

व्यासश्रीः VYĀSAŚRĪḤ

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(UGC CARE LISTED)

परब्रह्मस्वामिनारायणप्रबोधित- अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमदर्शनविशेषाङ्कः

A special issue on
Parabrahman Swaminarayan's
Akṣarapuruṣōttama Darśana

Chief Editor
Dr. Buddheswar Sarangi

Editor
Dr. Gyanaranjan Panda

The Akṣarapuruṣottama Darśana



अक्षरब्रह्म श्रीगुणातीतानंद स्वामी परब्रह्म श्रीस्वामिनारायण भगवान

The Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana is a unique philosophical tradition of Vedic Sanātana Dharma that was revealed by Parabrahman Swaminarayan. This darśana characterizes ultimate liberation as becoming akṣararūpa by attaining qualitative oneness with Akṣarabrahman and offering supreme devotion to Puruṣottama. The darśana also accepts and advocates the existence of five eternally distinct ontological entities – jīva, īśvara, māyā, Akṣarabrahman, and Parabrahman. Hence, due to principles such as these along with the darśana's unique understanding of various subjects including epistemology, spiritual endeavor and the nature of liberation, the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana is renowned and acclaimed as an independent and distinct Vedic tradition.

Brahmaswarup Shastriji Maharaj, Bhagwan Swaminarayan's third spiritual successor, created majestic mandirs in which he embodied the Vedic principles of the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana. Within the central shrines of these mandirs he consecrated the murtis of Akṣarabrahman and Parabrahman, the two principal entities of this darśana. To protect, promote and nurture the Vedic principles of the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana, he also established the Bocāṣaṇavāsi Akṣara-Puruṣottama Svāminārāyaṇa Saṁsthā (BAPS).

Brahmaswarup Pramukh Swami Maharaj, Bhagwan Swaminarayan's fifth spiritual successor, positioned Parabrahman Swaminarayan's philosophical teachings in a darśanic framework by inspiring Mahāmahopādhyāya Bhadreshdas Swami to author commentaries on the Prasthānatrayī (the Upaniṣads, Śrīmadbhagavadgītā, and Brahmasūtras) and scholarly justify the darśana's principles based on Vedic revelations. Under the current visionary leadership of Param Puja Mahant Swami Maharaj, the sixth Akṣarabrahman guru succeeding Bhagwan Swaminarayan, the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana continues to flourish as a vibrant tradition encompassing a following of millions around the globe.

This special issue of the journal, Vyasaśrīḥ, investigates the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana through diverse disciplinary dimensions and provides a unique opportunity for scholars to gain a deeper insight into this philosophy. We hope this issue proves to be a testament to the profoundness and ever-changing landscape of darśanic thought and reflection.

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**This issue is dedicated to
Shri Pramukh Swamiji Maharaj and
Shri Mahant Swamiji Maharaj**

: Chief Editor :
Dr. Buddheswar Sarangi

: Editor :
Dr. Gyanaranjan Panda



: Publisher :
Maharshi Vyasadev Nation
Research Institute
Vedvyas, Rourkela-4, Odisha
Email - vyasasri12@gmail.com
Visit us - www.vyasasri.com

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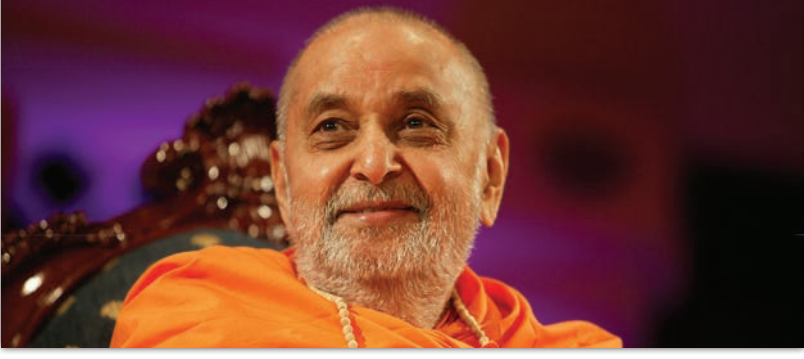
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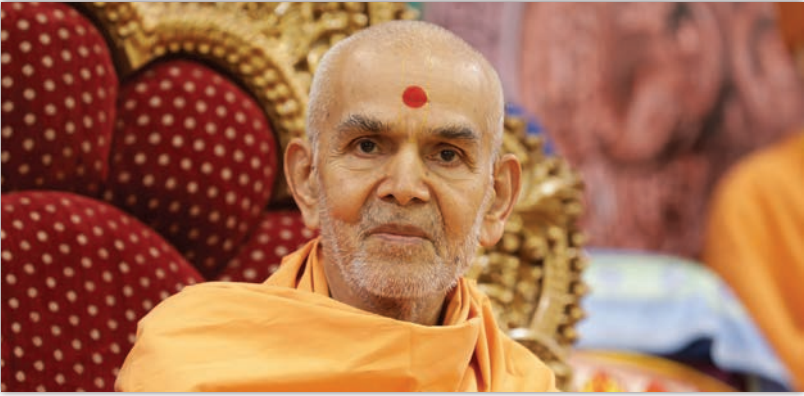
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DEDICATION



SHRI PRAMUKH SWAMIJI MAHARAJ

This issue of Vyāsaśrīḥ is dedicated to Shri Pramukh Swamiji Maharaj and Shri Mahant Swamiji Maharaj who inspired Mahāmahopādhyāya Bhadreshdas Swami to author the bhāṣya on the Prasthānatrayī (the ten principal Upaniṣads, Śrīmadbhagavadgītā, and Brahmasūtras) and other academic works based on the philosophical teachings of Parabrahman Swaminarayan known as the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana.



SHRI MAHANT SWAMIJI MAHARAJ



Mahamahopādhyāya Bhadreshdas Swami

author of

the Prasthānatrayī Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam

and other philosophical texts

of the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana

MAHĀMAHOPĀDHYĀYA BHADRESHDAS SWAMI

Mahāmahopādhyāya Bhadreshdas Swami is a disciple of Bhagwan Swaminarayan and an ordained sadhu of the Bocāsaṇavāsī Akṣara-Puruṣottama Svāminārāyaṇa Saṁsthā (BAPS). He was initiated as an ascetic by his guru Brahmaswarup Pramukh Swami Maharaj in 1981.

Bhadreshdas Swami is a world-renowned scholar who has received multiple master's degrees in Sāṅkhya, Yoga, Nyāya, Vaiśeṣika, Pūrvamīmāṃsā, and Vedānta Darśanas. In 2005, he was awarded his doctoral degree for his exemplary work on Paramātmapratyakṣasvarūpayogaḥ, a profound comparative analysis of Swaminarayan's Vacanāmṛta and the Śrīmadbhagavadgītā. Thereafter, through the wish, inspiration, and grace of his guru Param Pujya Pramukh Swami Maharaj, Bhadreshdas Swami authored the Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam – an extensive five-volume commentary on the entire Prasthānatrayī (the ten principal Upaniṣads, Śrīmadbhagavadgītā, and Brahmasūtras) that correlates the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana revealed by Parabrahman Swaminarayan with scriptural revelations. In addition, he also composed a vāda text entitled the Svāminārāyaṇasiddhāntasudhā – a detailed exposition that scholarly substantiates and justifies the Vedic authenticity of the Swaminarayan sampradāya's doctrinal principles. Due to these original contributions in Sanskrit literature, Kavikulguru Kalidas Sanskrit University bestowed a D.Litt to Bhadreshdas Swami.

In addition, Bhadreshdas Swami has received numerous notable accolades and recognitions from prestigious universities and academic institutions for his remarkable scholarly intellect and unprecedented work on dārśanic thought. These include the Darśanakesarī, Vedāntamārtanda, Mahāmahopādhyāya, Vedānta Bhāskara, Darśana Śāstra Sārvabhauma, and Abhinava Bhāṣyakāra awards amongst many others.

Bhadreshdas Swami's unprecedented contributions to Sanskrit literature, darśanic thought, and the Vedānt tradition position him amongst the glorious lineage of renowned bhāṣyakāras, ācāryas, and scholars of Vedic philosophy. He has composed and edited numerous literary publications and has authored and published more than 200 articles on topics ranging from Paninian grammar to Vedic literature in various esteemed journals. He has also visited more than 80 universities in 18 countries and has conversed with over 180 prominent scholars throughout the world. Currently, he is the head of the BAPS Swaminarayan Research Institute, Swaminarayan Akshardham, New Delhi and travels as an international lecturer on Indian culture and Vedic philosophy and tradition.

भावाञ्जलिसप्तकम्

अमन्दनन्दप्रदमेव लोके श्रीक्षेत्रनाथं पुरुषोत्तमं तम्।
 नौमीन्दिरानन्दकरं च नित्यं भजे जगन्नाथमनादितत्त्वम्॥१॥

संसारतापान्तकदेवदेवं योगीन्द्रसंसेवितपादपद्मम्।
 नमामि भक्तहृदये वसन्तं श्रीस्वामिनारायणदिव्यरूपम्॥२॥

श्रीपश्चिथ्या यत्र परेऽक्षरे शं संसेवते भद्रतरे सुरम्ये।
 योगाध्वगानां रतिरेव नित्यं यत्रास्ति नस्तत्र मतिस्सदा स्यात्॥३॥

भद्रात्मभाजां क्षरधर्मजालं यदक्षरानन्दरसैर्विनष्टम्।
 तत्तत्त्वसारामृतसिन्धुगाही न कस्य मोदाय भवे भवेद्भोः॥४॥

प्रस्थानविद्यामननैकधन्या भद्रेशपादादिबुधाग्रगण्याः।
 मोक्षार्थिकल्याणपरास्सदा ते व्यासोक्ततत्त्वं प्रथयन्ति लोके॥५॥

जीवस्य मुक्तिश्श्रुतितत्त्वसारैस्तदेव चेदक्षरमार्गमध्ये।
 तज्ज्ञानिनश्चेत् श्रितसाधुधर्माः किं वा भवेदन्यपदेषु भक्तिः॥६॥

कांक्षा क्षरे कीर्तिचये न मे वा वित्ते न वासे न च भोगजाले।
 तदक्षरे यत्र मुनीन्द्रचित्तं रसं कमेवास्वदतेऽचलं यत्॥७॥

- बुद्धेश्वरषडङ्गी, प्रधानसम्पादकः, व्यासश्रीः,
 कोलकाता-३५

EDITORIAL

THE EMINENCE OF VEDIC DARŚANAS

Vedic Darśanic thought presents a comprehensive understanding of the nature of the self, the world in which it lives, and its relationship with all that exists. Its constant inquiry into the most profound and fundamental questions have continued to enlighten humankind throughout many millennia. Who are we, why do we exist, and what is the nature of the world? Is there a divine being, and if so, what are they like? How can we overcome misery and experience everlasting bliss?—These are but a few of the questions that have sourced, inspired, and guided human thought throughout its existence. In search of meaningful answers to these and many other questions, great ācāryas and thinkers provided original perspectives and interpretations of sacred works, which eventually culminated in the birth of various schools of thought known as darśanas.

The formation of darśanas transformed the Indian experience. They presented reflections with significant bearing on one's experience of the phenomenological and unperceived world by offering revolutionary and comprehensive ways of understanding the self, the world, and the Divine. Such interweaving of doctrine and praxis resulted in the identity of a darśana becoming limited not to just well-organized ideas written in a text or deliberated in conversations, but exemplified, reaffirmed, and witnessed within the lives of its followers. A darśana refused to be reduced to just thoughts and reflections but took in a broader framework, encompassing as many dimensions of human experience. To witness a darśana, one, therefore, had to study its sacred texts and literature, understand its principles, perceive its expression in the lives of its practitioners, become familiar with its history and culture, and perhaps more importantly, experience its transformative effects in one's own life.

To commemorate this rich, comprehensive, and living Vedic darśanic tradition, we focus this specific issue of our journal on exploring the characteristic features, insights, and practices of one recently acclaimed school of Vedic

thought: The Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana.

BHAGAVĀN SVĀMINĀRĀYAṆA'S AKṢARA-PURUṢOTTAMA DARŚANA

The recent introduction of the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana serves as an example of the ever-changing landscape of darśanic thought and the complexity of thought and praxis that forms its identity. Founded on the teachings of Bhagavān Svāminārāyaṇa and established by Yajñapurūṣadāsa Svāmī (Śāstrījī Mahārāja), the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana is a distinct Vedic darśana tradition with its own original Sanskrit commentarial literature, characteristic philosophical position, established ritual practice, and dedicated international following.

The Prasthānatrayī Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣya (a comprehensive five-volume Sanskrit commentary on the principal ten Upaniṣads, Bhagavadgītā, and the Brahmasūtras according to the teaching of Bhagavān Svāminārāyaṇa), the Svāminārāyaṇasiddhāntasudhā (a vādagrantha that offers an exposition, justification, and defense of the darśana's philosophical principles), and Satsaṅgadīkṣā (a collection of verses that convey personal practices, values, and traditions of the darśana) are among its most recent contributions to darśanic thought and the understanding of its practice. Authored by Mahāmahopādhyāya Dr. Bhadreshdas Swami, these Sanskrit works provide new insights on the darśana's unique understanding of universally recognized sacred revelations. Their contributions in advancing Vedic thought and Sanskrit philosophical literature have been acknowledged by traditional pundits and contemporary scholars worldwide.

The scholarly aptitude and authenticity of Mahāmahopādhyāya Bhadreshdas Swami's works have in turn resulted in the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana as being heralded as a distinct, comprehensive Vedic Darśana. As a testament to their far-reaching significance, the new darśana has been welcomed and applauded within numerous international conferences and seminars around the world, traditional academic circles, and established and reputed traditional organizations (pariṣad) in both North and South India as a comprehensive, contemporary Vedānta darśana, along the same lines as Śaṅkara's Advaita, Rāmānuja's

Viśiṣṭādvaita, Madhva's Dvaita Darśana, and other Vedantic Darśanas.

THIS SPECIAL COMMEMORATIVE ISSUE

We at Vyāsaśrīḥ have also independently evaluated the intellectual and academic legitimacy and depth of Shri Bhadreshdas Swamiji's works and attest to their wide-ranging, multidisciplinary contributions. Having had the unique opportunity to meet and converse with Swamiji himself, a contemporary, living bhāṣyakāra, we were awestruck by his scholarly insights and extensive wisdom. Joining others in recognizing his and the darśana's achievements, we celebrate the contributions of Bhagavān Svāminārāyaṇa's Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana and Mahāmahopādhyāya Bhadreshdas Swami's perpetual work through the publication of this special commemorative issue.

This special issue focuses on hosting, in addition to articles on other topics, distinguished original academic works that highlight the unique Vedic insights offered by the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana and Mahāmahopādhyāya Bhadreshdas Swami's seminal works. These articles will spotlight the darśana's characteristic features from, among others, philosophical, societal, cultural, historical, literary, and anthropological perspectives. By engaging in these discussions, the articles in this issue will help better understand the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana's various distinct principles; the interconnectivity of its darśanic positions; its praxis within its religious practices, traditions, and values and among its followers; the use of narrative to understand, analyze, and convey histories, teachings, and values; and the literary, poetic, and hermeneutical insights offered by its sacred literature.

When deciding to commemorate this special issue, we approached Mahāmahopādhyāya Bhadreshdas Swami and expressed our wishes to dedicate it to him for his seminal contributions. His response humbled us. Swamiji expressed that his works and our admiration and adoration for them were due to the superior wisdom and guidance of his gurus Pramukh Swami Maharaj and Mahant Swami Maharaj. We were awestruck by his devotion to his gurus and respected his wishes by dedicating this historical issue to Shri Pramukh

Swamiji Maharaj and Shri Mahant Swamiji Maharaj.

I want to conclude by thanking all the distinguished authors for their outstanding articles. Their insightful reflections present new perspectives on understanding the teachings of Bhagavān Svāminārāyaṇa Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana through the Prasthānatrayī Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣya and other scriptures. Although many articles were submitted on the unique perspectives and contributions of various Indian traditions, we were unfortunately only able to accommodate a selected few for the publication of this special issue. In the near future, we foresee bringing into publication a second part of this special issue to include all of the exceptional works submitted. We anticipate that the original works presented within this issue and any forthcoming issues will instigate further interest in the study of the darśana and inspire new avenues of darśanic reflection and research.

Editors

December 2021

आचार्य वि. मुरलीधरशर्मा

कुलपति:

राष्ट्रीयसंस्कृतविश्वविद्यालयः

केन्द्रीयसंस्कृतविश्वविद्यालयधिनियमानुसारं (२०२०) स्थापितः

(प्राक्तनराष्ट्रीयसंस्कृतविद्यापीठम्, तिरुपतिः)

तिरुपतिः - ५१७ ५०७ (आ.प्र.)

Ph : (Off.) 0877 - 2287680 ; (Res.) 2286686 ; E-mail : vc.vidyapeetha@gmail.com ; Website : nsktu.ac.in



Prof. V. MURALIDHARA SHARMA

Vice-Chancellor

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तन्वाना सुरभारतीकमलिनीसौगन्ध्यसाम्राज्यकं

चिन्वाना पुरुषोत्तमाभिधमहासद्दर्शनालोडनम्।

मन्वाना बुधबोधनाद्भुतसृतिं जिज्ञासुधीवर्धिनीं

व्यासश्रीः जयताद्यशोभिरमला तत्त्वाब्धिमुक्ताऽनुला ॥

Vedānta, the ultimate philosophy which is considered to be the most practical among the orthodox philosophical systems of India, admits the Prasthānatrayī as its authoritative primary source. The holy scriptures comprising the Prasthānatrayī are the Upaniṣads, the Bhagavadgītā and the Brahma Sūtras. The Upaniṣads are the Śruti prasthāna, the Bhagavadgītā is the Smṛiti prasthāna, and the Brahma Sūtras are called as Yukti prasthāna. No process of learning of Vedānta will be considered complete without a close interrogation of the Prasthānatrayī. Writing a commentary to the Prasthānatrayī according to a single philosophy would bestow the status of philosophy.

So far Śrī Śaṅkara Bhagavatpāda, Śrī Rāmānujācārya, Śrī Madhvācārya, Śrī Bhāskaraācārya, Śrīkaṇṭhācārya and other some great philosophers interpreted the Prasthānatrayī with their astounding wisdom supported by the quotations from Śrutis and Smṛtis. After this great saga, no such polymath took risk of making such great philosophical system with their view of interpretation. In this situation, Parama Pūjya Śrī Bhadrēśa Dās Ji has bestowed a great philosophical system called "Akṣara Puruṣottama Darśanam" with the interpretation of Prasthāna Trayī based on the principles of Śrī Svāmī Nārāyaṇa. This philosophical system could be considered as the joining point of Advaita Vedānta, Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta and Dvaita Vedānta.

At this juncture, it gives immense pleasure to know that Vyāsaśrī, a bilingual journal releases a special issue on the Akṣara Puruṣottama Darśana, founded by Svāmī Nārāyaṇa and sermonized by Śrī Bhadrēśa Dās Ji. I wish to express with a deep sense of joy and satisfaction on the release of this volume. I am sure that this journal will fulfil the academic needs of the seekers of this great philosophy and will act as a special platform for the scholars to express their special views about this great philosophy.

मुरलीधरः

(Prof. V. Muralidhara Sharma)



राष्ट्रहिताय संस्कृतम्

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कुलगुरुः

Prof. Shrinivasa Varakhedi
Vice-Chancellor

कविकुलगुरु- कालिदास- संस्कृत- विश्वविद्यालयः

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अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमदर्शनभाष्यस्तवनम्

अक्षरं पुरुषश्रेष्ठं ब्रह्मेतिप्रतिपादकम् ।
स्वामिना नीलकण्ठेन गीतं नारायणात्मना ।। 1 ।।
साधुभिः स्वीकृतं शुद्धं दर्शनं वचनामृतम् ।
प्रमुखस्वामिराजस्य प्रेरणां प्राप्य दीक्षितः ।। 2 ।।
साधुभद्रेशदासेन्द्रः प्रापयामास शास्त्रताम् ।
प्रमाणैः युक्तिभिः शास्त्रप्रणाल्या सुविचारितम् ।। 3 ।।
सिद्धान्तोक्तिनबोन्मेषैः साधितं नवदर्शनम् ।
सरस्वती वहत्यद्य न लुप्ता शास्त्ररूपिणी ।। 4 ।।
विक्षिप्तसंग्रहात् क्वापि क्वाप्युक्तस्योपपादनात् ।
अनुक्तकथनात् क्वापि सफलं भाष्ययोजनम् ।। 5 ।।
अक्षरे पावने क्षेत्रे बीजमुप्तं परात्मना ।
सहजेनांकुरितं तत्त्वं पुष्पितं साधुमूर्तिभिः ।। 6 ।।
फलितं भाष्यरूपेण प्रस्थानत्रयसारकम् ।
भदेशभारती भद्रा भूयाद् भव्याय भूतये ।। 7 ।।
वरखेडीत्युपाख्येन श्रीनिवासेन संस्तुतम् ।
देहलीमन्दिरे पुण्ये कालिन्दीतटवर्तिनि ।। 8 ।।

इति

श्रीभद्रेशभारतीयपर्यासन्तुष्टः

विद्वद्भगवदः कविकुलगुरुकालिदाससंस्कृतविश्वविद्यालयस्य कुलगुरुः

Shrivara

आचार्यः श्रीनिवासः वरखेडी

Ramtek Office : Administrative Building, Mouda Road, Ramtek - 441106. Dist. Nagpur (M.S.)

Nagpur Office : 5th Floor, NIT Complex, Near Mor Bhavan Bus Stand, Sitabuldi, Nagpur - 440012 (M.S.)

Ramtek Office : Ph.No. (07114) 255007, Fax - 255549, Nagpur Office : Ph.No. (0712) 2549884, Fax (0712) 2560992

Email - kksuvc@gmail.com, shrivara.vckksu@gmail.com Website - www.kksanskrituni.digitaluniversity.ac

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THE AKṢARA-PURUṢOTTAMA DARŚANA AS REVEALED BY PARABRAHMAN SVĀMINĀRĀYAṆA

MAHĀMAHOPĀDHYĀYA
DR. BHADRESHDAS SWAMI

Head of BAPS Swaminarayan Research Institute,
Swaminarayan Akshardham, New Delhi

ABSTRACT

The Vedānta *darśanic* tradition is grounded in revelation and philosophical reflection. The various *darśanas* that encompass it are characterized by a unique set of foundational principles that distinguish it from others that share its *darśanic* domain. In addition to other philosophical positions, these *darśanas* place specific emphasis on their characteristic understanding of the nature and form of brahman, the self, the world, and the relationships between them. The designations of each of these schools represent the significance of these positions by reflecting each *darśana's* understanding of the characteristic metaphysical relationships between its identified entities. In context of this *darśanic* nomenclatural framework, this work offers a study of the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana. It presents an investigation of the following two assertions:

- Positioned within the Vedānta *darśanic* tradition, Bhagavān Swaminarayan's (Svāminārāyaṇa's) Akṣara-Puruṣottama Siddhānta is distinct from that advocated by Śaṅkara's Advaita Vedānta and Rāmānuja's Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta.

- According to established nomenclatures pertaining to the titles of the various schools of Vedānta, Swaminarayan's philosophy is appropriately identified as the "Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana."

This work's inquiry into the first assertion, begins by analysing unique features of Śaṅkara's Advaita and Rāmānuja's Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta. Foundational differences among these *darśanas*' understanding of 1) *brahmajñāna*: the nature and form of brahman, Parabrahman, the self, and the relationship between them; 2) *sādhana* – spiritual endeavour; and 3) the nature and state of liberation play a vital role in identifying both as distinct *darśanic* positions—schools of Vedānta. This work, thereafter, examines the foundational principles of the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana and contrasts them with those of Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja. Such analysis reveals that the philosophical differences that serve to distinguish Rāmānuja's darśana from Śaṅkara's also set apart the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana from both Advaita and Viśiṣṭādvaita.

The latter half of this work investigates the identification of Svāmīnārāyaṇa Vedānta as the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana. It discusses how 'Akṣara-Puruṣottama' concisely integrates the foundational principle of the *darśana*: to become *Akṣararūpa* and offering *upāsana* (worshipful service) or *parā-bhakti* (supreme devotion) to Parabrahman with *dāśabhāva*.^{1,2} The designation 'Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana' accurately incorporates the *darśana's* characteristic metaphysical position along with its understanding of *brahmavidyā*, spiritual endeavour (*sādhana*), and liberation. Consistent

1. 'Dāśabhāva' refers to the sentiment of willful and unpretentious service that originates from, among other things, love, respect, adoration, humility, and gratitude.
2. (Sadhu, Bhadrashdas. Svāmīnārāyaṇasiddhāntasudhā. 1st ed., Swaminarayan Aksharprithi, 2017, p. xxxiv); (Svāmī, Nārāyaṇasvarūpadāsa. Siddhāntapātra. 18 July 2008, p. 6)

with the nomenclature used to designate other Vedānta *darśanas*, the title “Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana” appropriately serves to identify Bhagavān Swaminarayan’s unique *darśanic* position.

KEYWORDS:

Darśana; Vedānta; comparative philosophy; Svāminārāyaṇa; Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana; Śāṅkara; Advaita; Rāmānuja; Viśiṣṭādvaita; brahman; Parabrahman; brahmajñāna; brahmavidyā; sādhanā; upāsana; bhakti; soteriology

RESEARCH MOTIVATIONS

BHAGAVĀN SWAMINARAYAN – A BRIEF BIOGRAPHICAL ACCOUNT

The Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana grounds itself in Bhagavān Sahajanand Swami’s (Sahajānanda Svāmī) teachings. Sahajanand Swami was born in 1837 in a *brāhmin* family in Uttara Pradeśa, India. Upon completing his study of various sacred texts, he left his home to set out on a pilgrimage throughout India. He travelled alone and barely equipped on a journey that led him throughout the Indian subcontinent. Wherever he went, he would ask learned scholars and ascetics to reveal their understanding of the nature and form of *jīva*, *īśvara*, *māyā*, Brahman, and Parabrahman. Unsatisfied with the responses he received, he travelled for a little over seven years until he arrived at a village named Loja in Gujarat. It was here that Nilkanth (Nīlakaṇṭha)³ ended his pilgrimage. Soon after, Sahajanand Swami established a fellowship founded on his unique teachings and became worshipped as Parabrahman Puruṣottama.

3. During his pilgrimage throughout India, Sahajanand Swami was identified by the name Nilkanth.

Sahajanand Swami later became known as Bhagavān Swaminarayan. He instructed his followers on various philosophical teachings and inspired them to live a pious and righteous life. For the remainder of his life, he travelled from one village to the next and delivered discourses on various principles of Vedānta. He revealed that there were five eternal and ontologically distinct entities: *jīva*, *īśvara*, *māyā*, Akṣarabrahman, and Parabrahman. He explained that the *jīvas* and *īśvaras* were bound by *māyā*⁴ since eternity and that Akṣara (Akṣarabrahman) and Puruṣottama, who is greater than even Akṣara, were both distinct and eternally beyond the influence of *māyā*. He emphasized the need to become *brahmarūpa* (attain oneness with Brahman) in order to offer supreme devotion to Parabrahman. Through such teachings he revealed the foundational philosophical and theological principles of the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana.

Although Swaminarayan⁵ is recognized as the founder of this *darśana*, his significance within it extends much further. He is identified as Parabrahman Puruṣottama, the *avatārin* (the cause) of all *avatāras* (divine manifestations). He was and continues to be worshipped as such and is identified as the object of *upāsanā* (worshipful service). In recognition of his unique ontological position within the *darśana*, there are thousands of Akṣara-Puruṣottama mandirs throughout the world in which Bhagavān Swaminarayan's divine idol (*mūrti*) is consecrated and worshipped.

Alongside his *mūrti*, the *mūrti* of Gunatitanand Swami (Guṇātītānanda Svāmī) is also consecrated in the central shrine of these mandirs. Within the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana, Gunatitanand Swami is identified as Akṣarabrahman, a distinct ontological entity from Parabrahman. He is

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4. Māyā is identified as an instrument or power of Parabrahman that is used as the substance of creation and the cause of ignorance. By nature, it is composed of the following three qualities: sattvagūṇa, tamogūṇa, and rajoṇa.
 5. Although Sahajanand Swami is formally identified as Parabrahman Puruṣottama Bhagavān Swaminarayan, for brevity and in an attempt to increase readability; henceforth, I will occasionally refer to him by simply 'Swaminarayan.'

also identified as Bhagavān Swaminarayan's first successor. Swaminarayan is believed to remain present, bestow liberation, and continue to allow others to experience his divine presence after his worldly departure through Gunatitanand Swami and, successively thereafter, through the *guṇātīta*⁶ gurus.

THE AKṢARA-PURUṢOTTAMA DARŚANA AND BRAHMASVARŪPA SHASTRIJI MAHARAJ

Although Bhagavān Swaminarayan revealed the principles of this doctrine through his discourses, numerous letters, and personal revelations, the identification of the *darśana* as an independent Vedānta *darśana* and the use of 'Akṣara-Puruṣottama' – a designation found in the title of the *darśana*, was first employed by Brahmasvarūpa Shastriji Maharaj (Śāstrījī Mahārāja). Shastriji Maharaj was the third successor in the lineage of *guṇātīta* gurus that followed Swaminarayan. Having analysed Swaminarayan's expositions in the *Vacanāmṛta*⁷, other sacred texts of the *saṃpradāya*⁸, and both historical and personal accounts of Swaminarayan, he synthesized 'Akṣara-Puruṣottama' to constitute the foundational philosophical and theological principles revealed in Swaminarayan's teachings. The verse, "Reverence to him—Śāstrī, who is the guru's guru⁹ and who composed [the title] 'Akṣara-Puruṣottama'"¹⁰ is presented

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6. 'Guṇātīta' refers to being above the following three qualities of māyā: rajoguṇa, tamoguṇa, and satvaguṇa.
 7. The *Vacanāmṛta* is a sacred text of the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana that consists of a collection of Bhagavān Swaminarayan's discourses.
 8. 'Saṃpradāya' refers to a religious tradition that is, among other things, characterized by a succession of gurus, a distinctive philosophical or theological doctrine, a particular tradition of ritual performance, a recognized collection of sacred texts, and a religious following committed to particular religious identity.
 9. 'guru' here refers to Pramukh Swami Maharaj. Since Shastriji Maharaj was Pramukh Swami Maharaj's guru, he is also identified as the guru's guru.
 10. "grathito yena śabdo'yamakṣarapuruṣottamaḥ| gurūṇāṃ guruve tasmai śāstrīṇe'stu namo namaḥ||" (Sadhu, 2017, p. 145)

in recognition of his foundational role. This work's investigation of Swaminarayan's *darśanic* position as an independent Vedānta *darśana* and its designation as the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana seeks to understand the significance of Shastriji Maharaj's proclamation.

The recent creation of 1) the *Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣya*—a five-volume comprehensive commentary of the *Prasthānatrayī* according to the *darśanic* principles revealed by Bhagavān Swaminarayan, and 2) the *Svāminārāyaṇasiddhāntasudhā*—a *vādagrantha* that offers a systematic exposition, justification, and defence of the *darśana's* foundational principles, further attest to the significance of this investigation and substantiate the discussion within a framework that is familiar to the established *darśanic* dialogue.

This investigation takes on further relevance by Śrī Kāśī Vidvat Pariṣad's recent affirmation of Swaminarayan's Vedānta not only as an independent Vedānta *darśana*, but also as aptly identified by the title: "The Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana." Upon studying, analysing, and discussing the *Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣya* and the *Svāminārāyaṇasiddhāntasudhā*, the Śrī Kāśī Vidvat Pariṣad on July 31, 2017 produced a copper-plated letter of declaration to reaffirm the *darśana's* identity.

Grounding its relevance in such historical and contemporary developments, this article serves to explore the distinctive philosophical and theological content of the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana as it is expressed within 1) the discourses of Bhagavān Swaminarayan that are collected in the *Vacanāmṛta*, 2) the revelations of the *darśana's* *guṇātīta* gurus, and 3) the readings of the sacred texts of the *Prasthānatrayī*. Upon exploring Swaminarayan's revealed philosophical and theological principles within the context of an existent *darśanic* dialogue, this work also investigates the role of such principles in identifying Swaminarayan's Vedāntic *darśana* as the "Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana."

FOUNDATIONS

This work will approach its discussion of Svāminārāyaṇa Vedānta within the framework of investigating the following two assertions:

The Akṣara-Puruṣottama Siddhānta as it has been revealed by Bhagavān Swaminarayan is a distinct Vedānta doctrine

Swaminarayan's Vedānta is appropriately identified by the title: "The Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana."

The first section of this work will focus on the first of these assertions. It will begin by highlighting Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja Vedānta's characteristic understanding of:

Brahmajñāna: the nature and form of *brahman*, Parabrahman, the self, and the relationship between them;

sādhana—spiritual endeavour; and

the state of liberation

Upon calling attention to key differences that have traditionally formed the basis of identifying these *darśanic* systems as independent, this section will proceed by explicating the principles of Swaminarayan's Vedānta as they pertain to the above-mentioned categories. The exposition and then comparative analysis of the principles of the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana with those of Śaṅkara's Advaita Vedānta and Rāmānuja's Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta are intentioned to demonstrate that philosophical and theological differences that serve to distinguish Rāmānuja's Vedānta from Śaṅkara's also set apart the *darśanic* position revealed by Svāminārāyaṇa. As a result, I conclude that it is only appropriate to identify the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana as an independent Vedānta *darśana*.

Although a comprehensive analysis of the first of the two claims above would requisite an investigation and an exposition of all principles of not only Śaṅkara's Advaita Vedānta and Rāmānuja's Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta, but also those of other Vedānta darśanas, for the economy of space I have restricted my discussions by comparing only certain foundational principles of the aforementioned two Vedānta with those

of Svāminārāyaṇa. The project of considering other minor difference in addition to contrasting Swaminarayan's Vedānta from other *darśanic* systems, such as Madhva's Dvaita Vedānta and Vallabha's Śuddhādvaita, is a task that I have left for subsequent works.

This work will substantiate its exposition of each *darśana's* position on available commentarial works and subsequent literatures. With regards to the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana, expositions of its principles will be founded on Swaminarayan's discourses as they are recorded in the Vacanāmṛta, the *Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣya*, and the *Svāminārāyaṇasiddhāntasudhā*. Upon conducting this analysis, this work will conclude the first section in support of the declaration that Swaminarayan's Vedānta is an independent Vedāntic *darśana*.

The second half of this work will then investigate the dynamics underlying the identification of Svāminārāyaṇa Vedānta as the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana. It will offer a *darśanic* basis for identifying Swaminarayan's Vedānta by the title: "The Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana." Among other considerations, this section will elaborate on how this title incorporates both the *darśana's* unique ontological position along with its understanding of spiritual endeavour (*sādhana*).

PART I

THE ADVAITA (NON-DUALIST) DOCTRINE - ŚAṆKARA'S BRAHMA-MĪMĀṂSĀ

BRAHMAN

Śaṅkara characterizes *brahman* according to the Advaita *darśana*. For him, there is only one fundamental entity: *brahman*. This *brahman* is without qualities (*nirguṇa*), not characteristically distinct (non-phenomenal) (*nirviśeṣa*), unknowable (*ajñeya*), and not subject to any

means of knowledge (*aprameya*)¹¹. As such brahman does not possess the quality of being a cause (*karṭṛtva*), being an upholder (*dhartṛtva*), having knowledge (*jñātṛtva*), nor the quality of being a controller (*niyanṭṛtva*).

Given such a description of *brahman*, how does Śaṅkara accommodate Upaniṣadic aphorisms that describe brahman as being for example existent (*sat*), conscious (*cit*), and happiness (*ānanda*)¹² or truth (*satya*), knowledge (*jñāna*), and endless (*ananta*)¹³? Śaṅkara moves by identifying these qualities as the non-existence (*abhāva*) of their opposing or contrary quality. He then argues that since *abhāva* or non-existence can only be a substratum (*adhikaraṇa*), it cannot be a quality (*dharma*). When such terms describe *brahman* while using coordinate predication (*samānādhikaraṇa*), they are indicative of *brahman* itself (*svarūpabhūta vastutattva*) and not a quality of *brahman*. For instance, when *sat* is identified as the non-existence of *asat* (non-existence)—the contrary of *sat*—*sat* is described as an *abhāva*. It is not identified as a quality of *brahman*, but instead *brahman* itself. Similar moves are made for other *śruti* descriptions of *brahman*.

Śaṅkara makes a different move to consolidate other seemingly contradictory descriptions of Brahman found in the *śrutis*. Aphorisms such as: “He (*brahman*), the knowledgeable one (*puruṣa*) is the observer, the listener, the one who tastes, smells, contemplates, comprehends, [and] does”¹⁴ and “one whose desires are [made] true (fulfilled) (*satyakāma*) and whose volitions are [made] true (fulfilled) (*satyasaṅkalpa*)”¹⁵ describe *brahman* as having particular qualities. Śaṅkara identifies these as referring to not the *pāramārthika* or real *brahman* but *saguṇa-brahman*. To compensate the two seemingly contrasting descriptions—a *brahman* without qualities and one with qualities, he identifies two types of *brahman*:

11. (Hiriyanna, Outlines of Indian Philosophy 372) (Sivananda 220)

12. See, for example: “saccidānandaṃ brahmal”

13. See, for example: “satyaṃ jñānamānantaṃ brahmal” (Tai. 2.1.1) (Śāstrī 25)

14. “eṣa hi draṣṭā śrotā rasayitā ghrātā mantā boddhā kartā vijñānātmā puraṣaḥ” (Pra. 4.9) (Śāstrī 14)

15. “satyakāmaḥ satyasaṅkalpaḥ” (Chā. 8.1.5) (Śāstrī 78)

a *pāramārthika brahman* and a *vyavāhārika* or *saguṇa brahman*. Among the two, the *pāramārthika* or true/actual *brahman* is identified as earlier: viz. among other things, without qualities (*nirguṇa*) and not characteristically distinct (non-phenomenal) (*nirviśeṣa*); whereas, the *vyavāhārika* or *saguṇa brahman*, although unreal (*mithyā*), is one that (1) has qualities, (2) engages in actions, such as creating, contemplating, and desiring, and (3) is described by, among others, action-contingent qualifiers.

Śaṅkara's insistence for such an understanding lies in his assertion of the existence of only *brahman*. Often, Upaniṣadic revelations such as: "There is one, singular *brahman*,"¹⁶ "I am he,"¹⁷ and "This all is *brahman*"¹⁸ are offered in support of his Advaita position. As a result of his distinct ontology, Śaṅkara's *brahman* is characterized without the following three distinctions: *svasajātīya* or being similar to others; *svavijātīya* or being dissimilar to others; and *svagata* or being of parts. Brahman's singular existence as such results in the understanding of the self (*ātman*) and the world (*jagat*) as its manifestations.

THE ĀTMAN AS BRAHMAN

Within Śaṅkara's Advaita the self (*ātman*) is understood to be ontologically identical with *brahman*. Upaniṣadic revelations such as, "This *jīvātman* (self) is *brahman*"¹⁹ and "I am *brahman*"²⁰ substantiate his identification of the *jīvātman* with *brahman*. This position is expressed in the "*Jijñāsādhikaraṇa*" of Śaṅkara's *Brahmasūtra* commentary, where he asserts that the "*ātman* is *brahman*."^{21,22} Vācaspati Miśra, the author of the *Bhāmātī*, recalls the phrase "that you are,"²³ to further validate the

16. "ekamevādvitīyaṃ brahmal" (Chā. 6.2.1) (Śāstrī 66), (Vi. 467) (Madhavananda 202)

17. "so'ham" (Īśā. 16) (Śāstrī 1)

18. "sarvaṃ khalavidam brahmal" (Chā. 3.14.1) (Śāstrī 50)

19. "ayamātmā brahmal" (Mā. 1.2) (Śāstrī 20)

20. "aham brahmāsmi" (Bṛ. 1.4.10) (Śāstrī 89)

21. "ātmā ca brahmal" (BS. 1.1.1) (Śaṅkara, *Brahmasūtra Bhashya* 81)

22. (Śāstrī and Śāstrī 81)

23. "tattvamasi" (Chā. 6.8.7) (Śāstrī 69)

non-dualist identification^{24,25}. In his discussion on Advaita, the phrase “the *jīva* is *brahman*, and not inferior”²⁶ is also often recalled in support. Within Śāṅkara’s Vedānta, a distinct emphasis is placed on identifying the *ātman* as *brahman* (*svarūpaikya*) and not simply as having qualities identical to those of *brahman* (*guṇasāmyakṛta-sādrśya*).

In addition to identifying *brahman* with the self, the Advaita doctrine also advocates *brahman* as the greatest sovereignty (*sarvopari-sattāvat*). As such, there is no notion of an absolute (*pāramārthika*) Parabrahman that reigns superior to *brahman*.

THE WORLD AND BRAHMAN

The Advaita doctrine, offers yet another means to understand *brahman*. Along with identifying the self with *brahman*, Śāṅkara’s Advaita advocates that all of creation is also identical to *brahman*. Sacred text excerpts such as: “Distinct objects do not exist”²⁷ and “This all is *brahman*,”²⁸ are often cited in support of this position. Rambachan explains this oneness, “Shankara suggests that the universe, which has come from the infinite *brahman*, is not different in essential nature from *brahman*.”²⁹ For Śāṅkara, there is only *brahman* and everything is *brahman*.

How does Śāṅkara accommodate for the phenomenal world? The *advaitin* (an adherent of the Advaita doctrine) explains that from a non-dualist (*pāramārthika*) perspective there is nothing other than *brahman*.

24. (Śāstrī and Śāstrī 81)

25. Elsewhere, Vācaspati Miśra, further supports this argument by elaborating: “tadastvamā sāmānādhikaraṇyāt tasmāt tatpadārthasya śuddhabuddhatvādeḥ śabdataḥ, tvampadārthasya ca jīvātmanaḥ pratyakṣataḥ prasiddheḥ, padārthajñānapūrvakatvācca vākyārthajñānasya, tvampadārthāvagamaḥ tattvamasi iti vākyādupalapadyate iti bhavaḥ!”

26. “jīvo brahmaiva nāparaḥ!” (Br. 20) (Śāṅkara, Brahmasutra Bhashya 224)

27. “neha nānāsti kiṃcanal” (Bṛ. 4.4.19) (Śāstrī 118), (Kaṭha. 2.1.11) (Śāstrī 8), (Vi. 467) (Madhavananda 202)

28. “sarvaṃ khalavidam brahma!” (Chā. 3.14.1) (Śāstrī 50)

29. (Anantanand 72)

Rambachan elaborates, “The world is likened to a sense-illusion, which we conjure, and experience because of our ignorance.”³⁰ Just as a piece of rope is misunderstood as a snake and dealt with as such by someone who is ignorant, the world, which is nothing but the singular entity *brahman*, is misconceived by the ignorant to be distinct from *brahman*. In his *Vivekacūḍāmaṇi*, Śaṅkara summarizes: “*Brahman* is real; the world is unreal (*mithyā*).”³¹ The phenomenal world is rendered unreal (*mithyā*) and is understood to be merely a presentation of *brahman*.³²

Despite his description of the world as *mithyā*, Śaṅkara does not offer a clear exposition of ‘*mithyā*’ or the precise nature of the relationship between *brahman* and the world. Consequently, within the Advaita tradition there is an indecisive dialogue regarding the relationship between the real (*satya*) *brahman* and the unreal (*mithyā*) world. This indeterminacy has resulted in different schools of thought identified as, among others: *pratibimbavāda*, *avacchedavāda*, and *ābhāsavāda*. The commentator Śrī Prakāśātmayati explains Advaita using *bimba-pratibimbābhāva*. He describes the world to be a reflection or *pratibimba* of unqualified (*nirguṇa*) *brahman*. Alternatively, Vācaspati Miśra in the *Bhāmatī* offers an interpretation through *avacchedavāda*. According to him, although space (*ākāśa*) is one, its relevant association or distinction (*avacchinna*) with an object such as a pot (*ghaṭa*) renders it as the space of the pot (*ghaṭākāśa*). Similarly, the non-dualist’s *brahman*, through different relationships (*vibhinna upādhi*), is realized as distinct objects. The elaborator (*vārtikakāra*) Sureśvara (Maṇḍana Miśra), explains Advaita in yet another manner. He advocates *ābhāsavāda*, a position that likens the world of the *advaitin* with the illusion of a mirage.³³ Although *advaitins* after Śaṅkara have provided thorough yet disparate contributions to the tradition by reflecting on the nature

30. (Anantanand 67)

31. “brahma satyaṃ jagananmithyā” (Vi. 20) (Madhavananda 8), (Br. 20) (Sankaracharya, “Brahmajñānāvalīmālā” 224)

32. (Hiriyanna, Outlines of Indian Philosophy 373–76)

33. (Pulasth Soobah 136–70)

of the world and *brahman*, their expositions nonetheless remain faithful to non-dualist belief of the world as *brahman*.

PĀRAMĀRTHIKA BRAHMAN

As we saw earlier, within Śaṅkara's Vedānta the ultimate (*pāramārthika*) *brahman* is without qualities (*nirguṇa*) and not characteristically distinct (*nirviṣeṣa*). As a result, one is unable to ascribe to it the qualities of being a cause (*kāraṇatā*), being the sustainer or upholder (*ādhāratā*), or being the inspirer (*prerakatā*). This presents a unique challenge to Śaṅkara, since it is accepted that there must be some creator or cause of the world. A need arises for the *advaitin* to reconcile the cause, sustainer, and inspiration of the experiential world with some entity. *Saguṇa-brahman* or a *brahman* with attributes is introduced with these intentions. The *advaitin* identifies 'īśvara' with this *saguṇa-brahman*. For the *advaitin* *īśvara* is the cause, sustainer, inspirer, controller (*niyaṃtā*), and destroyer (*saṃhartā*) of the world.³⁴ *Īśvara* is said to be excellent (*Bhagavān*) or with powers (*aīśvarya*). Sacred text readings that describe *brahman* as the cause, sustainer, controller, or inspirer of the world, are interpreted by *advaitins* to express qualities of this *saguṇa-brahman* or *īśvara*. Recall however, within Śaṅkara's framework *saguṇa-brahman* does not exist as the ultimate being (*pāramārthika sat*). It is affected by desolation (*trikālābādhitā*) and considered to be imaginary (*kālpanika*), unreal (*mithyā*), and an illusion.

ŚAṅKARA ON SĀDHANĀ (SPIRITUAL ENDEAVOUR) AND LIBERATION (MUKTI)

Śaṅkara's understanding of spiritual endeavour (*sāadhanā*) and liberation (*mukti*) are closely related with his understanding of the knowledge of *brahman*. Within Śaṅkara's Vedānta bondage is understood in terms of ignorance or the absence of knowledge. He explains in his commentary of the *Brahmasūtras*, "Knowledge (*jñāna*) is shrouded

34. (Hiriyanna, Outlines of Indian Philosophy 366–67)

by ignorance; by it (ignorance) beings are delusioned.”³⁵ He reasons that by acquiring knowledge one becomes freed from ignorance and attains liberation. He continues in the text, “Liberation is attained by knowledge,”³⁶ and then much later explains, “Knowledge results in liberation from bondage, which is caused by ignorance.”³⁷ For Śaṅkara, knowledge or *jñāna* is understood as the means for attaining liberation. Not only is knowledge presented as a means, but it is also identified as the sole cause for liberation. He asserts elsewhere, “Only by knowing it’ (Śve. 3.8)—the *śruti* [expresses] that for liberation there are no means other than knowledge.”³⁸

What is the nature of this *jñāna*? Śaṅkara specifies that *brahmajñāna*—the knowledge of *brahman*—is the means of attaining liberation. Within the “*Jijñāsādhikaraṇa*” of his Brahmasūtra commentary, Śaṅkara expresses his understanding of the significance of *brahmajñāna*. He states, “One should desire to attain *brahmajñāna*, since it thoroughly rids one of ignorance, which is the root cause of attachment to the world.”³⁹ Vācaspati Miśra similarly expresses this position when he states, “*Brahmajñāna* is the greatest and (perhaps) the only means to alleviate all misery and attain the one (ultimate) happiness.”⁴⁰ Appayya Dikṣita’s *Parimālā* along with Amalānanda Sarasvatī’s *Kalpataru* also substantiate, “Therefore, *brahmajñāna* diminishes karma and is the cause of liberation (*mokṣa*)”⁴¹ and

35. “ajñānenāvṛtaṃ jñānaṃ tena muhyanti jantavaḥ itil” (BS. Śaṃ. Bhā. 2.1.14) (Śāstrī and Śāstrī 462)

36. “jñānānmokṣa ityupapadyate” (BS. Śaṃ. Bhā. 2.1.14) (Śāstrī and Śāstrī 457)

37. “avidyākṛtatvādbandhasya vidyayā mokṣa upapadyate” (BS. Śaṃ. Bhā. 3.2.29) (Śāstrī and Śāstrī 723)

38. “tameva viditvā... iti vidyayā anyāḥ panthā mokṣāya na vidyate iti śrute... jñānāt kaivalyamāpnotil” (Gī. Śaṃ. Bhā. 18.66) (Śaṅkarācāryaḥ 463)

39. “brahmāvagatirhi puruṣārthaḥ, niḥśeṣasaṃsārābījā vidyādyanarthanibarhaṇāt tasmād brahma jijñāsitavyam” (Śāstrī and Śāstrī 77–78)

40. “brahmajñānameva samastaduḥkhopaśamarūpamānandaikaṛasaṃ paramaṃ prayojanam” (Śāstrī and Śāstrī 46)

41. “ata eva karmaṇaṃ kṣayaṣṇutvaṃ brahmajñānasya ca mokṣahetutvam” (Śāstrī and Śāstrī 74)

“brahmajñāna is a means for attaining liberation (*mukti*),”⁴² respectively. *Brahmajñāna* plays a significant soteriological role in Śaṅkara’s Advaita or the non-dualist *darśana*.

What does such *brahmajñāna* involve? Along with the realization of *brahman* as without qualities (*nirguṇa*) and not characteristically distinct (non-phenomenal) (*nirviśeṣa*), *brahmajñāna* requisites the realization of the phenomenal world as unreal and the identification of the self (*ātman*) with *brahman*. As we have already seen earlier in this work, Śaṅkara advocates, “Brahman is real; the world is unreal (*mithyā*).”⁴³ With regards to the identification of the self with *brahman*, he explains in his *Vākyavṛtti*, “Arising from the assertion ‘that you are’ (*tattvamasī*) and others, the knowledge of the oneness of the self and Paramātman—it (that knowledge) is the means for this liberation.”⁴⁴ For Śaṅkara since everything including the self is *brahman*, the knowledge of *brahman* requisites an understanding of the self as *brahman*. He explains in his commentary of the *Bhagavadgītā*, “Only the knowledge of the self is the means for liberation, since it dismisses distinction, and it (distinction) inhibits liberation.”⁴⁵ By understanding the self as *brahman*, one not only is freed from understanding that there is a distinction between both, but also comes to realize the true form of the self as *brahman*.

Having bestowed such unparalleled significance to knowledge, Śaṅkara’s Vedānta leaves little if any prominence to devotion (*bhakti*), *dharma*, or worshipful service (*upāsana*). To the *advaitin*, *bhakti* and *upāsana* of *brahman* are not considered to be the ultimate reality (*pāramārthika satya*), since at the *pāramārthika* level the *ātman* is itself *brahman*, and as

42. “muktisādhana brahmajñānam” (Śāstrī and Śāstrī 47)

43. “brahma satyaṃ jagananmithyā” (Vi. 20) (Madhavananda 8) (Br. 20) (Sankaracharya, “Brahmajñānāvalimālā” 224)

44. “tattvamasyādivākyotthaṃ yajjīva paramātmanoḥ tādātmyaviśayaṃ jñānaṃ tadidaṃ muktisādhanaṃ” (Va. 6) (Sankaracharya, “Vākyavṛttiḥ” 26)

45. “ātmajñānasya tu kevalya niḥśreyasahetutvaṃ bheda pratyayaṃ nivartakatvena kaivalya phalāvasānatvāt” (Gī. Śaṃ. Bhā. 18.66) (Śaṅkarācāryaḥ 460)

a result, is not required to offer devotion (*bhakti*) or worshipful service (*upāsana*). Nevertheless, until one attains the realization of Advaita—from a phenomenal-non-existential (*vyavāhārika*) perspective—notions such as devotion and worshipful service are accepted in practice. However, such practice is accepted with an understanding of the non-dualistic sentiments expressed in ‘I am *brahman*’ and the its inherent, ultimate ineffectuality. Within the liberated state there is no offering of *bhakti* or *upāsana* since distinctions such as those between the object of devotion (*upāsya*) or devotee (*upāsaka*) are understood to be non-existent.

RĀMĀNUJA ON BRAHMAN

Rāmānuja’s *darśanic* position is greatly at odds with Śaṅkara’s. He places Śaṅkara as the voice of the adversary (*pratipakṣa*) when presenting his own expositions. His opposition becomes apparent when one examines the meaning he ascribes to *śruti* phrases of his text the *Vedārthasaṅgraha*⁴⁶ and in the great antithesis (*mahāpurvapakṣa*) presented at the beginning of the *Śrībhāṣya*—his commentary on the *Brahmasūtras* (BS).⁴⁷

Like Śaṅkara, Rāmānuja’s understands ‘brahman’ to signify only one *brahman*. In his commentary on the BS, he employs various philological methods to argue that ‘brahman’ refers to Puruṣottama and that other meanings ascribed are merely metaphorical. He argues that it is not possible to conceive of ‘brahman’ as having multiple meaning ascriptions.⁴⁸ Consequently, he uses the singular of ‘brahman’ in his nominal declension of ‘brahmajijñāsā’ in BS. 1.1.1.⁴⁹ He also identifies this ‘brahman’ as a referent to Puruṣottama.⁵⁰

46. (Rāmānuja, *Vedārthasaṅgrahaḥ*)

47. (Rāmānuja and Dhruva 53–352)

48. See, for example: “sarvatra bṛhattvagunayogena brahmaśabdaḥ bṛhattvaṃ ca svarūpeṇa guṇaiśca yatrānavadhikātiśayaṃ so’sya mukhyo’rthaḥ sa ca sarveśvara eva ato brahmaśabdastatraiva mukhyavṛttaḥ tasmādanyatra tadguṇaśayogād-aupacārikaḥ anekārthakalpanā’yogāt” (Rāmānuja and Dhruva 57)

49. “brahmaṇo jijñāsā brahmajijñāsā” (Rāmānuja and Dhruva 56)

50. “By ‘brahman’ Puruṣottama is referenced.” (“brahmaśabdena...

Rāmānuja's understanding of the nature and form of *brahman*, however, differs greatly from Śaṅkara. Rāmānuja contrasts his own understanding of *brahman* from the *advaitin* tendency to categorize it as without qualities (*nirguṇa*), as not characteristically distinct (non-phenomenal) (*nirviśeṣa*), as unknowable (*ajñeya*), and as not the subject of knowledge (*aprameya*).⁵¹ Innovatively escaping the *advaitins'* objections, Rāmānuja presents a way to allow for the same *brahman* as being both with qualities (*saguṇa*) and without qualities (*nirguṇa*). Although like Śaṅkara, he identifies *brahman* by 'īśvara,' his belief in *īśvara* as the creator of the world (*jagatkartā*) or as *saguṇa brahman*, is vastly different.⁵² As the creator of the world, he identifies *brahman* as being with qualities (*saguṇa*). Although *brahman* is *saguṇa*, he also identifies the same *brahman* as *nirguṇa*, which he, unlike Śaṅkara, interprets as *being without faults*.⁵³⁻⁵⁴ Rāmānuja explains: "Its meaning is that [*brahman*] is characterized by being without any faults (*doṣa*) (*nirguṇa*) and with liberating qualities (*saguṇa*)."⁵⁵ In his works Rāmānuja places great emphasis on this thesis and invests much effort in trying to argue for its position. In his argument he takes assistance from the *Brahmasūtra* in describing *brahman* as having two natures—*ubhayalingam*.⁵⁶ By interpreting 'nirguṇa' as *being without faults*, Rāmānuja allows the same *brahman* to be both *saguṇa* and *nirguṇa*.

Rāmānuja also ingeniously sidesteps the *advaita* criticism for describing the same *brahman* as being both indistinct and distinct from the self and *prakṛti*. Carefully accommodating both types of *śrutis*: 1) those that depict *brahman*, the *jīvātman*, and *prakṛti* as distinct⁵⁷ and 2) those

Puruṣottamo'bhidhīyatel") (Rāmānuja and Dhruva 57)

51. (Hiriyanna, *Outlines of Indian Philosophy* 372) (Shivananada 220)

52. (Rāmānujācārya, *Shri Bhashyam* 353)

53. (Rāmānujācārya, *Shri Bhashyam* 1291)

54. (Rāmānuja, *Śrībhāṣya* 1289–312)

55. "nirastanikhiladoṣatvakalyāṇaguṇākaraatvalakṣaṇopetamityarthah!" (Rāmānujācārya, *Shri Bhashyam* 1291)

56. See, for example: (Rāmānuja and Dhruva 1289–311)

57. See, for example *Śvetāśvataropaniṣad* 1.6, 1.12, 6.13, 6.16, 1.9, 4.6, 4.7, 4.10, and

that depict them as one,⁵⁸ Rāmānuja describes the relationship between *brahman* and the *jīvātman* or *prakṛti* as analogous to the relationship between a body (*śarīra*) and its embodier (*śarīrin*). He explains in his commentary of “Brahmasūtra 1.1.13:” “In this way, by *brahman*’s being the *ātman* of all sentient and insentient, all those with sentience and the world are its *śarīra*.”⁵⁹ He asserts that although the three (*tattva-traya*): *jīvātman* (the sentient), *prakṛti* (the insentient), and *brahman* are ontologically distinct, *brahman* resides in both the *jīvātman* and *prakṛti* as their *ātman*.⁶⁰ As a result, he argues, *brahman* can be described as being distinct from the *jīvātman* (*cit*) and *prakṛti* (*acit*), and as the *śarīrin*, *brahman* can be described as being one with them. Rāmānuja recognizes a single *brahman* (Puruṣottama) as the greatest reality (*paramasat*) and believes it to be simultaneously characteristically distinct (*saviṣeṣa*).

RĀMĀNUJA ON SĀDHANĀ (SPIRITUAL ENDEAVOUR) AND LIBERATION (MUKTI)

Parabrahman plays a significant role within Rāmānuja’s understanding of liberation and the means to attaining it. Śrīnivāsadāsa offers a succinct summary of Rāmānuja’s viewpoints in his *Yatindramatadīpikā*. He explains, “Having been propitiated with devotion (*bhakti*) and refuge (*prapatti*), only Īśvara (Bhagavān) gifts liberation. As a result, they both are means for [attaining] liberation.”⁶¹ Within Viśiṣṭādvaita *vedānta*, liberation is gifted by Īśvara or Paramātmā rather than acquired simply engaging in spiritual endeavour. However, as Śrīnivāsadāsa is clear to express, devotion (*bhakti*) and refuge (*prapatti*) play a significant role in attaining liberation: they

Muṇḍakopaniṣad 3.1.1, among others.

58. See, for example Chāndogyaopaniṣad 3.14.1, 6.2.9, 6.8.7; Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad 1.4.10, 2.4.14, 2.5.19, and 4.4.19, among others.

59. “evaṃ ca sarvaṃ cetanācetanam prati brahmaṇaḥ ātmatvena sarvaṃ sacetanam jagattasya śarīram bhavati” (Rāmānujācārya, Shri Bhashyam 492)

60. See also, (Rāmānujācārya, Shri Bhashyam 1522)

61. See

are identified as the means for acquiring Paramātman's *kṛpā*—favour or beneficence—which in turn is the cause of liberation. As such, *bhakti* and refuge (*śaraṇāgati* or *prapatti*) are presented as the sole means for attaining liberation.⁶² In summarizing Rāmānuja's position, Appayya Dīkṣita expresses similarly in his *Ratnatrayasāra*, "Devotion (*bhakti*) and refuge (*prapatti*), which are foremost, are the means to propitiate him (Bhagavān)."⁶³

Despite this emphasis on *bhakti*, *prapatti*, and Paramātman's *kṛpā*, Rāmānuja is also read to understand *brahmavidyā*—the knowledge of *brahman*—as a means for liberation. Rāmānuja reveals, "The reward of the knowledge of *karma* (*karmajñāna*), claimed by Pūrvamīmāṃsā is modest, mutable, and cannot grant liberation; whereas, *brahmajñāna* has the capacity to offer limitless and unmitigated reward, or in other words, liberation."⁶⁴ Elsewhere in the same text he reaffirms, "It been said: 'the cession of ignorance is nothing but liberation,' and that it (the cession of ignorance) is attained only by the knowledge of *brahman* (*brahmavidyā*); it is accepted."⁶⁵ With the author of the textual elaboration (*vṛtti*) of the *Brahmasūtra* in mind he also asserts the significance of the desire to attain *brahmajñāna*.⁶⁶ Raṅgarāmānuja, an advocate of Rāmānuja's position, supports the importance of *brahmajñāna* in his commentary of the Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad, where he states, "Liberation is not possible without *brahmajñāna*."⁶⁷ Like Śāṅkara and the *advaitins*, Rāmānuja also emphasizes the significance of *brahmajñāna* in his expositions.

62. (Rāmānujācāryaḥ 384–85) (Rāmānujācāryaḥ 589–91)

63. "bhaktiprapattipramukhaṃ tadvaśīkarakāraṇaṃ" (Ra. 23) (Brahmadarśanaśāstra Sādhu 172)

64. "mīmāṃsāpūrvabhāgañātasya karmaṇo'lpā'sthiraphalatvāduparitanabhāgā'vaseyasya brahmajñānasya'nantā'kṣayaphalatvācca pūrvavṛttāt karmajñānādanantaramata eva hetorbrahma jñātavyamityuktaṃ bhavati" (Rāmānuja, Śrībhāṣya 2)

65. "yaduktam - avidyānivṛttireva mokṣaḥ, sā ca brahmavijñānādeva bhavati iti tadabhyupagamyate" (Rāmānuja and Dhruva 72)

66. "brahmavividiṣāl" (Rāmānuja, Śrībhāṣya 2)

67. "brahmajñānābhāve mokṣasaṃbhāvanaiva nāsti" (Kumāra 122)

What is the relationship between devotion (*bhakti*) and such liberating *brahmavidyā*? Rāmānuja explains, “Therefore, knowledge (*jñāna*), which is 1) a referent of ‘dhyāna,’ ‘upāsana,’ and others and 2) different from the knowledge of the referent of sentences (knowledge of the meaning of sentences), is intended by Vedānta proclamations,”⁶⁸ and then later continues, “Unwavering cherished recollection (*anusmṛti*) is, in other words, referred to by ‘bhakti,’ since ‘bhakti’ is a synonym of *upāsana*.”⁶⁹ Rāmānuja not only contrasts *brahmavidyā* from the mere knowledge of the meaning of sacred texts, but also considers it as synonymous with his understanding of *anusmṛti*, *bhakti*, and *upāsana*. He expands on the specifics of the relationship between these terms in his commentary of Gī. 11.53-4, where he states: “It is not possible to see me in my true state with mere instruction, lecture, study, listening, or recitation of the Vedas or through sacrifice, benefaction, oblation, or austerity that is without my devotion. Through singular devotion (*ananyabhakti*), it is possible to truly know [me] through the sacred texts, to truly realize [me], and to truly enter (conjoin with) [me].”⁷⁰ In this reading, Rāmānuja identifies *bhakti* as a necessary cause of, among other things, such knowledge.

RĀMĀNUJA ON MUKTI

Within Rāmānuja’s understanding of liberation, he advocates, unlike the *advaitin* position, that the liberated self continues to remain ontologically distinct from *brahman*⁷¹ and offer devotion toward Puruṣottama. In Rāmānuja’s identification of *brahman* as Puruṣottama, the

68. “ato vākyaṛthajñānādanyadeva dhyānopāsanaḥśabdavācyaṃ jñānaṃ vedāntavākyaairvidhitsitam” (Rāmānuja and Dhruva 74)

69. “evaṃrūpā dhruvānusmṛtīreva bhaktiśabdenābhidhīyate; upāsanaṃyāyātvaḥbhaktiśabdasya” (Rāmānuja and Dhruva 81)

70. “vedaiḥ adhyāpanapraṇavaṇādhyānaśravaṇajapaviśayaiḥ yāgadānahomataṇḍapobhiḥ ca madbhaktirahitaiḥ kevalaiḥ yathāvad avasthitaiḥ ahaṃ draṣṭuṃ na śakyam | ananyayā tu bhaktyā tattvataḥ śāstraiḥ jñātuṃ tattvataḥ śākṣātkartuṃ tattvataḥ praveṣṭuṃ ca śakyaḥ” (Rāmānuja, Śrīmadbhagavadgītā - Śrīrāmānujabhāṣya 381)

71. (Rāmānujācārya, Shri Bhashyam 1604–05)

greatest sovereignty (*sarvoparisattā*) and with whom nothing can be similar to or transgress, the notion of identifying oneself with *brahman* is rendered infeasible. Instead he advocates, “For teachings [that express] similarity and qualitative identification, the form of the individual self, who is qualified by *brahman*, is similar to it—[in so much as] by being rid of deva and other material forms, [the self acquires] purity that is comparable to *brahman*. This is established.”⁷² Rāmānuja advises that *śrutis* that seemingly identify the self with *brahman* are to be read to express the self as attaining purity (*śuddhatā*) that is comparable to that of Paramātman.

Upon attaining liberation, the self is freed from all wrongdoing (*papa*), sheds its material body, and reigns as its true self (*svasvarūpa*).⁷³ This liberated self is believed to not have a body. In his consideration of whether the liberated self has sense faculties, Rāmānuja affirms, “The liberated self is without a body.”⁷⁴ In this state the self is believed to not acquire a new form,⁷⁵ but rather expresses its inherent qualities, which include among others, *being able to have one’s wishes come true* (*satyasaṅkalpatva*).

Along with being *satyasaṅkalpa*, a *mukta*—the liberated self—is understood as being uncontrolled by others. Rāmānuja explains, “The liberated self is *satyasaṅkalpa* (one whose wishes come true); as a result, [it is also] one who does not have another as its controller (*ananyādhipati*).”⁷⁶ He reasons that since having another as one’s controller (*anyādhipatitva*) would imply the qualification of action as permissible and impermissible (*vidhiniṣedhayogyatva*), which in turn would be contradictory to the description of liberated self as *satyasaṅkalpa*, the position that the

72. “sāmyasādharmyavyapadeśo brahmaprakārabhūtasyaiva pratyagātmanah svarūpaṃ tatsamamiti devādiprākṛtarūpaprahaṇena brahmasamānaśuddhiṃ pratipādayati” (Rāmānuja and Dhruva 1605)

73. (Rāmānujācārya, Shri Bhashyam 1598–601)

74. “muktasyāśarīratvam” (Rāmānuja and Dhruva 1613)

75. (Rāmānuja and Dhruva 1598–99)

76. “yato muktaḥ satyasaṅkalpo’ta evānanyādhipatiśca” (Rāmānuja and Dhruva 1612)

liberated self has *anyādhipatitva* is rejected.

Having detailed some of the characteristic and relevant expositions of Śaṅkara's Advaita Vedānta and Rāmānuja's Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta, the latter half of this section will present Bhagavān Swaminarayan's Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana and contrast it from Advaita and Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta.

BHAGAVĀN SWAMINARAYAN'S BRAHMAVIDYĀ

Throughout the Vacanāmṛta, Swaminarayan offers a unique exposition of *brahman*, its relationship with the self, the significance such a relationship, and liberation. From his revelations, this work will focus its investigations on his exposition of *brahmajñāna* in GM. 3 and *uttama nirvikalpa niścaya* in L. 12.

"Vacanāmṛta Gaḍhaḍā II-3," presents a succinct exposition of Swaminarayan's understanding of the nature and form of *brahman* and *brahmajñāna*. Swaminarayan reveals:

"Now, one should understand the path of *brahmajñāna* in the following way: 'Brahman (Akṣarabrahman) is immutable (*nirvikāra*) and indivisible (*niraṁśa*); hence, it is not subject to change, and it cannot be divided.' When others identify this Brahman as all forms (*sarvarūpa*) they mean the following: 'Brahman causes, bears, and pervades through its *antaryāmī* power,⁷⁷ Prakṛti-Puruṣa⁷⁸ and all others.' It is this, along with the understanding that the cause (*kāraṇa*), sustainer (*ādhāra*), and pervader (*vyāpaka*) is not independent from its effect (object) (*karya*), that the sacred texts (*śāstras*) identify Brahman as all forms. However, one

77. 'Antaryāmī power' refers to the power of controlling while pervading within something or someone.

78. 'Prakṛti' refers to māyā or materiality, whereas 'puruṣa' refers to a mukta (a liberated jīvātman or īśvarātman (self)), who is inspired by God (through Akṣarabrahman) to create the world. Within Swaminarayan's account of creation, the world is created by God's will when a puruṣa associates with prakṛti. (Svāmīnārāyaṇa 74–75)

should not understand Brahman as having undergone change and become all mobile and immobile (*cara-acara*) forms. Puruṣottama Nārāyaṇa (Parabrahman) is distinct from this Brahman and is also its controller, supporter (*ādhāra*), and inspirer (*preraka*). With this belief, along with identifying oneself (*jīvātmā*) with this Brahman, one should worship Parabrahman as a servant serves his master (with *svāmi-sevaka-bhāva*). With this understanding *brahmajñāna* becomes an unobstructed path to attaining the highest spiritual state.”⁷⁹

Within this elaboration of the nature and content of *brahmajñāna*, Swaminarayan makes the following points explicit:

- *Brahmajñāna* is a means for attaining the highest spiritual state of release or liberation (*mukti*).
- *Brahmajñāna* consists of understanding the nature and being of two ontologically distinct entities: Brahman (Akṣarabrahman) and Parabrahman.^{80,81} It is necessary for a spiritual aspirant who strives to realize *brahmajñāna* to understand the true nature and being of both entities.
- In addition to being a distinct metaphysical entity from Parabrahman, Brahman (Akṣarabrahman), with Parabrahman’s inspiration (*preraṇā*), is also the cause (*kāraṇa*), controller (*niyaṁtā*), and omniscient pervader (*vyāpaka*) of the universe.⁸²
- Despite Brahman’s (Akṣarabrahman’s) abilities, Parabrahman is superior to Brahman. Brahman serves Parabrahman, Brahman’s sovereignty is solely dependent on the will and grace of Parabrahman, and Brahman does not wield his power of his own accord.⁸³

79. (Svāminārāyaṇa 356–57)

80. Swaminarayan makes a clear distinction between Brahman and Parabrahman in his discourses. When Brahman and Parabrahman are mentioned in the same reading, one should understand ‘Brahman’ to refer to Akṣarabrahman.

81. Other readings in which Swaminarayan identifies Akṣarabrahman as an ontologically distinct entity from Parabrahman include: (Svāminārāyaṇa 8, 563, 123–24, 303)

82. (Svāminārāyaṇa 121, 356)

83. (Svāminārāyaṇa 125, 356–57, 627)

- Having identified oneself with Brahman, one offers worshipful service (*upāsanā*) to Parabrahman.⁸⁴ Swaminarayan elaborates on the necessity of attaining this oneness with Brahman in “Vacanāmṛta Loyā 7,” where he explains, “Only one who has attained oneness with Brahman is capable of offering devotion (*bhakti*) to Puruṣottama.”⁸⁵ He then later describes the necessity of attaining such state in order to acquire liberation when he states, “If one does not offer devotion (*bhakti*) to Parabrahman having attained oneness with Brahman, then s/he is said not to have attained liberation (*kalyāṇa*).”⁸⁶ Identifying oneself with Brahman is necessary for those who seek devotion (*bhakti*) and liberation (*mukti*). This identification or oneness is understood as acquiring the qualities of Brahman.⁸⁷
- It is not possible to become ontologically one with Parabrahman.⁸⁸
- *Upāsanā* should be offered to Parabrahman with the sentiments of a servant serving his master (with *svāmi-sevaka-bhāva*). In other words, Swaminarayan advocates that one remains a servant of Parabrahman even upon attaining liberation.⁸⁹

From the above readings and subsequent expositions, it is evident that Swaminarayan’s *brahmavidyā* comprises of a particular understanding of the nature of Parabrahman, Akṣarabrahman, the relationship between them, and their relationship with the self (*jīvātman* and *īśvarātman*). These elaborations can be categorized as the following: points 2-4 above offer metaphysical descriptions; 1,5 and 6 present descriptions of spiritual endeavour (*sādhana*); and 7 describes the nature of liberation.

84. (Svāminārāyaṇa 292, 357)

85. “brahmarūpa thayo tene ja Puruṣottamanī bhaktino adhikāra che.” (Svāminārāyaṇa 272)

86. “brahmarūpa thaīne je Parabrahmanī bhakti na kare, to te paṇa ātyantika kalyāṇane na pāmyo kahevāya.” (Svāminārāyaṇa 272)

87. (Svāminārāyaṇa 424)

88. (Svāminārāyaṇa 236, 241, 259, 296, 624–25, 632)

89. (Svāminārāyaṇa 211–12, 250, 490–91)

BHAGAVĀN SWAMINARAYAN ON BRAHMAN

Swaminarayan's metaphysics asserts the existence of Akṣarabrahman as an ontologically distinct entity from Parabrahman, the self (*jīvātman* or *īśvarātman*), and *māyā*. Like Parabrahman, it is identified as being sentient, eternally free from the influence of *māyā*, and possessing the following four forms: 1) the form that is the all-pervasive space (*cidākāśa*), 2) the form that is Parabrahman's divine abode, Akṣaradhāman, 3) the form of an embodied eternal servant of Parabrahman that resides within Akṣaradhāman, and 4) a human-like form that is present in the world and through whom Parabrahman remains manifest (present).⁹⁰

Given Swaminarayan's exposition of Akṣarabrahman within GM. 3 and other discourses, there are several foundational differences that distinguish Swaminarayan's metaphysics from Śaṅkara's and Rāmānuja's. In contrast to Advaita Vedānta's understanding of a singular entity identified as *brahman* and Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta's enumeration of *tattvatraya* (the three ontological categories): the sentient (*cit*), the insentient (*acit*), and *Īśvara*; Swaminarayan advocates the existence of the following five eternal ontological distinctions: *jīvātman*, *īśvarātman*, *māyā*, Akṣarabrahman, and Puruṣottama (Parabrahman).⁹¹

The ontological distinction between Akṣarabrahman and Puruṣottama is reflected in the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana's unique reading of the sacred texts of the *Prasthānatrayī*. With regards to 'brahman,' unlike Śaṅkara, who reads 'brahman' either as referring to the single *pāramārthika*, *nirguṇa brahman* or an unreal *vyavāhārika brahman*, and Rāmānuja who reads the same to express *saguṇa brahman*; the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana reads the term to express either Akṣarabrahman or Parabrahman—both real and ontologically distinct entities. For example, when Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja discusses *brahmajñāna* as a means for attaining liberation, they understand 'brahman' to signify one (*saviśeṣa*, *saguṇa*, or *nirguṇa*)

90. (Svāmī 3–4)

91. See, for example, (GP. 7) (Svāminārāyaṇa 8) and (GA. 10) (Svāminārāyaṇa 563)

Puruṣottama. For Swaminarayan, however, ‘brahmajñāna’ refers to the knowledge of two ontologically distinct, real, entities: Akṣarabrahman and Parabrahman (Puruṣottama). This dual reference is reflected in the MuSB’s reading of 1.2.13: “That by which Akṣara (Akṣarabrahman) and Puruṣa (Parabrahman) is truly known, that is *brahmavidyā* (the knowledge of Akṣarabrahman and Parabrahman).”⁹² Advaitins and Viśiṣṭādvaitins interpret the aphorism differently as: “That by which the imperishable (*akṣara*) *Puruṣa* (Puruṣottama) is truly known, that is said to be *brahmavidyā*.”⁹³ While Śaṅkara and Viśiṣṭādvaitins identify ‘akṣara’ as an adjective of ‘Puruṣa,’ the *Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣya* identifies it as a signifier of the distinct ontological entity, Akṣarabrahman.

A similar dual reference is expressed in BSB’s reading of 1.1.1: “And now commences an inquiry into brahman(s),”⁹⁴ where ‘brahmajijñāsā’ is analysed as ‘brahmaṇorjijñāsā,’⁹⁵ meaning *an inquiry into two brahman*. Here, ‘brahman’ in the compound ‘brahmajijñāsā’ is also interpreted as referring to both Akṣarabrahman and Parabrahman.

Swaminarayan’s unique understanding of Akṣarabrahman as a distinct ontological entity from Parabrahman is also reflected in its reading of the *Bhagavadgītā* verses 15.16-7, which read:

“There are two types of *puruṣa* in the world: *kṣara* and *akṣara*. All beings are *kṣara* and the unchanging is called *akṣara*. (15.16)

The supreme *Puruṣa* (Puruṣottama) is different from others [and is therefore] called Paramātmān. He is the unchanging controller of all, and upon entering all worlds, is their support. (15.17)”⁹⁶

Within Rāmānuja’s readings, *kṣara* is identified as the [bound] self

92. “yenākṣaram puruṣam veda styam provāca tām tattvato brahmavidyām” (Bhadreśadāsa Sādhu, *Īśādyāṣṭopaniṣatsvāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam* 256)

93. (Raṅgarāmānuja 270–73) (Śaṅkara, *Upaniṣadbhāṣyam* - Muṇḍamāṇḍūkyaitareyaṇi 30)

94. “athāto brahmajijñāsā” (Bhadreśadāsa Sādhu, *Brahmasūtrasvāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam* 3)

95. (Bhadreśadāsa Sādhu, *Brahmasūtrasvāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam* 4)

96. “dvāvimau puruṣau loke kṣaraścākṣara eva ca kṣaraḥ sarvāṇi bhūtāni kūṭastho’kṣara

(*jīvātman*), *akṣara* as the liberated self (*ātman*), and the different, greatest *puruṣa* as *Puruṣottama*.⁹⁷ Śaṅkara makes the identification differently. He identifies ‘*kṣara*’ as all mutable objects and ‘*akṣara*’ as *māyā*—the persistent seed of the world (*samsāra*).⁹⁸ Within the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana, however, we find a completely distinct exposition. The GSB. identifies *kṣara* as the self (both bound and liberated *jīvātman* or *īśvarātman*) and *akṣara* as Akṣarabrahman.⁹⁹ The latter identification recalls Kṛṣṇa’s response to Arjuna’s question from verse 8.1: “What is that *brahman*.”¹⁰⁰ Kṛṣṇa’s response in 8.3: “The great (*parama*), who is Akṣara, is [only] Brahman”¹⁰¹ is used to substantiate the identification of Akṣara as *brahman*—here, read as referring to Akṣarabrahman. Since, (Parabrahman) is greater than both Akṣara and the *jīvātman*s and *īśvarātman*s, he is identified as the supreme (*uttama*) *Puruṣa*, or when these terms are compounded, *Puruṣottama*—a philologically significant designation that indicates Parabrahman’s supremacy over the self and Akṣarabrahman (*brahman*).

CREATION

In addition to identifying Parabrahman as the creator of the world,¹⁰² in GM. 3 Swaminarayan also recognizes Akṣarabrahman as the cause of the world. This identification is reflected in the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana’s reading of MuSB. 1.1.7. The aphorism states, “Just as a spider

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uttamaḥ puruṣastvanyaḥ paramātmetyudāhṛtaḥ yo lokatrayamāviśya
bibhartavyaya īśvaraḥll17ll” (Vyāsa 234)

97. (Rāmānujācāryaḥ 490–92)

98. (Śaṅkarācāryaḥ 376)

99. (Bhadreśadāsa Sādhu, Śrīmadbhagavadgītā Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam 314–16)

100. “kiṃ tad brahma” (Bhadreśadāsa Sādhu, Śrīmadbhagavadgītā Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam 172)

101. “Akṣaram Brahma paramam” (Bhadreśadāsa Sādhu, Śrīmadbhagavadgītā Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam 173)

102. See, for example, (GP. 37, 51; L. 2, 17; P. 1; GM. 10, 53; V. 2, 18) (Svāminārāyaṇa 65, 96, 254, 310, 319, 372, 460, 496, 528)

spins [a web] and consumes it; just as herbs grow on earth; [and] just as hair grows on a man; this world is produced by Akṣara.”¹⁰³ A little later, the same text similarly reveals, “Somya! By Akṣara various material objects come forth and [in the end] are only absorbed within it.”¹⁰⁴ The commentary’s identification of Akṣara with Akṣarabrahman and not with Parabrahman is suggested by MuSB. 2.1.2 later assertion: “The supreme (Parabrahman) is superior to the superior Akṣara (Akṣarabrahman).” This aphorism not only asserts the supremacy of the supreme Parabrahman over Akṣara, but also in doing so is read to express an ontological distinction between the two. The commentary argues that if ‘Akṣara’ is to be consistently interpreted throughout the Upaniṣad, then Mu. 1.1.7 and 2.1.1 should both be read as being about the superior Akṣarabrahman and not the supreme Parabrahman.

Swaminarayan’s understanding of Akṣarabrahman as also the creator of the world contrasts from both Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja’s position. First, Swaminarayan’s understanding of a *pāramārthika* (real) *brahman* as the cause of the world is diametrically opposed by Śaṅkara. Also Swaminarayan’s understanding of Akṣarabrahman as an ontological entity distinct from Parabrahman and as the cause of the world, is inconsistent with both Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja’s metaphysics. Within Swaminarayan’s metaphysics, Brahman (Akṣarabrahman) is also identified, according to the eternal will (*nityecchayā*) of Parabrahman, as the creator (*jagat-kartā*) and inspirer (*jagat-preraka*) of the world.¹⁰⁵ Therefore, it is not the case that Akṣarabrahman is equivalent to Parabrahman in matters of creation, it must be kept in mind that Parabrahman is independent upon no one, and Akṣarabrahman is dependent upon Parabrahman.

103. “yathorṇanābhiḥ sṛjate grhṇate ca yathā pṛthivyāmoṣadhayaḥ sambhavanti yathā sataḥ puruṣāt keśalomāni tathā’kṣarāt sambhavatīha viśvam||” (Mu. 1.1.7) (Bhadreśadāsa Sādhu, *Īśādyāṣṭopaniṣatsvāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam* 239–41)

104. “akṣarād vividāḥ somya bhāvāḥ prajāyante tatra caivā’piyanti” (Mu. 2.1.1) (Bhadreśadāsa Sādhu, *Īśādyāṣṭopaniṣatsvāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam* 258)

105. (Svāminārāyaṇa 121)

‘ĪŚVARA’

Within Swaminarayan’s metaphysics, ‘īśvara’ is often used as a designation for another ontologically distinct category. Within his ontology, an īśvara (īśvarātman) is an eternal sentient (*caitanya*) entity distinct from Parabrahman, Akṣarabrahman and the *jīvātman*s. *Īśvarātman*s are distinct from each other and are entities that have been assigned various tasks of creation. The Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana advocates the existence of an infinite number of such ontologically distinct *īśvarātman*s.¹⁰⁶ They are of the form of knowledge (*jñānasvarūpa*), have the capacity to know (*jñātā*), and are identified as those who perform action (*karma*) and experience its consequences.¹⁰⁷ An *īśvarātman* is understood to have greater sovereignty (*aiśvarya*) and knowledge (*jñāna*) than the *jīvātman* and is engaged in the creation, sustenance, and dissolution of the world according to Parabrahman’s wishes.¹⁰⁸ Despite such a difference, these *īśvarātman*s, like the *jīvātman*s, strive to attain liberation.

Swaminarayan’s understanding of *īśvara* is also distinct from Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja’s. As we have seen earlier, Śaṅkara’s Advaita identifies *īśvara* as *saguṇa brahman* and as the cause, sustainer, inspirer, controller (*niyaṁtā*), and destroyer (*saṃhartā*) of the world. In making this identification, he also understands *īśvara* as imaginary (*kālpanika*), unreal (*mithyā*), and an illusion. Rāmānuja also similarly identifies *īśvara* as *brahman* and as the cause of the world; however, unlike Śaṅkara he understands *saguṇa brahman*, and hence, *īśvara* as real. Nevertheless, both Śaṅkara’s and Rāmānuja’s identification of *brahman* as *īśvara* is distinct from Swaminarayan’s in terms of its not only ontological identity but also cosmological commitments.

106. (Svāmī 5), (GP. 13, GP. 72, GA. 34, GA. 37, GA. 39) (Svāminārāyaṇa 17–18, 148, 618, 626, 629–30)

107. (Svāmī 5)

108. (Svāmī 5)

BHAGAVĀN SWAMINARAYAN'S UNDERSTANDING OF SĀDHANĀ

In GM. 3 above, Swaminarayan advocates *brahmajñāna* or *brahmavidyā* as “an unobstructed path to attaining the highest spiritual state.”¹⁰⁹ Despite the shared soteriological significance of *brahmavidyā* within all three *darśanic* systems, Swaminarayan's unique ontology results in an alternative rendering of the content of *brahmavidyā*. Unlike Śaṅkara's Advaita and Rāmānuja's Viśiṣṭādvaita, both who identify ‘brahman’ in ‘brahmavidyā’ as a signifier for only Parabrahman; as we have seen earlier, the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana uniquely elaborates ‘brahmavidyā’ as the knowledge of two ontologically distinct entities: Akṣarabrahman and Parabrahman, and interprets Mu. 1.2.13 accordingly.

Analogous to his exposition of *brahmavidyā*, Swaminarayan also presents the relationship between the knowledge of Akṣarabrahman and the knowledge of Parabrahman in L. 12. Corresponding to his exposition in GM. 3, L. 12 offers a succinct exposition of the nature and significance of spiritual endeavour or *sāadhanā* in terms of Swaminarayan's description of *uttama nirvikalpa niścaya*—the supreme conviction [in the present form of Parabrahman]. He defines, “One who offers *upāsana* to Puruṣottama upon identifying oneself as Akṣara (Akṣarabrahman), in comparison to whom infinite universes along with their eight obstructions are known to be like atoms and who is the abode of Puruṣottama Nārāyaṇa (God), is said to have *uttama nirvikalpa niścaya*.”¹¹⁰ There are several noteworthy elements in this reading.

First, Swaminarayan employs a unique understanding of ‘*upāsana*.’ In addition to Rāmānuja's understanding of ‘*upāsana*’ as synonymous to ‘devotion,’ ‘love,’ and ‘worshipful service,’ Swaminarayan characterizes the term with the conviction in the present form of Parabrahman as

109. (Svāminārāyaṇa 357)

110. “aṣṭāvaraṇe yukta evaṃ je koṭi koṭi brahmāmḍa te je akṣarane viṣe aṇunī peṭhe jaṇāya che, evuṃ je Puruṣottama Nārāyaṇanuṃ dhāmarūpa akṣara te rūpe pote rahyo thako Puruṣottamanī upāsana kare, tene uttama nirvikalpa niścayavālo kahīe.” (L. 12) (Svāminārāyaṇa 292)

being, among other things, supreme (*sarvopari*), divine (*divya*), the all-doer (*kartā*), with form (*sākāra*), and the cause of all divine manifestations (*avatārin*)—a conviction that is identified as requisite or characteristic of such devotion, love, and worshipful service. Within the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana, such *upāsanā*, devotion, love, and worshipful service, in its incomplete or imperfect state (*sādhanaśā*) is intentioned towards acquiring the *kṛpā*—favour or beneficence of Parabrahman and Akṣarabrahman. Ultimately through Parabrahman's *kṛpā*, the self becomes *brahmarūpa* (attains qualitative oneness with Akṣarabrahman), attains *upāsanā* (conviction in the present form of Parabrahman) in its most complete and perfect state (*siddhadaśā*), and is gifted final and everlasting liberation.

Second, in L. 12's exposition of *uttama nirvikalpa niścaya* and GM. 3's elaboration of *brahmavidyā*, Swaminarayan advocates an identification with *brahman* (Akṣarabrahman) as requisite for offering *upāsanā* to Puruṣottama. He also highlights its significance in L. 7, where he explains: "Only one who is *brahmarūpa* (attained qualitative oneness with Akṣarabrahman) is worthy of offering devotion to Puruṣottama."¹¹¹ The *Bhagavadgītāsvāminārāyaṇabhāṣya*, a comprehensive commentary on the *Bhagavadgītā* according to Swaminarayan's principles, articulates the same sentiments when it reads Gī. 18.54 as: "The pleased self who has attained oneness with Brahman neither grieves nor desires any worldly-things and sees all beings with equanimity; (s)he attains my ultimate devotion."¹¹² It elaborates that Parabrahman's ultimate devotion or *upāsanā* necessitates attaining oneness or identity with Brahman (Akṣarabrahman).

The identification of the self with *brahman* is not new to Vedānta. There are numerous readings from sacred texts that assert the identification and explicate its significance. For instance, Mu. 3.2.9 asserts: "Truly, (s)

111. "je brahmarūpa thayo tene ja Puruṣottamanī bhaktino adhikāra che." (Svāminārāyaṇa 272) (L. 7)

112. "brahmabhūtaḥ prasannātmā na śocati na kāṅkṣati samah sarveṣu bhūteṣu madbhaktim labhate parām" (Gī. 18.54) (Sādhu, 2012a, pp. 360–1)

he who knows that superior Brahman (Akṣarabrahman), becomes like Brahman... (S)he overcomes grief, overcomes unrighteousness, becomes free from grievances of the heart (*hṛdayagranthi*).^{113,114} Although many such readings express the identity between brahman and the self, the nature of this identification differs from one Vedāntic *darśana* to the other. How does Swaminarayan characterize the identification?

Bhagavān Swaminarayan advocates that the identification referred to by these readings express a qualitative identification and not an ontological one. As we saw earlier in Swaminarayan's enumeration of the five eternally ontologically distinct entities in GP. 7 and GA. 10, the *jīvātmans* and *īśvarātmans* are not understood to be identical with Akṣarabrahman, even in the liberated state. In other words, the liberated self (*jīvātman* or *īśvarātman*) does not become, merge, or revert itself to Brahman (Akṣarabrahman), but instead acquires certain qualities of Akṣarabrahman. The state of such qualitative identification is referred to as “Akṣarabrahmaguṇasādharmya.” Upon attaining *brahmabhāva*, *brahmaikyaṃ*, or becoming *brahmarūpa*—all terms that express an identification of the self with Brahman, the self attains the qualities of Brahman—specifically, those qualities that facilitate performing supreme devotion to Parabrahman. Swaminarayan expresses this identification in terms of “like-ness” (*sādharmya*) as opposed to strict identity. For instance, in GP. 21 he advocates: “The devotee who has attained Akṣaradhāman also attains likeness (*sādharmyapaṇuṃ*) with Akṣara and continues to forever serve Bhagavān.”¹¹⁵ Later in GP. 40 when describing the state of *nirvikalpa samādhi* he qualifies such a devotee as “forever engrossed in

113. “sa yo ha vai tatparamaṃ Brahma veda Brahmaiva bhavati... tarati śokaṃ tarati pāpmānaṃ guhāgranthibhyo vimukto'mṛto bhavati” (Mu. 3.2.9) (Bhadreśadāsa Sādhu, *Īśadyaṣṭopaniṣatsvāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam* 299)

114. For other sacred text readings that express a similar identification between the self and brahman see also Chā. 3.14.1, 6.2.9, 6.8.7; Br. 1.4.10, 2.4.14, 2.5.19, 4.4.19; Mā. 1.2; and Gī. 5.24, 6.27, 13.30, 14.26, 18.53-4.

115. “Akṣaradhāmane pāmyo je bhakta te paṇa Akṣaranā sādharmyapaṇāne pāme che ane Bhagavānanī akhaṃḍa sevāmāṃ rahe che.” (GP. 21) (Svāminārāyaṇa 33)

only the form of Bhagavān having attained likeness (*sādharmyapaṇum*) with Akṣarabrahman.”¹¹⁶ In GM. 31 he mentions that the qualities of Brahman are acquired by the self who associates with Akṣarabrahman. He states, “If one while continually contemplating in this way associates with Brahman, the qualities of Brahman are acquired by the self.”¹¹⁷ In all of these readings, Swaminarayan asserts that ‘brahmabhāva’ and its synonyms express the state in which one attains qualitative identification with Akṣarabrahman—one attains qualities of Akṣarabrahman that are necessary for offering devotion and having *upāsana* of Parabrahman.

Although Swaminarayan’s understanding of *brahmajñāna* and *uttama nirvikalpa niścaya* is characterized by an identification of the self with *brahman*, it differs from both Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja’s position. First, Swaminarayan’s understanding of the identification is not like Śaṅkara’s in that it is qualitatively and not ontologically motivated. Recall, Śaṅkara, unlike Swaminarayan, requires the self to realize itself as *brahman*, since for him, the self is *brahman*. Swaminarayan, on the other hand, maintains an eternal ontological distinction between the self and *brahman*.

Additionally, for Swaminarayan the *brahman* with which the self is asked to identify itself with is not the greatest metaphysical entity. According to Swaminarayan, the self is to identify itself with Akṣarabrahman and not Parabrahman (*sarvopari tattva*). In his metaphysics Brahman (Akṣarabrahman) is presented as a distinct entity from Parabrahman, who is understood to be superior to Akṣarabrahman. As a result of differences in ontological commitments, Swaminarayan’s understanding of attaining oneness with *brahman* is rendered impermissible by both Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja.

116. “Akṣarabrahmanā sādharmaṇyapaṇāne pāmīne kevala Bhagavānanī mūrtine viṣe ja nimagna rahato hoyā...” (GP. 40) (Svāminārāyaṇa 72)

117. “evī rīte niraṃtara manana karato sato Brahmano saṃga kare to e Brahmano guṇa e jīvane viṣe āve.” (GM. 31) (Svāminārāyaṇa 424)

BHAGAVĀN SWAMINARAYAN ON MUKTI

Swaminarayan advocates both the state of liberation while being alive (*jīvanamukti*) and the state of liberation upon bodily-death (*videhamukti*). With regards to *jīvanamukti* he reveals in GA. 2: “When [one] attains the association of such a *sadhu*,¹¹⁸ despite having a body, one attains whom is to be obtained upon shedding the body. Therefore, that which is identified as the supreme location (*paramapada*)—which is identified as liberation (*mokṣa*)—it is obtained despite having a body.”^{119,120} According to this revelation and others, Swaminarayan advocates that it is possible for one to become *brahmarūpa*,¹²¹ attain the same bliss and fulfilment as one would attain upon attaining Parabrahman’s divine abode,¹²² and obtain association with Parabrahman’s form¹²³ while being alive.

In his description of liberation upon death (*videhamukti*), Swaminarayan describes that in this liberated state, one retains qualitative identification with Akṣarabrahman. In this state, the self (*jīvātman* or *īśvarātman*) sheds its mortal body and attains a body made from Akṣarabrahman (*brāhmitanu*).¹²⁴ Upon attaining Akṣaradhāman, which is identified as one of Akṣarabrahman’s forms and Parabrahman’s eternal divine abode, the liberated self continues to offer supreme unwavering *upāsana* to Parabrahman.¹²⁵ As such, the self within this liberated state remains ontologically distinct from both Akṣarabrahman and Parabrahman.

118. Within the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana, ‘sadhu’ here is interpreted to refer to the present form of Akṣarabrahman or the Akṣarabrahman guru.

119. “... jyāre āvo samta samāgama prāpta thayo tyāre deha mūkine jene pāmavā hatā te to deha chatām ja malyā che. māṭe jene paramapada kahīe, mokṣa kahīe tene chate dehe ja pāmyo che.” (GA. 2) (Svāminārāyaṇa 547)

120. Swaminarayan also advocates the state of *jīvanamukti* in other discourses including: S. 9; GM. 28, 45; and GA. 7. (Svāminārāyaṇa 193, 421, 449–50, 558)

121. See, for example (S. 9) (Svāminārāyaṇa 193)

122. See, for example (GM. 45) (Svāminārāyaṇa 449–50) and GA. 7 (Svāminārāyaṇa 588)

123. See, for example (GA. 2) (Svāminārāyaṇa 547)

124. (Svāminārāyaṇa 206)

125. (Svāminārāyaṇa 33)

Swaminarayan's position on liberation is distinct from both Śaṅkara's and Rāmānuja's position. Although Śaṅkara advocates that it is possible to attain *jīvanamukti*,¹²⁶ his understanding of the state is vastly different. For Śaṅkara, "the absence of ignorance is itself liberation."¹²⁷ Upon attaining such a state, the self realizes itself as *brahman*.¹²⁸ In this state there is no attainment or acquisition of qualities, but only the realization of what one already is: viz. *brahman*. Even regarding liberation upon death, there is no passage of the self from one place to another or the attainment of an abode, since the self is *brahman*, which is itself all-pervasive.¹²⁹ Also, for Sankara the liberated self does not offer devotion to a greater being, since according to him, "I have no ruler other than myself."¹³⁰

Unlike both Advaita and the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana, Viśiṣṭādvaita rejects the possibility of *jīvanamukti* altogether. In his commentary of BS. 1.1.4, Rāmānuja denounces, "What is this *jīvanamukti*? If [it is said] liberation is [for those] who have a body, the statement is contradictory in the same way that [the claim] 'My mother is barren' [is contradictory]."¹³¹ Following Rāmānuja, Vedānta Deśika in his *Tattvamuktākālāpa* glosses occurrences of the term in sacred texts by stating, "The term 'jīvanamukta' is occasionally used for (as a signifier) of the state that is *similar* (yet not identical) to it (the state of liberation)."¹³²

Swaminarayan's understanding of *videhamukti* is also distinct from Rāmānuja's position. Rāmānuja affirms in his commentary of BS 4.4.10, "The liberated are without a body."¹³³ Unlike Swaminarayan, Rāmānuja

126. See, for example (Vi. 439-40) (Madhavananda 192)

127. "avidyānivṛttireva mokṣaḥ"

128. See, for example (Vi. 492-3) (Madhavananda 213)

129. (Vi. 513) p. 222

130. "nirīśvaro'haṃ" (Vi. 494) (Madhavananda 214)

131. "kā ceyam jīvanmuktiḥ, saśarīrasyaiva mokṣa iti cet, 'mātā me vandhye'tivadasaṃgatārthaṃ vacaḥ..." (Rāmānuja and Dhruva 408)

132. "jīvanmuktādisabdaḥ kvacidupacaritastatsamāvasthayaiva" (Ta. 2.73) (Deśika 247)

133. "muktasyāśarīratvam" (Rāmānuja and Dhruva 1613)

advocates that the self reigns as its true self (*svasvarūpa*)¹³⁴ but does not attain a body, let alone one made from Akṣarabrahman (*brāhmī tanu*). Also contrary to Swaminarayan's understanding, Rāmānuja would deny that the liberated attain oneness with Akṣarabrahman.

CONCLUSION

Having identified many of the foundational and characteristic features of Śaṅkara's Advaita, Rāmānuja's Viśiṣṭādvaita, and having contrasted them from not only each other, but also the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana, it becomes clearer why each *darśana*, and in particular Swaminarayan's Vedānta, is positioned as an independent from the other. Many of the philosophical and theological differences that serve to distinguish Rāmānuja's Vedānta from Śaṅkara's, also set apart the *darśanic* positions revealed by Swaminarayan from both Śaṅkara and Rāmānuja. Specifically, Swaminarayan's unique 1) ontology, 2) understanding of *brahman*, the self, and Parabrahman, and the relationships between them, 3) exposition of spiritual endeavour and its significance, 4) and position on the nature and form of liberation cause the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana to stand apart from these other *darśanic* systems. Taking into consideration these characteristic differences, it is only appropriate to advocate that Parabrahman Swaminarayan's Vedānta is distinct from both Śaṅkara's Advaita and Rāmānuja's Viśiṣṭādvaita *darśanas*.

The proceeding section will now investigate the second proclamation regarding the identification of Svāminārāyaṇa's Vedānta as the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana. As previously mentioned, this section presents a *darśanic* analysis on the semantic significance of the title: "Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana." Among other considerations, this section will elaborate on how this title incorporates both the *darśana*'s unique ontological position along with its understanding of *sādhana*.

134. (Rāmānujācārya, Shri Bhashyam 1598–601)

PART II

THE KNOWLEDGE OF AKṢARA (AKṢARABRAHMAN) AND
PURUṢOTTAMA AS BRAHMAVIDYĀ

Bhagavān Swaminarayan's revelations on *uttama nirvikalpa niścaya* in L. 12; his unique exposition of Akṣarabrahman as an ontologically distinct entity; his clarification on the qualitative identification of the self with Akṣarabrahman as requisite for supreme devotion (otherwise identified as *paramā bhakti* or more foundationally, *upāsana*); and the GSB's reading of 18.54 are all reflected in the *darśana*'s distinctive understanding of *brahmavidyā*—the knowledge of two brahmans. Recall, in L. 12 Swaminarayan described *uttama nirvikalpa niścaya* as “[offering] *upāsana* to **Puruṣottama** upon identifying oneself as **Akṣara** (Akṣarabrahman), in comparison to whom infinite universes along with their eight obstructions are known to be like atoms and who is the abode of Puruṣottama Nārāyaṇa...”¹³⁵ The GSB's reading of verse 18.54 similarly expressed: “The pleased self who has attained oneness with Brahman neither grieves nor desires any worldly-things and sees all beings with equanimity; (s)he attains my ultimate devotion.”¹³⁶ MuSB. 1.2.13's definition of *brahmavidyā*—analysed as *brahmaṇoḥ vidyā* (the knowledge of two *brahmans*: Akṣarabrahman and Parabrahman)—similarly reflects Bhagavān Swaminarayan's unique philosophical position: **for the self (ātman) to become Akṣararūpa (Brahmarūpa) and offer superior devotion (paramā bhakti) or upāsana to Puruṣottama.**

As we have seen throughout the first section of this work, Bhagavān Swaminarayan reveals this unique *darśanic* position throughout the Vacanāmṛta. In doing so he describes, among other things, 1) the nature,

135. “aṣṭāvaraṇe yukta evaṃ je koṭi koṭi brahmāṇḍa te je akṣarane viṣe aṇunī peṭhe jaṇāya che, evuṃ je Puruṣottama Nārāyaṇaṇuṃ dhāmarūpa akṣara te rūpe pote rahyo thako Puruṣottamanī upāsana kare...” (L. 12) (Svāminārāyaṇa 292)

136. “brahmabhūtaḥ prasannātmā na śocati na kāṅkṣati samah sarveṣu bhūteṣu madbhaktim labhate paramam” (Gī. 18.54) (Sādhu, 2012a, pp. 360–1)

form, and salience of Akṣarabrahman, 2) its relationship with both the self and Puruṣottama; 3) the nature and significance of identification of the self with Brahman, and 4) the nature of superior devotion (*paramā bhakti*) or *upāsana* to Puruṣottama. We also analysed his revelation in GM. 3 where he revealed many facets to his understanding of *brahmavidyā*.

From these readings and subsequent expositions, Swaminarayan's *brahmajñāna* (*brahmavidyā*) not only is identified as the knowledge of Akṣarabrahman and Puruṣottama (Parabrahman), but also comprises of a particular understanding of the nature of Puruṣottama, Akṣarabrahman, the self, and the relationships between them. From Bhagavān Swaminarayan's expositions of *brahmajñāna* in GM. 3 and *uttama nirvikalpa niścaya* in L. 12, the *Bhagavadgītāsvāminārāyaṇabhāṣya*'s reading of Gī. 18.54, and the Muṇḍakopaniṣad's characterization of *brahmavidyā*: *brahmajñāna* or *brahmavidyā* is understood to express that by which the self (*ātman*) becomes Akṣararūpa (Brahmarūpa) and offers superior devotion (*paramā bhakti*) or *upāsana* to Puruṣottama.

BRAHMAVIDYĀ EXPRESSED AS THE SVĀMINĀRĀYAṆA MANTRA

The Svāminārāyaṇa mantra is also understood as expressive of Bhagavān Swaminarayan's unique understanding of *brahmavidyā*. On Maghar vada 11, Āśādhādi Saṃvata 1858 (1801 CE) Sahajanand Swami introduced the Svāminārāyaṇa mantra to his devotees.¹³⁷ Although the mantra later became a designation by which his disciples referred to him, it was representative of his characteristic philosophical and theological position. This identification is summarized in the following verse: "Śrīhari Sahajanand offered within one's own counsel the Svāminārāyaṇa manta, whose essence is *brahmavidyā*."¹³⁸ The Svāminārāyaṇa mantra is representative of *brahmavidyā*—the knowledge of Akṣara and Puruṣottama.

137. (Dave 388–89)

138. "Śrīhariḥ Sahajānandaḥ svayamupadideśa yam| Svāminārāyaṇam mantram garbhitam brahmavidyayāll" (Sadhu 9)

‘Svāminārāyaṇa’ expresses a semantic that encapsulates the *darśana*’s unique understanding of Akṣarabrahman and Puruṣottama as distinct ontological entities and their relationship with the self (*jīvātman* or *īśvarātman*). A grammatical analysis of the term sheds greater clarity.

When the term appears in the dual-number form: ‘Svāminārāyaṇau,’ it is analysed as an enumerative coordinative compound (*itaretara-dvandva-samāsa*)—as ‘Svāmī and Nārāyaṇa.’ When the term appears in its singular form: ‘Svāminārāyaṇa,’ it is analysed as a missing-member, equational compound (*madhyamapadalopi-karmadhāraya-samāsa*).¹³⁹ Its analysis (*vigraha*) is of the form: “Svāmī (Akṣarabrahman) along with¹⁴⁰ Nārāyaṇa (Parabrahman).”¹⁴¹ Both analyses present ‘Svāmī’ and ‘Nārāyaṇa’ as signifiers to two ontologically distinct entities: Akṣarabrahman and Puruṣottama (Parabrahman), respectively. The *Akṣarapuruṣottamamahātmya* further clarifies: “The Svāminārāyaṇa mantra consists of six letters. [It] is magnificent. The primary servant is to be understood by ‘Svāmī.’ [It] is compounded as a missing-member, equational [compound].”¹⁴² Here,

139. The following auxiliary (*paribhāṣā*) is utilized in the construction of a missing-member, equational compound (*madhyamapadalopi-karmadhārayasamāsa*): “For the construction of ‘śākapārthiva’ (‘the king, who loves vegetables’) and others, further add the removal (disappearance) of the latter word”—remove the second term from ‘śāka-bhojī pārthivaḥ.’ (‘śākapārthivādīnāṃ siddhaye uttarapadalopasyopasaṃkhyānam”) (Bhaṭṭojidīkṣita 105)

140. The peculiarity of translating ‘Svāminā sahitaḥ’ is also worthy of mention. In discussions on Sanskrit cases (*kāraka*), the object of the instrumental case that is accompanied with ‘sahita,’ ‘saha,’ or other such terms that express accompaniment is considered secondary (*gauṇa*) in comparison to that which it is accompanying. In English, however, this is not the case. The object that follows ‘with’ takes on a primary role. For instance, although ‘Svāminā sahitaḥ Nārāyaṇa,’ would literally translate to ‘Nārāyaṇa along with Svāmī,’ adjusting for the semantic differences between both languages would result in the following, more accurate translation: “Svāmī along with Nārāyaṇa.”

141. “svāminā sahitaḥ nārāyaṇaḥ” (Sadhu 8)

142. “svāminārāyaṇo mantraḥ ṣaḍakṣaraḥ śubhāspadaḥ svāmīśabdena vijñeyo mukhyastu paricārakaḥ|| madhyamapadalopena samasyate mahāmanuḥ||” (APM. 2.20.14-5) (Sadhu 114)

‘the primary servant’ refers to Akṣarabrahman, who is the eternal servant of Puruṣottama and forever untainted by *māyā*. “‘Svāmī along with Nārāyaṇa’—Svāminārāyaṇa; this is the meaning of the mantra; this is its analysis (*vigraha*)”¹⁴³ offers a similar analysis. The SS identifies, “Within the [Svāminārāyaṇa] mantra, Akṣarabrahman is referred to by the term ‘Svāmī.’ Puruṣottama, who is superior to it (Akṣarabrahman) is referred to by the term ‘Nārāyaṇa.’”¹⁴⁴ Among other things, the analysis emphasizes Akṣarabrahman and Puruṣottama as ontologically distinct entities.

In addition to expressing the distinction between both entities, the Svāminārāyaṇa mantra also represents Bhagavān Swaminarayan’s understanding of *brahmavidyā*. As we saw earlier MuSB. 1.2.13 defines: “That by which *akṣara* (Akṣarabrahman) and *puruṣa* (Puruṣottama) are truly known, that is said to be *brahmavidyā*.”¹⁴⁵ In defining *brahmavidyā*, the Upaniṣad presents *brahmavidyā* as the knowledge of two entities: Akṣarabrahman and Puruṣottama—the same two referents of ‘Svāmī’ and ‘Nārāyaṇa’ that constitute ‘Svāminārāyaṇa.’

The analysis of the term also identifies Swaminarayan’s understanding of the relationship of the self (the *jīvātman* or *īśvarātman*) with Akṣarabrahman and Puruṣottama. Within this analysis, “the term ‘Svāmī,’ which is a signifier for Akṣarabrahman is used to refer to [attaining] its being; with this sentiment Parabrahman Sahajanand has given the mantra “Svāminārāyaṇa.”¹⁴⁶ “The purport of the Akṣara-Puruṣottama *upāsanā* is incorporated within the meaning of the supreme mantra ‘Svāminārāyaṇa,’ having become Svāmī-rūpa, otherwise known as Akṣara-rūpa (attained qualitative identification with Akṣarabrahman), one should with the

143. “svāminā sahito nārāyaṇa iti Svāminārāyaṇa iti mantrā’rthatve tadvigrahaḥ” (Sadhu 8)

144. “Akṣaram Brahma vijñeyam mantre svāmīti śabdataḥ Nārāyaṇeti śabdena tatparaḥ Puruṣottamaḥ” (Sadhu 9)

145. “yenākṣaram puruṣam vada satyam provāca tām tattvato brahmavidyām” (Bhadresādāsa Sādhu, Īśādyāṣṭopaniṣatsvāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam 256–57)

146. “Akṣarabrahmavācikasvāmītipadam tadbhāvānusandhānāya prayojya Svāminārāyaṇeti mantram dadau Sahajānandaḥ Prabhuriti” (Sadhu 8)

sentiments of a servant (*dāsabhāva*) perform *upāsana* in the form of *bhakti* to Nārāyaṇa—[otherwise known as] Parabrahman or Puruṣottama-Nārāyaṇa.”¹⁴⁷ Stated differently, ‘Svāmī’ found within the ‘Svāminārāyaṇa’ mantra refers to the *self having identified—having acquired qualitative identification—with Akṣarabrahman*. When ‘Svāmī’ is conjoined with ‘Nārāyaṇa’—a term that refers to the object of *upāsana*, supreme devotion, or love (*bhakti*)—they come together to express: “Having identified the self with Akṣarabrahman one ought to offer devotion (*bhakti*) to Puruṣottama with the sentiments of a servant (*dāsabhāva*).”¹⁴⁸ Given M. 3’s exposition of *brahmajñāna* above, ‘Svāminārāyaṇa’ is understood as synonymous to *brahmajñāna* or *brahmavidyā*.

‘SVĀMINĀRĀYAṆA’ AS ‘AKṢARA-PURUṢOTTAMA’

Within the Vacanāmṛta, Bhagavān Swaminarayan presents a unique philosophical doctrine known as the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Siddhānta. ‘Akṣara-Puruṣottama’ is used synonymously with ‘Svāminārāyaṇa.’ ‘Akṣara-Puruṣottama’ consists of two terms: ‘Akṣara’ and ‘Puruṣottama.’ As with ‘Svāminārāyaṇa,’ when the compound is presented in the dual number form (‘Akṣarapuruṣottamau’) it is identified as an enumerative coordinative compound (*itaretara-dvandva-samāsa*). In this form, the term is used, like ‘Svāminārāyaṇau,’ to collectively refer to two ontologically distinct entities: Akṣarabrahman and Puruṣottama.

However, when the compound is presented in its singular form, both terms are joined together to form a missing-member, equational compound (*madhyamapadalopi-karmadhārayasamāsa*).¹⁴⁹ Like the Svāminārāyaṇa

147. “asminnakṣarapuruṣottamopāsanātātparya eva Svāminārāyaṇamahāmantrārthaḥ samāviṣṭaḥ yathā svāmīrūpo nāmākṣararūpo bhūtvā Nārāyaṇasya Parabrahmaṇaḥ Puruṣottamanārāyaṇasya dāsabhāvena bhaktyupāsanaṁ kuryāditi” (Sadhu 14)

148. “svātmanyakṣarabrahmarūpatvaṁ sampādya Puruṣottamasya dāsabhāvena bhaktiḥ karaṇīyeta” (Sadhu 8)

149. The following auxiliary (paribhāṣā) is utilized in the construction of a missing-member, equational compound (*madhyamapadalopi-karmadhārayasamāsa*): “For the construction of ‘śākapārthiva’ (‘the king, who loves vegetables’) and others,

mantra, the term succinctly expresses Bhagavān Swaminarayan's unique understanding of *brahmavidyā* as it is expressed in GM. 3 and MuSB. 1.2.13 and *uttama nirvikalpa niścaya* as it is elaborated in L. 12 . The attentive reader will notice the use of 'Akṣara' and 'Puruṣottama' in L. 12 is reflected in the title: "Akṣara-Puruṣottama." As with 'Svāmī' and 'Nārāyaṇa,' 'Akṣara' refers to Akṣarabrahman whereas 'Puruṣottama' refers to Parabrahman. Similar to the Svāminārāyaṇa mantra, 'Akṣara-Puruṣottama' also refers to offering devotion (*bhakti*) or *upāsanā* to Puruṣottama upon identifying the self with Akṣarabrahman. As a result, along with 'Svāminārāyaṇa,' 'Akṣara-Puruṣottama' is also understood as synonymous to 'brahmavidyā.'

SVĀMINĀRĀYAṆA VEDĀNTA AS THE AKṢARA-PURUṢOTTAMA DARŚANA

Swaminarayan's Vedānta *darśana* is identified as the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana. Swaminarayan revealed the principles of his distinct *darśana* in the Vacanāmṛta. Among other things, he offered a specific understanding of the nature and form of Puruṣottama (Parabrahman), Akṣarabrahman, self, and the relationship between them. He also presented a distinctive understanding of what is meant by 'identify the self with Brahman (Akṣarabrahman).' From his expositions summarized as *brahmajñāna* in GM. 3 and *uttama nirvikalpa niścaya* in L. 12, the grammatical analysis of 'Svāminārāyaṇa' and 'Akṣara-Puruṣottama,' and the Muṇḍakopaniṣad revelation on *brahmavidyā*; 'brahmajñāna' ('brahmavidyā'), 'Svāminārāyaṇa,' and 'Akṣara-Puruṣottama' are all understood as synonymous. They are all offered as representative of Bhagavān Swaminarayan's distinctive *darśanic* position, which is summarized as: **the self (ātman) becoming Akṣararūpa (Brahmarūpa) and offering superior devotion (paramā bhakti) or upāsanā to Puruṣottama.**

Identifying Bhagavān Swaminarayan's Vedānta *darśana* as the

further add the removal (disappearance) of the latter word"—remove the second term from 'śāka-bhojī pāṛthivaḥ.' ("śākapāṛthivādīnāṃ siddhaye uttarapadalopasyopasamkhyānam") (Bhaṭṭojidikṣita 105)

Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana reflects this position. Within this title, ‘Akṣara-Puruṣottama’ expresses: becoming **Akṣararūpa** and offering superior devotion (*paramā bhakti*) or *upāsana* to **Puruṣottama**. The term also conveys the *darśana*’s distinctive understanding of *brahmavidyā*—the knowledge of two ontologically distinct entities: Akṣarabrahman and Puruṣottama. By the term’s (‘Akṣara-Puruṣottama’) inclusive and summative capacity to express distinguishing *darśanic* features of Bhagavān Swaminarayan’s revealed principles and the Vedāntic nomenclature to identify a *darśana* by its characteristic ontological enumerations or metaphysical descriptions of the relationships between its accepted entities, Bhagavān Swaminarayan’s *darśana* is appropriately identified as the “Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana.”

INDEX OF TEXTUAL ABBREVIATIONS

Br.	Brahmajñānāvalīmālā
Bṛ.	Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad
BS.	Brahmasūtra(s)
BSB.	Brahmasūtra-Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣya
BS Śaṃ. Bhā.	Brahmasūtra Śaṃkarabhāṣya
Chā.	Chāndogyopaniṣad
Gī.	Śrīmadbhagavadgītā
Gī. Śaṃ. Bhā.	Bhagavadgītā Śaṃkarabhāṣya
GSB.	Śrīmadbhagavadgītā-Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣya
Īśā.	Īśāvāsyopaniṣad
Kaṭha.	Kaṭhopaniṣad
Mā.	Māṇḍūkyopaniṣad
Mu.	Muṇḍakopaniṣad
MuSB.	Muṇḍakopaniṣat-Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣya
Pra.	Praśnopaniṣad
Ra.	Ratnatrayasāra
SP.	Siddhāntapātra
Śve.	Śvetāśvataropaniṣad

Ta.	Tattvamuktākālāpa
Tai.	Taittirīyopaniṣad
Va.	Vākyavṛtti
Vi.	Vivekacūḍāmaṇi
Ya.	Yatīndramatadīpikā

ABBREVIATIONS OF CHAPTER TITLES FROM THE VACANĀMṚTA

GA.	“Vacanāmṛta Gaḍhaḍā Antya”
GM.	“Vacanāmṛta Gaḍhaḍā Madhya”
GP.	“Vacanāmṛta Gaḍhaḍā Prathama”
L.	“Vacanāmṛta Loyā”
P.	“Vacanāmṛta Pañcālā”
S.	“Vacanāmṛta Sāraṅgapura”
V.	“Vacanāmṛta Varatāla”

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AKṢARA AND PURUṢOTTAMA: EXPOUNDING ON THEIR INTEGRAL RELATION

SMIT THACKER

Ph.D. candidate, Department of Philosophy,
Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda

Abstract

The Vedānta schools of philosophy, known as *darśanas*, although distinct from the Vedānta tradition, encompassing variegated schools formed out of veritable perspectives of the ultimate reality, has witnessed an inclusion of a novel school of thought, the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana. This Darśana offers a distinct perspective on the nature of ultimate reality, the endeavours for realising it and the result of engaging in such endeavours. These offerings, in line with other schools of Vedānta, are grounded in the authoritative texts, particularly the Upaniṣads, Brahma-Sūtra and the Bhagavad Gītā, which are collectively referred to as the Prasthānatrayī, literally meaning the three sources of departure.

Based on the teachings of these texts, the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana identifies a distinctive entity Akṣara or Akṣarabrahman that remains eternally distinct from the Supreme Person Puruṣottama. Both these entities, as the name of the darśana suggests, form the core in understanding the fundamental principles of the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana. This paper aims to examine the integral relation between these two entities, Akṣara and Puruṣottama, through the exegetical analysis of certain statements

from the Prasthānatrayī. The paper mainly engages with the exposition of the relationship as offered in the vādagrantha Svāminārāyaṇa-Siddhānta-Sudhā (henceforth, Sudhā).

The paper begins with a brief introduction to the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana and its metaphysics. It then discusses the nature of Akṣara and Puruṣottama followed by an examination of the relation between both these entities and its significance on the Darśana's understanding about the means to attain liberation.

AKṢARA-PURUṢOTTAMA DARŚANA

The Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana is stated to be founded by the nineteenth century socio-spiritual leader, Sahajānand Svāmī (1781-1830 CE)¹. Born in the village of Chapiyā in North India, Sahajānanda Svāmī (Sahajanand Swami) travelled across the Indian subcontinent for seven years as Nilkaṇṭha and in that course arrived in Gujarat where he “significantly transformed the religious landscape”² through his teachings and endeavours. These teachings soon led to the establishment of the distinct sampradāya that came to be known as the Svāminārāyaṇa Sampradāya, named after the mantra ‘Svāminārāyaṇa’ that was imparted by Sahajanand Swami in 1801 CE. Likewise, Sahajanand Swami, revered as the manifest God by his followers, came to be recognized as ‘Bhagavāna Svāminārāyaṇa.’

The pivotal text of the Svāminārāyaṇa Sampradāya is the ‘Vacanāmṛta’ (literally meaning the nectar-like words), which is a compilation of the philosophical discourses imparted by Sahajanand Swami that were chronicled by his contemporary sadhus. Each chapter of this text is also called a ‘Vacanāmṛta’ (henceforth, Vac.) and is classified on the basis of the location at which the discourse was delivered. In one such discourse,

1. (Bhadreshdas, Svāminārāyaṇasiddhāntasudhā 9)

2. (Bhatt 149)

Sahajanand Swami enumerates the fundamental ontological entities:

These five entities--Parabrahman, Akṣarabrahman, māyā, īśvaras and jīvas--are eternal.³

Each of these five entities, that is, the jīva (the countless individual ātman), īśvara (the deities), māyā (the material cause of creation), Akṣara or Akṣarabrahman (the entity superior to all other entities, except the Supreme Being) and Parabrahman Puruṣottama (the Supreme Being that reigns supreme to all entities, including Akṣarabrahman) are maintained to be eternally real and distinct. Amongst these entities, Akṣarabrahman and Parabrahman are believed to be eternally pure entities, untouched by the aversions of the māyā. Both these entities, while being mutually distinct, are explained as the support, as the controller and regulator of the remaining three entities, jīva, īśvara and māyā.⁴

The Bocāsanvāsī Śrī Akṣara-Puruṣottama Svāminārāyaṇa Sansthā (BAPS), one of the main denominations of the Svāminārāyaṇa Sampradāya,⁵ identifies Sahajanand Swami as the Supreme Being Parabrahman and the legacy of Gurus that propagate his teachings and safeguard the sampradāya as the Akṣarabrahman Gurus. The legacy of such Akṣarabrahman Gurus is believed to encompass Guṇātītānand Swāmī (Gunatitanand Swami) (1785-1867), Bhagatjī Mahārāja (Bhagatji Maharaj) (1829-1897), Śāstrijī Mahārāja (Shastriji Maharaj) (1865-1951), Yogījī Mahārāja (Yogiji Maharaj) (1892-1971), Pramukha Svāmī Mahārāja (Pramukh Swami Maharaj) (1921-2016) and the current Guru, Mahanta Svāmī Mahārāja (Mahant Swami Maharaj) (b. 1933).

BAPS, as a distinct denomination of the Svāminārāyaṇa Sampradāya, was established in 1907 CE under the spiritual leadership of Shastriji Maharaj, the third spiritual successor of Sahajanand Swami, who departed from the Varatāla denomination to uphold the theological integrity of Bhagavāna Svāminārāyaṇa's teachings. He departed with just a handful of

3. (Vac. Gaḍhaḍā I.7)

4. (Vac. Gaḍhaḍā II.3)

5. (Bhatt 151)

sadhus and devotees, and minimal resources. The organisation gradually began to flourish under his spiritual leadership with the construction of the five large stone mandirs, the first being in the town Bocāsana, Gujarat.⁶ The murtis of Akṣara and Puruṣottama were consecrated in the central shrine of these mandirs, and thus the ontological entities of Akṣarabrahman and Parabrahman that were revealed by Sahajanand Swami were brought to the fore.

Over the years BAPS, along with its social and cultural services worldwide,⁷ has substantially contributed to scholastic heritage of the Svāminārāyaṇa sampradāya. Bhadreshdas Swami, upon the behest of Pramukh Swami Maharaj, the fifth spiritual successor of Sahajanand Swami, composed commentaries on the ten principal Upaniṣads, the Brahma-Sūtra and Bhagavad Gītā, collectively known as the Prasthānatrayī-Svāminārāyaṇa-Bhāṣya, and the vādagrantha Svāminārāyaṇa-Siddhānta-Sudhā. This literature creates a scholastic framework that have led to the recognition of its philosophy, giving it a status of a distinct school or darśana of Vedānta, the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana. In 2017, the eminent scholars of the Kashi Vidvat Parishad acclaimed the commentaries and the Sudhā as offering a unique perspective in the field of Vedāntic philosophy.⁸ Thus, the ṣaḍdarśana of the Vedānta tradition encompassing the schools of Advaita, Viśiṣṭādvaita, Dvaita, Dvaitādvaita, Śuddhādvaita, and Acintyabhedābheda can now include the novel Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana.

AKṢARA AND PURUṢOTTAMA

Each of the five entities, jīva, īśvara, māyā, Akṣara or Akṣarabrahman and Parabrahman Puruṣottama, form a separate chapter in the Sudhā wherein the author Bhadreshdas Swami systematically puts forth the nature and form of each entity through scriptural and logical reasoning.

6. (Dave 324)

7. (Brahmbhatt 113–15)

8. ('HH Mahant Swami Maharaj Inaugurates Swaminarayan-Siddhanta-Sudha')

The entity Akṣara, explicated in the chapter titled “Akṣarabrahmadhārā,” is demonstrated to be mentioned and described on several occasions in the Prasthānatrayī. The term ‘akṣara,’ occurring at several instances in these authoritative texts, along with the terms ‘brahman’ and ‘avyakta’ are identified as denoting the entity Akṣarabrahman.

The term ‘akṣara,’ for instance, in the statement “*atha parā yayā tadakṣaramadhighamyate*”⁹ of the Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad is described as the entity Akṣarabrahman that is an essential subject matter of the highest spiritual knowledge (*parā vidyā*). The Upaniṣad then is explained as describing the greatness of Akṣarabrahman, such as being cause of creation (*akṣarāt sambhavatīha viśvam*)¹⁰ as it wills to create the world as per the wish of the Supreme Person Parabrahman and as omniscient when the Upaniṣad accounts Akṣarabrahman as “*vibhu*,” all-pervasive, and “*sukṣama*,” subtler than the subtle. The same Upaniṣad later states Akṣarabrahman as the in-dweller of every being as it described the presence of two birds perched on tree.¹¹ Here, the tree is explained to signify the mortal body wherein dwell the two birds, that is, the individual ātman and Akṣarabrahman.

The Sudhā explicates Akṣarabrahman as the in-dweller through the statement “*daharo’sminnantarākāśa*”¹² of the Chāndogya Upaniṣad. Here, the Upaniṣad asserts the presence of *daharākāśa* or space within the cavity of the heart. This space is later described as “*ātmā*” that is beyond all sins and suffering¹³ and as the support of all worlds.¹⁴ These descriptions indicate the *daharākāśa* as an entity that is sentient, eternally beyond the aversions of the material world (*māyā*) and the sustainer of creation. In this respect, the term ‘*daharākāśa*’ is explained as the eternally sentient

9. “Now *parā vidyā* is that by which Akṣara is known.” (Mu. Up. 1.1.5)

10. (Mu. Up. 1.1.7)

11. (Mu. Up. 3.1.1)

12. “Within this [heart] lies the *daharākāśa*.” (Ch. Up. 8.1.1)

13. “*eṣa ātmāpahatapāpmā*.” (“This *ātmā* is beyond any vices or sorrow.”) (Ch. Up. 8.1.5)

14. “*eṣaṃ lokānāmasambhedāya*.” (“He is the support of the worlds.”) (Ch. Up. 8.4.1)

and pure Akṣarabrahman.¹⁵ This pervasive form of Akṣarabrahman is known in the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana as the Cidākāśa, literally meaning the sentient (cit) space (ākāśa).

This sentient space is not understood as the Supreme Person Parabrahman, who is also all-pervasive and eternally pure, ever transcending the influence māyā. The Sudhā argues on the basis of the same statement of the Chāndogya Upaniṣad that affirms “tasmin yat antah tat anveṣṭavyam tat vāva vijijñāsitavyam iti.”¹⁶ The Upaniṣad instructs on inquiring upon that which lies within the sentient space. Accordingly, this entity dwelling within the pervasive space is identified as Parabrahman Puruṣottama, who is subtlest of the subtle.

Apart from the all-pervasive form, Akṣarabrahman is also portrayed as having a divine human-shaped form. This aspect encompasses three forms of Akṣarabrahman, namely Akṣarabrahman as the supreme abode of Puruṣottama, as the ideal servant in this abode and as the Guru manifesting on earth. The Sudhā delves on the nature of each of these forms. The term ‘akṣara,’ is stated when Yamarāja asserts the greatness of the divine abode, “yadicchanto brahmacaryam caranti tatte padam saṁgrahaṇa bravīmyomityetat etaddhyeva akṣaram brahma.”¹⁷ This statement describes the place (padam), which those who have realised (Akṣara)Brahman (brahmacaryam caranti) attain, as “akṣaram brahma.” A similar statement is cited from the Bhagavad Gītā that also describes the supreme abode, “yadicchanto brahmacaryam caranti tatte padam saṁgrahaṇa pravakṣye.”¹⁸ Sudhā notes that this statement is part of the section that accounts the nature of Brahman, which begins with the

15. (Bhadreshdas, Svāminārāyaṇasiddhāntasudhā 50)

16. “One must desire to know that which lies this space and must be inquire upon it.” (Ch. Up. 8.1.1)

17. “The place that those who wish to remain immersed in Brahman attain, I will explain it briefly. That place is Akṣarabrahman.” (Ka. Up. 2.15,16)

18. “The place that those who wish to remain immersed in Brahman attain, I will explain briefly.” (BG 8.11)

definition of Brahman as “akṣaram brahma paramam.”¹⁹ This way, the Sudhā demonstrates Akṣarabrahman as the supreme abode that is also frequently referred to as Brahmaloḥka, Brahmadhāman, and the like terms. The term ‘brahma’ in the compound term ‘Brahmaloka’ is identified as Akṣarabrahman, which is abode that eternally upholds Parabrahman. The Darśana, thereby, refers to the supreme abode as ‘Akṣaradhāman.’ Further, instances that describe the abode as eternal (nitya, ananta),²⁰ one without a second,²¹ sentient,²² all-knowing,²³ and ever transcending the guṇas of māyā²⁴ are attributed to the entity Akṣarabrahman.

Akṣarabrahman is further also upheld as eternally serving and experiencing the bliss of Puruṣottama in this divine abode. Here, Akṣarabrahman ever possesses a divine human-like form as he is referred to as the “puruṣa” in the famous statement of the Īśa Upaniṣad “yo’sāvasau puruṣaḥ so’hamasmi.”²⁵ This Upaniṣadic prayer is explained as an appeal to Puruṣottama, to see his divine form, and for acquiring the auspicious qualities of the Akṣarabrahman Guru, which makes one capable (adhikārī) to realise the form of Puruṣottama. Accordingly, the terms ‘yo’sāvasau puruṣaḥ’ are understood as denoting the person (puruṣa) who is situated closest to Puruṣottama. The term ‘asau’ translated as the pronoun ‘that,’ is explained as indicating proximity of Akṣarabrahman to Puruṣottama (atī sāmipyā) in the divine abode. Accordingly, the terms ‘so’hamasmi’ are understood as indicating one’s association with Akṣarabrahman, who remains in service of Puruṣottama.

Akṣarabrahman’s servant form in the divine abode, while possessing a human-like form, is also affirmed through the Upaniṣadic statement

19. “Akṣarabrahman is superior [to jīva, īśvara and māyā].” (BG 8.2) (Bhadreshdas, Svāminārāyaṇasiddhāntasudhā 59)

20. (Ke. Up. 4.9), (Ka. Up. 1.12), (BG 4.12)

21. (Br. Up. 4.3.32), (Mu. Up. 1.2.5)

22. (Mu. Up. 1.1.9)

23. (Mu. Up. 1.1.9)

24. (Ch. Up. 8.4.1), (Br. Up. 4.4.23)

25. “That Puruṣa near you, I am he.” (Īśa Up. 16)

“mahatpadam atraitatsamarpitam ejat prāṇannimiṣacca.”²⁶ Here, Akṣarabrahman is identified as being “samarpita” or engaged in service in the “mahatpadam” or Akṣaradhāman. The human-shaped form of Akṣarabrahman is inferred through the lucid description of the verbs walking (ejat), breathing (prāṇat) and blinking (nimiṣat). Sadhu Bhadresdhas specifies that the term ‘ca’ at the end signifies other organs of the divine human-like form of Akṣarabrahman.²⁷ Thus, Akṣarabrahman as the servant in the abode ever possesses a specific form.

The countless released ātman that surround Puruṣottama in this abode are believed to remain eternally distinct from Akṣarabrahman and Puruṣottama. The released ātman acquires certain auspicious qualities of Akṣarabrahman and experiences the supreme bliss of Puruṣottama in the manner experienced by Akṣarabrahman. The aphorism of the Brahma-Sūtra “bhogamātrasāmyaliṅgācca”²⁸ is cited to negate the absolute identity between the released ātman and Akṣarabrahman. The term ‘bhogamātra’ is explained as the experience of only (mātra) the supreme bliss of Puruṣottama along with Akṣarabrahman. The term ‘ca’ is inferred to deny the presence of other virtues of Akṣarabrahman within the released ātman, such as virtues of engaging in creation, sustenance and dissolution of the universe. In this way, Sudhā insists that even upon liberation, the released ātman never becomes ontologically identical with Akṣarabrahman and Puruṣottama. The ātman is showcased to acquire only those virtues that are necessary for attaining liberation.²⁹

The Akṣarabrahman Guru is the only form of Akṣarabrahman that remains accessible (sulabha) to all ātman on earth. This form also possesses a human-like form but remains beyond any kind of human flaws or vices. This characterisation of the Akṣarabrahman Guru is

26. “The supreme place and here in that [place] the dedicated walks, breathes and blinks.” (Mu. Up. 2.2.1)

27. (Bhadreshdas, Īśadyaṣṭopaniṣatsvāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam 269)

28. “Enjoyment only as the indication of equality.” (BS 4.4.21).

29. (Bhadreshdas, Svāminārāyaṇasiddhāntasudhā 412)

affirmed through the Upaniṣadic statement “tadvijñānārthaṁ sa gurum evābhigacchet samitpāṇiḥ śrotriyam brahma niṣṭham.”³⁰ The “guru,” to whom the Upaniṣad instructs to approach, must be “śrotriyam,” that is, must encompass the true meaning of the sacred scriptures, must be “brahma” or the form of Akṣarabrahman, and “niṣṭham” or immersed in the service and bliss of Parabrahman Puruṣottama. Thus, only the Akṣarabrahman Guru is described as encompassing such qualities of a Guru, who can impart the highest spiritual knowledge.

The Bhagavad Gītā, in its enumeration of the qualities of one who is ever stable (sthitaprajña), is stated as depicting the characteristics of the Akṣarabrahman Guru. These qualities are enumerated in response to Arjuna’s inquire about the nature of one who is sthitaprajña. He asks, “sthitadhīḥ kiṁ prabhāṣeta kimāsīta vrajeta kim.”³¹ The verbs such as “prabhāṣeta” (speak) “vrajeta” (walk) imply the human-shaped form. Some of these qualities of a sthitaprajña that Kṛṣṇa describes include self-restrain, disinterest for any material pleasures, and resoluteness. This section ends with the statement, “eṣā brāhmī sthiti”³² which the Sudhā understands as the state (sthiti) of the Akṣarabrahman Guru (brāhmī), who naturally encompasses all these qualities. Thus, Akṣarabrahman manifests on earth with all these auspicious virtues. Negating this manifestation is shown to negate the relevance of these virtues stated in the Gītā.³³

Despite these four forms, Akṣarabrahman is described as a single ontological entity that remains superior to all ātman. In the statement “mahataḥ paramavyaktam avyaktāt puruṣaḥ paraḥ”³⁴ of the Kaṭha

30. GSB, pg. 360. “To know that one must approach the Guru alone who is learned, Brahman and fixed in the Supreme.” (Mu. Up. 1.2.12)

31. “How does the one who is sthitaprajña speak, how does he walk?” (BG 2.54)

32. “This is Brahmī-sthiti.” (BG 2.72)

33. (Bhadreshdas, Svāminārāyaṇasiddhāntasudhā 82)

34. “Avyakta is superior to Mahat and the Puruṣa is superior to Avyakta.” (Ka. Up. 3.11)

Upaniṣad, the term ‘avyakta’ is identified as Akṣarabrahman, who is superior to the individual ātman (mahat) and remains ever subordinate to the Supreme Person Parabrahman (puruṣaḥ paraḥ). This description and the various other virtues of Akṣarabrahman, such as of being ever beyond māyā, places Akṣarabrahman distinct from other entities of jīva, īśvara and māyā.

Parabrahman or Puruṣottama prevails superior to all entities, including Akṣarabrahman. Puruṣottama is described as the ultimate independent cause of all entities. As the efficient cause, Puruṣottama initiates creation upon his own will and as the material cause, he manifests in every object that is created from the transformation of māyā. Though both Akṣarabrahman and Parabrahman are eternally pure sentient entities, Akṣarabrahman can engage in service and other functions only upon the will of Puruṣottama.

Puruṣottama, while being all-pervasive and the in-dweller of all beings including Akṣarabrahman, always resides in the supreme abode Akṣaradhāman possessing a divine human-like form. The action of seeing attributed to Puruṣottama and Akṣarabrahman in the statement “tadaikṣata bahu syāñ prajāyeya”³⁵ of the Chāndogya Upaniṣad is explained to imply the presence of their eternal human-shaped form. Sadhu Bhadreshdas notes that the process of creation begins with Parabrahman glancing (ikṣata) at Akṣarabrahman with the intent of creation and Akṣarabrahman then glancing (ikṣata) at a released ātman, who then engages with mūla-māyā to form the various subtle and gross elements.³⁶ This description thus not only underlines Puruṣottama as the ultimate cause prevailing before the beginning of creation, but also his eternal human-like form. The various other Upaniṣadic statements that seem to describe Puruṣottama as formless (arupam, āsarīram) are understood as negating any kind of material (prākṛta) body and not his

35. “That saw and manifested as many.” (Ch. Up. 6.2.3)

36. (Bhadreshdas, Svāminārāyaṇasiddhāntasudhā 125)

divine human-shaped form.³⁷

Further, Puruṣottama is believed to have descended on earth in a human-shaped form as Sahajanand Swami. This very form of Puruṣottama continues to manifest on earth through the Akṣarabrahman Guru. Accordingly, Puruṣottama is stated to remain “pratyakṣa” or before one’s eyes³⁸ and engaging in the worship and service on this manifest Puruṣottama (pratyakṣa bhakti) releases one from the cycle of transmigration.³⁹

RELATION BETWEEN AKṢARA AND PURUṢOTTAMA

Akṣara and Puruṣottama, as discussed above, are eternally sentient ontological entities prevailing beyond the realm of māyā. The Sudhā elucidates the relation between the two by responding to certain relationship types that it raises as purvapakṣa. The first relation type proposes that the relation between the two entities Akṣara and Puruṣottama does not entail any difference of high or low, both entities are at the same level (sama bhāva). This relation is explained through the illustration of the pot and the hand holding the pot---just as the pot and hand holding the pot are distinct from each other yet do not have any such difference of one being higher than the other, likewise Akṣara and Puruṣottama are also distinct yet have the same faculties and virtues.

Responding to this explanation, the Sudhā insists on the presence of a difference of high and low between Akṣara and Puruṣottama based on scriptural reasoning. It cites those statements that lucidly bring forth this difference, such as “akṣarāt parataḥ paraḥ,”⁴⁰ “avyaktāt puruṣaḥ paraḥ”⁴¹ and “akṣarāt api ca uttamaḥ.”⁴² In each of these statements,

37. (Bhadreshdas, Svāminārāyaṇasiddhāntasudhā 125)

38. (Bhadreshdas, Svāminārāyaṇasiddhāntasudhā 130)

39. (Bhadreshdas, Svāminārāyaṇasiddhāntasudhā 355)

40. “Parabrahman is superior to the supreme Akṣara.” (Mu. Up. 2.1.2)

41. “Puruṣa is superior to Avyakta.” (Ka. Up. 3.11)

42. “Superior even to Akṣara.” (BG 15.18)

Akṣarabrahman, denoted with the terms ‘akṣara’ and avyakta,’ is stated to be lower or subordinate to Puruṣottama, denoted with the terms ‘parah,’ ‘puruṣah,’ and ‘uttamah.’ Thus, there is no kind of equivalence between the two.

The Sudhā further cites “tad viṣṇoḥ paramaṁ padam”⁴³ wherein Sadhu Bhadrashdas specifies that the term ‘viṣṇoḥ’ is in the genitive case, which suggests that the supreme abode (paramaṁ padam) is distinct from Puruṣottama. This further implies that as the owner and resident of the abode Akṣaradhāman, Puruṣottama is ever greater than Akṣarabrahman, who not only upholds Puruṣottama but eternally serves him in this abode.

The other relation type proposed between Akṣara and Puruṣottama is that of difference and non-difference. This relation is illustrated through the snake and its coil---just as the snake and its coiled shape can be stated separately yet remain identical, Akṣara and Puruṣottama are likewise two different terms that are otherwise essentially identical. Just as one may refer to the snake as the coil-shaped snake or the snake in a coil, one may variedly use the term ‘akṣara’ and ‘puruṣottama’ to refer to the same entity. The Sudhā dismisses this relation type as Akṣara and Puruṣottama are essentially distinct at all times. Moreover, unlike the shape of the snake that would constantly undergo modification, Akṣara is described as unchanging (nirvikāri) that never experiences any kind of modifications. Akṣara and Puruṣottama are remain eternally distinct and unchanging.

Another relation type proposed was of substance and attribute, illustrated through light and its rays---just as the light and its rays are distinct but the rays or its effulgence are essentially rooted to the light, Akṣara and Puruṣottama are likewise distinct but Akṣarabrahman as the effulgence of Puruṣottama is rooted in the latter. Denying this relation, the Sudhā argues that the scriptures through statements such as “asya bhāsā sarvamidam vibhāti”⁴⁴ affirm Akṣarabrahman to have the

43. “That is the supreme place of Supreme Person.” (Ka. Up. 3.9)

44. “All this is illumined by its effulgence.” (Mu. Up. 2.2.10)

attribute of effulgence. In fact, this mantra describes the nature of the supreme abode of Puruṣottama as being extremely luminous, such that the brilliance of even the Sun becomes insignificant. This abode, that is Akṣarabrahman, is the source of brilliance of the cosmos and everything that prevails within. Thus, the Sudhā, in pointing out such attributes of Akṣara, denies reducing it to an attribute. Akṣara is emphasised as being a unique ontological entity encompassing several attributes and thereby cannot be an attribute of Puruṣottama.

The nature of the relation between Akṣara and Puruṣottama, as distinct entities that are low and high respectively, is explained as being of different degrees (*viśama bhāva*) in every way and form. The Sudhā describes their difference as “*svarūpaīśca svabhāvaiśca guṇaiśvaryāditastathā*,” that is, Akṣara and Puruṣottama differ in every respect, including the form, nature and virtues.⁴⁵ This difference is substantiated through the statements from the Prasthānatrayī.

The Upaniṣadic statements, such as “*daharo’sminnantara ākāśastasminyadantastad anveṣṭavyam*,”⁴⁶ denote the presence of daharākāśa or the Cidākāśa form of Akṣarabrahman within the cavity of the heart and the entity dwelling within this Cidākāśa that is to be inquired as Puruṣottama. Accordingly, Puruṣottama is described as subtler than the subtle Akṣarabrahman; while Akṣarabrahman pervades every object and being that exists, Puruṣottama pervades every object and being including Akṣarabrahman. Thus, the relation between Akṣara and Puruṣottama is described as being of the pervaded and the pervader respectively. Further, as pervading Akṣarabrahman as the in-dweller (*śarīrī*), Puruṣottama is depicted as the controller and regulator of Akṣarabrahman. In the statement of the Gītā “*brahmaṇoḥ hi pratiṣṭhā aham*,”⁴⁷ the term ‘*brahmaṇoḥ*’ (of Brahman) is explained as indicating Akṣarabrahman. Admitting the presence of two eternally distinct Brahman, Sadhu

45. (Bhadreshdas, *Svāminārāyaṇasiddhāntasudhā* 44)

46. “Know the one that lies within the daharākāśa.” (Ch. Up. 8.1.1)

47. “In Brahman indeed I dwell.” (BG 14.27)

Bhadreshdas is able to consistently explain this statement as Puruṣottama being the support (pratiṣṭhā) of Akṣarabrahman. Akṣarabrahman thereby is stated as the controlled (niyāmya) and Puruṣottama as the controller (niyāmaka).

As discussed earlier, Akṣarabrahman is depicted as the servant in the supreme abode who is eternally in service (samarpitam) of Puruṣottama. In fact, Akṣarabrahman remains service of Puruṣottama in all its four forms. Swami Paramtattvadas explains the same as:

[A]kṣarabrahman, in all its four forms, is first and foremost always a devotee of Parabrahman, serving him variously in four different forms.⁴⁸

Even when Akṣarabrahman manifests on earth and is described to eternally uphold the form of Puruṣottama with all his faculties and virtues, Akṣarabrahman continues to steadfastly worship and serve Puruṣottama. This aspect is at times viewed to be paradoxical. Raymond Williams, for instance, claims:

The special character of his acts of worship displays the paradox. He is at the same time the primary worshipper and himself the object of worship.⁴⁹

This apparent paradox can be explained through the understanding offered in the Sudhā, which clearly states:

Upasyopāsakatvaṃ syāt sambandho dāsabhāvataḥ |
Param brahma sadā upāsyam akṣaram tadupāsakam ||⁵⁰

The Akṣarabrahman eternally (sadā) remains the worshipper (upāsakam) and Puruṣottama as the worshipped or the object of worship (upāsyam). The devotees and sadhus of the sampradāya regularly chant the statement “akṣaram aham puruṣottama dāsoṣmi”⁵¹ that signifies one’s

48. (Paramtattvadas 200)

49. (Williams 149)

50. “The relation is of the worshipper, who worships with immense humility, and the worshipped. Parabrahman is ever the worshipped and Aksara is the worshipper.” (Bhadreshdas, Svāminārāyaṇasiddhāntasudhā 41)

51. “I am Akṣara, in service of Puruṣottama.”

aim to selfless worship Puruṣottama in the manner of the Akṣarabrahman Guru. The Sudhā also notes that the mantra ‘Svāminārāyaṇa’ bestowed by Sahajanand Swami also to encapsulate the endeavour of realising ‘svāmī’ or Akṣarabrahman and worshipping ‘nārāyaṇa’ or Parabrahman. This understanding, thus, rules out the implication of yugala upāsanā or the worship of paired (yugala) entities. The Sudhā clearly identifies only ‘nārāyaṇa’ or Parabrahman as the upāsyadeva or the object of worship. As discussed earlier, the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana believes Sahajanand Swami as manifest Parabrahman and his continued manifestation through the Akṣarabrahman Guru. The Akṣarabrahman Guru is thus deemed as ever upholding the form of Parabrahman. In this respect, the Sudhā clarifies that the Akṣarabrahman Guru is to be devotionally served with the intent of worshipping the form of Parabrahman whom the Guru eternally upholds.⁵² Thus, the upāsyadeva is only one, the Supreme Parabrahman, whom even the Akṣarabrahman Guru worships with immense humility (dāsabhāva).

Furthermore, since the Akṣarabrahman Guru is accessible to all aspirants on earth, he is described as the “setu” or bridge that leads or guides one to Puruṣottama. The Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad asserts “amṛtasya eṣa setuḥ”⁵³ where the term “setu” is identified as Akṣarabrahman that helps one to attain the immortal Puruṣottama, in the same way as a bridge helps one to attain the other end of the shore. This is possible as the Akṣarabrahman Guru can personally associate (prasaṅga) with the aspirants, correct their vices and enable them to cultivate auspicious virtues that are necessary to attain Puruṣottama. Accordingly, Puruṣottama is the ultimate aim or destination that is worthy of attainment. This relationship between Akṣara and Puruṣottama implies that the Akṣarabrahman Guru is the one and only means or medium for attaining Puruṣottama. The same Upaniṣad, thereby, insists on approaching and profoundly associating

52. (Bhadreshdas, Svāminārāyaṇasiddhāntasudhā 281)

53. “He is the bridge to immortality.” (Mu. Up. 2.2.5)

with such a Guru, “gurumevābhigatvchet.”⁵⁴ Sadhu Bhadreshdas observes that this instruction, through the term ‘eva,’ ensures that the association with the Guru is the fundamental and foremost endeavour for realizing Puruṣottama. This endeavour should be performed with utmost faith and conviction in the Guru.

Thus, the relation between Akṣara and Puruṣottama can be summarised as follows:

Akṣara	Puruṣottama
Worshipper	Worshipped
Pervaded	Pervader
Bridge/Guide	Goal/Destination
Controller	Controlled

CONCLUSION

The entities Akṣara and Puruṣottama are central to the philosophical principles of the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana. Both these entities, including those of jīva, īśvara and māyā, are recognised to be separate ontological entities that are real and eternal. Akṣara pervades and regulates jīva, īśvara and māyā, while Puruṣottama pervades and regulates all these three entities including Akṣarabrahman. Akṣara remains ever subordinate to Puruṣottama in every way. Though both these entities eternally transcend māyā, Akṣara ever worships and serves Puruṣottama. Akṣara as manifesting on earth as the Guru remains immersed in the worship of Puruṣottama and also guides the aspirants towards this path. Since the Akṣarabrahman Guru ever upholds the form of Parabrahman with all his faculties and virtues, aspirants serve the Akṣarabrahman

54. “Guru alone should be approached.” (Mu. Up. 1.2.12)

Guru with the intent of worshipping Puruṣottama. Thus, understanding the relation between Akṣara and Puruṣottama is crucial for engaging in soteriological endeavours for realising Puruṣottama which marks the attainment of liberation.

ABBREVIATIONS

BG	Bhagavad Gītā
Br.Up.	Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad
BS	Brahma-Sūtra
Ch. Up.	Chāndogya Upaniṣad
Ka. Up.	Kaṭha Upaniṣad
Ke. Up.	Kena Upaniṣad
Mu. Up.	Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad
Sudhā	Swaminarayan-Siddhānta-Sudhā
Vac.	Chapter of the text Vacanāmṛta

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THE PRASTHĀNATRAYĪ-SVĀMINĀRĀYAṆA-BHĀṢYAM IN LIGHT OF SVĀMINĀRĀYAṆA'S VACANĀMṚTA

ĀCĀRYA SADHU GYANANANDDAS
Ph.D. Student, MS University, Baroda

Abstract

In the Indian Vedāntic tradition, the Prasthānatrayī; (Upaniṣads, Bhagavadgītā, and Brahmasūtras) holds significant prominence. Great teachers from Ādi Śaṅkarācārya's era to the contemporary times have established and authenticated their doctrines on the basis of Prasthānatrayī. In this Vedic tradition, most recently (2007-2012) Sādhu Bhadreśadāsa authored the commentaries on the Prasthānatrayī (henceforth Bhāṣyam) and claimed that the Prasthānatrayī Svāminārāyaṇa Bhāṣyam represents the eternal Vedic ideology proclaimed by Bhagavān Svāminārāyaṇa. However, the principles of Svāminārāyaṇa Saṃpradāya were established by Svāminārāyaṇa two hundred years ago and they are all in the written form in the Vacanāmṛta. Moreover, Svāminārāyaṇa did not commission the writings of Bhāṣyam or commentary on the Prasthānatrayī in his time, yet he had encompassed his philosophical teachings as Akṣarapuruṣottama Doctrine. Therefore, there was a need of examining the principles of Prasthānatrayī Svāminārāyaṇa Bhāṣyam to determine to what proportion the Bhāṣyam accords with the principles of Svāminārāyaṇa's Vacanāmṛta. The period of two hundred years is enough to change the phenomenon

of social, religious, and moral aspects of any particular region. Consequently, these changes can also be perceived in the various other writings that stood at two different and vast time zones. Therefore, this paper comparatively analyzes Svāminārāyaṇa's Vacanāmṛta and the Prasthānatrayī-Svāminārāyaṇa-Bhāṣyam on the basis of four important factors; epistemology, metaphysics, spiritual endeavor and liberation, and intends to bring forth a valid conclusion.

KEYWORDS

Akṣarapuruṣottama Darśana, Prasthānatrayī Svāminārāyaṇa Bhāṣyam, Vacanāmṛta, epistemology, metaphysics, spiritual endeavor and liberation.

INTRODUCTION

Svāminārāyaṇa's teachings were based on the ancient Indian scriptures and he propagated his principles using direct references from these texts.¹ All his teachings were compiled in his time and preserved in a written form. This compilation is known as the *Vacanāmṛta*. In this text, he discusses the nature of five ontological eternal entities, sādhanā, mukti and many significant principles. On the other hand, Sādhu Bhadrēśādāsa is explaining the sāmpradāyika principles after two centuries in a scholastic way on the base of *Prasthānatrayī*. Thus, this traditional philosophy has emerged as Akṣarapuruṣottama Darśana.

Moreover, he acknowledges at the beginning of the Bhāṣyam that
*“svāminārāyaṇeneha siddhānto yaḥ prakāśitaḥ, tasyaiva sarvathā samyag-
 ihānusaraṇaṃ yataḥ.”*²

I am thoroughly following the principle which Svāminārāyaṇa has already asserted.

1. Vacanāmṛta V 18

2. Īśāvāsyā-upaniṣat Svāminārāyaṇa-Bhāṣyam, Mangalam, page-4

Therefore, in this paper, we present an analysis of whether Sādhū Bhadrēśadāsa's claim is well-grounded or not.

Now we analyze and examine both texts based on the following points.

ANALYSIS ON THE BASIS OF EPISTEMOLOGY

Epistemology in Vedic tradition offers one of the most vigorous efforts at the construction of a substantial, realist ontology that the world has ever seen.³ It is known as the theory of knowledge, *pramāṇa-śāstra*. The *śāstra* echoes:

- ‘*Pramāṇamantareṇa nārthapratipattiḥ*⁴

Without valid means, there is no knowledge of substances.

The actual numbers of *Pramāṇa* vary from school to school. The Cārvākas, eliminating all other *pramāṇas*, admitted only *Pratyakṣa* (direct perception) as the source of knowledge; the Buddhist and Vaiśeṣikas added one more, namely *Anumāna* (inference); the Sāṃkhya attached another viz *Śabda* (revelation-verbal authority); the Naiyāyika, the fourth viz, *Upamāna* (analogy), the *Prabhākara Mīmāṃsaka's* fifth one, *Arthāpatti* (implication), the *Bhaṭṭas*, the sixth one, *Anupalabdhi* (non-apprehension). Theory of knowledge, or epistemology, therefore precedes ontology or the theory of Reality or Being. All the teachers and commentators of *Bhakti Vedānta* Schools follow this time-honored method. Śaṅkarācārya accepts all six sources of knowledge. Rāmānujācārya takes three perceptions, inherence and verbal testimony.

This alteration in the number of *Pramāṇa* is due to *vicārasvātantryam* (freedom of thought.) Various philosophers have found their set of several *pramāṇas* or means of knowledge to perceive the highest reality, self, world, their relation, the concept of ultimate salvation and the means to reach it - *pratyakṣāmanumānaṃ ca vedāscopamayā saha*.⁵

Bhagavān Svāminārāyaṇa emphasizes true knowledge and its sources

3. Karl H. Potter, *Encyclopedia of Indian Philosophies*, pg. 1

4. *Vātsyāyana-Bhāṣyam* 1.1.1

5. *A glossary of Philosophical Terms*, 56

in the Vacanāmṛta.⁶ Moreover, the idea of acceptance of sources of knowledge is based on the attaining knowledge of five eternal ontological entities; Jīva, Īśvara, Māyā, Brahman, and Parabrahman, rather than a specific number of the sources. Thereby, Svāminārāyaṇa is not bound by any particular source of knowledge. Sometimes, he refers to true empirical knowledge⁷ for liberation. Sometimes inference⁸, testimony⁹, and analogy¹⁰ are also indicated to attain liberation. Moreover, he also highlights the Saṃbhāvya Pramāṇa¹¹ and Aitihiya Pramāṇa¹² in the Vacanāmṛta. Thus, in the Vacanāmṛta, he has indicated major sources of knowledge and opened the branch of any systematic path that fulfills the goal of attaining true knowledge of Akṣarapurūṣottama. In addition to this pramāṇa discussion, he mentions that Parabrahman's grace plays a vital and inevitable role in attaining true knowledge of eternal entities¹³.

The Prasthānatrayī-Svāminārāyaṇa-Bhāṣyam clearly mentions the significance of pramāṇa¹⁴; however, like Bhagavān Svāminārāyaṇa, the Bhāṣyakāra is not bound with the fixed numbers of pramāṇas. He averred

- *brahmabrahmaparau pramāṇaśata kairmāyādhīpau kīrtitau*.¹⁵

There may be hundreds of pramāṇas to procure the knowledge of Brahman and Parabrahman.

So, “the pramāṇa which negate and obstruct to obtain knowledge of the eternal entities, should be abjured, others are welcomed, in

6. Vacanāmṛta L 7, K 1, S 18, G III.10).

7. Vacanāmṛta L 7

8. Vacanāmṛta L 17

9. Vacanāmṛta G II.30

10. Vacanāmṛta G I.25

11. Vacanāmṛta K 3

12. Vacanāmṛta L 7

13. Vacanāmṛta G I. 51, 78

14. Brahmasūtra-Svāminārāyaṇa-Bhāṣyam 1.1.1, Kenopaniṣat-Svāminārāyaṇa-Bhāṣyam 1.3, Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣat-Svāminārāyaṇa-Bhāṣyam 2.4.5,

15. Svāminārāyaṇa-Siddhānta-Sudhā 1

this manner, we don't claim any particular numbers of the *pramāṇa*.¹⁶ Moreover, the *Bhāṣyakāra* strongly asserts that without the grace of Parabrahman, our mundane senses are incapable of comprehending upon the knowledge of the true form of those eternal entities. The *Bhāṣyakāra* elaborately substantiates this idea while commentating on the verse –

- *na tatra cakṣurgacchati na vāḡ gacchati no mana...*¹⁷

Here, in his commentary, he explicitly mentions three major *pramāṇas* - perception, inference and textual words; and acknowledges them as the sources to attain the supreme spiritual knowledge of Brahman and Parabrahman. However, he further states that worldly *pramāṇa* or the means of knowledge run short to procure the comprehension of eternal entities. Since worldly *pramāṇa* are potent only to obtain worldly knowledge, not that of Brahman and Parabrahman. The *Bhāṣyakāra* argues admirably with the appropriate references from the scriptures.¹⁸ Parabrahman Himself grants this vision out of His overflowing grace to *jīvas* and *īśvaras*. God, with concern for the seekers of truth, divinizes their sensory-motor apparatuses and the mind (*antaḥkaraṇa*), which enables them to have a vision of this ontic reality (Parabrahman Himself) as revealed in the sacred scriptures. The conceptual understanding of this vision follows as a consequence of His own wish.

ANALYSIS ON THE BASIS OF NUMBER OF METAPHYSICAL/ ONTOLOGICAL ENTITIES

At several places in his *Vacanāmṛta*, Bhagavān Svāminārāyaṇa has evidently enunciated about five distinct eternal metaphysical entities.

- “These five entities – Parabrahman, Akṣarabrahman, *māyā*, the *īśvaras* and the *jīvas* – are eternal.”¹⁹

16. *sati siddhāntapratyanīkatve hi taddheyamanyathā tu na khaṇḍanīyamiti na tan-nirdhāritasamkhyāsamādara iti* - Svāminārāyaṇa-Siddhānta-Sudhā, 149

17. *Kenopaniṣat* 1.3

18. *Kenopaniṣat-Svāminārāyaṇa-Bhāṣyam* 1.3

19. *Vacanāmṛta* G I.7

- “From the Vedas, the Purāṇas, the Itihāsa, and the Smṛtis, I have formed the principle that jīva, īśvara, māyā, Brahman and Parameśvara are all eternal.”²⁰

Even in the Svāminārāyaṇa-Bhāṣyam, it has been stated at various instances in a variety of ways that there are five distinct metaphysical/ontological entities.

Under the Bhāṣyam of Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad verse ‘*hyakṣarātparataḥparaḥ*’²¹, Bhadreśādāsa writes:

- *jīveśvaramāyābrahmarūpamuktādisarvebhyah parabhūtād ... akṣarāt ... parabhūtaḥ... paramātmā*²²

In the 15th Canto of the Śrīmad-Bhagavad-Gītā, when Kṛṣṇa initiates a discussion on the entities, the Bhāṣyakāra indisputably extrapolates the knowledge of five entities.

- *dvāvimau puruṣau loke kṣaraścākṣara eva ca | kṣarah sarvāṇi bhūtāni kūṭastho’kṣara ucyate*²³

There are two classes of beings, the fallible (kṣara) and the infallible (akṣara).

All the groups of the jīva and īśvara are constituted in the kṣara. Sādhu Bhadreśādāsa, the Bhāṣyakāra, answers to the question of how to animate entities like the jīva and īśvara can be constituted in the kṣara:

- ‘*idāniṃ vā pūrvaṃ vā yadā kadāpi kṣaraṇasvabhāvācitsaṃsar-gaprāptatvāt kṣara iti śabdābhilapyāni*’²⁴

Either in this birth or previously, they are connected with the perishable body; therefore, they are identified as kṣara.

Interestingly, Sādhu Bhadreśādāsa’s answer is in consonance with the doctrine of Bhagavān Svāminārāyaṇa as the latter himself says in the Vacanāmṛta that infinite jīvas and īśvaras are pervaded by māyā and

20. Vacanāmṛta G III.10

21. Muṇḍakopaniṣad 2.1.2

22. Muṇḍakopaniṣad--Svāminārāyaṇa-Bhāṣyam 5.2

23. Śrīmad-Bhagavad-Gītā 15.16

24. Śrīmad-Bhagavad-Gītā 15.16

that they have infinite births and that only associating themselves with Brahman and Parabrahman, they attain liberation.²⁵

Now, there arises a question that why the Akṣara is called kūṭastha? All preceding Ācāryas have defined kūṭastha as either Parabrahman or māya or Śakti. However, the Svāminārāyaṇa Bhāṣyakāra defines kūṭastha Akṣara as 'Brahman'. This is because his interpretation is in sheer consonance with what Bhagavān Svāminārāyaṇa talks about in the Vacanāmṛta. Bhagavān Svāminārāyaṇa explicitly delineates Brahman and Parabrahman from māya. Moreover, in addition to that, he also avers that the Brahman and Parabrahman are two distinct entities and not one unlike many of his predecessors have advocated.²⁶

Also, it can be argued that in the Gītā itself, the word kūṭastha does not mean Parabrahman. This is because, in the very next śloka, Shri Kṛṣṇa demonstrates that Parabrahman is distinct from Akṣara. He says:

*uttamaḥ puruṣastvanyaḥ paramātmetyudāhṛtaḥ
yo lokatrayamāviśya bibhartavyaya īśvaraḥ ॥*²⁷

Therefore, just as Parabrahman has been portrayed distinctly from jīva, īśvara, māya and Brahman in the Vacanāmṛta, the Svāminārāyaṇa Bhāṣyakāra, too, writes:

- *akṣarād api pūrvoktasarvavidhabaddhamuktajīveśvaramāyādibhyo'pi
sadaiva'tyantotkṛṣṭāt sāksādakṣara- brahmaṇo'pi uttamaḥ utkṛṣṭa ॥*²⁸

About this very "tattvapañcaka", Sādhu Bhadreśadāsa corroborates in the third kārikā of the Vādagrantha – The Svāminārāyaṇa-Siddhānta-Sudhā that:

*jīvastatheśvaro māyā brahma paramabrahma ca ॥
nityaḥ satyaḥ sadaivete mitho bhinnāḥ svarūpataḥ*²⁹

Thus, the Bhāṣyam and the Vacanāmṛta go in one direction as far as

25. Vacanāmṛta G III.10

26. Vacanāmṛta G II.3

27. Śrīmad-Bhagavad-Gītā 15.17

28. Śrīmad-Bhagavad-Gītā 15.18

29. Svāminārāyaṇa-Siddhānta-Sudhā (kārikā 3)

metaphysics is concerned.

ANALYSIS ON THE BASIS OF SĀDHANĀ OR SPIRITUAL ENDEAVOURS

In his Vacanāmṛta, Bhagavān Svāminārāyaṇa has stated that out of all sādhanas, to believe that one's own svarūpa is Brahmarūpa, that is Akṣararūpa, and to offer bhakti to the Parabrahman is the main sādhanā. This means, therefore, that to do the upāsanā of the Parabrahman, one has to inevitably become Brahmarūpa. Thus, in Vacanāmṛta Loyā 7, Bhagavān Svāminārāyaṇa states:

- “Only one who is Brahmarūpa has the right to offer bhakti to Puruṣottama.”³⁰

The Svāminārāyaṇa Bhāṣyakāra has explained this principle to us from the original references of the Prasthānatrayī verbatim:

- *‘tathā hi yo brahmarūpaḥ sa eva paramātmā’ptau syādadhikārītiha niyamyate, brahmasākṣātkārā’bhāve yathāvatparamātmā’nubhavā’sambhavāt’*³¹

THE GĪTĀ SVĀMINĀRĀYAṆA-BHĀṢYAM:

*‘brahmabhūtaḥ prasannātmā na śocati nā kāṅkṣati ।
samaḥ sarveṣu bhūteṣu madbhaktiṃ labhate param’*³²

Here, the Bhāṣyakāra says that the word brahmabhūtaḥ means the Brahmarūpa Bhakta. Furthermore, only the Brahmarūpa Bhakta acquires madbhaktiṃ, that is, Puruṣottama's Bhakti. In other instances, too, the Bhāṣyakāra has shown the method of sādhanā as well as the result of becoming Brahmarūpa.

- *‘anena paramātmaparābhaktiḥ svātmabrahmarūpatvasampattiṃ vinā mumukṣubhiḥ naivā’pādituṃ śakyā iti siddhāntitam ॥’*³³

30. Vacanāmṛta L. 7

31. Taittirīyopaniṣat-Svāminārāyaṇa-Bhāṣyam 2.1.1

32. Śrīmad-Bhagavad-Gītā 18.54

33. Śrīmad-Bhagavad-Gītā 18.54

- 'sa brahmayogayuktātmā sukham akṣayyam aśnute'³⁴
- 'sukhena brahmasaṃsparśam atyantam sukham aśnute'³⁵
- 'te brahma tadviduḥ'³⁶

In the bhāṣyam of this śloka as well, the inevitability of becoming Brahmarūpa is mentioned.

THE UPANIṢAD SVĀMINĀRĀYAṆA-BHĀṢYAM:

- *adhyātmayogādhiḡamena devaṃ matvā dhīro harṣaśokau jahātī'*³⁷

With the interpretation of the Bhagavad-Gītā Svāminārāyaṇa-Bhāṣyam, the word "adhyātmā" means Akṣarabrahman.³⁸ It has been elucidated in the śloka that by ontologically being an Akṣarabrahman, the 'devaṃ' does manana and Cintana, meaning constantly ruminates about the Puruṣottama, and resultantly sublimates himself/herself from the joy and misery, that is the laukika viṣayas or the mundane worldly pleasures, and attains brahmīstithiḥ with this very body.

Similarly, in the other Upaniṣads, one finds that:

- 'sa yo ha vai tatparamaṃ brahma veda brahmaiva bhavati '³⁹
- 'pratibodhaviditaṃ matamamatṛtvaṃ hi vindate | ātmanā vindate vīryaṃ vidyayā vindate'mṛtam'⁴⁰
- 'asyāśca śaśraddhaṃ śravaṇamananādibhirbrahmasvarūpagurorivaiva śiṣyasyāpi saralatayā saha jatayā spaṣṭatayā sadyaḥ satyo nirāśaṅko nirutthānaḥ śāśvataśca pratyakṣaparamātmavarūpaḥ sa bhāvaiś-varyādyuttamanirvikalpaniścayo bhavati'⁴¹
- 'sa pāpmanā vinirmuktaḥ sa sāmabhirunnīyate brahmalokaṃ sa

34. Śrīmad-Bhagavad-Gītā 5.21

35. Śrīmad-Bhagavad-Gītā 6.28

36. Śrīmad-Bhagavad-Gītā 7. 29

37. Kaṭhapaniṣad 1.2.12

38. Śrīmad-Bhagavad-Gītā 8.2

39. Muṇḍakapaniṣad 3.2.1

40. Kenopaniṣad 2/4

41. Kenopaniṣad-Svāminārāyaṇa-Bhāṣyam 2.4

*etasmājjīvaghanāt parātparam puriśayaṃ puruṣamīkṣate*⁴²

- ‘*amātraścaturthā'vyavahāryaḥ prapañcopaśamaḥ śivo'dvaita evamoṅkāra ātmaiva saṃviśatyātmanā'tmānaṃ ya evaṃ veda ca evaṃ veda*’⁴³
- *brahmavidāpnoti param*⁴⁴
- ‘*sa eṣa sarvebhya pāpmabhya udeti ha vai sarvebhyaḥ pāpmabhya ya evaṃ veda*’⁴⁵
- ‘*tasya idaṃ sarvaṃ bhavati*’⁴⁶

In this manner, one evidently finds that the Upaniṣads, too, talk at length about the essentiality of becoming Brahmarūpa and offering bhakti or devotion to the Parabrahman.

THE BRAHMASŪTRA SVĀMINĀRĀYAṆA-BHĀṢYAM:

Now, let us examine how the doctrine of Bhagavān Svāminārāyaṇa is reflected in the Brahmasūtra-Svāminārāyaṇa-Bhāṣyam.

Just as Bhagavān Svāminārāyaṇa has talked about doing *āpopu*, or having intimacy or oneness with the Brahman in Vacanāmṛta Jetalapura 1, the Brahmasūtra also talks about cultivating such *āpopu*.

