

प्रातः स्मरणम्

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PRĀTAḤ SMARAṆAM



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FOREWORD

The purpose of all Sadhana is to be at home i.e. to be in tune with one's own self. We always feel happy to be at home. Atma tattva is that happy home.

The purpose of this text is to remind us of our true abode. The daily reminder helps us to get established in our true nature which is Satcitananda.

Based on daily informal talks on the subject by Swami Visharadananda to a group of students at Prashanti Kutiram. An attempt has been made to bring the idea enshrined in the text in a simple manner. Shortcomings, on the part of publishers, may please be excused.

PRĀTAḤ SMARAṆAM

प्रातस्समरामि हृदि संस्फुरदात्मतत्त्वं
सच्चित्सुखं परमहंसगतिं तुरीयम् ।
यत्स्वप्नजागरसुषुप्तमवैति नित्यं
तद्ब्रह्म निष्कलमहं न च भूतसङ्घः ॥ 1 ॥

Prātassmarāmi hr̥di saṁsphuraḍātmatatvam
Saccitsukham paramahamsagatim turīyam
Yatsvapnajāgarasuṣuptamavaiti nityaṁ
Tadbrahma niṣkalamaham
na ca bhūtaśaṅghaḥ

Prātaḥ - early morning; **smarāmi** - I remember; **hṛdi** - in the heart; **saṃsphurat** - shining; ātmatattvam - the truth of self; **saccitsukham** - that ever present limitless awareness, bliss; **parama-ḥaṃsa-gatim** - the supreme goal of **sannyāsīs**; **turiyam** - known as the fourth; yat - which; svapna - **jāgara-suṣuptam** - in dream, waking and sleep; avaiti - witnesses; nityam - always; tat - that; brahma - Brahman; **niṣkalam** - undivided; aham - I; na ca - and not; **bhūta-saṅghaḥ** - aggregate of elements.

Early morning, I remember the shining truth of the self in the heart, that which is ever present, limitless awareness, the supreme goal of **sannyāsīs**, known as the 'fourth', and which always witnesses dream, waking and deep sleep. I am that undivided Brahman and not an aggregate of elements.

प्रातर्भजामि मनसा वचसामगम्यं
वाचो विभान्ति निखिला यदनुग्रहेण ।
यं नेति नेति वचनैर्निगमा अवोचुः
तं देवदेवमजमच्युतमाहुरग्र्यम् ॥ 2 ॥

**Prātarbhajāmi manasā vacasāmagamyam
Vāco vibhānti nikhilā yadanugraheṇa
Yam neti neti vacanairnigamā avocuḥ
Tam devadevamajamacyutamāhuragryam**

Prātaḥ - early morning; **bhajāmi** - I worship; **manasā** - by the mind; **vacasām** - of the speech; agamyam - inconceivable; **vācaḥ** - words; **vibhānti** - manifest; **nikhilāḥ** - entire; yat - whose; **anugraheṇa** - by blessing; yam - which; neti - 'not this'; neti - 'not this'; **vacanaiḥ** - by the words; **nigamāḥ** - Vedas; **avocuḥ** - described; tam - that; deva-devam - the Lord of deities; ajam - unborn; acyutam - changeless; **āhuḥ** - they say; agryam - the foremost.

Early morning, I worship Him in the mind who cannot be conceived by speech, by whose blessing all the words are manifest and whom the Vedas described by the words 'not this, not this'. That one, they say, is the foremost, the Lord of the deities, the unborn and changeless.

प्रातर्नमामि तमसः परमर्कवर्णं
पूर्णं सनातनपदं पुरुषोत्तमाख्यम् ।
यस्मिन्निदं जगदशेषमशेषमूर्त्तौ
रज्ज्वां भुजङ्गम इव प्रतिभासितं वै ॥ 3 ॥

Prātarnamāmi tamasah paramarkavarṇam
Pūrṇam sanātanapadam puruṣottamākhyam
Yasminnidam jagadaśeṣamaśeṣamūrtau
Rajjvām bhujāṅgama iva pratibhāsitam vai

Prātaḥ - early morning; **namāmi** - I bow; **tamaśaḥ** - from darkness; **param** - beyond; **arkavarṇam** - has the lustre of the sun; **pūrṇam** - limitless; **sanātana-padam** - changeless support; **puruṣottamākhyam** - known as the supreme being; **yasmin** - in whom; **idam** - this; **jagat** - universe; **aśeṣam** - the entire; **aśeṣa-mūrtau** - in the limitless form; **rajjvām** - in a rope; **bhujaṅgamaḥ** iva - like a snake; **pratibhāsitam** - has appeared; **vai** - indeed.

