

ADVAITA PANCHARATNAM

(An Introduction to the Spiritual Science of
Advaita Vedanta in Five Verses)

BY D.B. GANGOLLI



PUBLISHED BY: HIND NAVOTTHANA PRATISHTHAN
VYASAGIRI KERALA. 680 623

1993

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PUBLISHERS' NOTE

This short treatise, "*Advaita Pancharatnam*", is on the basic essentials of Vedanta (the science of Monism). Shri Shankara, the great exponent of the Upanishadic path of Self-Realization, is the author of the five terse verses in this very short book.

The role of Adi Shankara in presenting to all aspirants of *Moksha* (liberation from the trammels of worldly existence) the science of the *Atman* in all its glory and pristine purity is unrivalled. But most of his followers who have taken it upon themselves to present Shankara's teachings to the aspiring public have strayed away from the essentials of his teachings and the methodology adopted by him. Swami Srimad Satchidanandendra Saraswati, of Holenarsipur, is one of the very few recognized authorities on Shankara who has been a true exponent of Shankara's works. It is he alone who has been able to give true seekers a correct insight, through his books, into Shankara's teachings.

The author of this interpretation of "*Advaita Pancharatnam*", Shri D. B. Gangolli, of Bangalore, has been responsible for publishing many books in English based on the Kannada publications of Swami Satchidanandendra Saraswati—books in which he has been able to bring the 'soul' of Shankara's teachings alive again. Shri D. B. Gangolli needs no introduction to the true followers of Adi Shankara. This, we can boldly say, is one more addition by him—a very valuable addition, too—to the other books of which he is the author.

To beginners in the path of Vedanta and Self-Realization, this book will be of immense use.

We have great pleasure in presenting this small *Upahaara* to all lovers of Vedanta—especially those who are beginners in the path.

Harih Om Tat Sat.

Swami Purushottam Teertha

General Secretary,

Hind Navotthana Pratishtan,

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Trichur District, Kerala.

Vyasagiri,
15-2-1993.

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ADVAITA PANCHARATNAM

(An Introduction to the Spiritual Science of
Advaita Vedanta in Five Verses)

PREFACE

As the title of the book suggests these are five verses, believed to have been composed by Adi Shankaraachaarya, in which the great world teacher introduces all genuinely-interested students to the rudimentaries of the spiritual science of Vedanta. Just like any empirical science, this Vedantic science is also a very highly developed science desiderating a great deal of steadfast dedication and burning enthusiasm on the part of the seekers.

All the five verses end with the words 'Shivaoa (s) ham' meaning 'I am *Shiva*, the Ultimate Reality'. Each of these verses depicts one important aspect of this Absolute, Ultimate Reality called '*Shiva*', which is synonymous with '*Ishwara*', the Lord Creator of the Universe as well as the human beings and other creatures. Shri Shankara has propounded in these pithy verses the basic theme of *Advaita* Vedanta, namely, that *Atman*, the innermost Self of all of us, is this non-dual, eternally pure, perfect, conscious and free '*Shiva*' alone. He reminds us that we are not '*Samsaaris*' or transmigratory souls tossed about from one birth to another, but our very essential nature at the core of our Being is *Shiva*, of '*Satchidaananda Swaroopa*.'

In the first verse the conglomeration of the body, the senses, the mind etc. is taught to be '*Anaatman*' or not the real Self. In the next three verses, viz. 2nd, 3rd and 4th, delineating with the help of three illustrations of the rope-snake, the dream, the reflection in a mirror, Shri Shankara brings home to our minds the salient teaching of Vedanta that—
"Although, in the ultimate analysis, we are not really or

absolutely transmigratory souls (*Samsaaris*), due to *Bhraanti* or delusion we are falsely appearing to be enjoying the transient pairs of opposites like *Sukha* (happiness) and *Duhkha* (misery) as also to be totally different from *Parameshwara*, the Lord Creator. In the last and fifth verse it is expounded that our core of Being in its essence *per se* is *Chaitanya*, which is perennially free, liberated, pure and perfect, devoid of any blemishes or sins whatsoever; consummate, all-pervading, all-consuming Reality. It will become quite evident here that *Shiva* means not one of the members of the mythological Trinity—*Brahma*, *Vishnu*, *Maheshwara*—but the Ultimate non-dual Reality which is beyond the three states of waking, dream and deep sleep, also called *Paramaatman*, *Parabrahman*, who is the innermost Self of all of us.

