



# Shaastra Setu Demystifying VedAnta

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सदाशिवसमारम्भां शङ्कराचार्यमध्यमाम् । अस्मदाचार्यपर्यन्तां वन्दे गुरुपरम्पराम्

# vedAnta – in bhAratIya shAstra

18 – vidyAsthanAni – knowledge branches of the shAstras



- rig, yajur, sAma, atharva



- vyAkaraNa, shikshA, Chandas, nirukta, kalpa, jyotisha



- nyAya, purANani, mImAmsa, dharma shAstra



- Ayurveda, dhanurveda, gandharvaveda, arthashastra

# mlmAmsa

## mlmAmsa – Enquiry

Vedic texts enquiries are broadly divided into 2 sections for enquiry



pUrva mImAmsa

uttara mImAmsa - *vedAnta*

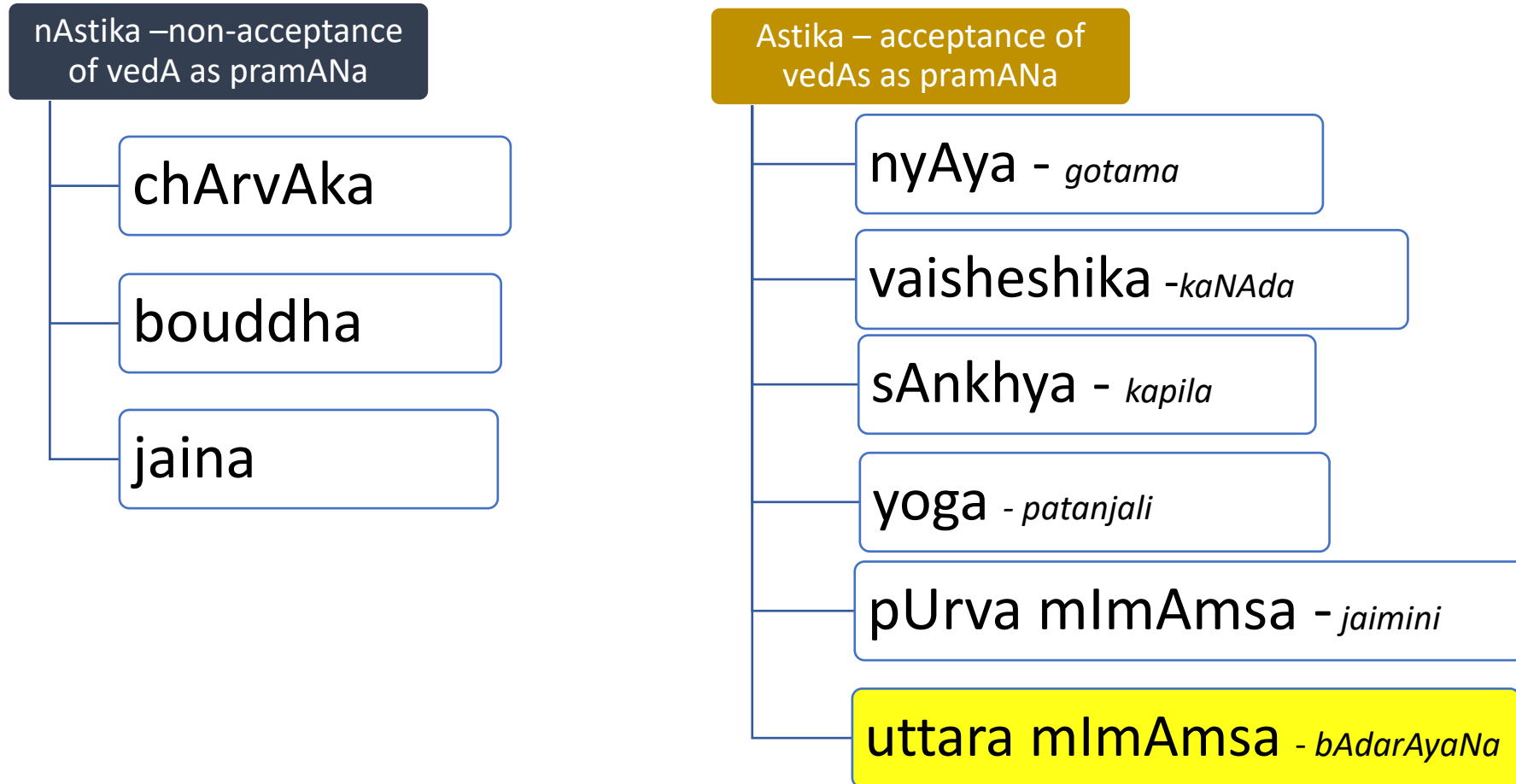
# darshanaas – As seen by rishis/AchAryAs

