

## CHAPTER-2

# TRANSLATIONS OF PRASTHĀNATRAYĪ IN THE CONTEXT OF DHĀRAṆĀ, DHYĀNA, AND SAMĀDHI

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### 2.0 INVOCATION

ॐ भद्रं कर्णेभिः शृणुयाम देवा  
भद्रं पश्येमाक्षभिर्यजत्राः  
स्थिरैरङ्गैस्तुष्टुवाꣳसस्तनूभि-  
र्व्यशेम देवहितं यदायुः  
स्वस्ति न इन्द्रो वृद्धश्रवाः  
स्वस्ति नः पूषा विश्ववेदाः  
स्वस्ति नस्तार्क्ष्यो अरिष्टनेमिः  
स्वस्ति नो बृहस्पतिर्दधातु  
ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः

“Om! Bhadrāṃ karrobbhiḥ śrūyāma devā- bhadrāṃ paśyemākṣabhiryajatrāḥ sthirairāṅgaistuṣṭuvam sastanūmi-rvyaśema devahitam yadāyuhḥ svasti na indro vṛiddhaśravāḥ svasti naḥ pūṣhā viśvavedāḥ svasti nastārksyo tripariṣṭanemiḥ svasti no bṛhaspatirdadhātu Om śāntiḥ; śāntiḥ; śāntiḥ”.

"Om. Radiant Ones! May we, the worthy worshippers, listen to auspicious words with our ears. May we perceive what is auspicious with our eyes. Endowed with a body with sturdy limbs, may we, through our praises, fulfill the divine destiny of the lifespan granted to us. May the renowned Indra bestow his blessings upon us. May the all-knowing Pushan

shower his auspiciousness upon us. May Tarkṣya, the vanquisher of all evils, grant us his blessings. May Bṛhaspati confer upon us abundant auspiciousness!"

Om. Peace! Peace! Peace!

## 2.1 SŪTRAS OF BRAHMASŪTRA IN THE CONTEXT OF DHĀRAṆĀ, DHYĀNA, AND SAMĀDHI

अथातो ब्रह्मजिज्ञासा ॥ 1.1.1 ॥

athāto brahmajijñāsā ॥ 1.1.1 ॥

As the results of sacrifices and other acts are transient, knowledge of Brahman is eternal. Therefore, now that the necessary spiritual qualities have been attained, the investigation (into the true nature) of Brahman, which is riddled with ambiguities due to differing philosophical schools, ought to be undertaken.

अस्मिन्नस्य च तद्योगं शास्ति ॥ 1.1.19 ॥

“asminnasya ca tadyogaṃ śāsti ॥ 1.1.19 ॥”

“(The Vedas) also teach of its (the Jiva’s) becoming (on the dawning of Knowledge) one with this (referred to in the passage under discussion)”.

Therefore, the main focus of these works is in no sense "the self consisting of bliss." The foundation of all that is dealt with is Brahman.as a separate entity within these writings.

अन्तस्तद्धर्मोपदेशात् ॥ 1.1.20 ॥

“antastaddharmopadesāt ॥ 1.1.20 ॥”

“(The one) within (the sun and the eye is **Brahman**), because Its characteristics are mentioned (therein)”.

भावं तु वादरायणः, अस्ति हि ॥ 1.3.33 ॥

bhāvaṃ tu vādarāyaṇaḥ, asti hi || 1.3.33 ||

According to Badarayana, gods possess the necessary qualifications for knowledge of Brahman because they have the requisite attributes such as body, desires, and intelligence. Badarayana holds the belief that each celestial body like the sun and the moon has a presiding deity associated with it. These deities possess the necessary qualities that qualify them for spiritual practices and the supreme knowledge. Despite limitations, such as the sun-god not being able to meditate on himself in the Madhu Vidyait does not bar them from engaging in other virtuous meditations or learning about Brahman. Hence, gods are eligible for these practices and knowledge due to the presence of these qualifying factors.

तर्काप्रतिष्ठानादपि; अन्यथानुमेयमिति चेत्,  
एवमप्यनिर्मोक्षप्रसङ्गः ॥ ११ ॥

tarkāpratiṣṭhānādapi; anyathānumeyamiti cet,  
evamapyanirmokṣaprasaṅgaḥ || 11 ||

This Sutra argues that reasoning lacks a reliable foundation and cannot challenge the conclusions of Vedanta. Reasoning, being variable and subjective, cannot provide a consistent basis for true knowledge. While different philosophical schools, such as Sankhyas and Naiyayikas, arrive at diverse conclusions through their reasoning, these conflicts render reasoning unreliable for determining ultimate truths. The Sutra contends that genuine knowledge is grounded in the object of knowledge itself and remains consistent, unlike the varying conclusions derived from reasoning. Therefore, any reasoning contradicting the scriptures is insufficient to challenge the wisdom contained in the Sruti texts, and true knowledge cannot be attained through reasoning alone, emphasizing the primacy of scriptural knowledge for Liberation.

प्रदानवदेव, तदुक्तम् ॥ 3.3.43 ॥

“pradānavadeva, taduktam uktam || 3.3.43 ||”

“(The meditations on Vayu and Prana are different owing to their different functions, though the two are essentially one); (it is) exactly as in the case of the offerings. This has been stated (by Jaimini in Purva Mimamsa-Sutras)”.

Meditation on Prana, in relation to the body, and on Vayu, in relation to the gods, is advised by the Chhandogya Samvarga Vidya. Prana and Vayu are now said to be one in essence in numerous literature. According to the opponent, it is possible to blend the two meditations. Despite the fact that Vayu and Prana are not distinct in nature, the Sutra contradicts this perspective by stating that they should be kept separated because of the differences in their duties brought about by their separate abodes. Similar to how offerings are made to Indra, the deity, in accordance with his various roles, even though he is only one, so too must the meditations on Vayu and Prana be kept separated. In Purva Mimamsa, Jaimini establishes this principle.

एक आत्मनः शरीरे भावात् ॥ 3.3.53 ॥

“eka ātmanaḥ śarīre bhāvāt ॥ 3.3.53 ॥”

Some people contest the existence of an Atman that exists independently of the body because it can only exist in the presence of a body.

This Sutra presents the viewpoint of the materialists, or Charvakas, who reject the idea that there is an Atman apart from the body. It is said that man is nothing more than a body endowed with awareness as a characteristic, and that consciousness itself is like the intoxicating quality that results from the combination of specific components, none of which are intoxicating on its own. This is how they come to their decision. Only in the presence of a body is consciousness perceived to exist. It is never experienced, body independent. Therefore, it is merely a physical attribute. Consequently, this body does not contain a distinct Self.

व्यतिरेकः, तद्भावाभावित्वात्, न तु, उपलब्धिवत् ॥ 3.3.54 ॥

“vyatirekaḥ, tadbhāvābhāvitvāt, na tu, upalabdhivat || 3.3.54 ||”

However, this is untrue; consciousness does not exist even in the presence of the body (after death), as is the case with cognition. Instead, a Self distinct from the body does exist.

This Sutra refutes the idea put out in the previous one. It refutes the idea that consciousness is a physical attribute of the body by emphasising the absence of consciousness in a deceased person's body. This absence of consciousness in a lifeless body indicates that consciousness is associated with something other than the body and resides within it.

Moreover, the Sutra references the Charvaka school, which also acknowledges the distinction between the knower and the known. If we are aware of our own body, then the entity cognizing the body must be distinct from the body itself. This cognizing entity, identified as the Self, is the one perceiving our body, and consciousness is not just a quality but rather the inherent nature of this Self.

सर्वापेक्षा च यज्ञादिश्रुतेः, अश्ववत् ॥ 3.4.26 ॥

sarvāpekṣā ca yajñādiśruteḥ, aśvavat || 3.4.26 ||

This Sutra addresses the necessity of performing various works, as prescribed by scriptures such as sacrifices, even though they are not directly related to attaining the ultimate goal of Liberation. The analogy of a horse being used to draw a chariot illustrates this point – works serve as a means to attain Knowledge, similar to how a horse aids in the functioning of a chariot but is not involved in ploughing.