Early morning, I bow to the limitless, that which is beyond darkness, which has the lustre of the sun, which is the fundamental support known as the supreme being, in whose limitless form the entire universe has appears like a snake upon a rope.

INTRODUCTION

It is a universal truth that life is a struggle to get happiness and to avoid unhappiness. Life is a chain of actions directed towards this goal. We conclude without examining that the objective world is a means for our happiness and to avoid unhappiness. We seek an object assuming it would make us happy and shun it thinking it would make us unhappy. That is one conclusion.

Another conclusion is I am in need of happiness and I need to avoid unhappiness. So there are two-fold conclusions in our struggle:

These conclusions are taken for granted and never examined.

- (1) Viṣaya, the world as a means of happiness/
unhappiness and
- (2) Viṣayī, the person who experiences happiness/
unhappiness.

Our notions about the objects keep changing. There is no consistency in our likes and dislikes. There is no object which can give us happiness or unhappiness permanently. Today the Iṣṭa Sādhanatvam, the desirability for a particular object is there, tomorrow it would be different. Similarly, what is undesirable (aniṣṭa) today may not look so tomorrow.

What we want, the happiness, is not created but is eternally present with us. In deep sleep we are free from all misery without depending on any object because the mind is free from all the anxiety of seeking something. There is no disturbance whatsoever. This type of experience is there with everyone. It is universal.

That means, it is a false conclusion that I need to depend on outside world to get happiness or to avoid misery. But the whole struggle of the world is due to this false knowledge. This is a simple thing known to everybody and yet not recognised. Why do we miss this truth?

There is no answer to this question. We have been missing and we will be missing forever unless some factor points out that your struggle is based on some false knowledge! And this false knowledge cannot be got rid of by itself or accidentally. We are not going to 'stumble' upon some solution unless some āpta puruṣa (wise person) comes on our way and points out our ignorance. We, at our own, can't find the solution.

We are so busy in our worldly activities, so extrovert that even when someone offers the solution, we say we don't have the time.

Only when we stop for a while in our busy schedule (only due to some puṇya (merit) such a pause may come) there is a possibility that we may question our knowledge base, doubt the correctness of our knowledge. In that case, stop for a while, think, clear the doubt and go ahead.

Whatever is obvious, if it is missed it will be missed forever. This is true about ātma also. Mokṣa (liberation) is nityasiddha (ever-existing) yet we miss it. That missing is called ignorance. Missing nitya-siddha vastu means it is as good as not being there. If mokṣa is away from you it is only by ignorance. That you have to be dependent on means to be happy is ignorance. You don't see the fact. If ignorance is

the problem then knowledge has to be the solution. And to gain the knowledge, we have to go to the source of knowledge. Śabda Pramāna (scriptures) is the means to get knowledge.

ABOUT THE VERSES

Prataḥ Smaranam Stotra is a composition by Sri Śaṅkarāchārya. This is used for Nidhidhyāsana (contemplation). Mind has to be brought to ātma again and again. For that purpose we need some alambana (support). As an alambana the Prataḥ Smaranam reminds us to bring the mind back to ātma-tattva.

Before I get into hectic life, before I lose control over my mind, before the sense organs become violent, let me think over this ātma-tattva. Once they become violent, it is difficult to bring them back to the ātmavastu.

According to Pañca Daśi, there is Māṇḍya Dvaita and Tīvra Dvaita. Getting into the objective world is Tīvra Dvaita. Once you are with it, you will be carried away. That is why one has to remind oneself in the morning after taking rest of the night when the mind has not yet entered into activity of life. That is the right time to think over the ātma tattva. It is easier to concentrate at that time.

