

ShiningWorld

Presents

15th Annual Trout Lake Seminar 2019

The Bliss of the Self



A. What is the Self? (*Atatho Brahma Jignasa*)

It is: (1) Existence (*Sat*) (2) Consciousness (*Chit*) (3) Bliss (*Ananda*)

B. What is Consciousness?

It is the inner immortal essence of every individual. It is called the *Jivatma*, eternal all-pervading Consciousness/Awareness. Because it is the essence of everything it is called the Self, that without which a thing is not a thing. Without Consciousness you do not exist.

(1) Definition: (1) not a part, product or property of the body, (2) an independent factor which pervades and enlivens the body, (3) not limited by the boundaries of the body but extends beyond it infinitely. It is space-like and invisible. Space is a substance, not a void or a vacuum as is Consciousness. Just as space is everywhere, Consciousness is everywhere. **(4) It survives the death of the body.** Once the body medium is gone, Consciousness is not identifiable, because the body is a reflector of Consciousness. **(5) It is not limited by time.**

(2) How to Prove the Existence of Consciousness? It is self-evident.

(3) How do we know we are Consciousness? Reflection Teaching (*pratibimba vada*)

C. What is Existence? (Matter)

1. Maya & Avidya – Creation – Confusion (*adhyasa, viparaya*) Creation Chart

This teaching shows how samsara is caused. Samsara is the belief that the subject-object duality caused by *Maya* is real for individuals (*jivas*). It causes them to pursue objects to complete themselves when they are already complete. It creates bondage to objects. Explaining the cause of *samsara* makes it possible for an individual to remove it. The purpose of all Vedanta teachings is to remove *samsara*.

2. The Connection between Consciousness and Matter

3. Why is the Self to be Known? Because Jivas want Bliss.

D. What is Bliss (Ananda)

(Thesis: The primary human Desire – motivation of action - is Bliss) - "I do to enjoy."

1. Analysis of Human Experience: A Conscious Subject and Inert Material Objects

Yoga is Contact with Objects

(1) It is a fact that we are conscious, aware, sentient.

(2) It is also a fact that Consciousness comes in contact with five categories of objects (Space, Air, Fire, Water and Earth) as the five senses contact each material element. The object accessible to the ears is sound. The object of the skin is touch. The object of the eyes are forms and colors. The object of the tongue is taste. The object of the nose is smell.

(3) Two factors determine how Consciousness contacts the objects: (a) The sense organs; whichever sense organ I, Consciousness, choose to operate gives me access to the objects that it reveals and denies access to the other objects.

(b) The type of thought in the mind determines the type of object I wish to contact. The type of thought is driven by an unconscious desire for the object.

Before coming in contact with an object, I, Consciousness, and the object were separate but once they come in contact I say, "I am experiencing a tree," for instance. **Consciousness is called Consciousness when it is not in contact with an object. In contact with objects it is called "experience."** Experience is another name of Consciousness. Experience is transactional, a relational status of Consciousness. When a sound comes, I say I am experiencing sound.

If discrete experiences are just experience itself appearing in many guises, separating myself from experience leaves me standing alone as I am. Standing in myself alone is called "liberation" (*moksa*). *Separating myself from experience is called "discrimination" (viveka). It is the essence of Vedanta practice.*

(A) How Do We Experience Objects? My Relationship to Experience.

Experience is a sentient thought mode. It is called a *vritti*. The *vritti* is sentient because the mind is sentient. Apart from Consciousness, the mind is insentient, inert. When it is illumined by Consciousness/Awareness it becomes sentient, capable of knowing. The relationship between Consciousness and thought is the same as the relationship between Consciousness and the body because the body and mind inhabit the same order of reality. Just as Consciousness is not a part of the body, it is not a part of a thought nor is it a property of a thought. It is an independent factor that makes the thought sentient. Consciousness is not

affected by the size, shape or duration of the thought. It precedes the thought and remains when the thought dies.

*The stream of our experiences is a consequence of the continual stream of thoughts rising and falling in Consciousness. Consciousness does not arise and fall nor does it come and go, although it seems to change when it is confused with the thoughts it illumines. It is always present shining steadily in our minds. Consciousness pervades every thought and exists between each thought. In the absence of thought, Consciousness is objectless. Although every thought is in contact with Consciousness, Consciousness is not in contact with any thought/experience. **Conclusion: If I am Consciousness I am always free of experience.***

(B) Experience Seemingly Produces Bliss

1. Bliss is Not in Objects
2. **I'm seeking Bliss when I Experience Because I want to change myself.**

(C) But Experience Does Not Change the I

You do not become a different conscious being when you have a different experience, although you think you do. People routinely ask, "How are you today?" This shows that they believe the Self is different today from yesterday. But the same "I" that experienced yesterday experiences today. The same "I" sees that smells, tastes, touches and hears. If you have a father-experience and subtract the father, pure experience remains. If your father enters the room you have son-experience. Subtract the son and pure experience remains. When your wife comes in you have husband-experience. Subtract the husband and pure experience remains. Experience does not change the "I."

