



ĀTMABALA

2024 WEEK RESIDENTIAL

COVER

And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.

Book of Psalms, Psalm 1 verse 3

Constancy of knowledge of truth
is one of the important factors
which one ought to maintain.

Śrī Śāntānanda Sarasvatī, 1985

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OPENING ADDRESS

Anthony Renshaw

asato mā sadgamaya |
tamaso mā jyotirgamaya |
mṛtyormāmṛtaṁ gamaya |

We had this as a prayer at our week-long satsaṅga last year. This year, it's a prayer and a resolution – a resolution to move from that which is unreal to that which is real; to move from the darkness of delusion to bright illumination; to move from the time-bound realm of mortality to eternity.

Each line is a mantra. Together they are called 'pavamāna' mantras. *Pava* means 'being purified or flowing clear'. *Māna* is a wish or a purpose. These three mantras express a resolution to be purified, to flow clear:

From the unreal lead me to the real.
From darkness lead me to the light.
From death lead me to immortality.

Śaṅkara tells us that through the repetition of these mantras, we advance towards the realisation of our own innate divinity.¹ So this is our resolve, to advance towards the truth about our own Self.

As we advance towards the Self, we grow in strength and power. This is the power of the self, ātmabala and this is our theme for the week – the power of the self, ātmabala. Śrī Śāntānanda Sarasvatī referred to this when he said:

Reflection provides concentration, acute attention, strengthens memory and all this in return creates power of the self, ātmabala, which stabilises the individual on the way to liberation and facilitates the removal of impediments.²

'Bala' means power, strength, might, vigour, force, validity. Ātmabala is the energy of the Absolute showing itself as individual power, strength, might, vigour, force, and validity.

In 2016, Śrī Vāsudevānanda Sarasvatī spoke about Ātma śakti. Like 'bala', śakti is also translated as power. Ātma śakti is a different order of power. Ātma śakti is the pure energy of the Absolute Self. Śrī Vāsudevānanda described it as the invisible and indivisible energy that balances all the energies in the world. This is what he said:

Ātma śakti is not visible. It is not describable. It has to be experienced. It

has no divisions. It has no definitions. It is experienced from within.³

Ātma śakti is universal. It is the power of the Powerful, the manifest power of the Self. Indivisible, inexpressible, universal power. It balances and sustains all the worlds and all the beings in these worlds. It supports the upright body. It keeps the heart beating for a measured time. By its power, the lungs inhale and exhale, and air circulates around the globe. It keeps the planets in motion, the sun and the moon in balance, the stars in all their glory. It manifests the Self in all these multitudinous ways, form by form, many and infinite, for the sake of making the Self known.

Ātma śakti shows itself in the individual as individual power, strength, might, vigour, force, and validity, ātmabala. It stabilises the individual on the way to liberation and facilitates the removal of impediments.

When we experience an increase in energy, physically, emotionally or mentally, it is because we have moved closer to the Self, the source of all energy. Coming into proximity with the Self, we infuse some of that energy and we move from being powerless to being powerful; we move from weakness to strength; from frailty to might; from listlessness to vigour; from feeble to forceful; from invalidity to validity.

Śrī Śāntānanda Sarasvatī described this as follows:

Having understood and acquired the proximity of the Ātman the individual's reasoning is sharpened, feelings and attitudes become steady, power of execution of works increases, ability to resolve doubts becomes penetrating, and one acquires contentment.⁴

When we move towards the Self, we move towards the source of all energy, and its proximity infuses us with energy. To take one common example: some of us may have experienced feeling a bit miserable. A rare moment or two of mental darkness, not pitch black, twilight, a little bit of emotional glue. It hangs around and won't shift, but then it comes time to meditate. With a little resolve, we stay the course and meditate. When we rise from the meditation, we find ourselves in a better state. We've made a move towards the source of all energy, and somehow or another, we feel the influx of that energy. A second example is before a week-long satsaṅga, it might take a bit of effort to get here. But we make the effort and here we are, and there's a rise in energy.

Even a slight move towards the Self increases our energy. In 1977, Mr MacLaren began a group meeting as follows. Just listen as it's read and follow his directions.

Being the supreme Ātman in human form, we should behave accordingly. Our form is our function in the great universe. So, first, let us sit in that human position with the spine straight and the head erect; and let us find

that fine balance which is rock-like and easy ...

Immediately we find this balanced position, everything becomes brighter, and we are aware of my Self.⁵

With the slightest of movements towards the Self, a 'mysterious power' shows itself. That's what Śaṅkara calls it, śakti-viśeṣaṃ,⁶ a 'mysterious power'. It has sovereignty, aiśvarya, over everything.⁷ The Upaniṣad calls it 'that which is the root of the tree of the world: that which is śukra – pure, bright, resplendent – the light of consciousness.'⁸

Coming into its proximity, the individual feels stronger, less frail, more vigorous, more forceful, and purposeful. We feel a greater sense of validity. This is the power of the self, ātmabala.

In the *Conversations*, Śrī Śāntānanda Sarasvatī explains that ātmabala shows itself in 'constancy in expressions, acuteness of attention, elimination of worries, elimination of confusion and rise of pure saṅkalpa;' we act 'with confidence and in righteousness without losing the essence;' ⁹ there is refinement and steadfastness; whatever we take into our hand, 'we produce everything refined, better and almost divine'. ¹⁰

This is what we want: to be constant in what we feel, think, say and do; to be attentive to the play of life; to be free of worries and confusion; to be confident and refined and steadfast. In the realm of action, to produce everything refined, better and almost divine.

These are the hallmarks of ātmabala. Śrī Śāntānanda Sarasvatī tells us that ātmabala 'stabilises the individual on the way to liberation and facilitates the removal of impediments'. He says that it is created through concentration, acute attention, and strength of memory. The practice of reflection provides these three and all this in return creates power of the self, ātmabala.

Ātmabala is created. This week, we shall be reflecting on a magnificent definition of the Absolute from the Taittirīya Upaniṣad. Some of us may have reflected on this before, and it will be valuable to do so again. The truth of the statement has not changed but our appreciation has changed.

So, reflection on this magnificent definition will provide concentration, acute attention, strength of memory. These three are the provisions of cintana – concentration, acute attention, and strength of memory. All this in return creates power of the self, ātmabala.

We can consider each of the three provisions in turn. First is concentration.

Concentration is dhāraṇā. The word ‘concentrate’ is usually thought of as a verb, an action, a muscular effort to fix the attention on something. But it’s also a noun. A concentrate is something where anything excess is removed, like concentrated orange juice, where the excess water has been removed. Or concentrated heavy minerals after unnecessary rocks are reduced. Concentration is the removal of anything ancillary to that upon which we’re concentrating. And it’s an act of devotion. Our love is for the essence, nothing else.

In the Taittirīya Upaniṣad, Swami Gambhirananda translates dhāraṇā as ‘cherishing’, which is quite lovely. One of the meanings in the Monier Williams dictionary is ‘the act of holding, bearing, supporting, maintaining’. Dhāraṇā, concentration, is cherishing, loving, holding, supporting. And that which is cherished, loved, held and supported is the essence, the Self itself. When we concentrate, we collect ourselves, we draw back, we cherish ourselves.

So, throughout the week, in meditation, cherish the mantra; in action, cherish the very place where the work is taking place; in reflection, cherish the Self.

The second aspect is one-pointed attention, ekāgratā. Monier-Williams gives the meaning ‘intentness in the pursuit of one object: close and undisturbed attention’. Throughout the *Conversations*, the importance of focussed attention in clearing impediments is spoken of again and again. When we cherish the Self, the essence, there is a natural intentness in the pursuit of that one thing. So, throughout the week: in meditation, ekāgratā, close and undisturbed attention on the mantra; in action, ekāgratā on the very point where the work is taking place; in reflection, ekāgratā on the Self.

And the third aspect is strength of memory, smṛti. The dictionary translates smṛti as remembrance, thinking of or upon. Patañjali defines smṛti as ‘not letting slip away an object experienced’.¹¹ So, don’t let what we know slip away: remember our own experience of the Self; remember what the scriptures say, remember what the Teacher says. In meditation, remember the Teacher’s directions; in action, remember that I do nothing whatsoever; in reflection, remember the Self.

We began with three mantras from the Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad. Śrī Śāntānanda Sarasvatī describes them as a plea:

... to be led from untruth to truth, from darkness to light and from death to immortality ... All that is asked for is the realisation of the Self, the memory of the Self.

This is our plea. All that we ask for is the realisation of the Self, the memory of the Self. That’s all we’re asking for. It’s a desire – a pure desire – to be closer to the Self,

to realise the Self. 'I just want to be closer to the Self.' As the desire matures, it becomes a pure saṅkalpa, a resolution that 'I shall remember the Self'.

Śrī Śāntānanda Sarasvatī's commentary on the three mantras begins with a description of what happens when this doesn't happen. This is what he says:

When the memory of the Self is lost or forgotten then association with the other increases.

What is 'the other'?

How many 'others' are in the room now? How often do we meet 'others'? How often do we exchange pleasantries with 'others'? How much of our engagement in the world is with 'other'? The Self is one, not many. There is no 'other'. There is only the Self.

Śrī Śāntānanda Sarasvatī goes on:

When the memory of the Self is lost or forgotten then association with the other increases. It is this other which in company creates all multifarious forms of pleasure, pain, suffering and sickness. In the company of the Self, there is only blissfulness which must be experienced in all phases of one's life ... To bring people back to the Self one needs Satsaṅga where the true nature of the human being is explained. The proper place of the other is also exposed. The good company helps all to remember the Self and unite the play of the creation with bliss.¹²

So, when we perceive 'other', the memory of the Self has been lost or forgotten. We have Satsaṅga to help us remember. This is 'where the true nature of the human being is explained, and the proper place of the other is also exposed.'

What is the 'proper place of the other'? In this moving realm of everyday existence, there are always, as it were, 'others'. This world is limited in time and space, a world of objects governed by the gunas. The Self, however, is unlimited by time, space and objects. With the memory of this unlimited Self, there is a season to every object in the world, and a time to every purpose under the heaven, and everything has its proper place. With memory of the Self, there can be companionship with the Self and mastery of the world simultaneously.

Śrī Śāntānanda Sarasvatī finishes by saying 'The good company helps all to remember the Self and unite the play of the creation with bliss.'

