

GITA CLASS – CHAPTER 2, PART 8

We are now on the 2nd chapter, 19th shloka.

***‘Ya enam vetti hantāram yaśchainam manyate hatam
Ubhau tau na vijānīto nāyam hanti na hanyate.’ 2.19.***

2.19. ‘He who thinks of this One as the killer, and he who thinks of this One as the killed – both of them do not know. This One does not kill, nor is it killed.’

This *śloka* and the next one go together. The concept of these *ślokas* was discussed in the classes on the *Katha Upaniṣad*. There is only a slight difference in the presentation here. In the *Kathopaniṣad* it says, ‘*hantas chet manyate hatam.*’ This means, ‘when the body is slain, man thinks, ‘I am slain.’ Here it says, ‘*Ya enam vetti hantāram yaśchainam manyate hatam.*’ This means, ‘whoever knows the Self as the slayer, and whoever knows this Self as that which is slain. Then the *śloka* says, ‘*ubhau tau na vijānītaḥ nāyam hanti na hanyate.*’ In this part, there is no difference from the *mantra* in *Kathopaniṣad*. This means, ‘both of these people do not know the true nature of the Self, that It is neither slayer nor is slain.’

The next *śloka* is the same. The 20th *śloka* says, ‘The Self is never born and never dies.’ (*Na Jāyate mriyate Vā Kadāchit*). This idea is also conveyed in the *Kathopaniṣad*. There, it says, ‘*Na Jāyate Mriyate Vā Pibaśchit.*’ This is the same meaning, that ‘the Self is never born, and never dies. Then the next line of the 20th *śloka* says, ‘*Nāyam bhūtvābhavitā vā na bhūyaḥ.*’ In the *Kathopaniṣad*, the same idea is said in the phrase, ‘*Nāyam kutaścha na babhuva kaśchit.*’

Then the rest of the 20th *śloka* here says, ‘*ajo nityaḥ śāśvatoyam purāṇo na hanyate hanyamāṇe śarīre.*’ This means, ‘The Self is birthless, eternal, and ancient. It is not destroyed in the destruction of the body.’ This is the same in *Kathopaniṣad*. The ideas contained in the *Kathopaniṣad* are thus expressed in these two *ślokas* of the Gita. Now to the *Śaṅkara Bhāṣyā*. It says,

‘Śokamohādisaṁsāraḥkāraṇanivṛttyartham gītāśāstram na pravartakamityetasyārthasya sākṣībhūte ṛchāvānnināy bhagavān. Yattu manyase yuddhe bhīṣmādayo mayā hanyante/hameva teṣāṁ hantetyeṣā buddirmṛṣaiva te. Katham?’ – ya enamiti.

It says first, ‘śokamohādisaṁsāraḥkāraṇanivṛttyartham.’ This means that śoka (grief) and moha (delusion) are the cause (kāraṇa) of the samsara, the transmigration of life and death. The science of the Gita (Gītā śāstra) is for the cessation of those causes (nivṛttyartham). It says that this science of the Gita, ‘na pravartakam.’ It does not order a person to action. This means that the Gita does lead a person who performs actions in ignorance back to actions, back to samsara. Instead, the Gita is what leads man to Supreme Liberation (mokṣa).

It says, ‘iti etasya arthasya,’ of the meaning of this idea, ‘sākṣībhūte,’ the pramāṇa, or proof of this, the witness of this, ‘ṛchau,’ the mantras in the Kathopaniṣad, ‘ānināya Bhagavān,’ is presented by the Lord. Through these two mantras, the Lord presents this idea. Then, the bhāṣyā continues, ‘Yat tu manyase ‘yuddhe bhīṣmādayaḥ mayā hanyante, ahaṁ eva teṣāṁ hantā’ iti eṣā buddhiḥ mṛṣaiva te. Katham.’ It starts with, ‘Yat tu manyase.’ The Lord is speaking to Arjuna. He says, ‘that which you think,’ ‘yuddhe bhīṣmādayaḥ mayā hanyante.’ ‘that Bhīṣma and the Kauravas will be slain by me.’ ‘Ahaṁ eva teṣāṁ hantā.’ ‘I will become their slayer.’ ‘Iti eṣā buddhiḥ.’ This is what you think, isn’t it? ‘Mṛṣaiva,’ That is not correct. ‘Katham?’ How is that?

The Lord says, ‘your understanding is not correct. ‘Tava buddhiḥ mṛṣā eva.’ Why is this? The answer to this question is the 19th śloka, ‘Ya enam vetti hantāram.’ Now we can look at the commentary of the śloka.

‘Enam prakṛtaṁ dehinam vetti jānāti hantāram hananakriyāyāḥ kartāram. Yaśchainamanyo manyate hataṁ dehahanane hato/hamiti hanankriyāḥ karmabhūtaṁ, tāvubhau na vijānīto na na jñāntavantāvavivekenā/tmānamahampratyayaviṣayaṁ, hantā/hami hato/smyahamiti dehahananenā/tmānamaham prayayaviṣayaṁ yau vijānītaṣṭāvātmasvarūpānibhijñāvityarthaḥ. Yasmānnāyamātmā hanti na

*hananakriyāyāḥ kartā bhavati, na hanyate cha bhavatīyarthah,
avikriyatvāt. 2.19.*

It says, ‘*Yaḥ enam prakṛtam dehinaṁ vetti vijānāti hantāraṁ hananakriyāyāḥ kartāraṁ.*’ This part is explaining the phrase in the *śloka*, ‘*Ya enam vetti hantāraṁ.*’ So, ‘*Yaḥ,*’ whoever, ‘*enam,*’ this, the Self which is being discussed, ‘*prakṛtam,*’ in this circumstance, ‘*dehinaṁ,*’ the Self, to which the body belongs, ‘*vetti vijānāti,*’ knows. Whoever knows the Self, ‘*gantāraṁ,*’ as the slayer. This is explained. ‘*Hananakriyāyāḥ kartāraṁ.*’ This means the person who performs the act of slaying. The *śloka* said, ‘*Ya enam vetti hantāraṁ.*’ So, whoever knows the Self as the slayer.’ That is the meaning.

The word ‘*gantā*’ means someone who slays. The 2nd conjugation of this as an object is the word ‘*gantāraṁ.*’ This word comes from the verb root ‘*hana*’ to slay. The word ‘*gantāraṁ*’ is in the form of doership, a person who performs the action of slaying. From the root ‘*hantr,*’ comes the doership form of *gantā*, (one slayer), *gantarau*, (2 slayers), and *gantaraḥ* (plural slayers). From the single form comes the word ‘*gantāraṁ,*’ the slayer as an object. Therefore, the word ‘*gantā*’ means a person who slays. Thus, the *bhāṣyā* says, ‘*hanana kriyāyāḥ kartāraṁ.*’ This means, ‘the one who performs slaying.’ So the *śloka*’s first part means, ‘whoever knows this Self as the slayer.’

Then, the *bhāṣyā* continues. ‘*Yaśchainaṁ manyate hataṁ.*’ This means, ‘and whoever has the opinion that the Self is slain.’ If we separate the words from the *saṁdhis*, we get this construction; ‘*yaḥ cha enam manyate hataṁ.*’ The *bhāṣyā* explains this part of the *śloka*. It says, ‘*Dehahananena ‘hataḥ ahaṁ’ iti hanana kriyāyāḥ karmabhūtaṁ.*’ Thus, another person thinks, ‘the Self is slain.’ How is this? It says, ‘*deha hananena ‘hataḥ ahaṁ.*’ He thinks like this. ‘*Hataḥ ahaṁ.*’ ‘I am slain.’ This is what he thinks. Then what is this? It says, ‘*hanana kriyāyāḥ karmabhūtaṁ.*’ This person knows the Self as being affected by *karma*. We said that the word ‘*hana*’ means ‘to kill.’ When a person is the object of the action of slaying, it says, ‘*hataḥ.*’ That is why it says, ‘*karma bhūtaṁ.*’ This is an verb, the act of slaying.

Every verb has a subject. Here, the subject is ‘*gantā,*’ the slayer. Then there is the object of that *karma* of slaying, called, ‘*hataḥ.*’ One may think either of

these. One may think, '*hatohami*.' 'I have been slain.' Or, one can think, '*hantā ahami*.' 'I am the slayer.' A person can have either of these feelings, and this is what happened to Arjuna. Arjuna thought, 'I will kill them, or they will kill me. I will become their slayer.' This is the awareness a person has; what a person thinks about the *Ātman*.

Then the *bhāṣyā* says, '*Tau Ubhau Na Vijānitaḥ*.' Both people, the one who thinks he is the slayer and the one who thinks he is slain, '*Na Vijaanitau*.' They do not know the Self. '*Na Jñātavantau*.' They do not have true knowledge. Of what? '*Avivekena ātmānam*.' Out of *aviveka*, indiscrimination, they do not know themselves. They do not know the *Ātman*.

The *bhāṣyā* says next, '*hantā ahami*' '*hataḥ asmi ahami*' *iti dehahananena ātmānam ahamipratyayaviṣayam yau vijānitaḥ tau ātmasvarūpānabhijñau ityarthah*.' These two do not know the Self. In truth, it is the body that is undergoing destruction. Therefore, they do not know the *Ātman*. '*Hantā ahami*.' 'I am the slayer.' '*Hataḥ asmi ahami*.' 'I have been slain.' '*Iti dehahananena ātmānam*.' They know the Self as identified with the process of killing. A person cannot truly say, 'I am slain.' Instead, this is imagined. A person imagines, 'after he slays me, I will die.' This is speaking about a person who imagines this. This doesn't speak about the experience after death. That's not possible.

So, '*dehahananena*, 'through the slaying of the body, '*ātmānam*,' one's self. What is the *Ātman*? It says, '*ahamī pratyayaviṣayam*.' The *Ātman* is the awareness '*ahamī*,' or 'I.' That is what is called the Self. Then, it says, '*Yau vijānitaḥ*,' whoever understands this, that 'I am killed,' or 'I am the killer,' '*Tau ātmasvarūpānabhijñau*.' Both of them do not understand the true nature of the *Ātman*, the Self. '*Ityarthah*,' That is the *artha*, the meaning of the *śloka*. Why is this?

It says, next, '*Yasmāt na ayam ātmā hanti na hananakriyāyāḥ kartā bhavati, na hanyate na cha karma bhavatītyarthah, avikriyatvāt*.' So, we can look at this section. It starts with the phrase, '*Yasmāt na ayam ātmā hanti*.' This means, 'Because the self does not slay.' This is explained, '*na hananakriyāyāḥ kartā bhavati*.' The *Ātman* does not become the doer performer of the act of killing (*hanana kriya*). This is what Arjuna thought. Arjuna told Krishna, 'I will have to kill them.'

Then, it says, ‘*Na hanyate.*’ This means that the *Ātman* is never affected by the action of slaying. It is never slain. ‘*Ityartham,*’ this is the meaning. Why is that? It says the reason, ‘*avikriyatvāt.*’ This is because the *Ātman* is devoid of modification, of change. Now the meaning of this is very clear. Let’s take a look at the *śloka* now.

‘*Yah,*’ whoever, ‘*enam,*’ this, which is the Self being discussed, ‘*hantāram,*’ as the killer, ‘*vetti,*’ knows, ‘*yah cha,*’ and whoever, ‘*enam,*’ this, the Self, ‘*hataṁ,*’ as the slain, ‘*manyate,*’ thinks. *Ubhau Tau Na Vijānitaḥ.* These two people do not know. ‘*Nāyam hanti.*’ ‘*Ayam,*’ this, ‘*na hanti,*’ doesn’t kill, ‘*na hanyate,*’ is not slain.’

So, ‘*ayam na hanti,*’ the Self does not kill, ‘*na hanyate,*’ and is not killed either.’ That is the meaning. The difference between these two statements is between subject and object. In other words, the phrase, ‘*na hanti,*’ means the Self is not the doer of the action, which is killing. The phrase, ‘*na hanyate,*’ means that the Self is not the object of action, which again is killing.

Now, to the next part of the bhashya. It says, ‘*Katham avikriyaḥ ātmā iti dvitīyaḥ mantraḥ.*’ So, ‘*katham avikriyaḥ ātmā.*’ This means, ‘how is the Self devoid of change? The *bhāṣyā* said that the Self is *avikriya*, devoid of change. So how is this? ‘*Iti dvitīyaḥ mantraḥ.*’ This is explained in the 2nd *śloka* of these two. This is said because these two *ślokas*, 19 and 20, are considering as being grouped together. This is because there is only a small difference between these two *ślokas* and the *mantras* in the *Kathopaniṣad*. So, to explain how the Self is devoid of change, the next *mantra* is said.