(D) Therefore, experience does not produce Bliss

(E) Solution: Inquiry into The Self

E. The Self is Bliss (Panchadasi)

Bliss is the nature of the Self. Everyone seeks bliss. We seek it because it is our nature. We avoid or discard unnatural things.

8. "This Awareness is the Self of all beings. Its nature is bliss because it is for the sake of the Self that people wish to never die. (Chapter 1)

9. Others are loved for the sake of the Self, but the Self is loved for none other. Therefore, the love for the Self is the highest.

*10. Scripture establishes **by reasoning** that the individual self and the impersonal Self are of the nature of existence, Awareness and bliss. The Upanishads teach that the*

individual and the limitless Self are one.”

Why Do I Need Reasoning? Because I am ignorant that what I desire to experience I am already experiencing.

11. *“If it is not clearly known that the Self is limitless bliss, there will not be intense love for it. When it is known, **there is no attraction for worldly objects** because all one’s love goes to it. It is difficult to say that the Self is either completely known or completely unknown.*

12. *For example, a single child’s voice singing in a chorus is drowned by the simultaneous voices of the other children. **The bliss of the Self is easily obscured by the daily small blisses occurring when desired objects are attained.***

13. *Experience of everyday objects leads to the conclusion that they are self-existent and self-revealing. An obstruction, like blindness, prevents an appreciation of the self-existence and self-revelation of objects.*

F. The Bliss of Yoga (Chapter XI)

Panchadasi’s first five discrimination chapters focus on the existence “aspect” of the Self. The next five, the illumination chapters, focus on the Consciousness “aspect” of the Self. The final five unfold the bliss “aspect” of the Self. **The Self has no actual aspects because it is non-dual.**

The Benefits of Self-Knowledge

*1 to 5. We now describe the bliss of Awareness, knowing which, one becomes free from present and future worries and obtains objectless happiness. Scripture says, “A knower of Awareness “becomes” Awareness and “goes beyond” sorrow.” It also says, “Awareness is bliss.” One “becomes” blissful through knowledge of blissful Awareness **and in no other way**. Established in Awareness as Awareness, one is fearless. One who sees differences is not established in Awareness. Self-knowers have no anxiety concerning the results of good and bad actions.*

6 to 8. For the enlightened, “good” and “bad” are projections of ignorance. When Awareness is realized to be the Self, all doubts about one’s nature dissolve and the need to act to complete oneSelf ends. Knowing one’s Self as Awareness, one “becomes” immortal because birth and death do not exist for Awareness.

9 to 10. Many texts say that steady Self-knowledge destroys sorrow and results in bliss.

What Is Bliss?

17. *Awareness alone is fullness/bliss. Only temporary bliss is experienced in the transactional, apparent reality, i.e. the Five Sheaths. Temporary bliss is suffering.*

18. Bliss is threefold: (1) the bliss of Awareness, (2) the bliss born of knowledge and (3) the bliss produced by contact with objects.

19. First learn the definition of Awareness from scripture, "that because of which I (jiva) knows what I know," then negate the Food Sheath, the Vital Sheath, the Mental Sheath and the Intellect Sheath and realize Awareness as it reflects in the Bliss Sheath.

20. All beings are born of bliss, live by it, pass on to it and are finally reabsorbed in it. There is no doubt that Awareness is wholeness/bliss.

The bliss of Awareness is experience itself, but it is not a particular experience. It is fullness-bliss, wholeness-bliss, completeness-bliss. "Experience itself is existence." Subtract the thought appearing in Awareness and lock your mind on the 'feeling' of existence.

21. Before someone hears Vedanta, he or she is subject to the usual miseries, but even as an inquirer there is **the misery of not knowing the Self, the misery involved in struggling with the wayward mind, the fear of falling off the path and the misery of conceit.** But one perseveres because the bliss of Awareness awaits.

22. (Objector): There is no happiness in duality, but there is no happiness in non-duality either. If you maintain that there is, then it must be experienced.

