the essential Ādi Shankara

BY D. B. GANGOLLI

PUBLISHED BY
ADHYATMA PRAKASHA KARYALAYA
BANGALORE
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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

We have great pleasure in publishing this English rendering of revered Shri Satchidanandendra Saraswati Swamiji's Kannada magnum opus — "Shankara Vedanta Saara" — for the benefit of those devotees who do not know that language. Coming in the wake of other English books like "The Salient Features of Shaankara Vedanta" and "The Science of Being" — both of them written by Shri Swamiji himself — and "The Magic Jewel of Intuition" — a transliteration of Swamiji's Kannada book, "Paramaartha Chintaamani" by Shri D. B. Gangolli, an ardent devotee of Swamiji — this present work by Shri Gangolli is yet another Vedantic 'jewel' indeed of immense benefit to the true seeker of Self-Knowledge (Aatma Jnaana).

It is fairly well-known by now that any individual, who to study the numerous Vedantic texts by himself without the aid and guidance of a knowledgeable teacher well versed in the traditional methodology utilized by our ancient sages and seers, particularly that colossus of a spiritual preceptor, viz. Shri Shankara Bhagavatpaada, is more likely to get confused and confounded by the apparent contradictory teachings. This holds good even in the case of many scholars, intellectuals and anchorites. No wonder then that among the avowed followers of Shri Shankara themselves there seems to be a pronounced lack of unanimity and agreement in so far as the interpretation of the famous "Praslaana Trayaa Bhaashyaas" is concerned. Most of the differences of opinion with regard to the true purport of the Upanishadic teachings are due to a total ignorance of that traditional (Saampradaayic) methodology of teaching as well as understanding. In fact, it would not be an exaggeration if it is stated here in this context that unless and until the genuine, dedicated seeker discerns this unique comprehensive methodology which runs in and through the fabric of the Vedantic lore, like its warp and woof, he will not be able to reconcile those apparent contradictions, nor will he be able to attain that abiding conviction and consummation of Self-Knowledge propounded in all the Shrutis and Smritis.

That unique, comprehensive methodology is based on "Adhyaaroapa Apawaada Nyaaya" or the maxim of Superimposition and Rescission. After a life-time research and selfless dedicated effort Shri Swamiji unearthed this singular, profound traditional methodology which was implicit in all the Upanishadic texts but not fully understood by the later commentators and teachers. He meticulously correlated and compiled relevant Bhaashya excerpts to substantiate his conclusions and endeavoured to focus the attention of all true seekers on its importance as well as its infallibility through most of his works. Incidentally, Shri Swamiji has drawn pointed attention of his followers
to rely totally on the extant works of the three Saampradaayic teachers, viz. Shri Gaudapaada, Shri Shankara and Shri Sureshwara, so as to be able to reconcile possible contradictions and conflicting theories.

Side by side with the tradition of Absolutism or Non-dualism (Advaita) which these great teachers have indelibly perpetrated in their works, there were other Monistic schools which claimed to represent the original Upanishadic teachings. Except for one honourable exception in Shri Sureshwara (a direct disciple of Shri Shankara) all other post-Shankara Advaitins, even while professing to explain Shri Shankara's Bhaashyas, have succumbed either to the inference of the ancient Monists or to that of the later 'dualistic' Vedantins and thus lost sight of the only method which holds the master-key to the right understanding of the Upanishadic teaching.

It is our firm conviction that this English transliteration dealing with 26 important topics — several of them having given rise to raging controversies in high spiritual circles — is assuredly the first attempt of its kind and that it is sure to revolutionize many of the current notions regarding the true nature or purport of Shri Shankara's Advaita Vedanta. We have brought out this handy publication at a moderate price, despite the prohibitive printing and paper costs, so as to cater to the needs of a variety of students and seekers alike. This unique book contains in a nut-shell the most reliable and authentic information on Shankara's pristine pure Advaita Vedanta, pure and simple, purged of all later controversial and conceptual accretions, since it is based completely on the original Bhaashyas by that world teacher. By way of showing the contrast, it gives a critical account of the distinctive features of the sub-commentaries of the post-Shankara era and solves quite convincingly all doubts and objections raised by the present-day Vedantins.

We hope that this publication will be appreciated by all critical students of Advaita Vedanta and true seekers of Self-Knowledge.

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Bangalore - 560 028
January 15, 1991

Price: Rs.75
Quotations adduced are taken from the books indicated below and are English translations of:

1. Principal Upanishads with Commentaries of Shri Shankaraachaarya;
2. Brahma Sutra Bhshyam;
3. Bhagavadgeeta;
4. Upadesha Sahasri of Shri Shankaraachaarya — all these published by Advaita Ashram, Calcutta, and Shri Ramakrishna Math, Madras.

Quotations from Svetaashwatara and Jabaala Upanishads are from "The Principal Upanishads" by Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, published by George Allen & Unwin Ltd., London.

References

2. Chhaandogya Upanishad -do-
3. Bhagavadgeeta -do-
4. Brahma Sutra Bhshya -do-
5. Brihadaaranyaka Upanishad — By Swami Madhavananda
6. Upadesha Sahasri (A Thousand Teachings)
   — By Swami Jagadananda

List of Abbreviations

Ait. Bh — Aitareya Bhshya.
Su. Bh. — Brahma Sutra Bhshya.
Br. Up — Brihadaaranyaka Upanishad.
Br. Bh. — Brihadaaranyaka Bhshya.
Ch. Up. — Chhandogya Upanishad.
Ch. Bh. — Chhandogya Bhshya.
Isa Up. — Isa Upanishad.
Isa Bh. — Isa Bhshya.
Ka. Bh. — Katha Bhshya.
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<td>Ke. Bh.</td>
<td>Kena Bhashya.</td>
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<td>Mu. Bh.</td>
<td>Mundaka Bhashya.</td>
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<td>Pr. Bh.</td>
<td>Prashna Bhashya.</td>
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<td>Tal Up.</td>
<td>Taittireeya Upanishad.</td>
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PREFACE

There are innumerable books published in the name of Shri Adi Shankara but to an unbiased, discerning mind it becomes quite clear that they present and propound tenets which are fundamentally contradictory to one another, as also dogmatic or doctrinaire in content. It also becomes evident that even those eminent scholars, who profess and parade quite ostentatiously their erudition swearing by and in the name of Adi Shankara, are intriguingly popularising various but mutually contradictory methodologies and interpretations inter se. With the result, those inveterate opponents and critics of Shri Shankara, who are ever ready to pick holes in his Advaita (Non-dualistic) philosophy, are having a field day and an ample scope for criticizing and controverting the great Achaarya's teachings. It being so, the genuine seekers of the Ultimate Reality (viz. Muktihus) get, more often than not, confused and confounded, unable to reckon as to what is the genuine methodology of teaching of Shri Adi Shankara.

It is accepted universally that the genuine works of Adi Shankara are his famous Prasthaana Traya Bhaashyas which are his original commentaries on the triad of authoritative canonical sources, viz. the ten principal Upanishads, the Bhagawadgeeta and the Vedanta Sootras (popularly going by the name of Brahma Sootras), and these being extant in their original texts or forms with hardly any variations, there is no scope or possibility for any one to challenge their authenticity or authorship. But it will be a Herculean task, if at all, for the common people — why, even for many scholars — to study all these original Bhaashyas meticulously, sift and codify the great savant's genuine spiritual teachings of philosophy by themselves. Hence, this stupendous task has been attempted in this treatise with a good deal of success.

The first and foremost, as also an exclusive, feature of this treatise is to dissect and diligently analyse all those difficulties and anomalies which may apparently be met with by a seeker as he endeavours on his own to collate and confirm the teachings of the Bhaashyas, and to point out all those important aspects of those tenets to be remembered. The second, but equally valuable, feature of this book is an extraordinary attempt being made herein to codify Adi Shankara's teachings under 26 different topics or heads of burning interest to a true Vedantin and to give a big list of quotations or excerpts from these Prasthaana Traya Bhaashyas so as to substantiate and justify the codified conclusions so drawn under each topic in all its wide range of aspects or perspectives. Perhaps, such an arduous attempt made with regard to so many topics — especially those which have given rise to a great number of controversies — being enumerated and elaborated upon in one single
book is the first of its kind, or at least unparalleled. Thus it will not be an exaggeration or a false claim if it is said that this treatise will provide a much-needed opportunity for seekers and scholars alike to ratiocinate and ruminate over a good many thought-provoking topics and tenets.

After having stated briefly the subject-matter of this treatise, its need in these present times and its special features, it would be in the fitness of things to remind ourselves about the time, the place of his birth and such other related aspects of history of this world-renowned philosopher-saint. But it is unfortunate that barring the fact of his place of birth to be Kaaladi in Kerala the other details of his life history have become topics of raging controversies, and this confusion is caused despite there being nearly 10 to 12 so-called “Shankara Vijayas”, which are eulogies pertaining to the Achaarya’s achievements and deeds and which contain mutually conflicting accounts or statements. None of these “Shankara Vijayas” is written by a contemporary of the Achaarya; besides, all of them differ on the main points and features from one another. Whether it was because his contemporaries did neither envisage nor cultivate a historical perspective or whether it was because the writers of his time attached all importance to his spiritual teachings alone (and perhaps thought that if his doctrines are discussed and disserted, it would amount to the best way of remembering and adoring him), except for the Vedantic texts that Adi Shankara authored and the post-Shankara commentaries and sub-commentaries on them we do not have any other clues to confirm the facts of his historical background. Hence we have to content ourselves with whatever spiritual teachings Adi Shankara has bequeathed to and bestowed upon us through his works, especially his Prasthaana Traya Bhaashyas, and try sincerely to adapt and integrate, to whatever extent possible, our present way of life, and style of life to boot, in keeping with the innate and implicit ethos of his teachings so as to be worthy of being his followers or admirers.

There exists a deep-seated misconception in certain quarters that Shri Adi Shankara was the founder of Advaita Vedanta (Non-dualism). There is no dearth, however, of evidence to prove that he belonged to a line of traditional teachers (Sampradaaya) of spiritual wisdom like Shri Gaudapaada, Shri Dravidaachaarya, Shri Brahmaanandi etc. Shri Shankara has quoted a verse in the Taittireeyya Bhaashya which runs as: “Yairime Gurubhihi Poorvam Padavaakyapramaanataha, Vyaakhyaaataaaha Sarvavedaantaastaannityam Pranatoasmyaham.” This is a clincher. In the same manner, there are statements in his Brihadaaranyaka and Brahma Sootra Bhaashyas referring to them as “spiritual teachers who knew and belonged to the Vedanta Sampradaaya.” From this it will be evident that by the phrase
— "Shankara’s spiritual teachings" — it does not mean that they are his own instructions conceived or founded originally by him. It also implies that among the teachings of his predecessors belonging to this traditional line of preceptors these instructions found in Adi Shankara’s original Bhaashyas must necessarily exist at least in an implicit seed form, but which were later on made explicit by him to suit the needs and circumstances of his times. Thus, in a secondary sense if we say that these are ‘Shankara’s teachings’ it will not be improper. However, one salient feature about these matters we cannot afford to forget or neglect, and that is: Barring the Kaarikas of Shri Gaudapaadaachaarya, no other explanatory commentaries belonging to this particular Sampradaaya of Advaita Vedanta or sub-commentaries thereof are available now at all. Not only that, but also even the dissentions or criticisms by Vedantins belonging to an opposite camp are not available in their original forms whatsoever. Under the circumstances, it is tantamount to saying that all the genuine traditional Vedantic teachings up to the times of Adi Shankara have necessarily to be treated as coming down to us exclusively through his Bhaashyas alone. How far these spiritual precepts are true and relevant, especially in these modern times of civilization and unimaginable scientific advance, will have to be found out only after the aspirants test their veracity by adopting correctly the methodology that is enunciated and expounded in a highly profound, rational or scientific manner by these traditional teachers. One important fact, however, should never be lost sight of in this regard, and that is: Because the Ultimate, Absolute Reality (Brahman, Atman) that these teachers unanimously and unequivocally propounded is beyond the time-space-causation categories (why say more, beyond all empirical dealings), there is no scope or possibility whatsoever at any period of time, anywhere in any clime for anyone to refute or controvert these truths (as they are immutable and Intuitive). In support of this affirmation Shri Gaudapaada’s Kaarika can be quoted: "Asparshayoagoa Vai Naama Sarvasatwasauskhoa Hitaha, Avivaaoa Aviruddhascha Deshitastam Namaamyaham."

We who live in the world of ‘Contemporary Thought’ can hardly afford to discard its parallelisms with the tendencies and theories of the thinking world of today. But any true students of philosophy who will take the trouble and pains to discern the common methodology and unity of purpose running in and through all the arguments and assertions in the present treatise will notice how very thought-provoking it would be for those who are genuinely interested in the tendencies, theories (nay, vagaries) of Contemporary philosophy. No wonder then that there are proponents who affirm that the Upanishadic philosophy propounds apparently doctrines of Absolute Monism, of Personalistic Idealism, of Pantheism, of Dualism, of Solipsism, of Self-Realization, of the difference between Intellectual and Intuitive
dealings, and so on, and all these doctrines have divided the philosophic world of today indeed.

With the stupendous advance of scientific knowledge and with the ever-increasing means for communication and interchange of thought forms or constructs the universe is indeed becoming closer and consolidated into a single stock, so to speak, and the majority of the Western philosophers cannot any more afford to look down upon the time-honoured systems of Indian spiritual (philosophical) science, particularly the Vedantic science. It can be asserted without any fear of being contradicted that the very same problems and predicaments which in the present times divide a Bradley from a Bosanquet, a Ward from a Royce, also divided the Upanishadic philosophers as in the case of the Shad Darshanakaaras of ancient times. Those very pyramidal depiction of the Ultimate Reality as on the basis of space and time with the qualitative emergence of Life and Mind and Deity in the course of evolution found in Western philosophy is to be found with a striking profound semblance of parallelism here in the Vedantic philosophy. In fact, the very acute analysis of the epistemology of Self-Consciousness, which we meet with in the Upanishads, can easily hold its own against any similar doctrine even of the most advanced thinker of today, thus nullifying, nay rebutting, once for all the influence of that ill-conceived and half-thought-out bluster of an early European writer on the Upanishads that — 'They are the work of a rude age, a deteriorated race, and a barbarous and unprogressive community.'

Suffice it to say that this treatise will surely bring to the notice of such irresponsible and chronically prejudiced critics — whether Western or Indian — 'the variety and wealth of Upanishadic ideas on every conceivable subject in the domain of philosophy', and then in that event this book would have fulfilled its raison d'être. In conclusion, if at all the present treatise points to any moral, 'it is the moral of the life of beatific vision' enjoyed at all times by the Jnaani, the Realized soul.

Now, a few points to be noted by the reader while going through this text. This being a free transliteration of the original Kannada book, entitled — "Shankara Vedanta Saara" by Shri Satchidanandendra Saraswati Swamiji, of Holenarsipur, of revered memory, it may contain many sentences which are long and involved desiderating some elucidation here and there; such explanatory remarks or notes have been given within brackets if only to facilitate the correct interpretation or understanding by the reader. Secondly, this treatise deals with a highly subtle, esoteric and profound subject needing an utmost degree of concentration of the mind on the part of the reader (who should be sincere and devoted, one expects, and not casual in his approach to the subject) and hence there may be many repetitions of sentences, phrases or technical Sanskrit terms with slight variations in their
connotations to suit the context in which they are used. But they are relentlessly repeated invariably with a view to helping the seeker (especially one who is too raw or immature for Vedantic dialectic) to cognize the real and correct import or purport only. For this reason alone, this (defect of) repetition may be condoned and construed to be rather an aid (nay, a virtue).

The English translations of the original Sanskrit excerpts of Shri Shankaraachaarya’s extant Bhaashyas (original) are selected from the books by reputed authors, mainly from the Ramakrishna Mission Order, and are given in the relevant Chapters and sections. The Chapters deal with many topics of Vedantic philosophy, and since several of them have given rise to controversies prevalent and kept alive in some circles, a diligent attempt has been made by the author to thrash out the discrepancies and the discordant notes to be found in the various interpretations (in vogue) in many present-day Vedantic texts by taking recourse to Adi Shankara’s clarifications in his own original Bhaashyas. As a result, many a familiar and popular notion or conception held by even seasoned Vedantins may be rendered to be misconceptions, nay misrepresentations or misinterpretations of the original text. However, in such an event the reader should not have or harbour any bias, rancour or malice at heart and with an open mind (full of catholicity) should try to reckon the truth to his own benefit.

An attempt has been made to arrange the topics in a thematic sequential order to facilitate better understanding and appreciation of the genuine Vedantic teachings of Adi Shankara, to whose adoration and memory this volume has been dedicated by me. Equally I dedicate it to the memory of my spiritual guide and Guru but for whose grace I would not have undertaken such an arduous and ticklish task.

I am beholden to the Publishers, Adhyatma Prakasha Karyalaya, Bangalore Branch, Thyagarajanagar, Bangalore - 560 028, for giving me this opportunity to serve this great institution which is propagating pristine pure Advaita Vedanta of Adi Shankara for over two decades in the city. I am particularly grateful to Shri K. G. Subraya Sharma, M.A., the Karyalaya’s enterprising and energetic Secretary, for his unstinted cooperation and encouragement in my work. I am greatly indebted to the Printers, Verba Network Services, Malleswaram, Bangalore - 560 003, who have left no stone unturned in bringing out this attractive edition. Last but not the least, I am grateful to all those others who have given me moral support and to the readers.

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January 15, 1991

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THE ESSENTIAL ADI SHANKARA

I. INTRODUCTION

1. It is proposed to present in this treatise the essentials of Vedanta (i.e. the Indian or Hindu philosophical science) which are acceptable to (or authenticated by) Shri Adi Shankara. In the Indian continent many Vedantins prior to and after that great saint have composed treatises on Vedanta. But even to this day the special and inimitable features of that great teacher's spiritual teachings have remained exclusively unique and unparalleled. His spiritual teachings of Advaita Vedanta philosophy are relevant, alive and vibrant; are even to this day providing thought-provoking concepts to the discerning seekers with regard to their well-being and all-round progress here in this life and hereafter.

Shri Shankaraachaarya, like the other ancient preceptors, has written his treatises acknowledging fully the validity and authority of the Vedas. His writings are, in fact, of the form or nature of commentaries on the Upanishads. But, he has stressed the fact that Vedanta philosophy (as depicted or taught in the Upanishads) has expounded the Reality which can be Intuitively experienced (or to be short, Intuited) here and now (while living in this body). Shri Shankaraachaarya's extraordinary and exclusive opinion and teaching is: "That the Ultimate or Absolute Reality alone, which is in consonance with SaarvatrIka Poorna Anubhava (universally acknowledged reason or dialectic and Intuitive experience) is taught or expounded in Vedanta philosophy". He has promised and pledged his word of honour that by virtue of Self-Knowledge or Jnaana vouched by the Vedanta philosophical science all the vicissitudes and ills of Man's transmigratory existence or Samsaara will be completely rooted out; hence, everyone (irrespective of his or her religious faith, ideology, nationality or culture) may make a sincere and dedicated attempt to attain this Self-Knowledge. Besides, this eminent preceptor has the spiritual support of a prominent lineage of traditional teachers like Shri Gaudapaada, Shri Dravidaachaarya, Shri Brahmaanandi etc.; but Shri Shankara has nowhere in all his commentaries or treatises said that one should believe in any textual or literary meanings or interpretations on the mere strength or support of traditional tenets or concepts. On the other hand, he opines that — "If any school of philosophy, whatever or whichever it may be, is defective and opposed or contrary to one's Intuitive experience, then it is fit to be condemned or refuted; on the other hand, let it be any philosophical teaching, if it is indisputable and cannot be invalidated by whatever means and if it is
especially in consonance with universal or everyone's experience, then that spiritual teaching or exposition deserves to be respected, revered." Thus the essence of the Vedantic philosophy taught by this world teacher and which will be appreciated and approved by the present-day spiritual seekers in all its aspects will be presented in this small treatise. It is our firm and fond hope that those true seekers, who cannot by themselves understand or comprehend the subtle teachings by directly reading Shri Shankara's original treatises and commentaries or Bhaashyas in Sanskrit, will find this book fully trust-worthy and useful.

2. There exist already several Prakarana Granthas or his own treatises in which the Vedantic methodology of teaching by Shri Shankara is compiled. Among them some have become well-known as works by Shri Shankara himself; some others are compiled by the followers of commentators of Shri Shankara's original works. Because these books are written in Sanskrit language, there is no benefit accruing from them to those who do not know or understand that language. Even to those who know and understand Sanskrit these treatises are not likely to expound or teach beyond doubt Shri Shankara's pure Vedanta philosophy. For, they contain various methodologies which are mutually contradictory; some of them, written in a style bristling with bizarre and jarring dialectic, are beyond the ken of limited intellects. Many such books written so far in regional languages are translations of those books alone; they too are replete with these defects. Some other books, though they are written independently, are following the Sanskrit treatises virtually as their replicas. In any of these books there do not exist the important teachings culled out from Shri Shankara's Bhaashyas or original commentaries. Especially, a singular treatise which elucidates and elaborates completely and comprehensively the principal or fundamental methodology which is the exclusive prerogative and feature of Shri Shankara's pristine pure Vedanta of Non-dualism (Advaita Vedanta) is not yet compiled in any language at all. In order to fill up this lacuna this treatise entitled — "The Essential Adi Shankara" — is composed.

3. In this treatise there are some teachings written in an orderly manner pertaining to different topics based on statements collected together from the original commentaries by Shri Shankara on the Prasthaana Traya or the three categories of texts (viz. the Shruti Prasthaana comprising the ten principal Upanishads — Isha, Kena, Katha, Prashna, Mundaka, Maandookya, Aitareya, Taittireeya, Chhaandogya and Brihadaaranyakas; the Smriti Prasthaana — Bhagavadgeeta; and the Nyaaya Prasthaana — the Vedanta
Meemaamsaa Sootras or popularly known as Brahma Sootras). The *Upanishads* are fundamentally the authoritative sources of the Vedantic philosophy; because they form one part of the Vedas, they are called Shruti. *Bhagavadgeeta* is a text contained in the epic called *Mahabhaarat* written by revered Veda Vyaasa in order to explain and elucidate the purport and teachings of the Shrutis; because this *Bhagavadgeeta* is written by remembering or memorising the teachings and purport of the Shrutis, that text is called Smriti; *Vedanta Meemaamsaa Sootras* (or the *Brahma Sootras*) is a text of the form of aphorisms written by Shri Badarayana in order to determine the spiritual teaching purported to be expounded in the *Upanishads* along with the concurrence of *Bhagavadgeeta* by means of and on the strength of Yukti or dialectic: hence, it is called Nyaaya Prasthaana. Because these three categories of texts, viz. Shruti, Smriti and Nyaaya, have ventured out in three different paths or approaches, each one adopting its own exclusive viewpoint or perspective, to depict the spiritual teaching of Vedanta, they are customarily termed “Prasthaana Traya”, meaning three paths or approaches. In this book we have predominantly reckoned the commentaries of Shri Shankara on the Prasthana Traya alone as the valid or authoritative means to establish the validity or veracity of any spiritual teaching. The readers may determine or judge that teachings contrary to those found in these Bhaashyas — irrespective of the fact that they may be any texts or treatises by any great post-Shankara author — are not pure Advaita Vedanta of Adi Shankara.

4. In these days it is to be found, to a great extent, that those who teach Vedanta philosophy to the common run of people are doing so by mixing up alien methodologies of different Darshanas or schools of philosophy like Saankhya, Yoga, Nyaaya, Vaisheshika and Poorva Meemaamsaa etc. It is also a fact that Shri Shankara has at various places in his Bhaashyas written his opinions blending the paths or approaches of the remaining Darshanas in Vedanta. “Paramatam Apratishtddham Anunlatam Bhavati” (Sootra Bhaashya 2-4-12). He has utilized the Tantra Yukti or pragmatic axiom of “What we have not refuted as not proper in the teachings of other schools of philosophy, that may be taken as acceptable to us to be true”. Therefore, it is not at all wrong or improper if from the point of view of grasping or comprehending the essential purport, other reasonable methodologies are used. But discarding the Ultimate Reality of Brahman or Atman, which is the prime purport of Vedanta philosophy, either to reckon the other philosophical texts alone to comprise wholly the genuine Vedantic philosophy or to acknowledge methodologies contrary to the Vedantic methodology can never be proper or justifiable. Hence, we will keep on pointing out here and there the dialectic methods of the other
Schools of philosophy which are refuted or condemned in the \textit{Prasthaana Trayaa Bhaashyaa}.

5. In order to explain the purport of Shri Shankara's \textit{Bhaashyaa} there are \textit{Vyaakhyaanaa} or sub-commentaries. But those \textit{Vyaakhyaanaa} have employed methodologies which are contrary to the original \textit{Bhaashyaa}. \textit{Vaartikaa}, which are written by way of further explaining the \textit{Bhaashyaa} on the \textit{Brihadaaraanyaka} and the \textit{Taittireeya Upanishads}, commentaries called \textit{Panchapaadika} and \textit{Bhaamat}, which are available with regard to \textit{Vedanta Meemaamsaa Bhaashyaa} (of Shri Shankara) — are predominant among such \textit{Vyaakhyaanaa} or sub-commentaries. Because all these three \textit{Vyaakhyaanaa} are mutually contradictory, we have not taken them for consideration or examination here in this book. Those teachings which are not contrary to the methodology which we have acknowledged (in this treatise) may be accepted or grasped by the true seekers from the viewpoint of understanding or cognizing the essential purport, i.e. the \textit{Ultimate Reality of Atman}, even from these \textit{Vyaakhyaanaa} and there cannot be any objection whatsoever in doing so. But in this treatise which we have compiled for the sake of those aspirants who wish to know the pristine pure \textit{Vedanta} philosophy of Adi Shankara alone (totally based on his own original \textit{Bhaashyaa} on the \textit{Prasthaana Trayaa}) we have purposefully kept out of consideration these \textit{Vyaakhyaanaa}.

6. Shri Shankara has used some \textit{Paaribhaashika Shabdas} or technical terms, some \textit{Drishtaantaas} or illustrations as also some \textit{Nyaayaas} or axioms in his works. The present-day Vedantins have conceived, in addition to those terms, certain other technical terms; they have used those technical terms and illustrations which Shri Shankara has utilized in a different manner and with a different connotation, and they have, as a result, drawn different conclusions; either they have not taken into the reckoning his axioms as much as they deserved, or even if they have considered his axioms, they have conceived a different meaning or interpretation for them. In order to bring home this lapse on their part to the seekers we have used in this treatise, to a great extent, those very technical terms which Shri Shankara has utilized; not only we have mentioned the synonyms of those terms at several places but also wherever we felt it necessary we have briefly mentioned whatever different meanings have been conceived for those particular terms by the present-day Vedantins. Wherever necessary, we have also indicated how and in what aspect the illustrations (used by Shri Shankara in his original \textit{Bhaashyaa}) are correctly used and how they should not be utilized in a particular manner with a particular sense. Indicating briefly the relevant axioms, we have also brought home the necessity of remembering those axioms. By this method not only the seekers
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become familiar with Shri Shankara's style of discrimination but also they will discern very clearly the immense value of his profound, sublime methodology. Besides, with the help of this type of deliberation the seekers can imagine that, although books are published in the name of Adi Shankara, in which such technical terms, illustrations and axioms are used with different meanings or interpretations — or apart from these, totally different terminology is used — in truth, all of them cannot be accepted as the works by that great world teacher.

7. In this book, for those sentences from Shri Shankara's Bhaashyas, which are alluded to in the brief footnotes for the purpose of substantiation and authenticity, we have not given detailed explanations, for their purport is, to a large extent, implicit or is included in our main text. The complete meaning of those original Sanskrit sentences in the extant Bhaashyas can be grasped by those who have a smacking knowledge of Sanskrit, first by reading them and later on getting them fully explained by knowledgeable Vedantins; or, in the alternative, they can know from detailed English translations of these commentaries published by monks of the Shri Ramakrishna Mission, a list of which is given at the beginning in this treatise. It can be affirmed here that for all those who aspire to know the quintessence of Adi Shankara's pristine pure Vedanta the text in this book is sure to satiate all their curiosity and inquisitiveness beyond a shadow of doubt. Those students who wish to study exclusively (for academic purposes) the original Bhaashyas by Adi Shankara — if they do so under the tutelage and guidance of a preceptor and then contemplate, it can be assured that the prime teachings of the original commentator, viz. Adi Shankara, and their real purport will be discerned. Thereafter if they pursue their study by reading in a detailed and incisive manner it would amount to their studying the Bhaashyas in a 'Samaasa-Vyaasa Paddhati' (method of studying first in a brief manner followed by a detailed and elaborate manner). This treatise will provide a greater help and guidance to those superior students or post-graduates who have a burning desire to reconcile all teachings of the Prasthaana Traya Bhaashyas after scrutinizing all of them. Especially to 'Mumukshus' (those desirous of attaining Moakssha or Self-Knowledge here and now in this very life), who have neither the time or scope of studying all the voluminous Bhaashyas nor the capacity to do so but who aspire to adopt an ascetic's, anchorite's way of life following the principal spiritual teachings as taught by Shri Shankara even in their daily routine for Manana (discriminative deliberation based on Intuitive reasoning or Anubhavaanga Tarka), a more helpful or valuable book than this one will not be available. Thus this small treatise has been compiled with a view to catering to the varied requirements of different classes of readers and seekers.
II. VEDANTA

8. The author of every text or treatise on philosophy should mention at the outset these three objectives, viz. Abhideya or the subject-matter of the text; Sambandha or its relevance and relationship; and Prayaogjana or its benefit or the purpose served by it. For, unless and until the subject-matter dealt with in the text, the benefit accruing from its knowledge and the relationship between the subject-matter and its benefit are known beforehand no one endeavours to study the text. The Adhikaari or qualified or fit person is one for whose sake the text has been written and recommended. There is a custom or convention of calling all these four aspects — viz. Adhikaari, Abhideya (or Vishaya), Sambandha and Prayaogjana — together Anubandha Chatushtaya. The Upanishadic lore as well as the philosophical or spiritual science in it that is expounded is called Vedanta by the knowledgeable scholars. Therefore, either with regard to the Upanishadic texts or with regard to the spiritual science of Vedanta expounded in it the Anubandha Chatushtaya has to be first of all explained as a matter of convention.

9. There are many Vedantic schools of philosophy. There are many people who have written commentaries on Prashtaana Trayaa. In the southern parts of India nowadays commentaries by three preceptors, viz. Madhwa, Raamaanuja and Shankara, are in vogue. This treatise, which we have compiled, is the Vedanta philosophy in consonance or agreement with Shri Shankara’s Bhaashyas. The special features of this Vedanta have been already mentioned by us in section no. 1 briefly. Henceforth we will use the word “Vedanta” with reference to Shri Shankara’s Vedanta alone. The text that we have now compiled has been given the name of — “The Essential Adi Shankara”. Because it signifies the essentials of Vedanta philosophy approved by Adi Shankara and because it contains the very essence of Vedanta philosophical (or spiritual) science, which is “Shankara”; meaning, that which bestows material or mundane prosperity upon Jeevas or souls, this treatise can be given the significant appellation of “The Essential Adi Shankara”.

10. For Vedanta philosophy the Abhideya or subject-matter is Brahman, the Ultimate Reality. Because Brahmana Vidya or knowledge of Brahman destroys the bondage of Samsaara or transmigratory life or existence of those devotees who examine or deliberate upon it (Brahma Vidya) with dedication and discrimination and because it enables them to attain that Brahmanhood or what goes in spiritual parlance as Self-Knowledge or Self-Realization, this knowledge is called Upanishad. For this word — “Upanishad” — this alone is the principal meaning. In a secondary sense, the spiritual texts which are the means to know
Brahma Vidya are also called Upanishads. The statements in these Upanishads alone have been explained by Shri Shankara through his commentaries. Those statements alone are the prime or fundamental sources of authority and authenticity for the Vedantic deliberation. Either those Upanishadic statements or the Bhaashya sentences pertaining to those Upanishadic quotations alone we will go on mentioning at various places according to the context.


11. It becomes quite evident from the above description with regard to Abhideya alone that Prayaagjana or the benefit accruing from Upanishad, meaning Brahma Vidya, is the destruction of the root cause or the seed form of Samsaara like Avidya etc., as also the attainment of Brahman. Brahman is verily our Atman or Self alone; Samsaara (the transmigratory existence of the apparent form of the dualistic world) is appearing in that Atman because of Avidya (ignorance) alone. Therefore, it amounts to saying that, in a sequential order, the benefit accruing from Vedanta Shaasatra or the scriptural (Vedantic) texts — because they teach or expound Brahma Vidya which removes Avidya — is verily to destroy the dualistic world which is of the apparent form of miseries and misfortunes of life and to help attain Atman or Self of the essential nature of Brahman, the Ultimate Reality. Just as when a person, suffering from a disease, is cured of that disease, he is said to regain his health, similarly when by virtue of Brahma Vidya the calamities and miseries caused by Avidya are removed, the seeker is reinstated or re-established, so to speak, in his essential nature of Atman, which is Advaita or non-dual, and this regaining one's Swasthataa (one's own essential nature) alone is the paramount benefit accruing from Vedanta Shaasatra. (Swasthataa, Swaalmarti Avasthaa, SwaAtma Pratishthaa, Swaroopavaasthaa — all these are synonymous Vedantic terms).


12. Between Brahma Vidya (Self-Knowledge) and Brahma Praaptti (attainment of Brahmanhood) which is of the nature of ‘Swasthataa’ there exists a relationship of ‘means’ and ‘end’; for, Brahma Vidya is Saadhana or the practical means, Brahma Praaptti is Saadhya or the resultant fruit or goal, end. Between Vedanta Shaasatra and Brahma Vidya there exists a relationship of the valid means of expounding the Reality (Pratipaadaka) and the end product of Brahma Vidya (Pratipaadya); for, Shaasatra expounds Brahma Vidya, which is the Pratipaadya (that which is expounded). All this we have stated above.
If the Sambandha or relationship between Jnaana Kaanda (the part of the Vedas which contains the Upanishads) and the preceding portion of the Vedas, viz. Karma Kaanda, is discerned, it will be understood as to which new subject-matter or topic has been expounded in the Upanishads. Karma Kaanda portion is that which elucidates the stratagem or device of acquiring the desires which Atman (Jeeva) wishes to be fulfilled in other births or Dehaantara, as also getting rid of the undesirable things. This topic of Vidya and Avidya which are the causes for Ishta Praapti (acquisition of the desirable things) and Anishtha Nivrutti (getting rid of undesirable things) will be explained in due course (in sections 30, 31).


13. It becomes evident now that those who have got rid of Avidya and have an aspiration to get themselves established in the essential nature of Atman alone are the Adhikaaris (the qualified persons) to deliberate upon the teachings of this Shaastra. But because by merely wishing one does not obtain the benefits, the question that — “Endowed with which qualifications, will any one become an Adhikaari to know Vedanta?” — will have to be deliberated upon in detail. It is very clear that because the Vedanta Philosophy is contained in the Upanishads and these form a part of the Vedas, Dwijas (the twice-born i.e. Brahmins, Kshatriyas and Vaishyas) alone who are qualified to study or learn the Vedas are the fit persons to attain Brahma Vidya through the study of the Vedas. It will be indicated in due course in this treatise that Vedaadhyayana (the systematic study of the Vedas), Vedoakta Karmas (performance of rituals mentioned in the Vedas) — all these become the cause or the means, in a sequential order and indirectly, for Brahma Vidya. Therefore, observing the Dharmic (religious) rituals or rites, disciplines stipulated for the Varnas (castes) and Aashramas (the four stages in one’s life) also becomes a contributory or secondary cause for the qualification for Brahma Vidya. But it is known from Puranaas (Hindu mythological texts) that people like Vidura, Dharmaavyaadhha, Maitreyi etc. who did not have the knowledge of the Vedas through Vedaadhyayana, people like Samvarta etc. who could not observe the Aashrama Dharmas (disciplines pertaining to the four Aashramas or stages of Brahmacharya, Gaarhasthya, Vaanaprastha and Sannyasa) also were Jnaanis (people who had attained Self-Knowledge or Brahma Vidya); in the Mahabharata it is stipulated that the people belonging to all four Varnas or castes should listen with devotion to the discourses on Itihaasa (historical texts) and Puranaas (mythological texts), which in truth teach the purport of the Vedas alone. In the historical texts it has been stated that Samvarta and some others, who were indifferent to the Aashrama Karmas (rituals pertaining to the four Aashramas) were
also great Yogis. On the basis of all these reasons it becomes evident that — (i) those who have undergone a spiritual course by Vedadhyayana and have observed one’s own respective Varna and Aashrama Karmas become Adhikaaris to attain Tattwa Jnaana (the Self-Knowledge) through the valid means of Vedas; (ii) though having had Vedadhyayana, people like Vidura etc. who did not have the right for Aashrama Dharmas, also become Adhikaris for Jnaana or Self-Knowledge expounded through the Vedas; (iii) people belonging to the fourth Varna viz. Shoodras etc., who do not have the right to study Vedas, become Adhikaaris for Jnaana through listening with devotion to Itihaasa and Puranaas; (iv) even those who do not have any right for Aashrama Karmas can attain Brahma Vidya through the study of texts written on Vedanta in various languages other than Sanskrit.


14. Adhyayana of the Vedas is to possess Yoagyata (the capacity or qualification) necessary equally for the deliberations on Karma and Brahman (the Absolute, Ultimate Reality). The rudimentary physio-psychic excellences or capacities which are invariably needed for Brahma Vichaara (Intuitive deliberation on Brahman) are:

i) Intuitive deliberation with regard to entities which are eternal and non-eternal (Nitya-Anitya Vastu Viveka);

ii) Renunciation of enjoyment of fruits or pleasures either in this human birth or other worlds or births (Iha-Amutra Artha Bhoaga Viraagah); 

iii) The human wealth of having attained or acquired the six purificatory disciplines of Shama or control over the mind; Dama or control over the senses; Uparati or introvertedness of the mind; Teeksha or equipoise of the mind in the face of the pairs of opposites like happiness and misery, success and defeat, heat and cold etc.; Shraddha or one-pointed dedication towards attainment of Self-Knowledge and Samaadhaana or steadfastness and consummation of mental equipoise;

iv) Mumukshutwa or burning desire for attaining Moaksha or Liberation from the Bondage of Samsaara. If these four basic disciplinary capacities have been achieved, then whether one has deliberated upon Karmas or not, one can carry on Brahma Vichaara; but if one does not possess the above four human excellences, he will not have the Adhikaara or spiritual qualification to carry out such Brahma Vichaara and thereby cognize or Intuit the Reality. For this reason alone, Shri Shankara has stressed in his Bhaashyas that “Moaksha, which is the fruit of Brahma
Jijnaasa (a burning desire to know or Intuit Brahman), can only be attained by Brahma Vidyā alone which is endowed with Karma Sannyaasa (total renunciation of Karmas or ritualistic actions); and that for mere Jnāna or Intuitive Knowledge of Aatman people belonging to all the four Aashramas have Adhikāra or qualification".


15. Nitya-Anitya Vastu Viveka — means: Discerning by distinguishing in the manner — "All the fruits of religious practices like Karma (scriptural rituals) and Upaasana (scriptural meditations) are Anitya (non-eternal), and further, Moaksha or Liberation of the nature of attainment of the Supreme Self alone is Nitya or eternal". It is found in everyone's experience in this world that what is done and obtained as a result of Karma is Anitya. In the same manner, what is done and obtained as a result in other worlds or other births too has to be invariably non-eternal only; therefore, the Shrūtis (scriptures) are proclaiming that anything that is eternal cannot at all be attained by any religious means or practices which involve any action or deed whatsoever.

Ihaamutraartha Bhoaga Viraagaha — means: Getting disgusted or indifferent towards the enjoyment of objects or pleasures of this world or towards the enjoyment of the objects or pleasures of other worlds after realizing or recognizing the defects as well as the miseries in those enjoyments and thereby becoming disinterested in them or developing an apathy towards them.

Shama Damaadi Saadhhana Sampat — means: Adopting a way of life in which the six disciplines, viz. Shama, Dama, Uparatī, Titēksha, Shraddha and Samaadhaana — mentioned in the previous section — so as to acquire human excellences.

Mumukshutwa — means: Entertaining an aspiration for attaining Liberation or Beatitude, i.e getting rid of Samsaara Bandha (the shackles of this transmigratory existence of repeated births and deaths). These will be further explained in the context of deliberations on Saadhana or spiritual practices.

15. Ch. Up. and Bh. 8-1-6. p. 582.
18. Ch. Up. 5-10-8. p. 375;
III. THE SALIENT FEATURES OF SHANKARA’S VEDANTA

16. Although Vedanta philosophy has the four features like Abhidyena, etc. and hence it is established that one should deliberate upon the Vedanta philosophical science, the question — “Why should the aspirant deliberate upon Adi Shankara’s (Advaita) Vedanta philosophy alone?” — arises and the answer is: It has already been briefly mentioned in (section 1) as to what are the salient features of Shri Shankara’s philosophy. Even so, here there is a need to discuss in some detail that topic. The readers may ask questions like: Prior to Shri Shankaraachaarya were there no Vedantins at all? Even today there are many, is it not? In examining Shri Shankara’s Vedanta philosophy exclusively what extraordinary benefit accrues?

Except for the Mandookya Kaarikas by Shri Gaudapaadaachaarya, Shri Shankara’s grand preceptor, no Vedanta treatises whatsoever, older than those Kaarikas, are fully available to us. In the post-Shankara period a treatise on Advaita Vedanta called “Brahma Siddhi”, written by a Vedantin by name Mandana Mishra, came to light some years ago. Now Vedanta methodologies propounded by some commentators like Raamaanuja and Madhwa, who have followed or adopted Duaita philosophy, are also in vogue. But the extraordinary or special feature of the methodology of Vedantins who follow the traditional school of philosophy of Shri Shankara is the teaching that by the Aatma Jnaana or Self-Knowledge, which is born out of Intuiting the purport conveyed by the Vedanta sentences, the fruit of Sadyoamukti (Liberation from all shackles of Samsaara) can be attained here and now in this very life. All the rest of the Vedantins have interpreted the Jnaana Kaanda (the third part of the Vedas dealing with the Intuitive Knowledge of the Ultimate Reality) giving predominance to Vidhi (religious injunctions or stipulations). Nowadays even those Vedantins who profess to be the followers of Shri Shankaraachaarya blend or interpolate the methodologies of Saankhya or Yoga and such other schools of philosophy and somehow try to bring about a relationship between Jnaana Kaanda and Vidhi. All these Vedantic schools of philosophy, like the rest of the schools other than Vedanta, mutually oppose or contradict one another also; their own philosophies contain self-contradictions in their treatises themselves too. Besides, they do not propound the Ultimate Reality taking the Vedanta sentences alone as the authoritative sources or means. Shri Shankara has himself asserted in his Maandookya Kaarika Bhasha that his Advaita Darshana or philosophy of non-dual Reality does neither give any room or scope whatsoever for any Vivaada (dialectic debate or polemics) nor for any Viroadha (opposition or confrontation).

17. If it is argued that the fact that the rest of the Vedantic schools of philosophy as well as the other non-Vedantic schools being mutually contradictory or opposed to one another is itself a defect in them, then because Shri Shankara's school of philosophy is opposed to all of them, it also is rendered defective or fallible alone. If it is argued that the fact that the methods adopted for explanation or elucidation of Shri Shankara's philosophy, among themselves, are contradictory to one another is itself a defect in them, then because the methodology that is expounded in this treatise also is opposed to all of them, it amounts to saying that in this methodology too there exists a defect only. It being so, how can it be determined or established that what is depicted here in this treatise alone is the genuine methodology of Shri Shankara or that it alone is infallible or without any defect whatsoever? — thus the aspirants may raise a doubt.

The solution for this doubt is: Having taken exclusively the Bhaashyas on the Prasthaana Tray, which are acknowledged by everyone to be genuine works by Shri Shankaraachaarya and to be the authoritative sources, and having reconciled all the Bhaashya statements — to establish the Vedantic philosophy on the strength or support of those Bhaashya sentences alone is an exclusive feature to be found in this treatise alone, and the discerning among the seekers can realize this truth. Therefore, the methodology and teachings expounded here in this treatise alone are the genuine and pristine pure non-dual Advaita philosophy of Shri Shankara. The rest of the commentaries are mutually contradictory, contain contradictory opinions within their own texts and finally they are opposed to the original Bhaashyas of Shri Shankara. Therefore, they do not by any means teach or propound the pristine pure methodology of Shri Shankara's Advaita Vedanta school of philosophy. This pure and highly rational, nay Intuitive, philosophical science of Shri Shankara, which does not countenance any opposition whatsoever from any quarter, determines and establishes the non-dualism of Atman or the Self by means of the Shaastric statements as well as valid discursive reasoning (Yukti), and for that reason alone it is the "Samyagdarshana" (genuine true philosophical science). Because they are opposed to both the scriptural texts or statements and Yukti and are having recourse to dialectic arguments which are contradictory to one another and further, because they have propounded the philosophy of dualism alone which gives full scope for Raaga (attachment or liking) and Dwesha (hatred, dislike) etc. — the rest of the philosophies are "Mithyaadarshanas" (misconceived, untrue philosophical systems). Besides, dualism (Dvaita) is superimposed upon, or misconceived in, the substratum of non-dualism (Advaita). Because Advaita is Akalpita or beyond misconception, it is Paramaartha or the Supreme, Ultimate Reality. Because such an Advaita (non-dual
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Reality) is expounded also, Shri Shankara's philosophy is a "Samyagdarshana". This fact has been clarified by Shri Shankara in his Bhaashya on Shri Gaudapaada's Maandookya Kaarikas 3-17, 18. Because all the methodologies, which the present-day Vedantins are adopting or accepting, are either directly or indirectly, in the ultimate analysis, culminating in Duaita (the empirical region of duality) alone, their philosophies are all untrue or misconceived Darshanas (systems of philosophy) indeed. Because the exclusive methodology that we have elucidated in this treatise is revealing a philosophical science of Advaita or non-dualism (the science of the Ultimate, Absolute Reality without a second), which is infallible and impeccable, seekers who are desirous of Shreyas (spiritual solace or enlightenment) should reverentially follow this philosophical science alone. This candid, frank assertion has not been made by us in this context with any trace of hankering for name, fame, material gain or adoration; nor we have said so out of any jealousy or animosity towards any one. We have written this treatise solely for the purpose of disseminating the truth to seekers devoted and dedicated to the realization of the Ultimate Reality of Atman.


18. The preceptors of other schools of philosophy also have followed the Shaastra. But they have not predominantly trusted the Shaastra alone; they have, in addition, believed in extra-ordinary logical or dialectical devices needed for their respective philosophical systems or teachings. Besides, because they fundamentally trust their own respective logic or dialectical system alone and strain or stretch the scriptural texts or statements so as to suit their systems or teachings, in their schools of philosophy logic is given the pride of place or importance. Therefore, they are Taarkikas (logicians) and not Vedantins. But, in Shri Shankara's Advaita Vedanta philosophy — for Brahman, who is Abhideya or the named entity which is the subject-matter, Shaastra or the Upanishadic lore alone is the Pramaana or the valid, authentic, authoritative means or source. Shri Shankara's dictum that — "Shaastra alone is the valid means or authoritative source to signify Brahman, the Ultimate Reality" — is in consonance with the aphorism or Sootra, viz. "Shaastra Yoanitwaat" — (Brahma Sootra 1-1-3) — of the Vedanta Meemaamsaa Sootras. For this reason alone, Shri Shankara's is the true or genuine Vedanta Philosophy. Shaastra, Veda, Shruti, Vedanta, Upanishad, Aagama — all these are synonyms.


19. Those very Shaastras alone which Shri Shankara had believed in or trusted were relied upon as the valid means or authoritative sources
by the Vedantins prior to Shri Shankara for expounding their philosophical systems or teachings. It being so, what greatness or profundity can there be in saying that Shri Shankara alone has adhered to the validity or authority of the *Shaastras*? — Thus some people may think.

Like the others Shri Shankara has not relied upon the validity or authority of the *Shaastras* merely based on belief or faith. The Poorva Meemaamsakas (Jaimini's school of philosophy) have believed the *Vedic* statements contained in the *Karma Kaanda* to be valid or authoritative, because therein there do not exist any empirical valid means which contradict or refute what is stated in those *Vedic* sentences and secondly, because (they assert) the Vedas or scriptures are "Apourusheya" (works not of human origin) at all. The opinion of the other Vedantins is that the validity or authoritativeness of the *Jnaana Kaanda* sentences too is similar to this belief alone. But Shri Shankara opines that: The doubt — "Whether the result or fruit of *Karma* or any ritual, mentioned in the *Karma Kaanda* sentences, actually or in reality accrues or not?" — may arise indeed. For, that fruit is "*Paroaksaha*" (invisible, out of or beyond the range of sight). But because the fruit born out of the *Vedanta* sentences (to be found in the *Jnaana Kaanda* portions) culminates in one's Intuitive experience (here and now), there is no scope or room for such a doubt to arise in their case at all. Shri Shankara has emphasized this point. The special feature of the validity of the sentences which is acknowledged in this methodology is: In the case of *Dharma Jijnaasa* (the pursuit of knowing religious truths) merely the *Shaastra* etc. alone are the valid means; but in the case of the pursuit of knowing *Brahman* or the Ultimate Reality not only the *Shrutis* etc. alone are the valid means; but also *Anubhava* or Intuitive experience etc. are the valid means according to the context or circumstances.


20. "The Vedantins belonging to the other schools also reckon the *Shaastras* as the valid means or authoritative sources and refute the teachings of Shri Shankara. Even the proponents of *Vyaakhyana Prasthaana* or the later post-Shankara commentaries too, having acknowledged the validity, authority and authenticity of *Shaastras* alone, propound their respective philosophical systems and refute the teachings of other schools of philosophy. Therefore, the methodology that is expounded in this treatise will be one among many *Vedantic* methodologies alone and hence it cannot claim to have any exclusive distinction which is not to be found in any of them" — Thus one may jump to a conclusion. But, because the *Vedantic* discrimination culminates in one's Intuitive experience, to those who keep in mind what we have stated above the fact of this opinion being improper or
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unjustifiable becomes quite evident and clear. For, there may be as many methodologies as one may desire which determine the purport of the Vedantic lore by imagining or conjecturing the special characteristics like Upakrama (the proposition at the commencement) and Upasamhaara (conclusive assertion at the end) etc.; but, because Intuitive experience is universal and common and the same to every one, there is no possibility whatsoever for more than one methodology to exist in so far as the question of determining or establishing the entity (here in this present context, the Ultimate Reality of Brahman), which is in consonance with every human being's Intuitive experience, is concerned. Vedanta Shaastra or the Upanishadic lore predominantly expounds the Ultimate Reality of Brahman, which is a "Bhoota Vastu" (eternally, perennially existing Reality); it is not possible to misconceive or to conjecture in the manner — "A Vastu or existing entity is like this as well as it is like that too; it is surely existing, as also it is not at all existing". We do not mean in the least by this to say that the viewpoints or aspects which are adopted or followed to determine or establish the Reality cannot be many; but — ‘to conceive or believe that the different discriminative methods which are contrary to one another to be, in this sense, genuine viewpoints of different types’ — it will never be possible at all. Because even if a hundred statements assert quite contrary to everyone’s experience, in the manner — “Fire is cold; there is no light in it” — they cannot be acknowledged as valid or true, between the other unique methodologies which are based on the mere premise of the absolute validity or authority of Shaastras alone, on the one hand, and the unique methodology that is adopted in and through Shri Shankara's Bhaashyas to expound the Ultimate Reality enunciated in the Shaastras or Upanishads so as to be in consonance with “Anubhava” (everyone’s Intuitive experience), on the other hand, there exists a very great difference.


21. Some people have a doubt of the type — “Experience (Anubhava) too may vary from one person to another (to wit, it may be of a different type to each person). Therefore, how will it be proper or justifiable if we interpret the Shruti sentences reconciling them with our individualistic experience?” But we have not called here in this context the experience of delusion or the extra-ordinary or abnormal experiences of a particular individual obtained as a result of his Yoga practices or the mystic powers that one has obtained by witchcraft or chanting some Mantras or hymns etc. — by the name of “Anubhava”. The Saarvatvrika Anubhava (the universal or every human being’s Intuitive experience) alone, which is not confined to, or restricted by, time, space and
causation categories, is truly, in the ultimate analysis, the real Anubhava (Intuitive experience). That thing in the essential nature of Being of which (i.e. in its Swaroopa) there is ever or eternally no change, increase or decrease whatsoever and which exists ever in one and the same form or nature — that thing alone is the Ultimate Reality or Paramaarthartha, Truth or Satyam. The Knowledge or Intuition of such a Reality alone is called Samyajjnaana or Samyagdarshana (the true knowledge or the genuine spiritual science). Because Vedanta Darshana (the spiritual science of Vedanta) teaches the Intuitive Knowledge of Brahman in consonance with “Anubhava” (universal Intuitive experience), here in this spiritual science there is no scope whatsoever for any kind of difference or variance in everyone’s Intuitive experience.


22. Just because the remaining schools of philosophy are mutually opposed, it will not be proper to assume that all of them are wrong. Why should it not be believed or reckoned that a particular school of philosophy among them is correct? It does not seem to be reasonable to assume that Shri Shankara’s Vedantic philosophy alone is correct; for, it is a relevant doubt among some people that just as the staunch followers of Shri Shankara’s Vedanta had refuted the other philosophical schools — which in the past people had believed to be correct and these followers of Shri Shankara had shown them to be incorrect — in the same way, in the future also at any point of time some person may show that Shri Shankara’s Vedanta also is wrong or defective.

This doubt is not proper. For, among the schools of philosophy propounding duality alone to be real, not one of them can be said not to have an opposite camp or party. It is not possible at all to champion the cause of their own respective interests of the proponents of one particular school by merely refuting or solving the defects pointed out or levelled against their philosophy. We had indicated in the past (section 16) that the schools of philosophy, propounding duality to be real — being opposed to one another — give scope for Raaga and Dwesha; thereby they become Mithyaa Darshanas (pseudo schools of philosophy). For the fact of all those schools being wrong or defective, the only reason of any other school being opposed to them is not the root cause. All of them by their very nature alone are philosophies born out of misconceptions (Adhyaasa). For, they are not born out of, or based on, the support of Poorna Anubhava (the comprehensive, consummate Intuitive experience or Pure Consciousness). Anybody can doubt in the manner — “Why should not a philosophy, which depicts or
propounds the experience of objects or phenomena which are within
the purview of one’s perception, be formulated?” But that is not
possible; for, the philosophical science (Darshana) of Advaita or non-
dualism engenders, or rather culminates in, the intuitive experience of
the type — “The Ultimate Reality (Paramaartha Tattwa) is Atman alone;
 apart from It there is no second thing or phenomenon existing”. Because once this Intuitive experience is attained, there is no duality
 whatsoever, there is no possibility whatever of another school of
 philosophy falsifying or invalidating this philosophical science, much
less the Reality. If one acknowledges the unity (or rather non-
duality) of Atman or the Self, it is tantamount to accepting
Advaita alone as the Ultimate Reality; there is no plausibility
 whatsoever to point out any defect in Advaita Tattwa (the non-
dual Reality), the one without a second to It. For, then it is also
accepted that the duality or second phenomenon of defect too does not
exist. Therefore, our assertion (section 16) that this philosophical
science is without or beyond any disputation or discursive logic is quite
reasonable and proper. The knower of this philosophical science of the
Vedas (Vedanta), gives up the defect of duality, which is the root cause
for disputation or argument, as belonging to the lot of the respective
proponent and remains blissful. Even his act of refutation of other
schools of philosophy is born out of a need of explaining or showing
their essencelessness (or being devoid of truth) rather than out of any
addiction or craze for disputation or dialectics like them.


IV. ADHYAASA OR MISCONCEPTION

23. The essence of the spiritual teachings of Vedanta philosophy is
this much: “All this is Brahman alone; our Atman is Brahman
alone” — (Maandookya Upanishad Mantra 2). In Brahman there
does not exist any world of duality whatsoever. The Sanskrit word ‘Brahman’
means “huge, big”. The truth that our Atman is an impertible entity or
ever-existent Reality, devoid of any world of duality whatsoever — is
realized (Intuited) when we see with insight according to the Shaastra
Drishiti (scriptural viewpoint) — (Sootra Bhaashya 1-1-30). But if we
view from our present standpoint (called Loukika, Avidya or
Adhyaaroopa Drishti), it appears in the dual, divided form of “I” and
“Prapancha” (the external world); it also appears as if there exist many
Atmans or selves in the world and as if those Atmans are endowed with
Raaga (attachment) and Dwesha (hatred) towards things external to
them and are experiencing Dukhha (misery) concomitant with
transmigratory life (Samsaara). This our viewpoint or Drishti is called
by Vedantins — Avidya Drishti (the viewpoint of misconception). Shastra Drishti, Aarsha Darshana, Tattwadarshi Drishti, Vidwad Drishti — all these are synonyms; Loaka Drishti (Sootra Bhashya 2-2-3), Vyaavahaarika Drishti, Swaabhaavika Drishti, Avidya Drishti — all these are also synonyms.


24. All the miseries or calamities of Samsaara suffered by us are caused from the viewpoint of Auidya alone. All that is Paramaarthta (the Ultimate Reality), in the ultimate analysis, is nothing but our Atman, who is Brahman, meaning that which is impartible, indivisible and non-dual. That in this Brahman the world comprising sentient and insentient divisions does not exist in the least — is the spiritual teaching of Vedanta Philosophy. When we follow implicitly the spiritual directions or instructions of the Shrutis and the Achaarya (preceptor who knows the Shastraic methodology or Aagama, as also who is rooted or established in the Intuitive experience of Atman) and Intuit in our mind alone the truth that — “In this Brahman there does not exist, in the least, any variety or manifoldness” — then all our Shoaka (bemoanings) and Moaha (attachments) are got rid of. At that stage all the mortal desires imbedded in our hearts are driven away or they vanish, and here and now (while living in this very body) we attain Brahma Praapti and as a consequence we who were mortal will ourselves become immortal; all our doubts are cut asunder. Herefore there does not remain or persist any particular mundane objective or ambition for us to be fulfilled or achieved by performing any particular action, deed; we become one of those who are Krita-Krityas (people who have attained all that is to be attained in this human life spiritually). Thus the Upanishads are proclaiming. At the same time the Shrutis (Upanishads) criticise, belittle the Avidya Drishli by statements like — “That person who persists in having or exercising the Avidya Drishti alone which prompts him to perceive manifoldness or duality — which does not really exist in Atman — that person will get death after death incessantly.”


25. There are other schools of philosophy which have undertaken the task with the intention or purport of expounding the proper, correct knowledge to remove Avidya (ignorance). But the Vedantins affirm that what they propound as Vidya or correct knowledge and Avidya or wrong knowledge are both existing in the world of duality projected by Avidya (metaphysical ignorance). Just as the Vedantins have
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deliberated upon the essential nature of this latter *Avidya*, none of the other schools of philosophy has done. The fact that — "*Avidya* means misconception, delusion or wrong knowledge of reckoning one thing as another" — is known to everyone. This misconception or delusion is caused by conceiving a characteristic feature or quality in a particular object or thing in which that characteristic feature or quality really does not exist. This wrong conception or misconception is called 'Adhyaasa'. For example, to misconceive a sea-shell or nacre as silver and one moon to be two is *Avidya* of the form or nature of *Adhyaasa*. Several such *Adhyaasas* or misconceptions keep on occurring in our day-to-day life. But what the Vedantins say is: "Our *Atman* is the non-dual *Brahman*; there exists an *Avidya* which misconceives by way of *Adhyaasa* a world of duality that does not exist in the least, not even an iota of it, in this *Atman* or *Brahman*." Not only does this *Avidya* superimpose on, or misconceive in, *Atman* this *Anaatman* (not-self) and its characteristic features or qualities but also it superimposes upon, or misconceives in, *Anaatman* or not-self *Atmatwa* (innate, utmost identification, meaning the *Anaatman* is reckoned to be, really our essential nature) and further the essential nature or characteristics of *Atman* is misconceived to be belonging to *Anaatman*. Because of this basic misconception and mutual superimposition alone the delusion of the divisions or distinctions of *Pramaatnt* (cognizer), *Pramaana* (means of cognition) and *Prameya* (the cognized object) — these three categories are called in *Vedantic* parlance "Triputi" — is superimposed indeed; consequently, the *Anartha* (undesirable calamity) of *Samsaara* of the form or nature of *Kartrutwa* (doership, agentship of action) as also *Bhoktrutwa* (enjoyership) has been misconceived in *Atman*. All the *Upanishads* have the prime purport of teaching the *Atmaikatwa Vidya* (Intuitive Knowledge of the Absolute, non-dual Reality of *Atman* or *Brahman*) through the path of total annihilation of this *Avidya*.


26. To some people it may appear that the *Adhyaasa* or misconception of the nature of mutual superimposition between *Atman* and *Anaatman* (i.e. the 'I' notion in everyone and its concomitant paraphernalia) is without the support of reasonable grounds. Although in our workaday world it is common knowledge that people misconceive silver in nacre and a human being in a wooden post, in those contexts or situations people have misconceived one *Jneya* (object) in another *Jneya* (both being things or percepts external to them). *Jneya* means (technically) that phenomenon or percept which is the object for the *Jnaana* (knowledge, consciousness) of the *Jnaatru* (the knower or
cognizer). Because nacre and the wooden post etc. are the objects in front of us directly perceived through the senses, in them it may be possible to misconceive another external object. For, 'Adhyaasa' means a delusion of misconceiving or wrongly knowing an object in front of us to be another. But Atman is neither a perceptible entity to be known through the senses nor an external object; (at best) He is a Vishayi, Jnaatru or cognizer, one who knows or perceives. How will it be possible to believe that the cognizing Atman, Himself having been deluded in the manner that He Himself is the object to be known or perceived, superimposes the special characteristics of that external object on Himself?

This objection is not proper. For, there is no rule of law whatsoever that people always superimpose another thing on a perceptible object alone. The ignorant people (without exercising their God-given discriminative faculty) superimpose on, or misconceive in, Akaasha (sky, which is formless and hence invisible to the eyes) an impurity in the manner — "The lower region or part of this sky is polluted or is impure". Moreover, there is neither any rule of law whatsoever that people always superimpose an object on another object alone. Misconceiving Atman, who is the Vishayi (subject) as also Jnaatru (knower), in the body and the characteristic features of the body in Atman, who is the subject, people express in the manner — "I am of a fair complexion; I am of a black complexion; I am an old aged person"; thus it is accepted by Naiyyaayikas (protagonists of the Nyaaya school of philosophy) and such others that — 'People in general misconceive Atman, who is the subject, as the body, which is the object, and vice versa. Further, they mutually superimpose the characteristic features of each on the other.' Although the Poorva Meemaamsakas (who give predominance or importance to the ritualistic earlier parts of the Vedas and treat the end or later portions, called the Upanishads, of the Vedas as Gouna or of secondary importance) and such others say or opine that — 'To conceive the body, mind, the senses etc. as 'I' is Gouna alone and not a misconception — because no one, in general, is able to cognize the truth that the body and Atman are each different from the other — it should be accepted on all hands that this common belief or knowledge of the people in general is a misconception alone. Besides, because of the fact that Atman is Aparoaksha (of an innate Intuitive nature), He is well-known to every one as their very essence of Being: for this reason too there cannot be any objection whatsoever for the mutual superimposition between Atman (Self) and Anaatman (not-self). Therefore, the statement to the effect — "People in general superimpose mutually Atman and Anaatman and further misconceive the special characteristics of each in the other" — cannot become a fit target for any kind of objection whatsoever. Adhyaasa, Adhyaaaropa, Viparyaasa, Bhraanti, Vipareeta Pratyaya, Anyathaa Jnaana, Mithyaa
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\[ Jnaana \] — all these are \textit{Paryaaya Shabdas} or synonyms alone (their meaning being superimposition or misconception).


27. If there is a thing in which another thing is misconceived, that latter thing does not really exist therein; it is just a false appearance. For example, the silver that appears in nacre or sea-shell; the snake that appears in the rope; the pollution that appears in the sky — the fact that all these are absolutely, undoubtedly false or unreal is known to every one. If the Self (\textit{Atman}) and the not-self (\textit{Anaatman}) are mutually superimposed (misconceived), then both those things which are superimposed will have to be per force unreal alone. The statement that the body, the senses etc., which are the not-self are superimposed on \textit{Atman} is contradictory to valid means like perception (\textit{Pratyaksha}), inference (\textit{Anumana}) etc. Therefore, some people may imagine that between the Self (\textit{Atman}) and the body, the senses etc. (\textit{Anaatman}) there might exist a particular relationship.

But this method of deliberation is not proper. For, the fact or truth that the body, the senses etc. exist in the Self is not to be cognized by valid means like perception, inference etc. Since no one has been able to cognize the Self and the not-self separately by the valid means of perception, inference etc., it is not possible at all even to imagine any kind of relationship between the two. Even in case we imagine that the body, the senses etc. and the Self are conjoined with each other, then also it becomes evident that an absolutely pure (unrelated) Self (\textit{Atman}), who has observed or objectified and known the two things, i.e. the Self and the body, the senses etc., being conjoined together and who is not related to those two in any manner whatsoever, exists quite apart. Besides, the inferential statement or analogy that — "The conglomeration of the body, the senses, the mind etc. is functioning for the sake of the unrelated or absolute Self alone who is completely distinct from that conglomeration — just as the wall, the pillars, the beams, the tiles etc. which are conjoined with one another to form a house, but which are meant for the use of an owner who is not conjoined with them" — is also in consonance with reasoning or a logical device. There is no defect whatsoever if it is said that — "The not-self (\textit{Anaatman}) which is imagined or misconceived in the Self (\textit{Atman}) is unreal like the blue colour that is imagined or misconceived in the sky or empty space". Though the Self who is imagined or misconceived in the not-self is unreal in that form, in His essential nature of Pure Being He is real
indeed. Therefore, it becomes evident or established that the superimposition (Adhyaasa) which we have mentioned earlier is nothing but the knowledge (Jnaana) which is a mixture or blending of the two things, namely, the really existing Self (Atman) and the unreal, false appearance of not-selves (Anatman) without discriminatively separating them. Asat, Asatya, Anrita, Mithyaa, Vitatha, Mrishaa — all these are the Sanskrit synonyms which indicate false appearance.


28. If it is accepted that all valid means of cognition (Pramaananas) are caused by Adhyaasa (delusion), then the distinction between valid means of cognition and the invalid means will have to be erased out completely. Besides, merely because Vedantins say that valid means of cognition are caused by Adhyaasa, one cannot believe it to be true. If this is true, then because the Shaastras too are a kind of valid means only, like the other valid means of perception (Pratyaksha Pramaana), inference (Anumaana Pramaana) etc., they too will have to be said to be caused by Adhyaasa only. Then in that event, it will be a matter of bravado or an exaggeration to say that — "Even what the irrefutable Shaastra teaches is untrue; further, those who perform the rituals or rites stipulated in the scriptures do not have a knowledge of an Atman apart from their body." Therefore, how can wise, discriminating people accept at all Vedanta which negates or refutes valid means of cognition (Pramaana) themselves? Thus the protagonists of valid means of cognition or Pramaanawaadins may raise an objection.

But, Vedantins do not at all say that when one observes from the empirical viewpoint the dealings pertaining to the valid means of cognition and the cognized object (Pramaana — Prameya Vyavahaara) are not proper. In fact, Vedantins assert that just as the cognition of the type — "I am the body alone" — continues to be valid knowledge till the Intuitive cognition of the type — "Apart from the body there exists Atman" — which is born as a result of the instructions or teachings of Shaastras, in the same manner till the conviction (Intuitive experience) of the essential nature of Atman is attained, the empirical valid means like perception (Pratyaksha), inference (Anumaana) etc. continue to be valid alone. Whichever or whatever valid means they may be, without being dependent upon the cognizer (i.e. one who uses them, the Pramaatru) they can never proceed towards their objects which are to be cognized (through them). But, without misconceiving in the manner — "I am the body; the senses are mine" — no one can ever become a cognizer (Pramaatru). Therefore, it is not possible for any one,
whosoever he may be, to negate or refute the fact of life that cognizership (Pramaatrutwa) has come into being through misconception (Adhyaasa) alone. Hence, the fact that — “When we observe from the Absolute or Transcendental viewpoint of Atman the dealings of valid means of cognition, as also their respective objects of cognition, both of which depend upon the cognizer — these empirical dealings are evidently products of Adhyaasa alone; that means, they are all a delusion alone” — is indisputable and irrefutable. Besides, between the empirical dealings of perception, inference etc. of man and the empirical (instinctive) dealings of perception, inference etc. of animals, birds and other creatures there does not exist any difference whatsoever. Both the kinds of behaviour of the type — (1) when the external sensations or percepts like the sound, the touch etc. seem to be congenial or desirable the innate proclivity of wanting those things which project those sensations or percepts, followed by the innate urge to proceed towards those things or objects; (2) if those things seem to be inconvenient or troublesome, then the innate urge to recede or shy away or avoid them — are, at the time of those dealings, quite natural and common to both human beings and the animals or other creatures. No one says that the animals or creatures etc. in general carry on their empirical dealings with a sense of discrimination or Viveka; hence, the empirical dealings of human beings also, which are carried out with the help of valid means (Pramaana) and the objects of cognition or perception (Prameya), akin to those of the animals or creatures, are verily prompted by a lack of discrimination (Auiiveka) alone. Therefore, we can say without any doubt that those empirical dealings of human beings too are carried on because of Adhyaasa alone. Although the scriptural texts (and their teachings) are based on Adhyaasa, the special features that pertain to them and are profound in them will be explained in section 51.