This booklet will, it is hoped ardently by the publishers, engender an abiding interest in the unique methodology of teaching such a terse, subtle, metaphysical science which concerns our life taken in its entirety. If it whets the appetite of the casual reader, he will surely take to studying the other texts meant for genuine seekers of *Moaksha* or Liberation, Beatitude. A detailed commentary is given with this objective alone.

Vyasagiri,
January 10, 1993

D. B. GANGOLLI

**DEDICATED TO
AADI SHANKARA**

ADVAITA PANCHARATNAM

INTRODUCTION

Deliberation on 'Atman 'and' Anaatman'

Although Vedanta is a *Shaastra* or scientific text which, without mentioning the fruits that accrue to the devotees in the other worlds of the celestial region, delineates the '*Anubhava*' or Intuitive experience that can be attained here and now in this very lifetime, the majority of the common run of people do not show any mental inclination towards this spiritual science. The reason for this is: For many people, in general, texts which demand or desiderate a predominant sense of discrimination, ratiocination on the part of the reader or student do not attract their minds; even among those whose minds have been induced to take up the study of these texts and to deliberate upon the topics and teachings propounded in them, many have not understood thoroughly as to which are those topics or phenomena that are of prime importance and which are those subordinate topics helpful in discerning and developing the former. Because of the reason that those who do not possess any basic inclination or propensity for discrimination are not at all the qualified persons for Vedanta, their case is not relevant for us here in this context. But it is quite evident that for the sake of those who are sincerely and dedicatedly aspiring to cognize the Ultimate Reality of Vedanta so as to match it with his/her Intuitive experience here and now a primary treatise which selects judiciously the most important, cardinal teachings of *Advaita* Vedanta and expounds them in a lucid manner becomes a necessity. With a view to meeting this dire need of those who are exposed to this spiritual science for the first time in their present materialistic extroverted way of life, Shri Shankara Bhagavatpaada composed these pithy five verses of *Advaita Pancharatnam* to cover a whole theme of the spiritual science *par excellence* of Vedanta. This small treatise, in fact, unravels its teachings in the form of a compact commentary.

The principal tenets of Vedanta are three : (a) The Absolute Ultimate Reality, without anything else whatsoever as second to it, is Brahman alone; (b) in It both *Jeevatwa* or soulhood and *Jagat* or the physical universe of manifold diversity are misconceived; (c) The Absolute Reality of *Brahman* is, in truth, our *Atman* or innermost Self (beyond our 'I' notion). All these three tenets have been explained here in this text by way of a commentary for the benefit of the genuine seekers.

The knowledgeable seers or sages aver that if an initiate to this spiritual science wishes to know or cognize these tenets so as to realize them in his own Intuitive experience, four human excellences have necessarily to be acquired by assiduous practice. These spiritual practices called "*Saadhana Chatushtaya*" — also referred to as "*Saadhana Sampat*" — are the following four: (i) *Nityaanitya Viveka*; (ii) *Iha Amutra Phala Bhoaga Viraagaha*; (iii) *Shama Damaadi Shatka Sampat*; (iv) *Mumukshutwa*.

Nitya-Anitya Viveka: The capacity to cogitate and contrast what is eternal and what is non-eternal is called by this phrase. The practitioner should deliberate upon the questions: What is the essential nature of any thing or phenomenon which is *Anitya*, meaning those objects which are within the purview of time? What is the essential nature of *Nitya Vastu*, meaning an entity which, if it exists at all, is beyond time?

Iha Amutra Phala Bhoaga Viragaha: The absence of any hankering after the enjoyment of such and such a pleasure in this world (*Iha*), as also the enjoyment of such and such a happiness in '*Paraloaka*' or other celestial worlds mentioned in the scriptures and mythological texts (*Amutra*) is called by this phrase. *Viraaga* or *Virakti* means detachment, renunciation. It is to be realized that one whose mind is engrossed incessantly thinking about the sensual objects outside and thereby is always extroverted, will find his mind wavering and wandering out amidst the multiplicity of external objects and hence it will not be available for him to concentrate and converge on the metaphysical, transcendental Reality (*Paramaartha*) of Vedanta.