Tuesday September 24 marks the anniversary of the birth of the School's Founder, Mr Leon MacLaren. He was born in 1910, and he disappeared 30 years ago, in 1994. For the last few months, I've been studying the material he wrote ten years after he

first met with Śrī Śāntānanda Sarasvatī in 1965. In 1975, he started encouraging students to train the manas to see every other human being as a manifestation of my Self. It's a way of training the manas not to see 'other'.

How do we usually go about training the manas? To take a simple example: if we're studying a language, say Sanskrit, how do we train the manas? Repetition is necessary – it strengthens memory. Keeping the attention focussed and single-pointed during study is most important, not being distracted. Above all else, concentration. Cherishing Sanskrit makes the effort light and easy.

All these are important for training manas in any field, and the same applies to training the manas to see every other human being as a manifestation of myself. The specific practice devised by Mr MacLaren was this, word-for-word from his material:

Upon meeting anyone, or upon entering into a room, or upon anyone entering the room where one is, or upon anyone turning to speak to one, upon any meeting, fall still, come to Myself, and let the senses work. This is the way to greet the Self in any form, with the fulness of attention.¹³

When manas is still, and attention is full, the senses work cleanly. Instead of seeing things as they are not, manas sees things as they are. Instead of seeing 'other', we begin to see the Self in everyone we meet. The mind has to be still, and then the fullness of attention, real connection with the senses, so that we see the person in front of us without any thought of 'other'. It's a seeing which is crystal-clear, pristine, without any generated content.

Some of us will remember an arduous practice we had of not letting the mind entertain the idea of other. Mr MacLaren's direction is a bit simpler. We don't have to stop the mind doing anything or replace one thought with another. All we have to do upon meeting anyone, is to fall still, come to my Self, and let the senses work. We don't have to scare people off by intently looking for the Self in them. Just be natural about it.

The mind will fall still with repeated practice. In the stillness there is memory of my Self, and memory becomes strong with repeated practice; the attention flows naturally and easily and becomes single-pointed on the Self. All of this starts with cherishing the Self, dhāraṇā.

Another practical direction from Mr MacLaren was to remember that the entire creation and its infinitely diverse activities is a single, vast activity. What Mr. MacLaren said was this:

This whole glorious creation is one great activity, It is a single activity,

whole and entire, manifesting the will of the Absolute. Every activity which we may observe or experience is just a facet of this mighty action.

The first effect of acknowledging this is that the heart opens. We surrender our own little world. And it certainly frees us from attachment to our own activities.

So, the whole glorious creation is one great activity. It is a single activity, whole and entire, manifesting the will of the Absolute. Every activity which we may observe or experience is just a facet of this mighty action.

Now, in one way or another, all we have been speaking about is remembering the truth about my Self, realising the truth about my Self.

This Satsaṅga will provide the practice of cintana; cintana provides concentration, acute attention, and strength of memory. 'All this in return creates power of the self, ātmabala, which stabilises the individual on the way to liberation and facilitates the removal of impediments.'

May we be powerful rather than powerless; may we be strong, not weak; may we be mighty rather than frail; may we be vigorous; may we be forceful; may our lives be valid rather than invalid.

This is our prayer. This is our resolution.

ĀTMABALA & ĀTMA ŚAKTI

COUNSEL FROM THE TEACHER

1985 6.1 Question: Your Holiness has given general instructions about the work of the school towards liberation. Your Holiness did not specifically mention reflection. Would Your Holiness say how this fits in with the other things of which Your Holiness spoke?

Answer: Constancy of knowledge of truth is one of the important factors which one ought to maintain. If there is no constancy of knowledge while one is engaged in the spiritual work of liberation or in worldly activities, the knowledge gets lost when most needed. Thus, all the help given by the scriptures, śruti, smṛti and mahāpuruṣa goes out of vision and becomes useless. Reflection provides concentration, acute attention, strengthens memory and all this in return creates power of the Self, ātmabala, which stabilises the individual on the way to liberation and facilitates the removal of impediments.

Śravaṇam, hearing, comes before reflection. It does not take a long time to hear what mahāpuruṣa says or what the scriptures say. Having heard, the knowledge has to be assimilated into one's being, which can be done through reflection and this must necessarily take a longer time.

Although reflection is not meditation, yet it is very similar to it. Just as one can eat one's meal in about twenty minutes and then allow a fairly long time to digest it, so that it may be transformed into the proper elements to form one's being on the physical level, and provide energy for activities, so reflection is like the process of digestion. It establishes the concept heard and provides power of the Self (*ātmabala*) to act accordingly. This helps, not only on the spiritual way of liberation, but gives more vigour, resolution and steadfastness in dealing with the world.¹⁴

ĀTMA ŚAKTI

2016 2.10 Question: In the world today there are many violent forces. Yesterday there was an act of terrorism in Pakistan. Is there some way that this śakti can be utilized to meet and overcome or dissolve these terrible forces?

Answer: The order of this creation has ups and downs, which goes on. To balance this, Īśvara at times increases āsurī śakti and at times daivī śakti. When in daivī śakti there is an excess of dambha, then to suppress that, Īśvara increases āsurī śakti. To suppress āsurī śakti He increases daivī śakti through His special nature, - as a form of a mahāpuruṣa, or a form of an incarnation. He comes and suppresses the āsurī śakti and balances it. That is why it looks like up and down, but it is nothing except the play of Īśvara.

When the Ātma śakti increases then the āsurī śakti and daivī śakti both remain in an even state. India has Ātma śakti, and always along with that, daivī śakti. And those who have āsurī śakti, to suppress that, daivī śakti is needed. With there being Ātma śakti, both are balanced.

2016 2.11 Question: Would His Holiness say more about the Ātma śakti? The nature of that śakti? How this Ātma śakti can be strengthened in us?

Answer: Ātma śakti is not visible. It is not describable. It has to be experienced. It has no divisions. It has no definitions. It is experienced from within. It is not visible. When daivī śakti increases, and as it continues to increase, it has its effect on āsurī śakti, controlling it. Above that is Ātma śakti which balances both. Reaching that then nothing remains. While in us daivī śakti and āsurī śakti are working, until then we are able to talk through speech, act through the body. Now, when both śakti become balanced, Ātma śakti will rise, then we call that adhyātma, then we call that Ātma. That is adhikaraṇa. In that, in which all is balanced, we call that Ātma, that is adhyātma, that is called Ātma śakti.

2016 2.12 Question: That sounds most powerful in the best sense of the word.

Translator struggles to communicate precise words: 'Mr Lambie says that sounds most marvellous, . incredible, ... most powerful. I cannot find the words Mr Lambie wishes to express.'

Answer: That word does not have any form, it cannot be voiced.

te dhyāna-yogānugatā apaśyan devātma-śaktiṃ sva-guṇair nigūḍhām |
yaḥ kāraṇāni nikhilāni tāni kālātma-yuktāny adhiṣṭhaty ekaḥ || 1.3 ||

- 1.3. By practising the yoga of meditation they realised the power of the Deity Himself, hidden by its own effects, – the Lord who, alone, rules all those sources associated with (i.e. including) Time and the individual soul.

FROM ŚAṆKARĀCĀRYA COMMENTARY: ... What is the characteristic of Brahman which is not the cause? With regard to this the answer is, It is neither the cause nor the not-cause; neither is It both nor is It different from both; neither is It the efficient cause nor the material cause, nor both. What is stated is this: The nondual supreme Self cannot in Itself be the cause, be it material or efficient. The Upaniṣad, after presenting that very factor as the source, by virtue of which as the limiting adjunct It (Brahman) becomes the cause etc., shows it as the source by singling it out in the text, 'the power of the Deity Himself,' etc.

They realised as the source the *ātma-śaktiṃ*, the power, identical with Himself –not independent, not free and separate like the Nature imagined by the Sāṅkhyas, – of the *deva*, Deity, endowed with effulgence etc., the Lord of Māyā, the supreme Lord, the supreme Self ...

They realised the *śaktiṃ*, power, of That which is by nature effulgent (*devātma*), which is of the nature of radiance, which is the Light of lights; (the power) which belongs to the supreme Self that is by nature solid homogeneous Consciousness, and which is concerned with the regulation of creation, preservation and destruction of the universe. (The power) which is *nigūḍhām*, hidden; *svaguṇaiḥ*, by omniscience, omnipotence, etc. that are its own particular forms; (hidden) i.e. not realised in its true nature as the power as such, on account of its existing in those particular forms. In keeping with this the Upaniṣad will reveal that this power cannot be realised through any other means of knowledge:

He has neither a body nor any organ; none is seen to be either equal or superior to Him. His supreme power (*parāśya śakti*) is heard of as diverse, indeed, and it consists of the spontaneous act of knowing and the act of control (6.8).¹⁵

DEFINITION OF THE ABSOLUTE

WHAT IS BRAHMAN?

TAITTIRIYA UPANIṢAD 2.1.1 – GRAMMAR & ETYMOLOGY

THE TEACHER: HOW TO REFLECT ON TAIT. 2.1.1

WHAT IS BRAHMAN?

The subject of our inquiry is Brahman. A modern philosopher has described Brahman this way:

Brahman, the One, is a state of being. It is not a 'He' nor a 'She', a personal being; nor is it an 'It', an impersonal concept. Brahman is that state which is when all subject/ object distinctions are obliterated. Brahman is ultimately a name for the experience of the timeless plenitude of being.¹⁶

The Taittirīya Upaniṣad defines Brhamna in three words, 'satyam jñānam anantam'. The entire sentence is 'satyam jñānam anantam brahma.' Śaṅkarācārya describes this as a Ṛg mantra, a concentrated expression of true knowledge. His commentary on this mantra is a master-key to knowledge of Brahman.

Śaṅkarācārya begins by explaining that Brahman '... is called Brahman because of (the etymological sense of) *br̥hat-tamatva*, being the greatest.'¹⁷

The 'etymological sense' refers to the origin of words, where they come from. The word 'brahman' comes from the root, *br̥h* (pronounced 'brih'). It means 'to grow great or strong, to increase'. This root word becomes *br̥hat* (pronounced 'brihat'), meaning 'great, vast, immense'. The suffix *-tamatva* is the superlative form, meaning 'greatest'. Brahman signifies something which is absolutely the greatest, something absolutely vast and immense.

