AN INTRODUCTION
TO THE
PHILOSOPHY OF
PANCHADASI

by
SWAMI ABHEDANANDA

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PREFACE

An Introduction to the Philosophy of Panchadasi is an offer of ours that contains the philosophical thoughts of Panchadasi delivered at the Christo-theosophical Society at Bloomsbury Square on the 27th October, 1896. Swâmi Vivekânanda was present on the occasion and was highly pleased at the crown success of his beloved spiritual brother. It is the maiden speech of Swâmi Abhedânananda before the learned Western audience. Below are quoted certain authentic records of this lecture from the Life of Swâmi Vivekânanda (Vol. II):

"One of the events which satisfied the Swâmi (Vivekânanda) immensely, was the success of the maiden speech of the Swâmi Abhedâ-
nanda, whom he had designated to speak in his stead at a club in Bloomsbury Square, on October 27. The new monk gave an excellent address on the general character of the Vedānta teaching; and it was noticed that he possessed spiritual fervour and possibilities of making a good speaker. A description of this occasion, written by Mr. Eric Hammond, reads:

'Some disappointment awaited those that had gathered that afternoon. It was announced that Swāmījī did not intend to speak, and Swāmī Abhedānanda would address them instead.

'An overwhelming joy was noticeable in the Swāmi (Vivekānanda) in his scholar’s success. Joy compelled him to put at least some of itself into words that rang, with delight unalloyed. It was the joy of a spiritual
father over the achievement of a well-beloved son, a successful and brilliant student. The Master was more than content to have effaced himself in order that his Brother's opportunity should be altogether unshirked. The whole impression had in it a glowing beauty quite indescribable. It was as though the Master thought and knew his thought to be true: 'Even if I perish on this plane, my message will be sounded through these dear lips and the world will hear it**. He (Vivekânanda) remarked that this was the first appearance of his dear Brother and pupil, as an English-speaking lecturer before an English audience, and he pulsated with pure pleasure at the applause that followed the remark. His selflessness throughout the episode burnt itself into one's deepest memory.'

The present booklet is an attempt
to throw light upon the Vidyāranya, or Vivarana school of Vedânta. It is the first lecture of Swâmi Abhedânanda before the Western audience and as such, the method employed in it is not marked by that peculiar novelty which characterises his later lectures and addresses. Yet the fact is to be noticed that the maiden speech also exhibits remarkable lucidity of expression and directness of appeal.

The philosophy of Panchadasî is a unique contribution to the domain of Indian thought. Swâmi Abhedânanda’s treatment of the subject is thoroughly subjective. He has revealed here, the central idea of Panchadasî philosophy faithfully and thereby has sought to awaken an interest of the reader in it. His method is essentially logical rather than historical. The historical background is furnished here for the sake of reader’s convenience.
First of all we like to mention here the varying opinions with regard to time and historicity of Vidyâranya. It is quite clear that Muni Vidyâranya belongs to the Vivarana school of thought and he wrote many learned books on Vedânta, such as Vivarana-prameya-samgraha, Panchadasi, Drik-drisya-viveka and others. But there is a dispute among scholars whether Vidyâranya was the self-same person as Sâyana, the commentator of the Vedas, or they were totally two different persons? Dr. S. N. Dasgupta is of opinion that Vidyâranya, the author of Panchadasi, and Sâyana, the author of Sarvadarshana-samgraha are identically the same. He says in his A History of Indian Philosophy (Vol. II, p. 215): “Vidyâranya is reputed to be the same as Mâdhava, brother of Sâyana, the the great Vedic commentator.” Dr. Dasgupta accredited Vidyâranya with
the authorship of many more books on philosophy, such as, *Vivarana-prameya-samgraha*, *Jivanmukti-vireka* and others.