- ‘*ātmagr̥hītyadhikaraṇam*’⁴⁷

In this adhikaraṇa, too, there is an emphasis on becoming Brahmarūpa.

- ‘*brahmātmaikyalakṣaṇāyā asyā ātmagr̥hītereva paramātmopāśanasādhanēṣu śreṣṭhatvādityarthaḥ | svātmabrahmarūpatvasampattiṃ vinā paramātmopāśanādhikārāśambhavāt tasyaḥ śreṣṭhatvam | itthamupāśakātmanyakṣarabrahmabhāvaḥ paramopāśane'pariheyatayā prasthāpitaḥ*’⁴⁸

42. Praśnopaniṣad 5.5

43. Maṇdukyopaniṣad 4.1

44. Taittirīyopaniṣad 2.1.1

45. Chāndogyopaniṣad 1.6.7

46. Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad 1.4.10

47. Brahmasūtra 3.3.15

48. Brahmasūtra-Svāminārāyaṇa-Bhāṣyam 3.3.15

ANALYSIS ON THE BASIS OF THE STATE OF MUKTI OR LIBERATION

In the Vacanāmṛta, Bhagavān Svāminārāyaṇa has talked about two paths that a liberated jīva treads on to the abode of God. The summary of what he explains in Vach. G I-21 is as follows:

- “In a state of liberation to the bhakta continually does the upāsanā of Puruṣottama with dāsabhāva by being Brahmarūpa. When the bhakta attains brahmabhāva, he gets separated from the bhāva of māyā and becomes guṇātita. And, when the bhakta leaves his/her body at the time of death, with God's wish, he/she attains a brahmamaya deha through the arcirmarga.”⁴⁹ Moreover, Svāminārāyaṇa highlights another path to travel through, where “you will be reborn as a ghost or a demon, and you will have to suffer. Of course, the fruits of whatever bhakti you may have previously offered to God will be rewarded eventually, but only after much misery.”⁵⁰

Here, two types of paths have been delineated:

1. Arcir-Mārga
2. Dhūma-Mārga

In the Bhagavad Gītā too, this has been emphasized empathetically. It says that the liberated one goes north (uttarāyaṇa) through the arcirādi mārga:

*‘agnirjyotirahaḥ śuklaḥ ṣaṇmāsā uttarāyaṇam ।
tatra prayātā gacchanti brahma brahmavido janāḥ ॥’*⁵¹

While exegeting the meaning of the word ‘tatra’, the Bhāṣyakāra writes:

- *‘tatra asmin dvimārge prayātā brahmavido janāḥ brahmavidyāniṣṭhā
brahmarūpā paramātmopāsakā brahma apunarāvṛttikaraṃ
brahmākhyam lokamakṣaradhāmetiyāvad gacchanti divyākṣaradhāma*

49. Vacanāmṛta G I.21

50. Vacanāmṛta G I.18

51. Śrīmad-Bhagavad-Gītā 8.24

*gatvā tatsthaparamātmānaṃ labhanta iti bhāvaḥ*⁵²

One also finds a mention of the concept of archirmarga in the Brahmasūtra.

- ‘*arcirādyadhikaraṇam*’⁵³
- ‘*brahmavido hi arcirādinā anekaviśeṣaṇa viśiṣṭena ekena eva arcirādinā adhvanā vrajati*’.⁵⁴

The Svāminārāyaṇa Bhāṣyakāra also describes the second ‘dhūmamār-ga,’ (candramārga) in the sūtra:

- *kṛtātyayenuśayavān druṣṭaśrutibhyāṃ yathetamanevaṃ ca*⁵⁵
- *kṛtātyaye kṛtānāṃ karmaṇāṃ svargādilaukikaphalod-deśenānuṣaṭhitānāṃ attyaye bhogena kṣaye sati anuśayavān bhuk-tāvaśiṣṭakarmasaṃśliṣṭa eva avarohati*⁵⁶

Within the Vacanāmṛta, devotees have a relationship with Akṣara and Puruṣottama in the sādhanadaśā and also after attaining mukti. Mukti is defined as becoming brahmarūpa and offering bhakti to Puruṣottama with dāsbhāva. Thus, the state of mukti, one, upon becoming brahmarūpa, continuously offers upāsana to Puruṣottama with dāsbhāva.

- “Becoming Akṣararup and serving Śrī Puruṣottama Nārāyaṇ is in itself liberation.”⁵⁷

To become Akṣararūpa or brahmarūpa is to attain brāhmic qualitative oneness with Brahman. By attaining brahmabhāva, one acquires all of the attributes necessary for liberation. When a devotee achieves brahmabhāv, they are redeemed from māyā, become guṇātīta (rise beyond the three māyik attributes) and become faultless. This brahmarūpa devotee is then forever engrossed in unhindered bhakti towards Puruṣottama and experiences Bhagavān’s supreme bliss.

52. Śrīmad-Bhagavad-Gītā-Svāminārāyaṇa-Bhāṣyam 8.24

53. Brahmasūtra 4.3.1

54. Brahmasūtra-Svāminārāyaṇa-Bhāṣyam 4.3.1

55. Brahmasūtra 3.1.8

56. Brahmasūtra-Svāminārāyaṇa-Bhāṣyam 3.1.8, pg. 272

57. Vacanāmṛta Aśālī

The Vacanāmṛta acknowledges two types of mukti:

1. Jīvanmukti and 2. Videhmukti.

JĪVANMUKTI

Jīvanmukti is liberation whilst living - to attain the brāhmic state in this very body. Ultimate liberation is achievable not only after death but can also be attained while living. Parabrahman Svāminārāyaṇa has clearly explained this principle in his teachings. The following revelations of Bhagavān Svāminārāyaṇa explicitly confirm the abovementioned principles:

“Therefore, if one practices satsaṅga with absolute sincerity, then no-fault will remain in one's heart, and one will become brahmarūpa in this very lifetime.”⁵⁸ “When one attains the company of such a saint, he who is to be attained after death is attained in this lifetime. Therefore, that which is described as parampada or mokṣa it is attained while being alive.”⁵⁹

VIDEHMUKTI

‘Videhmukti’ refers to liberation after death. When a devotee who has become Akṣararūpa renounces their material body, they travel along the path known as archimārga towards Akṣaradhāma, the eternal abode of Puruṣottama. By Parabrahman's wish, this mukta acquires a divine brāhmic form and experiences supreme bliss while being engrossed in bhakti towards Puruṣottama.

Parabrahman Svāminārāyaṇa reveals, “After such an ekāntik bhakta leaves his body and is freed from all influences of māyā, he attains Akṣaradhāma via the archimārga.”⁶⁰ In both types of mukti, a brahmarūpa devotee experiences the same divine bliss of Parabrahman. The bliss that a mukta experiences in this world is identical to the bliss experienced in

58. Vacanāmṛta S 9

59. Vacanāmṛta G III.21

60. Vacanāmṛta G I.21

Akṣaradhāma after death. As a result, there is no difference in bliss between one who has attained jīvanmukti and one who has attained videhmukti.

The only difference between both types of mukti is the location of where they are experienced.

In the Svāminārāyaṇa-Bhāṣyam, jīvanmukti has also been substantiated by the scriptures. For instance,

yadā sarve pramucyante kāmā ye'sya hṛdi śritāḥ |
atha martyo'mṛto bhavatyatra brahma samaśnute⁶¹

“When all desires clinging to the heart of one fall off, then the mortal becomes immortal and here attains Brahman.” Consequently, the Bhāṣyakāra comments on a śruti about attaining the brāhmic state “*itthamiha sāksāt śrutireva jīvanmuktiṃ prasthāpayati*”⁶². Moreover, he also asserts the jīvanmukti in the Gītā 5.11 and the Brahmasūtra tadadhikaraṇam 4.1.13–15. In this way, jīvanmukti is accepted within the Prasthānatrayī Svāminārāyaṇa Bhāṣyam.

For videhamukti, Bhadrēśadās draws upon this when commenting on Chāndogyopaniṣad 8.12.2. He explains that when the self leaves the body and reaches the supremely glorious form of Parabrahman in the divinely luminous Akṣaradhāma, it receives a divine, Brahmanic body (brahmatanu – the body made up of Akṣarabrahman) in which it continuously experiences the divine bliss of Parabrahman and Akṣaradhāma.⁶³ Furthermore, he elaborates: - “As a goldsmith takes a piece of gold and turns it into another, newer, more beautiful form, in the same way, this soul, having discarded this body and dispelled its ignorance, receives another, newer, more beautiful... brahman form.”⁶⁴ the Bhāṣyakāra also explains by commenting on the Gītā's verse, “*tatra prayātā gacchanti*”, “after becoming divine the aspirant goes to Akṣaradhāma through the divine

61. Kaṭhōpaniṣad 6.14

62. Kaṭhōpaniṣat-Svāminārāyaṇa-Bhāṣyam 6.14

63. Chāndogyopaniṣat-Svāminārāyaṇa-Bhāṣyam 8.12.2, pg.386-7

64. Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣat-Svāminārāyaṇa-Bhāṣyam 4.4.4

way”.⁶⁵ These words of the Bhāṣyakāra directly follow the Vacanāmṛta.

CONCLUSION

The Vacanāmṛta is a principal sacred text of the Svāminārāyaṇa Saṃpradāya (religious tradition) delivered by Parabrahman Svāminārāyaṇa himself. After two hundred years of Svāminārāyaṇa's time, the Prasthānatrayī-Svāminārāyaṇa-Bhāṣyam are authored by Sādhu Bhadreśadāsa.

This paper analyzed and assessed the main doctrinal interpretations provided within the Svāminārāyaṇa-Bhāṣyam and the Vacanāmṛta based on the four important factors; epistemology, metaphysics, spiritual endeavor and mukti. The current study accumulated a number of factors where both scriptures propagate the same idea. Although it includes only a few examples, the findings clearly suggest that the Svāminārāyaṇa-Bhāṣyam thoroughly follows the Vacanāmṛta's principle. We can conclude by saying that Sādhu Bhadreśadāsa has put the philosophical principle of Svāminārāyaṇa found in the Vacanāmṛta, in a scholastic way. The findings of this study have a number of important implications for those who intend to conduct research on the Akṣarapuruṣottama Darśana (Svāminārāyaṇa-Darśana).

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THE TATTVA-MĪMĀMSĀ, PRAMĀṆA-MĪMĀMSĀ AND MUKTI-MĪMĀMSĀ OF THE MUṆḌAKA UPANIṢAD, IN PERSPECTIVE OF THE AKṢARA- PURUṢOTTAMA DARŚANA

SADHU PARAMVIVEKDAS

Ph.D. Student, University of Delhi

Abstract

The Vedānta schools of philosophy, known as *darśanas*, although distinct from each other, tend towards a common goal of *brahmavidyā*. The means of achieving this goal includes inquiring and investigating the metaphysical elements (*tattva-mīmāṃsā*), the authentic tools for true knowledge (*pramāṇa-mīmāṃsā*) and the means for transcending miseries and attaining liberation (*mukti-mīmāṃsā*).

In the Vedānta schools, the Prasthānatrayī, namely the Brahmasūtras, Upaniṣads and Gītā, are unanimously treated as the primary authority on such philosophical matters. Amongst the Prasthānatrayī texts, the Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad holds a unique place when considering the topic of *brahmavidyā* as it is a direct exposition on it. The Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad itself has much to say on these three *mīmāṃsā*.

Bhagavān Svāmīnārāyaṇa's unique Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana, based on which Mahāmāhopādhyāya Sadhu Bhadrēśdas Swami composed the Prasthānatrayī Svāmīnārāyaṇa Bhaṣyam, is the latest development in the *darśanic* dialogue. This paper seeks to review the *tattva-mīmāṃsā*, *pramāṇa-mīmāṃsā* and *mukti-mīmāṃsā* of the Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad in light of the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana.

KEYWORDS

Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad, Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana, metaphysics (*tattva-mīmāṃsā*), epistemology (*pramāṇa-mīmāṃsā*), liberation (*mukti-mīmāṃsā*).

INTRODUCTION

The six schools of Indian Philosophy and the various schools of Vedānta all tend towards a common purpose. Swami Harshananda writes:

In spite of serious differences on the doctrinal side, there is a remarkable harmony and agreement as far as the practical disciplines are considered in these six systems.

Recognition of the presence of human suffering was the starting point for all the systems. Attainment of a state of total freedom from misery called liberation was the final goal.

This can be achieved only through right knowledge. But right knowledge is not just intellectual knowledge but direct and actual experience of one's real nature as the spirit, the soul, transcending the body-mind complex.

All the systems believe in the law of *karma* and consider this world as providing us with a moral stage for acting our roles satisfactorily, gradually improving our spiritual fibre.¹

All of these schools of thought (*darśanas*) inquire and investigate the same elementary questions regarding metaphysics, the means of true knowledge (epistemology), and the means for liberation. These three subjects of investigation are often known as *tattva-mīmāṃsā*, *pramāṇa-mīmāṃsā* and *mukti-mīmāṃsā*.²

The schools of Vedānta validate their philosophical stance on the above topics with the words of the Prasthānatrayi, namely the Upaniṣads, Gitā and the Brahmasūtras. Within the Prasthānatrayi, the Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad holds a unique position as it is a direct exposition on *brahmavidyā*, the primary focus of schools of Vedānta. The latest development in the *darśanic* dialogue is the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana revealed

by Bhagavān Svāminārāyaṇa (1781-1830 CE). The Svāminārāyaṇa Bhaṣyam by Mahāmahopādhyāya Sādhu Bhadreśdasa Svāmi presents the views of the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana in the traditional commentarial manner. This paper attempts to review the *tattva-mīmāṃsā*, *pramāṇa-mīmāṃsā* and *mukti-mīmāṃsā* revealed by the Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad in light of the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana as expressed in the Svāminārāyaṇa Bhaṣyam.

THE TATTVA-MĪMĀMSĀ OF THE MUṆḌAKA UPANIṢAD

Tattva-mīmāṃsā is often referred to as metaphysics, the branch of philosophy that studies the principles of being, identity and change, space and time, causality, necessity and possibility.³ *Tattva-mīmāṃsā* investigates what, if any, the eternal elements are, the relationship between the eternal elements and how creation came to be. Bhagwan Swaminarayan's novel Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana speaks of five eternal metaphysical elements, namely *jīva*, *īśvara*, *māyā*, Brahman and Parabrahman. These distinct elements are well narrated in the Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad. Even an independent analysis of this Upaniṣad produces a close resemblance to this deduction.

Distinctiveness of the elements

The principal subject of the Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad is *brahmavidyā*. This Upaniṣad defines *brahmavidyā* as 'that by which Akṣara and Puruṣottama are truly known.'⁴

Hence, the very definition of *brahmavidyā* provided by the Upaniṣad speaks of *akṣara* and *puruṣa*, i.e. the entities Akṣarabrahman and Paramātman. The terms *akṣara* and *puruṣa* cannot be taken to be synonyms, nor can one be taken to be the adjective of the other. This can be understood through the first two *mantras* of the second chapter. *Mantra* 2.1.1 describes *akṣara* as being the cause of creation through the use of an analogy: 'Just as thousands of fire-like sparks emit from a well-lit fire, similarly, diverse creation originates from Akṣara and dissolves back within it.'⁵ Immediately following this *mantra* the Upaniṣad reveals a clear distinction between *akṣara* and *puruṣa*: 'The divine Puruṣottama,

who is ever free of a mundane form, pervades within and outside all... He is superior to Akṣara brahman, who is superior to all.⁶ This presents an immediate clarification that *puruṣa* transcends *akṣara*. As a result, *akṣara* and *puruṣa* speak of two distinct ontological entities.

Mantra 3.1.1 provides a very deep example by saying, ‘Two birds closely united as friends reside on the same tree. One eats the tasteful fruits while the other eats nothing yet shines radiantly.’⁷ The *mantra* following this extends the example and reveals the principle, ‘Paramātman resides on the same tree, [yet] the *ātman*, deluded by *māyā*, grieves. If it realises the glory of the blissful other (bird, i.e. Akṣarabrahmātman) and the blissful Paramātman, it will be freed from grief.’⁸ This sequential couplet reveals a third distinction, separate from Akṣarabrahman and Paramātman: the individual *ātman*s.

Terms such as *tamas* (darkness) in *mantra* 2.2.6⁹ and *viraj* (transcending the *guṇas*) in *mantras* 1.2.11¹⁰ and 2.2.9¹¹ express the existence of *māyā*, another distinct entity.

The Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad not only prove the distinct identities of Akṣarabrahman, Parabrahma, *māyā* and *jīva-īśvarātmans*, but also provide a classic description of these entities. Although the Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad’s primary field of focus is *brahmavidyā*, the knowledge of Akṣarabrahman and Paramātman, it also informs the listener of various aspects of *māyā* and the *ātman* which are respectively to be overcome and benefited by *brahmavidyā*. These four elements are elementarily analysed here, on the basis of Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad:

Akṣarabrahman

The Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad commences its extensive exposition on *brahmavidyā* by first describing Akṣarabrahman. It states that ‘*parāvidyā* is that by which that Akṣara is known.’¹² The Upaniṣad then continues to describe the characteristics of Akṣarabrahman. It reveals Akṣarabrahman as being an eternal entity through the phrase ‘*tadetatsatyam*’ in *mantra* 1.2.1.¹³ Terms and phrases such as ‘*nityam*’ and ‘*tadavyayam*’ in *mantra*

1.1.6¹⁴ and 2.2.2¹⁵ describe Akṣarabrahman as eternal and unchanging.

The word *virajam* in *mantra* 2.2.9¹¹ describes Akṣarabrahman as free of *rajoguṇa*, which the Svāminārāyaṇa Bhāṣyam explains as implying that Akṣarabrahman is above the three *guṇas*, i.e. above *māyā*.

The statement, ‘*sadasadvareṇyaṃ paraṃ vijñānādyadvariṣṭhaṃ prajānām*’ in *mantra* 2.2.1¹⁶ describes Akṣarabrahman as being omniscient and superior to the individual *jīvātmans*. Therefore, Akṣarabrahman is an eternal element, superior to all sentient and non-sentient things, except Paramātmā.⁶

Akṣarabrahman itself is sentient as is obvious from characteristics like omniscience mentioned in phrases such as ‘*yaḥ sarvajña sarvavit yasya jñānamayaṃ tapaḥ*’ in *mantra* 1.1.9¹⁷ and ‘*yaḥ sarvajñaḥ sarvavidyasyaiṣa mahimā bhuvī*’ in *mantra* 2.2.7.¹⁸

Akṣarabrahman is described as a cause of creation in statements like ‘*akṣarātsambhavaṭiḥa viśvam*’ in *mantra* 1.1.7¹⁹, but the Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad goes further and describes the manner in which it is so. The words ‘*tapasā cīyate brahma*’ in *mantra* 1.1.8²⁰ show that Akṣarabrahman only has to make a mental resolve for creation to occur. This characteristic shows that Akṣarabrahman is an efficient cause (*nimitta kāraṇa*) of creation. The statement ‘*tasmādetad brahma nāma rūpamannaṃ ca jāyate*’ in *mantra* 1.1.9¹⁷ shows that it is the material cause (*upādāna kāraṇa*) of creation. The word ‘*bhūtayoni*’ in *mantra* 1.1.6¹⁴ shows that it is the cause of all beings. In *mantra* 1.1.7¹⁹, the analogies of spider, plants and body hair show that although Akṣarabrahman is a cause of creation, it remains unchanged and unaffected; it is impartial and unbiassed despite a diverse creation; and creation is effortless for it. These analogies, as well as phrases like ‘*sudīptāt pāvakād*’ in *mantra* 2.1.1⁵, along with the other characteristics mentioned above, show that Akṣarabrahman is the efficient and material cause (*abhinnanimittopādāna kāraṇa*) of creation, i.e. it is present throughout creation and creation cannot exist without it.

The words ‘*tad divyamacintyarūpam*’ in *mantra* 3.1.7²¹ show that Akṣarabrahman is divine and imperceptible.

The Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad describes Akṣarabrahman as all-pervading. This can be seen in terms such as ‘*sarvagatam*’ in *mantra* 1.1.6.¹⁴ *Mantra* 2.2.11²² describes Akṣarabrahman to be in all directions. The words ‘*sūkṣmācca tatsūkṣmataraṃ vibhāti dūrāt sudūre tadihāntike ca*’ in *mantra* 3.1.7²¹ describe Akṣarabrahman as subtler than the subtle, and farther than the far yet also near all at once. These characteristics show that Akṣarabrahman is everywhere, i.e. all-pervasive.

The term ‘*vibhu*’ in *mantra* 1.1.6¹⁴ describes Akṣarabrahman as powerful. The actual abilities of Akṣarabrahman, which demonstrate this power, are also described by the Upaniṣad. Phrases such as ‘*yasminṣloka nīhitā lokinaśca*’ in *mantra* 2.2.2¹⁵ and ‘*yasmin dyauḥ pṛthivī cāntarikṣam*’ in *mantra* 2.2.5²³ show Akṣarabrahman as the support of all.

Phrases such as ‘*yadarcimad*’ in *mantra* 2.2.2¹⁵, ‘*tacchubhram jyotiṣāṃ jyotiḥ*’ in *mantra* 2.2.9¹¹ and ‘*tameva bhāntamanu bhāti sarvaṃ tasya bhāśa sarvamidaṃ vibhāti*’ in *mantra* 2.2.10²⁴ describe Akṣarabrahman as lustrous.

Phrases such as ‘*adreśyam*’, ‘*agrāhyam*’, ‘*agotram*’, ‘*avarṇam*’ ‘*acakṣuḥśrotram*’ and ‘*tadapāṇipādam*’ in *mantra* 1.1.6¹⁴ describe the all-pervasive *cidākāśa* form, which is physically formless. These phrases also describe the other three forms of Akṣarabrahman as not mundane but completely divine.

The repeated use of the singular words *akṣara* and *brahman* impart that there is only one Akṣarabrahman. Nevertheless, although one, Akṣarabrahman is described to have various forms, all of which are described in the Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad. Below is a brief overview:

- 1) The all-pervasive form of Akṣarabrahman, often known as the *anvaya* form, and, in the Svāminārāyaṇa Darśana, as *cidākāśa*. The above phrases that speak of Akṣarabrahman as all-pervasive, the support of all, controller and without physical attributes speak of this form of Akṣarabrahman. The Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad also speaks of it residing in the heart in phrases such as ‘*nihitaṃ guhāyām*’ in *mantra* 2.1.10²⁵, ‘*guhācaram*’ in *mantra* 2.2.1¹⁶ and ‘*pratiṣṭhitonne hṛdayaṃ sannidhāya*’ in *mantra* 2.2.7.¹⁸
- 2) The Akṣaradhāman form of Akṣarabrahman is also known

as the divine abode of Paramātman. Phrases that speak of Akṣarabrahman as a place are mostly referring this form. For example, phrases such as ‘*eṣa vaḥ puṇyaḥ sukr̥to brahmalokaḥ*’ in *mantra* 1.2.6²⁶, ‘*mahatpadam*’ in *mantra* 2.2.1¹⁶, ‘*divye brahmapure hyeṣa vyomnyātmā pratiṣṭhitaḥ*’ in *mantra* 2.2.7¹⁸, ‘*paramaṁ brahma dhāma yatra viśvaṁ nihitaṁ bhāti śubhram*’ in *mantra* 3.2.1²⁷, ‘*tasyaiṣa ātmā viśate brahmadhāma*’ in *mantra* 3.2.4²⁸ and ‘*te brahmalokeṣu parāntakāle parāmṛtāḥ parimucyanti sarve*’ in *mantra* 3.2.6²⁹ make it clear the Akṣarabrahman is also the abode of Paramātman. The phrase ‘*mahatpadam*’ in *mantra* 2.2.1¹⁶ mentioned above also shows that it is extremely vast. Nevertheless, although extremely vast, the words ‘*tasyaiṣa ātmā viśate brahmadhāma*’ in *mantra* 3.2.4²⁸ show that the size of Akṣaradhāman is indeed limited because it is ‘entered’ by the realised liberated *ātman*. The repeated use of the singular form when speaking of this place shows that there is only one Akṣaradhāman. The use of the plural form in *mantra* 3.2.6²⁹ is only a special sign of respect, which is common in Sanskrit. The words ‘*divye brahmapure hyeṣa vyomnyātmā pratiṣṭhitaḥ*’ in *mantra* 2.2.7¹⁸ illustrate that Akṣaradhāman is divine, and the words ‘*etairupāyairyatate yastu vidvān tasyaiṣa ātmā viśate brahmadhāma*’ in *mantra* 3.2.4²⁸ suggest that only liberated *brahmarūpa* *ātman*s can enter it. Phrases such as ‘*na tatra sūryo bhāti*’ in *mantra* 2.2.10²⁴ imply that Akṣaradhāman is self-luminating. The words ‘*paramaṁ brahma dhāma yatra viśvaṁ nihitaṁ bhāti śubhram*’ in *mantra* 3.2.1²⁷ indicate that everything in Akṣaradhāman is pure, without fault and divine. With the words ‘*upāsate puruṣaṁ ye hyakāmāste śukrametadativartanti dhīrāḥ*’ in *mantra* 3.2.1²⁷, ‘*parātparam puruṣamupaiti divyam*’ in *mantra* 3.2.8³⁰ and ‘*yatrāmṛtaḥ sa puruṣo hyavyayātmā*’ in *mantra* 1.2.11¹⁰ the Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad shows that Paramātman eternally resides in Akṣaradhāman, and this is where liberated *ātman*s worship Paramātman after death. For this reason, the Upaniṣad calls Akṣaradhāman ‘the goal’ with

the words ‘*brahma tallakṣyamucyate*’ in *mantra* 2.2.4³¹.

- 3) The form of Akṣarabrahman that is in the service of Paramātman within Akṣaradhāman is described with the words ‘*atraitatsamar-pitam*’ in *mantra* 2.2.1¹⁶ as well as ‘*divye brahmapure hyeṣa vyomnyāt-mā pratiṣṭhitaḥ manomayaḥ prāṇaśarīranetā*’ in *mantra* 2.2.7.¹⁸ In this very *mantra*, words such as ‘*paramaṁ brahma dhāma yatra viśvaṁ nihitaṁ bhāti śubhram*’ indicating everything in Akṣaradhāman to be pure, without fault and divine, also speak of the servant form of Akṣarabrahman to have a divine body, as it too resides in Akṣaradhāman.
- 4) The form of Akṣarabrahman that manifests on earth as the *guru* to teach the *jīvātmans* how to realise *brahmavidyā*. This is mentioned in *mantra* 1.2.12³² with the words ‘*tadvijñānārthaṁ sa gurumevābhigacchet samitpāṇiḥ śrotriyaṁ brahma niṣṭham.*’ Indicating this manifest *guru* form of Akṣarabrahman on earth, as well as the servant form of Akṣarabrahman in Akṣaradhāman, the words ‘*ejatprāṇannimiṣacca*’ in *mantra* 2.2.1¹⁶ clarify that both these forms are moving, breathing and blinking. This illustrates a human-form of Akṣarabrahman. The words ‘*yasyaiṣa mahimā bhuvi*’ in *mantra* 2.2.7¹⁸ also speak of the *guru* form of Akṣarabrahman. The words ‘*vareṇyaṁ*’ in *mantra* 2.2.1¹⁶ and ‘*dhyāyatha*’ in *mantra* 2.2.6⁹ suggest that the *guru* form is worthy of respect by all and is to be meditated upon.

Thus, the Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad describes the various forms of Akṣarabrahman. Two *mantras*, 2.2.1¹⁶ and 2.2.7¹⁸, stand out explicitly on this topic, as they both successfully describe and distinguish all four forms of Akṣarabrahman.

Paramātman

The Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad describes Paramātman as an entity that is superior to Akṣarabrahman, and thus superior to all other ontological entities.

Although Paramātman is superior to Akṣarabrahman, the Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad begins its exposition with Akṣarabrahman, which seems to contradict the logical order. The key to the Upaniṣad's choice lies in providing a reference point for the exposition on Paramātman. Before *mantra* 2.1.2⁶, the Upaniṣad mentions Paramātman twice, using the term *puruṣa*. However, both mentions are cursory: *mantra* 1.2.11¹⁰ speaks of the place (Akṣaradhāman) where the immortal Paramātman resides and liberated *ātman*s attain. *Mantra* 1.2.13⁴ mentions Paramātman as a key aspect of *brahmavidyā*, with no further elaboration on Paramātman. *Mantra* 2.1.2⁶ is where the first detailed exposition of Paramātman starts, with the words 'divyo hyamūrtaḥ puruṣaḥ sa bāhyābhyantaro hyajaḥ, aprāṇo hyamanāḥ śubhro hyakṣarātparataḥ paraḥ.' In essence, the *mantra* speaks of Paramātman as the divine being which is superior to the superior Akṣarabrahman. This statement suggests that till now, the extensive exposition of Akṣarabrahman as an imperceptible, eternal, all-pervasive, powerful, cause of creation, was for the sole purpose of establishing a reference point to which it could then point and say that Paramātman, the ultimate divine being, is even beyond this. Terms such as 'parāvare' in *mantra* 2.2.8³³ and 'parātparaṁ puruṣam' in *mantra* 3.2.8³⁰ all echo the same sentiment. Phrases such as 'yatrāmṛtaḥ sa puruṣo hyavyayātmā' in *mantra* 1.2.11¹⁰ show that Paramātman is the lord of Akṣaradhāman. Thus, the Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad's choice of starting its exposition on *brahmavidyā* by describing Akṣarabrahman, turns out to be a very logical, brief and well thought out introduction.

With the words 'divyaḥ' in *mantra* 2.1.2⁶ and 'puruṣamupaiti divyam' in *mantra* 3.2.8³⁰, the Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad describes Paramātman as divine.

The word *amṛta* in phrases such as 'amṛtaḥ sa puruṣaḥ' in *mantra* 1.2.11¹⁰, 'amṛtasyaiṣa setuḥ' in *mantra* 2.2.5²³ and 'ānandarūpamamṛtam' in *mantra* 2.2.7¹⁸ describes Paramātman as eternal, not born nor perishable.

The words 'satyasya paramaṁ nidhānam' in *mantra* 3.1.6³⁴ describe Paramātman as having an ocean of eternal virtues.

The words 'sa bāhyābhyantarāḥ' in *mantra* 2.1.2⁶ and 'puruṣa

evedaṃ viśvaṃ karma tapo brahma parāmṛtam in mantra 2.1.10²⁵ describe Paramātman as all-pervasive. Furthermore, words such as ‘agnirmūrdhā cakṣuṣī candrasūryau diśaḥ śrotre vāgvivṛtāśca vedāḥ, vāyuh prāṇo hṛdayaṃ viśvamasya padbhyāṃ pṛthivī hyeṣa sarvabhūtāntarātmā’ in mantra 2.1.4³⁵ and ‘yenaīṣa bhūtaistīṣṭhate hyantarātmā’ in mantra 2.1.9³⁶ describe Paramātman as the *ātman* and controller of all. From these *mantras*, it is clear that Paramātman pervades and controls all, including even Akṣarabrahman.

The Upaniṣad describes Paramātman as the all-doer and the cause of all in the entire section from *mantras* 2.1.3³⁷ to 2.1.9³⁶, alongside mentions such as ‘kartāram’ in mantra 3.1.3³⁸.

Terms such as ‘amūrtaḥ’, ‘aprāṇaḥ’ and ‘amanāḥ’ in mantra 2.1.2⁶ may seem to describe Paramātman as without a form, but terms such as ‘ruk-mavarṇaṃ’ in mantra 3.1.3³⁸ clarify that Paramātman indeed does have a form, and, as the Svāmīnārāyaṇa Bhāṣyam explains, the seemingly contradictory statements actually negate Paramātman having a mundane form and emphasize that he his form is completely divine.

The Individual Ātmans

The Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad’s primary subject matter is explaining *brahmavidyā*, the knowledge of Akṣarabrahman and Paramātman, but the purpose of *brahmavidyā* is also just as clear, and that is to elevate the bound individual *ātmans* above *māyā*, become like Akṣarabrahman and attain Paramātman in Akṣaradhāman. Therefore, during its exposition on *brahmavidyā*, the Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad also sheds light on the individual *ātmans* for whom the precept is targeted.

Mantra 1.2.12³² explains that bound *ātmans* realise *brahmavidyā* by the association with the *guru* form of Akṣarabrahman. Mantra 3.2.3³⁹ explains the inevitability of the grace of Paramātman in achieving this.

The words ‘eṣo’ṇurātmā’ in mantra 3.1.9⁴⁰ describe the individual *ātmans* as infinitesimally small in size.

One thing of key importance to the individual *ātmans* is that they realise that they are never alone and Paramātman and Akṣarabrahman,

being all-pervasive, are always with them. To make the individual *ātman*s understand this, words such as ‘*etad yo veda nihitaṁ guhāyām*’ in *mantra* 2.1.10²⁵ explain that Paramātmā resides in the hearts of all, and the words such as ‘*guhācaram*’ in *mantra* 2.2.1¹⁶, ‘*pratiṣṭhito’ne hṛdayam*’ in *mantra* 2.2.7¹⁸ and ‘*nihiṭaṁ guhāyām*’ in *mantra* 3.1.7²¹ mention that Akṣarabrahman too, resides in the hearts of all.

Māyā

The Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad, as mentioned above, primarily explains *brahmavidyā*, the knowledge of Akṣarabrahman and Paramātmā, but the purpose of *brahmavidyā* is to elevate the bound individual *ātman*s above *māyā*. Therefore, during its exposition on *brahmavidyā*, the Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad reveals some details about *māyā*, which is to be overcome by *brahmavidyā*.

Words such as ‘*tamaśaḥ*’ in *mantra* 2.2.6⁹, ‘*virajaṁ*’ in *mantra* 2.2.9¹¹, ‘*virajāḥ*’ in *mantra* 1.2.11¹⁰ are examples of the Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad’s mentions of *māyā*.

The term ‘*muhyamānaḥ*’ in *mantra* 3.1.2⁸ shows that the *ātman*s are bound by *māyā*. *Māyā* manifests itself in many ways, such as arrogance, as described in *mantras* 1.2.8⁴² and 1.2.9⁴³.

Creation

Details about creation, and the process of it, are also revealed to some extent in the Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad. As seen above in their respective sections, the Upaniṣad clearly describes both Akṣarabrahman and Paramātmā as the cause of creation. Indeed, in both primary descriptions of Akṣarabrahman and Paramātmā, the first point the Upaniṣad establishes in both cases is that they are the cause of creation.

Akṣarabrahman and Paramātmā are the efficient cause of creation in that it is by their resolve that creation occurs. This is described by the Upaniṣad with the words ‘*tapasā cīyate brahma*’ in *mantra* 1.1.8²⁰ along with ‘*jñānamayaṁ tapaḥ*’ in *mantra* 1.1.9.¹⁷

They are the material cause of a creation which is, in essence, *māyā*. This is because they are, being all-pervasive as seen in their respective sections, present in all and the *ātman* of all, i.e. without their presence, nothing could exist.

Some aspects of creation that the Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad mentions are the *prāṇa*, *antaḥkaraṇa*, *indriyas*, various *lokas*, space, wind, fire, water, earth, Dyuloka, sun, moon, directions, Vedas, wind, earth, man, woman, *devas*, animals, birds, rice, barley, oceans, rivers, plants and herbs. The Upaniṣad describes how many of these are sequentially produced.

Thus, by the divine resolve of Paramātman and Akṣarabrahman, creation occurs from *māyā* under their control. This is shown in *mantras* 1.1.7¹⁹ to 1.1.9¹⁷ and *mantras* 2.1.3³⁷ to 2.1.10²⁵, amongst others.

THE PRAMĀṆA-MĪMĀṆSĀ OF THE MUṆḌAKA UPANIṢAD

Pramāṇa-mīmāṃsā (epistemology) is a major focus of the *darśanic* traditions. The various schools accept a variety of *pramāṇas* (means of true knowledge), sometimes merging those which others treat independently, sometimes completely negating a specific *pramāṇa* to be a means to true knowledge. The most prominent *pramāṇas* discussed amongst the various schools include *pratyakṣa*, *anumāna*, *upamāna*, *śabda*, *arthāpatti* and *anupalabdhi*.

The Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad sheds light on the means of knowledge in two ways: firstly, by its direct precepts on how to realise *brahmavidyā* or a specific aspect of it; and secondly, by reviewing the means to which it resorts to in its exposition on *brahmavidyā*.

Śabda Pramāṇa

Being an Upaniṣad, a part of the Vedas, the primary means to knowledge and the realisation of Paramātman is *śabda pramāṇa* because the entire discussion takes place through the *mantras* of the Upaniṣad. Thus, any topic of discussion, be it metaphysics, epistemology, or the means to liberation, the solutions are provided in the precepts of the Upaniṣad. Therefore, *śabda pramāṇa* is the primary *pramāṇa*.

Although the *darśanic* traditions consider the words of the Vedas to be of supreme authority in *śabda pramāṇa*, the Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad itself also sheds light on this matter. In *mantra* 1.2.12³², it says that to attain the knowledge of realisation, one must go to the Akṣarabrahman *guru*. It is indeed for this reason that, in *mantra* 1.1.5¹², it speaks of mere linguistic knowledge of the words of the Vedas as *aparā vidyā*, and, in essence, the same knowledge as *parā vidyā* if understood in its true manner from the Akṣarabrahman *guru*. Thus, according to the Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad, in order to realise Paramātman, the words of the Akṣarabrahman *guru* are the highest *pramāṇa*.

Nevertheless, *pratyakṣa pramāṇa* (knowledge via the senses) is considered to be the base for all other *pramāṇas*. This is because they are needed to receive any external knowledge. Be it *anumāna pramāṇa* or *upamāna pramāṇa*, they both depend on some sort of physical experience. Even *śabda pramāṇa* requires the words to be first heard, read or felt. The *guru* that must be approached for knowledge must also be *pratyakṣa* (physically present). Similarly, *arthāpatti* and *anupalabdhi* are also based on *pratyakṣa*. Therefore, *pratyakṣa* plays a key role in all *pramāṇas*.

Pratyakṣa Pramāṇa

Despite the importance of *pratyakṣa pramāṇa*, the Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad does not say that it is all that is needed to realise Paramātman. In fact, it specifically says that Akṣarabrahman and Paramātman are not attainable by *pratyakṣa pramāṇa*. This can be seen through words like ‘*yattadadreśya-magrāhyamagotramavarṇamacakṣuḥśōtramaṇi tadapāṇipādam*’ in *mantra* 1.1.6¹⁴ and ‘*na cakṣuṣā grhyate nāpi vācā*’ in *mantra* 3.1.8.⁴¹ Furthermore, descriptions such as ‘*susūkṣmaṇ tadavyayam*’ in *mantra* 1.1.6¹⁴, ‘*tiṣṭhate hyantarātmā*’ in *mantra* 2.1.9³⁶, ‘*nihitaṇ guhāyām*’ in *mantra* 2.1.10²⁵, ‘*guhā-caram*’ in *mantra* 2.2.1¹⁶, ‘*aṇubhyo’ṇu ca*’ in *mantra* 2.2.2¹⁵, ‘*pratiṣṭhitonne hṛdayaṇ sannidhāya*’ in *mantra* 2.2.7¹⁸ and, ‘*sūkṣmācca tatsūkṣmataram*’ in *mantra* 3.1.7²¹ suggest Akṣarabrahman and Paramātman to be subtle, residing in the cavity of the heart, etc. This clearly indicate that they are

beyond the scope of *pratyakṣa pramāṇa*. Even the *jīvātmāns* are infinitesimally small as described with the phrase ‘eṣoṇurātmā’ in *mantra* 3.1.9⁴⁰, and therefore, they too, are beyond the scope of *pratyakṣa pramāṇa*. Therefore, as far as the Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad is concerned, although *pratyakṣa pramāṇa* is mandatory in accomplishing other *pramāṇas*, it alone is not able to lead to spiritual realisation.

Pratyakṣa pramāṇa is of two types, *bāhya* (outer) and *ābhyantara* (inner). *Bāhya pratyakṣa* involves the five senses, the type discussed above; but *ābhyantara pratyakṣa* does not require these senses at all. *Ābhyantara pratyakṣa* involves meditation and remembrance.⁴⁶ The Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad mentions *ābhyantara pratyakṣa* in its precepts. The analogy in *mantras* and 2.2.3⁴⁷ and 2.2.4³¹ speaks of meditating on one’s *ātman* as Akṣarabrahman, and the word ‘*dhyāyatha*’ in *mantra* 2.2.6⁹ also speaks of meditating on Akṣarabrahman. It is necessary to have experienced something externally in order to meditate on it internally. Therefore, in order to meditate on Akṣarabrahman, one must first experience Akṣarabrahman first-hand. The Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad explains the possibility of this as Akṣarabrahman, that is beyond the scope of the senses, becomes visible-experienceable. This is described with words such as ‘*ejat prāṇannimiṣacca*’ in *mantra* 2.2.1¹⁶ and ‘*tadihāntike ca*’ in *mantra* 3.1.7.²¹ Thus, although *pratyakṣa pramāṇa* is not sufficient to realise *brahmavidyā*, it is indeed necessary to experience the manifest form of Akṣarabrahman as the *guru*, that is in front of one’s eyes, and as a result, be able to meditate upon him.

Other *Pramāṇa*

There are no significant mentions or uses of *anumāna pramāṇa* in the Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad, therefore it may be induced that, as far as the Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad is concerned, *anumāna pramāṇa* is not crucial for the realisation of Akṣarabrahman and Paramātmān.

The Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad does use *upamāna pramāṇa* during its exposition on *brahmavidyā*. This is visible in the analogies of *mantras* 1.1.7¹⁹, 1.2.7⁴⁸, 2.1.1⁵, 2.2.3⁴⁷, 2.2.4³¹, 2.2.6⁹ and 3.1.1⁷. However, not every aspect

of *brahmavidyā* has been explained with *upamāna pramāṇa*. Thus, it can be induced that, as far as the Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad is concerned, *upamāna pramāṇa* can be used to better explain established principles.

In essence, the Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad considers the *śabda pramāṇa* of the Akṣarabrahman *guru* to be of supreme importance in realising *brahmavidyā*. However, the need and importance of other *pramans*, such as *ābhyantara pratyakṣa* and *upamāna*, are also implied as tools.

THE MUKTI-MĪMĀṂSĀ OF THE MUṆḌAKA UPANIṢAD

Mukti means liberation from a previously bound state. The primary purpose of *brahmavidyā* is to liberate the *ātman*s that have been eternally bound by *māyā*. The Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad's exposition on *brahmavidyā* reveals much about liberation and its means.

The analogy in *mantra* 3.1.1⁷ shows that the individual *ātman*s are bound to the fruits of their *karmas*. The words '*anīśayā muhyamāno*' in *mantra* 3.1.2⁸ describe *māyā* as the cause of grief for the *ātman*. *Mantras* 1.2.8⁴² and 1.2.9⁴³ describe how *māyā* manifests as arrogance, resultingly binds the *ātman* to constantly experience the misery of birth and death.

Necessary Endeavours for Liberation

Spiritual aspirants adopt various endeavours to liberate themselves from their ignorance and bond of *māyā*. The Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad reveals much about such spiritual endeavours. It teaches which types of endeavours should be adopted and which should not, which endeavours lead to temporary happiness and which lead to eternal.

For example, commencing with the words '*yasyāgnihotram*', *mantra* 1.2.3⁴⁹, and, commencing with the words '*plavā hyete*', *mantra* 1.2.7⁴⁸ speak of *karmas* which if done without association with Akṣarabrahman and Paramātman, lead to '*jarāmṛtyuṃ te punarevāpiyanti*' repeated cycles of birth and death. The same can be seen in *mantras* 1.2.9⁴³ commencing with the words '*avidyāyāṃ bahudhā*' and 1.2.10⁵⁰ commencing with the words '*iṣṭāpūrtaṃ manyamānā*'.

For this reason, the Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad advises the aspirant to develop detachment from such *karmas* with the words ‘*parikṣya lokān karmacitān brāhmaṇo nirvedamāyāt*’ in *mantra* 1.2.12³². To prevent one from straying on the wrong path, the Upaniṣad warns the aspirant to stay away from the wrong company with the words ‘*andhenaiva nīyamānā yathāndhāḥ*’ in *mantra* 1.2.8⁴². Otherwise, one falls into the same hole as the one followed. Thus, it hints the inevitability of attaining the true Akṣarabrahman *guru*, as the one mentioned in *mantra* 1.2.12³², for the purpose of liberation.

The Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad also provides further clarification on the particular endeavours that are to be adopted for true liberation. After taking the refuge of the Akṣarabrahman *guru* (as stated in *mantra* 1.2.12³²), one has to keep the *guru* in the center of all endeavours because the *guru* is Akṣarabrahman, as stated in *mantras* 1.2.12³², 2.2.1¹⁶ and 2.2.4³¹, and is through whom Paramātman remains manifest as stated in *mantra* 2.2.6.⁹ Thus, the aspirant’s endeavour is to comprehend Akṣara and Puruṣottama by the words of the *guru*. The command ‘*jānatha*’ in *mantra* 2.2.1¹⁶ instructs the aspirant to know Akṣarabrahman, and *mantra* 2.2.5²³ says ‘*jānatha ... anyā vāco vimuñcatha*’, forget all else. Beyond just knowing Akṣarabrahman, the Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad advises the aspirant to make it one’s only goal in *mantras* 2.2.2¹⁵ and 2.2.3⁴⁷ with the analogy of the bow, arrow and the target. In *mantra* 2.2.6⁹, it tells the aspirant to constantly contemplate on Akṣarabrahman, and in *mantra* 3.1.5⁵¹ it tells the aspirant to contemplate on one’s *ātman* as Akṣarabrahman with the word ‘*brahmacarya*’. In order to do this, one must first realise one’s *ātman* as different to the body, which is why the Upaniṣad instructs ‘*eṣoṇurātmā cetasā veditavyo*’ in *mantra* 3.1.9⁴⁰.

Along with the above, the Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad mentions other endeavours that are important on the spiritual path. For example, it mentions truthfulness and penance in *mantra* 3.1.6³⁴, patience and faith in *mantra* 1.2.11¹⁰, ‘*samitpāṇi*’ in *mantra* 1.2.12³², a tranquil mind and self-discipline in *mantra* 1.2.13⁴, practicing *karmas* desiring only that which is true in *mantra* 1.2.1¹³, pronouncing the glory of Paramātman in *mantra* 3.1.4⁵².

One cannot practice the above endeavours on one's own strength and expect to realise Paramātman. Paramātman is realised by his grace alone. The Upaniṣad specifies that he is only realised by those he chooses with the words 'yamevaiṣa vṛṇute tena labhyastasyaiṣa ātmā vivṛṇute tanūm svām' in mantra 3.2.3³⁹. Mantra 3.2.4²⁸ further specifies that only one who practices endeavours according to the instructions of the guru with a pure heart as mentioned earlier realises Paramātman, attains liberation and goes to Akṣaradhāman.

The Benefits of Liberation

The Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad also provides further details on what *mukti* (liberation) actually is. It speaks of two outcomes of liberation. The first is the attainment of the *brāhmic* state as mentioned with the words 'yad-bhūtayoniṃ paripaśyanti dhīrāḥ' in mantra 1.1.6¹⁴ and 'brahma veda brahmaiva bhavati' in mantra 3.2.9⁵³, which makes one worthy of true devotion to Paramātman. The second is the realisation of Paramātman along with this *brāhmic* state. With the realisation of Paramātman, one experiences the infinite bliss of Paramātman. The realisation of Paramātman is mentioned with the words 'tadvijñānena paripaśyanti dhīrā ānaṃdarūpamamṛtaṃ yadvibhātī' in mantra 2.2.7¹⁸, 'tasmin dṛṣṭe parāvare' in mantra 2.2.8³³, 'ātmakṛdā, ātmaratīḥ' in mantra 3.1.4⁵², 'amṭaḥśarīre jyotirmayo hi śubhro yaṃ paśyanti yatayaḥ kṣīṇadoṣāḥ' in mantra 3.1.5⁵¹, 'tatastu taṃ paśyate niṣkalaṃ dhyāyamānaḥ' in mantra 3.1.8⁴¹ and 'parātparam puruṣamupaiti divyam' in mantra 3.2.8.³⁰ On experiencing the infinite bliss of Paramātman the aspirant:

- overcomes all grief, as mentioned with the words 'vītaśokaḥ' in mantra 3.1.2⁸ and 'tarati śokam' in mantra 3.2.9⁵³;
- overcomes the cycle of birth and death, as mentioned with the words 'śukrametadativartanti dhīrāḥ' in mantra 3.2.1²⁷ and 'amṛto bhavati' in mantra 3.2.9⁵³;
- is rid of all karmas, as mentioned with the words 'kṣīyante cāsya karmāṇi' in mantra 2.2.8³³ and 'puṇyapāpe vidhūya' in mantra 3.1.3³⁸;

- is rid of all inner faults, as mentioned with the words ‘kṣīṇadoṣāḥ’ in *mantra* 3.1.5⁵¹, ‘tarati pāpmānaṃ guhāgranthibhyo vimukto’ in *mantra* 3.2.9⁵³, ‘viśuddhasattvaḥ’ in *mantra* 3.1.10⁴¹, ‘vītarāgāḥ praśāntāḥ’ in *mantra* 3.2.5⁵⁴, ‘avidyāgraṃthī nāśa pāmī jāya che’ in *mantra* 2.1.10²⁵;
- attains an extremely similar state to that of Paramātmān and Akṣarabrahman, as mentioned with the words ‘nirañjanaḥ paramaṃ sāmīyamupaiti’ in *mantra* 3.1.3³⁸;
- and has nothing else left to attain as, mentioned with the words ‘jñānatṛptāḥ kṛtātmānaḥ dhīrāḥ’ in *mantra* 3.2.5⁵⁴.

Types of Liberation

The Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad speaks of two types of liberation: *jīvan-mukti* (whilst alive) and *videha mukti* (after death). It clearly states that the benefits of liberation can be experienced here, in this life, as well as after, when the *ātman* leaves the body and enters Akṣaradhāman – the abode of Paramātmān.

The experience of liberation here, in this world, whilst alive, can be seen in the use of words such as ‘iha’ which means here, here in this world, here in this life. For example, statements such as ‘so’vidyāgranthīm vikīratīha somya’ in *mantra* 2.1.10²⁵ and ‘ihaiva sarve pravīṇyanti kāmāḥ’ in *mantra* 3.2.2⁵⁵ state that all desires are eradicated here. The words ‘antaḥśarīre jyotirmayo hi śubhro...’ in *mantra* 3.1.5⁵¹ clearly show that Paramātmān, who resides everywhere, including the physical heart, can be realised within one’s heart, which is only possible whilst alive. *Mantra* 2.2.8³³ also supports this principle to say that upon realising Puruṣottama, the desires of the heart are destroyed, all doubts are shattered, and all *karmas* annihilated.

Furthermore, the Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad describes the state of liberation after death. It describes how, upon death, the liberated *ātman* goes to Akṣaradhāman, as well as the path it takes to get there. Akṣaradhāman, the destination, and the path to it are described with phrases such as ‘taṃ nayantyetāḥ sūryasya rāsmayo yatra...’ ‘ehyehīti... suvarcasāḥ sūryasya

raśmibhīryajamānaṃ vahanti, priyāṃ vācam abhivadantyo'rcayantya eṣa vaḥ puṇyaḥ sukrto brahmalokaḥ.' in mantra 1.2.5-6^{56,26}, '*sūryadvāreṇa te virajāḥ prayānti*' in mantra 1.2.11¹⁰, '*satyena panthā vitato devayānaḥ yenākramantyṛṣayo...*' in mantra 3.1.6³⁴, '*eṣa vaḥ panthāḥ sukr̥tasya loke*' in mantra 1.2.1¹³, '*yatra devānāṃ patirekodhivāsaḥ*' in mantra 1.2.5⁵⁶ '*eṣa vaḥ puṇyaḥ sukrto brahmalokaḥ*' in mantra 1.2.6²⁶, '*tasyaiṣa ātmā viśate brahmadhāma*' in mantra 3.2.4²⁸, and '*te brahmalokeṣu parāntakāle parāmṛtāḥ parimucyanti sarve*' in mantra 3.2.6²⁹.

After this life, the liberated *ātman* attains Paramātmā in Akṣaradhāman. There, it maintains worshipful servitude towards and is completely focussed on Paramātmā. Explaining this, the Upaniṣad says '*upāsate puruṣaṃ ye hyakāmāste śukrametadativartanti dhīrāḥ*' in mantra 3.2.1²⁷, '*parātparam puruṣamupaiti divyam*' in mantra 3.2.8³⁰, '*yatrāmṛtaḥ sa puruṣo hyavyayātma*' in mantra 1.2.11¹⁰, and '*parevyaye sarva ekībhavanti*' in mantra 3.2.7⁵⁷.

Power of the Liberated *ātman*

Describing the powers and glory of the liberated *ātman*s, the Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad says that they are the ultimate knowers of *brahmavidyā*, as mentioned with the words '*eṣa brahmavidāṃ variṣṭhaḥ*' in mantra 3.1.4⁵². They are able to do bring about anything they think of (except creation itself, Vyāsa clarifies in the Brahmasūtras⁵⁸). Thus, they are to be revered by those who want miraculous powers as stated in mantra 3.1.10⁵⁹ with the words '*Yam yaṃ lokam manasā samvibhāti viśuddhasattvaḥ kāmayate yāṃś-ca kāmā, tam tam lokam jayate tāṃśca kāmāstasmādātmañnam hyarcayed bhūtikāmaḥ.*' They also become all-knowing as described with the words '*sarvamevāviśanti*' in mantra 3.2.5⁶⁰.

In this manner, the Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad provides detailed description about the principle of liberation. It distinguishes the two categories of liberation, the state of soul in liberation, the tools and endeavours necessary for its attainment, a description of abode where liberated *atma* live, the path they take and the bliss of Parabrahman they experience.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad proves to provide much detail on *tattva-mīmāṃsā*, *pramāṇa-mīmāṃsā* and *mukti-mīmāṃsā*. From the metaphysical perspective, the Upaniṣad supports the distinctiveness and describes the characteristics of *ātman*, *māyā*, Akṣarabrahman and Parabrahman. From epistemological perspectives, it recognises *śabda pramāṇa* to be of utmost importance. Even within *śabda pramāṇa*, the words of Akṣarabrahman *guru* are of supreme authority. Regarding the concept of liberation, it depicts the two categories of *mukti*, namely *jīvanamukti* (whilst alive) and *videhamukti* (after death). In both, the *ātman* achieves a *brāhmic* state and experiences the constant bliss of Parabrahman. Thus, the concepts and principles of the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana prove to be in great harmony with the the precepts of the Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad.

ENDNOTES

- 1 Harshananda, *The Six Systems of Hindu Philosophy*, 4–5.
- 2 Vivekjavandas, *Hinduism*, 1.
- 3 Adorno, *Metaphysics*.
- 4 ‘tasmai sa vidvān upasannāya samyak praśāntacittāya śamā'nvitāya, yenā'kṣaraṁ puruṣaṁ veda satyaṁ provāca tām tattvato brahmavidyām.’ (1.2.13) – To a disciple who has properly approached with a tranquil mind and self-discipline, that guṇātīta guru wholly describes the knowledge of brahmavidyā, which is that by which Akṣara and Puruṣottama are truly known.
- 5 ‘tadetatsatyaṁ yathā sudīptāt pāvakād visphuliṅgāḥ sahasraśaḥ prabhavante sarūpāḥ, tathā'kṣarād vividhāḥ somya! bhāvāḥ prajāyante tatra caivā'piyanti.’ – This is all eternal truth. Oh Śaunaka! Just as thousands of fire-like sparks emit from a well-lit fire, similarly, diverse creation originates from Akṣara and dissolves back within it. (2.1.1)
- 6 ‘divyo hyamūrtaḥ puruṣaḥ sa bāhya”bhyantaro hyajaḥ, aprāṇo hyamanāḥ śubhro hyakṣarātparataḥ paraḥ.’ – The divine Puruṣottama, who is ever free of a mundane form, pervades within and outside all. He is unborn and without a worldly prāṇa or mind. He is forever pure. He is superior to Akṣara brahman, who is superior to all. (2.1.2)
- 7 ‘dvā suparṇā sayujā sakhāyā samānaṁ vṛkṣaṁ pariśasvajāte, tayoranyaḥ pippalaṁ svādvattyanaśnannanyo'bhicākaśīti.’ – Two birds closely united as friends reside on the same tree. One eats the tasteful fruits while the other eats nothing yet shines radiantly. (3.1.1)
- 8 ‘samāne vṛkṣe puruṣo nimagno'nīśayā śocati muhyamānaḥ, juṣṭaṁ yadā paśyatyanyamīśamasya mahimānamiti vītaśokaḥ’ (3.1.2)
- 9 ‘arā iva rathanābhau saṁhatā yatra nāḍyaḥ sa eṣo'ntaścarate bahudhā jāyamānaḥ, Aum ityevaṁ dhyāyathā”tmānaṁ svasti vaḥ pārāya tamasaḥ parastāt.’ – That [Akṣara] is present where the vessels of the body converge like a hub where the spokes of a chariot-wheel converge. From it springs forth diverse creation. That Akṣarabrahmātman is Aum. Meditate upon it to attain that which is beyond māyā. That is your liberation. (2.2.6)

- 10 ‘tapahśraddhe ye hyupavasantyara nye śāntā vidvāṁso bhaikṣyacaryām carantaḥ, sūryadvāre ṇa te virajāḥ prayānti yatrā’mṛtaḥ sa puruṣo hyavy-ayātmā’ – Those who are wise, at peace, survive on alms and live in the forest while upholding faith and austerity, they, who are guṇātīta, traverse the path of the Sun towards the location where the unchanging immortal Param ātman resides. (1.2.11)
- 11 ‘hiraṇmaye pare kośe virajāṁ brahma niṣkalam, tacchubhram jyotiṣāṁ jyotistadyadātmavido viduḥ.’ – That Akṣara brahman resides in the supreme and lustrous abode. It is free of the three qualities (guṇas), unchanging and beautiful. It is the lustre of the luminous and known by those who have realised Brahman. (2.2.9)
- 12 ‘Tatrā’parā ṛgvedo yajurvedaḥ sāmavedo’tharvavedaḥ śikṣā kalpo vyākaraṇaṁ niruktaṁ chando jyotiṣamiti, atha parā yayā tadakṣaramadhigamyate.’ – Of the two, aparā comprises of the Ṛgveda, Yajurveda, Sāmaveda, Atharvaveda, phonetics, ritual, grammar, etymology, metrics and astrology. And parā is that by which that Akṣara is known. (1.1.5)
- 13 ‘tadetatsatyam, mantreṣu karmāṇi kavayo yānyapaśyamistāni tretāyām bahudhā santatāni, tānyācaratha niyataṁ satyakāmā eṣa vaḥ panthāḥ sukṛtasya loke.’ – That Akṣara is true. The actions described in the Vedic mantras were realised by the wise and were always appropriately practiced in the Tretā Yuga. All of you should necessarily practice them while desiring only that which is true. This is your path towards Akṣaradh āman. (1.2.1)
- 14 ‘Yattadadreśyamagrāhyamagotramavarṇamacakṣuḥśrotraṁ tadapāṇi-pādam, nityaṁ vibhuṁ sarvagataṁ susūkṣmaṁ tadavyayaṁ yadbhūtayoniṁ paripaśyanti dhīrāḥ.’ – It (Akṣara) is imperceptible by the senses, unattainable by worldly organs, without a worldly lineage, colourless and without eyes, ears, hands, feet, etc. It is eternal, powerful, all-pervading, subtler than the subtle, unchanging and the cause of all beings. It is what the brahmarūpa realise. (1.1.6)
- 15 ‘yadarcimad yadanubhyo’ṇu ca yasmimllokā nihitā lokinaśca, tadetadakṣaraṁ brahma sa prāṇastadu vānmanaḥ, tadetatsatyam tadamṛtaṁ tadveddhavyaṁ somya viddhi’ – That Akṣara brahman, which is lustrous,

subtler than the subtle, and which is wherein the realms and their dwellers reside, is the life of all. It is the cause of all speech and thought. It is constant and eternal. It should be attained. Oh Śaunaka, make [attaining] it your goal. (2.2.2)

- 16 'āviḥ sannihitaṁ guhācaraṁ nāma mahatpadamatraitat samarpitam, ejaṭprāṇannimiṣacca yadetajjānatha sadasadvareṇyaṁ paraṁ vijñānād yad variṣṭhaṁ prajānām' – That [Akṣara] is manifest and united with all. [It] resides within the heart and is renowned. [It is] the great abode and is also established (resides) within it (that abode). It moves, breathes and blinks. Because of its [superior] knowledge, it should be respected by all beings and is superior to them. It is manifest, subtle and venerable. This Akṣara should be known. (2.2.1)
- 17 'yaḥ sarvajñaḥ sarvavid yasya jñānamayaṁ tapaḥ, tasmādetad brahma nāma rūpamannaṁ ca jāyate.' – One who knows all, whose tapas is in the form of knowledge, that Akṣara brahman gives rise to the names, forms and subsistence [of creation]. (1.1.9)
- 18 'yaḥ sarvajñaḥ sarvavid yasyaiṣa mahimā bhuvi, divye brahmapure hyeṣa vyomnyātmā pratiṣṭhitaḥ, manomayaḥ prāṇaśārīranetā pratiṣṭhito'ne hrdayaṁ sannidhāya, tadvijñānena paripaśyanti dhīrā ānandarūpamamṛtaṁ yad vibhāti.' – That (Akṣara brahman), who is all-knowing and whose glory is renowned on earth, resides within the divine abode called Brahmapura. [He] possesses divine hands, feet, [and other human-like features] and [also] resides within the heart of the body. By realising him, the wise realise the blissful and eternal [Parabrahman] who radiates [in all places]. (2.2.7)
- 19 'Yathorṇanābhiḥ sṛjate gṛhṇate ca yathā pṛthivyāmoṣadhayaḥ sambhavanti yathā sataḥ puruṣātkeśalomāni tathā'kṣarātsambhavatīha viśvam.' – As a spider creates and swallows back [its silken threads], as herbs and plants grow forth from the earth, and as hair grows on a person, in the same way, this world is created from Akṣara. (1.1.7)
- 20 'tapasā cīyate brahma tato'nnamabhi jāyate, annāt prāṇo manaḥ satyaṁ lokāḥ karmasu cā'mṛtam.' – According to Paramātman's wishes, Akṣara brahman resolves to create the world. From that resolve, mūlaprakṛti

becomes ready for creation. From mūlaprakṛti, the prāṇa, antaḥkaraṇa, jīvas, īśvaras, various lokas and the fruits of karmas are born. (1.1.8)

- 21 'bṛhacca taddivyaamacintyarūpaṁ sūkṣmācca tat sūkṣmataraṁ vibhāti, dūrātsudūre tadihāntike ca paśyatsvihaiva nihitaṁ guhāyām.' – It (Akṣara) is great, divine, and imperceptible. It gleams as subtler than even the subtle. It is farther than the far, yet [it is also] near. The wise realise it within their hearts. (3.1.7)

- 22 'brahmaivedamamṛtaṁ purastād brahma paścād brahma dakṣiṇataścot-tare ṇa, adhaścordhvaṁ ca praśṛtaṁ brahmaivedaṁ viśvamidevaṁ variṣṭham.' – This eternal Brahman pervades in front and behind, to the right and left, above and below. Brahman is the ātman of this entire creation. It is superior. (2.2.11)

- 23 'yasmin dyauḥ pṛthivī ca'ntarikṣamotaṁ manaḥ saha prāṇaiśca sarvaiḥ, tamevaikaṁ jānathā'tmānamanyā vāco vimuñcathā'mṛtasyaiśa setuḥ.' – In which dyuloka, the earth, the realms of space, the mind with all the prāṇās reside; know that one Akṣara brahman as one's ātman. Renounce all other talks. That (Akṣara brahman) is the bridge to Paramātmā. (2.2.5)

- 24 'na tatra sūryo bhāti na candratārakaṁ nemā vidyuto bhānti ku-to'yamagniḥ, tameva bhāntamanu bhāti sarvaṁ tasya bhāsā sarvamidevaṁ vibhāti.' – The Sun does not shine there; neither does the Moon nor the stars. Lightning does not flash there. Then what can be said of mere fire? Everything that shines, shines because of it. All of this is illumined by its radiance. (2.2.10)

- 25 'puruṣa evedaṁ viśvaṁ karma tapo brahma parāmṛtaṁ, etad yo veda nihitaṁ guhāyām so'vidyāgranthiṁ vikratīha somya.' – Only Puruṣottama is this creation, karma, austerities, and the superior and eternal Brahman. Oh Śaunaka! One who realises that Puruṣottama to be present in one's heart is freed from the shackles of ignorance here. (2.1.10)

- 26 'ehyehīti tamāhutayaḥ suvarcasah sūryasya raśmibhīryajamānaṁ vahan-ti, priyāṁ vācam abhivadantyo'rcayantya eṣa vaḥ puṇyaḥ sukṛto brah-malokaḥ' – Offerings take (lead) a person, via the resplendent rays of

- the Sun, [forward] with pleasing words, “Welcome, welcome.” That Brahmadhāman is attainable by you through good *karmas*. (1.2.6)
- 27 ‘samāne vṛkṣe puruṣo nimagno’nīśayā śocati muhyamānaḥ, juṣṭaṁ yadā paśyatyanyamiśamasya mahimānamiti vītaśokaḥ.’ – Paramātman resides on the same tree, [yet] the ātman, deluded by māyā, grieves. If it realises the glory of the blissful other (Akṣarabrahmātman) and the blissful Paramātman, it will be freed from grief. (3.2.1)
- 28 ‘nā’yamātmā balahīnena labhyo na ca pramādāt tapaso vā’pyalingāt, etairupāyairyatate yastu vidvāṁstasyaiṣa ātmā viśate brahmadhāma.’ – This Paramātman is not attainable by the weak, by remissness or by penance which is not in accordance with the śāstras. The ātman of whoever wisely performs these endeavours enters Brahmadhāman. (3.2.4)
- 29 ‘vedāntavijñānasuniścitārthāḥ sannyāsayogād yatayaḥ śuddhasattvāḥ, te brahmalokeṣu parāntakāle parāmṛtāḥ parimucyanti sarve.’ – Those with conviction in the knowledge of the Upaniṣads, possess self-control due to their renunciation and have a pure heart. When departing their body for the last time, they become free of desires and attain Param ātman’s bliss within Brahmadh āman. (3.2.6)
- 30 ‘yathā nadyaḥ syandamānāḥ samudre’staṁ gacchanti nāmar ūpe vihāya, tathā vidvān nāmar ūpād vimuktaḥ parātparam puruṣamupaiti divyam.’ – Like flowing rivers lose their name and colour and merge into the ocean, similarly, the realised devotees lose their name and form and attain the divine Puruṣa, who is superior to the superior. (3.2.8)
- 31 ‘pra ṇavo dhanuḥ śaro hyātmā brahma tallakṣyamucyate, apramattena veddhavyaṁ śaravattanmayo bhavet.’ – Praṇava is the bow, the ātman is the arrow, and Akṣaradh āman is the goal. One should carefully pierce it (the goal) and engross one’s self into it like the arrow. (2.2.4)
- 32 ‘parīkṣya lokān karmacitān brāhma ṇo nirvedamāyānnāstyakṛtāḥ kṛteṇa, tadvijñānārthaṁ sa gurumevā’bhigacchetsamitpāṇiḥ śrotriyaṁ brahma niṣṭham.’ – Those who desire brahmavidyā should develop detachment towards the transient realms by contemplating upon how they are short-lived and attained by mundane karmas. They should realise that the eternal (Param ātman) is unattainable by such karmas. To

realise that brahmavidyā, one should imperatively surrender, with sacrificial wood in hand, to that guru who has realised the śāstras, is the manifest form of Akṣara brahman and is ever steadfast in Paramātmān. (1.2.12)

33 'bhidyate hṛdayagranthiśchidyante sarvasamśayāḥ, kṣīyante cā'sya karmāṇi tasmin dṛṣṭe parāvare.' – Upon realising Param ātman, the desires of the heart are destroyed, all doubts are shattered and all karmas are annihilated. (2.2.8)

34 'satyameva jayate nā'nṛtaṁ satyena panthā vitato devayānaḥ, yenā''kramantyṛṣayo hyāptakāmā yatra tatsatyasya paramaṁ nidhānam.' – Truth alone is victorious, not untruth. The long Devay āna path is attained by truth. The ṛṣis who have attained all traverse on that path and arrive where the supreme reservoir of truth resides. (2.1.6)

35 'agnirmūrdhā cakṣuṣī candrasūryau diśaḥ śrotre vāgvivṛtāśca vedāḥ, vāyurḥ prāṇo hṛdayaṁ viśvamasya padbhyāṁ pṛthivī hyeṣa sarvabhūtāntarātmā.' – Dyuloka is his head, the Sun and the Moon are his eyes, the directions are his ears, the Vedas are his voice, the wind is his prāṇa, creation is his mind, and the earth is his feet. He is truly the ātman within all beings. (2.1.4)

36 'ataḥ samudrā girayaśca sarve'smāt syandante sindhavaḥ sarvar ūpāḥ, ataśca sarvā oṣadhayo rasaśca yenaīṣa bh ūtaistiṣṭhate hyantarātmā.' – The oceans and mountains all come forth from him; rivers in all forms flow from him; all plants and herbs come forth from him; all taste also originates from him. ['This is so, since] he is the ātman that resides within all. (2.1.9)

37 'etasmājjāyate prāṇo manaḥ sarvendriyāṇi ca, khaṁ vāyurjyotirāpaḥ pṛthivī viśvasya dhāriṇī.' – The prāṇa, the mental faculties (antaḥkaraṇa), all the senses (indriyas), space, wind, fire, water and earth, which supports the world, are [all] born from this Param ātman. (2.1.3)

38 'yadā paśyaḥ paśyate rukmavarṇaṁ kartāramīśaṁ puruṣaṁ brahmayonim, tadā vidvān puṇyapāpe vidhūya niraṇjanaḥ paramaṁ sāmyamupaiti.' – When the seer understands the golden Puruṣottama, who is the all-doer, controller and the cause of Brahman, that wise person becomes

free of their merits and sins and, upon having no mundane desires, attains an extremely similar state. (3.1.3)

- 39 ‘nā’yamātmā pravacanena labhyo na medhayā na bahunā śrutenā, yamevaiṣa vṛṇute tena labhyastasyaiṣa ātmā vivṛṇute tanūm svām.’ – This Paramātmā is not attainable (realised) by discourses, intelligence, or vast listening. He is only attainable by those he accepts. That Paramātmā reveals his divine form to them. (3.2.3)

- 40 ‘eṣo’ nūrātmā cetasā veditavyo yasmin prāṇaḥ pañcadhā saṁviveśa, prāṇaiścittaṁ sarvamotaṁ prajānāṁ yasmin viśuddhe vibhavatyēṣa ātmā.’ – The ātman is infinitesimal. It should be known through the intellect. The five types of prāṇa depend upon it. Along with the prāṇas, the citta of a person is [also] dependent upon it. When it becomes pure, that ātman becomes special. (3.1.9)

- 41 ‘na cakṣuṣā gṛhyate nā’pi vācā nā’nyairdevaistapasā karmaṇā vā, jñānaprasādena viśuddhasattvastatastu taṁ paśyate niṣkalaṁ dhyāyamānaḥ.’ – It (Paramātmā) is not perceptible to the eyes, by speech, by the deities of the senses, by karmas, or by penance. However, it, which is faultless, is realised by grace and meditation performed with a pure heart. (3.1.8)

- 42 ‘avidyāyāmantare vartamānāḥ svayaṁ dhīrāḥ paṇḍitaṁmanyamānāḥ, aṅghanyamānāḥ pariyanti mūḍhā andhenaiva niyamānā yathā’ndhāḥ.’ – Out of ignorance they believe themselves to be wise and learned. They repeatedly experience the misery of birth and death and are like the blind being lead by the blind. (1.2.8)

- 43 ‘avidyāyāṁ bahudhā vartamānā vayaṁ kṛtārthā ityabhimanyanti bālāḥ, yatkarmaṇo na pravedayanti rāgāt tenā’turāḥ kṣīṇalokaścyavante.’ – Those who are overwhelmed by great ignorance, [yet] conceitedly feel, “We are content,” are but children. They perform karmas to fulfil their desires and do not attain realisation. Because of this, they remain tormented and attain the destructible realms. (1.2.9)

- 44 ‘tasmāḍṛcaḥ sāma yajūmṣi dīkṣā yajñāśca sarve kratavo dakṣiṇāśca, saṁvatsaraśca yajamānaśca lokāḥ somo yatra pavate yatra s ūryaḥ.’ – From him come forth the Ṛg mantras, the S āma Veda, the Yajur Veda, dīkṣā,

- yajñas, all the kratus, dakṣiṇā, time, yajamāna, and the lokas which are purified by the Moon and illuminated by the Sun. (2.1.6)
- 45 'tasmācca devā bahudhā sampras ūtāḥ sādhyā manuṣyāḥ paśavo vayāmsi prāṇā'pānau vṛhiyavau tapaśca śraddhā satyaṁ brahmacaryaṁ vidhiśca.' – From him come forth various devas deities (devas) who are worthy to please, man-kind, animals, birds, prāṇa and apāṇa, rice and barley, austerities, faith, truth, celibacy and Vedic commands. (2.1.7)
- 46 Svāminārāyaṇa Siddhāntasudhā 150-152
- 47 'dhanurgrhītvaupaniṣadam mahāstraṁ śaraṁ hyupāsāniśitaṁ sandadhīta, āyamyā tadbhāvagatena cetasā lakṣyaṁ tadevā'kṣaraṁ somya viddhi.' – Upon taking the great bow in the form of the Upaniṣads, and nocking it with an arrow sharpened by upāsānā, Oh Śaunaka! draw it (the arrow) with a mind that is one with the target and attain the goal, which is that very Akṣara. (2.2.3)
- 48 'plavā hyete'dṛḍhā yajñarūpā aṣṭādaśoktamavaram yeṣu karma, etacchreyo ye'bhinandanti mūḍhā jarāmṛtyuṁ te punarevā'piyanti.' – These eighteen sacrifices with inferior karmas are indeed like worn out boats. The foolish, who rejoice in them while believing them to be redemptive, repeatedly attain old age and death. (1.2.7)
- 49 'yasyā'gnihotramadarśamapaur ṇamāsamacāturmāsyam anāgraya ṇam atithivarjitaṁ ca, ahutam avaiśvadevam avidhinā hutamāsaptamāmstasya lokān hinasti.' – Seven generations are destroyed of those who perform Agnihotra (1) without Darśama, Paur ṇam āsama, C āturm āsyama, Āgrayaṇa, and Vaiśvadeva, (2) without honouring guests, (3) by offering oblations at an unsuitable time, (4) or inappropriately. (1.2.3)
- 50 'iṣṭāp ūrtam manyamānā variṣṭham nā'nyacchreyo vedayante pramūḍhāḥ, nākasya pṛṣṭhe te sukrte'nubh ūtvemaṁ lokam hīnataram vā viśanti.' – Those fools who believe ritual and philanthropic karmas to be the greatest are ignorant of the other, better means for attaining redemption. They, upon experiencing the heavenly realm (svarga), which is attained by performing good karmas, attain either this realm or one that is inferior. (1.2.10)
- 51 'satyena labhyastapasā hyeṣa ātmā samyag jñānena brahmacarye ṇa nit-

yam, antaḥśarīre jyotirmayo hi śubhro yaṁ paśyanti yatayaḥ kṣīṇadoṣāḥ.'

– That Param ātman is eternally attainable by truthfulness, penance, complete knowledge, and contemplation of Brahman. That Param ātman indeed resides in the body and is radiant and pure. The flawless and self-controlled realise him. (3.1.5)

52 'prāṇo hyeṣa yaḥ sarvabh ūtairvibhāti vijānan vidvān bhavate nātivādī, ātmakrīḍa ātmaratiḥ kriyāvāneṣa brahmaavidāṁ variṣṭhaḥ.' – That (Paramātman) is indeed the life of all. One who knows him to shine through all beings becomes wise and does not speak untruth. They remain engrossed in Paramātman and devoted to [him]. A person who performs actions in this way is supreme among those who know brahmavidyā. (3.1.4)

53 'sa yo ha vai tatparamaṁ brahma veda brahmaiva bhavati nāsyā'brahma-vitkule bhavati, tarati śokaṁ tarati pāpmānaṁ guhāgranthibhyo vimukto'mṛto bhavati.' – One who realises that superior Brahman (Akṣara brahman) becomes brahmarūpa. No one in their family is left ignorant of Brahman. They overcome grief and sin, and while becoming free of the shackles of the heart, they become immortal. (3.2.9)

54 'samprāpyainamṛsayo jñānatṛptaḥ kṛtātmāno vitarāgāḥ praśāntāḥ, te sarvagaṁ sarvataḥ prāpya dhīrā yuktātmānaḥ sarvamevāviśanti.' – On attaining that Param ātman, they become realised, content with knowledge, fulfilled, desireless and tranquil. Upon realising the all-pervading Param ātman to be in all places, they, who are wise, become focused upon him and realise him to pervade this. (3.2.5)

55 'kāmaṁ yaḥ kāmayate manyamānaḥ sa kāmabhirjāyate tatra tatra, paryāptakāmasya kṛtātmanastvihaiva sarve praviliyanti kāmāḥ.' – One who believes in pleasures and desires them is born according to those desires. One who feels they have attained all and is content, is indeed here freed from all desires. (3.2.2)

56 'eteṣu yaścarate bhrājamāneṣu yathākālāṁ cā'hutayo hyādadāyan, taṁ nayantyetāḥ sūryasya rāśmayo yatra devānāṁ patireko'dhivāsaḥ.' – One who practices karmas, offering oblations into the flaring flames at the appropriate time, is taken by those oblations, via the Sun's rays, to the

- one abode, who is the lord of the deities (devas). (1.2.5)
- 57 'gataḥ kalāḥ pañcadaśa pratiṣṭhā devāśca sarve pratidevatāsu, karmāṇi vijñānamayaśca ātmā pare'vyaye sarva ekībhavanti.' – The fifteen kalās dissolve into their cause; all deities return from their locations. The remaining karmas and the knowledgeable ātman become engrossed in the indestructible Param ātman. (3.2.7)
- 58 Jagadvyāpārādhikaraṇa (BS 4.4.17-22)
- 59 'yaṁ yaṁ lokaṁ manasā samvibhāti viśuddhasattvaḥ kāmāyate yāmśca kāmā, taṁ taṁ lokaṁ jayate tāmśca kāmāṁstasmādātmañjñāṁ hyarcayed bhūtikāmaḥ.' – The pure-hearted attain whatever realm they think of and whatever pleasures they desire. Therefore, those who desire miraculous powers should indeed revere those who have realised Paramātman. (3.1.10)
- 60 'samprāpyainamṛṣayo jñānatṛptāḥ kṛtātmāno vītarāgāḥ praśāntāḥ, te sarvagaṁ sarvataḥ prāpya dhīrā yuktātmānaḥ sarvamevāviśanti.' – On attaining that Param ātman, they become realised, content with knowledge, fulfilled, desireless and tranquil. Upon realising the all-pervading Param ātman to be in all places, they, who are wise, become focused upon him and realise him to pervade things. (3.2.5)

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THE BHAGAVADGĪTĀ- SVĀMINĀRĀYAṆABHĀṢYA: INTRODUCTION, SURVEY, AND CONTRIBUTION

DR. SADHU AKSHARANANDDAS SWAMI

Professor,

BAPS Swaminarayan Sanskrit Mahavidyalay, Sarangpur

ABSTRACT

The recent creation of the *Bhagavadgītā-Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣya* by Sadhu Bhadreshdas Swami introduces new dimensions in Vedānta philosophical reflection. Based on the discourses of Parabrahman Bhagavān Svāminārāyaṇa recorded in the *Vacanāmṛta* and the teachings of his established lineage of gurus, the text presents a comprehensive Sanskrit commentary of the *Bhagavadgītā* according to the principles of the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana. This paper introduces the *Bhagavadgītā-Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣya* by providing a survey of a few of its significant expositions and highlighting its unique contributions to Vedānta thought.

Upon providing a brief introduction to the text, this work proceeds its investigation through two major discipline-specific trajectories (perspectives of analysis): (1) a philological, linguistic, and literary trajectory and (2) a *darśanic* trajectory.

The philological trajectory discusses the linguistic and literary features of the text. These discussions highlight the commentary's elaborations on noteworthy grammatical expositions, stylistic elements, and referential methods. The role of the commentary's transitional expositions in providing

a comprehensive reading of the primary text is also examined. Additionally, the commentary's use of periodic synoptic elements to facilitate the comprehension of otherwise difficult or complex discussions is presented. The *darśanic* trajectory follows, thereafter, by elaborating the commentary's unique exposition of philosophical and theological reflections based on its readings of the *Gītā*. The analysis presented in this work specifically focuses on elaborating the commentary's understanding of Brahman, its relationship with the self, and the role of this relationship in acquiring supreme devotion (*paramā bhakti*).

Drawing on the commentary's (1) elaborations of *kṣara*, Akṣara, and Puruṣottama from *Gītā* (Gī.) 15.16-17, (2) the identification of Brahman as Akṣara presented in Gī. 8.3, and (3) its recognition as *avyaktoṣkṣara* in Gī. 8.21, this work explores the commentary's both (1) justification for and (2) unique identification of Brahman (Akṣara or Akṣarabrahman) as an entity that is ontologically distinct from the *self* (*jīvātman* and *īśvarātman*), *māyā*, and Parabrahman. The commentary's exposition of (1) the state of Brahman (*sthitaprajña* and *brāhmī sthitiḥ*) from Gī. 2.55-72; (2) its description of *jīvanamukti*¹ from Gī. 5.7-13, 16-29; (3) a *yogin*² from Gī. 6. 1-5, 7-23, 27-32; (4) a *jñānin* (the knowledgeable) from Gī. 7. 18-19; (5) a *priyabhakta* (beloved devotee) from Gī. 12.13-20, and (6) the *guṇātīta*³ from Gī. 14.2, 20, 22-6, in conjunction with its reading of "brahmabhūtaḥ prasannātmā" from Gī. 18.54, introduces the darśana's understanding of the relationship between Brahman (Akṣara) and the individual self (*ātman*). Finally, the need to attain this relationship in order to acquire supreme devotion (*paramā bhakti*) is discussed according to the commentary's reading of Gī. 18.54.

1. 'Jīvanamukti' refers to the state of attaining liberation while being alive.
2. A *yogin* is one who practices (or rather possesses) yoga, which is in turn understood as: possessing conviction in the present form of Parabrahman.
3. The *guṇātīta* is one who has transcended the three qualities of *māyā*.

This work's concise study of a few of the significant philological, linguistic, literary, and *darśanic* features of the *Bhagavadgītā-Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣya* serves to introduce the text and highlight some of its unique contributions.

KEYWORDS:

Bhagavadgītā; Bhagavadgītā-Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣya; Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣya; bhāṣya; Svāminārāyaṇa; Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana; darśana; philology; Sanskrit literature; Akṣara-Brahman; sthitaprajña; brāhmī sthitiḥ; jīvanamukti; yoga; jñāna; guṇātīta; bhakti

ARTICLE

The *darśanic* tradition consists of numerous schools of thought, each distinguished by their unique understanding of the nature of *brahman*, the self (*ātman*), the world (*jagat*), and the relationships between them. Śaṅkara's elaborate elucidation of these elements within the framework of his commentaries served as a catalyst that transformed Advaita reflections into the Advaita Darśana, Rāmānuja's did the same resulting in the Viśiṣṭādvaita Darśana, Madhva's resulted in the emergence of the Dvaita Darśana, Nimbārka's the Bhedābheda (or Dvaitādvaita) Darśana, Vallabha's the Śuddhādvaita Darśana, and Caitanyamahāprabhu's the Acintyābheda Darśana. Each *ācārya's* organized presentation of original perspectives, reflections, and discussions on sacred revelations of the *Prasthānatrayī*: the Upaniṣads, *Bhagavadgītā*, and the *Brahmasūtras*, resulted in the birth of systematized schools of thought. The continued introduction, acceptance, and recognition of new schools of *darśanic* thought, along with their associated well-organized novel reflections and readings of these foundational sacred texts, is a distinguishing feature of the Vedānta *darśanic* tradition. Parabrahman Puruṣottama Bhagavān Svāminārāyaṇa's Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana, accompanied by Mahāmāhopādhyāya Bhadrēśdas Swami's recent creation of the five-volume Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣya, serves as a testament of this living and

innovative *darśanic* tradition. Like the commentarial works found in other *darśanic* systems, the *Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣya* introduces new dimensions in Vedānta philosophical reflection and dialogue by presenting distinct readings of the *Prasthānatrayī*.

Among the texts of the *Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣya*, this work focuses on introducing the *Bhagavadgītā-Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣya* and providing a brief overview of some its distinguished features and unique contributions to Vedānta thought.

Upon providing a brief introduction to the text, this work proceeds its investigation through two major discipline-specific trajectories (perspectives of analysis): (1) a philological, linguistic, and literary trajectory and (2) a *darśanic* trajectory.

The philological and linguistic trajectory discusses the linguistic and literary features of the text. Discussions highlight the commentary's elaborations on noteworthy grammatical expositions, stylistic elements, and referential methods. The role of the commentary's transitional expositions in providing a comprehensive reading of the primary text is also examined. Additionally, the commentary's use of periodic synoptic elements to facilitate the comprehension of otherwise difficult or complex discussions is presented.

The *darśanic* trajectory follows, thereafter, by elaborating the commentary's unique exposition of philosophical and theological reflections based on its readings of the *Gītā*. The analysis presented in this work specifically focuses on elaborating the commentary's understanding of Brahman, its relationship with the self, and the role of this relationship in acquiring supreme devotion (*paramā bhakti*).

Drawing on the commentary's (1) elaborations of kṣara, Akṣara, and Puruṣottama from *Gītā* (Gī.) 15.16-17, (2) the identification of Brahman as Akṣara presented in Gī. 8.3, and (3) its recognition as "*avyakto'kṣara*" in Gī. 8.21, this work elaborates on the commentary's both (1) justification for and (2) unique identification of Brahman (Akṣara or Akṣarabrahman) as an entity that is ontologically distinct from the self (*jīvātman* and

īśvarātman), māyā, and Parabrahman. The commentary's exposition of (1) the state of Brahman ("sthitaprajña" and "brāhmī sthitiḥ") from Gī. 2.55-72; (2) its description of *jīvanamukti*⁴ from Gī. 5.7-13, 16-29; (3) a yogin⁵ from Gī. 6. 1-5, 7-23, 27-32; (4) a *jñānin* (the knowledgeable) from Gī. 7. 18-19; (5) a *priyabhakta* (beloved devotee) from Gī. 12.13-20, and (6) the *guṇātīta*⁶ from Gī. 14.2, 20, 22-6; in conjunction with its reading of "brahmabhūtaḥ prasannātmā" from Gī. 18.54 introduces its understanding of the relationship between Brahman (Akṣara) and the individual self (*ātman*). Finally, the need to attain this relationship in order to acquire supreme devotion (*paramā bhakti*) is discussed according to the commentary's reading of Gī. 18.54.

This work's concise study of a few of the significant philological, linguistic, literary, and *darśanic* features of the *Śrīmadbhagavadgītā-Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣya* serves to introduce the text and highlight some of its unique contributions to the Vedānta dialogue.

INTRODUCTION TO THE BHAGAVADGĪTĀ-SVĀMINĀRĀYAṆABHĀṢYA

THE SVĀMINĀRĀYAṆABHĀṢYA

The *Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣya* is comprehensive commentary of the *Prasthānatrayī*: the principal ten Upaniṣads, the *Bhagavadgītā*, and the *Brahmasūtras*. Divided into five volume, it is a collective designation for the *Īśādyāṣṭopaniṣat-Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣya*,⁷ the *Chāndogyopaniṣad-Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣya*,⁸ the *Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad-Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣya*,⁹

4. 'Jīvanamukti' refers to the state of attaining liberation while being alive.

5. A yogin is one who practices (or rather possesses) yoga, which is in turn understood as: possessing conviction in the present form of Parabrahman.

6. The *guṇātīta* is one who has transcended the three qualities of māyā.

7. (Bhadreshdas, *Īśādyāṣṭopaniṣatsvāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam*)

8. (Bhadreshdas, *Chāndogyopaniṣatsvāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam*).

9. (Bhadreshdas, *Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣatsvāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam*)

the *Śrīmadbhagavadgītā-Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣya*,¹⁰ and the *Brahmasūtra-Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣya*.¹¹ The commentary's reading of the sacred texts of the Prasthānatrayī found within these texts are presented according to the teachings revealed by Bhagavān Svāminārāyaṇa and the discourses delivered by the lineage of *guṇātīta* Akṣarabrahman gurus that succeeded him. The *darśanic* position advocated by these teachings is identified as the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana, an independent school of the Vedānta *darśanic* tradition that was first revealed by Bhagavān Svāminārāyaṇa.

Authored by Mahāmahopādhyāya Sadhu Bhadreshdas Swami, the *Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣya* was inspired by His Holiness Pramukh Swami Maharaj, the fifth spiritual successor of Bhagavān Svāminārāyaṇa.¹² It serves as a seminal and authoritative text that details the *darśanic* position of the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana within the framework of the revelations found with the *Prasthānatrayī*.

THE BHAGAVADGĪTĀ-SVĀMINĀRĀYAṆABHĀṢYA

The *Śrīmadbhagavadgītā-Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣya* (GSB) provides a comprehensive commentary of the *Bhagavadgītā* according to the principles of Bhagavān Svāminārāyaṇa and the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana. Published in January 2012, the text was preceded by Sadhu Bhadreshdas Swami's doctoral thesis entitled *Paramātmapratyakṣasvarūpayogaḥ Śrīmadbhagavadgītā-Śrīvacanāmṛtasandarbhayoḥ Tulanātmakam*

*Adhyayanam*¹³—a work that elaborates on understanding the Gītā's use of 'yoga' as *conviction in the present form of Paramātmān*. In addition to

10. (Bhadreshdas, *Śrīmadbhagavadgītā Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam*)

11. (Bhadreshdas, *Brahmasūtrasvāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam*)

12. For a detailed account by Sadhu Bhadreshdas Swami on the creation of the *Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣya*, see (Bhadreshdas, "Guru's Grace Empowers Philosophical Treatise").

13. (Bhadreshdas, *Paramātmapratyakṣasvarūpayogaḥ Śrīmadbhagavadgītā - Śrīvacanāmṛtasandarbhayoḥ Tulanātmakam Adhyayanam*)

identifying this rendering of *yoga* as a principal topic of exposition of the *Gītā*, the thesis explores the various widespread interpretive ramifications of such an identification. This exposition, in turn, served as a foundation for the later creation of the GSB.

Among the many distinguishing features of the GSB, lies its unprecedented reading of Kṛṣṇa's counsel and revelation presented within the *Gītā*. The GSB's unique reading of *dharma*;¹⁴ *yoga*;¹⁵ "*brāhmī sthitiḥ*"¹⁶ (the state of attaining qualitative identity with Akṣarabrahman), the "*sthitaprajñah*,"¹⁷ *yogayuktaḥ*,¹⁸ *yogin*,¹⁹ *jñānin*,²⁰ "*priyaḥ bhaktaḥ*,"²¹ and the "*guṇātīta*,"²² a coherent reading of *karmayoga*, *jñānayoga*, and *bhaktiyoga*;²³

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14. See GSB's exposition on Gī. 2.40. (Bhadreshdas, Śrīmadbhagavadgītā Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam 42–50)
 15. See GSB's exposition on Gī. 2.39. (Bhadreshdas, Śrīmadbhagavadgītā Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam 38–42)
 16. See GSB's exposition on Gī. 2.72. (Bhadreshdas, Śrīmadbhagavadgītā Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam 68–69)
 17. See GSB's exposition on Gī. 2.55–72. (Bhadreshdas, Śrīmadbhagavadgītā Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam 59–69)
 18. See GSB's exposition on Gī. 5.7–13, 16–29. (Bhadreshdas, Śrīmadbhagavadgītā Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam 119–22, 123–30)
 19. See GSB's exposition on Gī. 6.1–5, 7–23, 27–32. (Bhadreshdas, Śrīmadbhagavadgītā Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam 131–34, 134–42, 143–47)
 20. See GSB's exposition on Gī. 7.18–9. (Bhadreshdas, Śrīmadbhagavadgītā Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam 165–66)
 21. See GSB's exposition on Gī. 12.13–20. (Bhadreshdas, Śrīmadbhagavadgītā Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam 272–75)
 22. See GSB's exposition on Gī. 14.2, 20, 22–6. (Bhadreshdas, Śrīmadbhagavadgītā Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam 292–93, 300, 301–03)
 23. See (Bhadreshdas, Śrīmadbhagavadgītā Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam 47–50)

brahman and *akṣara*;²⁴ “*saṃyāsa*,”²⁵ “*yajña*,”²⁶ “*sāṅkhya*,”²⁷ and other prevalent teachings within the *Gītā* reflect the characteristic teachings of the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana.

The GSB’s naming of the individual chapters of the *Gītā* text is also a distinct feature of the commentary. Many of the names it ascribes to the various chapters of the *Gītā* are distinct from those identified by commentaries within other *darśanic* systems. These unique identifications not only suggest the commentary’s unprecedented reading of the principal topic of revelation of the chapter, but also introduce and emphasize characteristic *darśanic* terminology in context with its reading of the *Gītā*. For instance, chapter (*adhyāya*) two is identified as “Brahmasthaniyoga,” four as “Avatārayoga,” five as “Brahmanirvāṇayoga,” fourteen as “Guṇātītayoga,” and eighteen as “Śaraṇāgatiyoga.”²⁸ By uniquely identifying chapter two as ‘Brahmasthaniyoga’ the commentary identifies Kṛṣṇa’s exposition of “eṣā brāhmī sthitiḥ”²⁹ as a principal topic of the chapter—emphasizes its significance among the other revelations provided by Kṛṣṇa within the same chapter—and introduces the principle of “brahmisthiti”—a term both uniquely and frequently used within the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana to express the state of attaining qualitative oneness with Akṣara-Brahman. Similarly, the commentary’s unique identification of the fourth chapter as “Avatārayoga” highlights its distinct reading of the purpose and means for Divine manifestation found within Gī. 4.7-8.³⁰ Specifically, by reading

24. See GSB’s exposition on Gī. 8.3, Gī. 15.16-17. (Bhadreshdas, Śrīmadbhagavadgītā Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam 314–16)

25. See GSB’s exposition on Gī. 5.2 and 5.6. (Bhadreshdas, Śrīmadbhagavadgītā Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam 117, 119)

26. See GSB’s exposition on Gī. 4.25-30. (Bhadreshdas, Śrīmadbhagavadgītā Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam 105–08)

27. See, GSB’s exposition on Gī. 2.39, 3.3, 5.4-5, and 13.24. (Bhadreshdas, Śrīmadbhagavadgītā Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam 38, 71, 118, 287)

28. (Bhadreshdas, Śrīmadbhagavadgītā Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam 69, 115, 130, 304, 377)

29. (Gī. 2.72) (Bhadreshdas, Śrīmadbhagavadgītā Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam 68–69)

30. See GSB’s reading of Gī. 4.7-8. (Bhadreshdas, Śrīmadbhagavadgītā

‘dharma’ as *conviction in the present form of Parabrahman* (an identification made earlier in the text’s reading of Gī. 2.40³¹), the text uniquely identifies Parabrahman’s manifestation as intentioned to establish, among other things, such conviction. Other similar explanations elucidate the GSB’s distinct identification of chapters five, fourteen, and eighteen.

PHILOLOGICAL, LINGUISTIC, AND LITERARY TRAJECTORY

GRAMMATICAL EXPOSITIONS

By nature of being an extensive commentary, the GSB presents numerous noteworthy philological and linguistic features. Despite being a Vedānta work, it presents grammatical elaborations and justifications at different points in its exposition. These grammatical insights serve different purposes. For instance, the commentary’s exposition on the morphological formulation of ‘Yudhiṣṭhiraḥ’, the name of the Pāṇḍava king and eldest of the Pāṇḍavas, elaborates: “Yudhiṣṭhiro yudhi saṃgrāme sthiratvād yudhiṣṭhiraḥ ‘halantātsaptamyāḥ saṃjñāyām’ ityalukḥ ‘gavi yudhibhyām sthiraḥ’ (Pāṇinisūtra 8.3.95) iti śatvamḥ”³² In addition to providing a non-technical epistemological elucidation of the term, perhaps catering to those not familiar with the dynamics of Pāṇinian grammar, the commentary also 1) identifies the specific type of compound (*aluk-samāsa*) utilized in the formation of the term and 2) references the specific aphorism that induces the morphological transformation of ‘s’ into a ‘ṣ’ in ‘sthira’, the latter term in the analyzed compound.

A similar, two-pronged exposition: one which is non-technical and another which is informed by the application of a Pāṇinian aphorism is mentioned in the commentary of Gī. 9.2. While describing

Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam 95–96)

31. (Bhadrēśhdas, Śrīmadbhagavadgītā Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam 42–43)

32. “युधिष्ठिरो युधि संग्रामे स्थिरत्वाद् युधिष्ठिरः। ‘हलन्तात्सप्तम्याः संज्ञायाम्’ इत्यलुक्। ‘गवि युधिभ्यां स्थिरः’ (पा.सू. ८/३/९५) इति षत्वम्।” (GSB. 1.16) (Bhadrēśhdas, Śrīmadbhagavadgītā Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam 9–10)

‘rājavidyā’ as expressing *the supreme among all knowledge*, the text explains: “rājavidyā vidyānām rāja iti vighrahaḥ | rājadantādiṣu param | (Pāṇinisūtra 2.2.31) ityupasarjanasya pūrvanipātaḥ | sarvāsu vidyāsu yā śreṣṭhā sā rājavidyetyerthaḥ |”³³

The commentary’s exposition of Gī. 6.23 exemplifies a different use of the Pāṇini’s aphorisms. In its elaboration of ‘duḥkhasaṃyogaviyogaḥ’ as that *by which the association of misery is removed*, the text not only elaborates on what is meant by ‘duḥkha’, ‘saṃyoga’, ‘viyoga’, and their semantic relationship with one another, but also specifies that the compound term is to be understood in the instrumental sense (“aneneti viyogaḥ”). It goes further to recall the Pāṇini’s aphorism that permits for such an interpretation by stating, “‘karaṇā’dhikaraṇayośca’ (Pāṇinisūtra 3.3.17) iti karaṇe ghaṇ viyogakarastamityarthaḥ |”³⁴

The commentary of Gī. 8.3 offers a unique reading of ‘svabhāva’ in its exposition of Gī. 8.3. It specifies: “svasya bhāva iti svabhāvaḥ | svaśabdasya ‘svamajñātidhanākhyāyām’ (Pāṇinisūtra 1.1.35) iti śabdānuśāsanena sarvanāmatvāt sarvanāmnām prāguktārthaparāmarśitvāt tadavyavahitapūrvoktamakṣaram brahmeha svaśabdena parāmṛśyate | tasya’kṣarabrahmaṇo bhāvo’kṣarabrahmarūpatvamadhyātmamucyate | ityarthah |”³⁵ By identifying ‘sva’ as a pronoun, the commentary implicitly utilizes the Sanskrit grammatical (*vyākaraṇa*) definition of ‘pronoun’: “A pronoun (*sarvanāma*) is that whose remembrance is of the mind”³⁶ and

33. “राजविद्या विद्यानां राजा इति विग्रहः। राजदन्तादिषु परम्। (पा.सू. २/२/३१) इत्युपसर्जनस्य पूर्वनिपातः। सर्वासु विद्यासु या श्रेष्ठा सा राजविद्येत्यर्थः।” (GSB. 9.2) (Bhadreshdas, Śrīmadbhagavadgītā Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam 202)

34. “‘करणोऽधिकरणयोश्च’ (पा.सू. ३/३/१७) इति करणे घञ् वियोगकरस्तमित्यर्थः।” (GSB. 6.23) (Bhadreshdas, Śrīmadbhagavadgītā Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam 141–42)

35. “स्वस्य भाव इति स्वभावः। स्वशब्दस्य ‘स्वमज्ञातिधनाख्यायाम्’ (पा.सू. १/१/३५) इति शब्दानुशासनेन सर्वनामत्वात् सर्वनाम्नां प्रागुक्तार्थपरामर्शित्वात् तदव्यवहितपूर्वोक्तमक्षरं ब्रह्मे स्वशब्देन परामृश्यते। तस्याऽक्षरब्रह्मणो भावोऽक्षरब्रह्मरूपत्वमध्यात्ममुच्यते इत्यर्थः।” (GSB. 8.3) (Bhadreshdas, Śrīmadbhagavadgītā Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam 178)

36. “sarvanāmanah buddhisthaparāmarśitvam |” (“सर्वनामनः बुद्धिस्थपरामर्शित्वम्”) (Śarmā 4)

the Nyāya definition: “That which is characterized by being the reference of an object whose subject is in the mind of the speaker,”³⁷ to refer to the previously mentioned object—brahman or *akṣara*. By conjoining ‘*sva*’ (meaning *brahman* or *akṣara*) with ‘*bhava*’, the commentary reads ‘*svabhāva*’ as *brahmabhāva*, or in terms of the Gītā, “*brāhmī sthitiḥ*”³⁸ (the state of attaining qualitative identity with Akṣarabrahman).

The commentary of Gī. 8.3 also presents the derivation of ‘*akṣara*’ and ‘*brahma*’ from its base-root verb. It respectively explains, “*na kṣaratītyakṣaramiti sañcālanārthakṣaraterānāṣahakāreṇa, aśnuta ityakṣaramiti vyāpanārthāśnoteśca vyutpādayantyakṣaraśabdaṃ prajñāḥ*”³⁹ and then later “*brahma ‘bṛha bṛhi vṛddhau’ (Pāṇinīyadhātupāṭha 735, 736) iti pāṇinīya-dhātupāṭhabalād vṛddhyarthe vyutpādyate brahmaśabdaḥ tathā ca bṛmhati barhati veti brahma*”⁴⁰ The commentary’s analysis of both terms is intentioned on emphasizing the various semantics of the base verbal form of each term. It utilizes these semantics to be identify and reaffirm the nature of the referent of these terms; and in doing so, substantiate the reading’s adherence to the Sanskrit nomenclature of identifying the referent of a term by a corresponding linguistic expression that specifies its features or characteristics.

The extensive elaboration of ‘*yoga*’ as *conviction in the present form of Puruṣottama (pratyakṣaparamātmavarūpaniṣṭhā)* found in the commentary’s reading of Gī. 2.39 introduces yet another use of grammatical analysis. The text begins by first presenting a grammatical examination of ‘*yoga*’

37. “*vaktṛbuddhiviṣayatāvacchedakatvopalakṣitadharmāvacchinnaṃ*” (“वक्तृबुद्धिविषयता वच्छेदकत्वोपलक्षितधर्मावच्छिन्नम्”) (Bhattacharya 65)

38. See GSB’s exposition on Gī. 2.72. (Bhadreshdas, Śrīmadbhagavadgītā Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam 68–69)

39. “*न क्षरतीत्यक्षरमिति सञ्चालनार्थक्षरतेर्नञ्सहकारेण, अश्रुत इत्यक्षरमिति व्यापनार्थाश्रोतेश्च व्युत्पादयन्त्यक्षरशब्दं प्राज्ञाः।*” (GSB. 8.3) (Bhadreshdas, Śrīmadbhagavadgītā Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam 173)

40. “*ब्रह्म बृह बृहि वृद्धौ (पा.धा.पा. ७३५, ७३६) इति पाणिनीय-धातुपाठबलाद् वृद्ध्यर्थे व्युत्पाद्यते ब्रह्मशब्दः। तथा च बृंहति बर्हति वेति ब्रह्म।*” (GSB. 8.3) (Bhadreshdas, Śrīmadbhagavadgītā Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam 175)

along with its three prevalent semantics. It reveals: “yogaśabdaścāyaṃ samādhisaṃyamanaśambandhārthād yujdhātorghaṇi kṛte vyutpannaḥ”⁴¹ The commentary then mentions verses within the *Gītā* that make use of each semantic of ‘yoga’ (viz. as *samādhi* (concentration) *saṃyamana* (control), and *sambandha* (association)), respectively, when it states:

“triṣvapyeteṣvarthe prayukto’yaṃyāḥ gītopadeśeḥ yathā ‘yatroparamate cittam niruddham yogasevayā’ (Gī. 3.20), ityādaḥ cittavṛttināṃ pratyakṣanārāyaṇasvarūpe nirodhalakṣaṇe samādhau ‘paśya me yogamaiśvaram’

(Gī. 11.8) ityādāvaiśvareḥ ‘tasmādyogī bhavārjuna’ (Gī. 6.46) ityādaḥ sambandha iti”⁴²

Upon providing examples from the text, the commentary unifies all three to refer to a meaning that is implicit in all three semantics: conviction in the present form of *Puruṣottama* (*pratyakṣaparamātmāsvarūpaniṣṭhā*). It explains: “trayāṇāmapyeteṣāmarthānāmantaṭaḥ pratyakṣanārāyaṇasvarūpaniṣṭhāyāmeva paryavasanaṭ pratyakṣaparamātmāsvarūpaniṣṭhā’sya pradhāno’rthaḥ”⁴³

The commentator’s grammatical insights not only provide innovative interpretations of the revelations within the *Gītā* terms of the *Gītā*, but also substantiate or authenticate such readings. Additionally, they attest to the author’s proficiency in the nuances of Sanskrit grammar and their interpretive application.

41. “योगशब्दश्चायं समाधिसंयमनसम्बन्धार्थाद् युज्धातोर्घञि कृते व्युत्पन्नः।” (GSB. 2.39) (Bhadreshdas, *Śrīmadbhagavadgītā Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam* 39)

42. “त्रिष्वप्येतेष्वर्थेषु प्रयुक्तोऽयमिह गीतोपदेशो यथा ‘यत्रोपरमते चित्तं निरुद्धं योगसेवया’ (गी. ६/२०), इत्यादौ चित्तवृत्तीनां प्रत्यक्षनारायणस्वरूपे निरोधलक्षणे समाधौ। ‘पश्य मे योगमैश्वरम्’ (गी. ११/८) इत्यादावैश्वर्यो ‘तस्माद्योगी भवार्जुन’ (गी. ६/४६) इत्यादौ सम्बन्ध इति” (GSB. 2.39) (Bhadreshdas, *Śrīmadbhagavadgītā Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam* 39)

43. “त्रयाणामप्येतेषामर्थानामन्ततः प्रत्यक्षनारायणस्वरूपनिष्ठायामेव पर्यवसनात् प्रत्यक्षपरमात्मस्वरूपनिष्ठाऽस्य प्रधानोऽर्थः।” (GSB. 2.39) (Bhadreshdas, *Śrīmadbhagavadgītā Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam* 39)

COMMENTARIAL STYLISTIC ELEMENTS

In addition to grammatical features of the GSB, there are also many noteworthy stylistic elements within its exposition. The commentary adheres to the tradition of presenting benedictions (*maṅgalācaraṇa*) according to the renowned *Mahābhāṣya* declaration: “maṅgalādīni maṅgalamadhyāni maṅgalāntāni hi śāstrāṇi prathante vīrapuruṣāṇi ca bhavantyāyusmat puruṣāṇi cādhyetāraśca maṅgalayuktā yathā syuritiḥ”⁴⁴ The commentary offers the “introductory-benedictions” (“*maṅgalādīni*”) at the beginning of the text with the verse:

“maṅgalaṃ Sahajānandaḥ Śrīharirmaṅgalaṃ śubhamḥ maṅgalaṃ Nīlakaṇṭho hi Svāminārāyaṇaḥ sadāḥ”⁴⁵

and then continues by presenting four other benedictory verses. These introductory verses (1) offer salutations to Bhagavān Svāminārāyaṇa, (2) reveal the principal doctrine of the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana as it is revealed within the Gītā, and (3) offer benedictions to the author’s guru, who inspired the creation of the text. Thereafter, the commentary once again presents a *maṅgalācaraṇa* at the beginning of the ninth chapter of the Gītā. This second set of benedictory verses serve as the “middle-benediction” (“*maṅgalamadhyāni*”). The commentary identifies the middle of the Gītā here at the beginning of the ninth chapter, explaining that chapters 1-8 primarily served to highlight the nature, form, and significance of “*brāhmī sthitiḥ*”⁴⁶ (the state of attaining qualitative identity with Akṣarabrahman), whereas chapters 9-18 predominately focus on the revealing the nature and glory of Paramātman.⁴⁷ The text then concludes the text with the “final-benediction” (“*maṅgalāntāni*”) with a set of ten

44. “मङ्गलादीनि मङ्गलमध्यानि मङ्गलान्तानि हि शास्त्राणि प्रथन्ते वीरपुरुषाणि च भवन्त्यायुष्मत् पुरुषाणि चाऽध्येतारश्च मङ्गलयुक्ता यथा स्युरिति॥” (Śarmā 1–2)

45. “मङ्गलं सहजानन्दः श्रीहरिर्मङ्गलं शुभम् मङ्गलं नीलकण्ठो हि स्वामिनारायणः सदा॥” (Bhadreshdas, Śrīmadbhagavadgītā Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam 3)

46. See GSB’s exposition on Gī. 2.72. (Bhadreshdas, Śrīmadbhagavadgītā Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam 68–69)

47. (Bhadreshdas, Śrīmadbhagavadgītā Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam 201)

verses beginning with: “namo’stu Sahajānandasvāmine hyavatāriṇe | Nārāyaṇasvarūpāya Gītābhāṣyāntaparvaṇi||”⁴⁸

In addition to upholding such benedictory traditions, the commentary also adheres to other stylistic features that are common to the Vedānta commentarial tradition. For instance, the GSB frequently presents self-poised objections to the interpretations that it provides and then responds to these opposing positions. Such methods serve to refute prevalent alternative interpretations of a verse and substantiate the interpretations provided by the text. The style is commonly associated with the discussion style of the Naiyāyikas (adherents of the Nyaya-Darśana), perhaps more specifically to the Navya-Naiyāyikas, and thereafter implemented in expository and inter-darśanic discussions of the other schools of thought, including those within *vyākaraṇa*—Sanskrit grammar—and Vedānta. Within works of this kind, a counter-position is often considered and responded by the proponent using a number of lexical indicators including: “*na ca* [x]... *vācyam* [y]” or “*nanu* [x]... *cenna* [y];” where the counter position is expressed in place of ‘x’ and its response is provided in place of ‘y’. The GSB employs such reflections throughout many instances of its exposition, corroborating the authenticity of its readings.^{49:50}

REFERENTIAL METHODS

In addition to providing unique readings and interpretations of the verses and terms of the Gītā, the GSB presents extensive justifications to substantiate its interpretations. For example, its introductory reading

48. “नमोऽस्तु सहजानन्दस्वामिने ह्यवतारिणे | नारायणस्वरूपाय गीताभाष्यान्तपर्वणि||” (Bhadreshdas, Śrīmadbhagavadgītā Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam 376)

49. For examples of the commentary’s use of “*na ca* [x]... *vācyam* [y],” see its exposition on: Gī. 8.3, 10.3, and 14.3. (Bhadreshdas, Śrīmadbhagavadgītā Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam 174–75, 223, 293)

50. For examples of the commentary’s use of “*nanu* [x]... *cenna* [y],” see its exposition on: Gī. 2.40, 2.45, 6.5, 8.3, 8.21, and 14.2. (Bhadreshdas, Śrīmadbhagavadgītā Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam 43, 52, 132–33, 174, 191–93, 293)

of ‘yoga’ as *conviction in the present form of Puruṣottama (pratyakṣaparamāt masvarūpaniṣṭhā)* is elaborated on in depth in its commentary of Gī. 2.39. Within this exposition, the commentary references verses from chapters four, six, seven, eight, nine, ten, and twelve to present contextual evidence and terse arguments for its reading of ‘yoga’ as a conviction.⁵¹ Similar, reference-laden arguments are also presented to justify the reading of ‘dharma’ as yoga (or *conviction in the present form of Puruṣottama*) in the text’s exposition of Gī. 2.40. Specifically, by offering verses from the fourth, ninth, twelfth, and eighteenth chapters, the commentary presents concise arguments to substantiate its unique interpretation.⁵²

Another noteworthy exposition that provides extensive references to advocate the commentary’s interpretive position exists in the GSB’s exposition of Gī. 8.3. Here, upon identifying Akṣara (Akṣarabrahman) as a referent of ‘brahman’, the commentary introduces an elaborate reference-based argument to establish that ‘Akṣara’ found in Gī. 8.3 does not refer to Parabrahman Paramātman nor the *jīvātman*, *īśvarātman*, or *muktātman* (the liberated self). References provided in the commentary’s argument consist of verses from the *Gītā* itself, along with verses from the Upaniṣads, including the Muṇḍakopaniṣad, Kaṭhopaniṣad, Śvetāśvetaropaniṣad, Taittirīyopaniṣad, Chāndogyopaniṣad, and the Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad.⁵³

Other such substantiated readings include those of: “yadākṣaram vedavido vadanti”⁵⁴ of Gī. 8.11; “avyakoṣkṣara... taddhāma paramam

51. See GSB’s exposition of Gī. 2.39. (Bhadreshdas, Śrīmadbhagavadgītā Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam 39–41)

52. See GSB’s exposition of Gī. 2.40. (Bhadreshdas, Śrīmadbhagavadgītā Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam 44–45)

53. See GSB’s exposition of Gī. 8.3. (Bhadreshdas, Śrīmadbhagavadgītā Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam 175–78)

54. “यदक्षरं वेदविदो वदन्ति” (GSB. 8.11) (Bhadreshdas, Śrīmadbhagavadgītā Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam 182–85)

mama”⁵⁵ of Gī. 8.21; ‘rājavidyā’ and ‘rājaguhyam’⁵⁶ of Gī. 9.2; and ‘⁵⁷ of Gī. 17.23.

TRANSITIONAL EXPOSITIONS

Another feature of the GSB is its generous provision of transitional expositions. These clarifications exist at three levels: (1) among consecutive verses, (2) among the verses of a chapter, and (3) among chapters of the text. For example, each verse is premised with an introductory line or paragraph that describes how the topic of discussion in a previous verse is associated with the topic of the consecutive verse.

Additionally, each chapter is introduced with an expository paragraph that describes the principal subject(s) of the chapter.⁵⁸ This introductory paragraph also includes a transition from the discussions of the previous chapter(s) to topics presented in the subsequent chapter. For instance, the beginning of the commentary’s exposition of chapter four includes a paragraph that serves as a transition from the discussion of ‘buddhiyoga’ as the principal topic of chapter two to attaining *brahmabhāva* (oneness with Akṣarabrahman) through *karmayoga*—the principal topic of chapter three—and then to a further elaboration of this *karmayoga*—the primary topic of chapter four.⁵⁹ The beginning of the fifteenth chapter also provides a similar exposition by summarizing the topics of discussion in the thirteenth and fourteenth chapters and transitioning them into the topic of the fifteenth chapter.⁶⁰

By explaining how a topic of discussion flows from one verse to the

55. “अव्यकोऽक्षर... तद्दाम परमं मम” (GSB. 8.21) (Bhadreshdas, Śrīmadbhagavadgītā Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam 189–91)

56. ‘राजविद्या’ and ‘राजगुह्यम्’ (GSB. 9.2) (Bhadreshdas, Śrīmadbhagavadgītā Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam 202–03)

57. (Bhadreshdas, Śrīmadbhagavadgītā Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam 336–37)

58. See, for example the introduction to chapter two, three, four, five, and others. (Bhadreshdas, Śrīmadbhagavadgītā Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam 18, 70, 92, 116)

59. (Bhadreshdas, Śrīmadbhagavadgītā Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam 92)

60. (Bhadreshdas, Śrīmadbhagavadgītā Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam 305)

next, among the verses of chapter, and among the chapters of the text, the commentary's transitional expositions ensure an uninterrupted, fluent reading of the *Gītā*.

SYNOPTIC ELEMENTS

Related to such transitional expositions are the synoptic elements provided by the commentary. These descriptions provide short summaries of topics covered throughout the commentary's reading of verses, sections of verses, or chapters. For example, at the end of chapter two, the GSB offers a summary of the Kṛṣṇa's revelation of the nature and significance of "brāhmī sthitiḥ"⁶¹ or alternatively, one who is "sthitaprajñah."⁶²

The presentation of such synoptic elements not only facilitates the comprehension of complex discussions but also highlights and establishes continuity within the text. The commentary at the end of chapter eight presents a summary of the first half of the GSB's reading of the *Gītā* by presenting the main ideas of each chapter accompanied with relevant references to verses from that chapter.⁶³ This exposition also reveals a transition from the discussions of the first half of the *Gītā* (chapters 1-8), which focuses on elaborating on the nature and significance of attaining oneness with Akṣarabrahman, to topics of the latter half (chapters 9-18), which primarily deal with elaborating on the form (*svarūpa*), eminence, and glory of Paramātmā. Concluding this first half of the text, the commentary provides a summary in the form of the verse: "prathamāṣṭasu prādhānyam Brahmaṇo daśasu Hareḥ| evaṃ sarvāpi gīteyaṃ Brahmaparabrahmānvitā||"⁶⁴ The use of verse as a synoptic element is also another noteworthy feature of the commentary.

A different type of synoptic element is found within GSB's

61. (Gī. 2.72) (Bhadreshdas, Śrīmadbhagavadgītā Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam 68–69)

62. (Gī. 2.54) (Bhadreshdas, Śrīmadbhagavadgītā Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam 58–59)

63. (Bhadreshdas, Śrīmadbhagavadgītā Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam 198–99)

64. "प्रथमाष्टसु प्रधान्यं ब्रह्मणो दशसु हरेः। एवं सर्वापि गीतेयं ब्रह्मपरब्रह्मान्विता॥" (GSB. 8.28) (Bhadreshdas, Śrīmadbhagavadgītā Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam 200)

description of Gī. 18.54. Upon elaborating on the nature of the “brahmabhūtaḥ prasannātmā,” the commentary states: “yad dvitīye sthitaprajñalakṣaṇaiḥ, pañcame jīvanmuktalakṣaṇaiḥ, ṣaṣṭhe yogilakṣaṇaiḥ, saptame jñānilakṣaṇaiḥ, dvādaśe priyabhaktalakṣaṇaiḥ, caturdaśe vā guṇātītalakṣaṇairbahudhā nirūpyopapāditam ...”⁶⁵ The commentary identifies the brahmabhūta self (*ātman*) as possessing the qualities of the “*sthitaprajña*”⁶⁶ described in chapter two, the “*jīvanmukta*”⁶⁷ described in chapter five, the “*yogi*”⁶⁸ described in chapter six, the “*jñāni*”⁶⁹ described in chapter seven, the “*priyabhakta*”⁷⁰ described in the twelfth chapter, and the “*guṇātīta*”⁷¹ described in the fourteenth chapter. Listing common revelations categorized under different nomenclatures not only reinforces the consistency of the revelations found within the base text, but also attests the author’s acute awareness of the purport of the text.

Another instance of such a summary occurs in the exposition of Gī. 18.73. Arjuna’s final admission to abide by Kṛṣṇa’s direction prompts the commentary to provide a summary of primary topics of revelation provided throughout the entire *Gītā*.⁷² Beginning with Arjuna’s unwillingness to participate in the battle, the commentary traces Kṛṣṇa’s principal

65. “यद् द्वितीये स्थितप्रज्ञलक्षणैः, पञ्चमे जीवन्मुक्तलक्षणैः, षष्ठे योगिलक्षणैः, सप्तमे ज्ञानिलक्षणैः, द्वादशे प्रियभक्तलक्षणैः, चतुर्दशे वा गुणातीतलक्षणैर्बहुधा निरूप्योपपादितम्...” (GSB. 18.54) (Bhadreshdas, Śrīmadbhagavadgītā Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam 361)

66. See GSB’s exposition on Gī. 2.55-72. (Bhadreshdas, Śrīmadbhagavadgītā Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam 59–69)

67. See GSB’s exposition on Gī. 5.7-13, 16-29. (Bhadreshdas, Śrīmadbhagavadgītā Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam 119–22, 123–30)

68. See GSB’s exposition on Gī. 6.1-5, 7-23, 27-32. (Bhadreshdas, Śrīmadbhagavadgītā Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam 131–34, 134–42, 143–47)

69. See GSB’s exposition on Gī. 7.18-9. (Bhadreshdas, Śrīmadbhagavadgītā Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam 165–66)

70. See GSB’s exposition on Gī. 12.13-20. (Bhadreshdas, Śrīmadbhagavadgītā Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam 272–75)

71. See GSB’s exposition on Gī. 14.2, 20, 22-6. (Bhadreshdas, Śrīmadbhagavadgītā Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam 292–93, 300, 301–03)

72. (Bhadreshdas, Śrīmadbhagavadgītā Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam 371–72)

revelations by recalling key verses from the *Gītā* itself. In addition to substantiating the coherence of the text, this recollection is a testament to the author's clear comprehension of not only the essential topics of the *Gītā* but also its larger structure.

DARŚANIC TRAJECTORY

Having presented a survey of the various philological, linguistic, and literary features of the GSB, this work will present several unique darśanic insights afforded by the commentary. Although there are many such insights, I will focus my discussions to elaborating on the commentary's understanding of Brahman, its relationship with the self, and the role of this relationship in acquiring supreme devotion (*paramā bhakti*).

Prior to engaging with the GSB's reading of the *Gītā*, it is important to first clarify Svāminārāyaṇa's Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana's foundational *darśanic* principles. This prelude is necessary to understand how these principles are reflected within the GSB's reading of the *Gītā*.

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE AKṢARA-PURUṢOTTAMA DARŚANA'S FOUNDATIONAL DARŚANIC PRINCIPLES

The Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana advocates the existence of the following five eternally ontologically distinct entities: *jīvātman* (*jīva*), *īśvarātman* (*īśvara*), *māyā*, Akṣara (Brahman or Akṣarabrahman), and Puruṣottama (Parabrahman).⁷³ Puruṣottama (also identified as and Parabrahman) is understood as the one supreme entity, who is divine (*divya*), the all-doer (*kartā*), with form (*sākāra*), higher than all others (*sarvopari*) (supreme), and present or manifest (*pragaṭa*).

Within the *darśana*, Akṣarabrahman is offered as a distinct ontological entity from Parabrahman. Like Parabrahman there is only one Akṣarabrahman, who is eternally beyond the influence of *māyā*. His form (*svarūpa*), qualities, and supremacy is dependent on and

73. (GP. 7, GA. 10) (Svāmī 1; Svāminārāyaṇa, Vachanamrut 8, 563)

secondary only to that of Parabrahman. By Parabrahman's eternal wish, Akṣarabrahman is the cause, support, controller, and pervader (*śarīrin*) of all inanimate creation, *jīvātman*, and *īśvarātman*. Although there is only one Akṣarabrahman, he exists as the following four forms:

1. the all-pervasive space (*cidākāśa* or *daharākāśa*),
2. Parabrahman's divine abode, Akṣaradhāman,
3. an embodied eternal servant of Parabrahman within Akṣaradhāman, and
4. in human form in the world, through whom Parabrahman remains manifest (present).

Māyā is identified as being composed of three qualities: purity (*sattvagūṇa*), urgency (*rajogūṇa*), and stolidity (*tamogūṇa*) and is believed to be eternally in flux, inanimate, and the material cause of creation. It is identified as an instrument of Parabrahman and the cause of ignorance and the rebirth of bound *jīvātman*s and *īśvarātman*s.

Within Svāminārāyaṇa's ontology, *īśvarātman* and *jīvātman* are identified as the self.⁷⁴ There are an infinite number of ontologically distinct *īśvarātman* and *jīvātman*.⁷⁵ They are of the form of knowledge (*jñānasvarūpa*), have the capacity to know (*jñātā*), and are identified as those who perform action (*karma*) and experience its consequences.⁷⁶ In comparison to a *jīvātman*, an *īśvarātman* has greater sovereignty (*aiśvarya*) and knowledge (*jñāna*), and by Parabrahman's wishes, is engaged in the creation, sustenance, and destruction of the world.⁷⁷ Both the *jīvātman* and *īśvarātman* are bound by *māyā* (materiality),⁷⁸ but through Parabrahman's favor they, having identified themselves with Akṣarabrahman and having

74. 'ātman' also is used to refer to *jīvātman* or *īśvarātman*.

75. (Ś. Sādhu 7) (GP. 13, GP. 72, GA. 34, GA. 37, GA. 39) (Svāminārāyaṇa, Vachanamrut 17–18, 148, 618, 626, 629–30)

76. (Ś. Sādhu 7)

77. (Ś. Sādhu 7)

78. (Ś. Sādhu 7) (GM. 66, V. 6) (Svāminārāyaṇa, Vachanamrut 487, 507)

attained superior devotion (*parābhakti*) for Parabrahman,⁷⁹ are forever freed from misery and faults (*doṣas*) and experience the supreme bliss of Parabrahman even while living.⁸⁰ Thereafter, by Parabrahman's wish, such a *brahmarūpa* devotee (a devotee who has attained oneness with Akṣarabrahman) having forgone one's material body, attains Parabrahman's divine abode, Akṣaradhāman.⁸¹

The Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana's understanding of

1. Akṣarabrahman as an entity that is ontologically distinct from Puruṣottama, the *jīvātmans*, and *īśvarātmans*;
2. The nature of the state of becoming *brahmarūpa*—attaining oneness with Akṣarabrahman; and
3. the need to attain this relationship in order to acquire (practice) supreme devotion (*paramā bhakti*) towards Puruṣottama is reflected within the GSB's unique reading of the *Gītā*.

BRAHMAN AS AKṢARA WITHIN THE GĪTĀ

Throughout the *Gītā*, the GSB identifies 'brahman' as referring to Akṣara (Akṣarabrahman)—an entity that is ontologically distinct from Puruṣottama, *jīvātmans*, *īśvarātmans*, and *māyā*. Its motivations for this identification lie in Kṛṣṇa's expositions found within the eight and fifteenth chapters. What follows is a summary of the argument for the position put forth by the commentary based on its distinct reading of numerous verses of the *Gītā*.

The commentary explains: Kṛṣṇa mentions 'brahman' numerous times prior to the beginning of the eight chapter. For example, in the last verse of the second chapter he uses the term in his declaration of having descried "the state of *brahman*" ("brāhmī sthitiḥ").⁸² He again repeatedly

79. (Ś. Sādhu 8) (S. 11, GM. 66) (Svāminārāyaṇa, Vachanamrut 196–98, 486)

80. (Ś. Sādhu 8–9)

81. (Ś. Sādhu 9) (GP. 1, GP. 12, GP. 21, GM. 34) (Svāminārāyaṇa, Vachanamrut 2, 16, 33, 432).

82. (Vyāsa 63–64)

uses the term in Gī. 4.24-25, 4.31, 5.6, 5.10, 5.19-21, 5.24-26, 6.27-28, and 7.29.⁸³ This repeated mention of 'Brahman', prompts Arjuna to ask, "kim tad brahma?"⁸⁴ ("What is that Brahman?").⁸⁵ Kṛṣṇa's answer, "akṣaram brahma paramam"⁸⁶ ("Brahman is Akṣara, who is superior") identifies 'brahman' as synonymous to 'Akṣara' within the *Gītā*.

The question then remains, what, or rather, who is Akṣara? We will look at two primary revelations in the *Gītā* that present a clear description of Akṣara. The first occurs within the fifteenth chapter, where Kṛṣṇa explains:

dvāvimau puruṣau loke kṣaraścākṣara eva ca |
kṣaraḥ sarvāṇi bhūtāni kūṭastho'kṣara ucyate ||

"There are two types of puruṣa in the world: kṣara and Akṣara. All beings are kṣara and the unchanging is called Akṣara."⁸⁷

In this verse Akṣara is clearly distinguished from kṣara, which Kṛṣṇa describes as "*sarvāṇi bhūtāni*"—individual beings or *ātman*s.⁸⁸ Notice his (Kṛṣṇa's) use of the plural form, suggesting that there are many such *ātman*. On the other hand, Akṣara is described as "*kūṭastha*" meaning *unchanging*.

83. See: "ब्रह्मार्पणं ब्रह्म हविर्ब्रह्माग्नौ ब्रह्मणा हुतम् ब्रह्मैव तेन गन्तव्यं ब्रह्मकर्मसमाधिना॥" (Gī. 4.24), "... ब्रह्माग्नावपरे" (Gī. 4.25), "...यान्ति ब्रह्म सनातनम्" (Gī. 4.31); "...ब्रह्म न चिरेणाधिगच्छति" (Gī. 5.6); "ब्रह्मण्याधाय कर्माणि..." (Gī. 5.10); "निर्दोषं हि समं ब्रह्म तस्माद् ब्रह्मणि ते स्थिताः" (Gī. 5.19); "ब्रह्मविद् ब्रह्मणि स्थितः..." (Gī. 5.20); "स ब्रह्मयोगयुक्ताऽऽत्मा सुखमक्षय्यमश्नुते" (Gī. 5.21); "स योगी ब्रह्मनिर्वाणं ब्रह्मभूतोऽधिगच्छति" (Gī. 5.24); "लभन्ते ब्रह्मनिर्वाणम्" (Gī. 5.25); "अभितो ब्रह्मनिर्वाणम्" (Gī. 5.26); "उपैति शान्तरजसं ब्रह्मभूतमकल्मषम्" (Gī. 6.27); "युञ्जन्नेवं सदात्मानं योगी विगतकल्मषः। सुखेन ब्रह्मसंस्पर्शमत्यन्तं सुखमश्नुते॥" (Gī. 6.28); and "जरामरणमोक्षाय मामाश्रित्य यतन्ति यो ते ब्रह्म तद्विदुः" (Gī. 7.29). (Vyāsa 86, 86, 88–89, 95, 96, 99, 99, 99–100, 100–01, 101, 101, 111, 111–12, 128)

84. "किं तद् ब्रह्म" (Gī. 8.1) (Vyāsa 129)

85. (GSB. 8.1) (Bhadreshdas, Śrīmadbhagavadgītā Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam 172–73)

86. "अक्षरं ब्रह्म परमम्" (Gī. 8.3) (Vyāsa 129–30)

87. "द्वाविमौ पुरुषौ लोके क्षरश्चाक्षर एव चा क्षरः सर्वाणि भूतानि कूटस्थोऽक्षर उच्यते॥" (Gī. 15.16) (Vyāsa 234) (GSB. 15.16) (Bhadreshdas, Śrīmadbhagavadgītā Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam 314)

88. "सर्वाणि भूतानि जीवेश्वरसमूहानि" (GSB. 15.16) (Bhadreshdas, Śrīmadbhagavadgītā Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam 314)

It is in the singular case, suggesting that there is only one such Akṣara; and hence, ‘Akṣara’ is also not a signifier of the mukta-ātman (the liberated selves), since there are many such liberated selves.⁸⁹

Kṛṣṇa then continues in the very next verse:

uttamaḥ puruṣastvanyaḥ paramātmetyudāhṛtaḥ
yo lokatrayamāviśya bibhartavyaya īśvaraḥ॥

“The supreme puruṣa (Puruṣottama) is different and is therefore, called Paramātmā. He is the unchanging controller of all, and upon entering all worlds, is their support.”⁹⁰

Kṛṣṇa, here, describes Paramātmā to be distinct from both kṣara and Akṣara, metaphysically identifying Akṣara and Puruṣottama (*uttamaḥ puruṣaḥ*) as ontologically distinct entities.⁹¹

We then jump to the 8th *adhyāya*—the *adhyāya* where Arjuna asked Kṛṣṇa, “What is Brahman,” to which Kṛṣṇa responded “akṣaram brahma paramam” (“Brahman is Akṣara, who is superior”).⁹² By this verse we learn that Akṣara is superior, suggesting that there is something that is inferior to it.⁹³ We then move on in the same *adhyāya* to the following verse:

parastasmāttu bhāvo’nyo’vyakto’vyaktātsanātanaḥ॥

89. “इत्यत्र क्षरः इत्येकवचने सत्यपि तद्वाच्योपस्थापनाऽवसरे ‘सर्वाणि भूतानीति बहुवचनसद्भावाद् क्षराणां बहुत्वं सूचितम्, किन्तु तत्रैव पुनः ‘कूटस्थोऽक्षर उच्यते’ इत्यत्र अक्षरः इति क्षरशब्दवदेकवचनेऽपि तद्वाच्यव्याख्यानावसरे तु ‘कूटस्थः’ इत्येक-वचन-प्रयोगाद् अक्षरतत्त्वस्य एकत्वमेवाभिप्रेतमिति गम्यते। अत एव अक्षरशब्देन नात्र बहुत्वयुक्ता अक्षरमुक्ता ग्राह्या अपि त्वेकसंख्याकमक्षरं ब्रह्मैवा॥” (GSB. 15.16) (Bhadreshdas, Śrīmadbhagavadgītā Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam 315)

90. “उत्तमः पुरुषस्त्वन्यः परमात्मेत्युदाहृतः। यो लोकत्रयमाविश्य बिभर्त्यव्यय ईश्वरः॥” (Gī. 15.17) (Vyāsa 234) (GSB. 15.17) (Bhadreshdas, Śrīmadbhagavadgītā Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam 315–16)

91. “तुशब्दो हि प्रागुक्तेभ्यो जीवेभ्य ईश्वरेभ्य एतेषां क्षरत्वोपचारापादिन्यास्तदावृत्ताया मायाया तत्सर्वजीवेश्वरमायाभ्यः परभूतादक्षरब्रह्मणश्च परमात्मनः स्वरूपस्वभावैश्वर्यादितोऽत्यन्तं विलक्षणत्वं द्योतयति” (GSB. 15.17) (Bhadreshdas, Śrīmadbhagavadgītā Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam 315)

92. “अक्षरं ब्रह्म परमम्” (Gī. 8.3) (Vyāsa 129–30)

93. “परमं परमात्मातिरिक्तसर्वजीवेश्वरमायातन्मुक्तेभ्यः सर्वदा स्वरूप-स्वभावशक्तिसामर्थ्यादिना परभूतम् अक्षरम्...” (GSB. 8.3) (Bhadreshdas, Śrīmadbhagavadgītā Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam 173)

yaḥ sa sarveṣu bhūteṣu naśyatsu na vinaśyati॥

“However, distinct from and superior to that *avyakta* (*māyā*), is another eternal *avyakta*—that which is not destroyed when all *prāṇins* are destroyed.”⁹⁴

In this verse, Kṛṣṇa identifies the term ‘avyakta’ as a referent to *māyā* and to another entity which is distinct from *māyā*, superior to it, distinct from all *prāṇins* (i.e. *ātman*s, or in terms of verse 15.16 “sarvāṇi bhūtāni”),⁹⁵ and eternal.⁹⁶ The proceeding verse then describes what this second *avyakta* is when it states:

avyakto’kṣara ityuktastamāhuḥ paramāṃ gatim
yaṃ prāpya na nivartante taddhāma paramaṃ mama॥

“That *avyakta* is said to be Akṣara. It is called the superior end.

Upon attaining it, there is no return. That [Akṣara] is my superior abode.”⁹⁷

The *avyakta* that is distinct from *māyā* is described by Kṛṣṇa as Akṣara.⁹⁸ It is described as Paramātmā’s superior abode—a place from which there is no return.⁹⁹ When read together, these two verses describe

94. “परस्तस्मात् भावोऽन्योऽव्यक्तोऽव्यक्तात्सनातनः। यः स सर्वेषु भूतेषु नश्यत्सु न विनश्यति॥” (Gī. 8.20) (Vyāsa 135–36) (GSB. 8.20) (Bhadreshdas, Śrīmadbhagavadgītā Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam 188–89)

95. “सर्वानि भूतानि” (Gī. 15.16) (Vyāsa 234)

96. “अव्यक्तात् प्रकृतेस्तु अन्यः चेतनः स्वरूपस्वभावादिभिर्भिन्नः परः नित्यं तदव्यापकत्वनियामकत्वशरीरित्वादितया श्रेष्ठः अव्यक्तः मायिककरणैर्व्यक्तुमशक्योऽक्षरब्रह्माख्यो...” (GSB. 8.20) (Bhadreshdas, Śrīmadbhagavadgītā Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam 188)

97. “अव्यक्तोऽक्षर इत्युक्तस्तमाहुः परमां गतिम्। यं प्राप्य न निवर्तन्ते तद्धाम परमं ममा॥” (Gī. 8.21) (Vyāsa 136) (GSB. 8.21) (Bhadreshdas, Śrīmadbhagavadgītā Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam 189–93)

98. “अव्यक्तः मायिककरणैर्व्यक्तुं परिमितुं वाऽशक्यत्वादव्यक्तः अक्षर इत्युक्तः...” (GSB. 8.21) (Bhadreshdas, Śrīmadbhagavadgītā Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam 189)

99. The GSB references several other verses from the Gītā and the Brhadaranyakopaniṣad that express this distinguishing feature of the abode-form (*dhāman*-form) of Akṣara. It states: “तेषां न पुनरावृत्तिः” (बृ. ६/२/१५), “एतेन प्रतिपद्यमाना इमं मानवमावर्त नावर्तन्ते नावर्तन्ते (छा. ४/१५/६), “यं प्राप्य न निवर्तन्ते (गी. ८/२१), “यद् गत्वा न निवर्तन्ते (गी. १५/६) इत्यादौ च तस्याऽपुनरावृत्तिशीलत्वम्” (GSB. 8.21) (Bhadreshdas, Śrīmadbhagavadgītā

Akṣara as distinct from māyā, the *prāṇins* (*ātman*s), and even Puruṣottama, since Akṣara is described as his divine abode—a place that is attained. As the lord (*svāmī*) of this abode, Puruṣottama is understood as both distinct from Akṣara and superior to him.¹⁰⁰ Recall that although Akṣara (or Brahman) is Puruṣottama’s abode, he is not just a place, but also, according to Gī. 15.16: “dvāvimau puruṣau loke kṣaraścākṣara eva ca,”¹⁰¹ a *puruṣa*—sentient.

BRAHMARŪPA—A UNIQUE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE SELF AND AKṢARA

In addition to presenting and justifying Akṣara as an entity that is ontologically distinct, the GSB also introduces a distinct reading of the nature of the relationship between the self and Akṣarabrahman. Within the tradition, this relationship is expressed by terms such as ‘brahmarūpa’, ‘brahmaikya’, ‘brahmabhāva’, and others. In terms of the *Gītā* this oneness is identified by the commentary as being expressed by terms including ‘sthitaprajña’¹⁰², ‘brahmī sthiti’¹⁰³, ‘brahmaṇi sthitāḥ’,¹⁰⁴

Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam 190)

100. The Muṇḍakopaniṣad-Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣya’s reading of Mu. 2.1.2 substantiates Akṣara’s relationship with Puruṣottama when it reveals Puruṣottama as “अक्षरात् परतः परः” (“akṣarāt parataḥ paraḥ”) (“superior to the superior Akṣara”). (Bhadreshdas, *Īśādyastopaniṣatsvāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam* 258–61)

101. “द्वाविमौ पुरुषौ लोके क्षरश्चाक्षर एव च” (Gī. 15.16) (Vyāsa 234)

102. See GSB’s exposition of Gī. 2.54. (Bhadreshdas, *Śrīmadbhagavadgītā Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam* 58)

103. See GSB’s exposition of Gī. 2.72. (Bhadreshdas, *Śrīmadbhagavadgītā Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam* 68–69)

104. (Gī. 5.19) (Bhadreshdas, *Śrīmadbhagavadgītā Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam* 125–26)

‘svabhāva’,¹⁰⁵ ‘brahmacarya’,¹⁰⁶ ‘brahmabhūya’,¹⁰⁷ ‘brahmabhūta’,¹⁰⁸ ‘brahmakarmasamādhī’,¹⁰⁹ ‘dhīra’,¹¹⁰ ‘ātmavat’,¹¹¹ and ‘yajña’.¹¹²

Attaining such oneness is not understood as attaining or realizing ontological oneness, but instead, acquiring the qualities of Akṣara (Akṣarabrahman) that are instrumental in offering supreme devotion towards Parabrahman. As a result, such oneness is expressed by the commentary as “guṇasādharmyatā” and not as “svarūpaikyātā.” The commentarial expositions:

- “bhāvaśabdaḥ sādharmyavacanah| mama sādharmyamatyirthaḥ| sa ca punarakṣara-brahmarūpatvasampattāvevā’ntarbhavatīti nāyaṃ bhagavadbhāvo brāhmyāḥ sthiteratiricyate...”¹¹³
- “tadbhūto brahmabhūto brahmaguṇasādharmyamāpta ātmā yasya sa brahmarūpaḥ sannityarthaḥ”¹¹⁴
- “... brahmaguṇasādharmyavattayā svātmā”¹¹⁵

105. See GSB’s exposition of Gī. 8.3. (Bhadreshdas, Śrīmadbhagavadgītā Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam 178)

106. See GSB’s exposition of Gī. 8.11. (Bhadreshdas, Śrīmadbhagavadgītā Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam 184)

107. See GSB’s exposition of Gī. 18.53. (Bhadreshdas, Śrīmadbhagavadgītā Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam 360)

108. See GSB’s exposition of Gī. 5.24, 6.27, 18.54. (Bhadreshdas, Śrīmadbhagavadgītā Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam 128, 143, 360–61)

109. See GSB’s exposition of Gī. 4.24. (Bhadreshdas, Śrīmadbhagavadgītā Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam 104)

110. See GSB’s exposition of Gī. 2.15. (Bhadreshdas, Śrīmadbhagavadgītā Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam 27)

111. See GSB’s exposition of Gī. 2.45 (Bhadreshdas, Śrīmadbhagavadgītā Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam 53)

112. See GSB’s exposition of Gī. 4.25, 31 (Bhadreshdas, Śrīmadbhagavadgītā Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam 105, 108)

113. “भावशब्दः साधर्म्यवचनः। मम साधर्म्यमित्यर्थः। स च पुनरक्षर-ब्रह्मरूपत्वसम्पत्तावेवाऽन्तर्भवतीति नाऽयं भगवद्भावो ब्राह्म्याः स्थितेरतिरिच्यते।” (GSB. 4.10) (Bhadreshdas, Śrīmadbhagavadgītā Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam 97)

114. “तद्भूतो ब्रह्मभूतो ब्रह्मगुणसाधर्म्यमाप्त आत्मा यस्य स ब्रह्मरूपः सन्नित्यर्थः।” (GSB. 5.7) (Bhadreshdas, Śrīmadbhagavadgītā Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam 119)

115. “...ब्रह्मगुणसाधर्म्यवत्तया स्वात्मा” (GSB. 13.11) (Bhadreshdas, Śrīmadbhagavadgītā)

- “brahmasādharmyalakṣaṇo brahmabhāvaḥ prāpyate tada...”¹¹⁶

and others express this relationship—the state of achieving qualitative oneness with Akṣara-Brahman.

The nature or characteristic of those who attain this state is also read to be expressed within the *Gītā*. Pointing to Kṛṣṇa’s ending of the second chapter with “eṣā brāhmī sthitiḥ,”¹¹⁷ the GSB highlights the qualities expressed in Kṛṣṇa’s revelation in verses Gī. 2.55-71 as characteristic of those who have attained qualitative identity with Akṣarabrahman. It explains, “brāhmī brahmaṇa iyamiti brāhmī sāksādakṣarabrahmasambandhinīti yāvad tadakṣarabrahma-svarūpaguru-mananaprakarṣalabhyā svātmanastadakṣarabrahmaguṇasādharmyalakṣaṇatadbhāvarūpā Paramātmopāśanaparamānukūlā sthitiḥ...”¹¹⁸ Much later in the text, the GSB identifies this same revelation of the qualities or characteristics of a *sthitaprajña* or *brahmarūpa ātman* as expressed in terms of the *Gītā*’s description of (1) *jīvanamukti*¹¹⁹ from Gī. 5.7-13, 16-29; (2) a *yogin*¹²⁰ from Gī. 6. 1-5, 7-23, 27-32; (3) a *jñānin* (the knowledgeable) from Gī. 7. 18-19; (4) a *priyabhakta* (beloved devotee) from Gī. 12.13-20, and (5) the *guṇātīta*¹²¹ from Gī. 14.2, 20, 22-6.¹²² By this reading, the GSB presents a unified reading of the Kṛṣṇa’s counsel throughout the entire *Gītā*. For this reason, the GSB concludes its commentary of the second chapter with: “evaṃ

Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam 280)

116. “ब्रह्मसाधर्म्यलक्षणो ब्रह्मभावः प्राप्यते तद...” (GSB. 18.40) (Bhadreshdas, Śrīmadbhagavadgītā Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam 355)
117. “एषा ब्राह्मी स्थितिः” (Gī. 2.72) (Vyāsa 63–64)
118. “ब्राह्मी ब्रह्मण इयमिति ब्राह्मी साक्षादक्षरब्रह्मसम्बन्धिनीति यावद् तदक्षरब्रह्म-स्वरूपगुरुमननप्रकर्षलभ्या स् वात्मनस्तदक्षरब्रह्मगुणसाधर्म्यलक्षणतद्भावरूपा परमात्मोपासनपरमानुकूला स्थितिः...” (GSB. 2.72) (Bhadreshdas, Śrīmadbhagavadgītā Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam 68)
119. ‘Jīvanamukti’ refers to the state of attaining liberation while being alive.
120. A yogin is one who practices (or rather possesses) yoga, which is in turn understood as: possessing conviction in the present form of Parabrahman.
121. The *guṇātīta* is one who has transcended the three qualities of *māyā*.
122. “यद् द्वितीये स्थितप्रज्ञलक्षणैः, पञ्चमे जीवन्मुक्तलक्षणैः, षष्ठे योगिलक्षणैः, सप्तमे ज्ञानिलक्षणैः, द्वादशे प्रियभक्तलक्षणैः, चतुर्दशे वा गुणातीतलक्षणैर्बहुधा निरूप्योपपादितं...” (GSB. 18.54) (Bhadreshdas, Śrīmadbhagavadgītā Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam 361)

samādhiniṣṭhasya sthitaprajñasya sakalagītopadeśa”darśamūrteḥ kṛtsno’pi guṇavaibhava eṣā brāhmī sthitiriti brahmarūpatve saṁgrhītaḥ.”¹²³

BECOMING BRAHMARŪPA AND OFFERING SUPREME DEVOTION TO PURUṢOTTAMA

The final unique exposition of the GSB’s reading of the *Gītā* that I would like to discuss in this work pertains to the text’s advocacy of the need to attain oneness with Akṣara-Brahman in order to acquire (practice) supreme devotion (*paramā bhakti*) towards Puruṣottama. Bhagavān Svāminārāyaṇa explains this position in L. 7; where he reveals: “Only one who is *brahmarūpa* (attained qualitative oneness with Akṣarabrahman) is worthy of offering devotion to Puruṣottama.”¹²⁴ Expositions on the *Vacanāmṛta* elaborate that Svāminārāyaṇa emphasizes that only when one, like Akṣarabrahman, is free from the influence of *māyā*, is (s)he capable of understanding Parabrahman’s true form (*svarūpa*) and engaging in his *upāsana* (worshipful service).¹²⁵

The GSB affirms this relationship in several of its readings. Since Svāminārāyaṇa thereafter in the same “*Vacanāmṛta*” (L. 7) recalls Gī. 18.54 to substantiate his revelation, I will here focus specifically on the commentary’s reading of it. The GSB reads:

“brahmabhūtaḥ prasannātmā na śocati na kāṅkṣati |
samaḥ sarveṣu bhūteṣu madbhaktiṃ labhate parām||”

“The pleased self who has attained oneness with Brahman neither grieves nor desires any worldly-things and sees all beings with equanimity; they attain my ultimate devotion.”¹²⁶

123. “एवं समाधिनिष्ठस्य स्थितप्रज्ञस्य सकलगीतोपदेशाऽऽदर्शमूर्तेः कृत्स्नोऽपि गुणवैभव एषा ब्राह्मी स्थितिरिति ब्रह्मरूपत्वे संगृहीतः।” (GSB. 2.72) (Bhadreshdas, Śrīmadbhagavadgītā Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam 69)

124. “je brahmarūpa thayo tene ja Puruṣottamanī bhaktino adhikāra che.” (“જે બ્રહ્મરૂપ થયો તેને જ પુરુષોત્તમની બક્તિનો અધિકાર છે.”) (Svāminārāyaṇa, Vachanamrut 272) (L. 7)

125. (B. Sādhu 203)

126. “ब्रह्मभूतः प्रसन्नात्मा न शोचति न काङ्क्षति। समः सर्वेषु भूतेषु मद्भक्तिं लभते पराम्॥” (Gī. 18.54) (Vyāsa 277–78) (GSB 18.54) (Bhadreshdas, Śrīmadbhagavadgītā Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam

The GSB explains, “By this [verse], it is not possible for spiritual aspirants [to attain] superior devotion (*parābhakti*) towards Paramātmā without identifying the self with Brahman (Akṣarabrahman) (attaining “brahmaguṇasādharmya”); this is doctrinal.”¹²⁷ The commentary explains that according to Kṛṣṇa, only *sthitaprajñāḥ*, *brahmarūpa*, *brahmabhūta*, *akṣararūpa ātman* attains conviction and superior devotion (*parāṃ madbhaktim*) towards the present form of Paramātmā. By this reading, the text identifies: **offering superior devotion to the manifest Puruṣottama upon become akṣararūpa**, as a central message of the Gītā. It affirms in its conclusion: “itthaṃ svātmabrahmarūpatvaprāptipūrvakam Paramātmāsvārūpameva paramaṇiḥśreyasāya dāsabhāvena samāśritya samupāsaniyamiti Gītāsakalopadeśaḥ.”¹²⁸ This same position is identified as the foundational principal of the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana: “to become Akṣara-rūpa and offer supreme devotion to **Puruṣottama**.”¹²⁹

CONCLUSION

Analyzing the GSB from a philological, linguistic, literary, and *darśanic* trajectory (perspective) demonstrates the richness and variety of original insights presented within its discussions. (1) The depth and utility of its use of grammatical precepts; (2) its adherence to traditional stylistic elements; (3) its willingness to present justifications and references to substantiate its interpretations; along with (4) the unifying nature of its various transitional expositions; and (5) the summative proficiency of its synoptic elements—all attest to the text’s robust and comprehensive reading of the *Gītā*. Furthermore, the text’s presentation of *darśanic*

360–61)

127. “अनेन परमात्मपराभक्तिः स्वात्मब्रह्मरूपत्वसम्पत्तिं विना मुमुक्षुभिर्नैवाऽऽपादितुं शक्या इति सिद्धान्तितम्” (GSB. 18.54) (Bhadreshdas, Śrīmadbhagavadgītā Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam 361)

128. “इत्थं स्वात्मब्रह्मरूपत्वप्राप्तिपूर्वकं परमात्मस्वरूपमेव परमनिःश्रेयसाय दासभावेन समाश्रित्य समुपासनीयमिति गीतासकलोपदेशः।” (GSB. 18.78) (Bhadreshdas, Śrīmadbhagavadgītā Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam 375)

129. (Bhadreshdas, “Parabrahman Svāminārāyaṇa’s Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana” 77)

insights within the *Gītā*; such as (1) its reading of Akṣara (Brahman) as an ontologically distinct entity; (2) its unique understanding of the relationship between the self and Brahman expressed by ‘sthitaprajña’, ‘brāhmī sthiti’, ‘svabhāva’, ‘brahmabhūta’, and others; and its foundationally novel understanding of the relationship between attaining qualitative oneness with Akṣara and offering supreme devotion (*paramā bhakti*) towards Puruṣottama highlight some of its discerning contributions to Vedānta reflection. While proceeding through this work, one cannot help but notice a synergy of sorts between trajectories. Darśanic positions are evidently fueled through grammatical or linguistic elements, while these very same elements are guided by *darśanic* insights, ultimately revealing the multifarious yet heterogeneous nature common to all Indian thought.

I would like to conclude by admitting that this study is not only unfinished in its analysis of each of the mentioned trajectories, but also vastly incomplete in that it fails to address other analytical trajectories. Nevertheless, this work is presented to serve merely as an introduction to the text and as a guide to other similar investigations. This brief analysis demonstrates that although the GSB is only recently introduced, its reflections are far reaching, enlightening, and anything but insignificant.

ABBREVIATIONS

Gī.	Śrīmadbhagavadgītā
GA.	“Vacanāmṛta Gaḍhaḍā Antya Prakaraṇa”
GM.	“Vacanāmṛta Gaḍhaḍā Madhya Prakaraṇa”
GP.	“Vacanāmṛta Gaḍhaḍā Prathama Prakaraṇa”
GSB.	Śrīmadbhagavadgītāsvāminārāyaṇabhāṣya
L.	“Vacanāmṛta Loyā Prakaraṇa”
Mu.	Muṇḍakopaniṣad
S.	“Vacanāmṛta Sarangpur Prakaraṇa”
V.	“Vacanāmṛta Vartāla Prakaraṇa”
गी.	Śrīmadbhagavadgītā
छा.	Chāndogyopaniṣad
बृ.	Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad
पा.धा.पा.	Paṇinīyadhātupāṭha
पा.सू.	Pāṇinisūtra

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CONNECTING THE DOTS: EXPLORING THE ROOTS OF THE NOVEL CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE ŚRĪMADBHAGAVADGĪTĀ- SVĀMINĀRĀYAṆA-BHĀṢYAM

ĀCĀRYA JIGNESH RAVAL

PhD student, Saurashtra University, Rajkot

Abstract

The term Vedāntika refers to the texts part of the Vedānta canon. Vedānta entails *vedanām antaḥ iti*, the principle of the Vedas: The Upaniṣads. The texts which are based on the Upaniṣadika knowledge are also believed as Vedāntika texts. This is why the Śrīmad-Bhagavad-Gītā and Brahmasūtra are treated as the most authoritative texts after the Upaniṣads in the Vedānta tradition. Collectively, all three texts are known as the Prasthānatrayī, the three Vedāntika canonical texts. Throughout the ages, numerous commentarial and other works have been penned on the Gītā. In this commentarial lineage, a new work has been composed, entitled “Śrīmadbhagavadgītā-Svāminārāyaṇa-Bhāṣyam,” by Sādhu Bhadreśādāsa. He follows the principles of Parabrahman Svāminārāyaṇa known as the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana. The acceptance of the ontological entity Akṣarabrahman is one of the foremost unique contributions of the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana. Due to that, the perspective to see Parabrahman also changes in this school. This paper will explore the novel contributions of the Śrīmadbhagavadgītā-Svāminārāyaṇa-Bhāṣyam. This study aims to explore three facets of the Śrīmadbhagavadgītā-Svāminārāyaṇa-Bhāṣyam. The first,

how this text expresses the nature of Akṣarabrahman and Parabrahman. The second, the roots of the arguments, presented in this text, in Svāminārāyaṇa's preaching. The last, how this text establishes Parabrahman's perennial manifestation through Akṣarabrahman.

KEYWORDS:

Śrīmad-Bhagavad-Gītā, Śrīmadbhagavadgītā-Svāminārāyaṇa-Bhāṣyam, Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana, Parabrahman Svāminārāyaṇa, Bhadreswami, Akṣara, Brahman, Akṣarabrahman.

INTRODUCTION

The term Vedāntika refers to the texts part of the Vedānta canon. Vedānta entails *vedanām antaḥ iti*, the principle of the Vedas: The Upaniṣads. Any text that takes a philosophical lead from the Upaniṣads or is based on it, either explains, makes concrete or glorifies the Upaniṣadika teachings are considered Vedāntika texts. This is why the Śrīmad-Bhagavad-Gītā (BG) and Brahmasūtra are treated as the most authoritative texts after the Upaniṣads in the Vedānta tradition. Collectively, all three texts are known as the Prasthānatrayī, the three Vedāntika canonical texts. Throughout the ages, numerous commentarial and other works have been penned on the BG. In this commentarial lineage, a new work has been composed, entitled “*Śrīmadbhagavadgītā-Svāminārāyaṇa-Bhāṣyam*” (GSB), by Sādhu Bhadrēśadāsa (Bhadrēś Swami). He follows the principles of Parabrahman Svāminārāyaṇa known as the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana (APD). The acceptance of the ontological entity Akṣarabrahman, is one of the foremost unique contributions of the APD. Due to that, the perspective to see Parabrahman also changes in this school. These novel contributions will be explored in this paper. This study aims to explore three facets of the *Śrīmadbhagavadgītā-Svāminārāyaṇa-Bhāṣyam*. The first, how this text expresses the nature of Akṣarabrahman and Parabrahman. The second, the roots of the arguments, presented in this

text, in Svāminārāyaṇa's discourses. The last, how this text establishes Parabrahman's perennial manifestation through Akṣarabrahman. The paper opens up with a brief introduction to the Vedāntika commentarial tradition and the importance of the BG in that tradition. Further, the article explores the roots of the GSB by examining the nature of the entities Akṣarabrahman and Parabrahman as presented in the GSB and in the primary text of the APD. The study concludes with a brief exploration of how GSB interprets a few crucial terms of the BG.

1. The Vedāntika Commentarial Tradition

The commentarial tradition of Vedānta can be traced back to the era of the Vedas, owing to the fact that the Vedas contain the roots of these interpretative methods. For instance, Chāndogya Upaniṣad breaks apart the word “hr̥daya” as हृदि अयम् इति हृदयम्, (8/3/3) and the Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad states, तदेतद् त्र्यक्षरं सत्यमिति स इति एकम् अक्षरं, ति इति एकम् अक्षरं, यम् इति एकम् अक्षरम् प्रथमोत्तमे अक्षरे सत्यं मध्यतोऽनृतम् (5/5/1). Following this approach, the BG states and explains the word “Puruṣottama” in the fifteenth adhyāya. Specifically, the BG asserts in the sixteenth śloka that there are two types of puruṣas, द्वाविमौ पुरुषौ लोके. The following śloka explains, उत्तमः पुरुषः तु अन्यः, another entity is superior to the two kinds of puruṣas. Referring to the previous two verses, the eighteenth śloka concludes that the one who is superior to the puruṣas is Puruṣottama. Through all these examples, it is perceived that the mantras or verses state the word along with presenting an interpretation of a term or each syllable of it.

In this manner, theories of interpreting texts, or hermeneutical theories, are rooted in the Vedāntika texts. The tradition of writing classical commentaries on the scriptures, by utilizing and building on these hermeneutical theories, emerged around the end of the first millennium¹. Various commentators (or ācāryas) established the

1. Brahmabhatt, “Scholastic Publics: Sanskrit Textual Practices in Gujarat, 1800-Present,” pg. 121

authenticity of their theologies by interpreting the Vedāntika texts and thus defended their thoughts in a commentarial manner. Over the years, numerous commentators have successfully presented novel interpretations on the texts—ultimately forming separate Vedānta sub-schools. The commentators established their doctrinal positions by conveying a novel and coherent interpretation of the words of the Prasthānatrayī². Eventually, this act of writing commentaries became an inevitable and necessary step in establishing the authenticity and legitimacy of one's philosophical position as being Vedāntika (or Vaidika).

Over the course of time, the scrutinization of the Indian commentarial literature became an inevitable part of studying the history of Indian philosophy. This is because commentaries were seen to communicate ideas connected to significant changes in history. The commentaries also served as a window for new audiences and other cultural communities to perceive the traditions' practices and philosophical commitments. This was the case as it was these commentaries that preserved the ideas of the school in their original form³.

2. BG's Importance in the Vedāntika Tradition

The BG is as well considered as a critical source of śabda pramāṇa in the commentarial tradition. The text is found within a broader narrative, the Mahābhārata, but comprises self-contained discussions of topics crucial to Vedānta philosophy, such as metaphysical entities and their nature, karma, devotion, and liberation. Perhaps this is the primary reason for its broad appeal⁴. The BG is considered as Vedānta text as it is an abridged and condensed summary of Upaniṣadika knowledge. After each adhyāya of the BG, the concluding statement reads the BG as 'Upaniṣatsu'-an Upaniṣad like statement. The verse, 'सर्वोपनिषदो गावो दोग्धा गोपालनन्दनः। पार्थो

2. Saha, "Vedāntic Commentaries on the Bhagavadgītā as a Component of Three Canonical Texts (Prasthāna-Trayī)," pg. 1-2.

3. Ganeri, "Sanskrit Philosophical Commentary," pg. 604.

4. Malinar, *The Bhagavadgītā Doctrines and Contexts*. pg. 20.

वत्सः सुधीर्भोक्ता दुग्धं गीतामृतं महत्॥,⁵ presents an allegorical plaudit of the BG and is cited by numerous scholars in support of the text's significance. Similarly, Śaṅkara introduces the BG as समस्तवेदार्थसारसङ्ग्रहभूतम्, a collection of verses that reveal the essence of the knowledge within the Upaniṣads.⁶ Furthermore, most of the ācāryas believe that in the Brahmasūtra 'स्मृतेश्च,' (1/2/6) Vyāsa is referring to the BG.⁷ Hence, the scripture is counted as the Smṛti-prasthāna in the Vedāntika tradition.

All the facets mentioned above played a crucial role in attracting the commentators to examine the BG. For thousands of years, numerous philosophers and thinkers have examined the BG and have presented their unique interpretations of the text. It is indeed true that whenever someone interprets the text, the interpreter's interpretation becomes one among many.⁸ Hence, numerous works in different scholarly milieus have been produced on the text in the past centuries. A few commentarial compositions to list are: Śaṅkarācārya's *Gītābhāṣyam*, Śrīdhara's *Śrīdharīṭikā*, Madhusūdana's *Gūḍhārthadīpikā*, the *Gītābhāṣyam* of Rāmānuja, the *Gītārthasaṅgraha* of Yāmunācārya, Vedāntadeśika's *Gītārthasaṅgraharakṣā* and *Tātparyacandrikā*, Ānandatīrtha's *Gītābhāṣyam*, and many more. Within this commentarial lineage, a novel commentary in the 21st-century has recently been composed by Bhadrash Swami entitled "*Śrīmadbhagavadgītā-Svāminārāyaṇa-Bhāṣyam*."

3. The Roots

"(The GSB) follows the preaching of Bhagavān Svāminārāyaṇa,"

-
5. Translated as: All the Upaniṣads are cows, Kṛṣṇa is the milkman, Arjuna is the calf, and the Gītā is milk.
 6. Śaṅkara, *Śrīmadbhagavadgītā*, trans. by Shri Harikrushnadas Goyandka, pg. 14.
 7. For instance, see *The Works of Sri Sankaracharya*, pg. 101; Rāmānuja, *Jagadguru Śrīrāmānujācāryakṛta Śrībhāṣyam*, pg. 401; Madhvācārya, *Śrīmadbrahmasūtrabhāṣyam*, pg. 86; Bhadrēśadāsa, *Brahmasūtra-Svāminārāyaṇa-Bhāṣyam*, pg. 60.
 8. Nadkarni, *The Bhagavad-Gita for the Modern Reader: History, Interpolations and Philosophy*, pg. 32.

pledges Bhadrēśwami, in the preface of the text.⁹ This statement helps to trace the roots of the commentary; the Vacanāmṛta, a text that anthologizes the discourses of Svāminārāyaṇa.

The Vacanāmṛta is accepted within the Svāminārāyaṇa tradition as the primary revelatory text by which its doctrines are established and articulated.¹⁰ It is believed in the tradition that the text encapsulates the words of the supreme entity, Parabrahman. Parabrahman Svāminārāyaṇa has discoursed his own novel doctrine and reinforced it by providing the knowledge discussed in the Upaniṣads, Puranas, and other such seminal texts.¹¹ The Vacanāmṛta is honored as the first example of Gujarati prose literature. The text is widely praised by scholars across the spectrum for its complete adherence to the grammatical rules of Gujarati, lucidity in explaining intricate doctrines, and the text's historicity. In the context of the text's authenticity, scholars of world religion count the dating of scripture as one of the crucial factors. John B. Carman, a Professor of Comparative Religion Emeritus, notes the historicity of the Vacanāmṛta as "Yet students of Indian religious history are constantly faced with the difficulty of the lack of firm and definite dates in this history. In this book (Vacanāmṛta), however, every chapter is precisely dated. This is a chapter of religious history which one might say is in the full light of day as far as our knowledge of history is concerned."¹²

Though the text itself is called the Vacanāmṛta, each chapter is also individually referred to as a 'Vacanāmṛta.'¹³ There are two hundred and seventy-three chapters (Vac.) in the sacred text, divided into ten sections.

The talks of Svāminārāyaṇa are often interlaced with quotations from the BG and other such seminal texts. For instance, the Vac. L 7

9. GSB, pg. xxi. [Bhadrēśadāsa, *Śrīmad-Bhagavadgītā-Svāminārāyaṇa-Bhāṣyam*.]

10. Paramatattvadāsa, *An Introduction to Swaminarayan Hindu Theology*, pg. 13.

11. Bhadrēśadāsa, *Svāminārāyaṇasiddhāntasudhā*, pg. 172-3.

12. Carman, "Vachanamritam: A Note", pg. 207.

13. To prevent confusion between the two, I will use 'Vacanāmṛta' to refer to the entire scripture and 'Vac.' to refer to the individual chapters.

includes about fifteen excerpts from the BG, various Upaniṣads, Vedas, and Śrīmad-Bhāgavata. To concentrate just on the BG, in the entire Vacanāmṛta, Svāminārāyaṇa refers to the text in about twenty-nine Vacs.¹⁴ He engages with the BG in two manners; first, he mentions the specific verses to elucidate the doctrine, and second, he just explicates the principles by referring to the entire BG.

Moreover, Svāminārāyaṇa just has not mentioned the verses of the BG, but several times he has uniquely interpreted the text. For a case, in the Vac. GM 9, he reads the BG verse section 'स्वल्पमप्यस्य धर्मस्य त्रायते महतो भयात्' (2/40) as 'if one has the slightest strength based on the conviction of Bhagavān, it will protect one from great calamities.' Here, Svāminārāyaṇa construes the term 'dharma' as the conviction of Bhagavān.¹⁵

4. The Novel Contribution

Metaphysical commitments of any theologians are the groundwork for further inquiry. Hence, the number of metaphysical entities accepted by the theologian inevitably plays an essential role in exploring the theologian's novel contributions. In contemplating and attempting to explain ontological entities, various Ācāryas have outlined different philosophies, including the classical Vedāntika schools, of Advaita, Dvaita, Viśiṣṭādvaita, etc. Śaṅkara adheres to Advaita, Rāmānuja to Viśiṣṭādvaita, Madhva to Dvaita, Vallabha to Śuddhādvaita, and Nimbārka, Chaitanya, and others to their respective philosophies. To express their ontological commitments and establish their position in the Vedāntika tradition, these ācāryas have composed the holistic philosophical commentaries (Bhāṣyas) on the Prasthānatrayī.

Similarly, Svāminārāyaṇa discoursed his novel metaphysical

14. GP 15, 42-3, 50, 56, S 14, L 7, 9, 10-11, 18, GM 1, 8, 10-11, 13, 16-17, 19-20, 25, 33, 37, V 5, 12, 18, A 2, GA 3, 10. [Svāminārāyaṇa, Vacanāmṛta.]

15. For detailed discussion in Sanskrit, see GSB, pg. 42-50; and in English, see Akṣarānandadāsa, "Svāminārāyaṇa's Interpretation of 'Dharma' As It Appears in the Shrimad Bhagavad Gita."

commitments, which led to the framework of the APD. Later, Bhadrash Swami composed the Bhāṣyas, on the Prasthānatrayī texts, based on the preaching of Svāminārāyaṇa. This section will explore the novel contributions made by the GSB into the Vedāntika tradition.

4.1. Akṣarabrahman: A Distinct Entity

Svāminārāyaṇa commits the doctrine of five ontological entities. He accepts that ‘Five entities - Parabrahman, Akṣarabrahman, māyā, īśvaras, and jīvas are eternal.’ (Vac. GP 7) Moreover, ‘From the Vedas, the Purāṇas, the Itihāsa, and the Smṛtis, I have formed the principle that jīva, māyā, īśvara, Brahman, and Parabrahman are all eternal,’ says Svāminārāyaṇa in the Vac. GA 10. In addition, these entities are real, fundamentally distinct from each other, and not illusory.¹⁶ The most remarkable novel contribution of Svāminārāyaṇa’s metaphysical commitment is the acceptance of Akṣarabrahman as a distinct entity. The term Akṣara, or the synonym Brahma, is widely used in the Vedāntika scriptures. A significant debate revolves around using the terms Akṣara and Brahman in various references throughout the Vaidika traditional texts. Despite their multiple usages, almost all the philosophers and theologians have attempted to offer a coherent interpretation of these terms.

Bhadrash Swami follows Svāminārāyaṇa’s preaching and presents Akṣara, Brahman, or Akṣarabrahman in the GSB. To understand the novel contribution of the GSB and how this contribution provides a novel perspective to study the BG, a study of Advaita, Viśiṣṭādvaita, and Svāminārāyaṇa commentaries, on the thirteenth and fifteenth adhyāya of the BG, will be presented. This study aims not to picture the inconsistency of any commentary or to establish the superiority of any. Instead, this exercise will provide the opportunity to learn the novel contributions of the GSB.

16. Pramukha Svāmī, “Philosophical Document,” pg. xxv; Paramatattvadāsa, *An Introduction to Swaminarayan Hindu Theology*, pg. 70.

4.1.1. Kūṣasthaḥ Akṣara Uchayate

In the following section, this paper aims to study and understand the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth verses of the fifteenth canto.

The sixteenth śloka reads:

द्वाविमौ पुरुषौ लोके क्षरश्चाक्षर एव च। क्षरः सर्वाणि भूतानि कूटस्थोऽक्षर उच्यते॥15.16॥

There are two types of puruṣas in the world: the Kṣaras (perishables) and the Akṣara (imperishable).