This Sutra makes it clear that efforts do have a purpose, despite the preceding Sutra's suggestion that they are completely pointless. Scriptures prescribe these actions because they act as a means to acquire Knowledge. However, it's crucial to understand that these

works do not directly lead to Liberation. Instead, they play an indirect role by purifying the mind. When the mind is purified through such works, it opens up to the realisation of the Self, making the road to emancipation easier. Works are essentially a means of preparing the mind for genuine Knowledge, which is essential to achieving emancipation.

नियमाच्च ॥ 3.4.7 ॥

“niyamācca ॥ 3.4.7 ॥”

And on account of prescribed rules.

“Performing works here let a man wish to live a hundred years” (Is. 2); “Agnihotra is a sacrifice lasting up to old age and death; for through old age one is freed from it or through death” (Sat. Br. 12. 4. 1. 1). “From such prescribed rules also we find that Knowledge stands in a subordinate relation to work”.

विभागः शतवत् ॥ 3.4.11 ॥

“vibhāgaḥ śatavat ॥ 3.4.11 ॥”

Knowledge and labour are divided, much like when a hundred are split between two people.

Sutra 5 is refuted by this Sutra. “It is followed by knowledge, work and past experiences” (Brih. 4. 4. 2). “Here we have to take knowledge and work in a distributive sense, meaning that knowledge follows one and work another”. “Just as when we say a hundred be given to these two persons, we divide it into two halves and give each man fifty”. “There is no combination of the two”. “Even without this explanation Sutra 5 can be refuted. For the text quoted refers only to knowledge and work, which concern the transmigrating soul, and not an emancipated soul”. For the passage, “Thus does the man who desires (transmigrate)” (Brih. 4. 4. 6) shows that the previous text refers to the transmigrating self. And of the

emancipated soul Sruti says, “But the man who never desires (never transmigrates)” etc. (Brih. 4. 4. 6).

न, अविशेषात् ॥ 3.4.13 ॥

“na, aviśeṣāt ॥ 3.4.13 ॥”

“Because there is no special mention (of the Jnani, it does) not (apply to him)”.

“This Sutra refutes Sutra 7. The text quoted there from the Isa Upanishad is a general statement, and, there is no special mention in it that it is applicable to a Jññi also. In the absence of such a specification it is not binding on him”.

आसीनः, संभवात् ॥ 4.1.7 ॥

“āsīnaḥ, sambhavāt ॥4.1.7 ॥”

“(One has to practise Upasana) sitting, because (in that way alone) it is possible”.

“The opponent argues that since Upasana or contemplation is a mental activity, the physical posture is irrelevant”. However, this Sutra asserts that meditation should be practiced in a seated position, as it is challenging to concentrate the mind on a single object while standing or lying down. In Upasana, focusing the mind requires a stable posture, which is achievable only while sitting.

ध्यानाच्च ॥ 4.1.8 ॥

“dhyānācca ॥ 4.1.8 ॥”

“And on account of meditation (implying that)”.

“The word ‘Upasana’ also means exactly what meditation means, viz. concentrating on a single object, with fixed look, and without any movement of the limbs. This is possible only in a sitting posture”.

अचलत्वं चापेक्ष्य ॥ 4.1.9 ॥

“acalatvaṃ cāpekṣya ॥ 4.1.9 ॥”

“And referring to (its) immobility {the scriptures attribute meditateness to the earth}”.

“The earth meditates as it were”—“in such statements meditateness is ascribed to the earth on account of its immobility or steadiness. So we learn that steadiness is a concomitance of meditation, and that is possible only while sitting and not while standing or walking”.

स्मरन्ति च ॥ 4.1.10 ॥

“smaranti ca ॥ 4.1.10 ॥”

“The Smṛiti texts also say (the same thing)”.

“Having made a firm seat for one’s self on a pure spot” etc. —“in this text the sitting posture is prescribed for meditation”.

यत्रैकाग्रता तत्र, अविशेषात् ॥ 4.1.11 ॥

“yatraikāgratā tatra, aviśeṣāt ॥ 4.1.11 ॥”

“Wherever concentration of mind (is attained), there (it is to be practised), there being no specification (as to place)”.

“The purpose of meditation is to achieve concentration, and any location is suitable if concentration can be achieved there”. This is why the scriptures advise, "Choose any place that is suitable and convenient"; "Focus your mind where it feels uplifted," and similar instructions. However, places that are clean and devoid of obstacles like pebbles, fire, and sand are preferable, as they can aid in meditation. Nevertheless, there are no strict regulations regarding the choice of a meditation spot.

आ प्रयाणात्, तत्रापि हि दृष्टम् ॥ 4.1.12 ॥



“ā prayānāt, tatrāpi hi dṛṣṭam || 4.1.12 || ”

“Till death (meditations have to be observed), because (their observance) even at that moment is seen (from the scriptures)”.

“In the first topic of this section it was said that meditations on Brahman are to be repeated till Knowledge dawns. The question is now taken up about other meditations which are practised for attaining certain results. The opponent holds that such meditations can be stopped after a certain time; they would still yield results, like sacrifices performed only once. This Sutra says that they are to be continued till death, for the Sruti and Smriti say so”. “With whatever thought he passes away from this world” (Sat. Br. 10. 0. 3. 1). “Remembering whatever form of being he leaves this body” etc. (Gita 8. 6). “Such a thought at the time of death as fixes the course of life hereafter cannot be had at that moment without lifelong practice. Hence meditations must be practised till death”.

तदधिगम उत्तरपूर्वाघयोरश्लेषविनाशौ तद्व्यपदेशात् || 4.1.13 ||

“tadadhigama uttarapūrvāghayoraśleṣavināśau tadvyapadeśāt || 4.1.13 ||”

The scriptures claim that when Brahman is realised, there would be a result of not clinging to anything and the destruction of past sins and current sins, respectively.

“The state of Jivanmukti is described here. The opponent holds that Liberation is attained, in spite of Knowledge, only after one has experienced the results of one’s sins committed before illumination. For the Smritis say”, “Karma is not destroyed before it has given its results.” The law of Karma is inexorable. This Sutra says that when a person attains Knowledge, all his past sins are destroyed and future sins do not cling to him. For by realizing Brahman he experiences that he never was, nor is, nor will be an agent, and such a person cannot be affected by the result of sins. The scriptures also declare that. “Just as cotton growing on reeds is burnt when thrown into fire, even so are burnt the sins of one who knowing this offers Agnihotra” (Chh. 5. 24. 3); “The fetters of the heart are broken, all doubts are solved, and all works are destroyed when He who is high and low is seen” (Mu.

2. 2. 8); “As water does not wet the lotus leaf, even so no sins cling to him who knows it” (Chh. 4. 14. 3). “What the Smritis say about the inexorability of the law of Karma is true only of ordinary people, and does not hold good in the case of the knowers of Brahman. And in this way alone can Liberation result—by snapping the chain of work. Otherwise Liberation can never take place”.

भोगेन त्वितरे क्षपयित्वा संपद्यते ॥ 4.1.19 ॥

“bhogena tvitare kṣapayitvā sampadyate ॥ 4.1.19 ॥”

“But having exhausted by enjoyment the other two works (*viz.* good and evil works that have begun to bear fruit), (he) becomes one (with Brahman)”.

“The opponent argues that even as a knower of Brahman sees diversity while living, so also even after death he will continue to see diversity; in other words, he denies that the knower of Brahman attains oneness with Brahman at death. This Sutra refutes it and says that the Prarabdha works are destroyed through fruition, and though till then the knower of Brahman has to be in the relative world as a Jivan-mukta, yet when these are exhausted by being worked out, he attains oneness with Brahman at death. He no longer sees any diversity, owing to the absence of any cause like the Prarabdha, and since all works including the Prarabdha are destroyed at death, he attains oneness with Brahman”.