Pramaana means the instruments or media for proper, correct knowledge or cognition; Prameya is the object or thing known or cognized with the help of or through the Pramaana; Pramaatru means one who knows or cognizes through the Pramaanas; Pramiti means the proper, correct cognition accruing through the Pramaanas. When we use the terms like Jnaana (the valid means for cognitive knowledge), Jneya (the object or thing cognized), Jnaatru (one who knows or cognizes), Jnapti (the end result of cognition) — we do so without any restrictions whatsoever with regard to the veracity of the knowledge accruing in those circumstances. The nature of the empirical dealings of Pramaana and Prameya will be discussed in detail in Chapter VII (section 47).

29. In the Vedantic teachings of Shri Shankaraachaarya apart from the metaphysical Avidya, which is in reality the mutual
superimposition between Atman and Anaatman, there does not exist any other Avidya whatsoever. In order to get rid of, remove or root out this misconception (Adhyaasa) the steadfast knowledge backed up by complete conviction of the type — "In truth, the essential nature of Atman is verily the non-dual Brahman devoid of any distinctions or special characteristics whatsoever; on the other hand, Anaatman, being unreal, like the elephant created by Maayaa (magic), or like the objects seen in the dream, or like the celestial world seen in the sky, appears as though it is real" — by distinguishing and separating Atman and Anaatman (by a reasoning based on Intuitive experience alone) is needed. Thus to cognize Intuitively the essential nature of Reality by distinguishing between the real and the unreal is truly Vidya. There is a practice or convention of calling Atman 'Pratyagaatman' (inner Self), Kshetrajna (the knower or indweller in the body) and the Anaatman the Kshetra (the dwelling place). Till one Intuitively cognizes by distinguishing between and separating Kshetra and Kshetrajna the mutual superimposition between them (Adhyaasa) exists in all human beings; it is never known as to when exactly this misconception began and when it will end. Because of this misconception alone the phenomena of Kartrutwa and Bhoktrutwa are superimposed upon Atman. All the terms like Avidya, Ajnaana, Mithyaajnaana, Anyalhaajnaana, Mrishaajnaana, Vipareetaajnaana, Mithyaapratyaya, Anavaboadha, Apratiboadha, Anavagama — all these are synonymous terms given to Adhyaasa. All the synonymous terms pertaining to Jnaana like Brahmacvidya, Aatmacvidya, Adhyaatmacvidya, Aatmaikatwavidya, Brahmaatmaikatwavidya, Paramaatmacvidya, Paramaatmaikatwavidya, Paramaatmaviijnanaana etc. are the names given to the Intuitive knowledge which determines the essential nature of Atman. If one remembers this difference between the essential natures of Vidya and Avidya, it will become evident that either the defects or imperfections of Anaatman and their characteristic features which the common people superimpose upon Atman because of Avidya of the nature of Adhyaasa, or, on the other hand, the excellences of Atman and His special qualities which the common people superimpose upon Anaatman — both these are not in the least related or attached to either Atman, who is the basis or substrate for this Adhyaasa or Anaatman. It also becomes quite clear that to know this truth Intuitively with full conviction alone is the destruction or complete rooting out of Avidya. In fact, all the Upanishads have undertaken the supreme and profound task of teaching the seekers this Aatmaikatwavidya alone.

Previously in section 25 we have stated that Avidya means the mutual superimposition between Atman and Anaatman alone, but the term 'Avidya' is more comprehensive or pervasive in its connotation than the term 'Adhyaasa'. For, by means of Vidyā — that means, by the light of the Intuitive deliberation on Atman and Anaatman — whatever things or concepts are falsified and till the dawn of Vidyā whatever things or concepts do not allow the real thing or entity to be cognized by covering it up or hiding it — all such concepts of the nature of ignorance (incomprehension) or darkness are fit to be called 'Avidya'. Therefore, all steadfast concepts (Pratyaya) which misconceive an entity or give rise to doubts about it or which do not cognize the real entity are in this sense 'Avidya' alone. Apart from this triad of Avidya no other kind of Avidya exists in this world. For example, to a person suffering from a certain defect in his eyes an object in front of him may not appear; that defect may blur his vision and give rise to a doubt as to what the object in front may be, or it may make that object appear quite differently and in a false manner. All these three kinds of Avidya disappear as soon as the basic defect in the eyes is got rid of and the correct knowledge of the object is gained; apart from correct knowledge or Jnāna, no other phenomenon whatsoever can remove these three aspects of Avidya. Similarly, the three types of Avidyas, namely, Agrahana or non-conception, Samshaya or doubting and Vipareeta Pratyaya or misconception — pertaining to the essential nature of Atman are got rid of only by the Aatmaikatwavidya or the Intuitive, cognitive knowledge of the non-duality of Atman. Some present-day Vedantins who are followers of Vyaakhyaaana Prasthaana (methodologies adopted in recent commentaries called 'Vyaakhyaanas') have imagined or conceived that apart from this triad of Avidya (mentioned above) there exists yet another 'Avidya', called Moolaavidya. They have imagined that 'Moolaavidya' is the material cause for the world and a part of it or a special feature as a state of consciousness, called 'Toolaavidya', is the material cause for objects of appearance like the rope-snake etc. But the Bhaashyakaara or Shri Shankaraachaarya has not mentioned either of these at all; nor does it exist in anybody's experience in this world. Besides, this their theory is totally opposed to the Vedantic teachings.


In our empirical state (i.e. while we are awake in this world) Avidya exists in everyone's experience indeed in the form — "I do not know that". Similarly, the Avidya of the form — "I do not know the
'non-dual Atman' — also exists in everyone's experience indeed. To those who have not carried out completely the (Vedantic) Intuitive deliberation the doubt of the type — 'Whether the essential nature of Pure Being of Atman is like this or like that' — does exist. In our empirical day-to-day dealings too, because all human beings do have an innate identification to the effect that the body, the mind, the senses etc. are our Atman, Adhyaasa (misconception) of the nature or form of Vipareetapratyaya too exists invariably. Thus although Avidya exists in everyone's experience itself, some people indulge in mischievous child-like pranks asking the question — "What is the proof or valid evidence for the existence of Avidya?" — but the fact that this trait (especially, in the case of the so-called philosophers or scholars of the present times) is a matter of 'imbecility and ridicule' is quite evident and clear. Because all empirical workaday dealings of Pramaana and Prameya are carried on through Avidya alone, with regard to the Avidya about Atman (of the form of Adhyaasa) that we are considering in the present context especially, if any one asks for any proof or valid evidence (Pramaana) it would be tantamount to an arrogant behaviour or foolhardiness, which need not be pointed out. Even so, some Vedantins too, like people who have ventured out to show darkness with the help of light, have undertaken the futile task of showing the valid evidence (Pramaana) for Avidya.

32. In our workaday world for misconceiving the sea-shell or nacre to be silver and one moon to be two, causes like a defect in the eyes and the object of perception being too far away exist; but some people ask the question — "What is the cause for the Adhyaasa between Atman and Anaatman?" Some people even ask in the manner — "With what material cause (Upaadaana Kaarana) has Avidya arisen? Like the clay (which is the material cause) for the earthen pot, for this Avidya too is not a material cause needed?" But this question is absurd. For, Vedantins have neither accepted that the empirical categories or concepts of cause-effect are real, nor that the Adhyaasa superimposed on Atman (beyond the empirical concepts or categories of time, space and causation, or for that matter, all duality) is an effect (having a cause). Atman alone is the Ultimate Reality; all else, whatever it may be, is unreal, false appearance. This is the affirmation of Vedantins. From this it amounts to saying that the concepts or categories of cause-effect are also unreal alone. From the empirical viewpoint, Adhyaasa is verily beginningless and endless; for that reason too, asking or inquiring about a cause for this is not proper. The concept of cause-effect desiderates the concept of time; it is the opinion of the protagonists of cause-effect theory that the cause precedes the effect
(to wit, the cause exists first and the effect comes into existence later all in one time series). But Vedantins say or opine that time too is a misconception or a superimposed concept. This truth will become clear later on in section 105. Therefore, to conceive Adhyyaasa to be an effect just like the earthen pot, pitcher etc. and then to ask as to what is the cause for that effect is not proper. When those people who misconceive or wrongly take the sea-shell or nacre to be silver come to know the truth, they say in the manner — “This thing is a sea-shell alone; I had misconceived (wrongly known it) to be something else” and not that they knew that at that time (of misconception) in reality a silver called 'sea-shell-silver' was born or was in existence. Hence, it has to be pointed out that those who have conceived that 'Toolaavidya' is a material cause for sea-shell-silver are under the spell of delusion. From this it will be evident that to ask as to what is the cause for Adhyyaasa is not valid or proper. For, there is no rule of law whatsoever that for all kinds of delusion there should exist a cause; it is but natural for people who have not known an object or thing correctly to misconceive it. Not having Intuitively cognized Atman is itself the Nimitta-Kaarana or efficient cause. There is a practice of the Vedantins saying that Adhyyaasa has arisen, or is caused by, this lack of Knowledge (or cognition) of our Atman. But while saying in that fashion we should never commit the blunder of understanding or reckoning that these two events take place in time and thereby have a relationship of cause and effect. When viewed from the standpoint of the Absolute or Ultimate Reality of our Atman, there does not at all exist an entity like Avidya; then, wherefrom can the categories or concepts of cause-effect enter into It? How can the sea-shell appear as silver? How can the delusion of a rope appearing as snake take place at all? — With regard to questions and topics of this nature there exists a great deal of discussion based on a dialectical method of argument called "Khyaati Baadha Vichaara" in several present-day Vedantic treatises. Because there is no purpose served by or any benefit accruing from this discussion at all vis-a-vis the determination of the Absolute, Ultimate Reality of Vedanta, we have given up this subject-matter which is purely an exercise — a brain-racking one at that — in futility.

7. Ma. Ka. 4-78. and Bh. 4-78. 9. Su. Bh. 4-1-5. p. 825

33. One should not take the literary meaning of our statement: "Avidya is of three kinds, viz. Agrahana (non-conception or incomprehension), Anyathaagrahana (misconception, wrong understanding) and Samshaya (doubting); further, between Agrahana and Anyathaagrahana there exists a Nimitta (cause) and Naimittika (being dependent upon a particular cause) relationship" — and formulate his
understanding or knowledge of the essential nature of Avidya. For, all concepts or categories like numbers, cause and effect etc. cannot be reckoned without Pramaaturutwa (the egoism, 'I' notion as the agent of cognition); previously in section 28 we have already stated (established) that Pramaaturutwa (cognizership) cannot come into being or reckoning without Adhyaasa. Therefore, just as in the empirical sphere or our workaday world when the sea-shell or nacre, which is perceived by the eyes, is misconceived as silver because of the hurdle or impediment of that misconception or wrong knowledge and this is understood or reckoned to be Ajnaana or a lack of correct knowledge, similarly for Agrahana (non-conception), Anyathaagrahana (misconception) etc. pertaining to Atman the Adhyaasa alone of the form or nature of Vipareetajnaana (wrong knowledge) is the essential nature. When Jnaana (intuitive knowledge of the Self) negates or falsifies Adhyaasa, none of the phenomena like Agrahana, Anyathaagrahana, Samshaya exist whatsoever; because even the distinctions or differences of Agrahana, Samshaya and Anyathaagrahana are caused (arise) coeval or coexistent with Pramaaturutwa alone, which is super-imposed upon or misconceived in Atman, Shri Shankara is seen dealing with or treating, in and through his Bhaashya texts, Adhyaasa alone as Avidya (i.e. synonymous with Avidya) in a predominant sense or manner.


34. It is customary for Vedantins to make empirical pronouncements like: As a result of Avidya, Bandha is caused and as a result of Vidya (Self-Knowledge) Moaksha is caused. The purport behind this teaching is not that Liberation, which does not really exist at a particular moment or stage of life of a seeker, is attained afresh, or that a bondage, which really exists in the life of a seeker, is removed or mitigated. This fact will be elucidated in section 157 when 'Bandha Moaksha Vichaara' or 'Deliberation on Bondage and Liberation' is taken up. The removal or destruction of Avidya alone is the destruction of Bondage and the attainment of Vidya (Self-Knowledge) alone is attainment of Moaksha (Liberation); in spite of listening to the Vedantins' statement — "In truth, entities or phenomena like Bondage and Liberation do not at all exist" — some people opine that Avidya really exists, but eventually by virtue of Vidya it gets destroyed. This is an opinion formulated by some people without understanding or discerning the real purport and subtleties of the Vedantic teachings. For, Avidya and its effects are Asat or unreal; the Absolute or Ultimate core of Being or Vidya is Sat or Reality (as it is nothing but the essential nature of Atman, who is of the very essence of Jnaana or Pure Consciousness or Intuition). That which is Asat never exists; that which is real becoming non-existent is never plausible. Even so, assuming or accepting this distinction of Vidya
and Avidya — the latter which exists from the empirical viewpoint — for the purposes of spiritual teaching or instruction, Vedantins expound the teaching that — "All duality is nothing but Avidya". What is the essential nature of Avidya? Though Atman is everything (Sarvam), Avidya shows Atman to be nothing (Asarva); although there does not exist any other entity or thing whatsoever, Avidya projects something as if it is really existing; thereafter, Avidya projects as if a desire for that other second thing is born; it further prompts an action to be undertaken to obtain or possess that object or thing projected by that desire; Avidya then gives rise to a result or fruit. All this is verily the prolific projections of Avidya alone. Although Vidya or Intuitive Knowledge is not to be necessarily born in the form of Atman, it is true that in the empirical sphere a mental concept of the form or nature of cognition to the effect that — 'Atman (our Self) is of the essential nature of eternally Absolute, Pure Consciousness' — is born; the fact that cognitive knowledge negates or removes Avidya — speaking from the empirical standpoint — is verily true. But from the Absolute viewpoint of the Self if it is observed (Intuitively) then the belief or concept that — "In Atman, who is of the essential nature of eternally or absolutely Pure Consciousness, Avidya exists" — also is Avidya alone; the concept or belief that this Avidya is removed by means of Vidya (Self-Knowledge) is also Avidya alone. None of these beliefs or concepts is 'absolutely' true or real; the Absolute or Ultimate truth is that Atman is the non-dual Brahman alone, beyond all concepts.


35. For those who remember the truth that — "Whether it be Avidya or its effects, neither of them exists whatsoever in reality" — the doubt of the type — "How does Vidya destroy Avidya?" — to arise there is no scope at all. Even if the seeker cognizes or discerns as to what exactly is the essential nature of Vidya, this doubt will not arise. For, in our empirical day-to-day experience the correct or true knowledge is called 'Vidya'. As soon as that Vidya is born, Avidya gets sublated or negated, that means, one gets the conviction of the type — "What I had known in the past was not correct." For example, when in poor light a person mistakes a rope lying on the ground to be a snake, with fear caused thereby he keeps running helter skelter; if another person tells the former in the manner — "Do not be afraid; this is not a snake, but a rope only" — then as a result of that knowledge gained through that sentence the first (deluded) person comes to know that the thing lying on the ground is a rope only and thereby gives up or gets rid of his fear as well as the consequent trembling or anxiety. Here in this context the knowledge born out of the sentence did not procure a non-existent rope, nor did it drive away an existent snake. It helped cognize an entity
as it is, an existent rope as a rope; that is all. Merely on that count the belief or concept that it was a snake was recognized to be a misconception or wrong knowledge. No change whatsoever occurred in the thing. Similarly, while there exists Avidya or when it is negated or removed, there does not occur any change whatsoever in the essential nature of Atman (the Self).


36. Many people are under the delusion that Vedantins have accepted the philosophical teaching of non-duality but at the same time they have also accepted the 'existence' of Avidya. The real state of affairs is not like this at all. Because the common run of people are saying that they do not know Advaita (the non-dual Reality), they have by themselves accepted or admitted of the phenomenon of Avidya. From this empirical standpoint alone Vedantins say that they will teach Vidya (Self-Knowledge) which sublates or negates Avidya. Therefore, to address the question of the type — "Who has this Avidya?" — to non-dualist Vedantins, is a ridiculous proposition. One who admits that — "I do not know Atman who is non-dual" — has necessarily to accept in the manner — "I have Avidya". Some people raise a doubt in the manner — "Because from the standpoint of non-dualists — 'I am Ishwara or the Lord Almighty' — who is omniscient alone, how at all can I have Avidya?" To that doubt the solution lies in the cognition of the fact that if one follows or adopts the standpoint of non-dualists, Ishwara alone is the Ultimate or Absolute Reality; then no one has Avidya at all. Even to those who doubt in the manner — "If Atman has Avidya, then how at all can one establish Advaita (non-duality) as the Ultimate Reality?" — this same solution can be provided. Because, when Avidya is accepted to exist, the empirical dealings of our workaday world are definitely accepted to exist and there is no cause or room for objecting or doubting the existence of duality in the manner — "If there exists Avidya...". When the true seeker has sublated or got rid of Avidya by means of Vidya, as there does not exist any empirical dealing of duality, even then there cannot arise or exist any doubt whatsoever.


37. "What is the object for Avidya? Because Atman is non-dual (Reality), there does not exist anything whatsoever apart from Him. There is no possibility of one getting Avidya, or being ignorant, about oneself. Therefore, in the philosophical teaching of those Vedantins who do not at all accept that another thing (second thing to Atman) which
can be misconceived there is no meaning whatsoever to the phenomenon or concept of Avidya. Is it not so?” — This objection too can be solved satisfactorily by the above explanation alone.

For, from the viewpoint of one who has the Intuitive or cognitive knowledge that — “Atman is non-dual Entity or Reality” — there does not exist any Avidya at all. Therefore, the question — “Who has this Avidya?” — cannot be put to those who observe from that viewpoint. On the other hand, one who has misconceived Pramastrutwa (i.e. ‘I’ notion) in himself, he has per force to accept that he has Avidya with regard to Brahman (or Atman) who is his own essential nature of Pure Being. By virtue of that Avidya alone he is said to be ‘a Samsaaree’. Otherwise, what was the need or occasion for the Shaastras to have taught or instructed Brahnavidya or Self-Knowledge? Is it not true that despite the fact that one is Brahman alone he does not cognize It or is not aware of It and only to such a person (who is ignorant of his own Self being the very essential nature of Intuition) that Shaastras as well as the Achaaryaa (spiritual preceptor) should instruct or teach in the manner — “You are verily that Brahman (That thou art)” The purport or hidden meaning of scriptural sentences like — “Brahman alone originally, or in the beginning, existed; It came to cognize or know Itself to be — ‘I am Brahman’ — and by virtue of that cognition It became everything” — (Brihadaaranyaka 1-4-10) — is this alone.


38. If one accepts the teaching of Advaita (viz. Atman is the non-dual, Absolute or Ultimate Reality), there does not exist either any objection or solution whatsoever. For, both objections and their solutions exist only in the sphere of duality; even so, it is a mystery as to why people in general get some kind of a doubt or other (rather always some kind of a doubt raises its ugly head in their minds) whenever the word ‘Advaita’ or ‘non-duality’ is pronounced in their presence. If it is true that our Atman is Brahman alone (i.e. the Ultimate Reality behind all creation), does it not mean the same whether we say — “I have Avidya” — or we say — “Brahman has Avidya”? Then, how come Brahman who is omniscient can have Avidya or ignorance? — This doubt is of the above category. From the standpoint of non-duality, that is — “Atman is Brahman” — no one, whosoever he may be, has any kind of Avidya whatsoever. Therefore, the purport of the teaching that — “Brahman does not have Avidya” — is a proper or correct one indeed: but at the same time the teaching or truth that — “Apart from Brahman no other conscious entity whatsoever exists” — also should not be forgotten. Further, it should be understood that those who follow the methodology of Vyaakhyaaana (or later
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commentators, i.e. some of the present-day Vedantins who have been adopting purely dialectic methods or arguments without the full backing or support of the all-comprehensive Intuitive experience or Saakshi Anubhava) and entertain the concept that — "Jeeva alone has Avidya; not Brahman" — have completely forgotten this above philosophical teaching. It is indeed for this unique purpose of reminding all of us about this fundamental truth of the non-dual Reality of Brahman or Atman alone that all Upanishads have undertaken their teachings or instructions.


39. After solving yet another objection which the followers of other schools of philosophy may raise with regard to ‘Avidya’ mainly because they have not kept in mind the fundamental teachings of Advaita by the Vedantic science of spirituality, we will conclude this subject-matter here. “In the teachings of these ‘Advaitins’ who propound that no one, whosoever he may be, has Avidya at all there will be a serious defect or anomaly that the teachings of Pure Consciousness that is attained through, or by means of, the scriptural instructions too will become a matter of futility alone; further, even the teaching that Ajnaana is sublated or rooted out by Jnana or Self-Knowledge will become an invalid or unreasonable proposition. If in order to evade all these defects or lacunae one accepts the concept or theory of ‘Avidya’, then invariably one has to accept that this Avidya is attached to the non-dual Brahman alone.” This in essence is their objection indeed.

Although on the face of it (or apparently) this seems to be a very strong or indisputable objection, in truth (i.e. when deliberated upon from the standpoint of the Pure Consciousness or Intuitive experience, which is taught by all the scriptures using the method of Superimposition and Rescission or Adhyaaroapa Apavaada Nyaaya) this objection fizzes out without any real content like a damp squib, so to speak. For, what if for one who has Intuitively known or cognized in the manner — “No one has Avidya at all; I am verily the non-dual Atman” — the instructions or teachings of the scriptural texts become futile? Is it not true that only for the sake of those who have no knowledge of the Reality the scriptural teachings are meant? Prior to one getting the Intuitive Knowledge of the Ultimate Reality of Atman or Brahman alone Avidya exists as also Vidyta (Self-Knowledge), which sublates or roots out Avidya, exists. When it is seen from everyone’s experience that by means of Vidyta the phenomenon of Avidya is sublated or removed, who can ever say that Vidyta is futile? The objection of the type — “In the teaching or theory of the non-duality of Atman, the sublation or removal of Avidya does not fit in or is not feasible!” — is not proper or valid at all; for, everyone can in his own experience see or cognize (for himself and
by himself Intuitively) that by the Intuitive Knowledge of non-duality Avidya is sublated or removed. Especially to raise an objection of the type — “As per this spiritual science of Advaita it should not be or cannot be cognized Intuitively like that!” — is not at all proper or reasonable. For, to doubt in the manner — “It should not or cannot be experienced or cognized” — when actually in truth it is cognized or Intuitively experienced, it is not rational or logically convincing at all. The Nyaaya or axiom that — “Na Hi Drishte Anupapannam Naama” — (meaning, when it is actually cognized, there is no question whatsoever of negating that cognition) — provides a solution like a panacea for all these kinds of objections and doubts indeed.


VI. ADHYAAROAPA (SUPERIMPOSITION) AND APAVAADA (RESCSSION) METHODOLOGY

40. Atman or Brahman that Vedanta expounds as the Ultimate Reality is devoid of all kinds of special features or characteristics. Therefore, it is not possible either to indicate (or signify) to others or to know by ourselves by means of any particular word Atman in Its essential nature of Pure Being-Consciousness-Bliss with certitude or conviction in the manner — “It is this alone”. It has to be signified per force by negating or sublating the features which truly do not belong to Its essential nature. It is stated (in the scriptures) that a disciple by name Baashkali requested his preceptor named Baadhwa to instruct him about the essential nature of Being of Brahman and the latter taught him by means of silence (Avachana) alone. (Not being able to discern what his preceptor was intending to teach) Baashkali repeated the same question twice more. Then the preceptor, Baadhwa, stated: “I have been teaching It to you all along, but you have not been grasping It at all. For, this Atman is 'Upashaanta' or an entity of the very essence of quietude; in Him there does not exist any special feature or characteristic whatsoever”. In the Smriti like Geeta also it is stated in a similar manner as: “It is not real, nor is It unreal”. In the epic Bhaarata it is mentioned that Lord Naaraayana who adorned or assumed the macrocosmic form of Vishwaroopa told Naarada, the devotee of Vishnu when the latter invoked Him, that — “My essential nature is not the one which you are perceiving now as endowed with the gross features or characteristics. What is being perceived by you is My Maayaashrishti or magical creation. See that you do not reckon that I am essentially of this form.” For that reason alone, in the Shruttis (Upanishads) Brahman has been taught by sublating or negating all the qualities or special features of Anaatman or not-self; it is also taught that — “Apart from
indicating Brahman in the manner — 'It is not this, not that' — there does not exist any other greater or better method of teaching'. The teaching that — "Brahman is devoid of all features or characteristics." — is the most profound and principal teaching of Vedanta. Nirvisheshha, Nishprapancha, Nirguna, Nirdharmaka, Niraakaara, Nirvikalpaka, Nirupaadhiika — all these are synonymous terms.


41. Just because it has been taught in the Shrutis that — "Atman is 'not this, not that' " — one should not reckon it to mean that the non-existence of the contra or the not-self, which has been negated or sublated, exists in Brahman or Atman; nor one should interpret it to mean that that contra (of Brahman or Atman) exists somewhere else (apart from and in space) away from Brahman. For instance, if it is stated that — "Brahman is Adrishyaj or that which cannot be seen or perceived" — it does not mean either that things like an earthen pot, pitcher etc. which are perceptible exist separately or that the non-existence of those things exists in Brahman. The repetition of the words — "Neti, Neti" or "Not this, not that" — has been employed here to indicate a pervasive meaning (Veepsaarththa) or to imply a comprehensive outlook. The purport behind the Shrutti statement is whatever the human mind can imagine or conceive Brahman to be, none of those concepts, whatsoever they may be, is Brahman at all. Otherwise, if by the statement — "Not this, not that" — the two things known by them are negated, the doubt of the type — "If Brahman is not this or that, what else can It be?" — may arise. When seen or observed from the viewpoint of the Shastraas, the teaching is — "Brahman is one and one alone, non-dual without a second". In Brahman, neither the five primordial elements like Prithvi (earth), Ap (water), Tejas (fire), Vaayju (air) and Aakaasha (space) or their Vaasanamas (latent, potential forms or impressions), nor their non-existence, exist. Even the Vedic statements of the type — "Such and such a thing does not exist in It; It is not such and such a thing" — which are negative in their import do not exist or pertain to It in the least.


42. The moment it is stated that — "Such and such a feature or quality does not exist in Brahman" — it amounts to having accepted the fact that that particular quality or characteristic exists in reality somewhere else; for, no one ever negates any characteristic or quality
which does not exist anywhere at all. Whoever can contradict a statement of the type — "This boy is not the son of a barren woman"? If it is stated that — "One should cognize or know Brahman" — it invariably amounts to having accepted that in Brahman there exists 'Jneyatwa' (objectivity — meaning, the quality of Brahman being objectified); it also amounts to having accepted thereby that Brahman can be explained or described (to others) by means of a particular statement. In order to cognize Brahman one has to have per force the mind. Thus as there is no other go than to accept conditions like: (i) the existence of Brahman, (ii) Its characteristics or qualities which are separate from It, (iii) words or sentences needed to describe It, (iv) the preceptor who uses those words or sentences to describe It and (v) the valid means or instrument of our mind needed to cognize It — how will it be proper or reasonable to say that Brahman is devoid of qualities or characteristics? — This dilemma may be countenanced by Jijnaasus (seekers of the Ultimate Reality).

Is there a way out of or solving this knotty problem? Yes, Vedantins utilize a Nyaaya (axiomatic theory) in order to signify Brahman devoid of all characteristics or qualities. That theory is called — "Adhyaaroapa Apavaada Nyaaya" or "The methodology of Superimposition and Rescission". The method of teaching adopted herein is: First select one particular Vikalpa (misconception) which the Ajnaanis (ignorant people) have superimposed upon or misconceived in Atman and show that, apart from or other than that particular misconception, there does not exist a more extraneous or grosser misconception; then sublate the first acknowledged misconception too by means of accepting another (subtler) misconception.

In this methodology, that special feature which is taken wrongly (or misconceived) to exist in Brahman exclusively for the purpose of instruction is the Adhyaaroopa (the superimposition); that which is negated or sublated is the Apavaada (the rescission); that which falsifies or invalidates any misconception pertaining to any entity or thing, whatever it may be, and thereafter gives rise to the correct knowledge about that particular entity is itself the Vaakya or sentence. Just as in the case of a person who has wrongly known or understood the directions like east, west etc., by means of a sentence of the type — "This is not east, but west" — the Jnaana (correct knowledge) which is capable of sublating or falsifying the earlier wrong knowledge (misconception) is born, similarly in the case of a person who has wrongly cognized that his body, mind and senses etc. are his Atman, by virtue of a (scriptural) statement which signifies in the manner — "That essential nature of Atman alone art thou" — that Intuitive knowledge (Jnaana) which is capable of sublating or falsifying (the earlier or innate) misconception is invariably caused. Although in the statement of
the type — "Not this, not that" — all the misconceptions which are likely to be superimposed upon Brahman are invariably sublated, first it appears as though the phenomena of the expressed meanings of the scriptural sentences (Shabda Vachyatwa) and the objectivity of the mind (Mano Vishayatwa) are accepted. But because both Vachyatwa as also Jneyatwa are again misconceptions alone, this Vakyya (scriptural sentence) sublates or falsifies those features also. Not only this; because even the Vakyatwa (the abstract phenomenon of this scriptural sentence denoting something is nothing but a misconception, finally the scriptural sentence gives up its Vakyatwa and subsides (to culminate in the Intuitive experience or cognition of Atman as one's own innate Pure Being).


43. "If both the Shruts and the Aachaarya teach invariably by adopting or utilizing the method of Adhyaaroopa Apawaada, then does it not amount to saying that their statements too are based on Avidya (misconception) alone?" — In this manner it is not possible to doubt or raise an objection. For, between the Adhyaaroopa (superimposition) that the Ajnaanis or the common run of ignorant people have and the Adhyaaroopa (superimposition) that the Shruts and the Aachaarya adopt (deliberately) there exists a very important, predominant difference. The common run of ignorant people who believe (misconceive) one thing to be another do not possess the correct or proper knowledge of the real thing. For example, when they perceive the brilliance of or the silvery brightness of nacre or sea-shell, they have invariably the wrong knowledge of the type — "This is silver indeed" — rooted in them; but after they thoroughly examine the object (lying before them) they get the conviction of the type — "This is not silver at all; in truth, it is nacre or a sea-shell alone" — and at the same time the former misconception of the type — "This is silver indeed" — is falsified or sublated. Even so, that thing may appear to them as before as if it is silver, but now having cognized in the manner — "The sea-shell or nacre itself is appearing as if it is really silver" — the discriminative knowledge of the distinctions like — the superimposed (misconceived) silver and the substratum of the sea-shell or nacre for that misconception — is 'born'. However, the deliberate superimposition adopted by the scriptures or the spiritual preceptor is not caused by Ajnaana at all; in fact, it is deliberately adopted or utilized by them with full discriminative (Intuitive) knowledge. In support of this, yet another example can be given. The common run of ignorant (non-discriminative) people carry on their empirical or day-to-day dealings of the type — "The sky (space) is black; it is red etc."; but the discriminative and knowledgeable people, though having fully realized
(cognized) that the sky never has any colour whatsoever, still transact in their daily life in the manner — “The sky is black, or it is red etc.” — adopting or following the viewpoint of others (i.e. ignorant, non-discriminative people). In both these transactions in reality the sky does not have any colour whatsoever. But especially the misconception that the common run of ignorant people have is not to be found in the least among the knowledgeable or the discriminative people. Therefore it is not proper or rational to say that just because the knowledgeable people carry on their day-to-day or empirical transactions by adopting the method of deliberate superimposition all their transactions are carried out in toto through, or on the basis of, ignorance alone.


44. If the question — “Why does even the knowledgeable Aachaarya instruct utilizing this Adhyaaroapa Apavaada method?” — is raised, then the answer is: “Because here (in teaching Brahma Vidya) this unique, exclusive method alone is the proper or correct device for the purpose”. Even in the empirical or our workaday world this Adhyaaroapa Apavaada Nyaaya (method of superimposition and rescission) is being utilized by teachers in our educational systems. For example, all of us have seen the school teachers using some linear figures on a black board for the purport of teaching numericals or arithmetic, as also the teachers using paper, pen and ink and such other means to teach the alphabet etc. to their pupils. In this context the teachers do not at all have the ultimate intention or purport of instructing about those objects or means like paper, ink, pen or the linear figures themselves; nor do they teach that the paper, pen, ink etc. are themselves the numericals or arithmetic or the alphabet. In fact, through these means which they use as devices the teachers inculcate in the minds of their young pupils the subtle sense or knowledge of numbers or arithmetic as also the alphabet. In the same manner, utilizing the suitable or appropriate superimpositions which are helpful in enabling the pupils' intellect to grasp or discern, both the scriptures and the knowledgeable preceptor instruct about the essential metaphysical nature of Atman. For them the goal or final purport is only to instruct that Ultimate Reality of Atman and not to teach the reality of the superimpositions themselves which they had deliberately utilized as aids and devices for the prime purport of instructing about Atman.

However, between these illustrations (Drishtaanta) and illustrated (Daarshtaantika) there exists a subtle distinction. That is: In the alphabets, numericals etc. because there are special characteristics like sound, forms etc. projected by them, using them directly as the means, the subject-matter can be directly instructed, as it is, to highly qualified students or pupils. But in the case of the essential nature of
the Ultimate Reality of Atman, since it is devoid of any kind of special characteristic whatsoever, it is not possible at all to instruct the essential nature of Atman directly by any objective means or mediatory aids. Therefore, whatever ways in which it can be surmised that the common run of people are likely to misconceive the essential nature of their Atman or Self — each one of those ways will have to be invariably sublated or negated in the process of instructing the Ultimate Reality of Atman. Therefore, Vedantins have quite necessarily utilized this unique methodology suitably.


45. Because some Upanishadic statements like — “Satyam Jnaanamanantam Brahma” — (Taittireeya 2—1) anc. “Vijnaanamaaandam Brahma” — (Brihadaaranyaka 3-9-28) — teach the Reality of Brahman through the means of injunctions (Vidhimuk’ra) alone, and scriptural statements of the type — “Brahman is not this, is not that” — do not signify the essential nature of Brahman in a direct manner, this latter method adopting devious or circumlocutory statements is of no benefit whatsoever. — Thus some seekers may feel or think. But even the methodology implicit in teaching Brahman through sentences like — “Satyam Jnaanamanantam Brahma” — is also based on the axiomatic system of Adhyaaroopa Apavaada Nyaaya alone; in that context too, by superimposing upon the Ultimate Reality of Brahman characteristics like name, form and action (Naama Roopa Karma) alone Brahman is signified or taught; while teaching the essential nature of Brahman Itself, as It is, the method adopted will have to be per force negative in nature (i.e. the method of sublation of all kinds of special features or characteristics in the manner — “Not this, not that”). In due course (in section 66) we will indicate the Vedantic tenet of — “No word or sentence whatsoever can ever directly signify or teach the essential nature of Brahman as It is”. Thus if we do not accept that the Upanishads teach Brahman exclusively by sublating anything other than, or secondary to, Brahman — then because of the defect of having first said that Brahman cannot be known or perceived either by the mind or the speech and later on (flouting or contradicting this very stipulation) the scriptures start directly describing the essential nature of Brahman, the scriptures become false or invalid means for teaching the Ultimate Reality of Brahman indeed.


46. It is not possible here to explain and to enumerate with full details all the various superimpositions which have been acknowledged and adopted in the Upanishads in order to teach the Transcendental Reality of Brahman utilizing the methodology of ‘Superimposition
and Rescission'. Even so, we will explain some of the important methods through the examples given in this book mainly for the purport of instruction and guidance to the true seekers. They will do well if on the basis of these examples given here they imagine similar methods by themselves. Some scriptures first superimpose on Atman objectivity (Jneyatwa) and then teach that nothing other than Atman is worth knowing as an object of knowledge; some scriptures first superimpose subjectivity or cognizership on Atman and then teach that Atman is not an entity to be objectified or perceived (Aprameya) at all. In some other scriptural statements Aatmatwa or most innateness is superimposed on Atman and cognizership or Jnaatrutwa is sublated; in yet other scriptural statements Saakshitwa or Witnesshood is superimposed on Atman and Aatmatwa or the most innateness also is negated or sublated. In some sentences Brahmatwa or infiniteness is first superimposed and later Alpatwa or finitude is sublated. In other sentences, in addition to Brahmatwa or infiniteness Aatmatwa or innateness is superimposed and Paroakshatwa or imperceptibility (extraneousness) is sublated. In the same manner, the scriptures superimpose or accept tentatively Vaakyagamyatwa or the capability of being indicated by sentences and sublate the misconception of Atman being a Prameya or an object of cognition through the valid means of perception, inference etc. Other scriptures state on the basis of tentative superimposition that Atman is non—perceptible or beyond the ken of Vaak or speech and Manas or the mind, and then later on they sublate Vishayatwa or objectivity altogether. Similarly, superimposing tentatively Jagat Kaaranatwa or causation of the world on Atman they sublate the category of effect or Kaaryatwa altogether and thereafter sublate even the category of causation or Kaaranatwa also. Accepting first Saamaanyatwa or universality (generic characteristic), they then propound that the characteristic of particularity (Visheshatwa) is not different or apart from it; accepting Asangatwa or non-attachment, non—relatedness, the scriptures then sublate even Saamaanyatwa or generality also: depicting Samsaaritwa or transmigratory soulhood, the scriptures then propound or teach soulhood by distinguishing it from Jadatwa or grossness; superimposing Upaasyatwa or the category of being an object for meditation on Atman, the Upanishads then sublate or falsify Samsaaritwa or transmigratory soulhood; superimposing on Atman Avasthaa Saakshitwa or the position of the Witnessing Principle of the three states of Consciousness (i.e. waking, dream and deep sleep), they then sublate Aparichhinnatwa or distinctness, divisibility. Further, propounding Atman to be having Tureeyatwa or the fourth dimension beyond the three states of Consciousness, the Upanishads then sublate that Saakshitwa or Witnessing Principlehood also; teaching Saadhakatwa or practitionership, seekership, they then sublate one's Nitya Samsaaritwa or being a permanent transmigratory soul,
and teaching or superimposing *Nitya Muktatwa* or being eternally enlightened or liberated state, they then sublate even the *Saadhakatwa* or practionership, seekership. Thus in this manner by means of each one of such superimpositions one particular misconception is removed or falsified, and this process continues in and through the scriptural texts.

Although in the above description we have mentioned as to how by means of a particular superimposition a particular misconception is negated or sublated, it is possible to utilize each one of the above superimpositions to sublate several misconceptions at the same time; Vedantins have, in fact, used these superimpositions in that manner. If the superimposition that — "Atman alone is to be known (*Jneya*)" — is utilized, it amounts to negating not only in the manner that — "Nothing else is there to be known" — but also indicating the truth (or teaching) that — "The Ajnaana pertaining to Atman alone is the cause for the false appearance of Anaatman or not-self; if Atman is cognized (Intuitively), then all that is Anaatman or not-self becomes known or cognized; if Atman is Intuitively cognized, the Ajnaana is perennially rooted out; if Atman is Intuitively cognized, the divisions or distinctions of Jnaatru (cognizer) and the Jneya (the cognized object) will not exist" — and such other spiritual truths are realized through these methods of superimposition and rescission. People who are adepts in this kind of Intuitive deliberations can easily conceive by themselves such methods of superimposition and rescission according to the contexts. For the sake of people with low and medium intellectual faculties or qualifications we will explain to some extent these methodologies in the following chapters.

**VII. DEALINGS OF PRAMAANA (VALID MEANS) AND PRAMEYA (OBJECTS)**

47. Vedantins have acknowledged the Shrutis or *Upanishads* alone as *Pramaana* to cognize *Paramaartha* (the Ultimate Reality) of Brahman, is it not? If the question — "What is that special feature to be found in the Shrutis which is not to be found in the other remaining *Pramaanas*?" — is not clearly understood and the proper answer to it found out, then there is no possibility of discerning that this acknowledgement is rational (or proper). Therefore, we will now present, for this purpose, before our readers a few deliberations pertaining to the validity of the Shrutis as *Pramaanas* for Atman.

Previously in section 28 it was propounded that all the dealings of *Pramaanas* and *Prameya* are in the sphere of *Avidya* of the nature or form of *Adhyaasa* (misconception) alone. In that case, it amounts to saying that Shaastras too proceed on the basis of, or through, *Avidya*
alone. Then, Shaastras which teach that the results or fruits of Karmas accrue in other worlds or celestial regions and other births or times, will become invalid means, indeed. Thereby, can it be said that one who wishes to attain such fruits engages himself in performing such rituals or rites without cognizing in the manner — “I have an innate nature of Atman which is quite different or apart from this my body”? Both these surmises are rendered irrational or improper. Therefore, for the sake of the Karma Kaanda (the ritualistic portion of the Vedas) remaining as the valid means, it will have to be per force acknowledged that the Shaastra which stipulates the rituals and their procedural details (Karma Vidhaayaka) is truly meant by way of injunctions for Jnaanis or Self-Realized souls alone. This sort of a doubt is likely to sprout out in the minds of people who lack intellectual understanding or wisdom.

We have already given the solution for this question in section 28. Now we will explain it in some detail. It is not our opinion at all that by means of the Shaastras we do not come to know the fact that apart from the body there exists an entity called Atman. But the portion of the Shaastras which deal with stipulations or injunctions pertaining to scriptural (Vedic) rituals or rites has not dealt with any deliberations whatsoever about the essential nature of Atman; for, if one wants to undertake any ritual (or even mundane, secular action) it is enough for him to have or possess the basic knowledge of the type — “I am a doer or an agent of action; I am an enjoyer” — which the common run of people possess quite naturally too. People who are qualified or who have the propensities to perform the Vedic rituals do so by virtue of their having the common knowledge or belief to the effect — “Atman has relationship with other worlds (after his release from, or death in, this present body)” — invariably and not by attaining or gaining the Intuitive cognition of the essential nature of Atman (Aatmajnaana) which is propounded in the Vedantic or Upanishadic lore. Besides, that Aatmajnaana is opposed or contradictory to any person undertaking (or performing) any scriptural or secular action (Karma). For, the innate belief of the type — “I am the enjoyer of the results or fruits of my actions” — is needed for Karma; but Aatmajnaana or Self-knowledge that is taught or propounded by Vedantic or Upanishadic lore is the Intuitive cognition of the truths like — “I am one who does not have hunger or thirst and such other defects whatsoever which are to be got rid of nor any desires to be fulfilled’. The concept of the type — “I belong to such and such a Varna; I belong to such and such an Aashrama; I am of such and such an age and I am qualified to perform such and such Karma” — is needed for performing any kind of Karma; but the Vedantic Aatmajnaana is the Intuitive cognition of the truths like — “There do not exist any castes like Brahlmana, Kshatriyya, Vaishhya and Shoodra whatsoever, nor any Kartrutwa and Bhoktrutwa whatsoever nor do I have any movements like coming and going etc. whatsoever”.

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Therefore, to say or accept that *Karma*, which is stipulated for a person who has the misconception (*Adhyaasa*) of himself having *Varna* and *Aashrarna* etc. and the *Jnaana* of the eternally Pure or Absolute *Atnman*, which is devoid of any kind of misconception or superimposition whatsoever (*Adhyaasa*), co-exist is as much a contradictory statement as saying that darkness and light co-exist. For this reason alone, there is nothing wrong or improper in making the statement that — “The portion of *Shaastra* pertaining to *Karma* or rituals and rites is a *Pramaana* only in the sphere of *Avidya*.”


48. If the knowledge that is born out of a sentence in the *Karma Kaanda* is a mere misconception just like the misconception of the rope-snake, then in that case by the *Shruti* statement which gives rise to the unitary or non-dual *Vijnana* of the Self the earlier misconception will invariably be sublated. Therefore, as these latter *Shrutis* are opposed to the scriptural statements found in the *Karma Kaanda* acknowledged as valid means (*Pramaana*), to say that *Shrutis* teach the unitary non-dual Self-knowledge is not proper. Besides, if it is acknowledged that the scriptures propound the Intuitive knowledge (*Jnaana*) of *Atnman* who is non-dual and non-agent of any action, then since there is no scope for the distinctions of the type — spiritual instruction (*Upadesha*), the instructor or preceptor (*Upadeshruru*) and the subject-matter of instruction (*Upadeshya*) — the validity or authority of *Jnaana Kaanda* (the *Upanishadic* portion dealing exclusively with the essential nature of *Atnman*) will be falsified or invalidated. Since all mundane or empirical dealings are carried out or prompted by *Avidya* alone, it will have to be accepted *per force* that even the dealing of treating the *Shrutis* as valid or authoritative means is based on or prompted by *Avidya* alone. Then in that event, each and every scriptural statement becomes invalid and loses its authority or sanctity. It is the opinion of some people that, instead of saying that — “The scriptural sentence which teaches non-duality or *Absolutism* of *Atnman* loses its validity or authority in this manner and, in addition, deprives the sentences in the *Karma Kaanda* portion of the *Vedas* also of their validity and thereby rendering all mundane or empirical dealings unreal” — it is better to declare that — “The scriptural sentences which propound non-duality of *Atnman* alone are invalid.”

But in this theory, or argument, there is no stuff. For, we have already explained and exemplified that all empirical dealings involving *Pramaanas* and *Prameyaa* are invariably based on, or prompted by, *Avidya* alone. Hence the fact that — “Just like the *Pramaana* of the portion of the scriptures pertaining to the injunctions and prohibitions, the *Pramaana* of that portion of the *Vedic* lore devoted to the knowledge
of the Self or Emancipation is also meant for the ignorant people only” — is quite acceptable to Vedantins indeed. But merely on this count to say that the validity (Pramaanya) of valid means (Pramaanas) themselves gets falsified is not proper or reasonable. For, in the first place the scriptural sentence pertaining to Self-knowledge undertakes the task of propounding the Intuitive knowledge of the unitary or non-dual Atman in order to remove or sublate Avidya. Because the Self-knowledge (Vidya) sublates Samsaara of the Jeeva caused by Avidya, in saying that the Shastraas which enable the seeker to gain Vidya which is the practical means to attain Parama Purushaarthaa (the prime goal of human existence) there is no contradiction whatsoever. The Upanishadic sentences do not at all teach that — “The non-duality of Atman is real as well as unreal.” Neither do they preach that one should not perform Karma or Vedic rituals in order to fulfil one’s desires and attain the relevant fruits, nor do they teach that one should not practise Upaasana. Therefore, the Upanishadic sentence is neither self-contradictory nor opposed to the scriptural statements which stipulate Karmas or Vedic rituals. On the other hand, the Karma Kaanda sentence — invariably based on the empirical or mundane belief that the ingredients of action like the agent of action, the valid means of action etc. which are projected by Avidya do exist — teaches the aspirants for Moaksha (Mumukshus) to perform Nitya Karmas (daily routine, rituals) for the purposes of getting rid of one’s demerits and at the same time the Karma Kaanda sentence teaches, rather recommends to, such seekers of empirical or mundane fruits Kaamya Karmas (mundane actions) which help attain or fulfil one’s desires. The Karma Kaanda sentence teaches or recommends those Karmas based on the principal reason that if Paapa (demerits of the heart or mental impurities) are sublated, Jnaana (Self-knowledge) accrues and at the same time the sublation of Avidya too is achieved. Thus, as that Karma Kaanda sentence too instructs a device to attain Purushaarthaa, that too becomes a valid or authoritative means (Pramaana) indeed. Since that Karma Kaanda sentence does not at all teach that the constituents of Karma (i.e. Kaarakas) are real in their essence, there does not exist any contradiction whatsoever between the Karma Kaanda and the Jnaana Kaanda. Now there is no need whatsoever to provide a solution or answer to the doubt — “When Jnaana propounds in a manner which culminates in non-duality (Absolute Reality), then the distinctions like Upadesha, Upadeshtru etc. do not exist at all”. For, to those who have the Intuitive Knowledge of the non-dual or Absolute, Transcendental Self there does not exist any need for any spiritual instruction whatsoever; then in that event, what does it matter if Upadesha etc. are rendered unreal? In Vedanta utilizing the Adhyaaroopa Apavaada Nyaaya the distinctions of Shastra (scriptures), Shishya (disciple) and Guru (preceptor) have been acknowledged exclusively for the purpose of
teaching the *Paramaartha* (the Ultimate Reality) of *Atman*. In the case of those seekers who have kept in mind this fact there is no room for any doubt arising with regard to the validity or authority of the *Shaastra*.

8. Bh. p. 4.

49. The valid means like perception (*Pratyaksha*), inference (*Anumaana*) etc. are common to both classes of people, viz. those who are interested in mundane or materialistic affairs and those who are interested in, or having faith or belief in, *Vedic* rituals and rites. The *Shrutis* are the valid means which are acknowledged only by the *Vaidikas* (people who have staunch faith in *Vedas*). If the *Shrutis* are accepted as *Pramaana*, then one has to accept the fact that common valid means like perception, inference etc. are not valid any more, and for this reason why not accept, on the contrary, that the *Shrutis* are themselves weak? — This kind of a doubt may arise in the minds of some sceptic people.

But this doubt is not rational. For, to say that — “The *Shrutis*, on the one hand, and *Pratyaksha*, *Anumaana* etc., on the other, are both valid means which are mutually contradictory” — is itself not proper, reasonable. Valid means invariably signify their respective but unique or exclusive objects; they are never contradictory to one another (to wit, they do not cross one another’s path or jurisdiction, so to speak). If through the ears sound alone is known and through the eyes form of an object alone is known, it is quite evident that what is heard through the ears is not denied or falsified to be so by the eyes. Valid means, like *Pratyaksha*, *Anumaana* etc., can signify, or help cognize, sensations like *Shabda* (sound), *Sparsha* (touch) etc., but they do not at all signify that — “Brahman, which the *Shrutis* propound, is not non-dual or Absolute.” For, *Brahman* is not the subject-matter for the former set of valid means like perception, inference etc. As *Brahman* does not possess form, sound, etc., it is not perceptible; and because *Brahman* does not have any symbolic or special features etc., It is neither an object, or subject-matter, for conceptual means like *Anumaana* (inference), *Upamaana* (example, illustration) etc. To signify *Brahman*, *Shaastras* alone are the *Pramaana*. Just as *Dharma* cannot be known by any other means or sources than *Aagama or Shaastra* (i.e. the traditional scriptural texts and the implicit methods of teaching contained in them), similarly in the case of *Brahman* too the *Aagama or Shaastra* alone is the valid, authoritative means or source. In the above section 48 we have already pointed out that there is no contradiction whatsoever between the portions of *Shaastras* which propound *Dharma* (religious tenets)
and Brahman (the Ultimate Reality). We do not at all demand or stipulate that one should per force believe the scriptural statements propounding non-dual nature of Brahman; the fact that — “Because the identity of Brahman and Atman which the Shaastras propound is to be cognized invariably through Intuitive experience, the Shrutis are the valid, authoritative means or sources” — we have already mentioned long back in section 19 itself. Further, there is no scope for anyone to doubt in the manner — “If the scriptures teach non-duality of Brahman, then there does not remain any subject-matter or object whatsoever for valid means like perception (Pratyaksha), inference (Anumaana) etc.”

For, the scriptures themselves propound that the empirical means like Pratyaksha, Anumaana etc. are things which concern only Ajnaanis (ignorant people), and that those empirical means of perception, inference etc. are not valid means for Jnaanis (people who have realized the Self); for this reason, just as the transactions of the dream state continue to be real till one gets awakened, similarly till the seeker gets the Intuitive Knowledge or experience of the identify of Brahman and Atman the empirical means of perception, inference etc. may also continue to be valid. This truth also has been indicated by us previously in section 28.


50. Some others have raised a doubt of the type — “Because the Shrutis are the valid means perceptible to the Avidya Drishti (empirical viewpoint of ignorance) alone, they are untrue or unreal. How at all is it possible for the real Intuitive Knowledge of the non-duality or identity of Brahman and Atman to accrue, or to be attained, from the unreal Vedantic (scriptural) sentence? No one has ever seen any one having died because of his being bitten by a rope-snake; no one also has ever seen any purposes or uses like bathing, drinking etc. having been fulfilled by the water of the mirage!”

But by the ‘poison’ arising out of doubt death occurs; in the dream a person dying after being bitten by a snake and a person taking a bath and such other acts being carried out are well known to every one. One may question that — “Because that act or effect is taking place in a dream alone, that is also unreal, is it not?” Even those who say that action or effect is unreal will have to accept per force the fact that at least the knowledge of that effect that has been gained is real; for, even after one wakes up, that knowledge remains as it is, without being sublated or falsified. Previously in section 44, we have already exemplified that by conceptual or imaginary means of chalk, cardboard, lines etc. the real knowledge of alphabets, numbers, sentences etc. is gained. Therefore, by unreal devices or means the real knowledge can be attained. For that very reason alone, the Shrutis negate or sublate all
devices or superimpositions in the manner — "It is not this, not that" — because they are all unreal in the ultimate analysis.


51. There is no scope for any one to doubt in the manner — "Despite being a product or projection of Avidya, how is it possible at all for the Shrulis to sublate or falsify Avidya itself? In case it is possible for the scriptures to sublate Avidya, then all the dealings of Pramaana and Prameya also will have to get sublated and hence the Shrulis will then become invalid, is it not?"

For the dealings of Pramaana and Prameya the very basis (substrate) is Pramaatrutwa (cognizership) alone. In fact, the goal of the Shrulis is to help sublate this Pramaatrutwa and thereby exclusively teach the real non-dual essence of Pure Being of Atman. We have already clarified in section 28 as to how the Pramaatrutwa is an effect (projection) of Avidya. To one who can cognize (Intuit) that Pramaatrutwa is not absolutely real the Pramaanas are not really Pramaanas at all, nor the Prameya are not really objects. Therefore, just as the valid means of the dream become invalid in the waking, when by virtue of the scriptural teaching the Intuitive experience (cognition) of the essential nature of Atman is attained, the scriptures too become themselves invalid indeed. Because the scriptural Intuitive knowledge sublates completely (or perennially) the validity of the empirical valid means of Pramaanas, the scriptures are called Antya Pramaana (the ultimate, final valid means). Although this Antya Pramaana finally sublates its own validity, even before the empirical dealings of Pramaanas are rendered invalid, the scriptures have completed or fulfilled their prime task or purport; thereafter even if they become invalid it does not matter at all (that is, it is of no consequence whatsoever from the standpoint of the Jnaanis). Suppose if another person in our dream roars in the manner — "All this is your dream alone" — and we get awakened as a result of that roaring: although that person's boisterous statement belongs to our dream alone and so is invalid or false — to the extent his statement helped signify the dream as a dream, that statement amounts to be a Pramaana alone, is it not? In the same way alone we should discern the Praamaanaya (validity) of the scriptures too. "How will it be after the non-dual Intuitive knowledge (Self-Knowledge) accrues owing to the valid means of the scriptures? What next? Why?" — such metaphysical questions, or the empirical doubts of the type — "Whether that Self-Knowledge is real in Itself or unreal; or whether any other knowledge can sublate or falsify this Self-Knowledge and thereby signify Its invalidity and can cause, or engender, in us any kind of indifference or disrespect since it is worthless" — remain to be solved.


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52. Even though Vedantins affirm that Atman is cognized (Intuited) through the valid means of the scriptures alone, one should not understand it in the manner that the Self can be cognized as an object or a perct (Prameya), just like an earthen pot, pitcher etc. For, if Atman is Prameya, He will have to be established on the strength of Pramaanas; then that Atman too, just like any other Prameya, will have to become per force a projection of Avidya alone, and for this reason the Shoonyavaada (theory of essencelessness or Nihilism) propounding the tenet of the type — "Both Atman and Anaatman are verily false appearances and are essenceless" — alone, will become the final spiritual teaching. For this reason alone, in the Shruts or the Smritis Atman has been described as Aprameya (not an object of cognition or not a percept). In the ultimate analysis, even for the Shastraas it is not possible to signify the essential nature of Atman, and one of the reasons for this is that Atman is devoid of all special features or characteristics. This fact we have already indicated in section 40. The other reason for Atman not being an object of cognition or percept is the truth that Atman is the essential nature of Pure or Absolute Being Itself of the person who seeks to know or cognize Him. Any Pramaana or valid means functions or is employed (utilized) for the purpose of cognizing or perceiving a Prameya but not for the purpose of cognizing (objectifying) the Pramaatru himself.


53. Those people who cannot discern the essential natures of Atman and Pramaanas doubt in the manner — "If Atman is Aprameya, then how at all can the scriptures become the Pramaanas to help the seeker to cognize Atman? Is it not true that for any Pramaana to function there must be a relevant Prameya? Besides, if Atman is not an object of cognition at all, since Atman does not have any valid means of proof to establish His existence or Being any body can argue that Atman does not at all exist. After having affirmed that — 'Shastraas alone are the Pramaanaas' — and then at the same time to assert that — 'He is Aprameya' — is Vyaahata (an incongruous statement), meaning, a statement which is contradictory to itself."

First, Shruts are not said to be Pramaanas — not because they teach Brahman by objectifying It, but because Brahman is the seeker's innermost Atman alone. The scriptures teach in the manner — "Atman is not an object of perception" — and then sublate the distinctions of the kind of the knower, the known object and the means of knowledge. The Shruts are valid or authoritative means only because they sublate (rescind) all the special features or qualities which do not pertain or belong to Atman and, at the same time, teach the subsisting essential
nature of Atman. For the traditional aphorism of Dravidaachaarya, viz. "Siddham Tu Nivartakatwaat" — meaning, "As they [i.e. the scriptures] sublate or rescind those special features or qualities which do not pertain or belong to Atman, they are established or proved to be valid means" — this alone is the ultimate purport. We have also mentioned previously in section 51 that the scriptures are Antyapramaana or the final, decisive valid means, as also the fact that after the Self-Knowledge accrues from them the whole gamut of empirical dealings involving Pramaanas is falsified or sublated.

Further, for the doubt — "If Atman is not established by Aagama (the scriptures), then it amounts to saying that the existence of Atman Himself is not established or proved, is it not?" — especially to arise, there is no cause at all. For, in the case of empirical objects like Aakaasha (space), Vaayu (air) etc. they do not become self-established without desiderating valid means; they invariably need, nay demand, the valid means of Pratyaksha, Anumaana etc. But Atman is self-established and hence there is no need for Him to be established with the aid or support of any Pramaanas. Atman means the essential nature of Pure Being of the Pramaatru himself; and for the Pramaatru the necessity of a Pramaana arises only in the matter of knowing a Prameya, but not in establishing himself. Because the cognizer is the substratum for the empirical dealings of Pramaanas and Prameya etc., he has to be invariably and necessarily established prior to those empirical dealings. It cannot be asserted that — "An object is established to exist only if it is done so through the Pramaanas, but not if it is self-established." It is not possible for any one to deny Atman, who is self-established as also one's own essential nature of Pure Being Itself. Just as fire cannot at all give up or avoid, despite its strenuous efforts, its intrinsic heat which is verily its essential nature of being, similarly no one can ever give up or get rid of one's own essential nature of Atman.


54. From the standpoint of people who believe that the task or function of Pramaanas is only to signify things which are not known, the Shrutis which teach the Absolute or non-dual Reality (of Brahman or Atman) do not deserve to be called Pramaanas. For, the Shrutis do not at all teach the Absolute, non-dual Reality directly; they sublate features or qualities which do not at all pertain or belong to It, that is all. Therefore in their opinion it amounts to saying that there exists a great deal of difference between the empirical valid means like Pratyaksha, Anumaana etc. and the Shrutis.

But if we discern with insight, it will be evident that any Pramaana, whatever it may be, sublates the ignorance about its Prameya, but it
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never causes or creates any special characteristic whatsoever in the Prameya. If one is asked to cut asunder a piece of log into two parts, no one thinks that apart from dissociating the relationship between those parts or pieces there remains another function of cutting asunder the two parts. In fact, to cut asunder itself connotes breaking apart (a thing that is partible). Is it not? In the same way, if it is stated that Pramaanas signify their Vishaya (object) — it means that they remove the ignorance that exists with regard to the object of cognition alone and not in addition to it they perform yet another function or act of 'signifying' or 'making it known'. If considered from this viewpoint, it can be categorically stated that the real function of Pramaanas, whatever they may be, is to remove or sublate ignorance alone; because the Shrutis, just like the rest of the Pramaanas (empirical valid means), sublate the ignorance with regard to Atman (their subject-matter of cognition, Intuition), there is no room for any objection or difficulty whatsoever in reckoning them as Pramaanas.


55. Many proponents of various philosophies (Darshanakaaras) have acknowledged that Atman is an object of cognition (Vishaya) alone for a Pramaana. Some among them opine that Atman is perceptible directly by the mind; some others think that He is known by the empirical means of Anumaana. By discerning the defect that exists in their theories the greatness and importance of the Vedantic (spiritual) teaching — "Atman is Aprameya" — will become clear. Therefore, we will explain this topic in some detail here.

Atman is the essential nature of the Pramaatru indeed; we have previously stated in sections 28 and 51 that Pramaatru (cognizership) too is misconceived in, or superimposed upon, Atman. But even those who assert that — "Atman is perceptible to valid means like Pratyaksha, Anumaana etc." — have to accept invariably that Atman is Pramaatru, is it not? Even after accepting this fact to say that — "We cognize Atman who is the Pramaatru by Pramaanas" — will be opposed to the Shrutis, which clearly say — "Atman is Amata (that which cannot be conceived of by the mind); He is Avijnaata (one who cannot be known or cognized); to know or cognize Him (who is Aprameya) there are no Pramaanas whatsoever". Besides, there is no possibility of a Pramaatru who has a desire to know or cognize the Pramaatru, either himself or another. If it is himself, his Pramitsaa (desire to cognize) will, in that event, be a matter pertaining to a Prameya alone, and not something pertaining to himself. If it is another, then, in that event, to cognize that second Pramaatru yet another Pramaatru as also the desire to know this second one will have to be per force imagined and thereby there will be the defect of regressus ad
infinitum or Anavastha Dosha. Only after fulfilling pre-conditions like — (i) The Pramaatru should have a desire to cognize his Prameya; (ii) then he must have the Smriti (memory) of that object; (iii) he should make an effort to know; (iv) finally the fruition of that effort — alone the Prameya gets established, is it not? But in the case of Atman it is not possible even to imagine or conceive that only after He gets such a desire to know or cognize Himself and getting a memory about Himself etc. He becomes self-established; if it is imagined or surmised that another Pramaatru may, or can, know himself, then invariably one has to imagine or surmise the existence of yet a third Pramaatru and his having all those pre-conditions like desire, memory etc., and as it was pointed out above the defect of regressus ad infinitum will invariably attach itself.

Thus to imagine or surmise that it is possible to objectify or perceive Atman through empirical valid means of Pratyaksha, Anumaana etc. and then cognize or know Him is contradictory to Yukti (logical devices) as also Anubhava (universal experience). If it is maintained that one can know or cognize oneself, then it will become necessary to cut asunder Atman into two parts, one being the cognizer part and the second the cognized part; or, in the alternative, we will have to imagine or conceive of many cognizers (Pramaatrus) who perceive mutually one another. Besides, just as it is ridiculous to say that one light is seen (or perceived) with the help or aid of the light of another, it will be similarly ridiculous to imagine or surmise that one Atman is cognized or perceived by another Atman. For, when the Jnaana Swaroopa (the essential nature of Pure Consciousness) or the Jnaana Dharma (the rudimentary faculty of knowing or Intuitive cognition) is common to both, where is the necessity of a desire to know each other at all? Therefore, the spiritual teaching of Vedanta that — “Atman is Aprameya” — is correct and proper.


56. Some people coerce Vedantins and question them in the manner — “Is Atman a Pramaatru or not? Is Atman the subject-matter for the Shruts or not? Are Pratyaksha, Anumaana and such otherVyaaavahaaric Pramaanash (empirical valid means of cognition) are accepted by you as such or not? For all these queries give any one definite and convincing answer?” But those people who keep in mind the Vedantic teaching that — “All empirical dealings are invariably based on the Adhyaaroapa Drishti (the empirical viewpoint of misconception or superimposition) and are not real in the absolute sense (i.e. they are not Paramaartha or really real)” — will realize that there is no scope whatsoever for such kinds of doubts or questions to be
raised. For, it is proper (reasonable) to say that Atman is a Pramaatru from the Vyaavahaaric viewpoint alone; but if we go a little further deep and discern Intuitively, then Pramaatrutwa itself is Aadhyaasika (a product, projection of Adhyaasa or misconception) as we have previously stated in section 51. Till one realizes by virtue of the scriptural (spiritual) teaching of Advaita Jnaana (Intuitive knowledge of Atman as the non-dual Reality, one without a second), one is a Pramaatru cognizer and Paramaatman (the Absolute, Transcendental Reality of Atman) is Prameya, but on the dawn or attainment of Jnaana (Intuitive knowledge of Atman) — then what was previously reckoned, nay misconceived, as the Pramaatru (cognizer) is himself Paramaatman or the Absolute, Ultimate Reality of Atman; thereafter the very empirical distinction of Pramaatru and Prameya will not subsist at all. This fact we have stated previously in section 51. Pratyaksha, Anumaana etc. are valid means indeed till the dawn of Jnaana; but after the attainment of Jnaana those valid means also get sublated or falsified, just as the valid means of the dream state get falsified after one wakes up. All these empirical dealings exist only from the Adhyaaroapa Drishli; they do not exist in reality from the Apavaada Drishli. Several scriptural statements have to be reconciled in this manner applying the methodology of superimposition and rescission (Adhyaaroapa Apavaada Nyaaya) alone.


VIII. TARKA OR LOGIC

57. The logicians cannot understand why the Vedantins — who propound that the desire to cognize the Reality of Brahman or Brahmajnaana culminates, i.e. it becomes consummate, in Atmaanubhava or Intuitive experience of the Self — assert that Brahmajnaana or Self-Knowledge is not attained by means of Turka or logic (dialectics). It is also not possible for them (i.e. the logicians) to understand or reckon why Vedantins enhance the importance of Shabda or the spoken word, which signifies the empirical things or phenomena alone, beyond or above Anubhava or empirical experience. Here in this context we have to discern first of all as to what is meant by "Anubhava", as also what is the function of Shabda. The logicians call the empirical knowledge gained through Pratyaksha, Anumaana etc. as Anubhava or experience only. Although from the Vyaavahaaric or empirical viewpoint this too is proper alone, the Brahmaanubhava
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or Atmaanubhava (Intuitive experience of Brahman or the Ultimate, Absolute Reality) is not attained through the empirical valid means of Pratyaksha (perception), Anumaana (inference) etc. This fact we have mentioned previously in section 49.

Now let us deliberate upon Shabda or word. The scriptural Shabda teaches Dharma or religious tenets or doctrines which are to be practised and which are plausible and practicable; it also propounds entities, realities like Brahman, Atman etc. which are Siddha or self-established (eternal). But Saankhyans (i.e. followers of the school of philosophy called Saankhya, founded by Kapila Rishi) ask the question — “If it is said that the scriptural word instructs us about Dharma or religious tenets alone which can be practised, we can accept it; but the ever-existing Reality or Entity should be known or signified by empirical means like Pratyaksha, Anumaana etc. too, is it not?” That entity which exists for eternity is called by synonymous terms like Bhoota Vastu, Parinishthita Vastu, Parinishpanna Vastu etc. Because such an entity has per force to be perceptible to, or objectifiable by, other kinds of valid means or Pramaananas, in the event when one scriptural statement is contradictory to another scriptural statement, then it is conventional to interpret the weaker scriptural texts in subordination to, or with secondary importance to, the predominant, powerful scriptural texts; in the same manner, the Saankhyans are of the opinion that, if the Shruts are opposed to the Pramaanaantara or other kinds of valid means, then in that event, that particular Shruti or scriptural statement must be invariably interpreted to suit that Pramaana alone. This opinion too is not proper. For, although Brahman is a Bhoota Vastu, it is not an object for any other kinds of valid means (to be found in the empirical region) or Pramaanaantara Gooachara; because, it has no special characteristics like form, taste etc. Besides, it is not proper also to say that one Pramaana is opposed to or contradicts another Pramaana; this fact has already been mentioned in section 49. Therefore, just like Dharma or religious tenets or teachings, Brahman or the Ultimate Reality of the Self too is a subject matter of teaching exclusively for the Shruts alone.