23. (Reply): It is true that there is no experience of happiness "in" non-duality. Non-duality, i.e. Awareness, **is** bliss. Experiential happiness requires a subject and object, but there is no subject and object in Awareness, only the appearance of them. **No proof of bliss is required** because Awareness is self-revealing and requires no proof.

24. The question itself is evidence of the self-revealing nature of non-dual Awareness, for you cannot deny your existence. All you can say is that it is not bliss. (because you are in yoga with your thoughts)

25 to 26. If you cannot accept non-duality, please tell us **what existed before duality.** Was it non-duality or duality or something different from both? It cannot have been something different from both, because non-duality and duality include everything in existence. It cannot have been duality, because you cannot derive two without one. However, assuming the existence of Maya (ignorance) you can derive two from one.

27 to 29. (Objector): Deep sleep is non-duality because the subject required for experience is not present.

30 to 32. Not so, because even though the waking-state "you" is not there, you exist in deep sleep as non-dual Awareness **because you can't experience it if you are not there to witness it.**

34. *It is common knowledge that in deep sleep the blind are not blind, the wounded are not wounded and the ill are not sick.*

35 to 36. *If you argue that the absence of misery does not necessarily imply bliss because inert objects like stones do not experience misery or happiness, we reply that inert objects are the fullness of Awareness minus Subtle Bodies, so they have no way to reveal their non-dual nature.*

37 to 38. *Happiness and misery, however, are not known by inference; they are experienced directly. The absence of misery is directly experienced in deep sleep. Since misery (negative thoughts) is the opposite of bliss, the absence of misery is the presence of bliss.*

39 to 41. *If sleep is not blissful, why do people take such care to sleep in comfortable beds and become irritated when awakened from a deep sleep? If you argue that sick people sleep to remove pain, we agree, but healthy people also love sleep. If you say that their happiness is due to comfortable beds and sleep accessories, we argue that a comfortable bed brings happiness before sleep, but not once the person has fallen asleep.*

42 to 45. *The happiness experienced in deep sleep does not come from an object, because objects are absent. In sleep the Subtle Body merges into the Causal Body, the Bliss Sheath, and becomes a subtle vritti called Prajna to produce the experience of the bliss of limitless Awareness.*

44. *Even the bliss that comes from keeping one's attention on the bliss of Awareness as it reflects in the intellect in the waking state becomes tiresome.*

46. *The scriptures give the following examples to illustrate the bliss of sleep: the falcon, the eagle, the infant, the king and the knower of Awareness.*

47 to 48. *Tied to a string, a falcon flies hither and thither. Failing to find a resting place, it returns to rest on the post to which it is tethered. Similarly, the Subtle Body, Jiva's instrument for experiencing bliss, moves on in the dreaming and waking states to obtain the results of righteous and unrighteous deeds. When the results of its actions are exhausted, the mind ignores the impermanence of the results of previous pursuits and tries to find bliss through different pursuits.*

49. *The eagle flies to its nest to find rest. Jiva sleeps to experience the bliss of the Causal Body, the "nest" of Ignorance i.e. the body/mind/sense complex.*

50. *A newborn baby, having suckled the breast of its mother, lies smiling in a soft bed. Free from desire and aversion, it enjoys the bliss of its nature as limitless, unborn Awareness. When you get what you want, you experience the bliss of Existence/Awareness.*

51. A mighty king, sovereign of his world, having enjoyed everything humanly possible to his complete satisfaction, becomes the embodiment of bliss. He doesn't need objects because he knows they are always available.

52. A knower of the Self is effortlessly established **as, not in, bliss**.

53. Other than the infant, the king and the wise person, most Jivas are subject to intermittent bouts of happiness and unhappiness.

54 to 55. **We sleep to enjoy the bliss of Awareness**. In that state, like a man embraced by his loving wife, Jiva is not conscious of the internal (dream) or external (waking) worlds.

56 to 61. Scripture says, "In sleep a father is not a father." In the absence of the Subtle Body, which is merged in the Causal Body, Jiva is one with its nature, pure Awareness. Without its identity as a dreamer or waker, which causes the experience of joy and sorrow, Jiva becomes free of suffering. After deep sleep, the waking state entity says, "I slept happily. I knew nothing." Recollection presupposes experience. So in sleep there was experience. **The bliss experienced in dreamless sleep is revealed by Awareness itself**. It is the Self "experiencing" itself without the presence of objects. It also reveals the undifferentiated ignorance (ajnana) covering the intellect in that state. Many texts say that Awareness is bliss.

62. The Mental and the Intellect Sheaths are latent in the Causal Body. Deep sleep is the condition of the waking or dreaming Jiva when it appears as Prajna in the sleep state.