There are countless descriptions of Brahman in *The Conversations*. The following are but a few:

Brahman is the 'unmeasured generating centre of all forces of knowledge or bliss';¹⁸ 'one, eternal and unchanging';¹⁹ 'ever-present' and 'before, during and after creation';²⁰ 'limitless, eternal consciousness';²¹ and that which 'one can never know for a final totality'.²²

In his commentary on the Taittirīya Upaniṣad Śaṅkarācārya offers three reasons for understanding this Ṛg mantra. The central one, the most important, is this:

...to make that very Brahman, whose definition is going to be stated, realisable specifically as non-different from one's own indwelling Self.²³

सत्यं ज्ञानमनन्तं ब्रह्म ॥

SATYAM JÑĀNAM ANANTAM BRAHMA

GRAMMAR & ETYMOLOGY

“One can reflect on each of these three aspects as satyam brahma, jñānam brahma and anantam brahma.” (Vol. 3, p. 194²⁴)

सत्यम्

satyam

satya 1135/3 **Truth, reality, existence**

- *sat* 1134/2 being, existing, occurring
- *√as* 117/1 to be, live, exist
– in *bhū* (760/3), becoming, being

ज्ञानम्

jñānam

jñāna 426/1 **Knowledge**

- *√jñā* 425/2 to perceive, understand, experience, know
– in *avabodhane*; in informing, teaching

अनन्तम्

anantam

ananta 25/1 **Infinite, unlimited, endless**

- *an* (not) +
- *anta* (end, limit)

ब्रह्म

brahma

brahma 737/3 **Brahman**

- *√br̥h* 53/3 to grow great or strong, increase
– in *vṛddhi*, in growth, welfare, happiness

1985 2.5

Take a quotation of an Upaniṣad such as satyaṃ jñānam anantam brahma. It indicates that Brahman is Truth, Knowledge and Eternal Existence without end. One can reflect on each of these three aspects as satyam brahma, jñānam brahma and anantam brahma.

Truth is that which remains constant in all the aspects of time – past, present and future. Brahman is the treasury of all knowledge which is inexhaustible, known or yet-to-be-known as new knowledge. Anantam is that existence which has no beginning and no end, which is full and eternal. Reflection brings to light the inner unity of satyam, jñānam, anantam and Brahman. Reflection can open new visions of seeing the unity which holds the multifarious creation without affecting the underlying substance, just as the moving pictures on the screen do not colour the screen in reality.

1999 1.2

The reality of the Brahman is the truth, and truth has been defined as ‘satyam jñānam anantam’. This Brahman is the Truth and this Brahman is the Consciousness and it is also Limitless or Eternal; one can explore as much as one can, and it operates through the laws which one can see through the creation. One can visualize the Brahman as if:

satyataḥ imāni bhūtāni
satyena jātāni jīvanti
satyam prayantyabhisamviśanti
satyam brahma

‘The genesis of all beings is from truth, and having originated from truth, they have their existence in truth, they have life in truth and they reestablish in truth again at the end of the creation.’²⁵

UNDERSTANDING THE THREE WORDS OF THE DEFINITION

SATYA

- a. Śaṅkara's explanation from his Commentary
- b. Explanations from the Teacher
- c. Ten Statements for Reflection

JÑĀNA

- a. Śaṅkara's explanation from his Commentary
- b. Explanations from the Teacher
- c. Ten Statements for Reflection

ANANTA

- a. Śaṅkara's explanation from his Commentary
- b. Explanations from the Teacher
- c. Ten Statements for Reflection

A. ŚAÑKARA'S EXPLANATION FROM HIS COMMENTARY

... As for satya, a thing is said to be satya, true, when it does not change the nature that is ascertained to be its own; and a thing is said to be unreal when it changes the nature that is ascertained to be its own. Hence a mutable thing is unreal, for in the text, 'All transformation has speech as its basis and it is name only. Earth as such is the reality.' (Ch. VI. i. 4), it has been emphasised that, that alone is true that exists (Ch. VI. ii. 1). So the phrase satyam brahma (Brahman is truth) distinguishes Brahman from mutable things.

... pure existence is truth, according to another Vedic text, 'That is truth' (Ch. VI. viii. 7).²⁶

B. EXPLANATIONS FROM THE TEACHER

Note: The 2024 Tradition booklet deals with satya as 'truth'. The following passages and statements describe satya as 'reality' and 'existence'.

Passage 1

The basic concept of pure Advaita is enshrined in one of the sayings of Sri Śaṅkarācārya:

Brahma satyam jaganmithyā jīvo brahmaiva nāparah

'The Brahman exists; the world is illusion; there is no difference between the jīva and the Brahman.'²⁷

When it is simply said that the Brahman exists, it means that the Brahman exists without the help of anyone. This makes It the independent element in the creation. It exists by Itself, and, because It is not dependent on anyone else, It is eternal and all-powerful.

The world is said to be an illusion, which does not mean that it does not exist. It has existence as in time and space, but it has no independent existence. Its existence depends on the Brahman and, because it is dependent, it is not Absolute and cannot exist all the time. It comes into being and gets dissolved; and its coming into being and subsequent dissolution depend on the Brahman. This is why the world is said to be illusion.

The third element of the statement claims that there is no difference between jīva and Brahman. Difference between the jīva and the Brahman is experienced due to upādhi.

Upādhi is the recognition of certain qualities at a certain stage; for example householder, van-driver, Bachelor of Philosophy, Bachelor of Science, etcetera. These are qualifications.

This creates the difference, and the work of the Advaita philosophy is to allow people to understand that although there is no factual difference between the jīva and the Brahman there are these upādhis and one has to transcend these; and the removal of these upādhis would take place through the true knowledge and understanding.

When the unity and oneness of the jīva and Brahman is fully recognised, then the upādhis disappear. For example, there are numerous pots of different sizes, shapes and colours, but the material substance is only clay, which is common to all.

Although the ocean is one, yet one sees waves of different types and magnitude, foam etcetera on its surface; but behind all these phenomena the ocean is materially the same. Whereas the ocean remains the same, other phenomena come and go.

Similarly, the Brahman is like the ocean on which jīvas emerge and merge like waves of different magnitudes and duration; and this will go on without end.

But a person of understanding sees the ocean for the waves and realises the Advaita of jīva and Brahman.²⁸

Passage 2

The experience of existence or presence which one has is all pervading and ever present. Remembering is evoked according to individual's saṃskāra. The worldly activities cause the consciousness of separation from that presence. In reality the presence is all pervading and everlasting. At moments when this presence is experienced in the antaḥkaraṇa, the initial experience is the existence of the Self, oneself. When engaged in the worldly activity, it is experienced in conjunction with manas, buddhi and all senses of knowledge and action in various forms, as who am I, what I have to do, why, where, when and how I have to engage in activity. With the appearance of these notions the memory of that ever-presence becomes hazy. Unless the mind is withdrawn totally from external engagements the remembering cannot be clear and full. The hazy view of the presence of the Self is, therefore, due to vikṣepa. The antidote to vikṣepa is meditation. Therefore, I must come out of vikṣepa sometime every day. If this return to the all-pervading and everlasting presence is not conducted then the memory would become more hazy. In general people do manage most of their worldly affairs with the co-operation of senses and mind, but without realising that all energy for every type of activity comes from that presence. They recharge their energy only through rest and sleep, which is not enough for creative spiritual life. In order to help in this situation, meditation is very necessary. For example, wells or ponds become very dry when water is withdrawn during the day, but during the restful night they accumulate enough water from within the samaṣṭi aspect of the land. The meditation is the conscious approach to unite with the samaṣṭi presence which is the ultimate source of conscious energy and it is inexhaustible. Meditation is not done as an activity to achieve this, but it happens sometime during that period.²⁹

C. TEN STATEMENTS FROM THE TEACHER FOR REFLECTION

NOTE: For Satya as 'truth', see the 2024 Tradition booklet. The following statements relate to Satya as 'reality' and 'existence'.

1. Hammerings of pain and pleasure, victory and defeat, my wisdom and my property are experienced only in ahaṅkāra (personal identification) but if one could give them up for the reality of the never changing Aham, then one would witness everything without being affected by it.³⁰
2. [*Things made of gold*] may have sentimental value for you, but in reality, only gold is valuable.³¹
3. Relative existence accepts multiplicity of forms and agencies manifesting through individuals in space and time, but ultimately, they derive their existence through the absolute force, which exists by itself.³²
4. All that seems is Prakṛti, but in reality it is the same everywhere.³³
5. Individuals arise from universals and universals are emanations of the single Ātman.³⁴
6. No individual ever doubts their own existence. Statements like 'I am not' are impossible.³⁵
7. When it is said that 'atmaivedaṃ sarvaṃ' ('the Self indeed is all this') then it implies that all things manifest and visible or not visible, remote and close, have their existence in the Ātman.³⁶
8. The real Self, the sovereign, the master, the Absolute, whose existence is beyond doubt expresses Itself as aham (I am).³⁷
9. The reality is Brahman, the one, eternal and unchanging; and all that you call creation is superimposition and therefore multifarious, transitory and ever changing.³⁸
10. The reality remains one immutable consciousness, the witness, and one and one alone.³⁹

A. ŚAṆKARA'S EXPLANATION FROM HIS COMMENTARY

... Jñāna means knowledge, consciousness. The word jñāna conveys the abstract notion of the verb 'to know'; and being an attribute of Brahman along with truth and infinitude, it does not indicate the agent of knowing. If Brahman be the agent of knowing, truth and infinitude cannot justly be attributed to It. For as the agent of knowing, It becomes changeful; and, as such, how can It be true and infinite?

... Therefore the word *jñāna* (knowledge), having been used adjectivally along with truth and infinitude, is derived in the cognate sense of the verb, and it is used to form the phrase, *jñānam brahma* (Brahman is knowledge), in order to rule out (from Brahman) any relationship between noun and verb as that of an agent etc., as also for denying non-consciousness like that of earth etc. ⁴⁰

B. EXPLANATIONS FROM THE TEACHER

Passage 1

Question: Your Holiness has given the example of the citta reflecting the whole room. I should like to ask if the citta is limited or not?

Answer: The Ātman within and without is all knowledge and eternally present. In the individual, the knowledge is not given, but aroused by the act of experience.

