

annamayakōśaḥ (Anatomical Sheat)

*sa tapōṣṭapyata / sa tapastaptvā / annam brahmēti vyajānāt /
annāddhyēva khalvimāni bhūtāni jāyantē / annēna jātāni jīvanti /
annam prayantyaabhisamviśantīti /
(taittirīyōpaniṣat-3-04)*

MEANING

He performed a penance. Having thus practiced penance, he realized food as Brahman. For from food these beings are produced; by food when born they live; into food they go and enter it

From food which has been converted into Rasa (an essential fluid of the body). The moveables and the immoveables are produced. All without any limitation which rest on the earth are produced from that very food- Even afterwards they live by food, that is, preserve their lives, and grow. Then, it is this food they go towards the word is they are absorbed by food in the end, that is, at the close of the growth which is indicated by life. Why food, because it is the first born among the beings. Food is the cause of other beings made of food. Therefore all beings originate in food, live in food and are absorbed in food. This being so it is said to be a medicament for all, which, can cool the body and alleviate the thirst of all being. The fruit of knowing food as Brahman is then mentioned- They obtain all food. Who? Those who meditate on food as Brahman, as prescribed how? Thus—I am born from food, my soul is food and I am finally absorbed into food, thus food is Brahman. How then is the meditation of food as the soul productive of all food to the meditator? It is thus answered. Food is the eldest of the beings; for it was born before all other beings. Hence it is said to be a medicament for all. Therefore it is right that one who meditates on all food as the A'tman should obtain all food, the repetition "From food the beings are born; and being born they grow by food,"—this repetition is for summing up. The etymology of the word is now mentioned. Food is eaten by the beings and itself eats them. Therefore since it is eaten and eats, Anna is so called.

The sheath of food has been explained with a view to divert the mind of a person from external objects in which it is engrossed. A spiritual aspirant must first overcome attachment to external objects such as wealth, son, kinsmen, and so on. By meditating constantly on the sheaths of food as Brahman as taught by Sruti, one can withdraw from the external objects. So the knowledge of the sheath of food in the individual as well as the cosmic aspect is the first step to the knowledge of Brahman.

*tadvijñāya / punarēva varuṇaṃ pitaramupasasāra / adhīhi bhagavō
brahmēti / taṃ hōvāca / tapasā brahma vijñāsasva / tapō brahmēti /
(taittirīyōpaniṣat-3-05)*

MEANING

Having known that he again approached his father Varuna and requested to teach the Brahman. He said to him "know the Brahman through tapas. Tapas is Brahman.

He came to know that food was Brahman because it had the distinctive marks set forth. How? For, from food are produced all these beings; by it they live; they go to food and become one with it. The gist is that it is right that food should be Brahman. After performing penance and knowing that food is Brahman, because it satisfied the definition of Brahman, he again approached his father Varuna, being beset with doubt."Oh Reverend one teach me Brahman." What the cause of the doubt is is mentioned. Advising penance again and again, instead of showing the origin of food, is to clearly indicate that penance is the best means. So long the description of Brahman does not become unsurpassed, and the desire to know does not cease, so long is penance the only means- The meaning is by penance alone try to know Brahman"

***prāṇamayakōśaḥ** (Sheath of Vital force)*

*sa tapōstapyata / sa tapastaptvā / prāṇō brahmēti vyajānāt /
prāṇāddhyēva khalvimāni bhūtāni jāyantē / prāṇēna jātāni jīvanti /
prāṇaṃ prayantyaabhisamviśantīti /
(taittirīyōpaniṣat-3-07)*

MEANING

Having thus practiced penance, he realized prana as Brahman. For from prana these beings are produced; by prana when born they live; into prana they go and enter it.

*tadvijñāya / punarēva varuṇaṁ pitaramupasasāra / adhīhi bhagavō
brahmēti / taṁ hōvāca / tapasā brahma vijñāsasva / tapō brahmēti /
(taittirīyōpaniṣat-3-08)*

MEANING

Having known that he again approached his father Varuna and requested to teach the Brahman. He said to him “know the Brahman through tapas. Tapas is Brahman.

manōmayakōśaḥ (**MENTAL SHEATH**)

*sa tapōstapyata / sa tapastaptvā / manō brahmēti vyajānāt / manasō
hyēva khalvimāni bhūtāni jāyantē / manasā jātāni jīvanti / manaḥ
prayantyaabhisamviśantīti / (taittirīyōpaniṣat-3-10)*

MEANING

Having thus practiced penance, he realized mind as Brahman. For from mind these beings are produced; by mind when born they live; into mind they go and enter it.

