

The course on ***Vedāntasāra*** comprises 15 lessons. A detailed description of the topics covered in each lesson is provided below.

Lesson 1: Introduction [Paragraphs 1 – 5]

- Introduction to the text and the author
- Prakaraṇa-grantha versus śāstra-grantha
- Maṅgalācaraṇa
 - The types of maṅgalācaraṇa
 - How the maṅgalācaraṇa indicates the anubandha-catuṣṭaya
 - How the maṅgalācaraṇa indicates svarūpa-, taṭastha- and atadvyāvṛtti-lakṣaṇas
- Vedānta as a means of Knowledge
 - The role of Śārīraka-sūtra
- The subject matter of Vedānta
- Anubandha-catuṣṭaya of *Vedāntasāra*
- The preliminary considerations of Vedānta

Lesson 2: The Qualified Student of Vedānta [Paragraphs 6 – 26]

- Qualifications for the study of Vedānta
- Types of karma – nitya, naimittika, kāmya, prāyaścitta
- Analysis of upāsanā
- Primary and secondary results of nitya- and naimittika-karmas
- Primary and secondary results of upāsanā
- Analysis of sādhana-catuṣṭaya
 - Viveka and vairāgya
 - Definitions of śama, dama, uparati, titikṣā, śraddhā, samādhāna
 - Mumukṣutva
- Hetu, kārya and avadhi for viveka, vairāgya, śamādi-ṣaṭka-sampatti and mumukṣutva
- Nididhyāsana and upāsanā and their difference
- Adhikārin – A qualified student

Lesson 3: Viśaya, Sambandha, Prayojana [Paragraphs 27 – 31]

- Viśaya of *Vedāntasāra*
- Sambandha
- Prayojana of *Vedāntasāra*
 - Śruti citation showing the prayojana
- Qualification of a student
- Qualification of the teacher
- Guru-upasādāna
- Method adopted by Guru in teaching – adhyāropa–apavāda

Lesson 4: Superimposition [Paragraphs 32 – 34]

- Definition of adhyāropa
- Definition of vastu and avastu

- Definition of ajñāna
- Bhāva-rūpa and abhāva-rūpa
- Nature of ajñāna as bhāva-rūpa

Lesson 5: Causal Universe [Paragraphs 35 – 50]

- Ajñāna is one or many when seen from vyaṣṭi and samaṣṭi standpoints respectively
- Illustration of tree and forest – avaccheda-vāda
- Illustration of water and reservoir – pratibimba-vāda
- Samaṣṭi-kāraṇa-upādhi having preponderance of viśuddha-sattva
- Qualities of the Consciousness associated with samaṣṭi-kāraṇa-upādhi
- Various appellations for Consciousness associated with samaṣṭi-kāraṇa-upādhi
- Vyaṣṭi-kāraṇa-upādhi having preponderance of malina-sattva
- Qualities associated with the Consciousness associated with vyaṣṭi-kāraṇa-upādhi
- Definition of prājña
- Various appellations for Consciousness associated with vyaṣṭi-kāraṇa-upādhi
- The commonality of experience of Īśvara and prājña in dreamless sleep
- Identity in samaṣṭi-kāraṇa and vyaṣṭi-kāraṇa
 - Identity at both Consciousness and upādhi levels
 - Identity shown with the illustration of the tree–forest and water–reservoir
- Unconditioned Consciousness explained – nature of Turīya
- Mahāvākya – vācyārtha and lakṣyārtha

Lesson 6: The Extensions of Ignorance [Paragraphs 51 – 56]

- The two powers of ajñāna
- Āvaraṇa-śakti – veiling power of ajñāna
 - Illustration of clouds covering the sun to demonstrate āvaraṇa-śakti
- Vikṣepa-śakti – projecting power of ajñāna
 - Illustration of snake projected on the rope to demonstrate vikṣepa-śakti
- Effects of ajñāna and its expressions as kartā and bhoktā
- Consciousness associated with ignorance
 - Becomes the nimitta-kāraṇa from its own standpoint
 - Becomes the upādāna-kāraṇa from the standpoint of its upādhi
- Illustration of spider and web to show Īśvara as the abhinna-nimitta-upādāna-kāraṇa