Śaṅkara interprets the Kṣaras as perishables, and the Akṣara as तद्विपरितो भगवतो मायाशक्तिः क्षराख्यस्य पुरुषस्य उत्पत्तिबीजम् अनेकसंसारिजन्तुकामकर्मादिसंस्काराश्रयः अक्षरः पुरुषः उच्यते. Meaning, Akṣara is contradictory to the Kṣaras; it is the energy of Bhagavān, and the cause of the Kṣaras. Rāmānuja explains the Kṣaras as क्षरशब्दनिर्दिष्टः पुरुषो जीवशब्दाभिलपनीय ब्रह्मादिस्तम्बपर्यन्तक्षरणस्वभावाचित्संसृष्ट सर्वभूतानि, or the Kṣaras are all those jīvas bound within māyā: from Brahmā to grass. The Akṣara is defined as अचित्संसर्गवियुक्तः, स्वेन रूपेण अवस्थितो मुक्तात्मा. Meaning, those which are detached from māyā, the liberated souls are Akṣara. To summarize, according to Śaṅkara, the Kṣaras are the perishables, and their cause Māyā is Akṣara. According to Rāmānuja, the terms Kṣaras and Akṣara, sequentially, differentiate the bound and liberated souls.

The Svāminārāyaṇa Bhāṣyakāra, Bhadrash Swami, notes the Kṣaras as इदानीं पूर्वं वा यदा कदापि क्षरणस्वभावाऽचित्संसर्गप्राप्तत्वात् क्षर इति शब्दाभिलप्यानि, all the beings which are bound within māyā in any period of time. Therefore, Akṣara is नित्यं प्रकृतिसंसर्गवियुक्तं प्रागुक्तजीवेश्वरसमूहपरभूतमक्षरं ब्रह्म; Akṣara is Brahman, eternally detached from māyā, and superior to all jīvas and īśvaras. To support this interpretation, Bhadrash Swami raises logical arguments and a debate, based on this verse in the eighth adhyāya, which he offers solutions to as follows:

The first argument is that the non-sentiment (jaḍa) māyā consisting of the five-bhūtas (elements), should be considered as Kṣara as its perishable nature is witnessed by everyone. And if Kṣara is māyā, then Akṣara should be the jīva. Bhadrash Swami resolves this point by explaining that 'Kṣara' is not popularly employed for jaḍa (non-sentient), and it consists of the power to reflect the non-liberated souls. Also, the term 'Puruṣa' used in

the verse cannot imitate the inanimate prakṛti (māyā). Hence, 'Kṣara' reflects the bound jīvas and īśvaras, but 'Akṣara' does not.

The second argument claims to accept the non-liberated souls as Kṣara. And because the liberated souls are not affected by māyā at the current moment, they are considered to be Akṣara. Bhadrash Swami rebukes that this argument fails to be accurate in context to the triad of time (the past, present, and future). He explains, मुक्तात्मनामिदानीं प्रकृतिसंसर्गविरहेऽपि पूर्वं तदभावाद् भूतपूर्वगत्या प्रकृतिसंसर्गवशात् क्षणस्वभावाच्च न त्रैकालिकसम्बन्धाऽवच्छिन्नं त्रिकालाबाधितमक्षरत्वम्, that though the liberated souls are not bound within māyā at the present moment, they were affected by māyā at some period of time.

Bhadrash Swami uses the term 'भूतपूर्वगत्या', which draws our attention towards the maxims of Nāgeśa Bhaṭṭa. Nāgeśa notes in his text 'Paribhāṣenduśekhara', साम्प्रतिकाऽभावे भूतपूर्वगतिः.¹⁷ Meaning, when any word is unable to express the contemporary meaning, it directs back to its antecedent meaning. Similarly, the doctrine here will not be eternally true as the Akṣara, liberated souls, were pointed as both Kṣaras and Akṣara at some point in time. Hence, the interpretation which will be eternally true is to accept all liberated and non-liberated jīvas and īśvaras as Kṣara. A minute argument raised here is let us not include beings liberated from māyā at some point as Akṣara, but those which are eternally not bound within māyā can be recognized as Akṣara. Svāminārāyaṇa Bhāṣyakāra responds that, in the APD, only Akṣarabrahman and Parabrahman are accepted as eternally unbound entities.

If Parabrahman is acknowledged as an eternally unbound entity, then, an argument arises that Parabrahman can be accepted as Akṣara. Bhadrash Swami refutes this argument by presenting a few verses of the BG. First, he mentions the verse 8/21 'अव्यक्तोऽक्षर... तद् धाम परमं मम,' and 15/6 'यद् गत्वा न निवर्तन्ते तद् धाम परमं मम,' that is my supreme abode.¹⁸ He says,

17. Nāgeśa, *Paribhāṣenduśekhara*, pg. 241

18. The Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana accepts four forms of Akṣarabrahman: the cidākāśa, the divine abode, the servant in that abode, and the Brahmasvarūpa guru. (Bhadreśādāsa, *Svāminārāyaṇasiddhāntasudhā*, pg. 47.)

Parabrahman mentions Akṣara as own residential place. Additionally, the use of the sixth vibhakti (genitive case) 'मम धाम,' presents Akṣara and Parabrahman as two distinct entities. Furthermore, the following verse 15/17 mentions, 'उत्तमः पुरुषः तु अन्यः,' the supreme Puruṣa is someone else, and verse 15/18 states 'यस्मात् क्षरमतितोऽहमक्षरादपि चोत्तमः, I am (Puruṣottama) superior to both Kṣaras and Akṣara.' This verse also demonstrates that Akṣara and Puruṣottama are two distinct entities. Hence, to interpret Parabrahman as 'Akṣara' in 15/16 is inconsistent.

The last couplet of the verse 15/16 states 'क्षरः सर्वाणि भूतानि, कूटस्थोऽक्षर उच्यते.' Meaning, all beings are Kṣaras, and the Kūṭasthaḥ (mountain-like stable) is Akṣara. Here, it is seen that Kṣaras is plural (sarvāṇi bhūtāni), and Akṣara is mentioned in a singular form (Kūṭasthaḥ). Thus, the term Akṣara denotes a singular entity. No particular discussion regarding this point is seen in Śaṅkara's commentary. On the other hand, Rāmānuja and Bhadrash Swami present reasoning for the significant placement of a singular adjective before Akṣara.

Rāmānuja notes अत्र अपि एकत्वनिर्देशः अचिद्वियोगरूपैकोपाधिना अभिहितः; the singular designation is used to show a group of all the liberated souls. Whereas, Bhadrash Swami writes, 'कूटस्थः' इत्येकवचनप्रयोगाद् अक्षरतत्त्वस्य एकत्वमेवाभिप्रेतमिति गम्यते, the singular entitlement 'Kūṭasthaḥ' numerically shows there is only one entity Akṣara. He further notes that there is only one Akṣarabrahman. Hence, Akṣarabrahman can be understood with the term Akṣara, and not the liberated souls. The root of this point can be traced back into the Vacanāmṛta. In Vac. L 17, Svāminārāyaṇa says, 'Akṣara te āvo che,' or Akṣara is like this.

	Kṣara	Akṣara	Kūṭasthaḥ (Singular designation)
Advaita Darśana	All beings	Māyā	-
Viśiṣṭādvaita Darśana	Bound souls	Liberated souls	A Group of liberated souls
Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana	All bound & liberated souls	Akṣarabrahman	Akṣarabrahman

4.1.2. Anādi Matparam Brahma

In this section, this article aims to understand APD's novel contribution of accepting Akṣarabrahman as an ontologically distinct entity through the verse-portion 'अनादिमत्परं ब्रह्म' from the twelfth śloka of the thirteenth adhyāya.

In the ancient era, it was popular to write manuscripts without using any punctuations or space (see figure 1). This writing style helped the scholars to split or break the terms according to their doctrines. Śaṅkara splits the phrase 'अनादिमत्परं ब्रह्म' as अनादिमत् परं ब्रह्म. While Rāmānuja and Bhadrash Swami partition it as अनादि मत्परं ब्रह्म. Amongst these two phrase-separations, the rules of Pāṇinian grammar and Sanskrit Kāvyaś (poems) consider the second split as more scholastically appropriate.¹⁹ Undoubtedly, Śaṅkara is aware of this scholastic approach; hence, he presented proper reasoning for not using the second three-piece division.²⁰

19. For Sanskrit grammar rules, see Patañjali's Mahābhāṣya with Pradip and Udyot sub-commentaries (Patañjali, *Vyākaraṇamahābhāṣyam*, pg.410.), and for Sanskrit Kavya rules, see कर्मधारयमत्वर्थीयाभ्यां बहुव्रीहिर्लघुत्वात्प्रक्रमस्य (Hemacandra, *Kāvyaṇuśāsanam*, pg. 206.)

20. Śaṅkara, *Śrīmadbhagavadgītā*, trans. by Shri Harikrushnadas Goyandka, pg. 322.

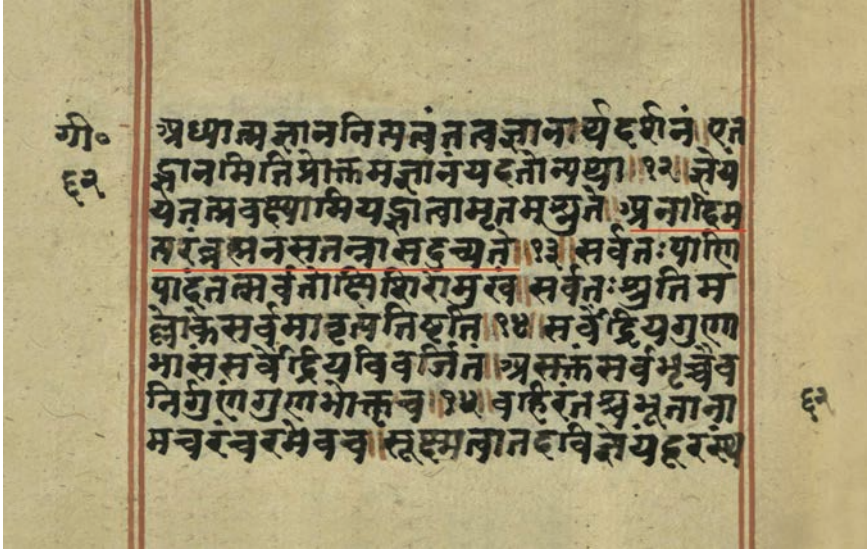


Figure 1 SBG's manuscript of the verse 12/13²¹

The interpretation of the verse section अनादि मत्परं ब्रह्म is critical because Kṛṣṇa pledges in verse 13/12 that, henceforth, he will speak about that Brahman, by knowing which, one accomplishes the eternal, ज्ञेयं यत्तत् प्रवक्ष्यामि यज्ज्ञात्वा अमृतम् अश्नुते. Kṛṣṇa's pledge foreshows that the following śloka will characterize Brahman. Hence, the interpretation of the term Brahman in 13/12 plays a crucial role in understanding the forthcoming verses.

Śaṅkara interprets 'अनादिमत् परं ब्रह्म' as the supreme Brahman (Parabrahman) who is without any beginning.²² Rāmānuja explains ब्रह्म as the individual soul (pratyagātma), which is without any beginning or end (अनादि) and considers me (Paramātma) as the highest (मत्परम्).²³ Bhadrash Swami explains that only Parabrahman is superior to that Akṣarabrahman (ब्रह्म). And that Akṣarabrahman (ब्रह्म) is origin-less and endless (अनादि)

21. Image courtesy: Acc. No. 19, AARSH, Akshardham, Sector-20, Gandhinagar – 382020, Gujarat, India.

22. Śaṅkara, *Śrīmadbhagavadgītā*, trans. by Shri Harikrushnadas Goyandka, pg. 322.

23. Rāmānuja, *Śrī Rāmānuja Gītā Bhāṣya with Text and English Translation*, Trans. by Svāmī Ādidevānanda, pg. 438.

and offers willful servitude to Parabrahman (मत्परम्).²⁴

Svāminārāyaṇa declares this doctrine in several Vacs. He says in Vac. GP 64, “He [Paramātman] is greater than even Akṣara, which is greater than everything.” In Vac. GP 73, Svāminārāyaṇa mentions, “Parabrahman – who transcends Brahman....” Furthermore, throughout the Vacanāmṛta Svāminārāyaṇa uses the adjective ‘akṣarātīta,’ one who transcends even Akṣara, for fourteen times to describe Parabrahman.²⁵ Also, he mentions in Vac. GP 21 that ‘Akṣara serves Puruṣottama Nārāyaṇa.’

In this manner, this study helped to understand the APD’s novel contribution of accepting Akṣarabrahman as distinct ontological entity.

The summary of this section is as follows:

	Advaita Darśana	Viśiṣṭādvaita Darśana	Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana
Brahman	Parabrahman	Pratyagātmā	Akṣarabrahman

4.2. Parabrahman

Parabrahman, the highest ontological entity, also known as Paramātman, Puruṣottama, Nārāyaṇa, Bhagavān, Parameśvara or, occasionally, Īśvara, or only Brahman. Almost all of the Vedāntika schools, at least of the Vaiṣṇava saṃpradāyas, accept the existence and superiority of Parabrahman. As the existence of only one entity is accepted in the Advaita tradition, there is not much to discuss about Parabrahman. Henceforth, the entity Parabrahman will be explored within the Viśiṣṭādvaita and APD schools of thought. The section will briefly explain Parabrahman’s perennial manifestation through Akṣarabrahman, as understood in the APD.

24. GSB, pg. 281.

25. GP 31, 41, 51, 66, 78, S 5, L 18, GM 13, 18, 31, and A 4.

4.2.1. Parabrahman in the Viśiṣṭādvaita Darśana

Parabrahman, Brahman, or Īśvara are not explicitly differentiated in the Viśiṣṭādvaita school. Rāmānuja accepts five forms (svarūpa) of Parabrahman. Raṅgarāmānuja notes the five forms in his commentary as ‘पर-व्यूह-विभव-अन्तर्यामी-अर्चाऽवतार...’,²⁶ Para, Vyūha, Vibhava, Antaryāmī, and Arcā.²⁷ Rāmānuja introduces Parabrahman, in the beginning of his commentary on the BG, by presenting numerous adjectives such as: ‘स्वाभाविकानवधिकातिशयज्ञानबलैश्वर्यवीर्यशक्तितेजः प्रभृत्यसंख्येयकल्याणगुणगणमहोदधिः, वाङ्मनसापरिच्छेद्यस्वरूपस्वभावः, ब्रह्मादिदेवमनुष्याणां ध्यानाराधानाद्यगोचरः अपि अपारकारुण्य-सौशील्यवात्सल्यौदार्यमहोदधिः, स्वयमेव रूपं तत्तत्सजातीयसंस्थानं स्वस्वभावम् अजहद् एव कुर्वन् तेषु लोकेषु अवतीर्य अवतीर्य तैः तैः आराधितः.’ Svāmī Ādidevānanda translates these as

‘He (Parabrahman) is the great ocean of countless auspicious attributes which are both inherent in Him and beyond all limitations in excellence – some of them being knowledge, power, lordship, energy, potency, and splendor. His nature and qualities transcend all thought and words. He being inaccessible in His transcendent form to the meditation and worship of all creatures from Brahmā down to gods, men etc., and being also a shoreless ocean of compassion and loving condescension, paternal affection and generosity – He shaped His own figure into the likeness of the various kinds of creatures without giving up His supreme nature, and got incarnated in the worlds of creatures and received their worship.’²⁸

Rāmānuja’s introduction to Parabrahman mentions two crucial points. First is Parabrahman’s inaccessibility, through meditation, to even Brahmā so then what of ordinary creatures? And second, Parabrahman makes

26. Raṅgarāmānuja, *Taittirīya-Aitareya-Chāndogya-Bhāṣyam*, pg. 196.

27. Śrīnivāsa Cārī notes the Para-svarūpa as the transcendental form of Parabrahman; the Vyūha is the manifestation of Parabrahman in four different forms known as Vāsudeva, Saṅkarṣaṇa, Aniruddha, and Pradyumna, the Vibhava is the manifestation of Parabrahman by assuming similar bodies similar to those of human beings or other living beings, the arcā is the idol of worship. [Cārī, *Vaiṣṇavism*, pg. 212-22.]

28. Rāmānuja, *Śrī Rāmānuja Gītā Bhāṣya with Text and English Translation*, Trans. by Svāmī Ādidevānanda, pg. 41-3.

himself available by accepting a similar form to those worshipping him.

Rāmānuja also elaborates these points throughout his BG bhāṣya. For instance, the commentary of BG 18/42 and 73 notes Parabrahman as 'निरस्तनिखिलदोषगन्धः' (devoid of even the slightest trace of evil), 'निखिलवेदवेदान्तवेद्यः' (be known through Vedas and Vedānta), 'निखिलजगदेककारणं' (the sole cause of the universe), 'निखिलजगदाधारभूतः' (the foundation of the entire universe), 'निखिलस्य प्रवर्तयिता' (the actuator of all), 'तदाराधनभूतं च कृत्स्नं वैदिकं कर्म' (all action taught in the Vedas for His worship), and 'समस्तकल्याणगुणगणमहार्णवपरब्रह्म-शब्दाभिधेयपरमपुरुषयाथात्मविज्ञानम्' (the great ocean of all auspicious attributes. He is what is signified by the expression Supreme Person).²⁹

Rāmānuja believes Parabrahman as the doer, controller, sole cause, and actuator of all. Furthermore, Parabrahman is the only one to be known from the Vedas and attributed with all divine attributes. He also describes Parabrahman as the ultimate goal in the opening statements of his commentary on the third, seventh, and eighth adhyāyas.³⁰

With this background, we now move to understand Parabrahman is the APD.

4.2.2. Parabrahman in the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana

Amongst the five ontological entities accepted in the APD, Parabrahman is considered to be the supreme entity. There are many conceptual differences in the nature of Parabrahman described by Viśiṣṭādvaita juxtaposed to APD. The GSB notes four vital points to understand the nature of Parabrahman – सर्वसमुत्कृष्टत्व (supreme), साकृतिकत्व (with form), सर्वकर्तृत्व (omniagent), and प्रकट (manifest).³¹ First, we will look to understand how Parabrahman is supreme according to the APD.

4.2.2.1. Parabrahman: All-doer

The fundamental concept Svāminārāyaṇa explains is that Parabrahman

29. Ibid. pg. 578-9, 603-4.

30. Ibid. pg. 115, 241, 269.

31. GSB, pg. 226.

is eternally Sarva-Kartā (omniagent). He explains this doctrine in thirty-five Vacs.³² He explains that Parabrahman creates, sustains, dissolves,³³ supports, controls, inspires,³⁴ empowers,³⁵ permits, and grants the fruits of karma³⁶ to jīvas and īśvaras.

Bhadresh Swami notes in the GSB of the sixth verse of the seventh adhyāya, (अहं-परमात्मा) कृत्स्नस्य सकलजडचिदात्मकस्य भूतभवद्भविष्यतश्च जगतः प्रभवः अभिन्ननिमित्तोपादानकारणम् तथा अहमेव प्रलयः प्रलयकारणम्. अत एव स्थितिकारणमपीति योज्यम्,³⁷ or I am (Paramātmā) a material (उपादान) and efficient (निमित्त) cause of all the creations of the past, present, and future. Furthermore, I am the cause of dissolution. It should also be understood that Parabrahman is the cause of sustenance.

4.2.2.2. Parabrahman: Having Form

A few of the critical theological questions are: Does Parabrahman eternally have a definite form? If yes, then which form does Parabrahman possess? A few schools of Vedic philosophy believe that Parabrahman only possesses a physical body when Paramātmā incarnates on the earth and otherwise remains formless. However, Svāminārāyaṇa posits that Parabrahman perennially has a definite form, and that is the human form. He explains in GA 35, “Bhagavān eternally possesses a form.” Svāminārāyaṇa often³⁸ strongly stresses to his devotees that they should always understand Parabrahman to be Sākāra.

Here, it is to be noted that, according to Svāminārāyaṇa, the term

32. GP 13, 27, 37, 51, 56, 59, 62, 65, 74, 78, GM 10, 21, 31, 45, 53, 62, GA 13, 31, 32, 35, 38, K 10, L 2, 7, 12, 13, 14, 17, P 1, 7, V 2, 6, 18, A 7, J 5.

33. GP 37, 51, L 2, 17, P 1, GM 10, 53, V 2, 18, GA 35.

34. GM 10, 31, K 1.

35. GP 65.

36. GP 13, 65, GM 21, 45, V 6.

37. GSB, pg. 159.

38. GP 3, 15, 20, 23, 26, 37, 40, 45, 48, 56, 61, 63, 64, 66, 71, 78, GM 2, 8, 9, 10, 13, 18, 19, 24, 35, 39, 42, 50, 62, 64, GA 31, 38, S 1, 15, K 4, 7, 8, L 4, 6, 14, 16, 18, P 1, 2, 4, 7, V 2, 4, 9, 12, 13, 18, A 5, 6

Sākāra means that Parabrahman possesses a human form (manuṣyākāra).³⁹ Even though Parabrahman is always dvibhuja (having two arms),⁴⁰ he may appear to have four arms (caturbhuja), or sometimes eight arms (aṣṭabhuja), or may even have a thousand arms (sahasrabhuja), by wish.⁴¹ Additionally, the eternally human-shaped form of Parabrahman is Divya (divine) and not composed of māyā.⁴²

On the same note, Bhadreswami continually mentions Parabrahman's form, in the GSB, as 'दिव्यसाकारकिशोरमूर्तिः' (divine adolescent form), 'दिव्यकरणकलेवरादिसंयुतं' (with the divine body), 'मनुष्याकारः' (human form), 'सदाद्विभुजचरणः' or 'द्विभुजः' (having two arms). Not only on the earth, but Parabrahman also possesses a similar form in Akṣaradhāma (the divine abode). Bhadreswami notes 'अक्षरधामाख्यस्वदिव्यनिलयस्थितं पुरुषाकृतिं पुरुषोत्तमनारायणम्, that Puruṣottama Nārāyaṇa resides in Akṣaradhāma, his divine abode, with a human form.⁴³

4.2.2.3. Parabrahman: Supreme

According to the APD, the most imperative attribute for Parabrahman is 'akṣarāt parataḥ paraḥ' (Muṇḍaka 2/1/2). Parabrahman is superior to and the controller and inspirer of Akṣarabrahman. The APD outlines that Akṣarabrahman is eternally above māyā and thus acts as the doer, controller, cause of creation, and inspirer through the wish of Parabrahman. Svāminārāyaṇa states in the Vac. GM 3, "Brahman is the cause of all – Prakṛti-Puruṣa, etc. It is their supporter and pervades all... Transcending that Brahman is Parabrahman, Puruṣottama Nārāyaṇa, who is distinct from Brahman, and is the cause, the supporter and the inspirer of Brahman." Although, Akṣarabrahman, as it is eternally above māyā, can be the doer, controller, cause of creation, and inspirer through

39. GP 37, K 8, M 13.

40. GM 13, GA 38, L 18, V 18.

41. L 18.

42. GP 66, GA 37.

43. GSB, pg. 163, 181-2, 365.

Parabrahman's wish.

Bhadresh Swami notes while commenting on the verse 15/18 अत्र 'अक्षरादपि' इति अपिकरणेन बद्धमुक्तजीवेश्वरादिसर्वोत्कृष्टाक्षरब्रह्मणोपि पुरुषोत्तमस्योत्तमत्वोक्त्या तन्निरवधिकपरमशक्तिसामर्थ्यविभवः सूच्यते. एवं च सति क्षरातीतत्वं तु कैमुत्यसिद्धमेवेति सिद्ध्यति.⁴⁴ Meaning, the term *akṣarādapi* in verse denote that Parabrahman is superior to Akṣarabrahman, who is superior to all liberated and non-liberated jīvas and īśvaras.

Furthermore, in the commentary on the BG verse 10/41, Bhadresh Swami notes controllership and pervasiveness of Parabrahman as सर्वं वस्तुजातं मम सर्वन्यायकस्य परमात्मनः तज्जोऽशसम्भवमेव तेजो दिव्यैश्वर्यसामर्थ्यादिलक्षणं तदंशेन संभवो यस्येति तदलौकिकाऽचिन्त्यदिव्यशक्त्यंशैकदेशोद्भवमेवेति... परमात्मदिव्यव्याप्तिशून्यं किमपि नास्तीति भावः,⁴⁵ or the cause of all the vibhūtis and rest of the things is all-controller Parabrahman's divine opulence. Therefore, not a single thing is without Paramātmān's divine pervasiveness.

Moreover, Bhadresh Swami notes in the commentary on the Brahmasūtra, whenever a viewer experiences divinity in jīva, īśvara, or māyā, it is also due to the anupraveśa of Parabrahman. He writes, 'यदा सर्वव्यापी सर्वसमुत्कृष्टः परमात्मा स्वोपासक-स्वनियाम्य-स्वशरीरभूत-तत्तदात्मान्तःप्रविश्य तद्भावमाच्छाद्य स्वदिव्यभाववैभवं प्रकाशयन् उपदेशचेष्टादिकमातिष्ठते तदा परमात्मेच्छानुसारं कदाचित् तदुपदेशचेष्टादिषु दिव्यालौकिकभावो जनैः अनुभूयते,⁴⁶ when the supreme Paramātmān pervades in the body of someone it enlightens its powers through it. Therefore, due to the wish of Parabrahman, the viewers experience a similar divinity in the actions of that body. Svāminārāyaṇa declares this doctrine in Vac. P 7:

“...whomever that Puruṣottama Bhagavān ‘enters’ for the purpose of fulfilling many types of tasks, He eclipses that entity by His own divine light and He Himself reigns supreme through that entity. Moreover, in whomever He resides, He suppresses their own light and manifests His own divine light - just as when fire enters iron, it suppresses the quality of coldness and the black color of the iron and exhibits its own quality.

44. GSB, pg. 314.

45. GSB, pg. 237

46. Bhadrēśādāsa, *Brahmasūtra-Svāminārāyaṇa-Bhāṣyam*, pg. 58.

Also, when the sun rises, the light from all of the stars, the moon, etc., merges into its own light, and only the sun's light remains. In the same way, in whomever God 'enters', He overpowers their light and exhibits His own divine light to a greater degree. Then, after completing the task for which He had 'entered' that entity, He separates from it. Thereafter, the other entity remains as it was before. Thus, the additional powers that that entity appeared to have should be known to actually be Puruṣottama Bhagavān's powers."

4.2.2.4. Parabrahman: Manifest

Many Vedāntika schools affirm the doctrine of Parabrahman's manifestation. For instance, Śrī Vaiṣṇavas believe that Parabrahman remains present in the world in a temple through his archā svarūpa (mūrti), in the same way that Parabrahman resides in heaven.⁴⁷ However, the fundamental difference between the theological understanding of Svāminārāyaṇa's Parabrahman and other systems is the fact that an extremely transcendent and supreme Bhagavān can be fully present and exist in the form of human being here and now among us. Affirming Parabrahman's presence in the mūrtis, Svāminārāyaṇa adds that Parabrahman appositely remains manifest in the world through the Akṣarabrahman. He explains in Vac. GP 68:

"The mūrtis which Parabrahman has given for worship by his command are of eight types. Parabrahman himself personally enters those mūrtis and resides within them.... In the same way, Parabrahman also resides in the heart of the Santa. Therefore, the Santa should also be respected."

Furthermore, in Vac. V 19, Svāminārāyaṇa posits, "whenever a jīva attains a human body in Bharatakhanda, Bhagavān's Avatāras or Bhagavān's sādhu will certainly also be present on earth at that time." It is believed in the APD that the terms 'Santa' and 'Sādhu,' here, refer to Akṣarabrahman.

47. Narāyaṇan, "Arcāvatāra: On Earth as He Is in Heaven," pg. 53.

A detailed explanation of why these terms refer to Akṣarabrahman is beyond the scope of this paper, but it can be understood through an examination of both the primary and secondary sources of the APD.⁴⁸

In the BG, Kṛṣṇa repeatedly uses various declensions of the *asmad* pronoun, for around three hundred times and the verbs in the first person for sixty-five times, to teach Arjuna to join all of his senses in him. The notable point of Svāminārāyaṇa commentary is while Bhadrash Swami interprets any declension of *asmad*, he specifically adds the word *pratyakṣa*, or its synonyms to show that Kṛṣṇa is talking about the form standing right in front of Arjuna. To illustrate a few, Bhadrash Swami reads the terms *matparaḥ* (2/61) as प्रत्यक्षपरमात्मैकपरायणः, *aham* (18/66) as त्वत्पुरोवस्थितः परमात्मा, *mayi* (7/1) as सर्वमनुजनयनविषयतां गते प्रकटपरमात्मनि, *tvām* (12/1) as सर्वजननयनगोचरेत्वेनोपस्थितप्रत्यक्षपरमात्मानम्. In addition to these, the Svāminārāyaṇa Bhāṣyam mentions BG's crux as परमात्मस्वरूपं चाऽपि सकलमनुजनयनगोचरं प्रत्यक्षनराकृतिरूपमेवोपास्यमिति गीताया विशिष्टोपदेशः, or the unique preaching of the BG is to faithfully worship Parabrahman's manifest form.

The doctrine pertaining to the present manifestation of Bhagavān is central to attaining liberation in the APD. By the association of the present manifest form, one liberates oneself from the bondage of *maya*. A following intra-textual study of the BG will be helpful to understand how this doctrine of Parabrahman's manifestation through Akṣarabrahman is grounded in the BG.

Kṛṣṇa teaches Arjuna to remain engrossed in him (Parabrahman) in verse 18/66 as मन्मना भव मद्भक्तो मद्याजी मां नमस्कुरु, or focus on me, be my devotee, worship me, and revere me. Kṛṣṇa further says that if you do these, then you will attain me. Kṛṣṇa also articulates this notion of single-minded devotion to himself in the eighth śloka of the twelfth adhyāya, मय्येव मन आधत्स्व मयि बुद्धिं निवेशय। निवसिष्यसि मय्येव अत ऊर्ध्वं न संशयः; that is, there is no doubt that you will become established in me if you keep your mind and buddhi immersed in me. In this verse, Kṛṣṇa tells Arjuna to engage

48. For instance, see Brahmadarśanadāsa, *Vacanāmṛta Rahasya*, pg. 453-66.

in his devotional service. Using the word ‘*eva*,’ Kṛṣṇa illustrates that one should only be exclusively devoted to Parabrahman. In addition to this, Kṛṣṇa clarifies that one should also be an *avyabhichārī* (steady/faithful) bhakta of him. As he states in śloka 14/26, one who does not fall from the faithful bhakti of Parabrahman attains liberation. Kṛṣṇa also says that after one cultivates devotion to a superior embodiment, Parabrahman, all of one’s senses turn away from worldly desires, and one attains the eternal abode of Parabrahman.

An analysis of the verses mentioned above thus reveals that Kṛṣṇa instructs his disciple, Arjuna, to attach his senses to him, be faithful to him, and cultivate oneness with (or devotion to) him. By doing so, a devotee can attain the divine abode of Parabrahman. Importantly, Kṛṣṇa solidifies the idea that liberation is attained through devotion to the presently manifest form of Parabrahman—by using the words ‘*mayi*,’ ‘*mayyeva*,’ and ‘*avyabhichārī*.’

In addition to Parabrahman, this same idea of devoting one’s actions to Akṣarabrahman can be found in Kṛṣṇa’s discourse. Consideration of other verses of the BG highlights this similarity. For instance, Kṛṣṇa states in the verse ब्रह्मण्याधाय कर्माणि... (BG 5/10), that one who dedicates all of one’s karmas to Brahman, renouncing attachment to them, is not tainted by karmas, just like a lotus surrounded by water is not touched by it. This verse explains that one who dedicates all of one’s karmas to Akṣarabrahman becomes free from the bondage of karma.

As was previously mentioned, one who is freed from the fetters of karma attains the divine abode of Puruṣottama. Thus, this verse accentuates the idea that offering devotion to Brahman and Parabrahman affects the same result. However, 5/10 is not the only verse that expresses the sameness in the result. The BG contains numerous ślokas that explain that the result of worshipping Brahman and Parabrahman is the same.

Now, an important issue arises: the result of worshipping Brahman and Parabrahman can only be the same if both of these terms refer to the same entity. Nevertheless, as we already discussed using other verses,

Parabrahman and Brahman are two distinct entities. Hence, it seems logically necessary that the result of offering devotion to both can only be the same if Parabrahman resides in Akṣarabrahman. Further study of the BG helps to demonstrate this doctrine. Kṛṣṇa states in the fifteenth verse of the fifteenth adhyāya, वेदैश्च सर्वैरहमेव वेद्यो वेदान्तकृद्वेदविदेव चाहम्. That is that he (Parabrahman) is the source of knowledge. By all the Vedas, he is the only entity to be known. Moreover, indeed, he is the inspirer of Vedānta, i.e., the Upaniṣads, and the knower of all the Vedas. Kṛṣṇa clarifies here that he is the only source of knowledge, meaning that he alone can transmit that knowledge.

However, in the 34th śloka of the fourth canto of the BG, Kṛṣṇa mentions that someone else bestows the same knowledge. He says उपदेक्ष्यन्ति ते ज्ञानं ज्ञानिनस्तत्त्वदर्शिनः or the entity who is *jñāni* and *tattvadarśin* (i.e., the knower of all the tattvas) will give you the knowledge. Again, one can ask: to whom is Kṛṣṇa referring by the words ‘te,’ ‘*jñāninas*,’ and ‘*tattvadarśinaḥ*’? In reference to this question the Muṇḍaka asserts, तद्विज्ञानार्थं स गुरुमेवाभिगच्छेत् समित्पाणिः श्रोत्रियं ब्रह्म निष्ठम्. (1/2/12) To gain knowledge, one should approach a guru who is well versed in the scriptures, has staunch conviction in Parabrahman, and is himself, Brahman. As was discussed earlier, the third śloka of the eighth adhyāya in the BG states that Brahman is to be understood as Akshara. This means that Akṣarabrahman can also be the source of knowledge.

This connection reveals answers to our previously raised questions. First, the terms ‘te,’ ‘*jñāninas*,’ and ‘*tattvadarśinaḥ*’ refers to the entity Akṣarabrahman. Furthermore, second, Parabrahman resides in Akṣarabrahman, as Akṣarabrahman is also ascribed the authority to give knowledge. The reasoning behind this claim is as follows: If both the entity who is *tattvadarśin* and Parabrahman are said to be the only sources of the same knowledge, then they are the same entity, or Parabrahman resides in and acts through the former. However, we know, through other verses, that they are different. So, it is clear that Parabrahman resides in the *tattvadarśin* entity. In addition, by reflecting on the above verse from

the Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad, that this *tattvadarśin* entity is Akṣarabrahman is crystallized.

As mentioned at the beginning of this section, APD asserts that Parabrahman remains manifest on earth through Akṣarabrahman. The GSB establishes this doctrine by presenting a unique interpretation of the term ‘*upadekṣyanti*,’ which appears in verse 4/34. The bhāṣya states, here, लृटा विशेषार्थद्योतनम्, the use of the future tense points to some distinctive theme. The Bhāṣyakāra, furthermore, notes the centerpiece as यद्यपि इदानीं तु साक्षाद् अहम् एव तव गुरूपदेष्टृभूतः किन्तु भविष्यति काले मन्त्रनाट्यलीलासमाप्ति-अनन्तरम् अपि ममात्मभूतान् मत्परमप्रीतिमतः मन्निकटतमान् साक्षाद् अक्षरब्रह्मस्वरूपज्ञानिगुरुन् द्वारीकृत्य तत्कार्यं करिष्ये इति.⁴⁹ That is, Kṛṣṇa says that even though he (Parabrahman) is present to guide Arjuna in the form of his Guru, after his passing, he will communicate the same knowledge through the Akṣarabrahman gurus, for eternity.

5. Exploring Seminal Elucidations

In addition to taking metaphysical, epistemological, praxis, or soteriological lead from the Vacanāmṛta, Bhadrash Swami’s dedication to Svāminārāyaṇa’s teaching is seen at the minute level also. The words he uses while interpreting the scripture reflects the attention towards the Vacanāmṛta. According to the *sthālī pulākanyāya*, this section will examine four interpretations from the GSB.

Bhadrash Swami interprets sthitaprajña (BG 2/54) as स्थिता मानुषीं लीलामाचरत्यपि नारायणस्वरूपे निश्चला प्रज्ञा निश्चयात्मिका बुद्धिर्यस्य,⁵⁰ or Sthitaprajña refers to one of unwavering intellect or unflinching conviction towards Parabrahman even while Parabrahman seemingly performs human actions. Svāminārāyaṇa states in Vac. GM 17, as “...without harboring any doubts about the appropriateness or inappropriateness of those actions and incidents. Such a devotee should be known as being sthitaprajña

49. GSB, pg. 110.

50. GSB, pg. 58.

with regards to the nature of Puruṣottama.”

Another such term is sarvabhūtātma (BG 5/7). The Bhāṣyakāra explains the phrase as सर्वभूतानां जीवेश्वरलक्षणानामात्मा व्यापकस्तन्नियामकस्तच्छरीरी यदक्षरं ब्रह्म.⁵¹ Meaning, *Sarvabhūtātma* refers to Akṣarabrahman. Akṣarabrahman is the pervador, sovereign, and indweller and thus the Ātmā of all bhūtas, or jīvas and īśvaras. Svāminārāyaṇa's words in Vac. L 10 and GM 3 can be combinedly used to understand the above bhāṣya. Vac. L 10 includes “Brahman is the ātmā of all.” Moreover, Vac. GM 3 mentions, “Brahman is the cause of all – Prakṛti-Puruṣa, etc. It is their supporter and pervades all...”

The GSB interprets *jñānī* (BG 7/17) as ब्रह्मविद्यासंपन्नः भक्तः,⁵² A bhakta who has attained Brahma vidyā. Bhadrash Swami mentions *jñānī* as a bhakta and that bhakta has attained Brahma vidyā. Svāminārāyaṇa uses both these words to explain who a *jñānī* is in the entire Vacanāmṛta. For instance, Vac. GP 43 includes, only such a ‘niṣkāma bhakta’ who has been referred to as a devotee with *jñānī* by Kṛṣṇa Bhagavān in the Gītā.” In Vac. GM 65, Svāminārāyaṇa says, such a person is called a *jñānī* bhakta of Bhagavān. Svāminārāyaṇa also includes the terms such as; brahmarūpa or brahmasvarūpa while interpreting the term *jñānī*. He mentions in Vac. A 2, “*jñānī* has discarded worldly influences and became brahmarūpa.” Vac. S 12 entails, “*jñānī* believes own ātmā to be brahmarūpa.”

The last term to examine is ब्रह्मभूतः (BG 18/54). The Bhāṣyakāra interprets this term as साक्षदक्षरब्रह्मस्वरूपगुरोर्दृढतमं प्रसङ्गं लब्ध्वा तन्मननतदाज्ञानुवृत्त्यादिपालनादिभिस्तदक्षरब्रह्मसाधर्म्यलक्षणा देहावस्थागुणत्रयसमतिक्रमणलभ्यां ब्रह्मरूपतां प्राप्तः.⁵³ Meaning, one who has perfected the brāhmī sthiti—a state that transcends all three bodies, states of being, and guṇas—upon attaining the Akṣarabrahman guru's prasaṅga and having reflected on that [guru] and having followed that [guru's] ājñā and anuvṛtti. A few crucial terms to concentrate on from this bhāṣya portion are; guru's prasaṅga, ājñā and anuvṛtti, and

51. GSB, pg. 119

52. GSB, pg. 165.

53. GSB, pg. 360.

sādharmya. The roots of all these words can be traced in the Vacanāmṛta. In Vac. GP 54, Svāminārāyaṇa mentions that one should do prasaṅga of Bhagavān's ekāntika sādhu. GM 51 declares, "only one who follows the commands (ājñā and anuvṛtti) of the Satpuruṣa is behaving as the ātmā." Furthermore, Vac. GP 21 and 40 echo that one attains sādharma (qualities) of Akṣarabrahman.

This section helped to understand the level of dedication Bhadrash Swami upholds while writing the GSB.

CONCLUSION

To conclude, this paper has analyzed the novel commentarial work the GSB. The study encapsulated three primary points; I. how Bhadrash Swami presents the nature of Akṣarabrahman and Parabrahman in the GSB, II. the roots of Bhadrash Swami's arguments in Svāminārāyaṇa's discourses; the Vacanāmṛta, and III. the APD's theological understanding of supremely transcendental Parabrahman can be wholly present and personable among us, in human form.

List of Abbreviations

A	Vacanāmṛta Amadāvāda
APD	Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana
BG	Śrīmad-Bhagavad-Gītā
GA	Vacanāmṛta Gaḍhaḍā Antya
GM	Vacanāmṛta Gaḍhaḍā Madhya
GP	Vacanāmṛta Gaḍhaḍā Prathama
GSB	Śrīmadbhagavadgītā-Svāminārāyaṇa-Bhāṣyam
K	Vacanāmṛta Kāriyānī
L	Vacanāmṛta Loyā
P	Vacanāmṛta Pañcālā
S	Vacanāmṛta Sāraṅgapura
V	Vacanāmṛta Varatāla
Vac.	Refers to the individual chapters of the text Vacanāmṛta

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THE VACANĀMṚTA – THE TEACHINGS OF BHAGAVĀN SVĀMINĀRĀYAṆA

SADHU BRAHMASETUDAS
Ācārya

KEYWORDS

Śāstra; Svāminārāyaṇa Saṃpradāya; Vacanāmṛta; Gujarati literature; text overview; textual authenticity; textual authority; themes

INTRODUCTION

The Vacanāmṛta consists of a chronological compilation of the teachings of Parabrahman Svāminārāyaṇa (Swaminarayan) delivered in the last decade of his life, between 1819 and 1829 CE. It is venerated as one of the seminal sacred texts of the Swaminarayan tradition and presents a foundational exposition of Swaminarayan's *darśanic* position. Containing the record of Swaminarayan's teachings in his own words, it is understood as the divine revelation (*parāvāṇi*) of God. For this reason, the work is greatly revered among the followers of Swaminarayan. The text is studied, analyzed, and researched upon in tremendous detail by both renunciate and unordained members of the tradition. As such, it is a work within the tradition that is greatly read, studied, and revered. This work presents a brief introduction of the Vacanāmṛta to familiarize readers with Bhagavān Swaminarayan, the teacher of the text; the history and authenticity of the work; its structure and methodology; and its primary topics of concern.

ORGANIZATION

At roughly 650 pages, the *Vacanāmṛta* consists of a total of 274 chapters presented in chronological order. These individual chapters are also identified as “*Vacanāmṛta*.”¹ Within the text, these chapters (or “*Vacanāmṛta*”) are categorized based on the locations in which Swaminarayan delivered his teachings. In sequence, these sections are titled: “*Gaḍhaḍā Prathama*,” “*Sāraṅgapura*,” “*Kāriyāṇī*,” “*Loyā*,” “*Pañcālā*,” “*Gaḍhaḍā Madhya*,” “*Varatāla*,” “*Amadāvāda*,” and “*Gaḍhaḍā Antya*.” Given this organization, discourses that were delivered in the village named *Sāraṅgapura* appear in the section titled “*Sāraṅgapura*,” and discourses delivered in the village named *Kāriyāṇī* appear in the section “*Kāriyāṇī*.”

The following table details the number of “*Vacanāmṛta*” in each section:

Vacanāmṛta Section	Number of “Vacanāmṛtas”	Total
Gaḍhaḍā Prathama	78	262
Sāraṅgapura	18	
Kāriyāṇī	12	
Loyā	18	
Pañcālā	7	
Gaḍhaḍā Madhya	67	

1. To prevent confusion between the two, the articles in this issue will use ‘*Vacanāmṛta*’ without double-quotes (*Vacanāmṛta*) to refer to the entire sacred text and use ‘*Vacanāmṛta*’ nested within double-quotes (“*Vacanāmṛta*”) to refer to the individual chapters contained therein. For instance, in the sentence: The *Vacanāmṛta* contains 274 “*Vacanāmṛtas*.”

The first instance of ‘*Vacanāmṛta*’ refers to the sacred text as a whole, whereas the second instance refers to the individual chapters within the text.

Varatāla		20	
Amadāvāda		3	
Gaḍhaḍā Antya		39	
Bhūgola-kagolanuṃ Vacanāmṛta		I	I
Vadhārānām Vacanāmṛto	Amadāvāda	5	II
	Aślālī	I	
	Jetalapura	5	
		Total:	274

“Vacanāmṛtas” are traditionally referenced according to this grouping. The section in which the “Vacanāmṛta” appears is mentioned first, followed by the sequential number of the “Vacanāmṛta” as it appears within that section. For example, “Vacanāmṛta Sāraṅgapura 7” or more simply, “Sāraṅgapura 7” refers to the seventh “Vacanāmṛta” in the Sāraṅgapura section.

THE LAYOUT OF A “VACANĀMṚTA”

Each “Vacanāmṛta” within the text is presented in a specific format. A “Vacanāmṛta” begins by announcing its sequential number in the section within which it is positioned, followed by a brief title. These titles were added in later editions of the text to aid in recalling the content of its associated “Vacanāmṛta.” These titles typically reflect notable topics of revelation found within the “Vacanāmṛta.” For instance, “Vacanāmṛta Gaḍhaḍā Prathama 54”—the 54th “Vacanāmṛta” in the Gaḍhaḍā Prathama section—is titled: “Vacanāmṛta 54: Bhāgavata Dharmanā Poṣaṇanuṃ; Mokṣanā Dvāranuṃ (Cultivating Bhāgavata Dharma; The Gateway of Liberation).”

Each “Vacanāmṛta” begins with an introductory paragraph that presents a number of details. This paragraph commences by recording the date on which Swaminarayan delivered the particular “Vacanāmṛta.” This date appears according to the classical Indian calendar system that uses

lunar months and sidereal years. The Vikrama Saṃvat year is provided, followed by the lunar month and a description of whether the moon is in the waxing or waning stage of progression. This is then proceeded by detailing the numerical day within the lunar phase and its corresponding *tithī*—a verbal expression of the numerical day.

The paragraph then continues by describing the location in which Swaminarayan delivered the discourse. Among other things, this description includes the name of the village and the place within the village in which the discourse was delivered. A brief description of Swaminarayan's appearance is then followed by a description of those who were seated before him in the assembly (*sabhā*). Occasionally, the time of day is also provided.

After the introductory paragraph, the “Vacanāmṛta” begins its presentation of Swaminarayan's discourses. This is done in a number of ways. In some “Vacanāmṛta,” Swaminarayan immediately begins delivering his teachings. In others, he begins by presenting a question to those assembled before him. In yet others, members of the audience pose questions to Swaminarayan or to other members of the audience. Some “Vacanāmṛtas” begin with a brief description of the moments leading up to Swaminarayan's discourses. Then the “Vacanāmṛta” continues by recording Swaminarayan's teachings and any relevant interactions he has with the audience. The chapter finally concludes with the words “iti Vacanāmṛtam,” indicating the end of the discourse.

A BIOGRAPHICAL ACCOUNT OF BHAGAVĀN SWAMINARAYAN

The Vacanāmṛta contains the teachings of Parabrahman Bhagavān Swaminarayan. In order to appreciate the significance of the Vacanāmṛta, it is important to become familiar with Bhagavān Swaminarayan. Born as Ghanaśyāma Pāṇḍe on April 3, 1781 (on the 9th lunar day of the *śukla*-half

(waxing-half) of the Caitra month, Āṣāḍha Saṃvata 1837)² in Chapaiyā,³ a small village by Ayodhyā, Uttara Pradeśa, Swaminarayan was the second son of his mother Bālā (better known as Premavatī or Bhakti)⁴ and father: Devaśarmā (also known as Dharmadeva).⁵

Soon after his parents passed, Ghanaśyāma, at the age of eleven, left his home on a pilgrimage across India.⁶ During his journey of approximately seven years, he visited many pilgrimage sites and āśramas (dwellings of sages and ascetics)⁷ throughout India. During his journey, he often asked those he met to explain the nature and form (*svarūpa*) of the *jīvātman*, *īśvarātman*, *māyā*, *Brahman*, and *Parabrahman*. He remained unsatisfied by the responses he received.⁸

Eventually, he settled in Loja, Gujarat and took the name Sahajānanda⁹ He soon after established a religious tradition (*saṃpradāya*)¹⁰ and bestowed the mantra ‘Svāminārāyaṇa’ to his disciples. He announced that all should offer worship to the present God, Swaminarayan,¹¹ and later became well-known by this designation.

Swaminarayan thereafter traveled throughout the region delivering discourses and meeting with devotees. In his discourses, he often talked on the knowledge of Akṣarabrahman and Parabrahman (*brahmajñāna*) and other principles of Vedānta. He also repeatedly elaborated on the significance of singular devotion (*ekāntika-bhakti*), which he described as becoming one with Akṣarabrahman and offering singular devotion to Puruṣottama. Through his discourses, he explained the principles of the

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2. (Harshadrai T. Dave, Bhagavāna Śrīsvāminārāyaṇa 22)
 3. (Harshadrai T. Dave, Bhagavāna Śrīsvāminārāyaṇa 21)
 4. (Harshadrai T. Dave, Bhagavāna Śrīsvāminārāyaṇa 8)
 5. (Harshadrai T. Dave, Bhagavāna Śrīsvāminārāyaṇa 7)
 6. (Harshadrai T. Dave, Bhagavāna Śrīsvāminārāyaṇa 96–97)
 7. (Harshadrai T. Dave, Bhagavāna Śrīsvāminārāyaṇa 311)
 8. (Harshadrai T. Dave, Bhagavāna Śrīsvāminārāyaṇa 317)
 9. (Harshadrai T. Dave, Bhagavāna Śrīsvāminārāyaṇa 349)
 10. (Harshadrai T. Dave, Bhagavāna Śrīsvāminārāyaṇa 377)
 11. (Harshadrai T. Dave, Bhagavāna Śrīsvāminārāyaṇa 387–88)

Akṣara-Puruṣottama Siddhānta (the doctrine of Akṣara-Puruṣottama), thus laying the foundation for the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana. He also identified and spoke on the glory of his own self as Parabrahman Puruṣottama¹² and identified his greatest disciple Guṇātītānanda Svāmī (Gunatitanand Swami) as the manifest form of Akṣarabrahman.¹³

In addition to advising his disciples on spiritual matters, Swaminarayan also took interest in their daily lives and occupations.¹⁴ During famines and droughts, he cared for their well-being and livelihood¹⁵ and elevated them both spiritually and socially. Swaminarayan is also documented to have inspired his devotees to work for social change. Through his teachings and involvement, he strived to mitigate “some of the oppressive nature of the caste-based customs” common in his era.¹⁶ He also advocated for women’s rights and spoke against the practice of sati¹⁷ and female infanticide.¹⁸ He promoted non-violent sacrifices (*ahiṃsā-yajñas*) and abstinence. This drive for social reform often resulted in persecution.¹⁹

Swaminarayan also inspired the creation of six *śikharabaddha mandirs* (sacred places of worship with pinnacle-like structures) in Gujarat.²⁰ These *mandirs* were constructed in Ahmedabad, Bhujā, Vaḍatāla, Dholerā, Junāgaḍha, and Gaḍhaḍā “within a span of six years, from 1822 till 1828.”²¹ In one of these *mandirs*, he also consecrated an idol of himself and

12. See, for example (Brahmadarśanadāsa Sādhu, Vachnamrut Rahasya 153–91, 202–03)

13. See, for example (Brahmadarśanadāsa Sādhu, Vachnamrut Rahasya 126–27)

14. See, for example (Harshadrai T. Dave, Bhagavāna Śrīsvāminārāyaṇa 311) (Harshadrai T. Dave, Bhagavāna Śrīsvāminārāyaṇa 52–75)

15. See, for example (Harshadrai T. Dave, Bhagavāna Śrīsvāminārāyaṇa 239–74)

16. (Mangalnidhidas Sadhu 117)

17. ‘Sati’ refers to the practice of “immolation of a widow on the cremation pyre of her dead husband.” (Mukundcharandas Sadhu 27)

18. (Mukundcharandas Sadhu 26–31)

19. See, for example (Harshadrai T. Dave, Bhagavāna Śrīsvāminārāyaṇa 55–56) (Harshadrai T. Dave, Bhagavāna Śrīsvāminārāyaṇa 440–49, 461–67)

20. (Williams and Trivedi xviii) (Mukundacaranadāsa Sādhu 65)

21. (Mukundcharandas Sadhu 65)

designated it as Harikṛṣṇa Mahārāja.^{22,23}

Throughout his life, Swaminarayan initiated approximately three thousand celibate *sadhus* (renunciants), who were known as *paramahaṃsas*.²⁴ Many of them traveled throughout the region communicating Swaminarayan's teachings and encouraging people to live virtuous lives. Among them, many were recognized for their musical expertise, Sanskrit and vernacular (*prākṛta*) literary works, poetic contributions, artistic creations, and even administrative capabilities.²⁵

Within the tradition's biographical and historical accounts, Swaminarayan is also recorded as having placed many into a state of *samādhi*—a state of intense concentration or meditation.²⁶ Because of his enlightening discourses, extraordinary works, miraculous feats, and accounts of self-revelation,^{27,28} many of Swaminarayan's followers worshiped him as the manifest form of Parabrahman. In explanation, they enumerate thirteen exclusive reasons for their conviction.²⁹

Among all the introductions given of Swaminarayan, the most significant to his devotees and the most relevant to understanding the importance of the Vacanāmṛta is his identification as Parabrahman Puruṣottama—the supreme entity. As Parabrahman he is believed to

22. (Mukundcharandas Sādhu 66)

23. A detailed account of the Svāminārāyaṇa's tradition of mandir construction can be found at (Hardy) (Vasavada).

24. (Ā. Svāmī 7847) (HaC. 28.35)

25. (Mukundcharandas Sādhu 46–48)

26. See, for example (Harshadrai T. Dave, Bhagavāna Śrīsvāminārāyaṇa 400–30) (Harshadrai T. Dave, Bhagavāna Śrīsvāminārāyaṇa 29–30, 79–80, 256)

27. Bhagavān Svāminārāyaṇa was proclaimed by his devotees as Parabrahman Puruṣottama. In numerous biographical accounts and discourses he is also documented as revealing himself as such.

28. For a collection of such accounts see: (Brahmadarśanadāsa Sādhu, Vachnamrut Rahasya 138–283)

29. A detailed listing of these reasons in Sanskrit verse along with accounts from his biography are available in: (Vivekasāgaradāsa Sādhu 32–55). A detailed listing is also available in: (Brahmadarśanadāsa Sādhu, Vachnamrut Rahasya 245–48).

be, among other things, supreme (*sarvopari*), with form (*sākāra*), divine (*divya*), the cause of all (*sarvakāraṇa*), the all-doer (*sarvakartā*), and ever-present on earth (*pragaṭa*). He is also identified as the object of devotion or worshipful service (*upāsana*) within the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana. As a reflection of this understanding, today, there are over a thousand Akṣara-Puruṣottama temples (*mandirs*) throughout the world in which Swaminarayan's divine idol (*mūrti*) along with the idol of Gunatitanand Swami (Akṣarabrahman) are consecrated and worshiped. As the recorded teachings and revelations of Parabrahman, the Vacanāmṛta is greatly revered and holds a unique significance within the tradition.

Upon revealing his continued presence upon earth through Gunatitanand Swami,³⁰ Swaminarayan, at the age of 49, departed from the world in Gaḍhaḍā on 1 June 1830 (Jeṭha suda 10, Saṃvata 1886).³¹ Under the guidance of Gunatitanand Swami and the succession of Akṣarabrahman gurus that followed, devotees continue to experience Swaminarayan's presence and divine bliss to this day.

TEXT CREATION

Swaminarayan's teachings found within the Vacanāmṛta were compiled and edited by Gopālānanda Svāmī, Muktānanda Svāmī, Nityānanda Svāmī, Brahmānanda Svāmī, and Śukānanda Svāmī—all distinguished, senior renunciate disciples of Swaminarayan. In addition to being devout followers, these editors brought their unique expertise and specialized knowledge to complement the creation of the text.

Gopālānanda Svāmī, a senior *paramahaṃsa* sadhu of Swaminarayan, possessed exceptional clarity on the principles revealed by Swaminarayan. As a distinguished scholar of sacred texts and the author of several Sanskrit and vernacular works, he was an adept and experienced author.

Muktānanda Svāmī was another senior disciple of Swaminarayan.

30. (Harshadrai T. Dave, Bhagavāna Śrīsvāminārāyaṇa 426–28, 431)

31. (Harshadrai T. Dave, Bhagavāna Śrīsvāminārāyaṇa 430–32)

His unsatisfying yearning for knowledge and ever-increasing eagerness inspired his inquisitive nature. He was a prolific poet, whose literary contributions include more than twenty-two poetic works within a number of Indian languages. He was esteemed for his exceptional talent in poetic composition, authoring lyrical poetry, and the performing arts.

Nityānanda Svāmī's reputation as a scholar was well-known during Swaminarayan's time. Classically trained in Kāśī, he was exceptionally versed in sacred texts. Throughout his life, he engaged in several classical intellectual debates and was esteemed within scholarly communities. As the author of several Sanskrit and vernacular works, his proficiency in literary composition was highly acclaimed.

Adept in statecraft and possessing exceptional administrative capacities, Brahmānanda Svāmī functioned as Swaminarayan's master-builder. In addition to his pragmatic faculties, he was a proficient poet and lyricist who composed over eight thousand lyrical pieces. He was also gifted with an exceptional memory, affording him with the unique ability to recall not only literary compositions but also, more relevantly, Swaminarayan's discourse and teachings.

Śukānanda Svāmī served as Swaminarayan's personal assistant and amanuensis. Being in close proximity with Swaminarayan and his experience with dictation afforded him with unique capacities that facilitated the creation of the Vacanāmṛta. His abilities as an author greatly contributed to the text.

Together these senior *paramahamsas* recorded, compiled, and drafted Swaminarayan's discourses into the Vacanāmṛta. Their scholarly aptitude, experience in literary and poetic composition, and transparency all contribute to the merits of the Vacanāmṛta.

AUTHENTICITY AND AUTHORITY

Many of the above-mentioned features of the Vacanāmṛta attest to its authority and authenticity. As the divine revelation (*parāvāṇi*) of Parabrahman, the text holds authority within the tradition on par with

śruti texts, such as the Vedas and Upaniṣads. Since it records the discourses delivered by Swaminarayan himself, the founder of the tradition, and encompasses his essential teachings, it also serves as an important work for understanding the core teachings of the Swaminarayan Saṃpradāya. In addition, the lineage of gurus that succeeded Swaminarayan further affirmed the text's authority by their constant endorsement and acclaim. The text's significance is also discernible by the willingness of the *saṃpradāya*'s adherents to apply its teachings within their lives. As a result of its importance, the Vacanāmṛta serves as the source of the many secondary texts authored within the tradition.

In addition to being a foundational and authoritative text, the Vacanāmṛta also possesses great authenticity. The text's accurate rendering of Swaminarayan's revelation is substantiated by being compiled by, as we saw earlier, learned, devout, and experienced editors, who were present not only in Swaminarayan's time but also in the assemblies in which he delivered his teachings. Each "Vacanāmṛta's" mention of the date on which the discourse was delivered, the precise location in which it was presented, and a detailed description of Swaminarayan's appearance all further support the text's integrity. Furthermore, the text itself records being presented to Swaminarayan for approval. "Vacanāmṛta Loyā 7" begins by describing how Nityānanda Svāmī presented a copy of the Vacanāmṛta to Swaminarayan on December 7th, 1820. It narrates: "In the assembly, Nityānanda Svāmī brought the Vacanāmṛta manuscript and presented it to Śrījī Mahārāja. He (Swaminarayan) examined the manuscript and was extremely pleased."³² Documenting this presentation and Swaminarayan's own validation of the text serves to further substantiate its authenticity.

32. "ane te samayamāṃ Vacanāmṛtanuṃ pustaka Nityānaṃda Svāmīe lāvīne Śrī-jīmahārājane āpyuṃ. pachī te pustakane joīne bahu rājī thayā" (Svāminārāyaṇa 269)

PRESENTATION APPROACH

Question-Answer Dialogue and Kṛpāvacana

Swaminarayan’s method of conducting discourses is distinguished. Most of the discourses in the Vacanāmṛta are in the form of a dialogue, specifically, structured in the form of a question and answer session. Within the 274 “Vacanāmṛtas” there are a total of 456 questions asked. Devotees and *paramahamsas* ask questions to either Swaminarayan or one another or Swaminarayan presents a question to those seated in the assembly. Swaminarayan then either affirms and adds to their responses, corrects them, or provides a response himself. Occasionally, Swaminarayan also clarifies a question being presented and offers instruction on how to better formulate them. In yet other “Vacanāmṛtas” he offers revelation without being prompted. These revelations are identified as *kṛpāvacana* or discourses that are self-inspired and delivered out of sheer grace or compassion.

Case Studies

Within some revelations Swaminarayan engages in an analysis of case studies. He presents a description of two persons, events, or concepts and asks the audience to present an informed and defensible analysis or evaluation of both cases. By presenting such inquiries Swaminarayan not only emphasizes subtle differences between various principles, but also reveals the relationships between them and how they are practically expressed. These case studies also serve to engage the audience in rational reflections on presumed values, merits, and moral positions.

Interpretive Analysis

Swaminarayan also uses interpretive analysis as a means to express revelation. In many instances, he refers to and recalls passages, verses, or aphorisms from sacred texts including the Vedas; Upaniṣads; *Purāṇas*, such as the *Bhāgavatapurāṇa*; *smṛti* works such as the *Bhagavadgītā*; and

itihāsa (historical) texts, such as the *Mahābhārata* and *Rāmāyaṇa*. In some of these recollections he presents novel interpretations or unique exegetical insights, whereas, in others, he elaborates on them to reinforce the message he is conveying. In yet other instances, he presents well-known narratives from sacred texts and provides an analysis of persons or events described within them to establish a principle or reference them as exemplars of a principle he is discussing. Within certain “*Vacanāmṛtas*” Swaminarayan provides hermeneutical insights on how to interpret sacred texts and other *darśanic* positions expressed within their respective works. He provides summative expositions of these texts and *darśanic* positions to both clarify their foundational principles and emphasize their significance. In doing so, he also at times conducts inter-*darśanic* analyses by expressing distinctive features of various *darśanas* and contrasting them with others or his own. In engaging in such analyses, he even considers counter-arguments, anticipates objections, and provides resolutions or responses to them.

Analogy and Metaphors

Swaminarayan also possesses an exceptional method of presenting difficult concepts. Accommodating the cultural, social, and historical background of his audience, he uses simple analogies, metaphors, and examples from ordinary occurrences to present otherwise difficult notions. These exemplars are taken from a broad range of fields including widely-practiced agricultural methods; fundamentals of animal husbandry and behavior; culinary practices; embroidery; principles of statecraft and warfare; natural phenomenon; methods of town, city, or home management; the nature of cosmic events; and even the performance of common household duties. Although these analogies and metaphors are simple, Swaminarayan possesses a remarkable ability to utilize them to convey his teachings in an understandable manner. These analogies and examples serve not only an explanatory role but also aid in remembering the principles that they clarify.

By integrating a variety of methods to convey his teachings, Swaminarayan provides a comprehensive and adaptive means for expressing revelation. As a consequence, his discourses not only are compelling and characterized by diverse perspectives and academic rigor, but also cater to a wide range of audiences.

THE AUDIENCE

A survey of (1) the questions asked and answered by those present within the assembly, (2) descriptions provided in the introductory paragraph of each “Vacanāmṛta,” and (3) details given throughout the Vacanāmṛta suggest that Swaminarayan’s discourses addressed an extremely diverse audience. This audience included both ascetics (*sadhus* or *paramahamsas*) and householders from both genders and various social classes, educational backgrounds, vocations, age groups, financial positions, and even religious denominations.

Among the ascetics that are recorded as being present, many were distinguished scholars, authors, skilled poets, vocalists, musicians, and even administrators. Some had received formal education and were learned in sacred texts, while others were students still engaged in the study of sacred works, languages, and religious literature. They were also from diverse cultural and religious backgrounds, had come from different regions of India, and spoke a number of languages and dialects.

The devotees present within these assemblies were also from diverse backgrounds. Some were farmers, merchants, rulers, pundits, large and small estate owners, guards or defenders, and even of royalty. Both men and women, the young and aged, those of affluence and those without means, and of all social orders (castes and *jātis*) were not only present in the assembly, but also asked questions to Swaminarayan. Even those of different faiths attended Swaminarayan’s discourses and contributed by putting forth questions. As the ascetic disciples that were present, these devotees were also from diverse cultural backgrounds and came from different regions of India.

Swaminarayan's ability to accept, address, and include such a diverse audience in his discussions bears testament to his extraordinary teaching proficiency. To be able to keep such a wide range audience not only attentive but also engaged in meaningful dialogue affirms his ability to make even the most sophisticated and difficult topics of discussion palatable. Furthermore, his willingness to engage in reflection with all those present, regardless of their gender, social status, age, and creed demonstrates his unbiased concern, respect, and admiration.

THE SVĀMINĀRĀYAṆABHĀṢYA AND SVĀMINĀRĀYAṆASIDDHĀNTASUDHĀ

As one of the tradition's most significant and seminal works, the *Vacanāmṛta* serves as a basis for the tradition's comprehensive commentaries on the *Prasthānatrayī*, a collective designation of the following three canonical sacred texts: The Upaniṣads, *Brahmasūtras*, and the *Bhagavadgītā*. These commentaries are collectively identified as the *Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣya*. Swaminarayan's philosophical, theological, hermeneutical, exegetical, moral, and summative revelations in the *Vacanāmṛta* provide profound insight on deciphering the revelations of these foundational sacred works. Whether Swaminarayan engages in revelation that explicitly interprets verses or aphorisms from these sacred texts or implicitly does so by presenting his own unique position on principles discussed within them, Swaminarayan's teachings in the *Vacanāmṛta* serve as the origin of the *Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣya* reading of these texts. As a result, the *Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣya*, consisting of the following five volumes: the *Īśādyāṣṭopaniṣat-Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣya*, *Chāndogyopaniṣat-Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣya*, *Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣat-Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣya*, *Brahmasūtra-Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣya*, and the *Śrīmadbhagavadgītā-Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣya*, presents a comprehensive commentary on the sacred texts of the *Prasthānatrayī* according to the teachings of Swaminarayan.

On a similar note, the *Svāminārāyaṇasiddhāntasudhā*, a *vāda* text

that offers an exposition, justification, and defense of the principles of the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana—the *dārśanic* position revealed by Swaminarayan—also bases its discussion on his teachings found within the Vacanāmṛta and elaborations provided by the tradition’s gurus.

AUDIENCE AND RECEPTION

As one of the core sacred texts of the tradition, the Vacanāmṛta has seen a growing, diverse readership. To accommodate this audience, it has been translated from Gujarati into a number of different languages. Its Hindi translation was published in 2004, followed by its revised English translation in June 2010. It was later translated in Telugu, Tamil, and Marathi in December 2018.

Technological development has also increased accessibility to the text. In addition to print media, the Vacanāmṛta is also available in several digital formats. In April 2017 the introduction of a cross-platform and multi-device application on the Vacanāmṛta, which provides an extensively annotated version of the Gujarati text along with study aids, further increased accessibility, readership, and study of the text.

As the text, and consequently Swaminarayan’s teachings, become(s) more accessible, not only in terms of the number of languages but also the platforms it is available in, its readership, scholarship, and secondary publications also expands, giving way to new insights and perspectives. It is with this expectation and anticipation that this brief yet instructive introductory work on the Vacanāmṛta serves as a gateway to its further scholarly inquiry, reflection, and discussion.

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TRADITION OF EDUCATION WITHIN THE SVĀMINĀRĀYAṆA SAṂPRADĀYA'S

DR. JYOTINDRA DAVE

Director,

BAPS Swaminarayan Research Institute, New Delhi

ABSTRACT

Among the many features that serve to consolidate the identity of a religious tradition is its rich history of scholarship. The Svāminārāyaṇa Saṁpradāya, a religious tradition founded almost two and a half centuries ago, possess an extensive tradition of education that serves to reinforce its identity. This article presents a historical framework of this Saṁpradāya, focusing specifically on BAPS' tradition of scholasticism. By examining Swaminarayan (Svāminārāyaṇa) and the guṇātīta gurus' attention to a wide range of scholarship, their efforts to promote and facilitate such learning, and their eagerness for its expression, this article intends to 1) provide an approximation of the scope of the tradition's scholarship and 2) offer an overview of the foundational values at the core of its scholarly endeavours and institutions.

KEYWORDS:

Svāminārāyaṇa Saṁpradāya; Svāminārāyaṇa; BAPS; history; education; learning; research; literature; scholarship; creative expression; Shastriji Maharaj; Yogiji Maharaj; Pramukh Swami Maharaj; vocational training

INTRODUCTION

The Swaminarayan (Svāminārāyaṇa) tradition has a practice of learning that originates back to the saṃpradāya's beginnings in the mid-19th century. On numerous occasions, Parabrahman Bhagavān Swaminarayan (Svāminārāyaṇa), the founder of the Svāminārāyaṇa tradition, engaged in, promoted, and facilitated scholastic study spanning a wide range of disciplines. In addition to himself partaking in scholarly pursuits, Swaminarayan encouraged his disciples to both become cognoscente in various disciplines, discuss and share their knowledge and expertise with others, and provide means for its expression. This tradition continued even after Swaminarayan's passing, as the fellowship's poets, historians, architects, and others worked to acquire knowledge and expertise and express it in various forms.

BAPS is positioned within this tradition of scholasticism. Over the past three decades it has created and managed various institutions, including: the BAPS Swaminarayan Research Institute in New Delhi; the Akshardham Centre for Applied Research in Social Harmony (AARSH) in Gāndhinagara, Gujarāta; and the Yajñapurūṣa Saṃskṛta Vidyālaya and the BAPS Swaminarayan Sanskrit Mahavidyalaya in Sāraṅgapura, Gujarāta, to promote, facilitate, and express scholarly investigation. By providing forums for international scholarship, these institutions encourage interdisciplinary research, discussion, collaboration, and expression. The BAPS Swaminarayan Research Journal, managed and published by the BAPS Swaminarayan Research Institute in New Delhi, serves as yet another forum for the development, discussion, and expression of such learning.

By examining the extensive tradition of education that serves to reinforce the identity of the Svāminārāyaṇa Saṃpradāya and BAPS, this work seeks to ground the interests, potential scholarly engagements, and values of the tradition within a particular historical framework. It will offer a historical overview of the Svāminārāyaṇa tradition's practice of learning and its expression as it has been facilitated by Swaminarayan

and his succeeding *guṇātīta* gurus. By presenting such a framework within which the BAPS Swaminarayan Sanstha's institutes of higher learning, its activities, and publications, this work seeks to understand the foundational values and diversity of scholarship that is characteristic of these institutions and their scholarly pursuits. As is the case with many historical explorations, narrations of this sort offer an opportunity to not merely contextualize, but also serve as a guide for future developments. With these intentions in mind, this article seeks to present and examine the practice of scholarly pursuits within the Svāminārāyaṇa tradition and highlight some of its noteworthy features.

BHAGAVĀN SWAMINARAYAN'S SCHOLARLY PURSUITS

At the foundation of all endeavours, academic or otherwise, of the Svāminārāyaṇa tradition are the teachings, values, and instructions of Bhagavān Swaminarayan. As the founder of the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana and his unique recognition within it as Parabrahman Puruṣottama, Swaminarayan's revelations and events from his life have served as guides or models on which the tradition has progressed and developed over the years. As a result, in order to understand the historical framework and the principles that continue to direct the institutional development of the tradition's various intellectual pursuits, it is necessary to analyse the *darśana's* understanding of Swaminarayan's own scholarly endeavours, the underlying the inspirations, motivations, and guidance he provided others, and the results of such undertakings. The proceeding subsections will be dedicated to expounding each of these aspects of Swaminarayan's scholarly pursuits. In presenting several detailed accounts of his life, these sections will highlight some of the core values, principles, and essential features of scholarship from his life and teachings that continue to guide the tradition's numerous academic ventures.

SWAMINARAYAN'S SCHOLARLY UNDERTAKINGS

Swaminarayan's admiration for and perspectives on scholarship

are often reflected in his own academic undertakings. Embarked on his scholastic journey as a child, Swaminarayan began his formal education at the age of six in 1787 CE. His primary instruction was conducted by Hṛdayarāma and later his father, Hariprasāda Pāṇḍe, a renowned pundit who was well versed both in the Vedānta and Āgama traditions¹ Biographical accounts record that in addition to studying preliminary Saṃskṛta grammar (*vyākaraṇa*) and nyāya texts, Swaminarayan's foundational study included that of the Vedic corpus and many of the *vedāṅgas* (ancillary texts of the Vedas); the commentarial and expository (*prakaraṇa*) works of the six *darśanas* (*ṣaḍdarśanas*); sections of the *Mahābhārata*; and many of the *purāṇa* texts, with an emphasis on the *Śrīmadbhagāvata*. Although much of Swaminarayan's study had been focused on classical works, his instruction is characterized by a diverse pool of literature in terms of its literary genre, discipline of study, and philosophical and theological commitments.

His study of various sacred texts and their diverse practice continued even into his adolescent years, which were mostly spent traveling more than seven thousand kilometres across India. On his travels, he visited numerous pilgrimage places, participated in various religious festivals and rituals, and observed traditions that thrived around the country. He interacted with religious practitioners, community leaders, and pundits, learning and reflecting on the nuances of their varied belief systems.² At certain locations, he also paused his journey to undertake rigorous study. For instance, between 1795 and 1796 CE, he spent a year studying *aṣṭāṅgayoga*³ from an ascetic named Gopāla Yogī.⁴ He also spent two months thereafter in Totādri studying the texts of the Rāmānuja

1. (Dave H., *Bhagavān Śrī Svāminārāyaṇa*, Vol. I, 75)

2. (Brahmadarśanadas 14)

3. The depth of Swaminarayan's understanding of yoga is reflected in or can be inferred from the detail with which he explicates yogic practices in GP. 73, V. 4, and A. 1.

4. (Dave H., *Bhagavān Śrī Svāminārāyaṇa*, Vol. I, 171-75)

tradition from Jiyara Svāmī, the head of the Rāmānuja saṃpradāya⁵ Swaminarayan's travels throughout India presented him with diverse perspectives, nuances, and forms of the Indian culture, belief systems, and religious practice.

Swaminarayan's multifarious disciplinary instruction, comprehensive experience of Indian thought and its praxis, and more impressive, spontaneous oral recollection of readings from sacred texts are later reflected in his discourses. These discourses were recorded in the *Vacanāmṛta*, a chronological anthology of his teachings. Within its entirety, he recalls ninety distinct verses or aphorisms from sacred texts, among which he recalls verses from the *Śrīmadbhāgavata* the most at thirty-nine times. He also presents readings from the *Śrīmadbhagavadgītā* and repeatedly references the *Muṇḍakopaniṣad*, *Chāndogyaopaniṣad*, *Taittirīyopaniṣad*, *Śvetāśvetaropaniṣad*, *Hiraṇyakeśīyaśākhāśruti*, *Mahābhārata*, and other Saṃskṛta works.⁶ In one documented discourse, he recites nineteen verses from seven different texts while engaging in a debate with his disciples.⁷

In addition to explicit recollections of verses and aphorisms, he presents implicit, accurate references to concepts, narratives (*ākhyānas*), and instructions (*upadeśa*) from a wide range of sacred texts. For instance, his revelations on the relationship between the gopīs and Kṛṣṇa,⁸ Uddhava's spiritual insights,⁹ and the narratives of Śukdeva¹⁰ and Janaka¹¹ are reflective of expositions in the *Bhāgavatapurāṇa*. His discussions on

5. (Dave H., *Bhagavān Śrī Svāminārāyaṇa*, Vol. I, 240)

6. (Ādarśajīvanadāsa, *Bhagavān Svāminārāyaṇanu Vyaktitva*, 20)

7. L. 7.

8. See, for example: GP. 42, 56, 63, 73; S. 5, 15; K. 11; L. 14; GM. 10, 17, 19, 62; GA. 2; V. 3, and 18.

9. See, for example: S. 3, 15; K. 9; L. 1, 11, 16, 17; GM. 4, 17, 18, 21, 62; and GA. 30.

10. See, for example: GP. 23, 38, 45, 68, 72; L. 4, 12, 14, 15; GM. 10, 17, 20, 21, 61, 62, 65, 66; A. 1, 4; GA. 4, 21, and 22.

11. See, for example: GP. 2, 38, 73; L. 10; GM. 14, 20; and V. 20.

Arjuna¹² and Yudhiṣṭhira¹³ correlate with descriptions in the *Mahābhārata* and the *Bhagavadgītā*, whereas elaborations on Hanumāna¹⁴ and Sītā¹⁵ do so with the *Rāmāyaṇa*. His recollection and discussions of principles expressed within the Sāṃkhya and Yoga *darśanas*¹⁶ are also reflective of expositions within their respective texts. A passing glimpse at the textual references provided in the footnotes of the *Vacanāmṛta* indicates such implicit references to discussions or expositions found in more than fifty distinct Saṃskṛta texts.¹⁷ The scope and frequency of such referencing is particularly striking considering that Swaminarayan relied on a form of oral pedagogy that was mostly extemporaneous. Swaminarayan's personal study of and both explicit and subtle referencing to a diverse range of texts—spanning from Vedic, *darśanic*, *purāṇic*, philosophical, theological, to even historical texts, attest to not only his own varied interests, but also are reflective of the interests of the *darśana* and its various institutions.

Along with his willingness to engage with a wide range of texts and their associated subject matter, Swaminarayan was keen on the analysis of such works. From an early age, he demonstrated a budding interest in creating abstracts and synopses of the literary works he encountered. It is recorded that as a child he created and often reflected on entries he made in a small pocketbook called a *gutko*, in which he summarized texts and recorded verses and aphorisms he found to be noteworthy.

His aptitude for offering analysis of textual readings and *darśanic* perspectives became more apparent later when he presented his discourses. In numerous revelations he employed well-known, classical dialectic methods by presenting conflicts or contrary expositions and resolving

12. See, for example: GP. 25, 66, 70; K. 8; L. 6, 18; P. 4, 6; GM. 9, 10, 16, 28; and V. 20.

13. See, for example: GP. 69, GM. 9, and 16.

14. See, for example: GP. 59; GM. 62; GA. 16, 39; and J. 2.

15. See, for example: GM. 19, 28; and GA. 11.

16. See, for example: GP. 17, 18, 52, 73; L. 15; P. 2; GM. 8, 10, 17, 36, 50, 63; V. 2, 4, 8, 18, 20; GA. 36, and 38..

17. See appendix 7 of the *Vacanāmṛta* (Svāminārāyaṇa 693–96).

them, often using novel exegetical renderings.¹⁸ He also often analysed texts or *darśanic* positions by demonstrating how they substantiate one another to create a comprehensive philosophical or theological position. For instance, in P. 2, he presents an integrated reading of the Yoga and Sāṃkhya Darśanas in order to put forth a coalescent rendering of spiritual endeavour. Having positioned the Sāṃkhya Darśana as advocating the means to develop detachment from the world, Swaminarayan reveals Yoga as encouraging devotion, worshipful service (*upāsana*), and meditation (*dhyāna*) of Parabrahman's form. One severs while the other conjoins. Swaminarayan, thereafter, presents verses from the *Śrīmadbhagavadgītā* and the *Bhāgavatapurāṇa* to substantiate this reading.¹⁹

By identifying, positioning, and bridging the significance of the perspectives and contributions that each tradition or text offers, Swaminarayan often presented distinct yet integrated renderings of philosophical and theological positions. Despite such reflection, he highlighted and placed into perspective the characteristics of each system, all the while being attentive to the essence of its teaching. Swaminarayan's disposition towards the analysis of *darśanic* positions and their texts suggests his distinct rendering and pluralistic approach

18. See, for example, Swaminarayan's revelations in GP. 45, 66; K. 7; and GM. 16.

19. "One who has attained oneness with Brahman remains joyful at heart, grieves nothing, desires nothing, harbours neutrality amongst all beings, and attains my supreme devotion (bhakti)." ("brahmabhūtaḥ prasannātmā na śocati na kāṅkṣati, samaḥ sarveṣu bhūteṣu madbhaktiṃ labhate parām.") (*Śrīmadbhagavadgītā* 18.54) "Even while being engaged in the ātman and having overcome all base natures, the learned offer selfless devotion (bhakti) to Urukrama (Paramātman), who possesses such [divine] qualities." ("ātmārāmaśca munayo nirgranthā apyurukrame, kurvantyahaitukim bhaktim itthaṃ bhūtaguṇo hariḥ.") (*Śrīmadbhāgavata* 1.7.10) "O King [Parikṣit]! Despite being perfectly poised in the nirguṇa state (the state of being uninfluenced by the qualities of māyā), I (Śukdeva)—having been attracted by the divine actions and incidents of Paramātman—studied the [*Śrīmadbhāgavata*] epic." ("pariniṣṭhito'pi nairguṇye uttamaślokalīlayā, grhītacetā rājarṣe ākhyānaṃ yadadhītavān.") (*Śrīmadbhāgavata* 2.1.9)

Note: All translations offered here are the author's own.

towards Indian thought.

Also notable and quite related to Swaminarayan's modes of analysis were his willingness and enthusiasm to engage in constructive dialogue. A celebrated incident from his childhood suggests his early interest and adeptness in engaging in debate. Four years after he commenced his studies, when he was ten, he accompanied his father to Kāśī, where his father had been invited to mediate a debate amongst pundits at the Gomāṭha Āśrama. Although Ghanshyam was merely an observer at the proceedings, he often contributed incisively to the discussions. He presented sharp rebuttals against opposing positions and substantiated his arguments from readings of authoritative texts. The pundits expressed their admiration for his astuteness and adeptness at presenting reasoned arguments.²⁰

Swaminarayan's interest in reasoned discussions is later reflected in his method of exposition found in the Vacanāmṛta. In many Vacanāmṛta discourses, he employs dialogue as a means for offering spiritual revelation. He often instigates discussion by revealing *prima facie*, contradictory interpretations,²¹ contentious hypotheticals,²² or ambiguous principles whose clarification warrant exposition.²³ Frequently prompting those assembled before him,²⁴ he even presents counterarguments and rebuttals²⁵ He also invites those present within the assembly to ask questions²⁶ and often encourages them to ask and respond to one another's questions²⁷ Within the Vacanāmṛta, sadhus, elderly devotees,²⁸ women,²⁹ and

20. (Dave H., Bhagavān Śrī Svāminārāyaṇa, Vol. I, 75-82)

21. See, for example GP. 66.

22. See, for example GP. 14.

23. See, for example GP. 13.

24. See, for example GM. 27, 66; and GA. 28.

25. See, for example GP. 44.

26. See, for example GP. 29, 35, 51, 53, 57, 78; L. 7, 17; GM. 62; GA. 4, and 5.

27. See, for example GP. 49, 5-7, 65, 70-1, 77; and S. 2.

28. See, for example GP. 1, 2, 70, 75; K. 7; V. 2, 7; and A. 5-7.

29. See, for example V. 10.

children³⁰ are all recorded as asking questions and playing an active role by participating in dialogue.

Swaminarayan's discourses also included discussions in the presence of, or upon prompting by, scholars from other traditions. In GP. 46, for instance, Swaminarayan answers a question from a Vedāntī Brāhmaṇa named Māheśvara Bhaṭṭa regarding the nature of ākāśa during the state of samādhi; in GP. 39, he speaks to an unnamed Vedāntī Brāhmaṇa about the *nirvikalpa* and *savikalpa* states; and in GA. 10, he speaks to a scholar of the Gauḍīya sect about his tradition's belief regarding the nature of Vṛndāvana and the Śaivite belief about the nature of Kāśī.

Swaminarayan's willingness and enthusiasm to engage in discussions has several noteworthy aspects. First, his discussions welcome participation from all persons within the tradition regardless of their age, gender, *āśrama*, or scholarly instruction. These discussions also welcome participation from those outside of the tradition. Partially because of such diverse involvement, the dialogues themselves also span a wide range of topics, including everything from *darśanic* philosophical ruminations to personal modes of religious practice. Indeed, Swaminarayan's readiness and disposition to engage in such multifaceted discussions serve as a model that guides learning within the tradition.

AL PURSUITS WITHIN THE SWINTELLECTUAMINARAYAN'S TRADITION

In addition to his own scholarly undertakings, Swaminarayan's enthusiasm also extended towards encouraging intellectual pursuit amongst his followers. Along with his eagerness to involve followers from diverse backgrounds in discussions and debates, Swaminarayan, amidst various political, social, and cultural challenges, promoted the development of 1) disciplinary expertise in a wide range of fields, 2) infrastructure for the growth of such skills and study, and 3) opportunities

30. See, for example GP. 31; GA. 15 and 25.

for their expression.

Cultural, Political, and Social Challenges

Historians recount that present-day Gujarāta was in turmoil in the 18th and 19th centuries. The Mughal Sultanate had collapsed, while the British government had restrained the East India Company from expanding its hold over the country.³¹ The Muslim, Marāṭhā, and Rājaputa leaders were thus left competing for control, leaving Gujarāta victim to frequent violence from the Gāyakavāḍa and Peśvā rulers of Vaḍodarā and Amadāvāda. As a consequence of such political instability, feudal lords in Kāṭhiyāvāḍa perpetually struggled for control over land and resources.³²

In addition to and in part as a consequence of these political challenges, Swaminarayan also faced numerous institutional, social, and cultural hurdles. Due to political uncertainty, for instance, there was no established formal system for education. Instead, education was relegated as primarily a private affair. Furthermore, cultural barriers prevented members of lower social orders and women from receiving even the most foundational education. The little systematized education that existed was exclusively limited to upper-caste males.³³ Even the children of these privileged castes, who were fortunate enough to attend village primary schools, learned only rudimentary reading, writing, and arithmetic to serve bare vocational needs. For these fortunate, schooling began at the age of six and often came to an abrupt end at the age of fourteen. It would not be until the late 1820s that formal education systems and literacy would take root in Gujarāta.³⁴

31. (Vāghelā 11)

32. See H. Wilberforce-Bell's *The History of Kathiawad from the Earliest Times* (p.121-253) for a detailed political history of Kāṭhiyāvāḍa during the 18th and 19th centuries.

33. (Vyāsa 224-229; Majumdar 60; Mallison 262; Pārekha 117-118).

34. (Vāghelā 103)

Cross-Disciplinary Expertise

Despite such unfavourable and impeding circumstances, Swaminarayan inspired his disciples to study and gain expertise in numerous disciplines. Indeed, some of his disciples had been fortunate to have had access to academic pursuit before having joined the fellowship. Nityānanda Svāmī, for instance, had travelled to Kāśī to learn the Vedas, the Upaniṣads, the Darśana Śāstras and other texts.³⁵ Gopālānanda Svāmī, on the other hand, had studied Saṃskṛta under his father. Thereafter, he had studied vyākaraṇa, nyāya, jyotiṣam, astronomy and the Vedas under a scholar from a neighboring village.³⁶ Similarly, Brahmānanda Svāmī had spent ten years in the city of Bhuja learning equestrianism, yoga, jyotiṣam, nyāya, sculpture, architecture, and the poetic sciences. He had also studied Saṃskṛta and music in Dhamadkā under a renowned pundit named Bhaṭṭācārya.³⁷ Bhagavān Swaminarayan inspired these sadhus and others to further their education so that they could become experts in their respective fields and share their knowledge with others. He sent Brahmānanda Svāmī, for example, to Surata along with Muktānanda Svāmī, Jerāma Brahmācārī, and others to study the classical Saṃskṛta grammar text known as the *Vaiyākaraṇa-siddhānta-kaumudī* and other texts under a 102-year-old scholar named Muni Bāvā.³⁸ He also sent Premānanda Svāmī, who was just a boy of just eleven at the time, to Ujjain to learn vocal and instrumental music. Premānanda returned twelve years later having mastered the musical sciences.³⁹ In this way, Swaminarayan inspired many such disciples to acquire expertise in a wide range of subjects.

35. (Dave H., *Life and Philosophy of Śrī Svāminārāyaṇa*, 84)

36. (Gopālānanda 5; Īśvaracaraṇadāsa, *Satsang Reader*, 1)

37. (Ratnu 47)

38. (Ratnu 268-9; Vyāsa 226)

39. (Bhagvatpriyadās 11-12)

Facilitating Growth and Study

In addition, Swaminarayan also provided the means for such study and developed an infrastructure that would sustain it. Since printing did not become widespread within India until the mid-19th century, it was difficult to gain access to works needed for textual study. Swaminarayan often scouted and accumulated copies of manuscripts wherever possible. Ādhārānanda Svāmī recalls in his work, the *Haricaritrāmṛtasāgara*, Swaminarayan instructing Nityānanda Svāmī to obtain a copy of various sacred texts that he had learned were available in Junāgaḍha.⁴⁰ Once such texts were obtained, Swaminarayan would have scribes make handwritten replicas of them so that they would be readily accessible.

As the number erudite disciples increased, Swaminarayan also established *pāṭhaśālās*, centres that facilitated focused learning. Ādhārānanda Svāmī notes that such *pāṭhaśālās* were established in the villages of Kāriyāñī, Boṭāda, and Gaḍhaḍā. He also provides a detailed listing of the instructors at these *pāṭhaśālās* and the subjects that they taught. For instance, he observes that Paramānanda Svāmī taught the *Sārasvata-vyākaraṇa*; Bhajanānanda Svāmī taught lexicography and the poetic sciences; Gopālānanda Svāmī taught yoga, various *smṛti* texts, and *jyotiṣa*; and Nityānanda Svāmī taught the *Vaiyākaraṇa-siddhānta-kaumudī* and its commentaries, the *purāṇas*, and various darśanic texts.⁴¹ By providing access to works, establishing centres for learning, and appointing instructors, Swaminarayan not only facilitated academic pursuit during his time but also established a lasting tradition of scholarship.

Cultivating Forms of Expression

Among his efforts, Swaminarayan also encouraged and provided opportunities for the expression of scholarship and learning. Regarding musical expression, expertise acquired in playing musical instruments

40. (Ādhārānanda 6840-47)

41. (Vyāsa 226)

and singing was often utilized in ritual performances and through recitals of devotional songs in assemblies. The frequency of such performances can be inferred from Vacanāmṛta, where thirty-seven of the discourses describe Swaminarayan listening to sadhus reciting devotional songs (*kīrtanas*), often accompanied by classical Indian instruments, including the *ḍukaḍa*, *jhāñjha*, *mṛdaṅga*, *tāla*, *pakhāvaja*, *sitāra*, *mañjhirā*, and *sarodā*.⁴²

In numerous incidents, Swaminarayan also asked his disciples to sing devotional verses accompanied by musical instruments in large public assemblies attended by dignitaries or leaders. For example, in 1816 CE, Swaminarayan requested Premānanda Svāmī to perform in Dharamapura at the queen's court. Premānanda Svāmī tied chimes to his wrists, elbows, ankles, and waist and stood on a pile of *kumkuma*. While both singing and dancing, he dipped his feet in the *kumkuma* and moved around the courtyard, drawing with his feet scenes from the *Śrīmadbhāgavata*'s narrative of the churning of the ocean. In this performance, Premānanda Svāmī integrated three forms of expression—music, dance, and art.⁴³ Regarding Premānanda Svāmī's mastery of vocal expression, an 1863 edition of *Buddhiprakāśa*, a magazine published by the Gujarāta Vernacular Society, noted that people of varying religious backgrounds would come to hear Premānanda Svāmī sing devotional songs and often leave overwhelmed with tears.⁴⁴ Similarly adept in dance and art, Premānanda Svāmī had employed his polymathic abilities at Swaminarayan's request. Through many such performances, Swaminarayan encouraged the expression of musical and vocal talent.

Swaminarayan also provided a forum that allowed for the expression of disciples' understanding of sacred texts, *darśanic* works, and *purāṇic* and *itihāsa* literature. In his own presence, Swaminarayan encouraged his disciples to recite from sacred texts and present expositions on them. For instance, GM. 63 describes Swaminarayan listening to Bhajanānanda

42. (Dave R., Svāminārāyaṇīya Bhakti-Saṅgīta, 14)

43. (Dave R., Svāminārāyaṇīya Bhakti-Saṅgīta, 16-17).

44. ("Gujarātī Bhāṣānā Kaviona Itihāsa" 242-3)

Svāmī recite the *Bhāgavatapurāṇa*; P. 2 and 7 depict Nityānanda Svāmī reciting the “Mokṣadharmā” section from the Mahābhārata and the first chapter of the *Bhāgavatapurāṇa*; and GM. 31 describes Prāgajī Dave reading the “Kapilagītā” aloud in an assembly. In addition to such recitals, Swaminarayan encouraged his disciples to analyze, evaluate, explicate, and argue for ideas presented within these readings. Through such public dialogues, he provided a forum for the expression and evaluation of his disciples’ understanding of holy texts.

The study of sacred works also became instrumental in delivering discourses. Swaminarayan often instructed his ascetic disciples to travel from one village to the next, spreading his teachings to others and encouraging moral behaviour. During their travels, these ascetics often held assemblies or counselled individuals by recalling readings or accounts from scripture. Women were also encouraged to present such discourses in special assemblies, offering them the opportunity to express their understanding of sacred texts.

As Swaminarayan’s followers travelled, they also interacted with scholars from other traditions. However, since the Svāminārāyaṇa tradition was newly founded, characterized by distinct philosophical and theological principles, and respected for its moral precedent, scholars of other traditions were quick to challenge its doctrines and practice. Within the Indian scholarly tradition, such *darśanic* disagreements were commonly abated, if not resolved, through scriptural debates, known as *śāstrārthas*. Confronted with such opposition, Swaminarayan often approved of his ascetic followers to participate in such debates. Historical accounts record that such debates were formally conducted in cities including Vaṇḍodarā, Junāgaḍha, Amadāvāda, and Jāmanagara.⁴⁵ These public debates served as another means to express the scholarly aptitude of the tradition’s sadhus and offered them the opportunity to engage in

45. (Bhagvatpriyadāsa 2-6; Brahmadarśanadāsa 168; Īśvaracaraṇadāsa, Satsang Reader 17, 26)

constructive scholarly dialogue.

Swaminarayan also encouraged and facilitated his devotees to create *darśanic* works. He inspired the creation of numerous historical, philosophical, theological, commentarial, poetic, and literary works in various languages, including Saṃskṛta, Gujarātī, Hindī, and Vraja. Over time, these texts became valuable because of not only their devotional, doctrinal, and theological impact, but also their literary merits and contribution towards the advancement of contemporary literary style.

Among these works, the *Vacanāmṛta*—a compilation of Swaminarayan’s discourses transcribed by his ascetic devotees—is considered to be the most revered philosophical and theological text within the *darśana*.⁴⁶ It has been praised for its authenticity and historicity, as well as its simple, lucid, and insightful exposition.⁴⁷ It is also recognized as the first major work of prose in Gujarātī. Thirty years after its completion in 1830, the Gujarātī monthly *Buddhiprakāśa* identified it as a model for early nineteenth-century Gujarātī prose.⁴⁸

In addition to textual works, Swaminarayan also inspired the creation of thousands of poetic verses that served to express the tradition’s teachings, articulate devotional sentiments, and record significant historical events. This collection includes more than 2,700 verses composed by Brahmānanda Svāmī, 3,375 by Premānanda Svāmī, and others authored by poets including Niṣkulānanda Svāmī, Muktānanda Svāmī, Devānanda Svāmī, Dayānanda Svāmī, Bhumānanda Svāmī, Manjukeshānanda Svāmī and Pūrṇānanda Svāmī—totalling more than 9,000 poetic compositions.⁴⁹

46. For a detailed discussion of the *Vacanāmṛta*’s theological content and its practical implications, see Sādhu Brahmadarśanadāsa’s *Vacanāmṛta Rahasya* (Vols. I-V).

47. (Carmon 204-10)

48. (“Cālīsa Varṣa Upara Lakhelī Gujarātī Bhāṣāno Dākhalo”, 36-7)

49. The figures presented here are based on the number of verses that have been published and are thus available today. Biographical texts, however attribute 8,000 verses to Brahmānanda Svāmī and 14,000 to Premānanda Svāmī. They also attribute 2,500 to Niṣkulānanda Svāmī. Such texts estimate the total number of verses written by Swaminarayan’s contemporaries to be between 30,000 and 35,000.

In addition to the immensity of such poetic corpus, the lyrical variety, linguistic features, and creative symbolism of each are also noteworthy. These verses were authored in several languages. Premānanda Svāmī alone wrote in more than a dozen languages, including Punjābī, Māravādī, Kacchī, Gujarātī, Marāthī, Urdu, and Vraja. In one composition, he incorporated fifteen different meters, with a change in meter in each couplet.⁵⁰ Another poet, Brahmānanda Svāmī, created verses in rare classical tunes that are unfamiliar to modern musicians.⁵¹ One of his works, the “Adharaṣṭhaprabandha Dohā,” was written without the use of labial sounds. Charged with meaning, *rasa*, and poetic expression, it can be sung in its entirety without the performer’s two lips ever coming together.⁵² Such lyrical, euphonious, and inventive features joined with devotional sentiment resulted in works that crossed linguistic, regional, and cultural boundaries, as they were adopted by practitioners and performers across the country. These poetic creations caught the attention of prominent literary critics and scholars including, Kiśoralāla Maśaruvālā, Kanaiyālāla Munaśī, Anantarāya Rāvala, Raghuvīra Caudharī, Harīndra Dave, and Candrakānta Śeṭha. They were foundational and instrumental for the formation of some of the most vibrant expressions of Svāminārāyaṇa devotion (*bhakti*) and creative poetry and continued to be the subject of not just study, but also reverential expression.⁵³

The construction and administration of mandirs also served as a means for similar expression. Architecture, design, and management-related learning came into practice with Swaminarayan’s decision⁵⁴

(Ādarśajīvanadāsa, *Sarvavatari Bhagavān Svāminārāyaṇa: Jīvana ane Kārya*, 141)

50. (Dave P. 81; Dave R., *Śaṅgīta ane Svāminārāyaṇa Saṃpradāya*, 26-27)

51. (Majumdar 23)

52. (Vyas 262)

53. One of the most extensive collections of Svāminārāyaṇa manuscripts today lies in the Akshardham Centre for Applied Research in Social Harmony (AARSH) in Gāndhīnagara, Gujarāta.

54. (Dave, *Bhagavān Śrī Svāminārāyaṇa*, Vol. IV, 285–86)

to construct such edifices. Built in Amadāvāda,⁵⁵ Bhuja,⁵⁶ Varatāla,⁵⁷ Dholerā,⁵⁸ Junāgaḍha,⁵⁹ and Gaḍhaḍa,⁶⁰ these mandirs inspired the onset of a new chapter in the tradition. The creation of mandirs brought with it the development of a distinct architectural style, which would both continue and develop throughout the history of the tradition. Along with the construction of these mandirs arose the need to manage accompanying facilities and activities. Eventually, these mandirs would serve not only as places of worship but also centres of learning and cultural and religious expression.

CONCLUSION

Despite facing political, social, and cultural challenges, Swaminarayan established a flourishing tradition of learning. Inspiring study and attaining expertise in diverse disciplines, ranging from language studies to classical architecture, he not only developed a following that was skilled in such various fields of study but also set a precedent within the tradition to pursue expertise in such disciplines. Additionally, his enthusiasm for facilitating study through infrastructural or institutional development served as a model for the tradition's continued efforts in providing for such growth. By furnishing numerous means for the expression of acquired skill and learning, Swaminarayan grounded learning in practice, creative enterprise, and devotion; developed perpetual mechanisms for inspiration; and influenced advancements in the disciplines themselves. Swaminarayan's enthusiasm to inspire, facilitate, and finally express multi-disciplinary learning developed a foundation for the academic endeavours and institutions of the tradition.

55. (Dave, Bhagavān Śrī Svāminārāyaṇa, Vol. IV, 323)

56. (Dave, Bhagavān Śrī Svāminārāyaṇa, Vol. IV, 405)

57. (Dave, Bhagavān Śrī Svāminārāyaṇa, Vol. V, 12)

58. (Dave, Bhagavān Śrī Svāminārāyaṇa, Vol. V, 183)

59. (Dave, Bhagavān Śrī Svāminārāyaṇa, Vol. V, 249)

60. (Dave, Bhagavān Śrī Svāminārāyaṇa, Vol. V, 272)

A CONTINUED INTELLECTUAL TRADITION

Although Bhagavān Swaminarayan passed from this world in June 1830,⁶¹ his vision for the promotion of scholarship carried down through the tradition. Leaders of the fellowship continued to encourage learning over a diverse range of fields. To facilitate such study, new pāṭhaśālās in Gaḍhaḍā, Amadāvāda, Varatāla, and other locations were established. Both sadhus and devotees came to study in these pāṭhaśālās. The renowned Gujarātī poet Dalapatarāma, for example, studied at one such pāṭhaśālā in Amadāvāda.

In addition to study, the tradition also continued to encourage the expression of such learning through the production of both literary and poetic works. Gunatitanand Swami (Guṇātītānanda Svāmī), the successor of Swaminarayan, encouraged Acintyānanda Brahmācārī and others to produce both translations of existing Saṃskṛta works and original texts. With Gunatitanand Swami's inspiration and blessings, Acintyānanda Brahmācārī authored the *Harisaṃbhavamahākāvya*, a biographical poem on Swaminarayan composed in the classical Saṃskṛta epic style, and the 33,000-verse *Harilīlākālpataru*.

Historical and biographical research was also conducted by many other disciples. For instance, Dalapatarāma authored the famed *Harilīlāmṛta*, a four-volume biography of Swaminarayan composed in Gujarātī in poetic form. Although he was visually impaired, he conducted interviews and thereafter composed verses orally, often needing up to four scribes to commit his compositions into textual form.

The teachings of many of Swaminarayan's prominent sadhus were also compiled during this time. Texts including Guṇātītānanda Svāmīnī Vāto ("The Sermons of Gunatitanand Swami"), *Gopālānanda Svāmīnī Vāto*, *Akṣarānanda Svāmīnī Vāto*, *Adbhutānanda Svāmīnī Vāto*, and others were compiled from the teachings of the respective senior sadhus.

In addition to inspiring literary creations, Gunatitanand Swami also,

61. (Dave, Bhagavān Śrī Svāmīnārāyaṇa, Vol. V, 432–33)

like Swaminarayan, facilitated study by having texts replicated. When devotees came for receiving additional religious vows, he often instructed them to scribe replicas of the many literary texts of the tradition, including the *Vacanāmṛta* and various poetic works.⁶²

SHASTRIJI MAHARAJ

Brahmasvarūpa Shastriji Maharaj (Śāstrījī Mahārāja) (1865-1951 CE), the founder of BAPS, continued Swaminarayan and Gunatitanand Swami's efforts. Like Swaminarayan, he himself engaged academic study in numerous fields, encouraged others to do the same, and inspired its expression. Initiated as Yagnapurushdas (Yajñapurushadāsa) in November 1882, Shastriji Maharaj went on to study a variety of classical subjects including, *nyāya*, *Śaṃskṛta* grammar (*vyākaraṇa*), and *Vedānta*. His competence in *Śaṃskṛta* earned him the ability to extemporaneously analyse otherwise difficult verses from works such as the *Bhāgavatapurāṇa* and present meaningful expositions on them.⁶³

Along with *Śaṃskṛta* learning, he also displayed great interest in the study of the tradition's history, focusing in particular on Swaminarayan's theological and philosophical revelations. Often pursuing investigations himself, he interviewed those who had themselves heard Swaminarayan's discourses and revelations to consolidate the tradition's understanding of Swaminarayan's teachings. Corroborating textual exposition of Swaminarayan's revelations in the *Vacanamrut* and other biographical works with eyewitness accounts, he reaffirmed and designated Swaminarayan's teachings as the *Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana*. He later established the *Bochasanvasi Shri Akshar-Purushottam Swaminarayan Sanstha* (BAPS) in 1907 on the principles of this doctrine.

In addition to his own diverse scholarly learning, he, like Swaminarayan, was not only eager but also proficient in engaging

62. (Dave H., *Akṣarabrahma Śrī Guṇātītānanda Svāmī*, Vol. II, 137)

63. (Dave H., *Brahmasvarūpa Śāstrījī Mahārāja*, Vol. I, 141-3)

in dialogues with scholars, sometimes even with his preceptors. In a celebrated debate with Mahīdhara Śāstrī, he received public acclaim for successfully defending and affirming his reading of a section from the Sārasvata, a classical Saṃskṛta grammar text.⁶⁴ He also engaged in dialogue with many erudite members of the tradition, convincing them of the authenticity of the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana.

Shastriji Maharaj also encouraged and facilitated others to participate in scholarly learning. In several preserved letters he encouraged students by expressing the significance of scholarship.⁶⁵ In other instances, he took a personal interest in what they studied, offered them advice,⁶⁶ and even personally tutored many in their own studies.⁶⁷ He also financially supported their learning by making arrangements for pundits,⁶⁸ paying examination fees, and facilitating their accommodations. Yogiji Maharaj (Yogiji Mahārāja), Shastriji Maharaj's successor, recalled Shastriji Maharaj accommodating several sadhus to study in Bhādarāṇa, Khambhāta, and Goṇḍala⁶⁹ – all locations where pundits were more readily available. In his efforts to further facilitate the study of sacred texts, Shastriji Maharaj later developed a *pāṭhaśālā* in Sāraṅgapura, a village in western Gujarāta.⁷⁰

YOGIJI MAHARAJ

Yogiji Maharaj's enthusiasm for encouraging higher education paralleled that of his guru, Shastriji Maharaj. Among his many contributions, he established a centre for learning in Mumbai, where many ascetics received classical training in Saṃskṛta, music, foreign languages, and the fine arts. He encouraged them to develop proficiency

64. (Dave H., Brahmasvarūpa Śāstrīji Mahārāja, Vol. I, 152-4)

65. (Īśvaracaraṇadāsa, Likhitana Śāstrī Yajñapurūṣadāsa, Vol. II, 390–95, 556, 573, 576)

66. (Īśvaracaraṇadāsa, Likhitana Śāstrī Yajñapurūṣadāsa, Vol. II, 393–94)

67. See, for example: (Īśvaracaraṇadāsa, Likhitana Śāstrī Yajñapurūṣadāsa, Vol. I, 262)

68. (Khācara)

69. (Īśvaracaraṇadāsa, Brahmasvarūpa Yogiji Mahārāja, Vol. III, 58-9)

70. (Khācara)

so that they would themselves be able to teach and convey their expertise to others. In addition to acquiring expertise and learning across numerous disciplines, they also acquired formal degrees, including masters and doctorates, from accredited universities.

Yogiji Maharaj supported the expression of such learning through numerous activities. He continued Swaminarayan's efforts to produce a wide range of literature by inspiring the creation of many publications. By his instruction, Harṣadarāya Tribhovanadāsa Dave, an astute disciple, prolific author, and researcher, conducted a comprehensive study of the tradition's history and authored numerous biographical works. To this day, these works are regarded as authoritative sources of the tradition's history.

Additionally, Yogiji Maharaj inspired the expression of the tradition's teachings in foreign languages. Harṣadabhāi Dave produced the first English translation of the *Vacanāmṛta*. Other works including, *The Life and Philosophy of Lord Swaminarayan*; an English translation of the *Vedarasa*—a collection of Swaminarayan's communications to his devotees; and a text entitled *New Dimensions in Vedānta Philosophy*, further introduced the tradition's teachings to an English readership. In addition to textual creations, Yogiji Maharaj motivated many to utilize their proficiency in foreign languages by delivering expositions and discourses in these languages.

Yogiji Maharaj also encouraged numerous forms of artistic expression. For instance, he inspired the creation of a music school in Mumbai. Its students often engaged in stage performances and released recorded compilations of musical track works of devotional songs accompanied by both classical and contemporary instruments. There was also an active effort to incorporate traditional dance forms into onstage performances, ultimately resulting in not only the creation of a distinct form of cultural expression but also the evolution of staged cultural programs. The production of graphic art creations and artistic paintings added yet another element to the various forms of artistic expression that were

inspired by Yogiji Maharaj.

The formal creation of periodic weekly assemblies at the fellowship's mandirs was another contribution of Yogiji Maharaj. These assemblies allowed for the regular expression of numerous skills and became venues for textual expositions, discourses, and variegated forms of the performing arts. The rise of such regular forums for creative expression placed an enormous demand for learning and expertise and often instigated its creation. Yogiji Maharaj's introduction of youth and children assemblies not only further increased the demand for such learning and expertise, but also catered learning to audiences of various age groups and inspired skill development from a young age.

PRAMUKH SWAMI MAHARAJ

Following both Shastriji Maharaj and Yogiji Maharaj, Pramukh Swami Maharaj (Pramukha Svāmī Mahārāja) further inspired and facilitated learning and scholarship and provided numerous means for its expression. He took a personal interest in the formal education of many ascetics and facilitated their studies in a wide range of both classical and contemporary disciplines. This included the formal study of both western analytical methods and classical Indian disciplines, such as Saṃskṛta grammar (*vyākaraṇa*), Saṃskṛta literature (*sāhitya*), *navyanyāya*, and various *darśanic* and Vedic studies.

Along with promoting advanced formal studies, Pramukh Swami Maharaj also inspired the creation of novel literary works and expositions. The following is a survey of some of these works:

The *Vacanāmṛta Rahasya* (2004)—a comprehensive exposition of the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana's foundational principles based on Swaminarayan's discourses as presented in the *Vacanāmṛta*. This text appears in five volumes and is published in the Gujarātī language. An abridged version of this text has also been published in three volumes in English.

The *Akṣara-puruṣottama-māhātmyam* (2013)—a 19,000-verse

Saṃskṛta text that describes the history, darśanic position, and core practices of the Svāminārāyaṇa tradition.

The Prasthānatrayī-svāminārāyaṇa-bhāṣyam (2009-12)—a five-volume comprehensive Saṃskṛta commentary on the Upaniṣads, the Brahmasūtras, and the Śrīmadbhagavadgītā according to the principles of Bhagavān Swaminarayan.

The Svāminārāyaṇa-siddhānta-sudhā (2017)—a Saṃskṛta vādagrantha, which offers an exposition, justification, and defense of the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana in the style of classical Indian debate.

Along with these textual creations, more than 450 works in various languages, including Gujarātī, English, Hindī, Tāmila, Marāṭhī, Saṃskṛta, and French, were also published. To facilitate such publications, a modern printing press and design studio were also developed. Such infrastructure allowed for the periodic creation and publication of the tradition's magazines, which include:

The Svāminārāyaṇa Prakāśa – a monthly magazine published in Gujarātī and Hindī that presents the tradition's news events and articles on Indian culture, morality, family values, self-help, and various subjects related to the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana.

The Swaminarayan Bliss – an English, bi-monthly magazine that offers articles on the life and teachings of Swaminarayan and the lineage of guṇātīta gurus and expositions on the principles of the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana.

The Svāminārāyaṇa Bālaprakāśa – a periodical in English and Gujarātī designed for children.

The Premavati – a bi-monthly magazine for women that is authored and edited by female volunteers and aims to promote spiritual, cultural, and educational values.

In addition to literary and periodical creation, Pramukh Swami Maharaj inspired the expression of learning through many other activities, as well. For example, he developed professional recording studios and motivated the study of music, the playing of traditional and contemporary

instruments, singing, and the performing arts. As a result, hundreds of audio and video productions have been created. Training in classical dance, performing arts, visual arts, various practical fields of study, and management have all been put to use in the fellowship's international festivals, many of which are conducted annually. Furthermore, studies in history, anthropology, and social sciences have culminated in the creation of permanent exhibitions in various centres throughout the world. In addition, the study of sculpting, visual arts, design, and architecture have led to the development of more than a thousand mandirs throughout the world, including the Akshardham complexes in Gāndhīnagara (Gujarāta), New Delhi, and Robbinsville, New Jersey. Through such infrastructural and organizational development, Pramukh Swami Maharaj inspired creative expression and the practical application of learning. Along with creating opportunities for such expression, he also established formal centres of learning that would continue to foster the fellowship's tradition of intellectual inquiry and expression.

Institution Creation

Through the creation of schools, student residential facilities, education and career aid initiatives, institutes, and research centres, Pramukh Swami Maharaj established centres for formalized learning. With schools in London (UK), Bhādrā, Cāṇasada, Vidyānagara, and Selavāsa; residential schools in Vaḍodarā, Goṇḍala, Valasāḍa, Mount Ābu, Nāgapura, Rāisaṇa, and Sāraṅgapura; and all-girls, residential schools in Rāndesaṇa and Karamasada, every year thousands of students receive equal opportunity, quality, formal education from professionally trained and certified teachers. Allocating scholarships and grants to students on both need and merit bases, these schools provide a variety of residential amenities and resources needed to develop both academic and personal success.

In addition to schools, residential and education facilities in Vallaba Vidyānagara, Surata, Naḍiyāda, Ukāi, Bhāvanagara, Baroḍā,

Dhule, Mahesānā, Bāraḍolī, and Ādipura facilitate students studying at nearby universities. These centres for learning increase education awareness through literacy campaigns and provide necessary financial support initiatives, academic mentoring, access to study-skills workshops, standardized exam preparatory courses, and summer education camps to give students direction, necessary resources, and opportunities for academic progress.

Pramukh Swami Maharaj also established centres for higher learning. These centres include the Yajñapurūṣa Saṃskṛta Vidyālaya, the BAPS Swaminarayan Sanskrit Mahavidyalaya, the Akshardham Centre for Applied Research in Social Harmony (AARSH), and the BAPS Swaminarayan Research Institute.

The BAPS Swaminarayan Sanskrit Mahavidyalaya and The Yajñapurūṣa Saṃskṛta Vidyālaya

The Yajñapurūṣa Saṃskṛta Vidyālaya and the BAPS Swaminarayan Sanskrit Mahavidyalaya are both located in Sāraṅgapura, Gujarāta. Developed in 1973, the Yajñapurūṣa Saṃskṛta Vidyālaya serves predominantly as a learning centre for the tradition's ascetics. The BAPS Swaminarayan Sanskrit Mahavidyalaya was developed much later in 2013 and functions as a higher-level learning centre that offers formal certification and degree-based programs in affiliation with the Shree Somnath Sanskrit University. Both centres offer a comprehensive and in-depth study of a wide range of disciplines, including vernacular and foreign language study, Saṃskṛta grammar, *saṃpradāyic* history, and principles and sacred texts of the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana. They also explore Vedānta texts, such as the Upaniṣads and the *Śrīmadbhagavadgītā*; itihāsa works, including the *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Mahābhārata*; classical and contemporary poetry and literary works; and various *smṛti* texts. In addition to textual study, they offer extensive coursework on world religions, human relations, management, music, and homiletics.

AARSH - The Akshardham Centre for Applied Research in Social Harmony

Established in November 1992 at Akshardham, Gāndhīnagara, the Akshardham Centre for Applied Research in Social Harmony (AARSH) has served as one of Gujarāta's premier Indological research institutes. In correlation with several accredited universities, it serves primarily as a forum for experienced academicians, researchers, and erudite practitioners of Indic studies. The research centre focuses its efforts on Vedic and *darśanic* studies, Indian historical and cultural studies, the societal and practical applications of philosophical and theological investigations, cross-disciplinary and inter-faith studies, and manuscriptology.

AARSH also promotes academic dialogue by hosting numerous conferences and seminars. It has hosted a total of thirteen conferences at the international, state, and regional levels since its inception. These conferences have included the "International Seminar on the Role of the Guru" (1996), "The Status of Women in Religions" (1998), and a conference on the literary contributions of the Swaminarayan tradition, organized in association with Pātana's Uttar Gujarat Vishwavidyalaya (the Hemchandracharya North Gujarat University) (2001). The institute has also hosted the "Akhila Bhāratiya Darśana Pariṣad" (2004) and a conference on the modern relevance of the Yoga Darśana (2010). In its efforts to encourage frequent academic dialogue, AARSH also conducts a lecture series once every three months on a wide range of topics.

In addition to encouraging academic dialogue, AARSH promotes the expression of original research through numerous publications. Since its inauguration the centre has published more than thirty texts, including several English works, such as *Vaidikarva in Indian Philosophy* (1996), *the Role of the Guru* (1996); *Samṣkṛta* works, such as *the Vyāsasūtrārthadīpa* (2006) and *the five-volume Akṣarapuruṣottama-mahātmyam* (2013); and Gujarātī works, such as *Brahmasūtramā Jīvātmānī Gatio ane Brahmanu Svarūpa* (1998), *Aṃtyeṣṭi Samṣkāra* (2001), and *Vaidika Tathā Sāṃpradāyika Śāstronā Ādhāre Akṣarabrahmanirūpaṇa* (2010).

The BAPS Swaminarayan Research Institute

Established in 2010, the BAPS Swaminarayan Research Institute also serves as a centre for Indology, emphasizing research on Indian culture and history, philosophy, literature, and language. Its comprehensive research projects advance the expression, understanding, and appreciation of Indian culture, philosophy, religions, languages, and texts. The institute also provides a platform for interdisciplinary and interfaith scholarly engagement.

Of note are the numerous seminars and conferences hosted by the institute. These collaborative symposiums include the conference on “Bhakti and Prapatti in Indian Philosophy of Religion,” an event organized alongside the Indian Council of Philosophical Research (2016); the “International Conference on Sahajanand Swami and the Svāminārāyaṇa tradition,” organized with the Maharaja Sayajirao University, the Gujarat Historical Society, and the B. J. Institute of Learning and Research (2013);⁷¹ and the “Interim International Conference on Realizing Global Peace,” organized with the All-India Philosophy Association and the India Hellenic Society for Culture and Development (2014). The institute also hosts regular guest lectures, guided discussions, and a lecture series on a wide range of topics pertaining to Indology.

The newest contribution of the BAPS Swaminarayan Research Institute is the BAPS Swaminarayan Research Journal. This journal intends to provide a platform for a discussion on not only Indian music, poetry, creative writing, visual arts, architecture, agriculture, performing arts, philosophy, Sanskrit, Indian vernacular languages, sacred texts, philology, linguistics, darśanas, management, history, medicine, and technology, but also the Swaminarayan tradition and its philosophy, theology, history, rituals, and practice. In addition to publish the most insightful, profound, practical, and ground-breaking scholarship

71. The proceedings of this conference were published in 2016 by the Oxford University Press in the form of the book *Swaminarayan Hinduism: Tradition, Adaptation, Identity*, Ed. Raymond Williams & Yogi Trivedi.

concerning a wide variety of discipline-specific learning, it hopes to open new roads of inquiry regarding one of India's largest and fastest-growing transnational movements and its place amongst some of India's oldest and most resilient darśanic traditions. Such inquiry will add to the Svāminārāyaṇa tradition's already vibrant scholarly practice and provide a forum for academic dialogue and expression.

CONCLUSION

Bhagavān Swaminarayan and the guṇātīta gurus that followed showed great interest in encouraging the acquisition of knowledge and skills in a wide range of disciplines. According to the means available and appropriate to the tradition's position, they encouraged learning and skill development, provided infrastructural support, and inspired its expression. Considering these contributions, there are two ways to situate the relevance of their efforts.

The first intention is to provide an approximation of the scope of the Saṃpradāya's scholarly tradition. Either through their own scholarship or their encouragement of others', Swaminarayan and the gurus that followed demonstrated much interest in the study of diverse disciplines. Everything from the study of classical Vedānta texts to Saṃskṛta and vernacular poetry, to music, dance, history, and even foreign languages was encouraged, suggesting the relevance of all of these undertakings. Alternatively, the associated modes of expression of such learning and the consequent literary, artistic, cultural, architectural, musical, and organizational contributions serve in themselves as pertinent subjects of investigation. Additionally, the relationships of these works with other contemporary creations; their historical or societal influences, implications, or significance; and the implicit, inter-disciplinary relationships among them also serve as relevant nodes of investigation. By highlighting these interests, creative expressions, and relationships, this work serves to identify them as relevant subjects of the tradition's scholasticism.

The second intention of this work is to offer an overview of the foundational values at the core of its scholarly endeavours and institutions. In addition to considering the disciplinary interests of the tradition, by dwelling on the values and expression of learning across its history, this work provides an approximation of its scholarly merits. The tradition's history of welcoming and even encouraging constructive dialogue, especially with those outside the tradition; its emphasis on the practical application of learning; its inspiring of an inclusive, pluralistic, and comprehensive outlook; its willingness to accommodate cross-cultural, transnational, and multi-lingual features; its readiness to integrate modern elements while preserving core cultural and traditional foundations; and its non-discriminatory attitude are just a few of the core values or features that it inherits from the precedents set by its leaders.

Given its historical framework and under the guidance of its leadership, BAPS' tradition of education continues Svāminārāyaṇa's legacy of learning. Serving as a forum that welcomes new perspectives and constructive dialogue, it continues to encourage, support, and provide a home for quality scholarly inquiry.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

A.	“Vacanāmṛta Amadāvāda”
GA.	“Vacanāmṛta Gaḍhaḍā Antya”
GM.	“Vacanāmṛta Gaḍhaḍā Madhya”
GP.	“Vacanāmṛta Gaḍhaḍā Prathama”
J.	“Vacanāmṛta Jetalapura”
K.	“Vacanāmṛta Kāriyāṇī”
L.	“Vacanāmṛta Loyā”
P.	“Vacanāmṛta Pañcālā”
S.	“Vacanāmṛta Sāraṅgapura”
V.	“Vacanāmṛta Varatāla”

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YAJÑAPURUṢA PRAVARTITA SIDDHĀNTAM

Shastriji Maharaj and the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana

TILAK PAREKH

Ph.D. Student, Faculty of Divinity,
University of Cambridge

INTRODUCTION

Every morning and evening, millions around the globe sing the verse ‘*Yajñapurūṣa pravartita siddhāntam sukhadam*’ as part of the Swaminarayan *ārṭi* ceremony. The verse means ‘This doctrine propagated by Yagnapurush bestows ultimate happiness’. Who was Yagnapurush (Shastriji Maharaj) that so many pay tribute to every single day? What was the theological principle that he proliferated? This paper focuses on Yagnapurushdasji (1865-1951), the founder of the global BAPS (Bochasanwasi Shri Akṣara-Puruṣottama) Swaminarayan Hindu tradition and the theological-philosophical-soteriological system of Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana he verified, established, and materialised. He was a *Śāstrī* (Sanskrit term for scholar), which earned him the sobriquet of ‘Shastriji Maharaj’. In exploring the lives and personalities of people who have established and profoundly preached impactful schools of thought, we get a deeper insight into the schools’ purpose, philosophy, and historical context of development. It was Shastriji Maharaj who gave form to Bhagwan Swaminarayan’s unique *darśana* at a time when few were willing to engage with or listen to him. This article is an attempt to recount Shastriji Maharaj’s endeavours to codify and promulgate the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana.

The Swaminarayan *sampradāya* is a Hindu devotional tradition founded by Bhagwan Swaminarayan (1781-1830) at the start of the 19th century in present-day Gujarat. Bhagwan Swaminarayan is believed to be God, namely, *Parabrahman Puruṣottama*, by followers across Swaminarayan

traditions.¹ Since its inception over 200 years ago, the Swaminarayan tradition has become an international movement described by scholars as one of the “most visible forms of contemporary Hinduism”.² The Swaminarayan *sampradāya* is an umbrella term for a wide constellation of denominations; in this article, I will examine the doctrinal beliefs of Bochasanwasi Shri Akṣara-Puruṣottama Sanstha (BAPS) formed in 1907 by Shastriji Maharaj. Raymond Williams, a scholar of the Swaminarayan *sampradāya*, writes that “the most important event in the modern history of the Swaminarayan movement is the founding of the Bochasanwasi Shri Akṣara-Puruṣottama Sanstha (BAPS). This event involves the major doctrinal split as well as the major institutional division within the movement.”³ BAPS is arguably the most visible and fastest growing Swaminarayan denomination.⁴ It has been described as “the single largest identifiable Hindu community in the West”.⁵ This is largely due to the efforts of Pramukh Swami Maharaj (1921-2016), the fifth guru of BAPS, whose work placed BAPS on a global platform. He was awarded the Guinness World Record in 2008 for consecrating the largest number of Hindu temples in the world (1100), which includes the Neasden Temple

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1. Pramukh Swami, ‘Vacanāmṛut Nā Siddhānta No Sārsāṅkṣhep’, in Vacanāmṛut (Ahmedabad: Swaminarayan Aksharprith, 2015).
 2. Raymond Brady Williams and Yogi Trivedi, eds., Swaminarayan Hinduism: Tradition, Adaptation and Identity, First edition (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2016), xix.
 3. Raymond Brady Williams, An Introduction to Swaminarayan Hinduism, Third edition (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 60.
 4. Hanna Kim, ‘Svāminārāyaṇa: Bhaktiyoga and the Akṣarabrahman Guru’, in Gurus of Modern Yoga, eds. Mark Singleton and Ellen Goldberg (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, USA, 2014); Williams, An Introduction to Swaminarayan Hinduism.
 5. J. Gordon Melton and Constance A. Jones, ‘Reflections on Hindu Demographics in America: An Initial Report on the First American Hindu Census’ (Association for the Study of Religion, Economics & Culture, Washington, D.C., 2011), 7, www.thearda.com/asrec/archive/papers/Melton_Hindu_Demographics.pdf.

in London.⁶ The tradition now has over one million followers, primarily of Gujarati background, residing in India, Africa, Europe, the Middle East, North America, Australia, and Southeast Asia.⁷

This article recounts the history and beginnings of BAPS with a focus on its founder and the third spiritual successor of Bhagwan Swaminarayan, Shastriji Maharaj, and his efforts to preach the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana. The first half of this article will address how Shastriji Maharaj came to know of the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana and verified it through meticulous research. The second half will explore how he institutionalised the philosophy.

VERIFYING THE AKṢARA-PURUṢOTTAMA DARŚANA

Succession and doctrinal accuracy have been critical issues in the

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6. 'Most Temples Consecrated by One Person', Guinness World Records, accessed 28 May 2019, <http://www.guinnessworldrecords.com/world-records/most-temples-consecrated-by-one-person>.
 7. Hanna Kim, 'Transnational Movements: Portable Religion and the Case Study of the Swaminarayan Sanstha', in *Hinduism in the Modern World*, ed. Brian A. Hatcher (Routledge, 2015), 48–64. range, and significance of modern and contemporary Hinduism in South Asia and the global diaspora. Organized to reflect the direction of recent scholarly research, this volume breaks with earlier texts on this subject by seeking to overcome a misleading dichotomy between an elite, intellectualist "modern" Hinduism and the rest of what has so often been misleadingly termed "traditional" or "popular" Hinduism. Without neglecting the significance of modern reformist visions of Hinduism, this book reconceptualizes the meaning of "modern Hinduism" both by expanding its content and by situating its expression within a larger framework of history, ethnography, and contemporary critical theory. This volume equips undergraduate readers with the tools necessary to appreciate the richness and diversity of Hinduism as it has developed during the past two centuries.", "container-title": "Hinduism in the Modern World", "ISBN": "978-1-135-04630-9", "language": "en", "page": "48-64", "publisher": "Routledge", "title": "Transnational Movements: Portable Religion and the Case Study of the Swaminarayan Sanstha", "editor": [{"family": "Hatcher", "given": "Brian A."}], "author": [{"family": "Kim", "given": "Hanna"}], "issued": {"date-parts": [{"2015", 10, 5}]}], "schema": "https://github.com/citation-style-language/schema/raw/master/csl-citation.json"}]

history of all religious traditions and remain divisive and complex subjects. Both become significantly more contentious after the passing of founders. Such questions also emerged after the passing of Bhagwan Swaminarayan in 1830. Williams and Trivedi write that “Following Swaminarayan’s death in 1830, the group continued to grow, and new institutions developed to interpret his teachings and practices and to oversee the expansion of Swaminarayan Hinduism.”⁸ The *sampradāya* was split into two dioceses and both were headed by Bhagwan Swaminarayan’s nephews; Acharya Ayodhyaprasadji led the Ahmedabad diocese in North Gujarat and Acharya Raghuvirji the Vadtal diocese in South Gujarat. Questions remained regarding spiritual succession; some argued that the acharyas were themselves the spiritual successors of Bhagwan Swaminarayan, others posited the names of certain sadhus, whilst some believed there was no spiritual successor. Similarly, there were various competing ideas on doctrine. Followers interpreted Bhagwan Swaminarayan’s words in different ways, which resulted in multiple lines of theological and metaphysical thought.

It was on the basis of seeking the truth regarding these two interconnected strands of succession and doctrine that Shastriji Maharaj decided to leave the Vadtal diocese in 1905 to establish BAPS as an independent Swaminarayan tradition. Shastriji Maharaj maintained that there was a rightful spiritual lineage after Bhagwan Swaminarayan that was not hereditary, but a succession of spiritual gurus who were the entity *Akṣarabrahman* and living vessels for Bhagwan Swaminarayan.

Shastriji Maharaj believed that Gunatitanand Swami (1784-1867) was the first such spiritual successor of Bhagwan Swaminarayan and that Gunatitanand Swami was the embodiment of the eternal metaphysical entity *Akṣarabrahman*. After the passing of Gunatitanand Swami, Shastriji Maharaj believed the next guru to be Bhagatji Maharaj (1829-1897), who

8. Williams and Trivedi, *Swaminarayan Hinduism: Tradition, Adaptation and Identity*, xvii.

himself was Shastriji Maharaj's guru. BAPS followers believe Shastriji Maharaj to be the third spiritual successor, followed by Yogiji Maharaj (1892-1971), Pramukh Swami Maharaj (1921-2016), and currently Mahant Swami Maharaj (1933-). This lineage of Akṣarabrahman gurus is seen by BAPS as the rightful spiritual succession of Bhagwan Swaminarayan. As Raymond Williams writes,

“BAPS followers do not believe that it was an innovation. They believe that Gunatitanand Swami was appointed by Swaminarayan, and that the early acharyas looked to Gunatitanand Swami for advice and help in the administration of the fellowship. Gunatitanand Swami established a line of spiritual authorities who are believed to have the right to administer the affairs. They indicate that Swaminarayan gave authority to devout ascetics to initiate ascetics and install images in temples. The theory is that Swaminarayan is always manifest in the perfect disciples who have continued in a line of succession from Gunatitanand. Images of those in the line of succession are placed in the temples.”⁹

Intimately connected with this belief in a spiritual succession was the doctrine propounded by Shastriji Maharaj, the ‘Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana’, which was not accepted by many at the time. The variance in the theological understanding of *Akṣarabrahman* led to the formation of BAPS.¹⁰ Shastriji Maharaj had no interest in power or fame; he was entirely dedicated to serving Swaminarayan Bhagwan. It is only when he saw that the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana would not be accepted in the Vadatal diocese that he found himself forced to separate. The Vadatal and Ahmedabad dioceses believed then, and continue to do so today, in the

9. Williams, *An Introduction to Swaminarayan Hinduism*, 61.

10. Smit Gadhia, ‘Akshara and Its Four Forms in Swaminarayan's Doctrine’, in *Swaminarayan Hinduism: Tradition, Adaptation and Identity*, eds. Raymond Brady Williams and Yogi Trivedi, First edition (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2016), 157.

existence of three eternal entities, *jīva*, *māyā*, and *Parabrahman*.¹¹ However, Shastriji Maharaj, based on his reading of Bhagwan Swaminarayan's teachings in various texts, posited five eternal metaphysical entities:

1. *Parabrahman* (supreme God, believed by the tradition to be Bhagwan Swaminarayan);
2. *Akṣarabrahman* (the abode of *Parabrahman* Bhagwan Swaminarayan, and also appears in human form as *Parabrahman*'s ideal devotee; believed by the tradition to be the succession of spiritual gurus: Gunatitanand Swami, Bhagatji Maharaj, Shastriji Maharaj, Yogiji Maharaj, Pramukh Swami Maharaj, and Mahant Swami Maharaj);
3. *Māyā* (ignorance and the base substance of the material world which one has to overcome in order to achieve liberation);
4. *Īśvaras* (higher beings endowed with special powers for fulfilling particular functions within a universe); and
5. *Jīvas* (infinite individual souls).¹²

Harshad Dave, a contemporary and biographer of Shastriji Maharaj, recounts an important incident in the life of Shastriji Maharaj in which he first becomes aware of this theological principle of Akṣara-Puruṣottama. On 11 March 1882 Shastriji Maharaj arrived in Surat. He would regularly listen to the scriptural discourses of Bhagatji Maharaj, a lay devotee and tailor, on the *Vacanāmṛt*, a sacred and authoritative text of the Swaminarayan tradition. Shastriji Maharaj is said to have immediately experienced Bhagatji Maharaj's elevated spiritual state and mentally

11. Sadguru Ghanshyamcharandas, *Ādhyātmika Tattvākhyāna*, Harijivandas Shastri (ed.) (Vadtal: Harijivandas Shastri, Vadtal Swaminarayan Temple, 1973), p. 257; Nandkishordas Purani, *Ajñānādhvāntabhāskara* (Muli: Soni Maganlal Kalidas, Swaminarayan Temple, 1924), pp. 3–42; Sadguru Swamishri Swayamprakashdasji, *Uddhav Sampradāyī Mārgdarśikā* (Ahmedabad: Shri Swaminarayan Mandir Kalupur, 1998), p. 12; Harjivandas Shastri, *Vacanāmṛt-Bhūmikā* (Vadtal: Shastri Harijivandasji, Swaminarayan Temple, 1972), p. 252.

12. *Vacanāmṛt* (Ahmedabad: Swaminarayan Aksharpath, 2015) Gadhada 3.10 (henceforth referred to as *Vacanāmṛt*). Swami Paramtattvadas, *An Introduction to Swaminarayan Hindu Theology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017).

accepted him to be his spiritual guru. One day, Bhagatji Maharaj was discoursing upon Vacanāmrut Loyā 12 in which Bhagwan Swaminarayan describes the highest level of faith as “Worshipping Purushottam whilst realising oneself to be Akshar” and that “Countless millions of *brahmānds*, each encircled by the eight barriers, appear like mere atoms before Akshar. Such is the glory of Akshar, the abode of Purushottam Narayan.” Explaining these words of Bhagwan Swaminarayan, Bhagatji Maharaj said that the ‘Akṣara’ which Bhagwan Swaminarayan talks of is Gunatitanand Swami, and that the only means of attaining the highest spiritual state is through attaining qualitative oneness with the *Akṣarabrahman* guru and worshipping Bhagwan Swaminarayan. It was the first time that Shastriji Maharaj was hearing of *Akṣarabrahman* as Gunatitanand Swami.¹³

This Akṣara-Puruṣottama principle and the notion of Gunatitanand Swami as the spiritual successor, embodiment of *Akṣarabrahman*, and ideal disciple of Bhagwan Swaminarayan was not common knowledge in the Swaminarayan tradition. Some sadhus and devotees had personally heard Bhagwan Swaminarayan extol the principle of Akṣara-Puruṣottama and the glory of Gunatitanand Swami. In fact, some feared being reprimanded if they spoke openly about this belief, as it was seemingly novel and would alter the existing beliefs and methods of worship in the tradition. As such, the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana remained largely dormant, and privy to few.

Shastriji Maharaj’s immediate reaction after hearing Bhagatji Maharaj’s discourses was to validate and verify this principle. It was this process of exploration and research which formed the basis of the historical and scriptural proof of the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana. Current scholarship on the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darshan credits Shastriji Maharaj’s research, beliefs, and dedication to the establishment of the darśana. Bhadreshdas Swami, author of the *Prasthānatrayī Svāminārāyaṇa Bhāṣya*,

13. Harshadrai Dave, Shastriji Maharaj Jivan Charitra Part 1 (Biography of Shastriji Maharaj) (Ahmedabad: Swaminarayan Aksharpith, 2014), 55–58.

at the opening of the compendious Swaminarayan Siddhant Sudha offers a nine verse obeisance to Shastriji Maharaj titled '*Yajñapurūṣa Sthavaha*', in which he glorifies him for truthfully and correctly explaining and revealing the doctrine Bhagwan Swaminarayan had given, as well as giving it the name 'Akṣara-Purūṣottama Darśana'.¹⁴ Equally in 'Introduction to Swaminarayan Hindu Theology', the author, Paramtattvadas Swami, opens the book by revealing his gratitude to Shastriji Maharaj by stating, "Shastriji Maharaj, whose incisive scholarship defined by relentless fidelity to and careful elucidation of Swaminarayan's teachings has informed my understanding of Swaminarayan Hindu theology throughout this exposition."¹⁵ Thus, the original research and scholarship conducted by Shastriji Maharaj is the base of these important texts of BAPS. It is this very foundational and ground-breaking work of Shastriji Maharaj which we shall now explore.

The depth and extent of the historical and scriptural research conducted by Shastriji Maharaj is evident from two key sources. The first is a text called Likhitan Shastri Yagnapurushdasji. It is a two-volume collection of letters written by Shastriji Maharaj and his sadhus and devotees between the years 1888 and 1951. These letters "among votaries of Swaminarayan Hindu theology, as well as those who were challenging its interpretations, provides an invaluable window into the history of BAPS Swaminarayan Sanstha and, more importantly for us, vital source material about Swaminarayan doctrine and practice."¹⁶ Second is Shastriji Maharaj's biography written by Harshadrai Dave. Dave was a contemporary of Shastriji Maharaj and associated with him for eleven years. Shastriji Maharaj had personally narrated many incidents of his life to Dave on numerous occasions.

Shastriji Maharaj's first method of verification was oral history. He

14. Sadhu Bhadrashdas, Svāmīnārāyaṇa-Siddhānta-Sudhā (Ahmedabad: Swaminarayan Aksharpath, 2016).

15. Paramtattvadas, An Introduction to Swaminarayan Hindu Theology, xvii.

16. Paramtattvadas, 18.

sought out sadhus and devotees who had either heard directly or second-hand from Bhagwan Swaminarayan that Gunatitanand Swami was the embodiment of Akshar.

He first verified this with Vignananand Swami, his first guru and a respected senior sadhu who was initiated by Bhagwan Swaminarayan and associated with him for 12 years. Days after learning about Gunatitanand Swami from Bhagatji Maharaj, Shastriji Maharaj witnessed a conversation between Bhagatji Maharaj and Vignananand Swami. Vignananand Swami hesitatingly said, “[Gunatitanand] Swami is Akshar. I have heard Maharaj [Bhagwan Swaminarayan] say these words on many occasions. Thus, it is definitely embedded in me.” Hearing this personal testimony from his guru, Shastriji Maharaj resolved to spread the Akṣara-Puruṣottama doctrine.¹⁷

A letter written by Shastriji Maharaj on 7 December 1938 to devotees residing in Africa outlines the oral testimonies he gathered to prove that Gunatitanand Swami was the human manifestation of *Akṣarabrahman* and therefore, the rightful spiritual successor of Bhagwan Swaminarayan.¹⁸ In the letter he begins by saying that “these are my own experiences” and then describes nineteen different incidents and references that he had personally verified as evidence. Alongside describing the various incidents, Shastriji Maharaj traces the authentic route through which he has come to know of these events. As space precludes us, I highlight two such excerpts from the letter here:

“Gunatitanand Swami was seated in the home of Jhinabhai in Panchala having his meal along with five hundred paramhansas. At that time, referring to Gunatitanand Swami, Bhagwan Swaminarayan told Kalyanbhai of Vanthali, ‘Do you know this sadhu?’ Kalyanbhai replied, ‘Yes. He is a great ascetic, very austere and perceives others’ glory.’

17. Dave, Shastriji Maharaj Jivan Charitra Part 1 (Biography of Shastriji Maharaj), 675.

18. Sadhu Vivekpriyadas, ed., Li Shastri Yagnapurushdasji Part 2 (Compilation of Letters of Shastriji Maharaj and Contemporary Satsang), Third edition (Ahmedabad: Swaminarayan Aksharpith, 2007), 375.

Then Bhagwan Swaminarayan said, ‘No, not only that. He is my eternal abode, Akshardham.’ In this way, Bhagwan Swaminarayan revealed Gunatitanand Swami to be Akshar to Kalyanbhai. I had heard this incident from Kalyanbhai’s son [Devjibhai].”¹⁹

“In Sarangpur, at the home of Rathod Dhadhal, Bhagwan Swaminarayan revealed the identity of Gunatitanand Swami by saying that he is the ‘sadguru’ that Kabir describes in his bhajan and that he is *Akṣara*. The incident in Sarangpur was told by Rathod Dhadhal to Jasa Gor and Nagji Sheth – who told me.”²⁰

In this way, he recounts many such incidents with details of whom he heard them from. Alongside this extensive oral history research to verify Gunatitanand Swami as *Akṣara*, Shastriji Maharaj forensically and holistically studied the primary scriptures of the Swaminarayan tradition and Hinduism. Scripture is and always has been one of key sources of doing theology. In Hindu traditions they hold the keys to validating, legitimising, and establishing the truths of any particular philosophy or theology. For Shastriji Maharaj, the primary text he researched was the *Vacanāmṛut*. The importance of the *Vacanāmṛut* in the Swaminarayan tradition cannot be understated as it is the “primary revelatory text by which its doctrines are established and articulated.” The *Vacanāmṛut* is a collection of 273 discourses delivered by Bhagwan Swaminarayan between the years 1819 and 1829. These discourses were noted down and compiled by various senior sadhus of Bhagwan Swaminarayan. The scripture is organised chronologically based on the various locations in which Bhagwan Swaminarayan discoursed. “Each individual discourse is also called a ‘*Vacanāmṛut*’, and these are arranged chronologically and numbered sequentially within each section. Hence, ‘*Vacanāmṛut Vartal 11*’, for example, is the eleventh recorded discourse delivered by Swaminarayan in the town of Vartal.”²¹ The compilers ensured the historicity and authenticity

19. Vivekpriyadas, 375.

20. Vivekpriyadas, 375.

21. Paramtattvadas, *An Introduction to Swaminarayan Hindu Theology*, 14.

of the text by noting the date, time, and description of the setting of each discourse in the text. Moreover, the text was shown to Bhagwan Swaminarayan himself. Paramtattvadas Swami explains, “this abiding status of the Vacanāmṛut is predicated on the distinctive belief of the faith community that Swaminarayan, as the self-manifestation of God, is both the source and the subject of revelatory knowledge comprised within it.”²² Therefore, for Shastriji Maharaj, the Vacanāmṛut was the primary scriptural source to verify the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana, as the text were the very words of Bhagwan Swaminarayan himself.

In Vacanāmṛut Gadhada 3.10, Swaminarayan posited five eternal (*nitya*) ontological entities and clearly stated, “From the *Vedas*, the *Purāṇas*, the *Itihāsa* and the *Smṛtis*, I have formed the principle that *jīva* [the finite self], *māyā* [cosmic material principle that shrouds the *jīvas* and the *īśvaras*], *īśvara* [higher beings responsible for the maintenance of the universe], [*Akṣara*] *Brahman* and *Parabrahman* are all eternal.”²³ On this ontological landscape, only *Parabrahman* (Swaminarayan himself) and *Akṣarabrahman* are believed to transcend *māyā*. Swaminarayan writes that *Parabrahman* “is greater than even *Akṣara* [*Brahman*], which is greater than everything else”²⁴; where “everything” is to be understood as the three entities of *jīva*, *īśvara*, and *māyā*. Shastriji Maharaj, based on the Vacanāmṛut, propagated the belief of five eternal metaphysical entities.

Shastriji Maharaj’s biography describes an incident which displays how he grounded the Akṣara-Puruṣottama doctrine in the Vacanāmṛut. Ranabhai Darbar from the village of Jhinjhar came to visit Shastriji Maharaj to understand why he decided to leave Vartal. As they began their conversation, Shastriji Maharaj told him to bring the Vacanāmṛut and then told him to read Gadhada 1.21 (where the forms of *Akṣara* are explained), Gadhada 1.71 (where God manifesting with *Akṣara* on the earth is stated), Gadhada 2.59 (where Bhagwan Swaminarayan says only

22. Paramtattvadas, 15.

23. Vacanāmṛut Gadhada 3.10.

24. Vacanāmṛut Gadhada 1.64.

those who have accumulated a great number of merits from performing good deeds receive the opportunity to serve the *Akṣarabrahman* guru), and Vartal 5 (where Bhagwan Swaminarayan says by performing with extreme affection such similar service of Bhagwan and the Sant [*Akṣarabrahman* guru] who possesses the highest qualities, even if he is a devotee of the lowest type and was destined to become a devotee of the highest type after two lives, or after four lives, or after ten lives, or after 100 lives, he will become a devotee of the highest calibre in this very life). Shastriji Maharaj had all these Vachanāmṛuts read and then he himself explained that such a Sant is Gunatitanand Swami, who is the eternal *Akṣarabrahman*. He further explained that the fundamental principle of offering worship to God is to first imbibe the qualities of the *Akṣarabrahman* guru and then worship *Parabrahma*. Through this incident we derive an awareness of how Shastriji Maharaj verified this doctrine through the Vachanāmṛut.²⁵

Shastriji Maharaj was also clear in explaining that *Akṣarabrahman* was always subordinate to *Parabrahman*, in other words, Gunatitanand Swami was always subordinate to Bhagwan Swaminarayan. In 1929 in the village of Sarangpur, Vachanāmṛut Gadhada 1.27 was being read in the assembly: “The countless wonders which have occurred in the past, those which are currently taking place, and those which will occur in the future are all only due to the manifest form of God that I have attained.” Hearing this, Kuberbhai of Bhavnagar asked Shastriji Maharaj, “In this, who should one understand is the manifest form of God? Everyone understands their own guru to be the manifest form of God and they believe him to be the all-doer. In reality, who should one believe to be the all-doer?” Shastriji Maharaj replied, “Your question is such that it can clear the misunderstanding of countless people in the satsang community. Bhagwan Swaminarayan alone is the all-doer.... The principle is that the Sant [*Akṣarabrahman* guru] is the manifest form of

25. Dave, Shastriji Maharaj Jivan Charitra Part 1 (Biography of Shastriji Maharaj), 383.

Bhagwan Swaminarayan through whom he resides. Therefore, the all-doer is Bhagwan Swaminarayan alone; but Maharaj makes use of his powers through the Sant who is his manifest form. Therefore, understand the attributes of the Sant who has attained this association with Maharaj through Vacanāmṛuts Gadhada 1.27 and Gadhada 1.62 as well as Gadhada 3.26 and Gadhada 3.27. Recognize this Sant who works and travels according to Maharaj's wishes and understand that Maharaj is present in Satsang through that Sant.”²⁶

Shastriji Maharaj also established the glory of Gunatitanand Swami through the Vacanāmṛut. In Nadiad, Shastriji Maharaj explained the principle of Akṣara-Puruṣottama to the renowned Gujarati author, scholar of Sanskrit, and member of the Vartal Temple Committee, Dolatram Krupashankar Pandya. Dolatram Pandya said, “Swami, the fact that Akṣara-Puruṣottama are Swāmi and Nārāyan is now lodged in my heart. However, please explain to me how that Akshar is Gunatitanand Swami and only Gunatitanand Swami.” Shastriji Maharaj recounted all the incidents of Bhagwan Swaminarayan that showed Gunatitanand Swami is Akshar, such as those we had seen earlier in the paper. Then Shastriji Maharaj said, “Greatness is due to one's faith in the manifest form of Bhagwan and the observance of his commands, based on Bhagwan Swaminarayan's words in Gadhada 1.31. Therefore, study both Gopalanand Swami's talks and Gunatitanand Swami's talks (in their respective scriptures) and decide whose talks bring out the greatness of Bhagwan Swaminarayan to a greater extent.” A comparison of Gunatitanand Swami's discourses and those of Gopalanand Swami clearly shows that Gunatitanand Swami explains the glory of Bhagwan Swaminarayan to the greater extent. Dolatrambhai then came to understand that Gunatitanand Swami was the greatest of Bhagwan Swaminarayan's sadhus.²⁷

Bhagwan Swaminarayan's words in Vacanāmṛut Gadhada 1.21

26. Dave, 415.

27. Dave, 415.

were also key scriptural evidence for the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana. Dolatram Krupashankar Pandya was sad that such a saintly and scholarly sadhu like Shastriji Maharaj should have to leave Vartal. But he knew that Shastriji Maharaj would never do anything contrary to Bhagwan Swaminarayan's principles. Once, he met Shastriji Maharaj in Nadiad and requested, "Swamiji, I know that you would not leave without a true reason. So please explain to me this principle." Accordingly, Shastriji Maharaj explained, "In the mandirs Bhagwan Swaminarayan built he consecrated the mūrtis of Gopinathji, Nar-Narayan, Lakshmi-Narayan, Radha-Krishna and others. Bhagwan Swaminarayan himself was supreme God and the cause of all avatars, yet to appease others, he consecrated his own mūrti only in Vartal. However, in Vacanāmṛut Gadhada 2.21, Bhagwan Swaminarayan has revealed the essential principle to be understood by all spiritual aspirants to attain ultimate liberation (mokṣa). In it he says, 'If a person realizes the greatness of manifest God and his holy Sadhu in exactly the same way as he realizes the greatness of past avatars of God such as Ram, Krishna, etc., as well as the greatness of past sadhus such as Narad, the Sanakadik, Shukji, Jadbharat, Hanuman, Uddhav, etc. — then nothing remains to be understood on the path of liberation.'" Shastriji Maharaj continued, "On the basis of this Vacanāmṛut, Bhagwan Swaminarayan is himself the manifest form of God and Gunatitanand Swami is the manifest form of his holy Sadhu. So, only if one understands their true glory and consecrates mandirs with their mūrtis in the central shrine has the fundamental principle been understood fully. Also, God and his ideal devotee are worshipped together. For example, Radha and Krishna, Nar and Narayan, Lakshmi and Narayan, Sita and Ram, similarly, Swami (Akṣara) with Narayan (Puruṣottam) is Swaminarayan (Akṣara-Puruṣottama). This is the true way of worship. Swami is Gunatitanand Swami and Narayan is Bhagwan Swaminarayan. It is to teach this true principle that we have left Vartal." Dolatram Pandya was pleased by Shastriji Maharaj's interpretation of Bhagwan Swaminarayan's words in the Vacanāmṛut. He bowed and said, "Swami, you are doing the work

for which Bhagwan Swaminarayan would have had to incarnate again. Your greatness is immeasurable, since you have explained the true and pure philosophy of Akṣara-Puruṣottama on the basis of the shastras.”²⁸

Shastriji Maharaj, therefore, undertook a deep study of Bhagwan Swaminarayan’s words in the Vacanāmṛut to authenticate the Akṣara-Puruṣottama doctrine. From both a historical perspective and scriptural perspective, Shastriji Maharaj conducted extensive research to verify and authenticate the true doctrine and line of succession. This process to the external eye appears to be a form of academic research, however, whilst the methods make it appear that the way, the outcome here was not a publication of a monograph or journal article. For Shastriji Maharaj, it was a matter far deeper. The outcome was a matter of liberation; a wrong or faulty belief system would not lead to liberation. For Shastriji Maharaj, verifying and proving the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana was a matter of the utmost importance. It also reveals that Shastriji Maharaj was a spiritual being who valued historicity, authenticity, and legitimacy.

Alongside his scriptural and historical research, examining Shastriji Maharaj’s personality adds value to his proofs. Followers of BAPS emphasise two aspects of his personality that come through from eyewitness accounts and textual references to Shastriji Maharaj’s life. The first is his intelligence and the second, his integrity.

Shastriji Maharaj studied canonical Hindu texts, such as the Upaniṣads and Bhagavad-gītā, and earned the designation of ‘*Śāstrī*’ (scholar). In 1892, Shastriji Maharaj began studying various commentaries written on the Bhagavad-Gita in Vartal.²⁹ He was then sent to Vadodara to study further under Rangacharya, an esteemed scholar of the Madhva *Sampradāya*

28. ‘Brahmaswarup Shastriji Maharaj: Propagator of Akshar-Purushottam Darshan (Part 1)’, BAPS, accessed 18 September 2021, [https://www.baps.org/EnlighteningEssays/2018/Brahmaswarup-Shastriji-Maharaj-Propagator-of-Akshar-Purushottam-Darshan-\(Part-1\)-13163.aspx](https://www.baps.org/EnlighteningEssays/2018/Brahmaswarup-Shastriji-Maharaj-Propagator-of-Akshar-Purushottam-Darshan-(Part-1)-13163.aspx).

29. Dave, Shastriji Maharaj Jivan Charitra Part 1 (Biography of Shastriji Maharaj), 148.

from the Dravid region. Under Rangacharya's guidance, Shastriji Maharaj studied Siddhānta-Kaumudī (Sanskrit Grammar). Using proofs from these various canonical Hindu texts, Shastriji Maharaj would frequently explain the doctrinal principles that Bhagwan Swaminarayan revealed – the existence of five eternally distinct ontological entities, the forms of *Akṣarabrahman* and *Parabrahman*, and the identification of Gunatitanand Swami as *Akṣarabrahman* to his teacher Rangacharya. Along with substantiating these revelations through Hindu scriptures, Shastriji Maharaj also spoke of the glory of Bhagatji Maharaj, Shastriji Maharaj's own guru who he believed to be the present *Akṣarabrahman* guru at the time. Accepting the authenticity of Shastriji Maharaj's talks and captivated by his unparalleled intellect, Rangacharya gradually understood the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana. It is a reflection of Shastriji Maharaj's intelligence that his interpretations and references of Hindu texts were such that he even impressed and convinced his own teacher who was from another tradition of Hinduism.

Another incident which Dave recounts is during an academic debate which occurred in 1893 in the village of Gadhada. A scholar named Mahidhar Shastri wished to hold a debate with various learned sadhus of the Swaminarayan tradition. Everyone assembled recognised the level of Mahidhar Shastri's intelligence and as most had only studied the Bhāgavata-Purāṇa, nobody was ready to take on the challenge. The sadhus also felt inadequate to engage in a debate with Mahidhar Shastri. The young Shastriji Maharaj realised that if no one stepped up to the challenge, then the reputation of the Swaminarayan tradition would be at stake, so he stood up and accepted the challenge. Mahidhar Shastri saw this young sadhu and started laughing as he thought this young man was no match for him. Shastriji Maharaj's teacher, Rangacharya, said not to look at his age, but instead see his intelligence and qualities. Subsequently, Mahidhar Shastri began debating with Shastriji Maharaj. As the debate progressed, each of Mahidhar Shastri's questions were resolved by Shastriji Maharaj. Eventually, Mahidhar Shastri had no choice

but to accept his defeat, and accept the principle established by Shastriji Maharaj. Everyone in attendance was awe-struck by how such a young student was able to deftly and proficiently defeat such a practiced veteran scholar. This serves as testament to Shastriji Maharaj's academic prowess, as despite only being twenty-six years old, he was able to defeat one of the most renowned scholars in Gujarat.³⁰

Alongside his intelligence, contemporaries of Shastriji Maharaj highlight his sincerity and integrity.³¹ Many devotees and sadhus who had spent time with Shastriji Maharaj say that he was a person who would filter information ten times before declaring it, such was his insistence on truth. An excerpt from a letter written by Shastriji Maharaj explains this sentiment:

“I do not know how to arrange false statements in order to serve my own purposes. There is much sin in falsehoods. God has said untruth is the highest sin. Also, the earth has said, ‘I can carry the weight of all of man's sins, but I cannot sustain the weight of someone who does not speak the truth.’ I have no interest in spreading false statements. If you have trust in me, and believe that I speak the truth and am an honest person, then believe what has been said above to be true and believe Swami to be eternally Akṣhar from within and have conviction.”³²

Shastriji Maharaj would often emphasise that he had not left the Vartal diocese for any other reason apart from establishing the truth of doctrine and succession. The historical context would also prove this fact. Leaving Vartal meant being ridiculed and living in extremely harsh and difficult conditions. Moreover, even after leaving Vartal in 1905, he was willing to rejoin if Vadtal authorities accepted the Akṣara-Puruṣottama

30. Dave, 152.

31. ‘Eva Shastriji Maharajne Amara Lakho Vandan Ho...: Pushpa 1’, BAPS, accessed 18 September 2021, <https://www.baps.org/Publications/Video/Eva-Shastriji-Maharajne-Amara-Lakho-Vandan-Ho-Pushpa-01-1378.aspx>.

32. Vivekpriyadas, Li Shastri Yagnapurushdasji Part 2 (Compilation of Letters of Shastriji Maharaj and Contemporary Satsang), 375.

Darśana, however, this was no avail. Therefore, his motivations appear to be solely for the cause of establishing what he believed to be the correct theology and line of succession.

MATERIALISING AND INSTITUTIONALISING THE AKṢARA-PURUṢOTTAMA DARŚANA

Now that he had verified and had full conviction in the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana, he did not keep this to himself. He decided to spread, materialise, institutionalise, and concretise this belief. He was intent on making this philosophical-soteriological principle into something material. In the Satsang Diksha scripture, Mahant Swami Maharaj describes how the Akṣara-Puruṣottama *siddhānta* evolved. He writes:

*Swāminārāyaṇeneha
siddhānto'yaṁ prabodhitaha;*

[Bhagwan Swaminarayan revealed this *siddhānt* in this world.]

*Gurubhish-cha Guṇātītair
digante'yaṁ pravartitaha. 111*

[The Gunatit gurus spread it throughout the world.]

*Yagnapurushadāsena
sthāpito mūrti-mattayā. - 112*

[Shastriji Maharaj enshrined it in the form of *mūrtis*.]

Throughout the BAPS fellowship, Shastriji Maharaj is venerated not only for establishing the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana, but also for concretising, institutionalising, materialising, and enshrining the theology in the form of *mūrtis*, mandirs, and literature.

The first thing he did was establish an institution. He institutionally and legally established the BAPS organisation. He put the words 'Akṣara-Puruṣottama' in the very name of the tradition. This move ensured that the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana would not merely be a small pocket of believers conducting worship during his lifetime, but that the *darśana* would be safeguarded within an actual institution so that even after the passing of Shastriji Maharaj, this theology and worship would continue.

The second and arguably most important aspect of materialising the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana was building *shikharbaddha* mandirs. Rather than writing or commissioning scriptures, Shāstrīji Maharaj opted to undergo many hardships and erect temples to begin the worship of Bhagwan Swaminarayan alongside Gunatitanand Swami. A *shikharbaddha* mandir is a traditional stone mandir with spires. Shāstrīji Maharaj between the years 1907 and 1951 built five such stone temples and installed sacred metal images (*mūrtis*) of Gunatitanand Swami and Bhagwan Swaminarayan in the central shrine.

Cynthia Packert elaborates on the importance of establishing the *mūrtis* of Akṣara-Puruṣottama by saying, “When Shāstrīji Maharaj (Sadhu Yagnapurushdas) founded the BAPS Swaminarayan Sanstha in 1907 and installed the first two *mūrtis* or sacred images of Akshar–Purushottam in the newly constructed Bochasan temple, he created a new iconographic paradigm that formed the centrepiece of his understanding of Swaminarayan’s philosophy”.³³ Installing *mūrtis* of God alongside their ideal disciple was not uncommon, as Bhagwan Swaminarayan had himself installed *mūrtis* of Nar-Narayan, Lakshmi Narayan, and Radha Krishna in the mandirs he built. Shāstrīji Maharaj, as we saw earlier, explained this very point when installing the *mūrtis* of Akṣara-Puruṣottama. The first mandir he built was in the village of Bochasan in the region of Charotar in 1907, hence the name Bochasanwasi Akṣara-Puruṣottama Swaminarayan Sanstha (BAPS). The next temple he built was in Sarangpur in 1916, then in Gondal in 1934 followed by Atladra in 1945 and then Gadhada in 1951. By installing the *mūrtis* of Akṣara-Puruṣottama, he was fulfilling the words of Bhagwan Swaminarayan in Vacanāmṛut Gadhada 1.27, wherein he says that mandirs are built for the correct worship of God (*upāsana*). Shāstrīji Maharaj frequently cited Vacanāmṛut Vartal 5 when people would oppose.

33. Cynthia Packert, ‘Early Swaminarayan Iconography and Its Relationship to Vaishnavism’, in Swaminarayan Hinduism: Tradition, Adaptation and Identity, eds. Raymond Brady Williams and Yogi Trivedi, First edition (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2016), 240.

In Vacanāmrut Vartal 5, Bhagwan Swaminarayan states “by performing with extreme affection such similar service of God and the Sant who possesses the highest qualities, even if he is a devotee of the lowest type and was destined to become a devotee of the highest type after two lives, or after four lives, or after ten lives, or after 100 lives, he will become a devotee of the highest calibre in this very life. Such are the fruits of the similar service of God and God’s Bhakta.”³⁴ Shastriji Maharaj established Gunatitanand Swami as the ideal disciple of Bhagwan Swaminarayan, and as per the words of Bhagwan Swaminarayan installed *mūrtis* of both so that equal service could be performed.

Another manner in which Shastriji Maharaj proliferated the Akṣara-Puruṣottama philosophy was through the creation of the Swaminarayan Prakash, a monthly periodical. In a letter dated 28 September 1938, Shastriji Maharaj writes from Sarangpur to a devotee named Khengarjibhai in Amdavad explaining the purpose behind this magazine. He writes, “In order to spread the greatness of Bhagwan Swaminarayan and Swami you have started a monthly publication, ‘Swaminarayan Prakash’ which will give thousands of pure devotees, philosophy, joy and satisfaction. Due to this, I have deep affection for you. ‘Swaminarayan Prakash’ means ‘Swami’ is Gunatitanand Swami, who is eternally Akshar, ‘Narayan’ is Sahajanand Swami, who is Purna Puruṣottama, and their ‘Prakash’ is light in the form of knowledge. From this endeavour, the philosophy will attain victory around the universe and daily bells of this will be heard. Because of this, I feel a great deal of satisfaction.”³⁵ The chief purpose of this magazine was therefore to elucidate and educate people about the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana.

The seeds of the global presence of BAPS were also sowed by Shastriji Maharaj. The first devotees in Africa such as Maganbhai Patel and Harmanbhai Patel were devotees of Shastriji Maharaj. Moreover,

34. Vacanāmrut Vartal 5.

35. Vivekpriyadas, Li Shastri Yagnapurushdasji Part 2 (Compilation of Letters of Shastriji Maharaj and Contemporary Satsang), 368–70.

Shastriji Maharaj blessed Mahendrabhai Patel to go to the UK in the early 1950s to study and maintain and establish the worship of Akṣara-Puruṣottama.³⁶ In this way, Shastriji Maharaj ensured that the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana did not remain within the confines of India but would spread to devotees and aspirants around the world.

The longevity of the Akṣara-Puruṣottama darshan can be credited to Shastriji Maharaj's succession planning, as he was not intending to create a following centered around him. Instead, as seen throughout the history we have traced here, he wanted to establish a tradition centered on the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana. As outlined by Max Weber, many a time, groups formed by charismatic leaders wither away after the passing of the leader. In 1950, a year before his passing, Shastriji Maharaj arranged a meeting of the executive committee of BAPS and declared that Narayanswarupdas Swami would henceforth be the president (Pramukh) of the tradition. From that day onwards Narayanswarupdas Swami would be called Pramukh Swami, and today he is renowned around the world as Pramukh Swami Maharaj.³⁷

In verse 312 of the Satsang Diksha scripture, Mahant Swami Maharaj describes Shastriji Maharaj as “*Yagnapurushadāsāya satya-siddhānta-rakṣiṇe*”, meaning Yagnapurushdas (Shastriji Maharaj) was the protector of the true *siddhānta* (principle). Similarly, the text under a marble image of Shastriji Maharaj in a temple dedicated to him at the spot he was cremated reads “*Akṣara-Puruṣottama na prakhar pravartak*”, meaning ‘the ardent propagator of the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana’. Therefore, we see that in BAPS Shastriji Maharaj is venerated chiefly for verifying, protecting, establishing, and proliferating the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana. To clarify, the Akṣara-Puruṣottama theological principle and the notion of Gunatitanand Swami as the embodiment of *Akṣarabrahman*

36. ‘History of BAPS in the UK & Europe’, accessed 18 September 2021, <http://londonmandir.baps.org/about/history-of-baps-in-the-uk-europe/>.

37. Sadhu Adarshjivandas, Brahmaswarup Shri Pramukh Swami Maharaj (Part 1) (Ahmedabad: Swaminarayan Aksharpath, 2018).

was not created by Shastriji Maharaj. Rather, Shastriji Maharaj is said to have uncovered, verified, and proclaimed this principle which Bhagwan Swaminarayan had stated. Shastriji Maharaj is also believed to be the human manifestation of *Akṣarabrahman* and therefore the third spiritual successor of Bhagwan Swaminarayan, and that is why it is believed that only he was able to verify and establish this *darśana*.

In 1905 when Shastriji Maharaj left Vartal, he was ridiculed for leaving the comforts of a tradition in which he was highly respected. As we have seen, he left with the intention of propagating the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana, a *darśana* few had heard of. Today, in 2021, BAPS now has 1100 temples around the world, the Swaminarayan Prakash now has an English edition too and a circulation of thousands, and the 5 sadhus that Shastriji Maharaj left Vartal with in 1905 have now turned to over 1000 sadhus. Crucially, the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana is now accepted by the wider academic community as an original philosophical-soteriological *darśana* and is receiving much acclaim from respected institutions such as the Kāśī Vidvat Paṛiśad in Benares, as well as the World Sanskrit Conference.³⁸ This brief article has shown how the resolve and scholarship of one individual in uncertain and challenging times led to the creation and proliferation of a vibrant tradition across the globe.

38. “Swaminarayan Siddhanta Sudha” Acclamation by the Śrī Kāśī Vidvat Paṛiśad at Varanasi, India – BAPS Swaminarayan Research Institute’, accessed 28 May 2019, <http://swaminarayanresearch.akshardham.com/2017/07/31/swaminarayansiddhantasudha-acclamation-by-the-sri-kasi-vidvat-parisad-at-varanasi-india/>; Staff Writer, ‘World Sanskrit Conference Recognizes Bhagwan Swaminarayan’s Akshar-Purushottam Darshan as Distinct Vedanta Tradition | News India Times’, accessed 28 May 2019, <http://www.newsindiatimes.com/world-sanskrit-conference-recognizes-bhagwan-swaminarayans-akshar-purushottam-darshan-as-distinct-vedanta-tradition/>.

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SWĀMINĀRĀYAṆA-SIDDHĀNTA-SUDHĀ AS A ŚĀSTRA-KĀVYA

PROF. DR. RABINDRA KUMAR PANDA

Former Head Department of Sanskrit, Pali & Prakrit

Former Principal, Baroda Sanskrit Mahavidyalaya,

The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda

ABSTRACT

Akṣarapuruṣottama darśana originates from the Vedas and finds its clear expression in the Upaniṣads, Bhagavad-Gītā and Brahmasūtra. The Vacanāmṛta of Bhagavān Swāminārāyaṇa is the most authentic source of this philosophical system of knowledge. The Swāminārāyaṇa-siddhānta-sudhā, an independent Vādagrantha written by Pūjya Bhadreshdas Swamiji explicates and interprets scientifically the doctrines of this philosophy on the basis of the original source material and gives to it a well organised form of a Śāstra. But, this philosophical text has some unique and distinctive features which require intensive study and proper appreciation from the literary perspective in the light of the model of Śāstrakāvyas. The present paper is an attempt in this direction and it will initiate a dialogue to accommodate philosophy within the fold of literature. This perspective, I think, will unfold unique beauty relating to literary style, language and literary qualities of Swāminārāyaṇa-siddhānta-sudhā, which is universally accepted as a text of philosophy.

I. INTRODUCTION:

Mahāmahopādhyāya Bhadreshdas Swami is one of the great *āchāryas* of India. He has composed seminal commentaries on the *Prashthānatrayī* viz. *Upaniṣats*, *Bhagvadgītā* and *Brahmasūtras* being inspired by H. H. Pramukhaswami Maharaja. He has also composed an independent treatise, a *Vādagrantha* apart from the commentaries published in five volumes. These works are very valuable contribution to the intellectual lore of India. Through these erudite works, our *Pūjya* Bhadreshdas Swami has revived the *Bhāṣya-paramparā* developed by the great *ācāryas* like Śaṅkarācārya, Rāmānujācārya and others. At present the *bhāṣyas* are great source of knowledge for study and research of *Akṣarapuruṣottama darśana*.

The principle of *Swāminārāyaṇa-vedānta* or *Akṣarapuruṣottama darśana* was present in the Vedas, *Upaniṣats*, *Bhagvadgītā* and *Brahmasūtras* but it was analysed and interpreted by revered Swamiji. His interpretations of all those Vedantic principles found in the *Upaniṣats*, *Bhagvadgītā* and *Brahmasūtras* are at present before us in the form of great commentaries. *Bhadreshdas* Swami is not only a *bhāṣyakāra* but he is also a writer of an Independent dialectical text entitled *Swāminārāyaṇa-siddhānta-sudhā*. It substantiates the *Akṣarapuruṣottama darśana* – as revealed by *Parabrahman Swāminārāyaṇa* and propagated by the succession of *Akṣarabrahmanaswarupa* Gurus. The text is divided into nine sections. It begins with a description of the two divine entities, *Akṣara* and *puruṣottama*. The text then discusses valid means of knowledge and continues by presenting a narration on *Māyā*, *Jīva* and *Īśvara*. Thereafter, upon offering an explanation of *Sādhana*, the book concludes with an elaboration on *Mukti*, the cultivate goal of human life. Every discussion within this text concludes with *Karikas* on verses that encapsulate the *Sampradāya*'s principles. A total of 458 verses are composed and included within this text. They are collectively known as *Swāminārāyaṇa-siddhānta-kārikas* or *Akṣarapuruṣottama-darśana-samgraha*. The ontology, epistemology and soteriology of the philosophy is the core of the text.

