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BENEDICTION

from

*His Holiness Jagadguru Śrī Jayendra Sarasvati,
Śrī Śaṅkarāchārya of Kāñchi Kāmakoṭi-piṭha*

To be born as a human being is indeed the fruit of innumerable meritorious deeds. The chief aim of man should be to attain the knowledge of the truth that Reality is non-dual and that it is his own essential nature. Lord Śiva facing the South imparted this knowledge first by showing the *cinmudrā*. And in this *kali* age, Śrī Śaṅkara, an incarnation of Lord Śiva, imparted the same some 2500 years ago through his commentaries on the Upaniṣads, the *Gītā* and the *Brahma-sūtra* and through several manuals.

We are very glad to learn that in order to propagate the teachings of Śrī Śaṅkara with a view that all may attain the knowledge of truth and thereby the chief aim of one's life, a quarterly journal entitled the *Voice of Śaṅkara* is being published under the auspices of the newly founded Institute 'Ādi Śaṅkara Advaita Research Centre' whose other activities are to arrange for learned discourses on Vedānta, to conduct classes on the Hymns of Śaṅkara for the benefit of children, and to afford facilities to those who want to study Advaita Vedānta and other related *śāstras* in a traditional manner.

We pray to Lord Chandramaulīśvara and Goddess Mahā Tripurasundarī that the Institute should be enabled to carry out its noble tasks in a successful manner.



Homage to Sankara

[1]

यद्वक्त्रमानससरः प्रतिलब्धजन्म-
भाष्यारविन्दमकरन्दरसं पिबन्ति ।
प्रत्याशमुन्मुखविनीतविनेयभृङ्गा
तान् भाष्यवित्ताकगुरून् प्रणतोऽस्मि मूर्ध्ना ॥

*yadvaktra-mānasasarahḥ pratilabdhanma-
bhāṣyāravindamakarandarasaṁ pibanti,
pratyāśamunmukha-
vīnīta-vineyabhṛṅgā
tān bhāṣyavittakagurūn praṇato'smi mūrdhnā.*

I bow my head before Śrī Śaṅkara, the preceptor of the humble disciples who are renowned for their knowledge of the bhāṣya and who drink the nectar flowing from the bhāṣya-lotus which owes its origin to



the Mānasa-lake of Sañkara's mouth and who, like the bees, are eagerly lifting up their faces from all quarters.

— Padmapādācārya

[2]

आशैलादुदयात् तथाऽस्तगिरितो भास्वद्यशोरश्मिभिः
 व्याप्तं विश्वमनन्धकारमभवद्यस्य स्म शिष्यैरिदम् ।
 आरात् ज्ञानगभस्तिभिः प्रतिहतश्चन्द्रायते भास्करः
 तस्मै शंकरभानवे तनुमनोवाग्भिर्नमः स्यात् सदा ॥

*āśailādudayāt tathā'stagirito bhāsvadyaśoraśmibhiḥ
 vyāptaṁ viśvam anandhakāram abhavadyasya
 sma śiṣyairidam,
 ārāt jñānagabhastibhiḥ pratihatasa'candrāyate
 bhāskaraḥ
 tasmai śaṅkarabhānave tanumanovāgbhirnamahsyāt
 sadā.*

Obeisance with body, mind, and speech be to the glorious Sun that is Śrī Sañkara; struck back by the lustre of whose knowledge the brilliance of the solar orb was rendered dim like the moon, and the effulgent renown of whose disciples enveloped (all the continents) from the mountains of the Far East to those of the Far West, thereby rid-
 ding the universe of darkness.



[3]

येषां धीसूर्यदीप्त्या प्रतिहतिमगमन्नाशमेकान्ततो मे
 ध्वान्तं स्वान्तस्य हेतुर्जननमरणसन्तानदोलाधिरुद्धेः ।
 येषां पादौ प्रपन्नाः श्रुतिशमविनयैः भूषिता शिष्यसंघाः
 सद्यो मुक्ताः स्थितास्तान् यतिवरमहितान् यावदायु-
 र्नमामि ॥

*yeṣāṃ dhīsūryadiptyā pratihatamagamannāśa-
 mekāntato me*

*dhvantam svāntasya heturjananamaraṇasantāna-
 dolādhirūḍheḥ,*

*yeṣāḥ pādau prapannāḥ śrutīśamavinayaiḥ
 bhūṣitā śiṣyasāṅghāḥ*

*sadyo muktāḥ sthitāstān yativaramahitān
 yāvadāyurnamāmi.*

By the sunlight of whose wisdom, the darkness of ignorance residing in my heart, which is the cause of ceaselessly swinging between birth and death, has been completely destroyed, by taking refuge at whose feet, groups of disciples have become adorned with scriptural learning, self-control and humility, and have been instantly released—to that Great Sage I offer my obeisance till the end of my life.



[4]

वक्त्रारमासाद्य यमेव नित्या सरस्वती स्वार्थसमन्वि-
ताऽऽसीत् ।
निरस्तदुस्तर्ककलङ्कपङ्कनमामि तं शंकरमर्चिताङ्घ्रिम् ॥

vaktāramāsādya yameva nityā sarasvatī svārthasamanvita-sit.

*nirastadustarkakalaṅkapaṅkā namāmi taṁ śaṅkaram
arcitāṅghriṁ.*

I bow to Śrī Saṅkara, whose feet were worshipped by all, and on obtaining whom as the exponent, the eternal speech, namely, the Veda, became possessed of its true import, as from it the fallacious reasoning, consisting, metaphorically, of dirt and loose clay, has been removed.

— Sarvajñātma muni

[5]

नानाभाष्याहता सा सगुणफलगतिर्वेधविद्याविशेषैः
तत्तद्देशाप्तिरम्या सरिदिव सकला यत्र यात्यंशभूयम् ।
तस्मिन्नानन्दसिन्धावतिमहति फले भावविश्रान्ति मुद्रा
शास्त्रस्योद्घाटिता यैः प्रणमत हृदि तान्नित्यमाचार्य-
पादान् ॥





*nānābhāṣyādr̥tā sā saḡuṇāphalagatirvaidhavyā-
 viśeṣaiḥ
 tattaddēśāptiramyā saridivā sakalā yatra yātyamśa-
 bhūyam,
 tasminnānandasindhāvatimahati phale bhāvaviśrānti
 mudrā
 śāstrasyodghāṭitā yaiḥ praṇamata hṛdi tān nityam
 ācāryapādān.*

Always offer salutations, in the heart, to the
 revered preceptor (Śrī Saṅkara) by whom the
 culmination of the import of the scripture has been
 imbedded in the supreme human end—the ocean of
 bliss, wherein merges (as it were), like a river, the
 state of becoming Godlike which is favoured by many
 commentaries (on the *Brahma-sūtra*), and which results
 by reaching the respective celestial regions that are
 pleasing, through prescribed and specific meditative
 exercises.

— Appayya Dikṣita

[6]

श्रुतिस्मृतिपुराणानां आलयं करुणालयम् ।
 नमामि भगवत्पादं शङ्करं लोकशङ्करम् ॥

*śruti-smṛti-purāṇānām ālayam karuṇālayam |
 namāmi bhagavatpādam śaṅkaram lokaśaṅkaram ||*

I prostrate before Śrī Saṅkara of revered feet,
 who confers auspiciousness on the whole world, who
 is the repository of scripture, codes of law, and epics,
 and who is the abode of compassion.

The Significance of Sankara Jayanti*

Jagadguru Sri Chandrasekharendra Sarasvati

Today is Śrī Saṅkara-Jayantī. It was by the *avatāra* of Śrī Saṅkara that the Vedas, the Smṛtis, etc., were resuscitated. It is by their resuscitation alone that the observances connected with auspicious days such as Rāma-navamī, Nṛsimha-jayantī, Kṛṣṇa-jayantī, Uttarāyaṇa-saṅkrānti, Śiva-rātrī, etc., have been revived. The Jayantī of Śrī Saṅkara is the Jayantī that has imparted to all Jayantis their character as Jayantis. On the fifth day of the bright-half of the month of Vaiśākha falls Ś : Saṅkara Jayantī. Like the pure white jasmine (*vasantī-mādhavī*) creeper, that causes delight, let this fifth day of the bright-half month in the spring season (*vāsantī-madhavi*) embellish and delight our intelligence.

* Saṅkara Jayantī Message in Sanskrit, translated into English—Editor.





Who is Śaṅkara? Śaṅkara is the one who brings delight to the world. He alone is Śiva. Śiva is the giver of auspiciousness, Toṭakācārya says in his octad of verses in the *toṭaka* metre thus :

*bhava eva bhavān iti me nitarām
samajāyata cetasi kautukitā
gurupuṅgava puṅgava-ketana te
samatāṁ vyatām na hi ko'pi sudhiḥ.*

“Knowing that Thou art the Lord Śiva, there arises supreme bliss in my heart; O the Best of teachers! The One whose banner is the bull-sign (Śiva) ! None of the wise ones is equal to Thee !”

And, Padmapādācārya says in the *Pañcapādikā* :

*namāmy-abhogi-parivāra-saṁpadam
vinā- vināyakam apūrva-śaṅkaram*

“I bow to the unique Śaṅkara whose wealth is the *entourage* of ascetics, (who has no serpents adorning him), and who has vanquished opposition by the Baud-dhas and Jainas¹ (who is not accompanied by Gaṇeśa).”

And, it has been said by a well-instructed one of old :

“I bow to Bhagavatpāda Śaṅkara who is the repository of Śruti, Smṛtis and Purāṇas, the abode of grace, and the bestower of auspiciousness on the world.”

What is śaṁ (auspiciousness)? Happiness is bliss. The *Bṛhadāranyakopaniṣad* says, it is love. Where that

1. ‘Vināyaka’ is an appellation of the Buddha and the Jina.

auspiciousness, love, or bliss exists, the world mostly does not know. Therefore it suffers. He who is always of the nature of auspiciousness, the Bhagavat-pāda, seeing the world which suffers, became filled with grace. He became the abode of grace so that the world may experience the happiness of the impartite Self-experience. What is that happiness? It was on account of that experience that Śaṅkara was far removed from misery. Śaṅkara speaks: For all, the Self alone is happiness; the Self alone is all; the Self itself is Brahman; and Brahman itself is all this. All is the effect of Brahman; and the cause itself is the effect. From the cause, the effect is non-different. All is, verily, auspiciousness. Let auspiciousness be experienced in all beings. Let the Self which is auspiciousness be experienced."

A son becomes dear to the worldly people. Why? Because he is one's son. Wealth becomes dear to the worldly people, because it is one's wealth. A wife becomes dear to the worldly people, because she is one's wife. Corn and land become dear to the worldly people, because they are one's corn and land.

If the same corn and land have been sold to one other than one's self, say Yajñadatta, then they are not considered to be dear. And, thus in the world, since all that is external becomes dear because it is related to one's self, the self is the dearest; and since that itself is Brahman, that alone is the supreme bliss. Thus Śaṅkara said in his commentary on the topic dealing with the Self as love.

That the supreme Self is one is Śaṅkara's view. That all is the supreme Self, is Śaṅkara's view. That





all is one alone is, Śaṅkara's view. That all is Brahman is the view of Scripture. The view of Scripture is, verily, the view of Śaṅkara. Because all is Brahman, there is nothing whatever that is different from Brahman: this is Śaṅkara's view. The universe alone is real, there is no Brahman: this is the Cārvāka view. The universe and Brahman are both of them real: this is the dualistic view of the Naiyāyikas and others. The universe and Brahman are both of them non-existent: this is the Bauddha view. Brahman alone is real, the universe as different from Brahman is non-existent: this is Śaṅkara's view.

On the rise of Buddhism, the views that were in vogue previously did not get exterminated. On the rise of the Cārvāka school, the views that differed from it did not get obliterated. But, on the rise of Śaṅkara's view, all the previous schools lost their brilliance, even as the planets that shine by night are shorn of their luminosity at sun-rise.

When the impartite light shines, need it be said that the limited luminaries get overpowered? In the supreme non-dual Self, the one impartite essence, which is like the ocean, all paths, viz. devotion, meditation, ethical culture, and mutually incompatible *tāntrika-sādhanas*, stressing *Vaidika-ācāra* or *Yoga-samādhi*, become one, even like the great rivers which flow towards the East, South, West or North become one when they join the sea. Therein alone all of them find auspiciousness. The following statement of an ancient sage bears this out.

*nanābhāṣyādr̥tā sā saḡuṇap̥alagatīḥ vaidhavidyāviše-
ṣaiḥ*

tattad-deśāpti-ramya sarid-iva sakala yatra yaty-amśa-
 bhūyam,
 tasminn-ānandasindhau atimahati phale bhava-viśrānti-
 mudrā
 śāstrasyodghāṭitā yaiḥ praṇamata hṛdi tān nityam
 ācāryapādēn.

“The relative path of gaining the fruit of contacting Godhead endowed with attributes (*saguṇa*) by guiding the souls to the respective celestial regions is revealed by the different Upaniṣadic *upāsanās* (meditations) and expounded by the various Bhāṣyas. But, like a river which flows into the ocean and becomes a part of it, that path finds its end in the ocean of Ānanda, the final human goal, the quiescence of transmigration, which is the revelation of Scripture as explained clearly by the Ācārya-pāda. Adore him in the heart!”

The “Ācārya-pāda” is Śrī Saṅkara-bhagavat-pāda.

The conclusive view of Bhagavatpāda, as of all the preceptors of the Vedic tradition, is that the *dharma* as taught in the Veda should be practised by the humans according to their respective *varṇa* and *āśrama*. And, this *varṇāśrama-dharma* is prescribed by Scripture, not merely for the sake of the preservation of the human society from the economic standpoint through the people helping one another as helpers and the helped, but as the means to *mokṣa* for each individual soul: this *dharma* is prescribed prominently in *Śruti* and *Smṛtis* for the sake of purifying the mind by generating virtues like peace, self-control, discrimination, and dispassion, which cannot be acquired by any other means by those who seek them. This has been taught





directly by Śrī Saṅkara-bhagavatpāda in his work, *Aparokṣanubhūti*:

*sva-varṇaśrama-dharmena tapasā hari-toṣaṇāt,
sādhanam prabhavet puṁsam vairāgyādi-catuṣṭayam.*

“By (following) one’s own *varṇaśrama-dharma*, by austerity, and by pleasing Hari, the four-fold means consisting of dispassion, etc., is generated for human beings.”

This teaching of Śrī Saṅkara follows clearly the *Bhagavad-gītā*: *tasmāc-chāstram pramāṇam te kāryākārya-
vyavasthitau.*

“Therefore, scripture is the authority for you in the matter of what ought to be done and what ought not to be done.”

In this passage of the *Gītā*, the word ‘therefore’ refers to some cause for Scripture being the authority for what ought to be done and what ought not to be done. What is that cause?

The cause has been explained in the previous verses:

*trividham naraka-vedam dvāraṁ naśanam atmanaḥ
krodhas-tāhā lobhaḥ tasmād-etaḥ-trayaṁ tyajet.
etaḥ-vimuktaḥ kaunteya tamo-dvārais-tri¹hir-naraḥ
acaraty-ātmanaḥ śreyas-tato yāti parāṁ gatim.
yaḥ śāstra-vidhim utsrjya vartate kāmakārataḥ,
na sa siddhim avāpnoti na sukhaṁ na parāṁ gatim.*

“Triple is the door to this hell leading to self-destruction—desire, anger, and greed. Therefore, these three

should be rejected. Freed from these three doors to darkness, O Arjuna, man follows what is his good, and thereby attains the supreme goal. He who, transgressing the injunctions of Scripture, acts being impelled by desire, attains neither perfection, nor happiness, nor the supreme goal. Therefore, Scripture is the authority for you in the matter of what ought to be done and what ought not to be done. Knowing thus, you ought to perform here only such action as is ordained by Scripture."

Thus the Ācārya transforms even the layman into the supreme Self through the teaching of the Bhāṣyas gradually. Beginning with the statement "Let the Veda be studied everyday" (*vedo nityam adhiyatām*), he concludes his teaching with the statement "Let one remain as the supreme Brahman-Self" (*brahmātmanā sthiyatām*). The fruit of Veda is the performance of actions taught therein. The performance of actions ought to be done in a spirit of dedication to God, and not for the sake of any other fruit. The performance of (one's) action is itself the worship of God. It has been stated by one who knows the tradition: "It is by God's grace alone that there is for men an inclination towards Advaita." It is by God's grace that the mind becomes pure. Let the one who is endowed with purity of mind approach a teacher who is a knower of Brahman. Let him offer worship to the teacher's *pādukā*. Let him listen to the meaning of the Upaniṣads. Let him pray for instruction. Let him renounce every desire. Let him seek the company of the good. Let him partake of food got by alms, merely as medicine for the disease, called hunger. Let him not ask for delicious food. Let him





be satisfied with whatever destiny brings. Let him practise *samadhi*. Let him remain as the supreme Brahman-self. This is the gist of Śrī Śaṅkara's teachings.

Thus the *Parivrāṭ* (wandering monk), who expounds the hidden meaning of the Upaniṣads in the words of his commentaries which are clear and deep, wanders about. He wanders everywhere from the Setu to the Himalayas. He visits the holy rivers. He goes to the pilgrim-places. He tours the villages. He goes to the towns. He visits the temples. In those places, he augments the Presence Divine through such means as *mantras* and *yantras*. There is almost no holy place in India whose greatness has not been strengthened by Śaṅkara's visit. Even to this day people in the different parts of the country say: "This temple in our territory has been purified by the splendour of the *mantra* uttered by Śrī Śaṅkarācārya, and has been rendered great by the installation of *yantras*." In the entire area where the Veda has spread—Aṅga, Vaṅga, Kaliṅga, Āndhra, Draviḍa, Kerala, Karnāṭaka, Mahārāṣṭra, Saurāṣṭra, Mālava, Gūrjara, Sindhu, Gāndhāra, Kuru, Pāñchāla, Kāśmīra, Nepāla, Mithila, Kānyakubja, Magadha, Kāmarūpa, Kāmbhoja, etc.—there is no place where the Bhāṣya of Śrī Śaṅkarācārya was not known to the seekers of release. Even now it is so in every place where the Veda is in vogue.

It is true that the growth of modern science is considered to be a great danger to the world because it has promoted the production of nuclear weapons which can cause the total destruction of living beings.

Yet, from another standpoint, when one reflects carefully and thoroughly, one will be able to approve of the growth of science as what can possibly lead to the supreme peace of all beings. Till about fifty years ago, the eminent scientists were intent on establishing through enumerating the elements that those elements were absolutely distinct from one another. But now the scientists deny any distinction among the visible and invisible modes of matter, and proclaim that all matter is a transformation of one energy. Thus, gradually, the modern scientists reject difference and exhibit non-difference. This will be evident to all thinkers.

The foremost among the scientists, Einstein, Sir James Jeans, and others, come very close to the Advaita-siddhānta of the Upaniṣads as taught by Bhagavatpāda, by offering proofs for the relativity of the objective world and its dependent reality. The scientific research of the present age is thus getting into the proximity of Śaṅkara's *siddhanta*, as it rejects the host of differences. Hence, it is clear that modern science has opened a way to universal peace. When the non-perception of difference has been established through higher research, then those popular leaders and administrators who are the wise ones, the heroes, the thinkers, who are rid of such differences as one's own and others' and who experience the non-difference from even the people of the enemy-country, and regard the suffering of those people as their own, will become the central pillars of lasting world-peace. On this sacred day of Śaṅkara Jayantī, let the thinkers and the wise ones, according to their abilities, begin to spread, with enthusiasm, everywhere in the world, the conclusive view of non-difference, endorsed by the modern





scientific researchers, proclaimed by the beginningless Upaniṣads and rendered radiant by Śrī Saṅkarabha-gavatpāda. May the malady of lack of peace which is a universal affliction be removed through the life-giving ambrosia of the experience of non-difference, i.e. Advaita.

On Advaita*

Jagadguru Sri Chandrasekharendra Sarasvati

At first, Śrīmad Āchārya (i.e. Śrī Śaṅkara) established Advaita-siddhānta. Among the texts that teach Advaita-siddhānta, the principal ones are the commentaries on the three *prasthānas*, viz. the *Upaniṣads*, the *Bhagavadgītā*, and the *Brahma-sūtra*. These three are the basic authoritative texts for Advaita-siddhānta. Besides these, the Āchārya has written several manuals (*prakaraṇas*). The *Vivekachūḍāmaṇi*, etc., are the most important among them. And, in addition, he has composed many a hymn—Śiva-stotras, Viṣṇu-stotras, Āmbikā-stotras, etc. He has also written a text on mantra-śāstra bearing the title '*Prapañcasāra*'.

Many great learned preceptors have written commentaries on the works of the Āchārya. Of the works

* This is a rendering into English of a discourse in Tamil given in Madras on the 13th of October, 1932.—Editor





of the Āchārya, the most important is the *Brahma-sūtra-bhāshya*. This is a commentary on the *Brahma-sūtra* of the Sage Vyāsa. In the *Brahma-sūtra* are to be found topics that are taught in the ten principal Upanishads. The essence of these teachings is given in the *Brahma-sūtra* in aphoristic form. The *bhāshya* explains in an extensive way how the *Brahma-sūtra* refers to the topics dealt with in the ten Upanishads. Many preceptors, down to the present day, have written commentaries on the *bhāshya*.

Padmapāda, one of the chief disciples of the Āchārya, wrote a commentary by name '*Pañchapādikā*'. For this, there is a commentary by Vivaraṇāchārya: it is called *Tattvadīpana*. Thus, there is one branch of commentaries (known as the Vivaraṇa school).

There is a commentary called '*Bhāmati*' for the Āchārya's *bhāshya*, written by Vāchaspatimiśra who lived in North India. Amalānanda wrote a commentary '*Kalpataru*' on it. Appayya Dīkshita wrote a gloss '*Parimala*' on the *Kalpataru*. There is another gloss on the *Kalpataru* by Koṭṭaiyūr Lakshmīṅsiṃha Vājapeya: this is called *Ābhoga*. This is another (Advaita) tradition (known as the *Bhāmati* school).

For the *Sūtra-bhāshya*, there is a commentary, *Ratnaprabhā*, by one Rāmānanda; there is also a commentary on the *Ratnaprabhā*.

For the same *Sūtra-bhāshya*, Ānandagiri, a disciple of the Āchārya (Śaṅkara) wrote a commentary: this is called '*Ānandagiriya*'. About one hundred-and-fifty years ago one Tryambaka Bhaṭṭāchārya wrote a commentary on the *bhāshya*: *Bhāshyabhānuprabhā*.