It is the theory of logicians that — “Tarka or logic is useful in establishing or substantiating what is not perceptible or by comparison with what is perceptible or visible; therefore, Tarka is very near or close to Anubhava or perceptual, sensory experience.” But Brahman is to be cognized through or with the aid of the valid means (Pramaana) of Shaastras alone but not to be known or cognized through Pratyaksha Pramaana, at all. Therefore, neither Anumaana nor any other logical, dialectical device which closely follows or which is in consonance with the empirical valid means of Pratyaksha (perception) is of any utility or benefit here in this context. In fact, Brahman or the Ultimate Reality is Achintya or beyond the purview of the mental concepts. For this
Tarka or Logic

reason alone, both Shrutis (Upanishads) and Smritis are propounding that even for the sages or Rishis like Kapila, Kanaada etc., who were Siddhas (highly evolved souls in spiritual matters) it was not possible to know or cognize this Brahman merely by means of empirical logic, dialectics (Tarka).


58. It should not be misinterpreted in the manner that Vedantins never need any kind of Tarka whatsoever. In fact, Shruti expound their principal teachings by analyzing the whole gamut of not-self or Anaatman using a particular but queer methodology and helping the seeker's mind to get merged, as it were, or equipoised, in the Intuitive experience Itself of Atman. This exclusive methodology of the scriptures is called Aagama. For the highest class of seekers or Uttamaadhi kaaris merely listening to the scriptural sentence which teaches adopting this Aagama methodology is sufficient to attain the Intuitive experience of Atman (Aatmaanubhava). But in the case of those who are not capable of Intuiting the Reality of Atman merely on the strength of Shravana or listening to the scriptural statements, it is not wrong or improper to utilize the Shruti seeking the help of Intuitive reason also. For this reason alone, the Shruti say that in order to attain Self-Realization or Aatmaadarshana, in addition to Shravana, Manana or ratiocination (Intuitive reasoning) too is necessary. It is mentioned in the Upanishads that a rich man, whom some thieves kidnapped blind-folded and left him behind in a far-off forest, reached his native Gaandhaaradesha by virtue of his following the instructions given by some guides as well as by dint of his own discerning or discriminative faculty; in the same manner, the spiritual seeker or aspirant should attain Aatmajnaana or Self-Knowledge with the help of the spiritual instructions of the Aachaarya or preceptor as well as his own intellectual faculties of reasoning and discrimination. In this manner with the help of an illustration the scriptures have emphasized the need for Tarka or logic. Such a Tarka has been signified or depicted by the Shruti themselves for the sake of attaining the Intuitive experience. But on this pretext the dry, futile logic or dialectics which is either not having the support of the Shruti or is opposed to them cannot possibly be utilized to cognize or Intuit Brahman. For, the Tarka that human beings merely conjecture or formulate (using their intellectual faculties or capabilities) has no finality whatsoever; hence, it is not possible at all even to imagine about the Ultimate, Absolute Reality of Atman (which is the subject-matter or purport of the Shruti) without the aid of the Shruti themselves. If one proceeds on the basis of Tarka which human beings have imagined and formulated, the Purushaarthra or the ultimate goal of human existence
(i.e. Self-Knowledge or Self-Realization) also cannot ever be attained. Especially in the matter of topics or phenomena which have been experienced by every one with the help of the scriptural instructions it is evidently not proper or reasonable to argue contrary to that universal experience. “Na Hi Drishte(s)nupapannam Naama” (There is nothing illogical or unreasonable pertaining to anything that is experienced or seen, perceived) — this Nyaaya or maxim, axiom we have already exemplified in section 39 for this reason only. Kevala Tarka, Shushka Tarka, Niraagama Tarka — all these are the names given to the Tarka or logic which is opposed to or contradictory to Shrutis and which is Nishpramaanaka or not based on any empirical valid means of cognition and which is AnubhavaViruddha or opposed to universal human experiences. Tarka, Upapatti, Yukti are synonymous terms. As far as it is concerning Brahma or Atman, even the empirical valid means of Anumaana are in the same position (or predicament) as Tarka alone, but they are not independent valid means of cognition at all; the logic that is in consonance with the Intuitive experience as taught by the Shruti themselves is called Shrutyanyugraheeta Tarka or logic that is ‘blessed’ or approved by the scriptural texts; that logic which is not opposed to this Shrutyanyugraheeta Tarka is called Shrutyaviroadhi Tarka or Shrutyanyukoola Tarka or Shrauta Tarka.


59. Some disputants keep on exemplifying logical devices agreeable to their own whims and fancies to be in consonance with Shruti or they explain away saying that those logical devices are such as to help the seekers to understand the subtle meaning of the Shruti. But in order to decide or determine that such and such a logical device or argument alone is the one convenient or helpful, there is no dearth of means at all. As we have mentioned above the Shruti themselves exemplify here and there these kinds of logical arguments indeed. Therefore, we should necessarily accept those logical devices. It may appear to anyone that even the purport or opinion of those logical devices can be interpreted or described by each person in his own different manner. But if it is agreed upon that Tarka must invariably and necessarily be Anubhavaaangga or in consonance with or subordinate to experience, then the distinction that exists between Shushka Tarka or dry, vain logic and Shrauta Tarka or logic that is used in the Shruti will become very clear. That type of Tarka alone is called Shrauta Tarka. For, Paramaartha or the Ultimate, Absolute Reality should per force be of one and the same nature or form; It is not an entity which desiderates the categories of time, space and causation or which ever changes Its very nature or essence of Being. The Intuitive knowledge or Jnaana pertaining to that Reality alone is called Samyajjnaana
Tarka or Logic

(the correct, real knowledge), because it is in consonance with Saarvatraika Anubhava or universal Intuitive experience (which never varies from person to person). Therefore, that Tarka which is exemplified in the Shrutis to help attain this Intuitive experience as also any other Laukika Tarka or empirical logic that we may formulate, or conceive of, to be in consonance with such Tarka are together called Satyarka (reasonable, genuine logic). Any Tarka which is acceptable to one faction only but which is opposed or not accepted by the other factions does not have any finality and hence it cannot be Anubhavaanga Tarka; because it is not Anubhavaanga, i.e. in consonance with, or subordinate to, Anubhava or Intuitive experience, it is invariably Kutarka or wrong, false logic.


60. Vedantins do not maintain or assert that Tarkas or logical devices that are used by Saankhyans or Vaisheshikas and such other Darshanakaaras or by the present-day Vedantins or by people other than Vedantins or by Vaidvikas — are always such which cannot be accepted or that they are not reasonable. To the extent their logical devices are helpful to, or in consonance with, the Jnaana or knowledge that accrues from the Shrutis we may utilize them indeed as secondary aids. For that reason only, the Nyaya or axiom — "Paramatam Apratishtidham Anumatam Bhavati", meaning "That opinion of others which is not refuted or contradicted becomes acceptable to us" — has been acknowledged in Vedanta and this fact has been previously mentioned in section 4. To the extent such acceptable logical devices are in keeping with Shrauta Tarka or are close to them, Vedantins invariably accept them.


61. Here in this context one important difference that exists between the Darshanas or schools of philosophy which have based their tenets or doctrines predominantly on Tarka and Vedanta philosophy becomes very clear. That is: The Taarkikas proceed or undertake to determine the essential nature of phenomena or categories like Kaarana (cause) and Kaarya (effect) on the strength of Drishtaanta or illustrations alone. Therefore, for them the illustration or example that is actually perceived before us is quite necessary. In fact, there is no scope for them even to budge a little hither or thither away from the illustration. On the other hand, Vedantins have taken as their paramount basis Anubhava or Intuitive experience which accrues from the valid means of Shrutis.
Because that Intuitive experience signifies or helps cognize an entity (Vastu) which is not at all perceptible or cognizable through empirical valid means like Pratyaksha, Anumaana etc. even if Anubhava or Intuitive experience is not in consonance with any particular empirical illustration, there is no harm whatsoever. While using examples or illustrations Vedantins take up any one particular aspect or part alone of the illustration as the basis for comparison and then utilize those examples or illustrations, but they do not accept taking the illustration to be similar or identical in all aspects or matters (in order to drive home their point of view), and this important fact must necessarily be remembered. In truth, no one ever says that between the Drishtaanta or the illustration and Daarshtraantika or the illustrated there exists comparison or similarity in all aspects and respects; neither is it possible to assert in that manner. For, if such an identity or similarity exists between them, both entities become merged into one and hence the distinction or difference of the two in the forms of Drishtaanta and Daarshtraantika will itself become nullified or in other words that difference will not exist at all; it vanishes.


62. It is wrong to think that merely because an illustration has been utilized the establishment or determination of the reality or entity has been achieved. For, an illustration is useful only to clarify a topic or truth which is being currently enunciated. No one can ever establish that just because the water snake appears to be similar to a cobra, like the latter the water snake too is poisonous. Apart from this, if in the scriptures an illustration has been mentioned we can only deduce a purport or benefit that can accrue from that, but where that illustration cannot at all be compared or made applicable it will not be possible to do so. If it is a Loukika Drishtaanta or an empirical illustration, then that illustration should necessarily be interpreted or conceived to mean to be in consonance with universal acceptance. But, on the other hand, the illustration itself should never be distorted or twisted and be made controversial merely in order to prove or establish the veracity of a statement or opinion that is desired by us. For, it is never possible to determine or establish the reality of an object or a thing merely on the ground that we desire or like it to be so. If this truth is kept in mind, it becomes evidently clear that the Tarka or logic that is utilized by those who attempt to propound a teaching or doctrine which is contradictory to an empirical phenomenon by using scriptural illustrations or examples is Kutarka or vain, dry logic alone. For, then in that event the very basis or rationale behind the concepts of Drishtaanta and Daarshtraantika is totally vitiated. It is never possible to prove or establish that — "Fire is cold" or "The Sun is like the Moon, endowed
with cool rays" — by means of any illustration whatsoever. In the same manner, it also becomes evidently clear from this that not only the logic of those who endeavour to make anything that is acceptable to all human beings a matter of controversy by imagining or misconceiving invariably an aspect which is not to be found in the illustration at all is verily Kutarka or vain, dry logic, but also a matter of ridicule. For, if one can imagine or conceive anything that does not exist at all, then anybody can imagine or conceive anything that he wishes or fancies. The present-day Vedantins who argue in the manner — "While the people take (or believe) a rope to be a snake and a sea-shell or nacre to be silver out of delusion (Bhraanti) their knowledge or perception then in that context is not false or wrong but then, in reality, a kind of an appearance of a snake (i.e. Praatibhaasika Sarpa) is actually or really born as a result of Avidya (Avidyaaparinaama)" — are, in fact, using such Kutarka or dry, vain logic mentioned above.


IX. VEDANTA VAAKYA OR VEDANTIC SENTENCE

63. Previously in section 18 we have stated that in Shaankara Vedanta the fact that — "It has been acknowledged that Shaastras alone are the valid means or authoritative sources" — is a special feature. We have also previously in sections 47 - 56 given solutions too for some objections concerning the validity of Shruttis or the scriptures. But so far we have examined the Shruttis only from the predominant viewpoint of their being valid means. Now, we will begin to examine them from the predominant viewpoint of their being sentences. For, the prime or paramount teaching of this school of philosophy is: "Brahmajnaana or Self-Knowledge is gained from the conviction accruing from the deliberation on the meaning or purport of the Vedanta Vaakyas or the scriptural sentences."


64. During the times of Adi Shankaraachaarya there were Meemaamsakas (belonging to Jaimini's Purva Meemaamsaa school of philosophy) who were totally including all the Vedanta Vaakyas or Upanishadic sentences in the Vidhikaanda or ritualistic portion of the Vedas, as also some Vedantins were following such Meemaamsakas. Even today there are Vedantins belonging to alien schools of Vedanta other than, or opposed to, Adi Shankara's school who maintain that
— "Vedanta stipulates in the form of injunctions Upaasanas or meditations alone pertaining to Brahman or Atman, but does not merely state about Brahman (in the form of sentences)". All these are invariably the opponents to Adi Shankara's pristine pure Vedanta. Therefore, it is quite essential for the spiritual seekers to get all their objections in this regard solved completely. First of all, let us examine and deliberate upon the opinion of the Meemaamsakas that — "Because Brahman is 'Bhoota Vastu' or an existing entity, the Shruti does not enunciate or propound it."

The rationale behind the opinion of the Meemaamsakas is: "Shaastras may stipulate by way of injunctions Dharma or religious tenets or doctrines which are not perceptible to Pratyaksha, Anumaana etc. But because Brahman is a Bhoota Vastu, It should be an object for Pratyaksha, Anumaana etc.; therefore, if the Shaastras enunciate or propound Brahman, which is a Bhoota Vastu, then it will be tantamount to Anuwaada or mere repetition of things already known (and hence they will become redundant). Besides, by mentioning such a thing no benefit will accrue nor any purpose served at all. For that reason alone, it has been stated that not only do the Shaastras invariably teach Kriya or rituals, religious rites but also that the scriptural sentences, which signify or teach Vastu or an entity — which is not a Kriya — become futile; for this reason alone, it has been determined in the Meemaamsaa Sooltras or aphorisms of the Meemaamsaa school of philosophy that Arthavaada (tenets, doctrines of secondary importance) are valid means by virtue of their praising Vidhis or religious injunctions. Therefore, it should be reckoned that because the Vedantic sentences stipulate or mention the Kartru or the ritual, the Kriya or the ritual, Devata or the deity who is to be invoked etc. they are the valid means."

First of all, the opinion that the Shaastras should invariably enunciate or propound Karmas (rituals) alone pertains to a sentence belonging to the Karma Kaanda. Although Brahman is a Bhoota Vastu the truth that — "Brahmaatman, (the Ultimate Reality of the Self) alone is myself" — can never be cognized or Intuited without the help of the Shaastras. Further, because by cognizing Brahmaatman the difficulties like Avidya (ignorance), Kaama (desires), Karma (rituals) etc. are actually rooted out, there exists a perceptible benefit or utility. There is no restriction, regulation or stipulation that the Vedantic sentences should invariably instruct about rituals or actions alone. For, the Shruti condemns Kriya or action, Kaaraka or instruments or means of action, as also the Phala or fruits, results of action. It is true that in the Vedantic sentences pertaining to Upaasanas there is mention about Devalas, the ritual etc.; but because the Brahma Vaakya or Vedantic sentence, which pertains to the essential nature of Brahman and which
Vedanta Vaakyad expounds unitary or non-dual existence of Brahman, sublates the entire gamut of knowledge of duality itself, it will not be proper to say that therein there exist either Upaasana Vidhis or stipulations, injunctions concerning meditations or Devatas etc. which were mentioned as accessories subordinate to those injunctions.


65. Some people say that apart from sentences which stipulate either Pravrilti (endeavour to achieve something desirable) or Nivritti (effort of receding from something undesirable) and objects which are accessories subordinate to these, there are no Vedavaakyas or scriptural sentences whatsoever which expound merely an existing entity or Reality (Bhoola Vastu). In the opinion of the Meemaamsakas even the Jnaana Kaanda (the Vedic portion devoted to Self-Knowledge) also expounds something reamingin after the Karmas mentioned in the Karma Kaanda only. In the opinion of many others, although the Shaasstraas teach Brahman, they do not do so independently; on the other hand, they teach Brahman in subordination to the injunctions pertaining to meditations alone. In the Jnaana Kaanda also there are a few Upaasana Vidhis. For example: “Aatmaa Vaa Are Drishhtavyaha Shroatavyo Mantaavya Nidhidhyaasitavyaha” — (Brihadaaranyaka 2-4-9) — meaning, “My dear, one should cognize Atman, listen to the descriptions and teachings about Atman, reason out or deliberate upon Atman and contemplate upon Atman”; “Soa(s)Nveshtavyaha Sa Vijijnasitavyaha” — (Chhaandogya 8-7-1) — meaning, “One should search out Atman, one should cognize, Intuit Atman alone”; “Aatametyevoapaaseeta” — (Brihadaaranyaka 1-4-7) — meaning, “One should meditate that his true Being is Atman alone” — all such statements are belonging to this kind of scriptural injunctions. It is their opinion that the Brahma Vaakyas or sentences pertaining to Brahman have the purport of signifying either Brahman which is to be meditated upon or those teachings devoid of injunctions about the Swaroopa or essential nature of Being of Paramaatman. They have understood (or interpreted) the scriptures to mean that just as the invisible Svarga or Heaven is to be attained by means of Karma, in the same way Moaksha or Emancipation which too is invisible is to be attained by means of Maanasaka Karma or action at the mental or psychic level. Some people believe that by this kind of Upaasana even Avidiya too is removed.

But this is not proper. It is not possible to say either that the Parama Purusha or the Supreme Being or Self, who is cognized through the Upanishads alone, does not exist or that He cannot be known or Intuited through the valid means of the Vedas. For, in the Upanishads
He has been stated to be our Atman or Self alone, devoid of all special characteristics. It is not possible to refute the existence of Atman; for, one who endeavours to refute in that manner is himself Atman. Because this Atman is called "Aupanishad Purusha", the fact that — "He is expounded predominantly in the Upanishads alone and not as subsidiary to any other Vidhi" — will become clear.

In many contexts there exist scriptural sentences which signify the unity or identity of Brahman and Atman and they end up there itself. Relating to them there do not exist any Vidhis whatsoever. Therefore, it becomes necessary to deduce that — "The real purport or goal for all Upanishads culminates in signifying or expounding the Brahmaatma Swaroopa or the essential nature of Brahman or Atman." It is true that at certain places there exist scriptural sentences which signify the unity or identity of Brahman and Atman and they end up there itself. Relating to them there do not exist any Vidhis whatsoever. Therefore, it is not proper to say that therein it has been stipulated by way of an injunction that our Atman has to be cognized afresh. Because by means of scriptural sentences themselves which signify or help cognize the Aatma Swaroopa (the essential nature of our Self) that entity (Bhoota Vastu) which is to be cognized becomes cognized invariably, thereafter there does not remain anything whatsoever which has to be stipulated by way of an injunction. Therefore, for the sake of those people who are extroverted and think in the manner — "I must achieve this; I must get rid of or avoid this" — and who without having attained the final goal of life are suffering the miseries of this transmigratory existence (Samsaara), inasmuch as they induce or prompt them to become introverted, the scriptural sentences seemingly to be of the form of injunctions Vidhis like — "Aatmaa Vaa Are Drishtavyaaha" (mentioned above) — which appear like Vidhis. But that entity which has been pointed out to be cognized or Intuited in such contexts is our Atman alone. Therefore, it is not proper to say that therein it has been stipulated by way of an injunction that our Atman has to be cognized afresh. Because by means of scriptural sentences themselves which signify or help cognize the Aatma Swaroopa (the essential nature of our Self) that entity (Bhoota Vastu) which is to be cognized becomes cognized invariably, thereafter there does not remain anything whatsoever which has to be stipulated by way of an injunction. Therefore, for the sake of those people who are extroverted and think in the manner — "I must achieve this; I must get rid of or avoid this" — and who without having attained the final goal of life are suffering the miseries of this transmigratory existence (Samsaara), inasmuch as they induce or prompt them to become introverted, the scriptural sentences seemingly to be of the form of injunctions Vidhis like — "Aatmaa Vaa Are Drishtavyaaha" — etc. are useful in instructing or guiding them in the manner — "Oh, dear ones, do not look outside extrovertedly, but look within introvertedly at Atman alone." Thus that Atman alone, who if one has begun to discover within cannot be acquired afresh as desirable or cannot be discarded or got rid of as undesirable (i.e. neither Upaadnya nor Heya, respectively) but who is the very core of Being indwelling in every one — the Upanishadic sentences describe in the manner — "This Atman alone is all this existing before us"; "Where everything becomes this Atman alone, there who can see what and with what.....?"; "This Atman is verily Brahman alone". Therefore, in the Jnaana Kaanda devoted to teaching Self-Knowledge it is not possible even to imagine that Brahman is taught as being subordinate to any injunction whatsoever.

66. Now anyone may get a doubt of the type—"Whether the scriptural sentences pertain to the enunciation of the essential nature of Brahman (Brahma Swaroopad) or to the unitary Intuitive experience of the identification of Brahman and Atman (Brahmaatmaikatwa), they have per force to include a word signifying or indicating Brahman. For, as a sentence has invariably to signify the purport or meaning intended by the sentence in the form of the relationship between various objects or things, it becomes quite necessary for the various words that exist (or that are used) in the sentence to signify the relevant, respective objects or things they pertain to. Hence, it is impossible for a sentence pertaining to Brahman, the Ultimate Reality, to exist without comprising or containing a word signifying Brahman. But if Brahman is Padavaachiya or an entity, phenomenon which is signified by a Pada or word, then there will be a danger of refutation or contradiction to the Siddhaanta or spiritual teaching that Brahman is Nirvishesha or devoid of all special characteristics. The teaching which we indicated previously in section 40, namely that—"It is not possible to signify Brahman by means of any Shabda or word whatsoever"—will have to be given up or discarded. Thus, how can we trust, believe this Brahmanavada (theory pertaining to the Reality of Brahman) which is self-contradictory?"

Here the Siddhaanta or genuine spiritual teaching is that Brahman is not at all an object signified by any word whatsoever. For, in our workaday world too words like bullock, horse etc. by way of indicating species, words like cook, reader etc. by way of indicating the action involved, words like white, black etc. by way of indicating the quality or Guna, words like rich man, dairy owner etc. by way of indicating their respective relationships or possessions—all such words indicate or signify their respective objects or phenomena. But pertaining to Brahman, because there are no causes or pretexts like species, actions, Gunas etc. prompting the functioning or usage of words, Brahman is not an object for any word whatsoever. In fact, because Brahman is non-dual, unobjectifiable and the very essence of Being of everything—It cannot ever become an object indicated by any word whatsoever. Even the words like Brahman, Atman etc. cannot, in the ultimate analysis, signify Brahman, the metaphysical Absolute Reality. Even so, we must understand or discern that, by using the axiom of superimposition and rescission (i.e. Adhyaaroopapa Apavaada Nyaaya), the scriptures adopt some certain names, forms and functions by way of superimposition alone and utilize words like Vijnana, Aananda, Vijnanaanagha, Brahman, Atman etc. to indicate Brahman, the Ultimate Reality. By calling Brahman “Satyam” or real, the Upanishads have the prime purport of instructing the seekers that “It is not false”; by calling It “Jnaanam” (Consciousness) they propose to instruct that—“It is not Jada (insentient or inert)”. In the same manner, the word “Brahman”
is useful in indicating that the Ultimate Reality is not “Alpa” or small; but that word is not used to indicate or signify that in the Ultimate Reality “Brahmatwa” or “Brahmanhood” exists in the form of a Dharma or special feature, nature or quality. The word “Atman”, which signifies the Pratyagaatman or the indwelling self endowed with a body, is itself utilized in accordance with the meaning connoted by the grammatical root (Dhaatu) to signify an entity or Reality beyond the body, the mind, the senses etc. The connotation of the word “Atman” in Sanskrit is: “That which is all-pervasive, that which grasps or assimilates everything, that which consumes or destroys everything, that which exists eternally”. It should, therefore, be discerned that this word “Atman” which is the nomenclature of the self (i.e. not-self) endowed with a body is utilized by the scriptures to teach “Atman” or the Self, of the essential nature of Pure Being-Consciousness-Bliss (i.e. the Absolute, Ultimate Reality which is non-dual, beyond time-space-causation categories) beyond the ken or purview of any word or nomenclature, as also the truth that He is not “Anaatman” or not-self. In the same manner, although in reality (i.e. in the ultimate analysis) Brahman is not an object or phenomenon capable of being indicated or signified by any word or nomenclature whatsoever, by virtue of the axiomatic Adhyaatma or deliberate superimposition Brahman can be invariably indicated by certain words indeed. Therefore, there is no cause or room for the doubt or objection of the type — “If Brahman is not the object for any sentence (Vaachya), then there cannot be any scriptural sentence pertaining to Brahman.”


67. Now yet another doubt raises its head: “In the Brahma Vaakya or sentence pertaining to Brahman any one particular word necessarily should directly signify Brahman. Otherwise, there is no scope whatsoever for us to know Brahman’s essential nature from the sentence. If it is argued that in the sentence each one of the words signify Brahman, then the question — ‘When one single word is sufficient for the purpose, why at all is there any need for a sentence which is nothing but a form of a bunch or congregation of many words?’ will arise. Besides, a sentence should necessarily indicate the relationship that exists among various objects or things; is it not?”

If we deliberate upon, with deep insight, on this matter then it will be evident that an answer has already been provided in the above consideration regarding words. Even so, for the sake of examining clearly the nature of a sentence we will explain it in some detail. In the main, the sentences pertaining to Brahman are of two kinds. Some
sentences are of the type — “Satyam Jnaanamanantam Brahman” — and are called Laxana Vaakyas or sentences which signify the essential nature of Brahman, the Absolute Reality. Sentences like — “Tattvamasi”, meaning “That thou art” — etc. are those which indicate or teach that our Atman is, in the absolute sense or from Paramaartha Drishti, Brahman alone beyond all empirical dealings or categories.

In the first category of Laxana Vaakyas the special characteristics that are mentioned are not used in a predominant sense with the meanings connoted by them; therefore, Brahman, which is Satyam or real, purports to mean that Brahman is not Asatyam or unreal Brahman; Brahman, of the nature of Jnaana, purports to mean Brahman which is not of the nature of Ajnaana or ignorance; Ananta Brahman or endless, eternal Brahman purports to mean that Brahman which is not having any end or destruction. In this manner, these special features are not utilized to signify Brahman contrasting or separating It from another Brahman. In truth, Brahman is one and one only; there are not many Brahmanas at all. Therefore, there is no necessity also of utilizing any special features or characteristics in order to distinguish or separate Brahman from another Brahman belonging to the same species (Sejaateeya Brahman). “That which is Satyam or real is Brahman, that which is Jnaanaam or conscious is Brahman, that which is Ananta or endless is Brahman” — this alone is the meaning or purport of the special features (being used in the sentence). The words like Satyam, Jnaanaam, Ananta have not been used to signify any Dharmas or qualities like Satyam, Jnaanaam and Ananta; in truth, those words teach Brahman in the manner — “Brahman is not Anrutila or unreal; is not Achetana or insentient, inert; is not Parichhinna or divisible, partible” — through the method of negating the special features of the type of Anrutila (unreality), Achetana (insentience) etc. alone. Therefore, the spiritual teaching implicit here is that not a single word used in the Laxana Vaakya directly signifies Brahman. Because the words like Satyam, Jnaanaam etc. are used one by the side of another, they imply that their Vaachyaartha or literary meaning should not be taken. For, by saying that — “Brahman is real or Satyam” — it is meant that It is not an unreal or a false effect. In that case, the doubt that — “It may be a cause like clay etc. which is inert or insentient” — is removed by the usage of the word “Jnaanaam”. Because Brahman is Jnaanaam or conscious, the doubt that — “Brahman may be born like the consciousness or knowledge of Ghata or earthen pot, and then in due course may get destroyed” — is removed by the word “Ananta” or endless, eternal. Because Brahman, being the essential nature itself of Vijnaatru or the knower, is eternally or perennially established, It is not an intellectual or mental concept (Buddhi Vritti), which is signified by the word “Jnaana” or knowledge; because Brahman does not have any special features or characteristics
whatsoever It is not an empirical phenomenon signified by the word “Satyam” or reality which connotes the empirical reality commonly understood by all people. In this manner, because these words like Satyam, Jnaanam, Anantam etc. conjointly help reject their respective literary meanings and become useful in signifying Brahman, which is verily our essential nature of Pure, Absolute, Transcendental Being-Consciousness-Bliss, through Laxana or implication, in a subtle sense, it becomes necessary for all such words to be there in a Laxana Vaakyaya or scriptural sentence implying, subtly pointing out or signifying, Brahman. Further, the fact that, unlike a statement of the type — “Neelam Utpalam” — meaning, “A blue lotus or water-lily”, the Laxana Vaakyaya does not signify the association or relationship among the various things or objects is established and for this reason the restriction or rule that a sentence should necessarily indicate the relationship among things or objects does not hold good; it is not proper to insist like that.

Now, let us examine the sentence — “Tattwamast” meaning “That thou art” — of the second category. Here in this sentence the Sanskrit word “Tat”, meaning “That”, signifies that entity or Reality called Brahman, which is of the very essence of Intuitive experience devoid of any qualities or characteristics of Samsaara. The word “Tuam”, meaning “Thou” or “You”, signifies the Chaitanya or Pure Consciousness-Bliss which is our Atman or Self, the indweller innate in us, who is distinct, separate from the body, Praana or vital force, the mind, the intellect and Ahamkaara or the ‘I’ sense, ego. Because these two words are used in the scriptures together alone, their identity becomes evident. Otherwise, it would have amounted to saying that these words, viz. “Tat” and “Tuam”, signify their respective literary meanings alone. In the sentence — “The horse is black” — the word “horse” gives up, or does not take into the reckoning, all the horses other than black-coloured horses and the word “Black” gives up, or does not take into the reckoning, all the objects or things which are not horses, and these implications are made possible by the proximity of the two words; in fact, from the sentence the knowledge with the meaning or purport of — “A black horse” — is engendered because of the knowledge of these two things separately or distinctly. In the same way, from the usage of the words “Tat” and “Tuam” syntactically in proximity the Intuitive knowledge mentioned above is engendered and the listener (i.e. seeker) discerns the meaning of the word “Tat” to be his Atman or Self alone, as also the meaning of the word “Tuam” to be Brahman, the metaphysical Absolute Reality, devoid of all misery, and by the usage of the verb “Asi”, meaning “art or are”(indicating the present tense and with the meaning “at present” in addition), the listener or seeker attains the cognitive or Intuitive Knowledge of the entity purported to be denoted by the sentence called (in Vedic parlance) Brahmaatma Ekatwa Jnaana
Vedanta Vaakya

or the unitary or non-dual Intuitive Knowledge or cognition of the identity of Brahman and Atman, just as one becomes aware of and realizes the truth (getting rid of his folly or delusion) when he was told — "That tenth person is yourself". For this reason, the scriptural sentence signifies the identity of Brahman and Atman without indicating the literary meaning of the form or nature of union or association (Samsarga) of various objects or empirical things. (The word "Samsarga" connotes two things being associated or united intimately). Therefore, in this context too all the various words have necessarily to be there in a sentence.


68. Some people have raised the doubt that — "Each and every word in the scriptural sentence signifies Brahman through Laxana, i.e. in a subtle sense, alone is not realized in our workaday world. For example, in the sentence — 'The village lies on river Ganga' — the word 'Ganga' or 'Ganges' indicates by Laxana the bank of the said river. Even while communicating in this way there exists another word which is the name used for or which connotes the 'bank' of a river. But when there is no word whatsoever which is Vaachaka or name which signifies or connotes Brahman, how at all can any word signify Brahman even through Laxana, i.e. by way of implication or in a subtle sense?"

But for those people who keep in mind the Vedantic teaching that statements like — "Brahman is Vaachya"; "Brahman is Laxya" — (meaning, 'Brahman is that object indicated by a word or a sentence' and 'Brahman is that entity signified by implication or in a subtle sense', respectively) are made only from the viewpoint of superimposition (Adhyaropaha), this doubt cannot present any difficulty whatsoever. The statement that — "Brahman is Vaachya or the object literally signified by such and such a word" — is meant only to instruct in the manner — "That Vaachaka Shabda or word literally used as Brahman cannot possibly signify the metaphysical entity Brahman." The statement that — "That Brahman (named) is signified through Laxana or implicitly by words like Satyam, Jnaanam etc." — is only to instruct by negation in the manner — "Neither is Brahman Vaachya, i.e. not an object which can be indicated literally by either a word or a sentence". In fact, a word — whether it operates either by way of a name (Abidhaa Vritti) or by way of implied meaning (Laxana Vritti) — invariably signifies any one particular thing or object, which exists in the empirical world of duality with distinctions and which is capable of being an object or phenomenon for the mind and speech but other than
Atman; however, a word cannot at all signify the non-dual, metaphysical or Absolute Atman who is the “Vishayi” or the subjective Witnessing Principle in everyone. For that reason alone, the scriptures teach that — “Brahman is not an object at all either for any Vaak or speech (word) or Manah or the mind” — (which means, Brahman is the Absolute Intuitive experience, Pure Consciousness beyond the ken or purview of either the senses or the mind).


69. It is also the opinion of some people that — “The grammatical relation of words comprising a sentence invariably lies in indicating an action-oriented ritual alone; if there is no ritual stipulated (in the manner of an injunction) the words do not at all become a composite sentence.” If there is a ritual which can be practised or put into action, then the objects (mentioned as necessary accessories while performing rituals, rites etc.) become relevant as aids or accessories; the sentence too becomes a valid means or authoritative source. Otherwise, even if hundred words are conjoined in the manner — “This from that like this” — it does not become a composite (meaningful) sentence. Therefore, necessarily in a sentence there must be verbs like — “should be done”, “such and such a thing has to be done”, “such and such a thing has per force to be done”. Merely if there are words like Paramaatman, Ishwara etc. it does not become a sentence, nor does it become a Pramaana. If Paramaatman and Ishwara etc. are the meanings or phenomena signified by those words, then also, because they too have necessarily to become perceptible to some other valid means, the (scriptural) sentence becomes futile or purposeless. This is the rationale of these theorists or proponents.

This especially is not proper or reasonable at all. For, both in our workaday world or empirical transactions and in the scriptures there are many sentences being used which culminate (or exhaust their purport) in merely indicating the object. For example — “Choadanaalaxanoa(s)rthoa Dharmaha” — this aphorism of Jaimini (which if transliterated reads — “Dharma — the meaning of ritualistic features or characteristics” — without any usage of a predicate) is not in agreement with any Kaarya Kriya or action done or ritual performed; it merely states or defines the characteristics of Dharma, that is all. In the same manner, “Sadeva Soamyedamagra Aaseedekameva Adviteeyam” — (Chhaandogya 7-2-1) — meaning, “Oh son, this (i.e. the manifested world before us) in the past or beginning (i.e. before the creation) existed as the non-dual Sat or Reality (i.e. Brahman, alone); when it is quite evident or established to be a fact that the words used in all such scriptural sentences invariably become relevant and
meaningful in signifying the essential nature of Brahman alone, it is not reasonable or justifiable to imagine or conjecture that a sentence should necessarily signify the stipulatory injunctions pertaining to certain action-bound rituals. Even if we accept the stand that there should necessarily be a verb, predicate in a sentence, there is no room or cause for a rule of law laying down the condition that — "There should be necessarily a predicate which stipulates by way of injunctions any particular duties or rites." Just as in the sentence — "Asti Meruvvarnachatushtayoapetaha" — meaning, "There exists a mountain called Meru having four colours" — there is no objection against adding or assuming a predicate of the type — "Asti" or "exists". In scriptural sentences like — "Tattwamasi" — (Chhaandogya 6-8-7) "Aham Brahmaasmi" — (Brihadaaranyaka 1-4-10) — the words or verbs like "is", which denote an action do exist. Some Vedic sentences signify the prohibition or condemnation of a particular action; therein, although there is no teaching of any action in the form of a duty or responsibility, there exists a sentence indeed; besides, those sentences are having validity or they are treated as authoritative scriptural dictates or stipulations alone.

30. Suo Sh. 1'-1-4. p. 38.

X. VAAYKAYJANYA JNAANA OR KNOWLEDGE BORN OUT OF A SENTENCE

70. It is necessary now to discern the difference between the knowledge that is born out of the Karma Kaanda sentence and the knowledge that is born out of the Jnaana Kaanda sentence. The Karma Kaanda sentences signify Dharma, which is within the jurisdiction or control of the person’s dealings in the empirical sphere and which, after the completion of those dealings, helps attain Svarga and such other Abhyudaya or prosperity, accruing in the future period of time, whereas the Jnaana Kaanda sentences signify or teach Brahman, which is within the control of the Vastu or the real entity which exists eternally and is verily Atman or the Self of the seeker and which gives Mukti or Beatitude. In another aspect also these two kinds of knowledges are totally opposed to each other. After the knowledge of the Karma is gained, the tasks of procuring the respective implements or accessories needed for the Karma and performing the Karma remain separately. But after the attainment of Brahma Jnaana or Self-Knowledge nothing remains to be done or performed; as soon as that Self-Knowledge is attained, the Intuitive experience (Pure Consciousness) of being the Sarvaatman or the Self or essential nature of Being of everything, who is
neither the Kartru or agent of action nor the Bhoktru or the enjoyer of the fruit of action, is at once attained. Thus because the knowledge that is born out of the Vedanta sentence completely sublates Ajnaana or ignorance and produces supreme satisfaction or blissful contentment, those people who have this Self-Knowledge are called wise people, Krita Krityas, i.e. people who have achieved all that is to be achieved in life (in other words, those who have fulfilled the prime purport of human existence or who have attained the ultimate goal of life) in the Bhagavadgeeta.


71. In the Jnaana Kaanda too there exist a few Vidhi Vaakyas or sentences of injunctions. They do not become relevant to or fully in agreement with Brahman, the Ultimate Reality. Those sentences stipulate Upaasanas or meditations of the form or nature of — Saamoopaasana, Omkaar Upaasana, Samhita Upaasana, Brahma Upaasana etc. We have already refuted the objection that — “The scriptural sentences which signify or teach the Brahma Swaroopa are subordinate to the sentences which teach Brahma Upaasana” — for the following reasons: 1. The Brahma Vaakyaa culminates in cognizing the Absolute non-dual Reality of Brahman (i.e. it helps attain the Intuitive experience of Atman); 2. In that Brahman there is no scope for any stipulation or injunction whatsoever (section 65); 3. The unitary or non-dual Jnaana or Intuitive experience that accrues from the scriptural (Upanishadic) sentences signifying the very essence of Brahman completely sublates or falsifies the knowledge of all duality (section 64); 4. The sentences like — “Drishtavyaha, Shroalavyaha, Anveshtavyaha” — etc. which are apparently like the injunctions but existing in a chapter devoted to teaching the essential nature of Brahman, in truth, do not teach Upaasanas but have the genuine purport of making or inducing the mind of the Jijnaasu or seeker to recede, turn away from Anaatman or not-Self and towards his own Atman — (section 65). Thus it has been conclusively proved, established that the Brahma Vaakyas are not at all subordinate to anything other than itself. If the Entity which is signified in the scriptural statement — “Brahman must be known or cognized” — is stated to be subordinate to some other duty or stipulated action, then it has to be accepted that by means of that particular duty or stipulated action one can attain Mokshaa or Emancipation; then in that event, it amounts to saying that — “Among the various fruits of action themselves, which are different in their degrees or gradations from one another, this Mokshaa too becomes one of them, and thereby it becomes Anitya or non-eternal.” This is not proper. Because the Upaasana Vaakyas are invariably concerning
actions of meditating, they cannot, by any means, become the predominant valid means to determine or establish the essential nature of Brahman, the Absolute Reality. In fact, they must be interpreted in such a manner that they do not contradict or oppose the purport of the predominant sentences which exist in the scriptures exclusively to signify or teach the essential nature of Brahman alone. On the other hand, any attempt especially to interpret the Brahma Vaakyas so as to be in agreement or in consonance with Upaasana Vaakyas, which are not to be found in the Jnaana Prakarana or chapter devoted to Jnaana, is not at all proper or reasonable. For this reason alone, the true seeker should discern that — "The sentences which signify that in Brahman there does not exist any special characteristic whatsoever are those which exclusively teach the essential nature of Brahman; further, although the remaining scriptural sentences have accepted certain special features, qualities or characteristics in Brahman purely from the viewpoint of Adhyaaroopa or superimposition, on that count there does not exist any danger or difficulty posed to the validity of the Absolute Being-Consciousness of Brahman."


72. Some people argue out in the manner — "Merely by listening to the scriptural sentences no one has the chance of getting Jnaana or Self-Knowledge. For, in the scriptures themselves it has been stated that there are many people who even after listening to the Vedantic sentences have not been able to get Jnaana (Katha 1-2-7). There is a convention of the Vedantins arguing in the manner that by listening to a sentence of the type — 'This is not a snake, it is a rope' — a knowledge which is capable of sublating, removing the fear or anxiety caused by misconception or delusion accrues and this is seen in the workaday world. But in the illustrated (Daarshtraantika), i.e. in the case of Self-Knowledge, that is not realized in that manner. Because it has been mentioned in the Shrutsis themselves that after listening to the scriptural sentences the seeker should practise Manana or discrimination and Nididhyaasana or contemplation also, it has to be accepted that merely by listening to the scriptural sentences Brahmaatma Jnaana (Self-Knowledge) cannot be attained. Besides, no one can attempt either to attain Self-Knowledge or to listen to the scriptural sentences without the aid of the Vichhis or injunctions mentioned in the scriptures themselves. Therefore, for attaining Self-Knowledge a particular promoting or motivating means is quite necessary; the contention that — 'Merely a Vedantic sentence which is of the nature of teaching or expounding the Reality is enough for attaining Self-Knowledge' — is not proper."
But when by virtue of listening to the scriptural sentence expounding the essential nature of \textit{Atman} one actually attains \textit{Jnaana}, to say or insist that for attaining Self-Knowledge \textit{Vidhis} are necessary is never justifiable or proper. Those people who say or argue that for listening to the scriptural sentences there is a necessity of a \textit{Vidhi} will be confronted by the defect of 'absence of reaching a finality' because they will have per force to imagine or postulate another \textit{Vidhi Vaaka}ya for the listening to the earlier \textit{Vidhi Vaaka}ya and so on. Apart from this, in the case of \textit{Anaatman} or not-self it may be necessary for a \textit{Pravartaka Pramaana} or promoting means to attain the knowledge of that entity or object other than oneself. But to say that there is a necessity for a \textit{Pravartaka Pramaana} for the knowledge about oneself is never reasonable or justifiable. Just like \textit{Shravana} or listening, the other two disciplines of \textit{Manana} or ratiocination and \textit{Nididhyaasana} or contemplation too have been taught for attaining Self-Knowledge (\textit{Aatma Jnaana}) alone and not for involving the Self in any other duty or ritual remaining after the attainment of Self-Knowledge. The scriptural sentences found in the \textit{Brahma Prakarana} or Chapter devoted for expounding the essential nature of Brahman of the type — "\textit{Atman} should be seen; He should be listened to" — etc. are, in truth, not having the ultimate purport of stipulating by way of injunctions any \textit{Jnaana} or knowledge whatsoever; they merely alert the seeker or beckon him to pay attention in the manner — "One should make an attempt to see (\textit{Atman}), listen to (\textit{Atman}), one should divert his attention towards Him (\textit{Atman})." Even in our day-to-day dealings words like — "Look", "Listen" — have only so much meaning, that is all. Therefore, in the Vedic literature too to reckon the same meanings will be quite in order and proper. Hence, the knowledges that accrue from \textit{Shravana}, \textit{Manana} etc. are not injunctions at all. To say that by listening to the \textit{Brahma Vaaka}ya one does not attain \textit{Jnaana} (Intuitive experience) is a statement smacking of bravado. The scriptural statement — "Even after listening to the scriptural sentences many people do not know or cognize (the Reality of \textit{Atman})" — has the genuine purport of saying that \textit{Atman} can be known or cognized only after a great deal of strenuous effort. For, in the same context it has been further clarified that — "That person who expounds the essential nature of \textit{Atman} is himself a wonderful person (i.e. such people are very few); one who understands or cognizes that Reality is himself a wise man". To the question (posed by the Vedantins) that — "Just as for the sentences found in the \textit{Karma Kaanda} the knowledge to the effect that — "There exist Dharma and \textit{Adharma} and that the \textit{Jeevaatman} or soul who is a \textit{Kartra} has relationships with other worlds where he gets new bodies (in other words, he has a transmigratory existence)" — is obtained, in the same way for the sentences found in the \textit{Jnaana Kaanda} why should not the knowledge to the effect that — "The same \textit{Atman} is \textit{Avikriya} or devoid of
all changes, mutations, \textit{Akartru} or not an agent of any action whatsoever, \textit{Eka} or non-dual entity' — etc. be attained — the \textit{Karmavaadins} or proponents of \textit{Karma} theory cannot at all give a satisfactory answer. Because \textit{Vaakyatwa} or the abstract phenomenon of being a sentence is common to both the \textit{Jnaana Kaanda} and the \textit{Karma Kaanda Vaak\text{\text{\text{y}}}}\textit{\text{a}}\textit{s}, both kinds of sentences should necessarily give rise to knowledge (of their respective subject-matter). Further, because both are \textit{Shaastra Vaak\text{\text{y}}\textit{\text{a}}s} or scriptural sentences, the knowledges that accrue from both kinds of sentences must necessarily be substantive or tangible also; for example, just like the results of Knowledge of rituals like \textit{Darshapoorna Maasa} etc. which are not perceptible to the empirical valid means like perception, inference etc. — the fruits of the Intuitive Knowledge of the essential nature of \textit{Paramaatman} or the Supreme Self also must necessarily be substantive or tangible (\textit{Yaataartha}). In this regard there is no scope to show any difference whatsoever between \textit{Karma Kaanda} and \textit{Jnaana Kaanda Vaakyas}.


73. Even though many people have accepted that from the Vedanta \textit{Vaakyas} (\textit{Jnaana} sentences) \textit{Jnaana} or Self-Knowledge accrues, they have not approved of the fact that \textit{Jnaana} is verily the Intuitive Knowledge of the Supreme Self which is propounded in \textit{Shaankara Vedanta} as explained or elucidated in his extant \textit{Bhaashyjas}. It is the opinion of the \textit{Meemaamssakas} that those scriptural sentences have the real purport of stating, signifying that Knowledge of \textit{Atman} who is the agent of action (\textit{Kartru}) for the \textit{Karmas} as a means of discipline to attain 'Purushaartha' (i.e. the goal of human existence or life) and so it is proper to reckon them to be \textit{Arthawaada} or of secondary importance subordinate to the \textit{Karmas} stipulated in the scriptures. Their opinion is: "In Vedant\textit{\text{\text{a}}}s (\textit{Upanishads}) there are several episodes like — 'the story of Maitreyi-Yaajnavalkya', 'The story of Pratardana', 'the story of Jaanashruti' etc.; because of the fact that from the mere knowledge of a story there does not accrue any benefit or advantage, these episodes should be utilized for the purpose of \textit{Kathhaakhyaana} or narrating an old legendary story, as stipulated as an injunction in the scriptures, to a King who is in the company of children, his ministerial staff or other companions on the occasion of his performing the \textit{Ashwamedhayajna} by way of 'Paarip\textit{\text{\text{a}}}wa' or a mere mental recreation."

These opinions especially are not at all proper, justifiable. For, we have already stated in section 65 that the \textit{Paramaatma Vijnaana} or the Intuitive Knowledge of the Supreme Self which can be known from the \textit{Upanishads} exclusively can never be subordinate or secondary (in its importance or magnitude) to any \textit{Karma} or ritual. This \textit{Atman} is not
of the essential nature of mere Kartru and Bhoktru; the Vedanta Vaakyas or Vedantic, Upanishadic sentences signify Paramaatman who is devoid of any characteristics or qualities of transmigratory life like Kartrutwa, Bhoktrutwa etc. By the virtue of that Jnaana or Self-Knowledge Karmas stipulated in the Shaastras are themselves destroyed. Thus because they teach quite independently and in their own right the essential nature of the Supreme Self, it is not possible to say or dismiss these scriptural sentences as Arthavaada. Even in case we accept them to be Arthavaada, because that Jnaana or Intuitive Knowledge of the Self born out of those scriptural sentences does not either signify any entity or object perceptible and because that Jnaana does not denote or connote any meaning which is opposed to, or contradictory to, any other valid means, we have to per force accept that those scriptural sentences teach invariably the essential nature of an Entity which really exists.

The episodes like 'Maitreyi-Yaajnavalkya story' etc. are not mere stories; there is no evidence or valid means to show that they should be utilized in Yajnas as Paariprava or sport, recreation. Besides, particular stories alone like Manu's stories etc. are especially stipulated to be utilized for Paariprava, and to this effect are specific injunctions stipulated also. Therefore, with regard to the stories mentioned or referred to in the present context it is proper to reckon or discern that according to the Chapter or Prakarana devoted to a particular Vidya the respective stories have been utilized as introductions to the respective Vidya alone. It is also possible to refer and reconcile them in that manner. Hence, to say or insist that the Self-Knowledge (Jnaana) that is produced by the Vedanta Vaakyas or Upanishadic sentences pertaining to the essential nature of Brahman or Atman is subordinate, subservient to the knowledge of Karmas (rituals) there is not even an iota of scope or room.


74. Some disputants during the time of Shri Shankaraachaarya were of the opinion: "Even if it is accepted that by means of Vedanta Vaakyas describing the essential nature of Brahman or Atman the Knowledge of the Supreme Self (Paramaatman) is attained, in the ordinary course the knowledge which accrues from a sentence is Paroaksha or extroverted, objective in its aspect (i.e. the knowledge is that of an object or phenomenon external to us). Because the perceptual knowledge of the type — 'I am a Samsaaree or a transmigratory soul' — which is deep-rooted as a latent impression in our minds from time immemorial, is stronger than the knowledge accruing from listening to the Upanishadic
Vaakyajanya Jnaana

sentence, the latter, i.e. Vaakyajanya Jnaana or the knowledge accruing from listening to a Vedanta Vaakya, gets falsified, cancelled. Therefore, till the Knowledge that — 'I am Paramaatman who is Akartru (not an agent of action) and Abhoktru (not an enjoyer)' — is firmly rooted, established in us we should practise this form of getting that Jnaana, called 'Prasankhyajaana', repeatedly.

Some others have even argued in the manner — "Because sentences invariably signify the association or relationship among various objects or things, by means of such sentences the Intuitive knowledge of the Self, called 'Aparaaksha Jnaana', can never be attained directly; if that Vaakyajanya knowledge is practised repeatedly, in the end the knowledge of Akhandaatman or immutable Self, devoid of any relationship with any other thing whatsoever, is attained. Even if a knowledge of conviction is obtained by means of a sentence, the false illusory knowledge may persistently continue to exist; just as in spite of our conviction that jaggery is sweet, because of the after-effects of a disease, it may taste as if it is bitter, when Samsaarialta (transmigratory nature of the soul or Jeeva) is appearing to be stronger, then in order to overcome that, or to remove that, it is quite necessary to practise repeatedly the Tattwaabhyajaana or the knowledge of the Self."

None of these theories is acceptable to Shri Shankara. There is no rule of law whatsoever that from a sentence knowledge of an external object alone should accrue. The story of the tenth man itself is an illustration for this. Ten deluded people were having a misconception that somehow one among them had disappeared. They had reckoned, having counted nine others without each counting himself, that — "We are only nine people". A passerby who saw these people grieving that they had lost the tenth man, addressed each one of them in the manner — "You yourself are the (missing) tenth man" and taught them (i.e. removed their misconception). Then to each one of them the knowledge or cognition to the effect — "I myself am the tenth (missing) man" — dawned. In the same way, to the ignorant people who, having been captivated by desires, are perceiving the Aaatman or not-selves alone, by means of the Vedanta Vaakya of the type — "Tattwamasi" meaning "That thou art" — i.e. you are verily that Pure Being-Consciousness-Bliss of Brahman, the Intuitive Knowledge or cognition of the type — "I myself am Brahman or the Ultimate Reality" — can possibly accrue directly culminating in this Intuitive experience here and now (Aparaaksha Jnaana).

In the Upanishad (viz. Chhaandogya) it is mentioned that that kind of Intuitive experience was attained by Shvetaketu and even in these modern times too that Self-Knowledge is attained by the qualified people all right. The argument that — "By means of Jnaana caused by a sentence the misconception of the type — 'I am Abraham (i.e. not being
the Reality of Brahman) or I am verily Anaatman (i.e. the not-self') — does not get sublated or falsified" — also is not reasonable; for, the scriptural sentences like — "Tattwamasi" (That thou art) and "Neti, Neti" (Not this, not that) — etc. clearly signify the identity or unity of Brahman and Atman alone. The statement that — "A sentence is falsified by perceptual knowledge" — will be proper in the context of matters objectifiable by the valid means of perception (Pratyaksha Pramaana). For example, in the sentence — "Krishnalaan Shrapayet" — it has been stipulated as an injunction that bits of a metal called 'Krishnala' should be baked; but because it is established in our perceptual knowledge that any metal cannot be possibly baked so as to make it soft, we have per force to interpret that sentence to mean that those metal pieces have to be baked in that manner in order to impart a particular invisible effect or special characteristic (Samskaara) to them. But the fact that — "Atman is a Samsaaree" — is not established on the strength of any perceptual knowledge; for, Atman is not an object for perception at all (section 56).

Therefore, it may be plausible that by means of the Shaastra Vaakyas of the type — "Tattwamasi" — the Samsaaritwa of Atman, which appears to be (i.e. apparently) true to perception, may be sublated. However, it is not proper to doubt, even after the non-dual (i.e. unitary) Intuitive Knowledge (or experience) is attained by means of the scriptural sentences, in the manner that the Samsaaritwa may reappear, just as in the case of the jaggery tasting as if to be bitter as a result of the ill effect of high temperature; for, when the non-dual, unitary Knowledge dawns there does not exist any second object or thing at all and hence, unlike in the example that there is an ill effect of the experience of high temperature, after the unitary, non-dual Intuitive Knowledge of the Self is attained there does not exist any other phenomenon or thing whatsoever which can possibly falsify or vitiate this Intuitive experience.

Therefore, the advice to practise (repeatedly) the Vaakyayukti or the devices signified by the scriptural sentences is only for the sake of discrimination about the Padaartha or the existing Entity, and not to practise over and over again even after the Intuitive Knowledge of the Reality is grasped through the meaning of the scriptural sentences. For the scriptural sentence — "Vijnaaaya Prajnaam Kurveeta" — (Brihadaaranyaka 4-4-21), meaning, "After knowing, attain the Intuitive experience " — the interpretation is not that the seeker, after understanding the literary meaning of the sentence, should by means of practising repeatedly attain the Saakshaatkaara Jnaana (perceptual knowledge of the materialization) of what is called "Anubhava" or "Intuitive experience". Even after the Intuitive experience is attained — because the Karmatraya or the triad of Karmas may function extrovertedly as a result of their being under the influence of inertia

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or momentum of Praarabelha Karma (fruits of past actions which have ripened in the present life), just like an arrow which is already released from the bow and is traversing its course or path — the seeker should stabilize the sublime memory of the Intuitive experience as it accrues. This alone is the genuine meaning or purport of the scriptural sentence. Even this is stated from the empirical viewpoint (Adhyaaroapa Drishti) alone. It will be more reasonable if this scriptural sentence is interpreted in the following manner: "Because for the Jnaani or a Realized Soul (i.e. one who has attained Self-Knowledge) there is no need whatsoever for any scriptural injunctions to the effect that — 'He should stabilize or establish his mind in the Ultimate Reality of Atman alone' — or that — 'He should not allow his mind to wallow in the Anaatman (not-sell) which is Anitya (non-eternal), Ashuch (impure) and Duhkhakara (causing misery) — the scriptural sentence stipulates for the benefit of the Mumukshu or the seeker of Enlightenment that he should acquire qualifications like Sanitta (asceticism), Shama (control over the mind), Dama (control over the senses) etc. essential for attainment of Intuitive experience of Atman, and hence the scriptural sentence advises the seeker to acquire this Vijnaana or special Knowledge from Shaarsa as well as Acharaya and thereby attain the Prajnaa or Intuitive experience of the Self which is really the culmination of or fulfilment of the genuine desire for Enlightenment." It is quite evident or clear here that even after the dawn of the Intuitive Knowledge born out of the scriptural sentence which purports to signify the nonduality of Atman if the seeker reckons that in order to Intuit or cognize Brahman or Atman yet another Pramaana (medium) is needed, then that will never be justifiable or acceptable in any manner whatsoever.

75. If we consider it with complete insight we realize that it will not be proper even if it is stated that as a result of, or by means of, the Vedanta Vaakyas the Intuitive experience of the Self (i.e. Aatmaanubhava) accrues or is produced. For, Atman Himself is perennially or eternally of the very essence of Anubhava or Intuitive experience; hence, there is no scope whatsoever for the special or extraordinary states of the types of — "Not having attained Intuitive experience of Atman" — and — "Intuitive experience of Atman attained afresh" — to be produced or to exist at all. Therefore, just like the cognition of the tenth man, to say that the Intuitive Knowledge or experience of Atman is attained afresh or anew also is not proper. 

Even so, while Intuiting Atman as of the very essence of Intuitive experience or Anubhava Swaroopa, the mental concept pertaining to this Pure Consciousness when it is formed in the Jijnaasu or true seeker, it is 'born' appearing as the Aatmachaittanya or the Pure Consciousness (i.e. Intuition of the Self) alone; but that mental concept of the appearance, or rather the replica, of that Pure Consciousness is itself transacted as or called Aatmaanubhava or Self-Knowledge (Self-Consciousness) in the empirical world. In our workaday world too when we say that the knowledges or perceptions of the various objects like Shabda (sound), Sparsha (touch) etc. are produced or acquired, in truth, our inner instrument of the mind (psyche) cognizes the respective external object through the means of the five senses etc. and thereby get 'transformed' into their shapes; those mental concepts of the form or nature of such transformations are also produced or born being 'objects' to the Aatmachaittanya or Pure Consciousness of the Self alone, as also being pervaded by that very Pure Consciousness of the Self alone. Because they appear as Aatmachaittanya, they are called "Vijnanaa" or "cognitive or Intuitive Knowledge" of those respective objects. Although they are by nature the appearances of Pure Consciousness, they are not the qualities or special characteristics of Atman; neither is this Atman who is of the very essence of Pure Absolute Consciousness an object for those knowledges. For this reason alone, we have previously stated in section 67 that for the words like "Jnaana" (Intuitive Knowledge) or "Anubhava" (Intuitive experience) etc., which are the nomenclatures of the concepts, Atman or the Self is not Vachya or the object signified or named object, but He is "Laxya" or the subtle or sublime purport to be Intuited only.


76. The fact that — "The Jnaana (Intuitive experience) which is gained from the Brahma Vaakya as found in the Jnaana Kaanda is by no means "Vidhey" or 'something enjoined or prescribed to be done' — is indeed the spiritual teaching of Shri Shankara's Vedanta. Wherever in the scriptural lore after the Vaakya Jnaana or literary meaning is gained there remains something or other that is yet to be done and the aspirations or hankerings of the type — "What is to be done next? with what means or instruments should I do it and how should I do it?" — are engendered in us, and thereafter sentences which promote or guide us to fulfill or complete those remaining duties or actions are found — in all such contexts the scriptural injunctions become necessary and valid too. But after the Brahma Jnaana or Intuitive experience or Knowledge of Brahman or Atman is attained by means of the scriptural sentence, no aspiration or burning desire of any kind whatsoever is engendered nor does it exist or subsist (section 51); for, by virtue of that Intuitive
Knowledge both the opposites of *Abrahmatwa* or non-reality and *Anaatmatwa* or not-selfhood are sublated. It is true that with regard to the *Upaasana Vaakyas* or sentences devoted to meditations found in the *Jnaana Kaanda* even after the intellectual knowledge of the literary meaning of the sentence is engendered something still remains to be done. But the purport of those sentences is not to teach or signify directly, or Intuitively, the essential nature of *Brahman*; we have, in fact, stated already in section 71 that they are there to teach meditations by way of injunctions alone.

Some people have believed that — “Because *Upaasanas* too, just like *Jnaana*, is a mental process only and because the scriptures call *‘Upaasana’* by terms like *‘Jnaana’, ‘Vedana’* etc. which are synonymous with *Jnaana* or Intuitive Knowledge, further because even *Jnaana* or Intuitive Knowledge or experience being termed *‘Upaasana’* is to be found in the scriptural texts — the term *Jnaana* means *Upaasana* or meditation alone and apart from, or other than, *Upaasana* there does not exist any *Vedanta Jnaana* or *Upanishadic* teaching of Intuitive Knowledge or experience whatsoever.” This is not proper. For, *Upaasana* is *Purushatantra* as well as *Choadanaatantra*, which means, it is a *Kriya* or action which a human being (*Purusha*) can perform or give up or can do in a different manner other than the stipulated manner and further it is a rite or ritual which the scriptures can stipulate as injunctions to be performed in a particular manner alone. But *Jnaana* or Intuitive Knowledge or experience is not *Purushatantra* like this, nor is it *Choadanaatantra*, that ritual or action which can be stipulated as an injunction; It is indeed *Vastutantra* and thereby It is Intuitive or cognitive Knowledge of the Vastu or Entity as It really exists born through the relevant *Pramaana* or valid means. This *Jnaana* cannot be stipulated as an injunction by any sentence whatsoever. Even the scriptural sentences which appear as if they are stipulating *Jnaana* as injunctions become themselves blunted or innocuous just like a sword becoming blunted when it is used to smoothen a stone; for that reason alone, we have previously stated in section 65 that the scriptural words like — “*Drishtavyaha*”, “*Shroatavyaha*”, meaning, “One should see” and “One should listen to this Atman” — are not predominantly teaching *Vidhis* or injunctions. For all these reasons, both the *Upaasana Vaakyas* and the *Brahma Vaakyas* are not mutually connected as parts of each other; it should be discerned here that *Brahma Vaakyas* are totally different in their import and purport. This deliberation on *Upaasana* we will take up in due course in a separate independent and exclusive Chapter.

XI. SAAKSHI OR THE WITNESSING PRINCIPLE

77. Because Vedantins say that the Vedantic texts teach that — "Brahman is verily our Atman" — and because in the scriptural sentences like — "Aham Brahmaasmi", meaning I am Brahman alone" — Atman is called by the word 'I' alone, there is a possibility of the ignorant people misconceiving, or getting deluded, thinking that Atman is truly the object for 'I' notion (Ahampratyayagamya). Both the Meemaamsakas and Taarkikas argue out saying that Atman is that object signified by the 'I' notion alone. But although the cognition of the 'I' notion is engendered in us, Chaarvaakas (Materialists) and Baudelhas (Buddhists) do not accept an Atman apart or different from the body. It is not seen in our workaday world that in the event of a Pratyaya (definite cognitive knowledge) being engendered through perception etc. in the manner — "This is a pot; this is a stump of tree" — an argument being carried out between one group of people holding the view that — "This is a pot; this is a stump of tree" — and another group of people holding the opposite view of — "This is not a pot; this is not a stump of tree". Therefore, the statement that — "Atman is an object perceptually for the cognitive notion of 'I'" — is not proper; for, that is a subject-matter of a controversy. Basing their arguments on certain characteristics or symbolic statements made in the scriptures to the effect that — "Atman exists" — alone, some people like Meemaamsakas, Taarkikas etc. are under the delusion that Atman can be established on the strength of the empirical valid means of Anumana or inference too. That is all. We have already shown in section 55 the defects that exist in the theory — "Atman is Pramananagamya or an object for any empirical valid means". To establish the truth of the existence of Atman who is related to other lives (Janmaantara) on the strength of empirical valid means of perception, inference etc. is never possible at all. In the Upanishads it has been taught that — "Apart from or other than this Atman who is the object for the 'I' notion there exists another Atman or Self who is Sarvasaakshtha or the Witnessing Principle for everything." Neither the Meemaamsakas nor the Taarkikas know this essential nature of Sarvasaakshitva of Atman. Vedantins call this alone Atman, who is Asamsaara or devoid of transmigratory existence and who can be known exclusively from the Upanishads alone (Aupanishad Purusha). We have previously in sections 65, 69 mentioned that the Vedantic statements culminate in, or have the ultimate purport of, teaching or expounding this essential nature of this Supreme Self alone.


78. We have propounded above that — "The statement that — 'Atman who is the object for the 'I' notion (Ahampratyayagamya) is
related to other worldly bodies' — is not a matter to be ascertained by perception." *Loakaayatikas* (a sect of Materialists) are saying: "What is known from this *Ahampratyaya* or 'I' notion is the body alone; apart from the body associated with consciousness there is no *Atman*." The *Vijnanaavaadins* among the the Buddhists argue in the manner: "Apart from the body there exists a *Vijnana* or intelligence, which cognizes itself, and that *Vijnana* alone is the real *Atman*."

But the statement that the body is associated or endowed with Consciousness (*Chaitanya*) is contrary to universal experience. For, *Chaitanya* is *Vishayi* or the subject, and the body, according to the *Chaarvaakas* or *Loakaayatikas*, is an object produced from four elements; it will be reasonable only to assume that *Atman*, who is the subject as well as of the nature of *Chaitanya*, is distinct from the body. To assert that an object cognizes itself is as ridiculous a statement as — "One is squatting on his own shoulders". Apart from this, if it is maintained that the body alone is the Consciousness, which cognizes everything, then the blind man cannot possibly see what he had seen previously in his dream; for, the eyes which were the instruments of sight for the body are not available; even so, the blind man asserts in his waking that what he saw in the past in his dream as a summit of the Himalaya Mountain he actually saw. Hence it should be deduced that *Atman* who appears in the dream is himself appearing in the waking too. In the same way, to assert that *Vijnana* or empirical consciousness (i.e. intelligence) is itself both the *Vishayi* or subject and the *Vishaya* or object is contrary to *Anubhava* or universal experience. In fact, to say that — "The *Saakshi Chaitanya* or the Witnessing Consciousness or Principle, which illumines and shows *Vijnana* when it is born and when it is destroyed or is extinct, exists apart or distinct from that *Vijnana*" — is itself in consonance with universal experience. By the experience or enjoyment of an object *Vaasana* or its latent impression is engendered and stays put; later on, from time to time either *Smriti* (memory) or *Pratyabhijina* (recognition) will be produced, and for all these phenomena some substratum or support is invariably required. That substratum has to be necessarily either the *Pramaatru*, i.e. that 'I' notion (cognizer) related to the sphere of the triad of time, or the *Saakshi*, the Witnessing Principle (Consciousness) who is *Kootastha* (i.e. fully established, steadfast — beyond the time-space-causation categories). In the tenets of the *Kshanika Vijnanaavaadins* or the proponents of *Vijnana* to be momentary (a sect among the Buddhists) none of these propositions has been accepted. "If it is contented that *Vijnana* is cognized by something other than itself, then to cognize that second thing another cognizing principle will be needed and further to cognize that third thing another cognizing principle will be needed and so on. Thus there will be no end or finality to the succession of *Vijnanaas*. Besides, because the *Vijnana* which cognizes the first
Vijnaana is invariably of the essential nature of the first Vijnaana alone, to imagine or conceive the distinctions or special features of one Vijnaana being the cognizer and the other being the cognized is not proper or reasonable; for, no one thinks or imagines that one lamp or light illumines another. Therefore, Vijnaana illumines itself. This alone is the reasonable argument" — thus the Buddhists argue out. But this logical dissertation is not correct; for, as we (Vedantins) say that Saakshi or the Witnessing Principle or Pure Consciousness is the one and only (non-dual) Entity which cognizes all Vijnaanas or empirical knowledges or consciousnesses, there is no necessity whatsoever for yet another Vijnaana to cognize it. Because, that thing which is itself (of the essence of) Graahyaa, i.e. objectifiable or an object of comprehension, that thing will invariably require or desiderate a separate Graahaka, i.e. subject, an objectifying or comprehending principle; logically speaking, there is no Yukti or logical rule or device to establish an axiom that — "That thing which is by its very nature a Graahaka, i.e. subject or a principle which can only be a percepi, does not desiderate or need another Graahaka or percepi." To say that — "Just like a lamp or light, Vijnaana illumines itself" — is also not correct. For, there is no meaning for a statement that — "A thing illumines itself." There is no possibility of imagining or thinking about the special circumstance like — "When the light does not illumine itself, how will it be?" Only in the case of objects or things like an earthen pot, pitcher etc. which have different states like — "One state when the illumining principle or light is near, and another state when the illumining principle or light is not in the vicinity" — can be called "Prakaashyaa" or that thing which is illumined. In that manner or sense, it is not possible to imagine or think about a light to be near itself in one particular moment of time and far off from itself in another moment of time. If it is asked — "Since the Saakshi or Witnessing Consciousness too needs another instrument of cognition in the form of a Vijnaana in order to cognize the first Vijnaana, does it not amount to facing the defect or anomaly of 'not reaching any finality' (for the Vedantins)?" — the answer is 'No.' For, though for the earthen pot when there is a light or lamp of the essential nature of an illuminating light (nearby), then that earthen pot invariably possesses Graahyatwa, i.e. objectivity or the capacity of being objectified or comprehended, but to cognize or perceive the light itself another light is not at all needed; in the same way, to say or assert that — "In order to perceive or cognize one Vijnaana another Vijnaana is required" — is not a rational or proper logic.

