fixing of mind on the effulgent, the ever pure sinless, ever blissful sorrowless Light within, his purified intellect gets illumined by the Light of *Ātman*. As the result there arises pure *Sātvik Vṛtti* (शुद्ध सत्त्व जनिता वृत्तिः) and is called *Jyotiṣmati*. It is *Jñāna Vṛtti* (ज्ञान वृत्ति) an illumined intuitive knowledge giving waves of spiritual joy and contentment — a world of joy without a trace of sorrow and of love without a trace of hatred in the purified intellect. This experience gives perfect mental stability, serenity and also dispassion towards the world. Now with peace he can go further.

There was an American Swami, a Christian by birth. Heartily accepting the Hindu ideal, became a Brahmachari, then a sannyasin and lived whole life as a Hindu monk. During the later part of his life he could be seen having attained great peace, his face was beaming with joy. Often with tears he would say "O! These Christians, they don't understand they are sinless, if they live clinging to their bodies they will know that they themselves are the Christ and they are one with the Father in the Heaven." At other time he would say "look at the Islam, how narrow understanding of Allah they have! They say Allah is the God Supreme, at the same limit Him! They don't understand a limited thing cannot be God! They don't even know nor accept that Allah can take any

form and appear!” He was a loving soul, loved by all. So went his life; the end did come. He was then in a hospital. A day before he left his body he wanted a Father from any church for confession. All were surprised; living as a Hindu, that too a Vedāntin, all through the life, when end is nearing he is seeking a Father for confession! He insisted, so a Father was brought from a near by church. Supported by a Brahmachari the Swami sat erect with same beaming face. In front of him the Father stood with a cross in his hand. The Swami wished him with polite words of thanks giving. The Swami confessed – “I was born a Christian. So, I want to confess my mistakes before I die too. Glory be to (*Jai*) Mary, Glory be to Christ, Glory be to Śrī Rāmakṛṣṇa, my Lord and the Lord of all Religions.” Then he said, “ Since my childhood till I became a Hindu very often I used to go and confess my faults and wrong doings. Now I know I never did anything good or bad. I feel sorry for having told a lie at the Alter of the Christ of having sinned during each confession. Now I confess all my earlier confessions were lies for I had never done any act at all. I am the pure Spirit, the Holy Spirit. Now having confessed the truth I am free from all guilts. With free mind I shall leave the world now. May Lord illumine all hearts and give the Light and Peace to all.” The Father had nothing to say except to show gleeful eyes of surprise. What would have been his experience that had brought about this divine awareness. Whether he had realised God or not, he had certainly seen his Inner Light. I am sure, any one who sincerely strives for realisation shall never be deprived of seeing the Inner Light at the least.

The best way to predict the future is to (effortfully) create it.



37

वीतरागविषयं वा चित्तम् ॥३७॥
(*Vītarāgaviṣayam Vā Cittam*)

“Or, the mind which has for its objects of meditation some person (an illumined soul) devoid of passion,— acquires serenity and stability of mind.”

An illumined soul who is rid of all desires and passion (वीतरागः—*Vītarāgaḥ*) is taken as the object (विषयम्— *viṣayam*) of mind for concentration (चित्तम्— *Cittam*) also (वा— *Vā*) gives serenity or stability of mind.

Patanjali has been touching the most sensitive spots that keeps the consciousness linked to the world. If any one of these strong links is broken, the rest can be overcome.

Unlike the mind of all other species in this world, the human mind is one full of passions and desires. It has great thinking power and power of imagination but finds it difficult to get into a ‘Self-centred state of being unattached and free. With the power of imagination and capacity to feel deeply, if the mind can simulate through contemplation the exact state or feelings an illumined Soul would have when his heart is completely rid of all desires and passion, then the mind experiences

great freedom from body, ego and the external world, and experiences a blissful tranquillity and perfect stability.

First we have to form a clear and exact mental assessment of what exactly is the heart or *Citta* free from attachment. Then the mind is set on its contemplation which results in absorption. Contemplation here does not mean to *think* about it. It is simply to know it, perceive it with subjective reference and hold it in our awareness. The inner essence then transmits itself to our inner being and awakens that principle ever existing within us. Same stillness, calmness, serenity and purity arises within us, the *Vītarāgaḥ* (person free from passion) emerges out of ourselves. Actually absorption creates identification of that principle which is our natural state. This identification builds up the identity with our higher self which has a direct link with our True Being. We sense how deeply we rest in the Supreme Being. Experiencing this we come to a place of rest deep within the perfect tranquil mind.

There is also the process of invoking a divine being, a god or a goddess or a holy personality within our own heart to pervade whole of our being. In this process we dissolve our personality and individuality and allow the divine personality to pervade our system. In *Pūja* (ritualistic worship), as a part of preliminaries we adopt this process and is called *Jīvanyāsa* (जीवन्यास) — The bodily existence is emptied of all tendencies (भूतशुद्धि—*Bhūtaśuddhi*) then the vital energy (*Prāṇa*), mind, intellect, senses are replaced by those of the deity we are worshipping. In our daily *Rāmakṛṣṇa Pūja* we replace all our inner faculties — senses, mind etc., — by those of Śrī Rāmakṛṣṇa. Thereafter we are obliged to think, feel and perceive and act in the same divine, pure and perfect way Śrī Rāmakṛṣṇa would do. This thoroughly cleans the system even at the subtle and causal levels. At gross level it crowns the Yogin with moral perfection that manifests purity and divinity in all his external dealings. At subtle level it imparts inner freedom of mind to rest on God at the will. At causal level will be washing down the old tendencies and wrong understandings.

If we were to come in personal contact with a saint, the first thing that influences us is his love and concern for all beings. The very next thing that draws our attention is his desireless state and passionless attitudes. Living in close contact with such persons naturally renders us desireless. A desirefree passionless mind can easily enter *Samādhi*.

Even the intensely passionate person full of desires and ambition can realise this truth that is standing as a principle in every being, provided the fact of its existence enters his/her mind.

Alexander the Great of Macedon (356 to 323 BC) was a disciple of the famed philosopher Aristotle. Three years from his thirteenth age he was tutored by Aristotle. At the age of eighteen he was taken by his father into his military. He succeeded the throne after his father Philip was assassinated, and as a king in 334 BC at the age of twenty two he invaded Persian-ruled Asia Minor. With that began a series of campaign lasting for ten years. Through a series of decisive battles conquered the entirety of Persian Empire, stretching Macedonian Empire from Adriatic Sea to the Indus river. His folly took millions of innocent lives. Every step of his covered miles of land with blood. Following his desire to reach “ends of the world and the Great outer sea”, he invaded India in 326 BC. Before he set forth for the conquest he proudly asked his preceptor (Aristotle) “what do you expect of me to bring for you when I return after conquering India”. The preceptor replied, “If

you can find a Master (*Guru*) who can remove your thirst for power and possession, please bring him with you.” But his violent temper, rash impulsive nature suppressed his calmer side, and with a sarcastic smile overlooked the warning of his master who had taught him philosophy, morals, religion, logic, art and medicine! The fiery temperament and weakness for alcohol made him forget his *Guru*, but his words had entered his inner conscience. Each wound would remind him of those noble words of wisdom. Eventually he was forced to return by the near-mutiny of his troops. He was severely wounded, pus oozing out of every wound. He had reached Babylon and his end was nearing. He was made to sleep on plantain leaf to avoid wounds sticking to cloth, and the whole body was covered with a cloth to save from flies. He was then just thirty two. His speech had stopped a few days earlier. When the final moments arrived, he stretched his hands out from the sheet covering his body and through signs he requested the attendants to leave the palms open so that ‘people will know the one who had conquered the greatest part of the earth is going empty handed. Let not the people fool themselves as I did.’ The last moments were the greatest emotional moments of his life, for, they brought him to the desireless state of mind; behind it were the words of his philosopher guide “search for the desireless that make you desireless.”

The principle that causes this conversion is greatest psychological truth — As one thinks so he becomes. Thakur used to say “Je jār dyān kore, Se tār satya pāy” — “जे जार ध्यान कोरे से तार सत्या पाव” “On whatever man meditate (or broods over) upon, verily that he becomes”. So, he would advise every one never to think of oneself as a sinner. Every Hindu is supposed to remember the sinless desireless sage from whom their clan originated it is called *Gotra* (गोत्र). How elevating it is to think of personages who have succeeded in riding themselves completely of all passion. Rev. Tapasyanandji Mj (Vice-president of Ramakrishna Math and Mission) used to say “Keep the picture of Holy Mother and of Śrī Rāmakṛṣṇa with his 16 direct disciples — you will remain unsmitten by desires, for, they are embodiment of renunciation and love, absolutely desireless”. Taking saints’ heart/mind purged of all passion, as object of contemplation, one attaches oneself to it and gets absorbed in it, then he assumes that very form. Thus by freeing itself in its turn of all passion, the mind acquires aptitude and strength to stabilize itself in the spiritual existence. I heard that Sw. Yatishwaranandji Mj used to advice those who have taken up meditation path seriously “when your mind is in *Sātvik* condition, it gets certain degree of absorption. Whenever you reach a state of deep absorption, boldly but politely present the qualitative image of Śrī Rāmakṛṣṇa, the Greatest Spiritual Ideal in the most clear and concrete way and submit yourself to undergo transformation. This will surely make you spiritually awakened in shortest period.”



38

स्वप्ननिद्राज्ञानालम्बनं वा ॥३८॥
(*Svapnanidrājñālanbanam Vā*)

“Or, a dream experience or the experience of deep sleep can be the support or object of meditation, for attaining serenity and stability of mind.”

Or (वा –*Vā*) a dream experience (स्वप्न–*Svapna*), the experience of deep sleep (निद्रा–*Nidrā*) can be support/object of meditation (आलम्बनम्–*Ālambanam*) for attaining serenity and stability of mind.

The sages of India focused their attention on God and realities of life. They honoured life and nature. Any technology or development or advancement that harmed Nature or risked life, however beneficial to mankind be it, had no sanction or encouragement. They had witnessed the various dimensions at cosmic and individual levels — both, of the inner world and of the outer world.

The present *Sūtra* takes a different stand point altogether, it is an extremely common day to day experiences of every *Jīva* which neither belong to waking state experiences nor promises material gain, at the same time no being can totally avoid it — the sleep and the dream experiences. These two states have no validity from the standpoint of mind in the waking state in which we are accustomed to reason. But has deep significance, relevance and validity from the *Jīva*'s (the individual soul's) standpoint. From the *Jīvātman*'s standpoint they are all valid states of experiences. From the cosmic standpoint they belong to three different dimensions the gross, subtle and the causal states of existence. The individual soul is as if mounted on a wheel that pass through three states — the waking, the dreaming and the deep sleep — in each state it is in tune with a particular aspect of cosmic existence : the gross, the subtle and the causal aspects. Both at cosmic and individual level, the causal existence extends itself through the subtle and pervades it; and the subtle existence and the causal existence together extend through the gross existence and pervade it.

