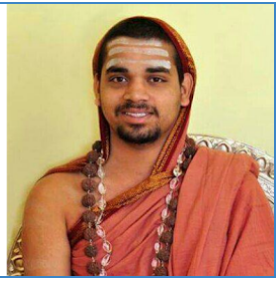


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(Inducement)

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Prārthanā



आपः पृणीत भेषजं वरूथं तन्वे३ मम ।

ज्योक्च सुर्यं दृशे ।

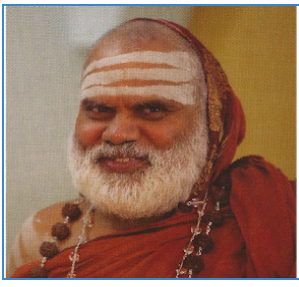
āpaḥ pṛṇīta bhēṣajaṃ varūthaṃ tanvē3 mama |

jyōkca suryaṃ dṛśē |

{Rig veda 10/1/20/7}

O Lord who are in the water! Be inside our body in the form of medicated water to remove all the diseases from our body and grace us to worship Lord Suryadeva, with a long life.

We submit our efforts at the Lotus feet of Jagadguru Śankarācārya His Holiness Mahāsannidhānam Śrī Śrī Śrī Bhārati Tīrtha Mahāswāmiji and Jagadguru Śankarācārya His Holiness Sannidhānam Śrī Śrī Śrī Vidhuśekhara Bhārati Mahāswāmiji

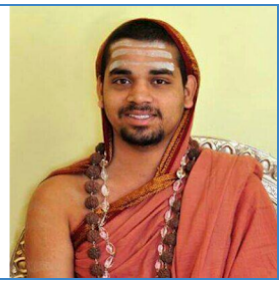


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Acharya Sandesham

Eradication of Bondage:

Our mother-like Upanishads often teach us by presenting their instructions in the context of stories. Accordingly, the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad resorts to the following story to point out the way to acquire knowledge of the Truth. Janaka, the ruler of Videha, once performed a Vedic sacrifice and distributed many gifts. Scholars from Kuru and Panchala who were well-versed in the Vedas had assembled there. Seeing that concourse of learned persons, Janaka felt a desire

to know who among them was most erudite. So, he announced that the best Vedic scholar was welcome to take with him a thousand cows with horns adorned with gold. While the other learned persons remained silent, Sage Yajnavalkya instructed his disciple Samasravas to drive the cows home. The disciple obeyed.



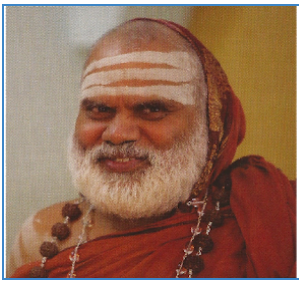
ಶ್ರೀ ಶೃಂಗೇರಿ ಜಗದ್ಗುರು ಶ್ರೀ ಚಂದ್ರಶೇಖರಭಾರತಿ ಸ್ವಾಮಿಗಳವರು ಮತ್ತು ತತ್ಪರಕಮಲಸಂಜಾತ ಶ್ರೀ ಅಭಿನವ ವಿದ್ಯಾತೀರ್ಥಸ್ವಾಮಿಗಳವರು.

Enraged, Janaka's priest Asvala, who prided upon being most learned, thundered, "Yajnavalkya! Are you indeed the greatest Vedic scholar among us?" The sage replied, "I salute the best scholar. I just wanted the cows". Asvala then began to interrogate Yajnavalkya to appraise his knowledge. The sage answered with ease and finally. Asvala fell silent. The other learned persons then proceeded to question Yajnavalkya one after the other. One of the savants who tested the sage was Kahola, the son of Kusitaka.

Kahola asked, "Yajnavalkya, explain to me Brahman that is immediate and primary, the Atma that is within all". By the word "Sakshat" or immediate, the questioner specifies that Brahman is not obstructed from perceiver by anything. A sense

object such as a book may sometimes be directly in front of a perceiver, such as when he is reading it; however, at other times it is not immediate. It is clear that Kahola was not asking about that which is sometimes immediate and sometimes not. Further, sense objects are not absolutely immediate, as they are apprehended only through the medium of the mind.