He admits: "In addition to the *Samvad-darsana-samgraha* Mādhava wrote two works on the Samkara Vedānta, viz. *Vivarana-prameya-samgraha*, and *Panchadasi*, and also *Jivanmukti-vireka*." (Cf. H.I.P., Vol. II, p. 214). Prof. Rādhākrishnan is also inclined to identify Vidyāranya with Mādhava-Sāyana and he says: "Vidyāranya (fourteenth century), generally identified with Mādhava, wrote *Vivarana-prameya-samgraha* as the gloss on Prakāsatman's work. While his *Panchadasi* is classic of later Advaita, his *Jivanmukti-vireka* is also of considerable value" (Vide *Indian Philosophy*, Vol. II, p. 551). Pandit Rājendranath Ghose (afterwards Swāmi Chidghanānanda) also admits this view and mentions in his Bengali edition of *Advaitasiddhi* (Vol. I) that
Vidyârânya was no other person than Mâdhavâchârya who wrote not only the Panchadasi, Sarvadarsana-samgraha, and Vivaranaprameya-samgraha, but also Anubhuti-prakâsa, Jivanmukti-viveka, the glossary on Aparoksânubhûtu and 108 Upanishads, the short commentary on Sauta-samhitâ, Aitareya, Taittiriya and Chândogya Upanishads. He wrote also Brihadâranyaka-vânîkasâra, Sâm-hâra-vijaya, Jaiminiya-mâlî-vistara, Mâdhva-vriddhi, Parásara-mâdhava and Kalâ-mâdhava, etc. But Dr. T. M. P. Mahâdevan expresses his view with regard to it thus: "But Vidyârânya, ** was only 'an insignificant ascetic who presided over the Sringeri Matha from C. 1377 to 1386 A.D. The works that are definitely attributed to Vidyârânya are only the Panchadasi and the Vivaranaprameya-samgraha'" (Vide "The Philosophy of Advaita, p. 2).
Dr. Mahâdevan says that Vidyâranya lived probably in the fourteenth century A.D., and he was the preceptor of Harihara I, the emperor of Vijayanagar and Bukka. Swâmi Abhedânanda mentions: "Mâdhava was at first the Prime Minister of the King Bukka of South India and he flourished some 400 hundred years after Sankarâchârya. Afterwards he renounced his ministership, poverty and worldly position and entered the order of Sannyásin." Mr. M. A. Dori-swâmi Iyangar says in his article on The Mâdhava-Vidyâranya-Theory (Cf. Indian Historical Quarterly, Vol. XII) that Vidyâranya was "an insignificant ascetic and the president of the Sringeri Math. Mr. N. Venkataramanayya proves in his Vijayanagar, Origin of the City and the Empire (Ch. II, p. 48ff) that Mâdhava and Vidyâranya were not identical. Because "the identity-theory seems to be more probable
than the opposite theory’ (Cf. The Philosophy of Advaita, p. 3). So he infers that Vidyâranya lived in time of Harihara I, the King of Vijayanagar, and the Harihara I, was really the builder of Vijayanagar Kingdom, the name of which was given after the name of Vidyâranya. But Mr. R. Râma Rao in his suggestive article on Vidyâranya and Mâdhavâchârya (Cf. Indian Historical Quarterly, Vol. VI, p. 701) holds a quite different view. He says that ‘King Bukka I is referred to as the patron, while the inscriptions of Vidyâranya are all of the reign of Harihara II (1377-1404)’. But Dr. Mahâdevan contends: ‘The evidence of the copperplate grant is corroborated by a few inscriptions of the Tulava period which declare that the city of Vidyânagara was built by King Harihara I and named Vidyânagara in the name of Vidyâranya Sripâda. Two inscriptions dated
respectively 1538 and 1559 A.D. state that Haritha Raya built Vidyânagara in the name of Vidyâranya' (Vide The Philosophy of Advaita, p. 4).

As regards the teacher or preceptor of Vidyâranya there is also a dispute among scholars. Some say that the teacher of Vidyâranya was Sankarânanda; according to some, Bhârati-Tirtha, while others hold that Vidyânanda was the teacher of Vidyâranya. But Dr. Dasgupta is of opinion that Bhârati-Tirtha, Vidyânanda and Sankarânanda, these three savants were the teachers of Vidyâranya. Appaya-Dikshit, the author of Siddhântaleśa-samgraha differs from it. He holds that Bhârati Tirtha and Vidyâranya refer to the same man. He calls the Vivarânapramyâya-samgraha as the Vivaranolânya, as he admits with the words:

"चिघरणोपन्यासे भारतीप्रधिनवचनम्"
in his celebrated work *Siddhântalesa-samgraha*. Dr. Mahâdevan also agrees with Appyaya Dikshit and he says:

"From the evidence afforded by the *Siddhântalesa* of Appyaya Dikshit * *, we are led to the conclusion that Bhâratitirtha was the author of the three works and that the name Vidyâranya was an appellation which was common to both Mâdhava and Bhâratitirtha" (Cf. The Philosophy of Advaita, p. 7). Thus it follows from the foregoing lines that the title of 'Vidyâranya' was common both to Mâdhava and Bhârati Tirtha. Vidyâranya was not the name of any individual, and: Mâdhavâchârva-Vidyâranya and Bhârati-Tirtha-Vidyâranya were quite different persons. Appyaya-Dikshit says that Bhârati-Tirtha-Vidyâranya was the author of *Vivaranaopanyûsa* or *Vivaranaprâmeya*—
samagraha. According to Dr. Mahadevan Bharati-Tirtha-Vidyaranya was senior to Madhavacharya-Vidyaranya though they were contemporaries. But Swami Abhedananda disagrees with this view and holds that Vidyaranya was the disciple or pupil of the Sannyasin Bhurati-Tirtha.

In conclusion we add further that our labours for bringing out this neat booklet will be rewarded with success if it wins the real appreciation of the reading public.

THE PUBLISHER.

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19B, Raja Rajkrishna Street,
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AN INTRODUCTION TO THE PHILOSOPHY OF PANCHADASI

Ladies and gentlemen, the subject of my discourse, I am afraid, is one which may not be interesting to you on account of its being very dry and metaphysical. It is a discourse on the Vedânta philosophy of the Hindus and its teachings as explained in Panchadasi.

Before I proceed with my subject I shall tell you what the meaning of the word Vedânta is and how it became the name of a certain school of philosophy in India.

‘Vedânta’ is a Sanskrit com-
pound word of *veda* and *anta*. The word *Veda* comes from the Sanskrit root *vid* i.e. to know. So *Veda* means literally the 'act of knowing' or knowledge. Knowledge is a general term. There may be the knowledge of external things and of things internal; there may be the knowledge of natural things and of things supernatural; there may be knowledge of relative things and of things beyond all sorts of relation, or, in other words, things which we cannot perceive, cannot sense, cannot feel, cannot think of or imagine. The word *anta* means 'end,' or the latter portion of the Vedas. Therefore, 'Vedānta' means that portion of knowledge by which we can under-
stand the true nature of those things which are internal or mental, which are super-natural or above the gross material side of nature and of things which are above all relations i.e. the Absolute, the soul universal.

The Absolute is called by Vedânta Brahman. Jñâna is another word for knowledge. The term which the Vedântists use for the knowledge of the Absolute is ‘Brahmajñâna’. So, Vedânta means Brahmajñâna.

Such being the scriptural or literal meaning of the word Vedânta, the scriptural literature of the Hindus which deals with Brahmajñâna is also called Vedânta. The most ancient parts of this scriptural literature
which the Hindus believe as revealed. are the *Upanishads*.

There is another book *Bhagavad Gita* which contains the doctrines of Vedânta as taught by Sri Krishna to Arjuna before the commencement of the great battle of Kurukshetra. It is considered by the Vedântists as an authority. These *Upanishads* and *Bhagavad Gita* form the real scriptural foundations of the Vedânta philosophy. Upon these foundations is built the huge superstructure of Vedânta by different sages and philosophers who flourished both before and after Sâkyasimha, the great founder of the Buddhist faith.

The scattered flowers of the
Vedântic truth that are to be found here and there in the mass of the simplest form of the Upanishads were collected and placed each in its proper place by Bûdarâyana, so as to form a beautiful bouquet that may please the scrutinizing and truth-seeking eyes of all philosophers of all ages and climes. He put these grand philosophical tenets in short pithy sentences called Vedânta-sutras or aphorisms of Bûdarâyana. These Upanishads, Gîtâ and the Sutras of Bûdarâyana form the three prasthânas or steps to the realization of the background underlying all phenomena. These three being the basic literature of the Vedântic school, volumes after volumes of commentaries and annota-
tions was written on them, in prose and in verse by Sankarâchârya and his disciples and other Advaitists who flourished later. *Panchadashi* is one of these works on the Vedânta philosophy written in verse by Mâdhavâchârya. (Sâyana), the great commentator of the Vedic literature. Few countries have ever produced such a voluminous writer as Mâdhava. Mâdhava was at first the prime minister of the King Bukka of South India and he flourished some 400 years after Sankarâchârya. (eighth or ninth century A. D). Afterwards he renounced his ministership, property, and worldly position and entered the order of *Sannyâsin*. He was initiated into that order by a *Sannyâsin* named
Bhârati Tirtha and thenceforth was called Vidyâranya.