*tadvijñāya / punarēva varuṇaṁ pitaramupasasāra / adhīhi bhagavō
brahmēti / taṁ hōvāca / tapasā brahma vijñāsasva / tapō brahmēti /
(taittirīyōpaniṣat-3-11)*

MEANING

Having known that he again approached his father Varuna and requested to teach the Brahman. He said to him “know the Brahman through tapas. Tapas is Brahman.

vijñānamayakōśaḥ (**INTELLECTUAL SHEATH**)

*sa tapōṣtapyata / sa tapastaptvā / vijñānaṁ brahmēti vyajānāt /
vijñānāddhyēva khalvimāni bhūtāni jāyantē / vijñānēna jātāni jīvanti /
vijñānaṁ prayantyaḥhisamviśantīti /
(taittirīyōpaniṣat-3-13)*

MEANING

*Having thus practiced penance, he realized Intellect as Brahman.
For from Intellect these beings are produced; by Intellect when born
they live; into Intellect they go and enter it.*

*tadvijñāya / punarēva varuṇaṁ pitaramupasasāra / adhīhi bhagavō
brahmēti / taṁ hōvāca / tapasā brahma vijñāsasva / tapō brahmēti /
(taittirīyōpaniṣat-3-08)*

MEANING

*Having known that he again approached his father Varuna
and requested to teach the Brahman. He said to him “know the
Brahman through tapas. Tapas is Brahman.*

ānandamayakōśaḥ (**BLISSFUL SHEATH**)

*sa tapōṣtapyata / sa tapastaptvā / ānandō brahmēti vyajānāt /
ānandāddhyēva khalvimāni bhūtāni jāyantē / ānandēna jātāni jīvanti
/ ānandaṁ prayantyaḥhisamviśantīti /
(taittirīyōpaniṣat-3-13)*

MEANING

*Having thus practiced penance, he realized bliss as Brahman.
For from bliss these beings are produced; by bliss when born
they live; into bliss they go and enter it.*

pañcakōśāḥ nātmānaḥ
(Brahman is beyond the five sheaths)

annamayakōśaḥ nātmā
(Brahman is not anatomical sheath)

dēhōḥyamannabhavanōḥnamayastu kōśa
ścānnēna jīvati vinaśyati tadvihīnaḥ |
tvakcarmamāmsarudhirāsthipurīṣarāśiḥ
nāyaṁ svayaṁ bhavitumarhati nityaśuddhaḥ ||

vivēkacūḍāmaṇiḥ-154

This body of ours is the product of food and comprises the material sheath. it lives on food, and dies without it; it is a mass of skin, flesh, blood, bones and lots of other filthy things, and can never be the eternally pure, self-existent Atman.

Reasons to prove that body is not the Soul

parādhīnaḥ (Dependent)

This body of ours is the product of food. It lives on food, and dies without it.

aśuddhaḥ (Impure)

This body is a mass of skin, flesh, blood, bones and lots of other filthy things

anityaḥ (Non-eternal)

It does not exist prior to birth or posterior to death, but lasts only for a short period; its virtues are transient, and it is changeful by nature.

niyamaḥ (Ruled)

The body continues to live even when particular limbs are gone and the different functions of the organism also remain intact.

dr̥śyamānaḥ (Seen object)

Body is a sense-object like a jar or any other thing.

sāvayavaḥ (With organs)

This body is full of organs.

prāṇamayakōśaḥ nātmā
(Brahman is not vital energy sheath)

naivātmāpi prāṇamayō vāyuvikārō
gantāgantā vāyuvadantarbahirēṣaḥ |
yasmātkiñcitkvāpi na vēttīṣṭamaniṣṭam
svam vānyam vā kiñcana nityam paratantraḥ ||

vivēkacūḍāmaṇiḥ-166

Neither is the Vital Sheath the Self because it is a modification of Vayu and like the air it enters into and comes out of the body, and because it never knows in the least either its 'own weal and woe or those of others, being eternally dependent on the Self.

Reasons to prove that vital air is not the Soul

sakriyatvam (Activeness)

It is active because it enters into and comes out of the body

acētanatvam (Insentient)

It never knows in the least either its own weal and woe or those of others.

**parādhīnatvam
(Dependence)**

It is controlled through pranayama.

**paricchinnatvam
(Delimited)**

It is the effect of the wind. So it is limited in nature.

manōmayakōśaḥ nātmā
(Brahman is not mental sheath)

manōmayō nāpi bhavēt parātmā
hyādyantavattvāt pariṇāmibhāvāt |
duḥkhātmakatvāt viśayatvahētōḥ
draṣṭā hi dṛśyātmatayā na dṛṣṭaḥ ||

vivēkacūḍāmaṇiḥ-183

Neither can the Mental Sheath Be the Supreme Self because it has a beginning and an end, is subject to modifications, is characterised by pain and suffering, and is an object. Whereas the subject can never be identified with the objects of knowledge.

