



# THE VISION OF ĀTMAN

(YĀJNAVALKYA'S INITIATION OF MAITREYI  
INTO THE INTUITION OF REALITY)

By

SRI SRI SATCHIDĀNANDENDRA SARASWATI SWĀMIJI



ADHYĀTMA PRAKĀSHA KĀRYĀLAYA  
HOLENARSIPUR



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*(See the inside of the book cover)*

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**SRI SRI SATCHIDĀNANDENDRA SARASWATI  
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## ERRATA

<i>Page</i>	<i>Line</i>	<i>Printed</i>	<i>To be read as</i>
17	2 from below	second	second 'न'
18	7	सवान्तरः	सर्वान्तरः
19	3 from below	Insert the following sentence above line 2 from below: एको देवः सवभतेषु गूढः सवव्यापी सर्वभूतान्तरात्मा ।	
19	2 from below	एका	Delete this
27	9	लृतस्मा ..... तस्मा ..... तत्स्वरूप	तस्मा ..... तत्स्वरूप
33	6	तत्स्वरूप	तत्स्वरूप
38	5	ब्रह्मोदि	ब्रह्मोति
43	6	किञ्चदपे .....	किञ्चदपे .....
48	1	लृतस्मात् .....	तस्मात् .....
49	2	तावदुपनिषद्वा	तावदुपनिषद्वा
49	7 from below	obtained	obtained by
50	11 from below	Mandana an	Mandana and
51	3	नोत्पादयित	नोत्पादयितुं
54	11 from below	लृत्यतुनरुक्तं	यत्तुनरुक्तं
62	13	having come from	even while they have become one with

<i>Page</i>	<i>Line</i>	<i>Printed</i>	<i>To be read as</i>
67	9	Insert the following after the words 'with what' – there to whom could one taste and with what	
72	6	प्रतिमाति	प्रतिभाति
74	5 from below	वाहितः	वहितः
75	2	मनन्तान्यस्यैतानि	मनस्तान्यस्यैतानि
84	Last line	hat	that
87	1	तामापि	तमाप
87	3	परास्मिन्	परस्मिन्
89	Last line	and a	and all
98	9 from below	seen	see
104	8 from below	renounced	enoounced
106	8	an Manana	and Manana
110	5	चायमथाः सवषा वदान्ताना तथा वयमास्या	चायमर्थः सर्वेषां वेदान्तानां तथा वयमस्यां
110	7	(चतुष्टय) संपत्त्यनन्तर	(चतुष्टय) संपत्त्यनन्तर
119	1	नेदिनेत्या ...	नेतिनेत्या

**Errors which are obvious and can be easily noticed by the Reader have not been included in this errata.**

## **PUBLISHER'S NOTE**

**(First Edition)**

This is a revised version of the lectures delivered by Swāmi Satchidānandendra Saraswati Maharāj during the *S'āṅkara-Saptāha* celebration at Tarikere in the year 1968. Readers will welcome it as an elucidation of an important subject which has evoked differences of opinion from different interpreters of S'āṅkara.

We are grateful to Swāmiji for having entrusted the sole right of publishing this work as he has done before with regard to several of his writings. Our warm thanks are due to Sri G. Viswanātha Rao, No. 654, 'Laxminārāyaṇa Kripa', Viyāli Kāval, Malleswaram, Bangalore-3, whose generous contribution has partly met the printing expenses of the book.

Holenarsipur,  
20-11-1970.

Y. Narasappa  
Chairman, A. P. Karyalaya.

**(Second Edition)**

As there was an increasing demand for this enlightening work which is out of stock of Swāmiji, of revered memory, we have pleasure in bringing out this edition.

Holenarsipur,  
23-4-1995.

A. Thandaveshwar,  
Chairman, Mg. Com., A.P. Karyalaya.

# INTRODUCTION



## The Subject-matter of the Work

Perhaps there is no other point of S'āṅkara's interpretation of the Upanishads which has given rise to so many differences of opinion from his own followers as well as adverse critics, as the immediate Vision of Ātman and its direct means. (1) Is the so called vision a sort of immediate realization achieved through meditation and *Samādhi* or is it the resultant knowledge that dawns directly from the teaching of Vedāntic texts about Ātman ? (2) What is *S'ravana* ? (3) Is *Manana* (Vedāntic Reasoning) of the same type as reasoning employed in discussions regarding empirical phenomena, or is it something totally different in kind? (4) Why do S'āṅkara and other Advaitic Vedāntins repudiate *Tarka* (ratiocination) and yet indulge in reasoning about Ātman themselves ? (5) Is *Nididhyāsanam* a sort of meditation (*Upāsana*) on the Ātman as taught by the Upanishads or something of a different nature ? (6) Does this last means lead to *Samādhi* (Trance) wherein the true nature of Ātman is directly realized, or is the so-called Vision of Ātman altogether different from that achieved in *Samādhi* taught by Patanjali or other Yōgic Systems ? (7) Are all the three means to be practised in succession before the Vision of Ātman is attained, or can any one of them lead to

the vision itself ? (8) What is *Mōksha* or Immortality to be achieved by this Vision of Ātman ? Is it an end to be reached in this very life, or is it an eschatological result ? These and other questions have puzzled many a scholar who has studied the various interpretations of S'āṅkara. The controversy among the followers of S'āṅkara cannot be supposed to have subsided even to-day, for the view of Pandits of Vedāntic lore depends on the branch of S'āṅkara's interpretation-such as the Vivaraṇa and the Bhāmati-on which each one of them relies as more authoritative. Such is the subject-matter of the work now presented to the reader. Yet it is not to be discarded as merely of academic interest. For, it concerns the very *summum bonum* of life to attain which every earnest enquirer into the teachings of Vedānta aspires.

## **The Attitude of the Present Writer**

As a firm believer in the truth of S'āṅkara's Vedānta I have taken the proclamation of the *Kāthaka S'ruti* at its face value :-

यदा सर्वे प्रभिद्यन्ते हृदयस्येह ग्रन्थयः ।  
अथ मर्त्योमृतो भवत्येतावद्ध्यनुशासनम् ॥ का. ६-१५.

“When all the knots of the heart are untied, then and there the mortal man becomes immortal. This is the whole teaching.” Kā. 6-15.

Yājñavalkya also winds up his teaching by declaring 'एतावदर खल्वमृतत्वम्', 'Only so much, my dear, is the teaching concerning Immortality.' I am fully convinced that Yājñavalkya was speaking the eternal truth according to his conviction. He was referring to a universal truth when he said 'आत्मनि खल्वर दृष्टे श्रुते मते विज्ञाते इदं सर्वं विदितम्', 'When, my dear, Ātman is seen, heard about, reflected upon and contemplated on, all this universe becomes known.' (Br. 4-5-6). I have, therefore, stuck to the teaching of S'āṅkara when he says that when any person is concerned with the enquiry into the nature of Brahman as the universal Self, he has to rely on Vedāntic texts, not as an authority to be believed in, but to be verified by intuition also supported by Vedāntic Reasoning (न केवलं श्रुत्यादय एव प्रमाणम्; किंतिर्हि श्रुत्यादयोनुभवादयश्च यथासम्भवं प्रमाणम् ।)

### **The Method Adopted in this Work**

As in my recent work '*S'āṅkara's Clarification of Certain Vedāntic Concepts*', I have not only defined and explained what *Dars'ana*, *S'ravaṇa*, *Manana* and *Nididhyāsana* mean according to the Upanishads as interpreted by S'āṅkara, but also quoted directly from S'āṅkara, mostly from the *Sūtra-Bhāshya*, for my interpretation of the Upanishadic teaching regarding Intuition of Ātman and its means.

I have also shown where and how the sub-commentaries are not only in conflict with one

another, but also in direct opposition to S'āṅkara, by producing necessary vouchers from S'āṅkara's classical works and the respective sub-commentaries. The line of argument adopted appeals not only to the original writings of these commentators as compared with the Bhāshya, but also to reason based upon universal intuition.

## **The Contents**

The Table of Contents would convince any critical reader, I hope, that I have fairly exhausted all the important points that deserve to be discussed in connection with the teaching regarding knowledge of Ātman. The last section is expected to recapitulate all the relevant teachings of the Upanishads which would enable the enquirer who would be eager to have a constructive view of S'āṅkara's System on the subject.

## **Conclusion**

The Copy-Right of the work has been made over entirely to Adhyātma Prakāsha Kāryālaya Committee, Holenarsipur as usual. My Nārāyaṇa Smaraṇams to all those that have co-operated in making the production a success, and especially to Adhyātma Prakāsha Press and Sri Swāmi Brahmānandendra Saraswati and Sri K. G. Subraya Sharma, Private Secretary, for their assistance in reading the proof-sheets.

**SWĀMI SATCHIDĀNANDENDRA SARASWATI**

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# THE VISION OF ĀTMAN



## SECTION ONE

### THE INTRODUCTORY EPISODE

#### Yājñavalkya's Renunciation

1. There was a time when all over this country there were eager souls filled with seething enthusiasm for the acquisition of knowledge of Truth and Reality. There were hungry seekers prepared to go to the very ends of the earth if need be to find a wise teacher who could initiate them into the mysteries of God, the soul and the world. Learned men thronged at the courts of kings who delighted in arranging for discussions and debates concerning Reality. Kings and emperors humbly sat at the feet of wise sages whose company was found to be edifying and inspiring.

It was on one of such eventful occasions that *Yājñavalkya*, a great sage, decided to renounce all his wealth and pomp of mundane life to retire into solitude. He had won the covetable prize set apart for the best of knowers of Brahman in a contest of debate organized

by King Janaka of Videha, who was a royal sage greatly renowned for his interest in Vedānta. *Yājñavalkya's* laurels won at that contest consisted of a thousand cows decked with gold of five *Pādas* on each of the horns. The sage had two wives *Maitreyi* and *Kātyāyani*. He was a great *Kulapati* teaching a number of students of Veda under his care. But in his estimate,<sup>6</sup> contemplation on Brahman in solitude was worth more than all the wealth and comfort that worldly life could promise, and so he chose to enter the order of *Paramahansa-Parivrājakas*. The *Maitreyi-Brahmaṇa* depicts the episode and the dialogue between this great seer and his wife *Maitreyi*.

### **Yājñavalkya and Maitreyi**

2. The introductory portion of the narrative is significant and quite in fitting with the seriousness of the subject-matter discussed in the *Brahmaṇa*. The sage proposes to arrange for a partition of property between his elder wife *Maitreyi* and her co-heiress *Kātyāyani* before going to homelessness. But that worthy spouse asked him whether she could hope to become immortal even if the whole earth filled with its wealth came to her lot. "No", replied *Yājñavalkya*, "you could settle yourself comfortably like any other person commanding all the accessories to an easy life. As for immortality,

you have no chance of having it through acquisition of wealth." "Very well, then, what shall I do with that through which I could not become immortal ? Please do instruct me in that wisdom in which your revered self is well-versed".

Yājñavalkya was immensely pleased with this reply, and said, "You have become dearer than ever to me by offering such an agreeably surprising reply; come on then, sit beside me and try to understand what I expound to you regarding this matter".

### **Significance of the Narrative**

3. What is the purpose of this introductory narrative inserted at the very commencement of the Brāhmaṇa ? Evidently the Upanishad wants us to know that there is one thing worth knowing whose worth is more than all the wealth stored up in this world. Wealth acquired here can give us a comfortable life and we can hope to get to the highest heaven by virtue of sacrifices performed with the help of wealth. But for immortality, the knowledge of the supreme Ātman, renunciation and direct vision of Ātman alone would help us and nothing else. That Yājñavalkya is ready to give up all his wealth for the sake of gaining contact with Ātman is one

incontestable evidence to show that renunciation of the idea of possession is a proximate means to the highest goal of human life. And that Maitreyi rejects her portion of wealth and prefers the knowledge of Ātman, and that Yājñavalkya imparts that holy wisdom to a woman who is not qualified to perform any *Karma* (ritual), is another indication that renunciation and dispassionateness both qualify a person to look inward and see Ātman of all.

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## SECTION TWO

### ĀTMAN TO BE SEEN

#### The Dearest of All

4. It is very interesting to find how skilfully Yājñavalkya begins with the topic of conjugal affection most familiar to the man of the world and deftly leads his wife to an analysis of the notion of the individual self which all human beings instinctively love most of all.

स होवाच न वा अर पत्युः कामाय पतिः प्रियो भवति  
आत्मनस्तु कामाय पतिः प्रियो भवति । न वा अरे जायायै  
कामाय जाया प्रिया भवत्यात्मनस्तु कामाय जाया प्रिया भवति।  
न वा अरे पुत्राणां कामाय पुत्राः प्रिया भवन्त्यात्मनस्तु कामाय  
पुत्राः प्रिया भवन्ति । न वा अरे वित्तस्य कामाय वित्तं प्रियं  
भवत्यात्मनस्तु कामाय वित्तं प्रियं भवति । न वा अरे पशूनां  
कामाय पशवः प्रिया भवन्त्यात्मनस्तु कामाय पशवः प्रिया भवन्ति।  
न वा अरे ब्रह्मणः कामाय ब्रह्म प्रियं भवत्यात्मनस्तु कामाय ब्रह्म  
प्रियं भवति । न वा अरे क्षत्रस्य कामाय क्षत्रं प्रियं भवत्यात्मनस्तु  
कामाय क्षत्रं प्रियं भवति । न वा अरे लोकानां कामाय लोकाः  
प्रिया भवन्त्यात्मनस्तु कामाय लोकाः प्रिया भवन्ति । न वा अर  
देवानां कामाय देवाः प्रिया भवन्त्यात्मनस्तु कामाय देवाः प्रिया  
भवन्ति। न वा अरे वेदानां कामाय वेदाः प्रिया भवन्त्यात्मनस्तु  
कामाय वेदाः प्रिया भवन्ति । न वा अरे भूतानां कामाय  
भूतानि प्रियाणि भवन्त्यात्मनस्तु कामाय भूतानि प्रियाणि भवन्ति।

न वा अरे सर्वस्य कामाय सर्वं प्रियं भवत्यात्मनस्तु कामाय  
सर्वं प्रियं भवति ॥

वृ. ४-५-६.

The above-cited passage shows how one's own self is naturally dearer than anything else. It is well-known that a wife is ready to sacrifice everything else for the sake of her **husband**, whom she naturally calls her dearest. But yet, the sage calls Maitreyi's attention to the fact that the husband is dear to the wife, not because she loves him most, but only because he happens to be *her* husband and she loves her own self more than even her husband whom she usually styles her 'dearest'. The husband in his turn calls his **wife** his most beloved, and this is so only because she happens to be *his* wife; and he loves her only next to himself. The wife of course cannot be dearer to him than himself.

Then the **sons** that one considers dearer than all other things, are dear because they are the offspring of that couple, more especially because they are one's own children, the children of the father or the mother as either of them would view the matter. In this case also one's own self is dearer than the children or even one's spouse. Next to the children comes the **wealth** that one regards as his own and holds dearer than other things. It goes without saying that wealth comes only

next in rank to the family for whose benefit it has been acquired. The family would be prepared to sacrifice all this precious wealth if such a sacrifice were needed to save the interest of the members of the household; and the family itself, as we have already seen, is dear only next to one's own self. Then the **cattle** are dear only because they are necessary for one's own family and wealth, and much less so than one's own self. One's superior **caste** such as Brāhmaṇa-hood or one's Kshatriya clan dearer as it is than other castes, is dear only because it is one's caste which qualifies one to perform certain religious rites. The **other worlds** which one aspires to reach and reap the benefits of the religious works which one has performed here, are dear because they are the privileges of one's own caste, and the **gods** whom one is very particular to please through sacrifices for the sake of attaining the heavenly worlds, are similarly dear for one's own sake and not for the sake of the gods themselves. Even the very **Vedas** according to whose injunctions the gods are to be worshipped are not dear for their sake, but obviously for one's own sake. Nor are any **other beings**—from the highest Brahma (Hiraṇyagarbha) down to the lowest tuft of grass, dear for their sake, but only for the sake of one's own self. In a word, **everything** that one

holds dear, counting from the most distantly related down to the nearest kith and kin, is dear not for its sake, but for one's sake. It is clear that man has clean forgotten and neglected his own self while he is immersed in the thought of external beings and things.

### **Ātman Alone is Worth Seeing**

5. Having drawn Maitreyi's attention to the most lovable nature of the self, Yājñavalkya exhorts her to make an earnest effort to see her own all-important self:

आत्मा वा अरे द्रष्टव्यः श्रोतव्यो मन्तव्यो निदिध्यासितव्यः  
मैत्रेय्यात्मनि खल्वरे दृष्ट श्रुते मते विज्ञाते इदं सर्वं विदितम्  
॥ ६ ॥

Ātman alone, my dear, is to be seen. He is to be heard about, reflected upon and ascertained O Maitreyi, Ātman having been seen, heard about, reflected upon and known, all this becomes known."

The true import of this piece of advice has to be exactly understood before we proceed further; for, upon correctly understanding it alone one would be able to follow the subsequent argument. In the first place, what exactly is meant by the statement 'Ātman alone is to be seen'? And who is that Ātman that is exhorted here to be seen? Is it the well-known 'self' as understood by the common man, or even the self that is taught by the

ritual portion of the Vedas, or some one else ? In any case, how is that Ātman to be seen ?

### **The Problem**

6. This question is of the utmost importance because Yājñavalkya has declared at the very beginning that Ātman is to be seen in order to attain immortality, and he has further maintained that by the knowledge of this Ātman, all this, the whole objective sphere of knowledge becomes known. This, to say the least, is very puzzling. For, how can one expect to attain immortality by knowing himself ? And further more, how can the knowledge of the knower, the subjective knowing self, help one to know all that is objective as well ?

### **Which is the Ātman to be Seen ?**

7. On the face of it, the knowledge of the self as known to the common man, can never lead one to achieve either of the above-mentioned results. It is too well-known that the common man has too vague an idea of his self. He believes no doubt that he exists and has something he calls his self, but he has never bestowed any thought upon the true nature of that self; from birth to death, he is absorbed in the thought of objective phenomena with some one which he identifies himself

from moment to moment, except for temporary torpor or deep sleep. It is obvious that Yājñavalkya never for a moment thought of this fancied self when he said that by the knowledge of the Ātman everything else becomes known.

8. It seems plausible, however, that he may have had the Vedic transmigratory self in his mind, when he asked Maitreyi to know the Ātman in particular to attain immortality and be able to know everything else. This *prima facie* view has been put forward in the *Vakyānvaya-Ādhikaraṇa* (Topic taken up for discussion in 4-19 of the first chapter of the Vedānta-Mīmāṃsā p. 169). The individual self could very well be meant here, because it is well-known in common life that everything else is dear to us for the sake of one's own self. The statement that everything becomes known by the knowledge of the Ātman, may be explained away as merely figurative, since objective things may well be considered to have been known by the knowledge of their experiences to whom they are subservient. But this view is not tenable either, because nowhere do we find it stated that by the knowledge of the individual self immortality can be attained, nor is it possible in the primary sense of the expression that by knowing the

individual self everything becomes known. And it is not proper to take words in a figurative sense where the primary sense is available. As a matter of fact we do know from S'rutis and Smṛtis that immortality is attainable only through the knowledge of the supreme Ātman.

### **Brahman as the Supreme Ātman**

9. Moreover, we are obliged to admit that the Brahman or the Highest Ātman alone is meant here, by a glance at the very next *Kandika* here. For it reads thus:

ब्रह्म तं परादाद्योऽन्यत्रात्मनो ब्रह्म वेद क्षत्रं तं परादाद्योऽन्यत्रा-  
 ऽऽत्मनः क्षत्रं वेद लोकास्तं परादुर्योऽन्यात्रात्मनो लोकान् वेद  
 देवास्तं परादुर्योऽन्यत्रात्मनो देवान् वेद वेदास्तं परादुर्योऽन्यत्रात्मनो  
 वेदान् वेद भूतानि तं परादुर्योऽन्यत्रात्मनो भूतानि वेद सर्वं तं  
 परादाद्योऽन्यत्रात्मनः सर्वं वेदेदं ब्रह्मेदं क्षत्रमिमे लोका इमे देवा  
 इमे वेदा इमानि भूतानीदं सर्वं यदयमात्मा ॥ ७ ॥

“The Brāhmaṇa caste rejects him who thinks that the Brāhmaṇa caste is other than Ātman; the Kshatriya caste rejects him who thinks that the Kshatriya caste is other than Ātman. The heavenly worlds reject him who thinks that the heavenly worlds are other than Ātman. The gods reject him who thinks that the gods are other than Ātman. The Vedas reject him

who thinks that the Vedas are other than Ātman. Creatures reject him who thinks that creatures are other than Ātman. Everything rejects him who thinks that everything is other than Ātman. This Brāhmaṇa caste, this Kshatriya caste, these heavenly worlds, these gods, these Vedas, these creatures, this everything is what is (really) Ātman.” 4-5-7.

This passage clearly means that what is commonly thought to be other than Ātman is really Ātman alone and nothing else. It is this Ātman whose knowledge according to Yājñavalkya results in the knowledge of the reality underlying everything.

### **Can Ātman be Seen at all ?**

10. But how is Ātman to be seen at all ? That is the most crucial question. Yājñavalkya says that Ātman having been seen, heard about, reflected upon and ascertained, everything here becomes known inasmuch as he considers that there is nothing other than Ātman. But what is meant by saying that Ātman is to be seen? The word 'Ātma' means one's own self. If so, how can any one see, hear about, reflect upon and ascertain the true nature of one's own self ? Surely the subjective self cannot become its own object ? This doctrine of non-duality of the subject and object seems so palpably self-conflicting that Vedāntins of the other schools say that it is absurd to think Brahman has to know itself to

attain the highest goal, and therefore maintain that the Upanishads do teach some sort of dualism according to which the individual soul has to know Brahman and devoutly meditate upon God who is distinct and different from the devotee to attain salvation. We have therefore to see what solution the non-dualists have to offer to obviate this seeming difficulty.