- *tatvam drishyate anena* – darshanam
- Vedanta deals with relationship between –  
*jIva – jagat – jagatkAranam*

Darshanas have

- Independence in enquiry
- References based on experiences of visionaries
- Revelations through yogic powers
- Enquiries based on means of Knowledge (pramANa)

# darshanaas



# pramANa – *proper means of gaining correct knowledge*

<b><i>pramANam</i></b>		<b><i>chArvAka</i></b>	<b><i>nyAya</i></b>	<b><i>pUrva mImAmsa</i></b>	<b><i>vedAnta</i></b>	<b><i>pourANika</i></b>
pratyaksham	Perception by Sense - I see flowers, smell fragrance, hear music					
anumAnam	Inference - the forest is wet and moist, must have rained					
upamAnam	Analogy - ape is like monkey					
shabdah	Apta vAkyam, vedAs					
arthApattih	Knowledge derived from circumstances					
anupalabdhih	non-existence (abhAvah) . Absence of an object as a source					
sambhavah	Inclusion – in a group of 100, 10 members are present for sure.					
aitihyam	based on historical facts					

# vedAnta- Texts

upanishads



brahmasUtras – *Maharishi bAdarAyana*

bhagavadgIta – *Maharishi VyAsa*

*Commentaries of the above texts by later AchAryAs and prakaraNa granthAs*



*apourusheya*



# Upanishads ~108+

- Ten are considered maha Upanishads

ईश केन कठो प्रश्न मुण्ड माण्डूक्य तैत्तिरी ।  
ऐतरेयं च छान्दोग्यं बृहदारण्यकं तथा ॥

*“Isha kena kaTho prashna muNDa mANDUkya taittiri;  
aitareyam ca chAndogyam bRhadAraNyakam tathA.”*

Ishavasyopanishad – <i>Shukla Yajur veda</i>	mANDUkyopanishad - <i>Atharva veda</i>
kenopanishad – <i>Saama veda</i>	taittirlyopanishad – <i>Krishna yajur veda</i>
kaThopanishad – <i>Krishna yajur veda</i>	aitareyopanishad – <i>Rig Veda</i>
prashnopanishad – <i>Atharva veda</i>	chAndogyopanishad – <i>Saama veda</i>
muNDakopanishad – <i>Atharva veda</i>	bRhadAraNyakopanishad - <i>Shukla Yajur veda</i>