One Raghunātha-sūri of Mahārāshṭra wrote a commentary for one section (*pāda*) of the *sūtra-bhāshya*: this bears the name ' *Śaṅkara-pāda-bhūshaṇa*.' These are the commentaries (on the *bhāshya*) known to us.

Thus, for a single *bhāshya* there are so many commentaries.

Of the ten principal Upanishads, *Bṛhadāranyaka* and the *Taittirīya* have *Vārtikas* by Sureśvarāchārya. Hence, this preceptor is also known as the *Vārtika-kāra*.

There is a commentary on the *Bhagavad-gītā* by the Ācharya. Following this commentary, there are ten commentaries. All these are texts which expound Advaita-siddhānta.

Similarly, there is Dvaita-siddhānta. For the aforesaid *Brahma-sūtra*, Śrī Madhvāchārya who appeared on the West-Coast wrote *bhāshya* after the Dvaita-siddhānta. Many scholars have written commentaries on this *bhāshya*. In those commentaries, they have opposed the doctrine of Advaita-siddhānta. About four-hundred years ago, a work called ' *Nyāyāmṛta* ' was written criticising Advaita-siddhānta. Criticising this, Madhusūdana Sarasvatī wrote a work by name *Advaita siddhi*. On behalf of Dvaita, a work bearing the title *Taraṅgiṇī*, was written criticising the *Advaita-siddhi*. Criticising the *Taraṅgiṇī* a great preceptor by name Brahmānanda who lived in Gauḍa-deśa wrote his *Chandrikā*. This work is also known as ' *Gauḍa-brahmānandīya*.' Criticising this from the standpoint of Dvaita, one Vanamālāmiśra wrote *Vanamālā-miśrīya*'. Tryambaka Bhaṭṭa, the author of the *Bhāshyabhānuṣṭhā*, wrote also the *Siddhānta-vaijayanti* in which he criticised Vanamālāmiśra's work.





More than sixty years ago, Anantālvār wrote a work called '*Nyāya-bhāskara*' criticising the *Gauḍa-brahmānandiya* from the standpoint of Viśiṣṭādvaita. Criticising the *Nyayabhāskara*, Rāju Śāstrin who came in the lineage of Appayya Dikshita wrote the *Nyāyenduśekhara*. Thus, we have the *Siddhānta-vaijayanti* as the last critique of the Dvaita standpoint and the *Nyāyenduśekhara* as the last critique of the Viśiṣṭādvaita standpoint. The series of critical works so far stops with these two works. But it may be extended hereafter. Any critique, by whosoever written, must be studied by all.

A study of such works will lead to clarity. It is only when differences of view arise that doctrines gain clarity. In our country, any scholar who is well-versed in the literature of his own philosophical school usually has close acquaintance with the literature of other schools. This is our tradition.

There are so many works relating to our tradition. We do not read them. We know more about the books written in other countries. Which book is our authority, we do not know. Bundles upon bundles of books which have no relevance to our tradition, we know. We do not know our texts. If we become aware at least of their titles, we may begin to take some interest. If scholars who are versed in these texts volunteer to expound them, we do not lend an ear to them; we disregard them. Our country is in a very low state now. The people of other countries praise our *Ātma-vidyā*. If we should gain esteem in the world, we should augment that culture of our country which has been the object of true esteem. What is the greatness of our

country? It consists in the fact that here countless sages have realised the Bliss that is the Self. If we do not come to be aware of the grounds of that greatness, we shall be demeaning ourselves.

So far I have mentioned the series of the important works on Advaita-siddhānta. What is that Advaita? What shall we gain from it? Do we know it, or do not know? Could we gain its fruit, or not? Or, do all these belong to the region of mere imagination? Will Advaita become fruitful in experience. We shall consider these questions.

What does 'Advaita' mean? Its meaning is 'without a second'. That there is no second does not appear to us to be true. There are thousands of things. If there is no second, what do we gain? Is this not clear? It is only because there is no second, that for which we strive will get fulfilled. What for do we strive? We strive for the removal of all the miseries that afflict us. The removal of miseries will be accomplished through (the realisation of) that which is without a second (i.e. non-duality). We strive for removing poverty, hunger, dishonour, disease, empirical usage (*vyavahāra*), mental pain, etc. Is there any place where these miseries are absent? No. Yet, we continue to strive for the removal of miseries. Through our empirical endeavours, there is only temporary appeasement. If through medical treatment one disease is cured, another disease comes. The means for the absolute removal of all miseries is Advaita. Through it, hunger, disease, death, dishonour, empirical usage, poverty, etc., will not recur.





Why do we have misery? It will be good if hunger, etc., do not afflict us. But, why do they afflict us? Let us see through which course they come. They will come as long as the body lasts. But, if this body goes, another takes its place. For that body also, hunger, thirst, disease, etc., will come. So, if we could do without body, then these miseries will disappear. We take many births. What is the cause of those births? On account of what do we take a body? We have to reap the consequences of the good and bad deeds done in the previous births. The self cannot reap them. Fire cannot burn the self; nor the application of sandal paste make it cool. Therefore, a body is needed. As the result of the good and bad deeds done by us, God endows us with a body, and punishes us by making us imagine that the body is "I". If a boy commits a mistake, he is beaten for that. By his side there is a doctor. If the boy swoons not being able to bear the pain, he is revived and again beaten. He is given food, and again beaten. For the sins we have committed, God gives us a body and thus punishes. If this is not enough, He endows us with another body and punishes. Thus, the sins that we commit are the cause for the body. If we do not commit anymore sins, we shall not be endowed with a body hereafter. Constantly we should remember that we should not commit sin.

What is the cause of merit and demerit? There is the desire to eliminate them by refraining from the deeds that give rise to them; but we are not able to avoid those deeds. If a tree is to be prevented from growing, it is not enough to cut off the branches; the root-trunk must be removed. Similarly, we must

discern the cause of sin, and destroy that cause. Why do we perform evil deeds? We desire to possess an object. We device short-cuts to obtain it. That is sinful. The cause for our performing sinful deeds is desire. If an object is beautiful, there arises desire to possess it. The knowledge that a thing is good produces desire. In order to fulfil that desire, we perform actions. Knowing through the senses that a thing is beautiful is the cause of desire. Through effort, we can produce desire, or change it. Knowledge cannot be produced, nor changed.

The punishment for the sins we do is the body. Therefore, if we remove desire which is the cause of sin, there will be destruction of misery. How to remove desire? The way to remove misery is not taught in the other sacred texts.

Vedānta does not omit this teaching. Vedānta which is the peak of the Vedas teaches the way for the removal of sorrow.

Hatred and desire arise only in respect of objects other than us. There arises neither desire nor hatred in regard to ourselves. Since desire arises in regard to objects other than us, that desire will not arise if those objects are rendered identical with us. If all become identical with us, and if there is nothing other than us, then desire will not arise. If there is no desire, there will be no effort. If this be so, there will be no sin. When there is no sin, there will be no body. When that is not there, there will be no misery. It is for the destruction of misery that we put forth several efforts.

If there is something as a second to us, and if that thing is more powerful than us, there arises fear. If





there is something beautiful, there arises desire; and the mind is disturbed. If there is no second, there is no desire, no hatred, no fear. Scorpions and snakes cause fear in us. If we ourselves remain as scorpions and snakes, how then could there be fear? Would we be afraid of ourselves? As long as there is something other as a second, there will be fear. Therefore, what Advaita accomplishes is the bringing about of secondlessness. The Upanishad declares that there is no fear when there is no second thing.

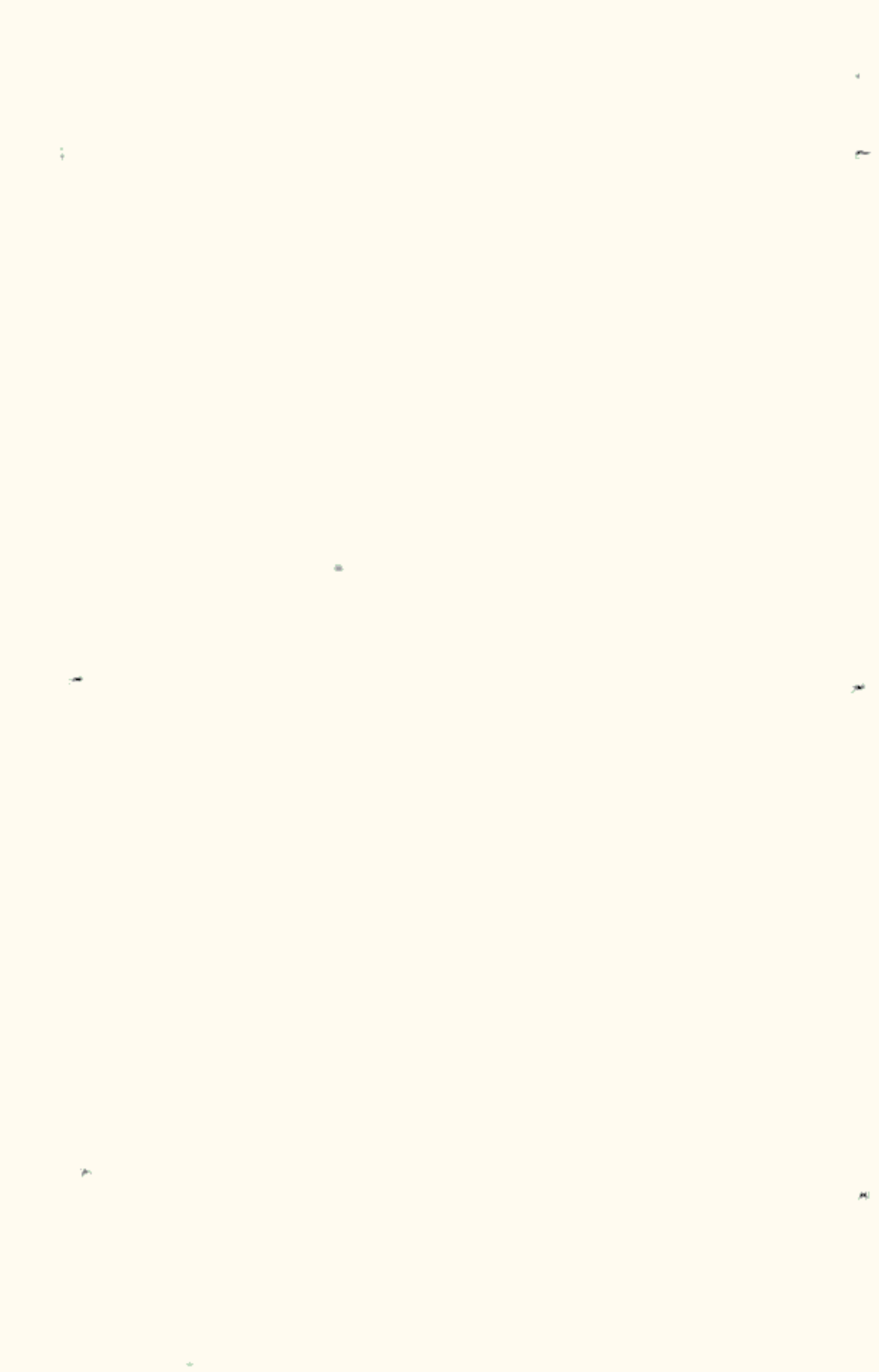
Are there not in the world many people? How can all of them become one? How to accomplish secondlessness? Vedānta teaches that what we see in this world as many are illusory. It declares that all are of the nature of Īśvara. We do not see thus. If it is true that Īśvara is all, then what we see must be illusory. If what we see is true, then the declaration that Īśvara is all must be false. If what appears to us is true, then there should be no misery for us. But misery does come to us. Therefore, what Vedānta teaches must be true. If that be so, that all are of the nature of Īśvara should be regarded firmly as the truth. What appears to us is illusory. The real is not this. Our eyes see what are illusory. Advaita teaches that there is a Reality as the basis of the entire world. Things which appear to us to exist are all illusory: the true Existence that is one is alone real.

If all is Īśvara, are we alone different? We should dissolve ourselves too as that Īśvara. Then, there will be no second entity. Now, we see things as different. But the true seeing is seeing all as Īśvara. If we too get dissolved without leaving a second, then good will

result. Even in the empirical world if two minds become one, there is no strife. Similarly, if all become one as Īśvara, we shall become all; then, there will be no desire in regard to ourselves. In the absence of desire, there will be no sin; and if there is no sin, there will be no body; and if there is no body, there will be no misery at all. For the destruction of misery, Advaita is the medicine. Advaita is that which accomplishes secondlessness. Seeing all as Īśvara is Advaita. Seeing what is real is Advaita. It is this that is taught in the books mentioned above.

Many objections are raised against this position. Some of them are logical, the others are unreasonable. The sacred texts reply to those objections. They outline the disciplines that lead to Advaita. The manuals written by the Āchārya impart the same teaching.

We go to sleep well. From sleep we wake up. Sometimes we sleep well. Sometimes we experience dreams. The waking state is *jāgrad-avasthā*. Experiencing dreams is *svapna-avasthā*. Deep sleep is *sushupti-avasthā*. Thus there are three states of experiences. Our waking is for doing work. Deep sleep is for getting rid of tiredness that results from work. These two seem to be enough! Why should there be dream-experience? I reflected on this. Īśvara is everywhere. He is the non-dual Brahman. All is of the nature of Ātman. In order to prove this truth, it appears. He has projected the dream-world as an example. There is no other purpose. The apparent plurality of the empirical world is similar to that of dreams. In dream there occur multifarious difficulties and pleasures. But at the termination of the dream there is nothing left.



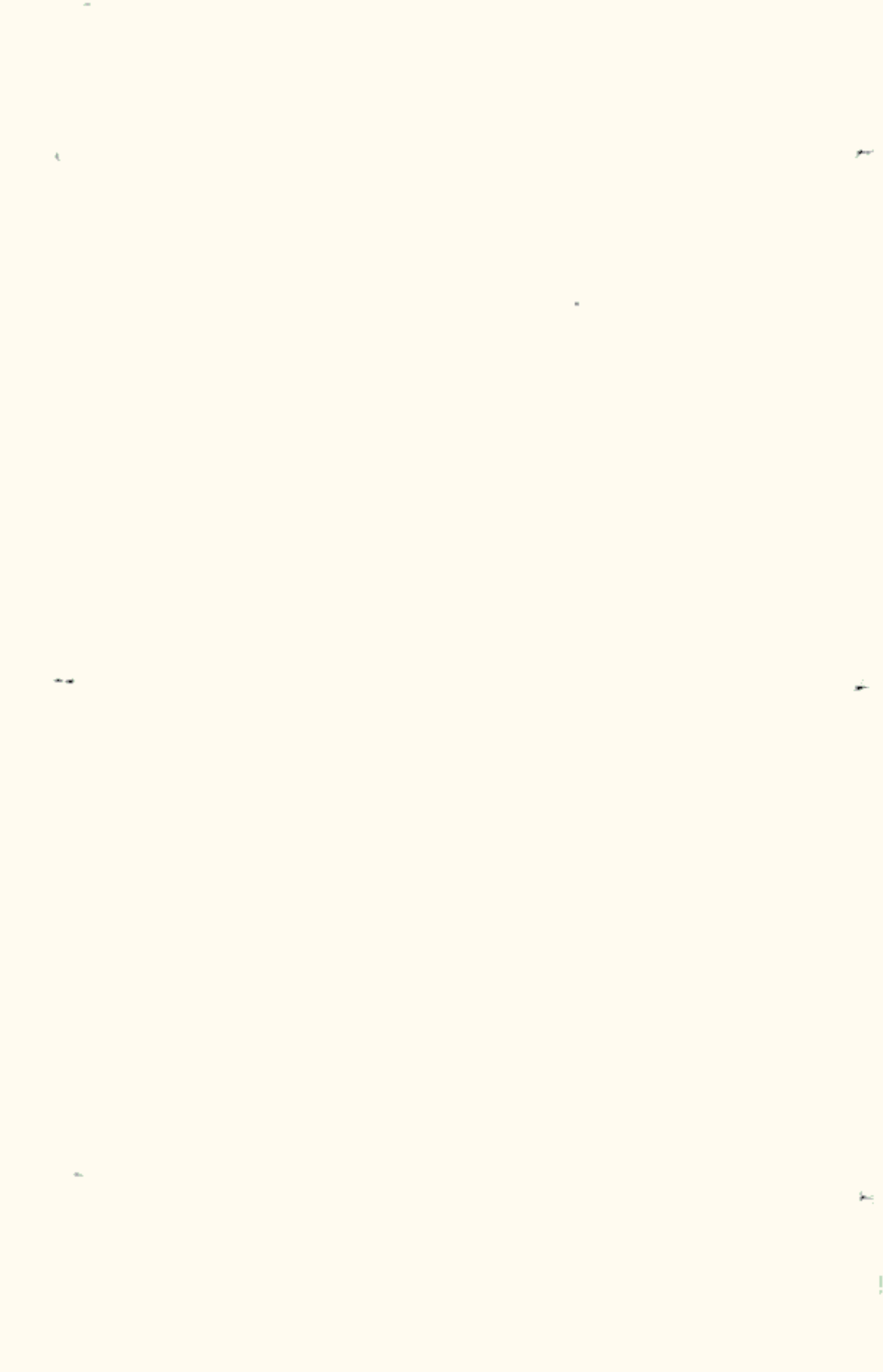
Even the body which appeared when the dream was experienced is not there. Only he who realizes that such dream was seen is left as the residue. All else that appeared to exist in dream disappears. When we wake up from this empirical world which is a dream, only consciousness will remain. That is the true reality. It is that which is called Advaita. We are all Advaitins; we are in Dvaita-experience. But, those of us who have faith in Advaita see the Dvaita-dream in the empirical state. In this dream, we go through disease and misery. But we are those who believe that there will be a state in which there will be no disease. By what is Dvaita made known? It is given in immediate experience, now, through the sense of sight, etc. Advaita is made known only by Vedānta. Advaita is that which is made known by the sacred texts; Dvaita is that which is evidenced by the sense of sight, etc. Science tells us that the sun is very big; but our eyes tell us that the sun's diameter is just a span in length. With the palm the sun could be covered. Therefore, the sun appears small. But, what is the truth? If what we see is alone true, there is no need for the texts. It is only what we do not know that should be revealed by the sacred texts.

In the Upanishads, at certain places, Dvaita is mentioned; at some other places, Advaita. In what context is Advaita mentioned? It is mentioned in the context where the nature of supreme Brahman is taught. In the *Māṇḍūkya Upanishad*, for instance, when the significance of *Pranava* is taught, it is declared that all is of the nature of Advaita, that *Om* is all; here the expression 'Advaita' occurs. The term 'Dvaita' occurs in an Upanishad. The context there is this:

“Remaining as different, how can one perceive an object that is different? If all is of the nature of Ātman, who can experience what as different?” In this context occur the words “Where, indeed, there is Dvaita (duality) as it were”. The meaning is: In the state where duality appears to be, there would be that (differentiated) experience :

*yatra hi dvaitam iva bhavati, taditarah itaram paśyati ;
yatra tvasya sarvam ātmaivābhūt, tatkēna kaṁ paśyēt.—
Bṛhadāraṇyaka*

Where, however, all has become the Ātman, there it is declared, there is duality *as it were*. In the context of the expression *as it were (iva)*, duality is mentioned; and in the context of the statement ‘where, however, all has become the Ātman’, non-duality is taught. There is also the word ‘*tu*’ (however) mentioned in the context where Advaita is declared. If after a statement, the word *tu* (however) or the word ‘*atha*’ (then) occurs, it means that the final position is set forth thereafter. After the words ‘*yatra tu*’ (where, however), it is declared ‘all has become the Ātman’. Thus, from the expression ‘*tu*’ (however) we have to understand the conclusive truth that all is of the nature of Ātman. The expression ‘*iva*’ (*as it were*) indicates appearance and not reality. The expression ‘like him’ means ‘not he himself’. Hence, when it is said ‘duality, as it were’, it means that there is no duality—this is the *siddhānta*. To our senses, duality is presented. That is mere appearance. What is understood with the help of sacred texts is Advaita. That alone is the *siddhānta*. That all is the Self (Ātman) alone is the truth.





Here, the expression 'Ātman' occurs; should not the expression be 'Paramātman' (supreme Self)? Thus it may be asked. If there is Paramātman', there would be 'alpātman' (little self) as different from it. There is no Paramātman too. It is only in the state of duality that there is the distinction of 'Paramātman' and 'jīvātman'. When the state of Advaita is realised, there is only the Self (Ātman).

The *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* declares: *dvitīyād-vai bhayaṃ bhavati*. It is from duality that fear, misery, strifes, e'c., arise. Only if there are two different entities, there would arise desire, fear, misery, etc.

If some one that is dear to us dies, there arises misery. If he passes away before our eyes, we feel distressed. We think that there would be no distress if we pass away. If we pass away, there would be no misery for us. Therefore, if all are ourselves, then there will be no misery whatsoever. When there occurs misery, there is the thought of difference. What is it that occasions desire? It is only when there is consciousness of duality that there arise desire and misery. If the other becomes us, then there is no misery at all. How to effect this identity? If all become the Paramātman, there would be the one Self alone.

Hence, Vedānta declares: There need not be duality; non-duality alone is the truth. This truth our Achārya has expounded as a glowing lamp, and has asked us not to forget. His commentary is called '*bhāshya-dīpa*'. Simply because the expression 'Dvaita' occurs in Vedānta, people begin to say 'Dvaita', 'Dvaita'. They do not inquire as to where, what for,

and before which concluding statement, the expression occurs. This is like the conclusion that there was the prevalence of drinking toddy among the Vedic circles, which some scholars arrive at, on the ground of the Vedic statement, 'Do not drink toddy'.

We are now in the state of dream. If we wake up from this state, that is the state of Advaita. If this *siddhānta* is retained in memory, at least one in a hundred-thousand will endeavour to attain that state. It is with this end in view that the great preceptors have written their words. It is not enough if we know that there is the Gaṅgā at Kāśī ; we must buy the necessary ticket, travel by the appropriate train, cross the railway junctions *en route*, and without oversleeping arrive at Kāśī and actually bathe in the Gaṅgā.