### **The Doctrine of Direct Vision**

11. Teachers who believed in the perfect identity of the individual self in the state of release and the Supreme Self, propounded the doctrine of direct vision (साक्षात्कार) long before the time of S'aṅkara. Bhartr-prapañcha, for instance, whose doctrines are frequently criticized in the Brhadāranyaka Bhāshya, stood by this doctrine. In his explanation of a passage (Br. 4-2-4) this teacher in discussing the possible meaning of the sentence 'अभयं त्वा गच्छताद्याज्ञवल्क्य यो नो भगवन्नभयं वेदयस' (May fearlessness come to you, O Yājñavalkya, to you, revered one, who have taught us fearlessness!), poses the question 'How is it that Janaka prays for the attainment of fearlessness by his teacher, who must have already attained fearlessness inasmuch as the sage has himself bestowed fearlessness on the king ? Bhartr-prapañcha solves the difficulty (Br. Va. 101, T.p.

135) by the remark प्राप्तमभयं याज्ञवल्क्येन नाप्राप्तम् ; न तु साक्षात्कृतम् । (Fearlessness has been attained indeed by Yājñavalkya, it is not unattained; but it has not been directly visioned).<sup>1</sup>

12. Writers of sub-commentaries on S'āṅkara's Bhāshya firmly believe in this tenet that it is not enough to know the meaning of the Upanishadic text teaching the identity of the individual and the Supreme Ātman, but over and above that knowledge it is quite necessary to have direct experience of that identity. The author of the *Pañcha-pādikā*, for example, writes as follows :-

(१) अवगतिरिति साक्षादनुभव उच्यते । ज्ञानं तु परोक्षेऽनुभवानारूढेऽपि संभवति । संनिहितेऽप्यसंभावितविषयेऽनवसितरूपम् इत्युक्तं पुरस्तात् ॥ पं. पा. ७७३-७७४.

“Here by the word *Avagati* (in the Bhāshya) is meant direct experience; but *Jnāna* (mere knowledge) is also possible in the case of what is remote and not within the range of direct experience. Even in the case of what is proximate, when the object is regarded as improbable, we have already remarked that judgment is inconclusive.” PP. pp. 773-774.

1. This is one of the numerous excerpts from Bhartṛ-prapañcha interspersed in Ananda-Giri's Tika on the Bṛhadāraṇyaka Vārtika.

[It is worthy of note that this writer apprehends that even direct experience may sometimes be questionable.]

And *Vāchaspati Mis'ra* in his *Bhāmati*, the sub-commentary on the *Sūtra-Bhāshya*, writes :-

(२) न केवलं ज्ञानम् इष्यते, किं तु अवगतिं साक्षात्कारं कुर्वत् अवगतिपर्यन्तं सन्वाच्याया इच्छायाः कर्म ॥  
वा. भा. पा. ७७.

“Not mere knowledge alone is desired but that which leads to *Avagati* or *Sākshātkāra* (direct experience). That which culminates in *Avagati* is the object of the desire denoted by the suffix *san* ”

[This is the explanation of the *Sūtra-Bhāshya* which reads  
अवगातपर्यन्तं ज्ञाने सन्वाच्याया इच्छायाः कर्म ॥ SB. 1- 1-1

### **Vision of Ātman According to the Sūtra Bhāshya and the Vārtika**

13. Is this view of *Ātma-dars'ana* (Vision of Ātman) correct ? We have to carefully sift out the true and the false not merely on the evidence of the S'ruti and trustworthy authority, but also by an appeal to universal intuition and reason based upon it. Even today, there are many great Vedāntins of repute who affirm that the knowledge of Ātman based upon Vedic texts is only mediate, and that it cannot be final until it is raised to the level of what they call 'realization'.

## The Genuine Ātman

14. Let us revert to a consideration of the true nature of Ātman, for, that would be of great help in deciding the question, whether or not Ātman can be seen directly. We have seen that the Upanishads declare that the true Ātman is only one, and distinct from the individual Ātman who is the object of the notion of I (अहंप्रत्ययविषयः) and who is experienced by each one of us in our body. The true Ātman is untouched by this individual Ātman and the psychic set seemingly owned by it. None of the *Pramāṇas* (valid means of knowledge) can objectify even the familiar individual self, for the simple reason that it is Ātman who uses the means to ascertain the nature of anything objective. As S'āṅkara says :-

न ह्यात्मा आगन्तुकः कस्यचित्स्वर्यंसिद्धत्वात् । न ह्यात्मा  
 आत्मनः प्रमाणमपेक्ष्य सिध्यति । तस्य हि प्रत्यक्षादीनि  
 प्रमाणान्यप्रसिद्धप्रमेयसिद्धये उपादीयन्ते । न ह्याकाशादयः पदार्थाः  
 प्रमाणनिरपेक्षाः स्वर्यंसिद्धाः केनचिदभ्युपगम्यन्ते । आत्मा तु  
 प्रमाणादिव्यवहाराश्रयत्वात् प्रागेव प्रमाणादिव्यवहारात् सिध्यति ।  
 न चेदृशस्य निराकरणं संभवति । आगन्तुकं हि वस्तु निराक्रियते,  
 न स्वरूपम् । य एव हि निराकर्ता, तदेव तस्य स्वरूपम् । न  
 ह्याग्नेरौष्ण्यमग्निना निराक्रियते । तथा 'अहमेवेदानीं जानामि वर्तमानं  
 वस्तु, अहमेवातीतमतीततरं च ज्ञासिषमहमेवानागतमनागततरं च  
 ज्ञास्यामि' इत्यतीतानागतवर्तमानभावेनान्यथाभवत्यपि ज्ञातव्ये न

ज्ञातुरन्यथाभावोऽस्ति; सर्वदा वर्तमानस्वभावत्वात् । तथा  
भस्मीभवत्यपि देहे नात्मन उच्छेदो वर्तमानस्वभावादन्यथास्वभावत्वं  
वा न संभावयितुं शक्यम् ॥ सू. भा. २-३-७, पा. २६८

“Ātman, as is well known, is nothing extraneous to anyone, for he is self-established. Ātman indeed, does not become known to himself depending for his knownness on any Pramāṇa; for, it is for him that perception and other means of knowledge are employed for establishing the existence of an object unknown. No one supposes that ether and other things are self-proven without the help of the means of knowledge. Ātman, on the other hand, being the basis of the idea of means of knowledge etc., is presupposed even before the idea of means of knowledge etc. Nor is the denial of such an entity possible; for, only something extraneous can be denied, but not one's own essential nature. For, the very person who would be the denier, is verily his essential nature. Surely, the essential nature of fire cannot be denied by fire itself? Also, as one thinks 'It is I that now know something in the present time, it is I myself that knew something in the past and something in the remoter past, and it is I myself that will know something in future and something in some more distant future', there is no change (conceivable) in the knower even when the knowable changes as past, future or present; for, the knower is of an eternally present nature. So also even when the body is reduced to ashes, there is no destruction or change in nature conceivable in the case of Ātman.”<sup>1</sup>

SBh. 2-3-7, p. 268.

1. It would appear that the reading of the original could be construed without difficulty if there were no second in this sentence.

## Ātman as Self-existent

15. The self-existent nature of the genuine Self as distinct from the body and the psychic set and its un-objectifiability, is thus revealed in the S'ruti :-

(२) अथ हैनमुषस्तश्चाक्रायणः पप्रच्छ याज्ञवल्क्येति होवाच यत्साक्षादपरोक्षाद्ब्रह्म य आत्मा सर्वान्तरस्तं मेव्याचक्ष्वेत्येष त आत्मा सवृान्तरः कतमो याज्ञवल्क्य सर्वान्तरो यः प्राणेन प्राणिति स त आत्मा सर्वान्तरो योऽपानेनापानिति स त आत्मा सर्वान्तरो यो व्यानेन व्यानिति स त आत्मा सर्वान्तरो य उदानेनोदानिति स त आत्मा सर्वान्तर एष त आत्मा सर्वान्तरः ॥

बृ. ३-४-१.

“Then Ushasta, the son of Cakra asked him, ‘Yājñavalkya’ said he, ‘explain to me the Brahman, actually immediate, that which is the innermost Self. ‘This is your Ātman, the innermost of all.’ ‘Which is this innermost of all, Yājñavalkya ?’ ‘Who breathes out with the Prāna, He is your Ātman, the innermost of all; Who breathes in with the Apāna, He is your Ātman, the innermost of all; who functions in all directions with the Vyāna, He is your Ātman innermost of all; who breathes up with the Udāna, He is your Ātman, the innermost of all. This is your Ātman, the innermost of all.”

Br. 3-4-1.

स होवाचोषस्तश्चाक्रायणो यथा विब्रूयादसौ गौरसावश्च इत्येवमेवैतद्व्यपदिष्टं भवति यदेव साक्षादपरोक्षाद्ब्रह्म य आत्मा सर्वान्तरस्तं मे व्याचक्ष्वेत्येष त आत्मा सर्वान्तरः कतमो याज्ञवल्क्य सर्वान्तरः । न दृष्टेर्द्रष्टारं पश्येर्न श्रुतेः श्रोतारं शृणुया न मतेर्मन्तारं

मन्वीथा न विज्ञातेविज्ञातारं विजानीयाः । एष त आत्मा सर्वान्तरोऽ-  
तोन्वदार्तं ततो होषस्तश्चाक्रायण उपरराम ॥ बु. ३-४-२.

“That Ushasta, son of Cakra said, ‘you have spoken of it as one might have said’, ‘such and such is an ox’, ‘such and such is a horse’. Explain to me the actually immediate Brahman itself, the inmost Self, ‘This is your Ātman inmost of all’. ‘Which is he, Yājñavalkya, the inmost of all?’, ‘You cannot see the seer of the sight; you cannot think the thinker of thinking; you cannot hear the hearer of hearing; you cannot understand the understander of understanding. This is your inmost Self, everything else than this is perishable!’ Thereupon Ushasta, son of Cakra, kept quiet.” Br. 3-4-2.

In the second of these texts, it is stated in the clearest terms possible that the innermost Self of everyone is that which objectifies even the organs of sight, hearing, thinking and understanding. It is evident then that the Supreme Self whose knowledge leads to immortality, cannot be seen, heard, reflected upon, or understood in the ordinary sense of these words.

### Ātman as Witness

16. We may now turn to another text which throws abundant light on the intrinsic nature of the Self:

(३) एकाकर्माध्यक्षः सर्वभूताधिवासः साक्षी चेता केवलो  
निर्गुणश्च॥ श्वे. ६-११

“The one *Deva* (Shining One) hidden in all beings, all-pervading, the inmost Self of all creatures, the superintendent of actions, the in-dweller in all beings, the Witness, the conscious one, alone, without any qualities.”

Sve. 6-11.

We learn here that this Ātman is देवः ‘Deva’, self-resplendent and is ‘One’ common to all creatures (सर्वभूतेषु), not only to all men. Yet he is गूढः, ‘hidden’, as it were, till one succeeds in knowing him immediately. He is सर्वव्यापी all-pervading, not restricted to any one spot or any particular point of time. He is not only in all creatures, but also सर्वभूतान्तरात्मा, ‘the inner Self of all creatures’. He is not the same as the seeming self which is an agent of actions and experiencer of the fruits of actions; He is कर्माध्यक्षः, the superintendent of actions, the dispenser of the fruits of actions to the empirical agents who are bound by their several actions and results thereof. He is सर्वभूताधिवासः, the in-dweller in all the bodies of creatures, unaffected by the defects or good features of those bodies. He is साक्षी, the eternally changeless Witness of all changeful things, good, bad or indifferent, high or low, happy or miserable, ever unaffected by those features of these creatures. He is चेतः, the conscious one unlike the not-selves. Nay more, he is केवल, the One without a second, for, the objective

things witnessed are no more than appearances of which he is the one real substrate. He is निर्गुण, devoid of any qualifying adjuncts and therefore not liable to any change in his essential nature.

### **The Interpretation of S'rutis Which Teach the Vision of Ātman**

17. We now arrive at the crucial question. How are we to interpret the S'ruti texts which teach that Ātman is to be seen, heard about, reflected upon, or to be ascertained as he is ? How can there be a subject-object relation within an entity which has no conceivable parts whatever ? Here is S'aṅkara's reply to this question :-

(१) आत्मनोऽप्रच्युतात्मभावस्यैव सतः तत्त्वानवबोधनिमित्तो मिथ्यैव देहादिष्वनात्मस्वात्मत्वनिश्चयो लौकिको दृष्टः । तेन देहादिभूतस्याऽऽत्मनोऽपि आत्मा 'अनन्विष्टोऽन्वेष्टव्यः', 'अलब्धो लब्धव्यः', 'अश्रुतः श्रोतव्यः', 'अमतो मन्तव्यः', 'अविज्ञातो विज्ञातव्यः'- इत्यादिभेदव्यपदेश उपपद्यते। प्रतिषिध्यत एव तु परमार्थतः सर्वज्ञात् परमेश्वरादन्यो द्रष्टा श्रोता वा 'नान्योऽतोऽस्ति द्रष्टा' (बृ. ३-७-२३) इत्यादिना । परमेश्वरस्त्वविद्या-कल्पिताच्छारीरात्, कर्तुर्भोक्तुर्विज्ञानात्माख्यादन्यः । यथा मायाविनश्चर्मखड्गधरात् सूत्रेणाकाशमधिरोहतः स एव मायावी

परमार्थरूपो भूमिष्ठोऽन्यः। यथा वा घटाकाशात् उपाधिपरिच्छिन्नादनु-  
पाधिरपरिच्छिन्न आकाशोऽन्यः ॥ सू. भा. १-१-१७, पा. ३९.

“Ātman, even while not swerving from his Ātman-nature, is seen in ordinary life to be mis-conceived by people to be identical with body and other not-self objects, owing to want of correct knowledge of his true nature. To Ātman himself who has thus become identified with body and other not-selves, it is conceivable that Ātman is spoken of, in terms implying difference of the subject and object, as ‘unsought and to be sought’, ‘unattained and to be attained’, ‘unheard about and to be heard about’, ‘not reflected upon and to be reflected upon’, ‘unascertained and to be ascertained’ and so on. From the standpoint of Reality, however, a seer or hearer other than the omniscient Supreme Lord is negated in texts like ‘There is no seer beside this’

(Br. 3-7-23)

“The Supreme Lord, however, is other than the embodied agent and experiencer super-imposed by Avidyā, known by the name of *Vijnānātman* (the knowing self). This is in the same way that other than the (apparent) magician ascending up the sky by a rope with a sword and shield, there is the same real magician standing on the floor; or in the same way that other than the jar-space limited by an associating adjunct, there is space unlimited by any associating adjunct.”

Unlike the *Advaitins* belonging to the pre-S'āṅkara and post-S'āṅkara schools, S'āṅkara discusses the doctrine of seeing, hearing of, reflecting upon and knowing the true Ātman without any assumption that there is any actual seeing, hearing of, reflecting upon or knowing of Ātman as an object. According to him, the distinction of the Jīva from Brahman as well as the enquiry into the true nature of Ātman is only in the empirical sphere projected by Avidyā.

18. We shall now quote from the *Upadesa-Sāhasri*, a few verses which disclose what S'āṅkara the author of that work, has to say with regard to *Anubhava* or direct intuition of Ātman :

(1) दृशरेवानुभूयेत स्वेनैवानुभवात्मना ।

तदाभासतया जन्म धियोऽस्यानुभवः स्मृतः ॥

उप. १८-१९५

“The seeing Ātman himself could be intuited by himself as He is of the nature of intuition. The birth of the modification of the mind with its semblance, is called His Anubhava (intuition of the self.)”

Upa. 18-195.

[Since everything is known through the light of Consciousness which is the very stuff of what should be called ‘*anubhava*’ in the strict sense of the word, there can be no

intuition of Intuition itself, in the same way as no other light can be imagined to show light to itself. Empirically speaking however, the modification of the mind which makes its appearance when one says 'I have now known my real self', is metaphorically called 'intuition' by Vedāntins.]

(2) इतोऽन्योऽनुभवः कश्चिदात्मनो नोपपद्यते ।  
अविज्ञातं विज्ञानतां विज्ञातारमिति श्रुतेः ॥

उप. १८-२१०.

"No direct experience of Ātman other than this, is conceivable. For, the S'ruti says 'It is unknown to those who know it (objectively)' (Ke.2-3) 'With what, my dear, can one know the knower ?' Br. 4-5-15)"

Upa. 18-210

[These two texts declare that Ātman can never be objectified by knowledge. Hence the only intuition of Ātman, is to know that we are the unobjectifiable Ātman whose changeless essence of consciousness lights up everything else.]

(३) दृशेच्छाया यदारूढा मुखच्छायेव दर्शने ।  
पश्यंस्तं प्रत्ययं योगी दृष्ट आत्मेति मन्यते ॥  
तं च मूढं च यद्यन्यं (यो ह्यन्यं ?) प्रत्ययं वेत्ति नो दृशेः ।  
स एव योगिनां प्रेष्टो नेतरः स्यान्न संशयः ॥

उप. १२-६, ७.

"The Yōgin who sees the concept in which the semblance of Ātman is reflected, very much like one's own image in the looking-glass, thinks that the Ātman is seen there. He who knows him as well as the delusive concept to be no other than the Seeing Witness, that person, verily, is the best

of Yōgin and not the other one. There is no doubt about this.”

Upa. 12-6, 7.

[The Yōgin who believes that he has realized the Ātman in a particular modification of the mind, does not know the truth. The fact is that the knower as well as the known, is a semblance of Ātman in the modification of the mind. Both are superimpositions on the Witness, and are essentially that Witness and nothing else.]

(४) विज्ञातेर्यस्तु विज्ञाता स त्वमित्युच्यते यतः ।  
स स्वादनुभवस्तस्य ततोऽन्योऽनुभवो मृषा ॥

उप. १२-८.

“That one art thou, who is the understander of the understanding’ so says the S’ruti (Bṛ. 3-4-2). Since this is so, that alone is the intuition of the Ātman; any intuition other than that, is false.”

Upa. 12-8.

[Any understanding through a faculty of the intellect can be only that of the not-self; it can never be that of the real Self. To intuit one’s Self as the witness of understanding, is the only intuition worth the name.]

(5) योऽहङ्कर्तारमात्मानं तथा वेत्तारमेव च ।  
वेत्ति नात्मज्ञ एवासौ योन्यथाज्ञः स आत्मवित् ॥

उप. १४-२४.

“He who thinks that the Ātman is the ego, and the knower, is no knower of Ātman at all. He who knows otherwise, is the (true) knower of Ātman.”

Upa. 14-24.

[The self which answers to the notion of the ‘I’ and is the knower of objects, is not the real Ātman at all. He is the real knower who knows that Ātman is neither a knower nor an agent of any action.]

(६) बोधात्मज्योतिषा दीप्ता बोधमात्मनि मन्यते ।

बुद्धिर्नान्योऽस्ति बोद्धेति सेयं भ्रान्तिर्हि धीगता ॥

उप. १६-६०.

“Enkindled by the light of consciousness of Ātman, the intellect imagines that it has consciousness within itself, and thinks that there is no other knower. Now this delusion belongs to the intellect.”

Upa. 16-60.

[Consciousness is no attribute of Ātman, but is essentially the nature of Ātman himself.]

19. The foregoing quotations suffice to show that according to S’āṅkara’s tradition Ātman cannot be known by any one of the faculties of the mind or directly visualized. Ātman is of the very essence of consciousness which is in no need of being lighted up to be seen. To intuit this, is to see Ātman.

## SECTION THREE

### REFLECTION AND REASON

#### The Real Self is One's Own Self

20. We have so far discussed the meaning of the term *Vision* (दर्शन) of Ātman. It is no ordinary seeing with some one of the faculties of the mind, but directly intuiting the Self by oneself as the Self. It is just what another text (Br. 4-4-23) recommends thus :-

लतस्मादेवंविच्छान्तो दान्त उपरतस्तिक्षुः समाहितो भूत्वा-  
त्मन्येवात्मानं पश्यति”

बृ. ४-४-२३

“Therefore one who knows thus, shall become self-controlled, with his senses tamed, free from all outward activity, enduring pairs of opposites and tranquillized, and see his self in the (real) Self alone.”

Br. 4-4-23.

21. The meaning of श्रोतव्यः (to be heard about), is now clear. Ātman being one's very self, one needs only to be told so, and at the very instant of the teaching of the S'ruti or the preceptor about its nature, one sees the Self in himself, giving up all other delusory notions that one is something else. As S'aṅkara says :-

वस्तुमात्रकथनेऽपि 'रज्जुरियं नायं सर्पः' इत्यादौ भ्रान्तिजनित-  
भीतिनिवर्तनेनार्थवत्त्वं दृष्टम्; तथेहाप्यसंसार्यात्मवस्तुकथनेन  
संसारित्वभ्रान्तिनिवर्तनेनार्थवत्त्वं स्यात् ॥

सू.भा. १-१-४, पा. १३

"The mere reminder of one's being the non-transmigratory Self, would be fruitful by wiping off the delusory notion that one is an individual self suffering from the ills of mundane life; in the same way as reminding one that a particular phenomenon is only a rope and not a serpent, would be effective in dispelling all fear due to the delusion."