Lesson 7: Creation of the Subtle Universe [Paragraphs 57 – 97]

- Evolution of the five elements from the Self
 - Ajñāna as the material cause for creation and Caitanya as the efficient cause
 - The world being predominantly inert, we can infer its material cause also to be inert.
- The five elements are in tanmātra form and apañcīkṛta – uncompounded and in rudimentary subtle form
- Sūkṣma-śarīra is the same as linga-śarīra.
 - Why linga-śarīra is termed so
- Components of the linga-śarīra
- The five jñānendriyas and their creation from the individual sattvic aspect of the five subtle elements
- Antaḥkaraṇa and its creation from the collective sattvic aspect of the five subtle elements

- Components of the antaḥkaraṇa and its functions
 - Manas
 - Buddhi
 - Citta
 - Ahaṅkāra
- Vijñānamayakośa
 - Its components – buddhi along with the the five jñānendriyas
 - Its functions as the kartā and bhoktā
 - Vijñānamaya as the essential jīva
- Manomayakośa
 - Its components – manas along with the five jñānendriyas
- The five karmendriyas and their creation from the individual rajasic aspect of the five subtle elements
- The five prāṇas and their functions
 - The five prāṇas and their creation from the collective rajasic aspect of the five subtle elements
- Prāṇamayakośa
 - Its components – the five prāṇas along with the the five karmendriyas
- Manomayakośa, vijñānamayakośa and prāṇamayakośa together constitute the subtle body
- Samaṣṭi-sūkṣma-upādhi and vyaṣṭi-sūkṣma-upādhi
 - Illustration of tree–forest and water–reservoir for samaṣṭi- and vyaṣṭi-sūkṣma-upādhis
- Various appellations for Consciousness associated with samaṣṭi-sūkṣma-upādhi
- Qualities of the Consciousness associated with samaṣṭi-sūkṣma-upādhi
- Taijasa – Consciousness associated with vyaṣṭi-sūkṣma-upādhi
- The commonality of experience of Sūtrātman and Taijasa
- Identity in samaṣṭi-sūkṣma and vyaṣṭi-sūkṣma at both Consciousness and upādhi levels
 - Identity shown with the illustration of the tree–forest and water–reservoir

Lesson 8: Creation of the Gross Universe [Paragraphs 98 – 121]

- Pancīkaraṇa explained
 - Trivṛtkaraṇa as expounded in the śruti
 - The manifestation of sound, touch, form, taste and smell from the five gross five elements
 - The evolution of the 14 worlds and four kinds of gross bodies
- Types of gross bodies
- Samaṣṭi-sthūla-upādhi
- Consciousness associated with samaṣṭi-sthūla-upādhi
 - Various appellations for Consciousness associated with samaṣṭi-sthūla-upādhi
- Consciousness associated with vyaṣṭi-sthūla-upādhi
 - Various appellations for Consciousness associated with vyaṣṭi-sthūla-upādhi
- Annamayakośa explained
- The commonality of experience of Viśva and Vaiśvānara
- Identity in samaṣṭi-sthūla and vyaṣṭi-sthūla
 - Identity at both Consciousness and upādhi levels

- Identity shown with the illustration of the tree/forest and water/reservoir
- Identity of the aggregate sthūla- sūkṣma- and -kāraṇa-upādhis of samaṣṭi and vyaṣṭi
- Vācyartha and lakṣyartha of Īśvara and jīva

Lesson 9: Non-Vedāntic Schools of Philosophy [Paragraphs 122 – 133]