The Veda declares that Advaita-experience is that whence words, speech and mind return, not being able to reach it :

*yato vācho nivartante aprāpya
manasā saha. (Taittirīyopanishad).*

If it cannot be thought by the mind, how to know it? What is the meaning of this Vedic declaration? What is the meaning of the statement that the status of the Self cannot be thought by the mind? If it be that the supreme Self could be known, it would become an object of knowledge. The knower would then be different. In the *Kenopanishad*, it is said: "He by whom it is not contemplated. He by whom it is contemplated knows it not."

*yasyāmataṁ tasya mataṁ mataṁ
yasya na veda saḥ.*





What is the meaning of the statement that the Self is not known? The meaning is that it is not an object of knowledge. There is no meaning in bringing in another lamp to show a lamp. It is only for illuminating what is non-luminous that a lamp is required. To see a lamp nothing else is needed. Consciousness is self-luminous. Īśvara is the nature of that very consciousness. In many places in the Tamil hymns, such as *Tevāram*, *Tiruvāchakam*, and the songs of Tāyumanavar, it is declared that Īśvara is 'consciousness alone', that He is 'of the form of consciousness.'

By the mind, the Self is not thought; the mind thinks by it. All that the mind thinks is false, that by which it thinks is true.

yan-manasā na manuḥ, yenāhur-mano matam
(*Kenopanishad*).

All that is seen in dream is false. The seeing consciousness alone is real. It is this self that appeared in dream as all the objects seen. When the dream terminates, it will be realised that the one (consciousness) alone remains. If there be one that speaks and one that knows, they would be different. If there is no difference, there will be neither speech nor knowing. It is this non-duality that is declared in the Upanishads, and in the aforesaid sacred texts.

On the tree that is the Veda, there are the flowers, the Upanishads. The *Brahma-sūtra* serves as the thread which helps in making a garland out of them, fit to be worn round the neck: *vedāntavākya-kusuma-grathanārthat-vāt sūtrāṇām*.

If the maker of the thread (*sūtra*) was Vyāsa, the one who made the garland was the Āchārya. Those who wear the garland are we. That garland should adorn our neck.

What we have conclusively understood, is this: "The truth is only one; all is of the nature of Īśvara". On account of past impressions, things appear as different. But all must be made into one. Even what is referred to as 'we' must be dissolved. For that, the appropriate sacred texts should be studied. The means to this are the Veda, the Smṛitis the Purāṇas, the sight of temples, pūjā, etc. We sacrifice so much for the sake of the objects of the world. We can do anything for gaining the bliss that is stable. The royal sage Janaka said: "I have given away the entire Videha kingdom; I have given away myself too."

videhan dadāmi mām cāpi saha dāsyāya.

To reach this state, the easy path is meditation on Śrī Chandramaulīśvara. Thus Appayya Dikshita has said. Following this way, all should gain Advaita-siddhi.

*īśvarānugrahād-eva puṁsām advaitavāsanā,
mahadbhayaparitrānā dvitrāṇām upajāyate.*





Vedanta*

Jagadguru Sri Jayendra Sarasvati

The end of Veda is Vedānta. The term *Veda* means that which makes known even what is unknown. We see with our eyes many sorts of things ; hear with our ears ; touch with our hands ; smell with our nose ; taste with our tongue. These experiences are through what is called perception (*pratyakṣapramāṇa*).

After experiencing an object once through perception, when we see a part of it again, or hear, or think of that part, we get to know that object fully. Yet, it is not, then, known through perception. As a result of the previous experience, we understand through inference. This is called *anumāna-pramāṇa*.

* Translated from Tamil - Editor.

Inference always functions, being dependent on perception. For example, in some place we have seen with our eyes smoke and fire together. After some time, we do not see fire, but we see smoke at a distance. Seeing smoke, we conclude that there should be fire at that place. The cause for this is our having seen formerly smoke and fire together. Smoke is the sign for concluding that there is fire which is not seen directly.

Similarly, there are several types of wooden furniture: chair, bench, etc. A carpenter makes these. We have seen this. Therefore, when we come across similar furniture elsewhere, we infer that it should have been made by a carpenter. Like furniture, each manufactured article we see in the world should have been made by some one. For the entire world, therefore, there should be a maker. Nothing there can be, which was not made by some one. The maker of the world in its totality is God. He is God. He is the supreme Self. It is by his power that all move. But, that power is not visible to the eyes. The supreme Reality which is the locus of that power is also not visible to the eyes.

Power and the reality that is the substrate of power are not ordinarily seen to be separate. But power and its substrate exist as separate. For example, candy and sweetness that is in it are not perceived to be different. Yet, we say there is sweetness in candy. In the same way, as the substrate of the power that creates and protects the world, there is the supreme Self.

Independent of the figure of a man, there cannot be the shadow, even though this shadow





may be seen as separate, as longer or shorter than his height, and as howmuchsoever larger or smaller. The substrate of the shadow is the man's body. In the same way, the substrate of the power which is *māyā* is the supreme Self; and it is by *māyā* that the world is originated, sustained, and destroyed. The feature of the shadow will not affect the man's body in any way. So also, the characteristics of *māyā* do not affect the supreme Self. By its relation with the supreme Self, *māyā-śakti* originates, sustains, and destroys the world.

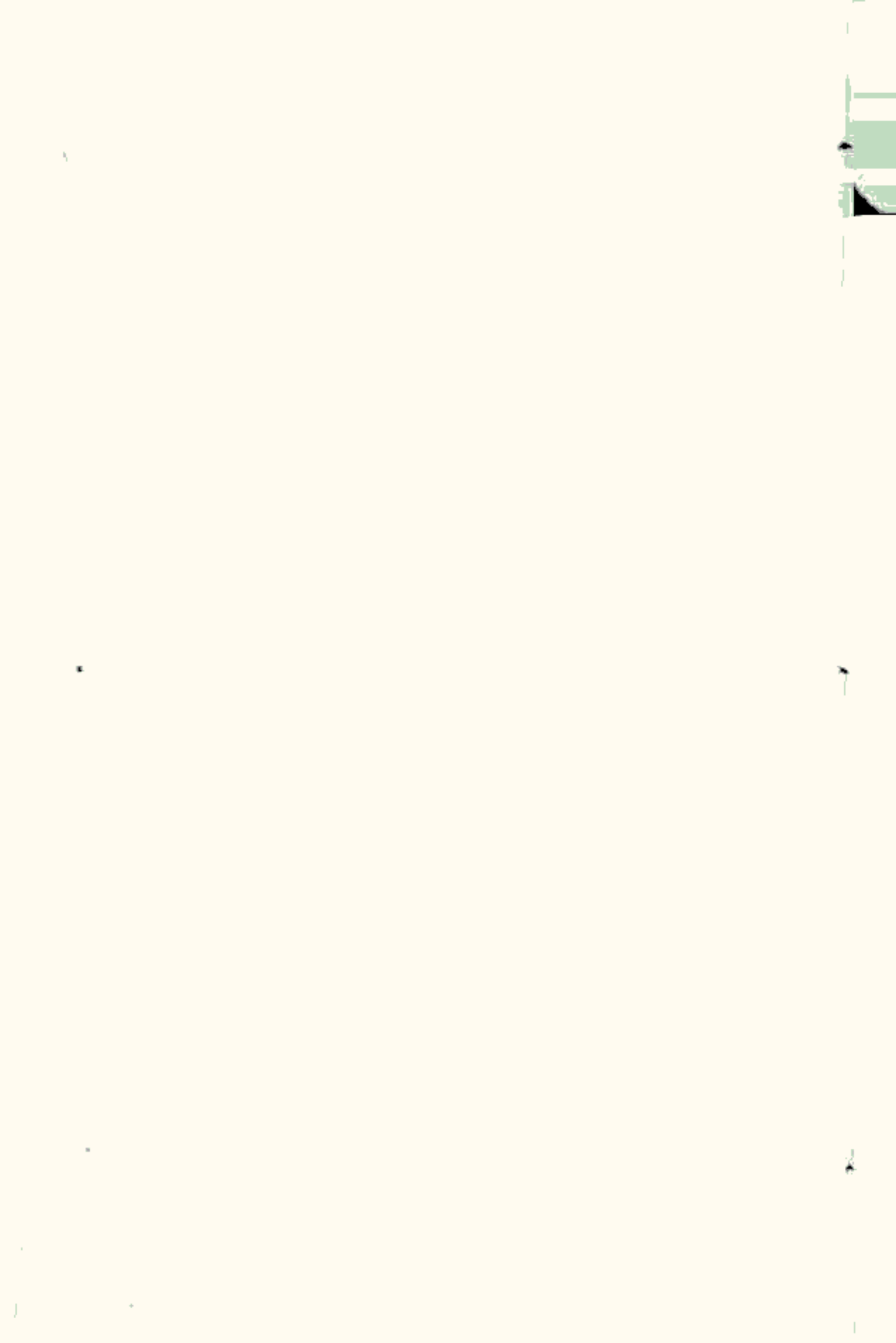
This entire world is the effect of *māyā*. It is *māyā* that we refer to as *ajñāna*. *Ajñāna* is ignorance. It is because of ignorance that there is no true knowledge. When there is no true knowledge, the nature of reality is not manifest. When the nature of reality is not manifest, we mistake the unreal for the real. This being so, we imagine that pleasure, pain, etc., which are engendered thereby are also real. Therefore, it is the non-manifestation of the nature of reality that is responsible for our pleasure, pain, etc. The cause for this is ignorance. Ignorance is *māyā*; the substrate of *māyā* is the supreme Self.

Māyā will be destroyed through knowledge of the supreme Self. Then, it will be clearly seen that the world of phenomena is not real. Also, it will be realised that pleasure, pain, etc., caused by that world are not real. For example, we have dream experience. There is not the state of waking in dream; yet there is memory. The basis of memory is waking experience; for, memory arises from waking experience. That memory gets transformed

into dream. While one is dreaming, the dream seems to be real. But as soon as one wakes up, i.e. when there is the waking consciousness again, it is realised that it was all a dream. One then knows that the pleasure, pain, etc., that were experienced in dream were not real. But, so long as there was the dream, i.e. as long as there was no waking up, the experiences seemed to be real.

Similarly, as long as we are in ignorance, the phenomenal world is real. When there arises knowledge of the supreme Self, then it will be realised that all this is false, illusory; the effect of *māyā*. Till the time this is realised, one must continue doing one's duties. Until then the phenomenal world is empirically real (*vyāvahārika-satya*). The dream-objects are real as long as we see them in dream; these belong to the category of apparent reality, (*prātibhāsika-satya*). Vedānta is that which explains all these.

The supreme Self is all-pervading. There is nothing which is not related to it. The reason why this is so is that the Self alone is. It is because of its being that all things have being-ness. As an illustration: when we see nacre at a distance, we think of silver. We have seen in the past the shining silver. When we see here an object with the same shining, the recollection of silver comes to us. The object which we imagine to be silver, we pick up. We examine it carefully. We see it shine. But we do not see silver. Even then the memory of silver is not lost. Under these circumstances, we throw the nacre away. What is the reason? There is not in it the silver that we expected; and so, we





are driven to the situation which makes us cast it away.

Another illustration : at dusk, where the light is failing, we see a rope with its bends and mistake it for a snake, and are seized with fear. We even go to beat it with a stick. When, however, we go near the object and look at it with the help of lamp-light, we see no snake there, but only a rope. Even so, the idea of snake does not leave the mind. A snake was seen in what is not a snake. As soon as the true nature of the substrate comes to be known, although the idea of the apparent snake continues to be in the mind, we know at the same time that that idea is not real, but only false. Similar is the case with the world. The things that constitute the world appear. When we inquire it will be seen that they are not real. The ideas, however, will linger in the mind. They have found a lodgment there.

The basis for the mind is the intellect. That which imparts the intellect the power of cognition, that which is all-pervading, is the supreme Self: it is within our body, within our mind, within our intellect. The cognitive power of the intellect is due to the reflection therein of the consciousness which is the supreme Self. The intellect is inert; but it is pure. It has the ability to appropriate whatever is reflected in it. Since it receives the reflection of the supreme Self, it is able to function accordingly.

Because we do not know this truth, we wrongly identify the intellect with the Self and refer to it as 'I'; and regarding it as the *jīva*, we imagine that it

functions independently. When the all-pervading Self shines within the body, in view of the conditioning by the body, we call it *jiva*, or *jīvātman*. We imagine that it is subject to experiences, pleasant and painful; and that it is the agent of all actions. And, after death, it is the *jiva* that is regarded as entering into another body. All these are appearances due to ignorance. Ignorance also is pervasive. It enters into our heart too.

Thus, like a man and his shadow, the supreme Self and the power of *māyā* are non-separate; yet, when one inquires, one realises that *māyā* is not real. It is on account of the power of *māyā* that one does not understand the real nature of the supreme Self.

Every man attains the state of the supreme Self when he sleeps. But, since ignorance persists, he does not realise this truth. In the state of deep sleep, all our limbs and sense organs rest without functioning. The Self, even in that state, is of the nature of consciousness and bliss. As soon as we wake up from sleep, because of the persistence of ignorance, we say, "I slept well; I slept happily; but then I did not know anything." Because we did not know anything it is clear as crystal that there was ignorance. Because we recollect "I slept happily", it is evident that the self was in the state of happiness, with all sense organs having got resolved. This may be illustrated thus. There is a big theatre. It is lit brilliantly with myriads of lamps. There is a large audience assembled to witness the dramatic performance. When the drama starts, the lights are put out. The fans





may continue to run. The electric energy is still there. Only some spot lights play on the actors, throwing on them appropriate coloured illumination. After the dramatic play is over, the lights are switched on again. The audience now leaves the hall, and the theatre becomes empty. Before the play starts and after it ends, all the lights burn. But, for the duration of the play, those lights are switched off.

Similarly, the worlds that we experience have been created in different ways by *māyā-śakti*. Before the creation there was only the supreme Self. Even during the creation, sustentation, and destruction of the worlds, it is *māyā-śakti*, the power of the Self, that is active. After the world has been created, all forget the cause of creation, i.e., *māyā-śakti*, and its cause which is the supreme Self. They imagine that they themselves create and sustain things. At that time, ignorance is all-pervasive there. There is no thought of Self-knowledge. But, now and then, in accordance with pleasure and pain, we remember God. The remembrance of the Self, however, is not there.

It is the Self that shines pervading everywhere. Its power is called *māyā-śakti*. With the aid of *māyā-śakti*, *Īśvara* creates, sustains, destroys, etc. It is *Īśvara* that assumes names and forms, according to his respective functions. It is he that appears in forms endowed with qualities, and is worshipped in the temples.

It is the *saguṇa* form that incarnates itself in every age, and at special times, and is spoken of

in the *purāṇas* as having assumed several incarnated forms. It is the *saguṇa* form that is worshipped by the people in temples and in the households. It is this form that is meditated on by those who seek Self-knowledge, in order that the mind gets one-pointed. In the course of the meditation, the form dissolves itself and reveals to those who meditate the light that is the Self. It is by this light that the entire world moves. Thus, the worship of God is a means for realising the nature of the Self.

The truth of the self is veiled by the *māyā-śakti* which is located in it, even as the true nature of a man is veiled by his shadow. In order to remove the *māyā-śakti*, we must gain the true knowledge of the pure Self. For that, we must remove the *māyā-śakti* which is ignorance. Only God can remove it. He has, therefore, to be worshipped. By his grace, we should endeavour to have the *māyā-śakti* removed.

For example: If there is dirt on our body, or scar, etc., in order to remove them we smear oil; and then in order to remove the oil, we rub soap-nut, etc., on our body. That is, for removing one type of dirt we use another type. If our clothes are dirty, we give them to the washerman. He makes them all the more dirty by applying Fuller's earth; and, then, only after that, he washes them and returns them to us. Similarly, for getting rid of ignorance, we perform actions set up by that ignorance.

On a piece of white cloth there are pictures drawn of a lion, an elephant, etc. When children look at the pictures, then say they are real animals. But a grown-





up person who knows the truth recognises them as pictures drawn on a cloth, and not as real beings. Likewise, the ignorant ones, on account of their ignorance, look at the world and its phenomena as if they are real. But, the wise one, the sage, who knows the truth, holds in his experience only the basic reality, the Self; the phenomena are but appearances to him, and are not at all real.

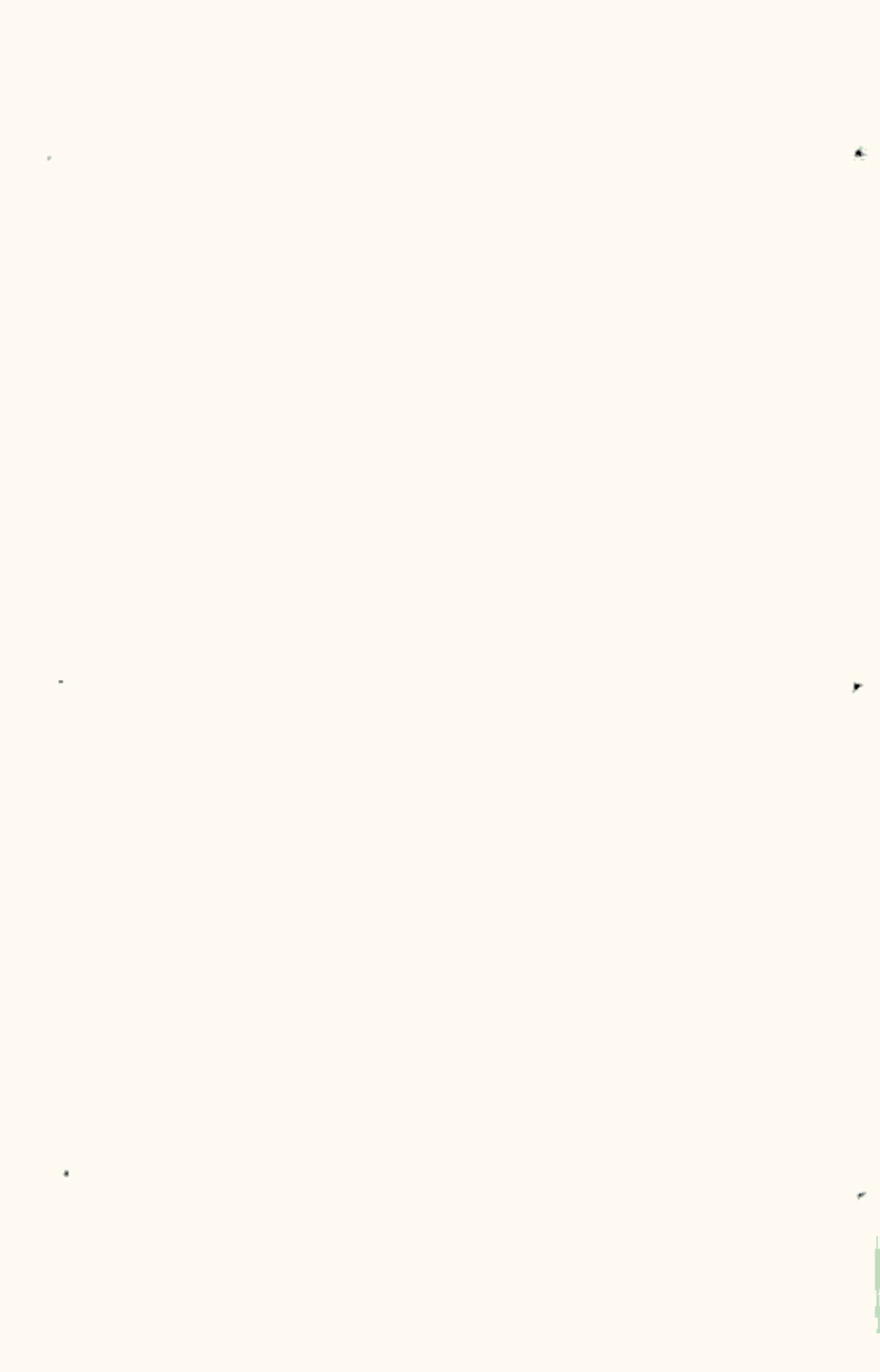
The actions done by those who have realised the true Self—actions such as eating, sleeping, etc.,—actions good and bad—appear only to our perception because we are governed by ignorance. To the sages—from the standpoint of their vision—they are no actions at all. They do not have the thought of doing actions. What remains always in their consciousness is Self-experience. Even without their being aware that the actions are of the body, the bodily actions will be taking place.

About the world and its phenomena, Vedānta speaks in two ways. The world and its phenomena have not been really created. As in dream, they appear when they are seen; they are real when they are seen. This is one view. The world, according to this view, is apparently real (*prātibhāsika-satya*).

The world and its phenomena are created; they exist; they perish. All these are real while they occur. But, only the Self is the imperishable ultimate reality; it has no origination; it is the supreme bliss. It is from this supreme Self which is of the nature of bliss that, through *māyā-sākti*, all the things that constitute the world are originated. This world and the things that are in it are all changeable and destructible; and

they lead to misery. Therefore, it is only the supreme Self that we should seek to know—the Self that is the *plenum*, of the nature of bliss-consciousness, devoid of decay and destruction. It is by this knowledge that we shall get rid of birth, death, misery, etc. Although the world and its things are ever changing and perishing, in some form or other they will persist. It is we that should keep away from them. Therefore, the world and all its things are to be accepted as having empirical reality (*vyāvahārika-satya*). The empirical affairs will continue to take place. This is the other view.

The first view is known as ^{dr̥ṣṭi-}*sr̥ṣṭi-dr̥ṣṭi-vāda* (the theory that perception is creation). The second view is *sr̥ṣṭi-dr̥ṣṭi-vāda* (the theory that what is created is perceived). When we open our eyes, we see the world; when the eyes are closed, nothing is seen. Likewise, when we look at the world and its things as they appear, we cognise them. That is, they are created by our look. Hence this view is known as *dr̥ṣṭi-sr̥ṣṭi vāda*. The world is always there; but it is not real. There is an elephant made of wood. In that wood there is elephant as well as the nature of wood. If it is looked at as 'elephant', the wood will not be seen. If it is looked at as wood, the elephant will not be seen. Although both elephant and wood are there in the object, how it looks to us—as elephant or as wood—would depend upon our seeing. It is an elephant made of wood. And so, there are both elephant and wood in it. What is real in it is wood which is the substrate. What has been shaped out of it is the likeness of an elephant. Although it is true that the image of an elephant has been made, there is no real elephant.





