It is explained now in more detail how the functions of the senses are inadequate for the purpose of the perception of Reality. The reason is that there is a compulsive activity on the part of the senses in the direction of diversity. A single mass of light is refracted and diversified when it is projected through a prism but this diversity is mingled and comprehended together in the single mass of light. Originally, likewise, the single Reality is projected in a diversified manner when it is visualised through the senses. What the senses do is not to split Reality into pieces; they are not actually creating the diversity, but making it impossible for the mind to observe the Totality by abstraction of certain aspects of it from certain other aspects of it. Let us take the example of colours. There is no such thing as colour; it does not exist. What colour actually means is a particular abstraction of a character from the total capacity of sunlight to the exclusion of the other characters. When we perceive a green object, for instance, that particular object which appears to be green projects only that aspect of sunlight which we call green and excludes every other aspect. It cannot absorb into its body the whole capacity or force of sunlight. So it is with a particular sense-organ: the eye sees colours, but cannot hear sounds, the ears can hear sounds, but cannot see colours, and so on. The various senses perform independently, isolating characters, which are incapable of identification with their own functional capacities and making it appear as if their function is the only reality - e.g., a colourless world is incapable of perception. Thus, the total mass of Reality cannot really be apprehended at one stroke through the senses.
Neither the eye can see, nor the ear can hear, nor the tactile sense can touch IT. So, the Upanishad says:

19. manasaivanudrastavyam, naiha nanasti kim cana: mrtyoḥ sa mṛtyum
     apnoti ya iha naneva pasyati.

*Manasaivanudrastavyam*: ‘It is only through the purified mind that It can be comprehended’, not through the senses. Here, the word mind has to be understood in its proper connotation. It is not the lower mind or the psychological function which acts in total dependence upon the senses that is indicated here. There is a particular aspect of our mind which functions only in relation to senses. There is nothing that we can think which we have not seen or heard or sensed in some other manner. Even if we stretch our imaginations to the farthest extent, we will see that the mind can conceive only in terms of colours, sounds, solidity, three-dimensions, etc. So, this is the lower mind which is merely the functionary in terms of a synthesising activity of the various reports received through the senses. The diversity of sense-perception is put together in a blend in the mind, and then the mind is able to feel the harmony or unity among the various sensations. So there is perceptive synthesis in the mind. The mind does not give us any new qualitative knowledge. This part of the mind does not give, in spite of its synthesis, a knowledge which is qualitatively superior to the sensory knowledge. It synthesises, no doubt; it brings together in harmony all the diversities of sense function, no doubt; in that sense it appears to be a higher agent, but it is only a quantitative superiority that it exercises over the senses, not a qualitative superiority. Qualitatively, it is the same. There is however one aspect of our mind which is called the higher mind. It is rather difficult to distinguish it from the lower one. Sometimes we call it pure or higher reason, *Para Vidya*, as the Bhagavad Gita also puts it. With this pure reason - *Manasa* - we may grasp It. It can be grasped only through the intellect, not that intellect which is dependent upon the senses, but the pure intellect which can ratiocinate on the basis of the unity of things rather than the diversity of things, knowing that this diversity does not exist at all - *naiha nanaste kim cana*.

*Manasaivanudrastavyam, naiha nanasti kim cana*: ‘Inasmuch as the diversity is not there, really’, the senses are not the instruments, not the proper ones, for the perception of Reality, as they always distort the vision. The idea of diversity is the cause of attachment to things. So you can now find out why we cling to things. It is because of our dependence upon the senses. Attraction and repulsion are both caused by dependence on sensory activity. Diversity is taken for the ultimate truth. The being that is projected through the senses as a target thereof, an object as we call it, is regarded as the sole reality as far as the senses are concerned, so that the particular sense which is after a particular object regards it as the sole reality. But it is not the sole reality because it is vitally connected with other objects. The connection of one object with another is invisible to the eyes. It cannot be seen. There is a connection, for instance, between the various frequencies of radio waves; otherwise, they cannot travel...
through ether. Yet, they are different. They do not clash with one another. That they do not clash among one another means that there is a unity behind them. There is a basic uniformity of substratum upon which they travel which you call the ether. Likewise, there is a basic substratum underlying the diversity projected through the senses, but it is not seen. And because it is not seen, it is not believed, also. For the senses, the philosophy is, ‘seeing is believing’. When you cannot see a thing, it cannot be believed, it cannot be trusted. So, they follow this peculiar doctrine of believing only that which is seen or sensed, in some way or the other. Now, this is a very dangerous philosophy inasmuch as it does not purport to present what is really there. The truth is that diversity is a false abstraction by the senses of certain characters of Reality to the exclusion of others. The Total Reality cannot be seen by the senses. That can be done only by a higher mind which can infer the existence of unity through diversity. How does the higher mind know that there is unity? Even the higher mind cannot actually cognize the presence of Reality, but it can infer its existence through a kind of logical induction and deduction. That is what we call philosophy. The entire system of metaphysics is a process of induction and deduction. You argue by certain premises that are given and you infer the existence of certain things, though they are not perceptible actually, physically, solidly. This is a very shrewd and tactful activity of the higher mind by which it concludes the existence of certain things which are ordinarily not capable of perception.