In this work, Swamiji has summarised the doctrines of the *Akṣarapurūṣottama darśana* in both prose and poetry. This *Vādagrantha* is a monumental text which stands unique in the entire Indian Intellectual culture for its style, language and poetic beauty. The *kārikās* are wonderful creations of Swamiji's extraordinary brilliance of mind and heart. All the verses of this text delight us with its supreme thematic essence and linguistic flavour.

These texts are unavoidable for the systematic, scientific and literary study of *Akṣarapurūṣottama* philosophy. Even the general students and teachers can get the benefit of studying these great texts for philological, philosophical and aesthetic knowledge. Furthermore, theses important commentaries that have been composed by the great poet Bhadrashācārya is a link for understanding of entire intellectual tradition and knowledge systems of India like *Nyāya*, *Sāṅkhya*, *Yoga* and other well-known Vedantic systems. So, these works create a great scope for comparative and historical research from various perspectives.

We know very well that H. H. Pramukh Swami Maharaja has made significant contributions to Vedic *Sanātana-dharma* by inspiring the creation of literature that fosters the *Akṣarapurūṣottama-darśana Siddhānta*. Among these literary works, the Philosophical texts such as the *Prashthānatrayī-Swāminārāyaṇa-Bhāṣyas* and *Swāminārāyaṇa-siddhānta-sudhā* composed by Pūjya Bhadrashdas Swami present the *Darśanic* form of *Akṣarapurūṣottama-Siddhānta*, with *Śruti*, *Yukti* and *Anubhāva*.

Thus, Bhadrashdas Swamiji's unique and laudable contribution for propagating and propounding the Swāminārāyaṇa Vedantic thoughts in lucid and logical form by way of systematic interpretation of the foundational texts like *Upaniṣats*, *Bhagvadgītā* and *Brahmasūtras* should be further extended by way of systematic study and research so that Indian systems of knowledge will continue to grow in their own ways. His *Swāminārāyaṇa-siddhāntasudhā*¹ is a commendable contribution. Swamiji's writing is scholarly sophisticate

1. Sadhu, Bhadrashdas, *Swāminārāyaṇa-siddhāntasudhā*, Swaminarayana Aksharapeetha, Ahmedabad, 1st Edition, 2017.

and free from errors. Prof. Jyotindra Dave rightly explains:

The *Swāminārāyaṇa-siddhāntasudhā*, a *Vādagrantha* that offers an exposition, justification, and defence of the foundational principles of the *Aksara-Purusottama Darsana*.²

C. Rajendran also observes:

The *Swāminārāyaṇa-siddhāntasudhā* is authored by Sadhu Bhadreshdas – an erudite scholar of the *Swāminārāyaṇa Darsana*. The text provides an elegant introduction to the basic tenets of the system in scholarly Sanskrit. Sadhu Bhadreshdas has already won the acclaim of the scholarly world of his expert exposition of the *Prasthāntayī* from the perspective of the *Swāminārāyaṇa Sampradāya*. The present work, authored in the classical *Vādagrantha* style, will be interesting to all students of Indian Philosophy. It recreates the environment of ancient scholarly discourses, where philosophy was a matter of daily intellectual exercise and Sanskrit was the vehicle of scholarly exchange.³

He further remarks:

Students of Indian Philosophy will be greatly indebted to Swami Bhadreshdas for providing this scholarly introduction to the *Swāminārāyaṇa Philosophy*. It's clear and comprehensible Sanskrit is commendable. Within this exceptional exposition, the author displays his through knowledge of not only the *sampradāya*, but also the various schools of Indian philosophy. He authenticates his position at every juncture within numerous references to scriptures, such as the Upaniṣads and the Bhagvadgita. Rival perspectives are presented clearly and are accurately responded to from the siddhant position. Written in modern times, the

2. Dave, Jyotindra, The Tradition of Education in the Svaminarayana Sampradaya, Vyāsaśrīḥ Vol.XX, Part 1.

3. Rajendran, C., A Lucid Introduction to the Svāminārāyaṇa Darśana: Svāminārāyaṇasiddhāntasudhā by Mahāmahopādhyāya Sadhu Bhadreshdas, Vyāsaśrīḥ Vol.XX, Part 1.

work serves as a testament to India's living *darsanic* and *Śāstra tradition*.⁴

II. SWĀMINĀRĀYAṆA-SIDDHĀNTA-SUDHĀ

शास्त्रमिदं ह्येवं नवधारासु निर्मितम् ।

श्वसिति निष्ठया साक्षादक्षरपुरुषोत्तमे ॥⁵

Swāminārāyaṇa-siddhāntasudhā contains nine *dhārās* and I have also tried to present my ideas in nine *dhārās* from the perspective of poetics.

1. Rasa-dhārā:

Bharata and his followers like *Vishvanātha Kavirāja* accept Rasa to be the soul of poetry though all the Sanskrit *poeticians* do not accept this view and there is differences of opinion about the soul of poetry. Ānandavardhana, the author of *Dhvanyāloka* accept *Dhvani* or suggested meaning to be the soul of poetry while Kuntaka, the author of the *Vakroktijīvitam* accept *Vakrokti* as the soul of poetry. According to Vāmana, the soul of poetry is *Rīti* or Style. Kshemendra opines that *Auchitya* should be accepted as *kāvyaātmā*. Some of the rhetoricians think that *Alaṅkāra* is the soul of poetry. In the *Śāstrakāvya* entitled *Swāminārāyaṇa-siddhānta-sudhā*, I find Bhakti as the main sentiment and that Bhakti is *Parama-premarupa*.⁶ The *Akṣarapuruṣottama-darśana* propagates that Bhagavan Swāminārāyaṇa is the ultimate supreme reality and one can achieve *Mokṣa* by Bhakti. Many verses composed by Sadhu Bhadrashdasji in the *Swāminārāyaṇa-siddhānta-sudhā* contain this *Bhaktirasa*. We also find *Śāntarasa* in some verses. Though the text is a dialectical text and the theme of the text is presented logically, still the writing of Swamiji take us to a world of emotions where we can experience the *Rasas* and *bhāvas* through his lucid expression and melodious use of language. This *rasa-dhārā* flows as if with emotions of devotional poetry. Some examples are here:

4. Ibid, p.202

5. Sadhu, Bhadrashdas, *Swāminārāyaṇa-siddhāntasudhā*, p.459

6. Nārada-bhaktisūtra, सा त्वस्मिन् परमप्रेमरूपा । I- 2, by Swami Vedantananda, trans into Hindi by Kedarānath Labha, Ramakrishna Math, Nagpur, 4th Edition, 2015.

ब्रह्मज्ञानविचारचारुविषयब्रह्माऽक्षराधीशयोः
 सिद्धान्ताज्जनहेतुयज्ञपुरुषे ब्रह्मस्वरूपे पुनः ।
 ग्रन्थाऽऽज्ञाकरणप्रफुल्लप्रमुखे प्रत्यक्षनारायणे
 लेखारम्भमहोत्सवेऽभिरमतां दिव्या मतिर्मे शुभा ॥
 शास्त्रे शास्त्रेऽतिभक्त्या त्वदभिहितवरे सम्प्रदायाऽर्थपुष्ट्यै ।
 वाक्ये वाक्ये त्वदीये सकलहितकरे सत्यसिद्धान्तदृष्ट्यै ॥
 कार्ये कार्ये मदीये सततमहरहस्त्वत्सहत्वाऽनुभूत्यै ।
 श्वासे श्वासे ह्यभीक्ष्णं मम हृदयङ्गरे वातु विश्वासनादः ॥

व्यर्थाऽभविष्यन्ननुब्रह्मविद्याब्रह्मैव चेदत्र न प्राऽभविष्यत् ।
 भाग्यं खलु ब्रह्मपरब्रह्मोभौ साक्षात्प्रभूतावथ सार्थिका सा ॥

ब्रह्मब्रह्मपरौ प्रमाणशतकैर्मायाऽधिपौ कीर्तितौ
 जीवात्मेश्वरकोटिवृन्दभरणौ सर्वाऽऽत्मभूतौ शुभौ ।
 ब्रह्माऽऽत्मैक्यप्रसादिताऽऽत्मविभया यौ साधयन्ते मुदा
 दिव्यौ मुक्तिकरौ स्मरामि सनति ग्रन्थोद्यमे मङ्गलौ ॥^७

महामहोपाध्याय श्रीगोपीनाथ कविराज लिखते है –

“काव्य और साहित्य “पोएट्री” अथवा “रेटॉरिक” मात्र नहीं है। य भी “ब्रह्मविद्या” है। प्राचीन काल में कवि-पद से ब्रह्मविद् समझा जाता था। “कवयः क्रान्तदर्शिनः” यही प्राचीन दृष्टि है। “कविं पुराणमनुशासितारम्” इत्यादि वचनों में भी कवि शब्द से ज्ञानी ही माना जाता है। वाक् (शब्द) और अर्थ के सहित भाव से ही साहित्य का उद्भव है। वाक् और अर्थ यथाक्रम शक्ति और शिव के वाचक हैं। शिव-शक्ति सामरस्य ही साहित्य है। इसका आत्मा अथवा प्राण रस है। ह्लादिनी-शक्ति तथा संवित्शक्ति इन दो स्वरूप-शक्तियों के अभेद से रस का आस्वादन होता है: “रसो वै सः” वस्तुतः रस स्वयंप्रकाश ब्रह्मतत्त्व का ही नामान्तर है।”^८

Bhāsa-dhārā:

The most important factor that gives a special status to the philosophical work like *Swāminārāyaṇa-siddhānta-sudhā* is its language.

7. Sadhu, Bhadrashdasa, *Swāminārāyaṇa-siddhānta-sudhā*, pp.4-5.
8. Gopinatha Kaviraja, *Bharatiya Sanskriti Ka Svarupa in Bharatiya Sanskriti Aur Sadhana*, Vol.1 p. 214

The language of Swami Bhadreshadasa is sweet, ornamental, lucid, sophisticated and free from grammatical errors. The language makes the work unique and extra ordinary. The reading of *Swāminārāyaṇa-siddhānta-sudhā* reminds us the great *Naiyāyika* Jayanta Bhatta and his *Nyāyamañjarī* in which Jayanta makes use of erudite but simple and sweet language. The *Swāminārāyaṇa-siddhānta-sudhā* seems to be a piece of art. The poetic art is in its peak. The presentation flows continuously and it does not burden the readers. The expression and language do not stand on the way of verbal understanding. It is the result of poetic genius of Swamiji Panditaraja rightly defines:

रमणीयार्थप्रतिपादकः शब्दः काव्यम् ।⁹

In this text we closely observe the beauty of both *Śabda* and *Artha*. In this context, Bhāmaha, the author of *Kāvyalankāra* comes to my mind who rightly says:

एतद्ग्राह्यं सुरभिक्षुसुमं ग्राम्यमेतन्निधेयं
धत्ते शोभां विरचितमिदं स्थानमस्यैतदस्य ।
मालाकारो रचयति यथा साधु विज्ञाय मालां
योज्यं काव्येष्ववहितधिया तद्वदेवाभिधानम् ॥¹⁰

(Just as a man who strings up a garland uses one kind of flower because it is sweet-smelling and rejects another because it is ordinary: again knows that one (particular) flower will look pretty when interwoven in a particular manner or that only a (particular) place is suited for a particular flower just as such a man strings up discriminating correctly – so should one comparing *kāvya* dispose of words with close attention.)¹¹ Swamiji has selected words very carefully and selection deserves commendation.

9. Rasagangadhara, Text with English Translation and Critical Study, Ed. Dhananjaya Bhanja, Bharatiya Kala Prakashan, Delhi, 2004, p.5

10. Kavyalankara of Bhamaha, Ed: P.V. Naganatha Sastry, Motilal Banarasidass Publishers Private Limited, Delhi, 1.59, p.21

11. Ibid.

3. Rīti-dhārā:

Vāmana, the author of *Kāvyaālankāra* accepts *Rīti* to be the soul of poetry. It is the style that makes the author. Swamiji's style of presentation is superb and it is *Vaidarbhī* style. In my opinion, Swamiji Bhadrashdas is a follower of *Vaidarbhī rīti* mainly used by the great poet like Kavi kulaguru Kalidasa. It is defined as:

माधुर्यव्यञ्जकैर्वर्णै रचना ललितात्मिका ॥ १.२

अवृत्तिरल्पवृत्तिर्वा वैदर्भी रीतिरिष्यते । १.३ ¹²

An Example:

“अयमेव नारायणस्वरूपे मनसोऽखण्डितां वृत्तिमापादयति, सम्पादयति अध्यात्मवार्ताम् आस्थापयति ज्ञानस्थितौ, समुदभावयति कल्याणमयगुणगणं, जनयति स्थावरजङ्गमेषु परमात्मसाक्षात्कारं, दहति कारणदेहं, दृढयति उत्तमनिर्विकल्पनिश्चयं, दिव्यभावमुद्दीपयति, विषयशल्यान् विशकलयति, प्रभुप्रसादम् आसादयति, पूर्णकामतां संपूरयति, अष्टप्रहरमानन्दसन्दोहे निमज्जयति, कृतकृत्यताम् आकारयति चेति ।”¹³

One more example:

तथा हि इन्द्रियेभ्यः परा ह्यर्थाः (कठ. ३/१०) इत्यारभ्य सोऽध्वनः परमाप्नोति तद् विष्णोः परमं पदम् ॥ (कठ. ३/९) इत्यन्तेन दिव्याऽक्षरधामस्थितपरमात्म सहजानन्दाऽवाप्तिलक्षण-परम-पुरुषार्थो पायाऽनुकूलसोपानोपदेशः । त्रेन्द्रियाद्युत्तरोत्तरविजयेऽध्व पाराऽऽप्तिः फलमिति । तत्र शरीराद्धि सूक्ष्माणीन्द्रियाणि पराणि । तेभ्यश्चक्षुरादिभ्यो विषयसन्निधानमात्रेण तदिन्द्रियाणां विषय-प्रवणतोद्भवाच्छब्दस्पर्शरूपादयोऽर्थाः प्रबलाः । एतेभ्योऽर्थेभ्यश्च तत्तदिन्द्रियव्यापारविरामेऽपि बाह्यशब्दस्पर्शाद्यर्थ-संसर्गं विनाऽपि तत्सङ्कल्परमणप्रभुत्वाद् मनः परम् । बुद्ध्या निश्चितस्यैव मनसाऽनुमननदर्शनादाह मनसस्तु परा बुद्धिरिति । तस्याश्च बुद्धेर्देहेन्द्रियाऽन्तःकरणादिसर्वेषामधिष्ठातृत्वाद् आत्मा महानिति ।¹⁴

4. Dhvani-dhārā:

Dhvani means suggested meaning, Acharya Mammata says in his *Kāvyaaprakāśa* that *Dhvani-kāvya* is the best type of *kāvya*. Actually, the ordinary expressions do not contain superb meanings. Since the

12. Sahityadarpana of Visvanatha, Ed: Shree Shaligram Shastri Vidyavachaspati, Bharatiya Kala Prakashan, Delhi, 2008, p.569

13. Sadhu, Bhadrashdas, op.cit., p.6

14. Ibid.

sentences do not contain any hidden meaning or interesting meaning, the expressions do not arrest the minds of the *Saḥardayas*. In the *Swāminārāyaṇa-siddhāntasudhā*, there are plenty of beautiful verses which contain suggested meanings. A serious reader will not miss them while reading the *Sudhā* text from a literary perspective. Though the *Swāminārāyaṇa-siddhānta-sudhā* is not like a *Mahākāvya* type of work, we may not get such verses where suggested meaning is very obvious and clear. Still suggestiveness is found in many of the verses composed in appropriate metres. Let's see an example of *Dhvani-dhārā* :

तस्माच्चाऽऽत्मनः परभूतमव्यक्तमित्याह महतः परमव्यक्तमिति । इहाऽव्यक्तशब्देनाऽक्षरं ब्रह्माऽभिहितम् । मायिककरणैः प्रत्यक्षतया व्यक्तुमशक्यत्वात् तस्याऽव्यक्तमिति व्यपदेशः । आत्मन इन्द्रियमनोबुद्ध्याद्यपेक्षया प्रबलत्वेऽपि तस्याऽव्यक्तमिति व्यपदेशः । आत्मन इन्द्रियमनोबुद्ध्याद्यपेक्षया प्रबलत्वेऽपि तस्याऽनादिमायावेष्टितत्वाद् अक्षरब्रह्मणश्चाऽनादित एव मायागन्धशून्यत्वाद् मायावेष्टितानप्यात्मानो मायारहितान् ब्रह्मरूपांश्च कर्तुं सामर्थ्यशालित्वात्स्यादेव तस्याऽऽत्मनः प्रबलत्वमिति । तस्माच्चा " "त्मपरभूतादव्यक्ताऽऽख्याऽक्षरब्रह्मणः पुरुषोत्तमः परभूत इत्याहाऽव्यक्तात् पुरुषः पर इति । तस्मात् परस्याऽन्यस्याऽभावादाह पुरुषान्न परं किञ्चिदित्यादि । एवमिहाऽऽत्मपरमात्मनोर्भिन्नतयाऽक्षरं ब्रह्मोपदिष्टम् । स चाऽयमर्थः सूत्रकारेण प्रतिपादित इत्यग्र उपस्थाप्यते ।¹⁵

5. *Alaṅkāra-dhārā*:

The verses of Swamiji are full of poetic figures like *Upamā*, *Rūpaka* etc. The beauty i.e. called *Alaṅkāra* is found in almost all the verses of the work. Even the prose passages contain good number of *Alaṅkāras* and our revered Swamiji must be appreciated for the appropriate and sophisticated use of *Alaṅkāras*. So his philosophical text seems to be a masterpiece of literature Mammata rightly observes:

उपकुर्वन्ति तं सन्तं येऽङ्गद्वारेण जातुचित् ।
हारादिवदलङ्कारास्ते ऽनुप्रासोपमादयः ॥¹⁶

15. Sadhu, Bhadreshdasa, op.cit., p.35

16. Mammata, *kāvya-prakāśa* with English translation (Revised), Ed: Mahamahopadhyaya Ganganatha Jha & S K Jha, The Bharatiya Vidya Prakashan, Varanasi, U.P., p. 301.

An example of Nidarśanā Alamkāra is given here for reader's perusal:

क्व वेदान्तगारो गहनसुगभीरः श्रुतिगणः
क्व हन्ताऽस्मद्बुद्धिः प्रकृतिजडपङ्केन मलिना ।
तथापि प्रज्ञा तु परमगुरुकारुण्यसुलभा
कटाक्षः पर्याप्तः प्रमुखनयनोद्भूतसरसः ॥¹⁷

6. Guṇa-dhārā:

As a human being is appreciated for his qualities, similarly the poetic compositions are also appreciated for the poetic qualities like *Oja*, *Prasāda* and *Mādhurya*.

ये रसस्याङ्गिनो धर्माः शौर्यादय इवात्मनः ।
उत्कर्षहेतवस्ते स्यु-रचलस्थितयो गुणाः ॥¹⁸
श्लेषः प्रसादः समता माधुर्यं सुकुमारता ।
अर्थव्यक्तिरुदारत्व-मोजः कान्तिसमाधयः ॥
इति वैदर्भमार्गस्य प्राणा दशगुणाः स्मृताः ।¹⁹
श्रुतिमात्रेण शब्दानां येनार्थप्रत्ययो भवेत् ।
साधारणः समग्राणां स प्रसादो गुणो मतः ॥²⁰

Swamiji's writing is full of *prasāda-guṇa* and *Mādhurya Guṇa*. Both *śabdaguṇas* and *Arthaguṇas* are profusely found in the *Swāminārāyaṇa-siddhānta-sudhā*. I have given some examples to make my point clear.

साक्षाद्ब्रह्मस्वरूपे प्रकटगुरुवरे प्रीतिकाष्ठां विधाय,
सङ्गेन स्वात्ममध्ये स्वयमपि च तथा ब्रह्मभावं प्रधाय ।
कार्या तत्रैव भक्त्या प्रकटहरिसुधीर्दिव्यभावं निधाय
सेव्यो ब्रह्मस्थदेवो भवभयतरणे स्वामिनारायणोऽयम् ॥²¹

17. Sadhu, Bhadreshdasa, Swāminārāyaṇa-upanīsat-bhāṣyam, Swaminarayana Aksarapeetha, Ahmedabad, 1st Edition, 2017, p. xix

18. Mammata, kāvyaprakāśa, op.cit., p. 299

19. Kavyadarśa of Dandin, (Text with the Commentary Jībanand Vidyasagara), Ed: by R. K. Panda, Bharatiya Kala Prakashan (Revised Edition), Delhi, 2008, p.21

20. Mammata, kāvyaprakāśa, op.cit., p.7

21. Sadhu, Bhadreshdasa, Swāminārāyaṇa-siddhāntasudhā, p.306

ईशेऽप्युक्तं “योऽसावौ पुरुषः सोऽहस्मि” (ई.१६) इति । इहाऽस्मिन्नेव मन्त्रे पूर्वं “यत्ते रूपं कल्याणतमं तत्ते पश्यामि (ई.१६) इति परब्रह्मणो दिव्यविग्रहसाक्षात्कारः प्रार्थितः । ततश्च तादृशसाक्षात्काराधिकार प्राप्तयर्थं स्वात्मनि साक्षादक्षरब्रह्मरूपतामासासयितुं स्वात्मानं तदक्षरब्रह्मणासहैक्येनाऽनु-सन्धानमुच्यते योऽसावसौ पुरुषः सोऽहमस्मीति । असावित्यतिसामीप्याददसा निर्देशः । तथा च दिव्याक्षरधाम्नि पुरुषोत्तमस्य तव सेवार्थं मुक्तेभ्योऽपि त्वदतिसमीपं वर्तमानं दिव्यकरचरणाद्यङ्गयुक्तं सदा पुरुषाकारत्वात् पुरुषशब्दाभिधेयं यद् अक्षरं ब्रह्म वर्तते तादृशमक्षरं ब्रह्म मम स्वरूपमस्तीति तात्पर्यम् । परब्रह्मसाक्षात्कारे ब्रह्मरूपताया अनिवार्यत्वात् तद्दाढ्यायाऽसावसाविति वीप्सेति । एवमनेन पुरुषोत्तमस्तद्धामस्थं सेवकरूपमक्षरं च सहैवोपदिष्टमिति जयत्यक्षरपुरुषोत्तमः”²²

इत्थं हि तन्मन्त्रार्थः – सः परमकल्याणाऽभिलाषी तद्विज्ञानार्थं साक्षादक्षरब्रह्मपरब्रह्मगोचरब्रह्मविद्यासाक्षात्कारार्थं समित्पाणिः विधिवद्वस्ताहित-समित्कुशादिः सन् श्रोत्रियं साक्षात्कृतसकलशब्दार्थं स्वाऽऽचरणोपदेशादिना श्रुतिबोधितब्रह्मविद्याबोधनदक्षं च ब्रह्म साक्षादक्षरं ब्रह्म निष्ठं नित्यं नितान्तं च तिष्ठतीति निष्ठस्तम् । क्वेत्यपेक्षायां परब्रह्मणीति लभ्यतेऽतो निष्ठमित्यस्य परब्रह्मनिष्ठमित्यर्थः । नित्यं परब्रह्मनिष्ठः साक्षादक्षरं ब्रह्मैव परमनिःश्रेयसप्रदब्रह्मविद्याविज्ञापको गुरुर्भवितुमर्हति नाऽन्य इतीह सिद्धान्तितम् । गुरुं गुकाराऽभिधेयाऽनाद्यज्ञानाऽन्धकाराऽपाकरणक्षमरुकाराऽभिधेयाऽक्षर-पुरुषोत्तमसिद्धान्तज्योतीराशिसमुज्ज्वालयितुं-त्वात् सम्प्रदायो हि गुरुक्रम इत्याद्युक्तेः सम्प्रदायपरम्पराऽभिरक्षकत्वाच्चाऽक्षरब्रह्म गुरुरिति व्यपदिष्टम् । एवाऽभिगच्छेद् यथाविधि तच्छरणं गच्छेदिति । नैकाऽर्थाश्चेह विज्ञापयत्येवकारः । ब्रह्मविद्याऽभीप्सा चेद् गुरुवश्यमाश्रयणीय इति ब्रह्मविद्यार्थिनां गुरुपसत्तौ नियमो विधीयते । अन्ययोगव्यवच्छेदाऽर्थकतयैवकारस्य ब्रह्मविद्यासाक्षात्काराय परमनिःश्रेयसे गुरुरेव समाश्रयणीयो नाऽन्य इति तदन्येषां मुक्तानां व्यवच्छेदः । मुक्तानां साक्षाद्ब्रह्मस्वरूपगुरुपदेशादिभिर्लब्धब्रह्मभावत्वेऽपि ब्रह्मविद्या-साक्षात्कारविभूषितत्वेऽपि त्रिगुणातीतत्वेऽपि स्वरूपतोऽक्षरब्रह्म-तत्त्वभिन्नत्वान्न हि तेषां परेभ्यस्तत्प्रदानक्षमत्वमधिकारो वा । अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमयोरेव तन्नियताऽधिकारत्वात् । अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमेतिद्वयाऽतिरिक्तानां नित्यमुक्तत्वं नास्तीत्यन्यत्र वदामः । एवं मुक्तेषु व्युदस्तेषु शास्त्रशब्दोच्चारणमात्र-कुशलानामसाक्षात्कृततदर्थसिद्धान्तानां देवागारमठादिसंचालनमात्रेण तदाधिपत्यवतां सितकाषायादिवासः परिधानमात्रेण शास्त्रोपदेशकौशल-वाक्चातुर्यच्छलेन वा गुरुवदाभासानां व्युदासस्तु कैमुत्यसिद्ध एव । श्रोत्रियादिविशेषणाऽन्वये चैवकारस्य तादृगुणयुगेवाऽऽश्रयणीयो नाऽतद्गुण्यपीतिगुणविशिष्टाऽवधारणपरत्वम् ।²³

22. Ibid., p. 73

23. Sadhu, Bhadreshdasa, op.cit., p. 77

7. Vakrokti-dhārā:

Kuntaka is the propounder of *Vakrokti* theory. It means oblique expression.

भिन्नयोर्लिङ्गयोर्यस्यां सामानाधिकरण्यतः ।
 कापि शोभाभ्युदेत्येषा लिङ्गवैचित्र्यवक्रता ॥²⁴
 उभावेतावलंकार्यो तयोः पुनरलंकृतिः ।
 वक्रोक्तिरेव वैदग्ध्यभङ्गीभणितिरुच्यते ॥²⁵

Ordinary expressions like the birds are flying, trees are growing and the air is blowing etc. are not poems because they lack poetic beauty. Such sentences are not accepted and appreciated by the lovers of poetry who truly know what poetry is. In many verses of Swamiji we, especially find *linga-vakrata*. Some examples are here:

गुरोर्हीश्च भक्तानां सुधामयी प्रसन्नता ।
 जायतामिति भावोऽयं सुधाग्रन्थविलेखने ॥ प्राक्कथनस्य अन्ते ॥²⁶

क्व वेदान्तगारो गहनसुगभीरः श्रुतिगणः
 क्व हन्ताऽस्मद्बुद्धिः प्रकृतिजडपङ्केन मलिना ।
 तथापि प्रज्ञा तु परमगुरुकारुण्यसुलभा
 कटाक्षः पर्याप्तः प्रमुखनयनोद्धृतसरसः ॥²⁷

8. Chhando-dhara:

It is rightly said, Na *Kāvyaṃ Chhandavarjitam*. The great poet Bhadrash Swami is a master of metres. He has thoroughly studied the important texts of metrics. He has composed verses in appropriate metres. The metres like *Sragdharā*, *Śārdulavikrīditam*, *Vasantatilakā*, *Vaṃsastha*, *Upajāti*, *Mālinī* and others make his *Sudhagrantha* a beautiful work of literature. In spite of my best efforts, I could not find a single metrical

24. Vakroktijivita, Kuntak No Kavyavicara, (Original Gujarati Translation and explanation), Gujarat Sahitya Academy, Gandhinagar, Second Edition, 2000, p. 91

25. Ibid., p.17

26. Sadhu, Bhadrashdasa, op.cit., p. xlviii

27. भूमिका, पृ. १९ मङ्गलम्, श्लोक नं-८, पृ. ४

defect in the verses of Swamiji. Therefore I am delighted to announce that Swamiji must be appreciated for his superb metrical skill of composition. In-depth knowledge of metres and their proper use of Swamiji is clearly observed while reading his texts. For example :

ब्रह्मब्रह्मपरौ प्रमाणशतकैर्मायाऽधिपौ कीर्तितौ
जीवात्मेश्वरकोटिवृन्दभरणौ सर्वाऽऽत्मभूतौ शुभौ ।
ब्रह्माऽऽत्मैक्यप्रसादिताऽऽत्मविभवा यौ साधयन्ते मुदा
दिव्यौ मुक्तिकरौ स्मरामि सनति ग्रन्थोद्यमे मङ्गलौ ॥²⁸

शास्त्रे शास्त्रेऽतिभक्त्या त्वदभिहितवरे सम्प्रदायाऽर्थपुष्ट्यै
वाक्ये वाक्ये त्वदीये सकलहितकरे सत्यसिद्धान्तदृष्ट्यै ।
कार्ये कार्ये मदीये सततमहरहस्त्वत्सहत्वाऽनुभूत्यै
श्वासे श्वासे ह्यभीक्ष्णं मम हृदयङ्गरे वातु विश्वासनादः ॥²⁹

It is rightly said:

शास्त्रं कुर्यात्प्रयत्नेन प्रसन्नार्थमनुष्ठुभा ।
येन सर्वोपकाराय याति सुस्पष्टसेतुताम् ॥³⁰

All the *saṅgraha-sloka*s more than 500 are in *Anuṣṭup* metre. I, therefore composed the following verse in praise of Swamiji's skill in use of *Śārdulavikrīḍita* metre.

भद्रे शस्वामिपादानां वृत्तं शार्दूलक्रीडितम् ।
क्रीडत्येव यथा बालः कोमलो भावविह्वलः ॥

9. Auchitya-dhārā:

Kṣemendra, a great writer of Sanskrit is known for his *Auchityavāda*. According to Kṣemendra, no composition is good without *Auchitya*:

अलङ्कारस्त्वलङ्कारा गुणा एव गुणाः सदा ।
औचित्यं रससिद्धस्य स्थिरं काव्यस्य जीवितम् ॥

28. Sadhu, Bhadreshdasa, Swāminārāyaṇa-siddhāntasudhā, op.cit., p. 422

29. Ibid., p. 4

30. Suvrttatilaka of Ksemendra with English Translation of Dr. Suryakanta, Ed: Rabinindra Kumar Panda, Paramamitra Prakashan, Delhi, 1998, p. 80

उचितं प्राहुराचार्याः सदृशं किल यस्य यत् ।
 उचितस्य च यो भावस्तदोचित्यं प्रचक्षते ॥
 पदे वाक्ये प्रबन्धार्थे गुणेऽलङ्करणे रसे ।
 क्रियायां कारके लिङ्गे वचने च विशेषणे ॥
 उपसर्गे निपाते च काले देशे कुले व्रते ।
 तत्त्वे सत्त्वेऽव्यभिप्राये स्वभावे सारसङ्ग्रहे ॥
 प्रतिभायामवस्थायां विचारे नान्यथाशिषि ।
 काव्यस्याङ्गेषु च प्राहुरौचित्यं व्यापि जीवितम् ॥³¹

So *Auchitya* should be there in everything whether a poet selects a word, a meaning, a noun or a pronoun. Kshemendra speaks about many types of *Auchitya*. I am not going to give the details of all the varieties of *Auchitya* as explained by Kṣemendra in his *Auchityavichara Charcha* but I can say with confidence that Swamiji's writing contains *Auchitya*. Important types like *Padauchitya*, *Arthauchitya* etc., are found. Therefore, Swamiji strictly follows the *Auchitya* tradition of Sanskrit culture and that is the reason why his *Swāminārāyaṇa-siddhānta-sudhā* is in fact *Sudha* for *Sudhis* (learned scholars). Let's see some examples of *Auchitya-dhārā*:

धाम नाम निवासस्थानं सद्यः । अक्षरं ब्रह्म निवासस्थानमपि । परमात्मा सहजानन्द
 एकोऽस्याधिपतिः । तस्मिंश्च स्वाऽधिपः परमात्मा तत्सेवाऽनुलग्नं मूर्तिमत् सत्
 स्वयमप्यक्षब्रह्मभावाऽऽपन्ना ब्राह्मी तनू लब्धाः परमदासभावाद्ध्येनाऽऽत्मना परब्रह्मस्वामिनार
 ण्यणोपासनरतास्तद्दर्शनैकसेवनाऽऽनन्दिताऽऽत्मनोऽनन्तमुक्ताश्च निवसन्ति । दधाति परं ब्रह्म
 ब्रह्मरूपाऽनन्तकोटिमुक्ताश्चेति धामेति व्यपदेशः । तच्चैकं नित्यमेरूपं स्थिरमनुपममनुत्तमं
 प्रकाशवदमाधिकं त्रिगुणातीतं कालातीतं प्राप्ताऽक्षरब्रह्मसाधर्म्यमुक्तप्रवेशाऽर्हमर्चिरादिलितः
 यविदेहमुक्ति-देशश्च ॥³²

The author himself declares:

तत्तत्प्रकरणौचित्याद् विषयबोधहेतुतः ।
 भाषितं यत्त्रयीभाष्ये तदेवेहाऽपि योजितम् ॥³³

31. Varakhedi, Shrinivasa, Minor Works of Ksemendra, Sanskrit Academy, Hyderabad, 2009, p. 6-7.

32. Sadhu, Bhadrashdasa, op.cit., p. 57

33. Ibid, p.4

III. CONCLUSION:

The *Swāminārāyaṇa-siddhānta-sudhā* composed by Pūjya Swami Bhadreshdasji is a great *Śāstrakāvya* though it is not like the well-known *Śāstra-kāvyas* such as *Bhaṭṭi-kāvya* etc. Still to my mind it is a *Śāstra*, philosophical science written in the form of a good *kāvya*. In this text there are no superficial imaginations, exaggerations and verbal jargons. It is a good scholarly and interesting work. One can easily enjoy the philosophy of *Akṣarapuruṣottama* through the comprehensive and critical study *Swāminārāyaṇa-siddhānta-sudhā* and equally relish poetic beauty of the writing of Swamiji.

C HALLENGE TO CONVENTIONAL OUTLOOK IN DANCE LIKE A MAN

DR. SAROJ PADHI

Associate Professor,
Department of Vedic Darshan
&

DR. RAJNEESH PANDEY

Associate Professor of English,
SVDV, BHU, Varanasi

The list of contemporary Indian playwrights cannot complete without Mahesh Dattani. We find the glimpse of multidimensional creative talent in his performance as a playwright, director, actor, screen-writer and so on. We find a brilliant mingling of conservative themes with some shocking new ones in his plays. Dattani's approach to the oriental and the occidental, the Indian cultural and multicultural cosmopolitan happenings is uniquely balanced. He is very clear in his objective of his writing when he states in the preface of the *Collected Plays* "I am certain that my plays are a true reflection of my time, place and socio-economic background, I am hugely excited and curious to know what the future holds for me and my art in the new millennium in a country that has a myriad of challenges to face politically, socially, artistically, and culturally"(XV).¹ Dattani is something very different from his contemporaries in his approach to rigorous sexual confines, and cultural ethos. Dattani is very intrepid in his attack on dogmatic stereotypes. In

1. Dattani, Mahesh. *Collected Plays*. New Delhi: Penguin Books, 2000.

his plays we witness such characters that are not only energetic, vivacious but also daring and do not feel shy to embrace whatever appeals to them. Various cores of Dattani's writings have been unfurled by Beena Agrawal "theatre is not a mute and mechanical representation of social dynamics but it is the lively representation of the voices resounding in context of totality of human experiences that consciously or unconsciously affect the existing dynamics of human sensibility. Dattani, in the process of engineering the current on Indian drama by bringing it closer to the real-life experiences, tried to articulate the voice of the oppressed sections of society whose identity is shrouded in the cover of myths and social prejudices. They have been dragged in darkness, doomed to survive in perpetual silence bearing the oppressive burden hegemony of the elitist class. Dattani, within the framework of dramatic structure, tries to investigate the identities of those who occupy no space in the social order"(34).² *Dance Like a Man* is a very striking play of Dattani, in which we observe the real view of his noteworthy dramatic art replete sharp and astute images of contemporary India. Antares looks very close to the artistic urge of Dattani when she says "the universality of its theme, and the quality of Dattani's script has made it something of cultural flagship for contemporary Indian theatre".³ In Indian conventions Music and dance are not just the means of recreation in Indian culture it has got the status of God or Shabdbrahama that is the sound form of God. According to Indian classics and even modern science sound never dies because it is the form of energy which always remains in the cosmos though may be changed in the form. Dattani treats this classical and conventional subject adroitly by associating it with the contemporary widely discussed discourse of gender and patriarchal hegemony. The pivot of the whole play is the trust of ambition within the fringe of family entity. Jairaj; the

2. Agrawal, Beena. Mahesh Dattani's Plays: A New Horizon in Indian Theatre. Jaipur, India: BookEnclave. 2008.

3. Antares. Bharatanatyam Blues: Review of Primetime Theatre's Dance Like a Man. 5 Aug 2002.

chief male character of the play, has an utter passion for learning the classical dance. This passion is plunged between the dismal clash between the past and present and predetermined gender roles in society. Amritlal, the father of Jairaj, characterizes the attitude of established middle class society and is dead against his son's passion and derides his son's craze for dance as a mania. Dance for him is nothing but a perverted form of art performed by Devadasis. On the other hand Ratna the main female character and the wife of Jairaj has her own perception of manhood quite different from her husband. Consequently, her expectations for husband want him to be more of a man. Thus, the central point of discussion in the play is all about the callous burden of predisposed gender expectations of Ratna and Amritlal from Jairaj against his devotion for dance.

The play starts in the house of Lata with her chat with her lover Viswas as she wants to introduce him to her parents (Jairaj and Ratna). Viswas derides the art of dance as he says, "Only doctors and firemen go out on emergencies. Dancers stays at home till it's show time." The chat between Lata and Viswas discloses that Lata and her parents are dedicated to dance. Her parents practiced dance together under the same Guru. She got really captivated by the musical instruments kept in the practice hall. She describes the impact her parent's art of dancing "When I was a little girl, I used to stand near the door and watch mummy and daddy practice. It was magic for me. I knew then what I wanted to be." She also tells to Viswas about her grandfather Amritlal; a social reformer, who died when she was just a baby. She tells he was very dominating and wanted to have complete control over her daddy (Jairaj). There had been a terrific fight between her father and her grandfather over the issue of her father's deep passion for dance. In spite of this clash, her father has deep respect for her grandfather. In meantime, Jairaj and Ratna come before us with their worries regarding their daughter's forthcoming performance because the musician C.V. Srinivas who played Mridangam has multiple fracture in his hand and is unable to play. They are concerned that without Mridangam Lata cannot perform her dance to the best and ultimately it will cause a

setback to her dancing career.

Ratna feels that this unfortunate incident in her daughter's career happens because of her father-in-law's curse so she very anxiously says to Jairaj, 'you should have listened to your father. He was right. We were never anything great, never will be, and nor will our daughter be anything but an average human being. Ratna recalls the past and says to Jairaj, " You! You are nothing but a spineless boy who couldn't leave his father house for more than forty eight hours." And blames, " You stopped being a man for me the day you came back to his house..." The difference of opinions between Amritlal and Jairaj ultimately compelled Jairaj and his wife Ratna to depart from the house of Amritlal but under the pressure of the security and financial support, after sometime Jairaj returns to his father's house. Ratna says that his decision of leaving house was impulsive and he shouldn't have done so. They talk about the unfortunate death of their first child Shankar due to the lack of proper care caused by their total involvement in practicing dance. They remember the difficulties they had to undergo in their time but they never want this in the life of their daughter. "Times have change and things will be easier for her some way. Of course, she is talented and can become famous.' She feels exalted while talking about future prospects of her daughter.

Then the scene moves to show the conflict of ideas between Jairaj and his father Amritlal. While Jairaj and Ratna are practicing, in the middle if practise, Jairaj is called by his father who orders him to stop the practice of dance and leave the room because some guests are expected to come so the Guruji and musician should leave the house before their arrival. Amritlal does so because he is dead against his son's obsession and interest in dance. He wished his son to play cricket rather than dance because cricket suits boys not the dance."I would have made a cricket pitch for you on our lawn if you were interested in cricket. Well, most boys are interested in cricket, my son is interested in dance, I thought. I didn't realize this interest of yours would turn into an Obsession"(DLM414) Jairaj blames his father for his double standards and says his so called

progressive ideas are false, conservative and prudish as the people who were ruling over us. His so called fight for independence was actually the fight for powers in his hand. When his father defends himself by saying that " We are building ashrams (shelters) for these unfortunate women. Educating them, reforming them' ", Jairaj counters with "Send them back to their temples! Give them awards for preserving our art'", Jairaj tries his best to convince his father about the positive approach of people towards dance but Armitlal is firm in his objection to the association of dance with Devdasis family in his established concept of man.

In Act II we see in flashback when Jairaj, who had left his father's house along with Ratna, has come back. At their return, Amritlal is ready to forget all things said and done by his son to remove the hatred for him from the mind of his son. He also permits him to dance reluctantly. He believes that a man's happiness lies "in being a man." Being a father, Amritlal just wishes his son Jairaj to learn and follow the established ways of the world to be an important member of the community. He simply represents the expectations of all fathers from his son. Amritlal thinks Ratna as responsible for Jairaj's obsession for dancing. In his view she has married Jairaj because he is affluent and would permit her to dance for her whole life. He clarifies to Ratna: A woman in a man's world may be considered as being progressive. But a man in a woman's world is pathetic. Amritlal only wish is that his son should not live the life of henpecked husband but like a true man. As far as Ratna's pursuit of dance is concerned he has no such objection and says "Help me and I'll never prevent you from dancing".

Once again the scene shifts from the present to the past. Amritlal has gone out to receive some award for "serving the nation." Jairaj is not happy. His wife's pursuit of fame has made her careless towards their child. She, and, in following her, he, too, have become inhuman. Both have neglected their duty towards the child. Amritlal, on the contrary has proved to be a caring grandfather. He may have neglected his son. But he is certainly an affectionate grandfather. Jairaj and Ratna have

appointed a maid to look after the child but she is careless towards the child. She too wants "a restful sleep" as "her mother and mother's mother." She therefore gives a dose of opium so that he may have un-disturbing sleep through the whole night. Jairaj says that it is "an old trick banded down from one generation of ayahs to the next." Yet busy parents leave their children to the care of their maids. There is a suggestion that Ratna herself also used to give him some opium to keep him asleep when she goes out for performance in the evening.

Through conversation we come to know about the rough conjugal life of Jairaj and Ratna. He feels that she has used him as a ladder for rising higher, and she feels that he was spineless. She did not give him chance to dance in front and did not let him show his talent as she thought the audience wanted to see her performance. He was dancing in her shadow. He understands his father's trick. 'He knew he had us in his hands when we came back to him. We could have listened to anything he said.' Ratna becomes rude to her husband and imposes everything on him: '... You can't blame us for you state and get away with it. What do want? Ask yourself. Do you want freedom? You had it and you came back to your prison. Bit by bit, Ratna reveals his real character, his true self. Again and again in the play, Jairaj tries to "cover himself" and "pretends to be asleep." But the more he tries to run away from the reality, the more he is exposed. The same is true of Ratna.

The significance of the title of the play becomes clear in the light of the above. This kind of life is dancing like a man. It is also dancing like God. Dattani portrays the character Ratna, the most dominant woman in this play. The whole play revolves around the superiority of Ratna to attain an awful position But her daughter Lata exceeds the limit like her mother in the passion of dance. Dattani portrays these two characters are ruthless and outspoken. As Saikia, "Ratna not only spoils Jairaj's life but tries to mould her daughter Lata's life also by making her a traditional

dancer” (88).⁴ Though Jairaj has a passion on traditional dance which usually related with woman’s art as Lakhotia remarks “... a dance which is usually performed by Women” (315).⁵ In the play it has been pointed out how Ratna uses Jairaj to materialize her dream to become a famous dancer to earn eminence and money along with public appreciation. It is quite clear when Ratna says to her husband “You’re not even good at that anymore” (160). It is the tactic that she has taken a benefit of Jairaj’s love, her status as a wife and finally leaves Jairaj a failure and simple dancer. The play also tells how ordinary people having jealousy and ready to encounter any difficulties for achieving their ambitions as we seen in the characters of Ratna and Lata who go the extent of family relationship for the sake of satisfying individual ambition as Saikia points out “Dance Like a Man is a play dealing with gender, through dance: one of Dattani’s principal passions. Dattani uses Traditional Dance as a medium that creates conflict in the play within the minds of the other characters. As the play goes forward and the actions take place, Dance takes centre the stage and pushes the characters outside (86)⁶

Dattani is a contemporary playwright who overtly violets the concept of fixed performative roles of gender. Somehow he seems to be close to the result of a research conducted by MacKinnon. His result shows the fact that men and women with greater creative ability have qualities and ideas which are usually absent in their respective sexes because “creativity,

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4. Saikia, Shyamolima & Buragohain, Bornali. “Interrogating Ex-centric Identities in Mahesh Dattani’s Plays in the Light of Performativity” In Kaustav Chakraborty, ed., *De-stereotyping Indian Body and Desire*. Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2013.
 5. Lakhotia, Smita. “The Thespian Art of Mahesh Dattani: A Critique” In Satish Barbuddhe, ed., *Indian Literature in English Critical Views*. New Delhi: Sarup & sons, 2007.
 6. Saikia, Shyamolima & Buragohain, Bornali. “Interrogating Ex-centric Identities in Mahesh Dattani’s Plays in the Light of Performativity” In Kaustav Chakraborty, ed., *De-stereotyping Indian Body and Desire*. Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2013.

by its very nature, requires both sensitivity and independence” (138)⁷

The theorists like Herbert Marder, James Hafley, Bram Dijkstra, and Francette Pacteau are of the opinion that A person with free gender mind-set had a greater power of creativity in the field of art, theatre, and literature than a person of a mindset of fixed gender roles. It is because of his supple nature to accommodate the contrasting gender qualities in a sex-stereotyped society. Their plucky and sovereign nature do not bother about the dominance and pressure of social norms, while practicing their creative powers. The genderless mind set gives very powerful expressions to the underlying latent individual possibilities. Such a free mindset proves to be an superb inclusive mental as well as physical medium that overtly challenges and successfully defeats the discriminating gender ideologies of disparity. Even the long aged and well established tyrannical power of patriarchy cannot hinder them to achieve their own space and identity both in terms of gender and sexuality . Bem is of the view that the greater freedom given to the people make them to excel hackneyed gender norms and limitations by their exceptional emotional and physical determinations which reflected as high level of confidence, dignified conduct, superior malleable dexterity, firm character, and superior cognitive skill. (155-162)⁸. Kaplan & Bean elucidates such persons not as “individuals with male and female sex organs but to individuals who are capable of behaving in integrative feminine and masculine ways, who are assertive and yielding, independent and dependent, expressive and instrumental”(2-3)⁹. Enloe opines that it is the stringent conformist beliefs and patriarchal ideologies that question and pose the people of free gender mind-set as unnatural and effeminate. Since patriarchy believes

7. Torrance, E.P. Education and the creative potential. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. 1963.

8. Bem, S.L. The measurement of Psychological androgyny. Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology. 1974.

9. Kaplan and Bean. Beyond Sex-Role Stereotypes: Readings toward a Psychology of Androgyny. Boston: Little, Brown and Co. 1976.

that “gender is synonymous with sex ... women and men are ‘naturally’ different;...maleness is inherently rational and femaleness is inherently emotional” (5)¹⁰.

The common opinion attributes the sex to the biological entity or binary proposition i.e. male vs. female. It is natural and essential and gender is the cultural construction of sex. However Butler does not agree with this so called difference between sex and gender and says that it is not merely gender which acts as a social construct; the biological and physical differences between the sexes originate from the same gendered concept. The sexual identity of a person is also a social construction because it associated with fixed gender roles which make a boy different from girls. So the customary view of a distinction between sex and gender is meaningless. As Butler (1990) says, “this construct called ‘sex’ is as culturally constructed as gender; ...perhaps it was always already gender, with the consequence that the distinction between sex and gender turns out to be no distinction at all”(9)¹¹. Therefore Butler rejects the notion of ‘objective’ or natural sex; and takes the ‘performatively’ designed view of gender which is neither biological nor essential. It is entirely based on performance. Mahesh Dattani’s core of concern is always such patriarchal establishments that force an individual to thrust aside his instinctive identity and espouse an imposed one by the demands of hegemonic performance as we observe in the character of Jairaj in *Dance Like a Man*.

In *Dance Like a Man* Mahesh Dattani has critically analyzed how the patriarchal norms play a powerful role to mould the consciousness of the individual. It is an influential family drama which beautifully portrays a strong struggle between the true individual identity and imposed identity by socio-cultural norms gender disparity. It takes the

10. Enloe, Cynthia. *The Big Push: Exposing and Challenging the Persistence of Patriarchy*. Myriad/New Internationalist, UK. University of California Press, US. Retrieved from. 2017.

11. Butler, Judith. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. New York and London: Routledge. 1999.

art of dance convey its message which was traditionally considered as the profession of Devdasis in ancient India. This orthodox social view of dance has been portrayed as a shared duplicity which is challenged in the play by an Indian man, Jairaj who decides to take dance as his career in spite of severe objections of his father Amritlall Amritlal Parekh and the established gender norms associated with the art of dance. The play simply redefines the gender roles and the social execution of their performance. Amritlal Parekh, the father of Jairaj, is a well-educated Hindu freedom fighter and a cunning *Gujju* (Gujarati) businessman. He is strongly of the opinion that man should perform the manly tasks showing physical and mental strength and dance cannot be associated with anything called masculine. Thus his strong objections to his son's interest in dancing as a career was fundamentally moulded by the accepted concepts of fixed gender roles. In his view dance cannot be considered to be suitable for man as a profession from any angle of masculine performance. Amritlal remains silent until the dance was performed by Ratna; his daughter in law but when he observed his only son Jairaj practicing *Bharatanatyam*; a traditional form dance it came to him like a bolt from the blue and he was so disgusted with dance that he could even endure the view of long hair of Jairaj's *guru* (teacher) and reacts as "never seen a man with long hair" (DLM 417). He satirically says "I meant normal men" and pours scorn at "the way he walks" (DLM 417). He was very worried regarding his son's interest in dance because he thinks that it would question the manhood of his son and such effeminate act would make him an object of mockery in society. The patriarchal attitude of Amritlal is clearly expressed when he remarks "I would have made a cricket pitch for you on our lawn if you were interested in cricket. [...] my son is interested in dance" (DLM 414). "Where is your dance going to lead you? Why must you dance?" (DLM 415)." In spite of being a well educated freedom fighter who fought against oppressive English rule but he adopts the same oppressive attitude against his own son's freedom and his desire to opt dancing as his career. Amritlal employs all his tyrannical influence to coerce Jairaj to keep

aside his personal choice of dance and opt something else which would satisfy Amritlal criteria of masculine identity. Thus Dattani attacks the established social norms that does not allow a space for an individual as Beena Agarwa comments the “conventional social framework” which quashes the passion of an artist under its idealized “close fist ed gender roles” (24)¹².

The struggle between the conservative Amritlal and his progressive son Jairaj is the nucleus of the play. For Amritlal the established gender norms of society are the true guiding principles and any deviation from them is not acceptable to him. On the other hand, Jairaj is a man of open ideas who wants free space to achieve his personal identity even against the established gender norms. Jairaj does not concur with his father’s views regarding the dancing career of a man. He does not feel shy in adopting the dancing career. For him dancing art has nothing like sissy in it or which can be related to a particular gender. It is just an art which depends on individual choice irrespective preconceived gender roles. Jairaj’s decision of adopting the adopting bluntly ridicules the age old dogma of twofold classification of gender roles.. The play develops as a battle ground between traditional and modern, between masculine and feminine. Choice of individual identity and social space for it cannot be denied. Jairaj represents in the play the freedom of choice of modern generation which cannot be compromised for anything else. While Amritlal represent the orthodox old who firmly believes in established norms and wants to regulate the choice of his son to learn the *Kuchipudi* dance. He is really frustrated when he comes to know his son’s utmost passion for dance and calls his psychologically “sick” (DLM, 427). He asks Ratna “Do you know where a man’s happiness lies? ... In being a man” (DLM, 425). Thus it is not just the anatomy but performances and socially determined roles that decide the gender. It is a widespread acceptance

12. Agrawal, Beena. Mahesh Dattani’s Plays: A New Horizon in Indian Theatre. Jaipur, India: BookEnclave. 2008.

that the masculine supremacy can be sustained only by complying with established gender norms of society and for that Amritlal leaves no stone unturned to suppress Jairaj's by criticising the dance as the work of Devdasi. Jairaj is plunged between his father's social pressure and the expectations of his wife from him to be more like a man. Amritlal plays a double game to achieve his orthodox social purpose by creating suspicion in Ratna regarding her husband's masculinity and on the other hand and on the other hand he ignites Jairaj to suspect the sincerity of Ratna. He says: ... Is it because of your wife? Is she forcing you to dance? ...She may be by influencing you. Maybe it's her, not you" (DLM415). thus he playing a double game to preserve the patriarchal norms. Amritlal sums up: "A woman in a man's world may be considered as being progressive. But a man in a woman's world is pathetic" (DLM427). Amritlal's conniving intent creates chaos in the personal and the professional life of Jairaj. Thus Jairaj is utter failure in the eyes of his father and disappointing husband for his wife who calls him "a spineless boy who couldn't leave his father's house for more than forty-eight hours" (DLM402).. He becomes the victim of these pressures and consequently cut a sorry figure even in his profession as he exclaims: "Bit by bit. You took it when you insisted on top billing in all our programmes. You took it when you made me dance my weakest items. You took it when you arranged the lighting so that I was literally dancing in your shadow" (DLM443). Thus Jairaj becomes the prey to the social expectations of his father and Ratna's patriarchal sense of responsibility where a man is bound to be a breadwinner for his family. Thus the message of the play is crystal clear. The imposed identity is neither good for individual, nor for family and nor for society. The play begins with socio-cultural objective, develops through psychological human dimensions and finally achieves the philosophical suggestiveness which clearly denies gender discriminations and any kind of hegemony.

Abbreviation DLM – Dance Like a Man from Cpllected Plays 2000
By Mahesh Dattani

YAYĀTĪ: A TRAGEDY OF THE MIRAGE OF HUMAN DESIRES

DR. RAJNEESH PANDEY

Associate Professor of English,
SVDDV, BHU, Varanasi

Any discussion about modern Indian theatre cannot be substantial without mentioning the name of Girish Karnad who is regarded as one of the great contemporary Indian writers. He belongs to that influential group of Indian playwrights during 1960s and 1970s that relentlessly made serious efforts to reshape the Indian theatre to address the contemporary issues. He is blessed with amazing theatrical potential and inventive contemporary sensibility. M.K. Naik has justly commented that Karnad was aware: If Indian English drama wishes to go ahead, it must go back first, that is, only a purposeful return to its own roots in the rich tradition of ancient Indian drama, both in Sanskrit and folk drama in Prakrits, can help it shed its lean and pale look, and increase its artistic haemoglobin count, and make it cease to be the 'sick man' of Indian English Literature" (43-44).¹ Most of his plays are his serious effort with wholehearted commitment to apply the Indian mythological tales to regulate and cure the problems of modern era. He firmly believed that that a huge tree may have numerous branches, leaves, flowers and fruits but their nourishment and life wholly depend in the root of the

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1. Naik, M.K. A History of Indian English Literature. ShaityaAkademi, Govt. of India, reprinted in 2005, pp. 43- 44.

tree. In the same way the modern man may boast of many advances in various fields but our root is our cultural heritage which is like primary human instincts that do not change. They were, they are and they will be the true identity of our existence irrespective of time and place. That is why unlike science there are no new discoveries in literature. It is always the past that returns with new aura. This is the reason we find the treatment of mythological narratives in the plays of Karnad. His plays became an epitome for imagination and innovation. Karnad has mainly taken his mythical sources mainly from the great epic, *The Mahabharata* and *The Kathasaritsagra*. His purpose is to draw the messages from traditions and myths which may serve utterly important role in the life of modern man. This is also true in case of *Yayati*. Karnad has given to this traditional tale "Yayati" a new meaning and significance highly relevant in the context of contemporary life. When he wrote *Yayati*, he was under the influence of Sartre and Camus. The story which he read in Adiparva of the *Mahabharata* influenced him and made him to write the play. In his interview with Rajinder Paul he says, "I was excited by the story of Yayati, this exchange of ages between the father and the son, which seemed to me terribly powerful and terribly modern. At the same time, I was reading a lot of Sartre and the Existentialists. This consistent harping on responsibility which the Existentialists indulge in suddenly seemed to link up with the story of Yayati".² He has borrowed from the chapters 75 to 93 of *Adi Parvah* in *Mahabharata*.

Though the plot is taken from the *Mahabharata*, but Karnad as a true artist adds various hues of his imagination in showing the relationships and their tragic twists and he adds some new characters like Chitrlekha. In his interview with Tutun Mukherjee, Girish Karnad says, "My attempt was to emphasize the calm acceptance of grief and anguish. Pooru's old age is a sudden transformation and not the eventuality of life. It brings no wisdom and no self-realization. It is a senseless punishment for an

2. Paul, Rajinder. "Girish Karnad Interviewed." *Enact*, No. 54 June 1971.

act he has not committed. I was also intrigued by the idea that if Pooru had a wife, how would she react? So I introduced Chitralekha. Every character in the play tries to evade the consequences of their actions, except Sharmistha and Chitralekha” (31).³ Karnad has introduced another subplot in the play. The episode of Swarnalata and her husband is an additional plot which comments on the suspicious behavior of male community. Associated with the idea of time, play is a reflection of past and future. Karnad has given a lot of thought to both of these concepts. There is a profound sense of disillusionment with the past in the play. This disillusionment spreads, not just to the self, but to the society, the nation and the whole human race. And that acceptance is our responsibility. Disillusionment apart, Karnad speaks through the narrator that; “In spite of the fact that this story is about our ancestors, we do see our reflections in it, and it is our responsibilities to accept this fact too. None can escape this responsibility-neither the lover nor the scholar.” It was Karnad’s first attempt at reworking a myth. King Yayati was tenth in the line of Brahma’s family. The major characters in the play are Sharmistha, Devayani, Yayati, Pooru and Chitralekha belong to different races namely The Rakshasa, Aryan, Brahmin and Kshatriya respectively.

The story of Yayati begins with Devayani who is the daughter of Shukracharya, the guru of Asuras. Once Devayani and Sharmistha, the daughter of Demon king, Vishaparva, went on the river bank for bath. Suddenly a strong wind started blowing and they quickly came out of the river and put on their cloths. By mistake Sharmistha wore Devayani’s cloth which made Devayani furious and there started a fighting between Sharmistha and Devayani in which Devayani is pushed into the river. Coincidentally the king Yayati was passing by and when he saw her, he immediately came to help her to come out of the river by holding her right hand. According to Hindu mythology, if a man holds the right

3. Mukherjee, Tutun. (ed.). *Girish Karnad’s Plays: Performance and Critical Perspectives*, New Delhi: Pencraft International, 2006.

hand of a lady means that he is infatuated towards that lady. Devayani was attracted towards Yayati and later offered to marry Yayati. But Yayati being a Kshatriya, denies to marry her because she was the daughter of a Brahmin, Shukracharya. On the other hand, Shukracharya punished Sharmishtha for her rude behaviour by making her a lifelong servant of his beloved daughter Devayani. When Shukracharya came to know about the love desire of her daughter he agreed to marry her with Yayati with an exception to the Pratiloma rule. As dowry he gave away Sharmishtha. Yayati married Devayani in the hope of knowing the secrets of immortality(mrit sanjivini vidhya) from Shukracharya. Thereafter we know that Sharmishtha develops intimate relationship with Yayati. When Shukracharya came to know this relationship he became angry and cursed Yayati with old age. Yayati is extremely sad with this curse of premature old age. Sharmishtha advises Yayati to become a hermit and lead his rest of his life with her in the forest. But Yayati wants to save his youth so Shukracharya was requested to take back his word. At this Shukracharya suggested that curse can be taken back but if someone is ready to take this curse of old age on his behalf then Yayati can sustain his youth. Yayati requested to people of his kingdom to save him from cursed old age but no one agreed. Ultimately it is Pooru the youngest son of Yayati who comes forward to save his father by accepting curse of Shukracharya though he was recently married with Chitrlekha. When newly married Chitrlekha comes to know this sacrifice of her husband, she feels proud. However very soon when she realizes the cost of this sacrifice she feels utterly disappointed to the extent of madness and could not accept the premature old age of her husband. She even goes to Yayati and offers herself to him. Being her father in-law Yayati accuses her having such low thoughts and refuses to accept her. She questions Yayati about her miserable existence and ultimately in dejection she commits suicide by consuming poison. The death of Chitrlekha's badly jolts Yayati and he realizes his mistake and returns the youth of Pooru to him and retire into the forest as a hermit.

The whole tragedy of Yayati takes place because of the presence of Sharmishtha who is living in the palace with her revengeful motives against Devayani. But neither king nor Devayani could recognise her wicked motives hidden behind her beautiful face. After sometime Sharmishtha wants to get rid of her presence but it is too late and the whole background crisis is slyly prepared because Yayati does not agree with Devayani to send Sharmishtha away. The long awaited revenge of Sharmishtha has now got the chance to be materialised. Sharmishtha lives there only to make her place in the heart of king. She deliberately developed the whole scornful atmosphere to suit her revengeful motives. Swarnalata, the maid fully understands her motive and remarks: “That spiteful whore – I would have torn her hair out if you hadn’t stopped me. Taught that fiend a proper lesson. The rakshasi. You heard us, madam. The nasty jibes. They are too horrible to think. She didn’t even spare His Majesty. I...I can’t bear it”.(*Yayati* 7)

Sharmishtha has been cursing and crying everyone including the king. When Yayati comes to know and he wanted to settle the matter as his son and newlywed bride were on the way to the royal palace. Yayati immediately wants to meet Sharmishtha so he sends Devayani and Swarnalata out of the room to have a secret meeting of enquiry. Herein lies the turning point of the tragedy in the life of Devayani and Yayati. Devayani’s departure from the room proves to be her blunder which provides the much awaited opportunity to Sharmishtha to meet Yayati alone and snare him in her motives and taking the advantage of this opportunity she transforms herself from the slave to master of the king. Sharmishtha finds it the right moment to sow the seed of reprisal. She explains and reopens the whole episode of Devayani’s marriage to Yayati to convince Yayati successfully what she really wants: “Please, Sir, bear with me. If those words had come from anyone else, I would have brushed them aside. I was used to worse. But Devayani my-Devayani to whom I had dedicated myself! My mind froze. I watched myself, like in a dream straining to stop myself but powerless to do so, as I got up and

grabbed her long loose hair. I twisted the strands round my hand and pulled her up. And as she screamed and thrashed about, I dragged her to a well nearby and pushed her in. And I stood there and watched, as she crashed through the brambles that filled the well. The world knows I threw her into a empty well, But not that I was sitting there, for I don't know how long, racked with sobs. Does that surprise you, Sir? I do have tears in my eyes. But the world only cares for the embers there." (*Yayati* 20)

Sharmishtha very intelligently and diplomatically thanks Yayati for giving and hearing her miserable story. Thereafter she shrewdly shows him the vial of deadly venom she has been carrying with her to succeed in her plotted game to win over the king and his love and sympathy for her just by a pretended act of ending her life. Yayati categorically and immediately stops her by holding her right hand. He commits the same mistake once again which Sharmishtha wants him do impatiently and says 'Sir, you are holding my right hand. And I am a princess'. Yayati is entirely under the spell of her charm as he exclaims: "Because I feel bewitched by her. Even now, at this moment, I want her. I have never felt so entranced by a woman. What is it? Is it some spell she has cast? Some secret sorcery? I can feel youth bursting out within me again. Her beauty, her intelligence, her wit, her abandon in love. Not to marry her is to lose her, don't you see? I must have her (*Yayati* 30).

Thus the clever Sharmishtha tackles the situation triumphantly. This is the tragic point in the life of both the King and Devayani. Sharmishtha openly traps the king to revenge Devayani as she says: "Me his concubine? You must be jocking. Yes, I got him into bed with me. That was my revenge on you. After all, as a slave, what weapon did I have but my body? Well, I am even with you now. And I am free. I shall go where I please." (*Yayati* 29) Ultimately after this alone meeting that happens which brings tragedy and ruin in the play. When Devayani comes to know that Yayati instead of settling the issue of Sharmishtha has actually begot more complicated and insulting issue for her. She refuses to accept the new position given to her slave. Yayati informs Devayani about his

relation with Sharmishtha and assures her that she has no need to feel any danger about her position because of Sharmishtha's presence. She will hold the position of Senior Queen and be on his side on all public ceremonies. And thus Devayani feels herself marginalized and deceived while Sharmishtha achieves what she desired. Sharmishtha totally wins the king and king desires her to have her as his another wife. It is a great defeat and insult for Devayani. She is furious and leaves the palace and goes to Shukracharya. When Shukracharya is acquainted with the whole affair and insult of his daughter and he gets very angry. He curses Yayati to attain old age at sun set. The king is upset and afraid with the curse and wants his rescue any how: "On seeing me even my son spits fire. Would he try to save me from the curse? No, I myself should go, I should go and meet Shukracharya". (*Yayati* 49)

Yayati is quietly nonplussed and does not know how to save himself from this terrible situation. Sharmishtha consoles and convinces him to accept the curse of old age and leave the life of hermit in jungle with her. But Yayati is very anxious and restless and wants to save his youth. When his Pooru comes back to inform him that the curse can be redeemed if some young person is ready to accept the old age. Hearing this Yayati is delighted and immediately orders Pooru to arrange a meeting with all his pupil, so that someone may be prepared to take upon himself his curse of old age and transfer youth hood to him. But he is extremely disappointed when he sees that no one is ready to take upon the curse while he is prepared to pay any cost give. At last the youngest Pooru comes forward to save his father from the curse and agrees to exchange his youth with the king. Pooru proposes the curse given to Yayati should be transferred to him. Sharmishtha tries to dissuade him saying that the pride of sacrifice is also a kind of poison. She also reminds him about his responsibility towards his newly married wife Chitrlekha, but Pooru is firm to sacrifice his youth. When Chitrlekha hears about this she says: I thought he was an ordinary man. What a fool I have been! How utterly blind! I am the chosen one and I ...which other woman has been

so blessed? Why should I shed tears? (*Yayati* 56)

Pooru did not make any discussion with his wife, regarding his sacrifice. In the beginning she is very excited and feels proud and privileged for saving the kingdom. She is still ignorant of the miserable reality ready to take place in her newly married life. In the dark, when Pooru enters into the nuptial chamber to explain his wife Chitrlekha that it was not an ordinary old age. It was the sum total of his father's wrongdoing and the burden of the whole dynasty. Chitrlekha immediately supports his decision saying that it was really her good fortune and he needs not explain anything to her. She feels actually privileged. Pooru wants her support for the responsibility he has undertaken which Chitrlekha gladly extends without knowing that the greatest misfortune is at hand. Chitrlekha is so proud and privileged that she wants to do the ritual of aarati for his great sacrifice. Chitrlekha is still unaware of his old husband's face. Pooru immediately agrees. When Chitrlekha is doing aarathi of her husband, his withered face looks even more terrified in the dim light of aarathi's flame and she could prevent herself from screaming and dropping the aarathi to the ground. She at once directs him to get out of the chamber and never to come back again. Now the gravity of misfortune is naked before her and she realizes what has befallen. When Yayati comes with his ever youth face to see the newly wedded bride and groom in their chamber. He is very shocked to see Pooru outside the chamber and comes to know the disapproval of Chitrlekha. Yayati tries to convince Chitrlekha that she must be proud to have such a great husband. Yayati reminds Chitrlekha the vows of marriage taken in front of spiritual fire and emphasizes that a good wife must follow her husband in all conditions, whether it be home or forest "to walk in the path marked by his foot prints whether home or into wildness" She ironically answers "to walk in the path marked by his foot prints whether home or into wildness" that he has forgotten to mention one thing that she should follow him to his pyre also. Here we see how the patriarchal structure of society aspects and compels woman to follow the restrictions

established in the marriage institution but it is not applied to man as K. K. Sharma remarks "the underlying driver of ladies' mistreatment lies in patriarchal sex relation, instead of lawful system or class conflict" (07).⁴

This annoys Yayati and he rebukes Chitrlekha for wishing death for her husband. Yayati advises Chitrlekha to come out of all these issues to lead her life with Pooru "Rise above the trivialities, Chitrlekha. Be superhuman." Chitrlekha in her utmost painful situation expresses: This morning I was the mistress of all that I had yearned for. But within half a day-no, within half an hour- half a century has driven across my bed and crushed the dreams on my pillow". Chitrlekha puts a proposal before Yayati. She should like Yayati to take the place of Pooru in her life so that she can bear a child of the family. Yayati stood speechless, but when she says: "Oh, come, sir. These are trite considerations. We have to rise above such trivialities. We have to be superhuman. Nothing like this has ever happened before. Nothing like this is likely to...It is a part of the sacrifice we all have to make. Your Majesty would say that this sacrifice measures up to the demand?" (*Yayati* 66) She instantly takes the vial of poison to drink it. In spite of her disinclination Chitrlekha has to die because of her failure. Under the extreme pressure of distress she finds no way and no solution except death. Yayati moves forward and grabs her hand to stop her but all in vain. Chitrlekha smiles defiantly, swallow poison and collapses. Yayati understands his offence, calls Pooru and re-exchanges his old age. It is all too late to lead a life with his wife. Pooru rules the kingdom and is hailed as a philosophical king.

In Indian society we generally observe some different types of images. Firstly she is equated with Shakthi, the goddess Durga and Kali and secondly woman as a dependent and ruled under patriarchal structure and defined social tradition and culture and lastly she is looked upon as a sexual object to be possessed and passed on from one to the other.

4. Sharma, K.K. *Feminism and Literature: New Points of View*. New Delh: K.K. Publications, 1996, p.07.

These are some prevalent images of women in the society. According to Jaganamohana Chari : “Stifled by the energy of patriarchal estimations of the decision class belief system. Be that as it may, she gives off an impression of being generally more liberated and more equipped for separating herself from the hegemonic settings. She may rest content in her agree to the hegemonic settings, yet she embraces the more backhanded method of confronting up to reality”(234).⁵ Through the four remarkable female characters Devayani, Sharmistha, Chitraleka and Swarnalatha Dattanai weaves out the whole tragedy of life. Devayani is a Brahmin by birth and daughter of Shukracharya, the guru of Rakshashas and wife of Yayati the king. Sharmistha is the princess of Rakshashas clan, childhood friend of Devayani who has later turned out to be her slave and becomes villain to Devayani’s life. Swarnalatha is the waggles slave and maiden servant in Yayati’s palace who works solely for food, clothing and shelter. Chitraleka is the daughter in law of Yayati and Devayani and wife of Pooru the son of Yayati. Girish Karnad has conveyed that each and every woman has own grace and greatness to make strong impression. Towards the end of the play, Devayani has gone out of Yayati’s life with an intention of not coming back. Chitraleka ends up her life by committing suicide in the very front of her husband and Yayati to give them a heavy and eternal blow to make them realize their unforgivable sin. Prem Sagar and R. Varshney observe: The play remains an existentialist predicament, showing in definite terms how a person rendered rootless and alienated becomes revengeful. This makes it a psychological study of those who are awarded severest sentence for no fault of theirs”(96).⁶

The real tragedy of man is that he is the effigy of desires, especially the sensual desires. It is a fact that Man dies but never his desires. The

5. Chari, A. Jaganamohana. “Hayavadana and NagaMandala: A Study in Postcolonial Dialectics.” *The Plays of Girish Karnad: Critical Perspectives*. Ed. Jayadipsinh Dodiya. New Delhi: Prestige Books, 1999, p.234.

6. Sagar, Prem and R. Varshney. *Girish Karnad Yayati*. Agra: Lakshmi Narain Agarwal Educational Publishers.

whole life we pursue our desires. Some times we feel that we are very close to fulfilment but at the same moment we are deceived. This also happens in case of Yayati's tragedy. According to B.Yadav Raju "Karnad's Yayati retells the age-old story of the king who in his longing for eternal youth does not hesitate to usurp the youth and vitality of his son. Karnad invests new meaning and significance for contemporary life and reality by exploring the king's motivations. In the Mahabharata, Yayati understands the nature of desire itself and realizes that fulfillment neither diminishes nor eliminates desire. In the drama, Karnad makes Yayati confront the horrifying consequences of not being able to relinquish desire; and through the other characters he highlights the issue of class, caste and gender coiled within a web of desire"(18).⁷ Thus Yayati's running behind the mirage of improper sensuality ruins everything. In this blind running he forgets his duties as king, his responsibility as father. He not only ruins his own life but he also destructed the life of his newly married son and his daughter in law. It is really the credit to Karnad's ability that by describing the myths with imagination and creativity he makes it so revelent even for modern life. The tragedy of Yayati is not just the tragedy of him rather it the tragedy of every modern who is involved in the blind running behind the desires. Dr. Jyoti Gupta and Dr. Sushama Sharma aptly remarks on the problem of Yayati: "Karnad's Yayati reveals the afflicted consciousness of a broken man like Yayati who tries to find a meaning in existence. Out of sorrow and humiliation Yayati is unable to understand the meaning of life till he is rid of old age. But contrary to his expectation Chitralkha's suicide leads him to expiate his desire. He projects the image of an existential character and shows that no man has the courage to choose whole-heartedly either right or wrong. He is himself an amalgamation of self-evasion and vanity, self condemnation and humility. Thus, there is an eternal quest for meaning and Value,

7. Yadav, Raju B. "Race and Gender in Yayati" in Girish Karnad's Plays Performance and Critical Perspectives(ed.) Tutun Mukherjee, New Delhi: Pen craft International, 2006.

freedom and truth that can sustain us in this chaotic and apparently meaningless world”(36).⁸

All textual quotations are from the following book:

Karnad, Girish 2008 Yayati. New Delhi: Oxford University Press 2005. Print.

8. Gupta, Dr. Jyoti and Dr. Sushma Sharma. “Existentialism in Girish Karnad’s Yayati” in Thunder on stage: A study of Girish Karnad’s Plays (Ed.) By C.L.Khatri and Sudhir K. Arora, Jaipur: Book Enclave, 2008.

दार्शनिकप्रपञ्चस्य प्रपञ्चनं तथा श्रीस्वामिनारायणभाष्याणि

DR. NARAYAN PUJAR

Associate Professor, Dept. of Dvet-vedant,
NSU, Tirupati

भारतीयदर्शनानि

प्रायः स्तरत्रये दर्शनानां विकासः परिदृश्यते। परमार्थदिदृक्षुः कश्चन ऋषिः सुदीर्घकालेन तपसा यत्प्राप्नोति तन्मन्त्ररूपेणाभिव्यज्यते। ऋषयः मन्त्रद्रष्टारः। अयं हि प्रथमस्तरः। मन्त्राणामर्थनिर्णयाय ऋषिकल्पः कश्चन सूत्राणि कारिकाः वा ग्रथयति। द्वितीयोऽयं स्तरः। अनेन हि दर्शनं किञ्चिदविष्कारं गच्छति। सूत्राणि कारिकाः वा व्याख्यातुं बहवः ज्ञानिनः बहुधा प्रायतन्। पूर्वपक्षसिद्धान्तरूपेण तत्सम्प्रदायप्रवर्तकाः मतान्तरनिराकरणेन स्वाभिमतस्थापनार्थं भाष्याणि रचयामासुः। तदनुयायिभिः कालान्तरे सपरिष्कारं टीकाटिप्पण्यादयः व्यरचिषत।

वेदान्तदर्शनानि

उत्तरमीमांसादर्शने तावत् अद्वैत-विशिष्टाद्वैत-द्वैतेत्यादिवेदान्तदर्शनानि प्रख्यातान्येव। वेदान्तदर्शनम् हि उपनिषद्गीतासूत्रप्रस्थानमाश्रित्य प्रवर्तते। यथा वेदान्तदर्शनस्यास्ति काचित्परम्परा सकलवेदान्तदर्शनाचार्यसम्मतता न तथेतरत्र दृश्यते काचित्परम्परा चिन्तने दर्शनाविष्करणे भाष्यादिग्रन्थप्रणयने वा। का सा परम्परा सकलवेदान्तदर्शनाचार्यसम्मतता या सर्वत्र सन्तता? इत्यत्रेयं महती परम्परा साधारणी भवति समेषां वेदान्तदर्शनानां मूलभूतानि त्रीणि प्रस्थानानि यानि चावश्यमाश्रयणीयानि मुमुक्षुजनानाम्। कानि तानि त्रीणि? अवधारय, तानि भवन्ति अपौरुषेयास्तावदुपनिषदः, तासां सारभूता सर्वज्ञेन भगवता गीता महाभारतपारिजातमधुभूता भगवद्गीता, एवं पौरुषेयापौरुषेयानां निर्णयग्रन्थजातानामर्थनिर्णयायैव-प्रवृत्तं ब्रह्ममीमांसाशास्त्रं सर्वज्ञेनैव भगवता वेदव्यासेन च यद्व्यरचि तच्चेति, येन च मार्गेण प्रस्थातव्यं मोक्षप्रप्तये साधकेन।

सर्वेषां मनसि इयं साधरणधारणा जागर्ति लोके यत् साम्प्रतिके भोगप्रधाने प्रपञ्चे

सर्वेऽपि भौतवादमेव पुरस्कृत्य स्वीयजीवनयापनाय अध्यात्मविद्यामपि ऐहिकसुखसाधनायो-
पयुञ्जानो दरीदृश्यन्ते। अतः पूर्वाचार्यप्रणीतदर्शनान्याश्रित्यैव वादविवादान् प्रचरन्तो
दृश्यन्तेऽधुनातनदार्शनिकाः।

किमत्र कारणं भवति यज्जगतीतले प्राक्तनान्येव दर्शनान्यनुस्रियन्त इत्यत्र? किं
नूतनदर्शनानामाविष्करणस्य दार्शनिकप्रपञ्चपञ्चीकरणस्य वावकाश एव नास्ति? किं वा
केनापि राज्ञा दण्डेन वारितमभिनवदर्शनस्याविष्करणं नाम। अथ च श्रुत्या स्मृत्या वा निषिद्धम्?
न तादृशं किमप्युपलब्धं कारणम्। यद्यलप्स्यत कारणं किमपि तर्हि न व्यद्योतिष्यन्त नैकानि
नास्तिकास्तिकभेदभिन्नानि दर्शनानि। विद्योतन्ते नैकानि दर्शनानीति नास्त्येव निषेध इति तु
सिद्धम्।

श्रीस्वामिनारायणभाष्यम्

अथ मन्यते, नूतनदर्शनानामाविष्करणन्तु दुष्करमेव। यतो हि कश्चिदृषिर्वा महानाचार्यो
वा अभिनवं दर्शनमाविष्कर्तुमीष्टे। तादृशास्तु दुर्लभा एव इत्येतदपि न युक्तं वचः। बहवः
श्रुतिपथमागता विलसन्ति अर्वाचीना महान्तः वेदोपनिषद्भाष्यकर्तारः विद्वांसः। किं न ते
दार्शनिकाः? को वा नेति ब्रूते। परन्तु न तत्प्रणीतानि भाष्याणि दर्शनसंस्थापकानीत्यभिमतानि।
यद्यभिमतानि तर्हि तान्यङ्गान्येव केवलं कस्यचिदर्शन-स्येति, नार्हन्ति स्वयं
दर्शनपदालङ्करणम्।

वेदान्तदर्शनेषु प्रस्थानत्रयभाष्याण्येव परिगण्यन्ते। वेदभाष्याणि तु पूर्वोत्तरमीमांसयोः
सहकारीणि भवन्तीत्यत्र नास्ति विप्रतिपत्तिः। अतः न सन्त्येव तादृशाः प्रस्थानत्रयभाष्यप्रणेतारः
अभिनवदर्शनसंस्थापकाः इत्यस्त्येव जनानां मनसि धारणा। स इदानीमलीकताङ्गता साधु
श्रीभट्टेशदासस्वामिमहाभागग्रथितप्रस्थानत्रयस्वामिनारायणभाष्य-ग्रन्थैः।

1. स्वामिनारायणवचनमृतम् – तथा भाष्याणि

प्रायः सप्तदशे क्रिस्तोः शके² श्रीस्वामिनारायणभगवत्पादैः अपूर्वदार्शनिकसिद्धान्तं प्रकाशयद्भिः
वैदिकवर्तमानसुत्य स्वीयं सम्प्रदायं प्रस्थापयद्भिः ब्रह्मविद्यागर्भितेन स्वामिनारायणमन्त्रोपदेशेन
सज्जनान् संसारसमुद्रात्तारयितुं ग्रामाद्ग्रामं समचारि। स्वयं कठोरान् संन्यासधर्माननुपलयन्तो
भगवत्पादाः मांसमदिरादिदुर्व्यसनेभ्यः रक्षयितुं सज्जनवृन्दं ते समाजे जलाशये मीन इव
समचरन्। प्रायतन् च निर्धनानां जनानां दुःखपरिहरणाय। तादृशानां परमकारुणिकानां महात्मनां

1. स्वामिनारायणसिद्धान्तसुधायां १.६.शास्त्रावतरणिकायां – “अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमसिद्धान्तः परब्रह्मसहजानन्दोपदिष्टो
अक्षरब्रह्मगुरुसमुपबृंहितो हि वैदिकः सनातनसिद्धान्तः”।
2. सहजानन्देत्यपरनामधेयैः

मुखारविन्दात्समुद्भूतः श्रुतिसारभूतः सामान्यजनासदनीयः गुर्जरभाषाविभूषितः उपदेश एव वचनामृतमिति प्रथितमस्ति । श्रुतिसारभूतमिदं वचनामृतं लोकभाषानिबद्धं मुमुक्षुसाधनम् । यद्गतमृतवचनानि श्रुतिमूलानि भवन्ति ।³ यत्राध्यात्मविद्याऽऽद्यन्तं व्यापृता । श्रुत्यर्थनिर्णयाय, मुमुक्षूणामधिकारिणाम् अध्यात्मविद्याविबोधाय च प्रस्थानत्रयभाष्याणि यथाऽविकृतानि कृपालुभिः तत्तद्वेदान्तसम्प्रदायप्रवर्तकैराचार्यैः तद्वदध्यात्मविद्यायाः वचनामृते निगूढायाः प्रस्थानत्रयभाष्यद्वाराऽऽविष्करणेन श्रीस्वामिनारायणाभिप्रेतस्य अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमदर्शनस्य अभिनववेदान्तदर्शनस्याविष्करणं साधु श्रीभद्रेशदासस्वामिमहाभागैः गुरुकृपाबलेन "विघ्नैः पुनः पुनरपि प्रतिहन्यमाना प्रारब्धमुत्तमजना न परित्यजन्ती" ति सुवचनानुसारं व्यधायीति अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमदर्शनप्रतिपादकस्य प्रस्थानत्रयभाष्यस्य मूलं भवति वचनामृतम् श्रीस्वामिनारायणोपदिष्टम् ।

साधु श्रीभद्रेशदासप्रणीतानि भाष्याणि

नातिप्राचीनस्यास्य अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमदर्शनस्य वेदान्तदर्शनत्वं यद्विना असम्भवमासीत्तदधुना महामहोपाध्यायैः साधु श्री भद्रेशदासमहाभागैः सम्पादितम् । तद्धि प्रस्थानत्रयभाष्यम् । नैतावदेव साधितम् एतैः प्रस्थानत्रयभाष्यप्रतिपादिततत्त्वानां सङ्ग्रहोपि व्यधायि सूत्रप्रायैः वाक्यैः कारिकाभिश्च । तादृशः ग्रन्थः भवति "स्वामिनारायणसिद्धान्तसुधा" नामकः । "सङ्क्षेपविस्तराभ्यां प्रवदन्ति मनीषिणः" इत्याषोक्तिमनुसृत्य श्री भद्रेशदासमहाभागैः अक्षरब्रह्मपुरुषोत्तमसिद्धान्तः प्रस्थानत्रयभाष्ये विस्तरेण, "स्वामिनारायणसिद्धान्तसुधायां सङ्क्षेपेण च न्यरूपीति मनीषिचर्यानुसृता तैः ।

किमस्त्यत्रापूर्वताऽभिनववेदान्तदर्शने ?

प्रायः पञ्चाशदधिकानि वेदान्तदर्शनानि पूर्वाचार्यैः सुदीर्घेन तपसा मीमांसया श्रुतिस्मृतिसूत्रेतिहासपुराणादिग्रन्थाधारेण प्रतिपादितानि । किन्तु ह्यवशिष्टं नूतनपथप्रदर्शनाय । अद्वैत-विशिष्टाद्वैत-द्वैत-द्वैताद्वैत-शक्तिविशिष्टाद्वैत-लक्ष्मीविशिष्टाद्वैतेत्यादिना नैके पन्थानः प्रदर्शितास्सन्ति । किदृशोऽयमभिनवः पन्थाः अक्षरब्रह्मपुरुषोत्तमसिद्धान्तनामा ? किं वात्रापूर्वता ? पूर्वाचार्यप्रदर्शितप्रकल्पातिरिक्तः नूतनः कश्चन प्रकल्पः सम्भावितो वात्र इति सभ्रूविक्षेपमाक्षिपन्ति जिज्ञासवः । तदत्रायं परिहारो दृश्यते दर्शनस्यास्य नाम्नैव । यथा सर्वं खल्विदं ब्रह्मेति सर्वस्यापि ब्रह्मात्मकत्वमेव प्रतिपादयतां सिद्धान्तः अद्वैतेति, नाम्ना एव अभेदवादिनामिदं दर्शनमिति वेद्यते यथा च विशिष्टाद्वैतं, द्वैताद्वैतं, शिवाद्वैतं, शक्तिविशिष्टाद्वैतं, द्वैतमिति च नाम्ना एव तत्तत्सिद्धान्तवैशिष्ट्यमवगम्यते । एवमेवास्य सिद्धान्तस्य नाम भवति अक्षरब्रह्मपुरुषोत्तमसिद्धान्त

3. स्वामिनारायणसिद्धान्तसुधायां १.६.शास्त्रावतरणिकायां : "स एव परविद्याऽध्यात्मविद्या ब्रह्मज्ञानमिति प्रथितः"

इति । नाम्नि तु विद्यत एव वैलक्षण्यम् । नात्र नाम्ना भेदो वाऽभेदो वा भेदाभेदो वा किमपि संसूच्यते । परन्तु अक्षर-पुरुषोत्तमेति पदद्वयोपेतमिदं नाम किमपि वैशिष्ट्यं सूचयति इति तु स्पष्टम् । अस्पष्टमिदमस्माकं किमत्राभिनवं तत्त्वं निगूढमिति अस्त्यस्यापूर्वता इति तु विस्पष्टम् । अतः अपूर्वस्य तत्त्वस्य प्रतिपादनादस्ति अभिनवत्वमस्मिन् वेदान्तदर्शने । कोऽयम् अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमसिद्धान्त इति किञ्चित्पश्यामः ।

अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमसिद्धान्तः -

यथोक्तमत्र पदद्वयं विद्यते । अक्षर-पुरुषोत्तमेति तत्पदद्वयम् । अक्षर-पुरुषपदे तावत् उपनिषदादिविद्यासु बहुधा श्रूयते । किं ताभ्यां द्वाभ्यां प्रतिपाद्यं वस्तु एकमेवोत भिन्नम् ? अस्ति तावद्वेदान्तिषु विप्रतिपत्तिः । न क्षरतीत्यक्षरं जीवः, प्रकृतिः, तदभिमानिनी देवता, अथवा ब्रह्मेति अनेके अर्थास्सम्भवन्ति अक्षरपदस्य । यथा ब्रह्मपदं बृहजातिजीवकमलासनादिषु प्रसिद्धं नैकार्थप्रतिपादकम् तथा पुरुषपदमपि पुरि शेते इति व्युत्पत्त्या सकलजीवसाधारणमनकार्थ-प्रतिपादकम् । एवं सति श्रुतिस्मृत्यादिस्थितानामेषां पदानामर्थः क इति अस्त्येव विप्रतिपत्तेः कारणम् । तन्निर्णयायैव समस्तानि वेदान्तदर्शनानि प्रवृत्तानि तेषु विशिष्टमिदमपूर्वतापादकम् "अक्षरब्रह्मपुरुषोत्तमदर्शनम्" ।

अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमेतिपदयोः आद्यम् अक्षरपदम् अपरब्रह्माऽभिधायकम् । अतः तदेव अक्षरतत्त्वमिति क्वचिदक्षरं ब्रह्मेति च शास्त्रेषु व्यपदिष्यते । पुरुषोत्तमपदं पुनः तदक्षरब्रह्मणोऽपि परं परमात्मानं ब्रूते । अतः अयं परमात्मा परं ब्रह्मेत्युच्यते । एवमस्मिन् सिद्धान्ते अक्षरं ब्रह्म, परं ब्रह्मेति ब्रह्म द्विविधं मतम् । किमिदं भोः सर्वैरपि भेदवादिभिर्वाऽभेदवादिभिर्वा भेदाभेदवादिभिर्वा वेदान्तिभिरिदमैकमत्येनोद्धुष्टं यत् ब्रह्मतत्त्वमेकमेवेति । एकस्मिन्नेव ब्रह्मणि विवदन्ते सर्वे वेदान्तिनः । किमिदं नूतनमाह भवान् ब्रह्मद्वयमिति । द्विगुणितः स्याद्विवाद इति मा कथय । ब्रह्मद्वयमिदं न निर्मूलं सन्त्यत्र ⁴श्रुतिवचनानि, युक्तयश्च प्रमाणानि इत्येतदाविष्करणाय तदङ्गतया अन्यानपि वचनामृतसिद्धान् विषयान् निरूपयितुमेवेदं वेदान्तदर्शनं प्रवृत्तमिति अस्त्यस्य वैशिष्ट्यं महत्त्वं अपूर्वता चेति नास्त्यस्य वेदान्तदर्शनस्य मुमुक्षुजनोपादेयतायां जिज्ञासूनां सन्देहलेशोऽपि ⁵ ।

अक्षरं ब्रह्म, पुरुषोत्तमब्रह्म (परं ब्रह्म) इति द्वे ब्रह्मणी अध्यात्मविद्याप्रतिपाद्ये । तत्र ⁶यदक्षरं ब्रह्म तद्धि परब्रह्मनित्येच्छया जगत्कारणं ब्रह्म उच्यते । ⁷यच्च परमं ब्रह्म पुरुषशब्दाभिधेयं

4. द्वे वाव ब्रह्मणो रूपे मूर्तं चैव अमूर्तं च । - बृहदारण्यकोपनिषत् २-३-१ एतद्वै सत्यकाम ! परं चापरञ्च ब्रह्म । (प्र.उ. ५-२)

5. वक्तृश्रोत्रोरभिमतमनन्यसाध्यं फलमधिकृत्य तद्धेतुभूतं प्रमाणान्तराप्राप्तमर्थं प्रतिपादयतां वाक्यानां समूहो हि शास्त्रमित्युच्यते ।

6. "अक्षरमम्बरान्तधृतेः" (ब्र.सू. १-३-१०)

7. अक्षरादपरतः परः (मु.उ. २-१-२) अक्षरादपि चोत्तमः (भ.गी. १५/१८) "स दहर उत्तरेभ्यः" (ब्र.सू. १-३-१०)

तच्च "दिव्यो ह्यमूर्तः पुरुषः स बाह्याभ्यन्तरोऽहजः" इत्याद्युक्तदिशा यस्य साक्षात्कारेण साधकः अमृतत्वमाप्नोति तद्धि अक्षराद्धिन्नमेवाभिधीयते अक्षरात्परतः पर इत्यादिना । तदेवं ब्रह्मद्वयजिज्ञासयैव मोक्षमाप्नोति साधकः इत्येतत्प्रतिपादयत्ययं सिद्धान्तः । अत एव "अथाऽतो ब्रह्मजिज्ञासे"ति प्रथमसूत्रं व्याख्यायता भाष्यकारेण "ब्रह्मणोः जिज्ञासा ब्रह्मजिज्ञासे"ति द्विवचनान्तविग्रहवाक्येन ब्रह्मजिज्ञासापदस्यापूर्वार्थः प्रादर्शितः⁸ । परविद्याविषयत्वं हि श्रूयते द्वयोरप्यनयोः ब्रह्मणोः मुण्डकोपनिषदि । तत्रादौ अपरेति आदौ अपरां निरूप्य "अथ परा यया तदक्षरमधिगम्यत" इति अक्षरं निरूपयति भगवती श्रुतिः "यत्तदद्रेश्यमग्राह्यमगोत्रमवर्णमचक्षुःश्रोत्रं तदपाणिपादम्....." इत्यादिना तदक्षरब्रह्मणः जगत्कारणत्वादिकञ्च सदृष्टान्तमुपपादितं प्रथमखण्डे । द्वितीयखण्डे पुनः प्रथमोक्ताक्षरब्रह्मणो भिन्नस्य तत्परभूतस्य च परमपुरुषोत्तमस्यापि परविद्याविषयत्वं विस्पष्टमाह भगवती श्रुतिः⁹ "तपःश्रद्धे ये ह्युपवसन्त्यरण्ये शान्ता विद्वांसो भैक्षचर्यां चरन्तो.....यत्रामृतः स पुरुषोऽव्ययात्मा" इति । अत एव मुमुक्षुणा अक्षरं ब्रह्म, पुरुषोत्तमनामकं परं ब्रह्म च अधिगन्तव्यं मोक्षप्रदं परमं ब्रह्म पुरुषोत्तमाभिधमुपासितव्यञ्चेति ब्रह्मद्वयविद्यैव ब्रह्मविद्येति अध्यात्मविद्येति चाभिधीयते ।¹⁰ जीवेश्वरादिभिस्तत्त्वतो भिन्नं ब्रह्मद्वयमेव सकलस्याप्यस्य अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमतत्त्वप्रतिपादकस्य शास्त्रस्य विषयः मुमुक्षुरेवाधिकारी । मोक्ष एव प्रयोजनम् । यथायोग्यं सम्बन्धश्च विद्यत इति शास्त्रस्यास्यानुबन्धचतुष्टयसिद्धिः ।

परब्रह्मणा व्याप्तमक्षरब्रह्म

द्युभ्वाद्यधिकरणे अक्षरब्रह्मण एव द्युभ्वाद्यायतनत्वं "द्युभ्वाद्यायतनम् अक्षरं ब्रह्मैव स्वशब्दात् - पूर्वप्रकृतस्याऽक्षरब्रह्मण एव साक्षाद्वाचकब्रह्मात्मशब्दश्रवणादिति सिद्धान्तितम् । तथा हि "यस्मिन् द्यौः पृथिवीचान्तरिक्षमोतं मनः सह प्राणैश्च सर्वैः इत्यादिना मुण्डकोपनिषद्वचनेन अक्षरब्रह्मण एव द्युभ्वाद्यायतनत्वं प्रकरणानुगुणं मुक्तोपसृप्यत्वादिना कारणेन समर्थितं सप्रमाणम् । तावता न परब्रह्मणः तदाधारत्वाभाव इत्यभिप्रायः, स तु सर्वतन्त्रस्वतन्त्रः ब्रह्मादिसकलचेतनाचेतनात्मकजगतः आधार एव परन्तु अक्षरप्रकरणे स न विवक्षित इत्येवाभिप्रायः सूत्रकाराणाम् । यत्राक्षरब्रह्मणः सकलाधारत्वं व्यापकत्वं सर्वनियामकत्वं वा श्रुतिषु प्रतिपाद्यते तत्र परब्रह्मातिरिक्तस्य सकलस्य धारकत्वं, व्यापकत्वं नियामकत्वं वा मन्तव्यं यत्र च परब्रह्मण एव तदुच्यते तत्र अक्षरमन्तर्भाव्यैव सकलग्रहणमिति सर्वव्यापकत्वं परब्रह्मणि विलक्षणमेव ।¹¹

8. ब्रह्मसूत्रस्वामिनारायणभाष्यम् - १-१-१ पृ.सं. ४

9. मुण्डकोपनिषत् १-२-११

10. ब्रह्मसूत्रस्वामिनारायणभाष्यम् - २-१-२३

11. ब्रह्मसूत्रस्वामिनारायणभाष्यम् - १-३-१ पृ.सं ९७

जीवहृदयगुहायां विद्यमाने अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमब्रह्मणी

अक्षराधिकरणे हि "सहोवाचैतद्वै तदक्षरं गार्गि..... अदीर्घमलोहितम्" इत्याद्युपनिषदि अक्षरशब्दवाच्यं अक्षरब्रह्मैव अम्बरान्तधृतेः अम्बरस्य भूताकाशस्य अन्तः तस्य मूलकारणत्वेन अन्तस्थितः प्रकृत्यधिष्ठाता पुरुषः तस्य धृतेः तस्याप्याधारत्वेन उक्तत्वात् तदक्षरं ब्रह्मैव । तत्र कस्मिन्नु खलु आकाश ओतश्च प्रोतश्चेति (बृ.उ.३-८-७) स होवावाचैतद् वै तदक्षरम्" इत्येवम् उपनिषदि एव प्रकृतेरधिष्ठातृप्याधारभूतम् अक्षरं ब्रह्मैव भवितुमर्हति नान्यत्प्रधानादिकमिति सिद्धान्तितम् । उत्तरत्र "स दहर उत्तरेभ्यः" (ब्र.सू.१-३-१४) इत्यत्र दहराधिकरणे हृत्पुण्डरीकाख्य-वेशमान्तर्वर्ती दहराकाशः न भूताकाशादिः किन्तु स दहराकाशः अक्षरं ब्रह्मैव । पूर्वाधिकरणे प्रसक्तं अक्षरं ब्रह्मैवात्र तच्छब्देन परामृष्टं सूत्रकारेण इति अक्षरं ब्रह्मैव तथा "अथ यदिदमस्मिन् ब्रह्मपुरे दहरं पुण्डरीकं वेश्म दहरोऽस्मिन्नन्तराकाशस्तस्मिन्यदन्तस्तदन्वेष्टव्यं तद्वाव विजिज्ञासितव्यमि" त्यत्र तस्मिन्निति द्वितीयदहरस्यैव ग्रहणमुचितमिति, एवम् उत्तरेभ्यः समानप्रकरणोपात्ताग्रिमश्रुतिभ्यः इति हृत्पुण्डरीकाख्यवेशमान्तर्वर्ती दहराकाशः अक्षरमेव ब्रह्म । तस्मिन् यदन्तस्तदुपासनं विधेयमित्युक्तत्वात् तादृशदहराकाशस्थितः पुरुषोत्तम एव ग्राह्य इति स्पष्टमेवानेन अधिकरणेन अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमदर्शनाभिमतम् अक्षरं ब्रह्म पुरुषोत्तमब्रह्मेति तत्त्वद्वयस्य जिज्ञासा कर्तव्या तेनैव मोक्षसिद्धिरिति प्रतिपादयद्भिः महामहोपाध्यायैः साधु श्री भद्रेशदासमहाभागैः नातिप्राचीनं भगवता स्वामिनारायणेन सन्दृष्टं वचनामृतं श्रुतिसङ्गमितं श्रीस्वामिनारायणप्रस्थानत्रयभाष्येण अपि च अभिनववेदान्तदर्शनमाविरकारीति समभिनन्दनीयं स्वागतार्हमिदं नूनं तत्त्वशास्त्रविस्तारे महदुपायनमिति ।

सन्दर्भग्रन्थसूचिः

श्रीस्वामिनारायणभाष्याणि.
श्रीस्वामिनारायणसिद्धान्तसुधा
दशोपनिषदः
श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता
इतरवेदान्तभाष्याणि

ब्रह्मसूत्रस्वामिनारायणभाष्ये वचनामृतसामरस्यम्

DR. SADHU SHRUTIPRAKASHDAS

Ṣaḍdarśanācārya, Ph. D., D. Litt.,
Director, AARSH Shodh Sansthan, Swaminarayan Akshardham,
Gandhinagar, Gujarat

पूर्वभूमिका

सामरस्यम् अर्थात् स्वीकृतग्रन्थस्य व्यक्तेर्वा सङ्गतिः । ब्रह्मसूत्रस्वामिनारायणभाष्याह्वये ग्रन्थरत्ने परब्रह्मस्वामिनारायणवदनकमलनिःसृत- वचनामृतस्य सङ्गमनं स्वभावतः आवश्यकम्, तन्नाम्ना व्यवहरणात् । ब्रह्मसूत्राणां तद्भाष्याणां वचनामृतस्य च समय-शैली-भाषाप्रभृती विचार्य तत्र कियदवधि भाष्यकारः स्वामिनारायणनामव्यवहारेण सफलस्तदनुभवायायं प्रयासः । तत्र प्रथमं वचनामृतस्य भाष्याऽपेक्षयाऽभ्यर्हतत्वात्तत्परिचयादिकं प्रदीयते ।

वचनामृतानि

भगवत्स्वामिनारायणमुखारविन्दविनिःसृता परावाणी तेषामेवान्तेवासिभिश्चतुर्भिः साधुभिर्मुक्तानन्द-गोपालानन्द-नित्यानन्द-शुकानन्द-स्वामिभिः सङ्गत्य यथाश्रुता सम्पादिता । यथाश्रुतं गुजरातीभाषायां सम्पादितं चेदं ‘वचनामृतम्’ पुस्तकं दृष्ट्वा भगवत्स्वामिनारायणोऽतीव प्रसन्नोऽभवत् ।¹ तदित्थं भगवत्स्वामिनारायणेन स्वयं प्रमाणीकृतं ‘वचनामृतम्’ शास्त्रं श्रीस्वामिनारायणदर्शने परमप्रमाणतया प्रथितम् ।

गुजरात प्रदेशेगढडा-सारङ्गपुर-कारियाणी-लोया-पञ्चाला-वरताल(वृत्तालय)-अमदावादेषु सप्तसु नगरेषु विक्रमादित्यस्याष्टादश-शताधिकषट्सप्ततितमसंवत्सरतः (वि.सं.१८७६ तः) अष्टादशशताधिकषडशीतिसंवत्सरपर्यन्तं (वि.सं.१८८६ पर्यन्तं) दशवर्षपर्यन्तं भक्तेभ्यो भगवत्स्वामिनारायणेनोपदिष्टानां द्विशताधिकद्विषष्टिवचनामृतानां सङ्ग्रहात्मकोऽयं ग्रन्थः ।

भगवता स्वामिनारायणेन प्रोक्तेषु वचनामृतेषु प्राक्कालीना, औपनिषदिकी रीतिर्दृश्यते ।

1. “अने ते समयभां वचनामृतनुं पुस्तक नित्यानंद स्वामीअे लावीने श्रीजमहाराजने आयुं. पछी ते पुस्तकने जोरने भुङ्गु राखु थया.” वय.लो.७

यथा यथा मुमुक्षुभिः स्वसाधनामार्गे जिज्ञासितं तथा तथा साक्षाद् द्रष्टृत्वेन भगवता मन्त्रात्मकानि वचनानि प्रदत्तानि । तान्येव ग्रन्थरूपेणास्मत्सन्निधौ समागतानि । वचनामृतशब्देन च प्रसिद्धानि ।

वचनामृतस्य गुणगौरवविषयेऽलिखत् पारेखो मणिलालः², ‘समग्रदृष्ट्या ‘वचनामृतम्’ सर्वोत्तमेषु हिन्दुधर्मशास्त्रेष्वन्यतमं शास्त्रमस्ति, अपि च तद् एकाग्र्येव पर्याप्तं स्वामिनारायणस्याचार्यत्वेन गौरवं ज्ञापयितुम्’ इति । वचनामृतं सर्वान् मानवहितानावहतीति न्यरूपयत् पाण्डेयो ब्रह्मेश्वरो विद्यार्थी³, ‘वचनामृतस्य दार्शनिकग्रन्थत्वेन समीक्षात्मकमूल्याऽऽकरण एतदवश्यं स्थापनीयं भवति यत्तस्मिन् (वचनामृते) दर्शनस्य युक्तोऽर्थः कृतस्तदृष्ट्या तस्मिन् सर्वेषां मानवहितानां समावेशाय विपुलोऽवकाशोऽस्ति’ इति ।

भगवत्स्वामिनारायणेन सर्वत्र वैदिकशास्त्राणि पुरस्कृत्यैव स्वसिद्धान्तो निरूपितः । तच्च दृष्टान्तविधया निरूप्यते । स कथयति ‘यावन्तो ग्रन्था व्यासेन जनश्रेयसे कृतास्ते सर्वेऽप्यस्माभिः सावधानीभूयः श्रुताः, तेषु सर्वेष्वपि शास्त्रेषु सिद्धान्तोऽयं जीवनिःश्रेयसार्थं यत् ‘सर्वस्याप्यस्य विश्वस्य कर्ता संहर्ता चैव एवास्ति भगवान्’⁴ ।

शास्त्रकृत्स्वपि ब्रह्मसूत्रविरयचयितृमहर्षिवेदव्यासं प्रति तस्यासीमविश्वासो विलोक्यते वचनामृतेषु । स कथयति- ‘व्यासवचनेषु वर्ततेऽस्माकं दृढा प्रतीतिः’ इति ।⁵ ‘व्यासदेवान्नास्ति कश्चिन्महान् आचार्यः, अन्ये च ये ये आचार्या समभवन्तैः खलु व्यासकृतग्रन्थान् आश्रित्य स्वस्वसम्प्रदायाः प्रवर्तिताः । अत आद्याचार्यव्यासदेववचनानि ह्यन्यसर्वाऽऽचार्यवचनेभ्योऽतिप्रमाणानि ।’⁶

वचनामृतेषु शास्त्रज्ञानेन सह स्वानुभूतिं प्राकटयत् स्वामिनारायणः । स कथयति स्म ‘किञ्चेयं वार्ताऽस्माभिर्दृष्टपूर्वाऽनुभूतपूर्वाऽपि च सिद्धीकृतैव, तथा च शास्त्रसम्मतैव वार्ता । इयं या वार्ताऽस्माभिः कृताऽद्य भवतामग्रे सोऽयं सर्वशास्त्राणां सिद्धान्तः । अनुभवेऽपि दाढ्यमेतस्यैव । प्रत्यक्षं दृष्टिनिरीक्षणं कृत्वैव वार्तेयं कृताऽस्माभिः । यदि प्रत्यक्षनिरीक्षणं कृत्वाऽस्माभिर्न कृतेयं वार्ता तर्हि शपथोऽस्माकं सर्वपरमहंसानाम्’⁷

2. “Altogether the book is one of the greatest in Hindu religious literature, and it alone is sufficient to show the greatness of Swami Narayan as a Teacher.” Parekh, M. C., Shri Swami Narayana, p. २0१.

3. “In the critical assessment of the Vachanamritam as a philosophical text, therefore, it is necessary to establish that it is philosophy in the true sense of the term in so far as its scope is as wide as to include all human interests.” P.B. Vidyarthi, “Vachanamritam, as a philosophical text”. New Dimensions in Vedanta Philosophy, Part-१, p. ३६.

4. वच. ग.म.२१

5. वच. ग.प्र.३९

6. वच. ग.अं.१0

7. वच. ग.म.१३

ब्रह्मसूत्रस्वामिनारायणभाष्यम्

स्वामिनारायणभाष्यस्याधारभूतं ब्रह्मसूत्रं प्रप्रथमं विचार्यते

ब्रह्मसूत्राणि वेदान्तदर्शनस्याधारभूतानि । ग्रन्थमेनं वेदान्तसूत्रम्, उत्तरमीमांसासूत्रम्, शारीरकसूत्रम् इत्यादि नाम्ना व्यवहरन्ति विद्वांसः । ग्रन्थेऽस्मिन् उपनिषदां दार्शनिकाध्यात्मिकविचाराणां परब्रह्मणि समन्वयो मुख्यत्वेन विलोक्यते । बन्धमोक्षसृष्टीत्यादिविषया अवान्तरविषयरूपेण विलसन्ति ।

वेदान्तस्य स्तम्भरूपप्रस्थानत्रय्यां तर्कप्रस्थानाभिधानेन ब्रह्मसूत्राणां स्थानमिति नाविदितम् । शास्त्रेऽस्मिन् साङ्ख्य-वैशेषिक-जैन-बौद्धादि-दर्शनसिद्धान्तानामालोचनं विलोक्यते । चतुष्पादसंयुक्तचतुर्विध्यायेषु विभक्तमिदं शास्त्रं समन्वय-अविरोध-साधन-फलात्मकविषयेषु ५५५ सूत्रेषु च निबद्धम् ।

ब्रह्मसूत्राणामर्थगाम्भीर्यं तदुपरि सज्जातभाष्यव्याख्यानादिना विज्ञायते । शङ्कराचार्यादारभ्य प्रायः सप्तमशताब्दीतो ब्रह्मसूत्रव्याख्यानानां ग्रन्था उपलभ्यन्ते । ततोऽपि प्राचीने काले⁸ बोधायन-टङ्क-गुहदेव-भारुचि-कपर्दी-भर्तृप्रपञ्च-भर्तृहरि-ब्रह्मनन्दी-ब्रह्मदत्त-सुन्दरपाण्ड्य-उपवर्ष-द्रमिडाचार्य-प्रभृतीनां व्याख्यातृणां नामानि भाष्यग्रन्थेषूपलभ्यन्ते । तत्पश्चात्काले य आचार्या भाष्यं लिलिखुस्तेषां सिद्धान्त-भाष्यनाम-समयेत्यादिकमधः प्रदर्श्यते

भाष्यकारः	भाष्यनाम	सिद्धान्तः	प्रायः समयः ईशवीयः
शङ्करः	शाङ्करभाष्यम्	अद्वैतः	७८८ तः ८२०
भास्करः	भास्करभाष्यम्	औपाधिकभेदाभेदः	८०१ तः १०००
रामानुजः	श्रीभाष्यम्	विशिष्टाद्वैतः	१०१७ तः ११३७
मध्वः	पूर्णप्रज्ञभाष्यम्	द्वैतः	११९६ तः १२७६
निम्बार्कः	वेदान्तपारिजातसौरभम्	स्वाभाविकभेदाभेदः	१२०० अथवा १४००
श्रीकण्ठः	शैवभाष्यम्	शैवविशिष्टाद्वैतः	१३००
श्रीपतिः	श्रीकरभाष्यम्	वीरशैवविशेषाद्वैतः	१४००
वल्लभः	अणुभाष्यम्	शुद्धाद्वैतः	१४७९
विज्ञानभिक्षुः	विज्ञानामृतभाष्यम्	अविभागाद्वैतः	१७००
बलदेवः	गोविन्दभाष्यम्	अचिन्त्यभेदाभेदः	१८७५ प्रायः ⁹

यादवप्रकाशविरचितं दशमशतककालीनं भेदाभेदप्रदर्शकं भाष्यं नाद्यावधिर्दृश्यते । अन्ये वैखानसीयं विशिष्टाद्वैतभाष्यम्, जानकीभाष्यम्, आनन्दभाष्यम्, आर्यमुनिद्वारा लिखितमार्यसमाजविचारानुकूलं वेदान्तदर्शन-भाष्यम् एवं वेदान्तसूत्रवैदिकवृत्तिः, पञ्चाननतर्करत्नभट्टाचार्यप्रणीतं शक्तिभाष्यञ्चेति साम्प्रदायिकभाष्यग्रन्था उपलभ्यन्ते ।

9. डॉ.रामकृष्ण आचार्य, ब्रह्मसूत्रोक्ते वैष्णवभाष्योका तुलनात्मक अध्ययन (पृ. २३-२४)

एकविंशतिशतके विश्ववन्द्यप्रमुखस्वामिमहाराजेन लिखापितं महामहोपाध्यायेन स्वामिभद्रेशदासेन लिखितं स्वामिनारायणभाष्यम् । एतादृशं विपुलं वैविध्यपूर्णञ्च साहित्यं ब्रह्मसूत्रोपरि राराजते ।

ब्रह्मसूत्रस्वामिनारायणभाष्यपरिचयः

परब्रह्मस्वामिनारायणप्रदत्तो गुरुपरम्परारक्षितः संवर्धितश्च सिद्धान्तोऽक्षरपुरुषोत्तमदर्शननाम्ना ब्रह्मस्वरूपशास्त्रिमहाराजस्वामि- यज्ञपुरुषदासेन(ई.स.१८६५-१९५१) प्रवर्तितो मूर्तायितश्च महामन्दिरेषु मूर्तिप्रस्थापनव्याजेन । ब्रह्मस्वरूपप्रमुखस्वामिमहाराजो प्रस्थानत्रयीमाध्येन शास्त्रबद्धं विधातुमाज्ञापयामास स्वामिभद्रेशदासं २००५ ईशवीयाब्दे । ततस्तेन गुर्वाज्ञया गुर्वाशिषा स्वासाधारणमेधया विरचितेषु प्रस्थानत्रयीस्वामिमिनारायाह्वयेन भाष्येषु ग्रन्थोऽयं राजतेतमाम् । नैकराष्ट्रीयैस्तज्जविद्विद्भिर्हृदयेन प्रसंशितो ग्रन्थराजोऽयम् । भारतस्य सांस्कृतिकराजधान्यां वाराणस्यां काशीविद्वत्परिषदाह्वयया प्राचीनसंस्थया परीक्ष्य ताम्रपत्रद्वारा प्रमाणितः । शतशो विश्वविद्यालयैः सन्मानितः । तत्तत्सम्मानसमारोहे च कुलपतयः कुलाधिपतयः केन्द्रिया राज्यस्तरीयाश्च महानुभावाः समुपस्थिताः । विश्वसंस्कृत-संमेलनायोजकैर्द्विः श्यामदेशस्य राजधान्यां बेङ्कोकनगरे केनेडादेशे च वेनकुवरनगरे विद्वद्भिः पुरा प्रपाठ्य सत्रे विमृष्टः । भाष्यलेखको महामहोपाध्यायः स्वामिभद्रेशदासः विद्यावाचस्पति-दर्शनकेसरी-महामहोपाध्याय-वेदांतमार्तंडेत्यादिभिर्नैकाभिरुपाधिभिर्विभूषितः । एकविंशतिशतके प्रस्थानत्रय्यां भाष्यस्तरीयग्रन्थलेखनं न बालक्रीडनम् । एतत्साहसेन नैके महामेधाविनो विद्वांसः सन्तुष्टाः ।

वचनामृते ब्रह्मसूत्राणां विषयसामञ्जस्यम्

अथैवं विषयपरिचयं प्राप्तः । ब्रह्मसूत्रस्वामिनारायणभाष्ये वचनामृतस्य सामरस्यमिति प्रस्तुतविषयान्तरगतब्रह्मसूत्र-वचनामृत-स्वामिनारायणभाष्येतिग्रन्थत्रय्यां कालक्रमानुसारेण ब्रह्मसूत्राणां प्राचीनतमत्वम् । ततः वचनामृतस्य प्राचीनतरत्वम् । ततः स्वामिनारायणभाष्यस्य । अतः प्रथमं वचनामृते ब्रह्मसूत्राणां विषयसामञ्जस्यं विचार्यते । तद्विज्ञाय ब्रह्मसूत्ररहस्ययुग्वचनामृतस्य सामरस्यं ब्रह्मसूत्रस्वामिनारायणभाष्येऽन्वेष्टुमनुकूला वेदिका सम्पद्येत ।

द्वयोर्लक्ष्यमेकम् ।

तच्चानावृत्ति-अमृतत्व-मोक्ष-भगवदानन्दादिभिः शब्दैर्वाच्यमात्यन्तिकं श्रेयः इति ।

ब्रह्मसूत्रग्रन्थः ‘अनावृत्तिः शब्दाद् अनावृत्तिः शब्दात्’ (ब्र.सू. ४/४/२२) इत्यात्यन्तिकं श्रेयः फलं निरूपयति । भगवान् स्वामिनारायणोऽपि तथैवाह - येन हि ज्ञानप्रलय-

लक्षणाऽऽत्यन्तकप्रलयेन मायिकोपाधिः परित्यक्तः, तस्मिंस्तु न पुनः कदापि संसृज्यते मायिकोपाधिः । (वच. अम. २)

पक्वतण्डुलन्यायेनैवं लक्ष्ये, साधने, तत्त्वनिरूपणे च भूयस्त्वेन साम्यम्, न केवलं साम्यमपि त्वर्वाचीनकाले विरचितत्वेन हेतुना तस्मिन् ब्रह्मसूत्राणाम् अनुभूतिमूलकाः स्पष्टार्था दृश्यन्ते । शब्ददेहभेदेऽप्यर्थदेहस्य साम्याद् द्वयोर्विषयसामञ्जस्यम् । श्रौतक्रमादार्थक्रमो बलीय इति मीमांसान्यायः¹⁰ अत्रोपष्टम्भकः । अत्र केचित् सामञ्जस्यनिरूपकाः सन्दर्भाः प्रदर्श्यन्ते । अत्र प्रदर्शितब्रह्मसूत्रार्थः प्रायः सर्वेषामाचार्याणां भाष्येषु स्वीकृतः

विषयसामञ्जस्यदर्शकं कोष्ठकम्

क्रमः	ब्रह्मसूत्राणि	वचनानुवृत्तानि
१	जन्माद्यस्य यतः १/१/२	पुरुषोत्तमो भगवान् सर्वेषामुत्पत्तिस्थितिप्रलयानां कर्ता (वच.ग.प्र. ५१)
२	शास्त्रयोनित्वात् १/१/३	यस्य भगवन्निश्चयः सम्पद्यते तस्य शास्त्रेणैव सम्पद्यते । (सा. १३)
३	आनन्दमयोऽभ्यासात् १/१/१२	भगवाँस्तु सर्वसुखमात्रराशिः । तथा च भगवत्सम्बन्धि सुखम् अविनाशि महाऽलौकिकं च । (वच.ग.अं. ३९)
४	ईक्षतेर्नाशब्दम् १/१/५	सृष्टिसमयेऽक्षरातीतः पुरुषोत्तमो भगवान् अक्षरसम्मुखम् ईक्षते । (वच.ग.प्र. ४१)
५	तन्निष्ठस्य मोक्षोपदेशात् १/१/७	भगवत्स्वरूपज्ञानं भगवन्माहात्म्याऽवबोधश्चेति द्वौ मोक्षस्या- साधारणौ हेतू इति । (वच.ग.प्र. ५७) येयं केवलं भगवत्येव कर्तृत्वबुद्धिः, सैव कल्याणस्य परमं कारणम् । (वच.का. १०)
६	सर्ववेदान्तप्रत्ययं चोदनाद्यविशेषात् ३/३/१	वेदचतुष्टय-पुराण-इतिहासेतिसर्वेष्वियमेव वार्ता यद्, ‘भगवान् भगवत्साधुश्चैव कल्याणकारिणौ’ इति । (वच.ग.म. ५९)
७	फलमतः उपपत्तेः ३/२/३८	कर्मफलभोजयिता परमेश्वरः (वच.ग.प्र. ६५)
८	पुरुषार्थोऽतः शब्दादिति बादरायणः । ३/४/१	...परमपदञ्चाप्नुवन्ति; तदेत्सर्वभगवदुपासनायाबलेन प्राप्नुवन्ति । (वच.ग.प्र. ५६)

९	आवृत्तिसकृदुपदेशात् ४/१/१	इमां वार्तां नित्यं नवीनामिव धारयत । न च प्रमादेन विस्मरत । अद्यतनीमिवश्चोऽपिनवनवामिव धारयत । (वच.ग.म. १३)
१०	अर्चिरादिना तत्प्रथितेः ४/३/१	एकान्तिकभक्तः ...अर्चिर्मार्गेण प्राप्नोति भगवतोऽक्षरधाम । (वच.ग.प्र. २१)
११	अनावृत्तिः शब्दात् ४/४/२२	येन हि ज्ञानप्रलयलक्षणाऽऽत्यन्तिकप्रलये मायिकोपाधिः परित्यक्तः, तस्मिँस्तु न पुनः कदापि संसज्यते मायिकोपाधिः । (वच.अम. २)

एतादृशविधया वचनामृते बहुविधसूत्रसामञ्जस्यविलोकनेन ब्रह्मसूत्रस्वामिनारायणभाष्ये वचनामृतसामरस्यमवश्यं विलसेदित्यत्र न शङ्कापङ्ककलङ्कः ।

सामरस्यदर्शनम्

ब्रह्मसूत्रस्वामिनारायणभाष्ये वचनामृतसामरस्यं क्वचित्स्पष्टशब्देन विलोक्यते क्वचिच्च भावार्थरूपेण । तत्त्वनिरूपणानुरूपमुभयं निरूप्यते ।

ब्रह्मविद्यास्वरूपनिरूपणे सामरस्यम्

वचनामृते

ब्रह्मविद्यायाः स्वरूपं ब्रह्मज्ञानपदेनोत्तमनिर्विकल्पनिश्चयरूपेण च निरूपितम् । परब्रह्म ब्रह्मज्ञानपदेन भाषते -

- ‘ब्रह्मणः पृथग् वर्तते परब्रह्म पुरुषोत्तमो नारायणः । स च ब्रह्मणोऽपि कारणम् आधारः प्रेरकश्च । इत्येवं विज्ञाय स्वकीयजीवात्मनस्तेन ब्रह्मणा सहैकतां विभाव्य परब्रह्मणः स्वामिसेवकभावेन उपासनाऽनुष्ठेया । इत्येवंरूपेण ज्ञाते सति ब्रह्मज्ञानम् अपि परमपदप्राप्तये वर्तते निर्विघ्नः पन्थाः ।’ (वच.ग.म. ३)
- ‘यदक्षरेऽष्टावरणयुक्तकोटिकोटिब्रह्माण्डान्यणुवद् भासन्ते, तादृशं यत् पुरुषोत्तमनारायणस्य धामरूपम् अक्षरम्, तद्रूपेण स्वयं तिष्ठन् पुरुषोत्तमम् उपासीत, स कथ्यते उत्तमनिर्विकल्पनिश्चयवान् इति ।’ (वच.लो.१२)

ब्रह्मज्ञानोत्तमनिर्विकल्पनिश्चयेति द्वयं साधनोत्तममनावर्तनाय वचनामृतेषु निगद्यते । ब्रह्मविद्याया अप्यनावृत्तिरेव मुख्यं लक्ष्यम् । तस्माद् ब्रह्मविद्या-ब्रह्मज्ञान-उत्तमनिर्विकल्पनिश्चयेति समानार्थका शब्दाः । प्रस्तुतवचनामृतयोर्ब्रह्मविद्यास्वरूपवर्णने ब्रह्म-परब्रह्मेतितत्त्वद्वयविज्ञानं विलोक्यते । तत्राक्षरब्रह्मणा सहैकतां वा ताद्रूप्यं समुपवर्ण्य पुरुषोत्तमोपासना करणीयेति विधीयते ।

स्वामिनारायणब्रह्मसूत्रभाष्ये

अत एव भाष्यकारः अथाऽतो ब्रह्मजिज्ञासा॥ ब्र.सू. १/१/१॥ इति प्रथमसूत्रे ब्रह्मजिज्ञासाघटकब्रह्मशब्देन ब्रह्म-परब्रह्मेतिद्वयं निरूपयति यथा च तत् - 'ब्रह्मजिज्ञासा ब्रह्मणोर्जिज्ञासेति ब्रह्मशब्देनेह सकलवेदान्तोदितब्रह्मविद्यातत्त्व-निरूपणनिपुणेन भगवता व्यासेनाऽक्षरब्रह्म-परब्रह्मेतिदिव्योभयतत्त्वयोर्जिज्ञास्यमानत्वेन विवक्षितत्वात्' ।

ब्रह्मपदस्यायमपूर्वोऽर्थ इतः पूर्वं केनाप्यनभिधानादिति विज्ञाय स सन्दर्भयुक्तिभ्यां प्रमाणयति महता सम्भारेण, यथा - 'ननु ब्रह्मविद्याविचाराऽऽरम्भणसूत्रेऽस्मिन्नेकः परमात्मैवाऽस्तु वेदनीयतया जिज्ञास्यः, किमिह तत्त्वद्वयग्रहाऽऽग्रहेणेति चेन्नाऽयमस्माक- माग्रहोऽपि तु भगवत्याः श्रुतेरेव । श्रुत्युपजीव्यत्वाच्चाऽस्य शास्त्रस्य सकलवेदवेदान्त-शब्दावलीरहस्यार्थदर्शिनो भगवतः सूत्रकारस्यापीति । का सा श्रुतिरिति चेद् 'येनाऽक्षरं पुरुषं वेद सत्यं प्रोवाच तां तत्त्वतो ब्रह्मविद्याम्'(मु.उ.१/२/१३) इति ।

ततः मुण्डकोपनिषद सम्पूर्णं प्रस्तावमुपक्रमಾದिलिङ्गार्थं विस्तरयति । 'इत्थं हि तत्रत्यो भवति प्रस्तावः' इति मुखेन । ततश्च महता सम्भारेण मुण्डकोपनिषद उपक्रमादिकहेतुमवधार्य विषयमिमं निरूपयति । अग्रे कथयति च -

'इत्थमक्षरपुरुषोत्तमसिद्धान्तमेव ब्रह्मविद्यारूपेण प्रस्थाप्य तद्विद्यासाकल्याय तद्व्ययमपि दिव्यतत्त्वमवशिष्टमुण्डकद्वय उक्तार्थादादर्याय सोत्साहमुपदिदेश । तत्र 'यथा सुदीप्तात् पावकाद् विस्फुलिङ्गाः सहस्रशः प्रभवन्ते सरूपाः । तथाऽक्षराद् विविधाः सोम्य ! भावाः प्रजायन्ते तत्र चैवाऽपियन्ति॥'(मु.उ.२/१/१), 'आविः सन्निहितं गुहाचरं नाम महत्पदमत्रैतत् समर्पितम् । एजत्प्राणान्निमिषच्च यदेतज्जानथ सदसद्वरेण्यं परं विज्ञानाद् यद् वरिष्ठं प्रजानाम्॥१॥ यदचिर्मद् यदणुभ्योऽणु च यस्मिँल्लोका निहिता लोकिनश्च । तदेतदक्षरं ब्रह्म स प्राणस्तदु वाङ्मनः । तदेतत्सत्यं तदमृतं तद् वेद्भ्यं सोम्य विद्धि॥२॥ धनुर्गृहीत्वौपनिषदं महाऽस्त्रं शरं ह्युपासानिशितं सन्दधीत । आयम्य तद्वावगतेन चेतसा लक्ष्यं तदेवाऽक्षरं सोम्य विद्धि॥३॥ प्रणवो धनुः शरो ह्यात्मा ब्रह्म तल्लक्ष्यमुच्यते । अप्रमत्तेन वेद्भ्यं शरवत्तन्मयो भवेत्॥४॥ यस्मिन् द्यौः पृथिवी चाऽन्तरिक्षमोतं मनः सह प्राणैश्च सर्वैः । तमेवैकं जानथाऽऽत्मानमन्या वाचो विमुञ्चथाऽमृतस्यैष सेतुः॥५॥ अरा इव रथनाभौ संहता यत्र नाड्यः स एषोऽन्तश्चरते बहुधा जायमानः । ॐ इत्येवं ध्यायथाऽऽत्मानं स्वस्ति वः पाराय तमसः परस्तात्॥६॥ यः सर्वज्ञः सर्वविद्यस्यैष महिमा भुवि । दिव्ये ब्रह्मपुरे ह्येष व्योमन्यात्मा प्रतिष्ठितः । मनोमयः प्राणशरीरनेता प्रतिष्ठितोऽन्ने हृदयं सन्निधाय । तद्विज्ञानेन परिपश्यन्ति धीरा आनन्दरूपममृतं यद् विभाति॥७॥'(मु.उ.२/२/१-७), 'हिरण्ये परे कोशे विरजं ब्रह्म निष्कलम् । तच्छुभ्रं ज्योतिषां ज्योतिस्तद्यदात्मविदो विदुः॥१॥ न तत्र सूर्यो भाति न चन्द्रतारकं नेमा विद्युतो भान्ति कुतोऽयमग्निः । तमेव भान्तमनु भाति सर्वं तस्य भासा सर्वमिदं विभाति ॥१०॥(मु.उ.२/२/९-१०), 'बृहच्च तद्विव्यमचिन्त्यरूपं सूक्ष्माच्च

तत् सूक्ष्मतरं विभाति । दूरात्सुदूरे तदिहाऽन्तिके च पश्यत्स्विहैव निहितं गुहायाम्' (मु.उ.३/१/७) इत्यादौ ब्रह्माक्षरोद्धोषः ।

‘दिव्यो ह्यमूर्तः पुरुषः स बाह्याभ्यन्तरो ह्यजः । अप्राणो ह्यमनाः शुभ्रो ह्यक्षरात्परतः परः॥२॥ एतस्माज्जायते प्राणो मनः सर्वेन्द्रियाणि च । खं वायुर्ज्योतिरापः पृथिवी विश्वस्य धारिणी॥३॥’ (मु.उ.२/१/२,३), ‘भिद्यते हृदय-ग्रन्थिश्छिद्यन्ते सर्वसंशयाः । क्षीयन्ते चाऽस्य कर्माणि तस्मिन् दृष्टे परावरे’ (मु.उ.२/२/८), ‘यदा पश्यः पश्यते रुक्मवर्णं कर्तारमीशं पुरुषं ब्रह्मयोनिम् । तदा विद्वान् पुण्यपापे विधूय निरञ्जनः परमं साम्यमुपैति’ (मु.उ.३/१/३), ‘नाऽयमात्मा प्रवचनेन लभ्यो न मेधया न बहुना श्रुतेन । यमेवैष वृणुते तेन लभ्यस्तस्यैष आत्मा विवृणुते तनूं स्वाम्’ (मु.उ.३/२/३) इत्यादौ पुरुषोत्तमोद्धोषः ।

‘एतद् यो वेद निहितं गुहायां सोऽविद्याग्रन्थिं विकिरतीह सोम्य’ (मु.उ.२/१/१०), ‘भिद्यते हृदयग्रन्थिश्छिद्यन्ते सर्वसंशयाः । क्षीयन्ते चाऽस्य कर्माणि तस्मिन् दृष्टे परावरे’ (मु.उ.२/२/८), ‘तदा विद्वान् पुण्यपापे विधूय निरञ्जनः परमं साम्यमुपैति’ (मु.उ.३/१/३), ‘स वेदैतत् परमं ब्रह्मधाम यत्र विश्वं निहितं भाति शुभ्रम् । उपासते पुरुषं ये ह्यकामास्ते शुक्रमेतदतिवर्तन्ति धीराः’ (मु.उ.३/२/१), ‘वेदान्तविज्ञानसुनिश्चितार्थाः सन्न्यासयोगाद् यतयः शुद्ध-सत्त्वाः । ते ब्रह्मलोकेषु परान्तकाले परामृताः परिमुच्यन्ति सर्वे’ (मु.उ.३/२/६), ‘तथा विद्वान् नामरूपाद् विमुक्तः परात्परं पुरुषमुपैति दिव्यम्’ (मु.उ.३/२/८), ‘तरति शोकं तरति पाप्मानं गुहाग्रन्थिभ्यो विमुक्तोऽमृतो भवति’ (मु.उ.३/२/९), इत्यादौ च तद्विज्ञानफलोद्धोष इति । अतोऽत्र तत्त्वद्वयाङ्गीकार एव श्रुतियुक्तिसम्मतः सूत्रकाराभिप्रेतश्चेति श्रुत्यक्षरद्रोहतः सूत्राक्षरद्रोहो ब्रह्माक्षरद्रोहश्च नावहनीय इत्यलम् ।’

परब्रह्मस्वरूपनिरूपणे निर्लेपत्वे सामरस्यम्

परब्रह्मणः स्वरूपस्य निर्लेपत्ववर्णनं वचनामृतेषु कनकदृष्टान्तेन, वह्निदृष्टान्तेन गगनदृष्टान्तेन च सुष्ठु निरूपितं तस्य सामरस्यं भाष्ये विलोक्यते । तत्र प्रथमं वचनामृतसन्दर्भान् विलोकयिष्यामः ।

वचनामृते कनकदृष्टान्तेन –

- ‘यथा सुवर्णं तदितरधातवश्चैकत्रीकृत्य पृथिव्यां निखन्येर्न तर्हि बहुकालाऽनन्तरं सुवर्णैतरधातवः सर्वे धूल्या सह धूलित्वं प्राप्नुयुः, परं सुवर्णं तु यथाऽधिकं पृथिव्याम् अवतिष्ठेत तथा वृद्धिम् आप्नुयात्, किन्तु न ह्यपक्षीयेत । तथैव भगवान् तदतिरिक्त-विरञ्ज्यादिदेवमुनयश्च न सन्ति समानाः; यतो हि, यदा भवेद् विषयरूपधूलियोगस्तदा भगवद्व्यतिरिक्ता यथाकथञ्चिन्महान्तोऽपि विषयैः सह तन्मया भवेयुः, परं मनुष्यसदृशं भासमानमपि भगवन्तं नहि बाधयितुं

प्रभवेद् मायिकपदार्थः, न च स लिप्येत कदाप्यत्युत्कृष्टे विषये। एतादृशं विद्यते भगवतोऽलौकिकं सामर्थ्यम्।’ (वच.ग.म.४)

वचनामृते नभोदृष्टान्तेन-

- ‘यथा चत्वारि तत्त्वानि यद्यप्याकाशोऽवस्थितानि तथापि कस्यचिदपि दोष आकाशं न स्पृशति; तथा परमेश्वरस्वरूपम् अपि न स्पृशति कश्चिन्मायिकतत्त्वदोष इत्येवंविधं हि भगवतः स्वरूपम्’। (वच.ग.म.१७)

स्वयं स्वस्वभावं परब्रह्म निरूपयति -

- ‘महाराजस्त्वाकाशवन्निर्लेप’ इत्येवं मत्समीपे निरन्तरं निवसन्तो जानन्ति मत्स्वभावम्’। (वच.का. ६)

वचनामृते वह्निदृष्टान्तेन -

- ‘अग्निवत् तेजस्वी, स या याः शुभाऽशुभक्रियाः कुरुते तत्सर्वा भस्मीभवन्ति’ इत्येवंप्रकारेण भगवन्तं निर्लेपं ब्रह्मरूपं जानीयात्।’ (वच. लो. १२)

ब्रह्मसूत्रभाष्ये १/२/८

ब्रह्मपरब्रह्मणोर्बद्धजीवेश्वराभ्यां सर्वथा विशिष्टत्वान्न तयोः संभोगदोषभाक्त्वम्। भूमिस्थहेम्न इव, भूतान्तरस्थव्योम्न इव नैतयोरपि स्वव्याप्यदोषलेपलेशप्रसङ्गः। अनलप्रकृती स्वसंसर्गितां प्रकृतिमपि ब्रह्मरूपां कुरुत इति क्व संभोगवार्ता। तदुक्तं ‘सूर्यो यथा सर्वलोकस्य चक्षुर्न लिप्यते चाक्षुषैर्बाह्यदोषैः। एकस्तथा सर्वभूतान्तरात्मा न लिप्यते लोकदुःखेन बाह्यः॥’ (कठ.५/११), ‘अग्निर्यथैको भुवनं प्रविष्टो रूपं रूपं प्रतिरूपो बभूव। एकस्तथा सर्वभूतान्तरात्मा रूपं रूपं प्रतिरूपो बहिश्च॥’ (कठ.५/९) इति। ‘असक्तं सर्वभृच्चैव’ (गी.१३/१४) इत्यादि च।

परब्रह्मस्वरूपनिरूपणे साकारत्वे सामरस्यम्

वचनामृते परमात्मनः मनुष्यनिभं नित्यदिव्यं साकारस्वरूपं भृशं प्रतिपादितम्। ‘नहि खलु मातुःक्रोडस्थानं ज्ञानसहस्रमपि लभते’ इति न्यायेन साकारस्वरूपमेव साधनायामधिकमुपकारकमिति तदाशयः। तद्विलोकयामः।

वचनामृते

- ‘भगवदक्षरधामस्थो भगवदाकारस्तथा च तद्भगवत्पार्षदभूतानां मुक्तानां य आकाराः, ते सर्वे सत्या दिव्याः अतिशयप्रकाश-युक्ताश्च। अथ तद्भगवतस्तथा च तन्मुक्तानामाकारः

पुरुषवद् द्विभुजः सच्चिदानन्दरूपश्च । अक्षरधामाऽवस्थितश्चाऽयं भगवान्
मुक्तपुरुषैर्नानाप्रकारकदिव्योपचारैः सेव्यमानः, तेषाञ्च मुक्तपुरुषाणां परमानन्दं जनयन्
सदा विराजमानः । तथाविधश्चाऽयं सर्वोपरिपुरुषोत्तमो भगवान् एव दयया जीवानां
कल्याणायास्यां पृथिव्यां प्रकटितः सन् वर्तते सर्वजननयनगोचरः’ (वच.ग.अ.३८)

- ‘तत्तेजसि चैका दृश्यतेऽतिप्रकाशमयी भगवन्मूर्तिः; सा चेयं मूर्तिर्धनश्यामा, तथापि
तेजोभूयस्त्वान्मानुभूयते श्यामा, अतिशयश्चेता प्रतीयते । सा चेयं मूर्तिर्द्विभुजा
द्विचरणाऽतिशयमनोहरा च, परं तन्मूर्तेर्न सन्ति चत्वारो वाऽष्टौ वा सहस्रं वा भुजाः । सा
मूर्तिस्तु अतिसौम्या मनुष्यसमानाऽऽकृतिः किशोरवयाश्च ।’ (वच.ग.म.१.३)

भाष्ये

- अत एव ‘यत्ते रूपं कल्याणतमं तत्ते पश्यामि’(ई.१६) इतीशे प्रार्थनश्रुतिः ।
इत्थमिह परमात्मैव साकृतिकत्वेन निरूपितः । साकृतिकोऽपि न येन
केनचिदप्याकारेणाऽपि तु दिव्यकरचरणादिकरणयुतपुरुषाकार एवेति ‘पुरुषः’
इत्यनेन सिद्धान्तितम् । स च पुनर्द्विभुजचरण एव । चतुर्भुजादित्वं तु द्विभुजचरणस्य
सत एव तस्य निमित्तविशेषनिबन्धनं स्वैश्वर्ययोगजनितं न सार्वकालिकम् । स च
सदा किशोरमूर्तिर्धनश्यामोऽपि दिव्यतेजोऽतिशयाद्धिरण्मयत्वेन वर्णितः । स
चेदृग्विधोऽयं स्वदिव्याऽक्षरधाम्नि दिव्यसिंहासनारूढः सन्नेव तद्रूपमजहदेव
स्वसङ्कल्पमात्रतः कृपया मानुषादिरूपेणाऽऽविर्भवतीतीहामुष्यसर्वत्रसाकृतिकः ।
प्रलयाऽवस्थायामपि कालाऽस्पृष्टोऽयं नैककोट्यक्षरमुक्तैरीक्ष्यमाणो विराजत इति
दर्शनेन दृश्याकारसिद्धिः ।’ (ब्र.सू. स्वा. भा. १/१/२१)

परब्रह्मस्वरूपनिरूपणे परमानन्दसामरस्यम्

वचनामृतोद्बोधकपरब्रह्मसहजानन्दस्य सहजानन्दं नैकविधया निरूपयति वचनामृतानि ।
कीदृशञ्च तत्सुखमिति चेद् वचनामृतानां सम्मिलितानां सारांशो यथा - चतुर्दशलोकानां
सुखाद्, इन्द्रचतुर्मुखादिदेवानां स्वर्गसुखात्, पञ्चविषयानन्दात्, रूपवत्कामिनीनां
दर्शनसङ्गाह्लादाच्चातिशयाधिकम् । अनन्तकोटिब्रह्माण्डानां सुखमेकत्रीकृतमपि भगवतो
रोमच्छिद्रे यावत्सुखमस्ति तत्समीपे तुच्छमिव भासते । किं बहुना, चतुर्दशलोकानां, स्वर्गादेः,
पञ्चविषयस्य च सुखं नरकतुल्यं परब्रह्मानन्दसमीपे, नैतावता विरम्यते अग्रे वर्णयति यत्
– नैकब्रह्माण्डस्थेभ्यो जीवेभ्यः प्रदत्तं सुखं महाश्रोत्रियेण धनाढ्येन महाभोजनानन्तरं शुने
प्रदत्तरोटकार्ध-चन्द्रमिवात्यल्पं विद्यते । अत एवान्यत्र सुखस्य किञ्चिन्मात्रा, भगवति

सुखमात्रमस्ति ।¹¹

अन्ते च विशिनष्टि यद् – अत्यधिकं सुखं, दिव्यं सुखं भगवति, भगवान् परमसुखदायकः । येन क्षणमपि भगवद्दर्शनं कृतञ्चेत् स मन्येत यत् सहस्राधिकवर्षाणि सुखसागरे व्यतीतानि ।¹² इत्येव भगवतःसुखमस्ति ।

भाष्ये

‘सैषाऽऽनन्दस्य मीमांसा भवति’ (तै.उ.२/८/२), ‘यतो वाचो निवर्तन्ते । अप्राप्य मनसा सह । आनन्दं ब्रह्मणो विद्वान्’ (तै.उ.२/९/१) इति मुहुर्मुहुरभ्यस्तो मानुषाद्यक्षरब्रह्मान्तसर्वानन्दसमुत्कृष्टः सर्वानन्दमूलभूतोऽयमानन्दस्त्रिविधदुःखोदधिनिमग्ने जीवे वेश्वरे वा बाध्यमानः परमात्मसहजानन्दमेव स्वाश्रयतया प्रतिपादयति । (ब्र.सू. स्वा. भा. १/१/१३)

वस्तुतस्तु यद्विव्याऽऽनन्दाऽनुभवलेशलेशोऽपि कोटिकोटियुगान्ता-नन्दानुभूतितुल्यतां नैतीति परमात्माऽऽनन्दस्त्वनन्त एव । अनन्तस्य गणनैव मौढ्यम् । अत एवाऽऽनन्दमीमांसायां मानुषाद्यानन्दानामुत्तरोत्तरशतगुणसमुत्कृष्टत्वमुपदिशता ‘स एको ब्रह्मण आनन्दः’ (तै.२/८/२) इत्यक्षरब्रह्मण्येव तत्परम्परा विरमिता । यद्यपि सत्यज्ञानाऽनन्तलक्षणस्याऽक्षरब्रह्मणोऽप्यानन्दोऽनन्त एव तथापि जीवेश्वरमाया-तन्मुक्तादिसर्वपरतस्तस्मात् केवलं परमात्मन एव परत्वात् तदानन्दपुरस्कारेण तदक्षरादिसर्वसमुत्कृष्टपरमात्मसहजानन्दाऽऽनन्दं निरूपयितुं स उदाहृतः । (ब्र.सू. १/१/१४) ‘भोगमात्रसाम्यलिङ्गाच्च’ (ब्र.सू. ४/४/२१) इति सूत्रविषयवाक्यरूपेण ‘सोऽश्रुते सर्वान् कामान् सह ब्रह्मणा विपश्चितेति’ (तै.२/१/१) इति मन्त्रेण मूर्तेनाऽक्षरब्रह्मणा सह तत्सुखं मुक्ता भुञ्जते ।

भाष्ये सहजानन्दशब्द एकोनचत्वारिंशत्कृत्व (३९) विविधदृष्टिभेदेनोपयुक्तः । तेषु केचन-

- ‘परमात्मसहजानन्ददिव्यसुखात्मकं फलम् ।’ (ब्र.सू. स्वा. भा. १/२/११)
- ‘स ब्रह्मरूपः परमात्मोपासकस्तत्परमात्मसहजानन्दपरमानन्दसुखसागरे निमग्नस्तद्विव्यस्वरूपमात्रलीनसकलस्ववृत्तिः ।’ (ब्र.सू. स्वा. भा. १/३/८)
- ‘प्रत्यगात्मा परमात्मसहजानन्दपरमानन्दमुपभुङ्क्त इति परमपुरुषार्थभूतमोक्षस्थितिरुपवर्णिता ।’ (ब्र.सू. स्वा. भा. १/४/१)
- ‘दिव्याऽक्षरधामस्थपरमात्मसहजानन्दपरमानन्ददिव्यानुभूतिरेवेति वैशिष्ट्यम् ।’ (ब्र.सू. स्वा. भा. ३/१/७)
- अक्षरब्रह्मसाधर्म्याऽऽपन्नेनाऽऽत्मना परब्रह्मसहजानन्दपरमानन्द-दिव्यानुभूतिलक्षणः

11. वचनामृत- वर.१६, ग.म.५७, पं.४, ग.अं.२७, लो.१८, ग.५७, सा.१, ग.म.१, सा.४, ११, ग.म.४७, वर.१९, ग.अं.३९, ग.अं.२८, पं.१ इत्येतेषां सारांशः

12. वचनामृत- ग.अं.३२, ग.म.५६, वर.९ इत्येतेषां सारांशः

परमपुरुषार्थः ।' (ब्र.सू. स्वा. भा. ३/४/१)

- 'प्रत्यक्षपरब्रह्मसहजानन्दतत्परमानन्दाद्यनुभूति-लक्षणपरममुक्तिरूपं फलमुत्पद्यते ।' (ब्र.सू. स्वा. भा. ३/४/५०)
- 'तत्र च ते परमात्मसहजानन्दपरमानन्दमनुभवन्तीति सकलोऽर्थः ।' (ब्र.सू. स्वा. भा. ४/३/१५)
- 'परमात्मसहजानन्ददिव्यपरमानन्दपरमसागरे परमभक्त्युद्रेकतो लीनत्वात् ।' (ब्र.सू. स्वा. भा. ४/४/४)

अक्षरब्रह्मस्वरूपवर्णने सामरस्यम्

परब्रह्मस्वामिनारायणः प्रतिजानीते 'यन्ममायमवतारो जीवेभ्यो ब्राह्मीं स्थितिं प्रदायात्यन्तिकश्रेयोहेतुक एव ।'¹³ अत एव स्वस्य ब्रह्मणि प्रीतिं स्वयमेव वर्णयति - 'यथा नद्यः समुद्रे विलीयन्ते, यथा च सती-पतङ्गा अग्नौ भस्मीभवतः, यथा च शूरो रणे विच्छिद्यते, तथैव मया एकरसपरिपूर्णब्रह्मस्वरूपे मदीयाऽऽत्मा विलापितः' ।(वच.ग.म.५०)

यस्मिन् ब्रह्माण्डे सोऽवतरति तत्राक्षरब्रह्म स्वेन सह नीत्वैवेति स्वयं समुद्राति - 'भगवान् यदा जीवकल्याणाऽर्थं मूर्तिं धरति तदा स्वकीयाऽक्षरधाम्ना चैतन्यमूर्तिपार्षदैः स्वकीयसकलैश्वर्यैश्च सहित एव समागच्छति ।'(वच.ग.प्र. ७१)

तस्य चाक्षरब्रह्मण एकत्वेऽपि चतुष्प्रकारकसेवाभेदेन चतुर्धा वचनामृते वर्णितम् ।

१. परमपदधामरूपेण

- 'अक्षरब्रह्म त्वस्ति तद्भगवन्निवासधाम ।' (वच.पं.१)

२. धामस्थं मुक्तानामादर्शरूपं परब्रह्ममुख्यपरिचारकरूपेण

- 'अक्षरम् अन्यरूपेण पुरुषोत्तमनारायणस्य सेवायाम् अभिवर्तते ।' (वच.ग.प्र.२१)

३. नैककोटिब्रह्माण्डधारकचिदाकाशरूपेण

- 'अयं सर्वाधार आकाश उच्यते ब्रह्मेति चिदाकाशो वेति ।' (वच.ग.प्र.७१)

४. सत्पुरुषरूपेण, जीवेश्वराणां नरदेहोपलम्भ आत्यन्तिकश्रेयोहेतवे

- 'जीवोऽयं यदा भरतखण्डे मनुष्यदेहमवाप्नोति तदा भगवदवतारं भगवत्साधुं (अक्षरब्रह्मस्वरूपं) वाऽवश्यं पृथिव्यां विचरन्तं यदि परिचिनुयात्, तर्हि स जीवः सम्पद्यते भगवद्भक्तः ।' (वच.वर.१९)

13. भावार्थसंक्षेपः, नन्दकिशोरदास स्वामी, आत्यन्तिक कल्याण, पृ.७६.