The first six chapters of Panchadasi was written by Bhârati Tirtha, but his sudden and unexpected death left the work to be completed by his disciple who wrote the remaining nine chapters. The word Panchadasi comes from the Sanskrit ‘panchadasa’ which means fifteen and the book is called Panchadasi on account of its having fifteen chapters. The Panchadasi contains altogether 1530 slokas or verses and is divided into three books, each containing five chapters.

In the first chapter the true nature of the unconditioned Brahman is explained. We can never define this
unconditioned *Brahman* because every thought of the human mind or reasoning faculty will be under some condition or relation while *Brahman* transcends them all. *Brahman* is beyond space and time, beyond thought and beyond all human expression. It is not to be the object of our consciousness. Our mind cannot approach it. It is beyond all human expression. It is indescribable and unspeakable. Human mind cannot, however, rest satisfied unless it reaches that state where all human search after truth ceases. It is a state where all desires for transitory and worldly things vanish, where peace and happiness reign through all eternity and where all qualities of ego and non-ego end, and
the whole universe merges into one ocean of universal consciousness. After realizing that superconscious state of perfect bliss and unity the Vedântic sages declare in a trumpet voice before the world:

वेदाहमें पुरुषं महान्तं।
आदित्यवर्णं तमसं परस्तात्।
तमेव विदिस्वात्मस्तुमेति
नान्यं पन्था विद्यते आयनाय।॥

‘I have reached that one conscious Being, effulgent with divine light and beyond the limits of darkness. Knowing Him alone one attains that state which is beyond the reach of death. There is no alternative course to it.’

These ancient sages began to coin different words to give a clear
idea what they realized in the superconscious state. Most of these words are of negative categories (neti mulakam). Its attributes are all in the negative form. It is without colour, without form, without smell etc. Very few words in the affirmative have been accepted as correct to represent the Absolute or Brahman. Words are relative and they carry with them a conditional sense. But Brahman is unconditional. So, we must be cautious while using the words for describing the unconditioned. Words should then be used not in their relative sense but in their absolute sense. Suppose, if we use existence, intelligence and bliss to describe Brahman, we must take their
meanings not as used ordinarily, but in their absolute sense or in the language of *Panchadasi* not in their *vāchya-rtha* but in their *lakṣhya-rtha*. Therefore, *Brahman* is described in *Panchadasi* as *Sat-chit-ānanda*, pure existence, pure consciousness and pure bliss. It is also established in this chapter that the soul of man is in reality a part and parcel of *Brahman*, conditioned by the illusive nature of *māyā* which makes it appear different from *Brahman*, individualizes it and forces it to think, feel, perceive, sense, and do all sorts of works.

What is this *māyā*? It is a name given by the Vedāntists to that eternal energy whose manifestations are the phenomena and the universe. This
mâyâ acting upon the ocean of Brahman, produces waves which we call the organic and inorganic phenomena of nature. She evolves and manifests herself as atoms and molecules. She attracts them, combines them so as to produce all the elements and constructs out of them myriads of suns, moons, stars and solar systems. Even the greatest minds stand stupefied in dumb astonishment when they try to think of that supreme power whose inkling has evolved this gigantic manifestation. Mâyâ creates division—division between individual self and Brahman. The projection or the world-appearance is due to only mâyâ or nescience. This mâyâ, or Prakriti has three gunas or qualities,
sattva, rajas and tamas. This broad and general sense of the word mâyâ as expressed in Panchadasi is Prakriti and the word mâyâ has been used in a little restricted sense.

Panchadasi divides Prakriti into mâyâ and avidyâ:

तमोरजः सत्त्वशुणा प्रकृतिद्विभिधा च सा ।
सत्त्वाद्यविद्यादिभिधा मायादिविधों च ते मस्ते || 1.15-16

When sattva guna or the power by which we can know things as they are, is not overcome by rajas (activity) and tamas (ignorance), and on the other hand, sattva prevails over rajas and tamas, then only Prakriti is called mâyâ. When sattva guna is overcome by rajas and tamas, the Prakriti is called avidyâ. The sattva is
described as a pure reflecting substance that has the power of catching the image of Brahman and reflecting its rays as a mirror reflects and casts the rays of the same on all sides.