So, it is not possible to perceive Reality; it can only be inferred. And the inference can be so convincing, so firm in its being established as a final solution to the problem of diversity, that the mind can contemplate upon it. The philosophical inference is not a real perception. It is an activity of the mind alone. No doubt it is an activity of the higher mind, but it is not a realisation; it is not an experience. However it can be so mathematically precise, so scientifically perfect, that it can drive conviction into the mind, and where conviction is complete, the mind can go nowhere else. It can go to that alone. It is lack of conviction that makes us drift from one thing to another. But when the conviction is complete and it is founded well in one’s own heart, in one’s own feelings, then meditation follows automatically. ‘If this cannot be achieved, one clings only to diversity; the achieved state is then of birth and death.’ \textit{Mrtyoh sa mṛtyum apnoti ya iha naneva pasyati:} No one can escape birth and death; no one can be free from transmigratory metempsychosis as long as there is belief in the diversity of objects, because the conviction and the belief that there are really multitudinous objects in the world compels one to run after them. It is impossible for one to be free from one’s longing for things which are seen with the eyes as real, because they are believed to be such on account of the incapacity of the lower mind to infer the existence of something which is underlying them. The conviction that diversity is true, ultimately, compels the mind to long for finitude. One takes finite objects as targets of experience and satisfaction. Finite things cannot satisfy the mind, because a finite object is hanging for its existence on certain other finite objects. There is an interconnectedness of things but this is imperceptible to the senses. Relying on the truth of sensory perception, there is no satisfaction;
the body is shed in a condition of mental dissatisfaction, and this unsatisfied condition of the mind during which the body is shed becomes the cause of rebirth for the satisfaction of unfulfilled desires. So it is the perception of diversity that leads to rebirth. The senses, therefore, are not the real guides of an individual in the comprehension of Reality. It is the higher mind, the higher reason alone, that should be taken here as our mentor.

20. ekadhaivanudrastavyam etad aprameyam dhruvam, virajah para akasad aja atma mahan dhruvah.

Ekadhaivanudrastavyam: The perception of Reality should be practised in our daily activity. It is not easy to do it because the senses are our friends, and not so the higher mind. Unfortunately, we never take the higher mind to be our friend in our daily activities. It rarely functions. Even if it tries to peep through, the activities of the senses overwhelm it. Like a mighty wave that dashes down all things that come before it, the sense activity puts down or stifles the activity of the higher mind, on account of the vehemence of attachment to things. But ‘practice makes perfect’; so the adage goes. A daily attempt has to be put forth by everyone to see that the senses do not gain an upper hand, and that you do not trust the report of the senses too much because, as we have seen, they are bad friends. They are going to bind us one day or the other and throw us to hell. The higher mind has to be taken as our real guide and philosopher. The oneness of being is, therefore, to be practised as a regular routine in spite of the overwhelming vehemence of sense activity. It is like taking a bath in the tumultuous ocean, which is not particularly easy due to the waves that are constantly trying to press you into the bosom of the ocean. Likewise, the senses will not allow you to contemplate unity. Who can see unity? You open the eyes and see many things, many objects. The eyes are not the guides; the ears are not the guides; no particular sense-organ can be regarded as an instructor to us in the perception of Truth. In spite of the multitudinousness of variety that the senses present before us, a very piercing intelligence has to work behind them and ‘the practice of the perception of the unity inferred in the background of this sensory diversity should be made a regular programme of daily life’ - ekadhaivanudrastavyam.

