**Chapter 1: Anubandha Chatushtaya**

**Question 1:** What is meant by anubandh-chatushtaya?

*Answer:* The four things, after knowing which, one gets inspired to study a shastra is known as anubandh-chatushtaya. It is mentioned at the start of the shastra. It consists of four things:-

- **Vishaya:** It means the subject matter with which the text deals. This work has the vishaya of jiva, jagat and Brahman.
- **Prayojana:** The benefit derived from study of a shastra is referred as the prayojana of that shastra. Generally there are four motives of human beings – dharma, artha, kama and moksha.
  - By **kama** is meant the desire of attainment of physical or mental pleasure either here or hereafter (=after death) and it includes the desire of removal of all sorrows and sufferings.
  - By **artha** is meant the means by which object of kama can be achieved.
  - By **dharma** is meant the laws which govern the attainment of pleasure. The mundane pleasure is relative to space, time and person. It is also temporary and impure. Its temporality depends upon the purity of effort and means. Since everyone is after pleasure, they put effort for permanent happiness. Dharma prescribes the rules by which the pleasure can be attained. However, this too does not guarantee everlasting happiness.
  - By **Moksha** is meant the bliss which is absolute (not relative), eternal, unblemished and unparalleled.

The vidya which is required for Moksha is called **para vidya**.

The vidya which is required for attainment of kama in this world and after death is referred by **apara vidya**. This apara vidya is mentioned in karma and upasana portions of Vedas. **Mundak Upanishad** also refers to it.

The **prayojana of this work is moksha which is attainable by para vidya**. This para vidya is presented in the jnana-kand potion of Vedas namely Upaishads.

- **Adhikari:** A person who has the eligibility to study a particular shastra is referred as the adhikari of that shastra. So the study of shastra by a non-adhikari will not result into the attainment of prayojana of the text.
- **Sambandh:** It refers to the relationship between vishaya and prayojana OR between prayojana and adhikari OR between adhikari and vishaya. The first one is named as Brahma-Jnana. The second sambandha is known as ‘Elimination of Ajnana’. The last one is known as ‘Nature of Oneself’.

These four i.e. vishaya, prayojana, adhikari and sambandh are collectively known as anubandh-chatushtaya because only after knowing these, a person gets inspired to study the shastra.

**Question 2:** What is the meaning of purusharth? What are the four purusharth?

*Answer:* Everybody believes oneself as different from the world, Brahman (God) and other living beings. Due to this notion of difference, one transacts. All transactions of human beings have some end result aiming which we transact. Those end results are referred as purusharth. The four purusharthas are kama, artha, dharma and moksha. They have been discussed in answer to question 1.
**Question 3:** What is the kind of prior preparation which a person with Brahm-jijnasa should have?

**Answer:** The person with Brahm-jijnasa should possess sadhan-chatushtaya-sampatti. This is both necessary as well as sufficient for Brahm-jijnasa (not for Moksha). It continues from the past lives. So if necessary efforts had been made in previous lives, then in this birth one can get sadhan-chatushtaya-sampatti even without much effort. (Gita 3.4 and 6.44)
Chapter 2: Sadhan-Chatushtaya-Sampatti

**Question 1**: What are the sadhanas which are included in sadhan-chatushtaya?

**Answer**: Sadhan-chatushtaya includes (i) nitya-anitya-vstu-vivek (ii) iha-amutra-artha-fala-bhog-virag (iii) shama-aadi-shat-sampatti (iv) mumukshutva.

**Question 2**: What is meant by samkalpa-vikalpa?

**Answer**: Mind is defined as sampkalpa-vikalpa-aatmak. Prior to initiating any action, a tendency arises which induces one to initiate action. The kalpana which is the cause of this tendency is known as sankalpa. Thus, the chain is sankalpa (=kalpana)—tendency—initiation of action. Vkalpa refers to the several doubts which come about when one does not understand the vishaya fully.

