



2025 RESIDENTIAL WEEK

MĀṄḌŪKYA UPANIṢAD

COVER

Hope, George Frederic Watts, 1885

'Hope sitting on a globe, with bandaged eyes playing on a lyre which has all the strings broken but one out of which poor little tinkle she is trying to get all the music possible, listening with all her might to the little sound — do you like the idea?'

George Frederic Watts in a letter to a friend, December 1885

After work on any way is properly done,
bliss arises from it. This gives
encouragement and builds up hope for
truth to manifest in its fullness.

Śrī Śāntānanda Sarasvatī, 1973

Āśāṃ upāssva, meditate on hope.

Chāndogya Upaniṣad, VII.14.1

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HOPE

2025 Annual Global Meeting
Saturday October 4

Chāndogya Upaniṣad 7.14.1-2

Commentary by Mr Donald Lambie

Śrī Śāntānanda Sarasvatī on Hope

Śrī Śāntānanda Sarasvatī on the Four Ages of Humanity

HOPE

CHĀNDOGYA UPANIṢAD 7.14.1-2

āśā vāva smarādbhūyasyāśeddho vai smaro mantrānadhīte karmāṇi
kurute putrāṃśca paśūṃścecchata imaṃ ca lokamamuṃ cecchata
āśāmupāssveti |1|

Hope is indeed greater than memory. With memory enthused by hope we recite the mantras, perform the rites, wish for progeny and animals, wish for this world and the other world. Meditate on hope.

sa ya āśāṃ brahmetyupāsta āśayāsyā sarve kāmāḥ samṛdhyantyamoghā
hāsyāśiṣo bhavanti yāvadāśāyā gataṃ tatrāsyā yathākāmacāro bhavati ya
āśāṃ brahmetyupāste'sti bhagava āśāyā bhūya ityāśāyā vāva bhūyo'stīti
tanme bhagavānbraṅvītīti |2|

Anyone who meditates on hope as Absolute, all his desires become enriched by hope, and his prayers become unailing. Those who meditate on hope as Absolute get freedom of movement as far as the range of hope extends.

COMMENTARY

Mr Donald Lambie

'Hope is greater than memory'.

This implies that hope springs from memory. It is not a fantasy, but in some way based on a memory of truth, our true Self in some way. It is a memory of something fine or great. All that the great teachers seek to do is to arouse the memory within the follower or student. The knowledge of truth is there but it has been covered. The memory of it gives hope in a real sense. The individual begins to connect with his or her real strength.

We may remember the story of the lion cub who found itself living among sheep. It began to think it was a sheep until one day a grown lion came along and roared. The roar awakened the memory within the lion cub of its true nature, and it began to live as a lion. The moral of the story is that we are all lions but the memory of that needs to be strengthened and made constant.

Another story is about the prodigal son who received his inheritance and went to live in a strange land where he spent it all on riotous living. Eventually the memory of his home was awakened, and he started the journey of return.

Memory is from something in the past and hope relates it to the future. The great

Indian philosopher, Ādi Śaṅkarā, refers to the 'rope of hope', which binds together past, present and future. They are all important and need to be in harmony with each other. A rope can bring things together and hold them strongly. Without hope the past and the future lose touch with each other, or if they are connected it may be in a rather negative way. We can hold grudges from the past and these can affect the future in a dismal way. Hope gives the chance of a better future.

'Enthused by hope the memory recites the mantras'.

The hope that springs from memory gives enthusiasm. When as it were we are not ourselves, when the covers seem rather thick, there tends to be a lack of enthusiasm. Shakespeare said, 'The native hue of resolution is sicklied over by the pale cast of thought.'

This describes the situation where our natural strength, the native hue or colour of resolution, is made weak by the pale colour of such thoughts as doubt, anxiety, confusion and the like. With memory of one's real Self, in whatever way that may occur, there is a natural strength and enthusiasm.

'Recites the mantras'.

As I said before, at first sight seems rather remote from our situation. What does it mean? The word 'mantras' can be taken to signify any part of the great teachings available in the world. It refers to wisdom.

'Recites' can be taken to mean, turns to, studies, takes account of. In the School we refer to a number of the great teachers of humanity, from both East and West. It is an example of reciting the mantras in the way I have described. We have the practice given right at the start of asking ourselves 'What would a wise person do now?' It is an example of turning to wisdom, reciting the mantras.

'Performs the rites'.

Again this can sound rather remote as far as we are concerned. But the essence is that actions are done with a sense of service. That service begins as service to the person or situation in front of us, but there can also be a sense of service to something greater, for example to an organisation, to the nation, to humanity. In this way service can be made more universal.

Any of our actions can be performed as a simple service. This can help us to escape from the world of what I like and what I don't like into something much more worthwhile, indeed at times into something sacred.

One student in the School is a mother of 6 children. She described how day in day out she would prepare dinner for the family. Occasionally this could be

accompanied with a sense of resentment, a feeling of not being appreciated and the like. But mostly she would feel that she is nourishing the family with good food, bringing them together so they could grow as a family and enjoy each other's company. The preparation of a meal is a 'rite' and on the whole for her it is a beautiful and liberating action.

'Performs the rites' also means facing up to situations and responding to them fully. Not running away or hiding from difficult situations. It means doing one's duty, whatever that might be.

'Wishes for progeny and animals, wishes for this world and the other world'.

'Progeny' here signifies the family and longevity. 'Animals' signifies wealth. 'This world' signifies to take a good place and play a good part in the world. The 'other world' signifies the spiritual world, so that one's thoughts are not entirely materialistic.

A current Australian philosopher, Roman Krznavic, wrote a book called *The Good Ancestor* in 2020. The idea is that we should strive to be good ancestors for the generations to come, so that they may look back at us and be grateful for what we have left. This is a similar idea to that expressed by the 18th century thinker Sir Edmund Burke who said that society is a contract between the past generation, the present and future generations.

These expressions are aspects of what is being referred to in the Upaniṣad by the words 'this world and the other world'.

'Those who meditate on hope as Absolute gets freedom of movement as far as the range of hope extends'.

Hope gives enthusiasm, strength and vitality. All these in turn give freedom.

For example, Helen Keller was born in 1880 and when she was just under two years old, she suffered an illness which left her without the senses of sight and hearing. Despite this she grew up and led an incredibly full and useful life. She said, 'Optimism is the faith that leads to achievement. Nothing can be done without hope and confidence.' Her life certainly illustrated that.

The Upaniṣad refers to 'freedom of movement'. Lao Tzu said, 'As long as we have hope, we have direction, the energy to move, and the map to move by.' The direction, energy and map all combine to give this 'freedom of movement'.

The point is that it is possible to create and live in a golden age. We can hope and work for that. It is not exclusive. The more the better. But it is at hand if we work for it.

There are many problems and conflicts in the world, and one could become dispirited and gloomy. But the Upaniṣad encourages us to have hope for something better and to work to fulfil that. The work of the School you could say is to create a golden age for everyone where we can live in light, love, knowledge and happiness. Everyone can play their part in doing that.

ŚRĪ ŚĀNTĀNANDA SARASVATĪ ON HOPE

In the machinery of the work, the Absolute presides over the management of the work and its reward. The reward is bliss, courage and hope. They are followed one by the other and, in the early stage of the work, this is necessary and the Absolute sees that it takes place.

If any work is devoid of a fruit or reward for too long a period and if one has to keep on doing the same work for too long, then the interest or hope fades away and the energies seem to look for some other channels. Although one has to give up all desires of achievement of any type, yet this does not stop the law from following its course. After work on any way is properly done, bliss arises from it. This gives encouragement and builds up hope for Truth to manifest in its fullness. This process also establishes the higher levels of being as well. (1973:8.4, Vol. 2, p68)

ŚRĪ ŚĀNTĀNANDA SARASVATĪ ON THE FOUR AGES OF HUMANITY

Although we have so far seen the qualities of yugas, starting from the Satyuga (golden age) to the Kaliyuga (iron age), divided in time and appearing one after the other, but due to the interdependence of vyaṣṭi and samaṣṭi, the yugas may be seen as prevailing here and now. In any man's life, these four yugas may appear, or different types of people could be seen to belong to these yugas.

When a particular man is engulfed in dark tamas, has no initiative for his development, is satisfied with all the dirt and muck of the world, he is living as incarnate Kaliyuga (iron age). Whosoever shows at least some desire for improvement and can take the trouble to come to listen to good words, good books or holy men, then such a one must have Dvāparayuga (bronze age) in him.

One who wakes up and gets up and makes a resolution to move up and makes efforts to do away with impurities, who refuses to go into company of bad men, he is a man of the Tretāyuga (silver age). One who is resolved, whose reason is mature, who has given up all attachments, whose desires are few, who dwells in devotion and knowledge and is in peace and bliss, he is a man of the Satyuga (golden age). For them it is only truth that really matters. (1974:8.6; Vol. 2, pp. 154-155)

THE MĀṆḌŪKYA
AN UPANIṢAD FOR TODAY

Mr Donald Lambie

A talk delivered at the
School of Practical Philosophy, Cape Town
December 1, 2024

The Upaniṣads are a collection of ancient teachings which hold the Advaita teaching. Advaita means 'one without a second' and the Upaniṣads, from many years ago, hold the essence of this teaching. One of the Upaniṣads, the Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad, expounds the word Om and what I am going to talk about is based on this. On first reading this Upaniṣad is rather esoteric. It is quite difficult to really see what it means and how it applies to us. But with a little thought and consideration, it turns out that it's actually most applicable to us. What is said about the Upaniṣads is that they contain wisdom which is timeless and which applies to all of mankind, eastern or western. So, we are going to consider if this is so, does this apply to us here in Cape Town on the 1st December 2024? Is it as timeless as that?

The Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad expounds the word Om. There are many different ways of understanding this word. One way is to consider it like a seed. Just as all these human bodies, each one of us, originated as a seed, what is said is that the whole universe originates from a seed and the word Om is that original seed. It has become a popular, well-known symbol. But it is more than just a symbol. It is described as being the very essence of who and what we are. I will come back to this at the end to relate in more detail how the Upaniṣad refers to this essence. But to begin with, I would like to start with the three letters which combine to make the word Om, namely A, the U and M.

(Some time was spent sounding these letters and the word Om).

The Upaniṣad says that the sound 'A' describes or represents the outer world. It describes this physical creation that we look around and see, including the magnificent Table Mountain next to us which you can never tire of. The Upaniṣad says that the person who really understands this, who appreciates the Absolute in this way in its fullness and its purity, has two characteristics. This person pervades everything and attains everything. So what does the word 'pervade' mean here? If we take an example, let's say a gardener. The gardener has a garden and his or her attention pervades the garden. He or she knows every corner, every plant, every bit of grass, even every weed, knows the soil, knows everything about the garden and all that is contained in the garden. The attention goes everywhere, it pervades everything.