Etad aprameyam dhruvam, virajah: It is eternal Reality, no doubt, but it is ‘immeasurable’ to the senses. However much you may strain your eyes, you cannot see it. Whatever be the instrument of observation that you use, it cannot be observed, because the subtlety of physical instruments is nowhere, comparable to the subtlety of this Supreme object of quest of this goal of one’s life. There is no instrument conceivable other than the mind. It is our superior mind only that is going to help us in convincing us of the nature of Truth. Any kind of activity, speaking or hearing, seeing or touching, tasting or smelling, whatever it be, is not the correct philosophical instructor for a seeker of Truth. The real instructor is the higher philosophical and logical reason which alone can tell us that there is an apprehension of a Being which is more profound than the finite objects which are
presented by the senses. Though immeasurable to the senses, it is measurable by the higher intellect. ‘It is free from the Rajas, or the character of distraction, which preponderates in the senses’ - virajah.

Para akasad aja atma: ‘It is superior even to the extensiveness of space’, and therefore, we find it difficult to conceive even with the mind. The infinitude of the Supreme Being is inconceivable because it is far more infinite than even the conceptual infinite of spatiality that we think of in our minds. It is more difficult to conceive this unity for another reason also. It is the Self of all beings - Atman - as well. First of all, the difficulty is due to the incapacity of the senses to apprehend its being. It cannot be seen. However much you may scratch your head, it is not there. By chance, if you do stumble upon it through the work of pure inductive reason, it is still difficult to make it a part of the daily meditation, because is not merely an infinitude of objectivity, but is the Self, also. It is hard for one to combine these two aspects; it is almost like a circus feat, a kind of acrobatics that you have to perform through the high reason. How is it possible to conceive, first of all, an endlessness of existence? And if it is practicable at all, it becomes even more difficult when it is identified with the Selfhood of beings. An endlessness of Being identified with the Selfhood of beings is hard to conceive. But that is the key to true meditation. ‘This is the great Being, the eternal’ - para akasad aja atma mahan dhruvah.

21. tam eva dhiro vijnaya prajnam kurvita brahmanah nanudhyayad bahun sabdan, vaco viglapanam hi tat iti.

Here, like a mother, the scripture gives a piece of good advice. ‘One should not read too much or speak too much. It is a waste of energy’. Though a little of study and education is necessary in the earlier stages, too much of bookishness is not going to help in the end, and not too much speech, also. One has to restrain the tongue because through it energy is spent too much. Speaking too much, reading too much are not advantageous in the higher stages of spiritual practice. ‘A heroic seeker, a bold aspirant, should take this alone as the goal of life, and should not divert his attention to objects which are finite in their nature’. Having understood the character of this Reality through the analytical reason, one should try to fix one’s mind in this understanding. Practice should follow correct understanding. One should not be too eager to practice without proper understanding, because when understanding is incomplete, whatever be the practice, it will not be able to bring the required result. There is no use merely complaining, ‘I have practised and practised and meditated and meditated for years and years, but nothing comes.’ May be it is so, but it cannot yield the desired result because it is based on incorrect understanding of the nature of the object. There is a fundamental error on the part of the mind itself, which has not conceived of Reality properly. You are not able to absorb into your feeling the character of Reality in its completeness. And much time may have to be spent even in understanding what It is. Perhaps, the major part of one’s life goes only in study and understanding the character of that which we are aiming at. Practice is
not the difficulty; the difficulty is understanding. And so, the Upanishad says: ‘Having understood, you must strive for realisation’. Such is the nature of what the ancients call a Brahmana. Nanudhyayad bahun sabdan: ‘Too much reading is not necessary’. Vaco viglapanam hi tat iti: ‘It is a mere weariness of speech’.

So, this is a practical advice, a serious admonition which the fourth chapter of the Upanishad gives us as a kind of sequel to its main gospel. Now, we are coming to the close of this chapter which winds up its teaching by pronouncing its great message. According to the renowned commentator Acharya Sankara, these little passages that follow are the essence of the whole Upanishad. It is a pronouncement of a final judgment, as it were, which the Upanishad gives as a quintessence of its teaching, the message of the whole of the Upanishad. It is short, but very profound.

