

## Satasloki

Slokas 81 to 85

यो यो दृग्गोचरोऽर्थो भवति स स तथा तद्गतात्मस्वरूपा-  
विज्ञानोत्पद्यमानः स्फुरति ननु यथा शुक्तिकाज्ञानहेतुः ।  
रौप्याभासो मृषैव स्फुरति च किरणाज्ञानतोऽम्भो भुजङ्गो  
रज्ज्वज्ञानान्निमेषं सुखभयकृदतो दृष्टसृष्टं किलेदम् ॥८१

81. When the nacre in front is not known to be such, it is mistaken for silver. The sun's rays falling on sand create the illusion of water. A rope is mistaken for a snake in dim light. These appearances last only for a short time, till the substratum is known. The appearance of silver causes joy and the appearance of the snake gives rise to fear, but all these appearances are clearly false. The silver, water and snake are created only when they are seen. Similarly, the multifarious names and forms which we see appear only because the substratum, the Self, is not known. They also cause such emotions as joy, sorrow and fear. They are created only when they are perceived. They have no real existence apart from the substratum, the Self.

The principle propounded in this verse is known as दृष्टिसृष्टिवाद, according to which all things are, during the period they are cognized by a person, created by him through his nescience. This is also known as एकजीववाद, the 'Theory of Single Jiva'. Sri Madhusudana Sarasvati says in his work 'Siddhantabindu', which is a commentary on Sri Sankara's 'Dasasloki', that this is the pre-eminent Vedantic view. According to this view, the Jiva is the cause of the world by the power of nescience. All objects of perception last only as long as they are perceived. There is only one Jiva. Only when this Jiva attains liberation all Jivas become liberated. The statements about Suka and others having attained liberation is only eulogy or 'Arthavada'.

In this context Sri Sankara's Bhashya on the following verses from Mandukya Karika are relevant:-

II.6. The different things perceived in the waking state are unreal, for the additional reason that they do not exist in the beginning and at the end. A thing, such as a mirage, does not exist in the beginning and at the end; that does not exist even in the middle.

IV. 65-66. The creatures visible to a waking man are non-different from his consciousness, because they are perceived through his consciousness, just like the creatures perceived by the consciousness of

a dreamer. And that consciousness, as engaged in the perception of creatures, is non-different from the experiencer, since it is perceived by the experiencer, like the consciousness in the dream state.

IV. 71. It has been said that the birth, death, etc, of creatures within the range of empirical existence are like those of the creatures in dream and that the highest truth is that no creature undergoes birth.

The allegation made by some, that Advaita is only Buddhism in another garb, is refuted by Sri Gaudapada himself in Karika IV.99 where he says, "This view was not expressed by Buddha". This is further explained by Sri Sankara thus-" That the nature of the supreme Reality is free from the differences of knowledge, known and knower and is without a second was not expressed by Buddha; though a near-approach to non-dualism was implied in his negation of external objects and his imagination of everything as mere consciousness. But this non-duality, the essence of the ultimate Reality, is to be known only from the Upanishads".

मायाध्यासाश्रयेण प्रविततमखिलं यन्मया तेन मत्स्था-  
न्येतान्येतेषु नाहं यदपि हि रजतं भाति शुक्तौ न रौप्ये ।  
शुक्त्यंशस्तेन भूतान्यपि मयि न वसन्तीति विष्वग्विनेता  
प्राहास्माद् दृश्यजातं सकलमपि मृषैवेन्द्रजालोपमेयम् ॥८२

(विष्वग्विनेता- The guru of the universe, Lord Krishna)

82. Since I am the substratum for the superimposition of the universe by Maya, this entire universe is brought forth by me. Therefore all these creatures are in me, but I am not in them. Though (illusory) silver appears on nacre, there is no trace of nacre in silver. (The superimposed object appears on the substratum, but we cannot say that the substratum is contained in the superimposed object). But, in reality, these creatures do not dwell in me (because they have no real existence and are only the creation of Maya). So said Lord Krishna, the Guru of the universe. Therefore all the things perceived are only like objects conjured up by magic and so unreal.

This verse is based on Bhagavadgita, 9.4 & 5.

Gita, 9.4:-- Here, as everywhere in the Gita, Lord Krishna speaks as Brahman, the Self of all. All creatures are superimposed on Brahman by Maya. They appear to be real only because of the substratum, Brahman, who is the only reality in the absolute sense. It can therefore be said that all beings exist in Brahman. Since Brahman is the self of all beings, it may be thought that Brahman dwells in them. This is denied by the

statement, "But I am not contained in them". Brahman, who alone is real, cannot be contained in the world which has only empirical reality. Taking the example of the rope-snake to clarify this point, it can be said that the illusory snake exists in the rope. In fact the snake exists, or appears to exist, only because there is a rope there. But, although it is the rope that appears as the snake, it cannot be said that the rope is contained in the snake, because the snake has no existence at all, while the rope does exist (as an empirical reality). The snake has only illusory or *praatibhaasika* reality. Similarly, Brahman who is the absolute reality, cannot be contained in the world or in created beings which are not real from the absolute point of view.