***Na jāyate mriyate vā kadāchinnāyaṁ bhūtvā/bhavitā vā na
bhūyaḥ
Ajo nityaḥ śāśvato/yaṁ purāṇo na hanyate hanyamāne śarīre.
2.20.***

2. 20. ‘*Never is this One born, and never does It die; nor is it that having come to exist, It will again cease to be. This One is birthless, eternal, undecaying, ancient;
it is not killed when the body is killed.*’

*Kathamavikriya ātmeti dvitīyo mantraḥ – na jāyate notapadyate
janīlakṣaṇā vastuvikriyā nā/tmano vidyate ityarthaḥ. Na mriyate vā.*

*Vāśabdaschārthe. Na mriyate chetyantyā vināśalakṣaṇā vikriyā
pratiśidhyate. Kadāchicchabdaḥ sarvavikriyāpratiśedhaiḥ sambandhyate
na kadāchijjāyate na kadāchinmriyate ityevam. Yasmādayamātmā bhūtvā
bhavanakriyāmanubhūya paśchādabhavitā/bhāvaṁ gantā na bhūyaḥ
punastasmānmriyate. Yo hi bhūtvā na bhavitā sa mriyate ityuchyate
loke. Vāśabdānnaśabdācchāyamātmā/bhūtvā bhavitā vā dehavanna
bhūyaḥ punastasmānna jāyate. Yo bhūtvā bhavitā sa jāyate ityuchyate
naivamātmā/to na jāyate. Yasmādevaṁ tasmādajo yasmānna mriyate
tasmānnityaścha.’*

The phrase, ‘*na jāyate*’ is explained first. It says, ‘*Na jāyate na utpadyate.*’ This means that the Self is not born, or produced. Then the 6 modifications of worldly object are refuted as existing for the Self. These 6 modifications are birth, growth, sustenance, change, decay, and death. It thus refutes all of these. It says, ‘*janīlakṣaṇā vastuvikriyā na ātmanaḥ vidyate ityarthaḥ.*’ ‘*Janīlakṣaṇā,*’ in the form of birth, ‘*vastuvikriyā,*’ the modifications of objects, ‘*na ātmanaḥ,*’ in the Self, ‘*vidyate,*’ don’t occur. ‘*Ityarthaḥ.*’ This is the meaning.

In this way, the process of birth (*jāyate*) is refuted. Then the bhashya says, ‘*Na Mriyate Vā.*’ The *vikāra* of destruction is refuted here. ‘*Na mriyate vā,*’ that isn’t destroyed. It says, ‘*Vā śabdaḥ cha arthe.*’ The word ‘*vā*’ usually means ‘either or.’ However, here it means, ‘*cha,*’ ‘and.’ This is because it refers to combination. Thus, the *śloka* actually means, ‘*Na Jāyate Mriyate Cha.*’ The Self does not experience birth and death. That can be used in that way. This means that this is a common way of using the word. Thus, the *bhāṣyā* says, ‘*Na Mriyate Cha iti.*’

Then it continues, ‘*Antyā vināśalakṣaṇā vikriyā pratiśidhyate.*’ Here, the quality of destruction, *vināśa lakṣaṇā,* is refuted for the Self. These parts don’t require a lot of commentary. Then, it says, ‘*Kadāchit śabdaḥ sarvavikriyāpratiśedhaiḥ sambadhyate.*’ In the *śloka*, there is the word ‘*kadāchit.*’

The word '*kadāchit*' means 'at any time.' In the *śloka* it appears as, '*Na Jāyate Mriyate Vā Kadāchit.*' This word is connected to the verb, 'is born,' and also the verb, 'is destroyed.' Thus, this word, '*sarvavikriyāpratiṣedhaiḥ,*' along with all changes of objects, '*sambadhyate,*' should be connected. This is shown combined in the commentary. It says, '*Na kadāchit jāyate, Na kadāchit mriyate, ityārthaḥ.*' This means, 'not at any time is the Self born,' and 'not at any time is the Self destroyed.'

Then the *bhāṣyā* continues. It says, '*Yasmāt*' because of which, '*Ayam ātmā bhūtvā bhavanakriyām anubhūya paschāt abhavitā abhāvaṁ gantā na bhūyaḥ punaḥ.*' We can look at this part. It says, '*Yasmāt,*' because of which, '*ayam ātmā,*' this Self, '*bhūtvā bhavanakriyām anubhūya.*' The word '*bhūtvā*' means, 'after being born, after being manifested.' This is explained as '*bhavanakriyām anubhūya,*' after having attained the modification of coming into existence (*bhavana kriyā*). This means, 'after the feeling, 'I am born' is produced in the Self. This exists in the body. Then it says, '*paschāt,*' after this, after the *Ātman* feels 'I am born,' '*abhavitā,*' being destroyed. This is explained, '*abhāvaṁ gantā.*' This means the condition of non-existence, or death, '*na.*' The Self does not experience, 'I am born and then destroyed.' This experience does exist for the Self. Instead, it exists for the body.

Then the *bhāṣyā* says, '*bhūyaḥ.*' The meaning of this is given, as '*punaḥ,*' Again, the *Ātman* doesn't have the awareness that 'I was born, and will die.' Because of that, what is it? '*Tasmāt,*' therefore, '*na mriyate,*' the Self is not destroyed. It does not die. Here, in the *śloka* it says, '*Na jāyate mriyate vā kadāchit, Nāyam Bhūtvā abhavitā vā na bhūyaḥ.*' Because of the *sandhi,* it says, '*bhūtvābhavitā.*' Actually, it is, '*bhūvā abhavitā.*' Because they are joined, it says, '*bhūtvābhavitā.*' This creates some confusion, because we are unable to distinguish which word is which. We will think, 'Is it '*bhūtvā bhavitā?*' Or is it '*bhūtvā abhavitā?*' This can be in either way, because of the *sandhi.* Here, the commentator divides this phrase as, '*bhūtvā abhavitā.*'

All of the other commentators of the Gita have explained this section as '*bhūtvā bhavitā.*' However, *Śaṅkara* explains it as, '*bhūtvā abhavitā.*' So what does it say here? '*Ayam ātmā bhūtvā,*' For the Self, being manifested, '*abhavitā na,*' and then being destroyed; this does not occur. The Self does not die. Thus,

the *śloka* says, ‘*Na Bhūtvā abhavitā.*’ The Self is not born, nor is it destroyed. Then where does birth and death occur? This means that birth and death happen to the body, not the Self. Only *Śaṅkara* gives this explanation.

Then the *bhāṣyā* says, ‘*Na hi bhūtvā na bhavitā sa mriyate iti uchyate loke.*’ Whoever is born and is destroyed is said to die (*mriyate*) in the word (*loke*). He is said to be dead. That is the meaning. ‘*Bhūtvā,*’ having been born, ‘*abhavitā,*’ being destroyed, ‘*na,*’ this doesn’t occur for the Self. That destruction is called death. Then the *bhāṣyā* says, ‘*vāśabdāt naśabdāt cha ayam ātmā abhūtvā vā bhavitā dehavat na bhūyaḥ punaḥ.*’

In the *śloka* the word ‘*vā*’ is used. This is in, ‘*na jāyate mriyate vā.*’ There is also the word ‘*na.*’ These two words continue in the next part, ‘*nāyam bhūvābhavitā vā na bhāyaḥ.*’ When these two words are continued to this part of the *śloka*, a new meaning is gained. Therefore, it says, ‘*vāśabdāt naśabdāt cha,*’ because we can use the words ‘*na*’ and ‘*cha,*’ this is the meaning. ‘*Ayam ātmā,*’ ‘This, the Self, ‘*abhūtvā.*’ This means that the word ‘*na*’ is continued here. The phrase ‘*na bhūtvā*’ is the same as ‘*abhūtvā.*’ Why is this? In the *śloka* it says, ‘*na ayam bhūtvā.*’ Therefore, you can organize this as, ‘*Ayam Na Bhūtvā.*’ The meaning of this is said, as ‘*Ayam ātmā Abhūtvā.*’ The Self, being unmanifested, ‘*bhavitā,*’ becomes manifest, what is this like? ‘*Dehavat,*’ like the body, ‘*na,*’ this doesn’t happen. The Self is not something that is unmanifest and becomes born. What is this like? This is like the body. The body comes from unmanifestation to being manifest. However, the Self is not like that. Then it says, ‘*bhūyaḥ punaḥ.*’

Then it says, ‘*Tasmāt,*’ therefore, ‘*na jāyate.*’ The Self is not born. That which is unmanifest and comes into existence is what is born. That which is manifested and is destroyed is what dies. To give both of these meanings, the words ‘*abhavitā*’ and ‘*abhūtvā*’ were explained. First, the word ‘*bhūtvā*’ was explained. This means something that exists and is destroyed. It said, ‘*Bhūtvā abhavitā na.*’ This means the Self is not something that is manifested and the destroyed. This was said.

And what about the 2nd part? We said, ‘*Abhūtvā bhavitā na.*’ The Self is not something which is unmanifest and is born. Because of this, both death and birth are refuted in relation to the *Atman*. This was explained in this way to refute birth and death for the Self. Then it says, ‘*Yo hi abhūtvā bhavitā sa jāyate.*’

Yaḥ, whoever, *'abhūtvā bhavitā,'* is unmanifest and then manifest, *'saḥ jāyate,* he is born.' *'Iti uchyate.'* This is said. In this way, to make completely clear that the Self in no way is born, the commentator takes and explains every possible meaning..

Then it says, *'naivam ātmā.'* All of these things happen to the body, not the Self. *'Ataḥ na jāyate.'* Therefore, the Self is not born. *'Yasmāt evam,'* Because of this, *'Tasmāt ajaḥ,'* the Self is birthless. Then, *'Yasmāt na mriyate,'* because the Self does not die, *'tasmāt nityaḥ cha,'* therefore the Self is eternal as well. That which is not born is *aja*, birthless. That which does not die is eternal, *nitya*.

'Yadyapyādyantayorvikriyayoḥ pratiśedhe sarvā vikriyāḥ pratiśiddhā bhavanti tathā/pi madhyabhāvinīnām vikriyāṇām svasābdairiva tadarthaiḥ pratiśedhaḥ kartavya ityanuktānāmapi yauvanādisamastavikriyāṇām pratiśedho yathā syādityāha – śāśvata ityādinā. Śāśvata ityapakṣayalakṣaṇā vikriyā pratiśidhyate śāśvadbhāvaḥ śāśvataḥ. Nāpakṣiyate svarūpeṇa niravayavatvānnirguṇatvāccha nāpi guṇakṣayeṇāpakṣayaḥ. Apakṣayaviparītā/pi vṛddhilakṣaṇā vikriyā pratiśidhyate – purāṇa iti. Yo hyavayavāgamenopachīyate sa vardate/bhinava iti chochyate. Ayam tvātmā niravayavatvātpurā/pi nava eveti purāṇo na vardhate ityarthāḥ.'

Then it says, *'Yadyapi ādyantayoḥ vikriyayoḥ pratiśedhe sarvāḥ vikriyāḥ pratiśiddhā bhavanti.'* Here in the beginning we said, *'Na Jāyate Na Mriyate.'* The Self is not born and does not die.' So the first modification of the 6 modifications of a *Jiva* in *Samśāra* is birth. The last modification is death. Naturally, because birth and death, the first and last modifications are refuted, it follows naturally that the other modifications are also refuted. These are growth, sustenance, decay, etc. All of these modifications are refuted.

So, it said, *'yadyapi,'* even if that is so, *'ādyantayoḥ vikriyayoḥ pratiśedhe.'* If the beginning and end are refuted, which are the first and last modifications in a living beings life, *'sarvāḥ vikriyāḥ pratiśiddhāḥ bhavanti.'* Then all of the others will be refuted. This is continued. It says, *'Tathāpi,'* even so,

‘*madhyabhāvinīnām vikriyānām svasābdaiḥ eva tadarthaiḥ pratiśedhaḥ kartavyaḥ iti anuktānām api, yauvanādisamastavikriyānām pratiśedhaḥ yathā syāt ityāha- śāśvataḥ ityādinā.*’ Even though it is enough to refute the first and last modifications, it says, ‘*madhyabhāvinīnām,*’ of the middle stages, ‘*vikriyānām,*’ of the modifications, ‘*svasābdaiḥ eva tadarthaiḥ,*’ the refuting of these with their direct words, ‘*kartavyaḥ iti,*’ because this should be done, ‘*anuktānām api,*’ even though this is not said in particular, ‘*yauvanādisamastavikriyānām.*’ We should remember that these modifications are not refuted for external objects like the body, but for the Self. The body is born, and undergoes childhood, growth, maturity, etc. So it says, ‘*yauvanādisamastavikriyānām,*’ of all the modifications such as youth, ‘*pratiśedhaḥ*’ are refuted for the Self.