Since the three states are experiences of the same soul (*Jīva*), its knowledge, understanding and memories can be reflected upon in the mind at the waking state. The same mind and *Buddhi* which in waking state are reflecting upon the experiences of dream and deep sleep, were present in active and passive states in the dream state (*Svapna*) and deep sleep state (*Nidrā* or *Suṣupti*) respectively. And therefore those experiences too can be used as objects of meditation. Patanjali brings them into the field of meditation because they are direct experiences and are therefore better than imagination. The pleasing spectacles seen in a dream or rare and unique dream experiences beyond the range of mind to imagine, or any divine and unearthly experiences of dream (*Svapna*) can be made the objects of concentration of mind. So also the peace experienced in deep sleep or the ever welcomed joy of deep sleep (*Nidrā*) where ‘I’ am all alone without a second in my own bliss can be made the object of meditation. The utilization of dream and sleep experiences for meditation purpose is called *Ālambanā*. We usually leave the dream and deep sleep part of life and

take only waking state as true and complete. But they are parts of our life; we spend nearly half of life span in dream and sleep! Through this type of meditation, though for a short period, say two or three weeks, we find internal unification and is called ‘dimensional unification’. Life in one whole, when life is viewed in that way, it finds convergence of all basic power.

Dreams are free expressions of our inner trend where hypocrisy and craftiness are absent. There is neither the emotional blockage of self-imposed limitations caused by external factors. So, dreams express more of our real nature and our inner status. After a year or two of spiritual struggle or scriptural studies or contact with holy personalities the inner most self tries to express itself through the tough surface of *Vāsanās* like the germinating seed cracks hard earth and shows its face outside. The Religious ideas and spiritual ideal remain stored in our unconscious. So also the hidden desires. In dream they express themselves freely. The good, noble and spiritual projections in dream being close with our higher self, meditation on them imparts calmness, serenity and stability of mind easily in a most natural way. One more important advantage of contemplation of those positive elevating dream experiences especially those pertaining to the Divine (the experience being unguided by reasoning mind), it breaks down mental logic and ego-bound way of reasoning which common features of a thinking mind, but nevertheless pushes the spiritual goal far away.

As far as the experiences are concerned, their recollections produce certain sentiments in us. The recollection of any experience to rouse the sentiments is called *Ālambanam*. Other things that help to enhance these sentiments is called *Uddīpanam* (उद्दीपनम्). When at Bangalore a boy came to me and told that he had a dream in which he saw Śrī Rāmakṛṣṇa playing flute standing on the peak of a mountain. He said, “I was thrilled, I ran to the mountain but I could not climb it. He saw me helpless and struggling. Then he threw the flute to me, I caught it, then I saw him slowly climbing down without stepping on the mountain. When he reached me I was beside myself with joy, I fell at his feet I woke up.” I told him not to disclose it to anyone but to ‘sit silently somewhere and with a calm mind bring the whole incident to mind in the same way as if it is happening in your presence and meditate on that Blissful Form at least once a day.’ A week later he came and said he does not get that mood everyday and that he finds it difficult in recollecting the incident because mind picks up a thing and runs elsewhere. I told him to light an incense stick, put on the fan to give a soft breeze and put on fine flute music mildly playing a bit far off, say in the next room and then begin the meditation. He did, and he succeeded. The dream incident was the *Ālambanam* for his meditation. The incense, the breeze and music were *Uddīpanam*. When *Ālambanam* is explicitly told, the *Uddīpanam* is implied. We can take the help of anything that assists our concentration and meditation.



39

यथाभिमतध्यानाद्वा ॥३९॥
(*Yathābhimatadhyānādvā*)

“Or, by meditation on whatever appeals and found agreeable to one’s mind,
the serenity and stability of mind can be achieved.”

Or (वा-*Vā*) whatever (यथा-*Yathā*) one thinks to be the best (अभिमतम्-*Abhimatam*), by meditating on it (ध्यानात्-*Dhyānat*) one can attain serenity and stability of mind.

Patanjali is going by systematic steps to lead every type of *Sādhakā* to the Goal. He gives vast openfield and complete freedom to select any that appeals one’s mind. But we cannot haphazardly select anything and everything. Our selection must suit our ideal, our system, our path and our goal. Presently people have developed a fad for meditation and it has given way for a many spinning business for purveyors. All that people seek is some peace and relief from stress and strain of the modern world. They neither want their worldly life be hampered, they want the means should not interfere with their other activities including sense gratification and worldly indulgences. So vendors have emerged, floating varieties of tailor-made techniques of meditation within the purview of everyone’s purse and catering to the individual whims and fancies of the clientele etc.,. Patanjali’s licence to choose is without compromise to the ideal and goal, demanding total undivided dedication to it. In selection we have to be lions and not foxes.

In selecting any object let us always see that it is directly connected to the Divine. Then let it be not connected to mundane but to the spiritual or transcendental. If we are to go quality-wise then some supreme quality capable of manifesting or revealing divinity be there, like — *Tyāga* (त्याग) – renunciation, *Prema* (प्रेम) – self-less love, *Samarpaṇa* (समर्पण) – uncompromising dedication, *Pavitratā* (पवित्रता) – purity, *Sevā* (सेवा) – selfless service etc.,. In its existential aspect let it reflect immortality, eternity, immutable indestructible etc.,. Places to be included must have association with Divinity — like Kāshi, Brindavan, Dakshineshwar etc., places sanctified by saints and holy men. Traditional Deities, Holy personalities, Divine Incarnations, Prophets and saints are most suitable for early beginners.

Any such thing agreeable to oneself or other entities appealing to mind and congenial for the purpose of meditation can be taken up. Because of one’s own liking and choice, both mind and heart can be set upon it with ease and soon it acquires tranquillity and stability. Having practised stabilising *Citta* first in this way, we have to slowly move forward to gain stability on subtler aspects of Reality, i.e., on some *Tattva* (तत्त्व), principle. It has to be clearly borne in mind that *Samprajñāta Yoga* (सम्प्रज्ञात योग) is stabilization on some *Tattva*, not on any mundane object. Having mastered *Samprajñāta Yoga*, then alone we can aspire for *Asamprajñāta Samādhi* (असम्प्रज्ञात समाधि), there is no other way to reach it.

Patanjali uses the term *Dhyāna* in the *Sūtra*. *Dhyāna* is an act of diverting the whole attention to one single object. This concentrated attention to single object for maturing into spiritual experience must have a spiritual base and a spiritual link. So all external objects are excluded. Whether it is material object (image or tree or a person) or mental reality (an idea or symbol) or content of an experience (a meeting with a saint, Moments of life where total sacrifice or unselfish divine love was experienced, any spiritual visions or while serving someone intense presence of God was felt etc.), is felt and visualised within the heart in pure spiritual background as manifestation of the Divine or the pure consciousness *Caitanya*. To avoid intrusion of alien thoughts, it is extremely united to the sacred syllable *Om*, symbol of the Supreme Reality in which all material and physical existence dissolves without a residue. Here in name and form are used for the mind to concentrate and dwell upon; The Divine, the Consciousness, the Spirit is the essence, the goal and the end. The Name and the Form are added to release our mind's grip on Nature. By removing the name-form concept from mind, we remain Ourselves more fully; name-form had reduced us to become bodies, diminished to become 'natural', through their elimination again we raise to *be* the spiritual — it is what we are even now at the deepest level. Whatever thing we take as an object for meditation, it remains supporting the process till we reach this Consciousness; taste, choice, good, better — appears to make a lot of difference when we see the beginning — but really they do not matter, for, anything can take us to That. That is why Patanjali mentions (यथाभिमतम्—*Yathābhimatam*) “as one wishes”.

Many times path tread is more beautiful than the destination reached.



40

परमाणु-परममहत्त्वान्तोऽस्य वशीकारः ॥४०॥
(*Paramāṇu-paramamahattvānto'sya Vaśīkārah*)

“From the minutest to the infinitely large is such mind's range of concentration.”

Of such a mind that has attained serenity and stability through one or more preceding methods (अस्य—*Asya*), the power to contemplate, concentrate and meditate (वशीकारः—*Vaśīkārah*), ranges from (अन्तः—*Antah*) the minutest (परमाणु—*Paramāṇu*) to the infinitely large (परममहत्त्व—*Paramamahattva*) entities.

Having full Self-realisation as their aim, the Indian philosophies have dealt with mind as distinct from the Self, but related to it by close bounds. Infact it functions being illumined by the light of the Self, the *Ātman*. On the other side mind is intensely bound to the world through senses and its power to think, opt and act. In *Yoga* mind is compared to a stream of unfathomable depth of which only the modifications of the surface in a limited way are intelligible, these are called *Vṛttis*. Perceptions, experiences, conscious and unconscious ideas etc., come to the focus of consciousness and pass into dark unmanifest condition and remain in potential form to feed upon mind when proper conditions form. In their potential state they are called *Vāsanās* and their active functioning

or spent-up condition is called *Samskāras*. The whole fabric of *Yoga* system rest upon the theme that the mind stands mediating between the Self and the non-Self, the *Puruṣa* and *Prakṛti*; anihil mind, then they separate. To ultimately achieve that end of *Puruṣa*'s freedom, mind was taught and trained to be serene and steady. Through that the mind has acquired the super normal power to reduce itself to the minutest level and expand itself to infinitely large level. That means it has learnt to remain independent of *Vāsanās* and *Samskāras* lying within its bossom. By practice of remaining serene and steady, it has overcome its monkey-nature of being always restless and jumping from thought to thought. Now mind has acquired the nature of intellect, the *Buddhi*. With a little effort and practice, mind can get merged in the *Buddhi* and begin the inward journey. This unique *Sātvik* condition of mind is called the *Vaśīkāraḥ* or complete mastery.

This is the acme of stability and serenity. *Citta* having developed the capability to hold on to any object with ease without hindrance from micro to macro limits with perfect tranquillity and stability, it is said to be under total control (*Vaśīkāra*). This marks the end of practice for *mind control*. The *Paramāṇu* is minutest particle which defies further sub-division and *Parama-mahattva* when refers to the inner world is the all pervading consciousness (Pure I-sense), and externally something (of the collectively standing infinitely large body of things) like universe with marked greatness or largeness. The practice of meditation on an *object* terminate at this point, the mind needing no further cleansing. For, the cleansing needed for concentration of mind on an object is over. Further purification is for attaining the objectless concentration.

Great is he who conquers others, but the one who conquers himself is supreme, the unsurpassed; the former is praised, the latter is worshipped.



41

क्षीणवृत्तेरभिजातस्येव मणेर् ग्रहीत्-ग्रहण-ग्राह्येषु तत्स्थ-तदञ्जनता समापत्तिः ॥४१॥

(*Kṣīṇavṛtterabhijātasyeva Maṇer Grahīṭṛ-grahaṇa-grāhyeṣu
Tatstha-tadañjanatā Samāpattiḥ*)

“When mentations (*Vṛttis*) get weakened (lose their strength and power to appear), the mind attains such stability and transparency like that of a pure crystal, being itself unaffected illumines the object of meditation occupying and pervading and accommodating it in itself, displays total oneness with it, with respect to the cognizer, the instrument of cognition and the object cognised (meditated upon) — this oneness or identification is called *Samāpatti* (समापत्ति).”

When through *Ekatattvābhyaśa* etc., the mentations get weakened (क्षीणवृत्तेः) and mind attains stability, transparency and clarity (*Abhijātasya*— अभिजातस्य) like a pure crystal (*Maṇeriva*—मणेरिव), then whether the objects of meditation is : grasper/meditator (*Grahīṭṛ* – ग्रहीत्) himself Or it is the

process/instrument of grasping /meditating (*Grahaṇa*—ग्रहण), or it is an external object (*Grāhya*—ग्राह्य) — (remaining itself unaffected like the crystal) accommodating the object of meditation within itself pervades and occupies it (*Tastha*— तस्थ), and illumines it by displaying total oneness with it (*Tadañjanatā*— तदञ्जना); this stainless flawless identification is called “*Samāpatti*”.