Hence this *Viraaga* becomes quite essential for the discriminative seekers.

Shama-Damaadi Shatka Sampat: Further, there are six (*Shatka*) qualities or excellences which should per force be there in the minds of the *Jignaasus* or people who seek this Knowledge of the Ultimate Reality of *Brahman* or *Atman*. They are: (i) *Shama* or control over one's mind; (ii) *Dama* or control over one's senses (iii) *Uparati* or introvertedness; (iv) *Titeeksha* or forbearance in the face of the pairs of opposites like happiness and misery, heat and cold etc; (v) *Shraddha* or one-pointed dedication; (vi) *Samaadhaana* or equipoise of the mind. Note that these six excellent qualities are called '*Sampat*' or his wealth. Evidently, the seeker whose mind is endowed with these six excellences or virtues will be mature with the necessary '*Samskaaras*' or refinement of mind or heart, enabling him to carry out the subtle. Intuitive deliberation demanded of him by this spiritual science, Mumukshutwa: In addition to these above three qualifications this basic proclivity of the mind is necessary. The persistent persevering quest in the manner — "The present state in which we are is surely not the one endowed with eternal, absolute bliss; such a blissful state which is superior to anything else in this whole universe is plausible to be attained by Man; I have heard about this assurance being given and its veracity being vouched for by the scriptures and sages"— is itself '*Mumukshutwa*'. In fact, only those whose minds have imbibed or have been imbued with, this *Mumukshutwa* will invariably deliberate upon questions of the type—"Which is such a magnificent state of Bliss? What should I do to attain it?" When such *Mumukshus* listen to the scriptural instruction of the type — "The Absolute, Ultimate Reality is Itself the fountainhead of that Bliss; in fact, that is my *Atman* or innermost essence as the Self alone" — they go into rapture, ecstasy. Without the least conceit or cunning these people are engrossed in the Intuitive deliberation on the Transcendental Reality of *Brahman*, *Atman*; they assiduously endeavour to acquire all the necessary qualities like *Viveka* and *Viraaga* etc. for such deliberation. In any case, before one undertakes this Intuitive deliberation on the Ultimate Reality of *Atman* he should be per force endowed

with these four excellences or virtues. Only such seekers will meet with success and their deliberations reach their fruition.

Shri Shankara has not mentioned this '*Saadhana Chatushtaya*' in these verses for these are not '*Saadhanapradhaana*' or practical in their import and perspective. They are, on the other hand, '*Siddhaantapradhaana*' or scientific and rational in their approach and treatment of the subject-matter. The first component of '*Saadhana Chatushtaya*' which the practitioners or seekers of Beatitude (*Moaksha*) have to acquire, namely, *Nitya-Anitya Viveka* or deliberation on the prime questions of 'which is eternal' and 'which is non-eternal' has been exhaustively and exclusively taken up for deliberation here.

1. AATMAANAATMA VIVEKA

The reason for the common run of people not to have attained the Intuitive Knowledge of the type—"We are of the very essence of *Paramaatman* or *Shiva Swaroopa*" — is truly the absence of '*Aatmaanaatma Viveka*', mentioned earlier. *Atman* means the Self and *Anaatman* means what is not the Self. "*Atman*, meaning one's absolute essence of Being—what is it?" and "*Anaatman*, meaning that thing or phenomenon which is something other than one's own Self—what is it?"—these two questions are to be deliberated upon Intuitively (meaning, not intellectually alone) here and when we cognize the essential natures of these two phenomena distinctly, then it is called '*Aatmaanaatma Viveka*' in Vedantic parlance. Because of the reason that people, in general, do not possess this *Viveka* they have naturally and invariably believed that the body, the senses, the mind etc. are themselves, meaning their true Being. In their this present state of mind each one of them entertains a deep-seated steadfast belief to the effect

that—"I was born to such and such parents at such and such a time so many years ago at such and such a place, which is a particular region of this earth which forms a part of this huge universe; after getting such and such an education I have taken up such and such an vocation; I am a family man with a wife, so many children, and relatives; just like everyone, after living for many years when my span of life allocated to me by the Almighty comes to an end I am going to die."