SBh. 1-1-4, p. 13.

Of course even such a reminder would not have been needed, if the human mind had not been naturally oppressed by an obsession which compelled it to look outwards for the solution of every problem of life.

### Manana or Reflection

22. We may now pass on to consider the significance of the exhortation मन्तव्यः (should be reflected upon). The root मन ('mun') means to think; and like the English verb, the Sanskrit word may be used at least in two different senses. When one says 'I think he will come soon', he means to say that he supposes so, that he is of that opinion. But when he says 'Think over it, and come to your own conclusion', he advises the person addressed to reflect upon the matter.

It is in the latter sense that the word '*Mantavyah*' is used here. When one has not grasped the meaning of the text directly on hearing it, one will have to ponder on the nature of the thing taught and verify his conclusion by repeated reflection till one is free from all doubt or misconception.

23. And what is the nature of this thinking in this particular case ? In his Bhāshya on Sūtra 1-1-2, S'ānkarā remarks :

(१) सत्सु तु वेदान्तवाक्येषु जगतो जन्मादिकारणवादिषु तदर्थ- ग्रहणदाढ्यायानुमानमपि वेदान्तवाक्याविरोधि प्रमाणं भवन्न निवार्यते; श्रुत्यैव च सहायत्वेन तर्कस्याभ्युपेतत्वात् । तथा हि 'श्रोतव्यो मन्तव्यः (बृ. ४-५-६) इति श्रुतिः, 'पण्डितो मेधावी गन्धारानेवोपसंपद्येतैव- मेवेहाचार्यवान् पुरुषो वेद' (छां. ६-१४-२) इति च पुरुषबुद्धि- साहाय्यमात्मनो दर्शयति ॥

सू. भा. १-१-२, पा. ८

“While there are Vedāntic texts teaching the cause of the origin etc. of the Universe, inference also (अनुमानमपि) unopposed to Vedānta texts, where it becomes a means of valid knowledge (प्रमाणं भवत्) for the sake of a firm grasp of their meaning, is not ruled out. For, the S'ruti itself recognizes reasoning (तर्कस्य) as an aid. Accordingly the S'ruti '(He is) to be heard about and reflected upon' (Br. 4-5-6), as well as the text 'The scholarly and intelligent person would reach the country of the Gāndhāras alone.' Similarly in this case, a

person who has an efficient teacher would know the truth" (Ch. 6-14-2) shows that it recognizes the assistance of human intelligence."

SBh. 1-1-2, p. 8.

### **Tarka or Reason According to Post-S'ankaras**

24. The words अनुमानम् (inference) and तर्कः (reason) used in the Bhāshya in the above excerpt, have been the occasion of various interpretations, on the part of different sub-commentaries. And we cannot be sure of what exactly Yājñavalkya means मन्तव्यः (should be reflected upon) till we have determined the full import of the above-cited extract from S'ankara.

(1) Thus the *Pancha-Pādikā* explains S'ravana and other means of knowledge as follows :-

(१) तथा च श्रवणं नाम आत्मावगतये वेदान्तवाक्यविचारः, शारीरकश्रवणं च । मननं वस्तुनिष्ठवाक्यापेक्षितदुन्दुभ्यादिदृष्टान्त-जन्मस्थितिलयवाच्यारम्भणत्वादियुक्तार्थं (युक्त्यर्थः?) वादानुसन्धानम्, वाक्यार्थाविरोध्यनुमानानुसंधानं च । निदिध्यासनं मननोपबृंहित-वाक्यार्थविषये स्थिरीभावः । विधेयस्योपासनापर्यायस्य निष्फलत्वात्; दर्शनम् अतो वाक्यार्थे स्थैर्यान्निरस्तसमस्तप्रपञ्चावभासविज्ञानधनैक-तानुभवः ॥

पं. पा. ११७०.

"And accordingly *S'ravana* (hearing) is enquiry into the meaning of the texts and the study of the *Sāṅirakā* (the science

of Vedānta as systematized by Bādarāyaṇa). *Manana* is the investigation (of the significance) of the illustrations like those of the 'drum' etc., the origin, sustentation and dissolution (of the world), the fact of the effect being a mere play of words—these and other rational eulogistic statements desiderated by texts purporting to teach the existent entity, as also the revolving in mind the significance of the inferences unopposed to the meaning of the texts. *Nididhyāsana* is staying steadily in the purport of texts supported by *Manana*; for, the enjoined meditation synonymous with *Upāsana*, is of no avail here. and *Dars'anam* is the direct experience of the unity of the Pure Consciousness devoid of all differences resulting from steady staying.”

PP. p. 1170.

[Here evidently *S'ravana* defined as enquiry into the meaning of the *S'rutis* as well as the study of the *Sārīraka*, is ill-suited to the context of the dialogue between *Yājñavalkya* and *Maitreyi* for the simple reason that *Maitreyi* was not qualified for such enquiry and study, and further the *Sārīraka* was not in existence at all during the Upanishadic age.]

And *Bhāmati*, another sub-commentary, has the following to say on the subject :-

(२) अत्र चागमाचार्योपदेशाभ्यां सत्यस्य श्रवणम्, अथागमा-  
विरोधिन्यायनिवेशनं मननम् ॥ वा. भा. २७९.

“Here *S'ravana* (hearing) is learning the truth through the teaching of *Āgama* (Vedas), and one's preceptor. And *Manana* is adding reason unopposed to *Āgama*.”

VBh. p. 279.

(2) Vāchaspati Mis'ra, the author of this Bhāmati, writes in more express terms elsewhere :

(३) अनुमानं वेदान्ताविरोधि; तदुपजीवि च-इत्यापि द्रष्टव्यम्।  
शब्दाविरोधिन्या तदुपजीविन्या च युक्त्या विवेचनं मननम् । युक्तिश्च  
अर्थापत्तिरनुमानं वा ॥ १-१-२; वा. भा. ८९

“*Anumāna* is what is unopposed to Vedānta; ‘and depending upon it’ it may be added. Investigation (of truth) with the assistance of reason unopposed to the Word and depending upon it, is reflection. And this reason is either presumption or syllogistic inference.” VBh. 1-1-2, p. 89.

(3) The Pañca-Pādikā, however, distinguishes Tarka from syllogistic inference :-

(४) क्व तर्हि तर्कस्योपयोगः ? विषयासंभवाशङ्कायां  
तथानुभव- फलानुत्पत्तौ तत्संभवप्रदर्शनमुखेन फलप्रतिबन्धविगमे ॥  
पं. पा. ५००

“Where then is the use of reason (Tarka) ? When a fact is considered improbable and direct experience is not born, (reason is useful) in showing the probability of the fact and thus removing the obstacle to the resultant experience.”

PP. p. 500.

This sub-commentary has an other utility also to attribute to the employment of reason :-

(५) विद्या उदितापि न प्रतिष्ठां लभते असंभावनाभिभूतविषयत्वात्। तथा च लोकेऽस्मिन् देशे काले चेदं वस्तु स्वरूपत एव न संभवति - इति दृढभावितम्, यदि तत्कथञ्चिद् दैववशादुपलभ्येत, तदा स्वय- मीक्षमाणोऽपि तावन्नाध्यवस्यति यावत्तत्संभवं नानुसरति। तेन सम्यग्ज्ञानमपि स्वविषयेऽप्रतिष्ठितमनवाप्तमिव भवति। तेन तस्वरूप- प्रतिष्ठायै तर्कं सहायीकरोति। अत एव 'प्रमाणानामनुग्राहकस्तर्कः' - इति तर्कविदः ॥ पं. पा. ५०२-५०३

“Even correct knowledge which has dawned, does not attain stability; for, its object may be be-clouded by suspicion of its improbability. That is why a man is not confirmed in his belief of the existence of a thing about which he has a strong impression that its existence is inconceivable in a particular place and time, even when it accidentally happens to be found there and he himself actually sees it, unless and until he follows it up with reason supporting its probability. So even correct knowledge of an object becomes unstable as though it were not attained. Hence it demands the aid of reason for its stability. This is why those proficient in logic say that *tarka* is that which supposes a valid means of knowledge.”

It is surprising that this writer goes so far as to fear that even the direct intuition of Advaita (non-duality) may happen to be doubted as though doubt can possibly

be entertained in a state where there are no two things at all !

### Manana According to S'ankara

25. We may now go back to S'ankara himself to see how he explains his statement that even the S'ruti may sometimes require the assistance of reason called 'Manana' as distinguished from reason of the other type bearing that name.

(१) यदपि श्रवणव्यतिरेकेण मननं विदधच्छब्द एव तर्क-  
मप्यादर्तव्यं दर्शयति-इत्युक्तम् । नानेन मिषेण शुष्कतर्कस्यात्रात्मलाभः  
संभवति । श्रत्यनुगृहीत एव ह्यत्र तर्कोऽनुभवाङ्गत्वेनाश्रीयते ।  
स्वप्नान्तबुद्धान्तयोरुभयोरितरेतरव्यभिचारादात्मनोऽनन्वागतत्वम्,  
संप्रसादे च प्रपञ्चपरित्यागेन सदात्मना संपत्तेर्निष्प्रपञ्चसदात्मत्वम्,  
प्रपञ्चस्य ब्रह्मप्रभवत्वात् कार्यकारणानन्यत्वन्यायेन ब्रह्माव्यतिरकः  
- इत्येवञ्जातीयकः ॥ सू.भा. २-१-६, पा. १८८, १८९

"As for the statement (by the Sāṃkhya) that the Vedic word enjoining *Manana* in addition to *S'ravana*, itself shows that reason also has to be given a place (here), we reply that dry reason cannot gain access here under this cloak. For, reason proffered by the S'ruti itself alone, is accepted as subservient to intuition; reason of the type, for instance, which argues that Ātman is not tainted by the *Avasthas* since both waking and dream are each absent when the other obtains and that the empirical self is essentially of the nature free from all plurality since it shakes off all the dual world and becomes

one with the Ātman as Pure Being in deep sleep; and also reason of the type that since the pluralistic universe arises out of Brahman, it cannot be other than Brahman on the principle of non-distinction of the effect from the cause.”

SBh. 2-1-6, pp. 188-189

Vedāntic reason is distinguished from the other types of reasoning, in that it rests upon direct intuition and is no mere speculation based upon empirical logic.

26. The following verse from the Upades'ā Sāhasri states the nature of Vedāntic reasoning succinctly :-

(२) अन्वयव्यतिरेकौ हि पदार्थस्य पदस्य च ।  
स्यादेतदहमित्यत्र युक्तिरवावधारणे ॥ उप. १८-१६

“Constant continuance and variability of the word and the thing denoted by it respectively, would be the reason in deciding what is meant by the term I.” Upa. 18-96.

While in common parlance the word 'I' is applied to the body, the senses, the vital principle, the mind and the intellect as the case may be, yet it is clear that the notion of 'I' continues even when the not-selves disappear altogether, thus compelling us to conclude that the entity corresponding to this notion is none of these.

That this is so is proved by an appeal to the experience of deep sleep in the next two verses :-

नाद्राक्षमहमित्यस्मिन् सुषुप्तेऽन्यन्मनागपि ।  
न वारयति दृष्टिं स्वां प्रत्ययं तु निषेधति ॥ उप. १८-१७

“In the statement ‘I saw never a whit in sleep’, one does not negate the seeing (nature of the self), but negates only the concept.”  
Upa. 18-97

स्वयंजोतिर्न हि द्रष्टुरित्येवं संविदोऽस्तिताम् ।  
कौटस्थं च तथा तस्याः प्रत्ययस्य तु लुप्तताम्  
स्वयमेवाब्रवीच्छास्त्रं प्रत्ययावगती पृथक् ॥  
उप. १८-१८

“ ‘(Here this Purusha) is self-luminous’ (Br. 4-3-9, 4-3-14), ‘There is no destruction of the sight of the seer at all’ (Br. 4-3-23). The S’āstra has (thus) declared the existence of consciousness and its unchangeability (on the one hand) and the disappearance of the concept on the other, thus distinguishing the concept and the consciousness.” Upa. 18-98.

The idea is that the Witnessing Consciousness alone should be regarded as indicated by the word ‘I’, when we refer to the intuition of deep sleep, since there is no question of any concept continuing to thrive there. The S’ruti expressly refers to both the self-identity of the Witness thriving there and the absence of the concept. This is the *Anvaya* (constant continuation) of the word ‘I’ together with the entity meant by it as also the *Vyatireka* (the absence of) the not-self wrongly presumed to be denoted by it in common life. Thus by observing this constancy and the fleeting nature of ‘*Padārtha*’ and *Pada*, as testified by intuition, Vedānta determines the reality and unreality of things and not by syllogistic reasoning or dry speculation.

**SECTION FOUR**  
**NIDIDHYĀSANA AS**  
**CONTINUED PRACTICE OF**  
**S'RAVAṆA AND MANANA**

**Relation of the Sequel  
to the Previous Section**

27. We have so far discussed the meaning of *S'ravaṇa* (hearing) and *Manana* (reflection) as means to *Dars'ana* (intuition) of the Self. Grasping the teaching regarding the real nature of Ātman, is *S'ravaṇa* and reflecting upon the nature of Ātman with the assistance of Vedic-reasoning based upon intuition with a view to determine the exact teaching without any impediment, is *Manana*. We shall now turn to the discussion of the nature of the advice 'निदिध्यासितव्यः' (should be contemplated) offered by Yājñavalkya; for, like the other three concepts (vision, hearing and reflection), *Nididhyāsana* also has been differently understood by different schools of Vedānta.

**The Prasamkhyāna Tradition**

28. Among the ancient Advaitins belonging to an earlier school called that of the *Prasamkhyāna-Vāda*, there was a theory that repeated meditation of the

meaning of the Vedāntic text teaching the nature of Ātman, could effectively wipe off all Avidyā. Sures' varacārya refers to them thus :-

(१) एवमुपसंहते केचित् स्वसंप्रदायबलावष्टम्भादाहः-“यदेतद वेदान्तवाक्यादहं ब्रह्मोदि विज्ञानं समुत्पद्यते, तन्नैव स्वोत्पत्तिमात्रेणाज्ञानं निरस्यति; किं तर्हि अहन्यहनि द्राघीयसा कालेनोपासीनस्य सतो भावनोपचयात् निःशेषमज्ञानम् अपगच्छति, 'देवो भूत्वा देवानप्येति' (बृ. ४-१-२) इति श्रुतेः” इति ॥  
नै. सि. १-६७

“At this conclusion, some supported by their own tradition, aver that this knowledge of the form 'I am Brahman' arising out of hearing the Vedāntic Text, does not remove ignorance at all at its very inception; but, by this same being meditated upon day by day for a long time, is wiped off all ignorance without a residue as a result of accumulated intense feeling, for the S'ruti says - 'One becomes a god and is then merged in the gods' (Br. 4-1-2).” Nai. 1-67.

And S'ankara refers to the doctrine of a similar school in his Sūtra-Bhāshya :-

(२) भवतु नाम साध्यफलेषु प्रत्ययेष्वावृत्तिः, तेष्वावृत्तिसाध्यस्यातिशयस्य संभवात्; यस्तु परब्रह्मविषयः प्रत्ययो नित्यशुद्धबुद्धमुक्तस्वभावमेवात्मभूतं परं ब्रह्म समर्पयति, तत्र किमर्था आवृत्तिरिति? सकृच्छु तौ च ब्रह्मात्मत्वप्रतीत्यनुपपत्तेरावृत्तयभ्युपगमः- इति चेत्; न, आवृत्तावपि तदनुपपत्तेः । यदि हि 'तत्त्वमसि'

(छां. ६-८-७) इत्येवञ्जातीयकं वाक्यं सकृच्छू यमाणं  
 ब्रह्मत्वप्रतीतिं नोत्पादयेत्, ततस्तदेवावर्त्यमानम् उत्पादयिष्यतीति  
 का प्रत्याशा स्यात् ? सू. भा. ४-१-२, पा. ४६१

“The repetition of the concepts may be of use in the case of results to be achieved by meditation, inasmuch as it is possible that some intensity is effected in them by repeated practice. But in the case of the knowledge of the Higher Brahman which reveals Brahman that is the very self of the seeker, eternally pure, conscious and free, what purpose would be served by its repetition ?

“If it be said that the knowledge of the identity of Brahman and Ātman is not born by listening to the text merely once, and hence its repeated meditation is held to be necessary, we reply that this cannot be; for, the result is not conceivable even in the case of repetition. (To explain:) If hearing the Vedāntic text of the type of ‘That thou art’ once, does not produce the knowledge of the identity of Brahman and Ātman, where is the hope that the same repeatedly heard, would produce that knowledge ?”

SBh. 4-1- 2, p. 461

## Mandana and Others

29. There were Vedāntins who maintained that a constantly repeated practice of meditation of Ātman after gaining knowledge through ‘hearing’ and ‘reasoning’, was effectual in removing ignorance. *Mandana*, for instance, says :-

(१) योऽयं श्रवणमननपूर्वको ध्यानाभ्यासः  
 प्रतिषिद्धाखिलभेदप्रपञ्चे स एष नेतिनेत्यात्मनि, स व्यक्तः  
 भेददर्शनप्रतियोगी तन्निवर्तयति। स च सामान्येन भेददर्शनं प्रविलापयन्  
 आत्मनापि प्रविलीयते । ... यथा पयः पयो जरयति, स्वयं च  
 जीर्यति; यथा च विषं विषान्तरं शमयति, स्वयं च शाम्यति ॥  
 ब्र. सि. पा. १२-१३

“Now this repeated practice of meditation subsequent to *S’ravana* and *Manana*, negating all sorts of differences in Ātman described as ‘This is the Ātman taught as not this, not that’, this practice being evidently opposed to the experience of differences in general, removes it and dissolving as it does all idea of difference, dissolves itself also, in the same way as water drunk digests water and is itself digested, or in the same way as poison taken in, digests another variety of poison and is itself removed.”

Br. S. pp. 12-13.

(२) जातेऽपि तत्त्वदर्शने, अनाहिते च षट् संस्कारे द्रढीयसि  
 च मिथ्यादर्शनजे संस्कारे निश्चया अपि मिथ्यार्था भवन्ति । यथा  
 दिङ्मूढास्थान्नुसंहिताप्तवचसः, प्रागिव प्रवृत्तिदर्शनात् । तथा  
 प्रमितरज्जुभावाया अपि रज्ज्वाः प्रमाणाननुसन्धाने सर्पभ्रान्त्या  
 भयदर्शनम् । तस्मात् जातेऽपि प्रमाणात् तत्त्वदर्शने अनादिमिथ्या-  
 दर्शनाभ्यासपरिनिष्पन्नस्य द्रढीयसः संस्कारस्याभिभावाय, उच्छेदाय  
 वा, तत्त्वदर्शनाभ्यासं मन्यन्ते । तथा च ‘मन्तव्यो निदिध्यासितव्यः’  
 इत्युच्यते । शमदमब्रह्मचर्ययज्ञादिसाधनविधानं च । अन्यथा  
 कस्तदुपदेशार्थः? ब्र. सि. पा. ३५

“Even when the knowledge of truth has dawned, but a sufficiently strong impression of it has not been stored up, while the impression born of false knowledge is stronger, even correct notions may present false objects, as for example in the case of one who is confounded with regard to the cardinal directions, but does not keep up the memory of the testimony of a friend; for, he is found to proceed in the wrong direction even then as before. This is the case also with regard to a rope ascertained to be such, which is found to give rise to fear through a misconception that it is a snake, in case one does not keep up the memory of his correct knowledge. .... Therefore even after true knowledge has dawned by the help of the right means of knowledge, the repeated maintenance of correct knowledge, is deemed to be necessary for the purpose of overcoming or destroying the stronger impression that has arisen out of continued repetition of false perception. That is why the S'ruti says '(Ātman) is to be reflected upon and meditated', (that is why) control of the mind and the senses, and the performance of sacrifices and other practices of discipline, are also enjoined. Otherwise, what purpose would their teaching serve ?”

Br.S. p. 35.

### Mandana's Theory

30. It is evident that Mandana considers that S'ravana or the study of the text, is incomplete and inefficient in bringing about the knowledge of Ātman without *Manana*. That is why he writes श्रवणमननपूर्वको ध्यानाभ्यासः (Repeated meditation with a presupposed combined practice of *S'ravana and Manana*). Obviously

he is a *Samuccaya-Vādin* (one who recommends the combined practice of all the three means of knowledge, *S'raṇa*, *Manana* and *Nididhyāsa*).

31. Both Mandana and the author of the *Pāncapādikā*, think that even after the dawn of knowledge of Ātman there is a possibility of its being obstructed by some external factor—impressions of wrong knowledge according to Mandana, and suspicion that it is not probable or some misconception according to the author of *Pāncapādikā* (see p. 32). It is clear that this fear, while applicable to empirical knowledge, can have no place in the case of knowledge of the Non-dual Ātman since there is no scope for any 'external obstructive cause' in the state of this knowledge. Witness the S'ruti quoted often and often by S'āṅkara 'यत्र त्वस्य सर्वमात्मैवाभूत् तत्केन कं पश्येत् ... तत्केन कं विजानीयात्' (Where to this enlightened one everything has become Ātman alone, there one could see whom and with what, ... there one could know whom and with what ?) which emphatically denies the distinction of knower, knowledge and the knowable in that state.