Similarly with the owner of a business. His or her attention will go to every aspect of the business; sales, purchases, accounts, staff, everything. There isn't a corner of the business that the owner is not interested in. The head of a school, any kind of school, likewise, his or her attention goes to all aspects of the school. Sometimes it happens in organisations that the attention slips and there are dark corners which is where bad things tend to happen. Eventually the bad things come to light and there is a problem. It's better if there aren't any dark corners.

So, in the sense that the attention naturally goes out and encompasses every part of a garden, a business or a school, in this way, the person who understands the Absolute in the form of the outer world, that person's attention goes out everywhere and pervades everything. It pervades and attains. The garden becomes part of the gardener. The business becomes part of the owner. The school becomes part of the head. The word 'attains' has the sense of 'becoming part of'. For the philosopher, the attention can naturally go out and encompass any part of the outer world. It can pervade any part of the outer world, and in that sense, the outer world becomes part of us. Sometimes it happens that some new thing comes along or a new situation, and you have to give your attention to it. That might be easy, it might happen quickly and naturally. At other times it may be necessary to keep attending to it, to keep finding out about it. It may be complicated, but if you keep at it after a while the attention pervades, and the thing becomes part of you. You can naturally know how to respond to it, how to deal with it, how to fix it if something goes wrong. This is the idea. This is enjoying the outer world. The philosopher can enjoy the outer world in the sense of pervading and attaining it. It becomes part of us, not separate. One man I know loves fixing things, like cars. He once said "I just don't have the idea 'I can't do it'". There are other people who have the idea very strongly 'I can't do it'. If a person doesn't have that idea, then the attention naturally goes out, it pervades. And the engine or whatever it is, it almost, as it were, becomes part of the person. He loves it, he loves doing it. This is the idea. Now these are very small examples but we can take this in a much greater way as well. All this is denoted by the sound 'A', the outer world.

'U' denotes the inner world, the world of knowledge and ideas. The Upaniṣad says that in the person who understands this 'the current of knowledge' becomes strong. And such a person, who enjoys this universal inner world, becomes 'equal with all'. So, let's consider this. First, the description that the current of knowledge becomes strong. Let's take the example of a scientist who is actively involved in researching some aspect of science day in, day out. The current of scientific knowledge will become strong in such a person. I used to work as a barrister, a lawyer, and then there came a time when I stopped doing that. It is an interesting experience because practising something like law, doing it day in, day out, time is spent researching cases, reading cases, going to court and so on. It is just part of what you're doing. There is an immense amount of knowledge and information which is absorbed without thinking about it. It's just what happens. Then stepping out of that, after quite a short time, a year or two, looking back, it's as though there is a current of knowledge, which is increasingly distant from where you are. And now, 25 years later, if I had to go back into that, it would be an alien world. The current of knowledge has passed on.

Now, philosophically or spiritually, in the person who is studying, hearing, practising and reflecting on the knowledge of the Self, the current of knowledge in such a person, the current of philosophic or spiritual knowledge, becomes strong.

There is a man in the School who has devoted many years to the work of Plato. He has translated it, taught it and lived with it. If you talk to him, it's obvious the current of knowledge is strong. He can relate any aspect of the Platonic teaching easily and naturally, it's all in him. It's at his fingertips, we would say. There are other people in the School who have also spent many years translating the works of Marsilio Ficino. And again, with these people, the current of the knowledge of Ficino is strong. They practically know each letter and all that is contained in it. Another person might, let's say, love Shakespeare and become a Shakespearean scholar. The current of knowledge of Shakespeare in such a person becomes strong.

This is a lovely quality when you meet this. The examples are all in a way particular, like Plato, Ficino or Shakespeare. If the current of the true knowledge of the Self is strong, this is the best of all. It encompasses everything. This is what the Upaniṣad says; in the person who understands and enjoys the universe in this sense, the inner world, the current of knowledge is strong. The Upaniṣad says such a person becomes equal with all, which is slightly a surprising description. The great commentator Ādi Śaṅkara says that the person becomes equal with all because nobody envies him.

What is noticeable about people in whom this current of knowledge is strong is that they tend to share it fully with everyone. In the examples that I have given relating to Plato and Ficino, these people are only too pleased to share the knowledge with anyone and everyone. Now it's true some people may be able to receive the knowledge more fully than others, but that's another matter. From the point of view of the individual, he or she will naturally want to share the knowledge with everyone. When somebody shares the knowledge, people like that person, they're friends with that person. They don't envy him or her. They don't have any such feelings of separation. There is a natural unity. This is the nature of the person who is at ease in this inner world of the universe. As philosophers, the knowledge of unity can become strong in us. It enables us to meet anyone and everyone equally. It's not the case that 'I like this person, so I'll give my knowledge to him, but I don't like that person, so I won't give my knowledge to him'. It is given equally and we become equal in the sense that we see everyone as equal. This is the second aspect.

The third letter in the word Om is 'M'. This denotes or represents the causal world. So, we have the outer world, the inner world, and the causal world. We can see the outer world and we can be familiar with the inner world but we can't see the causal world. It's like when we go to sleep at night and if we have a nice deep sleep, we

don't see anything. What we do know is when we wake up is that we had a nice sleep. We say we had a really good sleep. And when people sleep well, they tend to be happy.

When people don't sleep well, they tend to become anxious and unhappy. The experience of the causal world is accompanied by happiness. What the Upaniṣad says is that the person who is familiar with this world measures and absorbs everything. In a way, all of the measures are held in this causal world. It's called causal because of this. Take the Internet, the World Wide Web. How long have we had the World Wide Web? About thirty years? Thirty years ago, if somebody had been standing here and said the words World Wide Web to us, we would have thought what on earth are you talking about? Now it's a part of everyone's life. Thirty years ago, the knowledge of the World Wide Web was in the causal world, but it wasn't manifest. This is the nature of the causal world. It holds everything. It measures everything. It has the knowledge for everything. But it is unseen, unmanifest. When we go to sleep at night our personalities, our moods, our foibles, our inclinations, all of these things are unmanifest, they seem to retreat into this deep sleep. When we wake up, they all appear again, as if by magic. So, the causal world measures everything and absorbs everything. Somebody who's in charge of an organisation has to absorb everything.

One person may be interested in one thing, and the head of the organisation absorbs that. Another person is interested in something else and the head absorbs that.

Another person is unhappy about something and the head absorbs that. It is the nature of such a person that he or she absorbs everything, and in that sense brings everything to rest. Just as the ocean might absorb the waters from many different rivers.

As a philosopher we can have these attributes when we are still and at rest. We can absorb everything, we can measure and weigh everything without preference or partiality. A judge in a court of law hears the arguments from both sides, absorbs and weighs them. Then, we hope, the judge gives a measured judgment which resolves the difficulty or the dispute. When we are troubled or anxious about something we might go to someone who we regard as wise, and we say what's troubling us and it is as though that is absorbed by this person. And this wise person may or may not say something, or may or may not give some advice, but just the fact that it's been absorbed is helpful. There may just be a little bit of advice, a few words even, but that can also be extremely helpful. As philosophers we can absorb and weigh.

This is how the Upaniṣad describes the manifestations of the word Om; as the outer world, the inner world, and the causal world, all of which are recognisable or

understandable to us. Our appreciation of these, and our ability to move freely in them increases as we proceed with the practice of philosophy. However, they all completely depend on the word Om. It is said that the inner world embraces or contains the outer world, the causal world contains both the inner world and the outer world and the word Om embraces and contains all three. The Upaniṣad says the word Om is indescribable, unthinkable, beyond the reach of the mind.

However well- educated, erudite and eloquent a person may be, there is no ability to speak about this word Om. However, the Upaniṣad does give certain indications to help us. It says in this word Om the movements and the identifications and attachments to the outer world come to rest. The more we experience the true Self, the less our identifications and attachments with the world become. In Sanskrit it's called 'Prapañcopaśāmanam'. The Upaniṣad goes on to say 'Śāntam' which means peaceful. The person becomes peaceful. The next indication is the word 'Śivam', which means auspicious, propitious. Then there is the word 'Advaitam', non-dual, complete. So, although this word Om is beyond any description, the Upaniṣad is giving us some help to appreciate it. The world of attachment and identification comes to rest. It is peaceful, auspicious, and it is one without a second. This is said by the Upaniṣad to be our true Self. The self we're familiar with, which tends to be identified with and attached to all kinds of things and relationships, people, objects and activities - this is just a kind of shadow. The shadow world doesn't know peace. The shadow world is a world of multiplicity. The real person, unlike the shadow, is peaceful, auspicious and one. This is the description the Upaniṣad gives of our true Self.

The best way that we may experience this is, for us, in meditation. This is what has been given by the great teachers we are familiar with. Meditation takes us to the Self. Most of us here have been introduced to meditation in the School. Maybe some have not, and I hope in due course you will be, because as I say, meditation takes us to the experience of the true Self. We don't meditate on the word Om because it said that this is appropriate for the renunciate, not for the householder. However, the mantra that we use in meditation takes us to the same place, it takes us to the Self which is what the word Om is referring to.

The word Om is like a seed and the Upaniṣad is just one description of the nature of that seed. I've tried to relate a little of what the Upaniṣad says. The Upaniṣad is quite short, but it is full of significance. There was a great philosopher who wrote a long commentary on it. At first it can seem a bit daunting, but really it is both simple and practical. It is an Upaniṣad for us here today.

2025 LEADERS' CONFERENCE

Waterperry House
August 23-31, 2025

2025 LEADERS' CONFERENCE

FINAL MEETING – MR DONALD LAMBIE

August 31, 2025

The first thing to say is that I am delighted with the event. It has come together beautifully after quite a long time in the planning. It has been everything one could have hoped for. It is important because the unity of the School around the world is a most precious asset. But that unity needs to be fostered, cherished and looked after. Coming together like this is of the greatest value. So, as I have said, I'm delighted with the event.

We've been through a few recurring themes from the conversations with Śrī Vāsudevānanda Saraswatī and I'll just allude to those briefly.

The first was the reference to that from which all beings come, that which sustains them, and that to which they move. His Holiness has varied this from the Upaniṣad which refers to Brahman, consciousness. He's referred to that as satyam, truth, as Rāma and as ānanda. These are all the same.

It's easy for us to become identified with all the beings, which are multifarious and transitory. The Upaniṣad and His Holiness, are encouraging us to know that from which they come, the consciousness from which they come, the Self from which they come. Not to give our attention to the multiplicity, but to the unity. He has alluded to this three times so it is worth heeding.

Then we had the reference to all and everything.