This mâyâ together with the image of Brahman reflected therein is Isvara or the creator, preserver and destroyer of the universe. Isvara of Vedânta is the same God as different nations worship and pray to in different names. He is all-pervading, all-powerful, all-knowing and all-merciful.

The image or reflection of Brahman in avidyâ is the jīva or the conditioned Brahman in man. This jīva because of his impure sattva has
got partial knowledge and with it he tries to gain fuller knowledge. In Vedânta, therefore, jîva is called prâjña or partial knower while Isvara is all-knowing. This jîva gets the name prâjña when he assumes avidyâ as his kûrana-sarîra or causal body. Panchadasi teaches that there are three bodies of every man: (1) The sthula-sarîra, the gross material body; (2) the suksma-sarîra, the subtle body and (3) the kûrana-sarîra, the causal body. The last one is the cause of the other two bodies, or, in other words, it contains the seeds of the subtle and the gross bodies.

मायाचित्रो वशीकृत्य तां स्वात् सवैः इंस्करः \nअविचारशस्त्रस्तदूवाचिन्ध्यादुनेकः \nI. 16-17

The jîva with his subtle body is
called tājasa: 'प्राणस्तराभिमानेन तैजस्तर्व प्रतिपथ्यते' and 'साकारणश्च प्राणस्तराभिमानवन्ति।'

The subtle body contains the antahkarana (अन्तःकरण), the internal organ or the mind in its different manifestations, the five jñānendriyas or instruments of knowledge: the senses of seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting and touching, five karmendriyas or instruments of action: power of seizing, moving, speaking, excreting and generating, and the five prānas. The prāna is the life-sustaining power or the vital energy in us. Although it is one, it has five different names on account of the five different functions it performs. While working in the upper part its name is prāna and that which moves the lower
part is *apâna*. When it performs digestive function it is *samâna*, and when it is the cause of bringing down food from the alimentary canal to the stomach it is *uddâna*. Again, it is *vyâna* when it works through the canals of the body.

When the *jiva* identifies himself with the gross body, he is called *visva*. This gross body contains the instruments through which those *indriyas* and *prânas* work on the material plane.

The gross body dies as the physical instruments, but the *jiva* or inner man can never die or lose his powers, impressions and thoughts. The *jiva* or the inner man goes to heaven or hell, or to any other planet.
He assumes different bodies, and wherever he goes, he carries with him his subtle body, which is the seed of his gross body. All these divisions, differentiations and limitations, says Panchdasi, are imposed on Brahman. They are false like māyā; they have no independent status. They cannot bring any change in the unchangeable, just as the apparent redness of a crystal cannot affect its genuine whiteness and transparency when a red object is placed near it. The qualities of the changeable are often attributed to the unchangeable. This process is called the superimposition. The superimposition or upadhi, is caused by avidyā. The jīva conditioned by
avidya and entangled in the meshes of the three bodies, thinks himself as actor (karta) and enjoyer (bhokta). As long as these two ideas of being actor (kartritva) and enjoyer (bhoktritva) will remain in the jiva, he will have to go on with his work and enjoy the fruits coming therefrom. Even after the perish of body he still retains the ideas of doer (kartritva) and enjoyer (bhoktritva). These two ideas will bring forth desires as their offspring and as long as these desires will remain, they will create new bodies. So Panchadasi says:

"When one can transcend the sense of self, as well as bring under control the desires, this can be defined as sokapanodana (शोकपनोदन). And
the pleasure and satisfaction one derives from it may be defined as
tripti (त्रिप्ति) and harsa (हर्ष).

In Sanskrit the desires are called vāsanās. The desires or vāsanās for
work and enjoyment are the causes of our births and re-births. If these
desires remain in us, we shall be born again and again. As these desires or
vāsanās are the roots of all our karmas or works, good or bad, jīva
cannot escape from reaping what he has sown. So, he enjoys pleasure
and pain which are the results of his works, good or bad. Thus fettered
by the trammels of karma, jīva moves on from one body to another enjoying
or suffering the good or bad results of his own deeds.
Is there no end to this process of births and re-births? Can we not be free from the inevitable law of karma? So, the author of *Panchadasi* himself raises these questions:

नत्वं कीटा इवावत्तीवाच्यतन्तरमास्तु्ते।
ञ्जततो जन्मनो जन्म दमन्तनेनव नि-द्रूतिम।।
सतू कर्म परिपाकात्र ते कर्णा निधिनिद्रात॥
प्राप्य तीर्तहृच्छायां विशान्यन्ति यथासुखम॥

As a small insect falling into the current of a river passes from one whirlpool to another and does not find a resting place, so the *jiva* passes from one birth to another without finding rest or peace. But if any kind-hearted man seeing the miserable plight of the rapid current and places the insect
under the shade of a tree on the bank, it escapes the ever-running current of the water. Similarly, the jīva can escape the continuous recurring births and deaths, if any God-realized man shows him the path to freedom and peace. Following the advice of the realized man (सत्त्ववृक्षी) the jīva can be liberated from the pangs and cares of the deceitful world.

