

## Elucidation of terms and concepts in Vedanta (By S.N.Sastri)

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### Transliteration code

The code used here for transliteration of Sanskrit words is the ITRANS 4.0 used in internet with a few modifications.

The Sanskrit vowels are, in order, as below:-

a, aa, i, ii, u, uu, r., r., l., l., e, ai, o, au.

Consonants:--

kavarga--- k, kh, g, gh, .n

chavarga—ch, chh, j, jh, nj

Tavarga—T, TH, D, DH, N

tavarga--- t, th, d, dh, n

pavarga—p, ph, b, bh, m

y, r, l, v, s', sh, s, h

visarga--H

## Abbreviations

B.G.	Bhagavad-gita
B.S.	Brahma suutra
Br.up.	Br.hadaaraNyaka upanishad
Ch.up	Chhandogya upanishad
MaaND.up.	MaaNDuukya upanishad
MuND.up.	MuNDaka upanishad
S'.V.up.	S'vetaas'vatara upanishad
taitt. up.	taittiriya upanishad
S.B.	S'ankara bhaashyam
V.C.	Viveka chuuDaamaNi

## Elucidation of terms and concepts in Vedanta (Based on the commentaries of Sri Sankaracharya and other authoritative texts)

By S.N.Sastri

### Introduction

Statements expounding particular terms and concepts in Vedanta are found scattered at different places in the Upanishads and the commentaries thereon. For example, if we take the concept of *mukti* (liberation), the answers to questions such as, what is *mukti* and what are the means to it, are found in various places. It was felt that if statements relating to each topic were collected and put together, that would be of considerable help in getting a total view about that topic. This is the task undertaken in this work. This is not by any means an exhaustive collection of all the statements relating to any particular topic. The attempt has been to gather together as much as is necessary to get a clear idea about each topic. Another purpose that this topic-wise grouping would serve is to make it easy to trace the exact place where a particular point has been elucidated.

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### Adhyaasa (Superimposition)

Brahmasuutra--- (B.S.)-*adhyaasabhaashya* of S'rii S'ankara- *smr.tiruupaH paratra puurvadr.shTa avabhaasah---adhyaasa* (superimposition) is the illusory appearance, in another place, of an object seen earlier elsewhere. It is similar in nature to recollection. (On seeing a rope in dim light and not recognizing it as a rope, a person mistakes it for a snake which he has seen elsewhere. The snake is not absolutely unreal, because it is actually experienced, and produces the same effect, such as fear and so on, as a real snake would. At the same time, it is not real, because it is no longer seen when the rope has been recognized. It is therefore described as *anirvachaniiya*, or what cannot be classified as either real or unreal).

In the above definition, the words 'similar in nature to recollection' are intended to exclude recognition. 'Recollection' is of an object previously experienced, but which is not now present before the person recollecting. 'Recognition' is when the same object previously experienced is again present before the person.

B.G.13.26 S.B.--- In this verse it is said that everything in this world is brought into existence by the association of the 'field' and the 'knower of the field', or, the self and the non-self. S'rii S'ankara points out in his commentary on this verse that the association of these two is only by superimposition, since there cannot be any real association between the self, which is absolutely real and the non-self which has only empirical reality. The non-self, (namely, the body, mind and organs,) is superimposed on the self and, consciousness, which is the nature of the self, is attributed to the body, mind and organs.

S'rii S'ankara further points out in his *adhyaasa-bhaashya* on the Brahma suutras that, when there is superimposition of one thing on another, the latter is not affected in the least by the good or bad qualities of the former. (e.g., nacre does not become more valuable because it is mistaken for silver, nor does a rope get the qualities of the snake which it is mistaken for). The implication of this statement is that the self does not undergo any of the changes, nor does it experience any of the joys and sorrows, of the body, mind and organs. It is, however, only because of this mutual superimposition of the self and the non-self that all action, both secular and religious, becomes possible. The self, by itself, is neither a doer of actions, nor an enjoyer of the results. It becomes a doer and an enjoyer only because of this superimposition, as a result of which, as S'rii S'ankara says, the real and the unreal, namely, the self and the non-self,

are blended into one, as it were. All action, including the various rites laid down in the Vedas, thus come within the sphere of *avidyaa* or nescience, which is the cause of superimposition.

Superimposition is of two kinds. When a rope is mistaken for a snake, the snake alone is seen. The existence of the rope is not known at all. Here the snake is said to be superimposed on the rope. This is known as *svaruupa-adhyaasa*. The second kind of superimposition is when a crystal appears to be red in the proximity of a red flower. Here both the crystal and the flower are seen as existing, and the redness of the flower is attributed to the crystal also. This is known as *samsarga-adhyaasa*. Both these kinds of superimposition are present in the mutual superimposition of the self and the non-self.

Because of the superimposition of the non-self on the self, the existence of the self is not recognized at all, and the non-self, (that is, the body, mind and organs), is alone recognized as existing. This is *svaruupa-adhyaasa*. In the superimposition of the self on the non-self, only the consciousness of the self is attributed to the body, mind and organs. This is *samsarga-adhyaasa*. The result of this mutual superimposition is that every one identifies himself with the body. This is the root cause of all suffering. Giving up this wrong identification with the body-mind complex and realizing that one is the self which is beyond all suffering and all the pairs of opposites such as heat and cold, success and failure and so on, is *vidyaa* or knowledge. It is this knowledge that is contained in the Upanishads.

*svaruupa-adhyaasa* is also known as '*nirupaadhika adhyaasa*', or superimposition without a limiting adjunct or *upaadhi*. The superimposition of an illusory snake on a rope is of this type. *upaadhi* has been defined by Bhaskararaya in his commentary on the name '*nirupaadhiH*' (No.154) in the *Lalitaasahasranaama as--upa samiipe aadadhaati sviyam dharmam*—that which gives its quality to an object near it. A red flower which makes a transparent crystal near it look red is an *upaadhi*. The superimposition of the red colour on the crystal is a superimposition with *upaadhi* and it is known as '*sopaadhika adhyaasa*', which is the same as *samsarga adhyaasa*.

In the superimposition of the snake on the rope, the substratum is considered to be the rope. But the rope itself is not real, and is a superimposition on Brahman or Consciousness. Therefore it is said in *Vedaanta* that the substratum is '*raju-upahita chaitanyam*', or, Consciousness apparently limited by the rope.

The illusory snake is said to be '*praatibhaasika*'; the rope, like everything in this world, is '*vyaavahaarika*', or empirical reality. Brahman alone is '*paaramaarthika*', or absolute reality.

B.S.-*Adhyaasa-bhaashya---adhyaaso naama atasmin tadbuddhiriti----- adhyaasa*, or superimposition, is the cognition, as a particular thing, of what is not that, like the cognition of what is not silver as silver. Other examples given here by S'rii S'ankara are---when one's wife or son is happy or unhappy, one considers oneself also as happy or unhappy; one attributes the qualities of the physical body, such as fatness, leanness and so on, to oneself, as one says-"I am fat, I am lean, etc"; one says-"I am blind, deaf, etc", attributing the qualities of the sense-organs to oneself. This superimposition is beginningless, it is of the nature of illusory cognition and is the cause of the notion of agency and enjoyership. The truth is that one is the *aatmaa* which is free from all these qualities. The wrong identification with the body, mind, organs, etc., can be removed only by the realization of one's real nature. The aim of Vedaanta is to enable one to attain this realization.

### **Advaita-jnaana and upaasanaa (Non-dual realization and Meditations)**

Similarity and difference between the two.

Ch.up. Introduction-S.B.—*yathaa advaitajnaanam manovr.ttimaatram ----- --saamaanyam.*

The similarity between non-dual realization and meditations is that both are mere modifications of the mind.

*svaabhaavikasya aatmani adhyaaropitasya -----iti vis'eshaH.*

The difference between the two is this—non-dual realization removes totally the cognition of all such differences as agent, instrument, action and results, which are superimposed naturally on the action-less Self, just as the appearance of a snake is superimposed on a rope. This superimposition is removed by the knowledge of the substratum. But meditation consists in establishing a continuous flow of similar modifications of the mind with regard to some object as prescribed by the scriptures, and uninterrupted by any other thought.

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### **Aatmaa –the indwelling self**

--is self-luminous, unattached, etc.

Br.up.4.3.14.S.B.—*svayamjyotiH aatmaa asti iti svapnanidars'anena pradars'itam.*By the illustration of dream it has been proved that there is the

self-luminous *aatmaa* and that it transcends the forms of death (i.e. the body and organs).

Br. Up. 4.3.17.S.B.—*yathaa asau svapne asa.ngatvaat-----buddhaantena.*

Just as, being unattached in the dream state, the *aatmaa* is not affected, on its return to the waking state, by whatever appeared to have happened in the dream state, so also, it is not affected by anything done in the waking state. (In other words, the *aatmaa* is not at all affected by anything experienced either in the dream state or in the waking state).

#### Aatmaa in the three states

Br.up.4.3.19. S.B.—*yasmaat jaagarite sasa.ngaH samr.tyuH-----*

It has been shown that in the waking state the self appears through ignorance as connected with attachment, death (meaning here action) and the body and organs. In the dream state it appears to be connected with desire, but free from the forms of death (meaning the body, mind and organs—See Br.up.4.3.7.S.B.-*svatah kaaryakaraNaani eva asya ruupaaNi*). In the state of deep sleep it is perfectly serene and unattached. This non-attachment is the special feature in this state. Considering all these passages together, it becomes clear that the self is by nature eternal, free, self-luminous and pure.

#### The *jiivaatmaa* is not a part (*ams'a*) of Brahman

Br.up.2.1.20.S.B.“*kshudraa visphuli.ngaaH*”Br.up.2.1.20

”*mamaivaams'aH*”-B.G.15.7. -*paramaatmaikatva-pratyaya----*

The passages such as ‘tiny sparks’, ‘a part of Myself’, are intended to convey the idea of identity. We are aware that sparks of fire are identical with fire. Thus a part may be considered as identical with the whole. Therefore words such as ‘part of the Supreme Self’, as applied to the individual self, are meant only to convey the idea of the identity of the two. (The supreme Self has no parts. It is one homogeneous entity).

The individual self appears as a separate entity because of the limiting adjuncts (*upaadhi*)

Br.up.2.4.12. S.B.—*yathaa adbhyaH suuryachandraadipratibimbaH-----*

Just as reflections of the sun, moon, etc, arise in water, or a transparent crystal appears red because of the proximity of a red cloth, so also, because of the limiting adjuncts (*upaadhi*) in the form of the body and organs, Brahman appears as a separate individual entity. On the realization of one’s true nature as being identical with Brahman, the notion that one is a separate individual entity comes to an end. As the reflections of the sun, moon, etc, and the redness of the crystal, disappear when their causes, namely the limiting adjuncts in the form of the water and the red cloth are

removed, and the sun, moon and the transparent crystal alone remain as they are, so also, the endless, infinite and limpid Pure Consciousness, or Brahman, alone remains.

Consciousness pervades the whole body, mind, etc.—an illustration--

Br.up.4.3.7 S.B—*yathaa vaa marakataadiH maNiH ----- sarvaantaramatvaat.*

Just as an emerald or any other gem, dropped into a vessel of milk, imparts its lustre to the milk, so does this luminous self, being subtler than even the mind and the intellect, impart consciousness to the whole body, mind and organs. (When an emerald is dropped into milk, the latter gets a green hue. Similarly, the self, being pure consciousness, makes the insentient mind, body and organs sentient.)

Why people identify themselves with the body, mind, etc.

Br.up.4.3.7 S.B---*buddhistaavat svachchhatvaat -----yathaa vivekam jaayate.*

The intellect, being transparent and next to the self, easily catches the reflection of the consciousness of the self. Therefore it is that even wise men identify themselves with the intellect first; next comes the mind which catches the reflection of the self through the intellect; then the organs through contact with the mind; and lastly, the body, through the organs. Thus the self successively illumines with its own consciousness the entire aggregate of body and organs. This is the reason why all people identify themselves with the body, mind and organs, to a greater or lesser degree, according to the extent of their discriminating capacity.

### **Avidyaa (Nescience)**

Br.up.4.3.20 S.B.---*ata idam avidyaayaaH satatvam uktam----- tataH phalam.*

Therefore, the nature of nescience is that it represents what is infinite as finite, projects things other than the Self, which are non-existent and makes the Self appear as limited. From this sense of limitation arises the desire for things that appear to be different from oneself (due to ignorance of the truth that everything is but Brahman). This desire prompts one to action for its fulfillment. Action produces results, and this leads to further birth. Thus the cycle—*kaama, karma, janma*—desire, action, rebirth, goes on indefinitely, as long as ignorance continues.

*tasmaat na aatmadharmaH avidyaa---* Ignorance is not a natural characteristic of the Self, because that which is natural to a thing can never be eliminated, like the heat and light of the sun.



B.S.Adhyaasabhaashya---*avidyaadvishayaaNi eva -----s'aastraani ca.*

All the means of valid knowledge, such as perception, and even the scriptures, have validity only as long as a person is ignorant of the Self. (All these function only on the basis of the superimposition (*adhyasa*) of the body, mind and organs on the Self. This superimposition comes to an end when *avidya* is eradicated. After that even the scriptural injunctions cease to be applicable).

This primal ignorance is described as beginningless. But this word is not used here in the same sense as that in which it is used in respect of Brahman. *avidya* is beginningless only in the sense that it has no cause. *avidya* is the cause of the entire universe according to Advaita.

It is not possible to classify this *avidya* either as real or as unreal. What is unreal (*asat*), like a sky-flower, or the horn of a rabbit, is never experienced. Since *avidya* is experienced, it is not unreal. According to Advaita, that alone is real, which never changes or ceases to exist. *avidya*, being removable by knowledge, is not real. It cannot be both real and unreal because the two are contradictory. So *avidya* is described as '*anirvachaniya*', different from both real and unreal. This does not mean that it is absolutely unreal. *avidya* has empirical (*vyaavahaarika*) reality. The universe, which is an effect of *avidya*, also has the same level of reality. *avidya*, as well as the universe, are said to be indeterminable (*anirvachaniya*) and illusory (*mithyaa*).

#### Locus and content of *avidya*

All are agreed that the content (or object) of nescience is Brahman. But there is difference of opinion with regard to its locus.

MaNDana Mis'ra says in Brahmasiddhi that the *jiiva* is the locus of nescience.

Vaachaspati Mis'ra holds the same view –see his commentary on Brahma sutra-1.4.3.

Aanandagiri---Brahman is the locus—commentary on Brahma sutra-1.4.3.

Sures'varaachaarya---Brahman is the locus---Naishkarmyasiddhi Ch.3.1.

Sarvajnaatmamuni---Brahman is the locus---Samkshepa s'aariirakam—1.319

Prakaas'aatman---Brahman is the locus-----VivaraNa-

#### *avidya* is positive

*avidya* is not mere negation, as it is antagonistic to Knowledge. In Vedaantasaara of Sadaananda, ignorance is defined thus:-Ignorance is something positive, though intangible, which cannot be described as either

being or non-being, which is made of three *guNas* (*sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*), and is antagonistic to Knowledge. Ch.2.34

In B.G.5.15, the Lord says that Knowledge is covered by Ignorance. What covers can only be positive and cannot be negative. In Samkshepas'aariirakam 1.320 and in VivaraNa it is established that *avidyaa* is positive.

The same conclusion has been arrived at in Sures'vara's Vaartika on taitt. Up. Bhaashya-2.179.

See also Samkshepas'aariirakam Chap.3.111.

It must, however, be noted that it is only from the empirical point of view that it is said that *avidyaa*, while being other than the real as well as the unreal, is positive and not mere absence of knowledge. From the absolute point of view, *avidyaa* does not exist at all. See also under the heading 'Maayaa', where verses from Panchadas'i have been quoted.

*avidyaa* has two powers

*avidyaa* or Nescience covers Brahman with its veiling power (*aavaraNa s'akti*) and projects the universe with its power known as *vikshepa s'akti*—see Viveka chuuDaamaNi, verses 113 and 115.

In Vedaantasaara it is said:- Just as a small patch of cloud, by obstructing the vision of the observer, conceals, as it were, the solar disc extending over a very large area, similarly, ignorance, though limited by nature, yet obstructing the intellect of the observer, conceals, as it were, the Self, which is unlimited and not subject to transmigration. Such a power is the power of concealment. (Para 52).

The Self, covered by this concealing power of ignorance, becomes subject to transmigration characterized by the notion of being a doer and an enjoyer. Just as ignorance regarding a rope, by its inherent power, gives rise to the illusion of a snake, etc., so also, ignorance, by its own power, creates in the Self covered by it, such phenomena as aakaas'a, etc. Such a power is called the power of projection. (Paras 53 and 54).

*avidyaa* and *maayaa*—whether the same or different

S'rii S'ankara treats *avidyaa* and *maayaa* as identical –See B.S.Bhaashya-1.4.3.Sures'vara also does the same.

Samkshepas'aariirakam-3.108-109 expresses the same view.

In Panchadas'i, VidyaaraNya says that *prakr.ti* constituted of pure *sattva* is *maayaa* and when constituted of *sattva* mixed with *rajas* and *tamas* is *avidyaa*. Brahman reflected in *maayaa* is *iis'vara*, who is omniscient and is the controller of *maayaa*. Brahman reflected in *avidyaa* is *jiiva*.

In Patanjali's Yoga suutras *avidyaa* is described as one of the five 'kles'a-s', or causes of man's suffering. (Suutra 2.3); the other four are

egoism (*asmitaa*), attachment (*raaga*), aversion (*dvesha*) and the desire to cling on to life (*abhinives'a*). *avidyaa* is said to be the cause of the other four (2.4). *avidyaa* is defined as looking upon what is non-eternal as eternal, what is impure as pure, what is painful as pleasant and the non-Self as the Self (2.5).

### *avidyaavr.tti*

In deep sleep there is *avidyaa* as well as *avidyaavr.tti*. *avidyaa*, which is the adjunct (*upaadhi*) of the Self in deep sleep, is the causal condition of the mind. While the mind is dormant in deep sleep (*sushupti*), it is through *avidyaavr.tti* that ignorance and happiness are experienced. On waking up, the mind again comes out of its causal condition and there arises the memory of what was experienced in sleep.

*svaruupa-jnaana*, which is the very nature of Brahman, is not opposed to primal ignorance. It is this *svaruupa-jnaana* which reveals the ignorance. The primal ignorance which is the cause of bondage is destroyed by the mental mode (*akhaNDaakaaravr.tti*) generated by the *mahaavaakyas*. This final *vr.tti-jnaana* also disappears immediately thereafter, in the same way as the medicine itself disappears after removing the disease.

### **Avidyaanivr.tti**

There are three views on what is meant by '*avidyaanivr.tti*' or the cessation of ignorance.

1. It is identical with Brahman-Aatman.
2. It is different from Brahman-Aatman and yet it is not *anirvachaniiya*, but is of a fifth kind.
3. It is identical with the direct experience of Brahman-Aatman.

See Samkshepas'aariirakam-4.13 onwards.

Madhusuudana Sarasvati rejects the second view stated above—see Vedaantakalpalatika-

The first view derives support from S'rii S'ankara's Haristuti—*tam samsaaradhvaantavinaas'am harim iDe*.

MaNDana favours the third view above in Brahmasiddhi.

Madhusuudana Sarasvati supports the first and third views in his Advaitasiddhi—*tasmaat ajnaanahaanih aatmasvaruupam tadaakaaraa vr.tti vaa iti siddham----*

### **Ahamkaara**

VivekachuuDaamaNi-verse No.106---*ahamkaaraH sa vijneyaH*—In his commentary on this verse, H.H. Svaami Chandrasekhara Bhaarati says-*ahamkaara*, the ego-sense, is the *antaHkaraNam* (the internal organ or

mind) with the reflection of the consciousness of the Self in it. It then identifies itself with the body and senses. This *antaHkaraNam* considers itself as doer and enjoyer. It acquires the states of waking, dream and deep sleep by conjunction with *rajoguNa*, *sattvaguNa* and *tamoguNa* respectively.