तन्मनः प्राणे, उत्तरात् ॥ 4.2.3 ॥

“tanmanah prāṇe, uttarāt ॥ 4.2.3 ॥”

“That mind (is merged) in Prana, (as is seen) from the subsequent clause (of the Sruti cited)”.

“That mind, in which the functions of the different organs get merged, in its turn gets merged in Prana, for the Sruti cited in Sutra 1 says”, “Mind in Prana”. “The opponent holds that here, unlike the case of the organs, it is mind itself, and not its function, that gets merged in Prana, inasmuch as Prana can be said to be the material cause of mind. In support of his contention he cites the following texts:” “Mind consists of food, Prana of

water” (Chh. 6. 6. 5) and “Water sent forth earth” (Chh. 6. 2. 4). “When mind is merged in Prana, it is the same thing as earth being merged in water, for mind is food or earth, and Prana is water. Hence the Sruti here speaks not of the function of mind, but of mind itself getting merged in Prana. The Sutra refutes this view and says that this relation of causality by an indirect process does not justify our understanding that mind itself is merged in Prana. So here also it is the function alone that gets merged, and this is justified on the same grounds as given in Sutra 1, viz. scriptural statement and experience. We find that mind ceases to function in a dying man, even while his vital force is functioning”.

भूतेषु, तच्छ्रुतेः ॥ 4.2.5 ॥

“bhūteṣu, tacchruteḥ ॥ 4.2.5 ॥”

“In the elements (is merged) (the Jiva with the Pranas), as it is seen from the Sruti”.

“If we understand, “Prana (is merged) in fire” as meaning that the Jiva with Prana is merged in fire, there is no contradiction between this Sruti text and what is said in the last Sutra. So Prana is first merged in the individual soul and then the soul with Prana takes its abode in the fine essence of the gross elements, fire etc., the seed of the future body”.

नैकस्मिन्, दर्शयतो हि ॥ 4.2.6 ॥

“naikasmin, darśayato hi ॥ 4.2.6 ॥”

“(The soul with Prana is merged) not in one (element only), for both (the Sruti and Smriti) declare so”.

“At the time of death, when the soul leaves one body and goes in for another, it together with the subtle body, abides in the fine essence of all the gross elements and not in fire only, for all the elements are required for a future body. Vide 8. 1. 2”.

नोपमर्देनातः ॥ 4.2.10 ॥

“nopamardenātaḥ || 4.2.10 ||”

“Therefore (this subtle body is) not (destroyed) by the destruction (of the gross body)”.

प्रतिषेधादिति चेत्, न, शरीरात् ॥ 4.2.12 ॥

“pratiṣedhāditi cet, na, śārīrāt || 4.2.12 ||”

“If it be said (that the Pranas of a knower of Brahman do not depart), on account of the Sruti denying it; (we say) not so, (because the scripture denies the departure of the Pranas) from the individual soul (and not from the body)”.

तानि परे, तथाह्याह ॥ 4.2.15 ॥

“tāni pare, tathāhyāha || 4.2.15 ||”

“Those (Pranas) (are merged) in the Supreme Brahman, for so (the scripture) says”.

“This Sutra explains the fate of the Pranas (organs) and the subtle essence of the gross elements within a knower of Brahman who passes away”. In this scenario, these organs and elements amalgamate into the Supreme Brahman. The statement, “The sixteen digits of this witness, the Purusha, having their goal in Him are dissolved on reaching Him” (Pr. 6. 5), signifies their ultimate union with Brahman. Another text, “All the fifteen parts of their body enter into their causes” (Mu. 3. 2. 7), depicts the dissolution of the body back into its elemental origins, from a relative perspective. Conversely, the former text conveys a transcendent viewpoint, indicating the complete absorption of the entire entity into Brahman, similar to how an illusory snake disappears into the rope upon the realization of true knowledge.

योगिनः प्रति च स्मर्येते, स्मार्ते चैते ॥ 4.2.21 ॥

yoginaḥ prati ca smaryete, smārte caite || 4.2.21 ||

In this context, the Smriti texts specifically mention certain times relevant to Yogis practicing Sadhana in the Yoga and Sankhya traditions, both classified as Smritis, not Srutis. The Bhagavad Gita contains verses such as 8.23 and 8.24, indicating that individuals dying during specific periods do not reincarnate. “Based on these verses, critics challenge the validity of the previous Sutra. However, this Sutra counters that objection by explaining that the time constraints mentioned in the Gita apply exclusively to Yogis following the Sadhana of Yoga and Sankhya”. These traditions fall under the Smriti category. “Therefore, these time restrictions do not pertain to those meditating on the Saguna Brahman according to Sruti texts”.

मुक्तः, प्रतिज्ञानात् ॥ 4.4.2 ॥

“muktaḥ, pratijñānāt || 4.4.2 ||”

“(The Self which manifests Its true nature attains) Liberation, (as is known), from the premise (made in the scriptures)”.

“Liberation is not a new acquisition for the Jiva, but rather, it signifies freedom from the state of bondage. In the state of bondage, the Jiva is entangled in the three states of wakefulness, dream, and deep sleep, experiencing happiness and misery while falsely perceiving itself as finite”. Liberation involves the removal of all these misconceptions, leading the Jiva to realize its true nature, which is Absolute Bliss. This transformation signifies a significant departure from the state of bondage.

How can one ascertain the Jiva's liberation? The scriptures provide insight into this transformation. The Sutra, “I will explain It to you further” (Chh 8. 9. 3; 8. 10. 4; 8. 11. 3), indicates the intention to elucidate the Self devoid of imperfections. The scriptures begin with the statement, “The being without the body is not touched by pleasure and pain” (Chh. 8. 12. 1), and culminate with the declaration, “Thus does this serene being, transcending its body and attaining the highest light, manifest in its true nature” (Chn. 8. 12. 3). These

teachings affirm the Jiva's liberation by unveiling its serene, enlightened essence beyond the limitations of the physical body, marking a profound departure from its prior state of bondage.

आत्मा, प्रकरणात् ॥ 4.4.3 ॥

“ātmā, prakaraṇāt ॥ 4.4.3 ॥”

“(The ‘light’ attained by the Jiva is) the Supreme Self; on account of the context”.

“The ‘Light’ attained by the Jiva which is referred to in the Chh. 8. 3. 4 is the Supreme Self, and not any physical light, for the Self is the subject-matter which is introduced thus: “The Self which is free from evil, undecaying,” etc. (Chh. 8. 7. 1), The word ‘light’ is also used to denote the Self in texts like, “Upon that immortal Light of all lights the gods meditate as longevity” (Brih. 4. 4. 16)”.

## **2.2 VERSES OF ŚRĪMADBHAGAVADGĪTĀ IN THE CONTEXT OF DHĀRAṆĀ, DHYĀNA, AND SAMĀDHI**

The Śrīmadbhagavadgītā, a revered Indian scripture, imparts profound wisdom on spirituality, ethics, and practical life guidance. “Central to its teachings is the practice of meditation and the attainment of SAMĀDHI, a state of complete absorption in the divine”. This research delves into the Śrīmadbhagavadgītā's insights on DHĀRAṆĀ, DHYĀNA, AND SAMĀDHI, essential components of yoga and integral to spiritual growth.

Within the Śrīmadbhagavadgītā, meditation and SAMĀDHI are pivotal themes. The text elucidates these concepts, emphasizing their crucial roles in the path of yoga. Meditation leads to SAMĀDHI, a state characterized by profound inner peace and unity with the universe. Various levels of SAMĀDHI are described, each offering unique characteristics and benefits.