Citta by itself does not have any force at all, but it gets its force from the light of the Ātman. If citta is pure and clear, then it could take in all possible knowledge available in that moment. If citta is not imprinted and marked by previous events, then it could still receive further knowledge in its purity. Otherwise the marked citta will receive further knowledge deformed by the mark.

One may take the electricity supply as an example. A light bulb would have a certain capacity of measured wattage to reflect its limited light. This is connected to a meter in the house which is also designed to take a certain measured load of electrical power for distribution for general use in the household. The meter receives power from the city power-house and the power-house receives its supply from the generating centre.

Similarly, on the universal scale, the Brahman is the unmeasured generating centre of all forces of knowledge or bliss, which are regulated through measured meters like Brahmā, Viṣṇu, gods, goddesses, man, beast, earth, water, fire etc. Some meters are large while others are small, but they all draw their measured power from the unmeasured and unmetered source which is Absolute. Each meter would respond within its own limit. The earth responds by the generation of seeds, which is also the act of consciousness working through it. In the case of man, if the citta is made clear and transparent and a direct connection is established with the generating centre, then it could reflect all consciousness and bliss.⁴¹

Passage 2

Knowledge of Truth or the Absolute is only the primary knowledge which one hears from someone or reads in a book. This is fairly good compared to confused and mixed up ideas. But this is the outward form of real knowledge.

Having had information and a map of the routes leading to the sacred temple of Badrinath, one would get a fair idea of mileage, stopping stations and so on. But of what use is this? The pleasure of pilgrimage, the possibility of transformation, evolution of humility at the foot of the great Himalayas is not possible, unless one treads over the road leading to it. This is experience.

In experience, knowledge is transformed into being. This is a subtler state when words actually become the man, for then he starts to communicate from being, the real substance, consciousness Itself.⁴²

C. TEN STATEMENTS FROM THE TEACHER FOR REFLECTION

1. All luminary bodies shine in darkness according to the measure of brilliance which they inherit, but everything in this universe is held by consciousness, which knows no darkness.⁴³
2. The ultimate mark and use of knowledge of the Self is in efficiency and uniqueness of action, detachment in its origin and completion while emotionally bound to nothing.⁴⁴
3. The work of knowledge is to 'let there be light' and in light all is good.⁴⁵
4. The real waking state is the state of consciousness in which one sees things as they are.⁴⁶
5. The world seen by the realised man experiences only one identity, the limitless ocean of consciousness as Aham.⁴⁷
6. Cognition of truth, which really exists, is the jñāna which dispels duality for ever.⁴⁸
7. Knowledge is the first form of Brahman.⁴⁹
8. The light of consciousness falls on *buddhi* as pure *Aham*.⁵⁰
9. Fullness of knowledge is bliss, the sense of oneness in full, usually satisfaction in oneself.⁵¹
10. The substance of creation is consciousness.⁵²

A. FROM ŚAṆKARĀCĀRYA'S COMMENTARY

... there are three kinds of infinitude (*anantam*) – from the standpoint of space (*deśa*), time (*kāla*), and objects (*vastu*). To illustrate: The sky is unlimited from the point of view of space, for it is not limited in space. But the sky is not infinite as regards time or as regards (other) objects. Why? Since it is a product. Brahman is not thus limited in time like the sky, since It is not a product. For, a created thing is circumscribed by time, but Brahman is not created. Hence It is infinite from the point of view of time as well.

... How, again, is established Its infinitude from the point of view of objects? Since It is non-different from everything. A thing that is different acts as a limitation to another. Indeed, when the intellect gets occupied with something, it becomes detached from something else

... Brahman, then, is spatially infinite, being the cause of space etc. For space is known to be spatially infinite; and Brahman is the cause of that space. Hence it is proved that the Self is spatially infinite. Indeed, no all-pervading thing is seen in this world to originate from anything that is not so. Hence the spatial infinitude of Brahman is absolute. Similarly, temporally, too, Brahman's infinitude is absolute, since Brahman is not a product. And because there is nothing different from Brahman, It is infinite substantially as well. Hence Its reality is absolute.⁵³

B. EXPLANATIONS FROM THE TEACHER

Passage 1

For the wise and disciplined, no object or person seems constant and attractive, for they are all small and insignificant for the Self, which is limitless.

Establishment of identity arises from identification with something else. The Self or the Brahman is already there with all its beauty and glory and bliss. It is limitless and seeks no identification spatially or temporally. Identification takes place in space and time. It is not possible to locate the limitless or reduce the eternal into temporal. The moment this is supposed to be done in ignorance, an identity is born. The world is here and now spatially and temporally and one has to live in it and with it. If one can, under the light of true knowledge, live without attachment in simplicity, then identity can be avoided. The sense of accomplishment, pride of being the doer brings in the identifications of being happy at success and sorry at failure.

The fact is that the Self is blissful by its own nature. Bliss is not a product of action and its result. Like Brahman if one can think and accept oneself as alone and yet limitless, then the one without a second would have no cause to identify with anyone since there is none else.⁵⁴

Passage 2

Question: It is very plain that the ordinary knowledge which people have is limited and that individuals have different ways of receiving the knowledge. This is also very obvious, but one just gets a hint that there is something that is unlimited, is beyond these limits, which in its own way is equally obvious. It would be a great help to know this. Is there something equally evident but limitless?

Answer: The limitless is pre-eminent. It is existing before any limited thing comes into existence. All knowledge from within and without arises in the limitless. We seem to have forgotten this fact although it is always with us, and because of this forgetting all limited knowledge in the antahkaraṇa comes into existence. Through buddhi, which is the only instrument for reasoning, ultimate reasoning, that is viveka, can provide the facility to regain the forgotten experience of the limitless. It is indicated by a word such as Self-realisation, which is not a piece of limited knowledge. Once this knowledge or experience is known the knowledge of having forgotten is lost. For example, when one needs to cross a river, one takes to a boat. Having reached the other side, the boat is left behind. No one carries the boat on his

shoulder. The same thing happens with knowledge of the limitless and once this has dawned then the operation and the means of operation is of no use. It is simply dropped away. The same lesson comes through the example of a thorn in the foot. One takes another thorn to remove the broken thorn in the foot and then throws both of them away.

There is something special about knowledge which can lead one to experience the limitless; and then it becomes redundant. Its use is over, it must withdraw or just disappear. Limitlessness is the real state, ever present. Experience of the limitless is possible and real; but knowledge of the limitless is a contradiction in terms.⁵⁵

C. TEN STATEMENTS FROM THE TEACHER FOR REFLECTION

1. The world is governed by the laws of space and time and the built-in deterioration of the objective world.⁵⁶
2. Experience of the limitless is possible and real; but knowledge of the limitless is a contradiction in terms.⁵⁷
3. The wisdom which one receives about the limitless is this, that having received the information that 'I am limitless', then all that happens in the limitless becomes a passing show, because it is in neutral gear.⁵⁸
4. The limitless seeks no help.⁵⁹
5. The limitless is like the ocean which never floods.⁶⁰
6. No sooner one knows that oneself is the Ātman, the awareness expands limitlessly, and the universe becomes one's own treasury.⁶¹
7. The same pāramārthika (absolute) consciousness which is one and limitless shines through multiple forms and beings, who appear on the universal stage, shine for a time and then merge again into the same limitless ocean of consciousness.⁶²
8. Ananta is that existence which has no beginning and no end, which is full and eternal.⁶³
9. The unlimited is pervading everywhere and there is no end to it, and this is what does exist in reality.⁶⁴
10. Limitlessness is the blissful field of advaita where everything is felt as the same Brahman, unmoving, unperturbed, blissful and ever the same.⁶⁵

TAITTIRĪYA UPANIṢAD

THE COMMENTARY OF ŚAṆKARĀCĀRYA

Translated by Swami Gambhirananda

NOTE: Śaṅkara's commentary consists of lengthy sections without a break, so for ease of study, it has been divided into 28 parts with headings for each part. Śaṅkara has no headings in his commentary.

TAITTIRĪYA UPANIṢAD

Book 2, *On The Bliss That Is Brahman*

Verse 1

1. The utility of this study: Śaṅkara's commentary preceding 2.1.1

... In order to apprise us of its own relation and utility at the very beginning, the Upaniṣad itself declares its utility in the sentence; *brahmavid āpnoti param* – the knower of Brahman reaches the highest. For one engages in hearing (śravaṇa), mastering (grahaṇa), cherishing (dhāraṇa), and practising (abhyāsa) a science (vidya) only when its utility (artham) and relation are well known.⁶⁶ The result of knowledge certainly succeeds hearing etc., in accordance with such other Vedic texts as 'It is to be heard of, reflected on, and meditated upon' (Br. II. iv. 5, IV. v. 6).

Taitt. 2.1.1

FIRST HALF

om brahmavidāpnoti param / tadeṣābhuktā / satyaṁ
jñānamanantaṁ brahma / yo veda nihitaṁ guhāyāṁ parame
vyoman / so 'śnute sarvān kāmān saha / brahmaṇā vipaściteti | |

The knower of Brahman attains the highest. Here is a verse uttering that very fact: 'Brahman is truth, knowledge, and infinite. He who knows that Brahman as existing in the intellect, lodged in the supreme space in the heart, enjoys, as identified with the all-knowing Brahman, all desirable things simultaneously.'

Śaṅkara Commentary

2. 'The knower of Brahman attains the highest'

Brahmavit, the knower of Brahman; Brahman is that whose characteristics will be stated and who is called Brahman because of (the etymological sense of) *brhat-tamatva*, being the greatest. He who *vetti*, knows, that Brahman is *brahmavit*. He *āpnoti*, attains; *param*, the absolutely highest. That very Brahman (that occurs as the object of the verb, *vid*, to know) must be the highest (goal as well), since the attainment of something does not logically follow from the knowledge of something else and since another Vedic text, viz 'Anyone who knows that supreme Brahman

becomes Brahman indeed' etc., (Mu. III. ii. 9), clearly shows the attainment of Brahman Itself by the knower of Brahman.

Objection: The Upaniṣad will say that Brahman permeates everything and is the Self of all; hence It is not attainable. Moreover, one thing is seen to be attained by another – one limited thing by another limited thing. And Brahman is unlimited and identical with all; hence Its attainment – as of something that is limited and is different from one's Self – is incongruous.

Answer: This is no fault.

Objection: How?