The consciousness, the Self, is in everything, in everyone, in each person present here now. Likewise, all of us are within the Absolute. So the Absolute is in everything and everything is within the Absolute. And the idea is that if we remember this as appropriate, in this way, we come to experience the Self truly. We come to experience it as knowledge, light, consciousness and bliss. Again, he's referred to this on several occasions and he's trying to help us in simple, practical ways to see truly.

We discussed Dharma, Sanātana Dharma, how the laws of nature can flow through us, be embodied in us, which is to say how the Will of the Absolute, how the laws of the universe, can flow through us and be embodied by us. This isn't a mechanical process, it's a highly intelligent process. He's referred to this in lots of different ways on lots of different occasions.

And then the last recurring theme, which was emphasised most strongly last year,

was that the Self is indescribable, beyond speech. All that really could be said is to let it happen, and that's the phrase he used, to let it happen, to not get in the way of it. And this at this stage is the primary instruction or advice for the School. It was said with such emphasis last year that it's right that we take it seriously. It is echoed by the Upaniṣad we have been discussing.

What we can do is we can let the knowledge work. Mr Howard has most diligently taken a note of all the references that we've had during this week and when we finish the meeting, he'll give you a copy of this. It is on a single piece of paper, which is the best thing you can hope for. It would be good to revisit any part of this because it will connect or reconnect us with the event. We can imbibe what the sages have said. Other than that, the knowledge works as it works. But at least we can take it in. So I would encourage everyone to do this, every day for a month. Now, I'm not saying stop after a month, but just to start off, look at something from what we've done each day for the next month. And then after that, as it may be.

So these are the four recurring themes we have considered.

We have looked at the Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad, which is really a most succinct but profound work. It begins with all this is Om. Om is Brahman and this Self is Brahman. Then it proceeds to speak of four quarters, really to make it more accessible to us.

The first quarter is the waking state. When anyone becomes familiar with this, they are at home in the world. They are happy to move and act in the world, can earn a living and play a good part in the world in a way which is enjoyable rather than overwhelming. Such a person knows how to behave and conduct him or herself in worldly matters, easily, lightly. So it's quite something, the first quarter. And of course it's magnificent. It is really vast and beyond imagination.

The second quarter is the subtle world. With this a person becomes at home in this subtle world, gains something of the brilliance. The word is *taijasa*, which is from *tejas*, the fire of the Absolute, the light of the Absolute. The light of the Absolute lights the mind, lights the being and lights the world. This person increases the current of knowledge. It can be spiritual knowledge and or worldly knowledge. This is the nature of the subtle world, *taijasa*.

The third quarter is *prājña*, the causal state. Here the person is steady, settled, connected, centred. He has some understanding of the deeper laws which govern the creation. He can measure out things. So there's an aspect of profundity with this third quarter. It is accompanied with a deep sense of happiness.

When you put these three together you have got what you might call a really well-

rounded man or woman. None of it, of course, makes sense or ultimately is possible without the fourth quarter, the Self, which the Upaniṣad describes beautifully as ekātmapratyayasāram prapañcopaśamam śāntam śivam advaitam. This we have looked at reasonably carefully.

So you put these four quarters together and it's just wonderful. It's liberating, it's everything.

This is one way of understanding the Upaniṣad and there are other ways of understanding. I'm not putting this forward as the only way. But for our purposes, it perhaps is a helpful way.

So these are the things we've looked at. And as I say, I'm delighted with how it's gone. It has been excellent.

I made reference to a possible trip to India. We will have to look at the dates and make arrangements. It is in mind to give the opportunity to as many people as reasonably possible. But it has to be within a workable number, so you just have to, if you will, leave that with me and I'll do the best I can. There is a limit to what's workable and what's going to be a good event. So, we'll just have to see how that looks.

We began with the statement from Śrī Śāntānanda Saraswatī,

'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. The creation is only of one type, the perfect, which exists in reality. It is basically full of bliss. This is neither good nor bad, neither pleasant nor painful. In the presence of the Self this play of creation is experienced with bliss. When the other becomes important, then associations increase and patterns of pleasures and pains evolve and multiply, which deepen the forgetfulness of the Self. To bring people back to the Self one needs satsanga where the true nature of man 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." (1980: 1.1; Vol.3 , p.66)

This is a wonderful description of what we've been about during this week. The good company does indeed help all to remember the Self and unite the play of creation with bliss.

Q&A

Question: Mr Lambie, we would like to thank you and all the people who were involved for an excellent and most insightful week. And thank you very much for the continued and invaluable guidance you have given us all these years. Thank you.

Answer: Thank you very much.

Question: And lastly, in addition to what you said, is there any other message you want us to take back to the students in the schools?

Answer: All of this, all that we've discussed, in whatever way it is understood, is to be shared and to be given. In School and wherever. His Holiness, again last year, was encouraging us to make the Teaching as fully available everywhere as we possibly can. It is very much appreciated that enormous efforts are made in this regard and everyone here works extremely hard. Just continue with that, so the light of the Self can shine everywhere in everyone. I hope you'll go home and share, in whatever way you can, what has happened, what has been discussed and considered and what has been appreciated.

His Holiness at one stage said the three things to be cherished are faith, enthusiasm and encouragement. This applies to junior and senior students. Faith is what keeps people going. Enthusiasm gives the energy, light and vitality. And encouragement is always welcome. There is no one to whom this does not apply. All this can be transmitted, the faith, enthusiasm and encouragement.

Question: I'm so grateful for the opportunity to be here and what has resonated most deeply with me this week is the word śāntam and I will carry out with me and I will share that and everything else with the students.

Answer: Thank you. Please send our warmest regards to all the retired leaders. They have all played a most significant part in getting us to where we are here now. You can tell them that that that's much appreciated and they're very much in our hearts and we wish them all well. So please pass that on.

Question: It was very, very nice to revisit 'Yato vā' because many years ago it was Mr MacLaren who gave us that śruti and I just remember him up there, chuckling away and the depth of the sound. So very nice to, you know, to meet that again. And it fits in so beautifully with what we've been looking at.

Answer: Well, it does, and it turns out to be profound, but also simple and practical. We have got 40 beings here and you can easily get identified with the 40 different beings. When that happens, we get lost in the multiplicity. But the Upaniṣad is

encouraging us to recognise that from which all of these beings have come, that which is sustaining us all, which is invisible, intangible and yet ever present. You can't see it, touch it, taste it, hear it or think it. But you can be it. So it is a really marvellous piece of advice. As we have discussed, it says *tadvijñāsasva*, crave to know that. It's saying really give your attention to this. This is most valuable, most important. Don't be half hearted about it.

Question: I was very struck by what you said yesterday afternoon about the choir and producing another Mozart and your comments around that. And this must have been turning in my head at some level because I ended up this morning disinfecting surfaces and they were just next door in the library and in one second, I was disinfecting the chair and the next second there was a quickening, where it felt that I was part of a renaissance. It just changed in the instance, and it was so clear and so joyful and it seems so important. And how to cultivate that? What was most attractive about it was that this was a simple thing – wiping a chair.

Answer: Yes, very good. It is true, we are part of a renaissance, a rebirth. Quite what form that takes, we can't necessarily say but really, it's an extraordinary coming together of East and West, the wisdom of the Veda and the situation we have here. What can come of it is extraordinary.

We have the conversations with the Śāṅkarācārya, which we do our best to study, to understand and to realise. That is our part, it is what we can do. The more that takes place, the more energy in a way is given to them. They've got their own energy, but the fact that people work with them and realise them releases that energy. The thought here is that just as now two and a half thousand years later, we study the words of Plato, the Bible and similar things, in one or two thousand years' time, these words will still be available, studied and treasured. And that they can play a part in uplifting the world for a thousand years and more. So, it is good to see them translated into French and Greek and whatever else. We will all be long since dead and gone, and all of this will be dead and gone. But the wisdom will not be dead and gone. Anyway, we just have to attend to what is in front of us and realise the truth of what is in front of us.

Question: Mr Lambie, as I'm sitting here, I'm just astounded by the level of riches, the support, the good company of both the leaders and the servers has been truly amazing. I mean and we really can move forward as a group of people who are working together. Because I really feel that we are all working together on this journey. It's just been a wonderful, wonderful week and I feel very supported.

Answer: The service team have been magnificent. We will have a chance to say thank you a little bit later. But yes, there are great riches. You will recall His Holiness said the Self holds all the treasury the world is aware of and meditation takes us to

that treasury. What happens is when we become really still and connect with the Self, there may be some insight, some experience, something which is like a precious gem, and that becomes available. When we come together a lot of riches become available. Again, the idea is that we spread those riches as widely as we can. And the more they are given, the more they multiply. They don't diminish.

His Holiness referred to the godown of knowledge; a godown is a kind of warehouse. It is a Hindi word for a warehouse. I remember going to South Africa shortly after Mr Maclaren died and there were nine or ten weeks ahead of us in South Africa, Australia and America. The thought came into mind 'If I keep giving whatever knowledge I have, I'm going to run out.' This was a little bit disturbing, but then the memory was of the godown of knowledge and that His Holiness said the more the knowledge is given, the more there is. So, this was remembered and it has proved to be true. The more you give the more there is. When people try to hold it for themselves in some way or another, it ossifies.

The other thing I remember quite early on is that having been made the leader of the School, there were all sorts of people around, who'd been in a senior group and who were steeped in wisdom and were wonderful people. And this was a little bit intimidating. 'There are all these wonderful, amazing people and, you know, aren't I supposed to be more wonderful?' Anyway, the resolution to this was that you should never be afraid of someone's brilliance, someone's wisdom. You should welcome it. It's what we want. The more brilliance there is, the more wisdom there is, the better it is. It would be terrible to be part of an organisation where the person in charge is trying to control things and limit things and the like. We all want to be part of a School where there can be growth, where the Self can, as it were, expand and show Itself. So, it's never useful to be unnerved by somebody else's wisdom. You're just grateful that there's some wisdom, wherever it comes from.

Question: I just want to join the others who have given their thanks. I'd like to thank you for taking us through this week carefully, painstakingly explaining all the key ideas. What stood out for me was something you said yesterday. I thought I knew what you meant, but what is meant by unity and diversity? And the way it was explained yesterday sent me back to the Conversations, another thing I want to thank you for, telling us to bring that, because His Holiness answers all questions in there. But you mentioned that we can give unity and quiet unity to a situation.

Answer: That's right, yes.

Question: And in the Conversations His Holiness talks about that, saying don't be agitated by the diversity. And that's the thing that would trip me up and it was so clearly explained, so I really appreciate that. As I mentioned in my group last day, this morning I got up, there was some strange thing on the chest, on the inside, not

disturbing, but it was there, it was an intrusion. After the sounding with Warwick, it disappeared. And there was a release by the end of the reflection, and I really cannot, words are not available to explain, how much I appreciate that. Thank you very much.