In the minds of such people a profound doubt of the following type will persist and pester constantly: "How at all can I get the conviction that I am the eternally Pure, Free *Parameshwara*? How is it at all possible for me, who lives for a few years in a corner of this vast universe created by *Parameshwara* and who will eventually die, to be that *Isiwara* Himself?" Hence in order to get rid of that misconception the method of *Aatmaanaatma Viveka*, that a genuine *Mumukshu*, meaning high-rank seeker who is determined with one-pointed zeal and aspiration to attain *Moaksha* or Liberation, Beatitude here and now in this very life-span, has to carry out has been expounded in the first verse:

1. "*Naaham Dehoa Nendriyaanyantarangam, Naahamkaaraha Praanavargoa Na Buddhihi; Daaraapatyakshetravittaadi-dooraha Saakshee Nityaha Pratyagaatmaa Shivoa(s)ham.*"

Meaning: I am not the body, am not the senses, not the mind, not the ego, not the group of vital breaths or forces, not the intellect. I am the one who is far away from wife, children, farm, house etc. I am verily that *Shiva* who is witnessing directly, who is eternal and is the innermost Self.

Commentary Here all the '*Anaatmans*' or not-selves that the common people have believed to be the 'I' in him have been sublated, refuted one by one.

(A) 'I am neither the body nor the senses'

Some people have taken the body or the senses to be themselves. In the gross things seen outside like the stone,

sand etc. there does not exist any sentience, consciousness. These things like stone etc. do not move about by themselves; in them the symptoms like inhalation, exhalation, blood circulation etc. for distinguishing the existence of consciousness are not there; they cannot see, nor can they hear. Because of all such reasons there exists a distinction between inanimate things like the stone, sand, wood etc. and human beings like us. We are '*Chetanas*' or animate beings, while they are '*Jada Vastus*' or inanimate, gross things—thus many people have commonly reckoned. Some others have deliberated a little more and have opined in the manner: Things like the stone, sand etc. are lifeless entities, while we human beings are living beings; the lifeless things themselves have undergone certain transformations and have acquired the forms of the body and the senses endowed with life. Therefore, considered from the standpoint of their inner essential nature the body and the senses and the external things too are one and the same indeed. Even so, we the human beings possess the capacity of cognizing the external things, as also the faculty of utilizing them for our benefit. For this reason alone we call the external things by pronouns like 'that', 'this', whereas we call the conglomeration of the body and the senses 'I'.

But the above opinions of both the groups are not proper. If the group or conglomeration of the body and the senses is itself the entity or substance called this 'I' (myself or ego), then in each of the parts and limbs of the body as well as in each one of the senses the awareness or consciousness as 'I' should not exist. But it is in our experience universally that in each one of the organs or limbs and in each one of the senses also we have an innate awareness in the manner: 'I am walking'; 'I am touching'; 'I am smelling' and 'I am seeing'. Another point. The body has many parts or organs, the senses too are many; if each one of these were the entity called 'I', how come the one who has many senses is not aware of his being many in the manner: "I's or we"? In fact, we all have the deep-seated innate notion of this entity

called 'I' as one and one only. What is the reason for this?