Answer: Because the attainment or non-attainment of Brahman is contingent on Its realisation or non-realisation.

3. Individual souls identify with that which is not the Self

The individual soul, though intrinsically none other than Brahman, still identifies itself with, and becomes attached to, the sheaths made of food etc., which are external, limited, and composed of the subtle elements; and as (in the story) a man, whose mind is engrossed in the counting of others, misses counting himself, though that personality is the nearest to him and supplies the missing number, just so, the individual soul, under a spell of ignorance, that is characterised by the non-perception of one's own true nature as Brahman, accepts the external non-Selves, such as the body composed of food, as the Self, and as a consequence, begins to think, 'I am none other than those non-Selves composed of food etc.' In this way, even though Brahman is one's Self, It can remain unattained through ignorance. Just as through ignorance, there is a non-discovery (in the story) of the individual himself who makes up the requisite number, and just as there is the discovery of the self-same person through knowledge when he is reminded of that personage by someone, similarly in the case of one, to whom Brahman in It's own nature remains thus unattained owing to his ignorance, there can quite reasonably be a discovery of that very Brahman by realising that omnipresent Brahman to be none other than one's own Self – a realisation that comes through enlightenment consequent on the instruction of the scriptures.

4. Three Ideas involved in quoting the Ṛg mantra, *satyam jñānam anantam brahma*

The sentence, 'The knower of Brahman attains the highest', is a statement in brief of the purport of the whole Part (II).⁶⁷ The ideas involved in quoting a *Ṛg mantra* with the words *Tad eṣā bhuktā* – 'here is a verse uttering that very fact', are (as follows).

1. (First) It is sought to determine the true nature of Brahman through the presentation of a definition that is capable of indicating the true nature of Brahman through the presentation of a definition that is capable of indicating the totally free intrinsic nature of that very Brahman which was briefly referred to as a knowable entity in the sentence, 'The knower of Brahman attains the highest', but of which any distinct feature remained undetermined;
2. (secondly) the knowledge of that Brahman having been spoken of (earlier) in an indefinite way, it is now sought to make that very Brahman, whose definition is going to be stated, realisable specifically as non-different from one's own indwelling Self;
3. (and lastly) the idea is to demonstrate that the attainment of supreme Brahman by a knower of Brahman – which (attainment) is spoken of as the result of the realisation of Brahman – is really nothing but identity with the Self of all, which is Brahman Itself transcending all worldly attributes. *Tat*, with regard to what has been said by the brāhmaṇa portion (of the Upaniṣad), *eṣā*, this *Ṛk (mantra)*; is *abhyuktā*, uttered:

5. Brahman is the Subject of the Definition⁶⁸

The sentence *satyam jñānam anantam brahma – Brahman* is truth, knowledge, infinite – is meant as a definition of Brahman. For the three words beginning with *satya* are meant to distinguish Brahman which is the substantive. And from the fact that Brahman is intended to be spoken of as the thing to be known, it follows that Brahman is the substantive. Since Brahman is sought to be presented as the chief object of knowledge, the knowable must be the substantive. And just because (Brahman and *satya* etc.) are related as the substantive and its attributives, the words beginning with *satya* have the same case-ending, and they stand in apposition. Brahman, being qualified by the three adjectives, *satya* etc., is marked out from other nouns. Thus, indeed, does a thing become known when it is differentiated from others; as for instance, in common parlance, a particular lotus is known when it is described as blue, big, and sweet-smelling.

Objection: A noun can be distinguished only when there is the possibility of its ruling out some other adjective (which does not belong to it), as for instance a blue or red lotus. An adjective is meaningful when there are many nouns which belong to the same class and which are capable of having many adjectives; but it can have no meaning with regard to a single noun, where there is no possibility of any alternative adjective. There is a single Brahman, just as there is a single sun; there do not exist other Brahman from which It can be distinguished, unlike a blue lotus that can be (marked out from a red one).

Answer: No, there is nothing wrong, since the adjectives are used by way of definition (also).

Objection: How?

Answer: Since the adjectives (here) bear a predominatingly defining sense and not a predominantly qualifying sense.

Objection: What again is the difference between the two relations — (1) that existing between the definition and the thing defined; and (2) that between the quality and the thing qualified?

The answer is: An adjective distinguishes a noun from things of its own class, whereas a definition marks it out from everything else, as for instance, (the definition of) *ākāśa* is that which provides space. And we said that the sentence (under discussion) stands for a definition.

6. The Three Attributive Words - *satyam*, *jñānam*, *anantam*

The words, *satya* etc., are unrelated among themselves, since they subserve something else; they are meant to be applied to the substantive only. Accordingly, each of the attributive words is related with the word 'Brahman', independently of the others thus: *satyam brahma*, *jñānam brahma*, *anantam brahma*.

7. SATYA distinguishes Brahman from mutable things

As for *satya*, a thing is said to be *satya*, true, when it does not change the nature that is ascertained to be its own; and a thing is said to be unreal when it changes the nature that is ascertained to be its own. Hence a mutable thing is unreal, for in the text, 'All transformation has speech as its basis and it is name only. Earth as such is the reality' (Ch. VI. i. 4), it has been emphasised that, that alone is true that exists (Ch. VI. ii. 1). So the phrase *satyam brahma* (Brahman is truth) distinguishes Brahman from mutable things.

8. JÑĀNA means knowledge, consciousness

From this it may follow that (the unchanging) Brahman is the (material) cause (of all subsequent changes); and since a material cause is a substance, it can be an accessory as well, thereby becoming insentient like earth. Hence it is said that Brahman is *jñānam*. *Jñāna* means knowledge, consciousness. The word *jñāna* conveys the abstract notion of the verb (*jñā*, to know); and being an attribute of Brahman along with truth and infinitude, it does not indicate the agent of knowing. If Brahman be the agent of knowing, truth and infinitude cannot justly be attributed to It. For as the agent of knowing, It becomes changeful; and, as such, how can It be true and infinite? That, indeed, is infinite which is not separated from anything. If it be the agent of

knowing, It becomes delimited by the knowable and the knowledge, and hence there cannot be infinitude, in accordance with another Vedic text: 'The Infinite is that where one does not understand anything else. Hence, the finite is that where one understands something else (Ch. VII. xxiv. 1).

9. The self cannot be SATYAM (pure existence) if it be a knower or the known.

Objection: From the denial of particulars in the (above) statement, 'One does not understand anything else', it follows that one *knows* the Self.

Answer: No, for the sentence is intended to enunciate a definition of the Infinite. The sentence, 'in which one does not see anything else', etc., is devoted wholly to the presentation of the distinguishing characteristics of Brahman. Recognising the well-known principle that one sees something that is different from oneself, the nature of the Infinite is expressed in the text by declaring that the Infinite is that in which that kind of action does not exist. Thus, since the expression, 'anything else', is used (in the above sentence) for obviating the recognised fact of duality, the sentence is not intended to prove the existence of an action (the act of knowing) in one's Self. And since there is no split in one's Self, cognition is impossible (in It). Moreover, if the Self be knowable, there will remain no one else (as a knower) to know It, since the Self is already postulated as the knowable.

Objection: The same self can exist both as the knower and the known.

Answer: No, this cannot be simultaneously, since the Self is without parts. A featureless (indivisible) thing cannot simultaneously be both the knower and the known. Moreover, if the Self can be cognised in the sense that a pot is, (scriptural) instruction about Its knowledge becomes useless. For if an object is already familiar, just as a pot for instance is, the (Vedic) instruction about knowing it can have no meaning. Hence if the Self be a knower, It cannot reasonably be infinite. Besides, if It has such distinctive attributes as becoming the agent of knowing, It cannot logically be pure existence. And pure existence is truth, according to another Vedic text, "That is truth" (Ch. VI. viii. 7).

10. JÑĀNAM BRAHMA rules out from Brahman any relationship between agent and action

Therefore the word *jñāna* (knowledge), having been used adjectivally along with truth and infinitude, is derived in the cognate sense of the verb, and it is used to form the phrase, *jñānam brahma* (Brahman is knowledge), in order to rule out (from Brahman) any relationship between noun and verb as that of an agent etc., as also for denying non-consciousness like that of earth etc.

11. ANANTAM BRAHMA makes jñānam unlimited.

From the phrase, *jñānam brahma*, it may follow that Brahman is limited, for human knowledge is seen to be finite. Hence, in order to obviate this, the text says, *anantam*, infinite.

12. The entire sentence is a definition of an existent entity

Objection: Since the words, *satya* (truth) etc., are meant only for negating such qualities as untruth, and since the substantive Brahman is not a well-known entity like a lotus, the sentence beginning with *satya* has nothing but a non-entity as its content, just as it is the case with the sentence, 'Having bathed in the water of the mirage, and having put a crown of skyflowers on his head, there goes the son of a barren woman, armed with a bow made of a hare's horn.'

Answer: No, for the sentence is meant as a definition. And we said that even though *satya* etc. are attributive words, their chief aim is to define. Since a sentence, stating the differentia of a non-existing substantive, is useless, and since the present sentence is meant to define, it does not, in our opinion, relate to a non-entity. Should even *satya* etc. have an adjectival sense, they certainly do not give up their meanings. If the words *satya* etc., mean a non-entity, they cannot logically distinguish their substantive. But if they are meaningful, as having the senses of truth etc., they can justifiably differentiate their substantive Brahman from other substantives which are possessed of opposite qualities. And the word Brahman, too, has its own individual meaning. Among these words, the word, *ananta*, becomes an adjective by way of negating finitude; whereas the words, *satya* and *jñāna*, become adjectives even while imparting their own (positive) senses (to the substantive).

13. The cognizer is Brahman

Since in the text, 'From that Brahman indeed which is this Self, (was produced this space)' (II. i. 1), the word Self (*ātma*) is used with regard to Brahman Itself, it follows that Brahman is the Self of the cognizing individual; and this is supported by the text, 'He attains this Self made of bliss' (II. viii. 5), where Brahman is shown to be the Self. Moreover, it is Brahman which has entered (into men); the text, 'having created that, (He) entered into that very thing' (II. vi), shows the entry of that very Brahman into the body as the individual soul. Hence the cognizer, in his essential nature, is Brahman.