Answer: Very good. Thank you. Well, two things on what you've said. Firstly, as a teacher, you will know, the greatest reward or gratitude that a student or pupil can give to his or her teacher is to understand what has been imparted, to take it to heart and take it forward. And this would apply to His Holiness or anyone, that above all what he would want is that we hear, understand and realise what he's been saying. And that is very best way of expressing gratitude. The second thing is to keep the company of His Holiness. Each day, just keep the company. It doesn't have to be for long. Now we live in a computer world, which is only going to become more computerised with AI and so on, but try to keep His Holiness out of the computer. There's a book and there are words and there are ears. Try to keep it simple. So, keep the company of His Holiness. It's ever fresh and full of vitality.

Question: Mr Lambie, His Holiness Śrī Śāntānanda Mahārāji made a resolution that under the agency of Mr MacLaren, which the last thirty plus years, you are the agency; through that agency, the School would reach full development.

Answer: That's right.

Question: In which the members and students in School can realise oneself. So this coming together of new faces and new impulses, gives the responsibility to everyone here to play their part, to see that resolution, given by the Self, in the form of the teacher, takes full manifestation and I'm confident, come what may, if we just stick to it, it's going to happen.

Answer: It is, absolutely. Stick to it. Very good. I remember you saying once at Wallkill, really, all that has to happen is the student has to turn up. But there is turning up and turning up. It's a very good idea to turn up physically. People have come from all around the world. It's extraordinary that people have turned up. It's no small matter. But of course, there's a turning up mentally and emotionally. To turn up, to be present, here, now, is to turn up. So we just have to turn up and stick to it. And we can be fully confident of all that may follow.

Question: Mr Lambie, I was sitting on the bench, just contemplating how best to express a bigger form of gratitude for the abundance of all that has been received. There's no appropriate superlative that comes to mind to express the scale of abundance. The care, the food, the service team, the comfort. And the depth of wisdom coming forth from Mr Lambie. The goddess, Sarasvatī, was unrestricted. The depth of wisdom just came forward. And really, it's such a position of privilege

that it cannot be for the individual. The best attempt will be made to share this with the School and promulgate it.

Answer: Good.

Question: In addition to that, there's also a sense of the responsibility at a personal level, in addition to serving the School. And what came to mind arising from the four themes that you presented in, please correct me if this is wrong, from the four themes about the settlement for That, being the imminent truth, the bliss, the Brahman is myself, and everything is Brahman. That also makes it very immediate now. And then the subtlety of the Dharma, that it's not a manual, it's a subtleness, it's going to be worked at and arrived at. So the power lies, in perhaps a bigger form of gratitude – to go forward, not to the idea that the truth is yet to be discovered. But rather that the truth is being discovered, and to let greater facets and greater depths of it be manifest.

Answer: Yes. It's being discovered every day. That's right. Lovely. Thank you. All right, maybe we will leave it there. But as I say, it's been a splendid occasion and all your efforts are much appreciated, so keep going, happily.

MĀṆḌŪKYA VERSES FOR REFLECTION

From the SL61 Material

- Introduction
- Step 1 – Ekātmapratyayasāram
 - Note on Pratyaya
 - Note on Sāram
 - The Words in Relation to One Another
- Step 2 - Prapañcopaśamam śāntam śivamadvaitam
 - Note on Prapañcopaśamam
 - Note on Śāntam
 - Note on Śivam
 - Note on Advaitam
- Further Guidance From Śrī Śāntānanda Sarasvatī

INTRODUCTION

The Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad contains a magnificent exposition on the word ॐ. There is an extensive commentary on the Upaniṣad by the sage Gauḍapāda, who is said to have been in the line of teachers of Śrī Śaṅkara's teacher. The first section of Gauḍapāda's work is a direct commentary on the Upaniṣad and is interwoven into it. The following three sections of Gauḍapāda move on to related subjects. Śrī Śaṅkara wrote an extensive commentary on both the Upaniṣad and Gauḍapāda's work. All in all there is a lot.

For present purposes however, we will take a part of verse 7 of the Upaniṣad for reflection. This verse begins with a series of negations - the Supreme Self is not conscious of an inner or an outer world, it is unseen, beyond the realm of worldly dealings, ungraspable, beyond mind and speech. It then moves on, to give a series of positive indications for the Self. These point the way to the deeper experience of that Self.

STEP 1 – EKĀTMAPRATYAYASĀRAM

The Upaniṣad states एकत्मप्रत्ययसारम् (ekātmapratyayasāram). This consists of four words which are in compound form.

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|--|
| एकत्मप्रत्ययसारम् ekātmapratyayasāram |
| एक – (eka 227/3) one, single, alone, chief, pre-eminent, excellent, sincere, truthful |
| आत्म – Self (आत्म is the form आत्मन् (135/1) takes when it is within a compound word) |
| प्रत्यय – (pratyaya 673/3) belief, firm conviction, trust, faith, assurance, certainty of, proof. |
| सारम् – (sāram 1208/1) the core, pith, strength, energy, essence, substance, quintessence, essential part |

NOTE ON PRATYAYA

'Pratyaya' is sometimes translated by the word 'belief' but that does not really do justice to the word. Ultimately it refers to the full realisation or experience of the Self which is without any shred of doubt and which is totally assured. Śrī Śāntānanda Sarasvatī gave an example which helps with this word:

An accountant has to harmonise the balance sheets. The amounts of income, expenditure and balance must match. If there is a mistake, it would not be let go. Usually, a big mistake is easily discovered, but the infinitesimal mistake is difficult to trace. When it is found out and balance corresponds to income and expenditure, then not only a wave of joy follows, but truth being realised settlement comes for all times. The doubt is vanquished for ever. Confidence is total. (1985 5.4; Vol. 3, p218)

NOTE ON SĀRAM

Hanuman, Rāma's servant, can be taken to illustrate the strength which is available when we connect with our inner essence. For example there is this passage:

In the life of Śrī Rāma as described in the Rāmāyaṇa, when Sītā was lost and no one in the camp of Rāma knew her whereabouts, Rāma sent Hanumān to go south and look for Sītā. Having done so, he reported the exploits, that he had met Sītā and consoled her by giving her Rāma's ring, killed a number of rākṣasas, beaten Rāvaṇa in discussion, burnt the golden Laṅkā and filled the inhabitants with terror. While he was describing all this, others thought he was being proud and claiming it all for himself. But at the end he said: 'My Lord, all this was done by your śakti and I was only an instrument.' (1973, 8.4; Vol. 2, p69)

THE WORDS IN RELATION TO ONE ANOTHER

Grammatically there is no fixed way that the meaning of these words in relation to each other can be understood. Śrī Śaṅkara gives two ways of understanding these words:

It (the Self) is to be spotted (sāram) by the unchanging belief (pratyaya) that it is the same Self (eka ātma) that subsists in the states of waking, dreaming and sleeping.

He gives a second interpretation:

Turīya has for its valid proof (sāram), the single (eka) belief in (pratyaya) the Self (ātma).

We can reflect on these words either individually or together.

STEP 2 - PRAPAÑCOPAŚAMAM ŚĀNTAM ŚIVAMADVAITAM

Verse 7 continues, प्रपञ्चोपशमम् शान्तम् शिवमद्वैतम् (prapañcopaśamam śāntam śivamadvaitam).

प्रपञ्चोपशमम् शान्तम् शिवमद्वैतम्
prapañcopaśamam śāntam śivamadvaitam

प्रपञ्च – (prapañca 681/3) expansion, development, manifestation,
the visible world, five (elements)

उपशमम् – (upaśamam 207/3) becoming calm, quiet, stopping,
tranquillity

शान्तम् – (śāntam 1064/2) tranquil, calm, friendly, gentle, kind

शिवम् – (śivam 1074/1) auspicious, gracious, propitious, happy.

अद्वैतम् – (advaitam 19/3 peerless, sole, unique)

NOTE ON PRAPAÑCOPAŚAMAM

In the 1987 conversations, Śrī Śāntānanda Sarasvatī was asked a number of questions about the Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad. For example he said:

The real essence of the prapañcopaśama is not to stop prakṛti within or without, but to minimise and stop attaching prakṛti to Ātman, while yet taking part in all deliberations of prakṛti and its prapañca which happen to come one's way. (1987 1.3; Vol. 4, p5)

There can be an idea to try to make everything in the world and 'my life' calm and free from stressful people and situations. That plainly does not happen. We cannot stop the waves arising on the face of the ocean, but we can minimise and stop identifying with them. We do not have to be overwhelmed by them.

In the same answer His Holiness gave a helpful analogy:

During the summer, heat waves create an illusion of water over desert sand. The illusion of water is there by virtue of the laws of nature, and they are there to exist under certain circumstances. No wisdom can undo them.

The use of wisdom and reason is to have true knowledge of the phenomenon and, having seen this illusion of water, to refrain from a desire to quench the thirst or have a dip to get fresh.

NOTE ON ŚĀNTAM

Etty Hillesum (1914-43) was a Dutch Jewish woman who met her death at Auschwitz. She wrote:

Ultimately, we have just one moral duty: to reclaim large areas of peace in ourselves, more and more peace, and to reflect it toward others. And the more peace there is in us, the more peace there will be in our troubled world.

NOTE ON ŚIVAM

Śrī Śāntānanda Sarasvatī said:

The experience of kaivalya is, as the hymn by Śaṅkara says, śivaḥ kevalo'ham. 'I am Śiva alone', harmonious, propitious and blissful, conscious and true. Apart from that Śiva which I am, there is nothing true or real, nothing conscious and nothing as a source of bliss. In this state, every perception, conception or volition appears as true, conscious and blissful. There is no hankering because it is all oneself. (1991:5.1; Vol. 4, p153)

And Shakespeare said:

Thy grace being gain'd cures all disgrace in me (*Love's Labours Lost* 4.3)

NOTE ON ADVAITAM

Speaking of this, Śrī Śāntānanda Sarasvatī said:

Ignorance of advaita means involvement without any chance of escape. It sometimes gives pleasure, sometimes pain, and they come in turn. It creates worries and worries reduce the chances of future freedom from attachment. If advaita is accepted, involvement ceases. One watches everything as it is. The mind is not preoccupied with worries. One is free to change a situation without claim of result. One gets proper sleep and every day dawns with opportunity. Illusion is dissolved but the universal drama goes on to be watched in good health and vigour. (1985:4.4; Vol. 3, p211)

FURTHER GUIDANCE FROM ŚRĪ ŚĀNTĀNANDA SARASVATĪ

Elsewhere His Holiness said this about the part of verse 7 that we are referring to:

Ekātmapratyayasāram – the essence of all valid knowledge of the Self in unity with the creation and the creator can arise only by practical and true application of unity in diversity.

Prapañcopaśamam – in that true knowledge of the Self the proliferations of prakṛti causing illusions, deceptions and fantasies tend to minimise until true unity dawns.

