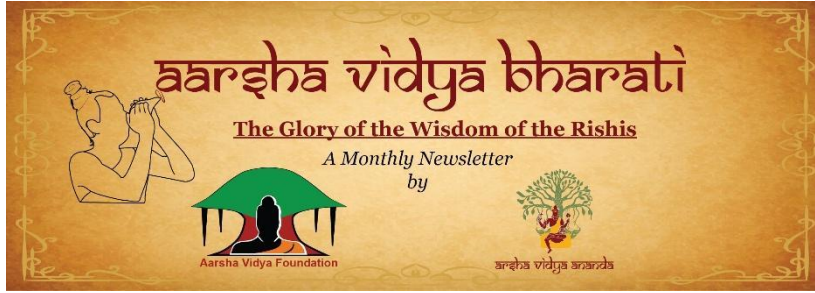

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A monthly newsletter that will bring you more happiness, more wisdom and more freedom



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Mithyā and the movie called Life

By Baldeep Singh, Dubai

Imagine you're in a theatre, watching a movie but with a minor twist - there's a slight lag between the visuals and the audio. This delay is just enough for you to grasp the storyline while also being acutely aware of your position as an external observer. Your experience is dual – you're both engaged in the narrative and distinctly separate from it.

Now, imagine that the lag disappears. It's a really good movie and the plot of the movie captivates you to such an extent that you're wholly absorbed, losing yourself in the visual and auditory spectacle. This deeper immersion leads you to a profound connection with the movie, where your sight and hearing senses are entirely synchronised with the unfolding scenes.

Taking this a step further, now imagine that you can smell the different environments of the movie, and your seat moves in sync with the action. All five senses are now fully enveloped in the movie (say an advanced Virtual Reality) and you resonate so deeply with the main character in the movie that their emotions become your own – their joy is your joy, their sorrow, your sorrow. It has become so alive for you. It is a fully immersive movie with sight, with taste, with smell, with sound, and even with touch**



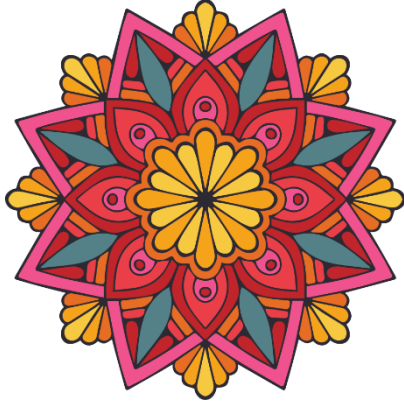
This is our movie! Exactly what we are experiencing right now 😊
Reflect on this for a moment.

Mithyā and Turīya

In Vedanta, 'Turīya' is our true-self (mostly forgotten when immersed in the movie called life), and the 'waker identity' is our everyday, waking self (the character mistakenly identified in the movie to be the real you). The *Maṇḍūkya* Upanishad, teaches us that our over-identification with the waker identity, due to *avidyā*, leads to 'Samsāra' – the cycle of life and death influenced by our actions and desires. This

identification is seen as '*mithyā*', which is a paradoxical state ontologically – neither fully existent nor completely non-existent. It's in the category of being 'as though existent'. But it's still you, the pure consciousness that is lighting the entire movie of your life. The entire movie is shining in the light of you, consciousness.

Satyam meets Mithyā or Does it?



With this understanding, an interesting question arises: What is the relationship between '*satyam*' (the observer or the true self) and '*mithyā*' (the observed or the world of phenomena we are calling the movie) in the context of our lives?

Vedantic teachings, supported by various scriptures and *kārikā*-s, offer three inter-connected perspectives:

1. *Satyam* as the Sole Reality: This view asserts that there is only '*satyam*' – the ultimate truth. Every bit of '*mithyā*' is nothing but '*satyam*'. The distinction between the observer and the observed is *mithyā*, as all is one undivided reality.
2. Dependence of *Mithyā* on *Satyam*: Here, '*mithyā*' is seen as having a borrowed existence from '*satyam*'. It's akin to a pot, which has no independent existence apart from the clay it's made of. The relationship between them is that of the real (*satyam*) and the apparent (*mithyā*).
3. Observer as Part of the Observed: This perspective challenges the distinction between the observer and the observed. The observer, often considered detached and separate, is also seen as an integral part of the observed reality.

Embracing the Ultimate Reality that is YOU!

As we navigate through the movie called life, embracing its highs and lows, joys and sorrows, the wisdom of '*Mithyā*' offers a guiding light. It reminds us that while we partake in this grand cosmic play, *Satyam*, our true self remains unchanged—the eternal consciousness in which the entire movie is shining. In this understanding lies the key to peace and true liberation.

** Example adapted from 'Untethered Soul' by Michael A Singer

(Baldeep Singh attends the *Maṇḍūkya* Upanishad with *kārikā* class by Swamini Brahmajnananda)