3. Su. Bh. 3-3-54. pp. 742, 743.
79. It is an assiduous belief of Buddhists that between their doctrine of Vijnaana being Swayamparakaasha, i.e. of self-illuminating nature, and the Vedantins' doctrine of Saakshi Chaitanya, i.e. the Witnessing Consciousness of the innate nature of self-illumining essence, there is no difference whatsoever. But this opinion is wrong. For, Vijnaana (i.e. empirical consciousness) has features like birth and growth whereas Saakshi Chaitanya is Kootastha Nitja or eternally steadfast or immutable and true (i.e. changeless Reality); Vijnaana is manifold, Saakshi Chaitanya is unitary, non-dual. The Buddhists say that because Vijnaana is like a light or lamp, it illuminates itself and it is of self-illumining nature; but we have already shown that the statement — "A light or lamp illuminates itself" — has no meaning. The doctrine of Vedantins that — "Just like a light or lamp, though it illuminates all other things around it, desiderates another Vijnaana in order to illumine or know it, Vijnaana too desiderates Saakshi Chaitanya, i.e. the Witnessing Principle or Pure Consciousness, which is quite separate from Vijnaana, i.e. empirical consciousness itself" — is the only teaching that is proper or reasonable.


80. "Because the Buddhists averred that Vijnaana is momentary, there may arise a need of assuming or anticipating that, apart from that Vijnaana, there should necessarily exist a Vijnaatrutu or knower of that Vijnaana. The Taarkikas and Meemaamsakas have accepted the Atman, who is the object for the 'I' notion to be steadfast or changeless and hence in their doctrine there does not seem to exist any defect. To imagine or conceive of another Atman other than this Atman, who is the Vijnaatrutu established in every one's experience, what evidence or valid means (Pramaana) exists? Besides, by such imagination what benefit or utility accrues at all?" — Thus some people may raise an objection.

But the Saakshi or Witnessing Consciousness which the Vedantins propound is to be known only from the valid or authoritative means of Shruti, i.e. Upanishadic lore. On this essential nature of Saakshi alone the common run of people and the Meemaamsakas have superimposed the Ahampratyayagamyatwa or the objectivity of the 'I' notion. This misconceived or superimposed form of 'I' notion is also called "Pramaatrutu". We have previously in section 28 mentioned that this Pramaatrutwa or nature of 'I' notion as cognizer is misconceived in, or superimposed upon, the Saakshi Chaitanya. This Atman who is Ahampratyayagamy a i.e. who is the substrate or support for the percept or cognition of the form of 'I' notion or sense, although a seer or perceiver, invariably cognizes, perceives the external objects through the valid means of knowledge (cognition) or Pramaanas; but he is not a direct perceiver like the Saakshi. Just like
the Sun illumines all the objects directly (without the help of any mediatory means) Atman, who is the Saakshi in all of us, cognizes everything directly or Intuitively; the whole range of Anaatman or not-selves is the Saakshyha, i.e. the witnessed object for Him. Because Pramaatru (i.e. the 'I' sense in us) cognizes everything through, or by the mediatory means of, Antahkarana or the inner instrument of cognition (i.e. the Mind in its totality), which is the Pramaana, and because this Antahkarana has per force to cognize by acquiring or assuming the form of the respective object to be cognized, the mutations or changes that occur in the Antahkarana, which is an adjunct, do affect the Pramaatru too; but Saakshi cognizes or Intuits all at once (spontaneously, so to speak) everything without any mutations or changes whatsoever. Because Pramaatru is an agent of action or Kartru, he performs a particular action and experiences the respective fruit of that action; but because Saakshi is witnessing these Kartrutwa and Bhoktrutwa, in Him (Atman) these two adjuncts do not exist in reality. Because Atman of the essence of Witnessing Consciousness is verily the core of Pure Being of all of us, it is not possible to deny His existence and this fact we have mentioned previously in section 53. We have now revealed that if we do not accept the essential nature of Saakshi Chaitanya or the Witnessing Pure Consciousness, it will not be possible to justify the Intuitive experience of perceiving or cognizing all the objects all at once, spontaneously, simultaneously. Not being able to separate or distinguish between the essential nature of Saakshi and the Ahampratijayee or 'I' sense (i.e. Pramaatru) and thereby, as a result of it, our misconceiving these two aspects, each in the other, is itself the cause for our having Kartrutwa i.e. agentship of all action, and Bhoktrutwa or enjoyership, and hence if we Intuit the essential nature of Saakshi, the calamity of suffering all the miseries of transmigratory life (Samsaara Anartha) of the nature of Kartrutwa and Bhoktrutwa will invariably be destroyed and this alone is the great benefit accruing.


8.1. The Pramaatrutwa or cognizership of Atman is caused by the Adhyaasa or superimposition of the Dhamas or special characteristics of the body, the senses and the mind and hence the viewpoint of this Atman arising out of this misconceived relationship, or contact, with the senses and the mind is Anitiya or non-eternal. Because this viewpoint as well as the Knowledge arising out of it is non-eternal, the divisions of the type — 'a blind man' and 'a person who can see'; 'a Jnaan' and 'an Ajnaan' — have arisen. By means of the senses the special features like sound, touch, form, taste and smell are cognized (or perceived), but Atman or the Self, who is the Witnessing Consciousness (Saakshi), is of the very essence of eternal, perennial (i.e. Absolute,
plenary) Consciousness and hence He always directly Intuits (i.e. without the aid of any mediatory instruments or means) all phenomena like sound, touch etc. Jnaatu or the knower, Upalabhtru or the procurer, Vidwaan or a scholar, Jnaha or a conscious being — all such synonymous terms are used for Pramaatu, i.e. the cognizer. The common people, because of their Avidya which is of the nature of being without any discrimination between the respective mental concept (Buddhi Vritti) and the Saakshi, transact in the manner — “Atman cognizes phenomena like sound, touch etc.” In the same manner, they transact that one who has carried out the discrimination between Atman and Aaataman and has attained Vidya or Self-Knowledge (Intuitive experience of the Ultimate Reality of Brahma or Atman) is an “Aatamajnaani”. In truth, in Atman these non-eternal viewpoints (or cognitions) do not exist at all. He is of the very essence of eternal or Absolute Intuition; of the very essence of eternal or Absolute Consciousness and he always witnesses the non-eternal viewpoints and cognitive knowledges etc. of the Vyavahaartic sphere.


82. Some ancient Vedantins like Bhartruprapancha had believed that — “In the statement — ‘Atman’s viewpoint as the Witnessing Consciousness is eternal’ — there is something to be examined in depth. In the Brihadaaranyaka Upanishad, 4-3-23 to 30, it has been stated that the viewpoint of Atman and the Shruti, i.e. Vedic texts, do not have any flaw or defect whatsoever. Therefore, in the Saakshi too special characteristics or qualities like Drishti or viewpoint etc. are many and though they are mutually different from one another they are one with Atman and so Atman by His own nature, unto Himself, is one and one only; but from the standpoint of His Dharmas or special features He is manifold.” Although cow as a genus is in itself one alone, but from the standpoint of special features like the skin hanging loose from the neck, its hump etc. its species are many; similarly, it was their opinion that both unity or oneness and manifoldness may co-exist in Atman Himself. Shri Shankaraarhaaarya has refuted this doctrine, viz. that Atman is of Naanaaaras or of the essence of manifold natures, and has established that Atman is Ekaras or of the essence of oneness (non-duality) and is one and one only. Although Atman is of the essential nature of Pure, Absolute Consciousness, by virtue of His being associated with adjuncts like eyes, ears etc. (i.e. Drishti or sight, Shruti or hearing etc.) and such other forms of manifoldness He is appearing as many in the waking and the dream. But in Sushupti or deep sleep when all transactions carried out in association with any adjuncts have come to a standstill we do not perceive any distinctions or differences whatsoever
of the type of sight, hearing etc.; then, He exists as Pure, Absolute Consciousness alone. Even so, in order to point out that because therein, i.e. while in deep sleep, there do not exist either any objects whatsoever, or these special cognitions like seeing, hearing etc., the Upānishad assumes whatever differences like seeing, hearing etc. that are available in the waking to be apparently true (by way of Adhyāyarācāpa or deliberate superimposition). But the Upānishads do not at all have the purport thereby of teaching in such contexts that, in reality or in the absolute sense, there exist these distinctions or differences like seeing, hearing etc. in Atman. In our workaday world too instead of saying — "He sees with his eyes"; "He hears with his ears" — it is customary to refer to sensual perceptions like sight, hearing etc. by words like ‘experience’, ‘cognition’ or ‘knowledge’ alone in the manner — "He knows or cognizes form by means of his eyes"; “He cognizes or knows sound by means of his ears"—and so on. Just as in the example — “A clean singular marble stone in association or conjunction with adjuncts like various colours or hues appears itself to be having those very colours, and at that juncture, it cannot at all be imagined that the marble imbibes the respective colour in truth" — similarly here too we should understand that Atman does not in reality have manifoldness or distinctions of any kind whatsoever.


83. To believe in the manner — “There are two kinds of Jñāna, namely, one which is Anitya Jñāna or non-eternal Knowledge or Consciousness of the nature of cognizing sound, touch, form etc., found in the senses and the second which is Nitya Jñāna or eternal Knowledge or Consciousness, found in the Atman Himself, who is the Witnessing Consciousness or Principle" — is wrong. Atman Himself is the one who cognizes objects or phenomena like sound, touch, form etc. through the senses; or, to know that — “The Pramaatṛutwa or cognizershhip, i.e. the ‘I’ notion, itself is a projection or product of Avidyā or ignorance and hence the Intuitive cognition (Jñāna) of Atman itself appears as the cognition of sound, touch, form etc. gained through the senses, the mind etc. which are the Pramaanās or valid, mediatory means" — is the correct knowledge alone. There is no proof or evidence by way of a Pramaana at all to show that in the senses there exists consciousness independently by itself. In fact, because all the senses are organic or material in content alone, just like objects, they too like the phenomena of sound, touch, form etc. must be known or cognized by another entity, but they cannot by themselves independently shine (or function). Just as the sound cannot illumine touch, the touch cannot illumine taste and so on, in the same way the senses too cannot
illuminating one another. We have already propounded in sections 65 - 75 that — "Even the consciousness or knowledge that appears in the thoughts or concepts of the Antahkarana or mind is truly the brilliance of Pure, Absolute Consciousness or Chaitanya of the Saakshi (the Witnessing Consciousness); further, though that Consciousness is signified by the word Jnaana, in truth, that word has the Lakshaartha (implicit meaning) of Atma Chaitanya or Self-Consciousness, Pure Consciousness." Hence, just as for the phenomenon of a piece of iron burning hot fire alone is the cause, for the senses to be functioning as senses with their respective faculties of cognizing form, sound etc. the root cause is the mind alone; further, for the mind to function as the mind (that means — the mind by virtue of its faculty of producing thoughts or concepts by illuminating their respective objects) the root cause is Saakshi Chaitanya in all of us indeed. We must also understand or discern that by virtue of that essential nature of Pure Consciousness alone the cognitive knowledges seen both in the mind (in the form of thoughts or concepts) and the senses (in the form of percepts, sensations) appear to be separate or different cognitions or knowledges only. Atman illuminates all of these phenomena, viz. the mind, the senses, the various external objects. There is nothing whatsoever anywhere (and at any time) which is not illumined by the Pure Consciousness of Saakshi in us.


84. For those people who make an attempt to determine the real essential nature of Atman it becomes clearly known that for Atman having the generality of actions like speaking, seeing, hearing, thinking etc. is not His true essence of Being. Just as the names like grain cutter, cook etc. are those epithets given to a person according to the work he performs and they do not at all signify the person's complete essence of Being, in the same way various names like a creature, speaker, seer, hearer, thinker etc. — the names that may be given to Atman when He is associated with such respective actions (but distinctly they are not the names which can be addressed to Him always) — are given to Him. There is an axiom like — "If one is speaking alone he is called a Vaktru or speaker; if one is speaking, then he is called a Vaktru or speaker alone." When he is not speaking, or for instance, when he is simply seeing, he is not at all a speaker. Even so, whether any of these actions are being performed or not, the Saakshi Chaitanya which is the essential nature of Being of Atman invariably exists. Therefore, because It has pervaded all states of (physical or
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mental) actions as well as all states of the absence of any kinds of actions the Saakshi Swaroopan or the essential nature of the Witnessing Principle in all of us alone is Atman or our real Self. Hence, as long as we reckon our selves to be endowed with forms or natures of the type — “I am seeing”; “I am hearing” — till then we do not at all Intuit or cognize completely our plenary essence of Pure Consciousness at all; the nature of Pramaatrau or the cognizer is not complete or of a plenary nature. In truth, the Saakshi Chaitanya or the Witnessing Consciousness alone, which illumines that nature of Pramaatrau and which exists even when Pramaatrutwa does not exist, is our essential nature of Pure Being-Consciousness-Bliss and if this truth is Intuited or cognized alone it amounts to our “Intuiting completely and truly” the real essence of our Being.


85. We will conclude this deliberation after referring to another topic. We have indeed previously stated in sections 78, 80 that if we do not acknowledge the existence of the Witnessing Consciousness, then the Intuitive experience by virtue of which every object or phenomenon can be examined or investigated cannot at all be justified or vindicated. Some people who have not properly discerned the purport behind this statement raise a doubt of the type — “In order to mark the identity of the one Pramaatrau in the manner — ‘I’ who hears the sound, that ‘I’ alone sees the form indeed’ — one and the same Saakshi or Witnessing Principle is needed, is it not? Because that Pramaatrau is separate for each body, evidently for each Pramaatrau a separate Saakshi is needed. Otherwise, it can be reasoned out in the manner — ‘What Chaitra organized, the same thing was cognized by Maitra too’. For this reason, there must be, just like the manifold Pramaatrus, the Jeeva Saakshis or the Witnessing Principles in each one of the Jeevas also should be many.” Such is their contention or line of argument.

This opinion is not correct. For, we have previously in section 77 mentioned that Saakshi is to be known with the guidance of the Upanishads exclusively. But in none of the Upanishads the tenet of many Saakshis has been taught. On the other hand, in Shwetaashwatara Upanishad (6-11) it has been very clearly taught that one and the same Saakshi alone exists in all things. There is no need of inferring about the existence of Saakshi on the strength of a logical device or axiom of the type — “There must be one Witnessing Principle which can cognize all objects.” For, we have previously in section 53 stated that Saakshi is Swayam Siddha or self-established and further that the Shaastras, merely on the ground of their teaching that the special features of the Saakshyana (the witnessed phenomena) do not exist whatsoever in the Saakshi, are called Pramaananas (the valid, authoritative sources). If at all the existence or reality of Atman could be
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established or proved by dialectics, it will amount to saying that both those who do not accept that logical device or those who innovate a better, stronger method than that logical device to suit their conclusions may reject the existence or reality of Atman. The spiritual teaching that — "Because one who attempts or undertakes either to establish or to reject the existence or reality of Saakshi either by Pramaanas or by Tarka is himself the Witnessing Principle for both Pramaanas and Tarka, no one can ever possibly reject or refute the existence or reality of his own Self" — is the correct one alone. Even if for argument's sake it is assumed or accepted that Saakshis are many, because in order to cognize the manifoldness of their own making one singular Saakshi will be needed, and further because people, who accept that Saakshis are of the nature of being a Saakshya, will be contradicting themselves — the manifoldness of Saakshis is illogical to boot. Therefore, it should be discerned that just as for all mental thoughts of a single Antahkarana alone there exists one Saakshi, in the same way for all Antahkaranas there exists one unitary Saakshi alone; as also in that one unitary non-dual Saakshi alone, by virtue of the association with the Upaadhis or adjuncts, the empirical transaction of Naana Pramaatrutwa or manifold cognizership has arisen. This topic we will refer to in due course in section 140.

Now one can raise an objection of the type — "In the teaching of the unitary, non-dual existence of Atman how at all can a Shaastra, which teaches in the manner — 'This should be done or performed; this should not be done or performed' (with Vidhi or Nishedha Vaalayyas) — be relevant or suitable? There cannot indeed be any cause or scope whatsoever to stipulate in the manner — 'For such and such a person such and such duties are stipulated!' Besides, the fruits or results of one's actions another person would have to experience indeed. What one experiences, another person would have to cognize or realize!"

But because the Jeeva who is a Pramaatru is called a 'Jeeva' as a result of his association with adjuncts like the body, the mind and the senses, and since when the adjuncts are manifold there does not exist the unitary existence of the Jeeva — this objection is not valid, or in other words, this apparent defect does not affect Vedantins' teaching of non-duality. This topic too we will explain when we deliberate upon 'Jeeva' in section 128.

33. Su. Bh. 2-3-49. p. 515.

XII. ATMAN AS THE CAUSE OF THE UNIVERSE

86. Because Brahman is devoid of any kind of special features It cannot at all be signified by means of Its pure essential nature alone.
Just as *Brahman’s Saakshitwa* (Witness-hood) is superimposed deliberately and thereby it is shown that *Brahman* has no special features or qualities of *Saakshya*, witnessedness (which signifies that *Brahman* as the subject has no relationships with any object), in the same manner the cause-ness of the universe (*Jagat Kaaranatwa*) is superimposed on *Brahman* and thereby it is shown that the form or nature of *Kaarya* or effect (the universe in this context) does not at all exist in it. *Kaaryana* and *Prakritti* are synonyms, while *Kaarya, Vikritti, Vikaara* are synonyms.

Earthen pots, pitchers, plates etc., which are ‘born’ out of clay, subsist in the clay only and finally merge in the clay alone, do not exist apart from the clay; in the same manner, the universe, which is ‘born’ out of *Brahman*, subsists in *Brahman* only and merges in *Brahman* alone, does not exist apart from *Brahman*. For this reason alone, the Shruti is stating that — “If the one entity (reality) of clay is known or cognized, all its effects are assumed to have been known or cognized; for, the effect is merely a name mentioned for the name’s sake.” The scripture further states, on the strength of that illustration of the clay pots, pitchers etc., that if the one Reality of *Brahman* is known or cognized, the whole of the universe (the effect) becomes known.


**87.** By means of enunciating the theory or methodology of the cause-ness for the universe which is mentioned in the scriptures not only the spiritual teaching that — “The universe does not exist apart from *Brahman* (the Ultimate Reality)” — is evolved, but also the subsidiary theory that doctrines like — “Insentient causes like *Pradhaana* (as propounded by *Saankhyans*), *Paramaana* (as propounded by *Vaiseshikas*) etc. give rise to the universe” — are not proper is established. Therefore, because the universe appears to exist and because it is for empirical transactions of utility, people in general have believed it to exist in reality, and hence in order to instruct such people that — “Anything which is gross or insentient, whatever it may be, cannot ever be a cause” — the scriptures teach the theory or methodology of the cause of the universe (i.e. by way of superimposition or *Adhyaaroapa*) and not with the ultimate motive or purport of teaching that — “Really *Brahman* is an Entity having relationship or an association with empirical categories like cause and effect.” But those people, who have discerned this purport of the scriptural texts clearly, have without any doubt lurking in their minds Intuited (to wit, they have gained complete conviction or a sense of certainty, which is the hallmark of Intuitive experience) to the effect that
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— "That Entity or Reality, which is devoid of birth, which is non-dual and which is everyone's Atman is Itself Brahman, the Ultimate Reality."


88. The fact that the doctrines of those who say that — "Pradhaana, Paramaana etc. are the cause for the universe" — are not proper can be determined both by means of the examination of the essential nature of the universe and by means of the support of the authoritative source of the Shrutiis. This universe is diversified as names and forms; it is full of many agents of action (Kartrus) and enjoyers (Bhoktrus); it has a fully organized system with rules and regulations of the type — 'For such and such action taking place in such and such place in such and such time and with such and such a cause — such and such fruit or result will accrue.' No sculptor, howevemuch intelligent he may be, cannot possibly imagine by his mind as to how this universe must have been caused by Parameshwara who knows its essential nature of Being, who is omniscient and who is omnipotent in that He is capable of creating all this universe, but surely it is not possible at all for such a marvellous universe to have been caused by the insentient phenomena like Pradhaana, Paramaana or by Abhaava (non-existence) or by any one Samsuara (transmigratory soul, Jeeva) who is devoid of omniscience and who is of a meagre strength or power. It cannot at all be contended that the very nature of this universe is certainly like this and that it does not at all need any cause whatsoever; for, we have mentioned already that the regularisation or systematization of time, space and causation categories is fundamental for actions and their fruits. Especially the doctrines of Saankhyans, Vaisheshikas etc. are invariably opposed to the authentic or valid source of the Shrutiis. For, it has been very clearly stated in the scriptures that — "Brahman alone is the cause for the universe; Brahman is the Pure Consciousness which thinks (conjectures) and creates."


89. The statement that — "The sentient Brahman is the material cause for the universe" — is contrary to the universal (common people's) experience. For, a sentient pot-maker can only be an efficient cause (Nimittta Kaarana) for an earthen pot but not a material cause (Upaadhaana Kaurana) like clay. Therefore, it becomes established only to the extent that — 'If at all Brahman is a cause for the universe, It will be merely an efficient cause" — that is all. Hence, a doubt of the type — "What is wrong in arguing in the manner — 'Either Pradhaana — just
as the Pradhaanavaadins (Saankhyans) affirm — or Paramaanu — just as the Vaisheshikas assert — must be the material cause for the universe?" — may arise. According to the Vaisheshikas' doctrine, the cotton thread is the Samavaayi Kaarana or inherent cause for the cloth; the conglomeration or conjunction of the threads is the Asamavaayi Kaarana; and the weaver is the Nimitta Kaarana or efficient cause. (Vaisheshikas have divided 'cause' into three types, viz. Samavaayi, Asamavaayi and Nimitta; Saankhyans and Vedantins have included everything other than Nimitta Kaarana in Upaadaana Kaarana, i.e. material cause).

But the theory that — "Ishwara, the Lord Creator, is merely a Nimitta Kaarana" — is opposed to logic or reasoning. It is not established (determined) as to which thing is the material cause (Upaadaana Kaarana) for the universe; further, to imagine or conjecture that Ishwara uses a particular material which is not perceptible to our valid means like Pratyaksha, Anumaana etc. and creates the universe, there is no valid means or (convincing) proof whatsoever. If we attempt to imagine like that from the analogy of the pot-maker, or if we attempt to imagine, on the basis of the analogy of a king, that there should be a Lord Creator for the universe, then Ishwara too will become, like the pot-maker or a king, a Samsaaaree and not an omnipotent Lord Creator who can create such a wonderful universe. If we imagine the triad of entities like Ishwara (the Lord Creator), Jeeva (soul) and Upaadaana Kaarana (material cause), in the process of which we divide each from the other, then the defect that Ishwara is a mutable or partible thing will adduce itself to our reasoning. Further, because the Shrutis say very clearly in the manner — "Paramaatman or the Supreme Self thought or imagined that — 'I will become many' — and then He created the universe" — and because the scriptures also state that — "The creation and the destruction of the universe are caused (i.e. carried out) by Brahman alone; It by Itself created Itself" — the doctrine or theory that Ishwara is merely the efficient cause (Nimitta Kaarana) for the universe is opposed to the Shrutis. This doctrine of mere Nimitta Kaarana is refuted in the Bhaashya on Pratyadhikarana of the Shaareeraka Meemaamsa or Brahma Sootras (Sootra Bhaashya 12-2-37 to 41).


90. It may appear that the assumption — "For the universe which is full of sentient and insentient things or objects, a sentient or conscious Brahman is the material cause" — is opposed to logic or dialectics. For,
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If the sentient can be a cause for the insentient then it amounts to saying that there may be Vaitarkhanya (contrariety) between the cause and the effect. Then in that event, it may be possible to say that from clay golden ornaments and from gold the earthen pots, pitchers etc. can be produced. If we try to infer or think in the manner — "Because it is stated in the Shruti's that Brahman is sentient (conscious), the universe too should per force be sentient or conscious" — we find that the fact of the universe having the divisions of the sentient and the insentient phenomena is quite familiar or popular. Hence, protagonists of the theory of Pradhaana as the cause (Saankhyans) etc. were saying that — "To assume or reckon that, in accordance with the nature of the universe, an insentient thing alone to be the material cause for the universe is proper."

But the theory that there should be agreement or similarity between the features of the material cause and its effect is itself not proper. For, if there is complete similarity or identity in all respects between them, then the difference itself of the type — "This is the cause, this is the effect" — will not be there at all. Besides, in our workaday world too we have invariably seen from the human body things like hairs, nails, which are totally different in nature from it, growing or being born. If it is contended that there must necessarily be some modicum of similarity or common features, then between Brahman and the universe the similarity or common feature called "Sattwa" (existence) does exist.

The doubting Thomas may ask the question — "Because Brahman is Chaitanya (Consciousness) Itself, if the universe were born or created from It, the universe which is created should have been endowed with or associated with Consciousness of Brahman — in this manner why should not we infer?" But the logical or syllogistic 'universal concomitance' (Vyaapti) between the middle term (Hetu) and the major term (Saadhyja) — called in logic "Anuvaya Vyatireka Vyaapti" (in simple terminology — agreement and disagreement; comparison and contrast) of the type — "That thing which is born from or out of Chaitanya is invariably endowed with Consciousness; that thing which is not born out of Chaitanya is not endowed with Consciousness" — can never be demonstrated or proved by anybody, whosoever he may be. For, no one can possibly exemplify or demonstrate in a convincing manner to the Vedantins the illustration of the type — "Because such and such a thing is unconscious or insentient it is not born out of Brahman." The reason for this is the truth that — "Everything is born out of Brahman alone" — and this alone is the spiritual teaching of Vedantins.

The opponent may ask the question — "If everything were born out of Brahman, how could the division of some things being conscious or sentient and the rest being unconscious or insentient arise at all?" The answer to that question is: "Because Pure Consciousness is not
appearing or manifest in insentient or gross objects, people transact in the manner that those things are insentient or unconscious. Even in the case of creatures which are fully known to be quite alive and conscious, during their states of deep sleep and such other conditions, it looks as though they are devoid of consciousness. Therefore, the truth that — 'From Brahma which is Conscious the universe is born' — is not contrary to logic.

Another point: To those who argue that from the conscious or sentient entity an unconscious or insentient thing cannot be born, we can also put forth a counter-argument of the type — “From the unconscious or insentient, gross thing too a conscious or sentient thing cannot be born, is it not?” Therefore, the logic based on Vailakshanya (contrast in the special features) alone is not proper. Because the Shrutis have enunciated or expounded that — “Brahman which is of the essence of Pure Consciousness has manifested as the world of the dual forms of sentient and insentient things” — the spiritual teaching that Brahma is the cause of the world is in consonance with the scriptures, as also it is unopposed to logic.

19. Su. Bh. 2-1-6, pp. 312, 313.
20. Su. Bh. 2-1-6, p. 313.
21. Su. Bh. 2-1-6, p. 315.
22. Su. Bh. 2-1-6, p. 315.

91. Some people have taken the literary meaning, word for word, of the scriptural statement — “Brahman became (attained the form of) the Jagat (the universe)” — as the fundamental tenet and, analogous to the example of milk getting transformed into curds, they have interpreted the above scriptural sentence to mean that — “Brahman got transformed into the form of the universe.” This theory is opposed to the scriptural teaching that — “Brahman is devoid of parts or limbs.” Because the scriptures clearly affirm that — “Brahman is Aja (devoid of birth)” — the theory or doctrine that Brahma has really got transformed into the universe of the dual forms of Chetana (sentient) and Achetana (insentient) is undoubtedly contrary to the scriptural teaching. It becomes clearly evident that because the scriptures emphatically state that — “Even after Brahma gets converted into the form of the universe It (Brahman) subsists in Its Avikritaroopa (unchanged, immutable form) apart or quite distinct from the (apparent) effect and because Brahma is (as stated above) devoid of parts or limbs (Niravyaya), the Shrutis do not have the ultimate purport of teaching or propounding “Parinaama” (transformation) at all. We will clarify further in the next three Chapters the real purport of the Shrutis when they teach that — “Brahman became or attained the form of the universe.” The Jinaasus (the true seekers of the ultimate goal of Beatitude) should never forget the fact that just as much the “Pradhaana Parinaamavaada”, i.e. the Saankhya doctrine
of the primordial matter of *Pradhaana* getting transformed into the universe, is opposed to both Shruti teachings and Yukti, so much too is the "*Brahma Parinaamaavaada*", i.e. the doctrine of Brahman getting transformed into the universe (of duality), opposed to Shruti statements as well as to Yukti. The real cause for giving rise to this misconception is the scriptural statement to the effect — "By means of *Upaasanas* one attains the *Brahma Swaroopa.*" The Gati or resultant fruit of reaching, going to *Brahma Loka*, referred to in the *Upaasana Vaakyas*, we will explain in the Chapter devoted to the deliberation on *Upaasanas* (viz. XXIII Chapter).


92. The *Upanishad* is clearly stating — "*Brahman* transformed Itself by Itself into the universe." The Sootrakaara (i.e. the author of the *Brahma Sootras*, viz. Baadaraayanaachaarya) also has preached *Brahma Parinaama* or the transformation of Brahman into the universe in the manner — "*Aatma Krutehe Parinaamaat*" — (Sootra 1-4-6). It being so, how can we discern that neither the Shruti nor the Sootrakaara has the purport of teaching *Parinaama*? — In this manner a doubt may arise in the minds of some people.

But we have already delineated above that to say that Brahman has, in reality, got transformed (converted) into the universe is contrary to Shruti, Smriti (the Geeta) and Nyaya (Brahma Sootras). It is redundant indeed to stress that the statement — "Brahman is birthless and non-dual; but it has a mutation, transformation into another form of the universe too" — is a self-contradictory one. The topic as to why the scriptural statements propounding the truth of Brahman being devoid of any birth (mutation, transformation) are more predominant and stronger than the scriptural texts or statements pertaining to *Parinaama* of Brahman, will be explained in the next three Chapters.

The Sootrakaara has followed the spiritual teaching (Siddhaanta) of — "The Kaarya (effect) does not exist apart from the Kaarana (the cause)" — alone in the Sootra, viz. "*Tadananyatwamaarambhahahablaadbhyyaha*" — (2-1-14) and such other Sootras. He had accepted the effect (Kaarya) of the universe of the forms of Bhoktrus (enjoyers) and Bhogyaa (the enjoyed objects) from the standpoint of *Vijavahaara* alone. Without refuting the existence of Kaarya the adoption of *Parinaamavaada* is for the purport of espousing or enunciating *Upaasanas* (meditations). All these teachings will become evident by stages in due course.

28. Su. Bh. 2-1-15. p. 335
27. Su. Bh. 2-1-14. p. 327
XIII. SATKAARYAVAADA OR THE THEORY OF
THE BIRTH OF AN EXISTING ENTITY

93. The relationship of cause and effect between Brahman and the universe is accepted only for the purpose of signifying that — “Brahman of the essential nature of Pure Being alone is real; in It the universe, which is an effect, does not exist whatsoever.” (section 86). We have also previously mentioned in section 87 that the theory or doctrine of Brahman as the cause is enunciated, firstly, in order to refute or dismiss theories like Pradhaanavada and Paramaanuvaada etc., and secondly, to indicate that it is of utility to enlighten Aastikas or believers in the Vedas and the existence of the Ultimate Reality of God, stage by stage, that — ‘Brahman is birthless and non-dual.’ If one discerns with consummate insight, the categories of cause and effect and their mutual relationships are not at all in keeping with, or in consonance with, dialectical devices. For, let us first of all ask the questions separately — “Whether the cause is real or unreal or real as well as unreal?” — and — “Whether the effect is real or unreal or real as well as unreal?” What is real is not born; for example, clay etc. is not born. What is unreal, like ‘horns of a hare’, ‘barren woman’s son’ etc., is also not born. In the same way, from the unreal neither an unreal thing is born nor from it a real thing too is born; from the real neither a real thing is born nor an unreal thing is born. ‘Real as well as unreal’ is a self-contradictory statement. Therefore, nothing is ever possibly born at all; the statement that the effect is born is merely an imagination. Thus by means of dialectics it can be deduced. Hence, the theory of Brahman as the cause of the universe — which is propounded by the Vedantins — is not at all to establish firmly or convincingly the theory of the relationship of cause and effect; on the other hand, it should be understood that it is enunciated in order to refute the theories of Satkaaryavaada as also Asatkaaryavaada of other proponents like the Saankhyans and the Vaisheshikas, respectively.


94. Ajaatwaada, meaning, the theory which propounds that Brahman alone is the Absolute non-dual Reality, It is immutable, changeless and in It there does not exist really any cause-effect categories or relationships at all — which theory of the cause-effect relationship the Vedantins have accepted only for the purpose of teaching, stage by stage, the people of low and middle class intelligence or qualifications — is called “Satkaaryavaada” alone. In order to refute or negate the Satkaaryavaada which the Saankhyans have acknowledged and the Asatkaaryavaada which the Vaisheshikas and the Buddhists have accepted, the Vedantins have adopted this
Satkaaryavaada

Satkaaryavaada. In the opinion of the Saankhyans the root cause called "Pradhaana" is of the essential nature of Reality; that alone in reality gets transformed into the real forms of effects like Mahat, Ahamkaara etc. In so far as it is propounded that before the effect is born it (the cause) exists in the form of Pradhaana which is real, the Saankhyans are Satkaaryavaadins indeed. Because of reasons like — (a) they have accepted this doctrine of Satkaaryavaada which is very close or akin to the Vaidika Satkaaryavaada, as also (b) they have accepted the doctrine of Asangaatma (Atman being Absolute or unrelated to anything else) etc. Manu Rishi and others have to a little extent utilized their doctrines. But if examined in depth, they too are, like the Vaiisheshikas, Asatkaaryavaadins alone. For, they have adopted the doctrine that Pradhaana really gets born in the forms of Mahat, Ahamkaara etc. which were not existing before; in case they contend that Mahat, Ahamkaara etc. do exist in the beginning and later on they get manifested, even then because they will have to per force agree that at least Abhivyakti (manifestation) and Tiroabhaava (disappearance) were not existing before and later on came into being, it amounts to their accepting Asatkaaryavaada alone. Asatkaaryavaada means the theory or doctrine that — "What was not existing before gets born, i.e. it comes into being". Just like the Vaiisheshikas say that Dvyanuka (bi-atomic), Tryanuka (tri-atomic) matter which did not exist before come into being afresh, in the same way if the Saankhyans too adopt or accept the doctrine that Mahat, Ahamkaara etc. or their manifestation and disappearance, non-existing in the beginning, come into existence or being, then what else can it be but Asatkaaryavaada? Therefore, in order to refute the doctrines of these two schools of philosophy Vedantins have propounded their own Satkaaryavaada. The real or genuine "Satkaaryavaada' is: "Brahman which alone is of the essential nature of Pure Being or Existence appears to have obtained, in a magical fashion, birth, sustenance and destruction" — alone.


95. Now the question that is to be understood clearly and the proper answer for which is to be found out necessarily is: "Whether the Saankhyans are Satkaaryavaadins or whether they are Asatkaaryavaadins; and finding which defect in their doctrine should we refute their opinion?" The Saankhyans call themselves Satkaaryavaadins, while the Vaiisheshikas claim themselves to be Asatkaaryavaadins. The Asatkaaryavaadins point out a defect in the doctrine of Satkaaryavaada in the manner — "An existing thing cannot be born; that thing which exists already does not (need not) have birth.
For example, Purusha (which the Saankhyans posit as Reality) does not get born. Therefore, it would only be reasonable to say that Pradhaana (which the Saankhyans posit as a second Reality serving Purusha) — whether it is a cause or whether it is an effect — if it exists already, then it need not be born at all.” In the same manner, the Satkaaryaavaadins (Saankhyans) point out a defect in the doctrine of Asatkaaryaavaada of the type — “That thing which in the beginning itself does not exist at all, such a thing cannot at all be born. For example, the horns of a hare never exist nor are they born.” Because these disputants can never possibly solve or mitigate the defects that each points out in the other’s doctrines, it becomes established on the strength of their debate or polemics that both these doctrines, viz. Satkaaryaavaada and Asatkaaryaavaada, are defective indeed. Therefore, on the strength of their debate too the Vedantins’ teaching that — “The Absolute, Ultimate Reality of Brahman or Atman is not one which is born; It is non-dual alone” — becomes completely established and substantiated.


96. We have stated above that on the strength of the debate or dispute that is being carried on between Saankhyans and Vaisheshikas itself Ajaatiavaada (the doctrine of Brahman being devoid of any kind of birth) is established, is it not? Now, we may examine in detail the special or particular defects that exist in the doctrines of these disputants. In the doctrines of Satkaaryaavaadins, who propound that Pradhaana, the cause, gets transformed itself into the effects of the forms of Mahat, Ahamkaara etc. there is the explicit contradiction of saying that Pradhaana is an entity which is devoid of birth but at the same time asserting that it is born in the forms of Mahat, Ahamkaara etc. If it is contended that one part of Pradhaana gets transformed into various forms like Mahat, Ahamkaara etc. and thus if it gets divided, then the acceptance of the doctrine that Pradhaana is Nitya (eternal) will have to be given up. For, earthen pitchers or pots etc. which are brittle are not eternal. The Saankhyans opine that the effect is not anything other than or different from the cause; in that case, the effect too, like Pradhaana, can be said to be devoid of birth. If Mahat, Ahamkaara etc. which have a birth are Pradhaana (i.e. their very cause) alone, then how can it be possible for Pradhaana to be eternal? We have not seen in our workaday world a birthless cause giving rise to an effect. If it is contended that from a thing (cause) that is born, i.e. which has birth, another thing (effect) is born, then because that cause too per force will have to be born the defect of reasoning without reaching a finality by way of an endless series of causes and effects (called in Turka Shaastra or logical texts “Anavasthaa Dosha”) will creep in the manner — ‘A born cause having a prior cause and the latter in turn having
another as its cause' and so on. In this way, the Satkaaryavaada of the Saankhyans is in all respects contrary to logic.


97. On the face of it the Asatkaaryavaada, which the Vaisheshikas and others propound, may appear to be in consonance with logic. For we get a distinct apprehension or perception (Prateeti) invariably to the effect — "The cause existed first and then the effect came into existence". In the Shrutis too it has been stated that — "Sadbrahman (Absolute Being of Brahman) by Itself alone first existed; from It the universe, the effect, was born, i.e. came into being." Any one may ask — "Why should this doctrine be refuted?"

But this theory also cannot stand against the onslaught of logic. If one wants to know how, then the answer is: "The Vaisheshikas are of the opinion that Duyanuka, Tryanuka etc. are in the beginning absolutely unreal (Asat); they are born, subsist for a while and then completely (absolutely) become non-existent. But Abhaava (non-existent thing) becoming Bhaava (an existent thing) is contrary to valid means of knowledge (Pramaanas). The doctrine of the Vaisheshikas that — 'Duyanuka, Tryanuka etc. which were first non-existent, desiderating or needing the triad of causes, viz. Samavaayi (inherence), Asamavaayi (non-inherence) and Nimilta (efficient cause), come into being' — will have to bow down before the objection of the type — 'A hare's horns too may come into being or become real, is it not?' Real earthen pots, pitchers (which are in the beginning itself existent) — how can they desiderate a cause in order to get manifested? How can we at all believe the valid dealings of Pramaana and Prameya, taking place in the doctrine which says — 'A non-existent thing becomes existent; an existent thing becomes non-existent'? Anything can become anything else, is it not?"

This theory is opposed to the scriptures too. For, the doctrine that — "The effect is one with, or not apart from the cause" — is not only in agreement with the scriptural teaching that — "All this was in the beginning Sat or the Reality alone" — but also the scriptural teaching that — "If this one Entity is known, all else becomes known." But, the doctrine that — "A non-existent effect gets born as also, at the same time, is one with the cause" — cannot agree with this above scriptural statement or teaching in any respect whatsoever.

The Buddhists have accepted another kind of Asatkaaryavaada. Their doctrine is: "If the cause continues to exist as it is, from it no effect whatsoever can ever be produced. Only after the seed gets disintegrated and becomes non-existent alone the sprout comes into being, is it not? In the same way, because only when every cause
becomes non-existent alone the effect comes into being, we should admit that Abhaava or non-existence alone is the cause."

This theory is not correct. For, if from a non-existent thing an existent thing were to be born, then to accept the rule or regulation that — "From such and such a non-existent thing (Abhaava) alone such and such an effect should emerge or be born" — will be rendered futile. Therefore, in this doctrine there is no scope for a rule or regulation like — "From a seed alone a sprout can emerge; from milk alone butter-milk can emerge" — to exist or to be formulated. Besides, because in a non-existent thing there does not exist any special characteristics or features, from a hare's horn also any particular effect can be born or can emerge; for, that hare's horn too is a non-existent thing. Even a stationary person also will have to be acknowledged to be having an effect of the nature or form of having performed an action. Further, if from a non-existent thing an effect were to be produced, then in accordance with the nature of that cause the new-born effect too would have had to appear to be of the nature of non-existence alone; but, in truth, it is not like that at all. The statement that — "On a seed becoming a non-existent thing, a sprout comes into being" — is also not correct; for, after the seed disintegrates its parts themselves continue to exist in the sprout, which is the effect, and hence those very parts are invariably the cause and not the non-existence of the seed. Hence, this doctrine of the Buddhists that — "From an unreal thing (Asat) an effect is born" — also is not tenable or proper.

Especially the Buddhist doctrine that — "Both the cause and the effect are Asat (unreal)" — is contrary to all kinds of valid means of cognition (Pramaanas). In the teaching of those Shoonyavaadins (proponents of essencelessness or Nihilism) of the type — "All empirical or workaday transactions are invariably unreal or absolutely untrue" — there is no satisfactory answer to the question — "Accepting which Ultimate or Absolute Reality do these Shoonyavaadins assert that the empirical objects, established on the strength of valid means of cognition like Pratyaksha, Anumaana etc., to be unreal?" Without accepting or adopting any common valid means of cognition whatsoever if they assert that everything is Shoonya (essenceless), then no one can ever comprehend their doctrine which is baseless or without any support of any valid means of cognition. Besides, the ShrutiS have refuted this 'Asadavaada' (theory of unreality) in the manner — "How can the universe which is in and through real, be born from Asat or unreality?" "Asat or an unreality has no 'Utpatti' or birth and Sat or reality has no destruction" — To this Smriti (Geeta) statement too, the "Asatkaaryavaada" (the theory of an unreal thing giving birth to or producing an effect) is opposed. This "Asat" mentioned here is not that Asat which the Naiyyaayikas (followers of Nyaya school of philosophy) call "Asat" which, according to them, is the contra or opposite category
Satkaaryavaada

of Sat and which the Buddhists propound as Asat or Abhaava (non-existence). For the non-existence of a ‘Ghata’ (an earthen pot), there should necessarily be the Ghata; but, it is the doctrine of the Buddhists that Absolute Asat (essencelessness) alone is the cause of the universe or the world of duality. This means, the essential nature of being or existence of the world of duality is not there whatsoever. This is their teaching. It is not possible at all to acknowledge absolute Asat (essencelessness); for, at least we have to accept the existence of the person who acknowledges such a tenet or doctrine. If it is contended that prior to creation or his birth he too does not exist, then the statement that — “Everything is Asat or essenceless” becomes opposed to or without the support of valid means of cognition indeed. In that event, absolute Asat or essencelessness can never be even imagined or conceived of. Therefore, it will be proper or justifiable to totally refute this doctrine which is contrary to the Shrutis, Smritis like Geeta, and Nyaya (the axiomatic texts and their tenets).


98. In what respects is the Vedantins’ doctrine of — “Brahman becomes the universe of the forms of space, air etc.” — different from the Satkaaryavaada of the Saankhyans, which says — “Pradhaana gets transformed into the forms of Mahat, Ahamkara etc.”? The doctrine that — “From Brahman which is sentient, pure and devoid of Shabda (sound), Sparsha (touch) etc. the universe, which is of an opposite nature of being, meaning which is insentient, impure and associated with sound, touch etc., is born” — is verily the Asatkaaryavaada of the Vaisheshikas, is it not? — Such doubts or objections cannot possibly be hurled at the Vedantins.

For, Vedantins do not propound that, like Pradhaana, Brahman really gets transformed into the form of the universe. They say that by virtue of Maayaa, Brahman appears as if It is born as the universe. Hence, there is no comparison between the Saankhyans’ doctrine of the Pradhaana really being born and the Vedantins’ teaching (of Maayaa Satkaaryavaada). In the same way, Vedantins also do not propound that the universe associated with sound, touch etc., which did not exist before being born or coming into existence, like Dvyanuka, Tryanuka etc., is born afresh or anew. They reckon that the doctrine that — “Non-existence, like a barren woman’s son or a hare’s horns etc., becomes existent” — is opposed to universal experience. In fact, the Vedantins expound that — “The universe associated with sound, touch etc. before its birth as well as after its birth exists in the essential nature of
Brahman alone; besides, even now, i.e. when it is being perceived or rather it appears, it does not exist by itself at all in its own essential nature apart or different from its cause (Brahman).” Therefore, there is no comparison or similarity whatsoever between the Vaisheshikas’ Asatkaaryavaada which says that — “Dvyanuka, Tryanuka etc. which did not exist in the beginning get born or come into being and acquire the Sattaasambandha (relationship, association with the genus or general category of Satta or reality)” — and the Vedantins’ teaching. Because Abhaava (non-existence) is Nirvishesha (devoid of all special characteristics), to say that from such non-existence things, which are endowed with special characteristics, are born is not proper or reasonable. Especially, between the Asatkaaryavaada of the Shoonjyavaadinins which says — “Before its birth and after its birth too the universe which was absolutely or totally unreal appears to be born by virtue of Maayaa” — and the Vedantins’ (Maayaa) Sattaasambandivaada there is no comparison whatsoever. For a real rope, sea-shell etc. may by virtue of Maayaa (mystic power or magic) ‘become’ a snake, silver etc., but an unreal barren woman’s son, a hare’s horns and such other unreal (non-existing) things or phenomena cannot at all be born really or by virtue of Maayaa (mystic power or magic). It may appear that our branding Maadhyanilcas, a particular school of Buddhists, who are Shoonjyavaadinins (Nihilists), as Asatkaaryavaadinins is a false allegation levelled against them. For, it is their contention too that — “No effect whatsoever is born in any manner; birth itself is not valid; no object or thing has any essence of being at all.” Even so, it is their overbearing attitude of maintaining that — “The universe which is perceived by every one is verily Shoonya or essenceless” — on the strength of mere logical gimmicks that causes this predicament. The Saakshiivaada (the doctrine of Saakshi, the Witnessing Consciousness of Brahman, Atman based on the firm conviction of Intuitive experience, which is also universal and consummate) which the Vedantins expound cannot possibly be refuted by means of, or on the strength of, any such logical device whatsoever; therefore, all those Taarkikas have no other go but to accept the Vedic Sattaasambandivaada which propounds that — “For the false appearance of the universe Atman alone is the substratum.”

20 (a) Su. Bh. 2-1-7. p. 316.

199. The Taarkikas (logicians) do not acknowledge that Abhaava (non-existence) is like the barren woman’s son or the hare’s horns etc. Just as the perceptive knowledge of an earthen pot desiderates an existing or real object called a pot, in the same way the (negative) cognition or perceptive knowledge of the type — “Non-existing thing” or “Not this” etc. — also desiderates Abhaava or non-existence, and hence
Abhaava also is an (existing) object indeed. Besides, because in Abhaava special characteristics like Praagabhaava (the non-existence which existed before the birth of an object), Pradhvamsaabhaava (the non-existence that exists after the destruction of the object), Anyoanyaabhaava (the non-existence that is not to be found relatively in either of two objects) and Atyantaabhaava (non-existence that is not to be found anywhere in the absolute sense) etc. are seen, the statement that — "Abhaava is Nirvishesha (devoid of all special characteristics or categories)" — is not correct or proper. Just as the Vedantins assert that although Brahman is Nirvishesha, from It a world of special features is born, in the same way if the Taarkikas contend that — "Even though Abhaava is Nirvishesha, from it also an effect which is associated with special characteristics can be born" — there is no defect whatsoever in their argument. In this way, the protagonists of the logicians' doctrines may raise a doubt or objection.

But none of these doubts can ever be accepted. For, there is no rule of law that merely there being Prateeti (cognitive or perceptive knowledge), there should really exist an object. The well which was perceived by a person from the top to be "deep" is itself perceived by another person from the bottom to be "high"; but in this example, because of two perceptive knowledges two distinctively existing objects or phenomena do not get established whatsoever. If any particular statement is made, one particular (distinctive) meaning may be comprehended; but by the mere transaction of knowing the literary meaning or connotation of a word it cannot be thereby established that that object or phenomenon (signified by the word) is really existing invariably. If it were to be established in that manner, then by mere transaction of the usage of words like "hare's horns" or "barren woman's son" etc. the existence of the corresponding phenomena like a hare's horns or a barren woman's son will have to be accepted as established to be really existing. In fact, the real and proper transactions in the empirical, workaday world can be carried out in the case of things signified by words, but at the same time their existence can possibly be established on the strength of various valid means of cognition; the dealings based on delusion may take place even if there are no real objects available or present at the time. To say that in non-existence (Abhaava) there exist special characteristics like Praagabhaava, Pradhvamsaabhaava etc. is also not proper or reasonable. For, it is not possible in the case of Praagabhaava, Pradhvamsaabhaava etc. to demonstrate, by way of proving their essential nature of being, any special characteristics whatsoever. If in case there exist special characteristics in Abhaava too then between Abhaava with special characteristics and Bhaava (an existing entity) with special characteristics, there cannot possibly exist any difference or distinction whatsoever, and thereby Abhaava also will become Bhaava alone. Besides, because there does not exist
any distinction or difference with regard to their essential natures, 
it will not be justifiable to stipulate or regulate in the manner — 
"Pradabhaa alone is the cause for the particular effect and not 
Pradhwamsaabhava, and so on". It is reasonable to conclude that 
people in general misconceive Bhaava (Absolute Existence) alone to be 
of various types like Ghata Bhaava, Pata Bhaava etc. despite the fact 
that Bhaava is one and one alone; in the same way, it is reasonable to 
say that they misconceive Bhaava alone to be Abhaava also. On the 
basis of all these reasons, the statement that — "Abhaava is mere 
 misconception alone, just like a barren woman's son, a hare's horns 
etc." — is fully justified indeed.

23. G. Bh. 18-48. pp. 714, 715

100. Abhaava appears to be quite different and queer compared to 
Bhaava, is it not? In it special characteristics are also seen! Even so, if it 
were to be obstinately contended that Abhaava is Avastu 
(unsubstantial or non-material) and in it there do not exist any special 
characteristics whatsoever, then one can well establish by showing any 
particular kind of absence of reasonable grounds or inconclusive 
reasoning (Anupapatti) that none of the objects which are actually 
perceived by the senses does exist at all, is it not? — Such a doubt 
pesters some people.

But there is no cause for such a doubt to arise at all. We do not say 
that in our workaday world transactions, there does not exist any 
Prateeti Vailakshanya (contrariety of perceptual knowledge) of the type — 
Bhaava and Abhaava. It is true that a sea-shell appears to be silver; 
even so, because therein silver does not exist in reality its perceptual 
knowledge (Prateeti) is a mere delusion (Bharaanti) alone. In the same 
way, because Abhaava is a contra (Prati Dwandvi) to Bhaava, that too 
appearing in manifold forms like Bhaava is quite natural indeed. That 
Ghata Bhaava or the perceptual knowledge of an earthen pot, Pata 
Bhaava or the perceptual knowledge of cloth etc. are actually different 
kinds of existences — no one can emphatically assert at all. In the same 
way, by virtue of a relationship with action (Kriya) and qualities (Guna) 
Abhaava too like Drauvya, Guna etc. appears to be different. If we 
examine it with insight, Bhaava is one and one only, Abhaava also is 
one and one only. Still further if we try to discern or probe in this 
manner, then the statement that — "Ghata, Pata etc. are distinct 
varieties of Bhaava, an existing entity" — does not hold water at all.

Vaisheshikas opine that — "Bhaava means reality, existence. Drauvya 
(substance), Guna (quality), Karma (action) — in all these Sattaa 
(existence), a particular kind of Parasaamaanya (subllest or highest 
genus), by virtue of a special relationship called Samavaaya
Satkaaryavaada

(inherence), is associated or conjoined.” It is their belief that just as among all cows there is a genus called “Goatwa” (cowness), all objects or things are associated with Sattaa (existence, i.e. the highest genus), quite inherently. It is their doctrine that Prithveetwa or earliness, Dravyatwa or substanceness, Sattaa or the subtlest genus which is inherent — are in that order the various genera, each being more pervasive than the previous category. The Sattaa genus is the highest in its pervasiveness; therefore, that Sattaa alone is the Prasaamaanya, that means, it is the highest or subtlest genus most pervasive among all of them.

But Vedantins do not acknowledge any other Sattaa Reality other than Brahman which is of the essential nature of Absolute Existence. This topic we will elucidate in due course in section 101. In Vedanta, Sadvastu (the Ultimate Reality or Existence) means Brahman alone; all else is Asat (unreal or non-existence) alone. People are dealing with the one and only Sadvastu as Ghata Sattaa, Pata Sattaa etc. Because Ghata, Pata etc. are effects, they are Ananya (identical) with their respective causes of clay, cotton etc., respectively. Therefore, in their essential nature of cause they are Sat, but in their respective forms of appearance they are Asat alone. Sadbudhdi (the cognitive nature of Pure Being or Existence) does not change perennially; but the cognition of Ghata, Pata etc. go on merging in their respective cause forms like clay, cloth etc. and finally all of them become quiescent or merged in the supreme or ultimate cause of Brahman which is the Ultimate Reality (Sadvastu). Thus when Ghata, Pata etc. are themselves Asat, where is the necessity to say that the Ghata Abhaava and Pata Abhaava etc. (all of which can only be established similarly in relation to Ghata, Pata etc.) — are Asat? Although on the strength of valid means of cognition like Pratijaksha (perception), Anumaana (inference) etc. the existence of objects like Ghata, Pata etc. is established or determined, till the Absolute, Ultimate Reality of Brahman alone is Intuited as real, if we deal with the objects like Ghata, Pata etc. to be real empirically it will be quite reasonable and proper indeed; but from the viewpoint of Paramaarththa (in which Brahman alone is reckoned to be the Absolute Reality) if we cognize those things like Ghata, Pata etc. to be real it will never be justifiable at all. This has already been expounded in section 28. Therefore, what we have stated from the viewpoint of the Absolute Reality, viz. (i) that there do not exist any special characteristics in Bhaava and Abhaava, and further (ii) that our refuting in the manner — “Abhaava is unreal” — is not unreasonable at all.


101. With regard to Satkaaryavaada there remains the task of raising one more doubt and providing a solution for it. The doubt is:
"The statement that Ghata, Pata etc. are Asat is opposed to Prateeti (conviction or settled belief) of a reality (Sat) that exists in those entities. If it is contended that Ghata is Asat and its Abhaava, too is Asat, then in that event between the Prateeti of Abhaava of the Ghata and the Prateeti of Bhaava of the Ghata there will be a contradiction. If it is asserted that from Brahman, which is of the essential nature of Sat, the Jagat or the universe of the essential nature of non-existence (Asat) is born, then we will be giving room for a doctrine of the type — 'From Sat Asat is born or created' — which is clearly contradictory to logic or reasoning. The scriptural statement — 'How can the Sat be born from Asat?' (Chhaandoagya Upanishad 6-2-2) — also is propounding that Jagat is real only. Besides, because Brahman, of the essential nature of Reality, is devoid of parts (and hence is immutable) the doctrine that — 'Like the clay, iron, gold etc. Brahman is the cause for variegated universe' — will be opposed to logic indeed. Thus, it becomes apparent that the teaching that the universe is Asat (unreal, non-existent) and the teaching, Brahman that of the essential nature of Reality, is the cause for the universe are both opposed to Shrutis as well as to Yukti or reasoning."

The solution to the above doubt is: "The argument that both the objects like Ghata, Pata etc. and their respective Abhaavas are Asat (unreal) is not an undesirable doctrine at all for the Vedantins; for, all the things that are apart from Brahman are Asat only. Asat means false appearance alone. From this viewpoint there is no difference whatsoever between earthen pots etc. and their Abhaava. That thing which is seen in a particular form and which does not at all get that form ever changed — that thing is real. To say that — 'What is perceived (and believed to be true) and what is an object which is subject to cause and effect is real' — is not proper or reasonable. In due course this fact will be clarified. But that thing which is seen in a particular form and which goes on getting that form changed — that thing is invariably Asat, Anrita. Even among the things of the dream, which are acknowledged by everyone as false appearances, there exists the division of 'real' and 'unreal'; therefore, the perception of the division or distinction of the type — Bhaava and Abhaava — cannot at all be a hurdle for determining that those things are Asat or unreal, non-existent. Hence, the empirical transaction of considering water to be real in comparison with a mirage (water) is not an hindrance at all to the doctrine — 'Jagat or the universe is Asat' — enunciated from the viewpoint of the Absolute, Ultimate Reality of Brahman."

Just as the Taarkikas have acknowledged that Sattaasaamaanya the objects like Ghata, Pata etc. as also their Praagabhaava are both real objects or entities, Vedantins have not acknowledged an independent entity of Asat apart from Atman. Just as the rope-snake does not really
exist at all apart from the rope, similarly apart from Sadbrahman (the Ultimate Reality of Brahman) objects or entities like Ghata, Pata etc. or their Abhaava (non-existence) do not at all exist. In fact, Sat (Brahman) alone is appearing as the various forms of Dvaita (duality). Therefore, Dvaita also, in the absolute sense, is Sat alone, but not Asat. “All that is different or distinct from Atman in its own form is Anritam (unreal, false), but in its essential nature as Atman is Sat or Pure Being-Existence alone” — this alone is the spiritual teaching (Siddhaanta) of Vedanta.

The purport of the Shruti statement — “How can Sat come into being from Asat?” — is that the effect called Jagat (the universe), which is born from Sat (Brahman or Atman) is not different or separate from Sat (Brahman or Atman). Some disputants opine that from Asat alone Jagat came into being; but just as earthen pots which are organically connected or associated with clay are truly effects of clay only, the Jagat also, which is ‘substantially’ associated with Sat can only be the effect of Sat alone and not an effect of Asat at all. Because the purport of the Shruti sentence lies in affirming or emphasizing the truth that the ‘cause is Sat alone, the scriptural sentence does not at all have the ultimate goal or intention of signifying that the universe is either Sat or Asat. Therefore, this scriptural sentence is not a valid, authoritative statement to support or substantiate the doctrinaire interpretation of it to mean that Jagat is real; in fact, the Shruti sentence mentioning it to be “Vaachaarambhana” — meaning, that the discussion about Aarambhana (creation or birth) is mere desultory talk — is stating that the universe which is an effect is unreal only; and hence this Shruti sentence is harmful to the doctrine of the reality of the universe.

The objection of the type — “From Sat (Brahman) which is devoid of parts or components how can the universe (which is a conglomeration of various things and parts) be born or created?” — cannot raise its head at all. For, to the universe which is born magically (Maayika) the parts or components which are imagined by the deluded Buddhi or intellect in the substratum of Sat or Pure Being-Existence — those misconceived parts or components themselves are sufficient to serve their purpose.

30. Ch. Bh. 6-2-3. P. 423. 34. Ch. Bh. 6-2-2. P. 422.

XIV. MAAYAA OR THE DIVINE MYSTIC POWER

102. In order to teach the people with low and middle class intelligence and capacity the truth that — “Brahman alone is
the Absolute Reality or Entity" — the Satkaaryavaada (section 98) which propounds that — "The universe is born through **Maayaa** (divine mystic power) from **Brahman**" — is tentatively accepted in the Vedanta philosophy, is it not? Now the opportune time has arisen to find out the answer to the question — What is **Maayaa**? For, is **Maayaa** different or apart from **Brahman** or not? If it is separate, then there is contradiction of **Advaita** (teaching of non-duality); if it is one with **Brahman** alone, then the teaching that — 'From **Kootastha** (immutable, absolutely changeless and eternal) **Brahman** the mutable universe is born' — is not tenable and justifiable.

In relation to the **Jagat** or the universe **Brahman** is called **Ishwara** (the Lord Creator). In **Vedanta** it has been acknowledged that **Maayaa** cannot be said to be of an essential nature which is either separate from **Brahman** or not separate from **Brahman**; **Maayaa** is nothing but the seed form of name and form which are projected or imagined by virtue of **Avidya**. The universe is now (i.e. in the waking) appearing with names and forms, is it not? This is called **Vyakrit** **Jagat** (manifested universe). This universe at the time of **Pralaya** (dissolution) and before re-creation exists in the state of **Avyaakrit** (without being divided or differentiated into various parts or units in an unmanifested, latent or potential) form, so to speak. Because this **Avyaakrit** alone is the raw material for **Paramaataam** (the Lord Creator), it is called **Ishwara's Shakti** (the mystic power of the Lord Creator) and also as **Prakriti** (the primordial matter). Because it is not possible to determine and then to say that this **Maayaa** is either **Paramaataam** Himself or a separate entity apart from Him existing by itself, it is called **Avyaakrit** (unmanifested state); because it is pervasive it is called **Aakaasha** (space); and because it is a phenomenon which is never destroyed unless and until **Jnaana** (Intuitive experience) is attained, it is called **Akshara**. It is the spiritual teaching of **Vedanta** that because **Ishwara** (**Brahman**) is of a quite different essential nature of Being other than the **Maayaa**, which is projected by **Avidya** and which is of the nature of names and forms, no defect or any blemish, whatsoever, of **Maayaa** affects **Ishwara**.


**103.** While **Paramaataam** assumes the form of the universe no change or mutation whatsoever has taken place in His essential nature. The names and forms (which have been mentioned earlier) which were in the seed form of **Avyaakrit** have assumed the manifested form (**Vyakrit** form of the universe). Because both these forms of **Vyakrit** and **Avyaakrit** are, in truth, **Avidyaakrit** (projected by ignorance), even if it is stated that through them (these **Vyakrit** and **Avyaakrit**
forms) *Atman* gets transformed (*Parinaama*) into the form of the universe. He is invariably and eternally existing as *Kootastha* (Pure, Absolutely immutable, steadfast Existence alone). Just as in the beginning what was water alone later on if it assumed two forms of water and foam even then the foam is nothing but water alone, in the same manner in the beginning what existed as *Atman*, after the creation even when the two forms of *Atman* and the universe (which is perceptible as various names and their respective precept(s) everything is, in truth, nothing but *Atman* alone. When it is stated that — “Names and forms which were *Avyaakrita* became *Vyaakrita*” — the opinion or purport of the statement is not at all that they (names and forms) exist apart from *Brahman* or *Atman*. The *Avyaakrita* names and forms invariably retaining their essential nature of Pure Being of *Atman* become *Vyaakrita* (manifested); while for the names and forms *Brahman* alone is the *Swaroopaa* (essential nature of Pure Being), vice versa, it is not true, that means, for *Brahman* the names and forms, are not the *Swaroopaa* (His essential nature of Being) at all. For the *Shrutis* pronouncing in the manner — “Even now (in this waking, manifested state) everywhere *Atman* alone exists” — this alone is the reason. Apart from *Atman*, what is called *Aanaatman* or not-self never, at any time and nowhere, exists at all. Even what is stated in the *Geeta* in the manner — “In *Atman* there exist two *Prakritis*, one that is *Chetana* (sentient) and the other *Achetana* (insentient), and through these two *Prakritis* alone Paramaatman becomes the cause for creation” — is also for this reason alone. Both those *Prakritis* too are of the essential nature of Absolute Being of *Paramaatman* alone.

104. By now it must have flashed to the minds of the readers as to what difference there is between the *Pradhaana* (primordial matter), which the *Saankhyans* propound as the root cause for the universe, and *Maayaa*, which the Vedantins propound as of the form or nature of *Avyaakrita* (unmanifested seed form of the universe). The *Saankhyans* affirm that although *Pradhaana* is insentient (*Achetana*), it by itself independently gets transformed (*Parinaama*) into the universe, quite contrary to logic or reasoning. Whereas to the doctrine, which the Vedantins have accepted, there is no danger whatsoever because *Maayaa* is Ishwara’s power and because it is not separate from Ishwara who is of the very essence of *Chaitanya* (Pure Absolute Consciousness). The universe which is the effect is not a separate entity apart from Ishwara’s power or *Shakti*; that *Shakti* is not separate from the cause of *Brahman*; therefore, there is no harm, or danger, to *Advaitavaada* (the spiritual teaching of non-duality) also. Just as, although the foam
appears to be separate or different from water, in reality, it is water alone, in the same manner, although from the Avidya Drshhti (empirical viewpoint of ignorance) names and forms appear to be separate, in reality, they are not separate or different from Paramaatma Tattwa (the Ultimate, Absolute Reality of Brahman or Atman). Therefore, merely on the ground of Vedantins saying that Maayaa is the cause for the universe there is never any danger whatsoever to either the doctrine of Brahman being the cause for the universe or the doctrine of Advaita or non-duality.


105. In the doctrine that — "The universe is not separate from Maayaa; Maayaa is not separate from Ishward" — it amounts to saying that — "At the time of dissolution the universe dissolves or merges in Maayaa, that means, through Maayaa it dissolves in Brahman alone." Some people may get a doubt that — "Therefore, after dissolution the defects of the universe will taint Brahman also!" But if the Vedantic teaching that — "The effect called the universe, which is Vyaakrita or manifested, and the cause for it, viz. Maayaa, which is Avyaakrita or unmanifested seed form, are both Avidyaakalpita (projected, imagined or conjured up by ignorance)" — is discerned, then this doubt disappears into thin air. In the spiritual teaching (Siddhaanta) of Vedanta, unlike the doctrines of the logicians, the word "Kaarana" (the cause) is not used in the sense, or with the meaning, of 'that thing which is definitely or distinctly existing in time prior to that of the effect'. According to the teachings of Vedantins even phenomena like Aakaasha (space), directions, time, mind, atom etc. are all the effects alone of Brahman. Kaarya means that which is superimposed upon, or misconceived in, Brahman (that means, a false appearance, a delusion). The Vedantins say that all those things which appear to be separate or distinct from one another are, in fact, Kaarya (effects) alone; therefore, time and space too are the effects only. Just as in the workaday world Maayaa (magic) does not touch or taint the Maayaaaw (the magician) and does not affect or vitiate his being by the effects of its false appearances, and just as the defects or ill effects of a dream do not really affect or taint the dreamer, in the same manner this Samsaara Maayaa (this magic of transmigratory existence) does not affect Paramaatman (the Supreme Self). The universe as well as its seed form of Maayaa is Avidyaakalpita or it is delusory (that means they are misconceived appearances alone). That entity or thing on which another thing is superimposed or misconceived, that entity is not in the least related to or affected either by the good qualities or by the defects, ill effects of that thing which is superimposed or misconceived;
therefore, the assumption that — *“Brahman is not related to or affected by the defects of either the universe or its seed form of Maayaa”* — alone is in consonance (in full agreement) with reason.


106. Now to some people it may appear that still there remains one more logically-oriented objection to be solved. That is: If creation is the effect of Maayaa, of which phenomenon is Maayaa an effect? At least, as long as Maayaa exists the world of duality has per force to exist, and hence to that extent at least there is danger caused to the doctrine of Advaita (non-duality), is it not? If it is contended that Maayaa is Avidyaakrita, then finally Avidya will have to be accepted to subsist; if so, at least to that extent will there not be any danger to the doctrine that Advaita alone is the Ultimate Reality?