Sri sures'vara points out in his Naishkarmyasiddhi ,Ch.2, verses 46 to 51 that (1)the internal organ is the connecting link between the Self and the non-Self (verse 46), (2) it makes the Self which is one appear as many (v.47), (3) it is because of it that the Self, though free from action and attributes, appears to have all of them (v.49), and (4) it makes the non-relational Self relational, as it were (v.51). The internal organ assumes the form of the external object which is presented to it and when this modification of the internal organ (*antaHkaraNa-vr.tti*) is illumined by the Self which is reflected therein, the internal organ assumes the role of the knower or the seer, though by itself it cannot be the knower since it is insentient. In the absence of the internal organ, as in *sushupti*, the Self has no relation with anything and does not experience anything, subjective or objective.

### **Brahman**

taitt. Up. 2.1 S.B.—*br.hattamatvaat Brahma*---Being the greatest, it is known as Brahman.

The sentence - Brahman is truth, knowledge and infinite- is meant to be the definition of Brahman.

A thing is said to be *satya* –true- when it does not change the nature that is ascertained to be its own; and a thing that deviates from the form in which it has been once ascertained is said to be unreal. (This is the literal translation of the statement in the Bhaashya. The gist of this is that, the meaning of the word ‘true’ in Vedaanta is--- that which never undergoes any change at any time. Brahman alone is true in this sense). Every modification is therefore unreal. The *s'ruti* says- all modification is mere name, created by words alone; what is called clay is alone real. (Ch.up. 6.1.4). Various forms such as pot, etc, made out of clay are all unreal. Their reality is only as clay. Thus, by the word ‘truth’ the *s'ruti* distinguishes Brahman from all changing forms.

By the word ‘knowledge’ the *s'ruti* makes it clear that Brahman is not insentient like clay.

By the three words – truth, knowledge and infinite – it is made clear that Brahman is different from everything in the universe which is always

subject to change, is insentient and limited by time, space and other objects.

Here knowledge means ‘consciousness’ and not a particular knowledge, which has a beginning and an end and is therefore finite. This consciousness is not distinct from Brahman, but is its essential nature, like the light of the sun or the heat of fire. This consciousness is eternal and is present even during deep sleep. A specific act of knowing takes place only when the mind functions in association with the relevant sense-organ, but this must be distinguished from consciousness, which is ever present. It is this consciousness which is known as Brahman. Brahman, which is Pure Consciousness, becomes a ‘knower’ only when the intellect is superimposed on it.

Upades’ a saahas’ rii-(Metrical portion)-Ch.18. Verse 65—The Self is looked upon as a knower only because of the superimposition on it of the knowership of the intellect. Similarly, the intellect is considered as a knower only because of the superimposition of consciousness on it.

Since the words truth, knowledge, and infinite are only intended to convey that Brahman is different from all that is subject to change, all that is insentient and all that is limited, and since such an object is not known to anyone, it may be argued that Brahman is non-existent, like the objects mentioned in the following statement:-

“Having bathed in the waters of the mirage and adorned his head with sky-flowers (i.e. flowers which grow in the sky), here goes the son of a barren woman, carrying a bow made out of the horn of a hare”. The answer to this is that, since the words are intended as a definition of Brahman and a definition is given only for something that exists and not for something non-existent, the argument is not tenable. Here Aanandagiri says—The word truth connotes unfailing existence, the word consciousness connotes self-luminous knowledge of all objects and the word infinite connotes all-pervasiveness. Thus each of these words conveys a positive idea, while excluding the opposite and does not mean a mere negation.

The words *satyam*, *jnaanam*, etc, apply to Brahman only in their secondary sense (*lakshyaartha*) and not in their primary sense (*vaachyaartha*)—see Samkshepas’aariirakam Ch.1. verses 178 to 184.

### Brahman is in reality attributeless

In Brahma suutra 3.2.11 to 3.2.21, it is established that, though the scriptures describe Brahman as both qualified (Ch.up.3.14.2) and as unqualified (Br.up.3.8.8), Brahman is really attributeless. The description of Brahman as qualified is only for the purpose of *Upaasanaa* (meditation).

Brahma suutra 3.2.22. S.B.—In Br.up.2.3.1 it is said that Brahman has two forms—gross and subtle, mortal and immortal, limited and unlimited, defined and undefined. Then it is said in Br.up.2.3.6 –“Now therefore the description (of Brahman)—*neti, neti*—not so, not so”. These two negatives deny the two aspects, gross and subtle etc. By this the reality of all creation is denied.

#### Two kinds of definition of Brahman

There are two kinds of definition of Brahman—(1) *svaruupalakshaNam*—definition with reference to the essential nature, e.g. *satyam jnaanam anantam brahma*—taitt,up. 2.1. (2) *taTasthalakshaNam*—This is based on an accidental feature, which helps to distinguish the object defined. An example is the identification of a house by pointing out a crow sitting on it. While the crow may fly away, it nevertheless helps a person to know which is the house meant. In the case of Brahman, such a definition is—*yato vaa imaani bhuutaani jaayante*-----That from which all these beings are born, that by which they live and that towards which they move and into which they merge. (taitt.up,3.1.1).

#### How the Self pervades all bodies—examples

Br.up.1.4.7 S.B.—*yathaa cha kshuraH kshuradhaane*----

As a razor lies in one part of its case, as fire lies in wood, pervading it, so does the Self dwell in the body, pervading it in a general and particular way. There it is perceived as doing the functions of living, seeing, etc.

#### The meaning of “*neti, neti*”---

Br,up. 2.3.6.S.B.—*aades’o nirdes’o BrahmaNaH. KaH punarasau*-----*neti neti iti nirdes’aH*.

How is it sought to describe Brahman , the Truth of truth? By the elimination of all differences due to limiting adjuncts, the words “Neti, neti” refer to something that has no distinguishing mark, such as name, form, action, heterogeneity, species or qualities. Words refer to things through one or more of these marks. But Brahman has none of these distinguishing marks. Therefore it cannot be described as, “It is such and such “, as we can describe a cow by saying, “There moves a white cow with horns”. Brahman can be described only by the superimposition of name, form and action. When, however, we wish to describe its true nature, free from all differences due to limiting adjuncts, the only way is to describe it as –not this, not this.

#### Brahman transcends all qualities

Br.up.3.5.1.S.B.—*avivekibhiH talamalavadi va gaganam* -----

As the sky, fancied by the ignorant as being concave and blue, is really without these qualities, being untouched by them, so also Brahman-Aatman, although thought of by the ignorant as being subject to hunger, thirst, etc, really transcends all these qualities. The *S'ruti* says—"It is not affected by human misery, being beyond it"- KaTha up. 2.2.11

Brahman, the individual self and iis'vara

Br.up.3.8.12.S.B.—*kastarhi bhedaH eteshaam?*

What is the difference among them? It is only due to the difference in the limiting adjuncts. Intrinsically, there is neither difference nor identity among them, for all the three are in essence Pure Consciousness, homogeneous like a lump of salt. When the unconditioned Self has, as the limiting adjuncts, the body and organs which are characterized by ignorance, desire and action, it is called the transmigrating individual self. When the limiting adjunct is the power of eternal and unlimited knowledge, which is *Maayaa*, the same Self is known as *iis'vara*, who is the *antaryaamii* or Inner Controller. The same Self, free from all limiting adjuncts, is Brahman. When the limiting adjuncts are the bodies of *hiraNyagarbha*, the gods, men, animals and others, the same Self assumes those particular names and forms.

Br.up.4.4.5.S.B.—*sa vaa ayam ya evam samsarati ----- as'anaayaadyatiitaH.*

The transmigrating self is indeed Brahman, which is beyond hunger, etc.

Br.up.4.4.25.S.B.—*ya evam yathoktam aatmaanam-----*

He who knows the self described above as the Brahman which is beyond fear becomes Brahman. This is the purport of the whole Upanishad put in a nutshell. It is to bring out this purport that the ideas of creation, maintenance and dissolution of the universe, as well as the ideas of action, its factors and results were superimposed on the Self. Then, by the negation of the superimposed attributes the true nature of Brahman as free from all attributes has been brought out. This is the method of *adhyaropa* and *apavaada*, superimposition and negation, which is adopted by Vedaanta.

Br. Up.5.1.1.S.B.—*yadyapi Brahmaatmaadis'abdaaH-----*

Although the words 'Brahman', 'aatman' etc, are names of Brahman, we see from the *s'ruti* that Om is its most intimate appellation. Therefore, Om is the best means for the realization of Brahman. Om is both a symbol for Brahman and its name.

Brahman is both the material and the efficient cause of the universe.

Panchadas'i-1.44—Brahman becomes the material cause of the universe when it is associated with that aspect of *maayaa* in which there is

predominance of *tamas*. It becomes the efficient cause when associated with that aspect of *maayaa* in which there is predominance of *sattva*.

Brahman is free from all the three types of differences

Panchadas'i-2.20 and 21.—Differences are of three kinds. The difference of a tree from its leaves, flowers, fruits, etc, is the difference within an object. This is known as *svagata bheda*. The difference of one tree from another tree is the difference between objects of the same species. This is known as *sajaatiiya bheda*. The difference of a tree from a rock is the difference between objects of different species. This is known as *vijaatiiya bheda*. None of these differences exists with regard to Brahman, because there is nothing else of the same species or of a different species and there is no internal difference because Brahman is homogeneous. This is what is affirmed in the Chhaandogya upanishad (6.2.1) by the words “*ekam eva advitiiyam*”—one, only, without a second. The word “one’ negates *sajaatiiya bheda*, the word ‘only’ negates *svagata bheda* and the words ‘without a second’ negate *vijaatiiya bheda*.

Brahman is free from all limitations

Panchadas'i-3.35, 36, 37—Being all-pervasive, Brahman is not limited by space. Being eternal, it is not limited by time. Since all objects in the universe are merely superimposed on Brahman, Brahman is not limited by any object, just as a rope is not limited by the illusory snake superimposed on it .

### **Cause and effect**

taitt. Up. 2.1.S.B.—*na hi kaaraNavyatirekeNa kaaryam naama vastutaH asti ----*

There is no such thing as effect in reality apart from the cause. The effect has no real existence apart from the cause.

Ch.up.6.1.4---All modifications exist in name only, being created only by words.

Anubhuutiprakaas'a of VidyaaraNya—1.20—Just as a pot made out of clay is really nothing but clay, so also this universe which has originated from the Supreme Self (Brahman) has no reality apart from the Supreme Self.

### **Creation**

The real object of the description of creation

The Upanishads describe the creation, sustenance and dissolution of the universe. This should not, however, be taken to mean that creation, etc, are



real. According to Advaita, creation is not real, but is only a superimposition on Brahman, which alone is real in the absolute sense. The universe, which is a transformation of *maayaa*, is *anirvachaniiya*. It cannot be described either as real or as unreal. It has empirical reality only. The description of creation, etc, in the Upanishads is only to bring out the truth that Brahman, the cause, alone is real. The effect, universe, has no independent existence apart from the cause, Brahman. The following passages from S'rii S'ankara's Bhaashya bring out the real purpose of the statements about creation, etc, in the Upanishads.

Br.up.2.1.20.S.B.—*tasmaat upakramopasamhaaraabhyaam-----vaakyaani iti.*

From the introduction and conclusion it is clear that the passages speaking about the origin, sustenance and dissolution of the universe are intended only to strengthen the idea that the individual self is the same as the Supreme Self.

Br.up.2.1.20.S.B.—*tasmaat ekaruupaikatvapratyayadaarDhyaaya-----paramaatmanaH*

Therefore, the mention in all the Vedaanta texts of the origin, sustenance and dissolution of the universe is only to strengthen our idea of Brahman being a homogeneous entity, and not to tell us that the origin, etc, is real. Nor is it reasonable to suppose that a part of the indivisible, transcendental Supreme Self becomes the relative, individual self, because the Supreme Self is intrinsically without parts.

#### The theory of *vivarta*

Advaita Vedaanta explains the creation of the world by the theory of *vivarta*. This theory is different from the theory of *aarambha vaada* of Nyaaya-Vais'eshika and the *pariNaama vaada* of Saankhya. According to *aarambha vaada* the effect was not pre-existent in the cause and is something new which has come into existence. This theory is also called *asatkaarya vada*, because according to this the *kaarya*, effect, did not previously exist. According to the *pariNaama vaada*, the effect was existent in the cause and is only a transformation of the cause. It is therefore also known as *satkaarya vaada*, because the *kaarya*, effect, was existent in the cause. According to Advaita, the effect is not an actual transformation of the cause. Brahman is immutable and there can be no transformation of it. It only serves as the substratum (*adhishThaana*) for the appearance of the universe, just as the rope serves as the substratum for the appearance of the illusory snake.

This nature of the universe as a mere appearance on Brahman is brought out beautifully by Sures'vara in the following verses:-

Naishkarmyasiddhi.1.1—I offer my salutation to Hari, the destroyer of darkness and the witness of the intellect, from whom the universe consisting of ether, air, fire, water and earth has arisen like a snake from a garland.

taitt. Up. Bhaashya Vaartika.2.378—He, the Supreme Lord, the controller of *maayaa*, having created the universe with His *maayaa*, entered that very universe in the same way as a garland can be said to enter the illusory snake projected on it. (By this, the statements in the taitt.up.2.6.1 and the Br.up.1.4.7 that the Lord, having created the universe, entered into it, are also explained).

This appearance of the universe is due to *avidyaa*, or nescience, which conceals Brahman by its veiling power (*aavaraNa s'akti*) and projects the universe by its power of projection (*vikshepa s'akti*). The universe is therefore said to be only a *vivarta*, or apparent transformation, of Brahman. Like the illusory snake with rope as the substratum, the universe is illusory, or *mithyaa*, with Brahman as the substratum. But there is a vital difference between the illusoriness of the rope-snake and that of the universe. While the snake is purely illusory, or *praatibhaasika*, the universe has empirical, or *vyaavahaarika*, reality. That means that the universe is real for all those who are still in ignorance of Brahman. It loses its reality only when Brahman is realized as the only reality and as identical with one's own self, or, in other words, when identification with the body-mind complex completely disappears. Bondage is nothing but identification with the body-mind complex. This identification being due only to the ignorance of the truth that one is really the *aatmaa*, which is the same as Brahman, it can be removed only by the knowledge of one's real nature as Brahman.

Madhusuudana Sarasvati therefore says in Siddhaantabindu that the following statements in the *s'ruti*, which say that bondage ceases when Brahman is known, establish by implication the illusory nature of the universe:-

MuND.up.2.2.8—When that Self, which is the cause as well as the effect, is realized, the knot of the heart is cut asunder, all doubts are resolved and the effects of past *karma* are destroyed.

S'vetaas'vatara up.3.8—By knowing that Self one goes beyond death.

Ch.up.7.1.3—The knower of the Self goes beyond sorrow.

It is further pointed out in Siddhaantabindu that the following statements bring out explicitly the illusoriness of the universe:-

Br.up.3.4.2—Everything other than the Self is subject to destruction.

Br.up.4.4.19—There is no difference whatsoever in it (Brahman).

Br.up.2.3.6—Now therefore the description (of Brahman)—Not this, not this.

Bearing in mind the real import of the statements about creation, we may now go into the description of creation as found in the Upanishads and other Vedaanta texts.

### Creation of the subtle elements

taitt.up.2.1.1.S.B.—*tasmaad etasmaad brahmaNaH aatma-svaruupaat-----*

From that Brahman, which is identical with the indwelling self, *aakaas'a*, space, was created. *aakaas'a* means, that which is possessed of the attribute of sound and provides space for all things that have form. From that *aakaas'a* was born *vaayu*, air, which has two attributes, namely, its own quality, touch, and sound, the quality of its cause, *aakaas'a*. From air was produced *agniH*, fire, with three qualities, namely, its own quality, colour and the qualities of air and space. From fire was born *aapah*, water, with its own quality, taste, and the qualities of fire, air and space. From water was produced the element, *pr.thivii*, with its own quality, smell and the qualities of water, fire, air and space. These are the five subtle elements.

In Ch.up.6.2.3, the creation of only three elements is mentioned, namely fire, water and earth. S'rii S'ankara says here that it is logical to assume that, after creating space and air, Brahman created fire. The intended meaning is that all these have originated from *sat*, Existence, or Brahman and are therefore *sat* alone. The statement that all these elements arose from Brahman is clarified in Panchadas'i 1.18 by saying that these elements arose at the command of *iis'vara* from that aspect of *prakr.ti* in which *tamas* predominates.

### Creation of the organs of sense.

Vedaanta paribhaashaa.Ch.7—These subtle elements have arisen from *prakr.ti*, which is made up of the three *guNas*, namely, *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*, (which can be described as serenity, activity and inertia respectively). These elements are also therefore constituted of the same three *guNas*. From the *sattva* part of space, air, fire, water and earth are produced, respectively, the *indriyas*, known as ear, sense of touch, eye, the sense of taste and the sense of smell. It must be noted that these are not the organs, such as eye, etc, in the physical body. These latter are called *golaka*. The *indriyas* are the subtle counterparts of the external organs and form part of the subtle body, which will be described later. The presiding deities of these five *indriyas* are, respectively, the *devataas* of the Quarters,

Air, the sun, VaruNa (the god of the waters) and the two *As'vini devas*. (See also Panchadas'i.1.19).

It may be noted that each sense-organ is produced from the particular subtle element whose distinctive quality it has the power to reveal. For example, the organ of hearing reveals sound, which is the particular quality of *aakaas'a*, from the *sattva* part of which it is produced. The organ of smell is produced from the *sattva* part of *pr.thivii*, whose distinctive quality, smell, it reveals. S'rii S'ankara says in his commentary on Br.up.2.4.11—The *s'ruti* considers the organs to be of the same category as the objects, not of a different category. The organs are but modes of the objects they perceive.

### **Creation of the organs of action**

Vedaanta paribhaashaa.Ch.7 and Panchadas'i.1.21—From the *rajas* part of these five elements are produced, respectively, the organs of action called the tongue, the hand, the feet, the anus and the organ of generation. These, again, are not the physical organs bearing those names, but their subtle counterparts in the subtle body. The presiding deities of these organs are, in order, the *devataa* of Fire, *Indra*, *VishNu*, *Yama* and *Prajaapati*.

### **Creation of the *antaHkaraNam* or internal instrument**

Vedaanta paribhaashaa Ch.7 and Panchadas'i.1.20.From the *sattva* part of all the five subtle elements together is produced the *antaHkaraNam* which is known by four different names according to the function. The four names are-*manas*, *buddhi*, *chittam* and *ahamkaara*. (Sometimes only two names, *manas* and *buddhi*, are mentioned, as in Panchadas'i.1.20, the other two being included in them). These four functions are explained in VivekachuuDaamaNi, verses 95 and 96. The function of cogitation is known as the *manas* or mind. When a determination is made, it is known as *buddhi* or intellect. The function of storing experiences in memory is called *chittam* . Egoism is *ahamkaara*. The word 'mind' is also used to denote the *antaHkaraNam* as a whole when these distinctions are not intended. We shall use the word 'mind' in this sense hereafter.

There is difference of opinion among Advaitins on the question whether the mind is an *indriya*, organ, or not. Vaachaspati Mis'ra, the author of *Bhaamatii*, considers the mind as an *indriya*. Prakaas'aatma muni, the author of *VivaraNa*, takes the view that the mind is not an *indriya*. The author of *Vedaanta paribhaashaa* also takes the same view. This point assumes importance when the question as to how realization takes place

through the *mahaavaakyas* is considered. This will be dealt with later at the appropriate place.

In Panchadas'i.2.18, the number of *indriyas* is mentioned as eleven, indicating that the mind is also considered as an *indriya* there.