Objection: If thus Brahman be the Self, It becomes the agent of cognition, since it is a well-known fact that the Self is a knower. And from the text 'He desired' (II. Vi), it stands established that the one who desires is also an agent of cognition. Thus, Brahman being the cognizer, it is improper to hold that Brahman is consciousness.

Besides, that (later conclusion) leads to Its impermanence. For even if it be conceded that *jñāna* (cognition) is nothing but consciousness, and thus Brahman has (only) the cognate sense (-knowledge-) of the verb (*to know*, and not the verbal sense of *knowing*), It (Brahman) will still be open to the charge of impermanence and dependence. For the meanings of verbs are dependent on the (grammatical) cases of the nouns. And *knowledge* is a sense conveyed by a root (dependent on a noun). Accordingly, Brahman becomes impermanent as well as dependent.

14. Knowledge as a semblance of Consciousness

Answer: No, since without implying that knowledge is separable from Brahman, it is referred to as an activity by way of courtesy. (To explain): Knowledge, which is the true nature of the Self, is inseparable from the Self, and so it is everlasting. Still, the intellect, which is the limiting adjunct of the Self becomes transformed into the shape of the objects while issuing out through the eyes etc. (for cognizing things). These configurations of the intellect in the shape of sound etc., remain objectively illumined by the Consciousness that is the Self, even when they are in an incipient state; and when they emerge as cognitions, they are still enlightened by that Consciousness.⁶⁹ Hence these semblances of Consciousness – a Consciousness that is really the Self are imagined by the non-discriminating people to be referable by the word *knowledge* bearing the root meaning (of the verb *to know*); to be attributes of the Soul Itself; and to be subject to mutation.

15. Brahman is omniscient

But the Consciousness of Brahman is inherent in Brahman and is inalienable from It, just as the light of the sun is from the sun or the heat of fire is from fire.

Consciousness is not dependent on any other cause for its revelation, for it is by nature eternal light. And since all that exists is inalienable from Brahman in time or space, Brahman being the cause of time, space, etc., and since Brahman is surpassingly subtle, there is nothing else whether subtle or screened or remote or past, present or future which can be unknowable to It. Therefore Brahman is omniscient.⁷⁰

Besides, this follows from the text of the *mantra*: 'Though He is without hands and feet, still He runs and grasps; though He is without eyes, still He sees; though He is without ears, still He hears. He knows the knowable, and of Him there is no knower. Him they called the first, great Person' (Śv. III. 19). There are also such Vedic texts as: 'For the knower's function of knowing can never be lost, because It is immortal; but (It does not know, as) there is not that second thing (separated from It which It can know)' (Br. IV. Iii. 30). Just because Brahman's nature of being the knower is

inseparable and because there is no dependence on other accessories like the sense-organs, Brahman, though intrinsically identical with knowledge, is well-known to be eternal.

16. Brahman is indescribable

Thus, since this knowledge is not a form of action, it does not also bear the root meaning of the verb. Hence, too, Brahman is not the agent of cognition. And because of this, again, It cannot even be denoted by the word *jñāna* (knowledge). Still Brahman is indicated, but not denoted,⁷¹ by the word *knowledge* which really stands for a verisimilitude ⁷² of Consciousness as referring to an attribute of the intellect; for Brahman is free from such things as class etc., which make the use of the word knowledge possible. Similarly, Brahman is not denoted even by the word *satya* (truth), since Brahman is by nature devoid of all distinctions. In this way, the word *satya*, which means external reality in general, can indirectly refer to Brahman (in such expressions) as ‘Brahman is truth’, but it cannot denote it. Thus the words truth etc., occurring in mutual proximity, and restricting and being restricted in turns by each other, distinguish Brahman from other objects denoted by the words, truth etc., and thus become fit for defining It as well. So, in accordance with the Vedic texts, ‘Failing to reach which (Brahman), words, along with the mind turn back’ (II. iv. 1), and ‘(Whenever an aspirant gets fearlessly established in this changeless, bodiless,) inexpressible, and unsupporting⁷³ Brahman’ (II. vii), it is proved that Brahman is indescribable, and that unlike the construction of the expression, ‘a blue lotus’, Brahman is not to be construed as the import of any sentence.

17. Interpretations of ‘guhāyām vyomni’ in 2.1.1

Yajñ vedā, anyone who knows – that Brahman, described before; as *nihitam*, (hidden) existing; *parama vyoman* (i.e. *vyomni*), in the supreme space (which permeates its own effect, the intellect) – in the space which is called the Unmanifested (i.e. *Māyā*), that, indeed, being the supreme space in accordance with the Vedic text, ‘By this immutable (Brahman), O Gārgī, is the (Unmanifested) space (*ākāśa*, i.e. *Māyā*) pervaded’ (Bṛ. III.viii.11), where *ākāśa* occurs in the proximity of *akṣara* (Immutable)⁷⁴; *guhāyām*, in the intellect. *Guhā*, being derived from the root *guha* in the sense of hiding, means the intellect, because in that intellect are hidden the categories, viz knowledge, knowable and knower; or because in this intellect are hidden the two human objectives, enjoyment and liberation.

Or, from the apposition of *guhā* and *vyoma* in the expression, *guhāyām vyomni*, the Unmanifested space *Māyā* itself is the *guhā* (cavity); for in that, too, are hidden all things during the three periods (of creation, existence, and dissolution), it being their

cause as well as more subtle. In that (Māyā) is hidden Brahman. It is, however, reasonable to accept the space circumscribed by the cavity of the heart as the supreme space, for the text wants to present space here as a part of knowledge. The space within the heart is well-known as the supreme space from the other Vedic texts: 'The space that is outside the individual (Ch. III. xii. 7) ... is the same as the space within the individual' (Ch. III. xii. 8) (and that again) is the same as the space within the heart Ch. III. xii.9) . (Thus the meaning of the sentence is:) Within the cavity that is the intellect, which is within the space defined by the heart, is *nihitam*, lodged, placed, Brahman; in other words, Brahman is perceived clearly through the function of that intellect; for apart from this perception, Brahman can have no connection, (in the sense of being lodged in), with any particular time or space, Brahman being all-pervasive and beyond all distinctions.

18. Enjoying simultaneously all desirable things

Salī, he, one who has known Brahman thus – what does he do? The answer is – *aśnute*, he enjoys; *sarvān*, all without any exception; *kāmān*, desires, i.e. all enjoyable things. Does he enjoy the sons, heavens, etc. in sequence as we do? The text says: No; he enjoys all the desirable things, that get focussed into a single moment, *saha*, simultaneously – through a single perception which is eternal like the light of the sun, which is non-different from Brahman Itself, and which we called 'truth, knowledge, infinite'. That very fact is described here as *brahmaṇā saha*, in identification with Brahman. The man of knowledge, having become Brahman, enjoys as Brahman, all the desirable things simultaneously; and he does not enjoy in sequence the desirable things that are dependent on such causes as merit etc., and such sense-organs as the eyes etc., as does an ordinary man, identified with the worldly Self which is conditioned by limiting adjuncts, and which is a reflection (of the supreme Self) like that of the sun or water. How does he then enjoy? As identified with the eternal Brahman which is omniscient, all-pervasive, and the Self of all, he enjoys simultaneously, in the manner described above, all the desirable things that are not dependent on all such causes as merit etc., and are independent of the organs like the eyes etc. This is the idea. *Vipaścītā* means 'with the intelligent One' (i.e.) with the Omniscient; for, that indeed is true intelligence which is omniscience. The idea is that, he enjoys in his identity with that all-knowing Brahman. The word *iti* is used to indicate the end of the *mantra*.

/Cont. overleaf

Taitt. 2.1.1

SECOND HALF

tasmādvā etasmādātmana ākāśaḥ saṁbhūtaḥ / ākāśādvāyuh /
vāyoragniḥ / agnerāpaḥ / adabhyaḥ pṛthivī / pṛthivyā oṣadhayaḥ /
oṣadhībhyonnam / annātpuruṣaḥ / sa vā eṣa puruṣo 'nnnarasamayaḥ /
tasyedameva śiraḥ / ayam dakṣiṇaḥ pakṣaḥ / ayamuttaraḥ pakṣaḥ /
ayamātmā / idaṁ pucchaṁ pratiṣṭhā / tadapyeṣa śloko bhavati //

From that Brahman indeed, which is this Self, was produced space. From space emerged air. From air was born fire. From fire was created water. From water sprang up earth. From earth were born the herbs. From the herbs was produced food. From food was born man. That man, such as he is, is surely a product of the essence of food. Of him this indeed, is the head; this is the southern (right) side; this is the northern (left) side; this is the self; this is the stabilizing tail.

19. Śaṅkara's introduction to the second half of the verse

The entire purport of the chapter is summed up in the sentence, 'The knower of Brahman attains the highest', occurring in the *brāhmaṇa* portion. And that pithy statement (aphorism) is briefly explained by the *mantra* (the *Rk* verse). Since the meaning of that very statement has to be elaborately ascertained again, the succeeding text, *tasmād vā etasmāt* etc., is introduced as a sort of gloss to it.

20. Limitations of time, space and object

As to that, it has been said at the beginning of the *mantra* that Brahman is truth, knowledge, and infinite. The text proceeds to show how It is truth (*satyam*), knowledge (*jñānam*), and infinite (*anantam*). As to that, there are three kinds of infinitude (*anantam*) – from the standpoint of space (*deśa*), time (*kāla*), and objects (*vastu*).⁷⁵

21. Limitations of space and time

To illustrate: The sky is unlimited from the point of view of space, for it is not limited in space. But the sky is not infinite as regards time or as regards (other) objects. Why? Since it is a product. Brahman is not thus limited in time like the sky, since It is not a product. For, a created thing is circumscribed by time, but Brahman is not created. Hence It is infinite from the point of view of time as well.

22. Limitations of objects

Similarly, too, from the point of view of objects. How, again, is established Its infinitude from the point of view of objects? Since It is non-different from everything. A thing that is different acts as a limitation to another. Indeed, when the intellect gets occupied with something, it becomes detached from something else. That (idea), because of which another idea becomes circumscribed, acts as a limit to the (latter) idea. To illustrate: The idea of cowhood is repelled by the idea of horsehood; hence horsehood debars cowhood, and the idea (of cowhood) becomes delimited indeed. That limitation is seen in the case of distinct objects. Brahman is not differentiated in this way. Hence It has infinitude even from the standpoint of substances.

