

**Deliberation On
The Ultimate Reality Culminating
In Intuitive Experience**

Satchidaananda Vaak-Jyoti Series



SWAMI SATCHIDANANDENDRA SARASWATI

By D. B. GANGOLLI

**ADHYATMA PRAKASHA KARAYALAYA
BANGALORE**

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Foreword

This is the fourth of a series of small books under the head — "Satchidaananda Vaak-Jyoti" or "The Enlightening Words of Satchidaananda". All these booklets contain a free transliteration of 'the enlightening and immortal words and teachings of Shri Satchidaanandendra Saraswati Swamiji, of revered memory, found in his numerous Kannada books. Those readers who do not have the facility and advantage of reading and understanding books in the Kannada language will be immensely benefited by these English publications written in simple language and style.

This small plan of publishing these 'gems of spiritual literature', unrivalled in their esoteric import and teachings of the highest order and based on the pristine pure original Bhashyas of Adi Shankara, was first mooted by Shri D. B. Gangolli, a devotee and admirer of Swamiji. He had brought out the first of the series entitled — "The Relevance of Vedanta in This Modern Age of Civilization" — with the munificent financial help of Subharam Trust (Regd.)

It is an irony of our times that even that great Acharya's immaculate teachings of *Atma Vidya* or Self-Knowledge, purely based on the strength of the *Upanishadic* statements, their veracity based on intuitive dialectics or ratiocination (called *Anubhavaanga Tarka*) and finally on the strength of the culmination or consummation of all those teachings in one's own intuitive experience here and now, have been distorted beyond recognition and redemption.

The devoted and discerning seeker of the Ultimate Reality of *Atman* or the Self, of the essential nature of Pure Being-Consciousness-Bliss (Intuition), is sure to benefit a great deal by studying and cognizing the truths that are taught in these booklets which have adopted a well-planned sequential order of a spiritual theme so as to enable him to get rid of many a deep-rooted misconception that was hitherto proving to be a big stumbling block in his path of spiritual progress. It can be affirmed here that if the student honestly applies his mind and intellect and devotes all his efforts and energies with a high sense of purpose and perseverance, he will never fail to get the conviction and complete satisfaction accruing from this lofty pursuit.

We have great pleasure in publishing this book under the auspices of Adhyatma Prakasha Karyalaya, Tyagarajanagar, Bangalore - 560 028 and are thankful to its author, Shri D. B. Gangolli, for making over to us the copyright of this book. We hope that those who are sincerely interested in and devoted to the pursuit of a genuine spiritual path will avail themselves of this opportunity.

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I. THE METHODOLOGY OF VEDANTIC DELIBERATION

1. What is Vedanta?

Vedanta means Upanishads. The philosophical teachings implicit in the Upanishadic texts are called collectively 'Vedanta' alone. What is the methodology to be followed to help cognize or discern the Vedantic (philosophical, spiritual) truths? What is the manner in which — if we carry out our deliberations — the real purpose or goal that has to accrue from Vedanta will be obtained? These questions — let us calmly and carefully examine now.

2. The Manner in which Vedanta has been Depicted or Elaborated upon in the Upanishads:

We may look upon the Upanishads as a kind of celestial songs. The ancient sages or Rishis, by the grace of the Almighty Creator (Parameshwara), have in their ecstatic state sung their Intuitive experiences in the form of ballads. They have directly and immediately Intuited their objective and have projected their blissful ecstasies in the forms of Upanishads. Only to such of those who can elevate or sublimate their Antahkarana, i.e. their inner instrument of the mind, to rise up or soar to the dizzy heights of the Intuitive experience of the Rishis — per force the Vedantic truths will flash, and only such holy men will invariably attain the blissful state that has to accrue from Intuiting such esoteric truths.

3. The Vedantic Aphorisms:

From time to time in order to determine the Vedantic philosophical teachings, logic or dialectics had to be used (by our philosophers). That was an era when the various spiritual system-finders were carrying out their respective spiritual deliberations from their own viewpoints and were teaching their doctrines or theories and were, in addition, producing their own scriptures (or authoritative

texts) in the form of aphorisms. Therefore, answers to questions like — “Which is the Vedantic philosophy?” “And what is the difference between the teachings of the other schools of philosophy and those of the Vedanta philosophy?” — had to be determined rationally or logically after deliberating upon the Upanishadic sentences. Revered Shri Baadaraayanaachaarya undertook this task. He must have explained in detail the purport or significance of his aphoristic works and might have written the Vedantic Sutras (aphorisms), which are the Vedantic teachings in a terse or succinct form so that his disciples and followers could memorize the subject matters or topics through those aphorisms. To that text of aphorisms the appellations of ‘Vedanta Meemaamsaa’ and ‘Shaareeraka Meemaamsaa’ were given. ‘Vedanta Meemaamsaa’ means ‘the deliberation on the Upanishadic sentences’. ‘Shaareeraka Meemaamsaa’ means ‘the deliberation on the Atman or Self who resides in the Shareera, i.e. the body’. Since in this ‘Meemaamsaa’ or deliberation it has been determined that Atman (the Self) who exists in our body alone is the Brahman, i.e. the Ultimate Reality, as propounded by Vedanta, this philosophical science has acquired in later times the nomenclature of ‘Shaareeraka Meemaamsaa’.

4. The Era of the Bhashyas:

In due course of time the question as to what exactly is the meaning or interpretation of the Vedanta Sutras (i.e. Vedantic aphorisms) also became a controversial subject. People belonging to different traditions conceived different meanings to those aphorisms and wrote their respective ‘Bhashyas’ as ‘Vrittis’ which were commentaries. By means of logical arguments of the type — “This aphorism has to be interpreted in this manner alone, for that alone is agreeable to the Vedantic sentence as well as to the context relative to the preceding and succeeding situations” — the various commentators ventured to determine the meanings. The followers of such commentators started affirming that their respective doctrine alone was proper or correct. It came to such a pass that there was no universally acceptable standard whatsoever to determine as to whose teaching was correct and whose doctrine was wrong; for, every one had written commentaries to all the three authoritative sources,

viz. Prasthaana Traya (the principal ten Upanishads, Bhagavad Geeta and the Vedanta Sutras), in keeping with their respective school's doctrines; and they had begun to explain these authoritative texts according to their own respective commentaries! The Rishis or ancient sages who were the anonymous authors of the Upanishads attached a great value to the heart (Hridaya); they were people who cognized the truths by their Intuitive experience and enjoyed the blissful nature of Pure Being. But at the time of the commentaries the intellect became more important. The practice or trend of arguing on the basis of logic or dialectics in the manner — “Logically this sentence must mean like this; this particular aphorism must mean like this, because.....” — became the order of the day. The difference between the purport of the Upanishadic Rishis and the interpretations of the commentators was the same as the difference between the natural misery that the real Seeta (of Raamaayana) suffered in the Ashokavana and the misery that an actress Seeta exhibits or enacts as if to suffer realistically in a drama.

Further, what can be the plight of people who merely learn by rote whatever the the commentators have stated and think accordingly? To such people merely the sentences of the commentators alone are the last resort or the final refuge. Naturally, for them the task of determining the meaning of sentences in the manner — “What is the evidence or valid means for this? Which is that authoritative sentence to substantiate this?” — alone became important. In the same manner with regard to the interpretation of the aphorisms too there were prolonged discussions or disputations!

5. The Assistance of Logic sought by the Commentaries:

It has been already stated that at the time of the commentaries (Bhashyas) the intellect was given predominance and that deciding the meaning of Upanishadic sentences by means of logical disputations alone became important. This logic was of two kinds: One of them was to argue in the manner — “It is enough if there is a formal logic”; the other kind of logic was that which was

carried out in accordance with universal experience. It is stated in the Upanishads that — “The Supreme Self or Lord was alone; He thought in the manner — ‘I will become many’ — and created the world.” Those who believe in the formal logic alone conceived the meaning of this sentence arguing in the manner — “Because the Supreme Lord has been stated to be the cause for the world, just as a seed becomes a tree, He was transformed into the world — in this manner alone the sentence should be interpreted.” If any one asks them the question — “But the scriptures are saying that even now also the Supreme Self (Paramaatman) subsists as He is (i.e. even after His creation)! Is it not?” — they argue in the manner — “It cannot be; for, any entity being as it is cannot possibly assume another form; an entity which is non-dual without getting changed or having mutations cannot acquire or assume many forms.” But in case if both these conditions are in consonance with universal experience then what? Brahman or the Ultimate Reality exists as It is, but at the same time It has assumed the form of the world too, and if this phenomenon (or fact) is in agreement with every one’s Intuitive experience, naturally the logic itself will have to be adopted to suit, or to be in full agreement with, such an Intuitive experience, is it not? This kind of logic will be known as ‘Intuitive Logic’ (Anubhavaanga Tarka), i.e. logic in consonance with Intuitive experience.

The fact that what the Rishi pronounced in the form of the Upanishadic sentences on the strength of universal Intuitive experience had to be reconciled with logic in this manner is a regrettable predicament indeed. But how can every one attain, or attune to, that sublime Intuitive experience of those ancient sages at all? The Intuitive experience of the Self is not an easy thing which comes of Its own accord; It is a thing that can be attained only through spiritual practices or disciplines alone. But for that reason alone, the aspirants need not lose heart. They should practise such disciplines which suit their respective abilities or qualifications. They should try to understand or discern the meaning of the Vedantic sentences by following or adopting reasoning or logic in consonance with every one’s (Saarvatrika) Intuitive experience (Poorna Anubhava). Because the common run of people have not understood this fact, at present Vedanta philosophy has been tainted with the false propaganda that it is a vain deliberation or disputation that idle, old people carry on sitting in a Verandah or a lounge.

6. The Yeoman Services rendered by Shri Shankaraachaarya:

At a time when the confusion created in the minds of the true seekers by the commentaries, on the one hand, and the various disputants, on the other, had increased and no one could reckon what was the Ultimate Reality of Vedanta, (with the result the aspirants were misguided) it was our good fortune that Shri Shankara Bhagavatpaada 'incarnated'. He brought about a revolution, as it were, in the method of deliberation of Vedanta that existed in his times. It is true that he, too like the others, wrote a commentary; but one invaluable truth which the aspirants had forgotten was presented by him in a lucid manner before them. That was: *"Na Dharmajijnaasaayaamiva Shrutyaadaya Eva Pramaanam Brahmajijnaasaayaam; Kin tu Shrutyaadaya Anubhavaadayascha Yathaa Sambhavam Iha Pramaanam; Anubhavaavasaanatwaat, Bhootavastuvishayatwaachha Brahma Jnaanasya."* The purport of this important teaching of his is: As regards the knowledge of religious or ritualistic tenets, because the unseen fruits which accrue as a result of ritualistic actions are mentioned the scriptures alone are the authoritative sources or valid means. But with regard to the Knowledge of Brahman (the Ultimate Reality) it is not so. In this case the fruits of meditations which accrue in other worlds have been mentioned; in addition, the visible fruits which accrue by the Knowledge of the Ultimate Reality of Brahman also have been mentioned. Therefore, here merely the scriptures alone (or exclusively) are not the authoritative sources or valid means. On the other hand, to suit a particular set of empirical circumstances or situations the scriptures as well as the logical or dialectical devices adopted by them may be pressed into service, but predominantly the universal Intuitive experience (Anubhava) — which can never at all be refuted or invalidated by any one or at any time — has to be accepted as the valid means. For, **"the Knowledge of Brahman, i.e. the Ultimate Reality, has to culminate in one's own Intuitive experience; besides, for that Knowledge the (Absolute) Reality of the Supreme Self alone which eternally exists is the goal or purport"** — This exclusive and esoteric teaching Shri Shankara presented before the aspirants and opened their eyes, so to speak. This very dictum of his holds good to this day and will continue to hold good for ever.

7. The Greatness of Shri Shankara's Commentaries:

Shri Shankara was born in Kaladi, in Kerala, took Sannyasa at the tender age of eight and having cognized (Intuited) the Ultimate Reality of the Supreme Self (Brahman) he wrote his commentaries to all the Vedantic texts, viz. the Prasthaana Trayi, comprising the ten principal Upanishads, the Bhagavad Geeta and the Vedanta Sutras, in his sixteenth year itself. The Supreme Lord having created this magnificent world is amazing phenomenon indeed; but the scholars of his times must have nodded their heads in acquiescence to and in admiration of the fact that the Bhashyas that this 16-year-old boy 'created' (wrote) which was more amazing than that creation of the Lord! By virtue of Shri Shankara's commentaries Vedanta philosophy gained a new splendour, indeed. This Acharya's life history, image etc. — none of them we know distinctly with any certainty, but the commentaries that he wrote are extant before our eyes even to this day without undergoing any change whatsoever. In fact, it would not be an exaggeration if it is said that by the passage of time his Bhashyas bring to light more and more the profundity of his tenets as also the precocity of this young teacher. If we invoke him and his teachings it will certainly amount to our worshipping him. That is an onerous but invaluable task which will be welcomed by every aspirant.

8. The Method of Studying the Vedanta Philosophy:

How should the Vedanta philosophy studied? Vedanta is not the vain exercise of deliberating in the manner — "That statement means this....; this statement means such and such; this agrees with our Acharya's teaching, that does not." The Ultimate Reality propounded by Vedanta transcends time and space. If what is stated in the Vedanta sentences can be Intuited or cognized as one's own experience, then whosoever may state that (to wit, may explain or elucidate that Intuitive experience) it should be accepted. It should not be ignored saying that — "A young boy named Shankara had said that". "*Yuktiyuktam Upaadeyam*

Baalaadapi Shukaadapi” — this wise statement of our knowledgeable forbears means — “What does it matter as to who said it, as long as what is said is in consonance with reasoning and Intuitive experience? Even if it is stated by a boy or a parrot, it should be accepted.” Shri Shankara has affirmed that the Vedanta philosophy pertains to an entity which can be Intuited here and now. Not only that; that Reality about which he speaks is the only one that is in full agreement with the Consummate Intuitive experience (Poorna Anubhava); this is not mere praising or eulogising him, but the truth *in esse* of Life (taken in its entirety) as it is.

As the Ultimate Reality that is propounded by Vedanta is cognizable equally by every one there is no binding regulation whatsoever that that Intuitive experience of the Reality should be known exclusively through Sanskrit of the Upanishads. People of the various States of India through their regional languages or their own mother tongues as also foreigners through their respective languages can understand it when communicated; the aspirants can thus know through those means alone. Let any one, at any time, at any place and in any language expound this ‘Truth’ or ‘Reality’ as It is — then that Ultimate Reality of the Supreme Self is one and one only, i.e. non-dual; consequently, the Intuitive experience of that unitary Absolute Reality (beyond time, space and causation) and the fruit or benefit accruing from such a Knowledge too are one and the same alone.

9. The Necessity of the Bhashyas:

Here a question arises. Why should not any one straight away read the Upanishads themselves and deliberate upon them? Where is the need for a Bhashya? The answer to this question is: Those who acquire the Knowledge (i.e. their real purport) of the Vedantas (Upanishads) directly from the sentences of the Upanishads themselves — they may certainly do like that indeed. But every one does not get the Intuitive knowledge directly from the Upanishads. To many the answer to the question — “What is the purport of the Upanishads?” — is not known at all. In order to make it known to such people the Bhashyas (i.e. Shri Shankara’s commentaries) alone become a necessity. By ourselves we may sing or hum some tunes and feel happy too. But merely on that

count can we teach others the significance or subtleties (nay, the science) of music? Just because some people by nature can sing, merely on that ground can we say that the science (or art) of music itself is not needed at all? We are all using electric bulbs; merely by pressing a button, light comes into being. Just on that count will the science that explains the essential or innate nature and behaviour or functions of electricity become needless? Those who wish to study that science by themselves and have the capacity to communicate that knowledge to others too should necessarily study that science (under the tutelage of a professor, a qualified scientist); but for the other lay men it is enough if they buy sufficient number of bulbs according to their needs and pay the electricity bills, is it not? Similarly, those who have the capability of expounding the meaning of the sentences of the Vedantas, i.e. the Upanishads, and of determining the essential nature of the Ultimate Reality (of Brahman or Atman) through discussion and deliberation, should necessarily study the Upanishadic texts and should communicate to others also the Knowledge of the secrets or subtle meanings. Those who themselves study the scriptural texts, practise the scriptural teachings (disciplines — Saadhanas) in the true spirit and then teach others around them too inculcating in them the purport of those teachings by way of Saadhanas in their day-to-day life — such people are called Acharyas, i.e. teaches or preceptors. Shri Shankaraachaarya cognized in that manner the teachings of the Vedantic philosophy, taught them to the people of his times and finally through his extant Bhashyas benefited the future generations too by providing the guidelines for attaining the *Summum Bonum* of those Vedantic teachings. For that reason alone he has been known as a Mahaa Vedanta Achaarya i.e. a great Vedanta (spiritual) teacher. But nowadays there is no need at all for everybody to study the Upanishadic texts in that manner; it is enough if the ordinary common people who aspire to attain 'Enlightenment' or 'Beatitude' surrender unto a genuine, merited teacher and adapt their day-to-day life and behaviour in consonance with his teachings and guidance. Merely on that count they can attain the Intuitive experience of the Ultimate Reality of the Self and become fit to fulfill the supreme purpose of human existence (Purushaartha).

10. Defects in the Study of the Present-day Aspirants:

Among the present-day aspirants of the Knowledge of the Vedantic Reality many do not want the Upanishads, nor the Vedanta Sutras, i.e. aphorisms, nor the Bhashyas. For them any one individual's work (Prakarana Grantha) — whether it be a text in Sanskrit, or any regional language — it is enough; by following it, they get a greater sense of identification and pride in its teachings and thereby they quarrel among themselves. The methodology of deliberation of Vedanta is not like this at all. Just like the logic that — “If in our town the lake water is received through a pipe, in every one's town water must have been received from the lake alone” — if from one text book I get the knowledge and thereby if I affirm obstinately that — “Every one should invariably gain that knowledge from that particular text alone” — that type of attitude can never be proper or reasonable. Another aspect also should be considered. In Vedanta the majority verdict is not at all important; this may be acceptable for political deliberations where democratic principles are acknowledged; but for the determination of the Ultimate Reality it is not so. “Many people state that in deep sleep there exists Avidya, i.e. ignorance; therefore, Avidya exists therein” — this kind of logical argument has been based on the majority verdict or opinion, but not Intuitive experience. How is the Intuitive experience of deep sleep? What is meant by Avidya? Is there an Intuitive experience which enables one to cognize whether Avidya exists in deep sleep or not? — thus one should deliberate Intuitively. If there exists an Intuitive experience to the effect that Avidya exists in deep sleep, if any person — whosoever he may be — states that it should be accepted, if not even if many people state that it (i.e. Avidya) exists therein it should not be accepted. That is all.

11. What is meant by Anubhava, i.e. Intuitive experience?

The argument of the type — “This is our experience, therefore we agree or accept it” — is not proper. For, what is meant by experience? The feeling or reaction at the psychological level

(i.e. in the mind or heart) that any one particular individual experiences or accrues once at a particular period of time is not referred to here in this text as "Anubhava" (in the ordinary parlance translated as 'experience'). Hunger, anger, etc. are not called here "Anubhava", on the other hand, that cognition or consciousness which every one gets in an identical, same manner is called "Anubhava" here. For example, the cognition (knowledge) that is gained through the eyes is universal; to every person from alone appears or is cognized through the sense organ of the eyes. No one hears sound through the eyes. It should be evident from this deliberation now that Anubhava, i.e. Intuitive experience, means the knowledge, cognition or consciousness which is the real entity, but not a mere feeling or concept. Shri Shankaraachaarya has called this kind of universal (as also plenary, comprehensive) Intuitive experience of the innate nature of Pure, Absolute Consciousness or Knowledge alone "Anubhava". It is his opinion that logical disputation should be carried on in accordance with Intuitive experience or Pure Consciousness. Unless one carries out deliberation or discrimination taking the support of Intuitive experience (Pure, Absolute Consciousness) which is universal the determination of the Ultimate Reality (of Brahman or Atman) is not possible at all.

12. The Advantage that Accrues from the Vedantic Deliberation:

By the examination carried out so far it is established that — "By deliberating in consonance with universal Intuitive experience the determination of the Ultimate Reality (of the Self) should be made" — is it not? Now, what is the benefit or advantage that accrues from this kind of deliberation? This question may be asked by any person. For, there is no rule of law whatsoever that merely being in agreement with universal Intuitive experience any deliberation will necessarily yield any benefit or will be purposeful. One can ask, in this regard, a question of the type — "I saw a kind of an insect on the bank of a pond; it was just like a haystack. Unless it was observed meticulously it could not be reckoned at all as any insect by any one whosoever he might be. Since to anyone who looked at the insect it invariably appeared in the same manner, it could be said that its experience was universal indeed.