The mind is finite, being of medium magnitude (*madhyama parimaaNa*). It can therefore be connected with one or more of the organs at the same time. It has the capacity to expand and contract and take the form of any object.

The mind, being made of extremely subtle and transparent substance, receives the reflection of the consciousness of the Self. Because of this, it appears to be sentient, though it is really inert. All knowledge arises only through an appropriate modification of the mind, corresponding to the object of knowledge. (See further elaboration under 'Process of visual perception').

The mental states of pain, pleasure, fear, hope, and the like are illuminated directly by the witness-self without any intermediary. So they are said to be manifested by the witness-self alone (*kevala- saakshi-bhaasya*). The mental states become known as soon as they arise.

Panchadas'i.2.12—Mind, the ruler of the ten *indriyas*, is not independent, but depends on the organs of sense and action for its function in relation to external objects.

At the same time, no sense organ can function without the co-operation of the mind. In his Bhaashya on Br.up.1.5.3, S'rii S'ankara says- There is a mind apart from the external organs such as the ear. For, it is a well-known fact, that even when an object is in front, a person does not see it, if his mind is elsewhere. Similarly, a person does not hear what is said, if he is absent-minded. Therefore it is clear that in the absence of the mind, the sense organs do not perceive their respective objects. Hence it is through the mind that everyone sees, hears, etc.

Br.up.1.5.3 describes the mind thus:- Desire, resolve, doubt, faith, absence of faith, steadiness, unsteadiness, shame, intelligence and fear—all these are but the mind.

Another fact proving the existence of the mind is also stated here by S'rii S'ankara—'Because if one is touched by anybody even from behind, one is able to know distinctly whether it is a touch of a hand or of a knee. If there is no mind to distinguish them, how can the skin alone do this? That which helps us to distinguish between different perceptions is the mind'.

Panchadas'i.2.13. It is the mind which examines the merits and defects of the objects perceived through the senses. The conclusion which the mind comes to will depend on the proportion of the three *guNas* in it at the time.

Panchadas'i.2.15. When *sattva guNa* is predominant in the mind, merit (*puNya*) is acquired; when *rajas* is predominant, demerit (*paapa*) is acquired.

Panchadas'i.2.16. When *tamas* is predominant in the mind, neither merit nor demerit is produced, but life is merely wasted.

Mind is the cause of bondage, as well as of liberation

Amr.tabindu upanishad, mantra 2, says that the mind is, verily, the cause of bondage as well as of liberation; engrossed in objects of sense, it leads to bondage; free from attachment to objects, the same mind leads to liberation.

In *samaadhi* the *manas* (mind) becomes 'no-manas'; it attains to the state called *amaniibhaava*—GauDapaada's MaaNDuukya Kaarika, AdvaitaprakaraNa, verse 31. In verse 32, the term *amaniibhava* is explained—"When by the conviction of Aatman's reality, *manas* ceases to imagine, then it becomes 'no-manas', unperceiving for want of objects of perception".

### **Creation of praaNa (vital air)**

From a combination of the rajas aspect of the five subtle elements, is produced *praaNa*, or vital air. This has five divisions, according to the function performed. These are described in the Bhaashya on Pras'na Upanishad.3.5, thus:--- He (*praaNa*) places *apaana*, a division of himself, in the two lower apertures, as engaged in the work of ejecting the excreta . *praaNa* himself, who occupies the position of the sovereign, resides in the eyes and the ears and issues out through the mouth and nostrils. In the navel is *samaana*, which is so called because it assimilates all that is eaten or drunk, distributes them equally in all parts of the body and effects digestion. *udaana*, another division of *praaNa*, moves throughout the body and functions upwards. It leads the soul out of the body at the time of death and takes it to other worlds according to one's *puNya* and *paapa*. *vyaana* regulates *praaNa* and *apaana* and is the cause of actions requiring strength. (See also Br.up.1.5.3.S.B).

Br.up.3.9.26.S.B.—The force called *praaNa* would go out (through the mouth and nostrils) if it were not held back by *apaana*. The force called *apaana* would also depart (through the lower orifice) if it were not held back by *vyaana*. All these three forces would go out in all directions, if they were not fixed to *udaana*. All these four forces rest on *samaana*.

taitt.up.2.2.S.B. —*praaNa* is that aspect which goes out through the mouth and nostrils.

Vedaantasaara—Paras 84 and 85---According to Saankhya, there are five more vital forces known as *naaga*, *kuurma*, *kr.kala*, *devadatta* and *dhananjaya*. Their functions are, respectively, causing vomiting, winking, creating hunger, producing yawning and nourishing the body.

### Quintuplication of the subtle elements

Panchadas'i.1.26,27—The omnipotent Lord combined the five subtle elements by the process known as '*panchiikaraNam*' (Quintuplication) and produced gross elements to provide the *jiivas* (individual souls) with physical bodies and objects of enjoyment. The process of combination of the subtle elements is—Each subtle element is divided into two equal parts. The second half of each such element is divided into four equal parts (i.e. to get one-eighth of each element). Then the first half of each element is combined with one-eighth of each of the other four elements to make a gross element. The result is that in a gross element of earth one half is earth itself and the other half is made up of the elements of water, fire, air and space in equal shares. Similarly with the other four gross elements.

In the Chhaandogya upanishad, the creation of only fire, water and earth is spoken of (Chapter 6). It is further said that these three are combined (6.3.3). In Vedaantasaara, para 101 it is said that the authoritativeness of the compounding of the five elements is indirectly supported by the description of the combination of three elements in Ch.up.6.3.3. This combination of the three elements is also referred to in Brahma suutra 2.4.22.

### The three bodies of the *jiiva* (individual soul).

*prakr.ti*, which is made up of the three *guNas*, is of two kinds. When the element of *sattva* is pure, that is to say, not mixed with the other two, it is called *Maayaa*. When *sattva* is mixed with *rajas* and *tamas*, *prakr.ti* is known as *avidyaa*. Brahman reflected in *maayaa* is *iis'vara*, who is omniscient and the controller of *maayaa*. Brahman reflected in *avidyaa* is *jiiva*, or the individual soul. *jiivas* are many.

( Panchadas'i.1.16,17).

The *jiiva* has three bodies, known as the causal body or *kaaraNa s'ariira*, the subtle body or *suukshma s'ariira* or *li.nga s'ariira* and the gross body or *sthuula s'ariira*.

### Causal body

The *avidyaa* or nescience, is what is known as the causal body or *kaaraNa s'ariira*. It is the cause of the transmigratory existence of the *jiiva* and so it is called *KaaraNa* or cause. Though it has no form, it is called *s'ariira* or body, because it is liable to destruction on the dawn of Self-knowledge. The word *s'ariira* means, 'that which is perishable' (*s'iiryate iti s'ariiram*). In deep sleep the mind and the senses are dormant and nescience alone is present. The *jiiva* identifies himself with nescience in deep sleep. The *jiiva* is then known as *praajna*.

### Subtle body

Panchadas'i.1.23 and 1.24.—The five organs of sense, the five organs of action, the five *praaNas*, mind and intellect, these seventeen together form the subtle body. In some of the Upanishads *ahamkaara* and *chittam* are also counted separately, and the number of constituents is stated as nineteen, e.g. MaaNDuukya Upanishad. When the *jiiva* identifies himself with this body, as in the dream state, he is known as *taijasa*.

### Gross body

Vedaantasaara. Paras 104 to 109. The gross or physical body is produced out of the five gross elements. Gross bodies are of four kinds—*jaraayuja*, or those born of the womb, *aNDaja*, or those born out of eggs, *svedaja*, or those born from moisture and *udbhijja*, or those which spring from the soil. The first kind are men and animals. The second kind consists of birds and reptiles. To the third kind belong creatures like lice. Plants and trees belong to the last kind.

When the *jiiva* identifies himself with the gross body, as in the waking state, he is known as *vis'va*.

## **The five sheaths**

The three bodies mentioned above are grouped in another manner to form five sheaths or *Kos'as*. These are—*annamayakos'a*, *praaNamayakos'a*, *manomayakos'a*, *vijnaanamayakos'a* and *aanandamayakos'a*. These are described in taitt.up. Ch.2.

*annamayakos'a* or the Food-sheath-- This is the same as the gross body. See Viveka chuuDaamaNi, verses 156 to 158 for a description.

*praaNamayakos'a*-- \_The five *praaNas*, together with the five organs of action, form this. See Viveka chuuDaamaNi, verses 167 and 168.



*manomayakos'a*—This is made up of the mind and the five sense- organs. See Viveka chuuDaamaNi, verses 169 onwards.

*vijnaanamayakos'a*---The *buddhi* (intellect) and the five sense-organs constitute this. See Viveka chuuDaamaNi, verses 186 onwards.

The *praaNamayakos'a*, *manomayakos'a* and *vijnaanamayakos'a* together make up the subtle body.

*aanandamayakos'a*---See Viveka chuuDaamaNi, verses 209 and 210. This sheath is the modification of *avidyaa* and appears as a reflection of the *aatmaa* which is Pure Bliss. It is fully manifested in dreamless sleep. In the waking and dream states it is experienced a little due to the presence of desired objects. In Brahma suutra 1.1.12 to 19 the contention of some schools that this sheath is Brahman is refuted with detailed reasons and it is established that this sheath is also non-self. This sheath is the same as the *kaaraNa s'ariira*.

### The three states

The *jiiva* has three states—waking, dream and deep sleep.

#### Waking state

Viveka chuuDaamaNi-Verse 91. In the waking state the *jiiva* identifies himself with the gross body and experiences gross objects through the external organs. The *jiiva* is known as *vis'va* in this state. Brahman associated with the totality of gross bodies (the macrocosm) is called *vais'vaanara* or *viraaT*. MaaNDuukya upanishad, mantra 3 says about this state—The first quarter ( of the Self) is *vais'vaanara* whose sphere is the waking state, whose consciousness relates to things external, who is possessed of seven limbs and nineteen mouths, and who experiences gross (external) objects.

#### Dream state

Viveka chuuDaamaNi (V.C.) Verse 100—This is the special state of the subtle body. In this state the *buddhi* shines by taking the role of the agent, with the *vaasanaas* (impressions) derived from the waking state. In this state the sense-organs are dormant. Under the influence of ignorance, desire and past action, the mind, possessed of the impressions of the waking state, creates objects. Br. Up.4.3.10.S.B. says –There are no chariots, nor animals to be yoked to them, nor roads there, but the *jiiva* creates them in this state. In this state the *jiiva* is known as *taijasa*. The corresponding macrocosm is called *hiraNyagarbha*. MaaNDuukya up. mantra 4 says--*taijasa* is the second quarter, whose sphere is the dream

state, whose consciousness is internal, who is possessed of seven limbs and nineteen mouths, and who experiences subtle objects.

### Deep sleep state

V.C. Verse 122—*sushupti*, deep, dreamless sleep, is the special state of the causal body. This state is characterized by the dissolution of the activities of all the sense-organs and the mind. The mind remains only in seed-form. This state is described in MaaND. up, mantra 5, as the state in which there are no desires and no dreams. In Vedaanta the waking state is also considered to be similar to dream, because the Reality is not known and what is unreal is projected in both these states. In deep sleep, though the Reality, Brahman, is not known, there is no appearance of what is unreal, as in the waking and dream states. In this state the *jiiva* is called *praajna*. The corresponding macrocosm is *iis'vara*.

In MaaND. up. Mantra 2, it is said that the Self has four quarters. The waking, dream and deep sleep are the first three quarters. The fourth, *turiya*, is *aatmaa* unconditioned by the three states. MaaNDuukya kaarika, 1.14 says—The first two are endued with dream and sleep, but the third is endued with dreamless sleep. There is neither dream nor sleep in *turiya*. Here sleep means ignorance of the Reality and dream means projection of the unreal. The fourth, *turiya*, is the state of *samaadhi*.

### The self desires to go into the state of deep sleep

BR. UP. 4.3.19.S.B. – *TADYATHAA ASMIN AKAAS'E ---SVAMAATMAANAM PRAVIS'ATI*.

As a hawk or a falcon, flying in the sky, becomes exhausted, and stretching its wings, goes towards its nest, where it can have perfect rest, so does this infinite being run for this state, where, falling asleep it craves for nothing and sees no dream. The waking state is also considered by the *s'ruti* to be only dream. As the bird goes to its nest to recover from fatigue, so also does the *jiiva*, who is fatigued by the experiences of the waking and dream states, go to his abode, which is his own self, free from all attributes and devoid of all exertion caused by action. In this state he becomes one with the supreme Self, as the following quotation from Ch.up, shows.

Ch.up. 6.8.1.S.B.—*tatra hi aadars'aapanayane-----mana aakhyaam hitvaa*.

Just as the reflection of a person in a mirror appears to merge back in the person himself when the mirror is removed, so also, in deep sleep, when the mind and organs become dormant, the supreme Being who had entered the mind as a reflection attains his true nature, giving up his appearance as an individual soul, which is called the mind.

Ch. up. 6.8.1.S.B. *yadaa svapiti iti uchyaate----- gamyate iti abhipraayaH*.

When a person is in deep sleep, he becomes identified with Existence (Brahman). Having discarded his nature as an individual soul he attains his own self, his own nature, which is the ultimate Reality.

Ch.up.6.9.2. S.B. *yathaayam dr.shTaantaH-----*

All these creatures, after merging in Existence day after day during deep sleep do not know that they had so merged.

Ch.up.6.9.3. S.B. *yasmaat cha evam aatmanaH----- vaasanaa saa na nas'yati ityarthah.*

Since they merge in Existence without knowing that it is their own nature, they wake up again as the same beings as before. Their vaasanaas do not get destroyed. (The implication is that the vaasanaas continue and they are born again and again in accordance with them, as long as they do not realize that they are in reality Brahman).

Br.up.4.3.15.S.B. *tatra charitvaa iti-----*

'Roaming' in that state of dream and becoming fatigued, and thereafter going to the state of deep sleep, he comes back to the dream state and then to the waking state.

Br.up.4.3.17.S.B. *na, kaarakaavabhaasatvena-----na lipyate kriyaaphalena.*

No. The self does not do anything even in the waking state. Its being looked upon as an agent is merely attributable to its revealing the actions (performed by the body). Agency is attributed to the self because of the limiting adjuncts such as the body and is not natural to it. See V.C. verse 131—Because of whose mere presence, the body, sense-organs, mind and intellect perform their functions as if prompted (by it).

Br.up.4.3.18.S.B--- *evam ayam purushaH aatmaa----- vilakshaNaH. --*

Thus it has been brought out in the preceding paragraphs that the self is itself the light and is different from the body and organs as well as their causes, desire and action and is not attached to them. We know that it is not attached, because it moves from the waking to the dream state and then to the state of deep sleep and again back to the dream and then the waking state, proving that it is distinct from all these three states. To explain this further, an illustration is given here. Just as a big fish in a river moves freely from one bank to the other, never affected by the currents of the river, so does this infinite being move to both the states of dream and waking. The point of this illustration is that the body and organs, which are described as forms of death, together with their causes, desire and action, are the attributes of the non-self and that the self is distinct from them.

Br.up.4.3.6.S.B—*sushuptaat cha utthaanam---* We awake from deep sleep with the remembrance that we slept happily and knew nothing.

Br.up.4.3.21.S.B—*sa yadi aatmaa avinashTah----- duHkhii veti veda.-----*

A doubt may arise—If the self remains unaffected and in its own form during deep sleep, why does it not know itself then or know all other things, as it does in the waking and dream states? The reason is unity. This is explained by the *s'ruti* with an illustration. As a man, when fully embraced by his beloved wife, both desiring each other's company, does not know anything at all, either external, such as 'This is something other than myself', or internal, such as 'I am happy or unhappy', but he knows everything external and internal when he is not embraced by her and is separated, so also, this infinite being, the individual self, who is separated from the supreme Self (in the waking and dream states) because of having entered the body and organs, like the reflection of the moon in water, becomes unified with the supreme Self in deep sleep and does not know anything external or internal, such as 'I am happy or unhappy'.

Br.up.4.3.22.S.B.—*atra cha etat prakr.tam-----* "In this state a father is no father, a mother is no mother, worlds are no worlds, the gods are no gods, the Vedas are no Vedas. In this state a thief is no thief, the killer of a noble *braahmaNa* is no killer, and so on".

The form of the self that is directly perceived in the state of deep sleep is free from ignorance, desire and action. The *s'ruti* says that in this state a father is no father. His fatherhood towards a son is on account of the action of begetting. Since he is dissociated from all action in the state of deep sleep he is not a father then. Similarly, the son ceases to be a son in the state of deep sleep. All other relationships also cease to apply in this state.

Br.up.4.3.23.S.B.—*striipumsayoriva ekatvaat----drashTr.bhaavinii hi saa.---*

It was said that the self does not experience anything during deep sleep because of unity and this was illustrated by the example of a couple. It was also said that the self is pure consciousness. Now the doubt arises—if consciousness is the very nature of the self, just as heat is of fire, how can it give up that nature even in sleep and fail to see anything? The answer is – the reason for its not seeing anything in sleep is that there is then no second thing separate from it which it can see. What caused the particular vision in the waking and dream states, namely, the mind, the eyes and forms, were all presented by nescience as something different from the self. They are all unified in the state of deep sleep. The organs and objects are not there as separate entities in sleep. There is therefore no particular experience, for such experience is produced by the organs and objects and not by the self, and only appear as produced by the self. But the vision of the self can never be lost.

Br.up.4.3.32.S.B.—*yatra punaH saa avidyaa----- s'rutivachanametat.*

When, however, that ignorance which projects things other than the self is at rest, in the state of deep sleep, what can one see, smell, or know and through what? Then, being fully embraced by the self-luminous supreme Self, the *jiiva* becomes infinite, perfectly serene, with all his desires attained. Then there is no second entity different from the self to be seen. In deep sleep the self, freed of its limiting adjuncts, remains in its own supreme light, free from all relationships.

Br.up.4.3.32.S.B.—*etasyaiva                      aanandasya                      anyaani-----  
vibhaavyamaanaam.* ---On a particle of this very bliss, projected by ignorance, and perceived only during the contact of the organs with objects, all other beings are sustained. Who are they? Those who have been separated from that bliss by nescience and consider themselves as different from Brahman. Being thus different, they subsist on a fraction of that bliss which is experienced through the contact of the sense-organs with their objects. (It follows from this that when one realizes one's identity with Brahman one enjoys this bliss in its plenitude, nay, one becomes that very bliss itself).

In Panchadas'i, ch.15, the process by which one experiences happiness in the waking state is explained. Any happiness experienced by any person is really nothing but the bliss of Brahman. As long as there is some unfulfilled desire, the mind remains agitated. When the desire is fulfilled the mind becomes temporarily calm and sattvaguNa becomes predominant. In such a mind the bliss of the self becomes reflected clearly, The happiness experienced is therefore the result of the mind having become calm, but it is wrongly attributed by people to the fulfillment of the desire. When the mind is free from all desire, when there is total detachment, the bliss of the self is experienced in its fullness. So it is said in Panchadas'i, 15.18 that the greatest happiness results only from detachment.

MaND.up.5.S.B.—*manasaH vishayavishayyaakaara-----*

He is full of joy (in the state of deep sleep), his abundance of joy being caused by the absence of the suffering involved in the effort of the mind in experiencing objects; but he is not Bliss itself, since the joy is not absolute.

### **Jiiva (the individual soul)**

The *Jiiva* is defined in Panchadas'i 4.11 thus:- The substratum or the pure consciousness, the subtle body, and the reflection of pure consciousness in the subtle body together constitute the *jiiva*.

Panchadas'i 3.41—Brahman when looked upon as associated with the five sheaths (*kos'as*) is known as the *jiiva*, just as a man is called a father or a grandfather in relation to his son or grandson. Verse 42 says—As a man is neither a father nor a grandfather when considered apart from his son or grandson, so Brahman is neither *iis'vara* nor *jiiva* when not considered as associated with *maayaa* or the five sheaths.