PRĀTAḤ SMARĀMI

I recollect that tattva which is manifest in the antaḥ-karaṇa as a self-evident being. I don't depend on another factor in order to arrive at this type of understanding because ātma is svaparakāśa (self-evident). There is nobody who has doubt about the self. Aham asmi na va iti. This type of independence is because of svaparakāśakatva of ātma. This is known to everybody.

Why is ātma expressed only in the mind when it is all pervasive? It is because of its sattva pradhānatā. For example, though the sunlight is all pervasive, falls on all the objects equally, it is only the mirror that reflects it. The mirror has that special quality. Similarly the mind has that special quality to reflect the ātma.

I recollect the ātma-tattva by invoking the sanskāra of sat-cit-sukham. सत् Sat is that which is un-negatable. अबाधितत्वं सत्यत्वम् (abādhitatvam satyatvam) i.e. whose absence is never felt. One cannot conceive one's absence.

Cit is consciousness, awareness. It is Svaparakāśarūpatvam. The thing which lights up other things. Because of which things are known and without which things would have not been known. That particular knowledge by which things are known to us is Cit.

When you are in the dark room and someone asks, “Are you there?” you don’t put on the light to feel your presence. Even to put on the light, YOU have to be there.

Sukham we normally understand as happiness. This so-called happiness is subject to improvement from time to time. This gives happiness and that gives more happiness and something else is better, we feel. There is no permanent source of happiness except our own Self. Ātma is the source of all sukha. There is never a time when one is not dear to oneself. That dearest status is always there with the ātma.

PARAMAHAMSAGATIM TURĪYAM

It is ideal to have a committed life with seriousness and sincerity. Just listening will not do. Unless Śama-damādi ṣatsampatti is present in life, Niṣṭhā will not be complete.

TURĪYAM is that which is present constantly in all the three states of consciousness.

The real I, the unnegatable I which shines in the Hṛdaya as aham aham, Sat, Cit and Ānanda and is understood by the paramahansās. That exclusive commitment is done by paramahamsās. Turīyam is that which is available in all three states yet untouched. That is myself and not the bhūta saṅghaḥ.

YAT SVAPNA JĀGARA SUṢUPTAMAVAITI NITYAM

यथा कुसुमेभ्यः सुत्रम् Yathā kusumebhyah sūtram. In a garland of flowers, there is a thread running through all of them. It connects each flower but remains unseen. Same is true of ātma vastu. Just as thread is different from all the flowers and yet runs through them, ātma-tattva is exclusive to all the states, and still It is in all of them.

This ātma-tattva though available in all the three states, is not confined to any one of them.

This is to show that ātma which is available in Jāgrat avasthā is the same in svapna and suṣupti too. योऽहं स्वप्ने गजं दृष्टवान् सोऽहं इदानीम् गजं स्मरामि (Yoham svapne gajam dr̥ṣṭavān, soham idānim gajam smarāmi). “I who saw the elephant in the dream, am remembering that elephant.” There is the

pratyabhijnā, the recollection. “I” is the same in svapna (dream) and in jāgrat (wakeful state). There has to be a common basis. The experiencer and the person who remembers, has to be one and the same. One cannot recollect something which others have seen in the dream.

By this, it is understood my existence is never discontinued and I am not contaminated by the limitations of the avasthās. That is the ātma tattva and that ātma tattva I am. I bring this fact to my knowledge.

TAD BRAHMA NIṢKALAM AHAM NA CA BHŪTA SAṄGHAḤ

Kalā means part, avayava. When components are put together, an object is created. That which is created can be disintegrated also at some time or other. Ātma is not put.

together or created. So, there is no disintegration. It is निरवयव niravayava (having no components or parts). So, that ātma tattva, I am. तद् ब्रह्म निष्कलम् अहं Tad Brahma Niṣkalam Aham, and not an assemblage of spare parts, bhūtās.

We need to think of ātma again and again but the obstacle is our mind, which makes ātma slip out due to durvāsanās of viṣayāas. Nidhidhyāsanā is bringing the mind back to ātma tattva again and again.

That bringing back of the mind again and again is abhyāsa here.

