

Intuitive Approach of Shankara's Vedanta

(Secrets of Adhyaasa & Adhyaaroapa
Apavaada Nyaaya revealed)

D. B. GANGOLLI



ADHYATMA PRAKASHA KARYALAYA
BANGALORE
1991

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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

Encouraged by the good response to our earlier publication — “The Essential Adi Shankara” — we have endeavoured to bring out yet another jewel of *Vedanta* within a short space of eight months. Being another useful handibook on this terse subject of pristine pure *Advalta Vedanta*, this treatise reveals many a profound secret unknown to the generality of preachers as well as practitioners and is sure to benefit both immensely, particularly a true seeker.

One of the most important and fundamental tenets of Adi Shankara was that “In order to be able to reconcile many apparent contradictions with which all the *Upanishadic* lore is replete, the genuine student should invariably understand the real purport of the traditional methodology of teaching which utilizes the twin viewpoints, viz. the *Vyaavahaaric* and the *Paaramaarthic*, implicit in and through the whole gamut of the scriptural texts”. It was given to Shri Shankara to resuscitate and rescue this time-tested *Saampradaayic* methodology from the ravages of alien schools of philosophy as they had already made inroads into pristine pure *Vedanta*. This good work was kept up for a few decades after Shri Shankara by his true direct disciple, viz. Shri Sureshwara, but history repeated itself, so to speak, when in the post-Sureshwara period once again concepts, which smacked of *Dvaita Darshanas* like *Saankhya* and *Yoga*, were dubiously interpolated in the mainstream of *Vedantic* lore.

It is the bane of our times that few preceptors, professing to propound genuine *Shaankara Vedanta*, themselves know or have understood the distinctive features of the central traditional methodology of *Advalta Vedanta* based on the axiom of *Adhyaaroopa Apavaada Nyaaya*, a corollary of which is this teaching of the twin viewpoints. In fact, their effective applications enable us to solve many a riddle of mundane life and suggest proper means of making our lives purposeful. Unfortunately, most of the present-day half-witted Vedantins have cast their dragnet of vain dialectics far and wide in these days of rabid professionalism and unhealthy commercialization, with the result the unwary, gullible laymen have become easy victims to their subtle gimmicks. Faith, without which humanity cannot live, if not directed and controlled properly, gets degenerated into ‘blind faith’ to bring untold miseries and utter ruin.

Shri Satchidanandendra Saraswati Swamiji, of reversed memory, carried on a one-man campaign, as a matter of fact, to rid *Shaankara Vedanta* of many of these harmful alien theories and concepts and

to help the genuine seeker and student steer clear of the mushroom pitfalls in the *Vedanta* teachings in vogue today. This handibook, which is a free transliteration of the Swamiji's Kannada gem — “*Vedantaarthasaara Sangraha*” — stands out as a glorious tribute to his yeoman service in cleansing *Advaita Vedanta* of all the dross it has accumulated over centuries of decadence.

This treatise, though small in size, has great merit in that it points out the grossly distorted sub-commentaries and helps the true seeker resolve many a confusing anomaly, on the one hand, and propounds the genuine *Vedantic* principles, based on the steadfast and strong foundations of Intuitive experience (*Anubhava*) and logical deliberations in consonance with that plenary Intuitive experience (*Anubhavaanga Tarka*), on the other.

Yet another salient feature of this handibook is to bring into focus the profound truth that in the *Adhyaasa Bhaashya*, which Adi Shankara wrote as a preamble to his *Brahma Sootra Bhaashya*, the whole gamut of genuine *Vedantic* tenets are made explicit. Further, how off and on these very traditional teachings were revealed in many ways in the latter *Bhaashya* in a bid to reconcile all apparent contradictions and controversies is exquisitely elucidated to carry conviction.

We are glad that Shri D. B. Gangolli, a dedicated student of pristine pure *Vedanta* as propagated by our revered Swami Satchidanandendra Saraswati, has once again, as is his wont, taken great pains and meticulous care to render this free transliteration of Swamiji's Kannada book for the benefit of those who are denied the knowledge of this regional language. We wish to congratulate him on achieving this onerous task in providing another valuable treatise on *Vedanta*. May the Lord Almighty shower His benign grace on him and bless him to continue this excellent work for many more years to come.

We sincerely hope that all serious students of pristine pure *Advaita Vedanta* will draw all the inspiration from this unique handibook, which, we are sure, will go a long way in guiding them on the right path to Beatitude.

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

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

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1. Eight Upanishads — Part I & II — By Swami Gambhirananda,
2. Chhaandogya Upanishad -do-
3. Bhagavadgeeta -do-
4. Brahma Sutra Bhashya -do-
5. Brihadaaranyaka Upanishad — By Swami Madhavananda
6. Upadesha Sahasri (A Thousand Teachings)
— By Swami Jagadananda

BOOKS BY THE SAME AUTHOR ALREADY PUBLISHED

1. The Scientific Approach Of Advaita Vedanta
2. The Principal Teachings Of Bhagavadgeeta
3. The Magic Jewel Of Intuition
4. The Relevance Of Vedanta In This Modern Age Of Civilization
5. A Broad Outline Of Vedanta
6. The Reality Beyond All Empirical Dealings
7. Deliberation On The Ultimate Reality Culminating In Intuitive Experience
8. Brahmayajna Or Knowledge Of The Ultimate Reality
9. The Quintessence of Pristine Pure Vedanta
10. The Philosophical Science of Vedanta
11. Vedanta: The Only Consummate Spiritual Science
12. The Essential Adi Shankara

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"All the dualistic phenomena of the waking state in its entirety, including the *Aadhidaivika Prapañcha*, (Divine Plane) should be taken as an adjunct to the Witnessing Self (of the essential nature of Pure Consciousness). By this Intuitive Identification with one's own innermost Self one can sublate or falsify the waking state and thereby realize the non-dual nature of *Atman* and, at the same time, see all the creatures in Him and Himself in all the creatures. This type of non-dual essence of Being which is described in the *Upanishads* (*Isha* 6) and *Geeta* (6-29) will be realized only by taking the Self or Witnessing Consciousness as conditioned by the adjunct of the whole phenomenon of the waking state. Then only this right vision (Intuition) of non-dual Realization takes place. It is on this supposition alone that *Atman* can be identified as *Brahman* in the ultimate analysis, the conditioning universe being shown to be only a superimposed false appearance. Otherwise if we entertain the view that the Self is separate in each body, then we will come to the erroneous conclusion of the *Kapila Saankhya Darshana*, which is truly a dualistic philosophy. If we do so, *Advaita Siddhaanta*, which is expounded with unanimity in all the *Upanishads*, will come to grief." — (*Maanddokya Bhaashya* — 3).

PREFACE

"Unity amidst diversity" — is a succinct axiomatic truth revealed to all humanity by the *Upanishadic* texts, which are mostly the end portions of the *Vedas* and hence are called '*Vedantas*'. This unitary Spirit, which is the Ultimate Absolute Reality called *Brahman* or *Atman* in the *Upanishads*, pervades all duality and diversity of this wonderful universe of ours. The Knowledge of this all-pervasive Spirit is the very substratum, fountainhead of all other mundane empirical knowledges and sciences amassed and accumulated by Man from time immemorial. Evidently, this Spiritual science going by the popular name of '*Vedanta*', is to be given the pride of place over and above the other empirical sciences, if only we wish to reckon the true import of the profound pronouncement of all *Upanishads* that — "By knowing that unitary, non-dual Reality behind and beyond all this world of duality, all else, worth knowing, is discerned."

Having been steeped in the *Upanishadic* Knowledge and its highly esoteric Intuitive approach, handed down traditionally from the teacher to the taught for ages, Shri Shankara Bhagavatpaada, the spiritual colossus of our era, gave to humanity an immaculate and impeccable methodology of teaching which can never be faulted or felled by any logical or dialectical system — past, present or future. This is true for all times and climes because Intuition is at the very root of all human knowledge, be it empirical, religious or spiritual, and hence no intellectual knowledge, or for that matter science, can outreach or outstretch Intuition and sublate or falsify it. In fact, Intuition pervades and subsumes all intellectual pursuits and perspectives and is the core of Being of everything in this multi-spangled celestial universe of ours.

This all-consuming Intuitive approach taught in and through the *Upanishadic* lore was revealed by a long line of dedicated seers and sages, but it stands to his credit and glory that Shri Shankaraachaarya expounded this perfect traditional and time-honoured methodology in such unequivocal and convincing terms and manner that his Intuitive approach has been reckoned to be infallible, never to fail to deliver the goods, so to speak. But since the Absolute Reality of *Vedanta* is non-dual, beyond all categories of time-space-causation as also outside the purview of all percepts and concepts, the genuine seeker of this Reality of *Atman* has necessarily to have certain sterling qualities and excellences of head and heart so as to be fully receptive and be guided properly to Intuit his own Self beyond, and subtler than, his ego. In truth, it means that one has to give up his deep-seated 'egoism' and Intuit his Self.

In order to remove the great confusion which prevailed at the time and which had been caused by several renowned preceptors who had missed the mark, so to say (they had misunderstood the real import of the *Upanishadic* texts and had misinterpreted the prime purport or goal of *Vedanta Shaastra*). Shri Shankara appeared on the Indian spiritual firmament as a resplendent star which drove away the darkness that had enveloped the minds of scholars and scholastics alike.

Shri Shankara's extant *Bhaashyas* on the three canonical texts of the ten principal *Upanishads*, the *Bhagavad Geeta* and the *Brahma Sootras* expounding *Advalta Vedanta* have an aura of their own and his perfect methodology clinches the issue by resolving all kinds of doubts and anomalies. That is so because it is entirely based on universal and plenary Intuitive experience (*Saarvatrika Poorna Anubhava*) which is the unfailing touchstone of all human endeavour. Hence, the **first fundamental teaching** of Shri Shankara's *Vedanta* is that — 'All deliberations on the *Upanishadic* tenets must necessarily be based on this universal Intuitive experience alone' — which is truly 'the be all and the end all' of human existence (*Purushaartha*). With a view to focussing the attention of the true seeker on this subtle but all-pervasive Intuition, which is the very substrate of everyone's 'I' notion (ego), Shri Shankara bestowed upon the spiritual world his unique teaching pertaining to '*Adhyaasa*' (misconception, of the nature of delusion) on which he elaborated in his introductory *Bhaashya* on *Brahma Sootras*.

It is one of the most important secrets of Shri Shankara's *Vedanta* that this *Adhyaasa* is at the very root of all mundane transactions of Man and that by means of Intuition alone one can go beyond and conquer this delusory *Adhyaasa*, which is termed as '*Avldyaa*' by the Pundits. In fact, this *Adhyaasa* as depicted and delineated by the great teacher leads to the 'Bondage of *Samsaara*', and by means of Intuitive experience (termed *Saakshi Anubhava* or *Avagati* in *Vedantic* parlance) alone one can get himself released or liberated from this Bondage. Since this Intuitive experience happens to be everyone's everlasting essence of Being, Shri Shankara teaches that — "Being under the spell, or in the grip of this delusory *Adhyaasa* (*Avldyaa*) is itself 'Bondage' and attaining to the Intuitive experience which is the very core of our Being is itself 'Liberation'."

Yet another great secret of Shri Shankara's *Vedanta* is that this fundamental *Adhyaasa* brings about in its wake not only all secular or mundane transactions but also the religious and spiritual transactions; and unless and until the true seeker undergoes an intensive 'spiritual education and training' under a vigilant and versatile preceptor satiated with the traditional methodology based on *Adhyaaroopa Apavaada Nyaaya* (aphorism of Deliberate Superimposition and Rescission) adopted in and through the *Upanishadic* lore, he will not be able to

discern and divine the real purport of *Vedanta*. This revelation about this traditional methodology implicit in all the *Upanishads* is the **second fundamental teaching** of the Great Master.

This study leads the seeker to **three corollaries of these two rudimentary teachings**, and they are: (i) To distinguish between this plenary Intuitive experience (*Saakshi Anubhava* or *Avagati*) and the mundane but universal experiences of percepts (*Pratyaya* or *Pratyaksha Anubhava*) and concepts (*Vedana Anubhava*); (ii) to distinguish between the *Shaastric* or *Paaramaarthic* (Intuitive) viewpoint and the *Vyaavahaaric* (empirical) viewpoint — this aspect is dealt with in some detail in this treatise and it helps to reconcile many an apparent contradiction in the *Upanishadic* doctrines; (iii) to distinguish between what is within the purview of the agent of an action (*Kartru Tantra*) and what is pertaining to a real entity, but not in the control or purview whatsoever of this agent of action ('I' notion) — (*Vastu Tantra*).

In this treatise, which is published close on the heels of "The Essential Adi Shankara" as its 'companion volume', an earnest attempt has been made to unravel all these profound secrets of *Shaankara Vedanta* so as to equip the ardent seeker with a master-minded methodology which never fails to resolve and reconcile any apparent contradiction that may crop up anywhere in the *Upanishads* (in fact, all of them are replete with apparently confusing and contradicting statements and even apparent anomalies). Under the circumstances, it need not be gainsaid that to an uninitiated and immature student these esoteric *Upanishadic* teachings sound like 'the ramblings of an unsound mind' or 'weird figments of imagination' indeed. For that matter, many Indian and foreign 'philosophers' and scholars could not make out the head or the tail of these spiritual texts and have written mutually conflicting and confusing commentaries to augment the already-existing chaos. And so, it is truly a marvel of our 20th Century — which has taken such stupendous leaps both in the intellectual and the scientific spheres — that despite the predominant materialistic — nay anti-religious, nihilistic or sceptic — outlook of our age and its multiplying new wants and creature comforts, *Vedanta* alone provides the panacea for all human ills and failings as well as the master-key to universal prosperity and peace.

This book is dedicated to the memory of Adi Shankara, the world teacher, and Swami Satchidanandendra Saraswati, my spiritual guide, who treaded in the footsteps of Shri Shankara and, just like him, cleared a great deal of morbid moss that had grown around pristine pure *Advaita Vedanta*. Founder of the Adhyatma Prakasha Karyalaya at Holenarsipur, Hassan District, Karnataka State, in the late thirties and later its branch at Thyagarajanagar, Bangalore - 560 028, Swami Satchidanandendra Saraswati rendered yeoman service to the spiritual

world by culling out and collating the above-mentioned five 'magic jewels of Intuitive Knowledge' which were implicit in the original *Bhaashyas* of Shri Shankara but hidden from the perfunctory gaze of many a seasoned scholar or Indologist. Fortunately, those original *Bhaashyas* on the *Prasthaana Traya* are still intact and extant in their genuine form throughout the length and breadth of our country.

The Swamiji who dedicated his life to the study and practice of *Advaita Vedanta* as taught by Adi Shankara did yet another good turn by pin-pointing the attention of academicians and anchorites on the subtle distinctions between the two technical *Vedantic* terms of 'Avidyaa' and 'Maayaa', which have caused most of the confusion among the present-day Vedantins. Shri Shankara has never equated the two terms; in fact, he has taken all the pains and has left no stone unturned, as it were, to bring home the distinction between the two which are akin to 'cause' and 'effect', respectively, and he is very emphatic, and meticulously cautious, always to qualify *Maayaa* by the adjectival phrases of 'Avidyaakrita', 'Avidyaa-Kalpita', 'Avidyaa(ss)tmaka', 'Avidyaapratyupasthaapita' etc. throughout his *Bhaashyas*. Totally oblivious of these profound distinctions, the two terms have been interchanged and mixed up by the post-Shankara Vedantins who gave logic more importance than *Anubhava* to cause a great deal of confusion and distortion of the original works and their real import. So much so, a persistent belief that — "Shri Shankara was a giant of a logician and his brand of *Vedanta* which is highly dialectical in its approach and treatment is beyond the comprehension of the ordinary students and seekers" — lurks in the minds of lay men. However, it was sheer divine dispensation, as it was given to Swamiji, of revered memory, to cleanse *Shankara Vedanta* of this accumulated dross and put it back on the high pedestal where it deserved to be.

Many important controversies which are taxing the minds of true seekers are examined and resolved in this handibook, which is a free transliteration of Swamiji's Kannada jewel — "*Vedaantaartha Saara-sangraha*". The relevant original Sanskrit *Bhaashya* excerpts (which are quite often mentioned partly, for the purpose of substantiation) should be thoroughly studied from the English translations of the *Prasthaana Traya Bhaashyas* published by the Shri Ramakrishna Mission monks. However, the purport or gist of these long *Bhaashya* portions are given succinctly so that their real importance and relevance are brought to bear on the minds of the uninitiated or immature students. Readers should remember that the word 'Aatman' occurs in this book thousands of times. It is spelt - 'Atman' with single 'a' for convenience sake; in the same way, the word 'Vedanta' is spelt with a single 'a', though it is pronounced with a long sound as in the former word. But both the words, when used in a *Sanskrit Bhaashya* quotation, are used with two 'a's.

I would like to record here my sincere gratitude towards the Publishers, Adhyatma Prakasha Karyalaya, Thyagarajanagar, Bangalore - 560 028, for all the encouragement, patronage and unstinted co-operation that they have given me in bringing out this book. I have also to express my thanks to the Printers — Verba Network Services, 12th Cross Road, off 8th Main, Malleswaram, Bangalore - 560 003, who have once again done a perfect job.

***Bangalore - 560 003
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D. B. Gangolli.

INTUITIVE APPROACH OF SHANKARA'S VEDANTA

(Secrets About *Adhyaasa* And *Adhyaaroopa-Apavaada Nyaaya* Revealed)

I. INTRODUCTION

1. Question: What is meant by *Vedanta*?

Answer: '*Veda*' means that *Shaastra* or science which expounds extra-sensory phenomena not within the ambit or purview of perception (*Pratyaksha*), inference (*Anumaana*) and such other empirical means of knowledge (*Loukika Pramaanas*). In that *Shaastra* it has been mentioned that a person should perform certain *Karmas* or actions, rituals or rites in order to attain certain good invisible fruits or results as well as that he should not perform certain other *Karmas* so as to be able to avoid or parry certain undesirable fruits or consequences. In this manner that part of the *Veda* which is of the nature of injunctions (*Vidhi*) and prohibitions (*Nishedha*) is called in religious parlance '*Shaastra*'. Thus *Shaastra* means: 'It should be done in this manner' and 'It should not be done in this manner' ('*Shaasti Iti Shaastram*'). However, there is, in addition, another part in the *Vedas* which expounds the Ultimate or Absolute Reality (*Paramaarthata*) also. Because this latter part expounds the Reality (*Tattwa*), it is also called '*Shaastra*' ('*Shinashti Iti Shaastram*') alone. Because of the reasons that: (i) It determines the Reality expounded or enunciated in the *Vedas*; (ii) and that textual portion is to be found at the end of *Aaranyakas*, which are also a part and parcel of the *Vedas* themselves — those *Vedic* portions or texts which expound the Ultimate Reality are themselves called '*Vedantas*' only. Because those texts contain the secrets of the Ultimate Reality which is beyond the purview of the senses as well as the mind, those texts have been given another conventional name of '*Upanishads*' also.

2. Q: Which is that entity which is called '*Vedaantaartha*'?

A: '*Artha*' or the entity that is enunciated in the *Vedanta* is that '*Paramaarthata*' or Ultimate, Absolute Reality which is the very essence of Being of the whole universe. That Reality has been called in

the *Upanishads* by various names like 'Atman' (the essence of Being, Self), 'Paramaatman' (the Ultimate Reality or Being), 'Brahman' (That Absolute Reality of the essential nature of eternally Pure, eternally Conscious, eternally Free, i.e. *Nityashuddhabuddhamuktaswaroopaha*, and the Immutable Entity, i.e. *Aparichhinna*), 'Akshara' (That Entity without any special qualities or characteristics and indestructible), 'Purusha' (That Entity which pervades everywhere), 'Satyam' (Really existing Entity) etc. In a manner of speaking, all the phenomena or entities that have been taught or expounded in *Vedanta Shaastra* or the spiritual science of *Vedanta* are fit to be called '*Vedaantaartha*' indeed. Behind all those phenomena or objects, that prime principle which is the very substratum for them all is Intuition, and hence the title of this book has been based on It so as to suggest that Intuition (acting as the very locus or basis for all genuine *Vedantic* teachings of Adi Shankara) is Itself the basis for all deliberations mentioned herein.

3. Q: Who is qualified to listen to the spiritual teachings or precepts of *Vedanta*?

A: Those who wish to listen to and learn this spiritual science and attain thereby its profound fruits or benefits should necessarily possess four qualifications of: (i) *Nitya-Anitya Viveka*; (ii) *Iha-Amutra Artha-bhoaga Viragaha*; (iii) *Shama-Dama Aadhi Shat Sampat*; (iv) *Mumukshutva*.

To explain:

- (i) *Nitya-Anitya Vivekaha*: Means the steadfast belief which is the resultant of a *Viveka* or Intuitive deliberation to the effect that whatever fruit or benefit that is got as a result of some mediatory means of action (*Kritaka*) is truly *Anitya* or non-eternal. Whatever is achieved in this world (*Loaka*) is, in truth, *Anitya* indeed, for every now and then all those achievements or acquisitions are dissipating, degenerating (*Kshayaswabhaavaha*); in a similar manner, whatever happiness to be enjoyed in other worlds herefore to be acquired as a result of 'Dharma' or religious deeds or merits here in this life is also dissipative and hence Impermanent alone. In this *Nitya-Anitya Viveka* the unique teaching that — "For the sake of such non-eternal, transient happiness whatever *Saadhana* or effort is put in — however much firm and strong it may be — that resultant benefit will be, at best, proportionately lasting or durable, but can never be ever-lasting, eternal", — is implicit.
- (ii) *Iha Amutra Artha Bhoaga Viragaha*: That high sense of renunciation (*Viragya*) in mere enjoyment — born as a result of the above-mentioned *Viveka* in (i) and by getting rid of any kind of hankering after achieving or acquiring any particular thing or

objective either in this present world of this birth or any other world of the next birth and enjoying it — is called *Iha Amutra Artha Bhoaga Viragaha*.

- (iii) *Shama Damaadi Shadsampat*: One who practises the six physical and psychic disciplines or human excellences like: *Shama* (Control over the inner instrument of the mind). *Dama* (Control over the external instruments of the five senses). *Uparati* (Introvertedness). *Titeeksha* (Forbearance). *Shraddha* (One-pointed dedication) and *Samaadhaana* (Equipoise of the mind) — he alone will be able to attempt to Intuit or cognize the Ultimate Reality of *Atman* with all steadfast dedication.

These six disciplines are very essential for any *Saadhaka* or seeker to undertake the next higher and profound spiritual practices which will enable him directly to Intuit his essential nature of Pure Being-Consciousness-Bliss of *Atman*. Here in this context the seeker should remember that since *Atman* is his eternal Being and not a resultant product or fruit of any physical or mental action, all these disciplines are meant, in the ultimate analysis, for the cleansing of his psyche of all its dross in the form of desires, distractions, aims and objectives in this mundane world, 'nay in other worlds too. From this standpoint, the six disciplines will acquire some extra meaning and significance like : *Shama* means controlling the mind so as not to allow it to stray out in thinking about objects or phenomena in the external world; *Dama* means keeping the five senses too in check accordingly; *Uparati* means giving up all attempts and actions to acquire external objects or seek any objective by the subtle practice of introvertedness; *Titeeksha* means the capacity to withstand or bear with the suffering posed by the pairs of opposites like cold and heat, pleasure and pain etc.; *Shraddha* means the unflinching or unstinted faith to the effect that: 'Surely and certainly the path of attaining the final goal of human existence (*Purushaartha*) will accrue with the aid of the scriptural sentences (*Shaastra Vaakya*); *Samaadhaana* means the capability of maintaining the equipoise of the mind without allowing it to get perturbed or disturbed by external, environmental conditions or situations. Getting a mastery over all these six disciplines alone is called here the '*Shadsampat*' or the six-fold wealth or asset of all human beings.

- (iv) *Mumukshutwa*: One who has an innate desire to perform *Karmas* and to enjoy their fruits — such a person keeps on performing *Karmas* over and over again and unavoidably gets repeated births in order to reap the relevant fruits and enjoy them. Thereby he becomes fully bound by this vicious circle of *Janma Karma Bandha*. A burning desire of the type — "How best can I get rid of this Bondage?" — alone is termed here *Mumukshutwa*.

And one who has acquired these above-mentioned spiritual disciplines called '*Vivekaadi Saadhana Chatushtaya*' alone is the fit person for *Vedanta Shravana* or listening to the *Upanishadic* teaching which is of an esoteric essence indeed.

4. Q: Then, in that case, those who do not possess these '*Saadhana Sampat*' will not be able to cognize or comprehend the real purport of the *Vedanta* teachings, is it so?

A: It is possible to know as to what has been propounded in the *Upanishads* by determining the meaning of the sentences. But those who undertake to comprehend the word-meaning (literally) in that fashion may stop their deliberation at that stage itself just like those who read the newspapers with all curiosity or eagerness. However, to those who do not try to cognize what has been listened to from the scriptures so as to culminate in their Intuitive experience, the benefit which has to accrue from the *Vedantic* teaching (instruction) will never be attained. For, such people, instead of attempting to determine or discriminate about the essential nature of Reality behind the universe, will be ever hankering after the sensual enjoyments in the external world. In this regard a scripture says: "*Paraachaha Kaamaananuyanti Baalaaste Mrityoaryanti Vitatasya Paasham; Atha Dheeraa Amritatwam Viditvaa Dhruvamadhruveshwiha Na Praarthayante.*" Meaning: "Only those who are devoid of *Viveka* or discrimination pursue desires or pleasures in the external world; they are like (innocent) children who are becoming a prey for Death which has cast its net everywhere. Therefore, those who are blessed with the ability to discriminate (Intuit) that Immortal Reality (which happens to be everyone's Self of the essence of Pure Being-Consciousness, Intuitive experience) remain without hankering after anything in this *Samsaara* or transmigratory existence, knowing full well that nothing here that can be acquired is eternal." — (*Kaathaka* or *Katthoapanishad* 4-2).

5. Q: Is it true that to obtain *Jnaana* or Intuitive Knowledge accruing from the *Vedantic* teaching, listening ('*Shravana*') to the *Upanishadic* precepts alone is enough?

A: Although for those *Uttamaadhikarins* or the superior, highly qualified (evolved) persons, who are infinitesimally small in number, exclusively the exercise of listening to the *Upanishadic* teachings alone may be sufficient, for the numerous aspirants that kind of listening to the scriptural texts like *Bhagavad Geeta* and *Brahma Sootras* in addition and then to collate and cogitate so as to find complete agreement in all their spiritual teachings will become necessary. For, the *Upanishads* are the fundamental *Shaastra Prasthaana*, meaning,

a scientific system of approach; the *Geeta* is a *Smriti Prasthaana* or a system based on memory adopted to explain the subtle purport or secrets of Intuitive Knowledge implicit in the *Upanishads*; and *Brahma Sootras* comprise the *Nyaaya Prasthaana* or logical system adopted to establish or determine the real purport of the *Vedantic* teaching by means of dialectics, Intuitive reasoning or ratiocinations etc. Thus true *Vedantic Jnaana* has per force to be determined on the strength of this triad of authoritative scriptural texts called *Prasthaana Traya*.

6. Q: Then is it that anyone, whosoever he may be, can listen to those *Prasthaana Trayas* and determine the real meaning or purport of *Vedanta*?

A: For those qualified people, who are independently sagacious and Intuitive in their reasoning and who have carried out *Vedaadhyayana* or study of the scriptural texts in the required traditional or conventional manner, these three *Prasthaanas* alone are sufficient. But in the case of those who are not sufficiently qualified to discern and determine the subtle import of the *Shaastras* will do well to grasp, comprehend the purport in accordance with the traditional methodology as propounded by Shri Shankaraachaarya in his extant and extensive *Bhaashyas* (commentaries).

7. Q: It seems that like Shri Shankaraachaarya there are other *Vrittikaaras* or commentators also. Neglecting or brushing aside all of them, why this compulsory insistence on determining the subtle meaning or purport of *Vedanta* exclusively on the strength of his teachings alone is stressed?

A: It is true that, prior to and contemporaneous with Shri Shankaraachaarya, with a view to determining the purport of the *Vedantic* texts many had written their own *Vrittis* or commentaries. But as a matter of historical fact, the veracity of this statement about other rival commentaries having been in existence prior to or during Shri Shankara's time can be ascertained solely from this great *Aachaarya's* own reference and analysis or refutation of such works; for, none of them is available today. Therefore, it has become inevitable to ascertain the opinions of these ancient *Vrittikaaras* exclusively from such considerations and deliberations of their tenets found in Shri Shankara's extant *Bhaashyas*.

8. Q: In recent times it is to be seen that many post-Shankara commentators have been clamouring that their respective commentary alone is 'Saampradaayic' or traditionally the genuine one and, in addition, they have been refuting Shri Shankara's

teachings! Will it not be proper to utilize their opinions too in our effort to determine the real purport of the Upanishadic spiritual teachings?

A: It has already been pointed out that unfortunately such opinions of other commentators either prior to or contemporaneous with Shri Shankara have to be ascertained only from the latter's *Bhaashyas* themselves. Shri Shankara has proved, beyond any shadow of a doubt, that all the defects existing in the various kinds of *Vyaakhyaanas* or commentaries of those rival commentators are correct. Further, although those post-Shankara commentators and critics have been claiming that their own theories alone are *Saampradaayic* or traditionally authentic and authoritative, the ancient original canonical texts which they adduce in their works are not at all available (to wit, such authoritative works seem to be imaginary and are a clever ruse to hoodwink the gullible and unwary students); it is also a hard fact that those (fictitious) variants of *Vedantic Siddhaanta* which these zealots have brought out have not been referred to and considered either by Adi Shankara himself or other *Darshanakaaras* (spiritual preceptors) who were his contemporaries. Hence one who considers this matter dispassionately with an unbiased mind will inevitably have to say that — 'In order to conclude that those spiritual teachings or theories have come down to us from time immemorial in a traditionally acknowledged method of pedagogics' — merely their 'pledge' to that effect is the support or proof.

9. Q: Is it not true that the rest of the commentators too, just like Shri Shankara, have established their respective tenets on the strength and support of scriptural statements and logical arguments and have further adduced proper logical arguments to show that the spiritual teachings of Shri Shankara himself are opposed to the genuine scriptural teachings as well as logic?

A: It is true indeed that the present-day commentators (*Bhaashyakaaras*) claim that they have examined the *Prasthaana* or method of approach adopted by Shri Shankara and then only they have refuted his teachings. But we have to thoroughly analyse the fact whether they have truly examined and refuted the *Siddhaanta* propounded by and implicit in Shri Shankara's original *Bhaashyas*. Here in this context what is actually true is: These so-called *Bhaashyakaaras* of the modern times have mistakenly believed and taken to be true those very *Vyaakhyaana Prasthaanas* or methodologies found in the later post-Shankara commentaries written by certain so-called *Advaita Aachaaryas*, advocating non-dualism, who have been professing that they are genuine followers of Adi Shankara, to be the real *Siddhaanta*

of that great teacher; and only after establishing the true methodology of Shri Shankara the student will be able to discern clearly that the post-Shankarites have expounded their respective tenets on the basis of very inept and unsustainable logical means and devices. For this reason too, it becomes quite essential to comprehend the real essence of the genuine *Shaankara Siddhaanta* after an in-depth examination of the true *Shaankara Prasthaana* or the genuine, original methodology implicit in those original *Bhaashyas* alone.

10. Q: In that case, how can we discern the secret purport of Shri Shankara's *Prasthaana* and on what basis?

A: The answer to this query will be dealt with in full detail in the next Chapter.

II. SHANKARA'S BHAASHYAS ALONE ARE THE PRINCIPAL MEANS TO DETERMINE THE SPIRITUAL TEACHING OF VEDANTA

11. Q: How can we determine, and on the strength of which authoritative sources, the genuine spiritual teachings (*Siddhaanta*) of *Vedanta* which have been propounded and proved to be true by Shri Shankaraachaarya in accordance with his traditional school of philosophy?

A: First and foremost, the sincere seeker or aspirant should deliberate upon the *Prasthaana Traya Bhaashyas*, which are acknowledged by many as having been authored by that eminent *Aachaarya*. Even then, he should give the pride of place to the *Sootra Bhaashyas*, over and above all, as the supreme authority for the purposes of judging and then utilize the other two *Bhaashya* teachings so as not to be in conflict with or contradiction to the former conclusions. For, *Sootra Bhaashya* is evidently a '*Nyaaya Prasthaana*' or an edifying and extremely rational or logical approach; to wit, it is a *Bhaashya* or explanatory commentary which has been undertaken with the prime and sublime purport of determining the *Upanishadic* teachings after discerning the genuine interpretations of the *Vedanta Vaakyas* or *Upanishadic* sentences based on select *Nyaayas* or axioms (This in itself is a profound pedagogic method — a highly esoteric one at that — of training imparted to only those who are properly qualified for it and fully equipped psychically and morally, to boot. In other words, it should be treated as more sacro-sanct and systematic indeed).

12. Q: The rest of the Aachaaryas too have declared that their respective commentaries have been formulated with a view to determining the Vedantic Siddhaanta alone on the strength of dialectics, is it not? In that case, why should we opt for Shri Shankara's school of philosophy with such bias in this regard?

A: The other Aarchaaryas present before the aspirants, at the outset, those *Pramaanas* or authoritative sources which they have acknowledged. Then they enforce constraints on the aspirants asking them to accept wholeheartedly that the *Upanishadic* sentences are, in the main, the most authoritative ones among all *Pramaanas* as they are 'Apourusheya' or not of human origin but of divine dispensation. Further they have accepted only those *Yuktis* or dialectical devices in keeping with the *Upanishadic* sentences. In this regard, they undertake to refute the opinions of the followers of other rival schools of philosophy on the strength of *Vaakya Pramaana* or *Upanishadic* statements or sentences as being sacro-sanct as also *Yuktis* in consonance with them. Thus those various *Bhaashyakaaras* keep on quarrelling among themselves, opposing one another by forwarding various *Pramaana Vaakyas* as well as *Yuktis*! Not only are those schools of philosophy opposed to one another but also the methods adopted by them for the purpose of refuting Shri Shankaraachaarya's methodology as envisaged in his extant *Bhaashyas* are also different in each case. It being so, since all these rival schools of philosophy have altogether put up numerous hurdles and hindrances in the matter (or path) of systematization, equitable and rational, of *Vedantic Siddhaanta* and have unwittingly contributed to the rampant confusion with regard to the burning question — "Which is the true methodology adopted in and through the *Upanishadic* lore?" — it becomes quite evident that their mutually contradictory *Bhaashyas* are not at all helpful in arriving at a convincing solution of the present problem.

13. Q: In that case, because Shri Shankaraachaarya's Bhaashyas too are neither in agreement with any other Bhaashya nor are acceptable to the rest of the commentators, it is tantamount to saying that the Siddhaanta acknowledged to be that of Shri Shankara also is rendered unacceptable universally indeed! Then what special merit can it profess to have or claim?

A: It has to be emphasized that Shri Shankaraachaarya has reiterated that while the purport of the *Upanishadic* teachings is being determined, not only the sentences of the *Shruti (Upanishads)* and such other canonical texts but also everyone's 'Anubhava' or Intuitive experience should be treated as a valid means of determination or proof (*Pramaana*); further, he has accepted the subtle but unfamiliar truth

that any *Pramaana* or valid means of knowledge, whatever it be, should necessarily engender the '*Anubhava*' or correct knowledge of its exclusive object (*Prameya*) and then, and then alone, it is fit to be accepted as a genuine *Pramaana*. Therefore, it amounts to saying that that spiritual teaching alone which has been founded on the support and strength of universal (that is, everyone's) *Anubhava* becomes eligible to be called 'the universally acknowledged *Siddhaanta*', and not otherwise.

14. Q: When *Anubhava* too differs from person to person, what special significance can be adduced to *Anubhava*?

A: Because *Anubhava* which is different for different persons is essentially *Valiyyaktika* or individuallistic, such *Anubhava* being rendered indeterminate or uncertain is true indeed. For example, it cannot be guaranteed that the dream that one person has experienced can be experienced by another. But the *Saarvatrika Anubhava* or the universal Intuitive experience, which is exclusively granted by divine dispensation to all human beings everywhere and at all periods of time without any exception whatsoever, of having the dream experience in general is uniquely one and the same and hence universal; and further, because it exists without any restrictions imposed by time, space or any other object or entity whatsoever, there can never arise any dispute or controversy whatsoever about that universal experience or *Anubhava*. Therefore, everyone, irrespective of his personal affinity towards, or conviction about, a particular school of philosophy, will have to per force acknowledge the *Siddhaanta* in accordance with the *Shrutis* (*Upanishads*) and *Anubhava* (Intuitive experience — which is universally and inviolably true and convincing) which this great *Aachaarya* has propounded in and through his *Bhaashyas* (which are, fortunately for all of us, extant, intact and readily available).

15. Q: If so, how come there have arisen so many different opinions with regard to Shri Shankaraachaarya's *Siddhaanta*? Because of the reason that it has given rise to so many controversies, you too are advocating for determining as to what exactly is his Vedantic teaching, is it not?

A: True. Total negligence of the fact that — "For his methodology (*Prasthaana*) the one prime support and foundation is *Saarvatrika Anubhava* alone" — by these disputants is the one prime cause for giving rise to many different interpretations and opinions about Shri Shankara's methodology. Therefore, first and foremost we have to determine whether Shri Shankara has, in truth, relied for the purposes of formulating his unique *Siddhaanta*, solely and exclusively on the firm

and founding support of *Saarvatrika Anubhava*. Even if it is so, how is it that till today this paramount truth has not dawned on the minds of the disputants? — is another question which we have now to thoroughly examine; only then we will be able to determine once for all without giving any room for doubt or misunderstanding as to what exactly is the essential nature and feature of this *Siddhaanta* which is fully in consonance with universal Intuitive experience (*Anubhava*).

16. Q: If it is true that Shri Shankara has primarily and unequivocally advocated the importance of *Saarvatrika Anubhava* alone, how can it be explained that he, just like the rest of the *Aachaaryas* or spiritual preceptors, has been championing the concept that — “For the Intuitive Knowledge (*Jnaana*) of the Ultimate Reality of *Brahman* or *Atman* (*Paramaarthata*) the validity (*Praamaanya*) of the *Vedanta Shaastra* alone is the true means of knowledge”? Where was the necessity for him to write his own (differing) *Bhaashya* to the principal *Upanishads*? And what is the reason for his attempt in writing, side by side, *Bhaashyas* on the *Geeta* and the *Brahma Sootras*?

A: (i) The rest of the *Vrittikaaras* (commentators) had not acknowledged the hard truth that — “In the *Upanishads* it has been one-pointedly taught as their ultimate purport that ‘*Atma Jnaana*’ (Self-Knowledge or Self-Realization) is attained by means *Anubhava* (Intuitive experience) alone.” Therefore, it becomes evident that the *Upanishadic* sentences do not become *Praamaana* (valid means of knowledge) merely on the solitary ground of their being sentences. Under the circumstances, it became quite necessary for Shri Shankara to stress with all the power and perspicacity at his command that — “For rightly interpreting and imbibing the subtle purport behind those esoteric sentences in the *Upanishads*, Intuitive experience (*Anubhava*) too is essential and inevitable.” It also became equally necessary for him to write his *Upanishadic Bhaashyas* so as to be acceptable to all Vedantins.

(ii) In the *Bhagavad Geeta* the quintessence of the meaning and purport of the *Vedantas* (*Upanishads*) alone is presented: in order to expound that — “In the *Geeta* too *Tattwa Jnaana* has been enunciated with the aid of *Yuktis* (logical devices) in consonance with *Anubhava* alone” — as well as its corollary that — “In the *Geeta* spiritual disciplines and practices (*Saadhanas*) in consonance with the above tenet have been taught” — Shri Shankara was compelled, so to speak, to write his *Bhaashyas*. Similarly, in order to determine and demonstrate as to — “How can one discern the truth that for the *Upanishads* and the *Bhagavad Geeta* this very prime purport is common?” — on the strength

of dialectics (*Yuktis*) he had to write his *Sootra Bhaashyas*. For, many commentators, prior to and contemporaneous with Shri Shankara, had written their respective commentaries (*Vrittis*) to demonstrate that — "Both in the *Upanishads* and the *Bhagavad Geeta* the *Jnaana* that is taught is essentially '*Upaasanaaroopa*' or of the form or nature of mental meditations alone." In such a confused and chaotic state of affairs in *Vedantic* circles it became all the more important and expedient to refute their erroneous tenets and to establish the truth on the unflinching and fundamental strength of logical devices fully in consonance with universal Intuitive experience (*Anubhava*, which is Absolute, beyond the realm of the senses and the mind, on the one hand, and outside the purview of time-space-causation categories, on the other) that — "In the *Upanishads* it has been propounded that *Jnaana* of '*Atma Vastu*' or the Intuitive Knowledge of the Reality of the Self (Pure Consciousness) alone is the '*Hetu*' or means — in its ultimate purport or perspective — for '*Parama Purushaartha*' or the final, ultimate destination (Beatitude) of all human existence and endeavour" — and as a secondary teaching that — "For the sake of the middle and low grade aspirants, both the psychic meditations (*Upaasanas*) and the physical rites and rituals (*Karmas*) have been enunciated in the *Shaastras*."

17. Q: In that case, it is tantamount to saying that because of the reason that Shri Shankara has demonstrated the truth that — "*Vedantic sentences must and should be in consonance with *Yukti* and *Anubhava**" — *Shaastra* is rendered to be merely '*Anuvaadaka*' or explanatory repetition or reference to what is already mentioned (to wit, it is analogous to any portion of that *Brahmana* which comments on, illustrates or explains in detail a '*Vidhi*' or direction or stipulation previously laid down and which does not itself lay down any new directions or stipulations; in other words, it is corroborative in nature) and not by itself independently a *Pramaana*, is it not?

A: Because the *Vedanta Shaastra* by itself instructs or propounds that — "*Parabrahman* or the Ultimate Reality of *Brahman*, *Atman*, which is the really real Transcendental Truth of all existence, can be Intuited or cognized both by means of *Anubhava* (*Saarovatrika Anubhava*) and *Yukti* in consonance with this universal *Anubhava*" — it amounts to saying that — "*Shaastra* alone is the exclusive *Pramaana* with regard to that subject-matter (of *Parabrahma Tattwa*)."

In this unique *Vedanta Shaastra* or spiritual science *par excellence* teaching the Ultimate, Absolute Reality of *Atman*, Shri Shankara, as is his wont,

has not at all exemplified or illustrated '*Valiyyaktika*' or individualistic *Yuktis* or *Anubhavas*; purposefully indeed he has mentioned *Saarvatrika Yuktis* and *Anubhavas* at the Intuitive level (to wit, at this esoteric, supramental level one invariably goes beyond all dualities of the empirical world as also all conceptual or ideological dualities and uncertainties indeed). Therefore, by these fallacious and fallible arguments or doubts raised by the opponents there is no danger or harm whatsoever posed to this *Shaastra's* '*Praamaanya*' or validity or authority as a canonical text; in fact, is it not true that because all *Praamaanas* of Knowledge give rise to an Intuitive Knowledge (*Anubhava*) of their respective objects or phenomena quite spontaneously and as the latter are entities *in esse* (*Yatharth*), they are called '*Praamaanas*'?

Besides, because of the paramount reason that Shri Shankara has proved, beyond doubt, in his commentary bristling with a mass of '*Sootras*' or aphorisms called '*Vedanta Meemaamsaa Shaastra*' that — "All the *Vedantas* or *Upanishads* have the ultimate puport (*Taatparya*) of bringing about the final (Intuitive) fruition of '*Aatmaikatwa Jnaana*' or the unitary, integral or plenary Intuitive experience of the Self as Pure, Non-dual Consciousness" — and, in addition, the sentences which teach *Upaasanas* are also having the '*Parama Taatparya*' or the final culmination in that very '*Jnaana*' in the ultimate analysis" — it becomes evident that '*Shaastra Praamaanya*' is established on a sound and steadfast foundation.

18. Q: If, as you have argued out, deliberation on the *Prasthaana Traya Bhaashyas* alone is enough for determining the essential validity and veracity of the *Siddhaanta* of this profound science of *Vedanta*, why did Shri Shankaraachaarya write certain other '*Prakarana Granthas*' or personal treatises dealing with specific topics enunciated in the *Vedanta Shaastra*? Is it not proper to treat those *Prakaranas* too as equally valid (*Praamaanas*) in the matter of determining the *Tattwa* or the Ultimate Reality?