MaaNDuukya Kaarikaa 1.16--- When the *jiiva* who is sleeping under the influence of beginningless *maaya* is awakened, he realizes the birthless, sleepless, dreamless, non-dual (Brahman). The waking and dream states are both considered to be only dream, because, in both states the Reality is not known and only what is unreal is experienced and is looked upon wrongly as real. In sleep there is ignorance of the Reality, though there is no projection of what is unreal. Both dream and deep sleep in this sense are absent in Brahman. So it is said that Brahman is dreamless and sleepless. By saying that Brahman is birthless it is implied that it does not undergo any of the changes which everything in this world is subject to. When the *jiiva* becomes free from nescience or *maayaa*, he ceases to be a *jiiva* and realizes his real nature as Brahman.

Br.up.2.5.15.S.B.—*puurvamapi brahmaiva sat----sarvaH saH sarvam abhavat.*

Even before realization one was always Brahman, but through ignorance one considered oneself different from Brahman; one has always been all, but through ignorance one considered oneself otherwise. By getting rid of this ignorance through the knowledge of Brahman, the knower of Brahman, who has always been Brahman, is said to have 'become' Brahman. Having always been all, he is said to have 'become' all. The idea is that every individual, even when he considers himself as a transmigrating entity, is really Brahman alone. He has only to realize this truth. Bondage being not real, but only the result of ignorance of this truth, it can be removed only by the knowledge of the truth. If a thorn has actually pierced the skin of a person, the pain caused can be removed only by the action of removing the thorn. But if one's suffering is due to having mistaken a rope for a snake, that suffering can be removed only by the knowledge that there is only a rope and not a snake and not by any action. So also, bondage, which is only due to wrongly considering oneself as the body, mind and organs, can be eradicated only by the realization that one is the Self which is beyond all suffering.

#### *jiiva* and *saakshii*--difference

When the self is looked upon as qualified by the internal organ, that is to say, when the self and the internal organ are considered as inseparable,

the self is called *jiiva*. So the *jiiva* is described as *antaHkaraNa-vis'ishTa-chaitanyam*. The *jiiva* is therefore looked upon as an agent and enjoyer, by attributing the qualities of the internal organ to it.

When the internal organ is considered as merely an adjunct (*upaadhi*) of the self, the self is known as *saakshii* or witness. In such a concept, the agency and enjoyment as well as the various changes of the internal organ do not at all affect the self, which is a mere witness to them. The self is, in this case, known as *saakshii* or *antaHkaraNa-upahita-chaitanyam* or the self with the internal organ as the *upaadhi*.

Both these terms apply only in the empirical stage, when there is nescience. The self becomes a seer only when it is qualified by the internal organ. It becomes a witness only in the presence of the internal organ. By itself, the self is neither a seer, hearer, etc, nor a witness.

**B.S.2.3.17.S.B—IT IS POINTED OUT HERE THAT THE *JIIVA* HAS NO BIRTH OR DEATH. THE *S'RUTI* CLEARLY DENIES BIRTH TO THE *JIIVA* –“UNBORN, ETERNAL” (KATHA. 1.2.18). “THIS GREAT BIRTHLESS SELF” (BR.UP.4.4.25). IT IS BRAHMAN, THE ONE WITHOUT A SECOND, THAT ENTERS THE INTELLECT AND APPEARS AS THE *JIIVA*. THE TAITT.UP.2.6 SAYS—“HAVING CREATED IT, BRAHMAN ENTERED INTO IT”.**

**B.S.2.3.18.S.B.—**The Vais'eshikas say that consciousness is not the very nature of the *jiiva*, because it is not found to be conscious in deep sleep. This is refuted by this *suutra* by saying that it is Brahman itself that, being limited by the body-mind complex, appears as the *jiiva*. Therefore consciousness is its very nature and is not destroyed even in sleep.

**B.S.2.3.29.S.B.—**This *suutra* refutes the view that the *jiiva* is atomic. Since the *jiiva* is none other than the supreme Brahman, it is also infinite.

**B.S.2.3.40.S.B.---** The Nyaaya view that agency of the *jiiva* is real is refuted here and it is said that agency is only superimposed on the *jiiva*. The *s'ruti* says—“This *aatmaa* is unattached” (Br.up.4.3.15). All scriptural injunctions are with reference to the conditioned aspect of the self which is due to nescience. In its essential nature the *jiiva* is actionless, but appears to act only because of association with the *upaadhi* in the form of the body-mind complex.

**B.S.2.3.43.S.B.—**Here it is clarified that the statements in the scriptures describing the *jiiva* as a spark from a fire mean only that it is identical with Brahman and not a part of Brahman in the literal sense, since Brahman cannot have any parts.

**B.S.2.3.46.S.B.—**Though the *jiiva* is described as a part of Brahman or God, God does not experience pleasure and pain like the *jiiva*, who, on account of ignorance of his real nature, attributes to himself the joys and sorrows of the body and mind. If the *jiiva* realizes that he is different from

the body and mind, he will also have no suffering. God is beyond the control of *maayaa* or nescience and does not identify Himself with the bodies. He does not therefore experience any suffering. This point has been dealt with in the Bhaashya on B.G. 13.2 also, in a very elaborate manner.

B.S.2.3.49.S,B.--- It may be argued that if the same Brahman dwells in all bodies, everyone may have to experience the results of the actions of everyone else. This *suutra* dispels this doubt. A particular *jiiva* is connected only with a particular body-mind complex and so the *jiivas* are different from one another (as *jiivas*).

B.S.2.3.50.S.B.—The *jiiva* is only a reflection of Brahman in the internal organ (mind). The reflections in different minds are different, like the reflections of the sun in different vessels of water. Therefore, just as the trembling of a particular reflection of the sun cannot cause any disturbance to the other reflections, so also the experiences or the karma of any particular *jiiva* cannot affect other *jiivas*.

#### *iis'vara's* creation and *jiiva's* creation

In Panchadas'i-4.17 to 4.40 a distinction is made between God's creation and creation by the individual souls. Though all objects in the world are created by God, their enjoyment and the reaction of each individual towards a particular object depend on his karma and the *vaasanas* in his mind. A gem, which is a creation of God, may produce different reactions in different persons. One man may feel happy on having got the gem, while another man is unhappy because he has not been able to get it. Another person may not be interested at all in the gem and so may not feel either joy or sorrow on seeing it. (Verses 20 and 21). The *Jiiva* creates these three feelings of happiness, disappointment and indifference with regard to the gem, but the nature of the gem as created by God remains the same. Verse 31 says that every object has two aspects, the material and the mental. The material aspect always remains the same, but the mental aspect varies according to the mental make-up of the person who sees it. Moreover, though God has created all objects, the extent to which each individual is able to get them is dependent on his karma. It is therefore said in verse 19 that for the actual enjoyment of objects it is the modifications or functions of the mind of the *jiiva* that are responsible. An example is given in verses 34 and 35 to show that the cause of a man's bondage and suffering is his own mental world. When a man was told by someone that his son who was in a far-off place was dead, he began to cry, though the news was not true. But even if the son had actually died, but he had not received the news, he would have felt no grief. In a dream, even though no



objects are actually present, a person feels joy and sorrow, but in deep sleep, no joy or sorrow is felt, even if there are objects around (verse 33). Verse 42 says that the world of duality created by God is rather a help than an obstacle to the realization of non-duality. It is the creation of the *jiiva* that is the cause of suffering. By controlling the mind one can ultimately attain realization of the non-dual Brahman (verse 64).

#### Different theories about the nature of *jiiva* and *iis'vara*

Among Advaitins there are three different theories on this point. These are described in Vichaara saagara, ch.6, para 449 onwards.

1. *aabhaasavaada* (Semblance theory)—This is the *vaada* or theory adopted in Panchadas'i. According to this, the *jiiva* is an *aabhaasa* or semblance of Brahman in the internal organ which is an effect of *avidyaa*. This reflection or semblance is *mithyaa* or illusory. In B.S.2.3.50.S.B it is said-- The *jiiva* is an *aabhaasa* or semblance of the supreme Self, like the semblance of the sun in water. The *jiiva* is not the Self itself, nor is it something different.

In the Bhaashya on Ch.up.6.3.2 S'rii S'ankara says that the *jiiva* is an *aabhaasa* or semblance of the supreme Being.

2. *pratibimbavaada* (Reflection theory)—This is the theory adopted by the author of VivaraNa, Prakaas'atma Muni. According to this, *jiiva* is the reflection of *iis'vara* who is the *bimba* or the original in *avidyaa*. *iis'vara*, according to this theory, is Brahman or pure consciousness itself. Omniscience, etc, are not His natural qualities. But in relation to *jiiva* who has limited knowledge, power, etc, the qualities of being a *bimba*, *iis'vara*, etc, are superimposed. In this theory, the reflection, *jiiva*, is not *mithyaa*, but real. This theory is expressed in Amr.tabindu upanishad,12—

The one Self appears as different in different beings. It appears as one and as many, like (the reflection of) the moon in water. See also B.S.3.2.18.S.B.

3. *avachchedavaada* (Limitation theory)—This is the view of the author of Bhaamatii, Vaachaspati Mis'ra. In this theory the *jiiva* is a delimitation of consciousness by the internal organ, while *iis'vara* is not so limited. This theory is employed by GauDapaada and S'ankara in MaaNDuukya Kaarikaa, 3.3 to 7. It is said in the Bhaashya on 3.3:- The Self is subtle, partless and all-pervasive like space. The Self is spoken of as existing in the form of *jiivas* in the same way as space is referred to as existing in the form of spaces circumscribed by pots. The idea implied is that the emergence of *jiivas* from the supreme Self is comparable to the emergence of the spaces in different pots from the same all-pervading space.

Trees also have consciousness

Ch.up.6.11.2.S.B—*vr.kshasya rasasravaNa*----- That a tree is also a *jiiva* is indicated by such signs as exudation and drying up of sap. From the illustration in the S'ruti that non-moving beings also have consciousness, the view of the Buddhists and the Vais'eshikas that these have no consciousness is proved to be wrong.

### **iis'vara**

Panchadas'i - 6.157—*iis'vara* is the *aabhaasa* or semblance of Brahman in *maayaa* which is *prakr.ti* constituted of pure sattva. He controls *maayaa* and is the *antaryaamii* or Inner Controller of all beings. He is omniscient and is the cause of the universe.

According to the reflection theory *iis'vara* is the *bimba* and the *jiiva* is His reflection or *pratibimba* in *maayaa*. In both the theories God is omniscient. There is no obstruction to his knowledge by nescience, because of the absence of the veil in the form of gross and subtle bodies (Samkshepa s'aariirakam 2.176).

Br.up.3.7—*antaryaami braahmaNam*—*iis'vara* as the *antaryaamii* controls all beings from within.

B.S.1.2.20.S.B—In Br.up. 3.7 the Inner Controller is distinguished from the embodied soul. But this distinction is based on the limiting adjunct in the form of the body and organs, conjured up by nescience; the distinction is not real. The indwelling Self can be only one, not two. The one Self is spoken of as two because of the limiting adjuncts, like the space inside a pot being looked upon as different from the total space. All the statements in the Vedas about the difference between the knower and the known, doership and enjoyership, as well as all injunctions and prohibitions are based on this standpoint. The text "Because when there is duality, as it were, then one sees another, etc " (Br.up.2.4.14) shows that all dealings are only in the state of ignorance, while the text "But when to the knower of Brahman everything has become the Self, what (other thing) can he see and through what (sense-organ)" denies all such activity after the rise of Self-knowledge.

Br.up.3.8.12--- When Brahman has as the limiting adjunct the power of eternal and infinite knowledge (*maayaa*) it is called *iis'vara* or *antaryaamii*.

B.S.1.1.20.S.B—God may take various forms at His will through His power of *maayaa* to bless devotees.

B.S.2.1.34,35.S.B—No partiality or cruelty can be attributed to God because of the inequality found in creation. The difference is due to the merits or demerits of individuals, acquired as a result of actions in past births. God is comparable to rain. While rain is the common cause of the

sprouting of all seeds sown, the nature of the sprout depends on the seed. Similarly, while God is the common cause of all creation, the nature of a particular individual's life depends on the seed he has sown in the form of actions in past births. God cannot therefore be considered responsible for the inequalities in the world. Creation is without any beginning and so there is no such thing as the first birth of a particular individual for which it could be said that there would be no cause in the form of past karma.

B.S.2.3.46.S.B—God does not undergo suffering as the *jiiva* does, because He has no identification with the body. Even the *jiiva* will become free from all suffering when he gives up identification with the two bodies and realizes that he is the pure Self, untouched by anything that happens to the body or mind. It is further pointed out here that while a reflection of the sun in a vessel of water may shake when the water shakes, the sun itself is not at all affected, so also God is not affected, though the individual soul may be, by what happens to the limiting adjuncts.

B.S.3.2.38,39.S.B—The fruits of all actions are given by God. The fruit cannot emerge out of *apuurva*, the unseen potency, which, being insentient, cannot act unless stimulated by some conscious agent. This *suutra* refutes the view of the Miimaamsakas that karma itself gives the result through *apuurva* and it is not necessary to postulate a God for the purpose.

B.S.2.1.14.S.B--- *sarvajnasya iis'varasya aatmabhuute*-----

Name and form which constitute the seeds of the entire phenomenal existence and which are the products of nescience are non-different from the omniscient God and cannot be classified either as real or as unreal. They are described in the Vedas and the Smr.tis as the power of God, called *maayaa*. Like space being apparently limited by a pot, etc, God appears limited by the limiting adjuncts in the form of name and form, which are created by nescience. And within the domain of empirical existence God rules over the selves which identify themselves with the individual minds and which are, in essence, identical with God. Thus God's rulership, omniscience and omnipotence are based on the limiting adjuncts conjured up by nescience; but in reality such terms as 'ruler', 'ruled', 'omniscience', etc, are not applicable when speaking of the Self, shining in its own pure nature, after the cessation of the limiting adjuncts as a result of right knowledge. Therefore all the upanishads declare the cessation of all empirical dealings in the state of the Highest Reality. It is with reference to this unconditioned Brahman that the Lord says in B.G. 5.14 and 15:-- "Neither agency nor action does the Lord create for the world, nor does he bring about the union with the fruit of action. It is nature or *maayaa* that

does all that. The omnipresent Lord does not take note of the merit and demerit of anyone. Knowledge is covered by ignorance and so all beings become deluded”. It is seen from this that in the state of the Highest Reality all transactions like those between the ruler and the ruled, etc, cease to exist. But within the state of phenomenal existence, even the *s’ruti* speaks of divine rulership, etc, as in Br.up. 4.4.22:-- “He is the Lord of all. He is the ruler of all beings. He is the protector of all. He is the embankment that serves as the boundary to keep the different worlds apart”. (Thus the difference between the standpoints from which the unconditioned Brahman, on the one hand, and the conditioned Brahman or God, on the other, are spoken of is brought out here).

### **maayaa**

Panchadas’i.6.130-- From the standpoint of the ordinary worldly man, *maayaa* is real. From the standpoint of the man of realization, *maayaa* has no existence at all. For those who try to understand it through reasoning, *maayaa* cannot be determined as either real or unreal; it is *anirvachaniiya*. S’rii S’ankara says in *maayaapanchakam* that *maayaa* has the capacity to make the impossible happen. It imposes on Brahman, which is eternal and devoid of parts and which is pure Consciousness, the false distinctions as the world, individual souls and God. It makes even those who have mastered all the scriptures no different from animals by tempting them with wealth and the like. It makes Brahman which is infinite bliss, pure Consciousness and non-dual, struggle in the ocean of *samsaara* by associating it with the body made up of the five elements. It imposes on Brahman which is devoid of qualities the distinctions of colour, caste, etc, and attachment to wife, son, possessions and the like. It creates even in non-dual Brahman distinctions such as Brahmaa, Vishnu and S’iva and deludes even the learned into thinking that they are different from one another.

S’v.up.4.10—*prakr.ti* is *maayaa* and the supreme Lord is the wielder of *maayaa*.

V.C. verse 110--- *maayaa* is called ‘Unmanifest’. It is the power of Parames’vara, the supreme Lord. It is beginningless Nescience. It is constituted of the three guNas, sattva, rajas and tamas. Its existence cannot be directly known, but can only be inferred from its effects. It is the cause of this universe.

V.C.verse 111—it is neither real, nor unreal, nor both. It is neither different from Brahman, nor non-different, nor both. It is neither possessed of parts,

nor without parts, nor both. It is most wonderful and is of indescribable nature.

V.C.verse 112- This *maayaa* can be destroyed by the realization of the pure non-dual Brahman just as the illusory snake is negated by the knowledge of the rope which is its sub-stratum.

B.G.7.14—The Lord says—“ This divine *maayaa* of Mine is difficult to overcome. Those who take refuge in Me alone can cross over this *maayaa*”.

B.G.13.1.S.B—*prakr.tis'cha triguNaatmikaa* -----

It is *prakr.ti* or *maayaa* made up of the three guNas that has become transformed as all the bodies, organs and objects for subserving the ends of the individual souls, namely, enjoyment and liberation.

### **jnaanam and dhyaanam--- difference**

B.S.1.1.4.S.B.--- *nanu jnaanam naama maanasii kriyaa. na, vailakshaNyaat----- veditavyam.*

*jnaanam* (knowledge) is not a mental act, because there is a difference (between knowledge and meditation). A mental act is seen to exist where there is an injunction about it, which is independent of the nature of the thing concerned. *dhyaanam* (meditation), is a mental act, because it depends on the will of the person performing it. For example, to think of a man or woman as fire, as enjoined in “ O Gautama, man is surely fire” (Ch.up.5.7.1) , or in “O Gautama, woman is surely fire” (Ch.up.5.8.1) is certainly a mental act, since it arises from an injunction alone. But the idea of fire with regard to the well-known fire is not dependent on any injunction or on the will of any man. (In other words, thinking of one thing as another, like a *linga* as Lord S'iva and worshipping it as such, is meditation and it is a mental act, because it depends on the will of the worshipper. But looking at an ordinary stone and seeing it as a stone is knowledge and is not a mental act, because it does not depend on the will of the person). While meditation depends on the will of a person, knowledge depends only on the object concerned and on valid means of knowledge, such as perception. Meditation is therefore described as *purusha-tantra* (dependent on the person), while knowledge is called *vastu-tantra* (dependent on the object to be known).

## karma

The word 'karma' is used in two different senses in Vedaanta---(1) the results of actions performed, in the form of merit and demerit (*puNya* and *paapa*), which produce their effects later on, usually in another birth, and (2) the action itself, whether secular or religious. We shall deal with the first category here. The second will be dealt with subsequently.

Karma, in the sense of results of actions performed, is divided into three categories . (1) *sanchita karma*—the accumulated results of actions performed in past births, (2) *praarabdha karma*-- those results of past actions which have given rise to the present body and (3) *aagaami karma*—the results of actions performed in the present birth. On the dawn of Self-knowledge the first category is completely destroyed along with the third category acquired upto the time of attainment of knowledge. After the dawn of Self-knowledge any action performed does not produce any result in the form of merit or demerit. The second category is not destroyed on the attainment of Self-knowledge, but has to be exhausted only by being actually experienced. On the exhaustion of this category of karma the body of the enlightened person falls and the *jiivanmukta* becomes a *videhamukta*.

Br.up.1.4.7.S.B—*s'ariiraarambhakasya karmaNaH niyataphalatvaat----- anyaarthaasambhavaat.*

The past actions that gave rise to the present body must necessarily produce their results and so the body, mind and organs will continue to function even after the attainment of Self-knowledge, just as an arrow that has already been discharged must continue to move forward until its force is exhausted. The operation of Self-knowledge, which is weaker than the *praarabdha karma*, is liable to be affected by the latter. There is therefore need to keep up the train of remembrance of the knowledge of the Self by means of renunciation of action and detachment.