The image is an artifact of man. As long as there is the wood, there will be also the elephant made of wood. The two cannot be separated. But we can discriminate between them with our intellect. Similarly, the Self, God, the world, the things of the world—all these are mutually conjoined by *māyā-śakti*. Of these, the Self alone is imperishable, of the nature of bliss. The rest are subject to modification and destruction. Thus, one should discriminate and conclude. Thus, according to the second view, the world and its things have all been created. But, there is difference only in the way we look at them. This is what is stated in *sr̥ṣṭi-dṛṣṭi-vāda*.

Even before the world is created, there are six categories. It is with these categories that the world comes to be created. They are: the *jīva* (soul), *Īśvara*, the supreme Self, the difference between the *jīva* and *Īśvara*, nescience (*avīdyā*, *ajñāna*, *māyā*), the relation between the supreme Self and *māyā*. Because of the connection between the Self and *māyā*, *Īśvara* creates the entire world through *māyā*; in accordance with the past *karma* of the *jīva*s. The six categories are, all of them, beginningless and uncreated by anyone.

Before this world was created, all things were there, not in their gross form, but in their subtle form. The things made of clay or wood are there in a subtle form, even before they are made, in clay and wood, respectively. The potter or the carpenter only makes manifest from the material what are already there in a subtle form. Before creation, the things that we see now were in an unmanifest (*avyakta*) state, i.e. in a state where they were not patent. As a result of creation,

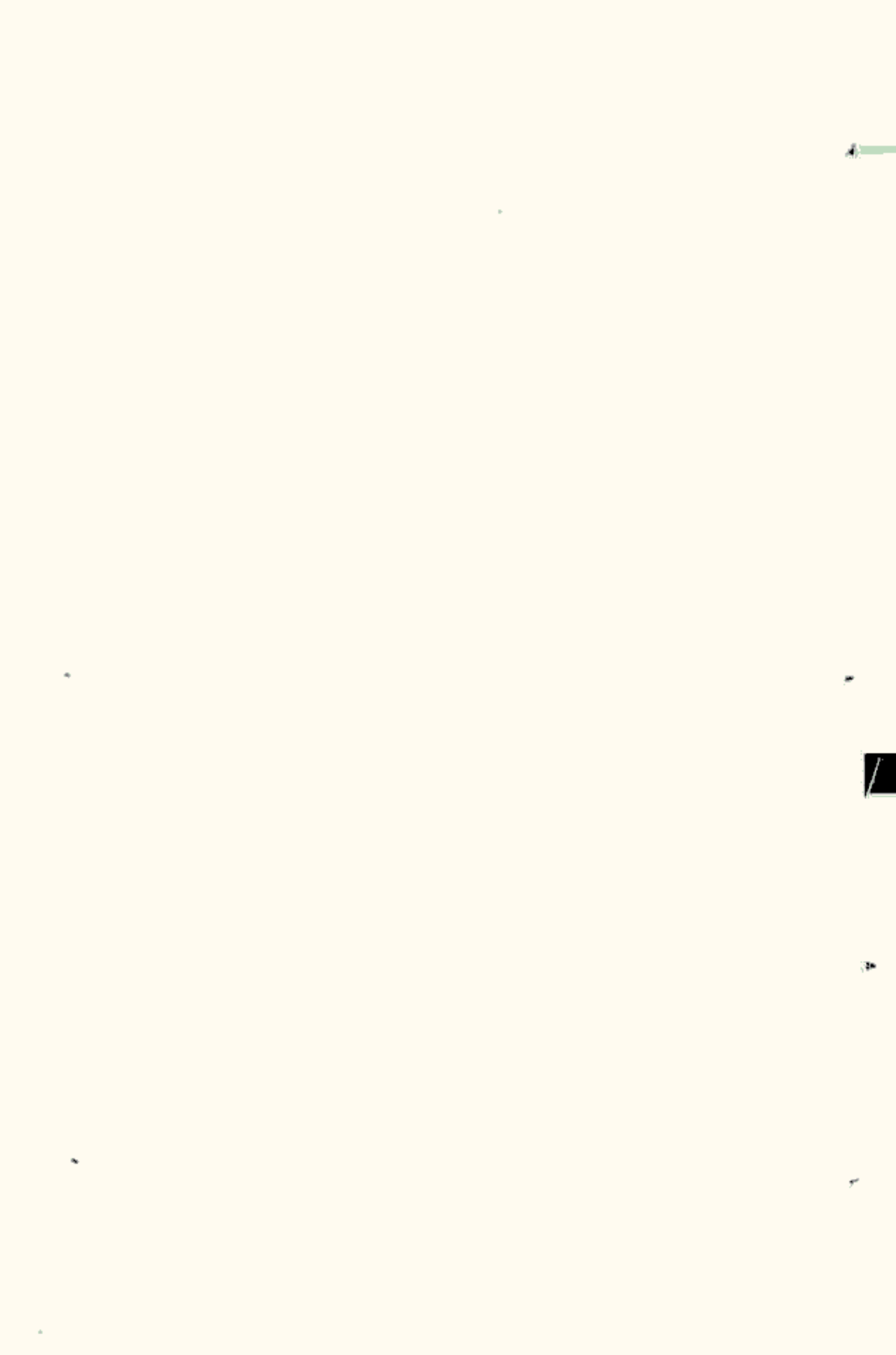
they become manifest (*vykta*), i.e. they become patently seen.

The world and all the things in it are created by God through his *māyā-śakti*. Because the creation is through *māyā*, the things are all inert (*jaḍa*).

In all the things created through *māyā* by God, there is "isness" or "being"—i.e. with reference to a thing we believe that it is, that it is required by us, that we have to gain it through effort, and that if gained it will afford us happiness. It is the supreme Self alone that has "isness" always. In other words, the Self alone is the significance of the expression "is" or "existence." All other things change, and get destroyed. Similarly, it is only the Self that is bliss. All beings desire happiness: happiness or bliss which is the Self is reflected in all things. Therefore it is, that people desire those things.

In every thing, there is inertness because of its relation to *māyā*; and because of its relation to the supreme Self, it is desired to be gained, and there is effort to gain it. There are five characteristics in all things: existence (*asti*), manifestation (*bhāti*), lovability (*priyam*), name (*nāma*), and form (*rūpa*). The first three are because of the relation to the Self; the remaining two are because of the relation to *māyā*. The first three are imperishable; the latter two are perishable.

Although the six categories mentioned above are beginningless, with the exception of the supreme Self, the other five have an end, in spite of their being beginningless. The *jīva* will realise its non-difference





with the supreme Self. The rest will disappear: *māyā*, the relation between *māyā* and the supreme Self, *Īśvara*, the difference between *Īśvara* and *jīva*. Through true knowledge, it will be realised that, although they are beginningless, they have an end.

The things in this world are of three forms—gross, subtle, and causal. They come out, at first, in a subtle form from the causal state and then from the subtle form they attain the gross state. The world and the things constituting it are made of the five elements. The elements are subtle at first, i.e. they are super-sensible. But, their effects are gross in form; i.e. they are objects of sense-perception.

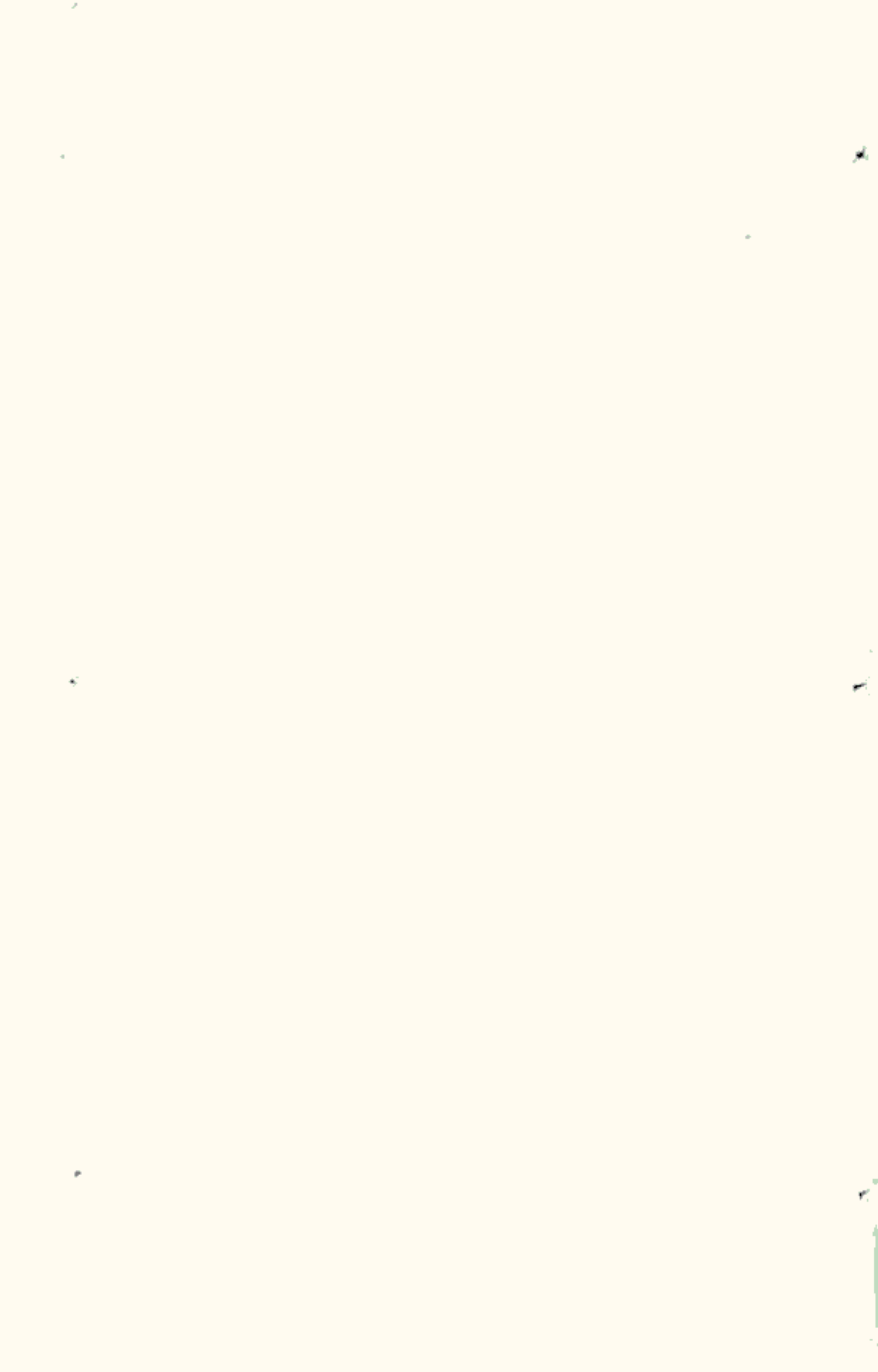
For example: earth (*pṛthivi* and all things made of earth), water (*ap*), fire (*tejas*), air (*vāyu*), and ether (*ākāśa*). Of these, ether is not perceptible. But, we see the inter-space. It is this inter-space that we call *ākāśa*. It is that which receives and transmits sound (*śabda*), which is the quality of *ākāśa*. That is why for making sound, inter-space is necessary. Let us illustrate: when the two hands are separated from each other, there is space between them, i.e. there is inter-space. But, then, in that situation the quality of ether, its special characteristic, is not manifest. When the two hands are brought together, and there is clapping, sound is generated; there is then no inter-space between the two hands. The sound is born by the two hands striking at each other.

Similarly, there is a huge drum. It has the ability to produce sound. But, it is only when it is struck with the hand or a stick that sound is produced. In

other words, sound is generated through an operation which is related to the inter-space between two things. Ether is not perceived. But the inter-space is perceived.

Sound which is the special quality of ether is not visible to the eyes ; it is audible to the ears. Similarly, there is air. This too is not visible. But, when hot air or cool breeze strikes our skin, we know that there is air. This feeling happens in the body. Therefore, the special quality of air is touch. The feeling of touch is known as the cutaneous sense. Through this we cognise air. That is, we have it confirmed that there is air. Touch is the distinctive quality of air. In air, i.e. where there is a storm or gale, there arises also sound (*sala-sala*) through the striking of the branches of a tree at each other. Thus, since air blows through the inter-space, it carries with it also the sound which is the special quality of ether.

The third element is fire (*tejas*). Fire and its luminosity are perceptible to the eyes. Its special quality is colour. Its heat is cognised through the sense of touch. Fire is visible ; its heat is felt through the cutaneous sense. Besides its own special quality which is colour, fire is endowed also with sound which is the quality of ether, and speed which is the characteristic of air. When there is a strong wind, the flames of fire are in a whirl. From this the nature of air is known. There arises also from fire in that condition the sound "*paṣa-paṣa*". From this it is known that in air there is also sound which is the quality of ether. Thus, there are : fire and its quality, colour ; air and its quality, touch ; and ether and its quality, sound.





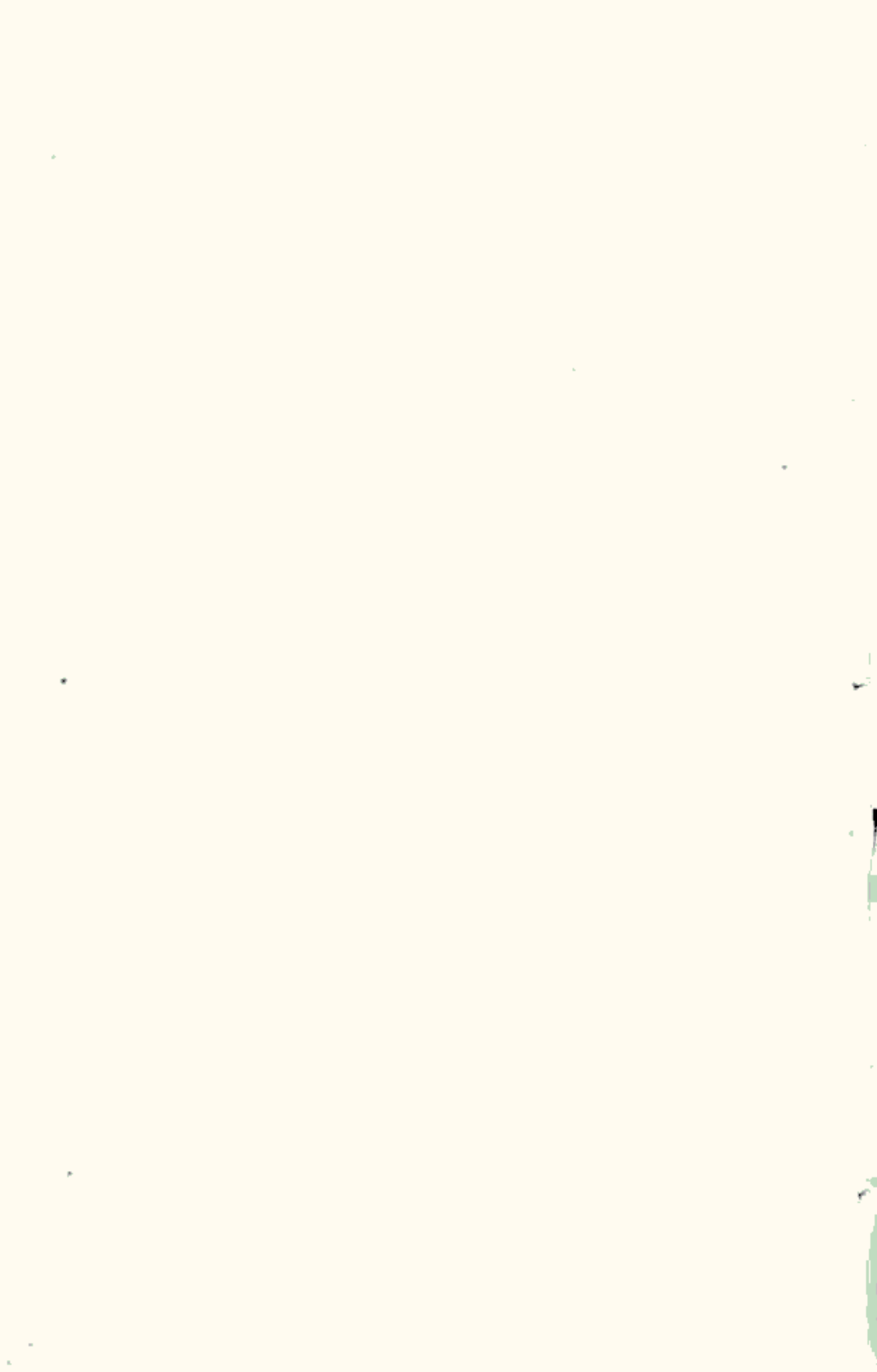
The fourth element is water. Water is visible to the eyes. The sweet taste that is in it is not visible. We know it with the tongue. Water is visible. The sweet taste which is the special quality of water can be perceived only with the tongue. The qualities of fire, air, and ether are also in water. Whiteness, the cool touch, and the sound "cho" when water falls from a height — these are the qualities, respectively, of fire, air, and ether, which are found in water. Touch is the special quality that resides in fire and air. In air, the touch is of a middling grade, i.e. it is neither hot nor cold. The special quality in fire is hot touch. Since the characteristic of fire is heat, its touch is hot. The special quality of touch comes to fire from air. Since the nature of fire is heat, its touch comes to be hot. Since the nature of water is coolness, the touch in water is cool. Thus, the quality of touch exists in all the three—water, fire, and air. Since there is no colour in ether and air, they are not visible to the eyes. In fire there is luminous white colour. In water there is non-luminous whiteness: this is visible to the eyes.

The fifth element is earth. It consists of moving and non-moving entities, from clay to trees. In it there are the special qualities of the four elements considered so far, viz., taste, colour, touch, and sound. Besides, there is the distinctive quality of earth which is odour. All the things made of earth are visible objects; they bear all sorts of colour. There are seven colours: white, black, red, yellow, green, the colour of the type of cow with black tongue and nipples, and a mixed colour (a mixture of two or three colours). These seven colours are in earth. All the things made of earth are visible to the eyes. The

qualities that reside in earth — odour, taste, colour, touch, and sound — are perceived through the respective sense-organs. Thus, creation starts with ether; from ether comes air; from air, fire; from fire, water; and from water, earth. This is the order of creation.

The five elements were not created *de novo*. Before creation, they were in the unmanifest (*avyakta*) state. Then, they came out in the manifest gross form. When the world was created, all the things and beings were also created: all these entities which we see now or read about in the *Purāṇas* and other ancient texts. But, at that time, it may be that some categories of beings were greater in number and some others smaller. Formerly, trees, animals, etc., might have been more, and humans might have been fewer in number. Now, it may be that the humans are greater in number, a large number of trees and animals having been destroyed. This state of things is in accordance of *yuga-dharma* and *karma*. That is, it is the result of the actions of living beings.

When the five elements are separate from one another, they do not produce any effect. In their gross form they are mixed elements. The mixing is called quintuplication (*pañcī-karaṇa*). With one half of each element, one-eighth of each of the other four elements is mixed. Thus, in every element, only one half of it is that element; the other half consists of the other elements in equal proportion. For example, in the gross element ether, only one half of it is ether; the other half contains the other four elements. It is only then that it becomes manifest (*vyakta*). The same is the case with the other elements. It is after quintuplication that the elements become perceptible.





Of the six categories which are without beginning, *Īśvara* manifests *Hiranyagarbha* who is the Deity looked up to by all the *jīva-s*. Through him, the world and its things are produced. When the primal Reality is the Deity presiding over all the *jīva-s*, it is called *Hiranyagarbha*. When the same Reality is in the form of the power that creates the world, it is named *Brahmā*.

The term *Hiranyagarbha* means 'golden womb.' That is, at the time of deluge (*pralaya*), it makes all *jīva-s* get resolved in Godhead that is luminous; and since that is also of golden here, it is called *Hiranyagarbha*. And since, from that Being, the world and its things come out, the term *garbha* (womb) is appropriate.

The word '*Brahmā*' means "He who retains in his mind the truths of the *Veda*, and has the power to create the world in accordance therewith." *Brahmā* does not create the world in a haphazard manner, but as in the previous *kalpa*, so in the present, he creates with the help of the truth of the *Veda*. In a year there are six seasons. In each season, certain things take place that are appropriate to it. For instance, in spring season trees flower and yield fruit. In the rainy season, the rains come. Thus, each season has its own characteristics. These are observed every year. In the same way, at the beginning of each *kalpa*, the world and its things are created in the same manner as in the previous *kalpa-s*. There is nothing like unordered or erratic creation.

We make a chair out of logs of wood, a pot out of clay, curd out of milk, etc. From this, we know that there is in wood the power to get transformed into

a chair, in clay the power to get modified into a pot, and in milk the power to get changed into curd. If this be not so, one should be able to derive a chair from clay, or a pot from wood, which is not the case. Therefore, it is clear that there is a power in the cause which produces the appropriate effect, that the effect is already in the cause, but in an unmanifest state.

Whether it be a chair or a pot, it will be the same, no matter at what time it is produced. The embellishments may change in accordance with the times. But the configuration of chair or pot will not change. Similarly, the world will be created in each *kalpa* after the mode of the previous creation. The things that we see now were there at the commencement of the *kalpa*. Only, as time proceeds, some things get augmented and some diminished.

The western evolutionists believe that life evolved from the lower and more rudimentary levels to the higher and more complex ones, i.e. from the homogeneous to the heterogeneous. According to them, man is a late and recent arrival in the evolutionary process. This, the philosophy of the Hindus does not accept. All living beings other than man are not responsible for their actions. Their doings do not lead to any consequences. This is because they do not possess the ability to discriminate: what they experience—be it pleasure or pain—is the result of what they did in their previous lives when they were humans. It is in accordance with their past human birth that they enjoy or suffer in their present non-human birth. Therefore, the root species for all other species of beings is the human. It is as a human being that the *jīva* gathers merit or demerit.



As mentioned already, the *jīva* is one of the categories that have no beginning. It is not produced by anyone; it is there beginninglessly. Unlike the western historians and evolutionists who say that the world was created a few thousand years ago, we hold that creation is beginningless. What we mean by creation is that what was unmanifest became manifest. The difference is only between these two states. That is, before creation, the world was in a latent state; after creation, it becomes patent. And so, according to our view, nothing is produced *de novo*. It is that which exists that is repeatedly made manifest. This view is known as *satkārya-vāda*, the doctrine that the effect is pre-existent in the cause.