**Question 3**: What is the function of buddhi?

**Answer**: There are several sankalpa and vikalpa. Buddhi discriminates between them and decides on which one is right and which one is wrong.

**Question 4**: Which capability of antah-karana is referred as vivek?

**Answer**: Mind is samkalpa-vikalpa-atmak. Buddhi is nischaya-aatmika. After discriminating between right and wrong, the acceptance of right and rejection of wrong is called viveka.

**Question 5**: What is the nature of vishaya-sukha (pleasure derived from sense-objects)?

**Answer**: The nature of vishaya-sukha is temporality, meagerness. It is also limited by several factors.

**Question 6**: What is the meaning of nitya-anitya-vastu-viveka?

**Answer**: By observing the temporality, meagerness and limitation of Vishay-sukha, one gets to understand the transience of world. Further, Shruti expounds the fact that Brahman is eternal i.e. non-transient. Thus, the viveka which treats Brahman as nitya (=eternal) and world as anitya (=transient) is known as nitya-anitya-vastu-viveka.

**Question 7**: In whom does this nitya-anitya-vastu-vivek dawn?

**Answer**: As Gita 7.28 mentions, this viveka dawns in the persons who are not sinful and who have earned the grace of Ishvara through punya-karmas and association of sages.

**Question 8**: How is viveka sustained?

**Answer**: Viveka is sustained by carrying out punya-karma (actions sanctioned by Shastra which accumulate spiritual merit) and association of sages.

**Question 9**: What is meant by fala-bhoga-virag?
**Answer:** Iha means here, in this world. Amutra means hereafter, after death i.e. in the pitru loka or swarga-loka. Artha refers to vishaya. Fala-bhoga-virag refers to absence of any desire or attachment about enjoyment of pleasure resulting from the vishayas. Either from here or from hereafter.

**Question 10:** What is the synonym of vairagya in shastra?

**Answer:** The synonym of vairagya in shastra is iha-amutra-artha-fala-bhoga-virag.

**Question 11:** What is meant by manisha?

**Answer:** Mind possesses certain independence while having samkalpa. The buddhi which controls this independence of mind in so far as having samkalpa is concerned is referred by manisha.

**Question 12:** What sort of life should a person attached with Moksha live?

**Answer:** A person attached with moksha should not desire for anything other than what is essential for sustaining life. He has the vairagya which is a natural result of nitya-anitya-vastu-viveka.

**Question 13:** What is meant by shat-sampatti?

**Answer:** Shat-sampatti is one of the constituent of sadhan-chatushtaya-sampatti. It comprises (i) shama (ii) dama (iii) uparati (iv) titiksha (v) shraddha (vi) samadhan.

**Question 14:** What is the feature of shama?

**Answer:** Mind forgets the objective and gets engrossed in non-object due to desire. The desire has its roots in samkalpa (Gita 6.24). The firmness of mind to remain established in object and not get swayed by desire is referred by shama.

**Question 15:** How is sadhana of dama done?

**Answer:** Kath Upanishad states in 2.1.1 that God has created the senses in such a manner that human beings see outwards through the senses and they don’t turn inward to see one’s own atman. To keep the senses, five jnana-indriyas and five karma-indriyas, under control is referred by dama. The sadhana of dama requires control of one’s mind by increasing the vision of God and not of the vishayas of jnana-indriyas or karma-indriyas.

**Question 16:** What is the meaning of uparati?

**Answer:** Karma results into attainment of desired object which is enjoyed through senses. However, moksha is not a result of karma. So, a person interested in moksha refrains from karma (desire-oriented-karma) and gets engrossed in Bhagvan. This refrainment from (desire-oriented) karma is known as uparati.