63 to 66. Just as melted butter again becomes solid, the two states following deep sleep again become manifest. Objects become differentiated from each other.

67 to 68. This fact is fully explained in the Mandukya and Tapaniya Upanishads. The Sheath of Bliss is the enjoyer and the bliss of Awareness is enjoyed. In deep sleep, Awareness is turned neither inward nor outward but forms one undifferentiated mass as Prajna experiences limitless bliss.

69 to 70. Awareness in the waking and dream states associates with the Subtle Body (chidabasa) and plays various roles. In deep sleep it is merged in the Bliss Sheath, the Causal Body. The intellect, mind and ego – the instruments of cognition – unite and become one in the state of sleep, just as drops of water become ice in winter.

71. The Witness is free of experience and therefore free of joy and sorrow.

72 to 76. Awareness reflected in the Causal Body is the means of enjoyment in deep sleep. Jiva leaves the bliss of the Causal Body when the vasanas that produce its karma sprout. The Kaivalya Upanishad says that the latent Subtle Body passes from the sleeping to the waking state owing to the effects of its previous actions. For a short time after waking up, the

*impression of the bliss of Awareness enjoyed during sleep continues. Jiva remains calm and happy and takes no interest in external objects. Then, **impelled by past actions ready to bear fruit**, it begins to think of duties and how to implement them, which entails experiences of many kinds. During the experiencing it gradually forgets the bliss of its nature. Because it experiences the bliss of Awareness during and after sleep on a daily basis it develops a predilection for it, how can Jiva doubt the bliss of its nature? **It must be one's nature because one willingly abandons transactions with objects to enjoy it.***

77. (Objector): *If a mere state of happiness that comes from non-doing – the sleeper is not a doer, but an enjoyer – is the bliss of Awareness, then all that is required for enlightenment is laziness.*

78. (Reply): *Your contention would be correct if Jiva realized that the bliss experienced in the waking state was the bliss of Awareness, but Jiva is always troubled by desire and thinks bliss is in objects, so the help of a teacher and the scripture is required to make its nature known.*

79 to 81. *If, from what has been unfolded so far, you know what Awareness is but are not free, you are like the man who heard that there was a large reward for anyone who knew the four Vedas, so he said, "I know that there are four Vedas. Please give me the money." But this not what is meant by the knowledge of Awareness. It should be directly and fully known.*

82. *If you argue that because Awareness is indivisible and unmodified bliss, untouched by Maya and its effects, knowledge of it cannot be complete or incomplete, we say that you know the word "Awareness," but you do not know what it means to be Awareness. **So you need a teacher and Vedanta to know what direct knowledge of Awareness means.***

85 to 86. *It is best to forget these clever arguments and understand that even the bliss experienced through objects (vishayananda) is the bliss of Awareness, apparently conditioned by the object present in Consciousness at any time.*

87 to 88. *There are three kinds of bliss: (1) brahmananda, the bliss of Awareness, (2) vasanananda, the bliss arising in the calm mind from vasanas born from experiencing the bliss of Awareness, and (3) vishayananda, the bliss arising from the gain of a desirable object. The self-revealing bliss of Awareness gives rise to vasanananda and vishayananda.*

89. *The bliss of Awareness is self-revealing in deep sleep and is established by the authority of the scriptures, reasoning and by one's experience. Now hear about its experience at other times.*

90. *Jiva identified with the Bliss Sheath (anandamaya) enjoys the bliss of Awareness during sleep, but becomes identified with the Intellect Sheath (vijnanamaya) when the results of its actions fructify in the form of vasanas. It then changes states and identities. (The "sleep aspect of the waking state)*

Recognizing Awareness in the Waking State

93. Jiva experiences non-attachment, happiness and unhappiness. Happiness and unhappiness are the result of actions born of ignorance of its nature; **non-attachment comes naturally because it is the nature of Jiva.**

94 to 96. Pain and pleasure are the result of internal and external actions. **Non-attachment is experienced in the intervals between pain and pleasure.** “Now I have no worries, I am happy,” describes the natural bliss of Awareness appearing as a state of non-attachment. But in this state, the natural bliss of the Self is not primary, for it is obscured by the idea, “I am non-attached,” and the bliss experienced is not the bliss of Awareness but only an impression (vasana) of it.