When through *Īśvarapraṇidhāna* (unconditional surrender) and *Ekatattvābhyāsa* (concentration on single object) the mind attains complete mastery/total control (*Vaśīkara*— previous *Sūtra*) then the mind stabilises itself. Thereafter the intensity of concentration and depth of absorption carry within them the gradual elimination of all mental process. What remains is only a single *Vṛtti* pertaining to the perception of the object on which the Yogin has been concentrating. This state in which alien *Vṛttis* prompted by *Vāsanās* lose their strength and power to appear in mind is called *Kṣīṇavṛttiḥ* (क्षीणवृत्तिः). Such a mind, extremely *Sātvik* in nature, is being compared to a supreme crystal. A pure crystal has three main properties (i) stability — does not undergo any change in itself, (ii) accommodates the features (colour, qualities, nature etc.,) of the object presented before it, (iii) and reflect them as if they are its own. Here the crystal-hood is brought in as an example to explain that structure of mind, inspite of the fact that *Sūtrās* demand strict economy of words. To give a better and clear picture of what he wants to convey through it, Patanjali uses two words *Tastha* (तस्थ) and *Tadañjanatā* (तदञ्जना). *Tastha* is the habitual disposition of mind to be in itself or to remain where it is placed as a part of meditation. As a result of the foregoing meditation techniques mind acquires this stillness and stability, it is no more under the sway of *Vāsanās* now, it has become pure and stable as a crystal or glass prism. *Tadañjanatā* is, acquiring the features and nature of a thing presented to it reflecting it as if it is its own without undergoing any change in itself and without identifying itself in any way with the object. When mind becomes perfectly clear and stable it loses its ‘mind-hood’ and acquires the ‘crystal-hood’, and thus illumines the object of meditation, accommodating it within itself without undergoing any change. Same calmness, same stillness, same uninvolvedness it retains with every object it meditates upon. Ordinary mind is a constant unstable flux. Itself changing every moment, takes the form of the objects appearing within its range; getting mutilated and re-appearing taking a new form every moment! It is like clay or cloud changing its shape, form and colour every moment successively to depict a drama or an event. This process is called *Tadākārita*— तदाकारित (*Tad+ākārita*=mind taking the form identical to that of the object) *Vṛtti* flow. As antithesis to that stands *Tadañjanatā* wherein the purified and stabilised mind behaves like a pure crystal to illumine the object meditated upon within itself without taking the form of the object or undergoing any change. The best example is T.V. or computer display screen (called LCD— Liquid Crystal Display) that clearly displays anything and everything with absolute perfection and utmost precision without undergoing any change in itself. This is *Añjanatā*. This stage indicates an important phase in which mind has acquired the capacity to separate itself from the object, and to remain aloof and uninvolved in its immediate presence. Here we find the *Jīvātman* placing its first step towards the attainment *Vivekakhyaṭi*. [*Vivekakhyaṭi* is the highest discriminative faculty that manifests in the Pure-Buddhi (The Spiritual Intellect) which bears the capacity to separate itself from the Light of *Puruṣa*, leaving the latter alone to Shine.]

Once the mind has acquired stability, serenity and clarity it can grasp the true nature of anything that is presented to it; its crystal-hood gives it the power of scanning through without

getting affected. Knowing that as long as mind and *Buddhi* exist, The *Puruṣa* cannot be realised, no attempt is made to approach *Puruṣa* directly. Instead attempts are made to annihilate the mind and intellect by gradual process of withdrawal to higher and higher levels of one's own being, through gaining true knowledge of the principles (*Tattvas*) involved in meditation.

The process of meditation consists of three segments : the meditator, the object meditated upon and the process of or the instruments of meditation. They are respectively called *Grahītr*, *Grahaṇa* and *Grāhya*. [Since the Yogic meditation is a process of grasping, holding or perceiving, the term related to grasping are used – *Grahītr* grasper etc., instead of *Dhyātr* meditator etc., : Yogic meditations are *Prakṛti* oriented, to discard Her and attain *Puruṣa*, where as Vedantic meditations are *Caitanya* oriented to transcend *Prakṛti* and attain the *Caitanya*.] To acquire subtlety and move towards *Puruṣa*, the meditation are aimed first to external objects (*Grāhya*), then to the subtle instruments of meditation themselves (the senses, mind and intellect = *Grahaṇa*) and finally to the meditating egoic self, the *Grahītr*; we move from the outwardness of external objects to the extreme inwardness of the pure sense of I.

Be it gross or subtle or the 'I' sense or any other abstract thing, when the mind attains purity, clarity and stability, it acquires a unique capacity to acquire the exact status of the object of meditation without undergoing any change in its structural existence i.e., its 'crystal-hood' – i.e., it no more acts as 'mind' but a transparent illuminator of the object of meditation to the extent of revealing its true nature. This unique state in which 'the pure crystal – mind' acquires the exact status to reveal its true nature is called *Samāpattiḥ*.

The word *Samāpattiḥ* is derived from the root 'पद्'–*Pad* (*Gatau*; गतौ=to go to, to attain to) समापत्तिः=सम्+आ+पद्+क्तिन्। (*Samāpattiḥ*=*Sam*+*Ā*+*Pad*=*Ktin*). The root पद् with prefixes सम् and आ gives the meaning — 'to assume', 'to take or put on oneself / itself', 'to attain to' or 'to acquire'. Here referring to sutra the term *Samāpattiḥ* gives a clear cut meaning: 'acquiring the status (features and qualities) of the object of meditation'.

Where as, *Samādhi* is firm and perfect placement of mind on the object of meditation; i.e., mind getting merged in the object of meditation, thus acquiring its immediate knowledge. In contrast to it, *Samāpattiḥ* means, mind while preserving its crystal like state, illumining in itself the object of meditation revealing its true nature. Suppose I want to carve out an image of a horse from a crystal block, I foresee the horse in that crystal block and then cut and remove the rest of the portion. Suppose, let us imagine the portion of the horse alone is getting illumined brightly while it is still in the block state, It may be compared to the state of *Samāpatti* — the crystal block is mind and horse is the object of meditation in *Samāpatti*. We may take another example : An hollow glass image of a saint which has a hole in it is immersed in water. Water enters, pervades and occupies the entire image without getting itself affected in any way. Now we can see the image distinctly and clearly in that crystal-like water, being pervaded and occupied by water and being displayed within itself without getting affected in any way — this is an example for *Samāpatti*.

The 'object' of meditation/concentration and the *mind* are two different entities. They appear, to the Yogi who is experiencing *Samāpatti*, as if they are non-different, unified or amalgamated on account of the total absorption and deep concentration of his crystal like mind. At

the same time, just as the pure transparent crystal does not undergo any modification by the fact of ‘taking the colour’ of the object presented to it, the mind too does not get modified on being absorbed in the ‘object’.

Samāpatti is just refined *Samādhi*. In a nut shell if we are to say roughly — the *Samādhi* is mind merging itself in the object of meditation and *Samāpatti* is the object of meditation merging in highly refined *mind*. So, the result being ‘illumination’ of the amalgamated unit of ‘mind’ and its ‘object of concentration’, by the Light of Consciousness, they can be used as synonyms for all practical purposes. Through this Patanjali indicates that after having the purity, clarity and stability of mind (crystal-like mind), in relation to the three segments involved in the process of meditation/concentration, there can be three possible resultant *Samāpattis*. (Although *Samāpatti* is to be practised on the underlying principle of the universal objects or beings, the *Tattvas*, we start with gross objects and then gradually move to the subtler.)

(i) Focusing the meditation on any of the innumerable objects of the world— like pot, tree, sky or the physical body — we attain *Samāpatti* pertaining to gross level of existence and is accordingly called – *Grāhya Samāpatti*.

(ii) Focusing on the instruments involved in meditation – (senses¹, mind or buddhi) – we attain *Samāpatti* pertaining to subtle level of existence and is accordingly called — the *Grahaṇa Samāpatti*. [*Grahaṇa* also means the process of meditation itself, in that case the focus is on how meditation/concentration is taking place. Generally speaking, the term *Grahaṇa* designates the act of attaining knowledge, process of the perception in its four aspects – sensorial, mental, emotional and metaphysical perceptions (experiential) during *Samādhi* etc.,]

(iii) Focusing on the pure ‘I’ sense². We attain the *Samāpatti* pertaining to perceiver’s individual existence and is called *Grahītr Samāpatti*. Through the modification ‘I am the Experiencer/Seer’, it acquires the resemblance to the ‘Pure indwelling Spirit’ (*Puruṣa*); this has led to its being called *Grahītr*.

In this *Sūtra* the general traits of *Samāpatti* are given, details of its types are given in the following *Sūtra s*.

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Every physical existence has its inseparable counterpart — a spiritual dimension which we are not aware of. That is the *Essence*, that is the thing we are to know. That is standing as the unifying force for the diversity of this universe and of all beings.

The universe and all beings are *One* at the root.



¹ By senses we do not mean the physical organs in the body – like the eyes, nose etc.,. They are mere outposts. Senses are the inner individual powers (underlying forces) that cause vision, audition etc., *Grahaṇa* at sensorial level is reception of form, sound etc., which takes place at the physical organs and then cognized by the mind. Any of these cognized knowledges we may practise to meditate upon.

² It is that ‘I’ in which all knowledge and feelings like ‘I know’, ‘I do’, ‘I am experiencing’ etc have their ultimate moorings. All modifications of the mind evolve from it, and it serves as their receptacle too.

तत्र शब्दार्थ-ज्ञान-विकल्पैः सङ्कीर्णा सवितर्का समापत्तिः ॥४२॥
(*Tatra Śabdārtha-jñāna-vikalpaiḥ Saṅkīrṇā Savitarkā Samāpattiḥ*)

“Therein (referring to previous *Sūtra* , i.e., in the state of *Samāpatti*) when the object of concentration/meditation is gross object, and the absorption in it is mixed up with the awareness of its name, meaning (qualities) and knowledge based on conceptual understanding, then it is called *Savitarkā Samāpatti*.”

There (*Tatra*-तत्र) i.e., while experiencing *Samāpatti* state (transcendental enlightening absorption) when the knowledge of the object of meditation is mixed up (*Saṅkīrṇa* – सङ्कीर्णा) with word defining the object/name (*Śabda*), its meaning (*Artha*) and the resulting knowledge (*Jñāna*) and, is based on conceptual understanding (*Vikalpa*), then that state of the (crystal like) mind in absorption is called *Savitarka* (Conceptual fixation) *Samādhi*.

The word *Tarka* in ancient times bore the meaning ‘mental conception or thought with the help of words’ (Presently it means ‘logic’ or ‘argument’ or ‘supposition’ etc.). *Vitarka* (*Viśeṣarūpa-tarka*; विशेषरूप-तर्क special form of *Tarka*) means knowledge acquired through word and meaning especially at gross level of sense perception. When in the knowledge gained in *Samādhi* if there is *Vitarka*, i.e., its pertinence to name/word quality/meaning etc., then it is called *Savitarkā Samāpatti*.

Word (*Śabda*) always carries meaning (*Artha*) with it, on reaching the mind knowledge (*Jñāna*) dawns, the knowledge of what it is. The whole thinking process is based on these factors. The three factors *Śabda* (word or name), the object indicated by it (*Artha*) and knowledge there of (*Jñāna*) — are distinct entities, different from one another. But generally the word/name, the object indicated and the mental picture of the object are identified with the knowledge of the object, because of their interdependence and interrelatedness. From the empirical stand point the *Śabda-Artha-Jñāna* (name-object-knowledge) pertaining to gross objects is not *Vikalpas*, but *Pramāṇās* i.e., they are based on true objective experience. Yet, the uttered word, its meaning (the actual object) and the mental image produced by the word, though distinct and separate are conceived to be and accepted to be one and the same entity — this mental abstraction is called *Vikalpa*. This process being unavoidable persists in the meditation also. When the *Sādhaka* fixes his mind on gross material objects like a tree or cow, the *Vikalpa* base presents itself in the process of contemplation, and as he attains *Samādhi*, if the ensuing insight as knowledge exhibits similar semantic base, then it is called *Savitarkā Samāpatti* (as being assorted through *Vikalpa*). This is one way of understanding ‘*Vikalpa*’ and ‘*Savitarka*’.