**Question 17:** How should one do the sadhana for titiksha?
Answer: The tolerance to endure the adhyatmik (like fever etc bodily sufferings), adhibhautik (from other living beings like tiger etc) and adhidaivik (like cyclone, flood etc from heavenly deities) sufferings is known as titksha. It is met with due to prarabdha. It is either sought to be warded off or hated upon. One who is interested in moksha should not hate them. Rather endure them and continue with one’s journey.

Question 18: What is the meaning of shraddha? In whom should we place our shraddha?
Answer: The faith in Guru and Shruti is known as shraddha. Literally it means the faith which is required to embrace satya. (A question may arise here that satya does not require any belief in order to be embraced. In response thereto, it is said) Our own nature is satya. Satya means something which does not change. We cannot determine our own nature through mind because it is beyond mind. It is knowable from Shruti alone.

Question 19: What do we get from shraddha?
Answer: As per Gita 4.39, we get jnana from shraddha.

Question 20: What happens due to the contact with Guru?
Answer: Keeping the mind in equilibrium is referred as samadhana. However, majority of transactions of world tend to deflect the mind from equilibrium. The contact with Guru is of opposite nature. It reinforces the mind back into equilibrium by deflecting it from vishayas.

Question 21: What exactly is Moksha like?
Answer: World is full of misery. One comes across them due to one’s own sins committed earlier. The life is said to be meaningful if the dukhas are enduréd while karmas are done keeping shraddha in dharma. Slowly, one has to shift the attention from world to Moksha. Moksha basically refers to complete liberation from all sorrows, all bondages. It is not transient like this world or swarga. It is attained by jnana for persons having sadhan-chatushtaya-sampatti.

Question 22: How does a liberated person behave?
Answer: A liberated person does not behave according to whims and fancies. The three sadhan-sampatti of nitya-anitya-vastu-vivek, iha-amutra-arth-fala-virag and sham-aadi-shat-sampatti become his nature which were the tools in so far as he was mumukshu. And the fourth sadhan-sampatti of mumukshutva becomes muktatva. His actions can never be against shastra. Aitreya Bhashya says that one who has seen a pit in night cannot fall in it in daytime.

Question 23: To whom does Bhagvad Gita prohibit para-vidya?
Answer: In Gita 18.67, para vidya is denied to one who is not a tapasvi, who envies Bhagvan, who does not serve or who does not have bhakti in Guru and devata.

Question 24: What should be the aim of life of a person of Brahmana varna?
Answer: Mundak Upanishad 1.2.12 prescribes the attainment of sadhan-chatushtaya-sampatti as extremely essential for a person of Brahmana varna. Though the aim of life is Moksha, if a brahmana is not desirous of moksha, still shastra mentions acquisition of sadhan-chatushtaya-sampatti as the goal of his life.

Question 25: Who is referred by the word ‘Brahma-bandhu’?
Answer: Shastra prescribes acquisition of sadhan-chatushtaya-sampatti for a person having brahmana-varna even if he is not desirous of Moksha. Chhandogya Upanishad refers to such a person who does not learn Brahma-vidya as Brahma-bandhu and in this manner criticizes him.
Chapter 3: Guru

Question 1: Why is Brahma-vidya said to be difficult?
Answer: Brahma-vidya refers to knowledge of oneself. Due to avidya, we have believed ourselves to be something else which is completely different to our real swaroop. We cannot get to know our real swaroop by worldly pramanas viz pratyaksha, anuman, arthapatti and anuman. Therefore, Brahma-vidya is said to be difficult. Bhagvan too says in Gita 7.3 ‘मनुष्याणां सहस्रेषु कष्ठित् यतति सिद्धेः, यततां अपि सिद्धान्तं कष्ठित् माम वेति तत्त्वः’.