There is yet another objection that—"Whether in the case of the various parts or organs of the body; whether in the case of the senses or whether in the case of their conjoined groups or conglomerations—can we believe any of these to be the entity called 'I'?" To wit, both in the body and the senses every now and then, there occur changes or mutations continuously. If it were true that the body and the senses etc. were the 'I' in all of us, then we would have had to keep on transacting in the manner: "All these changes have occurred in me only." But the real fact is not so. We transact, nay communicate to others, in the manner: "My eyes have become blurred"; "My legs have become lame"—also. If it were the case that the eyes and the legs were truly ourselves (to wit, they were identical with the 'I' notion), then when we express in the manner: "My eyes"—it would connote the wrong, ridiculous meaning of—"I of myself"—and this would amount to our using a wrong unintended statement, is it not? In this context, we can bring another universal experience to bear on our mind: Because of the reason that by means of our hands and feet we can very well catch hold of external objects and then push them away, it becomes quite evident to any person that those external things are distinctly different from us, is it not? In the same way, any part or organ that exists in our body can be removed or wrenched off, but merely on this count we do not feel that we ourselves are removed or cut off. If the surgeon cuts off a sore wound grown on our body, we do not at all feel or reckon that that part lying on the ground is 'myself' (to wit, once it is separated from the body there does not continue any sense of identification or belonging in that inert cut-out part). In the same way, the mucus of the nose, the spit, the saliva, the sweat, the hair, the vomit, the nail etc.—all such parts of our body we are parting with off and on; when they are lying outside on the ground by our side—we actually abhor their sight, but never do we identify ourselves with them as being part and parcel of ourselves. In the same way, we can decide about our senses too, in a particular sense. To explain, 'my eye', 'my ear', 'my nose'—in this manner we separate these sense organs

from us and cognize them in that manner. (They are sense organs which are separate parts of my body, but not myself in entirety. In fact, they are organs belonging to me). If we further proceed and carry out this process of deep cognition, then the eye, the ear, the nose etc.—these are truly the various organs and not the senses; the senses are functioning in or through these organs; but just like the sense organs called in Vedantic parlance '*Indriya Goalaka*', even those subtle senses which are the means or instruments of cognizing sight, hearing and smelling— we reckon by separating them from us. (To wit, all of them are objectified by our consciousness). Apart from this, when the functioning of the senses or *Indriyas* lurking in those organs like the eye, the ear and the nose diminishes or completely stops, no one among us actually believes that we ourselves entirely underwent or experienced the change. Therefore, it is tantamount to concluding that the senses are definitely not the 'I' in us.

Anyway, the final conclusion that is arrived at from all the deliberations made so far is: (a) The body, the senses etc. are manifold, but 'I' is one only; (b) the body and the senses are undergoing or having various changes or mutations, even then 'I' remains as it is, changeless; (c) the body, the senses are the cognized objects but 'I' is the subject which cognizes them; (d) therefore, the body and the senses are—just like the external stone, sand, wooden piece etc.—physical objects or substances alone; they are, in fact, gross and insentient objects only. I am not any one of them at all; that conscious entity which cognizes all of them is truly, verily myself — this 'I'.

Here in this context, a doubt may raise its head: If the body and the senses are not conscious, sentient things and if they are gross, insentient objects like a stone, sand etc.—then what about the symptoms of consciousness or sentience that appear in them? Knowing the objects, acquiring them, rejecting them and keeping away from them etc. — all such symptoms of being conscious or sentient are seen in the body and the senses indeed; these symptoms which are not seen or found in a stone,

sand etc. — wherefrom did these symptoms come into being in the body and the senses?

A tentative consolation (*Samaadhaana*) for this doubt is: The symptoms of being conscious or sentient do not, in truth, exist in these. A railway engine runs about; a magnet draws near it an iron piece; a magnifying lens enlarges or magnifies a minute, subtle object; but because of these symptoms does anyone ever think those gross things to be conscious or sentient? Let there be any amount of movement or activity in the body and the senses, let there be any amount of energy in them, but they are surely not that 'consciousness' or 'sentience' and are not capable of 'utilizing' their own movement, activity or their energy for their own sake; in fact, those who use these bodies and senses are '*Chetanas*' or conscious or sentient beings. The bodies and the senses belong to us (or we possess them) and we use them for our benefit. Therefore, we are *Chetanas* and they are gross objects indeed. To think that in the senses there exists consciousness or sentience is totally wrong. For, we cognize the senses, meaning we are conscious of them, and they are objects to our consciousness. Just as through a telescope we observe subtle things in empty space, we perceive through the instruments called 'senses' the external objects. Therefore, the senses are gross, insentient phenomena; they are 'means' of cognition or perception for us; we ourselves who cognize through those means are truly the conscious beings.