Merely on that count what benefit or advantage could possibly accrue from the deliberation on that insect? The answer would be undoubtedly — 'No benefit or gain accrues at all'. Similarly, one can raise a question of the type — 'What is the benefit or gain accruing from the deliberation on Brahman, the Ultimate Reality, that is indicated in the Vedantic texts?' — is it not? In the Upanishads it has been stated that by this kind of deliberation the ultimate or supreme goal of human life itself is attained. In the Taittiriya Upanishad it is stated that — "One who Intuits or cognizes that Brahman (the Ultimate Reality) which exists in his 'Hridaya', i.e. heart, alone will attain the fulfilment of all the desires together." In the Kathoapanishad it is stated: "When all the desires in the heart are got rid of, then a mortal being becomes immortal." The Bhagavadgeeta states: "He alone is a 'Sthitaprajna', i.e. one who is firmly established in the Pure, Absolute Consciousness (Intuition)." The question that confronts us now is: "By the Vedantic (Intuitive) deliberation whether such a supreme or profound benefit accrues or not?", and this problem has to be solved invariably by ourselves cognizing or Intuiting that Ultimate Reality of the Self (Atman) in ourselves here and now. There are some holy men who are genuine Vedantins, and they are always peaceful with immense mental equipoise; they are always happy, jovial by temperament. Even the people who meet and see them get rid of their miseries and gain a pronounced sense of solace. What could be the nature of their Intuitive experience (i.e. establishment in the Pure Consciousness)! If such contentment is attained by us within ourselves introvertedly, it amounts to our gaining the supreme, profound purpose (benefit) of Vedanta philosophy indeed.

In the Vedantic deliberation our prejudices born out of either attachment or hatred towards anything or any person should not be brought into the reckoning. The pre-conceived resolution of the type — "For us the Ultimate Reality should be like this — or it should not be like that" — is not proper. Suppose, one goes to a goldsmith, hands over a gold ornament and asks him to find out its weight, carat, etc. When all the details are gone into by the goldsmith in his presence, can that owner allege that the goldsmith is quoting a lower weight and lower carat and thereby get angry against the goldsmith? Similarly, the inquirer should 'rub the entity, here in this context the Reality, against the touchstone of Intuitive deliberation' and then decide, determine the Reality as

It really exists. Shri Shankaraachaarya calls such Reality as the 'Ultimate, Absolute Reality (Brahman, Atman)' as propounded by Vedanta; those others who have deliberated upon It also have cognized this Brahman or Atman (the innermost Self of everyone) by Intuition alone in the same manner to culminate here and now in their direct Intuitive experience of Pure Consciousness. In the same way we should also cognize It so as to culminate in our Intuitive experience as Pure Consciousness. That aspect alone is the most important one for the true seeker or aspirant. Here in this context we should not attach much value or importance to phenomena like Samaadhi (trance), Siddhis (magical or mystic powers), Mahimas (miracle-mongering, superhuman acts) etc. Not that phenomena like those of Samaadhi, Siddhis, Mahimas of great sages in the empirical sphere do not have any value whatsoever, but it should be discerned that they by themselves do not serve as any criteria to prove or establish the truths of Vedanta philosophy (which are meta-physical or transcendental beyond the empirical sphere, beyond time-space-causation categories, beyond all mental concepts). Here in Vedanta the Ultimate Reality of Brahman or Atman alone is the most important teaching (to wit, as the only non-dual Entity in the ultimate analysis). Our ancient holy seers or sages say that the benefit that accrues from the Intuitive Knowledge of Atman, i.e. the Self, (of the essential nature of Pure Being- Consciousness-Bliss) is of the utmost value to everyone. To avail of It everyone, without any exception whatsoever, can treat it as his or her birthright; by attaining that Intuitive Knowledge (experience) all of us human beings should fulfill the supreme purpose or goal of this precious human birth or existence. The Vedantic deliberation should not be carried out because of a conception of the type — "Vedanta is the hallmark of the greatness that is to be essentially and invariably found among people belonging to a higher strata of society; only such of them have it, let us also try to attain it." On the other hand, the true seeker should practise these Vedantic teachings with all fervour and a high sense of dedication and aspiration to suggest; "The Vedantic Intuitive deliberation is a spiritual science which leads every one among us (irrespective of our caste, creed, race, nation, sex, religious beliefs etc.) to attain the Intuitive Knowledge of the essential nature of Pure Being-Consciousness-Bliss of our own innate, innermost Atman (Self); by that means we attain the supreme goal or the summum bonum of human life or birth;

therefore, we should discard all other considerations, prejudices and misconceptions and wholeheartedly pursue this Intuitive deliberation to its fruition." Proportionate to the intensity and severity with which we carry out our Intuitive deliberation, backed up by a judicious spiritual course of disciplines and practices, there is bound to be an immense gain or benefit. In fact, this highly rational, scientific methodology that Vedanta philosophy (as expounded by the triad of Vedantic canons. viz. the ten principal Upanishads the Bhagavadgeeta and the Vedanta Sutras) adopts — though terse and highly subtle — is surely a clincher.

II. THE SCRIPTURAL METHOD OF TEACHING ATMAN (THE REALITY)

13. The Distinct Schools of Advaita Vedanta Philosophy:

What we have called the 'methodology of Vedantic deliberation' is what the 'Advaitins' or non-dualists delineate as the method of cognitive deliberation. The method which Shri Gaudapaada Aachaarya, Shri Shankaraachaarya's grand preceptor, and his line of disciples have described in their respective works alone is called "the methodology of Vedantic deliberation" here in this treatise.

At the time of Shri Shankaraachaarya and before his time too there were non-dualists. But their teachings were quite different. In the Brahma Sutra Bhashya, which is a commentary by Shri Shankara on the aphorisms of Shri Baadaraayanaachaarya on Brahman, the Ultimate Reality, the teachings of non-dualists (Advaitins) have been described in three different ways:

(a) Between Paramaatman (the Supreme Self) and Jeevaatman (the transmigratory soul) there is a cause-effect relationship. Because the Jeeva has been born (or created) from Brahman (the Ultimate Reality) he is different from as well as alike

Brahman; in the empirical sphere the Jeeva is qualified to perform the rituals and rites stipulated in the Karma Kaanda of the Vedas; he is also qualified to Intuitively deliberate upon the teachings of the Jnaana Kaanda, i.e. the end portion of the Vedas teaching the Intuitive Knowledge (Self Knowledge) of the Ultimate Reality of Brahman. In the opinion of these protagonists Jnaana, i.e. Self-Knowledge, means "Upaasana", i.e. meditation, alone; by means of Upaasana the Jeeva gets rid of that part of difference from Brahman and finally joins with or merges in the non-dual Brahman, the Ultimate Reality. This is one school of thought (philosophy), which is the doctrine of Bhedaabheda Vaadins.

(b) In the previous school of thought Brahman is multifarious in nature, which means — in Itself It has variegated aspects. But there was another school of Advaitins (non-dualists) who used to say: "Although in this manner in Brahman Itself no differentiation is accepted, the Jeeva, having been born or created from Brahman, finally joins with or merges in Brahman alone in Mukti, i.e. Liberation, Emancipation." According to their doctrine by the contact with the adjunct (Upaadhi) of the collective form of the body, the senses, the mind and the intellect an impurity or dross has been (really) caused in the Jeeva. After he, i.e. the Jeeva, becomes (gets) purified by means of spiritual practices or disciplines of the type of Knowledge and meditation etc. and thereafter casts off the conglomeration of the body, the senses etc. he joins with or merges in Paramaatman, i.e. the Supreme Self or Brahman. In the state of transmigratory life Jeeva is different indeed from Paramaatman; after he attains Mukti, there does not exist any difference whatsoever; for, the adjuncts which are the cause for the difference do not exist at all. The fact that this doctrine was accepted by the followers of the Bhaagavata school is known from the works like the commentary of Shri Bhaaskaraachaarya. **This is the doctrine of Bheda Vaadins.**

(c) In the teachings of the third school of Advaitins, Paramaatman, i.e. the Supreme Self, alone exists in the form of the Jeeva. The scriptures state that: "Apart from Paramaatman there is no Drishtru, i.e. seer, there is no Shroatru, i.e. hearer" etc.; they further state that — "Paramaatman proposed to Himself (or thought within Himself) — 'I will enter (into this creation) in the form of Jeeva, separate names and forms' — and has entered into

the creation (Shrishti).” There does not exist any difference whatsoever between Brahman (i.e. Ultimate Reality) and the Jeeva (i.e. the transmigratory soul); in the unitary, non-dual essential nature of Brahman, i.e. Pure Being-Consciousness-Bliss, through Ajnaana (Avidya or ignorance) different Jeevas have been misconceived. That is all. That one who is called ‘Jeeva’ in the state of ignorance (Avidya Dasha) is himself called Brahman (the Supreme Self) in the essential nature state of Intuitive Knowledge (Vidya Swaroopa). When observed from the viewpoint of Pure, Absolute (Intuitive) Knowledge or Consciousness, Jeeva is ever Brahman alone; whether he, i.e. the Jeeva, knows or Intuits this truth or he is ignorant and misconceives his true nature (i.e. irrespective of the Jeeva’s Intuition of his essential nature as Brahman or not) he is Brahman alone *in esse*. This school of Advaita (non-dualism) alone is the one that is in full agreement with the tradition of Shri Shankaraachaarya. In this regard Shri Sureshwaraachaarya has stated: “From the viewpoint of the Ultimate Reality (Paramaarth) there is no Ajnaana, i.e. ignorance, that is irremovable; nor the Intuitive Knowledge that is unattainable. To cognize this truth alone is the real Intuitive Knowledge.” **This is the doctrine of Abheda Vaadins.**

14. How to Cognize or Intuit the Essential Nature of our Supreme Self (Paramaarth Swaroopa)?

How can we attain the Intuitive Knowledge of the type — “I am ever Paramaatman (the Supreme Self)”? In this regard Shri Shankara in his commentary on the Aitareya Upanishad has mentioned a small anecdote. When a certain idiot committed a certain mistake some people remonstrated with him saying — “You idiot, you are not a human being!” In order to determine that he was a human being only, he approached a particular person and questioned him in the manner — “Sir, who am I? Tell me, please.” The other man who divined (understood) this person’s idiocy and began telling him — “I will make this known to you by stages” — and then continued: “You are not a plant, is it not? You are not a tree, is it not? Similarly, you are not a stone; you are not an insentient being; you are not merely the body, nor merely the Praana, i.e. the vital force” — and thus negating

several adjuncts (Upaadhis) one by one, finally told him: "You are not a no-man" — and thereafter became silent. Then the idiot, who was all along nodding his head in agreement, once again asked: "What Sir, you have not told me at all as to 'who I am'?" The question that we too keep on asking to know or cognize our Atman, i.e. the Self (of the very essence of Pure Being-Consciousness-Bliss), is also of the same nature. This is the significance of that anecdote which Shri Shankara has pointed out there in that context.

The purport of this anecdote is that the scriptures (Upanishads) teach or signify the essential nature of our Atman (Self) by Ataddharma Nivartana., i.e. by refuting those qualities or characteristics which cannot be adduced to Atman, i.e. our Self, a method of negation. The task of the scriptures is to indicate to us that none of those characteristics or qualities which we have superimposed on our Atman or Self through misconception exists in Atman at all. Our Atman is our essential nature of Pure or Absolute Being-Consciousness-Bliss alone exclusively and metaphysically, so to speak, and there is no need whatsoever to indicate separately that essential Being once again. To one who cannot discern or understand by himself that he is a human being, a man, when it is explained to him in the manner — "You are not a no-man" — how at all is it possible to signify beyond that limit or to communicate to him in the positive manner — "You are a man"? (To wit, what he is already but he has not realised, reckoned, then nothing else can possibly be done by anybody from outside or externally. In other words, if he is in essence a human being no other person outside him can make him cognize afresh that he is a human being. If he cannot help himself here and by himself utilise the faculty of discrimination, reasoning — then no amount of external instruction can deliver the goods, i.e. can be of any avail. That is all). In the same manner, when all the adjuncts or characteristics belonging or pertaining to Anaatman, i.e. not-self, are negated completely what remains is the absolute essential nature of Being-Consciousness-Bliss of our Atman, indeed.

Therefore, the manner in which it is delineated in the scriptures we must follow step by step, stage by stage to recede unto ourselves, so to speak, and finally we should carry out that pursuit to its fruition so as to culminate in our Intuition of Atman. When it is said — "One should know just as the scriptures state" — it does

not mean that we should believe in that manner; on the other hand, it means that we should cognize it by honing (rubbing it against our Intuitive experience) on that anvil or whetstone of Intuition till it becomes our Intuitive experience here and now. (In fact, this is a long-drawn process of inner education and edification which is truly and highly scientific, rational, nay beyond all physical laws, i.e. metaphysical). The Shrutis (Upanishads) are not, in this sense, the Pramaana, i.e. empirical valid means of cognition, just because they are called by the epithet 'Shrutis' and 'scriptures' (our sacred treatises), but because the manner in which they indicate or signify the Reality is invariably cognized in one's Intuitive experience indeed; for this reason alone, in a secondary sense, they become the valid means of cognition or Pramaana. There is no compelling or binding rule of law that a sentence that is mentioned in the Shrutis (Upanishads) alone, exclusively, is necessary in this context; neither is there any stipulation that the Sanskrit language alone is needed. But especially because the Shrutis (Upanishads which belong to the Jnaana Kaanda portion of the Vedas) are devoted to this metaphysical, Intuitive Knowledge of the Self in a highly, esoteric, scientific manner, the cognition or Intuition of one's own essential nature of Atman should be based on the methodology indicated in the Shrutis and then one cannot go wrong; the results in stages will occur in the same manner indicated or described in the Upanishadic texts. By discarding or negating all the qualities or characteristics alone of Anaatman, i.e. not-self, which are misconceived in Atman through Avidya one should cognize or Intuit that Reality as one's own innate nature of Self.

15. The Hurdles in the Path of Self-Knowledge:

Our nature of existence or Being as per our present knowledge is Avidyaapratyupasthaapita, i.e. it is of a nature which Avidya or ignorance has projected. In our essential nature of Pure Being-Consciousness-Bliss which the scriptures (Upanishads) signify no distinct characteristics exist at all. "Atman (the Self) is of the innate nature of being eternally pure, conscious and free, He is the Witnessing Principle of everything (Sarva Saakshi)" — thus it is mentioned in the scriptures. But because of Avidya we have

known or conceived our essential nature of Pure Being-Consciousness-Bliss Itself quite differently indeed. Avidya, Ajnaana, Mithyaabhimaana (misconception) are all synonymous Sanskrit terms. The mutual misconception between Atman (Self) and Anaatman (not-self) alone is called Avidya (in Vedantic parlance); this alone is called 'Abhimaana', i.e. innate identification, egoism. Just as in a place where there exists a great deal of din and bustle a person has all his attention poised towards his gold watch that is in his pocket, we have an innate identification with our transmigratory form (i.e. the soul, ego, 'I' notion) in a very deep-seated manner. We cannot at all say: "Such a misconceived identification should not have come into our eternally pure, conscious and free nature of Absolute Being-Consciousness-Bliss of our Atman." This innate identification is not one that has come into being in a particular place or in a particular period of time; quite naturally it has existed from time immemorial. We have not been able to know as to when and where this has occurred to us. Instead of saying; "We have grabbed this innate identification" — it is more befitting and factual if we say: "That identification itself has caught hold of us." Thinking that — "Why should we get ourselves called ignorant people by others around us?" — we may externally profess to say that — "I am not the body, not the senses etc." out of a sense of sufferance. But while expressing in that manner itself this innate identification has already caught us in its grip, so to speak, and continues to prompt all our empirical or mundane actions or dealings. While one is in a state of ignorance, it is never cognized by that particular person that — "This is ignorance." If it is cognized in that manner as an object, then that cannot possibly be ignorance (Avidya) at all. (To wit, the act of objectification desiderates and implies a subjective aspect in us which can never be objectified as it is opposed in its essence to what is objectified. If this is Intuited, then this 'I' notion or egoism of Advaita Vedanta is a natural but innate ignorance which is adventitious, not at all related to our essential nature of Pure Being-Consciousness-Bliss of Atman, the Self. In other words, Atman is self-evident, self-illuminating or self-effulgent, absolutely non-dual and free Entity without a second to It). Since this innate misconception of the form of 'I' notion or egoism (called Adhyaasa in Advaita Vedanta) is itself born out, quite naturally, of Avidya (nescience) Shri Shankara has stated: "*Panditaa Avidyeti Manyante*",

meaning — the scholars call this Avidya. For the great Self-realized sages it is Avidya; but for us lay, common people it is not Avidya but a natural phenomenon.

16. The Hallmark of Ajnaana having Disappeared

To the question — “What is the hallmark for this Avidya (Ajnaana) having disappeared?” — Shri Shankara has, in answer, written a verse: *“Dehaatmajnaanavajjnaanam Dehaatmajnaana Baadhakam; Aatmanyeva Bhavedyasya Sa Nechhannapi Muchyate”* — (Upadesha Sahasri 4-5). The purport of this verse is : Just as at present quite naturally there exists in us a constant knowledge to the effect — ‘I am the body, the senses etc. alone’ — in the same way if the Intuitive Knowledge to the effect — ‘I am Atman (Self) alone; not the body, the senses etc.’ — accrues and falsifies the earlier knowledge of the type — ‘I am the body, the senses, etc. alone’ — akin to or analogous to a person cognizing a rope and falsifying his earlier misconception of the type — ‘This is a snake’ — then we can say that this later knowledge is based on certitude. Only then we can reckon that the true genuine Self-Knowledge has accrued and ‘Avidya’ or ‘Ajnaana’ (misconception) has disappeared. In the case of one who has attained that ‘Self-Knowledge’ even if he later says — ‘I do not want It’ — that cannot happen and he invariably becomes a Mukta, i.e. a liberated one indeed. To us common run of people quite naturally (Naisargika) the twin defects of attachment for (Raaga or Moaha) or hatred towards (Dweshya) things of this external world are inborn, and we do not have the knowledge that they exist in us at all. This alone has been called by Shri Shankaraachaarya ‘Naisargika’, i.e. quite or innately natural (To wit, that which is apparently having no cause whatsoever and hence cannot in the ordinary course be explained away). When these defects of likes and dislikes (Raaga and Dweshya etc.) have disappeared (i.e. we have got rid of them) the result will be same. That means, the steadfast, firm Intuitive Cognition or Knowledge of the type — ‘In my essential nature of Pure, Absolute Being-Consciousness-Bliss of the Self never at any time (i.e. in the past, the present or the future) the defects of likes and dislikes ever existed at all; I am of the essential nature of eternally free, liberated Self’ — must necessarily accrue. For example, look at

the dream. To the emperor, Janaka, in his dream it appeared as though there was a drought for 12 years and that he was loitering about for some rice gruel and even as he was trying to drink it two bullocks came fighting and sent the bowl of the rice gruel he was holding flying in the air. He shrieked aloud, woke up only to see that he was sleeping on the royal bed in his palace alone!! Really, what is the reality? — he wanted to know. Such a curiosity arose in him; there is a story that at that juncture the sage Ashtaavakra instructed him about the Ultimate Reality of the Self or Atman.

From these deliberations it becomes quite certain that in the dream nothing whatsoever exists in reality. Even so, as long as we remain in that state we are bound to acquire an innate identification with the adjuncts like the body, the senses etc. that 'exist' therein and we 'misconceive' them to be — 'I am those alone'. Analogous to this universal experience, till the Intuitive Knowledge (akin to the waking knowledge) born out of the teachings of the Upanishads accrues to us, Avidya or Ajnaana (ignorance) of that really real Being-Consciousness-Bliss invariably and necessarily exists. It is also true that after the attainment of Self Knowledge too it becomes equally certain that that wrong knowledge or misconception called Ajnaana (ignorance) never existed in reality at all since it is falsified or sublated.

17. To Whom does this Self-Knowledge accrue from the Scriptural Sentences?

The scriptures are non-human; they are not sentences which any particular person had imagined or conceived according to his own whims and fancies. From the sentences of persons one understands only in the manner — "These people say like this" — but the task of determining the purport or the subject-matter of the sentence by other valid means as to what they said is true or not remains. But the Intuitive Knowledge that accrues from the scriptural sentences is not like that at all; the Knowledge of the Reality as It is accrues in its consummation.