Śāntam – that which is quiet in fulfilment of unity refrains from indulging in agitations caused by diversity.

Śivamadvaitam – the auspicious established in advaita dispels illusions, manifesting good tidings in the knowledge of the truth in action.

(Volume 6 p.20)

MĀṆḌŪKYA UPANIṢAD

ŚAṆKARĀCĀRYA'S TWO-FOLD INVOCATION

*These two verses appear at the beginning of
Śaṅkarācārya's introduction to the Upaniṣad.*

ŚĀṆKARĀCĀRYA'S INVOCATION

VERSE 1

प्रज्ञानांशुप्रतानैः स्थिरचरनिकरव्यापिभिर्व्याप्य लोकान् भुक्त्वा
भोगान्स्थविष्ठान्पुनरपि धिषणोद्भ्रामितान्कामजन्यान् ।
पीत्वा सर्वान्विशेषान्स्वपिति मधुरभुङ् मायया भोजयन्नो
मायासंख्यातुरीयं परममृतमजं ब्रह्म यत्तन्नतो ऽस्मि ॥१॥

prajñānāṁśupratānaiḥ sthiracaranikaravyāpibhirvyāpya lokān bhuktvā
bhogānsthaviṣṭhānpunarapi dhiṣaṇodbhāsītānkāmajanyān |
pītvā sarvānviśeṣānsvapiti madhurabhuṅ māyayā bhojayanno
māyāsaṅkhyāturiyaṃ paramamṛtamajaṃ brahma yattannato 'smi ||1||

(1) I bow to that Brahman which after having enjoyed¹
(during the waking state) the gross objects by pervading all
the human objectives through a diffusion of Its rays² of
unchanging Consciousness that embraces all that moves or
does not move; which again after having drunk³ (during
the dream state) all the variety of objects, produced by
desire (as well as action and ignorance) and lighted up by
the intellect,⁴ sleeps while enjoying bliss and making us
enjoy through Māyā; and which is counted as the Fourth
from the point of view of Māyā, and is supreme, immortal,
and birthless.

¹ Enjoyment consisting in witnessing the various mental moods of happiness, sorrow, etc.

² The individual souls that are but reflections of Brahman on the intellect.

³ That is, having merged all in the unrealized Self.

⁴ Existing only subjectively in the form of mental moods or impressions of past experience.

ŚAṄKARĀCĀRYA'S INVOCATION

VERSE 2

यो विश्वात्मा विधिजविषयान्प्राश्य भोगान्स्थविष्ठान्
पश्चाद्भ्रान्तान्स्वमतिविभवाञ्ज्योतिषा स्वेन सूक्ष्मान् ।
सर्वानेतान्पुनरपि शनैः स्वात्मनि स्थापयित्वा हित्वा
सर्वान्विशेषान्विगतगुणगणः पात्वसौ नस्तुरीयः ॥ २ ॥

yo viśvātmā vidhijaviṣayānprāśya bhogānsthaviṣṭhān
paścāccānyānsvamativibhavāñjyotiṣā svena sūkṣmān |
sarvānetānpunarapi śanaiḥ svātmani sthāpayitvā hitvā
sarvānviśeṣānvigatagaṇagaṇaḥ pātvasau nasturīyaḥ || 2 ||

(2) May that Fourth one protect us which, after having identified Itself with the universe,⁵ enjoys (during the cosmic waking state) the gross objects created by virtue (and vice); which again (during the cosmic dream state⁶) experiences through Its own light the subtle objects of enjoyment that are called up by Its own intellect; which, further (in sound sleep or cosmic dissolution), withdraws promptly all these into Itself; and which lastly becomes free from all attributes tributes by discarding every distinction and difference.

⁵ The cosmic gross body of Virāt.

⁶ As identified with the cosmic subtle body of Hiraṇyagarbha.

MĀṆḌŪKYA UPANIṢAD

VERSE 7 AND ETYMOLOGY

VERSE 7

नान्तःप्रज्ञं न बहिष्प्रज्ञं नोभयतःप्रज्ञं न प्रज्ञानघनं न प्रज्ञं नाप्रज्ञम् ।
अदृष्टमव्यवहार्यमग्रह्यमलक्षणमचिन्त्यमव्यपदेश्यमेकात्मप्रत्ययसारं
प्रपञ्चोपशमं शान्तं शिवमद्वैतं चतुर्थं मन्यन्ते स आत्मा स विज्ञेयः ॥७॥

nāntaḥprajñam na bahiṣprajñam nobhayataḥprajñam
na prajñānaghanam na prajñam nāprajñam |
adr̥ṣṭam avyavahāryam agrāhyam alakṣaṇam acintyam
avyapadeśyam ekātmapratyayasāraṁ prapañcopaśamaṁ śāntaṁ
śivam advaitaṁ caturthaṁ manyante sa ātmā sa vijñeyaḥ || 7 ||

They consider the Fourth to be that which is not conscious of the internal world, nor conscious of the external world, nor conscious of both the worlds, nor a mass of consciousness, nor simple consciousness, nor unconsciousness; which is unseen, beyond empirical dealings, beyond the grasp (of the organs of action), uninferable, unthinkable, indescribable; whose valid proof consists in the single belief in the Self; in which all phenomena cease; and which is unchanging, auspicious, and non-dual. This is the Self, and that is to be known.

| | |
|-------------------------|---|
| nāntaḥprajñam | not conscious of the internal world |
| na bahiṣprajñam | not conscious of the external world |
| nobhayataḥprajñam | not conscious of both the worlds |
| na prajñānaghanam | not a mass of consciousness |
| na prajñam | not simple consciousness |
| nāprajñam | not unconsciousness |
| adr̥ṣṭam | unseen |
| avyavahāryam | beyond empirical dealings |
| agrāhyam | beyond the grasp (of the organs of action) |
| alakṣaṇam | uninferable |
| acintyam | unthinkable |
| avyapadeśyam | indescribable |
| eka-ātma-pratyaya-sāraṁ | valid proof consists in the single belief in the Self |
| prapañca-upaśamaṁ | in which all phenomena cease |
| śāntaṁ | which is unchanging |
| śivam | auspicious |
| advaitaṁ | non-dual |

VERSE 7 ETYMOLOGY

Part 1

नान्तःप्रज्ञं न बहिष्प्रज्ञं नोभयतःप्रज्ञं न प्रज्ञानघनं न प्रज्ञं नाप्रज्ञम् ।

nāntaḥprajñam na bahiṣprajñam nobhayataḥprajñam
na prajñānaghanam na prajñam nāprajñam |

“(They consider the Fourth to be that which is) not conscious of the internal (world), nor conscious of the external (world), nor conscious of both (the worlds) nor a mass of consciousness, nor simple consciousness, nor unconsciousness . . .”

Note: The following are indications of तुरीय , the fourth quarter and are governed by the verb मन्यन्ते , meaning 'They consider'. They are therefore the कर्म (object) of that verb and so take endings of the second विभक्ति.

न ॥ 2 न 523/1 अव्यय । not

अन्तःप्रज्ञम् ॥ अन्तःप्रज्ञ 43/1 अम् । एक० । नपुं।

that which is conscious of the internal world

अन्तः see अन्तर् 43/2 internal + 2 प्रज्ञ 659/1 wise, conscious

1 प्र 652/2 forward + 1 ज्ञा 425/2 to experience, know

धातुपाठः । ज्ञा अवबोधने

अवबोधन 101/2 informing, teaching

न ॥ 2 न 523/1 अव्यय । not

बहिष्प्रज्ञम् ॥ बहिष्प्रज्ञ 727/1 अम् । एक० । नपुं।

that which is conscious of the external world

बहिष् 726/3 outside + 2 प्रज्ञ 659/1 wise, conscious

1 प्र + 1 ज्ञा as above

न ॥ 2 न 523/1 अव्यय । not

उभयतःप्रज्ञम् ॥ उभयतःप्रज्ञ 216/3 अम् । एक० । नपुं।

that which is conscious of both worlds

उभयतस् 216/3 अव्यय on both sides

उभ 216/2 both + 2 प्रज्ञ 659/1 wise, conscious

1 प्र + 1 ज्ञा as above

न ॥ 2 न 523/1 अव्यय | not

प्रज्ञानचनम् ॥ प्रज्ञान 659/1 consciousness + चन 376/1 अम् ।स्क° ।नपुं।

a mass of consciousness

2 प्रज्ञ 659/1 wise, conscious

1 प्र + 1 ज्ञा as above

न ॥ 2 न 523/1 अव्यय | not

प्रज्ञम् ॥ 2 प्रज्ञ 659/1 wise, conscious अम् ।स्क° ।नपुं। consciousness

1 प्र + 1 ज्ञा as above

न ॥ 2 न 523/1 अव्यय | not

अप्रज्ञम् ॥ अप्रज्ञ 57/2 अम् ।स्क° ।नपुं। unconsciousness

अ 1/1 not 2 प्रज्ञ 659/1 wise, conscious

1 प्र + 1 ज्ञा as above

अदृष्टमव्यवहार्यमग्रह्यमलक्षणमचिन्त्यमव्यपदेश्यम्

adr̥ṣṭam avyavahāryam agrāhyam alakṣaṇam acintyam avyapadeśyam

“ . . . which is unseen, beyond empirical dealings, beyond the grasp (of the organs of action), uninferable, unthinkable, indescribable; ...”