A: It is true that among several Vedantins there is a conventional, deep-seated belief rampant to the effect that Shri Shankara has authored several *Vedanta Prakaranas*. It is also true that all at once we cannot affirm that there is no substantiating support for such a belief. Even so, it is certain beyond any doubt that there is no sufficient and convincing proof to categorically say that all those *Prakaranas* which have come into existence in his name and popularly known to be his works are truly written by him. For, at present many a time people are clamouring among themselves that two or three treatises with one and the same name are the works of Shri Shankaraachaarya. For example, the fact that under the one single title of — '*Prashnoattara Ratna Maalika*' — several treatises being published in Shri Shankara's name

has come to light. Not only such dubious *Prakaranas* contain certain *Upadeshas* or doctrines which in certain circumstances and contexts are mutually contradictory, but also are convincing evidences to conclude that they are not at all the great *Aachaarya's* works; at certain other times, quite contrary to the principal and prime spiritual teachings in his original *Bhaashyas* there exist texts which present and affirm those very topics and tenets in a different manner altogether. Under such a confusing state of affairs, it is enough if we discard totally those controversial, though popular, *Prakarana Granthas* and rely entirely and exclusively on the sound support and strength of his *Prathaana Traya Bhaashyas*.

19. Q: In addition to Shri Padmapaadaaachaarya and Shri Sureshwaraachaarya, who were famous as the direct disciples of the *Bhaashyakaara* (Shri Shankaraachaarya), there are also *Vyaa-khyaanakaaras* (post-Shankara commentators) who have been acknowledged by the present-day scholars and academicians as great erudite Vedantic preceptors; besides, Shri Vaachaspati Mishra, who has become famous as a dedicated research scholar in several schools of philosophy like *Saankhya*, *Yoga*, *Meemaamsaa*, *Nyaaya* etc., is one among them. Can it be said that efforts (in the form of his works and commentaries) of such an eminent scholar of recent times to determine the purport of Shri Shankaraachaarya's *Sootra Bhaashya* are not helpful for guidance here in this context?

A: The fact that all *Vyaakhyaanakaaras* (post-Shankara commentators or glossators) were the direct disciples of Shri Shankaraachaarya has not yet been established. For instance, to conclude that Shri Padmapaadaaachaarya, who is popularly accepted and is famous as Shri Shankaraachaarya's direct disciple, was himself the genuine author of the controversial text called '*Panchapaadika*', which is reputed to be the glossary on Shri Shankara's *Sootra Bhaashyas*, neither in that treatise itself nor in its later sub-commentaries by scholars going by the name of '*Vivaranakaaras*' there is to be found any reference or mention at all. Further, a medieval scholar by name Shri Vaachaspati Mishra, who had written a sub-commentary (*Vyaakhyaana*) by name '*Bhaamati*' on *Sootra Bhaashya*, had not only written a commentary on Shri Mandana Mishra's '*Brahma Siddhi*', a *Vedanta Prakarana Grantha*, but also it has been found that he has scrutinized and adopted in his glossary of '*Bhaamati*' some theories of Mandana Mishra. It being so, if we rely on the support or help of a *Vyaakhyaana Grantha* for our deliberation, it will amount to inviting the risk and danger of placing ourselves up against all kinds of hurdles and hindrances in our arduous task of determining Shri Shankara's pristine pure *Siddhaanta*.

20. Q: Nevertheless, these sub-commentators are undoubtedly ancient scholars who had unflinching respect and reverence for Shri Shankaraachaarya. Can it ever be disputed that if we take into account their opinions and examine them while determining the great Master's *Siddhaanta*, it will not be helpful in any way at all? Is it not quite rationally true also that it is better and more advantageous, though marginally may be, to seek guidance from those works of *Vyaakhyaanakaaras* who were very near to the *Aachaarya's* times and had the better facility of determining the *Siddhaanta* in a scientific manner than the present-day Vedantins who are far removed in time and are trying to determine it quite independently?

A: Not so. If only the *Vyaakhyaanakaaras* had followed the original *Bhaashyas* of Adi Shankara literally and had attempted to elucidate the secret and subtle meanings and purports of those texts, or, in the alternative, if they had attempted to seek and show as to which of the *Bhaashya* excerpts had been adduced to substantiate and support their own independent conclusions as and when such tenets had been presented before the general followers or readers, then in that event as suggested by you their sub-commentaries would have been invariably helpful in deciding the correct *Siddhaanta* in full agreement with the original *Bhaashyas*. But unfortunately that is not the real state of affairs at all. In support of this conclusion a few glaring examples are mentioned below:

- (i) These post-Shankara glossators have, instead of accepting and interpreting the simple and straightforward meaning of the *Bhaashya* portions even where they are very evident and indubitable, distorted the original *Bhaashya* sentences and have attempted to show that they have different (i.e. their own misconceived) meanings for them.
- (ii) They have surreptitiously introduced and interpolated such theories which have not even been suggested or mentioned anywhere in the *Bhaashyas*, and thereby they have strengthened the erroneous belief that quite different from the traditional and time-tested '*Bhaashya Prasthaana*' is the present-day, highly-speculative '*Vyaakhyaana Prasthaana*'.
- (iii) These post-Shankara *Vyaakhyaanakaaras* have projected their own doctrinaire or dogmatic theories quite contrary to the *Siddhaanta* which Shri Shankara had vociferously and vigorously propounded and have unwittingly brought about contradiction or abrogation of the very methodology which they have themselves acknowledged earlier.
- (iv) Not only have these post-Shankara sub-commentators have argued out amongst themselves mutually opposing one another's

Prasthaanas but also if one wishes to determine what exactly is their opinion he has per force to take recourse to other *Upavyaakhyaanas* or sub-commentaries. More often than not, those sub-commentaries too are, in certain circumstances or contexts, quite opposed to their own respective sources or original authoritative treatises.

- (v) So much so, for the present chaotic trend of the alien *Bhaashyakaaraas* (opposed to Shri Shankara and who are rabid, chronic critics of his — ever ready to pick holes in the latter's methodology and teachings) to have been invariably deluded to think that merely by refuting any one of these defective *Vyaakhyaanas* written by these post-Shankara commentators they have succeeded in condemning or refuting Shri Shankara's *Prasthaana* and *Siddhaanta* themselves — these numerous mutually contradictory *Vyaakhyaanas* have become solely responsible.

21. Q: All right. As per your above list of allegations and conclusions, can you give at least one apt illustration for each one of the five allegations for our edification?

- A:** (i) Example for distorting the meaning of the *Bhaashya* excerpt even in a context where its meaning or purport is indubitably evident and clear and further trying to show that there exists quite a different meaning for it:

“*Anyoanyasminnanyoanyaatamakataam Anyoanyadharmaam-shchaadhyasya Itaretaraavivekena. Atyantaviviklayoardharma-dharminoaho. Mithyaaajnaananimittaha Satyaanrute Mithuneekrutya 'Ahamidam', 'Mamedam' Iti Nalsargikoa(s)yam Loakavyavahaaraha*” — is the original *Bhaashya* excerpt.

Here in this context, it is crystal clear and unambiguously evident that the literal meaning of this *Bhaashya* statement is: “Although *Atman* and *Anaatman* (Self and not-self, respectively) and their respective *Dharmas* or characteristic qualities are extremely different and distinct, because of the reason that the one is not distinguished from the other by means of discrimination (*Itaretaraavivekena*), as a result of *Mithyaaajnaana* or misconception, people in general have been transacting in their workaday world in the forms of ‘I am this’, ‘this is mine’, and such transactions are quite natural and innate (*Nalsargika*).”

Even so, it is distorted in the manner: The word ‘*Nalsargika*’ means ‘*Pratyakchaitanyasattaamaatraanubandhi*’ — meaning, that phenomenon which is conjoined to the Pure Being or Existence of the internal Pure Consciousness; further,

'*Loakavyavahaaraha*' (which, literally speaking, means — 'routine, mundane transactions carried out by the common run of people) is distorted to mean — '*Loakaha Iti Vyavahaaraha, Manushyaa(s)ham Ityabhlmaanaha*' — meaning, the feeling or thought entertained by the people to the effect — 'I am a human being': '*MithyaaJnaananimittaha*' — meaning, '*Mithyaa TadaJnaanam Cha MithyaaJnaanam..... Tannimittaha Tadupaa-daanaha*' — meaning, *Ajnaana* or non-comprehension which is false (*Mithyaa*) and indefinable (*Anirvachaneeya*) which is itself the '*Nimitta*', that is, material cause (*Upaadaana Kaarana*) — (*Panchapaadika* pp 84-88). Thus one *Vyaakhyaanakaara* has distorted the original *Bhaashya* sentence and drawn his own conclusions and his is very clearly a naive attempt to squeeze into the *Bhaashya* the alien concept or theory of '*Avidyaa Upaadaana*' (*Avidyaa* itself treated as a potential force which is the material cause for the world of duality) — suitable to his own queer but erroneous *Siddhaanta*.

- (ii) Example for evolving and projecting theories or concepts nowhere to be found in the original *Bhaashyas*:

The *Bhaashyakaara's Siddhaanta* is: "By means of '*SamyajaJnaana*' or Intuitive experience of the Self one's '*MithyaaJnaana*' or misconception is totally removed and the *Jnaani* (Self-Realized one) gets convinced that never in the three tenses of time his essential nature of Being was of the forms of '*Kartru*' or an agent of action or '*Bhoaktru*' or an enjoyer."

Quite contrary to this *Bhaashya* interpretation some post-Shankara commentators have written in their treatises like '*Ishta Siddhi*' and '*Vivarana*' etc. that: "Till the fall of the physical body an '*Avidyaa Lesha*' (a remnant of nescience or non-comprehension), meaning, a '*Samskaara*' or a latent impression and its remnant invariably exists." Some others have even gone to the extent of imagining that, in the contexts where it is said that the sea-shell (nacre) and rope etc. are misconceived to be silver and snake, respectively, etc. an indefinable silver (*Anirvachaneeya Rajata*) and an indefinable snake (*Anirvachaneeya Sarpa*) etc. are born actually as effects of the causal *Avidyaa* and then have foolishly proceeded to adduce peculiar but puerile *Yuktis* to uphold their own whimsical, untenable opinions.

- (iii) Example for projecting their own conceptual theory quite contrary to the one teaching specifically reiterated by the *Bhaashyakaara*:

Although Shri Shankara in his (extant, original) *Bhaashyas* has stressed that '*Adhyaasa*' or misconception is '*Anaadi*' or

beginningless (to wit, without a cause, as it is not an effect of something and hence a natural phenomenon in everyone's empirical experience: further, it can be, in a manner of speaking, equated with 'Avidyaa' or nescience, ignorance or non-comprehension, but not with *Maayaa*). some post-Shankara commentators have (erroneously and totally oblivious of the traditional methodology) projected that for this *Adhyaasa* a new formulation called '*Avidyaa Shakti*' or potential force of nescience is the cause: and *Avidyaa* and *Naamaroopaatmaka Maayaa* (illusory phenomena of the nature of names and forms — mainly referring to the empirical world of duality) are both one and the same. Shri Vaachaspati Mishra, who had earlier propounded that the *Adhyaasa* (misconception born out of mutual superimposition) between *Atman* (Self) and *Anaatman* (not-self) is itself *Avidyaa*, has later on stated that '*Avyaaakrita*' or unmanifested seed form of the world of duality (which is really nothing but and synonymous with *Maayaa*, according to Shri Shankara) is itself *Avidyaa* and this latter is said to be manifold, one for each *Jeeva* or soul — quite contrary to his own earlier statement as well as to the *Bhaashya* (which he has declared he has followed and commented upon by way of elucidation). Further, he has opined that *Adhyaasa* and *Jeevatwa* are, like the axiom pertaining to the seed and the sprout, mutually a cause for the other — this doctrine too is quite contrary to Shri Shankara's *Bhaashya*.

(iv) Example for the various exponents of *Vyaakhyaana Prasthaana* disputing mutually amongst themselves as also for the sub-commentaries on these *Vyaakhyaanas* being contradictory to their original sources:

(a) Thinking that Vaachaspati Mishra, who is the author of *Bhaamatee Vyaakhyaana*, has opined that — '*Jeeva* is of an essential nature quite separate from the *Antahkarana* (Mind) and that between *Jeeva* and *Paramaatman* (the Supreme Self) there exists a relationship just as that between *Ghataakaasha* or pot-space and *Mahaakaasha* or huge open space. Shri Prakaashaatma, who has written a sub-commentary (*Vivarana*) on *Panchapaadika* (popularly believed to have been written by Shri Padmapadaachaarya, a direct disciple of Shri Shankara), has enumerated some *Yuktis* (logical devices) to establish his own exclusive *Prasthaana* or methodology by propounding afresh that - "*Jeeva* is a *Pratibimba* or reflection of *Brahman* in *Avidyaa*."

(b) In the original source, viz. *Panchapaadika*, for his sub-commentary, although it has been stated therein that the sentences advocating that '*Shravana*', '*Manana*' etc. have to

be practised are '*Arthavaada*.' or of secondary importance alone. Shri Prakaashaatma has misinterpreted it saying that — "*Shravana* has been stipulated by way of a *Vidhi* or injunction in the *Upanishads* and that the first *Sootra* or aphorism in the *Shaareeraka Meemaamsaa*, viz. '*Athaatoa Brahma Jijnaasaa*', meaning — 'Now then (the totality of the teaching of) *Brahman* (the Ultimate Reality) for the sake of those who have its *Jijnaasaa* (desire to know)' — has the exclusive purport of determining the qualifications etc. of those who can perform or observe that '*Shravana Vidhi*' or injunction for listening — quite contrary to both *Panchapaadika* and the *Bhaashya* texts.

- (c) With regard to the three aspects of direct Intuitive spiritual practices of *Shravana* (listening to the *Upanishadic* texts), *Manana* (ratiocinating or ruminating over that which is heard) and *Nididhyaasana* (contemplating on the Ultimate Reality of the Self so as to culminate here and now in its Intuitive experience), on the subject as to which of them is the '*Angi*' or the predominant factor and which is the '*Anga*' or the secondary factor — there were conflicting opinions between the *Bhaamatee Prasthaana* and the *Vivarana Prasthaana* and both these *Vyaakhyaanas* are opposed to the original *Bhaashya* texts (of Shri Shankara) which propound that — "Merely from *Shravana* alone *Jnaana* or Intuitive Knowledge of the Ultimate Reality of the Self may accrue (to the highly evolved first-grade *Jijnaasu*)."
- (d) Although Shri Vaachaspati Mishra has opined in his '*Bhaamatee*' that — "There are two '*Anirvaachya*' or indefinable *Avidyaas* called '*Kaaranaavidyaa*' and '*Kaaryaavidyaa*' " — in the sub-commentary on *Bhaamatee* called '*Kalpataru*' there is a persistent attempt to establish that between those two *Avidyaas* one is called '*Moolaavidyaa*'.
- (e) If an ardent student or a discerning scholar who is not biased or gullible makes a cool-headed, incisive deliberation on what Shri Shankara's original *Bhaashya* says on the *Vedanta Sootra* (1-2-23), viz. "*Roopoapanyaasaachha*", on the one hand, and how cleverly but surreptitiously the same *Bhaashya* text has been distorted in *Bhaamatee Vyaakhyaana*, and in its turn, how this latter version is further distorted in its sub-commentary, viz. *Kalpataru*, and further in its sub-commentary, viz. *Parimala*, then he cannot miss to notice very clearly how at each later stage there has been a progressive contradiction.

Thus because of the reason that the fact — “The internal and mutual disputations engendered among the various *Vyaakhyaanakaaras* have become the root cause for the alien, rival *Bhaashyakaaras* (like Raamaanujaachaarya, Madhwaachaarya etc.) misunderstanding or wrongly comprehending genuine *Shaankara Siddhaanta* and therefrom jumping to the erroneous but delusive conclusion that — ‘Refutation of the *Vyaakhyaana Prasthaanas* is itself tantamount to the refutation of Shri Shankara's Vedantic teachings propounded in his (original) *Bhaashyas*” — is so very clear, we have not ventured further by enumerating more such glaring examples.

Under the circumstances, in such a confounding and chaotic state of affairs caused by (a) the *Vyaakhyaanakaaras*, (b) the followers of various conflicting *Prasthaanas*, (c) rival *Bhaashyakaaras* having written and published a vast Vedantic literature quite contrary to the pristine pure Shankara's *Bhaashya*, and, in addition, having propagated mutually contradictory interpretations — the scenario in which the present-day *Jijnaasu* or aspirant finds himself totally deluded and dazed to judge as to which among them all is correct and which is wrong, is, to say the least, pitiable and pathetic.

22. Q: In that case, what is your considered opinion as to which proper and correct path the true aspirant has to adopt in order to discern the genuine *Vedanta Siddhaanta*?

A: (i) First and foremost, he should study and deliberate upon Shri Shankara's original *Bhaashyas* which are the most ancient and traditionally authentic and authoritative works and thereupon determine the *Vedanta Siddhaanta* that can be deduced from them so as to be totally in agreement (having reconciled all the apparent contradictions that may crop up from the standpoint of the uninitiated or the newly initiated).

(ii) This complete reconciliation has to be per force achieved in accordance with *Saarvatrika Anubhava* alone (as stressed earlier).

(iii) And then, in consonance with a *Siddhaanta* arrived at in such a highly rational and Intuitive manner, other spiritual teachings even from the *Vyaakhyaanas* and *Bhaashyaantaras* in so far as they are unopposed to the above-mentioned *Siddhaanta*, *Yukti* and *Anubhava* also may be accepted. One should develop such a catholicity of the mind, sagacious and supersubtle.

23. Q: You have been saying that *Vyaakhyaanakaaras* as well as the rest of the *Bhaashyakaaras* have been disputing with one another believing that the subject-matter of *Vedanta Siddhaanta* is nothing other than *Upaasana* which has an invisible (posthumous)

fruit. If so, how at all we can come across a Tattwa (spiritual tenet) which is in consonance with Anubhava in their literature?

A: The *Vyaakhyaanakaaras* have deliberated upon the purport of *Vedantic* sentences which pertain to 'Vastu' or the Reality. Therefore, in contexts where their interpretations or opinions are not in contradiction with the original *Bhaashyas* (of Shri Shankara) they should be necessarily accepted.

Because even in the sentences pertaining to the *Upaasana Vidhis* the Ultimate Reality (*Paramaarth*) of *Brahman* alone has been stipulated by way of an injunction to be meditated upon (*Upaasana*) for the sake of, or the benefit of, the middle-class aspirants, to the extent the essential nature of *Brahman*, which is defined in those *Vidhi* sentences to be made the object for meditation (*Upaasya*), is in consonance with the *Brahma Swaroopa* mentioned in the *Brahma Vaakya* we must necessarily believe it to be valid (*Pramaana*). Only the deliberations pertaining to the fruits or results which are promised to be attained in other births or other worlds (*Janmaantara* and *Loakaantara Phalas*) on the mere authority of the *Shaastra* should be determined in accordance with grammatical or syntactic rules as applied to the interpretation of sentences (*Vaakya Dharma*) and axiomatic regulations stipulated in *Meemaamsaa Shaastra*. Even with regard to *Avaldika* or non-Vedic religious tenets, if there are instructions which are *Apratishiddha* or not refuted, then even for such tenets there may be scope here in this context. We should never forget that for 'Vedanta Siddhaanta', in the main, *Vedantas* or *Upanishads* alone are the original authoritative sources.

III. THE IMPORTANCE GIVEN TO ADHYAASA BHAASHYA IN SHAANKARA PRASTHAANA

24. Q: After discarding both the *Vyaakhyaanas* and the *Bhaashyaantar*, is there any easy device to determine the *Vedanta Siddhaanta* in accordance with Shri Shankara's methodology?

A: Yes, of course. This great teacher has, in truth, given the quintessence of all his *Prasthaana* in his work called 'Adhyaasa Bhaashya', which he has written in the form of an introduction to his 'Sootra Bhaashya'. Here in this book, first, it will be explained as to how this brief *Adhyaasa Bhaashya* serves the purpose of being an introductory commentary to the elaborate *Bhaashya* on the *Shaareeraka Meemaamsaa Sootras*. Then we will try to demonstrate as to how Shri Shankara is fully engaged and engrossed in repeatedly utilizing those very opinions or conclusions which he has deduced and depicted

in this introductory *Bhaashya* in his endeavour to determine, nay establish, for all times the real purport of *Vedanta Vaakya* or the *Upanishadic* sentences

25. Q: Is it your considered opinion that all the important and prominent topics which are propounded or enunciated in the *Vedanta Shaastra* are condensed in this introduction? Can we believe at all this apparently tall claim that in this small-sized text itself all the essence of such huge treatises like the *Upanishad Bhaashyas* as well as the *Geeta Bhaashya* has been compacted? Even if it is so, can we further believe that both the followers of the *Vyaakhyaana Prasthaana* and the rival *Bhaashyakaaras* who have propounded their own different systems of spiritual teachings (*Siddhaantas*) have shown a Nelson eye, so to speak, to this fact about this *Adhyaasa Bhaashya* and have proceeded quite nonchalantly to determine the purport of *Vedantic Reality* on the basis of their respective methodologies?

A: In fact, in order to bring home to our readers all these truths in this treatise alone we have undertaken this arduous task. Hence, (a) to explain in detail each topic with its subtle purport and authentic source found in this condensed introductory text; (b) to pinpoint the attention of the *Jijnaasus* (aspirants) towards the fact that in the later parts of the *Bhaashyas* how this prime purport has been detected and described at various places repeatedly and how from different viewpoints it is examined and explained by Shri Shankara; and finally, (c) to clarify or elucidate the hard fact as to how the followers of the various *Vyaakhyaana Prasthaanas* and the *Bhaashyaantarakaaras* have totally neglected this importance of the *Introductory Bhaashya on Adhyaasa*, or, perhaps, not being able to grasp the esoteric aspects of those spiritual teachings how they have, because of their pride in their own different methodologies or theories, tried to explain and adopt Shri Shankara's opinions or teachings in quite a different, distorted manner — in all such manifold directions we will extend our efforts.

26. Q: What is the reason for giving or attaching greater importance to *Adhyaasa Bhaashya* than all the other *Bhaashyas* (on *Prasthaana Traya*)?

A: “*Evamayamanaadlranantaa(s)dhyasoa Mithyaapratyayaroopaha Kartrutwabhoaktrutwapravartakaha, Sarvaloakapratyakshaha*” — meaning, “In this manner *Adhyaasa* (misconception), which is *Anaadi* (beginningless), *Ananta* (endless) and *Swaabhaavika* (quite natural), is of the nature of misconception and is capable of projecting both *Kartrutwa* (agentship of action) and *Bhoaktrutwa* (enjoyership) and is in everyone's experience.”

(1) The disparateness and distinctness of the two *Vedantic* viewpoints, viz. *Paramaārtha Drishti* (Absolute, Transcendental viewpoint of the Witnessing Principle or Pure Consciousness) and *Vyavahaara Drishti* (the mundane, empirical viewpoint of the ego or 'I' notion); (2) the possibility of determining the *Paramaārtha* or the Absolute Ultimate Reality (of the Self, Pure Consciousness) on the exclusive strength of *Anubhava* (Intuitive experience) as also *Yukti* (logical devices, arguments) in consonance with the above-mentioned *Anubhava*, without getting caught in the delusive web of the various controversial and mutually conflicting disputes and dialectical wrangles — These two principal features have not been exemplified and elucidated in such an easy and simple manner in any other treatise whatsoever except in this compact, concise *Bhaashya* on *Adhyaasa*. Therefore, it is to be emphasized that it is quite proper to take or adopt this *Bhaashya* portion as the main founding source to determine the true *Vedantic Siddhaanta*.

27. Q: You have previously in the book entitled — “The Essential Adi Shankara” (already published by Adhyatma Prakasha Karyalaya, Thyagarajanagar, Bangalore-28 earlier this year) — elaborated upon the essential teachings of *Vedanta Siddhaanta* by Adi Shankara, is it not? Now where was the necessity of publishing another *Prakarana Grantha* pertaining to the same subject?

A: Though it is true that in the recent book — “The Essential Adi Shankara” — published in 1991 by us the quintessence of the *Siddhaanta* had been given, the two salient features, viz. (i) ‘the fact that in the introductory commentary called *Adhyaasa Bhaashya* the principal spiritual teachings of *Vedanta* have been depicted’: (ii) ‘the fact that the tenets implicit in that introductory commentary have been repeatedly elucidated in so many ways in the *Sootra Bhaashya*’ — were not demonstrated in that earlier publication: hence, in order to fulfil that onerous task this *Prakarana* has become a necessity.

IV. THE ESSENTIAL NATURE OF ADHYAASA AND THE MUNDANE TRANSACTIONS CAUSED BY IT

28. Q: What is the prime conclusion or verdict of *Adhyaasa Bhaashya*?

A: “*Evamayamanaadīranantoa Nalsargikoa(s)dhyāasoa Mithyaapratyayaroopaha Kartrutwa-Bhoakrutwapravartakaha Sarvaloakapratyākshaha*” — (This part of the *Bhaashya* is already exemplified and its translation given under Question No. 26 above): “*Asyaanarthahetoaho Prahānaaya Aatmaikatwapratiṭṭāy Sarve Vedantaā Aarabhyante*”

— meaning. “Through the means of destroying totally this *Adhyaasa* which is the root cause for the catastrophe of ‘*Samsaara*’ (transmigratory existence) all the *Upanishads* have taken up that one sole purpose of helping the aspirant so that he may attain the ‘*Aatmaikatwa Vidyaa*’ (the Intuitive Knowledge of the unity or non-duality of *Atman*).”

It need not be gainsaid that from this one sentence it is quite clear that the decisive final verdict of the introductory *Adhyaasa Bhaashya* is that — “The whole *Upanishadic* lore is directed and dedicated to the sole purpose of teaching ‘*Aatmaikatwa Vidyaa*’ so as to enable the aspirant to get rid of this mutual *Adhyaasa* (misconception) between *Atman* and *Anaatman* which is of the nature of delusion alone and which is quite but natural to, and inherent in, every human being.

29. Q: What is meant by ‘Aatmaikatwa Vidyaa’?

A: The conviction that — “*Atman* alone is the ‘*Paramaarthasatya*’ or the Ultimate, Absolute Reality” — is called in *Vedantic* parlance ‘*Aatmaikatwa Vidyaa*’.

30. Q: Atman means the essential nature of Being of the Jijnaasu or aspirant alone, is it not? Anything other than that, whatsoever it may be, is not real, is it not?

A: Yes. nothing else is real. All else is ‘*Anrita*’. meaning. ‘Though it appears as if it is real, it is not, in reality, an existing entity.’

31. Q: You mean to say that this world of duality which is being perceived by all of us is also not real, is it not? From the statement — “Atman alone is real” — itself is it not evident that the other things or the world of duality are existing?

A: It is true that the common run of people are carrying on their workaday transactions of the type of — “What is being perceived as an object or substance is ‘*Satya*’ or real; what is objectified or perceived through a ‘*Pramaana*’ or valid means of cognition is ‘*Satya*’ or real; what is subject to the regulations of action and fruit of action in one series of time, space and causation categories is ‘*Satya*’ or real” — by connoting certain meanings to the word ‘*Satya*’. But such characteristics may be suitably addressed to the perceptible world of duality seen in a dream too and the objects which seem to exist in it. When the *Upanishads* declare that — “*Atmanis Satya* or real” — they do not connote this meaning to that word ‘*Satya*’. The purport which the *Upanishads* have is said to be: “That Entity which, once determined to exist in a particular nature or form, does not change or give up that nature or

form is alone called '*Satya*.' In this sense and with this meaning, *Atman* alone is *Satya*, the really real Entity. All else is *Anrita* or a false appearance, indeed.

32. Q: Why did Shri Shankaraacharya formulate afresh, in complete contravention of and by discrediting the universally acknowledged characteristics of empirical phenomena which are called '*Satya*' and '*Anrita*', his own uncommon and exclusive conditions and characteristics for them as suited to and needed by his own exclusive *Siddhaanta*?

A: These are not at all characteristics imagined or formulated by Shri Shankara by himself to suit his teachings; they are, in fact, characteristics established and acknowledged by the *Shrutis*, *Smritis* and *Nyaaya Shaastra*. For example:

(a) In the *Taittiriya Shruti (Upanishad)* it is stated: "*Satyam Chaanritam Cha Satyamabhavat; Yaddam Kincha; Tatsatyamityaachakshate*" — (*Taittiriya* 2-6). Meaning: "*Satyam* or Reality became '*Satyam*' and '*Anritam*' or real and unreal phenomena (in the empirical realm); all this perceptible world It became. That alone is being called '*Satyam*' or real."

Here it is explained that although in the absolute sense or in the ultimate analysis (to wit, from the standpoint of the Absolute, Transcendental Reality of Pure Consciousness, Self) *Atman* alone is really real; what the people in the workaday world (i.e. empirical or mundane realm) transact in the forms (pairs of opposites) like '*Satyam*' and '*Anritam*' are both '*That Absolute Reality*' alone.

(b) In the *Bhagavad Geeta (Smriti)* it is stated: "*Naasatoa Vidyate Bhaavoa Naabhaavoa Vidyate Sataha; Ubhayoarapi Drishto(s)nta-stwanayoastattwadarshibhih*" — (*Geeta* 2-16). Meaning: "*Asat* or false phenomenon has no existence; *Sat* or real entity has no non-existence; the *Tattwadarshis* or those who have realized or Intuited the Ultimate Reality of *Atman* have cognized, and are thereby convinced of, these two (misconceived) forms or phenomena" — thus the same above meaning has been propagated.

Here in this context too *Sat* means *Atman* who is of an immutable and invariable essence of Being; *Asat* means even after it is determined or established as to what the essence of being of a thing is, that thing has the nature of getting changed or undergoing a mutation in its essence of being.

(c) Even if one examines this topic (teaching) from the point of view of *Yukti*, we arrive at the same conclusion indeed. For, whatever phenomenon which is misconceived in or superimposed upon

Atman or the Absolute, Pure Being-Consciousness never continues or persists to 'exist' in the same essential nature of being; on the other hand, it keeps on changing its forms and undergoes mutations galore.

Therefore, in the empirical transactions or, for that matter, in the mundane realm, whether it be the common run of people or the scholar, and further whether they (by dint of their natural *Avidyaa*) observe and connote any meanings to the words '*Satyam*' and '*Anritam*', when we are engaged in and concerned about determining the supreme or Absolute (*Parama*) Reality or Entity (*Artha* or *Tattwa*) it is quite in order and proper in adopting the *Shaastric* characteristics which also happen to be quite rational, nay Intuitive, in nature. Hence, with this intention or purport at the back of his mind alone Shri Shankara has enunciated in his introductory *Adhyaasa Bhaashya* as follows:

"Anyoanyaasmin Anyoanyaatmakataam Anyoanyadharmaamshch-aadhyasya Itaretaraavivekena, Atyantaviviktayoardharmadharminoa-mithyaajnaana Nimittaha Satyaanrite Mithuneekritya 'Ahamidam', 'Mamedam' — Iti Naisargikoa(s)yam Loakavyavahaaraha".

The salient features of this sentence are:

- (i) *Atman* is '*Satyam*' or real, while *Anaatman* is '*Anrita*' or false; both these can never possibly swap positions or their essential natures. Further, one's intrinsic characteristics or qualities can never become those of the other in whatever manner or forms. Thus these two are totally distinct or different from each other.
- (ii) Even so, by dint of (the innate defect or lacuna of) not being able to distinguish between them, *Mithyāājnaana* (misconception) has arisen and as a result of this latter misconception people in general have quite naturally mixed up the two (opposites) and have been transacting in the forms of 'I am this' and 'this is mine.'
- (iii) And this mode of transaction is not at all something born or caused by way of an event in time; in truth, as a natural and inherent essence of being of everyone's '*Antahkarana*' or inner instrument as the mind it lurks, so to speak, in one's psyche.

33. Q: In the description of the empirical transaction of the type of — 'I am this' and 'this is mine' in the *Bhaashya*, why is the usage of the word 'this' made?

A: The word — 'I' — indicates the form of Pure Consciousness (*Chaitanya*) as the *Vishayi* or subject as well as of the essential nature of Consciousness or sentience (Intuition), while the word — 'this' — signifies the *Anaatman* or not-self (which is insentient) which is invariably *Vishaya* or an object. It should be affirmed here that — "That

which is '*Chetana*' (conscious or sentient) will ever be self-illuminating and will always be of the essential nature of illuminating its *Vishaya* and making it perceptible. From this, it can be surmised that — "The *Atma Vastu* or the Ultimate Reality of everyone's Self, which is eternally (*Nitya*) of the essential nature of Pure Being-Consciousness (*Chaitanya Swaroopa*), can never even be imagined by our mind that 'It' can be conceived as the *Anaatman* or not-self which is an object (*Vishaya*), insentient (*Achidroopa*).” Even so, it is a wonder of wonders that it can be noticed that identifying with the *Anaatman* which is an object as 'I' (*Ahampratyayagoachara*) every one is carrying on his or her empirical transactions. It is not possible even to conjecture as to how one can ever fully identify with any phenomenon, which is indubitably an object, as 'I' (myself).

This empathy or, in the language of psychology, 'the power of projecting one's personality into the object of contemplation — and coined after the Greek word '*empathela*' — is the technique for *Upaasanas*, meant mainly for the middle-class aspirants or *Jijnasus*.

Can anyone even guess that — "Light is dark" — in any period of time? Vice versa, can any one say — "Darkness is light"? Further, is it possible for any one at any time to conceive that — "In the phenomenon called light, there exists at least some traces of darkness"? Contrawise, is it possible to imagine that in stark darkness some traces of the essential nature of light do exist? Even so, hey presto, the common people conceive of a relationship of the non-dual Reality of *Atman*, of the very essence of Pure, Absolute Consciousness (*Adviteeya Chaitanya Swaroopa*), with the *Anaatman*, of the very essence of insentience, and then, as if that in itself is not enough fool-hardiness, venture out to believe innately that these two eternally opposed phenomena do have an organic relationship and, consequently, transact in the form of — "This is mine." It stands to the credit and glory of this 'All-time Great World Teacher', viz. Shri Shankaraacharya, that he exemplified, nay demonstrated quite convincingly, such a commonplace but highly delusive form of our workaday transaction which is indeed at the very root of all our waking experiences from early morning till bed time. True *Jijnasus*, worth any merit whatsoever, must be able to cognize this basic, fundamental defect of *Adhyaasa* in themselves if they ever wish to understand the subtleties and higher esoteric teachings of Shri Shankara. This very hard but cruel fact of life has been enunciated by the universal preceptor at the outset in his first sentence of the famous '*Adhyaasa Bhaashya*' in the form of a logical proposition:

"Yushmadasmnatpratyayagoacharayoaho, Vishayavishayinoaho Tamahaprakaashavadvairuddhaswabhaavayoaho Itaretarabhaavaanupapattou Siddhaayaam, Taddharmaanaamapi Sutaraam Itaretarabhaavaanupapattihi — Ityataha Asmatpratyayagoachare Vishayini Chidaatmake

Yushmatpratyayagoacharasya Vishayasya. Taddharmaanaam Chaa-dhyaasaha. Tadviparyayena Vishaylnastaddharmaanaam Cha Vishaye Adhyaasoa Mithyett Bhavltum Yuktam." Meaning — Because of the reasons that — (a) *Vishaya* (object) and *Vishayi* (subject), which have become cognizable as the objects for the two *Pratyayas* or concepts of 'you' and 'I', respectively, and which are of mutually opposite natures like darkness and light; (b) consequently, the possibility of one being of the essential nature of the other can never be rationally acceptable, as it is patently established (in every one's experience); (c) collaterally speaking, their respective inherent qualities or characteristics (*Dharmas*) can never be accepted to be interchangeable, (with the veracity of this truth also being established) — it is completely reasonable to accept the verdict that — "In the 'I'-notion (the object for the *Pratyaya* or percept of 'I') which is the *Vishayi* as also the *Chidroopa Tattwa* (entity of the very essence of Pure Consciousness), the *Vishaya*, which is perceived as an object as 'You', is misconceived (superimposed) and vice versa; in a similar fashion, their respective *Dharmas* or inherent, intrinsic natures or characteristics too, are mutually misconceived (*Adhyaasa*) is, in truth, absolutely false."

Although while describing the form or type of empirical transactions in general the word — '*Anaatman*' — meaning, not-self, has been addressed as 'this' in this propositional sentence (at the commencement) viz. '*Yushmatpratyayagoachare*', it is described as being suited to be addressed to the notion of 'you'; there is a purport behind this apparent discrepancy. In our workaday transactions, 'this I' (such and such an 'I') — in this manner the two words — 'this' and 'I' — are not only addressed to the *Vishaya* (object) and the *Vishayi* (subject), respectively, but also they are used for an object too. But it becomes incomprehensible as to how one can use expressions like — 'I which is you' and 'you which is I' — in any context whatsoever; for, it is so very clearly discernible that — 'You can never be I' — as also that — 'I can never be you'. It being so, it should be clearly understood that here in this context Shri Shankara has attempted successfully to bring home the full force of the hard fact of all transmigratory life that — '*Anaatman*' or not-self, which can always and invariably be addressed as 'You', distinguishable from one's own subjective 'I', can never be associated or blended organically with the sentient and self-cognitive 'I', and reckoned or even spoken of in that fashion. (In other words, much better than the use of the word 'this', the epithet or significant appellation of 'you', which is so very obviously and physically noticeable, is suitable to drive home the idea). Even so, it is the irony of life that in *Atman* (Self) who is of the very essence of Pure Consciousness (*Chidroopa*) and, consequently, for whom only the subjective (self-conscious) appellation of 'I' can rightly be used in all our empirical transactions — in other words, which can never be dealt with in

the form of 'You' (an object, insentient phenomenon) — all the human beings (unwarily and unwittingly, as it were) mix up the *Anaatman* which is extremely and totally of an opposite and alien character and nature to that of *Atman* and are carrying on the whole gamut of their mundane dealings. And, this phenomenon is in the experience of each and every one of us human beings without any exception whatsoever. This is the subtle meaning of this part of the *Bhaashya*.

34. Q: What is meant by 'Vyavahaara' or empirical transactions?

A: (a) To know or cognize in the manner — 'It is like this'. (b) to communicate the same through speech or language to others and (c) behave in accordance with it — these three together are called 'Vyavahaara'.

35. Q: Who has ever taken the world which is *Anaatman* to be 'I'? Are there any persons saying so anywhere? Does anybody demonstrate or exhibit in their behaviour treating this external world of duality and variety as 'I' and 'mine' at all? Does anyone ever deal with his own self in the manner — 'This world alone is myself'? Surely this is a false (highly ridiculous) accusation only; it seems to be clearly a figment of imagination and an unfounded allegation levelled against all human beings indeed!

A: Not so. The fact that — "People in general are carrying on empirical transactions of the nature of this *Adhyaasa*" — is in the experience of myself, yourself and all others (It is universally human to do so). To explain: "When you say — 'I am not this world', you deem all your body, senses and mind taken together as one unit called and addressed as 'I' and on that basis alone you are now talking, is it not so? (See it for yourself with a good measure of concentration and introvertedness). Is it not true that all human beings have believed that — 'I am born in this world; I grow up, live and survive for a long period in this world; eventually, one day or the other I have to leave it behind and go — such a mortal am I!'; they further speak in that manner and in accordance with such thoughts, sentiments and feelings they behave."

It is true that no one — whosoever he or she may be — is transacting in the manner — "This world is myself". But in the unit of 'I' which the people in general are dealing with in all their mundane transactions, besides their own inherent essence of Being as the Self (Pure Being-Consciousness, *Shuddha Chaitanya*) the alien, extraneous constituents of the body and the senses, which are distinctly not this essential nature of our Self, are mixed up; and this hard fact (which any intelligent person can easily discern, given a modicum or measure

of introverted vision, shall we say) can never be denied or refuted by any one, whosoever he or she may be. Further, it is in every one's experience that — "Despite realizing the truth that they are *Anaatman* alone, not one's Intuitive Self, each one of us is carrying on our workaday transactions in the manner — 'This is my body; these are my senses' — indeed." All this is *Adhyaasa*, pure and simple, is it not?

36. Q: What is meant by *Adhyaasa*?

A: For this there is an answer given in the *Bhaashya* itself:

"Smritiroopaha. Paratra Poorvadrishhtaavabhaasaha: Tam Kechit Anyatraanyadharmaadhyasa Iti Vadanti: Kechittu Yatra Yadadhyasaha Tadulvekaagraha Nibandhanaa Bhrama Iti: Anye Tu Yatra Yadadhyasaha Tasyalva Vipareeta Dharmatwakalpanaamaachakshate: Sarvathaapi Tu Anyasyaanyadharmaavabhaasataam Na Vyabhicharati: Tathaa Hi Loake(s)nubhavaha 'Shuktika Hl Rajatavada-vabhaasate'; 'Ekashchandraha Sadulteeyavat' Iti."

Meaning: "Of the form (nature) of memory the appearance of a thing seen before is itself *Adhyaasa*. Some people explain it saying: 'In one thing the qualities or characteristics of another appear (as *Adhyaasa*): some others (say): 'When one thing is misconceived (*Adhyaasa*) in another, the delusion (*Bhrama*) caused as a result of a lack of discrimination between the two things' (is called *Adhyaasa*); still some others say: 'When one thing is misconceived (*Adhyaasa*) in another, and when that thing is imagined to possess some other characteristics (is called *Adhyaasa*). In any case, the one common feature of — 'One thing appearing as if it has got the characteristics (*Dharmas*) of another — cannot be evaded (where *Adhyaasa* exists). For this reason alone, in our workaday (empirical) world (people in general) have experiences in the manner — 'The sea-shell (nacre) appears as silver'. 'one single moon appears to exist along with another (second) moon'."

37. Q: Here it appears to have been stated (enunciated) that — 'One thing which appears as if it is another is itself *Adhyaasa*' — is it not?

A: In this context the deliberation on the '*Vastu Tattwa*' or the essential nature of Being of the entity is not relevant at all. For, (*Adhyasya Itaretaraavivekena Mithyaaajnaananimitto Loakavyava-haaraha*) having misconceived and as a result of not being able to distinguish (or discriminate) one from the other, the general run of people are quite naturally carrying on their (workaday) transactions of the type — 'I am this' and 'This is mine'; in this manner, the subject-matter of *Jnaana* or Knowledge alone is mentioned here. Then again, it

has been stated: (*Satyaanrite Mithuneekritya*) having mixed up or blended 'Satya' or real thing and 'Anritam' or false appearance (people carry on their transactions). Therefore, whether it is stated that — "In one thing another appears" or "One thing appears to possess the characteristics (*Dharmas*) of another" — both statements coalesce in connoting the meaning that — "In that manner to reckon or understand is to be under a delusion (*Bhraanti*)."
Is it not a fact, quite popular and patent too, that both the sentences — "It appears to me like that" and "I have understood it in that manner" — have one and the same meaning?

Even so, the *Vyaakhyaanakaaras* (i.e. post-Shankara sub-commentators) have not only erroneously imagined the meaning of the above sentences to be: "Another entity or substance (*Padaartha*) which appears like a particular *Vastu* or object" — but have mischievously surmised and argued out that in this context Shri Shankara has examined or scrutinized the various *prima facie* theories (*Poorva Paksha Vaadas*) like 'Akhyaatī', 'Anyathaakhyaatī', 'Aatmakhyaatī', 'Satyakhyaatī', 'Asatkhyaatī' and finally he (Shri Shankara) has refuted all of them and has propounded his own exclusive *Siddhaanta* called 'Anirvachaneeya Khyaatī'. It is truly a great tragedy of our times that whether it be Shri Shankara's *Sootra Bhaashya* or his other *Bhaashyas*, nowhere even a wee bit or a smack of this theory or of the *Anirvachaneeya Khyaatī* is to be found. Therefore, there is no other go than to conclude that in this context the *Vyaakhyaanakaaras* (as was their wont) digressed into unrelated and irrelevant considerations at the expense of, and giving up callously, the contextual deliberation. (Research scholars deeply interested in this controversial topic may please refer to the Sanskrit treatise — '*Vedaanta Prakriyaa Pratyabhijnaa*' — published by Adhyatma Prakasha Karyalaya, Holenarsipur, Hassan District, Karnataka - 573 211).

38. Q: With regard to the *Jnaanaadhyasa* or misconception about the Knowledge of Reality, which you have been mentioning hitherto, has Shri Shankara examined this, at least once, anywhere else?