PRATAḤ BHAJĀMI MANASO VACHASĀMAGAMYAM

Smarāmi, Bhajami, Namāmi have same meaning. मनसः अगम्यम् आत्मतत्त्वम् वचसामगम्यम् आत्म तत्त्वम् अहमिदानीम् प्रातः बुद्धिस्थम् करोमि (Manasaḥ agamyām ātma tattvam, vachasām agamyam ātma tattvam aham īdānim prātaḥ budhisthām karomi). I recollect, I bring back to my mind that ātma tattva. I recollect and dwell in that ātma tattva which is not the object of mind and which is not the object of words too.

This ātma tattva cannot be seen by the mind and it cannot be known through the words (sabda). All the scriptures tell us.

यतो वाचो निवर्तन्ते अप्राप्यमनसा सह...

YATO VACHO NIVARTANTE APRĀPYA MANASA SAḤ

says Taitīreya Upaniṣat.

यं मनसा न मनुते.....

YAM MANASA NA MANUTE

says Kenopanishat.

All over the scriptures such are the expressions of Veda Vākyas. Words, though powerful, fail to reveal ātma tattva.

Mind cannot grasp it in a conventional way, even words cannot grasp it in a conventional way.

Dāndi Kavi says, “This whole world would have been in darkness had not śabda brought the knowledge into existence and lighted up the darkness”. In fact, most of the things that we know are only through śabda. Whatever we see, we express through words. Whatever is heard, ofcourse, is expressed through śabda again. And whatever we smell, touch and taste all are expressed through śabda. Śabda is so powerful.

Śabda in a conventional sense cannot reveal atma tattva and mind cannot objectify it.

VACO VIBHĀNTI NIKHILĀḤ YAT ANUGRAHEṆA..

Ātma tattva is that because of which everything has its existence. येन विना वाचाम् अस्तित्वमपि न सिध्यति (Yena Vinā Vācām Astittvam api na siddhyati). तस्य भासा सर्वमिदम् विभाति Tasya Bhāsā sarvam idam vibhāti. This ātma tattva is at the background of whole jagat (world).

No letter written on a piece of paper will be evident if background is not evident. Letters are manifest only because there is a support for them to stand upon. But we don't pay any attention to the paper.

Another example can be when we meet our near and dear friend and get lost in talking with him, in our preoccupation, in our excitement we don't even take note of other person accompanying the friend though that person is present all the time. Similarly though ātma is present all the time, in everything and everywhere, we fail to take notice of it.

What is the role of Śabda now? Śabda draws the attention towards the already evident fact. Misconception, bhrānti about ātma is eliminated by śabda. But śabda will fail to do if preoccupation continues to be there. If we are so much pleased and occupied about anātmā, then even if Śastra says that ātma is evident always, those words are not going to make any dent. That bhrānti will not go. That bhrānti goes only when āsakti, preoccupation with anātmā is diluted and is made loose. Then śabda does the job. What is evident, becomes really evident. Śabda is capable of creating a vrtti in the mind. And that object is illumined by Caitanya. Like it is only the light that shows the pictures in a film reel. Though images are different, light makes them evident.

Śabdās are able to reveal themselves because of atmānugraha. Ātma-tattva cannot be categorically pointed out as this or that by mind or by the words. But because of ātma all words gain the capacity to illumine themselves as well as the ātma tattva.

YAN NETI NETI VACANAIḤ NIGAMĀḤ AVOCUḤ

In Vedanta revelation is only through negation because there is no other way. Positively you cannot reveal ātma tattva. Because it is beyond all qualities. It is nirviśeṣa.

Svarūpa can be known by negation and not by assertion. (Assertion is okay for upāsana. For example, god with conch and discus. Upāsana is not useless but it is not ultimate). As and when individuality rises, one needs to negate it and see the basis of individuality. That which is there when individuality is present and that which is there when individuality is absent is myself. About which Śāstrās say that all the forms are upadhis and minus that upādhi what remains is infinity, ananta.

One knows ātma tattva but it is mixed with so many other things. Anātma is there and ātma is also there. Anātma

Dharma is taken as ātma dharma. For example, whenever I say “I am fat, I am lean”, I identify with body, when I say “I am hungry” I identify with prāṇa, when I say “I am disturbed” I identify with mind.