अदृष्टम् ॥ अदृष्ट 18/3 अम् । रक° । नपुं । unseen

अ 1/1 not + दृष्ट 491/3 seen, looked at

दृश् 491/1 to see, behold,

धातुपाठः । दृशिर् प्रेक्षणे ।

प्रेक्षण 712/2 view, sight

अव्यवहार्यम् ॥ अव्यवहार्य 112/1 not to be practised, not to be discussed

अम् । रक° । नपुं । beyond empirical dealings

अ 1/1 not + व्यवहार्य 1034/3 to be transacted or practised

व्य 1028/2 in comp for 3 वि 949/3 apart, asunder, + अवहार्य 106/3

2 अव 96/1 (as prefix to verbs etc.) off, away, down

हार्य 1289/3 to be borne or carried

हृ 1302/1 to take, bear, carry

धातुपाठः । हृञ् हरणे ।

हरण 1289/1 carrying, containing

अग्राह्यम् ॥ अग्राह्य 6/3 not to be perceived or obtained अम् । रक° । नपुं ।

beyond grasp

अ 1/1 not + ग्राह्य 373/1 to be seized or taken or held

ग्रह् 371/2 to seize, overpower

धातुपाठः । ग्रह उपादाने ।

उपादान 213/2 the act of taking for oneself, perceiving, noticing

अलक्षणम् ॥ अलक्षण 94/1 having no signs or marks अम् ।एक० ।नपुं।

uninferable

अ 1/1 not + लक्षण 892/1 indicating, attribute

लक्ष् 891/3 to perceive, observe

धातुपाठः । लक्ष दर्शनाङ्कनयोः

दर्शन 470/3 seeing, perceiving or अङ्कन 7/2 marking

अचिन्त्यम् ॥ अचिन्त्य 9/1 inconceivable अम् ।एक० ।नपुं।

unthinkable

अ 1/1 not + चिन्त्य 398/2 to be thought about

चिन्त 398/1 to think, have a thought

4 चित् 395/2 to perceive, fix the mind

धातुपाठः । चिती सञ्ज्ञाने ।

सञ्ज्ञान 1133/3 producing harmony, consciousness

अव्यपदेश्यम् ॥ अव्यपदेश्य 111/3 no designation अम् ।एक० ।नपुं।

indescribable

अ 1/1 not + व्यपदेश्य 1031/3 to be designated, represented

व्य 1028/2 in comp for 3 वि 949/3 apart, asunder,

अपदेश्य 49/2 assigning, pointing out

अप 47/3 (as prefix to nouns etc.) away, off

देश 496/2 point, region, spot

1 दिश् 479/3 to point out, show, exhibit

धातुपाठः । दिश अतिसर्जने ।

अतिसर्जन 16/1 the act of giving away, granting liberality

एकात्मप्रत्ययसारं प्रपञ्चोपशमं शान्तं शिवमद्वैतं
चतुर्थं मन्यन्ते स आत्मा स विज्ञेयः ॥

ekātmapratyayasāraṃ prapañcōpaśamaṃ śāntaṃ śivam advaitaṃ
caturthaṃ manyante sa ātmā sa vijñeyaḥ ||

“... whose valid proof consists in the single belief in the Self, in which all phenomena cease; and which is unchanging, auspicious, and non-dual. This is the Self, and that is to be known.”

एकात्मप्रत्ययसारं ॥ अम् । एक० । नपुं ।

एक ॥ एक 227/3 one, alone; single
5 इ 163/3 to go, walk, flow
धातुपाठः । इण् गतौ ।
गति 347/3 going, moving

आत्म ॥ आत्मन् 135/1 Self

प्रत्यय ॥ प्रत्यय 673/3 firm conviction; belief
प्रती 673/2 to go towards
प्रति 661/2 अव्यय (as prefix to roots etc.) towards, near to
+ 5 इ as above

सारम् 2 सार 1208/1 the core or pith, substance or essence
valid proof
see 1 सार 1208/1 course, motion, extension
सृ 1244/3 run, flow, glide
धातुपाठः । सृ गतौ ।
गति 347/3 going, moving

प्रपञ्चोपशमम् ॥ अम् । एक० । नपुं ।

| | |
|------------|--|
| प्रपञ्चो | <p>प्रपञ्च 681/3 expansion, development, <u>phenomena</u></p> <p>1 प्र 652/2 before, forward + पञ्च 575/3 in compound for -</p> <p>पञ्चन् 578/2 to spread out the hand with its 5 fingers</p> <p>1 पच् 575/1 to spread out, make clear</p> <p>धातुपाठः ।पचि व्यक्तीकरणे ।</p> <p>व्यक्तीकरण 1029/3 the act of making manifest or clear</p> |
| उपशमम् ॥ | <p>उपशम 207/3 becoming quiet, assuagement; <u>have ceased</u></p> <p>उप 194/3 towards, near, +</p> <p>शम् 1053/3 to become quiet, stop</p> <p>धातुपाठः ।शमु उपशमे ।</p> <p>उपशम 207/3 becoming quiet</p> |
| शान्तम् ॥ | <p>शान्त 1064/2 calm, pacified, tranquil; अम् ।एक° ।नपुं।</p> <p><u>unchanging</u></p> <p>शम् as above</p> |
| शिवम् ॥ | <p>शिव 1074/1 propitious, gracious, favourable; अम् ।एक° ।नपुं।</p> <p><u>auspicious</u></p> <p>1 शी 1077/1 to lie, lie down, recline, repose</p> <p>धातुपाठः ।शीङ् स्वप्ने ।</p> <p>स्वप्न 1280/3 sleeping, sleep</p> |
| अद्वैतम् ॥ | <p>अद्वैत 19/3 having no duplicate, unique; अम् ।एक° ।नपुं।</p> <p><u>non-dual</u></p> <p>अ 1/1 not + द्वैत 507/2 duality, duplicity</p> <p>द्वै 507/2 form of द्वि in compound</p> <p>द्वि 504/3 two</p> |

ŚAṄKARĀCĀRYA'S CONCLUDING SALUTATIONS

*These three verses appear at the end of
Śaṅkarācārya's commentary
on Gauḍapāda's Kārikā.*

VERSE 1

SALUTATION TO THE ABSOLUTE

अजमपि जनियोगं प्रापदैश्वर्ययोगादगति
च गतिमत्तां प्रापदेकं ह्यनेकम् ।
विविधविषयधर्मग्राहिमुग्धेक्षणानां
प्रणतभयविहन्तु ब्रह्म यत्तन्नतोऽस्मि ॥ १ ॥

ajamapi janiyogaṃ prāpadaiśvaryayogādagati
ca gatimattāṃ prāpadekaṃ hyanekam |
vividhaviṣayadharmagrāhimugdhekṣaṇānāṃ
praṇatabhayavihanṭu brahma yattannato'smi || 1 ||

1. I bow down (*nataḥ*) to that Absolute which, though birthless (*ajam*), appears to be born through Its inscrutable power; which, though ever quiescent (*agati*), appears to be in motion; which, though one (*ekam*), appears to be multiple to those whose vision has become perverted by the perception of diverse attributes of objects; and which destroys the fear (*bhayavihanṭu*) of those who take shelter (*praṇata*) in It.

VERSE 2

SALUTATION TO THE TEACHER OF MY TEACHER

प्रज्ञावैशाखवेधक्षुभितजलनिधेर्वेदनाम्नोऽन्तरस्थं
भूतान्यालोक्य मग्नान्यविरतजननग्राहघोरे समुद्रे ।
कारुण्यादुद्धधारमृतमिदममरैर्दुर्लभं भूतहेतोर्यस्तं
पूज्याभिपूज्यं परमगुरुममुं पादपातैर्नतोऽस्मि ॥ २ ॥

prajñāvaiśākhavedhakṣubhitajalanidhervedanāmno'ntarasthaṃ
bhūtānyālokya magnānyaviratajananagrāhaghore samudre |
kāruṇyāduddadhāramṛtamidamamarairdurlabhaṃ bhūtahetoryastaṃ
pūjyābhipūjyaṃ paramagurumamuṃ pādapātairnato'smi || 2 ||

2. I salute (*nataḥ*) by prostrating myself at the feet (*pādapātaiḥ*) of that teacher of my teacher (*paramagurum*), the most adorable among the adorable (*pūjya*), who, on seeing the creatures drowned in the terrible sea (of the world) infested with sea-monsters in the form of repeated births, extricated, out of compassion for all beings (*bhūtahetoryastam*), this nectar, which is difficult to be obtained even by gods and which lies in the depths of the ocean called the Vedas, which (Vedas) stirred up by inserting the churning rod of his illumined intellect (*prajñā*).

VERSE 3

SALUTATION TO MY TEACHER

यत्प्रज्ञालोकभासा प्रतिहतिमगमत्स्वान्तमोहान्धकारे
मज्जोन्मज्जच्च घोरे ह्यसकृदुपजनोदन्वति त्रासने मे ।
यत्पादावाश्रितानां श्रुतिशमविनयप्राप्तिरग्रय ह्यमोघा
तत्पादौ पावनीयौ भवभयविन्दुौ सर्वभावैर्नमस्ये ॥ ३ ॥

yatprajñālokabhāsā pratihatimagamatsvāntamohāndhakāre
majjonmajjacca ghore hyasakṛdupajanodanvati trāsane me |
yatpādāvāśritānāṃ śrutīśamavinayaprāptiragryā hyamoghā
tatpādaū pāvanīyau bhavabhayavinudau sarvabhāvairnamasye || 3 ||

3. I offer my obeisance (*namasye*) with my whole being (*sarvabhāvaiḥ*) to those sanctifying feet (*pādaū pāvanīyau*) – the dispellers of the fear of transmigration – (the feet) of my own teacher, through the light of whose illumined intellect (*prajñālokabhāsā*) was dispelled the darkness of delusion enveloping my own mind, who destroyed forever my fear of appearance and disappearance (*majjonmajjacca*) in this terrible sea of innumerable births, and having taken shelter at whose feet others also get unfailingly the knowledge of the Upaniṣads, (*śruti*) self-control (*śama*), and humility (*vinaya*), which is fruitful and most worthy.

FURTHER STUDY OF THE MĀṆḌŪKYA

FROM THE SL62 MATERIAL

We have been introduced to reflection on part of a verse from the Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad. To give the context for that reflection it is helpful to consider the whole of the Upaniṣad. The Māṇḍūkya is a pivotal text in Advaita philosophy. It was commented on at length by the sage Gauḍapāda who was the teacher of Ādi Śaṅkara's teacher. Gauḍapāda's Kārikā, as it is called, is itself comprised of four chapters. Traditionally the first of these chapters is interwoven with the Upaniṣad itself, which consists of twelve verses. This material will not include the verses from Gauḍapāda, but individuals or groups are encouraged to study these if they so wish, particularly the first chapter which relates directly to the Upaniṣad.

Ādi Śaṅkara commented at length on the Upaniṣad itself as well as all four chapters of Gauḍapāda. This material will not include this commentary, but again individuals or groups may wish to study it, particularly the commentary which relates to the Upaniṣad and the first chapter of Gauḍapāda.

As far as the Sanskrit is concerned, it is always helpful to address this. The Upaniṣad is relatively short, with only 12 verses. If students wish to learn the Sanskrit by heart, the verses to concentrate on are numbers 1, 2, 7 and 12.

(Note: Ensure this is clear.)

There are some general comments which may be helpful in considering this Upaniṣad. Firstly, it concentrates on the word ॐ which it divides into ॐ, corresponding to the waking state, ॐ, corresponding to the dream state, and halanta ॐ which corresponds to the state of deep sleep. These states generally seem to us to be real and highly convincing. They make up the world in which we usually live.

The Upaniṣad leads us from these to the Self itself, here referred to as turīya. As Śrī Śāntānanda Sarasvatī said:

The sage who wrote the Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad (Maṇḍūka means 'frog') said that with 'three jumps' one can get into the deepest level of the Self, just as a frog who happens to be on dry land and is getting scorched by the sun, and wants to be cool and peaceful, can with three jumps enjoy the cool and peace of the deepest water. Similarly, these are the three jumps we need, and by means of them it should be possible to establish the stillness of the mind.