This objection too raises its head because of our forgetting the Vedantic teaching that — *“Both Maayaa and Avidya are phenomena which have been imagined or hypothetically posited by virtue of the axiom of Adhyaaroopa Apavaada (the methodology of Super-imposition and Rescission) and not that they are existing in reality.”* Vedantins propound “Maayaa” in order to teach the truth to people of low and middle order intellect who obstinately cling on to the belief that the reasoning of cause-effect which appears to be valid in the empirical workaday world is real; and for the sake of those who get deluded that by virtue of Maayaa the world is really created or caused, they propound that Maayaa is projected or conjured up by Avidya. Further, in order to make it known to those who doubt in the manner — *“The defect or ill-effect that is engendered or caused by that Avidya — does it not affect or taint Atman?”* — the Vedantins propound that Avidya is a special characteristic of the inner instrument of the mind (Antahkarana Dharma). For the sake of those who doubt in the manner — *“Don’t these Maayaa and Avidya cause or engender any special features or changes in Atman”* — the Vedantins answer that this assumption of these phenomena which are on the side of Anaatman (not-self), causing special changes in Atman, is also nothing but Avidya alone of people who assume in that manner. If it is further contended that — *“That Avidya at least exists, is it not?”* — the Vedantins answer that even that exists only from the standpoint of such a doubting Thomas and not in reality. Maayaa and Avidya — these are, in fact, Samvidhi, which means covert empirical transactions based on Avidya or misconception, delusion alone. Therefore, the world of duality, existing in reality, does not get falsified or removed (sublated, negated) after the knowledge of Advaita is born (or it dawns). Although the snake
(i.e. misconceived) does never exist in the rope at all, the teaching that — "The appearance of the rope-snake (the misconceived notion of the snake) will be got rid of by means of the Jnaana (true knowledge) of the rope is analogous to the transaction that after the mystic spell of the magic that the magician had exercised or cast (on the onlookers) is removed or withdrawn the spell is said to be gone or removed only" — has to be discerned.

To those people who raise the question that — "Of which entity is Maayaa the effect?" — the fact that from the empirical viewpoint Maayaa is Anaadi or beginningless is totally forgotten. There do exist doctrines mentioned in the scriptures (Shrutis) and works of sages or seers (Smritis) that Maayaa called by names like Auyakta, Auyaakrita has come into being from Atman; but for those doctrines the only meaning is that Auyaakrita state turned into the Vyaaakrita state, that is all. For, if it is affirmed that Auyaakrita also is born anew, then it will amount to accepting the doctrine that — "The Samsaara is with a beginning and consequently for each one of the Kalpa or aeon one different or fresh universe is born or created" — and then, in that event, the defect of Akritaabhyaaagama (enjoyment of fruits or consequences of deeds or acts which have not been performed at all) as also the defect of Kritvipranaaasha (the fruits or results of acts or deeds performed actually not accruing) will attach themselves. Unless and until Jnaana (Self-Knowledge) is attained the empirical transaction of Maayaa having disappeared or having been got rid of never arises; besides, the fact that Maayaa is false or unreal will never be cognized at all. Therefore, it becomes established that by doctrines of Maayaa and Avidya there is no harm or danger whatsoever posed for the spiritual teaching of Advaita philosophy.


107. It is the opinion of some people that because the word "Maayaa" is synonymous with "Jnaana" in the Vedic literature, this word has never been used in the sense, or with the meaning, of 'a nonexistent object' (false appearance). Yaaska Aachaaarya has used this word "Maayaa" in his work of "Nighantu" (a glossary of Vedic words) as a synonymous term of "Jnaana" alone. Even so, in scriptural sentences like — "Indroo Maayaaabhiihit Purooroopa Eeyate" — meaning, "Indra by virtue of his Maayaaas appears as of many forms" — and such other usages the word "Maayaa" means "the knowledge or cognition gained or accruing through the senses" alone; because the perceptual knowledge gained through the senses is of the nature of Avidya (ignorance) alone, the ultimate meaning of — "Indra or Parameshwara, the Supreme Lord, by virtue of His Maayaa (Shakti)" appears as many;
If seen from the proper viewpoint of Intuitive experience He, i.e. Indra, the Supreme Lord Parameshwara, is one and one alone” — will invariably hold water. Therefore, even when we accept the meaning of “Jnaana” for the word “Maayaa” it signifies nothing but Mithyaaajnaana (misconception) alone. Especially, in the scriptural statement — “Maayaam Tu Prakritim Vidyaat” — in which Aavyaakrita (unmanifested seed form of the world) is called Maayaa, the interpretation of Jnaana for the word Maayaa does not suit at all; it becomes imperative there, in that context, to accept the Laxanaartha (the implied meaning) of — “The false appearance projected by Mithyaajnaana (misconception)” — alone. Therefore, there is no hindrance or valid objection whatsoever to affirm the teaching of Advaita in the manner — The world is Maayika, i.e. illusory; it is a false appearance like the dream, a magical show, Gandharva Nagara (the world of the celestial beings) etc. — alone is the true genuine spiritual teaching of Vedanta.


XV. BRAHMAN IS THE NIMITTA KAARANA (EFFICIENT CAUSE) ALSO FOR THE UNIVERSE

108. Hitherto we have carried out our deliberations assuming the meaning of the sentence — “Brahman is the cause for the universe” — to be that Brahman is the material cause (Upaadaana Kaarana) for the universe, just as clay is the material cause for the earthen pot. For, with regard to the question — “What is the material cause for the creation of universe?” — itself there are many differences of opinion among the disputants. In the olden times Saankhyans used to argue out that Pradhaana (primordial matter) itself was the cause for the universe whereas the Vaisheshikas used to contend that the atoms (Paramaanus) themselves were the cause for the universe.

Some Vedantins who were following a tradition quite different from the traditional school of philosophy followed by Adi Shankara were propounding that Brahman Itself was the material cause for the universe. There are defects in their doctrines; for, neither the insentient Pradhaana nor Paramaanus by themselves can ever get transformed into the form of the universe; if they can get transformed, they will have per force to keep on transforming themselves continuously. The author of the Brahma Soottas (Baadaraayana) as also the Bhaashhyakaara (Shankara) have refuted the doctrines of these opponents saying that there does not exist any external cause whatsoever which can either prompt or promote them into action or help discontinue (or recede away) from action. In the same manner, the doctrine that — “Brahman
has really got transformed into the form of the universe" — is also not proper; for, if Brahman were to get transformed it will amount to saying or accepting that Brahman is Saavayava (made up of parts or limbs) and that It is Anitya (non-eternal). Thus the Bhaashyakaara has brushed aside the doctrine of the other alien Vedantins who were Parinaamavaadins (proponents of the theory of transformation) and has established his teaching by clarifications and reasons of the type — "In the Shrutis the statement that — 'Brahman gets transformed into the form of the universe' — is in relation to the adjuncts of names and forms which are Avidyaakalptta (projected or conjured up by ignorance); in truth, Brahman eternally exists as It is without getting any transformation whatsoever."


109. Vedantins have not refuted the doctrines of Saankhyans and others by assuming that the cause of the universe is the material cause alone. For, it is the teaching of Vedantins that — Brahman is the material cause (Upaadaana Kaarana) and It is the Creator (Kartru or Nimitta Kaarana) as well. Vedantins also refute the doctrines of those people who maintain that Ishwara is merely the Creator (Kartru) for the creation of the world. While it is being propounded that Brahman is the cause for the world, it is implied that causes like Pradhaana, Paramaanu etc. are not those which are mentioned by the Vedantas (Upanishads); for, it is stated in the Shrutis that Brahman, which is the cause for the world, in the beginning, "reflected in itself". (Evidently, it implies that Brahman is sentient and not insentient or inert like Pradhaana or Paramaanus). In this manner Vedantins refute their doctrines. For this reason alone, it is tantamount to saying that Brahman, i.e. Paramaatman, is only the efficient cause. For, the function or act of first reflecting and then carrying out an action is seen in Nimitta Kaaranas (efficient causes), like a potter, a carpenter etc.; just as for the potter many implements and raw materials like a pole, a wheel, clay etc. are needed, it is quite reasonable to assume that for Paramaatman a material cause, separate from Him, is needed. Lords like Vaivaswata and others are seen to be merely the efficient causes (Nimitta Kaaranas) for their respective functions. Therefore, to say that Parameshwara (the Supreme Lord) too is merely the Nimitta Kaarana alone is reasonable. Thus the proponents of Brahman being the efficient cause argue out. In answer to their contention Vedantins say that Brahman is the material cause too. For, in Vedantic texts it has been stated as a proposition to be proved in due course that
Brahman is the Nimitta Kaarana

— "If the one unitary cause is cognized, it amounts to knowing all else"; but in our empirical workaday world merely knowing the Nimitta Kaarana, it does not amount to knowing the whole of the effect at all. Besides, in the scriptures the material cause (Upaadaana Kaarana) itself is given as an illustration in the manner — "Just as by knowing one lump of clay all the effects made out or produced out of clay are supposed to be known." For that reason too, it is the teaching of Advaita Vedants that "Brahman is the Upaadaana Kaarana also for the universe". Hence, they also contend that the doctrinaire teaching that "Ishwara (the Lord Creator) is merely the Nimitta Kaarana for the universe" — is contrary to the Vedic tenets. The present-day Dvaita Vedantins (the followers of Maadhwa Vedanta traditions) are proponents of Brahman being a mere efficient cause (Kevala Nimitta Kaarana Vaadins).


110. Hitherto we have mentioned the solutions for the doubts or objections that may arise with regard to the doctrine that — "Brahman is the material cause for the universe." Now we have to find out the solutions for the difficulties that may arise if it is assumed that — "Brahman is merely the Nimitta Kaarana." If it is taken that Ishwara is merely the efficient cause for the world, then between Him, on the one hand, and the Prakriti (the primordial matter of the world) and the Jeevas (the transmigratory souls), on the other, there will not be any relationship at all. For, it will not be possible to say that — "All these (the world of duality and the souls) will be Sarvagata (all-pervading) and Niravayaua (devoid of any parts, limbs or components)" — and because the question as to whether Brahman is the efficient cause or not is itself controversial, it will not be possible to assert that the world exists depending upon Ishwara. Further, because of the reason that prior to the creation Ishwara does not have a body, the function or transaction of creation is not possible at all. If Ishwara knows the numbers or limitations of His Prakriti and the Jeevas, then the concept of both Prakriti and Jeevas being Ananta (devoid of destruction or end) will be wrong, unreasonable because they are mutually different. If it is contended that — "Both Pradhaana and Purusha are invariably eternal and Ishwara does not know their end or destruction" — then He does not become Sarvajna (all-knowing or omniscient). Any person may ask the question that — "Don’t the Vedantins have this defect?" But in their spiritual teaching, between Paramaatman and the Jagat there exists an innate relationship of identity (Taaadaatmya). That means, the Vedantins acknowledge that Jagat is in reality Paramaatman alone. Because they conceive or infer the cause for the world on the strength of
Vedantas (Upanishads), which are Apourusheya (not the works of human origin but of divine origin), they do not suffer from the defects of logic. If it is argued in the manner — "The others too may quote the 'Aagama' as the valid or authoritative sources, is it not?" — the answer is "No". For, in their doctrines it is said that — "Because the omniscient Ishwara has propounded or proclaimed the Aagamas, they are authoritative sources". To wit, the logical defect of "Anyoanyaashraya Doasha" (mutual dependence for establishing either of the propositions) of the type — "If the validity or authority of Aagamas is established, then the omniscience of Ishwara can be established; similarly, if Ishwara's omniscience is proved or established, then only the validity or authority of the Aagamas become established" — will arise in their doctrines.

111. If Brahman is the Kartru (the efficient cause for the world), then like the Kartrus of the type of potter, weaver etc. many implements and raw materials (Kaarakas) will be needed by Him for creation. It is seen (and known in common experience) that Kartrus like a potter or a weaver, in order to produce their creations or effects like pots and cloth, respectively, need implements and raw materials like clay, a stick, a wheel, cotton thread, a loom etc. It may be objected in the manner now — "Since the non-dual Brahman does not have any raw material or implements whatsoever, how can Brahman become the cause for the world of duality at all?"

But it is seen or known that without any other cause being there milk by itself turns into curds. Because the milk has an innate or inherent capacity, by means of the heat in the atmosphere etc. it gets converted fast into curds. In the same way, Brahman existing by Itsown right Brahman alone can, without desiderating any aid from a second thing or entity (in the absolute sense) manifest Itself or become converted into various forms.

112. Cross things like milk etc. by themselves assuming the forms of curds etc. is seen. But how can sentient beings like a potter, a weaver etc. perform their actions without implements and raw materials? In answer to this question, it is learnt from Mantra or Vedic verse addressed to a deity, from Arthauada (eulogy), Itilasa (history) and Puraana (ancient legends or mythological works) that sentient beings
like \textit{Devatas} (deities), \textit{Pitrus} (forefathers) and \textit{Rishis} (sages or seers) used to create whatever they wanted merely by their will or whim. The opponent may argue in the manner — "A spider by itself (by means of its own saliva) creates its thread (needed for its web); the deities have their physical bodies and such other material things, is it not?" But every one without exception will have to per force accept the fact that between the illustration of a potter, a weaver etc. and this example of a spider and a deity there exists a difference or distinction. A potter does not create earthen pots merely from his body alone; he needs implements and raw materials like a stick, a wheel, clay etc. But for deities, celestial beings etc. no other external thing or implement is needed for their creations. From this elucidation it becomes evident that there is no rule of law whatsoever that just like one person’s or being’s capacities or capabilities all the others also must have similar capacities or capabilities. Therefore, it is not proper or reasonable to stipulate or put restrictions in the manner — "Just like a potter or a weaver \textit{Paramaatman} also must necessarily have separate or external implements and raw materials for creation."


113. Anybody may raise a question of the type — "Deities and such other celestial beings, though they have the powers of creation, have bodies and senses and hence they may perform their respective actions or functions. But \textit{Paramaatman} does not possess a body or the senses like the eyes, the ears etc. Besides, because it has been stated in the \textit{Shrutis} that — "Not this, not that" — and thereby it has been indicated that in \textit{Paramaatman} no special characteristics whatsoever exist at all, how at all from such a being any creation can take place?"

A solution to this problem has already been provided by saying that it is not proper or reasonable to assert or assume that the same capacities or capabilities which one person or being possesses should invariably be possessed by others too. It is probable for \textit{Brahman}, despite His not having any special characteristics whatsoever, to possess all powers by virtue of the special characteristics or forms superimposed on Him or misconceived in Him by Avidya. For this reason alone, the \textit{Shrutis} are stating that although He does not possess any instruments of knowledge (\textit{Jnaanendriyas}) whatsoever, \textit{Paramaatman} possesses the capacities or capabilities of all instruments of knowledge or cognition. This truth, or fact of life, itself has invariably to be realized by means of the \textit{Shrutis} alone, exclusively, and not to be imagined, inferred, conjectured or surmised by means of logical or dialectical arguments at all. This fact has also been already mentioned.

114. It is stated in the Shrutis that Paramaatman created the universe and He Himself entered into it in the form of the Jeeva (soul). It is also taught that Jeeva is Paramaatman alone. How can that Paramaatman, who is independent, get entangled with Samsaara (transmigratory life, of a Jeeva) which is of the nature of birth, death, illnesses, diseases, etc. and which is dangerous, disastrous as also uncongenial to Himself? In case He has done so, He should have had the remembrance in the manner — "I have thus got entangled with Samsaara"; but it is not so. A magician, even after he has cast his spell of creating the objects through his Maayaa (magical power), can at his will and pleasure remove or withdraw his spell; whereas a Jeeva cannot even give up his body easily and escape from its hazards. Therefore, it does not appear to be possible that Paramaatman has created the universe, is it not? — Thus any one may doubt.

But in Vedanta philosophy Paramaatman is stated to be the creator of the universe and not Jeeva as the creator of the world. Besides, it is stated that — "Paramaatman is of a superior state to that of the Jeeva; He is Sarvajna (omniscent), Sarvashakta (omnipotent), Nitya Shuddha Buddha Mukta Swaroopaha (He is of the essential nature of being Pure eternally, being Conscious eternally, being Free eternally); He does not have anything either congenial (beneficial) or uncongenial (not beneficial) to Himself. Although the Shruti statement that Jeeva himself is Paramaatman is true, till that truth is realized or Intuited, Jeeva is an Alpajna (a being with limited knowledge), who has yet to know or cognize that truth through spiritual practices like Shravana (listening) of the Shrutis, Manana (ratiocination or discrimination on the scriptural teachings) etc.; the type of difference that exists between the external space and the Ghataakaasha (space within an earthen pot) is likewise existing between Paramaatman and Jeeva. Therefore, there is no room or scope here in this context for an objection of the type — "How can there be Bhedaabheda (difference cum non-difference) between the Jeeva and Paramaatman?"

Supposing it is asked — "When the Jeeva, by means of the spiritual instruction by the Shaastras, Intuits that — 'I am Paramaatman alone' — then in that event what is your answer?" — then we say: "Then neither Jeeva is a Samsaaree at all, nor Brahman is a creator; the differentiated empirical, workaday transactions projected or conjured up by misconception will have vanished then." To exist or live without being able to distinguish between the (essential natures of) gross phenomena like the body, senses, mind etc., which are merely of the nature of names and forms projected by Avidlya (misconception), on the one hand, and one's Self, which is his essential nature of Pure Being, on the other, is itself Samsaara indeed. Hence, if Paramaatman were to be the creator of the universe, the argument or objection that the defects of having the duties or responsibilities of providing Hita (beneficial,
congenial things) or removing the Ahita (things which are not congenial or beneficial) will taint Atman or Brahman, will not hold good.


115. Some people raise an objection of the type — "If it is contended that Paramaatman is the creator of the world, then it will amount to saying that He has defects of Pakshapaata (partiality, favouritism) and Dayaaraahitya (not having compassion, kindness). For, among creatures or beings He has made some like Devatas etc. immensely happy, while He has created some others like animals, birds etc. extremely miserable; He has made some others like human beings etc. as the middle class of beings having happiness and miseries in equal proportions. Such a partiality or favouritism cannot befit Ishwara, who is considered to be devoid of Raaga (attachment) and Dvesha (hatred). Neither does the quality or characteristic of cruelty, like subjected creatures or beings to misery and at the time of PraZaya (final dissolution of the world) killing or destroying all the beings, befit His essential nature. Therefore, it is not proper to affirm that Ishwara is the cause for the world."

This is not an objection which is proper or reasonable. For in relation to, or proportionate to, the Dharma (merits) and Adharma (demerits) of the creatures or beings alone Ishwara has 'created' this universe. Just as in the example — although rain is the common cause for the growth of various grains like paddy, wheat etc., the respective seeds of those grains themselves are the root cause for their respective differences or distinctions — similarly though Ishwara too is the common cause for creation of the world, for the disparity or divergence in the happiness and misery of the various creatures or beings their respective actions, i.e. merits or demerits, themselves are the cause. It is in the fitness of things if it is assumed that because Samsaara is beginningless, the actions of the previous periods of time are the cause (responsible) for the disparity or apparent discrepancy in the creations of the future periods of time in a series.


116. There arises a doubt of the type — "By creating this world what is the benefit or purpose that accrues to Paramaatman? Is He not eternally contented? If it is argued that there is no benefit, or purpose served, whatsoever, then it will amount to saying or accepting that He is not Sarvajna, is it not? Who will ever create such a stupendous universe without getting any benefit whatsoever?" This is not a reasonable or valid doubt at all. For, there is no rule of law that all actions or deeds should have always a purpose or utility. People like a king, a minister etc. also, despite the fact that they are not gaining any
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benefit whatsoever, indulge in sports, walking, jogging etc. merely for Leela (recreation, amusement or a pastime). For the acts like inhalation and exhalation, which Jeevas (creatures) perform continuously, do not acquire any benefit whatsoever. For the omnipotent Parameshwara creation of this universe is not at all a stupendous task; for Him this is a Leela indeed! Even if every being invariably gets some sort of a benefit out of an action, there need not be such a stipulation of getting a benefit for Parameshwara; for, the scriptures state that He is Aaptakaama (one who has attained fruits of all desires). Apart from this, what is the real purport of saying that Brahma is the Nimitta Kaarana for the universe? Brahma, being Absolute Consciousness, is the Witnessing Principle (Saakshi) for everything. Being an object invariably to that Witnessing Consciousness alone all the progress or activity of, and in, the universe is going on. Thus Paramaatman remains as Pure, Absolute Consciousness alone; apart from Him there does not exist any other conscious being whatsoever who is an enjoyer. Therefore, there is no cause or scope for the question of the type — "Why does the creation of the universe take place?" — and there is also no need or cause for an answer to be given for such a question.


117. Thus even if we reckon Brahma to be either as the material cause or the efficient cause for the world of duality, there is no scope for any objection of the above type being raised. All the aspects of cause (Kaarana) suit or befit Brahma. For, Brahma is of the very essence of omniscience, omnipotence, and more than anything else, highly and profoundly mystic (Mahaa Maayaaavii). Vedantins do not say that this creation is caused in the absolute sense (it is not really real); in fact, it is their opinion that this creation is the objective phenomenon of the empirical transactions of the nature of names and forms alone projected or conjured up by Avidya. It is the spiritual teaching of Vedantins that this 'creation' is taught or expounded in the scriptural texts merely as a device to help Intuit unity or non-duality of Brahma and Atman alone. Therefore, in this regard there is no defect whatsoever.


XVI. SCRIPTURAL TEXTS ON CREATION

118. We have explained so far that the theories like Kaarya Kaarana Vaada (theory of cause-effect), Satkaarya Vaada (theory that an existing entity is born) and Maayaa Vaada (theory of the mystic power of the Lord Creator) etc. are all devices which have been accepted as
also adopted in the scriptures to propound the non-duality (*Aduaita*) of *Atman* by the utilization of the *Nyaaya* (axiom) of *Adhyaaroapa* (Superimposition) and *Apavaada* (Rescission). But the *Maayaa Vaada* or theory of the mystic power of the Lord Creator is not to be found in all the sentences pertaining to creation; how then can it be determined or concluded that this *Maayaa Vaada* alone is acknowledged by the scriptures? In the scriptures some sentences indicate the creation of *Aakaasha* (space), *Vaayu* (air) etc. as also the creation of the *Jeevas*; how could we interpret such scriptural sentences? — This question should be considered now.

In *Brahman* duality does not exist whatsoever, in reality; duality is *Maayika* (a false appearance) alone. Thus it has been established or determined on the strength of *Shruti Vaakyas* and *Yukti*. Therefore, it is not possible to imagine that the scriptures expound or teach creation quite contrary to its own statements (*Vyaahata*) and quite opposed to logical devices or arguments (*Yukti Viruddha*). Besides, the scriptures clearly and explicitly state not only that by virtue of *Avidya* alone duality appears as if it exists, but also that, when viewed from the Absolute or Transcendental standpoint of *Atman* alone being everything, one person does not at all cognize another person or another object whatsoever. The scriptures further state that *Jeevas* are devoid of birth, without cause, eternal; they are devoid of any change or mutation whatsoever; in truth, changeless, immutable *Brahman* (the Ultimate Reality) alone has assumed the forms of *Jeevas* or souls. Those *Jeevas* are really of the essential nature of *Brahman* alone. Therefore, it is tantamount to saying that the scriptures do not at all have the ultimate purport of teaching the subject-matter of the world, of the form of sentient and insentient beings, as really born or created.


119. Some people may raise the question — "Let it be that *Dvaita* is unreal; let it also be that *Jeevas* being born is not possible; just as all this is established or determined by the valid means of *Shrutis*, the fact that this world comprising *Aakaasha, Vaayu* etc. as also the fact that the *Jeevas* are born are both established by the valid means of the *Shrutis* alone, is it not? Then, what will happen to these scriptural statements?"

The *Shrutis* mentioning about or expounding creation is not for the sake of establishing the reality of creation. Utilizing the axiom that — "*Kaarya* (the effect) is *Ananya* (not separate or is one with) *Kaarana* (the cause)" — the *Shrutis* expound creation in order to bring home (with the prime purpose of inculcating in us) the truth of the unity or oneness of *Jeevas* with *Atman* by illustrations of clay, iron, fire sparks etc. Just as *Aakaasha* has assumed the various forms of *Vaayu, Agni*,

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Ap, Prithvi, in that order, Atman manifests Himself in the various forms of the body, the senses, the mind, the intellect, the ego etc., which are conglomerations of the nature of Kaarya Karana; just as Aakaasha by virtue of its relationship, or in association with, Ghata (pot), Mata (pitcher) etc. appears to be Ghataakaasha (pot space), Mataakaasha (pitcher space) etc. Atman appears to be various Jeevas. This alone is the prime purport of the sentences pertaining to creation. Just as from the Absolute Reality viewpoint it is determined or established that either Ghata, Mata etc., on the one hand, or Ghataakaasha, Mataakaasha, on the other, are not really separate or different from Akaasha (pure space), in the same way neither the world of the type of Aakaasha, Vaayu etc. nor the Jeevas are separate or different entities other than, or apart from, Atman. In this final spiritual teaching alone these Shrutts have their prime purport fulfilled or achieving their fruition.


120. Anybody may ask the question: "In all the scriptural sentences pertaining to creation it is not to be found that space, air etc. as also Jeevas are born by means of Maayaa. What is there to support or justify the endeavour for giving up the predominant meaning and for adopting or assuming the secondary meaning (Gouna Artha) of the creation being caused through Maayaa?"

But, in answer, we maintain that neither is it stated in the scriptures that — "Creation is absolutely real." Therefore, the scriptural statement pertaining to creation is common both to the Paramaartha Shristi (really real creation) and Maayika Shristi (mystic creation). To say that Maayika Shristi is Gouna (of secondary importance) is not proper; for, we have already shown (in the 13th Chapter) that creation cannot at all take place in any other manner. Therefore, Mukhya Shristi (creation in the predominant sense) and Gouna Shristi (creation in a secondary sense) are all Aavidyaka (projection of Avidya) alone. There is no possibility of any purpose or utility accruing from knowing creation (or its methods). Just as the anecdote of the dialogue among the Praanas (senses) and the Mukhya Praana (the vital force), mentioned in the scriptures, is enunciated merely to signify the speciality or singularity of Mukhya Praana and there is no cause to assume that the scriptures really have a purport in mentioning that the dialogue really took place, in the same way the scriptural statement pertaining to creation has the ultimate or prime purport of teaching the non-duality (Advaita) of Atman alone; the scriptures do not have the ultimate purport of teaching that creation is real. Thus it should be discerned. Just as it is not proper to meditate on the quarrel of the form of a dispute between the Mukhya Praana and the Indriyas (the senses),
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in the same way it is not proper to meditate on creation; for, by that means an undesirable result alone may accrue. Therefore creation has not been mentioned for the purpose of meditation. Consequently, the statement to the effect that creation is Gouna or Maayika alone is verily sustainable, meaning, that teaching alone can be substantiated or proved to be valid.


121. "The scriptural sentences pertaining to the creation of the world, like the sentences pertaining to the teaching of the essential nature of Brahman, are invariably scriptural sentences alone. It being so, what is the reason to disregard or dismiss those sentences by means of dialectical arguments or devices?" — Thus anybody may raise a doubt. But this doubt is not reasonable or proper. For, the sentences with regard to creation are to be found in a Brahma Prakarana (a chapter in the scriptures exclusively devoted to the exposition or enunciation of Brahman in esse). Besides, for such creation sentences no benefits or fruits have been mentioned in the scriptures. Taking the creation sentences along with the sentences pertaining to the essential nature of Brahman alone the purport of achieving full agreement or reconciliation is seen to be fulfilled. In the scriptures for the Brahma Jnaana (Self-Knowledge or Self-Realization) the final fruit called Paramapurushaarththa (the ultimate goal of all human endeavour and existence) is propounded; therefore, we should follow the logical axiom that — "If in the scriptures a sentence with resultant fruits or benefits is mentioned along with another sentence without any such fruits or benefits, then the latter should be assumed to be Anga (subordinate or subsidiary) to the former" — and accept that the scriptural sentences about the creation are subordinate or subsidiary to the sentences pertaining to, or propounding, the essential nature of Brahman. Not only this, but also it is mentioned in the scriptures emphatically and in clear terms that suggestions of the type of creation, causation etc. are for the prime and final purport of teaching the Intuitive Knowledge of Brahman (Brahma Jnaana). For all these reasons, it becomes established that creation sentences in the scriptures are not having the ultimate goal or purport of expounding creation as such.


122. "It is also stated in the scriptures that Atman gets born in the form of the Jeeva; further, it is stated therein that there are no distinctions or special features in Him and that He is the one and the only non-dual entity. It being so, why should we assume the scriptural sentences pertaining to birth, dissolution etc. alone to be subsidiary to
those which pertain to the essential nature of *Brahman*? On the contrary, why should we not reckon that the scriptural sentences about the essential nature of *Brahman* themselves are subsidiary to the scriptural sentences concerning birth, dissolution etc.? Or, why should we not conceive that both kinds of scriptural sentences too are independently valid or authentic and *Brahman*—just as a tree in its total form is one entity but in its forms as branches, sub-branches, leaves, etc. is manifold, or just as the sea in its total form is one but in the forms of waves, bubbles etc. is manifold—is endowed with many powers of existing as one and at the same time as many? Then, in that case, both the *Karma Kaanda* and the *Jnana Kaanda* will be equally valid or authentic, is it not?" — This is the doubt raised by *Brahma Parinaama Vaadins* (proponents of the doctrine of *Brahman's* transformation).

There is no need whatsoever to stress that this type of a doubt is totally unreasonable and contrary to the scriptural teachings. For, if the scriptural sentences which preach indistinctiveness (of *Brahman*) are reckoned to be valid or authentic, then we get the Intuitive cognition of the type — "Here *Purushaarth* (the goal or the *summum bonum* of all human existence and endeavour) ends up" — and thereafter there does not remain any aspiration whatsoever. It is also seen that *Jnaants* (Realized Souls) rest fully content without hankering after anything whatsoever. It is also stated in the scriptures that because a *Kaarya* is *Anrita*, one should not hanker after it. If the meaning or purport of the scriptural sentences which describe the birth or creation, sustentation and dissolution of the world is cognized, no one becomes rid of all hankering at all; besides, as stated above the fact that those scriptural sentences are means of disciplinary practices to attain *Brahma Jnana* has been explicitly and clearly expressed by the scriptures themselves. By this reasoning alone the doctrine of the type — "Let both the non-duality (*Monism*) and duality (*Dvaita* or manifoldness) be absolutely or really real" — stands refuted as being defective. For, in the scriptures first having declared that the cause alone is real and the effect unreal, it has been taught by means of examples or illustrations like the clay, iron, gold etc. that the cause is *Brahman* (Absolute Existence in esse) and finally it has been instructed that — "That *Brahman* is itself in truth subjectively you"; by means of the illustration of a thief it has been distinctly taught that — "One who has identification (*Abhisandhi*) with *Anrita* (unreal, false things like the body, the senses, the mind, the intellect etc.) is bound; one who has identification with the Ultimate Reality (*Satyaabhisandhi*) is liberated or, in other words, has attained *Moaksha*"; it has been emphasized further that by means of the Intuitive Experience of non-duality of *Brahman* or *Atman* one attains *Moaksha*. If non-duality and duality or diversity are both real, then all these above teachings do not become valid at all. Therefore,
the doctrine of Bhedaabheda (being both distinct and non-distinct at the same time) of the type — "Brahman is one (non-dual) and many (diverse) at the same time" — is always opposed to the scriptural teaching.


123. Some people may ask the question: "If creation is not there at all, then why at all creation has been described or depicted in such detail (in the scriptures)? Why at all the Sootrakaara (Shri Baadaraayanaachaarya) also has made such elaborate attempts to systematize the order of creation? Why has he accepted the world comprising enjoyers and the enjoyed objects by means of illustrations like the sea and the rivers etc.?

But because we have clarified above that the scriptures expound creation keeping in view the ultimate purport of teaching the non-dual Intuitive Knowledge of Brahman or Atman alone, there is no possibility of doubting any contradiction in the scriptures. The Sootrakaara in the second section of the second Chapter has refuted the doctrines of other schools of philosophy and has indicated self-contradiction in their doctrines. Therefore, with a view to preventing the Mumukshus (seekers of Emancipation) from losing faith in, or reverence towards, the Vedantic teachings because of the apparent reason of the scriptural sentences pertaining to creation being mutually contradictory, the Sootrakaara has started the third section so as to elucidate and emphasize the fact that there is no inconsistency whatsoever in regard to the Kaaryas (i.e. the creation details). All this is stated from the Vijaavahaarika Drishti (empirical viewpoint) alone, and not with the purport of teaching that in reality there is creation or that creation is really and absolutely real. For, if in Brahman, which is taught to be the cause for the world, all the scriptural statements are shown to acquiesce in or agree fully, it suffices to sustain or substantiate the Vedantic spiritual teachings. This has been enunciated in the Sootra 1-4-14 which reads: "Kaaranatwena Chaakaashaadishu Yathaa Vyapadishedhtoaktehe". The Sootrakaara has exemplified in Sootra 2-1-14, which reads — "Tadananyatwamaarambhana Shabdaadibhyaha" — that Kaarya is not different at all from the Kaarana. In the previous three sections we have elucidated that the scriptures do not at all have any deep interest (purport) in the doctrine of cause-effect. Therefore, just as we have previously (in section 92) stated, by accepting the effect of the world (for the time being, from the empirical viewpoint) the deliberation with regard to the effect (the creation) is carried out for the purport of facilitating the teaching of Upaasanas (meditations) alone.
While we deliberate upon *Upaasanas* in due course we will once again broach this topic.


**XVII. THE METHODOLOGY OF SAAMAANYA (GENUS) AND VISHESHA (SPECIES OR PARTICULAR)**

124. It has been previously stated that the *Vedantic* teaching — "Accepting that there is a relationship of cause and effect between *Brahman* and the world, respectively, it has been enunciated that the birth or creation, sustentation and dissolution of the world take place all owing to *Brahman*" — is only to help reckon that the world does not exist apart from *Brahman* at all, but not to propound that the categories or phenomena of cause and effect are really real. *Brahman* or *Atman* of all of us is a *Maayika* cause for the world; because the world is caused by *Atman* alone, it is sustained by and in *Atman* alone and it is dissolved in *Atman* alone — it invariably evolves that everything is nothing but *Atman* alone and this alone is the true, genuine *Vedantic* teaching. With a view to driving home the spiritual teaching that — "Even during the existence of the world there really exists *Atman* alone who is devoid of all special features" — superimposing *Saamaanyatwa* (the category of genus) on *Atman* is one of the methods of instruction adopted by *Vedanta*.

*Taarkikas* acknowledge six categories, like *Dravya* (substance), *Guna* (quality), *Karma* (action), *Saamaanya* (genus), *Vishesha* (particular, species), *Samavaaya* (inherence). *Dravyas* are associated with internal differences like *Prithvi* (the element of earth), *Ap* (the element of water), *Agni* (the element of fire), etc.; in all of them the genus of *Dravyatwa* (substantiveness) exists. It is their doctrine that in the same manner in all *Gunas* the genus of quality-ness, in all *Karmas* the genus of action-ness exist. Besides, there exist *Aparasaamaanyas* (sub-genera), like *Prithveetwa* (earth-ness), *Aptwa* (water-ness), *Agnitwa* (fire-ness) etc. which are inferior or subaltern to *Dravyatwa*; in the same manner, inferior to *Prithveetwa* the sub-genera like *Ghatatwa* (pot-ness) etc. also exist; similarly, inferior to *Gunatwa* and *Karmatwa* there exist sub-genera. But more pervasive than all these genera like *Dravyatwa*, *Gunatwa*, *Karmatwa* etc. there exists a super genus called *Satitaa* (absolute existence) beyond which no other *Parasaamaanya* (superior genus) does exist at all. This is then the logicians' teaching. In *Vedanta* this teaching method of the logicians is not accepted to be valid. We
have already, in section 97, refuted the logicians’ doctrinaire teaching that the effects like Duyanuka, Tryanuka etc., which in the beginning did not exist but were born fresh, got associated with their respective causes as well as with the super-genus of Sattaa by virtue of a special relationship called Samavaaaya (inheritance). These logicians, first having enunciated that Dravya, Guna, Karma etc. have quite distinct characteristics just like a man, a horse, a hare etc., have later on acknowledged and expounded — quite contrary to their above enunciation — that Guna, Karma etc. are all subordinate to Dravya (substance) and that they are associated (conjoined) with it by a (queer) relationship of Samavaaaya (inheritance). Shri Shankara has opined that — “If we deliberate in accordance with their acknowledged doctrines, then it will be reckoned that there is no valid means (Pramaana) to determine that, apart from Dravya, categories like Guna, Karma etc. exist at all or that apart from Atman, who is of the very essence of Pure Existence, the genera like Sattaa etc. exist at all.”

2. Suo Bh. 2-2-17. pp. 396, 397.

125. There is an axiom that that thing which cannot be cognized apart from another thing, that former thing is invariably a form (appearance) of the latter entity. For example, when a drum is being beaten the sounds that emit from it have necessarily to be cognized as the sounds of the drum alone, but they are not heard by themselves without any relationship with the drum. In the same manner, the particular sounds like conch sounds, Veena sounds etc. have to be cognized by means of the common cognitive genus alone as the sounds respectively of the conch, Veena etc. only. Further, none of these sounds can be separately cognized apart from the common cognitive genus of sound. Therefore, apart from this common cognitive genus of sound, these particular sounds do not exist. Similarly in the empirical workaday world whatever genera and particular categories are seen they all can be determined as not to exist apart from the common genus of Sadroopa (Pure, Absolute Existence) or Chidroopa (Pure, Absolute Consciousness). From this it is established that the common genus of Pure, Absolute Existence-Consciousness-Bliss alone of Atman is, in the ultimate analysis, the Paramaartha (the Ultimate Reality). The difference between the Sattaasaamaanya (common genus of Sattaa, the category of existence), which the Vaisheshikas propound and the Sat (Pure Absolute Existence), which the Vedantins expound, is that the Vedantins (unlike the Vaisheshikas) affirm that the Sat of Atman exists by Itself and unto Itself in deep sleep as well as in dissolution of the world. But Vaisheshikas do not at all acknowledge mere Sat; they say that even during dissolution of
the world the non-existence of the effects as also the atoms, like Dvyanuka, Tryanuka etc., do exist.

6. Ch. Bh.6-2-1. pp. 414, 415.

126. The Sadroopa and Chidroopa, which pervade the effects of Aakaasha (space), Vaayu (air) etc. is one and the same Entity only. If it is reckoned that in Atman there exist two genera like Sadroopasaamaanya and Chidroopasaamaanya, merely by such concepts even we will be giving rise to Savisheshatwa, meaning, Atman, the Reality, being associated with particulars or special features. In fact, doubting in the manner — “Is Brahman (Atman) Sadroopa or Chidroopa?” — is not proper. For, Sat, which has been taught to be Atman of the conscious, sentient Jeeva, has per force to be of the very essence of Consciousness alone; no one can ever conceive or imagine by his mind that Chaitanya is devoid of existence. If it is contended that Brahman is Sadroopa and also Chidroopa, then it amounts to saying that Brahman is manifold. We have already signified and explained in section 122 that the doctrine of — “Brahman is manifold” — is opposed to Shrutis’ teaching, and also to Yukti. Therefore, it should be rightly discerned that — “Sat (Pure, Absolute Existence) alone is Chit (Absolute Consciousness); Chit alone is Sat.”


127. Just as we reckon the essential nature of Atman (Absolute Being or Existence) as the common genus of Sadroopa, as also of Chidroopa, we can also consider it to be of the essential nature of Aanandaroopa (Absolute Happiness or Bliss). The joy or delight which accrues on the visualisation of a desirable result or fruit of meritorious deeds (Punya Karma) is called Priya (agreeable, dear one); if that result is actualised or acquired, then the delight or pleasure that accrues is called Moada (rejoicing); when Moada gets enhanced it is called Pramoada (ecstasy, excessive revelry). Thus, because there appear distinctions of the type of Priya, Moada, Pramoada in happiness or pleasure, it should not be doubted that happiness (Aananda) cannot be the essential nature of Atman. For these special features are not distinct from the common genus of Aananda (Pure Bliss); that common genus of Bliss pervades all these empirical pleasures. Priya, Moada and such other empirical or mundane pleasures really do not accrue from the things or objects (external to us); when one sees or acquires a thing desired by him by dint of his meritorious deeds, then the covering of Tamas (darkness, ignorance), as one of the three Gunas (qualities).
which are the three constituents of every object, is removed and a particular sort of concept appears in one's mind (Antahkarana); at that instant, in that Antahkarana the Bliss (Aananda) of the essential nature of Atman (the Self) gets manifested or projected. **Just as people call the concept or thought (Vritti) which is a reflection or replica of Consciousness or Knowledge (Jnaanaabhaasa) as Jnaana (sections 67, 75), in the same way the mental concept or thought of the reflection of Sukha (Sukhaabhaasa) is called by the common people as Sukha.** Because the Punyakarma (meritorious deed or action) is Alpa (limited or small), this resultant Vritti also is transient or evanescent (Kshanika). But the Bliss (Aananda) of the essential nature of Atman is not at all transient or evanescent. In proportion to the degree to which the Antahkarana acquires purification by virtue of spiritual disciplines or practices like Tapas (penance), Upaasana (meditations), Brahmacharya (celibacy), Shraddha (steadfast devotion or dedication) etc. higher and higher Aananda manifests in that Antahkarana. Just as many drops of water together go to make a sea, in the same way all the happinesses or pleasures accruing from Vishayas (objects) have become one with, or have merged in, Aatmaananda (Bliss Absolute of the Self); **in that Absolute Bliss the distinctions of Aananda (Bliss) and Aanandi (the person having or enjoying that Bliss) do not exist whatsoever. Atman Himself is Aananda (Happiness par excellence), as also Aanandi (the Entity full of or ebullient with that Blissful nature) — both rolled into one, so to speak.** Therefore, in the essential nature of Bliss of Atman really there do not exist any special characteristics or distinctions whatsoever.


128. Although Brahman (Atman) is of the essential nature of Sat and of the essential nature of Chit, It (Brahman) is not split up into two distinct categories of Sat and Chit; in the same manner, when Brahman is spoken of as Aananda, it means that It is not a distinct, a separate category or entity by itself other than Sat-Chit nature of essence. Although it is stated in the scriptures that Brahman is both Vijnaana (Intuitive experience or knowledge) and Aananda (Bliss), Brahman's Aananda is not an object for Vijnaana. Some disputants used to say that in Moaksha (Enlightenment, Liberation) Aananda is experienced. But because all disputants have accepted the standpoint that in Paramamukti (the Supreme or final Beatitude) there exists neither a body nor any senses or instruments of knowledge or cognition (Karanas) whatsoever, the statement — “Then (in Self-Realization) one experiences Aananda (Bliss)” — has no meaning whatsoever. Because Atman or Brahman, the Ultimate Reality, is eternally or perennially of the essential nature of Bliss or Aananda, He cannot possibly stand
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apart from Himself to experience Himself. The scriptural statement — "Wherein a second thing is not seen, that state or experience is Bhooma (the Ultimate Reality)" — (Chhaandogya 7-24-1) — which signifies Brahman, confronts those who accept the two special features of Vijnana and Aananda in Brahman. If it is contended that Vijnana and Aananda are mutually exclusive, then it will amount to saying that Aananda is distinct from Brahman of the essential nature of Vijnana, as also that It is not the real essential nature of Aananda. Therefore, Shri Shankaraachaarya has refuted the "Samvedyaananda Vaada" (the doctrine of perceived or cognized Bliss) by elucidating that the scriptural sentence — "Vijnanaamaanandam Brahma", i.e. "Brahman is Vijnanaam (Intuitive experience) as well as Aanandam (Bliss)" — does not teach an Aananda which is distinct from the Self who experiences it objectively as something separate from Himself. Hence, it should be understood (discerned) that for the doctrinaire teaching that — "Brahmaananda (the essential nature of Absolute Bliss of Brahman) is Anubhava-goachara (to be experienced perceptibly or objectively)" — the Mithyaajnaana (misconception), which presumes that Atman is an object for the cognition of 'I' notion, alone is responsible. Here the commentaries (Bhaashyas) by Shri Shankara on Brijhadaaranya 3-9-28 (concluding part) and Chhaandogya 7-24-1 should be completely and exhaustively studied.


129. It may appear to some people that if Aananda (Bliss) is not one to be experienced, then to call It Sukha (happiness) or Aananda (Bliss) is not proper. But there is no rule of law that Sukha should per force be an object for experience. If there were such a rule of law, then for those who do not have the objects of enjoyments happiness should never accrue. But in our workaday world that is not to be seen; on the other hand, it is seen that Jnaanis (Self-Realized souls), who are invariably Sannyasins (monks, ascetics) who have abstained from or discarded all objects of happiness or pleasure, are happy as much as people who are enjoying sweet things like sugar, honey etc. It is in every one's experience that in Sushupti (deep sleep state), despite the fact that therein no divisions or distinctions of Vishayati (subject) and Vishaya (object) whatsoever are found, people are happy. The scriptures are proclaiming that that happiness (which is experienced by every one in deep sleep) is the Paramaananda (supreme Bliss) that people attain. Therefore, it is not wrong to call Atmaswaroopa (the essential nature of the Self) "Aananda" which apparently accrues without the strain or constraint of the mind transforming into two divisions of Vishayati and Vishaya. Besides, it has been affirmed in the scriptures that
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the Aananda (Bliss) that accrues in the deep sleep state is invariably that of Atman alone. We have already in section 127 stated that the happiness (Sukha) that is enjoyed or experienced is produced afresh by the association or contact between the external objects and the senses and is nothing but a “Sukhaabhaasa Vritti”, meaning, a mere concept of the illusory, evanescent happiness which appears to be apart, separate or distinct from oneself.


130. The essence of whatever has been stated in this Chapter is this much: “All that appears to us in our workaday world (empirical sphere) as Sattaasaamaanya (the common genus of existence), Chitsaamaanya (the common genus of consciousness) and Sukhasaamaanya (the common genus of happiness) is verily Aatmaswaroopa (of the essential nature of the Supreme Self) alone. The appearances of the type — Sadvishesha (the particulars or special distinctive features of existence), Chidvishesha (the particulars or special distinctive features of consciousness or knowledge), Sukhavishesha (the particulars or special distinctive features of happiness) are all the phenomena appearing because of the relationship with respective Buddhivritti (mental concept). If one examines this fact from the standpoint of Intuitive experience, then the phenomena of Vishesa (distinctive features or characteristics) do not exist at all. Therefore, Atman is verily Satchidaananda Swaroopa (of the essential nature of Pure Being-Consciousness-Bliss alone per se). He is invariably devoid of particulars or distinctive, special features and is not — from the standpoint of the Ultimate Reality or Intuitive experience — of any common genus either."

XVIII. THE DISTINCTIONS OF JEEVA (SOUL) AND ISHWARA (THE LORD CREATOR)

131. “In the scriptures which are formulated with the prime purport of teaching the unity or non-duality of Atman alone why at all has the essential nature of Jeeva been described? In the Shaareeraka Meemaamsaa Sootras (Brahma Sootras) which are written with a view to determining the prime purport of the Vedanta sentences, Shri Baadaraayana every now and then keeps on saying — 'In this sentence Ishwara (the Lord Creator) is relevant, or is referred to, but the Jeeva (the transmigratory soul), who is separate or distinct from Ishwara, is not relevant or referred to.' When there are no two Atmans or selves at all, why at all has been this division or distinction brought about
by Shri Baadaraayana?" — This doubt is seen to plague the minds of some scholars.

Although Atman is one and one only and non-dual (without anything second to Him), the reason for which the divisions or distinctions of Jeeva and Ishwara have been conceived or imagined in Him is only to adopt or assume for the time being that the Jeeva (the transmigratory soul), who is well-known and familiar as such with every one in our workaday world, exists and then to delineate (teach) Ishwara, who is the really real essence as Pure Being-Consciousness-Bliss of the Jeeva in esse. Because Jeeva is Loakasiddha (familiar and well-known to all the people of the workaday world), the scriptures do not, and need not, at all teach about him as their prime purport; in fact, in order to expound Ishwara (the Ultimate, Absolute, Transcendental Reality) of all existence, the scriptures accept or assume by way of a deliberate superimposition the form or nature of Jeeva; that is all. The Sootrakaara (Shri Baadaraayana) has called Jeeva by the nomenclature of "Itara" (another person) in order to instruct or teach that Jeeva is of a quite different (or variant) nature other than that of Paramaatman (the Supreme Self, the Ultimate Reality of Brahman). But in Paramaatman, who is of the essential nature of perennial Purity, Consciousness and Freedom (Nitya Shuddha Buddha Mukta Swaroopa), apart from His innate nature an alien nature of soulhood (Jeevatwa) is misconceived, just like the lower part of Aakaasha (empty space) is imagined to be polluted and coloured etc. In order to signify that Paramaatman is separate or quite different from this nature (of the Jeeva) the Sootrakaara has stated this in the manner — “He is not Jeeva”; besides, he has also stated that Paramaatman is “Adhika”, meaning, of greater reality or essential nature than that of the Jeeva. In fact, nowhere in the scriptures (Upanishads) or in the Brahma Sootras it has been expounded that — “Jeeva really exists apart or separate from Paramaatman.” Shaareera, Praanabhrit, Praati, Janjhu, Vijnaanaa’ma, Karta, Bhoakta, Kshetrajnaha, Jnaha—all these are the synonymous terms used for the Jeeva (the transmigratory soul).


132. “What are the hallmarks to prove that the scriptures have the prime purport or goal of teaching the unity, non-duality of Atman? Jeevas, it is stated in the scriptures, are born or created by Paramaatman alone, is it not? Even for the Sootrakaara to say that the prime purport lies in enunciating that Jeevas do not exist apart from Paramaatman, what indications or clues are there?” — Thus any one may ask. We have previously in section 119 elucidated that the teaching of the birth or creation of Jeevas in the Upanishads is Gouna
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(of a secondary sense). Further, in the Shrutis (Upanishads) it is stated that if the distinctions (Bhed) between the Jeeva and Parameshwara are believed to be true, it will not be proper; thus it is deprecated and condemned, while the unity or non-duality of Atman is praised; it has also been affirmed that by means of Abhedajnaana (knowledge of the existence of distinctions or differences) between Jeeva and Parameshwara causes Samsaara (transmigratory existence or life) and Bhedajnaana (knowledge of the unity or non-duality of Atman) helps attain Mojaksha (Emancipation, Liberation). The Sootrakaara too has acknowledged this truth in Sootra 1-1-30, which says: "Like Vaamadeva, by virtue of the Shaastradrishti, Indra (the Lord of all deities) has cognized Himself as Paramaatman" (to wit, that Jeevas and Ishwara are one and the same, non-dual); the Sootrakaara has clearly declared in Sootra 4-1-3 that — "One should cognize Paramaatman to be one's own Self (Atman) alone." Therefore, to say that there exist differences in the teachings of the scriptures and the Sootras is not acceptable. It becomes established that their prime purport lies in propounding non-duality of Jeevas and Paramaatman beyond any doubt whatsoever.


133. It is stated in the scriptures that Jeevaatmas (selves) have emerged out of Paramaatman (the Supreme Self), just like the sparks of fire emerge out of fire. In the Bhagavadgeeta it is stated that the Jeevas are "Amsha" (parts) of Paramaatman and the same statement is to be found in the scriptures too. "Because Jeevas are many and are associated with differences or distinctions, the conscious or sentient Jeevas are 'Amshas' of Paramaatman" — such a deduction or conclusion is in consonance with logical devices also. It being so, how can we at all believe that — "Jeeva is Paramaatman"?

Shaastras are "Jnaapakam" (reminders) and not "Kaaraka" (means which produce material results); they teach or signify what exists really (in the ultimate analysis, absolutely), but they never produce anew or afresh what does not exist at all. If it is propounded that — "Just like the sparks of fire, Jeevas emerge out of Paramaatman" — then it will amount to accepting the fact that there exists some kind of change or mutation in non-dual Paramaatman. Consequently, it will have to be accepted per force that because Jeevas, who are parts, have acquired Samsaara, Paramaatman, who is "Sarvagata" (omnipresent, all-pervasive), will also suffer from the Samsaara Duhkha (the miseries of transmigratory life). Therefore, the word "Amsha" does neither mean
that Jeeva is an organic part nor a physical limb (of Paramaatman). The
purport of the illustration is merely to signify that just as the sparks
which emerge out of the fire are invariably of the very essence or nature
of fire alone Jeevas are of the very essence of Pure Being-Conscious-
ness-Bliss of Paramaatman alone. For that reason alone, illustrations
indicating “Pratibimba” (reflections) of the type of “Jalasooryaka”
(the various reflections of the Sun in water contained in several buckets
or vessels) are enumerated in the scriptures; those exponents (spiritual
preceptors), who are well-versed in the Sampradaaaya (traditional, time-
honoured methodology of teaching or propounding Brahma-Aatma
Ekatwa Vidya), have given the illustrations like “Ghataakaasha” etc.
pertaining to the Jeeva. Because the Sootrakaara has expounded
“Ekatwa” (non-duality, identity) of Brahman (Atman) and Jeeva, he also
does not have the prime purport of teaching that Jeeva is actually,
really an “Amsha” alone of Paramaatman. Hence, the doctrinaire
teaching that — “Jeeva is an ‘Avayava’ (limb, organ) or ‘Vikaara’
(mutation, transformation)” — can never be proper, justifiable.


134. Although Paramaatman is invariably and perennially non-dual
alone, the root cause for misconceiving the disparate forms of Jeevas
and Ishwara in Paramaatman is the fundamental relationship or
association invariably with the adjuncts (Upaadhis) of Kaarya Karana
Sanghaata (the conglomeration of functions and the relevant valid
means) which are formulated from the twin phenomena of names and
forms projected or conjured up by Avidya. The empirical differential
transaction of the type — “Ishwara is the ruler or Lord; Jeeva is the
ruled subject” — and the empirical (religious or spiritual) transaction
of the type — “By meditating (Upaasana) on or Intuiting (Jnaana) Ishwara
the Jeeva attains Liberation (Muktii)” — are because of this Upaadhi
(adjuncts of names and forms) mentioned above. Even the deliberate
(hypothetical) superimposition (by the Shastra) of Ishwaratwa
(Lord-hood, Creatorship) on Paramaatman is verily because of this basic
association with the adjuncts of names and forms alone. Although
Aakaasha (space) is one indivisible entity alone, the divisions or
distinctions which, are misconceived in Aakaasha by virtue of the
association or relationship with adjuncts like the earthen pot, pitcher
etc., can be reckoned or discerned to be analogous to the divisions or
distinctions misconceived between Jeevas and Ishwara. When the
unitary Intuitive experience of Atman is cognized (attained), then there
does not exist any distinction whatsoever of the type of Jeeva and
Ishwara in the adjunctless non-dual essential nature of Atman.
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A reconciliation between apparently contradictory statements made in the Shrutis and Smritis — for example, in one particular context the division or distinction of Jeeva and Ishwara is accepted and in another context such a distinction is refuted — can be brought about convincingly on the basis or strength of either an association with these adjuncts or non-association with them, respectively, indeed. Just as apart from an imaginary magician or mystic (Kalpita Maayaaui) a really real great magician or mystic (Paramaartha Maayaaui) exists, we can very well discern that the Upaadhi Kalpita Jeeva (the transmigratory soul who is misconceived because of the association with adjuncts like the body, the mind, the senses, the intellect, the ego) is different from the Nirupaadhika Ishwara (the Lord devoid of any such adjuncts whatsoever).


135. Some people assume that Jeeva, like Ishwara, really exists separately (or independently). Just as it is not proper to say that Ishwara, who is established to exist by the valid means of Shastra, does not exist, similarly to say that — ‘Jeeva whose existence is established by the valid means of perception, inference etc. does not exist’ — is also not proper. This is their opinion.

This contention is not justifiable. For, the physical form of Jeeva is contrived or misconceived by the adjunct of Antahkarana (the inner subtle instrument of the mind or psyche) alone, but Jeevatwa (soulhood), is not perceived to exist independently at all by any one, whosoever he may be. We have before in section 55 refuted the contention that Jeeva is perceptible by the valid means of the senses (Pratyjaksha Pramaana) and inference (Anumaana Pramaana). The Shrutis are proclaiming that apart from Ishwara, who is perennially free, non-dual and omniscient, there does not at all exist any other conscious thing or entity. We have also stated already in section 122 that — “The fact that — ‘The Shrutis and Smritis have eulogised the identity or non-duality of Jeeva and Ishwara, but at the same time they have unequivocally decried or deprecated the distinction or separation of the two’ — is providing a strong support for the spiritual teaching of the unitary or non-dual existence of Atman.” Therefore, it should be determined conclusively that just as a lone magician by virtue of his magical powers (Maayaa) appears as many, the non-dual Atman Himself, because of Avidyaa, appears as of manifold forms.


136. In the doctrines of those people who say that — “The distinction of Jeeva and Ishwara is Aavidya (a product or projection of
The unitary, non-dual existence of Jeeva-Ishwara (as one and the same) is the Ultimate Reality — it amounts to have discarded or neglected the contrary characteristics existing between Jeeva and Ishwara; whereby Ishwara Himself acquires the Samsaartwa (transmigratory existence): in that event, it is tantamount to Ishwara's non-existence alone. On the other hand, in the doctrines of those who say that — "Apart from Ishwara there does not exist any Samsaart" — it amounts to saying that there does not exist any transmigratory life at all, and this too is opposed to the valid means of Pratyaksha (perceptual knowledge), Anumaana (inference) etc. Besides, if the Jeeva, who is the proper, qualified person (Adhikaari) to study and follow Shaastras is himself not existing, then the scriptures which teach about Bandha (Bondage) and Moaksha (Liberation), Dharma (religious tenets or righteous behaviour) etc. become futile. Thus for all these above reasons it becomes evident that the Jeeva's Jeevatwa (soulhood) is really real. Thus some people argue out.

This argument is not proper or justifiable. For, the apparent conception that Jeeva and Ishwara are endowed with disparate qualities or characteristics is itself brought about or projected by Avidya. In the spiritual teachings (Siddhaanta) of Vedantsins who propound that Samsaartwa itself is Aavidyaka there is no scope whatsoever to say that Ishwara begets Samsaartwa. By the 'water' of a mirage which is imagined or misconceived the desert sand does not become slushy. In this philosophical school it is propounded that — "Jeeva, who apparently appears to be a transmigratory soul, is in the ultimate analysis (or in the absolute sense) devoid of all demerits or defects" — but not at all that — "Ishwara is perceived to be endowed with Dharma or Adharma." Besides, Vedantsins do not at all assert that Ishwara, who is established to exist by the Shaastras, does not exist. In view of the fact that Vedantsins have accepted that both Samsaara and Samsaari are Avidyaakalpita (misconceived because of ignorance), and further, as a consequence, they have conceived that until the seeker attains Jnaana (Intuitive experience or Self-Knowledge) Samsaartwa exists, if it is said that — "There is no one qualified or a fit seeker to follow the Shaastras" — then also it is not proper; especially the statement that — "The unitary, non-dual existence is opposed to Pratyaksha Pramaana Anumaana, etc." — is absolutely improper. For, we have previously in section 28 affirmed that the empirical transactions of Pratyaksha, Anumaana etc. are phenomena projected by Avidya.


137. The Jeeva is born and he dies; he performs the Karmas stipulated as duties in the Shaastras; posthumously, he attains Swarga Loaka (Heaven) or Naraka Loaka (Hell) or Janmaantara (rebirths). Thus
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It has been stated in the Shaastras. It is not proper to refute the Jeeva's Kartrutwa and Bhoktrutwa which are established to exist on the strength of the experience of the common run of people, as also the Shaastras. Taarkikas affirm that Samsaari is absolutely real and, apart from the Samsaari, Ishwara exists. Thus the doctrine that — "Atman is non-dual alone absolutely" — is opposed to Tarka also. Now, to people who argue out or raise an objection in this manner there is no need at all to give an answer exclusively.

To the Jeeva both his Janana (birth) and Marana (death) are not perceptible; there is only the empirical dealing of the type — "He gets born or he dies" — by virtue of his association with the body. We have mentioned previously in section 119 that the scriptural statement about the Jeeva's birth is a topic pertaining to Maayika Shristi (delusory or magical creation or birth). Doing or performing Karmas is seen to be in the body, the senses, the mind etc. only; but there is no valid means or proof whatsoever to demonstrate that apart from, or other than, the cause or consequence of "Adhyaasa" (misconception) Atman has in reality (in the absolute sense) any organic relationship with the body, the senses, the mind etc. Although the body is perceptible, because Atman is not perceptible the organic relationship between Atman and the body too is not perceptible. It is also not proper or reasonable also to surmise that Atman begets the body by virtue of his Dharma (merits or righteous deeds) or Adharma (demerits or irreligious actions); for, even before performing an action (Karma) the body is needed. If it is assumed that the fruit or consequence of Karma, performed by the body belonging to the previous birth, is this body of the present birth, even then for that earlier body (of the previous birth) another body belonging to its previous birth and for that body, in turn, the body of its previous birth, so on and so forth — thus a pre-condition arises or is desiderated, with the result nowhere (to wit, absolutely in any one body belonging to a particular birth) embodiedness is established; it becomes "Andhaparampara" (defect of blind faith in a series of regressus ad infinitum) indeed. In the Shaastras too because of the fact that Karmas are stipulated either as injunctions or prohibitions avowedly on the fundamental assumption of the relationship with the body, which in itself is Aavidyaka alone — even by virtue of the valid means of the scriptural texts (Shaastra Pramaana) also the embodiedness for Jeeva can never be established. The question that — "Consequently, because the actions and their respective fruits too are Aavidyaka alone (meaning, delusory) the spiritual teachings by the scriptures (Shaastra Upadesha) too are futile, worthless, is it not?" — cannot be valid: for, only for the benefit of, or for the sake of, ignorant, deluded people (Avidyaavantas) who have believed that the Saadhanas (religious practices) and Phalas (their fruits) are real, the Shaastras teach or instruct Karmas (by way of Karma Upadesha).
Therefore, in the absence of any valid means or proofs whatsoever to establish or confirm that Jeevatwa, of the forms or natures of Kartrutwa or Bhoktrutwa, is absolutely real, the tentative acceptance of Jeevatwa Prateeti (time-honoured, traditional belief in the reality of soulhood) cannot at all be repugnant or harmful to the teaching of non-duality of Atman. Words like Dharmadharmou, Karma, Hetihu, Shareeram, Kshetram, Dehaha, Phalam — are all synonyms.


138. Some disputants may raise an objection of the type — "In the teaching of those people who say that — 'Atman is one, non-dual Reality' — the fruits of the Karmas performed by one person (Jeeva) all the others will have to experience, is it not? If one person attains Jnaana (Self-Knowledge) all the others too will have per force to attain Jnaana, is it not?"

In the first place, we should keep in mind the Vedantic teaching that — “When we accept the non-dual Reality of Atman, because neither any one person’s Karmas nor the other persons (Jeevas) who can experience or enjoy the fruits of the Karmas performed by that one person will exist whatsoever, there is no scope or room for this objection at all.” Besides, because invariably in the state (of duality) wherein — from the empirical, workaday standpoint — Jeevas appear to be many, we have to talk about Karma and Karma Phala, and so, from this empirical standpoint alone we have invariably to provide a tentative but satisfactory solution for the objection.

Just as in the illustrations — viz. although the sky or empty space is one and one only (indivisible), there appear to be many Ghataakaashaas; although the sun is non-dual (one and one only), the reflections of that singular sun in the water contained in several buckets or vessels appear to be many — in the same manner, though Paramaatman is one and non-dual Reality alone, the Jeevas may appear to be many. We have already stated in section 133 that when it is stated — "Jeeva is an Ansha of Paramaatman" — it means that Jeeva is just like the Ghataakaasha and Jalasooryaka (reflections of the sun in the water) alone. Let us now analyse a little more these illustrations. The dust, smoke etc. that are superimposed on one ‘Ghataakaasha’ cannot affect or taint the other ‘Ghataakaasha’. If one Ghataakaasha, by virtue of its association with the adjunct of ‘Ghata’, is born or is destroyed, and similarly by virtue of such an association if it (Ghataakaasha) goes from one place to another or it comes to one place from another place (that means, when the pot moves from one place to another it appears as though the pot-space also moves from one place to another) — the other Ghataakaashaas are not at all born or destroyed, nor do they go or come
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from one place to another. In the same manner, if one Jalasooryaka appears to shake as a result of some particular cause, the remaining Jalasooryakas do not at all shake. In fact, the prime purport of the illustrations of the type of Ghataakasha or Jalasooryaka being mentioned in the authoritative, original (genuine) Vedantic texts is exclusively to clarify the teaching that — "Jeevatwa and Jeevaanekatwa (manifoldness of Jeevas) are both misconceived in, or superimposed upon, the Ultimate Reality of Brahman alone" — and not to teach that really Brahman is split up or divided by any other entity or phenomenon whatsoever, nor to teach that actually (in reality) Brahman has cast Its reflection Aabhaasa. Failing to discern this prime purport of the Vedantic teaching, some protagonists of "Vyaakhyaana Praslhaana" (the methodology of the post-Shankara glossators) have presumed, nay misconceived, the two doctrines of "Avachhedavaada" (the theory of division) and "Pratibimbavaada" (the theory of reflection) and are quarrelling with one another (among themselves). Let it be (and let us ignore their misconceived doctrinaire theories). In the doctrines of the various schools of philosophies like Saankhya (propounded by 'Kapila Rishi), Vaisheshika (propounded by Kanada Rishi) etc. who accept Akalpita Jeevas (souls are not misconceived but real) because Atman is all-pervasive the Karmas and their fruits of one Jeeva may actually accrue to the other Jeevas too. But in the case of Vedantins who accept "Kalpita Jeevas" (Jeevatwa itself to be a misconception) this defect cannot in the least attach itself to their teaching.


139. Yet another doubt which keeps on bothering some seekers is: "The scriptures state that into the created bodies Parameshwara Himself has entered as 'Jeeva'. Further, they teach that — 'Thou art that Parameshwara alone.' It being so, it amounts to saying that Parameshwara Himself, having created the world, got embodied and has become a 'Samsaari' (a transmigratory soul); it is not possible or justifiable to say either that — 'Ishwara, who is independent, has become subservient to, or one controlled by, another; thereby He has become bound' — or that — 'Ishwara, who is omniscient and extremely, absolutely pure, blemishless, has conceived Himself to be a body, which is impure, full of dross.' If Jeeva is himself verily Parameshwara, then he can by himself get rid of his 'Samsaara Bandha' (Bondage of transmigratory life); but that does not seem to be possible. Therefore, the prime purport of the scriptural teachings cannot possibly be the identity or non-duality of Jeeva and Ishwara. In order to get this problem solved completely if we say or think that apart from Jeeva alone Ishwara exists, then there will be refutation of or contradiction to
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the scriptural teaching of ‘Advaita’ (non-duality) of Brahman or Atman. If it is contended that because Jeeva is imagined or misconceived there is no defect in the teaching of Advaita, then how at all can it be proper to say that a misconceived or imagined Jeeva (Kalpita) and Ishwara, who is real and not imagined (Akalpita), are one and the same? It should be accepted either that Jeevatwa (soulhood) is Paramaarth (really real) or that it is not real at all; but how can it be proper to say both?"

A proper and fully satisfactory, convincing solution for this doubt is: If for the word — ‘Jeeva’ — the restricted meaning of ‘Chaitanya’ or Pure Consciousness alone is taken, then Jeeva is verily the Ultimate Reality alone; but in that viewpoint in ‘Jeeva’ there does not exist ‘Jeevatwa’ (soulhood) at all. If Jeeva connotes — ‘One who experiences the miseries of Samsaara; ‘Kinchijnna’ (one who is of limited knowledge or consciousness) and ‘Alpa Shakta’ (one who is having limited power or capacity) — then it will have to be per force accepted that the misery, which appears to be experienced by the Jeeva, is ‘Chidaabhaasa’ (the illusory consciousness), which is in its turn projected by a relationship with the Antahkarana (the inner instrument of the mind) and so it is in reality not experienced by, or affecting, Atman at all. In order to signify or propound this truth alone Vedantins say that — “Jeeva is merely an illusion or a reflection of Paramaatman, just as a reflection seen in a mirror.” When it is discerned from this viewpoint, Jeeva as also the Sukha (happiness) and Duhkha (misery) that accrue to him are all ‘Anriita’ (unreal) indeed. It is quite natural that for an imaginary or misconceived Jeeva there are imaginary or misconceived “Bhoktrsutwa” in keeping with the Sanskrit axiom — “A sacrificial offering fit for a Yaksha (a kind of ghost or spirit).” The statements made in certain scriptural texts that — “Kartrutwa and Bhoktrsutwa are not for Jeeva but for the inner instrument of the mind (Antahkarana) alone” — is meant for the real purport of teaching that the reckoning of (or the present identification with) Kartrutwa and Bhoktrsutwa is a lop-sided, partial viewpoint projected by virtue of the association with an adjunct (Upaadhipakshapadaai) alone, but not at all to propound that in reality there exists any experience or enjoyment of Sukha or Duhkha whatsoever to the Antahkarana (the mind), which is misconceived to exist because of Avidya. From all these reasonings, the two statements, viz. “Jeeva is Paramaatman alone” and “Jeeva is the Avidyaa Kalpita Swaroopa (the misconceived form of Brahman or Atman due to Avidya)” — are not at all mutually contradictory; from different viewpoints or standpoints both are correct (if properly reconciled, using the unique methodology of Adhyayaaroopa Apavaada Njaaya).


