

*avidyākāmakarmādi pāśabandham vimocitum,
kah śaknuyādvinātmānam kalpakoṭiśatairapi.* (55)

55. Who else but oneself can help rid oneself of the bondage caused by the chains of ignorance, desire, action and so on, even in a hundred crore of kalpas?

The bondage felt by the mortal is caused by the ignorance of his own real nature. This ignorance of his own all fullness in his spiritual personality creates in his intellect, waves of desires with which he expects to make himself full. Desires create thought waves in his mind, and thoughts express themselves as action. These three – ignorance, desire and action – are together called in Vedānta sāstra as the ‘heart knots’ (hrdaya granthi). These are the cords that bind the ego (jīva) to the finitude and sorrows of a mortal. In this enumeration of ignorance, desire and action when Śaṅkara adds ‘and the like’ he means, the residual impressions (vāsanās) that are left on the mind when a desire prompted activity is consciously undertaken. These vāsanās thicken the ignorance by darkening desires, agitating thoughts and propelling us into a world of frenzied activity.

The Ācārya, naturally asks, who can save a man from the chaos in his mind and intellect which is responsible for his rabid activities in the world of objects and his painful confusions in his relationships with his fellow beings? The answer is contained in the question itself; none but he himself.

The term ‘kalpa’ is used to indicate the entire duration of one universe from its day of creation to the day of doom. It has been calculated that the life of the universe is one day of the Creator which is equivalent to 432 million years, in terms of calculation of time, possible with our finite and limited time.





14. Knowledge of the Self – Its Beauty (56-61)

न योगेन न सांख्येन कर्मणा नो न विद्यया ।
ब्रह्मात्मैकत्वबोधेन मोक्षः सिध्यति नान्यथा ॥ ५६ ॥

*na yogena na sāṅkhyena karmaṇā no na vidyayā,
brahmātmaikatvabodhena mokṣaḥ sidhyati nānyathā. (56)*

56. *Neither by yoga, nor by Sāṅkhya, nor by ritual, nor by learning, is Liberation possible. Only by the realisation of one's identity with Brahman is Liberation possible, not by any other means.*

None of the paths enumerated in this verse can take the student to his goal if he only mechanically follows it without an ardent and sincere cooperation.

Altogether, there are six schools of philosophical thought in India; only some of them are mentioned here. Not that the others are positively against Self-realisation, against its principles. The few mentioned here include the rest. By the term 'yoga', Śaṅkara means the path of mysticism developed and maintained through the exercises of hatha-yoga. The Sāṅkhyan philosophy is one of the main fountainheads of Vedānta. Vedānta has sprung from its early roots and has ultimately reached a greater precision of thought and perfection of detail from what was only an elaborate philosophy.

According to the Sāṅkhyan philosophy, essentially dualistic, the world is constituted of two intrinsic factors – Puruṣa and prakṛti, Spirit and matter. Spirit is the sentient, intelligent, knowing principle, the vital factor, the source of all life that expresses through physical forms. Matter is insentient, unintelligent and lifeless in itself but it comes to exhibit the characteristic of life when it is blessed with