### **Mandana's Argument for the Combination of Means**

32. This, however, is only by the way. For the present we are concerned with Mandana's view that

knowledge arising from *S'ravana* and *Manana*, does require repeated meditation also in order to become stable. The following extract would further elucidate his view in this respect :-

(१) ननु विद्यारूपं ब्रह्मैव, न विद्या ब्रह्मणोऽन्या ; तच्च नित्यम्, अकार्यम् । तत्र कथं किञ्चिदपेक्ष्येत ? उच्यते - यथा उपधानतिरोहितरूपस्फटिकमणिरूपधानापकर्षणं स्वरूपाभिव्यक्ततयेऽपेक्षते, तथेहापि द्रष्टव्यम् ॥

ब्र. सि. पा. ३७

(Objection) :- The essential form of knowledge is Brahman itself. Knowledge is not something other than Brahman; and that Brahman is eternal and not an effect. This being so, how could anything else be desiderated here ?

We reply : 'In the same way as a crystal desiderates the removal of the associate for the manifestation of its real nature, so also one should understand the present case. Br.S. p. 37

### **Criticism of This View**

33. As we have already stated, this argument is not sound, because knowledge of Brahman abolishes all duality and leaves no scope for further employment of factors co-operating with knowledge. And even granting for argument's sake that the illustration of a crystal holds good, it has no point of comparison so far as knowledge of Ātman is concerned. While it is true that the conditioning associate should be removed to

reveal its bright colour, such an act is not always necessary to know that it is essentially bright always. As S'āṅkara observes :-

(२) यथा शुद्धस्य स्फटिकस्य स्वाच्छद्यं शौक्ल्यं च स्वरूपं प्राग्विवेकग्रहणाद् रक्तनीलाद्गुणाधिभिरविविक्तमिव भवति; प्रमाण-जनितविवेकग्रहणात्तु पराचीनः स्फटिकः स्वाच्छद्येन शौक्ल्येन च स्वेन रूपेणाभिनिष्पद्यत इत्युच्यते प्रागपि तथैव सन्, तथा देहाद्गुणध्व-विविक्तस्यैव सतो जीवस्य – श्रुतिकृतं विवेकविज्ञानं शरीरात् समुत्थानम्, विवेकविज्ञानफलं स्वरूपेणाभिनिष्पत्तिः केवलात्मस्वरूपावगतिः ॥ सू. भा. १-३-१९, पा. ११३

“Just as the transparency and whiteness of a crystal, being its essential nature, appears as though it were indistinguishable from the redness, blueness and other conditioning associates before it is distinctly grasped; but after it is distinctly grasped with the help of discrimination born through valid means of knowledge, the crystal is spoken of as having attained its true nature of transparency and whiteness while it was exactly such even before that, so also in the case of the Jīva who appears as though he were indistinguishable from the conditioning associates such as the body, the discriminatory knowledge due to the teaching of the S'ruti, is his rising up from the body and the result of this discriminatory knowledge, is his attainment of his own nature.”

SBh. 1-3-19, p. 113

[It is clear that just as there is no real change affected by the removal of the conditioning associates in the case of the crystal, there is no real effort needed to make the intrinsic

nature of Ātman manifest there being need only of the discriminatory knowledge.]

34. The doctrine of the necessity of repeated practice of conjoined S'raṇa-and Manana, has been rejected by S'āṅkara in the following extract :

(१) अथोच्येत, न केवलं वाक्यं काञ्चिदर्थं साक्षात्कर्तुं शाकोति; अतो युक्त्यपेक्षं वाक्यम् अनुभावयिष्यति ब्रह्मात्मत्व मिति; तथाप्या- वृत्त्यानर्थक्यमेव । सापि हि युक्तिः सकृत्प्रवृत्तैव स्वमर्थमनुभावयिष्यति॥ सू. भा. ४-१-२, पा. ४६१

“It may be said that a text alone cannot produce direct experience of anything, and that hence the text in conjunction with reason, may produce the experience.

“Even so, repeated practice would be certainly useless; for, even that reason employed only once, could well produce the experience.” SBh. 4-1-2, p. 461

35. And there were followers of other schools, or it may be followers of the school already mentioned, who further clarified their position. Their doctrine is stated and refuted in the following excerpt :-

(१) अथापि स्यात्, युक्त्या वाक्येन च सामान्यविषयमेव विज्ञानं क्रियते, न विशेषविषयम् । यथा 'अस्ति मे हृदये शूलम्' इत्यतो वाक्यात्, गात्रकम्पादिलिङ्गाच्च शूलसद्भावसामान्यमेव परः प्रतिपद्यते, न विशेषम् अनुभवति, यथा स एव शूली । विशेषानुभवश्चाविद्याया निवर्तकः । ततस्तदार्था आवृत्तिरिति (चेत्); न । असकृदपि तावन्मात्रे क्रियमाणे विशेषविज्ञानोत्पत्त्यसंभवात्।

न हि सकृत्प्रयुक्ताभ्यां शास्त्रयुक्तिभ्यामनवगतो विशेषः शतकृत्वोऽपि प्रयुज्यमानाभ्याम् अवगन्तुं शक्यते । तस्मात्, यदि शास्त्रयुक्तिभ्यां विशेषः प्रतिपद्यते यदि वा सामान्यमेव, उभयथापि सकृत्प्रवृत्ते एव ते स्वकार्यं कुरुत इत्यावृत्त्यनुपयोगः ॥

सू. भा. ४-१-२, ४६१

“Perhaps it will be maintained that reason and text can only produce a general idea of what they convey, but not the direct experience of that particular fact. For instance, from the statement ‘I have a pain in my heart’ as also on the strength of seeing the shaking of the body and other symptoms, another person could gather only that there is the ache but not direct experience of that particular ache like the person suffering from the ache himself. Now direct experience is what removes Avidyā and hence, for attaining it, repeated practice is necessary.

“We reply : No; for, the production of direct experience, is impossible even by repeated practice of that much. The particular state which one has not experienced by a single employment of hearing S’āstra and reasoning, could never be experienced by making use of them even a hundred times. Therefore whether by a conjunction of S’āstra and reason, the particular state is experienced or its general nature only, in either case, they can both produce their effect by being employed but once and so repetition is useless.”

SBh. 4-1-2, p. 461

## **A Further Argument Against Repetition**

36. There is a further reason against those who insist upon the continued repetition of both S’ravaṇa and Manana :-

(१) न च सकृत्प्रयुक्ते शास्त्रयुक्ती कस्यचिदप्यनुभवं नोत्पादयत इति शक्यते नियन्तुम्, विचित्रप्रज्ञत्वात् प्रतिपत्तृणाम् । अपि चानेकांशोपेते लौकिके पदार्थे सामान्यविशेषवत्येकेनावधानेन एकमंशमवधारयति अपरेणापरमिति स्यादप्यभ्यासोपयोगः, यथा दीर्घप्रपाठकग्रहणादिषु; न तु निर्विशेषे ब्रह्मणि सामान्यविशेषरहिते चैतन्यमात्रात्मके प्रमोत्पत्तावभ्यासापेक्षा युक्ता ॥

सू. भा. ४-१-२, पा. ४६१.

“Nor can it be urged that as a rule S’āstra and reason employed but once, cannot produce direct experience in any one; for, those that can understand things possess different levels of intellect.

“Moreover, repeated practice may be granted to have some use in the case of an empirical object which has many features both general and particular, since by one effort of attention one feature may be determined and another by another, as for instance in the case of studying a long chapter. But in the case of Brahman devoid of all specific features, and of the nature of Pure Consciousness without any distinction of the general and particular in itself, it is not proper to expect the need of any repetition for the dawn of correct knowledge.”

SBh. 4-1-2, p. 461.

### **Vācaspati Mis’ra’s View of the Matter**

37. Vācaspati Mis’ra very closely follows in the foot-steps of Mandana even while explaining many a passage in S’ānkarā’s Sūtra- Bhāṣya. With regard to this particular doctrine, he writes thus :-

लृतस्मात्, निर्विचिकित्सत्वाक्यार्थभावनापरिपाकसहितमन्तः  
 करणं त्वंपदार्थस्यापरोक्षस्य तत्तदुपाध्याकारनिषेधेन  
 तत्पदार्थतामनुभावयतीति युक्तम् । न चायमनुभवो ब्रह्मस्वभावो  
 येन न ज्ञेयत, अपि त्वन्तः- करणस्यैव वृत्तिभेदो ब्रह्मविषयः ॥  
 वा. भा. १-१-१, पा. ५७

“The mind endowed with the ripeness resulting from the meditation on the meaning of the text free from all doubt, can reasonably lead to the experience of identity of *Twampadārtha* the self denoted by the word ‘thou’ and the entity denoted by the word ‘that’ by negating the various conditioning associates. Nor is this latter experience of the very nature of Brahman in which case it could not be produced; it is only a particular modification of the mind having Brahman for its object.”

VBh. 1-1-1, p. 57

It will be noted that Mandana asserts that realization of Brahman, is a manifestation of the same which results from removing the wrong impressions, and so it need not be an effect of same means employed, whereas Vācaspati obviates the difficulty by admitting that *Anubhava* is also an effect since it is only a modification of the mind. The real *Anubhava* for him, however, is Brahman itself and it only manifests after the modification also disappears along with the dual world. So his teaching is Mandana’s, slightly modified in this instance :-

(२) अपि च चतस्रः प्रतिपत्तयो ब्रह्मणि, प्रथमा तावदुपनिषद्वाक्यश्रवणमात्राद् भवति, यां किलाचक्षते श्रवणमिति । द्वितीया मीमांसासहिता तस्मादेवौपनिषद्वाक्यात्, यामाचक्षते मननमिति । तृतीया चिन्तासन्ततिमयी, यामाचक्षते निदिध्यासनमिति । चतुर्थी साक्षात्कारवती वृत्तिरूपा । नान्तरीयकं हि तस्याः कैवल्यमिति॥ वा. भा. ८९८.

“Moreover there are four kinds of knowledge with regard to Brahman. The first variety arises out of the mere listening to the text in the Upanishad, which they call *S’ravaṇa*. The second is born out of the same Upanishadic text aided by enquiry (*Mīmāṃsā*); which they call *Manana*. The third is of the nature of a continuous stream of thought, which they call *Nididhyāsana*. The fourth is of the form of a modification of the mind which entails immediate experience, which results in immediate *Kaivalya* (or Release). VBh. p. 898.

It is obvious that Vācaspati sticks to Mandana’s school in holding that *Nididhyāsana* is a continuous meditation or rather creative imagination based on the knowledge obtained *S’ravaṇa* and *Manana* conjoined. Only, he postulates a modification of the mind attended with *Anubhava* or *Sākshātkāra*, on whose appearance alone actual *anubhava* or direct experience of Ātman is possible:

(३) तत्त्वावधारणाभ्यासस्य स्वभाव एव तादृशो यदनादिमपि निरूढनिबिडवासनमपि मिथ्याप्रत्ययमपनयति ॥ वा. भा. पा. ४०.

“The very nature of the repetition of ascertained knowledge is such that it removes even the beginningless false idea whose dense impression is deep-rooted.” VBh. p. 40.

Sures'vara had anticipated and rejected this theory of *Vāsanā* or *Samskāra* of *Avidyā* as an obstacle to the dawn of permanent enlightenment :-

बाधितत्वादविद्याया विद्यां सा नैव बाधते ।  
तद्वासना निमित्तत्वं यान्ति विद्यास्मृतेर्ध्रुवम् ॥ नै. १-३८.

“*Avidyā* having been already sublated, can never sublimate *Vidyā*. The impressions of that *Avidyā* would surely give rise to the memory of *Vidyā*.” Nai. 1-38.

If this firm stand of Sures'vara be kept in mind, insistence of Mandana and Vācaspati following him, on repetition of *S'raṇa* and *Manana* even after the dawn of right knowledge, will be readily seen to be a fight with one's own shadow.

### S'āṅkara's Dictum

38. S'āṅkara's final judgment in the matter resting as it does on both universal intuition and reason based upon it, may now be stated here :-

(१) एष व्यावृत्तसर्वसंसारधर्मकोऽनुभवात्मको ब्रह्मसंज्ञ-  
कस्तत्पदार्थो वेदान्ताभियुक्तानां प्रसिद्धः । तथा त्वंपदार्थोऽपि  
प्रत्यगात्मा श्रोता देहादारभ्य प्रत्यगात्मतया संभाव्यमान-

श्रैतन्यपर्यन्तत्वेनावधारितः तत्र येषामेतौ पदार्थौ  
 अज्ञानसंशयविपर्ययप्रतिबन्धौ तेषां 'तत्त्वमसि' इत्येतद्वाक्यं स्वार्थे  
 प्रमां नोत्पादयित शक्नोति; पदार्थज्ञानपूर्वकत्वाद्वाक्यार्थ(ज्ञान)-  
 स्य-इत्यतस्तान् प्रत्येष्टव्यः पदार्थविवेकप्रयोजनः शास्त्रयुक्त्यभ्यासः॥

सू. भा. ४-१-२, पा. ४६२.

"This entity called Brahman free from all attributes incidental to *Samsāra*, and of the nature of intuition itself, is well-known among adepts in Vedānta to be what is meant by the word 'that'. And the meaning of the word 'thou' also is the inner Ātman, 'the hearer' (the enquirer), who may possibly be taken to be (the not-selves) beginning with the body, but is ultimately ascertained to be of the nature of Pure Consciousness. Now, in the case of those for whom these entities denoted by the words ('that' and 'thou') are obscured by the obstacle of ignorance, doubt and misconception, the text 'That thou art' cannot produce correct knowledge with regard to what it propounds, for the knowledge of the import of a proposition presupposes the knowledge of the meaning of the terms of which it is composed. And so in their case the repetition of S'āstra, (S'ravana) and Reason is desirable for the purpose of discriminating the meaning of the terms."

SBh. 4-1-2, p. 462.

(२) यद्यपि च प्रतिपत्तव्य आत्मा निरंशः; तथाप्यध्यारोपितं  
 तस्मिन् बह्वंशत्वं देहेन्द्रियमनोबुद्धिविषयवेदनादित्त्वक्षणम् । तत्रैकेनाव-  
 धानेनैकमंशमगोहृत्यपरणापरमिति युज्यते तत्र क्रमवती प्रतिपत्तिः ।  
 तत्तु पूर्वरूपमेवात्मप्रतिपत्तेः ॥ सू. भा. ४-१-२, पा. ४६२.

“While it is true that the Ātman to be known has no parts, yet many parts have been superimposed on him such as the body, senses, mind, the intellect and perception of objective things. And one of these components is removed by one act of attention and another by another act; and so it is reasonable that knowledge has to be acquired gradually. But this is only previous to the final knowledge of Ātman.”

SBh. 4-1-2. p. 462.

(३) येषां पुनर्निपुणमतीनां नाज्ञानसंशयविपर्ययलक्षणः पदार्थ-  
विषयः प्रतिबन्धोऽस्ति, ते शक्नुवन्ति सकृदुक्तमेव तत्त्वमसिवाक्यार्थ-  
मनुभवितुमिति तान् प्रत्यावृत्त्यानर्थक्यमिष्टमेव । सकृदुत्पन्नैव  
ह्यात्मप्रतिपत्तिरविद्यां निवर्तयतीति नात्र कश्चिदपि क्रमोऽभ्युपगम्यते॥

सू. भा. ४-१-२, पा. ४६२.

“In the case of those, however, who have a keen intellect which has no impediment of ignorance, doubt or misconception to overcome with regard to what is meant by the terms, they can certainly intuit the entity intended to be conveyed by the proposition ‘That thou art’ uttered even once; and so the futility of repetition (of S’raṇa and Manana) is quite acceptable to us in their case. For, the intuition of Ātman obliterates Avidyā as soon as it dawns and no gradual unfoldment of knowledge is admitted here.”

SBh. 4-1-2, p. 462.

### **S’āṅkara’s Unequivocal Dictum**

39. The following conclusions have to be drawn from the above extract with regard to S’āṅkara’s position

touching the relation of *S'ravana* and *Manana*, as well as repeated practice of these two mental acts of discipline in conjunction :-

(1) The intuition of the identity of Brahman and Ātman is quite possible for those who have a correct notion of what the terms of the proposition 'That thou art' actually mean. They stand in no need of anything more than a first hearing of the teaching.

(2) The repetition of both *S'ravana* and *Manana* is necessary for those who have not comprehended the meaning of these terms.

(3) The only obstacle to the correct understanding of the meaning of the terms, is ignorance, doubt or misconception of the meaning of these terms.

[S'ankara's Vedānta is quite innocent of the doctrine of Positive Avidyā—the 'Mūlavidyā' as it is called by the sub-commentators, especially the followers of *Vivarāṇa* school by which modern Vedāntins are very much influenced.]

(4) There is nothing more to be done for the acquisition of intuition or freedom from Samsāra for those who have understood the meaning of the proposition.

S'ankara expressly proclaims this :-

न चैवमात्मानमनुभवतः किञ्चिदन्यत् कृत्यमवशिष्यते ।

सू.भा. ४-१-२, पा. ४६३.

(5) The *Prasamkhyāna-Vādins* insist that a repeated active thinking of the meaning of the proposition (That thou art) along with Manana (or reason) is absolutely necessary to ward off all wrong impressions. This teaching supported by Mandana and Vācaspati Mis'ra also (who insists that Bhāvana is quite necessary), has been anticipated and totally rejected here when S'āṅkara says in so many words (तत्तु पूर्वरूपमेवात्मप्रतिपत्तेः - All practice or order of its steps is only before the dawn of the knowledge of Ātman through S'ravaṇa and Manana.)

(6) The doctrine of *Prasamkhyāna-Vāda* is seen to be discarded in S'āṅkara's *Bhāshya* in 1-1-4 also :-

ल्यत्पुनरुक्तं श्रवणात् पराचीनयोर्मनननिदिध्यासनयो-  
र्विधिदर्शनाद् विधिशेषत्वं ब्रह्मणः, न स्वरूपपर्यवसायित्वमिति ।  
न (तन्न ?) । अव- गत्यर्थत्वान्मनननिदिध्यासनयोः । यदि ह्यवगतं  
ब्रह्मान्यत्र विनियुज्येत, भवेत्तदा विधिशेषत्वम् । न तु तदस्ति,  
मनननिदिध्यासनयोरपि श्रवणवदवगत्यर्थत्वात् ॥”

सू. भा. १-१-४, पा. २३.

“As for the argument, again, that inasmuch as the injunctions of Manana and Nididhyāsana also seem to have been enjoined subsequent to S'ravaṇa, Brahman must be subservient to an injunction, and cannot be self-sufficient, we say 'No'. For, Manana and Nididhyāsana are (also) for

intuition. (To explain:-) If Brahman already intuited were utilized for some other action to be done (such as Manana or Nididhyāsana), it could be right to suppose that Brahman is ancillary to an injunction. But it is not so since Manana and Nididhyāsana also are meant for intuition like S'raṇaṇa.”

SHh. 1-1-4, p. 23.

40. A considerable portion of the eighteenth chapter of the *Upadēś'a Sāhasri* is devoted to an elaborate exposition and refutation of the doctrine of Prasaṅkhyāna. It is really a matter for surprise, how in the face of all this, the Post-S'āṅkaras including some of the commentators on the *Sūtra-Bhāṣya* itself, happened to come forward boldly to support this irrational doctrine again.<sup>1</sup>

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1. We have quoted above S'āṅkara's express declaration in the *Bhāṣya* that an aspirant of the highest rank can know Ātman by a single act of S'raṇaṇa (शक्नुवन्ति सकृदुक्तमेव तत्त्वमसिवाक्यार्थमनुभवितुम्) Yet in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Bhāṣya* we find this statement; एव हासा दृष्टा भवात् श्रवणमननानादध्यासनसाधनानवाततः । यदकत्वमतान्यपगतान तदा सम्यग्दर्शनं बह्वकत्वावषयं प्रसीदति नान्यथा श्रवणमात्रेण ॥ (Br. Bh. 2-4-5, p. 760). All the three means combined culminate in the Vision, and not mere S'raṇaṇa. Is it possible that S'āṅkara contradicted himself on this vital point, or have we to suppose that the two S'āṅkaras are different ?

## SECTION FIVE

### MANANA FURTHER EXPLAINED

#### Nature of Manana

41. We have seen that Nididhyāsana recommended by Yājñavalkya, cannot possibly mean the compulsory repetition of the combined practice of S'raṇa and Manana. S'raṇa or listening to and ascertaining the meaning of the texts which suggest the nature of the Self, is quite enough in the case of the highest grade of seekers. Manana or Vedic reasoning may be, however, needed for aspirants of the second grade.

This reason is not of the syllogistic type, but only reasoning based upon intuitions of the nature of the Self. It may also be aided by a consideration of the empirical illustrations which an adept preceptor may cite in order to suggest the invariable dependence of the not-self (or empirical phenomena) on the Ātman.

#### The Illustration of Genus and Species

42. In this particular case, Yājñavalkya illustrates how everything else, the whole array of phenomena comprising actions, acting agents and other constituent

factors of actions and the results of actions in the universe, depend upon Ātman for their being while they last.

स यथा दुन्दुभेर्हन्यमानस्य न बाह्याञ्छब्दाक्कुयाद् ग्रहणाय  
दुन्दुभेस्तु ग्रहणेन दुन्दुभ्याघातस्य वा शब्दो गृहीतः ॥

स यथा शङ्खस्य ध्मायमानस्य न बाह्याञ्छब्दाञ्छक्कुयाद् ग्रहणाय  
शङ्खस्य तु ग्रहणेन शङ्खध्मस्य वा शब्दो गृहीतः ॥

स यथा वीणायै बाद्यमानायै न बाह्याञ्छब्दाञ्छ-  
क्कुयाद्ग्रहणाय वीणायै तु ग्रहणेन वीणावादस्य वा शब्दो  
गृहीतः ॥ वृ. ४-५-८, ९, १०.