There is another way of looking at *Vikalpa* : From the stand point of the meditative process. *Dhyāna*, meditation involves *Śabda-Artha-Jñāna* of the object on which the mind is fixed. The object taken up though being gross material, is not true objective experience but a mere mental conception, as far as the process of meditation is concerned. On the other hand, the goal of meditation which is the real nature of the object expected to be realised through *Samādhi* is not

immediately perceptible. So the word-object/meaning-knowledge (*Śabda-Artha-Jñāna*) involved in meditation is not a *Pramāṇa* but a *Vikalpa*¹. Yet this has a purpose, and is a step to the higher state of realisation. A Yogi who wants to realise the true nature of subtle principles underlying gross objects may begin meditating on some gross object. A devotee seeking to realise God in the form of *Iṣṭa Devatā* may begin meditating on the picture or an image of the *Iṣṭa Devatā*. All begin with their conceptual knowledge gained from books, lectures, reasoning, imagination or hearings etc., we may call it '*Kalpita Artha*' – *conceived meaning*. However, on reaching *Samādhi* through it, the object alone shines – but illuminating the same knowledge – the conceptual '*Kalpita Artha*'. It is not true nature depicting the reality. The Holy Form of the *Iṣṭa Devatā* shines forth – clear and luminous as if living but it is not 'real' *Iṣṭa Devatā*, the living God we are seeking. This *Vikalpa* based *Samādhi* Patanjali calls *Savitarkā Samāpatti* – because it is retaining the same preconceived 'name/word-from/meaning/qualities-knowledge' — the conceptual knowledge. This is only the first stage, we have to go further. *Samāpatti* is of four types *Savitarkā* (सवितर्क), *Nirvitarkā* (निर्वितर्क), *Savicārā* (सविचार) and *Nirvicārā* (निर्विचार). *Savitarkā* is being analysed because it is a stage we pass through, and is to indicate its difference from *Nirvitarkā*. Infact there is no need to direct meditation to the acquisition of knowledge in respect of ordinary things like tree or a cow. The main purpose of *Samādhi* is to gain knowledge of the *Tattvas* (their subtle aspects, their underlying principles, their inner hidden nature) through which *Vairāgya* (dispassion, detachment) is developed gradually leading to the attainment of *Kaivalya*.

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Not knowing our true Divine nature has created a mind-made ugly self as a substitute for our beautiful ever-divine immortal being and has made us to cling to the fear-stricken needy self.

“May Him illumine our path to reach the Truth.”



43

स्मृति-परिशुद्धौ स्वरूप-शून्येवार्थ-मात्र-निर्भासा निर्वितर्का ॥४३॥
(*Smṛti-pariśuddhau Svarūpa-śūnyevārtha-mātra-nirbhāsā Nirvitarkā*)

“When the memory is purified, the *Samāpatti* state of mind appears as if being devoid of its own nature, and the object (on which *Samāpatti* was attained) alone remains illumined and, this state is called *Nirvitarkā Samāpatti*.”

¹ *Vikalpa* is pure ideation : knowledge projected in the mind by words which lack material co-relate. They are objects conceivable by mind without anything tangible to senses. In one word – conceptual knowledge without corresponding material object but serves a practical end.

Memory having got purified (*Smṛti parśuddhau*—स्मृति-परिशुद्धौ), the *Samāpatti* state of mind appears as if being devoid of its own nature (*Svarūpaśūnya iva*—स्वरूपशून्य इव) and the object alone (*Artha mātra*—अर्थ मात्र) shines forth (*Nirbhāsā*—निर्भासा) and is called *Nirvitarkā* (निर्वितर्क).

Having successfully attained *Savitarkā Samāpatti*, one is expected to continue the practices devoid of words, meaning conveyed by them and the conceptual knowledge the mind carries in its memory regarding the object. The object now without ‘*Śabda-Artha-Jñāna*’ is taken for practice of meditation. Without these what conception would mind be holding then? It is like a week old baby looking at an object, free from all conception – object alone. That is we are getting rid of *Vikalpa* associated with the object. Now, when one succeeds in attaining *Samādhi*, it is bound to reveal the true nature of the object, since there is no participation of mind intellect and ego in any way. The object alone shines. When the aspirant holds the object with the unconditioned vision of a new-born baby, the ego too dissolves and mind too loses its ‘mindness’ in *Samādhi* and this experience of absence of the observer is called “*Svarūpaśūnya* (स्वरूपशून्य)”. And in that state the object alone shines forth untarnished by the participation of the observer. Then the true nature of the object ‘*as it is*’ is revealed and pure unalloyed form and its real nature gets embedded in the knowledge emerging from that experience. And this is called *Nirvitarkā Samāpatti*. Pure transcendental knowledge dawns in that pure mind.

The knowledge of the gross object on which *Nirvitarkā Samāpatti* is attained is the highest truth in respect of that particular object, because all senses are at rest and there is no *Vikalpa* either.

Earlier we have seen and known that in our everyday life most of the knowledge is based on the real objects and are *Pramāṇās*. Our meditation on our chosen Ideal (*Iṣṭa Devatā*) is, however, *Vikalpa* because we do not see the real *Iṣṭa Devatā*’s form. Further, in the *Savitarkā* also we saw how the Holy Form Shines forth – clearly and luminous as if living, but not the ‘real form’, the living God Himself. But now here in *Nirvitarkā Samāpatti* when the real object shines in its true nature, we see beyond all doubts, The God manifested as the *Iṣṭa Devatā*, the chosen Ideal in all His divine Splendour. With this all doubts regarding the existence of God, His Grace and compassion, His power to manifest in any form, His transcendental aspects etc., etc., get cleared. At least ‘God/*Īśvara* and His ways cannot be limited’ this much the aspirant experiences. As a part of *Īśvara-praṇidhāna* to whom was he calling upon, the aspirant gets a direct experience. Yet it is mere glimpse of God!, because we are yet at ‘gross-level’ of the *Nirvitarkā Samāpatti*. Regarding other general gross entities, the true genuine insight into their very root of existence is gained, then they are distinctly realised as mere grossified perceptions of – *Śabda*, *Sparśa*, *Rūpa*, *Rasa* or *Gandha* (vibration that cause sense perceptions like sound, touch, light or sight, taste and smell). Such knowledge is always firmly established in the mind engrossed in *Samādhi* because of its one-pointedness (*Ekāgrata*) and deep transcendental enlightened absorption. When *Citta* is engrossed in such knowledge, transcendental insight that dawns initially, gets associated with words (of course, after repeated experience of *Samādhi*), for example ‘This is *Ākāśatattva* (आकाशतत्त्व)’, ‘This is *Tejastattva* (तेजस्तत्त्व)’ etc., Or as ‘this is my Lord, my eternal Lord, the Love Incarnate, the *Iṣṭa Devatā*’, ‘This is the *Īśvara*, my eternal refuge’ etc.,. The spiritual insight oriented analysis of all material object shows that these are hollow like the trunk of a banana tree a mere aggregate of base-elemental-monads in the form of Pot etc., They are but identical mutations of *Tanmātrās*, through

permutations and combinations they have formed into many objects of the world. Even the bodies of living beings are perceived thus. This revelation is called the *Arthmātra Nirbhāsa* (अर्थमात्र निर्भासा). Besides, the knowledge of their being mere causal substance, {as *Tanmātrās* or as *Guṇās* (*Satva, Raja, Tama*), the qualities *Prakṛti*}, the knowledge dawns that these mutations and their aggregates display particular nature of their own, like — the assemblage of monads as stone follows its own nature, as butter or as plant follows its own nature. Although material objects are known to be assemblages of monads, they are never known or treated as such, in the sense that a pot is called and perceived as pot and used as a pot alone and not as assemblage of monads. This accounts for the difference from the causal substance. Each object has a particular formula for its manifestation and is a part of Nature's plan of creation. Mutations are made to manifest by an appropriate cause — the existence of innumerable *Jīvās* (souls, *Puruṣās*). Thus emerges assemblages of monads and, when a retractive recoiling force triggers up, they break up into monads and merge back into the causal substance. This reverse process is called dissolution; it is not total annihilation. The whole universe with various planes of existence is the collective whole of composite units of gross and subtle entities evolved from one common atomic substratum. As a complete entity, complete in itself every way, this universe has the characteristics of mutability, uncertainty, impermanency, and though for *Jīvas* it seemd to have some value and usability for their mundane purposes, it has a beginning and an end. This direct knowledge makes him totally detached from the gross external world. All glories, enjoyments and prospects appear to be meaningless or child's play. This makes him advance further on the path to *Kaivalya*.

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Contemplation on Divine cuts us off from that Power which compels mundane life. And concentrated absorption on Divine makes us reach The Supreme.



44

एतयैव सविचारा निर्विचारा च सूक्ष्मविषया व्याख्याता ॥४४॥
(*Etayaiva Savicārā Nirvicārā Ca Sūkṣmaviṣayā Vyākhyātā*)

“By this (through the two forgoing *Sūtrās*) the *Savicārā* and the *Nirvicārā* states of transcendental-illuminated-absorptions (*Samāpattis*) pertaining to subtle objects are also deemed to have been explained.”

By this (i.e., through the details given in the previous two *sūtrās*) *Etayā* (एतया), the *Savicārā* (सविचारा) and *Nirvicārā* (निर्विचारा) states of transcendental-illuminated-absorptions (*Samāpatti*— समापत्ति) are also (*Eva*— एव) deemed to have been explained (*Vyākhyātā*— व्याख्याता), the only difference from the *Savitarkā* and *Nirvitarkā Samāpattis* explained earlier is that those were pertaining to gross objects and these pertain to subtle objects (सूक्ष्मविषयाः— *Sūkṣmaviṣayāḥ*).

Here Patanjali brings about homological relation between the two sets of *Samāpattis* — the earlier one pair regarding the gross objects and the present one pair regarding the subtle objects. From this the conclusion is drawn that all that has been said regarding the previous two (*Savitarkā* and *Nirvītarkā*) states applies to the present two (*Savicārā* and *Nirvicārā*) states as well. Though the approach, process and final illuminating revelations of truth behind the pairs are identical, the former pertain to the gross level of creation governed by laws governing the gross matter with its comparatively limited existence, while the latter pertaining the subtle level is governed by the law of Nature concerning the subtle creation which pervades entire creation with unlimited existence and pervasion within this vast Creation. The gross world is like our waking state and the subtle world is like our dream state, in which we live in an entirely different dimension wherein the entire gross Creation is absent. Or their difference is like the hardware and software of computer. When we speak through a tiny mobile in hand, how vast and pervasive is its imperceptible functioning to reach a far off person. When we speak to an astronaut on the moon with a small table-size transmitter unit, a sphere extending in radius more than the distance of moon from earth is pervaded by electro-magnetic waves carrying the information! Such is the vast difference between gross and subtle, e.g., body and mind — depth of the body is visible, depth of mind is unfathomable. Thus, in this sense we can see there is vast difference between the realisations and states experienced in four types of *Samāpattis*. The *Samāpattis* referred to in the present *Sūtra* i.e., *Savicārā* and *Nirvicārā* are highly refined and illuminating. Earlier in *Savitarkā* and *Nirvītarkā* we saw the two possibilities — with and without the limitation of ‘word, meaning and knowledge (*Śabda-Artha-Jñāna*)’, where as in the present (i.e., in *Savicārā* and *Nirvicārā*), being pertaining to the subtle realm, we again see two possibilities—with and without ‘time, space and causation (*Deśa-Kāla-Nimitta*) in addition to ‘with and without— word, meaning and knowledge. In this sense we have to accept the existence of hierarchical difference of gradation among the four types of *Samāpattis*, and they are presented in the *Sūtra s* in the order of their progressive advancement, each leading to the next.