Suppose a boy has never seen but has heard of a personage named Devadatta. His father may show him a picture of Devadatta saying, "This is Devadatta". The boy directly perceives the picture. However, what he has been shown is only a symbol of Devadatta. In the Upanishads,

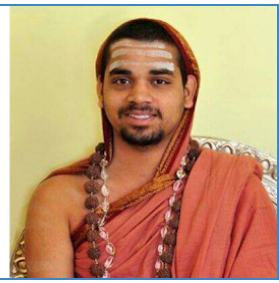


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we encounter passages such as, “Meditate on the mind as Brahman.” The mind is not really Brahman but, in the Chandogya Upanishad passage cited, is used as a symbol of Brahman. The mind, which is immediate to a person can be termed Brahman only in a figurative but not in a primary sense. By the word, “Aparokshat” or primary, Kahola specified that he was asking



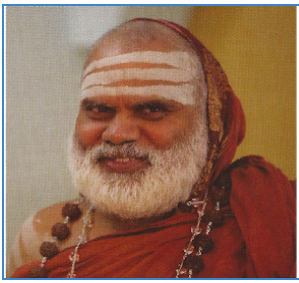
about Brahman Itself and not about what is regarded as Brahman in some figurative sense.

“Aparokshat” or, rather, “Aparoksham” also has the meaning “immediate”. So why not interpret “Sakshat” to mean “present everywhere” and “Aparoksham” to mean “present at all times?” In that case Kahola could well be asking about an omnipresent, immortal, personal God. This is a possible objection. Interpreting “Sakshat” and “Aparoksham” in the sense of pervasion and persistence is unjustified as these words do not

have such primary meanings. Akasha is all-pervasive and relatively imperishable too; it is, however, indisputable that Akasha has not been and cannot be termed as “Sakshat” and “Aparoksha”. Kala or time is also not deemed “Sakshat account of a personal God. There is thus no need to set aside the primary meanings of Kahola’s words.

The well-known connotation of the word “Atma” is “inner self”. From Kahola’s words it is evident that he asked not about two entities – Brahman that is immediate and primary and the Atma that is within all – but of a single entity; Atma and Brahma are identical. Kahola was not a disciple questioning Yajnavalkya but a savant examining the sage. Hence, his expression cannot be set aside as that of an ignorant student who made an imprecise or erroneous request.

Yajnavalkya masterly response was, “This is your Atma that is within all”. Here “within all” is a figure of speech for “Brahman that is immediate and primary and the Atma that is within all”. The sage thus taught, that Kahola’s very self was actually Brahman. Commonly, people regard the body as the Atma; thus they hold, “I am old”, “I am fair”, etc. Not only the gross body but also the subtle body, whose constituents include the Pranas and the mind, is believed to be one’s Atma. Hence, Kahola wanted Yajnavalkya to specify what he meant by “your Atma that is

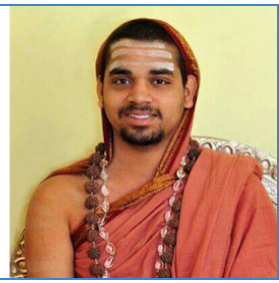


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within all". Was the sage referring to the gross body, Pranas, mind or something distinct from the body-mind complex? To ascertain this, Kahola demanded, "Which one is within all, Yajnavalkya?"

Yajnavalkya clarified, "That which transcends hunger and thirst, grief, delusion, decay and death". The sage ruled out the gross body by saying that the entity in question is beyond decay and death which are attributed of the body. Hunger and thirst are both solely the functions of the Pranas. So, by negating these two, the sage eliminated the Pranas of the subtle body from consideration.

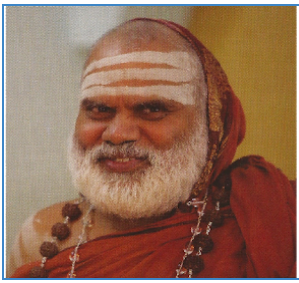


Grief and delusion pertain to the mind. Here, the word "Shoka" or grief used by Yajnavalkya actually stands for desire. The discontent that a man with a hankering feels as he reflects on some covetable thing is the seed of desire because such dissatisfaction kindles desire. If a person had no experience of unhappiness, why would he desire and acquire objects? As done in some other places in the scriptures, the effect, desire in the present case, is indicated by

mentioning the cause, grief. Delusion is an error, a confusion stemming from a false notion. It is Avidya, the source of all troubles. By negating grief and delusion in the Atma, the sage showed that the mind too is not the Atma.