“In the same way as while a drum is being beaten one cannot know the sounds as distinct entities, but only by knowing them as pertaining to the drum or to the beating of the drum, is the sound grasped as such; in the same way as while a conch is being blown one cannot know the sounds as distinct in themselves, but only by knowing them as pertaining to the conch or to the blowing of the conch, is the sound grasped as such; in the same way as while a *Vīṇā* is being played on, one cannot know the sounds as distinct entities in themselves, but only by knowing them as pertaining to the *Vīṇā* or to the playing on *Vīṇā*, is the sound grasped as such.”

Br. 4-5-8, 9, 10.

That is to say, as particular sounds produced can be recognized as inseparable from their genus, so also the phenomena of the world can be known only as depending on Ātman. There is no phenomenon

whatever which can be grasped as an entity distinct from Pure Consciousness which is their Ātman. Since there is no distinction of genus and species in Ātman, this illustration should be supposed only to suggest that empirical phenomena have no independent being of their own inasmuch as, metaphysically speaking, being can be only one and Ātman is Pure Being itself.

### **The Universe a Manifestation of Brahman**

43. The next illustration is meant to suggest that the whole universe spontaneously springs up from Brahman at the time of creation :-

स यथाऽऽर्द्ध्याग्नेरभ्याहितस्य पृथग्धूमा विनिश्चरन्त्येवं वा  
 अरेऽस्य महतो भूतस्य निःश्वासितमेतद्दृग्वेदो यजुर्वेदः सामवेदो-  
 ऽथर्वाङ्गिरस इतिहासः पुराणं विद्या उपनिषदः श्लोकाः  
 सूत्राण्यनुव्याख्यानानि व्याख्यानानीष्टं हुतमाशितं पाचितमयं च लोकः  
 पश्च लोकः सर्वाणि च भूतान्यस्यैवैतानि सर्वाणि निःश्वासितानि॥

बृ. ४-५-११, पा. ९४२.

“In the same way as from a fire kindled with wet faggot diverse columns of smoke issue forth, even so, my dear, are the following the exhalation of the Supreme Being: the Rgveda, the Yajurveda, the Sāma Veda, the Atharvāngirasas, the Itihāsa (traditional story), the Purāṇa, the Vidyā, the Upanishads, the S’lokas, the Sūtras, the sub-commentaries, the commentaries,

the sacrifice, the oblation of food, drink, this world and the next world and all the beings—all these are verily the exhalation of this Supreme Being.”

Br. 4-5-11, p. 942.

The whole world differentiated by names and forms, is said to be produced here out of Brahman without any effort whatever like the exhalation of a person.

### **The Dissolution of the World in Ātman**

44. And every phenomenon in the world is dissolved into Ātman in the end. This is taught through the illustration of the sea :-

स यथा सर्वासामपां समुद्र एकायनमेवं सर्वेषां स्पर्शानां  
त्वगेकायनमेवं सर्वेषां गन्धानां नासिके एकायनमेवं सर्वेषां रसानां  
जिह्वेकायनमेवं सर्वेषां रूपाणां चक्षुरेकायनमेवं सर्वेषां शब्दानां  
श्रोत्रमेकायनमेवं सर्वेषां सङ्कल्पानां मन एकायनमेवं सर्वासां विद्यानां  
हृदयमेकायनमेवं सर्वेषां कर्मणां हस्तावेकायनमेवं  
सर्वेषां मानन्दानामुपस्थ एकायनमेवं सर्वेषां विसर्गाणां पायुरेकायनमेवं  
सर्वेषामध्वनां पादावेकायनमेवं सर्वेषां वेदानां वागेकायनम् ॥

बृ. ४-५-१२.

“Just as the ocean is the one ultimate goal for merging in for all streams, even so, for all varieties of touch, the skin is the one goal. Even so, the nostrils are the one goal for all odours; even so, the tongue is the one goal for all tastes; even so, the eye is the one goal for all colours; even so, the ear is the one goal for all sounds; even so, the mind is the one goal for all varieties of willing (or imaginations); even so, the intellect

is the one goal for all actions; even so, the hands are the one goal for all actions; even so, the generating organ is the one goal for all pleasures; even so, the anus is the one goal for all excretions and even so, the legs are the one goal for all movements; even so, the speech is the one goal for all the Vedas.”

Br. 4-5-12.

Here the dissolution of the objects in the corresponding organs of sense, should be understood to have been intended as implicative of the final dissolution of all phenomena into Ātman as Pure Consciousness. For instance, when it is said that all varieties of touch are dissolved in the skin or the organ of touch, the implication is that all particular varieties of touch dissolve themselves into the genus ‘touch’ and that genus into the genus of ‘*Sankalpa*’, and that genus in its turn into the intellect and that finally into Brahman which is Pure Consciousness in its essence. Similarly the organs of taste or those of sight etc., should be traced to their respective organs, the mind, the intellect and finally Pure Consciousness. The conclusion is that just as all phenomena take their rise from Brahman, and continue to have their being in Brahman, so also they all merge in and become one with Brahman in the end. That is why Yājñavalkya began with the proposition that there is nothing apart from Brahman (Vide p. 8) and

therefore the world of phenomena is verily Brahman itself.

This is one species of Vedic reasoning or *Manana*, the reasoning that the world being the effect of Brahman as the cause, does not exist apart from Brahman( प्रपञ्चस्य ब्रह्मप्रभवत्वात् कार्यकारणानन्यत्वन्यायेन ब्रह्माव्यतिरेकः Vide SBh. 2-1-6, p. 189).

That the whole universe takes its rise from Ātman or Pure Consciousness and dissolves itself again into that Ātman, can be verified from one's intuition of deep sleep where the world as an appearance is nought as it were, and so soon as one awakes, the world divided into the interior and the exterior, makes its spontaneous appearance (see Br. 2-1-20). The Vedāntic reasoning involved in this reference, however, is not within the reach of beginners.<sup>1</sup>

### **The Three Varieties of Dissolution**

45. The S'āstras speak of three species of dissolution, diurnal, natural and the absolute. Diurnal dissolution takes place in deep sleep when everything

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1. Enquirers interested in the Avasthaic method (method of Reasoning based on the intuition of the states of consciousness), may study with profit 'Vedānta or the Science of Reality', published by the Adhyātma Prakāsha Kāryālaya.

is dissolved into Ātman. The natural is when the whole world is merged in Brahman at the end of each *Kalpa* or cyclic age. Both these are temporary, empirically speaking; for, sleep and world dissolution occur as a result of *Karma*, individual or collective, and though from the highest stand-point of Reality the souls along with the rest of the world, are really one with the real Ātman during these states, the Jivas do not know that they are one with the Supreme Self there. As the Chāndogya S'ruti says :-

(१) इमाः सर्वाः प्रजाः सति संपद्य न विदुः सति संपद्यामह इति ॥ छां. ६-९-२.

“All these beings, having come from Pure Being, do not know that they have become one with Pure Being.” Ch. 6-9-2.

(२) इमाः सर्वाः प्रजाः सत आगम्य न विदुः सत आगच्छामह इति । छां. ६-१०-२.

“All these beings, having come from Pure Being, do not know that they have come from Pure Being.” Ch. 6-10-2.

Even while every being high or low, is really one with Reality for ever and there is really nothing else than Reality, and even while every being without exception sheds its apparently distinguishing adjunct, or *Upādhi* in the shape of body, senses and mind whenever deep sleep or universal dissolution comes on, and

consequently there is not even the semblance of individuality in these states, yet creatures of all ranks, beginning with the lowest to the highest, are so prepossessed in favour of their identity with their circumscribing associates in waking, that they are barred from reflecting upon their innate nature as Reality. This ignorance no less than the predilection for their preconceived individuality in waking, is what is called *Avidyā* in Vedānta. When they have the good fortune to secure the sound advice of an adept teacher, they do reflect on their real nature and at once come to know that they have been always the one Reality without a second. This time their ignorance is effectively wiped off by enlightenment and the enchantment of the reality of the conditioning associates - the body, senses and mind - is dispelled for good. This is what is known as the *Ātyantika Pralaya* - Absolute Dissolution.

46. Yājñavalkya is now introducing Maitreyī into the notion of the Absolute dissolution :-

स यथा सैन्यवधनोऽनन्तरोऽबाहः कृत्स्नो रसघन एवैवं वा  
 अरऽयमात्मा अनन्तरोऽबाहः कृत्स्नः प्रज्ञानघन एवैतेभ्यो भूतेभ्यः  
 समुत्थाय तान्येवानुविनश्यति न प्रेत्य संज्ञास्तीत्यरे ब्रवीमीति होवाच  
 याज्ञवल्क्यः ॥

बृ. ४-५-१३

“Just as a lump of salt is entirely saline throughout, devoid of any within or without, even so, my dear, this Ātman is entirely Pure Consciousness throughout, devoid of any within or without. Having emerged out of these elements, He vanished along with them and after transcending them there is no more consciousness (of anything else), ‘So say I, my dear’, said Yājñavalkya.”

Br. 4-5- 13.

The above is a description of how the Ātman has taken shape, as it were, as an individual self owing to Avidyā, but on the dawn of enlightenment, loses his individuality. The illustration of water shaping itself as a lump of salt for a time and resuming its intrinsic form on being immersed in water, is intended to convey the idea that just as its solidification is due to the mixing of foreign matter, individuality is due to the five elements set up by Avidyā. Failing to catch this point quite, Maitreyi misinterprets the sage’s statement and puts forward her objection thus :-

सा होवाच मैत्रेय्यत्रैव मा भगवान् मोहान्तमपीपिपन्न वा  
अहमिमं विजानामीति स होवाच न वा अरऽहं मोहं ब्रवीम्यविनाशी  
वा अरेऽयमात्माऽनुच्छित्तिधर्मा ॥

बृ. ४-५-१४

“That Maitreyi exclaimed, ‘Just here Your Reverence has led me into a point of confusion. I do not understand this at all!’ He said ‘I am certainly not saying anything confounding.

Deathless, indeed, my dear, is this Ātman of an indestructible nature.' ”  
Br . 4-5-14.

[The *Mādhyandina* version of the Upanishad adds मात्राऽसंसर्गस्त्वस्य भवति (only there will be no contact of the particles of the elements) thus clarifying the sage's position. The meaning is that there is only this difference in the two states. While ignorant the Jīva imagines that he is an individual owing to the limiting condition of the body &c. projected by Avidyā, whereas when he has known the truth he realizes that he was never bound by these shackles fictitiously created by Avidyā.]

47. Bādarāyaṇa in his Vedānta Sūtras, sets forth three different views of three different sages with regard to the relation of the individual self and the Supreme Self. He is there discussing the question: 'How is it that Yājñavalkya begins with a description of human love for one's own petty self even while he has started to propound the nature of the Supreme Self transcending all mundane life?'

प्रतिज्ञासिद्धेर्लिङ्गमाश्मरथ्यः १-४-२० .

(1) Here *As'marathya* admits some sort of causal relation between the two selves and say that the aspect of identity of the two selves, is meant to be stressed here; for, there is the initial proposition that 'Ātman being known, all this becomes

known'. According to this sage there is an aspect of difference also between the two selves. SBh. 1-4-20.

उत्क्रमिष्यत एवंभावादित्यौद्भ्रलोमिः १-४-२१.

(2) *Audulōmi* postulates the difference between the individual self and the Supreme Self in the present life. But by dint of the practice of Jnāna (knowledge), Dhyāna (meditation) and other acts conducing to freedom, the individual self becomes merged in the Supreme Self.

SBh. 1-4-21.

अवस्थितेरिति काशकृत्स्नः १-४-२२

(3) *Kās'akṛtsna*, however, opines that the real Self unchanged is now and here the Jīva, who is only apparently the limited self.

SBh. 1-4-22.

### Reality is the Only Ātman

48. It is *Kās'akṛtsna's* view that S'āṅkara holds to be the only correct view. That this is right, is endorsed by Yājñavalkya himself. For he says :

यत्र हि द्वैतमिव भवति तदितर इतरं पश्यति तदितर इतरं जिघ्रति तदितर इतर रसयते तदितर इतरमभिवदति तदितर इतरं शृणोति तदितर इतरं मनुते तदितर इतरं स्पृशति तदितर इतरं विजानाति यत्र त्वस्य सर्वमात्मैवाभूत्तत्केन कं पश्येत्तत्केन कं जिघ्रेत् तत्केन कं रसयेत्तत्केन कंमभिवदेत्तत्केन कं शृणुयात्तत्केन कं मन्वीत

तत्केन कं स्पृशेत्तत्केन कं विजानीयाद्येनेदं सर्वं विजानाति तं केन  
विजानीयात् ॥

बृ. ४-५-१५

“For where there is duality, as it were, there one sees another, there one smells another, there one tastes another, there one talks to another, there one hears another, there one thinks of another, there one touches another, there one understands another. But where to this (person), all has become Ātman alone, whom’ could one see and with what, there whom could one smell and with what, there to whom could one talk and with what, there to whom could one touch and with what, there whom could one know and with what ? With what could one know Him through whom one knows all this?”<sup>1</sup>

Br. 4-5-15.

It is evident that when absolute dissolution has taken place upon the dawn of enlightenment, there is no question of any *Vyavahāra* or human dealings (thinking, talking or acting) whatever; for, the Absolute is the One without a second. It is to this state what Yājñavalkya referred when he said न प्रत्य सञ्जास्त (there is no consciousness of another there.) While it is true that empirical consciousness is absent as a matter of course

1. In these sentences केन कम् has been translated ‘Whom and with what ?’. But it could be translated as ‘What ... and with what ?’ with equal propriety; only we should have to understand the word ‘पदाथन’ after कम् .

in deep sleep and other kindred states, and the Jīva becomes one with the Absolute, that *Satsampatti* (union with Pure Being or the Absolute) is threatened with a break in these states, for one may return to the waking state subsequently, yet in the Absolute Dissolution which is gained through enlightenment, one realizes that he has always been the Absolute Ātman without any vestige of empirical consciousness or action. This point has been clarified by S'āṅkara in his Bhāshya on the Vedānta Sūtras (4-2-8 and 4-4-16).

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## SECTION SIX

### NIDIDHYĀSANA, UPĀSANĀ AND YŌGA

#### The Relation of the Sequel

49. It has been seen that a repeated practice of *S'ravana* and *Manana* combined, may be necessary for a large number of aspirants for *Dars'ana* or intuition of Ātman though that practice is not what S'āṅkara, the author of the *Sūtra-Bhāshya*, recognizes to be *Nididhyāsana*, as some Vedāntins preceding and succeeding him have supposed it to be. What exactly is this *Nididhyāsana* then according to him ? The *Maitreyi Brāhmaṇa* itself closes with reason or *Manana*, and the *Bhāshya* thereon does not precisely define what *Nididhyāsana* is. In his introduction to the next *Brāhmaṇa*, the *Bhāshyakāra* says :-

आत्मनि च विज्ञाते सर्वमिदं विज्ञातं भवति । आत्मा च प्रियः सर्वस्मात् । तस्मादात्मा द्रष्टव्यः स च श्रोतव्यो मन्तव्यो निदिध्यासितव्यः :- इति च दर्शनप्रकारा उक्ताः । तत्र श्रोतव्यः आचार्यागमाभ्याम् । मन्तव्यस्तर्कतः । तत्र च तर्क उक्तः । 'आत्मैवेदं सर्वम्' इति प्रतिज्ञातस्य हेतुवचनम् - आत्मैकसामान्यत्वम्, आत्मैकोद्भवत्वम्, आत्मैकप्रलयत्व च । तत्रायं हेतुरसिद्ध इत्याशङ्क्यते आत्मैकसामान्योद्भवप्रलयाख्यः । तदाशङ्कनिवृत्त्यर्थमेतद्ब्राह्मणमारभ्यते । ..... अथवा 'आत्मैवेदं सर्वम्' इति प्रतिज्ञातस्य

आत्मोत्पत्तिस्थितिलयत्वं हेतुमुक्त्वा पुनरागमप्रधानेन मधुब्राह्मणेन  
प्रतिज्ञातस्यार्थस्य निगमनं क्रियते ॥

बृ. भा. २-५-१.

“It has been enunciated that Ātman being known, all this becomes known and that Ātman is dearer than everything else. Therefore Ātman is to be seen. And the ways of seeing Him have been stated (in the statement) ‘He is to be heard about, reflected upon and contemplated’. Here, He has to be heard about through Āgama (or S’ruti) and preceptor, and He is to be reflected upon by means of reason. And the reason adduced for the enunciation ‘All this is Ātman’, was that Ātman alone is the one genus (that is common to all) that all is born of Ātman alone and that everything ultimately dissolves in Ātman. Now this reason of Ātman being the one genus, the one source of origin and the one final goal of dissolution, may be thought to be not established. So this *Brāhmana* is begun to ward off this objection. .... Or rather, it may be that after adducing reason-to the effect that everything originates, is sustained by and dissolves in - Ātman for the general enunciation that All this is Ātman, the original proposition enunciated is again concluded by the Madhu Brāhmaṇa, which makes general statements mostly in accordance with tradition.”

Br. Bh. 2-5-1, pp. 769, 770.

## **Brihadārnyaka Bhāshya on Nididhyāsana**

50. It is strange that the Brihadārnyaka Bhāshya never states exactly what Nididhyāsana is even in the context where it has to be discussed. Nevertheless, it is noteworthy that the author of the Bhāshya, does imply

that Nididhyāsa is not merely a combined practice of *S'ravana* and *Manana* as the Prasamkhyānavādins aver, but something over and above both (cf. दर्शनप्रकारा उक्ताः the three ways of seeing have been stated). The following extract is an additional piece of evidence on this behalf :-

अन्यैर्व्याख्यातम् 'आ दुन्दुभिदृष्टान्ताच्छ्रोतव्यार्थमागमवचनम्, प्राङ्मधुब्राह्मणान्मन्तव्यार्थमुपपत्तिप्रदर्शनेन । मधुब्राह्मणेन तु निदिध्यासनविधिरुच्यत इति । सर्वथापि तु यथा आगमेनावधारितम्, तर्कतस्तथैव मन्तव्यम्; यथा तर्कतो मतं तस्य तर्कागमाभ्यां निश्चितस्य, तथैव निदिध्यासनं क्रियत इति पृथङ् निदिध्यासनविधिरनर्थक एव॥

बृ. भा. २-५-१, पा. ७७०

'Others explain that up to the illustration of the drum, the subject-matter of *S'ravana* has been stated by Āgama, by the portion preceding Madhu Brāhmaṇa the subject-matter of *Manana* has been set forth by adducing reason and by the Madhu Brāhmaṇa is presented the Vidhi (injunction) of Nididhyāsa. However the matter may stand, one has to reflect upon the subject-matter exactly in accordance with the conclusion by Āgama and it is in accordance with the reflection alone, the thing determined by reason and Āgama, will have to be conducted the practice of Nididhyāsa also. A distinct injunction of Nididhyāsa is therefore certainly useless."

Br. Bh. 2-5-1, p. 770.

The view criticized here is that of *BhartyPrapañca*. For the present it is sufficient to observe that that

commentator also is looking for Nididhyāsana or contemplation where not a trace of it is to be found.

Suresvara in his Vārtika writes in this connection as follows :

निदिध्यासनसिद्धयर्थं केचिद्द्वयाचक्षते परम् ।  
मधुब्राह्मणमेतत्तु न युक्तं प्रतिमाति नः ॥

श्रुत आगमतो योऽर्थस्तर्केणापि समर्थितः ।  
स एवार्थस्तु निष्णातो निदिध्यासनमुच्यते ॥

शास्त्राचार्यानुभवनेर्हेतुभिश्च समर्थितः ।  
ईदृगैकात्म्यसंबोधो निदिध्यासनमुच्यते ॥

बृ. वा. २-५-१४, १५, १६.

“The next Madhu Brāhmaṇa is taken by some to be begun for the sake of enjoining Nididhyāsana. But this does not seem to be proper. For what has been heard about and supported by reason also, that very conclusion is what is known as Nididhyāsana. That which has been attained through S’āstra, Ācārya and intuition and has also been supported by reason—such is the kind of knowledge regarding the unity of Ātman that is called *Nididhyāsana*.” Br. V. 2-5-14, 15, 16.

[For Sures’vara, *Nididhyāsana* is the resultant knowledge and not meditation.]

### **Nididhyāsana According to the Sūtra-Bhāshya**

51. The *Sūtra-Bhāshya*, however, regards Nididhyāsana also to belong to the category of mental

acts as means to the attainment of knowledge. This Bhāshya is nowhere seen to identify Nididhyāśana with the resultant knowledge as Sures'vara's Vārtika does. On the other hand, we find express statements declaring it as a *Kriyā* (an act) to be performed.

(१) 'श्रोतव्यो मन्तव्यो निदिध्यासितव्यः' इत्येवंजातीयको ह्यसकृदुपदेशः प्रत्ययावृत्तिं सूचयति ॥ .

सू. भा. ४-१-१, पा. ४६०.

"Repeated teaching of the type 'He is to be heard about, reflected upon and contemplated points to the repetition of the concepts.' SBh. 4-1-1, p. 460.

(२) दर्शनपर्यवसानानि हि श्रवणादीन्यावर्त्यमानानि दृष्टार्थानि भवन्ति ॥

सू. भा. ४-४-१, पा. ४६०.

"S'ravaṇa and the practices proposed for culmination in vision, would yield results to be actually experienced only when they are repeatedly practised." SBh. 4-1-1, p. 460.