All of these modifications belong to the body. These do not belong to the Self. Then it says, ‘*Ityāha.*’ This is said by the Lord in the *shloka*, through the word, ‘*śāśvataḥ.*’ This means ‘everlasting.’ We already discussed the first half of the *śloka*. This was, ‘*Na Jāyate Mriyate Vā Kadāchit, Nāyam Bhūtvābhavitā Vā Na Bhūyaḥ.*’ The second part of the *shloka* is, ‘*Ajo nityaḥ śāśvatoyam purāṇo.*’

We explained the meaning of the word, ‘*ajaḥ.*’ This means what is not subject to birth. The Self is birthless. We also explained the meaning of ‘*nitya.*’ The Self is eternal, because it is not subject to death. Now we are explaining the word, ‘*śāśvataḥ.*’ This word is explained further in the *bhāṣyā*. It says, ‘*śāśvataḥ iti apakṣayalakṣaṇā vikriyā pratiśeddhyate.*’ The word ‘*apakṣayam*’ means ‘decay.’ This refutes the idea that the Self decays. This happens to the body, not the Self. Then what is the meaning of ‘*śāśvata?*’

It says, ‘*śāśvatbhāvaḥ śāśvataḥ.*’ Whatever is eternally existent is called ‘*śāśvat,*’ everlasting.’ Then it says, ‘*Na apakṣīyate svarūpeṇa, niravayavatvāt nirguṇatvāt cha.*’ The Self does not experience *kṣayam*, decay. The worldly objects and the body undergo decay. Their own nature is to undergo decay. They become destroyed out of their own nature. However, this doesn’t happen to the *Ātman*. It says the Self is ‘*niravayavatvāt.*’ The Self is devoid of parts (*avayavayam*). The Self cannot be split and divided into different parts. The Self is devoid of parts, and is also described as ‘*nirgunatvaat.*’ This means the *Ātman* has no attributes. The Self has no attributes, such as happiness, sorrow, anger,

etc. Because of this, it says, ‘*svayam apashīyate.*’ It does not undergo destruction itself.

Then it says, ‘*nāpi guṇakṣayeṇa apakṣayaḥ.*’ This is explained. Why is there no decay in the true nature of the *Ātman*? This is ‘*niravayavatvāt,*’ because the Self is devoid of parts. Because the *Ātman* is *nirguṇa*, devoid of qualities, It is not destroyed in the destruction of any quality. That is the meaning. Then it says, ‘*apakṣayaviparītā api vṛddhilakṣanā vikriyā pratiśeddhyate purāṇaḥ iti.*’ What does the next part of the *śloka* say? It says, ‘*sāśvato yaṁ purāṇo.*’ Here, the word, ‘*puāṇaḥ*’ is explained. It said, ‘*apakṣayaviparītā api vṛddhilakṣanā.*’ The opposite (*viparītā*) of destruction (*apakṣayam*) is growth (*vṛddhi*). The body experiences growth. When the body progresses from childhood to youth, and youth to maturity, this is growth. When one goes from maturity to senility, this is ‘decay,’ or ‘*apakṣayam.*’ After refuting this ‘decay,’ here it says, ‘the opposite of decay, ‘*vṛddhilakṣaṇa,*’ the modification of growth, ‘*pratiśiddhyate,*’ is refuted. The word ‘*purāṇaḥ,*’ ancient,’ refutes the existence of this quality for the Self.

This word is then explained in the *bhāṣyā*. It says, ‘*Yo hi avayavāgamena upachīyate sa vardhate, abhinavaḥ.*’ We can look at this part. It says, ‘*Yo hi,*’ whoever, ‘*avayavāgamena,*’ becomes consisting of parts. This happens in childhood, ‘*upachīyate,*’ he grows, ‘*vardhate abhinavaḥ iti uchyate.*’ This means that the body becomes new, compared to the old body. This can said about the body. What is that? We can say that the old condition of the body in childhood changed into the new condition of youth.

Then it says, ‘*Ayam tu ātmā niravayavatvāt purā api navaḥ eva iti purāṇaḥ.*’ We can look at this. It says, ‘*Ayam tu ātmā,*’ and what about the *Ātman*? ‘*niravayavatvāt,*’ it does not consist of parts. We said that the body changes into a new condition. This is because it consists of parts. However, the Self, because It is not composed of parts, ‘*purā api navaḥ eva.*’ The Self is ancient but new. The word *Purāṇa* is the combination of these two words, ‘*purā*’ and ‘*navaḥ.*’ Thus means that even though the Self is ancient, it is always new. This means that It is always the same. The Self is always new.

Then the *bhāṣyā* says, ‘*na vardhate ityarthaḥ.*’ The Self does not have grow. It doesn’t grow like the body. ‘*Ityarthaḥ,*’ this is the meaning. Now why is each section being repeated so much? This is because the *Jīva* becomes identified with

body, assuming that the qualities of the body belong to the Self. Through each part of the *śloka*, these qualities are refuted. This is to remove the *Jiva*'s false identification. Then it says,

*‘Tathā na hanyate na vipariṇamyate hanyamāne vipariṇāmyamāne/pi
śarīre. Hantiratra vipariṇāmārtho draṣṭavyo/punaruktatāyai na
vipariṇamyate ityarthaḥ. Asminmantre ṣadbhāvavikārā
laukikavastuvikriyā ātmani pratiśidhyante. Sarvaprakāravikriyārahita
ātmeti vākyārthaḥ. Yasmādevaṁ tasmādubhau tau na vijānīta iti
pūrveṇa mantreṇāsua sambandhaḥ.’*

‘tathā- na hanyate. Hanyamāne viparinamyamāne api sharīre.’ The end of the *śloka* is being explained. The *śloka* says, *‘Na Hanyate Hanyamāne Sharīre.’* The Self is not slain in the slaying of the body.’ The meaning of this is said. It says, *‘Na Viparinamyamāne.’* *Pariṇāma*’ is the name for the changes of the body. This happens from childhood into youth, and from youth into maturity. Both growth and destruction are transformations (*pariṇāma*). So, the *bhāṣyā* says, *‘na viparinamyate.’* *‘Hanyamāne sharīre na hanyate.’* In the slaying of the body, which is a transformation, there is no transformation (*pariṇāma*) in the Self. That is the meaning.

Then it says, *‘hantiḥ atra vipariṇāmārthe draṣṭavyaḥ apunaruktarāyai.’* This is speaking about the root *‘hana,’* to kill. The noun of this root is *‘hantiḥ,’* the act of killing.’ From this comes, *‘hataḥ,’* killed, and *‘ghnantīḥ,’* to cause to kill. This means to kill. This word *‘hantiḥ,’* has two meanings. It is said, *‘hana himsagatyoh.’* The root *‘hana’* can mean ‘to kill,’ or ‘to go.’ Here, the commentator accepts the 2nd meaning, ‘to go,’ not the first meaning, ‘to kill.’

The acceptance of the second meaning is agreed on by the rules of grammar. Thus, the commentator accepts the second meaning. Then the *bhāṣyā* says, *‘atra viparināmārthe draṣṭavyaḥ.’* The word *‘pariṇāma’* means to constantly evolve, to change. Thus, the root *‘hana’* should be understood in this way. Otherwise, what will happen? This will result in *‘punarukti,’* the repetition of a concept. If the meaning of the first use of *‘hanti’* is the same as it is used in this

śloka, the defect of repetition (*punarukti*) would occur. That cannot happen.

Therefore, it says that the use of the root ‘*hanti*’ refers to the second meaning of the word, which is different from how it was used in the previous *śloka*. The first meaning is ‘to kill, to slay.’ The second meaning is ‘to go.’ Thus, the commentator says that the second meaning of this word is used here. Because of this, it says that the defect of *punarukti* (redundancy) does not occur.

So, it says, ‘*vipariṇamyate ityarthah.*’ Here, the root ‘*hana*’ means ‘modification (*pariṇāma*), change, or evolution. The Self does not have the nature of movement. Then the *bhāṣyā* says, ‘*Asmin mantre ṣaḍ bhāvavikārāḥ laukikavastuvikriyāḥ ātmani pratiśiddhyante.*’ We can take a look at this. It says, ‘*asmin mantre,*’ in this *mantra*, ‘*ṣaḍ bhāvavikārāḥ,*’ the 6 modifications, such as birth, death, decay, etc., ‘*laukikavastukriyāḥ,*’ the transformations of worldly objects, ‘*ātmani pratiśiddhyante,*’ these modifications are refuted as existing within the Self.

Then, the *bhāṣyā* continues, ‘*sarvaprakāravikriyārahitaḥ ātmā iti vākyaṛthah.*’ Then how is the *Ātman*? It says, ‘*sarvaprakāravikriyārahitaḥ.*’ Devoid of every type of modifications, ‘*ātmā,*’ is the Self. This means that the *Jiva* experiences these modifications within himself at all times. What are all of these modifications? These are the changes of the mind and body. In one’s true nature, the *Ātman*, no kind of modification exists. ‘*Iti vākyaṛthah,*’ this is the meaning of the *śloka*.

Then it says, ‘*Yasmāt evaṁ tasmāt,*’ because of this, ‘*ubhau tau na vijānitaḥ*’ *iti pūrveṇa mantreṇa asya sambandhaḥ.*’ This part of the *śloka* says, ‘Both of these do not know (the Self).’ This is the part, ‘*Ubhau Tau Na Vijānitaḥ Nāyaṁ hanti na Hanyate.*’ So, whoever thinks that they are the body, that the Self is the body, does not know. What doesn’t he know? This is that the Self does not slay and is not slain. This is the connection with the previous *mantra*, ‘*pūrveṇa,*’ with the previous, ‘*mantreṇa,*’ *mantra,*’ *asya sambandhaḥ,*’ this is the relationship.

This means that the combination of both of these *mantras* produces a single meaning. That is what the word ‘*sambandha*’ means here. How do these two *mantras* combine to form one meaning? The meaning is, ‘the modifications belong to the body. Birth and death happen to the body. The body is manifested

and is destroyed. However, the *Atman* has neither manifestation nor destruction. This concept is revealed here..Now to the *śloka*.

‘*Ayam,*’ the Self, ‘*Kadāchit,*’ at any time, ‘*na Jāyate,*’ is not born. Then again, ‘*ayam,*’ the Self, ‘*kadāchit,*’ at any time, ‘*na mriyate cha,*’ does not die. Then, ‘*Ayam,*’ this, ‘*bhūtvā,*’ having existed, ‘*bhūyaḥ,*’ then, ‘*abhavitā na,*’ being destroyed, does not happen. This is according to the commentary. Again, ‘*bhūtvā,*’ having existed, ‘*abhavitā*’ being destroyed, ‘*na*’ does not happen.

Other commentators say, ‘*bhūtvā,*’ having existed, ‘*bhavitā,*’ again existing, ‘*na,*’ does not happen. However, *Shankara* sees this differently. He says the meaning is ‘*bhūtvā,*’ having manifested, ‘*abhavitā na,*’ is not destroyed. The other way of explanation is the order, ‘*abhūtvā,*’ having not existed, ‘*bhavitā na,*’ is not manifested. Then, ‘*Ayam ātmā,*’ this Self, ‘*ajāḥ,*’ is birthless, ‘*nityaḥ,*’ is eternal, ‘*sāśvataḥ,*’ everlasting, ‘*purāṇaḥ,*’ is ancient. This was all explained according to the *Shankara Bhāṣyā*.

We explained that the word ‘*purāṇaḥ,*’ means, ‘*purā api navaḥ.*’ This means that though it is ancient, it is always new. That was the commentary. We said that the word for everlasting, ‘*sāśvataḥ,*’ means that the Self does not undergo decay. This was commentated in this way. Then, the *śloka* says, ‘*sharīre hanyamāne ayam na hanyate.*’ When the body is slain, the Self is not slain. However, the commentary explained that the meaning of the root ‘*hana*’ here means to undergo modification. Therefore, the meaning according to the *bhāṣyā* is ‘when the body undergoes modification, the Self does not.’ This is because the root ‘*hana*’ can mean ‘to go.’ This indicates transformation. So, when the body undergoes transformation, the Self, ‘*na hanyate,*’ is not modified. That is the meaning accepted by the commentator. Now to the next *śloka*. The ideas of this *śloka* are now very clear. Now, to the next. First, the *Shankara Bhāṣyā*.

‘*Ya enam vetti hantāramityanena mantreṇa hananakriyāyāḥ kartā karma cha na bhavatīti pratijñāya ‘na jāyate’ ityanenāvikriyatve hetumuktvā pratijñātārthamupasamharati – vedāvināśinamiti.*’

This is the preface to the next *mantra*. We can look at this. It says, ‘*yaḥ enam vetti hantāram,*’ This is the 19th *śloka*. ‘*Ityanena mantreṇa,*’ by this *mantra*,

‘hanana kriyāyāḥ kartā karma cha na bhavati.’ This showed that the *Ātman* is not the doer of slaying or the object of slaying. Then, ‘na jāyate’ ityanena,’ by the 20th *śloka*, ‘Na Jāyate,’ it was said, ‘avikriyatve hetum̄ uktvā.’ The Self being ‘avikriya,’ devoid of modifications, ‘hetum̄ uktvā,’ the reason for this was spoken.

Then it says, ‘pratiñātārtham̄.’ So, after establishing that the Self does not undergo modification and is not the doer of object of action, through giving the reason that supports this, in relation to this, ‘upasam̄harati,’ the conclusion of this concept is given in the next *śloka*. Therefore, through these 3 *mantras*, a single idea is conveyed and concluded in the 21st *śloka*. We can take a look at this *śloka*.

**‘Vedāvināśinam̄ nityam̄ ya enamajamavyayam
Katham̄ sa puruṣaḥ pārtha kam̄ ghātayati hanti kam. 2.21.**

2.21. O Pārtha, he who knows this One as indestructible, eternal, birthless, and undecaying, how and whom does that person kill, or whom does cause to be killed?

