

Mandukya Upanishad, Class 12

Mantra # 7; Karika # 11:

Swamiji said in these karikas beginning from # 11 Guadapada is comparing and contrasting the four padas. This study is for clarifying the karika. This clarification is called Svadhanya Vaidhanya Vichara. It shows the study of common and uncommon features. Two specific factors are studied for comparison. They are: 1) Ignorance and 2) Error, or misconceptions born from ignorance.

When you do not recognize a rope, as a rope, it is called Rajju Agyanam; where it is mistaken as something else; hence called an error. Error is always born out of ignorance; with knowledge there can be no more error.

Ignorance is the cause while error is its effect. Ignorance is referenced by four expressions of Gaudapada. They are:

1. Nidra: Ignorance is figuratively called sleep. When you are asleep to a fact, you are ignorant of the fact.
2. Agrahanam: Non-perception of fact. Rope ignorance is non-perception that it is a rope.
3. Karanam: Ignorance is referred to as cause or karanam. Why is it a cause? Because it is cause of error, cause of mistake or misconception, hence it is karanam.
4. Beejam: or Seed. Why seed? Just as from a seed sprout comes out, from seed of ignorance, error or mistake arises. Rope misconception is born from rope ignorance. Some mistake it as snake, some as mala (garland), some as a crack in the earth, yet others as a stick. All misconceptions are born from one seed of ignorance.

Following four factors provide reference points for Ignorance. Errors too can be referenced by these four factors.

The four factors are:

- Swapna: Error is swapna; thus in dream we have a non-factual experience.
- Anyathagrahanam: Misperception. In error we always perceive things wrongly, thus we see snake in a rope.
- Karyam: Error is born of ignorance; it is an effect born of ignorance; hence it is called Karyam.
- Ankuraha: Sprout or a plant. Error is a sprout that comes out of the seed of ignorance or Beeja ankuraha.

Using these four expressions Gaudapada is going to compare and contrast the four padas.

Karika # 11:

विश्वप्रज्ञाप्रज्ञायाः कारणप्रज्ञायाः कारणप्रज्ञायाः
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Vishwa and Taijasa are both conditioned by cause and effect. But Prajna is conditioned by cause alone. Both cause and effect exist not in Turiya.

Vishwa, the waker, the first pada, is associated with Karyam (error) and karanam (ignorance). Waker has both ignorance and error. What is the Waker ignorant of? He is ignorant that I am Turiyam, the Paramatma. Since he is ignorant, he makes a mistake that I am the Jivatma, the limited sorrowful individual; that I am limitless, is not known; in error, I only know I am a limited individual. Every Waker looks at himself as a limited "I".

The dreamer also has same pair of problems or as Taijasa. Taijasa also has karyam and karanam. During dream, I am ignorant of fact that I am the limitless paramatma or Turiyam; I commit a mistake that I am limited individual or jivatma suffering from dream samsara. This is the second pada is also associated with ignorance and error.

Pragyaha is the third pada; the sleeper associated with only Karanam, or ignorance. A sleeper does not make a mistake; he

has only got ignorance. It is called pure ignorance. What does it mean? Error free ignorance is called pure ignorance; even though I am ignorant that I am limitless; I don't create any mistake because the mind is in a resolved state; as such it cannot commit mistakes. Hence called Total ignorance or also called Bliss. Ignorance becomes a problem only when it is mixed with erroneous perceptions.

Say a rope is lying in a shadow (half-lit area) and you see it partially; hence you see it as a snake causing to be frightened. Had the rope been in a pitch-dark area, and then there would have been rope ignorance, as I don't see the rope to begin with. Here Ignorance exists, but there is no wrong perception of snake. Here Ignorance is there without an error. Hence, in Total Ignorance, one knows no Samsara or there is no error. It is only in partial ignorance that the error comes in.

In deep sleep also there is no samsara. Gyani and deep sleep both don't have samsara. Only Waker and Agyani have samsara.

Shankaracharya in his Brahmasutra commentary talks of this error and calls Adhyasa. So, Gaudapada says, a sleeper has only "ignorance without error".