How, again, is Brahman non-different from everything? The answer is: Because It is the cause of everything. Brahman is verily the cause of all things – time, space, etc.

23. Brahman in an object is not limited to the object

Objection: From the standpoint of objects, Brahman is limited by Its own effects.

Answer: No, since the objects that are effects are unreal. For apart from the cause, there is really no such thing as an effect by which the idea of the cause can become delimited. This fact is borne out by another Vedic text which says that 'All transformation has speech as its basis, and it is name only. Earth (inhering in its modifications), as such, is the reality' (Ch. VI. 1. 4.); similarly, existence (i.e. Brahman that permeates everything) alone is true (Ch. VI. ii. 1).

24. Unlimited by space, time or object, Brahman's reality is absolute.

Brahman, then, is spatially infinite, being the cause of space etc. For space is known to be spatially infinite; and Brahman is the cause of that space. Hence it is proved that the Self is spatially infinite. Indeed, no all-pervading thing is seen in this world to originate from anything that is not so. Hence the spatial infinitude of Brahman is absolute. Similarly, temporally, too, Brahman's infinitude is absolute, since Brahman is not a product. And because there is nothing different from Brahman, It is infinite substantially as well. Hence Its reality is absolute.⁷⁶

25. Brahman is the Self of all

By the word *tasmāt*, from that, is called to mind the Brahman that was aphoristically stated in the first sentence; and by the word *etasmāt*, from this, is called to memory the Brahman just as It was defined immediately afterwards in the *mantra*. *Ātmanah*, from the Self – from Brahman that was enunciated in the beginning in the words of the *brāhmaṇa* portion, and that was defined immediately afterwards as truth, knowledge, infinite (in the *mantra*); (i.e.) from that Brahman which is called the Self,

for It is the Self of all, according to another Vedic text, 'It is truth, It is the Self' (Ch. VI. viii-xvi). Hence Brahman is the Self.

26. Creation of the elements

From that Brahman which is identical with the Self, *ākāśaḥ*, space; *sambhūtaḥ*, was created. *Ākāśa* means that which is possessed of the attribute of sound and provides space for all things that have forms. *Ākāśāt*, from that space; *vāyur* air – which has two attributes, being possessed of its own quality, touch, and the quality, sound, of its cause (*ākāśa*). The verb, 'was created', is understood. *Vāyoḥ*, from that air, was created *agniḥ*, fire – which has three attributes, being possessed of its own quality, colour, and the two earlier ones (of its cause, air). *Agneḥ*, from fire, was produced, *āpaḥ*, water – with four attributes, being endowed with its own quality, taste, and the three earlier ones (of fire). *Adbhyaḥ*, from water; was produced *prthivī*, earth – with five attributes, consisting of its own quality, smell, and the four earlier qualities (of its cause, water). *Prthivyāḥ*, from the earth; *oṣadhayaḥ*, the herbs. *Oṣadhībyaḥ*, from the herbs; *annam*, food.

27. Creation and pre-eminence of the human being

Annāt, from food, transformed into human seed, (was created), *puruṣaḥ*, the human being, possessed of the limbs – head, hands, etc. *Saḥ vai eṣaḥ puruṣaḥ* that human being, such as he is; *annarasamayāḥ*, consists of the essence of food, is a transformation of the essence of food. Since the semen, the seed, emerging as it does as the energy from all the limbs, is assumed to be of the human shape, therefore the one that is born from it should also have the human shape; for in all classes of beings, the offsprings are seen to be formed after the fathers.

Objection: Since all beings, without exception, are modifications of the essence of food and since all are equally descendants of Brahmā, why is man alone specified?

Answer: Because of his pre-eminence.

Objection: In what, again, does the pre-eminence consist?

Answer: In his competence for *karma* and knowledge. For man alone, who is desirous (of results) and possessed of learning and capacity, is qualified for rites and duties as also for knowledge, by virtue of his ability, craving (for results), and non-indifference (to results). (This is proved) by the evidence of another Vedic text: 'In man alone is the Self most manifest, for he is the best endowed with intelligence (*prajñānam*). He speaks what he knows (*vijñātaṃ* - what is known), he sees what he knows; he knows what will happen tomorrow; he knows the higher and lower worlds (*loka-alokau*); he aspires to achieve immortality through mortal things. He is thus endowed (with

discrimination), while other beings have consciousness of hunger and thirst only' (Ai. Ā. II. iii. 2. 5) etc.⁷⁷

28. Purpose of the Upaniṣad – to make the human being enter into the inmost Brahman through knowledge.

The intention here is to make that very human being enter into the inmost Brahman through knowledge. But his intellect, that thinks of the outer particular forms, which are not selves, as selves, cannot without the support of some distinct object, be suddenly made contentless and engaged in the thoughts of the inmost indwelling Self. Therefore, on the analogy of the moon on the bough,⁷⁸ the text takes the help of a fiction that has an affinity with the identification of the Self and the perceived body; and leading thereby the intellect inward, the text says, *tasya idam eva śiraḥ: tasya*, of that human being who is such and who is a modification of the essence of food, *idam eva śiraḥ*, this is verily the head – that is well known. The text, 'This is verily the head', is stated lest somebody should think that the head is to be imagined here just as it is in the case of the vital body etc., where things that are not heads are imagined to be so. Similar is the construction in the case of the side etc. *Ayam*, this, the right hand of a man facing east; is the *dakṣiṇaḥ pakṣaḥ*, the southern side. *Ayam*, this – the left hand; is the *uttaraḥ pakṣaḥ*, the northern side.⁷⁹ *Ayam*, this – the middle portion (trunk) of the body; is the *ātmā*, self, soul of the limbs, in accordance with the Vedic text, 'The middle of these limbs is verily their soul'. *Idam*, this – the portion of the body below the navel; is the *pucchaṃ pratiṣṭhā*, the tail that stabilizes. *Pratiṣṭhā* derivatively means that by which one remains in position. The *puccha* (here) is that which is comparable to a tail, on the analogy of hanging down, as does the tail of a cow. On this pattern is established the symbolism in the case of the succeeding vital body etc., just as an image takes its shape from molten copper poured into a crucible. *Tat api*, as to that also, illustrative of that very idea contained in the *brāhmaṇa* portion; *eṣa bhavati śloko*, here occurs a verse – which presents the self made of food.⁸⁰

THE PROCESS OF CINTANA

COUNSEL FROM THE TEACHER

STUDY SOCIETY RECORD

August 21, 1979

CONVERSATIONS

1985 2.4

1985 2.5

1985 2.7

2010 4.1

2015 2.2

Study Society Record, August 21, 1979

Question: Does His Holiness mean by 'going deeper' into the subject, more and more study of the information or something rather different?

Answer: Three things are necessary for complete realisation. First is that you have to listen or study. This means do the study: śravaṇam. Now the second thing is concentration on what you have studied—go on thinking about it, reflection upon it. That we call the mananam. First you have to listen—and second is Manana, concentration and reflection, and third is nididhyāsanam – which means that you will have, after considering it for some time, to sit quietly and get absorbed in it.

Question: Is there any method to be employed in the art of contemplation?

Answer: You are asking what is the machinery of contemplation. There are two things. One is that one has to be attentive. Attentive whether during study or listening. This is the first part. Studying or listening is the first part and one has to be attentive in it, then alone the contemplation part will come. If one is not attentive, and one is only listening with a part of the mind, as it were, then the process of contemplation will not start. It will not be possible to indulge or employ oneself in that process.

The other thing is that one has to have a feeling of its greatness, of its utility. One has to be impressed about the greatness or the utility of the information, then alone will that process be employed. So there are two things, one is attention and the other is a feeling of greatness or of its utility...

We see so many things. We don't remember them all. Unless we see things with attention, then we remember. We listen to many things. We do not remember them all. There are certain things which we heard many years ago and we still remember them because we heard them with attention. We thought that they were worth remembering, we had a feeling about their utility. Therefore, we continue to remember them. Similarly in this spiritual work, then you will listen to things and you will study things, you will be able to contemplate when you listen or read with attention and when you have a knowledge of their utility.

Note: See Śaṅkara's preamble to Taitt. 2.1.1 – '... one engages in hearing (śravaṇa), mastering (grahaṇa), cherishing (dhāraṇa), and practising

(*abhyāsa*) a science (*vidya*) only when its utility (*artham*) and relation are well known. The result of knowledge certainly succeeds hearing etc., in accordance with such other Vedic texts as 'It is to be heard of, reflected on, and meditated upon' (Br. II. iv. 5, IV. v. 6).'

Conversations 1985 2.4

Having listened to an Upanishadic reading, two activities may follow. The first is *mananam* and then *nididhyāsanam*. *Mananam* constitutes reflecting the reading again and again in one's mind and allowing its meaning to enlighten the mind. *Nididhyāsanam* constitutes the establishment of that meaning in one's being.

When Upanishadic mantras are reflected upon, being seed-like, they expand like plants with leaves, flowers and fruit. This enlightens the mind with deeper meanings contained in them. When the content is fully established, then it becomes a part of one's being. If this does not take place, then its effect could be lost in time, or it may remain only as a piece of knowledge. When meaning is properly established it shows itself in constancy in expressions, acuteness of attention, elimination of worries, elimination of confusion and rise of pure *saṅkalpa* manifests.

For example, the reading:

yato vā imāni bhūtāni jāyante
yena jātāni jīvanti
yat prayānty abhisamviśanti
tad vijijñāśasva
tad bhrameti

That from which all these beings take birth,
that by which they live after being born,
that towards which they move
and into which they merge:
Crave to know that well.
That is Brahman.

Taittirīya, 3.1.1

This reading indicates the underlying creative principle, which is responsible for the emanation of the creation, its sustenance in time and its eventual dissolution within itself. One needs to know that principle, for that is Brahman.

In reflection, one can see it in one's own being. Every morning one gets up from sleep and resumes one's presence in this creation, goes through all the activities during the day to sustain that which gained active consciousness in the morning, then eventually one retires into sleep once again.

The underlying principle of all these states so experienced and yet to be experienced is the Self and that alone is the subject of enquiry like Brahman. Knowing that principle, including Its manifestation, existence and dissolution one goes through this with attention, confidence and in righteousness without losing the essence.

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The underlying principle of all these states so experienced and yet to be experienced is the Self and that alone is the subject of enquiry like Brahman. Knowing that principle, including Its manifestation, existence and dissolution one goes through this with attention, confidence and in righteousness without losing the essence.

