



॥ विवेकचूडामणि ॥
... Vivekacūḍāmaṇi ...

AI Summary – Class 121

For Vivekacūḍāmaṇi, by Acharya Tadany Cargnin dos Santos
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Summary

Māyā, kāraṇa śarīram and the Three guṇas

Acharya Tadany began the Vedānta teaching by explaining that Śankarācārya in the Vivekacūḍāmaṇi equates kāraṇa śarīram (causal body) with māyā. He noted that māyā is given different names throughout the text:

- avyaktam (imperceptible to the senses, unmanifest)
- śaktiḥ (power)
- triguṇātmika (having three qualities)
- Other synonymous terms

The current focus of study is on Triguṇātmika - the three-fold nature of māyā consisting of:

1. Rajo guṇa (vikṣēpa śakti - projecting power)
2. Tamo guṇa (āvaraṇa śakti - veiling power)
3. sattva guṇa (quality of purity)

How Rajo guṇa and Tamo guṇa Work Together

Acharya Tadany explained that Rajo guṇa and Tamo guṇa work as a team to maintain samsara (the cycle of birth and death):

Tamo guṇa (āvaraṇa śakti)

- Covers or veils the true nature of the self
- Hides Paramātmā (the Supreme Self)
- Creates ignorance of one's true nature

Rajo guṇa (vikṣēpa śakti)

- Projects a false nature
- Creates the jīvātmā (individual self) identity



- Maintains the illusion of separateness

Acharya Tadany used the analogy that one guṇa hides the true nature while the other fantasizes about a false nature, thus maintaining the cycle of samsara.

The Three Divisions of sattva guṇa

Śankarācārya makes a unique subdivision of sattva guṇa in the Vivekacūḍāmaṇi that is not found elsewhere. He divides it into three levels:

1. Malina sattva (Impure sattva)

- Makes a person a samsarī (one bound to worldly existence)
- Specifically, a non-adhikārī samsarī (one without qualification for liberation)
- sattva is still tied down to Tamo guṇa and Rajo guṇa
- Like a good leader surrounded by terrible ministers - has good intentions but is helpless to execute them
- No hope of coming out of samsara in this state
- Compared to a person with a fatal disease that cannot be cured

2. miśra sattva (Mixed sattva)

- Makes a person an adhikārī (qualified seeker)
- An adhikārī samsarī or samsarī adhikārī
- The person is still in samsara but has hope
- Exposed to Vedānta teaching and wisdom
- Like a person with a disease who is in the ICU receiving treatment - there is light at the end of the tunnel
- Has the potential to assimilate knowledge and attain enlightenment in this lifetime
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3. śuddha sattva or Viśuddha sattva (Pure sattva)

- The person is no longer a samsarī
- Represents a jīvan Mukta (liberated while living)
- Also called a jñāni (one who has knowledge)
- Has assimilated ātmā jñānam (Self-knowledge)

Characteristics of śuddha sattva puruṣaḥ

Śankarācārya describes several features of a person established in śuddha sattva (from verse 119 onwards):

1. Prasādaḥ (Tranquility of Mind)

- Means tranquility, poised mind, balanced mind
- Harmony and equanimity



- **Key Distinction:** Both miśra sattva and śuddha sattva have Prasādaḥ, but with crucial differences:
- **miśra sattva:** apēkṣika Prasādaḥ (relative peace) - fragile, delicate, can be easily disturbed
- **śuddha sattva:** ātayantika Prasādaḥ (absolute peace) - spontaneous, natural, permanent

2. Svātmā Anubhūti (Aparōkṣa jñānam)

- Immediate, non-mediated knowledge
- Clear knowledge of the Self
- This is what distinguishes miśra sattva from śuddha sattva
- In miśra sattva, ātmā jñānam is not yet there
- In śuddha sattva, ātmā jñānam is fully assimilated