Thus it is now established that neither the body nor the senses are the innermost, innate Being going by the name of 'I' In the main, the dialectical device (*Yukti*) that—"The cognized objects like the body and the senses are distinctly not the cognizer or cognizing principle of 'I'"—is strengthened. But there exists another means or instrument in us to enable us to cognize these phenomena, the body and the senses and that is called 'mind'. Because this inner instrument itself cognize everything else, a doubt may arise quite naturally here in this context of the type—"That mind itself is the

entity 'I' — in this manner why should it not be concluded?" This doubt too is not reasonable or proper.

(B) 'I am not the Mind nor the Ego'

Although there do occur mundane transactions of the type — "I am fat; I am fair-complexioned; I am young; I am seeing; I am hearing" — since we become conscious or we cognize in the manner — "My body, my eye; my ear etc." and secondly just as in the case of the body and the senses they become objects to our consciousness or cognition and are cognized to be changing and thereby it becomes very clear or evident that we are not the body or the senses, in the same manner since there occurs a transaction of the type — "My mind" — this mind (which is distinctly but subtly an object to our consciousness) should per force be separate or distinct from 'I', i.e. me. In fact, I am cognizing with the mind (as a means or medium) and not that the mind by itself cognizes; the example or illustration of a telescope mentioned previously can suitably be applied here in this context. Just as the telescope (which is indisputably a gross insentient object) becomes a valid means (*Pramana*) to observe or cognize very subtle objects in far-off space, the mind too is a means for cognition. The senses are 'Bahihkarana' i. e. the instruments needed to perceive or cognize objects in the external world; the mind is 'Antahkarana', meaning, an instrument of knowledge or cognition that takes place within the body (at the psychic level). The '*Karana*' or instrument is a gross insentient valid means alone; the one who uses it (the mind) as an instrument, viz. 'I am verily a conscious being. Apart from this, the mind is wavering and wandering here and there. If the mind and the senses get linked up or related, then only we, through the mind, get cognition of some object. For this reason alone, quite often even if we hear the sound or see objects we keep saying in the manner: "What did you say? I did not clearly hear; it appeared as though someone came and moved away; I did not properly reckon." On such occasions the reason for not registering or reckoning the usual cognition

either of sound or sight is nothing other than the mind having had wandered somewhere else. From this reasoning it becomes tantamount to concluding that the changing, flowing mind is different from the steady 'I' who cognizes its change or flow.

Yet another objection may arise quite naturally and that is: "What is stated above, let us accept that too. In every workaday transaction of the type - 'I cognized; I saw; I heard' etc.—there is a cognition of 'I', 'I' in each one of them; at least, is that 'I' our essential nature or not? If that 'I' alone is our essential nature, then what the common run of people who believe that — 'I am in the body and I cognize with the mind; I transact through the body and the senses; the body exists in one region of the world'—amounts to be the correct knowledge alone, is it not? In that case, how at all is the statement about this belief being entertained by the common people wrong, and that assertion of—'I am *Parameshwara* or the Lord Creator Himself eternally pure and free or liberated'—be sustained?"

A consolatory, tentative solution to this is: "When we are carrying on our workaday transactions the 'I'-'I' that is associated with each one of them is not the real essence of our Being. The *Antahkarana* or inner instrument of the mind, mentioned above, alone appears in us in this form. In the transaction of the type—"I am cognizing this object through the senses"—the change that occurs in the *Antahkarana* which performs the act of cognizing is called by Vedantins 'Manas'; the change which assumes the form as the *Kartu* or agent of action for the cognition they call 'Ahamkaara'. Barring this one difference or distinction of appearing as *Kartu* and *Karana*, there does not exist any difference whatsoever between *Manas* and *Ahamkaara*. In fact, both these are changes or mutations of the *Antahkarana* alone. Therefore, just as the mind is separate from us (to wit, our essential real nature of Being) in the same way this *Ahamkaara* called 'I' notion or

concept too exists quite separately from our essential real nature of pure Consciousness or *Chaitanya Swaropa*.