Then comes the practice or sādhanā. Nowhere we can find in world's history, except in India, that the highest metaphysical conception has formed the basis of a religion. The religion of Vedānta is not merely theoretical, but it is also practical. It is the realization of the universal soul in the individual self. It is being
and becoming one with that eternal existence.

The union with the supreme pure consciousness forms the keynote of the Vedântic religion. The Vedânta proclaims that the oneness with Brahman is the ultimate end of human life. It is the Be-all and End-all of our individual existence. It is the final goal of all searches after Truth. What becomes after regaining the state of oneness is described in the following lines:

भिन्नते हृदयमन्थिमित्रिचन्ति सर्वसंध्याः ।
क्षीयते चार्य कर्मानि तस्मिन् हष्टे परावरे॥

When man reaches that state of oneness, all knots of desires are torn asunder, all doubts and questions
are solved for ever, and all works with their fruits are transcended.

But how to attain such a state of oneness or freedom? To this the Vedânta answers that by right knowledge of Brahman or Brahma-jnâna we can obtain oneness with Brahman and consequently the absolute freedom. And as before daylight the darkness of night disappears, so the darkness of false knowledge (mithyā pratyaya) vanishes before the light of jnâna or right knowledge.

The Vedânta says that this world is manifested form of mâyâ. These phenomena are nothing but the apparent waves in the ocean of Brahman. We live and move and have our being in Brahman. These
names and forms (nâme-rupa) are the 
mâyâ or nescience. They are the 
cause of creation: ‘नामस्योपज्वलस्यैव 
स्त्रित्वात् स्त्रित्: पुरा।’ Really Brahman 
appears as different only for name 
and form, otherwise it is pure and one 
without the second—एकमेवाद्वितीयम्। 
Panchadasi also says: ‘नामस्योपाधिभेदं 
विना नैव सतो भिद्या।’ But, truly speaking, 
Brahman is never affected by time 
and space. It is unchangeable 
amidst the changeful and deceitful 
world. Panchadasi also mentions:

प्रवहत्यपि नीरेव स्थिरा प्रौढ़ा शिला यथा।

नामस्यपान्यात्वेत्तेपि कूटस्थं श्राह नान्यथा॥

As a rushing stream cannot dis- 
lodge a huge stone, likewise Brah-
man remains unaffected amidst the
changes of names and forms (nūma-rupa). Name and form have their ground upon Brahman. Without the support of Brahman they cannot exist. Panchadasī describes this as:

निदिष्ट्रे दर्पणे सतिति वस्तुगमं वृहद्भूतियत।
सत्तिदृष्टवने तथा नानाजगद्गमभूतमिदं वियलु॥

As in a mirror one can see the reflected images of every object, likewise everything having a name and a form is revealed by Brahman.

In truth, every particle of matter in the universe is Brahman conditioned by nūma and rupa i.e. name and form. This vision of Brahman is called in Vedānta samyag-darsana or right knowledge. This samyag-darsana is acquired by
vichāra or proper analysis of the true nature of things and by realizing Brahman which is sat-chit-ānanda or existence-intelligence-bliss. To describe the necessity of vichāra Panchadasi says:

\[ \text{अहा यतःभि शास्त्रेऽपि प्रत्यक्तेन वर्णितम्।} \]
\[ \text{महावाक्यं स्तुथाप्यतत् दुर्वोधमधिविचारिणः॥} \]

Although the individual soul has been described as Brahman in the mahāvākyas or the great Vedic words, yet it is very difficult to understand for them who do not practise vichāra or the proper analysis of spirit and matter—jada and chaitanya.