Let us see what way we can understand *Savicārā* and *Nirvicārā* based on the same lines applicable to the two previous *Sūtra s*. Those previous ones were with respect to the gross (*Sthūlavīṣayaka*) and these present ones are with respect to subtle entities (*Sūkṣmavīṣayakās*). The gross are those that are perceived through senses or conceived by mind depending on previous sense perceptions (e.g. none of us have seen *Buddha* but can concretely conceive his form based on our experience of having seen men all through). The subtle are those that cannot be perceived by senses but can be inferred or experienced by mind; e.g. mind and senses themselves, qualities like good, bad, peace, happiness etc., or the subtle parts of the matter—the elements or the principles like *Agnitattva* (elemental fire/fire principle: i.e. the *Tanmātrās*) or even the I-sense. However, for the purpose of practice of the subtler aspects (*Savicārā* and *Nirvicārā*), we may begin with objects of which the qualities or properties are evident, directly apprehended by our senses (without the help of information from scriptures/books etc., or inferences) and within the time and space limits, so that the mind may easily conceive and get firmly fixed. Then gradually enter their subtler aspects.

There are two types of *Vikalpās* (awareness of other extra informations associated the object of meditation other than the ‘object’ in itself): (i) *Śabda-Artha-Jñāna* (word, meaning and knowledge), (ii) Time-Space-Causation (*Kāla-Deśa-Nimitta*; काल, देश, निमित्त). The ‘time-space-causation’ *Vikalpa* is not mentioned in the previous *Sūtra* (in *Sūtra* 42) because it uniformly

remains in both of the earlier *Samāpattis* as their common imperceptible substratum. But it totally disappears in *Nirvicārā* state mentioned in the present *Sūtra*. Therefore, though not explicitly mentioned in the *Sūtra*, we have to add this aspect of *Vikalpa* also here as being implied by the use of the term ‘subtle object-*Sūkṣmaviṣayā*’ in the *Sūtra*.

If we construct the two *Sūtra s* actually in lieu of the present one, it would be:

(i) शब्द-अर्थ-ज्ञानैः च देश-काल-निमित्तैः विकल्पैः संक्लीर्णं सूक्ष्मविषया सविचारा समापत्तिः । (*Śabda-Artha-Jñānaiḥ ca Deśa-Kāla-Nimittaiḥ vikalpaiḥ saṅkīrṇā Sūkṣmaviṣayā, Savicārā Samāpattiḥ.*)

“When the object of meditation is subtle object, and the absorption in it and the intuitive Knowledge there from is mixed up with the awareness of its name, meaning and knowledge as well as time, space and causation, then it is called *Savicārā Samāpatti*.”

(ii) स्मृति-परिशुद्धौ स्वरूप-शून्येव-अर्थमात्र-निर्भासा निर्विचारा । (*Smṛti-pariśuddhau Swarūpa-śūnyeva-arthamātra-nirbhāsā Nirvicārā*)

“When the memory is purified (i.e. devoid of ‘name-meaning-knowledge’ and ‘time-space-causation’ awarenesses), the *Samāpatti* state of mind appears to be devoid of its own nature, and the object alone remains illumined then, this state is called *Nirvicārā*.”

The meaning is quiet clear to us being in the similar lines as of the previous one, which has been explained in detail earlier.

Let us remind ourselves— that the aim of all this is to reach *Puruṣa*, the Pure Consciousness. We should not get entangled in the maze of words.

When we fix our mind on a particular subtle object (Say, *Vāk*, speech, or sense of touch, or quality of greed etc.) and attain *Samāpatti* through calm undistracted concentration, the prolonged one thought of the object to the exclusion of all other thoughts, gives a clear ‘illumined’ knowledge of the object (of course, ‘as we have conceived it’ and not as ‘it is’), and accompanied by the awareness of its name, and qualities and also the understanding of time-space-and causation [as ‘now’(the time awareness¹), ‘here in front of me’ (space awareness²), this is an object (a ‘product’, effect of a cause³: causation awareness)]. Such *Samāpatti* on subtle entity in which the illumined understanding is mixed-up with the awareness of its name and qualities (‘word-meaning’ *Vikalpa*) limited to space, time and cause (*Deśa-kāla-nimitta vikalpa*), is called *Savicārā samāpatti*.

When, on continuing the process further, the mind attains higher purification, in the sense that it transcends the present *Savicārā* state by losing the awareness of space (becoming unconditioned by space), of time (going beyond the three phases of time: past present and future),

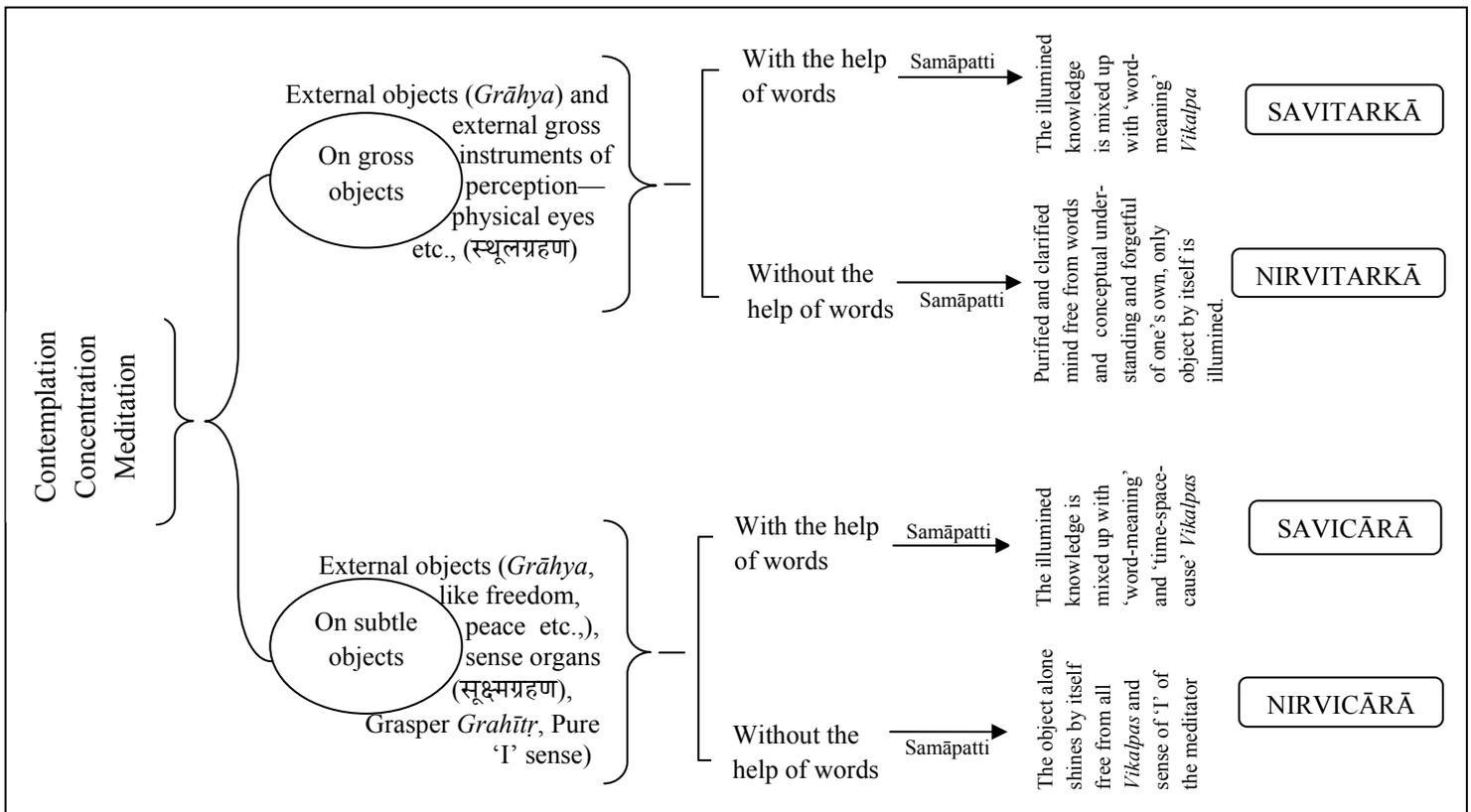
¹ Of the three periods of time (past, present and future), the *Savicārā Samāpatti* limits itself to the immediate present.

² The subtle entities like the colour concept, sound concept etc., are associated with space and directions. Thus *Savicārā* is associated by a feeling of space also.

³ The illumination/the knowledge that is got from *Savicārā Samāpatti* makes one realize that the object is ‘product’ – which creates an inquisitiveness to know what stands beyond it, i.e., it goads the aspirant discover its cause in which it merges back.

and of causation (perceiving independent of its cause and its effects.), by losing the awareness of name and qualities and finally by losing the awareness oneself as the knower or experiencer, then the object and object alone shines. In such transcendental illumined absorption, when the insight and knowledge that dawns there, is free from the *vikalpas* arising from word-and-meaning and even of the space, time, and causation factors, and illumines only the object under contemplation forgetful of even the self who is meditating, then it is called *Nirvicārā Samāpatti*.

The distinctive characteristic of *Nirvicārā* is transcendence from all aspects of manifested universe including the space, time and causation. It is there that the object reveals its true nature, what it really is.



A practical example would be highly enlightening to clear the idea regarding the *Samāpatti*.

1. The Savitarkā : Let us take a cow. The gross aspect of cow : the visible bodily structure is taken up. Mind is fixed on its name and form, with the name, all conceptual understanding we have acquired since our birth associated with the word 'cow' flows out. Deep contemplation results in elimination of all unwanted details and essentials alone remain centred round the cow to the exclusion of all other dissimilar thoughts. Finally our mind acquires the unique state of one pointed concentration, wherein the refined knowledge of cow alone stands shining – with clarity — say, as 'being a friendly animal serving man'. This illumined knowledge, however, remains associated with

name/word ‘cow’ and form etc., i.e., the *Vikalpa* ‘word–its meaning–knowledge’. This state is *Savitarkā*.

