A person who has his mind on the final good and not on the temporary pleasures is lucky if he gets an efficient teacher to guide him properly in his efforts to realize the Self which alone is permanent. Human mind is always vulnerable and there are innumerable objects and situations, which may divert a seeker of the truth from his correct path.
Overcoming of Temptations

It has been the traditional practice in India that a preceptor in any discipline tests his student to know whether he is fit to receive the instructions and able to carry on his studies. The mere fact that a student approaches a teacher is not enough reason for the teacher to admit him. It should be understood whether the student will continue diligently with his studies. If the student is likely to drop out when encountered by the early impediments, the teacher spurns him.

The metaphysical science being abstruse it happens more often that a student is unable to remain steadfast. There are worldly pleasures, which tempt him to give up his studies and
indulge in enjoyments. In the Kathopanisad we see a model student of Vedanta who is confronted with the greatest of temptations. An astonishing fact is that all these temptations are provided by the best model teacher. A teacher testing a student with unusual temptations of increasing severity is extraordinary. The teacher is Yama, the Lord of Death. His very name denotes that he is the controller of the beings. The student is Naciketas whose inquisitiveness never ceases.

The worst impediment to one's acquisition of the knowledge of the absolute reality is the easy availability of the objects of pleasure. Even a man who has cultivated an attitude of non-attachment is forcefully shaken by readily available luxuries. Naciketas was a boy who
himself considered worldly life silly and dared to go to the world of Death. To him did Yama give boons, which were most alluring. One boon was the knowledge of a particular sacrifice which could place a performer firmly in heaven to enjoy limitless pleasures. Another boon was Śrīkā of different forms. Śrīkā is explained as garland of gems with different colours and with a quality of making sounds. It is also interpreted as the way of life abounding in Karm. No doubt, the implication is that Nāciketas was offered a happy life on earth. In spite of getting such wonderful

1. KU.I.i.14
2. KU.I.i.16
3. KUSB.I.i.16
4. Ibid
gifts Naciketas did not hesitate to ask what was there after death. Having explained that it was a very difficult question, which was engaging the minds of even the gods, Mrtyu, the Lord of Death tried his utmost to make the boy give up this question. He offered what a person desires the most in life. Naciketas was offered sons and grandsons living up to hundreds of years, plenty of animals, gold and vast stretches of land. In addition he would live as many years as he wished\(^5\). Again he was told that he could ask for anything though rarely available on earth. Lord Death offered him beautiful girls along with chariots and music to serve him with sensual pleasures\(^6\).  

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5. KU.I.i.24
6. KU.I.i.25
Renunciation of Pleasures

Having resisted all temptations, \textit{Naciketas} renounced all pleasures he was assured. So should do any seeker of the ultimate reality. Decrying the indulgence in such enjoyments what he said to Yama is an advice to all. He was explaining a universal truth, which people fail to notice as long as they are in good luck and health. Children, animals, gold, land, beautiful girls and all such things are so temporary that one cannot sit assured that they will be there tomorrow. Indulgence in pleasures will weaken all the sense organs. Even the life in this world is not permanent\textsuperscript{7}.

\textsuperscript{7}KU.I.i.26
Man should not be satisfied with wealth. Whatever wealth and life he is expected to have are subject to the Mercy of death. Only those who lack discretion will find happiness in the life of colours, sports and merry making. Man is ageing and may at any moment be confronted by death. Knowing this very well, Naciketas was not prepared to prefer worldly pleasures to the knowledge of the Self. This renunciation shown by Naciketas is an important step to Self-realisation.