A: This *Adhyasa* has been elaborated upon by him in his *Geeta Bhaashya* in the following manner:

"Kaha Punarayam Kshetrakshetrajnayoaho Samyoagaa(s)bhipretaha? Uchyate; Kshetrakshetrajnayoaho, Vishayavishayinoaho, Bhinnaswabhaavayoaho, Itaretara Taddharmaadhyasalaxanaha, Samyoagaha, Kshetrakshetrajnaswaroopa Vivekaabhaavanibandhanaha Rajjushukti-kaadeenaam Tadvivekajnaanaabhaavaat Adhyaaroopitasarparajataadi

Samyoagavat. Soa(s)yamadhyaasaswaroopaha Kshetrakshetrajnasa-myogao Mithyaaajnaanalanaxanaha Yathaashaastram Kshetrakshetrajnalanabhedaparijnaanaapoorvakam Praagdarshitaroopaat Kshetraat Munjaadliveshikaam Yathoaktalanaxanam Kshetraajnam Pravibhajya 'Na Sattannaasaduchyate' Ityanena Nirastasarvoapaadhivishesham Jneyam Brahmaswaroopena Yaha Pashyati. Kshetram Cha Maayaa-nirmitahastiswapnadrishatavastu Gandharvanagaraadivat Asadeva Sadivaavabhaasate Ityevam Nishchitavijnanaa Yaha Tasya Yathoaktasamyagdarshanaviroadhaat Apagacchati Mithyaaajnaanam."

39. Q: Please explain in detail the meaning of this long excerpt of the Bhaashya?

A: "(Question): What is the opinion of Bhagawaan Shri Krishna as to what exactly is the *Samyoaga* or association, union that has taken place (or that exists) between *Kshetra* or the dwelling place and *Kshetrajna* or one who dwells in it (one who knows it)?

"(Answer): We will explain. Being the *Vishaya* or object and *Vishayi* or subject, respectively, *Kshetra* and *Kshetrajna* are of different or distinct essential natures; this association between them is of the nature of misconceiving one in the other; further this (association) is the result of not being able to cognize their respective distinct, innate natures of being, after separating *Kshetra* and *Kshetrajna*. This (misconceived association) too has taken place just as when a rope, a sea-shell etc. have not been properly scrutinized and known (perceived), the association with the (false appearances of) projected snake, silver etc. is misconceived. Such an association (union) of the nature of *Adhyaasa* or misconception between *Kshetra* and *Kshetrajna* is necessarily and indubitably of the characteristics of *Mithyaaajnaana* or false knowledge or misconception. "One who — (i) clearly cognizes the differences or distinctions in their respective essential natures of *Kshetra* and *Kshetrajna*, in accordance with the *Shaastraic* teachings; (ii) separates the *Kshetra*, the innate nature of which was described previously, from the *Kshetrajna*, whose essential nature of Being has already been explained, just as one separates the stalk from a blade of tender grass and then with the help of the (*Shaastraic*) teaching that — 'It is neither *Sat* (real) nor *Asat* (unreal)' - Intuits or cognizes It (the latter) to be *Brahman* or the Ultimate, Absolute Reality to be known (*Jneya Brahman*) which is devoid of any distinct adjunct whatsoever on the strength of Its essential nature of Pure Being-Consciousness alone; (iii) further, gets established in, or fully convinced by, the Intuitive experience of the type that — 'The *Kshetra* — though it is really *Asat* just like an elephant created by *Maayaa* or magic, an object seen in a dream, a celestial city (*Gandharva Nagara* appearing in the stellar region) etc. — appears as if it is real' — to such a person, because

to what is taught now as *Samyajjnaana* or correct knowledge of the Ultimate Reality of *Brahman* or *Atman* this *Mithyaaajnaana* is (totally) opposed, the latter will vanish (or will be falsified)."

This *Geeta Bhaashya* excerpt is like a replica of the *Adhyaasa Bhaashya* indeed. The salient features of the *Geeta Bhaashya* portion mentioned above are: (1) *Adhyaasa* means *Mithyaaajnaana* (misconception) — this truth has been repeatedly stressed; (2) It is also underscored that this *Mithyaaajnaana* is caused by (or is the outcome of) a lack of discrimination (*Vivekaabhaava*) between the *Vishaya* or the object (here the insentient *Anaatman*) and the *Vishayi* or the subject (here the eternally conscious Principle of *Atman* or Self); (3) It is also taught that *Brahman* — which is the Ultimate Reality and the essential nature (in the ultimate analysis) of Being (*Pramaartha Tattwa*) of the *Kshetrajna* who is (apparently) the *Jeeva* or transmigratory soul — is the Absolute, Transcendental Truth or Reality (*Paramaartha Satya*) devoid of any kind of (adjunct of) characteristic whatsoever (*Nirvishesha*); (4) *Kshetra* means the conglomeration of the gross and subtle bodies (*Sthoola Sookshma Shareera Samudaaya*). It is also pointed out that this *Kshetra* is — just like the '*Mayaahasti*' or elephant projected by magic, '*Swapnadrishhta Vastu*' or an object seen in a dream, '*Gandharvanagara*' or a celestial city seen in the stellar region etc. — a mere appearance of an '*Anrita Padaartha*' or false object of perception; (5) finally, it is affirmed that by virtue of the Intuitive Knowledge of the essential nature of Being of *Atman* (the Ultimate Reality) gained from discrimination (*Vivechana* or *Viveka*) the *Mithyaaajnaana* which is truly of the nature of *Adhyaasa* gets sublated, falsified. This alone is the quintessence of *Adhyaasa Bhaashya*.

Unfortunately, such a clear teaching written in no uncertain terms and giving no room whatsoever for any ambiguity or alternative interpretation had been totally discarded and, on the contrary, it was mischievously distorted in the manner: — '*Adhyaasa*' means that superimposed substantive (materialistic) object (*Adhyaasa Padaartha*); '*Mithyaaajnaana*' means '*Avidyaashakti*' or a potential power of nescience which is '*Anirvachaneeya*' or indefinable; '*Nimitta*' means material cause (*Upaadaana Kaarana*). This *Vyaakhyaana Prasthaana* or post-Shankara sub-commentary being totally different and contradictory to Shri Shankara's original *Adhyaasa Bhaashya* written as a highly purposeful methodological introduction is crystal clear now.

To drive home the fact that those people who have commented upon the original *Bhaashya* sentence of '*Paratra Poorvadrishhtaavabhaasaha*' in the manner — "*Adhyaasa* itself, meaning, another '*Anirvachaneeya Padaartha*' or indefinable substance or entity, which appears like a particular entity' — have, in truth, distorted the original *Bhaashya* sentence and have projected their own interpretation. Another sentence

which follows a little later in the *Sootra Bhaashya* itself is a clinching pointer. To wit, "Adhyaasoa Naama 'Atasminstadbuddhih' Ityavochaama" — meaning, "Adhyaasa means a (deep-seated) concept of the type — 'This is it' — in something which it is actually not (*Atasminstadbuddhih*) — thus we have enunciated." In this manner the *Bhaashyakaara* (Shri Shankara) has himself deliberated upon the sentence — "*Paratra Poorvadrishhtaavabhaasaha*" — and clarified its meaning (purport). Further, to clinch the issue he has, in his conclusive sentence, written: "*Mithyaapratyayaroopaha*" or of the nature of false percept.

40. Q: While describing *Atman*, why is it that three distinctive features like — '*Asmatpratyayagoachare*' (an object for the concept or notion of 'I'), '*Vishayini*' (subjective), '*Chidaatmake*' (the very essence in esse or Pure Consciousness) — have been mentioned?

A: The essential nature of Being of *Atman* is '*Chidaatmaka*', meaning '*Shuddha Chinmaatra*' (of the very essence of Pure Consciousness or Intuitive experience of the Self). But that very *Atman* (Absolute, non-dual) in the '*Vyavahaaraavastha*' or the mundane, empirical state (of diversity or duality) is reckoned as both '*Asmatpratyayagoachara*' and '*Vishayini*'; to wit, from the standpoint of *Anaatman*, which is both '*Yushmatpratyayagoachara*' (the object for the concept or notion of 'You' — which can never be equated with or identified as 'I' as explained before) and '*Vishaya*' (an object always for its subject) — and which has to be postulated exclusively for the purposes of teaching or understanding — we have to discern it tentatively. Hence, all the three distinct epithets are necessary.

For this reason alone, Shri Shankara has himself raised an objection of the type that — "The fact that there has been *Adhyaasa* conceived in *Atman* appears to be quite contrary to, or distinct from, the familiar, popular *Adhyaasa* (accepted on all hands)!" — and has provided a consolation in the following manner:

Bhaashya excerpt by way of an objection: "*Katham Punaha Pratyagaatmani Avishaye Adhyaasoa Vishayataddharmaanaam? Sarvoa Hi Puroa(s)vasthita Vishaye Vishayaantaramadhyasyanti Yushmatpratyayaapetasya Cha Pratyagaatmanoa(s)vishayatwam Braveeshi.*"

This objection has been raised in order to elucidate and elaborate upon the spiritual teaching that — "*Atman* exists as an object for the notion or concept of 'I'." The purport behind the element of doubt implicit in this objection is: "It is seen that people in general misconceive one thing in another thing. For example, a rope which is lying in front of anybody is wrongly taken or reckoned to be a snake, but it is not true that any one reckons one particular entity, which is

Paroaksha or beyond the range of sight or invisible and which is not at all an object for any instrument of cognition whatsoever as something other than that entity. is it not?

For this the consolation is: "*Uchyate; Na Taavadayamekaa(s)ntenaa-vishayaha; Asmatpratyaya Vishayatwaat, Aparoakshatwaatcha Pratyagaatmaprasiddhehe; Na Chaayamastl Niyamaha Puroa(s)vasthita Eva Vishaye Vishayaantaramadhyastavyamiti; Apratyakshepi Hyaakaashe Baalaastalamalinataadyadhyasyanti; Evamaviruddhaha Pratyagaatmanyapyanaatmaadhyasaha.*"

The purport of this consolatory *Bhaashya* is:

- (a) Because of the reason that *Atman*, like *Anaatman*, is not an object for the concepts of 'You', 'this', we have called him 'Vishayi' or subject, cognizer and not because of the reason that he can never be reckoned as an object at all, for there is no rule of law like that: to explain, he is an object for the notion or concept of 'I'. Hence it amounts to misconceiving one thing in another thing indeed.
- (b) If it is your contention or stipulation that the phrase — 'in an object' — must be interpreted only to mean — 'in an object which is perceptible', then there is no universal rule of law at all to the effect that always in the case of a perceptible object or thing alone misconception should occur; for example, *Aakaasha* or the sky (empty space) is not perceptible (*Apratyaksha*); even so, it appears to everyone as if it is above our heads and in its lower regions it is of a blue colour.
- (c) One more subtle point: Although *Atman* is not directly (or perceptibly) an object of cognition, He is familiar to every one (i.e. universally) as the notion or concept of 'I'. No one (at any time, or in any clime) has reckoned *Atman* as '*Paroaksha*' or invisible, non-cognizable, say in the manner — 'My essential nature of Being or Existence (*Swaroopa*) is not known to me; I do not know whether I exist or I do not exist.' Therefore, because of the reason that *Atman* (Pure Consciousness) is *Aparoaksha* or directly Intuited but not a *Paroaksha* or perceptible object, there is no surprise, or anything to be seriously doubted, when we have actually misconceived the familiar *Anaatman* in the familiar *Atman*!

41. Q: Is it acceptable to the *Bhaashyakaara* that — "*Atman* is an object for the '*Ahampratyaya*' or concept or notion of 'I' " or not? Why has he given one particular answer having accepted in this manner that — "He is an object" and yet another answer without accepting that — "He is not an object" — and thus has confused everyone giving two (mutually contradictory) answers?

A: He has accepted in the empirical transactions that — “Atman is an object for the notion of ‘I’ ” — just like the *Bhaattas* (*Poorva Meemaamsakas* — predominantly ritualists). But his supreme, final spiritual teaching (*Parama Siddhaanta*) is: “The Pure Consciousness as the Witnessing Principle, which is the essential nature of Being of Atman (*Saakshi Chaitanya*), is always a non-percept or non-concept — never an object for cognition through any means or medium.” For this conclusion there is full support to be found in *Sootra Bhaashya* and *Geeta Bhaashya*. For example, in the *Sootra Bhaashya*:

- (i) “*Putrabhaaryaadishu Vikaleshu Sakaleshu Vaa Ahameva Vikalaha Sakalaa Vaa Iti Baahyadharmaan Aatmanyadhyasyatl. Tathaa Dehadharmaan ‘Sthoolaa(s)ham’, ‘Krishtaa(s)ham’, ‘Gauroa(s)ham’, ‘Tishthaami’, ‘Gatchaami’, ‘Langhayaami’ Cha — Iti: Tathaa Indriyadharmaan ‘Mookaha’, ‘Kaanaha’, ‘Kleebaha’, ‘Badhiraaha’, ‘Andhaa(s)ham’ — Iti: Tathaantahkaranadharmaan Kaamasankalpavichikitsaadhyavasaayaadeen.*”

In this above *Bhaashya* excerpt it has been pointed out that people in general misconceive in (superimpose upon) Atman, who is the ‘*Ahampratyayavishaya*’ (the object for the notion of ‘I’) the distinct characteristics (*Dharmas*) of: (a) wife and children; (b) of the body, the senses and the psyche. It is very clear that here in this context it becomes expedient and essential for us to add up the ‘*Dehaadi Aatmabhaava*’ or the innate identification (of everyone of us) with our body, senses and mind to complete the process of summation.

- (ii) “*Evam AhampratyayInam AsheshaswapracharaasaakshInI Pratyagaatmanyadhyasya Tam Cha Pratyagaatmaanam SarvasaakshInam Tadviparyayenaantahkaranaadishwadhyasyatl.*”

In this *Bhaashya* sentence it is affirmed that, on the one hand, every one misconceives in or superimposes upon the ‘*Kootasthantiyachaitanyaswaroopa Atman*’ or Self, who is absolutely immutable and eternally of the very essence of Pure Consciousness and ‘*Avishaya Saakshiroopaatman*’ or Self who is the unobjectifiable Witnessing Principle in all of us, the Atman or the self (note the small letter ‘s’, lower case, used for the not-self or the ego), who is both ‘*Aashraya*’ or base or substrate and the ‘*Vishaya*’ or object for the *Ahampratyaya* or the notion of ‘I’; and, on the other hand, the ‘*Saakshi*’ or the Witnessing Principle is superimposed upon (misconceived in) the ‘*Antahkaranaadi*’ or the adjuncts of the mind, the senses and the body.

- (iii) “*Tenaiva HI Ahamkartaa, Ahampratyayavishayena PratyayInaa Sarvaaha Kriyaa Nirvartyante; Tatphalam Cha Sa Evaashnaatl*” — (*Sootra Bhaashya* 1-1-4).

In this (*Bhaashya*) sentence it has been further affirmed that *Atman* who is the substrate as well as object for the notion of 'I' is himself the '*Kartru*' or the agent of action as well as the '*Bhoaktru*' or the enjoyer. Therefore, it is tantamount to saying that Shri Shankaraacharya's genuine teaching is that — "In our empirical workaday transactions (*Vyavahaara*) *Atman* is '*Ahampratyayavishaya*' or the object for the 'I' notion, while from the standpoint of '*Paramaartha Saakshiroopa*' or the Absolute Transcendental Reality of the Witnessing Pure Consciousness He is never an object.

In addition to this, we will adduce here two more examples selected from the *Geeta Bhaashya*:

- (a) " '*Hantaa(s)ham*', '*Hatoa(s)myaham*' — *Iti Dehahananena Aatmanam Ahampratyayam You Vijaaneetaha, Tou Aatmatattwaa-nabhijnou — Ityarthaha*" — (*Geeta Bhaashya* 2-19).

Herein it has been taught that — "Those who reckon that when the body is killed or destroyed, *Atman* to be the '*Ahampratyayavishaya*' or the object for the 'I' notion and misconceive in the manner — 'I am the killer or the killed' — such people do not know the Ultimate Reality (*Tattwa*).” In this context, the purport of Bhagawaan Shri Krishna's teaching is clearly that — "*Atman's Saakshiswaroopa* or the essential nature of Being as the Witnessing Pure Consciousness is never an object of any mental concept or notion.

- (b) " *Evam Yathoakthathi Panchabhirhetubhirnirvartye Sati Karmani.. ...Tatra Eteshu Aatmaananyatvena Avidyayaa Parikalpitathi Kriya-maanasya Karmanaha Ahameva Kartaa Iti Kartaaramaatmanam Kevalam Shuddham Tu Yaha Pashyatyavidwaan; Kasmaat? Veda-antaachaaryoapadesha Nyayaaihi Akritabuddhitwaat Asamskrita-buddhitwaat. ..Na sa Pasyatyaatmanastatwam; Karmanoa Vaa Ityarthaha*" — (*Geeta Bhaashya* 18-16).

In this *Geeta Bhaashya* excerpt it is taught that — "One who reckons *Atman*, who is associated with the adjuncts of the body, the senses and the mind, as the '*Kartru*' or an agent of action is an '*Ajna*' or ignorant one."

In any case, thus it has to be concluded that the *Siddhaanta* acceptable to Shri Shankara is: "*Shuddhaatma* or the Pure, Absolute Self (Pure Consciousness) is *Akartru* or not an agent of action, while the *Atman* who is the *Ahampratyayavishaya* or the object for the 'I' notion is the *Kartru* or the agent of action." It is also further established that: "In *Atman* both *Ahampratyayavishayatwa* and *Kartrutwa-Bhoaktrutwa* are reckoned by virtue of *Adhyaasa* alone."

V. DIVISION INTO VIDYAA AND AVIDYAA AND AVIDYAAKRITA

42. Q: How is the deliberation on *Adhyaasa* suitable for the determination of the *Vedanta Siddhaanta* or *Upanishadic* spiritual teaching?

A: '*Vedanta*' means '*Upanishads*', which have the prime purport of propounding the '*Aatmaikatwa Vidyaa*' or the Intuitive Knowledge of the non-dualism of the Self. *Aatmaikatwa Vidyaa* means the determination (conviction) that *Atman* alone is the Absolute, Ultimate Reality (*Paramaarth* *Satya*). If it is reckoned that apart from *Atman* there 'really' exists *Anaatman* (not-self) too, then such a determination cannot be arrived at. Therefore, since the whole of *Anaatman* is actually misconceived, it becomes quite a necessity to show or demonstrate that it is '*Anrita*' or false (unreal). Although *Anaatman* is thus *Anrita* or a false appearance alone to those (ignorant) people who have not Intuited or cognized the Ultimate Reality, that very *Anaatman* appears as if it is real as well as the distinct characteristics (*Dharmas*) of the Reality or Entity of the Self (*Aatma Vastu*) exist in It. Hence, once again it becomes quite a necessity to demonstrate that — "All that (which appears as if it is all real) is the result of misconception or wrong knowledge (*Mithyaa/jnaana*)". For that reason alone, the *Bhaashyakaara* has written:

"*Tametamevamlaxanamadhyasam Panditaa Avidyeti Manyante: Tadulvekena Cha Vastuswaroopaaavadhaaranam Vidyamaahuhu: Tatratnam SatI Yatrat Yadadhyasaha Tatkritena Doashena Gunena Vaa Anumaatrenaapi Sa Na Sambadhyate.*"

The purport of this *Bhaashya* sentence is: '*Panditas*' meaning '*Aatmajnaanis*' or Realized souls call this '*Adhyaasa*' with such a '*Laxana*' or distinctive characteristic — to wit, on the one hand, superimposing *Anaatman* on *Atman* and vice versa, and, on the other hand, superimposing the distinctive characteristics or qualities of *Atman* on *Anaatman* and vice versa, by virtue of '*Bhraanti*' or delusion — '*Avidyaa*' or ignorance, nescience. Quite different from this *Adhyaasa* to determine their respective essential natures *In esse* by means of Intuitive discrimination based on separating *Atman* and *Anaatman* in the manner — "Such and such as this is the essence of Being of the '*Aatma Vastu*' and It is '*Satyam*' or absolutely real indeed; such and such as this is the essential nature of *Anaatman*; though this appears as if it is really existing, it is not '*Satyam*' but '*Anritam*' or false (appearance) indeed. Between that thing or phenomenon which is superimposed (*Adhyasta*) and that Entity on which the former is superimposed (*Aashraya*) — the former is not different from the latter"

— is termed '*Vidyaa*' (by those *Pandits* or *Aatmajnaanis*). Thus *Atman* alone is the '*Paramaarthaa Satya*'; all else is '*Anrita*' or false, and if we discern Intuitively on the strength of this above mentioned definite and distinct viewpoint then it flashes to our intellect the truth that — "By virtue of thus superimposing *Anaatman* on *Atman*, no defect or blemish whatsoever occurs in or taints the latter; neither by superimposing upon *Anaatman* the essentially real nature of Pure Being-Consciousness of *Atman* and thereby merely misconceiving one as the other does *Anaatman* acquire any real qualities or characteristics 'belonging to *Atman*. For, *Atman* alone is the Absolute Transcendental Reality or *Paramaarthaa Satyam* and, at the same time, all else (*Anaatman* as opposed to and other than *Atman*) has been determined, with total, unwavering and unshakable conviction, as not to exist at all in the form it appears.

Here in this context, the *Bhaashyakaara* has reiterated in a crystal clear manner the distinctive *Laxanas* of *Vidyaa* as against *Avidyaa* as: '*Vidyaa*' means the (Intuitive) Knowledge that *Atman* alone is the *Paramaarthaa Satyam*; whereas '*Avidyaa*' means mutual superimposition of identities between (*Paraspara Taadaatmya Adhyaasa*) as well as mutual misconception of their respective qualities or characteristics (*Paraspara Dharma Adhyaasa*). Therefore, those who decide the essential natures of '*Vidyaa*' and '*Avidyaa*' quite differently and contrarily to this teaching cannot at all be reckoned to be genuine followers of Shri Shankara's *Siddhaanta*.

43. Q: Can you dub even those who determine the *Tattwa* on the strength of empirical valid means (*Loukika Pramaanas*) or on the strength of *Shaastras* (*Shaastraadhaara*) as ignorant people (*Avidyaavantah*)?

A: This objection has arisen because of an absence of the deliberation or discrimination of the difference between the *Paramaarthaa Drishti* (the Absolute Reality's holistic viewpoint) and the *Vyavahaara Drishti* (the empirical parochial viewpoint of the *Pramaatru* or ego). The plenary Intuitive Knowledge (as the viewpoint of the Pure Consciousness as the Witness) of the type — "In the ultimate analysis the really real *Aatma Tattwa* is non-dual, unitary alone" — is itself the absolutely real '*Vidyaa*'. When observing from the viewpoint of that *Vidyaa*, neither any *Pramaana Vyavahaara* whatsoever nor any *Shaastraic Vyavahaara* whatsoever exists or subsists at all! But exclusively within the realm or purview of the *Vyavahaara Drishti* which is truly a misconceived viewpoint bringing in its wake an apparent projection of duality, all *Pramaanas* and *Shaastras* are carrying out their respective functions, indeed. In order to bring home this truth the *Shruti* (*Upanishad*) is stating:

"Yatra Hi Dvaitamiva Bhavati Taditara Itaram Pashyati Taditara Itaram Jighrati Taditara Itaram Rasayate Taditara Itaram Shrunoati Taditara Itaram Manute Taditara Itaram Sprushati Taditara Itaram Vijaanaati: Yatra Twasya Sarvam Aatmaivaabhoot Tatkena Kam Pashyetatkena Kam Jighretatkena Kam Rasayetatkena Kamabhivadetatkena Kam Shrunuyaattatkena Kam Manveeta Tatkena Kam Sprushettatkena Kam Vijaaneeyaam." — (Brhadhaaranyaka 4-5-15).

The literal meaning of this *Upanishadic* sentence is: "Where there is duality appearing as if it exists, there one sees another thing, there one smells another thing, there one tastes another thing, there one speaks about another thing, there one listens to another thing, there one thinks about another thing, there one touches another thing, there one cognizes another thing; but, to one when everything exists as Atman (Pure Consciousness) alone, there with what can he see what? There with what can he smell what? There with what can he taste what? There with what can he speak about what? There with what can he listen to what? There with what can he think about what? There with what can he touch what? There with what can he cognize what?"

This *Upanishadic* sentence has been repeatedly utilized as an illustration in different circumstances and contexts by Shri Shankara in order to drive home the teaching that — "Vyavahaara or empirical transactions in general do not exist in *esse* in the Absolute, metaphysical sense."

Thus although in their workaday world people, in general, reckon within the empirical realm in the manner — "Because *Pramaanas* and *Shaastras* are giving rise to or teaching the (scientific or technical) Knowledge of their respective objects or topics as they are — that Knowledge is *Vidyaa*, and further whatever wrong knowledge or misconception that is falsified (*Baadhita*) by such *Vidyaa* is *Avidyaa* — is valid and proper alone" — there is no hindrance or objection to accept or say that — "From the *Paramaarth* *Drishti* of the Witnessing Consciousness all this is 'Avidyaakrita Vyavahaara' or empirical, mundane transactions projected by nescience alone." For this reason alone, Shri Shankara in this introductory *Bhaashya* has written as follows: "*Tametamavidyaakhyam Aatmaanaatmanoarittaretaraadhyasam Puraskritya Sarve Pramaanaprameyavyavahaaraa Loukikaa Valdikaascha Pravrittaaha: Sarvaani Cha Shaastraani Vidhipratishedhamoakshaparaani*" — Meaning, "All the *Loukika* or empirical, secular and *Valdika* (religious) or spiritual transactions pertaining to and involving valid means of cognition and the object of cognition (*Sarve Pramaanaprameya Vyavahaara*) proceed only in the face of (or on the fundamental basis of) this *Anyoanya Adhyaasa* or mutual superimposition between *Atman* and *Anaatman* going by the name of '*Avidyaa*':

similarly, all the *Shaastras* which expound or enunciate injunctions (*Vidhis*) and prohibitions (*Nishedha*) as well as Liberation (*Moaksha*) as their prime purport, in the ultimate analysis, also proceed on the very basis of this *Avidyaa*."

The phrase — 'proceed keeping in front or in the face of this *Avidyaa*' — means: 'Proceed with the prime purport of engendering *Pramaana Jnaana* or consummate, mature Knowledge on the basis of valid means of cognition after removing *Ajnaana* or non-comprehension or ignorance (in the minds of those who have not been able to Intuit or cognize the Ultimate Reality of *Atman*), which lurks in the realm of all transactions of the workaday world.' Whether they are the valid means of cognition (*Pramaanas*) or the various scientific, authoritative treatises (*Shaastras*) — because of the reason that they proceed with the ultimate purport of teaching or expounding whatever *Tattwajnaana* (knowledge of an entity) their respective student or follower desires, it is to be understood that they will certainly (deliver the goods, so to speak, and) help attain the immaculate knowledge of their study (and following their guidance sincerely) the students will be feeling in the manner — "We are *Jijnaasus* or people desirous of knowing or pursuing this profound Reality" and "We must at all costs cognize this Reality of *Atman, Brahman*." But in the case of those scholars and logicians referred to in the question, though they are all '*Jijnaasus*', because they have not been able to Intuit the Ultimate Reality of the Pure Being-Consciousness of *Atman*, in the final analysis they are to be reckoned as '*Avidyaavantas*' alone.

44. Q: If you feel like it you may call stone, sand and such other insentient materials — '*Ajna*' (insensate, insentient) without sensibility or physical sensation because they are totally devoid of the faculty of cognition; although the low, irrational animals like an ox or an ass etc. possess a kind of natural knowledge of the form of instinct, but because they invariably do not possess the faculty of discrimination in the manner — 'This is such and such a thing' — in that sense they too may be called '*Ajna*' (devoid of the discriminative knowledge of the entities). But under any circumstances, can you reasonably call human beings who are capable (and invariably are endowed with the faculty) of discriminating and deliberating upon events and facts of the past, present and future periods of time and cognize their reality '*Ajna*' (totally ignorant, stupid people)? If they were so ignorant, could it have been possible for them to select properly the respective and relevant valid means of cognition like *Pratyaksha* (perception), *Anumaana* (inference) etc. needed in various sets of circumstances and situations to enable them to cognize the reality of the 'entity' in question?

A: This long-winded objection has been anticipated, taken up for consideration and answered by Shri Shankara in his introduction in the following manner:

“Objection: Katham Punaravidyaavadvishayaani Pratyakshaadeeni Pramaanaani Shaastraani Cha?”

Meaning: “How is it that empirical valid means of cognition like *Pratyaksha*, *Anumaana* etc. and *Shaastras* proceed and are meant only for the ignorant ones?”

“Answer: Uchyate: Dehendriyaadishu Ahamamaabhimaanarahitasya Pramaatrutwaanupapattou Pramaanapravrittyanupapattehe: Na Hi Indriyaanyanupaadaaya Pratyakshaadi Vyavahaaraha Sambhavati: Na Cha Adhishthanamantarena Indriyaanaam Vyavahaaraha Sambhavati: Na Cha Anadhyastatmabhaavena Dehena Kaschidvyaapriyate: Na Chaitasmin Sarvasminnasati Asangasyaatmanaha Pramaatrutwamupadyate: Na Cha Pramaatrutwamantarena Pramaanapravrittirasti: Tasmaat. Avidyaaavadvishayaaneyeva Pratyakshaadeeni Pramaanaani Shaastraani Cha.”

In this above *Bhaashya* excerpt the fact that — “All the secular valid means of knowledge like perception, inference etc. function for the sake of ignorant ones only” — has been explained. The phrase — “*Pratyakshaadi*” — means the empirical *Pramaanas* like *Pratyaksha* (perception), *Anumaana* (inference), *Upamaana* (illustration), *Shabda* (scriptural statement — also called ‘*Aapta Vaakya*’ or well-wisher’s statements), *Arthaapatti* (presumption, inference from circumstances) and *Anupalabdhi* (non-perception since the phenomenon can never be found anywhere). Although it is true that there is a discrepancy in the number of accepted valid means of knowledge or cognition (*Pramaanas*) among the various disputants or logicians, for all these *Pramaanas* perception (*Pratyaksha*) alone is the fountainhead.

Now, all these *Pramaanas* are not by themselves, without the help or presence of the *Pramaatru* (one who wishes or undertakes to cognize, or in other words, the cognizer), capable of signifying their respective objects. One who claims himself to be called a ‘*Pramaatru*’ has per force to have total identification (*Aatmatwa*) with his body in the manner — “I am the body” — and animate the belief that the external senses and the internal mind belong to him, thinking in the manner — “These senses and mind which are the valid instruments of cognition are mine and with their help as media I am able to cognize the external objects.” But, both the external body, the senses and the internal mind as valid means or instruments of cognition are — as we have previously pointed out — ‘*Vishayas*’ or objects for cognition alone and not the *Atman*, who is the ‘*Vishayi*’ or subjective cognizer. Even so, without misconceiving (*Adhyaasa*) the body as ‘I’ and the senses and the mind as ‘mine’ the Absolute *Atman* (of the essential nature of Pure Being-Consciousness)

can never be called '*Pramaatru*'. Because of the reason that one who is the *Pramaatru* alone has invariably to utilize the *Pramaanas* like *Pratyaksha*, *Anumaana*, *Shabda* etc., on the one hand, and the *Shaastras*, on the other, and then only he can possibly acquire any knowledge of any particular *Prameya* (object or phenomenon), only to that '*Avidyaavanta*' (ignorant one) who has misconceived himself to be the *Pramaatru* — it has to be admitted on all hands — both the empirical *Pramaanas* and the authoritative *Shaastras* are indubitably of any utility or benefit. This then is the complete clarification of the above-quoted long *Bhaashya* excerpt.

Whether it is the body or whether they are the external senses and the internal instrument of our mind — to say that they are related to *Atman*, except for the one singular misconception or wrong reckoning to that effect (to wit, they are innately related or associated with the Absolute non-dual Entity of *Atman*), there is no other supporting evidence whatsoever. This truth the *Bhaashyakaara* has been reiterating time and again in his *Sootra Bhaashya*.

As regards the objection — "If you so feel you may call animals like an ox, a donkey '*Ajna*', but are not human beings capable of discrimination?" — Shri Shankara provides a solution like:

"*Pashwaadibhihshwaavisheshaat: Yathaa Hi Pashwaadayaha Shabdaadibhihi Shroatraadeenaam Sambandhe Sati Shabdaadivijnane Pratikoole Jaate Tatoa Nivartante Anukoole Cha Pravartante — Yathaa Dandadyatakaram Purusham Abhimukhamupalabhya Maam Hantumayamichhateeti Palaayitumaarabhante, Harita Trunapoornapaaanimpalabhya Tam Pratyabhimukheebhavanti, Evam Purushaa Api Vyutpannachittaaha Krooradrishteenakroashataha Khadgaadyatakaram Balavat Upalabhya Tatoa Nivartante, Tadvipareetaan Prati Pravartante; Atha Samaanaha Pashwaadhibhihi Purushaanaam Pramaanaprameyavyavahaaraha: Tatsaamaanyadarshanaat, Vyutpatimataamapi Purushaanaam Pratyakshaadivavyavahaarastatkaalaha Samaana Iti Nishcheeyate.*"

Once again, the purport of this long *Bhaashya* portion is: Human beings, just like animals, utilize '*Pramaanajnaana*' or knowledge gained through the valid means with regard to external objects either to acquire them if desirable or to discard them if undesirable and shy away from them. It is true that human beings are more discriminative than animals, creatures etc. But in their workaday transactions, whether it is in regard to rushing forward towards desirable objects or whether in regard to receding away from things, when it is known that they are bad, dangerous or harmful, it cannot be affirmed that human beings always (invariably) utilize their discrimination and behave accordingly. For, merely on the ground of their feeling to acquire them the external objects always do not continue to be good or beneficial at

all. Neither do the objects which were undesirable always continue to be bad or disadvantageous. If it were so, human beings should never have been deluded. It is not the real state of affairs at all. They too, just like the animals, creatures etc., thinking something at a far-off distance as water, go near it for the sake of drinking it. But when they approach nearer that object, it is found to be merely mirage water and actually it is realized to be desert land alone. Really speaking, quite often the medicines and other things which people at first sight dislike and discard thinking that they are not good or beneficial are actually advantageous and conducive to their progress and good health. Therefore, it has to be acknowledged on the basis of rationality that analogous to animals all the empirical transactions like *Pratyaksha*, *Anumaana* etc. are being carried out, prompted by (*Purassara*, which literally means 'moving in front, harbinger or forerunner') *Aviveka* or a lack of discrimination, on the one hand, and by virtue of a natural instinct, on the other, indeed. For that reason alone, saying that — "I had believed it to be so, but it was not true" — people in general become wise after the event, so to speak, only when the result of an endeavour becomes undesirable or disadvantageous, but in the process they belatedly display their ability or faculty of discrimination. No wonder there exists a wise axiomatic saying that — "*Swaswaanush-thaanasamaye Munayoa(s)pi Na Panditaaha*" — meaning, "Even *Munis* or sages, who keep on teaching or giving discourses to their followers, when it comes to the question of their own work or endeavour, are not knowing, more often than not, the truth about it."

45. Q: So far as the *Loukika Vyavahaaras* are concerned we may take it for granted that people in general are deluded; but as prescribed in the *Shaastras* in the manner — "This should be done or performed; this should not be done or performed" — without such discriminative knowledge as stipulated who can carry on any *Vaidika Vyavahaara* at all? In this regard, the discriminative faculty which human beings possess can never be found in the animals, creatures etc., is it not?

A: To this Shri Shankara has given the following answer:

"*Shaastreeye Tu Vyavahaare Yadyapi Buddhipoorvakaaree Naavlditwaa Aatmanaha Paraloakasambandham Adhikriyate. Tathaapi Na Vedaantavedyam Ashanaayaadyateetam Apetabrahmakshatraadibhedam. Asamsaaryaatmatattvam Adhikaare(s)pekshyate. Anupayoagaat Adhikaaravirodhaatchha: Praakcha Tathaabhootaatmavijnanaat Pravartamaanam Shaastram Avidyaavadvishayatwam Naavivartate.*"

The real purport implicit in this *Bhaashya* portion is: It is true that a qualified person who observes or performs the *Shaastreeya Karmas*

or rites and rituals stipulated in the scriptures possesses the knowledge that — “The *Atman* or self (*Jeeva*) who transmigrates to other *Loakas* or worlds (as mentioned in the texts of *Karma Kaanda* as well as the *Upaasana Kaanda* of the *Vedas*) and enjoys either happiness or misery, is different and separate from the body, the senses etc.” — but the Intuitive Knowledge of the Absolute Reality of Pure Being-Consciousness of *Atman* (*Paramaarthaatma Jnaana*), which is taught in the *Vedantas* (*Upanishads*), he does not have in the least.

- (i) It is taught in the *Upanishads* that *Atman* does not have the pairs of drawbacks or blemishes like hunger and thirst, grief and attachment, old age and death etc. (*Brihadaaranyaka* 3-5-1). “Such an *Atman* am I” — this sort of an Intuitive Knowledge is not attained by one who endeavours to perform *Karmas* so as to attain ‘*Paraloakasiddhi*’ or other-wordly enjoyments.
- (ii) Further, the *Upanishads* teach that — “Apart from *Atman* there does not at all exist, in the Absolute (Intuitive) sense, the *Jaatis* or castes like *Braahmana*, *Kshatriya*, *Vaishya*, *Shoodra*, nor the various *Loakas* or other worlds (both superior and inferior to this our present empirical waking world), nor the *Devas* or deities who are to be worshipped and whose blessings are to be invoked by means of the *Vedic Karmas*, nor the various *Pashus* or sacrificial animals and such other victims of sacrificial oblations which are stipulated to be used in several *Yajnas* and *Yaagas* mentioned in the ritualistic portions of the *Vedas*.” — (*Brihadaaranyaka* 2-4-6). Such an Intuitive Knowledge of ‘*Aatmatattwa*’ or the Absolute Reality of the Self is absent in the ‘*Karmaadhikaari*’ or one who is fit for *Karmas* alone.

It is little known in religious circles all over our country that not only there exists any need of this *Aatmatattwa Jnaana* (mentioned above) which is again exclusively ‘*Vedaantavedya*’ or to be known or learnt from the *Upanishadic* lore for an agent of actions (*Karmas* stipulated in the *Karma Kaanda*, in particular, or, for that matter, even the whole gamut of mundane, secular *Karmas*). But, on the other hand, for those who have attained this *Aatmatattwa Jnaana*, none of the triad of *Kriya* (action), *Kaaraka* (means of action) and *Phala* (fruit of action) exists in reality. In fact, there is no possibility for the latter class of *Jnaanis* to venture into any kind of *Karma*, since they have attained the Intuitive Knowledge that all of duality (or diversity) is ‘*Anrita*’ or false appearance alone.

Thus, in view of all the teachings of the *Shaastra* pertaining to the fruits to be achieved in other worlds by means of certain stipulated *Karmas* are meant for those (*Avidyavantas*) who do not have the *Aatmatattwa Jnaana* which is also *Paramaartha*, it is tantamount to saying that the former *Paaraloukika Karmas* also are meant

for *Avidyaavantas* alone. And this conclusion is rational and proper indeed.

46. Q: All right, let us take all this you have said as granted, but how at all can it be accepted that even the '*Vedanta Pramaana*' or the authoritative validity of the *Upanishadic* lore, which is '*Moakshapara*' or devoted exclusively to Liberation, is also for *Avidyaavantas* only? If such a text too is dismissed off saying that it is meant only for the ignorant people, then, in that case, which other *Pramaana*, if at all there is one, meant exclusively for the sake of '*Vidyaavantas*' or the knowing ones exists? Which *Pramaana* should the knowing one (*Jnaani*) follow if he were to determine as to which is the '*Kaarya*' or that action (ritual) which is to be done or performed and which is '*Akaarya*' or that action which is not to be done or performed?

A: To this we have already given an answer (in so many words). Is it not true that Shri Shankara has written that — "In order to help get rid of this '*Adhyaasa*' which is the root cause for all miseries and ills (*Anartha*) of transmigratory life and which is of the nature of '*Mithyaapratyayaroopta*' or false, unreal type of belief or concept alone all the *Upanishads* have started expounding" — (*Adhyaasa Bhaashya*)? Therefore, only that person who has the wrong conception or belief of the type — "Atman is of the form of a *Kartru* or a *Bhoaktru*, who is none other than the object for the 'I' notion (*Ahampratyayagoachara*)" — aspires in the manner — "I want *Moaksha* (Liberation) from this *Bandha* (Bondage of the transmigratory existence)" — and only he thereafter starts deliberating upon the purport of the teachings of the *Shaastras* (particularly the portion pertaining to the *Aatmatattwa Jnaana*). Because this person (called in *Vedantic* parlance '*Mumukshu*') has listened to the *Shruti* (*Upanishadic*) sentence like — "A *Brahmajnaani* (Realized Soul) attains *Moaksha* which is the *Paramapurushaarth* or the final, ultimate goal, *summum bonum*, of human existence" — (*Taittiriya* 2-1) — and thereupon has launched himself on the Intuitive deliberation to know or cognize the *Brahmatattwa* or Absolute Reality of *Brahman* or *Atman*, it is evident that he (though a *Mumukshu*, desirous of knowing the Ultimate Reality) is yet without the Intuitive Knowledge (Experience) of the *Aatmatattwa*, and, not only that, he is one who has wrongly known or believed (misconceived) that *Tattwa* and hence can be said to be still an *Avidyaavanta* alone.

On the other hand, '*Vidyaavanta*' or the *Aatmatattwa Jnaani*, who has already attained the Intuitive Knowledge (Experience, *Anubhava*) of *Aatmatattwa*, since he has attained the consummate plenary Knowledge to the effect that ... "*Brahmaatma Tattwa* alone is

the *Paramaārtha Satya*” — for his sake no *Shaastra* whatsoever is any more needed (To wit. in his case the prime and final purport of the *Upanishads* has come to fruition and no *Shaastra*, whatsoever it may be, holds good as a *Pramaana* any longer). When *Vidyaa* is Intuited or Realized, there does not exist any empirical or mundane transaction or *Vyavahaara*. Neither there is any possibility or scope whatsoever for any kind of a desire to perform any *Karma* in a '*Vidyaaavanta*'. Then, in that event, even the *Veda* or scripture does not at all subsist as a *Pramaana*. In support of this above teaching the following *Upanishadic* statements are adduced:

- (i) “*Yatra Twasya Sarvamaatmalvaabhoot Tatkena Kam Pashyet. ..Kena Kam Vijaaneeyaāt*” — (*Bṛhadaaranyaka* 4-5-15 — already mentioned in the answer to Question 43). This is in support of the teaching that — “When everything has become *Atman* (Pure Consciousness) alone there is no *Vyavahaara* whatsoever.”
- (ii) “*Aatmaanam Chedvijaaneeyaadayamasmeetī Poorushaha; Klmicchan Kasya Kaamaaya Shareeramanusamjwaret*” — (*Bṛhadaaranyaka* 4-4-12). Meaning: “One who has attained *Aatmajnaana* in the manner — ‘I am the one who pervades all this’ — what desire whatsoever can he have so as to subject his body to any (vain) strenuous task” — This *Upanishadic* statement is sufficient *Pramaana* for the affirmation that an *Aatmajnaani* does not entertain any desire whatsoever, nor does he have any duty or responsibility towards anybody.
- (iii) “*Atra Pitaa Aptaa Bhavati. ...Vedaa Avedaaha*” — (*Bṛhadaaranyaka* 4-3-22). Meaning: “Herein a father is no-father.... *Vedaa* or scripture is *Aveda* or no-scripture.” — This *Upanishadic* statement is the *Pramaana* for saying that — “In *Paramaārthaatman* even the scripture is rendered no-scripture.”

VI. SAARVATRIKA ANUBHAVA

47. Q: What is the authoritative evidence to determine the exact import of the two concepts which we have so far determined, viz. '*Avidyaa*', of the form of '*Adhyaasa*' (misconception) and '*Vidyaa*', which sublates that *Avidyaa*? You have propounded that both *Pramaanas* and *Shaastras* are subsumed under the realm of *Vyavahaara* (empirical transactions) which is itself projected or prompted by *Avidyaa*, is it not? In that case, what supporting proof is there for '*Aatmaikatwa*' or the Absolute unity or non-duality of *Atman* which is to be determined by *Vidyaa*?