It is noteworthy that Yajnavalkya did not explicitly define the true Atma as "It is such and such"; he confined himself to negating what is not Atma but is mistaken by people to be the Atma. Atma, which is of the nature of consciousness, is self-evident; no one needs to be taught, "What is consciousness?" Further, as clarified by Yajnavalkya when questioned by a scholar named Usasta, the Atma is not some object like a pot that can be seen, heard, thought of or comprehended. Had it been possible to specify the Atma as, "It is such and such", the sage would have done so and even if he had not, Kahola would not have let him off; after all Kahola was a challenger, not a disciple.

Kahola had asked about Brahman. So, it clearly follows from Yajnavalkya reply that the individual soul is actually none other than Brahman. The term "Immediate" used by Kahola finds complete fulfillment in Yajnavalkya answer, for how can one ever fail to be immediate to

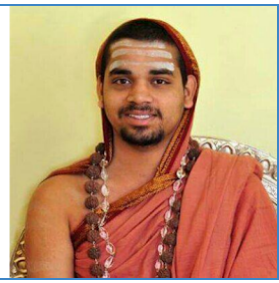


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oneself? Here one may wonder, "I grow old, feel hunger and am often unhappy. How could I be the Supreme Brahman, the Atma within all, distinct from and unaffected by the body-mind complex"? It is to enable us to recognize the horrible delusion we are under because of our ignorance and to make us give up our false notions that the Upanishads instruct us again and again in many a way.

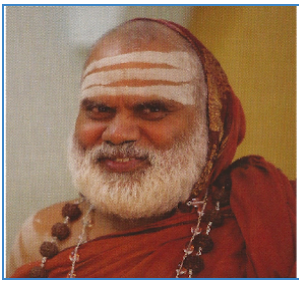
Yajnavalkya proceeded to explain to Kahola that right knowledge of the Atma is opposed to desire. After all, knowledge is opposed to Avidya. Because of Avidya, there is delusion; from



delusion there is sorrow and hence desire.

The sage said, "Having known this very Atma, the Brahmanas renounce the desire for sons, for wealth and for the worlds and lead a mendicant's life. That which is the desire for sons is the desire for wealth and that which is the desire for wealth is the desire for worlds, for both these (the desire for means and the desire for ends) are but desires".

Here, "having known this very Atma" refers to knowledge of the form, "I am this, the Supreme Brahman that is ever devoid of phenomenal attributes and ever satiated", acquired by hearing the words of the scripture and the Guru. The Upanishads are unequivocal that unless one is



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taught by a Guru, who has realized Brahman, right understanding about the Atma will not arise. The Katha Upanishad, for instance, states, "This Atma is not comprehended clearly if taught by a man of worldly understanding, for It is thought of variously by people. When taught by one who has become identified with It, there is no further cogitation with regard to It (or there is no absence of realization)". The Mundaka Upanishad specifies, "For knowing It, he must

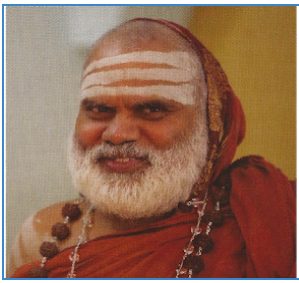
necessarily approach a Guru who is versed in the Vedas and absorbed in Brahman".

Elsewhere in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad, it is taught that a son is the means for gaining this world, sacrificial rites for attaining the world of the manes and contemplation for acquiring the world of the Devas. He who knows the Atma, has no longing for these three worlds and for the means to attain them. Desire for sons is fulfilled through the taking of a wife. Thus, by the statement that the knowers renounce the desire for sons and live as mendicants, Yajnavalkya taught that, on getting knowledge



prior to marriage, the knowers do not marry at all.

The "wealth" referred to by the sage, in his teaching that the knowers renounce the desire for wealth, is of two types. One form comprising cattle, etc., is the means for performing sacrificial rites; the other is contemplation, the means for winning the world of the Devas. Desire

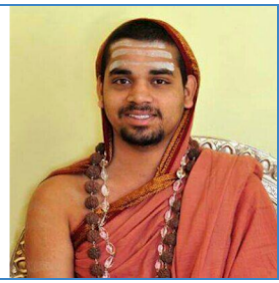


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for the worlds takes the forms, "Having performed sacrificial rites, I shall attain the world of the manes" and "By rites coupled with contemplation or purely by contemplation on Hiranyagarbha, I shall gain the world of the Devas".