22. sa va esa mahan aja atma yo’yam vijnanamayah pranesu; ya eso’ntar-hrdaya akasah tasmin sete, sarvasya vasi, sarva-syesanah, sarvasyadhipatipih; sa na sadhuna karmana bhuyan no evasadhuna kaniyan. esa sarvesvarah, esa bhutadhipatipih, esa bhutapalah. esa setur vidharana esam lokanam asambhedaya. tam etam vedanuvacanena brahma vividisanti, ya jnena, danena, tapasanasakena; etam eva viditva munir bhavati, etam eva pravrajino lokam icchantah pravrajanti, etadd ha sma vai tat purve vidvamsah prajam na kamayante: kim prajaya karysyamah; yesam no’yam atmayam loka iti. te ha sma putraisanayas ca vittaisanayas ca lokaisanayas ca vyutthaya, atha bhiksacaryam caranti; ya hy eva putraisanaya vittaisana, va vittaisana loka iti; ubhe hy ete esane eva bhavatah sa esa neti nety atma; agrhyah, na hi grhyate; asirya, na hi siryate; asangah, na hi sajyate; asito na vyathate, na risyati; etam u haivaite na tarata iti, atah papam akaravam iti, atah kalyanam akaravam iti; ubhe u haivaisa ete tarati, nainam krtakrte tapathah.

This is a longish passage, a single sentence, as it were, which tells us that the practice of spirituality is a double endeavour on the part of the individual to grasp something and renounce something at the same time. It is the renunciation of all finite attachments and a grasping of the nature of the unity of things, a blend of Vairagya and Abhyasa, renunciation and practice.

‘This great Being, Mahan Aja, is the Atman, or the Self of beings.’ Sa va esa mahan aja atma: ‘This immortal great Reality is the Self of all beings’, a very interesting sentence. It is the great Reality; It is also the inner Self of all beings. You should not forget this aspect. It is not an extra-cosmic creator of the universe; it is not a transcendent God who is above our heads. It is at once the Atman, our very Being, our very Self, and the very Existence of all things. It is the immortal Being which is also the Self of things. Yo’yam vijnanamayah pranesu: ‘It is manifested as the light in one’s own intellect, in one’s own reason, in one’s own understanding. The little light that peeps through our intellect is this great Light of Being’. It is luminous in one’s own heart as the deepest conscience. The
heart that you speak of generally, the feeling that you speak of, the conscience that you speak of, is the Hṛdaya of the Upanishad. It is cosmic in its nature. The little heart of yours which appears to be encased in the body is really cosmic in its nature. It is all-pervading. The little ether in the body is very much like the cosmic ether. The little space inside a small vessel is not distinguishable from the vast ether outside, as we all very well know. Likewise is this little peeping, twinkling consciousness-ether in our own hearts indistinguishable from the consciousness ether of the Absolute outside. The comparison is very interesting and very apt, of course. The space within a little tumbler is indistinguishable from, not different from, the vast space outside. The distinction between the two is only apparent; it is not real. It is only the walls of the vessel that make us feel that there is a distinction between the space within and the space without. There is no such thing as space within and space without. It is an impartite all-comprehensive expanse. So is the consciousness which is the ether of our hearts. So, this ether of the heart within us, the little space within, which is twinkling with the light of intelligence in our own selves is identical with the Universal Light.

Ya eso'ntar-hṛdaya akasah: Here, in this little ether of ours is the Ruler of all, the great Master of beings, the great Creator, Preserver, Destroyer. The God of the universe is seated in the little heart of the human being also. Tasmin sete, sarvasya vasi: ‘The great Controller, who keeps everything under subjection and to whom every one is obedient, including the sun, moon, stars and all creation; sarvasyesanah - the Master and the Ruler of all; sarvasyadhipatiḥ - the Overlord of all beings, is within each one’s heart’. You carry this great treasure within yourself and yet walk like a fool, like a beggar on the earth. This is a great message of the Upanishad, very useful for deep meditation.