Br.up.1.4.10.S.B—*yena karmaNaa s'ariiram aarabdham---- itarat.*

The residue of *praarabdha karma* is the cause of the body continuing even after the attainment of knowledge. Knowledge cannot prevent the results of this category of Karma from producing their effect, since the two are not contradictory to each other.

Ch.up.6.14.2.S.B--- *yaani pravrttaphalaani---*

Those actions which have started yielding results and by which the body of the man of knowledge was brought into existence get exhausted only by their results being actually experienced, just as an arrow that has gathered momentum after having been discharged stops only when the momentum is exhausted.

Br.up.4.4.22.S.B--- *s'ariiraarambhakayostu upabhogenaiva kshayaH*

Actions that caused the present body are exhausted only by the results being experienced.

B.G.4.37.S.B--- Since the karma because of which the present body came into existence has already taken effect, it gets exhausted only by being experienced. Self-knowledge destroys only those actions performed in past lives and in the present life prior to the dawn of knowledge which have not yet taken effect. Actions performed after the dawn of knowledge do not produce any effect in the form of merit or demerit.

Karma in the sense of the actual action, both religious and secular.

Br.up.1.3.1.S.B--- *yathaa svargakaamaadidoshavataH ----- karmaavasaraH asti*

As the rites with material ends (*kaamyaa karma*), such as the new and full moon sacrifices, are enjoined on one who desires to attain heaven, etc, so are the regular and obligatory rites (*nitya* and *naimittika karma*) on one who has the root of all evils, namely ignorance, and the consequent defects of attachment and aversion, manifesting themselves as the quest for what is pleasant and avoidance of the unpleasant. Rites such as *agnihotra*, *chaaturmaasya*, *pas'ubandha* and *somayaaga* are not intrinsically either rites with material ends (*kaamyaa*) or obligatory rites (*nitya*). They come under the former category only when they are performed with desire for results such as heaven. (The same rites can also be performed without desire for the result, in which case they become *nishkaama karma* and have the effect of purifying the mind and making it fit for Self-knowledge). No rites are enjoined in the scriptures for one who has realized the true nature of the Self. Self-knowledge arises only on the obliteration of the very cause of rites. One who has realized that he is Brahman has no obligation to perform even the obligatory rites. (They are not applicable to him, though he may still perform them to set an example to others or for the general welfare, as stated by the Lord in the Bhagavad-gita).

The aspirant for liberation must worship the gods by means of the rites prescribed for him---- Br.up.1.4.10.S.B--- *tasmaat mumukshuH*— Therefore the *mumukshu* should be devoted to the worship of the gods. (Here is another instance where S'rii S'ankara stresses the need for devotion even for an aspirant for liberation. This disproves the contention of some that there is no place for devotion in Advaita).

Br.up.3.3.1.S.B--- *tasmaat saabhisandhiinaam--- ----- phalaani*

Therefore the obligatory rites and rites like *sarvamedha* and *as'vamedha* performed with desire for the fruit lead to the attainment of oneness with *hiraNyagarbha*, etc.

*yashaam punaH nityaani nirabhisandhiini-----*

But in the case of those who perform the obligatory rites without desire for the fruit, merely for the purification of the mind, the rites help towards the attainment of Self-knowledge.

B.G.18.9.S.B--- *nityaanaam karmaNaam----- phalam cha iti---*

We said that the Lord's utterance is proof of the fact that *nitya* and *naimittika karma* also yield fruit. Or, even if these are considered to be devoid of any fruit on the ground that no fruit is mentioned in the *s'ruti*, still the ordinary, unenlightened man does certainly think that these produce a result in the form of purification of the mind or avoidance of evil. The Lord indicates by the words 'giving up the fruit' that even this thought should be given up.

See also the commentary of Aanandagiri on Br.up.1.3.1.

Br.up.3.5.1.S.B--- *na hi paramaarthaavadhaaraNa-----*

We do not postulate the existence of things different from Brahman in the state when one is established in the highest truth. See 'one only without a second' (2.5.19) and 'without interior or exterior' (3.8.8). Nor do we deny the validity, for the unenlightened, of actions with their factors and results as long as the relative world of name and form is accepted as existent.

Br.up.4.4.22.S.B--- *vedaanuvachana-yajna- daana-tapaH-s'abdena----- ekavaakyataavagatiH.*

The words 'study of the Vedas, sacrifices, charity and austerity' refer to all obligatory rites (*nitya karma*). Thus all the obligatory rites (that is all those other than *kaamyas karma*) serve as means to liberation through the attainment of Self-knowledge. Hence we see that the ultimate purpose of the two parts of the Vedas, that dealing with rites and that dealing with Self-knowledge, is the same, (namely liberation).

Br.up.4.4.22.S.B--- Commentary of Aanandagiri--- *aatmalokam ichchhataam mumukshuuNaam----- vaktavyam ityartham.*

WHEN THE VEDAS SPEAK OF RENUNCIATION OF ACTION EVEN FOR THE *MUMUKSHU*, IS IT NECESSARY TO POINT OUT THAT THERE IS NO ACTION TO BE PERFORMED BY ONE WHO HAS ALREADY REALIZED THE SELF? (IT MUST BE MENTIONED HERE THAT ONE BECOMES FIT TO BE CALLED A *MUMUKSHU* ONLY WHEN ONE HAS ATTAINED TOTAL DETACHMENT. IN HIS BHAASHYA ON B.G.4.11, S'RII S'ANKARA SAYS THAT A PERSON CANNOT BE A *MUMUKSHU* AND HAVE DESIRE FOR OTHER FRUITS ALSO AT THE SAME TIME. THUS ONLY A *YOGAARUUDHA*, ONE WHO HAS ATTAINED TOTAL DETACHMENT, IS A *MUMUKSHU*).

taitt.up.1.1.S.B--- *nityaanaam cha akaraNam-----* The mere non-performance of the obligatory duties cannot give rise to a positive demerit



(*paapa*), because something positive cannot arise from a mere negation (*abhaava*). The failure on the part of a person to perform obligatory duties (laid down in the scriptures) is merely an indication that he has accumulated sins resulting from past actions. (The performance of the obligatory duties eradicates such accumulated sins, while, by their non-performance, the sins continue. Thus the view of Advaita Vedaanta in this matter is opposed to that of the Miimaamsakas who hold that non-performance produces a new sin).

(A FUTURE SORROW IS CALLED A *PRATYAVAAYA*, WHICH, BEING A POSITIVE ENTITY, CANNOT HAVE A NON-ENTITY AS ITS CAUSE. FOR, ACCORDING TO BR.UP.4.4.5, 'SIN ARISES FROM SIN', SORROW IS CAUSED BY THE PERFORMANCE OF PROHIBITED ACTIONS—  
AANANDAGIRI).

TAITT.UP.1.11.S.B—*PUURVOPACHITADURITAKSHAYA*----- *KARMAANI*

THE VEDIC RITES HELP IN THE ATTAINMENT OF SELF-KNOWLEDGE BY ERADICATING THE ACCUMULATED SINS.

taitt.up.1.11.S.B---- *svaatmalaabhe tu puurvopachita*----- *nityaaniiti*.

For the attainment of Self-knowledge, the *nitya karma* becomes the means only by eradicating the obstruction in the form of accumulated sins. (karma cannot by itself lead to knowledge or liberation, because liberation is not something produced).

The fruit of karma is given by God

Br.up.3.8.9.S.B--- *tat cha karmaphalena*----- *phalena samyojayitaa*.

Awarding of the fruits of karma would be impossible if there were no ruler who, knowing the results of the various actions, unites the performer of action with its result. (The theory of *apuurva* of the Miimaamsakas is rejected. See also B.S.3.2.38&39.S.B under the head "iis'vara').

Br.up.4.4.5.S.B--- *tatra kaamakrodhaadipuurvaka*----- *samsaarasya kaaraNam*.

Doing good and bad deeds under the impulse of desire, anger, etc, is the cause of bondage and passing from one body to another.

*atho api anye* ----- *kaamamaya eva iti*. Others, however, say:-- It is under the influence of desire that man performs good and bad deeds. When desire is gone, any action performed does not lead to the accumulation of merit or demerit. Therefore desire is the root cause of transmigratory existence. As the MuND. Up. says--- He who longs for objects of sense, thinking highly of them, is born along with those desires, in circumstances in which he can realize them. (3.2.2). Therefore the Self is identified with desire alone.

*kaamya karma* also produces some purity

Br.up.Bhaashya Vaartika, Sambandhabhaashya-verse 1130 says--- purification does occur through *kaamyaa karma* also. But that is useful only for the enjoyment of the fruit of the karma (and not for liberation). Surely, one cannot enjoy the pleasures befitting Indra with the body of a hog (which is impure).

Br.up.4.5.15.S.B-- *karmaNaam cha avidvatvishayatvam---- vividishanti iti.*

We have said that rites are for the unenlightened. As long as there is ignorance of the Self, there is need for the performance of rites which are intended to produce, attain, modify or purify. (These are the four kinds of results produced by action). Rites are the means to Self-knowledge through the purification of the mind.

Br.up.6.2.1.S.B--- *kevalena karmaNaa pitr.lokah---- -- devalokah.*

Mere rites lead to the world of the manes and meditation combined with rites leads to heaven.

Ch.up.S.B. Introduction-- *samastam karmaadhigatam -----*

Rites performed along with meditation on various deities lead to the attainment of Brahmaloaka through the path of light (*devayaana maarga*).

Rites alone (without meditation) lead to the world of the moon through the path of smoke, etc (*pitr.yaana*).

Rites performed with knowledge of the meaning of the mantras are more effective.

Ch.up.1.1.10.S.B--- *tasmaat yadeva vidyayaa vijnaanena--- --- bhavati iti abhipraayaH.*

Therefore that rite which is performed with knowledge (of the meaning of the mantras), faith and meditation is more effective than the rites performed by a man who does not know the meaning. By declaring that a rite performed with knowledge of the meaning is more effective it is implied that a rite performed by an ignorant man also produces results, though it is less effective.

Ch.up.1.1.10.S.B--- *na cha avidushaH-----* It is not as if an ignorant man is not competent to perform rites, because in the story about Ushasta (Ch.up.1.10.1) it is seen that even a man ignorant of the meaning can be a priest in the performance of rites.

But Bhaskararaya says in his Varivasyaarahasyam,ch.2, verses 54 to 56 – The utterance of sound without a knowledge of the true import bears no fruit, and is only like an oblation poured into ashes. Those who merely recite various mantras without knowing their meaning may be compared to a donkey carrying a load of sandalwood.

The three debts (to the r.shis or sages, the manes and the gods) are only for householders.

B.S.1.1.1.Bhaamatii--- *ata eva na brahmachaariNaH*-----

Therefore for a *brahmacharii* there are no debts (to sages, manes and gods), for the discharge of which rites would have to be performed. Accordingly, the statement “A *BraahmaNa* is born with three debts” should be explained as applicable only to householders. Otherwise the statement of the Veda “Or, let him renounce from the stage of *brahmacharya* itself “ would be contradicted. Even for the householder the discharge of these three debts is only for the purpose of purification of the mind.

The same is stated also in the Introduction to Ait. Up. Bhashya.

B.S.1.1.1. Bhaamatii--- *tathaa hi- nityakarmaanushThaanaat*-----  
*karmaNaam yuktam.*

From the performance of the obligatory rites merit (*puNya*) is generated; as a result, demerit (*paapa*) is attenuated; it is that demerit that made the mind impure through wrongly looking upon what is transient, impure and miserable as eternal, pure and pleasant. On the cessation of *paapa* the world is recognized as impermanent, impure and the cause of misery. Thus the obligatory rites are the remote means for the attainment of Self-knowledge.

### **mukti (Liberation)**

Liberation is only cessation of nescience

Br.up.4.4.6.S.B--- *tasmaat avidyaanivr.ttimaatre mokshavyavahaaraH*-----  
*sarpaadinivr.ttiH.*

Therefore, as we have already said, the cessation of ignorance alone is what is known as liberation, like the disappearance of the snake, for instance, from the rope when the wrong notion about its existence has been eradicated.

Br.up.4.4.7.S.B---- *ataH mokshaH na des'aantaragamanaadi apekshate.*

Therefore, liberation does not imply going to another place (world), etc.

Br.up.4.4.20.S.B--- *jnaanam cha tasmin paraatmabhaavanivr.ttiH eva.*-----  
----- *iti ubhayam api aviruddham eva.*

The knowledge of Brahman means only the cessation of identification with external things (such as the body, etc). Identity with Brahman is not something which requires to be attained, since it is always there. Everyone is in reality always identical with Brahman, but wrongly considers himself to be something different (due to ignorance). Therefore the scriptures do not enjoin that identity with Brahman should be attained, but only that the false

identification with things other than Brahman should be given up. When the identification with other things (such as the body) is eradicated, the identity with one's own Self, which is natural, prevails. This is what is meant by the statement that the Self is realized. In itself the Self is unknowable, that is to say it cannot be made the object of any means of knowledge (*pramaana*).

taitt.up. 1.1.S.B--- *aatmaa hi brahma--- parapraaptiH.*

The Self, indeed, is Brahman. The attainment of the highest will be declared for the knower of Brahman (taitt.up.2.1.1). Therefore the establishment in one's own Self, on the eradication of ignorance, is itself the attainment of the highest, namely, liberation.

B.S.3.4.52.S.B--- *brahma eva hi muktyavasthaa.*

The state of liberation is itself Brahman.

B.S.3.4.52.S.B---- *tat hi asaadhyam nityasiddhasvabhaavam-----iti asakr.t avadishma.*

We have said more than once that liberation is not an effect to be attained; it is only to be realized through knowledge, since it is eternally existent. (It is not some thing to be brought into existence by any action, since it is ever present and has only to be realized as such).

taitt.up.1.11.S.B--- *ato vidyotpattiyartham anushTheyaani karmaaNi.*

The rites laid down have to be performed for the attainment of Self-knowledge (because they purify the mind and make it fit for the rise of knowledge).

taitt. up.1.11.S.B--- *yathaa praaptameva kaarakaastitvam upaadaaya----- virodhaH.*

The scriptures, on the assumption of the existence of the accessories of action (such as doer, etc), enjoin rites intended to eradicate the accumulated sins of those who aspire for liberation and also as a means for the attainment of various results for those who hanker after them. They do not however, at this stage, concern themselves with the question of the reality of those accessories. The rise of Self-knowledge is unimaginable for a person who has hindrances in the form of accumulated sins. On the attenuation of those sins, knowledge will emerge and nescience will be eradicated, resulting in the realization of the illusory nature of the world. A person who perceives something as different from himself may develop a craving for it. Impelled by desire, he engages himself in action. From that follows the succession of further births for enjoying the fruits of those actions. On the other hand, for a person who sees everything as the Self, no desire can arise. Such a person remains established in the Self and is liberated from further birth. It follows from this that Self-knowledge and karma (action) are opposed to each other.

taitt.up. 1.11.S.B--- *ataH kevalaayaaH eva vidyaayaaH param s'reyaH iti siddham.*

THUS IT IS ESTABLISHED THAT LIBERATION IS ATTAINED THROUGH KNOWLEDGE ALONE.

taitt. up. 1.11.S.B--- *yato janmaantarakr.tamapi---- ishyate.*

The karmas such as *agnihotra* and practices such as celibacy, etc, performed in past lives also help the dawn of knowledge. It is because of this that some persons are found to possess detachment even from their birth itself, while others are seen to be attached to the world and not inclined towards enlightenment. Therefore, for those who have become free from attachment to worldly pursuits as a result of tendencies acquired in past lives it is desirable to resort to the other stages of life (such as *sannyaasa*).

taitt. up, 1.11.S.B—*sarveshaam cha adhikaaraH vidyaayaam ---- iti siddham.*

Persons belonging to all *aas'ramas* are entitled to Self-realization.

Liberation comes from Self-knowledge alone (and not through any karma, though karma must be performed in the spirit of karma-yoga for attaining fitness for knowledge).

B.S.3.4.36 to 39.S.B—Even those who do not belong to any *aas'rama* are entitled to attain Self-knowledge (e.g. Raikva, Gaargii).

Br.up.1.4.7.S.B—*na hi vedaanteshu brahmaatmavijnaanaat anyat---- ---- avagamyate.*

In Vedaanta (upanishads) nothing is spoken of as a means to realization except the knowledge of the identity of the self and Brahman. (This is said while refuting the contention that Yoga is also by itself a means to liberation. While Patanjali's Yoga helps by developing one-pointedness of the mind, it does not postulate the identity of the self and Brahman as Advaita does).

**People of the present day can also attain Self-knowledge.**

Br.up.1.4.10.S.B--- *seyam brahmavidyayaa sarvabhaavaapattih----- tadvijnaanasya asti.*

Some may think that the gods were able to realize this identity with all through the knowledge of Brahman because of their extraordinary powers, but persons of the present age, particularly men, can never attain it because of their limited capacity. In order to remove this wrong notion, it is said here—“And even this day, whoever, curbing his interest in external things, strives for Self-knowledge, can attain it. ----- **There is no difference as regards Brahman or the knowledge of It, between giants like Vamadeva and the human weaklings of today**”.

**BR.UP.3.3.1.S.B--- AJNAANAVYAVADHAANANIVARTAKATVAAT JNAANASYA MOKSHAH  
JNAANAKAARYAM ITI UCHYATE.**

Because Self-knowledge removes the obstruction in the form of ignorance, liberation is metaphorically said to be the result of knowledge. (Liberation is not really an effect or result at all, since it is already existent in the sense that there is really no bondage at all).

Br.up.3.3.1.S.B--- *na cha ajnaanavyatirekeNa mokshasya ----- yat karmaNaa nivartyeta.*

We cannot imagine any other obstruction to liberation than ignorance, because liberation is identical with the self of the aspirant and is therefore eternal (and not something to be brought into existence by any karma).

Br.up.3.3.1.S.B--- *na aapyo api aatmasvabhaavatvaat ekatvaat cha.*

Liberation is not something to be attained because it is identical with the Self and (the Self) is one (without a second).

Br.up.3.5.1.S.B--- *na hi paramaathaavadhaaraNaanishThaayaam --- kaachana virodhas'a.nkaa.*

We do not maintain that things different from Brahman exist when the highest truth has been realized, since the S'ruti says "One only, without a second" and "Without interior or exterior" (2.5.19 and 3.8.8). Nor do we deny the validity, for the ignorant, of actions with their factors and results as long as the relative world of name and form is considered as real. Therefore the standpoint depends on knowledge or ignorance and there is no contradiction between the two.

Br.up.4.3.34.S.B—*tasmaat samprasaadasthaanam---*

The state of deep sleep is taken as the example for describing liberation in the upanishads.

Br.up.4.3.20.S.B—*tasmaat na aatmadharmo avidyaa----- moksha upapadyate.*

Therefore nescience is not a natural characteristic of the Self, for what is natural to a thing can never be removed from it, like the heat and light of the sun. Liberation from ignorance is therefore possible.

Br.up.4.4.6.S.B--- *na hi vastutaH ----- upapadyate eva.*

In reality, there is no distinction like bondage and liberation in the Self, because it is always the same; but the ignorance covering it is removed by the knowledge arising from the teachings of the scriptures.

Br.up.4.4.6.S.B--- *sarvadaa samaikarasam----- vijnaanaphalamapekshya.*

We hold that it is the definite conclusion of all the upanishads that we are nothing but the *aatmaa*, the Brahman that is always the same, homogeneous, one without a second, unchanging, birthless, undecaying,

immortal, and free from all fear. Therefore the statement “He is merged in Brahman” is a figurative one, meaning the cessation, as a result of knowledge, of the continuous chain of births and deaths for one who was considering himself (out of ignorance) to be other than Brahman.