Dhyāna, or meditation, is explicitly discussed in multiple verses of the Śrīmadbhagavadgītā. "For instance, in Chapter 6, Verse 10, Lord Krishna outlines the practice of yoga as a method to withdraw the mind from external distractions, emphasizing the pivotal role of Dhyāna in achieving focused concentration. This demonstrates the text's detailed exploration of meditation practices and their spiritual significance".

योगी युञ्जीत सततमात्मानं रहसि स्थितः

एकाकी यतचित्तात्मा निराशीरपरिग्रहः . ६.१०

“yogī yuñjīta satatamātmānaṃ rahasi sthitaḥ |  
ekākī yatacittātmā nirāśīraparigrahaḥ ||6.10||”

“Chapter 8, Verse 10: Krishna describes the practice of meditation on the divine form as a means of achieving liberation from the cycle of birth and death”.

प्रयाणकाले मनसाचलेन भक्त्या युक्तो योगबलेन चैव

भ्रुवोर्मध्ये प्राणमावेश्य सम्यक् स तं परं पुरुषमुपैति दिव्यम् .८.१०

“prayāṅakāle manasācalena bhaktyā yukto yogabalena caiva |  
bhruvormadhye prāṇamāveśya samyak sa taṃ paraṃ puruṣamupaiti divyam ||8.10||”

Chapter 12, Verse 12: Krishna advises the seeker to cultivate the practice of meditation on the divine as a means of achieving union with the divine.

श्रेयो हि ज्ञानमभ्यासात् ज्ञानाद्भयानं विशिष्यते

ध्यानात्कर्मफलत्यागः त्यागाच्छान्तिरनन्तरम् . १२-१२

śreyo hi jñānamabhyāsājñānāddhyānaṃ viśiṣyate |  
dhyānātkarmaphalatyāgastyāgācchāntiranantaram ||12.12||

“Chapter 13, Verse 24: Krishna describes the ultimate goal of meditation as the realization of the self as distinct from the body and mind”.

ध्यानेनात्मनि पश्यन्ति केचिदात्मानमात्मना

अन्ये साङ्ख्येन योगेन कर्मयोगेन चापरे .१३-२४

“dhyānenātmani paśyanti ke cidātmānamātmanā |  
anye sām̐khyena yogena karmayogena cāpare ||13.24||”

The Śrīmadbhagavadgītā expounds upon the significance of Dhyāna in spiritual practice, highlighting the necessity of developing a focused and concentrated mind to realize the true self and attain union with the divine. SAMĀDHI is a key theme in multiple verses of the text. For instance, in Chapter 2, Verse 48, Lord Krishna advises Arjuna to perform actions with a state of SAMĀDHI, denoting mental equilibrium devoid of attachment or aversion to the outcomes of those actions.

योगस्थः कुरु कर्माणि सङ्गं त्यक्त्वा धनञ्जय

सिद्धयसिद्धयोः समो भूत्वा समत्वं योग उच्यते .2.48

“yogasthaḥ kuru karmāṇi saṅgaṃ tyaktvā dhanam̐jaya |  
siddhyasiddhyoḥ samo bhūtvā samatvaṃ yoga ucyate ||2.48||”

Chapter 6, Verse 15: Krishna describes the state of SAMĀDHI as a state of perfect concentration and absorption, in which the mind is completely focused on the divine.



युञ्जन्नेवं सदात्मानं योगी नियतमानसः

शान्तिं निर्वाणपरमां मत्संस्थामधिगच्छति .६-१५

“yuñjannevaṃ sadātmānaṃ yogī niyatamānaśaḥ |  
śāntiṃ nirvāṇaparamāṃ matsaṃsthāmadhigacchati ||6.15||”

“In Chapter 6, Verse 20 of the Bhagavad Gita, Lord Krishna outlines SAMĀDHI as the ultimate objective of yoga, wherein the practitioner attains a profound union with the divine”.

यत्रोपरमते चित्तं निरुद्धं योगसेवया ।

यत्र चौवात्मनात्मानं पश्यन्नात्मनि तुष्यति .६-२०

“yatroparamate cittam niruddham yogasevayā |  
yatra caivātmanātmānaṃ paśyannātmani tuṣyati ||6.20||”

“Chapter 8, Verse 11: Krishna describes the state of SAMĀDHI as a means of achieving liberation from the cycle of birth and death”.

यदक्षरं वेदविदो वदन्ति विशन्ति यद्यतयो वीतरागाः ।

यदिच्छन्तो ब्रह्मचर्यं चरन्ति तत्ते पदं सङ्ग्रहेण प्रवक्ष्ये . ८-११

yadaḥśaraṃ vedavidō vadantiviśanti yadyatayo vītarāgāḥ |  
yadicchanto brahmacaryaṃ carantitatte padaṃ saṅgrahēṇa pravakṣyē ||8.11||

These and other verses in the Śrīmadbhagavadgītā emphasize the importance of cultivating a state of SAMĀDHI, or deep concentration and absorption, in spiritual practice as a means of achieving union with the divine and ultimate liberation (Shankaracharya, 2008).

### **2.3 MANTRAS OF PRINCIPAL UPANIṢADS IN THE CONTEXT OF DHĀRAṆĀ, DHYĀNA, AND SAMĀDHI**

“The exploration of Dhāraṇā, Dhyāna, and Samādhi in the Principal Upanishads constitutes a deep examination of these fundamental concepts as depicted in these ancient texts”. “Dhāraṇā, signifying focused mental concentration, plays a pivotal role in meditation and spiritual practices. The Upanishads emphasize channeling the mind toward a singular object of meditation, leading to self-realization and the understanding of ultimate truth through Dhāraṇā”.

Dhyāna, representing the practice of meditation, is extensively discussed as a profound means to attain spiritual enlightenment and gain insights into the nature of Brahman. “The Upanishads stress the importance of engaging in deep and sustained meditation, enabling the realization of one's true self and a profound understanding of Brahman”.

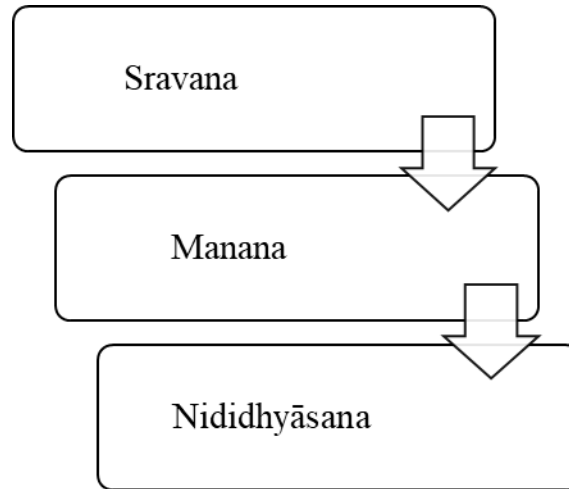
Samādhi, characterized by intense concentration and complete absorption, stands as the pinnacle of spiritual attainment. Within the Upanishads, Samādhi is portrayed as a state of profound tranquility, unity with the Self, and direct experience of the ultimate reality. “The concepts of Dhāraṇā, Dhyāna, and Samādhi”, as elucidated in the Upanishads, offer invaluable guidance and understanding for individuals practicing meditation and embarking on the transformative journey toward spiritual liberation.

“The Principal Upanishads, also known as Mukhya Upanishads, are ancient texts dating back to 800 BCE to the beginning of the common era”. Rooted in the Vedic tradition, these sacred scriptures are revered within Hinduism, offering deep insights into the nature of

reality and the ultimate purpose of human existence. “Among the spiritual practices highlighted in these texts, Dhāraṇā, Dhyāna, and Samādhi hold a central position”.

This exploration of Dhāraṇā, Dhyāna, and Samādhi in the Principal Upanishads has captivated the realms of philosophy, spirituality, and scientific inquiry. This comprehensive review aims to provide an overview of these concepts within the Principal Upanishads, delving into their historical and cultural context while illuminating their profound philosophical and spiritual significance.