Good Company p.52

(Note: Take conversation. The three jumps start from the waking to the dream state, from the dream to the sleep state and then from the sleep state to turīya, the Self.)

Secondly, as Śaṅkara points out in the commentary to verse 2, the quarters are like

the four quarters of a coin, not like the four legs of a cow. With the four legs of a cow each leg is separate and, in a sense, independent. If the example of a dollar is taken, the waking state is 25 cents, the dream state is 50 cents, deep sleep is 75 cents and the Self itself, turīya is the complete dollar. The greater includes the lesser and the Self includes everything. It is commonly thought that the waking state, by which the physical world is appreciated, is the greatest and most important, but this is an upside down view of reality.

(Note: Take conversation.)

Thirdly, the three states can be understood universally or individually. The universal waking state corresponds to the entire physical creation. The individual waking state is that part of the creation we appreciate with our senses.

The universal dream state consists of the whole world of knowledge, ideas and creative imagination. The individual dream state includes not only what we may dream at night, but that part of the universal state that we may comprehend or share in.

The universal state of deep sleep is the unmanifest consciousness, which holds all knowledge in a latent form. It is the causal realm. For the individual this is experienced when we sleep deeply at night. Our personality and everything connected with it is withdrawn into the deep sleep, only to reappear the next morning.

(Note: Take conversation.)

Finally, the 1987 Conversations contain a number of questions and answers relating to this Upaniṣad. Even those which are not directly on the Upaniṣad are relevant and most helpful. Study of these Conversations is encouraged.

At this point we may turn to the Upaniṣad itself. It begins by referring to the Absolute:

1 This syllable that is Om is all this. Of this a clear exposition (is started with): All that is past, present, or future is verily Om. And whatever is beyond the three periods of time is also verily Om.

(Note: With this and subsequent verses take any conversation which arises. There is no rush to get through the material. Take whatever time is necessary.)

2 All this is surely Brahman. This Self is Brahman. The Self, such as It is, is possessed of four quarters.

(Note: This verse contains the famous statement 'ayam ātmā brahma' – This Self is

Brahman. The following four verses relate to the three states of waking, dreaming and sleeping, which can also be understood as the outer world, the inner world and the causal world.)

3 The first quarter is Vaiśvānara whose sphere of action is the waking state, whose consciousness relates to things external, who is possessed of seven limbs and nineteen mouths, and who enjoys gross things.

4 Taijasa is the second quarter, whose sphere of activity is the dream state, whose consciousness is internal, who is possessed of seven limbs and nineteen mouths, and who enjoys subtle objects.

5 That state is deep sleep where the sleeper does not desire any enjoyable thing and does not see any dream. The third quarter is Prājña who has deep sleep as his sphere, in whom everything becomes undifferentiated, who is a mass of mere consciousness, who abounds in bliss, who is surely an enjoyer of bliss, and who is the doorway to the experience (of the dream and waking states).

6 This one is the Lord of all; this one is Omniscient; this one is the inner Director of all; this one is the Source of all; this one is verily the place of origin and dissolution of all beings.

(Note: At this point verses 1-9 of Gauḍapāda's Kārikā appear in the text.

The next verse is central to the whole work. It brings everything together. Firstly it proceeds by negating all that we are usually aware of. This is the process of vyatireka. It then sets out positive descriptions for how the Self may be known. This is the process of anvaya. We have taken a part of this verse for reflection.)

7 The Fourth (Turīya) is considered to be that which is not conscious of the internal world, nor conscious of the external world, nor conscious of both the worlds, nor a mass of consciousness (deep sleep), nor conscious, nor unconscious (insentience); which is unseen, beyond empirical dealings, ungraspable, uninferable, unthinkable, indescribable; whose essence is (experienced) in the full realisation of the Self; in which all phenomena cease; and which is unchanging, auspicious, and non-dual. That is the Self, and That is to be known.

(Note: The Self is recognised with the full realisation that it is the same Self that exists in the waking, dreaming and deep sleep states. For example, we may see a person one day wearing a red garment and the next day wearing blue but we know it is the same person. Likewise we may experience the different states of waking, dreaming and sleeping but we

can know that the same Self is present in them all.

Verses 10 – 18 of Gauḍapāda's Kārikā appear at this point in the text.

The next four verses return to the exposition of the waking, dreaming and deep sleep states and some of their universal qualities.)

8 That very Self, considered from the standpoint of the syllable denoting It is Om. Considered from the standpoint of the letters constituting Om, the quarters of the Self are the letters of Om, and the letters are the quarters. The letters are: A, U and M.

9 Vaiśvānara, having the waking state as his sphere, is the first letter A, because of the similarity of pervasiveness or being the first. He who knows thus, does verily attain all desirable things, and becomes the foremost.

10 He who is Taijasa with the state of dream as his sphere of activity is the second letter U of Om; because of the similarity of excellence and intermediateness. He who knows thus increases the current of knowledge and becomes equal to all. None is born in his line who is not a knower of Brahman.

11 Prājña with his sphere of activity in the sleep state is M, the third letter of Om, because of measuring or because of absorption. Anyone who knows thus measures all this, and he becomes the place of absorption.

(Note: Verses 19 to 23 of Gauḍapāda's Kārikā appear at this point in the text.

The final verse of the Upaniṣad is by way of conclusion.)

12 The partless Om is Turīya – beyond all worldly dealings, the limit of the negation of the phenomenal world, the auspicious, and the non-dual. Om is thus the Self to be sure. He who knows thus enters the Self through his self.

(Note: This ends the Upaniṣad. Verses 24 to 29 of Gauḍapāda's Kārikā appear at this point in the text.)

As had been said, there are 29 verses from Gauḍapāda which appear with the Upaniṣad. For present purposes reference can be made to verse 18 which contains the statement:

Jñāte dvaitam na vidyate. 'Duality ceases to exist after realisation.'

This was quoted by Śrī Śāntānanda Sarasvatī in 1987 1.3, which we have already seen in SL 61, and in 1989 4.1. He must have regarded it as an important phrase for us to hear given that he referred to it twice. These answers can be studied if time permits. It was also recited by Mr Jaiswal at the confluence of the Ganges and Yamuna rivers on the occasion of the funeral of His Holiness in December 1997.

(Note: Take conversation.)

Finally, we can gain insight into the word turīya from the following passage from Śrī Śāntānanda Sarasvatī:

The next dive is into the union. The diver, the depth and the diving are all known and experienced as one. The drama goes on. He stops nowhere; he stops nothing, but allows all things to happen. In union he only knows himself to be Absolute and he does act as an Absolute.

He has creative power and his being uses it without any claims whatsoever. This state is called turīya. This is hardly a state, for all states are within it. It is the fullness, the oneness, the reality, something unqualified and indescribable. There is the Absolute without a second. This is where vyaṣṭi becomes samaṣṭi. (1974 2.2; Vol. 2, p104)

(Note: Take conversation.)

This state of turīya is experienced in two ways; one is internal and the other is external. When the individual dives deep within, then his associations and confrontations, engagements and relations come to a stop and he, being one within, enjoys this bliss and consciousness.

When he rises from this deep state and comes to the awakened state in the world, he comes out of the ocean of bliss and consciousness and there is an abundance of freshness, pious thoughts, deep and kind look in his eyes. He is never in a hurry; there is no excitement or agitation in his movements and he always remains placid and pleased. All that he does goes with a natural rhythm and according to time.

He loves everyone and in return he gets love and devotion from anyone who works for him or comes in contact with him. Thus, everyone loves him and works with affection for him. Even the so-called enemy becomes friendly. Many extraordinary or miraculous things happen to him as thus: he might get direct communion with divine beings such as angels, seers or lawgivers etc.; he would experience vision. He is always blissful and has

compassion for everyone and has great powers to face up to or correct any situation. The wave of love keeps on flowing through him. (1974 3.1; Vol. 2, p105)

ŚRĪ ŚĀNTĀNANDA SARASVATĪ

ON THE MĀṄḌŪKYA

Message, February 21, 1986

Message, January 14, 1987

Audience, February 12, 1987

**Message from Śrī Śaṅkarācārya on the report⁷
from Mr. MacLaren: 21st February 1986**

Conversations, Volume 6, pp 17-19

The movement towards appreciation of the teaching of advaita is truly the journey back home and the more it manifests in everyday life, the simpler the journey becomes. Simplicity dawns with freedom from involvement and proceeds with direct experience of reality, of all that makes the event, its causes and the harmony to follow. Insofar as the entry into another being is experienced as one's own being the move is towards advaita, but any concept of another is a move towards dvaita (duality), even if full of sattva. The conviction that a fixed point of view is an illusion is true but the contrary is equally an illusion.

The manifest world of perceptions and conceptions is the prapañca which involves. The witness is neither perceptual nor conceptual but essential. The knowledge in concrete finality blinds one from further knowledge just as cessation from perceptual and conceptual knowledge leaves one ignorant. Yājñavalkya took away the cows because the need was there, not because he wanted to claim being wisest among the wise. In response to Gārgī's demand to prove his superiority to qualify to own the cows, he only said that he offered his respect to the wise and would gladly proceed to deal with questions which perplexed any one. Since no one wanted the cows he took them because the ashram needed them. Such actions arise only from advaita. Knowledge of advaita does not necessarily put an end to the play of śakti but it does end the turmoil and misery caused by misuse of śakti due to 'ignorance' or involvement of some sort. The Māṇḍukyopaniṣad gives this as the fourth or turīya state of Brahman and advaita.

'They consider the Fourth to be that which is not conscious of the internal (subjective) world, nor of the external (objective) world, nor conscious of both the worlds, nor is it a concrete consciousness, nor usual worldly consciousness, nor devoid of consciousness; which is unseen, beyond empirical dealings, beyond grasp (intangible), devoid of qualifications, beyond thinking and beyond description; essentially of the nature of consciousness as the Self alone in which all phenomena cease; which is peaceful, auspicious and non-dual. That is the Self, and that is to be known.'

⁷ This was a general report on the work of the School including a request to elucidate the reference to *pratibodhaviditam matam* in the Kena Upaniṣad 2.4.

The import of this quotation is subject to what has preceded. This advaita is not a concept or philosophy for it is the reality and essence of the Vedic tradition, and it is difficult to be grasped by ordinary intellect but can be indicated only to those whose intellect is refined. It is so subtle that it implies even in its negation.