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*apourusheya*

# Upanishads expound the Ultimate Truth

- Essence of Vedanta

जीवब्रह्मोऽभेदः।

jeeva brahma abhedah

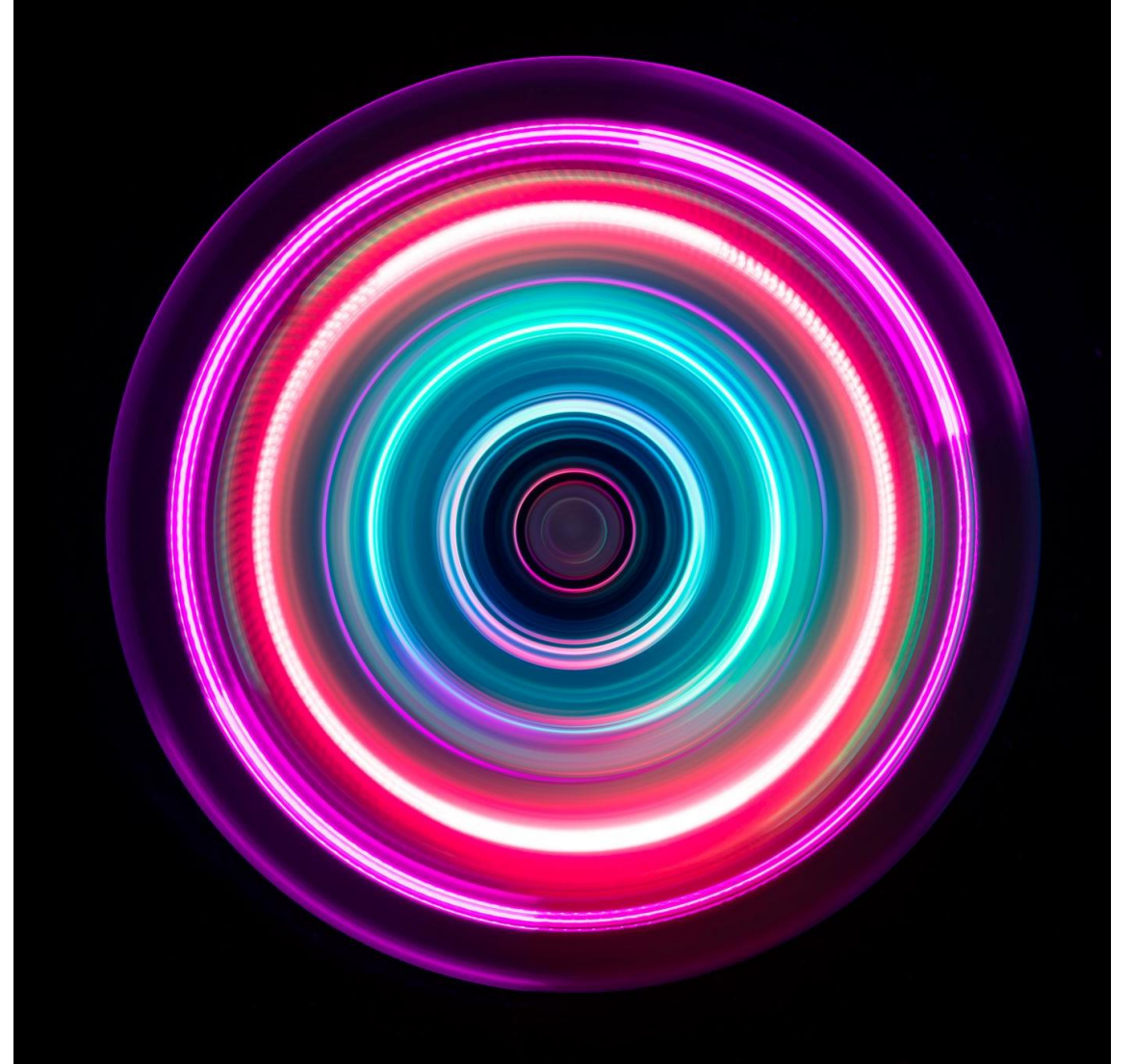
Non-difference between the Self ( individual soul) and Brahman (Supreme Reality)

- Nature of Brahman

नित्य-शुद्ध-बुद्ध-मुक्त-परमानन्द ब्रह्मोऽस्मि।

nitya shuddha buddha mukta paramAnanda  
brahmosmi

I am Eternal-Pure-Awakened and Free





# Exploring Brahman...

- From the Conditioned to the Unlimited/Infinite
- From Imperfect Perception (bounded rationality) to Perfect Knowledge (dimensionless)
- From Bondage (Karmic chain of rebirth) to Moksha (Freedom)
- From Separateness to Oneness
- From the Empirical to the Absolute

## *Approach to understanding these opposite states:*

- *Doctrines or truths from the Upanishads*
- *explanation of clarifying concepts*
- *use of accepted analogies*