भाष्ये

पदे पदे वचनामृतोक्तं ब्रह्मणः स्वरूपं ब्रह्मसूत्रस्वामिनारायणभाष्ये सामरस्येन प्रतिपादितम्, केचनांशाः समुपवर्ण्यन्ते ।

तत्र –

परमपदधामस्वरूपस्य वर्णनम्

‘न तत्र सूर्यो भाति न चन्द्रतारकं नेमा विद्युतो भान्ति कुतोऽयमग्निः । तमेव भान्तमनुभाति सर्वं तस्य भासा सर्वमिदं विभाति’(कठ.५/१५), ‘एतदालम्बनं श्रेष्ठमेतदालम्बनं परम् । एतदालम्बनं ज्ञात्वा ब्रह्मलोके महीयते॥’ (कठ.२/१७), ‘स य एतदेवं विद्वानक्षरं प्रणौत्येतदेवाक्षरं स्वरममृतमभयं प्रविशति तत्प्रविश्य यदमृता देवास्तदमृतो भवति’(छा.१/४/५), ‘अव्यक्तोऽक्षर इत्युक्तस्तमाहुः परमां गतिम् । यं प्राप्य न निवर्तन्ते तद् धाम परमं ममा॥’(गी.८/२१), ‘न तद् भासयते सूर्यो न शशाङ्को न पावकः । यद् गत्वा न निवर्तन्ते तद् धाम परमं ममा॥’(गी.१५/६) इत्याद्युक्तं तस्य दिव्याऽक्षरधामाख्यसकल-लोकसमुत्कृष्टाऽपुनरावृत्तिकरदेशविशेषात्मकत्वम् । (ब्र.सू.स्वा.भा.१/१/३) एवं मुक्तोपसृप्यव्यपदेशाच्चा॥ १/३/२॥ सूत्रभाष्येऽप्येतद्वर्णितम् ।

धामस्थं मूर्तं सेवकस्वरूपम्

‘अत्रैतत्समर्पितम् । एजत् प्राणन्मिषच्च’ (मु.उ.२/२/१), ‘सोऽश्रुते सर्वान् कामान् सह । ब्रह्मणा विपश्चितेति’ (तै.२/१/१) इत्याद्युक्तं तद्धामस्थपरमात्मदिव्यकरचरणादियुत-परमसेवकरूपमिति । (ब्र.सू. स्वा.भा.१/१/३)

पूर्वमिहैव ‘शास्त्रदृष्ट्या तूपदेशः’ (ब्र.सू.१/१/३१) इत्यत्र निरूपितदिशा शास्त्रदृष्टिसमुल्लसितो नित्य-समुद्भासिताऽप्राकृत दिव्यस्वाभाविकनिरतिशयाऽनुरागरसितपरमोपासन-निबन्धनस्तत्परायणतारूपउपास्यपरमोपासकभावलक्षणः सम्बन्धो वाच्य इत्यर्थः । शास्त्राणि हि ‘निष्ठम्’(मु.उ.१/२/१२), ‘अत्रैतत्समर्पितम्’(मु.उ.२/२/१), ‘मत्परः’ (गी.२/६१) इत्यादिभिरक्षरब्रह्मणो नित्यं परमात्मपरमोपासनपरायणतां दर्शयन्ति । (ब्र.सू.स्वा.भा.३/२/२८)

चिदाकाशस्वरूपस्य वर्णनम्

‘एतद् वै तदक्षरं गार्गी ब्राह्मणा । अभिवदन्त्यस्थूलमनणु’(बृ.उ.३/८/८), ‘तद् ब्रह्म तदेवामृतमुच्यते । तस्मिँल्लोका श्रिताः सर्वे तद् नात्येति कश्चन’(कठ.५/८), ‘यस्मिँल्लोका निहिता लोकिनश्च तदेतदक्षरं ब्रह्म’(मु.उ.२/२/२) इत्याद्युक्तं चिदाकाशात्मना तत्सर्वाधारत्वं, ‘ब्रह्मैवेदममृतं पुरस्ताद् ब्रह्म पश्चाद् ब्रह्म’ (मु.उ.२/२/११), ‘एतस्य वा अक्षरस्य प्रशासने गार्गी ! सूर्याचन्द्रमसौ विधृतौ तिष्ठतः ।’(बृ.उ.३/८/९) इत्याद्युक्तं सर्वव्यापकत्वं

तत्प्रशासकत्वमिति । (१/१/३) एवमक्षराधिकरणभाष्ये (१/३/१०-११) दहराधिकरणे (१/३/१४-२३) अप्यस्य वर्णनम् ।

सत्पुरुषस्वरूपवर्णनम्

‘प्रणवो धनुः’ (मु.उ.उ.२/२/४), ‘यः सेतुरीजानानामक्षरं ब्रह्म यत् परम्’ (कठ.३/२), ‘अमृतस्यैष सेतुः’ (मु.उ.उ.२/२/५) इत्याद्युक्तं ब्रह्मस्वरूपगुरुरूपस्य तस्य परमात्मप्राप्ति-परमौपयिकत्वमिति । (१/१/३)

ब्रह्मस्वरूपगुरुमुपाश्रित्य तत्प्रसङ्गेन स्वात्मानं मायामलहीनं परिशुद्धं कृत्वा तमेव स्वात्मानं पुनस्तदक्षरब्रह्मभावेन संस्कृत्य गुरावेव प्रत्यक्षनारायणस्वरूपभावनयाऽक्षराधिपतिसहजानन्द-परमोपासनेन तत्परमानन्ददिव्यानुभूति-लक्षणं मोक्षं सम्पादयेदिति १/१/४॥

श्रद्धा नाम ब्रह्मस्वरूपगुरुतदुपदिष्टशास्त्रसिद्धान्तेषु परमो विश्वासः । अत एव तत्त्वविचारविषये परमवत्सलाः श्रुतिमातरः ‘तद् विज्ञानार्थं स गुरुमेवाऽभिगच्छेत् समित्पाणिः श्रोत्रियं ब्रह्म निष्ठम्’ (मु.उ.१/२/१२), ‘आचार्याद्ध्येव विद्या विदिता साधिष्ठं प्रापद्’ (छा.उ.४/९/३), ‘आचार्यस्तु ते गतिं वक्ता’ (छा.उ.४/१४/१), ‘यस्य देवे परा भक्तिर्यथा देवे तथा गुरौ । तस्यैते कथिता ह्यर्थाः प्रकाशन्ते महात्मनः॥’ (श्वे.उ.६/२३) इत्याद्युपदेशैः सकलब्रह्मविद्यातत्त्वनिरुत्थान-निश्चायकं ब्रह्मस्वरूपगुरुमेव सश्रद्धं समाश्रयणीयतया वदन्ति । (स्वा.ब्र.सू.भा.२/१/११)

विषयविवचने तर्कसामरस्यम्

अंशत्ववर्णने

सूत्राणामर्थसम्पादने भाष्यकारेण वचनामृतोक्तार्थाः सम्यक्तया प्रतिपादिताः । तेन तस्य स्वेष्टदेवे भक्तिर्विलोक्यते । यथा भगवद्गीतायाः सन्दर्भे भगवदंशवर्णने —स्वयमेव वचनामृतसन्दर्भमुल्लिखति स्पष्टरूपेण भाष्ये ‘अपि च स्मर्यते’ (२/३/४५) सूत्रनिरूपणावसरे-

‘आत्मनो यथोक्तलक्षणं परमात्मांशत्वं परमात्म-सहजानन्दाऽनुप्रविष्टेन पार्थसारथिनाऽपि स्मर्यते ‘ममैवांशो जीवलोके जीवभूतः सनातनः । मनःषष्ठानीन्द्रियाणि प्रकृतिस्थानि कर्षति॥’ (गी.१५/७) इति । एतच्छल्लोकव्याख्यानावसरे स्वयमेव परमात्मसहजानन्दः प्राह ‘अयमेतच्छलोकाऽशयः । संसारेऽस्मिन् ये जीवा भगवतोऽशास्ते तु मनःसहितानि पञ्चज्ञानेन्द्रियाणि समाकृष्य पञ्चविषयेभ्यः स्ववशे समुपस्थापयन्ति । परं च ये भगवतोऽशा न, तांस्तु तानीन्द्रियाण्येव समाकृष्य स्वेष्टस्थानं प्रति नयन्ति । तस्माद्भि वयं सर्वे यदीन्द्रियाऽऽकर्षणाऽनाकृष्टाः स्याम तर्हि भगवदंशा एव स्याम’ (वच.ग.म.८) इति । एवमनेन विषयविजयादिलक्षण- परमात्मैश्वर्याशप्राप्तिलक्षणं भगवद्भक्तानामंशत्वमुक्तम्॥

(स्वा.ब्र.सू.भा.२/३/४५)

आत्मगृहीतिवर्णने

तृतीयाध्यायस्य साधनपादे ब्रह्माक्षरे आत्मगृहीतिर्वेधेयेति भाष्ये सूत्रानुसारेण भाषितम् । सैवात्मबुद्धिपदेन वचनामृत उपदिष्टा परब्रह्मणा । तदुभयं विलोकयामः ।

वचनामृते

‘यस्य भगवत्साधा एव विद्यत आत्मबुद्धिः; तद्यथा स्यात् कश्चिद् वन्ध्यो राजा, तस्य च वार्धक्ये जायेत पुत्रः, ततो यद्यपि स पुत्रस्तस्मै गालीः प्रदद्यात्, श्मश्रु चाकर्षयेत् तथापि न प्रसज्येत तस्मिन् कुभावः, तथा च कस्यचित् पुत्रं प्रताडयेत् तथा च ग्रामे अनीतिम् आचरेत् तथापि नैव गृह्येत तदवगुणः, यतो हि तद्राजस्य स्वपुत्र आत्मबुद्धिः संपन्ना इति । एवं भगवद्भक्ते यस्य सम्पद्यते तादृश्यात्मबुद्धिस्तेनैव सर्वसाधनेभ्यः सत्सङ्गोऽधिककल्याणकारी ज्ञातः । सा वार्ता भागवते कथिता यत्, ‘यस्याऽऽत्मबुद्धिः कुणपे त्रिधातुके स्वधीः कलत्रादिषु भौम इज्यधीः । यतीर्थबुद्धिः सलिले न कर्हिचिज्जनेष्वभिज्ञेषु स एव गोखरः॥’ इति श्लोके इयं वार्ता यथार्थं निरूपिता” इति ।’ (वच.ग.म.५४)

भाष्ये

तथा हि ममाऽऽत्माऽक्षरं ब्रह्मेति स्वात्मनोऽक्षरब्रह्मभावेनाऽनुसन्धानमात्मगृहीतिः । यद्वा इतरवद् आत्मेतरेषु देहधनदारापुत्र-बान्धवद्रविणादिषु स्वाभीष्टेषु यादृशी स्यादात्मबुद्धिर्यथा कश्चिद् देहाऽऽसक्तो वदेच्छरीरमेव ममात्मेति । लुब्धश्च धनमेव ममात्मेति । प्रमदैव ममात्मेति कामुकवचनमित्यादि । सैषा सर्वाऽप्यात्मबुद्धिस्तत्तद्वस्तुषु प्रकृष्टाऽनुरागोद्भवा । तादृश्यात्मबुद्धिः प्रत्यक्षब्रह्मस्वरूपे करणीया, स्वात्मनि ब्रह्मरूपत्वं सम्पादनीयमित्यर्थः । ब्रह्मात्मैक्यलक्षणाया अस्या आत्मगृहीतेरेव परमात्मोपासनसाधनेषु श्रेष्ठत्वादित्यर्थः । स्वात्मब्रह्मरूपत्वसम्पत्तिं विना परमात्मोपासनाधिकाराऽसम्भवात् तस्याः श्रेष्ठत्वम् । इत्थमुपासकात्मन्यक्षरब्रह्मभावः परमोपासनेऽपरिहेयतया प्रस्थापितः । (स्वा.ब्र.सू.भा.३/३/१५)

उपसंहारः

तदेवं रीत्या पदे पदे वचनामृतेन सह सामरस्यं बिभर्ति ब्रह्मसूत्रस्वामिनारायणभाष्यम् । अत एव च स्वामिनारायणभाष्यमिति नाम सार्थकम् ।

संकेताक्षराणि

ब्र. सू.	ब्रह्मसूत्र
कठ	कठोपनिषद्
गी.	श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता
छा.उ.	छान्दोग्योपनिषद्
तै.उ.	तैत्तिरीयोपनिषद्
बृ.उ.	बृहदारण्यकोपनिषद्
मु.उ.	मुण्डकोपनिषद्
श्वे.उ.	श्वेताश्वतरोपनिषद्
वच.	वचनामृतम्
वच.का.	वचनामृत कारीयाणी प्रकरण
वच.ग.प्र.	वचनामृत गढडा प्रथम प्रकरण
वच.ग.म.	वचनामृत गढडा मध्य प्रकरण
वच.ग.अं.	वचनामृत गढडा अन्त्य प्रकरण
वच.पं.	वचनामृत पंचाला प्रकरण
वच.लो.	वचनामृत लोया प्रकरण
वच.वर	वचनामृत वरताल प्रकरण
वच.सारं.	वचनामृत सारंगपुर प्रकरण
स्वा.ब्र.सू.भा.	स्वामिनारायणब्रह्मसूत्रभाष्यम्

अद्वैतविशिष्टाद्वैताऽक्षरपुरुषोत्तमेतिदर्शनत्रयाऽऽलोके ब्रह्मसूत्रोक्ताऽदृश्यत्वाऽधिकरणभाष्यसमीक्षणम्

ĀCĀRYA SADHU GYANTRUPTDAS

Ph. D. Student. Somnath University, Veraval &

Prof. BAPS Swaminarayan Sanskrit Mahavidyalay,
Sarangpur

प्रारूपम्

भारतीयतत्त्वचिन्तनपरम्परायां वेदप्रामाण्यस्वीकर्तृणामास्तिकदर्शनानां वेदान्तदर्शनमेकतमं विराजते । वेदानामन्तत्वेन सारभूतसिद्धान्तत्वेन तेषामेवैकभागभूता उपनिषदः वेदान्तदर्शनमुच्यते । सर्वोपनिषदामुपबृंहकत्वात् श्रुतिसिद्धान्तानुगतत्वाच्च समरसमये पार्थमोहविदारणाय पार्थसारथिमुखान्निःसृता श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता प्रोच्यते वेदान्तदर्शनप्रतिपादकं स्मृतिशास्त्रम् । एतद्ब्रह्मान्तो कृष्णद्वैपायनवेदव्यासमुनिना सूत्रशैल्या ब्रह्मसूत्रेषु सुग्रथितः । ग्रन्थाश्रेमे त्रयोऽपि सम्मिल्य वेदान्तदर्शनस्य प्रस्थानत्रयमुच्यते ।

प्रस्थानत्रयशास्त्राणामाधारेण प्रवर्तितेषु दर्शनेषु अद्वैत-विशिष्टाद्वैत-द्वैत-द्वैताद्वैत-शुद्धाद्वैत-अचिन्त्यभेदाभेद-अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमेत्यादयस्तत्त्वसिद्धान्ताः प्रसिद्धाः । तत्तद्दर्शनमधिकृत्य शाङ्करारामानुजादिभाष्यग्रन्था उपलब्धाः । तत्रोपलब्धवेदान्तभाष्येष्वदिमत्त्वाद्वैतदर्शननिरूपकं शाङ्करभाष्यम्, वैष्णवशैवदर्शनेष्वग्रत्वाद् विशिष्टाद्वैतदर्शननिरूपकं रामानुजभाष्यम्, साम्प्रतिकत्वे सति विशिष्टत्वाच्च ह्यक्षरपुरुषोत्तमदर्शननिरूपकं स्वामिनारायणभाष्यमिति भाष्यत्रयं चित्वा तदालोके श्रुतिस्मृतिशास्त्रसारभूतग्रन्थस्य ब्रह्मसूत्रस्यैकस्यांशस्य ह्यदृश्यत्वाधिकरणस्य समीक्षणकार्यं कर्तुमुत्सहे । नूनमवलोकितं मयाऽक्षरपुरुषोत्तमदर्शने दर्शनान्तरादर्थवैशिष्ट्यम् । तत्राप्यदृश्यत्वाधिकरणविषयी-भूतस्य मुण्डकमण्डितपरविद्यायामधिगम्यत्वेनोक्तस्याऽक्षरतत्त्वस्यार्थो दृश्यते दर्शनेऽस्मिन् नूतनो मौलिकश्च । स्वरूपतः परमात्मादितत्त्वान्तरेभ्यो भिन्नमप्यक्षरतत्त्वं कथं भूतयोनित्वेनात्रोपपादितं कथं चोपनिषन्मन्त्रेषु ब्रह्मसूत्रेषु चास्य सामञ्जस्यं प्रसाधितमित्याद्यत्र ध्यानाकर्षकम् । दर्शनस्यास्य

नवीनत्वाद् दर्शनान्तरैरस्य समीक्षणात्मकं शोधकार्यमिदमपूर्वमेवेत्यवगम्यते ।
अथ शोधपत्रेऽस्मिन् बादरायणप्रणीतब्रह्मसूत्रान्तर्गतमदृश्यत्वाधिकरणमधिकृत्य अद्वैतविशिष्टाद्वैत-
अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमेतिदर्शनत्रयदृष्ट्या विमर्शो भविता ।

महत्त्वपूर्णशब्दाः

परा विद्या, अक्षरम्, भूतयोनिः, पुरुषः, ब्रह्मविद्या, अक्षरात्परतः परः

पूर्वभूमिका

दृश्यते साक्षात्क्रियते सर्वोत्कृष्टशाश्वतसत्यमनेनेति दर्शनमित्युक्तदिशा येन तत्त्वसिद्धान्तेन परमनिःश्रेयसकरमार्गः प्रदर्शितो, यया रीत्या वा सनातनसत्यतत्त्वानि दृश्यन्ते सा दृष्टिदर्शनमुच्यते । वेदप्रामाण्यस्वीकर्तृष्वास्तिकदर्शनेषु वेदान्तदर्शनमेकतमं वरीवर्ति । वेदानामन्तः सारो राद्धान्तो यत्र सङ्गृहीतः स वेदान्तः । वेदानामेवैकांशभूता उपनिषदः वेदान्तदर्शनमुच्यते । सर्वोपनिषदां गोरूपेण गोपालनन्दनस्य दोग्धरूपेण गीतामृतस्य च दुग्धरूपेण प्रसिद्धत्वात् पार्थमोहनिवारणार्थं पार्थसारथिमुखादुच्चरिता श्रीमद्भगवद्गीताऽपि वेदान्तदर्शनस्याऽग्रस्थानीयं स्मृतिशास्त्रम् । एतमेव सिद्धान्तं संगृह्य महर्षिबादरायणवेदव्यासः सूत्रशैल्या ब्रह्मसूत्राणि विरचयाञ्चकार । एवमत्रोपनिषदिति श्रुतिप्रस्थानं श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतानाम् स्मृतिप्रस्थानं ब्रह्मसूत्राख्यं तर्कप्रस्थानं चैवं शास्त्रत्रयं सम्मिल्य प्रस्थानत्रयमुच्यते ।

प्रस्थानत्रयग्रन्थानेवानुसृत्य विनिर्मितेषु भाष्यग्रन्थेषु स्वाभिप्रायानुसारं तदर्थबोधकत्वात् तच्छब्दार्थभेदिनिबन्धना विभिन्नदार्शनिकसम्प्रदायाः प्रवर्तिताः खलु वेदान्तदर्शने । तत्र श्रीमच्छङ्कराचार्यप्रणीतम् अद्वैतदर्शनम्, श्रीमद्रामानुजाचार्यप्रबोधितं विशिष्टाद्वैतदर्शनम्, श्रीमन्मध्वाचार्यप्रवर्तितं द्वैतदर्शनमित्येवमेवास्यां दर्शनपरम्परायां सम्प्रति परब्रह्मस्वामिनारायणप्रस्थापितम् अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमदर्शनमपि वेदान्तदर्शनशास्त्ररूपेण प्रसिद्धिमाप्नोत् । अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमदर्शनमधिकृत्य ब्रह्मस्वरूपप्रमुखस्वामिमहाराजानामाज्ञाऽऽशीर्वादैः तच्छिष्य-महामहोपाध्यायसाधुभट्टेशदासः प्रस्थानत्रयस्वामिनारायणभाष्यं व्यरचयत् ।

खलु ब्रह्मसूत्रशास्त्रं चतुरध्यायात्मकं प्रत्येकाध्यायश्च चतुर्षु पादेषु विभक्तः । प्रत्येकस्मिन् पादेऽपि सूत्राणि विभिन्नाधिकरणेषु सन्निहितानि । ग्रन्थेऽस्मिन् ‘अथातो ब्रह्मजिज्ञासा’¹ इति सूत्रादारभ्य जिज्ञास्यमानब्रह्मपदार्थनिर्णयपुरःसरं तदानुषङ्गिकं च स्पृष्ट्वा ‘अनावृत्तिः

1. ब्रह्मसूत्रम्, १/१/१(शोधपत्रेऽस्मिन् कमपि विशेषोल्लेखं विना निर्दिष्टो ब्रह्मसूत्रसन्दर्भः स्वामिनारायणभाष्यस्य बोध्यः)

शब्दादनावृत्तिः शब्दाद्² इति ग्रन्थसमाप्तिपर्यन्तं सूचेरनुसंसर्तदोरकवद् मालामणिषु संसृतदोरकवद्वा सिद्धान्तानामेकसूत्रत्वं दरीदृश्यते। एतत्सिद्धान्तानेव मनसिकृत्य विरचितमदृश्यत्वाधिकरणं विशिष्टरहस्यं प्रकाशयति।

अथ शोधपत्रेऽस्मिन् बादरायणप्रणीतब्रह्मसूत्रान्तर्गतमदृश्यत्वाधिकरणमधिकृत्य अद्वैतविशिष्टाद्वैत-अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमेतिदर्शनत्रयदृष्ट्या विमर्शो भविता।

दर्शनत्रयदृष्ट्याऽदृश्यत्वाऽधिकरणप्रबन्धनम्

ब्रह्मसूत्रशास्त्रे प्रथमेऽध्याये द्वितीये पादे सङ्गृहीतमिदमुपान्त्यमधिकरणम्। प्रस्तुताऽधिकरणे त्रीणि बादरायणसूत्राणि सङ्गृहीतानि -

- (१) 'अदृश्यत्वादिगुणको धर्मोक्तेः'
- (२) 'विशेषणभेदव्यपदेशाभ्यां च नेतरौ'
- (३) 'रूपोपन्यासाच्च' इति।

यद्यपि बादरायणसूत्रस्थवर्णानि तु समानान्येव तथापि तत्तद्भाष्यकाराभिप्रायानुसारं सूत्रशब्दा अधिकरणप्रबन्धं सूत्रक्रमाङ्कादिकं मिथो भिद्यन्ते। अदृश्यत्वाधिकरणविषये भाष्यत्रयेऽप्यत्रोक्तान्येव त्रीणि सूत्राणि निर्णीतानि किन्तु सूत्रक्रमाङ्कोऽत्र विभिन्नः। यथा शाङ्करभाष्ये प्रथमाध्यायद्वितीयपादस्य एकविंशं द्वाविंशं त्रयोविंशं च तदेव पुनः श्रीभाष्यस्वामिनारायणभाष्ययोः समानाध्यायपादात्मके स्थाने द्वाविंशं त्रयोविंशं चतुर्विंशं चेति। त्रिष्वपि दर्शनेष्वधिकरणस्यास्य निर्णीतं विषयवाक्यं मुण्डकोपनिषदि विराजते। तदिदम् – “अथ परा यया तदक्षरमधिगम्यते॥, यत्तदद्रेश्यमग्राह्यमगोत्रमवर्णमचक्षुःश्रोत्रं तदपाणिपादम्। नित्यं विभुं सर्वगतं सुसूक्ष्मं तदव्ययं यद्भूतयोनिं परिपश्यन्ति धीराः॥”³

आथर्वणिकमिदं वाक्यं धीरसाक्षात्कारविषयीभूतं परविद्यायामधिगमनीयत्वेन व्यपदिष्टम् अद्रेश्यमग्राह्यमगोत्रमित्यादिलक्षणैश्च लक्षितमक्षराख्यतत्त्वमुज्जुघोष। ब्रह्मसूत्रभाष्यरीत्यनुसारं सूत्राण्यधिकृत्य सूत्रवर्णादिसामीप्यं भजमानं तदधिकरणगतसूत्रैरेकसूत्रत्वं च संसेवमानं भाष्यकाराभिप्रायपूर्वकं बादरायणमनःस्थितं यन्निर्णीतं श्रौतस्मार्तवाक्यं चित्वा विशयमुत्पाद्य पूर्वपक्षसिद्धान्तपक्षाणां शास्त्रचर्चा विधायान्ते भाष्यकारः स्वप्रतीतं व्यासप्रोक्त-वैदिकराद्धान्तमुद्घाटयति।

मुण्डकोपनिषत्क्रमः

अथर्ववेदान्तर्गतायामुपनिषच्छरीरे च मस्तकस्थानीयां मुण्डकोपनिषदि सर्वविद्याप्रतिष्ठारूपा

2. ब्रह्मसूत्रम्, ४/४/२२

3. मुण्डकोपनिषद्, १/१/५, ६

ब्रह्मविद्योपक्रमत आरभ्यैवोपसंहारपर्यन्तं सङ्गृहीता । सा च विरञ्च्यादिविब्रवत्कृपरम्परायां कथं प्रवाहितेति शास्त्रारम्भे सुगदितं यथा – “ब्रह्मा देवानां प्रथमः सम्बभूव”⁴ इत्यादिना ।

एवं ब्रह्माऽथर्वाऽङ्गिर्भारद्वाजोऽङ्गिरा इति क्रमेणाग्रे संसृतेयम् । तदन्ते च महाशालः शौनको ब्रह्मविद्याविज्ञातारमङ्गिरसं विधिवदुपसन्नः सन् पप्रच्छ – “कस्मिन् भगवो विज्ञाते सर्वमिदं विज्ञातं भवतीति॥”⁵ एतच्छ्रुत्वा ब्रह्मविद्योपदेशतत्परोऽङ्गिरा मुनिः परापरेतिभेदेन विद्याद्वयं निरूपयाञ्चकार यथा – “द्वे विद्ये वेदितव्ये इति ह स्म यद्ब्रह्मविदो वदन्ति परा चैवापरा च॥”⁶

ततः स्वयमेव निजनिर्दिष्टं क्रमं परित्यज्यादौ ऋगादिवेदचतुष्टयं शिक्षादिवेदाङ्गषट्कं चाऽपरविद्यात्वेनोक्त्वा पराया विद्याया निरूपणावसरेऽधिगमनीयतया अक्षराख्यः पदार्थो निर्दिष्टः । यथा – “परा यया तदक्षरमधिगम्यते॥”⁷

महर्षिणाऽङ्गिरसा परविद्यात्वेनोपस्थापितायां ब्रह्मविद्यायां तदेवाऽक्षराख्यतत्त्वं मुण्डकस्यास्यास्मिन्नेव खण्डे भूयो विवर्णितं चतुर्भिर्मन्त्रैः – “यत्तद्रेश्यमग्राह्यम्...॥, यथोर्णनाभिः सृजते गृह्णते च यथा पृथिव्यामोषधयः सम्भवन्ति यथा सतः पुरुषात्केशलोमानि तथाऽक्षरात् सम्भवतीह विश्वम्॥, तपसा चीयते ब्रह्म...॥, यः सर्वज्ञः सर्वविद्यस्य ज्ञानमयं तपः । तस्मादेतद् ब्रह्म नाम रूपमन्नं च जायते॥”⁸

साक्षादृश्यतेऽत्र यद्रेश्याऽग्राह्याऽगोत्राऽवर्णाऽचक्षुःश्रोत्रभूतयोऽन्यादिपदेन लक्षितमक्षराख्यतत्त्वेन यथोर्णनाभिरित्यादिदृष्टान्तैर्जगत्कारणत्वेनाऽपि गदितम् । तदेवाऽक्षरं पुनर्ब्रह्मशब्देनाभिधाय सृष्टिहेतुत्वेनैवोक्तं तस्य च सर्वज्ञसर्वविज्ञानमयतपआदि-शब्दैश्चेतनत्वमप्युद्घोषितम् ।

आद्यमुण्डकस्य द्वितीयखण्डे पूर्वखण्डोक्तसिद्धान्तं सत्यत्वेनोक्त्वा ब्रह्मविद्याविधुराणां कृते यज्ञरूपाणीष्टादीनि च कर्माण्यदृढप्लवात्मकानि पुनरावर्तनापादकानि च भवन्तीति वक्ति “प्लवा ह्येतेऽदृढा यज्ञरूपा...॥”⁹ इत्यादिना ।

एवं ब्रह्मविद्यामाहात्म्यं कथयन् मुनिरङ्गिरास्तद्विरहितानां गतिमुक्त्वा भूयो ब्रह्मविद्यावतां श्रेष्ठगतिमप्युवाच यथा – “सूर्यद्वारेण ते विरजाः प्रयान्ति यत्राऽमृतः स पुरुषो ह्यव्ययात्मा॥”¹⁰

4. मुण्डकोपनिषद्, १/१/१

5. मुण्डकोपनिषद्, १/१/३

6. मुण्डकोपनिषद्, १/१/४

7. मुण्डकोपनिषद्, १/१/५

8. मुण्डकोपनिषद्, १/१/६-९

9. मुण्डकोपनिषद्, १/२/७

10. मुण्डकोपनिषद्, १/२/११

मन्त्रेऽस्मिन्नमृताऽव्ययात्मेतिविशेषणविशिष्टः ‘अक्षरम्’ ‘ब्रह्म’ इति शब्दाभ्यामपि भिन्नो नूतनश्च शब्दः प्रयुक्तः ‘पुरुषः’ इति। अयमेव शब्दोऽग्रे विमर्शविषयो भविता। एवं ब्रह्मविद्याविहीनतद्युक्तानां गतिं विचार्य विद्यारहितशुष्ककर्मसु च निर्वेदमाप्य चरमश्रेयोऽभिकाङ्क्षिब्रह्मजिज्ञासुमुमुक्षुणा ब्रह्मविद्याऽऽप्तयेऽवश्यतया कर्तव्यं कर्म निर्दिशन् ब्रह्मविद्योपदेश कथयामास – “तद्विज्ञानार्थं स गुरुमेवाभिगच्छेत् समित्पाणिः श्रोत्रियं ब्रह्म निष्ठम्॥”¹¹ इति।

अनेन ब्रह्मविद्यामहिमा तत्प्राप्तिसाधनं चोक्त्वाऽऽद्यमुण्डकस्यान्तिमे मन्त्रे प्रस्तुतविद्याया व्याख्या प्रस्तूयते “येनाक्षरं पुरुषं वेद सत्यं प्रोवाच तां तत्त्वतो ब्रह्मविद्याम्॥”¹² इत्येतेन मन्त्रेण।

ब्रह्मविद्याव्याख्यायामेवात्राऽङ्गिरोमुनिः पूर्वोक्ताऽक्षरं पुरुषश्चेति द्वौ शब्दौ वेदनीयतया उल्लिखेत्। तदनु द्वितीयमुण्डकारम्भकमन्त्र एव पुनस्तदक्षरस्य जगज्जन्मप्रलयकारणत्वं प्रतिपिपादयिषया वक्ति यद् “अक्षराद् विविधाः सोम्य! भावाः प्रजायन्ते तत्र चैवापियन्ति॥”¹³

ततश्चैतमेवाऽक्षराख्यशब्दमव्यवहितपरवर्तिमन्त्रेऽपि प्रयुज्य तस्मादपि परतया पुरुषपदवाच्यं सर्वोत्कृष्टतत्त्वं ज्ञापयति “दिव्यो ह्यमूर्तः पुरुषः स बाह्याभ्यन्तरो ह्यजः। अप्राणो ह्यमनाः शुभ्रो ह्यक्षरात्परतः परः॥”¹⁴ इत्येतेन वचनेन।

एवं दिव्यत्वाऽमूर्तत्वाऽजत्वाऽप्राणत्वशुभ्रत्वादिविशिष्टं पुरुषाख्यपरमात्मानमुक्त्वा तस्मात् प्राणमनइन्द्रियखवायुज्योतिरप्पृथिव्यादिसृष्टिर्जायत इत्युपदिष्टम्। एवं मुण्डकोपनिषत्क्रममवलोक्याथ अदृश्यत्वाधिकरणे सङ्गृहीतानां त्रयाणां सूत्राणामर्थबोधनायोपयुक्ता एते मन्त्रास्तत्तद्भाष्यकारेण कस्मिन्नर्थे प्रयुक्ता अधिकरणस्यास्य च किं रहस्यमस्तीत्यपि विमृश्यते।

अद्वैतदर्शने ह्यक्षरतत्त्वनिर्णयः

अथाधिकरणगताद्यसूत्रम् - ‘अदृश्यत्वादिगुणको धर्मोक्तेः’¹⁵ इत्यत्र संशयवाक्यरूपेणाऽद्वैतदर्शननिरूपकशाङ्करभाष्ये “किमयमदृश्यत्वादिगुणको भूतयोनिः प्रधानं स्यादुत शारीर आहोस्वित्परमेश्वर इति।”¹⁶ इति कथयता संशयात्मके स्थाने प्रधानं,

11. मुण्डकोपनिषद्, १/२/१२

12. मुण्डकोपनिषद्, १/२/१३

13. मुण्डकोपनिषद्, २/१/१

14. मुण्डकोपनिषद्, २/१/२

15. ब्रह्मसूत्रम्, १/२/२२

16. शङ्कराचार्यः, ब्रह्मसूत्रशांकरभाष्यम्, १८७

शारीरो, परमात्मा च गृहीत्वा पूर्वपक्षे प्रधानं तथा च शारीरो जीवात्मा स्वीकृतः ।

प्रधानवादी जगत्कर्तृ प्रधानं ब्रुवाणोऽत्र भूतयोनिलक्षणलक्षितमक्षरतत्त्वं प्रधानमेवास्तीति यथोर्णनाभिरिति मन्त्रे ऊर्णनाभिपुरुषदृष्टान्तयोः “चेतनाधिष्ठितं ह्यचेतनमूर्णनाभिः शरीरं सूत्रस्य योनिः, पुरुषशरीरं च केशलोम्नामिति प्रसिद्धम्”¹⁷ इत्यादिशब्दैः ऊर्णनाभिः शरीरविकारभूततन्तुत्वेन पुरुषशरीरविकाररूपकेशलोम्नत्वेन च निर्दिष्टकार्यकारणसम्बन्धद्वारा तथा च मुण्डकमन्त्रान्तरेष्वपि “यथा तदक्षरमधिगम्यते” ‘यत्तदद्रेश्यम्’ इत्यक्षरशब्देनादृश्यत्वादिगुणकं भूतयोनिं श्रावयित्वा, पुनरन्ते श्रावयिष्यति ‘अक्षरात्परतः परः’ इति । तत्र यः परोऽक्षराच्छ्रुतः, स सर्वज्ञः सर्ववित्सम्भविष्यति । प्रधानमेव त्वक्षरशब्दनिर्दिष्टं भूतयोनिः”¹⁸ इत्यादिवचनैः प्रकृताऽक्षराख्यप्रधानात् परत्वेन पुरुषपदोल्लिखितं सर्वज्ञत्वसर्ववित्त्वादिविशिष्टं परमात्मानमेव वक्तव्येनापि प्रधानसिद्धिर्जायत इत्युपादानविवक्षयोपस्थितस्तदन्यो वा “यदा तु योनिशब्दो निमित्तवाची, तदा शारीरोऽपि भूतयोनिः स्यात्, धर्माधर्माभ्यां भूतजातस्योपार्जनाद्”¹⁹ इति निमित्तविवक्षयोपातिष्ठदिति अद्वैतदर्शने पूर्वपक्षे निगदितम् ।

एवमत्र पूर्वपक्षविचारान् प्रस्तूय प्रतिज्ञावाक्यरूपेण भूतयोनित्वादिविशिष्टमक्षराख्यतत्त्वं परमेश्वरार्थकत्वेनैव वक्ति यथा – “योऽयमदृश्यत्वादिगुणको भूतयोनिः, स परमेश्वर एव स्यात्, नान्य इति । कथमेतदवगम्यते ? धर्मोक्तेः । परमेश्वरस्य हि धर्म इहोच्यमानो दृश्यते - ‘यः सर्वज्ञः सर्ववित्’²⁰ इति । न हि प्रधानस्याचेतनस्य शारीरस्य वोपाधिपरिच्छिन्नदृष्टेः सर्वज्ञत्वं सर्ववित्त्वं वा सम्भवति”²¹ इति ।

अक्षरमत्र परमात्मेति प्रतिज्ञाय सोहापोहं ससन्दर्भं च पूर्वपक्षनिरसनपुरःसरं स्वमतमुपस्थापितम् । तदत्र सङ्कलन्य प्रस्तूयते –

(१) ‘अक्षरात् सम्भवतीह विश्वम्’²² इति मन्त्रे प्रकृतं भूतयोनिमक्षरमत्र जायमानप्रकृतित्वेन (जगत्कारणत्वेन) उक्त्वा तदेव सर्वज्ञसर्ववित्त्वादिविशिष्टं ब्रह्मपदाभिधेयेन पुनर्जायमानप्रकृतित्वेन निरदिशत्²³ अतो भूतयोनिरत्र न जडाभिप्रायेणापि तु चैतन्याभिप्रायेणाऽस्तीति निश्चीयते ।

(२) मुण्डकोपनिषदि वेदितव्यतया विद्याद्वयमुक्तं ‘परा चैवापरा च’ इति । अत्र

17. शङ्कराचार्यः, ब्रह्मसूत्रशांकरभाष्यम्, १८७-१८८

18. शङ्कराचार्यः, ब्रह्मसूत्रशांकरभाष्यम्, १८८

19. शङ्कराचार्यः, ब्रह्मसूत्रशांकरभाष्यम्, १८८

20. मुण्डकोपनिषद्, १/१/८

21. शङ्कराचार्यः, ब्रह्मसूत्रशांकरभाष्यम्, १८८

22. मुण्डकोपनिषद्, १/१/७

23. शङ्कराचार्यः, ब्रह्मसूत्रशांकरभाष्यम्, १८८-१८९

“परापरविभागो ह्ययं विद्ययोः अभ्युदयनिःश्रेयसफलतया परिकल्प्यते । न च प्रधानविद्या निःश्रेयसफला केनचिदभ्युपगम्यते ।”²⁴ इत्यादि वचनैर्निःश्रेयसफलप्रापकतया परविद्यावेद्यत्वमुक्तम्, तथा चाऽधिगमनीयमक्षरं परमात्मैव स्यादिति प्रत्यपादयत् ।

- (३) उपरोक्तविद्याद्वयविषय एव पुनर्वक्ति यद्भूतयोन्यक्षरं परमात्मभिन्नं कल्प्येत चेत्तर्हि अपरेतिशब्दिता ऋग्वेदादिलक्षणैका परेतिगदिता अक्षराधिगमनपरा द्वितीया तद्भिन्ना प्रधानविज्ञानात्मिका च तृतीयेत्येवं “तिस्रश्च विद्याः प्रतिज्ञायेरन्, त्वत्पक्षेऽक्षराद्भूतयोनेः परस्य परमात्मनः प्रतिपाद्यमानत्वात् । द्वे एव तु विद्ये वेदितव्ये इह निर्दिष्टे ।”²⁵
- (४) शौनकप्रश्ने यैकविज्ञानेन सर्वविज्ञानजिज्ञासा कृता साऽपि हीयेत, प्रधानेतिजडतत्त्वविज्ञानेन शारीरितिचेतनमात्रविज्ञानेन वा सर्वविज्ञानाऽसम्भवात् ।²⁶
- (५) परविद्यात्वेन ब्रह्मविद्यामेवोपक्रम्याग्रे तत्प्रशंसायै तद्भिन्नविद्यां निन्दित्वा ततश्च विरक्तस्याधिकारो दर्शितः । एतत्सर्वमप्यक्षरस्याऽब्रह्मत्वे बाधितम् ।
- (६) “न हि दृष्टान्तदार्ष्टान्तिकयोरत्यन्तसाम्येन भवितव्यमिति नियमोऽस्ति”²⁷ इति वाक्येन अक्षरात्सम्भवतीह विश्वमिति मन्त्रविषये पूर्वपक्षिप्रतिपादितं दृष्टान्तदार्ष्टान्तिकयोर्जडत्वसाम्यं निरस्य सूत्रनिरूपणस्यान्ते “भूतयोनिः परमेश्वर एव”²⁸ इति साधितम् ।
- (७) “विशेषणभेदव्यपदेशाभ्यां च नेतरौ”²⁹ इति सूत्रे “दिव्यो ह्यमूर्तः पुरुषः सबाह्याभ्यन्तरो ह्यजः । अप्राणो ह्यमनाः शुभ्रः ह्यक्षरात्परतः परः॥”³⁰ इति मन्त्रमनुसन्धाय शुभ्रपदपर्यन्तमन्त्रैकांशग्रहणद्वारा विशेषणकारणाच्छारीरो निराकृतः, अक्षरात् परतः पर इत्यपरांशग्रहणद्वारा च भेदव्यपदेशहेतुना प्रधानं खण्डितम् । तसिलप्रत्ययवत् परत्वबोधकं पदमत्राऽक्षरादित्यस्य विशेषणत्वेन गृहीतम् ।
- (८) सूत्रेऽस्मिन् प्रधाननिराकरणक्रमे स्वमतस्थापनसौकर्याय अद्यावध्युपक्रान्तस्याऽक्षरशब्दस्य भिन्नोऽर्थो विहितो यथा – “अक्षरमव्याकृतं नामरूपबीजशक्तिरूपं भूतसूक्ष्ममीश्वराश्रयं तस्यैवोपाधिभूतम्, सर्वस्माद्विकारात्परो योऽविकारः,

24. शङ्कराचार्यः, ब्रह्मसूत्रशांकरभाष्यम्, १८९

25. शङ्कराचार्यः, ब्रह्मसूत्रशांकरभाष्यम्, १८९

26. शङ्कराचार्यः, ब्रह्मसूत्रशांकरभाष्यम्, १८९-१९०

27. शङ्कराचार्यः, ब्रह्मसूत्रशांकरभाष्यम्, १९०

28. शङ्कराचार्यः, ब्रह्मसूत्रशांकरभाष्यम्, १९०

29. ब्रह्मसूत्रम्, १/२/२२ (शांकरभाष्यानुसारम्)

30. मुण्डकोपनिषद्, २/१/२

तस्मात्परतः परः इति भेदेन व्यपदिशन् परमात्मानमिह विवक्षितं दर्शयति ।”³¹

एवमक्षरशब्दार्थं परिवर्त्य तद्भूतसूक्ष्मं प्रधानमुक्त्वा तस्मादपि पुरुषपदवाच्यपरमात्मा परभूत इति निर्णीतम् ।

(९) “रूपोपन्यासाच्च”³² इति सूत्रे स्वमतमन्येषां च विचारान् प्रदर्श्य “अग्निर्मूर्धा चक्षुषी चन्द्रसूर्यौ दिशः”³³ “पुरुष एवेदं विश्वं कर्म”³⁴ इति मन्त्रद्वये सर्वभूतान्तरात्मत्वेन परमात्मरूपोपन्यासः प्रसाधितः ।

एवमद्वैतदर्शने अदृश्यत्वाधिकरणगतसूत्रत्रयं समुपयुज्य भूतयोनिरक्षरं ब्रह्म परमात्मैवेति प्रतिपादितम् ।

विशिष्टाद्वैतदर्शने ह्यक्षरतत्त्वनिर्णयः

श्रीभाष्येऽदृश्यत्वाधिकरणे पूर्वपक्षित्वेन साङ्ख्यप्रोक्तौ प्रकृतिपुरुषावुक्तौ । यद्यप्यदृश्यत्वादिगुणविशिष्टेनाऽक्षरशब्देन त्वत्र पूर्वपक्षे प्रकृतिरेवाभिप्रेता, पुरुषस्याक्षरात् परतः परत्वेनैव प्रस्थाप्यत्वात् । एतत्पूर्वपक्षनिरसनाय भाष्येऽस्मिन्नुपयुक्तं युक्तिसन्दर्भनिर्णयादिकं क्वचिच्छाङ्करभाष्येण समानम् । यथोपक्रमेऽदृश्यत्वादिगुणकं यद्भूतयोन्यक्षराख्यतत्त्वं परमपुरुषः परमात्मैवेति प्रतिज्ञाय तदेव साधितम्, तद्धर्मोक्तित्वेन च सर्वज्ञत्वं सर्ववित्त्वमित्याद्युक्तम् । तस्मिन्नेव मुण्डकक्रमे शाङ्करभाष्यवद्ध्यक्षरात् परतः परस्य विषये निर्णीतं यद् “अक्षरात् परतः पर”³⁵ इत्यक्षरशब्दः पञ्चम्यन्तः प्रकृतम्, अदृश्यत्वादिगुणकमक्षरं नाभिधत्ते । तस्य सर्वज्ञस्य विश्वयोनेः सर्वस्मात् परत्वेन तस्मादन्यस्य परत्वासम्भवात् । अतः अत्र अक्षरशब्दो भूतसूक्ष्ममचेतनं ब्रूते ।”³⁶

भाष्येऽस्मिन् कुत्रचिच्छाङ्करभाष्यतो भेदादिकमपि दृश्यते । यथा “विशेषणभेदव्यपदेशाभ्यां च नेतरौ”³⁷ इत्यत्र एकविज्ञानेन सर्वविज्ञानोपपादनादिकं विशेषणहेतुतयोक्तम् । भेदव्यपदेशहेतुत्वेन तु ‘अक्षरात् परतः परः’³⁸ इत्यनेन शाङ्करभाष्यवदेव गदितं किन्त्वत्र निरूपणावसरे पराऽपरा चेति विद्याद्वयमेव परोक्षाऽपरोक्षरूपं ज्ञानद्वयमित्युक्तम् ।

31. शङ्कराचार्यः, ब्रह्मसूत्रशांकरभाष्यम्, १९१-१९२

32. ब्रह्मसूत्रम्, १/२/२३ (शांकरभाष्यानुसारम्)

33. मुण्डकोपनिषद्, २/१/४

34. मुण्डकोपनिषद्, २/१/१०

35. मुण्डकोपनिषद्, २/१/२

36. रामानुजाचार्यः, श्रीभाष्यम्, ६०६

37. ब्रह्मसूत्रम्, १/२/२३

38. मुण्डकोपनिषद्, २/१/२

तत्र परोक्षं शास्त्रजन्यमपरोक्षं च योगजन्यं ज्ञानम् । किञ्च “अथ परा यया तदक्षरमधिगम्यते”³⁹ इति उपासनाख्यं ब्रह्मसाक्षात्कारलक्षणं भक्तिरूपापन्नं ज्ञानमुच्यते ।”⁴⁰ इत्यनेनात्र भक्तिप्राधान्यं दृश्यते ।

‘अक्षरात् परतः पर’⁴¹ इत्यत्र भूयः “अक्षरादव्याकृतात्परो यः समष्टिपुरुषस्तस्मादपि परभूतोऽदृश्यत्वादिगुणकः अक्षरशब्दाभिहितः परमात्मेत्यर्थः । अश्रुत इति वा न क्षरतीति वाऽक्षरम् । तदव्याकृतेऽपि स्वविकारव्याप्त्या वा महदादिवन्नामान्तराभिलापयोग्यक्षरणाऽभावाद्वा अक्षरत्वं कथञ्चिदुपपद्यते ।”⁴² इत्युक्त्वाऽक्षरमव्याकृतत्वेन तत्परतया समष्टिपुरुषस्तस्माच्च परत्वेन परमात्मा साधितः । अनेनाऽत्राऽप्यक्षरशब्दार्थपरिवर्तनं विधाय स्वमतं प्रकटीकृतम् ।

अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमदर्शने ह्यक्षरतत्त्वनिर्णयः

अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमदर्शननिरूपके स्वामिनारायणभाष्ये भाष्यकारेण पूर्वपक्ष-वाक्यरूपेणाऽदृश्यत्वादिगुणकं कापिलोक्तं प्रधानं तथा च सर्वज्ञत्वादिलक्षणश्रुतत्वात् कञ्चनोपचितपुण्यविशेषं प्रत्यगात्मानमुक्त्वा स्वसिद्धान्तः प्रदर्शितो यद् “अदृश्यत्वादिगुणकः अद्रेश्यत्वाऽग्राह्यत्वादिगुणविशिष्टतयोक्तोऽक्षरब्रह्मात्मैव न तु प्रत्यगात्मा न वा प्रधानम् ।”⁴³ धर्मोक्तित्वेनापि ‘सदसद्वरेण्यं परं विज्ञानाद् यद् वरिष्ठं प्रजानाम्’⁴⁴ ‘यस्मिंल्लोका निहिता लोकिनश्च’⁴⁵ इत्यादिमन्त्रा आधिक्येनात्र संयोजिताः ।

दर्शनेऽस्मिन्नक्षरब्रह्मतत्त्वविषय उक्तं यद् “अक्षरं ब्रह्म परब्रह्मणो भिन्नं परब्रह्मो नित्यमेकं त्रिगुणातीतं चेतनं च तत्त्वम् । तत् सदा दिव्यमनन्तकल्याणमयगुणैर्युक्तं मायिकगुणैश्च रहितं सदा निर्दोषम् । अस्य चाऽक्षरब्रह्मणः स्वरूपगुणैश्चर्यादिकमेकमात्रपरब्रह्माऽधीनमेव । परब्रह्मणश्च नित्येच्छया तज्जडचिदात्मकसकलसृष्टेः कारणमाधारं व्यापकं नियामकं शरीरि च ।”⁴⁶ एतदेव परब्रह्मभिन्नं जगत्कारणभूतं चेतनतत्त्वमक्षरमेवाऽदृश्यत्वादिगुणकतयाऽत्र निरूपितम् । एतदक्षरं यथोर्णनाभिरित्यादिदृष्टान्तेन सृष्टिकर्तृतयोक्तम् । तच्च तपसा चीयते ब्रह्मेत्यादिमन्त्रद्वये पुनर्ब्रह्मपदेन जगदभिन्ननिमित्तोपादानकारणत्वेन बोधितम् । एतदेवाऽक्षरं

39. मुण्डकोपनिषद्, १/१/५

40. रामानुजाचार्यः, श्रीभाष्यम्, ६१०

41. मुण्डकोपनिषद्, २/१/२

42. रामानुजाचार्यः, श्रीभाष्यम्, ६१३

43. साधुभद्रेशदासः, ब्रह्मसूत्रस्वामिनारायणभाष्यम्, ७६

44. मुण्डकोपनिषद्, २/२/१

45. मुण्डकोपनिषद्, २/२/२

46. साधुभद्रेशदासः, स्वामिनारायणसिद्धान्तसुधा, ४१८

परविद्यायामधिगम्यत्वेन निर्णीतम् ।

अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमदर्शनान्तर्गतमक्षरं पुरुषोत्तमश्चेति तत्त्वद्वयं चरमनिःश्रेयसाभिलाषिभिरनिवार्यतया विज्ञेयत्वाद् ब्रह्मविद्याव्याख्यायामेव दर्शनेऽस्मिन् ह्यक्षरपुरुषयोर्मिथो भेद उपस्थापितो यथा – “येनाऽक्षरं पुरुषं वेद”⁴⁷ इत्यक्षरशब्देनाऽक्षरब्रह्माख्यं परमात्मभिन्नं तन्मात्रन्यूनं दिव्यतत्त्वं, पुरुषशब्देन च तदक्षरादपि परभूतं परब्रह्माख्यं दिव्यतत्त्वं ब्रह्मविद्याघटकतया पृथक् पृथक् विज्ञातव्यत्वेन प्रस्थाप्य तद्विव्यतत्त्वद्वयविषयाऽक्षरपुरुषोत्तमसिद्धान्त एव ब्रह्मविद्यारूपेण प्रस्थापितः ।⁴⁸ एवमत्र अक्षरपदेनाऽक्षरं ब्रह्म पुरुषपदेन च परं ब्रह्म परमात्मा स्वीक्रियेते ।

यद्यपि ब्रह्मविद्याव्याख्यात्मकोक्तमन्त्रेऽस्मिन् पूर्वपक्षत्वेनाऽक्षरपदस्य पुरुषपदविशेषणत्वे प्राप्ते स्वामिनारायणभाष्येऽस्मिन् समाहितं यद् “प्रथममुण्डकाऽवसाने ब्रह्मविद्यालक्षणमभिधाय द्वितीयमुण्डकोदय एवाऽभ्यासनयेन ‘तदेतत्सत्यं यथा सुदीप्तात् पावकाद् विस्फुलिङ्गाः सहस्रशः प्रभवन्ते सरूपाः । तथाऽक्षराद् विविधाः सोम्य ! भावाः प्रजायन्ते तत्र चैवापियन्ति॥’⁴⁹ इत्यक्षरशब्दाऽभिधेयस्य सर्वभावप्रभवत्वमभिधाय तदव्यवहितोत्तरवाक्ये ‘दिव्यो ह्यमूर्तः पुरुषः स बाह्याभ्यन्तरो ह्यजः । अप्राणो ह्यमनाः शुभ्रो ह्यक्षरात्परतः परः॥’⁵⁰ इति स्फुटमक्षरशब्दवाच्याच्छ्रेष्ठतया भिन्नं पुरुषशब्दवाच्यं परं ब्रह्मोपदिष्टम् । तदिदं ‘तथा विद्वान् नामरूपाद् विमुक्तः परात् परं पुरुषमुपैति दिव्यम्’⁵¹ इत्युपसंहारेऽपि यथोक्तब्रह्मविद्यावतः फलबोधकवाक्ये दृढायितम् ।⁵² एवमुपक्रमोपसंहारादितात्पर्यलिङ्गैर्दर्शनेऽस्मिन्नक्षरपुरुषोत्तमौ सुचारुतया साधितौ ।⁵³

ननु ‘अथ परा यथा तदक्षरमधिगम्यते’⁵⁴ इत्युपक्रमे परविद्यायाऽधिगन्तव्यतया निर्दिष्टस्य भवदभ्युपेतस्य परमात्मतो न्यूनस्याऽक्षरतत्त्वस्यैवोक्तत्वात् तदक्षरभिन्नस्याऽक्षरस्यापि परभूतस्य पुरुषपदवाच्यपरब्रह्मणोऽप्यत्रोक्तेरदर्शनाच्च न्यूनायेतैव खलु परा विद्या । किञ्च परविद्याया एवाग्रे ब्रह्मविद्यात्वेन निर्देशत्वादेकत्राऽक्षरमात्रस्यान्यत्र चाऽक्षरपुरुषोत्तमयोर्ग्रहणमित्यसङ्गततैवापद्येतेति चेन्न भाष्येऽस्मिन्नथ परेति मन्त्रांशेन “एतदुपनिषत्प्रधानप्रतिपाद्यभूता ‘येनाक्षरं पुरुषं वेद सत्यं प्रोवाच तां तत्त्वतो

47. मुण्डकोपनिषद्, १/२/१३

48. साधुभद्रेशदासः, ईशाद्यष्टोपनिषत्स्वामिनारायणभाष्यम्, २५७

49. मुण्डकोपनिषद्, २/१/१

50. मुण्डकोपनिषद्, २/१/२

51. मुण्डकोपनिषद्, ३/२/८

52. साधुभद्रेशदासः, ब्रह्मसूत्रस्वामिनारायणभाष्यम्, ७८-७९

53. साधुभद्रेशदासः, ब्रह्मसूत्रस्वामिनारायणभाष्यम्, २६

54. मुण्डकोपनिषद्, १/१/५

ब्रह्मविद्याम्।⁵⁵ इत्यक्षरपुरुषोत्तमोभयावबोधघटिता ब्रह्मविद्याऽपरपर्याया परविद्या निरूप्यत इति शेषः। तत्रादावेतद्ब्रह्मविद्याघटकीभूताऽक्षरतत्त्वप्रतिपादनमुखेन परविद्यानिरूपणमारभ्यते ययेति”⁵⁶ इति वचनैरादावक्षरपुरुषोत्तमतत्त्वद्वयं गृहीत्वा ततस्तत्स्थाऽक्षरनिरूपणमुक्तमित्यनेन मन्त्रेऽस्मिन्नक्षराधिगमनोक्त्या परया विद्यया तदक्षरब्रह्माधिगमनं भवतीत्येवोक्तं न तु परमात्मसाक्षात्कारविषयत्वं निषेधितमिति निश्चीयते।

किञ्चाक्षरब्रह्मरूपत्वसम्पत्त्यैव परब्रह्मसाक्षात्कारो भूयादित्यत्र सिद्धान्तितम्। यथा – “श्रेयसः पथि ऋतेऽक्षरब्रह्मरूपत्वसम्पत्तेरुपासकस्य यथावत्परब्रह्मोपासनाऽनिष्पत्तेः ‘यथा तदक्षरमधिगम्यते। यत्तदद्रेश्यमग्राह्यम्’⁵⁷ इति ब्रह्मतत्त्वमेवादावुपदिदेश।”⁵⁸ परञ्चायमेव सिद्धान्तो मुण्डकेऽग्रेऽपि प्रकारान्तरेणोक्तो यथा – “तद्विज्ञानार्थं स गुरुमेवाभिगच्छेत् समित्पाणिः श्रोत्रियं ब्रह्म निष्ठम्॥”⁵⁹ इति। मन्त्रस्यास्य स्वामिनारायणभाष्ये श्रोत्रियं ब्रह्म निष्ठमिति त्रीण्यपि पदानि विभक्तानि गृहीत्वा ब्रह्मपदेन साक्षादक्षरं ब्रह्म निर्णीतम्।⁶⁰ अतः साक्षादक्षरब्रह्मगुरुरेव समित्पाणिः सन्नभिगन्तव्यतयोक्तस्तेनैव च ब्रह्मविद्यासाक्षात्कारो भवेद्। एतदेव गुरुरूपं ब्रह्मतत्त्वं परविद्ययाऽधिगमनीयतयाऽक्षरपदेनोक्तमित्यक्षरब्रह्मतत्त्वेनैव परब्रह्मसाक्षात्कारः सम्पद्यत इति निश्चीयते। तदेतत्सर्वमस्मिन् दर्शने उक्तम् – “गुरुं ब्रह्मस्वरूपं तु विना न संभवेद् भवे। तत्त्वतो ब्रह्मविद्यायाः साक्षात्कारो हि जीवने॥, नोत्तमो निर्विकल्पश्च निश्चयः परमात्मनः। न स्वात्मब्रह्मभावोऽपि ब्रह्माऽक्षरं गुरुं विना॥, नैवाऽपि तत्त्वतो भक्तिः परमानन्दप्रापणम्। नाऽपि त्रिविधतापानां नाशो ब्रह्मगुरुं विना॥, अतः समाश्रयेन्नित्यं प्रत्यक्षमक्षरं गुरुम्। सर्वसिद्धिकरं दिव्यं परमात्माऽनुभावकम्॥”⁶¹

एवमेव चाऽक्षरब्रह्माधिगमनेनाऽवश्यतया परब्रह्मसाक्षात्कारो भवेदेव। यो मुमुक्षुरक्षरब्रह्म-गुरुरूपसत्तिपूर्वकं तद्दृढतमप्रसङ्गादिना ब्राह्मीं स्थितिं प्राप्नुयात् स ब्रह्मरूपः सन् परब्रह्मभक्तिं विदधातीति ब्रह्मरूपत्वं परब्रह्मसाक्षात्कारश्चैकस्यामेव स्थितौ मुक्त्यवस्थायां प्राप्यत इत्यपि दर्शनेऽस्मिन्नुक्तं यथा – “अक्षरब्रह्मसाधर्म्यं सम्प्राप्य दासभावतः। पुरुषोत्तमभक्तिर्हि मुक्तिरात्यन्तिकी मता॥”⁶²

एवं दर्शनस्याऽस्यैतत्सिद्धान्तमवबोध्य स्पष्टतया निश्चीयते यत् परविद्याव्याख्यायां

55. मुण्डकोपनिषद्, १/२/१३

56. साधुभद्रेशदासः, ईशाद्यष्टोपनिषत्स्वामिनारायणभाष्यम्, २३६

57. मुण्डकोपनिषद्, १/१/५, ६

58. साधुभद्रेशदासः, ब्रह्मसूत्रस्वामिनारायणभाष्यम्, ७९

59. मुण्डकोपनिषद्, १/२/१२

60. साधुभद्रेशदासः, ईशाद्यष्टोपनिषत्स्वामिनारायणभाष्यम्, २५४

61. सत्सङ्गदीक्षा, २२-२५

62. सत्सङ्गदीक्षा, २९१

केवलमक्षरब्रह्माधिगमनवचनं समञ्जसमेव ।

शाङ्करभाष्ये खलु प्रधाननिरसनावसरे यदुक्तं “तिस्रश्च विद्याः प्रतिज्ञायेरन्, त्वत्पक्षेऽक्षराद्भूतयोनेः परस्य परमात्मनः प्रतिपाद्यमानत्वात् । द्वे एव तु विद्ये वेदितव्ये इह निर्दिष्टे ।”⁶³ तस्मिन् विषयेऽप्ययं सिद्धान्तो निर्बाध एव भवेदक्षरपुरुषोत्तमतत्त्वद्वयस्य ब्रह्मविद्याऽपरपर्यायभूतायां परविद्यायामेकस्यामेव विज्ञेयत्वात् ।

एवमेव च शौनककृता सर्वविज्ञानापादकैकविज्ञानजिज्ञासाऽपि पूर्णभवेद् ब्रह्मविद्यैकसम्पादनेन सर्वस्यापि विज्ञातत्वात् ।

अदृश्यत्वाऽधिकरणान्तःस्थितयोरन्यसूत्रयोरपि दर्शनेऽस्मिन् दर्शनान्तराद् मौलिकत्वं दृश्यते । “विशेषणभेदव्यपदेशाभ्यां च नेतरौ”⁶⁴ इति सूत्रे उक्तो विशेषणव्यपदेशो भेदव्यपदेशश्च पूर्वोक्तभाष्यद्वयाद्भिन्नतया गृहीतः । यथा “‘महत् पदम्’⁶⁵ , ‘यदर्चिमद् यदणुभ्योणु च’⁶⁶ , ‘बृहच्च तद्विव्यमचिन्त्यरूपं सूक्ष्माच्च तत्सूक्ष्मतरं विभाति । दूरात्सुदूरे तदिहान्तिके च पश्यत्स्विहैव निहितं गुहायाम्’⁶⁷ , ‘स वेदैतत्परमं ब्रह्म धाम यत्र विश्वं’⁶⁸ इत्यादावर्चिमत्त्वबृहत्त्वसूक्ष्मत्वदूरत्वान्तिकत्वदिव्यदेशविशेषत्वादीनां प्रधानप्रत्यगात्मनोरसम्भाव्यमानानां विशेषणानां व्यपदेशः श्रूयते । श्रूयते च ताभ्यां भेदव्यपदेशोऽपि । तथा हि ‘प्रणवो धनुः शरो ह्यात्मा ब्रह्म तल्लक्ष्यमुच्यते’⁶⁹ , ‘द्वा सुपर्णा सयुजा सखाया समानं वृक्षं परिषस्वजाते । तयोरन्यः पिप्पलं स्वाद्धृत्यनश्नन्नन्योऽभिचाकशीति’⁷⁰ , ‘एष आत्मा विशते ब्रह्मधाम’⁷¹ इत्यादौ धनुश्चशरत्वाभ्यां शरत्वलक्ष्यत्वाभ्यामशनाऽनशनाभ्यां गन्तृत्वगन्तव्यत्वाभ्यां च प्रत्यगात्माऽक्षरब्रह्मणोर्मिथो भेदव्यपदेशः । ‘स्वस्ति वः पाराय तमसः’⁷² , ‘विरजम्’⁷³ इत्यादौ च जडात्प्रधानात् तद्भेदव्यपदेशः ।”⁷⁴ इत्येवं रीत्या अक्षरशब्दनिर्णयानुसारमेवात्र मुण्डकमन्त्रा विशेषणहेतुत्वेन भेदहेतुत्वेन च सङ्गृहीताः ।

63. शाङ्कराचार्यः, ब्रह्मसूत्रशांकरभाष्यम्, १८९

64. ब्रह्मसूत्रम्, १/२/२३

65. मुण्डकोपनिषद्, २/२/१

66. मुण्डकोपनिषद्, २/२/२

67. मुण्डकोपनिषद्, ३/१/७

68. मुण्डकोपनिषद्, ३/२/१

69. मुण्डकोपनिषद्, २/२/४

70. मुण्डकोपनिषद्, ३/१/१

71. मुण्डकोपनिषद्, ३/२/४

72. मुण्डकोपनिषद्, २/२/६

73. मुण्डकोपनिषद्, २/२/९

74. साधुभट्टेशदासः, ब्रह्मसूत्रस्वामिनारायणभाष्यम्, ७७

“रूपोपन्यासाच्च”⁷⁵ इति सूत्रेऽस्मिन्नक्षरब्रह्मस्वरूपोपन्यासाय त्रीणि मन्त्राण्युल्लिखितानि । “हिरण्यमे परे कोशे विरजं ब्रह्म निष्कलम् । तच्छुभ्रं ज्योतिषां ज्योतिस्तद्यदात्मविदो विदुः॥, न तत्र सूर्यो भाति न चन्द्रतारकं नेमा विद्युतो भान्ति कुतोऽयमग्निः । तमेव भान्तमनुभाति सर्वं तस्य भासा सर्वमिदं विभाति॥, ब्रह्मैवेदममृतं पुरस्ताद्ब्रह्म पश्चाद्ब्रह्मदक्षिणतश्चोत्तरेण । अधश्चोर्ध्वं च प्रसृतं ब्रह्मैवेदं विश्वमिदं वरिष्ठम्॥”⁷⁶

एतेषु मन्त्रेषु दिव्यदेशतया ‘हिरण्यमे परे कोशे’ ‘न तत्र सूर्यो भाति’ इत्यादिवाक्यैरुक्तम्, दिव्यदेशस्थतया ‘विरजं ब्रह्म निष्कलम्, तच्छुभ्रं ज्योतिषां ज्योतिः’ इत्यादिवचनैः कथितम्, सर्वदेशस्थतया च ‘ब्रह्मैवेदममृतं पुरस्ताद्ब्रह्म पश्चाद्ब्रह्मदक्षिणतश्चोत्तरेण’ इत्यादिशब्दैरक्षरब्रह्म गदितम् । एतदपि पूर्वोक्तभाष्यद्वयाद् मौलिकं दर्शनेऽस्मिन् प्रतिपादितेन अक्षरतत्त्वेन च सर्वथा समञ्जसमेवेति स्फुटमवबुध्यते ।

ब्रह्मसूत्रार्थसमीक्षणम्

अद्वैतविशिष्टाद्वैताऽक्षरपुरुषोत्तमेतिदर्शनत्रयेऽप्यदृश्यत्वाधिकरणस्यास्य रहस्यं तत्तद्भाष्यकारैः सुचारुतयोद्धाटितम् । तेषु कुत्रचिच्छब्दार्थपरिवर्तनं कृत्वाऽपि स्वाभिप्रायः प्रदर्शितः कुत्रचिद्वा स्वरच्यनुसारं सूत्रशब्देन मन्त्रशब्दाः संयोजिता दृश्यन्ते । भाष्यत्रयेऽपि क्वचित् साम्यं क्वचिदर्थभेदो विज्ञायते । एतत्साम्यभेदौचित्यादिकं विज्ञातुमथ सूत्रशब्दमवलोक्य तत्तद्भाष्यार्थविमर्श आरभ्यते ।

‘अदृश्यत्वादिगुणको धर्मोक्तेः’⁷⁷ इत्यधिकरणस्यास्याद्ये सूत्रेऽदृश्यत्वादयो गुणा यस्येत्यदृश्यत्वादिगुणकस्तथा चाऽदृश्यत्वमादिर्येषामित्यदृश्यत्वादय इति विग्रहे कृते ‘यत्तदद्रेश्यमग्राह्यम्’⁷⁸ इति मुण्डकमन्त्रे सन्निहितः ‘अद्रेश्यम्’ शब्दः ‘अदृश्यत्वम्’ शब्देन साम्यं भजत इति स्फुटमनुभूयते । आदिपदेन मन्त्रान्तर्गता अग्राह्यमगोत्रमित्यादयोऽन्ये गुणा अपि सङ्ग्रहीतुं शक्यन्ते । अनेन त्रिभिर्भाष्यकारैश्चितो मन्त्र औचित्यमनुभावयति । तेनैव च मन्त्रोऽयं भाष्यत्रये विषयवाक्यत्वेन गृहीत इति त्रयाणां समानत्वम् । पूर्वपक्षित्वेनापि सर्वैः शब्दभेदेन केनचिदर्थभेदेन च प्रधानं प्रत्यगात्मा च स्वीकृतावित्यपि साधर्म्यं वक्तुं शक्यते ।

अदृश्यत्वादिगुणकभूतयोन्यक्षरतत्त्वविषये दर्शनत्रये वैधर्म्यमस्ति । तत्राऽद्वैतविशिष्टाद्वैतयोर्मध्ये साधर्म्यं सत्यप्येतयोर्द्वयोरक्षरपुरुषोत्तमदर्शनेन वैधर्म्यमस्ति, आद्ययोरक्षरपदेन परमात्मेति

75. ब्रह्मसूत्रम्, १/२/२४

76. मुण्डकोपनिषद्, २/२/९-११

77. ब्रह्मसूत्रम्, १/२/२२

78. मुण्डकोपनिषद्, १/१/६

स्वीकारादक्षरपुरुषोत्तमदर्शने च तत्रैवाऽक्षरब्रह्मेति परमात्मभिन्नतत्त्वत्वेन स्वीकृतत्वात् । अक्षरस्य परमात्मार्थकरणपक्षे ह्यक्षरात्परतः पर⁷⁹ इत्यत्र तस्मिन्नेवार्थे तत्परत्वबाधादर्थपरिवर्तनं विधाय यथाकथञ्चित् सामञ्जस्यमापादितम् । तस्यैव पुनर्जीवेश्वरमायापरभूतं परमात्ममात्रन्यूनं जगत्कारणमक्षरब्रह्मेत्यर्थकरणे उक्तमन्त्रस्थलेऽपि तस्मात्परत्वेन परमात्मनोऽवस्थानात् तदर्थपरिवर्तनं विनाऽपि सम्पादितमत्र सुकरं सामञ्जस्यम् । अदृश्यत्वादिगुणकसिद्धये धर्मोक्तेरित्यनेन भूतयोन्यक्षरस्य धर्माणामुक्तिर्हेतुत्वेन गदिता । एतद्विषये भाष्यत्रये प्रायः साम्यं सदपि स्वामिनारायणभाष्ये सदसद्वरेण्यमित्यादयो धर्मा अधिकतयोल्लिखिताः । ते चाप्यक्षरतत्त्वेन सुसङ्गताः ।

“विशेषणभेदव्यपदेशाभ्यां च नेतरौ”⁸⁰ इति सूत्रे चकारेणोक्तहेतुद्वयस्य द्विधा विग्रहो भवेदेको विशेषणाद् भेदव्यपदेशाच्च द्वितीयो वा विशेषणव्यपदेशाद् भेदव्यपदेशाच्चेति । तत्राद्यः शाङ्कररामानुजभाष्ययोर्द्वितीयश्च स्वामिनारायणभाष्ये कृतः । एतस्मिन् विषये अद्वैतविशिष्टाद्वैतयोर्मध्ये केनचिद् विशेषणविषयकभेदो वक्तुं शक्यते किन्तु भेदव्यपदेशे तु द्वौ प्रायः समानौ, केवलम् ‘अक्षरात् परतः परः’ इति मन्त्राऽर्थकरणे अद्वैतदर्शने तसिन्प्रत्ययवत् परत्वबोधकं पदमक्षरादित्यस्य विशेषणत्वेन गृहीतं तदेव च विशिष्टाद्वैतदर्शने अव्याकृतादक्षरात्परतया समष्टिपुरुषरूपेण निरूपितम्, तस्माच्च परत्वेन परमात्मा साधितः । अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमदर्शने त्वर्चिमत्त्वादिविशेषणव्यपदेशदर्शनेन, धनुष्ट्वशरत्वाभ्यामित्यादिना प्रत्यगात्मतो जडचेतनाभ्यां च प्रधानतो भेदव्यपदेशदर्शनेन च दर्शनान्तराद् भेदः । नेतरावित्यनेन अदृश्यत्वादिगुणकाद् भूतयोन्यक्षरादन्यौ द्वौ निषिद्धौ । त्रिभिर्भाष्यकारैश्च पूर्वपक्षित्वेन स्वीकृतौ प्रधानप्रत्यगात्मानावेवात्र निषेधविषयतया संस्मृतौ, साऽत्र समानता सर्वत्र च सामञ्जस्यम् ।

“रूपोपन्यासाच्च”⁸¹ इति सूत्रेऽपि चकारादन्यो हेतुरुक्तः । रूपस्योपन्यासः, तस्मादिति विग्रहे प्रकृतस्याक्षरस्यैव मुण्डकोक्तस्य रूपमुपन्यस्यते । अक्षरब्रह्मरूपोपन्यासवर्णने विशिष्टाद्वैताऽद्वैतदर्शनयोरुपन्यस्तं रूपं समानम् । अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमदर्शने पुनर्दर्शनान्तरभेदेन दिव्यदेशादितयाऽक्षरब्रह्मस्वरूपमुपन्यस्तम् । एतस्मिन् विषये त्रयाणामपि भाष्याणां स्वनिर्णिततत्त्वानुसारमौचित्यं दृश्यते ।

उपसंहारः

एवमत्राऽदृश्यत्वाधिकरणसमीक्षणप्रसङ्गे भूतयोन्यक्षरं ‘अक्षरात्परतः परः’ इति मन्त्रेऽपि स्वामिनारायणभाष्ये ह्यक्षरतत्त्वार्थकमेवाभिधीयत इत्युपक्रमादिलिङ्गैः सर्वथा सारल्येन

79. मुण्डकोपनिषद्, २/१/२

80. ब्रह्मसूत्रम्, १/२/२३

81. ब्रह्मसूत्रम्, १/२/२४

सकलसमञ्जसत्वाद् मौलिकत्वे सति वैदिकत्वाच्च अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमदर्शनेन नूनमाकृष्यते मे मनः ।

अथ शोधपत्रान्ते परतोऽप्यक्षरात्परभूताय परब्रह्मणे, तत्साक्षात्कारकश्रोत्रियब्रह्मनिष्ठगुरवे, मुण्डकोक्तब्रह्मविद्याप्रबोधकपरम्परायै, सूत्रकर्त्रे बादरायणव्यासाय, तत्सूत्रार्थज्ञापकेभ्यो दर्शनत्रयभाष्यकारेभ्यश्च भूयो भूयो नमो नम इति शम् ।

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श्रीरामानुजाचार्यः. श्रीभाष्यम्, सम्पादकः – गौतमपटेल, गुर्जरानुवादकः – आनन्दशङ्कर-बापुभाई-ध्रुव, द्वितीया आवृत्तिः, प्रकाशकः – संस्कृत-साहित्य-अकादमी, गांधीनगर, २००२

महामहोपाध्यायः साधुभद्रेशदासः. ब्रह्मसूत्रस्वामिनारायणभाष्यम्, परब्रह्मस्वामिनारायणप्रबोधित अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमदर्शनप्रतिपादकं शास्त्रम्. 2nd ed. Amadāvāda: Svāminārāyaṇa Akṣarapīṭha, 2019.

महामहोपाध्यायः साधुभद्रेशदासः. स्वामिनारायणसिद्धान्तसुधा - परब्रह्मस्वामिनारायणप्रबोधितम् अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमदर्शनम्, प्रकाशकः - स्वामिनारायण अक्षरपीठ शाहीबाग, अमदावाद, २०१७

महामहोपाध्यायः साधुभद्रेशदासः. ईशाद्यष्टोपनिषत्स्वामिनारायणभाष्यम्, परब्रह्मस्वामिनारायणप्रबोधित अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमदर्शनप्रतिपादकं शास्त्रम्. 2nd ed. Amadāvāda: Svāminārāyaṇa Akṣarapīṭha, 2019.

प्रकटब्रह्मस्वरूपमहन्तस्वामिमहाराजः, सत्सङ्गदीक्षा (अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमसंहिताऽन्तर्गता), परब्रह्मस्वामिनारायणप्रबोधित-आज्ञोपासनसिद्धान्तनिरूपकं शास्त्रम्, संस्कृतश्लोकरचयिता - महामहोपाध्यायः साधुभद्रेशदासः. प्रकाशकः - स्वामिनारायण अक्षरपीठ शाहीबाग, अमदावाद, २०२०

अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमदर्शनालोके उत्पत्त्यसम्भवाधिकरणविमर्शः

DR. JANAKISHARAN ĀCĀRYA

Former Dean, Faculty of Darshana &

Assistant Professor,

Shree Somnath Sanskrit University, Veraval

१. प्रवेशिका -

तत्त्वज्ञानार्जने व्यापृताः शान्तचित्ता जितेन्द्रिया दिव्यचक्षुषो निखिलपदार्थजातं करतलामलकवत् प्रत्यक्षीकुर्वाणा विवेकविचारशीला मानवसमुदायस्य श्रेयसे कल्याणकामनया च यानि तत्त्वानि याँश्च सिद्धान्तान् ज्ञानप्राप्तिसाधनभूतान् आविर्भावयामासुः तानि दर्शनानीति व्यवह्रियन्ते। एवञ्च दर्शनमिति नाम्ना प्रसिद्धं शास्त्रं तत्त्वज्ञानादेव प्रारब्धमिति। तच्च तत्त्वज्ञानं केनचित् साधनेन भवति, तस्य साधनविशेषस्य प्रदर्शनम्, अपि च तेन साधनेन कीदृशं तत्त्वज्ञानं भवति इत्युभयं तत्तद्दर्शनेन भवति। यद्यपि सर्वा अपि दर्शनसरण्यः तत्त्वसमीक्षार्थमेव प्रवर्तन्ते तथापि तासां सर्वासां चिन्तनविधिभिन्नः किञ्च तत्त्वाधिगमोऽपि भिन्न एव प्रतीयते। तत्तद्दर्शनग्रन्थपरिशीलनकाले जायते काचिद्विलक्षणैव श्रद्धा। एवञ्च तथ्यातथ्यविवेचनपुरस्सरं परमपुरुषार्थं साधयन्ति दर्शनानि। तत्रापि भारतीयदर्शनसमवाये मुकुटमणिपदवीम् उपगच्छति वेदान्तदर्शनम्।

विश्वस्मिन् विश्वे सत्स्वप्नकेषु सच्छास्त्रेषु ब्रह्मविद्यापराख्यम् अध्यात्मशास्त्रमेव निःश्रेयससाधनतया श्रेष्ठं परमुपादेयञ्चेति श्रुतिस्मृतिभिः चैकमत्येनोद्बुध्यते। “अध्यात्मविद्या विद्यानाम्”¹ इति परम्परामनुसृत्य सर्वेऽपि ऋषयः ज्ञानिनश्च अध्यात्मज्ञानमेवाश्रयन्ते। “सा विद्या या विमुक्तये”² इतीयमुक्तिः मोक्षपरकं शास्त्रमेव प्रकृतविद्यात्वेन अभ्युपैति। सुभाषितेऽपि “विद्या तु वैदुष्यमुपार्जयन्ती जागर्ति लोकद्वयसाधनाय” इत्युक्तं भवति। अथ च वैशेषिकसूत्रं

1. भगवद्गीता, १०.३२

2. विष्णुपुराणम्, १.१९.४१

“यतोऽभ्युदयनिःश्रेयससिद्धिः स धर्मः”³ इत्यनेन शास्त्राणां द्वैविध्यं सङ्केतयति। एवञ्च सति धर्मार्थकामानां त्रिविधानामुद्देश्यानां तत्सम्बद्धानां शास्त्राणाञ्च साधनत्वं मोक्षशास्त्रस्य च साध्यत्वं सम्पद्यते। अत एव मुण्डकोपनिषदि “द्वे विद्ये वेदितव्ये इति ह स्म यद् ब्रह्मविदो वदन्ति परा चैवापरा च। तत्रापरा ऋग्वेदो यजुर्वेदः सामवेदोऽथर्ववेदः शिक्षा कल्पो व्याकरणं निरुक्तं छन्दो ज्योतिषमिति। अथ परा यया तदक्षरमधिगम्यते”⁴ इति अध्यात्मशास्त्रस्यैव पराविद्यात्वेन निर्देशः कृतो वर्तते। यया विद्यया लौकिकं ज्ञानं जायते सा अपरा विद्या। यया च अक्षरब्रह्मविषयकं ज्ञानं जायते सा परा विद्या इत्युच्यते।

अतिप्राचीनकाले सेयं परा ब्रह्मविद्या प्रथममुपनिषत्सु प्रतिष्ठिता। ततो महाभारतान्तर्गतश्रीभगवद्गुणविन्दान्निःसृतायां बादरायणशाण्डिल्यादिभिः महर्षिभिर्मामींसासितार्थायां सर्वविषयावगाहित्वेन ज्ञानविज्ञानसमन्विताध्यात्मविद्याचरमोत्कर्षेण निःश्रेयसपथप्रदर्शिकायांब्रह्मविद्यारूपायां श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतायां तथा च अन्येषु ग्रन्थेषु सङ्क्षेपतस्तत्सिद्धान्तरूपेण सङ्गृहीता। ततः करुणावरुणालयेन भगवता बादरायणेन शारीरकसूत्रापरभिधाने ब्रह्मसूत्रग्रन्थे मीमांसान्यायपद्धत्योपनिषद्गतजीव-ब्रह्मविषयकानेकवाक्यार्थविचारेण जीवब्रह्मैक्यसिद्धान्तः प्रस्थापितः।

वस्तुतः वेदेषु कर्मकाण्डम् उपासनाकाण्डं ज्ञानकाण्डञ्चेति काण्डत्रयम्। तत्र ज्ञानकाण्डं ज्ञानप्रतिपादकं चतुःसहस्रमन्त्रात्मकम्। प्रायः अद एव वेदान्तदर्शनमिति कथ्यते। तत्र वेदस्यान्तः सिद्धान्तः परमात्पर्यं वा यस्मिन् स इति “अति बन्धने”⁵ इत्यस्माद्धातोर्न्तति बध्नाति व्यवस्थापयति वेदानां महातात्पर्यं यः स वेदान्तः। वेदान्तेऽस्मिन्मायाब्रह्मजीवानां निरूपणम्। तथापि “वेदान्तो नाम उपनिषत्प्रमाणम्”⁶ इति वेदान्ताचार्यैः उपनिषद्दर्शनमेव वेदान्तदर्शनमिति स्वीक्रियते।

२. प्रस्थानत्रय्याः तात्पर्यार्थालोचनम् -

उपनिषदः वेदान्तसूत्राणि श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता चैते वेदान्तस्य मौलिकग्रन्थाः। एतेषामेव प्रस्थानत्रयी इत्येतद् अपरं पारिभाषिकं नाम। तत्र उपनिषदः प्रथमं श्रुतिप्रस्थानम्, श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता द्वितीयं स्मृतिप्रस्थानम्, ब्रह्मसूत्राणि च तृतीयं न्यायप्रस्थानम्। तत्र उपनिषत्सु ऋषीणां सत्यद्रष्टृणां वा सत्योपलब्ध्यादिकं विधृतम्। गीतादौ ऋषिभिः विधृतम् उपलब्ध्यादिकं भाषान्तरेण श्रीभगवता उपस्थापितम्। ब्रह्मसूत्रादौ तु श्रुतिस्मृतिवचनादिकं युक्तिसहायेन दृढीकृतम्।

3. वैशेषिकसूत्रम्, १.१.२

4. मुण्डकोपनिषद्, १.१.४

5. धातुपाठः, ६१

6. वेदान्तसारः

श्रुतिप्रस्थानम् —

“तं त्वौपनिषदं पुरुषं पृच्छामि”⁷ इति श्रुत्यनुसारेण परमपुरुषस्य परमात्मन उपनिषदेकसमधिगम्यत्वम् उक्तमिति प्रस्थानत्रये प्रथमं मुख्यं चेदमेव उपनिषत्प्रस्थानं श्रुतिप्रस्थानं वा। श्रुतिप्रस्थाने उपनिषदोऽन्तर्भवन्ति। उपनिषदां शैली क्वचित् काव्यशैलीवल्ललितोचितसंनिवेशचारुतरा प्रसादगुणगुम्फिता, क्वचिच्च नारिकेलपाकवद् दुर्बोधार्था। उपनिषदो हि रहस्यात्मकगम्भीरार्थान् काव्यसुलभया गद्यपद्यात्मकशैल्या प्रतिपादयन्ति। वेदमूलकस्मृतिवद् उपनिषत्प्रस्थानमूलकत्वेनैव अपरप्रस्थानद्वयस्य गीताप्रस्थानस्य न्यायप्रस्थानस्य च प्रामाण्यम्। यतः सूत्रकारोऽपि न्यायेन वेदान्तार्थनिर्णये प्रवृत्तः प्रथमं ब्रह्मसूत्रेषु बहुत्र “श्रुतेः”⁸, “शब्दात्”⁹, “आमनन्ति”¹⁰, “अधीयते”¹¹, “शास्ति”¹² इत्यादिभिः श्रुतिमेव प्रमाणीकरोति। ततश्च “स्मृतेः”¹³, “स्मरन्ति च”¹⁴, “अपि च स्मर्यते”¹⁵ इति स्मृतिमपि सूत्रस्य तर्करूपत्वात् वेदान्तप्रमाणानुग्रहकत्वाच्च अङ्गत्वमेव। अतः प्रधानप्रस्थानोपकारकं सूत्रमपि प्रस्थानशब्देनाभिधीयते। अत एव भाष्यकाराः शङ्करभगवत्पादाः “वेदान्तवाक्यकुसुमग्रन्थनार्थत्वात्सूत्राणाम्”¹⁶ इति वदन्तः इममाशयमभिव्यञ्जयन्ति।

स्मृतिप्रस्थानम् —

उपनिषदः नैककर्तृकाः असङ्ख्याकाश्च। अपि च एकस्यामेवोपनिषदि वक्तृभेदो दृश्यते। एवमसङ्ख्याभिः उपनिषद्भिरद्वैतवेदान्तभावाः प्रतिपादिताः। किन्तु उपनिषत्समय एव क्वचित् वैदिकधर्मविरोधिनां विचाराणां सूक्ष्मस्सद्भावो दृश्यते।¹⁷ विभिन्नवेदविरुद्धदर्शनानां खण्डनाय वैदिकधर्मस्य च पुनः प्रतिष्ठापनाय करुणावरुणालयो भगवान् बादरायणः वेदव्यासः पञ्चमवेदतुल्यं महाभारतं, महापुराणानि, उपपुराणानि च निर्ममे। एतेषु महाभारतस्थ-श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता

7. बृहदारण्यकोपनिषद्, ३.९.२६

8. ब्रह्मसूत्रम्, २.४.१८, ३.४.१९

9. ब्रह्मसूत्रम्, १.१.६, १.३.१, २.१.४, २.४.१५, ३.१.२५, ४.४.१, ४.४.२२२

10. ब्रह्मसूत्रम्, १.२.३२

11. ब्रह्मसूत्रम्, १.२.२०, १.२.२६

12. ब्रह्मसूत्रम्, १.१.१९

13. ब्रह्मसूत्रम्, १.२.६, १.२.३०, १.३.३०, १.३.३८, २.२.२५, ३.४.४३, ४.३.११

14. ब्रह्मसूत्रम्, २.३.४७, ३.१.१४, ४.१.१०

15. ब्रह्मसूत्रम्, १.३.२३, २.३.४५, ३.४.३०, ३.४.३७

16. ब्रह्मसूत्रशाङ्करभाष्यम्, १.१.२

17. “येयं प्रेते विचिकित्सा मनुष्येऽस्तीत्येके नायमस्तीति चैके” (कठोपनिषद् १.१.२०), “असदेवेदमग्र आसीत्” (छान्दोग्योपनिषद्, ३.१९.१) इत्यादिना सर्वशून्यवादो निष्क्रियवादो वा वेगेन प्रचलित आसीदनन्तरभावि काले।

अन्यतमा वर्तते। श्रीभगवद्गुणारविन्दान्निःसृता अष्टादशभिरध्यायैः सप्तशतश्लोकैश्च सुग्रथिता, स्वभावमधुरपदविन्यासयुता, निःश्रेयसप्राप्त्युपायबोधिका, श्रुतीनामाशयपरिगृहीता, परश्शतैः प्राचीनैराचार्यैः प्रज्ञावद्भिश्च व्याख्याता, अध्यात्मविद्याचरमोत्कर्षेण निःश्रेयसपथप्रदर्शिका भगवद्गीता वेदान्तसाहित्ये द्वितीयस्य स्मृतिप्रस्थानस्य स्थानमलभत। श्रीशङ्करभगवत्पादा अपि प्रस्थानत्रयभाष्यं निरूपयन्तः क्वचिच्छ्रुतीः स्मृतीश्च समाश्रित्य गीतावचनानि पुराणवचनानि च उदाजहुः। भगवत्पादैः शारीरकभाष्य एव गीतावाक्यानि बहूनि उदाहृतानि क्वचिच्च विष्णुपुराणस्य वायुपुराणस्य च श्लोकाः तैरुदाहृता दृश्यन्ते।¹⁸

न्यायप्रस्थानम् —

सर्वकारणकारणं सच्चिदानन्दधनसत्यज्ञानानन्दस्वरूपमेकमेवाद्वितीयम् अत्यन्तमनन्तमसङ्गं नित्यं ब्रह्म औपनिषदगम्यम्। श्रुतिप्रमाणानुरोधात् ब्रह्मज्ञानादेव मोक्ष इति वेदान्तसमयः।¹⁹ ब्रह्मविषये अनाद्यपौरुषेयश्रुतिरेव प्रमाणम्। श्रुतिश्चातिसङ्क्षिप्तत्वात् अत्यन्तं दुरवबोधा। भाषा चातिपुरातनी। लोकाश्चोत्तरोत्तरं मन्दबुद्धयः। उपनिषत्सु जीवात्मनोऽविनाशित्वप्रतिपादनेन यज्ञादिकर्मकाण्डतदुपोद्बलकजन्यं स्वर्गादिपारलौकिकसुखमेव शाश्वतमिति लोकानां मतिरभवत्। एतादृशं लोकप्रत्ययं निराकरिष्णुः भगवान् बादरायणो ब्रह्मसूत्राणि प्रणिनाय। ब्रह्मसूत्राणि च श्रुतिमीमांसामुखेनैव तत्त्वोपदेशाय प्रवृत्तानि। श्रुत्यर्थनिर्णयार्थं यो लोकवेदसाधारणो नियमो मीमांसकैराविष्कृतः अवधारितश्च तेनैव नियमेन श्रुत्यर्थो वेदान्ते निरूप्यते।

“वेदान्तसूत्राणि”, “ब्रह्ममीमांसासूत्राणि”, “शारीरकसूत्राणि”, “उत्तरमीमांसासूत्राणि” इति नाम्ना प्रसिद्धानि इमानि ब्रह्मसूत्राणि महर्षिवेदव्यासरचितानीति प्रसिद्धिः। सूत्राण्येतानि निखिलोपनिषदामर्थसङ्ग्रहकाणि सन्तीति समेषाम् आचार्याणां मतिः। महाभारतादिपुराणानां कर्ता व्यास एव एतेषां सूत्राणामपि कर्ता इति सम्प्रदायविदो वदन्ति। पाणिनेरपि अयं बादरायणो व्यासः प्राक्तनः इति “पाराशर्यशिलालिभ्यां भिक्षुनटसूत्रयोः”²⁰ इति सूत्राज्ज्ञायते। पाराशर्य-बादरायण-कृष्णद्वैपायन-सत्यवतीसुतादिनामानि व्यासस्यैवेति महाभारतादिग्रन्थाद् ज्ञायते। “ऋषिभिर्बहुधा गीतं छन्दोभिर्विविधैः पृथक्। ब्रह्मसूत्रपदैश्चैव हेतुमद्भिर्विनिश्चितैः”²¹ इति भगवद्गीतायां एषां ब्रह्मसूत्राणां दर्शनात् प्राचीनतमत्वं तु सुप्रसिद्धमेव। अतः ब्रह्मसूत्राणां

18. द्रष्टव्यं ब्रह्मसूत्रशाङ्करभाष्यम्, १.३.२३, २.३.४५, ३.४.३०, ३.४.३७, २.३.४७, ३.१.१४, ४.१.१९, ४.२.१४, १.२.६, ४.३.११

19. “नान्यः पन्था विद्यतेऽयनाय” - श्वेताश्वतरोपनिषत्, ६.१५

20. अष्टाध्यायी, ४.३.११०

21. श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता, १.३.३

रचनाकालः द्वापरयुगान्ते कलेरादौ वा प्रायः पञ्चसहस्रवर्षेभ्यः पूर्वमिति सम्प्रदायवित्समयः। परं ये त्वाधुनिकाः विद्वांसः आत्मानमैतिह्यवदम्मन्याः बादरायण-वेदव्यासयोः भेदं ब्रुवन्ते ते तु ईशवीयशताब्दात् पूर्वं षष्ठशतकात् द्वितीयशतकपर्यन्तं ब्रह्मसूत्राणां कालं मन्वते²²

एषा प्रस्थानत्रयी कालक्रमेण विभिन्नाचार्यकृतैः स्वाभिमतसिद्धान्तप्रतिष्ठापकव्याख्यानैः विभूषिता। तत्तद्वेदान्तसम्प्रदायप्रवर्तकैः आचार्यैः श्रुति-स्मृति-न्यायेति प्रस्थानत्रयभाष्यप्रणयनद्वारा स्वसम्प्रदायोक्तसिद्धान्ताः विद्वत्समवाये प्रतिष्ठापिताः। भगवत्पादशङ्कराचार्यस्य पूर्ववर्तिकाले अपि ब्रह्मसूत्राणां व्याख्यानानि आसन् इति वेदान्तदर्शनस्य इतिहासात् ज्ञायते। तत्र बोधायन-टड्क-गुहदेव-भारुचि-कपर्दी-भर्तृप्रपञ्च-ब्रह्मनन्दी-सुन्दरपाण्ड्य-उपवर्ष-द्रमिडाचार्य-प्रभृतीनां व्याख्यातृणां नामानि सङ्केताश्च भाष्यग्रन्थेषु उपलभ्यन्ते²³ भगवत्पादशङ्कराचार्यस्य उत्तरवर्तिकाले तु भास्कर-रामानुज-मध्व-निम्बार्क-श्रीकण्ठ-श्रीपति-वल्लभ-विज्ञानभिक्षुप्रभृतिभिः आचार्यैः सूत्रभाष्यप्रणयनेन ब्रह्मसूत्राणां तात्पर्यान्वेषणं कृतम्।

तादृशवेदान्तसम्प्रदायेषु विशिष्टतमः वर्तते भगवता स्वामिनारायणेन उपदिष्टः अक्षरब्रह्मगुरुसमुपबृंहितश्च अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमसिद्धान्तः। “जीव-ईश्वर-माया-अक्षरब्रह्म-परब्रह्म” इति नित्यतत्त्वपञ्चकसमन्वितोऽयं सिद्धान्तः आधुनिककाले साधुभट्टेशदासविरचितप्रस्थानत्रयभाष्यप्रणयनेन दार्शनिकसमवाये राराज्यते।

३. ब्रह्मसूत्रभाष्यकाराः प्राचीनाः अर्वाचीनाश्च आचार्याः –

ब्रह्मसूत्रव्याख्यानकारेषु शङ्कराचार्यात् प्राक् येषाम् आचार्याणां नामानि समुपलभ्यन्ते, तेषां यथायथं कालनिर्णयः किञ्चित् दुष्करमेव। तथापि भगवत्पादशङ्कराचार्यस्य उत्तरकालीनाचार्याणाम् इतिहासः प्रायः उपलभ्यते²⁴ शङ्कराचार्यः तदुत्तरकालीनभाष्यकाराणाम् इतिहासः प्रायः सप्तमशतकमष्टकं वा शतकमारभ्य गण्यते। अत्रेदानीं ये प्रसिद्धाः भाष्यकाराः अभूवन् तेषां कालगणना भाष्यप्रतिपादितसिद्धान्तनामानि निर्दिश्यन्ते²⁵ -

क्रमः	भाष्यनाम	भाष्यकारः	सिद्धान्तः	कालः (ईशवीयः)
१	शङ्करः	शारीरकमीमांसाभाष्यम्	अद्वैतः	७८८ तः ८२०
२	भास्करः	भास्करभाष्यम्	औपाधिकभेदाभेदः	८०१ तः १०००
३	रामानुजः	श्रीभाष्यम्	विशिष्टाद्वैतः	१०१७ तः ११३७
४	मध्वः	पूर्णप्रज्ञभाष्यम्	द्वैतः	११९६ तः १२७६
५	निम्बार्कः	वेदान्तपारिजातसौरभम्	स्वाभाविकभेदाभेदः	१२०० अथवा १४००
६	श्रीकण्ठः	शैवभाष्यम्	शैवविशिष्टाद्वैतः	१३००
७	श्रीपतिः	श्रीकरभाष्यम्	वीरशैवविशेषाद्वैतः	१४००
८	वल्लभः	अणुभाष्यम्	शुद्धाद्वैतः	१४७९
९	विज्ञानभिक्षुः	विज्ञानामृतभाष्यम्	अविभागाद्वैतः	१७००
१०	बलदेवः	गोविन्दभाष्यम्	अचिन्त्यभेदाभेदः	१८ शताब्दी
११	साधुः भद्रेशदासः	स्वामिनारायणभाष्यम्	अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमदर्शनम्	२००७

एतदतिरिक्ताः अपि भाष्यग्रन्थाः समुपलभ्यन्ते। यत्र रामानन्दसम्प्रदायस्य आनन्दभाष्यं जानकीभाष्यं चेति भाष्यद्वयम्, आर्यमुनिना विरचितम् आर्यसिद्धान्तानुकूलं वेदान्तदर्शनभाष्यम्, स्वामि-हरप्रसादवैदिकमुनिना लिखिता वेदान्तसूत्रवैदिकवृत्तिः, पञ्चाननतर्करत्नप्रणीतं शक्तिभाष्यं भगवदाचार्यप्रणीतं वैदिकभाष्यम्, स्वामिनारायणसम्प्रदाये मुक्तानन्दस्वामिविरचितं ब्रह्मसूत्रभाष्यरत्नं ब्रह्ममीमांसा चेति भाष्यद्वयम्, गोपालानन्दस्वामिना प्रणीतं ब्रह्मसूत्रभाष्यप्रदीपं भाष्यदीपिका चेति ग्रन्थद्वयम्, स्वामिरामभद्राचार्यप्रणीतं विशिष्टाद्वैतपरकं श्रीराघवकृपाभाष्यम्। अपि च वैष्णवसम्प्रदायाचार्यश्रीविष्णुस्वामिना प्रणीतं तथा च भेदाभेदवादप्रदर्शकं यादवप्रकाशविरचितं ब्रह्मसूत्रभाष्यं श्रुतिपथगोचरमेवास्ति, मुद्रितरूपेण नाद्यावधिः उपलभ्यते।

एते समेऽपि ब्रह्मसूत्रव्याख्यानग्रन्थाः स्वसिद्धान्तानां सूत्रानुकूल्यप्रदर्शनाय विभिन्नैराचार्यैः विरचिताः सन्ति इति वक्तुं शक्यते। सिद्धान्तभेददृष्ट्या अमीषां ब्रह्मसूत्रव्याख्यानां शाङ्करसम्प्रदायः तद्भिन्नसम्प्रदायश्चेति भेदद्वयं कर्तुं शक्यते। तत्र निर्विशेषम् एकमेवाद्वितीयं ब्रह्म परमार्थसत् इति शाङ्करसम्प्रदायः। ब्रह्म सविशिष्टं सगुणं चेति तद्भिन्नाः साम्प्रदायिकाः मन्वते।

तत्रापि पुनः वैष्णवशैवसिद्धान्तभेदेन बहवः भेदोपभेदाः सन्ति। एतस्य सर्वस्य कथनस्य तात्पर्यम् एतदेव अस्ति यत् स्वसम्प्रदायानुकूलभाष्यप्रणयनदृष्ट्या ब्रह्मसूत्रव्याख्याग्रन्थेषु सत्सु बहुषु भेदेषु तत्र वर्णितानां विषयाणां कमपि एकमविषयमादाय विमर्शः कठिनः भवति।

अपि च ब्रह्मसूत्राणि सम्यग् आलोड्य तत्रत्यानखिलान् सिद्धान्तान् अन्विष्य उपक्रमोपसंहारन्यायेन क्रमविशेषण तेषां भाष्यद्वारा प्रकाशनम् नितराम् असाधारणं कार्यम्। यतः सूत्रकारो हि भूयांसम् अर्थजातं बुद्धावाकलय्य परं प्रति बुबोधयिष्या संक्षेपतः तत्प्रतिपादकं सूत्रं विरचयामास। यद्यपि सूत्रकारः विस्तरेणाप्यर्थं प्रतिपादयितुं समर्थाः सन्ति, किञ्च तादृशं प्रतिपादनम् उपयुक्तमपि। यतो हि विस्तरेणार्थप्रतिपादने सति बोद्धृणां संशयराहित्येन सौलभ्येन चार्थावबोधः सञ्जायते। तथापि मूलमारभ्य समाप्तिपर्यन्तं कृत्स्नं सूत्रप्रबन्धमालोचयतां बुद्धिमतां संक्षिपादपि वाक्यात् निश्चितार्थावगतिः सुलभा, अन्यथा बुद्धिमन्दानां तु विस्तृतादपि वाक्यान्निश्चितार्थावबोधः न सुलभः इति सामान्यतो लोकस्थितिरेव सूत्रकाराणां सूत्ररचनायां प्रवृत्त्यर्थभूता। निखिलपदार्थजातं प्रत्यक्षीकुर्वाणाः सूरयस्तु सर्वदा सूत्रानुसन्धानमात्रेण अखिलान् सिद्धान्तान् करतलामलकवत् पश्यन्ति। तदुक्तं तन्त्रवार्तिककृद्भिः -

“सूत्रेष्वेव हि तत्सर्वं यद्वृत्तौ यच्च वार्तिके।

सूत्रं योनिरिहार्थानां सर्वं सूत्रे प्रतिष्ठितम्॥” इति।²⁶

भाष्यकाराः अखिलानि सूत्राणि सूक्ष्मेक्षिकया पर्यालोच्य सूत्रगतगभीरान् सिद्धान्तान् किञ्च च सूत्रकाराणां हृद्गतमनुमाय भाष्यरूपेण तत्प्रकाशयन्ति। भाष्यकाराः सूत्रार्थं तथा प्रकाशयन्ति यथा तमवलम्ब्य अगाधेऽपि सूत्राब्धौ अनायासेन मत्स्या इव वाचकाः इतस्ततः सञ्चरन्ति। भाष्यकाराणाम् एतादृशं वैशिष्ट्यं लोकोत्तरवैलक्षण्यञ्च न केवलं श्रीमच्छङ्कराचार्यप्रणीतभाष्ये अवलोक्यते परम् आधुनिककालेऽपि साधुभट्टेशदासस्वामिभिः विरचिते अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमदर्शनप्रतिपादने स्वामिनारायणभाष्ये द्रष्टुं शक्यते।

ब्रह्मसूत्रभाष्यग्रन्थेषु विशिष्य परमतनिराकरणपरके द्वितीयाध्यायस्य द्वितीये पादे साङ्ख्य-न्याय-वैशेषिकादिवैदिकदर्शनानां बौद्ध-जैनाद्यवैदिकदर्शनानां निराकरणं दृश्यते, तत्र तु अमीषां सम्प्रदायविदां महत् वैविध्यं नावलोक्यते।²⁷ परन्तु पाशुपत-भागवत-शाक्तादिदर्शनानां निराकरणे आचार्येषु मतवैविध्यं दृश्यते। वस्तुतः द्वितीयाध्यायस्य द्वितीयपादोऽयं तर्कपादः कथ्यते। विषयव्याख्योभयदृष्ट्या अयं पादः अन्यपादापेक्षया भिन्नः। एतत्पादीयैः सूत्रैः विज्ञायते यत्तेषां रचना वैदिकसिद्धान्तासम्मतबौद्धादिमतखण्डनार्थं कृता वर्तते। अपि चात्र केवलेन तर्कबलेनैव विपक्षिसिद्धान्तानां खण्डनं प्रायः दृश्यते। अस्मिन् पादे प्रमुखभाष्यकाराणां दृष्ट्या पश्यामश्चेत् इदमवगम्यते यदत्र भगवत्पादशङ्करमते साङ्ख्यादिमतानां दुष्टत्वप्रदर्शनेन वेदान्तसमन्वयस्य

26. तन्त्रवार्तिकम्, २.३

27. द्रष्टव्यम् - ब्रह्मसूत्रप्रमुखभाष्यपञ्चकसमीक्षणम् - डॉ. रामशरण त्रिपाठी (पृ. १०४-१०९)

विरोधपरिहारः कृतो वर्तते। रामानुजाचार्यास्तु प्रतिपक्षतर्काणां वेदान्तवाक्यानुसारिभिः सत्तर्कैर्निराकरणं मन्वतेऽत्र। परोक्तयुक्तीनामाभासत्वप्रदर्शनरूपपरपक्षखण्डनमत्र विधीयत इति निम्बार्काचार्याः। मध्वमते तु वेदान्तविरुद्धसैश्वरसांख्यादिमतानां निराकरणपरः अयं पादः। वल्लभमते श्रुतिविरुद्धस्मृतिनिराकरणेन तद्विरोधस्य अकिञ्चित्करत्वमत्र विधीयते। अस्य पादस्य उत्पत्त्यसम्भवाधिकरणम् इत्याख्ये अन्तिमे अधिकरणभाष्ये व्याख्याकारेषु नैके भेदाः दृश्यते यत्र ह्यधिकरणे पाञ्चरात्रात्मकभागवतसम्प्रदायरूपेण प्रसिद्धं भागवतमतं निराक्रियते। तत्र इतरभाष्यकारापेक्षया साधुभद्रेशदासस्वामिभिः विरचिते अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमदर्शनसिद्धान्तपोषके स्वामिनारायणभाष्ये नूतनदृष्ट्या विमर्शः विहितः, तमधिकृत्य किञ्चिदिह विव्रियते।

४. उत्पत्त्यसम्भवाधिकरणविचारः –

“उत्पत्त्यसम्भवात्”²⁸ इति सूत्रस्य “उत्पत्त्यसम्भवः” इति पदात् अस्य अधिकरणस्य उत्पत्त्यसम्भवाधिकरणम् इत्यधिधानम्। तत्र भास्करभिन्नेषु सर्वेषु भाष्येषु चत्वारि सूत्राणि गृहीतानि। भास्करभाष्ये हि “विप्रतिषेधाच्च” इति सूत्रस्य वर्जनात् त्रीण्येव सूत्राणि तत्र गृहीतानि सन्ति। अस्याधिकरणस्य चत्वारि सूत्राणि यथा -

- (१) “उत्पत्त्यसम्भवात्” (२.२.४२)
- (२) “न च कर्तुः करणम्” (२.२.४३)
- (३) “विज्ञानादिभावे वा तदप्रतिषेधः” (२.२.४४)
- (४) “विप्रतिषेधाच्च” (२.२.४५)

इति सूत्रचतुष्टयघटितमिदमधिकरणं परमतनिराकरणे विवादास्पदम्।

एतस्य अधिकरणस्य निरूपणे पञ्च भेदाः समवलोक्यन्ते-

१. शङ्करवल्लभयोः मतानुसारं अस्य पादस्य शेषभागे अन्यमतवत् पञ्चरात्रसम्प्रदायस्य²⁹

28. ब्रह्मसूत्रम्, २.२.

29. (१) “एवमेकं साङ्ख्ययोगं वेदारण्यकमेव च। परस्पराङ्गान्येतानि पञ्चरात्रं तु कथ्यते॥” – महाभारते शान्तिपर्व ३५८-८१

(२) “साङ्ख्यं च योगश्च साङ्ख्ययोगम्। वेदाश्च आरण्यकानि च वेदारण्यकम्। परस्पराङ्गानि एतानि, एकतत्त्वप्रतिपादनपरतया एकीभूतानि ‘एकं पञ्चरात्रम्’ इति कथ्यते॥” – रामानुजभाष्यम्, २.२.४२

(३) “साङ्ख्योक्तानि पञ्चविंशतितत्त्वानि, योगोक्तं च यमनियमाद्यात्मकं योगम्, वेदोदितकर्मस्वरूपाणि अङ्गीकृत्य तत्त्वानां ब्रह्मात्मकत्वम्, योगस्य च ब्रह्मोपासनप्रकारत्वम्, कर्मणां च तदाराधनरूपताम् अभिदधति, ब्रह्मस्वरूपं प्रतिपादयन्ति आरण्यकानि। एतदेव परेण ब्रह्मणा नारायणेन स्वयमेव पञ्चरात्रतन्त्रे विशदीकृतम्” – रामानुजभाष्यम्, २.२.४२

(४) डॉ. रामशरणत्रिपाठिनस्तु ब्रह्मसूत्रप्रमुखभाष्यपञ्चकसमीक्षणख्ये ग्रन्थे (पृ. १०७) लिखन्ति यत् “आधुनिकवैष्णवागमानामुत्पत्तिस्तद्विकासश्च तस्माद् भक्तिप्रधानान्नारायणीयधर्मादभवतां यो महाभारते पाञ्चरात्र-सात्वत-भागवतान्यतमनाम्नोक्तो वर्तते। त्रीण्येतानि नामानि पर्यायवाचिनीति “विज्ञानादिभावे

(भागवतमतस्य) अंशतः निराकरणम् अस्ति। तद्यथा - "उत्पत्त्यसम्भवात्" (२.२.४२) इति सूत्रे प्रथमान्तपदाभावात् नास्य अधिकरणारम्भकत्वं युक्तम्, तथापि सर्वैः भाष्यकारैः अधिकरणारम्भकृतत्वात् अत्र प्रथमान्तपदमेकम् ऊहनीयम्। किं तत् पदम् इति जिज्ञासायां तत्र पादस्यास्य परमतखण्डपरत्वेन पूर्वाधिकरणवत् अत्र एको निषेधवाचको नकारः अनुसञ्जनीयः इति सर्वभाष्यकारसम्मतम्। अतः उत्पत्तेः निषेधात् उत्पत्तिरेव अत्र पूर्वपक्षत्वेन आशङ्क्यते। अतः प्रश्नः - कस्य उत्पत्तिविषयिणी शङ्का, यस्याः अत्र प्रतिषेधो उच्यते? स च प्रतिषेधविषयः जीवः इति उत्तरं वक्तुं शक्यते। यतः पूर्वाधिकरणात् ब्रह्मणः जगदुपादाननिमित्तकारणत्वे सिद्धे किं जगदन्तर्गतजीवस्यापि उत्पत्तिः तथाभूतब्रह्मणः जायते न वा इति जिज्ञासा स्वाभाविकी। भागवतपाञ्चरात्रादिमतेषु जीवस्य उत्पत्तिवर्णनं श्रूयते। अतः सूत्रार्थः - "भागवतसिद्धान्तो वेदविरुद्धजीवोत्पत्त्यंशे न प्रमाणमूलः, कुतः वासुदेवाद् जीवस्य उत्पत्तेः असम्भवात्" इति। श्रीमद्वल्लभाचार्योऽपि अस्मिन् अधिकरणे शाङ्करभाष्यवत् अंशतः भागवतमतं निराकरोति।³⁰

२. रामानुजानुसारं तु अस्य पादस्य द्वित्रित्वारिंशत्तम-त्रित्रित्वारिंशत्तम-सूत्रयोः पाञ्चरात्रसम्प्रदाये आक्षेपाः कृताः सन्ति।³¹ अन्तिमयोः चतुश्चत्वारिंशत्तम-पञ्च-चत्वारिंशत्तमसूत्रयोः पाञ्चरात्रसम्प्रदायोपरि कापिलादितन्त्रसामान्यात् समागतस्य अप्रामाण्यस्य निराकरणं कृत्वा भागवतमतस्य स्थापना कृता दृश्यते।³² मुक्तानन्द-गोपालानन्दस्वामिनौ अपि एतस्मिन् विषये रामानुजमतम् अनुसरन्तौ दृश्येते।
३. निम्बार्काचार्य-मध्वाचार्य-बलदेवविद्याभूषणाश्च एतस्मिन् अधिकरणे शङ्कररामानुजयोः नान्यतरेणापि सहमताः दृश्यन्ते। तेषां मते अधिकरणमिदं शक्तिसिद्धान्तस्य निराकरणपरं वर्तते। इदमेतस्य तात्पर्यं यत् शक्तिरेव केवलं चेतना सैव च एकाकिनी विश्वरचने समर्था। परम् एतेषु भाष्येषु तदर्थं न किमपि प्राचीनप्रमाणं प्रदर्शितम् अस्ति।

वा तदप्रतिषेधः" (२.२.४१), "विप्रतिषेधाच्च" (२.२.४२) इत्यनयोः ब्रह्मसूत्रयोः श्रीभाष्ये स्पष्टम्। आगमेषु च पाञ्चरात्रशब्दस्यैव प्राधान्यम् इति प्रसिद्धा अष्टोत्तरशतवैष्णवागमाः पाञ्चरात्रागमा उच्यन्ते।"

30. "ते च चतुर्व्यूहोत्पत्तिं वदन्ति। वासुदेवात् सङ्कर्षणस्तमात् प्रद्युम्नस्तस्मादनिरुद्धः इति।" - अणुभाष्यम्, २.२.४२
31. "यत्तु परैः सूत्रचतुष्टयं कस्यचित् विरुद्धांशस्य प्रामाण्यनिषेधपरं व्याख्यातम्, तत् सूत्राक्षराननुगुणम्, सूत्रकाराभिप्रायविरुद्धं च।" - श्रीभाष्यम्, २.२.४२
32. "शारीरके च साङ्ख्योक्ततत्त्वानामब्रह्मात्मकतामात्रं निराकृतं न स्वरूपम् जिनसुगताभिहिततत्त्ववत् सर्वं न बहिष्कार्यम्" - श्रीभाष्यम्, २.२.४२

४. शैवभाष्यकाराः अपि पाञ्चरात्रशास्त्रस्य सर्वथा अप्रामाण्यं समर्थयन्ति।
 ५. विज्ञानभिक्षुस्तु पूर्वाधिकरणप्रतिपादितं विषयमेव अभ्यः सूत्रेभ्यः समर्थयति।

एतस्मिन् अधिकरणे स्वस्वसिद्धान्तानुसारं कृतेषु अर्थेषु एतत्तु निर्विवादं ज्ञायते यत् शक्तिसिद्धान्तस्य श्रुत्यसम्मतत्वात् तत्स्वीकृतिः कथमपि सूत्रकारसम्मतता इति आकलयितुं न उपपद्यते। “उत्पत्त्यसम्भवाद्” (२.२.४२), “न च कर्तुः करणम्” (२.२.४३) इति सूत्रयोरर्थसाम्यं शङ्करभगवत्पादादीनामिव रामानुजाचार्योऽपि पूर्वपक्षरूपेण स्वीकरोति, तथापि उत्तरयोः सूत्रयोः मतभेदोऽवश्यं दृश्यते एव। अतः शङ्कररामानुजवल्लभेषु कतमस्य अर्थः सम्यग् उपपद्यते एतन्निश्चेतुं दुष्करं यदेतत् अधिकरणं भागवतमतं निराकरोति संस्थापयति वा। चतुश्चत्वारिंशत्तमस्य सूत्रस्य अर्थः शङ्करभवत्पादेन रामानुजाचार्येण च स्वसिद्धान्तानुसारं भिन्नभन्नरूपेण कृतः अस्ति, किन्तु कतरो गृह्येत इत्यत्र न किमपि द्रढीयः प्रमाणम् उपलभ्यते।

वस्तुतस्तु परमतनिराकरणपरकस्य द्वितीयाध्यायस्य द्वितीये पादे येषां दर्शनानां खण्डनं विहितमस्ति, तेषां दर्शनानां परिचायकं किमपि विशिष्टं पदं तत्र तत्र अधिकरणेषु उपलभ्यते। तदत्र तालिकया प्रदर्श्यते -

क्रमः	परमतनिराकरणपरं पदम्	निराक्रियमाणं मतम्	परमतनिराकरणपरं सूत्रम्
१	अनुमानम् (प्रधानं प्रकृतिर्वा)	साङ्ख्यम्	महद्दीर्घवद्वा ह्रस्वपरिमण्डलाभ्याम् (२.२.११)
२	ह्रस्व-परिमण्डलम्	वैशेषिकम्	समवायाभ्युपगमाच्च साम्यादनवस्थितेः (२.२.१३)
३	समवायः	न्यायः	प्रतिसङ्ख्याप्रतिसङ्ख्यानिरोधा- ऽप्राप्तिरविच्छेदात् (२.२.२२)
४	प्रतिसङ्ख्या, अपतिसङ्ख्या	बौद्धमतम्	प्रतिसङ्ख्याप्रतिसङ्ख्यानिरोधा- ऽप्राप्तिरविच्छेदात् (२.२.२२)
५	अभावः	योगाचारः	नाभाव उपलब्धेः (२.२.२८)
६	न एकस्मिन्	आर्हतमतम्	नैकस्मिन्नसम्भवात् (२.२.३३)
७	पतिः	पाशुपतमतम्	पत्युरसामञ्जस्यात् (२.२.३७)

अष्टमे एतस्मिन् उत्पत्त्यसम्भवाधिकरणे तु तादृशसञ्ज्ञाविशेषस्य अभावात् कस्य मतस्य निराकरणमत्र सूत्रकारसम्मतम् इति आलोचने भाष्यकारेषु मतवैविध्यं दृश्यते। अस्मिन् समग्रे पादे परमतनिराकरणमेव दृश्यते अतः तत्सामान्यन्यायेन अस्मिन्नपि अधिकरणे चतुर्भिः सूत्रैः

परमतनिराकरणं कृतमिति गम्यते। परं पूर्वोक्तरीत्या अस्मिन् अधिकरणे विशेषसंज्ञाभावात् तच्च परमतं भागवतमतं शाक्तमतम् अन्यद्वा इत्यत्र भाष्यकारेषु मतैक्यं नास्ति।

सम्प्रति अस्मिन् अधिकरणे विद्यमानां चतुर्णां सूत्राणां विभिन्नभाष्यकारैः कृतान् अर्थान् तुलनात्मकदृष्ट्या विलोकयामः।

“उत्पत्त्यसम्भवात्” (२.२.४२)		
क्रमः	भाष्यम्	सूत्रार्थः
१.	शाङ्करभाष्यम्	भागवतसिद्धान्तो वेदविरुद्धजीवोत्पत्त्यंशे न प्रमाणमूलः। कुतः उत्पत्त्यसम्भवात् = वासुदेवाद जीवस्य उत्पत्तेः असम्भवात्।
२.	श्रीभाष्यम्	उत्पत्तेः = निर्विकारतया श्रुतिसिद्धानां जीवानां विकाररूपस्य जन्मनः, असम्भवात्=अयोगात्, विकारस्वरूपान्यथाभावरूपजन्मावेदकं कपिलादितन्त्रसामान्यात् पाञ्चरात्रम् अप्रमाणम्।
३.	अणुभाष्यम्	उत्पत्त्यसम्भवात् = वासुदेवात् सङ्कर्षणादिजीवस्य उत्पत्तिः न सम्भवति। तथा सति पूर्ववत् सर्वनाशः स्यात्।
४.	वेदान्तपारिजातसौरभम्	शक्तिः न विश्वस्य कारणम्। कुतः? उत्पत्त्यसम्भवात् = पुरुषमन्तरेण शक्तेः सकाशात् जगदुत्पत्त्यसम्भवात्, तत्कारणतावादः शक्तिकारणवादः निर्मूलः।
५.	पूर्णप्रज्ञभाष्यम्	शक्तेः जगदुत्पत्तिः इति स्थिते उत्पत्त्यसम्भवात् = न हि पुरुषाननुगृहीतस्त्रीभ्य उत्पत्तिर्दृश्यते।
६.	स्वामिनारायणभाष्यम्	स्वभाववादो न उपपद्यते। कुतः? उत्पत्त्यसम्भवात् = केवलात् स्वभावात् प्रपञ्चोत्पत्तेः असम्भवात्।

“न च कर्तुः करणम्” (२.२.४३)		
क्रमः	भाष्यम्	सूत्रार्थः
१.	शाङ्करभाष्यम्	यथा देवदत्तादेः सकाशात् करणस्य कुठारादेः उत्पत्त्यदर्शनं तथा कर्तुः जीवात् करणं मनो जायते इत्येतत् न च = न सम्भवति।
२.	श्रीभाष्यम्	कर्तुः=कर्तृभूताज्जीवात्, करणम्=ज्ञानादिकारणभूतं मनः, न च=नैव उत्पत्तुमर्हतीति, तद्वादि पाञ्चाशन्नं न प्रमाणम्।
३.	अणुभाष्यम्	कर्तुः=सङ्कर्षणसंज्ञकात् जीवात् करणम्=प्रद्युम्नसंज्ञकं मन उत्पद्यते इति न=लोके न सिद्धम्। च=अग्रिमस्य (अहङ्कारस्य) निराकरणम्।
४.	वेदान्तपारिजातसौरभम्	शक्तेः पुरुषसंसर्गः अस्ति चेत् कर्तुः=पुरुषस्य करणं= करणम्, न=नास्ति तदानीम्। च=चकारात् सति पुरुषे कर्तारि, न शक्तेः कारणत्वम्।
५.	पूर्णप्रज्ञभाष्यम्	यदि पुरुषः अङ्गीक्रियेत तर्हि कर्तुः=पुरुषस्य करणं न=करणाभावाद् अनुपपत्तिः।

६.	स्वामिनारायणभाष्यम्	स्वभावादेव सकलप्रवृत्तिश्चेत् कस्यचित् कर्तुं न किञ्चित् करणं सम्भवेत्। लोके स्वतः एव=करणं विना घटपटादिकार्योत्पादने असमर्थाः कुलालादयः, दण्डादिकरणत्वेन उपयुञ्जानाः दृश्यते। एतादृशः कार्यकरणभावः स्वभाववादे नोपपद्यते।

“विज्ञानादिभावे वा तदप्रतिषेधः” (२.२.४४)

क्रमः	भाष्यम्	सूत्रार्थः
१.	शाङ्करभाष्यम्	सङ्कर्षणप्रद्युम्नानिरुद्धानां वासुदेववत् विज्ञानादिभावे वा=विज्ञानैश्वर्यादिमत्त्वेऽपि तदप्रतिषेधः=तस्य सङ्कर्षणादेः उत्पत्त्यसम्भवदोषस्य अप्रतिषेधश्च तादवस्थ्यमेव।
२.	श्रीभाष्यम्	वा-शब्दात् पक्षो विपरिवर्तते। विज्ञानादिभावे=सङ्कर्षणादिरूपाणां शुद्धज्ञानैकस्वरूपजगत्कारणभूतब्रह्म-भावे सिद्धे सति, तदप्रतिषेधः = जीवतत्वाभिमानिभगवदवतारतात्पर्यकोत्पत्तिवचनतः तत्प्रतिपादनापरस्य पाञ्चरात्रशास्त्रस्य प्रामाण्यं न प्रतिषिध्यते।
३.	अणुभाष्यम्	विज्ञानादिभावे=सर्वे विज्ञानैश्वर्यशक्तिबलवीर्यतेजःप्रभृति-पारमेश्वरधर्मान्विताः इति तथा सति तदप्रतिषेधः=ईश्वराणाम् अप्रतिषेधम्। अनेकेश्वरत्वं न युक्तमित्यर्थः।
४.	वेदान्तपारिजातसौरभम्	वा=पूर्वपक्षव्यावृत्त्यर्थः। विज्ञानादिभावे=स्वाभाविकज्ञान-बल्लादिगुणान्विता अन्यनिरपेक्षस्वभावाश्रयाः शक्तिः इत्येवं विज्ञानादिभावे अङ्गीकृते, तदप्रतिषेधः=विश्वहेतुत्वं न प्रतिषिध्यते।
५.	पूर्णप्रज्ञभाष्यम्	विज्ञानादिभावे=यदि विज्ञानादिकरणं तस्य पुरुषस्य अङ्गीक्रियते तदा, तदप्रतिषेधः=तत एव सृष्ट्याद्युपपत्तेरीश्वर-वादान्तर्भावः।
६.	स्वामिनारायणभाष्यम्	ज्ञानेच्छाप्रयत्नादीनां भावे सत्येव कार्योत्पत्तिनियम-दर्शनात् तदप्रतिषेधः=कार्यकारणभावाऽप्रतिषेधः।

“विप्रतिषेधाच्च” (२.२.४५)

क्रमः	भाष्यम्	सूत्रार्थः
१.	शाङ्करभाष्यम्	भागवतमते गुणगुणिनोः भेदोऽभेदश्च वर्ण्यते। तथा च परस्परं विप्रतिषेधाच्च=विरोधादपि भागवतमतम् अप्रामाणिकम्।
२.	श्रीभाष्यम्	विप्रतिषेधाच्च=पाञ्चरात्रेऽपि जीवस्योत्पत्तेः विशेषतः निषिद्धत्वादपि, एतत्प्रामाण्यस्य अप्रतिषेधः।

३.	अणुभाष्यम्	विप्रतिषेधात्=प्रद्युम्नाख्यं मनोऽनिरुद्धोऽहङ्कारः इति बहुकल्पनया, शाण्डिल्यः चतुर्षु वेदेषु परं श्रेयोऽलब्ध्वा इदं शास्त्रम् अधीतवान् इत्यादिरूपया वेदनिन्दया च । च=तत्त-चक्रादिधारणरूपसाधनप्रकारेण वेदप्रक्रियाविरोधात् पाञ्चरात्रं शास्त्रम् अप्रमाणम्।
४.	वेदान्तपारिजातसौरभम्	विप्रतिषेधात्=श्रुतिस्मृतिविप्रतिषेधात् शक्तिपक्षः अप्रामाणिकः।
५.	पूर्णप्रज्ञभाष्यम्	विप्रतिषेधात्=सकलश्रुत्यादिविरुद्धात् च शाक्तमतम् असमञ्जसम्।
६.	स्वामिनारायणभाष्यम्	विप्रतिषेधात्=विरोधादपि स्वभाववादोऽसमञ्जसम् इति।

रामानुजमतस्य स्वीकरणे अस्वारस्यम् -

रामानुजाचार्याः यद्यपि अस्मिन् अधिकरणे पूर्वसूत्रद्वयं पूर्वपक्षसूत्रम् उत्तरसूत्रद्वयन्तु सिद्धान्तसूत्रमिति मन्वते। परं समग्रेऽपि द्वितीयपादे प्रतिपक्षमतनिराकरणे प्रवृत्तः सूत्रकारः अत्र सूत्रद्वयेन कस्यापि मतस्य समर्थनं करोतीति वक्तुं नोचितम्। समग्रमिदमधिकरणं परमतनिराकरणपरम् इति कृत्वा श्रीनिम्बार्क-मध्व-बलदेवादायाः अत्र भागवतमतनिराकरणं परित्यज्य शाक्तमतनिराकरणे प्रवृत्ताः इति वक्तुं शक्यते। श्रीनिम्बार्क-मध्व-बलदेवादायाः पाञ्चरात्रागमस्य सर्वथा प्रामाण्यम् अभ्युपगच्छन्ति। मध्वाचार्यस्तु महाभारतकर्तृत्वेन वेदव्यासः महाभारते पाञ्चरात्रागमस्य प्रशंसां कृत्वा ब्रह्मसूत्रेषु तस्य खण्डनं कथं कुर्यात् इति तर्कम् उपस्थापयति। एतादृशः एव तर्कः रामानुजाचार्यैरपि “विप्रतिषेधाच्च”³³ इति सूत्रभाष्ये उत्थापितम्³⁴ परन्तु तर्कोऽयं प्रबलः न प्रतिभाति, यतो हि महाभारते तु सांख्ययोगादीनामपि प्रशंसा कृता वर्तते तथापि श्रुतिविरुद्धांशप्रतिपादनात् तेषां निराकरणं सूत्रकारेण कृतमस्ति। पादोऽयं पूर्वपक्षनिराकरणपरम् इति तैरेव उक्तत्वात्³⁵ शाङ्करभाष्ये भागवतमतविषये याः शङ्काः प्रदर्शिताः तासां समाधानं श्रीभाष्यकारेण महता प्रबन्धेन महाभारतशान्तिपर्वस्थः पाञ्चरात्रस्य महिमा निरूपितः। परं ये त्वाचार्याः बादरायणव्यासं महाभारतकर्तृव्यासात् भिन्नं मन्वते तेभ्यः इयं युक्तिः निष्फला भवति। अपि चात्र तर्कपादे विरुद्धमतनिराकरणप्रसङ्गे स्वमतस्थापनं न केवलं सन्दर्भविरुद्धम्, किन्तु “विप्रतिषेधाच्चासमञ्जसम्”³⁶ इत्यत्रोपक्रमे प्रयुक्तस्य विप्रतिषेधशब्दस्यैव “विप्रतिषेधाच्च”³⁷ इत्युपसंहारेऽपि प्रयोगेण अधिकरणद्वयेऽपि आद्ये अन्तिमे च विरोधार्थस्यैव ग्रहणं योग्यम्। अतः विपूर्वकस्य प्रतिषेधशब्दस्य केवलनिषेधपरत्वं श्रीभाष्यकारैः आदृतमिति कृत्वा पाञ्चरात्राधिकरणयोजनायां वाच्यापरित्यागरूपोऽपि दोषः स्यात्।

शाक्तमतनिराकरणे अस्वारस्यम् -

निम्बार्क-मध्व-बलदेवाः अधिकरणमिदं शाक्तमतनिराकरणपरम् इति ब्रुवन्ति। परं शक्तिवादनिराकरणे अध्याहाराम् आधिक्येन तत् सूत्रकारसम्मतं न प्रतीयते। शाक्तमतनिराकरणपक्षे तु शक्तिः, पुरुषः, अन्तरेण, संसर्गः, स्वाभाविकः इत्यादिशब्दानाम् अध्याहारो कर्तव्यो भवति, तथा कृते सति अधिकरणस्य वाक्यार्थः सूत्रकारसङ्गतो न प्रतीयते।

अतः (१) अधिकरणमिदं सर्वथा पाञ्चरात्रशास्त्रस्य अप्रामाण्यं निरूपयति इति स्वीकारे ब्रह्मसूत्र-महाभारतकारवेदव्यासेन महाभारते पाञ्चरात्रमहिमकथनात् स्वोक्तिविरोधः स्यात् इति कृत्वा अनुपादेयम् इति वक्तुं शक्यते। (२) रामानुजमतरीत्या अधिकरणेऽस्मिन् पूर्वसूत्रद्वयं पूर्वपक्षे उत्तरसूत्रद्वयं पाञ्चरात्रशास्त्रप्रमाणपरके इति स्वीकारे अस्य तर्कपादस्य सर्वथा परमतनिराकरणपरत्वात् एकवाक्यत्वाभावः स्यात्। (३) अध्याहारबाहुल्यापत्तेः अधिकरणमिदं शाक्तमतनिराकरणपरम् इत्यपि वक्तुं न शक्यते। (४) प्रायः सर्वैः आचार्यैः अस्य अधिकरणस्य निरूपणात् इदम् अधिकरणमेव नास्ति इति कथनं साहसमात्रम्। तस्मात् अधिकरणमिदं कस्य निराकरणपरम् इत्यत्र कश्चन नूतनः विमर्शः, नूतनश्च विचारः प्रकटितः, यत्र पूर्वोक्तदोषेषु न कोऽपि दोषः दृग्गोचरो भवति।

५. स्वामिनारायणभाष्यानुसारम् उत्पत्त्यसम्भवाधिकरणविमर्शः -

एकविंशतिशताब्द्यां प्रमुखस्वामिमहाराजस्य शिष्यैः महामहोपाध्यायस्वामिभद्रेशदासैः अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमसिद्धान्तपोषकं स्वामिनारायणभाष्यं विरचितम्। यत्र बहुषु स्थलेषु सूत्रार्थभाष्यावसरे नूतना दृष्टिः, नूतनश्च वाक्यार्थः उद्घाटितः वर्तते। तत्रैव उत्पत्त्यसम्भवाधिकरणेऽपि नूतनः वाक्यार्थः प्रकटितः अस्ति। स च वाक्यार्थः सूत्रकारसम्मतोऽस्तीति प्रतीयते। तेषां मते अस्मिन् अधिकरणे नास्तिकशिरोमणिः प्रत्यक्षैकप्रमाणपूजकः स्वभाववादी चार्वाकः प्रतिक्षिप्यते। यतो हि अस्मिन् तर्कपादे कार्यकारणभावम् आदाय परमतानि निराकृतानि सन्ति, तादृशकार्यकारणभाववादिषु अयं चार्वाकः अपि अन्यतमः। तर्कपादे सर्वादौ शङ्करभगवत्पादरीत्या प्रधानमल्लनिबर्हणन्यायेन सर्वाधिकं प्रबलं मतं साङ्ख्यमतं निराकृतम्। तदनु साङ्ख्यमतापेक्षया निराकरणे दुर्बलानि वैशेषिक-बौद्ध-जैन-पाशुपतमतानि निराकृतानि। अन्ते च केवलं प्रत्यक्षैकप्रमाणपूजकस्य स्वसिद्धान्तस्थापने प्रबलयुक्तिविहीनस्य लोकायतमतस्य निराकरणं सूत्रकारेण कृतम् इति स्वीकरणं सुसङ्गतं प्रतीयते। चार्वाकमतस्य निराकरणं स्वामिनारायणभाष्यानुसारं समासतो इह वितन्यते, तद्विस्तरं तु तद्भाष्ये आलोचनीयम्।³⁸

38. द्रष्टव्यम् - ब्रह्मसूत्रस्वामिनारायणभाष्यम् - भाष्यकारः - साधु भद्रेशदासः, प्रकाशकः स्वामिनारायण अक्षरपीठ अहमदाबाद, पृ. २१६-२१८

सर्वो हि जन्तुः निसर्गतः अदृष्टापेक्षया हि दृष्टसुखार्थं दृष्टदुःखनिवृत्त्यर्थं वा प्रवर्तते। स्वर्गसुखप्राप्तये यथा यज्ञादिकर्माणि आचरन्तः विरला एव दृश्यन्ते, तथा नरकदुःखभीत्या पापकर्मणः सकाशात् निवर्तमाना अपि विरला एव प्राणिनो दृश्यन्ते। तस्मात् स्वाभाविकप्रवृत्त्यनुगोचरेण कस्यचित् उक्तिः श्रुता चेत् ताम् अनायासेनैव चारुत्वेन लोकैः गृह्यते इति लोकप्रवृत्त्यनुसारिण्या उक्तेः चारुता सम्पद्यते। अत एव इदं चार्वाकदर्शनम्³⁹ अनायासेनैव लोके प्रसृतं भवतीत्यतो लोकायतदर्शनम् उच्यते। कार्यकारणभाववादिषु अस्य स्वभाववादः प्रथितोऽस्ति। इत्थं हि चार्वाकमतानुयानिनाम् अपलापः - प्रत्यक्षैकप्रमाणवादिभिः चार्वाकैः आकाशस्य प्रत्यक्षाभावेन तन्नाङ्गीक्रियते। अतः पृथिव्यप्तेजोवायुरूपाणि भूतानि। एतेषां परिणामविशेषस्वाभाव्यात् शरीररूपेण परिणामे किण्वादिभ्यः मदशक्तवत्⁴⁰ चैतन्यम् उपजायते, शरीरविनाशे च नश्यति। प्रजानां नियन्त्रित्वेन लोकसिद्धः राजा एव ईश्वरः, न तु जगतः उत्पत्तिस्थितिसंहारकर्ता अन्यः ईश्वरः कश्चित् जन्मान्तरप्रदाता वा। “नास्त्येव परमात्मा कुतस्तज्जगत्कारणत्वम्”⁴¹ इत्यर्थः। कार्यकारणभावं निराकुर्वन्तः चार्वाकाः प्रपञ्चोद्भवं स्वाभाविकं मन्वते। यदि क्वचित् कारणात् कार्यस्य उत्पत्तिर्दृश्यते तत्तु मणिमन्त्रौषधादिवत् यादृच्छिकः। यथा लोके उत्पन्नरोगस्य रोगादेः निवृत्तये शारीरसामर्थ्यधनकीर्त्याद्यैश्चैश्वर्यप्राप्तये च मणिस्पर्शो मन्त्रप्रयोगः औषधसेवनं च क्रियमाणं दृश्यते लोके। परन्तु मण्याद्युपयोगेऽपि क्वचित्कार्यं न दृश्यते, क्वचित्च तदभावेऽपि कार्यं दृश्यते। अतः अन्वयव्यतिरेकव्यभिचारात् वस्तुतः कार्यकारणभावः नैव भवति। तत्र क्वचित् काकतालीयन्यायेन जायमानं कार्यं दृष्ट्वा भ्रान्ताः कार्यकारणभावं मन्वते। ननु कार्यकारणभावाभावे कथं जगद्वैचित्यमिति चेत् स्वभावादेव तदुपपत्तेः। तदुक्तम् -

“अग्निरुष्णो जलं शीतं समस्पर्शस्तथानिलः।

केनेदं चित्रितं तस्मात्स्वभावात्तद्व्यवस्थितिः॥ ” इति⁴²

एतादृशस्य मतस्य निराकरिष्णुः भगवान् सूत्रकारः आह - “उत्पत्त्यसम्भवात्” (२.२.४२) इति। स्वभाववादो न उपपद्यते। कुतः? उत्पत्त्यसम्भवात् = केवलात् स्वभावात् प्रपञ्चोत्पत्तेः असम्भवात्। यथा चोक्तं भाष्यकारेण “स्वभावस्याऽयुतसिद्धतास्वाभाव्यात् सर्वदा वर्तमानत्वेन वस्तुनो नित्योद्भासनतो विनाशस्यैवाऽभावादुत्पत्तिकथैव कथं सम्भवेत्।

39. चार्वाकशब्दनिर्वचनं तु “चारुः सुन्दरो वाको वचनं यस्य” इति। एतस्य चार्वाकमतस्य अधिकः प्रचारः चार्वाकनाम्ना दैत्येन सम्पादितः। अयं चार्वाकः बृहस्पतिशिष्यः। एत एतद्दर्शनं चार्वाकदर्शनम् इत्यभिधीयते।

40. किण्वशब्देन सुरायाः प्रकृतिभूतो वृक्षविशेषनिर्यास उच्यते। तत्र प्रकृत्यवस्थायां मदशक्त्यभावेऽपि तद्विकृतिभूतसुरायां मदशक्तिरुत्पद्यमाना दृश्यते तद्वत्। - इति सर्वदर्शनसङ्ग्रहटीकायाम् (पृ. ३)

41. स्वामिनारायणभाष्यम्, २.२.४२

42. सर्वदर्शनसङ्ग्रहः, पृ. १३

पृथिव्या घटाकारेणाऽवस्थानं स्वभावेत् सर्वा पृथिवी घटाकारैव स्याद् न चास्तु। पटस्य चोत्पत्तिरेव न स्यात्”⁴³ इति। लोके चायं कार्यकारणभावः दृश्यते। स्वाभाविककार्योत्पत्तिपक्षे कार्यकारणभावस्य असिद्धेः कारणाभावात् कार्यभावेन सकललोकप्रत्यक्षस्य प्रपञ्चस्य उत्पत्तिरेव न स्यात्। तस्मात् स्वाभाविका प्रपञ्चोत्पत्तिर्न सम्भवति।

स्वभाववादिनः मतस्य दूषणाय हेत्वन्तम् उच्यते - “न च कर्तुः करणम्” (२.२.४३) इति। स्वभावादेव मृद्धेमतन्त्वादिभिः घटकण्डलपटादीनाम् उत्पत्तिश्चेत् स्यात्, तर्हि कस्यचित् कर्तुश्च न किञ्चित् करणं सम्भवेत्। “कश्चिद्धि कर्ता कुलालतक्षकादिः स्वत एव घटपटादिकार्योत्पादनेऽसमर्थो दण्डावास्यादिकं करणत्वेनोपयुञ्जानो दृश्यते। सोऽयं कर्तृकारणभावः स्वभाववादे नोपपद्यते। तथा ह्यद्योत्पन्नस्य घटादेः कम्बुग्रीवादिमत्वेन अवस्थानं स्वभावतः एव स्यात् तदा कुतोऽद्यैव जातः। कथं विलम्ब्यते।”⁴⁴ इति।

स्वभाववादिनां मते सकलकार्यकारणभावः प्रतिषिद्धः तत्रोत्तरम् उच्यते - “विज्ञानादिभावे वा तदप्रतिषेधः” (२.२.४४) इति। कार्यकारणभावे कार्योत्पत्तेः पूर्वं तत्कारणस्य विज्ञानस्य ज्ञानेच्छाकृतीनाम् अवबोधः अवश्यं भवति। तद्यथा घटचिकीर्षोः यदि घटोपादानभूतमृद्विज्ञानम्, घटचिकीर्षा, तदनुकूला प्रवृत्तिः अस्ति चेत् घटोत्पत्तिर्भवति, तद्व्यतिरेकेण ना। अतः विज्ञानादिसद्भावादेव एतादृक्कार्यकारणभावस्य स्वभाववादमाश्रित्य प्रतिषेधो न युज्यते। यथोक्तं भाष्यकारेण “विज्ञानं नाम कार्योत्पादानवस्तुविषयकाऽवबोधः। तथा हि ज्ञानेच्छाप्रयत्नादीनां भावे सत्येव कार्योत्पत्तिनियमदर्शनात् तदप्रतिषेधः=कार्यकारणभावाऽप्रतिषेधः”⁴⁵ इति।

इतोऽपि स्वभाववादः प्रज्ञावद्भिः निरादरणीयः। तदाह सूत्रकारः “विप्रतिषेधाच्च” (२.२.४५) इति। “विप्रतिषेधो विरोधः। विरोधादपि स्वभाववादोऽसमञ्जसम् इत्यर्थः”⁴⁶।

६. निगमनम् -

ब्रह्मसूत्रग्रन्थोऽयं सूत्रात्मकः। अतः अत्र अध्याय-पाद-अधिकरण-सूत्रैः एतस्य ग्रन्थस्य एकवाक्यता अवलोक्यते। आध्यायचतुष्टयात्मकस्य ग्रन्थस्यास्य समष्टिरूपेण यत् प्रतिपाद्यत्वं भवति तदेव प्रतिपाद्यत्वं व्यष्टिरूपेणापि सूत्रेषु अनुस्यूततया प्रवर्तते। यतो हि व्यष्टिभूतस्य समष्टिरूपत्वमपि स्वाभाविकम्, येन तादृशप्रतिपाद्यविषयानुसारेण अध्याय-पाद-अधिकरण-सूत्राणाम् अर्थनियमनं समुचितं भवति। समष्टिभूतस्य यो धर्मः तस्य व्यष्टिभूतधर्मनियामकत्वं नैसर्गिकम्। तर्हि कश्चास्य ग्रन्थस्य प्रतिपाद्यविषयः, कथं च सः ज्ञातव्यः

43. स्वामिनारायणभाष्यम्, २.२.४२

44. स्वामिनारायणभाष्यम्, २.२.४३

45. स्वामिनारायणभाष्यम्, २.२.४४

46. स्वामिनारायणभाष्यम्, २.२.४५

किञ्चित् दुरुद्धरकार्यमेव प्रतिभाति तथापि तत्र पूर्वाचार्यैः यत् षड्विधतात्पर्यनिर्णायकं लिङ्गं निरूपितम्, तेन एतस्य ग्रन्थस्य प्रतिपाद्यविषयः ज्ञातुं शक्यते। तथा हि -

“उपक्रमोपसंहारावभ्यासोऽपूर्वता फलम्।

अर्थवादोपपत्ती च लिङ्गं तात्पर्यनिर्णयो॥” इति ।

एतद्धि सर्वलोकसाधारणत्वात् सर्वत्र ग्रन्थादीनां तात्पर्यनिर्णये प्रयोजकम्। अत एव प्रायेण सर्ववादिसम्मतम्। एतत्साहाय्येन समग्रब्रह्मसूत्रग्रन्थस्य यदेकं सर्वसूत्रानुगतं तात्पर्यं भवेत्, तत् सर्वैः प्रेक्षावद्भिर्निर्णेतुं शक्यते। इत्थं षड्विधतात्पर्यलिङ्गनिर्णायकपद्धत्या प्रकृतम् उत्पत्त्यसम्भवाधिकरणमपि परमतनिराकरणपरं सिध्यति। तच्च परमतं तादृशं भवेत् यच्च सर्ववादिसम्मतं स्यात्। साधुभट्टेशदासविरचिते स्वामिनारायणभाष्ये उत्पत्त्यसम्भवाधिकरणं षड्विधतात्पर्यलिङ्गोपेतत्वात् चार्वाकमतनिराकरणपरकः नूतनः विचारः सर्वथा समादरणीयः एव प्रज्ञावद्भिरिति शम्॥

श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतास्वामिनारायणभाष्याऽऽधारेण ब्रह्मविद्यानिरूपणम्

DR. SOMANATH DAS

Assistant Professor, Department of Research & Publications
NSU, Tirupati

पूर्वभूमिका

स्थावरजङ्गमात्मकजगतः सृष्टि-स्थिति-लयसन्दर्भपुरस्कृत्य तत्र जीव-ब्रह्मणोस्सत्ताजिज्ञासवः दार्शनिकाः आ प्राचीनकालाज् ज्ञानचक्षुषा नैकप्रकारकतया ज्ञानमीमांसां व्यदधुः। अस्मिन् विषयाधिकरणे आस्तिकनास्तिकपरम्पराश्रिताः नैकाः विचारधाराः भारतीयसंस्कृतवाङ्मये दृष्टिपथमवतरन्ति। न्याय-वैशेषिक-सांख्य-योग-वेदान्त-मीमांसा-बौद्ध-जैन-चार्वाकादीनि दर्शनानि स्वसिद्धान्तैः ब्रह्मजगज्जीवानां समीक्षां प्रस्तुवन्ति। एवमस्यां परम्परायां मीमांसादर्शनं कर्मज्ञानविभागाभ्यां द्विधा विभक्तं पूर्वमीमांसा, उत्तरमीमांसा इति नामभ्यामभिधीयते। उत्तरमीमांसेयं ब्रह्ममीमांसा-शारीरकमीमांसा-वेदान्तदर्शनापरपर्याया ज्ञानयोगस्य प्रधानशाखारूपेण परिचीयते। “विद्ययाऽमृतमश्नुते” (ईशावास्योपनिषत्- ११), “विद्यया विन्दतेऽमृतम्” (केनोपनिषत् - २/४) इति ब्रह्मविद्याया अमृतत्वं मोक्षसाधकत्वं च सर्वथा शास्त्रेषु प्रतिपाद्यते। एवं वेदोपनिषदारण्यकग्रन्थानां मूलस्रोतो ब्रह्मविद्याप्रतिपादकं दर्शनमिदं “रहस्यविद्या” “मोक्षशास्त्रम्” इत्यपि उच्यते। अस्मिन् दर्शने प्रामुख्येन “उपनिषत्”, “श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता”, “ब्रह्मसूत्रम्” इति त्रयो ग्रन्थाः “प्रस्थानत्रयी”ति नाम्ना प्रसिद्धास्तत्तत्सिद्धान्तान् प्रभावयन्ति। यथा भूमिभेदं सम्प्राप्य एकैका सरित् बहुधा विभजते, तथा एकमेवेदं ब्रह्मविद्यानिरूपकं वेदान्तदर्शनं बहून् शुद्धान्तःकरणान् आचार्यान् सम्प्राप्य अनेकधाऽभवत्। तच्च वेदान्तदर्शनं प्राधान्येनैतावत्पर्यन्तम् अद्वैत-विशिष्टाद्वैत-शुद्धाद्वैत-द्वैत-द्वैताद्वैत-अचिन्त्यभेदाभेदनाम्ना षड्भिर्विधाभिः प्रथितमासीत्। एतस्मिन्नेव क्रमे परमात्मस्वामिनारायणोपदेशलब्धं वैदिकं प्रागुक्ताऽद्वैतविशिष्टाद्वैतादिभिन्नं विशिष्टं मौलिकमक्षरपुरुषोत्तमदर्शनमपि महामहोपाध्यायैः स्वामिभद्रेशदासचरणैः प्रस्थानत्रयीस्वामिनारायणभाष्ये वैदिकशास्त्रप्रमाणैः साधु प्रतिपादितं दार्शनिकक्षेत्रे विद्वज्जगति सम्यगादरं प्राप्य प्रथितम् एवमिदानीं सप्तमी विधा वेदान्तदर्शने प्रसिद्धिमागतेति

वैदिकसम्प्रदायपरम्परागौरवाऽभिवृद्धिरेव संजातेत्यत्र नास्ति शङ्कापङ्कावलेषः। एवं पूर्वप्रथितैः षड्भिर्वेदान्तदर्शनैः सह सप्तममक्षरपुरुषोत्तमदर्शनं संयोज्य सप्तानामपि वेदान्तदर्शनानां नामधेयानि तत्तत्संप्रदायप्रस्थापकाः एवं प्रधानभाष्यगन्थाश्च प्रवक्तारः प्रसिद्धाः ग्रन्थाः अधोलिखितप्रकारेण कोष्टके प्रदर्श्यन्ते।

	दर्शनम्	स्थापकः	प्रधानो भाष्यग्रन्थः
१	अद्वैतदर्शनम्	भगवत्पादः श्रीशङ्कराचार्यः	ब्रह्मसूत्रशाङ्करभाष्यम्
२	विशिष्टाद्वैतदर्शनम्	श्रीरामानुजाचार्यः	ब्रह्मसूत्रश्रीभाष्यम्
३	शुद्धाद्वैतदर्शनम्	बल्लभाचार्यः	ब्रह्मसूत्राणुभाष्यम्
४	द्वैतदर्शनम्	मध्वाचार्यः	ब्रह्मसूत्रभाष्यम्
५	द्वैताद्वैतदर्शनम्	निम्बार्काचार्यः	वेदान्तपारिजातसौरभम्
६	अचिन्त्यभेदाभेददर्शनम्	श्रीचैतन्यमहाप्रभुः	गोविन्दभाष्यम्
७	अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमदर्शनम्	परब्रह्म स्वामिनारायणः	स्वामिनारायणभाष्यम्

शोधपत्रेऽस्मिन् श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतास्वामिनारायणभाष्याऽऽधारेण ब्रह्मविद्यायाः विचारः उपस्थाप्यते।

१) स्वामिनारायणसम्प्रदायः

उपरोक्तान् वेदान्तसम्प्रदायान् अतिरिच्य परब्रह्मस्वामिनारायणेन एकं नूतनं मौलिकं च दर्शनं प्रददौ। उत्तरप्रदेशस्य गोण्डाजनपदे छपियानामके ग्रामे लब्धजन्मना परब्रह्मस्वामिनारायणभगवता स्वामिनारायणसम्प्रदायः प्रवर्तितः। अक्षररूपतां प्राप्य पुरुषोत्तमोपासना कर्तव्या, धरायामस्यां ब्रह्मद्वारकं सदैव परमात्मप्राकट्यमित्यादिसिद्धान्तः, आचारशुद्धिः, चरित्रशुद्धिः, नैतिकता, स्वच्छता, व्यवहारः इत्यादीनि तथ्यानि दर्शनस्यास्य मूलभित्तिरूपाणि भवन्ति। शिक्षापत्री-सत्संगदीक्षेत्यादिग्रन्थेष्वेतानि तथ्यानि प्रतिपादितानि। परब्रह्मस्वामिनारायणोक्ता उपदेशा वचनामृतशास्त्ररूपेण प्रसिद्धाः श्रुतिस्मृत्यादिशास्त्राणां सारभूताश्च। ग्रन्थेऽस्मिन् सम्प्रदायस्य तत्त्वज्ञानं साधनारीतिश्च सम्यङ्निरूपिता। वचनामृतोक्तोऽयं सिद्धान्तः “अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमदर्शनम्” इति नाम्ना अभिधीयते। अक्षरब्रह्मगुरुपरम्परायामस्यां विराजमानस्य गुरुप्रमुखस्वामिमहाराजस्य व्युत्पन्नः शिष्यः श्रीभट्टेशदासस्वामिमहोदयः परब्रह्मस्वामिनारायणप्रबोधितसिद्धान्तानुसारं उपनिषद्-ब्रह्मसूत्र-श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतानां (प्रस्थानत्रय्याः) स्वामिनारायणभाष्याणि विरच्य भारतीयदर्शनपरम्पराया महती सेवामकारि। तेषु त्रिष्वपि भाष्येषु श्रीमद्भगवद्गीताभाष्यमत्र अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमदर्शनसिद्धान्तदृष्ट्या किञ्चित् पर्यालोच्यते। तत्र विशिष्टतया जीवब्रह्मतत्त्वयोः सम्बन्धः इत्यादिविषये तद्भाष्यमाध्यमेन उपस्थाप्यते। ततः पूर्वं विविधासु वेदान्तशाखासु

अनयोः जीवब्रह्मणोः ज्ञानमीमांसा कथं विहिता, तथा च स्वामिनारायणभाष्ये तत्साधनं कथं कृतं तदत्र किञ्चित् प्रासङ्गिकतया संक्षेपेण निरूप्यते ।

२) वेदान्तसिद्धान्ते जीवब्रह्मविचारः

(१) अद्वैतदर्शनम्

वेदान्तशाखासु सर्वप्राचीना प्रथमशाखा भवति श्रीशङ्करभगवत्पादानाम् “अद्वैतवेदान्तः” । तन्मतानुसारेण सजातीय-विजातीय-स्वगतभेदत्रयरहितपरंब्रह्मणा सह जीवात्मन एकत्वं वर्तते । “अद्वैतम्” (Non-Dualism) इत्यस्य द्विधा व्युत्पत्तिः क्रियते । यथा - द्विधा इतं द्वितम्, तदेव द्वैतं, न विद्यते द्वैतं यत्रेति व्युत्पत्त्या, द्वितीयाभावोपलक्षितं ब्रह्मेत्यर्थः, “एकमेवाद्वितीयम्” इति श्रुतेः । अथवा द्वयोर्भावः द्विता, द्वितैव द्वैतं भेदः, न द्वैतमद्वैतं भेदाभाव ऐक्यमिति यावत् । ब्रह्मसूत्रस्य शङ्करभाष्यं शारीरकभाष्यमित्युच्यते, यत्र अद्वैतवादस्य उपस्थापना शङ्करभगवत्पादैः कृताऽस्ति । तानि शारीरकसूत्राणीत्युच्यन्ते । कुत्सितं शरीरं शरीरकं, तत्र भवः शारीरकः जीवात्मा इति । सः सूत्र्यते याथातथ्येन निरूप्यते यैः सूत्रैस्तान्येव शारीरकसूत्राणि भवन्ति । एवं कुत्सिते शरीरे विद्यमानः जीवः सजातीयविजातीयस्वगतभेदत्रयरहितपरंब्रह्म च उभयोर्मध्ये कोऽपि भेदो नास्तीति अद्वैतवेदान्तस्य निष्कर्षोऽस्ति ।

(२) विशिष्टाद्वैतदर्शनम्

तथैव श्रीरामानुजाचार्याणां वेदान्तसिद्धान्तो भवति “विशिष्टाद्वैतः” । विशिष्टञ्च विशिष्टञ्च विशिष्टे, तयोरद्वैतं विशिष्टाद्वैतमिति । एतदुभयविशिष्टस्य ब्रह्मण एकप्रतिपादको वादः सिद्धान्तो वा विशिष्टाद्वैतवादो भवति । किं वा द्विधा इतं द्वितं तस्य भावः, द्वैतम्, विशिष्टं च विशिष्टञ्च विशिष्टे, विशिष्टयोः स्थूलचिदचिद्विशिष्टब्रह्मणः सूक्ष्मचिदचिद्विशिष्टब्रह्मणश्चाद्वैतं भेदाभाव ऐक्यं वा विशिष्टाद्वैतमिति पदसिद्धिः । अस्य सिद्धान्तस्य विश्लेषणं कुर्वता सर्वदर्शनकौमुदीकारेणोक्तं यत् - यस्मिन् सिद्धान्ते चेतनाजीवात्मनः अचेतनाजडजगन्ति च प्रलयावस्थायां सूक्ष्माकारेण विलीना आसन्, सृष्टिकाले च पुनस्तस्मादग्नेः स्फुलिङ्गानिःसृतवत्ते तस्मान्निःसृत्य तस्मिन्नेव ब्रह्मणि स्थूलावस्थया तिष्ठन्ति तत्तद्विश्लेषणांशेन भेदविशिष्टयोस्तयोर्ब्रह्मणोरेकत्वं सिद्धान्तितमभूतादृश-स्मिद्धान्त एव “विशिष्टाद्वैतसिद्धान्त” इत्युच्यते । रामानुजाचार्यनये स एव सगुणब्रह्मेश्वरः, स्थूलं चित्, स्थूलमचित्, विशिष्टं ब्रह्म सूक्ष्मं चित्, सूक्ष्मं चाचिद् विशिष्टं ब्रह्म इत्याख्यया अभिहितो भवति ।

(३) शुद्धाद्वैतदर्शनम्

तृतीया वेदान्तशाखा भवति श्रीमद्वल्लभाचार्याणां “शुद्धाद्वैतवेदान्तः” । शुद्धाद्वैतनये कार्यकारणरूपं ब्रह्म शुद्धं ब्रह्म । मायया सह तस्य सम्बन्धो न विद्यते । अद्वैतवादिन मायां ब्रह्मणशक्तिरूपेणाङ्गीकुर्वन्ति, किन्तु शुद्धाद्वैतवादे माया ब्रह्मणशक्तिर्न भवति । यथोक्तं – “कार्यकारणरूपं हि शुद्धं ब्रह्म न मायिकम्” इति । अस्य नये जीवो नित्योऽणुश्च । यथा सुवर्णपिण्डनिर्गतकणानां तत्पिण्डेन सह अंशांशिभावसम्बन्धो विद्यते तथैव जीवब्रह्मणोर्मध्ये अंशांशिभावसम्बन्धोऽस्ति । शुद्धाद्वैतवादिनः वैष्णवाः भवन्ति । तेषामुपास्यदेवः श्रीकृष्णचन्द्रः । सकलं जगत् श्रीकृष्णमयमिति तेऽभिप्रयन्ति । श्रीकृष्णं शुद्धं ब्रह्म इति मत्वा तस्मिन् स्वस्य तनुमनोधनादिसकलवस्तुनि समर्प्य प्रगाढभक्त्याऽऽत्मसमर्पणेनैव जीवस्य मुक्तिर्भवतीति तेषामभिमतम् ।

(४) द्वैतदर्शम्

चतुर्थी वेदान्तशाखाऽस्ति मध्वाचार्यस्य “द्वैतवेदान्तः” । यस्मिन् सिद्धान्ते सगुणपरंब्रह्मेश्वर-जीवात्मानौ द्वौ कथमपि नैकपदार्थौ इति प्रतिपादितौ सः सिद्धान्तः “द्वैतसिद्धान्तः” इत्युच्यते । एतन्नये जीवो भक्त उपासकश्च । सगुणब्रह्मेश्वर उपास्यः । अनेन दर्शनेन भेदस्त्रिविधः । यथा - सजातीयः (Homogeneous), विजातीयः (Heterogeneous), स्वगतश्च (Eternal) । वृक्षाद् वृक्षस्य भेदः सजातीयः; वृक्षस्य प्रस्तराद्भेदः विजातीयः ; वृक्षस्य पत्रस्य फलस्य वा भेदः स्वगतः इति कथ्यते ।

एतेषां मते जीवः सत्यं ज्ञात्वा मोक्षमवाप्य ब्रह्मणः ईश्वरस्य सादृश्यं भजते न तु ईश्वरो भवति । गीतायामुक्तम् -

इदं ज्ञानमुपाश्रित्य मम साधर्म्यमागतः ।

सर्वेऽपि नोपजायन्ते प्रलये न व्यथन्ति च ॥ (गीता - १४-२)

द्वैतवादे प्रपञ्चस्य पञ्च भेदाः स्वीकृताः । यथा - (१) जीवेश्वरयोर्भेदः (२) जडेश्वरयोर्भेदः (३) द्वयोर्जीवयोर्भेदः (४) जडजीवयोर्भेदः (५) द्वयोर्जडयोर्भेदश्चेति । अत्र संग्रहश्लोके उच्यते -

जीवेश्वरभिदा चैव जडेश्वरभिदा तथा ।

जीवभेदो मिथश्चैव जडजीवभिदा तथा ॥

मिथश्च जडभेदो यः प्रपञ्चो भेदपञ्चकः ।

सोऽयं सत्योऽप्यनादिश्च सादिश्चेन्नाशमानुयात् ॥

न च नाशं प्रयात्येषः न चासौ भ्रन्तिकल्पितः ।

कल्पितश्चेन्निवर्तेत न चासौ विनिवर्तते ॥

द्वैतं न विद्यत इति तस्मादज्ञानिनां मतम् ।

मतं हि ज्ञानिनामेतन्मितं त्रातं हि विष्णुना ॥ (पूर्णप्रज्ञदर्शनम्)

(५) द्वैताद्वैतदर्शनम्

हंसरूपिणो निम्बार्काचार्याः वेदान्तस्य पञ्चमशाखायाः “द्वैताद्वैतवेदान्तस्य” प्रवर्तकाः भवन्ति । सिद्धान्तेऽस्मिन् सगुणब्रह्मेश्वर-जीव-जगतान्तेषां त्रयाणां परस्परं भिन्नत्वमभिन्नत्वञ्च उभयं प्रतिपाद्यते । अतः सिद्धान्तोऽयं “द्वैताद्वैत” इत्युच्यते । अस्यापरं नाम “भेदाभेदवाद” इति । एवमत्र तत्त्वत्रयं स्वीकृतम् - (१) ईश्वरः (२) जीवः (३) जगच्चेति । एतानि त्रीणि तत्त्वानि परस्परं भिन्नानि भवन्ति इति एकस्मिन् पक्षे स्वीकाराद् द्वैतसिद्धान्तः, अपरस्मिन् पक्षे जीवजगतोः परमेश्वरेण सह तादृशस्सम्बन्धो वर्तते यथा जलतरङ्गयोस्सम्बन्ध इति स्वीकारात् अभेदवादोऽपि एभिरङ्गीक्रियते । जीवः प्रकृतिश्च एते द्वे तत्त्वे परमेश्वराधीने भवतः । परमात्मानं विहाय एतयोः तत्त्वयोः सत्ता न सम्भवति । अतः उभयद्वैताद्वैतमतावलम्बिन इमे निम्बार्कमतानुयायिनः । एतेषां मते जीवः अणुरूपः प्रत्येकं भिन्नः । अयं जीवो द्विविधः - “बद्धः”, “मुक्तश्चे”ति । जडतत्त्वं प्रकृतिस्त्रिविधा - (१) अप्राकृतप्रकृतिः (२) प्राकृतप्रकृतिः (३) कालप्रकृतिश्च । ईश्वरः परमात्मा, वैश्वानरः, ब्रह्म, पुरुषोत्तमः, भगवान् इत्यादिभिः नामभिः ज्ञायते । अयम् अविद्या-अस्मिता-राग-द्वेष-अभिनिवेशाख्यपञ्चदोषैः शून्यो भवति । वासुदेवः, सङ्कर्षणः, प्रद्युम्नः, अनिरुद्धश्च ईश्वरस्य चत्वारि अङ्गानि भवन्ति ।

(६) अचिन्त्यभेदाभेददर्शनम्

षष्ठोऽद्वैतवादोऽस्ति महाप्रभोः श्रीचैतन्यस्य । गौडीयवैष्णवसम्प्रदायस्य आद्यप्रवर्तकः चैतन्यः “अचिन्त्यभेदाभेदवादम्” उपस्थापयति । येन सिद्धान्तेन अचिन्त्यशक्तिसम्पन्नेश्वर-जीवात्मजगतामेषां त्रयाणां वस्तुनां परस्परविभिन्नतासत्त्वेऽपि तेषामभिन्नता प्रतिपाद्यते सः सिद्धान्तः अचिन्त्यभेदाभेदसिद्धान्त इत्युच्यते । अत्र जीवात्मा अणुः सेवकश्च, भगवान् विभुः सेव्यश्च, जगच्च सत्यम् । अत्र भेदाभेदवादो द्वैताद्वैतमतसमो भवति । बलदेवविद्याभूषणनये जीवब्रह्मणोर्भिन्नत्वेऽपि गुणगुणिभावाभ्यामभिन्नत्वम् ।

(७) अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमदर्शनम्

एवं जीवब्रह्मणोः सम्बन्धविशेषप्रतिपादिकां “ब्रह्मविद्यां” स्वीकृत्य विधीयमानायां ज्ञानपरम्परायां स्वामिनारायणपरमात्मना प्रस्थापिता “अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमदर्शनम्” इति नाम्ना प्रादुर्भूताऽस्ति वेदान्तस्य सप्तमशाखा । परब्रह्मणा स्वामिनारायणेन जीव ईश्वरो माया ब्रह्म परब्रह्म चेति पञ्च तत्त्वानि नित्यानि सत्यानि परस्परं स्वरूपतः सदैव भिन्नानीत्युक्तम् ।

परमात्मपरमोपासकं यदक्षरं तदुणान् निर्दोषत्व-त्रिगुणातीतत्व-भक्त्यादीन् संप्राप्याऽक्षराधीशस्य पुरुषोत्तमस्य भक्त्युपासनं कार्यमिति परमात्मस्वामिनारायणप्रस्थापितः सिद्धान्तोऽयमस्य दर्शने प्राधान्यं भजते अत इदं दर्शनम् अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमदर्शनम् इति नाम्ना प्रसिद्धिमाप्रनोत्। वेदान्तस्येयं सप्तमशाखा। एषा प्रायशः अष्टादशशताब्देः प्रारभ्य इदानीं भारतस्य विविधेषु कोणविकोणेषु प्रचारिता प्रसारिता च दृश्यते। परब्रह्मस्वामिनारायणप्रबोधितसिद्धान्तेस्मिन् अक्षरब्रह्म-परब्रह्मणोर्मध्ये भेदस्य प्रतिपादनम्। सम्पूर्णस्यास्य चराचरजगतः नियन्ता सर्वोपरि स्थितः परंब्रह्म परमेश्वरः पुरुषोत्तमो वा नारायणो विद्यते। अक्षरब्रह्मापि परब्रह्मणो नित्येच्छया चराचरजगतः कारणमस्ति। तत्त्वत एकमेवाक्षरब्रह्म कार्यभेदेन चत्वारि स्वरूपाणि विधृत्य तिष्ठति। तत्रैकं परमात्मनित्यनिवासभूतं धामरूपम्। तस्मिंश्च धामनि परमात्मसेवायां निमग्नमपरस्वरूपम्। तदेव पुनरनन्तकोटिब्रह्मण्डात्मकसकलप्रपञ्चे अन्वयत्वेन व्याप्य स्थितम्। एतदेवाक्षरं ब्रह्म नैकजीवानामात्यन्तिककल्याणाय धरायामस्यामवतरति, स्वदिव्यप्रसङ्गेन जीवान् ब्रह्मरूपान् विदधाति, परमात्मानं निश्चायति, परमात्मप्राकट्यं चानुभावयति। एवम् अक्षरब्रह्म-परंब्रह्मणोः भिन्नत्वमुपनिषत्स्वपि प्रतिपादितमस्ति। यथा -

- येनाक्षरं पुरुषं वेद सत्यं प्रोवाच तां तत्त्वतो ब्रह्मविद्याम् (मुण्डकोपनिषत् - १/२/१३),
- अथ परा, यया तदक्षरमधिगम्यते (तत्रैव - १/१/५),
- यत्तदद्रेश्यमग्राह्यमगोत्रमवर्ण-मचक्षुःश्रोत्रं तदपाणिपादम्।
- नित्यं विभुं सर्वगतं सुसूक्ष्मं तदव्ययं यद् भूतयोनिं परिपश्यन्ति धीराः ॥ (तत्रैव - १/१/६)
- अक्षरात्सम्भवतीह विश्वम्, तपसा चीयते ब्रह्म (तत्रैव - १/१/७-८)
- तस्मादेतद् ब्रह्म नाम रूपमन्नं च जायते (तत्रैव - १/१/९)
- यत्रामृतस्स पुरुषो ह्यव्ययात्मा (तत्रैव - १/२/११)
- पुरुषः स बाह्याभ्यन्तरो ह्यजः। अप्राणो ह्यमनाः सुप्ते ह्यक्षरात् परतः परः (२/१/२)

इत्येवं मुण्डकोपनिषद्वाक्यैः स्पष्टमिदं प्रतीयते यत् अक्षरब्रह्म-पुरुषोत्तमयोर्मध्ये वर्तते भिन्नत्वं तथा च अक्षरब्रह्मापेक्षया पुरुषोत्तमस्य श्रेष्ठत्वमिति। श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतायामप्युच्यते - “अक्षरादपि चोत्तमः” (गीता. १५/१८) इति। एवं प्रस्थानत्रयग्रन्थेषु अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमदर्शनं विराजते। एतयोः अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमयोः मध्ये अक्षरब्रह्मज्ञानम्, पुरुषोत्तमतत्त्वज्ञानम्, तस्य माहात्म्यावबोधः, तद्भक्त्युपासनापद्धतिः, ब्राह्मीस्थितिसम्प्राप्तिः, मोक्षाधिगमः इत्यादिविषयाः अत्र प्रधानाः। मोक्षेभीष्णुः अक्षरब्रह्मरूपः सन् परमात्मोपासनं कृत्वैव अभीष्टं चिरन्तनशाश्वतसुखं प्राप्तुं शक्नुयात्। उच्यते च तैत्तिरीयोपनिषदि - “ब्रह्मविदाप्नोति परम्” (तैत्तिरीयोपनिषत् - २/१/१)। एवमत्र आत्मा अक्षरब्रह्माणं साक्षात्करोति। अक्षरब्रह्मसाक्षात्कारेण सोऽसौ ब्रह्मरूप आत्मा परंब्रह्माणं यथार्थतयोपासितुं शक्नुयात्। कठोपनिषदि अपि उच्यते - “अध्यात्मयोगाधिगमेन

देवं मत्वा धीरो हर्षशोको जहाति” (कठोपनिषत् - २/१२) इति । श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतायां भगवान् अपि उपदिशति -

ब्रह्मभूतः प्रसन्नात्मा न शोचति न काङ्क्षति ।

समस्सर्वेषु भूतेषु मद्भक्तिं लभते पराम् ॥ (गीता - १८/५४)

एवम् अक्षरब्रह्मणः परब्रह्मणश्च मध्ये भेदप्रदर्शकस्य परब्रह्मस्वामिनारायणप्रदत्तसिद्धान्तस्य दर्शनं वेदान्तशास्त्रेषु दृश्यते। तस्यैव प्रतिपादनं श्रीमान् भद्रेशदासस्वामिवर्यः दृढतरप्रमाणैस्सह प्रस्थानत्रय्याः स्वामिनारायणभाष्ये अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमदर्शननिष्कर्षमूलकतया अकरोत् ।

३) श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतायाः स्वामिनारायणभाष्ये जीवब्रह्मविचारः

श्रीभद्रेशदासस्वामिवर्येण गीतायाः यद्धाष्यं विरचितं तस्य स्वामिनारायणभाष्यम् इति नामकरणयाथार्थ्यं स्वयमेव लिखति भूमिकायां - “भगवत्स्वामिनारायणोपदिष्टार्थानुगत्वात्स्वामिनारायणेतिमहामन्त्रस्य ब्रह्मविद्यारहस्यमयत्वाच्च ब्रह्मविद्यानिरूपकश्रीमद्भगवद्गीताभाष्यस्यास्य स्वामिनारायणेत्यभिधानम्” इति । गीतायाः श्रुतितत्त्वगम्भीरोऽर्थोऽतीव गहनोऽस्ति । तथापि गुरुकृपया प्राप्तप्रज्ञया श्रीमान् भद्रेशदासमहोदयस्तत्कर्तुं समर्थ आसीदिति तदीयानुग्रहवचनमस्ति । यथा -

क्व गीताग्रन्थोऽयं गहनसुगभीरः श्रुतिसमः

क्व हन्ताऽस्मद्बुद्धिः प्रकृतिजडपङ्केन मलिना ।

तथाऽपि प्रज्ञा तु परमगुरुकारुण्यसुलभा

कटाक्षः पर्याप्तः प्रमुखनयनोद्भूतसरसः ॥ इति ।

पूर्वतनीयाचार्यैः प्रोक्तानुसारं श्रीमद्भगवद्गीताया अष्टादशाध्यायानां नामानि इत्थं वर्तन्ते - अर्जुनविषादयोगः, सांख्ययोगः, कर्मयोगः, ज्ञानकर्मसंन्यासयोगः, कर्मसंन्यासयोगः, आत्मसंयमयोगः, ज्ञानविज्ञानयोगः, ब्रह्मयोगः, अध्यात्मविद्यायोगः, विभूतियोगः, विश्वरूपदर्शनयोगः, भक्तियोगः, क्षेत्रक्षेत्रज्ञविभागयोगः, गुणत्रयविभागयोगः, पुरुषोत्तमयोगः, दैवासुरसम्पद्विभागयोगः, श्रद्धात्रयविभागयोगः, मोक्षसंन्यासयोगश्चेति । श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतायाः प्रथमाध्यायो गीतोपदेशस्य विलक्षणनाटकीयरङ्गभूमिं प्रस्तौति । अत्र श्रोता वक्ता च उभौ शान्तेः कृते नापि तु जीवनस्य दुस्सहसमस्यानां समाधानार्थं प्रवृत्तौ भवतः । शौर्यम्, धैर्यम्, साहसम्, बलमिति चतुर्भिः गुणैः अर्जुनस्य व्यक्तित्वं संघटितमासीत्, तदतिरिच्यापि क्षमा-प्रज्ञागुणद्वयेनापि सः दृढचित्त आसीत् । परन्तु धर्मक्षेत्रे कुरुक्षेत्रे स्वबान्धवजनान् दृष्ट्वा तैस्सह युद्धं करणीयं वा न करणीयम् ? इति महान् प्रश्नः तस्य मनसि समागतः । विचित्रकार्पण्यकरुणापूरिते तस्य मनसि क्षात्रस्वभावो लुप्तोऽभवत् । युद्धविमुखोऽयं गाण्डीवं त्यक्त्वा महान्तं विषादमन्वभवत् । एतादृशीं तस्य दयनीयदशां दृष्ट्वा सारथिरूपेण तद्रथचालकः द्वारकाधीशः भगवान् श्रीकृष्णः तर्केण,

बुद्ध्या, ज्ञानेन, कर्मालोचनया, विश्वस्वभावज्ञापनेन, जीवनकर्तव्योद्बोधनेन, अव्ययपुरुषपरिचयेन, परमात्मधामरूपाक्षरब्रह्मणः तस्मच्चापि परभूतस्य सर्वोपरि विद्यमानस्य परब्रह्मणः सत्त्वोपस्थापनेन, स्वीयसाक्षात्स्वरूपप्रदर्शनेन अर्जुनस्य मानसविषादं दूरीकर्तुं प्रयत्नं चकार । एवं क्रमशः तदुपदेशाः समेऽपि अत्र श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतायां चर्चायाः प्रमुखाः विषयाः भवन्ति ।

श्रीस्वामिनारायणोपदिष्टाऽक्षरपुरुषोत्तमदर्शने परमात्माऽस्यां पृथिव्यामवतरति नित्यं च प्रकटो वर्तते इति एतद्दर्शनस्यास्ति काऽपि विशेषता । श्रीमद्भगवद्गीताऽऽधारेण श्रीकृष्णार्जुनयोर्मध्ये जीवेश्वरसम्बन्धः प्रायशः सर्वैः व्याख्याकारैः प्रदर्श्यते । तत्र विषादग्रस्तः अर्जुनः परंब्रह्मणः अवतारभूतश्रीकृष्णस्योपदेशैः स्वकर्तव्यपरिपालनपूर्वकं नष्टमोहः लब्धस्मृतिः जीवनजीविकयोः चक्रव्यूहविषये गतसन्देहो जायते । अतस्तेन गीतायाः अन्ते उच्यते -

नष्टो मोहः स्मृतिर्लब्ध्वा त्वत्प्रसादान्मयाऽच्युत ।

स्थितोऽस्मि गतसन्देहः करिष्ये वचनं तव ॥ (गीता. १८/७३)

अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमदर्शनाधारेण अक्षरब्रह्म प्रत्यगात्मनामप्यात्मा । तदन्तश्च परब्रह्मपुरुषोत्तमो निवसति । एवमाध्यात्मिकसाधकाः भक्ताः अक्षरब्रह्मरूपत्वं सम्प्राप्य परब्रह्मणः पुरुषोत्तमस्य नारायणस्य वा भक्तिं कृत्वा मोक्षं प्राप्तुं शक्नुवन्ति जन्ममृत्युचक्राच्च विमुक्ताः भवन्ति । प्रबुद्धः गुरुः पृथिव्यां प्रकटितः अक्षरब्रह्मणः एकं स्वरूपं भवति । असौ गुरुर्नित्यं मायायाः, सांसारिकासक्तेः दूरे स्थित्वा अपूर्णतायाः प्रभावादुपरि एकस्मिन् शाश्वते स्थाने तिष्ठति । तेन अक्षरब्रह्मणा गुरुणा साकं सत्सङ्गमेन, तं ज्ञात्वा च ऐकान्तिको भक्तः, अध्यात्मसाधुपुरुषः मायामतिरिच्य आध्यात्मिकपूर्णतां प्राप्तुं शक्नोति । अनेन जीवस्य सांसारिकच्युतिः कदापि न जायते, यदि अक्षरब्रह्म तादृशः कोऽपि गुरुपदेष्टा वा तेन सह विद्यते । गुरोरावश्यकता तु लौकिकाध्यात्मिकक्षेत्रेषु सर्वत्र विद्यते । श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतायामप्यर्जुनो शिष्यस्तेहं शाधि मां त्वां प्रपन्नमित्युक्त्वा स्वसखायं भगवन्तं श्रीकृष्णं गुरुरूपेण स्वीकृत्यैव नष्टमोहो बभूव । श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतायां प्रथमाध्याये अर्जुनः श्रीकृष्णाय “अच्युत” इति सम्बोधयामास । यथा - “सेनयोरुभयोर्मध्ये रथं स्थापय मेऽच्युत” (गीता. १/२१) इति । अत्र अच्युतशब्दस्य व्युत्पत्तिः भद्रेशस्वामिवर्यैः इत्थं क्रियते - “स्वाश्रितान् धर्मज्ञानवैराग्यभक्त्यादितो नैव च्यावयति स्वतश्च स्वरूपस्वभावैश्वर्यादितो न च्युतिमाप्नोतीत्यच्युतः, तत्सम्बोधने । इदं हि गीतायामाद्यं सम्बोधनं पार्थस्य पार्थसारथिं प्रति ।” एवं श्रीकृष्णो वर्तते भगवान् । तद्भक्तश्च अर्जुनः । साक्षाद्भगवानेव साधारणयन्तृभावं सम्पद्य श्रीकृष्णः भक्तादिष्टस्सन् रथं समरसन्निहितयोः द्वयोः कौरवपाण्डयोर्मध्ये अस्थापयदिति तस्य करुणापारावारिणः इयं पराकाष्ठा वर्तते । गुरुः, भगवान् भक्ताधीनो भवति इति तस्य समाश्रितवात्सल्यनिधेः अद्भुतोऽयं गुणः । स एव भक्तमुक्तेः चरमोपाय इति भद्रेशदासवर्यस्य व्याख्यानेन अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमदर्शनस्य सङ्केतः प्राप्यते ।

जीवः “अनृतेन हि प्रत्यूढाः” (छा.उ. - ८/३/२), “तेषां सत्यानां सतामनृतमपिधानम्”

(छा.८/३/१), “अज्ञानेनावृतं ज्ञानं तेन मुह्यन्ति जन्तवः” (गी.८/३/१), “धूमेनाव्रीयते वह्निर्यथाऽऽदर्शो मलेन च । यथोल्बेनावृतो गर्भस्तथा तेनेदमावृतम् ॥” (गी.३/३८); “आवृतं ज्ञानमेतेन ज्ञानिनो नित्यवैरिणा” (गी.३/३९) इत्यादिभिः शास्त्रीयवचोभिः अज्ञानेन मोहग्रस्तो भवतीति स्पष्टं प्रतीयते । क्वचिद् सत्त्वरजस्तमोगुणानां न्यूनाधिक्येऽपि जीवः बन्धनग्रस्तो भवतीति गीतायां बहुधा उल्लिखितमस्ति । यथा -

सत्त्वरजस्तम इति गुणाः प्रकृतिसम्भवाः ।

निबध्नन्ति महाबाहो देहे देहिनमव्ययम् ॥ (गीता. १४/५)

कारणं गुणसङ्गोऽस्य सदसद्योनिजन्मसु । (गीता. १३/२१)

आचार्यः भद्रेशस्वामिवर्यः मायाग्रस्तस्य जीवस्य उपमानत्वेन हालिक-गोपालकौ उपस्थाप्य अर्जुनेन साकं तयोस्तुलनां करोति । यथा हालिकः स्वक्षेत्रस्य गर्भे स्थितं रत्नसम्पूरितस्वर्णमयनिधिकुम्भं मूढताकारेण ज्ञातुमसमर्थः तत्क्षेत्रमहत्त्वं न जानाति, आजीवनं बलीवर्दाभ्यां सह पांसुलपादुकस्सन् दरिद्रतामुद्रहते; यथा वा महामूल्यवत्सूर्यकान्तादिमणिस्वामी सन्नपि वराको गोपालकस्तन्महिमानम् अनवगच्छन् स्वयमेव स्वहस्ताभ्यां स्वधनाढ्यतां पशुकण्ठकुण्ठितां कुरुते; तथैव धनुर्धरोऽयं पराक्रमी पार्थः भ्रमच्चक्रानुलग्नमीनाक्षिवेधन समर्थोऽपि बाल्यकाले लब्धलक्ष्यावधानमनःकौशलोऽपि भ्राम्यते, विकम्पते, पुरुषर्षभोऽपि नपुंसकायते रोदिति च । एतत्सर्वं केवलं मायाकारणादेव जायमानमासीत् ।

एवं यथा मोहान्धः जीवः सांसारिकविषयवासनाचक्रे निपत्य दुःखमनुभवति, स्ववास्तविकं लक्ष्यं न जानाति, सा माया परमात्मस्वरूपज्ञानेन एव विनिवर्तते । शास्त्रेष्वपि उच्यते -

तमेव विदित्वाऽतिमृत्युमेति नान्यः पन्था विद्यतेऽयनाय । (शु.य. ३१/१८)

परं दृष्ट्वा निवर्तते । (गीता. २/५९)

भिद्यते हृदयग्रन्थिश्छिद्यते सर्वसंशयाः ।

क्षीयन्ते चास्य कर्माणि तस्मिन् दृष्टे परावरे ॥ (मुण्डकोपनिषत् - २/२/८) इत्यादि ।

परब्रह्मणः स्वरूपमपि सकलमनुजनयनगोचरं प्रत्यक्षनराकृतिरूपमेव बोध्यम् । तदुपासनञ्च यथावस्थितस्वानुष्ठानाय उपासकात्मब्रह्माक्षरैक्यमपेक्षते । ब्रह्मात्मैक्यविभावनयैव यथावत् परब्रह्मोपासना प्राप्यते, मायायाः निवृत्तिश्च जायते । तस्मादेव श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतायामुच्यते -

ब्रह्मभूतः प्रसन्नात्मा न शोचति न काङ्क्षति ।

समस्सर्वेषु भूतेषु मद्भक्तिं लभते पराम् ॥ (गीता. - १८/५४)

अपि च यः जीवः दुष्कर्मलग्नः, मूढः, नराधमः, मायाया अपहृतबुद्धिः, आसुरभावमाश्रितः भवति ; स महाद्वेषाग्निदग्धः सर्वात्मना एव परमात्मानं द्रुह्यन् नारायणं न समुपासते इति उपदिश्यते भगवता श्रीकृष्णेन । यथा -

न मां दुष्कृतिनो मूढाः प्रपद्यन्ते नराधमाः ।

माययाऽपहृतज्ञाना आसुरं भावमाश्रिताः ॥ (गीता. ७/१५)

तर्हि के उपासते ? इति प्रश्ने उच्यते -

चतुर्विधा भजन्ते मां जनाः सुकृतिनोऽर्जुन ।

आर्तो जिज्ञासुरर्थार्थी ज्ञानी च भरतर्षभ ॥ (गीता. ७/१६)

चत्वारः विशिष्टाः पुरुषाः उत्तमकर्मपुण्याः सुकृतिनः नारायणं तं प्राप्तुं शक्नुवन्ति, तस्य भजनं कुर्वन्ति । यथा - (१) आर्तः (बाह्याभ्यन्तरक्लेशक्लान्तः विषादी, तत्क्लेशापनोदनाभिलाषी), (२) अर्थार्थी (ऐश्वर्याभिलाषी) अथवा अप्राप्तं प्राप्तुं प्राप्तादधिकं वा प्राप्तुं भजनशीलः, (३) जिज्ञासुः (ब्रह्मविद्याभिलाषी) तथा (४) ज्ञानी (ब्रह्मस्वरूपगुरूपदेशादिभिः लब्धब्रह्मविद्यः) इति भद्रेशमहोदयानां शब्दार्थनिरुक्तिः । अत्रापि यः ज्ञानी (ब्रह्मविद्यासम्पन्नः) भक्तः विशिष्यते । असौ भक्तः निरन्तरं सकलेन्द्रियाणि प्रकटपरमात्मनि नियोज्य सदैव उद्योगपरायणो भवति । एकस्मिन् प्रत्यक्षनारायणस्वरूपे एव निष्कामभावेन निमग्नो भवति, तत्रैव तस्य भक्त्यतिशयत्वं तिष्ठति । एतादृशस्य परमात्ममाहात्म्यज्ञानवतो अक्षरब्रह्मरूपस्य भक्तस्य अतिप्रियो भवति परमात्मा परंब्रह्म । परमात्मनोपि स प्रियो भवति । तदुच्यते श्रीमता श्रीकृष्णेन -

तेषां ज्ञानी नित्ययुक्त एकभक्तिर्विशिष्यते ।

प्रियो हि ज्ञानिनोऽत्यर्थमहं स च मम प्रियः ॥ (गीता. ७/१७)

“एवं पार्थमोहव्याधेः औषधरूपेण अक्षरब्रह्मगुणसाधर्म्यलक्षणतदैक्य-सम्पत्तिपूर्वकपरमात्मप्रत्यक्ष-स्वरूपयोगमेव विविधाकारेणोपदेक्ष्यति भगवान्” इति श्रीमतः भद्रेशदासस्वामिनः अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमदर्शनलक्ष्यं भाष्यरूपेण उपस्थापितम् ।

4) अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमदर्शनस्य क्षराक्षरब्रह्मतत्त्वम्

श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतायां ब्रह्मविद्याप्रतिपादनसन्दर्भे श्रीकृष्णेन पुरुषस्य द्वैविध्यं प्रतिपादितम् । यथा - क्षरः, अक्षरश्च । एताभ्यां पृथगस्ति परंब्रह्म पुरुषोत्तमः । यथोच्यते -

द्वाविमौ पुरुषौ लोके क्षरश्चाक्षर एव च ।

क्षरस्सर्वाणि भूतानि कूटस्थोऽक्षर उच्यते ॥

उत्तमः पुरुषस्त्वन्यः परमात्मेत्युदाहृतः ।

यो लोकत्रयमाविश्य बिभर्त्यव्यय ईश्वरः ॥ (गीता. १५/१६-१७)

अर्थात् पुरुषः द्विप्रकारकोऽस्ति । यथा - क्षरः, अक्षरश्च । तत्र क्षरो नाम सर्वाणि भूतानि । अक्षरश्च कूटस्थः । एतस्मिन् सन्दर्भे अन्ये टीकाकाराः वदन्ति यत् - क्षरो नाम विषयवासनासन्दृब्धानां कर्मबन्धनपतितानां मायालिप्तानां जीवानां समूह इति । एवञ्चाक्षरो नाम कर्मबन्धनरहितानाम् ईश्वरेण सह ऐक्यभावं संस्थाप्य स्थितानां मायारहितानां जीवानां

समूहः इत्युच्यते। क्षराः भ्रान्ता अक्षरास्तु अभ्रन्ताः। क्षरत्वं नाम परिवर्तनत्वं विकारत्वं वा। मायापतितानां जीवानां सर्वदा षड्विकाराः दृश्यन्ते। यथा – जन्म, स्थितिः, विपरिणामः, वृद्धिः, अवक्षयः, विनाशः। अस्मिन् चक्रे पतित्वा संसारात्तस्य विमुक्तिः कदापि न सम्भवति। किन्तु अक्षरस्य मुक्तिः सम्भवति। एवं जीवः द्विविधः बद्धजीवः, मुक्तजीवश्च।

एवं व्याख्यानसन्दर्भे आचार्यः श्रीभट्टेशदासस्वामिवर्यः किञ्चिद् मौलिकं प्रदर्शयति। यथा

“तत्र सर्वाणि भूतानि जीवेश्वरसमूहः क्षर इदानीं पूर्वं वा यदा कदाऽपि क्षरण-स्वभावाचित्संसर्गप्राप्तत्वात् क्षर इति शब्दाभिलष्यानि। एवम् अचित्संसर्गनिबन्धनोऽयं चेतने क्षरत्वव्यपदेशः। कूटस्थोऽक्षर उच्यते - नित्यं प्रकृतिसंसर्गवियुक्तं प्रागुक्तजीवेश्वरसमूहपरभूतम् अक्षरं ब्रह्म कूटस्थः कूटः शिलाराशिः पर्वत इव तिष्ठतीति कूटस्थो नित्यं विकाररहिततया निश्चलस्वरूपेण अवस्थितमित्यर्थः।” (स्वामिनारायणभाष्यम् - १५/१६)