A: For this we have given a suitable answer at the beginning of this treatise itself. Shri Shankara has affirmed that the '*Vedanta Shaastra*'

is itself *in toto* the *Pramaana* for '*Aatmalkatwa*' or non-dualism of *Atman* which is the quintessence of his *Siddhaanta*. He has further elaborated and elucidated that with regard to the deliberation upon *Vidyaa* and *Avidyaa* pertaining to the Ultimate Reality of *Atman* as well as the determination of their respective natures in essence and by their distinctive characteristics: "The *Saarvatrika Anubhava* or universal Intuitive experience, which evolves out of the determination of the correct interpretation and import of the *Upanishadic* sentences is itself the convincing and clinching proof." This assertion is crystal clear in his *Bhaashya* sentence which says:

"*Na Dharmajijnaasaayaamiva Shrutyadaya Eva Pramaanam Brahmajijnaasaayaam. Kim Tu Shrutyadayo(s)nubhavaadayascha Yathaasambhavamihha Pramaanam: Anubhavaavasaanatwaat. Bhootvastuvishayatwaachha Brahmajnaanasya.*" — (*Sootra Bhaashya* 1-1-2). Meaning: "Just as in the case of '*Dharmajijnaasaa*' or deliberation on religious tenets '*Shrutyadi*' or the scriptural texts and other works and accessories in consonance with them are exclusively *Pramaanas* or valid means, these latter alone by themselves are not *Pramaanas* in the case of '*Brahmajijnaasaa*' or deliberation on the Ultimate Reality of *Brahman*: to wit, *Shrutis* or *Upanishadic* lore as well as '*Anubhava*' or Intuitive experience and other accessories in keeping with it are invariably *Pramaanas*, according to the circumstances and contexts (in which either of them become suitable and valid). For, '*Brahmajnaana*' or the Intuitive Knowledge of the Ultimate Reality of *Brahman* culminates or reaches its fruition in '*Anubhava*' or Intuitive experience; besides, *Brahmajnaana* pertains to a '*Bhootavastu*' or an already (eternally) existing or established *Aatmavastu* or Entity of the Self."

48. Q: What is the purport of the sentence that — "*Anubhava* is also a *Pramaana*; *Brahmajnaana* culminates in *Anubhava* alone"?

A: Shri Shankara's opinion is: '*Ekadesha*' or one part of the '*Saarvatrika Anubhava* or universal Intuitive experience is, for the purposes of deliberation, a *Pramaana*: '*Aatmalkatwajnaana*' or the Intuitive Knowledge of the Absolutism or non-dualism of the Self culminates or reaches its fruition in the '*Poorna Anubhava*' or plenary, consummate Intuitive experience, which is '*Saarvatrika*' or universal. Here in this context, the word '*Pramaana*' does not at all connote that this is also one among the empirical valid means of cognition like *Pratyaksha* (perception), *Anumaana* (inference) etc.; for, all those *Pramaanas* are subsumed in the realm of *Avidyaa* alone. In the present context, when we use the word '*Pramaana*' it connotes a means for determining the '*Tattwa*' or Reality after Intuitive deliberation; and *Poorna Anubhava* is that resultant Intuitive experience which evolves

out or is deduced from that deliberation. For example: (i) To cognize the fact that the empirical valid means like *Pratyaksha*, *Anumaana* etc. are those which help signify different kinds of objects; and (ii) to discern distinctively the three categories of 'Pramaana' in the manner — 'This is a valid means which gives rise to the correct knowledge': '*Apramaana*' or invalid means in the manner — 'This is totally a void with any valid means of cognition being absent, with the result there is no knowledge whatsoever engendered' — and for these above purposes the support (substrate) is the '*Ekadesha Saarvatrika Anubhava*' alone. After the Intuitive deliberation is carried out the *Poorna Anubhava* of the type — 'All that exists is *Atman* alone' — is itself the final fruition or culmination by way of the resultant fruit. For this reason alone Shri Shankaraacharya has written in his *Bhaashyas* that — "*Anubhava* alone is *Pramaana*" and "*Aatmajnaana* culminates in *Anubhava* alone."

49. Q: In the phrase — '*Anubhavaadayascha*' — (meaning, *Anubhava* and such other phenomena) what exactly is the meaning for the word — '*Aadi*' — meaning 'etc.'? In addition to *Anubhava* what else is required in this context?

A: Here taking the '*Ekadesha Anubhavas*' or parts of Intuitive experiences as the basis, one has to carry out ratiocination keeping in focus the '*Anvaya*' or agreement and '*Vyatireka*' or disagreement between two things to be discriminated about. In addition to this kind of a dialectical exercise in consonance with Intuition, here in this context, the other various logical devices in vogue in the empirical transactions like: (a) syllogistic reasoning based on analogous examples or illustrations in keeping with common experience born out of empirical valid means; (b) logic which examines the validity or otherwise of the means (*Pramaana Shodhaka Tarka*); (c) Pure critique of reason (*Kevala Tarka*) — are also needed for deliberation. There is also Intuitive reasoning (*Kevala Tarka*) which is needed to determine the validity, relevance or otherwise of the propositions of rival disputants. Keeping all these various kinds of dialectical devices in mind, Shri Shankara has used the word — '*Aadi* — or 'etc'. After indicating that all these are necessary for '*Brahmajijnaasaa*' or deliberation to know the Ultimate Reality of *Brahman*, he has made a pronouncement in the concluding sentence of the *Jijnaasaasootra Bhaashya* in the manner:

"*Tasmaat. Brahmajijnaasoapanyaasamukhena Vedaantavaakhyameemaamsaa Tadaviroadhitaakoopakaraanaa, Nihshreyasaprayojanaa Prasthoyate*".

The purport of this sentence is: Therefore, on the pretext of saying that one should carry out *Brahmajijnaasaa*, it is indicated that for this *Meemaamsaa* or deep reflection begun to discern the purport of the

Vedaantavaakyas — taking all logical devices not opposed to it as accessories — **Moaksha** or Liberation alone is the final benefit.

In the expression — ‘All logical devices not opposed to **Meemaamsaa**’ — in the above statement the following are subsumed: (i) Ratiocination exemplified or enunciated in the **Shrutis** themselves; (ii) dialectical devices in consonance with that; (iii) logic in keeping with empirical **Pramaanas** as well as reasoning adopted to determine the validity, relevance or otherwise of the **Pramaanas** themselves; (iv) pure critique of reason. This should be thoroughly understood and applied.

50. Q: What is the basis for the divisions or differentiation between ‘**Vidyaa**’ and ‘**Avidyaa**’? On the strength of which phenomenon do we conclude in the manner — “This is **Avidyaa** or nescience”? Is there no need for a cause at least for this **Avidyaa** to arise in human beings?

A: It amounts to our having given an answer already, indeed, to this question. **Avidyaa** means: (a) Imagining the body and the senses, which are ‘**Anrita**’ (unreal, false) to be really existing; (b) having identification with them in the manner — ‘I am this’ and ‘This is mine’. Because of the reason that this **Avidyaa** itself being the very foundation for all kinds of **Vyavahara** (mundane transactions) no one — whosoever he or she may be — can ever possibly ask for any **Pramaana** (proof, evidence) or **Kaarana** (cause). Without desiderating any **Yukti** (logical device) or **Pramaana** (valid means) whatsoever, all human beings in general have been believing or reckoning, quite naturally too, as part of their innate pattern of behaviour (**Naisargika**), in the manner — “I am this” and “This is mine”. There is no need of any cause whatsoever for this (either the belief or its consequent behaviour). For, this (kind of natural misconception) is ‘**Anaadi**’ or beginningless. In fact, it is even the ‘**Nimitta**’ or cause for all temporal transactions. No human being — whosoever he or she may be — does ever carry on any workaday transaction thinking in the manner — “I am an **Avidyaavanta**, not knowing anything.” All the people, in general, are endowed, quite naturally too, with: (i) **Kartrutva-Bhoaktrutva**; (ii) **Jnaatrutva** or cognizership which is the cause for these earlier two misconceptions, viz. **Kartrutva** and **Bhoaktrutva**; (iii) an innate desire (**Kaamana**) to know the reality of external objects or phenomena and thereafter to carry on all workaday transactions. Both the **Vedantas** (**Upanishads**), in the form of the authoritative, canonical texts, and Vedantins (those who have not only studied the spiritual science of **Vedanta** but also have intuitively imbibed its principal teachings) expound the genuine Vedantic teachings to **Jijnaasus** that — “The fact of the common run of people having presumed in the above manner is invariably an effect or consequence of **Avidyaa**; further, this **Avidyaa** can be destroyed or got rid of by means of **Aatmajnaana**.”

It being so, whether it is the division of *Vidyaa* and *Avidyaa* or whether it is the Intuitive deliberation to be carried out in order to be able to determine, establish their respective natures in essence — both aspects have to be based on the strength of *Anubhava* or Intuitive experience alone.

51. Q: Vedanta as a spiritual science is known to propound the Ultimate Reality of Brahman. But Brahman as an empirical entity having a distinct existence is not known to people in general. How then can people entertain any desire to know It or how at all can there even be any inclination of the mind among the people to carry out any kind of deliberation upon such a phenomenon? What relationship is there between the Vidyaa which Shri Shankara has called 'Aatmaikatwa Vidyaa' in this Adhyaasa Bhaashya and this 'Brahma Vidyaa'?

A: *Brahman* is not at all such an unfamiliar entity; the phenomenon, rather concept, called '*Brahman*' is born out of the root — '*Brh*', meaning, 'a huge thing'. That Entity which is in all aspects '*Aparichhinn*' or infinite, indivisible (beyond any limitations whatsoever) is Itself '*Brahman*'. Shri Shankara has written in the following manner with regard to It:

- (i) "*Asti Taavad Brahman Nityashuddhabuddhamuktaswabhaavam Sarvajnam Sarvashaktisamanvltam; Brahmashabdasya Hi Vyutpada-dyamaanasya Nityashuddhatwaadayoa(s)rthaaha Prateeyante; Brimhaterdhaatoararthaanugamaat.*" (Sootra Bhaashya 1-1-1).

Meaning: "The fact that — 'The Entity of *Brhaman* exists; It is of an eternally Pure, Conscious and Liberated or Free nature; It is all-knowing or Omniscient, all-powerful or Omnipotent' — will be reckoned if the etymology of the root '*Bruhi*' is studied. The sentence that — '*Nityashuddha* or eternally Pure, *Nityabuddha* or eternally Conscious, *Nityamukta* or eternally Free (Liberated), an Entity which can cognize everything and, endowed with Omniscience, is Itself *Brahman*' — is one which signifies the familiarity of the Entity of *Brahman* through the meanings of the words."

But such a *Brahman* need not be reckoned to be a certain invisible, imperceptible phenomenon. In the *Upanishads* It is declared to be — "*Ayamaatmaa Brahman*", meaning, "This *Atman* Himself is *Brahman*." — (*Brihadaraanyaka* 2-5-19). *Atman* means that Entity which is the essential nature of Being in each one of us. Therefore Shri Shankara has written in the following manner:

- (ii) "*Sarvasyaatmatwaachha Brahmaatmatwaprasiddhihi; Sarvoa Hi Aatmaastitwam Pratyeti, Na Naahamasmi — Iti; Yadi Hi Naatmaastitwaprasiddhihi; Syaat Sarvoa Loakoa Naahamasmi Iti Prateeyaat; Aatmaa Cha Brahma.*" — (Sootra Bhaashya 1-1-1).

Meaning: "Because It (*Brahman*) is every one's *Atman* alone. it has to be accepted that the familiarity in the form of — '*Brahman* exists' — does prevail. Every one has been reckoning in the manner — 'I am or I exist' — alone. and not in the manner — 'I am not or I do not exist.' If it were not familiar that — '*Atman* exists' — then the cognition of the type — 'I am (I exist)' — should not have prevailed. In fact. it is not possible even to imagine in the manner — 'I am not (or I do not exist).' Because. *Atman* who is so popularly famous. is Himself *Brahman*. it is tantamount to the latter also being familiar alone."

52. Q: If *Brahman* is familiar as 'I' myself, where is a need at all to deliberate upon It?

A: To this Shri Shankara has written this long *Bhaashya* in answer:

(iii) "Na: Tadvishesham Prati Vipratipattehe; Dehamaatram Chaitanya-vishishtamaatmeti Praakritaa Loakaayatikaascha Pratipannaaha:...Tasmaat Brahmajijnaasoapanyaasamukhena Vedaantavaakyameemaamsaa Tadvairoadhitarkoapakaranaa Nishshreyasaprayojanaa Prastooyate" — (Sootra *Bhaashya* 1-1-1).

Here in the above *Bhaashya* excerpt the following opinions of nine different schools of philosophy are depicted:

(1) The opinion of the common run of people and the *Chaarvaakas* that — 'The body itself is *Atman*'; (2) the proponents of the theory that — 'The senses and *Praana* (the vital force) are together the *Atman*'; (3) the logicians' opinion that — 'The mind itself is *Atman*'; (4) the opinion of *Kshanika Vijnaanavaadins* or proponents of ephemeral or momentary Idealism that — '*Vijnaana* or (intellectual) Idealism is itself *Atman*'; (5) the tenet of *Maadhyamikas* that — '*Shoonya* or Nihilism (essencelessness) itself is *Atman*'; (6) the *Meemaamsakas*' opinion that — '*Atman* is. by virtue of his *Aviveka* or non-discrimination. a *Gunadharma Bhoaktru* or an enjoyer of objects endowed with the three *Gunas* of *Sattwa*, *Rajas* and *Tamas*'; (8) the opinion of *Patanjali's* *Yoga* school that — '*Ishwara* or the Lord also exists apart (from this *Bhoaktru* of the *Saankhyans*'); (9) the verdict of *Vedantins* that — 'That *Ishwara* is the *Atman* alone of *Samsaarees* or transmigratory souls.'

It is also further decided that only after deliberating upon and discriminating about all such varied opinions a true seeker of the Reality will attain Self-Knowledge (*Jnaana*) to the effect that — "Paramaatman or Supreme Self. of the very essence of '*Nityashuddhabuddhamuktaswaroopa*' alone is *Satyam* or the Ultimate Reality." Therefore. what has been propounded to the effect that — 'For attaining *Aatmaikatwa Vidyaa* or non-dual Reality of *Atman* one should carry out deliberation on *Vedanta Vaakya* or *Upanishadic* sentences' — is proper indeed.

In the same manner, later on in the *Sootra Bhaashya*, while elaborating on the meaning of the word — 'Tat' — in the sentence: 'Tattwamasī' — in (4-1-2), Shri Shankara has written:

"Esha Vyaavrittisarvasamsaaradharmakoa(s)nubhavaatmakoa Brahmasamjnakastatpadaarthaha Vedaantaabhilyuktaanaam Prasiddhaha; Tathaa Twampadaarthoa(s)pi Pratyagaatmaa Shroataa Dehaadhaarabhya Pratyagaatmatayaa Sambhaavyamaanashchaitanyaparyantatwenaavadhaaritaha;....Sakrudutpannalva Hi Aatmapratipattiravidyaam Nivartayateeti Naatra Kwachidapi Kramoa(s)bhyupagamyate" — (*Sootra Bhaashya* 4-1-2).

In this long *Bhaashya* portion there are many topics (subtle points) which have to be kept in mind, and they are:

- (i) In the sentence — 'Tattwamasī', meaning, 'That Brahman Itself are you' — Brahman, which is the meaning of the word 'Tat' is the *Anubhavaswaroopa* or of the essential nature of Intuitive experience which is devoid of any special or distinctive characteristics (*Nirvisheshha*), having no features whatsoever of *Samsaara* or transmigratory life; and is of the nature of self-illuminating Pure Consciousness (*Chaitanya Prakaasharoopa*).
- (ii) 'Twampadaartha', meaning, 'Chaitanya' or Pure Consciousness, which is distinct and apart from the body, the senses, the mind, the intellect and all psychic feelings and emotions etc.
- (iii) The sentence — 'Tattwamasī' — connotes *Atman* who is non-dual and of the very essence of Pure Consciousness.
- (iv) The cause for 'Avidyaapratibandha' or the hindrance, impediment of nescience to know or cognize this *Atman* means only these three, viz. *Ajnaana* (non-comprehension, nescience), *Samshaya* (doubting) and *Viparyaya* (misconception), that is all.
- (v) In the case of superior or first-class seekers (*Uttamaadhikaaris*), merely by means of listening to the 'Vedantavaakya' or *Upanishadic* sentence which expounds or enunciates the non-dualism of the Self (*Aatmikatwa*) this aforesaid *Avidyaa* or nescience vanishes (falsified, sublated).
- (vi) Both the 'Vedaantavaakyaoapadesha' or the spiritual teaching or instruction of the *Upanishadic* sentences and 'Vichaara' or intuitive deliberation on their purport are invariably meant for the exclusive goal of sublating *Avidyaa* which is nothing but misconceiving the body, the senses etc. as *Atman*. That *Vichaara* is nothing but the 'Avadhaana' or awareness, alertness or attentiveness that is to be devotedly (with all steadfastness) practised in order to get rid of 'Dehaatmatwa' or false identification with the body, the senses etc. superimposed upon one's own Self as well as to cognize *Atman* in consonance with one's own Intuitive

experience (*Anubhavaanusaara*). It is nothing other than this kind of spiritual discipline indeed.

53. Q: If it is true that in the manner of — '*Brahman* Itself is myself' — It (Reality) is very familiar as *Atman*, then who is it that deliberates or discriminates about It? Is it not true that to that person who deliberates in that manner *Avidyaa* attaches itself? Because *Brahman* Itself is verily *Atman*, it amounts to saying that — '*Brahman* Itself deliberates upon *Brahman*; *Brahman* Itself has *Avidyaa*'; further, it amounts to having arrived at the undesirable (ridiculous) conclusion that — "*Brahman* Itself deliberates and acquires *Vidyaa* and thereby gets rid of Its *Avidyaa*"! Is it not?

A: The question that you have raised is valid indeed. To one who deliberates — to him or her alone there is *Avidyaa*. But after the deliberation, because of the reason that *Jnaana* or Self-Knowledge of the type — '*Brahmaatman* which is that Pure Consciousness or Reality having no other thing second to It (non-dual) am I' — invariably accrues, if we consider from that viewpoint (Absolute, Transcendental standpoint of the Pure Consciousness), then it is true that — "No one has *Avidyaa* at all." This opinion alone Shri Shankara has revealed in the following *Bhaashya* sentence: "*Kasya Punarayamaprabodha Iti Chet, Yastvam Prichhasi Tasya Te Iti Vadaamaha; Nanwaha-meeshwara Evoaktaha Shrutyaa; Yadyevam Pratibuddhoa(s)si Naasti Kasyachidaprabodhaha; Yoa(s)yam Doashashchoadyate Kalschit — Avidyayaa Kilaa(ss)tmanaha Sadviteeyatwaat, Advaitaanupapattiriti, Soa(s)pyetena Pratyuktaha.*" — (*Sootra Bhaashya* 4-1-3).

The literal meaning of this *Bhaashya* portion is:

(a) 'Whose is this *Avidyaa*' — If it is asked like that, then we say — 'It is yours only, one who is asking the question.'

(Doubt): What is this? The *Shruti* is stating that — 'I am *Ishwara* alone' — is it not?

(Solution): If you have cognized in that manner, then no one has *Avidyaa* at all!

(b) "Some others have levelled the following flaw or defect against the *Siddhaanta* itself: 'If there is *Avidyaa* or nescience, then because it amounts to it being the second phenomenon to *Atman*, it thereby renders non-dualism an invalid proposition or teaching!' To this objection too, it amounts to our having given a satisfactory answer or solution indeed."

Shri Shankara's purport behind this above *Bhaashya* portion is: The one who is carrying out the deliberation is *Atman* who is the object for the '*Ahampratyaya*' or 'I' notion; the object for his deliberation is

the Ultimate Reality of *Brahman* or *Ishwara* who is *Nityashuddha-buddhamuktaswaroopa*, *Sarvajna* (Omniscient) and *Sarvashaktiyukta* (Omnipotent). In the mundane or empirical state of existence (*Vyavahaarasthiti*) the one who is deliberating has (quite naturally, without desiderating any cause or reason for doing so, since it is, in the ultimate analysis, merely a delusion) necessarily presumed in the manner — "I am an *Ajna* or ignorant one." To such a person, the *Shruti* is beckoning, as it were, and instructing in the manner — 'In order to get rid of this *Ajnaana* you should deliberate upon *Vedantavaakyas* or *Upanishadic* sentences which propound the '*Brahmaswaroopa*' or the essential nature of Pure Being-Consciousness-Bliss of *Brahman*, the Absolute Reality. Then, you will be rid of (or will be able to falsify, sublate) your (apparent) '*Samsara Bandha*' or Bondage of transmigratory existence, which is caused or projected by *Avidyaa*." The same opinion has been expressed by the *Sootrakaara* or *Shri Baadaraayanaachaarya* in his first *Sootra*, viz. '*Athaatoa Brahmajijnaasaa*.' *Shri Shankara* has described in the following manner the fact that in this first *Sootra* it has been taught as to how the seeker can sublate *Avidyaa* by means of *Vidyaa*:

"*Jnaatumicchhaa Jijnaasaa; Avagatiparyantam Jnaanam Sanwaa-chyaayaa Icchhaayaaha Karma; Phalavishayatwaadicchhaayaaha; Jnaanena Hi Pramaane NaavagantumIshtam Brahma; Brahmaavagatirhi Purushaarthaha; Nishsheshasamsaarabeejaavidyaadyanarthanibarhanaat; Tasmaat Brahma Vijijnaastavyam*." — (*Sootra Bhaashya* 1-1-1).

The purport of this *Bhaashya* excerpt is: The terminal word '*Jijnaasaa*' indicates the desire for acquiring *Jnaana* or Knowledge; for, in the Sanskrit language the suffix of '*Saa*' (*San*) in words like *Prepsaa* (desire to obtain), *Jihaasaa* (desire to conquer), *Jijnaasaa* (desire to know) etc. connotes 'desire'. The fruition of any desire is to acquire its fruit, is it not? Here in this context, what is really needed is not the *Pramaana* of mere '*Shaastrajnaana*' or intellectual knowledge of the *Upanishadic* teaching or tenet (doctrine); but, through that *Pramaana* or medium what is to be attained in the form of '*Avagati*' or Intuitive determinate Knowledge, viz. *Vijnaana* (Self-Knowledge). This *Avagati* itself is *Vidyaa*; because, by virtue of this *Vidyaa* not only *Avidyaa* but also its resultant evil or ill-effect of the form of transmigratory existence are both destroyed, sublated — that *Vidyaa* alone is the final fruition or culmination of *Vedantic* deliberation. Previously also in answers to questions 47 and 48 we have mentioned that in this final fruit of the form or nature of *Avagati* (*Anubhava*) alone *Brahmajijnaasaa* has to culminate. *Shri Shankara* has affirmed in the concluding sentence of his *Adhyaasa Bhaashya* that — "*Brahmaanubhava* or Intuitive experience of *Brahman* is Itself *Aatmaikatwa Vidyaa* or non-dual

Absolutism of Pure Consciousness (Self)." That *Brahman* alone is *Paramaārtha Atman* or Absolute. Transcendental Self. Because that metaphysical Reality is not yet Intuited or cognized in the state of deliberation (*Vicāraāvastha*), at that moment or stage It subsists quite apart from the *Jijñāsu* or one who wishes to know (to wit, the *Pramātru*, 'I' notion) It.

54. Q: Since *Atman* who is of the very essence of *Brahman* is actually '*Nishprapancha*' or devoid of any duality whatsoever (to wit, *Advaitaswarōpa* or of the essential nature of non-duality), how at all can even the *Upanishadic* sentences signify such a Transcendental Reality? How at all such an esoteric Entity has been determined and on the strength of which *Yuktis* or logical devices has It been so determined?

A: It is true indeed that because this '*Jñeya Brahma*' or the Ultimate Reality which is to be '*known*' is devoid of any special characteristics whatsoever, it is not possible at all to describe It as '*such and such a thing or phenomenon*'. In fact, for that reason alone the *Shrutis* (*Upanishads*), by the exclusive means of sublating any form extraneous and alien to Its very core of Pure Being-Consciousness that is misconceived in It, teach or propound that Reality. The *Sootrakaara* expresses this very idea, which the *Bhaashyakaara* has strengthened; for instance:

Sootra: "*Darshayati Chaatho Apl Smaryate*" — (*Sootra* 3-2-17).

Bhaashya: "*Darshayati Cha Shrutihi Pararoopapratishedhenalva Brahma; Nirvisheshatwaat: 'Athaata Aadesho Neti Neti'* — (*Brihadaaranyaka* 2-3-6) — *Iti: 'Anyadeva Tadvidditaadatho Avidditaadadhi'* — (*Kena* 1-4);....*Sarvabhootagunairyuktam Malvam Maam Jnaatumarhasi'* — (*Moaksha Dharma* 339-45) *Iti*" — (*Sootra Bhaashya* 3-2-18).

Besides enumerating relevant examples from the *Upanishads* to drive home the fact that — '*In order to describe Brahman the exclusive methodology adopted in the Upanishads is to sublimate or negate (Pratishedha) whatever nature or characteristics which do not belong to It*' — in the above long *Bhaashya* portion, the manner in which the *Nirvisheshatwa* of *Brahman* is propounded in the *Bhagavad Geeta* (13-12), viz. '*It is neither Sat (real) nor Asat (unreal)*' — is illustrated.

Apart from this, for the purposes of propounding *Brahman* which is *Nirvisheshatwa*, yet another extra-ordinary methodology has been utilized in *Shrutis* as well as *Smritis*. In the *Geeta Bhaashya* (13-13) this methodology has been described in the following manner:

"Kshetroopaadhibhedakritam Visheshajaatam Mithyalva Kshetra-jnasya. Iti Tadapanayanena Jneyatwamuktam 'Na Sattannaasaduchyate' — *Iti; Upaadhikritam Mithyaaroopamapyastitwaadhigamaaya*

Jneyadharmavat Parikalpoachyate — 'Sarvataha Paanipaadam' — Ityaadi: Tathaa Hi Sampradaayavidam Vachanam 'Adhyaaroopapaavaadaabhyam Nishprapancham Prapanchyate' — Iti."

The literal meaning of this *Bhaashya* portion is: "Since the conglomeration of special features or phenomena made up of the adjuncts of the *Kshetra* (dwelling place) existing in the *Kshetrajna* (indweller) is *Mithyaa* or a delusion (misconception) alone, it has been taught that it should be sublated or negated and then cognized in the manner: 'It is not *Sat*, nor is it *Asat*'. Further, to help cognize that — '*Kshetrajna* exists', the *Mithyaaroopa* or deluded (misconceived) form conjured up by the adjuncts is conceived, imagined as if it is the distinctive characteristic (*Dharma*) of the *Kshetrajna* to be cognized, it is being taught that — '*Sarvataha Paanipaadam* or that Entity which has limbs like hands and feet everywhere.' For this reason alone, there is this dictum of those who knew the traditional teaching: 'By means of superimposition and rescission that Ultimate, Absolute Reality which is devoid of any traces or taint of duality (*Nishprapancha*) is being described' — This alone is that saying of those knowledgeable ancient teachers."

Whenever the Absolute, Transcendental Reality of *Atman* is to be propounded, the *Upanishads* have invariably utilized this (unique) methodology. In the present context, though *Brahman* is not at all '*Jijnaasya*' or an entity which is the object for *Jijnaasaa* (desire to know). It is treated as an object of knowledge; though It is, in reality, not cognizable, the *Shrutis* teach — adopting the '*Adhyaaroopa Drishti*' or the viewpoint of superimposition — that *Brahman* is fit to be intuited or cognized in statements like — '*Tadvijjinaasaswa; Tadbrahma*' (Deliberate upon It in order to Intuit It : It is *Brahman*, the Absolute Reality) — (*Taittiriya* 3-1); '*Sa Vijjinaasitavyaha*' (That *Atman* should be deliberated upon) — (*Chhaandogya* 8-7-1); '*Etajjneyam*' (This Reality of *Atman* alone is fit to be intuited) — (*Shwetaashwatara* 1-12). After the teaching of this doctrine is completed when Its essential nature of Pure Being-Consciousness is intuitively experienced, from that standpoint of Intuition, the scriptures rescind (*Apavaada*) the earlier deliberate superimposition of '*Jneyatwa*' (being an object of knowledge) hoisted on *Atman* or *Brahman* in statements like — '*Avijnaatam Vijnaanataam*' (Those who claim that they have known It, really do not know It) — (*Kena* 2-3). In the same manner, in the *Geeta* also it is stated that — '*Sookshmatwaattadvijneyam*' — (Since It is subtle It is not an object for knowledge) — (*Geeta* 13-15). Just like *Brahman*'s '*Jijnaasyatwa*' elaborated upon above, the *Upanishads* presume the pairs of concepts like '*Jijnaasu*' and '*Jijnaasaa*', '*Vidyaa*' and '*Avidyaa*' from the viewpoint of *Adhyaaroopa* alone and are propounding the Ultimate Reality of *Brahman* or *Atman*. How this very important, nay unique, methodology of '*Adhyaaroopa Apavaada Nyaaya*' or 'The Axiom

of Superimposition and Rescission' has been utilized in all the *Shrutis* to propound the Absolute Reality of *Brahman* or *Atman* in various ways — we will depict in the forthcoming Chapters of this *Prakarana Grantha*.

VII. BRAHMAN AS THE CAUSE OF THE WORLD AND ISHWARATWA

55. Q: Apart from the *Taittiriya Shruti* sentence that you exemplified before to substantiate the fact that — “The prime goal of all *Upanishads* is to propound the truth that *Brahman* alone is the *Paramaarthha Satya*” — are there any other such supporting sentences to be found in other *Upanishads*?

A: “*Tatsatyam Sa Aatmaa*” — (*Chhaandogya* 6-8-7); “*Yenaaksharam Purusham Veda Satyam*” — (*Mundaka* 1-2-13); “*Tadetad Satyam*” — (*Mundaka* 2-1-1) etc. — in all these contexts the one common teaching is that — “*Brahman* alone is the Absolute Reality.”

56. Q: In all these sentences quoted by you it has been propounded that — “*Brahman* is the cause for the world of duality” — is it not? In that case, how can it be proper to say that — “*Brahman*, which is involved in or within the purview of the empirical categories of cause and effect, is the Absolute (Transcendental) Reality”?

A: Just as we have called *Brahman* ‘*Jneya*’ or an object to be known, this our calling *Brahman* a ‘cause’ is also from the ‘*Adhyaaroopa Drishti*’ or viewpoint of superimposition only. When one (i.e. the aspirant) has cognized (Intuited) this non-dual, Absolute Reality of *Brahmaatman*, then the *Shruti* sublates or rescinds the mundane, empirical categories of cause and effect from that ‘Absolute or Intuitive’ viewpoint (*Paramaarthha Drishti*).

57. Q: Why at all does the *Shruti* first state that — “*Brahman* alone is the cause” and then it sublates this ‘causation’; instead, why should it not, at the outset itself, propound the *Swaroopa* or the essential nature of Pure Being of *Brahman* and be done with it? It would have been more prudent to follow the moral depicted in the maxim that — “*Prakshaalanaaddhipankasya Dooraadasparshanam Varam*” — meaning, “Better than getting the hands dirtied by mud, is to keep at a distance away from that mud without touching it” — is it not?

A: Not so. In all the *Upanishads* there are sentences like — “*Etajjneyam Nityamevaatmasamstham*” - (*Shwetaashwatara* 1-12); “*Naaraayanam Mahaajjneyam*” — (*Taittiriya Naa.* 13-28); “*Jneyam Yattat Pravakshyaami*” — (*Geeta* 13-12) — and it has been expressly pointed out that — “*Brahman* alone is that which is to be known: *Atman* alone is that which is to be known.” — but not that — “*Brahman* is a known object alone: *Atman* is a known object alone.” (To wit, there is a very subtle distinction pointed out here. In the first statement the implied meaning is — “*Brahman* alone is all that is to be known or Intuited; in other words, *Brahman* is the non-dual, unitary Reality that is to be pursued and found out as the final goal of all knowledge; but in the second statement the stress is shifted on the word — ‘*Jneya*’ — being in syntactical proximity with ‘alone’. The meaning now becomes — *Brahman* or *Atman* is merely an object of knowledge’ just like any other empirical object for our mind or senses).

“*Yatparasshabdaha Sa Shabdarthaha*” — meaning, “In that purport in which the *Shruti* (*Upanishad*) has its final goal — that alone is the genuine meaning or interpretation of the *Shruti* sentence” — according to this *Nyaaya* or axiom, the teaching that — “There is no other cause for the world of duality” — alone is the final goal or purport of the *Shruti* and not the suggestion that — *Brahman* always continues to be a cause (for the world).” In the same way, by the fact that in the *Upanishads* it has been repeatedly taught that — “If one knows *Brahman*, it amounts to his knowing everything” — “*Brahman* alone should be known.” Similarly, in *Shrutis* like — “*Sa Kaaranam Karanaadhipaadhhipaha*” — (*Shwetaashwatara* 6-6) etc. we should surmise that all the *Shrutis*, without exception, entertain the sole purport of expounding the teaching — “*Paramaatman* or the Supreme Self alone is the cause (for the world of duality) and not the *Jeeva* or the transmigratory soul, nor any other insentient thing or phenomenon whatsoever.”

58. Q: Where has it been taught, then, that “*Brahman* is not a cause”? Merely by making a statement like that what real benefit will accrue? If the *Shruti* itself first expounds that — “*Brahman* is the cause (for the world)” — and later on if it affirms that — “*Brahman* is not the cause” — then, the *Shruti* will face the consequence of being branded as an invalid means (source) of knowledge (*Apraamaanyatwa*) since it contradicts its own earlier teaching. That is all!

A: In the *Shruti* — “*Tadetadbrahmaapoorvamanaparamanantarama-baahyamayamaatmaa Brahma Sarvaanubhoohu*” — (*Brihadaaranyaka* 2-5-19) — it is very clearly indicated that — “That *Atman* who is experiencing everything alone is *Brahman*; and to that *Brahman* neither there exists a cause, nor an effect of It exists: neither there is anything

internal to It, nor anything external to It." In *Shrutis* like — "*Anyatra Dharmaadanyatraadharmaadanyatraasmaatkritaakritaad Anyatra Bhootaachha Bhavyaachha*" — (*Kathopanishad* 2-14) — it is very clearly taught that the categories of cause and effect, the opposites of *Dharma* and *Adharma* as well as the events past and future do not at all exist. Therefore, in order to determine the teaching that — "*Brahman* is the *Paramaarth* or the Absolute Reality devoid of the categories of cause and effect" — a methodology of exposition adopting both these viewpoints becomes quite a necessity indeed. And merely on account of this the *Shruti* statements do not get vitiated as invalid means or sources of knowledge.

59. Q: Merely because something is stated by the *Shruti*, can that statement become a genuine *Pramaana*? In accordance with that statement, should we not acquire the relevant *Jnaana*? What supporting evidence is there at all to determine in that manner?

A: The *Upanishadic* statement — which explains or describes in the following manner (*Varnanavaakya*): "*Yatoa Vaa Imaani Bhootaani Jaayante Yena Jaataani Jeevanti: Yatprayantya bhiksamulshanti: Tad-vijjinaasaswa: Tadbrahmeti*" — (*Taittiriya* 3-3-1) — depicts the *Brahmalaksana* or the distinctive characteristics of the Ultimate Reality of *Brahman*. Here in this context, '*Laksana*' means '*Swaroopa*' or the essential nature of Being alone, and not any extra-ordinary or uncommon nature (*Asaadhaaranaadharma*) as the logicians aver. For, the *Vedantic* teaching or instruction (*Vedaantoapadesha*) is "*Brahman* is *Nirdharmaka Vastu* or an Entity devoid of any distinctive characteristics" — alone. Here the *Brahmaswaroopa* has been described in the manner that — "From which Entity this entire physical, materialistic world of duality and diversity (made out of the five primordial elements) is born and after being born from that Entity that world is sustained by that very Entity (to wit, in which *Brahman* the world of duality and multiplicity appears to exist); and in which Entity alone all this world merges and in It alone it becomes one with It — such an Entity is *Brahman* indeed." In the *Brahma Sootra* — "*Janmaadyasya Yataha*" — meaning, 'From which Entity the *Janma* or birth (creation or causation) etc. of this *Jagat* or world of duality is taking place" — (that Entity alone is *Brahman*) — thus the *Laxanas* of '*Jijnaasya Brahma*' or the Ultimate Reality to be known, cognized are described. The nature of the world is to appear in *Atman* alone, to continue to exist or be sustained by *Atman* alone, and finally to merge or to become one with *Atman* alone. It is never in the experience of any one — whosoever he or she may be — that: "Apart from *Atman* and independently along with *Atman* the world of duality exists as a second entity; such as this indeed is the essential nature of the *Jagat*."

Therefore, *Atman* alone is the Reality. It becomes established as certain that — “The world which appears as being subservient to or controlled by *Atman* and which merges in Him is *Anrita* or false appearance alone.” Further, it is in everyone's experience that by mixing up *Atman* and *Anaatman* alone or ‘*Satyam*’ and ‘*Anritam*’, respectively, indeed all the common people transact in the forms of ‘I’ and ‘mine’. Therefore, what the *Shruti* is stating viz. “*Tatsatyam, Sa Aatmaa*” — (*Chhaandogya* 6-8-7), meaning, “That *Brahman* alone is the Reality; That alone is *Atman*” — is in consonance with universal *Anubhava*. Besides, it amounts to saying that all this is indeed the explanation of what is purported to have been stated in the *Adhyaasalaxanavaakya* or the sentence pertaining to the distinctive characteristics of misconception. Here, in this context, the word ‘*Kaarana*’ means ‘*Paramaartham Satyam*’ or the Absolute Transcendental Reality alone; the word ‘*Kaarya*’ means ‘*Anrita*’ or false appearance. In the *Bhagavad Geeta* too the *Laxanas* of *Paramaatman* have been stated in the following manner which are again analogous to the above *Laxanas* alone, viz.:

- (i) “*Aham Sarvasya Prabhava Mattaha Sarvam Pravartate*”
— (*Geeta* 10-8);
- (ii) “*Ahamaadishcha Madhyam Cha Bhootaanaamanta Eva Cha*”
— (*Geeta* 10-20);
- (iii) “*Sargaanaamaadirantashcha Madhyam Chalvaahamarjuna*”
— (*Geeta* 10-32);
- (iv) “*Na Tadasti Vinaa Yat Syaanmayaa Bhootam Charaacharam*”
— (*Geeta* 10-39).

Therefore, this ‘*Kaaranatwa*’ or causation is not merely connoted by the sentences, but also is in consonance with everyone's *Anubhava*.

60. Q: Why is it that giving up the popular commonplace meaning of the words ‘*Kaarya*’ and ‘*Kaarana*’ these very words are used with such a queer (*Vilaxana*) meaning like this in the *Shaastra*?

A: In our workaday world too clay, which is the (material) cause, appears as pots, pitchers etc. which are the effects. All these effects of pots, pitchers etc. even in their transactional forms or states are actually clay alone; they are not at all separate or apart from clay the material of which all those forms are made of. Is it not true that gold alone is popular (familiar) by names like a ring, a bangle etc.? Hence, in the sense of — “*Aatmavastu* or the Entity of *Atman*’ (the substratum for the world of duality) alone is appearing as the world based on this analogy and our having dealt with *Atman* as the cause and the world of duality as His effect does not amount to our having used them contrary to the popular beliefs among the common people.

61. Q: In our workaday world the material causes like clay, gold etc. are with constituent parts (*Saavayava*). It is also familiar that the constituents of clay acquire their distinctive, separate forms too. A potter wets the dry clay powder in water, prepares the lump of clay and then turns that into any form (like a pot, a pitcher etc.) according to his whim. Similarly, a goldsmith too melts the gold ingots or biscuits in the fire and pours that molten gold into various moulds or dies to convert the precious metal into various forms of ornament. However, neither the potter gets converted or transformed into pots, pitchers etc. nor the goldsmith gets converted into various ornaments like a ring, a bangle etc. Even so, sentient (animate) individuals like a potter or a goldsmith become the efficient causes for pots, pitchers etc. or rings, bangles etc., respectively. It being so, in what sense is the opinion (purport) of the *Shaastra* we should understand when it teaches that *Atman* is the cause for the world of duality or diversity?

A: Materials (insentient, inanimate) like clay, gold etc. are the '*Upaadaana Kaarana*' or material causes for their respective effects, while individuals (sentient, animate) like the potter, the goldsmith etc. are the '*Kartru*' or agent of action and are the '*Nimitta Kaarana*' or efficient causes for their respective effects. Although it is true that in our empirical workaday world the *Upaadaana Kaarana* and the *Nimitta Kaarana* (*Kartru*) are separate or distinct, before the creation *Atman* existed by and unto Himself without anything second to Himself. The *Shruti* describes that — "*Soa(s)kaamayata: Bahu Syaam Prajaayeyeti*" — (*Taittiriya* 2-6); "*Tadaikshata Bahu Syaam Prajaayeya*" — (*Chhaandogya* 6-2-3) etc. meaning — "I will be born as many" — in this manner *Atman* imagined and then created the world of duality and diversity. Therefore, for the world the primordial matter (*Prakriti*) is the *Upaadaana Kaarana*, and *Kartru* (or *Nimitta Kaarana*) is *Brahman* alone. This alone is the real purport of the *Shruti* teaching. In addition to this, *Brahman* existing alone by Itself, It alone became the whole of the world, as also, just as the clay gets converted into a pot, *Brahman* by Itself (Its own volition, so to speak) transformed Itself by its own effort into the world of duality — is stated by the following *Shruti* sentences: "*Tadaatmaanam Swayamakuruta*" — (*Taittiriya* 2-3); meaning, "It converted Itself by Itself"; "*Sachha Tyachhaabhavat*" — (*Taittiriya* 2-6), meaning — "It Itself became '*Moorta*' or with forms, '*Amoorta*' or devoid of forms." Therefore, it becomes quite evident from all these statements that — "The *Kartru* of creation, who is both the *Upaadaana Kaarana* and the *Nimitta Kaarana* for the world of duality, is *Brahman* alone" — is the genuine purport of teaching of the *Shrutis*.

Here in this context, the word '*Kaarana*' means the cause for the '*Anrita Vastu*' or false appearance of an object or phenomenon which is

projected or conjured up by *Avidyaa* and *Kaaraṇa* also means the substratum (*Aaspada*) of the Absolute Reality of *Brahman* (*Paramaārtha*) alone, and for this above teaching the illustrations given in the *Shruti* itself are the causes of clay, gold etc. and their respective effects of pots, gold rings or bangles etc. To wit:

“*Yathaa Soomyaikenā Mr̥t̥p̥indena Sarvām Mr̥inmayam V̥ij̥naatam Syaadvaachaarambhanam V̥ikaaroa Naamadheyam Mr̥ittiketyeva Satyam*” — (*Chhaandogya* 6-1-4). Meaning: “If one lump of clay is cognized, it amounts to our having cognized all the earthen effects made out of that clay; the effect is nothing but a mere name alone produced out of speech, but the clay alone is the reality.”

In this *Upanishadic* illustration it is pointed out that — “In our workaday world too whatever effects are produced out of the (material) cause of the clay are actually (in truth) clay alone; what is called the effect is merely a name alone, ‘*Anrita*’ or a false appearance alone and not ‘*Satyam*’ or the reality, an entity; further, the statement that the clay became a pot is a mere empirical transaction of speech, but clay alone is the entity involved.”

In the above *Shruti* it is further stressed that: “In the effects produced by *Brahman*, viz. *Tejoabanna* (*Agni* or fire, *Ap* or water, *Prithvi* or earth) — because of the reason that there are no other phenomena than *Agni* (fire), *Aaditya* (sun), *Vidyut* (lightning): “*Apaagaadagneragnitwam Vaachaarambhanam V̥ikaaroa Naamadheyam Treeni Roopaaneetyeva Satyam*” — (*Chhaandogya* 6-4-1); meaning, “Fire, sun and lightning — these three in the forms of effects are truly ‘*Anrita*’ alone and are nothing but the causes of ‘*Tejoabanna*’ (red, white and black) alone; they are all again ‘*Vaachaarambhana*’ (products of speech alone). Even among those *Tejoabannas* they are mutually related in the forms of cause and effect and are conglomerations indeed; here also it has been enunciated that the cause alone is the reality or entity. *Aadhyaatmically* speaking, the phenomena like the mind, the intellect etc. which appear within the body are also the effects of the *Tejoabanna* alone.