Preceptor’s involvement

A good number of people have not heard

8.KU.I.i.27
9.KU.I.i.28
about the Self. Many do not understand it even though, they have heard about it. Wonderful is the teacher who speaks about it (āścaryo vakta). Lucky is the student who is able to understand it, being instructed by an able teacher. Even such a student induces awe in us.10

After testing the eligibility of a student, the preceptor should, like Yama in Kathopanishad, instruct him on the two opposite ends — the good (Śreyas) and the pleasant (Preyas).11 He is to convince the student that the one who chooses Śreyas will achieve an aim which will

10.KU.I.ii.7
11.KU.I.ii.1
relieve him of all sufferings. A wise man with a strong will distinguishes between the good and the pleasant and chooses the good only. It is the dull-witted who prefers pleasures and strives for getting objects of pleasure more and more and for keeping them without any loss. Yama appreciated Naciketas very much for he spurned all objects of pleasures to which most people get hopelessly attached. Here we find an essential quality of a teacher.

Ignorance (avidyā) and knowledge (vidyā) are wide apart and they lead to two opposite points. A good teacher can find a student like

12.KU.I.ii.2
13.KU.I.ii.4
Naciketas whom ambitions for attaining pleasures do not tempt. Those who remain in ignorance fancy themselves that they alone are wise. In the worldly life they go astray like the blind being led by the blind\(^{14}\). As a consequence of the individual's cultivated imperfections and spiritual ignorance he develops desires in his mind for the satisfaction of which he does karmas, good, bad, and indifferent and thus earns a wealth of reactions to be suffered in unending future births\(^{15}\).

One who is blind with the greed for wealth is childish. He is not concerned with what

14. KU.I.ii.5
15. Chinmayananda, Op.it.,p.59
remains hereafter. He thinks that this is the only world and there is no other. As a result he comes again and again under the control of death. It means that he is ever suffering the cycle of births and deaths. It is by the merit of some deed a person gets a curiosity by chance to know what remains after death. It is the duty of a preceptor to give him proper guidance. The knowledge of the Self which transcends death is not easy to be grasped. It cannot be taught by a person of inferior quality of intellect. An ignorant person cannot learn it unless he is instructed by somebody else. Ātman (Self) is the subtlest of all subtle things.

16. KU.I.ii.6
17. KU.I.ii.8
The knowledge of the Self is not possible to be taught by mere argument. One cannot explain it just out of his own reasoning. The teacher should be well-versed in the Āgamas. Such a teacher can identify an able student. Yama who has all the qualities of a good teacher finds that Naciketas is having his mind firmly fixed on the reality. He is desirous of having more and more students of Naciketas's calibre.

Yama knows fully well that the merits acquired by actions are not eternal. The eternal cannot be gained by a non-eternal means. Yama himself practised rituals and from his own

18. KU.I.ii.9
19. KU.I.ii.10
experience acquired correct knowledge of the Self. This indicates that a preceptor should have first hand knowledge of what he preaches.

A preceptor's duty is to make manifest that Self-knowledge which is hidden in the student. That is what Yama does when he says to Naciketas: You have understood the basis of the Self, the end of desires, the state of the universe, the endless rituals and the maximum fearlessness and have rejected all transient pleasures\textsuperscript{20}.

**Seek in the Cave**

The student is eager to get the knowledge

\textsuperscript{20}KU.I.ii.11
of Ātman. But he does not know where that Self is to be sought. The learned and experienced teacher tells him that it is very difficult to perceive the Self (Durdarśa). However, he says that it is deeply interined in a cave (Guhāhita) and dwells in an intractable place (Gahvarestha)\(^\text{21}\). The idea is that the seat of Ātman is not any visible part of the body and by any physical process it is not possible for us to locate it. The cave referred here is what is called Hṛdeśa in the Bhagvad Gītā statement: God remains in the Hṛdeśa of all beings\(^\text{22}\). By the words hṛdaya and hṛd, heart is not always meant. It is probable that when

\(^{21}\)KU.I.ii.12.

\(^{22}\)īśvarah sarvabhūtānāṁ hṛdeśo rjuna tiṣṭhati

B.G. XVIII. 61
it is considered as the seat of memory, thought, consciousness, etc., *hṛdaya* (or *ḥṛḍ) is the brain. A man who has strong will controls his mind by *Adhyātmayogā* which may be understood as meditation and attains a state in which there is no sorrow or happiness.