Although this is *satkārya-vāda*, we hold that when knowledge dawns, all things except the supreme Self will disappear. That is, if the true nature of the Self that is in all the bodies is realised, then for the one who so realises, there is no world, nor the things of the world, no physical body nor the sense organs. He knows that these are not real, and that they appeared because of *karma*. The cause of *karma* is desire. The cause of desire is ignorance regarding the truth. When we see an object, we desire to obtain it, imagining that it will make us happy. This is a delusion. The appearance of duality, the belief in plurality, is due to ignorance. Imagining that there is another reality is like thinking that the shadow of a man is different from him.

[to be continued]

Ganesa - Pancaratna - Stotra*

Sankara Bhagavatpada

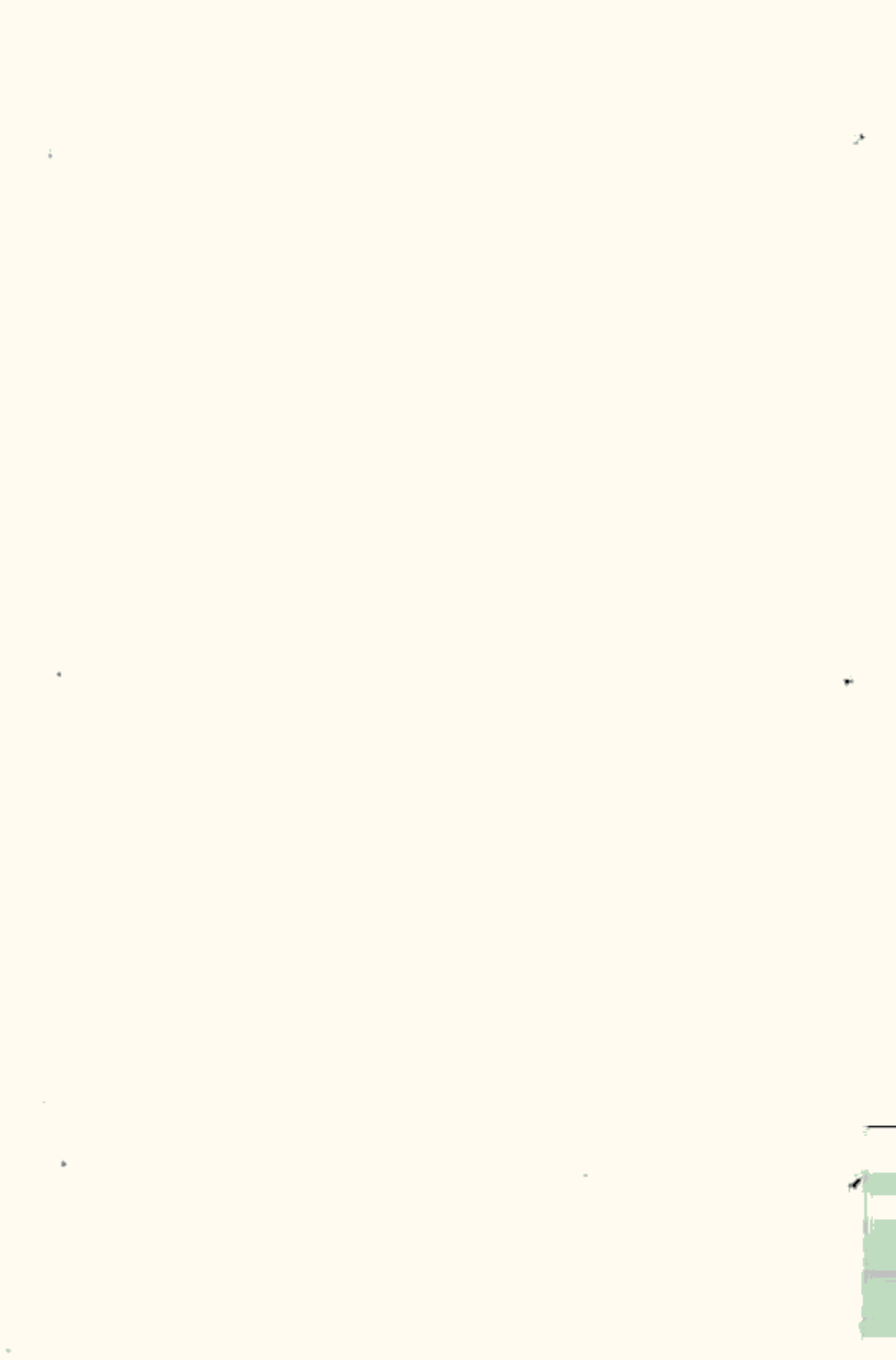
The one Absolute, called Brahman by the Vedas, transcends our faculties. Yet it comes within our grasp and comprehension in any form, shape and characteristic that we choose to invest it with. So God is worshipped in any form which a devotee wishes to, and he is considered to be still within the Hindu fold. This is because of the assurance held out by the Lord in the *Bhagavad-gītā*,

“ये यथा मां प्रपद्यन्ते तांस्तथैव भजाम्यहम्”

“I reach out unto them in the manner and form in which they adore me and surrender unto me.”

Ādi Śaṅkara who has composed devotional songs of great beauty, packed at the same time with a true philosophical perspective, praising all the well-known forms of God worshipped by the Hindus, has sung five “verse-gems” in adoration of Lord Gaṇeśa.

* Translated by Sri. A. V. Nagaraja Sarma, M. A.





According to the Purāṇas, Gaṇeśa—the Lord of the Gaṇas—the attendants on Śiva—is a unique manifestation of Brahman. His supremacy is clear from the fact that even the Trinity, the three primal manifestations of the Absolute, viz., Śiva, Viṣṇu and Brahmā, are hampered in their work if they do not first pay homage to Gaṇeśa. It is from Him that all other Gods derive power to bless and grant boons to devotees. We shall look into the picture of Gaṇeśa that Ādi Śaṅkara's *Gaṇeśapañcaratna* inspires and conjures up for us.

[1]

मुदा कराचामोदकं सदा विमुक्तिसाधकं
 कलाधरावतंसकं विलासिलोकरक्षकम् ।
 अनायकैकनायकं विनाशितेभदैत्यकं
 नताशुभाशुनाशकं नमामि तं विनायकम् ॥

In glee He keeps in His hand the “*modaka*” (a sweet edible preparation that is aptly named *modaka*—the delighter). He is ever the means to liberation, *mōkṣa*. He wears, as an ornament, the digit moon (on His forehead). He is the protector of those who shine (in the mirthful life of pleasures of the world). He is the ‘Lordless unique Lord.’ He destroyed the ‘Elephant-Demon,’ and He destroys quickly the evils (sufferings, or inauspicious happening) of those who bow to Him. That ‘*Vināyaka*,’ I adore.

The first line describes the Lord as one who bestows the pleasures of this world as also redemption from it. In other words, He gives both *aihika-sukha* and *āmuṣmika-sukha* or both *abhyudaya* and *niśreyasa*.

As life is beset with hurdles, one surmounts them by propitiating Lord *Vināyaka*, and obtaining His Grace.

[2]

नतेतरातिभीकरं नवोदितार्कभास्वरं
 नमत्सुरारिनिर्जरं नताधिकापदुद्धरम् ।
 सुरेश्वरं निधीश्वरं गजेश्वरं गणेश्वरं
 महेश्वरं तमाश्रये परात्परं निरन्तरम् ॥

I Constantly resort to that great (Supreme) Lord who terrifies those who do not bow to Him, or who are other than submissive, i e , He is a terror to those who defy Him. The Lord is shining like the rising sun. Both gods and demons, both good and evil spirits, adore Him. The Lord dispels the grave dangers that beset His devotees, i.e., He is the Lord of Gods, the Lord of Wealth, the Lord of Elephants (Himself having the head of an elephant) and Lord of Śiva Gaṇas. He is greater than the great, transcending the transcendental.

[3]

समस्तलोकशंकरं निरस्तदैत्यकुञ्जरं
 दरेतरोदरं वरं वरेभवक्त्रमक्षरम् ।
 कृपाकरं क्षमाकरं सुदाकरं यशस्करं
 मनस्करं नमस्कृतां नमस्करोमि भास्वरम् ॥

I prostrate in reverence before the Lord, the producer of good to the entire world, (or all the worlds). He destroyed the demoniacal elephant (the demon who took the form of an elephant and challenged the Lord). The Lord who is sought (by all) has a belly that is other than small. (The Lord Gaṇeśa is represented as pot-bellied). His face is the face of





a grand (majestic) elephant. He is the all-pervading indestructible God. He is the repository of mercy and forbearance. He grants bliss and glory (to the devotees). He makes pure the mind of those who bow to Him. He is the effulgent Lord.

[4]

अकिञ्चनार्तिमार्जनं चिरंतनोक्तिभाजनं
पुरारिपूर्वनन्दनं सुरारिगर्वचर्वणम् ।
प्रपञ्चनाशभीषणं धनञ्जयादिभूषणं
कपोलदानवारणं भजे पुराणवारणम् ॥

I seek (resort to) that 'Ancient Elephant' God who wipes out the afflictions of the poor. That Lord is the import of the scripture. He is the elder son of Śiva, the destroyer of the demons who had fortified themselves in three metallic Cities. He shattered the pride of the enemies of Gods (i.e., He destroyed the power of the demons). The Lord is terrible as the destroyer of the universe. He is the very adornment of Dhanañjaya and others. (That is, Arjuna and other heroes achieved their greatness because of their devotion to Gaṇeśa). The Elephant-Lord's temples are covered with pouring ichor (that is, the water of rut.)

[5]

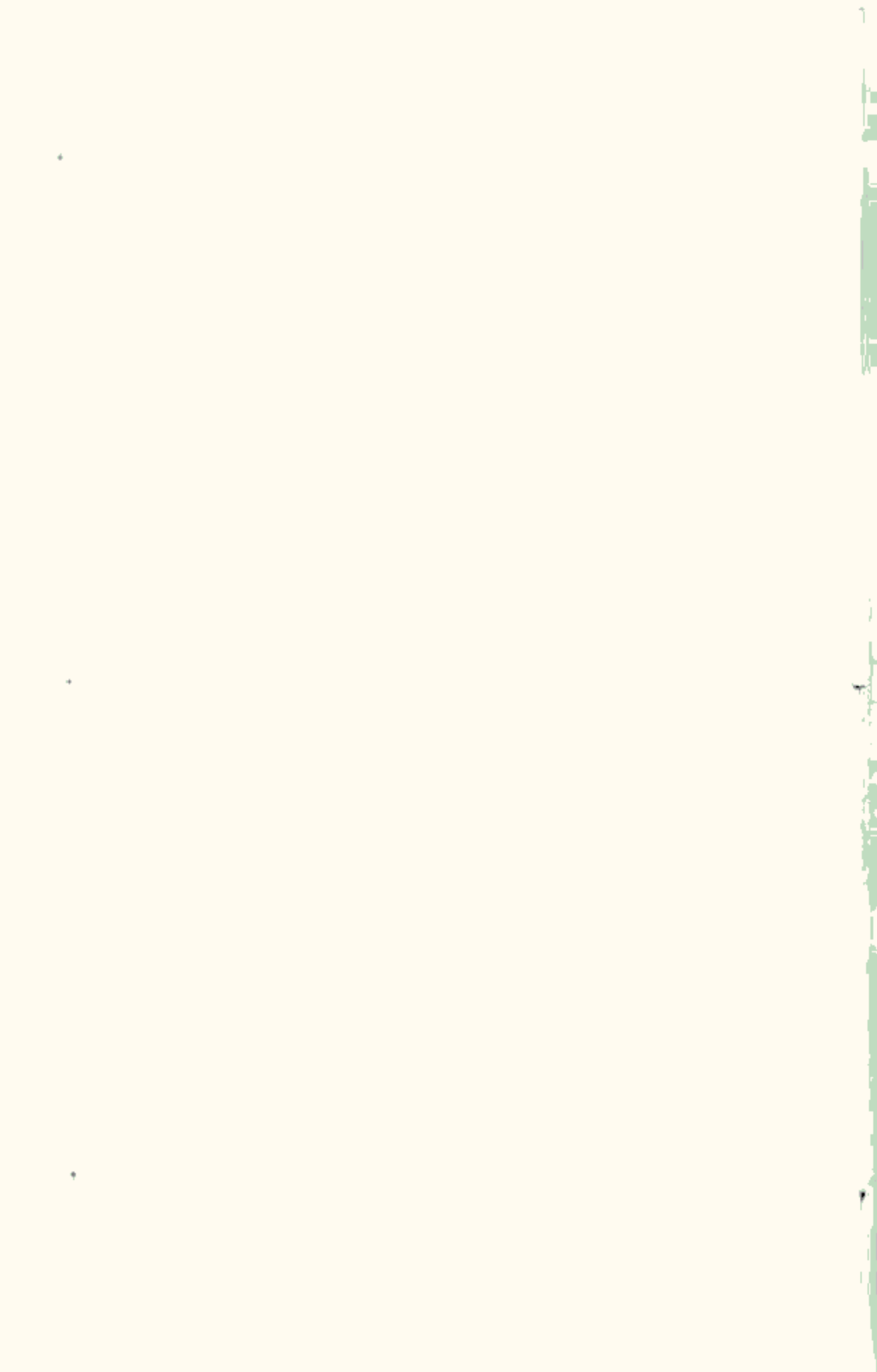
नितान्तकान्तदन्तकान्तिमन्तकान्तकात्मजम्
अचिन्त्यरूपमन्तहीनमन्तरायकृन्तनम् ।
हृदन्तरे निरन्तरं वसन्तमेव योगिनां
तमेकदन्तमेव तं विचिन्तयामि सन्ततम् ॥

I always think of only that Supreme Lord with a single tusk, whose enchanting tusk is possessed of great lustre. He is the son of Śiva, the destroyer of the Lord of Death. His form is unimaginable. He is endless (i.e., He is eternal). He removes all impediments. He is always immanent in the hearts of Yogins. (Such is Gaṇeśa).

[6]

महागणेशपञ्चरत्नमादरेण योऽन्वहं
 प्रजल्पति प्रभातके हृदि स्मरन् गणेश्वरम् ।
 अरोगतामदोषतां सुसाहितीं मृपुत्रतां
 समाहितायुरष्टभूतिमभ्युपैति सोऽचिरात् ॥

He (the devotee) who everyday, at dawn, recites with reverence this 'Five Gem' song in praise of Gaṇeśa, meditating upon Gaṇeśvara in his heart, achieves freedom from physical illness, freedom from all evils (defects or sins) and secures wholesome learning, good progeny and a peaceful life and he wins even the eightfold super-human powers ere long.



Gurvashtakam*

A Hymn of Eight Verses in Praise of the Guru

Sankara Bhagavatpada

The theme of this poem, which is sweet both in sound and sense, is the need for devotion to the *Guru*. Even the choicest blessings of the world are as nothing before the grace of the *Guru*. One may have all the excellences of body, mind, and spirit; but if one has not earned the *Guru's* grace, nothing will avail one. The means to receive the blessings of the *Guru* is unwavering devotion to Him. Hence Ācārya Śaṅkara makes this the burden of his poem: nothing will accrue from anything, however great or noble it may be, if the mind is not engaged in devotion to the *Guru*.

* Translated by Editor.

The ninth verse is in praise of the octad (*phala-śruti*).

[1]

शरीरं सुरूपं तथा वा कलत्रं
 यशश्चारु चित्रं धनं मेरुतुल्यम् ।
 मनश्चेन्न लग्नं गुरोरङ्घ्रिपद्मे
 ततः किं ततः किं ततः किं ततः किम् ॥ १ ॥

*śarīraṁ surūpaṁ tathā vā kalatram
 yaśaścāru citram dhanam merutulyam
 manaścenna lagnaṁ guroraṅghripadme
 tataḥ kiṁ tataḥ kiṁ tataḥ kiṁ tataḥ kim.*

One's body may be handsome, wife beautiful, fame, excellent and varied, and wealth like unto Mount Meru ; but if one's mind be not attached to the lotus feet of the *Guru*, what thence, what thence, what thence, what thence ?

[2]

कलत्रं धनं पुत्रपौत्रादि सर्वं
 गृहं बान्धवाः सर्वमेतद्धि जातम् ।
 मनश्चेन्न लग्नं गुरोरङ्घ्रिपद्मे
 ततः किं ततः किं ततः किं ततः किम् ॥ २ ॥

*kalatram dhanam putrapautrādi sarvaṁ
 gṛham bāndhavāḥ sarvametaddhi jātam
 manaścenna lagnaṁ guroraṅghripadme
 tataḥ kiṁ tataḥ kiṁ tataḥ kiṁ tataḥ kim.*





Wife, wealth, sons, grandsons, etc., all these ; home, relations—the host of all these there may be ; but if one's mind be not attached to the lotus feet of the *Guru*, what thence, what thence, what thence, what thence ?

[3]

षडङ्गादिवेदो मुखे शास्त्रविद्या
 कविवादि गद्यं सुपद्यं करोति ।
 मनश्चेन्न लग्नं गुरोरङ्घ्रिपद्मे
 ततः किं ततः किं ततः किं ततः किम् ॥ ३ ॥

ṣaḍaṅgādivedo mukhe śāstravidyā
kavitvādi gadyam supadyam karoti
manaścenna lagnaṁ guroraṅghripadme
tataḥ kiṁ tataḥ kiṁ tataḥ kiṁ tataḥ kim.

The Vedas with their six auxiliaries and knowledge of sciences may be on one's lips; one may have the gift of poesy ; and may compose good prose and poetry ; but if one's mind be not attached to the lotus feet of the *Guru*, what thence, what thence, what thence, what thence, what thence :

[4]

विदेशेषु मान्यः स्वदेशेषु धन्यः
 सदाचारवृत्तेषु भक्तो न चान्यः ।
 मनश्चेन्न लग्नं गुरोरङ्घ्रिपद्मे
 ततः किं ततः किं ततः किं ततः किम् ॥ ४ ॥

*videśeṣu mānyaḥ svadeśeṣu dhanyaḥ
 sadācāraṃṛteṣu matto na cānyaḥ
 manaścenna lagnaṃ guroraṅghripadme
 tataḥ kiṃ tataḥ kiṃ tataḥ kiṃ tataḥ kim.*

'In other lands I am honoured ; in my country I am fortunate ; in the ways of good conduct there is none that excels me' — thus one may think ; but if one's mind be not attached to the lotus feet of the *Guru*, what thence, what thence, what thence, what thence ?

[5]

क्षमामण्डले भूपभूपालवृन्दैः
 सदा सेवितं यस्य पादारविन्दम् ।
 मनश्चेन्न लग्नं गुरोरङ्घ्रिपद्मे
 ततः किं ततः किं ततः किं ततः किम् ॥ १ ॥

*kṣamāmaṇḍale bhūpabhūpālavṛndaiḥ
 sadā sevitaṃ yasya pādāravindam
 manaścenna lagnaṃ guroraṅghripadme
 tataḥ kiṃ tataḥ kiṃ tataḥ kiṃ tataḥ kim.*

One's feet may be adored constantly by hosts of emperors and kings of the world ; but if one's mind be not attached to the lotus feet of the *Guru*, what thence, what thence, what thence, what thence ?





[6]

यशो मे गतं दिक्षु दानप्रतापा-
 ज्जगद्वस्तु सर्वं करे यत्प्रसादात् ।
 मनश्चेन्न लग्नं गुरोरङ्घ्रिपद्मे
 ततः किं ततः किं ततः किं ततः किम् ॥ २ ॥

*yaśo me gataṁ dikṣu dānapratāpōj-
 jagadvastu sarvāṁ kare yatprasādāt
 manaścenna lagnaṁ guroraṅghripadme
 tataḥ kiṁ tataḥ kiṁ tataḥ kiṁ tataḥ kim.*

My fame has spread in all quarters by virtue of generosity and prowess; all the things of the world are in my hands as a reward of these virtues; but if one's mind be not attached to the lotus feet of the *Guru*, what thence, what thence, what thence, what thence.

[7]

न भोगे न योगे न वा वाजिराजौ
 न कान्तामुखे नैव वित्तेषु चित्तम् ।
 मनश्चेन्न लग्नं गुरोरङ्घ्रिपद्मे
 ततः किं ततः किं ततः किं ततः किम् ॥ ३ ॥

*na bhoge na yoge na vā vājirājau
 na kāntāmukhe naiva vitteṣu cittaṁ
 manaścenna lagnaṁ guroraṅghripadme
 tataḥ kiṁ tataḥ kiṁ tataḥ kiṁ tataḥ kim.*

Not in enjoyment, not in concentration, not in the multitudes of horses; nor in the face of the beloved, nor in wealth does the mind dwell; but if that mind be not attached to the lotus feet of the *Guru*, what thence, what thence, what thence, what thence?

[8]

अरण्ये न वा स्वस्य गेहे न कार्ये
 न देहे मनो वर्तते मे त्वनर्घ्ये ।
 मनश्चेन्न लग्नं गुरोरङ्घ्रिपद्मे
 ततः किं ततः किं ततः किं ततः किम् ॥ ८ ॥

aranye na vā svasya gehe na kārye
na dehe mano vartate me tvanarghye
manaścenna lagnaṁ guroraṅghripadme
tataḥ kiṁ tataḥ kiṁ tataḥ kiṁ tataḥ kim.

Not in the forest, nor even in one's own house, nor in what-is-to-be-accomplished, nor in the body, nor in what is invaluable does my mind dwell; but if my mind be not attached to the lotus feet of the *Guru*, what thence, what thence, what thence, what thence?

[9]

गुरोरष्टकं यः पठेत्पुण्यदेही
 यतिर्भूपतिर्ब्रह्मचारी च गेही ।
 लभेद्वाञ्छितार्थं पदं ब्रह्मसंज्ञं
 गुरोरुक्तवाक्ये मनो यस्य लग्नम् ॥ ९ ॥



*guroraṣṭakam yaḥ paṭhet punyadehī
yatirbhūpatirbrahmacārī ca gehī
labhedvāñcitārtham padaṁ brahmasamjñam
guroruktavākye mano yasya lagnam.*

That virtuous person who reads this octad on the *Guru*, and whose mind is fixed on the sayings of the *Guru*—whether he be an ascetic, king, student, or householder, attains the desired goal, the state which is called *Brahman*.

“The doctrine advocated by Śaṅkara is, from a purely philosophical point of view, and apart from all the theological considerations, the most important and interesting one which has arisen on Indian soil; neither those forms of the Vedānta which diverge from the view represented by Śaṅkara, nor any of the non-Vedāntic systems can be compared with the so-called orthodox Vedānta in boldness, depth and subtlety of speculation.”