Any person may raise the question of the type — "In that case, even after listening to the scriptural sentence of the type — 'That thou art' — why is it that we do not attain that Intuitive

Knowledge?" The answer to this question is: "Adhikaarini Pramitijanakoa Vedaha" — meaning, the Vedas (scriptures, particularly the Upanishads) engender Intuitive Knowledge in a person who is qualified or fit only. "One who does not know how to read, can he by merely keeping a book get the knowledge of the letters and of reading? To one who does not have sight (who is blind) merely because there is an object externally in front of him can that object be visible? No. In the same way, to one who does not have the proper qualifications taught by the scriptural instructions this Intuitive Knowledge of the Self cannot accrue. What is meant by Adhikaara, i.e. qualification? It is the capability of observing cognitively or Intuitively Atman (Self), of the essential nature of our own innate Pure, Absolute Being-Consciousness-Bliss, where and how He is to be invariably searched out if one wants to attain His Intuitive Knowledge. "Yadeva Saakshaat Aparokshaat Brahma Ya Aatmaa Sarvaantarastam Me Vyaachakshwetyesha Ta Aatmaa Sarvaantaraha" — to wit, when Ushastachaakraayana questioned Yaajnavalkya in the manner: "Tell me about Brahman who is directly and immediately known" — the latter has given an answer in the manner — "This alone is your Atman who is the innermost entity of everything" — (Brihadhaaranyaka 3-4-2). Atman means our essential nature or core of Being which is the innermost Reality compared to all other things or phenomena; therefore, that Reality or innermost entity within us should necessarily be observed within (through introspection, Intuition). But people generally are extroverted alone. The scriptures say that — "Paraanchi Khaani Vyatrunat Swayambhoostasmaat Paraangpashyati Naantaraatman" — meaning, the senses have been created (By the Lord) so as to be extrovert only; therefore, people by nature are perceiving outwardly and not inwardly. If Atman is to be cognized within then one should become "Aavruttachakshuhu", i.e. introverted, revert the senses, stop their functions and then introspectively observe within oneself; then only, Atman can be cognized. Shri Shankaraachaarya in his Bhashya on the Aitareya Upanishad has stated thus: "Paramakaarunikena Aachaaryena Aatmajnaana Prabodhakrichhabdikaayaam Vedaantamahaabheryaam Tatkarnamoole Taadyamaanaayaam" — meaning, when an Achaarya, i.e. scriptural preceptor, who is extremely kind (in fact, he is like a mine of kindness unto himself), beats the big drum of Vedanta, that resounding drumbeat helps arise to the waking

state of Self-Knowledge (Aatmajnaana). In the present (ignorant) state even if the scriptures and the knowledgeable holy men beating the drum of Vedanta philosophical science din it into our ears statements like — “Tattwamasi”, meaning ‘That thou art’; “Brahmaivedam Vishwam”, meaning ‘All this world is Brahman alone’ — we are not awakened (from the long sleep of Avidya) at all! For such a plight the cause is nothing but a lack on our part of a capability of introspection alone (To wit, an apathy towards becoming introverted and deliberate on the subtle truths taught by Vedanta Intuitively).

18. The Method Adopted by the Scriptural Texts to Propound the Reality of Atman Who is Beyond the Empirical Sphere (Metaphysical):

Atman (Self), like the empirical objects or phenomena, is not an empirical entity; that means, He is not one who can be cognized or perceived through any valid means whatsoever, like Pratyaksha (perception), Anumaana (inference) etc. Because HE is beyond the ken of the sensuous knowledge He cannot be cognized through the senses. The mind also is beyond the ken of the sensuous knowledge (to wit, the mind is subtler than the senses and hence the latter can never comprehend the former), but the mind can plausibly cognize itself. Therefore, it is empirical alone, not like Atman who is non-empirical, Absolute or metaphysical (noumenal). All the words in vogue in the world are suitable or fit to express the empirical things or phenomena alone. The Vedas too use and have necessarily to use if they have to teach or communicate) invariably those vary words in vogue in the empirical world; then how is it possible at all for us to know or cognize by means of the gamut of literature found in the Vedas, our scriptural texts, this metaphysical, noumenal Entity called Atman, who is stated to be beyond the empirical realm? Even so (despite thin enigmatic or dilemmatic predicament), the Vedas are expounding for our sake this Absolute, Transcendental Entity called Atman. Is it not, then, a wonderful phenomenon? If Atman is an entity devoid of sound, touch etc. then how at all can the empirical sounds or words — even if they be Vedic or of any other religious or philosophical texts — signify or communicate Him?

“Yatoa Vaachoa Nivartante Apraapya Manasaa Saha” —, meaning, the words along with the mind return or revert without being able to touch or comprehend Him; in this fashion even the Vedas themselves have declared the inability of either the words or the mind; that being the case, by what method can ever those very Vedic statements (literature) — all of them being themselves a mere compilation of statements — indicate, expound this Entity called Atman?

To this question the answer is: The scriptures, adopting a method of negating all the external Anaatman, i.e. not-selves which are known or cognized by us in the manner — “It is not this; it is not this” — push us backwards, as it were, unto ourselves (i.e. they help us turn our attention inwards introvertedly and enable us to introspect). It is necessary to elucidate in detail this particular statement. Our intellect is logic-oriented or predominantly prone to reasoning out. If it is stated that — “Atman is not like this” — the intellect argues or reasons out in the manner — “In that case, Atman must be like this.” In order to drive out a cat which has entered our house, we close all but one exit through which the cat has per force to run away because we have obstructed it from running about the house by keeping only one door open. We do use such a stratagem to induce the cat to run out, don’t we? In the same way, in order to obstruct the mind which is, like the evasive cat, jumping hither and thither (in pursuit of the external objects or phenomena) the scriptures induce our mind to recede unto ourselves, stage by stage, by instructing in the manner — “Atman is not to be perceived by the senses; He cannot be cognized by the organs of perception (Jnaanendriyas), nor can He be grasped by means of the organs of action (Karmendriyas)” etc. etc. To the intellect which thrives on logic or reasoning and imagines in the manner — “If it is not gross (Sthoola) then it means it must be subtle (Sookshma)” — the scriptures instruct by saying that Atman is neither gross nor subtle to prevent it from reasoning in that manner. For that reason alone the scriptures declare; “*Athaata Aadeshoa Neti Neti*” — meaning, ‘Now, the instruction about Atman — He is not this; He is not that’. By this sentence and by the words — ‘Not this, not that’ — we should not assume them to mean that they signify Atman’s non-existence; nor that they mean that there exist any other substance or object. After rejecting whatever things or phenomena that are superimposed on, or misconceived in, Atman — whether they be of the empirical

categories or thought-constructs like Bhaava (i.e. existent entity) or Abhaava (i.e. non-existent thing) — to wit, only after all those things are negated (by words, but by ideas too in the Kantian style so that all mental conceptions of reason transcending all experience) the Vedas themselves come to rest or retire unto the unitary, non-dual essence of Atman (i.e. Pure Being-Consciousness). In other words, both the Sanskrit words — Na (not), Iti (this) — and their conceptual aspects should be negated, sublated first and then the 'Neti, Neti', i.e. 'not this, not that' aspect (meaning all thought-constructs in toto) should be negated, sublated. In truth, Atman alone is what is called 'Veda', i.e. scriptural Knowledge (Self-Knowledge)!! In a far-flung or far-reaching prescient connotation of this word 'Veda' it can be said that because Atman Himself has put on this garb or disguise of the 'Vedas', i.e. the scriptural texts, and has appeared in that form in the empirical sphere (i.e. after His magical creation), the Vedas have the innate strength and capability of signifying the Ultimate or Absolute Reality or Atman. For this reason alone, the Vedas are known to be the valid means (Pramaana) to indicate or communicate the non-dual Reality of Atman. The 'Vedatwa', i.e. capability, the innate strength of signifying or communicating the Intuitive Knowledge of the Vedas, is not because they are in the sacred Sanskrit language (as the Hindus might have held that language in high esteem) but because they, i.e. the Vedas (particularly the Upanishads, the Vedantas), help cognize that metaphysical, esoteric Entity called Atman (our innate Self). All of us human beings are eternally devoid of all kinds of conceptual categories (Nitya Nirdharmakas), devoid of all kinds of qualities or characteristics (Nirgunas), verily of the essential nature of Atman (Pure Being-Consciousness-Bliss), i.e. Aatmaswaroopa. Therefore, the scriptural statement — "Neti, Neti" — pregnant with profound spiritual instructions, enables us to establish ourselves in that essential nature of Pure, Absolute Being-Consciousness-Bliss of Atman, who is unborn, non-dual, devoid of deep sleep, devoid of dream (as delineated in the Maandukya Upanishad) and culminates or reaches its fruition, consummation in the very essential nature of Atman. If this fact is realized by the aspirants, they should venerate those great sages, who expounded and elucidated these esoteric spiritual instructions, and serve them. The true seekers will do well to question such preceptors at the proper time and in the proper manner and try to

cognize (Intuit) this Reality of Atman (Self) as expounded by the Vedas. Truly, when that Reality of our Self (Atman) is Intuitively cognized the ignorance (Avidya) that is there in us at present — all of it — will vanish into the thin air. The instructing Guru or preceptor, the listening Shishya or disciple, the Knowledge — all these distinctions of the empirical sphere become one with, or merged into, the Supreme Self (Paramaatman) alone.

III. AAGAMA (SCRIPTURAL, TRADITIONAL METHODOLOGY) AND TARKA (LOGIC OR DIALECTICS)

19. The Scriptures Expound Atman through the Method of Negation of the Anaatman:

One should cognize the Ultimate Reality just as It has been expounded in the scriptures alone. How is It expounded in the scriptures? The answer to this question is that they teach us that Brahman, the Ultimate Reality, is beyond the ken of words and mind; It is neither gross (Sthoola) nor subtle (Sookshma); neither short (Hriswa) nor long (Deergha) — in this and such other ways the scriptures indicate Brahman by negating whatever characteristics or qualities which are not existent in It. Because Atman (or Brahman) is non-empirical He cannot at all be signified either by means of words, which have the capacity of communicating only the empirical objects or phenomena, or by means of percepts, which are the backdrop or background for them. If observed properly, symptomatic thought (Lakshanaa Vritti) or thought with suggestive or implied meaning (Vyanjanaa Vritti) — even these are not sufficient here in this context. For, in the statement — “On the river Ganga, i.e. Ganges, the village is situated” — by the word ‘Ganga’ the bank of that river is suggested by one of its symptomatic qualities (Lakshanaa), only. Here the bank which is indicated by a symptom is actually the meaning of another empirical word, viz. ‘bank’ indeed. But the Reality of the Supreme Self (Brahman, Paramaatman) is neither

the object or percept even for the words Atman or Brahman. In the statement — “Are you taking your food in their house? Then, you better eat poison!” — there is no intention in the least on the part of the person making this statement that the other person should actually consume poison; the implied or suggestive meaning that — ‘You should not take your food in that house’ — is implicit. But even by this kind of sentences too the Reality of Atman cannot be indicated! For, the reason that Atman is not an object or percept for any word at all is applicable here also. If we decide to assume non-empirical or metaphysical meanings (Aloukikaartha) to the words in the scriptures then that goes against the rules or stipulations of the Meemaamsaa Shaastra, i.e. the authoritative system of interpreting the scriptural sentences; for, in the Meemaamsaa Shaastra it has been laid down as a law that — “As regards the manner in which the empirical terms or words are used to convey a particular meaning — if that is not contradictory to the purport of the Vedas, i.e. the scriptural texts, then those very meanings must be accepted.” That being so, how at all can the scriptural texts signify or communicate the Reality of Atman? To this doubt an answer has already been provided. By the process of the scriptures negating all the characteristics or qualities of Anaatman, i.e. not-selves, in the manner — “Not this, not that” — the inner instrument of the mind (heart), being unable to go out towards the external world of objects, becomes silent or quiescent. Just as in the game of chess the king is checkmated by the servants so that the former cannot at all move about anywhere, in the same way when all the doorways or outlets of the mind to think extrovertedly are closed or shut, then the mind becomes quiescent. Then Atman (Self) who is self-luminous or self-effulgent shines by Himself.

20. A Doubt: Is Not the Negation by the Scriptures a Method of Teaching Essencelessness?

Here in this context a doubt arises: Just merely by the mind becoming quiescent, how can it be said that one has attained Atma Jnaana, i.e. Self-Knowledge? At best, it can be said that the mind has remained still without any activity, having become dull or

stupefied. If it is said that Atman is self-luminous alone, then why is it that we have not known Him earlier at all? Not only this; if words indicate in the manner — “Not this, not that” — merely by that how at all is it possible to reject or negate what is ‘not’, i.e. what it is not? Therefore, it amounts to saying that either (by that process) a particular thing’s mutual non-existence or negation (Anyoanyaabhaava), its non-existence (Abhaava) or its opposite (Viruddha) is relevant here! Besides, the scriptures are saying: “Manasaivedamaaptavyam” — meaning, through the mind alone this has to be known. If that mind itself becomes dull or stupefied, will it amount to saying that through the mind alone Atman is known? With regard to the question of the scriptural sentences or statements producing Self-Knowledge, there appear to be different kinds of difficulties of this type.

21. The First Step of the Scriptural Teaching: Promoting Introvertedness:

Before giving answers to these questions, it becomes necessary for the aspirants to deliberate, stage by stage, upon the methodology of teaching adopted by or in the Vedas. In fact, the mind seeks the paramount goal of human life or existence alone. When that mind (through its delusion) has sought repeatedly that supreme goal of life (Parama Purushaartha) in the external world alone and consequently has become fatigued, as it were, or disillusioned, the scriptures (address such a mind and) preach in the manner — “*Aatmaa Vaa Are Drishtavyaha, Shroatavyoa Mantavyoa Nididhyaasitavyaha*” — meaning, ‘One should seek out Atman (Self) alone; for that, one should Intuitively listen to the teachings about Atman; one should Intuitively reason out about or deliberate on Atman alone and one should Intuitively contemplate upon Atman alone.’ By these means the flow of the inner instrument of the mind, which was previously running out towards the external objects exclusively, will now be directed towards Atman, our innermost Self. Pratyak Pravanata, i.e. the habit or proclivity of flowing inwards (to wit, becoming introverted), is to be practised first. Unless and until this proclivity is attained by the inner instrument of the mind, Self-Knowledge (Atma Jnaana) cannot accrue at all. Therefore, the scriptures help the qualified seekers first of all to achieve or acquire this introvertedness of

the mind (Antarmukhatwa). This instruction is just akin to the one like — ‘One should seek sweetness in sugar alone; one should not seek it in tamarind fruit, not in salt etc. (i.e. where it cannot at all be found)’. **The first teaching of the scriptures is:** “As long as you are pursuing the old habits of extrovertedly listening to, reasoning out etc. with regard to Anaatman, i.e. not-selves, you will not attain the paramount or supreme goal of life; if you want the consummate, plenary state of Bliss or Beatitude, then you should pursue the spiritual disciplines of Shravana, i.e. Intuitively listening to the exposition of Atman by the scriptures, Manana, i.e. Intuitively reasoning about or deliberating on Atman as taught by the scriptures etc. alone.” By these means the properly qualified listener becomes introverted (thereby his mind will give up its previous pronounced or deep-seated proclivities of running after external objects).

22. The Second Step of the Scriptural Teaching: Removing One’s Pramaatrutwa (Cognizership):

Now the scriptures go to a step further and teach us in the manner: “Your Atman is everyone’s Atman alone. He is truly not a seer (Drishtu) of the form of an individual; apart from that Atman, who is the Atman (innermost Self) of everyone there does not exist any seer whatsoever at all.” By this teaching the Intuitive Knowledge that — “I am not the cognizer (Pramaatru)” — has to accrue. If it is taught (indicated) that — “I am not a seer, not a listener, not one who reasons out or ratiocinates” — then a misconception of the type — “In that case, my essential nature of existence or Being is essencelessness alone” — may arise. In order to avoid that the scriptural statement — “*Tattwamasi*” — meaning, ‘That thou art’ — has been made. If it is queried — “Which is that essential nature of Pure Being (Swaroopa) that is not a Pramaatru, i.e. cognizer?” — then the answer is: “That Reality or entity which is the Atman (Self) of everything and everyone.” Here in this context, the Kaaranatwa, i.e. the category of cause-ness, superimposed on Brahman, has been indicated in the scriptures in the manner — “(In the beginning) the Sat, i.e. Brahman, alone which does not have a second to It (i.e. non-dual)

existed; It created the Jagat, i.e. the world and then entered into it in the form of Jeeva, i.e. the soul." In the teaching that — "That cause for the world alone is yourself" — the transmigratory soul-hood of Shwetaketu signified by the word — "Twam", i.e. 'thou', in the statement is removed or negated; by the statement — "That alone is the Reality" — it amounts to saying that the effect of the form of the created world is Mithyaa, i.e. a delusion, and consequently it becomes evident that the relative causation is superimposed on Brahman. The final conclusion that — "Atman or Brahman is non-dual alone" — is thereby arrived at. Thus by the scriptural statement — "*Tattwamasi*" — it amounts to teaching the truth that thou art Atman alone who is devoid of any characteristics or qualities, who is non-dual, eternally pure, conscious and liberated or free.

23. The Manner in which by Means of the Empirical Words the Intuitive Knowledge of the Non-empirical Absolute Reality of Atman Accrues:

Thus the scriptures follow one extra-ordinary method to signify the Absolute, non-empirical Brahman of the essential nature of Pure Being-Consciousness-Bliss. In the scriptural sentence — "*Tattwamasi*" — the word 'Tat', meaning 'that' (as in common parlance) is the pronoun that is being at present examined or deliberated upon; it is a word that signifies an object which is external to or outside us (Paroaksha Vastu). But because Brahman which is the cause for the world is not an entity that exists either in space or in time, here in this context the externality (Paroakshatwa) is not relevant at all; since it has been taught to the listener that — "That thou art" — here it will have to be deduced that that word — 'Tat' — signifies 'Chaitanya', i.e. Pure, Absolute Consciousness (Intuitive experience, to be short-Intuition) alone, which is 'Aparoaksha', i.e. most innate nature, the very core of our Being *per se*. The word 'thou' (Twam), though it signifies the transmigratory soul who is in front (as the listener), because it has been stated in the scriptures that the listener is nothing but Brahman alone who has created the world and has entered into it and further because it has been stated that in deep

sleep all the Jeevas have become one with Brahman, of the essential nature of Pure Existence (Sadbrahma) alone, the word 'thou' or 'you' signifies, implies Chaitanya, i.e. Pure Consciousness alone, which is quite different from the body, the senses etc. Thus by the wisdom (cleverness) of joining together words like — 'That thou art' — those very empirical words have become capable of (or rather they have been invested or infused with) the valid means to signify or teach the Absolute, Transcendental (non-empirical) and non-dual Reality of Brahman.

In the statement — "The Supreme Self (Brahman) is not this, not that" — and such other statements, because the scriptures have successfully induced the mind to recede or regress away from all kinds of empirical objects or phenomena, this scriptural statement — "Not this, not that" — has become infused with a new-found capability, as it were, to signify or imply in a very queer, extra-ordinary style Atman, the Self, alone without any of the empirical meanings or connotations whatsoever of the type — "Tadabhaava", i.e. a thing's non-existence, "Tadbhinna," i.e. a thing exclusively different, "Tadviruddha," i.e. an opposite of or contra to a thing — being applicable here in this context.

Another example: The scripture has stated Brahmalakshana, i.e. the symbolism or significance of Brahman in the manner — "*Satyam Jnaanamanantam Brahma*". Here in this context, if it had been merely stated — "Satyam", i.e. real, — it would have meant — "That entity is a verity which exists without changing its intrinsic or essential nature of being"; then in that case, among the verities or objects like pot, pitcher, etc. which undergo changes or mutations that inert, insentient clay, which exists in one and the same form or nature and which is the causal matter (to wit, as the logicians call it the material cause, Upaadaana Kaarana) could have been called "Satyam", i.e. real. But because the word — "Jnaanam", meaning 'Conscious' — also has been used in proximity to the word "Satyam", the meaning now is: 'A real thing or verity which is conscious or sentient to boot'. Consequently, it amounts to having separated Brahman from the gamut of verities or entities which are inert or insentient. But in the empirical sphere, i.e. in common parlance, the word "Jnaanam" signifies 'Knowledge' that is dependent on external things or phenomena, or in the alternative, because that verity or entity which is endowed with knowledge can be called "Jnaanam" that word can

signify 'Jnaatru', i.e. a knower, also. But, not merely mentioning the two words — "Satyam" and "Jnaanam" — the scripture has added the word "Anantam", i.e. endless, also, and hence apart from the literary meanings or connotations which that empirical word "Jnaanam" suggests or connotes, it becomes evident from the scriptural statement that "Brahman" has been used to signify the 'endless' Pure Consciousness, i.e. Chaitanya, alone. Thus these three words, viz. Satyam, Jnaanam and Anantam, have been proximately used to signify the essential nature of Brahman (Brahma Lakshana). Shri Shankara states in his Bhashya by way of elucidation thus: "*Satyaadishabdaa Itaretara Samnidhaanaat Anyoanya Niyamanyiaamakaaha Santaha Satyaadi Shabdavaachyaat Tannivartakaa Brahmanoa Lakshana-arthaascha Bhavanti*" — meaning, because those words, viz. Satyam Jnaanam and Anantam are mutually acting as controlling and controlled words, the empirical substances or phenomena that the words like Satyam, Jnaanam and Anantam connote are discarded and together they become a sentence which signifies the essential nature of Pure Being-Consciousness-Bliss of Brahman, the Ultimate Reality or the absolute eternal verity alone. An entity or verity which is Satyam, i.e. real, Jnaanam, i.e. conscious, Anantam, i.e. endless, eternal — all these simultaneously we cannot find anywhere in the world even if we keep up the search till the life span of Brahma, the four-headed deity who is referred to in mythological texts as the 'Creator' of the universe. But merely saying that much the scriptures are not satisfied and therefore they further indicate that — "Brahman is our Atman or Self alone" — to bring home the 'Aparoksha' or the most intrinsic *per se* aspect of the Ultimate Reality. Thereby the scriptures have exhibited their extra-ordinary skill in signifying the non-empirical, metaphysical verity or Reality of Atman (our innermost Self) whose existence as well as verity can never be called in question or doubted by anyone at any time through the usage of these empirical words or terms.