(३) अपि च 'उपासनम्', 'निदिध्यासनं च' इत्यन्तर्णीतावृत्तिगुणैव क्रिया अभिधीयते ॥

सू. भा. ४-१-१, पा. ४६०.

"Moreover, by the words 'Upāsanam' and 'Nididhyāsanam' is denoted an act exclusively implying repetition." SBh. 4-1-1, p. 460.

(४) तत्र यानि तावत् सम्यग्दर्शनार्थान्युपासनानि, तान्यवघातादिवत् कार्यपर्यवसानानीति ज्ञातमेवैषामावृत्तिपरिमाणम् । न हि सम्यग्दर्शने कार्ये निष्पन्ने यत्नान्तरं किञ्चिच्छासितुं शक्यम् ॥

सू. भा. ४-१-१२, पा. ४७१.

“Now, with regard to Upāsanas intended for right-knowledge, the extent of their repetition is self-evident since they are to culminate in the production of their effect just like pounding of paddy; for, no further exertion can be urged (in their case) after right-knowledge, their effect, is produced.”<sup>1</sup>

SBh. 4-1-12, p. 471.

The above extracts must suffice to convince the reader that the author of the Sūtra-Bhāshya not only regards Nididhyāsana as a mental act serving as a means to produce the Vision of Ātman, but also actually calls it by the name of ‘Upāsana’ as well.

### **The Meanings of the Words Upāsana and Jnāna**

52. This circumstance, however, should not lead any one to conclude that S’ankara actually identifies the processes of Upāsana and Nididhyāsana, for, the word ‘Upāsana’ is used in the S’rutis and Smṛtis in three different senses. The following citations will vouch for this statement :

(१) स एष इह प्रविष्ट आ नखाग्नेभ्यो यथा क्षुरः  
क्षुरधानेऽवाहितः स्याद्विश्वम्भरो वा विश्वम्भरकुलाये तं न पश्यन्ति।

1. The injunction ‘He shall pound the paddy’ (व्रीहीनवहन्ति) demands the pounding up to the point of the separation of the husks from the rice grains and can serve no purpose after the separation.

अकृत्स्नोहि स प्राणत्रेव प्राणी नाम भवति वदन्वाक्यश्रयंश्चक्षुः  
 शृण्वञ्छ्रोत्रं मन्वानो मनन्तान्यस्यैतानि कर्मनामान्येव ॥ स योऽत  
 एकैकमुपास्ते न स वेदाकृत्स्नो ह्येषोऽत एकैकेन  
 भवत्यात्मेत्येवोपासीतात्र होते सर्व एकं भवन्ति ॥

बृ. १-४-७.

“Now this One has entered here up to the tip of the nails in the same way as a razor may be enclosed in a razor-case, or as the all-pervading fire may be concealed in a source of fire. They do not see Him; for, He is not the whole. Only when he breathes he is *Prāṇa* (the living soul); while speaking, the speaker; while seeing, the seer; while hearing, the hearer; while thinking, a thinker. These are only names due to his functions. So one who thinks of each of these aspects singly, he knows not; for thus viewed singly he is not the whole. One should think of him (‘Upāsīta’) as *Ātman* alone, for here alone all these become one.”

Br. 1-4-7.

It is obvious that the word उपासीत *Upāsīta* (One should regard him) एकैकमुपास्ते (thinks of these singly), cannot be translated as ‘one should meditate’, ‘he who meditates on Him’ etc. The context is that of knowledge, not of meditation.

(२) सर्वं खल्विदं ब्रह्म तज्जलानिति शान्त उपासीत । अथ  
 खलु क्रतुमयः पुरुषः यथाक्रतुरस्मिँल्लोके पुरुषो भवति तथेतः प्रेत्य  
 भवति स क्रतुं कुर्वीत ॥

छां. ३-१४-१.

“All this, indeed, is Brahman; for it is *Tajjatan* (originating, merging, and breathing in it.) Therefore one should calmly meditate upon it. Now, man is made up of thoughts. Just as one thinks in this life, so also he becomes after departing from here, he should resolve.” Ch. 3-14-1.

Here, obviously, ‘उपासीत’ (Upāsīta) is used in the sense of ‘one should meditate’; for, the result one’s *Kratu* (resolution or continuous stream of thoughts) here, is said to transform one into a corresponding state in the next.

### Difference Between Jñāna and Upāsana

53. It is necessary for students of Vedānta to be able to distinguish between Jñāna and Upāsana in their restricted sense as technically used by S’āṅkara and his followers; for, as we have seen above, both the words are used in either of these senses. the following extracts from the Chāndogya Bhāshya and the Sūtra Bhāshya will clarify S’āṅkara’s view in the matter:-

(१) स्वाभाविकस्यात्मन्यविक्रियेऽध्यारोपितस्य कर्त्रादिकारक-  
क्रियाफलभेदविज्ञानस्य निवर्तकमद्वैतविज्ञानम् । रज्ज्वादाविव  
सर्पाद्यध्यारोपलक्षणज्ञानस्य रज्ज्वादिस्वरूपनिश्चयः प्रकाशनिमित्तः ।  
उपासनं तु यथाशास्त्रसमर्पितं किञ्चिदालम्बनमुपादाय तस्मिन्  
समानचित्तवृत्तिसन्तानकरणं तद्विलक्षणप्रत्ययानन्तरितम्—इति विशेषः॥

छां. भा. अव. पा. ३५२.

“The knowledge of non-duality (अद्वैतविज्ञानम्) is the remover of the natural (wrong) knowledge of (the distinction) of the doer and other factors of action, action and the result of action, super-imposed on the changeless Ātman, just like the ascertainment of the real nature of a rope etc. superimposed on the rope, etc. Upāśana is taking up some object proposed by the S’āstra and setting up a stream of ideas corresponding to it, but not interrupted by any idea dissimilar to it. This is the difference.”

Ch. Up. p. 352.

[This is further clarified in the next excerpt.]

(२) ध्यानं चिन्तनं यद्यपि मानसम्, तथापि पुरुषेण कर्तुम्, अकर्तुम्, अन्यथा वा कर्तुं शक्यम्, पुरुषतन्त्रत्वात् । ज्ञानं तु प्रमाणजन्यम् । प्रमाणं च यथाभूतवस्तुविषयम् । अतो ज्ञानं कर्तुमकर्तुमन्यथा वा कर्तुम् अशक्यम् । केवलं वस्तुतन्त्रमेव तत्; न चोदनातन्त्रम्, नापि पुरुषतन्त्रम् । तस्मात्, मानसत्वेऽपि ज्ञानस्य महद्वैलक्षण्यम् ॥ सू. भा. १-१-४, पा. १८.

“While *Dhyāna* or *Cintana* (meditation) is mental, yet it can be done, not done or even done in some other way; for it depends on the will of a person. But *Jnāna* (knowledge) is born out of some means (of right knowledge) and objectifies a thing just as it is; hence, knowledge cannot be done, not done, or done in some other way. For, it is solely dependent on its object and not on any injunction or on the will of a person. Therefore *Jnāna* (knowledge), though mental, is altogether of a different species.”

SBh. 1-1-4, p. 18.

[In short, Upāsana (Dhyāna or Cintana) or meditation, is a mental act, while Jñāna (knowledge) is a mental idea born corresponding to a thing.]

54. The names, 'Upāsana' and 'Dhyāna' are also sometimes given to Nididhyāsana. The latter, however, is a psychological process of a quite different kind. It consists in a sustained effort to concentrate the mind upon any minute thing in order to know it as it is. The effort made by a scientist, for instance, when he uses a microscope to find the suspended impurities in water, or when he uses a telescope to ascertain the nature of a distant object may be likened to Nididhyāsana. Only, the latter is used for introspection to ascertain the nature of the Self, and has that further distinctive feature of thinning the mind till it finally becomes one with the Self. We shall now quote a few instances where the word or its equivalent refers to this mental process.

This very word is used in the passage which describes Yājñavalkya's response to Maitreyī's request to be taught the means for immortality:

(१) हन्त तर्हि भवत्येतद्व्याख्यास्यामि ते व्याचक्षणस्य तु मे  
निदिध्यासस्वेति ॥ बु. ४-५-५, पा. ९४०.

“Very well then, my dear, I shall explain this to you, but concentrate as I go on explaining.”

[The word निदिध्यासस्व obviously means 'employ all your attention upon what I say'.]

The second example is from Bādarāyaṇa's Sūtra (Vs. 3-3-14)

(२) आध्यानाय प्रयोजनाभावात् ॥ ३-३-१४.

"The detailed enunciation of the series, is only for *Ādhyāna*, for it serves no other purpose." Vs. 3-3-14.

S'āṅkara's Bhāṣhya on this runs as follows :-

(३). आध्यानायेति । आध्यानपूर्वकाय सम्यग्दर्शनायेत्यर्थः । सम्यग्दर्शनार्थमेव हीहाध्यानमुपदिश्यते, न त्वाध्यानमेव स्वप्रधानम्॥  
सू. भा. ३-३-१४, पा. ३८६.

"The word आध्यानाय (for contemplation means for the purpose of achieving right vision through contemplation; for, contemplation is here taught as a means to right vision (of the Ātman) and not for the sake of contemplation itself."

SBh. 3-3-14, p. 386.

### Samādhi for the Vision of Ātman

55. Like the word '*Dhyāna*', '*Samādhi*' also has misled even great sub-commentators to go astray and fuse Vedānta and Pātanjala Yōga into one system in their explanation of S'āṅkara's Bhāṣhya. Thus Vācaspati Miśra explains the meaning of the Sūtra (3-3-39) समाध्यभावाच्च (And for the reason that there could be no

‘Samādhi’ at all, the individual self must be considered to be an agent) in these words :-

(१) समाधिरिति संयममुपलक्षयति । धारणाध्यानसमाधयो हि संयमपदवेदनीयाः । यथाहुः ‘त्रयमेकत्र संयमः’ (यो. सू. ३-४) इति। अत्र ‘श्रोतव्यो मन्तव्य’ इति धारणोपदेशः । ‘निदिध्यांसितव्यः’ इति ध्यानोपदेशः । ‘द्रष्टव्यः’ इति समाधेरुपदेशः । यथाहुः- ‘तदेव ध्यानमर्थमात्रनिर्भासं स्वरूपशून्यमिव समाधिः’ (यो. ३-३) इति । सोऽयमिह कर्ता आत्मा समाध्वावुपदिश्यमान आत्मनः कर्तृत्वमवैति—इति सूत्रार्थः ॥ वा. भा. २-३-३९, पा. ६१५.

“By the word ‘Samādhi’, the author of the Sūtra implies *Samyama* also; for ‘*Dhāraṇa*’, *Dhyāna* and *Samādhi*, are all the three of them together denoted by the word *Samyama*. So say the Yōgins : (Ys. 3-4) ‘The triad concentrated at one and the same point is *Samyama*’. Here (in this S’ruti), ‘To be heard about and to be reflected upon’ teaches *Dhāraṇa*; ‘To be contemplated’ teaches *Dhyāna*; and ‘To be seen’ teaches *Samādhi*. For so has it been said ‘This same *Dhyāna* revealing only the object, and appearing as though it had not essential nature, is (called) *Samādhi* (Ys. 2-3). Now this same agent who is taught the *Samādhi* looks upon himself as an agent. This is the meaning of the Sūtra.”

V.Bh. 2-3-39, p. 615.

It is passing strange that Vācaspati Mis’ra, imbued with his Yōgic ideas (for, he has commentated upon *Yōga Bhāshya* also), can discern Yōgic terminology even in Vedāntic passages which do not even smell of any

such admixture. We have seen that Yājñavalkya never went beyond S'raṇa and Manana in his teachings and Maitreyi was able to attain immortality only by so much teaching. And yet this writer with his Yōgic microscopy finds a loophole for this terminology in the one word 'Samādhi' in the face of the Sūtrkāra's express summary rejection of the Yōga system in a single Sūtra एतेन योगः प्रत्युक्तः 'By this (repudiation of the Sāṅkhya), Yōga also may be considered to have been refuted.' (Vs. 2-1-3)!

And S'āṅkara says in so many words :-

(२) यत्तु दर्शनमुक्तम् तत्कारणं 'साङ्ख्ययोगाभिपन्नम्' इति, वैदिकमेव तत्र ज्ञानं ध्यानं च साङ्ख्ययोगशब्दाभ्यामभिलष्यते प्रत्यासत्तेरित्यवगन्तव्यम् ॥ सू. भा. २-१-३, पा. १८२.

"As for the S'ruti cited above, 'That cause attained through Sāṅkhya and Yōga', it must be understood that Vedic Jnāna and Dhyāna alone are denoted by the words Sāṅkhya and Yōga; for, these are more proximate to the context."

SBh. 2-1-3, p. 182.

56. And *Prakāshātman*. in whose name the Pañcapādikā-Vivaraṇa School has attained so much popularity among modern pundits, has been also tempted to call in the aid of the Yōga School to defend this vision of the Advaitic Ātman. He writes :-

(१) ननु ब्रह्मात्मानुभवाद्वैतदर्शनयोः कुतः साहित्यमुच्यते ?  
न वयं साहित्यं ब्रूमः । कदाचिदसंप्रज्ञातात्मैकत्वदर्शनम्, कदाचिदा-  
रब्धकर्मोपस्थापितबोधनिमित्तद्वैतदर्शनं चेति ॥ पं. वि. पा. १२४०.

“(Objection :-) How is it that the intuition of Brahmatman and perception of duality, are made to be simultaneous here?”

“(Reply :-) We do not say that both of these are simultaneous, but only that in *Asamprajnata Samādhi* (the Samādhi of the unconscious state), the vision of the one Ātman is attained at one time, but at another time, duality is perceived owing to the empirical consciousness projected by fructifying karma.”  
PV. p. 1240.

Of course this is in direct opposition to S'ānkara who says in emphatic terms :

(२) न चायं व्यवहाराभावोऽवस्थाविशेषनिबद्धोऽभिधीयत  
इति युक्तं वक्तुम्; 'तत्त्वमसि' इति ब्रह्मात्मभावस्यानवस्थाविशेष-  
निबन्धनत्वात् ॥ सू. भा. २-१-१४, पा. १९८.

“Nor can this absence of all *Vyavahāra* (human procedure of knowledge, speech, and action) declared in Br. 4-5-15) be reasonably said to be due to a particular state; for, the nature of Brahmatman taught by the S'ruti 'That thou art' is not due to any particular state.”  
SBh. 2-1-14, p. 198.

### Samādhi Referred to by Bādarāyaṇa

57. This is not to say that neither Bādarāyaṇa nor S'ānkara, recognizes any Samādhi state at all. For Bādarāyaṇa has the S'ruti :

(१) अपि च संराधने प्रत्यक्षानुमानाभ्याम् ॥

वे. सू. ३-२-२४.

“Moreover (Yōgins see the Ātman devoid of all specific distinctions) in the *Samrādhanā* state, for so say the S’rutis and the Smṛtis.”

VS. 3-2-24.

And S’ānkarā quotes the *Kāthaka* (4-1) and the *Muṇḍaka* (3-1-8) Upanishads in conformation of what the Sūtrakāra has said, and observes that the seeming difference implied here between the devotee and Brahman contemplated upon, is due to Upādhis, but intrinsically there is non-difference alone. (SBh. p. 367)

Does this mean that the Vedantic doctrine of Reality relies on the mystic-experience of Samādhi for its verification ? By no means. The following excerpt from the Sūtra-Bhāshya shows how the genuine doctrine of S’ānkaras tradition, assesses the evidence of this state.

(२) यथा हि सुषुप्तिसमाध्यादावपि सत्यां स्वाभाविक्याम् अविभागप्राप्तौ मिथ्याज्ञानस्यानपोदितत्वात् पूर्ववत् पुनः प्रबोधे विभागो भवति, एवमिहापि भविष्यति । श्रुतिश्चात्र भवति - ‘इमाः सर्वाः प्रजाः सति संपद्य न विदुः सति संपद्यामह इति । त इह व्याघ्रो वा सिंहो वा वृको वा वराहो वा कीटो वा पतङ्गो वा दंशो वा मशको वा यद्यद्भवन्ति तदाभवन्ति’ इति । तथा ह्यविभागेऽपि परमात्मनि मिथ्याज्ञानप्रतिबद्धो विभागव्यवहारः

स्वप्नवदव्याहतः स्थितौ दृश्यते, एवमपीतावपि मिथ्याज्ञानप्रतिबद्धैव  
विभागशक्तिरनुमास्यते ॥

सू. भा. २-१-९, पा. १९१, १९२.

“For in the same way as in deep sleep, *samādhi* etc. natural non-distinction accrues, and yet on waking, distinction reappears as before on account of the non-removal of mis-conception, so also it may very well be here (in the case of dissolution). In the same way, indeed, as even in the case of the Supreme Ātman devoid of all distinction empirical distinction does obtain in the state of sustentation un-impeded as in dreams, owing to misconception, so also in the case of dissolution, potentiality of distinction may be inferred as due to the self-same misconception.” SBh. 2-1-9, pp. 191, 192.

It will be noted that S'āṅkara considers the distinction between *Samādhi* and resumption of (the normal state of) waking, to be on a par with the distinction between deep sleep, and other states of unconsciousness (like swoon where non-duality is experienced) and waking, whatever be the degree of normality assigned to these states of unconsciousness by the common man. The fact that these states of non-duality are experienced by man, leads to the indubitable conclusion that experience of duality is not the inalienable nature of one's self. That is why *Bādarāyaṇa* as explained by S'āṅkara, refers to deep sleep no less than to the state of release, when he explains that either of these states is meant whenever S'rutis speak

of the utter absence of empirical consciousness. The Sūtra referred to is

स्वाप्ययसंपत्त्योरन्यतरापेक्षमाविष्कृतं हि ॥ ४-४-१६.

“This (absence of consciousness) refers to either of the states of deep sleep and absolute merging in Brahman; for, this has been revealed by the S’rutis only in that context.”

V.S. 4-4-16, pp. 509, 510.

### Yōga in the Upanishads

58. In fact we do see the term Yōga used in the Upanishads themselves for *Nididhyāsana* as a means to the vision of Ātman. Thus in the Kāthaka Upanishad we find the following statement :-

(१) तं दुर्दर्शं गूढमनुप्रविष्टं गुहाहितं गह्वरष्ठं पुराणम् ।  
अध्यात्मयोगाधिगमेन देवं मत्वा धीरो हर्षशोकौ जहाति॥  
का. २-१२.

“That *Deva* (Shining One) of yore hard to see, has entered into a secret place, is concealed in the cave (of the heart) and dwells in a spot fraught with many a risk. Knowing Him by the attainment of *Adhyātma Yōga*, the wise man is freed from both elation and grief.”

Kā. 2-12.

(२) मृत्युप्रोक्तां नचिकेतोऽथ लब्ध्वा  
विद्यामेतां योगविधिं च कृत्स्नम् ।

ब्रह्मप्राप्तो विरजोऽभृद्विमृत्युरन्योऽ  
प्येवं यो विदध्यात्ममेव ॥

का. ६-१८

“Naciketa having got this wisdom taught by Mṛtyu (Yama, the God of Death) and the entire process of Yōga, attained Brahman and became free from all the impurity (of virtue and vice) and from death. Any one else also who knows this pure Adhyātma (inmost Reality), will become such.”

Kā. 6-18.

Both of the above-cited texts expressly tell us that Adhyātma- Yōga is conducive to the knowledge of Ātman.

59. The *Modus operandi* of this Vedic Yōga as distinguished from the Pātanjala and the other varieties of Yōga, is also set forth, in the Kāthaka Upanishad. S'ānkara refers to this Yōga in these terms :-

(१) एष सर्वेषु भूतेषु गूढोऽऽत्मा न प्रकाशते, दृश्यते त्वग्रयया बुद्ध्या सूक्ष्मया सूक्ष्मदर्शिभिः (का. ३-१३) इति वैष्णवस्य परमपदस्य दुरवगमत्वमुक्त्वा तदवगमार्थं योगं दर्शयति - यच्छेद्वाङ्मनसीप्राज्ञस्तद्यच्छेज्ज्ञान आत्मनि । ज्ञानमात्मनि महति नियच्छेत्तद्यच्छेच्छान्त आत्मनि' (का. ३-१३) इति ॥

एतदुक्तं भवति - वाचं मनसि संयच्छेत्;  
वागादिबाह्येन्द्रियव्यापारमुत्सृज्य मनोमात्रेणावतिष्ठेत । मनोऽपि  
विषयविकल्पाभिमुखं विकल्पदोषदर्शनेन ज्ञानशब्दोदितायां बुद्धौ

अध्यवसायस्वभावायां धारयेत् । तामापि बुद्धिं महत्यात्मनि भोक्तरि-  
अग्र्यायां वा बुद्धौ- सूक्ष्मतापादनेन नियच्छेत् । महान्तं त्वात्मानं  
शान्त आत्मनि प्रकरणवति परास्मिन् पुरुषे परस्यां काष्ठायां  
प्रतिष्ठापयेत्-इति च ॥ सू. भा. १-४-१, पा. १४७, १४८.