भट्टेशस्वामिनामयमभिप्रायो यत् क्षरशब्देन बद्धजीवसमूहः, अक्षरशब्देन च मुक्तजीवसमूह इति नैवाङ्गीकर्तव्यः। क्षरशब्देनैव सर्वेषां बद्धमुक्तजीवेश्वराणां समूह स्वीकरणीयः। यद्यपि मुक्तजीवानां समूहस्य अचित्संसर्गवियोगो वर्तते, तथापि कदाचित् संसर्गयोगात् त्रिकालाबाधितं नित्यं प्रकृतिसंसर्गवियुक्तत्वं नास्तीति भूतपूर्वगत्या तस्यापि क्षरशब्देन ग्रहणं भवति। एवं बद्धमुक्तजीवेश्वरसाधारणवाचकोऽयं क्षरशब्दः। अक्षरशब्देन चात्र ब्रह्मैव ग्राह्यम्। अत एव प्रकृतेरपि नेहाक्षरशब्दवाच्यत्वसम्भवः।

अत्रः क्षरः, अक्षरः इत्यत्र एकवचनान्वयः सर्वभूतानां समूहेन करणीयः इति पूर्वपक्षानामाक्षेपः स्यादिति मनसि निधाय पुनः भट्टेशस्वामिवर्यो निगदति – “अन्यच्च क्षरः सर्वाणि भूतानि इत्यत्र क्षर इत्येकवचने सत्यपि तद्वाच्योपस्थापनाऽवसरे सर्वाणि भूतानि इति बहुवचनसद्भावात् क्षराणां बहुत्वं सूचितम्, किन्तु तत्रैव पुनः कूटस्थोऽक्षर उच्यते इत्यत्र अक्षर इति क्षरशब्दवदेकवचनेऽपि तद्वाच्यव्याख्यानावसरे तु कूटस्थः इत्येकवचनप्रयोगाद् अक्षरतत्त्वस्य एकत्वमेवाभिप्रेतमिति गम्यते। अत एव अक्षरशब्देन नात्र बहुत्वयुक्ता अक्षरमुक्ता ग्राह्या अपि त्वेकसंख्यात्मकम् अक्षरं ब्रह्मैव।” (स्वामिनारायणगीताभाष्यम् - १५/१७)

गीतायां बहुत्र इदमक्षरं ब्रह्म भगवता श्रीकृष्णेन व्याख्यातं वर्तते। यथा – “यदक्षरं वेदविदो वदन्ति” (गीता.८/११), “ओमित्येकाक्षरं ब्रह्म” (गीता.८/१३), “अव्यक्तोऽक्षर उच्यते” (गीता.८/२१), “अक्षरं ब्रह्म परमम्” (गीता.८/३)। बृहदारण्यके “एतस्याक्षरस्य प्रशासने गार्गी सूर्याचन्द्रमसौ विधृतौ तिष्ठतः” (बृ.३/८/९) ; छान्दोग्याभिहितयोः “ॐ इत्येतदक्षरमीथमुपासीतोमिति” (छा.१/४/१), “यदेतदक्षरमेतदमृतम् अभयम्” (छा.१/४/४) इत्यादिषु सूक्तिषु अक्षरब्रह्मस्वरूपमुद्भूतं वर्तते। एतेषामुद्धरणपूर्वकं भट्टेशस्वामिवर्यः स्वामिनारायणसिद्धान्तं पोषयति।

एवं बद्धमुक्तजीवाक्षरब्रह्मभ्यः पृथग्भवति परब्रह्म पुरुषोत्तमः। अयं पुरुषोत्तमः, परमात्मा, परमेश्वर इत्युच्यते। अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमदर्शनाधारेण अयं परमात्मा सर्वकर्ता सदा साकारः सर्वोपरी प्रकटश्च विद्यते। सर्वोच्चोऽयं पुरुषोत्तमः अक्षरातीतः। अयमतुलनीयः भगवतः स्वरूपम्। अयमत्यन्तं शक्तिशाली। कोऽपि अस्य समानतां प्राप्तुं न शक्नोति। कर्तृरूपेण अयं ब्रह्माण्डस्य सर्वासां क्रियाणां कर्ता, हर्ता, भर्ता च। सर्वेषामपि कारणानां अयं कारणमुच्यते। मुक्तेः सर्वोच्चकारणमयमेवास्ति। परमात्मस्वरूपं नित्य साकारमेवातः केनापि भगवतः स्वरूपखण्डनं न करणीयम्। रूपमिदमाकारेण मानवं तथापि दिव्यमेव। अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमदर्शनाधारेण अयं पुरुषोत्तमः आध्यात्मिकसाधकेभ्यः मोक्षं दातुं स्वयं पृथिव्यामवतीर्य अक्षरब्रह्मगुरुरूपेण प्रत्यक्षतया सदा विराजते।

“अक्षरधाम” स्वामिनारायणसम्प्रदायस्य सर्वश्रेष्ठं धाम इति कथ्यते। मायातीतमिदं धाम पुरुषोत्तमस्य शाश्वतपारलौकिकनिवासभूमिर्भवति। केवलं मुक्तजीवाः, ये खलु अक्षरब्रह्मणा साकं गुणात्मैक्यं प्राप्तवन्तस्त एव अस्मिन् धामनि प्रवेष्टुं शक्नुवन्ति। एवं पुरुषोत्तमेन साकम् अस्मिन् धामनि नैके मुक्तात्मानो निवसन्ति। त एव अक्षरमुक्ता इति निगद्यन्ते। एतद्धाम “परमधाम”, “परमपदम्”, “परमं स्थानम्”, “परमव्योम”, “ब्रह्मपुरम्”, “ब्रह्मधाम” इत्यादिभिः शब्दैः सन्दर्भितमस्ति।

एवं अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमदर्शने “पुरुषोत्तमः परंब्रह्म”, “अक्षरब्रह्म”, “माया”, “ईश्वरः”, “जीव” इति पञ्च पदार्थाः शाश्वता इति प्रोच्यन्ते। जीवोऽपि अत्र द्विविध उल्लिखितः। यथा - मायाबद्धः, मायामुक्तः। मायामुक्तः जीवः अक्षरधाम्नि निवसति। तदक्षरधाम पुरुषोत्तमस्य निवासस्थानम्। तत्रैव मुक्तजीवः परब्रह्मणः सान्निध्यं प्राप्नोति। तत्प्रेरणया मुक्तिञ्च अधिगच्छति। सेयं मुक्तिः द्विधा - विदेहमुक्तिः, जीवन्मुक्तिश्च। स्वामिनारायणसिद्धान्तानुसारेण मुक्तिकांक्षिणः पृथिव्यां स्थितस्य ब्रह्मस्वरूपस्य गुरोः, समाश्रयणेन स्वलक्ष्यं साधयितुं शक्नुवन्ति। धर्म-ज्ञान-भक्ति-वैराग्यादिसद्गुणाः अक्षरब्रह्मगुरोः सकाशात् प्राप्तव्याः। एतत्सर्वं गीतायाः सारभूतं तत्त्वं भवति। अतः श्रीमन्तः भद्रेशदासस्वामिपादाः तद्दर्शनसिद्धान्तं पोषयितुं प्रस्थानत्रय्याः सूक्ष्मेक्षिकया परिशीलनं कृत्वा भाष्याणि विरच्य गुरुचरणकमलतले पुष्पाञ्जलिरूपेण समर्पयामासुः। तत्रापि श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतायाः भाष्यमत्युच्चकोटिकमिति नास्ति कोऽपि सन्देहस्य लेशोऽप्यवकाशः। तत एव जीव-ब्रह्म-माया-अक्षरब्रह्मादिविषये नैके सिद्धान्ताः तद्व्याख्यानेषु उपन्यस्ताः। ग्रन्थवृद्धिभयाद् दिङ्मात्रं मयाऽत्र समालोच्य “त्वदीयं वस्तु गोविन्द ! तुभ्यमेव समर्प्यते” इति स्मारं स्मारं विरमामि विस्तरात्। इति ॐ शम्।

सहायकग्रन्थसूची -

- श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता (स्वामिनारायणभाष्यम्), भाष्यकारः महामहोपाध्यायः साधुभद्रेशदासः, स्वामिनारायण
अक्षरपीठम्, अहमदाबाद, ३८० ००४, द्वितीयसंस्करणम् - जुलाई, २०११ ।
- श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता (ओडिआभाषानुवादयुक्ता), अनुवादकः श्रीगौरगोविन्दस्वामी, भक्तिवेदान्त बुक् ट्रष्ट,
अन्ताराष्ट्रियकृष्णभावनसः, भुवनेश्वरम् - १२ । संस्करणम् - १२.०५.१९७१
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- बृहदारण्यकोपनिषद् (शाङ्करभाष्यसहिता), हिन्दीभाषानुवादयुक्ता च, गीताप्रेस्, गोरखपुर, संस्करणम् -
वि.सं. - १९९५
- मुण्डकोपनिषत्, व्यासः, स्वामिसर्वानन्दमहोदयेन सम्पादिता, श्रीरामकृष्णमठम्, चेन्नै ।
- मुण्डकोपनिषत्, स्वामिसर्वानन्दमहोदयः, श्रीरामकृष्णमठम्, चेन्नै ।
- उपनिषद अंक, शङ्करभाष्यम् - गीताप्रेस्, गोरखपुर ।
- मुण्डकोपनिषत्, शङ्करभाष्यम् - गीताप्रेस्, गोरखपुर ।
- बृहदारण्यकोपनिषत् - स्वामि अखण्डानन्द सरस्वति, सत्साहित्य प्रकाशन ट्रस्ट, नवी मुम्बई ।
- केनोपनिषत्, नारायणोपनिषत् - आचार्य शिवप्रसादद्विवेदीसम्पादिते, चौखम्बा विद्या भवन, नई दिल्ली ।
- तैत्तिरीयोपनिषत् - स्वामी विद्यानन्दगिरिः, कैलाशाश्रमब्रह्मविद्यापीठम्, हृषीकेशः, उत्तराखण्डम् ।
- कठोपनिषत्, शङ्करभाष्यम् - गीताप्रेस्, गोरखपुर ।

अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमदर्शने मुक्तिविचारः

ĀCĀRYA SAGAR

Ph.D. Student, Assit. Prof.,

Shree Somnath Sanskrit University, Veraval, Gujarat

मुक्तिर्नाम बन्धनराहित्यम्। बन्धनञ्चेदं मायाया एव। यतो हि अनादिकालतो मायामयाः जीवाः ईश्वराश्च। बहूपपादितं च तेषां मायाबद्धत्वं श्रुतिस्मृतिभिर्यथा ‘सत्त्वं रजस्तम इति गुणाः प्रकृतिसम्भवाः। निबध्नन्ति महाबाहो देहे देहिनमव्ययम् ॥’¹, ‘जातस्य हि ध्रुवो मृत्युर्ध्रुवं जन्म मृतस्य च’² इत्यादि। अतः पुरुषार्थचतुष्टये परमपुरुषार्थाय मोक्षाय³ आत्यान्तिकमुक्तिप्राप्तये च सर्वाण्यपि दर्शनानि प्रवृत्तानि। भारतीयशास्त्रपरम्परायां मोक्षो, निर्वाणम्, कैवल्यम्, अपवर्गः, आत्यन्तिककल्याणं, चरमनिःश्रेयसः समाधिर्वैतिशब्दैः स्वस्वसिद्धान्तमधिकृत्य मुक्तिर्गुम्फिता चर्चिता च। यतो हि सम्पूर्णतत्त्वज्ञानस्य सारः मुक्तिमीमांसया ज्ञातुं शक्यते। अतो मुक्तिविषयकं ज्ञानमनिवार्यम्। शोधपत्रेऽस्मिन् अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमदर्शनमाधारीकृत्य मुक्तेर्मीमांसा भविता। अद्वैतविशिष्टाद्वैतदर्शनाभ्यां सह अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमदर्शनस्य प्रस्थानत्रयस्वामिनारायणभाष्याणि, स्वामिनारायणसिद्धान्तसुधा, वचनामृतमित्यादिमुख्यग्रन्थान् उपयुज्य अथातो मुक्तिजिज्ञासा प्रारभ्यते।

मुक्तिर्बन्धनापेक्षा सापेक्षत्वात्। सापेक्षत्वेऽपि मुक्तिर्बन्धने पूर्णतः स्वन्त्रते अत्यन्तभिन्ने च इति वैशिष्ट्यम्। अर्थाद् यत्र बन्धनमस्ति न तत्र मुक्तिः तथा च यत्र मुक्तिर्वर्तते न तत्र बन्धनावसरः प्रकाशान्धकारवद्। अन्यच्च यत्र बन्धनस्य अन्तो भवति ततो मुक्तेरारम्भः इति। कार्यकारणविचारमात्रेणापि बन्धनमुक्तिर्विषयोऽवगतो भवति। अज्ञानं बन्धनकारणम्। दुःखं बन्धनफलम्। ‘ऋते ज्ञानान्मुक्तिः’⁴ इति श्रुतेः ज्ञानं मुक्तिकारणम्। सुखं मुक्तिफलम्। अतो

1. गी.१४/५

2. गी.२/२७

3. वेदान्तपरिभाषा, पृ.८

4. हिरण्यकेशीयशाखाश्रुतिः

मुक्तिविषयविचारात् प्राग् बन्धनस्वरूपविचारमनिवार्यम्।

बन्धनस्वरूपम्

सर्वेषु दर्शनेषु बन्धनस्वरूपं तत्तत्त्वज्ञानानुसारं विद्यते। यथा, अद्वैतदर्शने तु ‘ब्रह्म सत्यं जगन्मिथ्या जीवो ब्रह्मैव नाऽपरः’⁵ इत्यद्वैतदर्शनस्य प्रसिद्धवाक्याद् ज्ञायते यद् ब्रह्मैव जीवरूपो भवति। जीवः स्वस्वरूपमजानन् संसारे देहावस्थया बद्धोऽवतिष्ठति। एतद् स्वस्वरूपाऽज्ञानमेव बन्धनम्। अन्यच्च इदं बन्धनमपि मिथ्या एव अतः अविद्यात्मकभ्रान्तिरेव बन्धनस्वरूपम् इत्यादि। विशिष्टाद्वैतदर्शने कर्मरूपबन्धनं स्वीक्रियते। अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमदर्शने बन्धनस्वरूपं सत्यम्। मुक्तिरपि सत्या। जीवस्य कारणशरीरं सूक्ष्मरूपेण स्थूलरूपेण ईश्वरस्य च अव्याकृतं सूत्रात्मरूपेण विराड्रूपेण च भवतीति जीवेश्वरयोर्बन्धनम्। तदुक्तं परब्रह्मणा स्वामिनारायणेन ‘स्थूलसूक्ष्मकारणेति त्रयी जीवमाया प्रोच्यते। तथैव विराट्सूत्रात्माऽव्याकृतरूपा निगद्यत ईश्वरमाया’⁶ इति। अत एव आत्मस्वरूपोपदेशसमये आत्मनः स्थूलविराडादिदेहत्रयविलक्षणत्वम् उच्यते। बन्धनञ्चेदं तयोरच्छेद्यत्वाऽभेद्यत्वाऽद्यात्मकस्वरूपनिर्विकारत्वेऽबाधकम् तस्माऽयःपिण्डेऽन्ययसोरिव⁷ अम्लिकाबीजतत्त्वचोरिव⁸ इति। अन्यच्च इदं बन्धनं न जगन्मिथ्यात्वाऽङ्गीकुर्वाणामिव अपारमार्थिकं, ‘हिरण्यमेन पात्रेण सत्यस्याऽपिहितं मुखम्’⁹ ‘तथा तेनेदमावृतम्’¹⁰ इति श्रुतत्वात्। आवरणं चेदमज्ञानात्मकम्। अज्ञानं च विपरितज्ञानम्। तच्च बहुविधम्। यथा, जीवेश्वराऽक्षरब्रह्मपरब्रह्मेतिनित्यपरस्परभेदवति चैतन्यचतुःतत्त्वे अन्योन्यस्य वैपरित्याऽवगाहनम्। यथा परब्रह्म वाऽक्षरब्रह्म वेश्वरो वा जीवाऽभिन्नम् एवेति। यथा देह एवेन्द्रियाण्येव मन एव प्राण एव बुद्धिरेव तत्संघात एव पृथिव्यादिभूतचतुष्टयसंघातविशेषोत्पन्न एवाऽऽत्मेति। प्राकृतकार्यवर्गेषु ह्येकस्यऽन्यतया ग्रहणम्। यथा जले स्थलमिदमिति। सहजतयोरेकस्याऽन्यतया ग्रहणम्। यथा सारङ्गमेव कदाचित्सरजुतया वा सरजुरेव कदाचित्सारङ्गतयेत्यादि। तदिदमज्ञानरूपं बन्धनम्। स्वामिनारायणसिद्धान्तसुधाकारो लिखति बन्धनस्य कृते ‘एतद्धि बन्धनमनादि सान्तम्। मुक्तिः सादिरन्तेति विवेकः।’¹¹ अन्ते च साररूपेण कारिकया उक्तम्,

‘बन्धः सत्यस्तथा मुक्तिः सर्वजीवेश्वराऽऽत्मनाम्।
अनाद्यज्ञानतो बद्धाः साधनान्मुक्तिमाप्नुयुः॥’¹²

मुक्तिस्वरूपम्

मुच्यते जन्ममरणरूपभवबन्धनाद् अनेन इति मुक्तिर्मोक्षो वेति। सकलसाधनपरमफलम् आत्यन्तिकमुक्तिः। अनादिकालतः प्रकृतितत्कार्यादौ जनिमृतिप्रवाहान्तःपाती जीवो भ्रमत्येव। अस्माद्बन्धनाद् मुक्तिप्राप्तये जीवः प्रयतति। ‘अनावृत्तिः शब्दादनावृत्तिः शब्दाद्’¹³ इति बादरायणेन व्यासेन ब्रह्मसूत्रे अनावृत्तिलक्षणा मुक्तिरेव परमः पुरुषार्थ इति तु सर्वेषां समादरः। तथाऽपि मुक्तिस्वरूपप्रकारादिविषये तल्लक्षणादिषु स्वस्वसिद्धान्तमतभेदाद् भवन्ति विप्रतिपत्तयः। यथा केचन मन्यन्ते मरणमेवापवर्गः इति। अद्वैतदर्शने च अज्ञाननिवृत्तिः, अपहतपाप्मानं परमात्मानम् अभ्युपगच्छन्तः तस्यैव उपाधिसंसर्गनिमित्तजीवभावस्योपाध्युपगमेन तद्भावलक्षणम् एव मोक्षः। विशिष्टाद्वैतदर्शने तु भगवद्भावापत्तिः अथवा तत्सायुज्यसाम्यापत्तिरेव मुक्तिः। अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमदर्शने मुक्तिस्वरूपं वादग्रन्थकारो लिखति,

‘मुक्तिर्हि स्वात्मब्रह्मैक्यपूर्वकं दासभावतः।

भजनोपासनं प्रीत्या स्वामिनारायणप्रभोः॥’¹⁴

परब्रह्माखण्डधारेकेण प्रकटब्रह्मस्वरूपमहन्तस्वामिमहाराजेन स्वलिखितग्रन्थे सत्सङ्गदीक्षायां लिखितं यद्,

‘निजात्मानं ब्रह्मरूपं देहत्रयविलक्षणम्।

विभाव्योपासनं कार्यं सदैव परब्रह्मणः॥’¹⁵

मुमुक्षवो जीवास्तथेश्वराः साक्षादक्षरब्रह्मस्वरूपगुरोः दृढसमागमेन परब्रह्मकृपयैकान्तिकधर्मसिद्धिं प्राप्य ब्रह्मरूपा भूत्वाऽक्षरब्रह्मसाधर्म्यं प्राप्य परब्रह्मणः परां भक्तिं प्राप्नुवन्ति। तेषां सकलदुःखानि दोषाश्चाऽत्यन्तं नश्यन्ति। दर्शनेऽस्मिन् मुक्तिर्न केवलं हानरूपा अपितु हानोपादानरूपा। किञ्चित् परिहाय किञ्चित् समुपादियते। परब्रह्मपरमात्मस्वामिनारायणभक्त्युपासनादिप्रतिबन्धकं मायापञ्चविषयादिकं परिहाय ततः तद्भक्त्याद्यौपयिकम् आत्मबुद्धिर्ब्रह्मभावो ब्रह्मैक्यं परब्रह्मोपासनादिकम् उपादियते। मुक्त्यवस्थायां न किञ्चिद्भेदापादेयान्तरम् अवशिष्यते प्रतिबन्धकासम्भवाद् परब्रह्मपरमानन्दमग्नत्वाच्चेति। परममुक्तिप्रदात्रा परब्रह्मस्वामिनारायणेनाऽप्युक्तमस्ति यद् ‘स्वजीवात्मानं तेन ब्रह्मणा सहैकीकृत्य परब्रह्मणः स्वामिसेवकभावेनोपासनं कर्तव्यम्’¹⁶, ‘यो ब्रह्मरूपो भवति तस्यैव पुरुषोत्तमस्य भक्तावधिकारोऽस्ति’¹⁷ इत्यादि इत्थं, न केवलं त्रिविधदुःखात्यन्ताऽभावोऽपित्वक्षरब्रह्मभावाप्तिः परमानन्दप्राप्तिरपि भवति। अत एव कारिकायां लिखितं यद्,

‘निवृत्तिरेव नो मुक्तिरवाप्तिस्तूच्यते तदा।

ब्रह्मभावभावयुता भक्तिरपूर्वा हि प्रजायते॥¹⁸

इदमत्राऽवधेयम्, अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमदर्शने जीवेश्वरमायाब्रह्मपरब्रह्मेतिनित्यपञ्चतत्त्वेषु ब्रह्मात्मपरब्रह्मात्मानौ एव नित्यमुक्तौ। सर्वेऽपि जीवा ईश्वराश्च अनादिमायाबद्धाः अनादिकालतो जन्ममरणप्रवाहान्तःपातित्वात् संसरणमगन्तवात्। एते जीवा एव परमात्मपरमकृपया साक्षादक्षरब्रह्मस्वरूपगुरुरूपसत्पुरुषसमाश्रयादिभिर्ब्रह्मसाधर्म्यं प्राप्य अपूर्वामिव ब्रह्मरूपतां मुक्तिं लभन्ते। अतः कोऽपि प्राप्तमुक्तिक ईश्वरो वा जीवो वा अनादिब्रह्मरूपतां वा अनादिमुक्ततां वा नित्यमुक्ततां वा नैव भजते इति। मुक्तिः सर्वेषां कृते सादिरेव तथापि नैव अन्तवतीति अनन्ता मुक्तिः। अत आत्यान्तिकमुक्तिप्राप्त्यानन्तरं जीवतो वा दिव्याऽक्षरधामस्थस्य परमानन्दनिगमनस्य मुक्तस्य पुनर्मायाबन्धनप्रसङ्गा। एवं मुक्तेः सादित्वेऽपि मुक्तप्रवाहस्तु अनादिरेव इति विवेकः। तदिदं सर्वं सङ्क्षेपेण निदर्शितं कारिकया,

‘द्वावेव नित्यमुक्तौ स्तो ह्यक्षरपुरुषोत्तमौ। ताभ्यां भिन्नेषु सर्वेषु नाऽनादिमुक्तता मता॥’¹⁹

‘जीवानामीश्वराणां च ह्यनादिबन्धनं दृढम्। जनिमृतिप्रवाहान्तःपातित्वामादिशून्यकम्॥’²⁰

‘अतो न नित्यमुक्तत्वं नाऽनादिब्रह्मरूपता। कस्यापि लब्धमोक्षस्य जीवस्य वेश्वरस्य वा॥’²¹

‘सादिरपि तु सा मुक्तिर्न निधनवती मता। स्वामिनारायणानन्ददिव्यसम्पत्तिसंभृता॥’²²

‘यामवाप्य पुनर्नैव मायाबन्धनसम्भवः। जीवतो दिव्यदेशे वा स्थितस्य चेतनाऽऽत्मनः॥’²³

मुक्तेर्द्विविध्यम्

भारतीयदर्शनपरम्परायां द्विविधा मुक्तिर्दृश्यते। जीवन्मुक्तिर्विदेहमुक्तिश्च।

‘सा पुनर्द्विविधा प्रोक्ता ब्रह्मस्थितिमतां ध्रुवा।

एका जीवत एव स्याद् अन्या च मरणादनु॥’²⁴

परब्रह्मस्वामिनारायणेन स्वोपदेशग्रन्थे वचनामृतेऽपि जीवन्मुक्तिर्विदेहमुक्तिश्च ग्रथिता। यथा, ‘अतिसत्यभावेन यदि कोऽपि सत्सङ्गं कुर्यात्, तस्य हृदये न कोऽपि दोषोऽवतिष्ठते भवति च स सति देह एव ब्रह्मरूपः’²⁵ इत्यादौ जीवन्मुक्तिः। ‘एकान्तिकभक्तः कृत्वा देहत्यागं भूत्वा च सर्वमायाभावेभ्यो मुक्तः प्राप्नोत्यर्चिरादिमार्गेण भगवतोऽक्षरधाम इति।’ इत्यादौ हि विदेहमुक्तिम्

18. स्वा.सि.का. ४२९

19. स्वा.सि.का. ४३०

20. स्वा.सि.का. ४३१

21. स्वा.सि.का. ४३२

22. स्वा.सि.का. ४३३

23. स्वा.सि.का. ४३४

24. स्वा.सि.का. ४२८

25. सा.९

उपदिदेश मुक्तिदाता सहजानन्दः।

जीवन्मुक्तिः

जीवन्मुक्तिर्नाम देहे सति जीवत एव मुक्त्यवस्थाप्राप्तिरिति। देहत्यागानन्तरं प्राप्तव्यं यत् सुखं जीवन्मुक्त अत्रैव समश्नुते। श्रुतिस्मृतिसूत्रशास्त्रेषु जीवन्मुक्तिर्मुहुः समाप्नाता। यथा, ‘यदा सर्वे प्रमुच्यन्ते कामा येऽस्य हृदि श्रिताः। अथ मर्त्योऽमृतो भवति अत्र ब्रह्म समश्नुते’,²⁶, ‘पर्याप्तकामस्य कृतात्मनस्त्वहैव सर्वे प्रविलीयन्ति कामाः’²⁷, ‘इहैव तैर्जितः सर्गो येषां साम्ये स्थितं मनः। निर्दोषं हि समं ब्रह्म तस्माद् ब्रह्मणि ते स्थिताः॥’²⁸, ‘यतेन्द्रियमनोबुद्धिर्मुनिमोक्षपरायणः। विगतेच्छाभयक्रोधो यः सदा मुक्त एव सः॥’²⁹, इति ब्रह्मनिर्वाणयोगे, सूत्रग्रन्थस्थैहिकाधिकरणेऽपि ‘ऐहिकमप्यप्रस्तुतप्रतिबन्धे तद्दर्शनात्’³⁰, ‘एवं मुक्तिफलाऽनियमस्तदवस्थाधृतेस्तदवस्थाधृतेः’³¹ इति श्रुत्यादिभूयस्त्वं प्रतिपादयति जीवत एव भक्तस्य मुक्तिफलाऽनुभवम्।

जीवन्मुक्तिरस्तिर्नवेति विषये दृश्यते वैमत्यम्। तत्र विधिकोटिः अद्वैतदर्शनम् अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमदर्शनम् इत्यादीनाम्, निषेधकोटिश्च विशिष्टाद्वैतदर्शनम् द्वैतदर्शनम् इत्यादीनाम्। शारीरकभाष्ये शङ्कराचार्यो निरूपयति ‘एवमपान्तरतमःप्रभृतयोऽपीश्वराः परमेश्वरेण तेषु तेष्वधिकारेषु नियुक्ताः सन्तः सत्यपि सम्यग्दर्शने कैवल्यहेतावक्षीणकर्माणो यावदधिकारमवतिष्ठन्ते’³², कठोपनिषच्छाङ्करभाष्ये ‘यदा सर्वे प्रभिद्यन्ते भेदमुपायान्ति विनश्यन्ति, हृदयस्य बुद्धेरिह, जीवत एव ग्रन्थयो ग्रन्थिवद् दृढबन्धनरूपा अविद्या प्रत्यया.....’³³ इति शङ्कराचार्यसम्मतिः। श्रीरामानुजाचार्यः श्रीमध्वाचार्यश्च स्वग्रन्थेषु जीवन्मुक्तिं निराचक्रतुः।

अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमदर्शने तु परब्रह्मस्वामिनारायणप्रभुर्जीवन्मुक्तिम् उद्घाटयन् आह ‘यस्तु भक्त एवम्प्रकारेण भगवतो मूर्तौ निर्गुणत्वं सगुणत्वं च विजानाति तस्य खलु नैव प्रभवन्ति बन्धनाय कालकर्ममायाः।’³⁴, ‘यदैतादृशः साधुसमागमः प्राप्तः तदा देहं परित्यज्य प्रापणीयो (भगवान्) देहे सत्येव प्राप्तोऽतो यत्परमं पदं मोक्षो वोच्यते, तदेहे सत्येव प्राप्तम्’³⁵ इत्यादि नैकवारम्

26. बृ.४/४/७, कठ.६/१४

27. मु. ३/२/२

28. गी. ५/१९

29. गी. ५/२८

30. ब्र. ३/४/५०

31. ब्र. ३/४/५१

32. ब्र.शां.भा. ३/३/३२

33. कठ.शां.भा. २/६/१५

34. वच.का ८

35. वच.अ. २

उक्तमिति।

इयं जीवन्मुक्तिस्थितिः अद्वैतदर्शने निर्विकल्पसमाधिपदेनाऽपि प्रसिद्धा³⁶ तत्र निर्विकल्पपदेन ब्रह्मात्माऽद्वयस्थितिरेतद्वत् देहात्मभिन्नाऽवगमनस्थितिर्निरूपिता। परन्तु निर्विकल्पसमाधिकारको भगवान् स्वामिनारायणो निर्विकल्पपदव्याख्यानवासरे स्थितप्रज्ञलक्षणं ब्राह्मीस्थितिम् एव प्रतिपादयति यथा ‘प्रत्यक्ष परमात्मनि स्थिता स्थिरा प्रज्ञा यस्य स’ इति विग्रहेण प्रत्यक्षनारायणस्वरूपप्रधानत्वेन प्रतिपादयति, तथैव निर्गतो विकल्पो भगवत्स्वरूपे संशयाऽऽकारो यस्य स निर्विकल्प इति व्याख्याति। उक्तं परब्रह्मणा यत् ‘येन भगवत्स्वरूपं गतदिने प्रोक्तं तथा याथार्थ्येन ज्ञातं, न च ततो व्युत्थानं कथञ्चिदपि सम्भवति। यथा निम्बवृक्षज्ञानं जातं सकृदेव तदनन्तरं नैव सङ्कल्पः संशयात्मको भवति यदयं निम्बवृक्षो न वेति, एवं यस्य कस्याऽपि सङ्गे यस्मिन् कस्मिंश्चिदपि शास्त्रे श्रुते सति भगवत्स्वरूपनिश्चयान्न भ्रष्टो भवत्येवं निरूत्थानतया य भगवत्सम्बन्धिनिश्चयः, स एव कथ्यते तदात्मको भावः, निर्विकल्पसमाधिश्चेति’³⁷, ‘अक्षरब्रह्मणः साधर्म्यमाप्य परब्रह्ममूर्तिनिमग्नो निर्विकल्पसमाधिमान्’³⁸ तदित्थं भगवत्स्वरूपस्य प्राधान्येन जीवन्मुक्तिर्वर्णिता न केवलं ब्रह्मात्मैक्यज्ञानेन देहात्मपृथग्विज्ञानेन वेति।

जीवन्मुक्तिः श्रुतिस्मृत्यादिशास्त्रोद्धाटितेत्युक्तं प्राक् सङ्क्षेपेण। अथ श्रुतौ कया रीत्या जीवन्मुक्तिर्वर्णिता तद्वक्ष्यते। ‘यस्तु सर्वाणि भूतान्यात्मन्येवानुपश्यति। सर्वभूतेषु चात्मानं ततो न विजुगप्सते। यस्मिन् सर्वाणि भूतान्यात्मैवाभूद्विजानतः। तत्र को मोहः कः शोकः एकत्वमनुपश्यतः॥’³⁹ इतीशोपनिषदि जीवन्मुक्तिस्थितिरूपवर्णिता मन्त्रद्वयेन। तत्र साक्षाद्ब्रह्मस्वरूपगुरुप्रसङ्गद्वारा प्राप्तब्रह्मपरब्रह्मतत्त्वविज्ञानस्य निजात्मनि अक्षरब्रह्मभावापन्नस्य प्रत्यक्षपरमात्मनि च लब्धनिर्विकल्पसमाधेरुक्तस्य दृष्टिः किदुशी तद्वर्णिता। अत्र अनुपश्यत्यर्थात् परमात्मानम् इहैव साक्षात्करोति। तादृग्भक्तस्य स्थितेः फलं ‘न विजुगप्सते’, ‘तत्र को मोहः कः शोकः’ इति वचनैरुपवर्णितम्। तत्र भाष्यकारो लिखति ‘सकलेश्वरेशः परमात्मा सर्वेषां सदा कर्ता कारणं व्यापको नियामकश्चास्तीत्येवं तदात्मकत्वेन तमेव परमात्मानं सर्वत्रैकरूपेण समानाकारेण साक्षात्कुर्वतो ब्रह्मरूपस्य परमात्मभक्तस्य को मोहः प्रश्नमुखेन तदभावकथनात् साक्षादक्षरपुरुषोत्तमयोः स्वरूपे, स्वात्मनः स्वरूपे च संशयात्मको वा विभ्रान्तिरूपो वा प्रकृतितत्कार्यभूतजगतः स्वरूपेऽपि संशयात्मको वा विभ्रान्तिरूपो वा तत्र समासक्तिलक्षणवासनारूपो वा मोहो नास्त्येवेत्यर्थः। अत एव कः शोकः

36. ‘निर्विकल्पसमाधिना स्फुटं ब्रह्मतत्त्वमगम्यते ध्रुवम्। अन्यथाऽचलतया मनोगते प्रत्ययान्तरविश्रितं भवेत्॥’ विवेकचूडामणिः श्लो. २६५

37. वच.म. १४

38. वच.प्र. ४०

39. ई.६-७

तादृशमोहजन्योऽहंमत्वादिलक्षणदेहभावदोषजन्यो वासनाविवर्धनो वा संसाराऽऽवर्तनादिरूपः क्लेशोऽपि नास्त्येवेत्यर्थः। ब्रह्मरूपे स्वात्मनि सर्वत्र चाऽक्षराधिपतेर्दिव्यभावेन साक्षात्करणात् सदा परमानन्दमनस्तिष्ठतीति तात्पर्यम्।⁴⁰ इत्थं जीवन्मुक्त्यङ्गीकारे एव ईशमन्त्रसार्थक्यम्।

छान्दोग्येऽपि अष्टमाध्याये ‘मघवन्मर्त्यं वा इदं शरीरमात्तं मृत्युना तदस्यामृतस्याशरीरस्यात्मनोऽधिष्ठानमात्तो वै सशरीरः प्रियाप्रियाभ्यां न वै सशरीरस्य सतः प्रियाप्रिययोरपहतिरस्त्यशरीरं वाव सन्तं न प्रियाप्रिये स्पृशतः॥’⁴¹ मन्त्रेऽस्मिन् ‘शरीरम्’, ‘अशरीरः’, ‘सशरीरः’ इत्यादिशब्दैः जीवन्मुक्तस्थितिरेव श्रुतिमाता श्रावयति। तत्र शरीरं नाम मरणस्वभावमेव इदं परिदृश्यमानं शीर्यमाणं पञ्चभूतात्मकं वपुर्देहो वेति, अशरीरो नाम पञ्चभूतात्मकदेहात् शरीराद् भिन्नश्चेतनः प्रत्यगात्मा, सशरीरो नाम पञ्चभूतात्मकदेहेन शरीरेण सहितश्चेतनः प्रत्यगात्मा इति। देहानुकुलपञ्चविषयप्राप्तिः प्रियो देहप्रतिकुलप्राप्तिरप्रिय इति। प्रियाऽप्रियविषयमधिकृत्य प्रजापतिः इन्द्रं जीवन्मुक्तस्थितिं ज्ञापयति। मन्त्राऽन्ते भाष्यकारो लिखति ‘इत्थमत्र शरीरात्मविवेकाय शरीरस्य प्रत्यगात्मानं प्रति प्रियाऽप्रियादियदृच्छालब्धोपभोग-साधनमात्रं प्रतिपाद्यते न पुनः सशरीरस्य जीवतो मुक्तिर्निराक्रियत इत्यवधेयम्’⁴² इत्येवं प्रकारेण नैकाः श्रुतयो जीवन्मुक्तस्थितिम् उद्घोषयन्ति।

स्मृतिप्रस्थानश्रीमद्भगवद्गीतायामपि भगवता प्रदत्तेषु उपदेशेष्वपि जीवन्मुक्तस्थितिः प्रकाशयते। गीतायां मुहुः ‘इहैव तैर्जितः सर्गो येषां साम्ये स्थितं मनः। निदोषं हि समं ब्रह्म तस्माद् ब्रह्मणि ते स्थिताः॥’⁴³ , ‘शक्नोतीहैव यः सोढुं प्राक् शरीरविमोक्षणात्’⁴⁴ , ‘यतेन्द्रियमनोबुद्धिर्मुनिमोक्षपरायणः। विगतेच्छाभयक्रोधो यः सदा मुक्त एव सः॥’⁴⁵ इति ब्रह्मनिर्वाणयोगाख्ये जीवन्मुक्तस्थितिनिरूपणे इत्यादिस्थानेषु ‘इहैव’ शब्दभाष्यावसरे भाष्यकारोऽविस्मरन्नेव लिखति ‘अस्मिन् जन्मन्येव वर्तमानशरीराऽवस्थानकाल एव’⁴⁶ , ‘अस्मिन् देहे जीवन्नेव’⁴⁷ , ‘ब्रह्मरूपे स्वात्मनि प्रत्यक्षनारायणस्वरूपमनशीलो भवति स जीवन्नपि सदा मुक्त एव’⁴⁸ इति भगवता जीवन्मुक्तिरेव स्मारिता। तथा च गीतायां प्रदर्शिता ब्राह्मीस्थितिरपि जीवन्मुक्तस्थितिमेवेति तु तत्त्वम्। यथा ‘दुःखेष्वनुद्विग्नमनाः सुखेषु विगतस्पृहः।

40. ई.स्वा.भा. पृ. १६-१७

41. छा. ८/१२/१

42. छा.स्वा.भा. पृ. १६-१७

43. गी. ५/१९

44. गी. ५/२३

45. गी. ५/२८

46. गी.स्वा.भा. ५/१९

47. गी.स्वा.भा. ५/२३

48. गी.स्वा.भा. ५/२८

वीतरागभयक्रोधः स्थितधीर्मुनिरुच्यते॥⁴⁹, ‘एषा ब्राह्मी स्थितिः पार्थ नैनां प्राप्य विमुह्यति’⁵⁰, ‘ब्रह्मभूतः प्रसन्नात्मा न शोचति न काङ्क्षति। समः सर्वेषु भूतेषु मद्भक्तिं लभते पराम्॥’⁵¹ इत्यादिभिः सा जीवताऽपि प्रत्यक्षाऽक्षरब्रह्मगुरुप्रसङ्गादितो लब्धुं शक्येति गीतागलितार्थः।

‘जीवतो ब्रह्मभावोक्तिः श्रूयते स्मर्यतेऽपि च।

ईशे कठे च मुण्डे च गीतासु वचनामृते॥’⁵²

अन्यच्च जीवन्मुक्तस्य भक्तस्य जीवत एव पापनाशऽश्लेषौ पुण्यनाशऽश्लेषौ भवतः। तदुक्तं भाष्यकारेण बृहदारण्यकोपनिषदि ‘अतः स्वाऽनुष्ठितकर्मविशेषलक्षणाद्धेतोरहं पापकरवमिति अथवा अतो यथोक्ताद्धेतोरहं कल्याणमकरवमिति पुण्यकरवमिति एते ह्युभे चिन्ते एतं ब्रह्मसाधर्म्यं प्राप्य परमब्रह्म साक्षात्कुर्वन्तं ब्रह्मविद्यावन्तं पुरुषं न तरतः न स्पृशतः।... शरीरेऽवस्थितमपि एनं साक्षात्कृतब्रह्मविद्यं पुरुषं कृताऽकृते सुकृतदुष्कृते न तपतः न श्लिष्यतः’⁵³ इति। गीतोक्तवचनान्यपि स्मर्यन्ते ‘बुद्धियुक्तो जहातीह उभे सुकृतदुष्कृते’⁵⁴ इति श्लोकभाष्ये ‘उभे अपि इह अस्मिन् देहे लोक एव, स्वदेहपातात् पूर्वं जीवन्नेव जहाति तद्रहितो भवति’⁵⁵ तदिदं सर्वं प्रतिपादितं महर्षिणा बादरायणेन तदधिगमाधिकरणे।⁵⁶

एवम् उपासनबलात् पापपुण्यनाशाऽनन्तरं कारणशरीरप्रक्षयेऽपि परमात्मेच्छाहेतुना जीवन्मुक्तस्य स्थूलशरीरविश्लेषस्तु तच्छरीरपात एव। तथा चाऽयं जीवनमुक्तः सकलपापपुण्यकर्मातीतो भूत्वाऽपि निष्कामभावेन विद्याक्षेमार्थं लोकसङ्ग्रहाय च परमात्माऽनुग्रहविशेषाऽऽपादकतया कर्माणि न जहाति। तदिदं निरूपितं सर्वं भगवता व्यासेन ‘इतरस्याऽप्येवमसंश्लेषः पाते तु’⁵⁷, ‘अनारब्धकार्य एव तु पूर्वं तदवधेः’⁵⁸, ‘अग्निहोत्रादि तु तत्कार्यायैव तद्दर्शनात्’⁵⁹ इत्यादिसूत्रैः। तत्र स्वामिनारायणभाष्यकारः विवेचयति ‘देहनिमित्तं प्रारब्धमपि न हि कर्मविधया यावदायुषं शरीरधारणप्रयोजकमपि तु परमात्मेच्छाऽऽनुगुण्येनेति विशेषः। अत एव लिङ्गशरीरनाशोऽपि परमात्मकृपैकनिबन्धनो भगवद्भक्तस्य जीवत्काले,

49. गी. २/५६

50. गी. २/७२

51. गी. १८/५४

52. स्वा.सि.का. ४३५

53. बृ.स्वा.भा. ४/४/२२

54. गी. २/५०

55. गी.स्वा.भा. २/५०

56. ब्र. ४/१/१३

57. ब्र. ४/१/१४

58. ब्र. ४/१/१५

59. ब्र. ४/१/१६

तद्देहान्तकाले वा, तदुत्क्रमणे मार्गे वा यदा कदापि परब्रह्मेच्छानुसारमेव प्रवर्तते⁶⁰ इति दग्धबीजवन्न तत्र कर्मणां प्रभाव इति न जीवन्मुक्तौ बाधः।

सत्सङ्गोऽस्मिन् प्रत्यक्षतो दृश्यतेऽपि परब्रह्मस्वामिनारायणकृपया साक्षाद्ब्रह्मस्वरूपगुरुप्रसङ्गोपदेशश्रवणमनननिदिध्यासनादिना तत्कृपया च तदाश्रितानां भक्तानां जीवतामेव यथोक्तलक्षणायुक्ता मुक्तस्थितिरिति। तदुक्तम्,

‘खण्डनं जीवतो मुक्तेः शास्त्रलोपाऽऽवहं भवेत्।
प्रत्यक्षजा प्रतीतिश्च विरुद्ध्येत् सर्वसाक्षिका॥’⁶¹

विदेहमुक्तिः

विदेहमुक्तिर्नाम पाञ्चभौतिकदेहपातोत्तरम् एव लभ्यमाना मुक्तस्थितिः। जीवन्मुक्तिरिव विदेहमुक्तिरपि भारतीयशास्त्रपरम्परायां श्रुतिस्मृतिसूत्रादिशास्त्रेषु च भूयो भूयः प्रकीर्तिता। ‘स पर्यगात्’⁶², ‘अस्माच्छरीरात् समुत्थाय’⁶³, ‘तत्र प्रयाता गच्छन्ति’⁶⁴, ‘भोगेन त्वितरे क्षपयित्वाऽथ सम्पद्यते’⁶⁵ इति। सर्वस्वीकृताऽपि विदेहमुक्तिः तत्स्वरूपप्रकारादिविषये तल्लक्षणादिषु स्वस्वसिद्धान्तमतभेदाद् भवन्ति विप्रतिपत्तयः। अद्वैतदर्शनानुसारं जीवन्मुक्तस्य प्रारब्धकर्माणि भोगेन नश्यन्ति तदा एष भौतिकस्थुलसूक्ष्मदेहश्च जीवात्मनो वियुक्तो भूत्वा च स्वस्वरूपेण मुक्तो भवति। स्वस्वरूपमेव अर्थाद् अद्वैतनिर्गुणनिरूपाधिकविभुव्यापकब्रह्मतत्त्वमिति। अतो विदेहमुक्त्यवस्थायां दोषाऽऽदिकानां त्यागो नास्ति न वा सद्गुणसम्पादनमिति। विशिष्टाद्वैतमतानुसारं बद्धमुक्तनित्येतिप्रकारकजीवेषु बद्धमायिकजीवान् विहाय केवलमुक्ता एव विदेहमुक्तये अर्हाः।

अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमदर्शनानुसारम् परमात्मेच्छानुसारं यावदायुषमुपभोगान्तरं प्रारब्धनाशातः पाञ्चभौतिकदेहपातोत्तरम् एव लभ्यमाना मुक्तस्थितिः। मुक्तस्थितिरियम् अक्षरधामाख्यदिव्यदेशविशेषभोग्या। अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमदर्शनानुसारिणी विदेहमुक्तिः कारिकया निरूपिता यत्

‘देहपातोत्तरं लभ्या विद्मुक्तिरुच्यते।
अक्षरधाम्नि भोग्येयं मूर्तिमद् ब्रह्मणा सहा॥’⁶⁶

60. ब्र.स्वा.भा. ४/१/१५

61. स्वा.सि.का. ४३६

62. ई. ८

63. छा.८/१२/२

64. गी.८/२४

65. ब्र.४/१/१९

66. स्वा.सि.का. ४३७

परममुक्तिप्रदाता सहजानन्दप्रभुरप्याह 'एतादृशोऽयमेकान्तिकभक्तः कृत्वा देहत्यागं भूत्वा च सर्वमायाभावेभ्यो मुक्तः प्राप्नोत्यर्चिरादिमार्गेण भगवतोऽक्षरधाम'⁶⁷ इति। न चेयम् अक्षरधामप्राप्तिः ज्ञानस्थितिमात्ररूपेति वाच्यम् 'गच्छन्त्यमूढाः पदमव्ययं तत्'⁶⁸, 'स्वयंभूः'⁶⁹ इति श्रुतिवचनाद् विदेहमुक्यवसरेऽर्चिरादिमार्गेण गतेन ब्रह्मरूपमुक्तात्मना स्वयमेव तद्देशविशेषं प्रविश्य ब्राह्मविग्रहाऽऽप्तेन लभ्यतेऽर्थाद् मुक्तात्मा साक्षादक्षरधाम्युपस्थितो भवतीति।

अक्षरधामेतिदेशविशेषत्वादेव तद्गमनानुकूलः पन्थाः अपि शास्त्रैर्निरूपितः। अयमेव पन्था अर्चिरादिरितिप्रसिद्धः। अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमाऽतिशयकृपया तदिच्छयैव अनेन पथा ब्रह्मरूपोपासकः परमात्मभक्तोऽक्षरधाम प्रविशति। तत्र च दिव्याक्षरधाम्नि परमात्मसङ्कल्पतः तत्समानाऽऽकृतिं ब्राह्मीं तनुं प्राप्य नित्यं विराजमानं नित्यद्विभुजचरणदियुक्तमानुषाकृतिदिव्यविग्रहं परब्रह्मसहजानन्दं नित्यं परमदासभावतः तत्परब्रह्मसेवानुलब्धेन नित्यद्विभुजचरणदियुक्तमानुषाकृतिदिव्यविग्रहेण अक्षरेण ब्रह्मणा सह परमदासभावेन परमात्मोपासनरतो भवति।

अर्चिरादिगतिः

इदानीं वेदान्तशास्त्रोपवर्णिता गतिरुच्यते। देहोत्क्रान्त्यन्तरं विशुद्धात्माऽयं भगवद्भाम प्राप्नोति। अद्वैतदर्शन एवमुच्यते यत् श्रुतिस्मृतिसूत्रेषु आत्मनो गतेर्वर्णनमस्ति तत्पूषाधिकयुक्तजीवाय अथवा तु सगुणब्रह्मोपासकेभ्यो विद्यते यतो हि निर्गुणब्रह्म मुक्तेः स्वरूपं यदस्ति तस्य सर्वव्यापित्वात्तस्य गतिरशक्या। विशिष्टाद्वैतमताऽनुसारं यदा मुक्तजीवः शरीराद्विर्गत्य तेजोमार्गेण अग्निलोकादिलोकान् पारं कृत्वा प्रकृतिवैकुण्ठयोः सीमानं विभक्तकर्तृकां विरजानदीं पारं कृत्वा स्वसूक्ष्मदेहस्य त्यागं करोति।

अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमदर्शने ब्रह्मरूपः परमात्मोपासको जाग्रदाद्यवस्थाः, दिवादिकालः, प्रलपन्हसन्नेत्यादिकर्मक्रियाः, निरोगादिशरीरस्थितिः, बालादिदेहावस्थाः, तीर्थाऽतीर्थादिदेशश्चेत्यादिसर्वनियमं विहाय एव यदा कदाऽपि यथा तथाऽपि यत्र कुत्राऽपि त्यक्तदेहोऽयं दिव्याऽक्षरधाम गत्वा परात्परं सहजानन्दं प्राप्य परममुक्तिभाग् भवति। शास्त्रेषु उत्तममध्यमकनिष्ठभेदेन गतित्रयं प्रसिद्धम्। तत्र ब्रह्मरूपमुक्तैः प्राप्या अर्चिरादिगतिर्देवयान इति प्रथिता। तस्या अपुनरावर्तित्वकरत्वाद् उत्तमता। इष्टापूर्तादिमात्रकर्मकुर्वाणां मध्यमागतिर्धूममार्गः पितृयाणश्चेति। तस्याः पुनरावृत्तिकरत्वाद् कनीयस्त्वम्। अनिष्टकर्मदुःखप्रदानादिकर्मकर्तृणां कृते संयमनगतिः। तस्याः सर्वाऽधमत्वात् कानिष्ठ्यम्।

अर्चिरादिमार्गोऽयं ब्रह्मपथो ब्रह्मधामगमनमार्गो देवयान इत्यादिना व्यपदिश्यते

67. वच.ग.प्र.२१

68. गी.१५/५

69. ई.८

वेदान्तदर्शने। छान्दोग्योपनिषदि प्रदत्तप्रमुखज्ञानेषु एकमन्यतमं ज्ञानं नामाऽर्चिरादिमार्गज्ञानम्। ‘अथ यदु चैवास्मिच्छव्यं कुर्वन्ति यदि च नाऽर्चिषमेवाभिःसंभवन्त्यर्चिषोऽहरह्य आपूर्यमाणपक्षमापूर्यमाणपक्षाद्यान्षडुदङ्डेति मासास्तान्मासेभ्यः संवत्सरं संवत्सरादादित्यमादित्याच्चन्द्रमसं चन्द्रमसो विद्युतं तत्पुरुषोऽमानवः स एनान्ब्रह्म गमयत्येष देवपथो ब्रह्मपथ एतेन प्रतिपद्यमाना इमं मानवमावर्तं नावर्तन्ते नावर्तन्ते॥’⁷⁰ इत्यत्र अर्चिलोकादारभ्य अहोलोकः, आपूर्यमाणपक्षलोकः, उत्तरायणमासलोकः, संवत्सरलोकः, आदित्यलोकः, चन्द्रमसोलोकः, विद्युल्लोकान्तपर्यन्तं लोकविशेषाः वर्णिताः। लोकाश्चैते तत्तद्देवताविशेषैरधिष्ठाताः। ‘ब्रह्म गमयति’ इत्यनेन विद्युल्लोकानन्तरं विद्यमानं परब्रह्मपरमात्मनिलयम् अक्षरधामाऽख्यदिव्यदेशविशेषो निरूपितः। अतोऽक्षरधामगमनमार्गोऽयम् अर्चिरादिरित्युच्यते। ब्रह्मरूपोपासकं मुक्तं को नयति अक्षरधाम प्रति तदुत्तरति श्रुतिः ‘तत्पुरुषोऽमानवः’ इत्यादिना। अमानव अलौकिकोऽयं पुरुषशब्दवाच्यः पुरुषोत्तमपरमात्मा। तथा च ऐतरेयोऽपि श्रावयति ‘स एतेन प्रज्ञेनात्मना’ इत्यत्रोक्तं प्रज्ञानस्वरूपम् अक्षरं ब्रह्म चेति अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमौ स्वेच्छयैव भवतो ब्रह्मरूपमुक्तात्मनो ब्रह्मधामगमनमार्गो आतिवाहिकाविति विशेषः। एवं बहुप्रस्तुतिमाप्नोदयमर्चिरादिमार्गः श्रुतिस्मृतिसूत्रवचनाऽमृतेतिप्रस्थानचतुष्टये यथा बृहदारण्यकोपनिषदि पञ्चमेऽध्याये षष्ठेऽध्याये⁷¹, छान्दोग्योपनिषदि चतुर्थेऽध्याये पञ्चमेऽध्याये अष्टमेऽध्याये⁷², गीतायामष्टमेऽध्याये⁷³ सूत्रग्रन्थे च चतुर्थेऽध्याये⁷⁴ वचनामृते⁷⁵ चेत्यादि। इदमप्यनुसन्धेयं परब्रह्मसहजानन्दो वा ब्रह्मस्वरूपमहन्तस्वामिमहाराजादिब्रह्मस्वरूपगुणातीतगुरवो वाऽन्तकाले भक्तान् अक्षरधाम नेतुं अतिकरुणया आतिवाहिकत्वरूपेण समागच्छतीत्यनुभूतं दृष्टञ्चेति सम्प्रदायसिद्धम्। उक्तञ्च,

‘भक्तानां ब्रह्मरूपाणामक्षरपुरुषोत्तमौ।

देहपातोत्तरं स्यातां प्रमुखावातिवाहिकौ॥’⁷⁶

मुक्तस्थानम् अक्षरधाम

विदेहमुक्तिमाप्नो मुक्तः कुत्र निवसति, तत्कृते निवासस्थानमप्यस्ति न वेत्यपि विषये मतानि सन्ति। अद्वैतदर्शने तु अज्ञाननिवृत्तिरेव मुक्तिरस्त्यतः तत्र न धाम्नो निवासस्थानस्य

70. छा. ४/१५/५

71. बृ. ५/१०/१, ६/२/१५

72. छा. ४/१५/६, ५/१०/१, ८/६/५

73. गी. ८/२४

74. ब्र. ४/३/२, ३

75. वच. प्र. २१

76. स्वा. सि. का. ४४९

वा कल्पना। विशिष्टाद्वैतदर्शने यतीन्द्रमतदीपिकायाम् इन्द्रप्रजापतिसंज्ञकद्वारपालयुतं पताकाऽलङ्कृतदीर्घप्राकारसहितगोपुरसहितम् ऊर्ध्वप्रदेशेनानन्तम् अधःप्रदेशेन परिच्छिन्नं श्रीवैकुण्ठाख्यं दिव्यनगरं प्रदर्शितम्⁷⁷ स्थानञ्चेदं शुद्धसत्त्वमयं भगवतो नित्यविभूतिरिति नाम्नाऽपि तत्सम्प्रदाये प्रसिद्धम्⁷⁸ अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमदर्शने मुक्तात्मनिवासस्थानरूपेण अक्षरधाम इति विदेहमुक्तिदेशो विद्यते। तस्मिंश्च तदधिपः परमात्मा, तत्सेवाऽनुलग्नं मूर्तिमत् सेवकरूपमक्षरब्रह्म, तथा च ब्रह्मभावापन्ना अनन्तकोटिमुक्ताश्च निवसन्ति। धाम चेदं नित्यमेकरूपं स्थिरम् अनुपमं प्रकाशवद् अमायिकं त्रिगुणातीतं कालातीतम् अपुनरावृत्तिशीलमिति।

मुक्तात्मावर्णनम्

प्राप्तविदेहमुक्तिकस्य मुक्तस्य विदेहमुक्त्यवस्थायां विग्रहस्वरूपस्वभावैश्वर्यगुणादिकं विवर्ण्यते। तत्राऽद्वैतदर्शनानुसारं तु स्वस्वरूपादिकमात्मानो नास्तीत्येव मतम्। विशिष्टाऽद्वैतदर्शने ईश्वरनित्यजीवमुक्तजीवाः स्त्रीपुरुषादिभावयुक्ताः अप्सरादिनां श्रवणात्। मुक्तानां शरीराणि बहुविधानि सन्ति तदुक्तं 'मुक्तानां (शरीरपरिग्रहादिस्तु) शरीरादिपरिग्रहस्तु वसन्तोत्सव वेषपरिग्रहादिवत् स्वामिना मुखविकासहेतुत्वात्कैङ्कर्यमेव'⁷⁹ मुक्ताश्च ईश्वरसुखोपभोगातिरिक्तं चन्दनकुसुमवस्त्रभूषणायुधादिभोगोपकरणैः गोपुरप्राकारमण्डपविमानोद्यानपद्मिन्यादिभोगस्थानेषु भोगान् भुञ्जन्ति क्रीडाश्च कुर्वन्ति।

अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमदर्शने मुक्ता अनन्ताः स्त्रीपुरुषत्वशून्याश्च। सर्वेऽपि जीवेश्वराः अनादिकालतो मायाबद्धाः अतोऽक्षरपुरुषोत्तमभिन्नस्य कस्यापि नित्यमुक्तत्वाऽभावात् सर्वेषामपि मुमुक्षुणां जीवेश्वराणां कृते मुक्तिसाधनाऽनुष्ठानजा अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमकृपयाऽप्राप्तपूर्वा अविनाशिनी मुक्तिरियमपूर्वैवा सर्वेऽपि मुक्ताः त्रिगुणातीतत्वपरमात्मदासत्वाऽक्षरब्रह्मगुणसाधर्म्यवन्तः परमात्मसहजानन्दोपासनाः।

अथ मुक्तदेहः। अक्षरधामस्थपरमात्मानं सम्पद्य मुक्तस्याऽस्य दिव्यनूतनविग्रहयोगोऽस्तीति छान्दोग्येऽष्टमाध्याये जीवन्मुक्तिरूपणान्तरं विदेहमुक्तं निरूपितम्। 'एवमेवैष सम्प्रसादोस्माच्छरीरात् समुत्थाय परं ज्योतिरूपसम्पद्य स्वेन रूपेणाऽभिनिष्पद्यते'⁸⁰ इति श्रुतिः। तत्र सम्प्रसादशब्दाभिधेयो ब्रह्मरूपः परमात्मोपासको मुक्तात्मा स्वदेहत्यागाऽनन्तरं परमात्मानं प्राप्य ब्राह्मवपुमान् भवति। स्वामिनारायणभाष्यकारो लिखति 'परं ज्योतिः दिव्यप्रभासमानाऽक्षरधामस्थितपरमदिव्यतेजस्विनं परमात्मानम् उपसम्पद्य प्राप्य स्वेन

77. यतीन्द्रमतदीपिका – पृ. २०४-२०५, १०४

78. यतीन्द्रमतदीपिका – पृ. १०४

79. यतीन्द्रमतदीपिका – पृ. १०७

80. छा.८/१२/२

रूपेणाऽभिनिष्पद्यते स्वेन ब्राह्मेण दिव्यविग्रहेण निष्पन्नो भवति। ब्राह्मतनुयुक्तः सन् सदैव परमात्मपरमदिव्यसुखं दिव्याऽक्षरधाम्न्यनुभवतीत्यर्थः।⁸¹ इत्थमक्षरमुक्तस्य विग्रहो ब्राह्मो दिव्यतनुर्विद्यते। अक्षरब्रह्मणो जायमानत्वाद् ब्राह्ममित्युच्यते। ब्राह्मविग्रहसम्पत्तेः स मुक्तात्मा दिव्यनेत्रकरचरणादियुक्तो भवति तथापि न संसारवद् चक्षुरभावे दर्शनाऽभाव वा कर्णाभावे श्रवणाभावो वेति करणपारतन्त्र्यं तेषाम् अपरोक्षज्ञानत्वात्। अस्त्येव चक्षुर्न पुनर्दर्शनार्थमेव अस्त्येव कर्णादि न पुनः श्रवणाद्यर्थमेव। इन्द्रियसत्त्वेऽपीन्द्रियनीरपेक्षमिति विशेषः। सर्वमपि एतत् सकलकरणस्वतन्त्रस्य अनन्तदिव्यसामर्थ्यवतः सकलसर्जनचतुरस्य परमकृकपालोः परब्रह्मणः सामर्थ्यम्।

अथ मुक्तावपि परमात्मभेदः तदुपासनं चेत्याद्यस्त्येवेति विषयः। ‘एवमेवास्य परिद्रष्टुरिमाः षोडशकलाः पुरुषायणाः पुरुषं प्राप्याऽस्तं गच्छन्ति भिद्येते चासां नामरूपे पुरुष इत्येवं प्रोच्यते’⁸², ‘यथा नद्यः स्यन्दमानाः समुद्रेऽस्तं गच्छन्ति नामरूपे विहाया यथा विद्वान् नामरूपाद् विमुक्तः परात्परं पुरुषमुपैति दिव्यम्’⁸³, ‘न तु तद्द्वितीयमस्ति ततोऽन्यद्विभक्तं यद् विजानीयाद्’⁸⁴ इति श्रुतिमधिकृत्य केचन परमात्मस्वरूपाऽभेदं स्वीकुर्वन्ति किन्तु तन्न योग्यम्। ता हि परमात्मना सहाऽविभक्ततयाऽवस्थानमात्रमात्मनः प्रतिपादयन्ति न तु नारायणस्वरूपाऽभेदाऽऽप्तिम्। ‘अस्तं गच्छति’ इति दृष्टान्ते पर्वतप्रदेशात् प्रवहन्त्यो नद्यः सागरसमागमात् पूर्वं स्वस्वगङ्गादिनाम्ना स्वस्ववर्णसीतकृष्णादिरूपैर्व्यवहियन्ते। तथैव बद्धात्मा मुक्तेः प्राक् संसरणदशायां तत्तन्नामरूपादिभिर्युक्तो भवति। ततो नदीनां सागरप्रवेश इव परब्रह्मसहजानन्ददिव्यपरमानन्द-परमसागरे परभक्त्युद्रेकतो लीनत्वात् परमात्मपरमस्वरूपैश्वर्यादितश्च तदात्मस्वरूपाऽभिभवादि विग्रहाकारवैषम्याऽभावाच्च स्वरूपतस्तद्विन्नोऽपि मुक्तात्मा तदाऽविभक्तः सन् स्वकीयपूर्वनामरूपादिभिर्यवहारविषयो न भवतीति नामरूपप्रहाणमात्रे तात्पर्यं न तु तत्त्वस्वरूपप्रहाणोऽपीति ज्ञेयम्। अन्यच्चोक्तं भाष्यकारेण ‘किञ्चाऽस्तं गच्छन्तीति वाक्यमपि प्रतीच्यामस्तं गतः सूर्यः इति वददर्शनमात्रं बोधयति न तु सर्वथा स्वरूपप्रहाणं, तथा सति पुनरर्कोदयसम्भवात्। उपैतीत्यस्यापि प्राप्नोतीत्यर्थात् प्राप्तुः प्राप्तस्य च भेदोऽवतिष्ठत एव’⁸⁵ इति। कामुकस्य स्वाभिष्टकामिन्यामिव, धनलुब्धस्य धन इव, पुत्रान्धस्य पुत्र इव प्रवेशो ज्ञेयमिति परब्रह्मणाऽप्युक्तम्⁸⁶ इममेवाऽर्थं प्रतिपादयन् सूत्रं विरचयामास भगवान् बादरायणः

81. छा.स्वा.भा. ८/१२/२

82. प्र.६/५

83. मु.३/२/८

84. बृ.४/३/३०

85. मु.स्वा.भा. ३/२/८

86. वच. म.३८, अ.३३

‘अविभागो वचनात्’⁸⁷ इति दृष्टान्तसिद्धान्तसमन्वयः। परब्रह्मणा इव अक्षरब्रह्मणा सहाऽपि मुक्तस्य स्वरूपाऽभेद एव। अक्षरब्रह्मैक्यबोधनवाक्यानाम् अक्षरब्रह्मगुणसाधर्म्यपरतयैव स्वीकारः, ब्रह्मगुणसंसर्गाद्ध्यात्मनां ब्रह्मरूपत्वाद् इति। अत्र विशेषो यद् अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमभिन्नोऽप्यं चिद्रूपाऽऽत्मा ब्राह्मविग्रहो ब्रह्मगुणयोग अक्षरमुक्तात्मा न अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमसमोऽपि तु अक्षरब्रह्म इव दासभावेन परमात्मोपासकः। तत्राऽप्यस्त्येवोपासनम्। वस्तुतस्तु परमात्मोपासनं न केवलं मुक्तिसाधनमेवाऽपि तु साक्षान्मुक्तिरूपमेवेति तद् विना तु मुक्तेरेव मुक्त्यवसर इति।

अथ मुक्तसामर्थ्यमुच्यते। सत्यकामत्वसत्यसङ्कल्पत्वपरब्रह्मपरमानन्दनिमग्नत्व-सर्वज्ञत्वाऽपुनरावृत्तित्वाऽऽद्यैश्वर्यवान् भवत्यक्षरमुक्तः। सर्वञ्चेदं प्रतिपादितं श्रुतिस्मृतिसूत्रवचोऽमृतैरिति। परब्रह्मकारुण्येन साक्षादक्षरब्रह्मप्रकृष्टमननादिजन्यसत्य-सङ्कल्पात्मकब्राह्मगुणयोगबलात् सामर्थ्यं लब्धस्य मुक्तस्य कृते न किमपि प्रयत्नाऽपेक्षमपि तु सङ्कल्पनात्रसाध्यमेवेति। तदुक्तं छान्दोग्ये ‘स यदि पितृलोककामो भवति सङ्कल्पादेवाऽस्य पितरः सृतिष्ठन्ति’⁸⁸ इत्यारभ्य ‘यं यमन्तमभिकामो भवति यं कामं कामयते सोऽस्य सङ्कल्पादेव समुत्तिष्ठति तेन सम्पन्नो महीयते’⁸⁹ इत्यन्तेन तस्य प्रयत्नाऽन्तरनिरपेक्षसङ्कल्पमात्रसम्पाद्यपित्रादिसमुत्थानश्रावितमिति साक्षात्कृतब्रह्मगुणस्य ब्रह्मरूपस्याऽयं विशिष्टो महिमा। अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमाऽन्यस्तत्सङ्कल्पप्रतिबन्धकरकालकर्म-मायाद्यधिपतिर्नास्तीति सः अनन्याधिपतिरभिवर्तते इति तस्य सत्यसङ्कल्पता। ब्रह्मसाधर्म्यमाप्तोऽक्षरमुक्तो विदेहमुक्तिदेशे परब्रह्मपरमानन्दमग्न एवावतिष्ठति। श्रूयते च ‘यत्र नान्यत् पश्यति नान्यच्छृणोति नान्यद्विजानाति’⁹⁰, ‘न तु तद्वितीमस्ति ततोऽन्यद्विभक्तं यद् पश्येत्’⁹¹ इत्यादिश्रुतिगणो भक्तस्य हासविलासस्त्रीरमणादिभोगजातं वारयति परमात्मस्वरूपसुखलीनतां च स्थापयति। न च ‘स एकधा भवति त्रिधा भवति पञ्चधा सप्तधा नवधा चैव’⁹², ‘स्त्रीभिर्वा यानैर्वा ज्ञातिभिर्वा’⁹³ इत्यादिश्रुतौ प्रदर्शितं सामर्थ्यदेहसम्बन्धादिकमस्ति तथा च सत्यपि सामर्थ्ये तदविनियोगे तु किं सामर्थ्येनेति मुक्तस्य हासरमणादिभोगो नैवेति वाच्यम्, तात्पर्याऽवधारणे सर्वसामञ्जस्यात्। यथोक्तमुक्तैश्वर्यप्रदर्शनं परमात्मकृपालब्धतत्सामर्थ्य-सूचनमात्राभिप्रायेण। वस्तुतस्तु तदानीं तस्य ब्रह्मरूपेण स्वात्मना परमात्मपरमानन्दपरमदिव्यानुभूतिनिमग्नत्वाद् यथोक्तसामर्थ्यस्य मनुष्यदेवाद्यपेक्षया

87. ब्र. ४/२/१५

88. छा. ८/२/१

89. छा. ८/२/१०

90. छा. ७/२४/१

91. बृ. ४/३/२३

92. छा. ७/२६/२

93. छा. ८/१२/३

वैशिष्ट्येऽपि सहजानन्दसुखं प्रति त्वत्यल्पमेवेति तदितरसङ्कल्पाऽनवकाशात्तादृशसामर्थ्य-
लाभेऽपि न स स्वातन्त्र्येण तद्विनियोगमातिष्ठति। न वा तथाविधं किमपि कामयत इति।
अक्षरमुक्तोऽयं सर्वज्ञोऽपि भवति। श्रावयति च श्रुतिमाता 'स सर्वज्ञो सर्वो भवति'⁹⁴, 'स
सर्वज्ञः सर्वमेवाविशन्ति'⁹⁵, 'स सर्वविद् भजति माम्'⁹⁶ इत्यादिना ज्ञायते यत्स सर्वं
हस्तामलकवत्साक्षात्करोतीति। मुक्तस्य सत्यकामत्वसत्यसङ्कल्पत्वादिसामर्थ्ये सत्त्वेऽपि तद्वि
सामर्थ्यं जगद्व्यापारवर्जमेव। भूतभवद्भविष्यत्सकलजगत्सृष्टिस्थितिप्रशास्तिलयादिव्यापारस्तु
परब्रह्मणस्तन्मित्येच्छयाऽक्षरब्रह्मणश्चेत्युभयोरेवेति जगद्व्यापारवर्जमेव मुक्तैश्वर्यमिति। उक्तञ्च,

ऐश्वर्यं सर्वमुक्तानां सर्वज्ञत्वादिलक्षणम्।

परप्रसादतो लभ्यं जगद्व्यापारवर्जितम्॥⁹⁷

'सोऽश्नुते सर्वान् कामान् सह ब्रह्मणा विपश्चितेति'⁹⁸ इति ब्रह्मरूपस्य
मुक्तस्य अक्षरब्रह्मणा सह परमात्मसहजानन्दपरमानन्दलक्षणभोगमात्रे साम्यं
प्रतिपादितम्। अनेन ब्रह्मरूपत्वमपि न हि ब्रह्माऽक्षरगतसकलगुणसम्पत्तिरूपमपि तु
परमनिःश्रेयसौपयिकपरब्रह्मोपासनाधिकाराऽऽपादकतदुणविशेषसम्पत्तिरूपमेवेत्यपिसिद्ध्यति
मुक्ते जगद्व्यापारवदिव्यदेशरूपेण रमात्मतदुपासकाऽनन्तकोटिमुक्ताऽऽधारकत्वनैकमुमुक्षु-
मोक्षप्रदातृत्वाऽऽदिकस्याऽप्यसम्भवादिति। मुक्तस्याऽस्य परमं सामर्थ्यं तु नैव पुनर्मायया
पराभवमाप्नोतीति न पुनर्बध्यते। ब्रह्मदेशस्थितो ब्रह्मरूपोऽयं परब्रह्मोपासकस्तद्व्याऽनन्त-
सुखोपभोक्ता ततो नैव प्रत्यावर्तते। एवमस्याऽक्षरमुक्तस्य तादृशाऽपवर्गदशाया अनावृत्तिः
श्रुतिस्मृतिशब्दादेव लिङ्गादवगम्यते। तच्च 'न च पुनरावर्तते न पुनरावर्तते'⁹⁹, 'न
पुनरावृत्तिः'¹⁰⁰, 'आवर्तं नाऽऽवर्तन्ते नाऽऽवर्तन्ते'¹⁰¹, 'पुनर्जन्म न विद्यते'¹⁰², 'न
निवर्तन्ते'¹⁰³ इत्यादिभिर्भूयो भूयश्च सेमाम्मितम्। इदञ्च
सत्यकामत्वसत्यसङ्कल्पत्वपरब्रह्मपरमानन्दनिमग्नत्वसर्वज्ञत्वाऽपुनरावृत्तित्वसहाक्षर
भोगमात्रसाम्यत्वाद्यैश्वर्यं सूपपन्नं ब्रह्मसूत्रे सूत्रकृता बादरायणेन भाष्यकारेण च
महामहोपाध्यायभट्टेशदासेनेति। उक्तञ्च,

94. प्र.४/१०

95. प्र.४/११

96. गी.१५/१९

97. स्वा.सि.का. ४५६

98. तै.२/१/१

99. छा.८/१५/१

100. बृ.६/२/१५

101. छा.४/१५/६

102. गी.८/१५, १६

103. गी.८/२१, १५/४, १५/६

‘ब्रह्मणा भोगमात्रेण मुक्तौ साम्यं प्रकीर्तितम्।
ब्रह्माऽक्षरं पराऽऽनन्दं भुङ्क्ते मुक्तस्तथेति तत्॥’¹⁰⁴

उपसंहारः

एवमिह अद्वैतविशिष्टाद्वैताक्षरपुरुषोत्तमदर्शनानुसारं सकलोऽपि मुक्तिवैभवः सप्रपञ्चं निरूपितः। इत्थं साक्षादक्षरब्रह्मस्वरूपगुरोर्विधिवत्समाश्रयणेन तत्प्रसङ्गप्रकर्षमाप्य दृढतमाऽऽत्मबुद्ध्या स्वयमपि तद्भावभावितो ब्रह्मरूपः सन् तत्रैव पुनः 'यस्य देवे परा भक्तिर्यथा देवे तथा गुरौ। तस्यैते कथिता ह्यर्थाः प्रकाशन्ते महात्मनः॥' (श्वे. ६/२३) इति श्रुतिशासनाऽनुसारेण प्रत्यक्षनारायणस्वरूपभावोद्रेकतां प्राप्य धर्मज्ञानवैराग्याद्यनुगृहीतपरभक्तिलक्षणपरब्रह्मोपासनेन जीवदशायामेव तदुपासनप्रसन्नपरमात्मप्रसादेन परमनिःश्रेयसमनुभवन् स्वदेहपातोत्तरमर्चिरादिपथेन ब्रह्मदेशं प्राप्तो नैककोटिब्रह्मरूपमुक्तोपास्यमानपरब्रह्मसहजानन्दोपासनरतस्तद्विव्य-दर्शनजन्यदिव्यानन्दाऽनुभूतिनिमग्नोऽवतिष्ठते। इति जयत्यक्षरपुरुषोत्तमः।

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दिसम्बर २००९ अमदावाद
- साधुः भद्रेशदासः, छान्दोग्योपनिषत्स्वामिनारायणभाष्यम्, प्रथमा आवृत्तिः, स्वामिनारायण अक्षरपीठ,
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- साधुः भद्रेशदासः, बृहदारण्यकोपनिषत्स्वामिनारायणभाष्यम्, प्रथमा आवृत्तिः, स्वामिनारायण अक्षरपीठ,
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२०१२ अमदावाद
- साधुः भद्रेशदासः, स्वामिनारायणसिद्धान्तसुधा, प्रथमा आवृत्तिः, स्वामिनारायण अक्षरपीठ, जून २०१७
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- भगवान् स्वामिनारायणः, वचनामृतम्, उनविंशतितमा आवृत्तिः, स्वामिनारायण अक्षरपीठ, २०१३
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 सदानन्दः, वेदान्तसारः, सरस्वती पुस्तक भण्डार, २०१०-११, अमदावाद
 शङ्कराचार्यः, विवेकचूडामणिः, (गुजकाती अर्थ सहित) सस्तुसाहित्यकार्यालय, वि.सं २००२, अमदावाद
 शङ्कराचार्यः, ब्रह्मसूत्रशाङ्करभाष्यम्, प्रथमं प्रकाशनम्, संस्कृत सेवा समिति, २००९, अमदावाद
 शङ्कराचार्यः, कठोपनिषत्शाङ्करभाष्यम्, त्रयोदशं संस्करणम्, गीताप्रेस, सं २०७३, गोरखपुर
 नरसिंह सरस्वती तीर्थ, वेदान्तडिण्डिमः, द्वितीयं प्रकाशनम्, अध्यात्म प्रकाश कार्यालय, २००२, कर्णाटक
 हिरण्यकेशीयशाखाश्रुतिः

अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमदर्शनस्य स्वामिनारायणभाष्यस्य पाणिनीयदिशा पर्यालोचनम्

DR. PANKAJKUMAR VYAS

Associate Professor, Dept. of Vyakarana,
NSU, Tirupati

“अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमदर्शनस्य स्वामिनारायणभाष्यस्य पाणिनीयदिशा पर्यालोचनम्” इति प्रकृतलेखोऽयं तिरुपतिस्थराष्ट्रियसंस्कृतविश्वविद्यालये 2021 क्रीस्ताब्दे फेब्रुअरी-मासस्य 4 दिनाङ्के समायोजितायाम् अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमदर्शनविषयिण्यां राष्ट्रियविद्वत्सङ्गोष्ठ्यां भागग्रहणवेलायाम् अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमदर्शनस्य स्वामिनारायणप्रस्थानत्रयी-भाष्यस्य प्रणेतृणां तत्रभवतां भवतां श्रीमतां साधुभद्रेशदासस्वामिनां मुखारविन्दात् विद्वद्भिः सह तत्त्वालोचनचर्चायां तत्र तत्र विद्वद्भिरुत्थाप्यमानशङ्काः समाधातुं पाणिनीयं समाश्रित्य निःसृतांस्तांस्तान् विषयान् समाकर्ण्य व्याकरणे अधीतिनो जनस्यास्य मनोदोलिकायामान्दोलितान् काँश्चन् विचारान् क्रोडीकृत्य किञ्चिदिव प्रविवर्तिष्या प्रवर्तते। अनेन तत्र तत्र शङ्कासमाधानप्रसङ्गे बहुत्र व्याकरणशास्त्रस्योपयोगित्वप्रदर्शनेन “काणादं पाणिनीयञ्च सर्वशास्त्रोपकारकम्” इत्यभियुक्तोक्तेः सार्थक्यमपि अभिव्यक्तं भवति।

वस्तुतस्तत्रैव संगोष्ठ्याम् ऐदम्प्राथम्येन पर्यचिनुवं यद् षडास्तिकदर्शनातिरिक्तमस्ति किञ्चिदभिनवतत्त्वयुतं सर्वथा नूतनं स्वतन्त्रञ्चास्तिकदर्शनं श्रीस्वामिनारायणप्रबोधितम् अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमदर्शनमिति। तादृशस्य महनीयस्याभिनवस्य दर्शनस्यापि केनचिद् भाष्येण भाव्यम्, यतः सर्वस्यापि दर्शनजातस्य दर्शनत्वं प्रस्थानत्रयीभाष्येणैव सत्याप्यत इति सनातनीयं परम्परा। अतः परम्परामेनां निर्वहन्तो महामहोपाध्यायाः साधुभद्रेशस्वामिपादाः स्वगुरुणामाज्ञया प्रस्थानत्रय्यां स्वामिनारायणभाष्यं व्यरीरचन् इति त एव सङ्गोष्ठ्यां व्यजिज्ञपन्।

अथेदानीम् अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमदर्शनस्य स्वामिनारायणभाष्यस्य पाणिनीयदिशा पर्यालोचनमीमांसा प्रवर्तते। यतः स्वयं स्वामिनारायणभाष्यकाराः स्वीयसिद्धान्तप्रतिपादनाय स्वयंकृतव्याख्यानस्य सप्रमाणत्वं ध्वनयितुं बहुत्र पाणिनीयं समाद्रियन्त। तदनुगुणम् अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमदर्शनस्य स्वामिनारायणभाष्यस्थान् काँश्चनस्थलविशेषान् स्थालीपुलाकन्यायेन

पाणिनीयदिशा एकैकशः पर्यालोचयामहे । तद्यथा -

अथातो ब्रह्मजिज्ञासा 1-1-1

तत्र “अथातो ब्रह्मजिज्ञासा” (ब्र.सू. 1-1-1) इति आद्यं ब्रह्मसूत्रं व्याचक्षाणाः स्वामिनारायणभाष्यकाराः - “ब्रह्मजिज्ञासा ब्रह्मणोर्जिज्ञासेति कर्मषष्ठ्या विग्रहो विशेषाभिधानात् प्रतिपदविधाननिषेधनिवारणाच्च ।

अथ ब्रह्मपदार्थनिर्णयः । ब्रह्मशब्देनेह सकलवेदान्तोदितब्रह्मविद्यातत्त्वनिरूपणनिपुणेन भगवता व्यासेनाऽक्षरब्रह्म-परब्रह्मेतिदिव्योभयतत्त्वयोर्जिज्ञास्यमानत्वेन विवक्षितत्वात्, तथैव श्रुत्यवबोधितत्वाच्च ब्रह्मणोरिति द्विवचनान्तो विग्रहः । पदार्थभेदेऽपि पदसारूप्याच्चैकशेषः शाब्दिकसमयसिद्धो यथा पार्थपार्थसारथ्युभयविवक्षया कृष्णाविति भारते (म.भा.आदि.प.२२१/३३) दाशरथिवासुदेवाऽग्रजोभयविवक्षया वदन्ति लोके रामयोरिति तथेहापि । ब्रह्म च ब्रह्म चेति ब्रह्मणी तयोरिति लौकिको विग्रहः । तत्राऽऽद्यं शक्त्याऽक्षरतत्त्वं द्वितीयञ्च पुरुषोत्तमतत्त्वं ब्रवीतीति भवति तदुभयलाभः । तथा ह्येतयोरेव नित्यं स्वरूपस्वभावगुणतश्च सकलजीवेश्वरमायातन्मुक्तेभ्यो बृहत्त्वाद् बृंहणत्वाच्च मुख्यवृत्तैव ब्रह्मशब्दव्यपदेशः” इत्याहुः ।¹

अत्रेयं पाणिनीयदिशा विचारणा

प्रकृतसूत्रे भाष्ये श्रीस्वामिनारायणभाष्यकाराः व्याकरणसम्बद्धौ द्वौ विषयौ प्रस्तुवन्ति । तथा हि - 1) ब्रह्मणोर्जिज्ञासा इत्यत्र षष्ठीद्विवचनान्तेन समासविग्रहप्रदर्शनम्, 2) कर्मषष्ठ्या समासः इति च । तत्राद्य इदं वक्तव्यम् - यद् ब्रह्मजिज्ञासेत्यत्र प्रायः सर्वेऽपि शास्त्रकृतो ब्रह्मणो जिज्ञासेति षष्ठ्येकवचनान्तेन ब्रह्मशब्देन विग्रहं प्रदर्शयन्ति, परमत्र अक्षरब्रह्मपरब्रह्मेति द्वयोस्तत्त्वयोर्विवक्षणात् द्विवचनान्तेन यद् विग्रहप्रदर्शनं तद् युक्तियुक्तं न वेति चेद् व्याकरणदिशा न किञ्चिद् बाधकं तत्र पश्यामः । यतस्समासे वृत्तौ वा संख्यावगमो न भवति तस्य वाक्याधीनत्वात् वाक्यस्य च विवक्षाधीनत्वात् । यथा राजपुरुष इत्यत्र राज्ञः, राज्ञोः, राज्ञां वा पुरुष इति यथाविवक्षं विग्रहस्य वक्तुं शक्यत्वात् । अत एव “समर्थः पदविधिः” 2-1-1 इति सूत्रे एकार्थीभावफलनिरूपणाधिकरणपर-भाष्ये² भगवान् पतञ्जलिः आह - “संख्याविशेषो भवति वाक्ये - राज्ञः पुरुषः, राज्ञोः पुरुषः, राज्ञां पुरुष इति । समासे न भवति - राजपुरुष इति ।” तत्रैव कैयटः³ संख्याविशेष इति प्रतीकमुपादाय - “वाक्ये उपसर्जनपदानि विभक्त्यर्थाभिधायित्वात् संख्याविशेषयुक्तं स्वार्थं प्रतिपादयन्ति । समासे त्वन्तर्भूतस्वार्थं प्रधानार्थमभिधत्तीत्यभेदैकत्व-

1. ब्रह्मसूत्रस्वामिनारायणभाष्यम्, पृ.सं. 4

2. व्याकरणमहाभाष्यम् द्वितीयं खण्डम् समर्थः पदविधिः सूत्रे - पृ.सं. 322

3. व्याकरणमहाभाष्यम् कैयटे द्वितीयं खण्डम् समर्थः पदविधिः सूत्रे - पृ.सं. 322

संख्यां गमयन्ति । इत्यादि । ” आभ्यां भाष्यकैयटाभ्यां स्पष्टमिदं यद् वाक्ये उपसर्जनबोधकपदानां विभक्त्यन्तत्वेन तदर्थसंख्याविशेषयुक्तार्थबोधकत्वमिति । तेन वाक्ये यथा संख्याया अवगमो भवति न तथा वृत्ताविति । तेन प्रकृतेऽपि उपसर्जनबोधकपदस्य ब्रह्म इत्यस्य षष्ठीद्विवचनान्तत्वेन तदर्थद्वित्वसंख्याविशेषयुक्तार्थबोधकत्वात् अक्षरब्रह्मपरब्रह्मेत्यनयोर्बोधकत्वे न किञ्चिद् बाधकम् । अतः ब्रह्मणोर्जिज्ञासा ब्रह्मजिज्ञासेति विग्रहप्रदर्शनं सर्वथा युक्तमेव ।

न च क्लीबवृत्तेः ब्रह्मपदस्य परब्रह्मणि शक्तत्वात् ब्रह्मणो जिज्ञासेति एकवचनान्तसमासस्य परब्रह्मविषये पर्यवसानात् कस्याप्यन्यस्य सापेक्षत्वाभावात् सामर्थ्यसत्त्वाच्च समासे बाधकाभावेऽपि ब्रह्मणोर्जिज्ञासेति द्विवचनान्तेन समासे कयोरिति सापेक्षत्वात् “सापेक्षमसमर्थवत्”⁴ इति न्यायेन कथमत्र समास इति वाच्यम् । राज्ञः पुरुषः इत्यादौ सर्वत्रापि कस्येत्यादिसापेक्षत्वप्रदर्शनात् क्वापि समासस्यैवासम्भवात् । कस्य राज्ञ इत्याद्याकाङ्क्षायास्तु पूर्ववाक्याद्युपात्तपदार्थेन शान्तत्वात् विवक्षितपदार्थस्य पूर्वमेवज्ञातत्वात् तादृशाकाङ्क्षायामेव अनुद्भवाच्च । यद्वा एकवचनान्तेन समासे ब्रह्मशब्दस्य परब्रह्मणि प्रसिद्ध्या कस्य ब्रह्मण इत्यादिरीत्या कस्यापि पदार्थविशेषस्य सापेक्षत्वाभावात् समाससिद्धिः, तथैव प्रकृतेऽपि ब्रह्म च ब्रह्म चेति ब्रह्मणी इति विग्रहप्रदर्शनपरस्वामिनारायणभाष्योक्तरीत्या⁵ तत्रैव भाष्ये तत्र तत्र ब्रह्मतत्त्वद्वयविशेषस्य प्रमाणितत्वात् द्वयोरपि विवक्षितपदार्थयोः प्रसिद्धत्वात् तत्राप्येतादृशाकाङ्क्षाया अनुद्भवासंभवाच्च समासस्य सुवचत्वात् नासङ्गतेति स्पष्टम् ।

अथ द्वितीयं यदुक्तं स्वामिनारायणभाष्ये – ब्रह्मणोर्जिज्ञासेति कर्मषष्ठ्या विग्रहो विशेषाभिधानात् प्रतिपदविधाननिषेधनिवारणाच्च ।⁶ अत्र चो हेत्वर्थे यतः प्रतिपदविधाननिषेधनिवारणं ततः विशेषाभिधानम् इति । तत्रेतत्थं विवृतिः – प्रकृते शेषषष्ठ्या समास उत कर्मषष्ठ्या । कश्चात्र विशेषः ? इति चेदुच्यते – शेषषष्ठ्या समासे तु चतुर्थीसमासवत् ब्रह्मणे जिज्ञासा इति तादर्थ्यादिभानात् अर्थासङ्गतिः । न ह्यत्र ब्रह्मार्था जिज्ञासा ब्रह्मप्राप्तये जिज्ञासा ब्रह्मसम्बन्धविषयजिज्ञासा वेत्युच्यते किन्तर्हि ब्रह्मविषयिणी जिज्ञासेति । तद्धि कर्मषष्ठ्यन्तेन समासे सत्येव सङ्गच्छते । ब्रह्मणोऽत्र जिज्ञास्यमानपदार्थत्वात् । जिज्ञासाक्रियायाञ्च तस्य कर्मत्वेनैवान्वयस्योचितत्वात् । शेषषष्ठ्यां तु ब्रह्मपदोत्तरषष्ठ्याः को वा शेषार्थ उच्यते ? इत्यादौ वक्तव्यम् ।⁷ एकशतं षष्ठ्यर्था यावन्तो वा आर्थाः यौनाः मौखाः सौवाश्वेत्यादि “षष्ठी स्थाने योगा” (पा.सू. 1-1-49) इति महाभाष्यरीत्या सत्सु बहुषु अर्थेषु कमपि आर्थिकं सम्बन्धोपादानेन प्रकृते समासः वक्तव्यः । स च शेषार्थः सम्बन्धीविषयाः तल्लक्षणप्रमाणज्ञानप्राप्त्यादयो

4. सापेक्षमसमर्थं भवतीति । व्याकरणमहाभाष्यम् द्वितीयं खण्डम् समर्थः पदविधिः सूत्रे – पृ.सं. 318

5. ब्रह्मसूत्रस्वामिनारायणभाष्यम्, पृ.सं. 4

6. तत्रैव

7. व्याकरणमहाभाष्यम् प्रथमं खण्डम् षष्ठी स्थाने योगा सूत्रे – पृ.सं. 411

भवितुमर्हति । तथा सति ब्रह्मसम्बन्धिविषयाणामेव प्राधान्यमवभासेत, ब्रह्मणस्तु गौणत्वमेव । प्रकृते च ब्रह्मपदेन विवक्षितपदार्थस्यैव ज्ञानेन आमुमिष्टतमत्वात् तदेव प्रधानम् । प्रधानत्वञ्चात्र क्रियानिरूपितकर्मत्वात् साक्षात्तत्रान्वयाच्चेति बोध्यम् । शेषषष्ठ्या समासे तु अर्थतो लब्धानां ब्रह्मसम्बन्धिनां जिज्ञासाक्रियायामन्वयात् तेषां प्राधान्यं स्यात् प्रकृतक्रियानिरूपितकर्मत्वात् । शब्दतः साक्षात्त्वभ्यमानविषयं त्यक्त्वाऽर्थतो भासमानस्य ग्रहणानौचित्याच्च । किञ्च ज्ञातस्यैव सम्बन्धपदार्थानां विषये जिज्ञासा भवितुमर्हति, प्रकृते तु ब्रह्मपदार्थ एव न ज्ञातः तर्हि का कथा तद्विषयाणां विषये ? एवञ्च प्रधाने ब्रह्मणि ज्ञाते तत्सम्बन्धितविषयाणामपि ज्ञानस्य स्वतः सम्भवाद् ब्रह्मविषयिणीजिज्ञासेति कर्मषष्ठ्यैव समास उचितः । तथैव प्रधानपरिग्रहणेन तदपेक्षितानामर्थतः आक्षेपसिद्ध्या न तद्विषये पृथगुक्तेरपेक्षापि । अनेन स्वामिनारायणभाष्योक्तं विशेषाभिधानादिति कर्मषष्ठ्या समासे प्रदर्शितहेतोरपि सङ्गतिरुक्ता । ब्रह्मणः प्रधानत्वमेव विशेषः तदभिधानमेव तस्मादिति बोध्यम् । अनेनेदमपि स्पष्टं यत् प्राधान्यनिर्णयेऽत्रापि पाणिनीयमेव आश्रितमिति ।

‘प्रतिपदविधाननिषेधनिवारणाच्च’ इत्यत्र त्वायं विशेषो वक्तव्यः – तत्र “षष्ठी” (पा.सू. 2-2-8) इति सूत्रे भाष्ये⁸ कृद्योगा च षष्ठी समस्यत इति वक्तव्यम् । इध्मप्रवञ्चनः, पलाशशतान इत्यादौ समाससाधनाय “कृद्योगा च” इति वार्तिकमारब्धम् । ततः किमर्थमिदमुच्यते ? इति प्रश्ने ‘प्रतिपदविधाना च षष्ठी न समस्यते’ इति वक्ष्यति । तस्यायं पुरस्तादपकर्षः । ततोऽग्रे सर्वा षष्ठी प्रतिपदविधाना शेषलक्षणां वर्जयित्वा । “कर्तृकर्मणोः कृति” इति तु या षष्ठी सा कृद्योगेति इत्येवमुभयोर्भेदं प्रदर्श्य कृद्योगषष्ठ्या समासः साधितः । ब्रह्मणोर्जिज्ञासेत्यत्रापि “कर्तृकर्मणोः कृति” (पा.सू. 2-3-65) इत्यनेन कर्मणि षष्ठी वर्तते । तेन यदि प्रतिपदविधानसमासनिषेधस्य निवारणं (प्रतिप्रसवः) न स्यात् तदा “कर्तृकर्मणोः कृति” इति विहितषष्ठ्याः अपि प्रतिपदविधानात् तस्याश्च समासस्यैव निषिद्धत्वात् न कथमपि ब्रह्मजिज्ञासेत्यत्र समासोऽपि स्यात् । यदा तु महाभाष्यकारैः कर्मणि षष्ठ्याः कृद्योगत्वात् समासविधानस्य प्रतिप्रसवः कृतः तदा ब्रह्मजिज्ञासेति समासोऽपि सिद्ध इति अत्रापि स्वामिनारायणभाष्यकारैः पाणिनीयस्य प्रमाणत्वं सुष्ठु सङ्गमितम् ।

जन्माद्यस्य यतः 1-1-2

सूत्रमिदं व्याचक्षाणाः स्वामिनारायणभाष्यकाराः “यतः यच्छब्दाद्धेतुत्वर्थे पञ्चमी । हेतुत्वं चेह निमित्तोपादान-साधारणम् । ‘पञ्चम्यास्तसिल्’ (पा.सू. 5-3-7) । याभ्यामित्यर्थः । इत्याद्याहुः ।⁹

ननु ब्रह्मणो जिज्ञासेति एकवचनान्तेन विग्रहे यतः इति एकवचनोपपत्तिः सुशका । परं

8. व्याकरणमहाभाष्यम् द्वितीयं खण्डम् षष्ठी सूत्रे – पृ.सं. 430

9. ब्रह्मसूत्रस्वामिनारायणभाष्यम्, पृ.सं. 13

ब्रह्मणोर्जिज्ञासेति द्विवचनान्तेन विग्रहे कथं सोपपाद्येति¹⁰ चेदत्रोच्यते – पञ्चम्यन्तेभ्यः किमादिभ्यस्तसिल्वा स्यादित्यर्थकेन “पञ्चम्यास्तसिल्” (पा.सू. 5-3-7) इति सूत्रेण पञ्चम्यन्ते विहितस्य तसिलन्तस्य, यस्मात्सर्वा विभक्तिर्नोत्पद्यते स तद्धितान्तोऽव्ययं स्यादित्यर्थके “तद्धिताश्चासर्वविभक्तिः” (पा.सू. 1-1-38) इति सूत्रे तसिलादयः प्राक् पाशपः इत्यादिपरिगणनात् अव्ययत्वात् सर्वेषामपि वचनानां वक्तुं सुलभत्वात् द्विवचनान्तविग्रहे दोषाभावाच्च । अनेनात्रापि पाणिनीयप्रमाणोपन्यासः स्फुटं प्रतीयते ।

अन्यच्चोक्तं स्वामिनारायणभाष्ये हेतुत्वमिह निमित्तोपादानसाधारणमिति तदपि प्रौढमनोरमायां सम्यग् व्यचारि भट्टोजिना पञ्चमीप्रकरणे “जनिकर्तुः प्रकृतिः” (पा.सू. 1-4-30) इति सूत्रं व्याचक्षाणेन । अनेन सूत्रेण जायमानस्य हेतोरपादानं सज्ञा विहिता । तत्र प्रकृतिशब्देन हेतुरुच्यते । एवं हि ‘पुत्रात् प्रमोदो जायत’ इति उदाहरणप्रदर्शनात् प्रकृतिग्रहणं हेतुमात्रपरमिति वृत्तिकृन्मन्तमनूद्य महाभाष्यकृन्मते तु ‘गोमयाद् वृश्चिका जायन्ते, गोलोमाविलोमभ्यो दूर्वा जायन्ते’ इत्युदाहृतत्वाद् उपादानमात्रपरमिति व्याख्याय तदुभयसाधारण्येन ‘ब्रह्ममणः प्रजाः प्रजायन्ते’ इत्युदाहारि । ब्रह्मा = हिरण्यगर्भः । स च हेतुरेव न तूपादानम् । किं च ब्रह्म = मायाशबलम्, तद्धि सर्वकार्योपादानम् इति वेदान्तसिद्धान्तः ।¹¹ अत एव “यतो वा इमानि भूतानि जायन्ते” इति श्रूतौ ‘यतः’ पञ्चमी दृश्यते । तत्त्वञ्चात्रापि स्वामिनारायणभाष्ये प्रतिपाद्यते – “याभ्यां सकलजीवेश्वरमायातन्मुक्तव्यापकाभ्यां तन्नियामकाभ्यामचिन्त्याऽलौकिकशक्तिभ्यां दिव्याऽगणितकल्याणगुणगण-शालिभ्यामक्षरपुरुषोत्तमाभ्यामस्य प्रपञ्चस्योत्पत्तिस्थितिप्रलयाः प्रभवन्ति....” इत्यादिना । अनेन प्रकृतभाष्येण भाष्यकृतः यथाप्रतिज्ञं नान्यवेदान्तादिसिद्धान्तस्यापि विरोध क्वचिदित्यपि स्पष्टम् । व्यक्तञ्चानेन निमित्तोपादानसाधारणोपपादनपर-स्वामिनारायण-भाष्येण भाष्यकाराणां दीक्षिततुल्यत्वम् । एवञ्चात्रापि पाणिनीयसरणिरेच्छाया दृश्यत एव ।

तत्तु समन्वयात् 1-1-4

ननु “जन्माद्यस्य यतः” (ब्र. सू. 1-1-2) इत्यत्र ‘यतः’ इत्यनेन पाणिनीयप्रमाणबलात् याभ्यामित्यर्थस्य सुलभत्वादपि “तत्तु समन्वयात्” (ब्र. सू. 1-1-4) इत्यत्र ‘तद्’ इत्यस्य सर्वनामसंज्ञकत्वात् सर्वनाम्नां च पूर्वपरामर्शत्वस्य औत्सर्गिकत्वनियमात् “जन्माद्यस्य यतः” (ब्र. सू. 1-1-2) इति पूर्वसूत्रे ‘यतः’ इत्यनेन द्वयोर्वचनत्वात् प्रकृते ‘तद्’ इत्यनेन कथं द्विवचनान्तस्य लाभ इति चेत्¹² – तदित्यनेन जगत्कारणत्वमिति गृहाण । तत्त्वञ्च प्रकृतसूत्रे

10. वस्तुत ईदृश्येव शङ्का तिरुपतौ संगोष्ठ्यां केनचित् पण्डितेनोत्थापिताप्यासीत्

11. प्रौढमनोरमा कारकप्रकरणे जनिकर्तुः प्रकृतिः सूत्रे पृ.सं. 925

12. एतादृश एव प्रश्नः तिरुपतौ संगोष्ठ्यामेकेन चतुरपण्डितेनोपस्थापितः । तत्र हि कुशाग्रमतयः स्वामिनारायणभाष्यकृतोऽनुक्षणमेव तस्योत्तरमदुः । तेनोत्तरेण महता आश्चर्येण पश्यन् स्तब्ध स इति साक्षात्कृतं मया तत्र ।

स्वामिनारायणभाष्ये – तद् निखिलजगत्प्रभवादिहेतुत्वं शास्त्रयोनित्वं चाक्षरब्रह्मणः परब्रह्मणश्च सम्भवत्येव । वेदान्तवाक्यानां तत्र समन्वयात् मुख्यवृत्त्याऽन्वयादिति शब्दार्थयोजना।¹³ अयं भावः – पूर्वत्र हि सूत्रे द्वयोरपि ब्रह्मणोर्जगत्कारणत्वस्य उक्तत्वात् उभयोरपि जगत्कारणत्वेन समुच्चितत्वात् नात्र काचित् क्षतिः तच्छब्देन जगत्कारणत्वस्वीकारे, समुच्चयेन चोभयोरपि सङ्गृहीतत्वाच्च । अनेन प्रकृतेऽपि सर्वनामविषयकशाब्दिकनियेमेनैवार्थसङ्गत्या स्पष्टं पाणिनीयनिर्दर्शनत्वम् ।

अनादिमत्परं ब्रह्म (श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता 13/12)

ज्ञेयं यत्तत्प्रवक्ष्यामि यज्ज्ञात्वाऽमृतमश्नुते ।

अनादिमत्परं (अनादि मत्परं) ब्रह्म न सत्तन्नाऽसदुच्यते ॥¹⁴

इति श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतायाः श्लोकेऽस्मिन् उत्तरार्द्धे “अनादिमत्परम्” इति शब्दो दृश्यते । तस्य चार्थः अविद्यमानं आदिः यस्येति । अस्य व्युत्पत्तिस्तु एवं वक्तव्या - न आदिरनादिः, अनादिरस्यास्ति इत्यर्थे “तदस्यास्त्यस्मिन्निति मतुप्” (पा.सू. 5-2-94) इति पाणिन्यनुशासनेन मतुपि अनादिमदिति । परन्त्वत्र स्वामिनारायणभाष्यकृतस्तु अनादि मत्परम् इत्यादिरीत्या च्छेदं प्रदर्शयामासुः । तेन च विवक्षितार्थः क इति चेदिदमत्र स्वामिनारायणभाष्यम् – “अनादि उत्पत्तिरहितमत एव विनाशरहितं नित्यमित्यर्थः । मत्परम् अहं पुरुषोत्तमः परमात्मैव परः स्वरूपस्वभावगुणैश्वर्यादिभिः श्रेष्ठो यस्मादिति मत्परम् । यद्वा दासभावेन परमात्मभक्तिपरायणमिति तदर्थः । इति ।”¹⁵

अस्तु, तेषां सम्प्रदायदृष्ट्या विवक्षितार्थस्य सिद्धत्वेऽपि प्रचलितपाठमुल्लङ्घ्य च्छेदेन पाठान्तरकल्पनाया न्याय्यत्वं युक्त्याऽनुसंधेयम् । न ह्यत्र शास्त्रेषु क्वापि दृढतरप्रमाणाभावात् स्वकल्पितार्थस्य सिद्धये पाठान्तरकल्पनाया औचित्यमप्यङ्गीक्रियते । शास्त्राणां शास्त्रत्वं तु सप्रमाणं निर्णयजनकत्वादेव सम्भवि, अत एव अनुशासनमिति व्यपदेशस्तत्र सङ्गच्छते । क्वचिदपि शास्त्रे कस्या अपि प्रमाणरहितकल्पनायाः स्वीकारे तु शास्त्राणां शास्त्रत्वस्यैव भङ्गापत्तेः । एवन्तर्हि प्रकृते कृतायाश्छेदकल्पनाया विषयेऽपि केनापि प्रमाणेन भाव्यम् । अस्ति वा तत्र प्रमाणमिति चेद् –

अत्रैषा पृष्ठभूमिः

अनादिमत् इति वृत्तं किं नञ्त्पुरुषगर्भितमतुबन्तं ब्रूते उत नञ्बहुव्रीहिगर्भित-

13. ब्रह्मसूत्रस्वामिनारायणभाष्यम्, पृ.सं. 24

14. श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता अध्यायः 13 श्लोकः 12

15. श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतास्वामिनारायणभाष्यम्, पृ.सं. 279

मतुबन्तमिति।¹⁶ नाद्यः। बहुव्रीहिणैव तादृशार्थस्य लाभसम्भवात्। नाप्यन्त्यः। तत्रापि बहुव्रीहिणैव तादृशार्थसिद्धेः। पक्षद्वयेऽपि “न कर्मधारयान्मत्वर्थीयो बहुव्रीहिश्चेत्तदर्थ- प्रतिपत्तिकरः” इति सर्वशास्त्राङ्गीकृतव्युत्पत्तिविरोधाद् वृत्तिद्वयकल्पनप्रयुक्तगौरवाच्च। अत्र व्युत्पत्तौ कर्मधारय इति वृत्तिमात्रोपलक्षणम्। तर्हि साक्षाद्भगवतैव प्रयुक्तत्वाच्छब्दस्यास्याप्रामाण्यस्य कथमपि वक्तुमशक्यत्वात् किमत्र सम्प्रधार्यम्? इति चेद् –

अत्रेत्थं समाधिः

तत्र हि शब्दानुशासनव्याख्याता भगवान् महाभाष्यकारपतञ्जलिः “प्रत्ययस्थात्कात्पूर्वस्यात इदाप्यसुपः” (पा.सू. 7-3-44) इति सूत्रे भाष्ये¹⁷ असुपः इति पदमुद्दिश्य क्रियमाणे प्रश्ने “अथाऽसुप इति, कथमिदं विज्ञायते – असुब्वतोऽङ्गस्येति....” इत्यत्र असुब्वत इति प्रायुङ्क्त। तत्र कैयटः असुब्वत इति प्रतीकमुद्धृत्य – न सुब्वदसुब्वदिति नञ्समासः। ‘असुप’ इत्यस्य बहुव्रीहित्वप्रदर्शनाय भाष्यकारेण लाघवं नाश्रितम्। तदाश्रयणे हि बहुव्रीहिरेव न्याय्यो न तु मतुबन्तः समासः।¹⁸ इत्यादिना मतुबन्तस्यायुक्तत्वं सूचयति। पूर्वोक्तव्युत्पत्तेर्विरोधात्। अत एव प्रौढमनोरमायां कारकप्रकरणे आरम्भे दीक्षितस्य ‘नीलरूपवत्’ इति प्रयोगस्य सार्थकतां प्रदर्शयितुं शब्दरत्नकारः प्रथमं व्युत्पत्तिमिमामुल्लिख्य वृत्तिद्वयकल्पनस्यायुक्तत्वं संसूच्य ततो असुब्वत इति भाष्यप्रयोगेण क्वचिल्लाघवानादरस्यापि सूचनमित्यादिना नीलरूपवत् इति प्रयोगोपपत्तिं प्रदर्शयामास।¹⁹ एतादृश प्रयोगसत्त्वे चायं पातञ्जलप्रयोग एव ज्ञापकम्। अनेन महाभाष्यकृतकृतप्रयोगप्रमाणेन भगवता श्रीकृष्णेन प्रयुक्ते न काचिदनुपपत्तिः। परमत्रेदमालोचनीयं यन्महाभाष्यकृद्भिस्तु बहुव्रीहेः स्पष्टप्रतीतिरूपबलवत्कारणस्य सत्त्वात् वृत्तिद्वयाकल्पनामूलकव्युत्पत्तिविरोधप्रयोगेण लाघवमनादृत्य इष्टिः प्रदर्शिता। तेन बलवत्कारणसत्त्व एव तादृशप्रयोगः कर्तव्य इति ज्ञायते। तावतापि अस्मदादिभिः तादृशबलवत्कारणाभावे न तथा प्रयोगः शक्यः कर्तुम्। अन्यथा सर्वत्राप्येतादृशज्ञापकत्वमाश्रित्य तादृशप्रयोगकरणाच्छास्त्रीयव्युत्पत्तिकृतनियमानामुच्छेदापत्तिः।

अस्तु प्रकृतमनुसरामः। एवमेतावता भगवद्गीतास्थमूलपाठस्य युक्तत्वे प्रदर्शितेऽपि श्रीस्वामिनारायणभाष्य-कृद्विहितपाठान्तरस्य तु गतिस्समालोचनीयैव। इति चेदत्र तेषां चातुर्यमवश्यं प्रकटनीयम् – तैः अनादिमत्पर इत्यस्य एका क्रिया द्व्यर्थकरी इति न्यायमनुसृत्य

16. न आदिरनादिः (नञ्-तत्पु.), अनादिरस्यास्तीति अनादिमदिति मतुबन्तेन आद्ये वचनविवृतिः।

अविद्यमानमादिरनादिः (नञ्-बहु.), अनादिरस्यास्तीति अनादिमदिति मतुबन्तेन द्वितीये वचनविवृतिः।

17. व्याकरणमहाभाष्यम् षष्ठं खण्डम् प्रत्यस्थात्कात्-0 सूत्रे – पृ.सं. 198

18. तत्रैव कैयटे

19. प्रौढमनोरमा कारकप्रकरणे प्रातिपदिकार्थ सूत्रे लघुशब्दरत्ने पृ.सं. 741

च्छेदेन प्रकृते कार्यद्वयं साधितम्, एकेन शरेण लक्ष्यद्वयसाधनवत्। तदित्थम् – एकं तु अनादि इत्यत्र बहुव्रीहिराश्रयणेन विवक्षितार्थेन सह भगवदुक्तार्थस्यापि संग्रहणाल्लाघवं सम्पादितम्। यतो योऽयमर्थो वृत्तिद्वययुक्तपदेन उच्यमानः स एव बहुव्रीहिणापि सिध्यतीति पाणिनीयानुशासनेन लाघवमत्र प्रादर्शितं। तेन वृत्तिद्वयाकल्पना-मूलकव्युत्पत्तिविरोधोऽपि वारित इति द्वितीयं महल्लाघवम्। महत्त्वञ्चात्र वृत्तिद्वयकल्पनाया अन्याय्यत्वात् तादृशप्रयोगेषु ज्ञापकादिना इष्टस्थले प्रयोगस्वीकारः, अनिष्टस्थले च तद्वारणमित्येवम्परसमाधानादिबहुतरप्रयत्नानां सत्त्वात् तदपेक्षया व्युत्पत्त्यविरुद्धप्रयोगकरणेन लाघवातिशयसम्पादनत्वात्।

एवमपि पाणिनीयानुशासनेन ‘अनादि मत्परम्’ इत्यादिच्छेदे अनादि इत्यस्य ब्रह्मविशेषणत्वेन अर्थसङ्गतेरपि मत्परमित्यनेन किं विवक्ष्यते इति जिज्ञासिते इदमत्र श्रीस्वामिनारायणभाष्योक्तिः – मत्परम् अहं पुरुषोत्तमः परमात्मैव परः स्वरूपस्वभावगुणैश्वर्यादिभिः श्रेष्ठो यस्मादिति मत्परम्। यद्वा दासभावेन परमात्मभक्तिपरायणमिति तदर्थः। अत्र प्रथमेऽर्थे अस्मच्छब्देन पुरुषोत्तमो गृह्यते तस्य अक्षरापेक्षया प्रोक्तगुणादिभिः श्रेष्ठत्वात्। अत्र “पञ्चमी विभक्ते” (पा.सू. 2-3-42) इति सूत्रेण निर्धार्यमाणस्य यत्र भेद एव तत्र पञ्चमी विधीयते। अवधित्वं पञ्चम्यर्थः। अत्र “यतश्च निर्धारणम्” (पा.सू. 2-3-41) इत्यनुवृत्तेः निर्धारणावधेः निर्धार्यमाणस्य च भेदे यतो निर्धार्यते तत एवेत्यर्थाद् निर्धारणावधेः पञ्चमी प्रवर्तते। यथा माथुराः पाटलिपुत्रकेभ्य आढ्यतराः। अत्र पाटलिपुत्रकावधिकम् (पाटलिपुत्रकेभ्यो निर्धार्यते अतः तस्यावधित्वम्) आढ्यतरत्वं माथुरेषु निर्धार्यते। तस्मात् पाटलिपुत्रकेभ्य इति पञ्चमी ततस्सिद्धा। तथैव प्रकृतेऽपि अक्षरब्रह्मावधिकश्रेष्ठतरत्वं पुरुषोत्तमब्रह्मणि निर्धार्यते चेत् पुरुषोत्तमवाचकात् अस्मच्छब्दात् पञ्चम्याः असिद्धेः मत्परमिति अनुपपन्नम्। अत एव द्वितीयार्थं प्रति अनुधावनं भाष्यकृतां यद्वेति। तदुक्तं यद्वा दासभावेन परमात्मभक्तिपरायणमिति तदर्थः। परन्तु अत्रार्थेऽयं क्लेशः परमिति शब्दात् कथं वा परायणपर्यन्तस्यार्थस्य लाभः ? इति।

अतस्तादृशक्लेशापहाराय मार्गान्तरं कल्प्यम्। एवं हि उच्यताम् प्रथमार्थस्य सिद्धौ मत् इति पञ्चमी मास्तु, अहं परः = श्रेष्ठो यस्मात् इति बहुव्रीहिरस्तु। अस्मद् + सु पर + सु इत्यवस्थायां “अनेकमन्यपदार्थे” (पा.सू. 2-2-24) इत्यनेन समाससंज्ञायां समासत्वात् प्रातिपदिकत्वे सुब्लुकि “प्रत्ययोत्तरपदयोश्च” (पा.सू. 7-2-98) इत्यनेन मपर्यन्तभागस्य म-आदेशो दकारस्य चत्वे मत्पर इत्यस्मात् पुनः प्रातिपदिकत्वे सुबादिकार्येषु विशेष्यनिघ्नत्वात् क्लीबे मत्परम् इति सिध्यति। अतः पाणिनीयेनानुशासनेनात्रापि समाधानस्य वक्तुं शक्यत्वात् द्वितीयसमाधानपर्यन्तानुधावनस्यानावश्यकत्वाल्लाघवत्वेन प्रशस्यतरमिदं समाधानम्।

मत्परम् इति पञ्चमीघटितप्रयोगे तु इदमपि विचारणीयम् – मत्परम् इति व्यासप्रयोग उत समासप्रयोग इति। व्यस्ते समस्तेऽपि समानरूपत्वात्। यदि व्यस्तस्तदा पञ्चमी केन साधनीया ? “पञ्चमी विभक्ते” इत्यनेन साधिते तु पूर्वोक्तापत्त्या मत् इति पञ्चम्या एव

अनुपपत्तेः । अस्तु तर्हि समस्तमेव तथापि तत्र केन वा समासःसाधनीयः ? पाणिनीये विभक्तार्थे पञ्चमीसमासविधायकानुशासनस्यैवाभावात् । अतो मत्परमित्यत्र बहुव्रीहिणैव समाधानं वक्तव्यमित्यलम्बहुना ।

इत्थं पाणिनीयदिशा अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमदर्शनस्य स्वामिनारायणभाष्यस्य कतिपयस्थलानि यथामति यथाग्रन्थं सप्रमाणं समैक्षिषि । एवमस्य भाष्यस्य पाणिनीयव्याकरणानुगतता स्पष्टं दरीदृश्यते । युक्तायुक्तत्वविवेचने विद्वांसोऽत्र मानम् । अग्रेऽपि अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमदर्शनस्य स्वामिनारायणभाष्यस्थस्थलविशेष-विषयिणी मीमांसा प्रवर्तत इति शम् ।

अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमदर्शनाऽनुसारेण गीतोक्तब्रह्मस्थिति- लक्षणानां प्रमुखस्वामिमहाराजस्य जीवने समन्वयः

DR. GAJENDRAKUMAR S. PANDA

Head, Dept. Of Sanskrit, L. D. Arts College,
Gujarat, India.

सारांशः

मुमुक्षूणां मोक्षाध्वनि ब्रह्मस्थितिर्हि चरमा स्थितिरित्यक्षरपुरुषोत्तमदर्शनसिद्धान्तः। सा चेयं ब्रह्मस्थितिर्वेदवेदान्तादिसनातनशास्त्रेषु वचनामृते च भूयस्त्वेन निरूपिता। तत्राऽपि श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतायां द्वितीयाऽध्याये ब्रह्मस्थितिलक्षणानि स्फुटं प्रकीर्तितानि। तथा हि “श्रुतिविप्रतिपन्ना ते यदा स्थास्यति निश्चला। समाधावचला बुद्धिस्तदा योगमवाप्स्यसि॥” (गी. २/५३) इति समाध्यभिधेये परमात्मनि स्थितां प्रज्ञाम् अनुष्ठेयतया श्रुत्वा पार्थो हि “स्थितप्रज्ञस्य का भाषा समाधिस्थस्य केशव। स्थितधीः किं प्रभाषेत किमासीत ब्रजेत किम्॥” (गी. २/५४) इत्येवं जीवन्मनुष्याऽनुष्ठितक्रिया अनुलक्ष्य स्थितप्रज्ञपुरुषस्य लक्षणानि पप्रच्छ। तदा भगवान् पार्थसारथिरष्टादशसु श्लोकेषु समाधिनिष्ठस्य जीवतः स्थितप्रज्ञपुरुषस्य लक्षणानि वर्णयामास। तानि च सर्वाणि ह्यन्तिमे श्लोकेऽक्षरब्रह्मणि उपसंहरन् भगवानुवाच, “एषा ब्राह्मी स्थितिः पार्थ नैनां प्राप्य विमुह्यति। स्थित्वाऽस्यामन्तकालेऽपि ब्रह्मनिर्वाणमृच्छति॥” (गी. २/७२) इति। तथा हि सम्प्रोक्तस्थितप्रज्ञस्य स्थितिर्ब्राह्मी; ब्रह्मण इयमिति ब्राह्मी साक्षादक्षरब्रह्मसम्बन्धिनी, अक्षरब्रह्मणि विद्यमानेति। गीतादिसनातनवैदिकशास्त्रप्रतिपादिताः सिद्धान्ता भवन्ति जीवने समन्विताः। अतः शोधपत्रेऽस्मिन् गीतोक्तानीमानि ब्रह्मस्थितिलक्षणानि जीवति पुरुषे कथमनुभूयन्त इति निर्देष्टुं स्थितप्रज्ञपुरुषस्य ब्रह्मस्थितेर्वा लक्षणानां समन्वयस्तत्त्वतोऽक्षर-ब्रह्मस्वरूपस्य प्रमुखस्वामिमहाराजस्य जीवनप्रसङ्गेषु विहितः। तत्त्वतोऽक्षरब्रह्मण इयं स्थितिर्नित्या, मुमुक्षुभिश्चाऽक्षरब्रह्मस्वरूपगुरुप्रसङ्गाऽनुग्रहादिलभ्या।

भूमिका

श्रीमद्भगवद्गीताग्रन्थः सकलाम्नायनिष्यन्दीति समेऽपि चक्षुष्मन्तो विद्वांसोऽभ्युपगच्छन्ति। अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमदर्शनाऽभिमताऽध्यात्मपथशिखरस्य ब्रह्मस्थितेर्लक्षणानां यथार्थं निरूपणमत्र नैकेष्वध्यायेषु दरीदृश्यते। तथा हि द्वितीयाऽध्याये स्थितप्रज्ञलक्षणानि, पञ्चमाऽध्याये जीवन्मुक्तलक्षणानि, षष्ठाऽध्याये योगिलक्षणानि, सप्तमाऽध्याये ज्ञानिलक्षणानि, द्वादशाऽध्याये प्रियभक्तलक्षणानि, चतुर्दशाऽध्याये च गुणातीतलक्षणानीत्यादौ ब्रह्मस्थितिलक्षणानि सम्यङ्निरूपितानि। द्वितीयाध्याये तावत् “श्रुतिविप्रतिपन्ना ते यदा स्थास्यति निश्चला। समाधावचला बुद्धिस्तदा योगमवाप्स्यसि॥” (गी.२/५३) इति भगवान् अर्जुनं प्राह। अत्रत्यं समाधिपदं महामहोपाध्यायैर्भद्रेशदासस्वामिचरणैः स्वामिनारायणभाष्ये इत्थं भाषितम् – “समाधौ समाधीयन्ते चित्तवृत्तयोऽस्मिन्निति परमात्मा, तस्मिन् परमात्मनि”¹ इति। तथा च समाध्यभिधेये परमात्मनि स्थितां प्रज्ञाम् अनुष्ठेयतया श्रुत्वा पार्थो हि “स्थितप्रज्ञस्य का भाषा समाधिस्थस्य केशव। स्थितधीः किं प्रभाषेत किमासीत् ब्रजेत किम्॥” (गी.२/५४) इत्येवं जीवन्मनुष्याऽनुष्ठितक्रियाऽभिलक्षणीयस्य स्थितप्रज्ञपुरुषस्य लक्षणानि पप्रच्छ। तदुक्तं भाष्ये “हे केशव समाधिस्थस्य समाधिरिह परमात्मा। तस्मिंस्तिष्ठतीति परमात्मस्वरूपे निरुद्धसकलचित्तवृत्तिर्भक्तस्तस्य समाधिस्थस्य। स्थितप्रज्ञस्य स्थिता मानुषीं लीलामाचरत्यपि नारायणस्वरूपे निश्चला प्रज्ञा निश्चयात्मिका बुद्धिर्यस्य तस्य स्थितप्रज्ञस्य परमात्मस्वरूपे परमदिव्यताधीधनस्य ‘एषा ब्राह्मी स्थितिः पार्थ’ (गी.२/७२) इत्युपसंहारश्रुतेर्ब्रह्मरूपभक्तस्येत्यर्थः। का भाषा भाष्यते व्याख्यायतेऽनयेति भाषा लक्षणम्। ब्रह्मस्थितियुतपरब्रह्मपरायणो भक्तः केन लक्षणेन ज्ञायत इत्यर्थः। स च स्थितधीः किं प्रभाषेत तस्य भाषणे को विशेषः। किमासीत् कथमुपविशेत्। किं ब्रजेत् कथं गमनं कुर्यादिति। प्रभाषेतेत्याद्युपलक्षणं सकलक्रियाणाम्। स्थितप्रज्ञतालक्षणां ब्राह्मीं स्थितिं परब्रह्मनिष्ठां च मनुष्याऽनुष्ठितक्रियाभिरपि कथं विजानीयामिति पार्थजिज्ञासा। सैषा जिज्ञासा जीवन्नपि समाधिनिष्ठः स्थितप्रज्ञो भवतीति जिज्ञापयति”² इति। तदेव परमात्मा स्वामिनारायणो स्थितप्रज्ञलक्षणे प्राह – “सर्वक्षेत्रज्ञानां क्षेत्रज्ञे सत्यपि पुरुषोत्तमो भगवान् निर्विकारः, न च पुरुषोत्तमभगवन्तं स्पृशन्ति मायादिविकारिपदार्थानां विकाराः। भगवाँस्तु निर्विकारी निर्लेपश्चैवा य एवं प्रकारेण भगवत्स्वरूपं वेद स भगवद्भक्तः स्थितप्रज्ञो विज्ञेयः। यस्य भगवत्स्वरूपे न वर्तेत किञ्चित्प्रकारकोऽपि संशयः, तथा हि यथा भगवत्समर्थत्वं कीर्तयेत् तथैवाऽसमर्थत्वमपि कीर्तयेद्, यथा च भगवतो योग्यं चरित्रं कीर्तयेत् तथैव कीर्तयेद् अयोग्याऽऽभासि चरित्रमपि, परं भगवच्चरित्रेषु न हि कल्पयेद् योग्यत्वाऽयोग्यत्वे, इत्येतादृशो भगवद्भक्तो विज्ञेयः पुरुषोत्तमस्वरूपे स्थितप्रज्ञः। यस्य च पुरुषोत्तमस्वरूप

एतादृशी दृढा निष्ठा सम्पन्ना, तस्य ततोऽधिकं न किमपि विज्ञेयतयाऽवशिष्टम्”³ इत्येवं स्वजीवनद्वन्द्वेषु स्वात्मस्थिरतया सह प्रत्यक्षपरमात्मनो दिव्यमानुषादिसकलचरित्रेषु दिव्यभावो हि स्थितप्रज्ञलक्षणमिति प्रतिपादितम्।

अथाऽर्जुनप्रश्नम् उत्तरन् भगवान् पार्थसारथिरष्टादशसु श्लोकेषु समाधिनिष्ठस्य जीवतः स्थितप्रज्ञपुरुषस्य लक्षणानि वर्णयामास। तान्येतानि समाधिनिष्ठस्थितप्रज्ञस्य लक्षणान्युपसंहरन् भगवान् श्रीकृष्णः प्रोवाच – “एषा ब्राह्मी स्थितिः पार्थ नैनां प्राप्य विमुह्यति। स्थित्वाऽस्यामन्तकालेऽपि ब्रह्मनिर्वाणमृच्छति ॥”⁴ इति। तथा हि सम्प्रोक्तस्थितप्रज्ञस्य स्थितिर्ब्राह्मी; ब्रह्मण इयमिति ब्राह्मी साक्षादक्षरब्रह्मसम्बन्धिनी, अक्षरब्रह्मणि विद्यमानेति; तथा ह्याह परमात्मा स्वामिनारायणः “ब्रह्मस्वरूपः सत्पुरुषस्तु शरीरत्रयाद् अवस्थात्रयाच्च परतया वर्तमानः स्यात्, तथा च चतुर्दशेन्द्रियक्रियाणां नैकामपि स्वस्मिन् मन्यमानः स्यात्”⁵ इत्यादि। तथैव च तच्छ्लोकभाष्याऽवसरे महामहोपाध्यायैर्भद्रेशदासस्वामिभिर्निरूपितम् – “हे पार्थ ! एषा त्वया जिज्ञासिता मया च सप्रपञ्चमुपदिष्टैषा ब्राह्मी ब्रह्मण इयमिति ब्राह्मी साक्षादक्षरब्रह्मसम्बन्धिनीति यावत् तदक्षरब्रह्म-स्वरूपगुणमननप्रकर्षलभ्या स्वात्मनस्तदक्षरब्रह्मगुणसाधर्म्यलक्षणतद्भावरूपा परमात्मोपासनपरमानुकूला स्थितिः परिशुद्धात्मनो ब्रह्मविभावनसंस्कृता दिव्यदशोच्यते”⁶ इति। किञ्च श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतादिसनातनवैदिकशास्त्रप्रतिपादिता एते सिद्धान्ता भवन्ति जीवने समन्विताः। कः खलु गीतोक्तब्रह्मस्थितिसम्पन्नो भवतीति चेद्, भगवताऽष्टादशसु श्लोकेषूपवर्णितानि लक्षणानि लोकेस्मिन्नवतीर्णे ह्यक्षरब्रह्मस्वरूपसत्पुरुषे नैकशोऽनुभूयन्ते। तत्तल्लक्षणलक्षितः सत्पुरुषः एतद् धरातलं समागत्य सर्वजीवहिताऽऽवहेन स्वकीयाचरणेन सर्वकल्याणं साधयते। अस्मदीये जीवनकाले तादृशा ब्रह्मस्थितिसम्पन्नाः अगणितकल्याणगुणगणमण्डिता विस्मयविस्फारितलोचनगोचरतामुपगता ब्रह्मस्वरूपप्रमुखस्वामिमहाराजाः समनुभूताः। अतोऽत्र गीतोक्तानीमानि ब्रह्मस्थितिलक्षणानि जीवति पुरुषे कथमनुभूयन्त इति निर्देष्टुं स्थितप्रज्ञपुरुषस्य ब्रह्मस्थितेर्वा लक्षणानां समन्वयस्तत्त्वतोऽक्षरब्रह्मस्वरूपस्य प्रमुखस्वामिमहाराजस्य जीवनप्रसङ्गेषु विहितः।

‘एषा ब्राह्मी स्थितिः’⁷ इति केवलं त्रीण्येव पदानि खलु सकलवेदवेदान्तसारत्वेन मानवजीवनस्य सर्वोच्चसिद्धिप्राप्त्यर्थं दिव्यभूमिकात्वेन चकासिता ब्रह्मस्थितिः साधनायाः पराकाष्ठा। सिद्धेः सर्वोच्चं शिखरं ह्येषा स्थितिः पूर्णत उद्वेगरहिता, शान्तिप्रदायिनी,

3. गढडामध्यप्रकरणस्य सप्तदशं वचनामृतम्

4. श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता – २/७२

5. वरतालप्रकरणस्यैकादशं वचनामृतम्

6. श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतास्वामिनारायणभाष्यम् – २/७२

7. श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता – २/७२

कृतकृत्यता-धन्यताद्यनुभवद्योतिनीति गीतानिष्कर्षः। यतो ब्रह्मस्थितिर्नामाऽक्षरब्रह्मणः स्थितिः; स्थितिर्नाम जीवनशैली, गीताग्रन्थश्चाऽत्र प्रत्यक्षाऽक्षरब्रह्मणो जीवनशैलीं बोधयत्यतोऽक्षरब्रह्म मनुष्यदेहधारणपूर्वकं विचरतीत्यपि स्फुटं प्रज्ञायते। तस्मात् स्थालीपुलाकनयेन गीताप्रोक्तब्रह्मस्थितिलक्षणानां प्रत्यक्षाऽक्षरब्रह्मस्वरूपप्रमुखस्वामिमहाराजस्य विचरणं, जीवनयापनशैली, विचारः, आचारः उपदेशश्चेत्यादिषु समन्वयो विधीयते। स च समन्वयो जनसामान्यस्य सर्वोत्कृष्टमार्गदर्शकः कथं भवतीत्यपि परामृश्यते।

“प्रजहाति यदा कामान्”⁸

एतान् शब्दान् अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमदर्शनप्रतिपादकं भद्रेशदासस्वामिपादैर्विरचितं श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतास्वामिनारायणभाष्यमित्थं बोधयति – “अनादितो मनःस्थितान् मनःकल्पितान् वा सर्वान् लौकिकान् कामान् शब्दादिविषयान् तदुपभोगवासना इति यावत् प्रजहाति ब्रह्मस्वरूपगुरुसमाश्रयणबलेन प्रकर्षेण जहाति”⁹ इति। तथा हि यदा मनोगताः सर्ववासनाः परित्यजति तदा स पुरुषः स्थितप्रज्ञ इति संलक्ष्यते। परब्रह्मस्वामिनारायणश्च वचनामृते वदति – “अस्ति कश्चित् सत्पुरुषः, तस्यैहिकलोकसुखे तु नैव वर्तते प्रीतिरथ परलोकात्मके भगवद्भामिनि भगवन्मूर्तौ चैव वर्तते वासना”¹⁰, “देहाद् देहसम्बन्धिभ्यश्चाऽहंममत्वे परित्यज्य, स्वात्मानं च ब्रह्मरूपं मत्वा, सर्वा च वासनां त्यक्त्वा, स्वधर्मावस्थितः सन् यो भगवन्तं भजते, सोऽभिधीयते साधुः”¹¹ इत्यादि।

नवजातशिशोरारभ्य प्रशिथिलगात्रस्थविरं यावत् सर्वेऽपि विविधकामनाभिराबद्धाः। इदं दृष्टं, इदं च द्रष्टव्यमवशिष्टम्; इदं भुक्तमिदं च भोक्तमवशिष्टम्; इदं प्राप्तमिदं च प्राप्तव्यमवशिष्टमित्यादयो विविधकामनातरङ्गा जनसामान्यहृदये वरीवृत्यन्ते। एतादृशकामानां यदा पूर्णतो निर्वृत्तिर्भवति तदा खलु ब्रह्मस्थितिः समुदेति इति गर्भितार्थः।

पूज्यप्रमुखस्वामिमहाराजाः पूर्णतः लौकिककामनावासनेच्छाऽसंस्पृष्टान्तःकरणाः आसन्। सर्वं कृत्यं भगवतो नित्येच्छया, सत्पुरुषाणां च सङ्कल्पेन सिद्ध्यतीति मन्यमानास्ते कदापि लौकिकीं कामनां मनसि न आधारयन्।

वैश्विकस्तरे सहस्राधिकमन्दिराणां निर्माणं, विश्वस्तरीय-रुग्णालय-शिक्षानुष्ठानानां समाजकल्याणार्थमर्पणं भारतीयसंस्कृतिप्रचारार्थं विविधदेशानामटनं, वैश्विकस्तरे लक्षशः कार्यकर्तृभ्यो मार्गदर्शनं विदधतां पूज्यस्वामिवर्याणां निभृतान्तःकरणे कुत्रापि लेशमात्रमपि

8. श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता – २/५५

9. श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतास्वामिनारायणभाष्यम् – २/५५

10. गडडाप्रथमप्रकरणस्य सप्तषष्ठितमं वचनामृतम्

11. गडडाप्रथमप्रकरणस्य चतुश्चत्वारिंशं वचनामृतम्

लौकिककामनावासनाकणोऽपि नासीत्।

एकदा कश्चिद् हरिभक्तः स्वीयमनोभावं व्यक्तीकुर्वन् स्वामिचरणान् न्यवेदयद् – “भोः ! गुरुवर्याः ! भवदीयां नैकविधदिव्यकल्याणकरप्रवृत्तिं विलोक्य वयमेवं विभावयामो यद् भवन्तो नोबेल-पुरस्कारभाजो भवेयुरिति” उपस्थिताः सर्वेऽपि हरिभक्ताः सन्तश्च इदं विधानं सहर्षं सानन्दं चाऽभ्यनन्दन्। परन्तु स्वामिवर्याणां चिन्तनं किञ्चिदन्यादृशमासीत्।

त ऊचुः – “मया तु नोबेलपुरस्काराणां पुरस्काराणां पुरस्कारो लब्धः। परब्रह्मस्वामिनारायणः, तथा च शास्त्रीजीमहाराज-योगिजीमहाराजौ प्राप्ताः। शास्त्रीजीमहाराज-योगिजीमहाराजयोः आशीर्वादाः प्राप्ताः। एतादृशी सेवा प्राप्ता। एतादृशो भगवान्, एतादृशाः सन्तः, एतादृशा हरिभक्ताः अपि सम्प्राप्ताः। तस्मादधिकोऽस्मिन् जगति को महल्लाभः ?” एषा खलु सर्वविधलौकिककामनावासनानाम् अत्यन्ताऽभावस्वरूपिणी ब्राह्मी स्थितिः।

“आत्मन्येवात्मना तुष्टः”¹²

एतान् शब्दान् अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमदर्शनप्रतिपादकं श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतास्वामिनारायणभाष्यमित्थं बोधयति – “आत्मना ब्रह्मरूपेण स्वात्मना आत्मन्येव स्वात्मनोऽप्यात्मभूते प्रत्यक्षपरमात्मन्येव तुष्टः सन्तुष्टो भवति, यद्वा आत्मनि ब्रह्मरूपे स्वात्मनि वर्तमानेन आत्मना परमात्मना तुष्टः सन्तुष्टः स्यात् तदा स्थितप्रज्ञ उच्यते। असन्तुष्ट एव खलु लौकिकान् कामान् कामयमानो धावतीतस्ततः। कथं वा पुनरल्पादपूर्णाच्च सन्तुष्टिः। अनल्पः सर्वमहान् परमात्मैव तु सन्तोषस्य परं निधानम्। तं प्राप्तो हि सन्तुष्टिमाप्य ततोऽधिकसुखमयाऽभावात् तदितरत् किमप्यवाञ्छंस्तत्स्वरूपे स्थिरो भवतीति भावः”¹³ इति। तथा हि स्वात्मस्थितेन परमात्मनैव सन्तुष्टो भवेदितिदं ब्रह्मस्थितिलक्षणम्।

पूर्णसन्तोषं प्राप्तुं सकलोऽपि जन्तुः कामयते। परन्तु पूर्णतया सन्तोषः कदापि केनाऽपि न लभ्यते। यतो हि सर्वमपि वस्तुजातं परिमितं भवत्यतस्तेन ह्यपरिमितसन्तोषो न प्राप्येत। अतस्तदर्थं पूर्णसन्तोषप्रदाता परमात्मैव भजनीयः। यतः परमात्मैव सम्पूर्णः। परमात्मचिन्तनमननद्वारा चित्तं पूर्णकामं, निर्मलं, स्थिरं च भवति। बुद्धौ लौकिककामना नोद्भवन्ति। तदाह परब्रह्मस्वामिनारायणः – “तच्चेदं पूर्णकामत्वं त्वात्मनिष्ठया भगवन्माहात्म्यज्ञानेन चैव सम्पद्यते; तद्द्वये च यावती न्यूनताऽवशिष्यते, तावती पूर्णकामत्वेऽप्यवशिष्यते न्यूनता”¹⁴, “तस्मिँश्चेतने भगवन्मूर्तिं धारयित्वा स्वात्मसुखेन पूर्णेनावस्थेयम्”¹⁵, “यस्य चैवंगीत्या भगवत्स्वरूपचिन्तनं जायते स तु

12. श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता – २/५५

13. श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतास्वामिनारायणभाष्यम् – २/५५

14. गडडाप्रथमप्रकरणस्य पञ्चविंशं वचनमृतम्

15. गडडामध्यप्रकरणस्य द्वितीयं वचनमृतम्

कृतार्थः, न च तेन किमपि कर्तव्यम् अवशिष्टम्”¹⁶, “भगवतो महिमसहितनिश्चयं संरक्ष्य स्वस्मिन् कृतार्थत्वं मन्तव्यम्”¹⁷ इत्यादि। स्थिरगम्भीरप्रशान्तसरोवरसदृशेषा स्थितिरेव ब्रह्मस्थितिः।

सत्पुरुषाणां जीवनमपि एतादृशं पूर्णकाममयं सुस्थिरं सद् ब्रह्मस्थितिं धत्ते। ब्रह्मस्वरूप-प्रमुखस्वामिमहाराजानां जीवने ईदृशी ब्रह्मस्थितिः सुतरां परिलक्षिता आसीत्।

ई.स. २००४ जुलै-मासस्य चतुर्थे दिनाङ्के पूज्यस्वामिचरणा अमेरिकादेशस्य ओरलान्डो-नगरे विराजमाना आसन्। परिणतवयस्यपि शारीरकपीडामवगणय्य प्रतिदिनं हरिभक्तानां कल्याणार्थं विचरणं मार्गदर्शनं सभादिकं प्रचलदासीत्। तदा तेषामीदृशीमायासपूर्णं दिनचर्यां विलोक्य कश्चन राजनभाईनामा हरिभक्तः सविनयं हृदयगतं भावं प्राकटयद् – “भोः ! गुरुवर्याः ! अस्मिन् वयसि अपि भवद्भिः बहु कष्टं सोढम्। अथ भवन्तो मोदन्तामित्येव अस्मन्मनस इच्छा।” तस्य प्रीतिपूर्णं निवेदनमाकर्ण्य स्वामिपादास्त्वरितमेवाऽवोचन् – “अयि वत्स ! वयं त्वक्षरधामनि एव विराजामहे। महाराजः¹⁸ प्राप्तः, गुरुः प्राप्त इत्यानन्दसन्दोहसत्त्वात् स्यादेवाऽखण्डित आनन्दः।” यद्यपि शारीरिकी क्षीणता, स्थविरावस्थाप्रभावश्चासीत्, तथापि पूर्णप्राप्तिकपरमसन्तोषपरिपूर्णब्रह्मस्थितितारुण्याऽनुभवस्तेषां शब्देषु परिलक्ष्यन्ते स्म।

“दुःखेष्वनुद्विग्नमनाः”¹⁹

एतान् शब्दान् अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमदर्शनप्रतिपादकं श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतास्वामिनारायणभाष्यमेवं बोधयति – “दुःखेषु देहदैहिककष्टेषु प्राप्तेष्वपि अनुद्विग्नमनाः अनुद्विग्नमक्षुभितं मनो यस्य तथाविधः। परमात्मकर्तृत्वनिश्चयविभवादुद्वेगरहितः।”²⁰ इति। सांसारिकदुःखस्थितावप्युद्वेगाभाव इति तात्पर्यम्।

सर्वेऽपि प्राणिनः आधिदैविक-आधिभौतिक-आध्यात्मिक-दुःखत्रयपीडिताः सन्तस्तन्निवृत्त्यर्थं लौकिकं वैदिकं वा निदानहेतून् अन्विष्यन्तो दरीदृश्यन्ते। सुखं मे स्याद्, दुःखं मे मा भूदिति सकलोऽपि जन्तुरीहते। परन्तु दुःखत्रयप्रतिहन्यमानाः प्राणिनोऽतितरामुद्वेगावस्थया पीड्यन्ते। एतादृशविषमपरिस्थितावपि मनसि यः स्थिरतां धारयति, उद्विग्नो न भवति स एव ब्रह्मस्थितिसम्पन्नः। तदिदं परब्रह्मस्वामिनारायणो वचनामृते प्राह – “न जायेत स्वकीयदेहसुखसङ्कल्पः, तथा च यत् कष्टम् आपतेत् तत् प्रभुञ्जीत, तादृशस्य

16. गढडामध्यप्रकरणस्याऽष्टाचत्वारिंशं वचनामृतम्

17. वरतालप्रकरणस्य द्वादशं वचनामृतम्

18. परब्रह्मस्वामिनारायणः

19. श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता – २/५६

20. श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतास्वामिनारायणभाष्यम् – २/५६

निष्कामभक्तस्योपरि भगवतो जायते बद्धी प्रसन्नता।”²¹, “भगवान् अस्मान् यथा यथाऽधिकेषु कष्टेष्ववस्थापयेत् तथा तथाऽधिकेन प्रसन्नेन भवितव्यं यद्, ‘भगवान् यथा यथा मह्यम् अधिकं दुःखं प्रदाता तथा तथाऽधिकं मद्गशीभविता, न च मत्तः क्षणमात्रमपि विप्रकृष्टमवस्थाता’ इत्येवं विज्ञाय यथा यथा भगवान् अतिकष्टं देदीयेत तथा तथाऽत्यन्तं प्रसदनीयं, किन्तु दुःखं विलोक्य वा देहसुखार्थं वा न कथमपि परावर्तितव्यम्”²² इति।

कालिदासोऽपि कथयति – ‘विकारहेतौ सति विक्रियन्ते येषां न चेतांसि त एव धीराः ॥’²³ सत्पुरुषाणां चेतो धीरतायुक्तं भवति। महति कष्टमये कालेऽपि ते प्राकृता इव न प्रलपन्ति, न विजुगुप्सन्ते नापि द्विषन्ति। शरीरं रोगमन्दिरमिति आयुर्वेदाचार्याणां वचनानुसारं शरीरं रोगस्तु जायत एव, परन्तु सत्पुरुषास्तु परब्रह्ममनननिदिध्यासनैकतत्पराः तत्तद्रोगजन्यदुःखप्राप्तावपि अविचलिता राजन्ते इति भेदः। यतस्ते तु ब्रह्मस्थितिसपन्नाः अलौकिकाऽऽनन्द-निष्पन्दधारानिमज्जितान्तःकरणा मोदन्तेतरामिति।

दुःखसंश्लिष्टपरिस्थितावपि कथमात्मबुद्ध्या मनःस्थैर्यं धारणीयमिति विषये पूज्यप्रमुखस्वामिवर्याणां जीवनवृत्तान्तद्वयं परिलक्षयेमा पूज्यप्रमुखस्वामिवर्याणां (Heart-attack) 1983 तमे ईसवीये संवत्सरे हृदयाघातः प्रसक्तः। तदनु 1998 संवत्सरे तेषां हृदयस्य (Bypass surgery) आन्तरिकी शल्यक्रिया अप्यभवत्। परन्तु एतावता हृदयाघातसङ्क्रमणं पूर्णतयाऽपगतं नासीद् अतः 19th February-2007 तमे दिनाङ्के मुम्बापुर्यां पुनरपि हृदयपरीक्षणमभवत्। सुप्रसिद्धः हृदयरोगनिष्णातः डॉ. अश्विन-महेता-महोदयः पूज्यस्वामिचरणानां हृदयपरीक्षणं विधाय निर्गमनसमये स्वीयाऽभिप्राये यत् प्रोक्तवान् तदतीव महत्त्वपूर्णम् –

“प्रमुखस्वामिमहाराजः तु अनन्यस्थिरताधारकः। (हृदय)परीक्षणसमये ते अन्तः प्राविशन् तत्पूर्वमहं तन्मुखारविन्दम् अपश्यम्। तन्मुखारविन्दे नासीत् काऽपि चिन्ता। मया तु महान्तो जना उपचरिताः। महान् धर्मगुरुः स्याद् वा देशस्य प्रधानमन्त्री स्यात्, परम् एतादृशे क्षणे प्राप्ते समेषां मुखानि विपरिवृत्तानि दृष्टपूर्वाणि। (ते) अन्तर्हृदये विक्षिप्ता मया परिलक्षिताः, किन्तु प्रमुखस्वामिमहाराजानां मुखारविन्दे तु न कोऽपि परिवृत्तो भावः परिलक्षितः।” तदिदं श्रुत्वा पूज्यप्रमुखस्वामिमहाराजा अवोचन् – “अहं तु सर्वकाले सर्वदेशे च भगवन्मूर्तिं सहैव नीत्वा गच्छामि। अतः स एवाऽस्माकं क्षेमं चिन्तयति। यथा तस्य (भगवतः) इच्छा स्यात् तथैव भवति। स एव कर्ता।”

25th January-1974 तमे दिनाङ्के पूज्यप्रमुखस्वामिवर्याणां धर्मगुरुरूपेण प्रथमा

21. श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतास्वामिनारायणभाष्यम् – २/५६

22. गडडाप्रथमप्रकरणस्यैकषष्ठितमं वचनमृतम्

23. कुमारसम्भवम् – १/५९

धर्मयात्रा अफ्रिकाखण्डे नाईरोबी-नगरे निश्चिता आसीत्। मुम्बापुरीविमानतले अगणितजनसमूहः पूज्यस्वामिनामभिनन्दनं कर्तुं समागतः। प्रातःकाले 10:15 समये Air India गौरीशङ्कर-जम्बोजेट नाईरोबीं प्रति प्रस्थितोऽभवत्। अफ्रिकाखण्डस्य सर्वेऽपि हरिभक्ता नितरामानन्दिताः सन्तः पुष्पहारादिकं हस्ते गृहीत्वा नाईरोबीविमानतले पञ्चदशसाधुसमेत-पूज्यस्वामिवर्याणां स्वागतं कर्तुं वायुयानं प्रतीक्षन्ते स्म। निर्धारिते काले वायुयानं नाईरोबीविमानतले अवतीर्णम्। परन्तु तस्मिन् समये केन्या-सर्वकारपक्षतः काचिद् उद्धोषणा जाता। तस्य च भावः एवम् – भारतदेशतः समागतस्य प्रमुखस्वामिमहाराजस्य साधूनाञ्च केन्यादेशे प्रवेशः निषिद्धः। एष समाचरो वज्रपात इवासीत्। नाईरोबीविमानतले सर्वेऽपि प्रतीक्षमाणाः हरिभक्ताः अतितरां विषण्णाः किङ्कर्तव्यविमूढाश्चाभवन्। किमिदमभवत्, कथमेवमभवत् केनेदं दौष्टमाचरितमिति ऊहापोहं कुर्वन्तः सर्वेऽपि हरिभक्ता नितरां व्यथितान्तःकरणा अदूयन्त। तदा पूज्यप्रमुखस्वामिमहाराजाः सुप्तमीनसरोवरसदृशा धीराः शान्ता अविकाराश्च स्वस्थले उपविष्टा आसन्। तदानीमपि मुखे प्रसन्नता, हृदये सौम्यभावरसोऽन्तःकरणे सर्वजीवहितावहकरुणापूर्णनिष्पन्द आसीत्। स्मितेन सह एकमेव वाक्यमुच्चारितम् – “यथा भगवत इच्छा।” एतादृशमपमानं सोढ्वा, मुम्बापुरीं प्रति तस्मिन्नेव वायुयाने उपविश्य प्रत्यागत्य गढडाप्रथमप्रकरणस्य चतुःसप्ततितमं वचनमृतं निरूप्य सर्वहरिभक्तान् विविधैर्मधुरवचनैः तथा तोषयाञ्चक्रुर्यथा एषा घटना नैव प्रसक्ता। तदिदं परब्रह्मस्वामिनारायणः प्राह – “भगवान् यद्यस्मान् हस्तिनम् आरोहयेत् तर्हि हस्तिनमारुह्य प्रसदनीयं, यदि च गर्दभम् आरोहयेत् तर्हि गर्दभमारुह्य प्रहर्षणीयं, परं तद्भगवच्चरणाऽरविन्दं विना न ह्यन्यत्र कुत्राऽपि प्रीतिः सेव्या। यथा च तद्भगवदिच्छया सत्सङ्गोऽभिवर्धेत तथा प्रसदनीयम्; तथा हि सत्यां तद्भगवदिच्छायां सकलं जगत् सत्सङ्गीभवतु, अथवा तदिच्छया सर्वे सत्सङ्गिनो निवर्तन्तां, किन्तु मनसि न कथञ्चिदपि धार्यौ हर्षशोकौ; सर्वे तद्भगवत्कृतमेव सम्भवतीत्यतो यथा शुष्कं पर्णं वाय्वधीनं सञ्चरति तथा तद्भगवदधीनीभूयाऽऽनन्देन तत्परमेश्वरस्य भजनं कर्तव्यं, न च मनसि सम्भाव्यः किञ्चित्प्रकारकोऽप्युद्वेगः।”²⁴ इति। एवं “दुःखेष्वनुद्विग्नमनाः” इति यो गीतोपदेशो ब्रह्मस्थितिं लक्षयति, तस्य सन्दर्शनं पदे पदे पूज्यप्रमुखस्वामिमहाराजानां जीवने सर्वैः कृतम्।

“मुखेषु विगतस्पृहः”²⁵

एतान् शब्दान् अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमदर्शनप्रतिपादकं श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतास्वामिनारायणभाष्यमित्थम् बोधयति – “मुखेषु प्रियसंश्लेषपर्वसु विगतस्पृहः विगता स्पृहा तृष्णा वासनाऽऽसक्तिर्वा यस्य

24. गढडाप्रथमप्रकरणस्य चतुःसप्ततितमं वचनमृतम्

25. श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता – २/५६

सः। परमात्मप्रदातृत्वनिश्चयविभवात् सुखेष्वप्यासक्तिरहितः।”²⁶ इति। परब्रह्मस्वामिनारायणश्च वचनमृते ब्रूते – “ज्ञानी राज्येऽवतिष्ठेत, सहस्राऽवधिमनुष्याश्च निजाऽऽज्ञायां वर्तेरन्, समृद्धियुक्तश्च स्यात्, तेन स्वविषये नैवं मन्येत यद्, ‘अहं बहु महान् संवृत्तः।’”²⁷ इति।

सुखप्राप्तौ सुखप्राप्तये वा ईहाभावो हि विगतस्पृहत्वम्। स्पृहा नाम लालसा।

लालसाकारणेन कश्चिद् दुःखमवाप्नोति। दारिद्र्यं तु दुःखदायकं न भवति, परन्तु ‘धनवान् भवेयम्’ इतीच्छयैव कश्चित् पीड्यते खलु। “दुःखेष्वनुद्विग्नमनाः”²⁸ इत्येवं दुःखसमयेऽविचलितत्वोपदेशं विधाय सम्प्रति भगवान् सुखसमये कीदृशा मनोभावेन भाव्यमित्युपदिशति।

परमनिस्पृहोऽविचलितमानसः सुखप्राप्तावपि न रममाणो बुधोऽस्मिन् संसारे किं द्रष्टुं शक्यः ? पूज्यप्रमुखस्वामिमहाराजः स्वजीवनव्यवहारे “सुखेषु विगतस्पृहः” इति मन्त्ररूपतत्त्वस्य जीवद्-दृष्टान्तभूताः सन्ति।

1985 संवत्सरे पूज्यप्रमुखस्वामिमहाराज धर्मयात्रावसरे लण्डननगरे विराजमाना आसन्। तदा लण्डननगरस्य वरिष्ठहरिभक्तैः स्वामिवर्याणां सुवर्णतुलामहोत्सवं कर्तुं विचारः कृतः। यदा ते तं प्रस्तावं पूज्यस्वामिपादानां समक्षं तदीयानुज्ञार्थमुपास्थापयन्तस्तदा स्वामिनः त्वरितमेव तत्प्रस्तावस्य निरसनं कृत्वा ऊचुः – “अस्माकं साधूनां सुवर्णेन तुला नोचिता।” इति। अथ भक्तानामाग्रहपूर्ण-अनुनयाऽनन्तरं कथञ्चित् शर्करातुलां कर्तुं स्वामिनोऽनुमतिं प्रायच्छन्। हरिभक्तानां विचार आसीत् – प्रथमं शर्करातुला, तदनु तत्भारपरिमिता सुवर्णतुला करणीयेति।

पूज्यप्रमुखस्वामिमहाराजः परब्रह्मस्वामिनारायणमूर्तिं स्वीयोत्सङ्गे संस्थाप्य हरिभक्तानां मोद-सत्त्व-भाववर्धनार्थं शर्करातुलायामुपाविशन्।

भारतीयधर्मपरम्परायाम् एष प्रसङ्गोऽतीव सम्मानार्ह एतिहासिकश्चासीत्। शर्करातुलाभारपरिमितः सुवर्णतुलामहोत्सवः सुमहता समारम्भेन विधातुं हरिभक्तैः भव्यातिभव्यमायोजनं कृतम्। तदर्थं सुविशालं प्राङ्गणं सज्जीकृतम्। कीचक-तोरणेन निरतिशयशोभायुक्तं प्रवेशद्वारमुपकल्पितम्। लण्डननगरस्य धन्यधरायामसौ अभूतपूर्वो दिव्यतमो नेत्राह्लादको हृदयस्पन्दकः सर्वजनहितावहः सर्वहरिभक्त-मिलितोद्यमसम्भूतः अनितरसाधारणसुशोभनमण्डनमण्डित एतिहासिको महोत्सव आसीत्।

सुवर्णतुलायाः स दिव्यः क्षणः प्राप्तः। सर्वेऽपि उपस्थिता नैकदेशतः समागता हरिभक्ता एतद्विरलदृश्यस्य साक्षिणो भवितुं नितरामानन्दतुन्दिलाः दिव्यमनोभावसम्पन्नाः हर्षोत्फुल्ला नृत्यन्ति स्म, गायन्ति स्म, जयघोषं कुर्वन्ति स्म। सम्पूर्णं वातावरणं सुदिव्यं,

26. श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतास्वामिनारायणभाष्यम् – २/५६

27. लोयाप्रकरणस्य दशमं वचनमृतम्

28. श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता – २/५६

परमानन्दसन्दोहनिष्यन्दी, हर्षपुलकितं, भारतीयसंस्कृतिपरम्पराविचारदर्शनप्रतिष्ठापकम्, अद्वितीय-भव्यातिभव्य-सुरम्य-कलाकौशलसम्मानद्योतकं, नयनरमणीयं, निखिलजनप्रभावकञ्चासीत्।

परन्तु तदा पूज्यप्रमुखस्वामिमहाराजानां प्रतिक्रिया अन्यादृशी विलक्षणा विगतस्पृहा च पर्यलक्ष्यता। स्वीयोत्सङ्गे हरिकृष्णमहाराजं संस्थाप्य शान्ततया उपविष्टा आसन् ते। मुखारविन्दे भव्यसम्मानप्राप्तेः लेशोऽपि गर्वो नासीत्। गगनभेदि-स्वजयघोषनिनादश्रवणेनापि न कापि हर्षप्रतिक्रिया। भव्यातिभव्यम् ऐतिहासिकसम्मानं सम्प्राप्याऽपि मनसि नोपष्टम्भः। नापि मोदातिरेकः। तस्मिन् दिवसे तत्रोपस्थिताः सर्वेऽपि भाग्यवन्तो भक्ताः पूज्यप्रमुखस्वामिमहाराजानां ब्रह्म्याः स्थितेः दर्शनस्य साक्षिणो भूत्वा धन्यधन्यान्तःकरणाः कृतार्थाश्चाभवन्। सुखेषु विगतस्पृहा इति तत्त्वज्ञानस्य साक्षाद् निदर्शनं सर्वेषां पुरतो मूर्तिमद् आसीत्।

तदनु पूज्यप्रमुखस्वामिनां स्वल्पपदयुतं शान्तरसान्वितं प्रवचनमभवत्।

ते ऊचुः – “आदौ तु परब्रह्मपुरुषोत्तमं भगवन्तं स्वामिनारायणमहं वन्दे, येन मह्यमिदं शरीरं प्रदत्तम्। तदनु मदीयगुरुवर्यं पूज्यशास्त्रीजीमहाराजं पूज्ययोगिजीमहाराजं च (नमामि), याभ्यामहं स्वीकृतः। तयोः कृपया आशीर्वादश्चाऽहं (सम्प्रति) भवतां पुरतः स्थितः, ताभ्यां लक्षशो वन्दनानि। तयोः कृपा चेन्नाऽभविष्यत् तर्ह्यहम् एतस्मिन् स्थाने नाऽभविष्यम् (वदन्तोऽवरुद्धकण्ठा अभवन्)। तौ आशीर्वादान् सेवावसरं चाऽयच्छतामिति मेऽहोभाग्यम्। ताभ्यां मह्यं शक्तिः प्रदत्ता, अतोऽहं सेवां कर्तुं प्राभवम्। किञ्च भारतस्य सतां पण्डितानां च आशीर्वादैः विना सर्वेषां च सहकारेण विनाऽपीदं कार्यं न समपत्स्यत... ‘अहमेव कर्तुं शक्नोमि’ इति मिथ्या ज्ञानम्। सर्वकर्ता परमात्मा। भगवदिच्छां विना शुष्कमपि पर्णं चलितुं न प्रभवति। भगवदिच्छया सर्जन-पालन-संहारा भवन्ति...” इत्यादि।

समग्रप्रवचने कुत्रापि सुवर्णतुलाविधेः उल्लेखोऽपि नासीत्। अस्य च भव्यातिभव्यमहोत्सवस्य प्रशंसाऽपि न कृता। आनन्दः, स्वाभिमानः, सम्मानितताया गर्वो मोदभावाभिव्यक्तिर्वा किमपि प्रवचने नासीत्। तदिदमेव तदीयां “सुखेषु विगतस्पृहाः” इतिलक्षणां ब्रह्मस्थितिं ज्ञापयति।

“वीतरागः”²⁹

वीतरागत्वं ब्रह्मस्थित्या अग्रिमं लक्षणम्। अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमदर्शनप्रतिपादकं श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतास्वामिनारायणभाष्यम् एतान् शब्दान् एवं बोधयति – “वीतरागभयक्रोधः वीताः व्यपगता रागभयक्रोधा यस्माद् यस्य वेति तथाविधो मुनिः ब्रह्मपरब्रह्ममननमण्डितः पुरुषः”³⁰ इति। परब्रह्मस्वामिनारायणश्च वचनामृते प्रोवाच – “विषयेभ्य आसक्तिं विमुच्य सिद्धदशां

29. श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता – २/५६

30. श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतास्वामिनारायणभाष्यम् – २/५६

प्राप्नोति तदा स कृतार्थो ज्ञेयः। वेदशास्त्रपुराणेतिहासेतिसर्वग्रन्थानां चाऽयमेव गलितार्थः। मत्प्रोक्ता चेयं वार्ता सकलशास्त्ररहस्यम्”³¹, “यदा च येन तत्स्वरूपं³² विज्ञायेत, तदा यथा मम नास्ति कस्मिन्नपि विषयसम्बन्धिसुख आसक्तिः, तथा तत्पुरुषस्याऽपि नैव कुत्रचिद् अवशिष्येताऽऽसक्तिः।”³³, “न चेच्छेद् भगवदितरत् किञ्चन, स्याच्च निर्वासनिक एकान्तिको भक्तस्तर्हि भगवान् स्वयं तद्भक्तस्य वशीभवति।”³⁴, “निर्वासनिका भगवद्भक्ता एव मे प्रियाः”³⁵ वीतरागो नामाऽऽसक्तिरहितः। इदमपि ब्रह्मस्थितेरेकं लक्षणम्।

परमात्मानुरागिणां सत्पुरुषाणान्तु वासनाया आत्यन्तिकाऽभवाद् रागाऽभावयुक्तान्तःकरणत्वं वीतरागित्वं च भवति नित्यम्। पूज्यप्रमुखस्वामिमहाराजः पूर्णरूपेण वीतरागा आसन्निति अनेकैर्दृष्टान्तेस्तेषां जीवने अनुभूयते।

अमेरिकादेशस्य धर्मयात्रायां लोककल्याणैकदृढव्रताः पूज्यप्रमुखस्वामिमहाराजः आट्लान्टा-नगरे विराजन्ते स्म। एकदा पाकशाला-विभागस्य स्वयंसेवको विविध-स्वादष्टि-व्यञ्जनभरितस्थालीं समानीय स्वामिवर्यान् पृष्ठवान् – “भोः स्वामिवर्याः ! एतेषु भवते किं रोचते ?” स्वामिवर्याः प्रोचुः – “भगवते यद् रोचते, तत् सर्वं रोचते। भगवतः स्थाले यद् निवेद्यते तद् भोक्तव्यम्।”

“वीतभयः”³⁶

वीतभयो नाम वीतं भयं यस्मादिति, भयरहित इति भावः।³⁷ परब्रह्मस्वामिनारायणश्च वचनामृते प्राह – “ज्ञानिनस्तु स्याद् आत्मज्ञानस्य बलं, स एवं मन्येत, ‘अहं तु ब्रह्मस्वरूपो भगवद्भक्तः’ इत्यतस्तस्याऽपि न स्यान्मृत्युभयम्।”³⁸, “स्वं ब्रह्मरूपं मत्वा निर्भयोऽवतिष्ठते”³⁹, “भगवत्स्वरूपबलस्य लेशमात्रमपि स्यात्, तद् महाभयाद् रक्षति”⁴⁰, “यस्य स्यान्महिमसहितो भगवन्निश्चयः स भक्तो निर्भयः सञ्जातः।”⁴¹, “स भक्त एवं विचारयेत्, ‘सत्सङ्गाऽवाप्तेः प्रागहं कीदृश आसमिति चेत्, काल-कर्म-जन्म-मरण-चतुरशीतिलक्षसंख्याकदेहानां भोक्ताऽऽसं, सोऽहं

31. गढडामध्यप्रकरणस्य प्रथमं वचनामृतम्

32. प्रत्यक्षपरमात्मस्वरूपम्

33. गढडामध्यप्रकरणस्य त्रयोदशं वचनामृतम्

34. गढडाप्रथमप्रकरणस्यैकषष्ठितमं वचनामृतम्

35. गढडामध्यप्रकरणस्य पञ्चाशं वचनामृतम्

36. श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता – २/५६

37. श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतास्वामिनारायणभाष्यम् – २/५६

38. लोयाप्रकरणस्य द्वितीयं वचनामृतम्

39. लोयाप्रकरणस्य पञ्चदशं वचनामृतम्

40. गढडामध्यप्रकरणस्य नवमं वचनामृतम्

41. वरतालप्रकरणस्य द्वादशं वचनामृतम्

सर्वेभ्यो विमोचय्य निर्भयः कृतः...”⁴²

भयं नाम मानसिकविकारविशेषः। प्राणिमात्रं भयमनुभवति स्थल-काल-पात्रसंयोगजन्यपरिस्थितिकारणेन। आधुनिका मनोवैज्ञानिका इदं भयं फोबिया (Phobia) इति पदेनाऽभिदधति। एतदुपशमनार्थं साम्प्रतिकचिकित्सकैः विविधौषधोपचारपद्धतिविशेषा अपि आविष्कृताः। तथापि मानवः पूर्णरूपेण निर्भयजीवनमभिगन्तुं नैव शक्नोति।

परन्तु यदा मानवः स्वबुद्धौ भूयोभूयो निदिध्यासनपुरःसरं भगवन्महिमचिन्तनं कुर्यात् तर्हि सः पूर्णमभयदशां प्राप्नुयात्। ‘सर्वकर्ता सर्वहर्ता च भगवान् एवास्ति, स च सर्वनियामकः। सर्वोपरिसत्तां स एव धारयति। स मया सह सर्वत्र विद्यमानो मां पुरत एव प्रत्यक्षोऽस्ति।’ इत्ययं हि समूलभयनिर्मूलनमहामन्त्र इति गीताशास्त्रसारः।

सत्पुरुषा एतादृशविचारचिन्तनमनननिदिध्यासनपेशलहृदया न कस्माच्चिद् भयमनुभवन्तः सुतरां निर्भयान्तःकरणाः सुप्रसन्ना निरतिशयमोदमावहन्ति। सर्वशक्तिमत्-परमात्मस्वरूपस्य उत्तमनिर्विकल्पनिश्चयेन ‘तत्र को मोहः कः शोक एकत्वमनुपश्यतः’⁴³ इति उपनिषद्वचनाऽनुसारं रममाणस्ते वायुरहितस्थले दीपशिखावद् अचलां बुद्धिमाप्ता रमन्तेतमाम्।

1981 तमे ईसवीये संवत्सरे भगवतः स्वामिनारायणस्य द्विशताब्दिमहोत्सवः 37 दिवसव्यापी समायोजनीय इति निर्धारितमासीत्। परन्तु तेषु दिवसेषु आरक्षणान्दोलनं गुर्जरभूमौ समधिकविकारालरूपं धारयति स्म। सर्वत्र उग्रं विस्फोटकं च वातावरणं समाजप्रतिकूलं प्रावर्तत। विशिष्य साबरमती-विस्तारः, यत्र महोत्सवस्य आयोजनं निर्धारितमासीत्, स नितरामशान्त उद्वेगजनको भयावहश्चाऽऽसीत्। एतस्यां परिस्थितौ कथं वा महोत्सवः सफलः स्यादिति चिन्ताकुला दूयमानहृदयाः सर्वेऽपि स्वयंसेवकाः पूज्यप्रमुखस्वामिनां समीपमुपगम्य प्रवर्तमानप्रतिकूलस्थितिमबोधयन्। पूज्यस्वामिवर्या अप्यतीव शान्ततया श्रद्धया च प्रत्येकं जनाभिप्रायमामूलाग्रं श्रुतवन्तः।

सर्वेषां कार्यकर्तृणाम् एकमेव मतमासीद्, ‘एतस्मिन् प्रतिकूलेऽशान्ते वातावरणे जनसमूदायमाहूय द्विशताब्दिमहोत्सवाऽऽयोजनं नितरामशक्यम्। यदि महोत्सवे केनचिद् दुर्वृत्तिकारणेन सभायाम् आक्रमणं धर्षणादिकं वा विधीयेत; तर्हि महती जनहानिः, धनव्ययः, अपयशप्राप्तिश्च भविष्यन्ति। अत एष कार्यक्रमः कालान्तरे भव्यतया आयोजनीयः, नाधुना’ इति।

सर्वजनाऽभिप्रायं निशम्य पूज्यस्वामिवर्या अतीव निर्भीकतया शान्तचेतसा दृढतया च न्यवेदयन् – “उत्सवं तु वयं यथानिर्धारितमेव करिष्यामः। महाराजः⁴⁴ सर्वं स्वस्थं करिष्यति। इदं महाराजस्य कार्यं, तद् महाराजः करिष्यति। देशकालवैपरीत्यं निर्मूलयिष्यति।”

42. जेतलपुरप्रकरणस्य तृतीयं वचनमृतम्

43. ईशावास्योपनिषद् – ७

44. परब्रह्मस्वामिनारायणः

पूज्यस्वामिपादानामचला निष्ठा भक्तिः भगवति श्रद्धा अखण्डितविश्वासश्च तेषां वचने निर्भय-निर्णये च समुच्छलति स्म। एषैव वीतभयस्थितिकं ब्रह्मस्थितिलक्षणं, तदिदं भगवच्छरणागतः कश्चिद् विरल एव स्वजीवने धारयितुं शक्नुयात्।

महोत्सवस्य आयोजकैर्बलं लब्धम्। भक्तिः श्रद्धा च नैकगुणिता संजाता। सर्वेऽपि निर्भयतया सेवाकार्ये तत्परा अभवन्। द्विशताब्दिमहोत्सवो नितरां भव्यातिभव्यो दिव्यातिदिव्योऽभवत्।

वीतक्रोधः⁴⁵

“वीतक्रोध इति पदस्य वीतः क्रोधो यस्माद्”⁴⁶ इत्यक्षरपुरुषोत्तमदर्शनप्रतिपादकं श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतास्वामिनारायणभाष्यं बोधयति। परब्रह्मस्वामिनारायणश्च वचनामृते प्रोवाच – “क्रोधयुक्ता प्रकृतिस्तु दुष्टानां धर्मः, अथ शान्तस्वभावेन वर्तनमेव साधूनां धर्मः।”⁴⁷, “स्वल्पक्रोधोद्भवोऽप्यतिशयदुःखदायी”⁴⁸, “स साधुस्तु सर्वजगदाधाररूपः, यच्च सहते तुच्छजीवकृताऽपमानं, सा खलु तदीयाऽतिशया महता। किञ्च, तादृक्क्षमाशील एव ह्यतिमहान्”⁴⁹, “हानिवृद्धि-सुखदुःख-मानाऽपमानाद्यनन्तविधविघ्नप्रसक्तौ स्वस्थानकाद् विचलन्ति”⁵⁰, “यस्य सत्सङ्गो दृढः स्यात् तस्य यादृशान्यपि दुःखान्यापद्येरन्, सत्सङ्गो च यावानपि भवेद् अपमानस्तथापि तन्मनः कथमपि सत्सङ्गान्न परावर्तेत”⁵¹ इत्यादि।

वीतक्रोधो नाम क्रोधरहितजीवनः। क्रोध आन्तरिको भावः। अस्माकं मनोरथाद् वैपरीत्येन यदि कश्चित् प्रवर्तते तर्हि अस्मदीया बुद्धिः विक्षिप्यते, अतोऽस्मत्प्रतिकूलविचारे प्रवृत्तस्योपरि क्रोधो जायते।

क्रोधस्याऽऽवेगो नितरां भयावहो मूर्खतापूर्णश्च भवति। क्रोधझञ्जावातः क्षणस्थायी भवति, परन्तु तत्क्षणेनैव प्रसृता हानिर्मनुष्यं वर्षाणि यावत् शल्यरूपेण दुन्वन्ति। अतः क्रोधाग्निः स्वरक्षणं मानसिकस्थिरतया करणीयमिति अस्मच्छास्त्राणि सत्पुरुषाश्च सततमुपदिशन्ति।

गीतायां वीतक्रोधो भवितुमुपदिष्टम्। प्रमुखस्वामिमहाराजानां जीवने वीतक्रोधता असकृत् परिलक्षिता, सदैव ब्रह्मस्थितौ नितराम् आनन्दभक्तिसुखसागरनिमज्जितानां कथं वा क्रोधलेशावकाशः ?