The word — "Saakshi" — which is utilized in the scriptures (Upanishads) also is a very queer or extra-ordinary word which signifies the essential nature of Atman as the Pure Absolute Being-Consciousness-Bliss. The grammarians say that the symbolic name — "Saakshi" — is used with the meaning, or in the sense, of "One who sees directly." The word "Saakshi" connotes: "One who perceives directly, to wit, one who is self-effulgent and

so can perceive without depending upon any persepual senses or instruments of perception; not one who is a seer (Drishtru) at a particular point of time and who is not a seer (Adrishtru) at another point of time; He is one who is eternally of the essential nature of Witnessing Consciousness alone." The scriptural statement that — "*Saakshee Chetaa Kevaloa Nirgunascha*" — meaning, "One who is the Witnessing Principle, who is of the essential nature of Chaitanya, i.e. Pure Consciousness, and is devoid of all characteristics or qualities" — is fully applicable to and agreeable with Paramaatman, i.e. the Supreme Self (Brahman), who is the Atman or innermost Self of every one and who illumines everything by His essential nature of Chaitanya, i.e. Pure Consciousness. But that word "Saakshi" with this connotation does not at all agrees with or fits the Pramaatru, i.e. cognizer (the 'I' sense in all of us, the individual soul) who can at best perceive only particular objects one at a time through his senses, i.e. instruments of perception.

24. On the Culmination of Atma-Jnaana (Self-Knowledge) the Vedas become Avedas (lose their Authoritativeness)

The Vedas (scriptures) which expound in this manner without giving any scope for the mind of the seeker to wander about externally anywhere helps reach Atman (Self) alone who is the innermost core of Being. The fact that — the word 'Nai', meaning 'not' in statements like — "Neti, Neti", meaning 'Not this, not that'; "Asthoolamananu", meaning 'Not gross not subtle' etc. — without signifying any meanings whatsoever for those words that are in vogue in the empirical workaday world indicates Atman alone is then cognized by our mind. Generally, the mind overrides us and pushes or prompts us to become extroverted only; but when the Vedic words thus signify in this esoteric manner the essential nature of Pure Being-Consciousness-Bliss of Atman (the innermost Self), then those words connote in a queer manner that both the Abhidaana (Name) and the Abhideya (named object) are Atman alone; just like the fire that has burnt away the firewood, the Vedas too become one with Atman alone. In any case, in this manner although the Vedas utilize the various empirical words

they adopt a certain wisdom, cleverness or adroitness in conjoining those very words with a view to enabling us to get ourselves established in the core of our Pure Being-Consciousness-Bliss and thereby (having served their purpose) they become 'Avedas', i.e. unauthoritative, thereafter. In keeping with the scriptural statement — "*Atra Veda Avedaaha*" — meaning, 'Here the scriptures become non-scriptural', they also become one with the Self alone. Although the reflection of a light seems to be fluctuating in the water, the light by itself can remain steady. In the same manner, although Atman appears in different or distinct forms externally like "Vaachya", i.e. the phenomenon signified by a word, "Vaachaka", i.e. the significatory word, etc. He remains unto Himself *per se* in His "Kootastha", i.e. the eternal verity, "Avichaali Roopa", i.e. immutable essential nature of Pure Being-Consciousness-Bliss, alone. The Vedas signify this truth to us and then having served their purpose become Aveda, i.e. non-scriptures, and merge into the essential nature of Pure Being-Consciousness-Bliss of Atman alone.

Shri Sureshwaraachaarya has described the method of cognizing (Intuiting) Atman (our innermost Self) with the help of the Vedas in the following manner: "*Shabdashakterachintyatwaat Aatmatwaat Boadha Roopinaha; Tatsaakshyatwaat Cha Anidraayaa Vidmastam Mohahaanataha.*" — (Brihadaraanyaka Vaartika 4-4-698). It means: Just as people who are asleep — if they are called out loudly — they without understanding the relation between the word and its meaning (or object) wake up giving up their sleep state; in the same way, between the empirical words that the Vedas use and Atman there does not exist any relationship whatsoever; without indicating the relationship between the words and their object, an unimaginable or inconceivable capacity (Achintyashakti) of signifying the essential nature of Pure Being-Consciousness-Bliss of Atman the Veda Shabda, i.e. the scriptural words, possess. The eternal and essential nature of Pure Consciousness of Parabrahman, i.e. the Supreme Reality of Brahman, is our Atman, i.e. innermost Self, alone. Therefore, in order to signify that Reality of our Self there is no need whatsoever of any external light or media. Not only that, the sleep of Ajnaana is ever illumined by the Witnessing Pure Consciousness (Saakshi Chaitanya) and remains externally or outside that Pure Consciousness (to wit, Ajnaana is alien or extraneous to Chaitanya). Hence, with the help of the Vedic

guidance if we get rid of the delusion of the type — “I am a Samsaree, i.e. transmigratory soul” — and cognize our essential nature of Saakshi Chaitanya there is no wonder at all. This is what Shri Sureshwaraachaarya purports to express. Thus the method by which the Vedas signify (teach), with their unimaginable or inconceivable capacity, that essential nature of our Atman is called “Aagama”, i.e. the traditional method handed down from teacher to the disciple from time immemorial.

There exists a great difference between the manner in which the empirical valid means (Pramaanas) like Pratyaksha, i.e. perception, Anumaana, i.e. inference, Upamaana, i.e. illustration, Aapta Vaakya or Shabda, i.e. our well-wishers' or elders' statements which are like testimony of trust-worthy people, signify their respective objects or phenomena, on the one hand, and the Vedas, as the valid means for teaching or expounding the Ultimate Reality of Brahman or Atman, signify their subject-matter, utilising the method of 'Aagama', on the other. While the empirical valid means like Pratyaksha, Anumaana etc. signify their respective objects the distinctions like Pramaatru (cognizer), Pramaana (valid means of cognition) and Prameya (the objects of cognition) subsist, it is not so in the case of the Vedas. When the Vedic Knowledge culminates or comes to fruition in Self-Knowledge (of the very essence of Pure Consciousness of the Witnessing Principle beyond all empirical categories) then the Vedas themselves are rendered 'Avedas', i.e. non-scriptural; in other words, they no longer serve as the valid means of cognition for those who have benefited themselves by those valid means, and thus they are said to merge with Atman, the be-all and end-all of all Knowledge. When it is said — “The Vedas remove Ajnaana” — it should not be reckoned in the manner — “There exists an entity of Ajnaana (ignorance) and that Ajnaana is physically removed just as a broom removes some rubbish or garbage.” The Vedas signify that Ajnaana is merely a delusion in its essence and that all the various terms like Ajnaana, Ajnaana Nivritti (removal of ignorance) and Jnaana Praapti (attainment of Self-Knowledge) are all nothing but the various forms of Atman alone; they, i.e. the Vedas, indicate in bold relief that in Atman categories like Dravya (substance), Guna (quality), Kriya (action) etc., which are mere pretexts or premise for the transactions of words, do not exist in the least and thereby they signify their one and only goal or target of Atman in whom they get exhausted or subsumed, as it were.

Such a stupendous, unimaginable, inconceivable esoteric capacity do the Veda Shabda (i.e. the scriptural words and sentences) possess, indeed!!

25. On the Attainment of Self-Knowledge the Mind Becomes No-mind

All that is stated so far has been pertaining to the function of the Vedas of the form of words or sentences. Now let us examine carefully as to what transaction or reaction takes place in the mind as a result of the teaching or instruction by the Vedic words or sentences. A spoken word is outside or external to us, but comparatively the mind is more internal or closer and within us. This mind alone has to cognize Atman by the stipulation or instigation by the Vedic words or sentences. What is the method of its cognition? Just like a traveller who follows the path directed by a guide, the mind of a qualified seeker determines according to the method of the instructions or teachings of the Vedic sentences that none of the characteristics or special features of any external objects or substances is to be found in Atman, and then because the scriptures have stated that it is not possible to objectify and cognize Atman, the mind unable to find its moorings, or rather getting stupefied, so to say, comes to a standstill. Even then the scriptures do not stop their instructions and say: "*Shroatrasya Shroatram Manaso Manoa Yadvaachoa Ha Vaacham Sa Uoo Praanasya Praanaha; Chakshushashchakshuratimuchya Dheeraaha Pretyaasmaallokaadamrita Bhavanti*" — (Kena 1). The purport of this Upanishadic statement is that the Reality or the eternal verity of Atman is the eye of the eyes, is the ear of the ears, is the vital force of the vital force etc. To wit, the light of Consciousness Ultimate Reality of Atman is invariably needed by the sense organ of the eyes in order to carry out its function; hence it is said that the Reality of Atman (Pure Consciousness) is the eye of the eyes. Just as we interpret the sentence — "The heat of the hot water is itself the fire" — in the same manner these scriptural sentences should be understood or interpreted. The mind of the qualified seeker, when it listens to the scriptural statement (and comprehends its meaning): "Atman is the mind of even the psychic mind" — like an acrobat taking a somersault, cognizes or Intuits that the Reality or eternal verity which is

the very substrate for all its functions is Itsself own innermost and innate Self (Atman) which is of the essential nature of Pure, Absolute Being-Consciousness-Bliss alone; while trying to fathom or discern that Reality the mind itself gets merged or dissolved, as it were, in Atman, the innermost Self. In explaining this truth, Shri Ramakrishna Paramahansa has given the illustration of a salt doll; while trying to fathom the depth of an ocean, it gets itself dissolved in the ocean waters. This method has been described by Shri Gaudapaada in the following manner: *"Aatmasatya Anubodhena Na Sankalpayate Yadaa, Amanastaam Tadaa Yaati Graahyaabhaave Tadagraham."* — (Maandukya Kaarika 3-32). As a result of cognizing Intuitively in accordance with the teachings of the scriptures as well as the spiritual preceptor in the manner — "Atman alone is the Absolute, Ultimate Reality" — the mind will give up its function of conceiving or imagining; in order to conceive or imagine, some external object or phenomenon has necessarily to be there for the mind to function extrovertedly. Since the mind has cognized Intuitively (introvertedly) the truth that — "Atman or one's Self (i.e. the Witnessing Principle or Saakshi Chaitanya) is non-dual, whereas the phenomenon of Anaatman, i.e. not-selves, does not exist at all" — on the strength of the scriptural or the preceptor's teaching (preaching) about that Reality of Atman, then such an enlightened mind gives up its functions of conceiving or ideations and attains Amanastaam, i.e. a state of no-mind (In other words, the mind loses all its contents which are in the form of subtle desires, attachments etc.). This is the opinion of Shri Gaudapaada. Here in this context, the statement that — "The mind becomes no-mind" — is wrongly understood by certain people as a Yogic state; some people are teaching a particular kind of a Yoga called "Amanaska Yoga". But in the present context, there is no deliberation on Yoga whatsoever. The statement — "The mind becomes no-mind" — means only this much, viz. just as the Vedas, i.e. the scriptures, become Avedas, i.e. non-scriptures, in the same way the mind will be established in the essential nature of Pure Being-Consciousness-Bliss of Atman, that is all. This state of the mind has been referred to by Shri Shankara as: "Aatmanyavasthaanam" — meaning, the mind will get established, rooted or remain steadfast in Atman, i.e. our innermost core of Being or the Self, and that very state is relevant here. Then, all duality becomes sublated or falsified and their

substrate of non-duality or unitary Intuition is realized. With the result Atman cannot be cognized through any percept or concept whatsoever. In support of this, the Taittiriya Upanishad states: "*Yatoa Vaachoa Nivartante Apraapya Manasaa Saha*" — meaning, 'The speech (prototype for all senses) returns along with the mind without attaining the Reality of Atman. It implies that Atman cannot be grasped or comprehended either by means of words or the mental concepts. Some people sometimes use the phrase — "Aatmaakaara Pratyaya" — but that should not be interpreted just as we interpret the statement — "Ghataakaara Pratyaya" — meaning, the percept of the form of an earthen pot. For, Atman does not have any form whatsoever. On the other hand, its meaning should be reckoned as — 'The mind becomes (or better, merges in) Atman' — that is all. What the Jnanis, i.e. the Realized souls or the people who have attained Self-Knowledge, have assumed as a percept of the Ultimate Reality or eternal verity of Atman (Self) and while they teach or preach about the Reality they refer to that percept, and that percept — by way of a concession — may be called — 'Aatmaakaara Pratyaya' — but the fact that — 'The Reality is not a percept having the form of Atman' — should be quite evident in this context and should not be forgotten.

26. Aagama or the Traditional Methodology Utilised in the Scriptures:

So far it has been explained in detail the manner in which the scriptures signify, by using a method of instruction called "Aagama", i.e. a traditional Intuitive method, the Reality or the eternal verity of Atman, who is cognizable only by Intuition (Anubhavaika Vedyā). The word "Aagama" should not be understood to mean merely a technique or know-how as in the words "Paancharaatraagama", i.e. the authoritative text or scripture of the Paancharaatra, "Shaivaagama", i.e. the authoritative text of Shaivism, nor merely an instructional or teaching method of a particular preceptor as in the words like "Buddhaagama", i.e. the authoritative texts of Buddhism. Since they too have come down according to the traditional methods of teaching from the teacher to the taught, they too in that sense may be called "Aagama" indeed. But the authentic or reliable word

(Aptoakti) of elders or our well-wishers is always to be cognized by yet another valid means (Pramaanaantara Vedyā); although “Vedaagama”, i.e. the traditional method of instruction of the Vedas, has been handed down through the teachings of a line of spiritual preceptors, it does not at all signify any object or phenomenon which can be perceived or conceived by the empirical valid means (Pramaanas) of Pratyaksha, i.e. perception, Anumaana, i.e. inference, reasoning etc. The queer, or rather the most extraordinary, methodology of teaching Atman (the innermost Self of everyone) who is of the essential nature of Pure, Absolute, Transcendental Being-Consciousness-Bliss and who is beyond the realm of all empirical dealings desiderating or involving Pramaanas, i.e. valid means of cognition, and Prameya, i.e. the objects or phenomena of cognition, is itself called “Aagama”, i.e. the traditional method of spiritual instruction, here; it is connoted etymologically in the manner — this traditional method “Aagamayati”, i.e. signifies comprehensively or clearly so as to help Intuit that metaphysical, non-empirical eternal verity of Atman beyond the ken of the senses and the psyche, and hence it is called “Aagama”.

27. The Logic or Reasoning Used in the Scriptures:

Further, to those who do not possess the capacity or qualification to cognize the Ultimate Reality of Atman through “Aagama”, i.e. the traditional Intuitive method, alone the scriptures teach through Tarka, i.e. logic or reasoning, also. Here too, to the word “Tarka” there is an extraordinary meaning adduced. Some people call the valid means of “Anumaana”, i.e. inference, as Tarka. In the case of the logical or syllogistic argument — “If there is no fire, then there will not be smoke too; but there is smoke, therefore there must be fire” — even after determining or deciding about the existence of fire through the valid means of ‘Anumaana’, where is the question or necessity of the syllogistic argument of the type — “If there is smoke, there must be fire”? To a person who argues in such a manner, the sentence of the type — “If there does not exist fire, then there cannot exist smoke too” — which he uses, goes by the name of ‘Tarka’. The Vedantins have not called the Tarka or syllogistic logic and ‘Upapatti’, i.e. demonstrated

conclusion, which the logicians use, by the nomenclature of 'Tarka' at all. In order to refute the opinion or doctrines of the logicians the Vedantins on certain occasions use their (i.e. the logicians') logic or reasoning; but the Vedantins do not use that empirical logic at all for the Intuitive deliberation or discrimination on the eternal verity or Reality of Atman. They use the same kind of 'Tarka' that has been used in the scriptures alone; the manner in which one discriminates Intuitively by means of such scriptural logic alone is called "Manana", i.e. Intuitive reasoning or ratiocination. This kind of the Intuitive reasoning is called "Shrauta Tarka", i.e. logic or reasoning used in all the Shrutis, i.e. scriptures (Upanishads).

28. The Difference between Kevala Tarka, i.e. Empirical Logic, and Shrauta Tarka, i.e. Upanishadic Reasoning:

The logic or reasoning that is used in the scriptures is not merely a logic which is predominantly formal. For example, on the basis of a statement like — "All the people are not intelligent" — it can be argued or reasoned out that there are some people also who are dull-headed. If it is stated that — "A is equal to B; B is equal to C" — in that case, it can be argued that — "A is equal to C" — is it not? In these kinds of logical arguments experience is not at all predominant; it becomes evident, nay established, only to the extent that — "If one thing is real, the other thing also is real" — that is all; we are not so much concerned with the question — "Whether everyone is intelligent or not? We only argue in the manner that — "If everyone is not intelligent, then it becomes established or evident that some people at least are dull-headed" — that is all. We are not at all concerned or interested in finding out — "What are these things — viz. A,B,C?" We are also not interested in finding out whether in reality A is equal to B or not. We only argue in the manner — "If A is equal to B, and B is equal to C, then A must needs be equal to C." This kind of syllogistic argument is merely related to or concerned with formal logic; there is no importance or predominance given or attached to the real experience of the things so established on the basis of such syllogistic arguments. But, in Vedanta it is not like that at all.

In Vedanta logic is used to culminate in one's experience alone. In Vedanta the main purport or goal for the scriptures is to clarify or elucidate further the meaning indicated by "Aagama" or the traditional Intuitive methodology of teaching the Ultimate Reality, compare it with one's Intuitive experience and then help attain the Intuitive experience of Atman (i.e. the Self of the essence of Pure Being-Consciousness-Bliss) alone. Two examples may be given to signify such a kind of logic or reasoning used in the scriptures. First expounding that Brahman, i.e. the Ultimate Reality, is the cause for the creation, sustentation and dissolution of the world, then to argue or reason out in the manner — "Therefore, the world is not different or separate from Brahman" — this is one example. Between the dream state and the waking state because of the reason that when one state exists or is being experienced, the other state does not exist or is not experienced — it is tantamount to saying that Atman, who is our very core or the innermost essence of Being, is not an entity or verity who is not related to, or having any contact with, the characteristics or special features of those two states, viz. waking and dream; then to argue or reason out that because in deep sleep the Jeeva, i.e. the soul, has given up the world in its entirety and has become one with, or merged into, Paramaatman, i.e. the Supreme Self, alone devoid of the world — this is the second example. The methods of deliberation based on the cause of the world and the three states of consciousness etc. which are used here in Vedantic literature are exclusively utilised in the scriptures (Upanishads) alone; they are used in the scriptures for the prime purpose of helping the seeker attain the Intuitive experience of his own innermost Self (Atman), but it should not be forgotten that these methods of reasoning always play a subservient role to one's Intuitive experience (In other words, these methods of reasoning will never be contradictory or opposed to one's Intuition as he climbs up the ladder of higher and higher Intuitive experiences finally to culminate in Self-Realisation or Self-Knowledge). We will undertake the task of further deliberating upon these examples later on. For the time being, we must keep in mind the difference between the mere formal (syllogistic) logic called 'Shushka Tarka', i.e. dry, vain or empty logic, and the 'Vedantic Tarka', i.e. Intuitive deliberation or reasoning utilised in the scriptures. For the dry, vain empirical logic the intellect alone is predominant or important; but not the experience of the entity as it is. But the 'Shrauta Tarka',

i.e. logic used in the scriptures, which is also called 'Shrutyānugraheeta Tarka', i.e. logic as permitted or blessed (approved) by the scriptures, gives or attaches all the importance to Intuitive experience alone. Since that logic is in consonance with one's own Intuitive experience, naturally it should lead one to get rooted in this Intuitive experience (which goes by the name of Jnaana Nishtha). That alone has been called here by us by the epithets — Tarka, Upapatti (demonstrated conclusion). For the benefit of the disciple the preceptor or Guru may utilise other kinds of empirical logical arguments or reasonings, dialectics; but in all such cases they will never be contradictory to the Intuitive logic in consonance with the scriptural teachings.