Conversations 1985 2.5

Question: And the question that follows is, how does this stabilization take place? What is the best method to produce it? Your Holiness has just said that people have to apply it in their lives, but this takes time for Upanishadic words to take root. Would Your Holiness say something about this process of stabilization?

Answer: The act of nididhyāsanam is similar to dhyāna, the meditation. It is derived from the dhātu dhyai cintāyām ('in meditation'). When this reading and its content is held in mind constantly, then all other external impressions and their knowledge stay out, without interfering with nididhyāsanam. The Self and the content of the reading need to become one.

Having stabilized the content of the reading, it can then be reflected in various ways. Just as a master-key can open various locks this will enlighten many other aspects of existence. In this reading, it can be reflected as jāgarita, svapna, suṣupti (waking,

dreaming, deep sleep); as sṛṣṭi, sthiti, pralaya (creation, sustenance, dissolution); or sāttvika, rājasika, tāmasika aspects of one's life. The meaning is thus truly interpreted in different ways one has experienced the world. This gives a glimpse of pure consciousness. This facilitates the individual to face the situation of the world in a steady and yet novel manner.

Conversations 1985 2.7

The process of reflection so described, that enlightenment appears in two ways, one by highlighting the impediments and the other as a glimpse of sat-cit-ānanda; these experiences are there only to indicate that much more has yet to follow, for Brahman is unlimited. One has to keep this in mind that the Brahman is never exhausted. One can never know it for a final totality.

LATER TEACHINGS

Conversations 2010 4.1

The sentences which we hear (śravaṇam) have to be understood properly. The real meaning of these sentences is only propounded by the teachers. They do so by explaining them in simple language. Just as the fodder which is offered to cows is eaten by them and then they lie down somewhere to chew the cud, in the same way, whatever we hear from the teachers or read from the books, we should hold that in our mind, and later on consider those sentences by analysing them to get the real meaning. This is the act of mananam. After the analytical process, the real meaning of the teaching ought to be put into practice. This act of understanding the wisdom has to be put into action. In doing so, there is some transformation which takes place in the being and manifests in action with a higher level of consciousness. This is called nididhyāsanam. In this state there is complete unity of thought and action. Understanding deepens and a higher level of actions becomes natural.

Conversations 2015 2.2

Advaita is cintya (to be thought about, to be considered or reflected or meditated upon). Advaita is sought through cintana (thinking, thinking of, reflecting upon). Advaita is realised through cintana.

ENDNOTES (Volume numbers refer to the 7 volumes of the Conversations.)

¹ Śaṅkara's commentary on Brh. 1.3.28

² Vol. 3, p. 221

³ Vol. 7, p. 81

⁴ Vol. 3, p. 4

⁵ 'I' Groups, VIII, p. 1

⁶ BG Commentary, 10:18

⁷ BG. 10:18

⁸ Kaṭha Commentary II.iii.1

⁹ Vol. 3, p. 192

¹⁰ Vol. 3, p. 200

¹¹ Yoga Sūtras, 1.11. See also 1.20

¹² Vol. 3, p. 66

¹³ 'I'-Level Material, Term 2 (1975)

¹⁴ Vol. 3, p. 221-2

¹⁵ For a scriptural exposition of Ātma Śakti, see [Śrī Gaudīya Kanthahāra, Chapter 8 on Śakti-tattva](#).

¹⁶ Eliot Deutsch, *Advaita Vedanta, A Philosophical Reconstruction*, p. 9

¹⁷ Commentary, Tait. 2.1.1

¹⁸ Vol. 2, p. 9

¹⁹ Vol. 3, p. 204

²⁰ Vol. 4, p. 53

²¹ Vol. 7, p. 8

²² Vol. 3, p. 195

²³ Commentary, Tait. 2.1.1 – See Śaṅkara's commentary in this document, pages 39.

²⁴ Vol. 3, p. 194

²⁵ This is a variation on a verse from the final section of the Taittirīya Upaniṣad, 3.1.1, where the sage Varuṇa instructs his son Bṛhgu, telling him, 'Crave to know that from which all these beings take birth, that by which they live after being born, that towards which they move and into which they merge. That is Brahman'.

²⁶ Taitt. 2.1.1 Commentary – See Śaṅkara's commentary in this document, pages 40-41.

²⁷ *Brahma-jñānā-valī-mālā* (Song of Supreme Knowledge), v. 20

²⁸ *Conversations* Vol. 3, pp. . 27-28

²⁹ *School of Meditation*, 1989 3.1

³⁰ Vol. 2, p. 14

³¹ Vol. 4, p. 55

³² Vol. 4, p. 87

³³ Vol. 4, p. 11

³⁴ Vol. 4, p. 71

³⁵ Vol. 4, p. 118

³⁶ Vol. 7, p. 16. For 'atmaivedaṃ sarvaṃ', see Chān. Upa. 7.25.2

³⁷ Vol. 4, p. 118

³⁸ Vol. 3, p. 207

³⁹ Vol. 4, p. 12

⁴⁰ Taitt. 2.1.1 Commentary – See Śaṅkara's commentary in this document, page 40-41.

⁴¹ Vol. 2, pp. 8-9

⁴² Vol. 2, p. 58

⁴³ Vol. 2, p. 171

⁴⁴ Vol. 4, pp. 6-7

⁴⁵ Vol. 2, p. 62

⁴⁶ Vol. 1, p. 28

⁴⁷ Vol. 4, p. 83-4

⁴⁸ Vol. 4, p. 10

⁴⁹ Vol. 4, p. 154

⁵⁰ Vol. 4, p. 63

⁵¹ Vol. 4, p. 154

⁵² Vol. 1, p. 90

⁵³ Taitt. 2.1.1 Commentary – See Śaṅkara's commentary in this document, pages 46-47.

⁵⁴ Vol. 4, pp. 120-1

⁵⁵ Vol. 4, pp. 171-2

⁵⁶ Vol. 4, p. 176

⁵⁷ Vol. 4, p. 172

⁵⁸ Vol. 4, p. 173

⁵⁹ *School of Meditation*, 1989, 3.2

⁶⁰ Vol. 4, p. 120

⁶¹ *School of Meditation*, 1978, 1.8

⁶² Vol. 4, p. 87

⁶³ Vol. 3, p. 194

⁶⁴ Vol. 4, p. 169

⁶⁵ Vol. 7, p. 19

⁶⁶ Śaṅkara has *vidyāśravaṇagrahaṇadhāraṇābhyāsārtham*.

⁶⁷ The sentence, 'The knower of Brahman attains the highest' is the first sentence of Part 2 of the Upaniṣad, entitled *Brahmānanda-vallī* – 'On the Bliss that is Brahman'.

⁶⁸ The reason for arguing that Brahman is the substantive and that the other three words are attributes is grammatical. There is no verb in the sentence. Grammatically, the sentence does not say 'Brahman is *satyam jñānam anantam*. The verb is implied. All four of the words have the same case, number and gender, so in theory, any of the four words could be the substantive. Śaṅkara is arguing that Brahman is the substantive, rather than any of the other words.

⁶⁹ In the incipient stage, they have the fitness to be illumined; and after emergence, they remain soaked in consciousness. (Gmbh. Footnote)

⁷⁰ See Br Commentary 2.4.11

⁷¹ **lakṣyate, na tūcyate**

⁷² Panoli has 'semblance', (Vidyavachapati Panoli, *Prasthanathraya*, Vol. 3 p. 309)

⁷³ Panoli has 'supportless' – no home or refuge.

⁷⁴ *Ānandagiri's sub-commentary*: The Unmanifested called *vyoma* (space, *ākāśa*) is inherent in the intellect (*guhā*), which is the effect of former. In that Unmanifested is placed Brahman, The element called *ākāśa* is not accepted here as the meaning of *vyoma*, since the element *ākāśa* cannot be called *parama* (supreme), it being an effect of Unmanifested *ākāśa*. Besides, in the Bṛhadāraṇyaka, the Unmanifested *ākāśa* and not the element *ākāśa*, occurs in the proximity of the Immutable Brahman (*akṣara*).

⁷⁵ Time and space are self-explanatory as limits. [Vastu](#) refers to an object, a substance, thing, article etc. Any object or thing is limited to itself – no one thing can be another thing; no substance can be another substance. See below for Śaṅkara's examples of cows and horses.

⁷⁶ If Brahman has no spatial limitations; if there is no space where Brahman and there is no space where Brahman is not, the positive implication about this entity in relation to space is that it is omnipresent and all-pervading ([sarvavyāpin](#)). If Brahman has no temporal limitations, the positive implication is that this entity is eternal, perpetual and continual ([nityam](#)). If Brahman has no limitation to a particular object, substance or identity, there is no object, substance or identity where Brahman is not. The positive implication is that this entity is advaitam, non-dual and is plenitude itself, *pūrṇa*.

⁷⁷ *puruṣe tv evāvistarām ātmā sa hi prajñānena sampannatamo vijñātām vadati vijñātām paśyati vedaśvastanam veda lokālokau matryenāmṛtam iṣṭi ity evaṃ sampannaḥ / athetareṣāṃ paśūnāmaśanāpīpāse evābhivijñānam* ([Aitareya-Āraṇyaka 2,3,2-5](#))

⁷⁸ Though the moon is far away, it is at times spoken of as 'the moon on the bough', because she appears to be near it. The point is, the idea of something which escapes ordinary comprehension is sought to be communicated with the help of something more tangible, though the two are entirely disparate.

⁷⁹ The Sanskrit translated as 'side' (as in left side, right side) is [pakṣa](#) (MW 573:2-3), a wing; the flank or side or the half of anything; the side or wing of a building; the wing or flank of an army; a side, party, faction.

⁸⁰ This is a description of meditation as 'upāsana'. For a comprehensive explanation of upāsana as it is practiced in the Vedic tradition, see Swami Gambhirananda's introduction to his translation of the Chāndogya Upaniṣad. Also see the final paragraphs of Śaṅkara's introduction to the Chāndogya, where he describes upāsana as being 'presented in this context of the knowledge of nonduality because of the similarity of their being mystical in nature and mental modifications. As the nondual realisation is a mere mental modification, so also are the other meditations forms of mental modifications. Herein lies their similarity.'

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