In this context the Self has been qualified by the adjective *Purāṇa* in the Upaniṣad. *Purāṇa* means ancient. This is an apt epithet since the Self being the first entity, it is the most ancient of all things. An aspirant of *Brahmavidyā*, having received good instruction from the teacher, differentiates the Self from the

23.KU.I.ii.12.
body. For him the door of the Brahman-house is open. He is eligible for the final liberation (Mokṣa)²⁴.

Oṁkāropāsanā

On being requested by Naciketas to tell him what is beyond Dharma (actions enjoyed by religious scriptures and their results), Adharma (actions prohibited by religious scriptures and their results) and the three divisions of time, Yama instructed him to meditate on Oṁ. It is the symbol of Brahman and a person can meditate by chanting it. One may not be able to comprehend

²⁴. K.U.S.B.I. ii.13
the Brahman. But the teacher can ask him to meditate on the syllable Om. It will produce the same result as of practising Brahmacaryā. Both the individual Self and the absolute self are represented by Om. By properly chanting it one can, according to his wish, know the individual Self or get identified with the absolute Self. There are several means to attain the Self like Gāyatrī, Oṃkāropāsanā, Yoga etc. Of these Oṃkāropāsanā is the best one according to the Kathopaniṣad — etad ālambanaiś īrṣṭham. Gīta also emphasizes the importance of Om: He who leaves his body chanting Om the one-syllable Brahman and reflecting on Me (God)

25.KUSB.I.ii.16.
26.KU.I.ii.17.
reaches the supreme path\textsuperscript{27}.

Swami Chinmayananda explains that if a meditator meditates upon \textit{Om} with a desire to enjoy the subtler joys of \textit{Brahma Loka} he gains that plain of consciousness; and if the meditator with single pointed devotion meditates upon \textit{Om}, in a \textit{Naciketas}-like spirit of seeking the ultimate and the immortal, he shall certainly become ‘That’\textsuperscript{28}.

\textbf{Atman Reveals Itself to the Chooser}

The Self cannot be realised by the mere

\textsuperscript{27}B.G. VIII.13

\textsuperscript{28}Chinmayananda, Op.cit., p.93
study of the Śruti (Vedas and Upaniṣads). Mere knowledge of the text is no knowledge at all. Similarly mere scholastic preaching also will not lead one to the Self. Memorising of Vedic stanzas and cultivating a capacity to discourse upon the Mantras shall not take any individual to the Goal pointed out by the Śruti. So also the Self cannot be realized by mere intelligence (medhā) or by merely attending to the discourses by learned men. There are a large number of intellectuals in this world. But there is no guarantee that they will all attain Brahma. Intelligence equips a person with the capability of understanding and analysing information. But its

29. KU.I.ii.23

function is in a direction determined by the aim chosen by him. If one person chooses material prosperity as his aim in life, his mind will be always prompting his actions to achieve that aim discarding all other desirable objectives.

One may be aware of the various types of aims one can have in life. By an inborn nature, human beings are concerned with their own physical well being and material gains for physically enjoying pleasures. There may be certain occasions when one is suddenly startled to find that what one thinks is pleasant for him for ever is not truly so. One may be sometimes cautioned by a teacher at some particular moment about the transitory nature of all the pleasures one is enjoying. But if one’s mind is strongly affected by such warning and if that person sincerely
desires to acquire the knowledge of the eternal and to be identified with that eternal, then and then only the Self reveals itself to him. Neither study, nor memorising, nor hearing to a teacher, nor debating can give a man a subjective experience of the Reality. He has to choose it for himself and to sincerely make efforts to gain it. If he has a true desire he can pursue the methods advocated by the Upaniṣadic seers with sincerity, faith and consistency. Chinmayananda adds that the seeking consists of the slow removal of all the negativities in our physical and psychological make up, such as caste and class prejudices, vanities of being rich or preoccupation with the tragedies of our poverty, the selfishness, egoism, hatreds, jealousies, greeds and lusts which in their aggregate constitute the barricade that keeps us
away from the land of our own Real Nature\textsuperscript{31}.