### **Concept of Śravaṇa, Manana, Nididhyāsana:**



*Figure 1: Sravana, Manana, Nididhyāsana*

The concepts of "Śravaṇa", "Manana" and "Nididhyāsana" are fundamental within Advaita Vedānta philosophy. However, unlike traditional sutras found in texts like the Yoga Sutras or Brahma Sūtras, they are not explicitly expressed as such. “Instead, they represent key principles and stages of learning and realization within the Advaita Vedānta tradition”. Here is a revised explanation of each concept:

**Śravaṇa** (Hearing or Listening): Śravaṇa constitutes the initial phase of learning in Advaita Vedanta. It involves actively listening to the teachings of a qualified spiritual teacher (guru) or engaging in the study of sacred scriptures, particularly the Upanishads and other Vedantic texts. “The primary objective of Śravaṇa is to acquire a profound understanding of the non-dual nature of reality, the self (Atman), and the ultimate reality (Brahman)”.

इत्थं वाक्यैस्तदर्थानुसन्धानं श्रवणं भवेत् | (Panchadasi, Sloka I.53)

*ittham vākyaistadarthānusandhānam śravaṇam bhavet (I.53)*

“Shravana refers to the process of discovering the true significance of the identity between the individual self and the supreme Universal Self through the profound teachings and sayings”. “It involves deeply listening and understanding these teachings, leading to the realization of the interconnectedness between the individual soul and the universal consciousness”.

Manana, often termed Reflection or Contemplation, follows the acquisition of knowledge through sravana. In this stage, the seeker delves into deep reflection and contemplation upon the teachings received. During this phase, a meticulous review and contemplation of the assimilated knowledge occur. The purpose is to resolve doubts, dispel misconceptions, and internalize the teachings thoroughly. The ultimate aim is to establish a strong and comprehensive intellectual understanding of the subject matter.

युक्त्या संभावितत्वानुसंधानं मन्नन्तु तत् || (Panchadasi, Sloka I.53)

*yuktyā sambhāvitatvānusandhānam mannantu tat (I.53)*

“To arrive at the possibility of its validity through logical reasoning is what is called manana”.

**Nididhyāsana**, often referred to as Meditation or Deep Contemplation, represents the ultimate and most advanced stage of learning in Advaita Vedanta. It surpasses mere intellectual understanding and requires deep meditation and contemplation. “During nididhyasana, the seeker engages in profound meditation on the truth of the self (Atman) and its oneness with the ultimate reality (Brahman). This intensive practice leads to direct experiential realization of non-duality”.

आत्मा वा अरे द्रष्टव्यः श्रोतव्यो मन्तव्यो निदिध्यासितव्यो मैत्रेयि,  
आत्मनो व अरे दर्शनेन श्रवणेन मत्या विज्ञानेनेदं सर्वं विदितम् ॥

“(Brihadaranyaka Upanishad St.II.iv.5)”

*“ātmā vā are draṣṭavyaḥ śrotavyo mantavyo nididhyāsitavyo maitreyi,  
ātmano va are darśanena śravaṇena matyā vijñānenedaṁ sarvaṁ viditam ॥”*

(Brihadaranyaka Upanishad St.II.iv.5)

"The Self, should be realized – should be heard of, reflected on and meditated upon; by the realization of the Self, my dear, through hearing, reflection and meditation, all this is known." – “(Brihadaranyaka Upanishad St.II.iv.5)”

“Adi Sankara explains Nididhyāsana as meditation with determination. Sankara states”:-

श्रुतेः शतगुणं विद्यान्मननं मननादपि ।

निदिध्यासं लक्षणम् अनन्तं निर्विकल्पकम् ॥(Vivekacūḍāmaṇi, 364)

*śruteḥ śatagaṇaṁ vidyānmananaṁ mananādapi |*

*nididhyāsaṁ lakṣagaṇaṁ anantaṁ nirvikalpakaṁ ॥ (Vivekacūḍāmaṇi, 364)*

"Reflection (manana) surpasses mere listening (sravana) a hundredfold; meditation (nididhyasana) surpasses reflection a hundredfold; and nirvikalpaka samadhi transcends

them all infinitely." "Although these stages are not presented as distinct sutras, they hold a fundamental place in the study and practice of Advaita Vedanta". Seekers progress through these stages on their journey toward self-realization and the experiential understanding of ultimate truth. Advaita Vedanta philosophers like Adi Shankaracharya offer more detailed guidance on these stages within their respective texts.

**Concept of Dhāraṇā, Dhyāna, and Samādhi:** Dhāraṇā, Dhyāna, and Samādhi are three interconnected practices elucidated in the Principal Upanishads, constituting the foundational aspects of meditation and spiritual discipline. "Dhāraṇā entails focusing the mind's concentration on a single object or thought, whereas Dhyāna embodies a state of sustained and effortless focus". Lastly, Samādhi represents a state of total absorption and unity with the object of meditation.

Kaṭha Upaniṣad: **Samādhi-vicāraḥ**

Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad: **Samādhi-siddhāntaḥ**

Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad: **Samādhi-prakaraṇaḥ**

Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad: **Samādhi-vivekaḥ**

Brahma Sūtras: **Samādhi-sūtrāṇi**

The concept of Dhāraṇā, Dhyāna, and Samādhi, which refers to concentration, is explored in various principal Upanishads. Here are a few examples:

In Māṇḍūkya Upanishad, Verse 1:

ॐ इत्येतदक्षरमिदं सर्वं तस्योपव्याख्यानं भूतं भवद्भविष्यदिति सर्वमोकार एव।  
यच्चान्यतत्रिकालातीतं, तदप्योओ३मकार एव ॥ (Māndūkya Upanishad, Verse 1)

om̐ ityetadakṣaramidaṃ sarvaṃ tasyopavyākhyānaṃ bhūtaṃ bhavadbhaviṣyaditi  
sarvamomkāra eva| yaccānyatatrikālātītaṃ, tadapyoo3makāra eva||

(Māndūkya Upanishad, Verse 1)

(Translation: "Om, this syllable is all this. Its explanation is: Whatever has existed, whatever exists, and whatever will exist—all that is Om. And whatever transcends past, present, and future, that is also Om.")

This verse highlights the significance of meditating on the sacred syllable "Om" (AUM), which represents the ultimate reality and serves as a focal point for meditation and contemplation.

In the Kena Upanishad, verse 1.6, Dhāraṇā is described as a method to attain self-knowledge. It emphasizes that through concentrated focus, one can perceive the true essence of the self, indicating the profound importance of concentration in realizing the inner nature of one's being.

यच्चक्षुषा न पश्यति येन चक्षूषि पश्यति ।  
तदेव ब्रह्म त्वं विद्धि नेदं यदिदमुपासते ॥(Kena Upanishad 1.6)

“yaccakṣuṣā na paśyati yena cakṣūṣi paśyati |  
tadeva brahma tvam̐ viddhi nedaṃ yadidamupāsate ॥” (Kena Upanishad 1.6)

“What cannot be seen by the eye, but by which the eyes are able to see. That alone know thou to be the *Brahman*; not this which (people) here worship”.

The Upanishads emphasize the importance of concentration and focus in spiritual practice, often emphasizing Dhāraṇā as a foundational step in this process. Dhāraṇā is regarded as a preliminary stage leading to deeper levels of meditation and spiritual enlightenment.

In verse 8.7.1 of the Chandogya Upanishad, Dhyāna is described as a method to attain the ultimate reality, Brahman, through profound meditation and concentrated focus.