IV. LOGIC WHICH IS IN CONSONANCE WITH INTUITIVE EXPERIENCE:

29. Logic is of two kinds. One kind is such that it is confined (restricted) to the nature of the mind and the forms or varieties of deliberations. In the mind there is an innate nature of deliberating on the basis of space, time and causation categories alone. "If it is here, it is not there"; "It is not proper to say that a person is squatting at a particular place as also is standing there alone"; "By such and such causes such and such effects must accrue"; "Although it is an effect, it did not have a cause — this kind of a proposition is not proper" — in all such ways of argument the mind indulges or proceeds. To do so is its innate nature, and giving up such an innate tendency or nature the intellect (or the mind) cannot proceed to think or argue at all. While evaluating the various forms of argument (deliberation) we have to carry out our logical disputations (reasoning) on the basis of, or within the limits of, some fundamental rules or regulations alone. For example — "A should always subsist as A alone" — this is one of such rules. This is called — "Taadaatmya Niyama", i.e. the Law of Identity. To wit, let us assume that in a particular deliberation a person, while using the word 'Kudare' (which means a horse in Kannada), has used that as a name of an animal which is known to all of us. Now, till he completes the deliberation he should consistently

have the same connotation of that word 'Kudare' to mean 'a horse'; but if he uses that word with another connotation of 'Bisilu Kudare' (which in Kannada means a mirage) in the manner — "If a horse is seen, it is not proper to say that there invariably exists water" — then to the listeners how at all will it be possible to guess or discern as to what could be his opinion? How can it at all be determined in such circumstances whether his method or argument is right or wrong? Not possible at all. Therefore, it is essential to observe this 'Law of Identity'. Similarly a law or rule which stipulates in the manner — "The two propositions, viz. 'A is B' and 'A is not B' — cannot be at one and the same time true" — is a 'must', i.e. quite essential, for logic. This rule or law is called "Pratishedha Niyama", i.e. the Law of Contradiction. Further, the third rule (necessary for logic) is — "Between the two mutually contradictory propositions like — 'A is B' and 'A is not B' — one is true while the other is wrong or false; one has to invariably accept this fact alone and there is not a mediate third alternative." This rule is called "Prakaaraantara Nishedha Niyama", i.e. the Law of Excluded Middle. These three laws have been adopted here from the Western system of logic. In our Indian systems of logic the flaws or defects called "Aatmaashraya" i.e. self-dependence, "Anyoaryaashraya", i.e. mutual dependence, and "Chakrikaapatti", i.e. involved or circumlocutory procedure, etc. should be remembered here. The examples like — "One gave birth to oneself"; "The son was born to the father, the father was born to the son"; "Devadutta is the son of Vishnumitra, Vishnumitra is the son of Yajnadutta, and Yajnadutta is the son of Devadutta" — can be given as illustrations for these above mentioned logical defects, respectively. The logicians decide, determine that if these defects exist, then the logic adopted is not proper or valid. Anyway, the first category or variety of logic is one in which it is argued within the confines of or on the basis of certain laws dictated by the intellect.

30. Logic in Consonance with Intuitive Experience:

There is another variety of logic or reasoning. For that, our Intuitive experience alone is the basis or support. If Intuitive experience (Poorna Anubhava or Saakshi Anubhava) is invoked

or pressed into service, so to speak, it is enough; then, it is not possible to stipulate that logic should be invariably subject to such and such rules or laws alone. To wit, when Intuitive experience becomes the yard stick, one immediately realises or discerns the veracity of the statement that then logic or reasoning itself will have to be adopted or adjusted so as to be in consonance with our Intuitive experience (wherein there does not exist, or rather there is no scope for any kind of variations or differences whatsoever) alone. We have already stated that in Vedanta, in order to determine or establish the essential nature of Pure Being-Consciousness-Bliss of Atman (Self) this second variety of Intuitive logic or reasoning (deliberation) is utilized.

31. Three Meanings for the Word — Anubhava:

Now let us try to determine the answer to the question — “What is meant by the word — ‘Anubhava’?” The logicians call that which is perceived through or by means of our senses — ‘Anubhava’ (in common parlance, it means ‘experience’). People sitting in front of me are perceived by me, and this is called ‘Pratyaksha Anubhava’, i.e. perceptual experience or knowledge. When I go home and remember this event, then those people do not appear to me; that is mere ‘Smriti’, i.e. memory. Thus Jnaana, i.e. knowledge, is of two kinds, viz. Anubhava (perceptual) and Smriti (memory). In this way the logicians explain.

Further, saying that there is a mental experience too is in vogue. For example, the experience of stomach-ache, happiness, pleasure, grief, fear, astonishment, anxiety etc. Among these it is not possible for us to perceive any one of them through the mediation of our senses and then experience. Even so, we transact in the manner — “I have the experience of anger”; “I have the experience of happiness”; “I have the experience of grief”. Here the word — ‘Anubhava’, i.e. experience, does not mean the cognitive form or Pratyaya Roopa of knowledge or Jnaana. To perceive an earthen pot through the medium of our eyes and to gain the distinctive (determinative) knowledge in the manner — “This is an earthen pot” — these two phenomena are not the same. Through the eyes the knowledge of the form (of the object) is gained; in the mind the cognition of the form accrues or is registered. In the same way, when we get angry or become

happy we get the experience of anger or happiness. Then, we are 'engulfed by' or 'submerged in' anger, so to speak; so also we are 'overwhelmed by' or 'drowned in' happiness. We say that — "He became an embodiment of anger or happiness". But, even when there is no anger or happiness there can be a cognitive form of knowledge of anger or happiness. In this way, the experience (Anubhava) of Vedanas, i.e. emotions, feelings etc. are different from their cognitive forms of knowledge. Even small kids and big and small animals also have experience; but they do not have the cognition (Pratyaya). Let it be. In any case, we call the cognitive knowledge of the form of a sensation gained through the five senses 'Anubhava', i.e. experience; we also call the mental, conceptual or psychical knowledge of the type of happiness, misery, anger, fear etc. 'Anubhava' i.e. 'experience'. These facts are now evidently clear.

The logic or discriminative reasoning that the Vedantins utilize for the purpose of determining the essential nature of Pure Being-Consciousness-Bliss of Atman is based on another kind of experience (Anubhava), other than these two distinct kinds of experiences mentioned above, viz. Pratyakshaanubhava or Pratyayaanubhava, i.e. perceptual, sensory experiences, and Vedanaanubhava, i.e. conceptual feelings, emotions, thoughts, ideations etc. which are also psychic experiences. This the Vedantins call "Saakshi Anubhava", i.e. the Intuitive experience of the Witnessing Principle (Atman, Pure or Absolute Consciousness). This Intuitive experience too is there existing all the time in all of us; but many people do not know that this cognitive or Intuitive knowledge of It accrues to us through the Saakshi, i.e. the Witnessing Principle. For example, all of us transact in our workaday life in the manner — "I saw a dream; therein the mind was knowing the objects; in deep sleep, however, I did not see anything whatsoever; there was no knowledge whatsoever of anything therein." Here in this context, what is meant by the statement — "I saw a dream" By what means did we see the dream? Therein did we see the objects with these waking eyes? Therein, when we say — "I myself saw with my eyes" — which is that 'I'? In deep sleep when we say that — "I did not see anything whatsoever" — does this waking 'I' exist therein? If not, what is the meaning of our statement that — "I did not see anything whatsoever therein"? It is quite certain that the third kind of experience, i.e. Intuitive experience (Saakshi

Anubhava), alone we have therein; the common run of people do not deliberate upon this topic nor upon this Saakshi Anubhava, that is all. The philosophers call this “Nirvikalpaka Anubhava”, i.e. super-conscious state of Intuitive experience (beyond the mental or intellectual, i.e. conceptual, Jnaana or knowledge).

32. Intuitive Experience of the Three States of Consciousness:

Thus for the word — “Anubhava” — there are three different meanings. There arise different or even contradictory opinions among people because of a lack of discriminative determination as to in which context which meaning is to be taken into the reckoning. Just like a Telugu-speaking person interpreted the Kannada word — “Maataadu” — (which means — ‘You speak’), on hearing it as — “Maa Taadu” (which in Telugu means — Ma means Mine, Taadu means rope) — to mean ‘My rope’, in the same manner we interpret the word — “Anubhava” — with different meanings and get confused and confounded. Now let us examine the experiences of the type — “I saw a dream”; “I slept well . In these sentences who is that ‘I’ that saw the dream and who is that ‘I’ who slept well? It is said that Johnson was defeated in argument in his dream and after waking up he repented in the manner — “Alas, I was defeated in argument!” Are the two — the defeated ‘I’ and the repenting ‘I’ — one and the same? It is said that a particular ascetic dreamt that he had some transactions with his wife as a result of his previous Samskaaras (latent impressions)! Can we say that the ‘I’ which claimed to be an ascetic and the ‘I’ which transacted with the wife — both of them are one and the same? The self which is the object of the ‘I’ notion (Ahampratyayagamyā) which we call now ‘I’ in our waking was not there in the dream; the ‘I’ that existed in the dream is not existing now in the waking. Even so, we are transacting in the manner — ‘I saw a dream’! Let us observe the usage of the past tense in the statement — “I saw a dream”. In the statement — “I ate my lunch in the morning, but now (in the afternoon) I am hungry” — the morning and the afternoon of one and the same day and one and the same time flow or series are there in our deliberation; but when it is said — “Then I saw a dream” — are the two aspects — viz. ‘then’ of the dream time series and the ‘I’ of the waking

state and waking time series — existing in one and the same time series or flow in the same manner? Let us assume that one who slept at the right bed time at night dreamt that he was exhausted after walking a long distance in an open field in the hot sun. Then can the usage of the sentence — “I saw a dream” — be proper? Can we say that the afternoon (of the dream) belonged to the past series of time and the right bed time of the night belongs to the present series of time? The time series or flow of the dream is itself different, and the time series or flow of the waking itself is quite different; even so, we are transacting as if those afternoon and midnight time factors belong to one and the same time flow or series by saying — “I saw a dream”! We transact in the manner — “I saw you in my dream”; but the person whom we saw in the dream was quite different, and now the person with whom we are conversing is quite different. Thus although time, object, I — all these are different (in both these two states of dream and waking), for this ‘memory’ it occurs as if one and the same ‘I’, i.e. individual entity, experienced both these states of consciousness as a ‘substrate’ and so it amounts to saying that there should necessarily be one and the same ‘I’ which should be a common denominator for both the states of dream and waking, indeed. This core of Being — i.e. Atman or the innermost Self *per se* — Vedantins call “Saakshi”, i.e. the Witnessing Principle. There is a scriptural statement — “*Swapnaantam Jagaritaantam Cha Ubhou Yenaanupashyati, Mahaantam Vibhumaatmaanam Matwaa Dheeroa Na Shoachati*” — (Katha 2-1-4). It means: “That courageous resolute person (Dheera) who has cognized or Intuited that the ‘Mahaavibhu’, i.e. the Almighty Creator of the universe, alone is the one who cognizes by virtue of His being of the essential nature of Pure, Absolute Being-Consciousness-Bliss, both the waking and the dream states — such a hero does not grieve”.

33. Examination of the Method of Intuition by Saakshi Anubhava:

It will be beneficial to examine a little in depth the method of cognition (Intuition) by the Saakshi, i.e. the Witnessing Principle. While the mind cognizes the external objects its thought flow proceeds through the respective sense organ and signifies

the object by assuming the forms of that particular object. In that person who cognizes the objects through these mental thought forms there does not occur any cognition of the object at all without any change or mutation occurring in him. (In other words, the moment any cognition of the object as Jnaana occurs in the person, i.e. the Pramaatru, there occurs some sort of reaction or mutation). But it is not so with Atman, who is of the nature or essence of the Witnessing Principle, i.e. the Saakshi (Pure, Absolute Consciousness without any distinctions, either qualitative or quantitative); there is no need whatsoever for Him to get transformed into the respective form of the object. Just as the Sun, remaining as He is, illumines all objects, this Atman (Self) as the Saakshi, remaining wholly immutable as He is *in esse*, illumines any object that is before Him. It should be discerned that the statement that — “The Sun illumines” — does not mean that the Sun performs the function or action of ‘illumining’. In the Upadesha Sahasree, Shri Shankaraacharya has explained this truth and has indicated it in the manner — “*Bilaat Sarpasya Niryaane Sooryoa Yadvat Prakaashakaha, Prayatnena Vinaa Tadvajjnaataatmaa Boadharoopataha*” — (Upadesha Sahasree —15-46). If a snake comes out of an anthill the Sun becomes the illuminer of the snake; while illumining in that manner He (i.e. the Sun) need not make any effort whatsoever for that ‘illumining’. Is it not? The Sun, remaining as He is, is said to be, in common parlance, ‘illumining the snake’. That is all. Similarly, this Atman (the self-effulgent Saakshi Chaitanya) too, without any effort whatsoever on His part, without any mutation taking place in His essential nature of Pure, Absolute Being-Consciousness-Bliss, ‘illumines’ the states like waking, dream, which appear before Him. The distinct or definite cognition (Pratyaya) which is formulated in the manner — “This is waking”; “This was a dream” — especially, is not that belonging to the Saakshi, but clearly it belongs to the cognizer, i.e. Pramaatru, alone. While the cognizer (Pramaatru) is experiencing the object, because of the reason that his inner instrument of the mind has to per force get transformed into the form of the object he, i.e. the Pramaatru, ‘illumines’ the objects one by one alone; but it is not so in the case of the Saakshi Chaitanya, i.e. the Witnessing Principle of Pure Consciousness, in us. Just as the Sun illumines *in toto* that part of the earth planet which is an object to His light rays, similarly (in an analogous manner) the Saakshi Chaitanya illumines all that is an object to

Him *in toto* alone. Anyway, what is the fact established by this reasoning? It is: The Intuitive experience (Anubhava) of Atman who is of the essential nature of Saakshi Chaitanya, i.e. Pure Consciousness of the Witnessing Principle at the core of our Being, is exclusively different from both the sensory perceptions and the mental or psychic conceptions like emotions, feelings etc. In the senses the perceptual forms of sensations (Aaloachanaatmaka Vrittis) are taking place; while in the mind the conceptual forms (Vikalparooopa Vrittis) of the external objects are occurring. But in the Saakshi, i.e. Witnessing Principle (Atman), who is of the very essence of Pure Being-Consciousness-Bliss, no Vrittis, i.e. thought forms, whatsoever can ever arise; He, remaining as He is, experience, or rather Intuits, cognizes, the objects which are the witnessed (Saakshya) things to His Absolute Consciousness which is all-pervading and self-effulgent (to wit, the very *prius* of all existence, Being). Because He subsists as the very embodiment or core of Intuitive experience (Anubhava) alone, His very vicinity, presence is sufficient to experience the existence of the Witnessed object or Saakshya.

34. The Essential Nature of Logic in Consonance with Intuitive Experience

So far it has been indicated after a thorough examination as to which 'experience' or 'Anubhava' the Vedantins utilize when they say — "We use logic in consonance with universal experience". Now let us try to understand as to what is meant by the phrase — 'Anubhavaanusaari Tarka' (also called in Vedantic parlance — 'Anubhavaanga Tarka'), i.e. logic in consonance with everyone's experience. We have already examined the essential nature of futile, dry logic which takes into the reckoning merely the formal deliberative argument without attaching any importance to actual experience of everyone. That form of logic has stipulated certain rules. For example, it is one of its laws that — "A being as it is, it cannot become another substance B as well; A has always to exist as A alone; the proposition that 'A thing is in the form of mere A alone which is not of the form of B, but it (i.e. A) has also assumed the form of B too' — cannot be acceptable." But look at the experience of everyone. In deep sleep we are not endowed with (the adjunct of) the world; that means, the experience of the 'I'

notion and the whole gamut of distinctions that the 'I' perceives or cognizes (in the waking) does not exist. This is a universal experience (Saarvatrika Anubhava). On the other hand, when we are awake we are endowed with (the adjunct of) the world; that means, the 'I' of the deep sleep exists and in addition to that, the whole range of duality also is cognizable to that Intuitive experience. In the scriptures too it is stated: "Atman alone existed (in the beginning); 'I will become many, I will get born' — in this manner Atman willed, thus willing He created the world." Shri Shankara in his commentary in this regard in the Taittiriya Upanishad has written: "*Kathamekasya Arthaantara Ananupraveshe Bahutvam Syaaditi? Uchyate, Prajaayeya Utpadyeya; Na Hi Putroatpatteriva Arthaantaram Bahubhavanaam; Katham Tarhi, Aatmasta Anabhivyakta Naamaroopa Abhivyaktyaa; Yadaa Aatmasthe Anabhivyakte Naamaroope Vyaakriyete Tadaa Naamaroope Aatmaroopa Aparityaagenaiva Brahmanaa Apravibhakta Deshakaale Sarvaavasthaasu Vyaakriyete; Tadetat Naamaroopa Vyaakaranam Brahmanoa Bahubhavanam.*" The purport of this excerpt of the Bhashya is: "How can Atman, existing all by Himself alone, without the association with another thing whatsoever, become many? — The answer to this question is — 'When the names and forms, which are misconceived in Atman owing to Avidya and remain unmanifested, become manifested in variegated, distinctive forms they do so without giving up the form of Atman and without existing in any space or time apart from Brahman. Thus becoming manifested in various forms alone is what is said to be Brahman becoming many." This explanation is in conformity with our Intuitive experience alone. In deep sleep Atman exists all alone by Himself *per se*. In the waking the world too exists, but this world of names and forms that appears in variegated forms is not an entity or verity which is fit to be called a second thing existing apart from Atman (our innermost Self). We can call things or objects which exist in different places or different times as two things. But Atman does not exist in time; this fact is reckoned or discerned by means of Intuitive Consciousness (experience) of deep sleep. The world too is queerer than space and time; the world does not exist in space and time which are different or distinct from it. When the world manifests it does not appear separately apart from Atman at all. The experience to the effect — "Atman does not exist, the world exists" — does not

accrue to anyone whosoever he may be. Therefore, the existence of the world is the existence of Atman alone; apart from the existence of Atman the world does not have any other existence at all. Therefore, Atman exists as He is, but at the same time (simultaneously) He has manifested Himself as the world (of names and forms). This may appear to be contradictory to the formal logic (of the intellect); but it is in consonance with our Intuitive experience. Water itself appears as foam; but while it exists as water, as also while appearing as foam too it exists as water alone; (To wit, there are no two things existing as separate entities like water and foam; water itself appears as foam and is apparently, because of its distinct form, given the name of 'foam', that is all; but if one analyses with insight, it is evident that foam is nothing but water at its core or in its essence). Is it not? Our experience of the world too is like that; it is nothing but Atman in its essence. In this manner, even though the world in its manifested form appears to be separate or distinct, even then it is Atman alone. This truth is enunciated in the statement: "*Tattwaanyatwaabhyaam Anirvachaneeyam*" — meaning, that which cannot be determined and described as either 'Tattwa', i.e. Reality (Atman) or 'Annyatwa', i.e. another separate entity.

35. Circumstances when Logic (Reasoning) has to be Reconciled with Intuitive Experience:

In that case, what about the logical maxim of — "An object, existing as it is, cannot simultaneously become another"? To this question the answer is: We should reconcile it properly with our Intuitive experience. Our Intuitive experience tells us — "Atman exists as Atman alone, but at the same time He appears (manifests) as the world too"; therefore, we should ratiocinate in the manner — "What appeared (manifested) as the world was merely a misconception alone (Mithyaabhaasa). Just because there appear hundreds of reflections of a man in hundreds of mirrors his essential nature is not in the least affected, is it not? Similarly, merely because Atman manifests in various forms as the world (of duality, i.e. of many phenomena, forms) there is no harm whatsoever done to His essential nature of Pure, Absolute Being-Consciousness-Bliss." Thus we can reconcile our

discriminative thinking or reasoning with our own Intuitive experience which is invariably universal in its application and approbation. In Vedanta it is stated that both space and time have taken birth from Brahman, i.e. the Ultimate Reality. This does not conform with the empirical, formal or axiomatic logic. Where is the possibility of space getting born? When can time get born? — In this manner the logicians may raise questions. But the proposition that a thing is born actually means — ‘it invariably is born in space, at a particular point of time’ — and this is clearly a maxim that the human intellect has formulated, imagined or conceived. In deep sleep neither there exists space nor time; in the waking both these categories exist. Therefore, it amounts to saying that Atman, having existed alone, has been appearing in the forms of space and time too. Although we have an Intuitive experience of this type, to argue and reason out in a manner quite contrary to this universal Intuitive experience is nothing but ‘Kutarka’, i.e. futile dry logic smacking of vain triumphs and glories. When an opponent (who is an adept in this kind of vain, futile logic) raises an objection of the type — “When the space had not yet come into being, how did it exist? and now (after space has come into being) what special features or characteristics has it obtained? A solution to this query cannot be determined, isn’t it?” — Shri Shankaraachaarya, in his inimitable style answered in the manner — “Now, by which special essential nature of existence or being that phenomenon of ‘space’ is reckoned to be separate or different from other categories like earth, air etc. — that very special nature of existence or being itself did not exist in the beginning; thus you cognize it and get your doubt solved.” Because of the reason that if the experience of deep sleep is examined (scrutinized Intuitively) the truth that therein in deep sleep no ‘space’ whatsoever did exist will be cognized by means of Intuitive experience, this kind of Intuitive reasoning becomes the correct type of reasoning. Logic or reasoning should always follow in the footsteps of Intuitive experience so as to reconcile the actual situation with one’s Intuitive experience, but to stipulate that an actual situation or circumstance should be in consonance with one’s formal logic or reasoning is not at all proper or justifiable; it will be like putting the cart before the horse.