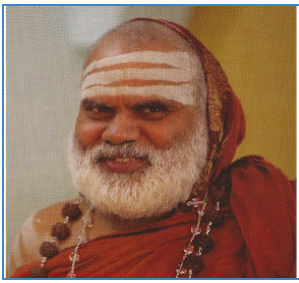


Yajnavalkya spoke of desire for sons being the same as desire for wealth because both these are the desire for means to seen ends; they are the means for the gaining of this world and for the performance of rites. Next, it was stated that the desire for wealth is the same as the desire for the worlds because the desire for means, namely the world of the manes and the world of the Devas.

Without getting married, or concerning themselves with the performance of sacrificial rites and contemplation, the knowers of the Atma renounced and lived as Paramahansa sanyasis. Desireless and unfettered by scriptural injunctions, they merely appeased hunger by begging for food. About such Sanyasis, the Jabala Upanishad says, "Then he becomes a monk, wears the ochre robe, shaves his head and does not accept gifts".

In his Bhashyam on the portion of the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad under consideration, Śankara has elaborately established that in the statement "the Brahmanas renounce", the Upanisad actually enjoins renunciation. Śankara has also explained that the statement references ancient knowers of Brahman. Thus, Yajnavalkya can be understood to have taught, "Having known this very Atma, the ancient knowers of Brahman renounced the desire for sons, for wealth and for the worlds and led a mendicant's life".

Yajnavalkya went on to add that since the ancient knowers renounced, "Therefore, to this day, the knower of Brahman, having completed 'Pandityam' should live with refers to the

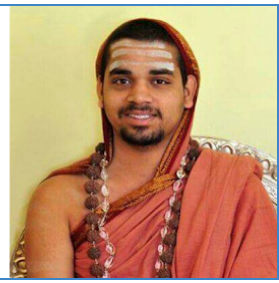


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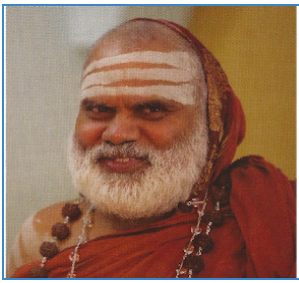
culmination of the process of eliminating vision of what is not the Atma. 'what is not Mounam' means Pandityam and Balyam. When the acquisition of Pandityam, Balyam and Mounam is complete, complete realization of Brahman dawns and destroys Avidya. One then becomes a true knower of Brahman as a "Yogi who has completed all that had to be done".

Yajnavalkya ended his reply to Kahola by glorifying the one who has realized Brahman with the words, 'How does that knower of Brahman behave? Howsoever he may behave, he is just such. Except this everything is perishable". The knower is liberated even while alive; at no time does he come under the sway of Avidya. No matter what his conduct is, neither virtue nor vice can touch him. He goes beyond the pale of all scriptural injunctions and prohibitions. Nevertheless, as he had practiced great spiritual discipline earlier, his conduct is



impeccable (above suspicious). After all to override the past practice of good conduct, effort is needed and he is not going to put in such effort. While people might think of him as engaging in bodily and mental activity, from his viewpoint he does not act at all; he is ever aware of being the non-dual, action less Brahman.

Yajnavalkya final comment was to the effect that except for this state of realization, all else-desires, which lie in the realm of Avidya – is perishable, being insubstantial like a dream. The Atma alone is detached and eternally free. On hearing Yajnavalkya words of wisdom, Kahola kept silent.

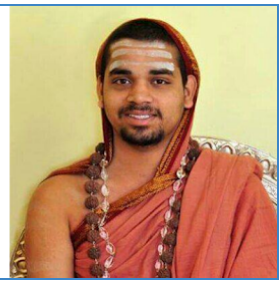


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The Path of Dharma Śāstra

In this portion we are going to see "The Path of Dharma Śāstra" in Question and Answer form. For our doubts regarding "Dharma Śāstra" , Pujyasri Swami Omkarananda Saraswati, Founder Acharya, Śri Swami Chidbhavananda Ashram, Vedapuri, Theni will guide us according to Vedic Scriptures.

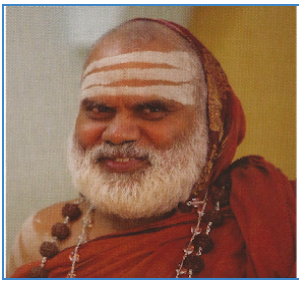
1. Namaskaram Swamiji, It is said that we should do 'Panchayatana Puja' daily ? In such a case in many houses we are not seeing this. If so shall a person can start newly? What is the procedure for that?