2002 तमे ईसवीये संवत्सरे जूनमासस्य 24 तमे दिनाङ्के मङ्गलवासरे

45. श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता – २/५६

46. श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतास्वामिनारायणभाष्यम् – २/५६

47. गडडाप्रथमप्रकरणस्यैकोनसप्ततितमं वचनामृतम्

48. लोयाप्रकरणस्य प्रथमं वचनामृतम्

49. गडडाप्रथमप्रकरणस्य सप्तविंशं वचनामृतम्

50. गडडाऽन्त्यप्रकरणस्य नवमं वचनामृतम्

51. गडडाऽन्त्यप्रकरणस्यैकविंशं वचनामृतम्

सायङ्काले पादोनपञ्चवादने गुर्जरेषु गान्धीनगरस्थित-विश्वप्रसिद्ध-अक्षरधाम-उपरि आतङ्कवादि-आक्रमणमभवत्। क्षणेष्वेव आतङ्कवादि-आक्रमण-गोलिकास्रघातेन 33 जनानां प्राणहानिः जाता। तेषु भारतीयसेना स्वयंसेवकाः हरिभक्ताः गुजरातप्रदेशीय-आरक्षणः च आसन्। शीघ्रमेव एषः मर्मन्तुदः समाचारः सकलेऽपि भारतदेशे विदेशेऽपि प्रसृतः। दिल्ली-मुम्बई-लखनऊ-जयपुरादिषु महानगरेषु पूर्णरूपेण स्वयम्भूसञ्चारस्थगनम् अभवत्। सर्वेऽपि अस्य हीनकृत्यस्य भूरि-भूरि भर्त्सनां कुर्वन्ति स्म। सर्वेषां प्रतीक्षा आसीद्, अक्षरधामसर्जकानां पूज्यप्रमुखस्वामिवर्याणां सन्दर्भेऽस्मिन् क आदेशो भविष्यतीति।

एष घातकः समाजविरोधी वज्राघातस्वरूपः समाचारो यदा पूज्यस्वामिवर्याणां सञ्ज्ञानमागतः तदा ते सारङ्गपुरे विराजमानाः आसन्। समाचारश्रवणसमनन्तरे क्षणे एव तैः स्वामिनारायणमहामन्त्रजपेन अधिकप्राणहानिम् अवरोधयितुं प्रार्थना कृता। चेतसि शान्तता आसीत्। पीडितानां कृते सहायतां कर्तुं धीरतया गम्भीरतया च आज्ञापयन्। मृतकानां सद्गत्यर्थं प्रार्थनामकुर्वन्।

ते तु जानन्ति स्म, समग्रदेशे सम्प्रति जनानां मनसि एतदातङ्कविरोधे सुमहान् क्रोधाग्निः समुत्पन्नः। तत्र यदि स्वल्पमात्रमपि घृतसंयोगः स्यात् तर्हि तस्य सामूहिकक्रोधानल-लेलिहान-ज्वालया समाजस्य राष्ट्रस्य च सुमहती हानिः भविष्यति। ततः तदनिष्टनिवारयितुकामाः अखण्डशान्तिसंस्थापनैकदृढपरिकराः सर्वजीवहित-कल्याण-सुख-समृद्धिकारकाः पूज्यप्रमुखस्वामिमहाराजाः निखिलविश्वं प्रति शान्तिसन्देशं प्रैषयन्। समग्रं विश्वं पूज्यस्वामिनां हृदयनिष्पन्दिप्रेमभावं स्वचेतसा अधारयत्। न कुत्रचिद् अशान्तिः प्रावर्तता। न कोऽपि जनः प्रपीडितोऽभवत्। सर्वत्र देशे अहिंसायुक्तावातावरणस्य प्रसारः प्रतिष्ठा च जाता।

पूज्यस्वामिनः कालान्तरे अक्षरधाम-परिसरदर्शनं विधाय मृतकेभ्यः श्रद्धाञ्जलिं समर्पयन्। यत्र यत्र गोलिकास्र-चिह्नानि आसन्, तानि अपि सुधाभरितान् कृत्वा भविष्ये तद्दर्शनेन कस्यचित् मनसि एतद्धटनायाः स्मरणं मा भूदिति अनन्यशान्ति-सौहार्द-सद्भावानां सन्देशं प्रसार्य नैसर्गिकब्रह्मस्थितिसम्पन्नत्वं सर्वसमक्षं दृष्टान्तरूपेण प्रस्थापितवन्तः।

तदनु जर्मनीदेशे हैडलबर्ग-स्थले विश्वपरिषदि (world conference) एषा आतङ्कवादघटना, तत्प्रभावश्चेति अमूलाग्रं चर्चाया विषयः आसीत्। ‘पूज्यप्रमुखस्वामिमहाराजानां शान्तिसन्देशः’ – इति विषये case study अभवत्। उपस्थिताः सर्वेऽपि वैश्विकसदस्याः ऐक्यमतेन अभिनन्दन्तः एतस्य नूतनं नामाभिधानं चक्रुः – ‘**The Akshardham Response**’ इति।

पूज्यस्वामिनां ‘Forget and Forgive’ इत्यस्य सिद्धान्तस्य भूरि भूरि प्रशंसा सर्वैः कृता। आतङ्कवादस्य प्रत्याघातरूपेण शान्तिसन्देशं प्रसारयन्तः विरलायमानाः सत्पुरुषाः पूज्यप्रमुखस्वामिमहाराजाः गीतायाः ‘वीतक्रोधः’ इति ब्रह्मस्थितेः सकले विश्वेऽस्मिन् सर्वोत्तमदृष्टान्तस्वरूपाः विराजन्ते।

मत्परः⁵²

एतान् शब्दान् अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमदर्शनप्रतिपादकं श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतास्वामिनारायणभाष्यमित्थं बोधयति – “मत्परः अहं परो परमोपास्यः सेव्यश्च यस्येति तथाविधः प्रत्यक्षपरमात्मैकपरायणः”⁵³ इति। परमात्मपरायणतया जीवनं शान्तं समानन्दमयं ब्रह्मस्थितिलक्षणाऽन्वितं च भवति। परब्रह्मस्वामिनारायणश्च वचनमृते वदति – “यन्मनुष्यस्य च मनोवृत्तिर्भगवत्स्वरूपेऽखण्डम् अवतिष्ठते, तत्कृते शास्त्रेषु नोक्ता ततोऽन्याऽधिका प्राप्तिः।”⁵⁴, “सेयं विज्ञेया ज्ञाननिबन्धना स्थितिरीति। यादृशी च भगवन्मूर्तिः प्रकटं दृश्यते, तन्मूर्तौ वृत्तेरखण्डतयाऽवस्थानात् सम्पद्यत एतादृशी स्थितिः।”⁵⁵, “यदा च भगवत्यखण्डं वृत्तिरवस्थिता तदा तेनाऽन्यन्न किमपि कर्तव्यमवशिष्टं, स तु कृतार्थः।”⁵⁶

परमात्मा हि सर्वश्रेष्ठः। यः परमात्मानुभवभरितान्तःकरणः सन् आनन्दसागरनिमग्नो भवति, तस्मै सांसारिकं सकलमपि वस्तुजातं तुच्छं प्रतिभाति। अतः खलु उपनिषद् वर्णयति – ‘रसो वै सः।’⁵⁷ एषैव मत्परा स्थितिः।

ब्रह्मस्वरूपप्रमुखस्वामिमहाराजाः सदैव मत्परास्थितिसम्पन्नाः विराजन्ते। अतः परमात्मप्रवणतया तेषां मनसि कदापि कस्यापि सांसारिकवस्तुनः वासनाजन्यस्पर्शः नाभवत्।

1998 तमे ईसवीये संवत्सरे पूज्यप्रमुखस्वामिमहाराजाः अमेरिकादेशस्य धर्मयात्रावसरे एडिसन्-नगरे विराजन्ते स्म। तदा अमेरिकादेशस्य सुप्रसिद्धवर्तमानपत्र ‘The Philadelphia Inquirer’ इत्यस्य सम्पादकः पुलित्सरपुरस्कारविजेता श्रीरोनाल्डपटेलः पूज्यप्रमुखस्वामिवर्याणां साक्षात्कारार्थं समागतः। साम्प्रतिके काले एव पूज्यप्रमुखस्वामिनां हृदयरोग-उपचारः Bypass Surgery द्वारा कृतः आसीत्। अतः श्रीरोनाल्डमहोदयः तद्विषये स्वामिनामनुभवं जिज्ञासमानः अपृच्छद्, “यदा हृदयरोगशस्त्रक्रियोपचाराऽनन्तरं सञ्ज्ञानं प्राप्तं तदा भवतां मनसि प्रथमं कस्य विचारः उदभवत्?”, “भगवतः।” क्षणमात्रमपि विलम्बं विनैव स्वामिनः प्रत्युदतरन्।

“शस्त्रक्रियोपचारान्ते भवन्तो यदा सञ्ज्ञानं प्राप्तवन्तः, तदा भवदीयमनसि किं कश्चन खेदः आसीत्, यदहं भगवत्सान्निध्यं न लब्ध्वा किमर्थं पुनरेतस्मिन् संसारे प्रत्यागमम्?” रोनाल्डमहोदयः सुतीक्ष्णदृष्ट्या पश्यन् उत्तरं प्रतीक्षमाणः आसीत्। स्वामिचरणाः तत्क्षणमेव प्रत्यवदन् – “ना भगवान् अखण्डतया मया सहैव विराजते।” एष प्रतिभावो नितरां साहजिक

52. श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता – २/६१

53. श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतास्वामिनारायणभाष्यम् – २/६१

54. गडडाप्रथमप्रकरणस्य प्रथमं वचनमृतम्

55. गडडाप्रथमप्रकरणस्य चतुर्विंशं वचनमृतम्

56. गडडामध्यप्रकरणस्य षट्त्रिंशं वचनमृतम्

57. तैत्तिरीयोपनिषद् – २/७/२

आसीत्। एतद्विव्यवाणीश्रवणेन रोनाल्डमहोदयस्य मनसि शान्तिभावसमुदयः अहोभावस्य च प्रतिष्ठा अभवत्।

निरहङ्कारः⁵⁸

अहङ्कारशून्यं जीवनं ब्रह्मस्थितिलक्षणम्। अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमदर्शनप्रतिपादकं श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतास्वामिनारायणभाष्यमिदं एतान् शब्दान् बोधयति – “निरहङ्कारः परमात्म-कर्तृत्वदृढनिश्चयोद्रेकाद् अहंभावशून्यः”⁵⁹ परब्रह्मस्वामिनारायणश्च वचनामृते प्राह – “निर्मानभक्तो हि सर्वेभ्यः श्रेष्ठः। अपरञ्च यथा बाल्यकाले न स्यात् कश्चिन्मानसम्बन्धी सङ्कल्पस्तथैव यावत्यावपि जायेयातां पूजाप्रतिष्ठे तथापि साधुना तु बालकवद् मानरहितेन वर्तितव्यम्”⁶⁰, “अथ ‘अहमेवं करिष्ये, अहमेवं करिष्ये’ इत्येवं केवलं स्वकीयमेव बलं धारयेत् परन्तु नाऽऽश्रयेद् भगवद्बलमिति न रोचते”⁶¹, “यो मानं परित्यज्य भगवन्तं भजेत, स तु सर्वहरिभक्तेष्वतिशयो महान् विज्ञेयः”⁶², “यः स्वकीयं कल्याणम् इच्छेत् स न सेवेत किञ्चित्प्रकारकमपि मानं यद्, ‘अहम् उच्चकुले जन्म प्राप्तो वाऽहं धनाढ्यो वाऽहं रूपवान् वाऽहं पण्डितो वा’ इत्येवं किञ्चित्प्रकारकमपि मानं मनसि न सेवेत, दीनसत्सङ्गिनाश्चाऽपि दासानुदासीभूय वर्तेता”⁶³ इति।

अहं करोमि, अहमेव करोमि, अहमेव कर्तुं शक्नोमि, नान्य इत्यादयो मानसिकभावा अहङ्कारद्योतकाः। एतत्कारणेन मानसिकी अशान्तिः, क्लेशः विवादश्च समाजे परिवारे वा वर्धन्ते।

निरहङ्कारत्वं पूज्यप्रमुखस्वामिमहाराजानां विशिष्टो गुणः। भगवान् एव सर्वकर्ता, सर्वहर्ता, सर्वाधारः सर्वनियामकश्चेति प्रत्ययः तेषां मानसपटले नित्यं रमते स्म। अतः खलु विश्वव्यापि-संस्थायाः प्रमुखत्वेनाऽपि, लक्षशोऽनुयायिनां मार्गदर्शकगुरुरूपेणापि तेषां मनसि पूर्णतया निरभिमानता दृश्यते स्म।

तेषां निरभिमानगुणाकृष्टाः सहस्रपरिमिताः नवयुवानः उच्चशिक्षणं प्राप्यापि अध्यात्ममार्गपथिकाः सन्तः समाजस्य राष्ट्रस्य च सेवार्थं पूर्णं जीवनं समर्पितं कृतवन्तः, यत्तु अन्यत्र नितरां दुर्लभं विरलं च।

विश्वस्य अनेके महापुरुषाः पूज्यप्रमुखस्वामिमहाराजानाम् एकवारं दर्शनसान्निध्यं प्राप्य

58. श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता – २/७१

59. श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतास्वामिनारायणभाष्यम् – २/७१

60. गडडाप्रथमप्रकरणस्य षट्पञ्चाशं वचनामृतम्

61. गडडाऽन्त्यप्रकरणस्य पञ्चविंशं वचनामृतम्

62. गडडाऽन्त्यप्रकरणस्य पञ्चविंशं वचनामृतम्

63. गडडाऽन्त्यप्रकरणस्य द्वादशं वचनामृतम्

विविध-दुर्व्यसन-दोषविनिर्मुक्ताः सुख-शान्ति-सौहार्द-समृद्धिमयं जीवनं जीवन्ति। परन्तु तन्निमित्तकः पूज्यस्वामिनां मनसि कदापि अहङ्कारस्य अभिमानस्य वा रेखालेशोऽपि न दृश्यते।

8th अगस्त 1986 तमे दिनाङ्के गुजरातस्य विद्यानगरे प्रश्नोत्तरीकार्यक्रमे केचन युवानः पृष्ठवन्तः –

“यदा कदाचित् किमपि उत्तरदायित्वम् अस्माकम् उपतिष्ठति, तदा वयं कार्यभारमनुभवामः। परन्तु बहूषु कार्येषु उत्तरदायित्वे च सत्सु अपि भवद्भिः मनोभारः कदापि नानुभूयते। तत्र रहस्यं किम् ?” इति।

तत्क्षणमेव स्वामिपादानामुत्तरम् – “रहस्यं तु इदमेव यदहं किमपि न करोमीति। भगवान् करोति, शास्त्रीजीमहाराजः योगीजीमहाराजश्च⁶⁴ कुरुतः। वयं तु तदादेशपालकाः। परिणामः समीचीनः प्रतिकूलो वा भवतु तथापि सर्वं भगवान् कुरुते। इतीदं ज्ञायते अतो मनोभारो नाऽनुभूयते।”

पूज्यस्वामिनां पूर्णं जीवनं भगवन्मयं भगवत्समर्पितं निरहङ्कारि अभिमानरहितं सरलं हृदयस्पर्शि चाऽऽसीत्। अतो गीतायाः ब्रह्मस्थितेः ‘निरहङ्कारः’ इति लक्षणं पूर्णतया पूज्यस्वामिनां जीवने प्रत्यक्षं भवति।

उपसंहारः

अनया रीत्या श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतायां प्रोक्तेभ्यः ब्रह्मस्थितिलक्षणेभ्यः स्थालीपुलाकनयेन

1. प्रजहाति यदा कामान्
2. आत्मन्येवात्मना तुष्टः
3. दुःखेष्वनुद्विग्नमनाः
4. सुखेषु विगतस्पृहः
5. वीतरागः
6. वीतभयः
7. वीतक्रोधः
8. मत्परः
9. निरहङ्कारः

इति नव लक्षणानि ब्रह्मस्वरूपप्रमुखस्वामिमहाराजानां जीवने तज्जीवनप्रसङ्गैः समन्वितानि, स्वजीवने ब्रह्मस्थितिप्रदर्शकास्ते तु ब्रह्मस्वरूपा एव आसन्।

ब्रह्मस्थितिसम्पन्नानां फलश्रुतिं दर्शयन् भगवान् श्रीकृष्णः अन्ते विवृणोति – “नैनं

64. प्रमुखस्वामिमहाराजानां गुरुवर्यौ इमौ

प्राप्य विमुह्यति”⁶⁵। अपि च “स्थित्वाऽस्यामन्तकालेऽपि ब्रह्मनिर्वाणमृच्छति”⁶⁶, अक्षरधाम अवाप्नोतीति। अत्राऽयं विवेकः, गीतोक्तानि ब्रह्मस्थितिलक्षणानि अक्षरब्रह्मणि नित्यानि स्वाभाविकानि अनादिसिद्धानि चेति, अथ मुमुक्षुभिस्तु प्रत्यक्षाऽक्षरब्रह्मस्वरूपगुरुद्वारा साधनीयानि; तदुक्तं श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतास्वामिनारायणभाष्ये “ब्रह्मस्थितित्वेनेहोक्ता गुणाः सर्वेऽपि गुरुरूपाऽक्षरब्रह्मणस्तु स्वाभाविकाः स्वयंसिद्धा नित्या इतोऽप्यत्यधिकाश्च यथेदानीं प्रकटगुरोः श्रीप्रमुखस्वामिमहाराजस्य। मुमुक्षोस्तावत् तदुपसत्तिपूर्वकं स्नेहातिशयेन तन्मननसमुत्पाद्या इति”⁶⁷ अतो ब्रह्मस्वरूपप्रमुखस्वामिमहाराजे तथा च प्रकटब्रह्मस्वरूपमहन्तस्वामिमहाराजे गीतोक्ता ब्रह्मस्थितिगुणा अनादिसिद्धाः, तदन्येषु च तन्मननाऽदनुग्रहादिलभ्या इति।

सन्दर्भग्रन्थसूचिः

ईशाद्यष्टोपनिषत्स्वामिनारायणभाष्यम्
 कुमारसम्भवम्
 चाणक्यनीतिदर्पणः
 वचनामृतम्
 श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतास्वामिनारायणभाष्यम्
 स्वाभिन्नारायण प्रकाश, मे-जून २०२१

65. श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता – २/७२

66. श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता – २/७२

67. श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतास्वामिनारायणभाष्यम् – २/७२

श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतास्वामिनारायणभाष्याऽऽलोके अक्षर पुरुषोत्तमसिद्धान्तस्तल्लोकोपयोगिता च

HARAPRIYA BEHERA

Ph.D. Student, Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri

National Sanskrit University, New Delhi.

अद्यतनासत्यान्यायानीति-सामाजिकदूराचाराणां परिहाराय, सामाजिक-शान्ति-समृद्धेः स्थापनाय, जनानां यूनां मनसि पुनः धर्म-कर्म-सत्यमार्गस्य बीजोत्पादनाय आधुनिकसमाजे कश्चन सिद्धान्तस्य आवश्यकता आसीत्। तथा को वा समर्थोऽद्यतनभ्रष्टाचारसमाजे तादृशः पुरुषोत्तमः यो नूतनसिद्धान्तस्य प्रतिपादनं कर्तुं शक्नोति। परन्तु भक्तरक्षार्थं सन्मार्गप्रदानार्थं पुनः धरातलं भगवन् अवततार। स एव भगवद्पादस्वामिनारायणमहाराजः। परब्रह्मपुरुषोत्तमस्वामिनारायणः स्वामिनारायणसंप्रदायस्य प्रवर्तकः। तेषां वचनामृताद् निःसृतः अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमसिद्धान्तः समसामयिकसमाजे अतिमहत्त्वपूर्णं स्थानमलङ्करोति। तेषां भगवद्पादानां सक्षिप्तपरिचयात्मक एकः श्लोकः वर्तते-

आदौ भक्त्यङ्गजन्मा गहनवनगतिर्नीलकण्ठस्वरूपे,
सिद्धान्तस्थापनार्थं स्थितिमतिदयया सम्प्रदायप्रतिष्ठाम्।
कृत्वा यागानहिंसान् सहजसुखकरान् त्यागिनो मन्दिराणि,
प्राकट्यं ब्रह्मणि स्वं सकलजनहिते स्थापयन् धाम यातः॥

परब्रह्म परमात्मा स्वान्तर्धानादन्वपि स्वनित्यसेवकरूपाऽक्षरब्रह्मद्वारा स्वयं धरायामस्यां प्रकट एवावतिष्ठति। एते ह्यक्षरब्रह्मगुरवो परब्रह्मस्वामिनारायणप्रबोधित-सिद्धान्तसम्प्रेषकास्तत्प्रवर्तकाश्च। एतस्यां परम्परायां ब्रह्मस्वरूपप्रमुखस्वामिमहाराजाः स्वशिष्यसाधुभट्टेशदासमहोदयद्वारा प्रस्थानत्रयभाष्यलेखनमकारयन्। साधुभट्टेशदासमहाभागाः उत्तमलेखकाः, विचारकाः, स्पष्टवक्ता, महान्तो दार्शनिकाश्च। तैर्लिखितेषु प्रस्थानत्रयभाष्यग्रन्थेषु श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतास्वामिनारायणभाष्यम् अन्यतमम्। भगवद्गीता कोपि साधारणग्रन्थो नास्ति।

श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता 'महाभारतम्' इत्येतेन नामधेयेन सुप्रसिद्धस्य शतसाहस्रीसंहितापरपर्यायस्य विशालकलेवरस्य महाग्रन्थस्य सारतमोऽशः। श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता भारतीयसंस्कृतेः प्राणभूता, गुणगौरवं चास्ति। इयं गीता सर्वासामपि उपनिषदां सारभागो वर्तते। गीता स्वयं महाभारतस्य बीजतत्त्वं वर्तते, य आधारस्तत्त्वज्ञानविषयकबृहद्ग्रन्थानाम्। ग्रन्थस्यास्यानुवादः सर्वासु भाषासु विद्यते तस्य च सर्वाधिकाः टीकाः भाष्याणि चापि लभ्यन्ते। विश्वस्तरे तत्त्वमीमांसासाधनादिक्षेत्रे नैकानां ग्रन्थानामाधारभूतं शास्त्रं गीतेव दृश्यते। ज्ञानगरिमान्विता गीता खलु आत्मस्वरूपम् अवबोधयति, स्थितप्रज्ञतां साधयति, निष्कामकर्मयोगं निष्पादयति, ज्ञानयोगम् उद्भावयति, भक्तियोगं च ज्ञापयति। अस्यां गीतायां सर्वोपनिषदां सारः मनोज्ञया प्रणाल्या साधुतरं विविच्यते। योगेश्वरः श्रीकृष्णः गोस्वरूपाणामुपनिषदां दोग्धा पार्थो गोदहनकाले स्तनन्धयत्वेन समुपस्थितो वत्सः, सुधियश्च तस्य गोदोहस्य दुग्धामृतस्य भोक्तारः। उक्तं च –

सर्वोपनिषदो गावो दोग्धा गोपालनन्दनः।

पार्थो वत्सः सुधीर्भोक्ता, दुग्धं गीतामृतं महत्॥

गीतायाः भाषाशैली तादृशी मनोरमा प्रसादगुणयुक्ता ज्ञानविज्ञानसमन्विता च। स्वल्पशिक्षाप्रबुद्धोऽपि मानवः अस्य ग्रन्थस्य सामान्यार्थं तु अवगन्तुं शक्नोति परन्तु अस्य गूढार्थो न सर्वजनसुलभः। नानार्थोऽयं ग्रन्थः विविधदृष्टिकोणमपि बिभ्रति यथा आध्यात्मिकार्थः, दार्शनिकोऽर्थः, वैज्ञानिकोऽर्थः, उत काव्यशास्त्रीयोऽर्थः, इत्यादिकम्। एतेषु विषयेषु जनाः अधुनापि सुष्ठुतया अवगन्तुं न पारयन्ति। अत एव प्राचीनकालादारभ्य अद्यावधि कालक्रमेण विद्वांसः स्वस्वभाष्यव्याख्याटीकादिभिः एतान् विषयान् उपस्थापयितुं प्रयासरताः वर्तन्ते। गीतामधिकृत्य प्राप्यभाष्येषु सर्वप्रथमं भाष्यं शाङ्करभाष्यम्। यस्य भाष्यकर्ता स्वयम् आदिशङ्कराचार्यः। शङ्कराचार्यात् पूर्वं गीताभाष्यं कदाचित् केनापि रचितं न वेतीतिहासो मैममवलम्बते, अप्राप्यत्वात्। अस्य भाष्यस्य लेखनानन्तरं नानाविधवादविवादपरम्परा प्रस्थापिता।

सर्वोपनिषत्सारभूता श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता सर्वैः प्रस्थानैः समधीता, व्याख्याता च। निरन्तरं विद्वद्भिः स्वानुभवमधिकृत्य नवोन्मेषपूर्वकं विशदीकृता अद्यत्वेऽपि विदुषां लेखनीं समुत्तेजयतीति ग्रन्थस्यास्य कमप्यपूर्वं वैशिष्ट्यम्। यः कोऽपि ब्रह्मविद्यायां मनो नियुङ्क्ते, कर्ममार्गस्य सन्धानं कुरुते योगरहस्यं वेत्तुं प्रयतते, स श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासूपनिषत्सु अवश्यमेव अवगाहते। अवगाह्य च नवनवार्थमौक्तिकानि उदाहरति।

दैवीं शक्तिं विना तामधिकृत्य मननं, चिन्तनं, लेखनं च असाध्यम्। तादृशा दैवशक्तिसम्पन्नाः स्वामिभद्रेशदासमहाभागाः तस्या उपरि स्वामिनारायणभाष्यम् अलिखन्। भाष्येस्मिन् अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमसिद्धान्तस्य सुष्ठु प्रतिपादनं भाष्यस्य वैशिष्ट्यं इतोपि वर्धयति।

को नाम अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमसिद्धान्तः

अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमसिद्धान्तः अथवा स्वामिनारायणदर्शनं परब्रह्मस्वामिनारायणस्य विचाराणां शिक्षाणां च नामान्तरमस्ति। अत्र स्वतः प्रश्नमायाति यत् मान्यताप्राप्तेभ्यः स्वीकृतेभ्यः सांख्य-योग-न्याय-वैशेषिक-कर्ममीमांसा-वेदान्तेतिषड्दर्शनेभ्यः तत्रापि च वेदान्तदर्शनस्य प्रसिद्धेभ्यः अद्वैत-विशिष्टाद्वैत-शुद्धाद्वैत-द्वैत-द्वैताद्वैत-अचिन्त्यभेदाभेदेति षड्भ्यः संप्रदायेभ्यः अतिरिच्य कोऽयं नूतनसिद्धान्तः अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमसिद्धान्तः। अत्र का विशेषता, का नवीनता, किं च औचित्यम्। कथं भिन्नमिदं दर्शनम्। स्वयं अक्षरब्रह्म भूत्वा पुरुषोत्तमपरब्रह्मण उपासना करणीया। स्वात्मानम् अक्षरं विभाव्य पुरुषोत्तमस्य भक्तिः कर्तव्या इति मुख्यसिद्धान्तः। यथा परमात्मा सर्वव्यापकः, सर्वसमुत्कृष्टः वर्तते, केषुचिद् दर्शनेषु अयं परमात्मा सदा साकारः वर्तते, सर्वकर्ता परमात्मा इति तत्र तत्र अङ्गीकृतमस्ति परन्तु अस्मिन् अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमदर्शने परमात्मा पुरुषोत्तमः सदैव प्रकटः वर्तते इति अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमदर्शनस्य दर्शनान्तरेभ्यो वैलक्षण्यम्। तत् कथमिति तेषां प्रमुखप्राथमिकग्रन्थः “वचानामृतम्” तत्र विस्तृता चर्चा प्राप्यते। सा च भगवद्गीतास्वामिनारायणभाष्येऽपि द्रष्टुं शक्यते।

श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतास्वामिनारायणभाष्ये अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमसिद्धान्तः

भगवद्गीतायाः अष्टमेध्याये अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमसिद्धान्तस्य प्रतिपादनं सम्यग् दृश्यते। अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमसिद्धान्ताधारेण अक्षरब्रह्म तु स्वात्मनि साधकशरीरान्तर्विद्यते। पुरुषोत्तमस्त्वन्यः। अक्षरब्रह्म परमात्मधामरूपमस्ति। तच्च पृथिव्यां परमात्मना सहावतरति परमात्मानं निश्चाययति स्वाश्रितान् ब्रह्मरूपान् विदधाति च। एवमक्षररूपः भूत्वा पुरुषोत्तमभक्तिसिद्धये आरब्धस्यास्याध्यायस्यादौ सङ्गत्यामुक्तम् - परमात्मप्रत्यक्षस्वरूपयोगलभ्यपरमगन्तव्यस्थानं तत्स्थपरमात्मदिव्यस्वरूपं तत्प्राप्तिसाधनानि तद्गमनपथश्चेत्यादि विनिरूपयितुं प्रवर्ततेयमध्यायः। इतः पूर्वं बहुवारं श्रीकृष्णेन ब्रह्मशब्दस्य उपस्थापनं कृतं यथा- ‘एषा ब्राह्मी स्थितिः’, (गी.२/७२), ‘ब्रह्मार्पणं ब्रह्म हविर्ब्रह्माग्नौ ब्रह्मणा हुतम्’ (गी.४/२४), ‘यान्ति ब्रह्म सनातनम्’ (गी.४/३१), ‘ब्रह्म नचिरेणाधिगच्छति’ (गी.५/६), ‘ब्रह्मविद् ब्रह्मणि स्थितः’ (गी.५/२०), ‘स ब्रह्मयोगयुक्तात्मा सुखमक्षय्यमश्नुते’ (गी. ५/२१), ‘ते ब्रह्म तद् विदुः’ (गी.७/२९) इत्यादौ भूयो भूयो ब्रह्म शब्दमाकर्ण्य यथोपदेशं तस्य जीवेश्वरप्रकृतिपरमात्मेतराभिधायित्वमापाततानुमाय ब्रह्मशब्दवाच्यत्वे संशायितस्तन्निश्चयाय पप्रच्छ किं तद् ब्रह्मेति।

किं तद् ब्रह्म किमध्यात्मं किं कर्म पुरुषोत्तम।

अधिभूतं च किं प्रोक्तम् अधिदैवं किमुच्यते॥ गी.८/१॥

प्रार्थितस्य समाधानं प्रयच्छति-

अक्षरं ब्रह्म परमं स्वभावोध्यात्ममुच्यते। गी.८/३॥

अत्र साधुभट्टेशदासमहाभागैः भण्येस्मिन् अक्षरब्रह्मपरमात्मनोर्मध्ये भिन्नतां दर्शयित्वा अक्षरब्रह्मतत्त्वस्य निरूपणं एवं कृतम्- परमं परमात्मातिरिक्तसर्वजीवेश्वरमायातन्मुक्तेभ्यः सर्वदा स्वरूपस्वाभावशक्तिसामर्थ्यादिना परभूतम् अक्षरम् एव ब्रह्मतत्त्वमुच्यत इत्यर्थः। तथा ह्यक्षरमितिपदेनाऽत्र ब्रह्म व्याख्यातम्। न क्षरतीत्यक्षरमिति सञ्चालनार्थक्षरतेर्नञ्सहकारेण, अश्रुत इत्यक्षरमिति व्यापनार्थाश्रोतेश्च व्युत्पादयन्त्यक्षरशब्दं प्राज्ञाः। तथा च 'अक्षरं न क्षरं विद्याद् अश्रोतेर्वा सरोऽक्षरम्' इति महाभाष्यस्थेयं वर्णग्रहणार्था द्विविधव्युत्पत्तिः प्रसिद्धा। अत्र साधुभट्टेशदासैः अर्थद्वयेन अक्षरतत्त्वस्य निरूपणं एवं कृतं-

आदौ नञ्सहकारेण संचालनार्थे- न क्षरतीत्यक्षरम्।

अन्यद् व्यापनार्थे- अश्रुत इत्यक्षरम्।

स्वामिनारायणसिद्धान्तकारिकायामप्यक्षरशब्दमधिकृत्योल्लिखितं यद् -

अश्रुतादौ व्यापनार्थाद्धि नञ्पूर्वात् क्षरतेस्तथा।

व्युत्पन्नोऽक्षरशब्दोऽयं ब्रह्मण्येव प्रयुज्यते॥ (स्वा.सि.का. - 63)

अतः अक्षरतत्त्वं भवति- स्वरूपस्वभावादिभिः अनादितो मायाप्रकृत्याद्यसंसृष्टत्वेन क्षरणाऽभावात्, चिदाकाशरूपेण प्रकृतितत्कार्याऽनन्तकोटिब्रह्माण्डेषु व्यापनाच्च संसिद्धो ब्रह्मणि अक्षरशब्दार्थसमन्वयः। अर्थात् परब्रह्मणः न्यूनं जीवात्मनः श्रेष्ठं, क्षरणाभावात् व्यापनाच्च नित्यं सत्यं मायातीतं दिव्यं तत्त्वम् अक्षरमिति उच्यते। अत्रोक्तं “परब्रह्मणः न्यूनं, जीवात्मनः श्रेष्ठमिति” पदद्वयस्य व्याख्या अपेक्षते। अर्थात् कथं भिन्नोऽयम् अक्षरब्रह्म अथवा ब्रह्मद्वयं अक्षरब्रह्म परब्रह्म चेति सम्यक् प्रतिपादनं पञ्चदशाध्याये दृश्यते। जीवात्मनः श्रेष्ठमिति पदस्य व्याख्या एवमस्ति भण्येस्मिन्-

द्वाविमौ पुरुषौ लोके क्षरश्चाऽक्षर एव च।

क्षरः सर्वाणि भूतानि कूटस्थोऽक्षर उच्यते ॥गी.१५/१६॥

क्षरश्चाऽक्षर एव च इति इमौ द्वौ पुरुषौ पुरुषपदवाच्यौ लोके स्त इति त्वं विद्धि। तत्र सर्वाणि भूतानि जीवेश्वरसमूहाः क्षरः इदानीं पूर्वं वा यदा कदापि क्षरणस्वभावाऽचित्संसर्गप्राप्तत्वात् क्षर इति शब्दाभिलष्यानि। एवमचित्संसर्गनिबन्धनोऽयं चेतने क्षरत्वव्यपदेशः। कूटस्थोऽक्षर उच्यते नित्यं प्रकृतिसंसर्गवियुक्तं प्रागुक्तजीवेश्वरसमूहपरभूतमक्षरं ब्रह्म कूटस्थः कूटः शिलाराशिः पर्वत इव तिष्ठतीति कूटस्थो नित्यं विकाररहिततया निश्चल स्वरूपेणाऽवस्थितमित्यर्थः।

अन्यच्च 'क्षरः सर्वाणि भूतानि' इत्यत्र क्षर इत्येकवचने सत्यपि तद्वाच्योपस्थापनाऽवसरे 'सर्वाणि भूतानि' इति बहुवचनसद्भावात् क्षराणां बहुत्वं सूचितम्, किन्तु तत्रैव पुनः 'कूटस्थोऽक्षर उच्यते' इत्यत्र अक्षर इति क्षरशब्दवदेकवचनेऽपि तद्वाच्यव्याख्यानावसरे तु 'कूटस्थः' इत्येकवचनप्रयोगाद् अक्षरतत्त्वस्य एकत्वमेवाभिप्रेतमिति गम्यते। अत एव अक्षरशब्देन नात्र बहुत्वयुक्ता अक्षरमुक्ता ग्राह्या अपि त्वेकसंख्याकमक्षरं ब्रह्मैवा। अनेन भण्यमाध्यमेन ज्ञायते यत्

सर्वाणि भूतानि जीवेश्वरसमूहाः क्षरः। इत्यत्र क्षर इत्येकवचने अस्ति परन्तु तद्वाच्योपस्थापनं बहुवचने भवति सर्वाणि भूतानि इति, अतः क्षराणां बहुत्वं दृश्यते। कूटस्थः अक्षरः एकवचनप्रयोगात् अक्षरस्तु एक एव नित्यं विकाररहिततया निश्चलस्वरूपेण अवस्थितमिति जीवात्मनः श्रेष्ठमिदम् अक्षरब्रह्म। पुनः परब्रह्मणः भिन्नं न्यूनं च अक्षरब्रह्म कथमिति भाष्येस्मिन् प्रतिपादितम्-

उत्तमः पुरुषस्त्वन्यः परमात्मेत्युदाहृतः।

यो लोकत्रयमाविश्य बिभर्त्यव्यय ईश्वरः॥गी.१५/१७॥

उत्तमः उत् + तमः यस्मादुत्कृष्टमन्यद् नास्तीति। पुरुषस्तु पुरुषोत्तमस्तु अन्यः भिन्नः। तुशब्दो हि प्रागुक्तेभ्यो जीवेभ्य ईश्वरेभ्य एतेषां क्षरत्वोपचारापादिन्यास्तदावृताया मायायास्तत्सर्वजीवेश्वरमायाभ्यः परभूतादक्षर ब्रह्मणश्च परमात्मनः स्वरूपस्वभाववैश्वर्यादितोऽत्यन्तं विलक्षणत्वं द्योतयति। स चाऽयमुत्तमः पुरुषः परमात्मा। एवमिह परमात्मनः सर्वविलक्षणत्वं सर्वोत्कृष्टत्वं सर्वनियामकत्वं सर्वान्तर्यामित्वं च सिद्धम्। पुनः परमात्मनः परब्रह्मणः सर्वोत्कृष्टतां प्रतिपादयति-

यस्मात् क्षरमतीतोऽहमक्षरादपि चोत्तमः।

अतोऽस्मि लोके वेदे च प्रथितः पुरुषोत्तमः॥गी.१५/१८॥

यस्माद् हेतौ पञ्चमी। क्षरं बद्धमुक्तजीवेश्वरवर्गम्, अतीतः स्वरूपस्वभावादिभिः अतिक्रम्य स्थितः, अक्षराद् अपि पूर्वोक्तसर्वविधबद्ध मुक्तजीवेश्वरमायादिभ्योऽपि सदैवाऽत्यन्तोत्कृष्टात् साक्षादक्षरब्रह्मणोऽपि, 'अक्षरादपि' इति अपिकरणेन उत्तमः उत्कृष्टः, अहमस्मि। अत्र बद्धमुक्तजीवेश्वरादिसर्वोत्कृष्टाक्षरब्रह्मणोऽपि पुरुषोत्तमस्योत्तमत्वोक्त्या तन्निरवधिकपरमशक्तिसामर्थ्यविभवः सूच्यते। एवं च सति क्षरातीतत्वं तु कैमुत्यसिद्धमेवेति सिद्ध्यति। अतः एवं 'द्वाविमौ पुरुषौ लोके क्षरश्चाक्षर एव च' (गी .१५ / १६) इति पुरुषशब्दव्यपदिष्टक्षराऽक्षरत उत्तमत्वाद् लोके वेदे च पुरुषोत्तमः इति प्रथितः कीर्तितोऽस्मि ॥

अनेन प्राकारेण अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमसिद्धान्तस्य सुष्ठु प्रतिपादनं साधुभद्रेशदासमहाभागैः श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतास्वामिनारायणभाष्येस्मिन् कृतम्।

श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतास्वामिनारायणभाष्ये अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमसिद्धान्तस्य लोकोपयोगिता-

दार्शनिकचिन्तनस्य मूलं जीवनस्य अर्थवत्ताया अनुसन्धानम्। व्यापकार्थं दर्शनं नाम तर्कपूर्ण-विधिपूर्वक-क्रमबद्धविचारस्य कला भवति। अस्य जन्म अनुभव-परिस्थित्यनुगुणं भवति। एतदेव कारणमस्ति संसारे विभिन्नाः व्यक्तिविशेषाः समयानुसारं स्वानुभवं परिस्थित्यनुगुणं च विविधप्रकारं जीवनदर्शनं अङ्गीकृतवन्तः। तेषु अन्यतममस्ति अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमदर्शनम्। अस्मिन् सिद्धान्ते आत्मनि अक्षरब्रह्मगुणाः प्राप्तव्याः इत्युच्यते। स्वात्मानं अक्षरं विभाव्य पुरुषोत्तमस्य भक्तिः कर्तव्या इति मुख्यसिद्धान्तः। स्वात्मनि अक्षरब्रह्मगुणाः कथं प्राप्तव्या

इति प्रश्नः? ब्रह्मप्राप्तेरुपाया विभिन्नेषु दर्शनेषु भिन्नरूपेण प्रतिपादिताः। अत्रापि भगवद्गीतायां श्रीकृष्णेन संपूर्णं समाजमुपलक्ष्य अर्जुनं प्रति यदुपदेशो दत्तस्तत् साधुभद्रेशदासमहाभागेः स्वस्मिन् भाष्ये श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतास्वामिनारायणभाष्ये परब्रह्मस्वामिनारायणप्रबोधितेन अक्षरब्रह्मगुरुपरम्पराप्रतिपादितेन चाक्षरपुरुषोत्तमसिद्धान्तरूपेण उल्लिखितः। कुरुक्षेत्रयुद्धसमये अर्जुनस्य यादृशी स्थितिरासीत् तादृश्येव स्थितिरद्यतनसमाजे सर्वजनानां दरीदृश्यते। ते उत्तमनिर्णयनेतुमसमर्थाः। विभ्रान्तिः सर्वदा आगच्छति तेषां जीवने। किं उत्तमं किं न, किं करणीयं किं न, कुत्र प्रवृत्तिः कुतः निवृत्तिः इत्यादिषु विषयेषु विचारशून्या भूत्वा अग्रे गन्तुं न शक्नुवन्ति। अग्रिमफलस्य परिकल्पनेन भविष्यति काले असफलता समायास्यति इति मत्वा कार्यस्य प्रारम्भमेव न कुर्वन्ति। एतादृशेः स्थितेः परिहाराय अर्जुनस्य समस्तशंकासंदिग्धतायाः निवारणाय भगवद्गीतायाः द्वितीयस्याऽध्यायस्य एकादशश्लोकादारभ्य एकसप्ततिः श्लोकपर्यन्तं विस्तृतरूपेण शंकानिवारणोपायाः उपदिष्टाः। भगवद्गीतायां द्वितीयस्याऽध्यायस्य अन्तिमश्लोक उपसंहारत्वेन अस्ति तत्राप्यक्षरपुरुषोत्तमसिद्धान्तः स्फुटं दृश्यते। उक्तं च साधुभद्रेशदासमहाभागेः-

एषा ब्राह्मी स्थितिः पार्थ नैनां प्राप्य विमुह्यति ।

स्थित्वाऽस्यामन्तकालेऽपि ब्रह्मनिर्वाणमृच्छति ॥गी. २/७२॥

हे पार्थ ! एषा त्वया जिज्ञासिता मया च सप्रपञ्चमुपदिष्टैषा ब्राह्मी ब्रह्मण इयमिति ब्राह्मी साक्षादक्षरब्रह्मसम्बन्धिनीति यावद् तदक्षरब्रह्म स्वरूपगुरुमननप्रकर्षलभ्या स्वात्मनस्तदक्षरब्रह्मगुणसाधर्म्यलक्षणतद्भावरूपा परमात्मोपासनपरमानुकूला स्थितिः परिशुद्धात्मनो ब्रह्मविभावनसंस्कृता दिव्यदशोच्यते। अर्थात् पूर्वोक्तोपदेशानामनुपालनेन एषा ब्राह्मी स्थितिः आगच्छति, स्वात्मनि अक्षरब्रह्मगुणान् प्राप्य पुरुषोत्तमस्य प्राप्तिः अवश्यमेव भविष्यति।

उपसंहारः

श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतास्वामिनारायणभाष्ये अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमसिद्धान्तस्य लोकोपयोगिता इति विषयस्य पूर्णावलोकनेन वक्तुं शक्नुमः यद् अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमसिद्धान्तः एकः स्वतन्त्रः सिद्धान्तः। भगवद्गीतायाः लोकोपयोगिता सर्वदा आसीत् अस्तैवा तथैव श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतास्वामिनारायणभाष्ये अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमसिद्धान्तस्य लोकोपयोगिता अस्तीति उपरि प्रतिपादितम्। भाष्येस्मिन् प्रतिपादितस्य अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमसिद्धान्तस्य अन्यदेकं वैशिष्ट्यं यत्सिद्धान्तस्थापनाय अन्येषां संप्रदायानां परम्पराणां विरोधः न क्रियते एतैः। केवलं परम्परारक्षार्थं कृतबुद्धयः भूत्वा तत्तद्वैदिकसम्प्रदायेषु ये विशिष्टाः विचाराः सन्ति तेषां विमर्शनेन कथं परमात्मा आराध्यते, मुक्तिः अवाप्यते इत्यस्य ज्ञानस्य अन्वेषणमात्रं विहितम्। अतः उत्कृष्टविचारेण पूर्णोऽयं सिद्धान्तः अस्माकं मनसि विश्वभ्रातृत्वभावनया सह वसुधैवकुटुम्बकमिति भावनामपि उत्पादयति।

सहायकग्रन्थाः

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गीता दर्पण; स्वामी रामसुखदास, गोविन्द भवन कार्यालय, गीताप्रेस गोरखपुर

श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतास्वामिनारायणभाष्यम्, महामहोपाध्यायः साधुभद्रेशदासः, स्वामिनारायण अक्षरपीठ, अमदावाद

भारतीय दर्शन, चन्द्रधर शर्मा, मोतीलाल बनारसीदास, दिल्ली

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स्वामिनारायणसिद्धान्तसुधा, महामहोपाध्याय साधुभद्रेशदासः, स्वामिनारायण अक्षरपीठ, अमदावाद

स्वामिनारायणसिद्धान्तकारिकाः, महामहोपाध्यायः साधुभद्रेशदासः, स्वामिनारायण अक्षरपीठ, अमदावाद

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अमृतमयचेतनायाः दिग्दर्शिका “सत्सङ्गदीक्षा”

DR. NIRANJAN MISHRA

Assistant Professor & Dept. In-Charge

Dept. of Vedabhashyam

NSU, Tirupati

विदितमिदं समेषां यत् प्रपञ्चेऽस्मिन्स्माकं विश्ववारासंस्कृतिः विरला-सुमधुरासर्वजनैरादृता इति । “विविधतायामेकता” इति मन्त्रेण अणुरणिता इयं सर्वोत्कृष्टा संस्कृतिरनादिकालत अखिलं विश्वं शान्ति-प्रीति-मैत्रीरूपायाः मन्दाकिन्याः त्रिवेणीधारया परिपुष्णाति । अस्यामेव संस्कृतौ “यत्र विश्वं भवत्येकनीडम्” इति वेदघोषः निनादितः , अस्यामेव संस्कृतौ “समः शत्रौ च मित्रे च” इति गीतोक्तिः प्रख्यापिता , अस्यामेव संस्कृतौ “जननी जन्मभूमिश्च स्वर्गादपि गरीयसी” इति रामायणीया सूक्तिः प्रथिता । अतः सर्ववन्द्या सर्वहृद्या सर्वग्राह्या इयं मधुमयी संस्कृतिः स्वीया विलक्षणया शक्त्या समाकर्षति सचेतसां चेतसाम् । एतादृशविलक्षणसंस्कृतिपरिपूर्णेऽस्मिन् भारतदेशे देवाः अपि स्वलीलाप्रख्यापनार्थं रामकृष्णादिरूपेणावतर्तुं व्यग्राः भवन्ति । यत्र प्रवहन्ति गङ्गादिनद्यः, यत्र राजते साक्षात् नगाधिराजः हिमालयः, यत्र विद्यन्ते रामनाथ-द्वारिकानाथ-विश्वनाथ-श्रीजगन्नाथ-स्वामिनारायणादयोऽस्माकमाराध्याः, यत्र विलसन्ति पुरी –मथुरा- वृन्दावन-अयोध्याप्रभृतिनी भगवतः लीलाक्षेत्राणि, यस्या संस्कृतेः परिपोषकाः भवन्ति अस्माकं वसिष्ठ-भरद्वाज-विश्वामित्र-भृग्वङ्गिराप्रभृतयः महर्षयः सिद्धाः साधकाश्चाते सर्वे विश्वस्य समग्रतया समृद्ध्यर्थं सर्वदा सर्वथा च प्रयत्नशीलाः आसन् । एतैः महर्षिभिः स्वकीयज्ञानचक्षुषा तपः प्रभावेन च समग्रं विश्वं अज्ञानान्धाकारात् परिरक्षितुं विविधानि दर्शनानि प्रवर्तितानि ।

उपर्युक्त्युदात्तपरम्परामाश्रित्य साम्प्रतिकसमाजे बहवः ऋषिकल्पाः विशुद्धान्तकरणाः साधकाः समुद्भवन्ति, येऽस्माकं सनातनवैदिकधारायाः संरक्षणार्थं अशेषलोकहिताय च ऋषिप्रणीतमार्गस्य पुनर्स्थापनार्थं विविधानि समाजोपकारकाणि दर्शनानि पुनराविष्कुर्वन्ति ।

तेषु दर्शनेषु परब्रह्मस्वामिनारायणप्रबोधितमक्षरपुरुषोत्तमदर्शनं स्वीयमौलिकसिद्धान्तेन तत्त्वज्ञानपरिपूरितेन अध्यात्मवैशिष्ट्येन च महत्वपूर्णं स्थानमावहति। तस्यैव दर्शनस्य निधिभूतोऽयं ग्रन्थः प्रकटब्रह्मस्वरूपः श्रीमहन्तस्वामिमहाराजप्रणीतः **सत्सङ्गदीक्षेति**। गुर्जरभाषया लिखितस्य शास्त्रस्याऽस्य महामहोपाध्यायैः स्वामिभद्रेशदासचरणैः संस्कृतभाषाया पद्यमयोऽनुवादो विहितः। अनुवादश्चाऽयं मूलग्रन्थप्रतिबिम्बमिव राजते। तदिदं संस्कृतपद्यमयं सत्सङ्गदीक्षेतिशास्त्रमक्षरपुरुषोत्तमसंहिताऽऽख्ये परमात्मस्वामिनारायणोपदिष्ट-भक्तिपरम्पराप्रतिपादके शास्त्रे स्वीयं स्थानं बिभर्ति। शोधपत्रेऽस्मिन् सत्सङ्गदीक्षेतिशास्त्रे प्रतिपादितस्य नवनीतोपमस्य तथ्यस्य दिङ्मात्रमत्रालोचनं विधास्यते।

भगवतः स्वामिनारायणस्य वैदिकसनातनअक्षरपुरुषोत्तमेति नैसर्गिकसिद्धान्ताः परावाणीवचनामृतरूपेण क्षरिताः। ते एव पुनः अक्षरब्रह्मगुणातीतानन्दस्वामिनामुपदेशेषु उपबृंहिताः। ते एव सिद्धान्ताः अद्य सत्सङ्गदीक्षारूपेणास्माकं समक्षं वर्तते। अध्यात्मतत्त्वज्ञान - आन्तरिकसाधना - भक्तेः प्रवाहः - आचारपद्धतिरिति विविधाः नैसर्गिकाः विषयाः ग्रन्थेऽस्मिन्नुपनिबद्धाः। एभिर्धार्मिककृत्यैः तन्ववच्छिन्नो जीवात्मा ब्रह्मप्राप्तियोग्यः सम्पाद्यत इत्याशयः।

ग्रन्थप्रवेशः

अत्र ग्रन्थे प्रतिपादिता विषयाश्चतुर्धा विभक्तुं शक्याः। यथा - आध्यात्मिकविचार-वैदिकविचार- धर्मशास्त्रीयविचार- नैसर्गिकविचारश्चेति।

तत्रादौ ग्रन्थस्यास्य नामकरणस्य सार्थकता प्रतिपाद्यते। सत्सङ्गः दीक्षेति अत्र दौ सारभूतौ शब्दौ वर्तते। यद्यपि सामान्येन सतां सज्जनैर्वा सङ्गः सत्सङ्गः इति बोधः तथाप्यत्र स्वामिपादैः कश्चन विशिष्टार्थः उटङ्कितः पल्लवितश्च, तद् यथा - न केवलं सज्जनैस्सङ्गरपित्वात्मना सङ्गः, परमात्मना सङ्गः, गुरुभिः सङ्गस्तथाशास्त्रैस्सङ्गरेव सत्सङ्गरिति व्यापकोऽर्थविशेषः प्रतिपादितः। सङ्गः इत्यस्य सङ्गत्यादरभावो वा अर्थः स्वीकार्यः। अतः उच्यते ग्रन्थे -

सत्यस्य स्वात्मनः सङ्गः सत्यस्य परमात्मनः।

सत्यस्य च गुरोः सङ्गः सच्छास्त्राणां तथैव च॥

विज्ञातव्यमिदं सत्यं सत्सङ्गस्य हि लक्षणम्।

कुर्वन्नेवं विधं दिव्यं सत्सङ्गं स्यात् सुखी जनः ॥ (स.दी.-8,9)

एवमेव दीक्षेति यमनियमस्य परिपालनमित्यर्थः सामान्येन ज्ञायते। परन्तु ग्रन्थेऽस्मिन् दीक्षेत्यत्रातिगम्भीरार्थः सुगुम्फितो वर्तते। यथा -

दीक्षेति दृढसङ्कल्पः सश्रद्धं निश्चयोऽचलः।

सम्यक् समर्पणं प्रीत्या निष्ठा व्रतं दृढाश्रयः ॥ श्लो. 10

अर्थात् मनस्यचलां निश्चयात्मिकां परमश्रद्धाञ्चादृत्य प्रगाढसंकल्पयुक्तः सन् स्वकीयं मनः भगवतश्चरणारविन्दे सर्वतोभावेन समर्पणमेव दीक्षा । तत् समर्पणं प्रीत्या निष्ठया च परिवृतं स्यात् । दृढसंकल्प- अचलनिश्चल- समर्पणमिति तत्त्वत्रयोपेतः साधकरेव प्राप्तदीक्षित्येति सज्ञां प्राप्नोति । यथा समर्पणार्थं शरणागतिभावस्यापेक्षा भवति, तच्च आनुकूल्यस्य सङ्कल्पः प्रातिकूल्यस्य वर्जनम् प्रभृतिभिः ज्ञायते । तथैवात्र दीक्षाशब्दस्य व्याख्यानवासरे आचार्याणां सैवाशयः परिपुष्णाति । एवमेव सत्सङ्गस्य आज्ञोपासनया तदसम्बन्धसिद्धान्तानां स्व जीवने प्रयोगार्थं सङ्कल्पः, तेषां सिद्धान्तानां अचलनिश्चयरूपेण संप्राप्तिस्तथा तान् प्रति समर्पणभावरित्येषः विषयः प्रामुख्येनाऽस्मिन् ग्रन्थे प्रतिध्वनितो भवति ।

शरीरज्ञानम्

शरीरं क्षणविध्वंसि कल्पान्तस्थायिनो गुणारिति सूक्तेः महत्त्वमस्माभिस्सर्वैः विदितं वर्तते । शरीरस्याधारत्वमात्मनराधेयत्वमित्यपि प्रसिद्धिः । ग्रन्थोक्तदिशा इदं शरीरं मुक्तेः साधनम् न तु भोगस्य, यतोहि दुर्लभमिदं शरीरमसकृत् नैव प्राप्यते । अत्रेदमवधेयं यत् विभिन्नैः दार्शनिकैः शरीरं व्याधिमन्दिरं तथा मलपरिपूर्णं षडभावविकारग्रस्तमिति स्वीक्रियते । परन्तु अनेनैव मुक्तिः भवितुमर्हति नाऽन्येन, अतः इदं न भोगसाधनमिति स्वीयसूक्ष्मचिन्तनमत्र प्रस्तावितम् स्वामिपादैः । सर्वोऽपि लौकिकः व्यवहारः शरीरस्य निर्वाहार्थरेव । न त्वेतत् मनुष्यस्य परमं लक्ष्यमित्यवसरेऽस्मिन् स्मारितम् । तद्यथा –

लौकिको व्यवहारस्तु देहनिर्वाहहेतुकः ।

नैव स परमं लक्ष्यम् अस्य मनुष्यजन्मनः ॥

नाशाय सर्वदोषाणां ब्रह्मस्थितेरवाप्तये ।

कर्तुं भगवतो भक्तिम् अस्य देहस्य लम्भनम् ॥ श्लो- 3-4

मन्ये एतदर्थमेव अस्माकं सामान्यः व्यवहारः भवति शरीरमाद्यं खलुधर्मसाधनमिति निरुक्तकारेण यास्केनाऽपि उक्तमस्ति यत् शरीरं श्रुणातेः शमनाते वा, अर्थात् शरीरस्योपरि हिंसा जायते पुनरिदं शरीरमुपशमनमपि भवति । एवमेव शारीरिकमालोच्य सत्सङ्गस्य वैशिष्ट्यमालोचितम् ।

सत्सङ्गवैशिष्ट्यम्

यद्यपि पूर्वं सत्सङ्गस्य शाब्दिकः विचारः विहितः तथाप्यत्र किञ्चिद् विशेषरूपेणाऽलोच्यते ।

सर्वमिदं हि सत्सङ्गाल्लभ्यते निश्चितं जनैः ।

अतः सदैव सत्सङ्गः करणीयो मुमुक्षुभिः ॥ श्लो- 5

अप्राप्यमपि वस्तु सत्संगात् प्राप्तुं शक्यते इत्यादिष्टमस्त्यत्र । सत्सङ्गस्याधिकारिणः जाति-धर्म-वर्ण-निर्विशेषेण सर्वे भवितुमर्हन्तीति श्लाघ्यः विचारः अत्र विचारितः ।

सत्सङ्गाऽधिकृतः सर्वे सर्वे सुखाऽधिकारिणः ।
 सर्वेऽर्हा ब्रह्मविद्यायां नार्यश्चैव नरास्तथा ॥
 नैव न्यूनाधिकत्वं स्यात् सत्सङ्गे लिङ्गभेदतः ।
 स्वस्वमर्यादया सर्वे भक्त्या मुक्तिं समाप्नुयुः ॥
 सर्ववर्णगताः सर्वा नार्यः सर्वे नरास्तथा ।
 सत्सङ्गे ब्रह्मविद्यायां मोक्षे सदाऽधिकारिणः ॥
 न न्यूनाधिकता कार्या वर्णाऽऽधारेण कर्हिचित् ।
 त्यक्त्वा स्ववर्णमानं च सेवा कार्या मिथः समैः ॥श्लो. 12-15

उपर्युक्तविषयचिन्तनस्याभ्यन्तरे कश्चन सामाजिकसहावस्थानभावः गुम्फितः तत् वैदिकचिन्तनमितोऽपि द्रढयति , यतो हि श्रुतौ “शृण्वन्तु सर्वे अमृतस्य पुत्राः।” “अज्येष्ठासो अकनिष्ठासः”, “संगच्छध्वम् संवदध्वम्” प्रभृतिभिः मन्त्रैः वयं सर्वे समानाः इत्यनन्यः कश्चनविचारः वर्तते अस्माकं परम्परायाम् । तदेव विचारः अत्र कात्स्येन प्रतिफलति । तस्य सत्सङ्गस्य प्राप्त्योपायोऽपि सन्दर्भेऽस्मिन् प्रदर्शितो वर्तते । यथा -

धन्योऽस्मि पूर्णकामोऽस्मि निष्पापो निर्भयः सुखी ।
 अक्षरगुरुर्योगेन स्वामिनारायणाऽऽश्रयात् ॥
 आश्रयेत् सहजानन्दं हरिं ब्रह्माऽक्षरं तथा ।
 गुणातीतं गुरुं प्रीत्या मुमुक्षुः स्वात्ममुक्तये ॥श्लो-19-20

यदि तं परमात्मानं सहजानन्दं (सहजानन्देति परब्रह्मणः स्वामिनारायणस्य पुण्यकरं नामधेयाऽन्तरम्) तथा च ब्रह्मस्वरूपं गुरुं नित्यं ध्यायाम आश्रयामश्च तर्हि सत्सङ्गस्य प्राप्त्युपायः सुगमः भवितुमर्हतीत्यादेशः।

गुरुभक्तिः

अस्माकं जीवने गुरोः सर्वाधिकं महत्वमस्तीति निश्चप्रचम् । यथा मुण्डकोपनिषदि एवमुक्तम्-“प्लवा एते ह्यदृढा यज्ञरूपा अष्टादशोक्तमवरं येषु कर्म। एतच्छ्रेयो येऽभिनन्दन्ति मूढा, जरामृत्युं ते पुनरेवापियन्ति ॥ इष्टापूर्तं मन्यमाना वरिष्ठं नान्यच्छ्रेयो वेदयन्ते प्रमूढाः। नाकस्य पृष्ठे ते सुकृतेऽनुभूत्वा इमं लोकं हीनतरं वा विशन्ति ॥ परीक्ष्य लोकान् कर्मचितान् ब्राह्मणो निर्वेदमायान्नास्त्यकृतः कृतेन । तद्विज्ञानार्थं स गुरुमेवाभिगच्छेत् समित्पाणिः श्रोत्रियं ब्रह्मनिष्ठम् ॥ (मु.1-2-7, 10,12) एवं गुरोः महत् वैशिष्ट्यमुपनिषद्भिः भूयो भूयः प्रतिपादितम् वर्तते । अत्र स्वामीपादानां दृष्ट्या मनुष्यस्य तमसाच्छन्नस्य मार्गस्य पथप्रदर्शकः गुरुरेव ।

गुरुं ब्रह्मास्वरूपं तु विना न संभवेद् भवे ।
 तत्त्वतो ब्रह्मविद्यायाः साक्षात्कारो हि जीवने ॥
 नोत्तमो निर्विकल्पश्च निश्चयः परमात्मनः ।
 न स्वात्मब्रह्मभावोऽपि ब्रह्माऽक्षरं गुरुं विना ॥
 नैवाऽपि तत्त्वतो भक्तिः परमानन्दप्रापणम् ।
 नाऽपि त्रिविधतापानां नाशो ब्रह्मगुरुं विना ॥
 अतः समाश्रयेन्नित्यं प्रत्यक्षमक्षरं गुरुम् ।
 सर्वसिद्धिकरं दिव्यं परमात्माऽनुभावकम् ॥ श्लो- 22-25

गुरोः स्मरणेन सुश्रुशया वा ब्रह्मविद्यायाः प्राप्तिः, एतदकरणेन भक्त्युत्पत्तिः नैव सम्भवति ।
 त्रिविधतापस्यापि नाशो न जायते । भगवतः परमानन्दस्वरूपस्योपलब्धिरपि नैव भविष्यति ।
 अतः सत्सङ्गलाभाय गुरुभक्तिः सर्वादौ करणीया भवति ।

दासभावः

हस्तौ बध्वा नमस्कारं कुर्याद्धि दासभावतः । स.दी- 63

आत्मानं दासमिति विचिन्त्य भगवतः समाराधनं विधातव्यमिति भावः । वस्तुतः अस्माकं
 जीवने दासभावस्य कियान् प्रभावः भवति, तत् स्मृत्यादिशास्त्रेषु अनेकत्र प्रतिपादितमस्ति । यथा –
 देहदृष्ट्वा तु दासोऽहं जीवदृष्ट्वा त्वदंशकः ।

आत्मदृष्ट्वा त्वमैवाऽहं इति मे निश्चितामतिः ॥

इति दर्शान्तरे प्रोक्तम् । अत्र स्तरत्रये भगवतः चिन्तनं कर्तुं समादेशः । यथा – मया देहः
 प्राप्तः, अत्राहं तव दासः, अहं जीव इति ख्यातः, अत्राहं तव अंशभूतः, मम शरीरे आत्मा अस्ति
 , अतः सैवात्मा साक्षात् त्वमेवासीति स्तरत्रयेण स्वात्मानं विचिन्त्य भगवतः ध्यानं कर्तुं शक्यते ।
 परब्रह्मस्वामिनारायणप्रबोधिते अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमदर्शने यद्यपि जीवदृष्ट्या ब्रह्मांशत्वं वाऽऽत्मदृष्ट्या
 ब्रह्माऽभेदत्वं नाऽङ्गीकृतं तथापि दासभावोऽङ्गीकृतः ।

श्रीमद्भागवतेऽपि –

त्वयोपभुक्तस्रग्ध वासोलङ्कारचर्चिताः ।

उच्छिष्टो भोजिनो दासास्तवमायां जयेमहि ॥

अत्र उद्भवः एवमेव उपर्युक्तदासगुणान् समाश्रित्य तवमायां जेतुं शक्नुमरिति श्रीकृष्णं प्रति
 स्व भावं प्रकटयति ।

पुनः-

यन्नामश्रुतिमात्रेण पुमान् भवति निर्मलः ।

तस्य तीर्थपदं किं वा दासानामवशिष्यते ॥

कामं च दास्ये न तु काम्यकाम्यया।
 यथोत्तमश्लोक जनाश्रया रतिः।(भाग....)
 स च दासभावः कथं प्राप्तव्यः तदप्यत्र स्पष्टीकृतः स्वामिपादैः-
 जमान्तरसहस्रेषु यस्यस्यान्मतिरीदृशी ।
 दासोऽहं वासुदेवस्य सर्वान् लोकान् समुद्धरेत् ॥

सर्वतोभावेनात्मसमर्पणेनैव उत्पद्यतेऽयं चिरन्तनः भावः तत्र नान्यः पन्था । स्व जीवने अस्ति दासभावस्य महती उपयोगिता । स च भावः अस्य ग्रन्थस्यानुशीलनेन सहजतया ज्ञातुं शक्यते ।

भगवति प्रगाढविश्वासः

ग्रन्थेऽस्मिन् प्रतिपादितेषु तथ्येषु अतिप्रसिद्धमस्ति भगवत्तत्त्वम् । कोऽयं भगवान्? किं तस्य कार्यम्? कुतः स आगत इत्यादयः विविधविषयाः अनुक्षणमस्माकं मानसपटलभृशमान्दोलयन्ति । कोऽयं भगवान्? इत्यस्मिन् विषये उच्यते अस्माकं शास्त्रवाङ्मये-

उत्पत्तिञ्च विनाशञ्च भूतानामगतिं गतिम् ।

वेत्तिविद्यामविद्याञ्च स वाच्यो भगवानिति ॥

यः सर्वं जानाति, सर्वं कर्तुं प्रभवति, यः सर्वगुणसम्पन्नः सैव भगवानीत्याशयः। एतादृशगुणविशिष्टस्य भगवतः किं कार्यमिति स्वामिपादैरत्यन्तं तात्त्विकमुत्तरं प्रदत्तम् । यथा –

भगवान् सर्वकर्ताऽस्ति दयालुः सर्वरक्षकः ।

स एव नाशकः सर्वसङ्कटानां सदा मम ॥

भगवान् कुरुते यद्धि हितार्थमेव तत्सदा ।

प्रारब्धं मे तदिच्छैव स एव तारको मम ॥ स.दी – 44- 45

भगवान् यद् किमपि करोति तदखिलं प्राणीनां हितायैव । तस्यैव अनुकम्पया मम संचितक्रियमाणप्रारब्धादिकं भवति । प्रारब्धशब्दस्य प्रयोगेनास्माकं दूरुहस्य कर्मवादस्य स्वीकारः स्वामिपादैः कृत इति निश्चीयते । तस्यैव भगवतः समुपाशनं कथं कर्तव्यमिति विभिन्नैराचार्यैः बहुधा प्रतिपादितमस्ति । तत्र विविधप्रक्रिया अपि प्रसक्ताः । परन्त्वत्र ग्रन्थे कश्चन विलक्षणप्रकारः समुदितः ।

विश्वासः सुदृढीकार्या भगवती तथा गुरौ ।

निर्बलत्वं परित्याज्यं धार्यं धैर्यं हरेर्बलम् ॥

कार्यं लीलाचरित्राणां स्वामिनारायणप्रभो ।

श्रवणं कथनं पाठो मननं निदिध्यासनम् ॥स.दी -132,133

कृत्याकृत्यम्

ग्रन्थेऽस्मिन् बहुविधेषु पर्यालोचितेष्वयं विषयः व्यवहारिको वर्तते। ये च विषयाः धर्मशास्त्रसम्पत्ताः भवन्ति। यथा – सर्वदा सर्वथा च दुर्व्यसनं त्याज्यं भवति। यथा समादिष्टमस्ति-
विहितस्याननुष्ठानात् निन्दितस्य च सेवनात्।

अनिग्रहाच्चेन्द्रियाणां नरः पतनमृच्छति ॥ (भा.भू.)

एतस्य भावोच्छवासः स्वामिपादैः स्पष्टतया प्रतिपादितः। मादकद्युतव्यभिचार-
-चौर्यहिंसापशब्दप्रयोगक्रोधप्रभृत्यवगुणानां परित्यागः कर्तव्यरित्यादेशः तत्र वर्तते। तद्यथा

अहिंसा परमो धर्मो हिंसा त्वधर्मरूपिणी।

श्रुतिस्मृत्यादिशास्त्रेषु स्फुटमेवं प्रकीर्तितम् ॥

यागार्थमप्यजादीनां निर्दोषाणां हि प्राणिनाम्।

हिंसनं नैव कर्तव्यं सत्सङ्गिभिः कदाचन ॥ श्लो.- 34-35

अर्थात् अत्र एतत्त्वं समाहितमस्ति यत् यदकरणीयस्य वर्जनेनैव जीवः शुद्धहृदयवान् भवति। फलतः सःसौलभ्येन सहजानन्दं प्राप्तुं शक्नोतीति सोपानमत्र प्रदर्शितं वर्तते। अस्माकं जीवने यद्यत् करणीयमकरणीयञ्च भवति तस्य धर्मशास्त्रीयमध्ययनमत्र कृतमाचार्यैः।

एतदतिरिच्य स्व जीवनं पल्लवयितुममृतेनाप्लावयितुञ्चात्र विभिन्नाः अमृतोपम निर्देशाः स्वामिपादानां हृदयकमलात् विनिश्रुताः। ते यथा – अहिंसा परमे धर्मः, शुद्धिः सर्वविधा पाल्या, भगवद्भलवैभवेनानन्दानुभूतिः, सत्सङ्गर्दाढ्याय शास्त्रपठनं, हरयेऽनर्प्यं न ग्राह्यम्, मन्दिराणां निर्माणं तथा नित्यं मन्दिरगमनम्, यथा स्वधर्मरक्षा स्यात् तथैव वस्त्रधारणम्, जीव-ईश्वर-माया-अक्षरब्रह्म – परब्रह्मेति पञ्चतत्त्वानां गूढरहस्यज्ञानम्, धर्मेण रहिता भक्ति नैव कार्या, सत्सङ्गं निष्ठया आनन्दोत्साहपूर्वकञ्च कुर्यात्, आलस्यप्रमादादीनां त्यागः, द्वयो न मानुषोभावो भगवती तथा गुरौ, स्थिरचेतसा अन्तर्दृष्टिः कर्तव्या, स्वामिनारायणेच्छया भूतं भव्यं च समनुष्ठीयते, सर्वं शान्तमना विचिन्तयेत्, स्वामिनारायणः मया सह सदैवास्तीति मनसि धारयेत्, स्वधर्मं परिपालयेत्, परधर्मं परित्यजेत्, भक्तिबाधकानि कर्माणि त्यजेत्, सुकर्मसु उत्साहं संवर्धयेत्, सत्यं हितां प्रियां वाणीञ्च वदेत्, कुत्सितां असत्यं च वाचं न वदेत्, वध्वा श्वशुरः पितृवत् श्वश्रूश्च मातृवत् सेव्यः, श्वश्रवा श्वशुरेण च स्नुषा पितृवत् पाल्या, गृहे मिलित्वा भोजनं कार्यं, धर्मसंस्कारनाशकम् अश्लीलदृश्यं न पश्येत्, लुञ्चा कदापि न ग्राह्या, स्वोपयोगानुसारं अन्नद्रव्यधनादिनां संग्रहणं कुर्यात्, विश्वासघातं नैव कुर्यात्, भक्तिप्रददेशे निवासः करणीयः, आध्यात्मिकेषु तर्कं परित्यजेत्, तीर्थभ्रमणं कुर्यात्, पञ्चदेवानां तिथ्यनुगुणमभ्यर्चयेत्, परिशेषे स्वामिनारायणे परां भक्तिं नियमपूर्वकं निदध्यात्।

अनेन उपरिर्युक्तगुणानामाश्रयणेन कश्चन सामान्य जनोऽपि स्व जीवनं मधुमयं सुधामयं अमृतमयञ्चावश्यं कर्तुं शक्नोतीति निशंसयं वक्तुं शक्यते। अतः अस्मिन् ग्रन्थे प्रतिपादितानि

तथ्यानि प्रतिक्षणं मानवजीवनोन्नतये उत्कृष्ट साधकानि भवन्तीति उक्त्वा परमात्मनः श्रीस्वामिनारायणस्य चरणनलिनयोः सभक्तिकप्रणामान् विनिवेद्य विरमामि ।

सन्दर्भाः –

1. सत्सङ्गदीक्षा
2. श्रीमद्भागवतम्
3. स्मृतिशास्त्रम्
4. मुण्डकोपनिषद्
5. निरुक्तम्
6. काण्वभाष्यभूमिका

अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमदर्शननिरूपकसत्सङ्गदीक्षाग्रन्थस्य सामाजिकदृष्ट्या प्रभावः

DR. GYANANARANJAN PANDA

Assistant Professor, Department of Sahitya

NSU, Tirupati.

भारतीयसंस्कृतौ प्रतिष्ठे द्वे संस्कृतं संस्कृतिस्तथा। संस्कृतेन निबद्धाः वेदोपनिषद् गीतारामायणपुराणदर्शनादयग्रन्थाः समग्रे प्रपञ्चे देदीप्यन्ते। तेषु दर्शनशास्त्रस्य न्याय-वैशेषिक-सांख्य-योग-मीमांसा-वेदान्तादिदर्शनानां महत्त्वं वैशिष्ट्यं च दरीदृश्यते। दार्शनिकेषु कपिल-पतंजलि-कणाद-गौतम-जैमिनि-शंकराचार्य-रामानुजाचार्य-माध्वाचार्य-वल्लभाचार्य-निम्बार्काचार्याः तथा चैतन्यमहाप्रभोः अचिन्त्यभेदाभेददर्शनं, जैनदर्शनं बौद्धदर्शनानन्तरं इदानीम् अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमदर्शनस्य माहात्म्यं सर्वैः सम्यक्तया अनुभूयते। भारते वर्षशतानामनन्तरमिदं नूतनदर्शनमाविरभूत्। दर्शनेन समाजस्य मार्गप्रदर्शनं जायते। सामाजिकैः दार्शनिकानां पदानुसरणं कृत्वा तेषां वचनानुगुणं धर्मार्थकाममोक्षं प्राप्यते। बहुवर्षानन्तरं स्वामिनारायणाख्यः एकः संप्रदायः गुर्जरप्रदेशादाविर्भूतः। स च संप्रदायः इदानीं न केवलं भारते अपि च समग्रे विश्वे स्वसेवाभावनया, सनातनधर्मस्य संरक्षणे, भारतीयसंस्कृतेः प्रचारप्रसारणे, मन्दिरनिर्माणे संस्कृतग्रन्थरचनायां च बद्धपरिकरः दरीदृश्यते। संप्रदायेऽस्मिन् बहव आचार्याः शिष्यसहिताः विलक्षणसंस्कृतग्रन्थनिर्माणे स्वप्रातिभं प्रकटितवन्तः। तेषु आचार्येषु महामहोपाध्यायाः भद्रेशदासस्वामिनः अन्यतमाः।

परब्रह्मस्वामिनारायणाश्रितः अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमदर्शनानुयायी श्रीमन्तो भद्रेशस्वामिनः प्रस्थानत्रयीभाष्यं विरच्य जगत्तिले प्रसिद्धिमाप्तवन्तः। भद्रेशस्वामिर्बहूनां विलक्षणग्रन्थानां विरचनं कृत्वा संस्कृतसाहित्यस्य दर्शनस्य च महानुपकारः कृतः। परब्रह्मस्वामिनारायणप्रबोधितम् अक्षरब्रह्मपरम्परासम्पोषितम् अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमदर्शनम् आधारीकृत्य महामहोपाध्यायसाधुभद्रेशदासस्वामिनः प्रस्थानत्रयभाष्यं विरच्य प्राचीनाऽऽचार्याणां सूचिपटले स्वनामाङ्कनम् अकुर्वन्। अस्य स्वामिपादस्य बहवः ग्रन्थाः संस्कृते तथा इतरभाषातोपि संस्कृतानुवादं कृत्वा संस्कृतसाहित्यस्य शोभावर्धनं कुर्वन्ति।

एतेषु ग्रन्थेषु सत्सङ्गदीक्षा इत्याख्यः संस्कृतभाषयाऽनूदितो ग्रन्थोऽन्यतमः। अयं सत्सङ्गदीक्षाग्रन्थः मूलगुर्जरभाषया निबद्धः। तस्य रचयितारः संप्रदायस्य वर्तमानगुरुवः ब्रह्मस्वरूपाः महन्तस्वामिमहाराजाः। अस्यानुवादं गुर्जरभाषातः संस्कृतश्लोकत्वेन महामहोपाध्यायसाधुभट्टेशदासस्वामिनः कृतवन्तः। सत्सङ्गदीक्षाग्रन्थः अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमसंहितायाः एक अंशविशेषः। यस्मात् विषयं स्वीकृत्य संस्कृतश्लोकरूपेण अस्य विरचनं संजातमस्ति।

अक्षराधिपतिः परब्रह्म भगवान् श्रीस्वामिनारायणः करुणार्द्रचित्तेन सर्वेषां मंगलाय धरातलेऽस्मिन् अवततार। स्वयं भगवता दिव्यसत्सङ्गद्वारा अस्य वैदिकसनातनाऽक्षर-पुरुषोत्तमदर्शनस्य स्थापना कृता। सहजानन्दश्रीहरिणा स्थापितस्य सत्सङ्गस्य वैशिष्ट्यं अनुपमं अद्वितीयं च। ग्रन्थेऽस्मिन् न केवलं स्वामिनारायणसंप्रदायस्य अपि तु प्रपञ्चस्य जीवनशैली, सामाजिकप्रभावः, प्रशासनस्य नियमाः, राजधर्मः, जीवनदर्शनं, अध्यात्मज्ञानं, दिव्यभक्तिः, धर्मशास्त्रप्रकारं गृहस्थधर्मस्य नियमाः, परिवारे के के संस्काराः पालनीयाः, वेदान्तप्रकारं दर्शनं, गुरुशिष्ययोः संबन्धः, शिष्यस्य परमभक्तिः, दिव्यभावः, अन्तर्भावः, सदाचारः, नित्यपूजनं, ध्यानं ग्रन्थेऽस्मिन् सुष्ठु चित्रितमस्ति। अस्मिन् ग्रन्थे विषयद्वयं मुख्यत्वेन चित्रितम् आज्ञा उपासना च। परब्रह्मस्वामिनारायणस्य परावाणीभूतग्रन्थे वचनामृते आज्ञा-उपासनासिद्धान्तः प्रबोधितोऽस्ति। गुणातीतानन्दस्वामी अक्षरब्रह्मस्वरूपं तथा भगवान् श्रीस्वामिनारायणः परब्रह्मपुरुषोत्तम इति सत्सङ्गसिद्धान्तः प्रतिपादितः। अनेन बहूनां मुमुक्षूणां परममुक्तिः संजायते।

अस्य ग्रन्थस्य नाम्ना एव वैशिष्ट्यमनुमीयते यतोहि दीक्षा इति शब्दस्य अर्थः सश्रद्धं मनसि दृढसंकल्पः अचलो निश्चय सम्यक् समर्पणं निष्ठा व्रतं दृढाश्रय इति। सत्सङ्गे एतादृशेन दृढसंकल्पेन आज्ञा-उपासनासिद्धिरूपं जीवनस्य प्रमुखं लक्ष्यं तथा मोक्षप्राप्तिरस्तु इति प्रयोजनम्।

अस्य ग्रन्थस्य मंगलश्लोके समग्रस्य प्रपञ्चस्य परमशान्तिप्रतिष्ठापनार्थं प्रार्थनां विदधाति कविवरेण्यः। समग्रस्य प्रपञ्चस्य परमशान्तिप्रतिष्ठापनार्थं भगवतः स्वामिनारायणसन्निधौ प्रार्थना क्रियते।

स्वामिनारायणः साक्षाद् अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमः।

सर्वेभ्यः परमां शान्तिम् आनन्दं सुखमर्पयेत्॥ १॥

असारे संसारेऽस्मिन् अस्य दुर्लभजीवनस्य समयस्य च सदुपयोगः करणीयः। यतोहि अयं समयः वारं वारं अस्माभिः प्राप्तुं न शक्यते। बहुमूल्यस्य जीवनस्य लौकिकसुखं लक्ष्यं न भवेदिति ग्रन्थकारस्याशयः। लौकिकानन्दः क्षणस्थायीति तत्र मतिर्न देया। लौकिको व्यवहारस्तु केवलं देहनिर्वाहायैव सोऽस्माकमात्यन्तिकं लक्ष्यं नास्ति। तदेवोक्तमत्र यथा –

देहोऽयं साधनं मुक्तेर्न भोगमात्रसाधनम्।

दुर्लभो नश्वरश्चाऽयं वारंवारं न लभ्यते॥२॥

लौकिको व्यवहारस्तु देहनिर्वाहहेतुकः ।

नैव स परमं लक्ष्यम् अस्य मनुष्यजन्मनः॥३॥

ग्रन्थस्य नामप्रकारं सत्संगस्य वैशिष्ट्यं सम्यगुपविर्णितम्। भक्ताः सत्संगद्वारा सिद्धिं प्राप्तुं शक्नुवन्ति। दोषनिराकरणे, समस्यासमाधाने, शक्तिवर्धने, भक्त्युत्पादने इत्यादौ सत्संगस्य महती भूमिका वरीवर्तते इति विचारः प्रकटितः। अनेनोद्देश्येन स्वयं परब्रह्म श्रीस्वामिनारायणः लोकेऽस्मिन् सत्संगस्य दिव्यत्वं प्रचारितवान् प्रसारितवान् च ।

आश्रयदीक्षामन्त्रः -

स्वामिनारायणसम्प्रदाये स्त्रीपुंसां त्यागिगृहिणां भिन्नभिन्नवर्णगतानां च मनुजानां मोक्षे भेदे नास्तीति स्पष्टमनुभूयते। सर्वेऽपि मुमुक्षवो मानवा ब्रह्मविद्यायां मोक्षे सदाऽधिकारिणः सन्ति। अतः सत्सङ्गे सर्वेऽपि स्वीकृताः। कश्चन मुमुक्षुरक्षररूपताप्राप्तिपूर्वकपरमात्मभक्तिमिच्छेच्चेत् स आश्रयमन्त्रं गृहीत्वा सत्सङ्गमाप्नुयादित्युक्तमत्र -

सर्वेऽधिकारिणो मोक्षे गृहिणस्त्यागिनोऽपि च।
न न्यूनाऽधिकता तत्र सर्वे भक्ता यतः प्रभो॥(स.दी.१७)
स्वामिनारायणेऽनन्य-दृढपरमभक्तये ।
गृहीत्वाऽऽश्रयदीक्षाया मन्त्रं सत्संगमाप्नुयात्॥(स.दी.१८)
धन्योऽस्मि पूर्णकामोऽस्मि निष्पापो निर्भयः सुखी ।
अक्षरगुरुर्योगेन स्वामिनारायणाऽऽश्रयात्॥
आश्रयेत् सहजानन्दं हरिं ब्रह्माक्षरं तथा ।
गुणातीतं गुरुं प्रीत्या मुमुक्षुः स्वात्ममुक्तये॥

गुरुभक्तिरपि कार्या -

मुमुक्षुः यथा भगवति भक्तः तथा गुरावपि भक्तः भवेत्। भारतीयसंस्कृतौ गुरुणां महत्त्वं शिष्यस्य समग्रे जीवने प्रभावयति। गुरुकुलपरंपरायाः शिष्यः गुरुणां चरणसन्निधौ स्वात्मानं समर्पणं कृत्वा विद्याध्ययनं करोति स्म। प्राचीनगुरुकुलपरंपरायां शिष्यः न केवलं ग्रन्थपठनमात्रम् अपि तु देशनिर्माणकौशलं, राष्ट्रभक्तिज्ञानं, युद्धकौशलज्ञानम् इत्यादिकमपि अर्जयति स्म। येन तदानीं भारतवैभवं विश्वगुरुत्वेन आसीत्। अस्माकं प्राचीनानाम् ऋषिमुनीनां गुरुणां च देशसंचालने महती भूमिका दरीदृश्यते। वेदमहाभारतादिशास्त्रेषु परिशील्यते यत् तत्र गुरुणां ऋषिमुनीनां न्यायनिर्णयः समाजस्य दिग्दर्शनं करोति स्म। यदद्य तेषां अभावेन कलिप्रभावेण समाजः च दिग्भ्रान्तः जायते। प्रतिदिनं समाजस्य अधोगतिः परिलक्ष्यते। अतः अत्र गुरोराज्ञा परिपालनीया इत्ययं अंशः प्रमुखमावहति। गुरुं विना शिष्यस्य विद्या निरर्थकी इति अत्र विर्णितम् अस्ति।

गुरुं ब्रह्मस्वरूपं तु विना न संभवेद् भवे।
 तत्त्वतो ब्रह्मविद्यायाः साक्षात्कारो हि जीवने ॥२२॥
 नोत्तमो निर्विकल्पश्च निश्चयः परमात्मनः।
 न स्वात्मब्रह्मभावोऽपि ब्रह्माक्षरं गुरुं विना ॥२३॥
 नैवाऽपि तत्त्वतो भक्तिः परमानन्दप्रापणम्
 नाऽपि त्रिविधतापानां नाशो ब्रह्मगुरुं विना ॥२४॥
 अतः समाश्रयेन्नित्यं प्रत्यक्षमक्षरं गुरुम्।
 सर्वसिद्धकरं दिव्यं परमात्माऽनुभावकम् ॥२५॥

व्यसनं त्याज्यम् –

विलासव्यसनं सर्वदुःखस्य कारणमित्युच्यते। अस्य त्यागे जनः सुःखी भवेदिति सत्सङ्गदीक्षाशास्त्रे निगदितम्। बहूनां रोगदुःखानाम् आमन्त्रणं व्यसनेन जायते इति अत्र ग्रन्थकारस्याशयः। दैनन्दिनजीवने भोजनस्य महान् प्रभावः वरीवर्तते। सुरापानेन, मांसभक्षणेन धूम्रपानेन च शरीरं रोगग्रस्तं भवतीन्द्रियाण्यन्तःकरणान्यपि मलिनीभवन्ति। अनेन समाजे व्यभिचारः वर्धते। तदर्थं शुद्धभोजनं कृत्वा व्यसनं त्यक्त्वा सन्मार्गे श्रमः क्रियेत चेत् सामाजिकशृङ्खलाप्रतिष्ठापनं जायते। अतः शुद्धसमाजनिर्माणार्थं एतेषां नियमानां पालनं नितान्तमावश्यकमिति अत्रोपदेशः।

सर्वं दुर्व्यसनं त्याज्यं सर्वैः सत्सङ्गिभिः सदा।
 अनेक रोगदुःखानां कारणं व्यसनं यतः ॥२६॥
 सुराभङ्गातमालादि यद् यद् भवेद्धि मादकम्।
 तद् भक्षयेत् पिबेन्नैव धूम्रपानमपि त्यजेत् ॥२७॥
 परित्याज्यं सदा द्यूतं सर्वैः सर्वप्रकारकम्।
 त्यक्तव्यो व्यभिचारश्च नारीभिः पुरुषैस्तथा ॥२८॥
 पातव्यं गालितं पेयं जलं दुग्धादिकं तथा।
 खाद्यं पानमशुद्धं यद् गृहीयाद् वस्तु तन्नहि ॥२९॥

अहिंसा परमो धर्मः –

श्रुतिस्मृतिपुराणादिशास्त्रेषु अहिंसायाः पराकाष्ठा प्रदर्शिता अस्ति। कस्यापि जीवस्य हानिः पीडादायिन्येव। यागादिकार्येष्वपि जीवहिंसा न कार्या। छागादीनां प्राणिनां हिंसनं कृत्वा कदापि सफलतां प्राप्तुं न शक्यते। अहिंसाद्वारा सर्वासां समास्यानां समाधानं कर्तुं शक्यते। सर्वेषु जीवेषु दया-क्षमा भावना स्थापनीया।

अहिंसा परमो धर्मो हिंसा त्वधर्मरूपिणी।
 श्रुतिस्मृत्यादिशास्त्रेषु स्फुटमेवं प्रकीर्तितम्॥३४॥
 यागार्थमप्यजादीनां निर्दोषाणां हि प्राणिनाम्।
 हिंसनं नैव कर्तव्यं सत्सङ्गिभिः कदाचन॥३५॥
 यागादिके च कर्तव्ये सिद्धान्तं सांप्रदायिकम्।
 अनुसृत्य हि कर्तव्यं हिंसारहितमेव तत्॥३६॥

स्वच्छभारतम् –

आधुनिकसंसारे सर्वे वयं समुन्नतिं कामयामहे। अद्यत्वे स्वच्छतायाः महती आवश्यकता वरीवर्तते। अस्माकं भारतीयसंस्कृतौ दैनन्दिनजीवनेषु स्वच्छतायाः प्रामुख्यं दरीदृश्यते। स्वच्छतायां भगवतः निवासः इति अस्माकं विश्वासः। धर्मशास्त्रानुसारमपि स्वच्छजीवनस्य शरीरशुद्धिप्रक्रियायाः महानुपादेयता वरीवर्तते। शरीरशुद्धौ मनःशुद्धिः तस्माद् कार्यसिद्धिः इति। अत्रापि दैनन्दिनजीवनस्य शरीरशुद्धेः बाह्यान्तः शुद्धिः करणीया इति सुष्ठु सूचितम् अस्ति।

ष्ठीवनं मलमूत्रादिविसर्जनं स्थलेषु च।
 शास्त्रलोकनिषिद्धेषु न कर्तव्यं कदाचन॥४९॥
 शुद्धिः सर्वविधा पाल्या बाह्या चाऽऽभ्यन्तरा सदा।
 शुद्धिप्रियः प्रसीदेच्च शुद्धिमति जने हरिः॥

मानवजीवनस्य बाह्यान्तःशरीरशुद्धिकरणस्य प्रक्रिया नियमाश्च अत्र सुष्ठु प्रतिपादिता अस्ति। अस्य ग्रन्थस्याऽध्ययनेन नियमानां परिपालनेन च वैयक्तिकदृष्ट्या सामाजिकदृष्ट्या च महानुपकारः भवेदिति जानीमः। ग्रन्थस्यास्य श्रवणमनननिदिध्यासनद्वारा विद्यार्थिनां गृहस्थानां च दैनन्दिनजीवनचर्यायाम् उत्तमगुणानां विकासः सम्भवति। ग्रन्थेऽस्मिन् अत्र मानवस्य प्रतिदिनजीवनस्य प्रातरारभ्य रात्रौ शयनं यावत्, सूर्योदयादारभ्य सूर्यास्तं यावत् नियमानुसर्तुं उपदेशः दत्तो अस्ति। प्रतदिनजीवनस्य अनुशासनस्यापि महती आवश्यकता वर्तते।

दैनन्दिन-जीवनचर्या –

अस्माकं दिनचर्या संस्कारयुक्ता शुद्धा भवेत्। शुद्धदिनचर्याद्वारा शरीरस्य शुद्धता, मस्तिष्कस्य निर्मलता तथा हृदि दयादाक्षिण्ये समजायेते। सूर्योदयात् प्रागेव शय्यात्यागं कृत्वा स्नानं करणीयम्। स्नानान्ते शुद्धवस्त्रधारणेन आसनादिषु उपविश्य भगवतः नित्यपूजा करणीया। अनेन मनसः स्वच्छता, शरीरस्योत्साहोऽपि वर्धते।

सत्सङ्गिभिः प्रबोद्धव्यं पूर्वं सूर्योदयात्सदा।
 ततः स्नानादिकं कृत्वा धर्तव्यं शुद्धवस्त्रकम्॥५१॥

पूर्वस्यामुत्तरस्यां वा दिशि कृत्वा मुखं ततः ।
 शुद्धाऽऽसनोपविष्टः सन्नित्यपूजां समाचरेत् ॥५२॥
 हरिर्ब्रह्मगुरुश्चैव भवतो मोक्षदायकौ ।
 तयोरेव हि कर्तव्यं ध्यानं मानसपूजनम् ॥५९॥
 स्थापयेच्चित्रमूर्तिश्च शुचिवस्त्रोपरि ततः ।
 दर्शनं स्याद्यथा सम्यक् तथा हि भक्तिभावतः ॥६०॥

एवमत्र दैनन्दिनजीवनचर्याप्रदर्शनेन शरीरशुद्धौ स्नानशौचादिकं नित्यपूजाद्याह्निकं विशेषतया दृढायितम्।

आह्वानमन्त्रः -

भगवतः गुणकीर्तनं प्रतिदिनमवश्यं क्रियेत चेत् मनसि आध्यात्मिकचिन्तनमुत्पद्यते ।
 शुद्धमन्त्रोच्चारणेन भगवतः आवाहनेन शरीरस्य शुद्धता, मनसः चित्तस्य निर्मलता, कार्येषु
 स्वच्छता चायाति । दैनन्दिनजीवनेषु भगवतः पूजायां कालयापनं करणीयमिति अत्रोपदेशः ।

उत्तिष्ठ सहजानन्द श्रीहरे पुरुषोत्तम।
 गुणातीताऽक्षर ब्रह्मन्नुत्तिष्ठ कृपया गुरो॥६४॥
 आगम्यतां हि पूजार्थम् आगम्यतां मदात्मतः ।
 सान्निध्याद् दर्शनाद् दिव्यात् सौभाग्यं वर्धते मम॥६५॥

सनातनसंस्कृति परिरक्षणम् -

भारतीयसंस्कृतिः सदैव महानतायाः परिचयं प्रददाति । त्यागबलिदानस्य इयं संस्कृतिः दाने
 विश्वसिति न च ग्रहणे, एतदर्थम् अयं देशः विश्वगुरुत्वेन अपि विवेच्यते । गुरुकुलपरंपरामनुसृत्य
 ब्रह्मचारी विद्यार्थी परंपरासंरक्षणे तत्परो भवेदिति ब्रह्मस्वरूपमहन्तस्वामिमहाराजानाम् आशयः।
 सनातनधर्मस्य परिरक्षणे संवर्धने च अस्माभिः प्रयतितव्यम्। दैनन्दिनजीवने सर्वसत्सङ्गिजनैः
 अध्ययनव्यवसायादिकर्मणा सह मन्दिरे कुलदेवतायाः पूजार्चना विधातव्या।

प्रातः सायं यथाकालं सर्वसत्सङ्गिभिर्जनैः ।
 निकटं मन्दिरं गम्यं भक्त्या दर्शय प्रत्यहम्॥९३॥
 स एकः परमोपास्य इष्टदेवो हि नः सदा।
 तस्यैव सर्वदा भक्तिः कर्तव्याऽनन्यभावतः॥९७॥
 साक्षाद् ब्रह्माऽक्षरं स्वामी गुणातीतः सनातनम्।
 तस्य परंपराद्यापि ब्रह्माक्षरस्य राजते॥९८॥

नारीसम्मानम् -

अस्माकं भारतीयसंस्कृतौ नारीणां वैशिष्ट्यं दत्तमस्ति। धर्मशास्त्रस्य मनुस्मृतौ उक्तम् -

यत्र नार्यस्तु पूज्यन्ते रमन्ते तत्र देवताः ।

यत्रैतास्तु न पूज्यन्ते सर्वास्तत्राफलाः क्रियाः ॥ मनुस्मृति ३/५६ ॥

यत्र तु नार्यः पूज्यन्ते तत्र देवताः रमन्ते, यत्र तु एताः न पूज्यन्ते तत्र सर्वाः क्रिया अफलाः (भवन्ति) । इति। वेदादिषु शास्त्रेषु विदुषीणां नारीणां गार्गी-मैत्रेयीत्यादीनां विशिष्टं स्थानमासीत्। भारतीयकुटुम्बेषु नारीणां देवीति परिकल्पनां कृत्वा तासां सम्मानं क्रियते। ग्रन्थेऽस्मिन्नपि कुटुम्बित्यागादिनियमपालनद्वारा नारीसम्मानं कृतमस्ति।

कुटुम्ब्या पुरुषैर्नैव स्त्रियो दृश्याः कदाचन।

एवमेव कुटुम्ब्या च स्त्रीभिर्दृश्या न पूरुषाः॥१८०॥

स्त्रीषु पुरुषाणां कुटुम्बिः न स्यादिति सत्सङ्गदीक्षाग्रन्थे सम्यगुपस्थापितम् । समाजे नारीणां सम्मानं, बालिकानां सम्यक् पालनपोषणं, विद्यादानं, पुरुषैः सह समानः अधिकारः इत्यादिषु बिन्दुषु अत्रालोच्यते।

स्वीयपत्नीतराभिस्तु रहसि वसनं सह।

आपत्कालं विना क्वापि न कुर्युर्गृहिणो नराः॥१८१॥

तथैव नहि नार्योपि तिष्ठेयुः स्वपतितरैः।

पूरुषै साकमेकान्ते ह्यापत्तिसमयं विना॥१८२॥

नरः समीपसम्बन्धहीनां स्त्रियं स्पृशेन्नहि।

नैव स्पृशेत् तथा नारी तादृशं पुरुषान्तरम्॥१८३॥

नारीणां समुन्नतौ समाजस्य प्रगतिः भवेदिति बहुधा दृश्यते । परिवारस्य समस्तभारः सा एव वहति । यदि सा सुष्ठु शिक्षिता तर्हि समग्रं परिवारमपि सा परिवर्तयितुं प्रभवति । नारीणां स्थानं सदैव उच्चतममावहति । सा माता-भगिनी-भार्या-पुत्री-इत्यादि स्थानेषु समाजस्य कार्यं निर्वहति। जननी जन्मभूमिश्च स्वर्गादपि गरीयसीत्युच्यते ।

प्रशासननियमानुपालनम्

भ्रष्टाचारस्य शाखाप्रशाखा विश्वस्य कोणानुकोणं प्रसारिता वर्तते । भ्रष्टाचारस्य मूलोत्पादने प्रयासं कर्तुम् अत्र सुष्ठु उपदेशः, मार्गः अपि दर्शितः। कार्यालये नियमानुपालने सर्वेषां मङ्गलं जायेतेति । कार्यसाधनार्थं कस्मादपि धनग्रहणं न करणीयम् । अनेन समाजे अशान्तिर्वर्धते । कर्तव्यसंपादने प्रशासनस्य आदेशानुसरामः चेत् समाजस्य महानुपकारः स्यात्।

धनद्रव्यधरादीनां सदाऽऽदानप्रदानयोः।

नियमा लेखसाक्ष्यादेः पालनीया अवश्यतः॥१८९॥

लुञ्चा कदापि न ग्राह्या कैश्चिदपि जनैरिह।
 नैव कार्यो व्ययो व्यर्थः कार्यं स्वाऽऽयानुसारतः॥१९३॥
 कर्तव्यं लेखनं सम्यक् स्वस्याऽऽयस्य व्ययस्य च।
 नियमाननुसृत्यैव प्रशासनकृतान् सदा॥१९४॥
 नैव विश्वासघातं हि कुर्यात् सत्सङ्गमाश्रितः।
 पालयेद् वचनं दत्तं प्रतिज्ञातं न लङ्घयेत्॥२००॥

अत्र स्वामिचरणानां आदेशानुसारं प्रशासने नियमान् अनुपालयामश्चेत् स्वच्छप्रशासनं चालयितुं शक्नुमः ।

विद्यार्थिजीवनचर्या -

विद्यार्थिजीवनस्य प्रत्येकं कार्यं भविष्यन्निर्माणस्य मूलसोपानमेव भवति । अस्मिन् समये यदि सत्कार्याणाम् अभ्यासः क्रियते चेद्बालः संस्कारयुक्तः स्यात्, तेन न केवलं परिवारस्य अपि तु समाजस्य राष्ट्रस्योन्नतिः सम्भवेत् । दैनन्दिनजीवने छात्रेणाभ्यासः कर्तव्यः, समयस्य अपव्ययो न करणीयः, सेवाप्रार्थनादिकं कार्यम् इत्यादयः प्रमुखाः विषयाः अत्र ग्रन्थकारैः सम्यक् सूचिता वर्तन्ते ।

उत्साहाद् आदरात् कुर्यात् स्वाऽभ्यासं स्थिरचेतसा ।
 व्यर्थतां न नयेत्कालं विद्यार्थी व्यर्थकर्मसु॥२१०॥
 बाल्यादेव दृढीकुर्यात् सेवाविनम्रतादिकम् ।
 निर्बलतां भयं चापि नैव गच्छेत् कदाचन॥
 बाल्यादेव हि सत्सङ्गं कुर्याद् भक्तिं च प्रार्थनाम् ।
 कार्या प्रतिदिनं पूजा पित्रोः पञ्चाङ्गवन्दना॥२११॥
 विशेषसंयमः पाल्यः कौमार्यै यौवने तथा।
 अयोग्यस्पर्शदृश्याद्यास्त्याज्याः शक्तिविनाशकाः॥२१३॥

बाल्यकालादेव विद्यार्थी सेवाव्रतं स्वीकुर्यात् चेत् समाजः चारित्र्यवान् भवति । तेन बाल्यादेव हृदि दया-क्षमा एते गुणा अप्युत्पद्यन्ते । येन कश्चन शान्तसमाजस्य निर्माणं जायते । सत्सङ्गतिः अपि बालानां महानुपकरोतीति अत्र महन्तस्वामिमहाराजानाम् आदेशः विहितः ।

संस्कृतस्य संरक्षणम् -

संस्कृतभाषा भारतस्य गौरवमयी प्रतीका । अनया भाषया वेदोपनिषद्भोगायुर्वेद-दर्शनरामायणमहाभारतादयः रचिताः वर्तन्ते तथा न केवलं भारतस्य अपि च समस्त-भूमण्डलस्य मार्गदर्शनं विधीयते ।

वेदायुर्वेदयोगसंगणकविज्ञानविषयेषु बहुषु चर्चा जायते । यदि भारतीयसंस्कृतिर्ज्ञातव्या तर्हि वेदेषु ज्ञानं नितरां भवेत् । वेदपरिचयं अनवाप्य भारतीयसंस्कृतेः सनातनधर्मस्य च ज्ञानं यथावन् भवितुमर्हतीति तु वस्तुस्थितिः । वेदाः भारतीयसंस्कृतेरमूल्यनिधित्वेन वरीवर्तन्ते । वेदोऽखिलो धर्ममूलम्, (मनु – १.२१) सनातनधर्मस्य दिग्दर्शनं वेदैः कृतमस्ति । त्यागबलिदानस्य भूमिरियं सदैव विश्वस्य गुरुत्वेन विद्योतते । अत एवोच्यते -

एतद्देशप्रसूतस्य सकाशादाग्रजन्मनः ।

स्वं स्वं चरित्रं शिक्षेन् पृथिव्यां सर्वमानवाः ॥ (मनु. २.)

संगणकविज्ञाने संस्कृतस्य महती भूमिका दरीदृश्यते । संस्कृतभाषा सङ्गणकोपयोगाय एका सुप्रयुक्ताभाषात्वेन भाषाविज्ञानीनां कथनम् । अन्तरिक्षविज्ञाने संस्कृतस्य महान् उपयोगः तथा चन्द्रपृष्ठे चन्द्रयानप्रेषणे अस्या भाषायाः व्यवहारः करणीयोऽस्तीति वैज्ञानिकैः संसूच्यते ।

अत्रापि ग्रन्थकारः संस्कृतस्य महत्त्वं सम्यक् उपस्थापयति । सर्वे विद्यार्थिनः स्वसामर्थ्यानुसारं संस्कृतं पठेयुरिति ग्रन्थकाराणां ब्रह्मस्वरूपमहन्तस्वामिमहाराजानां मतिः ।

स्वसंप्रदायग्रन्थानां यथाशक्ति यथारुचिः ।

संस्कृते प्राकृते वाऽपि कुर्यात् पठनपाठने ॥ २३५ ॥

तीर्थाटनं, देवपूजनम् इत्यादिकर्मभिः अस्माकं भारतीयसंस्कृतिपरिरक्षणं जायते । तदप्यत्र विहितमस्ति । स्वामिनारायणसंप्रदायस्य पूजाविधिः, व्रतोपवासादयः अत्र सम्यक्तया उपवर्णिता अस्ति । अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमदर्शनमनुसृत्य सत्सङ्गदीक्षायाः सम्यक् समन्वयः कृतो वर्तते । दार्शनिकदृष्ट्या एवं च अत्र साहित्यिकदृष्ट्या अपि परिशीलनं कृतमस्ति ।

अयं ग्रन्थः मूलरूपेण ब्रह्मस्वरूपमहन्तस्वामिमहाराजैः गुर्जरभाषया विरचितो वर्तते । अस्य ग्रन्थस्योपादेयतामनुभूय अस्य संस्कृतानुवादः महामहोपाध्यायाः भद्रेशस्वामिनोऽकुर्वन् । स्वामिचरणानां भद्रेशपादानां महान् प्रयासः अत्र प्रसंसार्हः इति नास्ति संदेहः । सहस्रवर्षानन्तरं संस्कृतजगति अद्वैतवेदान्तस्य प्रतिष्ठापकः भगवतः शंकराचार्यस्यानन्तरं संपूर्णभाष्यकारत्वेन परिचितः साधुभद्रेशमहोदयः अद्भुतकार्यमिदमकारि । तस्य स्वामिनः वैदिकसनातनधर्मेऽस्मिन् सूर्यसमः ग्रन्थोऽयं देदीप्यते । सनातनधर्मस्य परिरक्षणार्थम् अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमसंप्रदायस्य प्रदानम् अतुलनीयम् । संस्थायामस्यां संस्कृतभाषासुरक्षायै बहवः संस्कृतग्रन्थाः प्रकाशिताः । सनातनधर्मस्य संवर्धनार्थं बहूनि रम्याणि मन्दिराणि निर्मितानि, येषु मन्दिरेषु हिन्दुधर्मस्य सारतत्त्वस्य रामायण-महाभारतस्य वार्ता अपि प्रसारिता । संस्कृतशास्त्रस्य संरक्षणाय गुरुकुलपद्धत्या व्याकरणदर्शनसाहित्यादिशास्त्राणाम् अध्ययनाऽध्यापनादिकमप्यत्र सुष्ठु चाल्यते । संस्कृतशास्त्राणां वैज्ञानिकपद्धत्या शोधकार्यार्थं शोधसंस्थानं स्थापितम् । भारतीयसंस्कृतेः परम्परायाः परिरक्षणार्थं बहूनि कार्याणि अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमसंप्रदायद्वारा क्रियन्ते । अनया ग्रन्थरचनया समाजस्य पाठकानां महानुपकारः कृतोऽस्ति । अयं सत्सङ्गदीक्षाग्रन्थः सामाजिकानां दीक्षागुरुर्भवेदिति मे विश्वासः ।

आषाढशुक्लगुरुपूर्णिमाऽवसरे जुलाईमासस्य पञ्चमदिनाङ्के, २०२० तमे वर्षे अस्य ग्रन्थस्योन्मोचनं ब्रह्मस्वरूपमहन्तस्वामिमहाराजैः कृतमासीत्। एतेषां गुरुवर्याणां न केवलं स्वामिनारायणसम्प्रदायस्यापि तु समग्रजगत उपरि महानुपकारो विहितः। एवमेव ग्रन्थस्यास्यानुवादं संस्कृतभाषायां कृत्वा साधुभद्रेशदासमहोदयेनापि महती सेवा विहितेति।

परिशीलितग्रन्थसूची –

श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता स्वामिनारायणभाष्यम् – भाष्यकारः – महामहोपाध्यायः साधुभद्रेशदासः
छान्दोग्योपनिषत् स्वामिनारायणभाष्यम् – भाष्यकारः – महामहोपाध्यायः साधुभद्रेशदासः ।
बृहदारण्यकोपनिषत् स्वामिनारायणभाष्यम् – भाष्यकारः – महामहोपाध्यायः साधुभद्रेशदासः ।
ईषाद्यष्टोपनिषत् स्वामिनारायणभाष्यम् – भाष्यकारः – महामहोपाध्यायः साधुभद्रेशदासः ।
ब्रह्मसूत्र स्वामिनारायणभाष्यम् – भाष्यकारः – महामहोपाध्यायः साधुभद्रेशदासः ।
संस्कृत साहित्य का इतिहास – वलदेव उपाध्याय।

अग्न्याधानविधिनिरूपणम्

DR. SAPAN KUMAR PANDA

Associate Professor, Department of Veda,
Shasakeeya Sanskrit College, Bhitri, Sidhi (M.P.)

श्रौतस्मार्तभेदेन यज्ञो द्विधा विभज्यते। उभययोरनुष्ठानार्थं ततः प्राक् अग्न्याधानस्य आवश्यकता वर्तते। सविधि अग्न्याधानानन्तरमेव तदुत्तरक्रतुषु यज्ञेषु वाधिकारः सिद्ध्यति। अग्न्याधानं द्विविधं – श्रौताधानम्, स्मार्ताधानञ्चेति। श्रौताधानार्थं ततः पूर्वं स्मार्ताग्नेराधानं कर्तव्यं भवति। स्मार्ताग्नेराधानानन्तरमेव श्रौताग्नेराधानं कर्तुं शक्यते। यः गर्भाधानादारभ्य विवाहपर्यन्तं विहितसंस्कारेषु संस्कारितः त्रैवर्णिकः सपत्नीकश्च स एव आधानकर्मणि अधिकारी भवति। कात्यायनाचार्यस्तु रथकारस्याधानमात्रे एव अधिकार इति प्रतिपादयति।¹ आपस्तम्बाचार्योऽपि मतमिदं समर्थयति²

स्मार्ताग्न्याधानम् – उपनयनसंस्कारेण संस्कारितः त्रैवर्णिकः विधिवत् वेदमधीत्य गुरोरनुज्ञामवाप्य समावर्तनसंस्कारेण संस्कारितः सन् स एव स्नातकः शास्त्रोक्तलक्षणयुक्तां सुशीलां सवर्णां कन्यामुद्वा गृहस्थाश्रमे प्रविशति। तस्यैव सपत्नीकस्यैव अग्न्याधाने अधिकारः, अन्येषां न। स्मार्ताग्न्याधानस्य मुख्यकालो भवति विवाहकाल एव।³ अन्ये केचन दायविभागकाल इति मन्वन्ते। वैवाहिकहोमः चतुर्थीहोमो वा यस्मिन्नग्नौ सम्पाद्यते, तमग्निं परिगृह्य गृहे यथाविधि सम्पादितोऽग्निः गृह्याग्निः स्मार्ताग्निर्वेति पदेन उच्यते। तदेव सम्पादनमग्न्याधानमित्युच्यते। पक्षान्तरे यदि केनचित्कारणेन तदा न गृहीतं, तर्हि दायविभाजनकालेऽपि तेनैव विधिना

1. का.श्रौ. - १/१/९
2. आप.श्रौ. - ५/१/३/१८
3. अवसध्याधानं दारकाले। पा.गृ. १/२/१
भार्यादिरग्निदार्यादिर्वा। गौ.ध. - १/५/६
कर्म स्मार्तं विवाहाग्नौ कुर्वीत प्रत्यहं गृही।
दायकात्रादृते वाऽपि श्रौतं वैतानिकाग्निषु॥ (या.स्मृ. - ५/९७)
दायाद्यकाल एकेषाम्। पा.गृ. - २/२

अग्न्याधानं कर्तुं शक्यते । अन्यथा उभयोरशक्ते पितुर्गृहीताग्निकत्वे पुत्रः तस्मात् ग्रहीतुं समर्थो भवेत् । अनेन स्मार्ताग्न्याधानविधिना सम्पादिताग्नौ सर्वाणि गृह्यसूत्रोक्तकर्माणि, पञ्च महायज्ञाः, सप्तपाकसंस्थाश्च अनुष्ठीयन्ते ।

श्रौताग्न्याधानम् – स्मार्ताग्न्याधानानन्तरं श्रौतकर्मणामनुष्ठानार्थं समुचितकाले श्रौताग्नेराधानं कर्तव्यं भवति । आधानशब्दस्यायमर्थो यत् श्रुत्युक्तविधिना वेदिकाया उपरि अग्न्याधारभूतकुण्डान् निर्माय तत्र तत्र सम्भारान् आरोप्य यथाविधि अग्नेः संस्थापनमिति भवति । आधानेनानेन च श्रौताग्नीनां सिद्धिर्भवति । इदं चाधानं त्रिविधम् – (१) होमपूर्वाधानम्, (२) इष्टिपूर्वाधानम्, (३) सोमपूर्वाधानमिति ।⁴ अग्निहोत्रानुष्ठानात् पूर्वं यदाधानं क्रियते तत् होमपूर्वाधानम्; दर्शपूर्णमासात् पूर्वं यदाधानं क्रियते तत् इष्टिपूर्वाधानम् ; तथैव सोमयागानुष्ठानात् प्राक् यदाधानं क्रियते, तत् सोमपूर्वाधानमित्युच्यते । अग्न्याधानार्थमग्न्याधानस्य कालविषये शास्त्रान्तरेषु नैकानि मतान्युपलभ्यन्ते । आपस्तम्बश्रौतसूत्रे अमावास्यायां पौर्णमास्यां वा अग्न्याधेयमिति विधीयते ।⁵ शतपथश्रुतावपि अग्न्याधानस्य कालविषये इत्थमुच्यते यत् – ‘वसन्ते ब्रह्मणोऽग्नीनादधीत, ग्रीष्मे राजन्यो, शरदि वैश्यः’⁶ इति । तत्रैव अमावास्यायामग्न्याधानं कर्तव्यमित्यपि संदृश्यते⁷ कात्यायनेनापि मतमिदं समर्थितम् ।⁸ शाङ्खायनाचार्यः पौर्णमास्याममावास्यायां वा अग्न्याधेयमिति मनुते ।⁹ अग्न्याधानस्य वैकल्पिककालत्वेन कृत्तिका-रोहिणी-नक्षत्रयुक्त-चन्द्रमा भवतीति सूत्रितम् ।¹⁰ कात्यायनाचार्यः मतमिदं समर्थयन् कृत्तिकारोहिणीव्यतिरिक्तयोः मृगशिराः-फाल्गुन्योः वा कस्मिन्नपि एकस्मिन्नक्षत्रे अग्न्याधानं कर्तव्यमिति प्रतिपादितवान् ।

कामनामुद्दिश्य अग्न्याधानकालस्य विधानं श्रौतसूत्रग्रन्थेषु दरीदृश्यते । तद्यथा –

वसन्तो ब्रह्मणब्रह्मवर्चसकामयोः ।¹¹

ग्रीष्मः क्षत्रियश्रीकामयोः ।¹²

वर्षाः प्रजापशुकामवैश्यरथकृताम् ।¹³

4. य.त.प्र. - पृ.१

5. अमावास्यायां पौर्णमास्यां वा आधेयः । (आप.श्रौ. - ५/३/१६)

6. श.ब्र. - २/१/३/५

7. अमावास्यायामेवाग्नी आदधीत । श.ब्र. - ११/१/१६

8. अमावास्यायामग्न्याधेयम् । का.श्रौ. - ४/७/१

9. अमावास्यायां पौर्णमास्यां वादधीत । शां.श्रौ. - २/१/७

10. कृत्तिकासु रोहिण्याम् - आप.श्रौ. - २/१/१

कृत्तिका-रोहिणी-मृगशिरा-फाल्गुनीषु । का.श्रौ. - ४/७/२

11. का.श्रौ. - ४/७/५

12. तत्रैव - ४/७/७

13. तत्रैव - ५/१/३/५

कृत्तिकासु ब्रह्मण आदधीत मुख्यो ब्रह्मवर्चसो भवति ।¹⁴
 रोहिण्यामाधाय सर्वान् रोहान् रोहति ।¹⁵
 मृगशीर्षे ब्रह्मवर्चसकामो यज्ञकामो वा ।¹⁶
 यः पुरा भद्रस्सन् पापीयान् स्यात्स पुनर्वसोः ।¹⁷
 पूर्वयोः फाल्गुन्योर्यः कामयेत दानकामा मे प्रजास्युरिति ।¹⁸
 हस्ते यः कामयेत प्रमे दीयेतेति ।¹⁹

सोमयागानुष्ठानपक्षे अग्न्याधानार्थं कालस्यावश्यकता न भवति । यथोक्तं सूत्रेषु –

सोमेन यक्ष्यमाणो नर्तुं पृच्छेन्न नक्षत्रम् ।²⁰

यथाकाम्यमृतूनां सोमेन यक्ष्यमाणस्य ॥²¹

इत्थं श्रौतयज्ञानामनुष्ठानार्थं यथाविधि अग्न्याधानविधिना अग्नीन्नाधाय आधानसिद्धाग्निना दर्शपूर्णमासादयः अनुष्ठेयाः ।

तत्र गार्हपत्याहवनीययोः कृते पृथक् पृथक् शाला निर्मियन्ते । उभययोः सम्मिल्य अग्निहोत्रशालेति नाम्ना व्यवहारः याज्ञिकसम्प्रदाये दृश्यते । तत्र सामान्येन चत्वार्यागाराणि भवन्ति, परन्तु मुख्यत्वेन तत्र गार्हपत्याहवनीयागारे इति द्वे भवतः । गार्हपत्रयागारे पत्न्याः स्थानम्, आहवनीयागारे च यजमानस्य स्थानं भवति ।

अग्न्याधानविधिः – अग्न्याधानार्थं प्रवृत्तः यजमानः पौर्णमासवत् नखनिकृन्तनेन सह केशशमश्चादीन् वपेत्, पत्न्या अपि केशवर्जं नखनिकृन्तनादिकं सर्वं भवति । ततः जायापती चोभौ स्नात्वा क्षौमे वाससी परिधत्तः । ततः पूर्वं पूर्वस्मिन् अहनि वा अग्न्याधानार्थं चत्वार्यागाराणि निर्मितानि स्युः । यथा – गार्हपत्यागारम्, आहवनीयागारम्, सभ्यागारम्, अवसथ्यागारञ्च । आगारेषु गार्हपत्याहवनीयदक्षिणाग्नि-सभ्य-अवसथ्यभेदेन पञ्चानामग्नीनां स्थापनं भवति ।

व्रतग्रहणम् – क्षौरकर्मान्ते यजमानः स्नात्वा क्षौमवस्त्रपरिधानपूर्वकं सङ्कल्प्य व्रतं गृह्णाति । तस्यां रात्रौ यजमानः वीणावेणुवादनध्वनिना जागरणं कुर्यात् । व्रतग्रहणानन्तरं न मांसमश्नाति, न च स्त्रियमुपैति यजमानः । तत्र मातृपूजनाभ्युदयिकश्राद्धादिकं कृत्वा यजमानः दक्षिणहस्तेन ऋत्विजां दक्षिणजानुं स्पृष्ट्वा क्रमेण ब्रह्मा-होता-अध्वर्यु-आग्नीध्रदिचतुर ऋत्विजान् वृणुते । ततः अध्वर्युः

14. तत्रैव - ५/१/३/७

15. तत्रैव - ४/७/६

16. आप.श्रौ. - ५/१/३/३

17. तत्रैव - ५/१/३/६

18. तत्रैव - ५/१/३/८

19. तत्रैव - ५/१/३/१२

20. तत्रैव - २/१/१

21. शां.श्रौ. - २/१/६

शमीवृक्षस्योपरि प्रवृद्धोऽश्वत्थवृक्षसम्बन्धि द्वे अरणी अधरारण्योत्तरारणित्वेन सम्पाद्य यजमानाय दद्यात्। तत्र अग्न्याधाने आहवनीयाद्यायतने प्रक्षेपणीयाः सप्त पार्थिवाः सप्तवाक्प्र्याश्चाहृत्य चतुर्दशसम्भाराः तत्तत् स्थानात् संगृह्य संस्थापयेत्। सप्तपार्थिवाः सम्भाराः यथा – सिकताः, ऊषाः, आखुकरीषम्, वल्मीकवपा, सूदः, वराहविहतम्, शर्कराः। सप्तवाक्प्र्याः - अश्वत्थकाष्ठम्, उदुम्बरकाष्ठम्, पलाशकाष्ठम्, शमीकाष्ठम्, विड्ककतकाष्ठम्, अशनिहतवृक्षशकलम्, पद्मपत्रञ्चेति। ऋत्विग्वरणान्ते यजमानः ब्रह्मौदनं पचति, तं ब्रह्मौदनं ऋत्विग्व्योऽशनार्थं दद्यात्। ततः वीणावादनादिभिः रात्रिजागरणपूर्वकमारित्रिं काष्ठशकलैरग्निः प्रदीप्यते। यजमानः व्रतग्रहणे वाचं यच्छन् वदति – ‘अनृतात्सत्यमुपैमि मानुषादैव्यमुपैमि, दैवीं वाचं यच्छामि’²² इति। ततः पूर्वसम्पादितेषु आहवनीयाद्यायतनेषु पूर्वसंगृहीतसम्भाराणां सम्भरणं कृत्वा अन्ते हिरण्यशकलादयस्तत्र तत्र संस्थाप्यन्ते। अथ अग्निमन्थनं क्रियते। तत्प्रकारञ्चेत्थम् –

गार्हपत्यखरस्य पश्चात्प्रदेशे श्वेतमश्वमेकं बद्ध्वा अध्वर्युः अरणी मन्थेत्।²³ अगनावुत्पन्ने सति यजमानो वरत्वेन अध्वर्यवे गामेकां दद्यात्। गवाभावे तन्मूल्यं सुवर्णं वा देयम्। मथ्यमानेऽनौ धूमजाते अध्वर्युः गाथिनः कौशिकस्य ‘अरण्योर्निहितो जातवेदो ०’ इत्यादि साम गायेत्। ततः चतुर्होतृन् यजमानं वाचयति अध्वर्युः।

गार्हपत्याधानम् – मन्थनेनोत्पन्नमग्निं सम्भाराणामुपरि ‘भूर्भुवः’ इति मन्त्रेण यथाविधि समिद्धिः संस्थाप्यते। मन्त्रे ‘अमुष्य’ इत्यस्मिन् स्थाने अंगिरादि-ऋषिवाचकं पदं प्रयोज्यम्।²⁴ यथा – अङ्गिरसां कृते – ‘भूर्भुवः अङ्गिरसां त्वा देवानां व्रतपते व्रतेनादधे’ इति। तथैव अन्येषामृषीणाम्। ततः अध्वर्युः रथन्तरं साम गायेत्। कुतश्चेत्, आधानसाम आध्वर्यवकाण्डे एव समाप्तातम्।²⁵ विकल्पेन ब्रह्मा वा गायेत्। वेदत्रयाभिज्ञत्वात् ब्रह्मा सामानि गायेत् अध्वर्युश्च प्रेषं प्रददाति।²⁶ अध्वर्योः कार्यान्तरे व्यापृतत्वात् ब्रह्मैव सामानि गायेत्।²⁷ आपस्तम्बश्रौतसूत्रेऽपि अग्न्याधेये सौत्रामण्यां च ब्रह्मैव सामानि गायेदिति स्पष्टीकृतम्।²⁸

आहवनीयाधानम् – आहवनीयोद्धरणे क्रियमाणे च यजमानः सम्भारानधिष्ठाप्य प्राङ्मुखेऽश्वे अग्रतो नीयमाने आहवनीयखरसमीपे तं स्थापयित्वा अश्वपदं द्विवारं स्पृष्ट्वा तृतीयेनाग्निमादधाति। तत्र यजमान आहवनीयस्य पूर्वत आगत्य प्रत्यङ्मुखो भूत्वा इध्मस्य पूर्वार्द्धं हस्तेनालभ्य ‘द्यौरिति’ ‘भूमेत्याह’ स तिसृभिः सार्षपाङ्गीभिः ऋग्भिः तमाहवनीयमुपतिष्ठते।

22. आप.श्रौ. - ५/२/८/१

23. का.श्रौ. - ४/८/२३

24. तत्रैव - ४/९/१

25. तत्रैव - ४/९/४-५

26. तत्रैव - ४/९/६

27. तत्रैव - ४/९/७

28. तत्रैव - ५/१६/६

आपस्तम्बा-चार्यानुसारं यजमानः अर्धोदिते सूर्ये आहवनीयमादध्यात्, विकल्पेन ब्रह्मवर्चसकामस्य कृते उदिते सूर्ये आदध्यात्। उद्ध्यमाने वामदेवस्य साम्नो गानं भवति, सर्वे ऋत्विग्यजमाना अश्वं पुरस्तात् कृत्वा प्राचीं गच्छन्ति, आहवनीयस्य दक्षिणतो ब्रह्मा रथं रथचक्रं वा यथा त्रिः परिवर्तते तथा वर्तयति। अत्र 'भूभुवः स्वः०' इति मन्त्रेण पूर्ववत् अग्निराधीयते। एवं प्रकारेण आहवनीयाग्नेराधानं भवति।

दक्षिणाग्न्याधानम् – गार्हपत्याग्नेः सकाशात् समिद्धिर्ज्वलन्तमग्निं दक्षिणखरे स्थापयेत्। ततः वक्षमाणाभ्यामरणीभ्यामग्निं गार्हपत्यागारे खरस्य मध्ये वा दक्षिणाग्निं स्थापयति। विकल्पेन वैश्यकुलादम्बरीशाद् महानसाद्वाऽऽदृत्य तमग्निं गार्हपत्ये स्थापयेत्।²⁹ अनेन प्रकारेण सभ्यावसथ्याग्न्योरपि आधानं कर्तव्यम्।

पवमानेष्टिः – यद्यपि आधानेन अग्नयः सम्पादिताः, परन्तु पवमानेष्टिं विहाय ताः न सिद्ध्यन्ति। अतः अग्नीनां सिद्ध्यर्थमवश्यं पवमानेष्टिरनुष्ठेया। तत्र तिस्रः देवताः अग्निः पवमानः, अग्निः पावकः, अग्निः शुचिः। तत्रेष्टिद्वयम् – 'अग्नये पवमानाय प्रथमा'³⁰, अग्नये पावकाय अग्नये शुचये च द्वितीया'³¹ इति। सर्वत्र पुरोडाश एव द्रव्यम् इति शम्।

सन्दर्भग्रन्थसूची

- आपस्तम्बीयश्रौतप्रयोगः (द्वितीयभागः)- सम्पा.- ब्रह्मश्री म.रा. वेङ्कटेश अवधानी (श्यामः), श्रुति-
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घेरण्डसंहितोक्तषट्कर्मसाधनम्

DR. TAPAN KUMAR GHADEI

Assistant Professor, Department of Yoga Vijnana,
NSU, Tirupati

षट्कर्मप्रकरणं घेरण्डसंहितायाः प्रथमोपदेशे वर्णितमस्ति । षट्कर्मालोचनात्प्राक्
घेरण्डमुनिना चण्डकापालै प्राक्सूचना प्रदत्ता-

नास्ति मायासमः पाशो नास्ति योगात्परं बलम् ।

नास्ति ज्ञानात्परो बन्धुनाहङ्कारात्परो रिपुः ॥¹

अर्थान्मायासमः पाशः, योगसमः श्रेष्ठबलम्, ज्ञानात्परो बन्धुः, अहङ्कारात्परो शत्रुः न
विद्यते ह्यस्मिन् संसारे ।

तदनु घटनाम शरीरस्य शोधनार्थं सप्तसाधनानि अपेक्ष्यन्ते । सप्तसाधनद्वारैव घटशोधनं
सम्भवेत् । तद्धेतोः सप्तसाधनविषये मुनिनाभाषि -

शोधनं दृढता चैव स्थैर्यं धैर्यञ्च लाघवम् ।

प्रत्यक्षञ्च निर्लिप्तञ्च घटस्य सप्तसाधनम् ॥

षट्कर्मणा शोधनञ्च आसनेन भवेद्दृढम् ।

मुद्रया स्थिरता चैव प्रत्याहारेण धीरता ॥

प्राणायामाल्लाघवञ्च ध्यानात्प्रत्यक्षमात्मनि ।

समाधिना च निर्लिप्तं मुक्तिरेवं न संशयः ॥² इति ।

अत्र षट्कर्मणा मलशोधनकार्यम्, आसनेन शरीरस्य द्राढ्यता, मुद्रया शरीरस्य
स्थैरता, प्रत्याहारेण धीरता, प्राणायामेन शरीरस्य लघुता, प्रत्यक्षेण ध्यानस्य, निर्लिप्तेन
समाधिसिद्धिर्भविष्यतीति नास्ति संशयेति ग्रन्थकारेण प्रत्यपादि । सप्तसाधनानि यथा - १)
शोधनम्, २) दृढता, ३) स्थिरता, ४) धैर्यम्, ५) लाघवम्, ६) प्रत्यक्षम्, ७) निर्लिप्तञ्चेति ।

1. घेरण्डसंहिता- १/४

2. घेरण्डसंहिता- १/९-११

षट्कर्म षट्क्रिया नाम्न्याऽपि प्रख्याताऽस्ति । षट्कर्मणे केचिन्नियमाः विद्यन्ते। विशिष्य यस्य मेद-कफ-श्लेष्मादयदोषाः सन्ति सः एव षट्कर्मकरणानन्तरं प्राणायामादीन् अभ्यष्यति । षट्कर्माभ्यासः सर्वेषां कृते अस्ति चेदपि, विशिष्य मेद-कफ-श्लेष्मादिरोगपीडितानां जनानां कृते एव षट्कर्माभ्यासः आवश्यकः । तदुक्तं स्वात्मारामेण-

मेदः श्लेष्माधिकः पूर्वं षट्कर्माणि समाचरेत् ।

अन्यस्तु नाचरेत्तानि दोषाणां समभावतः ॥³ इति ।

अधुना षट्कर्मणां किं प्रयोजनम् एतज्जिज्ञासायमुच्यते घेरण्डेन -

धौतिर्वस्तिस्तथा नेतिलौलिकी त्राटकं तथा ।

कपालभातिश्चैतानि षट्कर्माणि समाचरेत् ॥⁴

षट्कर्माणि यथा - १) धौतिः, २) वस्तिः, ३) नेतिः, ४) लौलिकी, ५) त्राटकम्, ६) कपालभातिश्चेति। घट इत्युक्ते शरीरं तच्छोधनं मलापयनं करोतीति, घटशोधनकारणमिदमुद्दिश्य कर्मषट्कं धौत्यादिकम् अतीव गोपनीयम् । यतो हि विचित्रगुणसंधायीति ।

१) धौतिकर्म -

धौतिकर्मविषये मुनिनाकाथि यत् -

अन्तर्धौतिर्दन्तधौतिर्हृद्भौतिर्मूलशोधनम् ।

धौतिं चतुर्विधां कृत्वा घटं कुर्वन्तु निर्मलम् ॥⁵ इति ।

धौतिशब्दस्यार्थो भवति प्रक्षालनम् । अतः शरीरशुद्धिकरणस्य सामान्या प्रक्रिया धौति इत्युच्यते । मुखादारभ्य गुदापर्यन्तमवस्थितायाः अन्ननलिकायाः शुद्धिकरणप्रक्रिया धौति इत्युच्यते । धौतिकर्म अन्तर्धौति-दन्तधौति-हृद्भौति-मूलशोधनमित्यनेन रूपेण चतुर्धा विभक्ता । एतासामपि धौतीनां विभागाः विद्यन्ते । उक्तं च मुनिना -

अन्तर्धौतिः -

वातसारं वारिसारं वह्निसारं बहिष्कृतम् ।

घटस्य निर्मलार्थाय अन्तर्धौतिश्चतुर्विधा ॥⁶ इति ।

अन्तर्धौतेः भागचतुष्टयं विद्यते । तच्च - वातसारं, वारिसारं, वह्निसारं, बहिष्कृतञ्चेति ।

3. हठयोगप्रदीपिका- २/२१

4. घेरण्डसंहिता- १/१२

5. घेरण्डसंहिता- १/१३

6. घेरण्डसंहिता- १/१४

वातसारान्तर्धौतिः -

काकचञ्चूवदास्येन पिबेद् वायुं शनैः शनैः ।

चालयेदुदरं पश्चाद्वर्त्मना रेचयेच्छनैः ॥⁷

वातः नाम पवनः । यथा काकः चक्षुवा जलं पिवति तथा काकचञ्चुवन्मुखं कृत्वा वायुं शनैः शनैः निश्वासं नयेत् । तदनु उदरं शनैः शनैः भ्रमयेत् । तत्पश्चान्मुखान्मवायुं शनैः शनैः त्यजेत् । एषा प्रक्रिया वातसारत्वेन कथ्यते । इयं या वातसारक्रिया भवति अनया क्रियया शरीरस्य निर्मलत्वं जायते । सर्वे रोगाः नश्यन्ति । देहाग्नि अपि वर्द्धते ।

वारिसारान्तर्धौतिः -

आकण्ठं पूरयेद्वारि वक्त्रेण पिबेच्छनैः ।

चालयेदुदरेणैव चोदराद्रेचयेदधः ॥⁸

वारि नाम जलम् । जलं शनैः शनैः आकण्ठं पिबेत् । पुनः तज्जलम् उदरप्रापणात्परं शनैः शनैः अपि उदरं चालयेत् । तत्परं तज्जलं बहिर्निष्कासयेत् । एतादृशी या क्रिया भवति सा क्रिया वारिसारक्रियात्वेन अभिधीयते । अनया क्रियया शरीरस्य मलं नश्यति । तथा दैवत्वशरीरप्राप्तिर्भवति ।

वह्निसारान्तर्धौतिः -

नाभिग्रन्थिं मेरुपृष्ठे शतवारञ्च कारयेत् ।

अग्निसारमेषा धौतियोगिनां योगसिद्धिदा ॥⁹

वह्निः इत्युक्ते नाभिस्थजठराग्निः । नाभिग्रन्थिनं शतवारं मेरुदण्डस्थास्थिना सह संलग्नं कुर्यात् । नाम उदरम् अन्तः आकृषेत् । एतादृशी या क्रिया भवति सा वह्निसारान्तर्धौतिक्रिया नाम्ना कथ्यते । क्रियानया उदररोगाः दूरं यान्ति । जठराग्निः प्रवर्द्धते । सर्वसाध्या क्रिया नैव भवतीति कारणात् देवेष्वपि दुर्लभा इयं भवति । अपि च एतया शरीरं रमणीयं भवति ।

बहिष्कृतान्तर्धौतिः -

बहिष्कृतान्तर्धौतिर्विषये ग्रन्थकारेण घेरण्डेन उक्तं यत् -

काकीमुद्रां साधयित्वा पूरयेदुदरं मरुत् ।

धारयेद्वर्द्धयामन्तु चालयेद्वर्धवर्त्मना ।

7. घेरण्डसंहिता - १/१५

8. घेरण्डसंहिता - १/१७

9. घेरण्डसंहिता - १/१९

एषा धौतिः परागोप्या न प्रकाश्या कदाचन ॥¹⁰

दन्तधौतिः -

दन्तमूलं जिह्वामूलं रन्ध्रञ्च कर्णयुग्मयोः ।

कपालरन्ध्रं पञ्चैते दन्तधौतिं विधीयते ॥¹¹

दन्तधौतेः पञ्चभेदाः सन्ति । ते च - दन्तमूलं, जिह्वामूलं, वामकर्णरन्ध्रं, दक्षिणकर्णरन्ध्रं, कपालरन्ध्रञ्चेति ।

खादिरेण रसेनाथ मृत्तिकया च शुद्धया ।

मार्जयेद्दन्तमूलञ्च यावत्किल्बिषमाहरेत् ॥¹²

दन्तः नाम रदः । खदिरवृक्षस्य रसेण तथा शुष्कमृत्तिकया तावत्कालपर्यन्तं दन्तधावनं कुर्यात् यावत्कालपर्यन्तं दन्तेभ्यः किल्बिषाः नाम मलाः न नश्यन्ति । एतादृशी या क्रिया भवति सा क्रिया दन्तमूलधौतिक्रिया इति उच्यते । अनया क्रियया प्रभातकाले जागरणं सम्भवेत् । तथा रोगाः अपि न भवन्ति । धारणाशक्तिरपि दृढा भवति ।

हृद्भौतिः -

हृद्भौतिं त्रिविधां कुर्यादण्डवमनवासना ॥¹³ इति ।

हृद्भौतेः त्रयः भेदाः भवन्ति । ते यथा- दण्डहृद्भौतिः, वमनहृद्भौतिः, वासहृद्भौतिश्चेति ।

मूलशोधनम्-

अपानक्रूरता तावद्यावन्मूलं न शोधयेत् ।

तस्मात्सर्वप्रयत्नेन मूलशोधनमाचरेत् ॥¹⁴ इति ।

यावत्कालपर्यन्तं मूलस्य शोधनं न जायते इत्युक्ते यावत्कालपर्यन्तम् उदरस्य शौचक्रिया परिष्कृता न भवति, तावत्कालपर्यन्तम् अपानवायोः क्रूरता एव तिष्ठति । नाम अपानवायुः कष्टकारको भवति । अतः प्रयत्नपूर्वकं मूलस्य, उदरस्य शोधनम् अवश्यमेव कुर्यात् ।

10. घेरण्डसंहिता - १/२१-२२

11. घेरण्डसंहिता- १/२६

12. घेरण्डसंहिता - १/२७

13. घेरण्डसंहिता- १/३६ (द्वितीयचरणम्)

14. घेरण्डसंहिता- १/४३

२) वस्तिकर्म -

मूलाधारस्य समीपे वस्तिरस्ति । वस्तिशोधनकार्यं वस्तिकर्म इत्युच्यते । वस्तिकर्म द्विविधम्- जलवस्ति-शुष्कवस्तिभेदाभ्याम् । तयोः स्थानभेदत्वात् । घेरण्डमुनिना उक्तं यत्-

जलवस्तिः शुष्कवस्तिर्बस्तिः स्याद्विविधा स्मृता ।

जलवस्तिं जले कुर्याच्छुष्कवस्तिं सदा क्षितौ ॥¹⁵ इति ।

आधारानुसारेण अर्थात् स्थानानुगुणं वस्तिकर्म जलवस्तिस्थलवस्तिरूपेण द्विधा विभक्तम् । जले क्रियमाणं वस्तिकर्म जलवस्तिः । स्थले क्रियमाणं वस्तिकर्म स्थलवस्ति इति वक्तुं शक्येत ।

३) नेतिकर्म -

षट्कर्मसु तृतीयकर्म भवति नेतिकर्म । उक्तं च मुनिना -

वितस्तिमानं सूक्ष्मसूत्रं नासानाले प्रवेशयेत् ।

मुखान्निर्गमयेत्पश्चात् प्रोच्यते नेतिकर्मकम् ॥¹⁶ इति ।

अर्थात् वितस्तिपर्यन्तं (९ छम्पे) दैर्घ्यम् अतीवस्निग्धं सूत्रं नासानाले प्रावेश्य तच्छात्रं मुखान्निर्गमनं भवति चेन्नेतिकर्म इति सिद्धपुरुषैः निगद्यते ।

४) लौलिककर्म -

मुनिना उक्तं यत् -

अमन्दवेगेतुन्दं च भ्रमयेदुभपार्श्वयोः ।

सर्वरोगान्निहन्तीह देहानलविवर्द्धनम् ॥¹⁷ इति ।

कुक्षेः उभयपार्श्वमादौ वेगेन भ्रमयेत् इयं च क्रिया सर्वरोगविनाशिनी भवति । तथा जठराग्निं च वर्द्धयति ।

५) त्राटककर्म -

त्राटकविधिविषये उच्यते यत् - अश्रुपतनात् पूर्वक्षणपर्यन्तं निमेषोन्मेषकं त्यक्त्वा यच्छूक्ष्मनिरीक्षणं क्रियते तन्निरीक्षणकार्यं बुधैः त्राटकनाम्ना अभिधीयते । उक्तं यत् -

निमेषोन्मेषकं त्यक्त्वा सूक्ष्मलक्ष्यं निरीक्षयेत् ।

पतन्ति यावदश्रूणि त्राटकं प्रोच्यते बुधैः ॥¹⁸ इति ।

15. घेरण्डसंहिता- १/४६

16. घेरण्डसंहिता-१/५१

17. घेरण्डसंहिता- १/५३

18. घेरण्डसंहिता- १/५४

६) कपालभातिकर्म -

लोहकारस्य भस्त्रावत् शैघ्रिकतया कृतौ रेचकपूरकौ कपालभातिक्रिया इत्युच्येते । कपालभातिक्रिया त्रिधा भवति - वातक्रमकपालभातिः, व्युत्क्रमकपालभातिः, शीत्क्रमकपालभातिश्चेति । मुनिना उक्तं यत् -

वातक्रमेण व्युत्क्रमेण शीत्क्रमेण विशेषतः ।

भालभातिं त्रिधा कुर्यात्कफदोषं निवारयेत् ॥¹⁹

एतैः षट्कर्मभिरभ्यासैश्च साधकस्य शरीरस्य स्थूलत्वं, कफदोषश्च सम्पूर्णमेव दूरं गच्छति । अपि च एतद्वारा शरीरं सुस्थं दोषरहितमपि भवति । यदि साधकः प्राणायामादिक्रियाः समाचरेत् इतोऽपि हिताय कल्प्यते । यदि नाचरेत्, तर्हि लाभः नैव भवेत् ।

इत्थं षट्कर्मभ्यासैः वार्द्धक्यं न जायते, जराऽपि नैव प्रजायते । विशिष्य कफदोषनिवारणं सञ्जायतेति नास्ति संशितः । उक्तं च मुनिना -

न जायते वार्द्धकं च जरा नैव प्रजायते ।

भवेत्स्वच्छन्ददेहश्च कफदोषं निवारयेत् ॥²⁰ इति ।

एतस्मिन् विषये यद्यपि घेरण्डमुनिना विस्तारेण विषयाः प्रोक्ताः । किन्तु अहं केवलं स्थालीपुलाकन्यायेन मुख्यविन्दूनाश्रित्य आलोचयम् ।

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भारतीयसंस्कृतौ दानम् – एकमध्ययनम्

RAJESHREE DR. MAHANTA RAMSUNDAR DAS
JEE MAHARAJ

Sri Dudhadhari Math, Mathpara, Raipur

ब्राह्मणयुगे समाजे दानातिथ्ययोः प्रतिष्ठाऽऽसीत्। यो नरो देवान्, पितॄन्, अतिथिञ्च दानेन न तर्पयेत् स पुरुषः अनद्धा अनृतमिति कथ्यते इति ऐतरेयब्राह्मणे उक्तमस्ति¹। सायंकाले समागतोऽपि अतिथिः न प्रणोद्यः। यः पुरुषोऽतिथिसेवां करोति स पीनो भवति, प्रसन्नश्च भवति।

युगानुसारं धर्मः परिवर्तितो भवति। अतो मनुना² चतुर्युगानां कृते चत्वारो धर्माः निगदिताः। तेषु धर्मेषु कलौ दानधर्मो विशिष्यते। तदेव दानं प्रायशो गृहस्थानां कृते निर्दिष्टम्। दानञ्च सत्पात्रे प्रदेयमिति याज्ञवल्क्यादिभिः प्रतिपादितम्। अविस्मृत्यनुसारेण वेदशास्त्रज्ञ-मातृपितृभक्तसदाचारि-ऋतुकालाभिगामिब्राह्मणेभ्यो दानं सत्कारपूर्वकं देयम्। पराशरस्मृतौ दरिद्रकुटुम्बिश्रोत्रियब्राह्मणेभ्यो दानं शुभकारकं भवति। दक्षस्मृतौ ऐश्वर्यकामिदरिद्रेभ्यो दद्यादिति उक्तमस्ति।

राजा राज्यशासनाय सप्ताङ्ग-षड्गुण-पञ्चोपायानां यथाविधि प्रयोगं कुर्यात्। पञ्चोपायेषु दानमन्तर्भूतमास्ति। मत्स्यपुराणे सप्तोपायाः प्रतिपादिताः। यथा- सामः, भेदः, दानं, दण्डः, उपेक्षा, माया, इन्द्रजालमिति। पञ्चसु उपायेषु दानस्य महत्त्वं वरीवर्तते।

तच्च दानं भवति स्वस्वत्वनिवृत्तिपरस्वत्वोत्पादनम्। अर्थात् स्वकीयं वस्तु कस्मैचित् विप्राय मन्त्रोच्चारणपूर्वकं संकल्पसहितं प्रदानं भवति दानम्। यस्य प्रचलनं सुप्राचीनकालादारभ्य अद्यावधि समाजे दृश्यते। दानं बहुविधमस्ति। यथा- षोडशदानम्, दशदानम्, षड्दानञ्चेति। गोभूहिरण्यप्रभृत्युत्तमद्वयाणि ब्राह्मणेभ्यः प्रदाय राजा पारलौकिकं पुण्यं प्राप्नुयात्। अतः राजा अहरहः श्राद्धं वस्तुदानं चाकरोत्। गौः, भूः, हिरण्यम्, अन्नम्, छत्रम्, पादुका, आसनम्, वस्त्रम्,

1. ऐ.ब्रा. १/२६५

2. मनुस्मृ. १/८६

पुष्पमाल्यम्, शय्याप्रभृतीनि वस्तूनि दातव्यानि भवन्ति। अद्यापि समाजे पुष्करिणीदानं, वृषभदानं, मन्दिरदानं, कूपदानं, गृहदानमन्नदानं च प्रचलति। तदर्थं ब्राह्मणाः स्वतन्त्ररूपेण दानकर्मणां समायोजन कर्मकाण्डं च निर्दिशन्ति। इदं दानकर्म शास्त्रीयविध्यनुसारेण विधीयमाने पुण्यं प्राप्यते। दाता स्वर्गं च लभते। अमन्त्रकदानेन किञ्चिद् न्यूनं फलं प्राप्नुयात्। प्राचीनकाले प्रजानां शिक्षणनिमित्तं राजानो दानं चक्रुः। तथैव प्रजाः अपि दानशीलाः बभूवुः।

अर्थदान-ब्रह्मदान-अभयदानभेदेन दानं त्रिविधं भवति। दीयन्ते इति दानानि देयद्रव्याणि। दानक्रयैव वा दानम्। ब्रह्मदानं वेदाध्ययनं सर्वेषु दानेषु विशिष्यते। वार्याद्यष्टादशदानानां मध्ये वेददानं श्रेष्ठमित्याह मनुः। तथा हि

सर्वेषामेव दानानां ब्रह्मदानं विशिष्यते।

वार्यन्नगोमहीवासमं तिलकाञ्चनसर्पिषाम् ॥³

जल-अन्न-गो-भूमि-वस्त्र-तिल-सुवर्ण-घृतादिदानेषु वेददानं सर्वोत्तमं भवति। ब्रह्मदानं नाम विद्यादानम्। विद्यादाने दुरुपयोगस्य भयं नास्ति। दानमिदं दातुः मङ्गलं भवति। ग्रहीतुरपि। वसिष्ठधर्मसूत्र⁴, याज्ञवल्क्यस्मृतौ⁵ चापि विद्यादानस्य श्रेष्ठत्वं प्रतिपादितम्। अर्थात् जल-भोजन-गौवस्त्र-तिल-सुवर्ण-मधुभ्यो विद्यादानं सर्वश्रेष्ठं वर्तते। परन्तु अनुशासनपर्वणि⁶ विष्णुधर्मोत्तरे⁷ च भूमिदानस्य श्रेष्ठत्वं प्रतिपादितम्। विष्णुधर्मसूत्रे अभयदानस्य श्रेष्ठत्वं स्वीकृतम्। यद्दानं येन विधिना प्रदीयते तत्तु तेनैव भावेनागामिनि जन्मनि लप्स्यते। तदुक्तं मनुना –

येन येन तु भावेन यद्यदानं प्रयच्छति।

तत्तत्तेनैव भावेन प्राप्नोति प्रतिपूजितः ॥⁸

उत्तमवस्तुनो दातारो ग्रहीतारः च स्वर्गं प्राप्नुवन्ति। निकृष्टवस्तुनः दाने उभयोः नरकगामित्वं भवतीति मनुना⁹ प्रतिपादितम्। दानं प्रदाय सर्वेषां समक्षमस्मै इयता दत्तमिति न प्रकटितव्यम्¹⁰। यज्ञ-कूपादिनिर्माणसम्बन्धिदानधर्म नित्यं श्रद्धापूर्वकं यथाशक्ति सुपात्रे कुर्यात्। तथा हि मनुस्मृतौ

3. मनुस्मृ. ४/२३३

4. वसिष्ठधर्मसू. २९/१९

5. याज्ञ.स्मृ. १/२१२

6. म.भा.अनु.प. ६२/२

7. अपराके पृ. ३६९ उद्धृतम्

8. मनुस्मृ. ४/२३४

9. योऽर्चितं प्रतिगृह्णाति ददात्यर्चितमेव वा।

तावुभौ गच्छतः स्वर्गं नरकं तु विपर्यये ॥ मनुस्मृ. ४/२३५

10. मनुस्मृ. ४/२३७

दानधर्मं निषेवेत नित्यमैष्टिकपौर्तिकम् ।

परितुष्टेन भावेन पात्रमासाद्य शक्तितः ॥¹¹

यो ब्राह्मणः सुपात्रो भूत्वा दानं प्रतिगृह्यासत्कार्ये नियोजयति तदा तस्मै किमपि न देयम्¹²

नित्य-नैमित्तिक-काम्यभेदेन दानं त्रिविधं भवति। वैश्वदेवाद्यनन्तरं दीयमानं भोजनं भवति नित्यदानम्। कस्मिचित् विशिष्टावसरे ग्रहणादिसमये प्रदीयमानं दानं भवति नैमित्तिकम्। सन्तानोत्पत्ति-विजय-समृद्धि-स्वर्ग-पत्नीप्रभतिलाभाय दीयमानं दानं भवति काम्यम्। देवलस्य मतेन कूपादीनां समर्पणं भवति ध्रुवदानम्। कूर्मपुराणे एकस्य दानस्य अधिकत्वेन प्रतिपादितम्। यथा विमलदानम्। भगवत्प्राप्त्यर्थं ब्रह्मज्ञानिभ्यः श्रद्धासहितं दानमिदं प्रदीयते।

भगवद्गीतायां सात्त्विक-राजस-तामसभेदेन त्रिविधं दानं प्रतिपादितम्। यत् दानं दातव्यमिति देशे काले चानुपकारिणे च पात्रे दीयते तत् दानं सात्त्विकमुच्यते। निश्चयेन यद्दानं दीयते प्रत्युपकारसमर्थाय देशे कुरुक्षेत्रकाशीपुरुषोत्तमादितीर्थे काले संक्रान्तिग्रहणादौ पात्रे पात्रभूताय तपःश्रुतादिसंपन्नाय ब्राह्मणाय दीयते यत् दानं तत् सात्त्विकम्। तथा हि

दातव्यमिति यद्दानं दीयतेऽनुपकारिणे ।

देशे काले च पात्रे च तद्दानं सात्त्विकं स्मृतम् ॥¹³

यत् दानं पुनः प्रत्युपकारार्थं वा स्वर्गादिफलकामनया चित्तक्लेशयुक्तं दीयते तत् दानं राजसमिति कथ्यते¹⁴। यद्दानं अशुचिस्थाने अशौचादिस्थाने अपात्रेभ्यो वितनटादिभ्यो यद्दानं दीयते पुनः सत्कारहीनं पात्रतिरस्कारयुक्तं एवम्भूतं दानं तामसमुच्यते¹⁵।

गौ-भूमि-विद्यादिदानत्रयं भवति सर्वोत्तमम्। एतदतिदानमुच्यते। श्रद्धया सुपात्राय दानं भवति सफलदेयम्। किन्तु अश्रद्धया कुपात्राय दानं सर्वदा निष्फलं भवति। तदुक्तं देवलेन

अन्यायाधिगतां दत्त्वा सफलां पृथिवीमपि

श्रद्धावर्जमपात्राय न कांचिद् भूतिमाप्नुयात् ।

प्रदाय शाकमुष्टिं वा श्रद्धाभक्तिसमुद्यताम्

महते पात्रभूताय सर्वाभ्युदयमाप्नुयात् ॥¹⁶

11. मनु.स्मृ. ४/२२७

12. पात्रभूता हि यो विप्रः प्रतिगृह्य प्रतिग्रहम्।
असत्सु विनियुंजीत तस्मै देयं न किञ्चना॥ मनु स्मृ. ४/१४७

13. भ.गी. १७/२०

14. यत् प्रत्युपकारार्थं फलमुद्दिश्य वा पुनः।
दीयते च परिक्लिष्टं तद्राजसमुदाहृतम्॥ भ.गी. १७/२१

15. अदेशकाले यद्दानमपात्रेभ्यश्च दीयते ।
असत्कृतमवज्ञातं तत्तामसमुदाहृतम्॥ भ.गी. १७/२२

16. अपरार्क. २९०

गुप्तदानाहकाररहितज्ञानगोपनीयजपकरणेन अनन्तफलं प्राप्यते इति याज्ञवल्क्येनोक्तम्।
रामायणे दानविषये महती चर्चा विद्यते। तस्मिन् समये दानप्रदानाय प्रवृत्तिः धर्मस्य
सदाचारस्य लौकिकस्य पारलौकिकस्य च साधनमिति स्वीक्रियते स्म। याचकाय यथेष्टवस्तूनामेव
प्रदानं भवति आदर्शदानम्।

भूदानस्य गोदानस्य च महत्त्वं सर्वोपरि आसीत्। यदा अन्धमुनिकुमारस्य वधः दशरथेन
कृतः तदा दशरथेन ईदृश आशीर्वादः प्रदत्तो यत् भूमिदातॄणां गोदातृणाञ्च देहत्यागे या गतिः
प्राप्यते तां च गतिं त्वं गच्छ। तथा हि

या गतिः सर्वभूतानां स्वाध्यायात् तपसश्च या
भूमिदस्याहिताग्नेश्च एकपत्नीव्रतस्य च ।
गोसहस्रप्रदातॄणां गुरुसेवाभृतामपि
देहत्यासकृतां या च तां गतिं गच्छ पुत्रक ॥¹⁷

दानसमये उपहारे वा गोदानमनिवार्यमासीत्। राज्ञो दशरथस्य पुत्रप्राप्त्यनन्तरं दशरथेन गोसहस्रं
वित्तञ्च ब्राह्मणेभ्यः प्रदत्तम्। तथा च

प्रदेयांश्च ददौ राजा सूतमागधवन्दिनाम् ।
ब्राह्मणेभ्यो ददौ वित्तं च गोधनानि सहस्रशः ॥¹⁸

पुत्राणां नामकरणसमये दशरथेन ब्राह्मणां कृते अमलानि बहुरत्नानि दत्तानि। ब्राह्मणान्
पौरजनान् च भोजयामास सः। तदुक्तम्

ब्राह्मणान् भोजयामास पौरजानपदानपि ।
अददद् ब्राह्मणानां च रत्नौघममलं बहु ॥¹⁹

रामादिपुत्राणां विवाहसमये तेषां पुत्राणां हितकामनया गोदानं कृतं दशरथेन।
सुवर्णशृङ्गयुक्ताः सवत्साः कांस्यदोहनाः सहस्रगावः ब्राह्मणेभ्यः प्रदत्ताः। तथा हि

सुवर्णशृङ्गयः सम्पन्नाः सवत्साः कांस्यदोहनाः
गवां शतसहस्राणि चत्वारि पुरुषर्षभः ।
वित्तमन्यच्च सुबहु द्विजेभ्यो रघुनन्दनः
ददौ गोदानमुद्दिश्य पुत्राणां पुत्रवत्सलः ॥²⁰

त्रिजटानामकनिर्धनब्राह्मणाय श्रीरामेण गोदानं कृतमिति विषये ऋचिकरं वर्णनं विहितं
वाल्मीकिना। श्रीरामेण ब्राह्मणाय प्रोक्तं यत् मत्पार्श्वे असंख्याः गावः सन्ति। सहस्रसंख्यकानां

17. वा. रा. २/६४/४३-४४

18. वा. रा. १/१८/२०

19. वा. रा. १/१८/२३

20. वा. रा. १/७२/२३

गवां दानमद्यापि मया न कृतम्। अतः यावत् दण्डेन परिक्षिपसि तावत् अवाप्यसे। ततः ब्राह्मणः सर्वप्राणेन वेगतः दण्डं चिक्षेप। तस्य करच्युतः स दण्डः सरयूपारं ती। बहुसाहस्रे गोव्रजे पपाता। ततः धर्मात्मा श्रीरामः तत्र विद्यामानाः सर्वाः गाः आनीय त्रिजटस्याश्रमं प्रति प्रेषितवान्²¹।

यज्ञस्य परिसमाप्तौ दक्षिणानिमित्तं गोदानं सर्वमान्यमासीत्। अश्वमेधयज्ञस्य समाप्तिसमये राजा दशरथः होने प्राची दिशं अध्वर्यवे प्रतीची ब्राह्मणेभ्यो दक्षिणां दिशमुद्रात्रे तु उदीची दक्षिणारूपेण ददौ²²। स्वाध्यायकरणे रताः ब्राह्मणाः दशरथं प्रति प्रोक्तवन्तः यत् देशस्य पालने अस्माकं सामर्थ्यं नास्ति। पालनेऽपि अस्माकमाशक्तिः नास्ति। अतः निष्कयं किञ्चित् प्रयच्छतु। ततः राजा दशरथः एकलक्षपरिमिताः गाः, दशकोटिसुवर्णमुद्रां, रजतमुद्राञ्च ददौ। तथा च -

एवमुक्तो नरपतिर्ब्राह्मणैर्वेदपारगैः

गवां शतसहस्राणि दश तेभ्यो ददौ नृपः।

दशकोटिं सुवर्णस्य रजतस्य चतुर्गुणम्

ऋत्विजस्तु ततः सर्वे प्रददुः सहिता वसुः॥²³

रामायणसमये सम्मानितातिथीनां कृते गौः समर्प्यन्ते स्म। तथा हि रामायणे

स तस्य मधुपर्कं गां पाद्यमयं निवेद्य च।

पुलस्त्यमाह राजेन्द्रो हर्षगद्गदया गिरा॥²⁴

दानप्रदानं क्षत्रियस्य प्रधानकर्तव्यमासीत्। श्रीरामेण भणितं यत् दानप्रदानं यज्ञे दीक्षाग्रहणं युद्धे देहत्यागः क्षत्रियस्य कर्तव्यकर्म भवति। तथा हि

दानं दीक्षा च यज्ञेषु तनुत्यागो मृधेषु हि।²⁵

शरणागतस्य कृते अभयदानं क्षत्रियस्य धर्म आसीत्। अतः श्रीरामः ताडकाबधं करिष्यामीति अभयं प्रदत्तवान्। तथा हि

गोब्राह्मणहितार्थाय देशस्य च हिताय च।

तव चैवाप्रमेयस्य वचनं कर्तुमुद्यतः॥²⁶

भगवतो श्रीरामस्य व्रतमासीत् शरणागतस्य रक्षाविधानमभयप्रदानञ्च। य एकवारं मम शरणमागत्य रक्षार्थं प्रार्थयते तदाऽहमभयं ददामि। एतदेव मम व्रतमिति श्रीरामेण भणितम्। तथा हि

21. वा.रा. २/३२/२९-४३

22. वा.रा. १/१४/४३-४४

23. वा.रा. १/१४/५०-५१

24. वा.रा. ७/३३/९

25. वा.रा. २/४०/७

26. वा.रा. १/२६/५

सकृदेव प्रपन्नाय तवास्मीति च याचते ।

अभयं सर्वभूतेभ्यो ददाम्येतद् व्रतं मम ॥²⁷

यदि शत्रुरपि शरणमागत्य बद्धाञ्जलिपुटं दीनभावनया दयां याचते तर्हि तस्योपरि प्रहारो न करणीय इति श्रीरामेण निगदितम्। अर्थात् अभयदानं क्षत्रियस्य कर्तव्यम्। तथा हि -

बद्धाञ्जलिपुटं दीनं याचन्तं शरणागतम् ।

न हन्यादानृशंस्यार्थमपि शत्रु परंतप ॥²⁸

वानरा अपि ब्राह्मणाय दानं दत्तवन्तो रामायणकाले। राज्याभिषेकसमये राजा सुग्रीवः द्विजश्रेष्ठानां प्रसन्नाय रत्न-वस्त्र-भोज्यपदार्थान् ददौ। तथा हि

ततस्ते वानरश्रेष्ठमभिषेक्तुं यथाविधि ।

रत्नैर्वस्त्रैश्च भक्ष्यैश्च तोषयित्वा द्विजर्षभान् ॥²⁹

वनगमनसमये सीतासहितः श्रीरामो वसिष्ठस्य पुत्रं सुयज्ञमाहूय बहुमूल्यमाभूषणं धनं रत्नञ्च प्रदत्तवान्। तस्य पत्न्याः कृतेऽपि हारं हेमसूत्रं रशनां केयूराणि नानारत्नविभूषितं पर्यङ्कञ्च प्रदत्तवती सीता। तथा हि रामायणे -

हारं च हेमसूत्रं च भार्यायै सौम्य हारय

रशनां चाथ सा सीता दातुमिच्छति ते सखी ।

अङ्गदानि च चित्राणि केयूराणि शुभानि च

प्रयच्छति सखी तुभ्यं भार्यायै गच्छती वनम् ॥³⁰

रामायणसमये बहव आश्रमाः संस्थापिता आसन्। तत्राश्रमसंस्कृतिः महत्त्वपूर्णा आसीत्। रामायणकालीनभारते उत्तरस्यां दिशि सरयूतीरतः दक्षिणस्यां दिशि गोदावरीतीरपर्यन्तमाश्रमाणां श्रृङ्खला आसीत्। दण्डकारण्ये नर्मदायाः गङ्गायाः तीरे चित्रकूटे च बहव आश्रमाः विरजमाना आसन्। तत्र अगस्त्य-वसिष्ठ-अत्रि-शरभंग-वाल्मीकि-भरद्वाज-गौतम-सुतीक्ष्णादीनां तपोवनानि सुविख्यातान्यासन्। एषु आश्रमेषु असंख्याः विद्यार्थिनः शास्त्राध्ययनं कुतवन्तः। तत्र कुलपतिभिः ब्रह्मदानं कृतम्।

इत्थं रामायणे अर्थदान-ब्रह्मदान-अभयदानभेदेन त्रिविधस्य दानस्य प्रचलनं दृश्यते नित्य-नैमित्तिक-काम्यभेदेनापि दानं भवति त्रिविधम्। तदपि रामायणे वर्णितमस्ति। सात्त्विक-राजसतामसभेदेन त्रिविधदानं श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतायामुक्तमस्ति। तस्य दानस्यापि परंपरा रामायणकाले प्रचलिता आसीत्।

27. वा.रा. ६/१८/३३

28. वा.रा. ६/१८/२७

29. वा.रा. ४/२६/२९

30. वा.रा. २/३२/७-८

छान्दोग्य उपनिषद् की कथाओं में अक्षरपुरुषोत्तम दर्शन

SADHU VIVEKNISHTHDAS

Ph.D. Student, Sardar Patel University,
Anand.

प्रारंभ

विश्व के आध्यात्मिक शास्त्रों में वेदों के सारभूत उपनिषद् मुकुटमणि के समान हैं। समस्त उपनिषदों का प्रतिपाद्य विषय है – ब्रह्मविद्या। अर्थात् अक्षरब्रह्म और परब्रह्म का ज्ञान।

गहन तत्त्वज्ञान को विविध कथानकों के माध्यम से प्रस्तुत करना उपनिषदों की विशिष्ट शैली है। छान्दोग्य उपनिषद् में यह शैली भलीभांति उजागर हुई है।

सामवेद अंतर्गत तवलकार नामक ब्राह्मण में आठ अध्यायों में विभक्त छान्दोग्य उपनिषद् की कुछ कथाओं में उद्धाटित अक्षरपुरुषोत्तम दर्शन का हम परिचय प्राप्त करेंगे।

आरंभ में ही अक्षर का उद्गार ! - अक्षरम् उद्गीथम् उपासीत

‘ॐ इत्येतद् अक्षरम् उद्गीथम् उपासीत’¹ ‘ॐकार जिसकी संज्ञा है तथा सर्व वेदों में जिसका उद्गार हुआ है, उस अक्षरब्रह्म का चिंतन करना चाहिए।’

स्वामिनारायणभाष्य में इस बात को समजाया गया है - ‘ॐ इत्यभिधानेनाऽक्षरब्रह्मा-ऽनुचिन्तनं स्वात्मनि तद्ब्रह्मरूपत्वाऽऽपादनार्थं कर्तव्यमिति भावः।’²

उपनिषदों में ॐकार संज्ञा से अक्षरब्रह्म का उल्लेख किया गया है, जैसे - ‘ॐ इत्येकाक्षरं ब्रह्म’³, ‘ॐ इत्येतत्। एतद्ध्येवाक्षरं ब्रह्म।’⁴, : ‘एतद् वै सत्यकाम परं च अपरं च ब्रह्म यद्

1. छान्दोग्य उपनिषद् : १/१/१

2. छान्दोग्योपनिषत्स्वामिनारायणभाष्यम् : ८

3. गीता : ८/१३

4. कठ उपनिषद् : २/१५, १६

ॐकारः।⁵ आदि।

छान्दोग्य के प्रथम मंत्र में ही अक्षरब्रह्म का महिमागान हुआ है। इसका तात्पर्य स्पष्ट है कि अक्षररूप हुए बिना पुरुषोत्तम कि यथार्थ उपासना भक्ति नहीं हो सकती। अतएव मुंडक उपनिषद् में भी जब ब्रह्मविद्या के निरूपण का प्रसंग उपस्थित हुआ, तब ‘अथ परा’⁶ इस प्रकार उपक्रम करने के पश्चात् ‘तद् अक्षरम् अधिगम्यते’⁷ ऐसा कहते हुए प्रथम अक्षरब्रह्म के स्वरूप का ही उपदेश दिया गया है। इसी क्रम में माण्डूक्य उपनिषद् का श्रीगणेश भी ‘ॐ इत्येतद् अक्षरम्’⁸ अक्षरब्रह्म के उद्गान से ही हुआ है।

अक्षरब्रह्म के माहात्म्यज्ञाता को प्राप्त होने वाले लाभ की विवेचना भी आगे की गई है।

अक्षरब्रह्म के ज्ञाता का अक्षरधाम में प्रवेश - अक्षरं प्रविशति

‘यदेतद् अक्षरम् एतदमृतम् अभयं तत्प्रविश्य देवा अमृता अभया अभवन्। स य एतदेवं विद्वान् अक्षरं प्रणौति तदेव अक्षरम् अमृतम् अभयं प्रविशति। तदमृतो भवति।’⁹ अर्थात् यह अक्षरब्रह्म ‘तथा अक्षरधामात्मकदेशविशेषरूपं परमात्मनिलयम्’¹⁰ या परमात्मा का निवासस्थान अक्षरधाम अमृतमय है, जन्ममरण रहित है, ‘अभयं मायागन्धरहितत्वाद् अपुनरावृत्तिकरत्वाच्च’¹¹ उसमें किसी प्रकार का भय नहीं है। उसे जाननेवाला, उसकी शरण ग्रहण करनेवाला उसमें प्रवेश करता है, जन्ममरण से रहित हो जाता है, निर्भय बनता है तथा अमृतत्व की प्राप्ति करता है।

श्वेतकेतु – आरुणि कथा – सद्ब्रिद्या

आरुणि नामक ऋषि का पुत्र श्वेतकेतु था। बालक के कुछ बड़े होने पर पिता ने श्वेतकेतु को अध्ययन हेतु भेजने की इच्छा व्यक्त की। ऋषि आरुणि ने श्वेतकेतु को बुलाकर कहा, ‘श्वेतकेतो वस ब्रह्मचर्यम्’¹² ‘हे पुत्र ! अपने कुल में अब तक कोई भी विद्याविहीन नहीं है। अतः हे श्वेतकेतु ! तू पढ़ाई करा। किसी गुरुकुल में रहकर ब्रह्मचर्य का पालन करते हुए पढ़ाई करा।’

तदनुसार श्वेतकेतु ने बारह वर्ष तक गुरुकुल में रहकर अध्ययन किया। तत्पश्चात् विद्या पूर्ण

5. प्रश्न उपनिषद् : ५/२

6. मुण्डक उपनिषद् : १/१/५

7. मुण्डक उपनिषद् : १/१/५

8. माण्डूक्य उपनिषद् : १/१

9. छान्दोग्य उपनिषद् : १/४/४, ५

10. छान्दोग्योपनिषत्स्वामिनारायणभाष्यम् : ३२

11. छान्दोग्योपनिषत्स्वामिनारायणभाष्यम् : ३२

12. छान्दोग्य उपनिषद् : ६/१/१

कर घर लौटा। पिता ने पुत्र को दीर्घ समयावधि के बाद देखा। पुत्र के मुख पर विद्या के तेज के स्थान पर अभिमान के भाव विशेष दिख रहे थे। पिता को दुःख हुआ। उन्होंने पुत्र को बुलाकर कहा, 'वत्स ! तू ऐसा क्या पढ़कर आया कि इतना अभिमानी बन गया ? क्या तेरे गुरु ने तुझे ब्रह्मविद्या का उपदेश नहीं दिया ?'