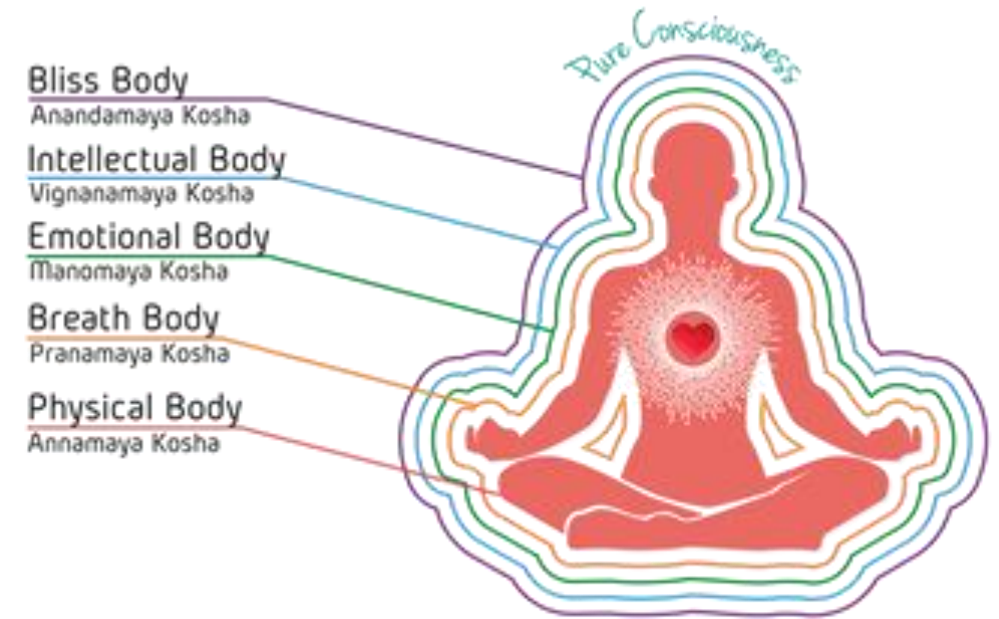
# From the Conditioned to the Unlimited

- सत्यं ज्ञानम् अनन्तं ब्रह्म।

Satyam JnAnam Anantam Brahma

The Supreme is the Truth, Ultimate Awareness and Boundless Infinite - Taittiriya Upanishad

- Conditioning caused by-
  - I am the body
  - I am the mind
  - I am the intellect
- Conditioning broken with “I am the Consciousness”
- *The vast space is the same as the space inside the vessel*





# From Imperfect to Perfect Knowledge

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- प्रज्ञानं ब्रह्म।

Brahman is Consciousness - Aitareya Upanishad

- Maya – World of Duality and Discrimination
- Ignorance destroyed by identifying with Consciousness as in deep sleep
- *This rope is not a snake, merely appears so.*



# From Bondage to Moksha

- मन एव मनुष्यानां कारणं बन्ध मोक्षयोः।

Mana eva manushyaAnAm kAraNam bandha  
mokshayoh-Amrita Bindu Upanishad

The Mind alone is the cause of all bondage

- Nature of moksha
- Karma theory
- Karma is destroyed on Realisation of Brahman
- *The ox thinks it is tethered and therefore does not move until the farmer pretends to untie it from the peg*





# From Separateness to Oneness

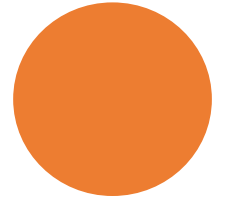
- एकमेव अद्वितीयं ब्रह्म।  
ekameva advitlyam brahma  
Brahman is One , without a second  
-Chandogya Upanishad
- Process of Srishti or creation
  - Tad sRshtva tam eva anuprAvishat  
(It created the jivas and entered them)
- *Just as a spider spins forth its web  
and then consumes it*





# From the Empirical to the Absolute

- तत्त्वमसि
- tattvamasī
- You are That -Chandogya Upanishad
- Three States of Reality
  - PrAtibhAsika (Apparent)
  - VyAvahArika (Empirical)
  - PArAmArthika (Absolute)
- The oyster shell appears as silver



# Different schools of Vedanta

Relationship between Brahman and Atma

- Advaita Vedanta- Non dualism
- VishishtAdvaita- Qualified non dualism
- Dvaita- Superior Brahman and dependent jivAs



# Relevance of Vedanta

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- sAkshi Bhava or Experiencing as Witness
- NishkAma karma or work without expectation of fruit therefrom
- Pain without suffering by disidentification
- Self inquiry and reflection as to the true nature of the Self



The relationship between ‘My Soul” and “me”

द्वा सुपर्णा सयुजा सखाया समानं वृक्षं परिषस्वजाते । तयोरन्यः पिप्पलं स्वाद्वत्त्यनश्नन्नन्यो  
अभिचाक्षीति ॥-Mundaka Upanishad

*Two birds of beautiful plumage perched on the tree,  
One bound to the world and the other eternally free.*

*The free bird, serene, stood still on the tree-top,  
Watching the lower one, bound, on the twigs do a hop.*

*Eating the fruits both sweet and bitter,*

*Spend its time and resources in a fritter.*

*The serene transcended both pleasure and pain,*

*Eating the fruits, the bound remained in chains.*

*The pain of bitter fruits taught it lessons of regret,*

*The pleasure of sweet fruits made it forget.*

*The pain of bitterness made the bound to ponder,*

*Resolving to reach the serene on the yonder.*

*Relinquishing its resolve with the arrival of pleasure,*

*Indulges in eating fruits again, to go beyond at its  
leisure.*

*But the frequent bitterness in fruits kept it in remind,*

*To reach the serene as the goal of the mind.*

*Rises up to reach the serene, it will, only if little by little*

*At its own pace and measure to prove its mettle.*

*Approaching the serene it no longer remains bound*

*It and the serene were always One, and so It found.*

**Om Shanthi Shanthi Shanthih!**