

# Mandukya Upanshad, Class 31

Continuing his teaching

Swamiji said, today I will give you a summary of the Chapter # 2 that is also

known as Vaithatya Prakaranam. Mandukya Karika is an analysis of the Mandukya Upanishad.

In this Karika Gaudapada is expounding from the Upanishad, not his own opinion,

rather, whatever is implicit in the Upanishad is made explicit using a method

of extraction known as Shruthyartapatti pramanam, an indirect manner of gaining

knowledge from Shruti.

In entire Mandukya Upanishad

the most important mantra is # 7 dealing with Turiyam. This topic is expanded

upon in this chapter. Turiya mantra has two words that are very important:

Prapanchoupashamam and Advaitam. Prapanchoupashamam is expanded upon in Chapter

# 2 and Advaitam is expanded upon in Chapter # 3.

The

word 'prapanchopasamam' means the prapancha mithyatvam.

Prapancha refers to the

waking world, the universe. Upasama literally means absent.

'prapanchopasama' means

that even though we experience the world, factually it is not there. It is

experientially available, factually non-existent. It is otherwise called

mithyatvam, or vaitathyam. Prapanchopasamam, prapancha mithyatvam and prapancha

vaitathyam all mean that the world is mithya.

Prapanchoupasamam also means,  
free from the world. What is free from the world mean? It  
means Turiyam is free  
from the world or it is world-less. This word negates world.  
What is its  
significance? Upanishad can't negate experience of the world;  
we can't negate  
it as well, as we experience it daily. Experiential experience  
of the world  
cant be negated but when the Upanishad says it does not exist,  
it means, world  
is only experiential but factually non-existent or world is  
seemingly existent  
or apparently existent.

Prapanchoupashamam deals with  
unreality of world. Idea of unreality can be conveyed in  
Sanskrit by words such  
as Satyam, Mithya and Vitathvam. They all convey unreality of  
world. Since  
chapter # 2 analyzes unreality of world implicit in Upanishad,  
it is called  
Vaithatya Prakaranam; it means Jagat Vaithatya Prakaranam.

Jagat is universe or cosmos,  
but in Mandukya Upanishad, it means the three Padas; that is,  
Waker & gross  
universe; Dreamer and subtle universe; and Sleeper and Causal  
universe. These  
three pairs, together, are called Pada Trayam. So, Chapter # 2  
can also be  
called Pada Traya Vaithatya Prakaranam.

Having seen significance of title  
we will now come to the chapter # 2 itself. It has 38 karikas  
and they can be  
classified in five headers. They are:

## 1. Karika's # 1-# 3:

Swapna Prapancha Vaithatyam,  
meaning unreality of dream world.

- Karika # 4- # 18:  
Jagrat Prapancha Vaithatyam; meaning unreality of waker's universe.
- Karika # 19-29:  
Misconceptions regarding the reality or Kalpana Prakaraha; varieties of confusion.
- Karika # 30- # 34:  
Summary or conclusion of main discussion of pada traya mithyatvam also called Upasamhara.
- Karikas #35- # 38:

Describe the sadhanas and their results or their Phalam. We can also call it spiritual disciplines and their results.

We will see each one the five headers now.

1. **Swapna Prapancha Vaithatyam:** Here Gaudapada wants to establish unreality of dream world. Dream example is very useful. Unreal dream world appears as real, in sleep. If I am convinced about it, I can extend it, to waker's world as well.

Therefore, dream example is very important. Gaudapada gives three proofs of unreality of dream world. Most people probably see dream world as unreal anyway. So the three proofs are:

1. Shruti; 2. Yukti  
and 3. Anubhava.

#### 1. Shruti Pramanam:

Brihadaranyaka Upanishad says dream world is unreal; dream is only our mental projection where non-tangible thoughts seem tangible ones.

#### ▪ Yukti Pramanam:

The logic is that dream objects can't really exist, as they don't have the required space to exist or the required time to exist. Required space is not there as everything is within our head; thus our head can't accommodate say an elephant. Similarly the required time, to beget children and grandchildren is not available in a dream. Hence they are considered projections of mind.

#### ▪ Anubhava

Pramanam: On waking up we find all our dream experience disappears into thin air. Sleeping in New York, I am seeing Coovam, but it disappears upon waking.