36. The Maxims of the Formal (Empirical) Logic are Predominantly Based on the Waking View-point:

At this juncture one may ask the question — “Why does (formal) logic go wrong in this manner at all? Are the maxims that are formulated by the logicians, i.e. the authors of the science of Logic, wrong? “They have taken the waking state into the reckoning quite predominantly and have decided the condition or state of a thing or phenomenon; therefore, all the maxims that they have formulated conform to, or are valid in, the waking state alone; if the experiences of all the three states of waking, dream and deep sleep are taken into the reckoning, then that cumulative experience will be a comprehensive, plenary or consummate experience indeed (Poorna Anubhava). The logic or reasoning in consonance with that ‘comprehensive experience’ alone will become the complete, plenary Intuitive experience. For the determination of the Ultimate Reality the logic in conformity, or in consonance, with this comprehensive Intuitive experience alone will be needed. There may not be a clear sentence in Shri Shankaraachaarya’s Bhashyas which distinguishes between these two types of experiences, viz. waking state experiences and the comprehensive Intuitive experience based on the cumulative experiences of the three states taken into the reckoning *in toto*. But it is quite certain that he has determined the Ultimate Reality on the strength of this comprehensive Intuitive experience called Poorna Anubhava (i.e. Pure Absolute Consciousness of the Self, the Witnessing Principle). While refuting the arguments of contentions of the protagonists of various logical systems the Bhashyakaara, i.e. Shri Shankara, now and then says: “*Evam Loake Drishtatwaat*” — meaning, ‘Thus it is seen in our workaday life.’ In all those contexts ‘Loaka’ means the waking world; because the logicians need only those maxims or regulations of the waking world, Shri Shankara while refuting their teachings or tenets has followed those very empirical or formal maxims formulated by the waking intellect.

37. The Intuitive Experience (Pure Consciousness) of Atman:

Now let us consider another topic. From the deliberation made so far it has become evident enough that for the determination of the Ultimate Reality logic in consonance with the scriptural directives or instructions — i.e. logic which is not opposed to or contradictory to Poorna Anubhava (comprehensive, plenary Intuitive experience of the Witnessing Principle or the innermost Self) — along with empirical dialectics or logical arguments in conformity with that plenary Intuitive experience must be utilized. In this regard Shri Shankaraacharya has written a pregnant sentence: “*Shrutyanugraheeta Eva Hyatra Tarkoa(s)anubhavaangatwena Aashreeyate*” — (Sutra Bhashya 2-1-6). The meaning of this sentence is: ‘The logic in consonance with the Shruti directives or implications alone is relied upon as it is subservient to Intuitive experience in this pursuit of the Knowledge (of the Self).’ Here a question arises: “It is quite clear that the opinion of the Bhashyakaara (Shri Shankara) is: ‘Logic, if at all, should be used subservient to Anubhava, i.e. Intuitive experience.’ But the Vedantins are saying that logic in consonance or conformity with Intuitive experience (Anubhavaanusaari Tarka) should be used! How can these two variant statements be reconciled?” An answer to this question is: What we have so far described is the Intuitive experience which helps provide the subject-matter for deliberation or discriminative thinking. The Intuitive experience which accrues as a fruit of this discriminative thinking or reasoning is the resultant form of Self-Knowledge or Consciousness (i.e. Pure Consciousness of Atman, the Witnessing Principle in all of us). This Consciousness *par excellence* is famous and has been given the nomenclature of “Avagati”. It is very difficult to signify as to what exactly is Avagati. In reality, It is the essential nature of Pure Being-Consciousness-Bliss of Atman (our innermost Self, the core of our Being) alone, i.e. Shuddha Aatmaanubhava. The expression of “Aatmaanubhava”, meaning Intuitive experience of Atman, literally, should not be understood as ‘experiencing of Atman’ just as any perceptual or conceptual experiences or knowledges of our workaday world or life. It actually signifies “*Aatmaiva Anubhavaha*”, meaning ‘It is the Intuitive experience which exists or subsists as our very essence or core of Pure Being-Consciousness-Bliss of Atman (i.e. the innermost Self,

the Witnessing Principle in every one of us). Therefore, the common run of people of the world do not at all know its essential nature of Pure Being-Consciousness-Bliss; It is cognized or Intuited only by the Self-realized souls, called in Vedantic parlance — 'Aatma Jnaanis'. Even so, Shri Shankaraachaarya has propounded his spiritual teaching so as to enable even the common people to obtain a conception, at least, of that Intuitive knowledge or experience. When we cognize an object through the valid means of Pratyaksha, i.e. sensory instruments, we say that - "I got the knowledge of such and such an object" — is it not? Then in our Antahkarana, i.e. inner instrument of the mind, a percept of the form of the object, say an earthen pot, is formed; in the culmination, or rather as the final consummation of this cognition Atman manifests Himself as the end product, i.e. the resultant form of this Intuitive experience (i.e. Pure Consciousness). When the cloud has shifted to a side we say that the moon (which was covered up by the clouds) appeared or manifested, is it not? In the same manner, when the cognition or perceptual knowledge of each and every object accrues Atman who is of the essential nature of perennial or eternal (Pure, Absolute) Consciousness — "Nitya Chaitanya Swaroopta", manifests Himself as the end product, i.e. the resultant form of the object as a Pratyaya, or percept. This description is given in the Chapter on "Avagati" in the Upadesha Sahasree. Shri Sureshwaraachaarya in his Vaartika says: "*Paraagarthaprameyeshu Yaa Phalatwena Sammataa, Samvitsaive Ihameyoa(s)rthoa Vedaantoakti Pramaanataha*" — (Sambandha Vaartika 159) — this alone in a brief manner. The meaning of this Vaartika excerpt is: "The Intuitive experience or Pure Consciousness which manifests as the end product for the empirical valid means (Pramaana) which enable one to perceive or cognize the external objects or phenomena — that very Intuitive experience or Pure Consciousness alone is the object (Prameya) for the valid means (Pramaana) of the Vedaantavaakya, i.e. scriptural sentences.

38. Conclusions:

So far what subject-matter we have deliberated upon is — if it is briefly indicated — tantamount to: In Vedanta, besides the two empirical experiences (Anubhavas) of sensory percepts and

mental concepts, a third kind of Saakshi Anubhava, i.e. Intuitive experience of the Witnessing Principle in all of us also is acknowledged. That Intuitive experience exists universally to every human being without exception whatsoever. By means of the Intuitive reasoning or logic (Anubhavaanusaari or Anubhavaanga Tarka) carried out in conformity or consonance with It a cognitive certainty (Aatmanischaya) accrues. The resultant end product of the Intuitive experience (of the essential nature of Pure Being-Consciousness-Bliss) of Atman which is gained through the Intuitive listening of the scriptural teachings (Shravana) and through Intuitive reasoning as to what their purport is (Manana) — is in truth that very Intuitive experience alone. That is itself called “Avagati” in Vedanta. Even in the empirical workaday world while the knowledge of an earthen pot, pitcher etc. is gained, in truth, this Avagati alone, i.e. this Intuitive experience of the essence of Pure, Absolute Being-Consciousness-Bliss of Atman alone, manifests Itself at the end as the culmination of all knowledge. As soon as the obstructing or impeding phenomenon or object is removed this Intuitive experience manifests Itself in a flash, as it were; that alone is dealt with by our utterance in the form of — “We got the (real) knowledge as the percept, i.e. Pramiti”. On the basis of the same analogy, the meaning of the statement — “Self-Knowledge or Self-Realization has been gained” — is that, first, Atman (i.e. Pure Being-Consciousness-Bliss) who was reckoned in the commonplace (misconceived) form of the ‘I’ notion (Pramaatru) is cognized to be — in accordance with the scriptural directive or instruction — nothing other than the Kootastha Chaitanya, i.e. perennially established or eternal verity of Absolute Consciousness, which is of the very essence of Nitya Swaroopa, i.e. eternal verity, Shuddha Swaroopa, i.e. Pure, Absolutely free, emancipated Reality (to wit, that Ultimate Reality beyond all empirical, mundane dealings). If the seeker ratiocinates he will come to know that this ‘I’ notion itself was an impediment or obstruction, just like the cloud in the above illustration, for our Intuition of our real essential nature of Atman. Thus the Intuitive cognition of our real nature with a sense of certainty in the manner — “I am not a Pramaatru, i.e. cognizer, not a Kartru, i.e. an agent of action, not a Bhoktru, i.e. an enjoyer” — accrues and subsists for ever. Further, this Intuition does not accrue in any particular exalted or highly evolved state as such; if it were so, then

the scriptural statements like — “Tattwamasi”, i.e. ‘That thou art’ and “Eternally Atman is not a transmigratory soul” — etc. will become false or they will be rendered invalid. For the Self-Realized souls (Jnaanis) this kind of empirical knowledge of the transmigratory soul being eternally bound as well as the speech or words which express Atman are both — from their metaphysical viewpoint of the Intuitive experience — Atman, i.e. the Absolute Pure Being-Consciousness-Bliss, alone. From the empirical viewpoint it is dealt with as if ‘ignorance’ has disappeared or has been removed and ‘knowledge’ has accrued, that is all; but from the Absolute, Transcendental viewpoint of the Intuitive experience or Pure Consciousness, that sense of certainty gets set in the manner — “Everything is perennially (i.e. ever — whether in the past, the present or in the future) Atman alone of the very essence of Pure Being-Consciousness-Bliss.” To cognize or Intuit this truth of life taken in its entirety alone is called “Aatmajnaana”, i.e. Self-Knowledge or Self-Realization, on sufferance.

V. DEVICES FOR THE INTUITIVE EXPERIENCE OF BRAHMAATMAN

39. What is Meant by Brahmaatmaanubhava?

Atman (our innermost Self) of all of us is one and one alone; in the Vedantic (philosophical) texts He is called “Brahman”. Let us call that sure Intuitive experience which culminates in the cognitive knowledge of the type — “Brahman who is non-dual (i.e. without a second to It) and of the essential nature of eternally pure, conscious and free or liberated Being is the Atman of all of us” — by the nomenclature of “Brahmaatmaanubhava”. The scriptural texts, viz. Upanishads, alone are the valid means (Pramaana) for this Brahmaatmaanubhava. The scriptures teach the aspirants this Brahmaatmaanubhava (i.e. the Ultimate Reality of this Brahman which is our Atman of the essential nature of Pure Consciousness) in the traditional Intuitive method supplemented

by a form of logical arguments based on Intuitive discrimination. Evidently, this method of logical arguments backed up by a special or unique type of Intuitive discrimination in conformity or consonance with the scriptural statements is also in conformity with universal Intuitive experience. Here in this context the word 'Anubhava' means that universal Intuitive experience which is different or distinct from both the empirical experiences of sensory percepts or mental concepts (like emotions, feelings, anxieties etc.). That kind of Intuitive experience has been called by us "Saakshyanubhava", i.e. the Pure, Absolute Consciousness or Intuitive experience of the Witnessing Principle.

40. The Doctrine that the Practice of the Knowledge Accruing from the Scriptural Sentence is Necessary for Intuitive Experience:

It is the opinion of Shri Shankaraachaarya that the instructional form or aspect of the scriptural sentence alone is the valid means for Brahmaatmaanubhava or Aatmaavagati, i.e. Intuitive experience of the Self (Self-Knowledge or Self-Realization). But before the time of Shri Shankara many Vedantins were propagating that merely by the instruction or teaching of the Vedanta sentences the Intuitive experience of the Self (Aatmaanubhava) will never be attained. Even in this post-Shankara period this belief is deep-seated and continues to exist among several Vedantins. Even after the knowledge of the scriptural sentence is obtained its practice is necessary, they say. It is their opinion that just as in music by practice of the notes like Sa, Re, Ga, Ma etc. the ability for their correct articulation or singing is obtained, similarly here too by the practice of the knowledge of the scriptural sentence the nature or form of Aatma Saakshaatkaara, i.e. materialisation of Atmaic Knowledge or Consciousness accrues. In the scriptural sentence — "*Vijnaaya Prajnaam Kurveeta*" — (Brihadaraanyaka 4-4-21) meaning — 'After knowing (theoretically) the Intuitive experience (Pure Consciousness) one should Intuit (practically) that Knowledge (Consciousness)' — they have conceived (rather misconceived) that there is an authoritative scriptural sentence to support

the teaching that the word - 'Vijnaana'- means the theoretical knowledge of the (literary meaning) scriptural sentence, and the word - 'Prajnaa' - means the practical knowledge, i.e. Intuitive experience, of the nature of materialisation of the Pure Consciousness; in this manner there is a difference or distinction between the theoretical knowledge of the scriptural sentence (Vaakyajnaana) and the practical knowledge or the Intuitive Knowledge of the actual materialisation of Pure Consciousness of Atman (Aalmaanubhava).

Thus this has become the cause for certain Vedantins to conceive of a different methodology and raise the objection or argument, raised by disputants belonging to other schools of philosophy, of the type — "There are differences of opinion among Advaita Vedantins too; they also have not attained the Brahmaavagati, i.e. Intuitive experience of the Pure Consciousness of Brahman, the Ultimate Reality, merely by the listening to the Vedantic texts. If it were true that the mere listening to the scriptural (Upanishadic) sentence alone the Intuitive Knowledge of the non-dual Reality (of Brahman) could have been gained, then that actual Intuitive experience should have accrued to the Advaitins at least, is it not?" For this objection a satisfactory solution is available only (exclusively) in the theory or doctrine of actual materialisation of the Intuitive experience of Brahman or "Brahman Saakshaatkaaravaada", they say. Merely by the theoretical knowledge of the scriptural sentence the actual Intuitive experience of Atman (or Brahman) cannot accrue; for the latter result to be obtained the means of putting into practice (repeatedly) the theoretical knowledge gained by the listening to the scriptural sentences or any other means of spiritual practices or disciplines to lead to "Saakshaatkaara", i.e. actual materialisation of the Intuitive Knowledge become quite necessary and this alone is the satisfactory solution for the above objection raised by certain disputants belonging to other alien schools of philosophy. Therefore, merely the theoretical knowledge of the scriptural sentences is not sufficient. This, in a nutshell, is the opinion of this section of Vedantins.

41. Shri Shankaraachaarya's Teachings in this Regard:

But, for this opinion there is no support to be found in Shri Shankara's works. On the other hand, the clear and distinct statement that — “By the instruction (signified) by the Vedantic sentence alone Jnaana, i.e. Intuitive Knowledge of Atman, can accrue” — is to be found. For instance, this following verse is found in Upadesha Sahasree: *“Sadevetyaadi Vaakyebhyaha Pramaa Sphutataraa Bhavet, Dashamaha Twamasi Ityasmaadhyathaiwam Pratyagaatmanee”* — meaning, “Just as by the sentence — ‘The tenth man is yourself’ — the deluded person — because he was attached to the act of leaving out himself and was counting the remaining nine persons only and thereby was grieving that the tenth man was missing — the knowledge that — ‘I alone am that tenth person’ — accrued, in the same way by means of sentences like — ‘*Tattwamasi*’ — meaning ‘That thou art’ — etc. the Intuitive Knowledge of Brahman who is every one's Pratyagaatman, i.e. the innermost Self of the essence of Pure Being-Consciousness-Bliss, will very clearly be attained.” This same opinion has been expressed by Shri Shankaraachaarya in his commentary on the Taittireeya Upanishad. He has indicated in his commentary on Mundakoapanishad also thus: “At the very instant of the knowledge born out of the meaning of the scriptural sentence the Intuitive experience of Pure Being-Consciousness-Bliss of the Self will accrue.” Besides these opinions, look at these two verses: *“Nityamuktatwavijnaanam Vaakyaadbhavati Naanyathaa, Vaakyarthasyaapi Vijnaanam Padaarthasmritipoorvakam”* and *“Anvayavyatirekaabhyaam Padaarthaha Smaryate Dhruvam, Evam Nirdukhamaatmaanamakriyam Pratipadyate”* — (Upadesha Sahasree — 18-182,183.)

The meaning of these verses is: “By means of the Vedantic sentence alone the Intuitive Knowledge that — ‘I am eternally liberated’ — accrue, not from any other means or in any other manner at all. The Knowledge born out of a sentence arises because it brings to our memory objects by means of agreement and disagreement (Anvaya and Vyatireka)”. Thus in a very clear manner Shri Shankaraachaarya has taught in his works. By exemplifying these verses in his ‘Naishkarmyasiddhi’ and

'Brihadaraanyaka Vaartika' Shri Sureshwaraachaarya has clarified this same teaching. In the Sootra Bhashya also Shri Shankara has written that for those who do not possess the requisite merit or qualification to attain at once the Intuitive Knowledge by listening to the scriptural sentence, viz. '*Tattwamasi*', meaning 'That thou art' — in order that this Intuitive Knowledge of the Ultimate Reality (of Atman) should culminate or fructify the practice of the scriptural devices or strategies is quite necessary — (Sootra Bhashya 4-1-2). The purport which we have been so far explaining or elucidating is to the effect that in the case of those who cannot comprehend the meaning of the Vedantic sentence through the traditional methodology of teaching (Aagama Krama) alone they invariably need the help of logical disputation or Intuitive reasoning to boot and this concept alone is acceptable to the Bhashyakaara, i.e. Shri Shankara; this fact will now be further elucidated.

42. Deliberation on (Evaluation of) the Three States of Consciousness as Taught in the Upanishads:

We have already mentioned that two kinds of logic, viz. the deliberation on or evaluation of the three states of consciousness and the deliberation on the categories of cause and effect, have been utilized in the Upanishads so as to help the listeners (Shroatrus) Intuit or cognize the non-dual Reality of Atman (of the essential nature of Pure, Absolute Being-Consciousness-Bliss) which is taught by means of the traditional methodology. This deliberation on the three states of Consciousness (Avasthaatraya Vichaara) is to be found in three Upanishads, viz. Chhaandogya, Brihadaraanyaka and Maandukya. In the Chhaandogya Upanishad when Prajaapati instructs Indra, the three different forms of Atman, viz. "Akshipurusha", "Swapnapurusha" and "Sushupta", have been indicated and thereafter it has been propounded that Atman, who is devoid of a body (Ashareeri) is Himself the absolutely Pure Atman. There, in that context, the question — "How is it that Atman is Ashareeri, i.e. devoid of a body?" — is not so clearly explained in the original Upanishadic text. In the Brihadaraanyaka Upanishad it has been stated that

a relationship of the conglomeration of the instruments of action and their actions, i.e. the mind, the senses and their functions with the external objects, of the waking state is not there with the Atman of the dream state; further, the transmigration between the waking and the dream has been compared to Samsara, i.e. transmigration of the soul from one birth to another, and the experience of the deep sleep state has been compared to Moaksha, i.e. Liberation. Besides, to the question — “Just as in the deep sleep state, how is it that in Mukti, i.e. Liberation, that accrues from Intuitive Knowledge too, Atman exists Pure or Absolute, as of the essential nature of Bliss and devoid of a body?” — a clear-cut answer is not to be found. In the Maandukya Upanishad, however, after explaining the three states of consciousness, it is stated that in Tureeya (which means, the fourth) — “*Naantaha Prajnam Na Bahhiprajnam*” — meaning ‘Not conscious internally, not conscious externally’, none of these waking, dream and deep sleep experiences whatsoever are existing and in that manner the existence of these three states have been refuted. The question — “How is that?” — is very difficult to be comprehended by the mind. It is stated there indeed that — “*Sa Aatmaa, Sa Vijneyaha*” — meaning, ‘He is (the Reality of) Atman, i.e. the innermost Self; He should be Intuitively known’; there the question — “What is to be known and how?” — is very difficult to be understood by the common aspirant or seeker.