“The S’ruti says in the following text that the highest heaven of Vishnu is difficult to comprehend: “This Ātman hid in all beings, does not shine forth, but he can be seen by those who are in the habit of discerning subtle entities by means of one-pointed and subtle *Buddhi*’ (K. 3-12) and sets forth the details (of the technique) of Yōga meant for the realization of that Ātman. ‘One who can discern should first control and fix the speech in the mind and that he should fix in *Jnānātman* (the knowing Self). (That) *Jnānātman* must be fixed in *Mahān Ātman* and that *Mahān Ātman* again in the tranquil Ātman.” (Kā. 3-13)

The import of the text is this :-

“Speech should be controlled in the mind; that is to say, one must renounce the functions of the speech and other external senses and should take his stand as the mind alone. And this mind also, when it inclines to revolve the objects, should be fixed in *Buddhi* (intellect) denoted (here) by the word *Jnāna* (the faculty) of determination, by noting the evils of revolving things in the mind. And that *Buddhi* should be fixed in the *Mahān Ātman* (the Great Ātman), the experiencing Self; or it may be, in the first born (Cosmic) *Buddhi* (of *Hiranyagarbha*) by making it more refined; and the *Mahān Ātman* in its turn must be firmly fixed in the *S’ānta Ātman*

(The Tranquil Ātman), the Supreme Purusha, the final goal, in whose context (this Yōga is being taught).”

SBh. 1-4-1, pp. 147, 148.

(२) अतश्च अनात्मत्वमितरेषां विवक्षितमिति गम्यते । तस्यैव च दुर्विज्ञानतां संस्कृतमतिगम्यतां च दर्शयति । तद्विज्ञानायैव 'यच्छेद्वाङ्मनसी प्राज्ञः' (का. ३-१३) इत्याख्यानं विदधति ॥

सू. भा. ३-३-१५, पां. ३८७.

“Hence it is to be concluded that the other items (the senses, the sense objects, the mind, the intellect etc. referred to in Kā. 3-10, 11) are all not the Self. It is for the realization of that Ātman alone, that Adhyātma Yōga has been laid down in the text ‘The discriminating person should control and fix the speech in the mind...’ (Kā. 3-13).”

SBh. 3-3-15, p. 387.

It is clear that *Ādhyāna* and (Adhyātma) Yōga are both terms interchangeable with Nididhyāsana, or even Upāsana recognized by S’āṅkara as the means of *Sāmyagdars’ana* (Right Vision) of Ātman (यानि सम्यग्दर्शनार्थान्युपासनानि SBh. 4-1-12). This same *Ādhyāna* (contemplation) or Yōga is seen to be explained at some length in the *Bhagavadgītā* at the end of the fifth chapter and in the sixth chapter. There also it is taught that withdrawing from the senses, the mind, and the Buddhi leads to the vision of Ātman.

(३) यतेन्द्रियमनोबुद्धिर्मुनिर्मोक्षपरायणः ।

विगतेच्छामयक्रोशो यः सदा मुक्त एव सः ॥

गी ५-२८.

“The Muni (contemplative person) who has controlled his senses, *Manas* and *Buddhi* and is intent on release, and who is always free from desire, fear and wrath, is surely free.”

G.5-28.

(४) शनैः शनैरुपरमेद्बुद्ध्या धृतिगृहीतया ।

आत्मसंस्थ मनः कृत्वा न किञ्चिदपि चिन्तयेत् ॥

यतो यतो निश्चरति मनश्चञ्चलमस्थिरम् ।

ततस्ततो नियम्यैतदात्मन्येव वशं नयेत् ॥

प्रशान्तमनसं ह्येनं योगिनं सुखयुक्तमम् ।

उपैति शान्तरजसं ब्रह्मभूतमकल्मषम् ॥

गी. ६-२५, २६, २७.

“Little by little one should withdraw by *Buddhi* controlled through fortitude. One should fix the mind on *Ātman* and think of nothing else. In whatever direction the wavering and unsteady mind stirs out, from each such object he should restrain it and bring it under his direct control. To this *Yōgin*, indeed, whose mind has dissolved (into *Ātman*) the highest bliss accrues, for his (delusion and other) distressing factors have been destroyed and he has become *Brahman* and free from all taint.”

G. 6-25 to 27.

(५) सर्वभूतस्थमात्मानं सर्वभूतानि चात्मनि ।

ईक्षते योगयुक्तात्मा सर्वत्र समदर्शनः ॥

गी. ६-२९.

“One whose inner organ has been quieted by *Yōga*, sees the same (Reality) everywhere and sees *Ātman* in all beings and a beings in *Ātman*.”

G. 6-29.

60. This view of S'āṅkara, is in perfect contrast with *Bhartr-Prapañca's* exposition of Dhyāna. The latter describes the process thus :

(१) स्वमात्मानमक्षरे परमात्मन्येकीकृत्य तं चात्मानं  
चक्रनाभिस्थानीयम्, देवतादिजगत् सर्वमरवत् कल्पयित्वा,  
तद्भावभावितो निदिध्यासेत् । सततं ध्यायमानस्य तप्तलोहवत्  
तस्मिन्नेकत्वं पुनरावृत्तिरहितम् आप्यते । ध्यातृत्ववर्जितं ध्येयत्वं  
चाधिगम्यते । यद्यप्येतद् ब्रह्मचक्रं सर्वप्राणिष्वपि संस्थितम्, तथापि  
तदसंबोधात् तैर्न तदनुभूयते ॥<sup>1</sup> वृ. २-५-१५.

“One should merge one's self in the Supreme Akshara, and think of that Ātman as the hub and the whole Universe of gods etc. as the spokes and should go on meditating and become permeated by this continuous thought. Thus meditating without break, the aspirant becomes one with that Ātman like a smelted piece of metal never to return (to the mundane life), and the nature of (the Ātman) meditated upon without any trace of the nature of the meditator is also reached. While this wheel of Brahman, is within all beings, yet they do not experience it because they are not aware of it.”<sup>1</sup>

Bhartr. on Br. 2-5-15.

1. This is one of the numerous excerpts from Bhartr-Prapañca's *Vṛtti* on *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* that one finds scattered in *Ānandagiri's Tika* on the *Bhāshya* and *Sures'vara's Vārtika* thereon. A collection of these would throw abundant light on most of the Vedāntic views held by the tradition of that commentator.

Obviously Bhartṛ-Prapañca takes Nididhyāsana here as an act of creative imagination which depends on the practicant's will. He does not seem to be ready to admit that a mere study of the meaning of Vedāntic texts (teaching the nature of Brahman) and verification of it by reason based upon intuition, can possibly lead to the Vision of Ātman.

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## SECTION SEVEN

### ARE S'RAVAṆA, AND OTHER MEANS ENJOINED ?

#### Disagreement Among Advaitins Themselves

61. We now arrive at a critical question. Are S'ravaṇa and other means of Vision enjoined by the Veda like the other Upāsanas, or are they merely given as directions to seekers of Reality ? The answer to this question obviously depends on what we mean by Dars'ana, S'ravaṇa, Manana and Nididhyāsana. We have seen in the previous sections of this work that different Vedāntins of different schools, have defined these practices in different ways. It is only S'āṅkara and with him Sures'vara the author of the Bṛhadānyaka and the Taittirīya Vārtikas, that stand alone with their doctrine that atman as the self-established Self of all beings, desiderates no active effort to be seen other than that required for the removal of Avidyā. All others, whether antecedent to S'āṅkara or subsequent to him and even some of the followers of S'āṅkara who postulate a positive Avidyā enveloping Ātman's real nature, insist as a rule that the enquiry into the nature of Brahman

itself started in the Brahma-Sūtras, presupposes this injunction. A particular section of Vedāntins, however, like the followers of Maṇḍana Miś'ra and Vācaspati Miś'ra, have maintained that *Sākshātkāra* or direct experience of the Ātman, is possible only on the complete removal of Avidyā and its deep impression on the mind by some Bhāvana or practice of continuous creative imagination even while they admit that the means in question are not enjoined by the S'rutis.

We shall briefly record the different views held by different Vedāntins according to the different systems they have attempted to bring out of the teachings of the Upanishads.

### Details of Different Opinions

62. First of all, we shall see what *Sures'vara* says:-

- (१) अतोऽपुरुषतन्त्रत्वान्नात्मज्ञाने विधिर्भवेत् ।  
 अन्वयादिक्रिया त्वस्य तत्तन्त्रत्वाद्द्विधीयते ॥  
 श्रवणं मननं तद्वत्तथा शमदमादि यत् ।  
 पुमान् शक्नोति तत्कर्तुं तस्मादेतद्विधीयते ॥

बृ. वा. २-४-१२१, १२२, पा. १०५३.

“Therefore self-knowledge not depending on the will of a person, there can be no injunction with regard to it. *Anvaya-Vyatireka* (the act of reason) based on continuance and variability being dependent on it, is enjoined. S'ravaṇa,

Manana, as also control of the mind and to the senses etc., a person can do (according to his will), and therefore these are also enjoined.”

Br. V. 2-4 121, p.1053.

(2) The author of *Pañca-pādikā* considers S'ravana and other means as merely eulogistic :-

(२) कः पुनरर्थवादः? इदमत्र प्रस्तुतम् – क्रियाकारक-  
फलात्मकात् संसारात् विरक्तायै मैत्रेय्यै मुमुक्षवे मोक्षसाधनमात्मज्ञानं  
प्रतिपिपादयिषन् 'न वा अरे पत्युः कामाय पतिः प्रियो भवति'  
इति पत्यादेरीप्सितत्वं प्रतिषिध्य आत्मन ईप्सिततमत्वमाह । ननु  
नैवात्मन ईप्सिततमत्वमुच्यते; किं तु पत्यादीनामेवात्पार्थ-  
तयोप्सितत्वमुच्यते 'आत्मनस्तु कामाय पतिः प्रियो भवति' इति।  
मैवम्, न हि तस्मिन्ननिष्टे तदर्थमिष्टं भवति । तस्मादनेनोपायेनात्मन  
एवेप्सितत्वमुक्तम् । ईप्सितश्चेत् 'द्रष्टव्यः श्रोतव्यः' इत्येषोऽर्थवादः॥

पं. पा. पा. ११७१.

“(Question:-) What is the eulogy here ?

(Answer :-) This is the context here : To Maitreyī who is free from all attachment to mundane life of the nature of action, means of action and result thereof and is intensely longing for release therefrom, Yājñavalkya proposes to teach the knowledge of Ātman as a means to release and says that Ātman is the most cherishable object in life and denies the cherishability of one's husband and the like in these words : 'Not for the husband's sake, my dear, is the husband held dear.”

“(Objection :-) Ātman is not held out here as the most cherishable; on the other hand one’s husband and other things themselves are said to be cherishable for the sake of Ātman.

“(Reply:-) Not so; for, if a particular thing is not cherishable some other thing cannot be desirable for its sake. Therefore by using this device, Ātman alone is commended as the most cherishable. If Ātman is (this) most cherishable ‘He (alone) is to be seen, and heard.’ This is the eulogy intended here.”

PP. p. 1171.

(3) *Prakāśātman* says that all the three means are enjoined here; only the first is primary and the other two are ancillary to it insofar as they help it to conduce to the desired end:-

(३) ‘आत्मनस्तु कामाय सर्वं प्रियं भवति’ इत्युपक्रमात् सर्वतो विरक्तस्य, आत्मप्रेप्सोः ‘आत्मनि विज्ञाते सर्वमिदं विज्ञातम्’, ‘एतावदरे खल्वमृतत्वम्’ इत्युपसंहारात् अमृतत्वसाधनम् आत्मदर्शनं ‘द्रष्टव्यः’ इत्यनूद्य तादर्थ्येन मनननिदिध्यासनाभ्यां फलोपकार्याङ्गाभ्यां सह श्रवणं नामाङ्गं विधीयते ॥

पं. वि. पा. २९.३०.

“From the commencing statement ‘everything becomes dear for the sake of Ātman’ the enquirer becomes dispassionate about everything else and desires to attain immortality, and from the concluding statement ‘Ātman being known everything becomes known’, ‘This is all, my dear, about immortality’, ‘The enquirer infers that द्रष्टव्यः (Ātman is to be seen) states that Vision of Ātman is the means to immortality

and to attain that (Vision) S'ravaṇa (hearing about Ātman) the principal means is enjoined along with the auxiliary means Manana and Nididhyāsana conducive to the result."

PV. p. 29, 30.

(4) *Vācaspati Mis'ra*, is of the opinion that these are well-known to be means to knowledge and therefore they need not be enjoined :

(४) प्राप्ता एव हि श्रवणादयो विद्विसरूपैर्वाक्यैरनुद्यन्ते ।  
न चानुवादोऽप्यप्रयोजनः प्रवृत्तिविशेषकरत्वात् ॥

वा. भा. १-१-४, पा. ११७३.

"S'ravaṇa and other means, indeed, being already known, are repeated here by means of sentences in the form of injunctions. Even this repetition is not useless; for, it serves the purpose of engaging the seeker in a particular sort of activity."

Bh. 1-1-4, p. 1173

### S'āṅkara's Verdict on the Matter

63. We may now turn to what S'āṅkara himself has to say with regard to this question. In the course of his lengthy refutation of the *Dhyānā-Niyōga-Vāda* (the doctrine of an aspirant being urged to meditate upon Brahman), he states his position thus :-

(१) या तु प्रसिद्धेऽग्नावग्निबुद्धिः, न सा चोदनातन्त्रा, नापि पुरुषतन्त्रा; किं तर्हि प्रत्यक्षविषयवस्तुतन्त्रैवेति ज्ञानमेवैतन्न क्रिया। एवं सर्वप्रमाणविषयवस्तुषु वेदितव्यम् । तत्रैव सति

यथाभूतब्रह्मात्मविषयमपि ज्ञानं न चोदनातन्त्रम् । तद्विषये लिङ्गादयः  
श्रूयमाणा अप्यनियोज्यविषयत्वात् कुण्ठीभवन्ति, उपलादिषु  
प्रयुक्तक्षुरतैक्ष्ण्यादिवत्; अहेयानुपादेयवस्तुविषयत्वात् ॥

१-१-४, पा. १९.

“As for the notion of fire with regard to the well-known fire, it is not dependent on an injunction or on a person's will, but being dependent on the nature of an object of perception, it is only Jnāna (knowledge) and no (mental) action. This applies to objects of all (other) means of knowledge also. This being so, knowledge having for its object Brahman as it is, is not dependent on any injunction. Forms of verb ending with *lin* (forms ending in potential and other moods), having none to be urged and no action in which one has to be urged to engage himself, become blunt like a keen-edged razor etc. applied to a stone etc. For, the object (Brahman, in this case) can neither be shunned nor taken up.”

1-1-4, p. 19.

(२) किमर्थानि तर्हि 'आत्मा वा अरे द्रष्टव्यः श्रोतव्यः'  
इत्यादीनि विधिच्छायाणि वचनानि ? स्वभाविकप्रवृत्तिविषय-  
विमुखीकरणार्थानीति ब्रूमः । यो हि बहिर्मुखः प्रवर्तते पुरुषः  
'इष्टं मे भूयात्, अनिष्टं मा भूत्' इति, न च तत्रात्यन्तिकं पुरुषार्थ  
लभते, तमात्यन्तिकपुरुषार्थवाञ्छिनं स्वाभाविककार्यकरण-  
सङ्घतप्रवृत्तिगोचराद् विमुखीकृत्य प्रत्यगात्मस्रोतस्तया प्रवर्तयन्ति  
'आत्मा वा अरे द्रष्टव्यः' इत्यादीनि । तस्यात्मान्वेषणाय  
प्रवृत्तस्याहेयमनुपादेयं चात्मतत्त्वमुपदिश्यते 'इदं सर्वं यदयमात्मा'  
(४-५-७), 'यत्र त्वस्य सर्वमात्मैवाभूत्तत्केन कं पश्येत् .....  
तत्केन कं विजानीयात् विज्ञातारमरे केन विजानीयात्?' (बु.

४-५-१५), 'अयमात्मा ब्रह्म' (बृ. २-५-१९) इत्यादिभिः॥

सू. भा. १-१-४, पा. १९.

*(Objection :-)* For what purpose then, are passages like 'Ātman alone, my dear, is to be seen, heard about' (Br. 4-5-5), (passages) resembling injunctions ?

*(Reply :-)* We answer – 'For the purpose of turning one's back on the objects of natural proclivity'. (To explain :-) Whosoever has a proclivity to go to external objects thinking 'May I get what I like, may not what I dislike happen to me', but gains no absolute good there, it is such a person who is in quest of absolute good, that texts like 'Ātman alone, my dear, is to be seen' turn back from the objects of the natural proclivity of the aggregate of the body and senses, and cause him to set up a continuous stream of thought towards the inner Ātman. And to him who has engaged himself in instituting a search of the Ātman, is taught the true nature of Ātman by texts like 'All this is really this Ātman' (Br. 4-5-7), 'When, however, everything has become this Ātman to this knower, then what could one see and with what ? .... then whom could one understand and with what ? With what my dear, could one know the knower?' (Br. 4-5-15), 'This Ātman is Brahman' (Br. 2-5-19)."

SBh. 1-1-4, p. 19.

### **Interpretation of S'āṅkara's Refutation of Seeming Injunctions**

64. To S'āṅkara, द्रष्टव्यः (He is to be seen), श्रोतव्यः (He is to be heard about) and other texts which resemble injunctions, are only directions to the seeker of truth to

look inwards; the seeker does not know where to look for the means of absolute good, and he is told that the knowledge of Ātman leads him to the goal. S'ravaṇa or hearing about the true nature of Ātman, is understanding the meaning of texts like 'अयमात्मा ब्रह्म' (This Ātman is really Brahman).

The sub-commentaries therefore, are off the track when they begin to discuss whether or not S'ravaṇa and other means are enjoined and which of these three is the principal means. It would be interesting to see how the author of the *Vivarāṇa*, tries to twist the above-cited extract from S'aṅkara in favour of his own theory of injunction :

(१) ननु विधिपरत्वे वेदान्तानां तन्निष्ठतया ब्रह्मस्वरूपस्य सिद्ध्यादिदोषप्रसङ्गान्नास्ति श्रवणादिविधानमिति भाष्यकारैरेव दर्शितम्। सत्यम्, ज्ञानविधिस्तस्य निराकृतः, न श्रवणादिविधिः; तत्रोक्तदोषप्रसङ्गभावात् ॥ पं. वि. पा. ३४.

“(Objection :-) But the author has shown that there is no injunction of S'ravaṇa and other means inasmuch as the Upanishads would merely purport to lay down an injunction and would lead to repugnant conclusions such as the non-establishment of the existence of Brahman ?

“(Reply :-) True, but there the injunction of Jñāna alone has been refuted and not the injunction of S'ravana etc. since

there the repugnant conclusions referred to, do not exist.

PV. p. 34.

Tattvadeepana, a commentary on Vivaraṇa, supports this doctrine by remarking 'ब्रह्मणि महातात्पर्यम्, विधौ त्ववान्तरतात्पर्यमिति न विरोध इत्यर्थः' (pp. 35,36).

"The Upanishads have their principal purport in teaching Brahman, but a subordinate purport in injunction is admitted. Hence there is no contradiction. This is the meaning of the Vivaraṇa passage." But where do we find any hint in the Bhāshya supporting such a 'have the cake and eat it also' interpretation ?

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## SECTION EIGHT

### RELATIVE IMPORTANCE OF THE THREE MEANS

#### **The Bhāmati and the Vivaraṇa**

65. The two wings into which the sub-commentaries on S'āṅkara, are mainly divided - the Bhāmati and the Vivaraṇa Prasthānas as they are called, both agree that S'ravaṇa, Manana and Nididhyāsana should all be practised in succession before the final Vision of Atman dawns. Only there are two points on which they differ with regard to these practices. The Bhāmati school insists, as we have already seen (p. 96), that these means are already known to be conducive to knowledge, and are only enumerated here in sentences which resemble injunctions. The Vivaraṇa school, on the other hand, persists in holding that all the three are serious injunctions. According to this school, moreover, S'ravaṇa is the principal means enjoined here, the other two being helpful to it in precipitating the resultant knowledge.

#### **S'āṅkara Interpreted by Bhāmati**

66. S'āṅkara's personal view in this matter may be gathered from the following extracts :-

(१) वाक्यार्थविचारणाध्यवसाननिर्वृत्ता हि ब्रह्मावगतिः, नानु-  
मानादिप्रमाणान्तरनिर्वृत्ता ॥ सू. भा. १-१-२. पा. ७

“The intuition of Brahman is accomplished through the conclusion drawn from the investigation of the meaning of Vedāntic texts and not through syllogistic inference or other means of right knowledge.”

SBh. 1-1-2, p.7.

It is clear that S'āṅkara means to say that listening to the Vedāntic teaching with a view to determine its purport, is self-sufficient and can give intuition of Ātman without desiderating any assistance by inference and other means of proof. Vācaspati Miś'ra, however, construes the statement as follows :-

विचारस्याध्यवसानं सवासनाविद्याद्वयोच्छेदः । ततो हि  
ब्रह्मावगतेर्निर्वृत्तिराविर्भावः ॥ वा. भा. ८९

“The conclusion of enquiry is the destruction of the two Avidyās (Causal and effective) together with their impressions; for, from that alone is possible the accomplishment or manifestation of the direct experience of Brahman.”

VBh. p. 89.

[This twisting of the statement is necessary for Vācaspati because the doctrine of direct experience (Sākshātkāra) is peculiar to his school. The Pañca-pādikā and the Vivaraṇa, of course, lay emphasis on the Vedāntic S'raṇa and that is what S'āṅkara also seems to do here.]

(२) यत्पुनरुक्तम्, श्रवणात् पराचीनयोर्मनननिदिध्यासनयो-  
र्विधिदर्शनाद् विधिशेषत्वं ब्रह्मणो न स्वरूपपर्यवसायित्वम् - इति,  
न; अवगत्यर्थत्वान्मनननिदिध्यासनयोः । यदि ह्यवगतं ब्रह्मान्यत्र  
विनियुज्येत, भवेत्तदा विधिशेषत्वम् । न तु तदस्ति ।  
मनननिदिध्यासनयोरपि श्रवणवदवगत्यर्थत्वात् ॥

सू. भा. १-१-४, पा. २३.