According to my understanding, Panchayatana Puja is a replacement of Agnihotraadi karmas. Therefore, Panchayatana Puja can be included as part of Deva Yajna itself. If done as part of Deva Yajna, panchayatana Puja is nice. One can start newly. There are several books on Panchayatana Puja. One can refer to the book published by Srivatsa Somadeva Sarma

2. Our next doubt is, It is said that "Mahabharatam" is considered as fifth veda. But many elders of the family in many places are telling that we should not read "Mahabharatam" in our house. Then how we can learn it. Please clear our doubt.

It is a myth, that one should not read Mahabharata, at home. This superstitious idea has crept in our thinking. One can read Mahabharata at home, by all means. There is no authentic information in the scriptures, that one should not read Mahabharata at home. They are creating unwanted sentiments.

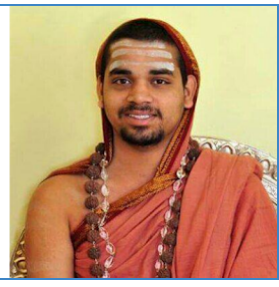


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The two important scriptures - Srimad Bhagavad Gita and Sri Vishnu Sahasranama are part of Mahabharata. Reading Mahabharata will bring auspiciousness to our homes. By learning the meaning of the slokas, one can understand about the mistakes committed by human beings and on how to avoid mistakes and refine ourselves. Thus, by reading Mahabharata, one will gain clarity in knowledge.



3. It is said that ladies are not entitled to chant "Gayatri Japa". In such a case what is suggested for them to chant daily to replace "Chanting of Gayatri Mantra".

Vedic mantras are said to be beneficial – only if chanted with proper Samskaras. Vedic mantras are like weapons – they should not be misused or abused. Mahatmas with compassion have given a sloka, which has the same meaning of the Gayatri Mantra.

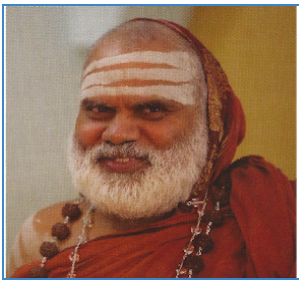
यो देवः सवितास्माकं धियो धर्मादिगोचराः

प्रैरयेत् तस्य यद्भर्गः तद्वरेण्यमुपास्महे

yō dēvaḥ savitāsmākaṁ dhiyō dharmādigōcarāḥ

prērayēt tasya yadbhargāḥ tadvarēṅyamupāsmahē

The meaning of this sloka is as follows -May we offer our prayers to the effulgent Sun God, to kindle our intelligence in the right direction.



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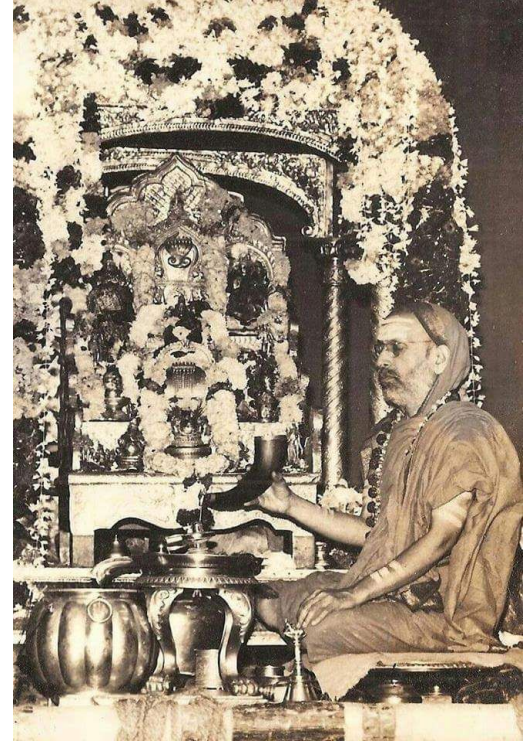
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On the occasion of the celebration of 101st Jayanti Mahotsavam of our Jagadguru Śankarācārya His Holiness Jeṣṭha Mahāsannidhānam Śrī Abhinava Vidyatirtha Mahaswamiji we are submitting this Chodanaa special edition at the lotus feet of Jagadguru Śankarācārya His Holiness Mahāsannidhānam Śrī Śrī Śrī Bhāratī Tīrtha Mahāswāmiji and Jagadguru Śankarācārya His Holiness Sannidhānam Śrī Śrī Śrī Vidhuśekhara Bhāratī Mahāswāmiji



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