—Thibaut

Atma - Bodha*

Sankara Bhagavatpada

The *Atma-bodha* of Śrī Saṅkarācārya is a *prakaraṇa* in sixty-eight verses. It deals with the knowledge of the Self (*Ātman*).

[1]

तपोभिः क्षीणपापानां शान्तानां वीतरागिणाम् ।
मुमुक्षूणामपेक्ष्योऽयमात्मबोधो विधीयते ॥

This work—*Ātma-bodha* (Self-knowledge) is composed, being needed by those who aspire for *mokṣa* (liberation) - those whose sins are reduced by austerities, who are peaceful in mind and who are free from *rāga* (attachment).

The knowledge of the Self is needed for Liberation. Liberation is freedom from the cycle of births and deaths fraught with the pairs of opposites like pleasure and pain. Sins are reduced by austerities—physical, vocal and mental. These purify the mind. A pure mind is peaceful. It does not crave after the objects of the senses.

* Translated by Dr. C. S. Venkateswaran.



[2]

बोधोऽन्यसाधनेभ्योहि साक्षान्मोक्षैकसाधनम् ।
पाकस्य वह्निवत् ज्ञानं विना मोक्षो न सिध्यति ॥

Bodha (Self-knowledge) as distinct from other means, is verily, the sole means of liberation. *Mokṣa* cannot be attained without knowledge just as cooking cannot be done without fire.

Knowledge of the Self is the direct means of liberation. There are, of course, other subsidiary causes conducive to Liberation like austerities (*tapas*), charity (*dāna*), etc. They are preliminaries which purify the mind. Fire is the direct cause in cooking though the preliminaries like pot and water are necessary.

[3]

अविरोधितया कर्म नाविद्यां विनिवर्तयेत् ।
विद्याऽविद्यां निहन्त्येव तेजस्तिमिरसङ्घवत् ॥

Karma (action), not being opposed (in nature), will not remove *avidyā* (ignorance). *Vidyā* (knowledge) indeed destroys *avidyā* (ignorance) just as light dispels dense darkness.

Knowledge of the Self only, and not action, can destroy ignorance. Actions include physical activities, rituals, etc., which are associated with ego-consciousness (*aśmkāra*). Knowledge is that which relates to the non-duality of the Supreme—Self, Brahman with which the *jīvātman* (individual self) is identical. All else is ignorance (*avidyā*).

[4]

परिच्छिन्न इवाज्ञानात् तन्नाशे सति केवलः ।
स्वयं प्रकाशते ह्यात्मा मेघापर्येऽशुमानिव ॥

The *Ātman* (Self) appearing as though limited (finite) through ignorance, when ignorance is removed, shines by itself (automatically) as the One (without a second), just as the Sun shines when the (obstructing) cloud passes off.

The Self appears to be finite through ignorance. It is infinite and self-luminous.

[5]

अज्ञानकलुषं जीवं ज्ञानाभ्यासाद्धिनिर्मलम् ।
कृत्वा ज्ञानं स्वयं नश्येत् जलं कतकरेणुवत् ॥

Jñāna (knowledge), through its repeated practice, purifies the *jīva* (embodied soul) tainted by ignorance and automatically disappears. It is like powdered *kataka* (mud-clearing nut) which disappears after having purified the muddy water.

Practice is meditation and knowledge is what pertains to the Self.

[6]

संसारः स्वप्नतुल्यो हि रागाद्वेषादिसङ्कुलः ।
स्वकाले सत्यवद्भाति प्रबोधे सत्यसद्भवेत् ॥

The World full of attachment, aversion, etc., is like a dream. During the dream-state of ignorance it appears to be real. During the state of wakefulness it (knowledge) becomes unreal.

[7]

तावत्सत्यं जगद्भाति शुक्तिकारजतं यथा ।
यावन्न ज्ञायते ब्रह्म सर्वाधिष्ठानमद्वयम् ॥

As long as *Brahman* which is the substratum of all and which is non-dual (the One without a second) is not realised, the world appears to be real like the illusory notion of silver in the oyster-shell.

Brahman, the oyster-shell and the rope are the *adhiṣṭhānas* or substrata. On them the world, the silver and the serpent are superimposed through ignorance. The false notion automatically disappears, once the real knowledge of the substratum dawns.

[8]

उपादानेऽखिलाधारे जगन्ति परमेश्वरे ।
सर्गस्थितिलयान्यान्ति बुद्बुदानीव वारिणि ॥

In the material cause, the universal substrate, the supreme Lord, the worlds reach the states of origination, sustentation and dissolution, like bubbles in water.

[9]

सच्चिदात्मन्यनुस्यूते नित्ये विष्णौ प्रकल्पिताः ।
व्यक्तयो विविधाः सर्वा हाटके कटकादिवत् ॥

All the individual forms with names are manifestations belonging to the all-pervading self which is existence, intelligence, absolute, constant and eternal just as bracelet and other ornaments are only gold in diverse forms.

The manifestations of Brahman with different forms and names have no real existence apart from their cause (*Brahman*). Similarly ornaments are not essentially different from their cause (gold).

[10]

यथाकाशो हृषीकेशो नानोपाधिगतो विभुः ।
तद्भेदाद्भिन्नवद्भाति तन्नाशे केवलो भवेत् ॥

The all-pervading *ākāśa* (ether) associated with diverse limiting conditions (*upādhis*) appears to be diverse. It becomes One when the *upādhis* disappear. Likewise is the Omni-present Self (the Lord of the senses).

The space inside different containers like cup, jar, etc., is differentiated by their forms. The limiting adjuncts (*upādhis*) differentiate space which is *viḥu* (the all-pervading one). The Self is only One differentiated by the forms of the embodied souls like man, animal, bird, etc.



[11]

नानोपाधिवशादेव जातिवर्णाश्रमादयः ।
आत्मन्यारोपितास्तोये रसवर्णादिभेदवत् ॥

The ideas of caste, colour and stage in life (*āśrama*) are superimposed on the *Ātman* only owing to its association with different *upādhis*, just as differences in taste, colour, etc., are superimposed on water which is bereft of them.

The body is a limiting adjunct of the soul (*Ātman*). Its attributes like fatness, whiteness, etc., are superimposed on the Self in such statements as "I am fat, I am white," etc.

[12]

पञ्चीकृतमहाभूतसम्भवं कर्मसञ्चितम् ।
शरीरं सुखदुःखानां भोगायतनमुच्यते ॥

The *śarīra* (gross body) is the result of past actions (*karma*) and is formed out of the five subtle elements by the process of *pañcīkaraṇa*. It is said to be the medium (of the soul) for experiencing pleasure, pain, etc.

The body of the embodied soul is determined by the nature of its past actions—good, bad or mixed. In *Pañcīkaraṇa*, one half of each rudimentary subtle element combines with one-eighth of the other four subtle elements and becomes a gross element.

[13]

पञ्चप्राणमनोबुद्धिदशेन्द्रियसमन्वितम् ।
अपञ्चीकृतभूतोत्थं सूक्ष्माङ्गं भोगसाधनम् ॥

The subtle body formed out of the unmixed rudimentary elements, in association with the five *prāṇas* (vital forces), mind, *buddhi* and the ten *indriyas* is the instrument of experience (for the soul).

The rudimentary elements are unmixed before the *pañcika-
raṇa*-process. The vital forces are five called *prāṇa*, *apāna*, *vyāna*
and *samāna*-according to their functions in different parts of the
body. The ten *indriyas* or organs consist of the five organs of
perception (*jñāna*) and five organs of action (*karma*).

[14]

अनाद्यविद्यानिर्वाच्या कारणोपाधिरुच्यते ।
उपाधित्रितयादन्यमात्मानमवधारयेत् ॥

Avidya (nescience) is beginningless and indescribable. It is called the cause (*kāraṇa*) which is an *upādhi* superimposed on *Ātman*. *Ātman* is to be ascertained as clearly distinct from the three *upādhis*.

[15]

पञ्चकोशादियोगेन तत्तन्मय इव स्थितः ।
शुद्धात्मा नीलवस्त्रादियोगेन स्फटिको यथा ॥

The pure *Ātman*, owing to association with the five sheaths and so on, appears to be like them just as the (pure) crystal, owing to association with a blue cloth, becomes so (blue).

The soul is covered by five sheaths (*kośas*). They are—*anna* (gross material particles) forming the physical body; the next three, *prāṇa* (vital force), *manas* (mind), and *vijñāna* (knowledge) constituting the subtle body and the last, *ānanda* (bliss) forming the causal body.



[16]

वपुस्तुषादिभिः कोशैर्युक्तं रूढ्य वेधाततः ।
आत्मानमन्तरं शुद्धं विविच्यात् तण्डुलं यथा ॥

One should separate the inner pure Self from the sheaths by which it is covered through discrimination, just as the rice is separated from the covering husk and the rest by striking it with a pestle.

The coverings are different from the object covered. The true nature of *Ātman* is realised through elimination of all the sheaths by the practice of discrimination and detachment.

[17]

सदा सर्वगतोऽप्यात्मा न सवत्रावभासते ।
बुद्धावेवावभासेत स्वच्छेषु प्रतिबिम्बवत् ॥

The *Ātman*, though always all-pervading, does not shine everywhere. It is manifest only in the *buddhi* just as objects are reflected only on pure surfaces.

[18]

देहेन्द्रियमनोबुद्धिप्रकृतिभ्यो विलक्षणम् ।
तद्द्रुत्तिसाक्षिणं विद्यादात्मानं राजवत्सदा ॥

The *Ātman* should be realised as different from the body, sense-organs, mind, intellect (*buddhi*) and *Prakṛti* and as the witness of their functions, like a king (who sees everything).

[19]

व्यापृतेष्विन्द्रियेष्वात्मा व्यापारीव विवेकिनाम् ।
दृश्यतेऽभ्रेषु धावत्सु धावन्निव यथा शशी ॥

To the non-discriminating (persons) the *Ātman* appears to be active when the senses are active, just as the moon appears to be moving fast when the clouds are doing so.

The non-discriminating cannot discriminate the soul from the body. Bodily activities are attributed to the soul.

[20]

आत्मचैतन्यमाश्रित्य देहेन्द्रियमनोधियः ।
स्वक्रियार्थेषु वर्तन्ते सूर्यलोकं यथा जनाः ॥

With the help of consciousness (*caitanya*) inherent in the *Ātman*, the body, senses, mind and *buddhi* (intellect) engage themselves in their respective activities, just as men work with the help of the light of the Sun.

Consciousness belongs to the *Ātman*. It activates the body, senses, etc. The *Ātman* and the Sun, however, are not affected by the effects of the activities of those objects which are activated with their help.

[21]

देहेन्द्रियगुणान् कर्माण्यमले सच्चिदात्मनि ।
अध्यस्यन्त्यविवेकेन गगने नीलतादिवत् ॥





Owing to non-discrimination, men superimpose on the pure *Ātman* which is absolute Existence and Knowledge, the characteristics and activities of the body and the senses, just as blueness and other qualities are ascribed to the sky.

[22]

अज्ञानान्मानसोपाधेः कर्तृत्वादीनि चात्मनि ।
कल्प्यन्तेऽम्बुगते चन्द्रे चलनादि यथाम्भसः ॥

Owing to ignorance, agency and the like which belong to the conditioned mind are attributed to the *Ātman*, just as movement and other activities of the water are ascribed to the moon reflected in it.

[*to be continued*]

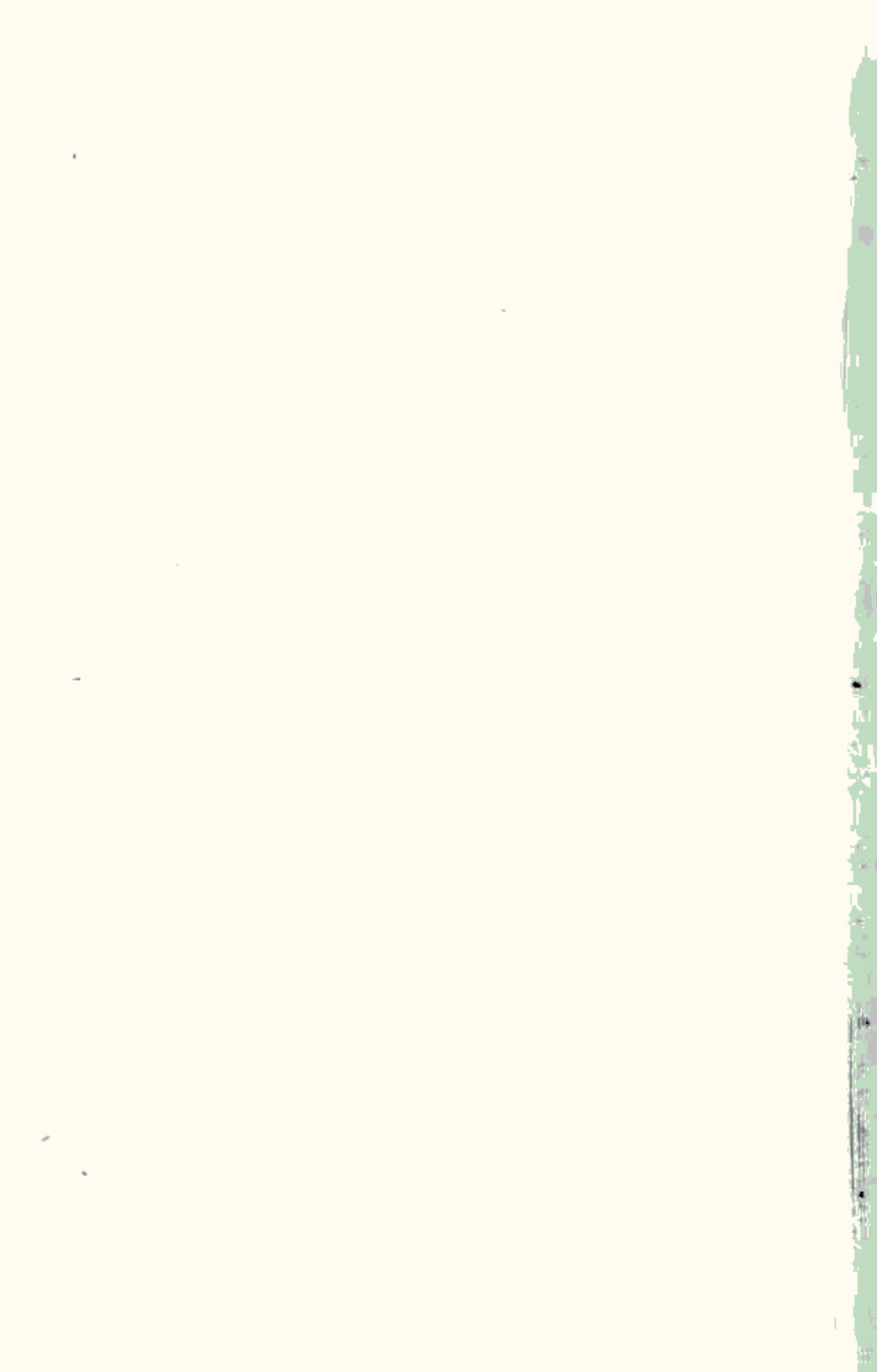
Totakastakam*

A Hymn of Eight Stanzas

Totakacarya

One of the chief disciples of Śaṅkara composed an octad of verses in praise of the Master. The metre he has used in this composition is the difficult but beautiful *toṭaka*. Hence he was himself given the name *Toṭakācārya*. Every word of this exquisite hymn bespeaks the utter devotion of its author to Śaṅkara. Śaṅkara, the *Guru*, is all to him. There is nothing equal to the *Guru*; nothing superior to Him. The *Guru* is the dispeller of the darkness of ignorance. There can be no greater good than the removal of ignorance. The spirit of devotion of the disciple is best expressed in the soul-moving burden of this song: *Be Thou my refuge. O Master, Śaṅkara (bhava Śaṅkara deśika me śaraṇam)!*

* Translated by Editor.



[1]

विदिताखिलशास्त्रसुधाजलधे
 महितोपनिषत्कथितार्थनिधे ।
 हृदये कलये विमलं चरणं
 भव शंकर देशिक मे शरणम् ॥ १ ॥

*viditākhilāśāstrasudhājāladhe
 mahitopaniṣatkathitārthanidhe
 hṛdaye kalaye vimalam caraṇam
 bhava śaṅkara deśika me śaraṇam.*

O Thou, the knower of all the milk-Ocean of Scriptures! The expounder of the topics of the great Upaniṣadic treasure-trove! On Thy faultless feet I meditate in my heart, Be Thou my refuge O Master, Śaṅkara!

[2]

करुणावरुणालय पालय मां
 भवसागरदुःखविदूनहृदम् ।
 रचयाखिलदर्शनतत्त्वविदं
 भव शंकर देशिक मे शरणम् ॥ २ ॥

*karuṇāvaruṇālaya pālaya mām
 bhavasāgaraduḥkhavidūnahṛdam
 racayākhiladarśanatattvavidam
 bhava śaṅkara deśika me śaraṇam.*

O the Ocean of compassion! Save me whose heart is tormented by the misery of the sea of birth! Make me understand the truths of all the schools of philosophy! Be Thou my refuge, O Master, Śaṅkara.

[3]

भवता जनता सुहिता भविता
 निजबोधविचारण चारुमते ।
 कल्येश्वरजीवावेकविदं
 भव शंकर देशिक मे शरणम् ॥ ३ ॥

*bhavatā janatā suhitā bhavitā
 nijabodhavicāraṇa cārumate
 kalayēśvarajīvavivekavidāḥ
 bhava śaṅkara deśika me śaraṇam.*

By Thee the masses have been made happy, O Thou who hast a noble intellect skilled in the inquiry into self-knowledge! Enable me to understand the wisdom relating to God and the soul. Be Thou my refuge, O master, Śaṅkara.

[4]

भव एव भवानिति मे नितरां
 समजायत चेतसि कौतुकिता ।
 मम वारय मोहमहाजलधिं
 भव शंकर देशिक मे शरणम् ॥ ४ ॥





*bhava eva bhavaniti me nitarām
 samajāyata cetasi kautukitā
 mama vāraya mohamahājaladhīn
 bhava śaṅkara deśika me śaraṇam*

Knowing that Thou art verily the Supreme Lord, there arises overwhelming bliss in my heart. Protect me from the vast ocean of delusion. Be Thou my refuge, O Master, Śaṅkara.

[5]

सुकृतेऽधिकृते बहुधा भवतो
 भविता समदर्शनलालसता ।
 अतिदीनमिमं परिपालय मां
 भव शंकर देशिक मे शरणम् ॥ ५ ॥

*sukṛte' dhikṛte bahudhā bhavato
 bhavitā samadarśanalālasatā
 atidīnamimam paripālaya mām
 bhava śaṅkara deśika me śaraṇam.*

Desire for the insight into unity through Thee will spring only when virtuous deeds are performed in abundance and in various directions. Protect this extremely helpless person. Be Thou my refuge, O Master, Śaṅkara.

[6]

जगतीमवितुं कलिताकृतयो
 विचरन्ति महामहसश्छलतः ।
 अहिमांशुर्वात्र विभासि गुरो
 भव शंकर देशिक मे शरणम् ॥

jagatīmavitum kalitākṛtayo
vicaranti mahāmahasaśchalataḥ
ahimāṁśurivatra vibhāsi guro
bhava śaṅkara deśika me śaraṇam.

O Teacher! For saving the world the great assume various forms and wander in disguise. Of them, Thou shinest like the Sun. Be Thou my refuge, O Master, Śaṅkara.

[7]

गुरुपुंगव पुंगवकेतन ते
 समतामयतां नहि कोऽपि सुधीः ।
 शरणागतवत्सल तत्त्वनिधे
 भव शंकर देशिक मे शरणम् ॥ ७ ॥

gurupuṅgava puṅgava ketana te
samatāmayatāṁ nahī ko'pi sudhīḥ
śaraṇāgatavatsala tattvanidhe
bhava śaṅkarā deśika me śaraṇam.





O the best of Teachers! The Supreme Lord having the bull as banner! None of the wise is equal to Thee! Thou who art compassionate to those who have taken refuge! The Treasure-trove of truth! Be Thou my refuge, O Master Śaṅkara.

[8]

विदिता न मया विशदैककला
 न च किञ्चन काञ्चनमस्ति गुरो ।
 द्रुतमेव विधेहि कृपां सहजां
 भव शंकरदेशिकमे शरणम् ॥ ८ ॥

*viditā na mayā viśadaikakalā
 na ca kiñcana kāñcanamasti guro
 drutameva vidhehi kṛpām sahojām
 bhava śaṅkara deśika me śaraṇam.*

Not even a single branch of knowledge has been understood by me correctly. Not even the least wealth do I possess, O Teacher. Bestow on me quickly Thy natural grace. Be Thou my refuge, O Master, Śaṅkara,

Sri Sankaracarya and Brahma-Vidya*

Sri S. R. Krishnamurti Sastri

Hon. Professor of Sanskrit, Sanskrit College, Madras.

शङ्कराश्लेषविलसदानन्दामृतनिर्मराम् ।

विम्बोत्तं सितपादाब्जां ब्रह्मविद्यां विभावये ।

In general, Indian philosophy may be said to have arisen out of the need to overcome the suffering found in life. The ancient Indians were mainly concerned with the problem of removing suffering as is revealed by the fact that all the systems of philosophy are oriented towards *mokṣa* which represents the state of absolute freedom from suffering. The course of discipline for attaining the goal of *mokṣa* is also laid down in all the systems of Indian philosophy. The important constituents of this discipline are taught in common in

* Translated by Dr. N. Veezhinathan.