3. Parama praśāntiḥ (Absolute Peace)

- The word "Parama" indicates absolute, not relative peace
- Again, both adhikārī and jñāni have peace, but different types:
- **adhikārī (miśra sattva):** apēkṣika śāntiḥ (relative peace) - temporary, fragile, deliberately maintained
- **jñāni (śuddha sattva):** ātayantika śāntiḥ (absolute peace) - permanent, natural, effortless

The Lottery Ticket Analogy

Acharya Tadany provided a powerful analogy to explain the relationship between relative and absolute peace:

- A poor, illiterate person wants to become rich but has no legitimate means
- They think of buying a lottery ticket to win money
- But to buy the lottery ticket, they need some money first
- Similarly, to come to Vedānta, you need some level of peace of mind (apēkṣika Shanti)
- With that relative peace, you "buy the Vedānta lottery ticket" (study and practice)
- Through Vedānta, you are guaranteed to win the prize: Absolute Peace (ātayantika Shanti)

The progression is: **apēkṣika śāntiḥ** → **Vedānta Study (Shravana, Manana, Nididhyasana)** → **ātayantika Shanti**

4. Tr̥pti (Contentment)

- Self-contentment that stops all comparison
- Comparison is identified as one of the greatest sources of suffering
- People compare themselves in every field - professional, personal, even spiritual
- Even among Vedānta students and mumukṣus (seekers), jealousy can arise from comparison
- One student jealous of another who has completed more texts
- Comparison continues: Tattva Bodha → Bhagavad Gita → Upanishads → Brahma Sutra → Vyākāraṇa → Mimamsa



- Once Vedānta is assimilated, Tṛpti arises naturally
- With self-contentment, there is no more comparison, no jealousy, no sense of smallness

5. praharṣaḥ (Total Fulfillment)

- Means extreme joy and pūrnatvam (fullness/completeness)
- Tṛpti (contentment) is actually a consequence of praharṣaḥ
- Because one feels totally full and complete, contentment naturally follows
- Reference to Bhagavad Gita Chapter 2, Verse 55, which defines a wise person, the verse states: when one gives up all desires born of the mind
- **Important distinction:** Even if the jñāni has desires, they are not born out of unfulfillment
- Desires born from unfulfillment are binding desires (if I get this, I'll be happy)
- Desires born from fulfillment are non-binding (arising from completeness, not lack)

The Problem of Comparison in Spiritual Life

Acharya Tadany emphasized that comparison is particularly problematic even in spiritual contexts:

- Living in a Gurukulam, students constantly compare their progress
- Competition arises about who has studied more texts
- Jealousy can develop even among sincere seekers
- The śāstra acknowledges that as long as Vedānta is not assimilated, jealousy will arise even among mumukṣus
- Only when Vedānta is fully assimilated does this comparison and jealousy cease

Key Philosophical Points

The Journey from Relative to Absolute Peace

The teaching emphasizes that spiritual development is a progression:

1. Start with relative peace of mind (prerequisite for study)
2. Engage in Vedānta study and practice
3. Attain absolute peace of mind through Self-knowledge

The Role of ātmā jñānam

Self-knowledge is the crucial differentiator:

- Without it, one remains in miśra sattva (qualified seeker)
- With it, one attains śuddha sattva (liberated state)
- The difference is not in external behavior but in internal realization



Understanding Desires

The teaching makes a subtle but important distinction:

- Binding desires arise from a sense of incompleteness
- Non-binding desires can exist even in a state of fulfillment
- The jñāni may have desires, but they don't create bondage

Teaching Methodology

Acharya Tadany's teaching style demonstrated several effective pedagogical approaches:

- Use of relatable analogies (lottery ticket, prime minister with bad ministers, disease diagnosis)
- Clear distinctions between similar concepts (apēkṣika vs ātāyantika)
- Integration of Bhagavad Gita references to support Vivekacūḍāmaṇi teachings
- Acknowledgment of practical challenges (comparison and jealousy even among spiritual seekers)
- Systematic progression through the material with clear structure