

# Mandukya Upanishad, Class 30

Karika # 34:

*This manifold does not exist  
as identical with Ātman nor does  
it ever stand independent by itself. It is neither separate  
from Brahman nor is  
it non-separate. This is the statement of the wise.*

After pointing out in Karika  
# 32 that from Turiya Drsihti or Turiya point of view, there  
is no creation at  
all, now Gaudapada says, we can't say the world is non-  
existent as well; hence  
it is Mithya. He says, it is experientially available but it  
is difficult to  
prove that it does not exist.

In this karika he shows that  
proving that it does not exist is difficult. We can't prove:

The world is Brahman,

or that it is a part of  
Brahman,

or that it is different from  
Brahman.

We can't logically establish  
that this world can be identified with Brahman, as Brahman is  
Chaitanyam while the  
world is Achetanam; Brahman is nirvikara while world is  
Savikara.

We cant say world is part of  
Brahman as infinite is beyond time and space; so world can't  
be part of

Brahman.

Is world different from Brahman? If world is a separate entity, then there should be duality and each will limit the other; or, both will be finite. Limited Brahman is a contradiction in terms. Brahman being non-dual, a world different from it is not possible. So, we can't establish a relationship between world and Brahman.

So the essence of karika # 34 is that both World and Brahman are Anirvachaniyam (indescribable).

Coming to the second line of the karika, Gaudapada says, if you study the world, you will find logical problems within it as well. Thus, there are many objects in creation, each different from the other. We have assumed these objects are different. This is our assumption and we have also invented different names for these objects. Thus, one is called a book and another is called say, a table. I transact with distinct words and it works. But if you probe a little bit further, you will not be able to show the difference between table and book; leave alone Brahman.

You can never clearly say whether an object is identical or different from another object. What is the problem in doing so? How to prove the difference, is the problem. Citing an example: Say yellow is different from green color; yellow can be seen; green also I can see. Now, I

introduce the concept of difference between yellow and green. What is the color of the “difference” between yellow and green? You can’t say the difference is yellow or green. This “difference” is not under category of color; as such we can’t see the difference, as there is no Pratyaksha pramanam.

Let us take the form of objects; say a square and a circle. Square is visible; circle is visible as well; when we say they are different, is it the “difference” in form between a Square and circle ? What is form of the “difference”? The difference is not a form; it means we can’t see it.

Therefore “difference” is neither color nor form. Vedanta says, “difference” is not part of sound, shape, color, smell, taste and texture. Hence, bheda, the difference, is not provable through Pratyaksha Pramanam. It is not a Pratyaksha Vishayaha.

Can “Bheda” (difference) be inferred by me? Vedantin says, what can’t be perceived can never be inferred. One can infer fire only if he has known fire through his perception in the past. If one has never experienced fire before, he can’t infer fire from smoke. I am able to infer fire from smoke because I have prior knowledge of fire.

So, Bheda is not object of Pratyaksha pramana, or anumana pramana, or any other pramana, as such it cannot

reveal the Bheda. So, there is no pramanam to establish the Bheda. So, Bheda is a misconception to begin with. Anything without pramana is known as Mithya. Similarly, you can never talk of Dvaitam; thus the wise understand Dvaitam is also Mithya.

**(Further elaboration:** Thereafter, Gaudapada makes another more profound statement. One needs to meditate on this statement to fully grasp the meaning. We are experiencing so many objects in front of us. Each object is different from each other. We are experiencing plurality and we see everything different from everything else. Therefore, we are experiencing difference everywhere in life. Vedanta asks what is the nature of difference? Upon enquiry, difference is also mithya. Why? We experience difference but we cannot prove difference as a fact. Blue sky is experientially available but it is factually not there. Difference is experientially available but it cannot be factually proved. If you have to prove something, you have to show a relevant pramanam or evidence. What cannot be proved by pramanam cannot be accepted as fact. What pramanam is there to prove difference? The tradition says that no pramanam is present to prove difference. We are experiencing difference everywhere but there is no pramanam to prove it. All our sense organs are meant to see sound, touch, form, taste or smell. Difference or bheda does not come under any of these five categories. **Difference**