“य आत्मापहतपाप्मा विजरो विमृत्युर्विशोको विजिघत्सोऽपिपासः सत्यकामः सत्यसंकल्पः सोऽन्वेष्टव्यः स विजिज्ञासितव्यः स सर्वाश्च लोकानाप्नोति सर्वाश्च कामान्यस्तमात्मानमनुविद्य विजानातीति ह प्रजापतिरुवाच ” ॥ ८.७.१ ॥

“ya ātmāpahatapāpmā vijaro vimṛtyurviśoko vijighatso'pipāsaḥ satyakāmaḥ satyasamkalpaḥ so'nveṣṭavyaḥ sa vijijñāsitavyaḥ sa sarvāṃśca lokānāpnoti sarvāṃśca kāmānyastamātmānamanuidya vijānātīti ha prajāpatiruvāca” ॥ 8.7.1 ॥

"The Self is devoid of sin, old age, death, sorrow, hunger, and thirst. It is the source of the yearning for truth and the commitment to truth. This Self must be diligently sought and comprehensively understood. The one who seeks and understands the Self attains all worlds and fulfills all desires."

In verse 2.3.10 of the Katha Upanishad, Dhyāna is presented as a method for acquiring self-knowledge. It emphasizes that through profound meditation, individuals can perceive the true essence of the self.

The Upanishads stress the significance of meditation as a pathway to spiritual enlightenment, with Dhyāna considered a more profound form of meditation than Dhāraṇā. It is seen as an indispensable element of spiritual practice.



Throughout the principal Upanishads, there are numerous references to Samādhi, denoting the highest state of consciousness and absorption. Here are a few examples:

In Chandogya Upanishad, verse 8.15.1, “it is stated that the knower of Brahman attains the highest state and experiences supreme peace, which is unchanging and one with the Self”.

तथैतद्ब्रह्म प्रजापतये उवाच प्रजापतिर्मनवे मनुः प्रजाभ्यः आचार्यकुलाद्वेदमधीत्य  
यथाविधानं गुरोः कर्मातिशेषेणाभिसमावृत्य कुटुम्बे शुचौ देशे स्वाध्यायमधीयानो  
धर्मिकान्विदधदात्मनि सर्वेन्द्रियाणि सम्प्रतिष्ठाप्याहिंसन्सर्व भूतान्यन्यत्र तीर्थेभ्यः स खल्वेवं  
वर्तयन्त्यावदायुषं ब्रह्मलोकमभिसम्पद्यते न च पुनरावर्तते न च पुनरावर्तते ॥ ८.१५.१ ॥

“tadhaitadbrahmā prajāpatayai uvāca prajāpatirmanave manuḥ prajābhyaḥ  
ācāryakulādvedamadhītya yathāvidhānaṃ guroḥ karmātiśeṣeṇābhisamāvṛtya kuṭumbe  
śucau deśe svādhyāyamadhīyāno dharmikānvidadhadātmani sarvairīyāni  
sampratiṣṭhāpyāhimsansarva bhūtānyanyatra tīrthebhyaḥ sa khalvevaṃ  
vartayanyāvādāyusaṃ brahmalokamabhisampadyate na ca punarāvartate na ca  
punarāvartate”|| (Chandogya Upanishad, 8.15.1)

The individual who maintains control over their senses and refrains from violence except in sacred places lives their life in this manner. Such a person, after death, ascends to Brahmaloaka and is not subject to rebirth.

The Taittiriya Upanishad explores an undetectable reality that is accessible to the mind and intellect but outside the realm of the senses.

These references from principal Upanishads underscore the significance of Samādhi as the ultimate spiritual achievement. Samādhi is characterised by an absolute calm that transcends ordinary sense perception and leads to the realisation of Brahman, the ultimate reality.

Kathopanishad, an ancient Indian scripture, provides profound insights into the practices of DHYĀNA (meditation) and Samādhī (enlightened state). While the primary focus of the Kathopanishad centers around the narrative of Nachiketa and his spiritual journey, it also imparts guidance on meditation and the attainment of Samādhī through specific sutras or verses.

One of the significant sutras in the Kathopanishad relating to DHYĀNA and Samādhī is:

यदा सर्वे प्रमुच्यन्ते कामा येऽस्य हृदि श्रिताः ।

अथ मर्त्यो'मृतो भवत्यत्र ब्रह्म समश्नुते ॥(Kathopanishad 2.3.14)

"Yadaa sarve pramucyante kaamaa ye'sya hrudisritah; atha martyo'mrito bhavatyatra brahma samashnute" (Kathopanishad 2.3.14)

This sutra emphasizes the necessity of transcending desires as a prerequisite for attaining Samādhī. It suggests that by rising above worldly desires and attachments, an individual achieves liberation, uniting with the divine symbolized by Brahman.

The Kathopanishad also underscores the role of meditation in the journey toward Samādhī. It advises practitioners to withdraw their senses, redirect their focus inward, and concentrate their minds on a reality beyond the physical world. Through the practice of DHYĀNA, seekers gradually detach themselves from external distractions and nurture a state of deep concentration and inner tranquility.

Although the Kathopanishad doesn't provide an extensive set of sutras exclusively dedicated to DHYĀNA and Samādhī like the Patanjali Yoga Sutras, it offers profound insights into the transformative potential of meditation and the ultimate objective of

attaining Samādhi. The scripture inspires seekers to engage in introspection, self-inquiry, and contemplation, paving the way for spiritual awakening and self-realization.

In essence, the Kathopanishad, through its sutras and teachings, emphasizes the significance of DHYĀNA and Samādhi as fundamental practices for spiritual development and realization. It stresses the importance of transcending desires and turning inward through meditation to achieve union with the divine, leading to liberation and immortality.

तां योगमिति मन्यन्ते स्थिरामिन्द्रियधारणाम् ।

अप्रमत्तस्तदा भवति योगो हि प्रभवाप्ययौ ॥(Kathopanishad 2.3.11)

"tām yogamiti manyante sthirāmindriyadhāraṇām |

apramattastadā bhavati yogo hi prabhavāpyayau ॥ (Kathopanishad 2.3.14)"

"The state of tranquility, where the senses are confined within the mind, is what they call 'Yoga.' In this state, one must remain vigilant, for Yoga marks both the beginning and the end of all things".

"The mind is inherently restless and challenging to control, but through practice and detachment, it can be tamed. The individual who masters the mind achieves Samādhi and comprehends the eternal Self." (Kaṭha Upaniṣad 1.2.2)

श्रेयश्च प्रेयश्च मनुष्यमेतस्तौ संपरीत्य विविनक्ति धीरः ।

श्रेयो हि धीरोऽभिप्रेयसो वृणीते प्रेयो मन्दो योगक्षेमाद्वृणीते ॥(Kaṭha Upaniṣad 1.2.2)

śreyaśca preyaśca manuṣyametaḥ tau samparītya vivinakti dhīraḥ.

śreyo hi dhīro’bhi preyaso vṛñīte preyo mando yogakṣemādvṛñīte (Kaṭha Upaniṣad 1.2.2)

Kaṭha Upaniṣad, verse 2.3.10, portrays Dhyāna as a practice for gaining self-knowledge, asserting that through profound meditation, one can perceive the true essence of the self.

यदा पञ्चावतिष्ठन्ते ज्ञानानि मनसा सह ।

बुद्धिश्च न विचेष्टते तामाहुः परमां गतिम् ॥(Kaṭha Upaniṣad 2.3.10)

yadā pañcāvatiṣṭhante jñānāni manasā saha

buddhiśca na viceṣṭate tāmāhuḥ paramāṃ gatim (Kaṭha Upaniṣad 2.3.10)

"When the senses are tranquil, the mind is serene, and the intellect is unwavering – at that moment, the enlightened proclaim that the highest state is attained. This unwavering control over the senses and mind is known as Yoga. It demands vigilant awareness because the state of Yoga is ephemeral, coming and going." (Kaṭha Upaniṣad 2.3.10)

"When all desires residing in the heart fade away, the mortal transcends mortality, achieving immortality and realizing Brahman within this very body. When all the knots of the heart are untangled, then indeed, the mortal becomes immortal. This is the essence of the teaching." (Kaṭha Upaniṣad 2.3.14)

यदा सर्वे प्रमुच्यन्ते कामा येऽस्य हृदि श्रिताः ।

अथ मर्त्यो’मृतो भवत्यत्र ब्रह्म समश्नुते ॥ १४ ॥

yadā sarve pramucyante kāmā ye’sya hr̥di śritāḥ.

atha martyo’mr̥to bhavatyatra brahma samaśnute (Kaṭha Upaniṣad 2.3.14)

These verses underscore the significance of calming the senses and the mind as a pathway to attain the highest state, akin to Samādhi. They emphasize the importance of relinquishing desires and the liberation of the individual self, transitioning from mortality to immortality.