**Good Conduct and Calm Mind**

One who is desirous of attaining *Brahman* should have good conduct and a calm mind. A person may engage himself in various kinds of activities. It is not possible for anyone to remain without any activity. But usually the *Vedāntin* says that when activities of one ceases he becomes eligible to realize *Brahman*. The explanation given by the learned is that *Naśkarmya* (withdrawal from *Karma*) is not the complete stopping of activities. How can a person live without breathing, eating, excreting, etc? So it is said in the *Gītā* that a person cannot

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achieve Naïśkarmya by non-performance of actions.\textsuperscript{32} One cannot have Siddhi (Fulfilment), i.e., the realisation of Ātman, by mere renunciation. One cannot remain for even a moment without doing any action. Everyone is made to act helplessly by the qualities born of nature.\textsuperscript{33} But it is essential that one should stop bad activities. So it is said in the Kathopaniṣad that one who has not turned away from bad conduct can never attain the Self by his intellect.\textsuperscript{34} Bad conduct means doing activities

\textsuperscript{32}BG.III.4.
\textsuperscript{32}BG.III.5
\textsuperscript{34}KU.I.ii.24
against the norms of *Dharma*. When an individual has lived at least for a time respecting *Dharma* he has the necessary gate pass to the arena of spiritual practices, explains Swami Chinmayananda\(^{35}\).

A man whose mind is not calm is also not able to attain the Self\(^{36}\). The mind is always fickle and it is very difficult to control it\(^{37}\). The mind should be tamed and controlled, if it is to be concentrated on the thought of the Self. Otherwise the mind will go after pleasures and will make the sense organs and organs of action


\(^{36}\) KU.I.ii.24

\(^{37}\) *mano durnigraham calam* B.G, VI.35
to engage in function harmful to the realisation of the Self. One whose sense organs are not controlled and mind is not concentrated can in no way realize the Self.

Whether a Brähmaṇa or Kṣatriya by caste, one does not become competent to realize the Ātman unless he has a purified, tranquil and concentrated mind. Otherwise even persons of Brähmaṇa and Kṣatriya castes become food for Brahman-eaten with the condiment of death. The suggested sense is that they will be like any other ordinary creatures suffering from the cycle of births and deaths.

38. KU.I.ii.25
Sunlight and Shadow

Though the Brahman is the only Reality, all-pervading, omnipotent, omnipresent and omniscient, we know that it is understood as two—(1) limited in the body and (2) unlimited. The limited is the Jīvātman (Individual Self) and the unlimited is the Paramātman (Universal Self). Jīvātman is enjoying the fruit of good actions in the world. The Kathopaniṣad states that these two, having entered the cave, remain in the supreme place (Parame) and in the distant part (parārdhe). Though Śaṅkara and later commentators take the words to mean one and the same thing, the supreme seat which

39.KU.I.iii.1
is nothing else than the space is Hṛdaya, where Brahman is known, it seems better to interpret in a different way here. If the two referred in the Kathopaniṣad are Paramātman and Jīvātman, then how can we say that the two enjoy the fruits of their actions. Paramātman does not enjoy anything. In the Rgveda Mantra dvā suparṇā sayujā etc., which is repeated in the Mundakopaniṣad⁴⁰, the two Souls are referred but there it is said that one of the two birds (Symbols of the souls) does not eat anything. There Paramātman is indicated by that bird and Jīvātman by the bird which eats. But the two Ātmans in the Kathopaniṣad Mantra ṛtam pībantu, etc., both enjoys the fruit of action.