Br.up.4.4.7.S.B--- *ataH mokshaH na des'aantaragamanam----* *iti uktam.*

Therefore liberation does not mean going to another place (or world). The organs of a realized person do not go anywhere else, but they merge in their cause, just where they are. As has been said in Br.up. 3.2.12, only their names remain.

Br.up. 4.4.9.S.B--- *tasmaat ayameva mokshamaargaH----*

Therefore liberation is the absorption of the body and organs such as the eye in this very life, like the extinguishing of a lamp, when transmigration comes to an end because of the exhaustion of all desires.

Panchadas'i- 2.99- - Even after realization of the non-dual Reality, worldly dealings may continue as before, but no reality would be attached to them. The enlightened man will continue to see the world like every one else; but he will not be affected by anything that happens, knowing that joys and sorrows are only for the body-mind complex and not for the Self. See also 4.40.

B,S.1.1.4.S.B—*tatra kinchit pariNaaminyam syat----- kaalatravam nopaavartete.*

Eternality is of two kinds, known as *pariNaaminyam* and *kooTasthanityam*. The first is what continues to be recognized as the same, though undergoing changes, e.g. earth, etc, for those who hold the universe to be eternal, or the *guNas* for the Saankhyas. The second category is what never changes. Brahman is eternal in this sense.

B.S.1.1.4.S.B—*avidyaakalpibhedanivr.ttitvaat s'aastrasya.*

The purpose of the scriptures is only to remove the notion of difference(duality) caused by nescience.

B.S.1.1.4.S.B--- *nityas'uddhabrahmasvaroopatvaat mokshasya.*

Liberation is of the nature of Brahman which is eternally pure.

Liberation is not the result of action (karma).

B.S.1.1.4.S.B--- *ato anyanmoksham prati----- na upapadyate.*

Apart from these (four), nobody can show any other mode by which liberation can be said to result from action. Accordingly, there is not the slightest possibility of any action being the cause of liberation.

Explanation:- The results of all actions fall under one or other of the following four categories—production, attainment (or acquisition), transformation and purification. Brahman, being eternal, is not something to

be produced. Being all-pervading and one's own real nature, it is not something to be attained or acquired. Being ever the same, it is not the transformation of something else, as curd is of milk. Being ever pure, it is not to be got by purification of something else, as gold is obtained by purification of ore. Non-realization of Brahman being due only to ignorance, knowledge alone can lead to its realization.

V.C. verse 2- Commentary of H.H.Chandrasekhara Bharati Svami—  
*tena saalokya-saamiipya-saarupya-saayujyaanaam  
mukhyamuktitvaabhaavaH suuchitaH bhavati.*

These four—*saalokya*, etc, are not of the nature of liberation in the principal sense. Since they relate only to *saguNa* Brahman, they are to be considered only as *mithyaa* or illusory.

*Jiivanmukti*---liberation even while living.

Br.up.4.4.6.S.B--- *tasmaat iha eva brahma eva----- na  
s'ariirapaatottarakaalam*

Therefore, being always Brahman, he is merged in Brahman, in this very life, not after the fall of the body.

*Jiivanmukti* is also spoken of in B.G.S.B—2.51, 5.24, 6.27 and 18.25--- Liberation consists in remaining identified with the changeless Self even while living in the present body. Liberation is not something to be attained after death.

Br.up.4.4.6—*na tasya praaNaa utkraamanti----brahmaapyeti.*

The organs of the realized person do not depart (to take up another body). Being already Brahman, he merges in Brahman.

Br.up.3.2.11.S.B— *neti hovaacha yaajnavalkyo -----uurmaya iva samudre.*

The organs and objects do not depart, but attain identity with, or merge, in him only, their cause, the man of realization, who is the Supreme Brahman, like waves in the ocean.

The characteristics of the *jiivanmukta* .

Vedaanta saara—Chapter 6.

***JIVANMUKTO NAMA*--- A PERSON LIBERATED-IN-LIFE IS ONE WHO, BY THE REALIZATION OF THE ABSOLUTE BRAHMAN, HIS OWN SELF, HAS DISPELLED THE IGNORANCE REGARDING IT AND WHO IS FREE FROM ALL BONDAGE AND IS ESTABLISHED IN BRAHMAN, BECAUSE OF THE DESTRUCTION OF IGNORANCE AND ALL ITS EFFECTS . SEE ALSO MUND. UP. 2.2.8. WHEN HE IS NOT IN *SAMAADHI* HE EXPERIENCES SENSE-OBJECTS AS WELL AS HUNGER, THIRST, ETC, BUT DOES NOT CONSIDER THEM TO BE REAL AND IS THEREFORE NOT AT ALL AFFECTED BY THEM. HE IS LIKE A MAN WITNESSING A MAGICAL PERFORMANCE, BEING FULLY AWARE THAT WHAT HE SEES IS NOT REAL.**

“He who does not see anything in the waking state as in sound sleep; who, though seeing duality, does not really see it as he sees only the Absolute; who, though engaged in action (for the good of the world), is in reality



inactive (being totally free from the idea of agency); he, and none other, is the knower of the Self. This is the truth.” (S’ankara’s *upades’asaahasrii*, 10.13).

“Such qualities as freedom from hatred are natural to one who has attained Self-knowledge. They have not to be cultivated with effort (as in the case of an aspirant for liberation)”--- *naishkarmyasiddhi*, 4.69.

### *videhamukti*

A *jiivanmukta* (one who is liberated in life) continues to live till the *praarabdhakarma* which gave rise to the present body is exhausted. Then his body falls and he attains *videhamukti* or Absolute oneness, from which there is no return (see S’rii S’ankara’s *Vaakya vr.tti-* verses 52,53).

“His sense-organs do not depart elsewhere (for taking up another body)”— *Br.up.4.4.6*.

“They (the sense-organs) are absorbed in him”—*Br.up.3.2.11*.

“Already liberated, he is freed (from further birth)” – *KaTha up. 2.2.1*.

*Ch.up.6.14.2.S.B*—For a person who has already become a *jiivanmukta* the delay (in attaining *videhamukti*) is only till the body falls after the enjoyment of the fruits of action due to which it was born.

*KaTha up. 2.3.15.S.B*—By declaring “He attains Brahman here” (2.3.14), it has been shown that there is no going to any other world for an enlightened man for whom all the knots of ignorance have been destroyed on the realization of the identity of the self with the all-pervading and absolutely attributeless Brahman, and who becomes Brahman even while living, as also asserted by another text: “His organs do not depart. Being but Brahman, he is merged in Brahman”- *Br.up.4.4.6*.

### *Kramamukti* (Liberation by stages).

It has been said earlier that a person who realizes his identity with Brahman becomes liberated even while living (*jiivanmukta*). Such a person becomes a *videhamukta* when his body falls on the exhaustion of his *praarabdhakarma*. There is another kind of liberation known as *kramamukti* or liberation by stages. Those who meditate on Om go to *Brahmaloka* and attain liberation there. Others who meditate on Brahman without the use of symbols also go to *Brahmaloka* by the path of the gods and attain liberation there (*B.S.4.3.15.S.B*). Those who meditate with the help of symbols do not go to *Brahmaloka*. In the meditations based on symbols, the meditations are not fixed on Brahman, the symbols being the chief object and so the meditator does not attain *Brahmaloka* (*B.S.4.3.16*). Meditation on a *linga* as S’iva or on a *saalagraama* as Vishnu are examples of meditation based on symbols. So also are the meditations such as “Meditate on the mind as

Brahman” (Ch.up.3.18.1), “Meditate on the sun as Brahman” (Ch.up.3.19.1). Such meditators attain other results, but not liberation.

**B.S.4.3.10.S.B---** *KAARYABRAHMALOKAPRALAYAPRATYUPASTHAANE SATI -----  
SAMBHAVATIITYUPAPAADITAM.*

When the time for the final dissolution of the world of the conditioned Brahman is imminent, those who are in that world and have acquired full realization there attain liberation along with *hiraNyagarbha*. Such a liberation by stages has to be admitted on the strength of the upanishadic texts.

### **The path of the manes and the path of the gods**

Ch.up.S.B.Introduction--- *samastam karmaadhigatam -----  
chandra lokapratipattikaaraNam.*

All the rituals performed along with meditation on *praaNa* and other deities become the means of reaching Brahmaloaka (the world of *hiraNyagarbha*) through the path of the gods (*devayaana*) . Rituals alone (without meditation) are the means of attaining the Lunar region through the path of the manes (*pitryaana*).

These paths are elaborated below.

Ch.up.5.1.1.S.B--- *saguNabrahmavidyayaa uttaraa gatiH uktaa. -----  
-----vaktavyaa iti aarabhyate.*

It has been said that meditation on the conditioned Brahman leads to the path of the gods. Now, in this fifth chapter, after reiterating that same path for the householder who knows the *panchaagni vidyaa* (meditation on the five fires), and the celibates who are possessed of faith and perform other forms of meditation, the path of transmigration (or the path of the manes) characterised by smoke, etc, for those who perform rites alone (without meditation) is described in order to generate a spirit of detachment (*vairaagya*).

The path of the gods (*devayaana* or the northern path) is described in Ch.up.5.10.1 as well as in Br.up. 6.2.15. Some other upanishads also describe this path with some variations. Taking all these descriptions together, the complete enumeration of the stages of the path of the gods is as follows: First the deity of fire, then the deity of the day, the deity of the bright fortnight, the deity of the six months when the sun travels northward, the deity of the year, the deity of the world of gods, the deity of the air, the sun, the moon, the deity of lightning, the world of Varuna, the world of Indra, the world of Prajapati, and finally Brahmaloaka. (B.S.4.3.3). In B.S.

4.3.4 it is made clear that the terms fire, bright fortnight, year, etc, refer to the deities identified with these. That deities are meant here, and not marks or places of enjoyment, is indicated by the text of the Chhandogya upanishad, which says—“From the moon to the lightning. Then a superhuman being leads them to Brahman”-(Ch. up. 4.15.5, 5.10.1). In B.S. 4.3.7 it is asserted that these meditators go to the Saguna Brahman, for no journey is possible to Nirguna Brahman which is all-pervading. This path is also known as the path of light or *archiraadimaarga*.

The path of the manes (*pitryaana* or *the southern path*) is described in Ch.up. 5.10.3 and 4. Householders who perform Vedic rites such as *agnihotra* and activities for public welfare such as construction of tanks, wells and rest-houses and practise charity (these are known as *ishTa*, *puurta* and *dattam*) go through the path of the manes. The stages in this path are the deity of smoke, the deity of the night, the deity of the dark fortnight, the deity of the six months during which the sun travels southward, the region of the manes, *aakaas'a* and the moon. This moon is King Soma. Reaching there, they become identified with this moon and enjoy there. They are also in turn enjoyed by the gods. Enjoyment is possible only with a body. Therefore the *jiiva* who reaches this moon by this path gets a body produced out of the water particles and smoke rising out of his dead body, which was his last offering on the earth into fire. The water, together with the smoke, arising out of the cremated body envelops the *jiiva* and goes to the region of the moon and produces a body for enjoyment. The enjoyment of the *jiivas* here consists in the companionship of the gods, who in turn enjoy them by being served by them.

Those who go by the path of the manes have to return on the exhaustion of the results of the rites and other good deeds performed by them, which earned them this path. This is described in Ch.up. 5.10.5 and 6. The aqueous body which the *jiiva* had in the region of the moon takes a subtle form like *aakaas'a* and remains in the sky. Then it successively appears as air, smoke, white cloud and rain-bearing cloud and then falls down in the form of rain. Then these *jiivas* come down to this world by remaining attached to rice, barley, herbs and trees, sesamum plants, beans, etc. There is no certainty where the rainwater will fall and where the *jiivas* attached to the grains etc, will go. When the rice, etc is eaten by a male capable of reproduction, the *jiiva* attached to it may enter the womb of a female and be born as a human being, animal, bird, or any other creature. This process and the difficulties in the way are described in detail in the Bhaashya. The nature of the birth is determined by the residual karma (See KaTh.up.2.2.7).

These two paths are also mentioned in B.G.8.24 and 25.

### Transmigration

Death is the departure of the subtle body from the gross body. The gross body gets sentiency only because of the reflection of Consciousness in the subtle body. When the subtle body departs the gross body becomes insentient. The subtle body takes up another gross body. This process goes on until the dawn of Self-knowledge. Then, on the fall of the gross body when the *praarabdhakarma* is exhausted, the subtle body also ceases to exist and *videhamukti* is attained.

Br.up.4.3.35.S.B---*itaH aarabhya asya samsaaraH varNyate-----ityaaha atra dr.shTaantam.*

From here onwards transmigration of the self is being described. An example is given to show how the self passes from the present body to the next, in the same way as the self goes from the dream to the waking state.

*tat tatra yathaa loke----- ityaaha kaaruNyaat s'rutiH.*

Just as a cart, heavily loaded with various articles, moves rumbling under the load, so does the self that is in the body, i.e. the self that has the subtle body as its limiting adjunct, move between this and the next world, as between the waking and dream states, through birth and death, consisting respectively in the association with and dissociation from the (gross) body. It should be noted here that, when the subtle body, which has the vital force as its chief constituent, and which is illumined by the self-luminous *aatman*, goes, the self, of which it is the limiting adjunct, also seems to go. This happens when breathing becomes difficult, when the person is gasping for breath. Although this is an occurrence that is commonly observed, the upanishad mentions it only to stimulate a spirit of renunciation in us. Since at the time of death a man is in a helpless state of mind and cannot adopt the means for attaining the final goal of life, he must practise the means earlier, when he is in a position to do so. This is what the *s'ruti* indicates out of compassion.

Br.up.4.3.36.S.B--- *tasmaat rasaat ----- karma s'rutaadivas'aat aadravati.*

Just as a fruit is detached from its stalk by the wind or by various other causes, so does this infinite being, the self identified with the subtle body, i.e. the self with the subtle body as the limiting adjunct, completely detach itself from all the parts of the gross body, such as the eye, etc. The word 'completely' indicates that the vital force does not remain in the body as in the state of deep sleep. The self withdraws the subtle body, including the

vital force (*praaNa*) and departs again. The use of the word ‘again’ is to indicate that this subtle body has similarly gone from one gross body to another many times before, just as it has moved frequently between the dream and waking states. It goes to the particular gross body determined by the past work, knowledge, etc.

Br.up.4.3.37.S.B----- *tatra asya idam s'ariiram parityajya ----- iti lokaprasiddho dr.shTaantaH uchyate.*

Now a question may arise---- When the *jiiva* goes leaving one gross body, he has no power to take another by himself. Nor are there others who, like servants, would wait for him with another body made ready, as a king's retinue waits for him with a house kept ready. How then can the *jiiva* get another body? The answer is: He has adopted the whole universe as his means for the realization of the results of his actions. Therefore the whole universe, impelled by his work, waits for him with the requisite means for the realization of the results of his actions. The S'atapatha Brahmana says- "A man is born into the body that has been made for him" (VI.II.ii.27). This process is illustrated by two examples in 4.3.37 and 4.3.38. These examples are narrated below.

Br.up.4.3.37.S.B----- *tat tatra yathaa raajaanam----- tathaa idam aagachchhati ityevameva cha kr.tvaa pratiikshante ityarthaH.*

Just as, when a king visits some place within his kingdom the leading citizens of that place, as well as certain others appointed by the king to perform specific duties, wait for him with food and drink and a palace kept ready for his stay, similarly, for the transmigrating self who is about to take up a new body, the elements that are necessary for the creation of that body, as well as the presiding deities of the organs, such as Indra and others, wait with the means of enjoyment of the results of his past actions, saying "Here comes Brahman, our enjoyer and master".

Br.up.4.3.38.S.B---- *tameva jigamishum ----- maraNakaale sarve praaNaa vaagaadaya abhisamaayanti.* Just as when the king wishes to go back, the leading citizens and others who had received him approach him in a body, unbidden by the king, and simply knowing that he wishes to go, so do all the organs approach the departing *jiiva* at the time of death.

Br.up.4.4.1.S.B--- It has been said in 4.3.36 --"This infinite being, completely detaching himself from the parts of the body"--In order to explain when and how that detachment takes place, the process of transmigration is described in detail in this section--- *Sa ayam aatmaa sammuuDha ayamiti---* When the self becomes weak--- really it is the body that becomes weak, but its weakness is figuratively spoken of as that of the self. The state of helplessness at the time of death, which is caused by the

withdrawal of the organs, is attributed by the ordinary man to the self. At this time the organs, such as that of speech, come to the self. Then this self that is in the body is detached from the parts of the body. How does this detachment take place and how do the organs come to the self? This is being explained: Completely withdrawing these particles of light, i.e. the organs, such as the eye, so called because they reveal colour etc. The word 'completely' shows the distinction of this state from sleep, in which they are just drawn in, but not absolutely, as in this case. The self then comes to the heart, i.e. the ether in the lotus of the heart; in other words, the consciousness is manifested in the heart. The self cannot, by itself, move or withdraw the activities of the organs. It is through the limiting adjuncts, such as the intellect, that all changes and activities are attributed to the self. When does it withdraw the particles of light? The answer is: the presiding deity of the eye, who is an aspect of the sun, being directed by the individual's past actions, goes on helping the functioning of the eye, but withdraws this help and becomes merged in the sun when the person is about to die. Br.up.3.2.13 says that the vocal organ merges in fire, the vital force in air, the eye in the sun, and so on, at the time of death. These organs again take up their respective places when the individual takes another body.

Br.up.4.4.2.S.B--- *ekiibhavati karaNajaatam svena lingaatmanaa.*

Every organ becomes united with the subtle body of the dying man.

Br.up.4.4.2.S.B—*tadaa upalakshyate devataanivr.ttiH karaNaanaam cha --- --- nishkraamati.*

This means that at the time of death the presiding deities cease to help the organs and the organs become united with the subtle body with its seat in the heart. The top of the heart, i.e. the nerve-end, which is the exit for the self, brightens. Through that top, brightened by the light of the self, the *jiiva*, with the subtle body as its limiting adjunct, departs. (This departure of the subtle body is what is known as death).

Br.up.4.4.2.S.B—*tatra cha aatmachaitanyajyotiH----- gamanam iha vivakshitam.*

In the subtle body the self-effluent consciousness of the self is always particularly manifest. It is because of this limiting adjunct that the self appears to have birth, death and all activities. As the self (with the subtle body as limiting adjunct) departs, by which way does it leave the body? Through the eye, if the individual has a store of work or knowledge that would take it to the sun, or through the head, if the individual is entitled to go to the world of *hiraNyagarbha*, or through any other part of the body, according to his past work and knowledge. When the individual self is

about to depart to the next world, the vital force follows; and when the vital force departs, all the organs, such as that of speech, follow.

Br.up.4.4.2.S.B—*karmaNaa tadbhaavyamaanena -----  
vijnaanodbhaasitam eva ityarthaH.*

Everyone gets, at the moment of death, a consciousness of his next life and goes to the body revealed by that particular consciousness.

The phenomenon of child prodigies explained

Br.up.4.4.2.S.B--- *s'akaTavat sambhr.tasambhaara -----*

It has been said that the departing self goes like a loaded cart, making noises. Now, as it leaves for the next world, what is its food on the way and for consumption after reaching that world, and what are the materials for making the new body and organs? The answer is: the self, journeying to the next world, is accompanied by all the knowledge acquired, the result of all actions (karma) and the impressions of past actions. These impressions are the cause of the initiation of fresh actions and the bringing to fruition of past actions. When the organs are prompted to work by the impressions of past actions, they can easily attain skill in certain spheres even without any practice in the present life. It is observed that some persons are skillful in certain activities, such as painting, from their very birth, even without any training in the present life (child prodigies). This is due to skill attained in past lives. Similarly, in the enjoyment of sense objects also, some are found to be skillful by nature and others are not. Hence it is said that these three—knowledge, work and past experience—are the food on the way to the next world (or next life) and after reaching there (i.e. taking a new body). Therefore one should cultivate only the good forms of these three so that one may get a desirable body and desirable enjoyments.