Śāstrās tell by separating and by negating anātma, one remains in ātma-tattva. This method is method of negation. If ātma tattva is to be known by negation then what could be the svarūpa of ātma?

TAM DEVA DEVAM AJAM ACYUTAM AHUḤ AGRYAM

Ātma is devata of devatas. Devatas also derive their prakāśakattva from ātma. Ātma is the light of the light, ultimate light. Ātma is ajam, that which is unborn, which does not have any cause. That which is uncreated, eternal, birthless. It is acyutam. Chyuti is deviation. Acyutam is that which has no deviation, no change, no fall. The principle that survives the death alone can say, “I have seen the death”. The factor that which witnesses the death can make such a statement. So, to witness death, the witness has to survive death. That is Acyutam.

Ātma is agryam (agre bhavam iti agryam). It is the first. That which was there in the beginning that which is always there. And that which will always be there. आत्मा वा अरे इदम् अग्रे आसीत् (Ātma vā are idam agre āsīt). Various ornaments

are made from one single element gold. They are various forms of the same substance. Bangle, ring, chain etc are forms of gold and will remain gold in essence. Various forms are mere concepts imposed on gold. So also whole jagat is imposed on ātma tattva, the agryam.

Śṛiti reveals that ātma tattva which is ajam, acuytam and agryam through the process of neti neti. I pray to that ātma-tattva (aham bhajāmi).

PRATAḤ NAMĀMI TAMASAḤ PARAM

ARKAVARṆAM

In this last verse again attention is drawn towards ātma tattva in different words.

Namaḥ means I bow down. All the karmendriyas and jnānendriyas I surrender to you is the connotation of namaste in Indian culture. By bringing the hands together whatever I have, I offer to you. It is at your disposal. That is the attitude you bring when you join your hands together. Both the hands have five fingers each. They represent five sense organs and five organs of action. With all this and kartṛatva in me I bow down. Please take me in your fold: that is the spirit behind namaskāra. Namaskāra is surrender. You are superior and I am subordinate. I want to follow you. That feeling I give by bowing down. I am offering my karmendriyas and

jnānendriyas. You guide me, how I have to conduct myself. One has to come down from high horse of the ego in śaraṇāgati bhāva, in a mood of surrender.

Here namāmi is a kriya done by me and unto myself. But how can I bow down to myself? There are no two things. Here bowing down means going closer. Looking at keenly. Trying to find out its real nature. Developing a love for it. Those things are represented by the word namāmi. With reverence, with sincerity I want to find out what is my real nature. I am prepared to reshuffle my thinking in the process. I am ready to keep my kartṛtva, bhokṛtva, my individuality aside. I can loosely sit on my individuality and I am ready to drop it.

TAMASAḤ PARAMARKA VARṆAM

Tamah is darkness. Anātmā prapañca is tamah. It is ajnāna. Arka Varṇam is swaprakāsa rūpa. Arka means sun. Sun does not depend on any other luminaries outside likewise, that ātma does not depend on any other things for its expression.

Darkness is that where your vision is obstructed. Where your vision becomes blunt. You can't see because of aviveka, mūḍhatā, jaḍatā. Moha is the andhakāra, darkness here.

Dhr̥tarāṣṭra, the mythological Kaurava King was drowned in infatuation for his son. He failed to see any defect in his spoilt son though pointed out again and again by all the wise men of his clan including mighty Bhīṣma, Droṇācārya, etc. He lost the power of discrimination because of his strong attachment to Duryodhana.

Such moha andhakāra, primary ignorance, obstructs the truth and one cannot see ātma. Param Arka Varṇam. For the whole universe life is possible because of the light of ātma:

PŪRṆAM SANĀTANA PADAM PURUṢOTTAMĀKHYAM

Pūrṇam is Trividha Pariccheda Śūnyam. Deśa-kāla-vastu pariccheda śūnyam is vastu. That which is not limited by space, time and object is pūrṇam, fullness.

The word Sanātana padam says this is to be known for parama puruṣartha prāpti. Ātma is beyond kṣara and akṣara hence called puruṣottama

There are three types of divisions seen in the world:

Sajātīya bheda,
Vijātīya bheda and
Swagata bheda.