⁴⁰.MU.II.i.1
Śaṅkara tries to solve the contradiction by Chattrīyāya saying that Jīvātman enjoys and Paramātman does not enjoy. However, the idea of Kaṭhopaniṣad seems that in the body the Ātman remains in two ways — one in the space of Hṛdaya (Brain) and the other pervading the whole body. The difference between the two is that one is limited in Hṛdaya and it can be considered of higher level and the other is limited in the physical body. Happiness and sorrow are enjoyed by the higher one and pain, touch, etc., are felt by the lower one. Scholars say that these two are sunlight and shadow respectively. This symbolic representation is intended to make clear the manifestation of the Ātman in two ways in the body.

41. KUSB.I.iii.1
Analogy of Chariot

The *Kathopanishad* presents a comparison of a chariot and the human body to make the idea of the Ātman inhabiting the body intelligible.

The Self (*Jīvātman*) is the Lord of the chariot and body is the chariot. Intellect (*Buddhi*, the reasoning faculty) is the charioteer. Mind (*Manas*, the thinking faculty) is the reins⁴².

The senses are the horses and their objects are the paths. The combination of the Ātman, the

⁴².ātmānam rathinam viddhi
   śarīram rathameva tu
   buddhim tu sārathim viddhi
   manāḥ pragrahameva ca.KU.I.iii.3
senses and the mind is the enjoyer, so say the wise.\(^{43}\)

The Self in its absolute state is free from all qualities and action. It does not feel pleasure or pain. But the Self limited in the body is in union with the intellect, mind, and senses and in that position it is the enjoyer of pleasure, pain etc. Intellect (Buddhi) and the thinking faculty (manas) are the two functions of the internal organ (antahkarana which is nothing but the mind). The psychology of perception taught by

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\text{43. } \text{indriyanāḥ hayānāḥur} \\
\text{viṣayāṁsteṣu gocarān} \\
\text{ātmendriya manoyuktam} \\
\text{bhoktetyāḥurmanīśinah}
\]
later philosophies like the Nyāya-Vaiśesika has its seed in the Kāṭhopaniṣad passages outlining the analogy of the chariot. The Ātman contacts the mind, the mind contacts the senses, and the senses contact their objects, and then the objects are perceived. What we call Ātva in our ordinary conversations is the above said combination.

It is the function of Buddhi to direct Manas in the proper way to control the senses. As the super-ego in modern psychology, Buddhi is a cultured part of the mind. By experiences and instructions received earlier, in the present or previous birth, it has a cultivated character. If it is pervaded by good impressions it can exercise a good control over the mind. It is a positive stature and then there is no doubt that the mind will lead the senses to the right path. Then the senses
will contact only the right objects. On the other hand, if the reasoning faculty (*Buddhi*) is wrongly cultivated with bad impressions, it will not guide the mind in the right way and the result will be that the mind will allow the senses to contact objects of their own choice. Then the enjoyment will be of what apparently is pleasant. Then the *Jīva* will be pleasure-seeking and not striving for the ultimate good. It means that the person in whom there is such a wrong *Buddhi* will not try to realise the Self. Thus the comparison of *Buddhi* with the charioteer is proper. If the charioteer is wise he will drive the horses in the right direction and the Lord of the chariot will reach the right destination. Otherwise, if the charioteer is a fool or a wicked person, his driving will do harm to the Lord of the chariot.
In the Bhagavad Gītā we have a good example of a well-driven chariot where the charioteer is the illustrious and well informed Kṛṣṇa, the Lord of the chariot is Arjuna and the chariot is driven by five surging horses like the senses (indriyas)⁴⁴. In the Gītā we find several Mantras or parts of Mantras borrowed from the Kaṇḍopaniṣad which points to the fact that, the basic philosophic principles in the Gītā are the same as that of the Upaniṣad. The Śvetāśvataropaniṣad also has the analogy of the chariot⁴⁵.