*‘Veda vijānātyavināśinamantyabhāvavikārahitam̄ nityam̄
vipariṇāmarahitam̄ yo vedeti sambandhaḥ. Enam̄ pūrveṇa
mantreṇoktalakṣaṇamajam̄ janmarahitamavyayamapakṣayarahitam̄
katham̄ kena prakāreṇa sa vidvānpuruṣo/dhikṛto hanti hananakriyam̄
karoti. Katham̄ vā ghātayati hantāram̄ prayojayati. Na
katham̄chitkam̄chidhanti na katham̄chitkam̄chidghātayatyubhayatrā/kṣep
evārthaḥ praśnārthasambhavāt. Hetvarthasya talyatvādviduṣaḥ
sarvakarmapraṭiṣedha eva prakaraṇārtho/bhipreto bhagavataḥ.
Hantestvākṣepa udāharaṇārthatvena. Viduṣaḥ kam̄ karmāsambhave
hetuviśeṣam̄ paśyankarmāṇyākṣipati bhagavān – katham̄ sa puruṣa iti.’*

We can now look at the *Shankara Bhāṣyā* for this *śloka*. This commentary starts with the word, ‘veda.’ Then, the word ‘avināśinam̄.’ When these two words are combined in the *śloka*, it reads, ‘vedāvināśinam̄.’ The *bhāṣyā* says, ‘veda vijānāti,’

knowing, ‘*avināśinām.*’ This is explained as ‘*antya bhāvavikārahitam.*’ The last of the 6 modifications is ‘*anta,*’ or death. Thus, the Self is devoid of destruction. Then the word ‘*nityam*’ is explained. When these two words are used in the *śloka*, *avināśi* and *nitya*, there is a difference in the meaning of the two. It says that ‘*nityam*’ means, ‘*vipariṇāmarahitam.*’ This means the Self is devoid of transformation (*pariṇāma*).

‘*Yaḥ,*’ who, ‘*veda,*’ knows, ‘*iti sambandah,*’ these two words should be joined together, ‘*yaḥ,*’ and ‘*veda.*’ The word ‘*yaḥ,*’ is the subject, and ‘*veda,*’ is the verb. So, ‘*yo veda,*’ whoever knows the Self, in this way, ‘*Enam pūrvamantreṇa uktalakṣaṇām.*’ So whoever knows this Self with the qualities described in the previous *śloka*, ‘*ajam,*’ as birthless. This part is explained in the *bhāṣyā*. It says, ‘*ajam janmarahitam.*’ This means, ‘devoid of birth.’ Then, it says, ‘*avyayam apakṣayarahitam.*’ This means, ‘immutable, devoid of destruction.’ These matters were discussed earlier, so they are included here in order to make a conclusion of these ideas. Thus, these words are once again made clear.

So this *Atman*, which is devoid of destruction, ‘*katham sa puruṣaḥ Pārtha?*’ How can such a person slay or cause to slay?’ This is in the *śloka*. This is explained. The *bhāṣyā* says, ‘*Katham Kena prakāreṇa,*’ how, in what way,’ *saḥ vidvān puruṣaḥ,*’ this man, a *Vidvān*, ‘*adhikṛtaḥ,*’ a person who is fit for the instructions of the scriptures and the performance of *dharma*, this person, ‘*katham hanti,*’ how can he kill? ‘*Hananakriyām karoti,*’ how can he perform the act of killing?’

So, whoever knows the Self as birthless and immutable, how can he kill? This means that you cannot kill the Self. A person who knows the Self to be eternal, how can he kill? He cannot. Then, it says, ‘*Katham vā ghātayati hantāram prayojayati?*’ How can he cause someone to kill? The word ‘*hanti*’ means ‘to kill,’ and the word ‘*ghātayati*’ means ‘to cause to kill.’ This is a causative verb. How can such a person cause to kill? This is because Arjuna thought that the Lord was prompting him to kill. Therefore, it says, that is not true. A person who knows that the Self is eternal and devoid of destruction can never perform the act of killing, nor prompt someone to kill. That is the meaning.

Then the *bhāṣyā* continues. ‘*Na Kathaṁchit Kaśchit hanti, na kathaṁchit kaṁchit ghāṭayati iti ubhayatra akṣepaḥ eva arthaḥ, praśnārtha asaṁbhavāt.*’ The *śloka* says, ‘*Kathaṁ ghāṭayati hanti kaṁ.*’ How can he cause to kill? Who will he kill?’ The word ‘*katham*’ is usually used in a question. This means ‘how?’ It says that this is not in a question here. Instead, what is it? It says this is in the meaning ‘*askhep*,’ in order to refute something.

In this way, the section, ‘*kathaṁ ghāṭayati*,’ how can he cause to kill?’ means that he does not cause to kill. Also, the part ‘*hanti kaṁ*?’ ‘who will he kill?’ means, ‘he does not kill. Thus, the word ‘*katham*’ is used to refute, not to indicate a question. That is what said here. The *bhāṣyā* says, ‘*na kathaṁ chit*,’ not in any way, ‘*kaṁchit*,’ anyone, ‘*hanti*,’ does he kill. In the same way, it says, ‘*na kathaṁchit kaṁchit*,’ not in any way, anyone, ‘*ghāṭayati*,’ does he prompt to kill. He does not encourage anyone to kill.

The Lord is saying, ‘I cannot cause anyone to kill ever, and you cannot ever kill anyone.’ Then it says, ‘*ubhayatra*,’ in both places, what is it? The word ‘*katham*’ is in the form of refuting. ‘*akṣepaḥ eva arthaḥ.*’ Then it says, ‘*praśnārtha asaṁbhavāt.*’ This means that this is not in the form of a question. The Lord is not asking Arjuna, ‘does he kill or cause to kill?’ Instead, the Lord is saying, ‘I do not cause to kill, and you do not kill.’ That is the meaning.

That is the meaning of the *mantra*. This is then further explained. The *bhāṣyā* continues, ‘*Hetvarthasya cha avikriyatvasya tulyatvāt viduṣaḥ sarvakarmapratiśedaḥ eva prakāranārthaḥ abhipretaḥ bhagavataḥ.*’ Here what is happening? It says, ‘*viduṣaḥ*,’ for a man of knowledge, a *Jñāni*, all forms of *karma* are refuted through the *śloka*. To prove that actions do not exist for a *Jñāni*, the *śloka* says that the *Atman* is devoid of all modifications. This refuting is called ‘*sarva karma pratiśedaḥ.*’ This means that the *Atman* does not perform any kind of *karma*. Why is this? We said this is because the Self is ‘*avikriya*,’ devoid of modification.

Thus, the *bhāṣyā* says, ‘*hetvarthasya cha avikriyatvasya tulyatvāt.*’ This means that the reason (*hetu*) that none of the modifications take place for the Self is that It is ‘*Avikriya*,’ devoid of all change. Then it says, ‘*tulyatvāt*,’ equally, ‘*viduṣaḥ*,’ for a *Jñāni*. This means that this idea applies equally to the *Atman* as it does to a *Jñāni*, one who has attained Self-Realization. The phrase, ‘*tulyatvāt*

viduṣaḥ’ means that in whatever way the *Atman* is described, the same equally applies to the *Jñāni*.

Then it says about the *Jñāni*, ‘*sarvakarmapratiṣedaḥ eva.*’ This means that all forms of *karma* are refuted as existing in the *Jñāni*. Then, ‘*eva prakāranārthaḥ abhipretaḥ,*’ this is the opinion expressed through the *śloka*, ‘*bhagavataḥ,*’ by the Lord. The question that is raised is, ‘after attaining Self-knowledge, is the *Jñāni* again obligated to perform the *karmas* of the *Vedas* and *Smṛtis*?’ Does the *Jñāni* have such a duty?’ The answer given is ‘No. The *Jnani* has no kind of obligation like that.’ Why is this? This is because the *Jñāni* is the embodiment of the *Atman*. The *Atman* is ‘*avikriya,*’ devoid of all modifications. Therefore, the *Jñāni* is devoid of all change. Because of this, the idea of ‘doership’ and other false impositions on the Self do not exist for the *Jñāni*. Therefore, there is no need for the *Jñāni* to perform the *karmas* of the *Vedas* or *Smṛtis*.

Then *bhāṣyā* then says, ‘*hanteḥ tu akṣepaḥ udāharanārthatvena kathitaḥ.*’ What is said here? It said that the action of killing was refuted in the *śloka*. However, this action of killing is just an example (*udāharanam*). All forms of *karma* are represented by the verb, ‘to kill.’ That is why it says, ‘*hanteḥ tu akshepaḥ.*’ This refuting of the act of killing, ‘*udāharaṇārthatvena,*’ as an example, ‘*kathitaḥ,*’ was told by the Lord. It’s enough if you think this. This isn’t aimed just at ‘killing.’ This is used to refute all actions. This means that the *Jñāni* is not obligated by any kind of *svadharma*.

Then the *bhāṣyā* continues. It says, ‘*viduṣaḥ kaṁ karmāsambhave hetuviśeṣaṁ paśyan karmāṇi ākṣipati bhagavān ‘katham sa puruṣaḥ’ iti.*’ We can look at this part. It says, ‘*Viduṣaḥ,*’ a man of Self-Knowledge, a *Jñāni*, ‘*kaṁ,*’ who,’ *karmāsambhave,* because *karma* does not exist within the *Jñāni*, ‘*hetuviśeṣaṁ paśyan,*’ seeing what cause, ‘*Bhagavān,*’ the Lord, ‘*karmāṇi ākṣipati,*’ does He refute *karmas*, ‘*katham sa puruṣaḥ,*’ is contained in this, the 21st *śloka*, ‘*Katham,*’ etc. This means that *karma* doesn’t occur within the *Vidvān*, the *Jñāni*. We said that the *karmas* of the *Vedas* and *Smṛtis* do not exist within the *Tattvajñāni*. Then what is the cause of this, for the Lord to say this? ‘*Kaṁ hetuviśeṣaṁ paśyan?*’ What cause is seen for this? What cause is seen which refutes these *karmas* to the *Jñāni*? That is the meaning. This is a question.

‘*Nanūkta evā/tmanovikriyatvaṃ sarvakarmāsambhava-kāraṇāviśeṣaḥ, satyamuko na tu sa kāraṇāviśeṣo/nyatvāviduṣo/vikriyādātmana iti. Na hyavikriyaṃ sthāṇuṃ viditavataḥ karma na sambhavatīti chet, na. Viduṣa ātmatvāt. Na dehādisamghātasya vidvattā. Ataḥ pāriśeṣyādasamhata ātmā vidvānavikriya iti tasya diduṣaḥ karmāsambhavādākṣepo yuktaḥ katham sa puruṣa iti. Yathā buddhyādyāhṛtasya śabdādhyarthasyāvikriya eva sanbuddhivṛttyavivekavijñānenāvidyayopalbdhā/tmā kalpyate, evamevātmānātmavivekavijñānena buddhibṛttyā vidyayā/satyarūpayaiḥ paramārthato/vikriya evā/tmā vidvānuच्यते. Viduṣaḥ karmāsambhavavachanādyāni karmāṇi śāstreṇa vidhīyante tānyaviduṣo vihitānīti bhagavato niścharyo/vagamyaṭe.’*

Then the answer is given. The *Siddhānti* is explaining. The questioner asked, ‘for what reason does *karma* not exist within the *Jñāni*?’ The *bhāṣyā* says, ‘*Nanu uktaḥ eva.*’ This matter was already told to you. What is that? ‘*ātmanaḥ avikriyatvaṃ.*’ This means that the Self is devoid of modification. That is the cause, of what? ‘*Sarvakarmāsambhava-kāraṇāviśeṣaḥ.*’ This means that no *karmas* occur in the *Jñāni*. This is called ‘*sarvakarma asambhavaṃ.*’ There, not a single *karma* takes place. The distinct cause of this was previously told.

Here, the section we are going to discuss deals with this concept; ‘Because the Self is devoid of modification in the Supreme Truth, not a single change takes place in the Self.’ When this is said, it means, ‘if there are modifications in the Self, then there is no purpose in the attainment of the Self-knowledge. This is because we think that modifications occur for the Self, out of ignorance. This feeling is what creates *Samśāra*, the transmigration through births and deaths. This was explained through the two previous *mantras*.

Therefore, if we accept that the *Jñāni* also has the thought, ‘the Self experiences change,’ then this implies that the *Jñāni* experiences doership and enjoyership. In this way, there would be no benefit of that *Tattvajñāna*. Then there would be no difference between a *Jñāni* and an *Ajñāni*. This concept that

the Self does not experience modification is repeated in order to give a spiritual seeker the strong impression that the *Jñāni* does not experience modification. Therefore, there are no *karmas* there. In this section, there will be questions raised, such as, ‘but isn’t the *Jñāni* seen to perform action?’ This will be continued later. For now, we can end our discussion.

X. The Jñāni and Karma

We discussed this *śloka* yesterday. The commentary said that no kind of *karma* can exist within the *Jñāni*. This part refuted the existence of all *karmas* in the *Jñāni*, or the *Vidvān*. Why is this? Why are all *karmas* refuted in the *Jñāni*? The commentator says the answer. This was, ‘*ātmanaḥ Avikriyatvāt.*’ This means that the Self is devoid of all modifications. Therefore, *karmas* do not take place in the Self.

