

## SUMMARY OF TATTVA BODHA

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It is a *prakarana grantha*, or introductory text, giving the entire vision of Vedanta. All the technical terms of Vedanta are explained in this book. This book is attributed to Adi Sankara and it is in prose form. This book starts with a prayer to the Guru.

### ANUBANDHA CHATUSTAYAM:

1. *Visaya* (Subject Matter) - Tattva-Bodhah (knowledge of the truth)
2. *Prayojana* ( Purpose) - Moksha
3. *Adhikari* (Qualified student) - The one who is desirous of *moksha* only- *Mumukshu*
4. *Sambandha* – Pratipadaka - Pratipadya Sambandha (Revealer - Revealed connection)

This book guides one about how to do discriminative analysis leading to discriminative knowledge, which serves as the means for gaining freedom to students endowed with four-fold qualifications: *vivekah*, *vairagya*, *samaadi shatga sampattih* and *mumukshutvam*.

### FOUR-FOLD QUALIFICATIONS (SADHANA-CHATUSHTAYAM):

Vivekah: Discriminative understanding to help differentiate between what is permanent and what is not.

Vairaagya: Dispassion for enjoyment of objects, here and in the hereafter.

Samaadi-shatga-sampattih: Six-fold qualities of *sama*, *dama*, etc

Mumukshutvam: Desire for *moksha* alone.

**VIVEKAH:** The discriminative knowledge that only Brahman (*Isvara*) is permanent and that other than Brahman, everything else is impermanent.

Leading a life of *dharma* with an attitude of *karma yoga* renders the mind subtle and pure. And discernment through life's experiences gives one maturity. The mere company of men with discriminative knowledge can help one set right one's priorities in life.

**VAIRAAGYA:** Having dispassion for the enjoyments of this world as well as *svarga* is *viraagah bhavam*. Suppressing desires is not *vairagya*. *Vairagya* is growing out of desires. Objectivity with regard to every object, person and situation – meaning that the person has no binding desires or excessive craving or obsession for anything. When one steps in for a higher pursuit, all other pursuits get dropped.

**SAMAADISATKASAMPATTIH:** The six-fold wealth are:

- a. Samah- Mastery of the mind
- b. Damah- Mastery of the sense organs
- c. Uparama- Doing one's duty
- d. Titiksa- Forbearance
- e. Sraddha- Trust in the words of Guru and Sastra
- f. Samadhana- Single-pointed mind

**SAMAH:** Mind is an instrument – a privilege. Only one who has mastery over his mind can pursue anything significant in life.

**DAMAH:** It is mastery over the five organs of perception and the five organs of action. This virtue will help one to conserve time and energy wasted over unwanted activities. One can get this virtue by prayer, observing religious austerities and by being in the company of *sattvic* people.

**UPARAMAH:** It is doing one's own duties with the attitude of *karma yoga*. It is the renunciation of all unwanted activities for the single pursuit of gaining *atma jnana*. Following this virtue will improve one's self esteem.

**TITIKSA:** It is endurance, forbearance, tolerance and putting up with opposite situations like cold and hot; pleasure and pain; and respect and disrespect. This will help one to focus on the pursuit of *moksha* without resisting external situations. One can look at every choice-less situation as an opportunity to raise the threshold limit of forbearance.

**SRADDHA:** This refers to the trust in *Isvara*, oneself, the Sastra and the Guru. *Sastra* (*pramana* for *atma jnana*) is a jewel box whose key (the *sampradaya* of teaching) is with the Guru. Prayer helps in gaining *sraddha*.

**SAMADHANAM:** It is the concentration power or the ability of mind to focus, to dwell on a given subject over a period of time. This concentration power is required to get a deeper understanding of Vedanta. We can get this virtue by getting convinced of its use, practice of *asana*, *pranayama* and meditation, that is, by repeated practice of bringing the mind back to the subject on hand.

**MUMUKSUTVAM:** It is the intense desire for freedom from *samsara*. This desire keeps one motivated in pursuing Vedanta. When one introspects into his or her life experience, he understands that nothing else other than gaining *moksha* can liberate.

**TATTVA-VIVEKAH:** The essence of the subject is as follows: *Atma* is *satyam* (real). Other than that *atma*, everything else is *mithyaa* (apparent). *Tattva-vivekah* is the analysis leading to the knowledge of the Atma, the reality. Atma (or I, or Self) is *satyam* and enjoys an independent existence. Mithyaa is that which depends on something else for its existence and it is not available for categorization or definition.

**ATMA:** Atma is presented as distinct from gross, subtle and causal bodies. It is distinct from the five *kosas* – layers of personality. It is also seen to be distinct from the three states of experience – waking, dream and deep sleep. It is of the nature of existence, consciousness and fullness.

A cognitive separation or intellectual separation of *atma* and *anatma* is done. A definition of an object should not have the *dosha* (fault(s)) of: *asambhava* (wrong description), *athivyapthi* (not being described exclusively) and *avyapthi* (not being described completely).