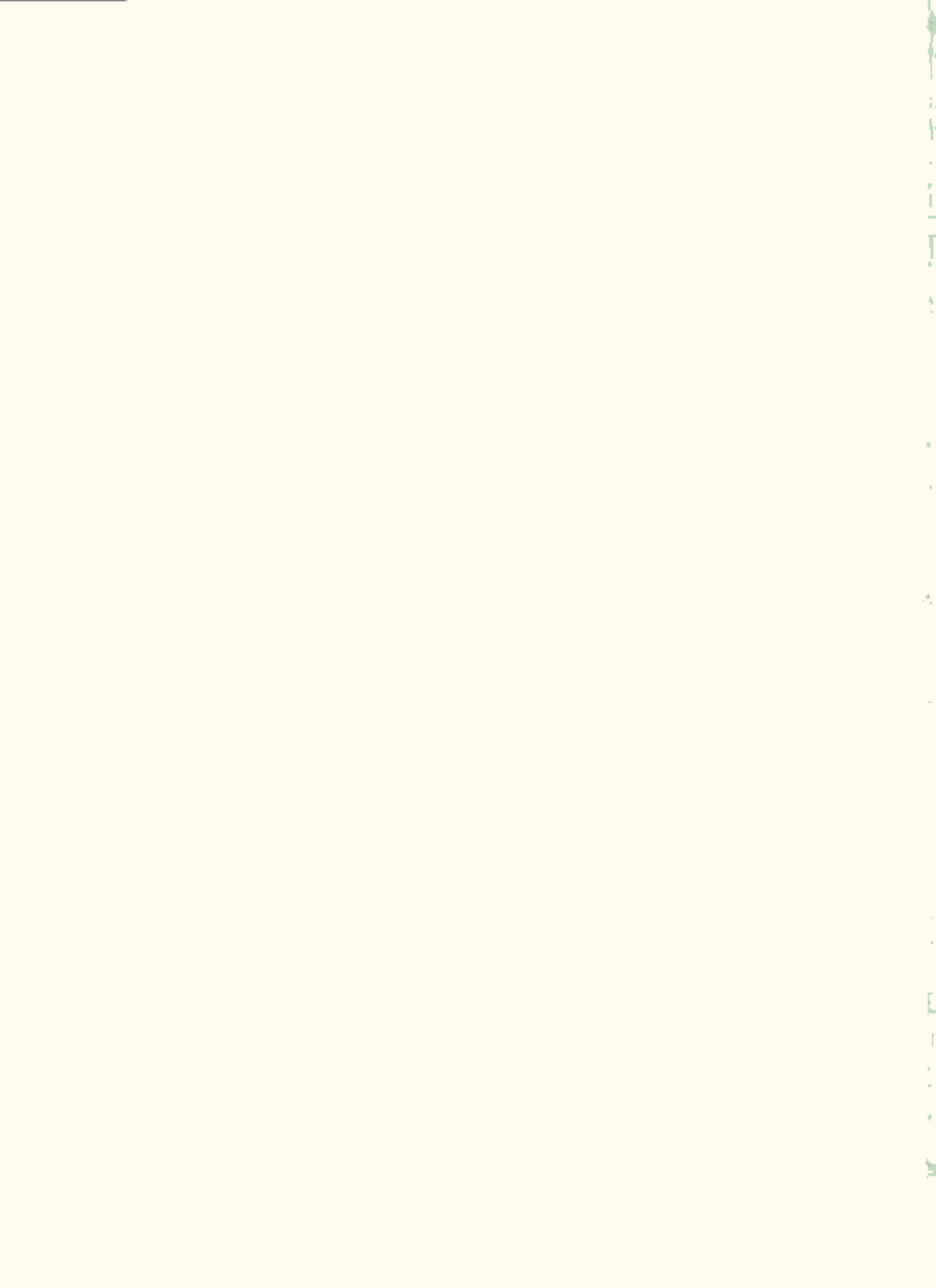


all the systems of philosophy — Vedic as well as non-Vedic. They are detachment (*vairāgya*) and self-knowledge (*jñāna*).

Śrī Saṅkara's philosophy of Advaita involves the doctrine of *avidyā* or *māyā*. It is based on the *prasthānatraya* — the triple canon of the Vedānta, that is, the *Upaniṣad-s*, the *Bhagavad-gītā*, and the *Brahma-sūtra*. The distinguishing feature of this school is the doctrine that the material world is an illusion. It is therefore frequently referred to as *māyā-vāda*. The ultimate reality is termed *Brahman* which is absolute consciousness and bliss. Owing to *avidyā*, it appears as *Īśvara*, *jīva*, and the world. The universe as such is indeterminable either as real or as unreal. The *jīva* is to realize its identity with *Brahman*. To remain as *Brahman* is the ultimate goal, that is, liberation. And this is possible only by overcoming *avidyā*. *Avidyā* has *Brahman* as its content (*viśaya*) and hence it could be removed only by the direct knowledge (*sākṣātkāra*) of the identity of the inner self (*Ātman*) which is the essential nature of *jīva* with the supreme self (*Brahman*) which is the essential nature of *Īśvara*. The formulation by Śrī Saṅkara of Advaita in a systematic form and in alliance with the doctrine of *avidyā* has established the way of knowledge as the sole means of liberation.

From the above it follows that according to Advaita there are only two categories — *dṛk* and *dṛśya* or spirit and matter. The former is three-fold as *Brahman*, *Īśvara*, and *jīva*, while the latter is two-fold as *māyā* and the phenomenal world.

We shall now deal with these factors successively.





BRAHMAN

There are Upaniṣadic texts which convey *Brahman* as attributeless (*nirguṇa*) and formless (*nirākāra*). There are other texts which convey *Brahman* as having attributes (*saguṇa*) and forms (*sākāra*). The *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* text (III, viii, 8) ' *Brahman* is not gross, not fine, not short, not long, without sound, without touch, without form, immutable,' etc., conveys *Brahman* to be free from quality and form. And the *Chāndogya* text (III, xiv, 2) 'He cherishes all (righteous) desires, contains all (pleasant) odours, and is endowed with all tastes etc.,' conveys *Brahman* as having qualities. In the same way the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* text ' Verily, there are two forms of *Brahman*: gross and subtle, mortal and immortal, limited and unlimited, definite and indefinite,' declares *Brahman* to have forms. When such is the case, how are we to conclude as to the exact nature of *Brahman*?

The author of the *Brahma-sūtra* in the aphorism (III, ii, 11) answers this by saying that *Brahman* by itself cannot have these two contradictory features, as it is opposed to experience. It may be said that *Brahman* by itself is free from all attributes, but by its association with a limiting adjunct it acquires qualities and forms which are real. This contention is not correct; for the true nature of a thing cannot change because of its association with some limiting adjuncts. Redness in a crystal which is colourless is caused by the redness of a flower placed by its side and it is not real. Similarly the qualities and forms in *Brahman* which is pure consciousness are caused by *avidyā* and hence they are not real. Of the two aspects of *Brahman* set forth in the Upaniṣadic texts, one has to accept that which is free from all attributes as its true nature.¹

As regards the forms mentioned in the Upaniṣads with reference to *Brahman*, every such form, as it is brought about by *avidyā*, is denied of *Brahman* in other texts that are negative in character. The Kaṭhōpaniṣadic text (IV, 11) 'He goes from death to death who perceives anything like variety here' teaches that manifoldness in *Brahman* is not true by condemning those who see difference in it. From these it is clear that forms and qualities in *Brahman* are not true and that there is only one formless principle. The distinctive qualities and forms are brought about by *avidyā* and the passages which set them forth are not without a purpose. This teaching is useful for meditative worship of *Brahman* as associated with qualities and forms.²

The foregoing discussion may be summed up as follows: the Upaniṣadic texts convey *Brahman* as consciousness, bliss, and absolute. It is the sole reality and it appears as *Īśvara*, *jīva* and the world owing to its association with *māyā-avidyā*.

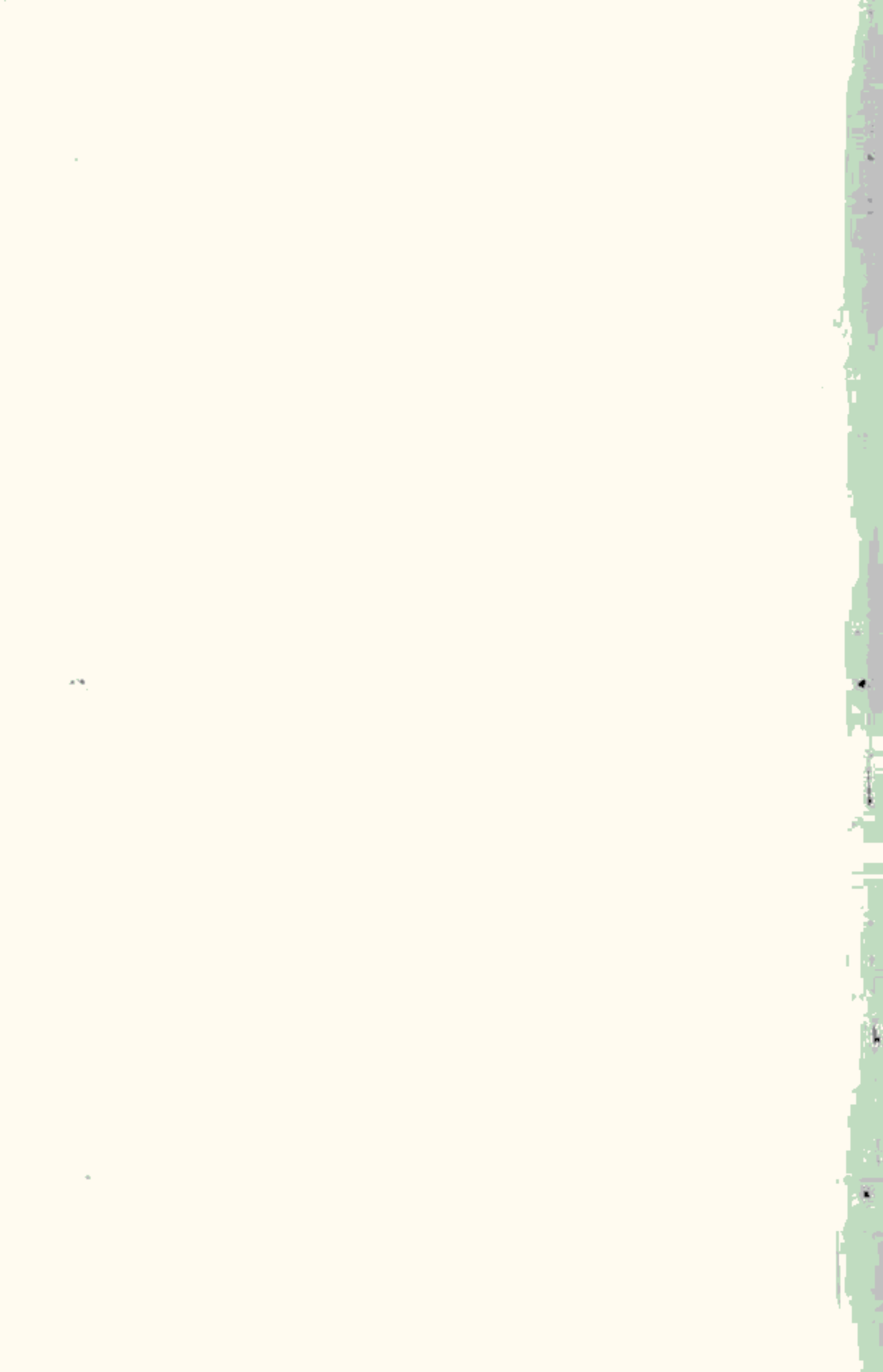
MĀYĀ - AVIDYĀ

The *Taittiriya* text (III, i, 1) 'That from which these beings arise, by which the created beings are sustained, That into which they lapse back at the time of dissolution—seek to know That; That is *Brahman*' states that *Brahman* is the cause of the world. Now the question arises as to how *Brahman* which is pure consciousness and is attributeless could be the cause of the universe. It is in order to account for the rise of the universe from *Brahman* of this nature that the *Svetāśvatara* text (I, 3) 'The sages absorbed in meditation discovered the *creative power* which is present in

Brahman and which consists of the three strands of *sattva*, *rajas*, and *tamas*' introduces the principle of *māyā*. The same text (IV, 10), 'Know *māyā* to be the primal cause of the world....' speaks of *māyā* as the primal cause of the world.

In his commentary on the *Kaṣho'paniṣad* (III, 11) Śrī Saṅkara states that the root-cause of the world is referred to by such terms as *avyākṛtākāśa* and the like. He says: before the creation of the world, the power which is the seed, as it were, of the whole world and which is designated as *avyākṛtākāśa*, etc., has within itself in a latent form, the entire world, as the tiny banyan seed has in it hidden the capacity to generate a banyan tree. It is like the warp and woof in *Brahman*'.³

Māyā is the transformative material cause of the world and it corresponds to the *prakṛti* or the *pradhāna* of the Sāṅkhya system. There is, however, a vital difference which distinguishes the one from the other. The *pradhāna* of the Sāṅkhya system is conceived of as the source of the world by being independent of the Puruṣa or the Spirit. But *māyā* in Advaita is considered to be the primordial cause of the world by being dependent upon *Brahman*. Śrī Saṅkara notices this distinction in his commentary on the *Brahma-sūtra* and points out that the Advaitins do not follow the line of argument of the Sāṅkhya in accounting for the rise of the universe.⁴ He further proceeds to point out: the root-cause of the world is of the nature of *avidyā*; it is designated by the word *avyakta*; it is dependent on *parameśvara*; it is of the nature of *māyā*; it is the great sleep. And, in it the *jīva-s*, having lost sight of their identity with *Brahman*, rest'.⁵





It follows from the above that *māyā* and *avidyā* are identical. And, *Brahman* associated with *avidyā* is the cause of the world.

ĪSVARA AND JĪVA

Avidyā makes *Brahman* appear as *Īśvara* and *jīva*. *Brahman* associated with *avidyā* is *Īśvara* and *Brahman* associated with mind — the product of *avidyā*—is *jīva*.

We have already noted that certain Upaniṣadic passages convey *Brahman* as attributeless and some other passages convey it as having attributes. Śrī Saṅkara notices this distinction between two forms of *Brahman*, one which is without attributes and the other which is conceived with attributes for the purpose of devout meditation. He says: the Upaniṣadic texts teach *Brahman* which is free from attributes in order that it may be realized, and they teach *Brahman* with attributes in order that it may be worshipped.⁶ It follows from this that *Brahman* which is non-dual can only be realized, and *Brahman* which is possessed of attributes can only be worshipped.

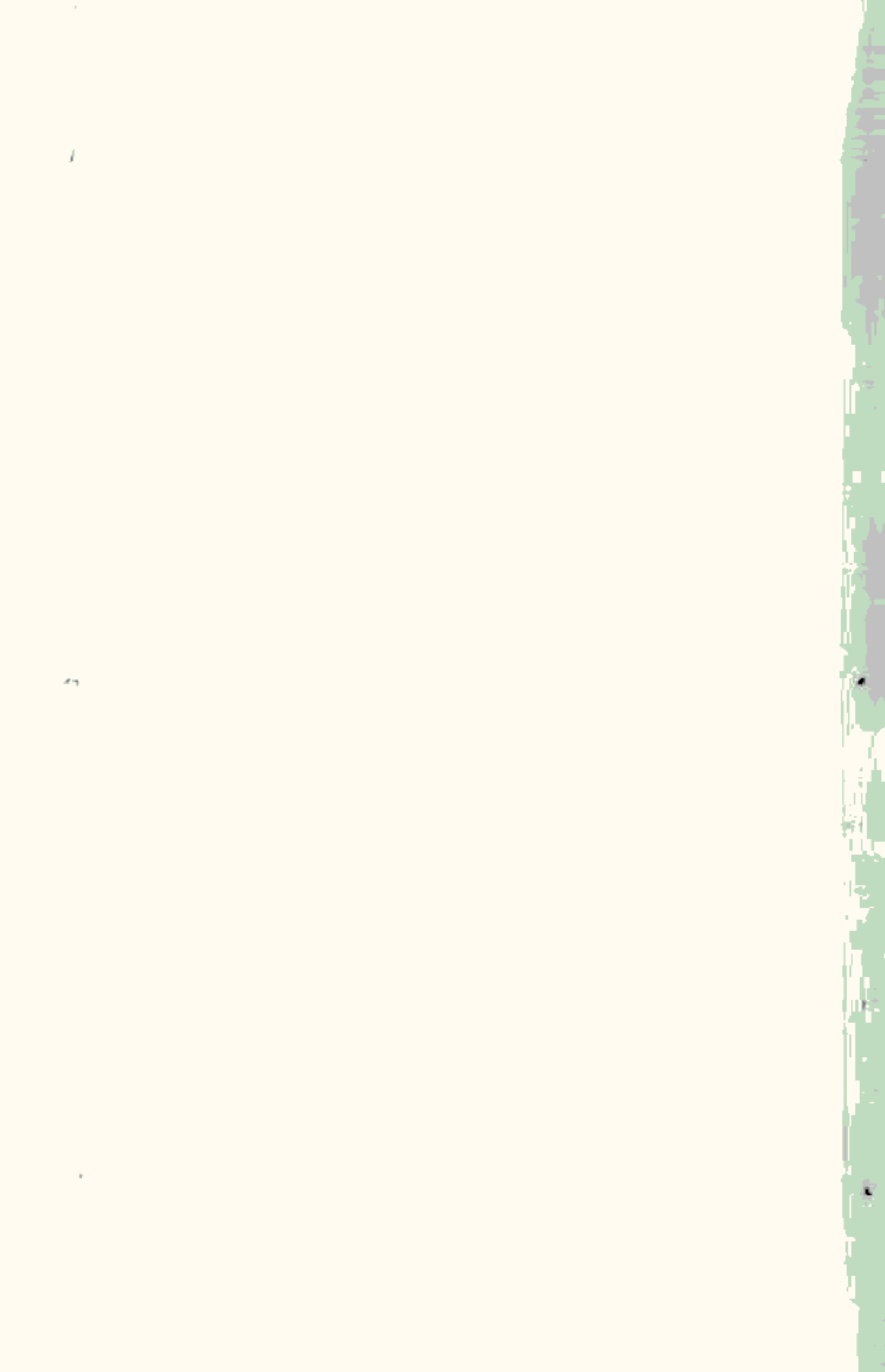
The realization of *Brahman* which is free from all characteristics is the direct means to liberation. But to men of average intellect, this is not possible. For them, the worship of *saguṇa-Brahman* or *Brahman* which is possessed of attributes, that is, *Īśvara*, is intended. Those who worship *Īśvara* reach the world of *Hiranyagarbha* and there they attain the knowledge of *Brahman* by pursuing Vedāntic study, reflection, and meditation, and are liberated. Śrī Saṅkara in his commentary on the *Brahma-sūtra* (IV, iii, 11) cites a passage from the *Kūrma-purāṇa* which states that those who have reached

the world of *Hiranyagarbha* attain the knowledge of *nirguṇa-Brahman* there and are liberated along with *Hiranyagarbha* at the end of this cosmic age.⁷

The *Chāndogya* text (I, vi, 6). 'He the Puruṣa that is seen in the sun is golden in colour; His beard is golden; hair is golden, everything unto the tip of the nails is golden,' etc., speaks of *Brahman* as having a form. Śrī Sañkara in his commentary on the *Brahma-sūtra* (I, i, 20) which discusses the above text states that *Īśvara*, out of His own will, takes an illusory form in order to bestow grace upon His worshippers.⁸

At this stage it is essential to say a few words about the doctrine of incarnation in Advaita. One of the incarnations of Lord Viṣṇu is Kṛṣṇa. In the *Bhagavad-gītā*, Lord Kṛṣṇa states the process of His incarnation. He says: 'I am free from birth (*aja*) and death (*avyaya*). Although I am, by nature, the Lord of all creatures, Yet I am born by my own *māyā*.'⁹ It is clear from this that *Īśvara*, through *māyā* or *avidyā*, and not in reality, appears in the form of Kṛṣṇa and other incarnations.

Śrī Sañkara in his preface to his commentary on the *Bhagavad-gītā* says: 'When *dharma* was overpowered by *a-dharma*.....Lord Viṣṇu, in order to maintain order in the universe incarnated Himself as Kṛṣṇa.'¹⁰ The words in the commentary corresponding to the phrase, 'incarnated Himself' are *aṁśena sambabhūva*. Ānandagiri, a commentator on Śrī Sañkara's *bhāṣya* on the *Bhagavad-gītā* explains the word *aṁśena* to mean *svicchānirmitena māyāmayena svarūpeṇa*, that is 'in an illusory form created by His own Will.'





Śrī Śaṅkara further preceeds to say: 'The Lord, always possessed as He is of (infinite) knowledge, supremacy, power, strength, might, and vigour, controls His *māyā*, the primal cause which is composed of three constituents, and He *appears* to the world *as though* He is born and embodied and helping the world at large; whereas really He is unborn and indestructible, is the Lord of all creatures, and is by nature eternal, pure, consciousness, and ever-released.'

From the above it follows that *Īśvara* illusorily appears as born and embodied while in fact He is unborn und unembodied.

This part of the discussion may be summed up by saying that *Brahman* associated with *avidyā* is *Īśvara*. *Īśvara*, out of His own will, takes illusory forms such as Viṣṇu, Brahmā, and Śiva, and further incarnates Himself as Kṛṣṇa, Rāma and other forms in order to bestow grace upon His worshippers.

Īśvara is the source of the universe and also the goal of meditation. He is quite independent of *avidyā*, unlike *jīva*-s who are subject to its influence. *Avidyā* does not conceal His true nature (*Brahman*) from Him. He is, therefore, omniscient and ever-released.

Brahman associated with mind attains to the state of *jīva*, and falsely identifying itself with mind and its qualities, it appears as a knower, an agent, and an experient. It is all-pervasive; yet, owing to its association with mind it is viewed as finite. *Avidyā* conceals the true nature of *Brahman* from it and consequently *jīva* has lost sight of its identity with its true nature, that is, *Brahman*, and experiences the recurring cycle of births and deaths.

It comes to this: *Brahman*, the only reality, appears as *Īśvara* and *jīva*. The limiting adjunct of *Īśvara* is *avidyā* over which He has absolute control. He is omniscient and ever-released. The limiting adjunct of *jīva* is mind which influences it. *Jīva*, therefore, is ignorant and bound. The difference between *jīva* and *Īśvara* is thus caused by *avidyā* and other limiting adjuncts.

Śrī Saṅkara in his commentary on the *Brahma-sūtra* (II, iii, 30) says: 'As long as the *jīva* is associated with the adjunct-mind, so long only is the *jīva*, a *jīva*. In reality, however, there is nothing like *jīva*-hood apart from what is fancied to be such by reason of this adjunct.'¹² He proceeds to point out: 'this relation of *Ātman* (*Brahman*) with mind has but *avidyā* as its source, and this *avidyā* cannot be removed by anything other than the correct knowledge (that is, the knowledge of identity between *Ātman* and *Brahman*). Hence this relation with mind does not cease so long as the identity of *Ātman* and *Brahman* is not realized.'¹³

It should be noted that Śrī Saṅkara speaks of the knowledge of identity between *Ātman* and *Brahman* to be correct knowledge. This is as it should be; for, there can be no identity of *jīva* as such with *Brahman* because *jīva* as such is associated with the characteristics of being an agent and an experient while *Brahman* is free from any attribute. It is only the essential nature of *jīva* which is referred to as *Ātman* in the *Upaniṣad-s* that is identical with or more strictly non-different from *Brahman*. The point that is of importance here is that *jīva* free from its relation to mind and its characteristics is pure consciousness. It is referred to as *Ātman* which is identical with *Brahman*.