Then there is a doubt raised by the *Pūrva Pakṣa*. Here, the *Pūrva Pakṣa* represents an inquisitive disciple. The *bhāṣyā* says, ‘*uktvā eva ātmano avikriyatvaṁ. Sarvakarma asaṁbhavakāraṇaviśeṣaḥ.*’ It says ‘*sarvakarma asaṁbhava,*’ the non-existence of any *karmas* in the *Jñāni*, ‘*kāraṇaviśeṣaḥ,*’ the specific reason for this. Why is that said? This is because when the *Siddhānti* is trying to establish an idea, he must give a firm reason for the truth of that idea. He must answer the question, ‘but why is that true?’ It is not enough to simply express an idea. That idea must be explained logically.

The *bhāṣyā* said that no *karmas* take place within the *Vidvān*, the *Jñāni*. Then why is that? It says, ‘*ātmanaḥ avikriyatvaṁ.*’ This is because the Self is *avikriya*, devoid of all modifications. ‘*Uktvā eva,*’ this matter was previously said. That is the answer of the *Siddhānti*. Then, the *jijñāsu*, an inquisitive disciple says, ‘*satyaṁ uktaḥ.*’ What you said is correct, *satyaṁ*. However, ‘*Na tu saḥ kāraṇaviśeṣaḥ anyatvāt viduṣaḥ avikriyāt ātmanaḥ anyāt iti.*’

So here the inquisitive disciple (*jijñāsu*) has to accept this specific reason for that. There is no modification in the *Atman*. The *Paramātmā* is devoid of change.’ The questioner has to accept this. Because of this, the *Siddhānti* says

that it is correct to say that *karma* does not take place in a *Vidvān*, a knower of the Self. Why is that? The *bhāṣyā* says, ‘*viduṣaḥ avikriyāt ātmanaḥ anyāt.*’ Who is the *Vidvān*? What is the question in the mind of the disciple?

The meaning of the word ‘*Vidvān*’ means ‘one who possesses knowledge (*vidyā*).’ The Self is devoid of attributes (*nirguṇa*) and formless (*nirākāra*). How can one have knowledge (*vidyā*) of the Self? The Self is devoid of all modifications. Therefore, there is no way that this Self, which never undergoes change, can be the same as a *Jñāni*.

What is the meaning of the word ‘*jñāni*?’ It means, ‘one who possesses knowledge (*jñāna*). This means that the *Jñāni* has a modification (*vikāra*), which is knowledge (*jñāna*). If we say that the *Atman* is devoid of modifications, then we cannot say that the *Jñāni* is the Self. This is because there is a *vikāra* in the *Jñāni*. Even though there is the absence of all other *vikāras*, the modification of *jñāna* exists within the *Jñāni*. What is this knowledge? It is the knowledge, ‘*ahaṁ brahmāsmi.*’ ‘I am *Brahman*.’ This reflection of ‘*ahaṁ brahmāsmi*’ exists within the *Jñāni*. So how can we say that the *Jñāni* is the Self, which is devoid of modification?’

The *bhāṣyā* says, ‘*viduṣaḥ anyatvāt.*’ The disciple says that what is called the *Jñāni* (*vidvān*) is different from the Self, which is devoid of all modification. Because of this, what happens? Therefore, *karma* can occur within the *Jñāni*. There is modification within the *Jñāni*. The questioner accepts that there is no modification for the *Atman*. However, he insists that the *Jñāni* experiences modification. He says, ‘the *Jñāni* is not devoid of *vikāras*. The *Jñāni* has a modification.’ This is a doubt that is natural.

‘What is this? ‘How can a *Jñāni* be devoid of modification? If the *Jñāni* is devoid of modifications, how can he be called a *Jñāni*? If he is devoid of modification, how can we call him a ‘*Jñāni*,’ one who possesses *Jñāna*?’ This is the doubt. This is explained further. It says, ‘*Na hi avikriyam sthānuṁ veditavataḥ karma na sambhavati iti chet.*’ It says that a pillar does not undergo modification. Or else, a small rock, in the gross, worldly view, doesn’t undergo modification. A person understand this as, ‘this is an object that doesn’t change.’ Because this is known, does it mean that the person will not be able to perform

actions? Will he stop thinking, speaking, etc.? No, because this knowledge is not an obstacle to that.

Therefore, it is not right to say that *karma* doesn't take place in someone because he knows that the Self is devoid of modification. That is just like saying that a person cannot perform actions because he knows that a pillar doesn't change. This process of knowing itself is a *vikāra*, a modification. Then how can we say that *karmas* do not occur within the *Jñāni*? This side says, 'isn't the process of knowing a *karma* itself?' That is their argument.

The *bhashya* says, '*avikriyam sthānum veditavataḥ*,' a person who knows a pillar, which does not change, '*karma na sambhavati iti chet*,' does this mean that that person does not perform *karma*?' 'No. *Karma* can occur within the *Jñāni*, also. Can't this be said?'

The *Siddhānti* says, 'No, that is not correct.' The *Siddhānti* again makes this clear; '*na; viduṣaḥ ātmatvāt*.' He says, 'the example you said is correct. A person who sees a pillar, which doesn't change, is different from the pillar. That is correct. Even while seeing the pillar, *karma* will continue to take place for the person. However, that is not so with *Tattva Jñāna*. What is said here? It says about this Self, which is devoid of modification, '*Viduṣaḥ ātmatvāt*.' This means that the Self is one's true nature. The true nature of the *Jñāni* is the *Atman*. What is being discussed is the changeless Self, which is the true nature of the *Vidvān*. This doesn't refer to an object that the *Vidvān* sees externally. The Self is not something that is contained within the knowledge of the *Vidvān*. The Self is the true nature of the *Vidvān*, and never an object. That is the difference between the two.

What is it that the *jñāsu* thought? He thought that the *Atman* is the object of the *Jñāni*'s knowledge. He thought that the *Jñāni* is someone who constantly knows the Self in the way that external objects are known. Then what does the *Siddhānti* say? He says that whoever has awareness of the Self as his or her true nature (*svarūpam*), not as an object, is the *Atman* himself. That is the meaning.

Then a doubt comes again. The *bhāṣyā* says, '*Na dehādīsamghātasya vidvattā*.' Here the questioner has a doubt. This is, 'where does the *Jñāni* experience this knowledge (*jñāna*)? Is it in the Self or in the non-Self? When we say the word '*jñāni*,' this knowledge can refer to two different things. One is the

Self, and the other is the non-Self. The word ‘non-Self’ refers to the combination of the mind, body, senses, etc. The other is the attributeless Self. So where does this knowledge (*jñāna*) occur? Is it in the attributeless Self, or is it in the combination of the body, mind, and senses? What is *Jñāna*? Who is called a *Jñāni*? So what does it say? It says, ‘*dehādisam̐ghātasya.*’ Is this *jñāna* in the combination (*saṁghāta*) of the mind, body, and senses? Is this what is called a *jñāni*? The *siddhānti* says, ‘No.’ ‘*Na. dehādisam̐ghātasya vidvattā.*’ This means the *jñāna* of a *Vidvān* is not in the combination of the body, senses, mind, etc. That is not a *Vidvān*. This word ‘*saṁghātam*’ means the combination of the body, senses, and mind. These things cannot exist separately. They can only exist in combination. They may be separated in the gross body, but in the subtle body, they cannot be separated from each other. We cannot say that the intellect sits isolated somewhere, the mind is alone somewhere else, and the senses are in a another place. As long as these exist, they can only exist as a combination (*saṁghāta*).

This combination is connected is thus connected to the physical body (*sthula sharīra*). Then is it correct to say that *Jñāna* refers to the knowledge of this *saṁghāta*? No, that is not right. It would not be correct to say that the *Vidvān* gains knowledge of the Self by knowing about the combination of the body, senses, mind, etc. It thus says, ‘*Na dehādisam̐ghātasya vidvattā.*’ This means that the knowledge of the combination of body, mind, and senses does not make one a *Jñāni*.

Then the *bhāṣyā* continues, ‘*ataḥ pāriśeṣyāt asam̐hataḥ ātmā vidvān avikriyaḥ iti tasya viduṣaḥ karmāsam̐bhavāt ākṣepaḥ yuktaḥ ‘kathaṁ sa puruṣaḥ’ iti.*’

So who is called a *Jñāni*? It says that this *Jnana* is not caused from the knowledge of the combination of the intellect, mind, and senses. How is that? This is because in that knowledge, there is not the knowledge, ‘*ahaṁ brahmāsmi,*’ ‘I am the Absolute Consciousness, *Brahman.*’ There will never be the awareness, ‘I am *Brahman*’ in the knowledge of this combination. This is because that is not *Brahman*. This combination (*saṁghāta*) is never *Brahman*. Therefore, the awareness, ‘*ahaṁ brahmāsmi*’ does not appear there. Then what is there?

It says, ‘*ataḥ pārīśeṣyāt.*’ Instead of the knowledge of this combination, ‘*asamīhataḥ ātmā,*’ the Pure Self, which is separate from the combination of senses, mind, and intellect, ‘*vidvān avikriyaḥ,*’ a person with the knowledge of the Self, that is devoid of modification, who is the embodiment of the Self, ‘*tasya viduṣaḥ,*’ for this person, the *Jñāni*, ‘*karma asamībhavāt,*’ *karma* does not occur.

This is because the *Jñāni* is the very embodiment (*svarūpam*) of the *Atman*, which is devoid of modifications. The true nature of the *Jñāni* is not the combination of mind, senses, and intellect. Instead, the *Jñāni* has the knowledge, ‘*ahaṁ brahmāsmi,*’ ‘I am the Absolute Consciousness.’

If an *Ajñāni* hears the statement, ‘*ahaṁ brahmāsmi,*’ what will he think? He will think that *Brahman* is the combination of the body, senses, mind, etc. His knowledge is confined to within this combination. His sense of ‘I’ is confined to the mind, intellect, and body. Therefore, his concept of the statement, ‘I am *Brahman,*’ becomes confined to the combination.

And what about a *Jñāni*? The *Jñāni*’s knowledge is not confined to this combination. So it says, ‘*tasya viduṣaḥ,*’ for this *Jñāni*, ‘*karma asamībhavāt.*’ What does the *Vidvān* do? The *Vidvān* has the continuous experience, ‘I am the embodiment of the Self. I am devoid of all modifications.’ Because of this, it says, ‘*karma asamībhavāt.*’ This means that *karma* cannot exist in such a *Vidvān*. Also, because of this, the refuting of change ascribed to the Self in the *śloka*, ‘how can such a person kill or cause to kill, Arjuna?’ are also applied to such a *Vidvān*.

We can explain this matter one more time. The *bhāṣyā* says, ‘*kathaṁ sa puruṣaḥ*’ *iti.*’ This refers to the 21st *śloka*, and indicates the complete refutation of *karmas* existing in the *Jñāni*. Therefore, the refuting of all *karmas* for a *Jñāni* is purely logical, explains the *Siddhānti*.

Then the *bhāṣyā* continues. It says, ‘*Yathā buddhyādyāḥṛtasya śabdādyaarthasya avikriyaḥ eva san buddhivṛttyavivekavijñānena avidyayā upalabdḥā ātmā kalpyate.*’ We can look at this section. It says, ‘*ātmā kalpyate.*’ This means that a person imagines about himself. ‘*Kalpyate,*’ means ‘to imagine.’ This applies to all *Jivas*. We all imagine about ourselves. What is this? It says, ‘*upalabdḥā.*’ This means the knowledge, ‘I know myself.’ ‘I am the one who speaks.’ ‘I am the one who listens.’ ‘I am the one walking.’ ‘I am the one thinking.’ This is the meaning of ‘*upalabdḥā.*’

‘I am grasping all of this. I am knowing all of this.’ Every *Jiva* imagines this. Each *Jiva* imagines this about himself. This is the experience of everyone. This is the knowledge, ‘I am the one hearing.’ When we hear something, this is what we feel. We cannot refute this experience. How is this constantly experienced? Does this occur in the Self or the non-Self? For whom is the experience? Is it for the combination of the mind, body, senses, etc.? Or is it for the attributeless *Atman*? Where does this experience constantly occur?

The answer is given here in the *bhāṣyā*. It says, ‘*avidyayā*.’ All of these experiences constantly happen out of ignorance of the Self (*Avidyā*). These experiences do not happen in the Self, but through *Avidyā*, they constantly take place within the Self. Where is this? In the attributeless *Ātman*, with the feeling of this ‘*upalabdḥā*.’ This is the experience, ‘I am the one who knows.’ Thus, if there are these attitudes in the attributeless *Ātman*, there must be something to connect these two together. This is because this experience that is described does not suit the nature of the *Ātman*.