What these mahāvākyas are and what do they mean? The mahāvākyas are the great words which
contain the fundamental ideas of Vedânta. *Panchadasi* also deals with these *mahâvâkyas* and explains them in an explicit way. They are four in number:

(1) *Tatvam-asi* (तत्वमसि) *Tat* means ‘that’ *i.e.* *Brahman* and the individual self is denoted by *twam*, *i.e.* ‘thou.’ So, *Tat-tvam-asi* means ‘That Thou art’ or the self is *Brahman*.

(2) *Aham Brah mãsmi* (अहं ब्रह्मासि) *i.e.*, I am *Brahman*.

(3) *Ayam Atm ä Brahman अयं आत्मा ब्रह्मन* *i.e.*, this *Atman* or the individual soul is *Brahman*.

(4) *Prajnânam Brahman* (प्रज्ञानं ब्रह्म), *i.e.*, the pure consciousness is *Brahman*. 
Panchadasi says:

चेतन्यको भाषात् प्रज्ञानेच विश्वविदारितम्।
स्वद्वािवधुवीजानवति तन्न प्रज्ञानसुदीरितिम्॥

चतुर्मूल्यं चेतन्यको भाषात् प्रज्ञाने विश्वविदारितम्॥

परिपूर्णं परात्मासमिन् देवेऽविश्वविदारितिम्॥

चेतन्यमेकं भाषात् प्रज्ञानं श्रुतं सत्यप्रत्येके॥

स्वतं पूर्णं परात्माज्ञानः चेतन्यभाषाम् वर्णितं॥

अस्मीताय स्वविदारिति चेतन्यभाषाम्॥

एकभाषाविविधतां सत्य नामस्पदविविहारतम्॥

सृष्टिआङ्गुलाद्विकलं तत्वद्वितीयति॥

श्रोत्तद्वेदिनित्याति वर्णवर्णां त्वप्रकर्षितम्॥

एकत्वं गुहातेविविद्विविक्तिः तदेक्षक्कुष्ठमयताम्॥

स्वप्रकाशापरोक्षविविधमपथमित्वाँक्तिः मन्मतम्॥

अहं कारादिद्विदेहान्वतु अस्त्यात्मायं सत्यगात्रमत्ति गीतते॥
The consciousness existing in connection with our intelligence is the source of our speech, perception, and desires, etc. It can be defined as the *prajñāna*. The great soul is existing in the gross material bodies of different animals as the ruler of their hearts. Therefore, the great soul is existing within me; also the *prajñāna* and supreme consciousness are existent within me. So, we can deduce that the supreme pure consciousness and *prajñāna*, together, are *Brahman*. The supreme consciousness being guided by the phe-
nomenal emanation is existing within
gross body as witness of everything.
As it is guided by the phenomenal
emanation being present within the
gross body, so we can define it as
self. The word Brahman means
the ever-present prime soul.
The word asmi (अस्मि) means our
individual consciousness and reflected
consciousness. Therefore, self means
individual consciousness. By that we
can easily deduce that one who tran-
scends the phenomenal emanation, is
Brahman. Before emanation i.e. pro-
jection, the supreme soul (Atman)
alone existed. It is also existing in
the same state now. So, we can define
it as tat (तत्). We can define our re-
lected consciousness as tam (तम्).
Therefore, \textit{tāt} (तत्) and \textit{tam} (तम) have no difference between them. We ought to know this. The reflected consciousness which is self-luminous can be defined as \textit{ayam} (अयं). It is also known as self, because desires are guiding it. Therefore, we can deduce that this reflected consciousness is known as self and \textit{ayam} (अयं). \textit{Brahman} is the source i.e. ground of everything. It is self-luminous. Therefore, we can deduce that no difference exists between self and the supreme self, the \textit{Brahman}.

The \textit{mahāvākyas} expressed in the form of \textit{sutras} or aphorisms contain the central truths of \textit{Vedānta} philosophy. \textit{Panchadasi} again says:
As long as there will remain in us देहात्म-आनि i.e., as long as we shall mistake the body for the self, it will be impossible for us to realize the true nature of the self as Brahman. The mistake or false knowledge we can get rid of by vichāra or discrimination only. Thus according to the teachings of Panchadasi we learn that vichāra is the first means which helps the acquirement of samyag-darsana (सम्यक्कुरुणम्). Panchadasi mentions,