does not have sound, touch, form, taste or smell. Difference is a concept we have. Since difference does not have any attributes, pratyaksha does not prove difference. Eyes see yellow color and blue color. The difference between the color's yellow and blue is not perceived by the eyes but conceived by the mind. Therefore difference is never perceived but it is only conceived. If the difference is not perceived, why can it not be said that it is inferred like smoke and fire? Inference will not help because whatever you are inferring has to have been perceived by you before. You are able to infer the fire because you have experienced fire and smoke together. You can only infer what you have perceived before. Because difference has never been perceived, you cannot make an inference also. Therefore, no pramanam can prove difference. Difference is experienced but cannot be proved. **What is experienced but cannot be proved is mithya.**

All the objects cannot be said to be identical with or different from each other. You can never prove objects as identical or different among themselves. You cannot prove them to be identical because you experience difference. Difference cannot be proved because there is no pramanam to do the proof. In short, the world is a mystery. It is experienced but you cannot prove anything logically. The more you go deeper, the more mysterious it gets. The

adhishtanam for this  
mysterious world is I, the Turiya atma. Experience life  
without asking too many  
questions. Every question will produce an answer that will  
lead to more  
questions. It leads to riddles. That is why it is called maya.  
Enjoy the world  
as it is. Whenever favorable conditions come, thoroughly  
enjoy. Whenever  
unfavorable conditions come, thoroughly put up with them. Move  
on. Do not talk  
too much. "aham satyam jagan mithya" is the knowledge. )

### **Karika # 35:**

***By the wise, who are free  
from attachment, fear and anger and who are well versed in the  
meaning of the  
Vedas, this (Ātman) has  
been verily realised as totally devoid of all imaginations  
(such as those of Prāṇa, etc.),  
free from the illusion of the manifold, and non-dual.***

With previous Karika, Gaudapada  
has concluded teaching that "Jagat is Mithya". Jagat here, in  
Mandukya Upanishad,  
means the three Padas (Waker and waking world; Dreamer and  
dream world; and  
Sleeper and Karana Prapancha). Turiyam alone is satyam while  
other three padas  
are mithya.

Now in Karikas # 35-38,  
Gaudapada talks of Sadhanas that helps one to grasp this  
teaching. In karika #  
35, he talks of Sadhana chatushtaya sampathihi, Smaranam and  
Mananam.

**First qualification:** required is one should be free from Ragaha (attachments). Such a person is a Vairagi. In such a person, even Bhayam (fear) leaves him, as does Krodhaha (anger). He is one who enjoys a calm mind.

**Second qualification:** required is one who is a clear thinker. Only when I know ignorance is the problem, knowledge becomes relevant. Knowledge must be more relevant than karma; it should appeal to me; only then Vedantic study will appeal to me. Then, I see the connection between ignorance, knowledge and Vedantic study and that this study can solve this problem. One who is a clear thinker is known as a Muni.

**Third qualification:** One who sees the connection between knowledge, Vedantic study, Sravanam and mananam. Many think self-knowledge comes only through meditation. One must know that knowledge can come only through Vedanta sravanam and mananam. Only those people can grasp Turiya Atma as defined in mantra # 7. This Turiyam is without any division of pramata-pramanam-prameyam, and Vishva-Virat, Taijasa-Hiranyagarbha, Prajna-Ishvara. Even the microcosm-macrocosm duality is not present in Turiyam. Those divisions belong to the transactional plane. The Turiyam is totally free from the mithya world and is non-dual.

These are the qualifications for an aspirant.

## Karika # 36:

***Therefore knowing the Ātman to be such, fix your attention on non-duality. Having realized non-duality behave in the world like an insensible object.***

Some more qualifications are enumerated in this karika.

If a person has Sadhana Chatushtaya Sampathihi, to him just sravanam will give him the Knowledge and Gyana phalam. For a qualified student, Gyanam and Gyana Phalam will occur at the same time. For others, Gyanam may occur but Gyana phalam may evade them. Here the problem is lack of Sadhana chatushtaya sampathihi. If so, how to rectify this gap?