97 to 98. The outside of a pot of cool water feels cool although there is no water on it, but the presence of cold water inside is inferred. **Similarly, as one realizes that his or her non-attachment belongs to Awareness and not to the ego, one begins to understand the meaning of Awareness.**

99 to 100. By continued practice of knowledge the Jiva becomes exceedingly refined. This state is like sleep but it is not sleep, because the ego is not completely absorbed. The Jiva is awake, but the Subtle Body is “asleep,” more or less free of disturbing thoughts. **The bliss in which there is no experience of duality and which is not sleep is the bliss of Awareness.**

101 to 106. By the steady application of reason and discrimination an inquirer should gradually control the mind. It should be returned to the Self over and over and fixed permanently on it. When the mind wanders to objects the inquirer should restrain it and concentrate it on the Self. The inquirer whose mind is tranquil and whose passions are subdued realizes he or she is limitless, blissful Awareness at some point. When the practice of inquiry withdraws and concentrates the mind, **the Self realizes itself and enjoys lasting satisfaction.** When one obtains the bliss which is beyond the senses, but which can be grasped by the intellect, he or she becomes firmly rooted in bliss and never moves from it. There is no greater gain. Once established in it, even great sorrow is meaningless.

Bhakti Yoga

Purification of the Mind – Detachment/Attachment Yoga – The Value of Renunciation

Yoga is the love that motivates the pursuit of bliss. I don't seek the object for the object's sake, I seek it for its bliss “component.” Since I can't seek two things at once, I have to disassociate from objects, which are inherently value neutral but which produce suffering owing to the expectation of lasting bliss and their changing nature. I disassociate from objects because they are only a means to an end. When a higher bliss is experienced the means is changed.

25 to 26. Love for a means to happiness is temporary because it is no longer valuable when the object – which is a means, not an end – invokes the love that is the Self. But the love for the Self is infinite. Love for an object always changes because an object can only deliver happiness for a limited period, after which a new object is required to apparently produce happiness. But the Self is not an object and its nature is love (parama prema svarupa), so the love for it is infinite.

Bhakti Yoga is the disassociation from objects and the sublimation of love into a higher object. Love of objects is sublimated into love of Isvara as *karma phala data*, and love of Isvara is sublimated into *upasana yoga*...the refinement, focus and control of the Subtle Body i.e. sublimating one's emotions into steady devotion for Isvara, which produces *samadhi*. *Samadhi* is the means for *sravanna*, *manana* and *nididhasana* i.e. Vedanta (*jnana yoga*). I love hearing the teaching because I want to know Isvara. I love discriminating Isvara 1 (pure original immortal Awareness) from Isvara 2 (objects) because it removes sorrow and produces great bliss.

113 to 117. *The mind is the world and the world is the mind. It should be purified with great enthusiasm. It assumes the form of the objects appearing in it. Through the purification of the mind with karma, upasana, and jnana yoga an inquirer destroys the impressions that produce the likes and dislikes that distort Jiva's evaluation of experience. When the likes and dislikes are destroyed the mind enjoys limitless bliss. If a person were to focus his mind on Awareness with the intensity he focuses it on the results of actions, he would be liberated in a short time. The mind is pure or impure. An impure mind is disturbed by desires and fears. A pure mind is not disturbed. The mind is the cause of bondage and release.*

118 to 127. ***The bliss which arises from the contemplation on Awareness is samadhi. It is sublime and purifies the likes and dislikes that produce suffering. Though it is difficult to keep the mind absorbed in Awareness, a bliss vasana is established that motivates further absorption. Other blisses pale in light of the bliss of absorption in Awareness. An inquirer who knows, "I am Awareness," experiences bliss even when he is engaged in worldly matters just as a woman devoted to her lover derives joy from thinking of him when she is doing household chores. Wisdom is renouncing the desire for sense-pleasure and sticking with the bliss of the Self even when the desire to enjoy objects is strong. The bliss of Self-knowledge frees the mind of subjective and objective entanglements. As a sati about to enter the fire considers the delay caused by putting on clothing and ornaments irritating, a devotee of the bliss of Awareness feels irritated by duties that distract the mind from the bliss.***

Yoga - Leading Error

80 to 82. Yoga is practiced to experience the bliss of the Self, but it can also bring about discrimination.

83. However, Yoga and Vedanta are difficult for extroverts. Yoga is not necessary for contemplative renunciants; they are suited for discrimination.

84. A seeker can be freed of attachment and aversion to objects by both Yoga and Vedanta.

85 to 87. Both the yogi and the discriminator are averse to objects inimical to their practice. If you argue that a yogi in nirvikalpa samadhi is superior to a discriminator because there is no duality for him or her, you need to know that there is no duality for a discriminator **irrespective of his or her state of mind.**

89. Yogis in samadhi are ever-conscious of the bliss of the Self and indifferent to the external world, as are discriminators.