Sa na sadhuna karmana bhuyan: ‘This great Being within you is not going to be affected either by your good deeds or by your bad deeds’. It is unconcerned with what you do or what you think, just as the activities in this world are not going to affect the space, or the ether outside. Neither the fragrance of a scented stick nor the sharp edge of a knife are going to affect space. It is unconcerned with what is happening within it. Likewise, what you call virtue is not going to affect this great Being within. What you call evil, too, is not going to affect it, because ‘it is uncontaminated Existence’ - sa na sadhuna karmana bhuyan no evasadhuna kantiyan. Esa sarvesvarah: ‘This is the Overlord of all’. Esa bhutadhipatiḥ: ‘This is the king of all’. Esa butapalah: ‘This is the Protector of all’.

Esa setur vidharana esam lokanam asambhedaya: ‘This is like a bank or a bridge, as it were, to connect every apparent diversity in this creation’. The so-called diversity of things would have caused them to be scattered like particles of sand hither and thither without any interconnectedness among themselves but for the fact of the existence of this connecting link. How is it that you know that there is diversity? How can I be aware that many people are sitting in front of me
if my consciousness is segregated? It is not segregated. It is indivisible. If I am also one of you, if my consciousness is just one particle, one individuality, I would not be able to even apprehend the existence of diversity. The consciousness of intelligence that apprehends a multitude or a variety is transcendent to this multitude. It is more comprehensive than the variety that is presented before it as objects. My consciousness should be as vast as this hall; otherwise, I cannot know that the hall exists. My consciousness should be as vast as this entire space, otherwise I cannot know that space exists. My consciousness should be at least as extensive and expansive and comprehensive as the object that I apprehend with my mind. Otherwise, how is it possible for the mind to apprehend it? So, by inference in this manner you can know your own greatness. You are not a little, tiny, insignificant person. You are a great being with tremendous capacity and a huge maxim of force is hidden there in the hearts of you all. This Being is the connecting link behind all apparent diversity. The sun, the moon and the stars, and the variety of objects that are visible in this world, are all apprehended by this single Being. The system, the symmetry of action, the justice of creation, the methodology of action and the precision with which everything works in this world is due to the fact of this Total Being bringing all of them together under its compass - *esa setur vidharana esam lokanam asambhedaya*. If it were not to be there, the world would collapse in one second, just as when the government is not there, people fight among themselves. There would be chaos in one day. There would be a chaotic universe and it will not anymore be fit to be called a universe. It will be only a confusion, a mass, a medley of unknowable diversities. This does not happen on account of the existence of this Being who is indivisible. The indivisibility of the existence of this Being is the cause of the symmetrical existence and the precise activity of the diversity that is visible outside. *Tam etam vedanuvacanena brahmana vividisanti*: You cannot know this by mere reasoning also. There are many people who can argue, but they cannot understand, because the argument also has to be based on right premises. It should not be based on false premises. Logic is good if it is based on a proper foundation; otherwise, it becomes a dangerous weapon. You can establish anything through logic. You can prove and disprove, either way. It becomes a help only when it is based on right apprehension of premises that are acceptable. Now, this is a difficult task for the senses because they do not know what is proper, and they cannot have even the least idea of the right foundation or the right premise for the purpose of argument in the line of the assessment of the nature of Reality. Vedas are the true guide. They include the Upanishads, also. They are supposed to be revelations of Masters who had direct experience of Reality. *Tam etam vedanuvacanena brahmana vividisanti*: ‘All seekers have tried to apprehend this Reality through the word of the Veda’. The Divine Word is the gospel to be followed because it comprehends and describes such Truths as cannot be grasped through the senses or gross mind. The practice for the realisation of this Being is put in three small terms - *yajnena, danena, tapasanasakena*. 
Yajna, Dana, Tapas - these are the terms used in the Upanishad. They also occur in the Bhagavad-Gita. "Yajno danam tapas cai va pavanani manisinam", says Bhagavan Sri Krishna in the eighteenth chapter of the Bhagavad-Gita. 'You can renounce any other action, but you cannot renounce these three actions - Yajna, Dana and Tapas'. Here the Upanishad also says: 'By Yajna, Dana and Tapas It has to be known'. Yajna is, in some way we may say, the duty that we have towards God. Dana is the duty that we have towards the world and Tapas is the duty that we have towards our own selves. Yajna is the sacrifice of the self for the purpose of the realisation of the Absolute. Dana is the charitable feeling that we have towards the people outside in the world, and Tapas is the austerity of the senses which has to be performed for our own selves in order to subjugate the passions which urge us to move towards the objects of sense. So service of God, world and soul are all three comprehended here in one gamut of expression by the terms Yajna, Dana and Tapas. Anasakena: A peculiarly difficult word is used here, anasaka, which perhaps indicates that the 'practice should be moderate and should not go to extremes of starvation and death'. You may at times practise such austerities that you may even kill yourself. Of what use is that? That is not the intention of the scripture; that is not the intention of the teacher. There should be a moderate approach to Reality, and the practice should be a golden means, not an extreme of any kind. ‘There should be moderate activity, moderate enjoyment and moderate subjugation of the senses, ultimately ending in complete mastery’ - yajnena, danena, tapasanasakena.

