Objection: What is the process of action? When a person hears the sentence ‘bring the pot’, the thought ‘I have been appointed to bring that pot, this is my action’ arises in the person’s mind and an intention to action also arises. Since there is no person in the Vedas, it is apūrva, an invisible power that conceives the action.

Reply: No, it is not so. Generally actions are performed because of a desire or intention to perform an action. This intention arises due to two kinds of knowledge; these are: iṣṭasādhanatā-jñānam, the knowledge of the object attaining which the desired result can be obtained; and kṛtisādhyata-jñānam, the knowledge that that object can be obtained by human effort. It is established that even the desire to follow Vedic injunctions arises only by having these two types of knowledge. Therefore, it is useless to attribute different meanings to the process of action. Even if such a different meaning is attributed to this process, we see that a person having a strong spirit of renunciation does not perform any Vedic rituals.

There is also the case of Vedic sacrifices like Vishvajit. In the Vedas we find this injunction: ‘Viśvajitā yajeta; the Vishvajit sacrifice should be performed.’ However, the result of performing such action is not mentioned here. Without the mention of a result, there is no motive to perform a sacrifice. We find Jaimini saying: ‘Ekaṁ vā codanaikatvāt; in reality only one result follows from it; as the injunction is one only.’ The meaning of a Vedic injunction does not become complete if it does not include the result of the injunction. Hence here, in the case of the Vishvajit sacrifice, we need to introduce the word svargakāma, desirous of attaining heaven. However, we can attribute only one result to a Vedic

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Svarajya Siddhih: Attaining Self-dominion

Gangadharendra Saraswati

Translated from Sanskrit and annotated by Swami Narasimhananda

(Continued from the July issue)
injunction, as that itself will make it complete. Attributing more than one result to a Vedic injunction will make it cumbersome. This is also supported by the Jaimini sutra: ‘Sa svargaḥ syāt sarvvaṁ pratyavāśiṣṭaḥ; that one result would be heaven as that is equally desirable for all’ (4.3.15).

Therefore, it is established that in sacrifices like Vishvajit, where the result is not expressly mentioned, their performance leads to heaven. Here too we see that there is a person who attributes this meaning. Also, when one becomes aware of one’s true nature or realizes Brahman, all desire to perform actions dissipates, and one becomes incapable of performing actions. Similarly, if a person is prevented from performing actions by a strong force, no action can be done. In all these cases īṣṭasādhanatā-jñānam and kṛtisādhyata-jñānam go away; this position is agreed by all. It is maintained by the Mimamsakas that since a sacrifice that is finished or gets destroyed produces results in the form of attainment of heaven much later, we should necessarily introduce a factor called apūrva, an invisible power, just like a door, and this is brought about by Vedic injunctions in the optative mood liṅ. By the line of argument given above to prove that actions are done only by persons, this introduction of apūrva can also be set aside.

Even if we were to introduce apūrva, it does not necessarily prove the existence of the desire to perform actions. The obeying or violating of the commands of the master leads to the happiness or anger of the master in the realm of maya. Similar is the case with the service of kings and the like. The happiness or anger of the king or the master leads to reward or punishment for the servant. Here also the results of actions of the servant do not occur immediately after the action but later. However, there is no necessity to introduce apūrva. Similarly, there is no need to introduce apūrva in the case of Vedic injunctions.

**Bhāvanā: Creative Energy**

Mimamsakas have the concept of bhāvanā, creative energy. Bhāvanā means a particular activity of a bhāvyitā, productive agent, which is conducive or favourable to the coming into being or production of that which is to come into being, that is, an effect. Bhāvanā is of two types: sābdi bhāvanā, verbal creative energy, and ārthī bhāvanā, actual creative energy.

Let us take the help of an example. Yajnadvatta orders his son Devadatta to bring a cow. On hearing this order, an inclination to do an action that would result in bringing the cow, arises in Devadatta’s mind. He then makes an effort to bring the cow. This incident can be looked at from two different perspectives, from that of Yajnadvatta and that of Devadatta. Yajnadvatta wants his son to have an inclination to bring the cow. This mental activity of wanting an inclination to arise is the bhāvanā here and is called the sābdi bhāvanā. On the other hand, Devadatta listens to his father’s order and wants the action of bringing the cow to be fulfilled. This desire of the cow being brought is the bhāvanā here and is called the ārthī bhāvanā.