Therefore, in order to make suitable this connection, the word ‘*Avidyayā*’ is said. *Avidyā*, or Ignorance is the cause of this. There is no other way this can happen. What is the base of this entire *Samśāra*? It is the *Paramātmān*, the Supreme Consciousness. Therefore, this awareness of ‘*upalabdḥā*,’ the awareness of plurality cannot exist anywhere except within the *Ātman*. Then a question will come. ‘How can that happen? Isn’t the Self devoid of modifications and change? Yes, that is true. The existence of modifications in a place where modifications do not exist is *Avidyā*, Ignorance. Thus, the *bhāṣyā* says, ‘*avidyayā*.’ This means, ‘due to Ignorance.’ This happens because of *Avidyā*. This is the instrumental case of the word ‘*Avidyā*;’ *Avidyayā*.’ Then how does this process happen?

The *bhāṣyā* says, ‘*buddhi vṛtti avivekavijñānena*.’ There are two kinds of *vijnana*, or knowledge for the *Jiva*. There is *vivekavijñāna*, knowledge with discrimination, and *avivekavijñāna*, knowledge without discrimination. *Vivekavijñāna* (knowledge with discrimination) is the knowledge, ‘*aham brahmāsmi*,’ ‘I am the Absolute Consciousness.’ *Aviveka vijñāna* (knowledge without discrimination) is called here as ‘*buddhi vṛtti*,’ the knowledge caused by the identification with mental modifications. That is the meaning of the phrase, ‘*buddhivṛtti avivekavijñānena*.’

What does the *Jiva* do? Out of ignorance, the *jīva* identifies with mental modifications, *buddhi vṛttis*. Out of *Avidyā*, these mental modifications are produced. Then the *Jiva* becomes identified with these modifications. We have previously discussed this concept of ‘*buddhi vṛtti*.’ We said that whenever the mind grasps an object, the name of the mind is ‘*buddhi vṛtti*.’ Whenever the mind grasps an object, it is called ‘*vṛtti*,’ a modification. If an object is not grasped by knowledge, then the mind, intellect, and inner instrument cannot exist. When we say that knowledge grasps an object, it means that the object is contained within knowledge. When we say that that knowledge grasps an object, we mean that the object is contained within knowledge.

This means that the mind and intellect can only exist along with knowledge. If knowledge leaves, then the mind and intellect cannot exist. The mind and intellect are constantly in the presence of this *jñāna chāya*, the reflection of knowledge. This is called by different names, such as *chit-bhānam*, the reflection of Consciousness, or *jñāna-pratibimbam*, the reflection of knowledge. The meaning of all of these is the same. This produces the mental modification, ‘*buddhi vṛtti*,’ and in this modification, the object is seen.

This means that knowledge constantly contains the objects within it. That is the meaning of ‘*buddhi vṛtti*.’ Thus, the *bhāṣyā* says, ‘*buddhi vṛtti avivekavijñānena avidyayā upalabdā ātmā kalpyate.*’ When that happens, how is the *Atman* situated? The *bhāṣyā* said before, ‘*yathā buddhyādyāhṛtasya śabdādyarthasya.*’ We can look at this part. When does this happen? It says, ‘*buddhyādi*,’ ‘*buddhi* and other such things.’ This means that it is not just knowledge. There is the consciousness within knowledge, the help of the senses, the object, etc. All of these combined together form the phrase, ‘*buddhyādi ahṛtasya.*’ This means that knowledge grasps objects, with the help of these organs. How is that? ‘*śabdādi arthasya.*’ This means that knowledge grasps objects such as sound (*śabda*). That is the meaning of ‘*buddhyādyāhṛtasya śabdādyarthasya.*’ This refers to the sense objects such as sound. Each kind of sense object has its own specific sense organ. The sense objects of sound, sight, taste, touch, and smell have corresponding sense organs. Thus, the specific sense objects have specified sense organs.

In this way, when each sense organ grasps each sense object, what happens? It says, '*buddhi vṛtti avivekavijñāna.*' What happens with that objective knowledge? The Self becomes identified with that mental modification, and this produces knowledge. Who is this for? It says, '*avikriyaḥ eva san.*' The changeless *Atman* becomes identified with the object. The *Ātman* is *avikāraḥ*, devoid of change. Thus, it says, '*avikriyaḥ eva san ātmā.*' Without the *Atman* experiencing a single *vikāra* (modification), '*upalabdhā san.*' The *Ātman* Itself, its true nature, becomes imagined as the experiencer. How does this imagining (*kalpitam*) occur? It says, '*avidyayā avivekavijñānena.*' This is the condition where the changeless Self becomes identified with the mental modifications.

Here there are 2 or 3 things happening. First is that the *Atman* is constantly devoid of modifications. The *antaḥkaraṇa*, senses, and everything function only because of the presence of the Self. The mind and intellect constantly exist in the presence of the reflection of the Self, *Ātma chāya*. Because this reflection of the Self exists in the mind and senses, this condition is described as '*Avidyā*,' or Ignorance. In this way, the inner instrument (*antaḥkaraṇa*) grasps, or contains external objects. When this happens, the *Ātman*, which is devoid of transformation, becomes identified with these modifications. The *Ātman* becomes identified with the intellect, the mind, the senses, the objects, and the knowledge of the objects. From this comes the awareness, 'I know this object.' This awareness is called, '*upalabdhā.*' This is the awareness, 'I know this object.' How does changeless *Atman* accept the attitude of a *Jiva* and grasp external objects? That is what is explained here in the *bhashya*.

It says that the primary cause of this is Ignorance (*Avidyā*). Therefore, this awareness of the *Jiva*, 'I know this object,' is called in the *bhāṣyā* as '*upalabdhṛtvam.*' This constantly happens to the *Jiva*, at all times. For example, we constantly hear sound. As we constantly hear sound, this matter discussed constantly happens within. In this, the *Ātman*, which is devoid of modification, becomes identified with the senses, then to the object grasped through the senses, and also to the knowledge of the object. Then one thinks, 'I am hearing this.' 'I am thinking.' 'I know this.' 'I understand this.' One imagines all of these. Therefore, the matter being discussed here is something that happens constantly.

We are able to hear and think about these objects because of the identification of the changeless Self with the attitude of ‘*upalabdha*’ This is a common thing experienced by all *Jivas* at all times. Then, the *bhāṣyā* says next, ‘*evaṁ eva ātmānātma vivekajñānena buddhivṛtṭyā vidyayā asatyarūpayā eva paramārthataḥ avikriyaḥ eva ātmā vidvān uchyate.*’

This means that this process does not occur for a *Jñāni*. This is correct in regards to an *Ajnani*, a person ignorant of the true nature of the Self. For the *Ajñāni*, all of this takes place because of *Avidyā* (Ignorance). Because of *Avidyā*, the *Jiva* becomes identified with the mind and senses, then to the sense objects, and finally to knowledge experienced through the sense objects. Then he thinks, ‘I hear this. I know this,’ etc. Then what happens to the *Jñāni*?

That is what is said here. It says, ‘*evaṁ eva ātmānātma vivekajñānena.*’ The *Jñāni* has obtained a discriminative intellect. He has the knowledge, ‘I am separate from the body. I am not this combination, of the body, mind, and senses.’ He has this awareness. This is called ‘*ātmānātma viveka*,’ discrimination between the Self and the non-Self. In the case of the *Jñāni*, this identification has been destroyed. This identification is called by different words, such as ‘*aviveka* (indiscrimination), *tadāthmyam* (identification), or ‘*adhyāsa*’ (superimposition).

This identification is thus destroyed for the *Jñāni*, and then it says, ‘*vivekajñānena.*’ This means that the *Jñāni* has the knowledge, ‘*ahaṁ brahmāsmi*,’ ‘I am the Absolute Consciousness.’ This is the awareness, ‘I am the embodiment of the *Paramātmān*.’ Remember we said that the Self is *avikriya* (devoid of modification). So if this awareness is attained, it says, ‘*buddhivṛtṭyā.*’ This is not the same *buddhi vṛtti* that was discussed earlier. This means that the same mind, the same modification that caused the *Jiva* to become identified with external objects and their knowledge in the condition of Ignorance helps the *Jñāni*. How is this? This is because the *Jñāni* knows, ‘*ahaṁ brahmāsmi.*’ So what is said? It says, ‘*vidyayā*,’ from *Vidyā* (knowledge). Before, it said, ‘*avidyayā*,’ from Ignorance. Here it says, ‘*vidyayā*,’ from Knowledge. What does one know through *Vidyā*? One knows, ‘I am the Self.’ What does one do through *Avidyā*? One knows, ‘I am grasping all of these objects.’ That is the difference between the two.

Then the question that is raised is, 'then is the *buddhi vṛtti* (modification of intellect) experienced by the *Jñāni* from discrimination-based knowledge true (*satyam*)? This is the doubt. The *bhāṣyā* answers, 'asatyarūpayā eva.' That is never *Satyam*, the Truth. That is Unreal. 'asatya rūpayā eva.' Even that is *Asatyam*, Unreal. Only the *Ātman* is *Satyam*. Whatever knowledge exists, it is *asatyam*. Here, the knowledge being discussed is the knowledge, 'ahaṁ brahmāsmi.' This too is *asatyam*, Unreal. Why is this? It is because this too is a *buddhi vṛtti*. However, this kind of modification is called *Vidyā*, while the other kind of modification is called *Avidyā*.

Both of these are *Asat*, Unreal. It is not that one is the Truth, and the other is false. The *vidyā* of a *Vidvān* is unreal. Why is this? This is because that is a *buddhi vṛtti*, mental modification. Then what is *Satyam*, the Real? It says, 'paramārthataḥ avikriyaḥ ātmā.' In the Supreme truth (*paramārtha*), the *Ātman* is *avikriya*, devoid of modification. This is true for a *Jñāni* or an *Ajñāni*. What is the difference between the two? One person's awareness is in external objects, while another's awareness is in the Self.

What is the conclusion of these two kinds of knowledge? This is that both of these kinds of knowledge are *Asatyam* (Unreal). Only the Self is True. For a *Jñāni*, we can say there are two things. One is the *Jñāni*, and two is the *jñāna* (the knowledge of a *Jñāni*). Then what happens? This creates duality. Here it says that the *Jñāni* is Real, but the *jñāna* is unreal. The *Jñāni* is the Supreme Truth, but the knowledge (*jñāna*) is not the Supreme Truth. The *Vidvān* is the Supreme Truth, but the *vidvatva* (knowledge) of the *Vidvān* is not.

Therefore, no matter what kind of experience it is, no matter how elevated the experience may be, that experience exists as a *triputi*. Therefore, it is destroyed. It is Unreal (*asatyam*). The meaning of 'asatyam' is 'that which is destroyed.' The phrase, 'ahaṁ brahmāsmi' is an experience. This experience, which destroys all of the *Jīva's* ignorance and false identification, is still an experience. This is an experience that is unique from all worldly experiences, and is unattainable by worldly knowledge. But isn't this an experience? Because it is, it is destroyed.

This is because it is 'Vidyā.' Because this is also the creation of the inner instrument (*antaḥkāraṇa*), it is also a mental modification. (*buddhi vṛtti*).

Therefore, this will also be destroyed. However, the difference is only this. When this knowledge occurs, we said before that *Avidyā* is destroyed. That is the difference. Ordinary knowledge does not have the ability to destroy *Avidyā*, but when it speaks here about the discriminative knowledge about the Self and non-Self, this knowledge destroys *Avidyā*.

There may be a question. ‘Suppose one attains the experience of ‘*aham brahmāsmi*’, and *Avidyā* is destroyed. Then what? What will happen? Isn’t there no modification in the *Ātman*? Then will there be knowledge?’ Suppose a person gains this discrimination between the Self and non-Self, and *Avidyā* is destroyed. Along with that, everything ends. Then, there is no *Jñāna*. Then, he simply abides as the embodiment of the *sĀtman*. Then, is he a *Vidvān*, or a *Jñāni*?

If everything is finished after that, then who is there to give instructions? This is because we said that the knowledge is also unreal, and so is destroyed. This means that the knowledge was experienced and then destroyed. However, this *Jñāna* is not like other kinds of knowledge. There, one knows an object, and this knowledge changes within a moment. Suppose one has the knowledge, ‘*aham brahmāsmi*.’ That knowledge becomes destroyed. Then isn’t there nothing left? Then there is no *Guru*, no person to give spiritual instructions. That is the state that is reached.

Therefore, this is a big subject of discussion in *Advaita*. It is a matter that can be debated and counter-debated. What happens? A *Jñāni* gains *jñāna*. However, the rule is that all knowledge that is gained is destroyed. It is said, ‘*yat kṛtakam tat anityam*.’ Whatever exists in the universe will be destroyed. In the condition of *Ajñāna*, there is no *Jñāna*. No one will say that there is. We call a person a ‘*Jñāni*’ because they obtain *Jñāna*. This is because they move from the condition of *Ajñāna* to the condition of *Jñāna*.

The *Ajñāni* has no *Jñāna*. The *Jnani* is one who has attained *Jñāna*. So the knowledge of the *Jñāni* is ‘*kṛtakam*.’ It is produced, so this means that it is subject to destruction, according to the rule of the Universe. Once it is produced, it cannot remain for long. So once this knowledge obtained, and is destroyed, who will we call a *Jnani*? Then who is the *Guru*, the person who gives the spiritual instructions? Countless problems will come.