Etam eva viditva munir bhavati: 'Having known this Supreme Being in this manner, by such practice meticulously conducted every day in one's own life, one becomes a sage, or a Master. You become a Yogin.' You become a great sage. A Muni is a sage. Etam eva pravrajino lokam icchantah pravrajanti: 'Renunciates set aside all their attachments because of their aspiration for this great Being'. You must have heard of various types of monks and various orders of hermits in this world. Hermits exist in every religion. The order of hermits is indicative of a higher aspiration that is present in people. Why do they set aside their attachments? Why do they renounce things? Why do people become monks and nuns? Why do they go to monasteries? What is the reason behind all this? The reason is simple. The reason is an aspiration within to catch the Highest, and to achieve a freedom far above the clamour of attractions and repulsions of this world. For the purpose of the realisation of this great goal of life, people renounce things belonging to this world - etam eva pravrajino lokam icchantah pravrajanti.

Etadd ha sma vai tat purve vidvamsah prajam na kamayante: 'Because of this great aspiration within, ancient seekers renounced their attachments to the temporal values of this life. There are many interesting things in this world, many things that attract us, many things that we regard as worthwhile. Great things do exist in this world also, but they are not great, in comparison with this great Being. So, desire for even the highest values in this world are set aside, are renounced, are relinquished for the purpose of a greater achievement which is the
realisation of Brahman, the Absolute. They had neither desire for children nor desire for wealth nor desire for fame. These are the three great desires of man. They renounced all these three for the sake of the achievement of a higher purpose - *vidvamsah prajam na kamayante*.

*Kim prajaya kariesyamah:* ‘What is the use of these acquirements which you call wealth and progeny, name and fame?’ That which we can attain through these instruments of satisfaction, we can attain also through that which we ourselves are. We do not anymore require external instruments for our satisfaction. We ourselves are the instruments. We require external aids or tools for satisfaction as long as we act as agents or remain as independent individual subjects separated from the objects that we are asking for or looking for in this world. But, when we have become something which is superior to this dualistic existence of subject-object relationship in this world; when we have become the comprehensive Atman itself; when the object of aspiration has become part and parcel of our own daily life, why should we struggle hard to acquire these objects of sense? The senses ask for objects because they are outside the senses. They are unreachable by ordinary grasp, but if by an indescribable and an extraordinary type of practice one has succeeded in assimilating the existence of the object into one’s own being, where comes the desire of the senses to grab them? Knowing this they renounced all longing for these temporal motives in life, keeping alive their desire for the realisation of the Self - *kim prajaya kariesyamah*.

*Yesam no’yam atmayam loka iti:* ‘This world is a part and parcel of our life’. We do not live in the world anymore; we have become the world itself. It becomes a great satisfaction for one to know that the world has become an inseparable appendage of one’s own existence. When we think, we think through the world; when we act, we act through the world; when we breathe, we breathe through the world. And so, the world that we are seeking, through the activities of the senses, has become inseparable from our existence, because the world has become the Self. Up to this time the self was only an individual subject that was running after the objects of the world. But now what has happened? The cart has turned upside down. The tables have turned. The object is not anymore a mere content in the world that is external to the individual subject. It is not a target of the senses anymore. That which was looked upon as a source of satisfaction to the senses has now become his very own, inseparable from his very existence. When such a realisation has come, where comes the occasion for ordinary desires?