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140. We are beginning this Chapter with a view to expounding \textit{Atman}, who is of the essential nature of the Witnessing Consciousness of everything, by the methodology of a deliberation of the \textit{Panchakoas}has (the five sheaths). In \textit{Vedanta} which has acknowledged the non-dual identity of \textit{Jeeva} and \textit{Ishwara}, it is propounded that \textit{Jeeva}, who is a transmigratory soul, is \textit{Kalpita} (misconceived) and his absolutely real, essential nature of being, which is "\textit{Chaitanya Saakshi} (the Witnessing Consciousness), is verily \textit{Ishwara}. Though \textit{Jeevas} appear to be many, because that manifoldness is misconceived or false, it becomes quite clear or evident that there is no danger or harm whatsoever posed to the teaching of the non-dual identity between \textit{Jeeva} and \textit{Ishwara}. But there are no valid means of proving that the \textit{Saakshi Anubhava} (Intuitive experience of the Witnessing Consciousness), which is the substrate for determining that \textit{Jeeva} is \textit{Kalpita}, is one and one only. Some people have raised a doubt of the type — "If \textit{Saakshi} (the Witnessing Consciousness) is one and non-dual Reality, how is it that the happiness and misery of one particular \textit{Jeeva} is not illumined or cognized by the \textit{Saakshi} of another \textit{Jeeva}?" — and they have consequently formulated the wrong doctrine of — "The \textit{Jeeva-Saakshis} (the Witnessing Consciousnesses of \textit{Jeevas}) are many; and \textit{Ishwara-Saakshi} (the Witnessing Consciousness of \textit{Ishwara}) is quite different or separate from the manifold \textit{Jeeva-Saakshis}."

But because they have forgotten the real essential nature of \textit{Saakshitya}, this worthless (perilous) misconception has been formulated by such half-boiled, pseudo Vedantins. It is not proper or justifiable to establish or determine by means of \textit{Anumaana} a doctrinaire teaching in the manner — "\textit{Saakshi} must be one; or \textit{Saakshis} must be many." The word, "\textit{Saakshi}”, means "\textit{Aatma Chaitanya}" (the Pure Being-Consciousness of the Self) which illumines or helps cognize even the \textit{Pramaatru} (the waking cognizer). How at all can the characteristics like number (manifoldness) or the distinctions of quality and quantity etc. which invariably are the categories pertaining to \textit{Prameya} (the cognized objects or phenomena) be found in that \textit{Chaitanya}? Even while we imagine or conceive that — "For each body there must be one \textit{Saakshi}" — necessarily and involuntarily the \textit{Pramaatru}, the waking cognizer, who thus imagines or conceives those manifold \textit{Saakshis} is directly and Intuitively illuminated by a distinct subtle Consciousness (\textit{Chaitanya}) and that Absolute Intuitive Consciousness alone is the really real \textit{Saakshi per se}. In truth, in the \textit{Saakshya} (the witnessed phenomena) alone, which are illumined by the \textit{Saakshi}, categories like space and time are included or subsumed; and without space and time,
numbers cannot exist or come into the reckoning. Therefore, manifoldness invariably pertains to *Saakshya* and never it concerns *Saakshi*. Because the "*Jeeva-Saakshya*" is really our *Atman* alone, the "*Iswara-Saakshi*", which is imagined (conjectured) to exist separately or distinctly apart from that *Jeeva-Saakshi* becomes automatically "*Anaatman*" alone. Further, *Saakshi Naanaatwa* (the doctrine of manifold Witnessing Principles) is opposed to *Yukti* and this teaching is not expounded in any of the *Shrutis* at all. This topic has been once discussed previously in section 85. The above doctrine is also contrary to the scriptural teaching which proclaims that — "*Iswara* is the non-dual *Saakshi Chaitanya*, devoid of any qualities or characteristics, which exists as the one and only Reality in each and every *Jeeva*." Therefore, because *Jeevas* are, like many *Chataakaashas* and *Soorya Pratibimbas*, the illusory forms of *Chit* (Pure Consciousness) or *Chidaabhaasa Roopa* alone and those illusory forms are projected or conjured up by *Avidya*, the *Samsaara* which is related to that illusion is also *Aavidyaka*. It means that *Samsaara* is a delusory (illusory) misconception; it does not at all taint or touch *Parameshwara*, who is of the essential nature of the Witnessing Consciousness. To such spiritual teachings of *Advatta* Vedantins there cannot possibly be any objections whatsoever.

1. Up. Sa. Pr. 3-1. p. 84.  

141. Yet, there is every scope for a doubt of the following type to raise its head in the minds of some people: "Because *Saakshi* is seeing (or objectifying) the *Pramaatru* (the 'I' notion), just as the *Pramaatru* is separate from the *Prameya*, *Saakshi* can be reckoned to be separate from all objectified phenomena, like the *Pramaatru*, the *Pramaana* and the *Prameya*. But there is no necessity or rule of law to assume that just because *Pramaatru* is distinct from the body, the senses, the mind and the intellect, both the *Pramaatru* (the subject), on the one hand, and the body, the senses, and mind etc. (the objects), on the other, are false or unreal. For, the body, the senses etc. are established to exist on the strength of the valid means of *Pratyaksha*, *Anumaana* etc. Therefore, it is quite reasonable to assume that *Pramaatru* and his adjuncts (*Upaadhis*) like the body, the senses etc. are really existing, just as till the pots, pitchers etc. are there the pot-space, the pitcher-space etc. also are real; or till the adjuncts like the water in the various buckets or vessels are there the reflections in the water contained in those vessels are real only. It will also be reasonable in keeping with every one's experience that because of the reason that apart from, and external to, our body, senses, mind and intellect, the elements like the earth, the air, the fire etc. are also existing, they too are really existing.
If all these are real, then it will never be possible to assert that Saakshti is in truth the non-dual Paramaatman at all?"

But we have previously mentioned in section 28 that unless and until the nature or characteristics of Upaadhis (adjuncts) like the body, the senses, the mind and the intellect are misconceived to be one's own, Atman cannot be assumed to be a Pramaatru (the cognizer of the waking). Therefore, by virtue of His own innate essential and real nature, Atman is not at all a Pramaatru, nor is He a Kartru or a Bhoktru. Had it been true that the Pramaatru were really of the essential nature of (an independent) cognizer alone, then the Shruts would not have taught or expounded in the manner — "You are, in truth, Ishwara" — and — "One who knows or Intuits Brahman becomes [one with] Brahman alone" — with all reverence and sanctity. For a being of the innate, essential nature of Pramaatru to give up that intrinsic real nature and further to get transformed into the essential, innate and real nature of Paramaatman it is not at all possible. We have previously in section 137 stated that the body, the senses, etc. are not really associated with Atman. Besides, there is no valid proof whatsoever to establish that the phenomena like the body, the senses etc. really exist. When questioned — from the standpoint of our workaday world experience — as to what are the Pramaanas for cognizing the existence of the body, the people generally explain away saying that our senses alone are Pramaanas; if questioned as to what proof or evidence is there to say or establish the fact that the senses exist, they will further explain away saying that the mind knowing or cognizing as such is the proof. Further, when questioned as to what proof is there to determine that the mind exists, they will again explain away saying that — "My experience alone is the valid means of proof". Therefore, barring this "experience" (Anubhava) of the Paraagdri.shiti (extroverted outlook or viewpoint) to affirm or prove that the phenomena like the body, the senses, the mind, the intellect etc. do really exist, there are no valid means or evidences whatsoever. For, unless and until the organic conglomeration of the body, the senses, the mind etc. is misconceived to be T' the Pramaatrutuva (cognizership) does not come into the picture or into the reckoning; unless and until we acknowledge the empirical fact that Pramaatrutuva is real we cannot reasonably, plausibly explain away saying that — "The body, the senses etc. are perceived merely by our empirical experiences (consciousness)." In the Shruts it has been affirmed that Atman does not at all possess (the adjuncts of) the body, the senses etc. In Vedantic parlance the Saakshidrishti (the Absolute, Transcendental viewpoint of the Witnessing Consciousness) is called "Pratyagdridrishti" (the introverted, introspective viewpoint) and the empirical viewpoint of the cognizer T' is called "Paraagdridrishti" (the extroverted, mundane viewpoint). The fact that — "This latter
Paraagdrishti is ‘Aavidyaka’ (a projection caused by Avidya)” — has been mentioned by us previously in section 83.


142. The “Adhyaaraopa Apavaada Nyaaya” utilized in the “Taittireeya Upanishad” with the prime purport of enabling the seeker to get rid of or rescind, stage by stage, the “Aatma Buddhi” (the innate deep-seated identification) with the body, the senses, the mind etc. is called “Panchakoasha Viveka” (Intuitive deliberation of the five sheaths). Man, by dint of his natural Avidya, is cognizing his body, which is composed entirely of the essence of the food that he takes in (Annarasamaya), itself to be “Atman” indeed. But, in order to teach that this body is nothing but Aanaatman (not-self), the scriptural text expounds by a deliberate superimposition of assuming the Praana (the vital breath) alone which is inner or subtler than the physical body and is of the form of five Vriltis (functions) as Atman; the scripture then ‘rescinds’ the earlier superimposition of the Annamayakoasha (the physical body) by preaching that it is Atman’s mere body alone. The body really does not exist apart or different from Praana, which is predominantly of a dynamic, sentient nature; for, just as an earthen pot is pervaded everywhere by clay alone, the physical sheath, which is full of the essence of the food one consumes (Annamayakoasha), is thus full of or pervaded by Praana alone. Therefore, just as the earthen pot is really nothing but clay and clay alone in and through, the whole of the physical body (or sheath) is nothing but Praana (Praanamaya). In the same manner, apart from the various mental concepts or thought forms Praana too does not exist; hence the Praanamayakoasha (the vital force sheath) is really the Atman alone called “Manoamaya” (which is full of or pervaded by Manas, the mind). But if examined more incisively with the help of Intuitive experience, even in this subtler sheath called Manoamayakoasha, the apparent identification as one’s own being (Aatmatwa) is “Adhyaaroopita” (superimposed or misconceived) indeed and it is not really Atman at all; in fact, it is full of or pervaded by an Aatmatwa called “Vijnanamaya” (of the essence of intelligence or cognitive, reasoning faculty) alone. That “Vijnanamaya” also is a sheath alone; for, it is not apart or separate from the Atman of the essential nature of Aananda (the happiness), which has enveloped or pervaded it. This “Aanandamaya” too is not Atman (of the essential nature of Pure Being-Consciousness-Bliss) in its distinctively (Visheshha) form (Roopa) with its special characteristics; because in and through that sheath, all over, Aanandasaamaanya (the genus of Bliss or happiness par excellence) alone is pervading, that Bliss Absolute or Transcendental alone is the really real Atman indeed.
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Here although the seeker (Jijnaasu) goes on conceiving the Annamaya, the Praanamaya, the Manoamaya, the Vijnanaamaya and the Aanandamaya Koashas (sheaths), stage by stage, to be Atman, in truth they are not the real Atman, of the essential nature of Pure Being-Consciousness-Bliss at all; they are indeed the sheaths of Atman which have pervaded one another in that order. Just as the hard leather sheath of a sword cover it up, these sheaths cover up the Self, as it were, and create the delusion that they themselves are Atman. Our physical body which is Annamaya is in fact a part of the external gross materialistic world. Praanamayakoasha is a part of the Samasti (the macrocosmic) Vaayu (air or atmosphere), which is of the nature of dynamism (Kriyaatmaka); because of this adjunct of this sheath, we are called Praan (a living creature). Manoamaya is a part of the macrocosmic (Samasti) Mind (Manas), which is of the essence of thought constructs or concepts as taught or expounded in the Vedas (scriptural texts); because of this adjunct we are called “Mantru” (one who ratiocinates or Intuitively reasons out). Vijnanaamaya is a part of the macrocosmic Intellect (Buddhi) which has the essential nature of determining the purport of the scriptural teachings and getting complete certitude or sense of conviction and performing Karma stipulated in the Vedic texts; because of our association with this adjunct of Vijnana (the intellect) alone we are called “Jnaatru” (a knower), Kartru (an agent of action). In the same manner, Aanandamaya is the adjunct (Upaadhi) for our Bhoktrutwa (enjoyership). This is a part of the macrocosmic adjunct of the enjoyer who enjoys the fruits of Karmas and Upaasanas. Thus without reckoning that all the five sheaths from Annamaya to Aanandamaya are the adjuncts of Atman we invariably mix up or blend them with Atman, of the essential nature of Saakshi Chaitanya and are totally deluded by the misconception (Bhraanti) that those adjuncts themselves are the real Atman. Because our real Atman, who is the substrate for everything, is devoid of all special characteristics like Sukha (happiness) and Duhkha (misery), He is verily of the essential nature of Aananda (Bliss par excellence), without any special characteristics whatsoever. Because of the final goal or purport of this Aananda alone all the empirical transactions or functions of the Karana (instruments of action like the senses, the mind, memory and intellect) of all creatures (Praanis) are being carried out; as a consequence of that action alone happiness is accruing. It is explained in the Taittireeya Upanishad that if we discern (Intuitively cognize) Atman, who is all-pervasive (Sarvaantara) and Witnessing Consciousness of everything (Sarvasaakshii), as also devoid of any special characteristics whatsoever and of the very essence of Bliss Absolute (Aanandaswaroopa) in the orderly manner as stated above, then we Intuit that — “Atman does not
have any body, senses, etc. whatsoever, nor any relationship with the five primordial elements (*Panchabhootas*) — and then ridding ourselves of any fear whatsoever of *Samsara* we will get fully established in our essential nature of Pure Being-Consciousness-Bliss *per se* indeed and that is, in truth, the goal, the *sumnum bonum* of all human effort or endeavour.


143. It has been stated in the *Taittireeya Upanishad* that for the *Annamaya* the *Praanamaya* sheath is the *Atman*; for the *Praanamaya the Manoamaya* is the *Atman*; for the *Manoamaya the Vijnaanamaya* is the *Atman*; and for the *Vijnaanamaya the Aanandamaya* is the *Atman*. Further, for each one of these *Atmans* — just as in the case of *Annamaya* it has been stated that they have left and right sides, a central part and a hind part or tail which is said to be 'Pratishtha Roopa' (of the nature of a substrate) — in that same manner it has been stated that each of the five *Atmans* has limbs. Therefore, when seen perfunctorily it strikes to our minds that these sheaths really are existing, one within another.

But this conception is not proper. For, when one among these five sheaths is cognized or Intuited as *Atman*, one does not have any *Aatmabuddhi* (the innate identification) with the rest of the sheaths. To say that one person has many *Atmans* (selves), each of which is of the essence of his Pure Being-Consciousness-Bliss is a statement without any meaning at all. Therefore, the *Upanishad* begins with the *Annamaya* sheath which is quite familiar and well-known to all of us, and just as one points out the moon as being above the branch of a nearby tree, the scripture points out the other sheaths like *Praanamaya, Manoamaya* sheaths. Because we have an innate identification (*Aatmabuddhi*) with each one of these five sheaths at different states or conditions, just as people, who wish to point out a very small or minute star called "Arundhati", first of all point out a grossly visible star nearby calling it by that very name of "Arundhati" and later on (i.e. when that gross star is easily perceived by the other person) they clarify in the manner — "Near that first gross star alone you can perceive that 'Arundhati' star existing" — in the same manner the scripture keeps on pointing out the five sheaths up to *Aanandamaya*, saying that each one of them is our *Atman*, one after another, in the beginning, but finally it teaches that the really real *Saakshi* (the Witnessing Consciousness) for all the five sheaths is *Paramaatman* alone. For that reason alone, it has been stated
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negatively that — "In Paramaatman there does not exist any kind of special features or characteristics whatsoever."


144. In the methodology of Pancha Koasha Viveka enunciated in the Talettireeya Upanishad with regard to the teaching — "That Entity which is innermost to all other things is Atman" — the topic — 'whether that Atman is Savishesha (endowed with special characteristics) or Nirvishesha (devoid of any special characteristics)' — is one which deserves a good deal of consideration. While teaching that from Manoamaya to Aanandamaya sheaths the latter sheath is the inner Atman to the former sheath, it should be discerned that after preaching about the Aanandamaya sheath another inner Atman has not been taught. (At this stage further such teaching of the existence of yet another inner Atman is stopped). In the Phala Shruti (the scriptural statement pertaining to the fruit or benefit accruing from such deliberation) it is stated that the seeker begins his deliberation of the Aanandamaya sheath and this teaching is abruptly rounded up with the statement — "With that alone he attains Brahma Praapti (Self-Realization)." Therefore, here in this context Aanandamaya itself is taught to be Brahman; the scriptural statement that — "Satyam Jnaanam Anantam Brahmaa" — meaning, "Brahman is the Reality; It is Consciousness; It is Eternity" — which is mentioned at the beginning, is nothing but this "Aanandamaya" — Thus one particular Vrittikaara (a commentator) had expressed his opinion while interpreting the scriptural statement.

However, this opinion or interpretation is not correct or proper. For, it has been taught that for Aanandamaya Atman the Ultimate Reality of Brahman (Saakshi Chaitanya) alone is the "Putchha" (the tail) — meaning, the essence of Being or the substrate; and in a specific manner and quite separately too it has been taught that beyond the Aanandamaya sheath Brahman exists (as the Ultimate Reality); further, it has been taught that it is Atman of the essence of Bliss (Aananda Roopa) also in Talettireeya Upanishad 2-5. Because of the reason that after the deliberation on Aanandamaya Atman, without concluding the topic of the description of the Aanandamaya sheath the scripture states that — "If one believes or thinks that Brahman is Asat (unreal or false), then he (the thinker) himself will become unreal or false" — and it becomes quite evident that this scriptural statement is made keeping in mind the prime purport that the common run of people who are ignorant (of the Ultimate Reality of Atman or Brahman) may have a doubt that because Brahman is Nirvishesha, it must be a non-existing...
thing. Because *Aanandamaya* sheath is universally known and is quite familiar to all the people to be associated with parts full of *Priya, Moada, Pramoda* etc. (Section 127), there cannot be possibly any room or scope for any doubt of the type — "Is there a thing like that (an *Aanandamaya* sheath) or not?" — to raise its head at all. It is also stated in the scriptures that *Brahman*, after creating the effects from *Aakaasha, Vaayu* etc. up to *Annamaya*, it entered into all these, and further the scriptures state that if that *Brahman*, which is lodged in the cave of the heart (*Hridaya Guha*), is Intuited or cognized, then one attains the *Parama Purushaartha* (the prime purport or goal of human existence). Because it has been stated in the scriptures that — "Beginning with *Annamaya, Praanamaya* etc. up to *Aanandamaya* these *Atmans* (both the physical and the psychic) are sublated and in the process the seeker attains a highly sublimated state; in other words, he destroys (or gets rid of) his *Avidya* and Intuits the essential nature of the Ultimate Reality as Pure Being-Consciousness-Bliss" — it becomes established without giving room for any doubt that these five sheaths have been exemplified in order to help attain Self-Knowledge (Brahma Jnaana) alone. Shri Shankara has determined that because (immediately after the instruction about these five sheaths) in the *Phala Shruti* that follows it is taught about the Ultimate, Absolute Reality of *Brahman* alone as being beyond the ken of words (speech) and the mind, only *Brahman* devoid of any special features or characteristics is propounded.


**XX. DELIBERATION ON THE THREE STATES OF CONSCIOUSNESS (AVASTHAATRAYA VIVEKA)**

145. In the previous Chapter we have indicated that by means of logical dissertation of the type — "Because the *Saakshi* is beyond the ken of time and space, there cannot possibly be any categories or phenomena like plurality or numbers, special features, relationships etc. in *Brahman* or *Atman* and hence the five sheaths which are the witnessed phenomena are not separate or different from the *Saakshi*; because the extroverted outlook or viewpoint (*Paraagdritishti*) is the root cause for conceiving or perceiving the body, the senses, the mind etc. in that *Brahman* or *Atman* who is the Witnessing Consciousness, if one Intuits with the help of *Pratijagdritishti* (Absolute or Transcendental viewpoint of the Intuitive experience), then these adjuncts of the body, the senses, the mind etc. do not exist at all." And for the predominance
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of the Paraagdrishti in all the people the innate identification with the waking state alone is the birth place; hence, in Vedantic philosophy the deliberation on the three states of Consciousness called "Avasthaatraaya Viveka" is taught in order to inculcate in the seekers the Pratyagdrishti (Saakshi Anubhava Drishti). This Avasthaatraaya Vichaara or Viveka is useful in first (deliberately) superimposing (i.e. Adhyaaroapa) on Atman the Saakashitwa (Witnesshood of the three states of Consciousness) and then rescinding (Apavaada) from Him the innate association with the world of duality (Saprapanchatwa).

In this methodology based on Intuitive deliberation the first and foremost step is that the aspirant for the attainment of Self-Knowledge (Aatma Jnaana, Moaksha Swaroopa Praapti) should fully cognize or Intuit the truth (or veracity of the teaching) that each one of the three states of Consciousness, viz. the waking, the dream and the deep sleep, are witnessed by him and him alone. To wit, by means of the Pratyabhijna (Intuitive recognition), that the 'I' that witnessed the dream state is itself 'awake' (as real as the waking 'I'); the seeker should cognize that his Swaroopa (essential nature of Atman) is, in truth, quite different and of a queer nature or essence; he should Intuit that his Swaroopa is more pervasive or comprehensive than both the waking and the dream states of Consciousness and is Shuddha (pure or devoid of any encrustations of duality) and is Adviteeya (non-dual, Absolute, Transcendental).


146. In order to cognize that the innate identification with the waking state consciousness alone is the root cause for Paraagdrishti, it is quite necessary for us to reckon as to how, with the innate natural identification with the waking state consciousness, the essential nature of Atman appears to us naturally (empirically). To reckon that Jeevas, being or existing in the world, keep on experiencing the waking, the dream and the deep sleep states one after another is in itself the essential nature of the innate identification with the waking state consciousness.

On the other hand, to cognize that — "My body, senses, mind etc. which appear in the waking, the entire universe which is seen or perceived by the valid means of Pratyaksha (perception), Anumaana (inference) etc. and all the Jeevas who are of the nature of Kartrus (agents of action) and Bhoktrus (enjoyers) and who are existing in that universe — are all bound up with or confined to the waking state alone. I am not really an embodied soul; I am indeed of the essential nature of Pure Being-Consciousness (Shuddha Chaitanya) which illumines the whole world and I am of the form of both the external (Baahyya) and internal (Aadhyaatmika) experiences that appear in the waking state"
— is the viewpoint which is beyond the waking state. The essential nature of \textit{Atman} which is innately identified with the body, the senses, the mind etc. which appear in the waking state is called \textit{Shaareera}, \textit{Pindaatman}, \textit{Jeeva}, \textit{Vijnaanaatman}, \textit{Kartru-Bhoktru}. Examining (Intuitively) with the \textit{Shaastradrtshtl} (the viewpoint recommended or suggested by the scriptures) our waking state, that nature or form which is described above (In other words) the essential nature of Pure Being-Consciousness of \textit{Atman} which is eternally illumining the entire universe (\textit{Samasti Prapancha}) within the waking state is called \textit{Viraat} or \textit{Vaishwaanara}.

In order to signify or expound this truth, in the \textit{Maandookya Upanishad} this \textit{Vaishwaanara} has been described as follows: "This \textit{Atman} has extroverted cognition, seven \textit{Ang':11s} (organic parts) like \textit{Dyuloaka} (the stellar region) etc., 19 doorways of knowledge or cognition of the form of ten senses, five vital forces, four aspects (functions) of \textit{Antahkarana} (the inner instrument), enjoyment of gross objects." However, this is one \textit{Paada} (footprint) alone of \textit{Atman} and this is not the description of the essential or real nature of \textit{Alman} as He is, \textit{in esse}.


147. The common people quite naturally assume that in the dream state by virtue of the latent impressions of the waking state (\textit{Vaasanas}) an imaginary world appears to the mind alone; and that world appears only to, or exclusively to, the dreamer alone (i.e. the individual who sees the dream), but in the waking state everyone sees or perceives a real world through his senses and in that real world there appear many \textit{Kartrus} and \textit{Bhoktrus}. For this presumption the root cause is one's innate or deep-seated identification with the waking consciousness alone. If we examine (Intuitively) from the viewpoint of the \textit{Shaastra} or \textit{Vedantic} scriptures, there is not an iota of difference whatsoever between the waking experience and the dream experience. To wit, in the dream too, just like the waking, the external (\textit{Baahya}) and the internal (\textit{Aadhyaatmi1ca}) worlds appear; that entire world, just like the entire waking world, is being illumined by \textit{Atman} alone. Therefore, the assumption that the waking world alone, exclusively, is real is a deduction or judgment of the empirical, workaday viewpoint \textit{Vyaavahaarika Drishti} backed up by (or based upon) the innate, deep-seated identification with the waking experience; but this judgment alone is not the final one. Even if we accept the contention that the dream appears because of the latent impressions (\textit{Vaasanas}) of the waking experiences, since these two states are not existing apart from \textit{Atman} as well as one state is experienced to have left off the other, both are rendered unreal, false. To assume, that the dream world appears
Individually to the respective dreamer alone while the waking world especially is real and natural to many people, there is no sustaining valid means or proof whatsoever. Just as the world of the dream appears only or exclusively to the person who sees the dream, the world of the waking state also is seen by one who is awake alone. In the deep sleep state both these worlds equally (and completely) become non-existent. The Atman who witnesses (in other words, who pervades and illumines) the dream world is called Tatjasa or Hiranyagarbha. The manner in which this Tatjasa is described in the Maandookya Upanishad is: “This Atman has (is endowed with) the internal cognition; He has seven Angas (limbs) like the Dyuloaka, i.e. the stellar region, as the head, sun and moon as the eyes etc. and 19 cognitive or perceptual doorways of the forms of the ten senses, five vital forces (Praanas) and four aspects or functions of the inner instrument of the Mind (Antahkaranal; He enjoys the subtle objects of the dream world.” He is the second Paada (footprint) of Atman; but this is not the real, self-established, non-dual and essential nature of Atman.


148. For the Vedantins to affirm that there does not exist any difference whatsoever between the waking and the dream, there are, in the main, two reasons. First, the objects or phenomena that appear in the waking are akin to the dream objects or phenomena; secondly, the Advaita Jnaana (the non-dual Intuitive experience, Pure and Absolute) does not exist in both these states. Because when the non-dual, Transcendental Intuitive experience is attained one gets convinced that both these waking and dream experiences are Mithyaa (false, unreal), Vedantins call both these experiences “dream” alone; at the time or moment of its occurrence appearing to be as real as the waking and (when the individual self wakes up really) it appearing to be a false appearance — alone is the nature of a dream and hence to say that both these states are “dreams” is quite reasonable or justifiable indeed.


149. The Buddhists too propound that the waking and the dream states are equal to each other. For that reason, they imagine on the basis of Anumaana (inference) that — “Just as for the percepts (Pratyaya) of the dream state there do not exist any external objects whatsoever, for the percepts of the waking state too there do not exist
any external objects at all." Anyhow, it is their conclusion that because
the object for the Vijnana (intellect) does not exist apart from or
external to it, Vijnana itself is the Tattwa (the Reality). But in their
doctrines because no "Kootastha Chaitanya" (immutable, steadfast
Absolute Consciousness) whatsoever — which is the common denomi-
nator for both the states and which witnesses both the waking and the
dream states — is accepted, their doctrine mentioned above (merely
based on equality of the two states) does not hold water (i.e. it cannot be
sustained). Apart from this, when the waking state comes, the dream
state becomes falsified or sublated (Baadhita) and in the same way, the
objection arises to the effect — "In which state does the waking state
also gets falsified or sublated?" — but to this objection there is no
satisfactory or convincing answer in their philosophy. Neither is there
any satisfactory solution to the question — "We remember the dream
experience in the waking state and then we say that dream experience
is false or unreal; in the same manner, assuming that the waking
experience too is a state which has occurred in a previous state in
which particular state do we determine or ascertain its Mithyaatwa
(unreality or falsity)?" On the basis of the solitary reason that the
comparison of the dream experience with the waking experience can be
adduced in this context, the inference that is deduced or drawn to the
effect — "The waking objects do not really exist" — is also not proper
and justifiable. (In fact, it looks to be far-fetched). For the same reason,
the contention forwarded or the deduction arrived at merely on the
strength of the reason or inference that — "Between the percepts like
Maayaa (magic), the mirage water, the celestial citadel (Gandharva
Nagar) etc. and the percepts of the waking state there exists an exact
comparison or analogy and hence there are no real external objects for
the waking percepts" — is not proper at all. Can any one say that —
"Just like fire, mist or dew also is an object of perception and hence
mist also is hot"? But in the case of Vedantins because they Intuit, from
the viewpoint of Self-Knowledge, that both these states are “dream”
alone, in their spiritual teachings it can well be asserted that — "The
Sattyaatwa (the so-called or apparent reality) of the waking experience is
falsified or sublated (Baadhita)” — and that is fully justifiable; for, in
Atman alone both the waking and the dream states are misconceived
(i.e. both of them are superimposed on Atman).

16. -do-

150. There is no rule of law whatsoever that Atman should always be
appearing to be associated with or related to the world of duality either
of the waking or of the dream. For, in the deep sleep state the entire
world of duality is merged in Atman alone; the distinct knowledges of
The various objects which appear in the world have also become one with Atman; besides, none of the pleasures born out of the external objects exists whatsoever therein and they are all one with Aananda (Absolute Bliss) of the essence of Atman. In that state Atman is devoid of any taint of Samsara. For this reason alone, it has been affirmed in the Chhaandogya Upanishad that Jeeva in that state has become one with Brahman, which is of the essential nature of Sat (Absolute Being or Existence); in the Brihadaaranyaka Upanishad it has been propounded that Jeeva has embraced Praajna (the Self of the essence of Absolute Being-Consciousness); in Maandookya Upanishad it has been vividly described that therein Jeevatman has become Ekeebhota (non-dual, unitary, one and one absolutely); Prajnaanaghana (the very embodiment or essence of Absolute Consciousness); Aanandamaya (full of, abounding in Bliss). Such a nature of Absolute, Transcendental (i.e. beyond the ken of time-space-causation concepts or categories) Consciousness is called Praajna. The essential nature of the Sushuptaatman (the Atman of the deep sleep state) is the third Paada of Alman: but it is not the really real essential nature of Atman.


151. There is a possibility on our part of having (or entertaining) two kinds of misconceptions with regard to the deep sleep experience: (a) ‘That while in deep sleep there being (existing) nothing therein, as soon as we are awake there appears a variegated world and hence in the deep sleep state the entire world of duality remains in a seed form’ is one misconception; (b) that ‘because in deep sleep both the experiences of ‘I’ and ‘the others’ do not exist therein at that moment even the essential nature of Atman too should be accepted as not to exist’ is the other misconception. The first opinion is proper or reasonable only from the waking viewpoint or standpoint; for that reason alone it is described in the scriptural texts that both the Sushuptaatman and the Atman who is of the nature of unmanifested seed form of the world (Aavyaakrita Jagadaatma) are one and the same, as also that Sushuptaatman is verily Parameshwara (the Supreme Lord) who is the creator of the world alone. But we have previously explained in section 105 that even conceiving or imagining this state of seed form is by virtue of misconception alone. That in deep sleep there does not exist any particular or distinctive knowledge or cognition is true indeed; but it is not proper or justifiable to say that the Chaitanya, which is the essential nature of Atman, also does not exist in deep sleep. For, therein the Intuitive experience of the type — “I did not cognize or know a second thing or object” — alone exists but not the experience of the type — “I too am not existing” — at all. It is true that therein the particular or distinctive
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cognition of the type — 'I', 'this', 'they' etc. — does not exist; but the reason for that is: The entire world of duality which has divided itself into its various categories — like the Antahkarana (the inner instrument of the mind), the senses and the objects — has become one with (or merged into) Paramaatman — alone and not that there was no existence of Atman at all.

23. Ch. Bh. 6-2-1. pp. 413, 414.

152. The deep sleep state (or experience) can be viewed from two standpoints. If it is compared with the waking experience and the dream experience, what exists (or what is experienced by us) in deep sleep becomes "Beejaatman" (the Self of the seed form which is the root cause for the world). From this standpoint alone it has been stated in the Upanishadic lore, that — "Jeeva (the transmigratory soul) becomes one with Brahman, the Ultimate Reality, in the deep sleep state"; as also, that — "From that Brahman the entire universe of duality comprising Praana etc. is born in the waking state." But, when viewed from the Paramaartha Drishti (the standpoint of the Intuitive experience of Absolute Being-Consciousness of Atman) it becomes evident that — "Jeeva is not a Jeeva at all; there is no moment of time whatsoever when he has not merged in and become one with Brahman (meaning, there are no distinctions of duality whatsoever and his essential nature is eternally unitary, non-dual Being-Consciousness-Bliss of Brahman or Atman indeed)." Because of the reason that in the waking and the dream states, associated with adjuncts, Atman appears as though having a different Jeeva Roopa (the form of a soul), it has been preached in the scriptures that in the deep sleep state Jeeva has merged in and become one with Sadroopa Brahman. When Intuitively viewed or cognized from this Absolute standpoint, Sushupti is not Sushupti (i.e. a state) at all; besides, Avasthaatraya (the three states of Consciousness) are merely Adhyaaroapita (superimposed upon, or misconceived in, Atman alone) and not that these three phenomena are Paramaartha (absolutely, really real). For that reason alone, the scripture states: "All these three states of Consciousness are dreams". When Avasthaatraya are assumed to be 'real' from the Adhyaaroopa Drishti, we (Vedantins) say that in the deep sleep state there is an absence of the world of duality (Nishprapanchatwa) and in the waking and the dream states there is association with the world of duality (Saprapanchatwa); further, our statement that — "In Sushupti Jeeva does not cognize anything (any object or phenomenon) whatsoever, while in the waking and the dream states he cognizes duality" — is made from this Adhyaaroopa Drishti alone. But when Sushupti experience is Intuitively cognized purely from the Sushupti Drishti (Intuitive experience of deep sleep
Deliberation on the Three States of Consciousness

in esse — meaning, unrelated to the waking or the dream experience but Intuitively), then Atman, devoid of the world of duality (Nishprapanchal), alone exists. Because that Atman does not have, or is associated whatsoever with, any of these three Avasthas (states of Consciousness), He is totally different (Vilakshana) from the above mentioned "superimposed" or "misconceived" forms of Vaishwaanara, Taijasa and Praajna and is said to be Tureeya (meaning, the fourth one). When compared to or related to those three states, Atman is the fourth. Because in this Paramaartha Roopa which is said to be the fourth comparatively, there does not exist any distinctive, special characteristics whatsoever. It has been described in the scriptures (Upnishads) negatively by the exclusive and extra-ordinary methodology of sublating or negating all forms or phenomena which can possibly be imagined or conceived in the three states of Consciousness.

29. Su. Bh. 3-2-34. p. 637.
34. Ma. Bh. 7. p. 211.

153. In order to help Intuit that the distinctive or special characteristics of the forms of the three states of Consciousness do not exist whatsoever in Atman, the determination of the meaning and purport of Aumkaara has been made in the Maandookya Upashanad. Aumkaara, Brahman, Atman — all these three are the names of one and the same Tattwa (Reality). In that Upashanad it has been propounded that — "In the waking and in the dream the world of duality is appearing; in the deep sleep state the world of duality exists in a seed form; this world of duality appears to exist in Atman as a result of misconception due to Avidya (Avidyaakalpita); further, when viewed from the Intuitive Absolute standpoint (Paramaartha Drishti) Atman is Prapancha Upashan (the substrate in which the world of duality has lapsed, merged or become extinct. In other words, Atman is devoid of the world of duality). Atman has become Shiva (an embodiment of auspiciousness, prosperity and Beatitude), as also Advaita (non-dual, the one Ultimate Reality without a second)". Although the world of duality is appearing to be full of or abounding in both names (Naamaatmaka) and forms (Roopaatmaka), in the Ultimate Reality (Paramaartha Tattwa) neither names nor forms exist whatsoever. In order to teach this subtle truth, the Tattwa (the Reality), in which all names are totally merged or have become extinct (Pralaya), is called symbolically (Lakshana) "Aumkaara" and the Tattwa, in which all forms or phenomena are totally merged or have become extinct, is symbolically called "Brahman" and then it is indicated that — "Aumkaara alone is Brahman, and Brahman means this our innermost, innate nature of
Atman (Pratyagaatman)" — in that Upanishad. "Aumkaara" is a "name" signifying everything phenomenal (Sarvavaachaka), while "Brahman" is the "named" — entire phenomena signified by that Aumkaara. Brahman, which is the "Lakshya" (implicitly or indirectly signified entity) for Aumkaara or in other words, Aumkaara Itself, being our Atman is Paadatraya Vilakshana (completely different from the three footprints) as also Maatraatraya Ateeta (an entity beyond the three component metres of "Aumkaara"). Atman who is — from the Roopa Drishi or viewpoint of the "named" or form — the footprint (Paada) called "Vaishwaanara" is — from the Naama Drishti (viewpoint of the "Name") — the component metre called "A"; in the same manner, Taijasa is the component metre called "U" and Praajna is the component metre of "M". Just as the "A" kaara is the primary or beginning source of all letters or alphabets as also the pervading sound in all syllables, "Vaishwaanara" is the primary or beginning Paada or footprint for the other footprints and by virtue of His Viraadroopa or colossal form is all-pervading. Just as the syllable "U" kaara is Ulkrishtha (raised upwards from "A" kaara while pronouncing) and is the middle component metre or syllable, between "A" kaara and "M" kaara, of "Aumkaara" — Taijasa is a middle Paada which rises upwards from Vaishwaanara Paada and is endowed with an Upaadhi (adjunct), full of latent impressions (Vaasanaamaya), between the other two Paadas, viz., Vaishwaanara and Praajna; to wit, because of the reason that the Vaasanaamaya Prapancha (the world of duality full of the latent impressions), which is his adjunct (Upaadhi), is invariably and indisputably appearing akin to the world of duality of the waking state, on the one hand, and it is Asat (unreal), just as the world of Sushupti, on the other hand, that Upaadhi of Taijasaatman is comparable to both the Upaadhis of Vaishwaanara, in one aspect, and of Praajnaatman, in another aspect (thereby he is seen as the via media between the waking and the deep sleep states). Just as "M" kaara (the third syllable or metre of Aumkaara) is appearing to measure out the other two syllables or metres as also is appearing to be the merging ground or place, in the same manner Praajna is appearing to measure out the other two Paadas or footprints as also to be their merging state or place. For this reason, "Tureeyaatman, who is comparatively the fourth and who is Paadatraya Vilakshana (quite queer or distinct from the three footprints) is the Lakshyaarththa (the subtly implied or implicit meaning) of Brahmaapada (the Blissful state, Beatitude of Brahman) as also because He is Maatraatraya Ateeta (beyond the three syllables or metres), He is the Lakshyaarththa of Aumkaara. In this Brahman or Aumkaara no names whatsoever exist, nor any forms whatsoever exist." Thus it has been propounded in that Upanishad (Maandookya Upanishad), as also in Shri Goudapaada's "Aagama Prakarana" (the first Chapter of his
Dealings of Bandha and Moaksha

book of four Chapters called "Maandookya Kaarika"), which is of
the form or nature of a Vyaakhyaaana (explanatory or expository
commentary). The reader or seeker should recall to his memory what
we have expounded previously in section 66 that — "Paramaartha
Tattwa or Atman cannot possibly be signified by any word whatsoever."


XXI. DEALINGS OF BANDHA (BONDAGE)
AND MOAKSHA (LIBERATION)

154. Although Atman exists in the same form or essence even when
He is either 'experiencing' the three states of Consciousness or existing
in the 'Tureeyaavastha' (the state of the fourth), in the waking state He
appears — by virtue of Avidya — to be obtaining changes or mutations,
like a blind person, a lame person etc.; He appears in the dream state to
be associated with undesirable hardships, which are 'Vaasanaamaya'
(full of latent impressions), like weeping, grieving etc.; in the deep sleep
state He appears to be devoid of any power or capacity of cognizing
anything whatsoever and to have been totally destroyed. To be liberated
from or to be rid of all these defects and blemishes is itself nothing but
to Intuit and get established in our essential nature of Atman
(Aatmaswaroopa) — and this alone is the real, genuine Moaksha
(Liberation or Emancipation). In this manner, even in the doctrine or
teaching of "Ekaatmavaada" (that the Self is non-dual Reality) also
both Bondage and Liberation are reconcilable. In fact, Moaksha is the
total or consummate removal of Bondage (Bandha Nirvutti) alone and
not any kind of attainment of anything anew or afresh whatsoever.

1. Su. Bh. 4-4-2. p. 896. 2. Su. Bh. 4-4-2. p. 897.

155. There is a probability of some people conceiving the teachings
of Vedantins, viz. "Moaksha is nothing that is to be attained afresh; it is
a state which is Nityapraapta (eternally attained or existing), meaning
that it is one's core of Being beyond the time-space-causation concepts
or categories" — to be contradictory to the scriptural statements and
Yukti (reason). For, the Chhaandogya Upanishad 8-12-3 states: "This
enlightened being (Samprasaada) rises up giving up this mortal coil and
gets established in his essential nature. He alone is the Uttamapuruusha
(the superior, Supreme Self)." On the strength of this scriptural
statement it becomes clear that the scripture purports to say: "Apart
from the Sushuptaavastha (the state of deep sleep), there exists a
Muktaavastha (the state of Liberation); further, after giving up or
leaving off our mortal coil (after death) the Muktaavastha is obtained

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afresh." Because every one has per force to agree that a state which is quite different or distinct from Avasthaatraya alone is Muktt (Liberation), to say that while the Jeeva is endowed with the three Avasthas (i.e. when he is embodied and alive), at that moment alone, there exists Muktt — is opposed to Yukti. Thus the protagonists of the doctrine of Muktt being attained afresh (Praapya Muktiadvadins) may argue out.

But we can also argue out reconciling in a manner which is in full agreement with Siddhaanta (the Vedantic teachings), as also with the meaning or purport of the scriptural statements. To wit, we have already clarified that by virtue of Avidya alone the three states of Consciousness appear to exist in the (substrate of) Atman but they do not really exist. Aatmaswaroopaa, which appeared to exist as if unmanifested with the adjuncts of the body, the senses, the mind etc. before the dawn or advent of Vivekajnaana (Intuitive Knowledge of the form of Vidya), appears to the Jnaani (Realized soul) who has by virtue of Viveka (Intuitive reasoning) given up his innate identification with the adjuncts of the body, the senses, the mind etc. as if his own Absolute essential nature of Atman is attained anew. Thus the purport of the scriptural texts can be interpreted to mean that — "What was not attained because of Avidya is attained by virtue of Vidya." Just because a crystal appears to be red or black as a result of being placed in the vicinity of a coloured adjunct (which is, in truth, red or black) no one believes that the crystal's white colour or clear nature has vanished, is it not? Because it is stated in the scripture that — "He attains his essential nature of Pure Being (Swaroopaj) — it amounts to saying that earlier too, i.e. even before a person attained by virtue of Vidya or Vivekajnaana (Intuitive experience or Self-Knowledge), that essential nature of Pure Being exists as his very core. Therefore, it should be reckoned that apart from the "Aavidyaka Bandha-Moaksha" (Bondage-Liberation projected as misconceptions by Avidya), there do not exist any real phenomena or entities like Bondage and Liberation whatsoever. For, as Advaita (non-duality) alone is the Absolute, Ultimate Reality, all mundane, empirical transactions — whether they are Loukika (secular or temporal) or Vaidika (sacred, eccelesiastical or religious based on the Vedic texts) — are, in truth, Aavidyaka (projected as misconceptions by Avidya). What is non-existent cannot be born or created afresh or anew; what is existent cannot be destroyed; therefore, the statement that Bondage and Liberation are not Paramaarththa (real in the ultimate analysis) is quite in consonance with logical reasoning indeed.

4. Su. Bh. 4-4-1. pp. 895, 896.
5. Su. Bh. 4-4-2. p. 897.
156. One cannot raise an objection of the type — "If no new result or fruit accrues from Moaksha why should one make any effort to attain Moaksha?" For, we are bound as a result of Avidya; and so, in order to get rid of or destroy this Avidya we have necessarily to gain or attain Vidya. Similarly, one cannot raise an objection of the type — "If Atman is perennially of one and the same form or nature, then don't the Vedantins affirm that by virtue of Avidya and Vidya alone Bondage and Liberation take place, respectively? In that case, it amounts to saying that by virtue of Vidya and Avidya some kind of a change has occurred in Atman! At least distinctions like — 'Avidya exists' or 'Avidya disappears'; 'Vidya is being acquired or attained' — have to be accepted, is it not?" Just as, even when one misconceives a rope to be a snake out of Avidya and later recognizes it to be really a rope alone, one gets anxious and timid as well as fearful, and these disappear later; though this is true, there is no change whatsoever in the thing (the rope in this instance), in the same manner, there is no change or mutation whatsoever occurring in Atman because of, or by virtue of, either Vidya or Avidya. The phenomenon of Avidya is nothing but the delusion that occurs as a result of the empirical dealings or transactions of (the adjuncts of) the body, the senses, the mind etc. It is quite reasonable to accept that one who objectifies Avidya as an appearance (i.e. external to his essential nature of Atman) is not deluded by Avidya at all; the scripture too is affirming that in Atman there does not exist any Kartrutwa whatsoever projected by Avidya.


157. If Bandha and Mukti are reckoned or believed to be really occurring, then it amounts to saying that the Mukti that is mentioned in the Shrutis is taken (assumed) to be in a predominant, primary sense (Mukhyaartha). The possibility of the common run of people misunderstanding that they are just now liberated and thereby becoming idle will also be prevented. Therefore, some people argue out that better than the teachings of those who say that — 'Bondage and Liberation are Aavidyaka' — are the teachings of those who say that they are real.

This argument is not proper. For, those who say or affirm that Bondage and Liberation are real cannot accept that both of them co-exist, because these two states are mutually opposite; if it is contended that they occur one after the other, then also without any cause Liberation cannot occur. Besides, because of the reason — 'That which occurs or happens by virtue of a Nimitta (cause) is not natural or of its essential nature' — it amounts to saying that it is unreal alone. In addition to this, the protagonists of Moaksha as a reality will have to per force accept that — "Bandha which is Anaadi (beginningless) has
an end, as also Moaksha which has beginning is Ananta (endless)." This is opposed to what is seen in our workaday world. The logical device (Yukti) that — "That entity which is Anaadi has an end, just like the 'Beejaa Ankura Santati' (the continuum of the seed and the sprout)" — is not proper or sustainable; for, both the seed and the sprout are 'Saaddi' (with a beginning — meaning, they are born or created). 'Santati' (continuum) is not another separate thing or entity existing by itself. It is not possible to say that a person, who has gone from a state called 'Bondage' to a state called 'Liberation', is Nitya or eternal. If it is asserted that Moaksha occurs as a result of Saadhana (spiritual practices or disciplines), it amounts to saying that Moaksha is Anitya (non-eternal) and that it is not the real essential nature of Atman also. This too is an undesirable, or an unwanted, predicament. Therefore, the statement that — "Bondage and Liberation are Satya (real)" — is opposed to both Yukti and Vedanta Siddhaanta (philosophical teaching of Vedanta). If it is contended — 'that thing which has a beginning can be, just like Pradhwamsaabhaava (non-existence subsisting after a thing is destroyed), Nitya (eternal)' — then it amounts to saying that Moaksha is 'Abhaava' (a non-existent thing). Because we have previously clarified in section 99 that the special characteristics or categories like Praadhwamsaabhaava, Praaghbaava etc. do not exist in 'Abhaava' at all, this argument or contention is not proper and justifiable.


158. Now it will be quite clear to the seeker that all the various types of arguments or objections mentioned below are verily without any essence or purport at all. For instance: "Although for Atman, Brahmatwa (all-pervasiveness) is indeed His very essence, that essential nature becomes concealed or oblivious in the state of Bondage (Bandhaavastha) owing to any particular cause and then as a result of some spiritual practices or disciplines (Saadhanas) when that cause is mitigated that essential nature manifests itself in the state of Liberation (Muktaavastha); or in Atman, as a result of a particular action, Bondage gets changed into Liberation; or that Liberation gets manifested as a result of some purification or refinement or cultivation (Samskaara)." For, in the case of precious metals like gold, silver etc. when in contact with an extraneous matter or object they have lost their brilliance (and thereby have become dull in appearance) after they are cleaned by washing with acid or washing soda etc. (i.e. any cleansing agent) they may regain their original brilliance. Stars and such other shining objects in the stellar region may become dull or invisible because of the brilliance of the Sun or such other extremely brilliant objects, but when those latter brilliant objects do not exist the stars and such other
objects may shine with their own brilliance in the sky as before; but, in that manner the Chaitanya Swaroopopa (the essential nature of Atman) cannot get concealed or covered up by contact with any other object whatsoever; nor It can become dull because of the brilliance of another (second) object whatsoever. For, Atman is Asanga (unattached), Adviteeyaa (non-dual, one without anything second to It). If Moaksha, were Utpaadya (a thing which is to be produced or created afresh) or Vikaarya (a thing which can be transformed or changed), then some kind of Saadhana (spiritual practice or discipline) becomes necessary. But we have already explained that a thing which is produced or born as a result of another external cause becomes Kritaka (artificial, false or sham), as also Anitya (non-eternal). Therefore, it is not possible to say or affirm that Moaksha is either Utpaadya or Vikaarya. Nor there is any necessity of creating or producing any new Guna (quality) in Atman or Brahman, or of removing, mitigating any defect or blemish in It by means of any Samskaara because the eternally Pure, Absolute Brahman alone is verily the state of Liberation (Muktaavastha). Thus, the doctrine that — “Mukti is a resultant fruit or effect which really occurs in the Absolute sense or is obtained, attained” — is not at all in agreement or consonance with any Yukti whatsoever.


159. Some people argue out in the manner — “If Atman were eternally Liberated only, then listening (Shravana) to the scriptural texts for the sake of attaining Liberation will be futile; even the Shaastras delineating devices or methods of attaining Liberation also will become futile. Therefore, one should reckon that Liberation (Moaksha) is a special kind of Phala (resultant fruit) to be really attained afresh.”

We have already in section 156 given a fitting answer to this argument. Because the ignorant common run of people do not know the truth that — “We are perennially of the essential nature of ’Nitya Shuddha Buddha Mukta Swaroopopa’” — despite the fact that they are eternally liberated or free from Bondage, they are ‘bound’ indeed. In order to remove or sublate that Avidya which is of the nature of delusion or misconception, the spiritual instruction by the Shaastras becomes necessary. But to those who are fully aware of this Self-Knowledge the teaching by the Shaastras is not necessary at all. This fact too we have already mentioned in section 39. The Dvaitins (dualists) too have accepted that among the liberated souls there do not exist the distinctions of Samsaara (transmigratory existence) and Samsaaritwa (transmigratoriness); in their doctrines the futility of the Shaastras does not arise at all. In fact, in their doctrines too in the state of Bondage
alone the Shaastras become meaningful, purposeful. In the same manner, in the teachings of Vedanta philosophy also let it be assumed that for those who have cognized or Intuited the Aatmaikatwa (the non-duality or Absolute oneness of Atman) the Shaastras are futile only; if in the matter of, or region of, Avidya the scriptures are Saarthaka (purposeful, meaningful), then that is enough.


160. Some others argue out in the manner — "If Samsaaritwa is real, then by means of Knowledge of the type — 'I am Asamsaaree; I am not a Kartru or a Bhoktru' — alone that Samsaaritwa should be sublated, is it not? But till death no one ever gets rid of this Samsaariswaroopa (this innate nature of transmigratoriness). It being so, how at all can the Asamsaaaritwa Jnaana (the Knowledge of one being non-transmigratory) accrue? Therefore, till the body exists Bondage really exists and after the body falls off alone Liberation can really be attained."

This argument is not proper. For, there is no objection or hindrance to accept the fact that just as the knowledge of scriptural rituals like Agnihotra etc. which are said to yield the fruit of Swarga (heaven), the Knowledge of Brahman, which is of the essential nature of Atman (the Sell) who is Akartru (non-doer), can also be acquired from the valid means of the Shaastras. This fact we have already explained in section 72. In truth, Avidya (metaphysical ignorance), Kaama (desires) and Karma (action) — these alone comprise the Bondage of Samsaaritwa; although this transmigratoriness appears to be absolutely true in the waking state, it is evident and is established on the strength of everyone's experience that in the deep sleep state these Avidya-Kaama-Karma categories do not exist whatsoever. This truth has been pointed out in the topic dealing with the deliberation on the three states of Consciousness (Avasthaatraya Vichaara). The scriptures too are expounding that in the deep sleep state the Asamsaat Swaroopa devoid of Avidya-Kaama-Karma (categories) alone exists. Therefore, there is every scope for Intuitively cognizing our essential nature of Asamsaatwa while we are embodied itself.


161. In the scriptures there are sentences of the type — "He gets established in His real essential form" — (Chhaandogya Upanishad 8-3-4); "Being Brahman, He merges in Brahman" — (Brihadaaaranyaka Upanishad 4-4-6); "Having been Liberated, He becomes or gets Liberated" — (Katha Upanishad 2-2-2); "He who is not embodied is not touched or tainted by desirable or undesirable things" — (Chhaandogya
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Upanishad 8-12-1). On the strength of these scriptural statements, some people argue out that there are two kinds of Mukti viz. Liberation after death called “Videhamukti”, and while alive getting Liberated called “Jeewanmukti”.

This argument is opposed to both the scriptures and Vedanta Siddhaanta. For, the scriptural statements like — “Tattwamasi” — meaning, “Thou art that Sadbrahman (the Ultimate Reality of the essence of Absolute Being or Existence) alone”; “Aham Brahmaasmi” — meaning, “I am verily that Brahman” etc. — which state that here and now alone Atman is Brahman. It is not possible to interpret the scriptural statement — “You are verily that Brahman” — to mean that — “You will become Brahman after death.” The scriptural statement — “Brahmaiva Sun Brahmaapyeti” — (Brihadaaranyaka Upanishad 4-4-6) is clearly affirming that Jeeva here and now itself (i.e. while living in this mortal body) is verily Brahman; the scriptural statement does not at all state that in future he becomes Brahman and merges in Brahman. We have also previously in section 155 mentioned that the scriptures emphatically state that — “Suena Roopena Abhinishpadyate” — meaning, He becomes established in His essential form or nature, and this sentence purports to state that — “By means of Jnaana (Self-Knowledge or Intuitive experience) the Jeeva Intuits his ever-existing (Nitya Siddha) essential nature of Pure Being-Consciousness-Bliss” — indeed. Further, the Kathaapanishad sentence — “Vimuktascha Vimuchyate” — meaning, being ever-Liberated he becomes or gets Liberated — (2-2-1) also clearly affirms that Atman is “Nityamukta” (eternally Liberated) alone. The antagonists may ask in the manner — “Why then it is once again stated in the scriptures like — ‘Brahmaapyeti’ — meaning, he attains Brahman, the Ultimate Reality; ‘Vimuchyate’ — meaning, he gets “Liberated, freed”? But these statements have been made with the prime purport of teaching that — “Here and now alone (i.e. while alive in the present physical body) the Jeeva is Liberated from Avidya-Kaama-Karma categories; he dos not get embodied or reborn after death as in the case of Ajnas, i.e. the ignorant people” — alone. Therefore, as soon as Jnaana (Intuitive Self-Knowledge) is attained the Sadyoamukti (being Liberated while in the embodied condition), which is attained, is one and one alone; Mukti cannot be of two kinds and so the statement or argument that it is of two kinds is not a proper proposition. In fact, Mukti means Brahman, the Absolute, Transcendental Reality, Itself; there are not, and can never be, many forms of Brahman (for, Reality cannot be manifold and varied). For that reason too the statement that — “Mukti is of two kinds” — is not proper or reasonable.

27. Br. Bh. 4-4-6. p. 720. 29. Su. Bh. 3-4-52. p. 810.
162. Some Vedantins are arguing out in the manner — "The Mukti that is attained while embodied is Gouna (of secondary importance); for, then there exist the body, Praarabdha Karma (the fruit of actions which have become ripe enough to fructify) and also sufficient Avidya-Kaama. Hence, Videhamuktt (Liberation without the body, accruing after giving up the mortal coil), devoid of this Avidyalesha (remainder or remnant of Avidya), alone is the main Mukti in the predominant sense or importance."

This especially is not proper at all. For the belief or concept that Atman has a body is caused by Mithyaabhimaana (the misconceived, wrong identification), which means that misconceiving Chaitanya (Pure Consciousness) to be the body and thereby identifying with the Adhyaasaroopa (superimposed or misconceived form or nature of 'I' notion or Pramaatrautwa); and so, it is not Paramaarth (really real). This truth we have previously mentioned in section 137. In the present context, the statement that — "Because at present the body is appearing or is seen to exist, only after death the real, genuine Ashareeratwa or unembodiedness accrues" — is not correct; for, in the dream this body of the waking does not exist and in deep sleep there does not exist any relationship with any kind of a body whatsoever. Therefore, Ashareeratwa is natural, meaning, it is our essential nature of Being. To a Jnaani (Realized soul endowed with Self-Knowledge) there is no scope or possibility of having any Kaama, Karma whatsoever; for, he has completely got rid of Avidya, which really means misconception or wrong identification. To one who does not have the Vishesa Jnaana (knowledge of the nature of distinctive cognition or Intuition) of any real entity (Vastu) as — 'such and such a thing' — to such a person alone misconception or wrong knowledge exists. There is no cause or scope for a Jnaani, who has attained the certitude or conviction of the type — "Atman is Brahman alone" — to have any more misconception or wrong knowledge at all. Of course, by virtue of the latent impressions (Samskaaras) of the old or previously existing Avidya memories or mental concepts (Smritis) which appear to be akin to Mithyaapratyaya (false perceptions) may arise. Just as in the case of people who know the four cardinal directions of east, west, north and south, also sometimes get deluded about the cardinal directions, in the same way this Mithyaajnaana-abhaasa (the temporary delusion of the nature of wrong knowledge or misconception) is sublated or destroyed by Samyag-Jnaana (correct, Intuitive Knowledge) alone and not that it can ever pose any threat or harm whatsoever to the Intuitive Knowledge. We have also previously stated that there is no room whatsoever for a Jnaani to have Avidya. Therefore, while alive or embodied in the present life alone one can attain Mukti and not after death (or after giving up
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one's mortal coil), and this truth Shri Shankara has repeatedly proclaimed in and through his Bhaashyas.

34. Mu. Bh. 3-2-6. p. 166.
35. Br. Bh. 4-4-6. p. 720.

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163. Moaksha is not Utpaadya, is not Vikaarya and is not Samskaarya. Therefore, it is stated previously in section 158 that It cannot be obtained or attained afresh as a result of, or by means of, any Saadhanas. Although this teaching is true, there remains a doubt that Moaksha can be Praapya (that which can be attained afresh)! In Chhaandogya Upanishad 8-12-3 the statement that — “Suena Roopena Abhinetshpayate” — it has been propounded there that Moaksha is not a separate state (Avasthaantara) which is attained afresh and that Moaksha, which appeared as if it was not attained because of Avidya, was attained by means of Vidya (Self-Knowledge). Although this truth we had mentioned in section 155 by way of a Samaadhaana (tentatively satisfactory answer), there are a few people who may raise a doubt that — “Moaksha is a thing which is Praapya” — saying that this fact is known directly from some scriptural statements. For, it has been described in detail that — “Brahma Jnaani goes (after death) via a particular path and obtains Brahman; and that he therein (in that Loaka called Brahma Loaka) by mere SankaZpa (volition) can acquire Siddhis (mystic powers), by means of which he can have whatever he desires. Therefore, Mukti is a thing which can be attained afresh only.”

But this doubt is not proper at all. For Moakshaavastha (the state of Liberation) means Brahman alone and not anything else whatsoever. Because Brahman means our Atman alone, one cannot at all possibly say that It is something which is Aapya or Praapya. Even in the philosophical teachings of those who affirm that Brahman is different or separate from Atman, because Brahman is accepted to be Sarvagata (all-pervading, all-consuming), It is verily Nityapraapta (eternally attained); space which is Sarvagata need not be touched or reached by any one after going or traversing a distance, is it not? In the same way, here also in the present context we must reckon. Besides, in the scriptural texts phenomena like Gati (going from one life, birth or Janma, or one world or Loaka), Aishwarya (the material wealth, assets etc.) have been mentioned as topics pertaining to Apara Brahman which is a Kaarya (effect). In reality, such phenomena are not related to Para Brahman at all. For, as Para Brahman is every one's
Atman alone and also is Sarvagata there is no possibility whatsoever for any Gantrutwa (going, traversing) or Gantavyatwa (being reached as the destination) to exist at all. Because Apara Brahman does not exist in any known particular space, spot or region too. It is not having any Gantavyatwa at all.

164. The statement that Brahman is two-fold is not merely a vain concept. It has been clearly stated in the scriptures that one should meditate upon Brahman, the Ultimate Reality, of the two types of Para and Apara as Aumkaara alone. Para Brahman is described in the scriptures in the manner — “It is not gross; It is not small like an atom; It is not that, It is not this” — etc. by refuting or sublating all the special characteristics superimposed or projected by Avidya upon Atman. When the scriptures describe Brahman with names and forms and such other special features or characteristics for the purpose of Upaasana (meditation), that very Brahman alone is called “Apara Brahman”. In Vedantic parlance Para Brahman which is to be Intuitively cognized (Jneya) is called by the various synonymous terms of Avikrita, Mukhya, Kaarana Brahman, Nirupaadhika Brahman, Nishprapancha Brahman, Nirguna Brahman etc., while the Para Brahman, which is to be meditated upon (Upaasya), is called by the various synonyms of — Apara Brahman, Kaarya Brahman, Soapaadhika Brahman, Saprapancha Brahman, Amukhya Brahman, Savishesha Brahman, Saguna Brahman, Saakaara Brahman, Soappakhya Brahman etc. In fact, even this difference or distinction of Para Brahman and Apara Brahman is superimposed or misconceived because of Avidya (Aavidyaka) and hence this distinction is not harmful or detrimental to the scriptural statements expounding Advaita (non-duality).

165. It is mentioned in the scriptures that if one has attained Brahman in the manner of Gatipoorvaka (by the via media of meditation), he goes to the region of Brahma Loaka and does not return to this world. If Brahman is the cause (Kaarana) for that world, to call what is an effect (Kaarya) as Brahman (the cause) will not be reasonable and proper; but, it has been stated in that manner, in the scriptures. It has also been very clearly described in the scriptural texts that those who have departed from a particular region attain Amritatwa (immortality). For all these reasons, to some people it may appear that Brahman is Praapya alone, and that this teaching is in consonance with the scriptural statements. Some others also may doubt in the manner — “Although Brahman is Nityapraapya (eternally attained or obtained),
just as on the earth which is ever obtained (ever existing and available) from one place or region one can go or traverse to another place or region; or one person passing from his own Baalyaavastha (childhood), to his own Vaardhakaavastha (state of old age), why cannot Brahman be Praapya?"

To all such doubts the solution is: "In the scriptural statements like — 'This person does not return to this region'; 'To those people there is nothing like coming back or returning to this world' — the purport implied in them is their returning to the life of mortality or transmigration during another 'Kalpa' (creation of the world). We have per force to interpret those sentences in the above manner, because the scriptures can never preach anything contrary to a logical argument or device which has necessarily to be in consonance with Anubhava (universal Intuitive experience) of the type — 'What is ever Sarvagata (all-pervading) cannot ever be got afresh by going or traversing anywhere.' [Naastyakritaha Kritena — meaning, Moaksha, which is not the resultant fruit of any Karma, can never be attained by Karma of any kind whatsoever). The scriptures may well propound 'Krama Mukti' (gradual, graded Liberation), in the sense that — 'In the Kaarya Brahma Loaka (the world of the four-headed Brahma, the Creator God), which is attained as a fruit of Upaasanas stipulated in the scriptures, those who attain the Intuitive Self-Knowledge (Jnaana) may become Liberated in that world (Loaka) itself and they will not return to this transmigratory life (Samsaara)." In support of this interpretation there are Smritis (statements made by Rishis or sages from their memory). There is a Smruti statement that — "The Sthaana (place or state of existence, till the final dissolution of the world) is called 'AmritaLwa' (immortality)." Besides, it is not wrong to call "Brahma Loaka" as "Amrita" (immortal) relatively when it is compared to other lesser, inferior Loakas (worlds, regions) because the former does not get destroyed or dissolved throughout a 'Kalpa' (the entire duration of the created world). Because of the reasons that — (1) Kaarya Brahma is very near Para Brahman in many respects or aspects; (2) while Para Brahman itself is being meditated upon (as the Upaasya Devata) as if associated with some Kaarya Dharmas (special features or qualities seen in the created empirical world of duality), that Para Brahman itself gets the nomenclature of "Apara Brahman" or "Kaarya Brahman", the Apara Brahman may, in a secondary sense, be called "Brahman". Therefore, it must be reckoned (discerned) properly that all the terms like — "Anaawritti" (non-return to the transmigratory existence or Samsaara), "Amritatwa" (immortality), "Brahma" (the four-headed Creator God called by this name) — are used in a secondary sense with a secondary meaning or purport (Gounaartha). Because the scriptures propound that in Brahman, the Ultimate Reality, there are no special characteristics or categories whatsoever like time, space, causation etc.
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this *Brahman* is not a thing to be reached or attained afresh or anew just as any spatial region to be reached by travelling or any state like *Vaardhakaavastha*. Therefore, the genuine *Siddhaanta* is: "*Para Brahman*, the Ultimate, Absolute Reality, is not something to be attained, acquired or reached afresh (*Praapya*)."

8. Ch. Bh. 5-10-2. p. 357. 11 Su. Bh. 4-3-9. p. 880.

166. Some people may think in the manner: "In the scriptural texts even in Chapters devoted to, or exclusively pertaining to, 'Para Brahman Vidya', which the Vedantins have accepted to be so, at many places or in many contexts it has been stated that there are 'Utkraanti' (departure or exit) through 'Naadi' (subtle kind of nerves) 'Gati' (travel, acquiring another state), 'Amritatwa Praapti' (attainment of immortality). For example, in the *Kathoapanishad* (2-3-1) through a *Naadi* a particular kind of 'Gati' as also 'Amritatwa' has been mentioned. In the *Chhaandogya Upanishad*, after mentioning *Naama Roopa Nirvahana Kartru* (one who destroys or annihilates the names and forms) as *Para Brahman*, it has been further stated that — 'I will attain the position of Prajaapati's assemblage' — i.e. a *Praapya Phala* (a fruit to be obtained afresh). In the *Taittireeya Upanishad* it has been described that one who cognizes *Brahman* departs from this world and in the sequential or progressive order of 'Annamaya', 'Praanamaya', 'Manoamaya', 'Vijnanaamaya' Atmans and finally he attains the 'Aanandamaya Atman'. In addition to this, in the very Chapter devoted to preaching that — "By means of the Knowledge of *Para Brahman* the seeker obtains or attains 'Aatmaswaroopa' (the essential nature of the Self)" — in the *Chhaandogya Upanishad*, 'Aishwarya' (rich mystic powers of — eating or enjoying, whatever one wants or wishes; of playing, sporting or revelling in whatever manner one wishes and finally of enjoying copulation with women and such other objects of enjoyment which become materialized by mere volition or willing etc.) is mentioned. Therefore, it is not possible to argue out that all that has been stated about *Gati*, *Utkraanti* and *Aishwarya* is exclusively pertaining to the topic of 'Saguna Brahman' (the Ultimate Reality with adjuncts or qualities or special characteristics alone), is it not?"