*Drg-drsya-viveka* is used in all the 3 methods of analysis – *sarira-thraya-viveka*, *panca-kosa-viveka* and *avastha-traya-viveka*. I am not any one of the *sarira* or *kosa* or *avastha* but *Atma*. I am Consciousness, not a part, product or property of the body.

**STHULASARIRAM:** The gross body is made of a particular type of combination of *five* original elements. The gross body is born due to *karma* or invisible result of previous actions. The gross body is the abode for experiencing pleasure, pain, etc. It has six modifications of 'born', 'lives', 'grows', 'keeps changing', 'declines' and 'perishes'.

**SUKSMA-SARIRAM:** The subtle body is made of *five* basic subtle elements before grossification. It is born due to *karma*. The subtle body is the abode for experiencing pleasure, pain, etc. It is made of 17 constituents – namely, 5 organs of perception, 5 organs of action, 5 *praanas*, 1 mind and 1 intellect.

**KARANA-SARIRAM:** The causal body is the undifferentiated, unmanifest form of categorically indefinable, beginningless ignorance – the cause for the gross and subtle bodies and ignorance of one's true nature.

## **TVAM PADA VICHARA**

**AVASTHAATRAYAM:** There are 3 states of experience – waking, dream and deep sleep. Waking state is the state of experience where the sense objects are experienced by the sense organs. In this state, *atma* is mistaken as a gross body. When *atma* is identified with the gross body, then it is called VISVA. Dream state is the state of experience that is

projected by the impressions gathered in the waking state. Atma identified with the subtle body is called TAIJASA. Deep sleep state is that state of experience where one does not know anything. Upon waking from deep sleep, one says that I enjoyed the sleep. Atma identified with the unmanifest causal body is called PRAAJNA.

**PANCAKOSAHS:** Atma 'appears to be' covered by 5 layers. These 5 layers form the loci for mistaken identification of the atma. They are annamayah kosah, praanamayah kosah, manomayah kosah, vijnaanamayah kosah and aananadamayah kosah.

**ANNAMAYAH KOSAH:** Annamayah kosah is the gross body. Annamayah kosah is born out of food, grows by food and resolves into the earth. It is the modification of food. Annamayah kosah is mistaken as the atma.

**PRAANAMAYAH KOSAH:** The 5 physiological functions or 5 pranas along with the 5 organs of action forms the pranamaya kosah. It represents kriya sakthi. The 5 pranas are Prana (respiration), apana (excretion), vyana (circulation), udana (reversal) and samana (digestion). The 5 organs of action are: the organ of speech, hands, legs, the organs of excretion and the organs of procreation. Pranamah kosah is mistaken as the atma.

**MANOMAYAH KOSAH:** The mind along with the 5 organs of perception forms the manomayah kosah. It represents iccha sakthi. The 5 organs of perception are: ears, skin, eyes, tongue and nose. Manomayah kosah is mistaken as the atma.

**VIJNAANAMAYAH KOSAH:** The intellect along with the 5 organs of perception forms the vijnaanamayah kosah. It represents jnana sakthi. Vijnaanamayah kosah is mistaken as the atma.

**ANANADAMAYAH KOSAH:** The experiential happiness in different degrees (of gradation) is the anandamayah kosah. This happiness is due to

impure sattva mixed with ignorance, which is in the form of a causal body. Anandamayah kosah is mistaken as the atma.

**MINE IS NOT ATMA:** The attitude towards various objects such as bracelet, earring, house, etc. is that these are mine. But they are not me. Similarly my body, my physiological functions, my mind, my intellect and my ignorance are mine. They are not I, or the atma. I, the subject, am different from mine, the object. Atma is sat-cit-ananda svarupah.

**ATMA IS CHIT:** Chit means consciousness or awareness. I the atma am consciousness. Consciousness is not a part of the body, nor a property of the body nor a by-product of the body. It is the fundamental principle. It is atma which illumines the Sun, the Lamp, the Eyes and the Mind. Atma is not to be experienced because atma is the truth behind every experience. Atma is not to be realized but to be understood.

**ATMA IS SAT:** Sat is that which remains unchanged in all the three periods of time – past, present and future. To be self-existent is the nature of atma. 'Present' can be used to denote anything from the present nano second to the present millennium. The truth of time, or 'now', is consciousness.

**ATMA IS ANANDA:** When one is a wanting person, he is unhappy. When that want is fulfilled he experiences happiness. This happiness is a manifestation of limitless ananda. Although the atma can be explained in many ways, it is commonly explained as sat chit ananda. This is to negate the common conclusion that I am mortal, I am ignorant and I am unhappy.

## **TAT PADA VICARA**

**BRAHMAN:** Brahman is both the **efficient cause and material cause** of this jagat. To illustrate this, the sastra gives 2 examples. One example is that of the **spider**, which is both the maker and material for the web.

Another example is that of the **dream** world for which the dreamer is both the maker and the material cause. Brahman appears manifold due to maya. It is independently existing, changeless and without attributes. The tatparya(commitment) of the sastra is to reveal Brahman.