“*Annamayam Hi Soomya Manashchaapoamayaha Praanaste-Joamayee Vaak*” — (*Chhaandogya* 6-5-4). Meaning: “Because of the reason that the mind is the effect of ‘*Anna*’ (food) or earth; the *Praana* or vital force the effect of *Ap* (water), *Vaak* (speech) the effect of *Tejas* (light or fire) — all of them too are, in truth, *Tejoabanna* alone and nothing else whatsoever. This sentence also depicts the same idea.

“*Annena Soomya Shungeraapoamoolamanwltchhaadbhihi, Soomya Shungena Tejoamoolamanwltchha Tejasoa Soomya Shungena Sanmoolamanwltchha Sanmoolaaha Soomyemaaha Sarvaaha Prajaaha Sadaayatanaaha Satpratishthaaha*” — (*Chhaandogya* 6-8-4). Meaning: “The cause for *Anna* (*Prithvi*) is *Ap* (water), the cause for *Ap* is *Tejas*

(light or fire). the cause for *Tejas* is 'Sat' (the Ultimate Reality of *Brahman* or *Atman*) — thus it is propounded that the effect being nothing other than the cause. in the final analysis *Sat* alone remains as the supreme cause (for everything). It being so. all the things which are born do so from *Sat* alone. are sustained by *Sat* alone and finally merge into *Sat* alone. Therefore. the supreme Reality (*Paramaarth* *Satya*) is *Brahman* alone. Because in *Brahman* alone the birth (creation) of the world. its sustenance and finally its merger are taking place. all these three aspects are *Anrita* (false appearances); and this alone becomes the ultimate purport of teaching of the *Shruti*. This same teaching is briefly stated in the *Sootra* — "*Janmaadyasya Yataha*."

62. Q: Barring the empirical illustrations of clay, gold etc. given in the *Shruti*, is there any other *Yukti* (logical device) to assert that — "Intuitive deliberation on *Satyam* and *Anritam* (and their distinct characteristics and natures) alone is the prime purport of the scripture here in this context"?

A: Yes. there is. In the above quoted *Sootra* viz. "*Janmaadyasya Yataha*", if any one tries to discern the purport of the *Bhaashya* portion devoted to explain the word '*Asya*'. meaning — 'this world' and its essential nature as explained therein. then such a person who has Intuited its purport will be convinced that in this context the *Shruti* sentence has the relevance only in teaching that — "The *Kaarana* (cause) is *Satyam* (real). while the *Kaarya* (effect) is *Anrita* (a false appearance) only." To wit. the *Bhaashya* says: "*Asya Jagataha Naamaroopaabhyaam Vyaakritasya. Aneka Kartrubhoaktrusamyuktasya. Pratnityatadeshkaalanimittakriyaaphalaashrayasya Manasaapyachintyarachanaaroopasya Janmasthitibhangam Yataha Sarvajnaat Sarvashaktehe Kaaranaadbhavati 'Tadbrahma' Iti Vaakyasheshaha*" — (*Sootra Bhaashya* 1-1-2).

In this description the world which is the effect is stated to be:

- (i) "It is divided or differentiated by names and forms." Therefore. from this it can be discerned that *Brahman* (*Atman*) which is the cause is devoid of names and forms and is an Entity quite different from those names and forms.
- (ii) It is further stated that — "This (world) is full of *Kartrus* (agents of action) and *Bhoaktrus* (enjoyers). Therefore. it can be discerned that — '*Brahman*. which is the cause for this effect of the world of duality full of *Kartrus* and *Bhoaktrus*. is surely not of the essential nature of the transmigratory soul (*Asamsaaree Swaroopa*) and not either a *Kartru* or a *Bhoaktru*."
- (iii) It is also stated that — "This world is the base (*Aashraya*) for every rule or regulation involving space. time and causation categories as

well as action and its relevant fruit." Therefore, it amounts to saying that the world's cause (*Brahman*) is not controlled or confined by the categories of space, time and causation, and it should be the very substratum for the birth, sustenance and dissolution of this world of duality which is of the nature of action, means of action and its resultant fruit. If it is stated that — "Devoid of the restrictions of time, space and causation, *Brahman* is the cause for the world, which is conjoined with those categories of time, space and causation and which is of the very nature of action, means of action and its fruit" — it amounts to having taught that *Brahman* is the *Paramaārtha Vastu* (the Absolute, Transcendental Reality) alone which is bereft of the divisions of time space etc. as also which does not get mutated or changed whatsoever by action, means of action etc. Because of the reason that this essential nature of the world of duality can be cognized not merely from the teaching of the *Shruti* alone but also by '*Saārvaatrika Anubhava*' or universal Intuitive experience, it becomes established (proved) that this teaching is based on, or supported by, *Yukti* in consonance with *Anubhava*.

63. Q: Is there any authoritative source to affirm that — "Those scriptural sentences which propound *Brahman* as the cause have, in the main, the purport or goal of teaching *Aatmaikatwa Vidyā* or the Knowledge of the non-dualism of the Self"?

A: Yes, there is. This truth has been indicated by Shri Baadaraayana in his *Sootra* (2-1-14) and Shri Shankara has explained it in his *Bhaashya* on that *Sootra*, viz. "*Tadananyatwamaarambhanashabdaadibhyaha*" — (2-1-14). The *Bhaashyakaara*, while explaining it in his commentary has written in the following manner: (1) " '*Aarambhanashabdaadibhyaha*' — *Iti Aadishabdaat 'Atadaatmyamidam Sarvam Tatsatyam Sa Aatmaa Tattwamasī'* — (*Chhaandogya* 6-8-7); '*Idam Sarvam Yadayamaatmaa*' — (*Brihadaaranyaka* 2-4-6); '*Brahmaivedam Sarvam*' — (*Mundaka* 2-2-11); '*Aatmaivedam Sarvam*' — (*Chhaandogya* 7-25-1); '*Neha Naanaasti Kinchana*' — (*Brihadaaranyaka* 4-4-19) — *Ityevamaadyaatmaikatwapratipaadanaparam Vachanajaatam Udaahartavyam; Na Chaanyathaa Ekavijnanaanena Sarvavijnanam Sampadyate*" — (*Sootra Bhaashya* 2-1-14).

In the *Sootra*: '*Aarambhanashabdaadibhyaha*' — (2-1-14), because the word '*Aadi*' (literally 'etc.') is used, the *Bhaashya*'s import is that all the *Shruti* statements devoted to teaching *Aatmaikatwapratipaadana* (propounding non-dualism of the Self) in various *Upaṇishads* like the ones quoted from *Chhaandogya* 6-8-7, *Brihadaaranyaka* 2-4-6, *Mundaka* 2-2-11, *Chhaandogya* 7-25-1 and *Brihadaaranyaka* 4-4-19 etc. — all such sets of scriptural statements should be exemplified.

From this it can be discerned that — ‘Whatever we perceive in this external world, all that is verily *Brahman* alone, *Paramaatman* alone.’ And this indeed is the prime purport of teaching behind the *Vedanta Vaakyas*. The oft-repeated teaching of the *Shrutis* that — “By knowing this One Entity it becomes tantamount to knowing all else indeed” — is an authoritative scriptural statement supporting this tenet of *Aatmaikatwa Vidyaa* alone and is the relevant spiritual teaching in all those statements.

Here in this context, the cause for mixing up *Satyam* and *Anritam*, viz. *Atman* and *Anaatman*, respectively, and then carrying on our workaday transactions is ‘*Avidyaa*’ alone. To discern that between these two one is *Satyam* and the other *Anritam* is ‘*Vidyaa*’, and if only this much were the intended purport for the *Shrutl*, then in that case there should not have existed any sentences in the *Shrutl* specifically teaching that — “All is *Atman* alone.” The *Shrutl* would have given sufficient scope for the wrong conception of the *Aviveki*’s or non-discriminative *Avidyaa*’s, viz. “The *Anrita Anaatman* too exists by the side of *Satya Atman* as an entity second to It.” But, the real fact is not like that at all. The *Anubhava* (Intuitive experience) that — “*Atman* alone is the *Paramaarth Satya*” — alone is ‘*Samyajjnaana*’ or the correct Intuitive Knowledge of the Self. Even what is reckoned as *Anaatman* is said from the Transcendental viewpoint of *Atman* alone. To determine this truth without any ambiguity or doubt alone is the final goal of *Adhyaasa Bhaashya*.

64. Q: In our workaday world the one who is a *Bhoaktru* being different and separate from his *Bhoagya Vastu* or object of enjoyment is found to be a universal rule of law. If *Brahman* is accepted as the *Upaadaana Kaarana* (material cause) for the world of duality or diversity, then the divisions of *Bhoaktru*, *Bhoaga* (means of enjoyment) and *Bhoagya* (object of enjoyment) themselves will be obliterated, is it not? Or, if *Brahman*, just like a lump of clay or an ingot of gold etc. gets transformed into Its effects (*Kaarya*), then the ‘*Anishtaprasakti*’ or undesirable conclusions of — (i) the Absolute Pure *Brahman* does not exist during the time of sustenance of the world; (ii) the divisions do not exist during the state of dissolution of the world — will be faced, is it not?

A: Looking from the empirical viewpoint, it is true that *Shrutis* like — “*Sachha Tyachhaabhavat*” - (*Taittiriya* 2-6) etc. are teaching that *Atman* by Himself transformed Himself into the form of the world without desiderating any help from anything else. This truth is also being propounded by the *Sootra* (1-4-26): “*Aatmakritehe Parinaamaat*”.

Considering it from this *Vyavahaaric* viewpoint, although *Bhoaktru* and *Bhoagya* from the standpoint of *Brahmaswaroopa* (essential nature of Pure Being) are one and the same alone, from the standpoint of their respective forms they may be different or diverse indeed. This truth is briefly taught in the Sootra (2-1-13): "*Bhoaktraapatteravibhaagaschet Syaalloakavat*". The *Bhaashyakaara* has explained it in the following manner:

- (i) "*Samudraadudakaatmanoa(s)nanyatwe(s)pi Tadulkaaraanaam PhenaveecheetarangabudbudaadeenaamItaretaravibhaagaha Itaretarasamshleshaadilakshnashcha Vyavahaara Upalabhyate; Na Cha Samudraadudakaatmanoa(s)nanyatwe(s)pi Tadulkaaraanaam Phenatarangaadeenaam Itaretarabhaavaapattirbhavati; Na Cha Teshaam Itaretarabhaavaanaapattaavapi Samudraatmanoa(s)n-yatwam Bhavati; Evam Ihaapi; Na Cha Bhoaktrubhoagyayoa-ritaretarabhaavaapattihl, Na Cha Parastaad Brahmanoa(s)n-yatwam Bhavishyati.*" — (Sootra Bhaashya 2-1-13).

Meaning: "Although foam, wave, bubbles etc. are the distinctive forms of sea water, mutually different from one another, from the viewpoint of their being water (their actual material base) all of them are nothing but sea water alone; in the same manner, although *Bhoaktru*, *Bhoagya* etc. are mutually different from one another, all of them may exist as the (unitary, non-dual) *Brahma Swaroopa*." To wit, from the *Paramaarth* *Drishti* *Bhoaktru*, *Bhoaga* and *Bhoagya* are *Anrita* only and hence it is established as a fact of life that *Kaarya* (effect) is not at all different from *Kaarana* (cause). From this standpoint, the *Bhaashyakaara* has written as follows: "*Tasmaat, Yathaa Ghatakarakaadyaakaashaanaam Mahaakaa-shaadananyatwam, Yathaa Cha Mrigatrishnikoadakaadeenaam Oosharaadibhyoa(s)nanyatwam, Drishtanashtaswaroopatwaat, Swaroopenaanupaakhyatwaat, Evam Asya Bhoagyabhoaktra-adiprapanchajaatasya Brahmayatirekenaabhaava Iti Drish-tavyam*" — (Sootra Bhaashya 2-1-14).

Meaning: "Just as the empty spaces within a pot, a pitcher etc. are identical (*Ananya*) with the open, large empty space; the waters of a mirage etc. are identical with the desert sand — in the same manner, the different categories of the type of *Bhoagya*, *Bhoaktru* etc. are not at all different from *Brahman*. Thus one has to discern." Here in this context, the different *Jeevas* are like the *Ghataakaasha*, *Mataakaasha* etc. or the apparent spaces within the pot, the pitcher etc. and all of them are like the water of the mirage (meaning, a mere delusion) — thus the similarity or analogy between two sets of illustrations should be carefully observed. This same illustration has also been mentioned by Shri Goudapaadaachaarya, the *Sampradaayapravartaka*

or proponent of the traditional methodology of teaching, in the following *Kaarika*: "*Aatmaa Hyaakaashaarajeevairghataakaashair-
troaditaha: Ghataadivachha Sanghaatairjaataavetannidarshanam*"
(Goudapaada *Kaarika* 3-3).

Its purport: Just as the *Mahaakaasha* itself is born as *Ghataakaasha*, *Mataakaasha* etc., *Atman* is born as the *Jeevas*, For the fact of (the world) being born or created, this is an (apt) illustration." To explain, although the *Mahaakaasha* always exists as one and one entity alone, it gets born as many in the forms of *Ghataakaasha*, *Mataakaasha* etc.; in the same way, *Brahman* associated with adjuncts like the body, the senses, the mind etc. appears as if it is the transmigratory souls (*Samsaari Jeevas*). Really speaking (from the transcendental viewpoint of *Atman*, the Pure Consciousness), just as the open empty space exists exclusively as one and one entity only, *Brahman* too exists ever as the non-dual Reality alone (This alone is the real purport of the illustration given in the *Kaarika*). *Aakaasha* appears as *Vaayu*, *Agni*, *Ap* and *Prithvi* in that order and by virtue of the transformation, or rather mutation, of the last of the primordial elements, viz. *Prithvi*, it (*Akaasha* itself) appears as an earthen pot, pitcher etc. In the same way, although *Paramaatman* is the only non-dual Entity, He appears as so many *Jeevas* just like the *Ghataakaashas* and as insentient, inanimate phenomena in the world of duality. This is the complete implied meaning of the sentence.

In this manner what has been taught in the *Sootra* (1-1-2): "*Janmaadyasya Yataha*" — from the viewpoint of superimposition (*Adhyaaroopa Drishti*) as the *Kaaryakaarana* theory, has been, in this context, negated or rescinded (*Apavaada*) on the strength of the *Shrutis* like "*Vaachhaarambhana Vikaaroo Naamadheyam*" etc.; here also it amounts to having taught the *Satyaanrita Viveka* or the Intuitive deliberation on what are real and unreal entities from the *Adhyaaroopa Apavaada Drishti*.

65. Q: Thus to teach *Jagatkaaranatwa* (causation of the world) from the *Adhyaaroopa Drishti* what is the authority or canonical source? What benefit at all can accrue from it?

A: From this the *Satkaaryavaada* (the theory of the birth of an existing entity) in accordance with the genuine teaching of Vedantic spiritual science as well as the rational, dialectical deduction and justification of the division into *Ishwara* (the Lord Creator) and *Eeshitarya* (the ruled *Jagat* and *Jeevas*) is fully clarified.

66. Q: What exactly is the essential teaching pertaining to Satkaaryavaada (theory of an existing entity being born) acceptable to Vedantic Shaastra? Are there any other Satkaarya theories apart from this?

A: The Saankhyans opine that - "*Kaarana* itself gets transformed into the *Kaarya*"; further they say — "*Kaarya* and *Kaarana* are *Ananya* (identical)." Shri Goudapaada has demonstrated that their theory of *Satkaarya* is '*Asaadhu*' or that which cannot be established or sustained on the strength of reason, and then has propounded (enunciated) the *Satkaaryavaada* acceptable to *Vedanta* in the following manner: "*Bhootam Na Jaayate Kinchidabhootam Naiva Jaayate; Vivadantoa Dvayaa Hyevamajaatim Khyapayanti Te*" — (Goudapaada *Kaarika* 4-4). Meaning: "That which exists is not born; that which does not exist never at all is born — thus those *Dvaitins* who are arguing and disputing among themselves, are, in truth, projecting (propounding unwittingly, as it were) '*Ajaati*' or birthlessness alone."

Here in this particular context, because *Saankhyans*, who are proponents of *Satkaaryavaada*, are being blamed by *Vaisheshikas*, while the latter who are the proponents of '*Asatkaaryavaada*' (the theory of a non-existing thing being born) are blamed by *Saankhyans* — a clear verdict gets evolved from their mutual quarrel, namely, that both their theories are invariably defective; besides, the truth that "From the *Paramaartha Drishti* the *Tattwa* or Reality of *Brahman* or *Atman* never at all is born" — is established jointly by their dialectical disputations and opposite viewpoints. This is implied by the above *Kaarika*.

"*Kaaranam Yasya Val Kaaryam Kaaranam Tasya Jaayate; Jaayamaanam Kathamajam Bhinnam Nityam Katham Cha Tat*" — (G. K. 4-12).

"*Kaaranaadyadyananyatwamataha Kaaryamajam Tava; Jaayamaanaadha Val Kaaryaatkaaranam Te Katham Dhruvam*" — (G. K. 4-12).

Shri Goudapaada in his these two above *Kaarikas* has shown the defects in the other proponents' theories in the manner: "In the doctrine of the *Saankhyans* who propound that — '*Pradhaana* which is the cause becomes transformed into its effects like *Mahat*, *Ahamkaara*, etc.; and therefore, *Kaarya* is *Ananya* (identical) with *Kaarana*' — it amounts to saying that although the *Kaarana* gets transformed into *Kaarya*, that which is born is *Aja* (birthless), which is (on the face of it) a blatant contradiction."

"*Satoa Hi Maayayaa Janma Yujyate Na Tu Tattwataha; Tattwatoa Jaayate Yasya Jaatam Tasya Hi Jaayate*" — (G. K. 3-27).

"*Asatoa Maayayaa Janma Tattwatoa Naiva Yujyate; Vandhyaaputroa Na Tattvena Maayayaa Vaapi Jaayate*" — (G. K. 3-28).

In these two above *Kaarikas* Shri Goudapaada has established dialectically the *Satkaarya* propounded and/or acknowledged by *Vedanta* in the following manner: "The entity which is *Sat* (really existing one) may be born by virtue of *Maayaa* (magic); but if it is propounded that it really is born, then it amounts to saying — 'That which is already born (existing) itself gets born again, afresh' — and this proposition becomes defective logically. But if a thing is at the beginning itself *Asat* (non-existing phenomenon), there is no possibility of it being born at all." In this manner the *Asatkaaryavaada* is also condemned.

"*Neha Naaneti Chaamnaayaadindroa Maayaabhirtiyapi; Ajaayamaanoa Bahudhaa Maayayaa Jaayate Tu Saha*" — (G. K. 3-24).

In this *Kaarika* several *Shruti* sentences like — "*Neha Naanaasti Kinchana*" — (*Brihadaraanyaka* 4-4-10); "*Indroa Maayaabhihi Pururoopa Eeyate*" — (*Brihadaraanyaka* 2-5-19); "*Ajaayamaanoa Bahudhaa Vijaayate*" — (*Taittiriya Aaranyaka* 3-13) — have been quoted as authoritative sources and on their strength Shri Goudapaada has adduced sufficient *Pramaana Vaakyas* to conclude (deduce) that — "The Absolute Reality of *Atman* (*Aatma Tattwa*), which is really birthless (*Janmarahita*), may plausibly be born by virtue of Its own magical powers (*Maayayaa*)."

This '*Maayaa Satkaaryavaada*' (theory of magical birth of the Eternal Entity of *Brahman* or *Atman*) has been expounded in the *Brahma Sootra* and the same tenet has been elaborated upon by Shri Shankara in his *Bhaashya* on that *Sootra*. For example: The *Sootra* (2-1-7): "*Asaditi Chenna Pratishedhamaatrataat*" — has been explained in the *Bhaashya* as: "*Yathalva Heedaaneemapeedam Kaaryam Kaara-naatmanoa Sat Evam Praagutpatterapi Iti Gamyate; Na....Heenam Praagutpatteridaaneem Vaa Asti.*" — (S. B. 2-1-7).

The *Shruti* enunciates that — "*Brahman* is devoid of *Shabda* (sound), *Sparsha* (touch) etc." The world which appears to be associated with *Shabda*, *Sparsha* etc. is never existing apart from *Brahman*; in other words, the world of duality or diversity is ever appearing in *Brahman* (to wit, *Brahman* is the substrate for the appearance of the world of duality). This elucidation is tantamount to enunciating the *Maayaa Satkaaryavaada* alone.

67. Q: What is meant by '*Ishwara*'? Is this *Ishwara* different from '*Brahman*'? How at all can this *Ishwaratwa* (Lordship) arise in *Aatma Vastu* (The Reality of the Self) which is non-dual (one without anything second to It)?

A: *Brahman*, the cause, alone in relation to the world, the effect, is called '*Ishwara*' (the Lord Creator); just as the *Kaaranatwa* (causehood) is superimposed on *Brahman*, in the same manner *Ishwaratwa*

also is superimposed on *Brahman* and is per force relative indeed. Just as in relation to the effect the transaction of treating or calling another thing its cause has arisen, in relation to the '*Eeshitavya Jeeva*' (the souls created and controlled by the Lord *Ishwara*) that Reality of *Brahman* is called or transacted as '*Ishwara*', the Lord. For this reason alone, Shri Shankara in many contexts in his *Bhaashya* has used the word '*Ishwara*' in the sense, or with the meaning, of '*Kaarana Brahman*'. For example:

(i) "*Asya Jagataha Naamaroopaabhyaam Vyaakritasya.. Janmasthitibhangam Yataha Sarvajnaat, Sarvashaktehe Kaaranaad Bhavati 'Tad Brahma' Iti Vaakyasheshaha*" — (Sootra Bhaashya 1-1-2).

(ii) *Yathoaktarisheshanasya Jagataha Yathoaktarisheshanam Ishwaram Muktvaa Anyataha Pradhaanaadachetanaad Anubhyoa(s)-bhaavaat Samsaarinoa Vaa Utpaatyaadi Sambhaavayitum Shakyam*" — (Sootra Bhaashya 1-1-2).

(In the above excerpts *Brahman* is called *Ishwara*, *Sarvajna* and *Sarveshwara*).

(iii) "*Kimu Vaktavyam Anekashaakhaabhedabhinnaasya Devattryangmanushyavarnaashramaadipravibhaagahetoaho Rigvedaadyaakhyasya...Sarvajnatwam Sarvashaktimatwam Cheti*" — (Sootra Bhaashya 1-1-5).

(Here because the special features or qualities of *Sarvajnatwam* (omniscience) and *Sarvashaktitwam* or omnipotency are mentioned, it amounts to signifying *Brahman* as *Ishwara* alone.)

(iv) "*Yatprasaadaat Hi Yoaginaamapyateetaanaagataavishayam Pratyaksham Jnaanamicchanti Yoagashaashtravidaha Kimuvaktavyam Tasya Nityasiddhasya Ishwarasya Shrishtisthitisamhritivishayam Nityajnaanam Bhavateeti*" — (Sootra Bhaashya 1-1-5).

(Here it is stated that *Ishwara*, whom the exponents of *Yoga Shaastra* are teaching, is none other than *Brahman*, the cause of the *Jagat*).

(v) "*Api Cha Avidyaadimataha Samsaarinaha Shareeraadyapekshaa Jnaanoatpattih Syaat: Na Jnaanapratibandhakaaraanarahitasya Ishwarasya*" — (Sootra Bhaashya 1-1-5).

(Here it is stated that there is no impediment whatsoever for *Brahma Jnaanaswaroopa* and hence that Itself is called *Ishwara*).

(vi) "*Swashabdaadeva Sarvajnaaha Ishwaroaha Jagataha Kaaranam Shrooyate Samhitoapanishadi*" — (Sootra Bhaashya 1-1-11).

68. Q: If the ultimate purport of the Shrutis is to teach that — "The non-dual Atman alone is the Paramaārtha Satya (the supreme, Absolute Reality)" — alone, then why is it that the Shrutis teach about Ishwaratwa, Sarvajnatwa etc, at all?

A: We have already stated that from the viewpoint of the relation with the world of names and forms the *Shrutis* teach about *Ishwaratwa*, His *Sarvajnatwa* etc. only from the *Vyavahaara Drishti* alone. For this the *Bhaashyakaara* has given a rational or dialectical device as follows:

“*Nityashuddhabuddhamuktaswaroopaat.... Saguneshoopaaneshu U'payoakshyata Iti*” — (*Sootra Bhaashya* 2-1-14).

There is an immense benefit in deliberating upon the various teachings, one by one, explained in great detail in this long *Bhaashya* portion:

- (i) In the *Sootra* — “*Janmaadyasya Yataha*” while projecting the *Brahmalaksana*, the statement that — ‘*Brahman* is the cause for the *Janma*, *Sthiti* and *Laya* of the *Jagat*’ is made from the *Adhyaaroopa Drishti* alone. And acknowledging the *Vyaavahaarika Kaaryakaaranabhaava* or the empirical categories of cause and effect, *Brahman* has been mentioned as the cause, that is all. From this, the refutation of the various theories presented by proponents of *Pradhaana* as the *Kaarana* for the *Jagat* (i.e. *Saankhyans*); *Paramaanus* as the cause of the materialistic world (i.e. *Vaisheshikas*) etc. is made very clear; further, the subtle relationship between *Satyam* and *Anritam* (to wit, *Vedantic* methodology of teaching is: *Jagat* is ‘*Adhyasta*’ or the super-imposed phenomenon, misconceived one; *Brahman*, the non-dual Reality, is ‘*Aaspada*’ or the substrate for this *Adhyaasa* or misconception. *Vedantic* methodology teaches us further that this relationship between a real entity and a false appearance of a phenomenon as if the latter is real is itself due to ‘*Avidyaa*’; but for the *Avidyaavantas*, very much steeped in materialistic transactions and pursuits, this methodology accepts in the beginning, by way of a concession and purely for the purposes of teaching, all mundane relationships of cause and effect by deliberate superimposition but later on rescinds this superimposition to bring home the non-dualism of *Brahman* or *Atman*) becomes very evident. From this there is no harm posed to *Aatmaikatwa* teaching at all.
- (ii) Here calling *Brahman*, the non-dual Absolute Reality, *Ishwara* is necessitated only by the relationship of the latter to the *Eeshitavya Kartrubhoaktruroopa Jeevas* or transmigratory souls of the nature of agents of action-cum-enjoyers, who are said to be lorded over or controlled by *Ishwara*. It should be evident to the careful student that from this teaching the qualities (*Dharmas*) like ‘*Ishwaratwa*’ and ‘*Kaaranatwa*’ do not at all attach to or taint *Brahman*.
- (iii) *Brahman* being called ‘*Sarvajna*’ and ‘*Sarvashakta*’ is only from the viewpoint of Its *Kaaranavastha* or grosser empirical state of being a cause. But from the viewpoint of Its Transcendental Absolute

Being (*Paramaārtha Drishti*) neither '*Sarvajnatwa*' nor '*Sarashaktatwa*' is to be found in the least in *Brahman*.

- (iv) For the whole of *Samsaaraprapancha* or the world of trans-migratory existence, names and forms are the seed. These names and forms cannot at all be described or defined as '*Tattwa-
anyatwaabhyamaanirvachaneeya*' or either as *Ishwara*'s essential nature of Pure Being or as independent entities existing by themselves apart from *Ishwara*. In fact, as if they are *Ishwara*'s very core of Being these names and forms are '*Avidyaa Kalpita*' or projected or conjured up by nescience. These are called *Maayaa*, *Shakti*, *Prakriti* in *Shrutis* and *Smritis* and this fact is very evident.
- (v) *Ishwara* is none other than *Brahman* alone, which is different from '*Avyākṛta Naamaroopabeeja*' or the seed form of names and forms in an unmanifest state and which is independent unto itself.
- (vi) *Brahman* which is the Ultimate Reality (*Paramaārtha*) is non-dual (*Adviteeya*); in It there is no transaction whatsoever.
- (vii) The *Sootrakaara* (Shri Baadaraayana) in the *Sootra* (2-1-13): "*Bhoaktraapatteravibhaagaschet Syaalloakavat*" — has given the illustration (analogy) of foam, waves and bubbles as the constituent parts of sea water while teaching this Ultimate Reality or *Brahman* neither with a view to concluding that *Brahman* is also having constituent parts (*Saavayava*) nor to affirm that in *Brahman* there are divisions of *Bhoaktru*, *Bhoagya* etc. In fact, the *Sootrakaara* does not entertain even an iota of the idea of teaching that — '*Brahman* is *Parinaami* or an object that undergoes transformation' — at all. For that reason too, he has taught through his *Sootra*: "*Aarambhanashabdaadibhyaha*" — that — "*The world of duality is Ananya (identical) with Brahman; and Aatmaikatwa or non-dualism of the Self is the final truth alone*". These alone are the genuine *Vedantic Siddhaanta*. This fact also is clarified here in this context.
- (viii) The *Sootrakaara* acknowledges *Ishwara* as '*Parinaami*' only from the *Vyaavahaaric* viewpoint; he does so with the ultimate purport of teaching that — '*The Jeeva can reach or attain Brahmanhood through Upaasana (meditation)*.'

69. Q: Regarding those preceptors who follow (adopt) the *Shaankara Siddhaanta* and propound the various topics, which of the tenets of Shri Shankara have these preceptors wrongly presented or commented upon?

A: (i) Although Shri Shankara has time and again reiterated in a crystal clear fashion that — '*Maayaa, Naamaroopabeeja, Prakriti* — all these various names are given to the unmanifested causal

state (*Praagroopa*) of the world of duality (which is the current topic of discussion) and that unmanifested causal (seed) form is said to be '*Avldyaakalpita*' or a projection, a conjured up phenomenon (concept) of nescience (to wit, the serious student of *Vedanta Shaastra* cannot afford to forget or neglect this prime secret of Shri Shankara's methodology of teaching that — "*Maayaa* or *Ishwara's Shakti* is itself *Avldyaakalpita*, just as *Ishwaratwa* also is *Avldyaakalpita*' — and the student should carefully discern the facts that — '*Avldyaa* itself, in a manner of speaking, is the cause for the effects or concepts of *Ishwaratwa* and *Maaya*: further, *Avldyaa* cannot be carelessly equated with *Maayaa* in all respects: for, all kinds of logical discrepancies will arise to confuse and confound him resulting in his totally missing the true significance of the unique methodology that the world teacher adopted — in consonance with the traditional pedagogic methods — in bringing home the subtle truths of *Advalta Vedanta*'") — some commentators have interpolated and adduced their own methodology of equating those three terms of *Maaya*, *Naamaroopabeeja* and *Prakriti* with *Avldyaa* and *Avldyaashakti* (to wit, Shri Shankara never calls *Avldyaa* as a *Shakti* or a potential force, but has used *Mayaa* to mean *Ishwara's Shakti* or omnipotency, quite in keeping with the *Upanishadic* teaching. Evidently, the confusion seems to have arisen from equating *Avldyaa* with *Maayaa* in all aspects).

- (ii) Discarding the *Bhaashya* teaching that — "*Avldyaa* means the mutual *Adhyaasa* (misconception and superimposition of qualities or characteristics of each on the other) between *Atman* and *Anaatman*" — Mandana Mishra, the author of '*Brahma-siddhi*', has misinterpreted Shri Goudapaada's technical words calling '*Agrahana*' (non-comprehension of the Reality) '*Kaaranaa-avldyaa*' and '*Anyathaagrahana*' (misconception) '*Kaaryaavldyaa*' — in his (Mandana's) own whimsical way and has called both *Avldyaa* to start, or bring into vogue, his own methodology.
- (iii) Because *Maayaa* or *Avldyaakalpita Prakriti* is misconceived in, or superimposed upon, *Atman*, it cannot be determined or defined to be either *Atman* Himself or some independent entity different from Him. But in the context where Shri Shankara has mentioned '*Tattwaanyatwaabhyaamanirvachaneeya*' — Mandana Mishra and the *Vyaakhyaanakaaras* (post-Shankara sub-commentators) have conceived a new meaning for the above 'phrase', interpreting it in the manner — " '*Anirvachaneeya*' — means that which cannot be determined as either '*Sat*' (real) and '*Asat*' (unreal) and is a substance (*Padaartha*) which is of quite a queer form different from both (i.e. *Sat* and *Asat*)."

The other *Bhaashyakaaras* who had undertaken an examination of Shri Shankara's *Siddhaanta* have erroneously taken this interpretation of Mandana Mishra and the *Vyaakhyaanakaaras* to be that of Shri Shankara alone and have refuted and criticized it. Those *Vyaakhyaanakaaras* who are the proponents of '*Avidyapaadaanavaada*' (the theory that *Avidyaa* itself is the material cause of the world) have imagined a completely new theory (a highly defective one at that, but mostly in vogue today) that — "The silver of nacre or sea-shell (*Shukтираjata*) etc. — the appearances which are *Anirvachaneeya Padarthas* or a materialistic, substantive thing which cannot be determined or defined as either *Sat* or *Asat* — are entities (substances) born out of another kind of *Avidyaa*, which is the substratum for not only things like *Shukti* (nacre) etc. but also the *Chaitanya* (Consciousness) which is *Avacchinna* or inseparable from them." (This is truly a far-fetched unsustainable imaginary theory which can never stand the onslaught of logic, particularly critique of reason; besides, it has, in the main, vitiated Shri Shankara's pristine pure *Advaita Vedanta Siddhaanta* beyond redemption, so to speak. Perhaps, only another world teacher of the calibre of Adi Shankara alone may save or salvage *Vedanta* from further harm and defilement).

- (iv) Although Shri Shankara's description of '*Adhyaasa*' is very clear in terms like '*Atasminstadbuddhihi*' the *Bhraantijnaana* or deluded, wrong knowledge of a thing as something other than what it is) — some *Vyaakhyaanakaaras* have misinterpreted it saying that — "*Adhyaasa* means not only this '*Jnaanaadhyasa*' or misconception but besides this there is another '*Arthaadhyasa*' which is nothing but the *Shukтираjata* or nacre-silver, rope-snake etc. which are born or appear in an *Anirvachaneeya* manner.
- (v) Whereas Shri Shankara has enunciated that — "*Ahampratyagatya Atman* or the Self (Pure Consciousness) associated with the adjunct of '*Ahamkaara*' or ego or the 'I' notion is the *Neera*' (transmigratory soul)" and that — "Quite different and distinct from him as his '*Saakshi*' or Witnessing Consciousness is *Ishwara*," — some other *Vyaakhyaanakaaras* are propounding their own bizarre doctrinaire theory that — "The *Avidyaa Shakti* that is attached to or has adhered to *Atman* gets transformed into *Ahamkaara*'; further, mere *Adhyaasa* alone is not *Avidyaa*. That *Avidyaa (Shakti)* covers up even the *Brahmaswaroopa* by dint of its own '*Aavarana Shakti*' or potency of covering up or hiding another thing, and thereafter by virtue of its other '*Vikshepa Shakti*' or potency of dispersing or scattering creates (causes)

'Samsaaritwa' or transmigratory existence (*Jeevatwa*)" Thus they have acknowledged *Avidyaa Shakti*, which is totally different from *Adhyaasa* as described by Shri Shankara. they have further explained that this *Avidyaa Shakti* is the *Kaarana* and *Samsaaritwa* is the *Kaarya*. This in truth, is the *Kaaryakaarana Vyavahaara* which they have acknowledged and adopted. This evidently amounts to their complete neglect of the *Bhaashya Siddhaanta* that — "All *Vyavahaaras* are due to *Adhyaasa* alone."

- (vi) A needless controversy has been started with a vain topic for discussion to the effect that — "To whom does *Avidyaa* attach itself — is it to *Brahman* or to the *Jeera*?" Some have opined that it attaches itself to the *Jeera*, while some others say that it attaches itself to *Brahman*; yet some others have thought that it attaches itself to the *Chinmaatra* or only the consciousness devoid of the divisions of *Jeevatwa* and *Brahmatwa*. Another topic of discussion is — "Is *Avidyaa* one or many?" — and some have opined it to be one, while some others are saying that — "Each *Jeera* has one *Avidyaa* and thus *Avidyaas* are many (to wit, as many as the number of *Jeevas*).". Thus they have expressed and exhibited their mutual differences of opinion among themselves. One more question is raised as to — "Is *Saakshi* one or many?" — and once again some have opined that — "*Jeera Saakshis* are different from *Ishwara Saakshi*" — and in this way they are conceiving highly illogical and imaginary doctrinaire theories (which again cannot stand the test of critique of reason and intuitive experience or *Anubhava*). It is so very clear and evident that these disputants have completely forgotten the *Upanishadic* teaching that — "The transactions of one and many" can never take place without any relation to time, space concepts" and the truth that — "*Saakshi* (the Witnessing or Pure Consciousness) is the Witness for everything else: in It there is no scope at all for the entry of any number whatsoever." Yet another ridiculous exercise (in futility) has been indulged in by these rabid logicians who have undertaken the wild goose chase of finding the *Pramaana* for *Avidyaa* itself and in the process have become totally oblivious and ignorant of the *Anubhava* (Intuitive experience) that — "All *Pramana Vyavahaara* (empirical transactions of finding valid means of evidence) are born out of *Avidyaa* itself!"

For all these blatant blemishes in these weird theories or tenets the root, prime cause is to be traced exclusively to the total neglect or obliviousness of the important *Vedantic* teaching that — "All the *Vedantas* (*Upanishads*) propound, on the firm basis of the immaculate

time-tested traditional methodology of *Adhyaaroopa* and *Apavaada*, that *Avidyaa*, which is established on the universal experience of the type of *Anyoanyaadhyaa* (mutual superimposition of their respective qualities or distinctive characteristics between *Atman* and *Anaatman*) and which is the *Adhyaasalaxana* (of the nature of misconception), can be got rid of or dissolved by means of *Aatmaikatwa Vidyaa* (the non-dualistic Knowledge or Intuitive experience of the Self as Pure Consciousness)." Therefore, the curative medicine, as it were, for getting rid of all these above-mentioned defects and defaults is to remember always the methodology of *Adhyaasa*, on the one hand, and the *Kaaryakaarana Prakriya* (the methodology of cause and effect) as already explained by us in some detail.

VIII. ISHWARA AND JEEVAS

70. Q: The *Laxana* (characteristic) of 'Brahman being the cause for the birth, sustenance and dissolution of the world' mentioned by the *Shaastra* does not seem to suit It for, in different *Shrutis* different orders of creation have been described. Is it not? How can all such discrepancies be reconciled?

A: For this question Shri Baadaraayana has provided satisfactory solution in his *Sootra* (1-4-14): "*Kaaranatwena Chaakaadishu Yathaa Vyapadishtoaktehe*". The purport of this is explained in the *Bhaashya* in the following manner:

- (i) *Yathaabhoota Hyekasmin Vedaante Sarvajnaha Sarveshwaraha Sarvaatmaa. Ekoa(s)dviteeyaha Kaaranatwena.. Bhavitumarhateeti Shakyate Vaktum; Atiprasangaat."*

Its gist: The *Brahmaswaroopa* or the essential nature of Pure Being-Consciousness that is enunciated in one particular *Upanishad* is itself described invariably in the same manner in the rest of the *Upanishads* and such a unitary Pure Being-Consciousness nature of *Brahman* alone has been enunciated to be the cause for the world of duality (Here the seeker should not get confused by such variations in the order of creation; for, in the ultimate analysis, creation or, for that matter, the details of the order of creation are not so important as the very cause of creation, and this latter tenet of *Brahman* as cause is enunciated synchronously. In fact, the very purport of teaching creation rests on diverting the attention of the seeker from the world of duality towards its unknown cause using the *Adhyaaroopa* technique and when *Brahman* is cognized to be beyond both cause and effect categories, then the deliberately superimposed qualities or characteristics

of *Brahman* are rescinded by *Apavaada*). It is true that in so far as the *Jagat*, which is the *Kaarya*, and its order of creation are concerned, different *Upanishads* have described the order of creation in different ways. But merely on that count it cannot be affirmed that in the matter of the *Kaarana* also the *Shrutis* (*Upanishads*) do not have any final purport (*Taatparya*). This is the opinion expressed in so many words in the above *Bhaashya* excerpt.

- (ii) "Samaadhaasyati Chaachaaryaha Kaaryavishayamapi Vigaanam 'Na Viyadashrulehe' — (2-3-1) Ityaarabhya: Bhavedapi.. Pratipattou Samsaaryaamatmatwavyaavrittehe" — (Sootra Bhaashya 1-4-14).

The purport of this above *Bhaashya* portion is: With regard to the *Upanishadic* sentences pertaining to the creation which is the *Kaarya*, to the objection that there is no unanimity the *Sootrakaara* (Shri Baadaraayana) will give satisfactory answer later on; but, in case there is no unanimity — even then it does not matter. For, by understanding it there does not appear to be any benefit at all: the *Shruti* does not also mention any *Phala* (benefit); last but not the least, we human beings by ourselves can never imagine this. The description of the creation by means of illustrations of clay, metal and sparks of fire etc. is only a clever device (*Upaaya*) adopted by the *Shruti* to divert our intellect (discriminative faculty) towards the non-dualism of the Self (*Aatmaikatwa*) and not to enunciate that the cause is separate or different from the effect (here, the world). Thus the traditional teacher Shri Goudapaada who knows the methodology of teaching handed down from time immemorial from the teacher to the pupil (*Sampradaayavid Achaarya*) also has affirmed. On the other hand, for the *Aatmaikatwa Jnaana* at various places in the *Shrutis* the benefit has been stated. With regard to the teaching — "Tattwamasi" — meaning, "That thou art", which the seeker has to cognize so as to culminate in his own Intuitive experience as — "That *Brahman* am I" — the fact that — "From this *Shruti Vaakya* 'Aatma Jnaana', which is engendered, directly helps attain 'Aatmaanubhava' or the Intuitive experience of the Self as Pure Being-Consciousness-Bliss alone" — is cognized by everyone directly and with certainty or conviction.

Here in this context *Kaarana* means that *Paramaatman* (Supreme Self) on whom the world of duality is superimposed (*Adhyasta*). And since that *Paramaatman* alone is *Satyam*, the *Shruti* propounding its *Jnaana* in order to attain the *Purushaartha* (the final goal of human existence) is reasonable indeed. Because the *Kaarya Prapancha*, which is superimposed on It is *Anrita*, the *Shruti* instructs (the seeker) that the *Tattwa* (Absolute Reality of *Brahman*) should be cognized without any

mixing up, in the least, of the *Anrita* world of duality; the *Shruti* further teaches that in the *Paramaarthā* not even a trace or taint of *Naanaatva* (diversity or manifoldness) exists. Thus it is enunciated in the *Sootra* (3-2-13): "*Api Chaivameke*". Its *Bhaashya* says:

"*Api Chaivam Bhedadarshanānindaapoorvakam Abhedadarshanā-meva Eke Shaakhinaha Samaamananti* — '*Manasavedamaaptavyam Neha Naanaasti Kinchana: Mrityoaho Sa Mritumaapnoati Ya Iha Naaneva Pashyati*' — Iti: Tathaa Anye(s)pi, '*Bhoaktaa Bhoogyam Preritaaram Cha Matu'aa Sarvam Proaktam Triveldham Brahmametat*' — (*Shvetashwatara* 1-1) Iti Samastasya Bhoogyabhoaktruntyantrulakshanasya Prapanchasya *Brahmaikasurabhaavataamadheeyate*" — (*Sootra Bhaashya* 3-2-13).

The gist of the *Bhaashya* is: The *Shruti* has specifically stressed that — 'Those who see as if there exists diversity in the really non-dual *Brahman* meet with death after death' — in the form of a condemnation or criticism and then instructed pointedly that — 'All that is divided or differentiated as *Bhoogyā* (object of enjoyment), *Bhoaktru* (enjoyer), *Parameshwara* (the Supreme Lord — who provides or bestows upon those enjoyers the fruits of enjoyment as their Dispenser) is *Brahman* alone. Even so, it should not be reckoned that description of creation has no utility whatsoever. The *Shruti* adopts a methodology of teaching the subtle Reality of *Brahman* on the strength of a *Nyaaya* (aphorism) that — 'The *Kaarya* is not *Bhinnā* (different) from the *Kaarana*' — and brings home the truth in the manner: "The *Paramaarthā* (the Ultimate Reality) behind *Prithvi* (earth) is *Ap* (water); the *Paramaarthā* of *Ap* is *Tejas* (fire)." In this order of tracing the root cause for all diverse and gross elements and their conglomerations (of which the world of duality is the visible percept) culminates in *Brahman* alone. In this manner the creation and its order becomes a pretext for the *Shruti* to determine the Ultimate non-dual Reality, and this teaching of the *Shrutis* is to be discerned by the true seeker. For this reason alone the *Sootrakaara* has enunciated the following *Sootra* in order to drive home the idea that the dissolution of this world of duality takes place completely in the reverse order of its creation:

"*Viparyayena Tu Kramoa(s)ta Upapadyate Cha*" — (2-3-14). To explain, the gross primordial element of *Prithvi* gets dissolved (*Laya*) in the subtler element of *Ap*, the latter in the still subtler element *Tejas* — thus these elements get dissolved in that order and this process of dissolution reaches its fruition or finality in the subtlest cause of *Brahman* in which everything gets merged, so to speak. This order of *Layachintana* (contemplation on dissolution) helps the seeker to determine the truth that — 'Everything is *Brahman* alone' — in the ultimate analysis (from the *Paramaarthā Drishti*).