Question 2: Why is guidance of the Guru is required in Brahma-vidya?
Answer: Brahma-vidya refers to knowledge of oneself. However, our real swaroopa cannot be known by any pramana other than Shruti. Now the problem is that it is extremely difficult for even a very intelligent person to experience the truth of Vedanta by independently studying it. Therefore, the guidance from Guru is required. The references are:-
शास्त्रज्ञोऽपि स्वातंत्र्येण ब्रह्म ज्ञान अन्वेषणम् न कुयात् (मुण्डक १.२.१२)
आचार्यद्वैत विद्या विद्विदत साधिष्ठम् प्राप्त (छ ४.९.३)
आचार्यवान पुरुषो वेद (छ ६.१४.२)

Question 3: Who is a shrotriya?
Answer: A person who has (i) understood the meaning of Shruti from sampradaya and thereafter (ii) who acts in accordance with Shruti, is referred by the word shrotriya.

Question 4: What are the characteristics of a Brahma-Nishth person?
Answer: Brahma-Nishth person means a person whose mind is always situated in Brahman. His features are contentment, freedom from worries, composure of senses, calm smile, equanimity, absence of egoism and attachment. He has risen beyond the pairs of opposites, does not expect any benefits or return, does not accept anything, is always clean, is efficient in action, is compassionate, is devoid of hypocrisy.

Question 5: How has been Guru described by saint Sarvajna?
Answer: Saint Sarvajna has said that a heavenly tree is not a mere tree, the heavenly cow is not a mere cow, the philosopher’s stone is not a mere stone and guru is not a mere mortal human being. He knows the swaroop of Vishnu and he is himself Vishnu-swaroop.
Mundak Upanishad also says in 1.2.13 that if a disciple comes equipped with sadhan-chatushtaya-sampatti and in accordance with sampradaya, then it is the duty of acharya to cross him from this ocean of world.

Question 6: When does one get a sadguru?
**Answer:** There are two reasons for not getting a sadguru. If these two reasons are absent then he can get sadguru through the grace of Ishwara. These reasons are as under:-

(i) The ignorance of the fact that there is no easier or quicker method for Moksha other than what has been described in Shastra. Shvetashvatara Upanishad says in 3.8 that नान्त्रयः निन्त्रथा पवद्यते अयनाय.

(ii) The person equipped with sadhan-chatshtaya-sampatti will have to struggle oneself for Moksha as mentioned in Gita 6.5.

**Question 7:** How should the service of Guru be done?

**Answer:** One should go to Guru with samit in hand. Samit is useful for karma. It is offered to fire. The idea is that all karmas may be burnt by the fire of jnana, as mentioned in Gita 4.37.

Gita 4.34 indicates that the conduct with respect to the Guru should be of humility, devotion and fear. Disciple should prostrate before him and serve him on essential things. Finally all non-sanyasi disciples should give guru-dakshina.

**Question 8:** One should learn Brahma-vidya from which Guru?

**Answer:** Guru should be a person who is shrotriya and Brahma-nishth. He should be knower of shastra and equipped with sadhan-chatushtaya-sampatti. He should be follower of the teachings of Shastra and his conduct should be in accordance thereto.
Chapter 4: Pramana- means of knowledge

**Question 1**: What is meant by triputi?
**Answer**: The threefold division of pramta-praman-prameya is called triputi. It exists not only during the action of knowing but in all actions.

**Question 2**: Who is pramata?
**Answer**: A person having prama is known as pramata.

**Question 3**: What is meant by prama?
**Answer**: Prama refers to valid knowledge of any vishaya. It is conclusive and definitive knowledge of any object.

**Question 4**: What is meant by prameya?
**Answer**: The object of prama is prameya. The object about which pramata has valid, conclusive and definitive knowledge is known as prameya. For e.g., there is a pot. ‘This is pot’ is prama. Whoever knows it as pot is pramata.

**Question 5**: Pramanas are of how many types? What are they?
**Answer**: Pramana refers to the specific and particular means which gives rise to prama. In the above example, eye is the pramana which gives rise to the prama ‘this is pot’. Pramanas are of five types, (i) pratyaksha (ii) anumana (iii) upamana (iv) arthapatti (v) aagam.