Thus, we have three pramanams of dream.

#### ▪ Jagrat Prapancha Vaithatya: Karikas # 4- # 18:

From the 4th verse up to the 18th verse, the second and the most important topic is covered, which is that the waking world is also mithya exactly like the dream world. Just as the dream world appears as satyam in dream, the waking world appears as satyam in the waking state. Even though the waking world appears as satyam in the waking state, still it is mithya only.

Gaudapada

in the very powerful verse 6 says that the dream world is mithya because it is subject to arrival and departure. The waking world is available in the waking state but the entire waking world disappears when you switch over from waking to dream or deep sleep. The moment you change the state, the entire waking world disappears and the dream world appears, and in dream it does not appear as dream, but like the waking world only. The waking world comes in the waking state, it goes in the dream state, the dream world comes in the dream state and it goes in the waking state. Each one appears in its own respective state and disappears in the other state. So both the worlds must have equal status. Therefore, since the dream world is known to be mithya, then the waking world also must be given the same mithya status. Thus Gaudapada says that the waking world is mithya because it is subject to arrival and departure just like the dream world is.

Gaudapada says Waker's universe is unreal; He gives two reasons for this: 1. Implied reason; and 2. Direct reason.

Implied reason:

Whatever

is objectified is Mithya. Whatever is seen; is mithya. Any object can reveal its existence depending on an observer. Without observer, no

object can reveal  
its existence. Since object depends on Subject it has a  
dependent existence;  
hence object is mithya. Thus, Jagrat Prapancha is an object of  
experience hence  
it is mithya. Say, in another higher state of experience, one  
experiences a  
mystical world, even that is mithya as even that mystical  
world depends on an  
extraordinary observer. So, any Drishyam is Mithya.

Direct Reason:

Whatever is impermanent is  
mithya. Anything impermanent enjoys only temporary existence.  
Temporary  
existence means borrowed existence; or it means dependent  
existence; however, anything  
with independent existence will exist forever. Jagrat  
Prapancha is subject to  
arrival and departure just like the dream world is, hence it  
is impermanent.

Therefore Gaudapada concludes  
Drishyatvam and Anithyatvam are the cause Mithyatvam.

Thereafter,  
several objections are raised and all these objections are  
with an intention to  
show that dream is mithya and waking is satyam. To prove this,  
various  
definitions of reality are presented. Gaudapada  
refutes these definitions of reality. They  
give four reasons:

1. Utility: Waker's  
universe has utility only in waking state but not in dream. If  
utility is

criterion then dream world will become real. Gaudapada refutes this by pointing

out that each world is useful in the respective state and each one is useless

in the other state. Dream water is useful in dream but not in waking.

Similarly, waker's water is useful in the waking state but not useful in the

dream. So if utility is the criterion, both should be accepted as the same and

it cannot be said that one is satyam and the other is mithya.

2. Clarity: Whatever is a clear

experience is real. Thus, dream is very vague and so unreal.

Gaudapada's answer is

that the dream world is unreal only from the standpoint of the waking state but

when you are in dream, every event is very clear just as everything in the

waking world is clear in the waking state. Clarity cannot be used to

differentiate between dream and the waking world.

3. Externality: Whatever is

externally available is real. The waking world is outside and the dream world is inside.

What is outside is real and what is inside is unreal, mithya.

Gaudapada refutes

this by saying that the dream world is said to be internal and unreal only when

you are in the waking state, but in dream, the dream world is experienced as

external. Internality and externality logic will thus not work to show that the

dream world is mithya and the waking world is real.

4.

Objectivity:

Objectivity is a criterion for reality. Whatever is commonly available to all is real. Thus, this mike is available to all, but dream is not available to all. Gaudapada however disagrees; he says even dream world is available to them, if you are in a dream. Dream train is available to many people in dream.

So, none of the above criteria are correct.

If dream and Waker's world's are unreal then what is reality? Unreal requires support. **Reality is that which exists but which is never observed.** What is that thing? It is the observer or Consciousness alone that is reality. **Everything else that is observed is unreal.** Thus world is observed, hence unreal; body is observed, hence unreal; mind is observed, hence unreal. The awareness of world, body and mind; that awareness principle, is Turiyam or Satyam. Thus, all three states are located and supported in Turiyam.