Again, as for the contention that *Manana* and *Nididhyāsana* also being enjoined subsequent to *S'raṇa*, Brahman must be subservient to an injunction and not self-sufficient, we reply 'No'. For *Manana* and *Nididhyāsana* are for the purpose of intuition. (To explain :- If Brahman already intuited were used for some other purpose, then, perhaps it might be considered to be subservient to an injunction. But it is not so, for, *Manana* and *Nididhyāsana* are also intended for intuition just like *S'raṇa*."SBh. 1-1-4, p. 23.

Here evidently, S'āṅkara means to say that *S'raṇa* can itself lead to intuition of Brahman, and in the case of those that are not able to intuit Brahman by that means alone, the other two may also be severally in demand for the same purpose. Vācaspati, however, twists this statement also and explains it thus :

'ब्रह्मसाक्षात्कारोऽवगतिः; तदर्थत्वं मनननिदिध्यासनयोरन्वय-  
व्यतिरकसिद्धम् इत्यर्थः । अथ कस्मान्मननादिविधिरेव न भवतीत्यत  
आह - यदि ह्यवगतमिति ॥'

वा. भा. पा. १५३.

“*Brahmasākshātkāra* (immediate experience of Brahman) is what is called ‘*Avagati*’ here. The meaning is that Manana and Nididhyāsana are for Avagati since they are known to be such by inference by applying the principle of continuance and variability. And why should Manana etc. be not deemed to be actually enjoined ? The reply to this is in the sequel.”

[In his explanation of the rest of the Bhāshya Vācaspati explains why these are not enjoined. Of course the Bhāshya is quite innocent of all this.]

(३) येषां पुनर्निपुणमतीनां नाज्ञानसंशयविपर्ययलक्षणः पदार्थ-  
विषयः प्रतिबन्धोऽस्ति, ते शक्नुवन्ति सकृदुक्तमेव तत्त्वमसिवाक्यार्थ-  
मनुभवितुमिति तान् प्रत्यावृत्त्यानर्थक्यमिष्टमेव । सकृदुत्पन्नैव ह्यात्म-  
प्रतिपत्तिरविद्यां निवर्तयतीति नात्र कश्चिदपि क्रमोऽभ्युपगम्यते ॥

सू. भा. ४-१-२, पा. ४६२.

“In the case of those, however, who have a keen intellect which suffers from no impediment of ignorance, doubt or misconception, with regard to what is meant by the terms (of the proposition), they can certainly intuit the entity intended to be taught by the proposition ‘That thou art’ renounced even once, and so the futility of the repetition of S’āstra and reason is quite acceptable to us in their case. For the intuition of Ātman obliterates Avidyā as soon as it dawns and there is no order of enlightenment deemed necessary.”

SBh. 4-1-2, p. 462.

This is obviously in direct opposition to the theory of both the Bhāmata and the Vivaraṇa; for these

sub-commentaries insist that all the three mental acts of discipline, should be undergone before the Vision of Ātman makes its appearance. Bhāmati, for instance, says:-

ॐ यस्तत्त्वमसीति सकृदुक्तमेवेति । – श्रुत्वा मत्वा क्षणमवधाय प्राग्भवीयाभ्यासजातात् संस्कारात् इत्यथः ॥

वा. भा. ४-१-२, पा. ९३३.

“The Bhāshya sentence ‘Who is able to experience (the meaning of the proposition ‘That thou art’) enunciated but once’ means, having heard about, reflected upon and meditated for a moment, (is able to experience it) on account of the impression born of the repeated practice in a previous birth.”

V. Bh. 4-1-2, p. 933.

[This view is imputed to Prasamkhyāna-Vādins and refuted in Upades’a Sāhasri Ch. 18-9, 10 etc.]

( ) तत्तु पूर्वरूपमेवात्मप्रतिपत्तेः साक्षात्कारवत्याः । एतदुक्तं भवति – वाक्यार्थश्रवणमनोत्तरकाला विशेषणत्रयवती भावना ब्रह्मसाक्षात्काराय कल्पत इति वाक्यार्थप्रतीतिरपि साक्षात्कारस्य पूर्वरूपमिति ॥

वा. भा. ४-१-२, पा. ८३०.

[Here the Bhāshya refers to the gradual manifestation of enlightenment in the case of those who have to remove superimposition of the body, the senses, the mind, the intellect and experience of external objects etc. (दहेन्द्रियमनोबुद्धिविषयवेदनालक्षणम्), and concludes that all this effort at removal of the superimposition, is only before

understanding the meaning of the proposition. But in the Bhāmati, the Bhāshya is twisted and stretched to mean something else (by taking the word 'Pratīpatteh' as a genitive instead of an ablative, and is interpreted as follows :-]

"This is only the previous form of the experience of Ātman, the immediate experience. What is said here amounts to this : The meditation qualified by its three characteristics, which is practised subsequently to S'raṇa an Manana, becomes effective in producing immediate experience; and so, the understanding of the meaning of the proposition, is the previous form of *Sākshātkāra* or realization."

V. Bh. 4-1-2, p. 830.

There is absolutely no reference to *Sākshātkāra* in the Bhāshya, but yet the sentence which says that 'the repetition of S'raṇa and Manana is only previous to the understanding of the proposition' is forced in the Bhāmati to mean that understanding the meaning of the sentence, is itself the previous form of *Sākshātkāra*.

### **S'aṅkara as Interpreted by the Vivaraṇa**

67. As for the author of the Vivaraṇa, it is needless to go into details in order to prove that he almost deliberately diverges from S'aṅkara's express statement that the *Dharma-jijnāsa* (enquiry into the nature of Dharma) and the *Brahma-jijnāsa* (enquiry into the nature of Brahman) have two disparate topics to deal with and

that Brahman cannot be made subservient to any injunction by any subterfuge. He has devoted his entire Bhāshya on the Samanvayādhikaraṇam (1-1-4) to ward off all sorts of efforts to connect Brahma-jijnāsa with injunction-*Vidhi* or *Niyōga* that may be supposed to be necessary for enquiry into the nature of Brahman, and has boldly declared that all talk of Upāsana (meditation) even in relation to Brahman, is only in the state of Avidyā. (तत्राविद्यावस्थायां ब्रह्मण उपास्योपासकादिलक्षणः सर्वो व्यवहारः - सू. भा. १-१-११, पा. ३५). These statements in the fourth *Adhikaraṇa* (topic for discussion), and elsewhere are worthy of note here :

(१) एवंभूतस्य ब्रह्मणस्तज्ज्ञानस्य वा न कयाचिद्युक्त्या शाक्यः कार्यानुप्रवेशः कल्पयितुम् ॥ सू.भा. १-१-४, पा. १६.

“No reason can be adduced to suppose that such Brahman or its knowledge, can be connected with any sort of action.”  
SBh. 1-1-4, p. 16.

(२) तस्मान्न प्रतिपत्तिविधिविषयतया शास्त्रप्रमाणकत्वं ब्रह्मणः संभवतीत्यतः स्वतन्त्रमेव ब्रह्म शास्त्रप्रमाणकम्, वेदान्तवाक्यसमन्वयात् इति सिद्धम् । एवं च सति ‘अथातो ब्रह्मजिज्ञासा’ इति तद्विषयः पृथक्शास्त्रारम्भ उपपद्यते ॥

सू. भा. १-१-४, पा. २३.

“Therefore we conclude that since Brahman cannot be possibly known through the S’āstra as subservient to the injunction of meditation, Brahman is only independently

known through the S'āstra, the valid means of its knowledge, inasmuch as the Vedānta texts purport to teach it exclusively. And it is on this supposition alone that the commencement of a separate S'āstra beginning with the Sūtra 'Then therefore the enquiry into (the nature of) Brahman' dealing with it, can be justified." SBh. 1-1-4, p. 23.

(३) वस्तुमात्रपर्यवसायीनि हि ब्रह्मवाक्यानि न नियोगोपदेशी-  
नीत्येतद् विस्तरेण प्रतिष्ठापितं 'तत्तु समन्वयात्' इत्यत्र ॥

सू. भा. ३-२-२१, पा. ३६१.

"That texts regarding Brahman, are self-complete by teaching the nature of a thing, and do not urge one to engage himself in any action, has been established after a long discussion in the Samanvaya-Sūtra." SBh. 3-2-23, p. 361.

(४) द्रष्टव्यादिशब्दा अपि परविद्याधिकारपठिताः, तत्त्वाभि-  
मुखीकरणप्रधानाः, न तत्त्वावबोधविधिप्रधाना भवन्ति ॥

सू. भा. ३-२-२१, पा. ३६२.

"Texts like 'He is to be seen' in the context of the knowledge of Brahman, are solely meant for directing the seeker's mind towards Reality and are not particular about enjoining knowledge of Brahman." SBh. 3-2-21, p. 362.

In the face of such emphatic assertions of S'ānkarā, the Vivaraṇa stresses again and again that enquiry into the nature of Brahman is begun in Sūtra 1-1-1, to consider an injunction :

तं च जिज्ञासुं पुरुषार्थकाममुपलभमानो भगवान् बादरायणः  
साधनचतुष्टयसंपन्नस्य मोक्षसाधनब्रह्मज्ञानाय वेदान्तवाक्यविचार  
विदधतो विधेरपेक्षिताधिकारिविषयफलानुबन्धप्रयत्नागमिकमपि न्यायेन  
निर्णेतुं सूत्रयामास 'अथातो ब्रह्मजिज्ञासा' इति; श्रुतिसूत्रयोरैकरूप्या-  
वगमात् । मनननिदिध्यासनयोश्च श्रवणाङ्गत्वमुत्तरत्र वक्ष्यामः ॥

पं. वि. पा. ३१, ३२.

“Having in view such an enquirer aspiring for the goal of human life, the revered Bādarāyaṇa composed the Sūtra ‘Then, therefore, the enquiry into the nature of Brahman’ in order to determine by reasoning, the three pre-requisites (the person qualified, the subject-matter, and the fruit resulting) of the S’ruti enjoining enquiry into the meaning of Vedāntic texts conducive to knowledge of Brahman, the only means to release, this enquiry being enjoined for one who is equipped with the fourfold qualification. (This Sūtra aims at determining all this by means of reasoning) although it has been already revealed in the S’ruti; for, harmony between the S’ruti and the Sūtra, is desirable. We shall show in the sequel how Manana and Nididhyāsana are auxiliary to S’ravaṇa.”

PV. pp. 31, 32.

The critical reader will readily notice the striking difference between S’āṅkara and Prakāś’ātman in respect of their introduction to Bādarāyaṇa’s first Sūtra. S’āṅkara says that all the Upanishads primarily intend to teach the knowledge of the unity of Ātman in order to destroy Avidyā (अस्यानथहताः प्रहाणाय,

आत्मैकत्वविद्याप्रतिपत्तये सर्वे वेदान्ता आरभ्यन्ते). How this is, can be seen by a reference to the S'ārīraka-Mīmāṃsa (the investigation into the nature S'ārīraka or Jīva who is really Brahman), as will be explained by S'aṅkara hereafter : यथा चायमथः सवषा वदान्ताना तथा वयमास्या शारीरकमीमांसायां प्रदर्शयिष्यामः । The first Sūtra, according to S'aṅkara, means यथाक्तसाधन (चतष्टय) सपत्न्यन्तर बह्वजिज्ञासा कतव्या. After acquisition of the fourfold qualification (discrimination, non-attachment to enjoyment, calmness etc. and desire to get release), one should enquire into the nature of Brahman. There is no inkling of investigation into any injunction whatever here.

According to the Vivaraṇa, however, the Sūtra wants to determine the purport of the S'ruti enjoining S'ravaṇa, and therefore Bādarāyaṇa wishes to decide who is qualified to hear, what it is that S'ruti enjoins the hearing about, and what the resulting fruit of this S'ravaṇa would be. The disparity is too obvious to require any further explanation. We refrain from further quoting Vivaraṇa passages with regard to the injunction for fear of prolixity.

## SECTION NINE

### RETROSPECT AND CONCLUSION

#### Yājñavalkya's Teachings

68. We have arrived at the close of the Maitreyi Brāhmaṇa. There is only one more *Kāṇḍikā* to be discussed. It is therefore time for summing up the teaching of Yājñavalkya. So we shall enumerate briefly the results of these teachings according to S'āṅkara free from the admixture of later accretions.

(1) No one can hope to purchase immortality with all the wealth one can possibly acquire in this world.

(2) Everything in the universe that one loves, is dear for the sake of Ātman, one's own self. So Ātman is the dearest of all.

(3) The Ātman alone is worth seeing through hearing about, reflecting upon and contemplating upon. When He is thus seen, everything becomes known.

[This does not mean that one's individual self has to be known; for, it is already known through the teaching of the revelation dealing with the ritual portion of the Veda. One who has studied the Vedas and performed the religious works enjoined therein, knows very well that one's self answering to the notion of T, is distinct from the aggregate of the body

and the sense-organs. Every believer in his own religion, believes in such a self perhaps. Yājñavalkya however, refers to the Witnessing Self of each one of us.]

Knowing this Self is quite unlike the objectification of any empirical phenomenon by means of a concept. As S'āṅkara puts it in his *Upadeś'a-Sāhasri*, it is the highest kind of intuition vouchsafed to man :-

चैतन्यभास्यताहमस्तादर्शं च तदस्य यत् ।

इदमंशप्रहाणेन परः सोऽनुभवो भवेत् ॥ उप. ५-५.

“Since the ego is revealed by Consciousness, and it is itself dependent on It, by destroying this objective factor that highest intuition of the Self would accrue.” U.S. 5-5.

(4) The teaching that Ātman being known everything becomes known, should not mislead one to suppose that something else exists side by side with Ātman. There is absolutely nothing else. Ātman is all that is.

S'āṅkara's interpretation of the teaching of the S'ruti texts that Ātman is to be known, is that the Natural Avidyā which separates one from one's real Self, has got to be wiped off by Vidyā. The common man who naturally superimposes the body and the senses upon the real Ātman, transfers by mistake the properties of the not-Self to the Self, and *vice versa*. So long as he is

under the influence of this nightmare, he conceives the genuine Ātman as something to be known, and presupposing this Avidyā for the purpose of teaching, the S'rutis teach that Ātman is to be known and immortality attained by means of that knowledge.

(5) S'ravaṇa according to S'āṅkara, is only listening to and trying to understand the teaching of the S'rutis and of the teacher about the real nature of Ātman. Neither the S'ruti nor the teacher can command the seeker to understand Ātman; nor can they point out or objectify Ātman by describing him as such and such. This is true even in the case of the knowledge of empirical things.

ज्ञेयाभिमुखस्यापि ज्ञानं कदाचिज्जायते कदाचिन्न जायते;  
 तस्मात् तं प्रति ज्ञानविषय एव दर्शयितव्यो ज्ञापयितुकामेन ।  
 तस्मिन् दर्शिते स्वयमेव यथाविषयं यथाप्रमाणं च ज्ञानमुत्पद्यते ।  
 न च प्रमाणान्तरणान्यथाप्रसिद्धेऽर्थेऽन्यथाज्ञानं नियुक्तस्याप्युत्पद्यते।  
 यदि पुनर्नियुक्तोऽहम् इत्यन्यथा ज्ञानं कुर्यात्, न तु तज्ज्ञानम्,  
 किं तर्हि मानसी सा क्रिया । स्वयमेव चेदन्यथोत्पद्येत, भ्रान्तिरव  
 स्यात् ॥ सू. भा. ३-२-२१, पा. ३६२, ३६३.

“Even when one has directed his attention towards the object to be known, its knowledge dawns sometimes, and sometimes not. Therefore, one who wishes to impart knowledge to another, has only to direct his attention towards

the object of knowledge, and when that is done, knowledge appears of itself in conformity with the nature of the object and the means of knowledge. Even if one is urged (by the S'ruti), knowledge of a thing cannot arise in contradiction of what its nature has been ascertained to be through some other valid means of knowledge. If, however, one should think it to be otherwise than what it actually is, on the score of his being directed (by the S'ruti) to do so, that can be no knowledge but only a mental act (of meditation). If the knowledge to the contrary should arise of its own accord, it would be only an illusion." SBh. 3-2-21, pp. 362, 363.

In the case of Brahman, of course, S'ravaṇa removes the intercepting misconception, and nothing further is needed to produce the knowledge of the self-shining Ātman.

(6) *Manana* is the use of reason based upon partial intuitions as adduced by the S'ruti itself or by the preceptor, or reasoning by the seeker himself in harmony with the Vedic reasoning. This reasoning may be of the nature of noting the continuity or persistence of Ātman and variability or evanescent nature of the not-self, or reflection upon the relation of Ātman to the phenomena during creation, sustentation and dissolution of the world (SBH. 2-1-6). *Manana* has nothing to do with syllogistic reasoning or dry speculation.

(7) *Nididhyāsana* (also known by other names such as *Ādhyāna* and *Adhyātma Yōga*), is a special kind of concentrated contemplation upon Ātman which culminates in the merging of the mind in, and the direct intuition of the Universal Ātman. It has nothing to do with creative imagination (ordinarily known by the name of *Upāsana*, or the *Pātanjala Yōga* (intended for the suppression of the modifications of the mind, as a prelude to Samādhi or dissociation of the Ātman from the mind)).

(8) *Bādarāyaṇa* refers (VS. 3-2-24) to a state called *Samrādhana* or worshipful mood in which the devotee sees even the transcendental Ātman. This has nothing to do with the Pātanjala Samādhi. The word used by the author of the Vedānta Sūtra, means the practice of devotion, deep meditation, and concentrated contemplation and other kindred mental acts of spiritual discipline.

There is another Sūtra of Bādarāyaṇa समाध्यभावाच्च (२-३-३९) (*Samādhyabhāvācca*), which is meant for giving a reason for holding that the individual self is an agent of action. S'āṅkara explains the meaning of the Sūtra by a statement that the *prima-facie* view is that even according to the Upanishads the Jīva must be

considered to be an agent, as otherwise the Samādhi enjoined in the S'rutis would become purposeless. Here according to the author of the Bhāshya, the word Samādhi is a variant for *Samādhānam* (staying the mind on Ātman) by means of S'ravaṇa, Mananā and other means. It goes without saying that there is absolutely no inkling of the *Pātanjala Yoga* in this Sūtra, though some recent Vedāntins have been misled by the word Samādhi.

One important corollary, however, emerges out of the Bhāshya on this Sūtra. Since all the means of knowledge indicated by the words *Drashtavyah* (to be seen), *S'rōtavyah* (to be listened to), *Manṭavyah* (to be reflected upon), *Nididhyāsītavyah* (to be contemplated upon), have been explained here as implying Samādhi (staying the mind exclusively on Ātman), the meaning of all these, may be subsumed under the act of being attentive. This is the same as what is denoted by the word *Praṇidhānam* in the following sentence from the Bhāshya :

लोकेऽपि 'इदं पश्य', 'इदमाकर्णय' - इति चैवंजातीयकेषु  
निर्देशेषु प्रणिधानमात्रं कुरु इत्युच्यते, न साक्षाज्ज्ञानमेव कुरु -  
इति ॥ सू. भा. ३-२-२१, पा. ३६२.

“Even in common usage in directions like ‘Look at this’, ‘Listen to this’, one is directed to give a concentrated attention to the particular fact, and not to perform the act of knowing itself.”  
SBh. 3-2-21, p. 362.

(9) S’ravaṇa alone is quite sufficient for the achievement of the intuition of Ātman in the case of competent enquirers who are able to grasp the exact signification of the terms involved in the proposition ‘That thou art’. But in the case of those that are not able to intuit the identity of Brahman and the self on the very first listening, repetition of S’ravaṇa and Manana may be necessary to remove the different misconceptions concerning Ātman (SB. 4-1-2).

This repetition of the combined practice of S’ravaṇa and Manana, however, should not be taken to be the same as Nididhyāsana as some have misconceived it.

(10) While S’rutis recommending S’ravaṇa, Manana and Nididhyāsana, do use verbs and participles that seem to imply injunctions, these means do not admit of being enjoined, and as we find no context in the S’ruti in which any particular person undertook to perform these functions in response to an injunction, we need not take any notice of the serious contention of some recent Vedāntins who suppose that Bādarāyaṇa’s S’ārīraka

Mīmāṃsa was undertaken to determine the person qualified, the subject-matter and the result accruing to one who undergoes these items of discipline. These seeming injunctions are simply meant, as S'āṅkara says, to direct the attention of the seeker inwards :-

द्रष्टव्यादिशब्दा अपि परविद्याधिकारपटितास्तत्त्वाभिमुखीकरण-  
प्रधानाः, न तत्त्वावबोधविधिप्रधानाः ॥

सू. भा. ३-२-२१, पा. ३६२.

### Qualifications Necessary for Enquiry

69. It will be remembered that only the three direct means to vision ( *S'raṇa*, *Manana* and *Nididhyāsa*), have been mentioned and discussed here. The four indispensable qualifications including *Nityānitya-Viveka* and *Vairāgya*, are of course implied in the character of *Maitreyi*. The introductory narrative also implies that even women, even though not qualified to perform Vedic rituals, may attain knowledge of the true Ātman under a competent preceptor's guidance, provided they are otherwise qualified.

70. Is there anything else remaining to be known or else done after the Ātman has been intuited ? *Yājñavalkya* has answered this question in the most unequivocal language :-



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