2. The *Nirvitarkā* : Continuing the practice of contemplating on the cow, its qualities slowly disappear, its nature, utility etc., also disappear from our awareness and just a living being independent of the word ‘cow’ shine forth. Finally we become forgetful of even our own self. This state reveals the truth regarding the cow. We see a multiple combination of basic elements standing as ‘cow’. This experience is *Nirvitarkā Samāpatti*. It produces insight into the object (cow) as single entity, being aware of it as an assemblage of many smaller units comprising of subtlest perceptible forms, the *Tanmātrās* of light, sound etc., (*Rūpa, Rasa, Gandha* etc., the object of senses). We see the cow in a new prospective :– certain combinations are appearing as an certain types of matter. Innumerable such combinations are found in each aggregate like the cow. One particular combination appears as its bone and another as its flesh, other as eyes ball and still other as blood in the body. It is we that give meaning and apply the properties to them and see good-bad, beautiful-ugly, useful-useless etc., Infact, all that (our normal conception) is mere illusory appearance. This is the supreme knowledge pertaining to gross objects. This knowledge changes our attitude towards the world; the charm for material possession like house, family, wealth, vehicle etc., fades and disappears. [Even scientifically speaking, if we happen to chemically analyse a charming beautiful body of a women (or of a man) we see it is combination elements with atomic numbers one to hundred and eight. Water in the body combination of two atoms of hydrogen one atom of oxygen (H₂O), and the salt of one atom of sodium and one atom of chlorine – NaCl. Imagine if we are but able to actuate our vision to atomic level and see a body! – A wonderful aggregate of millions of varieties of combination of basic elements — arranged systematically and is an unstable flux constantly undergoing changes within one structural set up. Every moment millions of molecule are getting rearranged. Every breath thousands of molecules are entering in and thousands are flowing out! It looks like a very complicated system of incomprehensible secret, a self-involved in huge factory or an industrial unit. The vision makes us go mad!

3. The *Savicārā* : After realising the elemental state of cow in the *Nirvitarkā Samāpatti*, we have more to apprehend the subtler state of it by the internal process of silencing the mind and senses, and reach an advanced stage of stillness. In that we perceive the sub-elemental state called the *Tanmātrā* or monadic state, the causal substance. From the scriptural testimony or from the verbal testimony of a realised Soul and through inference we need to arrive at a definite understanding of this *Tanmātrik* existence; we then intellectually discern with clarity that gross elements (subtle objects) are but various combinations of *Tanmātrās*, the causal substance. Then we proceed further in the meditation by reflecting on this knowledge while still perceiving the enlightened knowledge of subtle elemental state of the object attained in *Nirvitarkā*. By quietening the mind to deep stillness in this background, the prolonged concentrated observation of the highly purified intellect (which is practically rid of all gross and subtle tendencies of a common intellect), appears like a mirror that reflects the Pure Consciousness. It is now awareness and Pure Awareness alone. In that undifferentiated awareness shines forth the *Tanmātrik* (causal substance) state of the ‘cow’. In that state of realisation all sense perception of sound, touch etc., reach their *Tanmātrik* (causal) state. This is, *Savicārā Samāpatti*. In that calm undisturbed state of *Samādhi* we realise that the pain, pleasure or stupefaction (*Moha*—मोह) originate from material combinations due to their gross

properties and that gross properties have varieties which cause varieties of feelings in beings as ‘cause and effect’ or ‘action and reaction’ pattern of grossified *Tanmātrās*. This *Tanmātrik* (monadic) realisation releases from our ‘*Taking upon ourselves*’ the pleasure, pain etc., pertaining to body, for ever. Towards end of His Divine play (*Līlā*—लीला), Thakur used to remain very often in *Samādhi*. He would be experiencing the excruciating bodily suffering as well. Sometimes he would say ‘Let body and mind take care of each other, I am Bliss’.

Turning the torch towards oneself, the *Savicārā* covers the *Grahītr* and *Grahaṇa* aspect as well, which include senses, the mutative ego (*Ahaṅkāra*—अहङ्कार), the *Buddhi* as instrument etc.. But every where there remains the *Vikalpa* of verbal understanding ‘I realise, I know’, and in a steady unchanging manner there exists a background of time, space and causation.

4. The *Nirvicārā* : Perfection in *Savicārā* makes us advance towards the terminating point wherein awareness is refined and purified washing the associated verbal concepts and releasing the Enlightened Awareness from the presence of time, space and causation factors. The observer, the Meditating Self too disappears — only undifferentiated causal substance alone remains shining forth — It is *Prakṛti* in its final–perceivable state. The highest truth about gross object under contemplation is revealed in *Savitarkā* and *Nirvitarkā*, while the *Savicārā* and *Nirvicārā* state of *Samāpatti* reveal highest truth about subtle objects. The Final Enlightened Awareness free from time-space-causation *Vikalpa* is called *Prajñā* and the knowledge or the deep insight in that state is called *Rtambharā Prajñā* (ऋतम्भरा प्रज्ञा).

Beyond all this stands the *Puruṣa* our Goal, whose presence is making the *Prakṛti* to play in innumerable ways. This is a perception beyond *Nirvicārā* where the Truth behind the ‘cow’– the Pure Consciousness is perceived. It is ‘*presence*’ of the *Caitanya* that has brought about the form of cow, its life-force, its pains and pleasure and transmigration. The *Caitanya* the Pure Consciousness alone is the Truth and all else is a mere unending play of assemble and dissemble, the causal substance in its various forms.

Finally we find this knowledge culminating in realising eternal and ultimate truths about existence. We find two aspects of existence : one pertaining to the three *Guṇās* which mutates but does not become non-existent — which can be called ‘The Mutable Eternal Entity’ – the *Prakṛti*, The Divine Mother, and the other, ever independent of it, ever Free, ever Blissful, Pure Consciousness — which can be called ‘The Immutable Eternal Entity’, the *Puruṣa*.

Moving from gross to subtler and still subtler, the ultimate culminating (*Paryavasānam* – पर्यवसानम्) objective subtlety (*Sūkṣmaviśayatvam*– सूक्ष्मविषयत्वं) is attained when we reach the unmanifest (*Āliṅga*– अलिङ्ग).

Liṅga (लिङ्ग) is that which is an expression or manifestation of a cause, and on reversing the process merges back into the cause. Anything that is used to indicate a particular entity is also called a *Liṅga*. That which has no cause behind it, which has nothing beyond to merge in, which is the ultimate and an end in itself and which is not indicative of anything else, is *Āliṅga*. The unmanifest or *Prakṛti* is *Āliṅga*. And is told here to be the final culminating point in the subtle to the subtler series of entities. Gross to subtle we move. We have seen *Tanmātrās* (the causal substance) are the subtlest. There ends the matter. Further we move, we go to the subtler aspect, the mutative ego – the I sense¹ from which the knowledge of the *Tanmātra* has stemmed out. And we invariably find it to be a projection or product of *Mahat tattva* (महत् तत्त्व) [which is the Pure I sense, all knowledge and feelings have their ultimate moorings in it, the mind and mutative ego (*Manas* and *Ahaṅkāra*) evolve from it, and it serves as their receptacle.]. This *Mahat* which is pure I-sense witnesses both *Puruṣa* and *Prakṛti*. This *Prakṛti* which has no underlying cause is the subtlest and the ultimate cause of this empirical existence limited by time, space and causation. Hence the material subtlety terminates in the *Prakṛti*, the Unmanifest. However, we stop with *Mahat*², and since it is witness of both *Puruṣa* and *Prakṛti*, we move towards *Puruṣa*.

This *Sūtra* conveys an important message for the aspirant. It is what Śrī Kṛṣṇa says in B.G (VIII.16.) –“The whole creation upto the subtlest plane, the *Brahmaloka* (ब्रह्मलोक) is conditioned by the process of recycling and transmigration; attaining me alone you shall reach the Eternal and become immortal.” Similarly, the *Sūtra* indicates that we may attain *Nirvicārā Samāpatti* on subtle objects and reach the farthest limits of subtlety, but it cannot take us beyond to the *Puruṣa*. *Samāpatti* of every type ends with the *Prakṛti* and can never make us reach *Puruṣa*. ‘See one and understand the rest, waste no more time in trying with subtler and subtler aspects.’ Our aim is that we must get transported from the empirical material reality to the transcendental spiritual existence.

There is an undertone in the *Sūtra* which upholds the fact that human reasoning, however sharp be it, can neither comprehend nor lead to the Absolute, though it has much part to play in that direction. *Prakṛti* is empirical ultimate, behind and beyond is the Pure Consciousness the *Caitanya*, the *Brahman*. Each of the *Samāpatti* is a preparation for the next, and all the four together is a preparation for realising our identity with *Puruṣa*, the *Brahman*.



¹ Since there is no perceptible space in *Tanmātra* it can be perceived and experienced with flow of time. The perception of time presupposes existence of I-sense, the mutative ego from which the knowledge of *Tanmātra* proceeds. Thus mutative ego (*Ahaṅkāra*) is subtler form of *Tanmātra*.

² The unmanifest i.e., the *Prakṛti* is the potential form of all phenomena, including the Pure I-sense (*Mahat*). This cannot be made the object of meditation because through it one gets merged in *Prakṛti* and becomes the *Prakṛtiliṅga* (observe *Sūtra* I-19). Where as our goal is merged in *Puruṣa*. Yet, one may dip once and re-emerge and get an immediate knowledge of *Prakṛti*.

46

ता एव सबीजः समाधिः ॥४६॥
(*Tā Eva Sabījah Samādhiḥ*)

“These are *Samādhis* (transcendental states) with seeds.”

It is noticed generally that, one of the common features of Hinduism which is accepted both in theory and in practice by all shades of opinion, is the doctrine of transmigration according to the law of *Karma* and *Vāsanās*. The Self, whatever be its character, according to all schools of Indian philosophy, carries with it in the seed form the *Vāsanās* along with the bundle of *Karmās*, incarnating itself into matter and then tries in vain to get out of that bondage, again and again. They are potent seeds that remain in dormancy, becoming activated to functional level when proper situations arise and, they survive the death of the physical body. Under the strict regime of *Sādhanā*, store-house of seeds of *Vāsanās* and *Karma* sink down and remain in dark regions unperceived. At this stage of advanced *Samādhi* many many seeds would have got burnt down by now, many would have lost their power to regerminate. Yet a few that remain can cause *Samskāra* again; even one single *Vāsanā* is sufficient to make one fall into the clutches of *Māyā* again. A single seed can create a large forest.

The detailed conception of the *Karmāśaya* we will be seeing sometime later on. The *Karmāśaya* is a sleeping abode of the seed germs of desires in latency. It is a repository of potential tendencies, the passions etc.,. It is explained as conglomerate of the acquired tendencies to sin and sacrifice, vice and virtue, merits and demerits, etc., and these dormant seeds of both good and evil give rise to virtuous and vicious deeds, in due course, when seeds come to fructify. It is also said that *Āśaya* (आशय) is that which the transmigratory and evolving individuals sleep. It is the bed in which we lie, but it is also a bed of our own making. Just as the future oak sleeps in the acorn, even so does the future individual sleeps in the *Samskāras*. In that the past, present and future are simultaneously present.

We can see how subtle and how powerful the seed are. How stubborn they might be. No doubt, having reached such an exalted state of attaining *Nirvicārā* state, the remaining seeds of *Vāsanās* are bound to be good, noble and spiritual. Yet seeds are seeds; and they are the seeds that retain us in the realm of *Prakṛti*. With them, even one single weak seed being present, the *Jīva* cannot leave the jurisdiction of *Prakṛti* and enter the Realm of God.



47

निर्विचारवैशारद्येऽध्यात्मप्रसादः ॥४७॥
(*Nirvicāravaiśāradye 'dhyātmaprasādaḥ*)

“On gaining proficiency in *Nirvicārā* state, there develops purity, refinement/transparency and quietude in the inner instrument of cognition (the *Buddhi*).”

On gaining perfection (*Vaiśāradye*—वैशारद्ये) in *Nirvicārā Samāpatti* (*Nirvicārā*—निर्विचार) the inner instrument of cognition i.e., the *Buddhi* (*Adhyātma*—अध्यात्म) attains purity, refinement and quietude (*Prasādah*—प्रसादः).