The Liberated Person

128 to 130. A crow's vision alternates between the right and left eye. When a sage considers the bliss of Awareness and the bliss of worldly activities, he is like a crow that turns its head from one to the other. Or he is like someone who knows two languages.

131. When the knower experiences suffering, he is not disturbed as he was before the dawn of Self-knowledge. Just as a person half-immersed in the cool water of the Ganges feels both the heat of the sun and the coolness of the water, so the wise feel the misery of the world and the bliss of Awareness simultaneously.

132. The knower of truth who experiences the bliss of Awareness in the waking state also experiences it in the dream state because dream experience is just experience of vasanas garnered in the waking state.

133. But the impressions of ignorance still continue in the dreaming state. So in a dream a wise person will sometimes experience joy and sometimes suffering without being affected by either.

71 to 72. One who contemplates the witness Self as the dearest object will realize that it never changes. Because it is changeless, it is bliss. Because it is loved more than anything, it provides endless joy. The greater one's love of the Self, the greater one's bliss.

73 to 74. If you argue that because the mind is Awareness and Awareness is bliss, bliss should be present in *all* the modifications of the mind, you should know that Awareness illumines only the thoughts and the insentient thoughts illumine the world. For example, a candle burning in a room emits both light and heat, but only light fills the room and not heat. So you don't feel the bliss in the physical body, only the Subtle Body. The physical body of a jnana yogi feels virtually no pain because the Subtle Body is predominantly blissful.

75. Objects have certain properties (sound, touch, color, taste and smell), yet each is cognized by only one sense organ. **Only the Self experiences its bliss.** The senses are not capable of experiencing pleasure or pain. As they are just inert knowledge-gathering instruments, they can

only report the properties of objects to the mind, which is also inert. Inert instruments cannot experience limitless bliss, because they are not conscious and their range of experience is limited.

76. *If you argue that the different sensations reported by the senses are qualities of Awareness, you need to know that the seeming difference between Awareness and bliss is caused by Sattva, Rajas or Tamas conditioning the mind. **When there is a predominance of Sattva in the vrittis, it is clear that bliss and Awareness are identical.** But when Rajas and Tamas predominate in the vrittis, the bliss is obscured. As adding salt removes the intensely sour taste of tamarind, the bliss of Awareness is obscured when it is mixed with Rajas*

2. *Like the bliss arising from the contact of the mind with external objects, **the bliss arising from the knowledge of Awareness is a modification of the intellect.***

3. ***Three aspects of the bliss of knowledge are: (1) absence of sorrow, (2) the fulfillment of all desires, (3) the hard and fast conviction, "I have done all that needs to be done."***

4 to 5. *The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad says, "When someone has realized the identity of his own Awareness with the Awareness in everything, what will he or she desire? To please whom will the body be engaged?"*

6. *Awareness appears as if it is two selves, a reflected "self" and a pure Self. Awareness identified with the three bodies or the Five Sheaths (the reflected self) thinks of itself as a doer and an enjoyer – a Jiva.*

7, 10, 11. *Pure Awareness under the spell of Maya identifies with names and forms, apparently becoming the bodies that seek enjoyment through objects. Discrimination destroys identification with the Sheaths and reveals the fact that there is no enjoyer, nor anything to be enjoyed.*

(2) Fulfillment of All Desires

18, 20, 35. *The Aitareya Upanishad says that not only does sorrow cease, the knower achieves the object of all desires.*

19. *The Chandogya Upanishad says that the knower may be seen laughing, playing, rejoicing with the opposite sex, enjoying vehicles and other things, without bodily Awareness. The vital breath, impelled by fructifying actions keeps him or her alive.*

21 to 22. *The bliss attained by a wealthy king who is young, handsome, learned, healthy, strong of mind and entitled to all worldly enjoyments is not superior to the steady bliss of a knower.*

23. *For both the king and the knower there is no attraction for worldly enjoyments, and so their happiness and contentment are comparable. **One is desireless because of the ready availability of objects of enjoyment, the other because of discrimination.***

24 to 25. *The knower understands the defects of objects of enjoyment. The knower is indifferent to the cravings of the body.*

26 to 33. *Though there is a similarity between the king and the knower in terms of desirelessness, the king suffers misery by accumulating objects of enjoyment and fears the loss of them. Both gain and loss are absent for the knower, so his or her bliss is superior to the king's. It is also possible that a king has unfulfilled spiritual fantasies whereas the knower has none.*