To truly grasp the teachings on Samādhi and its spiritual implications within the Kāṭha Upaniṣad, it is crucial to engage in a comprehensive study of the text, including its historical context and various commentaries.

The Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad, one of the ancient and extensive Upaniṣads, explores profound metaphysical and philosophical inquiries. It introduces diverse meditative practices and delves into the nature of Absolute Reality (Brahman) and the individual self (Atman). Within its teachings, the Upaniṣad illuminates contemplative practices and states of consciousness that pave the way for Samādhi. "When the mind achieves stillness, the seeker realizes the Supreme Self, transcending all limitations. In that state of absorption, duality dissolves, and the unity of consciousness is experienced." (Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad 2.3.6)

तस्य हैतस्य पुरुषस्य रूपम् । यथा माहारजनं वासः, यथा पाण्ड्वाविकम्, यथेन्द्रगोपः,  
यथाग्न्यर्चिः, यथा पुण्डरीकम्, यथा सकृद्विद्युत्तमः; सकृद्विद्युत्तेव ह वा अस्य श्रीर्भवति य  
एवं वेद; अथात आदेशः—नेति नेति, न ह्येतस्मादिति नेत्यन्यत्परमस्ति; अथ नामधेयम्—  
सत्यस्य सत्यमिति; प्राणा वै सत्यम्, तेषामेष सत्यम् ॥ 2.3.6 ॥

tasya haitasya puruṣasya rūpam | yathā mähārajanam vāsaḥ, yathā pāṇḍvāvikam,  
yathendragopaḥ, yathāgnyarciḥ, yathā puṇḍarīkam, yathā sakṛdvidyuttam; sakṛdvidyutteva  
ha vā asya śrīrbhavati ya evaṃ veda; athāta ādeśaḥ—neti neti, na hyetasmaditi  
netyanyatparamasti; atha nāmadheyam—satyasya satyamiti; prāṇā vai satyam, teṣāmeṣa  
satyam (Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad 2.3.6)

The Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad provides insights into the knowledge of Supreme Truth and the process of spiritual enlightenment. It emphasizes Samādhi as a means to transcend the limitations of the mind and attain ultimate reality. The Upaniṣad highlights the importance of a qualified teacher (Guru) and the practice of meditation (Dhyāna) in attaining Samādhi.

परीक्ष्य लोकाङ्कर्मचितान्ब्राह्मणो निर्वेदमायान्नास्त्यकृतः कृतेन ।  
तद्विज्ञानार्थं स गुरुमेवाभिगच्छेत्समित्पाणिः श्रोत्रियं ब्रह्मनिष्ठम् ॥

(Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad 1.2.12)

parīkṣya lokāṅkarmacitānbrāhmaṇo nirvedamāyānnāstyakṛtaḥ kṛtena |  
tadvijñānārthaṃ sa gurumevābhigacchetsamitpāṇiḥ śrotriyam brahmaniṣṭham ||(Muṇḍaka  
Upaniṣad 1.2.12)

"The seeker should approach a qualified teacher (Guru) and learn the science of meditation. By attaining deep meditative absorption (Samādhi), one goes beyond all sorrow and realizes the ultimate reality." (Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad 1.2.12)

The Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad, a concise yet profound Upaniṣad, centers its focus on consciousness and various states of awareness. It introduces the Māṇḍūkya-Karika, a commentary by Gaudapada, which further clarifies the concept of Samādhi. These texts delve deeply into the nature of reality, exploring different states of consciousness such as waking, dreaming, deep sleep, and the fourth state of Turīya. Moreover, they elaborate on the process of meditative absorption, leading practitioners towards the profound state of Samādhi.

Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad, verse 3.10, depicts Dhyāna as a means to realize Brahman through sustained and deep meditation on the syllable "Om".

संघाताः स्वप्नवत्सर्वे आत्ममायाविसर्जिताः ।  
आधिक्ये सर्वसाम्ये वा नोपपत्तिर्हि विद्यते ॥ १० ॥

saṅghātāḥ svapnavatsarve ātmamāyāvisarjitāḥ |  
ādhikye sarvasāmye vā nopapattirhi vidyate || 3.10 || Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad.

Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad, verse 2.2.8, states that through Samādhi, attained by piercing through all the knots of the heart and resolving all doubts, one reaches the supreme goal, the ultimate reality of Brahman.

भिद्यते हृदयग्रन्थिश्छिद्यन्ते सर्वसंशयाः ।  
क्षीयन्ते चास्य कर्माणि तस्मिन्दृष्टे परावरे ॥ 2.2.8 ॥

bhidyate hṛdayagranthiśchidyante sarvasaṁśayāḥ |  
kṣīyante cāsya karmāṇi tasmindrṣṭe parāvare || 2.2.8 ||

"The waking state, dreaming state, and deep sleep state are transitory and subject to change. The fourth state (Turīya) is beyond all these states and represents pure consciousness. It is attained through Samādhi." (Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad 1.10)

निवृत्तेः सर्वदुःखानामीशानः प्रभुरव्ययः ।  
अद्वैतः सर्वभावानां देवस्तुर्यो विभुः स्मृतः ॥ १० ॥

nivṛtteḥ sarvaduḥkhānāmīśānaḥ prabhuravyayaḥ |  
advaitaḥ sarvabhāvānāṁ devasturyo vibhuḥ smṛtaḥ || 1.10 ||

## 2.2 SUMMARY

The Brahmasutra, also known as the Vedanta Sutra, is one of the most important texts in the Vedantic tradition. Composed by the sage Vyasa, the Brahmasutra is a collection of aphorisms that provide a concise and systematic exposition of the philosophical and theological principles of Vedanta. Among the many topics discussed in the Brahmasutra, the concepts of Dhāraṇā, Dhyāna, and Samādhi are of particular importance. In this section, we will explore the meaning and significance of these concepts in the context of the Brahmasutra.

**Dharaṇā:** Dhāraṇā, derived from the Sanskrit term "dhee," signifies the practice of concentration or single-pointed focus. Within the Brahmasutra context, Dhāraṇā is closely linked with jnana yoga, the yoga of knowledge. The Brahmasutra underscores Dhāraṇā as a fundamental aspect of jnana yoga, enabling practitioners to direct their focus toward the object of contemplation, which is Brahman, the ultimate reality.

According to the Brahmasutra, Dhāraṇā serves as a foundational stage for the more advanced states of Dhyāna and Samādhi. Practitioners initiate this process by selecting an object of contemplation, ranging from symbols or images to mantras or abstract concepts. They concentrate their minds on this chosen object, allowing all other thoughts and distractions to fade away. Through Dhāraṇā, practitioners cultivate the ability to maintain a steady and focused mind, preparing them for deeper meditative states.

The Brahmasutra emphasizes the significance of Dhāraṇā in the practice of meditation and the achievement of spiritual realization. These teachings provide guidance on developing concentration and mental focus, highlighting their central roles in the practice of Yoga and the pursuit of spiritual liberation.



**Dhyāna:** Dhyāna, derived from the Sanskrit term "dhyāna," signifies the state of meditation or contemplation. Within the framework of the Braṃhasūtra, Dhyāna is viewed as a natural progression from Dhāraṇā, wherein the practitioner intensifies their focus, entering a more profound state of awareness.