*The word vādha means ‘the falsity
It has already been said that by logical discourse or ratiocination (vichāra) we can get the right knowledge (of the ātman) that dispels the darkness of delusion. Therefore, we should determine by ratiocination the nature of the world (jagati), the individual petty self (jīva) and the highest Self (paramātman). Because knowledge derived from vichāra, if it once becomes permanent, nothing can hinder it. It destroys all delu-

of everything knowing their destructibility and not ‘the absence of knowledge’ or ‘forgetting them altogether’— ‘नाप्रती-तिस्तमोर्वबंध: किंतु विश्वासनिश्चयः।’ If it be so, then men would attain salvation in deep sleep or swoon—‘नो देतु सुखसमूच्छांदी सुच्येता यल्लो जन:॥’ But in deep sleep and swoon, the false knowledge or nescience is not corrected,
sions. With its help only one attains to God-realization even in this life and gets over the fruits of the actions of former life. So the *vichāra* like the thrashing of corns must be continued till the grain of right knowledge appears. Again says *Panchadasi*,

अनेकजन्मजनानां स्वविचारं चिकिर्षिति

विचारणं विनाश्यां मायायां शिष्यते स्वयम् ॥

‘A man follows the path of ratiocination and true knowledge in the world, after spending many past lives in prayer (*upāsanā*). By ratiocination, first of all, the nescience is cancelled and then the knowledge of the pure *Brahman* is regained’. The false imposition of duality and sorrow upon the nondual *Brahman* is called
bondage, and the right knowledge of the Brahman is known as salvation or realization. The Panchadasi mentions further that bondage is due to the want of right knowledge and it can be cancelled only by vichāra. Therefore, everyone should determine who is the jīva and who is the paramātman (Brahman):

अद्वयानन्दरूपस्य सहवयत्वं दुःखित य।
वन्धः शोकः स्वस्पेष स्थिति तु स्तिरितीर्थिं॥
अनविचारकृतो वन्धो विचारेण निवर्तते॥
त्वस्मात्जीव परात्मानो सर्वदैव विचारेऽहु॥

But, for those who are not so intellectually advanced as to be able to practise this kind of vichāra, Panchadasi says:
'विचार न हुभते
श्रवणसीति सोभनिषाम।'

'He who is not able to make vichāra, must meditate upon Brahman within.' The process of meditation is described as:

आधूरे विचारस्य श्रवणातविचारयन।

'Believing in the words of the enlightened the faithful disciple should try to abstract his mind from external objects and concentrate upon the self without being disturbed by any other thought. This kind of meditation will make his false knowledge of the soul vanish by and by.' And when by constant meditation such false impressions as, 'my
Self is the body,' 'I am born with the body' and 'shall die with it' will disappear, the indivisible non-dualistic Atman will be perceived in its fullness.

Whosoever will realize it, will remain eternally free even in this life. He will be one with Brahman. He will come no more under the bondages of mâyâ or delusion. Then he will act as witness (sâkshi) or seer of his mind, body and whole universe. So Panchadasi says:

विचारां सचिदाण्डा अस्तःपैरसात्मतामूँ।
प्राप्त्य भान्ति न भेदेन भेदकोपाधिवर्जनात्।

* * * * *

िियाधिनिघजहत्त्वे भास्माने स्वयंभूभे।
अद्रैैं तिपुटी नासित सुभाषन्दौड़यसुच्यते॥
After becoming perfect in meditation one attains to the *Brahma-vidya*. After the perfection in the *Brahman*-knowledge, one can realize the supreme soul. At that time the realized man perceives everything what is in reality. Owing to nescience one perceives the difference between him and *Brahman*. But after attaining to right knowledge, no distinction is perceived by the realized soul. After one succeeds in dispelling the sense of difference, one realizes the self-revealing light of *Brahman*. At that time *triputi* i.e., subject, object and relation, is vanished. That supreme state can be defined as the *bhumañanda* or the highest pleasure and eternal bliss. The fortunate man who attains to this
superconscious state, is called a jivanmukta i.e., one who is liberated in one's lifetime. Panchadasi describes the mental state of such a jivanmukta as,

That is, the jivanmukta thinks and
says: 'I have known the supreme ātman, therefore I am happy, I am enjoying highest bliss, therefore I am happy, I am free from the worldly bonds, I am also free from the chains of delusion, therefore, so I am happy. I have no obligation to anyone, I have attained that highest object, for which I was practising so long, therefore I am happy. I am enjoying the sublime bliss, therefore I am the happiest of the happy!'
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