Ātma is free from all these limitations

In Sajātīya bheda one object is different from members of same species. Example: mango tree is not coconut tree and it is not a palm tree.

Vijātiya bheda is being different from members of dissimilar species. Example: a mango tree is not a stone, it is not water.

And Svagata bheda means those differences are available intrinsically within oneself. Example: a tree has so many divisions in its own self. The trunk, branches, flowers, fruits, leaves etc. That is svagata bheda.

These three types of limitations we see everywhere. But that being which is free from all these three types of limitations is ātma.

Like in Akāśa (space), there are no divisions. East or West, above, below, all are imagined, man-made divisions for convenience for vyavahara. There is no absoluteness in it. So also there is no absoluteness in time. Past, present and future.

Leaving the form, the stuff of anātma is pūrṇa. One akhaṇḍa vastu, undivided substance. Anātmā is another name given

to ātma. Like ring, bangle, necklace is another name given to gold.

Another three types of limitations, that don't affect ātma are-

Deśataḥ-space wise

Kālataḥ- time wise

Vastutaḥ-object wise

Ātma is not located in space. In fact, space is located in ātma. I am the support of space.

There is no time limitation in ātma. Ātma is not subject to past, present or future. It is always there.

Ātma is not fragmented by various objects. It is because ātma is the substance of all the objects like gold is the stuff of various ornaments, like ocean is the base for the waves. Ātma is always there, everywhere and in every form. Every form

is a name given to the same stuff. Like, water is there in all its modifications- bubble, wave, foam, etc. Earth is there in all earthen ware, so also I am behind as the stuff and not as the name and form. If I can see myself like this, I am 'pūrṇoham', complete. Staying with this understanding, brings pūrṇa ānanda, supreme bliss.

I bow down to that tattva which is free from all three types of limitations and is pūrnam. Upādhi is an imposition upon existence. This world has millions of objects but behind millions and millions, 'Is'ness is common, that 'Is'ness is me.

SANĀTANA PADAM PURUṢOTTAMĀKHYAM.

Śuṣupti is the kārāṇa (cause) and svapna and jāgrat avasthās are kāryās (effect). It is beyond the reach of known and unknown.

**YASMIN IDAM JAGADAEŚMAŚEṢA MŪRTAU,
RAJJVĀM BHUJAṄGAMA IVA PRATIBĀSITAM
VAI.**

Real Vedanta dr̥ṣṭi is brought down in the third line of last stanza. It talks about the illusory nature of the world. Yasmin idam aśeṣam jagat, aśeṣamūrtau asti.

Rajjvām Bhujāṅgam is seeing a snake and fearing on a rope. But when seen properly, it is not there. Definition of mithyā (illusion) is स्वाधिष्ठानत्वेन यत् अभिमतं तस्मिन्नेव यस्य अभावः तत् मिथ्या svādhiṣṭhanatvena yat abhimatam tasminneva yasya abhāvaḥ tat mithyā. For example, gold can be present in the

form of an ornament but that is not its true reality. The ornamentality has to be discounted. It is there as gold. That is the truth about it. Similarly, jagat is in Brahma at the same time there is nothing in the jagat. Jagat does not have its own existence. It is always there in the form of Brahma. Yet it is not there in the form of jagat.

And if jagat is mithyā, then it is not a matter to be considered seriously. It is to be taken lightly. Only when it is taken easy, jagat is not scary. People are no longer frightening. And not that after calling mithyā you have to be fussy about it. If you become fussy about matters then you have taken it to be real and serious. That part has to be corrected in Vyavahāra. Mithyā means its existence and non-existence should not matter. If it is there, it is okay and if it is not there also, it is okay. That type of udāsīna bhāva ('Let Go' attitude) is to be created in the mind. Then the fact that jagat (world) is mithyā (illusory) is understood properly.

If I know jagat is like my shadow then it will not frighten me any more but if I don't know that fact then I think my own shadow as some yakṣa or rakṣasa then it will be frightening. But once I understand it does not have its own existence then it will not cause a reaction. Similarly, jagat has to be understood as mithya and not non-existence.