Reasons to prove that mind is not the Soul

ādyantavattvam

(Beginningness and endness)
As it is beginning and an end; it attains extinction in dreamless sleep and arises in waking etc.

pariṇāmibhāvatvam

(Subject to modifications)
It is subject to modifications viz desire, determinations, faith, fear and etc.

duḥkhātmakatvāt

(Nature of suffering)
Its nature is compacted of grief. Hence it is controlled and purified. It has been shown that all grief arises from superimposition.

viśayatvam

(It is an object)
Often people say 'My mind was elsewhere; I did not see; my mind was elsewhere, I did not hear'. Because mind is an object of cognition by the witnessing consciousness and as it is a cognised object, it cannot be the Soul which is the universal witness.

vijñānamayaḥ nātmā
(Brahman is not Intellect sheat)

atō nāyaṁ parātmā syāt vijñānamayaśabdabhāk |
vikāritvāt jaḍatvācca paricchinnatvahētutaḥ |
dṛśyatvāt vyabhicāritvāt nānityō nitya iṣyatē ||

vivēkacūḍāmaṇiḥ-206

This Intellectual Sheath (Vijnanamaya) that we have been speaking of, cannot be the Supreme Self for the following reasons because it is subject to change, because it is insentient, is a limited thing, an object of the senses, and is not constantly present: An unreal thing cannot indeed be taken for the real Atman.

Reasons to prove that wisdom sheat is not the Soul

vikāritvam
(Liability to change)
That is destructibility due to births.

jaḍatvam
(Insentient)
Not being self-luminous

paricchinnatvam
(Delimited)
Not being all pervasive.

dṛśyatvam
(Object of perception)
Being an object of consciousness

vyabhicāritvam
(Not constantly present)
Here liability to become non-existent; being the counter-entity of non-existent.

ānandamayakōśaḥ nātmā
(Brahman is not blissful sheath)

naivāyamānandamayaḥ parātmā
sōpādhikatvāt prakṛtīvikārāt |
kāryatvahētōḥ sukṛtakriyāyāḥ
vikārasaṅghātasamāhitatvāt ||

vivēkacūḍāmaṇiḥ-206

Nor is the Blissful Sheath the Supreme Self, because it is endowed with changeable attributes, because it is a modification of Prakriti, is the effect of past good deeds, and imbedded in the other Sheaths which are modifications.

sōpādhikatvam

(Connected with upadhis)

As it conditioned being produced by the sight of desired objects.

prakṛtīvikāratvam

(Modification of Maya)

As it is a modification of Avidya/maya which is the primordial nature, the modification brought about by tamas(ignorance) being of the nature.

sukṛtakriyākāryatvam

(Effect of good deeds)

As it is the effect of good deeds (done previously). It appears when the effect of merits is experienced. It must be taken that the modification by avidya in the form of happiness during awaken and dream is the result of merits.

vikārasaṅghātasamāhitatvam

(Associated with group of other modifications)

It is produced by the combination of the elements of seeing, getting, enjoying, all making for happiness. It is produced by the modifications of meritorious desired objects.

pañcānāmapī kōśānām niṣēdhē yuktitaḥ śrutēḥ |
tanniṣēdhāvadhīḥ sākṣī bōdharūpōḥsvavaśiṣyatē ||
yōḥyamātmā svayañjyōtiḥ pañcakōśavilakṣaṇaḥ |
avasthātrayasākṣī san nirvikārō nirañjanaḥ |
sadānandaḥ sa vijñēyaḥ svātmatvēna vipaścitā ||

vivēkacūḍāmaṇiḥ-210,211

When all the five Sheaths have been eliminated by the reasoning upon Sruti passages, what remains as the culminating point of the process, is the Witness, the Knowledge Absolute, the Atman. This self-effulgent Atman which IS distinct from the five Sheaths, the Witness of the three states, the Real, the Changeless, the Untainted, the everlasting Bliss, is to be realised by the wise one as one's own Self.

SUMMARY

<i>Anatomical Sheat</i>	<i>Dependent, Impure, Non-Eternal, Ruled by others, Seen object and with organs.</i>
<i>Vital Energy Sheat</i>	<i>Active, Insentient, Dependent and Delimited</i>
<i>Mental Sheat</i>	<i>Has Begining and End, Subject to modifications, Nature of perception and it is an object.</i>
<i>Intellectual Sheat</i>	<i>Liability to change Insentient, Delimited, Object of perception and Not constantly present.</i>
<i>Blissful Sheat</i>	<i>Connected with upadhis, Modification of Maya, Effect of good deeds, Associated with group of other modifications.</i>
<i>Brahman</i>	<i>Beyaond Five sheats, Witness, Knowledge, Absolute, Self effulgent, The real, Changeless, Untainted and everlasting bliss.</i>