Primarily the proficiency in *Nirvicārā* amounts to stability in that state without any wavering or slipping down from that state. The second thing is the total elimination of *Vikalpās* – free from conceptual and verbal aspects of knowledge, free from time-space and causation factors. Being now in the causal state, there can be tinges of *Rajas* and *Tamas* too in the form of imperceptible activity or restlessness (*Rajas*) and such subtle inertness or dullness (*Tamas*, or as tendency to be so) — even that trace must go away. There is another facet of perfection — that is, to be free from any unrecognisable trace of emotional presence – say the intuitive illuminating knowledge may be anointed with a tiny shade of joy of perception or of love — even that should not be there. This state of absolute perfection generates uninterrupted flow of transparent tranquillity which is the hallmark of excellence in *Nirvicārā* state. The *Buddhi*, the inner instrument of cognition being free from all phases of *Guṇās* of *Prakṛti* is said to be pure; is now able to grasp, reveal and reflect the truth as it is and therefore said to be refined and transparent; and remain undisturbed in depicting stillness and ultimate serenity and therefore said to have developed quietude — these three characteristics constitute what is called *Adhyātma* (pertaining to inner instrument of cognition i.e., *Buddhi*) *Prasādah*. The *Buddhi* (intellect) is said to have attained absolute perfection now.

48

ऋतम्भरा तत्र प्रज्ञा ॥४८॥
(*Ṛtambharā Tatra Prajñā*)

“There, filled with Truth is the Enlightened Awareness.”

There, (referring to previous *Sūtra* , in ripened state of *Nirvicārā*) *Tatra* (तत्र), the Enlightened Awareness which bears the illumined knowledge (*Prajñā*—प्रज्ञा) is filled with Truth (*Ṛtambharā*—ऋतम्भरा).

There are two important words — *Ṛtam* (ऋतम्) and *Prajñā* (प्रज्ञा). Here it is used as a Yogic terminology with specific standardised meaning. But has a greater significance when viewed from practical aspect.

There are two aspects of Truth — the existential and the expressive: that is, the Existence Itself and Its expression. The ultimate Truth, the Absolute, the Pure Consciousness, the *Śuddha*

Caitanya — is The Existence — and is called *Satyam* (सत्यम्), and Its expression in and through this Creation is called the *Ṛtam* (ऋतम्). This ‘expression’, however, is possible only in two regions (i) the Creation (the Relative Existence), which happens in a large way, and (ii) in the region of Transrelative Existence as well; beyond these two existences is the Absolute where there is no scope for any kind of duality including Its own expression.

We have already discussed and known what *Prajñā* is (page 64 to 66 under *Sūtra* 20. It is essential that we go through that again to make the concept clear).

When we reach the end-point of *Prakṛti* as in *Nirvicārā Samāpatti*, the *Buddhi* attains such a transparency, purity and clarity along with the perfection in unerring concentration, absorption, tranquillity and absolute stillness — that it acquires the capacity to penetrate and witness the ‘beyond’ standing as if near its threshold. Two ranges of perceptions are then witnessed. The first one is what is known as *Prajñā* and the second one is, in a limited way the perception of *Puruṣa*, which can be said to correspond to what is known as *Cidākāśa* (चिदाकाश). *Prajñā* is where things are seen in the Light of *Puruṣa* and, *Cidākāśa* is where the Pure Consciousness, the *Caitanya* condenses itself to take various forms to suit and fulfil the desires and wishes of the devotees. Mind is a platform in which *Vṛttis* raise and fall, *Buddhi* is a platform in which knowledge appear and disappear, similarly *Prajñā* is a platform on which True knowledge or the spiritual version of the things appear and, because the spiritual knowledge is ‘Truth’ itself and is eternal, it remains as a part of the Pure Awareness. The *Cidākāśa* is where the *Prajñā* gradually fades away into the Absolute, and there the Absolute can condense to take non-material (*Aprākṛta*—अप्राकृत), transcendental forms of pure spiritual nature. When viewed at the ‘heart’ of man, the innermost core of his being, the same *Cidākāśa* looks like a bay of consciousness. (bay= a broad inlet of sea where land curves inward). It is here the God manifests Himself in various or any form a devotee seeks. Behind every object of this universe there is this Consciousness which can be perceived only when mind merges entirely in it through undivided attention, concentration and absorption, or by any other means. In objects that represent Divinity like an Idol, it is comparatively the easiest; the most difficult would be where evil or vices are found and felt.

On the *Prakṛti* side of *Prajñā*, there is the Pure-Intellect of transparency in which the *Prajñā* appears to be gradually fading and merging. This gradual fading *Prajñā* is what is known to be the highest aspect of consciousness in the phenomenal existence. When we say that the external perceptions are received at first by the external sense instruments, then they are carried by sense organs to mind, mind conveys it to *Buddhi*, and finally *Buddhi* presents it to the consciousness, then it is this consciousness that is being referred to. Man losing consciousness and gaining consciousness also refers to this consciousness. The awareness of this world, our own self and of various duties and of being happy or unhappy etc., is an external expression of this consciousness. Beyond the illumined intellect is this consciousness, beyond this is the *Prajñā*, beyond the *Prajñā* is the Pure Consciousness, the *Śuddha Caitanya*, the *Ātman*, the *Puruṣa*.

When perfection in *Nirvicārā Samāpatti* is attained, the crystal clear illumined intellect happens to witness the ultimate knowledge of the object of concentration shining forth of its own accord in the *Prajñā* illumined by the light of Consciousness. Since the time *Jīva* (individual soul) came into existence in this creation, the mind and intellect were carrying the external informations

received through the senses to the consciousness and were presenting them to it. Now, after so much of cleaning and washing, through years of efforts, it has reached the present state wherein consciousness is presenting the information from the other side to the mind and the intellect on this side. Mind and intellect along with senses were ever accustomed to stand in attention witnessing and observing the external world. Now, they, having turned their back upon the world so as to be completely unaware of it, are witnessing with same attention but with wonder the inner glory presented to them by the consciousness. This turning inward and witnessing inner world is called ‘*Cetomukha*’ (चेतोमुख). Mind and intellect assisted by senses, following their own nature were perceiving and carrying the illusory version of this world to the consciousness. Now, consciousness is revealing the real version of the same world to the effortfully seeking, purified and enlightened mind and intellect. Since the knowledge is revealed in the *Prajñā*, it is real, it is Truth, it is illumined by the Light of Consciousness. Since it is perceived, it is ought to be an expression; for, the Truth that is not expressed cannot be perceived. The triad of the perceived, the perceiver and the perception too exists there proving there by the knowledge perceived is an expression of Truth. Thus it is *Ṛtam*, the expression of Truth that can be perceived in the realm of *Prakṛti*. *Ṛtam* is an expression of truth, while *Satyam* is the existential aspect of Truth is Itself. Behind every object there stands the Absolute Truth, the *Satyam*, untouched and unaffected by it. Every object of this universe is in fact an expression of this Ultimate Truth, the Pure Consciousness. Thus The Truth as a Principle (*Tattva*) is itself expressing as the objects of this universe and all beings, governed by definite law for their appearance, existence, mutation trans-mutation and dissolution. The Truth that is permeating through this universe, as a ‘principle’ *Tattva*, The Truth, which, as a law is governing this universe and all beings, The Truth that expresses itself as *Jñāna*, *Viveka*, *Prema* (the Divine love) etc., — all these expressions of Truth — is the *Ṛtam*. These expressions of truth (the *Ṛtam*) regarding the objects of meditation, are revealed in the Perfected state of *Nirvicārā Samāpattis*. Thus we see that it is *Ṛtam* (the spiritual truth, the hidden secret behind that object) that is pervading the *Prajñā* as the illumined knowledge regarding that object, the object of meditation, which is perceived, known and experienced by the transparent pure *Buddhi*. *Prajñā* can reveal only Truth, it has the exceptional status of being the means to know the truth, justifying the name given to it. This revelation, the illumined knowledge shining forth (expressed, manifested) in *Prajñā* is ‘*Ṛtambharā Prajñā*’. The term ‘*Prajñā*’ itself means that; प्र-ज्ञा = illumined knowledge. As our awareness shifts from our bodily/earthly existence to our Spiritual existence, as we become more and more aware of our Divinity, the *Prajñā* becomes a part of our own Existence and remains in us as *Pure Awareness* of our Eternal Divine Existence. Then the *Prajñā* becomes ‘*Satyambharā*’ (सत्यम्भार), filled with Existential Truth. The knowledge that dawns in *Prajñā* is something beyond what is known as the ‘intuition’, ‘the intuitive knowledge’ in the western tradition. Because intuition refers to a ‘self-evident knowledge devoid of doubts and originated in a pure and attentive mind’, where as *Prajñā* is beyond nature, beyond the realm of *Prakṛti*, and is experienced only in the transience of *Nirvicārā Samāpatti*.

There was at Kamarpukur, a lady by name Vāsanā Devi who was a disciple of Holy Mother Sarada Devi, and happened to live with Her for a very long term. When I met her she was 115 years. She narrated me an incident. She was initiated by Holy Mother along with two others, one of them was Rev. Abhayanandji Mj. (Rev. Bharath Mj). After initiation Rev. Bharath Mj. asked Holy Mother “Can I meditate on Thakur in His Formless aspect?”. Mother immediately replied,

“You can, my child, for Master (Śrī Rāmakṛṣṇa) is with Form, without Form, with innumerable forms, He is all that exists. But if you take His formless aspect, how can you serve others? If you take only His formless aspect always, then you will become more and more aware of your Divine existence beyond body, you will gradually forget there is suffering and needy world outside, you will lose your human aspect and ‘humanness’. No doubt you remain in your own Bliss, but you cannot give your love and serve others freely and spontaneously. You have come for Master’s work and you have to work for Him and for the world. If you take the Master’s aspect with Form, and know Him to be Formless, it is enough. You will know His advent, His *Līlā* and serve Him and this world with love. You will sacrifice yourself for Him. So meditate on His Blissful Form and know Him to be Formless and Everything. One day you will actually see Him in your meditation in His fully living form, truly living form, you can touch and talk to Him intimately and even know what to do and not to do. Now and then meditate on His Formless aspect too, He is Pure Bliss, Pure ‘*Sacchidānanda*’.

This clearly depicts how Truth dawns in *Nirvicārā Samāpatti*, how by taking a mere photograph of a Deity we reach His real aspect, and what experience we pass through really. Once we experience it, can we leave it any time? What a powerful *Samskāra* it may generate, how difficult would it be to shun it and reach the *Asamprajñātā Samādhi*!

This also makes us reach us understand that though *Kaivalya* is the only aim to be attained and to reach ‘*Puruṣa*’ and be That for ever is only objective to be achieved, that is not all that exists, there is the world and there are other *Jīvas* in bondage. And it is a bounden duty of every individual, every aspirant, every human to care for them and serve them with love, respect and gratitude that we offer to God, and side by side as an immediate necessity make all efforts to reach Him. This is the Human Ideal for all times, wherever man be.

Hail Mother, Hail The World.

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**With Advaita in the head, Dvaita in the Heart, work with your
limbs in this wonderful world, for all.**

49

श्रुतानुमानप्रज्ञाभ्यामन्यविषया विशेषार्थत्वात् ॥४९॥
(*Śrutānumānaprajñābhyāmanyaviṣyā Viśeṣārthatvāt*)

“The understanding derived from hearing/testimony or through inference is quite different from that derived in transcendental states, because it (the latter) imparts a specialised knowledge.”