Whatever can be negated by knowledge is mithyā. Mithyā object and mithya jñānam both can be negated by jñānam. In adhyāsa, sāmānya amśa is known and viśeśa anśa is not known. And that can be negated by jñānam of viśeṣa anśa.

This aśeṣa mūrthi, sanātana mūrthi, that Brahma is my ātma-tattvam. And that ātma-tattva is jagat adhiṣṭhāna. Adhiṣṭhana of svapna, jāgrat and suṣupti. What a great relief! I am there and I alone am there behind this entire creation.

My ātma tattva is the adhiṣṭhana of the whole jagat. That is, jagat does not have its own existence without my existence!

I lend sattā and sphūr̥ti to this jagat. I am so great yet I take myself to be so small!!

This understanding should change my life and make a difference. If it doesn't I need to work for it.

On Brahma, on Me this entire creation, the whole universe is evident. Like a snake on a rope

भुजैः गच्छति इति भुजङ्गम्

bhujaiḥ gacchati iti bhujāṅgam

Gam is gacchati. It does not walk with legs but walks with chest. That is sarpa.

Just as serpent shines on rope so also this entire creation shines on ātma. That is the aśeṣa mūr̥thi. I offer my praṇām to that aśeṣa mūr̥thi who is without any limitation. That is the pūr̥ṇa rūpa. Complete and perfect Being. Śeṣa means incomplete

which is remaining. Aśeṣa is complete. Everything is included in that. The entire jagat is imposed on that complete being. By telling aśeṣa aśeṣa twice jagat is aśeṣa and adhiṣṭhāna is also aśeṣa; jagat which has come out is aśeṣa and also on which it is seen is also aśeṣa, pūrṇamadaḥ pūrṇamidam mantra is reminded.

To appreciate rajvānbhujāṅgam we need to understand the basic truths in Vedānta. We take things for granted in this world. We accept things but later when we examine we find they are not there.

On a hot summer day an illusion of water is created deluding the mind. The reality of water looks unquestionable. Same type of illusion is created when a rope is taken for a snake in the darkness. The snake looks so real that it causes great fear in the seer. Similarly people get afraid mistaking a post for a ghost. The illusions are removed on closer examination, when we go near.

In day to day life this happens when we judge certain persons as good or bad. When we go near he is not all that bad what is imagined. He turns out to be a different person. This type of deception happens in our mind. Our mind is capable of being deluded Such situations are there in life.

Now when it appears to be there but really does not exist, what are we to do? Have we to investigate into the cause of appearance or the cause for creation? Why it is created like this, we have to investigate or why it appears like this, we have to investigate. The whole approach would be different. If it is a mirage water, we will not ask question like when did it rain, why so much of water has come, from which river water has come etc. These questions will not come if you know it is mirage water. If you think it is water, all these questions will become relevant. The whole set of questions will be irrelevant once you know it to be a mirage. Then

questions like why does it appear come. Śastra says before plunging into enquiring something, make sure you are putting proper questions.

If it is mere appearance and you go on investigating into creation, it is futile. We have to find out the nature of the thing first and then decide what type of question to be put. Before going ahead with the questions we make sure questions are applicable here.

Another illustration can be thus.

मालोद्भूताद्दहिरस्तं व्रजति किमु नमस्कारमन्त्रौषधाद्यैः

Mālobbhūtā hi rastam vrajati kimu
namaskāramantrauṣadhādyaiḥ.

You see a snake on a garland and do pradakṣiṇa, namaskāra, offer milk and ask the snake to go away. Does that snake go away? Snake is not there in the first place. If snake had been

there then mantra, auṣadha, pradakṣiṇa would have served some purpose. But when it is not there, it is not going to serve any purpose.

So, there are two types of situations. Real and imagined, illusory situations. We need to examine them and not swallow blindly. Whatever I see, need not be real. Whatever I hear, whatever I know need not be real. If we know that we can be misled by our sense organs and by our mind, we become humble. How many times we project on somebody imaginations daily. If a person does not smile at you, you start imagining. All his movements you interpret as symptoms of anger but in reality the person must have not noticed, seen you at all. But you interpret differently. There is possibility of misunderstanding, communication gap every moment because we are pre-occupied with our thinking. We react to non-existent situations, projected situations. Projected

situation is not outside but it is right in the head. But I see it as solid reality out there. So I react.