33. *From the status of a king up to the Creator each Jiva desires the intense joy of more evolved Jivas. But the bliss of the Self, which is beyond the grasp of the mind and the senses, is superior to all blisses, worldly and celestial.*

34. *As the knower has no desire for subtle pleasures, the bliss of everything is his.*

36. *It is not true that because the Self-ignorant are actually limitless fullness they should experience limitless bliss. Only temporary object-generated blisses are available to them.*

37 to 38. *The non-experiencing witness "enjoys" everything because it is self-experiencing bliss and everything is it. A famous verse says, "I am the food and the eater of the food." Thus the knower is free of suffering and enjoys object-independent satisfaction.*

39. *Before realization one performs many actions to acquire worldly and spiritual objects as an aid to liberation. But when Self-knowledge is firm, action loses its meaning.*

40. *Both topics have been properly explained in Chapter VII, "The Lamp of Perfect Satisfaction." The following verses should be contemplated for the purification of the mind.*

The Benefits of the Bliss of Self Knowledge

1. The Love Benefit - They Love Love, not objects.
2. The Generosity Benefit – They are unselfish saintlike givers, not grabbers.
3. The Presence Benefit – The Bliss of Awareness redeems a loveless past.
4. The Immortality Benefit – They have no future.
5. The Satisfaction Benefit – They love the world, their personalities and bodies warts and all.
6. The Freedom Benefit - They don't depend on others for their happiness or care what others think.
7. The Renunciation Benefit – They have no sense of ownership.
8. The Control Benefit – They have no sense of doership.
9. The Fearlessness Benefit. They see no otherness so they are happy to be reborn.
10. The Humour Benefit – They see the world as an entertaining play.
11. The Accomplishment Benefit – They have done everything that needs to be done.
12. The Desire Benefit – They are one with the life force, the desire that is not opposed to dharma.
13. The Attraction Benefit – They are the beauty that makes beauty beautiful.

How The Liberated Think

41 to 64. A liberated person is mindful of the difference between his former life and his present life. He or she thinks, "Let samsaris chase objects. I am fullness itself. What is there to gain in this world? Let the spiritual types seek high states of Awareness. I pervade all states. I am neither high nor low. Let those who are qualified teach Vedanta. I don't teach, because I am not a doer, but I can teach because I am the Self and anything is possible for me. I have no desire to sleep, beg for alms or purify myself. Mirage water does not wet the desert sand, nor do actions and the opinions of others affect me. Let inquirers listen to Vedanta. I have Self-knowledge. Why listen again? But why shouldn't I listen again, because Vedanta is even more beautiful when one knows who one is? I don't meditate, but I can meditate if I wish. I am meditation itself. Meditation is for doers.

"Even though I am not subject to ignorance, I behave as if I was ignorant owing to my fructifying karma. All worldly affairs end when fructifying karma is exhausted. If it is not exhausted, thousands of meditations will not remove it. To bring karma to an end, inquire as much as you like, but it is a waste of time because karma is harmless. It has nothing to do with me. I am not distracted, so I do not need samadhi. Both distraction and samadhi are only states of mind.

"I am the experience of everything in the universe. There are no special experiences for me. I have obtained all that is to be obtained and have done all that is to be done. This is my unshakeable knowledge. I am associationless, neither the doer nor the enjoyer. I am not concerned with doing good or bad karma in accordance with social or scriptural codes. But there is no harm in helping the world according to scriptural injunctions even though there is nothing to gain. Let my body worship God, bathe or beg for alms. Let my mind recite 'Om' or study the Upanishads. Let my intellect meditate on a deity or be merged in the bliss of Awareness, my Self. I am the witness of all. I do nothing nor cause anything to be done.

"Blessed am I because my Self-knowledge is firm. Blessed am I because I am the fullness of Awareness! Blessed am I, blessed, for I am free from the sufferings of the world. Blessed am I, blessed, for my ignorance has fled; I know not where. Blessed am I, for there are no further duties to perform. Blessed am I, for I have achieved the highest that one can aspire to. Blessed am I, for there is nothing to compare with my great bliss! Blessed am I, blessed, blessed, blessed, again and again, blessed! Wonderful am I, the possessor of great merit. Wonderful! O, how grand and true are the scriptures! How great is my teacher! How wonderful is illumination, how amazing my bliss!"

XV.

The Bliss of Objects

THIS CHAPTER SAYS that there is no bliss in objects. A mind under the influence of *Rajas* and *Tamas* imagines that objects contain happiness, but all objects are *mithya*. Just as a dog cuts its mouth as it chews on a sharp bone and thinks the blood comes from the bone and further injures its mouth, sense-oriented individuals pursue objects for happiness, but suffer constant attachment when pure happiness is the nature of the Self. All pleasure is the bliss of the Self.