71. Q: Since the world of duality is made up of *Bhoagya* and *Bhoaktru*, just like the insentient or inanimate objects which are *Bhoagya Vastu*, we should reckon that the *Jeeva*, who is the *Bhoaktru*, is also born from *Brahman* alone, is it not?

A: Not so. Because the bodies of *Charaachara Praanihi* or movable and immovable creatures are being born and are dying, *Jeeva*, who exists among them, seems to be born and to die. In the *Jeeva*'s essential nature of Being (*Svaroopo*) there exists both the *Aatmaamsha* (a part or an aspect of *Atman*, Pure Consciousness) which is animate or sentient and *Anaatmaamsha* (a part or an aspect of not-self) which is insentient in the form of *Antahkarana* (mind) etc. The *Aatmaamsha* is *Nitya* (eternal) while the *Anaatmaamsha* is *Anitya* (non-eternal, ephemeral). Mixing up both these aspects people in general misconceive themselves to be *Jeevas* (transmigratory souls having repeated births and deaths) as a result of *Avidyaa*. For this reason alone, in the *Adhyaasa Bhaashya* *Shri Shankara* has stated that — '*Evamahampratyayinam Asheshasuraprachaarasaakshini Pratyagaatmanyadhyasya. Tam Cha Pratyagaatmaanam Sarvasaakshinam Tadviparyayenaantahkaranadishu Adhyasyati.*'

Here *Atman* who is '*Ahampratyayagamya*' is Himself the *Jeeva* in the realm of empirical transactions; existing or being apart from him and illumining this *Jeeva* by His *Chaitanya* (Pure Consciousness) as his *Saakshi* (Witnessing Consciousness) is Himself referred to in all the *Upanishads* as *Parameshwara* or *Brahman*. In order to elucidate this fact *Shri Shankara* has written a *Bhaashya* like — '*Nanvaatmaa Ahampratyayaarishayatwaat Upanishatsveva Vijnayata Ityanupapannam. Na: Tatsaakshiltvena Pratyuktatwaat: Na Hi Ahampratyayaarishaya Katruvyatirekena Tatshaakshee Sarvabhootasthaha Samaha Ekaha Kootasthanityaha Purushaha Vidhikaande Tarkasamaye Vaa Kenachldadhigataha Sarvasyaatmaa: Ataha sa Na Kenachit Pratiyaakhyaatum Shakyaha*' — (*Sootra Bhaashya* 1-1-4).

In this *Bhaashya* excerpt the *Paramaarthaatman* examined in depth is familiar by names like *Brahman*, *Ishwara* and *Saakshi*. Previously the *Shruti* which the *Bhaashyakaara* had completely and literally quoted has been examined to suit the contextual purport here. That *Shruti Vaakya* is:

"Ekda Devaha Sarabhooteshu Goodhaha Sarvavyaapee Sarvabhootaantaraatmaa: Karmaadhyakshaha Sarvabhootaadhiwaasaha Saakshee Chetaa Keralaa Nirgrahascha" — (*Shwetaashwatara* 6-11).

Here some details in which *Ishwara*, who is the Witnessing Consciousness, is different or distinct from the *Jeeva*, who is the *Ahampratyayagamya*, have been clearly mentioned with their distinctive features:

Ishwara who is the Saakshi	Jeeva who is Ahampratyagamyam
1. He is the Witnessing Principle who objectifies the <i>Jeeva</i> , a <i>Kartu</i>	He is an object for the <i>Saakshi</i>
2. One who resides in every <i>Bhoota Vastu</i>	One who resides only in his extraordinary conglomeration of the body, the senses, the mind etc.
3. Of single unitary (<i>Sama</i>) nature, devoid of distinctions	One who has differences in <i>Jnaana</i> , <i>Karma</i> , <i>Sukha</i> and <i>Duhkha</i> etc.
4. One alone, non-dual (without anything second to Him)	Many, one for each body.
5. <i>Kootasthanitya</i> (devoid of any changes or mutations whatsoever)	One who undergoes changes by virtue of his <i>Karmas</i> , <i>Phalabhoaga</i> etc.
6. <i>Purusha</i> (One who is full and pervasive everywhere)	<i>Parichhlnna</i> (divisible)
7. <i>Atman</i> or Self for everyone and everything	<i>Atman</i> or self for each conglomeration (<i>Sanghaata</i>)

The deliberation of the non-dual *Purusha*, who is the Witnessing Consciousness (*Saakshi*) is not to be found in the *Karma Kaanda*; neither is to be found in the logic-oriented *Darshanas* or schools of philosophy like *Saankhya*, *Vaisheshika*, *Nyaaya* etc.; for, *Saankhyans* and the others teach that '*Purushas* are many.'

72. Q: Is Ishwara, who is the Saakshi, born? Or, is Jeeva born?

A: 'Because *Saakshiswaroopa* is the *Chaitanya* (Pure Consciousness) which witnesses everything and because It is the *Atman* of everything, no one can ever possibly imagine in the manner — "My *Atman* did not exist in the beginning; now He is born."

The *Sootrakaara* has, in his *Sootra* — "*Asambhavastu Satoa(s)nu-papattehe*" — stated that — "To say that for this *Paramaatman*, who is of the essential nature of Pure Being, is created — is contrary to *Yukti* (logical devices)." Shri Shankara, while explaining the purport behind this *Sootra* has stated in his *Bhaashya* that to say that for *Paramaatman*, who is Absolute Pure Being, the cause is '*Sat*' is not proper. For, between *Kaarya* and *Kaarana* there must per force exist some certain exclusive, distinctive feature in one category more than the other. *Sat* is *Nirvisheshha* (devoid of distinctions), while *Asat* (means 'that alone which does not exist') can never be a cause. Therefore, for *Sanmaatra* (Pure Being i.e. *Atman*) there cannot be a cause at all. Apart from this, if we go on imagining a cause for a cause, then without

reaching any finality we will face the defect of *Anavasthadoasha* (a flaw in logic called *regressus ad Infinitum*). Thus the *Bhaashyakaara* has written. It is quite necessary for the seeker to remember and discern that — “Because *Atman* is *Paramaarthā Satya*, no one can opine that *Atman* too is *Kalpita* (a mere imaginary concept). In fact, even to imagine in that weird manner too *Atman* is needed.” Even the *Shoonyavaadin* who imagines that — “Everything is naught or essenceless (*Shoonya*)” — does not have any kind of logical device whatsoever to prove that — “I too am essenceless (*Nihswabhaava*).” For, one who imagines in that manner is himself *Atman*, an existing Entity.

On the other hand, *Jeeva* is, from the *Vyavahaara Drishti*, one having a relationship with the conglomeration of the body, the senses, the mind etc.; because from the *Paramaarthā Drishti* he does not have any relationship with the adjuncts of the body, the senses, the mind etc., it amounts to accepting that he does not have *Kartrutwa* and *Bhoakrutwa* too, nor does he have *Janma* (birth) and *Marana* (death).

This above teaching is the *Vedantic Siddhaanta* substantiated by the following *Bhaashya* excerpts:

(i) In the brief sentence of *Adhyaasa Bhaashya* — “*Dehendriyaa-dishwahamamaabhimaanarahitasya Pramaatrutwaanupapattou Pramaanapravrittyanupapattehe*” — and in its explanatory statements too it has been demonstrated on the strength of reasoning in consonance with universal Intuitive experience that — “Barring the identification of *Atman* with the body as ‘I’ and with the senses as ‘mine’ — in the Absolute sense, for Him there is no relationship with either the body or the senses at all.”

(ii) From the brief sentence in the *Samanvaya Bhaashya* viz. — “*Sashareeratwasya Mithyaaajnaananimittatwaat*” — and its explanatory *Bhaashya*, viz. — “*Tasmaat, Mithyaaapratyayanimit-tatwaat Sashareeratwasya Siddham Jeevatoa(s)pi Vidushoa(s)-shareeratam*” — up to here the above *Siddhaanta* is established. Therefore, the fact that *Jeevatwa* exists only from the *Vyavahaara Drishti* is once again substantiated.

The *Bhaashya* on the *Sootra* (1-4-22): “*AvasthiterIti Kaashakritsnaha*” says that — “*Tathaa Cha Braahmanam ‘Anena Jeevenaa(ss)tmanaa(s)nupravishya Naamaroope Vyaakaravaani’ — Ityevamjaateeyakam Parasyaiva(ss)tmanoa Jeevabhaavenaa-vasthaanam Darshayati*” — and further in this *Sootra Bhaashya* by the sentence: “*Kaashakritsnasyaachaaryasya Avikritaha Parameshwara Jeevoa Naanya Iti Matam*” — it becomes established that — “*Paramaatman* Himself entered into the body and has acquired the transactions of a *Jeeva*.”

(iii) On the *Sootra* (2-3-50): “*Aabhaasa Eva Cha*” — the *Bhaashya* says: “*Abhaasa Eva Chalsha Jeevaha Parasyaa(s)tmanoa*

*Jalasooryakaadivat..... Tadvyudaasena Paaramaarthikasya
Brahmaatmabhaavasya Upadeshoapattihi."*

In this *Bhaashya* portion a rational device (*Upapatti*) has been provided in the manner: "Although *Paramaatman* has entered into all *Shareeras*, because the '*Aatmaabhaasa*' (the delusory reflection of *Atman* or Pure Consciousness) in each of the bodies is different from the others it can be said that *Jeevas* are many (in a manner of speaking)." Anyway, it is tantamount to teaching that — "*Jeeva* means the association of the mutual superimposition (*Parasparaadhyasa*) between *Paramaarthaatman* and His reflection projected by *Avidyaa*." For this reason, topics like *Jeeva's Samsaarakrama* or the order of his transmigration from one *Janma* to another and his *Bandha-Moaksha* are fit to be deliberated upon from the *Vyaavahaaric* viewpoint. The teaching that — "*Jeeva* is *Paramaatman* Himself" — which is to be deliberated upon '*Taatvically*' (Intuitively) from the viewpoint of *Paramaarth* is quite different.

To the question — "Is the *Jeeva* born?" — how Shri Shankara has given an answer can be dealt with now. The answer is: "He is not born from the standpoint of his essential nature of Pure Being, but can be said to be born from the viewpoint of his *Oupaadhikaroopa* (a form associated with adjuncts like the body, the senses etc.)."

73. Q: How does the *Vyavahaara* of the type — '*Jeeva* is born; he dies' — take place?

A: For the *Sootra* (2-3-16): "*Charaacharavyapaashrayastu Syaattadvypadeshoabhaaktastadbhaavabhaavitwant*" — the *Bhaashyakaara* has written his commentary like:

"*Shareerapraadurbhaavatiroabhaavayorhi Satoarjanmamaranashabdou Bhavataha. Naasatoaho: Na Hi Shareerasambandhaadanyatra Jeevoa Jaatoa Mritoa Vaa Kenachillakshyate: 'Sa Vaa Ayam Purushoa Jaayamaanaha Shareeramabhisambadhyamaanaha Sa Utkraaman Mriyamaanaha'* — (*Brihadaraanyaka* 4-3-8) *Iti Cha Shareerasamyoga-vlyoaganimittaveva Janmamaranashabdou Darshayati*".

The teaching that — "The relationship with the body is itself caused to *Atman* by dint of *Adhyasa* which is *Mithyaapratyayarooopa* (of the nature of misconception)" — is propounded from the *Paramaarth* *Drishti*. On the other hand, from the *Vyaavahaaric* viewpoint, because of the reason that, just like the *Jeeva*, the body too is real empirically, the *Shruti* teaches from the standpoint of '*Gouna Vritti*' (in a secondary sense) that — "With the association of the body *Jeeva* has birth and with its dissolution he has death."

If it is asked whether from the standpoint of his essential nature of Pure Being or *Swaroopa* (meaning he being devoid of the adjunct of the body, the senses etc.) the *Jeeva* has birth, then the answer given in the *Sootra* is: "*Naatmaa(s)shruternityatwaachha Taabhyaha*" — (2-3-17); and the *Bhaashya* on it explains:

"*Naatmaa Jeeva Utpadyate Iti: Kasmaat? Ashrutehe: Na Hyasya Utpatti prakarane Shravanamasti Bhooyahsu Pradesheshu: Nanu..... ,...Na Chalvamroopasya Utpattirupapadyate.*"

Its purport: "In his essential nature of Being, *Jeeva* is *Nitya* (eternal), *Aja* (birthless), *Brahman* (the Absolute Reality), which is immutable, changeless, without having or undergoing any change whatsoever has become (rather assumed the appearance of, as it were) *Jeevatman*: *Jeeva* is of the very essence of *Brahman* alone" — from the support of the *Pramaana* of the *Shrutis* which propound in this manner, we have to decide or deduce that *Jeeva* does not really have any birth. Therefore, the purport of the *Bhaashya* is: "For the *Jeeva* his creation or birth is by virtue of the association with the adjuncts like the body, the senses etc. alone and not that he, in reality, has birth." Because from the Transcendental viewpoint *Atman* is *Kootastha* (immutable), *Adviteeya* (non-dual, i.e. one without anything second to Him), *Ajaswaroopa* (of the essential nature of birthlessness), He has no birth whatsoever, and this teaching is enunciated by Shri Goudapaada in his *Kaarikas* as follows:

"*Marane Sambhave Chalva Gatyaagamanayoarapi; Sthitau Sarva-shareereshu Chaakaashenaavilakshanaha.*" — (3-9)

"*Sanghaataaha Swapnavat Sarve Aatmamaayaavlsarjitaaha; Aadhikye Sarvasaamyee Vaa Noapapattirhi Vidyate.*" — (3-10).

Meaning: "*Aakaasha* is born with various adjuncts, gets destroyed, travels to and from and stays put — just as for all these various transactions empty space becomes an object of conception, in the same manner *Atman* in the form of *Jeeva* becomes an object for all mundane transactions like *Janma*, *Marana* etc. Although in the dream many bodies etc. of *Jeevas* are seen to have diverse forms, all those bodies are created by virtue of *Avidyaa* alone and do not exist in reality (actually); in the same way, all the bodies seen (to appear) in the empirical (waking) transactions are also merely *Maayaashareeras* or magically appearing bodies projected or conjured up by *Aatmaavidyaa* or ignorance pertaining to our essential nature of Pure Being as the Self." Thus Shri Goudapaada has brought home this truth with a suitable analogy.

This same meaning has been made clear by Shri Shankara in his *Sootra Bhaashya* as follows:

The *Sootra* (2-1-28) says: "*Aatmani Chalvam Vichitraashcha Hi*" — and the *Bhaashya* on this *Sootra* says: Although the person who sees

a dream is a single individual. within him alone a world of diversity is created: similarly. Atman remaining as He is eternally. in the empirical world all kinds of diverse. multifarious creations are appearing to take place indeed; for this reason. to say that — '*Paramaatman* at all times eternally exists as one and one alone' — is not at all unreasonable or illogical.

The Sootra (3-2-3) says: "*Maayaamaatram Tu Kaartsnyenaana-bhivvyaktaswaroopatwaat*" — meaning: "Although there within the body itself the dream is being seen and a diverse. multifarious world appears to be seen therein. because — unlike in the waking world — the necessary time-space-causation categories do not exist therein for a world of duality or diversity to exist. all of us will have to per force accept that all that dream world is *Aavidyaka* alone (meaning. a mere projection due to *Avidyaa*). is it not?"

The *Bhaashyakaara* has explained it thus: "*Na Cha Vlyadaadlsarga-syaapyaatyantikam Satyatwamastl:.....Atoa Valseshikamldam Sandhyasya Maayaamaatrattwamudltam.*"

74. Q: From this deliberation finally what is it that is said to have been determined?

A: (i) *Atman*. who is the Ultimate Reality (*Paramaarth*), is non-dual. the only Entity without anything else second to Himself (*Adviteeya*) and exists unto and by Himself. Because He does not have any restrictions or limitations imposed on Him by time-space-causation categories of the world of duality. we can never imagine Him having *Janma*. *Marana* etc. In Him. owing to a relationship of, or association with, (adjuncts like) the body. the senses etc. which are conjured up by *Avidyaa* (nescience) of the nature of misconception (*Adhyaasalaxana*) the mundane transaction of *Jeevatwa* (transmigratory soulhood) is projected. If for the word 'birth' the meaning of — 'as a result of *Adhyaasa* something appearing' — is reckoned. then there is no objection whatsoever to say — "Just like *Naama* and *Roopa*. the body. the senses. etc. which are made up of names and forms and. further. by the relationship with the body. the senses etc. the *Jeevas* who appear to exist are all the *Kaarya* of *Paramaatman* alone." In this sense alone Shri Goudapaada has stated that — "Just as from *Aakaasha* (empty space) pots. pitchers etc. and pot-space. pitcher-space etc. are born. *Jeevas* as well as the conglomerations of the body. the senses etc. (*Kaaryakaranasanghaata*) are born out of *Paramaatman* alone." Utilizing the axiom of *Adhyaaroopa* and *Apavaada* and for the purposes of teaching the *Paramaarth* *Tattwa*. the *Moaksha Shaastra*

(spiritual science devoted to the teaching of Liberation) is begun by assuming the *Jeeva* who is *Ahampratyayagamyā* as a '*Jijnāsu*' (one desirous of cognizing the Ultimate Reality of the Self).

- (ii) The *Shruti* in a secondary sense (*Gouna Vrittī*) transacts in the manner — "From the *Vyavahaara Drishti* *Jeevas* are born and they die by virtue of the *Janma* and *Marana* of their bodies.
- (iii) *Jeeva* in the form in which he appears is neither *Paramaatman* nor is he an independent entity existing apart from *Paramaatman*. Even so, in such a state too his *Paramaartharoopa* or essential nature of Pure Being-Consciousness invariably exists. The *Shruti* instructs in the manner — "*Tattwamasī*" — meaning, "That thou art" — in order to propound the *Brahmatwa* (the essential real nature of Pure, Absolute Being) which is the Ultimate Reality only after negating or sublating the false appearance of the former phenomenon. While teaching in that manner the *Shruti* sublates all adjuncts like the body, the senses, the mind, the concepts of the external objects — all of which go to make up *Anaatman* nature by the cryptic statement — "You are not that" — at every negation and finally what remains after all such series of negations the *Shruti* points out to the *Shrotru* (listener) in the manner — "That *Paramaārtha Chaitanya Brahman* alone thou art." In the same manner all teaching methods adopted by the *Shrutis* pertaining to topics like *Jeeva's Ekatwa* and *Anekatwa*, *Jnaana*, *Parimaana* (dimensions or limitations), *Kartrutwa-Bhoakrutwa*, *Paramaatma Amshatwa*, *Janmaantara* *Loakaantara* *Vyavahaara*, *Avasthas*, *Bandha Moaksha* *Vyavahaara* etc. etc. should be reconciled and reckoned in accordance with the differences of the *Paramaārtha* and *Vyavahaara Drishtis* as taught or propounded in the *Shrutis*.

IX. JEEVA'S VYAVAHAARA

75. Q: Viewed from the *Vyavahaara Drishti*, *Ishwara* exists (resides) in the *Jeeva's* body, is it not? Then, does the *Jeeva's* *Vyavahaara* taint *Ishwara* or not?

A: *Sootra* (2-3-46) says: "*Prakaashaadivannalvam Paraha*". The *Bhaashya* on this says: "*Yathaa Prakaashaha.... ..Tasmaat, Naasti Jaivena Duhkhena Paramaatmanoa Duhkhitwaprasangaha.*"

The purport of this *Bhaashya* excerpt is: Although the sun's or (or moon's) light, which pervades everywhere, by virtue of its relationship or association with adjuncts like fingers, hands etc. itself appears

as if it (the sun's light) is straight or crooked assuming various such forms, in reality it does not assume such forms at all; if a pot or a pitcher is carried from one place to another, though the pot-space and the pitcher-space appear as if they are moving, in reality space does not at all have any motion; just as when buckets of water are shaken the reflection of the sun or any light etc. in the water appears to shake but the sun or the light themselves do not at all shake — in the same way, the *Amsa* or part called '*Jeeva*' who is projected by *Avidyaa* — even if he (the part akin to the reflection of the illustration) is suffering, *Ishwara*, like the sun in the illustration, is not at all afflicted by it. Really speaking (that is, observing from the *Paramaarthha Drishtii*), because of the reason that even to the *Jeeva* as a result of *Avidyaa* alone this *Duhkhitwa* is projected or conjured up, the *Shrutis* sublate this *Avidyaa*-projected *Jeevatwa* (soulhood), which is superimposed upon *Atman*, and teach in the manner — "You are verily *Brahman*." Therefore, by the *Jeeva*'s suffering *Ishwara* is not at all affected or afflicted.

76. Q: Though *Jeeva* is *Parameshwara* alone, *Jeevas* are many! How is this plausible?

A: For this question while answering the above question itself with the illustration of the reflections a suitable answer has been provided. The same opinion is given by Shri Baadaraayana in his *Sootra* (3-2-18): "*Ata Eva Choapamaa Sooryakaadivat*" — and the *Bhaashya* on it says: "*Yata Eva Chaanyamaatmaa Chaitanyaroopoa Nirvisheshoa Vaangmanasaateetaha Parapratishedhoapadeshyaha Ata Eva Chaasyoapaa-dhiniimittaam Apaaramaarthikeem Visheshavattaam Abhipretya 'Jala-sooryakaadivat' Ityupamaa Upaadeeyate Moakshashaastreshu;*

"*Yathaa Hyayam Jyoatiraatmaa Vivaswaanapoa Bhinnaa Bahudhal-koa(s)nugacchhan; Upaadhinnaa Kriyate Bhedaroopoa Devaha Kshetreshwevamajoa(s)yamaatmaa; Eka Eva Hi Bhootaatmaa Bhoote Bhoote Vyavasthitaha; Ekadhaa Bahudhaa Chalva Drishyate Jalachandravat.*" — *Ityevamaadishu.*"

The purport of this *Bhaashya* excerpt is: Because *Paramaatman* is devoid of any distinctive features or characteristics He, in association with the adjuncts — just like the reflections of the sun in the waters of many buckets — appears to have manifold forms, and thus the *Shaastras* teach.

In the illustration of the reflections of the sun in various buckets of water it is evident that, although the suns with adjuncts reflected in the waters of the buckets have acquired or assumed manifoldness apparently, in reality the actual sun is not at all more than one, is it not? Similarly, though *Paramaatman* is one and one only, by virtue of his association with the adjuncts He appears as if He has become many. That is all that is to be discerned here in this context from this illustration.

77. Q: To the *Jeeva* is consciousness his *Dharma* (quality) or *Swaroopa* (essence of Being)? Because it is quite familiar among all human beings that in states like deep sleep etc. there is no consciousness, but when a person wakes up consciousness appears, hence their opinion that — 'Consciousness is a quality which appears often' — itself seems to be proper, is it not?

A: Since it is already decided that — "*Jeeva* is not born at all" — from this alone it amounts to saying that his is *Brahmaswabhaava* (the essential nature of *Brahman*, the Ultimate, Absolute Reality) alone. Because *Shrutis* like *Shwetaashvatara* 2-1 and *Brihadaraanyaka* 4-5-13 etc. expound that *Brahman* is verily *Jnaanaswaroopa* (of the very essence of Knowledge or Consciousness) we have to reckon that *Jeeva* too is *Jnaanaswaroopa* only. If it is doubted in the manner — "Then in that case what about the empirical transactions like — 'Consciousness came and consciousness disappeared'? — we say that it is a *Vritti* or concept of the *Antahkarana* or mind. Because *Vritti* appears being pervaded by Pure Consciousness but exists as a *Chidaabhaasa* (reflection of Pure Consciousness). *Avivekis* (people who do not exercise their discriminative faculty) misconceive that *Vritti* alone to be *Atman's Jnaana* or Pure Consciousness.

Here in this context the following doubt may raise its head: 'If *Atman* is of the very essence of Consciousness or Knowledge, then what is the function for the senses? Is it not true that through the senses alone we all get *Jnaana* (that is, we all become conscious of the external objects)? In states like deep sleep, swooning etc. though the mind, the senses etc. are not functioning in such states he should have had *Jnaana* or knowledge of the external objects, is it not? For this doubt the *Bhaashyakaara* has given the following solution:

" '*Atha Yoa Vededam Jighraaneeti Sa Aatmaa*' — (*Chhaandogya* 9-12-4) *Iti Cha Sarvalhi Karanadwaaraihi*. '*Idam Veda, Idam Veda*' — *Iti Vijnaanaanusandhaanaat, Tadroopatwasiddhihi: Nityachaitanyaswaroopatwe Ghraanaadyaanarthakyam Iti Chet. Na; Gandhaadvishaya-visheshaparichhedarthatwaat; Tasmaat Nityachaitanyaswaroopa Evaatmaa Iti Nishchinnumaha.*" — (*Sootra Bhaashya* 2-3-18).

The salient points implicit in this long *Bhaashya* excerpt are:

- (i) Because he is cognizing in the manner — 'I smelt this, I touched this' — he, the *Jeeva*, has *Chaitanyaswaroopa*;
- (ii) The senses are responsible for the special objective knowledge of smell, taste etc. Therefore, in the deep sleep state and such other (unconscious) states this specific knowledge is not there, for there are no senses therein.
- (iii) In deep sleep the *Swaroopa Jnaana* (the essential nature of Pure Consciousness) invariably exists; but apart from It therein no other

object whatsoever capable of being illumined is not existing in the least and not because therein Pure Consciousness Itself did not exist at all. (Failure to discern this secret alone has become the root cause for the *Vaisheshikas* and some other *Darshanakaaras* like them, who are predominantly relying on logical or dialectical knowledge for deducing their respective *Siddhaantas* and to opine that therein in deep sleep there is no *Jnaana* at all; and the present-day Vedantins, who also cannot follow in the footsteps of Shri Shankara's teachings, imagine that therein a potent force called '*Avidyaa Shakti*' covers up *Atman*).

78. Q: What are the dimensions (*Parimaana*) of *Atman*?

A: Because *Atman* Himself is existing as *Jeeva*, this *Jeeva* has to be per force accepted as of the very essence of the former (that is, *Aatmaswaroopa*). Even so, because of the reason that there are the mundane transactions like giving up the body; transmigrate to another birth or another world, again coming back into a body (getting rebirth) etc. *Jeeva* is *Anuparimaana* or of microscopic dimensions (compared to the macrocosmic dimensions of *Brahman* or *Atman*). Because some *Shrutis* are describing the *Jeeva* in this manner, he has to be reckoned to be of microscopic dimensions. Even so, we have to come to a definite conclusion in this regard according to the *Bhaashya* on the *Sootra* (2-3-29): "*Tadgunasaaratwaattu Tadvyapadeshaha Praajnavat*". The relevant *Bhaashya* states:

- (i) "*Tasyaaha Buddhehe Gunaastadgunaaha; Icchhaa Dveshaha Sukham Duhkham Ityevamaadayaha Tadgunaaha...Tachchalva-meva Samanjasam Syaat Yadyoupachaarikamanutwam Jeevasya Bhavet, Paaramaarthikam Chaanantyam.*"

Its purport in brief is: Since it is established by the *Shrutis* that *Atman* is *Anantam* (endless), in the *Vyaavahaarika Avasthaa* we have to conceive in a secondary sense only that with the association of the adjunct of *Buddhi* (intellect) he has invariably characteristics like *Anutwa* (atomic or microscopic nature), *Itchha* (desire) and such other qualities.

The *Bhaashyakaara* has mentioned *Jeeva's Anutwa* in another manner too. To discern it here is quite essential:

- (ii) "*Tathaa Itarasminnapyunmaane 'Buddhergunenaatmagunena Chalva Aaraagramaatroa Hyavaroo(s)pl Drishtaha' — (Shwetashwata 5-8) Iti Cha Buddhiguna...Tasmaat Durjnaanatwaa-bhupraayamidamanutwavachanam Upaadhyabhipraayam Vaa Drashtavyam.*"

Its gist is: Here the *Bhaashyakaara* has deduced his opinion about *Jeeva's Anutwa* or microscopic nature on the basis that

— "In conjunction with the teaching that — 'He is the very essence of the adjuncts' — *Atman's Absolute Swaroopa* is difficult to be reckoned."

79. Q: To the Jeeva, is the relationship with the intellect eternal or non-eternal?

A: Because for the *Jeeva* the relationship with the intellect is conjured up by *Adhyaasa*. till he attains *Jnaana* this relationship is eternal; from the *Paramaarthā Drishti* because he is verily *Paramaatman* this relationship itself is not there at all. To substantiate this teaching there are two *Sootras*:

(a) "*Yaavadaatmabhaavitwaachha Na Doashastaddarshanaat*" — (2-3-30).

Its *Bhaashya* says: "*Tathaa Hi Shaastram Darshayati — 'Yoa(s)yam Vijnanamayaha Praaneshu Hridyantarjyoatit Purushaha Sa Samaanaha.... ...Buddhyupaadhisambandhoa Na Shaamyati'*".

In this long commentary. we have to note carefully the teaching that — "To *Atman* the relationship with the adjunct of *Buddhi* is brought about (conjured up) by *MithyaaJnaana* (misconception); till this latter disappears this relationship is not destroyed.

(b) "*Pumstvaadvattasya Satoa(s)bhivyaktiyoagaat*" — (2-3-31).

Its *Bhaashya*: "*Nanu Sushuptapralayoarna.... Tasmaat. Siddhametad Yaavadaatmabhaavee Buddhyaadyupaadhisambandha Iti.*"

Its gist: The misconceived relationship with the adjunct of intellect appears in the waking state as well as in the dream state. In states like *Sushupti* and *Pralaya* this relationship becomes *Avyakta* or unmanifest. *Adhyaasa* is removed or destroyed by *SamyaajJnaana* (the real, correct Intuitive Knowledge of the Ultimate Reality of *Atman*): in the *Paramaarthā Avasthaa* (state of being one with the Reality of *Atman*) that misconception does not exist at all.

Here in this context what is taught with regard to states like *Sushupti*, *Pralaya* and the like should be made applicable to states like swoon, coma etc. also. The determination of the Reality (*Tattwa Nirnaya*) has necessarily to be made only after examining these *Adarshana Avasthas* (states of unmanifest consciousness) from both viewpoints, viz. *Vyaavahaaric* and *Paaramaarthic*. And this *Avasthaavichara* or deliberation on the three states of Consciousness experienced by every one (universally) needed for the purport of *Paramaarthā Nirnaya* will be taken up for delineation in due course.

80. Q: Are the Kartrutwa and Bhoaktrutwa of a Jeeva eternal or non-eternal?

A: This should be understood on the same lines as the Jeeva's Anutwa caused by *Buddhisambandha*. From the *Vyavahaara Drishti* his Kartrutwa is eternal, while from the *Paramaarthā Drishti* it does not exist at all.

Consider the following Sootras:

- (i) "*Kartaa Shaastraarthaavatwaat*" — *Vidhyanyathaanupapatti*;
- (ii) "*Vihaaroapadeshaat*" — the teaching about *Vihaara* or recreation, pleasure existing in the dream;
- (iii) "*Upaadaanaat*" — because it is described that the Jeeva goes to the *Swapnaavasthaa* by gathering up his *Karanas*, by the device suggested by the *Shruti* (*Shrutarthaapatti*) *Kartrutwa* is inferred;
- (iv) "*Vyapadeshaachha Kriyaayaam Na Chennirdeshaviparyayaha*" — pointing out *Kartrutwa* significantly;
- (v) "*Upalabdhivadanlyamaha*" — with regard to the Jeeva's desirable things and undesirable things, both can be brought under the purview of his discriminative thinking;
- (vi) "*Shaktiviparyayaat*" — if it is said that — 'Apart from *Vijnana* (intellectual knowledge) there is no separate *Kartru* (to wit, this is the opinion of the *Vijnanavaadins* — a class of *Buddhists*), then it will amount to saying that the intellect does not have *Karanasakti* (the potentiality or faculty of being an instrument of action) but has *Kartrushakti* (the potentiality of being an agent of action);
- (vii) "*Samaadhyabhaavaachha*" — if it is said that *Kartru* is not there, then teaching about the mind's *Samaadhi* or equipoise or equanimity in the *Shaastras* will become futile.

In these above Sootras mainly based on the logical devices of *Shrutarthaapatti* (deliberation on the inferential proofs of the *Shruti* sentences) and *Drishtarthaapatti* (comprehending by way of inference based on perceptual knowledge) — *Kartrutwa* is being established. From the *Vyavahaara Drishti* this is agreeable, acceptable. But in the Sootra (2-3-40): "*Yathaa Cha Takshoabhayathaa*" — on the strength of *Yukti* and *Anubhava* it has been determined, nay established, that — "*Kartrutwa* is not *Swaabhaavika* (not the essential real nature of Being), but *Oupaadhika* (false appearance conjured up in association with *Upaadhī* or adjunct)."

The *Bhaashya* on this Sootra says:

- (i) "*Na Swaabhaavikam Kartrutwamaatmanahā Sambhavati Anir-moakshaprasangaat;..... Iti Choopaadhīsampriktasyatvaatmanoh Bhoaktrutwaadvisheshalaabham Darshayati.*"

If the logical arguments (devices) or *Yukti* utilized in this long *Bhaashya* excerpt referred to above are to be briefly mentioned, then they will amount to saying:

- (a) If *Kartrutwa*, which is evidently and invariably *Duhkharoopa* (of the very nature of misery, suffering) is accepted as *Swaabhaavika* (our essential nature of Being), then there is no possibility whatsoever for our attaining *Moaksha* (Liberation). From the *Arthaapatti* (logical inference) that in view of the fact that in the *Shaastras* (which are canonical, authoritative sources of spiritual teaching) the *Moaksha Saadhana* has been explicitly taught if we conclude (opine) that there is every possibility of attaining *Moaksha*, then because of the reason that whatever result or fruit that is acquired as a result of any human effort (*Saadhana*) becomes invariably *Anitya* (non-eternal), it will be tantamount to accepting *Moaksha* (taught by the authoritative *Shaastras*) too is *Anitya*, and this conclusion is totally opposed to or contrary to the *Vedantic Siddhaanta* (spiritual teaching).
- (b) Therefore, we have to accept that only because all of us (universally) have invariably misconceived (*Adhyaasa*) the distinctive characteristics (*Dharmas*) of the conglomeration of the body, the senses, the mind etc. (*Kaaryakaranasanghaata*) in our Pure Being of *Atman*, this *Kartrutwa* ('I' notion reckoned as an agent of action) has arisen (as a false appearance or concept). For this conclusion there is complete support from the *Shrutis*. (The deliberation on the topic that — In the *Adhyaasa Bhaashya* whatever has been implicitly taught amounts to saying that this *Kaaryakaranasanghaata* is truly *Avidyaakalpita* or a projection conjured up by nescience alone: — will be once again taken up for a detailed examination).

Now let us turn our attention towards the *Bhaashya* portion devoted to the expounding of this teaching on the strength of *Anubhava* (Intuitive experience) predominantly:

- (ii) “*Na Hi Vivekinaam Parasmaadanyoa Jeevoa Naama Kartaa Bhoaktaa Vaa Vidyate — 'Naanyoa(s)toasti Drishtaa' — (Brihadaaranyaka 4-8-23) Ityaadishravanaat;..... Ityaarabhya 'Eshaa(s)sya Paramaa Gatreshaa(s)sya Paramaa Sampadeshoo(s)sya Paramoa Loakaha, Eshoo(s)sya Parama Aanandaha' — (Brihadaaranyaka 4-3-12) — Ityupasamhaaraat.*”

In this long *Bhaashya* excerpt Shri Shankara clinches the issue, as it were, by bringing home emphatically and clearly the two *Anubhavas* viz. Intuitive experience of a *Jnaani* (a Realized Soul), the *Sushupti* (deep sleep) *Anubhava* of an *Ajna* (an ignorant

person. *Avidyaaavanta*) first and then expounding the *Upanishadic* teaching that — “Although the *Jeeva*'s adjuncts of *Kartrutwa* and *Bhoaktrutwa* appear in the *Dvaltaavasthaa*, which is the resultant or a projection of *Avidyaa* alone, these adjuncts do not at all adhere to him as his very essential nature of Being.”

While explaining the purport of the *Sootra* *Shri Shankara* has stated as follows:

- (iii) “*Takshadrishtaantashcha, Etaavataamshena Drashtavyaha — Takshaa Hi Vishishteshu Takshanaadivyaapareshu Apekshyalva Pratinityataani Karanaani Vaasyaadeeni Kartaa Bhavati... ..Takshaa Mana Aadeeni Karanaani Aatmaa Upaadadeeta Nyasyed Vaa.*”

In this *Bhaashya* portion the relevant aspect in the illustration of a carpenter has been explained. If the carpenter has instruments like a chisel, a hammer etc. only jobs like etching etc. are possible; otherwise, not possible. In the same way, if *Atman* has *Karanas* (physical and psychic instruments) only. He gets *Kartrutwa*, otherwise He does not get it at all. This much is common to the illustration and the illustrated. But just as the carpenter has limbs (*Avayavas*) like hands and feet etc. to use those instruments like chisel, hammer etc. the *Jeeva* does not possess any separate *Avayavas* etc. to use his *Karanas*. Hence that aspect is not relevant here in this context at all.

Anyway, *Jeeva*, by virtue of his association with the *Kaaryakaranas* which are conjured up by *Avidyaa*, has in the empirical sphere *Kartrutwa* which enables him to perform both *Loukika* (secular, mundane) and *Vaidika* (scriptural) actions or rituals indeed; but, from the *Paaramaarthic Drishti* (i.e. in the Absolute sense) because he is *Ashareeri* (one devoid of a body), he does not at all have *Kartrutwa*, and this is the *Vedantic Siddhaanta*.

81. Q: Is *Jeeva*'s *Kartrutwa* an independent phenomenon (*Swatantra*) or is it within the control of *Ishwara*?

A: It was stated in *Sootra* (2-1-34) that because *Ishwara*, the Lord Creator, creates various *Jeevas* (and creatures) according to their respective *Karmas*. He cannot be imagined to have either *Valshamya* (hatred or prejudice) or *Nairghunya* (cruelty). If it is argued that *Jeeva*'s *Kartrutwa* is within the control of *Ishwara*, then *Ishwara* becomes responsible for everything (concerning the *Jeeva*), then to this question an answer is provided in the *Sootra* (2-3-41): “*Paraattu Tacchhrutehe*”. The explanatory *Bhaashya* says:

- (i) “*Avidyaaavasthaayaam Kaaryakaranasanghaataavivekadarshino Jeevasya Avidyaatimiraandhasya Sataha Parasmaadaatmanaha*

Karmaadhyakshaat Sarvabhootaadhlvaasaat Saakshinaha Chetayitireeshwaraat Tadanujnaya Kartrutwabhoaktrutwaakshaasya Samsaarasya Siddhihi: Tadanugraha hetukenalva Cha Vijnaanena Moakshasiddhirbhavitumarhati."

Its purport: In the *Avdyavastha* Jeeva's *Kartrutwa* and *Bhoakrutwa* have been established by *Ishwara* alone, who is *Sarvasaakshi* (Witnessing Consciousness of every one); by means of *Vijnaana* (Self-Knowledge) alone bestowed upon the *Jeevas* or caused through His Grace alone *Moaksha* too becomes established indeed.

- (ii) "Sarvaasweva Pravrittiishu Ishwara Hetukartaa Iti Shruteraaseeyate: Tathaa Hi Shrutirbhavati 'Esha Hyeva Saadhu Karma Kaarayati Tam Yamebhyoa Loakebhyaha Unnineeeshate:..... 'Ya Aatmani Tishthannaatmanoa(s)ntaroaYamayati' — (Brihadanyaka 3-7-22) — Ityaadyaa."

By *Shruti Pramaana* (Upanishadic statements as authoritative evidence) it is established that *Parameshwara* alone is the substratum, foundation or main cause for all *Pravrittis* (mundane, workaday pursuits, endeavours of all human beings).

- (iii) The *Sootra* (2-3-42) says: "Kritaprayatnaapekshastu Vihitapratishiddhaaaiyarthyaadibhyaha" — Its *Bhaashya* says: "Krito Yaha Prayatnaha Jeevasya Dharmaadharma Lakshanaha Tadapeksha Evainam Ishwaraha Kaarayati:.... ... Poorvataram Cha Yatnaprapaapekshya Poorvamakaarayaditi Anaaditwaat Samsaarasyetyanavadyam."

Its gist: *Jeeva* has *Kartrutwa* indeed, while the *Kaarayitatwa* (capability of prompting, patronising the *Jeeva*) to enter into or undertake *Karma* belongs to *Ishwara*. Therefore, *Ishwara* induces the *Jeevas* proportionate to the quality of their efforts. For the present *Karma* the previous effort becomes the cause; for the previous *Karma* its previous effort becomes the cause — Thus in proportion to the quantum and quality of the *Jeeva's* efforts *Ishwara* induces or prompts them into action (*Karma*). And just as for various kinds of grains and plants rain water is the *Saadhaarana Kaarana* (common cause) to enable them to grow, *Ishwara* becomes the common cause and thereby becomes the patron for their desires and purposes; the *Jeevas'* individual efforts become the *Asaadhaarana Kaarana* (uncommon or particular cause) for the fruits of those actions.

(Here in this context the *Anaaditwa* or beginninglessness which is taught from the *Vyaavahaaric Drishti* is applied by some *Vyaakhyaanakaaras* to *Adhyaasa* which is utilized as a device by the *Shaastra* to determine the *Paramaatha* or the Ultimate non-dual Reality.

Evidently, they have thereby neglected the Vedantic teaching that — 'Adhyaasa alone is the cause for all Vyavahaara or empirical, mundane transactions.)

82. Q: What is the very essence (Swaroopa) of the relationship between the Upakaarya (one who is helped) or the Jeeva and the Upakaaraka (the helper) or Ishwara?

A: For this Shri Baadaraayana has given an answer in his Sootra (2-3-43): "Amshoa Naanaavyapadeshaadanyathaa Chaapl Daashaklita-vaaditwamadheeyata Eke". In the Bhaashya on this it is stated: "Jeeva Ishwarasyaamshoa Bhavtumarhati; Yathaagnervisphulingaha; Amsha Ivaamshaha. Na Hi Niravayavasya Mukhyoa(s)mshaha Sambhavati;'Naanyoa(s)toasti Drashtaa' — (Bri. 3-7-33) Ityaadi Shrutiibhyascha Asyaarthasya Siddhihi.....Atoa Bhedaabhedaavagamaabhyaam Amshatwaavagamaha."

In this long Bhaashya excerpt the salient points to be noted are:

- (i) Because in the Shruti both Bheda (difference) and Abheda (non-difference) between the Jeeva and Ishwara have been mentioned, Jeeva has been taught to be an Amsha (part) of Brahman;
- (ii) The word 'Amsha' does not mean 'part' in the predominant sense (Mukhyaartha) at all; for, since Atman (Brahman) is devoid of parts (Niravayava) in the predominant sense, Atman does not have any parts or divisions whatsoever. Therefore, just as for fire and sparks of fire heat is common, Chaitanyatwa or being endowed with Consciousness, sentience is common to both Jeevas and Ishwara. This is the real purport of teaching, and thus it is determined also. For instance, let us examine the next two Sootras: For 'Mantravarnaachha' (2-3-44) Shri Shankara has quoted 'Paadoa(s)sya Sarvaa Bhootaani' (Chhaandogya 3-13-6) to deduce that — "All creatures — movable as well as immovable (Sthaavarajangama Praanis) are parts (Amsha) of Paramaatman." For the next Sootra — "Apl Cha Smaryate" — (2-3-45) — he has exemplified the Geeta statement — "Mamaivaamshoa Jeevaloke Jeevabhootaha Sanaatanaha" — (Geeta 15-7). In the previous verse of the Geeta it has been stated that those who Intuit Paramaatman do not return to this Samsaara. Further, while commenting on this Geeta verse, Shri Shankara has said; "Yathaa Jalasooryakaha Sooryaamshaha, Jananimittaapaaye Sooryameva Gatvaa Na Nivartate Tenalvaatmanaa Samgatchhati Evameva; Yathaa Vaa'Yadgatvaa Na Nivartante' Iti."