The senses are the five sense organs —

⁴⁵. Śvetāśvataropaniṣad, II.9.
ears, the skin, the eyes, the tongue and the nose. Their respective objects are sound, touch, forms, taste and smell. A body has its existence only through the sense organs. These are also the five organs of action. These are also essential for the function of a human body. However, they are all controlled by the mind. Whatever is received by the sense organs is transmitted to the Antahkaran where Buddhi makes the selections according to its culture and on the decisions of the Buddhi, the mind takes action, i.e. the mind directs the

46. śrotam tvak cakṣuṣi jihvä ghrāṇam ca
47. vāk pāṇi pādapāyūpasthāni pañca karmendriyāṇi
organisms of action to do their work. Thus for all activities the responsibility is not of the organs of actions, but of the Antahkaraṇa. If there is no properly cultivated Buddhi, then there is no doubt that the mind will have its own way, just as the horses not properly controlled by the reins go astray. The mind should not be allowed to be carried away by the senses.

In the life of a person the family circumstances influence the mind which will train the intellect. The intellect has its own inherited power. If there is a good teacher, his instructions will also help to mould the intellect of that person. However, the trend of the intellect will be depending on the interaction of the previous inherited modes (Vāsanās) and the newly acquired experiences. The Upaniṣadic view is that the attitude of a
person is determined by both heredity and the present circumstances.

Mind Control

The intellect should be capable of discriminating the right and the wrong and should engage the mind in what is good. The mind should be withdrawn from its activities if it turns towards the bad. If an indiscriminate intellect lets the mind loose, then the sense organs will not be in its control just like the untamed horses of a charioteer\(^48\). The untamed horses will draw the chariot to places according to their own will and the charioteer will not be able to lead the owner.

\(^{48}\)KU. I. iii.5
seated in the chariot to his destination. Uncontrolled mind will make senses wander freely among their objects. A man with such an uncontrolled mind will be always engaged in sensual pleasures, never thinking of the ways to attain the final good.

A properly cultivated intellect will control the mind in the proper way and the controlled mind will have the sense organs in control. The organs will be like the good horses of an intelligent charioteer\(^\text{49}\). A seeker of Ātman has to be vigilant that his mind does not go out of control of the well-perceiving intellect. If the mind remains in control then it is said to be \textit{Yukta}.

\(^{49}\text{KU I.iii.6.}\)
A person who is devoid of proper knowledge, thoughtless and always impure never attains the right goal (the state of Brahman) and he will get the cycle of births and deaths (Saṁsāra). Those who fail to keep up an intelligent Self-control upon their own endless sense - demands, not only fail to climb up the ladder of perfection and thus ultimately reach the supreme God - head, but also slowly fall in the scale of evolution and thus reach the lower states of animal existence.

He who has the right knowledge, intent on the right action and always pure attains that

50. KU. I. iii.7
His stress is given to the control of the mind. The right knowledge here means the knowledge of Yoga, with which the mind is restrained from going astray and concentrated on only right actions. When a person is not indulging in bad habits and actions, he is pure. The supreme goal is the right understanding of the Ātman, i.e., the knowledge that the individual Self is the same as the Universal Self. Once this identification is understood, the human being has the real knowledge and he will not be reborn after death. The idea is that having realised the Self, he will not do any bad actions. Even his good actions will also be done with no attachment. Non-attachment.
will keep his mind free from impurities. In fact the important lesson to be learned is to have non-attachment (anāsakti) always.

He whose charioteer is intellect which is nothing other than the right knowledge and whose mind is the well controlled rein of the senses, attains the far end of his path which is the supreme place of Visnu. The word Visnu is derived from the root viṣ meaning to pervade and means the only principle which pervades the whole universe, viz., Brahman. The abode of the venerable deity Visnu is Vaikuntha. This Purānic concept, by the etymology of the word, means where there is no sorrow. From the fictions of

53.KU.I.iii.9
Purānas we come to think of a place which is far away from the earth. But from the Upaniṣad we understand that it is not spatially away. It is described as distant only because it cannot be reached by an ordinary man indulging in indiscriminate activities of a mundane nature.

