

# Chapter VIII

## Methods of Vedantic Knowledge

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# Introductory Chapters of Life Divine

- Ch 1 – Do not stop in the middle
- Ch 2 – Reconcile Matter and Spirit
- Ch 3 – Unity is the basis of all existence
- Ch 4 – Reconcile “One without a second” with “All is Brahman”
- Ch 5 – Individual is eternal. Man can become God
- Ch 6 – Universal is a status of Brahman
- Ch 7 – The dualities exist only in ego  
Supermind (not ego) is the creator

# Sri Aurobindo and the Tradition

<b>Tradition</b>	<b>Sri Aurobindo</b>
• <b>Purusha</b>	• <b>Iswara</b>
• <b>Ego</b>	• <b>Psychic</b>
• <b>Maya</b>	• <b>Marvel</b>

# Greatest Mystery

- What is the reality of Brahman in the universe?
- What process governs the relations between Sachchidananda & ego?

# Ch 8 – Methods of Vedantic Knowledge

- Reject the errors of the ascetic & materialist – do not rely on sense knowledge
- Senses, physical mind and reason are not capable of higher knowledge
- Reason has a double action – mixed & pure
- Knowledge is completed by Psychological Experience
- Experience also has a double action – mixed & pure
- Pure reason can lead to intuition
- True knowledge is by Identity

# Errors of the Sense Mind

- Sense mind (manas) bases knowledge on 5 senses
- To discover higher knowledge, we must first select the right instrument
- Sense mind believes only what it sees and already knows
- Knowledge of Sachchidananda is true knowledge and true power
- It requires us to transcend the limitations of the physical mind and senses.
- The first of these higher powers is reason.

# Mixed Reason

- Reason has a double action – mixed and pure
- We judge everything by their appearances
- Mind gives too much importance to past experience and what already exists
- Abandon faith in the mind's externalized way of seeing things (Synthesis)

# Pure Reason

- Pure reason transcends sense data
- Even when it appears to base itself on senses, it goes beyond them
- 1<sup>st</sup> rule of Psychic Education  
“The mind is incapable of judging spiritual things. In order to proceed on the path, it is indispensable to abstain from all mental opinion and reaction.”



# Psychological Experience

- Metaphysical knowledge alone does not satisfy
- Concepts are not real until they become experience
- Our nature sees through two eyes
  - idea and fact
  - concept and experience
- How can we directly experience metaphysical truths?
- This requires a different faculty -- psychological experience
- Psychological Experience has a double action

# Mixed action

- All experience is psychological
- Sense data has to be translated by the sense-mind, Manas – 6th Sense
- Mixed action is when mind experiences external world through senses

# Pure action

- Mind can have direct experience of objects without the senses
- Pure action is how we experiences ourselves by self-awareness
- All experience is in its secret nature knowledge by identity
- Ego's false distinction between subject & object conceals this truth
- Existing limitations are not inevitable
- We can develop senses by which mind perceives objects directly
- Sense mind can go beyond the data of the senses
- Manas can also become directly aware of the content of external objects

# Self-awareness

- These powers do not give direct psychological experience of metaphysical truths
- The truth of things always lies beyond our senses
- Sound Rule: “Where there are truths attainable by the reason, there must be faculties to know them”
- Extend the same faculty to awareness of the Self beyond & outside us
- Knowledge of the contents is contained in knowledge of the continent
- To know Brahman is to know everything
- Vedanta sought knowledge of the universe through knowledge of the Self

# Reason becomes Intuition

- We have to go beyond mind and reason
- Mental experience and reason are not the supreme self-existent identity
- Reason is mediator between subconscious & superconscious
- Subconscious Life: knowledge hidden & expressed in action
- Superconscious Light: Knowledge is primary, action automatically expresses knowledge
- In life Subconscious & Superconscious interact to liberate conscious knowledge

# Intuitional Knowledge

- Our self-awareness is Knowledge by Identity
- Intuition knowledge: the knower and the known are one in conscious self-identity
- Reason fulfills itself in intuitional knowledge
- Mind fulfills itself in Supermind

# Intuition

- Stands behind our mental operations
- Reason harvests the shining messages of intuition
- Gives us the idea of what is behind and beyond all we know
- As strong as Nature from whose soul it has sprung
- Cares nothing for the contradictions of the reason or denials of experience
- Knows because it IS and comes from that
- Intuition is a messenger from the superconscient -- therefore our highest faculty, reason is only a deputy
- Highest Intuitive Knowledge sees things as a whole with details as aspects of the whole

# Intuitive Knowledge of Vedanta

- Best previous foundation for Divine Life
- Infinite absolute pure existence, Sat Brahman, is the last concept of Vedanta
- Entirely beyond sense mind & experience
- Intuition tells us of the Pure Existent



# Three Great Declarations of Upanishads

- I am He.
- Thou art That
- All this is Brahman. This self is the Brahman.

# Age of Rationalistic Speculation

- Intuition is unable to give us truth in ordered, articulate form our nature demands
- Inspired scripture gave way to metaphysical knowledge (pure reason)
- Higher knowledge had to descend in organize itself in our surface being (mind) so all parts of our nature can develop
- Adopted double attitude toward Truth
- Recognized Sruti as inspired Revelation superior to Reason
- Started from Reason & affirmed results supported by Sruti
- Avoided begetting sin of metaphysics -- battling in clouds

# Reason

- Proceeds by analysis and division
- Assembles its facts to form a whole
- Its assemblage contains opposites, anomalies, logical incompatibilities
- Natural tendency to affirm some and negate others which conflict
- Mistakes the symbol for the reality

# Descent to Mixed Reason

- Natural trend of Reason to assert its supremacy
- Metaphysical knowledge (pure reason) descended to science (mixed reason)
- Rise of conflicting schools each founded in theory on the Veda, using its text as weapon
- What appears a descent is a circle of progress in which lower faculty takes up higher
- Necessary for the full development of our being

# Ascent of Knowledge

<b>CONCEPT</b>	<b>EXPERIENCE</b>
<b>Intuition – Knowledge by Identity</b>	
<b>Pure reason</b>	<b>Pure action</b>
<b>Mixed reason</b>	<b>Mixed action</b>
<b>Sense perception</b>	<b>Sensation</b>

# Descent of Knowledge

**Intuition – Knowledge by Identity**

**Metaphysical knowledge based on pure reason**

**Experimental knowledge based on mixed reason**

# Mind, Ego and Knowledge by Identity

- Our knowledge is based on the mixed action of the sense mind and reason which is ego
- Every man's ego wants others to serve him, not knowing that what we receive from others is limited by our identification with them and our self-giving to them.

# Practical Application

- Give up reliance on appearances
- Do not judge from sense impressions
- Give up all opinions and preferences
- Discover truth of inner outer correspondences and life response – they never lie
- Give up egoistic point of view
- See the other person's point of view
- Reject doubt
- Take everything Mother & Appa say as true
- Act on Faith, not reason