In Turiyam also there is neither ignorance nor error. It is free from both. It is pure Consciousness alone. It is the illuminator of ignorance and error. Why so? Several reasons are given:

1. Pure consciousness is asangaha; it is relation-less like space. Space is everywhere but not connected to anything including ignorance and error.
2. Consciousness is a higher order reality or Paramarthika Satyam. While ignorance of error is Vyavaharailka Satyam. Both can't be connected. Thus, a waking person can't be hurt by dream water, fire etc. Waker is higher order reality while dreamer is a lower order reality.

3. Prakash Tatvam: Illuminator of a thing can never be polluted by anything. Light can't be contaminated by whatever it shines on.

Karika # 12:

प्रज्ञा न विदुः सत्यं न विदुः सत्यं न विदुः सत्यं न विदुः
प्रज्ञा न विदुः सत्यं न विदुः सत्यं न विदुः सत्यं न विदुः

Prajna does not know anything of the Truth or the untruth., nor does Prajna know anything of the Self or of the not-Self; Prajna knows nothing. But Turiya is ever and it is always the all-knowing , the all-seeing.

In these two shlokas gaudapada is contrasting Pragya and Turiya and their uncommon features.

Pragya is associated with ignorance.

Turiya is not associated with ignorance.

This contrast is in both shlokas 12 and 13.

Pragya does not know anything. It is absolutely ignorant. Pragya is errorlessly ignorant and hence blissfully ignorant. Pragya does not know himself. I don't know the object or the subject. Nobody says, "I am sleeping", nor does he say, "I am Turiyam". How about others? He does not know others as well. He does not know Atma or anatma. Neither does he know reality nor the unreal world. It is state of Total Ignorance.

What about Turiyam? It is pure Consciousness, the illuminator of everything including ignorance, the state of "I don't know anything". If asked, do you know that you don't know anything, and then I am conscious of my ignorance. Consciousness is illuminator of ignorance and error; hence it is called Sarva Dhriti. Illuminator is not tainted by whatever it illumines. Imagine if light that illumines my body becomes a part of my body; when I leave everything will be dark, as light will leave with me. Light falls on body but is not connected to

body. So, Turiyam is free from ignorance, while Pragya is associated with ignorance.

When is Turiyam free? It is ever free from ignorance and error.

karika # 13:

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The non-cognition of duality is equal in both sleep and Turiya but the sleeper conditioned in his sleep, is in the form of the cause and this- the sleep or cause (avidya) does not exist in Turiya.

In this shloka also Gaudapada is studying Pragma and Turiya. Here he talks of similarities and dissimilarities. In previous shloka only dissimilarities were discussed.

What are the dissimilarities?

Pragya is associated with ignorance.

Turiya is not associated with ignorance.

Bija nidra means ignorance. Pragya is ignorance ridden. Contrastingly in Turiya Bija nidra, ignorance is not there.

What are the similarities?

Common factors are that both are free from error.

A sleepy person has no error; he does not have notion of a limited person; it is not there in Turiyam or a Gyani as well. So Gyani and Turiyam are identical. Therefore moksha and sleep are very similar.

In Brhadaranyaka Upanishad Yagyavalkya compares moksha with sleep. Unfortunately with problems we have today, we don't get sleep.

Here dvaitam means error or perception of the limited "I". Why is it an error? It is an error because advaitam is a fact. Agrahanam means absence. Absence of dvaitam or error is common to both Pragya and Turiyam. So, in sleep, I am in advaitam. Turiyam is also a state of advaitam. So, error abhava (absence) is common to both.

Karika # 14:

Vishwa and Taijasa, the former two are associated with the conditions of dream and sleep, Prajna is the state without dream. Those who have known the Truth do not see either sleep or dream in Turiya.

This shloka is similar to # 11. Shlokas # 11 and # 14 are similar. All four padas are compared in them. In shlokas # 12 and # 13 only two padas are compared.

First two padas, Vishwa (waker) and Taijasa (dreamer) are associated with nidra or ignorance and error. Waker is associated with ignorance and error; it is same for Taijasa as well; whereas Pragya is associated with ignorance or it is state of error-less ignorance or Total ignorance.

In Turiyam there is neither nidra (ignorance) nor swapna (error). Both are not there. Wise people don't see ignorance or error in Turiyam.

This is the comparison and contrast. To be liberated you have to become Turiyam. In Vishwa and Taijasa, you will not get liberation. How to become Turiyam will be topic of next class.

Take Away:

With Best Wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