The Braṃhasūtra emphasizes Dhyāna as a vital component of bhakti yoga, the path of devotion. Through Dhyāna, practitioners establish a profound connection with the object of their contemplation, often a form or aspect of the divine. According to the Braṃhasūtra, Dhyāna is described as a state of uninterrupted awareness, where the mind is entirely absorbed in the object of meditation.

Numerous sūtras in the Braṃhasūtra delve into the concept of meditation, particularly concerning spiritual liberation and the realization of the ultimate reality, Brahman. Some examples include:

अस्मिन्नस्य च तद्योगं शास्ति ॥ १९ ॥

asminnasya ca tadyogaṃ śāsti ॥ 19 ॥

Sūtra 1.1.19: This sūtra discusses the importance of meditation in achieving liberation. It states that meditation on the nature of Brahman is the means to attain spiritual liberation.

अन्तस्तद्धर्मोपदेशात् ॥ २० ॥

antastaddharmopadeśāt ॥ 20 ॥

Sutra 1.1.20: This sutra emphasizes the importance of meditation as a means to achieve knowledge of Brahman. It states that meditation on the nature of Brahman leads to the attainment of true knowledge.

भावं तु वादरायणः, अस्ति हि ॥ ३३ ॥

bhāvaṃ tu vādarāyaṇaḥ, asti hi ॥ 33 ॥

Sutra 1.3.33: This sutra discusses the different stages of meditation and their role in achieving spiritual realization. It states that meditation on the nature of Brahman is necessary for the attainment of liberation and describes the different stages of meditation.

तर्काप्रतिष्ठानादपि; अन्यथानुमेयमिति चेत्,

एवमप्यनिर्मोक्षप्रसङ्गः ॥ ११ ॥

tarkāpratiṣṭhānādapi; anyathānumeyamiti cet,  
evamapyanirmokṣaprasaṅgaḥ ॥ 11 ॥

Sutra 2.1.11 explores the significance of meditation in attaining self-knowledge. It asserts that meditation is crucial for understanding the Self and realizing the ultimate truth.

These sutras, among numerous others in the Brahmasutra, underscore the vital role of meditation in spiritual realization and the understanding of the ultimate reality, Brahman. They offer guidance on cultivating meditation, outlining its stages of development, and emphasizing its central position in Yoga practice and the pursuit of spiritual liberation.

These teachings illuminate the path toward self-discovery and the profound realization of the ultimate truth.

**Samādhi:** Samādhi, originating from the Sanskrit word "samādhi," signifies a state of total absorption and unity with the object of contemplation. Within the context of the Brahmasutra, Samādhi signifies the pinnacle of meditation, wherein the practitioner attains a profound oneness with Brahman, the ultimate reality.

There are several sutras in the Brahmasutra that discuss the concept of Samādhi, which refers to a state of deep concentration or absorption in meditation. Here are a few examples:

विद्याकर्मणोरिति तु प्रकृतत्वात् ॥ 17 ॥

vidyākarmaṇoriti tu prakṛtatvāt ॥ 17 ॥

Sutra 3.1.17 delves into the various stages of Samādhi and their significance in the practice of Yoga. It underscores Samādhi as a profound state of concentration and absorption during meditation, highlighting its pivotal role in achieving spiritual realization. This sutra emphasizes the transformative power of Samādhi in the context of the Yoga discipline.

ब्रह्मदृष्टिः, उत्कर्षात् ॥ ५ ॥

brahmadṛṣṭiḥ, utkarṣāt ॥ 5 ॥

Sutra 4.1.5 elucidates the essence of Samādhi, portraying it as a state devoid of all mental fluctuations, where pure consciousness prevails. It emphasizes the total absorption of the practitioner in the object of meditation, ultimately culminating in spiritual liberation.

In Sutra 4.4.22, the relationship between Samādhi and spiritual wisdom is explored. It underlines the vital role of Samādhi, stating that it is a prerequisite for the direct experience of the ultimate reality, Brahman. This sutra underscores the necessity of achieving the state of Samādhi for profound spiritual insights and knowledge.

**अनावृत्तिः शब्दादनावृत्तिः शब्दात्॥4.4.22॥**

anāvṛttiḥ śabdādanāvṛttiḥ śabdāt

These sutras, and others in the Brahmasutra, provide guidance on how to attain the state of Samādhi and the role it plays in the attainment of spiritual realization. They describe the nature of Samādhi, its different stages, and its relationship to the practice of Yoga and the attainment of spiritual liberation.

The Brahmasutra, a foundational text in the Vedantic tradition, asserts that Samādhi stands as the ultimate goal of spiritual practice, signifying liberation or moksha. Through the systematic cultivation of Dhāraṇā and Dhyāna, practitioners refine their awareness, gradually piercing through the veils of ignorance and illusion that obscure the true nature of reality. In the state of Samādhi, all dualities and distinctions dissolve, and practitioners experience complete transcendence, realizing their essential identity with Brahman.

These fundamental concepts of Dhāraṇā, Dhyāna, and Samādhi hold a central place in Vedantic philosophy, as elucidated comprehensively in the Brahmasutra. Dhāraṇā empowers practitioners to concentrate their minds and focus their awareness. An analysis of revered Upaniṣads such as Kaṭha, Bṛhadāraṇyaka, Muṇḍaka, and Māṇḍūkya, along with the Brahma Sūtras, consistently highlights Samādhi as a profound state of meditative absorption and spiritual realization.

These texts emphasize the paramount importance of inner stillness, contemplative practices, and the guidance of a knowledgeable teacher in the attainment of Samādhi. They offer diverse perspectives and philosophical frameworks that enrich the understanding of Samādhi as a transformative and enlightening experience on the path to self-realization and the realization of the ultimate truth.

The Śrīmadbhagavadgītā provides a rich and complex understanding of meditation and SAMĀDHI, and their role in achieving spiritual growth and connecting with the divine. The text describes several different types of meditation, each with its own focus and purpose, and teaches about the concept of SAMĀDHI, which is a state of consciousness that is achieved through meditation.

The exploration of Dhāraṇā, Dhyāna, and Samādhi within the realm of Prasthānatrayī holds significant importance in the landscape of Indian philosophy. These practices, involving systematic concentration, meditation, and contemplation, have contributed to the evolution of diverse schools of thought in the philosophical discourse of India.

One of the key advantages of engaging in Dhāraṇā, Dhyāna, and Samādhi lies in their ability to enhance concentration and focus. By directing the mind toward a singular object or idea, practitioners effectively eliminate distractions, fostering a state of clarity and tranquility. This focused approach not only sharpens cognitive abilities but also boosts productivity in everyday life.

Furthermore, the practice of these techniques offers a valuable solution for stress and anxiety reduction. Scientifically proven, meditation serves as an effective stress-relief method, inducing relaxation and stability. Regular meditation practice contributes to emotional equilibrium and inner peace, promoting an overall sense of well-being.

Moreover, the systematic practice of Dhāraṇā, Dhyāna, and Samādhi aids in the development of self-awareness and mindfulness. Through mindful observation of thoughts, emotions, and actions, individuals gain profound insights into their inner selves and their roles in the world. This introspective journey fosters self-acceptance and personal growth, paving the way for a deeper understanding of one's identity and purpose.

Additionally, these practices can lead to spiritual growth and a heightened comprehension of the universe and one's place within it. By attaining states of pure awareness and consciousness, practitioners often experience a profound sense of unity with the universe and a deep connection with all living beings. This spiritual connection can be transformative, offering a broader perspective on life and existence.

In conclusion, the practice of Dhāraṇā, Dhyāna, and Samādhi within Prasthānatrayī extends a multitude of benefits, encompassing physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being. Its structured approach to concentration, meditation, and contemplation not only enriches Indian philosophy but also stands as a powerful tool for personal growth and transformative experiences in contemporary times.