Now Gaudapada says, **everything unreal is born out of ignorance of reality. Therefore Turiya Agyanam is cause of Jagrat Prapancha and Swapna Prapancha. Citing example of snake and rope, rope ignorance is cause of snake appearance.**

When rope is mistaken for snake, it becomes a serious problem. The waking world will create serious problems



when it is mistaken as satyam. Mithya mistaken as satyam will create problems because mithya is unstable. Satyam alone is stable. When we take the mithya world as satyam, we will seek support and security from the unstable mithya objects, name, fame, power, position, and even relationships. Mithya never remains the same. Because of the ignorance of "I am satyam and jagat is mithya", we are facing problems. 'I am satyam, the world is mithya ' is not an academic knowledge but it makes a big change in our life itself, the way we look at us, the way we look at the world. There is a huge perspective change, which is the cause of moksha itself.

Similarly Turiya Agyanam is cause of Pada Trayam. So the teaching is: Turiyam Satyam, Pada Trayam Mithya.

- **Misconceptions regarding the reality:** Because of ignorance of Turiyam, many misconceptions are born. In each misconception one object or another is considered Satyam. " I " am the truth, is missed out and an object is taken as reality. Some say energy is truth; scientists feel truth is somewhere outside and are still struggling to find it. The irony is that the Searcher of reality is the Reality; Seeker is the sought. The more you struggle, the more you miss.

Even great philosophers have misconceptions. Gaudapada gives such philosophers hope; he says, behind every misconception, unreality, there is

Truth. Ultimately the misconception will save them, he says. Vedas allow for misconceptions. God, the ultimate reality, is initially presented as an object. An object is not the real god but still Vedas allow it in beginning stages; like Vishnu, Shiva etc. We look at God as an object not realizing such a god can't be true.

Gaudapada says even that object god worship will make you fit for Vedanta. Then you will question and realize god is not an object. Guru will then guide you to see that you are yourself god; Tat Tvam Asi. That is why we allow all religions to worship god in one form or another. But ultimately God is Turiyam. With this misconception is concluded.

▪ **Upasamhara:**

Karika # 30- 34:

I the observer am Satyam. Whatever I experience is mithya. Advantage of this knowledge is that: Mithya can't affect Satyam. Observed universe can't touch Me; I am free from all problems created by universe. Here, I, as Turiyam alone, have the right to say world is unreal. I am ever free from Samsara.

Gaudapada says even different words used for Turiyam are unreal. The word Turiyam is relative to each of the three padas. Just as father of dream child is unreal or his fatherhood is unreal. So also the word Advaitam is unreal as is the word

consciousness, which  
is also unreal with respect to inertness. **So  
no word can be used.**

Gaudapada says when we say  
world is mithya, it can be stated in two different forms:

1. An unreal world exists;  
and

2) A real world does not  
exist.

Which of the two is correct? Saying  
to some one, you are seemingly intelligent can mean he is not  
intelligent. When  
we say world exist, it means unreal world does not exist.  
Unreal is from  
standpoint of Turiyam.

▪ **Sadhanas and  
their result: Karikas # 35-38:**

Five sadhanas were given:

1. Sadhana  
chatushtaya sampathihi. This is stated as freedom from  
attachment, fear and  
anger.
2. Vedanta Sravanam:  
Systematic study of Vedanta.
3. Mananam: Here  
Munihi means one who performs mananam.
4. Nidhidhyasanam:  
Dwelling on the teaching.
5. Sanyasa ashrama:  
This is only an optional sadhana. One can practice  
internal sanyasam as well.

Karika # 38:

The Phalam: He will be ever  
established in the knowledge that I am ever-free Turiyam even  
during worldly  
transactions.

With this the chapter  
concluded.

**Take Away:** Rope

ignorance is cause of snake appearance. Everything unreal is  
born out of  
ignorance of reality. Thus, Turiya Agyanam is cause of Jagrat  
Prapancha and  
Swapna Prapancha.

Reality is that which exists  
but which is never observed. Everything else that is observed  
is unreal.

**With Best Wishes**

Ram Ramaswamy