How the *jiiva* takes a new body

Br.up.4.4.3.S.B--- *evam vidyaadisambhaarasambhr.taH-----  
puurvaas'rayam vimunchati ityetasmin arthe dr.shTaantaH upaadiiyate.*

Now the question is, when the self loaded with knowledge, etc, is about to take up another body, does it leave the old body and go to another, like a bird going to another tree? Or is it carried by another body serving as a vehicle to the place where, according to its past work, it is to be born? Or does it stay here, while its organs become all-pervading and function as such? Or do the organs remain contracted within the limits of the body as long as the *jiiva* remains in that particular body, but when the *jiiva* departs the organs become all-pervading, like the light of a lamp when its enclosure is removed and contract again when a new body is taken up? (These are the views, respectively, of the Jains, the Devataavaadins, the Saankhyas and Vedanta). The answer is: Though the organs are by nature all-

pervading and infinite (in their form as the presiding deities), since the new body is made in accordance with the person's work, knowledge and past impressions, the functions of the organs also contract or expand accordingly. Therefore the impressions called past experience, under the control of the person's knowledge and work, stretch out, like a leach, from the body, retaining their seat in the heart, as in the dream state, and build another body in accordance with his past work; they leave their seat, the old body, when a new body is made ready. An illustration on this point is given in 4.4.3.

Br.up.4.4.3.S.B--- *tat tatra dehaantarasanchaare----- ---- esha dehaantaraambhavidhiH.*

The following example illustrates how the *jiiva* passes from one gross body to another. Just as a leach, which wants to go from one leaf to another, stretches the front part of its body and takes hold of the new leaf and then draws the hind portion of the body away from the old leaf and onto the new leaf, so also, the *jiiva* takes hold of the new body and only thereafter leaves the old body. This is similar to what happens when going from the waking to the dream state. In the dream state the person identifies himself with his dream body and completely dissociates himself from his waking state body. The presiding deities of all the organs also take their places in the new body. The nature of the new body, whether it is that of a human being or of a god, or of an animal or other creature, depends on the past karma, knowledge and impressions (*vaasanas*) of the particular individual. The MuND. Up. says--"He who longs for objects of desire, thinking highly of them, is born along with those desires in a situation in which he will be able to realize those desires"(3.2.2). Desire is therefore the cause of repeated births and deaths. Total elimination of desire is the means to liberation.

Regarding how a new body is formed, the example of a goldsmith taking an old ornament and converting it into a new one is given in Br.up.4.4.4.

Br.up.3.2.13.S.B--- *karma eva aas'rayam -----*

Karma is the cause of repeated births.

KaTha up. 2.2.7—The *jiiva* is born according to his karma and knowledge as a human being, animal, bird, tree, etc.

Proof of existence of past births

Ch.up.6.11.3.S.B---*jiivaapetam ----- na jiivo mriyate iti.*

When separated from the *jiiva* (soul), the (gross) body dies, but the soul does not die. From the fact that as soon as a creature is born, it hankers after breast-feeding and experiences fear, etc, it is clear that it has memory of similar experiences in past lives. Moreover, since rites like *agnihotra* have some purpose to serve, it follows that the soul does not die.



### Om—the symbol and name of Brahman

Br.up.5.1.1.S.B--- *yadyapi brahma-aatmaadis'abdaa brahmaNaH-----*

Although the words 'Brahman', 'Atman', etc, are names of Brahman, we understand from the upanishads that Om is Brahman's most intimate appellation. Therefore it is the best means for the realization of Brahman. It is so in two ways—as the symbol of Brahman and also as Its name. Just as the image of Vishnu or any other god is looked upon as the god himself and worshipped, so also, Om is to be looked upon as Brahman. Brahman is pleased with one who uses Om as an aid, because the upanishad says—"This is the best help and the highest". (KaTha up. 1.2.17). (See also Pras'na up.5.2 , MuND. Up. 2.2.6).

Br.up.5.1.1.S.B—*katham omkaaraH brahmanaH pratiikatvena-----  
saadhanatvena pratipattavya iti.*

Om is declared to be a symbol of Brahman by the statement 'Om is the ether-Brahman (*om kham brahma*)'. Now Om is being praised as the Veda, for the entire Vedas are but Om. They all issue out of it and consist of it. Another reason why Om is the Veda is that through it one knows whatever is to be known. Therefore, Om being so important, it should be used as the means to Self-realization.

taitt.up.1.8.S.B—*paraaparabrahmadr.shtyaa upaasyamaana----- pratimeva  
vishNoH.*

Though Om is a mere word, it becomes a means for the attainment of the supreme Brahman or of *hiraNyagarbha*, depending on the idea with which it is meditated on. Just as an image is a symbol of Vishnu, Om is a symbol for the conditioned as well as the unconditioned (*apara* and *para*) Brahman.

Ch.up.2.23.2.S.B—*prajaapatiH viraaT kas'yapo vaa----- vyaahr.tayaH.*

Prajaapati meditated with regard to the worlds, in order to get their essence. Then the three Vedas flashed in his mind as the essence of the three worlds. He meditated further on the three Vedas and got as their essence the three *vyaahr.tis*, *bhuuH*, *bhuvah*, *svaH*.

Ch.up.2.23.3.S.B--- *taani aksharaaNi--- --- omkaaraH sampraasravat tat  
brahma.*

He meditated with regard to the three *vyaahr.tis* and got as their essence Om. That Om is Brahman. (Thus Om is the essence of all the worlds).

Ch.up.2.23.3. *tadyathaa s'ankunaa ----- eva idam sarvam.*

Just as all leaves are permeated by the ribs of the leaves, so are all words (speech) permeated by Om. Verily, Om is all this.

MuND. up. 2.2.4 says—Om is the bow, the soul is the arrow and Brahman is the target.

The MaaNDuukya upanishad deals elaborately with Om.

References to Om are found in S'rii S'ankara's Bhaashya on Bhagavad-gita ch.7.8, ch.8.13, ch.9.17 and ch.17.23,24.

Patanjali's Yoga suutra I.27 says that Om is the name of *iisvara*.

### The Mahaavaakyas

Statements in the upanishads declaring the identity of the *jiiva* and Brahman are known as Mahaavaakyas. S'rii S'ankara says in Viveka chuuDaamaNi, verse 251 that there are a hundred (i.e. innumerable) such statements in the *s'ruti*. Out of these, four statements from the four Vedas are well known. They are:-

*prajnaanam Brahma* –Ait.up. 3.13--- R.g Veda,  
*aham brahma asmi*- Br.up.1.4.10—Yajur Veda,  
*tat tvam asi*- Ch.up. 6.8.7—Saama veda,  
*ayam aatmaa brahma*- MaaND.up. 2.

#### The meaning of *tat tvam asi*

V.C.- Commentary of S'rii Jagadguru Chandras'ekhara Bhaarati on verses 243 to 251—

The word *tat* stands for Brahman as qualified by the functions of creation, sustenance and dissolution (i.e.*iis'vara*). The word *tvam* stands for the aatmaa as qualified by the mental states of waking, dream and deep sleep (i.e.*jiiva*). These two are of mutually opposed qualities, like the glow-worm and the sun, like the servant and the king, like the well and the ocean and like the atom and the earth (verse 244). There can be no identity between these two, which are the literal meanings (*vaachyaartha*) of the words *tat* and *tvam*. The identity is only between their implied meanings (*lakshyaartha*). The opposition between the literal meanings is due to the *upadhis*, since the literal meaning of *tat* is Brahman with the *upadhi* or limiting adjunct of *maayaa* and the literal meaning of *tvam* is aatmaa with the limiting adjunct of the five sheaths. When these limiting adjuncts, which are not real, are effectively removed, there is neither *iis'vara* nor *jiiva*. The two terms *tat* and *tvam* (That and Thou) are to be understood properly by their implied meanings in order to grasp the import of the absolute identity between them. This is to be done neither by total rejection of their literal meaning nor by total non-rejection, but by a combination of both.

Implied meanings are of three kinds—*jahallakshaNaa*, *ajahal- lakshaNaa* and *jahadajahallakshaNaa*.

*jahallakshaNaa*- The literal meaning is to be rejected and some other meaning consistent with it is to be adopted. An example is—*gangaayaam ghoshaH*, the literal meaning of which is—a hamlet on the river Ganga. Since there cannot be a hamlet on the river itself, it is the bank of the river that is meant. Here the literal meaning of the word ‘Ganga’ has to be given up completely and the implied meaning ‘bank’ has to be adopted.

*ajahallakshaNaa*- Without giving up the literal meaning of the word, what is implied by it is also adopted to get the meaning intended to be conveyed. An example is—“The red is running”, which is intended to convey that the red horse is running. Here the literal meaning of the word ‘red’ is retained and the implied word ‘horse’ is added to get the correct sense of the sentence.

*jahadajahallakshaNaa*- Here a part of the literal meaning is retained and the other part discarded. The sentence “This is that Devadatta” is interpreted by using this *lakshaNaa*. The meaning intended to be conveyed by this sentence is that Devadatta who is seen at the present time in this place is the same as the person who was seen earlier in another place. The literal meaning of the word ‘this’ is Devadatta associated with the present time and place. The literal meaning of the word ‘that’ is Devadatta associated with the past time and some other place. Since this sentence purports to convey the identity of the person seen in different places at different times, we get this meaning by discarding the reference to the place and time conveyed by the words ‘this’ and ‘that’ and retaining the reference to Devadatta. This is also known as *bhaagatyaaga-lakshaNaa*. The meaning of the sentence *tat tvam asi* is obtained by using this method. Just as in the sentence “This is Devadatta” the identity is stated by rejecting the contradictory qualities, so also in the sentence “That thou art” the contradictory qualities (namely, the limiting adjuncts) are rejected. Thus it follows that the *jiiva* and Brahman are in essence one when the limiting adjuncts, *maayaa* and the five sheaths, are rejected.

The above view, that *jahadajahallakshaNaa* is to be applied for getting the meaning of this Mahaavaakya, is the traditional and the most widely accepted view. But the author of Vedaanta Paribhaashaa says, after stating this view, that according to him it is not necessary to resort to implication (*lakshaNaa*) at all (Chapter IV- Verbal testimony).

In Samkshepas'aariirakam, I.169, the adoption of *jahallakshaNaa* is mentioned as a possible alternative, but the author has given an indication in this verse itself that he is not quite in favour of it.

How knowledge arises from the Mahaavaakya—two theories.

According to one theory, known as the *prasankhyaana* theory, attributed to MaNDana Mis'ra, the knowledge which arises from the Mahaavaakya is relational and mediate, like any other knowledge arising from a sentence. Such a knowledge cannot apprehend Brahman which is non-relational (*asamsr.shta*) and immediate (*aparoksha*). Meditation (*prasankhyaana*) gives rise to another knowledge which is non-relational and immediate. It is this knowledge that destroys nescience.

The view of Sures'vara is the opposite of the above. Knowledge of Brahman arises directly from the Mahaavaakyas. According to him also, meditation is necessary, but it is only for perfecting the hearing. The difference between the two theories is that, while, according to Sures'vara, the knowledge which arises from the Mahaavaakya is immediate and non-relational, according to the other theory this knowledge is only mediate and relational. For an elaborate discussion Sures'vara's Naishkarmyasiddhi may be referred to.

Following the view of MaNDana, Vaachaspati Mis'ra holds that the mind is the instrument for the attainment of Self-knowledge. Following the other view stated above, Prakaas'aatman, the author of VivaraNa says that the Mahaavaakya itself is the instrument, though the knowledge no doubt arises in the mind.

The Mahaavaakya gives rise to Self-knowledge by making the mind take the form of Brahman. The question arises-- since Brahman has no form, what is meant by saying that the mind takes the form of Brahman (*akhaNDaakaaravr.tti*)? This is explained by Vidyaranya in Jivanmuktiviveka, chapter 3 by taking an example. A pot made of clay is full of the all-pervading space as soon as it is made. Filling it afterwards with water, rice or any other substance is due to human effort. Though the water, etc, in the pot can be removed, the space inside can never be removed. It continues to be there even if the mouth of the pot is hermetically sealed. In the same manner, the mind, in the act of being born, comes into existence full of the consciousness of the self. It takes on, after

its birth, due to the influence of virtue and vice, the form of pots, cloths, colour, taste, pleasure, pain, and other transformations, just like melted copper, cast into moulds. Of these, the transformations such as colour, taste and the like, which are not-self, can be removed from the mind, but the form of the self, which does not depend on any external cause, cannot be removed at all. Thus, when all other ideas are removed from the mind, the self is realized without any impediment. It has been said—"One should cause the mind which, by its very nature, is ever prone to assume either of the two forms of the Self and the not-Self, to throw into the background the perception of the not-Self, by taking on the form of the Self alone". And also—"The mind takes on the form of pleasure, pain and the like, because of the influence of virtue and vice, whereas the form of the mind, in its native aspect, is not conditioned by any extraneous cause. To the mind devoid of all transformations is revealed the supreme Bliss". Thus, when the mind is emptied of all other thoughts Self-knowledge arises.

#### The meaning of the Mahaavaakya 'aham brahma asmi'

This Mahaavaakya is explained by Sures'vara in Naishkarmyasiddhi, 2.29 thus:--Just as in the sentence, "This post is a man", the earlier cognition that there is a post is sublated by the subsequent cognition that it is a man (and not a post), the cognition "I am Brahman" removes entirely the cognition as "I". Sures'vara explains the statement *aham brahma asmi*, (I am Brahman), through what is known as *baadhaayaam saamaanaadhikaraNyam*. In a sentence in Sanskrit, words which, having the same case-endings, denote one and the same thing are said to be in *samaanaadhikaraNam*. The relation between the words is called *saamaanaadhikaraNyam*. This relation is of two kinds, *mukhya saamaanaadhikaraNyam* and *baadhaayaam saamaanaadhikaraNyam*. In the former, the objects denoted by the words will have the same ontological status (or the same order of reality). For example, in the sentence, the pot-space is but the great (outer) space, the space within the pot and the great space are both empirically real (*vyaavahaarika satya*). The difference between them is only due to the *upaadhi* in the form of the pot. When the *upaadhi* is removed, they become one, which they really are, even earlier. But if the words of a sentence, having the same case-endings, denote objects which have different ontological status, and if they purport to convey only one idea, they are in *baadhaayaam saamaanaadhikaraNyam*. For example, in the statement "This post is a man", the words "post" and "man" have different ontological status. Since what exists is a man and not a post, "man" is empirically real (*vyaavahaarika*) and "post" is only

apparently real (*praatibhaasika*). Thus, just as the idea that what is seen is a post is removed when the person hears the statement "This post is a man", the wrong cognition of the form 'I am a man', 'I am happy' etc, is removed when a person realises that he is Brahman on hearing the statement *aham brahma asmi*.

The same explanation of this Mahaavaakya is given also in Panchadas'i, 8.43.

The statement *sarvam khalu idam brahma* (Ch.up.3.14.1)—All this is only Brahman—is also explained through *baadhaayaam saamaanaadhikaraNyam* in B.S. 1.3.1. S.B-- *sarvam brahmeti tu saamaanaadhikaraNyam prapanchavilaapanaartham ----- iti ekarasataas'ravaNaat-----* The use of the words 'all' and 'Brahman' in apposition in the text 'All this is but Brahman' is intended to eliminate the conception of the universe (as a reality) and not for establishing heterogeneity (in Brahman). For we hear of homogeneity in 'As a lump of salt is without interior or exterior, entire and purely saline in taste, even so is the Self without interior or exterior, entire and pure consciousness alone' (Br.up..4.5.13).

### The means to Self-realization

Br. up. 2.4.5. S.B--- *tasmaat aatmaa vai are drashtavyaH dars'anaarhaH -- ----- na anyathaa s'ravaNamaatreNa.*

Therefore, the Self should be realized, i.e. is worthy of realization or, should be made the object of realization. It should first be heard about from a teacher and from the scriptures, then reflected on through reasoning and then steadfastly meditated upon. It is only thus that It is realized—when these means, namely, hearing, reflection and meditation have been gone through. It is only when these three are combined that true realization of the oneness of Brahman is attained, not otherwise, by hearing alone.

The meaning of the terms 'hearing', 'reflection' and 'meditation'—*s'ravaNam, mananam and nididhyaasanam.*

Vedaanta saara,ch.5, para 182—Hearing is the determination, by the application of the six characteristic signs, that the purport of the entire Vedanta is the non-dual Brahman. The six signs are—(1)the beginning and the conclusion, (2)repetition, (3)originality, (4)result, (5)eulogy and (6)demonstration. The Sanskrit terms for these are, respectively, *upakramopasamhaara, abhyaasa, apuurvataa, phala, arthavaada, upapatti*. Each of these terms is explained below.

Vedaanta saara,ch.5. para 185—The term ‘ the beginning and the conclusion’ means the presentation of the subject matter of a section at the beginning and at the end of the section. For example, in the sixth chapter of the Chhaandogya Upanishad, Brahman, which is the subject-matter of the chapter, is introduced at the beginning with the words, “One only without a second”, etc. (6.2.1). At the end of the chapter Brahman is again spoken of in the words, “In It all that exists has its Self”,etc. (6.8.7).

Para 186—Repetition is the repeated presentation of the subject-matter in the section. In the same chapter, Brahman, the One without a second, is mentioned nine times by the sentence “Thou art that”.

Para 187—‘Originality’ means that the subject-matter of the section is not known through any other source of knowledge. For instance, the subject matter of the above section, namely, Brahman, cannot be known through any source of knowledge other than the *s’ruti*.

Para 188—The ‘result’ is the utility of the subject-matter. For example, in the same section, we find the sentences” One who has a teacher realizes Brahman. He has to wait only as long as he is not freed from the body; then he is united with Brahman”. (6.14.2). Here the utility of the knowledge is attainment of Brahman.

Para 189—Eulogy is the praise of the subject-matter. The words in this section, “Did you ask for that instruction by which one knows what has not been known, etc” (6.1.3) are spoken in praise of Brahman.

Para 190—Demonstration is the reasoning in support of the subject-matter, adduced at different places in the same section. An example is—“My dear, as by one lump of clay all that is made of clay is known, every modification being only a name, and being real only as clay”—(6.4.1). This shows that the universe has no reality except as an apparent modification of Brahman, the only Reality.

Para 191—Reflection is the constant thinking of Brahman, the One without a second, already heard about from the teacher, by making use of arguments in a constructive manner.

Para 192—Meditation is keeping the mind fixed on the thought of Brahman, uninterrupted by any other thought.

The result achieved by ‘hearing’ etc.

‘Hearing’ removes the doubt whether the upanishadic text which is the *pramaana* purports to teach about Brahman or about some other entity. This doubt is known as *pramaana-asambhaavanaa*, or the doubt about the *pramaana* itself.

‘Reflection’ removes the doubt whether Brahman and the *jiiva* are identical or not. This doubt is called *prameya-asambhaavanaa*.

'Meditation' is intended to keep off wrong notions such as " The universe is real; the difference between Brahman and *jiiva* is real", which are contrary to the teachings of the upanishads, by developing concentration of the mind. Such wrong notions are known as *vipariita-bhaavanaa*.

Thus the purpose of hearing, reflection and meditation is the removal of obstacles in the form of doubts and wrong notions that stand in the way of the origination of Self-knowledge.

### **The four preliminary requisites**

(Saadhanachatushtayam)

In order that hearing, reflection and meditation may be fruitful, the aspirant should have acquired the four preliminary qualifications mentioned below.

B.S.1.1.1.S.B--- *tasmaat kimapi vaktavyam yadanantaram brahmajijnaasaa upadis'yate. ----- mumukshutvam cha.*

The four requisites are— (1) discrimination between the eternal and the non-eternal (*nitya-anitya-vastu vivekaH*), (2) detachment towards all enjoyments in this world as well as in higher worlds like heaven (*ih-amutra-arthabhoga-viraagaH*), (3) possession of the six virtues commencing with control of the mind (*s'amadamaadisaadhanasampat*), and (4) yearning for liberation (*mumukshutvam*). Each of these is explained in VivekachuuDaamaNi as below.