43. Deliberation on the Three States of Consciousness and Shri Gaudapaadaachaarya:

Shri Gaudapaadaachaarya has done a great favour to us by writing in an explanatory form his famous Kaarikas on Maandukya Upanishad. He has stated that in the waking and the dream there are two bondages of the type of cause and effect categories, i.e. Ajnaana, i.e. not knowing, Adhyaasa, i.e. wrongly knowing or misconceiving, respectively — both these are there. But in the deep sleep the bondage of the category of cause exists, and nothing is known. The doubt that — “How can this be? Is it a wrong thing to know in the waking?” — troubles the minds of aspirants. He says that — “When both the cause-effect forms of

wrong knowledge (misconception) are removed, it amounts to knowing the Tureeya, the fourth.” The problem of — “How are these misconceptions removed?” — cannot be solved in the ordinary course. In another Kaarika it is stated that — “When the transmigratory soul (Jeeva) who is asleep because of a beginningless Maayaa, i.e. delusion, wakes up he will cognize or Intuit the non-dual Atman, who is Aja, i.e. devoid of birth, Anidra, i.e. devoid of sleep, Aswapna, i.e. devoid of dream.” A doubt of the type — “When can all the three states of consciousness disappear? If all these are a dream, then how is the ‘waking experience’ of knowing or cognizing the Tureeya?” — arises in our minds. Yet another Kaarika states: “When by means of the teaching of the Reality of Atman the volition, willing itself is got rid of, then the mind becomes ‘No-mind’, i.e. non-existent”. How can this statement be accepted at all? For the purpose of the knowledge that Atman alone is real, duality has per force to disappear, is it not? How can the defect of mutual dependence, viz. ‘If Jnaana accrues, then the state of No-mind is attained’ and ‘If the state of No-Mind is attained, then Jnaana accrues’ — be got rid of. Thus even after Shri Gaudapaada wrote his explanatory commentaries people used to get doubts with regard to the topic of the three states of consciousness.

44. Deliberation on the Three States of Consciousness and Shri Shankaraachaarya:

Shri Shankara wrote his commentary on the Kaarikas of Shri Gaudapaada because the latter too were not understood properly (to wit, their purport was not comprehended) by the common people. Shri Shankara has put to himself the following question: *“Katham Punaha Antahprajnatwa-adeenaam Aatmani Gamyamaanaanaam Rajjwaadou Sarpaadivat Pratishedhaat Asattwam Gamyat Iti?”* — meaning, ‘Just as when the snake, the floral garland etc. i.e. all the superimpositions are refuted or falsified, one knows it to be a rope, similarly merely by refuting the dream, the waking etc. which are seen to appear or manifest in Atman, how can those states of dream, waking etc. be cognized to be false or unreal and thereby Atman alone is real?’ — and then he himself has answered this objection. A charmer or magician, claiming that he will remove the pain of a scorpion-bite,

pronounced the words — “Gone; it is not there, it is not there any more” — repeatedly and then asks the victim — “Now, how do you feel?” Merely by his pronouncing the words — “It is not there; it is not there any more” — does the pain disappear? Merely by the statement that the states of waking and dream do not exist, how can they become non-existent? To this problem, the solution is: *“Jnaswaroopa Avisheshe(s)pi Itaretara Vyabhicharaat Asatyatwam Rajjwaadaviva Sarpadhaaraadivikalpitabhedavat, Sarvatraavyabhicharaat Jnaswaroopasya Satyatwam”* — to explain, in the waking, the dream and the deep sleep do not exist; in the dream, the waking and the deep sleep do not exist; in the deep sleep, the waking and the dream do not exist. Thus though it is true that the states are mutually excluded (and appear to produce a transitory feeling) they keep on coming repeatedly! — In this manner any one may raise a doubt or objection. But when the waking exists, does the dream exist? When the dream exists, does the waking exist? If not, can it be said that either the waking or the dream is the essential nature of Atman? — This question we must deliberate upon. The objection that — “They keep on coming again and again” — is not proper at all; for, first of all, the commonplace conception that — ‘The waking and the dream — these are two in number’ — is itself not based on facts or universal experience at all! To wit, they do not exist one by the side of the other. One person cannot simultaneously experience both the waking and the dream and cannot at all send his message from one state to another! To say that these ‘states’ occur one after the other (i.e. in one common series or flow of time) is also not correct or proper; for, the dream time series itself is distinctly different, and the waking time series itself is different from the dream time series. It being so, it is not proper (as it is not based on actual facts of life) to use the temporal words — ‘again and again’! Besides, in the deep sleep there does not exist any vestiges even of the concept of time at all; it being an actual fact of universal experience, what is the meaning of the commonplace statement that — “Waking, dream and deep sleep states keep on coming or occurring again and again”? For this reason alone, it should be accepted that when one state exists the remaining two states do not at all exist absolutely or anywhere. Because of the reason that there does not exist a common denominator of one and the same time series for all the ‘three states’, it is not possible also to say or

accept that the waking alone gets transformed into the dream and the deep sleep states.

From the deliberation carried out so far this much is established: Waking, dream and deep sleep are not our essential nature of Being-Consciousness-Bliss. Just as when the rope is misconceived in different forms like that of a snake, a stream of water, a chink in the ground etc. and among these three 'misconceptions' when one exists the other two do not exist at all, in the same manner in the case of these 'three states' of consciousness, when one exists the other two do not exist anywhere at all; they are mere misconceptions superimposed upon or imagined in the substratum of Atman, i.e. Pure, Absolute Being-Consciousness-Bliss. Just like an idiot who says that he would marry a non-existent (dream) girl, the Jeeva, i.e. soul, in a futile or vain manner has misconceived that he experiences the non-existent states of consciousness. If we discriminate properly here and now itself we are capable of cognizing that non-dual Being-Consciousness-Bliss of ours as our innate Atman alone, of the essential nature of Aja, i.e. devoid of birth, Anidra, i.e. devoid of sleep, Aswapna, i.e. devoid of dream. The belief that they exist is itself Maayaanidra, i.e. a sleep of delusion, meaning non-existent indeed. In this manner, if the aspirant Intuitively determines with a sense of certainty, it amounts to his erasing or falsifying that (beginningless) dream and 'waking up' to his Reality of Atman, his innermost true Self (of the essence of Absolute Being-Consciousness-Bliss of the Witnessing Principle — Saakshi Chaitanya). That is all.

45. By Means of Intuition Taught by the Scriptures about the Reality of Atman the Mind becomes No-Mind:

Now there is scope to obtain the Intuition (cognition) as to what exactly is meant by the statement that — "By means of Intuition as taught by the scriptures about the Reality of Atman the mind becomes no-mind" — and as per the explanation given so far, if it is reckoned that the three states of consciousness themselves do not exist at all, does it not amount to teaching that Atman (i.e. Pure Being-Consciousness-Bliss) alone is real in the true sense of

the term? In the statement — “When the Intuition as per the scriptural teaching of the Reality of Atman occurs or accrues” — there is no need to scrutinize or reckon any time factor (i.e. any temporal or spatial aspects) whatsoever. Atman, who is perennially devoid of the three states of consciousness, is also perennially, eternally real alone. In this ‘Aatmasatyaanubodha’, i.e. Intuition as per the scriptural teaching of the Reality of Atman, how does the mind come into the picture or reckoning at all? Without the waking state itself not existing, does the waking mind exist at all? The waking mind was merely imagining (misconceiving) the three states of consciousness. A girl, while she was sweeping a place with a broom, thought in the manner — “If I get married and beget a child and if that child suffers from a disease and finally dies, then Oh God, what will be my plight?” — and started crying! Just like that foolish girl, the foolish mind of ours was imagining (misconceiving) the non-existent states of consciousness indeed. Now these misconceived states do not exist, in the ultimate analysis, nor does the conceiving mind too. Now what happened to that mind? That has become ‘No-mind’ (Amanas). For the mind-hood to exist (i.e. the phenomenon of the psyche to function) logic or reasoning is the function or discipline, because the mind happens to be the instrument or valid means for carrying out reasoning (logical disputation in the forms of finding out cause-effect categories in our empirical dealings); but both these have, in a manner of speaking, committed suicide (i.e. they have become extinct)! Both the mind and its reasoning faculty have become one with Atman (of the essential nature of Pure Being-Consciousness-Bliss) indeed. The scripture is asking the question — “When everything has become Atman alone, where is any room whatsoever for grief or delusion?” Now the mind, imagination (conception), desire, action — none of these exists in the least; therefore, now in that Intuitive experience, of Saakshi Chaitanya (i.e. Pure Being-Consciousness-Bliss) there is no grief nor delusion whatsoever. To wit, there is no perceptual or sensory experience (Pratyayaanubhava), no conceptual, mental experience (Vedanaanubhava) as also the Saakshyanubhava, i.e. Intuitive experience of the Witnessing Principle, too; when it is reasoned out and thereby cognized in accordance with or in conformity with one’s Intuitive experience there is no phenomenon or dealing whatsoever to the effect — “The non-conceptual or non-distinctive Intuitive experience of Atman,

the Witnessing Principle in everyone of us, will accrue or will be attained afresh" — also. Everything has become, as it were, the non-dual Atman, i.e. Pure Consciousness-Being, alone in the absolute sense, Atman alone, who is Aja, Anidra, Aswapna, Adviteeya (one without a second) indeed!

46. Control of the Mind is taught for Attaining No-Mind-hood:

As a result of the discriminative reasoning (Anubhavaanga Tarka) following in the foot-steps of the Intuitive experience of the three states of consciousness (as per the scriptural guidance) the purport of the statement that — "One can get (attain) the Intuitive experience of Atman (who is of the essence of Pure Being-Consciousness-Bliss)" — has been, to some extent, described. For those who cannot Intuitively reason out or ratiocinate (Manana) thus in conformity with the scriptural teachings and cognize the Ultimate Reality of Atman, there is yet another device recommended, so as to help gain this Intuitive experience. Those for whom there does not exist any mind at all apart from Atman, for them apart from the mind there does not exist any duality to perceive at all nor any senses (through which one can perceive); apart from the senses there do not exist the objects which are perceived by the senses. Such people are of the essential nature of the non-dual (unitary) Brahman, the Ultimate Reality, alone which is Aja, Anidra, Aswapna; they do not have any duties or responsibilities to be performed or discharged at all. They are people who have eternally fulfilled the purpose of life (Nitya Krita Kriyas). But this Intuitive Knowledge or experience is beyond the comprehension of many people. They entertain a deep-rooted belief that the mind and the senses which are possessed by them really exist and further the objects which are perceived by the mind and the senses too really exist. Although such people, while deliberating, use reasoning also, they carry on their routine empirical dealings in this workaday world with all faith and dedication indeed. To give an analogy, sometimes at a distance there appears to be a snake and people keep jumping about hither and thither; thereafter if anybody questions them in the manner — "Why are you jumping about?" — they utilize reasoning in the manner and reply — "Because....." Even for

those who are thus predominantly emotional in their temperament there exists a method or path by which they can surely Intuit the non-dual Reality of Brahman (Atman). It is a distinct, unique system of practice in conformity with the science of psychology. That system Shri Gaudapaada has called — “Manoanigraha”, i.e. control of the psyche or mind; that very system is also called “Adhyaatma Yoga” in the Upanishads and “Dhyaana Yoga” in the Geeta.

As long as there is any particular perceptible object for the mind, it cannot help giving up perceiving that object; as long as the mind keeps on conceiving or imagining duality the perceptible object cannot cease to appear (to that mind indeed). This is a universal rule of law. Just like a person who has sent away all his family members somewhere as he could not tolerate their harassment and says — “Now I am sitting happily and quietly” — in the same manner when to the mind the external objects themselves become non-existent, then it gives up its function of imagining or conceiving, quietly rests in Atman (its true substratum) and becomes ‘No-mind’. Knowing this simple secret, the knowledgeable people of ancient times, viz. Rishis, sages, have found out or evolved a stratagem, a device for such total control of the mind. If the concept that — “All this is full of grief alone” — is repeatedly brought to bear on the mind, it naturally gives up its hankering after the enjoyment of the various desires lurking in the mind (or heart) and as a result becomes introvert. If the scriptural statement that — “All this is not born at all, all this is Atman alone” — is repeatedly ruminated over, then the mind gets ‘metamorphosed’, as it were, and to such a mind no object whatsoever becomes perceptible at all.

But although in this manner the causation of grief, misery by contact with the world of duality as also its non-creation is conceived, still the mind may present another cunning, clever ruse. It may retain within itself (in a subtle form of Vaasanas, i.e. latent impressions in the sub-conscious mind) the seed of duality, but externally may appear to stand still or without thinking about anything, and eventually getting ‘fatigued’ (because it is a tiring exercise for it, quite against its natural propensities of going out after external objects or pursuits for enjoyment) or ‘bored’ it may fall into deep sleep (to avoid this strain). Now, without giving scope for both these ruses of the mind the aspirant should

repeatedly, nay painstakingly, keep the mind alert and awake, and, as stated above, he should engage it in the practice of constant thinking about the causation of grief by contact with the world of duality as also its non-creation (i.e. unreality). The fact that the whole of duality is the cause for grief alone is cognized only by those who contemplate as it is taught in the scriptures. But contemplating in the manner — “That which appears to have been born, that does not exist at all apart from the seer or Witness who objectifies or perceives that object” — its non-creation, i.e. the fact that its apparent existence even is a delusion, is intuited clearly by this ‘metamorphosed’ mind. Thus without getting merged in deep sleep (Manoalaya) and without jumping out into the external world for the enjoyment of the objects (Vikshepa) and without allowing it to stand still retaining the seed of the desires for the objects of the world of duality (Sakashaaya), if the aspirant perseveres in training and controlling the mind and in making steadfast attempts, then just like the wise people who place a herbal medicine in a copper vessel and destroy mercury this very mind finally becomes ‘No-mind’, meaning it becomes Atman Himself, its very substratum. It becomes the unborn, sleepless, dreamless, non-dual Brahman Itself, the Ultimate Reality. This system or method of concentrating, focusing all our attention on Atman alone and discarding or showing indifference (or scant respect, belief) towards anything apart from Atman of the essence of Intuitive experience is called ‘Manoanigraha’ and also ‘Nidhidhyaasana’ in Vedantic parlance.

VI. AJAATIVAADA OR THE THEORY OF NON-CREATION

47. Objections and their Solutions pertaining to Unitary, Non-dual Intuition:

In Vedanta there is one teaching of the type — “*Brahmaivedam Sarvam*” — meaning, ‘All that exists here is Brahman alone’; there is another teaching of the type — “*Ayamaatmaa Brahma, Tattwamasi*” — meaning, ‘This our Atman is Brahman alone, That

thou art'. Thus there is a two-fold teaching in the Vedantic texts. As regards these teachings the aspirants may sometimes get two doubts. The doubt regarding the first teaching may be of the type — "When the world is being actually perceived, can it be reasonably said that — 'All that exists here is Brahman alone?'" If it is stated that — "If we cognize that we are Atman, both Ajnaana (ignorance) and Ashaanti (mental disquiet) will disappear and we feel that our life's purpose is fulfilled" — it means, undoubtedly, that — "In order to know in that manner the deliberation that one has to carry out or any spiritual practice that has to be undergone, the disquietude of the mind which has to be got rid of and finally the liberation of the essence of peace that has to be attained — all these are, at least, to be acknowledged to be true," — is it not? If these are accepted as real, then how can the Vedantic (philosophical) teaching of "Advaita", i.e. non-duality as the Ultimate Reality, can come into picture at all? This is the objection that is raised with regard to the second teaching. We should not think that — "This objection is raised by the dualists (Dvaitins); therefore, we have to give some kind of an answer to satisfy those disputants, that is all". This anomalous doubt may arise in the minds of all aspirants in general, irrespective of the fact that they belong to the school of dualism or of non-dualism. Hence, it is in the fitness of things that such a rational doubt per force has to be answered satisfactorily and a rational solution found out. Suppose that a person suffering from an unknown disease has gone to a hospital to get rid of the disease; if the doctor at the hospital tries to appease the patient saying — "You do not suffer from any disease whatsoever; there is no need for you to take any medicine or treatment; I am not a doctor at all, nor is this a hospital" — how ridiculous it would be? Quite analogous to that example, the consolation or words of solace that the adepts in Advaita Vedanta philosophy proffer to the true seekers of Emancipation (Mumukshus) would be as ridiculous and foolhardy. The solution does not lie in merely quoting the scriptural sentences as examples in the manner — "In the scriptures by statements like — '*Naantah Prajnam, Na Bahhiprajnam*' — the three states of consciousness existing have been refuted; by statements like — '*Indroa Maayaabhihi Pururoopa Eeyate*' — the scriptures are propounding that to one Ishwara, i.e. Lord Creator, existing in different forms is itself a misconception; by virtue of statements like — '*Tattwamasi*', '*Aham Brahma Asmi*' — etc. the scriptures

are propounding that the unity or oneness of the Jeeva and Ishwara is taught" — for, mere dogmatic statements do not convince a rational or intellectual being. In fact, the sceptics or agnostic disputants may raise objections of the type — "How is it known that the scriptures have one purport or goal in teaching Advaita, i.e. non-dualism (to wit, the Ultimate Reality is unitary, non-dual), alone? Instead, having determined in the manner that since Advaita, i.e. non-duality, which is opposed to the empirical valid means of (Pratyaksha Pramaana) perceptual knowledge or experience, it is not acceptable to the scriptures, why not we conceive for such scriptural statements mentioned above a different meaning (so as to be in conformity with empirical reason and perceptual knowledge)?"

In order to meet such challenges and solve objections that may be raised by even religious intellectuals we have so far elucidated the methodology of Vedantic deliberation, the method of interpreting the scriptural statements, the traditional method of teaching called 'Aagama' and finally the Intuitive reasoning or Tarka (Anubhavaanusaari Tarka) that are implicit in the scriptural texts as also their essential nature and the fact as to how far they are all in conformity with universal Intuitive experience (to wit, the unitary, plenary Absolute Being-Consciousness-Bliss of Atman, the innermost Self of all) and how they can all be convincingly reconciled by taking recourse to one's own Intuitive experience. All these aspects have been discussed threadbare. An attempt has also been made judiciously to bring home the concept that — "Advaita Vedanta philosophy is not so ridiculous a science as some people have made it out or understood; because of the reason that it is a highly developed philosophical or spiritual science *par excellence*, very much in conformity with universal, comprehensive Intuitive experience of every human being, in general, and every sincere Saadhaka, i.e. spiritual seeker, in particular, it is to be put to a practical test and should be made a way of life if at all one is sincere and serious; and merely raising objections based on Kutarka, i.e. futile exercises in logical disputations, will not be reasonable or proper; many seers and sages belonging to ancient, medieval and modern times have vouched unequivocally for the veracity of the truth that — 'If the Ultimate Reality of this Vedanta philosophical (spiritual) science is Intuited or cognized one gets or attains eternal, consummate peace, solace, nay immortality, here and now in this very life'.

Now, this same conclusion or judgement can also be arrived at from another viewpoint, and we will henceforth make an attempt to explain that fact to the extent possible in this small treatise.

48. The Delusory Dream called Avasthaatraya (The Three States Of Consciousness):

"Anaadimaayayaa Suptoa Yadaa Jeevaha Prabudhyate, Ajamanidramaswapnamadvaitam Budhyate Tadaa" — the purport of this Kaarika has been already stated. That the three phenomena of waking, dream and deep sleep have occurred (or are occurring) is itself a delusory dream. It is not a real dream; though not actually occurring, it is a 'dream' which appears as if it is occurring. If we delve deep into these experiences of the three states and deliberate Intuitively (taking recourse to or the standpoint of the Saakshi Chaitanya, the Witnessing Consciousness) upon them, then everyone can cognize that — "None of these three states of consciousness is in truth my essential nature of Being; I am birthless, am sleepless and am dreamless" — and realising this truth born out of this new-found plenary experience, we can 'wake up', so to speak, from this 'delusory dream' indeed to attain the fulfilment of this our life's prime purpose; this truth also we have discerned. Because of the reason that, in truth, neither the waking nor the mind and the senses etc. which appear or manifest therein do exist at all, if we — through concerted efforts — control the mind so that neither does it conceive of or imagine external objects nor does it stand still or fall back into deep sleep, then we can surely establish ourselves in our really (Absolutely) real and essential nature of Pure Being-Consciousness-Bliss of Atman alone. It does not mean from this that we 'become' of the essential nature of non-dual Brahmaatman, the Ultimate Reality, afresh or anew, but (even now or, for that matter, ever) we are of the essence of non-duality as described in the scriptural statement — "Ajamanidramaswapnam" — meaning, devoid of 'birth', of deep sleep and of dream; for that reason alone, when we perform this kind of 'Vastu Tantra' Saadhana, i.e. a spiritual practice of Intuitive introspection or contemplation, it appears as if we have 'attained afresh' this our eternal non-dual essence of Pure Being-Consciousness-Bliss. Really speaking, it 'accrues' to us since it

was already there, but we turned all our attention or cognitive faculty (Intuition) in a concentrated manner towards this Pure Consciousness which is ever our substratum of being. Otherwise, had it been that we were not of the essential nature of non-dual Self (i.e. Pure Being-Consciousness-Bliss), then in that case there would have arisen a serious doubt or objection of the type — “How could a thing, which is not really existing at all, be attained or acquired by whatever kind of spiritual practice or human effort, for that matter? Secondly, how could that thing acquired afresh as a fruit or resultant effect of a cause be said to be eternal or everlasting (Shaashwata) at all?”