**Question 6**: What are the features of pratyaksha pramana?
**Answer**: All the vishayas of world are classified in five parts, shabda, sparsh, roop, rasa and gandha. The knowledge about these is obtained by senses of hearing, touch, vision, taste and smell. When there is a contact of senses with vishaya, then a definitive knowledge arises in buddhi regarding the vishaya. The instrument through which such prama arises is known as pratyaksha pramana.

If there is some defect in material of knowledge namely our own antah-karana OR organs corresponding to senses OR some circumstantial defect concerning interaction between sense-organs and vishaya, then there may be samshaya-jnana or mithya-jnana or ajnana.

So, the features of pratyaksha pramana are (i) contact of sense with vishayas (ii) arising of definitive knowledge in buddhi.
So basically, jnana-indriyas are pratyaksha praman.

**Question 7**: When does anumana-pramana come into use?
**Answer:** ‘Anu’ refers to ‘after’ and mana refers to assessment. Now one has the memory of ‘vyapti’ i.e. the linkage between vyapak (fire) and vyapya (smoke). So when one sees only vyapya, due to memory of vyapti, one concludes about the existence of byapak.

Here, ‘knowledge of vyapti’ is called as anumaana praman because it is the tool which gives rise to ‘anumiti’ prama. ‘There is a fire on hill’—this is anumiti prama. The tool to this knowledge is memory of ‘wherever there is smoke, there is fire’—this is vyapti jnana. So this knowledge of ‘wherever there is smoke, there is fire’- is called anuman praman.

This anuman praman is of three types (i) sheshvat anuman praman {when cause fire is inferred from the effect smoke}(ii)purva-vat anuman praman {when effect rain is inferred from seeing the cause cloud}(iii) samanyato-drisht-anuman-praman{when no causal relation exists but they have similar features, like ornaments of Sitaji gave rise to anumiti prama about the path through which Ravan took her}.

The point to be noted is that anuman praman had been perceived earlier directly.

Further, anuman praman is controlled by pratyaksh praman i.e. it can be negated by pratyaksha praman. So it is a subservient pramana. But pratyaksh pramana is independent. So, a prama valid by pratyaksha cannot be negated by anuman but an anumiti prama can be negated by pratyaksha.

**Question 8:** Which part is important in upamana praman?

**Answer:** The tool through which a person gets upamiti prama, is called upamiti praman. A person who lives in city and has seen a cow but who has never seen a gavay (animal like cow which dwells in forest) goes to a forest. He sees a gavay and by pratyaksh praman, gets the prama that ‘this animal is like a cow’. Thereafter, he gets another prama that ‘my cow is like this’. Now this prama is not by pratyaksha praman because his cow is not before him.

Nor is it by anumana, because it is not based on any earlier pratyaksha of his cow and any gavay (he has never seen a gavay earlier). Thus, Vedanta gives a name to this prama i.e. upamiti prama. The instrument or causal factor of this prama is ‘gavaya-nisht-go-sadrishya-jnana’ i.e. the similarity WITH his cow existing IN gavaya. This is upaman praman.

Upaman praman— gavaya-nisht-go-sadrishya-jnana
Upamiti Prama— go-nisht-gavaya-sadrishya-jnana
Cow— Upaman
Gavay—Upameya

The important part in upaman praman is that the similarity is there only in few aspects and not all aspects.

**Question 9:** What is the meaning of arthapatti?

**Answer:** When a ‘seen’ or ‘heard’ artha is put in danger, i.e. when a seen or heard meaning is incongruous, then the presumption which reconciles the seen or heard stuff, is called as arthapatti. For e.g. none has seen devadatta eating in daytime and yet he is healthy. So the presumption that he must be eating in night is referred to be arthapatti praman. Two important issues here (i) There should not be another way of understanding the issue under inquiry (ii) There should not be another pramana through which it can be understood.
**Question 10:** Why should aagam praman be accepted?