But in all such contexts too we can interpret them to suit 'Nirguna Vidya' (the Knowledge of the Ultimate Reality without qualities or special characteristics). To wit, what is mentioned in the *Kathoapanishad* is the 'Gati' (transformed state) that is attained or obtained by *Upaasakas* (meditators) on 'Apara Brahman'; that has been preached there in that context in order to or for the ultimate purport of praising, eulogising the 'Brahma Vidya' (Self-Knowledge), which is the relevant topic. Then it will not be wrong or improper to mention
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'Aapekshika Amritatwa' (a relative or comparative immortality) that is attained by means of 'Apara Vidyā' in order to, or for the purport of, praising 'Para Vidyā' in the same manner as — 'In order to eulogize or praise Apara Vidyā comparatively it is stated that by means of Apara Vidyā one departs through the Sushumnaa Naadi and attains spiritual progress and Amritatwa and, at the same time, it is disparagingly stated or preached that those who depart from or through other Naadis return to 'Samsaaragati', which is verily Duhkhamaya or full of untold and innumerable miseries without let. Or, it may be interpreted that what is mentioned in the Kathoapanishad is the concluding teachings about the fruits or results of Agni Vidyā, which is again an 'Apara Vidyā' (inferior knowledge pertaining to some rituals). Because what is stated in the Chhaandogya Upanishad is the conclusion drawn about Apara Vidyā alone, therein the propriety of mentioning a Gati is not defective or wrong. There in that Upanishad either in conceiving or interpreting the statement which describes or delineates the essential nature of Para Brahman as a separate Prakarana (topic or Chapter devoted exclusively for a particular purpose) there is no contradiction whatsoever. The scriptural statement there, viz. "I will become the Yashas (fame, reputation) of Brahmins" — meaning, 'Sarvaatmatwa' (essential nature of Atman in everyone or everything) which is inferred therein also may amount to mean 'Sarva Karma' (all actions or rituals), 'Sarva Kaama' (all desires). In the sentence found in the Taittireeya Upanishad, the meaning of the statement — "After giving up this Loaka (world)" — is: 'When the seeker becomes Virakta (disinterested) in Drishta (visible) and Adrishta (invisible) Vishaya (objects); for that reason alone, in this scripture the attainment of Brahmahood or Brahma Praapti is described with qualities like Adrishyatwa etc. Therefore, here in this scripture too Utkraanti and Gati have not been mentioned or taught. Further, if there is an objection of the type — "How is it proper to have described in detail Aishwarya to be acquired afresh in a Chapter devoted to the Knowledge (Intuition) of Para Brahman?" — raised, it can be conceived, by way of explanation, that — "This description is given in order to eulogize the state of the Jnaani (the Realized soul), who has no misery whatsoever; or, it can also be explained that this Aishwarya is delineated in a Chapter devoted to Para Vidyā for the purposes of praising the Sarvaatma Bhaava (the comprehensive outlook of Intuiting everything to be nothing but Atman) by preaching that, because a Mukta (a Liberated soul) has in reality become 'Sarvaatman', the mystical powers or capacities of Devatas (various deities) and Yogis (mystics) are truly those of a Liberated soul alone.'

18. Su. Bh. 4-4-6. p. 900.
167. In order to justify or substantiate specifically the truth that — “Phenomena, like Utakraanti, Gati, Aishwarya etc. have not been mentioned exclusively in the scriptural texts in the sense of or with the meaning that Para Brahman is Praapya (something that is to be attained afresh)” — we have delineated Yuktis (logical devices), in consonance with universal Intuitive experiences like — “The dialectic method of expounding that — The Moakshaavastha means really Brahman alone which is nothing but our Atman’ — (sections 161,163); the dialectic method of propounding that — ‘Brahman is Nirvisheshha’ — (section 164); the dialectic method of saying that — ‘Because of the reason that what is attained or acquired as the resultant fruit of any Saadhanas becomes Kritaka and hence it becomes Anitya alone’ — (section 165) and such other dialectic methods. In addition to these, the scriptures themselves are clearly stating that — “His Praanas (vital forces) do not depart from here” — to refute the beliefs of Praana Utkramana, as also the scriptures clearly affirm that — “Having been Brahman (in essence) alone, he becomes one with, or merges in, Brahman”: “He attains Brahman, here and now (in this very life) itself” — and in such other clear statements that Sadyoamukti (also called Jeevanamukti) — meaning, Liberation while living in this very body, is possible to attain here and now only. For such reasons too topics regarding Utakraanti, Gati and Aishwarya etc. are related to Apara Brahman alone.


168. One cannot doubt in the manner — “If it is contended that in order to eulogise the Sarvaatma Bhaava (Intuitive experience of seeing everything to be full of Pure Consciousness) of a Mukta (a Liberated soul), the Aishwarya (abundance of mystic powers) that are found in Yogis etc. are described, then does it not amount to saying that the miseries that are seen to exist in Sthaavara (immobile objects) and Jangama (mobile or moving creatures) also will have to be found in a Mukta who is Sarvaatma (the essential nature of Being of everything)?” For, since a Mukta is the Self of everything he is also the Self of Duhkha (misery) too. In fact, all the Sukha and Dukhha that are seen to be experienced by Jeevas are Adhyaaroapita but Jnaani, by virtue of the Jnaana (the Intuitive Knowledge of Aatmaswaroopa) has got this Adhyaaroopa sublated or falsified (Apavaada; Baadhita). Therefore, there is no possibility of any Dukkha. Even so, because of the reason that in our workaday world all the happiness that accrues from various objects to the people is, in reality, belonging to Atman, of the essence of Pure Bliss, alone — (Tatttireeya Bhaashya-2-5) — it will not be wrong or improper to state that — “The happiness that is enjoyed by Yogis, deities etc., who are Siddhasankalpas (people or beings endowed with
the mystic powers of readily or instantaneously getting any desires fulfilled or pleasures obtained) are those of a Jnani alone who is established in \textit{Aatmaswaroopa} — in order to eulogise, praise the merits of \textit{Moaksha} alone.


\textbf{169}. Now, another doubt may arise and that is: "How at all can the special characteristics, like \textit{Utkraanti, Gati, Desha Videsha Gamana, Aishwarya Praapti}, which do not adhere to or which are not applicable to one who has cognized (realized) \textit{Para Brahman}, be made applicable to \textit{Apara Brahman}? Is it not true that Siddhaantins (the proponents of Vedantic teachings) affirm that — \textit{Para Brahman} itself, by virtue of Its association with certain adjuncts, is called \textit{Apara Brahman}? It being so, where is the scope for these Vedantins to conceive of differences of the type — 'For one the special features like \textit{Utkraanti, Gati} etc. are applicable, whereas for another these special features are not applicable — or suitable?"

For such a doubt there is one and only solution, and that is: "If it is said that — 'What is not applicable or suitable in the absolute sense (or in the \textit{Pramaartha Drishhti}), even that is applicable from the viewpoint of \textit{Avidya}' — one need not be surprised at all. In fact, even though \textit{Jeeva} is, in his essence of Being, \textit{Ishwara} alone, his Jnaana and Aishwarya have become hidden owing to \textit{Avidya}, Kaama, Karma categories. By virtue of \textit{Vidya} (Self-Knowledge) that essential nature endowed with those excellences becomes manifest or explicit. We have previously stated in section 134 that in the realm of \textit{Avidya} alone the divisions or distinctions of \textit{Jeeva} and \textit{Ishwara} are appearing because of the association with the adjuncts. Besides, \textit{Jeeva} means 'one who has put on, or who is sustained, supported by, \textit{Praana} (the vital force)'. But to one who has Intuited that — 'I am that \textit{Paramaatman} alone devoid of any kind of special characteristics or distinctions whatsoever' — to such a person neither the \textit{Praanas} (the five types of vital forces functioning in the body) nor his transmigration to any other birth, along with his \textit{Praanas} for the purpose of enjoying the fruits of his actions (\textit{Karmas}), become applicable or suitable. In fact, one who does not have or who is not sustained or supported by \textit{Praanas} is not a \textit{Vee va}; a \textit{Jeeva}'s 'Jeevatwa' (being associated with transmigratoriness) is nothing but his misconceiving his essential nature of the Self (\textit{Atman}) — because of, or by virtue of, \textit{Avidya} — to be having some relationship with \textit{Praana}. But from the standpoint of the Intuitive experience of the Self, because of the reason that \textit{Brahman} is \textit{Sarvagata} (all-pervasive), neither the condition of attaining \textit{Para Brahman} nor the condition of any transmigration for the purpose of
attaining Para Brahman becomes valid or suitable; but 'Apara Brahman' is the name given to 'Hiranyagarbha' (the primordial Being), the first born who exists in a particular Loaka (world), and hence in that context there can be a possibility of transmigration or Gati. Because Para Brahman is really a Jeeva's Atman it does not become valid or suitable to say, in the predominant sense, that one obtains the Aishwarya of Paramaatman; but because the attainment of the Loaka or world of Kaarya Brahman associated with special qualities or features, the condition of Aishwarya Praapti also becomes valid or suitable in that case or context. Thus although Brahman is one and one only (non-dual Absolute Reality without a second entity to It), when we accept the divisions or distinctions of Jeeva and Ishwara in the realm of Avidya or from the standpoint of Avidya — then that very Brahman alone may be conceived as 'Apara Brahman' indeed; in that context or from that standpoint a Jeeva may attain Gati, Uttraanti, Aishwarya Praapti etc. also.

170. There is a customary practice of calling both those who have obtained the 'Aapekshika Mukti' (relative Liberation) by means of Upaasana and those who have attained the 'Brahma Swaroopa' (the essential nature of Brahman) by means of 'Tattwajnaana' (Intuitive experience of the Self) by the same name of 'Muktas' alone in the spiritual texts. But because the Mukti that is obtained by means of 'Saguna Vidya' exists in the realm of Avidya alone, therein the Muktas do have the body, the senses as also the mind; they enjoy the Aishwarya of getting many physical bodies and enjoying through them; they have enjoyment equal to that of Parameshwara and they also have the capability or qualification to gain the Jnaana in the 'Brahma Loaka' and the resultant fruit of 'Apunaraauritti' (not returning to this mundane life). But they do not have the 'Jagat Shrishti Kartrutwa' (the ability to create the world). In only the case of those who have attained Mukti through 'Nirguna Vidya', on the other hand, the attainment of oneness with the non-dual Brahmanhood, which is devoid of all categories or special features, is fulfilled (it has become consummate). Thus though the same word or nomenclature of 'Mukti' is used in both the cases, there exists a difference between the two.
XXIII. UPAASANA OR MEDITATION

171. We have delineated that Brahman is of two types, viz. Nirupaadhika Brahman (Brahman devoid of any adjuncts and which is Jneya — that which is to be intuited or cognized) and Soapaadhika Brahman (Brahman associated with adjuncts and which is Upaasya — that which is to be meditated upon). Now, it becomes necessary to find out the answer to the question — "Why is it that Upaasanas, i.e. mental meditations, are stipulated as injunctions (Vidhi) in Jnaana Kaanda?" For, Upaasana means, as per the scriptural statements, 'to meditate or contemplate' upon an object mentioned in the scriptures in a manner so as to formulate one singular concept about that particular object without allowing any other concept of any other object to intrude upon or intervene in this continuity of that singular concept. Because this too is a Kriya (action) alone (section 76) it is quite proper to stipulate this by way of an injunction in the Karma Kaanda. Besides, because the Upaasanas are stipulated as injunctions in the Jnaana Kaanda, one may doubt that Upaasanas are not 'Aavidyaka' (things projected by ignorance). Therefore, it is quite but natural for a doubt of the type — "Why is it that Upaasanas are not mentioned in the Karma Kaanda itself?" — to arise in our mind.

Because Upaasanas are not possible to be carried out without there being the duality of the nature of — 'Upaasaka' (the meditator) and 'Upaasya' (the thing or object meditated upon) — and secondly, because in the non-dual Absolute Brahman, devoid of any special features or categories (Nirvisheshal), this duality is appearing as a result of Avidya alone, it becomes self-evident that the empirical dealings of Upaasana are 'Aavidyaka' (phenomena within the realm or ambit of ignorance). Even so, for the most valid or profound reasons like — (1) Upaasanas too, like Jnaana, are mental concepts alone; (2) they give rise to a fruit or result called 'Aapekshika Amritatwa' (a relative immortality) which is very near or akin to 'Mukhya Kaiyalya' (the genuine, predominant immortality) of Self-Knowledge; (3) the 'Upaasya Brahman' is a result or effect which is very close to or akin to 'Jneya Brahman' — these Upaasanas have been mentioned in the Jnaana Kaanda alone. This, then, is a satisfactory, nay convincing, answer to the above query.


172. Among the Upaasanas there are several varieties like Karmaanga Upaasanas, Prateekoapaasanas, Praanaadyupaasanas, Brahmoapaasanas etc. All these are of the form or nature of contemplating continuously with one singular concept which is
pertaining to one particular object mentioned or stipulated in the scriptures and in the same manner as instructed therein (meaning, the meditator cannot opt to meditate upon that particular object as and how he likes or fancies). However, they do not enable us to get rid of the distinctions of Kriya (action), Kaaraka (the means of actions) — which are superimposed upon, or misconceived in, Atman because of an innate Avidya, unlike the Advaita Jnaana (Intuitive experience of non-duality). Even so, because they are quite helpful aids for Advaita Jnaana via Chittaaikraagyata (one-pointed concentration of the mind which is purificatory in its effect), these Upaasanas have been expounded in the Jnaana Prakarana (a Chapter devoted for Jnaana) alone. Further, because of the valid reason that a mind that is thriving, having been completely immersed in the habit of empirical actions directed extrovertedly towards the materialistic world, cannot all of a sudden enter into, or adapt itself to, any Upaasana, the scriptures first of all stipulate ‘Kannaanga Upaasanas’ (meditations closer to physical actions); thereafter the scriptures stipulate ‘Prateeka Upaasanas’ (meditations spun round a particular object), which are ‘Saalambana’ (solely dependent upon an external object); thereafter, the scriptures have recommended ‘Saguna Brahmopapaasanas’ (meditations on Brahman associated with certain special qualities or features). Only after all these mental meditations are gone through (and the mind is purified or cleansed of its impurities or dross in the form of Kaamanas or desires for mundane or materialistic pleasures and possessive or acquisitive egoism) the scriptures deal with Jnaana (the Intuitive Knowledge of the Self).


173. Because Upaasanas are associated with mental concepts or thoughts (Vritolis) which are to be practised continuously and also because they are, like physical actions, ‘Purusha Tantra’ (mental actions well within the control or purview of the person concerned), as also are ‘Choadana Tantra’ (actions prompted by a scriptural injunction) — (section 76), they are not only extremely different from Jnaana but also are having fruits quite different from those of Jnaana. In this respect too, it becomes evident that Upaasanas are distinct from Jnaana. To wit, to those persons who practise Karmaanga Upaasanas the complete progress or growth of the respective Karma accrues, while for those persons who are desirous of Moaksha (Mumukshus) Jnaana Utpatti (the attainment of Self-Knowledge) is the fruit. For the Prateeka Upaasakas, according to their respective objects kept before them as Prateeka, Drishta (visible) or Adrishta (invisible) fruits will accrue. For the Saguna Brahma Upaasakas the fruits are Brahma Praapti (the attainment
of Brahma Loaka) and Krama Mukti (phased Liberation); but for Jnaana there accrues always and exclusively only one kind of fruit at the very instant of Intuition (Jnaana Samakaala) itself which is called the genuine Mukti, Sadyoamukti or Jeevanmukti (Liberation, Beatitude here and now in this very life). Although for all kinds of Upaasanas Paramaatman who is the Upaasya Devata (the deity or God to be meditated upon), is one and the same, in accordance with the qualities or special features that are associated with (i.e. superimposed upon) this Paramaatman for the purposes of their meditations, the Upaasakas will attain those relevant and respective fruits proportionate to those particular qualities or special features (superimposed).


174. We have stated above that because of the following reasons — (1) In Upaasanas there are the distinctions of Upaasya (the object on which one has to meditate) and Upaasaka (the meditator); (2) Upaasya Brahman (Brahman that is to be meditated upon) is an external object to oneself; (3) it is Choadana Tantra (a thing to be performed as per scriptural injunctions); (4) the fruits or results accrue in due course of time; and (5) these fruits are different for different meditations — Upaasanas are, as a rule, quite different (Vilakshanal from Jnaana. For this reason alone, it becomes evident that Upaasanas are within the purview or ambit of Avidya alone. Because of reasons like — “It is propounded in the scriptural texts that the object of meditations is not the Ultimate Reality of Brahman; it is criticized or deprecated clearly in the scriptural texts that Upaasanas are practices within the ambit of Avidya (Aavidyaka)” — it becomes established that — (1) Apart from mental Upaasanas there exists exclusively Jnaana which is quite different from Upaasanas; (2) By means of that Jnaana alone the ‘Mukhya Mukti’ (the predominant, Absolute Liberation) is attained. This truth we have previously substantiated also in section 65.

nature of Pure, Absolute Being-Consciousness-Bliss of Brahman, the Ultimate Reality", that is all. We have previously in section 164 mentioned that in the scriptural texts Brahman Itself has been preached as associated with some Kaarya Dharman (special characteristics or qualities suitable for, or which can be addressed to, an object or thing in the external world of duality) so as to enable the seeker to meditate upon as an object for mental meditation. By the usage of adjectives or qualifying words like ‘Aatmatwa’, 'Paaparahitatwa’, 'Sarvakaaranatwa' etc. it becomes evident that in the Upaasana Vaakyas (sentences pertaining to mental meditations) alone the Supreme Reality of Para Brahman is Itself taught. But the special symbols, characteristics mentioned therein in the Upaasana Vaakyas are related only to the Upaadhis (adjuncts) and not to the essential nature of Brahman at all. A clear crystal of alum or marble is not really associated or blended with the special features like the red colour of a flower placed in its vicinity, is it not? Those Upaadhis too are ‘Avidya Kalpita’ (projected by ignorance) alone; we have already in section 171 delineated that by virtue of Avidya alone the empirical dealings of Upaasya — Upaasaka are being carried out. Nirguna Vaakyas (scriptural sentences which mention Brahman devoid of any special qualities or characteristics whatsoever) especially, are teaching as their final goal or purport (Taatparya) the Brahma Swaroopa (the essential nature of Pure Being-Consciousness-Bliss of Brahman) alone. Therefore, there is no scope whatsoever to reckon that Brahman that is taught or preached by the Shrulis is of two kinds or are two in number. The prime purport of the Shruttis (Upanishads) is to teach (propound) in the ultimate analysis the one and only Nirvishesha Brahman (the Pure, Absolute Reality, devoid of all special characteristics or features) alone.


176. Although the differentiation as 'Upaasya' and 'Upaasaka' is itself a projection of Avidya, in general the seeker (Saadhaka) should necessarily believe or conceive that in whatever manner the scriptures have described the essential nature of the 'Upaasya' in that very manner that object really exists. If it is not conceived in that manner, then the defect or demerit of reckoning Vedas (the scriptural texts) as 'Apramaana' (invalid, unauthentic means of knowledge) without the proper cause for doing so (Nishkaarana) will attach itself. Therefore, the seekers should per force presume (or ardently believe) with full faith — especially when, among the scriptural sentences pertaining to Upaasanas, there are sentences which, while describing the essence of Brahman, are not opposed to or contradictory to the sentences which propound the essential nature of Brahman as Pure Being-Consciousness-Bliss (Tattwa Boadhaka Vaakyas) — that they describe
the nature of Brahman which really exists in that manner. Not only this, but also the seeker should presume, even with regard to sentences which teach Upaasanas of objects which are not Brahman, that — "When there does not exist any contradiction to Pramaanaantara (other, alternative valid means of Knowledge), they are verily sentences teaching or instructing the Reality as It is (Yathaartha Boadhaka Vaakyas)." Only when the special qualities or characteristics mentioned in the Upaasana Vaakyas appear to be opposed to the Brahma Swaroopa Pratipadaka Vaakyas (sentences which preach the essential nature of Absolute Being-Consciousness-Bliss of Brahman), then the seeker should discern that they are taught in that manner for the purpose of meditation alone, and not that they too are really the qualities or features belonging to the essence of Brahman. For, the 'Tatpara Vaakyas' (sentences pertaining to the essential nature of Brahman) are stronger and predominant in their nature and purport than the 'Atatpara Vaakyas' (sentences meant for an inferior purport other than preaching the Reality in Its essence); because the Brahma Vaakyas are found invariably to signify or teach the essential nature of the Ultimate Reality of Brahman, they have a consummation (culmination) of their purport in that Brahma Swaroopa alone; whereas, because the Upaasana Vaakyas are 'Upaasana Pradhaana' (predominantly meditation-oriented), they do not always have the prime purport of the various descriptions of 'Brahma Swaroopa' mentioned in them. For this reason alone, if in 'Nirguna Vaakyas' (scriptural sentences teaching Upaasanas devoid of any special characteristics), which agree with or suit the 'Saguna Roopa' (the Reality associated with adjuncts with special qualities or characteristics), then the seeker should discern that these are meant to signify the 'Vibhootis', profound and extra-ordinary excellences of the Supreme Lord (i.e. Ishwara or Brahman) and thereby to praise or eulogise that Reality. For, it cannot be accepted that really, or in the ultimate analysis, Brahman, the Absolute, Transcendental Reality, exists both as 'Saguna' and 'Nirguna'. For this reason alone, although the Sootrakaara (Shri Baadaraayanaachaarya) has taught that the 'Dahara Vaakya' (Upaasana Vaakya) pertaining to Dahara Vidya, which propounds 'Brahma Swaroopa' in the Chhaandogya Upanishad 8-1-1 and in the Brihadaaranyaka Upanishad 4-4-22, the sentence which teaches the unity of purpose or identity between 'Vijnaanaatman' and 'Nirguna Brahman' are one and the same, the Bhaashyakaara (Shri Shankaraachaarya) has described (or expounded) that the seeker should discern that — "One should add up the special characteristics found in the Nirguna Vaakya to the Saguna Vaakyas of the Chhaandogya Upanishad and then carry on the meditation, as also conceive that the Saguna Visheshanas (the special characteristics) found in the Saguna Vaakyas of the Brihadaaranyaka Upanishad do
signify the 'Vibhootis' (profound excellences or manifestations) of Nirguna Brahman alone." Although the Brahman which is referred to or taught in both these contexts (in Chhaandogya and Brihadaaranyaka Upanishads) is one and the same, in Chhaandogya Its 'Upaasya Roopa' (form that is to be meditated upon) is taught; whereas, in Brihadaaranyaka Its 'Jneya Roopa' (the essential nature of Pure Being-Consciousness-Bliss which is to be cognized or Intuited as the Ultimate Reality) is taught.


XXIV. SPIRITUAL PRACTICES (SAADHANAS) FOR AATMA VIJNAANA (INTUITION OF SELF)

177. Although Atman is our very core of Being, the common run of people are not Intuiting or cognizing Him as a result of Ajnaana (a lack of absence of Self-Knowledge). Therefore, there is an indispensable need of cognizing Him. This Self-Knowledge (Intuition) is called in the scriptural texts by words or terms like — 'Darshana', 'Vijnaana', 'Laabha' etc. Although in the scriptures both — (i) the special Knowledge (Vijnaana) that is to be obtained from Upaasanas which are of the form of purely conceptual knowledge and endowed with faith or belief and (ii) the Self-Knowledge attained through Jnaana (Intuition), which is of the essential nature of the cognition of the Reality (Vastu) as It is — are called by the same word or term, there exists a difference between the two. Though in the scriptural texts all the technical terms like Jnaana, Vedana, Upaasana, Vidya etc. are used as synonyms (Paryaaaya Shabda), these words do have the two meanings or connotations of — (i) Bhaavana (faith, belief, conceptual knowledge); (ii) Vastu Tantra Jnaana (the Intuitive, cognitive Knowledge or experience) of the Vastu, i.e. the Entity or Reality as 'It really is' or 'It really exists'. Following the conventions formulated by the present-day authors of Vedantic texts we will call the 'Vastu Tantra Jnaana' of the Ultimate Reality as It really exists (in Its essential nature of Pure Being-Consciousness-Bliss) by the term 'Jnaana', and the 'Dhyaana' (mental meditation or contemplation which is of the form of 'Bhaavana Roopa' i.e. concepts, beliefs, emotions, feelings) by the term 'Upaasana'.

2. Su. Bh. 4-1-1. p. 813.
178. **Shravana** (listening Intuitively to the scriptural teachings), **Manana** (reasoning or deliberating Intuitively upon those teachings) and **Nididhyaasana** (contemplating Intuitively the Ultimate Reality of Atman) — all these three are the direct, *Saadhanaas* which help cognize or Intuit Atman as He is or really exists in His essence *per se* and attain 'Vijnana' which is 'Vastu Tantra', i.e. unlike objective intellectual knowledge it is the Intuition or cognitive Knowledge entirely dependent upon the Reality *in esse*. But in order to attain 'Vijnana', which is of the form or nature of identification (*Abhimaana*) with a particular 'Devata' (deity), as oneself as a result of practising certain *Upasanas*, it is necessary for the ardent seeker to carry on continuously, to conceive of or to contemplate upon the form of the *Upaasya Vishaya* (the object of meditation), without allowing any alien concept, thought, feeling, emotion etc. to intervene or intrude in between.


179. 'Aatma Darshana' does not mean 'to objectify Atman or perceive Him by the valid means of one's sight' at all; it means 'to get established steadfast in the Intuitive Knowledge that — I am that Self alone'. Then in that event there does not remain any residual 'Aakaankshaa' (aspiration, innate desire) of the nature of — "I wish to cognize or Intuit Atman" — at all. *Shravana* means listening intently (Intuitively) to the scriptural sentences as also the Guru's (the spiritual preceptor's) explanatory sentences and cognize their meaning or purport; *Manana* means to reason out, ratiocinate, discern or deliberate upon (cognitively) what is being heard so as to be in consonance with *Yukti* (logical or dialectical devices or arguments); *Nididhyaasana* means to contemplate (Chintana) upon the *Vastu* (the Ultimate Reality of Atman) with all awareness, alertness and attention (*Lakshya*) so as to inculcate upon the mind the Intuitive experience of Atman and get fully established in that Reality (Intuition). Only if all these three aspects of direct spiritual practices are reconciled (all of them become one-pointed, fully in agreement), the *Samyag-Darshana* (the final, consummate Intuition) of the essence of the Absolute, non-dual *Brahman*-Atman Consciousness will accrue, but the 'Darshana' will not accrue to anybody and everybody by mere listening (*Shravana*) to the scriptural or preceptors's statements at all. (In the 'Bhaamati Vyaakhyaana', i.e. a commentary on Brahma Sootra *Bhaashaayas* of Adi Shankara, *Shravana-Manana-Nididhyaasana* have been described, quite contrary to the original *Bhaashaayas* of Adi Shankara, to be of the form or nature of *Dhyaana-Dhaarana* — and 'Darshana' as 'Samaadhi').

180. Some people may think that because Shravana, Manana and Nididhyaasana are Saadhanas to attain the 'Darshana' of Atman, they must be stipulations of the nature of scriptural injunctions. Although in words like ‘Drishtavya’, ‘Shroatavyaha’, ‘Mantavyaha’ and ‘Nidhidhyaasitavyaha’ the suffix ‘Tavya’ indicating or implying an injunction (Vidhi) is seen (on the face of them), there is no cause to reckon invariably that these are injunctions. For, the fact that — “To the extent these words beckon the seeker to pay attention towards the subtle subjective aspect of Atman (his own Self), after prompting him to turn back from or recede unto himself introvertedly and introspectively away from Anaatman, these words are ‘Pravartaka Vaakyas’ (inducing or prompting sentences) of the nature of injunctions” — we have already mentioned in section 65. In the absolute sense even in the workaday world too the knowledges that readily accrue from Shravana, Manana etc. (Shravanaaditi Jnaana) can never be stipulated as injunctions (Vidhaana) by any one; if any one says — “Look at this” or “Listen to this” — they mean thereby only that — “Pay your attention towards this” — and not as a command that — “You shall, do (attain) Darshana Jnaana” or “You shall, do attain Shravana Jnaana” — at all; for, Jnaana (Knowledge) accrues invariably in full consonance or agreement with Pramaana (the valid means of knowledge) and the Vastu (the object to be known), but not by means of Manushya Prayatna (human effort). This fact indeed we have previously mentioned in section 76. From this it becomes evident too that it is not necessary to learn from the scriptural texts the answer to the question — “How many times or how long human efforts like Shravana, Manana etc. should be repeated or continued?”; just as in the instance of — if it is said — ‘Pound the paddy’ — it is quite an evident and unequivocal statement which connotes or implies — ‘Till such time the rice (grain) is separated from the husk’ — alone, similarly it becomes self-evident that if it is asked as to how long or how many times the human efforts of ‘Shravana’, ‘Manana’, ‘Nididhyaasana’ should be performed or carried out, the answer would be — “Till one attains the Darshana of the intrinsic nature of ‘Aatmaswaroopa Vijnaana’ (Intuition of the essential nature of Pure Absolute Being-Consciousness-Bliss of Atman).” Shravana, Manana etc. are not, like the Karmas which are rites or rituals stipulated in the scriptural texts, Saadhanas stipulated by way of injunctions to be performed for the sake of attaining Adrishta Phala (invisible fruits, in other births or worlds); but they are verily ‘Upadesha’ (spiritual teachings), meant for Drishta Prayojana (visible benefits accruing here and now while living in this body). Therefore, the Vidhi Shabdas (words appearing to be injunctions), are used in the scriptural texts only to systematize by way of guidance in the manner — “You carry out Shravana, Manana etc. in such and such a manner.”

15. Su. Bh. 4-1-1. p. 813.
181. By the repetition of the statement of the type — "You must listen to the scriptural texts, deliberate upon or reason out those statements, contemplate upon the Entity or Reality signified by those scriptural statements" — many times in the scriptures it becomes evident that these spiritual practices (Saadhanas) should be repeated over and over again (Aavritti); besides, the literary meaning or connotation of the words — 'Upaasana' and 'Nididhyaasana' — are 'serving another without a break, continuously', 'meditating upon something without a break' alone. In statements used in our workaday world like — "He is performing Upaasana of the Guru"; "He is doing Upaasana of the Raaja (the King)"; "She is doing Dhyaana of her husband who has gone to another place" — by import, it is meant by these words of 'Upaasana' that the persons concerned are doing service as also remembrance continuously without a break. Because of the reason that Upaasanas, which are performed for the purpose of obtaining a result or fruit in due course of time, become stronger and stronger in accordance with the increase in the number of times they are repeated, those Upaasanas invariably need to be repeated. But in the case of 'Shravana', 'Manana' and 'Nididhyaasana', which are to be performed or practised in order to attain 'Brahmaatmatwa Darshana' (the Intuitive experience of the identity of Brahman and Atman), why should the seeker perform 'Aavritti' or repetition at all? — Such a doubt may arise in the minds of some people.

The solution for this doubt is: Because 'Shravana', 'Manana' and 'Nididhyaasana' are spiritual practices which yield 'Drishta Phala' they have to be practised per force till such time the 'Darshana' (Intuitive experience of the Self) is attained. If by performing mere Shravana alone one gets 'Darshana', then that 'Uttamaadhikaari' (supremely qualified person) does not have to practise any more Saadhana at all; but in the case of those who by means of one such mere (singular) 'Shravana' do not attain Darshana, they will have to do 'Aavritti' (repetition of those practices). It is in every one's experience that the meaning or purport of a sentence that is known to a little extent from listening to it once becomes completely and clearly known or understood by repetition of the Shravana of it. Because of the reason that through the 'Padaarththa Jnaana' (knowledge or cognition of the purport or meaning of the words) alone the 'Vaakyaartha Jnaana' (the knowledge of the purport or meaning of the entire sentence) accrues — naturally for the sake of 'Padaartha Viveka', i.e. deliberative thinking on the purport or meaning of the words, Shravana and Manana have to be repeated. Further, because of the reason that several phenomena like the body, the senses, the mind, the intellect, Vishaya Vedana (conceptual knowledge of the external or internal objects) etc. are misconceived in, or superimposed upon, Atman, the possibility of rescinding or sublating one each such superimposition by means of one each Avadhaana (attention
paid or directed towards each one of them) progressively might be availed of also. Therefore, in the case of those who attain the Intuitive experience of the Reality (Jnaana) by merely listening to the scriptural sentences (Vaakya Shravana) once only — because they get rid of Avidya, there is nothing to be done or practised by them at all. But in the case of such people who do not attain Jnaana, they will have per force to do or practise repeatedly Shravana, Intuitive listening etc. prior to their attainment of Intuitive experience of the Self. We have previously in section 74 refuted the theory of Prasankhyaana and such other theories which propound that such practices have to be continued even after the attainment of Jnaana (Self-Knowledge).


182. Some protagonists used to argue out in the manner — “Even after the Vedaanta Vaakya has signified Brahma in order to enable the Saadhaka to attain the Vijnaana as also help sublate or nullify (Pravilaya) the world of duality, the scriptures may restrain or bind, by way of a command, the seeker.” But this doctrinaire theory is shown to be not in consonance with reason by Shri Shankara. For, if it is contended that the world of duality (Prapancha) exists in reality and that the scriptures command or bind the seeker to sublate or nullify it, then because of the reason that no one can ever destroy or sublate what really exists, the scriptures will become invalid (Apramaana). Further, because of the reason that there will not, or cannot, be any scope or possibility for the world of duality to remain or survive even after it is sublated or nullified by one who is a Realized soul (Jnaani), even before this act of sublation now, at the present juncture, none of the external phenomenon of the world as also the physical body, the senses, the mind, the intellect etc. can possibly exist. On the other hand, if it is accepted that the world of duality is ‘Avidya Krita’ (projected as a result of ignorance; to wit, of the nature of misconception), then because of the reason that by ‘Brahmoapadesha’ (spiritual teaching or instruction about the Reality) alone both the ‘Brahma Vijnaana’ and the destruction (sublation) of the world of duality which is projected as a result of ignorance (Avidyakalpita) is made possible, there does not remain anything whatsoever to be done or performed after the spiritual instruction or teaching by the scriptures. Besides, in the argument propounding that the ‘Niyojijja Jeeva’ (the soul who is charged or enjoined with a duty by the scriptures) is belonging to the world of duality, because of the reason that he too gets destroyed or sublated along with the world of duality, the defect or predicament that — “Mukti does not accrue to anyone at all” — will have to be faced. But in the case of the spiritual teaching that — “Brahman Itself is misconceived as Jeeva because of Avidya” — because of the reason that by virtue of
the spiritual teaching or instruction (Upadesha) itself of the type — "Brahman alone thou art" — the Jeevatwa which is projected by Avidya gets sublated or rescinded (to wit, the basic misconception or delusion itself is rooted out), once again there is no scope for the 'Ni!Jooga' (enjoined duty) of 'Prapancha Pravilaya' (sublation of the world of duality) to arise at all. Because of the reason that Jnaana (Intuition) is 'Pramaanajanya' (a resultant product of valid means of Knowledge) as also 'Vastu Tantra' (invariably and inviolably dependent upon the reality of the object or the entity as it is or exists), neither that Jnaana can be attained by hundreds of empirical efforts or assertions nor by hundreds of sublations or refutations (Nishedha) to the effect that — "Jnaana can be destroyed or got rid of." Therefore, in this context there is no room or scope for a command (Niyoaga) for 'Prapancha Pravilaya'. Not only that but also if the scriptural lore is entirely 'Niyoaganishtha' (devoted exclusively in stipulating actions or rituals by way of injunctions), then the spiritual teaching that — "Jeeva is verily Aniyoajya Brahman (Metaphysical Reality beyond any stipulations)" — will be flouted. Further, if the scriptures themselves preach on the one hand that — "Thou art verily Aniyoajya Brahman" — and advise as a stipulation (Niyoaga) in the manner — "You make an effort to attain Brahma Vijnaana (Intuition)" — on the other hand, then it becomes tantamount to saying that the scriptural sentences have a purport of signifying or teaching two meanings mutually contradictory, and thereby the scriptures lose their validity or authenticity. Not only that, but again the defects of — (i) giving up or discarding the spiritual teachings regarding the Ultimate Reality which are clearly seen to have been enunciated in the Upanishadic lore or Shrulis; (ii) imagining or misconceiving 'Niyoaga' (mandatory stipulation of effort), as also (iii) the defect of imagining or misconceiving Liberation (Moksha) to be Adrishta Phala and, in addition, to consider it to be Anitya (non-eternal) also will attach itself to the protagonists of 'Prapancha Pravilaya Vaada'. Therefore, it can never reasonably be accepted that — "Jeeva is bound by mandatory stipulations or injunctions (Niyukta) by the scriptures so as to be able to achieve 'Prapancha Pravilaya'." Hence, just like the doctrinaire teaching that — "The job or duty of the Shaastras is to stipulate by way of injunctions particular Kriya to be performed invariably" — the doctrinaire teachings of 'Niyoaga Vaadins' (protagonists of the theory of mandatory stipulation of injunctions of the type) — "The scriptural responsibility is only either to stipulate a particular action or ritual (Karma) for the sake of Pravritti (continued progress in active worldly life) or to stipulate a particular action or ritual for the sake of Nivritti (retiring from the world)" — are also Avaidika (contrary to the Vedic teaching). Besides, it is seen in our workaday world by mere 'Vastu Nirdeshana' (pointing out towards an object of Knowledge) in the manner — "This is a rope, not a snake" — one gets
Jnaana (cognition of the object) and therefrom attaining one's desire fulfilled too.


183. Now it becomes quite evident that there is no content or strength in the argument — "Because of the fact that even after 'Shravana', 'Manana' and 'Nididhyaasana' are stipulated as injunctions — (i) the 'Brahma Jnaana' (Intuition) is necessarily 'Vihita' (that which is stipulated by mandatory injunction alone); (ii) Jeeva is invariably 'Niyukta' (one who is directed to be engaged) in attaining 'Brahma Jnaana' as per the scriptural injunctions alone; and not that merely by the Vedas mentioning or stating the 'Brahma Swaroopa' they become 'Krita Kriiya' (the valid means or authentic sources which have fulfilled their purport or goal)." For, we have already stated in section 180 that— "In the direct, Intuitive spiritual practices (Saadhana) of Shravana, Manana and Nididhyaasana it is taught that the seeker should re-direct or concentrate his full attention (Lakshya) towards his own Self (Atman or Brahman) alone and not that in the Vedas (i.e. Upanishads) Jnaana (Intuition) Itself is stipulated by way of injunctions." We have also elucidated in the previous sections 181-182 above that — "Just like Shravana, both Manana and Nididhyaasana too are meant for attaining Brahma Vijnana (Intuition of Brahman) alone and not to teach or preach that even after the attainment of Self-Knowledge there remains any Kartavyaanta (other duty, action or responsibility remaining to be performed or discharged)." Therefore, for a true seeker (Saadhaka) after the attainment of 'Brahma Vijnana' there does not remain or subsist any duty or responsibility whatsoever, nor any Kriiya (actions, obligations) for the Shaastras.

184. Although 'Nididhyaasana' (Intuitive contemplation) taught by the scriptures for the ultimate purport of attaining 'Samyaga Jnaana' (Intuitive experience, in other words, Self-Knowledge) is also 'Dhyaana' (a mental meditation) indeed, there is a great difference between this Intuition and Upaasana, of the nature or form of a conceptual belief, faith or feeling (Bhaavana Roopa). If examined in their fundamental essence 'Nididhyaasana' is an effort to contemplate Intuitively in accordance with the very essence of Being of the object of contemplation, i.e. the Self or Pure Consciousness, culminating in the consummate Intuitive experience of this Pure Consciousness per se; but, on the other hand, Upaasana is a mental process
or action based on, or backed up by, belief or faith as stipulated or directed by the Shaastras. Further, by Nididhyaasana here and now while living in this body Self-Knowledge is attained (Jnaana Praapti) as also Kaivalyja (the consummate non-dual experience of getting established, rooted in or Brahma Swaroopa) is attained. (In fact, this is the summum bonum of all human existence). This alone is called 'Dhyaana Yoga' in the Bhagawad Geeta. In the Kathoapanishad what is called 'Adhyaatma Yoga' is this 'Nididhyaasana' alone. For Upaasana the posthumous fruit of the form of attaining 'Apara Brahman' or 'Brahma Loaka Praapti', also called 'Krama Mukti', along with the resultant fruit of getting or obtaining 'Jagadaishwarya' (all the worldly riches, pleasures) etc. accrues; all that too is invariably acquired in the 'Samsaara Kshetra' (the region of transmigratory existence) alone. But the Aishwarya (riches or excellences) that is acquired by the 'Mukta', by virtue of his attaining 'Jnaana' (Intuition), is — from the Vyavaharaarika Drishti (empirical viewpoint) — unbridled and infinite; for, 'Brahma Jnaani' has verily become one with Brahman alone. But the 'Aishwarya' (worldly riches, powers) etc., that is acquired by Upaasakas is invariably limited and finite. In fact, all of them obtain or acquire their Aishwarya as the Supreme Lord's dispensation, having been under His control; however, they will not gain the Aishwarya (power) of creating, sustaining and destroying the world of duality; that supreme power ever rests exclusively with the Supreme Lord, the Creator. One who has attained Liberation through the doorway of (or by virtue of) Jnaana is devoid of a body (Ashareeri); for, 'Sashareeratwa' (embodiedness) is 'Mithyaa Jnaana Krita' (a resultant projection of misconception or a delusion). But for the Jnaani the mind does not exist as a separate entity or phenomenon at all; he has attained by virtue of Jnaana a supra-state of 'Amanastha' (no-mind-ness; in other words, his mind has lost all its content and substance to merge or become one with its very source, Atman). But one who has gained 'Mukti' (Liberation of the inferior kind, one that is stipulated in the scriptures, in a secondary sense) has a body caused by his Itchha (desire) as well as a mind alone. All these are differences in respect of the results or fruits accruing afresh. Nididhyaasana is a spiritual pursuit culminating or having its fruition, consummation in 'Swaanubhava' (one's own innate Intuitive experience of Atman or the Self).

30. G. Bh. 6-29. p. 300.
32. Su. Bh. 4-3-14. p. 892.
34. Br. Up. 4-4-7. p. 728.
36. Su. Bh. 4-4-10. p. 903.
37. Su. Bh. 4-4-12. p. 904.
38. a) Su. Bh. 4-4-5. p. 899.
   b) Su. Bh. 4-4-6. p. 900.
   c) Su. Bh. 4-4-7. p. 901.
40. Su. Bh. 4-4-17. p. 908.
41. Su. Bh. 4-4-18. p. 909.
42. Su. Bh. 4-4-19. p. 910.
185. *Brahman* is one and one only, Its Knowledge or Intuition too is one and one only; for, if there are many Knowledges or Intuitions, then barring one of them all the rest become delusions alone. Therefore, till one attains ‘Vijñaana’ (Intuitive experience of the Self) the seeker should keep on deliberating upon the ‘Brahma Swaroopa’ as propounded in the various sentences of the *Upanishads*. Whether the sentences are of the apparent form of ‘Vidhi’ (injunctions) indicating special features of the type of — ‘Anandatwa’, ‘Vijñaana Ghanatwa’, ‘Sarvakatwa’, ‘Sarvaatmatwa’ etc. or sentences indicating by way of ‘Nishedha’ (refutation of the various qualities or special features) of the type of — ‘ Astrophatwa’, ‘Ananutwa’, ‘Ahriswatwa’, ‘Adheergatwa’ etc. — all of them the seeker should reconcile with Brahman, the Ultimate Reality, which is non-dual and Absolute in its essence. Thus all the ‘Shravana’, ‘Manana’ and ‘Nididhyaasana’ collectively or collaterally understood will help cognize or Intuit the Self as the Ultimate Reality. In the case of Upaasana, the seeker should collect together all statements or details pertaining to a particular kind of Upaasana from all the *Upanishads* and meditate upon it.

43. Su. Bh. 3-3-1. p. 644. 45. Su. Bh. 3-3-33. p. 706. 44. Su. Bh. 3-3-1. p. 663. 46. Su. Bh. 3-3-5. pp. 651, 652.

186. Because it is propounded that the *Upaasya Brahman* is one and the same, it is not possible to meditate upon Brahman by blending all the ‘Brahmoapaaasananas’ (meditations stipulated in the scriptures about Brahman). For, as in different Upaasananas different Dharmas (special qualities or features) have been stipulated and by virtue of those various features, the Brahman which is to be meditated upon or objectified also is different (for each one of such Upaasananas). In addition to this, to meditate by combining or blending all these Upaasananas also is futile. For each one of these Upaasananas the fruit that accrues is ‘Brahma Saakshaatkaara’ (materialisation of Brahman in the form in which It is meditated); so, when by means of one meditation or Upaasana, the fruit of ‘Saakshaatkaara’ is attained, where is the need for another? Further, it is not possible to blend or combine in this manner and then meditate. For, to achieve Saakshaatkaara it is necessary for attaining concentration of the mind (Aikaagrya) by means of a singular type of Pratyaya (steadfast concept), but if all the Upaasananas are combined or blended, then ‘Chitta Vikshepa’ (dispersal, scattering of the mental attention) takes place. (Thereby, the practice will defeat the very purpose for which meditations are prescribed as spiritual practices or disciplines to be carried out for a long time). Hence, by choosing any particular Upaasana and adding up all the special features or details of that particular Upaasana which are
stipulated in the various scriptures (Upanishads), the seeker should keep on meditating till 'Saakshaatkaara' is attained.

47. Su. Bh. 3-3-58. p. 750. 48. Su. Bh. 3-3-59. p. 753.

187. There is no rule of law as regards the question — "When, at which time, where, at which place and in which direction when the seeker sits with his face towards that particular direction, does the Knowledge (Jnaana) of that 'Brahma Vastu' (the Ultimate Reality of Brahman) accrue?" For, that Intuitive Knowledge is 'Vastu Tantra' dependent upon the Vastu (the Ultimate Reality) as It really is. In the case of 'Karmaanga Upaasanas' (meditations subservient to the scriptural Karmas or rituals), because they have to be necessarily carried out subject to Karma Vidhi (stipulations as injunctions in the form of certain rites or rituals), in order to practise or carry out those meditations there is no need to consider separately details like Aasana (postures), Sthaana (place), Dik (direction) etc. But in the case of the other remaining Upaasanas — whether it is Nididhyaasana for attaining Jnaana or whether it is Upaasana, which is 'Purusha Tantra' (within the purview and control of the seeker or person so practising) for the sake of Saakshaatkaara — both Saadhanas will have to be per force done or performed in a squatting position or posture alone. For, the mind of one who keeps moving gets distracted or dispersed or scattered; if one does it standing, it will not be possible for the mind to concentrate and deliberate upon a subtle matter or phenomenon; if the seeker does it in a sleeping posture, he may get into sleep. For that reason alone, in the Smritis it has been advised that for performing Upaasanas a steadfast or steady posture (Sthira Aasana) should be practised for a long time. However, there are no rules or regulations whatsoever with regard to Dik (the cardinal directions), Desha (place) and Kaala (time of performance); it is sufficient if the mental state and temperament are congenial or helpful for the mind to be one-pointed or with full concentration. For, in order to carry out Upaasana successfully concentration or one-pointedness of the mind alone is necessary.


50. Su. Bh. 4-1-10. p. 832.

188. We have stated in section 181 that the technical terms of 'Nididhyaasana' and 'Upaasana' themselves suggest or signify that they are 'repetitions of the mental concepts (Manoavritti Aavrirtti), is it not? Because 'Nididhyaasana' is to be practised over and over again for attaining 'Samyag Darshana' (Self-Knowledge or Intuition), as soon as 'Darshana' (Intuitive experience) is attained the seeker may stop it or discontinue it. On the other hand, Upaasanas — especially which yield
results or fruits of the form or nature of 'Abhyudaya' (material progress and prosperity), occurring in due course of time and bearing fruits of 'Apara Brahma Praapti' etc. and which are of the nature of 'Bhaavanaa' (emotional feelings or beliefs) — have to be practised continuously till death. For, by virtue of, or based on, the 'Antya Pratyaya' (the singular concept or steadfast emotional feeling that the seeker had practised ardently prior to death) alone the 'Adrishta Phala' (the invisible, unknown future result or fruit) has to accrue posthumously. Even for 'Karmas' if they have to yield their respective fruits in future lives or births, they desiderate 'Bhaavanaa Vijnaana' (conceptual knowledge) which is held on to steadfastly, continuously till the time of death; therefore, for Upaasanas too 'Bhaavanaas' (beliefs, emotional feelings etc.) are invariably needed in the form of 'Aauritti' (repetitions) indeed.


189. Just as by practising Upaasanas till death an 'Adrishta Phala' in another birth accrues by virtue of 'Bhaavanaa Vijnaana' (the conceptual knowledge), which in turn is of the form or nature of the last steadfast 'Pratyaya' (conviction or settled belief) alone, it is not possible to stipulate by way of an injunction that the seeker has perforce to practise repeatedly 'Aatma Pratyaya Santaana' (continuous cognitive or Intuitive Knowledge of the Self). For, when the Mithyaa Jnaana (false, delusive knowledge pertaining to Atman) is sublated by means of Aatma Pratyaya (Intuition of the Self) as neither the conceptual, cognitive knowledge of Anaatman (not-self) nor their memories can possibly subsist or continue; further, because the Intuitive (cognitive) experience of the type — “All this Anaatman is non-eternal, full of Duhkha and impurity, but, on the other hand, Atman is of the essential nature totally different from that Anaatman” — then, there is no scope or cause for the occurrence of 'Aatmaikatwa Vijnaana' (Intuition of the non-dual essence of the Self) keeps on occurring or gushing forth continuously. Hence, there is no need for the scriptures to stipulate by way of injunctions (Vidhi) for the Jnaani.

Some people are of the opinion that — "To one who has attained 'Aatma Pratyaya Santaana' (continuous cognitive knowledge of the Self) alone by virtue of the 'Antya Pratyaya' it is possible to get rid of Avidya or destroy it, and for this reason the seeker should practise repeatedly and continuously 'Aatma Jnaana' or Self-Knowledge (Intuition).” But this opinion is not correct; for, if by means of the first Jnaana (Intuitive Knowledge) Ajnaana (ignorance) is not sublated or removed, then that
Intuitive Knowledge is not the true Jnana at all; if, on the other hand, ignorance is removed, there is no purpose whatsoever to be served by the second Jnana. Therefore, that Aatma Pratyaya — whether it is the first Jnana or the final Jnana; whether it is continuous or discontinuous — that which sublates, falsifies or removes Avidya alone is the true, genuine Jnana (Intuition). After the attainment of that Jnana, there does not remain anything whatsoever to be done or performed for a Jnani (a Realized soul). But in the case of Upaasanas the scriptures themselves affirm that the Antya Pratyaya, at the time of death, is necessary for the fruit of the Upaasana to accrue. Because of the reason that at the time of death the final belief or conceptual knowledge (Bhaavanaa) that is uppermost or prevalent in the mind of the dying Upaasaka is necessary for attaining the invisible fruit in that case, it is not possible to imagine or conceive that after performing or practising Upaasana for a particular period of time the Upaasaka may give up or stop that practice.


190. We have previously stated in section 167 that — "Because to a Brahma Jnani at the very moment of attaining Jnana itself ‘Jnana Praapti’ accrues, once again for its sake there is no Gati, Utkraanti etc." But in the case of an Upaasaka, because of the reason that for the meditations the end fruit or result to be acquired is ‘Kaarya Brahman’ which is to be found in a specified place (like Svarga Loaka, Brahma Loaka), for the Upaasaka there is every possibility of Gati, Utkraanti etc. At the time of death he leaves the body through the Sushumnaa Naadi alone which is situated in the cerebral region. Besides, it is stipulated by way of an injunction in the scriptures as part of certain Upaasanas the Upaasaka should constantly be contemplating upon the path by which he has to traverse or transmigrate via the doorway of the Naadi. Hence constantly practising the contemplation on that particular Gatt (path of transmigration), in accordance with the directives or instructions stipulated in the scriptures, the Upaasaka traverses via the doorway of the subtle nerve (Naadi) alone — called ‘Devayaana Maarga’ — and attains Brahman.

58. Su. Bh. 4-2-17. p. 865.

XXV. MUKTI SAADHANAS

191. There are scriptural sentences stipulating in the manner — “One should perform Karma till one is alive.” There are Smriti statements to the effect — “One should never give up Karma.” Therefore, if
in case *Moaksha* is not gained by means of *Karma*, the purpose for which *Karmas* are stipulated by way of injunctions will be futile. For these reasons, some people were believing that *Karmas* alone are the valid means for *Moaksha*. This doctrinaire theory is opposed to Shrutis and *Yukti*. The scriptures affirm that Liberation which is eternal cannot be attained by means of *Punya* (religious merits) gets destroyed — "Because *Moaksha* is *Akritaka* (not a resultant fruit of action), it is not the effect of *Karma*" — (*Mundaka Upanishad* 1-2-12); "The world that is won or gained by means of *Punya* (religious merits) gets destroyed" — (*Chhaandogya Upanishad* 8-1-6); "When the fruits of *Karma* get exhausted, the person returns to this world to do or perform actions" — (*Mundaka Upanishad* 1-2-12, *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad* 4-4-6). **The effect or resultant fruit of *Karma* is one of the four types, viz. *Utpaadya* (produced), *Vikaarya* (transformed or changed), *Samskaarya* (refined, cleansed) and *Aapya* (acquired); but *Moaksha* is not one among these four at all. We have mentioned previously in section 158 that, for that reason too, *Moaksha* cannot accrue from *Karma*. The scriptures reiterate that — "By means of *Brahma Jnaana* (Self-Knowledge) *Annitiatwa* (immortality), which is the *Parama Purushaartha* (the *sumnum bonum*, destination of all human effort and existence) in attained or comes to fruition" — (*Taittiriveya Upanishad* 2-1). Therefore, the *Vaidika Siddhaanta* (the final spiritual teaching of all the *Vedic* lore) is that — "By means of *Jnaana* (Intuition) alone *Moaksha* is attained."


192. Some people may ask the question: "If *Moaksha* does not accrue from *Karma*, then why at all *Karma* has been stipulated in so many ways in the scriptures?" The fruits or benefits alone are the goal kept in view for *Karma*; those who do not have any *Kaama* (desire) will invariably not need any fruit or benefit. Therefore, in order to instruct (stipulate) various *Saadhanas* (spiritual practices or disciplines) to gain or acquire their own respective fruits needed or desired by the ‘*Kaamis*’ (desirous people) *Karmas* have been stipulated in the Vedas. In our workaday world *Kaamis* are in great numbers, whereas *Mumukshus* (those people desirous of Liberation) are small in numbers. We should not doubt in the manner — "Because in the scriptures no fruits or benefits have been mentioned for ‘*Nitya Karmas*’ (the daily routine rituals or duties), from those *Nitya Karmas*, *Moaksha* may accrue." But, if no fruits or benefits have been mentioned for any particular kind of *Karmas* (in the scriptures), there is no authoritative or valid support to conclude that for such *Karmas* only *Moaksha* is the fruit. Of course,
both the Shrutis and the Smritis mention that for Nitya Karmas too ‘Punjya Loaka’ (worlds of merit) are the fruits that accrue; because Moaksha is ‘Nityasiddhha’ (eternally or ever existent), it is not a fruit or benefit to be acquired afresh by means of Karmas, and this truth we have mentioned previously in section 158.


193. Without properly understanding the purport of the Vedantins’ statement that — “Moaksha means being established in, or becoming one with, the Aatma Swaroopa” — some Meemaamsakas (who used to uphold that Karma Kaanda portion of the Vedas is to be given predominance over the Jnaana Kaanda, which, they used to say, is secondary or subservient to Karma Kaanda, i.e. Arthavaadha) used to argue out that this Phala (fruit of Liberation) accrues from Nitya Karma alone. Their argument was as follows: “If Kaamyaa Karma (actions or rituals done or performed for achieving the fruit of a particular desire) and ‘Nishiddhha Karma’ (actions or deeds forbidden by the scriptures) are or avoided, then both the good and the bad fruits of actions are prevented or eliminated; if one keeps on doing or performing Nitya Karmas, then the resultant ‘Pratyayaaya’ (bad effect of not performing one’s duties or discharging responsibilities stipulated by the Dharma Shaasstras, i.e. Karma Kaanda of the Vedas) will be necessarily avoided. If ‘Praaralxha Karma’ (the duties or responsibilities that the present birth is intrinsically tied up or associated with) is once experienced and exhausted, then there will remain no other cause for getting a body once again or for rebirth, at all.” Those Meemaamsakas were eventually concluding that — “Moaksha of the form or nature of remaining established in the essential nature of Atman Himself will be effortlessly (Ayatna) attained by means of or through the performance of the Karmas stipulated in the scriptures alone.”

This argument is not proper or reasonable. To wit, first of all it is not possible at all for any one to give up or avoid Kaamyaa or Nishiddhha Karmas; for, it is seen in our workaday world that even extremely wise or intelligent people repeatedly committing or performing small, trivial actions of demerit or mistakes; the Karmas done or performed in many previous births (Janmas) will remain (and they will per force have to be taken into the reckoning); at least, their resultant fruits must necessarily accrue. Apart from this, Moaksha, which is getting established in (or becoming one with) the essential nature of Atman without getting another body and eternally Liberated from Samsara (transmigratory existence), is not a thing or matter to be achieved by means of Karma; Moaksha is quite naturally and invariably the very Being or existence of every human being as his essential nature in esse.
By virtue of Ajnaana (the innate ignorance) alone we all human beings have believed in the manner — "We are embodied beings (Shareeri), who have to perform or discharge certain duties (Karmas)" — that is all. Because of the reason that Karma is the resultant effect of Kaama which in turn is caused by Avidya, Karma can never remove or help sublate Avidya or Ajnaana at all (to wit, since Ajnaana in accordance with this sequence is the prime cause for all Karmas or actions, whether they are physical or mental, the effects cannot possibly sublate their respective cause). The scriptures are proclaiming that — ‘Without attaining Aatma Jnaana (Self-Knowledge or Intuition), the destruction or sublation of Samsaara, which is 'Karmakrita' (a product or effect of action), can never possibly be attained at all." For all these reasons, the argument or contention (of the opponents) that — "By means of Nitya Karmas one can attain Moaksha" — is a mere figment of imagination alone; besides, by dint of the fact that — 'There is no scriptural support whatsoever for this doctrine' — Shri Shankara, in his Bhaashyas on Taalitreeiya Upanishad, the Geeta and the Brahma Sootras, has refuted this doctrine of the Meemaamsakas.

10. Su. Bh. 4-3-14. p. 889.
15. Su. Bh. 4-3-14. p. 888.

194. There is no room for a doubt of the type — "Even a Jnaani (a Realized soul) is not exempt from 'Pratyavaaya' (the ill effect of not performing or discharging one's stipulated duties or responsibilities) if he does not perform the Nitya Karmas. If Karmas are not the cause for Moaksha somehow or other, then the purpose of stipulating those Karmas by way of injunctions in a Jnaana Shaastra (scriptural text devoted to or pertaining exclusively to Jnaana or Self-Knowledge) will become futile." It becomes quite reasonable to believe or conceive that Karmas are stipulated by way of injunctions in order to remove or mitigate the Durita (sin, evil propensities) which are a hurdle or obstruction on the path to 'Jnaana Utpatti' (the attainment of Self-Knowledge). In truth, by means of Karmas performed with a deep devotion as an offering to Ishwara (the Lord) via Chitta Shuddhi (cleansing or purification of the mind) the right qualification or capability for Jnaana Nishtha (steadfast establishment in Self-Knowledge) as also the final culmination in Jnaana (Self-Knowledge, or, in other words, Intuitive experience par excellence) perse, will accrue. Blending the Karmas with Upaasanas (mental meditations) if the Saadhaka performs such Karmas invariably, those Karmas will become more effective and stronger. Therefore, the purport of stipulating by way of injunctions Karmas and Upaasanas in the Jnaana Prakarana (Chapter devoted to Self-Knowledge) is to
teach significantly that not only do those Upaasanas and Karmas yield their respective fruits (as stipulated in the scriptures) but also to indicate that they indirectly or sequentially (Parampara) give rise to Jnaana. The doctrinaire teaching that — "If one does not perform Karmas he suffers the ill effects like Pratyavaaya"— cannot reasonably be accepted because of it being opposed to the axiomatic truth that — "From an Abhava (non-entity, non-existent thing) Bhaava Utpatti (the birth or creation of an entity or existent thing) can never occur." The Smriti statement — "One who does not discharge or perform his duties or responsibilities (Karmas) becomes a Patita (a sinner or reprobate)" — (Manu 11-14) — is only or merely indicating that to one who does not perform Karmas the Durita Kshaya (removal or cleansing of sins, evil propensities) does not accrue. Besides, it is also mentioned in the Shrutis and the Smritis that for Jnaana Utpatti (the attainment of Self-Knowledge or Intuition) Karma as stipulated in the scriptures become the cause (in a sequential, indirect manner, Parampara).


195. Some other people were arguing out in the manner — "If Karma is not exclusively a means (Saadhana) for Mukti, then Karma associated with Jnaana can be the valid means. Even though curds is an enemy (to wit, it is not congenial or helpful food) for illness with high temperature, when it is mixed with sugar it serves as a Pathya (permissible diet). Poison too, when associated with Mantra (a Vedic verse addressed to a deity), does not cause death; in the same way, Karma blended with Jnaana may help attain, or give rise to, eternal Moaksha."

This doctrine too is not proper. And Shri Shankara has established and elucidated this fact. The Yukti or logical device that — 'A thing, which is a Kaarya (an effect), is Anitya (non-eternal)' — is applicable to this doctrinaire theory mentioned above. The Samuchhayawaddins (protagonists of the theory of blending of Karma with Jnaana) have not clarified as to what is meant by 'Jnaana'. If it is contended that Upaasana (mental meditation) alone is Jnaana then, in that event, Karma will only, at best, get the power or strength to yield another fruit or benefit by the association with Upaasana, but to affirm that Karma will get the strength or capability of yielding another (superior) eternal fruit or benefit, there is no valid means or evidence (Pramaana) at all. Because we have previously shown and exemplified in section 165 that the effect (or end product) of Upaasana too is a relative immortality (Aapekshika Amritatwa), Upaasana which is blended with Karma will yield the Amritatwa (immortality), which is
its own fruit or effect alone, faster or earlier, but it cannot at all falsify or refute the Nyaya, i.e. axiomatic (or logical) truth, that — “That thing which is an effect is always non-eternal.” It is never possible to establish or prove that — ‘Karma will produce or yield a thing which is eternal (i.e. real or immortal)’ — quite contrary to this above axiomatic truth or teaching merely by means of the support or on the strength of any (scriptural) sentence or statement whatsoever. On the other hand, if it is contended that Vastu Tantra Jnaana (the Intuitive Knowledge of Reality as It is) is Its Jnaana (Self-Knowledge), then because of the reason that co-existent with such Self-Knowledge there is no possibility or scope for the existence of any conceptual knowledge of Kriya (action), Kaaraka (the valid means of action), and Phala (the fruit of action), the theory of Jnaana Karma Samuchhaya (a blending of Self-Knowledge with physical or mental action itself) will not be proper, reasonable; besides it cannot be sustained by any logical argument whatsoever. The scriptures too affirm that by virtue of Jnaana the ‘Kriya-Kaarakha-Phala’ triad is destroyed or sublated. Even after one gets the Intuitive Knowledge or conviction based on, or culminating in, one’s own Intuitive experience of the type — “This is surely unreal” — to insist or assert that a conceptual knowledge will be born in the manner — “This is real, I should now perform an action” — is opposed to Pratyaksha (perceptual knowledge or experience) as also to the Shruti Vaakya (the scriptural texts or statements). Any one may here in this context argue out in the manner — “We can say that though Moaksha is eternal, Jnaana Karma Samuchhaya will remove or destroy the Pratibandha (the obstructions, hurdles) in the path of Moaksha”; but that argument too will not be proper or reasonable. For, the fact that — ‘Karma and Vidyta (Jnaana) have their respective but different fruits or benefits’ — is stated in the scriptures; but nowhere in the scriptural lore it is stated that their fruit is Moaksha Pratibandha Nivritti (removal of the hurdles or obstructions for Liberation). Therefore, Samuchhayaavaada (the doctrinaire theory of blending Jnaana and Karma) itself is not proper or justifiable.


XXVI. UTILIZATION OF JNAANA SAADHANAS

196. In the Shrutis not only has it been stated that by ‘Aatma Jnaana’ alone the seeker attains Mukti but also it has been affirmed
clearly that without Self-Knowledge (Intuition) 'Brahma Praapti' is not possible at all by any other means or spiritual practices (Saadhanas). But it appears as though at several places or in several contexts there are statements in the scriptural texts which imply that Karma, Upaasana, Yoga etc. are Mukti Saadhanas (spiritual practices for the attainment of Liberation or Beatitude). Therefore, it becomes quite necessary to know clearly without mixing up one spiritual practice with another as to what exactly is the proper place and status of each of these Saadhanas. If we at the outset understand or discern that — "Because of the reason that all the rest of the Saadhanas are either pragmatically helpful as aids or accessories (Sahakaari Saadhanas) or indirectly helpful in a sequential order (Parampara Saadhanas) in our efforts to attain Jnaana (Self-Knowledge), which is the summum bonum of all human existence and endeavour, and because Jnaana (Intuition) is the direct and immediate Saadhana which helps attain Moaksha here and now while alive in this body — these other Saadhanas (i.e. Sahakaari and Parampara Saadhanas) are treated in a secondary sense (Gouna) by way of Vyavahaara (purely from an empirical viewpoint), in a general scheme of Moaksha Saadhanas" — then the mutual contradictions among these scriptural sentences will disappear to a great extent as also many misconceptions in this regard will be totally removed.

1. Su. Bh. 3-4-1. pp. 758, 759.

197. Karmas are stipulated by way of injunctions in the Karma Kaanda for the sake of directing a seeker that he should necessarily perform those Karmas which pertain to 'Aashrama Karmas' (duties or responsibilities related to or enjoined upon persons belonging to the respective four Aashramas, viz. Brahmacharya, Gaarhastya, Vaanaprastha and Sannyasa); those stipulations mentioned in the Upaasana Prakarana (a Chapter devoted to mental meditations) are Karmas performed in association with Upaasanas meant as aids helpful for the achievement of 'Brahma Praapti' (going, after death, to the other world of the Creator Brahma), which is the resultant fruit of Upaasanas; the Karmas which are stipulated in the beginning of the Jnaana Prakarana (the Chapter devoted to teaching Jnaana) are meant for the sake of 'Jnaana Utpatti' (attainment of Self-Knowledge or Intuition). One and the same Karma being stipulated in the scriptures as an 'Aashrama Karma' as well as for Jnaana Utpatti is not contradictory; for, in general the Aashrama Karma is stipulated in the manner — "The seeker should perform the Karma till death" — but in the case of 'Mumukshus', there is a scriptural stipulation that those very Karmas like Yajna (sacrifice), Daana (charities), Tapas (penance) etc. become the cause (instrumental) for Jnaana Utpatti. If the scriptural teaching which we
have previously mentioned in section 194 is kept in mind by the readers and that is — "Karma is thus instrumental for Jnaana Utpatti only via or by virtue of their efficacy in destroying the demerits (Durita Kshaya) which one has acquired by previous acts but not directly (Saakshaat) i.e. not Intuitively and instantaneously (here and now)" — then the fact as to what exactly is the place or status of Karmas among the Moaksha Saadhanas becomes very clear.

8. Su. Bh. 3-4-33. p. 791.

198. Because of the reasons that by means of Karma alone the Durita Pratibandha (the impediments or obstructions of demerits like psychic bad propensities) have necessarily to be got rid of, and further, because of the reason that without those Pratibandhas being destroyed there is no scope or possibility whatsoever for anyone — whosoever he may be — to achieve Chitta Shuddhi (psychic or mental purification or refinement in the form of introvertedness capable of introspection), and therefrom attain Jnaana Utpatti, the true seekers should not get deluded to believe that Karma alone exclusively is the Moaksha Saadhana. For, there is no rule of law that through the means or path of Pratibandha Kshaya (the destruction of the impediments) alone Jnaana accrues; Ishwara Prasaadah (the Supreme Lord's grace), Tapas (penance, austerity), Dhyaana (meditation) etc. are also suitable spiritual practices or Saadhanas for Jnaana. Apart from this fact, by virtue of Karmas performed in previous births themselves Chitta Shuddhi might have been acquired culminating in Pratibandha Kshaya and thereafter leading the seeker further on in the path of spiritual progress. For that reason alone, we have previously pointed out in section 13 that — “Even those people who have not performed ‘Aashrama Karmas’ may also be Adhikaaris (the qualified people) for Vedanta Jnaana (Self-Knowledge taught by Vedanta philosophy). Besides, because of the reason that the scriptures have stipulated Jnaana for people like Sannyasa Ins etc. also, it has to be deduced that — “Karmas are not, in the ultimate analysis or in the absolute sense, necessary for Jnaana (Intuition).” The human virtues or excellences like Ahimsa (non-injury), Brahmacharya (celibacy with consummate dedication for Self-Knowledge), Satya (speaking the truth always) etc. found in people in such Aashramas are very helpful aids for Jnaana. Especially with regard to Shravana, Manana and Nididhyaasana we have previously stated in section 178 that they are the direct and immediate spiritual practices for the attainment of Jnaana.