**MAYA:** Maya is dependent on Brahman for its existence. It consists of 3 gunas –sattva (knowing power), rajas (acting(doing) power) and tamas (inertia). It is changing, with attributes and apparent (not real). Brahman and Maya both are beginning less. Maya makes impossible looking situations appear as possible. It is the power of Brahman. The tatparya of sastra is not to establish maya.

Isvara is maya sahita Brahman. Isvara is also called saguna Brahman. Maya is unmanifest name and form. Initially, Maya is introduced in the sastra. Later, maya is dismissed as apparent not having independent existence other than Brahman.

**EVOLUTION OF 5 ELEMENTS:** From that maya, which is dependent on Brahman, Akasa(space) was born. From Akasa, Vayu(wind) was born. From Vayu, Agni(fire) was born. From Agni, Apah(water) was born. And, from Apah, Prithvi (earth) was born. Thus, all the 5 great elements (pancha maha bhootani) are manifestations of Brahman.

From satva aspect of each of the 5 elements, particular sense organs evolved. From the total satva aspect of these 5 elements, the Antahkarana or inner instruments of mind, intellect, ego and memory were formed.

From the rajas aspect of each of the 5 elements, particular organ of action as well as the 5 praanas were born.

From the tamas aspect of 5 elements, the grossified 5 elements were born.

**PANCHIKARANAM:** Panchikaranam or Grossification takes place as follows: the tamas aspect of each of the subtle elements divide into two equal parts; one half of each remains intact; the other half of each gets divided into four equal parts. Then to the intact half of each element, one-eighth portion from each of the other four elements gets joined.

This grossified akasa, vayu, agni, apah and prithvi form the 4 types of gross bodies and the universe with 14 lokas. There is thus an identity between microcosm and macrocosm.

### **ASI PADA VICHARA:**

**ONENESS BETWEEN JIVA AND ISVARA:** The identity of jiva and Isvara is the tatparya of all the Upanisads. One space is taken as limited by many conditioning factors like pot space. This is called avacheda vada. One sun light is reflected in many mirrors and appears as many. This is called prati-bimba vada. Similarly, one limitless consciousness (Brahman) is reflected in many upadhis (jivas).

Brahman manifesting in avidya upadhi is jiva. The jiva wrongly identifies with gross, subtle and causal bodies. Due to ignorance, jiva considers itself different from Isvara. Brahman manifesting in maya upadhi is Isvara. There is no real difference between jiva and Isvara. The difference is only in the upadhi. As long as this apparent difference is mistaken as real difference, samsara will be there with the cycle of birth and death.

**DOUBT RAISED:** Upanisad proclaims Tat Tvam Asi. It means that there is an identity between the jiva and Isvara. The jiva has ego and limited knowledge; Isvara has no ego and all knowledge. How can there be identity between them is the doubt raised.

**TAT TVAM ASI:** The literal meaning of Tvam is jiva, or the atma identified with gross and subtle bodies. The implied meaning of Tvam is atma which



is pure consciousness free from the upadhi of gross, subtle and causal bodies. The literal meaning of Tat is Isvara, or the atma identified with maya upadhi. The implied meaning of Tat is atma which is pure consciousness free of the maya upadhi. To make the maha vayka meaningful, we have to take the implied meaning of tat and tvam: that is, both are consciousness.

The difference at the upadhi level is mithya. Hence, it is not real. **Between the jiva and Isvara, there is difference only at the empirical level. At the absolute level, there is no difference.**

**JIVAN MUKTHI:** By the teaching of Vedanta by a Sadguru, the vision of Brahman in all beings is gained. The person who gains this vision is called a jivan mukta. Sadguru is the one who has learnt from a traditional teacher, the one who knows the methodology of teaching preserved by the teaching tradition.

**Jivan mukta while living is free from bondage.** He has understood that he is consciousness and that he has no death. A **jivan mukta has the understanding that he is sat chit ananda svarupa.** He is not the doer or enjoyer. He is free from attachment. He is the indweller of all beings. He is like prakasa and akasa. He has the firm conclusive knowledge of atma, and he is free from doubts and opposing conclusions.

**VIDEHA MUKTHI:** Jnani exhausts his **Prarabdha** karma by going through the experiences. It is like an arrow already released. **Sanchita** karma is destroyed by atma jnana with the conviction that "Brahman only I am". It is like the karma done in dream getting destroyed upon waking up. The connection of a Jnani with **agami** karma is like drop of water resting on a lotus leaf.

The **agami punya** of a Jnani goes to one who praise, worship and serve Jnani. The **agami papa** of a Jnani goes to one who abuses, hates and gives discomfort to the Jnani.

After death, the gross body of a Jnani merges with the gross universe. The subtle body of the Jnani merges with the subtle universe. The causal body merges with the causal universe. **Jnani has no more births.** The **vyasti upadhi merges with the samasti upadhi.**