श्वेतकेतु ने प्रतिप्रश्न किया, 'यह कैसा उपदेश ?'

पिता ने कहा, 'येनाऽश्रुतं श्रुतं भवत्यमतं मतमविज्ञातं विज्ञातमिति',¹³ 'पुत्र ! इस ब्रह्मविद्या को प्राप्त कर लेने के पश्चात् अनसुना भी सुना जा सकता है, अर्थात् और कुछ भी सुनने की आवश्यकता नहीं रहती। अन्य कुछ भी मनन करना शेष नहीं रहता तथा अन्य कुछ भी जानना शेष नहीं रहता।'

उपरांत, 'यथा सोम्यैकेन मृत्पिण्डेन सर्वं मृण्मयं विज्ञातं स्याद्',¹⁴ 'हे प्रिय पुत्र ! जिस प्रकार किसी एक मृत्पिण्ड को सुव्यवस्थित जान लेने पर, उस मृदा (मिट्टी) से निर्मित सभी वस्तुओं का स्वरूप जाना जा सकता है, उसी प्रकार यह ज्ञान भी वैसा ही है।'

इसे सुनकर पुत्र की जिज्ञासा में वृद्धि हुई। उसने पिता से प्रार्थना की, 'वह ज्ञान मुझे दीजिए।' पिता ने प्रसन्न होकर पुत्र को ब्रह्मविद्या का अद्भुत उपदेश देना आरंभ किया।

सत् ही समस्त जगत का कारण - सदेव सोम्येदमग्र आसीद्

'सदेव सोम्येदमग्र आसीद्'¹⁵ 'हे पुत्र ! सृष्टि से पूर्व 'सत्' अर्थात् सदा निर्विकारी, माया के संबंध से रहित सत्य तत्त्व था।' उसी सत् में से ही सकल सृष्टि उत्पन्न हुई है।

'सत्' शब्द का विवेचन भाष्य में किया गया - 'नित्यसत्त्वात् सच्छब्दवाच्यकारणावस्थमक्षरं-ब्रह्म परं ब्रह्मैवाऽसीद्। सकलप्रपञ्चात्मकजगत् प्रति नित्यं सतोस्तयोर्व्यापकत्वेन तदात्मकत्वेन च कारणत्वात्',¹⁶

यहां पर 'सत्' शब्द से ब्रह्म एवं परब्रह्म का निरूपण किया गया है। क्योंकि वे ही सदा सत्यस्वरूप, निर्विकार तथा माया के संसर्ग से रहित हैं। यद्यपि आत्मा नित्य है किंतु उसे भी कभी तो माया आवृत्त हो ही जाती है, अतः उसे जगत में भटकना पड़ता है। इसीलिए सकल सृष्टि के कारण के रूप में उसका निर्देश नहीं किया गया है। उसके साथ-साथ मुक्तात्माएँ भी आरंभ में तो अनादि माया से आवृत्त थीं, परिणामतः जन्ममरण का क्रम उन्हें भुगतना पड़ा था, अतः उन्हें भी सकल सृष्टि का कारण नहीं कहा है।

13. छान्दोग्य उपनिषद् : ६/१/३

14. छान्दोग्य उपनिषद् : ६/१/४

15. छान्दोग्य उपनिषद् : ६/२/१

16. छान्दोग्योपनिषत्त्वामिनारायणभाष्यम् : २५२

इसके विपरीत ब्रह्म एवं परब्रह्म तत्त्व नित्य मुक्त हैं, सदा माया से निर्लेप हैं तथा सकल जगत की उत्पत्ति करने में समर्थ हैं। इसीलिए यहाँ पर ‘सत्’ शब्द से इन दो दिव्य तत्त्वों का प्रतिपादन हुआ है।

इसी क्रम में आगे पिता कहते हैं, ‘सन्मूलाः सोम्येमाः सर्वाः प्रजाः सदायतनाः सत्प्रतिष्ठाः’¹⁷ ‘हे प्रिय पुत्र ! यह जो कुछ भी उत्पन्न हुआ दिखाई देता है वह सत्यस्वरूप ब्रह्म एवं परब्रह्म में से ही उत्पन्न हुआ है। इतना ही नहीं, इस सृष्टि की स्थिति एवं प्रलय का कारण भी वे ही हैं।’ इस बात को समजाते हुए भाष्य में कहा – ‘सन्मूलाः ब्रह्मपरब्रह्मोद्भवा इत्यर्थः। सदायतनाः ब्रह्मपरब्रह्माश्रिता इत्यर्थः। सत्प्रतिष्ठाः सदेव प्रतिष्ठा लयस्थानं यासां ता इति तथाभूताः।’¹⁸

‘इस प्रकार हे श्वेतकेतु ! ब्रह्म तथा परब्रह्म ही सर्व कारण, सर्वात्मा होने से ‘तत्त्वमसि’¹⁹ ‘तेरी आत्मा के आत्मा भी वे ही हैं। अतः तू भी तदात्मक है।’

इसको समजाते हुए भाष्य में कहा – ‘त्वम् अपि तद् सच्छब्दवाच्यं ब्रह्मपरब्रह्मेतिदिव्य-तत्त्वद्वयं तदेव अस्येति। ब्रह्मपरब्रह्मोभयात्मकस्त्वमसीत्यर्थः।’²⁰

यह सुनकर श्वेतकेतु प्रसन्न हुआ। ब्रह्मविद्या की प्राप्ति का संतोष उसके मुख पर जलक उठा।

यहाँ पर ब्रह्म तथा परब्रह्म का उल्लेख ‘सत्’ शब्द से होने के कारण यह ब्रह्मविद्या सद्विद्या के रूप में प्रसिद्ध हुई है।

इस प्रकार, पिता-पुत्र के इस दिव्य संवाद द्वारा सकल सृष्टि के कारण का रहस्य इस उपनिषद् में निरूपित हुआ है।

नारद – सनत्सुजात कथा - भूमाविद्या

मुनि नारद ने महर्षि सनत्सुजात का शिष्यत्व स्वीकार करते हुए कहा, ‘अधीहि भगवः’²¹ ‘हे भगवन् ! मुझे ज्ञान दो।’

नारदजी का यह आर्तनाद था। तब सनत्सुजात ऋषि ने कहा, ‘यद वेत्थ तेन मोपसीद ततस्त ऊर्ध्वं वक्ष्यामीति’²² ‘प्रथम तो जो कुछ आप जानते हैं वह मुझे बताएँ, तत्पश्चात् उससे आगे के स्तर का ज्ञान दूँगा।’

यह सुनकर नारदजी ने सभी स्वविदितविद्या को क्रमशः प्रकट किया - ‘ऋग्वेदं भगवोऽध्येमि

17. छान्दोग्य उपनिषद् : ६/८/४

18. छान्दोग्योपनिषत्स्वामिनारायणभाष्यम् : २७५, २७६

19. छान्दोग्य उपनिषद् : ६/८/७

20. छान्दोग्योपनिषत्स्वामिनारायणभाष्यम् : २७८

21. छान्दोग्य उपनिषद् : ७/१/१

22. छान्दोग्य उपनिषद् : ७/१/१

यजुर्वेदं सामवेदमार्थर्वणं चतुर्थमितिहासपुराणं पञ्चमं वेदानां वेदं पितृयं राशिं दैवं निधिं वाकोवाक्यमेकायनं देवविद्यां ब्रह्मविद्यां भूतविद्यां नक्षत्रविद्यां सर्पदेवजनविद्यामेतद्भगवोऽध्येमि’²³ ‘हे भगवन् ! चारों वेद जानता हूँ इतिहास पुराण जानता हूँ संपूर्ण व्याकरणशास्त्र, श्राद्धशास्त्र, गणितविद्या, उत्पात विज्ञान, निधिशास्त्र, तर्कशास्त्र, नीतिशास्त्र, देवताओं की विद्या, वेद के समस्त अंग, वशीकरण विद्या, धनुर्वेद, ज्योतिष, सर्पविद्या, गंधर्वविद्या तथा आयुर्वेदविद्याओं को भी मैं जानता हूँ तथापि ‘सोऽहं भगवो शोचामि’²⁴ ‘मैं शोकसागर में निमग्न हूँ’ ‘श्रुतं ह्येव मे भगवद्दृशेभ्यस्तरति शोकमात्मविदिति’²⁵ ‘मैंने आप के समान वरिष्ठ पुरुष से सुना है कि जो परमात्मा को जान लेता है वह दुःख के समुद्र को तैर जाता है।’ ‘तं मा भगवन् शोकस्य पारं तारयतु’²⁶ ‘तो हे भगवन् ! आप ही मुझे इस शोकसागर के पार उतारिए। मुझे परमात्मा के स्वरूप का ज्ञान दीजिए।’

यह सुनकर सनत्सुजात ऋषि ने कहा, ‘अरे नारद ! जिन विद्याओं को तुम जानते हो, उसकी प्रतीति तो केवल नाममात्र की है।’ ‘नामैवैतद्’²⁷ कहकर नाम, वाणी, मन, संकल्प, चित्त, ध्यान, विज्ञान, बल, अन्न, जल, तेज, आकाश, स्मृति तथा आशा आदि आत्मा से संलग्न वस्तुओं को उत्तरोत्तर एकदूसरे से श्रेष्ठ दर्शाकर ‘नाम ब्रह्म’²⁸ ‘वाचं ब्रह्म’²⁹ ‘मनो ब्रह्म’³⁰ ‘संकल्पं ब्रह्म’³¹ ‘चित्तं ब्रह्म’³² इस तरह प्रत्येक में ब्रह्मदृष्टि करने का उपदेश देकर अंत में प्राण शब्द से आत्मा को दर्शाकर उस आत्मा को नाम से लेकर आशा तक सभी वस्तुओं से श्रेष्ठ कहकर पुनः आत्मा में भी ब्रह्म की विभावना करने का उपदेश दिया।

भगवद्गीता में भी ब्रह्मरूप व्यक्ति को ही भगवान की भक्ति का अधिकार दिया गया है। तत्पश्चात् नारदजी के न पूछने पर भी इस ब्रह्मरूप आत्मा के द्वारा परमात्मा की उपासना करने का उपदेश दिया गया। तथा ‘एष तु वा अतिवदति यः सत्येनातिवदति’³³ कहकर यहां पूर्व कथित आत्मज्ञानी से भी सत्यस्वरूप परमात्मा को जाननेवाले को श्रेष्ठ बताया।

आगे सनत्सुजात ऋषि कहते हैं, ‘नारद ! जो सत्यस्वरूप परमात्मा को जानता है, उनमें

23. छान्दोग्य उपनिषद् : ७/१/२

24. छान्दोग्य उपनिषद् : ७/१/३१

25. छान्दोग्य उपनिषद् : ७/१/३

26. छान्दोग्य उपनिषद् : ७/१/३

27. छान्दोग्य उपनिषद् : ७/१/४

28. छान्दोग्य उपनिषद् : ७/१/५

29. छान्दोग्य उपनिषद् : ७/२/२

30. छान्दोग्य उपनिषद् : ७/३/२

31. छान्दोग्य उपनिषद् : ७/४/३

32. छान्दोग्य उपनिषद् : ७/५/३

33. छान्दोग्य उपनिषद् : ७/१६/१

श्रद्धा तथा निष्ठा रखता है, उसी परिश्रमी को ही सच्चा फल मिलता है। किंतु उस परिश्रमी का प्रयत्न सुखद वस्तु की प्राप्ति के लिए ही हो सकता है। अतः सच्चे सुख का स्थान कहाँ पर है वह जानना भी आवश्यक है।

नारदजी तो यही चाहते थे। अतः शीघ्रतापूर्वक प्रार्थना करते हुए बोले, ‘सुखं भगवो विजिज्ञास इति’³⁴ ‘हे भगवन् ! मैं उस शाश्वत् सुख को जानना चाहता हूँ।’

सनत्सुजात ऋषि ने प्रत्युत्तर में कहा, ‘यो वै भूमा तत् सुखं नाल्पे सुखमस्ति भूमैव सुखम्’³⁵ ‘हे नारद ! सर्वसे विशाल परमात्मा ही सुखस्वरूप हैं। अल्प मायिक विषयों में सुख है ही नहीं।’ भाष्य में इसे समजाया – ‘भूमा तत् सुखं बहुशब्दाद् भूमशब्दो निष्पद्यते। सर्वसमुत्कृष्टाऽनवधिकवैपुल्यविशिष्टः परमात्मैव सुखस्वरूप इति भावः।’³⁶

‘हे नारद ! यदि तुम्हें दुःखमुक्त होना हो तो ‘भूमा त्वेव विजिज्ञासितव्यः’³⁷ ‘भूमा अर्थात् सर्वमहान् परमात्मा का ही साक्षात्कार होना चाहिए।’ इस प्रकार अपरंपार महिमा कहकर नारदजी को सुख का सच्चा राजपथ बताकर प्रसन्न किया।

यहां सुखस्वरूप परमात्मा को ‘भूमा’ शब्द से कहा गया है, इसलिए यह उपदेश ‘भूमाविद्या’ के नाम से प्रसिद्ध हुआ है।

अपनी आत्मा में ब्रह्म की विभावना कर सुखमूर्ति परब्रह्म को जानने से दुःख का सागर पार हो सकता है यही समग्र उपदेश का तात्पर्य है।

ब्रह्म का हृदय के साथ योग – दहरविद्या

छान्दोग्य उपनिषद् के आठवें अध्याय का आरंभ ब्रह्म एवं परब्रह्म, इन दो दिव्य तत्त्वों को जानने के आदेश के साथ हुआ है।

‘अथ यदिदमस्मिन्ब्रह्मपुरे दहरं पुण्डरीकं वेश्म दहरोऽस्मिन्नन्तराकाशस्तस्मिन्यदन्तस्त-
दन्वेष्टव्यं तद्वाव विजिज्ञासितव्यमिति’³⁸

भाष्य में इसका विवेचन मिलता है – ‘अस्मिन् ब्रह्मपुरे शरीरं यदिदं दहरम् अल्पं पुण्डरीकं कमलाकारं हृदयसंज्ञकं वेश्म, अस्मिन् वेश्मनि अन्तः तन्मध्यस्थितो दहरः सूक्ष्म आकाशः आसमन्तात् काशमानोऽक्षरब्रह्माऽभिन्निश्चिदाकाशो वर्तते सः, तथा च तस्मिन् चिदाकाशाख्ये हृदयान्तर्वर्तिनि ब्रह्मणि यदन्तः तदन्तःस्थतया वर्तमानं परं ब्रह्म तत् चेत्युभयम्

34. छान्दोग्य उपनिषद् : ७/२२/१

35. छान्दोग्य उपनिषद् : ७/२३/१

36. छान्दोग्योपनिषत्स्वामिनारायणभाष्यम् : ३३२

37. छान्दोग्य उपनिषद् : ७/२३/१

38. छान्दोग्य उपनिषद् : ८/१/१

अन्वेष्टव्यम् तद् उभयं वाव विजिज्ञासितव्यमिति। अनेनऽक्षरब्रह्मपरब्रह्मोभयविषयिणी जिज्ञासा विधीयते।³⁹

दहर का अर्थ है सूक्ष्म। इस शरीररूपी घर में दहर, अर्थात् छोटा कमलरूपी घर है। उस हृदयरूपी घर में उससे भी दहर अर्थात् सूक्ष्म आकाश है। जिसे दहराकाश या चिदाकाश कहा जाता है। सर्वव्यापी अक्षरब्रह्म का यह एक विशिष्ट स्वरूप है। उस दहररूपी अक्षरब्रह्म के भी भीतर परब्रह्म अवस्थित हैं। अतः इन दोनों दिव्य तत्त्वों की खोज अवश्य करनी चाहिए। उनका स्वरूपज्ञान भी अवश्य होना चाहिए। यह इस मंत्र का भाव है।

इतना कहकर अब सर्वप्रथम अक्षरब्रह्म के स्वरूप की विशिष्ट महिमा का निरूपण किया – ‘यावान्वा अयमाकाशस्तावानेषोऽन्तर्हृदय आकाश उभे अस्मिन् द्यावापृथिवी अन्तरेव समाहिते उभावग्निश्च वायुश्च सूर्याचन्द्रमसावुभौ विद्युन्नक्षत्राणि यच्चास्येहास्ति यच्च नास्ति सर्वं तदस्मिन्समाहितमिति’⁴⁰ अर्थात् जिस प्रकार यह बाह्य आकाश व्यापक है उसी प्रकार सर्व के हृदय में स्थित आकाश अर्थात् चिदाकाश अक्षरब्रह्म सर्वत्र व्यापक है। अंतर केवल इतना ही है कि बाह्य आकाश लौकिक है, भौतिक है तथा सीमित है। जबकि यह – ‘चिदाकाशाख्यमक्षरं ब्रह्म त्वनन्तं लौकिकाऽऽकाशादिनामाधारभूतं कारणं च’⁴¹ चिदाकाश तो अलौकिक है, अनन्त है तथा उपर्युक्त भौतिक आकाश में भी व्याप्त है। अंतरिक्ष लोक, पृथ्वीलोक आदि सभी लोक उसमें सन्निहित हैं। अग्नि, वायु, सूर्य, चंद्र तथा नक्षत्राणि आदि सभी उसी के आधार पर रहते हैं। इतना ही नहीं, परंतु जो कुछ भी यहां विद्यमान है, पूर्व में था, अब नहीं है तथा जो कुछ भी भविष्य में होनेवाला है, वह सबकुछ अक्षरब्रह्म के आधार पर है।

ऐसी ही अक्षरब्रह्म के प्रशासन की बात बृहदारण्यक उपनिषद् में कही है - ‘एतस्य वा अक्षरस्य प्रशासने गार्गि! सूर्याचन्द्रमसौ विधृतौ तिष्ठतः। एतस्य वा अक्षरस्य प्रशासने गार्गि! द्यावापृथिव्यौ विधृतौ तिष्ठतः। एतस्य वा अक्षरस्य प्रशासने गार्गि! निमेषा मुहूर्ता अहोरात्राण्यर्धमासा मासा ऋतवः संवत्सरा इति विधृतास्तिष्ठन्ति।’⁴²

इस प्रकार यह उपनिषद् व्यापक अक्षरब्रह्म को हम सभी के हृदय के साथ संलग्न करने का कार्य करती है।

यहां ‘दहर’ शब्द प्रयुक्त कर सभी के हृदय में स्थित अक्षरब्रह्म का वर्णन किया गया है, इसी से इस उपदेश का नाम ‘दहरविद्या’ पड़ा।

परब्रह्म पुरुषोत्तम भगवान् स्वामिनारायण ने भी यह उपदेश वचनमृत ग्रंथ में दृढ़ीभूत किया

39. छान्दोग्योपनिषत्स्वामिनारायणभाष्यम् : ३/४२

40. छान्दोग्य उपनिषद् : ८/१/३

41. छान्दोग्योपनिषत्स्वामिनारायणभाष्यम् : ३/४४

42. बृहदारण्यक उपनिषद् : ३/८/९

है, 'इस प्रकार ब्रह्मांड के चारों ओर चिदाकाश है तथा ब्रह्मांड के भीतर भी है। इसी सर्वाधार आकाश (चिदाकाशरूपी अक्षरब्रह्म) के रूप में जिसकी दृष्टि प्रवर्तमान हो, उसे दहरविद्या कहते हैं। अनेक ब्रह्मविद्याओं में से यह भी एक ब्रह्मविद्या है।'⁴³

यहां एक जिज्ञासा उठना स्वाभाविक है कि इस प्रकार सदा हमारे हृदयकमल में दहराकाश के रूप में व्याप्त अक्षरब्रह्म का अनुभव क्यों नहीं होता ?

छान्दोग्य उपनिषद् में इसका ठोस उत्तर है :

‘तद्यथापि हिरण्यनिधिं निहितमक्षेत्रज्ञा उपर्युपरि सञ्चरन्तो न विन्देयुरेवमेवेमाः सर्वाः प्रजा अहरहर्गच्छन्त्य एतं ब्रह्मलोकं न विन्दन्त्यनृतेन हि प्रत्यूढाः’⁴⁴ एक अज्ञानी कृषक का उदाहरण यहां पर दिया गया। जैसे भूस्वामी कृषक अपनी ही भूमि के नीचे गाड़कर छिपाई गई सुवर्णनिधि को नहीं देखता है। भले ही वह स्वयं उस भूमि पर प्रतिदिन चलता हो, हल चलाता हो, किंतु सुवर्णनिधि के ज्ञान के अभाव में वर्षों तक हल चलाकर दरिद्रता का ही वहन करता है तथा सुवर्णनिधि के लाभ से वंचित रह जाता है। ठीक उसी प्रकार हमारी भी उस कृषक सी परिस्थिति है। ‘सर्वव्यापकेऽस्मिन्नन्तर्यामिण्यक्षरब्रह्मणि प्रतिदिनं सञ्चरन्त्योऽपि तन्न लभन्ते। विद्यमानमपि तदज्ञानान्न प्राप्नुवन्तीति भावः।’⁴⁵ हमारे हृदय में दहराकाशरूपी अक्षरब्रह्म होने के उपरांत हमारी आत्मा ‘अनृतेन हि प्रत्यूढाः’⁴⁶ अर्थात् अनादि अविद्यामाया के आवरण से आच्छादित है। इसीलिए हम उस दिव्य निधि का अनुभव नहीं कर पाते।

अब यदि यह अनुभव करना ही है तो उस सुवर्णनिधि को जाने बिना अन्य कोई मार्ग नहीं है। अतः इस उपनिषद् में अब अक्षरब्रह्म के दिव्य गुणों का दर्शन कराया है।

अक्षरब्रह्म के दिव्य गुण - अपहतपाप्मा सेतुः विधृतिः

‘अपहतपाप्मा विजरो विमृत्युर्विशोको विजिघत्सोऽपिपासः सत्यकामः सत्यसङ्कल्पः’⁴⁷ इसका विवेचन भाष्य में किया है – ‘अपहतपाप्मा नित्यं मायागन्धविमुक्त इत्यर्थः। विजरो विगतजरः। विमृत्युः मरणरहितोऽनन्त इत्यर्थः। विशोकः सदा शोकशून्यः प्रसन्नचित्त इति। विजिघत्सः विगताऽशनेच्छः। अपिपासः पानेच्छाशून्यः। सत्यकामः सत्या कामा यस्येति। सत्यसङ्कल्पः सत्या सङ्कलपा यस्येति।’⁴⁸

इस ब्रह्म का स्वरूप निष्पाप माया-रहित है, वृद्धावस्था के भाव से रहित है, मृत्यु उसका

43. वचनामृत : गढ़डा प्रथम प्रकरण – ४६

44. छान्दोग्य उपनिषद् : ८/३/२

45. छान्दोग्योपनिषत्स्वामिनारायणभाष्यम् : ३५२

46. छान्दोग्य उपनिषद् : ७/३/२

47. छान्दोग्य उपनिषद् : ८/१/५

48. छान्दोग्योपनिषत्स्वामिनारायणभाष्यम् : ३४७

स्पर्श नहीं कर सकती, अर्थात् अमृतमय है। उसमें शोक या दुःख नहीं है, उसमें भूख-प्यासरूपी आवेग नहीं है, वह सत्यकाम है, सत्यसंकल्प है। ये सभी गुण अक्षरब्रह्म के नित्य गुण हैं। माया इन्हें कभी आवृत्त नहीं कर सकती। इसलिए यहां कहा गया है कि 'सत्यान् कामान्'⁴⁹ अर्थात् अक्षरब्रह्म के यह गुण सत्य अर्थात् सनातन तथा समान रूप से प्रकाशित रहते हैं।

इतना कहकर अब इस अक्षरब्रह्म के हमारे लिए अत्यंत उपकारी विशेषण दर्शाते हुए कहा कि 'स सेतुर्विधृतिरेषां लोकानामसम्भेदाय'⁵⁰ 'यह अक्षरब्रह्म मुमुक्षुओं के लिए परमात्मा को प्राप्त करने का, परममुक्ति प्राप्त करने का सेतु है तथा वहां सभी का आधार बनकर भी रहता है।'

यही बात अन्य उपनिषदों में कही गई है -

‘यः सेतुरीजानानामक्षरं ब्रह्म यत्परम्। अभयं तितीर्षतां पारं नाचिकेतं शकेमहि॥’⁵¹

‘अमृतस्यैष सेतुः’⁵²

इस प्रकार अनेक रीति से अक्षरब्रह्म का निरूपण किया है। इसका मूल हेतु तो अक्षर की पहचान हो, इस पहचान के पश्चात् जीवात्मा उसका दृढ़ प्रसंग करे, स्वयं आत्मस्वरूप को जाने, उसमें ब्रह्म के गुण प्राप्त करे, और ब्रह्मस्वरूप होकर परमात्मा की प्राप्ति करे, यही है।

समापन

इस प्रकार छान्दोग्य उपनिषद् की कथाओं में ब्रह्मविद्या के प्रतिपादन हेतु अक्षरब्रह्म और परब्रह्म का निरूपण किया गया है। अतः इसमें हमें अक्षरपुरुषोत्तम दर्शन का सम्यक परिचय प्राप्त होता है।

49. छान्दोग्य उपनिषद् : ८/१/६

50. छान्दोग्य उपनिषद् : ८/४/१

51. कठ उपनिषद् : ३/२

52. मुण्डक उपनिषद् : २/२/५

संदर्भग्रंथ सूचि

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श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता में परम शांति का उपाय – अक्षरपुरुषोत्तम दर्शन के परिप्रेक्ष्य में दर्शन

ACHARYA SADHU GNANNAYANDAS

Ph.D. Student, SP University,
Vallabhvidyanagar

सारांशः

मनुष्यमात्र की प्रत्येक प्रवृत्ति का मुख्य प्रयोजन है - सुख-शांति। सुख-शांति के लिये ही वह निरंतर प्रयत्नशील रहता है और पंचविषयों में सुख मानकर उसे पाने की चेष्टा करता रहता है। परंतु विषयों के दुःखप्रधान क्षणिक सुख से उसे कभी पूर्ण संतुष्टि प्राप्त नहीं होती, शाश्वत शांति नहीं मिलती।

सनातन धर्म के प्राचीन शास्त्रों ने हमें शाश्वत शांति के उपाय दर्शाये हैं। उन शास्त्रों के अनुसार विविध दर्शनों की विविध शाखाओं में परम शांति के उपायों का अनुष्ठान होता है। अक्षरपुरुषोत्तम दर्शन में भी परम शांति प्राप्त करने के उपाय निर्दिष्ट हैं। प्रस्तुत शोधपत्र में श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतास्वामिनारायणभाष्य के अनुसार अक्षरपुरुषोत्तम दर्शन में निर्दिष्ट परम शांति के उपायों का विमर्श निरूपित है।

श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतास्वामिनारायणभाष्य के अनुसार ब्रह्मविद्या की सिद्धि से ही परम शांति प्राप्त होती है। जिसने ब्रह्मविद्या सिद्ध की हो ऐसा ब्रह्मरूप भक्त ही परम शांति का अधिकारी बनता है। ऐसी ब्रह्मविद्या की सिद्धि के लिए ब्रह्मस्वरूप गुरु का सांनिध्य अनिवार्य है। ब्रह्मस्वरूप गुरु के मार्गदर्शन अनुसार परमात्म-शरणागति, भक्ति, सेवा, संयम इत्यादि साधन करने से ब्रह्मविद्या की सिद्धि होती है और उसके परिणामस्वरूप शाश्वत शांति की अनुभूति होती है। इसके अतिरिक्त ऐसे ब्रह्मरूप भक्त की अन्य विशेषताएँ भी इस शोधपत्र में निरूपित हैं।

Keywords

अक्षरपुरुषोत्तम दर्शन, ब्रह्मविद्या, ब्रह्मज्ञान, शाश्वत् शांति, परमात्म सुख, परम आनंद, स्वामिनारायण भाष्य, श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता

‘ज्ञानं लब्ध्वा परां शान्तिमचिरेणाधिगच्छति।’¹ भगवान् श्रीकृष्ण का यह वचन मनुष्य के लिए सुख-प्राप्ति के राजमार्ग समान है। ब्रह्मविद्या के माध्यम से शाश्वत शांति की प्राप्ति करना ही मनुष्यजीवन का परम उद्देश्य है। इस उद्देश्य को सिद्ध करने हेतु सनातन धर्म के वेद, उपनिषद्, श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता इत्यादि शास्त्र मार्गदीपक समान हैं। वेद-उपनिषदों में जगह जगह पर शांतिपाठ के रूप में की गई प्रार्थना भी इसी बात का निर्देश करती है। उदाहरण के रूप में यजुर्वेद में स्थित शांतिपाठ है –

ॐ द्यौः शान्तिरन्तरिक्षं शान्तिः पृथिवी शान्तिरापः शान्तिरोषधयः शान्तिः। वनस्पतयः शान्तिर्विश्वेदेवाः शान्तिर्ब्रह्म शान्तिः सर्वं शान्तिः, शान्तिरेव शान्तिः सा मा शान्तिरेधि ॥ ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः॥²

इस मंत्र में द्युलोक, अंतरिक्ष, पृथ्वी, जल, ओषधि, वनस्पति, सभी देवता, ब्रह्म और सबकुछ हमारे लिए शांतिदायक बनें ऐसी कामना करने के पश्चात्, अंत में कहा गया है कि ‘सा शान्तिः मा एधि’ वह शांति मुझे प्राप्त हो।

वेदों और उपनिषदों में शांतिमंत्रों के उच्चारण के पश्चात् ‘ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः’ उच्चारित करने की परंपरा है। इसका तात्पर्य दर्शाते हुए स्वामिनारायणभाष्यकार³ लिखते हैं, ‘ॐ शब्द से तद्वाचक अक्षरब्रह्म और परब्रह्म का स्मरण कर उनसे प्रार्थना की जाती है। तत्पश्चात् ‘शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः’ इस प्रकार तीनबार पाठ ब्रह्मविद्या में बाधारूप आध्यात्मिक, आधिभौतिक और आधिदैविक, इन तीन प्रकार के विघ्नों के उपशमन के लिए है।’⁴ इस प्रकार त्रिविध तापों के नाश से ब्रह्मविद्या की साधना विघ्नरहित एवं सरल बन जाती है और इस ब्रह्मविद्या के फलस्वरूप शाश्वत शांति का अनुभव होता है। स्वामिनारायणभाष्यकार लिखते हैं, ‘जो मनुष्य ब्रह्मस्वरूप गुरु के उपदेश से ब्रह्मविद्या सिद्ध कर परमात्मा का साक्षात्कार कर ले उसे शाश्वत शांति और सुख का अनुभव होता है।’⁵

इस प्रकार सनातन धर्म में शांति को अतिमहत्त्वपूर्ण स्थान दिया गया है और शाश्वत शांति का उपाय दर्शाते हुए ब्रह्मविद्या का ही निर्देश किया गया है। इस लेख में अक्षरपुरुषोत्तम दर्शन के परिप्रेक्ष्य में श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता में सुख-शांति का जो उपाय निरूपित किया गया है उस विषय में विमर्श प्रस्तुत है।

1. श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता ४.३९

2. यजुर्वेद ३६.१७

3. महामहोपाध्याय स्वामी भद्रेशदासजी

4. तैत्तिरीयोपनिषत्स्वामिनारायणभाष्यम् १.१.१

5. कठोपनिषत्स्वामिनारायणभाष्यम् ५.१२-१३

‘शांति’ शब्द का तात्पर्य

स्वामिनारायणभाष्य के अनुसार शांति शब्द से परमात्मा का सुख, आनंद, प्रसन्नता इत्यादि अर्थ अभिप्रेत है।⁶ गीता में सुख शब्द का प्रयोग दो संदर्भों में प्रयुक्त है – १. विषयादि का प्राकृत सुख २. परमात्मसुख। प्रस्तुत शोधपत्र में परम शांति के लिए जिस सुख को प्राप्त करने का उपाय निरूपित है वह परमात्मसुख है।

गीता-उद्धोधन का उद्देश्य ही शांति

अक्षरपुरुषोत्तम दर्शन के अनुसार श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता में भगवान श्रीकृष्ण के उपदेश का तात्पर्य ही प्रसन्नता अर्थात् शांति है। प्रथम अध्याय में अर्जुन युद्ध में शत्रुपक्षस्थित अपने स्वजनों को देखकर मोहग्रस्त हो गया है। भगवान श्रीकृष्ण अश्रुपूर्ण आँखोंवाले, विषादग्रस्त और मोहमूढ़ अर्जुन को देखते हैं अर्थात् क्रमशः अर्जुन के स्थूल, सूक्ष्म और कारण इन तीनों शरीरों को देखते हैं। उसके विषाद और रुदन का मूल कारण है अनादिवासनामय कारण-शरीर। अर्जुन कारणशरीरजनित मोह से भ्रमित हो गया है इसीलिए दुःखी है, और दुःखी है इसीलिए उसकी आँखें अश्रुपूर्ण हैं।

ऐसे अर्जुन को ‘ब्रह्मभूतः प्रसन्नात्मा न शोचति न काङ्क्षति’ (१८.५४) इत्यादि श्लोकों में निरूपित दिशा अनुसार ब्रह्मरूप और प्रसन्न आत्मा से भगवान की परा भक्ति करते हुए देखने की कामना से ही भगवान श्रीकृष्ण ब्रह्मभाव के निरूपण से पूर्ण, परमात्मा के उत्तम निर्विकल्प निश्चयरूप तथा भगवान के स्वरूप में अचल-अनन्य निष्ठारूप योग जिस में प्रधानतया निरूपित है ऐसी गीता का उद्धोधन करते हैं।⁷

गीता में परम शांति का उपाय - ब्रह्मज्ञान

गीता में परम शांति का उपाय निरूपित करते हुए भगवान श्री कृष्ण कहते हैं

श्रद्धावाँल्लभते ज्ञानं तत्परः संयतेन्द्रियः ।

ज्ञानं लब्ध्वा परां शान्तिमचिरेणाधिगच्छति ॥ (४.३९)

अक्षरपुरुषोत्तम दर्शन के अनुसार परम शांति हेतु ब्रह्मज्ञान कारणभूत है। ऐसा ज्ञान पाकर मुमुक्षु ‘अचिरेण’ तत्काल परम शांति को प्राप्त करता है। यहाँ ‘परम शांति’ शब्द से परमात्म-साक्षात्कार से उत्पन्न परम सुख की अनुभूतिरूप सर्वोत्कृष्ट दिव्य शांति अभिप्रेत है।⁸ परमात्मा ही सर्व सुख के आधार है। गीता में भगवान श्रीकृष्ण का कथन है कि

6. श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतास्वामिनारायणभाष्यम् २.७१, ४.३९, १४.२७, १८.५४

7. श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतास्वामिनारायणभाष्यम् २.१

8. श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतास्वामिनारायणभाष्यम् ४.३९

ब्रह्मणो हि प्रतिष्ठाऽहममृतस्याव्ययस्य च।

शाश्वतस्य च धर्मस्य सुखस्यैकान्तिकस्य च॥'(१४.२७)

अर्थात् शाश्वत और एकांतिक सुख के आधार परमात्मा है।⁹

सुख या शांति अनेक प्रकार की होती है। मनुष्य तीव्र धूप में सूर्य के ताप से त्रस्त होकर जब किसी पेड़ की छाँव में जाता है तो वहाँ पर भी उसे शांति का अनुभव तो होगा ही, परंतु वह शांति अति अल्प और क्षणभंगुर है, शाश्वत नहीं है। मनुष्य को मनवांछित पंचविषय प्राप्त हो तब भी उसे क्षणिक शांति का अनुभव अवश्य होगा परंतु वह शांति भी शाश्वत् शांति नहीं है। शाश्वत शांति तो ब्रह्मविद्या के फलस्वरूप परमात्म-साक्षात्कार से ही प्राप्त होती है। कठोपनिषद के अनुसार 'तमात्मस्थं येऽनुपश्यन्ति धीरास्तेषां शान्तिः शाश्वती नेतरेषाम्' (५.१३) परमात्मा का साक्षात्कार जिसे हो उसी को शाश्वत शांति का अनुभव होता है, अन्य को नहीं। क्योंकि परमात्मा ही सर्वसुखमय है। अक्षरपुरुषोत्तम दर्शन के अनुसार छान्दोग्योपनिषद में निरूपित भूमाविद्या में भी इस बात की पुष्टि प्राप्त होती है। 'यो वै भूमा तत्सुखं नाल्पे सुखमस्ति भूमैव सुखम्' (७.२३.१) इस मंत्र के भाष्य में स्वामिनारायणभाष्यकार लिखते हैं कि भूमाशब्दवाच्य परमात्मा ही सुखस्वरूप है। यद्यपि जीव ईश्वरादि भी सुखस्वरूप ही है, तथापि सर्वसमुत्कृष्ट उत्तम अलौकिक परम दिव्य सुख के स्वरूप तो केवल परमात्मा ही हैं, अतः 'नाल्पे सुखमस्ति' इन शब्दों से जीव ईश्वरादि में सुख नहीं है - ऐसा कहा गया है। इसके अतिरिक्त पंचविषयों में जो सुख की अनुभूति होती है वह भी परमात्मसुख के सापेक्ष में तो सुख का आभासमात्र है।¹⁰ परब्रह्म भगवान् श्रीस्वामिनारायण वचनामृत में कहते हैं, 'सर्वसुखमयमूर्ति तो भगवान् ही है और अन्यत्र पंचविषयों में जो सुख है वह तो परमात्मसुख का किंचित लेश है',¹¹ परमात्मा के लिए ब्रह्मसूत्रस्वामिनारायणभाष्य में 'सर्वसमुत्कृष्टाऽनवधिकवैपुल्यविशिष्टसुखस्वरूपम्',¹² ऐसा विशेषण प्रयुक्त किया गया है, जो कि परमात्मसुख की सर्वसमुत्कृष्टता, अनवधिकता और वैपुल्य का निर्देश करता है।

परमात्मा के सुख का वैशिष्ट्य दर्शाते हुए गीता में भगवान् श्रीकृष्ण कहते हैं, 'सुखमात्यन्तिकं यत्तद्बुद्धिग्राह्यमतीन्द्रियम्' (६.२१) यहाँ स्वामिनारायणभाष्यकार लिखते हैं, 'परमात्मा का वह आत्यंतिक सुख अर्थात् शाश्वत और अविनाशी सुख अतीन्द्रिय है। लौकिक बाह्य इन्द्रियों से उस सुख का अनुभव नहीं होता, वह सुख बुद्धि से ग्रहण किया जाता है, ब्रह्मस्वरूप गुरु के समाश्रय में साधना करने से जो सूक्ष्मबुद्धि प्राप्त होती है उससे वह ग्राह्य बनता है',¹³ ऐसे सुख की जो

9. श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतास्वामिनारायणभाष्यम् १४.२७

10. छान्दोग्योपनिषत्स्वामिनारायणभाष्यम् ७.२३.१

11. वचनामृत गडडा अंत्य २८

12. ब्रह्मसूत्रस्वामिनारायणभाष्यम् १.३.८

13. श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतास्वामिनारायणभाष्यम् ६.२१

अवस्था है उसी को योगावस्था कहा गया है, आगामी श्लोक में कहा है ‘यं लब्ध्वा चापरं लाभं मन्यते नाधिकं ततः।’ (६.२२) ‘उस निरवधिकातिशय परमात्मसुख की अवस्था प्राप्त करने के पश्चात् और कुछ पाना शेष नहीं रहता।’¹⁴ अर्थात् परमात्मसुखरूप शांति का अनुभव हो जाने पर मनुष्य कृतकृत्य हो जाता है, पूर्णकाम हो जाता है।

अतः ‘ज्ञानं लब्ध्वा परां शांतिमचिरेणाधिगच्छति’ का तात्पर्य यही है कि शाश्वत शांति प्राप्त करने हेतु, जिससे परमात्मा का साक्षात्कार होता है ऐसे ब्रह्मज्ञान को सिद्ध करना अनिवार्य है।

ब्रह्मज्ञान का तात्पर्य - अक्षरब्रह्म और परब्रह्म का तत्त्वतः विज्ञान

अक्षरपुरुषोत्तम दर्शन के अनुसार ब्रह्मज्ञान अर्थात् अक्षरब्रह्म और परब्रह्म इन दो ब्रह्म का यथार्थ विज्ञान। ब्रह्मविद्या की सिद्धि के लिए जिस प्रकार परब्रह्म का ज्ञान अनिवार्य है वैसे ही अक्षरब्रह्म का ज्ञान भी अनिवार्य है। मुण्डक उपनिषद में जहाँ ब्रह्मविद्या को व्याख्यायित किया गया है वहाँ भी ‘येनाऽक्षरं पुरुषं वेद सत्यं प्रोवाच तां तत्त्वतो ब्रह्मविद्याम्।’ (१.२.१३) इस मंत्र में अक्षर अर्थात् अक्षरब्रह्म और पुरुष अर्थात् परब्रह्म इन दोनों ब्रह्म के तत्त्वतः ज्ञान को ही ब्रह्मविद्या कहा गया है।¹⁵ इन दोनों ब्रह्म-तत्त्वों का संक्षिप्त परिचय यहाँ प्रस्तुत है।

परब्रह्म

अक्षराधिपति परब्रह्म पुरुषोत्तम नारायण नित्य, सर्वोपरि, सदा दिव्य, सदा साकार, निर्दोष, मायापर, एक और अद्वितीय हैं। अपने दिव्य अक्षरधाम में वे सदा दिव्य-द्विभुजादि सर्वांगसम्पूर्ण पुरुष आकृति में दिव्य सिंहासन पर विराजमान रहते हैं। वे अतिप्रकाशमान और किशोरमूर्ति हैं। मूर्तिमान अक्षरब्रह्म और अक्षरब्रह्म के साधर्म्य को प्राप्त हुए ब्राह्मतनुयुक्त अनंत कोटि मुक्त उन्हें दासभाव से भजते हैं। वे सदा स्वाभाविकतया अनंत दिव्य कल्याणकारी गुणों से युक्त हैं और मायिक गुणों से रहित हैं। वे सर्वदा सर्व ऐश्वर्यसंपन्न, सर्वज्ञ, सर्वकर्ताहर्ता हैं, सकल सृष्टि के निमित्त और उपादान कारण हैं। व्यतिरेक स्वरूप से सदा अपने दिव्य अक्षरधाम में विराजमान रहते हुए ही वे अन्वय स्वरूप से अनंत कोटि ब्रह्मांडों में अन्तर्यामीरूप से व्यापक हैं और उन ब्रह्मांडों के आधार हैं। वे जीवों, ईश्वरों, माया, अक्षरब्रह्म और अक्षरमुक्तों से अतिशय समर्थ हैं और उन सभी के स्वतंत्रतया नियंता, प्रेरक और शरीरी हैं। वे ही स्वेच्छा से सभी जीवों और ईश्वरों के कर्मफलप्रदाता हैं और उनके क्रियाशक्ति, ज्ञानशक्ति और इच्छाशक्ति के प्रेरक हैं। मायिक इन्द्रियों और अन्तःकरण से अगोचर ऐसे वे अपने दिव्य संकल्प से करुणापूर्वक अनंत जीव-ईश्वरों के आत्यंतिक कल्याण के लिए अपने अक्षरधाम में रहते हुए ही, प्रत्येक ब्रह्मांड में

14. श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतास्वामिनारायणभाष्यम् ६.२२

15. मुण्डकोपनिषत्स्वामिनारायणभाष्यम् १.२.१३

साक्षात् मनुष्यरूप में अवतरित होते हैं। वे ही सर्व अवतारों के कारण, अवतारी और अधिपति हैं। वे प्रत्यक्ष परब्रह्म परमात्मा श्री स्वामिनारायण भगवान हैं। वे ही हमारे परम उपास्य हैं। सदैव अपनी प्रत्यक्षतया उपासना हो सके इसलिये वे पृथ्वी से अंतर्धान होने के पश्चात् भी साक्षात् ब्रह्मस्वरूप गुरुहरि द्वारा अन्वयरूप से सदा प्रकट रहते हैं।¹⁶

अक्षरब्रह्म

अक्षरब्रह्म परब्रह्म से भिन्न, परब्रह्म की भाँति नित्य, एक, त्रिगुणातीत और चेतन तत्त्व हैं। वे सदा दिव्य अनंत कल्याणमय गुणों से युक्त हैं, मायिक गुणों से रहित हैं और सदा निर्दोष हैं। अक्षरब्रह्म के स्वरूप, गुण, ऐश्वर्य आदि एकमात्र परब्रह्म के आधीन हैं। परब्रह्म की नित्य इच्छा से वे जडचिदात्मक सकल सृष्टि के कारण, आधार, व्यापक, नियामक और शरीरी हैं। तत्त्वतः एक होते हुए भी ये अक्षरब्रह्म चार विभिन्न सेवारूप में कार्यरत हैं।

१. चिदाकाशरूप में अक्षरब्रह्म अनंत कोटि ब्रह्मांडों के अंदर-बाहर व्याप्त हैं और उन ब्रह्मांडों के आधार हैं।
२. धामरूप अक्षरब्रह्म जो है वह परब्रह्म, उनकी सेवा में उपस्थित मूर्तिमान अक्षरब्रह्म और अनंत कोटि मुक्तों के दिव्य निवासस्थान हैं। यह धाम एक है, नित्य है और सदा त्रिगुणातीत है। अक्षरब्रह्म के साधर्म्य को प्राप्त करनेवाले मुक्त ही उस में प्रवेश करने योग्य हैं।
३. उस अक्षरधाम में स्थित सेवकरूप में जो अक्षरब्रह्म है वह परब्रह्म की तरह दिव्य द्विभुजादिसर्वांगसम्पूर्ण पुरुषाकार हैं, सदा परब्रह्म की सेवा में रममाण हैं और अक्षरमुक्तों के लिए आदर्शरूप हैं।
४. वह अक्षरब्रह्म संसार में बद्ध जीवों और ईश्वरों को अपने दिव्य प्रसंग से ब्रह्मरूप कर परब्रह्म पुरुषोत्तम का निर्विकल्प निश्चय कराने के लिए, उनके आत्यंतिक कल्याण के लिए और सदा परमात्मा के प्राकट्य की अनुभूति कराने के लिए परमात्मा के सम्यक अखंड धारक गुरु के रूप में परमात्मा के साथ विभिन्न ब्रह्मांडों में मनुष्यरूप धारण कर अवतरित होते हैं, संप्रदाय-परंपरा की रक्षा करते हैं और सभी को परमसुख का अनुभव कराते हैं। ऐसे अक्षरब्रह्मस्वरूप गुणातीत गुरुओं की परंपरा अखंड चलती ही रहती है। एक समय में ऐसे एक ही गुरु के द्वारा आत्यंतिक कल्याण का मार्ग प्रचलित रहता है।¹⁷

इस प्रकार 'येनाऽक्षरं पुरुषं वेद' इस मुंडकोक्ति के अनुसार अक्षरब्रह्म और परब्रह्म का

16. स्वामिनारायणसिद्धान्तसुधा १.६.४.१

17. स्वामिनारायणसिद्धान्तसुधा १.६.४.२

तत्त्वतः विज्ञान ही ब्रह्मविद्या है। यहाँ ‘तत्त्वतः’ शब्द महत्त्वपूर्ण है, केवल शाब्दिक ज्ञान से परम शांतिरूप फल नहीं मिलता, उस ज्ञान का साक्षात्कार अनिवार्य है। साक्षात्कार के लिए प्रथम तो गुरुरूप अक्षरब्रह्म का प्रसंग आवश्यक है। चतुर्थ अध्याय में भगवान् श्रीकृष्ण कहते हैं कि ‘उपदेक्ष्यन्ति ते ज्ञानं ज्ञानिनस्तत्त्वदर्शिनः’ (४.३४) अर्थात् ‘ज्ञानी और तत्त्वदर्शी ऐसे ब्रह्मस्वरूप गुरु तुझे ब्रह्मज्ञान का उपदेश करेंगे’,¹⁸ पांचवें अध्याय में भगवान् श्रीकृष्ण कहते हैं, ‘स ब्रह्मयोगयुक्तात्मा सुखमक्षय्यमश्रुते’ (५.२९) अर्थात् ‘गुरुरूप अक्षरब्रह्म के प्रसंग से परमात्मा का शाश्वत सुख प्राप्त होता है’,¹⁹ तो प्रथम ऐसे ब्रह्मस्वरूप गुरु के प्रसंग से अक्षरब्रह्म को यथार्थतया जानना है। अक्षरपुरुषोत्तम दर्शन के अनुसार अक्षरब्रह्म को जानने से मुख्य दो फल मिलते हैं –

१. ‘ब्रह्म वेद ब्रह्मैव भवति’²⁰ अर्थात् ‘ब्रह्मस्वरूप गुरु के दृढ प्रसंग उपदेश इत्यादि से जो भक्त ब्रह्म को जान लेता है वह ब्रह्मरूप हो जाता है। यहाँ ‘ब्रह्मैव भवति’ इसका तात्पर्य अक्षरब्रह्म से स्वरूपाभेद नहीं है किन्तु यह है कि अक्षरब्रह्म के जो मोक्षेपयोगी गुण हैं वह उस भक्त को प्राप्त होते हैं’,²¹ अक्षरपुरुषोत्तम दर्शन के अनुसार गीता में ‘ब्रह्मभूयाय कल्पते’ (१४.२६) इस में भूयःशब्द के प्रयोग से तात्पर्य यही है कि अक्षरब्रह्म के सभी गुण मुमुक्षु को प्राप्त नहीं होते परंतु परम कल्याण के लिए उपकारक ज्ञान, वैराग्य, भक्ति, गुणातीतत्व इत्यादि गुण ही प्राप्त होते हैं। क्योंकि प्रत्यगात्मा के लिए धामरूप होकर परमात्मा और अनंत मुक्तों को धारण करना या चिदाकाशरूप में सर्वव्यापक बनना इत्यादि गुण संपादित करना असंभव है।²²
२. ‘ब्रह्मविदाप्नोति परम्’²³ – ‘अक्षरब्रह्म को जाननेवाला ब्रह्मरूप भक्त परब्रह्म परमात्मा को प्राप्त करता है’,²⁴ गीता में भी इसी सिद्धांत का निरूपण प्राप्त होता है। बारहवें अध्याय में भगवान् कहते हैं

ये त्वक्षरमनिर्देश्यमव्यक्तं पर्युपासते।

सर्वत्रगमचिन्त्यं च कूटस्थमचलं ध्रुवम्॥ १२.३

संनियम्येन्द्रियग्रामं सर्वत्र समबुद्धयः।

ते प्राप्नुवन्ति मामेव सर्वभूतहिते रताः॥ १२.४

इन श्लोकों के भाष्य में निरूपित है कि ‘जो लोग परमात्मा की उपासना का अधिकार

18. श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतास्वामिनारायणभाष्यम् ४.३४

19. श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतास्वामिनारायणभाष्यम् ५.२९

20. मुण्डकोपनिषद् ३.२.९

21. मुण्डकोपनिषत्स्वामिनारायणभाष्यम् ३.२.९

22. श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतास्वामिनारायणभाष्यम् १४.२६

23. तैत्तिरीयोपनिषद् २.१.१

24. तैत्तिरीयोपनिषत्स्वामिनारायणभाष्यम् २.१.१

पाने के लिए तथा स्वयं को ब्रह्मरूप करने के लिए अक्षरब्रह्म की उपासना करते हैं अर्थात् अक्षरब्रह्म का ध्यान, मनन इत्यादि करते हैं वे ही मुझे प्राप्त करते हैं।²⁵ स्वामिनारायणभाष्य में एवकार का अन्वय दो प्रकार से किया गया है

i. 'ते एव मां प्राप्नुवन्ति' जो अक्षरब्रह्म की उपासना कर ब्रह्मरूप हो जाते हैं वे ही मुझे प्राप्त करते हैं, यहाँ ब्रह्मरूप भक्तों को ही परमात्मप्राप्ति होती है यह सिद्धांत निरूपित है। इससे फलित होता है कि परब्रह्म को जानने के लिए अक्षरब्रह्म का ज्ञान अनिवार्य है।

ii. 'ते प्राप्नुवन्ति मामेव' जो अक्षरब्रह्म की उपासना करते हैं वे मुझे अर्थात् परमात्मा को ही प्राप्त करते हैं। यहाँ अक्षरब्रह्म गुरु के द्वारा परमात्मा सदैव प्रकट रहते हैं इस सिद्धांत का निरूपण है।²⁶

इस प्रकार यहाँ ब्रह्मज्ञान की सिद्धि हेतु अक्षरब्रह्म को जानकर ब्रह्मरूप होने की अनिवार्यता निर्दिष्ट है। ऐसे ब्रह्मरूप भक्त को ही परम शांति का अधिकारी कहा गया है।

परमात्मसुखरूप परम शांति का अधिकारी

परम शांति का अधिकारी कौन हो सकता है इसकी स्पष्टता करते हुए भगवान श्रीकृष्ण कहते हैं,

विहाय कामान्यः सर्वान्पुमांश्चरति निःस्पृहः।

निर्ममो निरहंकारः स शांतिमधिगच्छति॥ २.७१

अर्थात् 'ब्रह्मस्वरूप गुरु के अनुग्रह से प्राप्त ब्रह्मरूपत्व एवं परमात्म-माहात्म्यज्ञान के बल से जो मनुष्य सभी लौकिक कामनाओं को छोड़कर, निःस्पृह होकर, अहं-ममत्व-रहित होकर जीवनयापन करता है वह शांति प्राप्त करता है।'²⁷ द्वितीय अध्याय में अर्जुन ने प्रश्न पूछा है 'स्थितप्रज्ञ पुरुष किसे कहते हैं?' इस प्रश्न के उत्तर में भगवान श्रीकृष्ण स्थितप्रज्ञ के लक्षणों का निरूपण करते हैं वहाँ यह श्लोक प्रगुम्फित है। आगे इन्हीं लक्षणों का उपसंहार करते हुए भगवान ऐसे भक्त की स्थिति के विषय में कहते हैं,

एषा ब्राह्मी स्थितः पार्थ! नैनां प्राप्य विमुह्यति।

स्थित्वास्यामन्तकालेऽपि ब्रह्मनिर्वाणमृच्छति॥ २.७२

अर्थात् 'यह अक्षरब्रह्म की स्थिति है। इस स्थिति को प्राप्त करने के पश्चात् कभी मोह नहीं होता। इसी स्थिति में रहते हुए अंतकाल के समय वह भक्त भगवान के दिव्य अक्षरधाम में

25. श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतास्वामिनारायणभाष्यम् १२.३, १२.४

26. श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतास्वामिनारायणभाष्यम् १२.४

27. श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतास्वामिनारायणभाष्यम् २.७१

परमात्मा के परम आनंद को प्राप्त करता है।²⁸ अतः जो ब्राह्मी स्थिति से युक्त भक्त है वही परम शांति का अधिकारी बनता है।

अक्षरपुरुषोत्तम दर्शन के अनुसार गीता में प्रयुक्त 'ब्रह्म' शब्द अक्षरब्रह्म का वाचक है, परमात्म-वाचक नहीं। आठवें अध्याय के प्रारंभ में अर्जुन का प्रश्न है, 'किं तद् ब्रह्म' (८.१)। तद् शब्द से ज्ञात होता है कि ब्रह्म के विषय में इससे पूर्व उपदेश हो चुका है। जैसे कि द्वितीय अध्याय में उपर्युक्त श्लोक में प्रथम बार ब्रह्म शब्द का प्रयोग हुआ है। तत्पश्चात् चतुर्थ अध्याय में 'ब्रह्मार्पणं ब्रह्म हविर्ब्रह्माग्नौ ब्रह्मणा हुतम्' (४.२४), 'ब्रह्माग्नावापरे' (४.२५), 'यान्ति ब्रह्म सनातनम्' (४.३१) इत्यादि स्थानों पर, पाँचवें अध्याय में 'ब्रह्म नचिरेणाधिगच्छति' (५.६), 'ब्रह्मण्याधाय कर्माणि' (५.१०), 'निर्दोषं हि समं ब्रह्म तस्माद् ब्रह्मणि ते स्थिताः' (५.१९), 'ब्रह्मविद् ब्रह्मणि स्थितः' (५.२०), 'स ब्रह्मयोगयुक्तात्मा सुखमक्षय्यमश्नुते' (५.२१), 'स योगी ब्रह्मनिर्वाणं ब्रह्मभूतोऽधिगच्छति' (५.२४), 'लभन्ते ब्रह्मनिर्वाणम्' (५.२५), 'अभितो ब्रह्मनिर्वाणम्' (५.२६) इत्यादि स्थानों पर, छठे अध्याय में 'उपैति शान्तरजस ब्रह्मभूतमकल्मषम्' (६.२७), 'सुखेन ब्रह्मसंस्पर्शमत्यन्तं सुखमश्नुते' (६.२८) इत्यादि स्थानों पर, सातवें अध्याय में 'ते ब्रह्म तद् विदुः' (७.२९) इत्यादि अनेक स्थानों में ब्रह्म का निरूपण हुआ है। इस प्रकार पुनः पुनः ब्रह्म का माहात्म्य सुनकर ब्रह्मजिज्ञासु अर्जुन आठवें अध्याय में प्रश्न करते हैं 'किं तद् ब्रह्म' (८.१) वह ब्रह्म क्या है? भगवान् उत्तर देते हैं, 'अक्षरं ब्रह्म परमम्' (८.३) माया से पर जो अक्षर है वही ब्रह्म है। इससे यह भी ज्ञात होता है कि ब्रह्म और अक्षर ये दोनों पर्यायवाची पद हैं, और दोनों को जोड़कर बना अक्षरब्रह्म शब्द भी ब्रह्म का ही पर्यायवाची शब्द है। इस के अतिरिक्त 'अव्यक्तोऽक्षर इत्युक्तः' (८.२१) इत्यदि वचनों से अव्यक्त शब्द को भी अक्षरब्रह्म का वाचक कहा गया है। 'यदक्षरं वेदविदो वदन्ति' (८.११) से ज्ञात होता है कि वेदों में भी इस अक्षरब्रह्म का भूरिशः कीर्तिगान हुआ है। इसी श्लोक में भगवान् कहते हैं कि 'तद्धाम परमं मम' (८.२१) वह अक्षरब्रह्म मेरा परम धाम है। यहाँ धामरूप अक्षरब्रह्म का निर्देश तो है ही परंतु साथ में इससे अक्षरब्रह्म शब्द परमात्मवाचक नहीं है यह भी स्पष्ट हो जाता है।²⁹

अन्यत्र भी ऐसे ब्रह्मरूप भक्त को परमात्मसुख और परा भक्ति की प्राप्ति का निर्देश करते हुए भगवान् कहते हैं,

ब्रह्मभूतः प्रसन्नात्मा न शोचति न काङ्क्षति।

समः सर्वेषु भूतेषु मद्भक्तिं लभते पराम्॥ १८.५४

अर्थात् 'जो अक्षरब्रह्मरूप होता है वह प्रसन्नात्मा भक्त परमात्मा की भक्ति का अधिकारी

28. श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतास्वामिनारायणभाष्यम् २.७२

29. स्वामिनारायणसिद्धान्तसुधा २.९.१

बनता है,³⁰ इससे ज्ञात होता है कि गीता में जहाँ जहाँ परमात्मा की भक्ति-उपासना के विषय में निरूपण है वहाँ वहाँ अक्षरब्रह्मरूप होकर भक्ति-उपासना करना ही अभिप्रेत है। छठे अध्याय में भी भगवान् श्रीकृष्ण कहते हैं

प्रशान्तमनसं ह्येनं योगिनं सुखमुत्तमम्।

उपैति शान्तरजसं ब्रह्मभूतमकल्मषम्॥ ६.२७

यहाँ पर भी ब्रह्मभूत शब्द के द्वारा कहा है कि 'ऐसे ब्रह्मरूप, निष्पाप, त्रिगुणातीत, प्रशान्त मनवाले, निर्दोष योगी को परमात्मा के दिव्य सुख की प्राप्ति होती है',³¹ अतः निष्कर्षतः ऐसा कह सकते हैं कि परम शांति हेतु अक्षरब्रह्म के सांनिध्य से ब्रह्मरूप होना यही भक्त का लक्ष्य है। यदि भक्त अक्षरब्रह्म के सांनिध्य से ब्रह्मरूप हो जाये तो वह परब्रह्म का भी साक्षात्कार कर लेता है और परमात्मा के शाश्वत सुख का भी भोक्ता बन जाता है। अतः ब्रह्मरूप होना ही ब्रह्मज्ञान की सिद्धि है, वही परम शांति का उपाय है।

स्वामिनारायण भाष्य के अनुसार जो ब्रह्मरूप है वही द्वितीयाध्याय में निरूपित स्थितप्रज्ञ है, वही पंचमाध्याय में निरूपित जीवनमुक्त है, वही षष्ठाध्याय में निरूपित योगी है, वही सप्तमाध्याय में निरूपित ज्ञानी है, वही द्वादशाध्याय में निरूपित परमात्मा का प्रिय भक्त है और वही चतुर्दशाध्याय में निरूपित गुणातीत पुरुष है। इसके साथ समस्त गीता में केवल परमात्मा की प्रसन्नता से प्राप्य आत्यंतिक कल्याण के लिए जो भी साधन कहे गये हैं वे सभी साधन एक ही शब्द में संगृहीत है – 'ब्रह्मभूतः' अर्थात् ब्रह्मरूप होना।³² इससे स्पष्टरूप से निष्पन्न होता है कि अक्षरपुरुषोत्तम दर्शन के अनुसार ब्रह्मरूप होकर परमात्मा की भक्ति करना ही ब्रह्मविद्या का रहस्य है। यहाँ परमात्मा की भक्ति का तात्पर्य परमात्मा के स्वरूप को माहात्म्यपूर्वक यथार्थरूप से जानकर, उनका आश्रय कर, उनकी अनन्य भक्ति-उपासना करना है। अक्षरपुरुषोत्तम दर्शन के अनुसार गीता में योग³³ और धर्म³⁴ शब्द से भी अपनी आत्मा में ब्रह्मरूपत्व संपादित कर परब्रह्म की उक्त प्रकार से भक्ति-उपासना करना ही लक्षित है।

गीता में शांतिसाधनभूत ब्रह्मरूपत्व की प्राप्ति अथवा परमात्मसाक्षात्कार के उपाय

ब्रह्मज्ञान या ब्रह्मरूपत्व या परमात्मसाक्षात्कार की प्राप्ति ही परम शांति का उपाय है,

30. श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतास्वामिनारायणभाष्यम् १८.५४

31. श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतास्वामिनारायणभाष्यम् ६.२७

32. श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतास्वामिनारायणभाष्यम् १८.५४

33. श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता २.३९, ४.३, ६.३१ इत्यादि

34. श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता २.४०, ४.७, ४.८ इत्यादि

अतः ब्रह्मस्वरूप आदि की प्राप्ति के जो उपाय हैं वही परमशांति के भी उपाय हैं। उन उपायों का निरूपण यहाँ प्रस्तुत है।

१. ब्रह्मस्वरूप गुरु का सांनिध्य, प्रणिपात, परिप्रश्न और सेवा :

तद्विद्धि प्रणिपातेन परिप्रश्नेन सेवया।

उपदेक्ष्यन्ति ते ज्ञानं ज्ञानिनस्तत्त्वदर्शिनः॥ ४.३४

गीता के इस श्लोक में ज्ञानार्जन की प्रक्रिया दर्शाई गई है। सर्वप्रथम ज्ञानी और तत्त्वदर्शी ब्रह्मस्वरूप गुरु का यथाविधि आश्रय करना है। तत्पश्चात् प्रणिपात, परिप्रश्न और सेवा का विधान है। १. प्रणिपात अर्थात् अत्यंत दासभाव से दंडवत्प्रणाम करना। अपनी बुद्धि के बंधनों को तोड़कर गुरु द्वारा उपदिष्ट सिद्धांत में निश्चयबुद्धि, अमानित्व इत्यादि गुणों का भी प्रणिपात-शब्द में संग्रह है। २. परिप्रश्न अर्थात् वक्ता की परीक्षा के लिए या शंकापूर्वक नहीं, किन्तु श्रद्धापूर्वक स्वीकृत सिद्धांत की विशेष दृढता हेतु जिज्ञासा से नम्रतापूर्वक प्रश्न पूछना। श्रवण, ग्रहण, आदर, उत्साह, मन की एकाग्रता इत्यादि गुणों का भी परिप्रश्न-शब्द में संग्रह है। ३. सेवा अर्थात् ब्रह्मस्वरूप गुरु में प्रकटपरमात्मभाव से स्नेह और दिव्यभावपूर्वक शुश्रूषा करना। अथवा मन, कर्म और वचन से प्रत्यक्षपरमात्मभाव से दिव्यभावपूर्वक गुरु के दृढतम प्रसंगरूप सेवन करना सेवा है। इस प्रकार ब्रह्मस्वरूप गुरु का समाश्रय कर इन तीन रीति से गुरु का सेवन किया जाए तो ब्रह्मस्वरूप गुरु ब्रह्मविद्या का उपदेश करेंगे। यहाँ ‘उपदेक्ष्यन्ति’ शब्द में भविष्यकाल का प्रयोग है। यद्यपि अर्जुन के समक्ष भगवान् श्रीकृष्ण स्वयं उपदेश है तथापि वे भविष्यकाल का प्रयोग करते हैं, और कहते हैं कि ‘ऐसे ज्ञानी और तत्त्वदर्शी ब्रह्मस्वरूप गुरु तुम्हें ब्रह्मज्ञान का उपदेश करेंगे।’ इसका तात्पर्य यह है कि भविष्य में जब भगवान् अपनी नरनाट्यरूपलीला की समाप्ति करेंगे तब ऐसे साक्षात् ब्रह्मस्वरूप ज्ञानी गुरु द्वारा भगवान् ब्रह्मविद्या-प्रदान का कार्य जारी रखेंगे। इस प्रकार अक्षरब्रह्म में परब्रह्म के शाश्वत प्राकट्य के निर्देशरूप भविष्यकाल के प्रयोग से ‘प्रत्यक्षपरमात्मस्वरूप ब्रह्मस्वरूप गुरु अनिवार्य है’ ऐसा सिद्धांत प्रतिपादित किया गया है।³⁵

ब्रह्मस्वरूप गुरु में परमात्मा प्रकट रहते हैं इसका प्रतिपादन स्वामिनारायणभाष्यकार ने अन्यत्र भी अनेक स्थानों पर किया है। उदाहरण के रूप में ‘स ब्रह्मयोगयुक्तात्मा सुखमक्षय्यमश्नुते’ (५.२१) अर्थात् गुरुरूप अक्षरब्रह्म के प्रसंग से परमात्मा का शाश्वत सुख प्राप्त होता है।³⁶ भाष्यकार कहते हैं कि इस श्लोक में भी अक्षरब्रह्म द्वारा परब्रह्म का प्राकट्य उपस्थापित किया गया है। क्योंकि ‘शाश्वतस्य च धर्मस्य सुखस्यैकान्तिकस्य च’ (१४.२७) इस श्लोक में परमात्मा को शाश्वत और एकांतिक सुख का आधार कहा गया है, और यहाँ अक्षरब्रह्म को योग से

35. श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतास्वामिनारायणभाष्यम् ४.३४

36. श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतास्वामिनारायणभाष्यम् ५.२१

अक्षय सुख अर्थात् शाश्वत सुख की प्राप्ति दर्शाई गई है। इससे स्पष्ट होता है कि 'यस्य देवे परा भक्तिर्यथा देवे तथा गुरौ'³⁷ इस आदेश के अनुसार परमात्मा के धारक ब्रह्मस्वरूप गुरु में प्रत्यक्ष भगवान की भावना से यदि जुड़ जाये तो उसे भी परमात्मा के अक्षय सुख की अनुभूति होगी। इसीलिये परमसुखाभिलाषी को साक्षात् ब्रह्मस्वरूप गुरु का योग संपादित करना चाहिए।³⁸ ऐसे ब्रह्मस्वरूप गुरु के सांनिध्य से नीचे निर्दिष्ट अन्य उपाय भी मुमुक्षु के लिए सुकर हो जाते हैं।

२. परमात्मा के प्रति अनन्य भक्ति :

मां च योऽव्यभिचारेण भक्तियोगेन सेवते।

गुणान्समतीत्यैतान् ब्रह्मभूयाय कल्पते॥ १४.२६

अर्थात् जो अनन्य भक्ति से दिव्यभावपूर्वक मेरी उपासना करता है वह माया के सत्व, रज और तम इन तीन गुणों को लांघकर अर्थात् सांसारिक बंधनों से मुक्त हो कर ब्रह्मरूप हो जाता है। यहाँ स्वामिनारायणभाष्यकार ने स्पष्टरूप से निरूपित किया है कि अक्षरब्रह्मरूपता परमात्मा की अनन्य भक्ति से ही प्राप्य है अतः यदि कोई परब्रह्म की भक्ति को छोड़कर केवल अक्षरब्रह्म को लक्ष्य बनाकर ब्रह्मरूपत्व संपादित करने की आकांक्षा रखे तो उसका वह प्रयत्न सर्वथा निरर्थक होगा।³⁹

अन्यत्र भी 'मद्भक्ता यान्ति मामपि', 'मामेव स्मरन् ... यः प्रयाति स मद्भावं याति', 'भक्त्या युक्तो योगबलेन चैव ... स तं परं पुरुषमुपैति दिव्यम्', 'तस्याहं सुलभः', 'ये भजन्ति तु मां भक्त्या मयि ते तेषु चाप्यहम्', 'तेऽपि यान्ति परां गतिम्', 'मद्भक्तः ... मामेवैष्यसि', 'भक्त्या त्वनन्यया शक्य अहमेवविधोऽर्जुन। ज्ञातुं द्रष्टुं च तत्त्वेन प्रवेष्टुं च परन्तप॥', 'मद्भक्तः ... मामेति पाण्डवा॥', 'मां ध्यायन्त उपासते॥ तेषामहं समुद्धर्ता मृत्युसंसारसागरात्'।⁴⁰ इत्यादि श्लोकों में परमात्मभक्ति से परमात्मसाक्षात्कार, मुक्ति, परमगति इत्यादि फलनिर्देश द्वारा भक्ति का शांतिफलकत्व निरूपित किया गया है। ऐसी उत्कृष्ट परमात्मभक्ति के लिए भी पूर्वनिर्दिष्ट 'ब्रह्मभूतः प्रसन्नात्मा... मद्भक्तिं लभते पराम्' (१८.५४) इस सिद्धांत के अनुसार ब्रह्मरूप होना तो अनिवार्य है ही।

३. श्रद्धा :

'श्रद्धावाँल्लभते ज्ञानम्' (४.३९) श्रद्धावान को ब्रह्मज्ञान प्राप्त होता है। श्रद्धा को व्याख्यायित

37. श्वेताश्वतर उपनिषद् ६.२३

38. श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतास्वामिनारायणभाष्यम् ५.२१

39. श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतास्वामिनारायणभाष्यम् १४.२६

40. श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता - क्रमशः ७.२३, ८.५, ८.१०, ८.१४, ९.२९, ९.३२, ९.३४, ११.५४, ११.५५, १२.६, १२.७

करते हुए स्वामिनारायणभाष्यकार लिखते हैं, ‘ब्रह्मस्वरूप गुरु और उनके द्वारा उपदिष्ट शास्त्रवचनों को परम सत्य मानना और धैर्य रखना श्रद्धा है।’⁴¹ यहाँ धैर्य इसलिए कहा गया है क्योंकि ब्रह्मज्ञान को आत्मसात् करना सरल नहीं है। ‘अनेकजन्मसंसिद्धस्ततो याति परां गतिम्’ (६.४५) ब्रह्मस्वरूप गुरु के मार्गदर्शनानुसार अनेक जन्मों की साधना के पश्चात् परम गति प्राप्त होती है।⁴² अतः धैर्यरूप श्रद्धा भी आवश्यक है। ‘बुद्ध्या विशुद्ध्या युक्तो धृत्यात्मानं नियम्य च।’ (१८.५१) इस श्लोक में प्रभु ने आत्मनियमन हेतु भी धैर्य की आवश्यकता दर्शाई है।

४. तत्परता :

‘लभते ज्ञानं तत्परः’ (४.३९) ब्रह्मज्ञान की प्राप्ति के लिए तत्परता होनी चाहिए। ब्रह्मज्ञान ही सकलज्ञान में श्रेष्ठ ज्ञान है ऐसा मानकर उत्कंठा और त्वरापूर्वक ज्ञानप्राप्ति के उपायों का अनुष्ठान करते रहना ही तत्परता है। जो तत्पर होता है वह सदैव ब्रह्मज्ञान का अनुचिंतन करता रहता है।⁴³

५. इन्द्रियों का संयम :

‘लभते ज्ञानं तत्परः संयतेन्द्रियः’ (४.३९) अर्थात् जिसने इन्द्रियों को संयमित किया है उसे ब्रह्मज्ञान प्राप्त होता है। अतः ब्रह्मज्ञान के साक्षात्कार के लिए इन्द्रियों का संयम भी अनिवार्य है। अठारहवें अध्याय में भी ‘शब्दादीन् विषयांस्त्यक्त्वा’ (१८.५१) इत्यादि शब्दों से ब्रह्मरूप होने के लिए इन्द्रिय-संयम की अनिवार्यता दर्शाई है। द्वितीय अध्याय में जब ब्राह्मी स्थिति का निरूपण भगवान् श्रीकृष्ण करते हैं वहाँ आरंभ में ही ‘प्रजहाति यदा कामान् सर्वान् पार्थ मनेगतान्’ (२.५५) इस श्लोक से इन्द्रियों को संयमित कर मनःकल्पित लौकिक शब्दाविषय और वासना का त्याग ब्राह्मी स्थिति के गुणवैभव में प्रथमतया निरूपित किया है। वहीं ‘यदा संहरते चायं’ (२.५८), ‘तानि सर्वाणि संयम्य’ (२.६१) इत्यादि श्लोकों में भूयोभूय इन्द्रिय संयम का निर्देश किया गया है। अतः ब्रह्मविद्या संपादन हेतु यह भी एक महत्वपूर्ण साधन है।

६. काम-क्रोध आदि स्वभावों का त्याग :

‘अहङ्कारं बलं दर्पं कामं क्रोधं परिग्रहम्। विमुच्य निर्ममः शान्तो ब्रह्मभूयाय कल्पते॥’ (१८.५३) अहंकार, परपीडन, दर्प, काम, क्रोध, परिग्रह इत्यादि का ब्रह्मस्वरूप गुरु के बल से त्याग कर जो ममत्वरहित और विक्षोभशून्य हो गया है वही ब्रह्मरूपत्व-संपादन के

41. श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतास्वामिनारायणभाष्यम् ४.३९

42. श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतास्वामिनारायणभाष्यम् ६.४५

43. श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतास्वामिनारायणभाष्यम् ४.३९

योग्य है।⁴⁴ 'शक्नोतीहैव यः सोढुं प्राक्शरीरविमोक्षणात्। कामक्रोधोद्भवं वेगं स युक्तः स सुखी नरः' (५.२३) ब्रह्मस्वरूप गुरु के प्रसंग से जो मनुष्य इस लोक में ही मृत्यु से पूर्व काम-क्रोधादि से उद्भूत वेग को सहन करता सकता है वही योगी और सुखी मनुष्य है।⁴⁵ यहीं आगे ऐसे भक्त के लिए ब्रह्मभूत-शब्द का प्रयोग किया गया है।

७. माहात्म्य ज्ञानपूर्वक प्रकट परमात्मा की शरणागति :

'तमेव शरणं गच्छ सर्वभावेन भारता तत्प्रसादात्परां शान्तिं स्थानं प्राप्स्यसि शाश्वतम्' (१८.६२) अर्थात् हे अर्जुन तुम सर्वभाव से उसी परमात्मा की शरण में जाओ। उनकी प्रसन्नता से तुम परम शांति और शाश्वत स्थान को प्राप्त करोगे। यहाँ 'तमेव' इस शब्द से पूर्वनिरूपित सर्वकर्ता, सर्वनियामक, स्वान्तर्यामी, स्वतंत्र इत्यादि परमात्मगुणगण निरूपित है। ऐसे परमात्मा की शरण में जाना है। परंतु कैसे? 'सर्वभावेन' अर्थात् हे प्रभु आप ही मेरे मित्र, भाई, पिता, माता और गुरु हैं तथा आप ही सर्व अवतारों के कारण, सकल जगत की उत्पत्ति, स्थिति और प्रलय के कर्ता हैं, दिव्य अनंत और आश्चर्यमय शक्तिवाले हैं, सदा मनुष्याकार, द्विभुज, किशोरमूर्ति, घनश्याम हैं, मूर्तिमान अक्षरब्रह्म और अनंत कोटि ब्रह्मरूप मुक्त आपके चरणकमल की सदा पूजा करते हैं, करुणापूर्वक मेरे उद्धार के लिए, मुझे परमसुख प्रदान करने के लिए आपने मनुष्य अवतार धारण किया है, आप मनुष्यरूप में भी सदा दिव्य हैं, भजन, उपासना, ज्ञान, ध्यान, मनन इत्यादि से आप ही प्राप्त करने योग्य हैं, आप क्षमाशील हैं, मेरे सकल दोषों का नाश करनेवाले हैं और अक्षरब्रह्मगुरु द्वारा सर्वदा प्रकट रहते हैं। इस प्रकार सकल भावना से परमात्मा की शरण में जाना है। उस शरणागति से प्राप्त परमात्म-प्रसन्नता से परम शांति का अनुभव होगा और भगवान के निवासरूप शाश्वत अक्षरधाम की प्राप्ति होगी।⁴⁶

इस तरह यहाँ 'सर्वभावेन' इस क्रियाविशेषण द्वारा गीता में तत्तत्स्थानों में निरूपित 'सर्वकर्माणि मयि संन्यस्य', 'मत्परः', 'मां भजति', 'यस्मात्क्षरमतीतोऽहम्', 'तद्धाम परमं मम', 'मम योनिर्महद्ब्रह्म', 'मां ध्यायन्त उपासते', 'मय्येव मन आधत्स्व', 'ॐ इत्येकाक्षरं ब्रह्म व्याहरन्मामनुस्मरन्' इत्यादि सकल माहात्म्यरूप और भक्ति-उपासन-प्रकाररूप भाव निर्दिष्ट है।

अंतिम अध्याय में भगवान श्रीकृष्ण अर्जुन को प्रेरित करते हुए कहते हैं, 'सर्वधर्मान् परित्यज्य मामेकं शरणं ब्रज। अहं त्वा सर्वपापेभ्यो मोक्षयिष्यामि मा शुचा।' (१८.६६) यहाँ भगवान श्रीकृष्ण 'प्रभु की शरणागति से सारे पाप नष्ट हो जाते हैं।' यहाँ शांति में विघ्न करनेवाले पापों का नाश करनेवाली शरणागति का विशिष्ट सामर्थ्य दर्शाया गया है।

44. श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतास्वामिनारायणभाष्यम् १८.५३

45. श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतास्वामिनारायणभाष्यम् ५.२३

46. श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतास्वामिनारायणभाष्यम् १८.६२

८. भक्त की रुचि के अनुसार कर्मयोग अथवा ज्ञानयोग :

ब्रह्मरूप गुरु के आश्रय में भक्त अपनी रुचि अनुसार कर्मयोग अथवा ज्ञानयोग का अनुष्ठान कर सकता है। इन दोनों मार्गों में कोई न्यूनाधिकत्व नहीं है क्योंकि दोनों के फल एक समान ही हैं। जैसे कि 'तस्मादसक्तः सततं कार्यं कर्म समाचर। असक्तो ह्याचरन्कर्म परमाप्नोति पूरुषः॥', 'ये मे मतमिदं नित्यमनुतिष्ठन्ति मानवाः। ब्रह्मावन्तोऽनसूयन्तो मुच्यन्ते तेऽपि कर्मभिः॥', 'ब्रह्मण्याधाय कर्माणि सङ्गं त्यक्त्वा करोति यः। लिप्यते न स पापेन पद्मपत्रमिवाम्भसा॥', 'युक्तः कर्मफलं त्यक्त्वा शान्तिमाप्नोति नैष्ठिकीम्', 'यत्करोषि यदश्नासि यज्जुहोषि ददासि यत्। यत्तपस्यसि कौन्तेय तत्कुरुष्व मदर्पणम्॥ शुभाशुभफलैरेवं मोक्ष्यसे कर्मबन्धनैः। संन्यासयोगयुक्तात्मा विमुक्तो मामुपैष्यसि॥', 'मद्याजी ... मामेवैष्यसि'⁴⁷ इत्यादि अनेक श्लोकों में भगवान् श्रीकृष्ण ने कर्मयोग का प्रतिपादन किया है और उसके फलस्वरूप मोक्ष, परमात्मप्राप्ति, परम शांति इत्यादि दर्शाया है।

उसी प्रकार 'जन्म कर्म च मे दिव्यमेवं यो वेत्ति तत्त्वतः। त्यक्त्वा देहं पुनर्जन्म नैति मामेति सोऽर्जुन॥', 'बहवो ज्ञानतपसा पूता मद्भावमागताः।', 'इति मां योऽभिजानाति कर्मभिर्न स बध्यते', 'यज्ज्ञात्वा मोक्ष्यसेऽशुभात्', 'ज्ञानावस्थितचेतसः ... कर्म समग्रं प्रविलीयते', 'यज्ज्ञात्वा न पुनर्मोहमेवं यास्यसि पाण्डव', 'सर्वं ज्ञानप्लवेनैव वृजिनं सन्तरिष्यसि॥', 'ज्ञानाग्निः सर्वकर्माणि भस्मसात्कुरुते तथा', 'ज्ञानसंछिन्नसंशयम्। आत्मवन्तं न कर्माणि निबध्नन्ति', 'तेषामादित्यवज्ज्ञानं प्रकाशयति तत्परम्', 'गच्छन्त्यपुनरावृत्तिं ज्ञाननिर्धूतकल्मषाः', 'सुहृदं सर्वभूतानां ज्ञात्वा मां शान्तिमृच्छति', 'यज्ज्ञात्वा नेह भूयोऽन्यज्ज्ञातव्यमवशिष्यते।', 'ज्ञानवान् मां प्रपद्यते', 'यज्ज्ञात्वा मोक्ष्यसेऽशुभात्', 'यो मामजमनादिं च वेत्ति लोकमहेश्वरम्। असम्मूढः स मन्त्रेषु सर्वपापैः प्रमुच्यते॥', 'इदं ज्ञानमुपाश्रित्य मम साधर्म्यमागताः। सर्गेऽपि नोपजायन्ते प्रलये न व्यथन्ति च॥'⁴⁸ इत्यादि श्लोकों में भगवान् श्रीकृष्ण ने ज्ञानयोग का प्रतिपादन किया है और उसके फलस्वरूप मोक्ष, परमात्मप्राप्ति, परम शांति इत्यादि दर्शाया है। उसी प्रकार पूर्वोक्त भक्तियोग का भी ऐसा ही निरूपण और फलनिर्देश भगवान् श्रीकृष्ण ने किया है। इससे फलित होता है कि ज्ञानयोग या कर्मयोग या भक्तियोग इत्यादि भिन्न भिन्न शब्द-प्रयोग केवल भक्त की रुचि के भेद दर्शाते हैं, वस्तुतः इन सभी मार्गों में परमात्मा का संबंध होने के कारण सभी मार्ग कल्याणकारी और शांतिप्रदाता ही हैं। स्वयं भगवान् श्रीकृष्ण ने 'सांख्ययोगौ पृथग्बालाः प्रवदन्ति न पण्डिताः। एकमप्यास्थितः सम्यग्भयोर्विन्दते फलम्॥'(५.४) इस श्लोक में इसका निरूपण किया है।

47. श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता - क्रमशः ३.१९, ३.३१, ५.१०, ५.१२, ९.२७-२८, ९.३४

48. श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता - क्रमशः ४.९, ४.१०, ४.१४, ४.१६, ४.२३, ४.३५, ४.३६, ४.३७, ४.४१, ५.१६, ५.१७, ५.२९, ७.२, ७.१९, ९.१, १०.३, १४.२

गीता में निर्दिष्ट ब्रह्मस्वरूप भक्त का शांतिसहकारक वैशिष्ट्य-वैभव

ब्रह्मविद्या के फलस्वरूप परमशांतिरूप परमात्मसुख का अनुभव तो होता ही है, इसके अतिरिक्त ऐसे ब्रह्मरूप भक्त की अन्य विशेषताएँ भी भगवान श्रीकृष्ण ने निरूपित की है, जो अन्ततः शांति में ही सहकारक है। स्वामिनारायण भाष्य के अनुसार ऐसे ब्रह्मस्वरूप भक्त की कुछ विशेषताएँ यहाँ प्रस्तुत हैं।

- वह भक्त परमपुरुष परमात्मा को प्राप्त कर लेता है।
 - परमाप्नोति पूरुषः (३.१९), ज्ञानवान् मां प्रपद्यते (७.१९)
- वह कर्म से मुक्त हो जाता है और उसे कर्म का बंधन नहीं होता।
 - मुच्यन्ते तेऽपि कर्मभिः (३.३१), कर्मभिर्न स बध्यते (४.१४)
- वह पाप से मुक्त हो जाता है।
 - लिप्यते न स पापेन (५.१०), सर्वपापैः प्रमुच्यते (१०.३),
मोक्ष्यसेऽशुभात् (४.१६)
- उसका पुनर्जन्म नहीं होता।
 - पुनर्जन्म नैति मामेति (४.९), सर्गेऽपि नोपजायन्ते प्रलये न व्यथन्ति
च (१४.२), गच्छन्त्यपुनरावृत्तिम् (५.१७)
- उसे कभी मोह नहीं होता।
 - यज्ज्ञात्वा न पुनर्मोहमेवं यास्यसि पण्डव (४.३५)
- वह परमात्मा का अतिशय प्रिय बन जाता है।
 - तेऽतीव मे प्रियाः (१२.२०)
- उसके योग और क्षेम का वहन परमात्मा करते हैं।
 - योगक्षेमं वहाम्यहम् (९.२२)
- वह परमात्मा के दिव्य अविनाशी अक्षरधाम को प्राप्त करता है।
 - गच्छन्त्यमूढाः पदमव्ययं तत् (१५.५)
 - ब्रह्मनिर्वाणमृच्छति (२.७१)

उपसंहार

श्रीमद्भगवद्गीता-स्वामिनारायणभाष्य के अनुसार परम शांति का उपाय है ब्रह्मविद्या। अनादि काल से माया से मुक्त ऐसे अक्षरब्रह्म और परब्रह्म इन दो ब्रह्म-तत्त्वों का तत्त्वतः विज्ञान ही ब्रह्मविद्या है। ऐसी ब्रह्मविद्या आत्मसात हो जाने से परमात्मा के अपरिमित आनंद की, परम शांति की अनुभूति होती है।

ब्रह्मविद्या को सिद्ध करने हेतु सर्वप्रथम ब्रह्मस्वरूप गुरु का आश्रय अनिवार्य है। ऐसे

ब्रह्मस्वरूप गुरु के मार्गदर्शन अनुसार श्रद्धापूर्वक परमात्म-समाश्रय, सेवा, भक्ति, इन्द्रियनिग्रह इत्यादि साधना करने से मुमुक्षु को ब्राह्मी स्थिति प्राप्त होती है। वह भक्त ब्रह्मरूप हो जाता है। अक्षरपुरुषोत्तम दर्शन के अनुसार ऐसे ब्रह्मरूप भक्त को ही परमात्मसुख का अधिकारी दर्शाया गया है। उसी को परमात्मा की परा भक्ति का अधिकार मिलता है। ऐसा ब्रह्मज्ञानी ब्रह्मरूप भक्त पुनः कभी मोहित नहीं होता, उसके सारे कर्म-बंधन नष्ट हो जाते हैं, वह जन्म-मृत्यु के चक्र से मुक्त हो जाता है, परमात्मा का अतिशय प्रिय बन जाता है, उसे परमात्मा के अनवधिकातिशय सुख की अर्थात् शाश्वत शांति की अनुभूति होती है और मृत्यु के पश्चात् वह सदा के लिए परमात्मा के अक्षरधाम में जाकर परमात्मा के आनंद को प्राप्त करता है।

इस प्रकार अक्षरपुरुषोत्तम दर्शन के अनुसार ब्रह्मरूप होकर परब्रह्म परमात्मा की अनन्य भक्ति करने रूप ब्रह्मविद्या ही परम शांति का, परमात्मा के अखंड अविनाशी सुख के अधिकारी बनने का परम उपाय है।

BOOK REVIEWS

A LUCID INTRODUCTION TO THE SVĀMINĀRĀYAṆA DARŚANA: SVĀMINĀRĀYAṆASIDDHĀNTASUDHĀ BY MAHĀMAHOPĀDHYĀYA SADHU BHADRESHDAS

PROF. C. RAJENDRAN

Former Head, Department of Sanskrit
University of Calicut

Vedānta philosophy as described within Bādarāyaṇa's *Brahmasūtras* has been interpreted in different ways by numerous philosophers including, Śāṅkara, Rāmānuja, Madhva, Bhāskara, and Nimbārka. Each ācārya presents unique perceptions about the ultimate reality signified by 'brahman' and the nature of the individual self and the material world. While Śāṅkara postulates the principle of *māyā* and maintains that the material world is only an apparent transformation of the Brahman, most of the other schools take the world to be the real transformation of the Absolute. There is also a difference of opinion about the stature of the individual self vis-à-vis the Absolute. The position of a personal god is yet another greatly debated point.

An interesting interpretation of Vedānta is offered by the relatively recent Svāminārāyaṇa school of Vedānta that was founded by Bhagavān Swaminarayan (Svāminārāyaṇa) (1781-1830). The teachings of this *darśana* is identified as the Akṣara-Puruṣottama philosophy. This philosophy extensively references scriptures to postulate *Para-brahman*, the supreme being, as distinct from Akṣara-brahman, the immutable cause of the universe. Parabrahman is identified with Nārāyaṇa and regarded as beyond any modification. Attaining identity with the Akṣarabrahman is not the end of the spiritual journey. In fact, it only paves the way for

the real devotion to the Supreme *brahman*, who is to be approached with the sentiments of servitude. By maintaining this position, the philosophy harmoniously integrates Upaniṣadic doctrines of absolutism and theism. It also substantiates its position with numerous quotations from scriptures.

The present work is authored by Sadhu Bhadreshdas—an erudite scholar of the Svāminārāyaṇa *darśana*. The text provides an elegant introduction to the basic tenets of the system in pure and scholarly Sanskrit. Sadhu Bhadreshdas has already won the acclaim of the scholarly world for his expert exposition of the *Prasthānatrayī* from the perspective of the Svāminārāyaṇa *saṃpradāya*. The present work, authored in the classical *vādagrantha* style, will be interesting to all students of Indian philosophy. It recreates the environment of ancient scholarly discourses, where philosophy was a matter of daily intellectual exercise and Sanskrit was the vehicle of scholarly exchange.

The work is divided into nine sections called *dhārās* or streams. The first section, called the “Maṅgaladhārā,” offers benediction, pays obeisance to Akṣara-Puruṣottama and Shastriji Maharaj (Śāstrīji Mahārāja), and presents an account of the following five fundamental entities identified by the *darśana*: the *jīvas* (the individual self), *īśvaras* (conscious entities that are assigned with tasks by Parabrahman to ensure the function of the universe), *māyā* (the cause of delusion and bondage), Akṣarabrahman, and the supreme Parabrahman. While both Brahman (Akṣarabrahman) and Parabrahman are beyond *māyā*’s influence, the *jīvas* and the *īśvaras* are understood as bound by *māyā*.

The second chapter, entitled “Akṣarabrahmadhārā” deals with the nature of Akṣarabrahman. It is described as the entity which neither diminishes (*na kṣīyate*) nor becomes destroyed (*na kṣarati*), which pervades all things and resides as the abode of all. The author demonstrates how the nature and distinct form of Akṣarabrahman is substantiated by scriptural authority by providing numerous references from the Upaniṣads that support its position. Among others, it recalls readings from the Kāṭhapaniṣad (2.16), Muṇḍakopaniṣad (2.2.2), Taittirīyopaniṣad

(2.1.1), and also from the *Bhagavadgītā* (8.13). The author clarifies that within these and other readings the qualification ‘Akṣara’ cannot be applied to the Supreme Puruṣottama, who transcends even Brahman (Akṣarabrahman). As described in Muṇḍakopaniṣad (2.1.1), all entities of this universe emanate from Akṣara just as “sparks are emitted from a blazing fire.”

In the third chapter, titled “Parabrahmadhārā,” the author describes the nature and form of Puruṣottama, the supreme being, who is signified by the term ‘Nārāyaṇa.’ Parabrahman is portrayed as a being who is brilliant, eternal, divine, has definite form, is devoid of defects, and transcends and presides over māyā. Puruṣottama’s form is worshipped by devotees. It is portrayed as being ever youthful (*kiśora*) and residing in the eternal abode, which is identified as Akṣaradhāman. The author quotes extensively from Upaniṣads, the *Bhagavadgītā*, and the *Bhāgavatapurāṇa* to establish the transcendental, effulgent, and omnipresent nature of this supreme being.

The epistemology of the *darśana* is discussed in the section called “Pramāṇadhārā.” The author counters the view that knowledge is dependent on the means of knowledge (*mānādhīnā meyasiddhiḥ*) even for liberated souls, who have realized the true nature of the ultimate reality. Adopting an eclectic approach regarding means of valid knowledge, the author outlines the nature of eight sources of knowledge (*pramāṇas*): perception (*pratyakṣa*), inference (*anumāṇa*), analogy (*upamāṇa*), verbal testimony (*śabda*), presumption (*arthāpatti*), non-apprehension (*anupalabdhi*), possibility (*sambhava*), and traditional belief (*aitihya*). The school accepts the division of perception into worldly (*laukika*) and non-worldly (*alaukika*) perception, similar to the Nyāya Darśana. The *laukika* comprises of sensory perception, while the *alaukika* accounts for all types of extra-sensory perception. All the methods of language acquisition (*śaktigrahopāyas*), such as grammar and lexicon that are accepted by the Naiyāyikas are also accepted here as aids to verbal understanding. The doctrine of error accepted in the *darśana* goes by the name *cidacitkhyāti*.

The next section explains the nature of *māyā*. *Māyā* is understood to be that which results in the manifestation of the diverse material world. Similar to the Sāṅkhya *darśana's prakṛti*, *māyā* consists of the following three qualities (*guṇas*): *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*. It is the inert entity that results in the creation of the universe. *Māyā* is also identified as the cause of ego and possessiveness. It has the power to conceal the true nature of the self and cause the self to become attached to the world. As in the Sāṅkhya system, *māyā* as the base *prakṛti* is understood to evolve into *mahat*, the ego (*ahaṃkāra*), the mind (*manas*), the intellect (*buddhi*), the five sensory organs, the five motor organs, the five subtle elements, and the five gross elements. The system accepts the process of creation as *pañcīkaraṇa*—the means by which all gross elements are intermixed. By advocating that the world cannot become as it is without a cause, the system rejects the notion of philosophical naturalism (*svabhāvavāda*). It also rejects the Sāṅkhya Darśana's accidental causal theory, the Vaiśeṣikas' atomic theory, the nihilist and momentary doctrines, the views of the Yogācāras, Vaibhāṣikas and the Sautrāntikas, and the doctrine of the Ārhatas.

The next section, entitled the “Jīvadhārā” establishes the existence of the individual self as distinct from the body, the sensory organs, and the mental apparatus. The *jīvas* are identified as sentient, eternal and distinct from the supreme Brahman (Parabrahman), Akṣarabrahman, and the *īśvaras*. They are many in number, immutable, and like atoms, minute. They are bound by *māyā* since eternity, partake in righteous and unrighteous actions, and experience the fruits of these actions. The *darśana* rejects the Cārvāka view that the self is indistinct from the body and the Buddhist view that the self is void and consists of knowledge in flux. The doctrine also rejects the Advaitin position that the relationship between *brahman* and the *jīvas* is comparable to that between an object and its reflection (*bimbapratibimbabhāva*).

The author discusses the nature and form of *īśvaras* in the proceeding section identified as the “Īśvaradhārā.” The doctrine accepts that there are innumerable *īśvaras*, who are assigned various functions in the creation,

sustenance, and destruction of the material world by the supreme Brahman (Parabrahman). *Īśvaras* are identified as distinct entities from Parabrahman, Akṣarabrahman, and the individual *jīvas*. They are conscious in nature and eternal. While they are inferior to the Supreme Brahman (Parabrahman) and Brahman (Akṣarabrahman), they are vastly superior to the *jīvas* in terms of their capacity for knowledge and power.

The spiritual endeavour of the system is outlined in the next section called the “Sādhanaadhārā.” At the outset, the author, references a Kaṭhopeniṣad passage to emphasize that the cessation of the *jīvas*’ and *īśvaras*’ worldly life (the end of the circle of life and death) is possible only by the grace of Parabrahman and Akṣarabrahman. To attain such grace, the self strives to attain the realization of the supreme being with one’s mind, body, and speech. Even though the darśana acknowledges the fourfold social order within the realm of the material world, it maintains that the qualities of an individual, not one’s birth, determines one’s social position.

The final section called the “Phaladhārā” describes the nature and state of liberation. The *darśana* rules out the possibility of *jīvas* and *īśvaras* attaining ontological identity with *brahman*. Liberation (*mukti*) is conceived as attained by the grace of the supreme being. Liberation is characterized by the following two: the abandonment of all undesirable elements, such as *māyā*, and the attainment of devotion (*bhakti*) for Parabrahman. In addition to accepting liberation after the cessation of the mortal body (*videhamukti*), the darśana also accepts the possibility of attaining liberation while being alive (*jīvanamukti*). In support it references several readings from scriptures like the *Bhagavadgītā* that reveal the *sthitaprajña* nature of the *jīvanamukta*. The *darśana* also recognises three types of passages for the liberated self and describes various stations of the self (*ātman*) in its final journey towards Parabrahman’s divine abode.

The *Svāminārāyaṇasiddhāntasudhā* has two appendices at the end of the text. The first consists of Svāmī Nārāyaṇasvarūpadāsa’s (Pramukh Swami Maharaj’s) outline of the essential doctrine of the Svāminārāyaṇa

philosophy. The second appendix is written by the author of the work. It provides a concise summary of entire work in verse form.

Students of Indian philosophy will be greatly indebted to Swami Bhadreshdas for providing this scholarly introduction to the Svāminārāyaṇa philosophy. Its clear and comprehensible Sanskrit is commendable. Within this exceptional exposition, the author displays his thorough knowledge of not only the *saṃpradāya*, but also the various schools of Indian philosophy. He authenticates his position at every juncture with numerous references to scriptures, such as the Upaniṣads and the *Bhagavadgītā*. Rival perspectives are presented clearly and accurately and responded to from the *siddhānta* position. Written in modern times, the work serves as a testament to India's living *darśanic* and *śāstra* tradition.

BRAHMASŪTRA BHĀṢYAM

BY BHADRESHDAS SWAMI

PROF. N. RADHAKRISHNA BHATT

Late, Head of Sanskrit Research and Publication,
KSOU

About the author: Dr. Sadhu Bhadreshdas is a profound scholar. I am proud to announce that he was a student at our Karnataka State Open University, Manasagangotri, Mysore. He completed his MA in Sanskrit and received First class honours for his accomplishments. Thereafter, under my guidance he pursued his doctorate degree, Ph.D., on the subject: “Paramātma-pratyakṣa-svarūpa-yoga: Śrīmadbhagavadgītā-Śrīvacanāmṛta-saṃdarbhayoḥ Tulanātmakādhyayanam.” Dr. Sadhu Bhadreshdas produced an exceptional thesis. He placed tremendous effort in its creation. He presented it in lucid Sanskrit and received great appreciation by the examiners of his work.

I whole heartedly congratulate him and wish him much success in producing many such scholarly works, which enrich knowledge and benefit all of mankind.

I am delighted to know that Sadhu Bhadreshdas recently authored the unique and profound *Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣya* on Bādarāyaṇa’s *Brahmasūtras*.

About the work: The *Brahmasūtra-Svāminārāyaṇa-Bhāṣya* is a commentary that explains the philosophy of Bhagavān Śrī Swaminarayan (Svāminārāyaṇa). It is a very informative and authoritative commentary.

The *Brahmasūtra* is a great work of Bādarāyaṇa that discusses the knowledge of *brahman*. All Vedānta ācāryas have authored commentaries on it along with the following two important sacred texts: the Upaniṣads

and the *Śrīmadbhagavadgītā*. These three sacred texts are collectively known as the *Prasthānatrayī*. The great ācāryas authored commentaries on these works and established their own *darśanic* positions by interpreting these three sacred texts. The *Brahmasūtra-Svāminārāyaṇa-Bhāṣya* is created according to the Svāminārāyaṇa tradition and its philosophical principles. Dr. Sadhu Bhadreshdas' hard work, his meticulous study, and the blessings and inspiration from his guru Pramukh Swami Maharaj culminated into in the impressive creation of the *Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣya*.

The commentary is authored according to the Akṣara-Puruṣottama doctrine. Among other things, it is unique because of its extraordinary quality. Its every word presents unseen treasures hidden within Vedic principles. The text will help scholars study classical Vedānta texts under a new light. It possesses the potential to elevate the individual and take Vedānta philosophy to a greater heights. The commentary's stylistic elements reflect those of the classical and authoritative style of the renowned ācāryas. Dr. Sadhu Bhadreshdas substantiates his explanations of the aphorisms within the text by quoting several readings from the Upaniṣad and other sacred texts. The work reveals hidden principles of the *śrutis* and demonstrates readings from a larger, inclusive perspective. An in-depth study of this commentary will surely elevate one's understanding of Vedānta. This *bhāṣya* convincingly explains and establishes the eternal truth of Vedic philosophy revealed by Bhagavān Śrī Swaminarayan. It is immensely useful for understanding Indian philosophy. It is an unbiased work and does not discredit any other tradition (*saṃpradāya*) of Indian philosophy. The text offers interesting expositions on all aspects of the Svāminārāyaṇa tradition and brings forth its novel features. For this reason, it is an indispensable guide to students of Śrī Swaminarayan philosophy and may be used in curriculums where this philosophy is studied. By studying it, one concludes that the Svāminārāyaṇa *saṃpradāya* and the Akṣara Puruṣottama Siddhānta is an independent tradition that is based on ancient Vedic principles. The tradition's principles greatly differ from Rāmānuja's Viśiṣṭādvaita, Vallabhadeva's Śuddhādvaita and

the philosophy of Madhva, Nimbārka, and other Vedānta *darśanas*. The *Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣya* effectively brings forth the tradition's and its *siddhānta*'s distinctive features and principles.

By composing this text according to the eternal Vedic principles conveyed by Bhagavān Śrī Swaminarayan and the teachings of the enlightened guru-*paramaparā* (lineage of gurus that succeeded Bhagavān Swaminarayan), the author of this commentary has performed a great service. I hope that the author of this work continues to produce additional scholarly works and, in doing so, enlighten all those who seek knowledge from its pages.

BRAHMASŪTRA SVĀMINĀRĀYAṆABHĀṢYAM: A UNIQUE JEWEL IN THE VEDĀNTIC TRADITION

PROF. V. S. VISHNU POTTY

Professor, Dean, School of Sanskrit & Languages,
Kanchipuram

Its origin may have begun at the nano-level or possibly a level even smaller than that. Despite its modest beginnings, it grows instantly and crosses all imaginable boundaries. There are no limits to it; There is also no end to it. It is not unnatural or alien. It is the human thought. Yes indeed, there is no end to human thought. One cannot control it or categorize it into watertight compartments. It will break all bounds and stride to the deepest parts of the ocean and scale the highest peaks. However much humanity travels or advances it still remains steady at the point of its origin. Despite all advancement, certain fundamental questions remain to be difficult to answer. Even today, there are no conclusive answers to these questions—questions that many among us have sincerely tried to answer. Men of renunciation, perhaps one in a million, may have advanced in their search for truth and may have, to some extent, approached closer to the goal. We consider them prophets or god men and interpret their revelations. Their thoughts continue to influence us to this day. Their successors and scholars who follow them carefully study their reflections, offer different perspectives on them, and spread the revelations of these enlightened souls.

This treatise—the *Brahrnasūtrasvāminārāyaṇabhāṣya*—of Sadhu Bhadreshtas, is an interpretation of the great *Śārīrikamīmāṃsāsūtras* of Vyāsa. The creation of the *Brahrnasūtrasvāminārāyaṇabhāṣya* indicates that the unbroken chain of philosophical revelation continues to remain

strong and unshaken.

When interpreting a text, it is natural that the interpreter's perspective is influenced by their own beliefs, values, and thought processes. Sometime the interpreter dogmatizes their own viewpoint to such an extent that they criticize other beliefs to establish the supremacy of their own position. However, Sadhu Bhadreshdas' *Brahmasūtrasvāminārāyaṇabhāṣya* does not do this. It offers a novel interpretation that objectively reveals new horizons.

It is our culture to appreciate and accept the writings of the larger antiquity and also to view modern creations with speculation. Such reservation, however, should not be interpreted as mere prejudicial but instead as a testament to the willingness and patience to reflect upon the opinions of a larger intellectual forum. In spite of such apprehensive tendencies, those who are unbiased and unprejudiced view the original interpretations found within the *Brahmasūtrasvāminārāyaṇabhāṣya* as undoubtedly worthy of great appreciation. It is a creation that is born from tireless effort and *samādhi* (intense contemplative meditation). It offers a comprehensive explanation of Swaminarayan's (Svāminārāyaṇa) philosophy without deviating from the sacred teachings of the Upanishads. The commentary's lucid presentation demonstrates the author's intellectual aptitude and allows for all who seek to understand Swaminarayan's philosophy to effortlessly become familiar with its principles.

Sadhu Bhadreshdas' creation blossoms into a thought-provoking testament that strengthens the faith of all followers of the Swaminarayan way of life. It is yet another jewel that adorns the necklace of *Brahmasūtra* commentaries—a necklace that complements the radiance of the maternal Upanishads.

P RASTHĀNATRAYĪ SVĀMINĀRĀYAṆABHĀṢYAM

PROF. M. M. AGRAWAL

Professor Emeritus of Sanskrit,
Delhi University

मङ्गलं श्रीगुरोर्ध्यानं मङ्गलं तत्पदाम्बुजम् ।

मङ्गलं तज्जपो नित्यं मङ्गलं गुणकीर्तनम् ॥

Indian Philosophy may be divided roughly into three periods : (1) the Vedic period, (2) the Upaniṣadic period and (3) the post-Vedic period. The Vedic period refers to the period of the *saṃhitās*, the *brāhmaṇas* and the *āraṇyakas*, especially the Ṛgveda Saṃhitā. The *saṃhitās* consist mostly of hymns in praise of nature gods, such as Agni, Vāyu, and others. With the exception of a few hymns in the later parts of the *saṃhitās*, there is little, if any, philosophy within them. In the few hymns that do offer such reflection, we find interesting philosophical ruminations on cosmological subjects. In the *brāhmaṇas* and the *āraṇyakas*, which followed the Vedic hymns, there are two tendencies: 1) those that seek to establish the mystical forms of ritualistic worship and 2) those that engage in generalized reflections. The latter tendency was indeed much weaker than the former, and it may be the case that ritualistic tendencies had actually enveloped what little philosophy the later parts of the *saṃhitās* expressed.

The Upaniṣadic period is quite distinct in character from the first; though it is a natural result of it. Although philosophical thought during the first period was mainly cosmological, with only a traces of pure philosophical reflection, the second period was vastly different in that

it focused mainly on such revelation. The Upaniṣads contain various sorts of philosophical revelations, most of which are monastic in nature, but also with some pluralistic and dualistic elements.

The post-Vedic period is a systematic period, which saw the development of the six systems (*darśanas*), viz. Sāṃkhya, Yoga, Nyāya, Vaiśeṣika, Mīmāṃsā (alternatively known as Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā), and Vedānta (also known as Uttara-Mīmāṃsā). The roots of these systems were already present in the Upaniṣads. In addition to these systems, several theistic systems also gained prominence in the eighth century A.D. They probably also had their early beginnings at the time of the Upaniṣads. This systematic period may have begun with the collections of sūtras which are regarded as the foundations of the several *darśanic* systems. The intervening stage between the Vedic and the Upaniṣadic stage, on the one hand, and the period identified with the creation of the sūtras, on the other, is represented by the philosophical sections in the *Mahābhārata*: viz. the *Bhagavadgītā*, *Mokṣa-dharma*, and others.

Among the six systems of Indian Philosophy, Vedānta is the most acclaimed and the best studied. 'Vedānta' signifies literally in Sanskrit 'the final sections of the Veda;' in common use, however, the term is used in reference to the concluding portions of the Vedic literature known as the Upaniṣads. Thus, Vedānta philosophy, properly speaking, is that philosophy which takes its lead from the Upaniṣads. Although all systems are understood to derive their support from the Upaniṣads, 'Vedānta' applies only to Uttara-Mīmāṃsā and the various schools that comprise it. There are well-established reasons for this restricted application of 'Vedānta.' First, no other system makes as much use of Upaniṣadic authority as the various schools of Uttara-Mīmāṃsā. Most importantly, according to the Uttara-Mīmāṃsā, the *śruti* is considered to possess supreme authority.

In addition to the Upaniṣads, the *Brahmasūtras* ascribed to Bādarāyaṇa, also called the *Vedāntasūtras*, *Brahmasūtras* or *Śārīrakamīmāṃsāsūtras*, form the second great authority for the Vedānta schools. In addition

to the Upaniṣads and the *Brahmasūtras*, all Vedānta schools assert their *darśanic* positions on the authority of the *Bhagavadgītā*. Thus, the Upaniṣads, *Brahmasūtras*, and the *Bhagavadgītā* are collectively known as the *Prasthānatrayī*—the three textual foundations of Vedāntic philosophy.¹ The Upaniṣads are known as *Śruti-prasthāna*, the *Brahmasūtras* as the *Nyāya-prasthāna*, and the *Bhagavadgītā* as the *Smṛti-prasthāna*. Each of the acclaimed founders of the Vedānta schools or their predecessors have authored commentaries on the Upaniṣads (at least the principal ones), *Brahmasūtras*, and the *Bhagavadgītā*. Of these three texts, we are here only concerned with the commentaries on the *Brahmasūtras*.

The *Brahmasūtras* of Bādarāyaṇa are contained in four chapters (*adhyāyas*), each which is divided into four quarters (*pādas*). There are a total of 564 sūtras or aphorisms within the text. In chapter-I, the “Samanvayādhyāya,” *brahman* is established as the sole subject of all sacred texts. The nature of *brahman*, its attributes and the sources of its knowledge are discussed in this chapter. In chapter II, “Avirodhādhyāya,” the various commentators of the text read it refute the views of Sāṃkhya-Yoga, Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika, Buddhism, Jainism, Śaivism, Śāktism, and Vaiṣṇavism and offer reflection on the nature of the self (*jīva*), the world (*jagat*), and their relationships with *brahman*. These two chapters are purely metaphysical and serve as the philosophical foundations of various doctrines. The remaining chapters are chiefly express devotional and ethical interests. Chapter III, “Sādhanaādhyāya,” for example, discusses the means of attaining liberation (*mokṣa*) and the nature and significance of the meditations described in the Upaniṣads. Finally, in chapter IV, “Phalādhyāya,” the commentators express their readings on, among others, liberation (*mokṣa*), the fruits of the liberated self (*mukta jīvātman*), and the nature of their state.

The *Brahmasūtra* consists of several *adhikaraṇas* or sections. Every

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1. “Vedānto nāmopaniṣatpramāṇaṁ tadupakārīṇi śārīrakasūtrādīni ca” (*Vedānta-Sāra of Sadānanda*, Ed. by M. Hiriyanna, Oriental Book Agency, Poona, 2nd edition, 1962, p. 1.)

section consists of the following six parts: (1) *viśaya* or subject, (2) *saṁśaya* or doubt, (3) *pūrvapakṣa* or opposing view, (4) *uttarapakṣa* or responding view, (5) *siddhānta* or conclusion and lastly, (6) *saṅgati* or consistency with the other parts of the work.² *Saṅgati* or consistency shows that there is no conflict in what precedes and what follows any particular discussion. It is of three kinds: (1) Consistency with the scripture is called *śāstra saṅgati*, (2) consistency in the chapter or *adhyāya* is called *adhyāya saṅgati*, and (3) consistency within the quarter or *pāda* is called *pāda saṅgati*. In order to fulfil the condition of *śāstra-saṅgati*, an interpretation of any passage must not deviate from the primary subject of the text: viz. *brahman*. Secondly, each *adhyāya* presents discussion on a specific topic; a passage must be interpreted consistently with the topic of its *adhyāya*. A similar consistency exists with a *pāda-saṅgati*. In addition to these three types of *saṅgati*, there are relationships among the *adhikaraṇas* or sections themselves. One *adhikaraṇa* leads to another through some association of ideas. In a *pāda* there are many *adhikaraṇas* which are combined by a well-reasoned structure. The *saṅgati* which binds one *adhikaraṇa* with another is of the following six types: (1) *ākṣepa-saṅgati* or objection, (2) *dṛṣṭānta-saṅgati* or illustration, (3) *prati-dṛṣṭānta-saṅgati* or counter-illustration, (4) *prasaṅga-saṅgati* or incidental illustration, (5) *utpatti-saṅgati* or introduction, and (6) *apavāda-saṅgati* or exception.³ Thus, for example, in the seventh *adhikaraṇa* of the first *pāda* of the first *adhyāya*, the reference of ‘person’ in the following reading is discussed: “Now, this golden person, who is seen within the Sun, has a golden beard and golden hair and is entirely golden, right to the tip of his finger-nail.” “His eyes are like a fully blossomed lotus. His name is high, since he is above all sin. Verily, those who realize this rise above all sins. The Ṛc and Sāman eulogize him; [this much is revealed in] reference to the gods, ‘Now, in reference to the self,’ ‘now this person, who is seen within the

2. *Nyāyakośa*, by Bhīmācārya Jhalakīkara, Poona, 1928, p. 13.

3. *Nyāyakośa*, p. 907.

eye...”⁴ This last portion discloses the *viśaya*. Does ‘person’ refer to the individual self or the Supreme Lord; this is the *saṁśaya*. The *pūrvapakṣa* argues that the term refers to the individual self. The *siddhāntin* refutes the *pūrvapakṣa* position and substantiates the Supreme Lord as the only referent of the term. This is identified as the *uttarapakṣa*. The discussion concludes by asserting that the passage refers only to the Supreme Lord or *brahman*. This is the *siddhānta*. The being inside the Sun and the eye can only be the Supreme Lord and not the individual self, since the attributes of the Supreme Lord are provided within the reading. This is the *Dṛṣṭānta-saṅgati*.⁵ By utilizing these methods, each *adhikaraṇa* presents a very systematic discussion and evaluation of the topic under consideration.

The *Brahmasūtras* of Bādarāyaṇa are so concise and abstruse that without a commentary they are extremely difficult to understand. Without such an exposition, it is difficult to find the relationships between successive aphorisms. Since it is an exegetical work, one would expect it to reference the passages from sacred texts that it seeks explain; however, there is hardly a *sūtra* that unequivocally offers reference to a specific passage of the Upaniṣads. As a result, commentators have applied their ingenuity to identify passages or readings that correlate with the *sūtras*. It is evident to those who have studied the various commentaries on the text that there is lack of consensus among them even on such a foundational point. In my opinion, Bādarāyaṇa intentionally constructed the *sūtras* in this way so that they may be applied universally and not confined to the exposition of any particular religion or text. They contain universal principles on religion and philosophy, true for all times and ages, and not limited to the sacred literature of the Indians alone. An

4. “atha ya eṣo’ntṛāditye hiraṇmayāḥ puruṣo dṛśyate hiraṇyāśmaśrurhiraṇyakeśa āpraṇakhātsarva eva suvarṇaḥ,’ tasya yathūkapyāsaṁ puṇḍarikamevamakṣiṇīm tasyoditi nāma sa eṣa sarvebhyaḥ pāpmbhya uḍita uḍeti ha vai sarvebhyaḥ pāp-mabhya ya evaṁ veda,’ atha ya eṣe’ ntarakṣiṇi puruṣo dṛśyate” (Chāndogyopaniṣad 1.6.7.8, 1.7.1.5)

5. Brahmasūtra 1.1.20.

interpretation of the *Sūtras* in this light is a desideratum. Nevertheless, there are ten principal commentaries or *bhāṣyas* on the *Brahmasūtras*. They are as follows:

No.	COMMENTARIES	COMMENTATORS	DOCTRINES
1.	<i>Vedānta-pārijāta Saurabha</i>	<i>Nimbārka (750 A.D.)</i>	<i>Dvaitādvaita = Svabhāvika-bhedābheda</i>
2.	<i>Śārīrakabhāṣya =</i>	<i>Śaṅkara (788-820 A.D.)</i>	<i>Advaita = Kevalādvaita = Nirviśeṣādvaita</i>
3.	<i>Bhāskarabhāṣya</i>	<i>Bhāskara (1000 A.D.)</i>	<i>Bhedābheda = Aupādhika-bhedābheda</i>
4.	<i>Śrībhāṣya</i>	<i>Rāmānuja (1140 A.D.)</i>	<i>Viśiṣṭādvaita</i>
5.	<i>Pūrṇaprajñabhāṣya</i>	<i>Madhva (1238 A.D.)</i>	<i>Dvaita</i>
6.	<i>Śrīkaṇṭhabhāṣya = Śaiva-bhāṣya</i>	<i>Śrīkaṇṭha (1270 A.D.)</i>	<i>Śaiva-Viśiṣṭādvaita</i>
7.	<i>Śrīkarabhāṣya = Viraśaiva-bhāṣya</i>	<i>Śrīpati (1400 A.D.)</i>	<i>Viraśaiva-Viśiṣṭādvaita</i>
8.	<i>Aṇubhāṣya</i>	<i>Vallabha (1479-1544 A.D.)</i>	<i>Śuddhādvaita</i>
9.	<i>Vijñānāmṛtabhāṣya</i>	<i>Vijñānabhikṣu (1600 A.D.)</i>	<i>Avibhāgādvaita</i>
10.	<i>Govindabhāṣya</i>	<i>Baladeva (1725 A.D.)</i>	<i>Acintya-bhedābheda</i>

As is well-known, the doctrine of Dvaitādvaita or Bhedābheda developed by Nimbārka was the earliest of the Vedāntic systems. In the great efflorescence of philosophic thought in India from the 8th-18th centuries, various schools of thought arose, mostly as protests against the views held by the *Dvaitādvaita* school. There is no doubt that by reason of its metaphysical appeal and the rigid application of logical canons, Nimbārka's Dvaitādvaita position (*vāda*) exercised the most

profound influence on Indian thought and identified him as the greatest philosophical genius born in this country. His insistence, however, on the *Svābhāvika-bhedābheda*, in which the relation between *brahman* and the *jīva-jagat* is regarded as one of eternal difference and non-difference during *saṁsāra* or the cosmic existence as well as *pralaya* or dissolution, evoked strong reactions. The foremost of these was the *Advaita-vāda* of Śaṅkara.

Nevertheless, Dvaitādvaita-Vedānta is so significant in the eyes not only of scholars, but also of those who have been influential in moulding the attitudes of the enlightened *ṛṣis* and *ācāryas* of India's past, that one will frequently find the term 'Vedānta' used to exclusively refer to Dvaitādvaita-Vedānta. Still, it serves to emphasize the importance that is now attributed to Dvaitādvaita among the Vedāntas and especially to its most prominent figure, Nimbārkācārya.

As we have seen, Vedānta in general can be safely stated to have arisen from the Upaniṣads. It was later epitomized in the *Brahmasūtras* that have been ascribed to Bādarāyaṇa. Commentators on the *Brahmasūtras* interpreted them in different ways and with different emphases. Nimbārka's commentary (*bhāṣya*) on the *Brahmasūtras*, the *Vedānta-pārijāta-saurabha*, is the root from which sprang forth a great originality, vigour, philosophic insight, and a host of commentaries and studies on Vedāntism.

Following the commentarial tradition, after 275 years, Sadhu Bhadreshdas has for the first time composed an elaborate commentary on the *Brahmasūtras* according to the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana's philosophical principles. Entitled as the *Brahmasūtra-Svāminārāyaṇa-bhāṣya* (BSS), the work was inspired by his reverend guru Śrī Pramukh Swami Maharaj. As mentioned in his guru's blessings, Sadhu Bhadreshdas has also authored commentaries on the *Bhagavadgītā* and the Upaniṣads.⁶

6. Sādhu, Bhadresādāsa. "Blessings." *Brahmasūtrasvāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam*, Swaminarayan Aksharpith, 2009, pp. xi–xii.)

At the very outset of my review I would like to congratulate Sadhu Bhadreshdas and his *Pūjyapāda guruji* for this amazing creation. It is an effort of long felt desideratum within Vedānta philosophy in general and particularly within the Swaminarayan tradition. I am pleased to state that Sadhu Bhadreshdas has successfully explored the previously uncharted aspects of Swaminarayan's philosophy.

Sadhu Bhadreshdas has based his commentary on the teachings of Swaminarayan. Swaminarayan (April, 1781 A.D.) never authored a commentary on the *Brahmasūtras* nor did his immediate disciples. However, Swaminarayan's discourses were compiled and published under the title: *Vacanāmṛta*. His discourses were often on the basis of the *śrutis* and *smṛtis*. Within them he revealed the Akṣara-Puruṣottama doctrine: to become *Akṣarabrahma-svarūpa* and offer devotion (*upāsana*) with humility to the manifest form of Puruṣottama Parabrahman. Because of its detailed exposition on the nature of self, *brahman*, and the relationship between the two, the *Vacanāmṛta* serves as an invaluable guide for followers of the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana to understanding the *Vedāntasūtras* according to Swaminarayan's perspective. Nevertheless, the *Brahmasūtrasvāminārāyaṇabhāṣya* (BSS) offers greater clarity on the precise interpretation of each sūtra and greatly improves upon and contextualizes the revelations of the commentator's predecessors.

I found that the BSS is a well-studied work containing elements of both comparative and critical analysis. It provides descriptive elaborations on each word contained within the *sūtras*, presents doubt, establishes an opposition, constitutes and proliferates the *darśana's* foundational principles, and substantiate them on the authority of the text. In doing so, the work reflects the intellectual aptitude of its author. The topics of discussion covered within the text is extremely vast. Despite this, the commentator has neither missed nor dwelt superfluously on significant points of interest. The work offers an authentic survey of the philosophical views of the Vedas, *śrutis*, *smṛtis*, and various systems of Vedānta. Within relevant discussions, the commentator extensively quotes from the *śrutis*

and *smṛtis*. This volume is lucid in style and contains faultless Sanskrit. The BSS is truly a unique contribution in that it provides a novel reading of the *Brahmasūtras*.

Like earlier commentators, Sadhu Bhadreshdas has in certain places omitted and included terms in the *sūtras* and the *adhikaraṇas* to justify interpretations according to the Akṣara-Puruṣottama Darśana. Consequently, according to him there are a total of 549 *sūtras* that span 148 *adhikaraṇas*. In this way he incidentally adopts the strategy of Nimbārka, Śaṅkara, Rāmānuja, Madhva, Vallabha, and other earlier *ācāryas*.

Śaṅkara propounds the theory of a two-fold *brahman*. He accepts the highest *brahman* (*Para-brahman*), which is *nirguṇa* and *nirviśeṣa* (BS 1.1.1); but according to him the *brahman* referred to in *Brahmasūtra* 1.1.2, is the lower *brahman* (*apara-brahman*), which is under the sphere of ignorance. According to Śaṅkara, the creation, subsistence, and destruction of this world takes place by this *apara-brahman*. Nevertheless, his doctrine is known as Kevalādvaita or absolute monism, because according to him, all plurality is false or unreal and only *Para-brahman* is real. As a result, singularity is the substratum of all ephemeral and empirical plurality, is itself without the slightest touch of plurality, and is absolute. Knowledge of the identity of these two is the only means of attaining liberation.

According to Vallabha, *brahman* has three forms:

The highest divine form (*ādhidaivika*) is as Kṛṣṇa or Puruṣottama. This form possesses an infinite number of auspicious attributes and is attainable by a devotee (*bhakta*).

The *akṣara*-form (*ādhyātmika*): Within this form all attributes are unmanifest. This form is only attainable by the knowledgeable (*jñānin*).

The *antaryāmin*-form, which is seen in the different incarnations of Viṣṇu.

Despite these various forms, Vallabha's doctrine is identified as Śuddhādvaita, because of the identity among these forms, which are all pure or free from *māyā*. These three forms of *brahman* are all instrumental in attaining a single end: liberation or "to become one with *brahman*." The

self (*jīva*) is understood to be by nature inclined towards either devotion (*bhakti*) or knowledge (*jñāna*). When engaged with accordingly, both *bhakti* and *jñāna* are offered as means for attaining liberation. According to both ācāryas (Śaṅkara and Vallabha), brahman is identified as being both the material and efficient cause of the universe.

Like Śaṅkara and Vallabha, the BSS commentator (*bhāṣyakāra*) also advocates the existence of a twofold *brahman*: *Akṣara-brahman* and *Para-brahman*. He, however, presents a novel distinction between them. He asserts that Akṣarabrahman and Parabrahman are two ontologically distinct entities. He explains that the term 'brahman' may be used to refer to either *Akṣara-brahman* or *Para-brahman*. *Akṣara-brahman* or *Para-brahman* are both understood to possess inconceivable divine powers, have an infinite number of auspicious attributes, and be eternally free from *māyā*. Both are also recognized as the material and efficient cause of the world; and as a result, both are understood to govern the phenomenal world (*prapañca*). The darśana identifies that the ultimate end is to become Akṣara-brahmarūpa and offer devotion (*upāsana*) with the sentiments of a servant (*dāsabhāva*) to the manifest form of Puruṣottama Parabrahman.⁷ Based on these principles, the doctrine may be identified as the *Akṣara-Puruṣottama-vāda*.

I have gone through the BSS by reviewing, among others, the following several crucial sūtras: *janmādyasya yataḥ*, 1.1.2; *īkṣaternāśabdam*, 1.1.5; *ānandamayo'bhyāsāt*, 1.1.13; *netaro'nupapatteḥ*, 1.1.17; *bhedavyapadeśacca*, 1.1.18; *asminnasya ca tadyogaṁ śāsti*, 1.1.20; *bhedavyapadeśaccānyaḥ*, 1.1.22; *guhāṁ praviṣṭāvātmānau hi taddarśanāt*, 1.2.11; *śārīraśca*, 1.2.20; *ubhaye'pi hi bhedenainamadhīyate*, 1.2.21; *viśeṣaṇa-bhedavyapadeśābhyāṁ ca netarau*, 1.2.23; *prāṇabhṛcca*, 1.3.4; *bhedavyapadeśāt*, 1.3.5; *itaraparāmarśāt sa iti cenna asamhavad*, 1.3.18; *adhikaṁ tu bhedanirdeśāt*, 2.1.23; *nātmā śruternityatvāc-catabhyaḥ*, 2.3.18; *parābhidyānattu tirohitam, tato hyasya bandhavīparyayau*,

7. Sādhu, Bhadreśadāsa. *Brahmasūtrasvāminārāyaṇabhāṣyam*. Swaminarayan Akshar-pith, 2009. pp. 1-29.

3.2.5; *adhikopadeśāttu bādarāyaṇasyaivam taddarśanāt*, 3.4.8; *pratiṣedhāditi cenna śārīrāt spaṣṭo hyekeṣām*, 4.2.12; and *kāryam bādarīrasya gatyupapatteḥ*, 4.3.6.

I have found that the commentator successfully provides an appropriate interpretation of the Brahmasūtras. Having assessed the text, it is my sincere opinion that the *Brahmasūtrasvāminārāyaṇabhāṣya* is a well-researched work. I am delighted to note that the commentator has dived to great depths within this treasure trove.

The Akṣara-Puruṣottama philosophy has yet to be fully studied by modern scholars. Sadhu Bhadreshdas meticulous efforts in authoring the commentaries on the *Prasthānatrayī* provide immense contributions to the study of *Vedānta* philosophy. His detailed discussions on the significant principles of the Akṣara-Puruṣottama philosophy do justice to the subject. I believe that the *Brahmasūtrasvāminārāyaṇabhāṣya* will be an important addition to the field of *Vedānta* philosophy and will be welcomed in India and abroad. Again, I congratulate Sadhu Bhadreshdas for this excellent work. Its creation bears testament to his thorough research, penetrating insight, and sound knowledge of the Sanskrit language and Indian philosophy.

अक्षरपुरुषोत्तमदर्शनम्

(स्वामिनारायणसिद्धान्तसुधा-ग्रन्थपरिशीलनम्)

PROF. HARIDAS BHATT

Principal, Pūrṇaprajñavidyāpīṭha,
Bangalore

विदुषा भद्रेशदासमहोदयेन महदुपायनं प्रदत्तं स्वामिनारायणसम्प्रदायस्या जलबिन्दुः तप्तपाषाणे पतितः अदृश्यतामेति। शुक्तौ पतितः मुक्ताफलतामेति। तथा आचार्यप्रदत्तविद्यायाः फलमिदं ग्रन्थमुक्ताफलम्। नूनं स्वामिनारायणसम्प्रदायस्थाः भक्ताः अधमर्णा भवेयुः श्रीमतो भद्रेशदासस्या आत्मानं च धन्यं मन्ये। मदधिगतन्यायविद्यः अयं साधुः साधुवादमर्हति।

ग्रन्थोऽयं स्वामिनारायणसम्प्रदायसम्बद्धान् सर्वान् तात्त्विकविषयान् सप्रमाणं, सविमर्शं निरूपयति। अनेन स्वामिनारायणसम्प्रदायः न केवलं मुग्धभक्तिसम्प्रदायः, अपितु द्वैताद्वैतादिदर्शनवत् वैदिकं दार्शनिकं स्थानमर्हति इति सुष्ठु साधितम्। संस्कृतभाषामवलम्ब्य औपनिषदाः विषयाः सविमर्शं निरूपिता इति नूनं मूलग्रन्थस्थाने इदम् अभिषेक्तुमर्हति।

अयं ग्रन्थः नवप्रकरणेषु विभक्तः। एकैकं च प्रकरणं नैकैः विषयैः विभक्तम्। प्राथमिक्यां “मङ्गलधारायाम्” मङ्गलाचरणपुरस्सरं सिद्धान्तसंक्षेपः उपस्थापितः।

२. द्वितीये च प्रकरणे अक्षरब्रह्मधाराख्ये

अक्षरं ब्रह्म स्वरूपनिर्णयपुरस्सरं निरूपितम्। स्वोक्ते अर्थे उपनिषत्, भगवद्गीता, वचनामृतं च प्रमाणीकृतम्। अनेन स्वोक्तार्थः औपनिषदः, सम्प्रदायानुमतश्च इति दृढीकृतं भवति।

वैदिकेषु सम्प्रदायेषु लक्ष्मी-नारायणौ वा पार्वती-परमेश्वरौ वा दम्पती परमाराध्यतया अभ्युपेयेते। परन्तु, अत्र सम्प्रदाये लक्ष्म्यादिस्त्रीदेवतास्थाने अक्षरं ब्रह्म अभिषिच्यते। द्वावेतौ नित्यमुक्तौ। जगत्सृष्ट्यादिः अस्यैव अक्षरब्रह्मणः व्यापारः- “अक्षरात् सम्भवतीह विश्वम्” इति आथर्वणश्रुतिः अत्र प्रमाणम्। तदेवाक्षरं ब्रह्मधामरूपेण पुरुषोत्तमं सदा धारयति।

यदक्षरं वेदविदो वदन्ति विशन्ति यद्यतयो वीतरागाः।

यदिच्छन्तो ब्रह्मचर्यं चरन्ति तत्ते पदं सङ्ग्रहेण प्रवक्ष्ये॥

इति गीतायां श्रूयमाणम् ‘अपरं ब्रह्म’ इदमेव अक्षरं ब्रह्म।

“तत्ते पदं सङ्ग्रहेण प्रवक्ष्ये” इति काठकवाक्येऽपि श्रूयमाणं पदम् इदमेव।

मुक्तानामपि प्राप्यमिदम् अक्षरं धाम प्रलये न नश्यति, सर्गे नोपजायते। तदेतदक्षरं प्रतिजीवं दहराकाशरूपेण हृदि विराजते, यत् परः पुरुषः अधिशेते।

“दहरोऽस्मिन्नन्तराकाशः। तस्मिन् यदन्तः तदुपासितव्यम्” इति दहरश्रुतिः। इममर्थं प्रतिपादयति। न केवलं हृदि, किन्तु चिदाकाशरूपेण इदं सर्वत्र व्याप्तम्। तदेवमस्य चतूरूपेण संस्थितिः -

१. व्याप्तचिदाकाशरूपम्
२. मुक्तानां पुरुषोत्तमस्य च धामरूपम्
३. तस्मिन्नेव अक्षरधाम्नि ब्रह्म दासभावेन साकारविग्रहरूपम्
४. सम्प्रदायप्रधानगुरुरूपम्। (ब्रह्मरूपशास्त्रिजीमहाराजः, योगिमहाराजः...)

अयमस्य सम्प्रदायस्य अनितरसाधारणो विशेषः - प्रधानः साधुः गुरुस्थानेऽभिषिच्यमानः सर्वोऽपि भक्तकल्याणार्थम् अवतीर्णः स्वयम् अक्षरं ब्रह्म। ग्रन्थकारः विषयेऽस्मिन् साभिमानं स्वसम्प्रदायं प्रशंसति-

“न चैवं दृश्यते क्वापीति धन्या वयम्”

“ऋतं पिबन्तौ सुकृतस्य लोके”

इति काठकमन्त्रे ऋतपानकर्तृत्वेन श्रुतः एकः जीवः, अपरं च अक्षरं ब्रह्म। तथा च नात्र छत्रिन्यायेन योजना, किन्तु मुख्यवृत्त्यैव। परन्तु अक्षरब्रह्मणः ऋतपानकर्तृत्वं ब्रह्मानन्दभोक्तृत्वमिति विशेषः। जीववत् प्राकृतफलभोक्तृत्वाभावेन च तस्यैव श्रुत्युक्तम् “अनश्नन्नन्यः” इति विशेषणमपि सुष्ठु सङ्गच्छते।

एवं च एतौ द्वावेव नित्यमुक्तौ, सर्वेऽन्ये कदाचिद्बद्धा एव। “सदा पश्यन्ति सूरयः” इति प्रमाणमनुसृत्य रामानुजसिद्धान्त इव नैतन्मते नित्यसूरिशब्दवाच्याः नित्यमुक्ता अभ्युपगता इति विशेषः।

३. तृतीयप्रकरणम्

परं ब्रह्म नारायणाख्यं निरूपयति। स्वामिपदवाच्येन अक्षरब्रह्मणा सहैव तिष्ठति इति कारणेन इदमेव (परं) ब्रह्म स्वामिनारायणपदाभिधेयम्। “अक्षरात् परतः परः,” “पुरुषान्न परं किञ्चित् सा काष्ठा सा परा गतिः” इति प्रमाणैः सर्वोत्कृष्टत्वेन प्रमितम्, अत एव च पुरुषोत्तमपदवाच्यम्। तदुक्तं गीतायाम् -

“अक्षरादपि चोत्तमः। अतोऽस्मि लोके वेदे च प्रथितः पुरुषोत्तमः।” इति।

सगुणब्रह्मवादः

“साक्षी चेता केवलो निर्गुणश्च” इति श्रुतिः निर्गुणं ब्रह्म श्रावयति। अथापि सगुणब्रह्मवाद एव श्रुतिसम्मतः। प्राकृतगुणरहितत्वाद् अणोरणीयत्वात् सगुणमेव ब्रह्म निर्गुणमभिधीयते। दिव्यगुणवत्त्वात् महतो महीयत्वाच्च ब्रह्म सगुणम्। एवमत्र सगुणनिर्गुणवाक्ययोः समन्वयः साधितः। अत एव निर्गुणब्रह्मपरात् मायावादात् विशिष्यतेऽयं पन्थाः।

साकारवादः

यद्यपि नारायणाख्यं ब्रह्म “अशरीरं शरीरेषु,” “स शृणोत्यकर्णः” इत्यादिश्रुतिवाक्येषु निराकारं श्रूयते। सेयं श्रुतिः अस्मदादिसदृशं मायाशरीरं निराचष्टे। अत एव “य एष अन्तरादित्ये हिरण्मयः पुरुषः” इति तस्यैव अप्राकृतं रूपं छान्दोग्ये श्रूयते।

“यत्ते रूपं कल्याणतमं तत्ते पश्यामि।”

इति ईशोपनिषदि च भक्तः भगवतः कल्याणतमं रूपं दिदृक्षते।

यद्यपि भगवतः आकृतिः मनोवाचामगोचरा। “तदव्यक्तमाह हि” इति सूत्रकारोऽपि तद् ब्रह्म अव्यक्तैकस्वभावमाह। अथापि भक्तानुकम्पया स्वाचिन्त्यशक्त्या तद् दृग्गोचरं भवति। तस्यैतस्य दर्शने अक्षरं ब्रह्म यद् ब्रह्मधाम तद् उपदेशादिना हाय्यमाचरति। तदुक्तम् अत्र कारिकायाम्-

“दिव्यैर्गुणैर्विशिष्टोऽयं मायागुणविवर्जितः।

अन्तर्यामी सर्वकर्त्रा गुणातीतो नियामकः।

स एव प्रकटो नित्यं प्रत्यक्षे ब्रह्मणि गुरौ ॥” (पु. ९८)

सोऽयं नारायणः प्रतिमासु अल्पमैश्वर्यं प्रकटयति। तथा मत्स्यादि-अवतारेषु अनुप्रविश्यापि स्वविभवमाविष्करोति। अथापि अक्षरब्रह्मरूपे गुरौ सर्वतोऽधिकमैश्वर्यं प्रकटयति। अशन-वसन-सम्भाषणादिना विशिष्टसेवां स्वीकृत्य तत्र भक्तान् विशेषतोऽनुगृह्णाति।

अस्य अन्वयित्वं व्यतिरेकित्वं चेति विशिष्टं विभवद्वयमस्मिन् प्रकरणे समर्थितम्। अन्वयित्वम् अन्तर्यामित्वम्, व्यतिरेकित्वम् - अक्षरब्रह्मधाम्नि प्रकटरूपवत्त्वम्, स्वामिनारायणरूपेण अवतारश्च। तदेवं साकार-सगुणब्रह्मवादोऽयं मायावादादिभ्यो विशिष्यते।

४. चतुर्थप्रकरणे

प्रमाणस्वरूपं विचारितम्। प्रमाणानां सङ्ख्यामितौ नात्र नैर्भर्यं प्रकटितम्। ब्रह्मस्वरूपनिर्णये चेदुपयुज्यते अर्थापत्त्यादीनामपि प्रमाणत्वमङ्गीक्रियते इत्यौदार्यं प्रदर्शितम्। प्रायः तार्किकरीत्यैव व्याप्तिस्वरूपं, हेत्वाभासाश्च निरूपिताः। ख्यातिवादविमर्शावसरे चिदचित्ख्यातिः या स्वमते समर्थिता (पु. १९४) सा पुनः पर्यालोचनीया। एवमुपमानविषयेऽपि।

प्रत्यक्षे ‘इन्द्रियवृत्तिः’ इति पदप्रयोगेन सांख्यसिद्धान्तोऽनुसृत इति भाति। ज्ञानमात्मगुण इति

नैयायिकराद्धान्तः स्वीकृतः। अलौकिकेऽर्थे शब्दस्यैव प्रधानं प्रामाण्यम्, अनुमा कामचारिणीति सिद्धान्तः सुष्ठु समर्थितः।

५. पञ्चमं मायाप्रकरणम्।

मायाशब्दोऽयं मायावादं स्मारयत्यपि नात्र मायाशब्दः अघटित-घटनापटीयसीम् अद्वैतदर्शनाभिमतताम् अविद्यामभिधत्ते। अपितु त्रिगुणात्मिका प्रकृतिरनेन शब्देनाभिधीयते। सेयं भावरूपाविद्येत्यपि गीयते, परन्तु नानिर्वचनीया, अपि पुनः पारमार्थिकी। यस्याः गुणसाम्ये प्रलयः, गुणवैषम्ये सृष्टिः। सेयं माया अनन्तकोटिब्रह्माण्डोपादानभूता। वासना, प्रकृतिः, परशक्तिः, अन्धकार इति अस्याः नामान्तराणि। सेयं जीवस्वरूपमाच्छाद्य जीवं बध्नाति। सांख्योक्तदिशा महत्तत्त्वं, त्रिविधाहङ्कारः अस्याः परिणामविशेषाः। सांख्यरीतिरेव पञ्चभूतोपादानभूतानि शब्दादितन्मात्राणि अत्रापि सिद्धान्ते आदृता। एतानि तन्मात्राभूतेन्द्रियाणि ब्रह्माण्डानेकत्वादनेकानीति विशेषः। ज्ञानकर्मभेदेन द्वेधा विभक्तानि दशेन्द्रियाणि च नैयायिकोक्तदिशा न भौतिकानि, किन्तु राजसाहङ्कारजन्यानि। “मनःषष्ठानीन्द्रियाणि” इति गीतावचनमनुसृत्य मनसोऽपि इन्द्रियत्वमाश्रितम्। “एतस्माज्जायते प्राणः मनः सर्वेन्द्रियाणि च” इति मुण्डकश्रुत्या जन्यानि सर्वेन्द्रियाणि। तानीमानिन्द्रियाणि सूक्ष्मशरीरे तिष्ठन्ति।

कालः पृथक्पदार्थत्वेन नाङ्गीक्रियते, क्रियाद्युपाधय एव कालशब्दवाच्याः। ‘नित्यः’ इत्यस्य कालातीत इत्यर्थः, इति अत्र सिद्धान्ते विशेषः। क्षणलवमारभ्य द्विपरार्धावसानः कालः युगमन्वन्तरादिभेदेन भागवतपुराणमनुसृत्य सम्यगत्र निरूपितः।

अस्मिन्नेव प्रकरणे सृष्टिप्रक्रिया निरूपिता। रामानुजसिद्धान्त इव ब्रह्मणः अभिन्ननिमित्तोपादानत्वं स्वीकृतम्। परन्तु तद्दर्शने शरीर-शरीरिभावेन तत् समर्थितम्। अस्मिन् दर्शने व्याप्तस्य अक्षरब्रह्मणः कार्येऽपि व्याप्तत्वाद् उपादानत्वम् उपपादितम्। “तदैक्षत” इतीक्षणश्रुतेः कुलालवद् अक्षरब्रह्मणः निमित्तत्वमपि अस्तीति एतत्सिद्धान्तः।

सृष्टिकाले पुरुषोत्तमस्य सिसृक्षा भवति। सः अक्षरपुरुषमीक्षते, अक्षरं ब्रह्म च कञ्चन मुक्तात्मानं पश्यति। सः मूलप्रकृतिसन्निधानं प्रपद्यते। स एव प्रकृतिपुरुष इत्यभिधीयते। अनेन अनन्तकोटिब्रह्माण्डानि सृज्यन्ते। एकैकं ब्रह्माण्डम् एकैकः प्रधानपुरुषः अधितिष्ठति। [ततः वैराजपुरुषः।] वैराजपुरुषस्य नाभेः ब्रह्मा, ललाटात् रुद्रः, हृदयात् विष्णुः जायन्ते। एते च प्रधानपुरुषाः, वैराजपुरुषाः, ब्रह्मविष्णुमहेश्वरादयश्च अनन्ताः। अस्यां सृष्टिकल्पनायां वचनामृतं प्रमाणत्वेन निर्दिष्टम्। इत्थं दर्शनान्तरात् विशिष्यते इयं प्रक्रिया। अत्र सृष्टिप्रकरणे वैदिकावैदिकाभिमतसृष्टिप्रक्रियायाः निपुणं विमर्शः कृतः।

६. षष्ठं जीवप्रकरणम्।

स्वामिनारायणदर्शने माया, जीवः, ईश्वरः, अक्षरं, पुरुषोत्तम इति तत्त्वं पञ्चधा विभक्तम्। एतत्सर्वं सत्यमिति एतेषां परस्परं भेदोऽपि सत्यः शाश्वतश्च।

एतेषु पञ्चसु मायाशब्दवाच्या प्रकृतिः सर्वजडोपादानभूता। जीवाश्च अनन्ताः, अणवः, प्रतिशरीरं भिन्नाः। ते स्वयं ज्ञानरूपा अपि तेषां गुणभूतं ज्ञानान्तरमस्ति। तदेव च घट-पटादिविषयकम्। एतेषां जीवानां शरीरत्रयम् - स्थूलं, सूक्ष्मं, कारणशरीरं चेति। तेषु स्थूलं शरीरं कर्मानुसारेण परिवर्तते। सूक्ष्मम् आलयं तिष्ठति। कारणशरीरं तु मोक्षपर्यन्तमनुवर्तते। तदयं विशेषः द्वैतदर्शनमनुकरोति। जीवन्मुक्तानां कारणशरीरं नास्ति। सूक्ष्मं स्थूलं च शरीरमनुवर्तते।

जाग्रत्-स्वप्न-सुषुप्तिः इति अवस्थात्रयं जीवस्य परायत्तम्। स्वाप्ना अर्थाः वासनामया ईशनिर्मिताः सत्या इति द्वैतदर्शनवत् अभिमतम्। “अथ रथान् रथयोगान् पथः सृजते” इति बृहदारण्यकश्रुतिः “सन्ध्ये सृष्टिराह हि” इति सूत्रं चात्र प्रमाणम्। जीवकर्मानुसारेण सुखदुःखादयः भवन्तीति नेश्वरस्य वैषम्यादि-दोषाः। अमात्यस्य राजदत्तस्वातन्त्र्यवत् जीवस्य करणकलेवरादिकं दत्त्वा भगवान् क्रियास्वातन्त्र्यं ददाति। तदेतत् दत्तस्वातन्त्र्यं द्वैतदर्शनसम्मतम्। रामानुजसिद्धान्ते प्रथमप्रवृत्तौ भगवान् उदास्ते इत्यभ्युपगम्यते।

जीवब्रह्मणोः तादात्म्यं सम्बन्धः, नांशांशिभावः, न वा बिम्बप्रतिबिम्बभावः। तादात्म्यं च नाभेदः, किन्तु कतिपयगुणसाम्यम् इत्ययं विशेषः स्वामिनारायणदर्शने।

७. सप्तमं ईश्वरप्रकरणम्।

अयं च एतद्दर्शने विशेषः। भगवतः पुरुषोत्तमस्य आज्ञया वर्तमानाः ब्रह्मादयः, प्रधानपुरुषाः, विराट्पुरुषाः इन्द्रियान्तःकरणनियामकाः सर्वे ईश्वराः। न केवलमेतावत् राम-कृष्णाद्यवतारा अपि ईश्वरकोटावेवान्तर्भवन्ति।

८. अष्टमं साधनप्रकरणम्।

“यमेवैष वृणुते तेन लभ्यः” इति श्रुत्या भगवतः नारायणस्य कृपा प्रधानं मोक्षसाधनम्। साधकः अक्षरब्रह्मभावमापन्नः नारायणे सर्वोत्तमपुरुषे अखण्डां भक्तिं लभते। ब्रह्मभावो नाम अक्षरपुरुषसाम्यम्। तदर्थं वैराग्यादिसाधनान्तराणि अपेक्षितानि।

एतन्मते यागीयहिंसाऽपि पापसाधनम्। वर्णव्यवस्था च न जनिप्रधाना, किन्तु वृत्तिप्रधाना। ब्राह्मणः अध्यापकः इति न, किन्तु यः अध्यापकः सः ब्राह्मण इति। महान् दोषः अनेन परिहृतः।

९. अन्तिमं फलप्रकरणम्।

अत्र मोक्षाख्यः परमपुरुषार्थः निरूपितः। देहत्रयादुन्मुच्य अक्षरब्रह्मभावमापद्य अक्षरधाम्नि

प्रत्यक्षरूपस्य परमपुरुषोत्तमस्य स्वामिनारायणस्य सेवा मोक्षः। अनिष्टनिवृत्तिः इष्टप्राप्तिरिति दलद्वयात्मकोऽयं परमपुरुषार्थः।

तदेवं नवप्रकरणेषु वैदिकसिद्धान्तसम्बन्धिनः सर्वेऽपि विषयाः सुष्ठु, सप्रमाणं निरूपिताः। परमतविमर्शः विनोद्वेगं वस्तुनिष्ठः कृतः। परं ब्रह्मैक्यवादनिरासे पुनः इदमेकवाक्यं श्रूयते - “तदिदं विविधकृतर्ककल्पितं स्वगोष्ठीनिष्ठसमयतां भजते।” (पु. ३१०)।

स्वामिनारायणसम्प्रदाये बद्धादरैः अवश्यम् अध्येया इयं कृतिः। भारतीयदार्शनिकवाङ्मयस्यापूर्वं योगदानमिदम्। ग्रन्थकारेण सरलैः वाक्यैः विषयाः निरूपिताः। प्रायः प्रत्येकं प्रकरणेषूक्ताः विषयाः स्वयं विरचितासु कारिकासु सङ्गृहीताः।

ग्रन्थं साग्रमधीत्यायं विमर्शः मया विहितः। न खगावलोकनेन न वा पूर्वाग्रहेण।

ब्रह्मसूत्रस्वामिनारायणभाष्यम्

MAHĀMAHOPĀDHYĀYA R. KRISHNAMURTI SHASTRI

A Leading Scholar of the Kanchikamkoti pitha's
scholarly Assembly.

ब्रह्मसूत्रे स्वामिभद्रेशदासमहाभागेन स्वामिनारायणभाष्यं यत्प्रणीतं तत् करतलामलकवत्
श्रीश्रीश्रीस्वामिनारायणपूज्यपादानाम् आशयम् उपदेशांश्च सम्यक् प्रकटयति।

वेदान्तशास्त्राणां तात्पर्यं निर्णेतुं प्रवृत्तेस्मिन् ब्रह्मसूत्रग्रन्थे अस्ति मतत्रयरीत्या
भाष्यत्रयम् आचार्यत्रयप्रणीतम् अद्वैत-विशष्टाद्वैत-द्वैतसिद्धान्तानुसारि। इदं तु तुरीयं भाष्यं
पूर्वोक्तसिद्धान्तत्रयविलक्षणं स्वामिनारायणपूज्यपादानां हृदयाशयप्रकाशकम् अतीव विलक्षणं
सुस्पष्टं, विशदम् अथ च सुललितशैल्या निबद्धं वरीवर्ति।

संक्षिप्तबोधननैपुण्यम्

- संक्षिप्तबोधननैपुण्यं “ब्रह्मणोः जिज्ञासा = ब्रह्मजिज्ञासा” इत्येवं विग्रहवाक्यकथनेनैव
एतन्मतस्य सर्वविलक्षणत्वम् अतिसंक्षिप्ततया सूचयन्तः एते भद्रेशदासमहोदयाः
अनितरसाधारणं स्वमहत्त्वं गुरुकृपालब्धं अगण्यपूर्वपुण्यफलं प्रकटयन्ति। तुलसी खलु
स्वजन्मनैव पुष्पोद्गममनपेक्ष्य सुगन्धं प्रकटयति। अतिस्पष्टतया स्वसिद्धान्तम् एतं
जिज्ञासासूत्रे एव सुनिपुणम् उद्घोषयन्ति इमे!
- तथाहि पश्यत एतेषां नैपुण्यम् – “ब्रह्मशब्देनेह
सकलवेदान्तोदितब्रह्मविद्यातत्त्वनिरूपणनिपुणेन भगवता व्यासेन
अक्षरब्रह्म-परब्रह्मेति दिव्योभयतत्त्वयोः जिज्ञास्यमानत्वेन विवक्षितत्वात्...
ब्रह्मणोरिति द्विवचनान्तो विग्रहः।” इति।
- एवमुक्त्वा अस्य विग्रहस्य साधुत्वं निरूपयितुं ग्रन्थकाराः एवं प्रमाणं वदन्ति
- “पदार्थभेदेऽपि पदसारूप्यायैकशेषः शाब्दिकसमयसिद्धः यथा

पार्थपार्थसारथ्यभयविवक्षया ‘कृष्णौ’ इति भारते (म.भा.आ.प.२२१/३३);
 दाशरथिवासुदेवाग्रजोभयविवक्षया – वदन्ति लोके ‘रामयोः’ इति। तथेहापि” इति।
 एतं स्वमतसिद्धान्तम् अत्यन्तविलक्षणं नैव स्वकल्पितं किन्तु श्रुतिसिद्धमेव इति द्रढयितुम्
 असंख्याः श्रुतयः अत्र उदाहृताः (पृ. ४-८)।

आकर्षकशैली

एतेषां शैली ललिता भावार्जिका च। अत्र कानिचन उदाहरणानि पश्यामः –

- वाचामगोचरस्य ब्रह्मणः विषये सूत्रेण विज्ञानोत्पादनप्रयासः सूत्रकारस्य व्यर्थ इति शङ्काम् उद्भाव्य परिहारकथनसन्दर्भे (पृ.११) “ननु ‘तद्वा एतदक्षरं’.... अक्षरब्रह्मणः परब्रह्मणश्च वाङ्मनआद्यविषयत्वश्रवणाद् व्यर्थ एव तद्विशेषविज्ञानप्रयोजनकोऽयं शास्त्रारम्भश्रम इति चेद्, अनधिगतश्रुत्यर्थस्याऽयं व्यर्थ आक्षेपश्रमः। यतः... प्राकृतचक्षुर्मानसादीन्द्रियाऽविषयतायास्तत्रोपदेशाद्।” इति राजन्ते पङ्क्तयः।
- जन्माद्यधिकरणे संशयप्रदर्शनवेलायां ब्रह्मशब्दस्य वेदः विप्रः विधाता, जीवः मुक्तः, अक्षरं, परमात्मा प्रपञ्चश्चेति अष्टौ अर्थाः। तत्र तत्र प्रयोगः श्रुतावुदाहृतः (पृ. १३)। अत्रैवलक्षणविशेषणयोः भेदः सुस्पष्टं, सुललितं निरूप्यते (पृ. १४, १५)।
- शास्त्रयोनित्वाधिकरणे एतैः महाभागैः स्वीयं युक्तिकौशलं प्रदर्श्य केवलानुमानेन ईश्वरसिद्धिः नैव संभवति इति सुदृढम् उद्धोषितं, तेन एतेषां न्यायशास्त्रे नैपुण्यम् अथ च वेदान्ते अत्यादरश्च विशदीभवति (पृ. १८-२४)।
- अत्र निरूपणकौशलं एतेषां कथं लब्धम् इति पण्डितानामपि आश्चर्यमावहति! सन्दर्भे अस्मिन् अन्तिमं निगमनवाक्यम् एवम् उज्ज्वलति – “स्वतन्त्रेण केवलानुमानेन... अक्षरब्रह्मपुरुषोत्तमयोः स्वरूपगुणैश्चर्यादीनां सिद्धिस्त्वक्षणा स्वनग्रहाऽऽग्रहवदशक्यसम्भवेति ब्रह्मविद्यायां गुरुमुखाऽमृतीकृतवेदादिशास्त्रस्यैव सुखप्रसरत्वात् तदेव प्रमाणसार्वभैमतां भजत इति सिद्धिम्” इति।
- समन्वयाधिकरणे वेदान्तानां सर्वेषां अक्षरब्रह्मपुरुषोत्तमयोरेव समन्वयः इति प्रतिज्ञाय, “भवतुकार्यार्थत्वंवेदान्तवाक्यानाम्” (पृ. २७) इत्यारभ्य अभ्युपगमवादमवलम्ब्य, उभयमुख्यत्वे वाक्यभेददोषं परिहृत्य निगमितमेवम् - “अतएतादृशसाक्षात्कारात्मकज्ञानार्थं तद्विधिः न निष्फलः” (पृ. २८) इति !!
- अत्रैव अधिकरणसमाप्तिवेलायां सर्वं संगृहीतमेवम् – (मतसारः) “एवं जगतो निर्वेदं प्राप्य ब्रह्मस्वरूपगुरुमुपाश्रित्य तत्प्रसङ्गेन स्वात्मानं मायामलहीनं परिशुद्धं कृत्वा तमेव स्वात्मानं पुनस्तदक्षरब्रह्मभावेन संस्कृत्य गुरावेव

प्रत्यक्षनारायणस्वरूपभावनयाऽक्षराधिपतिसहजानन्दपरमोपासनेन तत्परमानन्द दिव्यानुभूतिलक्षणं मोक्षं सम्पादयेदिति प्रयोगविधेरपि सम्भवात् सर्वं समञ्जसम्” इति ।

- एवंरीत्या चतुस्सूत्र्याः चतुरध्यायीसारभूतायाः भाष्ये एव ग्रन्थकाराणां वैदुष्यचातुरीमाधुरी च स्पष्टं प्रतीयते या उत्तरत्र संपूर्णतया प्रवहन्ती दरीदृश्यते।
- भूमाधिकरणे भूमशब्दवाच्यः परब्रह्मैव अर्थात् पुरुषोत्तमः एव (अक्षराधिपतिः) इति निर्णयं कृत्वा “यत्र नान्यत्पश्यति नान्यच्छृणोति” इति वाक्यस्य अर्थवर्णनसन्दर्भे (पृ. ९६) स्वामिनारायणमतस्य सिद्धान्तं विशिष्टाद्वैतादपि भिन्नं सम्यग् विशदीकुर्वन्ति एवम् - (पृ. ९६) “अस्याऽयमर्थः। यत्र यस्मिन्क्षराधिपतौ ब्रह्मरूपत्वसम्पत्तिपूर्वकं साक्षात्कृते सति स ब्रह्मरूपः परमात्मोपासकस्तत्परमात्मसहजानन्दपरमानन्दसुखसागरे निमग्नस्तद्विव्यस्वरूपमात्रलीन-सकलस्ववृत्तिः संस्तस्मादेव हेतोः नान्यत् तत्परमात्मानं विहायाऽन्यत् किमपि न पश्यति विद्यमानं सदपि परमात्मपरायणत्वान्न साक्षात्कुरुते” इति।
- तदनन्यत्वाधिकरणे ‘युक्तेः’ (ब्र.सू. २.१.१८) इति सूत्रस्य भाष्यप्रस्तावे असत्कार्यपक्षः सुष्ठु निराकृतः रमणीयया ललितया शैल्या एवम् - (पृ. १७२) “किञ्चाऽसदेवकार्यमुत्पद्यत इत्यभ्युपगमे नियतोपादानग्रहणं न स्यात् । तैलाभिलाषिणा हि तिलमुपादीयते न सिकताः। असत्त्वे तैलस्य तिलसिकतयोः को विशेषः। तन्तुभ्य एव पटो मृत्तिकात एव घट इति कारणनियमोच्छेदेन तन्तुभ्यो घटस्य कपालाभ्यां पटस्य वोत्पत्त्याऽऽपत्तिश्चेति युक्त्या कार्याऽसत्त्वमेव बाधितम्” इति।
- कृत्स्नप्रसक्त्यधिकरणे (ब्र.सू. २.१.२७) ब्रह्म सांशं निरंशं वा इति विचारे उभयपक्षेऽपि दोषकथनं उद्भाव्यते। तदाऽऽदौ निरंशपक्षे दोषमुक्त्वा सांशपक्षे दोषः एवमुत्थाप्यते - (पृ. १७८) “ननु तर्हि सांशमस्तु; इदानीं न कृत्स्नप्रसक्त्यादयो दोषाः... इति चेद्; वृश्चिकभिया पलायितेन विषधरमुखे स्वनिपातोऽपि नाऽभिलक्ष्यते। कथमेवमुच्यते? तत्र दोषान्तरमाह निरवयवत्वशब्दकोपो वा” इति।
- अत्रैव उपसंहारसन्दर्भे एवं समाहितम् - (पृ. १७९) “अस्याऽतीन्द्रियार्थस्य श्रुतिशब्दभिन्नप्रमाणाऽमूलत्वात् तन्मात्रमूलत्वाच्च यदा भगवती श्रुतिरेव तन्निरंशत्वमुपादानमत्वं चोभयमुपदिशेत् तदा तत्र लौकिकलिङ्गदोषावकाशो न प्रभवतीति तदनुपदिष्टमेव निर्मूलमवगन्तव्यम्” इति।
- सर्वथाऽनुपपत्त्यधिकरणे (ब्र.सू. २.२.३२) शून्यवादनिराकरणं क्रियते इति

स्वामिनारायणैकमतरीत्या नूतनः पन्थाः अवलम्बितः। तत्र चादौ परिहासरूपेण एतत्सिद्धान्तप्रवर्तकस्य माध्यमिकस्य एकं विशेषणं दत्तं - (पृ. २१०) “सर्वशून्यवादी सौगतशिरोमणिर्माध्यमिकः प्रतिक्षिप्यते” इति।

- अत्रैव अन्ते एवं निगमितम् - “इत्थं सर्वथाऽनुपपत्तेः सकलौचित्यशून्योऽयं सर्वशून्यवादः” इति। (पृ. २११)
- ‘व्याप्तेश्च समञ्जसम्’ (ब्र.सू. ३.३.९) इति पठिते सर्ववेदान्तप्रत्ययाधिकरणान्त्यसूत्रे एवमवतरणिका एतैः महोदयैः ग्रन्थकारैः दत्ता - (पृ. ३१९) “एवमेतावता सोहापोहं ब्रह्मपरब्रह्मणोः सर्ववेदान्तप्रत्ययत्वमुपपाद्येदानीं हेत्वन्तरेणोपसंहरति - व्याप्तेश्च समञ्जसम्” इति।
- एवं सूत्रमवतार्य ब्रह्मपरब्रह्मणोः सर्ववेदान्तव्याप्तिम् उदाहरणैः स्पष्टीकुर्वन्तः पूज्यश्रीभद्रेशदासमहाभागाः स्वीयां दशोपनिषत्परिशीलनसिद्धां नैपुणीम् अत्र ईश-केन-कठ-प्रश्न-मुण्डक-माण्डूक्य-तैत्तिरीय-ऐतरेय-छान्दोग्य-बृहदारण्यकसंज्ञेभ्यः दशोपनिषद्भ्यः क्रमशः अनेकानि वाक्यानि उदाहरन्ति !!! एतेन एतेषां प्रखरमतित्वं, निरूपणभङ्गी च सुविशदं ज्ञायते इत्यत्र नास्ति संशीतिलेशः।
- ऐहिकाधिकरणे (ब्र.सू. ३.४.५०) भक्तस्य अत्रैव जीवन्मुक्तिः बलवत्प्रतिबन्धाभावे भविष्यति इति विषयः - विशिष्टाद्वैतमतविलक्षणः सुस्पष्टं व्यवस्थापितः बहुभिः श्रुतिस्मृतिप्रमाणवाक्यैः।
- उपसंहारखेलायां च एवं निश्चप्रचं दृढीकृतम् - (पृ. ३८२) “सर्वभूतस्थितं यो मां भजत्येकत्वमास्थितः। सर्वथा वर्तमानोऽपि स योगी मयि वर्तते॥ (गी. ६.३१) इति भूयोभूयो जीवत एव यथोक्तभक्तस्य मुक्तिफलाऽनुभवः शास्त्रोपदिष्टः। ऐहिकमपीत्यपिना भक्तैर्देहपातोत्तरलभ्यया विदेहमुक्तेः संग्रहादिह मुक्तेर्द्वैविध्यमुक्तम्। एवं सूत्रकारेणैव श्रुतिभिर्जीवन्मुक्तेः प्रसाधनाद् ये जीवन्मुक्तिरिस्कारपरिबद्धधियस्तैः श्रुतिशब्दाऽभिधानशक्तिविज्ञानविधुरैः कृत्स्नो वेदान्तार्थो न विदितः” (पृ. ३८३) इति।

उपसंहारः

इत्थम् एते ग्रन्थकाराः सुगृहीतनामधेयाः साधुभद्रेशदासमहोदयाः ब्रह्मद्वयाभिन्नस्वगुरुकृपालब्धधिषणाः अत्यद्भुतं ग्रन्थरत्नं स्वामिनारायणभाष्यं प्रणीय सर्वेषां जिज्ञासूनां उत्तमपुरुषार्थप्रापकं उपायं कृतवन्तः इति ते सुधन्यवादार्हाः एवमेव अन्यानि रत्नानि आविष्कुर्वन्तु इति स्वामिनारायणं अभ्यर्थये।
गुरुभक्तिसुधापूर्णः भद्रेशो हि बुधोत्तमः।
अत्युत्तमं ग्रन्थरत्नं निर्ममे ज्ञानहेतवे ॥

Author's Wall Designation

Author

Dr. Aksharananddas Swami	Professor of BAPS Swaminarayan Sanskrit Mahavidyalay, Sarangpur.
Mahāmahopādhyāya Dr. Bhadreshdas Swami	Head of BAPS Swaminarayan Research Institute, Swaminarayan Akshardham, New Delhi
Ācārya Brahmsetudas Swami	Ācārya
Dr. Gajendra Kumar Panda	Head, Dept. of Sanskrit, L. D. Arts College, Ahmedabad, Gujarat
Ācārya Gnannayandas Swami	Ph.D. Student, SP University, Vallabh Vidyanagar, Gujarat
Dr. Gyanaranjan Panda	Assistant Professor, Sahitya Department National Sanskrit University, Tirupati, Andrapradesh
Ācārya Gnantruptdas Swami	Ph.D. Student, Shree Somnath Sanskrit University, Veraval, Gujarat
Ācārya Gyanananddas Swami	Ph.D. Student, MS University, Baroda
Dr. Janakisharan Ācārya	Former Dean, Faculty of Darshana & Assistant Professor, Shree Somnath Sanskrit University, Veraval, Gujarat
Harapriya Behera	Ph.D. Student, Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri National Sanskrit University, New Delhi.
Ācārya Jignesh Raval	Ph.D Student, Saurashtra University, Rajkot
Dr. Jyotindra Dave	Director, BAPS Swaminarayan Research Institute, New Delhi
Dr. Narayan Pujar	Associate Professor, Dvet-Vedant Dept., National Sanskrit University Tirupati, Andrapradesh
Dr. Niranjan Mishra	Assistant Proffesor, Dept. of Vedabhashyam, National Sanskrit University, Tirupati
Dr. Pankaj Kumar Vyas	Assistant Professor, Dept. of Vyakaran National Sanskrit University, Tirupati
Ācārya Paramvivekdas Swami	Ph.D. Student, University of Delhi

Dr. Rabindra Kumar Panda	Professor of Sanskrit, M.S University
Dr. Rajneesh Pandey	Associate Professor of English SVDV, BHU, Varanasi
Rajeshree Dr. Mahanta Ramsundar Das Jee Maharaj	Sri Dudhadhari Math, Mathpara, Raipur
Ācārya Sagar Acharya	Ph.D. Student, Shree Somnath Sanskrit University, Veraval, Gujarat
Sapan Kumar Panda	Associate Professor, Department of Veda, Shasakeeya Sanskrit College, Bhitri, Sidhi
Dr. Saroj Kumar Padhi	Associate professor, Department of Vaidic Darshan, SVDV, BHU, Varanasi
Dr. Shrutiprakashdas Swami	Director, AARSH Shodh Sansthan, Swaminarayan Akshardham, Gandhinagar, Gujarat
Smit Thacker	PhD candidate, Department of Philosophy Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda
Dr. Somnath Dash	Assistant Professor, National Sanskrit University, Tirupati
Dr. Tapan Kumar Ghadei	Assistant Professor, Department of Yoga Vijnana, National Sanskrit University, Tirupati
Tilak Parekh	Ph.D. Student, Faculty of Divinity, University of Cambridge
Ācārya Viveknishthdas Swami	Ph.D. student, Sardar Patel University, Anand
Prof. Haridas Bhatt	Principal of Shri Poornaprajna Vidyapeetha, Banglore
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Prof. N. Radhakrishna Bhatt	Head, Dept. of Sanskrit, Karnatak Sanskrit Open University
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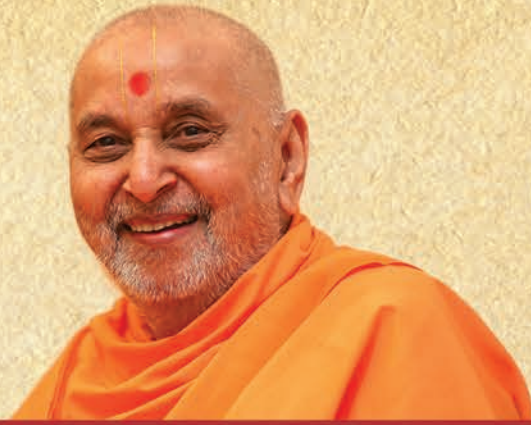
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