Whole jagat is like that. I think it is external and I react but projection is internal in my mind. For example, a non-angry person is viewed as an angry person in my mind and I react though it is not real. So a non-reality can make one sad. Can make one mad and miserable, even though it has no physical reality.

A thing need not have to be real to make us *sukhī* or *dukhī*. An object can just be false. It can be a projected one and yet it can make us happy or unhappy. Śastrās say you have been *sukhī* or *dukhī* because of your own projections but not because of the reality of the objects. This is called *jīva-sṛṣṭi*.

When we impose *rāga-dveṣas* on *Īśvara sṛṣṭi*, it becomes *jīva-sṛṣṭi*.

We project this person is near and dear to me. In reality there is nothing like this. For example, for a snake charmer or for another snake, snake is a near one where as for anyone else it is a frightening being.

Śāstrā says when all projections are cleared up, you are unlimited, pūrṇa, complete. Because of projections you find yourself limited, small. So go in for removing them and correct the projections. Elimination of projections is neti neti. This is not right, this is not right.

In projections, we have two types. One on objects and other on myself. Object projection is good and bad and my projection is I am small, I am limited, I am sukhī, I am dukhī. I am man, woman. I am brahmin, I am doctor, etc. All these are impositions. When all impositions are removed by neti neti, what remains is ātma vastu. Aśeṣa mūrti.

Śruti straight away says it is the problem of the vision. Mīnd

makes it appear as rajjvām bhujāṅgamaiva, if you can correct your doṣa (fault), then world is a nandana vana (garden of paradise) to live in.

Why do you think world is out there, a solid reality? It is because of the mind.

**RAJJVĀM BHUJAṄGAMA IVA PRATI BHĀSITAM
VAI.**

So Jagat is not to be taken so seriously because it is not as we see and project.

Just as we see a dream, and on waking up, the details become unimportant.

This entire creation shines in that perfect being and that perfect being is myself.

SUMMARY

Every day morning sit and collect the mind, the vṛttis and place it on the ātma vastu and suggest this ātma vastu is me, I am sat-cit-ānanda, I am the turīya, the support of the three avasthās, I am Brahma, niṣkalaḥ and not a collection of bone, flesh and marrow.

That ātma tattva which cannot be pointed as this and this, is me. Śabda cannot reveal, mind cannot reveal it yet all sabdas are revealed because of the blessing of ātma. That ātma I am. And that has been pointed out by śruti as neti neti which is the light of light.

Thus, every morning I see myself like this, not sitting in this physical body but seeing whole universe sitting in me, feeling I am the adhiṣṭhāna of whole universe.

You understand that there is no necessity of any improvement.

You are already the best. As adhiṣṭhana caitanya, you are the greatest. And as upādhi, whatever you have as human body or devata body or any yoni, or whatever you do, you will be small only. It can never be big. And I am that Hṛdi Sansphurat, ever shining ātma tattva substance as jagat adhiṣṭhāna, the base of the entire world.

Key to Transliteration and pronunciation

Sounds like

a o in son
ā a in master
i i in if
ī ee in feel
u u in full
ū oo in boot
r r in brush
e ay in May
ai y in my
o o in oh
au ow in now
k k in key

Sounds like

ḍ d in den
ḍh dh in godhead
ṇ n in under
t t in tar
th th in thumn
d th in father
dh th in breathe
n n in null
p p in pun
ph ph in loop-hole
b b in bun
bh bh in abhor

kh **chk** in **blockheadm**

m **m** in **mother**

g **g** in **gum** **y** **y** in **yard**

ñ **ng** in **singer** **r** **r** in **run**

c **ch** (not **k**) **chain**

i **I** in **luck**

ch **chh** in **catch in** **v** **v** in **avert**

j **j** in **judge** **ś** **sh** in **shampoo**

jh **dgeh** in **hedgehog**

ṣ **sh** in **show**

ñ **n** as in **french** **s** **s** in **sun**

ṭ **t** in **tuck** **h** **h** in **hot**

ṭh in **ant-hill** **m** **m** in **sum**

ḥ **h** in **half**

PRĀTAḤ SMARAṆAM