The gap can be covered through Nidhidhyasanam. **It is to be followed by a student who has studied Vedanta but still does not get it. So, repeated sravanam and then mananam and dwelling on teaching are required.** Here the importance is on mental dwelling on the teaching. This is nidhidhyasanam. Even after learning Vedanta, if I am still just a learned Sanyasi; then I must dwell on Turiyam Satyam all the time. As I dwell on teaching the mind becomes prepared; then gyanam comes through shanti and with shanti then comes advaitam.

When this shanti comes, do not publicize that you are a Gyani or a jivan muktaha. Live in



the world as an  
Agyani. Only if somebody wishes knowledge, give it to him.

Thus, this karika prescribes  
Nidhidhyasanam.

### **Karika # 37:**

***The man of self restraint  
should be above all praise, salutation and all  
rites prescribed by the Smṛti in connection with the departed  
ancestors. He  
should have this body and the Ātman as his support and depend  
upon chances, i.e., he should be satisfied with those things  
for  
his physical wants, that chance brings to him.***

Here Gaudapada says another  
Sadhana, an optional one, is Sanyasa Ashrama. It is useful for  
Vedantic study;  
and sravanam, mananam and nidhidhyasanam. If you wish, you can  
take to this  
path. Here, one chooses, to be a monk.

### **Advantages of Sanyasa:**

1. He is free from  
duties in samsara. Free from pancha maha Yagna  
requirements. There are no  
religious or social obligations. A Grihastha can't be  
free from any of them.
2. Deva Yagna is not  
required
3. Pitr Yagna is not  
required.
4. Manushya Yagna is  
not required.
5. He does not  
maintain a home

Only

requirement is Sravanam, mananam and nidhidhyasanam.

He

lives in the body, a temporary abode, during Laukika Vyavahara; otherwise, he lives in Brahman.

If

he has any possessions, whatever comes through prarabhdha, he accepts it. He basically lives, by chance. Such a person is a sanyasi; but it requires courage to lead this life.

**Karika # 38:**

***Having known the truth***

***regarding what exists internally (i.e., within the body) as well as the truth regarding what exists externally (i.e., the earth, etc.) he becomes one with Reality, derives his pleasure from It and never deviates from the Real.***

By following above sadhanas a

person will get Tatva Darshanam. It is not a physical darshanam rather he now

understands Turiyam. **He sees Turiyam both within and without.**

**He**

**sees it in form of Sakshi Chaitanyam Rupam which is not associated with the**

**mind. It is consciousness dissociated from mind.**

**He sees Turiyam outside also. Brahman inside**

**only makes it limited. Brahman Outside, is seen as Sat, the existence principle.**

**Where is the existence principle evident? In which part of the world is it**

**evident? It is evident in the is-ness of the “pillar is”; the**

**is-ness belongs**

**to the pillar; in the is-ness of the “gold is” etc. This is existence or Sat.**

Gaudapada

says, when we say a Gyani sees Tatvam, we commit a mistake. Tatvam is not an object rather it is the “I” the subject. He becomes Atma himself. Previously he said: I have a body with Atma. Now he says: I have an Atma with a body.

This

Tatva darshanam gives him joy. He does not require any other entertainment;

knowledge itself is his ananda. He does not reject external happiness; he

accepts material happiness as well. However, he does not slip from Brahman, thereafter.

He has obtained Gyana-nishta. Worldly transactions don't pull him from Gyanam.

Citing example of an expert cyclist, he does not lose his balance even as he

performs other activities. Such a person is called a Jivan mukta. This

concludes chapter 2 where Gaudapada focused on Jagan Mithya.

**Take Away:**

Difference

does not have sound, touch, form, taste or smell. Difference is a concept we

have. Since difference does not have any attributes, pratyaksha does not prove difference.

The

difference between the colors yellow and blue is not perceived

by the eyes but  
conceived by the mind. Therefore difference is never perceived  
but it is only  
conceived.

What  
is experienced but cannot be proved is mithya.

Sakshi Chaitanyam is  
consciousness dissociated from mind.

**With Best Wishes**

Ram Ramaswamy