Just like the Jalasooryakaadipratibimbhas (reflections of the sun in the waters contained in various buckets or vessels) are within the control or purview of the sun; just as the Ghataakaashas (pot-spaces)

etc. are. in truth. *Mahaakaasha* (open empty space) alone — though by virtue of the *Upaadhi* (adjunct) *Jeeva* is an *Amsa*, if by means of *Jnaana* (Self-Knowledge) this *Upaadhi* is sublated (falsified) he is (here and now) verily *Paramaatman* indeed — this truth becomes clear from these illustrations.

83. Q: In spite of the *Jeeva* being *Paramaatman* Himself, how can the former, who is (just at present) *Sarvagata* or all-pervasive, be said justifiably to have the empirical transactions like *Loakaantaragamana* (transmigration to other worlds) and then returning to this mundane world?

A: All the adjuncts or constituent (material) parts (*Upakarana Tattvas*) of the *Jeeva* are the effects of *Brahman* alone; to wit, they are the things or phenomena which are superimposed upon, or misconceived in, *Brahman*, the Ultimate non-dual Reality. Since it is established on the strength of the validity of the *Shrutis* (*Shruti Praamaanya*) *Shri Goudapaada* has stated in his *Kaarika*:

“*Marane Sambhava Chalva Gatyagamanayogarpi; Sthitau Sarva-shareereshu Chaakaashenaavilakshanaha*”—(3-9).

According to his teaching, till the *Mithyaajnaana* is destroyed by *Jnaana* the relationship with the adjunct of the conglomeration of the body, the senses, the mind (*Kaaryakaranasanghaata*) is inevitable for *Atman*: by virtue of these adjuncts the empirical transactions of *Gatyagamana* may be said to be plausible for *Atman* (who with these adjuncts is called in *Vedantic* parlance *Jeevaatman*).

84. Q: The *Bhootasookshmas* (subtle elements), which are the seeds (cause) for the body which is an effect — are these included in the *Upaadhi* or are they born afresh?

A: For this *Shri Shankara* has given a suitable answer in the following *Bhaashya* portion: “*Jeevoa Mukhyapraanasachivaha Sendriyaha Samanaskoa Vidyaakarma Poorvaprajnaaparigrahaha....Tasmaadadbhihi Pariveshtitoa Jeevao Ramhati Vrajateeti Gamyaate.*”

In this commentary it is established that by association with the *Panchabhootas* (five primordial elements) which are *Ap-Pradhaana* (predominantly water-based), *Atman* goes to another body. Since this topic is to be determined only on the strength of the validity of the *Shaastra*, it is not directly related to *Aatmaikatva Vichaara* (Intuitive deliberation on the non-dualism of *Atman*) which is truly (in the ultimate analysis) the purport or goal of the *Vedantic* spiritual science. we have not undertaken to describe or elaborate upon that topic here. From the *Upanishads* it can directly be known as to how, according to

his *Karmas* a *Jeeva* obtains his *Gati* (future transmigration) to other births or worlds.

85. Q: What about the *Gati* occurring to *Upaasakas*?

A: *Upaasana* too is a mental action only. Therefore, (barring *Kaamyopaasana* or meditations performed with specific desires, in all other cases) the fruits or resultant benefits accrue invariably through some *Gati* or transmigration. With regard to this topic we should keep in mind the following *Bhaashya* sentences:

- (i) "*Vidyaavidyaavishayabhedena Brahmanao Dviroopataam Darshayanti Vedaantavaakyaani: Tatraavidyaavasthaayaam Brahmana Upaasyopaasakaadilakshanaha Sarvoa Teshaam Gunavisheshopaadhibhedena Bhedaha.*"

The gist of this *Bhaashya* portion is: Because the distinctive qualities or characteristics of the *Upaasya* (object of meditation) differ from one another; because of the differences in the distinctive qualities or characteristics of the adjunct of the mind — these *Upaasanas* are necessarily different from one another.

- (ii) "*Nanu Jnaanam Naama Maanaseekriyaa: Na, Vallakshanyaat: Kriyaa Hi Naama Saa Yatra Vastuswaroopanirapekshalva Choodiyate:.... Evam Sarvapramaanavishayavastushu Veditavyam.*" — (*Sootra Bhaashya* 1-1-4).

It is clearly stated here that — "Although *Dhyaana* (meditation) and *Jnaana* (Knowledge) — both are mental concepts (*Maanasika Vrittis*). (a) *Dhyaana* is an action which is within the control or purview of the *Shaastravidhi* (injunctions stipulated in the scriptures) as also the mind of the meditator; (b) on the other hand, *Jnaana* is not at all a subject-matter for *Vidhi* nor within the control or purview of the meditator's mind." Therefore, *Dhyaana* is an act which the meditator can perform as he wishes according to his whims. *Jnaana* is a Knowledge accruing spontaneously by itself to the (proper) *Pramaana* (valid means of Knowledge) and *Prameya Vastu* (the Entity, Reality which is the object or goal of pursuit).

(Even in spite of such a clear elucidation by Shri Shankara the *Vyaakhyaanakaaras*, who have accepted the doctrine that *Jnaana* is a *Kriya* only, have followed or adopted a theory which is quite contrary to the original *Bhaashya* as well as to *Anubhava*. This fact now looms large before us. Here in this context, *Jnaana* means a fruit or benefit which is itself of the nature of *Anubhava*, (which is, truly speaking, is not to be gained afresh as a result of any *Saadhana* however subtle or profound it may be, for *Anubhava* is never a resultant *Phala* nor a *Prameya*). This important *Vedantic* truth we cannot afford to forget at all.

(III) "Yaagaadyanushthaayinaameva Vidyasamaadhivisheshaaduttarena Pathaa Gamanam.. ..Tatraapi Sukhataaratamyam Tatsaadhanataaratamyam Cha Shaastraat 'Yaavatsampaatamushitvaa' — (Chhaandogya 5-1-5) Ityasmaad Gamyate."

In this sentence Shri Shankara has stated that — "The Saadhaka who practises Karmoopaasanas mixing up all similar meditations (coming under that heading or category) goes to the Brahmaloaka via the Uttaramaarga or Northern Path."

To the Sootra (4-1-12): "Aa Praayanaattatraapi Hi Drishtam" — the Bhaashya says: "Aavrittihi Sarvoopaasaneshwaadartavyaa Iti Sthitam Aadye(s)dhikarane: Tatra Yaani Taavat Samyagdarshanaarthaani.... ..Tasmaat. Ye Pratipattavyaphalabhaavanaatmakaaaha Pratyayaaha. Teshwaapraayanaadaavrittihi."

Herein the salient points taught are:

- (a) Upaasanas are of two kinds: Samyajjnaanarthaa (keeping Self-Knowledge as their goal) and Abhyudayaartha (keeping some posthumous prosperity or progress as its goal).
- (b) The Dhyana which is Samyagdarshanarthaa or having its goal as the Darshana or fruition in Self-Knowledge (i.e. culminating in Intuitive experience here and now in this very life) and which is of the essential nature of Nididhyaasana (Intuitive contemplation) is also 'Upaasana' indeed. It also being a mental action, has to be practised (Abhyaasa, meaning Aavritti or repeatedly) over and over again as much as possible till the final fruit of Jnaana (Intuitive experience of Pure Being-Consciousness-Bliss of Atman) is attained.
- (c) Jnaana means the Intuitive experience or Knowledge of the type — "Atman alone I am" — which is Anityoajya or unpredicated (not obtained as a result of an act — be it physical or mental) and which is Brahmaroopa (of the very essence of Brahman, the Absolute Reality). Therefore, when that Intuitive Knowledge (Consciousness) is attained (rather, has dawned) the Shaastra becomes defunct or redundant and cannot thereafter continue to instruct or stipulate by way of an injunction in the manner — 'Thus it should be done.'
- (d) The Upaasana, which is of the type of Abhyudayaartha desiderating a benefit of some kind of prosperity or progress in other worlds or births has necessarily to be performed repeatedly until death. The Adrishta (invisible) Phala (benefit) which has to accrue in Lookaantara and which has to be procured by means of this kind of Upaasana has to be necessarily proportionate to the Antya (at the time of death) Pratyaya (conviction of the intellect entertained at that moment).

(This pertains also to the *Karmas* from which *Janmaantara* fruits accrue. In the *Bhagavad Geeta* this is indicated by the verse: 'Yam Yam Vaapi Smaran Bhaavam Tyajatyante Kalevaram; Tam Tamevaiti Kounteya Sadaa Tadbhaavabhaavitaha.'')

- (e) Both the meditations for the fruits that are to be attained after death and the *Bhaavanaaroopapratyaya* (the convincing steadfast concepts that are to be practised) have to be continuously repeated till the last breath ebbs out.

86. Q: For those *Upaasanas* which have to be performed with the ultimate purport or goal of attaining *Brahma Jnaana* (Intuitive experience) how does that *Brahma Praapti* (attainment of the Reality) occur? Although *Brahman* is *Sarvagata* (all-pervading), how is it justified in saying that It is *Praapya* (that which is to be obtained, attained)?

A: For this question the proper answer is given in the *Sootra* (4-3-7): "*Kaaryam Baadarirasya Gatyupapattehe*".

The gist of this as explained in the *Bhaashya* on it is: *Brahman* is of two types (as dealt with in the *Shaastras*); one is called by synonyms like *Avikrita* (*Kaarana*), *Nirguna*, *Para* or *Mukhya Brahman*; the second is called by synonyms like *Kaarya*, *Saguna*, *Apara Brahman*. Between these two, it is rational and proper only to say that the *Upaasakas* go to or attain *Kaarya Brahman*. This conclusion has been drawn by *Shri Shankara* in his *Bhaashyas*. The reasons for it that he has given are:

- (i) "*Yatsarvagatam, Sarvaantaram Sarvaatmakam Cha Param Brahma 'Aakaashavatsarvagatashcha Nityaha'*(?), '*Yatsaakshaadaparoakshaadbhrama*', '*Ya Aatma Sarvaantaraha*' — (*Brihadaa-ranyaka* 3-4-1), '*Aatmaivedam Sarvam*' — (*Chhaandogya* 7-2-25), '*Brahmaivedam Vishwamidam Varishtham*' — (*Mundaka* 2-7-11) — *Ityaadishruti Nirdhaaritavishesham; Tasya Gantavyataa Na Kadaachidapyupapadyate*" — (4-3-14).

He opines that because *Brahman* is *Sarvagata* It cannot have *Gantavya* or *Praapya* (going somewhere to get it or acquiring it afresh).

- (ii) "*Nishkalam Nishkriyam Shaantam Niravadyam Niranjanam*" — (*Shwetaashvatara* 6-19); "*Asthoolamananvahrasmadeergham*" — (*Brihadaa-ranyaka* 3-8-8); "*Sabaahyaabhyantaroo Hyajaha*" — (*Mundaka* 2-1-2); "*Sa Vaa Esha Mahaanaja Aatmaa Ajaroo(s)ma-roo(s)mrito(s)bhayoo Brahma*" — (*Brihadaa-ranyaka* 4-4-25); "*Sa Esha Neti Netyaatmaa*" — (*Brihadaa-ranyaka* 3-9-26) *Ityaadishruti-smritinyaayebhyoo Na Deshakaalaadvisheshayogoo Parama-atmani Kalpayitum Shakyate*."

Because *Atman* is *Nirvishesha* (devoid of any distinctive features or characteristics) it is not proper at all to say that He can be attained in *Deshaantara* (other places) or *Kaalaantara* (different periods of time).

(iii) “*Jagadutpattisthiti pralayahetutwashruteranekashaktitwam Brahmana Iti Chet. Na:.... ..Atashcha Gantavyatwaanupapattihl.*”

Some salient points taught in this long *Bhaashya* excerpt are:

- (a) The teaching that *Brahman* is the cause for the birth, sustenance and dissolution of the world of duality is given from the *Adhyaaroopa Drishti* as a device (*Upaaya*) for carrying out the (*Upaasana*) or for meditating upon *Aatmaikatwa* (non-dualism of the Self). From this, although from the *Shaaastreeya Vyavahaara Drishti* it is tenable, it is not *Paramaarth* (absolutely real in the ultimate analysis based on Intuitive deliberation). This has been affirmed previously in the *Bhaashya* on *Sootra 2-1-14*.
- (b) For the *Jagajjanma Shruti* the ultimate purport or goal (*Parama Taatparya*) lies in providing a rational device for attaining *Atmaikatwa Jnaana* alone.
- (c) There is also complete support in concluding that — ‘For the *Utpattyaadi Shrutis* the prime goal is *Ekatwabodha* (spiritual instruction about non-dualism alone).’
- (d) The *Nirvishesha Shrutis* end up (culminate) in enunciating the *Brahmaswaroopa*. The *Ekatwa* that is to be Intuited by their spiritual instruction (*Upadesha*) is in the Intuitive experience of and vouched for by *Jnaanis* or Realized Souls. Therefore, *Praapyatwa* (attainment) does not pertain to *Para Brahman*, but to the *Saguna Brahman* who is the *Upaasya Tattwa* (object of meditation), there being *Praapyatwa* which is tenable also.

87. Q: What is the authoritative source for dividing *Brahman* into two as *Para* and *Apara*? If it is said that *Upaasakas* do not reach *Brahman*, then how can it be called ‘*Aatyantika Mukti*’ (final Liberation, eternal Beatitude) at all? Not only that, there will also be a defect that *Brahman*, being two, is divisible, is it not?

A: First of all, really there are no two *Brahmans* as *Para* and *Apara*. One non-dual *Brahman* alone is given two distinctions (*Visheshana*) and then this is illustrated from the point of view of the *Saadhakas*.

The *Prashnoapanishad* (5-2) says: “*Etadval Satyakaamaparam Chaaparam Cha Brahma Yadoankaaraha*” — This *Shruti* sentence is the authoritative source for this distinction. In the *Sootra Bhaashya* their deliberation is explained in the following manner:

- (i) “*Yatraavidyaakritanaamaroopaadvisheshapratishtadhat Asthoola-
adl Shabdairbrahman Upadishyate Tat Param Tadeva Yatra
Naamaroopaadvisheshana Kenachid Vishishtamupaasanaayoa-
padishyate 'Manoamayaha Praanashareeroa Bhaaroopaha' —
(Chhaandogya 3-14-2) Ityaadishabdair Tadaparam:.. ..Buddhyaa-
dhypaadhigamane Gamanaprasiddhirityavaadishma 'Tadguna-
saaratwaat' — (2-2-29) Ityatra.*” — (Sootra Bhaashya 4-3-14).

The gist of this *Bhaashya* is: When *Brahman* becomes an object for meditation (*Upaasya*), having been associated with distinctive characteristics brought about by *Naama* and *Roopa* which are in turn conjured up by nescience (*Avidyaakrita*), then such a *Brahman* (also called *Saguna Brahman*) may become *Praapya* (attainable). Because such a *Brahman* exists in a special spatial province or realm, for the *Upaasaka*, who is a *Jeevaatma* with the adjunct of his *Buddhi* (intellect), both *Gati* (reaching a particular higher state of existence) and *Phala* (a benefit or fruit with *Aishwaryalaxana* or characteristics of riches, wealth, comfort in a distinctive spatial world of superior existence) become tenable. Even so, there is no objection to decide *Brahman* to be *Adviteeya*. All this amounts to accepting this teaching.

The *Bhaashya* on the Sootra (4-3-9): “*Saameepyaattu Tadvya-
padeshaha*” — says: “*Parameva Hi Brahma Vishuddhoapaadhi-
sambandham Kwachit Kaishchit Vikaaradharmairmanoamayatwaadi-
bhirupaasanaayopadishyamaanamaparamiti Sthitih.*”

Because here it is stated that — “*Jneya Brahma* itself is the *Upaasya*. It being called by the term ‘*Brahman*’ is not at all contradictory” — here in the above context there is no objection whatsoever. Secondly, in the *Bhaashyas* on Sootras (4-3-10 and 11): “*Kaaryaatyaye Tadadhyak-
shena Sahaataha Paramabhidhaanaat*” and “*Smriteshcha*” —

- (i) “*Kaaryabrahmalokaapralayapratyupasthaane Satl.. Parapraaptih
Sambhavateetyupapaditam*” — (Sootra Bhaashya 4-3-10)
(ii) “*Smritirapi Etamartham Anujaanaat:.... ..Kaaryabrahmavishayaa
Eva Gatishrutaya Iti Siddhaantaha.*” — (Sootra Bhaashya 4-3-11)

Their gist: On the strength of the *Smriti* sentence that — “In the *Brahma Loka* at the end of a *Kalpa* an *Upaasaka* attains *Jnaana* and along with *Hiranyagarbha Brahma* (the creating aspect of the Trinity) they get Liberated” — we have to infer in this manner.

X. AVASTHA VYAVAHARA

88. Q: It is determined on the strength of the *Shrutis* and *Smritis* that *Jeevas* can attain *Mukti* (Liberation) through *Upaasana*.

Then, which other methodology of teaching can there be on the deliberation of which *Sadyoamukti* (Liberation here and now while living in this body) is attained?

A: It amounts to our having already given an answer to this question. What has been elaborated upon previously under *Saarvatrika Anubhava* (Chapter VI) and *Brahman's Kaaranatwa* (Chapter VII) should once again be ruminated over. In addition to these, by means of Intuitive deliberation on the *Shaastraic* methodology pertaining to creation with *Tarka* in consonance with *Saarvatrika Anubhava* as well as the Intuitive deliberation on the three states of Consciousness (*Jagrat*, *Swapna* and *Sushupti*) as delineated in the *Shrutis* if the *Paramaārtha Swaroopa* is Intuited the (mature) *Jnaanis* attain *Sadyoamukti* instantaneously or spontaneously indeed.

89. Q: You had previously asserted that the Ultimate Reality of Brahman cannot at all be attained by Tarka, is it not?

A: It is true that it has been affirmed in the *Shrutis* that *Brahman* can never be attained by *Tarka*, because of the fact that for both critique of reason (*Kevala Tarka*) and dialectical or syllogistic reasoning in search of the valid means of Knowledge (*Praamaanashoadhaka Tarka*) *Brahman* is not the subject-matter. But here in this context the particular *Shaastraic Tarka*, which tries to establish the *Aatmaikatwa* on the strength of a logical device (implicit or in-built, so to speak, in and through the *Upanishadic* lore) as applied to the universal experiences of the three states of Consciousness — but all through in consonance with Intuitive experience which is universal or *Saarvatrika Anubhava* — by superimposing (*Adhyaaroopa*) the three states on *Atman* as taught by the *Upanishads* from the *Vyaavahaaric Drishti* (exclusively for the purposes of teaching this profound and subtlest Truth to *Avidyaavantas*) is not at all discouraged or discounted. Whatever has been elaborated upon in this regard should necessarily be recapitulated once again cautiously before we proceed further. Then only there will not be any room for this doubt at all.

90. Q: What is that spiritual teaching (*Siddhaanta*) that is arrived at after the Intuitive deliberation from the standpoint of the *Avasthaatraya* experiences?

A: Although from the Transcendental, Absolute viewpoint of the Pure Being-Consciousness of *Atman* there is no *Avasthaa* whatsoever at all, because of the association with various *Upaadhis* (adjuncts) these three states of Consciousness are experienced universally by everyone. Whenever the *Upanishads* recommend to us to undertake the Intuitive deliberation on these universal experiences of the three states of

Consciousness they do so with the single, unique purport of determining the non-dualism of *Atman* by means of merging (*Laya*) one state into another (A very extra-ordinary profound methodology but a sure clincher at that indeed!). For this conclusion the following *Bhaashya* sentences are authoritative examples:

- (i) In the *Goudapaada Kaarikas* of the *Alaatashaanti Prakarana* after refuting the opponents' doctrinaire teachings it is stated:

"Savastu Soapalambham Cha Dvayam Loukikamishyate; Avastu Soapalambham Cha Shuddham Loukikamishyate." — (4-87).

"Avastvanupalambham Cha Loakoattaramiti Smritam; Jnaanam Jneyam Cha Vijneyam Sadaa Buddhyaihi Prakeertitam" — (4-88).

The introductory *Bhaashya* on the following *Kaarika* begins with:

- (a) *"Athedaaneem Swaprakriyaapradarshanaaya Aarambhaha";*
"Jnaane Cha Trividhe Jneye Kramena Vidite Swayam; Sarva-
jnataa Hi Sarvatra Bhavateeha Mahaadhiyaha." — (4-89)

The *Bhaashya* on this above *Kaarika* says:

- (b) *"Jnaane Cha Loukikaadi Vishaye; Jneye Cha Loukikaadou*
Trividhe; Poorvam Loukikam Sthoolam, Tadabhaavena Pash-
chaat Shuddham Loukikam;....Na Hi Paramaarthavidoa
Jnaaninaha Jnaanoadbhavaabhibhavou Stoa Yathaa(s)nye-
shaam Praavaadukaanaam".

Its gist: To the *Jnaani* who has established himself in the *Atmaswaroopa* by means of merging the three states of waking, dream and deep sleep in that order of subtlety (to wit, when we discern Intuitively that both waking and dream are identical in all aspects as pointed out by the *Shrutis* and if we shift our attention to the subtle dream experience, then, in a manner of speaking, waking amounts to have been merged in the dream; thereafter, if the dream and deep sleep are found to be equal in being the manifest and unmanifest forms of the Ultimate Reality conjured up by *Avidyaa* alone then it amounts to our merging the dream also in deep sleep; and finally this process of merging reaches its fruition when deep sleep is reckoned as a state only in relation to the other two states but in its very essence when this relationship also is sublated it flashes to our mind that it is no more a state but therein the Witnessing Consciousness of *Atman* resides in all its Glory as the non-dual Absolute Reality beyond all states, beyond all categories of time, space and causation, why say more — beyond all duality) neither the *Jnaanoatpatti* (attainment of Intuitive of Knowledge) nor *Vilaya* (total merger into the Self) brought about within the limitations of time will

occur. In fact, he will be one with *Kootasthaanubhava Swaroopa*.

- (ii) There is the following explanation in the *Adhikarana* of the *Brahma Sootras* called '*Sushuptyutkraantyaadhikarana*': "*Yastu Madhye Buddhaantaadyavasthoapanyaasaat Samsaariswaroopavivakshaam Manyate Sa Praacheemapi Disham Prasthaapitaha... Paapena Teernoa Hi Tadaa Sarvaan Shoakaan Hridayasya Bhavati*'— (*Brihadaaranyaka* 4-2-33). — *Iti.*" — (1-3-42).

Here *Yajnavalkya* has instructed *Janaka* through the examination of the *Avasthaatraya* that — "The relationship with the *Avasthaas* does not attach itself to *Atman* at all; *Jeeva* (in the ultimate analysis based on the Intuitive experience) is really (verily) *Paramaatman* alone."

- (iii) In the '*Sandhyaadhikarana*' there is a *Sootra* — (3-2-3): "*Maayaa-maatram Tu Kaartsnyenaanabhivyaktaswaroopatwaat*"; and its *Bhaashya* says:

"*Maayaiva Sandhye Shrishtih, Na Paramaarthagandho(s)pyasti; Kutaha? Kaartsnyenaanabhivyaktaswaroopatwaat; Na Hi Kaartsnyena Paramaarthavastu Dharmenaabhivyaktaswaroopaha Swapnaha; Kim Punaratra Kaartsnyamabhipretam? Deshakaalanimittasampattihi Abaadhashcha.*"

Just as in the case of the waking objects there are the time, space and causation categories and their not being falsified (*Abaadhita*) — the dream objects do not have such *Dharmas* (characteristics), all those are *Maayaa* indeed, in other words, false only.

In the '*Tadabhaavaadhikarana*' there is a *Sootra* (3-2-7): "*Tadabhaava Naadeeshu Tacchhruteraatmani Cha*" — In its *Bhaashya* it is stated: "*Api Cha Na Kadaachijeevasya Brahmanaa Sampattirnaasti; Swaropasyaanapaayitwaat Swapna..... Tasmaadaatmaiva Suptisthaanam.*"

The salient points taught in this commentary are:

- (a) Observed from the *Paramaarthas Drishti*, *Jeevaatman* does not ever exist apart from *Paramaatman*. Therefore, a state, wherein *Satsampatti* (becoming one with *Brahman* after merger) is not there at all, does not exist indeed.
- (b) In the waking and the dream states, another form, having association with adjuncts like the senses and the mind, also appears as having come afresh. Because of the reason that this form does not exist in the *Sushupti* state, the *Shruti* is stating that therein *Satsampatti* has taken place.

- (c) *Naadee* (subtle nerves — not physical), *Pureetat* (a particular intestine near the heart) etc. are the doorways only to deep sleep, and not that in them deep sleep itself takes place. *Sushupti* means a state wherein a second thing is not cognized; because among the *Naadees* and such other adjuncts there are differences or distinctions, it is not possible at all for not cognizing another second phenomenon. When there is complete merger into *Brahman* (in other words, when *Satsampatti* is attained) because there necessarily exists *Ekatwa* (non-dualism) alone, there is no question of cognizing a second entity or phenomenon.
- (d) The *Sootrakaara* has not mentioned the phrase — '*Naadeeshwa-atmani Cha*' — meaning, 'In the *Naadees* and in *Atman*' — with a view to determining the exact locus where this *Sushupti* occurs. For that reason alone the *Shruti* too does not refer to *Naadees*, and for this conclusion to be drawn the *Pramaana* (authoritative scriptural evidence) is to be sought in the fact that there is no '*Phala Shruti*' (a statement describing the benefit or fruit accruing) for the event of *Jeeva* having entered into the *Naadees*. Then by determining that — "He (*Jeeva*) has merged with *Atman*" — an Intuitive experience (*Anubhava*) is engendered to the effect — "*Jeeva* is *Brahman* alone; in Him there are no empirical dealings of the waking, the dream and the deep sleep at all."

91. Q: Thus if by *Satsampatti* occurring in *Sushupti* alone the *Jeevabrahmaikya* (consummate merger of the *Jeeva* and *Brahman*) is to be established, does it not amount to saying that states like swooning, dissolution of the world (*Pralaya*), death etc. need not be deliberated upon at all?

A: No. Wherever a second thing or object is perceived or is established to exist by means of logical arguments (*Yukti*) in either the waking or the dream which have *Darshanavritti* (concepts of manifested forms), in all such situations by virtue of the *Vishesha Jnaana* (distinctive knowledge) of diverse objects *Atman* appears to have *Pararoopaapatti* (acquired alien forms). Wherever there is an *Avastha* having an *Adarshanavritti* (concept of unmanifestation), in all such situations — in the Absolute sense — *Jeeva* remains merged in *Brahman* or *Atman*. Thus the *Yukti* used here by the *Shaastra* in the above manner to help practise that kind of discrimination becomes purposeful in examining Intuitively the three states of Consciousness. For this conclusion, the following *Bhaashya* statements become authoritative sources:

- (i) "*Mugdhe(s)rdhasampattihi Parisheshaat*" (Sootra 3-2-10) and its *Bhaashya* says:

“Na Broomoa Mugdhe(s)rdhasampattirjeevasya Brahmanaa Bhavateeti; Kim Tarhi, Ardhenā Sushuptapakshasya Bhavati Mugdhatwam; Ardhenā Avasthaantarapakshasyeti Broomaha.”

Here the Poorvapaksha (prima facie objection of) — “Tasmaadupaadhyupashamaat Sushuptaavasthatwe(s)pi Kritsna-sampattireva Jeevasya Bhavati Naardhasampattiriti” — meaning — Just as in Sushupti, in the Moorchhaavastha (swooning) Poornasampatti (total merger) alone should occur, is it not? — is raised, and accepting it, an opinion is given that from the Vyaava-haaric Drishti swooning is analogous to the death experience only.

(ii) In the Bhaashya on the Sootra (3-2-24): “Api Cha Samraadhane Pratyakshaanumaanaabhyam” — “Ap Chaivamaatmaanam Nira-stasamastaprapanchamavyaktam Samraadhanakaale Pashyanti Yoaginaha; Samraadhanam Cha Bhaktidhyaanapranidhaanaadya-nushthaanam” — it is stated that: Bhakti (devotion), Dhyana (meditation) and Chittaavadhaana (keeping the mind attentive or alert) etc. which are performed to attain Samaadhyavastha — in these states the Anubhava (Intuitive experience) of Brahman alone which is devoid of all distinctive features or characteristics (Nirvishesha) accrues.

(iii) In the Bhaashya on the Sootra (3-2-34): “Sthaanavisheshaat Prakaashaadivat” — it is stated: “Yadapyuktam Sambandha-vyapadeshaat Bhedavyapadeshaachha Paramataha Syaat — Iti....Tathaa Bhedavyapadesha(s)pi Brahmanaha Upaadhibhedaa-pekshayaa Upacharyate Na Swaroopabhedaapekshayaa.”

Its gist: Jeeva reaches Brahman in Sushupti — thus the teaching pertaining to the difference as well as the relationship between Jeeva and Ishwara is envisaged because of the reason of an adjunct alone and not because of the reason of a difference in the essential natures of Jeeva and Ishwara existing.

(iv) In the Bhaashya on the Sootra (3-2-35): “Upapatteshcha” — it is stated:

“Upapadyate Chaatredrisha Eva Sambandhoa Naanyaadrishaha ‘Swamapeeto Bhavati’ — (Chhaandogya 6-8-1) Iti Hi Swaroopa-sambandhamenamaamananti;... ..‘Yoa(s)yamantarhridaya Aakaashaha’ — (Chhaandogya 3-12-9) — Iti.”

Its gist: Because of the reason that in the waking in association with the Upaadhi the essential nature of Pure Being-Consciousness is hidden, the Shruti says that — “In the deep sleep state (Sushupti) this Jeeva merges with Me (i.e. Brahman or Atman).” Just as for one and one Aakaasha alone the distinctions of the type of — ‘the space outside the body’ and ‘the space within the heart (Hridayaakaasha)’ — are attributed, in the same way the Shruti

mentions the *Kalpita Bheda* (imagined or superimposed distinction) between *Jeeva* and *Ishwara*. This truth is clarified here.

- (v) In the *Bhaashya* on the Sootra (4-2-8): "*Tadaa(s)peetehe Samsa-aravyapadeshaat*" — it is stated that — "*Keedrishee Punariyam Sampattihi Syaat? — Iti Chintyate;....Sushuptipralayavat Beeja-bhaavaavasheshatva Eshaa Satsampattiriti.*"

Its gist: Here in this context, at the time of death the subtle primordial elements like *Teja*, *Ap* and *Prithvi* etc., *Praana* as well as senses, other *Bhootas* (phenomena of the world) along with the *Jeeva* get merged in the *Sadbrahma* (Pure Being of *Brahman*), which is the Supreme Deity. *Brahman* is the *Prakriti* (material cause alone) for all these; even so, all these do not merge permanently (not *Aatyantika Laya*). Had it been so, the *Shaastra* portion, which teaches the *Samsaaragati*, as well as that *Moaksha Shaastra*, which teaches that — 'Without *Jnaana* (Self-Knowledge) *Moaksha* cannot be attained' — would have become futile. Therefore, just as in *Sushupti* and *Pralaya*, in the same manner here it is determined that all those phenomena subsist in a seed form which is projected by *Mithyaajnaana* (misconception). Previously while explaining the Sootra (2-3-31) it was stated in its *Bhaashya* that the relationship with *Buddhi* is caused by *Mithyaajnaana*; this teaching should be remembered here in this context.

- (vi) Sootra (2-1-9): "*Na Tu Drishtaantabhaavaat*" — solves an objection which the *Saankhyans* have occasion to raise against the teachings of *Vedantins*. The *Bhaashya* on this above Sootra says:

"*Yathaa Hi Sushuptisamaadhyaadaavapi Satyaam Swaabhaa-vikyaam Avibhaagapraaptou Mithyaajnaanasya Anapoaditatwaat Poorvavat Punaha Prabodhe Vibhaagoa Bhavati;.... ... Damshoa Vaa Mashakoa Vaa Yadyad Bhavanti Tadaa Bhavanti*" — (*Chhaandogya* 6-9-23) *Iti.*"

Its gist: In the case of all *Praanis* (creatures) although in states like *Sushupti*, *Samaadhi*, swooning, *Marana* (death) etc. there is no division between *Paramaatman* and these creatures, because of the reason that their respective *Mithyaajnaana* (*Adhyaasa*) has not been got rid of or removed, they again wake up (or get born) and just as the division between *Jeeva* and *Ishwara* takes place, in the same way here too the creatures get divided from their very essence of Being as *Ishwara* or *Paramaatman*. Hence whatever theory or principle applies to the concept or phenomenon of *Pralaya* — that very same theory can be made applicable here too.

In any case, till *Avidyaa* vanishes, although *Satsampatti* accrues in states like *Sushupti*, *Samaadhi*, *Marana*, *Pralaya* etc. the *Jeevas*

(creatures) appear again and again in their respective previous physical forms in the waking. But observed from the *Paramaarthha Drishti*, all of them are verily of the essential nature of Pure Being-Consciousness of *Brahman* at all times and in all states. Now this is tantamount to teaching that those who attain this *Aatmaikatwa Vidyaa* do attain *Moaksha* (that is, they are said to be Liberated from the Bondage of *Samsaara* or *Jeevatwa*).

Shri Shankara, while writing his *Bhaashya* on a *Kaarika* by Shri Goudapaada in which the latter has referred to an illustration, has driven home the truth about how a *Jeeva*, who appears to be experiencing the three states of Consciousness, Intuits his essential nature of Pure Being-Consciousness as *Atman* with the guidance of the *Shaastraic* method of examining these three *Avasthaas*, avers: "*Asti Chaayamaparoa Drishtaantaha Yathaa Swayamprasaaritayaa Maayayaa Maayaavee Trishwapi Kaaleshu Na Samsprishyate, Avastutwaat;....Ajamanidra-maswapnamadvaitam Budhyate Tadaa.*"— (G. K. 1-16) *Itl.*" — (*Sootra Bhaashya* 2-1-9).

In this *Bhaashya* excerpt Shri Shankara has in so many words said that — 'Waking, dream and deep sleep, *Jeeva*'s birth, growth and death, the world's creation, sustenance and dissolution etc. — in all such types of triads of states, *Atman* (the Absolute non-dual Reality) alone is appearing by His *Maayaa* (magical power); thus, because this *Avasthaatraya* is *Atman*'s false (misconceived) appearance alone, in reality (from the Absolute viewpoint of Pure Consciousness) *Atman* is *Aja* (birthless), *Anidra* (devoid of deep sleep), *Aswapna* (devoid of dream), *Advaitaswaroopaha* (of the essential nature of non-dual Pure Consciousness). To explain, *Aja* here means one who is devoid of the mutations or changes like *Janma*, *Marana* etc.; *Anidra* means one who is devoid of an *Avastha* of the type of *Adarshanavritti* of not cognizing anything at all; *Aswapna* means one who does not have any *Darshanavritti* or a state in which a false appearance (*Anrita*) of a second thing or phenomenon is seen or known. The final fruition of the examination of the three states of Consciousness is to Intuit this above-mentioned *Atman*'s *Paramaarthaswaroopaa* alone. The superior *Saadhakas* (highly evolved seekers) can have this Intuitive experience here and now by one-pointed ratiocination (*Manana*) on the *Bhaashyas* on *Maandookyoopanishad* and on Shri Goudapaada's *Kaarikas* in four *Prakaranas* called *Aagama*, *Vaitathya*, *Advaita* and *Alaatashaanti* in that order.

XI. BANDHA MOAKSHA VYAVAHAARA

92. 9: Thus if it is a hard fact that always at all times *Jeeva* is invariably of *Ishwaraswaroopaa* alone, then the empirical transactions of *Bandha* (Bondage) and *Moaksha* (Liberation) will be

rendered untenable, is it not? But this kind of mundane transaction is being taught in the Shaastras; how can it be justified?

A: Yes, true. As you have said, *Atman* is beyond all mundane (empirical) transactions (*Sarvavyavahaaraateeta*). The scriptural teaching that — “He is eternally *Adviteeya* (non-dual), having no second entity or phenomenon to Himself” — alone is the *Paramaatha*. In this regard *Shri Goudapaada*, the grand preceptor of *Shri Shankara* and ‘*Vedaantaarthasampradaayavid*’ (an exponent well-versed in the traditional pedagogic methodology of teaching the Ultimate Reality propounded in the *Vedantas* or *Upanishads*) has stated: “*Etaire-shoa(s)prithagbhaavaihi Prithageveti Lakshitaha; Evam Yoa Veda Tat-twena Kalpayetsoa(s)vishankitaha*” — (G. K. 2-30).

Its meaning: *Atman* is always (eternally) *Adviteeya*, but this *Paramaatman* by virtue of His being associated with various adjuncts appears as if He is manifold.

“*Swapnamaaye Yathaa Drishte Gandharvanagaram Yathaa; Tathaa Vishwamidam Drishtam Vedaanteshu Vichakshanaihi*” — (G. K. 2-31).

Its meaning: The world of duality is a false appearance alone just like the dream, *Maayaa* (magic), *Gandharvanagara* (celestial city) etc.; the really real Entity is this *Paramaatma Tattwa* alone, and this alone is the *Vedantic Siddhaanta*.”

“*Na Niroadhoa Na Choatpattirna Baddhoa Na Cha Saadhakaha; Na Mumukshurna Vai Mukta Ityeshaa Paramaarthataa*” — (G. K. 2-32).

Its meaning: *Srishti* (creation), *Sthiti* (sustenance), *Laya* (dissolution) of the world of duality, seekers who are *Mumukshus* or desirous of Liberation, Realized souls (*Siddhas*) who are already Liberated, concepts of *Bandha* and *Moaksha* — all these are merely empirical transactions projected or conjured up by *Avidyaa* alone, but from the *Paramaatha Drishti* none of them exists in the least.

In the 13th Chapter of the *Bhagavad Geeta* too it is stated: From the *Paaramaarthic* viewpoint *Kshetrajna* is *Bhagavanta* (the Supreme Being); by virtue of the mutual superimposition (misconception) between *Kshetra* and *Kshetrajna* the creation of movable and immovable creatures, trees and plants appears as if it has taken place.

Even so, from the *Vyaavahaaric* viewpoint which is conjured up by *Avidyaa* this *Vyavahaara* of *Bandha* and *Moaksha* has been propounded in *Vedanta*.

93. Q: What is meant by *Mukti*? Is it not true that to get Liberated from Bondage is itself a *Phala* (fruit)? Therefore, *Mukti* also should necessarily be a plausible result attained by means of *Saadhana* (spiritual practice), is it not? If it is not so, why is it that

Karmoopaasanas have been stipulated by way of injunctions (Vidhi) in the Shrutis to attain Mukti?

A: For this an answer has been given in Sootra (3-4-52) which says: "Evam Muktiphalaaniyamastadavasthaavadhritestadavasthaavadhritehe" — and Shri Shankara in his *Bhaashya* on this Sootra has written:

- (1) 'Yathaa Mumukshoarvidyaasaadhaanaavalambinaha Saadhana-veeryavisheshaat Vidyaalakshane Phale Aihikaamushmikaphala-twakritoa Visheshapratiniyamoa Drishtaha, Evam Muktilakshane(s)pyutkarshaapakarshakritaha Kashchid....'Yatra Twasya Sarvamaatmaivaabhoot Tatkena Kam Pashyet' — Ityaadi-shrutibhyaha."

Here in this above *Bhaashya* portion it is expounded that *Muktyavastha* is not an *Avastha* at all; in truth, it is the *Nityasiddha* (eternally existing) *Brahmaatmaswaroopa* alone.

- (2) "Apt Cha Vidyaasaadhanam Swaveeryavisheshaat Swaphale Eva Vidyaayaam..Na Tu Mukto Kasyachit Atishayasambhava(s)sti."

Its meaning: There may be distinctions to the effect — if a *Saadhana* or spiritual practice (to gain Self-Knowledge) is strong it will help attain that *Vidyaa* either immediately or proportionately faster than if the *Saadhana* is weak; but in the latter case the Knowledge may accrue in due course of time. However, in *Vidyaa* itself there do not exist any distinctions of higher and lower, big or small. It is pointed out here that only when it becomes *Paripoorna* (absolutely whole, consummate), then only it can be called '*Vidyaa*' and not when it is limited or immature. (Hence, the doctrinaire teaching about gradations among *Jnaanis* like *Brahmaavid*, *Brahmaavidvara* and *Brahmaavidvarishtha* is totally against this *Bhaashya* portion).

Here it is affirmed that — "Mukti is not *Saadhya* (a product or effect of an effort or practice, *Saadhana*); but it is *Nityasiddha* (eternally existing Reality); thus we have reiterated." Therefore, it amounts to our elucidating beyond any doubt that by means of *Vidyaa* the falsification or sublation of *Avidyaa* that takes place is itself the *Mukti* from *Bandha*.

94. Q: Where else has it been stated that Mukti is Nityasiddha? Where is any indication about this teaching in Adhyaasa Bhaashya?

A: In the *Adhyaasa Bhaashya* sentence — "Tametamavidyaakhyamaatmaanaatmanoaritaretaadhyasam Puraskritya Sarve Pramaana-prameyavyavahaaraaha Pravrittaaha Sarvaani Cha Shaastraani Vidhipratishedhamoakshaparaani" — the salient points indicated are:

- (i) Because it is stated in the above *Bhaashya* portion that even the *Moakshaprada Shaastra* (the *Vedantic* teaching pertaining to *Moaksha* or *Mukti*) also is prompted by *Avidyaa* only — it amounts to saying that for the *Jnaani* the *Moaksha* (that he is supposed to have attained as a result of some *Saadhana*) is really not something that is attained as a fruit or *Phala* afresh.
- (ii) In its explanatory sentence it is stated: “*Na Chaanadhyasta-atmabhaavena Dehena Kaschidvyaapriyate; Na Chaitasmin Sarvasminnasati Asangasyaatmanaha Pramaatrutwamupapadyate*” — meaning: Because it is stated that — ‘Since *Atman* is *Asanga* or unrelated (non-dual), unless *Dehaadhyasa* (misconception of *Atman* having a body) is preconceived He cannot possibly have the empirical dealings of possessing *Pramaatrutwa* with *Pramaanas* and *Prameya*’ — clearly it is tantamount to having indicated that embodiedness is superimposed on *Atman* or, in other words, the body is misconceived in *Atman*.
- (iii) In the sentence — “*Asti Taavad Brahma Nityashuddhabuddha-muktaswabhaavam... ..Aatmaa Cha Brahma*” — it is taught that — “*Atman* of the *Jijnaasu* is of the essential nature of eternally Liberated (*Nityamuktaswabhaava*); He need not attain *Mukti* afresh or anew” — and thereby in the (*Jijnaasaa Sootra*) the *Moaksha Vyavahaara* has been rescinded or sublated.
- (iv) In the ‘*Samanvaya Sootra*’ *Bhaashya* the statement that — “*Ashareeratwameva Dharmakaaryam Iti Chet, Na; Tasya Swaabhaavikatwaat; Tadetadashareeratwam Moakshaakhyam*” — it is indicated that — ‘The *Moaksha* called *Ashareeratwa* is *Swaabhaavika* (to wit, Intuition of being ever devoid of embodiedness is itself called here in this context *Moaksha* and thereby that is the very essence of Pure Being — not an adventitious state or condition to be acquired or attained afresh; for, that is *Swaabhaavika* and is not to be acquired anew at all); further, it is thereby suggested that this essential nature of Pure Being-Consciousness is not some fruit which is to be established afresh as a result of some *Dharma Kaarya* or religious or spiritual action giving rise to some merit.

In the *Bhaashya* Shri Shankara has repeatedly exemplified the scriptural sentence — “*Yatra Twasya Sarvamaatmaivaabhoot*” — which implies: ‘In the *Vidyaavastha*, wherein one has Intuited *Aatmaikatwa* culminating in Intuitive experience of the essence of Pure Being-Consciousness, there is no *Vyavahaara* whatsoever’ and has thus clarified the *Vedantic* teaching in clear terms. From this it amounts to having repeatedly taught that — ‘From the standpoint of a *Jnaani* the empirical dealing of *Bandha-Moaksha* also does not exist whatsoever.’