Immortality is the real state of Ātman because it is ever present. The present we know is the state between desires when mental activity is not in motivation. The state of desirelessness present is the real state of consciousness, devoid of all qualifications of the past and propositions or resolutions for the future. In this state of consciousness lies the essential knowledge untouched and unbound by what is already manifest, gone past, and yet to manifest in future. Knowledge is usually of the past and yet its essence is the living consciousness which rises as pratibodha. The present is the door between the past as the manifest, measured and known state, and the future as not yet born, as the unmanifest and unmeasured state of consciousness. All are united in the present as pratibodhaviditam matam, ([Brahman] is recognised/known/understood through every cognition/ perception).⁸

To know consciousness is therefore to realise immortality or to become immortal by existing in the everpresent. This state of knowledge matures through mananam preceded by śravaṇam. One first hears what scriptures have to say, what the teacher has to say and also what the Self within has to say. When in mananam all these settle down harmoniously the truth of advaita is essentially felt in the Self as the Self. Later this strengthened Self exercises itself with efficiency and harmony at every living moment which presents itself in paramārtha.

The Upaniṣads hold enough material for study. In general śruti, smṛti and the Upaniṣads have all necessary knowledge. Śaṅkara has commented on the Brahma Sūtra, the Bhagavad Gīta and many Upaniṣads. These are called the Prasthānatraya, the three points of departure back to the home. Whatever is possible can be taken for study, discourse and reflection which would bring in the synthesis of advaita and enlighten all round. Once the truth of advaita really flashes, the love, hate and fear will lose their pull and appropriate action in paramārtha will naturally take place.

May the Self bless you all in your efforts.

Recorded at Allahabad.

⁸ Kena Upaniṣad 2.4. *Pratibodha* means awaking, knowledge, perception, cognition, instruction. *Viditam* signifies 'when it is known' and *matam* is understood, realised. Thus, the statement is: **It (the Brahman) is realized, *matam*; when it is known, *viditam*; as the living consciousness of each cognition, *pratibodha*.** (See Śaṅkara's commentary)

Message from His Holiness to Mr. MacLaren⁹
14th January 1987

Conversations, Volume 6, pp 20-21

It is but natural that the Māṇḍukya text could lead to a state of void and disciples may feel at a loss to know how this true knowledge of the Self can be put into practice. In fact the answer is also provided in the same text by indicating the positive aspects:

ekātmapratyayasāraṃ prapañcopaśāmaṃ śāntaṃ śivamadvaitaṃ (Mā. 7)

‘Ekātmapratyayasāraṃ’ – the essence of all valid knowledge of the Self in unity with the creation and the creator can arise only by practical and true application of unity in diversity.

‘Prapañcopaśāmaṃ’ – in that true knowledge of the Self the proliferations of prakṛti causing illusions, deceptions and fantasies tend to minimise until the true unity dawns.

‘Śāntaṃ’ – that which is quiet in fulfilment of unity refrains from indulging in agitations caused by diversity.

‘Śivamadvaitaṃ’ – the auspicious established in advaita dispels illusions, manifesting good tidings in the knowledge of the truth in action.

Let them not entertain doubts. This knowledge is for practice. The disciplines of Law, Commerce or study of the Classics are not in vain. These embody the knowledge of prakṛti. If these are kept pure, the puruṣa or the Self could enact the eternal drama manifesting ānanda all round. In advaita the world and its activities do not come to a halt or become redundant, but activities become just and efficient.

All these branches of knowledge have manifested from the light of the Self. All one needs to be careful about is to see the truth in them and offer it to others who have not yet had its knowledge or have missed the absolute unity of various disciplines. Even when one has achieved the unity and needs nothing, the need to offer these disciplines to others is still valid in its true form.

Blessings to all disciples.

⁹ This followed a general report on the work of the School including the study of the Māṇḍukyopaniṣad which had left some students with a sense of void.

Audience with His Holiness

12th February 1987

Conversations, Volume 4, pp 1-8

1.1 QUESTION: As it is said that the causal seed of creation is ignorance, and its intervening formations, upādhis, are superimposed upon the reality of the Self like a snake on a rope, and as undoubtedly we human beings spend most of our time in total non-comprehension of reality as though in a deep sleep, what is meant by minimising the proliferations of prakṛti and what happens when true unity dawns?

ANSWER: Prapañca (proliferation) has no real or eternal existence, but it does exist as transitory play or drama, in which activities abound, and yet it causes no stress.

The play has no transformative result either, but it does offer happiness while the play is going on. The activity and the actor are separate. The knowledge of the activity during the play itself separates these elements.

The observer and participators in activity are the two elements. Activities are performed by body limbs; manas performs saṅkalpa and vikalpa; buddhi performs acts of decision and reason. These are the mechanical elements, but they all draw power to perform from the other element which is consciousness, and It has real existence. This element is totally detached from the activities, although fully involved.

If the activities are performed in the true knowledge of their being a mere play, the gain is twofold for it bestows peace and bliss. The loss of this true knowledge during activity results in loss both of peace and bliss. It rather ends in misery, attachments and agitation.

Since the knower of the known is positively separate or detached from things and activities known, it is better to keep it like that and allow all mechanical tools to perform the activities of the play efficiently while the observer remains detached. Thus, the vision of Advaita Vedānta implies the retention of this true knowledge about the knower and the known and then allows the full power of consciousness to be used in all activities. This is the practical application of Advaita for all occasions.

The activities of the drama will be better with detachment, devoid of miseries of doing; peace and bliss will be the gain. Proof of the practical application of Advaita arises from the fact that both during and upon completion of activities, peace and bliss follow without discontinuity. It is obvious that one has to learn the rules of the

play or the laws of prakṛtiprapaṅca without which participation in the play itself would not be possible.

1.2 QUESTION: In relation to the play and its laws or dharma, would Your Holiness say something about the nature of this knowledge to be acquired?

ANSWER: Prakṛti goes the way of pravṛtti and Ātman is realised through the way of nivṛtti.

Prakṛti is the property of the Self. Prakṛti or svabhāva are synonymous. Whatever prakṛti enacts, it enacts through the power of consciousness only, and yet the consciousness is detached.

For example, a master may employ various people to execute a work. The master empowers them all with delegated activities and guides the process along and keeps watch over all the affairs, but never considers himself to be one of the participant labourers. Nothing moves without his knowledge and yet he remains unmoved. Similarly, the body, mind and the buddhi are all performing labourers. Body has its laws, dharma; manas is governed by its own laws; so are buddhi, citta, ahaṅkāra and the prakṛti in general outside the individual.

The orders of these laws have to be learnt well before a good play can be performed. Although the factors are many, yet buddhi alone knows them all and the witness of buddhi is the Ātman like the master.

In the state of observation, maximum power of consciousness is available. The light of consciousness prevails in every part of the prakṛti play, but the laws of prakṛti do not bind the Ātman. While the sun shines naturally all around, nourishing and activating every part of the earth and its participants, be they good or evil, pure or impure, none of the things of the solar system either glorify or defile the sun. The sun is everywhere with its power of light and heat and yet is untouched by all it shines upon.

The rise of viveka (reason) clarifies all this and, in the light of this reason, the quality of activity is much improved: work will be completed with efficiency, full attention will be possible with detachment, and peace with bliss will be the gain all round. Wisdom lies in knowing the laws of prakṛti and playing one's part in harmony with the laws of nature, and in doing so peace and bliss are never lost and the laws of nature cannot bind the wise. Failure to appreciate this light of reason must end in attachments with prakṛti and misery must follow.

1.3 QUESTION: In relation to the text prapañcopaśama Your Holiness stated, 'In the true knowledge of the Self, the proliferations of prakṛti tend to minimise until the true unity dawns'. Could Your Holiness say something more about the minimising process?

ANSWER: The prapañcopaśama does not imply that the proliferation work of prakṛti itself comes to a stop, nor any such imaginary concepts in which it is visualised that prakṛti will come to a void under a certain state of consciousness. Such conclusions are wrong. All that is meant is that the prapañca has no eternal existence and not that it does not exist or can come to nought.

Ultimate power of all existence is of the Ātman alone, which is independent. Duality comes into being when two independent authorities or powers are presumed to exist, but in the light of true knowledge, 'no trace of duality can be found.' 'Jñāte dvaitaṃ na vidyate' (Gauḍapāda's Kārikā I.18). In order to achieve unity, the prapañca is not put under attack. The minimisation leading to unity has to be appreciated on the face of prapañca itself.

For example, during summer, heat waves create an illusion of water over desert sand. The illusion of water is there by virtue of the laws of nature, and they are there to exist under certain circumstances. No wisdom can undo them.

The use of wisdom and reason is to have true knowledge of the phenomenon and, having seen this illusion of water, to refrain from desire to quench the thirst or have a dip to get fresh. Even ordinary people who have known such phenomena see the truth and ignore any impulse to be affected in any way.

Similarly, the work of prakṛtiprapañca is the effect of transitory laws powered by consciousness, but the illusion of ahañkāra superimposes imaginary desires as if arising from the Ātman. The real aham is pure and is the true cognition of the Self both within and without. Ahañkāra creates division and then forges binding relations from those divisions. Such are the attachments. The illusion is caused by superimposition of prakṛti and its prapañca over the Self, which then gets into misery. This is when the power of the Self is ignored and forgotten for the sake of prakṛti and her glittering prapañca.

The ignorant, who cannot analyse the works of prakṛti by discrimination, presume prakṛti to be the Self and gets caught in her snares. The wise, who with awakened viveka see it all as it is, works through all the activities without attachment.

The real essence of prapañcopaśama is not to stop prakṛti within or without, but to minimise and stop attaching prakṛti to Ātman, while yet taking part in all deliberations of prakṛti and its prapañca which happen to come one's way.

1.4 QUESTION: The usual situation is that people feel convinced of separate existence, no doubt about that. Just in these last few days, two members of the senior group experienced the fact that they were the Ātman and knew the unity. Well, there they are, and one could tell from their demeanour that this realisation had a profound effect on them. This is a beginning, a start, but it did last for some time. That is the observation and a certain conviction of separate existence was in fact dislodged. Would Your Holiness kindly say something of this?

ANSWER: This is the real experience. Although nothing can be observed or said about the experience itself, because that would be impossible, yet the veracity and validity of the experience can be established from the deeds which follow in the world of prakṛti. If practical situations have been dealt with in the realization of the Self, all activities will bear the stamp of efficiency and detachment, the state of peace will prevail and bliss will be experienced all around. These alone are the real proofs and all expositions concerning the experience are untrue.

In the second chapter of the Bhagavad Gītā, Arjuna asks Śrī Kṛṣṇa how a realized man speaks, walks and behaves.

sthita-prajñasya kā bhāṣā samādhi-sthasya keśava
sthita-dhīḥ kiṃ prabhāṣeta kim āsīta vrajeta kim

(Gītā II.54)

The questions and answers which follow indicate that Self-realization is not a matter of exposition by itself, nor is it of the nature of a void. The only way to verify wisdom is through the deeds which follow from the level of wisdom behind. All actions manifest through the realm of prakṛti, but the deeds of the wise man are exemplary and unique in efficiency, beauty and justice. Others respect them and then try to inculcate the same depth of grace through their own actions.

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