The knowledge derived (*Prajñābhāyam*—प्रज्ञाभ्याम्) from verbal testimony (scriptures, books etc., or from preceptors or from saints etc.) (*Śruta*—श्रुत) and through sense perceptions or through inference (*Anumāna*—अनुमान) is generalised (and conceptual; each one understanding in his/her own way) and therefore takes a different form, different nature, (*Anyaviśayā*—अन्यविशया); where as the knowledge derived from the transcendental states of *Ṛtambharā Prajñā* are beyond the scope of normal intellect and are of specialised nature revealing higher truth, (*Viśeṣārthatvāt*—विशेषार्थत्वात्).

There are two types of perceptions — sensory and supersensuous. What is perceived through senses and grasped by the mind and understood by the intellect; this leads to the direct knowledge of this phenomenal world and is called the sensory perceptions. There is a¹ faculty in man which is an unearthed power hidden in him, which transcends senses and intellect, which penetrates where neither the sense perception nor intellectual reasoning can go, neither verbal testimonies nor inferences can have access. Through *Yoga* we transcend our physical bodily existence and the range of normal senses, mind and intellect, thereafter with our ‘inner transcendental faculty’ we perceive the infinite multifarious facets of this Vast Universe with its various planes of existence, and transcend even that and perceive the Truth beyond, the Ultimate Truth. This is second type of perception, the supersensuous perceptions. What is recorded in Vedas is through this vision of the Seers, the *Ṛṣis*. This vision is what is symbolically represented by the third eye in Śiva, Durga, Kali etc.;, knowing ‘this’ is through the two eyes, knowing ‘the beyond’ is through the third one. The central theme of *Yoga* is that as we perceive the phenomenal world with our senses, so we can perceive the rest of the Creation imperceptible to senses and beyond the range of mind and intellect. We can reach even still beyond where this faculty too cannot reach, the *Puruṣa*, the ultimate goal of *Yoga*.

We cannot have a comparison between the sense perceptions and super-sensuous or superconscious perceptions; they belong to the different realm, different dimensions altogether. This is what the *Sūtra* conveys. Patanjali is conveying to the aspirant, not to think of the knowledge filled with truth found in *Nirvācārā Samāpatti* to be similar to the knowledge man generally possess of this world. Knowledge of this glittering world is transitory and illusory, where as that found in *Samādhi* or *Samāpatti* is filled with truth and truth alone. For a man without spiritual illumination, the former makes him entangled and the latter helps his release. So it is specialised knowledge meant for the release — the *Viśeṣārthatvāt*.

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¹ It is the pure, clear, transparent intellect found in the *Samāpattis* to which the longing of the heart is linked and the will is connected. We may say it is the combination of three basic powers — *Ichā Śakti* (इच्छा शक्ति; longing of the heart), *Jñāna Śakti* (ज्ञान शक्ति; illumined/purified intellect) and *Kriyā Śakti* (क्रिया शक्ति; will and efforts to attain) are unified and directed to perceive the subtler and the beyond. They are powers of consciousness and not physical powers. Therefore the faculty bears all qualities of consciousness to perceive, know and to will and act. In Indian philosophical language in its crudest form it is called ‘*Antaḥkaraṇa*’ (अन्तःकरण), the ‘inner-organ’ which in refined form manifests as this ‘inner faculty’. When we receive massive blows like losing all wealth, losing the near and dear ones, intense fear, extreme loneliness — it is this crude *Antaḥkaraṇa* that weeps or revolts. It is something like a combination of heart and head. For lack of suitable vocabulary in English language, it is translated often as mind.

**Every fool knows that man cannot fly, but the wise never stop from trying.
Wright Brothers did the right thing in tying wings and trying to fly; they did succeed.
Today man flies after them. So should we try to take a flight to the beyond,
to the Spiritual Realm, to reach the Superconscious state of *Samādhi*.**

50

तज्जः संस्कारोऽन्यसंस्कारप्रतिबन्धी ॥५०॥
(*Tajjah Saṃskāro 'nyasaṃskārapratibandhī*)

“The latent impressions born of such knowledge obstructs all other latent impressions.”

The latent/subliminal impressions (*Saṃskāra*—संस्कार) born from the acquisition of knowledge in *Nirvicārā Samāpatti* (*Tajjah*—तज्जः) hinders, obstructs (*Pratibandhī*— प्रतिबन्धी) all other (of past or future) latent/subliminal impressions.

A playful child provided with dolls and toys to play, acquires tendencies (*Saṃskāras*) to get varieties and get immersed in play. When he grows up and becomes teenaged none of those tendencies remain any more. He loses all charm for toys and dolls and taste for playing with them. It is because new acquired tendencies of teenage have obstructed, over powered the old childhood tendencies. Similarly on attaining *Nirvicārā Samāpatti* the Soul acquires spiritual maturity and attains teenage and adulthood in his spiritual being. The old toy play of the empirical mind engaged in mundane ephemeral activities and pursuits does not attract him any more. In the light of the Truth experienced in *Samāpatti* state (*Rtambharā Prajñā*) the passing events of life, the passing shows — whether loss or gain, praise or blame, etc., — do not affect his illumined awareness nor disturb him in any way.

What are the new *Saṃskāras* (latent impressions) that are acquired by the soul from the knowledge gained from the *Rtambharā Prajñā*?

We have only philosophically analysed *Samāpatti* states like chemically analysing tears dripping from eyes without paying any heed to feelings behind those tears. When we analyse the Yogi's state from a new perspective of acquisition of *Saṃskāras*, we see him intensely craving to reach that state again and again, to make that a temporary abode at least to go beyond. It is because of the intense peace and freedom he experiences, because of higher bliss he experiences. It does not allow him to stay long at the empirical level, that state pulls him back. He has tasted honey, he likes to taste sugar candy now; go beyond to the *Asamprajñāta*, the *Nirbīja Samādhi* and go beyond the Nature eternally.

Another *Saṃskāra* is of having seen the things in the light of the truth. He now knows that this world is mere T.V. screen, mere appearance alone, a flux of 'passing shows' without any reality in it. There is no reality as such, of the events and movements or the presentations of this empirical world. If the scene and knowledge in *Nirvicārā* is '*Rtambharā Tatra Prajñā*' (ऋतम्भरा तत्र प्रज्ञा), then

the knowledge of the world appearing in our minds at ordinary level of perception may be called ‘*Anṛtambharām Atra manah*’ (अनृतम्भरा अत्र मनः).

So, we may dislodge this world from our awareness completely and fill with higher realities and with the Divine. If we bear higher realities (experience of *Samādhi*) in our mind, we do not get entangled in this world during the activities for survival and inevitable duties. If we bear Divine in our awareness, we will be able to love all and serve and help others in need calmly and harmoniously without losing the inner track and Divine contact.

The third set of *Samskārās* are based on his own existential awareness, the ‘I am’. It was attached to body when he had started the *Sādhanā* years back. He had thought himself to be a mortal as all others in the world commonly know themselves to be. Now stage by stage his understanding of himself is moving towards the Immortality, the Eternity.

The new *Samskārās* are like the light of the sun and old *Samskārās* were like light of a firefly enveloped by darkness. In the light of new *Samskārās* the darkness gets expelled, the light of the firefly disappears leaving no trace of its existence.

A point to note here is that the old *Samskārās* that are annulled by the new *Prajñā*-generated *Samskārās*, were the very *Samskārās* that were not allowing us to enter into meditation; now their play is over.

We can visualise how the gradual transformation to the present state might have occurred — there is the Vedic prayer to indicate.

असतो मा सद्गमय	<i>Asato mā Sadgamaya</i>	From unreal lead me to the real.
तमसो मा ज्योतिर्गमय	<i>Tamaso mā Jyotirgamaya</i>	From darkness (engulfing soul) lead me to the Light (of the <i>Ātman</i>).
मृत्योर्मा अमृतङ्गमय	<i>Mṛtyormā Amṛtaṅgamaya</i>	From death lead me to the Immortality.
~*~*~*		

**Don’t hide or run away from situations, face them and conquer them boldly —
but always remember — *Love is the way.***

51

तस्यापि निरोधे सर्वनिरोधात् निर्बीजः समाधिः ॥५१॥
(*Tasyāpi Nirodhe Sarvanirodhāt Nirbījaḥ Samādhīḥ*)

“By the restraint of even that, there being total restraint the seedless *Samādhi* ensues.”

Even (*Api*—अपि) that (latent impression of *Samāpatti* which obstructed all other latent impressions) being (*Tasya*—तस्य) restrained/eliminated (*Nirodhe*—निरोधे), owing to the resulting total

restraint (all *Samskāras* impressions being annihilated and all modifications being suspended) (*Sarvanirodhāt*—सर्वनिरोधात्), there ensues *Nirbīja Samādhi* (निर्बीज समाधि).

Here we find the termination of Yogic process and attainment of the state of *Kaivalya*. The *Sabīja* (सबीज) *Samādhi* (same as *Nirvicārā Samāpatti*) is *Samprajñāta Samādhi*, and *Nirbīja Samādhi* in *Asamprajñāta Samādhi* or the ultimate state of *Kaivalya* ensured by *Yoga*.

The latent impression of the *Ṛtambharā Prajñā* highlighted in the previous *Sūtra* annul all other old latent impressions. At this stage there remains one latent impression — the *Prajñā-Samskāra*. With this we repeatedly enter into *Samprajñāta Samādhi* and try for total restraint. These practices are accompanied by clear cut difference between the *Puruṣa* and true character of *Prakṛti* principle, and efforts persist till the discriminative enlightenment (*Vivekakhyaṭi*—विवेकख्याति) is attained. It is the acme of Yogic insight that finds the unworthiness of all aspects of *Prakṛti* and deliberately discards them. Where as the knowledge and the latent impressions acquired in *Samprajñāta Samādhi* very much pertain to final stage of *Prakṛti*, and therefore find it worth discarding. That is how the practice of total restraint for *Asamprajñāta*, final stage over comes the latent impression of *Samprajñāta Samādhi*. When even this *Vivekakhyaṭi* (discriminative faculty), the prime effect of *Samprajñāta Samādhi* is restrained or stopped or discarded, the entire *Citta* gets extinguished, all modifications cease and *Samskāras* get annihilated and as a result *Nirbīja Samādhi* leading to *Kaivalya* is attained. This does not happen immediately over night; it is a prolonged practice. Gradually both the frequency and duration of restraint (*Nirodha*) increases. The increase corresponds to the growth and perfection in detachment. Unhindered *Para-Vairāgya* brings about total cessation of mental activities for all times to come, it is called *Manonāśa* (मनोनाश). The *Buddhi*, mind along with the impressions of practice of the final stage of *Nirodha* get merged back into its constituent cause, the *Prakṛti*. In this total absence of *Prakṛti*, the *Puruṣa* alone shines in His own majesty and glory and is called the *Kaivalya* state.

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Śrī Rāmakṛṣṇa has incarnated in this land of mortals to make us realize we are Immortals. This Incarnation is unique and has not descended to slay demons, but to root out demonic tendencies in man; not only to relieve man’s temporal suffering of poverty and pain and ignorance, but to make him realize his ever Blissful nature hidden within himself being veiled by *Māyā* and to bestow upon him Everlasting Peace and Eternal Freedom. He is an incarnation of LOVE, The Love Divine unseen hitherto by this world; He has sown the seeds of universal peace and oneness in One Eternal Spiritual Existence. He is not only the Lord of this universe but Lord of all Faiths and Paths to God and of all Religion. Thus it is that from the mouth of Sw. Vivekananda spontaneously flowed out a gratitude-offering *Pranām-Mantra* which contains an epithet “अवतारवलिष्ठाय”—“To the Supreme Incarnation”

स्थापकाय च धर्मस्य सर्वधर्मस्वरूपिणे ।
अवतारवलिष्ठाय रामकृष्णाय ते नमः ॥