To be able to realize the truth that *Ahamkaara* is different from our essential nature of Being or *Swaropa* we have to observe very subtly certain conditions: Just as in our workaday transactions every now and then the mind is not within the purview of our cognition, in the same manner this *Ahamkaara* too is not cognized. If observed keenly, because of the reason that we are always immersed or engrossed in external objects only, unless we make a specific effort and bring it into our focus this 'I' notion does not at all loom clearly before us. Only those who have undertaken the deliberation on the Ultimate, Absolute Reality (as enunciated in the Vedantic science of spirituality) as separate in the manner—'I', 'this'—make this 'I' an object for their consciousness or cognition. To the rest of the people this 'I' notion is not easily cognizable. Especially when we are fast asleep, there is no trace whatsoever of this 'I' notion. Even so, none of us ever believes that in deep sleep our *Swaropa* or essential nature of Being itself does not exist therein. Therefore, only appearing in the waking and the dream, this notion of 'I'—'I', which is an instrument for our (workaday) transactions, in each of them as *Ahamkaara* it is distinctly separate and our *Swaropa* is separate. This is the final conclusion that is established.

(C) 'I am not Buddhi or Intellect'

Just like the two forms of *Ahamkaara* and *Manas*, the *Antah-karana* has a third form called '*Buddhi*' or intellect. When the cognition of the external objects are presented by the senses, it is the function of the mind to cognize them one by one; when these individual knowledges are conjoined by the mind and the latter presents them to the intellect, it determines in the manner—"This is such and such a thing"; then *Ahamkaara* or the ego or 'I' notion feels proud in the manner—"This know-

ledge or cognition I got; I cognized it to be such and such a thing'. Then by means of this knowledge of external objects either happiness (*Sukha*) or grief (*Duhkha*) occurs. Because these *Sukha* and *Duhkha* are engendered in us only, to enjoy or experience them and to cognize them distinctly *Antahkarana* alone is the instrument. In any case, since the intellect too is, like the ego and the mind, merely an instrument of cognition or knowledge and it is being cognized by us, it amounts to saying that the intellect is separate from our *Swaroopa*.

The mutations that occur in the *Antahkarana* in the forms of *Manas*, *Buddhi*, *Ahamkaara*, as also the changes like happiness (*Sukha*) and misery (*Duhkha*), desire (*Kaama*), anger (*Kroadha*), fear (*Bhaya*), shame (*Lajjaa*) etc. are called '*Vrittis*' or thought—constructs. The mind, intellect and ego etc. are *Vrittis* concerned with cognition, whereas happiness, grief etc. are *Vrittis* called '*Vedana*' concerned with the experience (*Anubhava*) of the external objects. Because all these *Vrittis* do occur in the *Antahkarana* alone and because this *Antahkarana* is merely a *Saadhana* or instrument, evidently that my *Swaroopa* or essential nature of Being, for which it is a *Saadhana*, is distinct from this *Antahkarana* and *Vrittis*; none of these is, in truth, my *Swaroopa*. Thus a *Viveki* or discriminative person should determine.

(D) 'I am not the Group of Praanas'

Some people in this world have believed that—"Neither are we the body and the senses, nor the mind, the intellect, the ego. We are only those who utilize these for our sake or benefit. For example, when I want, I lift up my arm, if it is enough, I put it down; any object I want, I grasp by hand, if not wanted, I give it up; any topic I want or like, I concentrate on it and think about it; any topic unwanted, I neglect and forget; in deep sleep I dissolve the *Ahamkaara* or the ego and the mind, or without allowing them to wander hither or thither I still them at one

point. Thus at whose behest the -body, the senses etc. are functioning—that entity itself is this ‘I.’”

This opinion is not correct. For, the power which motivates the body, the senses etc. to function is called ‘*Praana*’. The substratum for that *Praana* alone is myself or this ‘I’. Just as the *Ahamkaara*, *Manas* and *Buddhi*, mentioned before, are related to knowledge, they are related to *Praana* too. Just as in the transaction — “I am cognizing this object”—we distinctly determine that the ‘I’ is *Ahamkaara*, the cognizing aspect is the *Manas* or mind and the determination of the cognitive knowledge is done by *Buddhi* or intellect—in the same manner, we can determine the motive aspect of *Praana* in all the transactions of the body and the senses. To wit, when we say — “I do such and such a work”—that aspect of it which assumes the *Kartru Bhaava* or agentship of action is *Ahamkaara*; that instrument or means which conceives of the action, say by volition, is *Manas*, and that which takes the final definite decision to perform the action is *Buddhi*. In this way, only after a definite decision with regard to an action is taken *Praana* starts functioning. The fact that *Ahamkaara* etc. are ‘*Anaatman*’—meaning, not our essential nature of Being—we have determined previously. Therefore, *Praana* too, which functions with the backdrop or support of those (*Anaatmans*), is necessarily, invariably *Anaatman* alone, not my real self, and this truth becomes self-established now.