Who is there to talk about this *Jñāna*? If the knowledge that was gained is destroyed, then who is there to say, ‘*aham brahmāsmi*? I am the *Atman*?’ This cannot happen. In other words, what should happen to the *Jñāni* the moment that this *Jñāna* is destroyed? He should die instantly. Why is that? This is because he gained the knowledge that destroyed the Ignorance. We said earlier that the body, mind, senses, intellect, etc., are all products of *Ajñāna*. Then, we said that after the attainment of knowledge, this Ignorance is destroyed. Once the Ignorance is destroyed, one must go instantly into *Samādhi*.

So if the person dies like that, then there won’t be anyone to instruct the disciples, isn’t it? It won’t become possible to say, ‘*aham brahmāsmi*.’ After that, this endless lineage of *Atma Vidyā* would not be continued. Whoever attains knowledge instantly dies, so this would mean the end of *Atma Vidyā*. We would have to say this. Thus, this is a big discussion.

We have said the answer to this. What was said is correct, in a sense. What is Self-knowledge (*ātma jñāna*) like? Self-knowledge is like light. Once light is present, the darkness is destroyed. However, the worldly light, even that of the sun, cannot completely destroy darkness. At any time, due to a lack of light, the darkness can return. This darkness is waiting for the light to disappear, and then it will take over. So even though the worldly light can destroy darkness, it cannot completely eradicate darkness. Why is that? It is because light is *aneka* (several). These countless accumulated parts of light can partially destroy darkness. This darkness is also countless.

However, this is not how it is with Ignorance (*Ajñāna*). *Ajñāna* is only one. Why is this? It is because the Self is One. The Self is only One, and this Ignorance exists depending on the Self. There are several *bhāvas* of this Ignorance. We can say, ‘*aham ajñāh*.’ ‘I am ignorant.’ This is an experience of the Ignorance that exists in the Self. Nobody experiences this Ignorance in a different way.

Everyone has the experience, ‘I.’ This experience of ‘I’ points to the Self. This is never different in this experience in anyone. This experience points to the oneness of the Self. Nobody has instead, the experience ‘you.’ We neither have the constant experience, ‘this.’ We don’t have the constant experience of anything else. Everything knows itself as this experience of ‘I.’ This experience is

of the same form everywhere. It can be said that that is the proof of the Oneness of the Self. This same experience indicates to the *Jiva*, 'I am ignorant.' 'I have no knowledge.'

A person asks, 'do you know the Self?' The other person says, 'what Self? Which Self?' 'The eternal, free, and intelligent Self, do you know That?' This will be the first time we have heard this. So, we say about the Self, 'I don't know.' Therefore, because the Self is the foundation of everything that does not ever change, this experience of Ignorance (*Ajñāna*) is also without change. The Ignorance of the Self is the same everywhere. Why is this? It is because that is experienced by each *Jiva* in the same form.

One's Ignorance of oneself is experienced in the same way by everyone. This *Ajñāna* is what destroys *Ātma Bodha*. However, this *Ātma Bodha* can destroy Ignorance. In fact, what is this *Ātma Bodha* for? It is purely for destroying Ignorance. Once the Ignorance is destroyed, the job of *Ātma Bodha* is finished. Then there is no point in it continuing to exist. There is no purpose in its existence. So along with the destruction of Ignorance, this *Ātma Bodha* is also destroyed. That is what is said in, '*Vidyayā asatya rūpayā*.' This *Ātma Bodha*, or *Vidyā*, what is it? It is Unreal (*Asatyan*). It is destroyed. There is no point in the continuance of its existence.

This is because before the attainment of *Jñāna*, this *Ajñāna* was an obstacle for the *Jiva*. The primary obstacle preventing the light of Self-knowledge is Ignorance. The effects of Ignorance are experienced in many forms. For example, the condition of bondage. Ignorance is the cause, and bondage is the effect. This *Ajñāna* binds the *Jiva*. This bondage is of different kinds. There are several forms of bondage. Thus, in the single Ignorance, several forms of bondage are formed. How is that?

We know, 'I am the body.' That is a bondage. 'This is my body.' That is another bondage. The *Jiva* experiences every moment countless bondages related to the body, mind, and intellect. The cause of all of these forms of bondage is the single Ignorance. Along with the destruction of this Ignorance, all of these forms of bondage will be destroyed. Then this *Vidvān*, the *Jñāni*, who is devoid of modification, is left. The *Vidyā* is destroyed, but the *Vidvān* remains. In that state, there is no purpose for *Vidyā* (knowledge). Why is that? This is because

that *Vidyā* has destroyed *Ajñāna*, along with all of its bondages. That is why we call the *Vidvān*, ‘*mukta*,’ Liberated.

All actions of the *Ajñāni* through body, speech, and mind, are primarily relying upon this Ignorance (*ajñāna*). This kind of action can only exist in Ignorance. Ignorance and bondage have been destroyed for a *Vidvān*. Then how can these actions take place in the *Vidvān*? That is the question. This is because the Ignorance that all of the actions through thought, word, and deed depend on has been destroyed by Knowledge, along with its effects.

Then how will these actions take place? Once this Ignorance has been destroyed by Knowledge, what more purpose does Knowledge serve? It serves no purpose, so this Knowledge is also destroyed. Then the *Jñāni* has nothing more to attain. So that is also gone. Then how can any worldly action take place when the *Vidvān* does not even have Knowledge, never mind Ignorance? What is the answer? This was said previously in the commentary.

Śaṅkara says, ‘the *Vidvān* has no *karma*.’ When we say the word ‘*karma*,’ we should know that this doesn’t just indicate action. This means that the *Vidvān* does not experience ‘*vyavahāram*,’ the external dealings of the world. That is the Supreme Truth. And what about the explanation of *prārabdha karma* for the *Jñāni*? That is all imaginary. Whose imagination is this? It is the imagination of the *Ajñāni*. Worldly experience exists for the *Ajñāni*.

Therefore, the *Vidvān* is True, but everything including *Vidyā* is imagined, or superimposed by the *Ajñāni*. In the Supreme Truth, these things do not exist within the *Vidvān*. Therefore, this word ‘*prārabdha*,’ is used as explanation. In the level of the Supreme Truth, in the ultimate state, what are things like the Guru, the scriptures, bondage, and Liberation? They are imaginary. This is said in the *śāstras*. What is bondage and Liberation? They are imagined. However, in man’s current state, he has to rely upon these imaginings, for the attainment of Liberation. He has to depend on these to attain *Mokṣa*. That is the final matter said by *Advaita*. ‘Everything is imagined.

Thus, the *bhāṣyā* says, ‘*ityeṣā paramārthaḥ*.’ This is the Supreme Truth.’ Knowing this Supreme Truth, that all of these things are imagined, and accepting them is called *viveka* (discrimination). That is *viveka*. The acceptance of these things for attaining Liberation, while being aware that they are imagined is what

is called *viveka*. This is what is indicated in the description of the 4 essential qualities of a *sādhak* (*sādhana chatuṣṭayam*).

This is the acceptance of these matters, while understanding that they are imaginary, along with following the do's and don'ts of spirituality. Then one follows these do's and don'ts, striving for one's liberation. That is what is called '*sādhana chatuṣṭaya sampanna*,' a person endowed with these 4 qualities. This means that there is no point in acting without being aware of this rule.

In other words, even the *Vidyā* of the *Vidvān* is unreal, in the Supreme Truth. It is *asatyā*, unreal. The *Vidvān* is not Unreal, but the quality of *Vidvatvam* (being a *Vidvān*) is Unreal. The *Guru* is not unreal, but the quality of *Gurutvam* that we imagine is unreal. This is what we imagine.

The *Guru* is *Satyam*, the Truth. It says, '*paramārthato avikriyaḥ eva ātmā*.' The *Vidvān* is not refuted, nor the *Guru*. They are the Truth (*satyam*). However, the quality we imagine for them is Unreal. All of that is unreal, the imagination of the *Jīva*, even the *Vidyā* of the *Jñāni*. What happens because of this? Here the same matter is explained in different ways. Here a different kind of explanation is used. It says, '*viduṣaḥ karma asaṁbhavajanāt*.' This means, '*karma* does not exist within the *Vidvān*, the *Jñāni*.'

We said earlier that *karma* does not exist at all in the *Vidvān*. We also cannot consider the *karma* of a *Vidvān* as *karma*. Then what is it? It is *karma chāya*, the shadow of *karma*, the reflection of *karma*. There will be a question. 'We said that the *Ātma Bodha* of the *Vidvān* is also destroyed, because it is unreal. But doesn't this *Ātma Bodha* exist within the *Vidvān*?' This is the question.

You can say, 'yes.' How is this? You can say in two different ways. We said, 'there is no *karma* for the *Vidvān*.' We may ask, 'but doesn't the *Vidvān* show *karmas*? Doesn't he or she perform actions for the good of the world? Then what is that?' This is explained as being a *karma chāya*, the reflection of *karma*. This is not the ordinary *karma* that we see. Therefore, the *Vidyā* that the *Vidvān* experiences is not the *Vidyā* that is imagined by the *Ajñāni*.

What does this mean, that the *Ajñāni* imagines this *Vidyā* in the *Vidvān*? The *Ajñāni* hears the phrase, '*ahaṁ brahmāsmi*.' This awareness of '*ahaṁ brahmāsmi*' may even be within the *Ajñāni*. What does he do? He superimposes

the knowledge within him, of ‘*ahaṁ brahmāsmi*,’ onto the Guru. He thinks, ‘my Guru has this same knowledge.’ This is because the *Ajnani* cannot imagine anything beyond this phrase, ‘*ahaṁ brahmāsmi*.’ However, the condition of a *Jñāni* is never revealed to an *Ajñāni*.

Then what is the most the *Ajñāni* can do? He superimposes his own condition onto the *Jñāni*. He superimposes his own experiences onto the *Jñāni*. What does the *ajñāni* know? He knows, ‘*ahaṁ brahmāsmi*.’ ‘I am the Absolute Consciousness.’ How is this? He hears this and thinks about it. Then he superimposes this knowledge onto the *Jñāni*. He thus says, ‘my *Guru* is a *Jñāni*.’ In truth, he is imagining his own *jñāna* onto the *Guru*. How can the disciple know the *Guru’s jñāna*? How can an *Ajñāni* know the *jñāna* of the *Guru*? This is not possible. Therefore, the disciple superimposes his own knowledge onto the *Guru*. He then says, ‘my *Guru* is a *Jñāni*.’

What is that? In order to give an answer, we can say that the knowledge of the *Jñāni* is a *jñāna chāya*, reflection of knowledge. We said before about *karma chāya*, the reflection of *karma*. This means that the *Ajñāni* imagines about the *Jñāni*, according to his or her own condition. The meaning of all of this is that the condition of the *Jñāni* is never an object of knowledge to the *Ajñāni*. In the condition of *Ajñāna*, one can only guess about the level of the *Jñāni*, or the *jñāna* of the *Jñāni*. He can only imagine. However, the level of the *Jñāni* can never become an object of knowledge for the *ajñāni*. That is the meaning.

Because of this, the *Ajñāni* thinks about the state of the Supreme Truth. How will it be? In this way, the *Ajñāni* thinks about this through logic. At whose level is this being thought? This is being thought at the level of the *Ajñāni*, not the *Jñāni*. We said before that the *Jñāni* attains knowledge, which destroys Ignorance, and then this *Jñāna* is also destroyed. Then, to give an explanation as to the actions of the *Jñāni*, external and internal, such as giving spiritual instruction and performing action for the good of the world, the concept of *prārabdha* is used.

This is not possible to explain. There is no explanation. It is only said that this is due to *prārabdha*. This is accepted, because everything is contained in that. We accept that this is the *prārabdha karma* of the *Jñāni*. This is what is said. Because of this, it says, ‘*viduṣaḥ vidvān ātmā uchyate*.’ This means that the

Vidvān is the *Atman* Itself. This is because there is no duality within the *Vidvān*. Everything, including *Vidyā* has ceased to exist for the *Vidvān*. There is not even a single modification (*vikāra*). In the Supreme Truth, the *Vidvān* exists devoid of modification. That's all.

Both the *Ajñāni* and the *jñāni* are the Self, devoid of modification. Then what is the difference between the two? We said earlier that Ignorance exists for the *Ajñāni*, while it has been destroyed to the *Jñāni*. In one, there is *Jīva Bhāva*, the attitude of being a limited individual. In the other, this *Jīva Bhāva* does not exist. In one, there is the identification with the intellect, mind, knowledge and senses, called '*buddhivṛtti viveka*.' In the other, this doesn't exist. That is the difference between the two. This is explained from the level of the *Jñāni*.

Because of that, even *Vidyā* does not exist in the *Vidvān*. Then how can *karmas* continue to exist? That is the logic of *Śaṅkara*. In a place where there is not even *Vidyā*, there cannot be *karma*. That is the Supreme Truth. Still, we see *karma*. This is due to Ignorance. It says, in the *bhashya*, '*vidvān karma asaṁbhavajāt*.'