Relative Subtlety

The Upaniṣad declares that the objects are far from the sense organs, mind is still far from the objects, intellect is still far from Manas (the thinking faculty), and still far from the intellect is the great Self. We know that the sense organs are subtle. Though we see the outer eyes, ears,
nose, skin and tongue, we know for certain that the visible part is not actually the sense which perceives the objects. The objects are said to be far from the sense organs, since the true nature of the objects though seen by us is not easy to understand. Their origin and formation are beyond our clear understanding. Their objects are said to be subtler than the senses, which perceive them. The Mantra so says because the reason for existence of the very sense organs is the existence of the objects. If there is no sound to be heard, what is the use of our ears.

Mind is much subtler than the objects. It is the mind that registers the sense impulses and causes the control of the sense organs and their objects. Unless the mind works, how can a person have the perception of anything. Suppose, the
mind is engaged in some serious thought; then the eye even if fixed on some object does not see it; the ears though uncovered, does not hear any sound. We cannot see the mind. But it is too subtler and more important than the objects. The great Self is termed as the Hiranyagarbha, which is termed as the Total Mind or Total Intellect by Chinmayananda. Nobody can think even a single thought in absolute independence and freedom from the whole.

Beyond the great Ātman, Hiranyagarbha, is the unmanifested (Avyakta). Beyond the unmanifested is the Puruṣa. There is nothing beyond Puruṣa. That is the last stage. That is the highest goal.

56. KU.I.iii.11
In the Vedantic theory of the origin of the universe, the first manifested form is the *Hiranyagarbha* which pervading the different beings became *Jīvātmans*. The concept of *Hiranyagarbha* has its origin in the traditional belief that the first step in the creation was the Golden Egg. It is due to this tradition that the universe is also called the Egg of Brahman (*Brahmāṇḍa*). The manifestation of *Hiranyagarbha* is from a subtler thing, *Avyakta*, which is greater than all other things. This unmanifested is the seed of the whole universe. It is an “Existence” with no differentiated name or form. It is a collection of all causes of all effects and called by names like *Avyakta*,

57. *avyākṛta nāmarūpa sattvam*
58. *sarvākaryakāraṇaśaktisamāhārarūpam*
Avyākṛta and Ākāśa. It is inseparably existent in the Absolute Self like the creative power of a fig tree in its seed. Since this Avyakta is not visible and is greater and more unintelligible than Hiraṇyagarbha, it is said to be beyond the latter. Chinmayanananda interprets that the Avyakta state is the state of the unmanifest Jagat, something like the condition of each of us in our mothers womb; it may be noted that Avyakta, Pradhāna, Mūlaprakṛti, Avyākṛta and Māya are synonymous terms.

Subtler than the Avyakta is Puruṣa who is the cause of all causes and the innermost Self. He gets his name as he fills (pervades) all —

59.KUSB. I.iii.11
Sarvapūraṇāṇī. He is the condensed pure consciousness (Cinmātraghana). There is nothing beyond Puruṣa. So he is said to be the final state. It is the final goal of the soul in the cycle of births and deaths and having reached that goal, that Individual Soul merges into it and does not return.

Self perceived with sharp intellect

Puruṣa, described as the subtlest entity, is the Self in all beings, hidden in the innermost recess. The word Ātman though it signifies both

61.KUSB. I. iii.11
Puruṣa (Brahman or Paramātman) and Jīvātman, is mostly used in the Upaniṣad to denote Jīvātman which is the Brahman limited in each body. The Self, though denotative of both Brahman and Jīvātman, is usually used for Jīvātman. The other English word Soul is also having the same connotation as the Self. Only to make the apparent distinction clear that adjectives individual and absolute or universal are used with Soul and Self. Thus in truth there is only one Self pervading all beings. But we can perceive it only as existing in the body. To perceive it is also not easy. It can be perceived with a sharp and subtle intellect.  