12. Su. Bh. 3-4-17. p. 770.
It should not be reckoned that because there are many Saadhanas for Jnaana, any person, whosoever he may be, may undertake or practise any one of those Saadhanas. For, by virtue of Adhikaara Bheda (differences in qualifications; to wit, people have different innate propensities or capabilities and in accordance with them suitable Saadhanas are prescribed or recommended in the scriptures) the Saadhanas to be undertaken or practised may vary from person to person. In other words, one who is Bahirmukhi (an extrovert) has necessarily to practise Karma Yoga. One who has achieved Chitta Shuddhi but aspires to get rid of Chitta Chaanchalya (fickle-mindedness or psychic capriciousness, waywardness) should necessarily perform Karma associated with Upaasana (mental meditations) or practise Karma Sannyaasa (total renunciation of Karmas born out of discrimination on spiritual truths or teachings) and then undertake spiritual devices or disciplines like Shama (control over the mind), Dama (control over senses), Uparati (introvertedness), Titeeksha (psychic equipoise or equanimity in the face of either adverse or favourable environmental conditions) etc. One who has attained Chitta Shuddhi as well as Chitta Ekaagrata (mental concentration) should listen to Vedantic teachings (Shravana) as propounded by the Shrutis (Upanishads). If by mere Shravana the seeker does not become Krita Kritya (a Realized soul having achieved every thing that is to be achieved as the Supreme Goal of human existence), then he should undertake or practise Manana and Nididhyaasana.


Any one may get a doubt of the type — "Why should not any person (whosoever he or she may be) without having had practised Shravana, Manana and Nididhyaasana, as taught in the Shaastras, acquire independently by himself (to wit, depending upon his own capabilities or excellences physical as also intellectual or psychic) the qualification or capacity to know or Intuit the 'Tattwa' (the Ultimate Reality of Brahman or Atman)?" He may also further ask the question — "If he can do so, then the Jnaana Saadhanas which are stipulated in the scriptures are rendered futile, is it not?" But for these questions or doubts also the answer is provided very clearly by the explanations or elucidations given above. One who is extremely meritorious, pious or virtuous may on the strength of the spiritual practices of Jnaana or Karma performed in his previous births without the help of any Saadhanas now (i.e. in the present birth) attain Jnaana (Self-Knowledge). Even so, merely on this count the Jnaana Saadhanas stipulated or expounded in the scriptures do not become futile. For Naimittika Kaaryas (effects or results produced by a particular cause like
Saadhana), the means may be one or more than one in number for each effect; to some people common Saadhana alone may be sufficient; to some others Saadhana which are Saguna (associated with some virtue or quality) alone may be needed. Although human beings need the physical eyes, which can only see in sunlight or any light, in order to perceive a form (Roopa) for creatures like a cat or an owl etc. mere eyes alone without the help of light are sufficient for the purpose (because such creatures have been endowed with eyes which can inherently see in the dark too); for Yogis (contemplative saints endowed with magical or mystic powers) merely their minds alone are sufficient. In the same manner, for a primordial Prajaapati (the first born or Supreme Person) the Jnaana and the Karmas performed in previous births (aeons) may be sufficient. But for the rest of the people, one or more than one Saadhanas among, say — Tapas, Guru’s Anugraha (grace of the spiritual preceptor), Shraddha (devotion, dedication), Aachaarya Seva (service of the preceptor), Shama-Dama-Uparati etc. and Shravana, Manana etc. — may be required. Among all these Saadhana, Shravana, Manana, Nididhyaasana directly and immediately (here and now), while the rest via or by way of Pratibandha Niurutti in the spiritual path or progress become the right means for the attainment of Jnaana (Self-Knowledge or Intuition).


201. There is scope for those who have not discerned or realized the purport or secrets of the proper utilization of the various Saadhana as delineated above to believe that if along with Karmas the other Saadhana are performed conjointly Jnaana may accrue quickly in a shorter period of time. This doctrine is apparently in consonance with the Shruti statement that — “One should perform Karma as long as he is alive”; the Smrti Vaakyay that — “Gaarthasthya (householdership) alone is the genuine Aashrama (stage of life)” — too is seemingly in consonance with the above teachings; they may further reckon that this is in agreement with the Geeta statement — “By virtue of Karmas alone Emperor Janaka and others attained Samsiddhi (Beatitude).”

But this conception is contradictory to Shruti Vaakyas, Smrritis, as also Yuktis (logical arguments, reasoning). To wit, Karma (either physical or psychic) is permissible, valid or suitable till the qualification or eligibility for ‘Dhyana Yoga’ (Nididhyaasana) is acquired only; but thereafter, the aspirant should practise the spiritual discipline of ‘Shama’ (control over the mind) alone — This teaching is very clearly propounded in the Geeta. The Shrutis teach that — “To a Brahma Samstha (one who is established in Pure Consciousness or Brahman here and now in this very life) alone Amritatwa (immortality, Beatitude) accrues, while by the rest of the spiritual seekers stationed in,
practising the duties or responsibilities meant for, other Aashramas, Punya Loaka (meritorious worlds) is obtained." Both in the Upanishadic lore and historical or mythological texts 'Sarva Karma Sannyasa' (the total, consummate renunciation of all Karmas or all religious as well as mundane acts) has been stipulated as a 'Jnaanaanga Saadhana' (a spiritual discipline subservient, as an aid or accessory to Jnaana). Therefore, it is not possible at all to perform or practise the introspective Dhyaana (meditation or contemplation) etc., which are internal at the psychic level (Antaranga Saadhanas) along with or associated with the Bahiranga Saadhanas (like external, extroverted) Karmas (physical acts, religious rites or rituals) etc. Because the Smriti statement pertaining to Ekaashrama (one of the four Aashramas, viz. Brahmacharya, Gaarhastya, Vaanaprastha and Sannyasa) is opposed or contradictory to the Shrutis, the former Smriti teachings should necessarily be discerned to have been mentioned only for the purport of eulogising or praising the merits of Gaarhastya. For the Geeta statement — "By means of Karma alone these people attained Samsiddhi" — it will have to be reckoned to mean either that those people gained a Siddhi which was of the form or nature of qualification for Jnaana, or although it was associated with Karmas, because the misconception of the form of distinctions like 'Kriya', 'Kaaraka' and 'Phala' was sublated or falsified by Jnaana (Intuition of the Self), the statement should be understood to be in praise or to eulogise Jnaana in the manner — "Those people were not bound by or affected by Karmas."
We have previously clarified in detail in section 195 that there is no scope or possibility whatsoever for Karmas to co-exist with Jnaana. Therefore, the Shruti statement that — "One should keep on performing Karmas" — can be alternatively interpreted as praise-oriented in the manner — "Although he is performing Karmas, because the Jnaani (Realized soul) has the Intuitive Knowledge of the Self, he, not having identification with his AkarLraaLma Buddhi), has no taint or blemish of being affected by those Karmas at all."
Therefore, the following creamlike, churned-out interpretation or meaning with regard to Saadhanas become established or determined: Whether they are mere Karmas or whether they are 'Upaasana Sahita Karmas' (actions associated with meditations), these Karmas if performed by a Mumukshu (aspirant for immortality) with an ardent desire to attain Moaksha (Liberation), either in this his present birth or in previous births but before the dawn of Jnaana Utpatti, become the principal means or root cause for Brahma Jnaana through the sublation or removal of the demerits — which are impediments on the spiritual path of Intuiting Brahman, the Ultimate Reality, and which were acquired in the past — commensurate with their intensity and strength; thereafter, those Karmas become, by virtue of Parampara (indirectly
and in a sequential order), the cause for Mukti, the final goal of human existence, which is attained actually as a result of Brahma Vidya, which in turn is attained by practising Antaranga Saadhanas (internal, introverted mental disciplines) like Shravana, Manana and Nidhidhyaasana, Shradhha, Taatparya (having exclusively Self-Knowledge as the final goal, destination).

19. G. Bh. 6-1. Intr. p. 271.
20. G. Bh. 6 (Intr.) p. 271.
22. Su. Bh. 3-4-20. p. 776.
23. G. Bh. 3 Intr. p. 126.
24. G. Bh. 2-10. pp. 43, 44.
25. Su. Bh. 3-4-14. p. 768.

202. In ancient times some people were arguing out in the manner — "If one gives up or renounces (Sannyaasa) the religious rites or rituals Karmas, which he has always to perform or observe till his death, then he gets the sin or demerit called Pratyavaaya; there is a Smriti statement that one should not take to Sannyaasa without discharging, or absolving himself from, Runatraya (three kinds of debts) towards (i) sages, (ii) deities and (iii) manes. Therefore, Sannyaasa is meant for people who are not qualified for performing Karmas."

This argument is contradictory to Shrutis and Yukti. For, in the scriptures Sannyaasa Aashrama, viz. is stipulated by way of an injunction, and it is considered and judged on par with, or on similar grounds of, the other Aashrama (Grihasthaashrama or Gaarhastya). Because there is a Shruti statement saying that — "One who is free from all attachment (Virakta) may become or take to asceticism (Sannyaasa) right from the first stage of a celibate (Brahmacharya), who has observed continence" — for such a person who has the virtue of continence or celibacy there is no room or cause for the sin or defect of giving up any Karma can attach itself. If such a sin (of Pratyavaaya) can affect him, then for every one the sin of giving up the Karmas (stipulated duties or responsibilities) of others in the other Aashramas (stages of life) will per force attach themselves; for, then in that event it will amount to saying that for every one every Karma is stipulated as an injunction by the scriptures. No one ever raises an objection of the type — "A Brahmachaari (celibate youth) attracts the sin or defect of renouncing the Karmas of a Grihastha." To a recluse, if he gives up his Dharma of practising virtues like Shama, Dama etc., the demerit or sin of Pratyavaaya may accrue; but if he gives up the Karmas which are stipulated for a Grihastha, there is no cause at all for his getting Pratyavaaya. If Pratyavaaya really accrues, then the Dosha (the defect or sin) stipulated in the scriptures may well attach itself. It is the same case with regard to 'Runatraya Dosha', mentioned above. There is no Runatwa (indebtedness) attaching itself to a Brahmachaari (a celibate);
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therefore, he may take up Sannyasa (asceticism) directly from his present stage of life of a Brahmacaari by giving up or renouncing all scriptural Karmas. Even to a Grihastha, Sannyasa (the fourth stage or Aashrama of asceticism) is stipulated by way of an injunction in the scriptures and so he too may renounce all Karmas and take to Sannyasa. This being the case, it should be discerned that 'Yaavajeeya Shruti' (the scriptural statement stipulating performance of Karmas as long as one is alive and till death) is meant for 'Amumukshus' (people who are not Mumukshus or those who do not aspire for Liberation or immortality).

In truth, if we seriously deliberate with insight, then there is no cause or room for Pratyavaaya which is Bhaavaroopa (of the form or nature of an existing thing or entity) being born or produced from Abhaavaroopa (of the form of nature of non-existent thing or phenomenon) of renouncing or giving up a Karma, attaching itself to any one at all. Even in the case of a Grhtastha we may deduce that the 'Akarana' (scriptural injunction about non-performance or renunciation of a Karma) suggests or signifies only that if he gives up or renounces Nitya Karma (his daily routine duties), he will not be able to get rid of the demerits or sins acquired or accumulated in the past (Durita Kshaya). This fact we have mentioned previously in section 194. Sannyasa is not a thing or a subject-matter desiderating no qualifications or capabilities (which are stipulated in the scriptures); for, in addition to, or apart from, the scriptural sentences stipulating as injunctions Sannyasa of all Karmas for both classes of people, viz. Jnaanis (Realized souls) and Mumukshus (aspirants for Liberation or immortality), there exist separately scriptural sentences which describe the manner or method in which even the 'Anadhikrita' or unqualified people (to wit, those, who either by virtue of birth or stage of life, are not qualified for Sannyasa, i.e. the fourth stage of life or Aashrama, at the present juncture) can take up or practise Sannyasa (renunciation). If we deliberate upon the comparative merits of strength or weakness of the various Saadhanas stipulated by way of directives or injunctions in the scriptures for Ajnaanis (the ignorant people), then it will be self-evident and thereby self-established that more than the Grihastha Karmas (a householder's duties as stipulated in the scriptures), which are associated with or involving Himsa (injury or cruelty to other beings) and such other demerits — the meritorious human excellences or virtues — like Amaanitwa (modesty, humility), Adambhitwa (pridelessness) etc. which are found in a Sannyasin (a recluse or an ascetic), who is predominantly (in a pronounced manner) full of Yama (Yamapradhaana) and who does not give any quarter or scope for the functioning of desires (Kaama Prawritti) — are immensely beneficial, helpful. Therefore, for
Mumukshus, Paarivraajya (a recluse's or monk's style of a wandering life) alone is Prashasta (excellently or admirably suited).

203. In ancient times some people had argued out in the manner — “Because it is stipulated in the Smritis that — ‘Sannyaasins too should wear sacred thread and possess Tridanda (a pole or stick with three knots) and Kamandalu (begging bowl used by recluses or monks), which are symbolic accessories significant for the fourth stage of Sannyaasa’ — Sarva Karma Sannyaasa (renunciation of all Karmas) is opposed to Shrutis and further that if Sannyaasins (ascetics) give up or renounce Karmas meant for them, they too will attract the demerit of Pratyauaaya.” But this ‘Smaarta Sannyaasa’ (asceticism stipulated in Smritis) is not ‘Jnaana Anga’ (a constituent part or essential requisite for Self-Knowledge) and it has fruits of the type of Brahma Loaka; but Shri Shankaraachaarya has taught that — “Quite different from this there exists one ‘Parama Hamsa Paarivraajya’ (an ascetic way of life of a sect of Sannyaasins which enjoins upon the practitioner to be contemplating continuously on the Ultimate Reality and be wandering about without any possessive or acquisitive propensities) alone as the ‘Vedoakta Jnaana Annga Sannyaasa’ (the genuine ascetic way of life which is the essential requisite for Jnaana and which is propounded in the Vedas); further, for a Parama Hamsa (an ascetic or recluse who is engrossed in the Intuition of the Self) barring human virtues or excellences like Shama, Dama etc., no other Karmas attach themselves or are enjoined in the scriptures.” A Parama Hamsa who is a ‘Mumukshu’ (an aspirant for Liberation) should, without performing any other Karmas, always and daily be immersed in, or occupied with, the practice of Intuitive contemplation on the essential nature of the Self (Dhyaana Yogapara). This is the teaching of the Geeta. The injunction that — ‘Renouncing the Tridandi, Kamandalu etc. the recluse should become a Parama Hamsa’ — is stipulated in the Jaabaala Upanishad.

204. There is every possibility of some people misinterpreting and misconceiving the purport of the Geeta Bhaashya statement that — “For a Sannyaasin the spiritual practice or discipline which he has to
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observe is to remain engrossed in 'Dhyaana Yoga' and there is no need for him to perform any other Karma whatsoever." They may get deluded by misconceiving this statement to mean either that — (i) Yoga denotes Chitta Vritti Niroadha (as taught in Patanjali's Yoga Shaastra or Darshana), which means suppression or repression of mental concepts as a spiritual practice; or (ii) emotionally-motivated Upaasanas of the type of 'Daharavidya', 'Shaandilya Vidya' etc. We have indeed mentioned previously in section 173 that various Upaasanas have different fruits or benefits and that indirectly in a sequential order (Parampara) they too may serve as (Parampara Saadhanas) spiritual practices which lead in due course to Jnaana. But whether he is a Mumukshu or whether he is a Sannyaasin, the Dhyaana Yogas which they have to practise as spiritual disciplines quite necessarily and exclusively are — (i) Aatmachintana (Intuitive contemplation); (ii) Nididhyaasana which is of the form or nature of Ekaagrata (one-pointed concentration), on the real essence of Atman to attain Self-Knowledge (Aatma Jnaana) and not Upaasanas (mental meditations). We have previously refuted in

section 65 the doctrinaire theories of those who were preaching that — (i) the Jnaana Vaakyas are there only to expound the object for the Upaasana Vidhi (scriptural stipulations by way of injunctions for the sake of mental meditations) and further that (ii) by means of Upaasanas alone Avidya is sublated or falsified. Here in this context the Yoga of the form or nature of 'Chitta Vritti Niroadha' especially is not in the least relevant; for, that 'Yoga' is not stipulated or taught in the Vedas. Without the attainment of Aatma Jnaana (Intuition of Self) Chitta Vritti Niroadha does not reach its fruition or consummation in toto at all. Merely by means of Yoga, Mukti does not accrue also. Mere Yoga philosophy (of Patanjali) too, like Saankhya (that school of philosophy founded by Kapila Rishi) is necessarily a 'Dvaita SiddhaanLa' (philosophical teaching culminating in duality) alone and hence for such Yoga Sidelhaanta there is no scope or room given in Vedantic (spiritual) teaching.


205. We have previously clarified here and there in sections 171, 195, 196 and 197 that — (i) because of the reason that Karmas and Upaasanas are Praavritti Roopa (of the nature of going in pursuit of an object), while Jnaana is Nivririt Roopa (of the form or nature of receding away from all empirical transactions and towards Liberation) there is no scope for blending or mixing these two disciplines, viz. Karmas or Upaasanas and Jnaana, and (ii) because of the reason that, although Karmas and Upaasanas are responsible for yielding their respective
fruits which are different, they are indirectly in a sequential order responsible to help attain Jnaana too, Karmas and Upaasanas are propounded in the Upanishads too, and this is quite reasonable or justifiable. But showing indifference to this distinction, some people had begun to unify both these Saadhanas expounding in the manner — "Jnaana Vaakyas are virtually Upaasana Vaakyas alone" — because of either a logical inference (Adhyaahaara) or because of treating the Jnaana Vaakyas as subordinate or secondary to another Upaasana Vidhi; we have previously in section 65 shown that this is not proper or reasonable.

In the past some other Advaitins had expounded that — "All Vedas are Nivruttipara (Liberation-oriented alone) and hence for that reason alone they stipulate as injunctions all Vaidika Saadhanas instructing that the seeker having enjoyed the fruits of the preceding Karmas or Upaasanas should consider that they are all leading to mortality (repeated births and deaths) and thereby aspire for Liberation." But to make a statement mixing up everything in this manner in a confused way is not proper. For, there is no valid evidence to say or assert that the Karmas or the Upaasanas, which have been stipulated by way of injunctions in the scriptures to be performed to achieve respective fruits, are, in truth, stipulated for Moaksha. If it were so, fruits of the type of Svarga (Heaven, the abode of Gods), Graama (a region), Pashu (cattle wealth) etc. should not have been mentioned at all. Besides, in this standpoint, because of the reason that either by means of Karmas alone Moaksha would have been attained or by means of Upaasanas alone Moaksha could be possibly attained, the scriptural sentences pertaining to Jnaana would have been rendered futile indeed. Therefore, it is reasonable or justifiable to reckon that the scriptures have stipulated various Kaamyna Karmas (actions, rites with respective desires in accordance with respective fruits desired). We have stated in section 194 that for Nitija Karmas (daily routine duties) a Punyaa Loaka (going to a celestial region of great merit) is the corresponding fruit, but if the same Karmas are performed without any desire or hankering after the fruit, the benefit accruing out of it is 'Chitta Shuddhi' (mental equipoise, purity, concentration). To exemplify the truth that — "The aspirants after Liberation, who have got rid of all desires (Nishkaama Mumukshus) by performing their respective Varnaashrama Karmas (rites or duties attached to their respective caste and stage of life) with a mental temperament of offering all of them with their respective fruits worshipfully to Parameshwara attain Aarsha Darshana (sacred, holy and profound Intuition) of the essential nature of Aadma Jnaana" — we come across instances or examples of sages, seers like Trishanku, Vaamadeva etc. in the Vedas.

On the other hand, in the Upaasana Vaakyas some forms have been stipulated for Brahman, the Ultimate Reality; we have already in section
182 refuted the doctrinaire theory of "Prapancha Pravilayavaadins" (protagonists of the theory of dissolving totally the world appearance), who were arguing out in the manner — "Those Upaasana Vaakyas too are in truth Jnaana Vaakyas alone meant to help know Brahman devoid of any forms through the means (or doorway) of Prapancha Pravilaya and they do not have any other purport at all." As regards those scriptural sentences in which first distinctions or special characteristics are described as being superimposed upon Brahman and later on those very distinctions or special characteristics have been sublated or rescinded, then in such contexts it may be feasible to argue or affirm that by virtue of Adhyaaroapa Apavaada Nyaaya those sentences are meant for or having the ultimate purport of teaching or propounding 'Aakaara Pravilaya' (dissolving completely the various forms or distinctions). But as regards those scriptural sentences in which special characteristics have been deliberately superimposed on Brahman exclusively for the purposes of Upaasana if in such contexts the meaning of Pravilaya (complete dissolution) is inferred or imagined, there will be the predicament of contradicting Shrutis because it will amount to our having given up the 'Mukhyaartha' (predominant meaning) and having imagined a 'Laxanaartha' (a symbolic meaning) only. Especially in contexts where special features of benefits or fruits have been stipulated or signified explicitly it is quite evident or clear beyond any doubt that Upaasana Vaakyas are not Advaita Boddhaka (sentences purporting to teach non-duality); because of the reason that the scriptural sentences which preach or propound Moaksha too are teaching 'Krama Mukti' (phased or graded Liberation), Shri Shankara has established that it is quite reasonable, justifiable to separate the Upaasana Vaakyas as a different category altogether. By this exposition, it is quite clear indeed that there is no harm rendered to the spiritual teaching (Siddhaanto) that — "Both Karmas and Upaasanas are indirectly in a sequential order (Parampara) aids or accessorical complements for Jnaana (Self-Knowledge or Intuition), which is the main Saadhana for Avidya Nivritti (sublation, falsification of ignorance, delusion)."


XXVII. JNAANI'S SENSE OF FULFILMENT

206. All spiritual practices or disciplines like Karma, Upaasana, Shama, Dama, etc. and Shravana, Manana, NididluJaasana — are the valid means alone for Aatma Jnaana indeed, but once the Self-Knowledge (intuitive experience of the Self) is attained there does not remain
anything to be done or performed whatsoever. To believe that even after Self-Knowledge (Aatma Jnaana) is attained there exist or remain certain duties or responsibilities to be discharged is contradictory to the Shrutis and Smritis. Besides, the viewpoint or argument that even after the Intuition (Anubhava) of the type — "Atman, who is Nitya Mukta (eternally, perennially Liberated, free) and who is not either a Kartru (an agent of action) or a Bhoktru (an enjoyer) — that Atman Himself I am" — there still exists or remains something to be done or performed — is (a misconception or delusion) opposed to Yukti (logical argument, reasoning).


207. In Brhadaaranyaka Upanishad (3-5-1) it is stated that — “Even after acquiring Paandilya (scholarly erudition), which is of the form or nature of cognizing the essence of the Self (Aatma Jnaana Roopa), without anything left out of reckoning (Nissesha), the seeker should pursue spiritual practices like 'Baalya' and 'Mouna'.” Besides in the Geeta (18-54,55) it is taught that — “One who is established in Brahman (Brahma Bhoota) should attain Parabhakti (Supreme devotion), know or cognize Paramaaatman after clearly identifying Him and then should enter into Him.” If one examines all such statements, it will have to be acknowledged that — “Even after one attains Aatma Jnaana, there remains something to be done or practised.”

But, as we have clarified above, because this opinion (or conclusion) is opposed to Shruti and Smriti texts, Nyaya, the ardent student of Vedanta should infer the meaning of such sentences (or interpret them) in a different manner altogether. As stated previously in section 181, only in the case of those aspirants who do not attain Aatma Vijnaana (Intuition of the Self) merely by Shravana the repetition (or continuation) of spiritual practices (Saadhanas) like Manana, Nididhyaasana etc. will have to be preached. As regards the statement in the Brhadaaranyaka Upanishad, the word ‘Paanditya’ means — “After completing without any remainder Aatma Vijnaana from both the spiritual preceptor (Guru) and the Aagama (the traditional methodology of teaching that is implicit in the Upanishadic texts, handed down in Paaramparya from the Guru to the Shishya), eventually one should practise Sarva Karma Sannyasa (renunciation of all Karmas entirely)”; the word ‘Baalija’ means — “Having acquired or being fully equipped with Jnaana Bala (the spiritual strength gained from Jnaana), the true aspirant should be rejecting disdainfully ‘Anaatma Pratyaya’ (any perceptual or conceptual knowledge of the not-self); or in the alternative, like a Baala (an innocent child who does not usually exhibit pride, egolism, conceit etc.), the ardent seeker should practise Amaanitwa
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(absence of egoism), *Adambhitwa* (humility, modesty, without exhibiting his *Jnaana*), *Adhyayana* (learning or study of the scriptural texts), *Dhaarmikatwa* (his being endowed with spiritual virtues or excellences) etc.; the word ‘*Mouna*’ means — “Getting fully established or rooted in Intuition (*Anubhava*) of the Self which is the natural fruit of *Anaatma Pratyaya Tiraskarana* (total rejection with disdain the perceptual or conceptual knowledge of the not-self).” In truth, the purport of the *Shruti* statement is — “Only if the seeker attains this *Mouna*, he can be said to have become a *Brahma Nishtha* (the one established or rooted in Intuitive experience of the Self, a genuine, consummate *Jnaani par excellence*).” For the *Geeta* sentence too we must have a similar interpretation. *Para Bhaktt.*, *Jnaana Nishtha* — both these philosophical terms are nothing but Intuitive conviction (*Anubhava*), which is the natural product or fruit accruing as a result of human excellences or virtues like *Amaanitwa*, *Adambhitwa* etc. which are in turn the *Sahakaari Kaaranas* (complementary causes), which are spiritual practices or disciplines attained through *Sarva Karma Sannyaasa* (total rejection with disdain all physical and mental actions) needed invariably for the ripening or consummation of *Jnaana Utpatti* (attainment of Self-Knowledge). The true seeker clearly and correctly Intuits *Paramaatman* (*Brahman*), by means of *Bhakti* (devotion) alone which is verily of the essential nature of that *Jnaana Nishtha*. In order to significantly teach this *Viveka* (Intuitive deliberation, discrimination), the traditional teachers call this Intuitive Knowledge, born out of the study of the scriptural texts and which is of the form or nature of *Paanditya* (scholarly erudition), initially ‘*Jnaana*’, but in the ultimate analysis after the culmination or consummation in *Jnaana Nishtha* comes to fruition here and now they call that ‘*Anubhava*’ (Intuitive experience) by the name of ‘*Vijnaana*’ (Supreme Knowledge). After the seeker attains *Paanditya* and *Baalya*, although the third discipline of *Mouna* by itself — and quite naturally — accrues, as a result of *Praarabdha* (the *Karma* which has ripened already and has yielded its fruits) *Bheda Darshana* (appearance of variegated or distinctive objects or phenomena) may become quite strong or imperative, the scriptures in these contexts stipulate, rather alert, the seeker that he should immerse himself and stabilise his mind in *Aatmaanubhava* (Intuitive non-dual experience of the Self) alone. **As all these spiritual practices or disciplines are meant exclusively for the *Sannyaasin* (a recluse, ascetic), who is necessarily a *Vividishaa Sannyaasin* (one who aspires to attain the Intuitive experience of the ‘*Tattwa*’ or the Ultimate Reality of *Brahman*) alone it need not be gainsaid that such a *Vividishaa Sannyaasin* has no duty or responsibility of performing any other mundane *Karma* whatsoever (pertaining to the *Avidya Kshetra* or region of ignorance or delusion). Especially when the seeker (Saadhaka) attains Self-Knowledge or Intuition
(Jnaana) these Saadhanas too become, or are rendered invariably, ‘Mithyaa’ (false, unreal).


208. Because of the reasons that Paanditya, Baalya, Mouna etc. are described in the scriptural texts as exceptional, distinctive hallmarks of Jnaana and words like Jnaana Utpatti, Jnaana Paripaaka, Jnaana Nishtha etc. are used in Vedantic texts, some people have misconceived that in Self-Knowledge (Jnaana) too there are extremely subtle differences. Some others have even misconceived classes, categories like Brahmviti, Brahmvidvvara, Brahmvid Varishta among Jnaanis (Realized souls). But from the detailed explanations and clarifications that we have given above themselves it will be quite clear, evident and indubitable that — “In Vijnaana (Intuitive experience) of the essential nature of Anubhava (also called Saakshi Anubhava) there does not exist any big or small difference whatsoever.”

Because of the reason that the Saadhanas to be practised by the seekers for Jnaana Utpatti like (i) Varna Aashrama Dharma; (ii) Upaasanas; (iii) Sannyaasa; (iv) the practice of Shama, Dama, Uparati, Titeeksha, Shraddha and Samaadhaana; (v) Dhyaana etc. — are many, and secondly, because it has been stated in the scriptures that if Karma are blended or conjoined with Upaasanas the spiritual practices become stronger, more fruitful and successful (Chhaandogya Upanishad 1-1-10), some people may think or believe that there are differences in Jnaana also; some others may even think or believe that by virtue of the differences as well as their grades and respective calibre of Jnaana, there may be differences or grades in Mukti also.

But these beliefs or conceptions are without any scriptural support and are illogical to boot. For, if it is stated that — “By virtue of the intensity or immensity of spiritual practices there would be proportionate increase in Jnaana” — it can plausibly mean to have the special features, relatively, of earlier or faster attainment as against belated attainment in other or future births, but there is no scope or cause for the statement to have any other special characteristics at all. Even if we imagine or surmise that there are differences or grades in Jnaana (Intuition), we may do so in dividing them only into Paroaksha (that which is beyond the range of sight or invisible) and Aparoaksha (direct and immediate); but that which is Aparoaksha Anubhava (Intuitive innate experience) superior to all else, that alone will be fit to be called Jnaana, and not anything else — whatsoever it may be. Apart from this, just as in Karma there are differences, there are no differences or grades whatsoever in Jnaana; therefore, in Moaksha, which is the resultant effect or fruit of Jnaana
too there do not exist any differences or grades of any kind whatsoever. In truth, Moaksha means Brahman (the Ultimate Reality), which is Nitya Siddha (eternally, perennially existing, self-established) Entity alone; Jnaana falsifies or sublates Ajnaana, the ignorance pertaining to Brahman-Atman (one's own Self) but Jnaana never gives rise to any non-existent Mukti. Hence, on the dawn of Jnaana, Ajnaana is got rid of completely and Mukti accrues, instantaneously, so to speak, and there is no scope or possibility for any one to imagine in the manner — "In due course of time Jnaana will yield a particular fruit." Therefore, it is illogical to imagine or infer that there are differences or grades in the manner — Mukti of ordinary human beings, Mukti of Rishis or sages, Mukti of deities etc. But as regards Prateekoaapaasanas and Sagunoapaasanas, because there are differences with regard to the qualities or characteristics as 'big' and 'small' of the Upaasya Brahman (the Reality which is meditated upon), evidently there is room or scope for inferring or imagining differences and grades in Vidyas (psychic or mental knowledges), as also in their respective fruits or resultant effects.


209. If the Jnaana Saadhanas (spiritual practices) like Karma and Upaasana are undertaken, here and now immediately one may attain Jnaana or may attain It in due course. But Mukti, which is the fruit of Jnaana is not like that at all. Just as the very moment light comes or is brought the various forms of external objects are seen by the eyes, similarly the moment Jnaana dawns or flashes Avidya (Ajnaana) gets destroyed or sublated, and thereby Mukti, which is eternal and self-established and which is the very essence of Pure Being-Consciousness-Bliss of the Mumukshu gets manifested. (To wit, It is not the effect or fruit of any action either physical or mental, but beyond both, Intuitive). In truth, this Mukti is not even the resultant effect of Jnaana; rather, being ever-existent and eternal It gets manifested by Jnaana. From the empirical viewpoint, since it is believed that Bondage of the form of impediments like Avidya, Kaama, Karma etc. is sublated or falsified (Nivritti), only as a courtesy, convention or formality the scriptures mention Mukti to be a Jnaana Kaarya or Jnaana Phala; that is all. In fact, even Devatas (celestial deities) are not capable of hindering or coming in the way of the seeker attaining Mukti; for, when the seeker attains Mukti, because Ajnaana or Avidya is rooted out without the least remnants or even an iota of it, the Jnaani (Realized soul) becomes the Atman (Self) of the Devatas themselves.

210. The Vyaavahaarika Phala (the empirical benefit) that accrues from Aatma Darshana (Self-Knowledge or Aatma Jnaana), is described in the scriptural texts in the following manner: "First of all, the Kaamas (desires), which are fed and sustained by Avidya, have got entrenched in our heart and have clung on to it — they get rooted out; Samshayas (doubts, suspicions or uncertainties), which were continuously raising their ugly heads in matters pertaining to the 'Tattwa' (the Ultimate Reality of Brahman or Atman), get cut asunder; all Karmas (actions of merit and demerit) get emaciated and destroyed. Therefore, for a Jnaani nothing whatsoever remains to be done henceforth; he remains ever an Aatma Nishtha (one who is eternally established in the Self).

211. Some people argue out in the manner — "Even though it is true that by means of Jnaana Avidya is destroyed, as long as the body — belonging to a particular Janma (birth) in which Jnaana was attained lasts — to that body of that particular Janma there exists a good deal of 'Avidyaa Lesha' (remnants of ignorance)." The fact that this 'Avidyaa Lesha' theory is not proper or reasonable has been already clarified by us in section 162. Those who have misconceived this 'Avidyaa Lesha Vaada' and have put it into circulation, so to speak, are the protagonists of 'Adhyaasa Upaadaana Moolaavidyaa Vaada' (the theory that there exists a 'Moolaavidyaa' or the root cause for Avidya for which Adhyaasa or misconception, delusion, is the Upaadaana Kaarana or the material cause). Avidyaa Lesha, Avidyaa Chhaaya, Avidyaa Ganda, Avidyaa Vaasana, Avidyaa Samskara — all these are synonymous terms (used by these protagonists). Because of the reason that previously in section 30 itself we have explained that the 'Moolaavidyaa Vaada' (the theory of a root cause for Avidya) is totally opposed to Vedanta Siddhaanta (genuine teachings of Vedanta spiritual science), contradictory to Shri Shankara's original Bhaashyas and to Yukti (logical arguments) in consonance with everyone's experience in the empirical sphere — in the light of that explanation itself it becomes evident that this doctrinaire theory of Avidyaa Lesha too is not proper or reasonable. For that reason alone, Shri Shankaaraachaarya has very distinctly and markedly delineated that a Jnaani does not have or possess Vipareeta Pratyaya (misconception), Samsaaritwa (transmigratoriness) and has further reverentially acknowledged 'Jeevan Mukti' (being Liberated while living in a particular physical body) and that this Jeevan Mukti (also called Sadyoamukti) alone is devoid of Avidya. To argue that both Vidya and Avidya are existing simultaneously (i.e. co-existing) in one and the same person is as ridiculous as to say that light and darkness exist together or co-exist at the same time and same place. Even if one knows
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(or has cognized) Aatma Swaroopa in a general, perfunctory manner and if he has not Intuited the Self distinctively in Its essence per se, it may be quite possible to entertain a misconception of the type of taking a sea-shell (nacre) to be silver; but in the case of those who have Intuitively established themselves in the essential nature of Atman (the Self) there is no scope or possibility whatsoever of any kind, or any variety, of Avidya existing or remaining as 'Avidyaas Lesha' at all. It is truly a figment of imagination, which is, in itself, Avidya. This truth clearly looms large before us now.


212. "If Avidya, Kaama and Karma — all these are totally destroyed by means of Jnaana, how is it possible at all for the body to subsist? If the Jnaani does not remain embodied, how is it possible for him to teach or preach about the 'Tattwa' of Atman?" — such doubts have raised their ugly heads in the minds of some present-day Vedantins, and as a result they have given rise to two different and opposing opinions or doctrinaire theories with regard to Mukti. One of these opinions (belonging to a school of thought) says: "A Jnaani does possess a small quantum or measure of Avidya; he is a Jeevanmukta all right. In fact, one who has attained this kind of 'Gouna Mukti' (secondary Liberation, not the real one in the predominant sense) alone is the Aachaaarya (preceptor) and only when he gives up his mortal coil he attains the real 'Mukhya Mukti' which is called 'Videha Mukti' (Liberation devoid of a body)." This theory has been refuted by us already in sections 162 and 211. The protagonists of the second doctrinaire theory have propounded in the manner — "If Ajnaana is destroyed by means of Jnaana the Jnaanti's body falls off immediately, instantaneously and Mukti is attained. This kind of Mukti is called 'Sadyoamukti'.' Especially this 'Sadyoamukti Vaada' is a ridiculous one, a laughing stock. For, a staunch belief in the phenomenon of the body existing is accepted from the standpoint of Avidya alone and not in reality. Therefore, when Jnaana dawns, no body-consciousness whatsoever remains or subsists, and this very teaching we have previously expounded in sections 137 and 162.

Here in this context the true, genuine spiritual teaching is: By virtue of Jnaana, Avidya is completely falsified, sublated (Baadhita), — meaning, the seeker gets the conviction that Avidya does not really exist at all; only this much, and not that Jnaana does actually and literally destroy Avidya, like an axe cutting asunder a tree or like fire burning away or consuming firewood. Therefore, even after they become Baadhita by virtue of Jnaana, categories like Avidya-Kaama-Karma as also the physical body, which is caused as a result of 'Praarabdha Karma' and which is the supporting adjunct (Aashraya)
all of them carrying on their respective functions, just as when a potter rotates the wheel fast and allows it to turn on its own momentum (in consonance with the 'Law of Inertia') till its speed of rotation is destroyed — becomes quite but natural. There is no defect or blemish whatsoever in Mithyaa Jnaana (misconception, delusion) etc. — to wit, all the three types of Ajnaana, Mithyaa Jnaana (Adhyaasa) and Samshaya — which are falsified by virtue of Jnaana (Jnaana Baadhita) remaining effective for some time — just like a second moon (Dwiteeya Chandra), the false notion or misconception of sea-shell-silver (Shukti Rajataabhaasa) or the confused notion as regards the cardinal directions of east, west, north and south (Dik Moaha) etc. By virtue of or as a result of this Baadhitaanuwritti (falsified mental concepts) there does not arise any flaw or lapse whatsoever in so far as a Jnaani's Kriti-Krityata (the Realized soul's fulfillment of life's goal, its consummation) is concerned. Therefore, by the word — “Nasha” (destroyed) — if it is meant or interpreted to signify that — "Just as a fried seed is not able to sprout and give out a fruit" — then, it will have to be per force accepted that — “In the case of a Jnaani all his ‘Sanchita Karmas’ (accumulated, totality of merits and demerits or Punya and Paapa Karmas) are destroyed or cancelled by Jnaana, and that the fruits of ‘Aagaami Karmas’ (deeds of merit or demerit which are yet to ripen and fructify in future births) will not taint or touch him; further, because the ‘Praarabdha Karma’ (ripened or ensuing or present Karma) has already resulted in the present birth endowed with the present body and thereby has given rise to its effect this resultant fruit of the present birth has to be per force (unavoidably) enjoyed and exhausted. Nitya Karmas stipulated by way of injunctions in the scriptures, like Agnihoatra, Yajna, Hoama, Gaayatri Japa etc., are exclusively responsible or instrumental, indirectly and in a sequential order (Parampara) for Moaksha. If the word — ‘Naasha’ — is interpreted to connote ‘Baadhita’ (rendered false or sublated), then it will have to be per force accepted that — “A Jnaani gets the steadfast conviction (to wit, culminating in his Intuitive experience here and now) to the effect that neither the body nor the Karmas performed with it as the medium ever exists in the least.” In truth, Shri Shankaaraachaarya has called the Liberation (or the release from) the clutches or bonds of Karma which accrues or is caused by virtue of the Nischaya (steadfast conviction) culminating in the Intuitive experience of the type — “I was never in the past a Kartru or a Bhoktru; I am not either of them even now; nor will be in the future too; I cannot ever become a Kartru or a Bhoktru” — alone by the name ‘Sadyoamukti’ (Liberation, Beatitude, here and now while alive in the present body).
213. After Karmas (results of actions) in the form of merits (Punya) and demerits (Paapa) are totally and eternally (Aatyantika) destroyed by virtue of or by means of Jnaana, when the aspirant (Mumukshu) gets rooted or established firmly in the Intuitive Knowledge of the type — “Paramaatman (the Supreme Self), devoid of all actions or functions (Nishkriya) alone is myself” — then that Intuitive experience is Itself the true, genuine Sarva Karma Sannyaasa (renunciation of all actions). This kind of Sannyaasa can accrue to Grihastas (householders) too; because of the reason that after that renunciation accrues there is no purpose whatsoever served or no benefit whatsoever accruing from their earlier Aashrama Karmas (duties, responsibilities stipulated for a particular stage of life), those householders too will per force give up or renounce their Grihasta Karmas, just like Yajjavalkya and such other Realized souls mentioned in the Upanishads. This truth becomes self-evident and self-established now. But, if for some reason or other that consummation does not take place, even if those people appear, as before, to be engaged and engrossed in performing or pursuing their respective Karmas as in the past, their so-called Karmas, in reality, have become falsified or sublated (Baadhita) by Jnaana and have become mere semblances of action (Karmaabhaasa); for them the Intuitive Knowledge of the type — “Kriya (action) — Kaaraka (the means of action) — Phala (the fruits of action) — are all Brahman, the Ultimate Reality, alone” — has accrued. Then, all the Karmas they perform are indeed for Loaka Sangraha (for the purpose of guiding, or showing the spiritual path to, Ajnas or the ignorant people). Therefore, in whatever Aashrama (stage of life) they may be, they are truly ‘Krita-Kriyas’. The Sannyaasa, which the Jnaanis or Realized souls observe because of the reason that there is no more purpose or benefit whatsoever to accrue from any kind of Karma, is called by the present-day Vedantins ‘Vidvat Sannyaasa’. There is a second grade of people who, though they are Ajnas (in the ultimate analysis), because of their having acquired Chitta Shuddhi (cleansing or purification of the mind stuff of its innate proclivities, by discharging their respective Karmas that have befallen to their lot) and in due course through the acquisition of human excellences or virtues like Shama, Dama, Uparati, etc. give up or renounce the Grihasta Karmas for the sake of practising ‘Dhyaana Yoga’ which is ‘Kartrutwa Vijnanaa Poorvaka’ (through the discrimination on the essence of the ‘I’ notion) are said to practise a ‘Sannyaasa’ called the ‘Vividishaa Sannyaasa’. Further, for those who are not yet qualified for this Vividishaa Sannyaasa, the Geeta recommends ‘Karma Yoga’ alone which is called (in Vedantic parlance) ‘Karma Phala Sannyaasa’ (renouncing or giving up the hankering after the fruits or benefits of all Karmas) alone as the best, or the most suited, spiritual practice (Saadhana). Thus to enumerate in an ascending order and
based on their calibre and attainment it can be succinctly said that there are the following three ‘Sannyasaas’: (i) **Karma Phala Sannyasa**, (ii) **Karma Sannyasa** and (iii) **Sarva Karma Sannyasa**. Among these, **Sarva Karma Sannyasa** alone is possible to attain for a Jnaani exclusively. Barring these three categories of Sannyasa, all the other varieties — whatever they may be — are not genuine or real Sannyasas at all. For example, **those who have believed or misconceived Kriya-Kaaraka-Phala as real entities or phenomena; Shoonya Vaadins (Nihilists) or idlers, lazy-bones giving up or ‘renouncing’ Karmas can never be reckoned to be ‘Sannyasins’ at all.**


214. Jnaana may dawn (accrue) at any moment. Vaamadeva attained It while in the mother's womb; although Prajaapatii was alone existing at the beginning of a Kalpa (an aeon or a measure of the duration of the world), Jnaana accrued to him without anybody's spiritual instruction whatsoever. For this, the Karmas or Upaasanas and such other spiritual Saadhanas practised in previous births alone are instrumental. Here in this context a doubt may arise, and that is: “The one and only cause for any one taking to Sannyasa is the fact that there is no purpose served by, nor any benefit accruing from, Karmas; therefore, it amounts to saying that Sannyasa is not stipulated as necessary for a Jnaani. So, where is the question of a person who has attained Jnaana in his Grihastha Aashrama itself practising Sannyasa (renunciation) and thereby going to a forest at all? Besides, because he has achieved what is to be achieved in his life (Krita Kriitya) henceforth he need not perform any Karma whatsoever; he can remain at home, maintaining quiet, is it not? Or, in the alternative, because he is not bound by either the scriptural injunctions or prohibitions it may amount to saying that he can behave as he likes (i.e. according to his whims and fancies)!"

The solution for this doubt is: “To desire to remain quiet at home alone is tantamount to having a ‘Kaama’ (for, it is a subtle desire indeed); because a Jnaanti does not have any Kaama, he cannot think in the manner — ‘I will remain at home quiet.’ Similarly, whether he is a Brahmacaari (a celibate) or a Vaanaprastha (one who spends his last days in seclusion in a forest), if that particular person attains Jnaana, there is no possibility for him thereafter to think in the manner — ‘I will remain in this same Aashrama (stage of life).’ Because he has realized the truth that there is no benefit whatsoever accruing from any of the Karmas of these Aashramas, the Jnaanti attains Paariwraajya
(the wandering life of a religious monk or recluse), of the nature of Eshanaa Vyutthaana (giving up all desires exhaustively and rise to sublime heights in spiritual Saadhnaas). Because Paarivrtaajya is an Abhaava (a non-existent phenomenon), of the form of Eshanaa Tyaaga (giving up or renunciation of all desires exhaustively) and not any Kriya (action or function), there is no scope for any one to raise the objection of the type — 'Why exclusively Paarivrtaajya?' — or to compare it with other Karmas, whatever they may be. In case there is any impediment for the Jnaani to take recourse to or adopt the way of life of Paarivrtaajya, the Jnaani will invariably be performing the respective Karma for the sake of Loaka Sangraha (general welfare of or well-being of the society around him), but he will never behave as he likes, according to his whims and fancies.

For Yatheshtha Praavritti (the behaviour as one likes according to his whims and fancies) Dehaabhimana (the innate identification with one's body) is the root cause; but in a Jnaani this Dehaabhimana (called in Vedantic parlance 'Adhyaasa') does not exist. A Jnaani, who has renounced Dharmas (scriptural rites and duties) themselves considering them to be too heavy or arduous — why should he dabble or meddle with Adharma (acts which are prohibited by the scriptures and are sinful)? To doubt that a Jnaani, who has renounced both Dharma and Adharma even when he was a Mumukshu (a lower stage in the spiritual ladder of Saadhnaas) as such, may commit sinful acts of Adhanna even after his attainment of Jnaana and his becoming a 'Jnaana Tripta' (one who has attained consummate satisfaction, of the nature of Krita Krityata) is not justifiable at all. To wit, when a person is hungry he will never consume any poisoned food; then, where is the question of a person, who has got rid of his hunger by eating dainty savoury food, consuming such a poisoned food? One who has not fallen into a well and has avoided doing so during the night — can he or will he fall into the well after sunrise? The Karmas that a Jnaani performs for the sake of Loaka Sangraha are, in reality, not Karmas at all; for, then the Jnaani does not have either Ahamkaara (egoism or selfishness) or Phalaabhisandhi (hankering after the fruits or benefits). Just as when a person is performing Kaamyagnihoatra (a sacrifice offered into the fire with the desire to obtain a particular benefit or fruit), if he gets rid of his Kaama (desire), the remainder of that Kaamyagnihoatra will not continue to be Kaamy (associated with or backed up by any desire for fruit) any more — similarly, the Nitya Karmas performed after the attainment of Jnaana will not continue to be Karmas at all. Therefore, the Karmas that a Jnaani performs — whether they are Vaidika Karmas or Loukika Karmas — because he does not have any sense of agentship whatsoever in those Karmas and because everywhere, at all times he is besieged by Brahma Buddhi (sense of Reality of
the Self (to wit, a sort of divine or God-intoxication), those Karmas can never be reckoned to be real Karmas at all.

215. There is a big question raised by protagonists of ‘Jnaana-Karma-Samuchhaya Vaada’ (the theory of blending Jnaana and Karma) and that is: “Though there are no other Karmas to be performed by Sannyasins, who are Jnaans, they have certain spiritual disciplines like Bhikshaacharana (leading the way of life of a mendicant), Shoucha (cleanliness, purity) etc. They will have to per force perform acts like eating food and drinking water etc. Similarly, the other people in the other stages of life like Grihastaashrama, Vaanaprasthaashrama also, after the attainment of Jnaana, may be performing Karmas like Agnihotr etc., is it not? Just as the Sannyasins necessarily get prompted into actions like eating food etc., in the same manner why should it not be accepted that Grihasthas too get prompted, as a matter of necessity, into their respective (old, habitual) Karmas?”

Although it amounts to our having given an answer to this question already, here in this particular context with a view to elucidating and highlighting that answer we will repeat it. The regulations like the adoption of the way of life of a mendicant etc. which are seen to be practised by a Sannyasin are akin to, or analogous to, Pratipatti Karmas (conventional practices or rites) of the type of injunctions like — “After performing a Hoama (sacrificial fire) one should eat food.” As a result of Pratipatti Karmas the invisible or subtle benefit of Purusha Samskaara (subtle impressions at the psychic level) accrues. But by virtue of Bhikshaatana etc. such Samskaaras do not at all occur. Besides, a Bhikshu’s (monk’s) apparent acts of Bhikshaatana Karmas are not Niyama Karmas (actions stipulated by way of injunctions) at all; neither is there any rule of law whatsoever that one should necessarily observe such Bhikshaatana; they are, in fact, Pravrittis (naturally prompted actions at the physical level) because of physical wants or defects like hunger, thirst etc. but they are not subject to or controlled by rules or regulations of time, space and causation just like those of Shaastreeya Pravritti Karmas (the scriptural rites, rituals stipulated by way of injunctions as ‘musts’). Therefore, it is not possible or proper at all to state Bhikshaatana and such other Karmas as examples analogous to a Grihastha’s Pravrittis (behaviour patterns of a householder), which are prompted by and due to Kaama (desires), Vaasana (subtle impressions at the psychic level) etc.
216. Some people had in the past argued in the manner — "For Sannyasins too Karmas like Adhyayana (study of the scriptural texts), Devataarchana (worship of deities) and such other Karmas were stipulated by way of Injunctions as written in some Smritis composed by Rishis or seers. But in the Smritis it has also been stated that in performing Karmas like Guroopaasana (contemplation on one's spiritual preceptor), Adhyayana, Bhojana (consumption of food), Aachamana (a religious rite of sipping water before or after meals etc. taken in the palm of the right hand, etc. accessories like the sacred thread etc. are invariably necessary. Therefore, the aspirants (i.e. here in this context Sannyasins) should per force renounce these accessories like Yajnoapaveeta (the sacred thread), as also the Karmas which are performed with their aid, Linga (the symbolic badge, mark or some such adjunct pertaining to the Sannyaasa Aashrama) and then perform Eshanaatraya (renunciation of desires of the three kinds, viz. Putreshana, Vitteshana and Loakeshana), but it is not proper to give up or renounce all Karmas and the relevant Karma Saadhanas (the accessories required for their performance)."

But apart from the Paarivraajya, described above with Eshanaatraya, there is another distinct kind of Paarivraajya, which is of the form of Sannyaasa Aashrama (the fourth stage of life) but devoid of Eshanaatraya. For this latter Paarivraajya there is a fruit like Brahma Loaka Praapti etc. In that particular Aashrama Sannyaasa it is quite necessary to possess accessories like Yajnoapaveeta, Niveeta (wearing the sacred thread round the neck and making it hang down like a garland), Praacheenaaveeta (the sacred thread being worn over the right shoulder and passed under the left arm as during a Shraaddha ceremony) and all the Karmas like Daiva, Maanusha and Pitrya (scriptural rites pertaining to offerings to deities, all human beings and Manes or paternal ancestors) taken collectively and performed with their aid, as also the wearing of Sannyashrama Linga (symbolic marks of Sannyaasa Aashrama) — all these are necessary adjuncts. But what is the most relevant and necessary qualification (Anga) for Aatma Jnaana (Self-Knowledge) is Paramahamsa Paarivraajya (Sarva Karma Sannyaasa mentioned above) alone; in this type of Paarivraajya all Eshanas (desires), have per force to be renounced or banished in toto. For, all Eshanas are matters or phenomena within the realm or purview of Avidya alone. Hence, Shri Shankara has provided a satisfactory reason or solution to this problem by saying that — "Acts like wearing of Yajnoapaveeta and such other symbolic marks of adjuncts ignifying Sannyaasa (asceticism) is a matter concerning quite a different kind of Paarivraajya which pertains to Amumukshus (people not desirous of Beatitude) and which invariably pertains to egoism or agentship of action born out of ignorance which is,
in truth, a lack of or absence of Self-Knowledge (Avidvat Kartrutwa). Hence those who are Mumukshus — whosoever they may be — must per force adopt this Paramahamsa Paarivraajya exclusively; the final spiritual teaching of Vedanta (Siddhaanta) is: “After the attainment of Jnaana especially, there is nothing whatsoever to be done or performed by the Jnaani at all”.

217. For one who is a Jnaani there are no empirical or scriptural — Loukika or Vaidika — transactions or dealings at all; for, all such transactions are invariably Avidyaa Kaarya (the resultants or projections of ignorance, delusion alone). Because a Jnaani is Nitya Trupta (eternally content), he is Jitendriya (one who has completely conquered and thereby exercises full control over his senses); he has acquired a perspective of treating all things, like a lump of clay or a stone or an ingot of gold, with equal value; in fact, he is full of Adwesha (absence of hatred), Maitree (friendship or camaraderie) and Karuna (compassion, kindness). In him no defects like anxiety, agitated or perturbed mental state and fear, whatsoever, are to be found. Because he has surpassed or gone beyond the realm of Gunatraya (the three psychic qualities of Sattwa, Rajas and Tamas), the effects of these three Gunas cannot ever affect or taint him. In truth, his psyche is fully established or rooted in Paramaatma Swaroopa (the essence of the Supreme Self, vinculum substantiale). In the Geeta, Jnaani alone is being described by names like Sthitaprajna, Yukta, Bhakta, Trigunaateeta, and thereby the essential hallmarks of a Jnaani are taught. Those very special characteristics (Laxanas) become the ideal spiritual practices or Saadhanas to be adopted and the ends to be achieved for those who are yet Mumukshus (aspirants for Beatitude).

218. There are a few people who raise a doubt of the type — “If a Jnaani is always ‘Krita Kriitya’ then because thereafter there does not remain anything whatsoever to be done by him, his body should immediately fall off; then, in that event the Guru Sampرادааaya (the legacy or traditional system of Guru-Shishya dissemination or propagation of spiritual teaching) itself will vanish. Hence, we should accept that for the sake of salvaging or preserving that legacy the Jnaani too has something left to be done, is it not? Besides, because it is
Jnaani’s Sense of Fulfilment

mentioned in the Shrutis and the Smritis that people in the Grihasthaasrama taught the Ultimate Reality to their pupils, it amounts to saying that for Jnaanis too there remains some Karma to be performed. Apart from this, because it is also stated in the Shrutis, Smritis and Puraanas (mythology) that some Jnaanis got rebirth, one is constrained to say that by mere Jnaana alone Parama Purushaarthaa (the Supreme goal of human life) cannot possibly be attained, is it not?’

But there is no basis whatsoever to support or substantiate this doubt or argument. For, whether it is the existence of the physical body or whether it is the falling off of the body, either of them is to be reckoned from the Mithyaa Jnaana Drishti (the viewpoint of misconception alone). Although in the case of a Jnaani this Mithyaa Jnaana is sublated or falsified, just like the Dwichandraadi Jnaana, there is a possibility of that Mithyaa Jnaana to follow on or to continue (Anuvrittaj). This fact we have already explained in section 212. Therefore, it is quite possible and reasonable to say that by virtue of Baadhitaanuvrittii (the law of inertia operating for some time even after a misconception is falsified or sublated) the mundane or empirical transaction of teaching between the teacher and the taught may continue. The Shruti statements to the effect that — “Because a Jnaani has got rid of (falsified) the viewpoint (perspective) of treating Kriya, Kaaraka, Phala as real, the Grihasthaasramis too were Gurus” — cannot at all invalidate or cancel out the Nyaaya (aphorism) that — “There is no Samuchhaya (blending) of Jnaana and Karma.” In fact, because there are Shrutis also to the effect — “Without desiring the benefits of Karma, Jnaanis practised ‘Eshanaatraya’” — we should discern that — “Jnaana does not desiderate the aid of Karma at all.”

In the case of Jnaana, of the form or nature of Upaasana because it is, in the ultimate analysis, Kriya (action) alone, it may need the help of Karma indeed. Even when Jnaanis were Grihasthaas, because their Karmas were, in reality, Akarma (inaction) from the viewpoint of Paramaarthaa (the viewpoint of the Ultimate Reality of the Self), Karma cannot exist along with Jnaana. This truth we have mentioned in section 214. If it is questioned as to — “What about the Shruti statement that there is Punaraavrilti for Jnaanis also?” — the answer is that all such people are Aadhikaarika Purushas (superior personalities). These individuals, having been authorised or appointed by the Almighty, so to speak, with the powers of Vedapravartana (promoting or propagating the Vedic teachings) are posted in their respective positions till their Praarabda Karmas are exhausted; they acquire many bodies with facility invariably endowed with the memory (Smriti) that — “That alone I am.” None of them is affected by the rule of law of — ‘One Karma ends and another Karma begins yielding its fruit.” In their case, only one Karma yields many bodies. Those bodies as also
their respective *Karmas* — both having been falsified by *Jnaana*, those individuals have attained a steadfast conviction that all such phenomena are unreal only. Therefore, there is no scope whatsoever for the doubt of the type — "Even after the attainment of *Jnaana*, one cannot become *Krita Kriyta*.

58. Ch. Bh. 8-12-1. p. 647.
60. Su. Bh. 3-4-9. p. 765.
62. Su. Bh. 3-3-32. p. 703.
63. Ch. Bh. 6-14-2. p. 491.

**XXVIII. CONCLUSIONS**

In our country as well as in foreign countries several philosophical texts have been published. In the pre-Shankara period too in the olden times many *Aachaaryas* (spiritual preceptors), who were erudite scholars, intellectuals, philosophers and thinkers, had presented before the common run of people many systems of philosophy. Among those systems some have already disappeared; some of the rest have become exhibits merely to satisfy the curiosity of people, just like the exhibits of ancient manuscripts, remnants or skeletons of animals or birds displayed in a museum.

But the *Siddhaanta* (spiritual, philosophical teachings, particularly with regard to the essential nature of the Ultimate, Absolute Reality of *Brahman* or *Atman*) which Shri Shankara had presented before the aspirants have remained extant even to this day without any change or mutation, despite the fact that he expounded them nearly a thousand years ago on the basis or strength of the *Prasthaana Traya*. His teachings (*Upadesha*) are relevant at all times and in all countries and climes. The reason for this is: The subject-matter of *Vedanta*, which this great spiritual colossus expounds, is *Parabrahman* which is beyond the purview of time and space and which is the very essence of the entire universe itself. That *Brahman* is the *Atman* (to wit, the innermost core of Being) of all human beings of all times and all nations or races, as well as of all creatures other than human beings. Teaching this *Paramaarthta Tattwa* in a clear-cut manner on the strength of *Saarvatrika Anubhava* (universal Intuitive experience) — which is never affected or vitiated by differences in either time or space — is one unique, uncommon or extra-ordinary feature of Shri Shankaraachaarya's methodology of teaching or propounding the Universal Spirit.

Although the *Upanishads*, *Bhagavadgeeta* and *Brahma Sootras* are spiritual texts which have been composed and expounded in India, because of the reason that the *Paramaarthta Tattwa* which they teach is beyond the purview of time and space for the purpose of knowing or
cognizing that Reality, one need not be under the obligation of any Shaastra or spiritual (philosophical) text whatsoever. Although this Reality is to be known or Intuited by virtue of Aagama (the traditional methodology of teaching or imparting spiritual instruction) alone — which is a specialised system of spiritual education adopted by a genuine, true preceptor — no spiritual teacher, whosoever he may be and worth his salt, can possibly monopolize or preserve this Reality as his own special and secret prerogative at all. Although Vedantic (Spiritual) Science eulogises the benefits of Chitta Shuddhi which accrues to one who practises the spiritual disciplines stipulated for the four Varnas (castes) and the four Aashramas (the four stages of life of an individual), there is no coercion, compulsion or constraint whatsoever of the type — “Only if one has any one special, extraordinary adjunct like a particular Varna, a particular Jaati, a particular Aashrama, a particular Kaala, a particular Varna (pigment of the skin), a particular Linga (sex), a particular age, a particular class of economy etc. — he alone can attain this Intuitive experience of the Brahmaatma Tattwa.”

In this traditional methodology of spiritual instruction (Siddhaanta) the other-worldly fruits of deeds, viz. Janmaantara, Loakaantara Phala, etc., have not been rejected at all. But because the Jnaana that this Vedantic Science teaches or expounds as also the fruit or benefit that accrues from it can be attained in this very life span, this spiritual teaching cannot and will not detract or dislodge the belief, faith one may have in any religion, whatever it may be. In fact, the auspicious message about Sadyoamukti (Beatitude, Immortality here and now in this very life span), which assures in the manner — “At the very instant of Jnaana Itself the Bondage of Karma, Kaama will be removed, sublated; a mortal becomes Immortal” — is an exclusive hallmark of this sacred Science of Vedanta, the Science par excellence.

The spiritual instruction about Jeevanmukti which says: “Man gets Liberated from all calamities, miseries of transmigratory life (Samsaara) by means of the Vedantic Self-Knowledge while he is alive here and now itself” — provides a supremely excellent optimism to the present-day human society at large which is suffering from acute agony, distress from various elemental calamities and other ecological, economic calamities of life. Because a Jeevanmukta has acquired a superlative, steadfast conviction of the type — “Everyone’s Atman (Self) is my own Self” — he has an equal love towards all human beings, nay all creatures, alike. A person who has attained such a state has been called in the scriptural texts by names like Sthitaprajna, Yukta, Trigunaateeta, Para-Bhakta, Ativarnaashrami, Braahmana etc. If we realize or discern the special qualities of a Jeevanmukta as described in the scriptural texts, we may well affirm boldly that — “Not only in proportion to the increasing number of such people all problems of
our present-day life style or way of life will be solved, redressed, but also to that extent peace and happiness all around are assured to our human society all over the world."

It is possible for all those, who have acquired human excellences, virtues like Sadaachaara (good code of conduct and right living), Shama, Dama, Uparati, Titeeksha etc. as also a steadfast, burning desire for Self-Knowledge like that of a Mumukshu, to gain invariably this profound Knowledge of this Vedanta Siddhaanta (the Spiritual Science of Vedanta). Therefore, the pressing need of the times of having more and more of such spiritual preceptors or instructors who are adepts in propagating the genuine message of Vedantic Science as also who are Brahma Nishthas (those who are rooted, established in the Intuitive experience of the Ultimate Reality) and who can adopt a style of language and methodology to suit the present times of scientific progress is very great at the present juncture. Let us all pray that Shreemat Naaraayana, who is everyone’s Self (Sarvaatman) and who is a veritable storehouse of compassion, may provide us with such holy men and grant His Grace to all of us.

Om Tat Sat
BOOKS BY THE SAME AUTHOR ALREADY PUBLISHED

1. The Scientific Approach Of Advaita Vedanta

A succinct description of the unique methodology that is utilized in and through the Upanishadic lore to expound the Ultimate, Absolute Reality of Brahman or Atman, as explained by Shri Shankara in his extant, original Bhashyas on the Prasthaana Trayi, viz. the ten principal Upanishads, Bhagavadeeta and the Vedanta Sootras (Brahma Sootras). It will not be euphemistic if it is stated that without the knowledge of the six fundamentals mentioned in this booklet a true seeker of the Reality of the Self or student of Advaita Vedanta will invariably get confused and confounded by the apparently contradictory statements of the Upanishads. The author has used 14 diagrams to drive home the subtle teachings of pristine pure Advaita Vedanta of Adi Shankara in keeping with the modern trend of audio-visual methods of presentation of a topic.

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spiritual circles and by scholars and academicians are answered quite clearly so that they get dissolved, so to speak. At the end of the book, an Appendix on “Science and Spirituality” — which is a comparative study of the two formidable “sciences” — running into 83 pages is given.

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The Quintessence of Pristine Pure Vedanta: This is the sixth number of the “Satchidaananda Vaak-Jyoti Series” — and as the name of the book itself suggests this contains the quintessence of pristine pure Vedantic teachings culled out of the original Bhaashyas of Adi Shankara, devoid of all extraneous and alien accretions and interpolations which are likely to confuse a true seeker. By a meticulous study of this booklet it is hoped that a persistent hunger to pursue this ‘Aadhyaatmika Vidya’ as also to know more about it from bigger and more comprehensive texts will be generated.

Pages - 40  
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10. The Philosophical Science of Vedanta

The Philosophical Science of Vedanta: Being the seventh number of the “Satchidaananda Vaak-Jyoti Series”, this booklet gives a foretaste of Adi Shankara’s famous ‘Brahma Sootra Bhaashyas’, which are highly
dialectical in their approach in teaching the Ultimate Reality of Brahman or Atman of Vedanta. Two brief appendices are also adduced to compare and contrast the interpretations of 'Brahma Sootras' by the other schools of philosophy, viz. Vishisthaadvaita of Ramanujaachaarya and Dvaita of Madhvaachaarya.

11. Vedanta: The Only Consummate Spiritual Science

Vedanta: The Only Consummate Spiritual Science: This is the eighth and last of “Satchidaananda Vaak-Jyoti Series” and projects a profound and comprehensive perspective to enable a genuine student of this spiritual science to weigh its teachings and truths against all the other physical and psychic sciences as also other incomplete schools of philosophies, both Western and Indian. Taking a holistic viewpoint of Intuitive experience (Pure Consciousness of Atman) one can judge for himself that Vedanta is truly the ultimate and final in all epistemological and metaphysical pursuits.
It is a well-known fact in spiritual circles that one cannot by himself comprehend the genuine Vedantic teachings by a study of ‘Prasthaana Traya Bhaashyas’ of Adi Shankara without the help and guidance of a preceptor well-versed in the traditional methodology of utilizing the ‘Adhyaaroopa Apavaada Nyaaya’ which is implicit in and through those Bhaashyas. Even the avowed followers of Adi Shankara, scholars, academicians and anchorites have miserably failed to bring about a convincing reconciliation among all the teachings or doctrines of the triad of the original Bhaashyas as well as between the spiritual teachings pertaining to ‘Dharma Jijnaasa’ and ‘Brahma Jijnaasa’. Consequently, their interpretations and commentaries — verbal or written — bristle with contradictions and inconsistencies. Besides, the traditional or Saampradaayic methodology handed down from the teacher to the taught and subtle pedagogics utilized by that world teacher (Adi Shankara), who even to this day shines like a brilliant sun on the Vedantic firmament, have been virtually lost sight of or, denied to the true seekers of the Ultimate Reality of Brahman or Atman.

The modern educated intellectuals with their professed ‘scientific temperament’ take every opportunity and use every forum to decry and denigrate the time-honoured and time-tested Vedantic philosophy and question its very relevance in this Nuclear Age of scientific progress. Suffice it to say that ‘Reality’ has per force to be universal and invariable in all climes, times and ages. This hard fact cannot be denied by any empirical scientist worth his salt. If the Vedantic ‘Absolute Reality’ of Atman is beyond all empirical transactions and phenomena and, at the same time, if the ‘Science of Vedanta’ brings home this Ultimate Reality as one’s own essential Being of Atman using an immaculate and infallible methodology of teaching, then it becomes evident to any ardent seeker of this all-comprehensive and all-pervasive Reality that this ‘Aatma Vidya’ is in truth the ‘summum bonum’ of all human endeavour and prosperity. It deserves to be given the pride of place in all educational institutions and academies.

This book comes in handy as an excellent reference book and a constant guide for the genuine student of Vedanta as also to a seeker and will invariably create a spiritual hunger to know more details and secrets hidden in the vast Upanishadic lore. In that event, the students and seekers alike can take recourse to many such gems of Vedantic literature published by Adhyatma Prakasha Karyalaya, Thyagarajanagar, Bangalore 560 028.