95. Q: Has it been indicated in the *Adhyaasa Bhaashya* that there is no *Bandha* whatsoever? In any other context in *Shri Shankara's Bhaashya* is this truth clarified at all?

A: (1) *"Tametamevamlakshanamadhyaasam Panditaa Avldyeti Man-
yante: Tadvivekena Cha Vastuswaroopaaavadhaaranam Vidyaa-
maahuhu: Tatratnam Sati Yatra Yadadhyasaaha, Tatkritena
Doashena Gunena Vaa Anumaatrenaapi Sa Na Sambadhyate."*

In this *Bhaashya*, it has been indicated that because *Anaatmans* (not-selves) of the forms of *Upaadhis* are superimposed on, or misconceived in, *Nityashuddha Atman*, when that *Adhyaasa* is sublated or negated by *Vidyaa* (Self-Knowledge), the truth that — 'This defect of evil (*Anarthadoasha*) of the forms of *Kartrutwa-Bhoaktrutwa* does not taint or touch *Atman* in the least' — is realized.

(2) *"Poorvasiddhakartrutwabhoaktrutwavihareetam Hi Trishwapi
Kaaleshu Akartrutwabhoakrutwaswaroopam Brahmaaha-
masmi: Netaha Poorvamapi Kartaabhoaktaa Vaa Ahamasmi,
Nedaaneem Naapi Bhavishyatkaale Iti Brahmavidavagatchhati"*
— (4-1-13).

In this *Bhaashya* sentence it is stridently affirmed that — "One who has attained *Brahmajnaana* gets a steadfast, unflinching conviction to the effect — 'In me never in the past, nor now at present nor in the future — never at any period of time — the *Bandha* of the form of *Kartrutwa-Bhoaktrutwa* existed.'"

(3) *"Evameva Cha Moaksha Upapadyate: Anyathaa Anaadikaala-
pravrittaanaam Karmanaam Kshayaabhaave Moakshaabha-
vaha Syaat; Na Cha Deshakaalanimittaapekshaa Moakshaha
Karmaphalavadbhavitumarhati"* — (4-1-13).

In this *Bhaashya* sentence it is stated: If we assume that — '*Mukti* which ever exists is cognized by means of *Jnaana*' — alone *Moaksha* becomes eternal (*Nitya*) alone and neither when it is attained afresh as a result of, or a product of, *Saadhana* nor when something is created depending upon the mundane, empirical categories of time, space and causation; otherwise, it becomes *Anitya* (non-eternal) indeed; besides it will get defaulted without being the real *Moaksha*.

(4) *"Ato(s)vldyaakalpitatasamsaaritwanivartanena Nityamuktaatma-
samarpanaat. Na Moakshasyaanityatwadoashaha."* — (1-1-4).

In this *Bhaashya* sentence too it is further clarified that — "Having demonstrated or depicted that — 'By the destruction of *Avldyaa*, *Atman* is Intuited to be of the essential nature of being ever Liberated or free' — the final purport of the *Shaastras* lies in

giving rise to *Jnaana* alone; if this truth is not accepted, then *Moaksha* will invariably become *Anitya* indeed." Therefore, here in this context too *Samsaarabandha* (the Bondage of the form of transmigratory existence) is *Avidyaakalpita* (a projection conjured up by nescience) alone; it does not exist, in the absolute sense, as a reality, entity at all.

XII. MOAKSHA SAADHANA VYAVAHARA

96. Q: In that case, why is it that in the *Shaastras Saadhanas* have been taught for attaining *Moaksha*?

A: In the *Bhaashya* on the *Sootra* (3-4-1): "*Purushaartho(s)taha Shabdaaditi Baadaraayanaha*" — it is enunciated that — "By means of *Kevalavidyaa* (*Aatmikatwapratiipatti*) or attainment of Intuition of the non-dualism or Pure, Absolute Being-Consciousness of the Self alone the *Paramapurusha* is gained. The *Bandha* that is superimposed by mere *Avidyaa* has per force to be sublated (falsified) by mere *Vidyaa* alone; by means of *Yukti* in consonance with Intuitive experience or *Saarvatrika Poorna Anubhava* also it is inviolably established that besides *Jnaana* to attain *Mukti* there is no necessity of any other *Saadhana* felt. Having followed this teaching, the *Sootra* (3-4-25) is quoted in support of it: "*Ata Eva Chaagneendhanaadya-napekshaa*". The *Bhaashya* on this *Sootra* says:

- (1) "*Ata Eva Cha Vidyayaa Purushaarthahetutwaat Agneendhanaadeeni Aashramakarmaani Vidyayaa Swarthasiddhou Naapekshitavyaani Iti Aadyasyaivaadhikaranasya Phalamupasamharatyadhikavivakshayaa.*" — (*Sootra Bhaashya* 3-4-25).

Its purport: Here all the theories of the proponents to the effect that — "By means of *Karmajnaanasamuchhaya* (blending *Karmas*, which are *Katrutantra*, and *Jnaana*, which is *Vastutantra*) alone *Moaksha* is attained (afresh)" — are refuted.

But as a solution to the doubt of the type that — "Then for *Vidyaa* or Self-Knowledge is there no need of any *Karmas* at all?" — the following *Sootra* (3-4-26) is quoted: "*Sarvaapekshaa Cha Yajnaadishruterashwavat*" — and in his explanatory *Bhaashya* on this *Sootra* *Shri Shankara* says:

- (2) "*Nanu Viruddhamidam Vachanam Apekshate Chaashramakarmaani Vidyanaapekshate Cheti: Neti Broomaha:.. ..Kashaaye Karmabhihi Pakwe Tatoa Jnaanam Pravartate*" — (*Moaksha Dharma* 270-38) *Ityevamaadyaa.. ..Phalasiddhou Naapekshyante Utpattou Chaapekshyanta Iti.*"

The purport of this long *Bhaashya* excerpt is: In the methodology of teaching adopted by *Shri Shankara*, alien tenets like — (a) '*Karmas*

have been criticized or condemned in all respects and aspects': (b) 'For attaining *Moaksha*, *Karmajnaanasamuchhaya* is essential'; (c) 'For small or limited *Phala* an unsteady (*Asthira*) *Karma* is needed while for the steadfast (eternal) *Moaksha*, *Karma* conjoined with *Upaasana* is essential' — all such doctrinaire theories are refuted on the strength of delineating the essential natures of *Karma* and *Vidya* alone. Further, it amounts to clarifying the genuine Vedantic teaching (in accordance with the *Saampradaayic* methodology of Shri Shankara) here, viz. '*Svarga* and such other *Loakaantara* or *Janmaantara Phalas* are *Saadhya* or attainable as a result of some *Karma* or *Upaasana*, but *Mukti* is *Nityasiddha* or an eternally existing Reality; therefore, though for *Svarga* etc. *Karma* and *Upaasanas* may be indirect *Saadhanas*, they are not the direct (i.e. instantaneous, spontaneous, immediate) *Saadhanas* for *Mukti*. The fact they may, however, be indirect *Saadhanas* in a sequential order (*Parampara*) is clarified here.

Here in this context, we should ruminate over the purport of the verse (6-3) of the *Bhagavad Geeta* to the effect that — 'For the *Aarurukshu*, who is about to enter the path of *Yoga*, *Karma* is *Saadhana*, while for the *Aaroodha*, who has already entered the path of *Yoga*, *Shama* (control over the mind) is the *Saadhana*.'

97. Q: Apart from mere *Karmas*, which other *Saadhanas* are needed by the *Brahmajijnaasu*?

A: To this Shri Baadaraayana has provided the answer in his Sootra (3-4-27):

"*Shamadamaadyupetaha Syaattathaapi Tu Tadviddhestadangatayaa Teshamavashyaanushtheyatwaat*" — and the *Bhaashya* on it says: "*Yadi Kashchinmanyeta — Tasmaat Yajnaadyanapekshaayaamapi Shamaadeenyapekshitavyaani*" — (Here the *Maadhyandina* rescension is also mentioned).

Here because the injunctive case is seen in the word — '*Pashyet*' — it is stressed that not only is it stipulated that *Shama*, *Dama* etc. have to be necessarily practised but also they are more essential than *Yajna*, *Daana* etc. This distinctive gradation is clarified too in the next portion of the *Bhaashya* in the manner: "*Yajnaadeenyapi Twapekshitavyaani, Yajnaadishrutereva;... ...Vividishaasamyogaattu Baahyataraani Yajnaadeeni — Iti Vivektavyam.*"

Here it is blared out indubitably and unambiguously that — "*Yajnaadi Karmas* are *Bahirangasaadhanas* (spiritual disciplines or practices which are external), while *Shama*, *Dama* etc. are *Antaranga-saadhanas* (spiritual practices internally to be observed).

98. Q: Are there any Saadhanas which are still more Anta-ranga (internal) than Shama, Dama etc.?

A: Yes, there are. In the Sootra (4-1-1): "*Aavrittirasakridupadeshaat*" — the direct means (Saadhanas) like Shravana, Manana, Nididhyaasana have been elaborated upon very clearly for attaining Self-Knowledge. In the Bhaashya on that Sootra it is stated:

- (1) "*Darshanaparyavasaanaani Hi Shravanaadeeni Aavartyamaanaani Drishtaarthani Bhavanti: Yathaavaghaataadeeni Tandulaadinishpattiparyavasaanaani. Tadvat: Api Choapaasanam Nididhyaasanam Chetyantarneetaavrittigunaiva Kriyaa Abhidheeyate.*"

Here because Saadhanas like Shravana, Manana etc. which are exclusively pertaining to the subject-matter of Atman are taught for the Darshana (literally it means vision, but here it means Jnaana), we can discern that they have to be practised till this plenary Darshana or Jnaana accrues or reaches its acme or fruition here and now. Because of the reason that both the words 'Upaasana' (meaning mental meditation) and 'Nididhyaasana' (meaning Intuitive contemplation) are referring to mental actions which are to be repeated over and over again also, it becomes very clear that they have to be repeated till Jnaana (Self-Knowledge) is attained. Hence it amounts to having said that these Saadhanas are to be practised till Darshana or Jnaana accrues. If Shravana, Manana etc. are practised Jnaana accruing here while living in this body is experienced indeed. Therefore it becomes established that these direct Saadhanas of Shravana, Manana and Nididhyaasana are more effective and efficient Saadhanas than Shama, Dama etc.

99. Q: In all the Upanishadic sentences like — 'You should do Shravana (Shroatavyaha), you should have vision of Atman (Pashyet) etc. has Jnaana been stipulated as an injunction (Vidhi)? For, in words like Shroatavyaha, Pashyet there is a grammatical suffix 'Tavya' (Vidhi Vibhakti Pratyaya) which indicates a commanding injunction, is it not?

A: Here 'Jnaana' means a resultant fruit of the nature of Anubhava (Intuitive experience). It is that which evolves by itself from Pratyayas (convictions) and not a Kriya (an act). This we have mentioned previously. By ruminating over the detailed comments on this subtle topic by Shri Shankara in his Bhaashyas there is an immense benefit.

- (i) "*Avagatiparyantam Jnaanam Sanvaachyaayaa Icchhaayaaha Karma: Phalavishayatwaadlccchhaayaaha*" — (1-1-1).

In the expression — 'One should practise Brahma Jijnaasaa' — the word 'Jijnaasaa' (literally meaning a desire to know) alone is used in the sense that — 'One should desire (make an attempt) for

Jnaana (Self-Knowledge). Any desire is fruit- or benefit-oriented and hence, in a manner of speaking, here *Jnaana* is *Phala* itself, and not an act.

- (II) “*Yathaabhootabrahmaatmaishayamapi Jnaanam Na Choodanaa-tantram*” —

Its gist: Just like *Pratyaksha Jnaana* etc. *Brahmajnaana* also is Intuitive experience (Pure Consciousness) alone which indicates or shows an Entity as It really is; therefore, it is not an act (ritual or rite) which is stipulated by way of an injunction.

- (III) “*Kimarthaani Tarhi 'Aatmaa Va Are Drishtavyaha Shrootavyaha' — (Bri.) Ityaadeeni Vidhicchhaayanti Vachanaani? Swaabhaavika-pravrittivishayavimukhee Karanaarthaaneeti Broomaha.*”

Its purport is: If it is queried that — “What is the benefit or purpose of statements like ‘One should perceive *Atman* alone, should listen to (texts pertaining to *Atman* alone)’ etc. which appear to be injunctions only? — it is answered here by saying that the ultimate purpose behind these statements is to stop the habitual trend of a person’s senses which are extroverted (pursuing the five-fold enjoyments through the five *Jnaanendriyas*) and then turn them around completely towards *Atman* (the very fountainhead of all existence, knowledge and enjoyments).

- (IV) “*Loake(s)pi 'Idam Pashya', 'Idamaakarnaya' Iti Chalvanjaa-teeyakeshu Niradesheshu Pranidhaanamaatram Kuru — Ityuchyate, Na Saakshaat Jnaanameva Kuru Iti;....Na Cha Pramaanaanta-renaanyathaaprasiddhe(s)rthe Anyathaajnaanam Niyuktasyaapyupapadyate — (Sootra Bhaashya 3-2-21).*”

Its purport is: ‘Look here’, ‘Listen’ — these are not at all words of the type of injunctions. For a person who is a perceiver or a listener there should necessarily be the respective instruments of knowledge. Similarly, there should necessarily be percepts outside for perceiving and listening. If not, even if there are injunctions issued neither there will be perceptual knowledge nor *Shravanajnaana* or knowledge gained through listening. Thus here to conclude that — ‘*Darshana, Shravana* etc. mentioned in the scriptural texts are not really of the nature of injunctions’ — a rational explanation is forwarded.

(Therefore, it is established here on the strength of the original *Bhaashya* statements that — “The post-Shankara *Vyaakhyaana-kaaras*’ adamant interpretation that — ‘*Shravana, Manana, Darshana* and *Nididhyaasana* are injunctions’ — as well as such other attempts by other people” — are truly exercises in futility indeed!)

100. 9: In that case, among the *Saadhanas* like *Shravana, Manana* and *Nididhyaasana* which is predominant (*Mukhya*)

and which is subservient or secondary (Anga)? Or, is it that only when all these are necessarily complete, then alone Jnaana accrues?

A: Among these, because each one *Saadhana* is meant for the *Avagatiroopa Aatma Jnaana* (the plenary consummate Intuitive experience of Self-Knowledge) alone, whichever *Saadhana* helps accrue or attain *Jnaana* — to that extent that particular *Saadhana* is sufficient, and this interpretation alone is correct and proper. Besides, because *Jnaana*, being *Atman's* innate essence of Pure Being-Consciousness of the very nature of Intuitive experience, has to finally manifest Itself, evidently if the proper and sufficient instruments of Knowledge (here *Saadhanas*) are there to turn our attention or awareness towards this core of *Aatmavastu* (ever-existing Reality of our Self), that will be adequate and will serve the purpose all right.

Here in this context by deliberating upon the following *Bhaashya* sentences there is immense benefit to the *Saadhakas*:

(a) “*Manananididhyaasanayoarapyavagatyarthatwaat*” — (1-1-4).

Here it is stated that just as much *Shravana* is a *Saadhana* for *Anubhava* (Intuitive experience) so much are *Manana* and *Nididhyaasana* too for *Anubhava*.

(b) “*Tatra Yeshaametou Padaarthou Ajnaanasamshayaviparyaya Pratibaddhou Teshaam 'Tattwamasl' Ityetad Vaakyam Swaartho Pramaam Noatpaadayitum Shaknoati;....Naatra Kashchidapi Kramoa(s)bhyupagamyate*” — (Sootra *Bhaashya* 4- 1-2).

Its gist: For the *Uttamaadhikaaris* (superior-grade or highly-evolved seekers) who are capable of Intuiting the meaning of the two words — ‘*Tat*’ and ‘*Twam*’, and for those who do not have the obstructive defects or impediments like *Ajnaana* (non-comprehension), *Samshaya* (doubt) and *Viparyaya* (misconception) — all together these are called *Avidyaa* (nescience) — for these two highly qualified seekers merely by virtue of their practising *Shravana* (of the scriptural teachings about *Brahman* or *Atman* as the non-dual Absolute Reality) the purport of the sentences will be Intuited with certainty. Hence, in their case there cannot be any restriction or stipulation that they should necessarily practise further *Manana* and *Nididhyaasana* also. But those who do not attain the *Padaarthaajnaana* have per force to practise *Manana* or even further *Nididhyaasana*.

101. Q: What is meant by the practice of *Shravana* and *Yukti*? What exactly is the essential nature of the *Anubhava* that accrues either by means of *Shravana* or by ratiocinating over the *Yuktis* (logical devices) taught in the *Shaastras* themselves?

A: *Anubhava* (Intuitive experience) means: Since *Duhkhitwa* (misery) etc. are objects to (outside or external to) the subjective *Aatmaanubhava*, the *Dhrīdanishchaya* (unflinching conviction) that they do not attach themselves to Him accrues. (To wit. it is a highly esoteric teaching of *Vedānta* that anything that can be, and is, objectified — does not belong, or attach itself, to the subject). In support of this conclusion the following *Bhaashya* sentence is the *Pramaana* (authoritative source):

- (1) “*Pratyaksham Hi Dehe Chhidyamaane Dahyamaane Vaa Ahameva Chhidyate. Dahye — Iti Cha Mithyaabhimāna Drishtāḥ: ... Na Chaitvamaatmaanamanubhavataha Kinchit Anyat Kṛtyamavashishyate*” — (*Sootra Bhaashya* 4-1-2).

Its gist: Because of the reasons that: (i) in the waking it is intuited that the adjuncts like the body, the senses etc. as well as the *Vedanas* like *Duhkhitwa* etc. are clearly objects for *Atman*, the Witnessing Consciousness and (ii) these are absent in *Sushupti* is the Intuitive experience of Pure Consciousness (*Shuddha Chaitanya*) for everyone of us — it is stated that this non-dual *Chaitanya* Itself is the real Self, and this alone is called in *Vedāntic* parlance *Aatmaanubhava*.

- (2) “*Yasya Tu Naishoa(s)nubhavao Draagiva Jaayate Tam Pratyannubhavaartha Evaavṛittyabhyupagamaha;... Aavṛittyadivaa-choayuktyaa Abhyupeyate.*”

Its gist: Knowing full well that whatever is different or apart from *Atman* is really *Anṛita* and establishing oneself in (or having total or consummate identity with) *Atman* alone is in truth *Anubhava*. In order to enable us to establish ourselves in that *Anubhava*, the (repeated) practice of direct *Saadhanas* like *Shravana*, *Manana* needed for that purpose alone is reckoned as *Aavṛitti* or repetition in this context.

(From this it becomes evident that those theories which propound that *Anubhava* or *Saakshaatkaara* or materialisation have to be attained afresh by repeated practice of *Jnaana* are all contrary to the *Bhaashya*. It also, at the same time, amounts to saying that — ‘Getting rid of *Adhyaasa* and establishing oneself in or becoming one with *Atman* alone is ‘*Anubhava*’).

102. Q: What is meant by *Nididhyaasana*? Who can do it and how?

A: It is stated in the *Kathopanishad* that because *Aatmavastu* is very subtle, to many *Saadhakas* it may be beyond their ability to Intuit, and to such people *Adhyaatmayoga* will first become an essential practice. That also is meant for *Anubhava* alone. In this regard, the following *Bhaashya* sentences are authoritative sources:

In the Sootra (3-3-14): "*Aadhyaanaaya Prayojanaabhaavaat*", while determining the purport of the *Kathopanishad* verse (3-10-11): "*Indriyebhyaha Paraa Hyarthaa Arthebhyashcha Param Manaha; Manasastu Paraa Buddhirbuddheraatmaa Mahaan Paraha; Mahataha Parama Vyaktamavyaktaat Purushaha Paraha; Purushaanna Param Kinchit Saa Kaashthaa Saa Paraa Gatihi.*" — it is clarified that —

- (1) "*Purusha Eva Hyebhyaha Sarvebhyaha Param Pratipaadyata Iti Yuktam; Na Pratyekameshaam Paratwapratiipaadanam; Kasmaat? Prayojanaabhaavaat; ..Na Twaadhyaanamena Swapradhaanam.*"

For this long *Bhaashya* excerpt the gist is: *Indriya* (senses). *Artha* (the objects for the senses), *Manas* (mind) etc. in that order are subtler and subtler, and finally subtler than all else is '*Purusha*' or *Atman*. All these have been taught here for the sake of Intuiting *Atman* through '*Aadhyaana*'. Here *Aadhyaana* means '*Nididhyaasana*' alone; by means of that alone *Samyajjnaana* dawns.

For the Sootra (3-23-15): "*Aatmashabdaachha*" — the *Bhaashya* says:

- (2) " '*Esha Sarveshu Bhooteshu Goodhoa(s)tmaa Na Prakaashate; Drishyate Twagryayaa Buddhya Sookshmayaa Sookshmadarshibhihi*' - (3-13) *Iti Prakritam Purusham Aatmaa - Ityaaha; ...Tadvyaakhyaatam 'Aanumaanikamapyekeshaam* — (1-4-1) *Ityatra.*"

Its purport: By the word '*Purusha*' *Atman* alone is indicated; the rest are *Anaatman*; we have stated in the '*Aanumaanikaadhikarana*' that — '*To Intuit this subtle Reality of Atman, Aadhyaana has been recommended.*' From this commentary also it amounts to having said that for the sake of getting rid of all *Adhyaasa* about *Anaatmans* as well as Intuiting *Atman* alone this *Aadhyaana* or *Nididhyaasana* has been taught.

Further, the *Bhaashya* portion in the *Aanumaanikaadhikarana* referred to above says:

- (3) "*Vaishnavasya Paramapadasya Duravagamatwamuktvaa Tadvagamaartham Yoagam Darshayati — 'Yacchhedwaangmanasee Praajnaastadyacchhejjnaana Aatmanee;.... ...Mahaantam Twaatmaanam Shaanta Aatmani Prakaranavati Parasmin Purushe Parasyaam Kaashthaayaam Pratishthaapayet — Iti.*"

Its gist: Here the description of the spiritual practice called '*Adhyaatmayoga*' is given in detail. Because *Atman* is the subtlest Entity, *Indriyas* or senses etc. first should be merged in a subtler constituent of our Being like *Manas* (mind) and continuing this process of merging the outer or external gross elements into their immediate subtler elements, finally we should reach the extremely subtlest form of *Paramaatman*. From the *Bhaashya* sentence in

Brihadaaranyaka (2-4-4) it can be determined that by 'Nididhyaasana' it is meant 'to concentrate on a thing, observe it and Intuit (cognize) it' alone from the original sentence: "*Priyaa Bataare Naha Satee Priyam Bhaashase Ehyaaswa Vyaakhyaasyaaml Te Vyaachakshaanasya Tu Me Nididhyaasasweti*". That complete sentence is:

- (4) "*Ataha Ehi Aaswa Upavisha Vyaakhyaasyaaml Yatte Tava Ishtamamritatwasaadhanamaatmajnaanam Kathayishyaaml; Vyaachakshaanasya Tu Me Mama Vyaakhyaanam Kurvataha Nididhyaasaswa Vaakyaanyarthato Nishchayena Dhyaatumicchheti*." — (*Brihadaaranyaka Bhaashya* 2-4-4).

Here it is clearly explained to say that *Nididhyaasana* means 'to concentrate on and observe a thing and cognize (Intuit) it' alone.

(Even so, there are some proponents of *Vyaakhyaana Prasthaana* who explain in the manner: "*Shravana, Manana, Nididhyaasana* mean *Dhaarana, Dhyana* and *Samaadhi*, respectively" — equating the earlier three Vedantic technical terms with the latter three technical terms of *Paatanjala Yoga Shaastra* or *Darshana*, which is a *Dvaita Siddhaanta*. These proponents opine that the word '*Darshana*' used in the *Upanishadic* sentence means a resultant effect obtained afresh from *Samaadhi* or trance. This is totally opposed to and not acceptable to the *Bhaashya* teaching. There is no gainsaying the fact about this clear difference and variance from the *Upanishadic* teaching).

103. Q: What authoritative (scriptural) texts are there to conclude that after the attainment (or dawning) of *Jnaana*, *Saadhanas* like *Yajna, Daana* etc. should be given up? Why should it not be believed (reckoned) that both *Karma* and *Jnaana* can go hand in hand, so to speak, and together be the cause for the *Paramapurushaartha*?

A: Even prior to Shri Shankara or even in ancient times there were proponents of this doctrinaire theory that both these together are responsible for (or will engender) *Moaksha*. The three types of such theories, viz. (a) equal blending (i.e. in equal proportions) of *Jnaana* and *Karma*; (b) *Jnaana* is an *Anga* (secondary, accessory to) of *Karma*; (c) *Karma* is an *Anga* of *Jnaana* — were also propounded by some *Vedantins* even and all such doctrines were refuted by Shri.Shankara in his *Upanishad Bhaashyas* as well as in his *Geeta Bhaashya*. In the *Sootra Bhaashya* the second type in the above three was taken as the *prima facie* objection and on that pretext the genuine *Siddhaanta* had been established. For instance:

- (i) In the *Sootra* (3-4-3): "*Sheshatwaat Purushaarthavaadoa Yathanyeshwiti Jaiminihi*" — it is stated that because *Atman* is a

Kartru He is *Shesha* (remnant or subservient) to *Karma*. Therefore, it is inferred that, just as in a *Vidhi*, *Karmas* called '*Vreehi Proakshana*' etc. *Vreehi* (paddy) etc., *Atman's Vijnana* (intellectual knowledge) etc. are *Karmashesha* (things which are remaining apart from the *Karmas*) *Atman* too is *Karmashesha*; the statement that — "By means of *Jnaana* a *Phala* accrues" — is mere '*Arthavaada*' (stated by way of eulogising *Jnaana*) and hence of secondary importance (subservient to *Karma*). This is a theory propounded by some proponents following *Jaimini's Poorva Meemaamsaa Siddhaanta*.

- (ii) In the Sootra (3-4-3) "*Aachaaradarshanaat*" — a *prima facie* objection which championed the theory that '*Jnaana* is *Karmashesha*' has been examined. The argument of these proponents was: Because the *Upanishads* are stating that — '*Jnaanis* also were performing *Karma*, — if it were true that merely by *Jnaana* alone *Moaksha*, which is the *Purushaartha*, is attained, then there was no necessity whatsoever for *Jnaanis* to perform *Karma*. By the *Pramaana* of *Shrutarthaapatti* (the valid means of *Arthaapatti* or indirect inference from the *Shruti Vaakya*) *Jnaana* is deduced as *Karmashesha*.
- (iii) In the Sootra (3-4-4): "*Tatchhrutehe*" — on the strength of the *Chhaandogya* sentence — "*Yadeva Vidyayaa Karoati. ...Tadeva Veeryavattaram Bhavati*" — there is a *Poorvapaksha* championing the theory that — '*Vidyaa* is *Karmashesha*'.
- (iv) In the Sootra (3-4-5): "*Samanvaarambhanaat*" — because in the *Brihadaraanyaka Upanishad* it is stated that — "*Tam Vidyaaakarmanee Samanvaarabhete*" — meaning, '*Both Jnaana and Karma are responsible for the Phala*, it is argued that *Jnaana* by itself cannot give rise to a *Phala* independently.
- (v) In the Sootra (3-4-6): "*Tadvatoa Vidyaavidhaanaat*" — on the strength of the *Chhaandogya Upanishad* sentence — "*Aachaarya-kulaad Vedamadheetya.... ...Kutumbe Shuchou Deshe Swaadhyayaamadheeyaanaha*" — only after listening to the purport of the *Vedas (Vedaaartha)* from a preceptor (*Aachaarya*) the qualification for performing *Karma* accrues. Hence *Jnaana* is *Karmashesha*. This argument is forwarded.
- (vi) In the next Sootra (3-4-7): "*Niyamaachha*" — there is a *prima facie* (*Poorvapaksha*) argument that because there are several *Shruti* sentences purporting to teach that — '*As long as the seeker is alive he should per force go on performing Karma*' — it can be deduced that *Jnaana* is definitely *Karmashesha*.

Now, according to Shri Shankara's teaching this *prima facie* theory is refuted on the basis of the following *Shruti Pramaana Vaakyas*:

- (a) For the Sootra (3-4-7): "Adhikoapadeshaattu Baadaraayana-syalvam Taddarshanaat" — the following *Bhaashya* is there: "Adhikastaavacchhaareeraadaatmanoa(s)samsaareeshwaraha.....Pratyutakarmaanyucchhinatti."

Its purport: Atman who is expounded in Vedanta is not the Kartru; but apart from him, the non-dual Witnessing Consciousness who is beyond the empirical opposites of Dharma (ethical and religious acts or rituals) and Adharma (irreligious, unethical deeds) is taught. Therefore, Aatmajnaana is not Karmashesha or Karmaanga; in fact, It is capable of destroying or sublating Karmas.

Here we should remember the teaching brought home by Shri Shankara in his *Adhyaasa Bhaashya* that the seeker should discern Intuiting that Atman who is Chidaatmaka (of the very essence of Absolute, Pure Consciousness) as well as the Vishayiswaroopaa (of the essential nature of the eternal Witness or subject but never a Vishaya or Prameya, meaning an object for anything) but who is separate from the Ahampratyayagamya Atman (the 'I' notion, ego or Pramaatruroopa self). Hence it becomes established that this Witnessing Consciousness is Itself to be reckoned in the predominant sense and not in any Gounaatha or as Arthavaada.

- (b) For the Sootra (3-4-9): "Tulyam Tu Darshanam" — the following *Bhaashya* is written: "Tulyam, Aachaaradarshanam Akarmasheshatwe(s)pi Vidyayaaha;....Na Twatraapi Karmaangatwamasti; Prakaranaadyabhaavaat."

Its purport: There is also a *Shruti* which examines the conventions and beliefs, which the *Jnaanis* were entertaining to follow, expressed in statements like — "Why do we need Adhyayana (studying the scriptural texts) and Yagna, Daana etc.?" The *Shruti* sentence which the *Poorvapakshi* had exemplified to say that — "Jnaanis too were performing Karmas is the topic pertaining to Saguna Vidyaa, and not to Nirguna Vidyaa. Therefore, the opinion that - "Para Brahma Vidyaa is not Karmashesha" — is to be found in this *Bhaashya*.

- (c) For the Sootra (3-4-10): "Asaarvatrikee" there is a *Bhaashya*, viz. "Yadeva Vidyayaa Karoati" — (Chh.) — Ityeshaa Shrutihi Na Sarvavidyaavishayaa; Prakritavidyaabhisambandhaat; Prakritaa Choadgeethavidyaa 'Omityetadaksharamudgeethamupaaseeta' — Ityatra."

Its gist: The statement that — '*Karma performed along with (or with the support of) Vidyaa (Vidyaapoorvaka Karma)* will become more efficacious' — is not at all pertaining to the topic of *Para Brahma Vidyaa*. In fact, it is a *Karmaanga Vidyaa* (a meditation or *Upaasana* subservient to a particular *Karma*) called '*Udgeetha*'. Therefore, for the current topic it is not a *Pramaana* at all.

- (d) The *Bhaashya* on *Sootra* (3-4-11): '*Vibhaagaha Shatavat*' — says: '*Yadapyuktam — 'Tam Vidyaakarmanee Samanvaarabhete' — (Brl.) Ityetatsamanvaarambhavachanam Aswaatantrye Vidyayaa Lingamiti:....Evam Sati Avibhaagenaapeedam Samanvaarambhavachanamavakalpate.*'

Its gist: The *Upanishadic* statement — '*Vidyaakarmanee Samanvaarabhete*' — which was quoted by the opponent propounds the generality of both *Jnaana* and *Karma*. In that context there is no deliberation on *Brahma Vidyaa* at all, and this fact has been revealed in the *Bhaashya*. Therefore, it has been proved here that the theory that — '*Vidyaa is Phalaantara* (having a distinct or separate fruit), — has no scope here.

- (e) In the *Bhaashya* on *Sootra* (3-4-13): '*Adhyayanamaatravataha*' — it is stated: " '*Aachaaryakulaad Vedamadheetya*' — (Chh.) — *Ityatraadhyayanamaatrasya Shravanaad Adhyayanamaatravata Eva Karmavidhirityadhyavasyaamaha;....Yathaa Cha Na Kratwantarajnaanam Kratwantaraadhikaarena Apekshyate Evametadapi Drashtavyamiti.*'

Its gist: It is established here that although for *Karma* both *Adhyayana* and *Vedarthajnaana* (knowledge of the meaning of the *Vedic* text) are necessary, because the word '*Adheetya*' is used, it implies only that for *Karma* sufficient study of the *Vedas* and the knowledge engendered by it may enhance the qualification for *Karma* only, but it does not at all imply that for *Karmaadhikaara* (proper qualification to perform a particular *Karma*) the *Aatma Jnaana* (Self-Knowledge) which is *Upanishad* (known only from the knowledge taught by the *Upanishads*) is not essential whatsoever.

The deliberation upon the sentence — '*Yadyapi Buddhi-poorvakaaree*' explained in the *Adhyaasa Bhaashya* must be ruminated over here in this context. *Aatma Jnaana* is not only of any use for *Karma* but also is opposed to the *Adhikaara* (qualification) for performing *Karma*; this fact is brought out in bold relief here.

- (f) In the *Bhaashya* on *Sootra* (3-4-14): '*Stutaye Anumatirvaa*' — it is clarified that — "Although a *Jnaani* is performing his duties

(or discharging his responsibilities) as long as he lives. there will be no *Karmalepa* (taint of any *Karma*) and not that to *Karma* necessarily *Aatma Jnaana* should be an accessory or be subservient always”.

- (g) The *Bhaashya* on *Sootra* (3-4-15): “*Karmakaarena Chalke*” — says: “*Apl Chalke Vidwaamsaha Pratyaksheekritavidyaaphalaaha Santastadavashtambhaat Phalaantarasaadhaneshu Prajaadishu Prayojanaabhaavam Paraamrishanti..... 'Etaddha Sma Val.... Naapl Tadvishayaayaaha Phalashruterayatharthatwam Vaa Shakyamaashrayitum.*”

Its purport: When the *Jnaanis* attain the Intuitive experience as a result of *Jnaana*, they do not need *Yajna*, *Daana* etc. any more. The fruit of *Jnaana* is to be attained here and now; while for *Karma* the fruit accrues in due course of time. It being so, dogmatic theories like — (i) both these are together responsible for *Moaksha*: (ii) *Jnaana* is *Anga* for *Karma*: (iii) those *Shrutis* which mention the *Phala* for *Jnaana* are *Arthavaada* (meant for eulogising *Jnaana* but not giving them any predominance over *Karma*)— can never be established to be true. This is the genuine purport of the *Bhaashya* excerpt.

- (h) In the *Bhaashya* on *Sootra* (3-4-17): “*Oordhwaretaskas Cha Shabde Hi*” — it is stated that — ‘Even to *Oordhwaretaskas* who are not *Grihastas* (householders) — meaning, the other three *Ashrama* people, viz. *Nalshatika* (strict) *Brahmacharis* (who have practised strictly abstemiousness and continence), *Vaanaprasthas* (people who retire to a forest or into solitude for diverting their complete attention towards spiritual truths) and *Sannyasins* (anchorites or monks who dedicate their life in search of Self-Knowledge alone), the *Shrutis* recommend *Brahma Vidyopadesha*. In fact, for these people *Karmas* like *Agnihoatra* etc. of the householders are not at all stipulated. For this reason alone, *Brahma Vidyaa* is not *Karmashesha*.

104. Q: With regard to *Paarivraajyaashrama* (the fourth stage of an individual's private life called *Sannyasa Aashrama* in which, according to the *Shrutis* and *Smritis*, he should take to a wandering monk's life) what is the *Siddhaanta* propounded by *Shri Baadaraayana*? How can it be proper to say that an *Aashrama* (stage of life) which gives up *Karmas* stipulated by way of injunctions in the *Vedas* (*Vedavihita Karmas*) is in accordance with, and acceptable to, the *Shrutis*?

A: In *Chhaanadogya Upanishad* (2-23-1) sentence: “*Trayoa Dharma-skandhaaha*” and such other *Shruti* sentences the *Aashramas* like *Gaarhastya* (householdership), *Vaanaprasthya* (living in a forest in

solitude) etc. are elaborately described but not stipulated as injunctions. Although in the *Chhaandogya Gaarhashtha* is described, because of the reason that therein *Agnihoatra* or fire sacrifices are stipulated for a *Grihashtha*, that *Aashrama* itself should be accepted as *Shrutivihita*. This *prima facie* objection raised in *Sootra* (3-4-17) was taken up for discussion and on the strength of some other *Shrutis* like — “To one who has discarded *Agnihoatras* the sin or religious blemish of destroying vitality called ‘*Veerahatyadoasha*’” — the other *Aashramas* than *Gaarhashtha* have been condemned; hence there in that context it is stated that *Aashramaantaras* are not *Shrutisammata* (acceptable to the *Shrutis*). But —

- (a) In *Brihadaaranyaka* sentence — “*Brahmacharyaadeva Pravrajat*” — *Paarlvrājya* has been directly stipulated as an injunction. And in the *Chhaandogya Shrutī* statement — “*Trayoa Dharmaskandhaaha*” (*Chh.* 2-23-1), quoted above by the opponent, along with *Grihashthaashrama* alone the other three *Aashramas* are examined; therefore, because of the reason that these other three are stipulated along with *Gaarhashtha*, it amounts to saying that the other three *Aashramas* are also *Shrutivihita* alone.
- (b) In the *Bhaashya* on the *Sootra* (3-4-20): “*Vidhīrvāa Dhaaranavat*”, it has been stated that: “In a particular *Shrutī* sentence — “*Upārī Hī Devebhyoa Dhaarayati*”(?) — because a topic which is *Apoorva* (incomprehensible to the common intellect) is taught, we should acknowledge that herein a *Vidhi* has been stipulated; this contention of *Jaimini's Sootra* (3-4) propounds the above opinion. According to this *Poorva Meemaamsaa Sootra*, with regard to the *Shrutī* statement — “*Trayoa Dharmaskandhaaha*” — even though *Ekavaakyata Jnaana* (knowledge arising out of reconciling all apparent contradictions) is engendered, discarding such *Jnaana* we should imagine or infer the *Aashramaantara Vidhi* alone.

In the *Shrutī* sentence — “*Brahmasamsthōa(s)mritatwameti*” — because the *Parivraajaka* who is *Brahmasamstha* has been mentioned, we have to accept that *Paarlvrājya* is *Shrutivihita* alone. Because of the reason that here in this context after the three *Dharmaskandhas* have been examined the *Brahmasamstha* has been eulogised, that person cannot be surmised to be the *Vaanaprastha* as referred to in “*Tapa Eva Dviteeyaha*”. In fact, the *Dharmas* (spiritual disciplines) of the type of *Indriyasamyama* (strict control over senses) etc. cannot reasonably be included at all in the *Dharmas* of a *Vaanaprastha* whose very stage of life bristles with *Kaayaklesha* (physical torture). Further, the technical term of *Brahmasamstha*, meant for a *Yogaaroodha* (one who has ascended already the spiritual path of a *Mumukshu*, a *Sannyasin* completely dedicating his life for attaining Liberation) cannot be addressed to

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Grahashtaashramis, for, if those other three **Aashramis** (**Brahmacharis**, **Grahashtas** and **Vaanaprasthas**) give up their respective **Shaastravhita Karmas** or **Dharmas** they are likely to earn the demerit of **Pratyavaaya**.

But in the case of a **Sannyasin**; "**Brahmanishthatwameva Hi Tasya Shamadamaadyupabrimhita Swaashramavhita Karma;Brahmasamsthasya Karmaabhaavam Darshayanti.**" — (**Sootra Bhaashya** 3-4-20).

(c) "**Vidyate Eva Twaashramaantaravidhaayinee Shrutihi Pratyakshaa - 'Brahmacharyaadeva Pravrajat Grihaadwaa Vanaadwaa'**" — (**Jaabaala** 4) — **Iti;.....Brahmajnaanaparipaakaangatwaachha Paarivraajasya Naanadhikritavishayatvam.**"

"**Being Brahmasamstha** or engrossed, established in **Brahman** is the only **Dharma** for a **Sannyasin**" — say all the **Shrutis** and **Smritis**.

In the **Jaabaala Upanishad** **Paarivraajya** has been directly stipulated. The teaching that — '**Aashrama Karma** is subservient or secondary to the fruition or consummation of **Brahma Jnaana**' — is mentioned in **Jaabaala Upanishad** itself in **Mantra 5**. Therefore, it amounts to saying that **Paarivraajya** is recommended by the **Vedas**.

XIII. CONCLUSION

105. Q: Finally, what is the quintessence of the Upanishadic teachings?

A: Atman who is of the very essence of **Pure Consciousness** is alone (non-dually) the **Paramaarthasatya** (the **Absolute Reality**). In the **Vyavahaaric** realm the conglomerations of the body, the senses, the mind etc. which appear as if they are related to, or associated with, Him are **Anrita** (false appearances) only. Because we have not distinguished these two opposites of **Satyam** and **Anritam** and have not cognized their true natures, we have misconceived **Atman** to be of the forms of **Pramaatru**, **Kartru** and **Bhoaktru**; by virtue of **Avidyaa**, which is of the nature of misconceiving mutually **Atman** (the **Reality**) and **Anaatman** (the **Anrita** or false appearance) and consequently superimposing their respective **Dharmas** or intrinsic characteristics on each other, alone — (a) the cause-effect categories (concepts) appearing in the **Prameya Prapancha** (objective external world of duality); (b) the manifoldness of **Jeevaatmas**; (c) the mundane or empirical transactions of action, means of action and its fruit; (d) the dealings of the relevant time, space, causation concepts needed for all empirical transactions; (e) the **Shaastric** dealings of **Karmas** and **Upaasanas**, as also **Bandha** and

Moaksha — all these mundane transactions are appearing, and if we deliberate (Intuitively) upon the *Vedanta Vaakyas* it can be established indubitably that — “The non-dualism of *Atman* alone is the Ultimate Reality”; only such conclusions are drawn. Although *Vedanta Shaastra* propounds — (i) *Vedanta Shaastra Praamaanya* or validity and authority of the *Upanishadic* texts; (ii) the *Jijnaasaa* or desire for the knowledge of the purport or goal of these texts; (iii) the dawning or Intuition of the *Vidyaa* as a result of that *Jijnaasaa*; (iv) the empirical transaction that — ‘From that *Vidyaa* accrues the sublation or destruction of *Avidyaa* (nescience)’ — all of them are taught by way of a subtle device (*Upaaya*) exclusively for the purposes of spiritual instruction (*Upadesha*), utilizing the unique and traditional methodology of *Adhyaaroopa Apavaada Nyaaya*; but from the Absolute viewpoint (*Paramaarth Drishti*), in *Atman* (the Ultimate, Transcendental non-dual Reality) neither *Avidyaa* nor the transaction of its sublation or negation by means of *Vidyaa* exist in the least. Attaining the supreme Intuitive experience (*Anubhava*) of the type — “Everything is *Brahman* alone, non-dual *Atman* alone, and He alone am I” — we should all achieve this fulfilment of human existence (*Parama Purushaarth*). This alone is the quintessence of *Vedantic* spiritual teaching.

OM TAT SAT

All empirical sciences develop their own respective methodologies of explaining the laws of Nature and the ways as to how best those laws can be utilized or harnessed to provide better comforts and facilities to all humanity in various walks of life. Hence there are two distinct aspects

in their approach, one, which is profoundly theoretical and purely academic in character, while the other is highly practical and technological. The common run of laymen are more often than not totally ignorant or oblivious of the Laws and the principles delineated by immense treasures of human knowledge in those sciences, but all of them show immense proficiency in their products, gadgets and technological appliances.

It is accepted on all hands that only when the methods evolved by the scientists are totally in consonance with the Laws of Nature a worthwhile benefit accrues to everyone, and not otherwise. Similarly, unless and until the fundamental laws of Life (taken in its entirety) as expounded by the Vedantic spiritual science are comprehended in their true perspectives its students cannot hope to cash in on its true benefits. One such profound, fundamental law of vedanta is 'Adhivāsa' (misconception), which is at the root of all mundane dealings. And its subtle applications in this spiritual science are determined in 'brahmā-sūtras', which are an integral part of the system.

This handbook reveals many secrets about Adhivāsa hitherto unknown and suggests practical hints as to how best the sincere student can utilize this unique teaching to overcome the ills of mundane life.