Sattva, Rajas, Tamas

1 to 2. The bliss of contact with objects may be considered a door to the bliss of Awareness. Scripture says that the bliss of Awareness is indivisible and homogeneous and that individuals only enjoy a tiny fraction of it.

3 to 5. The mental modifications are Sattva, Rajas and Tamas. Sattvic modifications are detachment, fortitude, openness and so forth. Rajasic modifications are thirst and love for objects, attachment arising from the belief that they are real, etc. Tamasic modifications are delusion, fear and so forth. Awareness reflects on all three modifications, but joy is only available when the Subtle Body is predominantly Sattvic.

6 to 8. Consciousness in conjunction with the power of Maya exists in every object and illumines all bodies just as the sun reflects differently in differently shaped water pots. Like the moon reflected in the ripples in a stream, it seems to be many. It is faint and indistinct when it is reflected in muddy water (Tamas), but shines as it is when it is reflected in clear pure water (Sattva). It shimmers and dances when Rajas plays in the mind.

9 to 13. Because of the preponderance of Rajasic and Tamasic vrittis, the experience of the bliss of Awareness is obscured. Rajas manifests as a burning energy, the energy of passion, a blazing fire. Tamas is like a dead, wet, smoking fire; it manifests as dull narcotic pleasure. When the mind is Sattvic, both Awareness and bliss are manifest. These illustrations make it clear that the nature of the mind determines how Awareness manifests. There is no bliss in Tamas or Rajas, only in Sattva.

14 to 19. A desire for objects is Rajas. It is characterized by anxiety. Obstacles to the fulfillment of desire produce anger, hatred and despair if the obstacles are difficult to overcome. In Tamas, there is sloth, inadvertence and depression. The opportunities for happiness in it are virtually non-existent. With the acquisition of the desired object the desire disappears and happiness ensues. Even the idea of getting what one wants produces small happinesses. But the greatest happiness is the result of Sattva because sloth, anger or greed are absent. Whatever happiness is experienced is the reflection of the bliss of Awareness. When the mind is turned inward and relatively free of vrittis, reflected bliss is unobstructed.

20 to 21. Existence and bliss is the nature of Awareness. In material objects only existence is manifest, not Awareness and bliss. Existence and Awareness are manifest in Rajasic and Tamasic vrittis while existence, Awareness and bliss are manifest in Sattva.

22. Awareness unassociated with the world is known by discrimination and Yoga.

23. *Absence of reflected Awareness, misery and non-existence are three forms of Maya. Non-existence is illustrated by such expressions as “the horns of a hare”; absence of reflected Awareness is seen in inanimate objects like stones.*

24. *There is misery in Rajasic and Tamasic vrittis. Awareness associated with the Gunas is called Awareness with qualities.*

25. *Such being the nature of Maya and Awareness, the one who wishes to meditate on Awareness should ignore non-existent things (such as the horns of hares) and concentrate on other things.*

26. *In material objects, one should negate the name and form and concentrate on their existence. In Rajasic and Tamasic vrittis, one should reject the misery associated with them and meditate on the source of the Awareness that illumines them.*

27. *In Sattvic vrittis, contemplate their existence, Awareness and bliss.*

28. *Even for a man of dull intellect, meditation on the qualities of awareness is useful.*

29. *After seeing the defects of enjoyment of objects, non-attachment to them arises and the knowledge of the futility of pursuing objects is clear.*

Meditation and Self-Knowledge

30. *These contemplations involve a mixture of knowledge and experience and should be considered as a direct means of Self-knowledge. When the mind is concentrated on (the knowledge of) Awareness, the knowledge becomes firm.*

31. *When their adjuncts (upadhis) are discounted, Self-knowledge is steady if existence, Awareness and bliss are known to be one.*

32. *The adjuncts are the Sattvic, Rajasic and Tamasic vrittis. Through either knowledge or experience, the vrittis are discounted.*

33. *When the associationless, Self-luminous and non-dual Awareness is known as it is, the knower, known and knowing that belong to the Subtle Body are seen to be unreal.*

34. *In this, the fifth chapter of the section called “The Bliss of Awareness,” “The Bliss of Objects” has been unfolded. Enter the bliss of Awareness through this door.*

35. *May the Awareness that destroys ignorance be pleased by this treatise on “The Bliss of Awareness” and may it protect all pure-hearted beings that take refuge in it.*

OM TAT SAT!