V.C. Verse 20—The firm conviction that Brahman alone is real and that the universe is illusory (*mithyaa*) is discrimination between the eternal and the non-eternal.

V.C. Verse 21—Detachment is revulsion towards all objects of enjoyment in this world as well as in higher worlds, including one's own body.

The six virtues starting with *s'ama* are--- *s'ama, dama, uparati, titikshaa, s'raddhaa, samaadhaana*. These are explained below.

V.C. Verse 22—Withdrawing the mind from all sense- pleasures by realizing their harmful nature, and making it rest on one's objective (namely, the Self), is *s'ama*.

V.C. Verse 23--- Restraining the organs of sense and of action (*jnaanendriya* and *karmendriya*) is known as *dama*.

V.C. Verse 24--- When the mind ceases to function through the external organs, that state is *uparati*.

V.C. Verse 25—Enduring all adversities without lament or anxiety and without seeking to counter them is *titikshaa*.

V.C. Verse 26--- Firm conviction about the truth of the scriptures and the teachings of the Guru is *s'raddhaa*.



V.C. Verse 27--- The mind remaining firmly fixed in the attributeless Brahman is *samaadhaana*.

The fourth requisite, *mumukshutvam* is explained in V.C. verse 28 as the yearning to become free from nescience and its effect, bondage, by the realization of one's true nature. In the Bhaashya on Gita,4.11 S'rii S'ankara says that it is impossible for a person to be a seeker of liberation and also a seeker of the fruits of action at the same time. From this it is clear that only a person who has attained total and intense detachment can be called a *mumukshu*. The definition of *yogaarudha* in Gita 6.4 as one who is free from attachment to sense-objects and actions and does not even think of them indicates that both these terms have the same meaning.

Of these, detachment and the yearning for liberation are the most important. Only if these two are strong, will the others like *s'ama*, etc, be fruitful—Verse 30.

### **The scope of reasoning (*tarka*)**

Reasoning, by itself, is not sufficient for attaining knowledge of Brahman, but reasoning which does not run counter to the upanishadic texts is useful as a help.

B.S. 1.1.1. S.B--- *tasmaat brahmajijnaasopanyaasamukhena----- --- ---- prastuuyate*.

Therefore, beginning with a statement of the desire to know Brahman, there is begun an enquiry for the ascertainment of the meaning of the Vedaanta texts, with the help of reasoning not inconsistent with those texts, the object being liberation (through knowledge).

B.S.1.1. 2.S.B--- *vaakyarthavicharaNaadhyavasaananirvr.ttaa--- ----- dars'ayati*.

The realization of Brahman results from the firm conviction arising out of deliberation on the upanishadic texts and their meaning, but not from other means of knowledge such as inference, etc. With regard, however, to the texts that speak of the origin, sustenance and dissolution of the universe, even reasoning, not opposed to these texts, is not ruled out as a means of reinforcing the meaning of these texts. In fact, the upanishads themselves accept reasoning as an aid. For instance, it is said, "The Self is to be heard about, to be reflected on" (Br.up.2.4.5). And also the text, "A man, well-informed and intelligent, can reach the country of the Gandharas; similarly, a man who has a teacher attains knowledge" (Ch.up.6.14.2), shows that the texts rely on the aid of the human intellect also (i.e. they give importance to reasoning).

B.S.2.1.6.S.B--- *yadapi s'ravaNavyatirekeNa mananam vidadhat -----  
brahmaavyatirekaH ityevamjaatiiyakaH.*

It was also claimed that by enjoining reflection over and above hearing, the Br. up. itself indicates that logic also is to be accepted. Though this is so, mere empty logic cannot be given a place here merely because of this; for, logic conforming to the upanishads is alone resorted to here as a subsidiary means to help realization. The logic that is acceptable is of the following nature. Since the states of sleep and wakefulness contradict each other, the Self is not identified with either of them; since the individual soul dissociates itself from the world in the state of deep sleep to become one with the Self which is Existence, it must be the same as the transcendental Self; since the universe has originated from Brahman and since the principle is that cause and effect are non-different, the universe must be non-different from Brahman; and so on. It is reasoning of this kind that has been used in VivekachuuDaamaNi to conclude that none of the five sheaths can be the self (verse 156 onwards).

B.S.2.1.11.S.B--- *itas'cha na aagamagamyarthe kevalena tarkeNa-----  
parasparavipratipattidars'anaat.*

For this reason also one should not, on the strength of mere logic, propound something that has to be known only from the Vedas. Reasoning that has no foundation in the Veda and springs from the imagination of persons lacks conclusiveness. Man's conjecture has no limits. Thus it is seen that an argument put forward by one learned person is proved to be unsustainable by another learned person. That again is proved to be untenable by yet another person. The result is that no argument can be accepted as conclusive. It is well known that even great men like Kapila and Kanada hold divergent views. (Therefore, only conclusions firmly based on the scriptures and supplemented by proper reasoning can stand scrutiny).

KaTha up. 1.2.9.S.B--- *ato ananyaprokta aatmani----*

This wisdom about the Self, as presented in the Vedas, that arises when instruction is given by one who has become identified with It, cannot be attained through mere argumentation, based merely on one's own intellect.

B.S.1.1.2 S.B--- *na dharmajijnaasaayaamiva s'rutyaaadaya -----  
brahmajnaanasya.*

The scriptures, by themselves alone, are not the means for Self-knowledge. The scriptures have to be supplemented by reasoning and actual experience, unlike in the case of performance of rites, where the scriptures alone are the authority. In the case of rites there is no question of direct experience, since the result is to be attained only at some future

time, whereas in the case of knowledge of Brahman actual experience is the culmination.

### **Two kinds of Vision**

Vision is of two kinds—phenomenal and eternal. The former is a modification of the mind when it stretches out through the eyes. It is dependent on the objects perceived. It has a beginning and an end. But the latter is the very nature of the Self, just as heat and light are the very nature of the sun. The Self is said to be a seer, hearer, thinker, etc, only when it is associated with the respective limiting adjuncts such as the eye, ear, mind, etc.

Br.up.3.4.2.S.B--- *dr.shtiH iti dvividhaa bhavati laukikii paaramarthikii cha----- vidyate iti cha.*

Vision is of two kinds, phenomenal and real. Phenomenal vision is an action of the mind when connected with the eye. It is an act and has therefore a beginning and an end. But the vision that belongs to the Self is like the heat and light of fire, being the very essence of the witness; it has neither beginning nor end. The ordinary or phenomenal vision, however, is coloured by the objects seen through the eye. It begins when the eye comes into contact with the object and ends when the contact ends. The eternal vision of the Self is only metaphorically spoken of as the witness. It is a witness only when it is looked upon as associated with the limiting adjuncts, namely, the mind, body, etc. By itself it is only pure consciousness and cannot be described even as a witness.

### **The Process of Visual perception**

The process of visual perception, according to Advaita Vedanta, is described in chapter 1 of Vedaanta Paribhaashaa thus. Just as the water in a tank, issuing through a hole, enters, through a channel, a number of fields and assumes the shapes of those fields, so also the luminous mind, stretching out through the eye, goes to the space occupied by objects and becomes modified into the forms of those objects. Such a modification is called a *vr.tti* of the mind. The same fact is also stated in Panchadas'i, 4.27, 28 and 29, based on S'rii S'ankara's Upades'asaahasrii, Metrical portion, chapter 14, verses 3 & 4. The whole process of visual perception consists of the following steps:--

- (1) The mind stretches out through the eye, reaches the object and takes the form of the object. This is called a *vr.tti* or mode of the mind.
- (2) The mental mode removes the veil of ignorance that hides the object.
- (3) Consciousness underlying the object, being manifest through the mental mode, illumines the object.
- (4) The mental mode associates the object-consciousness with the subject-consciousness.
- (5) The subject perceives the object.

Consciousness manifest through the mental mode coincident with the object serves as the knowledge of the object. This is known as *phala* (fruit), being the resultant knowledge.

The mind has three main divisions in this process, namely,

- (1) the part within the body,
- (2) the part that extends from the body to the object perceived,
- (3) the part that coincides with the object.

The first part above is known as *pramaataa* and the consciousness manifest in it is called *pramaata-chaitanya*. This is the perceiver. The consciousness manifest in the second part is called *pramaaNa-chaitanya*, or the means of knowledge. The consciousness manifest in the third part is *pramiti-chaitanya* or percept.

The object perceived is called *prameya*. Since the third part of the mind mentioned above coincides with the object, *prameya-chaitanya*, or the consciousness underlying the object and *pramiti-chaitanya* become identical. The point to be kept in mind here is that all objects in this world are superimposed on Consciousness, i.e. Brahman. All objects are covered by a veil of ignorance, which has to be removed for seeing the object. It is only consciousness that reveals the objects, since the objects themselves are non-luminous.

### **‘Upanishad’—meaning**

KaThopanishad. S.B. Introduction--- *saderdhatoH vis'araNa---- vidyaa uchyate*.

The word ‘Upanishad’ is derived by adding the prefixes ‘*upa*’ (near) and ‘*ni*’ (with certainty) and the suffix ‘*kvip*’ to the root ‘*sad*’ meaning ‘to destroy, to go to and to loosen’. By the word ‘Upanishad’ is meant the knowledge that destroys the seeds of worldly existence such as ignorance in the case of those seekers of liberation who, after cultivating detachment towards all enjoyments, approach (*upa,sad*) this knowledge and then deliberate on it with steadiness and certainty (*ni*). Though this knowledge is the primary

meaning of the word, it is used also to denote the book that contains this knowledge, in a secondary sense.

Br.up.1.1.S.B.Introduction—*saa iyam brahmavidyaa ----upanishad uchyaate*. The knowledge of Brahman is called ‘upanishad’ because it entirely removes this relative world together with its cause from those who take to this study; for the root ‘sad’ prefixed by ‘upa’ and ‘ni’ means that. Books also are called ‘upanishad’ as they have the same end in view.

There is no contradiction between the upanishads and the ritualistic portion (karma kanda) of the Vedas.

Br.up.2.1.20.S.B—*tasmaat na brahmaikatvam-----pramaanaani s’rotraadivat*. Therefore the Vedaanta texts that teach the oneness of Brahman are not antagonistic to the ritualistic portion. Nor are the latter deprived of their scope by the former. Neither do the ritualistic scriptures, which are based on differences such as the factors of an action, take away the authority of the upanishads as regards the oneness of Brahman. For the means of knowledge are exclusively powerful in their respective spheres, just as the ear alone has the power to hear sounds and the eye alone to see forms, etc.

The ritualistic portion of the Vedas ceases to apply only after a person has attained Self-knowledge and has become liberated from the cycle of birth and death. Till then it remains applicable.

### **Mind, vital force and speech**

Ch.up.6.5.1.S.B—Food, when eaten, becomes divided in three ways. The grossest portion of the food turns into faeces. The medium constituent becomes flesh. The subtlest part, having reached the heart, enters into the fine nerves named *hitaa*, becomes transformed into the mind-stuff and nourishes the mind. It therefore follows that the mind is made of matter. It is not considered as eternal and partless as defined by the Vais’eshikas. (It is of the size of the body—*madhyama parimaana*).

Ch.up.6.5.2.S.B--- Water (or any liquid) when drunk becomes divided in three ways. The grossest portion becomes urine. The medium constituent becomes blood. The subtlest part becomes the vital force (*praaNa*).

Ch.up.6.7.1 says—“The vital force is made up of water. It will depart from him who does not drink water”.

Ch.up.6.5.3.S.B—Butter, oil, etc, when consumed, become divided in three ways. The grossest portion becomes bone. The medium constituent becomes marrow, the greasy substance inside the bones. The subtlest part becomes the (subtle) organ of speech (*vaak*). It is a well -known fact that

by the consumption oil, butter and the like, speech becomes clear and powerful.

Ch.up.6.5.4.S.B—Therefore the mind is made of food, the vital force is made of water and speech is made of tejas or fire (i.e. butter, oil, etc).

### Upaasanam (Meditation)

B.S.1.1.12 .--- *evam ekamapi brahma apekshitopaadhisambandham nirastopaadhisambandham cha ----- upadis'yate.*

Thus the same Brahman is taught in the upanishads as associated with limiting adjuncts to be meditated on and as devoid of limiting adjuncts to be realized.

B.S.1.2.14.S.B--- *nirguNam api sadbrahma naamaruupagatairguNaiH ----- --- tatra tatra upadis'yate.*

Even though Brahman is without attributes, it is taught in the upanishads as possessed of the attributes of name and form for the purpose of meditation.

B.S.1.1.20.S.B--- *syaat parames'varasya api ----- saadhaka-anugrahaartham.*

The Supreme Lord may take forms at will by His power of Maayaa for blessing spiritual aspirants.

B.S.4.1.1.S.B--- *vdyupaasyoH cha ----- prayogaH dr.s'yate.*

The verbs 'vid' and 'upaas' are seen to be used interchangeably in the upanishads. See Ch.up. 3.18.1, 3.18.3, 4.1.4, 4.2.2.

taitt.up.1.3.S.B--- *upaasanam cha yathaas'aastram ----- s'aaastroktaalambanavishayaa cha.*

Meditation consists in a continuous flow of one and the same thought as laid down by the scripture, uninterrupted by other thoughts and fixed on some perceptible object as prescribed by the scripture.

taitt up. 1.6.S.B. *brahmaNaH saakshaat upalabdhyartham ----- s'aalagraama iva vishNoH.*--- The s'ruti declares that the *hr.dayakaas'a*, the bright space in the heart, is the proper place for the contemplation and immediate perception of Brahman.

Br.up.1.3.9.S.B--- *upaasanam naama--- laukikaatma-abhimaanavat.*

Meditation is mentally approaching the form of the deity as it is presented in the eulogistic portion of the Vedas relating to the objects of meditation and concentrating on it, keeping out all other thoughts till one becomes as completely identified with that form as the ordinary man is with his own body.

Br.up.1.3.16.S.B--- *'tam yathaa yathopaasate ----- tadeva bhavati'.*

“One becomes exactly as one meditates upon Him”. (S’atapatha BraahmaNa-X.5.2.20.

Different kinds of upaasanaas.

B.S.1.1.12.S.B----- *tatra avidyaavasthaayaam----- sa sa iis’vara ityupaasyatayaa chodyate.*

It is only in the state of nescience (*ajnaana*) that Brahman can be considered as coming within the range of empirical dealings comprising the object of meditation, the meditator, the act of meditation etc. Among such meditations, some are for the attainment of higher worlds, some for making rites more efficacious and some for the attainment of liberation by stages (*kramamukti*). Those that lead to higher worlds are those meditations that are based on symbols, such as “One who meditates upon name as Brahman becomes independent so far as name reaches” (Ch.up.7.1.5), which are referred to in B.S.4.3.15 &16. These lead to higher worlds upto the world of lightning mentioned in Ch.up.5.10.2 and not beyond that. An example of an upaasanaa which increases the efficacy of rites performed is the *udgiita upaasanaa* described in Ch.up.1.9.2. The meditations which lead to *kramamukti* are *s’aaNDilya vidyaa* in Ch.up.3.14, *dahara upaasanaa* in Ch.up. 8.1 and *ahamgraha upaasanaas*, based on self-identification in which the individual thinks of himself as Brahman.

These meditations differ in accordance with the qualities (e.g. Brahman as possessed of particular attributes), or conditioning factors (e.g. Brahman meditated on as being in the heart, etc). These are elaborated in B.S.3.3.58.S.B. Although the same Brahman is to be meditated on as possessed of different qualities, the results differ, depending on the quality meditated on, as stated in the S’ruti, “One becomes what one meditates on”.

B.S. 1.1.12 S.B-- Although it is the same Self that remains hidden in all beings-- moving or stationary-- there are differences in the degree of manifestation of glory and power, caused by the gradation of the minds by which the Self is conditioned. This is the significance of Bhagavad-gita, Ch.10.41—“Whatever being there is, which is great, prosperous or powerful, know that to be a product of a part of my splendour”. It is enjoined in this verse that wherever there is extraordinary greatness, etc, it is to be worshipped as God.

Meditation on *saguNa brahman* leads to realization of *nirguNa brahman*.

Kaivalya Up. 7—“Having meditated on the highest Lord (S’iva) who is powerful, has three eyes and a blue neck and is the consort of Umaa, the sage reaches Him who is the source of all, the witness of all and beyond *avidyaa*.”

Vedaanta Kalpataru of Amalaananda Sarasvati—Gloss relating to Brahmasuutra 1.1.20--- When their minds are brought under control by meditation on Brahman as possessed of qualities, that very Brahman will directly manifest Itself divested of the superimposition of limiting adjuncts.

### ‘Deva’ and ‘Asura’ ---- Meaning

Br.up.1.3.1.S.B—*devaas’cha asuras’cha----- atyanta-yatna-saadhyaa hi sa.*

The *devas* and the *asuras* are the organs of speech, etc, of Prajaapati himself. They become *devas* when they shine under the influence of thoughts and actions as laid down in the scriptures, while those very organs become *asuras* when they are under the influence of natural thoughts and actions, based only on perception and inference and directed merely towards visible, material ends. They are called *asuras* because they delight only in their own senses, or because they are other than gods (or *suras*). The *devas* are fewer in number than the *asuras*, because, as we know, the organs have a stronger tendency towards thoughts and actions that are natural than towards those that are prescribed by the scriptures, for the former lead to visible, material ends. The tendency to adhere to the prescriptions of the scriptures is rare, because it is attainable only by great and sincere effort.

Ch.up.1.2.1.S.B--- *devaaH diivyaateH dyotanaarthasya--- indriyavr.ttayaH eva.*

The word ‘*deva*’ is derived from the root ‘*div*’ in the sense of shining. (This root has many meanings). It therefore means the functions of the organs when they are illumined by the scriptures. The *asuras* are the natural, unillumined (ignorant) activities of the organs, opposed to the *devas*, because of being engrossed in the enjoyment of sense-objects. From time immemorial a war, as it were, has been going on in the minds of all individual beings, between the gods and the demons, with each side intent on defeating the other.

iis’aavaasya up. 4. S.B—*dyotanaat devaaH ---*

Here the word ‘*devaaH*’ means the organs of knowledge such as the eyes.

Br. up. 5.2.3.S.B--- *athavaa na devaa asuraa vaa----- kruuraaH cha dr.s’yante.*

Or, there are no gods or *asuras* other than men. Those among men who are lacking in self-control, but are otherwise endowed with many good qualities, are the gods. Those who are particularly greedy are men, while those who are cruel and given to injuring others are the *asuras*. So members of the same species, man, are given the titles of god, man and



demon according to the predominance of the three gunas in them. The instructions given by Prajapati in this section are therefore meant for all men.

### **PariNaama and Vivarta**

(Transformation and Transfiguration)

When the cause and effect are of the same order of reality, the effect is a transformation or parinaama of the cause, as for example, when milk turns into curd. When the cause and effect belong to different orders of reality, as when a rope appears as a snake, the effect is called a vivarta or transfiguration of the cause.

In the Bhashya on Ch. up. 6.2.2 it is said that pot, etc are merely different configurations (samsthaanamaatram) of earth, etc. This is compared to a rope appearing as a snake i.e. vivarta. So it appears that pot is only a vivarta of clay and not a parinama. The same is stated in Anubhootiprakasa on Aitareya up.

The author of Samkshepas'aariirakam says that the theory of transformation of Brahman as the universe serves as the prelude to the theory of transfiguration. In II.56 it is said that the author of the Brahmasuutras puts forth the doctrine of transfiguration (vivarta) as his final conclusion. In II.64 it is said that the theory of transformation is advanced as a preliminary to the theory of transfiguration.

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