63. Viṣeṣa sarvesu bhūtesu

gūḍho 'tma na prakāsate
dṛṣṭyate tvagrayā buddhyā
sūkṣmayā sūkṣmadarśibhiḥ .KU.I.iii.12
The Self being hidden in the innermost part of the body, namely Hirdaya, is not understood by a man even though he is instructed again and again that the Innermost Self (Pratyagātman) is the same as the Universal Self. The reason for this is the wonderful Māyā (Illusion) of the Self itself. All beings in the world are really the Self, the Ultimate Reality, and it is due to the usually impenetrable illusion that a person does not realise this fact. On the contrary, this very same illusion of the Supreme Self makes him consider that the gross of the body, organs, etc., which is perceivable like a pot, as his Self and leads him to believe “I am his son” with reference to another such gross of a body and organs. In the Gītā it is said: Being covered by Yogamāyā I am not revealed to anybody\textsuperscript{64}.

\textsuperscript{64} BG. VII .25.
The two statements in *Katha*, one that the Self is not revealed\(^{65}\) and the other that a wise man realising the great and omnipresent Self does not grieve\(^{66}\), seem to be opposed to each other. This apparent contradiction is removed when it is said that the former statement is applicable only in the case of one whose intellect (*buddhi*) is not refined\(^{67}\). The wise have their intellect sharpened through rigorous training to perceive the subtle objects. The Self is, in fact, the subtlest of all objects and in the ultimate analysis it is the only real thing without a second.

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65.KU.I.iii.12
66.KU.II.i.4
67.KUSB.I.iii.12
Vāsanās should vanish

The idea of the Inner Self remaining obscured due to illusion and of the requirements to get rid of that illusion has been dealt with in the *Upaniṣad* in a seed form. In the later *Vedāntic* texts this seed has been made to grow and branch into detailed discussions. It is stated that even when one has come to know the Ultimate Reality, the Self, one is not fully convinced because of the strong Vāsanās which persist for a long period. Such Vāsanās cause one to believe firmly that “I am the doer”, “I am the enjoyer” etc. Because of these only one has to undergo Sanśāra, the chain of births and deaths. One should turn one’s inner sense organ towards the inner Self to realise its
real form and thus to get rid of the Vāsanās. However, it is a very difficult task.  

A person thinks “I”, “Mine”, etc., about his body and sense organs due to superimposition. It should be given up by concentrating oneself on the Soul. The Self is a witness of the intellect and its activities. Realising that “I am that Self” one should give up his misunderstanding of non-Self as Self. Following what usually people do, looking after the needs of the body and depending upon the Śāstras (religious teachings) are to be given up to get rid of the superimposition. These three, Lokavāsanā, Dehavāsanā and Śāstravāsanā

68. Vide VC. 267
69. VC. 268, 269
prevent a person from getting the real knowledge\textsuperscript{70}. These powerful \textit{Vāsanās} are said to be iron chains put on the feet of one who is desirous of release from the gaol of \textit{Sanāsāra} (the cycle of births and deaths). When he gets freed from these alone, he will get deliverance\textsuperscript{71} (\textit{Mukti}). The divine fragrance of \textit{Aguru} is subdued by a bad smell due to its contact with water. When it is properly rubbed, the external smell disappears and the fragrance is revealed. Similarly the real knowledge is a rubbing to reveal the Absolute Self by removing the infinite, bad \textit{Vāsanās} sheltered in the mind\textsuperscript{72}.

\textsuperscript{70}VC. 271
\textsuperscript{71}VC. 272
\textsuperscript{72}VC. 273-274
As the mind goes deeper and deeper inside to the Self, the Vāsanās leave gradually. When they are completely removed, the realisation of the Self is without any obstacle. It is a very difficult task to withhold the mind from diverting to different directions drawn by the senses and to concentrate it on the Self. This most important step in the process of Self-realisation is Yoga.

73. VC. 276