The knowledge of identity of *Ātman* and *Brahman* is correct knowledge.

In the *Chāndogyo'paniṣad* it is said that Sanatkumāra while imparting the knowledge of ultimate reality to Nārada refers to the reality as truth (VII, xvii, 1), as bliss (VII, xxii, 1), and as *bhūmā*, (VII, xxiii, 1) and states that all this is *bhūmā* (VII, xxv, 1). He then proceeds to say that all this is (the content of) I, that is, *jīva* (VII, xxv, 1). When it is said that all this is *bhūmā* and all this is the content of 'I,' it comes to this that *bhūmā*, that is, *Brahman* which is bliss is identical with the content of 'I' which is associated with misery, etc., And this is not possible. What the Upaniṣadic text means is that *bhūmā* or *Brahman* is identical with the essential nature of the content of 'I' which is pure consciousness and bliss and which is referred to as *Ātman*. This the *Chāndogyā* text (VII, xxv, 2) makes clear when it says that all this is *Ātman*.

From what has been said so far it would have become clear that *jīva* should attain the knowledge that its essential nature is none other than *Brahman* and this knowledge is correct knowledge which removes *avidyā*,

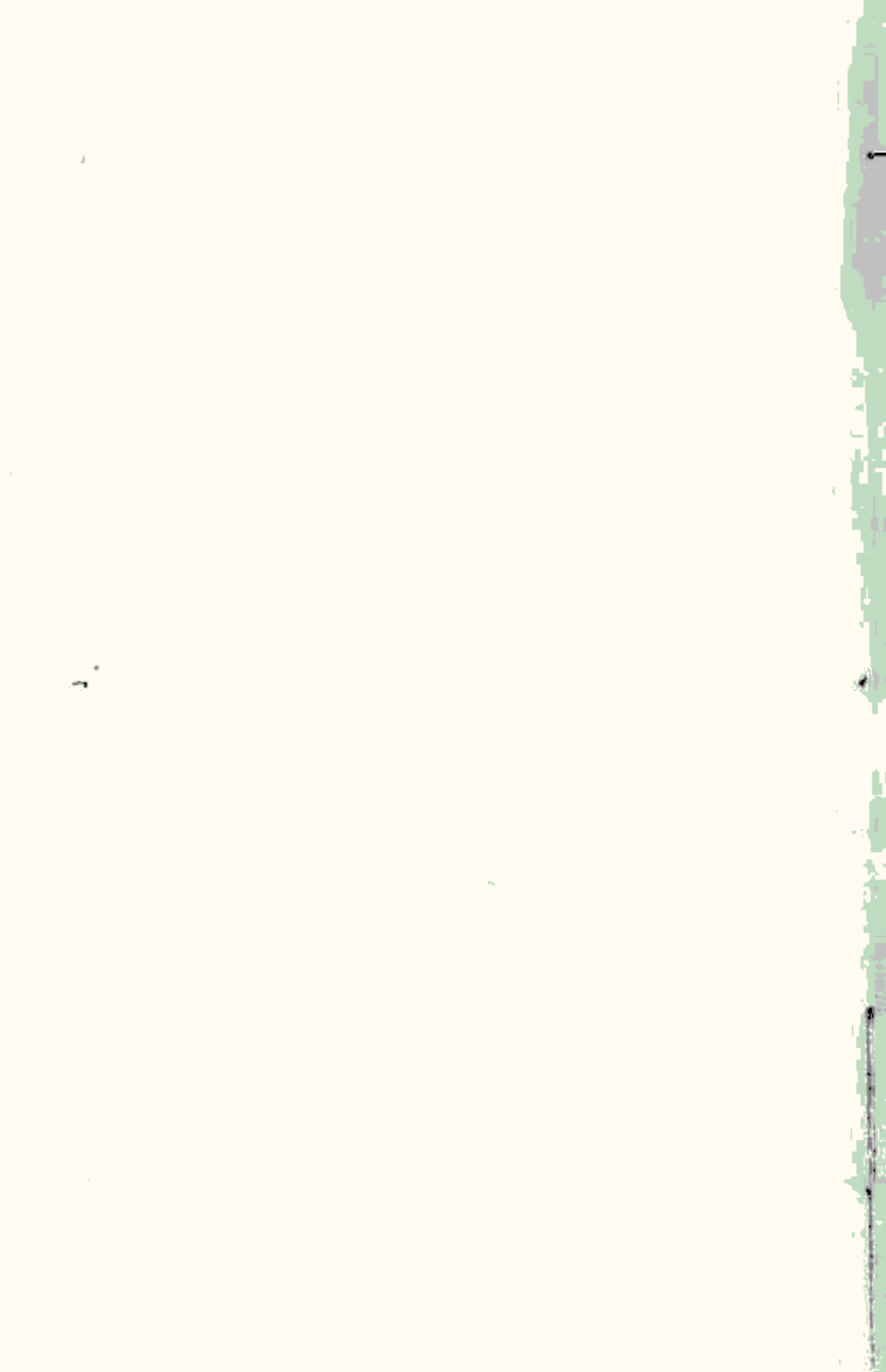
WORLD

In order to account for the rise of the world, the Advaita advocates the theory of transfiguration (*vivarta-vāda*). According to this theory, the cause appears as the effect without itself undergoing any change whatsoever. Viewed in the light of this theory, *Brahman* appears as the world, and being the substratum of the appearance of the world, it is its transfigurative

material cause (*vivarto'pādāna*). The principle that accounts for the illusory presentation of *Brahman* as the world is *avidyā* which is present in *Brahman*. This is known as *Brahma-vivarta-vāda* in contrast with the view known as *Brahma-pariṇāma-vāda* which holds that the world is the transformation of *Brahman*. The latter theory does not hold good for the following reason: if the whole of *Brahman* is transformed into the world, then *Brahman* would cease to exist, and there is no point in saying that *Brahman* is eternal. If, on the other hand, we hold that a part of *Brahman* is transformed, then it amounts to saying that *Brahman* is capable of being divided into parts. This would be a direct violation of the Upaniṣadic texts which declare that *Brahman* is partless. This leads us to conclude that *Brahman* which is partless ever remains the same. It does not undergo any change, though through *avidyā* it is the ground of the phenomenal world. The latter is only an appearance (*vivarta*) of *Brahman* and not a transformation (*pariṇāma*).

The difference between *pariṇāma* and *vivarta* is that in the former the effect is a real production from the cause and hence quite as real as the cause; in the latter, the effect belongs to a lower order and hence a mere appearance.

One objection is raised as to the conclusion that the world is only an appearance (*vivarta*) of *Brahman* and as such it is not real. And that objection is: if *Brahman* alone is the truth, then ordinary means of right knowledge, perception, etc., become invalid, since the absence of manifoldness deprives them of their objects. Again, the Vedic texts embodying injunctions and prohibitions, and the Upaniṣadic texts referring to



mokṣa lose their meaning if the world does not exist. Further, if *Brahman* alone is real, there is no room for the distinction of a god who rules, and the world and the souls ruled by him. Devotion to personal god would therefore be an impossibility. Moreover, the passages of the Vedānta also are not real, as they belong to the phenomenal world which is not real. Hence they cannot convey the truth of the identity of *Ātman* with *Brahman*.

Sri Saṅkara in his commentary on the *Brahma-sūtra* (II, i, 14) answers this objection. He points out that the entire phenomenal world does not exist for him who has realized his identity with *Brahman*; and, for him there is no distinction of god who rules and the souls and the world which are ruled. The author of the *Brahma-sūtra* advocates the *vivarta-vāda*, that is the theory that the world is an appearance of *Brahman* and, therefore, not real from the standpoint of the absolute reality.¹⁴ But so long as the knowledge of *Brahman* has not arisen, the entire complex of phenomenal existence is taken as true, even as the phantasms of a dream are taken as true until the sleeper awakes.¹⁵ It is from this standpoint that the author of *Brahma-sūtra* holds (II, i, 13) as a *prima facie* view the *pariṇāma-vāda*, that is, the theory that the world is a transformation (*pariṇāma*) of *Brahman*. The world is treated as real. *Īśvara* is considered to be omniscient and omnipotent. *Jīva* is held to be different from *Īśvara*. This theory, therefore, preserves empirical activity which requires difference in the form of means of knowledge, objects of knowledge and knowledge itself. The world is treated as real and the injunctive and prohibitive Vedic texts and also the Vedānta texts dealing with the nature and means of

release are fully significant.¹⁰ But these are all real until the rise of the knowledge of *Brahman*.

The Upaniṣadic texts, although ultimately not real, yet could convey the identity of *Brahman-Ātman* which is real. Śrī Saṅkara in his commentary on the *Brahma-sūtra* (II, i, 14) elucidates this point with suitable illustrations. He says that death which is real occurs sometimes as a result of the mere suspicion that a venomous snake has bitten. The *Aitareya-Āraṇyaka* text (III, ii, iv, 7) declares that the perception of aperture in the sun which is not real indicates death which is real. The author of the *Brahma-sūtra* declares (III, ii, 4) that dream is an illusion and yet it is indicative of future good or evil that is real. From this it is clear that an event in the dream though not real indicates an actual future event. In the same way, the Upaniṣadic texts though not real can convey the truth of identity of *Brahman-Ātman*.

To sum up: the entire phenomenal world is considered to be real so long as the knowledge of *Brahman* has not arisen. When the latter arises, the world as such is sublated. *Īśvara* is ever-released and so there is no question of his attaining liberation. It is only *jīva* which undergoes transmigration that has to realise that its true nature is none other than *Brahman*. It would then remain as *Brahman* which is liberation.

LIBERATION

Jīva, while being *Brahman*, falsely identifies itself with psycho-physical organism brought about by *avidyā* and is viewed as finite and ignorant. When the characteristics of finitude, etc., which are





brought about by *avidyā* are removed, *jīva* realizes its true nature as *Brahman*. It then remains as *Brahman* which is liberation. Liberation, therefore, does not consist in becoming something. It only means the discovery of what has always been a fact. What is necessary is the removal of finitude, etc., pertaining to *jīva* and they could be removed only by the removal of their cause, that is, *avidyā*. *Avidyā* is removed by the intuitive knowledge of its content, namely, *Brahman*.

In order to render the acquisition of such knowledge possible, the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-Upaniṣad* (IV, ii, 22) prescribes as a preliminary the performance of duties belonging to one's class and stage in life without any attachment toward their fruits. This cleanses one's heart and one has to give up the performance of one's duties belonging to one's class and stage in life after this result is achieved. The aspirant then comes to have the knowledge of the distinction between what is real and what is non-real. This gives rise to detachment towards the enjoyment of fruits of one's actions in the shape of desirable objects in this and other worlds. This, in turn, leads to the acquisition of the qualities, namely, control of mind, control of external senses, abstention from works, endurance of opposites like cold and heat, etc. power of concentration and faith in the teaching of the Upaniṣads as imparted by the preceptor.¹⁷ Then he has to pursue Vedāntic study (*śravaṇa*) and then practise reflection (*manana*), and meditation (*nididhyāsana*).

Śravaṇa brings forth the conviction that *Brahman* which is absolute is the true import of the *Upaniṣad-s*. It is supplemented by reflection which is arguing with-

in oneself with a view to gaining conviction that the import of the *Upaniṣad-s* is true. This training is to be further supplemented by meditation, which assists directly in the realization within oneself of the identity of *Brahman*. To an aspirant who has undergone formal study, reflection and meditation, there arises the knowledge of the identity of his essential nature with *Brahman*. Thereby *avidyā* is annihilated and *jīva* is freed from the characteristics of finitude, etc. It, however, continues to live in the body till its fructified deeds are exhausted by experiencing their fruits. This state is known as *jīvanmukti*. Then when the deeds are exhausted, the *jīvanmukta* is dissociated from the psycho-physical organism and remains as *Brahman*. And this is *videha-mukti*.

CONCLUSION

Śrī Sañkara who, as Padmapāda states, is the foremost among the knowers of the truth,¹⁹ says in the preface to his commentary on the *Brahma-sūtra* that in order to achieve the direct knowledge of the identity of *Brahman-Ātman*, the *Upaniṣadic* texts are studied and their import is enquired into.¹⁹ In his commentary on the *Kaṣho'paniṣad* he exhorts us to give up our belief in variety which is based on vicious logic, to discard also the misconception of nihilism and to accept, repressing our self-esteem, the oneness of the Self as taught in the *Upaniṣads* which are a thousand times better well-wishers of man than even his parents²⁰.





NOTES

1. अतश्च अन्यतरङ्गिणपरिचयेऽपि समस्तविशेषरहितं निर्विकल्पकमेव ब्रह्म प्रतिपत्तव्यं, न तद्विऽपरीतम् ।

Saṅkara's Commentary on the *Brahma-sūtra*, III, ii, 11.

2. एवजातीयकेषु यावयेषु यथाश्रुतं निराकारमेव ब्रह्म अवधारयितव्यम् । इतराणि तु आकारवदब्रह्मविषयाणि वाक्यानि न तत्प्रधानानि । उपासनाविधिप्रधानानि हि तानि ।

Ibid, III, ii, 14.

3. '...सर्वस्य जगतः बीजभूतं अव्याकृतनामरूपं सत्तत्त्व सर्वकार्यकारण-शक्तिसमाहाररूपं अव्यक्तं अव्याकृताकाशादिनामवाच्यं परमात्मनि ओतप्रोतभावेन समाश्रितं बटकणिकामिव बटकृशशक्तिः' ।

Sri Saṅkara's Commentary on the *Kaṣho'paniṣad*, III, 11.

4. 'यदि वयं सतन्त्रां काश्चित् प्रागवस्थां जगतः कारणत्वेन अभ्युपगच्छेम, प्रसङ्गमेव तदा प्रधानकारणवादम्; परमेश्वराचीना तु इयमस्माभिः प्रागवस्था जगतोऽभ्युपगम्यते, न सतन्त्रा ।'

Sri Saṅkara's Commentary on the *Brahma-sūtra*, I, iv, 3.

5. 'अविद्यात्मिका हि बीजशक्तिः अव्यक्तशब्दनिर्देश्या मायामयी महा-सुषुप्तिः, यस्यां शेरते स्वरूपप्रतिबोधरहिताः संसारिणो जीवाः' ।

Ibid.

6. एकमपि अपेक्षितोपाधिसंबन्धं निरस्तोपाधिसंबन्धं च उपास्य-त्वेन श्रेयत्वेन वेदान्तेषु उपदिश्यते ।

Ibid, I, i, 12.

7. ब्रह्मणा सह ते सर्वे संप्राप्ते प्रतिसहारे । परस्यान्ते कृतात्मानः प्रविशन्ति परं पदम् ।

कूर्मपुराणम्—पूर्वभागः,

XII 269.

8. स्यात् ईश्वरस्यापि इच्छावशात् मायामयं रूपं साधकानुपहार्यम् ।
 9. अजोऽपि सन्नव्ययात्मा भूतानामीश्वरोऽपि सन् । प्रकृतिं क्षामन्निष्ठाय
 स भवाम्यात्ममायया ।

Bhagavad-gītā, VI, 6.

10. '...कामोद्भवाद्दीपमान विवेकविज्ञानहेतुकेन जघर्मेण अभिमूयमाने धर्मे
 प्रवर्धमाने चाधर्मे जगतः स्थितिं परिपालयिषुः ऽ आदिकर्ता
 नारायणारूपो विष्णुः.....देवक्यां वासुदेवांशेन किल्बिंसम्बभूव'
 11. स च भगवान् जानैश्वर्यशक्तिबलवीर्यतेजोभिः सदा संपन्नः त्रिगुणात्मिकां
 देवकीं सां मायां मूलप्रकृतिं तर्शीकृत्य अजोऽव्ययो भूतानां ईश्वरः
 नित्यशुद्धबुद्धमुक्तश्चमावोऽपि सन् स्वप्नमयं देहवानिव जात इव च
 लोकानुपहं कुर्वन्निव लक्षणे ।

Sri Saṅkara's commentary on Brahma-sūtra, I, iii, 30.

12. 'यावदव चायं बुद्धशुभाधिसंबन्धः तावदेवास्य जीवत्वं संसारित्वं च;
 परमार्थतस्तु न जीवो नाम बुद्धशुभाधिसंबन्धपरिकल्पितस्वरूप-
 व्यतिरेकेण अस्ति'

Ibid.

13. 'अपि च मिथ्याज्ञानपुरस्सरोऽयं आत्मनो बुद्धशुभाधिसंबन्धः न च
 मिथ्याज्ञानस्य सम्यग्ज्ञानादन्यत्र निवृत्तिरस्ति; इत्यतः यावत्
 ब्रह्मात्मतानवबोधः तावदयं बुद्धशुभाधिसंबन्धः न शाम्यति'

14. सूत्रकारोऽपि परमार्थाभिप्रायेण तदनन्वयत्वमित्याह—

Sri Saṅkara's Commentary on the Brahma-sūtra, II, i, 14

15. 'सर्वव्यवहाराणामेव प्राग्ब्रह्मात्मताविज्ञानात् सत्यत्वोपपत्तेः, सप्र-
 व्यवहारस्येव प्राग्प्रबोधात् ।'

Ibid.



16. 'अप्रत्याख्यायेव कायेप्रपञ्चं परिणामप्रक्रियां चाश्रयति सगुणेषु
उपयोक्ष्यत इति'

Ibid.

17. *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-Upaniṣad*, IV, IV, iv, 23.

18. ब्रह्मविदामेकपुण्डरीकस्य.....

Pañcapādikā (Madras Government Oriental Series,
No. CLV), p. 97.

19. ...आत्मैकत्वविद्याप्रतिपत्तये सर्वे वेदान्ताः आरभ्यन्ते ।

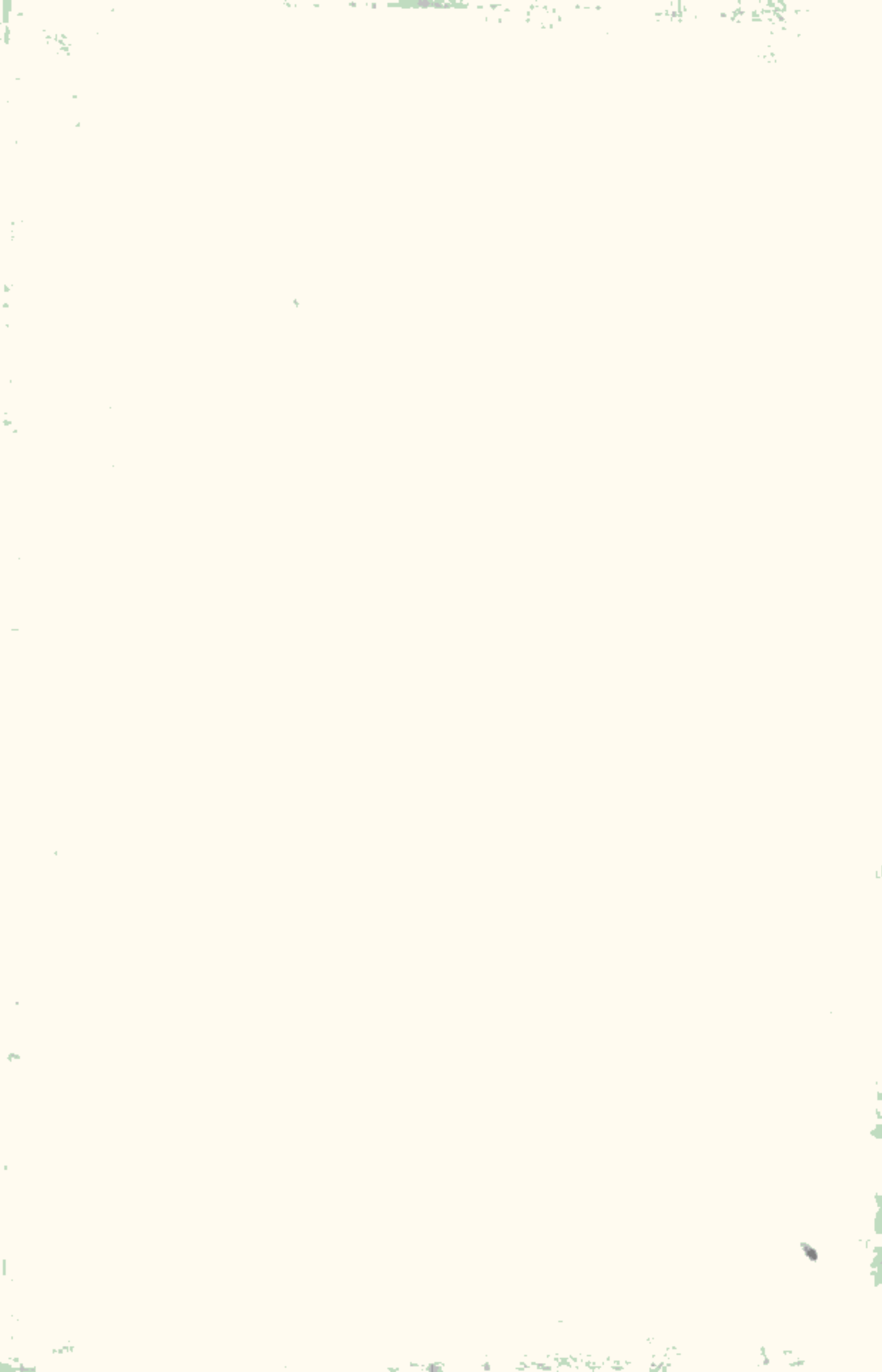
Adl. /śāra-bhāṣya-

20. तस्मात् कृतार्किकमप-ष्टिं नारिककुडाष्टं च उज्जित्वा मातापितृ-
सहस्रेभ्योऽपि हितैषिणा वेदेनोपदिष्टं आत्मैकत्वदर्शनं शान्तदर्पः
आदरणीयम् ।

Sri Śaṅkara's Commentary on Kaṭho'paniṣad, IV, 25.







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