Gita, 9.5:-- Here the Lord declares that the beings do not exist in him. This appears to be a blatant contradiction of what was said in the preceding verse, namely, that all beings exist in Brahman. This apparent contradiction is due to the fact that the two statements are made from two different standpoints. The statement that all beings exist in Brahman is made from the empirical standpoint, according to which the world and all beings are real. But if we speak from the standpoint of absolute truth, since the world is only a product of Maya and has no existence at all, it would be correct to say that the world does not exist in Brahman. Brahman is, in reality, not at all connected with the things created by Maya, just as the dreamer is not, in reality, connected with the things seen in dream.

हेतुः कर्मैव लोके सुखतदितरयोरेवमज्ञोऽविदित्वा  
मित्रं वा शत्रुरित्थं व्यवहरति मृषा याज्ञवल्क्यार्तभागौ ।  
यत्कर्मैवोचतुः प्राक् जनकनृपगृहे चक्रतुस्तत्प्रशंसां  
वंशोत्तंसो यदूनामिति वदति न कोऽप्यत्र तिष्ठत्यकर्मा ॥८३

83. The ignorant, deluded man, not realizing that his own past Karma is the cause of his joys and sorrows, wrongly believes that his friends are the source of his joys and his enemies the source of his sorrows. To remove this wrong notion, the sages Yajnavalkya and Artabhaga declared in the palace of King Janaka that a person's Karma alone is the cause of his joys and sorrows and of repeated births. They praised the power of Karma. Lord Krishna, the great ornament of the Yadava race, has said in the Gita that no one can remain inactive even for a moment.

This verse is based on Br. Up. 3.2.13 and Gita 3.5.

वृक्षच्छेदे कुठारः प्रभवति यदयं पाणिनोद्यस्तथापि

प्रायोऽन्नं तृप्तिहेतुस्तदपि निगिलनं कारणं भोक्तृयत्नः ।

प्राचीनं कर्म तद्वद्विषमसमफलप्राप्तिहेतुस्तथापि

स्वातन्त्र्यं नश्वरेऽस्मिन्न हि खलु घटते प्रेरकोऽस्यान्तरात्मा ॥८४

84. For cutting a tree, an axe is the instrument, but it has to be lifted up by a human hand and brought down with force on the tree, which means that it is the action of a sentient being that cuts the tree. Food no doubt satisfies hunger, but only if it is put into the mouth and swallowed by the eater. Similarly, though the accumulated result of good and bad actions of past lives is the cause of a person experiencing joys and sorrows, the actions themselves are not capable of giving the results, since they are insentient and come to an end as soon as they are completed. It is the Lord, who is the indwelling Self and inner controller of all, who dispenses the results of past actions.

Reference may be made here to Brahma sutra 3.2.38. There the view of the Mimamsakas that Karma itself gives its fruits and that it is not necessary to postulate a God for this purpose is refuted. Only a sentient being can perform any action. Karma which is insentient cannot.

स्मृत्या लोके तु वर्णाश्रमविहितमदो नित्यकाम्यादि कर्म

सर्वं ब्रह्मार्पणं स्यादिति निगमगिरः सङ्गिरन्तेऽतिरम्यम् ।

यन्नासानेत्रजिह्वाकरचरणशिरःश्रोत्रसन्तर्पणेन

तुष्येदङ्गीव साक्षात्तरुरिव सकलो मूलसन्तर्पणेन ॥८५

85. Various obligatory rites as well as optional rites for the fulfillment of specific desires are laid down for the different castes and stages of life by the Smritis (Dharma Sastras). The Vedas (and the Gita) declare that if these rites are performed as an offering to Brahman (without desire for the fruit), they confer very attractive results in the form of purity of mind, which is the essential pre-requisite for the attainment of Self-realization. Just as an individual can be pleased by the offer of something which pleases his organs of sense and action and a tree is nourished by pouring water at the root, the supreme

Lord is pleased along with all the various deities by the offering of all actions to the Lord.

In the first example above, it is shown that by pleasing a part, the whole is pleased. In the second example all the parts, such as the branches, leaves and fruits are pleased by pleasing the whole. From these two examples the following conclusions are reached:- (1) by propitiating the supreme Lord, all the deities such as Indra, Varuna, etc are propitiated and (2) the worship of any such deity is actually the worship of the supreme Lord and it is He who confers the result through that deity, as the Lord says in Gita, 7.21, 22 and 9.23.

In Br. Up. 4.4.22 it is said--The seekers of Brahman wish to realize Brahman through the study of the Vedas, performance of sacrifices, charity and austerity. This is what has been elaborated as Karmayoga in the Gita. Sri Sankara says in his Introduction to the Gita--"That Dharma, characterized by action and laid down for the various castes and stages of life, though meant for attaining various results such as prosperity in this world and enjoyment in higher worlds after death, yet, when performed as an offering to God and without craving for the fruit, results in purification of the mind. And the purified mind is the cause even for liberation, by becoming the means for the attainment of fitness for rise of knowledge".