**Answer:** Aagam, Shruti and Vedas are synonyms. They refer to the words which are alaukik. Thus, it won’t have bhram, pramad and vipralipsa which is possible if the words come from worldly persons. Vedas have not come out from the efforts of any person. They emanate naturally from Paramatman, LIKE breathing. They deal with stuff which cannot be determined by human beings.

Aagam is praman independently and it does not require any other praman like anumana for its validity. Brahm Sutra 1.1.4 states न च अनुमान गम्यं शास्त्र प्रामाण्यं.

However, by following inferences, it can be felt that Vedas are not written by human beings:-

- There is no mention of name of any author.
- Vedas have seven swaras.

**Question11:** How is it established that Vedas are apaurusheya?

**Answer:** Though Vedas are independent pramana and do not require the help of any other pramana, the following points prove that Vedas are not created by human beings:-

- There is no mention of name of author or authors in Vedas which is unlikely had there been authors.
- Vedic chanting contains the system of seven swara system of accent intonation. It has remain unchanged till date. Had it been an arrangement by human beings, it would have been changed by now.
- The scope of knowledge contained in Vedas is infinite and hence it is impossible to be created by human beings.
- There cannot be several authors over a period of time because that would have led to contradictions. Since there is unity of meaning of Vedas, this possibility is ruled out.
- There are several pieces of information which was unknown to the humanity.

**Question12:** Why is there appearance of confusing or contradictory statements in Vedas? How are they to be reconciled?

**Answer:** Speech has a limitation. It uses sentences to convey an idea. Now despite there being a unity of purport in Vedas, the fact remains that the idea is to be conveyed by sentences. Now one sentence can convey only some portion of the idea. It cannot convey the entire idea. The sentences indicate and draw the attention of reader towards that central idea. Now the central idea is at different locations from different vishayas i.e. the direction of the central idea is different from different localised ideas represented by specific sentences. Therefore, the attention, though towards central idea, appears to be drawn in different directions at different places. This is like the way to home keeps changing while on the way home in accordance with roads. Therefore, it appears that the statements in Vedas are confusing or contradictory.

The method for their reconciliation is prescribed by a sequence. It is as follows:

श्रुति → लिंग → वाक्य → प्रकरण → स्थान → समाख्यान
The idea is that in case of contradiction between either of these, the former one dominates and the meaning indicated by the former shall be taken to be the acceptable meaning.

**Question13: What is anupalabdhi praman?**

**Answer:** The prama which reveals the ‘isness’ of an existing object is known as upalabdhi prama. And the prama which reveals the non-existence of a non-existent object is referred as anupalabdhi prama. The tool or instrument which gives rise to anupalabdhi prama is referred as anupalabdhi praman. This is a praman which is referred to by Mimamsakas. Some Vedantins also accept it. However, it is not correct. Pramana operates only in relation to existing object. Pramana gives rise to valid and definitive knowledge (=prama) with respect to an extant object. If one does not get to know something through upalabdhi praman (all five pramanas), then it is referred as non-existent object (BSB 2.2.17). That is, if there is no prama for something, then the non-existence of that is determined. How can then that determined non-existence be imagined as ‘prameya’ and a further prama named as anupalabdhi praman be conjured up (BSB 2.2.21).

In nutshell, it is to be concluded that this anupalabdhi pramana, though acceptable to Mimamsakas and some Vedantins, does not stand the rigour of logic and is liable to be rejected, as aptly done by Acharya in Brihad Aranyak 3.3.1 and Mundaka Bhasha 1.1.12.

**Question14: Why has Sureshvaracharya not accepted anupalabdhi praman?**

**Answer:** In Sambandh Vartik 938, Sureshvaracharya says that it is not logical to assume pramanatva to something which does not have mana (=measurement). Further, something which does not have meya, i.e. something which is non-existent, cannot have prameyatva.

On the basis of this, he has rejected anupalabdhi praman.