- Methodology of adhyāropa–apavāda
- Atiprākṛta – unrefined school of thought
- Viewpoints of the various Cārvākas
- Viewpoint of the Bauddha schools
- Viewpoint of the Mīmāṃsakas and the Bhāṭṭas
- Viewpoint of the Śūṇyavādin
- How/why the non-Vedāntic schools of philosophy have erred in their understanding of the nature of the Self
- Affirmation of Vedāntic school of thought
- Definition of apavāda

Lesson 10: De-Superimposition [Paragraphs 134 – 147]

- Negation of the non-Vedāntic schools
- Vikāra and vivarta explained
- Reduction of gross world to gross elements
- Reduction of gross elements to subtle elements
- Reduction of subtle elements to Īśvara
- Reduction of Īśvara to Brahman
- Introduction to ‘*Tat tvam asi*’ mahāvākya
- Introduction to literal and implied meanings
- Tat-pada vicāra
- Tvam-pada vicāra
- Vācyārtha and lakṣyārtha of ‘Tat’ and ‘tvam’

Lesson 11: Analysis of “Tat Tvam Asi” [Paragraphs 148 – 169]

- Preview of ‘*Tat tvam asi*’ mahāvākya analysis
- The three relationships
 - Sāmānādhikaraṇya
 - Viśeṣaṇa-viśeṣyabhāvaḥ
 - Lakṣya-lakṣaṇabhāva
- Need for lakṣya-lakṣaṇa-bhāva in ‘*Tat tvam asi*’
- Types of lakṣaṇas
 - Jahal-lakṣaṇa
 - Ajahal-lakṣaṇa
 - Bhāgat-yāga-lakṣaṇa
- Review of inapplicable interpretations for ‘*Tat tvam asi*’
 - Inapplicability of ajahal-lakṣaṇa
 - Inapplicability of jahal-lakṣaṇa
- Understanding the correct import of ‘*Tat tvam asi*’ by bhāga-tyāga-lakṣaṇa

Lesson 12: Analysis of Ahaṁ Brahmāsmi [Paragraphs 170 – 180]

- Anubhava-vākya – ahaṁ brahmāsmi
- Vṛtti-vyāpti and phala-vyāpti
- Generation of akhaṇḍākāra-vṛtti

- Akhaṇḍākāra-vṛtti removes ignorance
- Review of vṛtti-vyāpti and phala-vyāpti
- Vṛtti-vyāpti alone applicable to reveal the Self
- The Self-effulgence of Brahman
- Understanding of the contradictory statements about the Self being known as well as not known by the mind
- How Self-knowledge takes place

Lesson 13: Steps to Self-realisation – 1 (Śravaṇa, Manana, Nididhyāsana) [Paragraphs 181 – 192]

- Steps to Self-realisation
- Śravaṇa
- Śaḍvidhaliṅga
 - Upakrama-upasamhāra
 - Abhyāsa
 - Apūrvatā
 - Phala
 - Arthavāda
 - Upapatti
- Manana
- Nididhyāsana
- Śruti citations from the *Chāndogya-upaniṣad* sixth chapter to show how the śaḍvidhaliṅgas point to the non-dual Reality.

Lesson 14: Steps to Self-realisation – 2 (Samādhi) [Paragraphs 193 – 215]

- Two types of samādhi
 - Savikalpaka-samādhi
 - Nirvikalpaka-samādhi
 - Comparison of nididhyāsana, savikalpaka- and nirvikalpaka-samādhis
- The eight steps of aṣṭāṅga-yoga
 - Yama, niyama, āsana, praṇāyāma
 - Pratyāhāra, dhāraṇā, dhyāna, samādhi
- The four obstacles to nirvikalpaka-samādhi
 - Laya
 - Vikṣepa
 - Kaṣāya
 - Rasāsvāda
- Obstacles to samādhi and how to overcome them

Lesson 15: Jīvanmukti and Videhamukti [Paragraphs 216 – 227]

- Review and characteristics of a Jīvanmukta
- Videhamukti