49. Identity in all respects between Waking and Dream:

So far we have clarified the truth that the experience of the three states of consciousness is delusory (Maayika) and not really belonging to our essential nature of Pure Being-Consciousness-Bliss of our Self. In Vedanta there is yet another method of Intuitively deliberating upon the cognition of our non-dual, innate nature of Pure, Absolute Being. It is an attempt indeed to cognize the truth that the manifoldness (i.e. distinctions) that appears in the dream and the waking has no substance or stuff ‘in reality’. Shri Gaudapaada has written a Kaarika in this regard: *“Swapnamaaye Yathaa Drishte Gandharva Nagaram Yathaa, Tathaa Vishwamidam Drishtam Vedaanteshu Vichakshanaihi”* — meaning, just as a dream, magic (Maayaa) and celestial city are mere appearances alone, in the same manner those who know Vedanta philosophy (Vedantic, Upanishadic spiritual science) say that this world of duality is a mere appearance. Since all the three states of consciousness are of the essential nature of change or mutation and thereby they are untrustworthy or fallacious, we can determine that they are just like the unsubstantive appearances of the rope-snake, nacre-silver etc.; this is the first step in that method. To cognize that waking is similar to the dream in all respects is the second step. Although experiences like — an object conjured up by magic appearing to be real or by chance, unexpectedly a celestial city appearing in the sky — are not commonplace experiences, a dream experience is a universal one, i.e. it is experienced by every human being without exception

whatsoever. In the dream many objects or phenomena, each different from the other and each being of a nature distinctly queer from the other, appear. But the fact that — ‘All those things or phenomena are a mere or false appearance’ — become established as soon as one wakes up. This fact has been pointed out by Shri Baadaraayanaacharya in his Sootra, i.e. aphorism, — *“Aatmani Chaivam Vichitraascha Hi”* — (Vedanta Sootra 2-1-28). The purport of this aphorism is: “One and the same Jeeva, i.e. soul, sees the dream; even so, it is in the experience of everyone that in him curious or odd things (to wit, which are varied and many and each one of them being exclusively different from the other, besides each one of them being queerer than the other) which are mere varieties of appearances manifest themselves for the ‘time being’. In the same manner, it can be discerned (as also accepted) that although the Supreme Self (Paramaatman) is one without a second, in Him the curious or odd world of duality manifests itself.” Here in this context the fact that merely based on the illustration of the dream experience the waking experience too is a false appearance is conjectured. But if one takes recourse to his Intuition and delves deep into these similar, or rather identical, experiences, it will not be possible at all to assert with absolute sense of certainty in the manner — “This is really waking” and “This is really a dream” — for, between these two states it is not possible at all to distinguish any separate features or characteristics whatsoever so as to enable us to assert or affirm that one state is totally different from the other in such and such a manner. Shri Gaudapaada Kaarika 2-5 states that — *“Swapna Jaagarite Sthaane Hyekamaahurmaneeshinaha, Bhedaanaam Hi Samatwena Prasiddhenaiva Hetunaa”* — meaning, in both those states of waking and dream the internal concepts are the subjective, comprehending principle while the external objects are the comprehended things. It is established on the strength of everyone’s experience that even if anything appears to be a special feature in the waking, it appears to exist in the same manner alone at the time of the experience of the dream. Therefore, both can be called waking alone; or both can be called dream only. Since both of them appear for a particular period of time and then disappear, it is proper indeed to call both ‘dream’ only. For this reason alone, the scriptures are propounding that — *“Trayaha Swapnaaha”* — meaning, ‘All the three states are dreams alone’.

50. The Three Types of Ajaativaada (Theory of Non-Creation):

The spiritual teaching that Atman of all of us is birthless can be cognized or Intuited by this second method also. The first form of 'Ajaativaada', i.e. a theory of non-creation, is to know or discern in the manner — "We are not born at all as those who are experiencing the three states of consciousness; the second form of 'Ajaativaada' is to cognize in the manner — "In our essential nature of Pure Being-Consciousness-Bliss of Atman there does not exist any manifoldness whatsoever in reality, i.e. in the absolute sense or in the ultimate Intuitive analysis. Both waking and dream are mere appearances alone." Gaudapaada Kaarika 2-32 states: "*Na Niroadhoa Na Choatpattirna Baddhoa Na Cha Saadhakaha, Na Mumukshurna Vai Mukta Ityeshaa Paramaarthataha*" — meaning, "Observed from the Absolute, Ultimate Reality viewpoint (Paramaatha Drishti) nothing whatsoever gets destroyed (dissolved), nothing whatsoever is born, no one whosoever it may be is bound, no one whosoever he may be is a seeker or practitioner of spiritual disciplines, no one whosoever he may be is a Mumukshu, i.e. one desirous of Liberation, no one whosoever he may be is a Mukta, i.e. one who is Liberated." The principal purport of this Kaarika is to signify that — "Birthless, non-dual Atman (Brahman) alone 'exists', in the true sense of the term." The word 'Prapancha' connotes that — "That which is expansive, pervasive." In this external world perceived by all of us there exist many objects, each of them being distinct and different from the other, each being quite queerer than the other and hence it is indeed 'Prapancha'. Atman, on the other hand, is not at all in any of these above senses 'Saprapancha', i.e. endowed with, or having an adjunct of, this Prapancha. He is eternally 'Prapanchoapashama', i.e. devoid of the adjunct of this Prapancha, indeed; He is Aja, i.e. birthless; He is one, non-dual Entity or Reality without any changes or mutations like birth, growth, emaciation, degeneration etc. and without any kind of manifoldness whatsoever. Atman, as described above, alone is the Ultimate Reality, called in Vedantic parlance 'Paramaatha'.

So far we have described the two kinds of 'Ajaati', i.e. non-creation or birthlessness, viz. (1) Atman does not get any kind of birth or 'creation' endowed with the three states of

consciousness; (2) Atman is not born with any kind of forms of manifoldness. Now yet another form of Ajaati will be described and that is — “The Supreme Self (Paramaatman) is not born in the form of a Jeeva, i.e. transmigratory soul, at all.”

To the common run of people the essential natures of Jeeva and Paramaatman appear to be totally different. To them it appears that the Jeevaatman, i.e. the transmigratory soul, is of a limited knowledge, bound by the pairs of opposites like Dharma and Adharma, of limited strength or powers, of a limited span of life, and as one who performs actions and enjoys their fruits; but Paramaatman or Ishwara, i.e. the Supreme Lord, is believed to be Sarvajna, i.e. omniscient, Swatantra, i.e. independent, Sarvashakta, i.e. omnipotent, Nitya, i.e. eternal, one who dispenses the fruits of actions by the Jeevas. The Jeeva has to perform Saadhana, i.e. spiritual practices, and then attain Liberation (Moaksha), while Paramaatman is perennially Liberated. In the scriptures too it has been stated that just as the sparks come out of fire, the Jeevas are born out of Paramaatman, i.e. the Supreme Lord or Self; it is also stated that from the Supreme Lord (Parameshwara) both the Jeevas, i.e. the transmigratory souls, and the Jagat, i.e. the world of duality, are born; in our experience too the Jeevas and the Jagat are seen to be different. Therefore, how can it at all be believed that the theory of non-creation, Ajaativaada, propounding that all these three, namely, the Jeevas, the Jagat and Brahman (Paramaatman), are one and the same? Such a doubt arises in the minds of many people. But because so far it has been conclusively affirmed that both the phenomena, viz. the three states of consciousness and duality, are unreal, mere false appearances and this teaching is in conformity with Saarvatrika Anubhava, i.e. universal Intuitive experience, this Ajaativaada, i.e. theory of non-creation as taught by Vedanta cannot be refuted by any one whosoever he may be. Besides, neither is this so ridiculous as the common run of people make it out or think it to be. However, these people to whom this discriminative method, based on a universal and comprehensive outlook backed up by Intuitive experience and propounded by the Vedanta philosophical science, is difficult or beyond their capacity and comprehension — such people should at least believe these teachings to be true as there are scriptural statements to substantiate them, as also our ancient sages and seers and forbears have vouched for their veracity. Then they should

assiduously pursue this science and Intuitively examine (as directed by the scriptural teachings) the dream state and check up whether in the waking state there exists any extra-ordinary distinction other than or more than (in its real substance, stuff or essence) the dream experience. And if this kind of Intuitive discrimination in conformity with the scriptural instructions is carried out to its fruition with all sincerity, then all doubts will get dissolved, as it were.

In the dream it appears as if therein many Jeevas and many objects really exist. Merely on that count will it amount to those Jeevas and objects being 'real'? Shri Gaudapaada has affirmed that there does not exist even an iota of difference between the waking experience and the dream experience (to wit, both in their own time, space and causation relationships or aspects are real, but the common run of people, in the ordinary circumstances, always evaluate the dream experience in the light of the standards of, or by the yard-stick of, the waking experience which they have presumed to be real but not the dream experience since the latter is falsified). He has also proved by a queer analytical method based on one's own Intuitive experience that, in truth, both these are states or experiences which belong to the same kind of species. If that truth is cognized, will it be possible for any one to assert that the Jeevas are really born at all and that they really go through or experience the transmigratory births (i.e. have rebirth or go through the cycle of births and deaths on and on)? Further, will it be possible to prove that they can really attain Mukti, i.e. Liberation, on the strength of their spiritual practices? Although it is true that in the scriptures creation of the Jeevas, of the five primordial elements and of the empirical objects has been described or propounded, because of the (stronger) reason that in the scriptures (further on) statements pertaining to the non-dual Atman have been mentioned to be in conformity with Yukti, i.e. universal Intuitive reasoning, and Saarvatrika Anubhava, i.e. universal Intuitive experience, and the latter to be contradictory to the former set of statements, we are constrained to conceive of a different meaning altogether to the statements on 'creation' in the manner — "Just as from Akaasha, i.e. space, the common people believe that the Ghataakaasha, i.e. the space of or within the earthen pot, is born and just as in the dream too a body, a mind and senses etc. of all the Jeevas are 'born', similarly the 'birth' or 'creation' of the Jeevas and the 'creation' of their respective

bodies, minds and senses etc. are mere appearances indeed; this very truth is indicated by the scriptural statements on 'creation' indeed." The fact that from Paramaatman, i.e. the Supreme Self or Lord, both the Jeevas and the Jagat are born is not opposed to the 'Ajaativaada', i.e. the theory of non-creation; we have to determine that it is only 'Maayaa Jaati', i.e. conjured up creation or birth, that is all. Thus in this manner the meaning of the scriptural statement that — "From Brahman both the Jeevas and the Jagat are born or created in a delusory manner" — should be determined to help Intuit in conformity with the scriptural teaching that — "In accordance with Shrutyanusaari Yukti, i.e. Intuitive reasoning or logical device, which advocates the maxim that the effect is not different from the cause, we should cognize or Intuit that the whole of the Jagat is nothing but Brahman, the Ultimate Reality or the Supreme Self; that all the Jeevas too are nothing but Brahman alone."

51. Defects in Dvaitavaada (Theory of Duality):

The protagonists of the other schools of philosophy have acknowledged 'Jaativaada', i.e. the theory of one object or being is really born from another object or being. The present-day physical scientists too have completely accepted the theory of empirical cause-effect categories; further, they are all propounding this theory by reconciling it with reasoning or dialectical disputations. (To wit, as long as the waking experience is taken as the yardstick for measuring or evaluating the 'reality' of any category or phenomenon this may be assumed to be correct, but when the Ultimate Reality beyond the empirical sphere, i.e. beyond time-space-causation categories, is being considered these empirical theories fall to pieces). Thus some people may be troubled by the doubt of the type — "How can we follow or accept 'Ajaativaada' which patently refutes or defies the opinions or theories of all protagonists?" But a question can be posed in this regard that — "What valid means or exact proofs are available for those people who champion the cause of the world being 'created'?" Conceptual reasoning or logic alone is final support or 'court of appeal' to all such disputants, is it not? (To wit, it has already been pointed out and affirmed that reasoning, however much strong and profound it may appear to be, is after all

the product of our mental or intellectual capabilities, excellences or proficiencies, but this reasoning capacity can never get the better of Intuition, or experience even in the empirical sphere). The Vaisheshikas (followers of an ancient Indian school of philosophy founded by sage 'Kanaada' and specialising in its own brand of atomic theory) had not seen the neutrons (Paramaanus); but they hypothetically conceived of a theory called 'Aarambhavaada' i.e. the theory of origination, and according to that theory they imagined the existence of Paramaanus, i.e. micro-atoms like the present-day neutrons. The present-day nuclear physicists also have not directly perceived the electrons and protons; theirs also is imagination alone; they say that if one goes on deliberating or examining these minute microscopic phenomena they might be mere distinctions of electric charges only. Had they directly perceived those microscopic particles there would not have arisen different imaginary theories at all. Why has there arisen a difference of opinion between the ancient, say Greek, physicists or scientists and the present-day physicists or scientists who have followed modern theories like Relative Theory and Quantum Theory etc.? All the scientists have not accepted the Theory of Evolution; there are scientists who refute it too, or give different versions of it. It is true that the protagonists of various theories are utilising logical disputations which may be in conformity with their own or respective imaginations or conceptions; it is also true that they are ridiculing those who cannot comprehend or fall in line with their theories or mode of thinking as dull-heads. It is enough if the theories are consistent throughout, and they accept them to be absolutely true and correct. But merely on this basis or count it cannot be asserted that in all respects their theory being consistent that particular theory alone, exclusively, is absolutely in conformity with Truth, i.e. the Ultimate Reality. Despite the fact that earth does not seem to be revolving, the astronomers have now established that it is absolutely true that the earth is revolving round the sun. For that determination the main support is the assertion that their theory is in conformity with logical arguments (and mathematical formulae) alone. In the theory of origination (Aarambhavaada) or the theory of creation (Jaativaada) every one has adopted logical arguments or mathematical calculations and formulae to suit their own theories or to be in conformity with them; but their opponents are

pointing out defects in those theories adopting alternative logical devices or mathematical formulae.

In our Indian continent too in the olden times Satkaaryavaadins, i.e. protagonists of philosophical schools like Saankhya, used to propound that — “What exists — that alone is born; that which is itself non-existent — how can it be born?”; their opponents, viz. Asatkaaryavaadins, i.e. protagonists of philosophical schools like Vaisheshika, used to argue that — “What is the meaning of the statement that a thing which is already existing is born again? It is ridiculous and illogical, and hence only in the case of the thing that does not exist in the past it is possible for it to be born anew.” Thus because of the reason that these protagonists of opposing theories are refuting each other’s theories and arguments pointing out serious defects in both of them which it is not possible for either group to give satisfactory solutions — Ajaativaada, i.e. the theory or doctrine of non-creation or birthlessness, which propounds that — “Nothing whatsoever is born ever” — becomes established. Shri Shankaraachaarya has quoted a verse in this regard, viz. *“Vivadatsveva Nikshipya Viroadhoa Udbhavakaaranam, Taissamrakshitasadbudhihi Sukham Nirvaati Vedavit”* — meaning, because the dualists keep on disputing or arguing with one another they have become opponents to one another; as a result of this, it becomes tantamount to their protecting and preserving by themselves the proper intellectual or rational approach of a Jnaani, i.e. a realized soul, who has known the purport or the apt meaning of the Vedas. Therefore, the Jnaani remains or rests happy unto himself without arguing with any one whosoever he may be.

52. If so, what about the Upaasanas recommended by the Scriptures:

Hence the Jijnaasus, i.e. seekers of the Ultimate Reality of Brahman, need not be afraid of any disputants or protagonists of the various schools of philosophy, who are quarrelling among themselves, and thereby give up the pursuit of this ‘Aatma Vidya’, i.e. the Intuitive Knowledge of the Self. They should understand that the purpose of the scriptures is: (a) to delineate the method of Superimposition of the Maayika Utpatti, i.e. delusory (illusory) origination or creation while teaching or signifying the creation

(origination) of the world as well as the souls (Jeevas) and then, (b) stage by stage, step by step, to signify by a method of Rescission based on Intuition the non-dual unborn (non-created) Reality of Atman, every one's innermost Pure Being-Consciousness-Bliss, alone. It is true that in the scriptures meditations (Upaasanas) on Paramaatman, i.e. the Supreme Lord Ishwara, have been mentioned; that is also done out of compassion towards, as it were, or as a concession to the 'intermediate class' (Madhyamaadhikaaris) of aspirants on the assumption of Maayika Dvaita, i.e. illusory duality, alone for the main purport of helping such people attain the Intuitive Knowledge of the non-dual Atman, stage by stage; as we meditate upon a particular object, so we (in proportion to our intensity and one-pointed sincerity of meditation) reap the fruit. Everything is verily Paramaatman, i.e. the Supreme Self or Pure Consciousness, indeed. For that reason alone, the scriptures are teaching in the manner — *"Sarvam Khalvidam Brahma, Tajjalaaniti Shaanta Upaaseeta"* — (Chhaandogya 3-14-1) — meaning, 'All this is Brahman alone, for all this universe is born out of Brahman alone, thrives on Brahman alone and finally merges in It alone; therefore, being quiescent one should meditate upon Brahman'. The scripture further says: *"Atha Khalu Kratumayaha Purushoa Yathaa Kraturasmilloake Purushoa Bhavati Tathetaha Pretya Bhavati"* — (Chhaandogya 3-14-1) — meaning, 'Man is full of volition; as he meditates with determination, so he proportionately, after death also, reaps the fruits'. If directly alone one cannot cognize or Intuitively experience the non-dual Brahman (here and now while living in this body) one should with complete, steadfast devotion and determination meditate upon Brahman in the manner — "Brahman is my Atman, i.e. innermost Self of the essence of Pure Consciousness, alone; I will decidedly become one with Him" By that kind of steadfast one-pointed meditation certainly one can merge in his Pure Being or Brahman, indeed. This very fact the scriptures also are stressing in the statement — *"Shraddhaabhaktidhyaanayogaadavehi"* — meaning, 'With dedication, devotion, meditation and practice one can Intuit the Reality.' One who abounds in likes and dislikes (Raaga and Dwesha) and indulges in thinking and desiring the external objects or pleasures alone gets born again and again in this transmigratory circle of births (Samsaara Chakra) so as to be able to enjoy the objects or pleasures over and over again and

repeatedly dies too, but as stated in the scriptures that — “*Shaantoa Daanta Uparatastiteekshuhu*” — meaning, ‘One who deliberates endowed with abilities of controlling his mind (Shaanta or Shama), of controlling his senses (Daanta or Dama), of introvertedness (Uparati), of putting up with the pairs of opposites like happiness and grief etc. with utmost tolerance and with an equipoise of the mind (Titeeksha) will be able to cognize the Ultimate Reality of Brahman and thereby become one with that eternally liberated or free Brahman alone. One who observes the spiritual disciplines of service of holy men, meditation etc. will surely attain the same fruit by stages, or after transmigrating to the Brahma Loaka, i.e. the celestial region ruled over by the four-headed Brahma, the Creator; at least, there in that more congenial environment the aspirant is assured of this fruit. Therefore, those who are qualified for the Intuitive Knowledge of the Ultimate Reality of Brahman (Atman) should here and now in this very life fulfil this prime purpose of human birth through this direct spiritual practice (Saakshaat Saadhana) of Shravana, i.e. listening to the scriptural statements or teachings, Manana, i.e. ratiocination or reasoning, based on Intuitive experience, on those teachings and finally Nidhidhyaasana, i.e. Intuitive contemplation. But those who do not possess, or are endowed with, the above qualifications or merit for that lofty, profound pursuit should practise meditations (as stipulated in the scriptures) and attain gradually the prime purpose of life (Purushaartha). Further, those who are not capable of practising meditations also should practise ‘Karmayoga’ (as stipulated or described in the Geeta) and attain the purpose of life. This alone is the prime teaching of Vedanta philosophy.

53. Conclusion:

What is the method of deliberation taught by Vedanta? By means of that method, in what manner can one attain the prime purpose of human life? Answers to these questions have been presented and explained as best as possible in these Chapters. May Shri Shankara, who is our holy preceptor and benign spiritual guide, shower His grace on all of us so as to enable us to cognize the Intuitive method of deliberation or discrimination of pristine pure

Deliberation on the Ultimate Reality Culminating in Intuitive Experience

Vedanta! May He enlighten our intellect and prompt us to enter into our respective paths of spiritual practice befitting our respective capabilities, subtle propensities and psychic merits!! May He grant us one and all the real Bliss!!!

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