In the case of a Vedic injunction the sābdi bhāvanā is the intention of the Vedic sentence giving the injunction. But there is no person who has this intention, as the Vedas are apauruṣeya, not originated from a person, and hence the Mimamsakas hold that the intention of the Vedic injunction resides in the optative mood itself. Using the logic adopted while setting aside the concept of apūrva, we can set aside the concept of sābdi bhāvanā residing in the Vedic sentence.

Thus, we find that īṣṭasādhanatā-jñānam and kṛtisādhyata-jñānam quash each other. Also, the optative mood liṅ does not support these two kinds of knowledge, and we perceive a mutual contradiction here. The optative mood conforms to experience and to the connection between the
root word and its meaning. Similarly, actions like sacrifices are accomplished through human effort, and no sentence can mean action in itself. The lamentation of Mimamsakas calling Vedanta a desert amidst the Vedas is nothing but the display of unhappiness upon defeat.

By this line of argument, the group who—by adding the words 'to be worshipped thus' to the mahāvākyas, great Vedic sentences—believe that worship leads to liberation, are defeated. Further, there are methods of meditation in the Vedas like the pañcāgni vidyā, of the Chhandogya Upanishad, through which a person bound by the cycle of transmigration visualizes release from this cycle. Since this kind of meditation is possible and is sanctioned by the Vedas, it is not necessary to posit worship of Brahman, which is nothing but sat, absolute existence. Such an interpretation will lead to the error of vākyabheda doṣa. This error occurs when it is possible to interpret a sentence as having a single idea or proposition and yet two ideas or propositions are attributed to it. To avoid this error Vedanta refrains from holding that Brahman can be worshipped. In reality, the worshipping of Brahman by a jiva who is bound by the cycle of transmigration and assumes an attitude of the liberated does not do any good. It is just like the mixing of copper and mercury leading to a combination appearing like gold. However, a cup made of such combination cannot be used for the purpose of drinking, as mercury is poison. In the Kena Upanishad it is said: 'Know that alone to be Brahman, and not what people worship as an object.' By this Vedic statement the possibility of the worshipped object being Brahman has been forcefully refuted, and the error arising out of the erroneous introduction of words to Vedic sentences has been struck at its source.

**Prasankhyāna: Continuous Meditation**

Some hold that the mahāvākyas produce only relational and mediate knowledge but cannot apprehend Brahman. It is just like the knowledge obtained from an ordinary sentence. Prasankhyāna, continuous meditation, on these sentences gives rise to another kind of knowledge, which is non-relational and immediate, and this knowledge destroys avidyā, ignorance. Some hold this continuous meditation or contemplation to be an injunction in itself, called prasankhyāna vidbi. This cannot be, since the knowledge of Brahman is not conditioned by the puruṣa-tantra, will of an agent, but by the vastu-tantra, reality of the object. The knowledge of Brahman is conditioned by another knowledge visaya-pramāṇa-tantra, which destroys ignorance, and Brahman is self-revealed. Therefore, there is no necessity of an injunction. Injunctions are applicable in matters where there is the volition of a person who shakyaḥ, can; kartum, do; akartum, not do; or anyatha kartum, do differently. However, the knowledge of Brahman is self-revealing and is visaya-pramāṇa, and if it arises, it cannot be restrained by even a thousand injunctions. Similarly, if this knowledge does not arise, it cannot be created by a thousand injunctions. Needless to say, injunctions that speak of attaining the impossible, like the crossing of an ocean by swimming, are like a sharp blade that becomes blunt on striking a stone, and are useless. Hence, even if one is firmly resolved or takes special efforts to practise the austerities of worshipping Brahman, its knowledge cannot be attained in that manner. Therefore, the worship of Prana and the like can be done in conjunction with the performance of actions, but it cannot go hand in hand with the knowledge of Brahman.

*(To be continued)*

**References**

43. Mimamsa Sutra, 4.3.14.
44. See Chhandogya Upanishad, 5.1 to 5.10.10.
45. Kena Upanishad, 1.5–9.