This does not mean, 'the *Vidvān* must not perform *karma*.' Instead, it means, '*karma* does not exist within the *Vidvān*.' The meaning of '*karma asaṁbhavaṁ*,' is 'how can *karma* exist where even *Jñāna* doesn't exist?' This means that *karma* does not occur in the *Vidvān*. It doesn't refute *karma* for a *Vidvān*. It doesn't merely refute, or say, 'he must not perform *karma*.' This is not what is said. Instead, it says, '*karma asaṁbhavajāt*.' This means that *karma* does not exist within the *Jñāni*.

Then the *bhāṣyā* says, '*yāni karmāṇi śāstreṇa vidhīyante*.' We can think further, 'whatever *karmas* are ordained by the scriptures.' Here it is speaking about ordained *karmas*. Primarily, when speaking about '*karma*,' *Shankara* is referring to these *karmas* that are ordained by the *Vedas* and *Smṛtis*. This doesn't mean that *Shankara* doesn't discuss other forms of *karma*. However, when the concept of *karma tyāga* is discussed, it refers to this phrase, '*yāni karmāṇi śāstreṇa vidhīyante*.' This means, 'whatever *karmas* are ordained by the *śāstras*.' '*Tāni aviduṣo vihītāni*.' All of these are ordained for an *Ajñāni*.

'*Iti Bhagavato niśchayo 'vagamyate*.' This is the certain opinion of the Lord in the Gita. Here, a *jijñāsu* asks again,

(Question) *‘Nanu vidyā/pyaviduṣa eva vidhīyate viditavidyasya piṣṭapeṣaṇavadvidyāvidhānānarthakyāt. Trāviduṣaḥ karmāṇi vidhīyante na viduṣa iti viśeṣo nopapadyate.’* (Siddhanti) *‘Na, anuṣṭheyasya bhāvābhāvaviśeṣopapatteḥ. Agnihotrādividhyarthajñānottara kālamagnihotrādikarmānekasādhanopasamhārapūrvakam anuṣṭheyam kartā/ham mama kartvyamityevamprakāravijñānavato/viduṣo yathā/nuṣṭheyam bhavati na tu tathā na jāyate ityādyātmasvarūpavidhyartha jñānottarakālabhāvi kiñcidanuṣṭheyam bhavati.*

‘Nanu vidyāpi aviduṣaḥ eva vidhīyante.’ It was agreed that *karmas* exist because of *Avidyā* (Ignorance). This subject of *Brahmajñāna* is being discussed through argument and counter-argument. We are hearing for some time now. After hearing this again and again, we may feel bored. It says, *‘vidyā api aviduṣaḥ eva vidhīyante.’* So who is this *Vidyā* for? We agreed that *karma* exists out of *Avidyā*, Ignorance. However, this *Vidyā*, *Brahmajñāna*, is only ordained for an *Ajñāni*, isn’t it? Why is this? It says,

‘Viditavidyasya piṣṭapeṣaṇavat vidyā vidhānānarthakyāt.’ This means that there is no purpose in instructing *Vidyā* to a *Jñāni*. If *karma* is ordained for the *Ajñāni*, then so is *Jñāna* for the *Ajñāni*. So it says, *‘viditavidyasya,’* for one who has acquired *Vidyā*, *‘piṣṭapeṣaṇavat.’* There is a purpose to this *‘piṣṭapeṣaṇavat.’* Suppose we grind something fully. Then we grind it again. We grind it again and again. There is no point in doing this. The word *‘piṣṭa’* means ‘ground.’ *‘Peṣaṇa’* means ‘to grind.’

We grind something so that it becomes ground. Here, it says to again grind what we grinded. That is a waste of time. Like this, there is no purpose in instructing *Jñāna* to a *Jñāni*. We said that *karma* exists for the *Ajñāni*. Then who does Knowledge exist for? We can only say that it exists for the *Ajñāni*. Why is this?

It says, *‘viditavidyasya,’* for one who has attained *Vidyā*. We may say, ‘there’s no point in instructing an *Ajñāni*.’ Here, it says, ‘that’s not true.’

‘*Viditavidyasya piṣṭapeṣaṇavat vidyā vidhānānarthakyāt.*’ This means that the instruction of *Vidyā* to a *Jñāni* is like grounding corn that is already ground. So, in the same way that *karma* is ordained only for an *Ajñāni*, this *Ātma Vidyā* must also be ordained only for an *Ajñāni*. What is the use of instructing *Vidyā* to a *Vidvān*? Then the Guru need not instruct him. So, just like how *karma* is ordained for the *Ajñāni*, like that, *Vidyā* is for the *Ajñāni*.

Because of that, it says, ‘*tatra aviduṣaḥ karmāṇi vidhīyante.*’ *Karma* is enjoined on the *Ajñāni*. ‘*na viduṣaḥ.*’ ‘Saying that the *Jñāni* has no need for *karma.*’ *iti viśeṣopapatteḥ.*’ is not right. Why is that? This is because if *karma* is for the *Ajñāni*, then *Jñāna* is for the *Ajñāni*. What if this is said?

The *Siddhānti* replies, ‘*na.*’ ‘No, that is not correct.’ There is a difference between the two. What is that? It says, ‘*anuṣṭheyasya bhāvābhāva viśeṣopapatteḥ.*’ The difference is between the existence and non-existence of duty. This is the difference between *Vidyā* and *karma*. The word ‘*anuṣṭheya*’ means, ‘one’s duty.’ There is a duty for *karma*, but not for *Vidyā*. This will be discussed in detail. The question was, ‘are both *Jñāna* and *karma* for an *Ajñāni*?’ The answer is given here.

It says here that there is a difference between the two, the instruction of *karma*, and the instruction of *Jñāna*. What is the difference? In *karma*, there is a duty, a responsibility. However, in the instruction of *Jñāna*, there is no duty at all. This is to destroy the sense of duty. That is the meaning of ‘*anuṣṭheyasya bhāvam.*’ In *karma*, there is this *bhāva* of duty. However, in *Jñāna*, it is, ‘*anuṣṭheyasya abhāvam,*’ the absence of duty. That is the difference between the two. There is logic in this. This is explained.

‘*Agnihotrādi vidhyarthajñānottarakālam agnihotrādikarma anekasādhanopasamhārapūrvakam anuṣṭheyam - ‘kartā aham, mama kartavyam’ ityevam.*’ This is saying the difference between the instruction of *karma* (*karma upadeṣam*) and the instruction of Knowledge (*jñāna upadeṣam*). What about when *karma* is instructed? It says here that this means *Vedic karmas* such as *Agnihotra* (the fire sacrifice). And what about other *karmas*? There is no purpose in instructing ordinary *karmas*. These *karmas* are performed naturally.

Here, when we speak about ordained *karmas*, we are not referring to the normal *karmas* we perform. In other words, these are *karmas* that are instructed

by the *Vedas*. All of the *karmas* that we perform that are not instructed by the *Vedas* are ordinary *karmas*. It is only possible to call *karmas* that one performs after studying the *Vedas* as ordained *karmas*. These are called ‘*vidheya karmas*.’ This is the explanation of the difference of the meaning of ‘*karma*’ when *Shankara* uses it, and when it is used normally. This has been explained several times. This is told again to avoid misinterpretation.

This is because when almost all of the commentators of the Gita read the word ‘*karma*’ they immediately equate it with the ordinary actions we perform. When the Gita speaks about *Karma Yoga*, it is interpreted as ordinary actions. When *Karma Tyāga* (renunciation of *karma*) is explained, it is interpreted as ordinary actions. This creates a lot of confusion. On hearing this, everyone may think, ‘where is *Swami* getting this idea? Is this his own?’

Therefore, I am simply stating firmly what is written in the commentary. Other commentators and translators have interpreted this differently. However, it is shown very clearly here. What is meant by the word ‘*karma*?’ It is not the ordinary *karmas* we perform. I can only say that I am not responsible for what other people may have taught. You may ask about what you hear from here on. Here, what the commentator says is, ‘*agnihotrādi*.’ This is how *karma* is described.

This indicates the *karmas* that are instructed by the *Vedas*. These do not apply to us. This does not mean actions we perform, such as waking in the morning, cleaning the courtyard, cooking food, washing clothes, etc. This is not that. It says ‘*agnihotrādi*,’ *karmas* such as the fire sacrifice. It is only possible for someone who has studied the *Vedas* to perform these *karmas*. Therefore, the matters dealing with this *Vedic karma* are relevant only to someone who has studied the *Vedas*. These kind of *karmas*, ‘*vidhyartham*,’ the meaning of the *vidhi*, or ordinance, ‘*jñānottarakālam*,’ having understood this meaning.’ This is said very clearly. Then it says again, ‘*agnihotrādi karma*,’ the *karmas* of the *Vedas*, such as the *Agnihotra*. This is the meaning of the word ‘*karma*’ when the commentator uses it, generally.

In this, the *karma* of a war is also included. We will ask, ‘is war a *karma* like that?’ Yes. This is because a war is a *Smārta karma*, a *karma* that is ordained

in the *Smṛtis*. This is one of the *kṣatriya's nitya karmas*, to defend the country in battle. In this way, there are 2 kinds of *karmas*. One is the *karma* related to the *dharma* of the life-stages, and the second is the *karma* related to the *dharma* of the classes. There are *karmas* ordained for each of the life-stages, and *karmas* ordained for each of the classes. There is a difference between these in the form of ordinance. The *karmas* ordained for the life-stages, such as *brahmachari*, *gṛhastha*, etc., are different from the *karmas* ordained for the classes, such as the *kṣatriya*, *Brāhmaṇa*, etc. Within these *dharmas*, are contained all *karmas*, such as *agnihotra* in the *Vedas*.

This is the kind of *karma* that is being discussed in the commentary. After hearing about this kind of *karma*, a person feels, 'this kind of *karma* must be performed.' In other words, a person who hears about the *karmas* of the *Vedas* and *Smṛtis* develops the awareness of doership (*kartṛtva bodham*). This is the awareness, 'I must do this.' This is the specialty of *karmas* that are ordained.

However, we can say that there is no such ordinance for Knowledge (*jñāna*). There is no ordinance as there is for *Karma*. This is because the prompting to perform *karma* comes from this ordinance. However, *Jnana* is not a prompting for *karma*. Therefore, it is not an ordinance. Instead, what does *Jñāna* do? It gives awareness of one's own true Nature. What awareness is this? It is, 'You have no duty.' 'You are not the doer.' This is in reference to these *karmas*. That must be given special attention.

This makes one aware, 'you don't have the doer-ship of *karmas* like the *agnihotra*.' That completely refutes the feeling of doer-ship. Therefore, for a person who hears this instruction, this feeling of duty is destroyed. You will immediately ask, 'but isn't there a duty towards *Jñāna* then? After being instructed in *Jñāna*, doesn't the *sādhak* have to perform reflection and contemplation? Thus, in the same way that the *karmas* such as *agnihotra* are performed as a duty, isn't it true that after hearing the instruction of *Jnana*, the *sādhak* must perform reflection and contemplation on that truth?'

The answer is 'no.' Why is that? The answer is that at that point, it is not necessary to do anything as a duty (*kartavyam*). There is nothing that must be done with the feeling of doership. Why are all these practices, hearing, reflection, etc., performed? It is to realize that the Self is the non-doer. This doesn't mean

that you shouldn't perform hearing and reflection on the Truth. But even when they are performed, that hearing, reflection, and contemplation should not be with the feeling of duty or doership. Instead, the *sādhak* has the awareness, 'I am the true embodiment of the Self.' Therefore, it is not possible for a *sādhak* who is contemplating on the Truth to feel, 'I am the doer. This must be done by me,' etc.

Instead, the *sādhak* needs the awareness, 'I am not the doer. I have no duty.' This kind of awareness is needed. Only then will the hearing and reflection be of benefit. In other words, in the same way that the *Vedas* give the feeling of duty and doership to a person instructed in *karma*, for the *sādhak* who is instructed in Knowledge and performs hearing and reflection on the scriptural dictums, '*tat tvam asi*,' and '*aham brahmāsmi*,' this feeling of doership or duty is strengthened from these practices. The feeling of the *sādhak* while performing these practices of hearing and contemplation is 'I am the embodiment of the Self.' Therefore, there is no feeling of duty in this.

There is not this kind of feeling of duty in the *sādhana* of Knowledge (*Jñāna Sādhana*). This is not just in *Jñāna Sādhana*. It is also in *Bhakti Sādhana*. There also, this kind of doership and feeling of duty cannot exist. Here, we are discussing about *Tattvajñāna*. However, this kind of feeling is not possible even in *Karma Yoga*. What does the *Karma Yogi* do with the feeling of doership of a person who merely performs worldly *karmas*? He renounces this and performs *karma*. Therefore, this feeling of doership doesn't exist even within the *Karma Yogi*. Because of this, the commentator says that these feelings of doership and duty do not exist within the *sādhana* of Knowledge. Avoiding these, the *sādhak* practices identification with the Self. This is the difference between the two.

Wherever *karma* is ordained, it is possible to perform that *karma* only with the feeling of doership. At the same time, if a person gains awareness of *Jñāna*, and practices hearing and reflection of the Truth, this feeling of doership is not produced from the *sādhana* practiced. Therefore, this feeling of doership does not exist in *Jñāna*, but it does exist in *Karma*. This is the difference between the two. We will continue to discuss this in the next talk.