Apart from the *Praana* functioning in the waking on our volitions, it does function without our volitions too. For instance, breathing, the heart beating or pulsating, the circulation of blood, optimum production of various juices like the bile etc. secreted by various glands or organs, excretion from the body of urine and stools etc.—all such involuntary functions without any manifestation of our volition whatsoever are steadily and continuously being carried out. Because of the reason that thus *Praana Shakti* or this vital power or force is variously functioning in our body, some scriptural texts are

saying that in this *Praana* there are five *Vrittis* or thought-constructs viz. *Praana*, *Apaana*, *Vyaana*, *Udaana*, and *Samaana*. These *Praana Vrittis* are also conventionally called *Praana Bheda* or different varieties of the vital force. But we may, if we so desire, imagine that in the waking state wherein all of us have a relationship or association with the body, the senses etc. we do have a relationship with *Praana*: but in a state like deep sleep wherein we do not have any relationship whatsoever with any second thing (than our Being) it is very evident that there is no relationship whatsoever with any function also. When we are awake we can observe others who are asleep and therefrom infer that in our deep sleep, without our being conscious or aware of it, several functions are being carried on without let; but in the waking we do not have the experience of deep sleep, we only imagine in that manner; in deep sleep which is Intuitively and directly experienced by us there does not appear any trace even of the functioning of *Praana*. Because of the reason that for the purposes of determining the Ultimate Reality Intuitive experience (*Anubhava*) is a stronger instrument or means of cognition than imagination or inference, the correct interpretation that is to be adopted or accepted universally would be: "Our essential nature of Being (*Swaroopa*) neither has any relationship with *Praana* nor with *Antahkarana* which is the substrate for it."

In any case, because of the following reasons: (a) *Praana Shaktis* are several; (b) they are also undergoing changes; (c) they are being cognized by us as objects; (d) in deep sleep all of them are completely absent — the unambiguous fact that — "They too are of gross nature, different from us (i. e. our essential nature of Pure Being); our essential nature of Pure Being which is conscious and is capable of cognizing them is distinctly different, separate from them" — is fully established.

(E) 'I am the One far from (belongings like) wife, children, farm, wealth etc.'

In this manner by deliberation based on the strength of Intuitive experience (*Anubhava*) it has been made quite clear, evident that neither the body and the senses nor the mind, the ego, the intellect and the *Praana* are our essential nature of Being. Now, from this line of thinking or deliberation another axiomatic truth evolves by itself, viz. objects like children etc. which are responsible for selfishness, are not at all related to our *Swaroopa*. For, only those, who have an innate, deep-seated identification of the type — "I am the body and the senses"—in them, which are *Anaatman*, have a strong feeling of identification with objects like wife, children, farm, house, money or wealth. Some of these non-discriminative, indiscreet people who have such a deep-seated identification with the body even go to the extent of actually believing that they are one with their wife, family and assets etc. and they are not averse or ashamed of showing off this vain pride in their possessions or belongings. Consequently, such people believe that if the wife, children are happy they themselves are happy and if their wife and children are unhappy they are themselves miserable; if their wealth or land, assets etc. are amassed they feel in the manner—"I have consolidated my financial or economic position; I have nothing to worry at all". If they are lost they bemoan in the manner—"Oh God! I am ruined." But by dint of the method of deliberation those who have cognized the spiritual teaching arrived at so far to the effect that—"Our identification with the body as our essential nature of Being or Self is misconception; in truth, none of these viz. the body, the senses, *Praana*, the mind, the intellect and the ego—is really related whatsoever to our essential nature of Being" — stand far removed from these external things like wife, children etc. related to our body. It is true that these phenomena like wife, children, wealth etc. appear to be related to or associated with us very much but

does it not appear in the same manner in the dream too? Although wife, children etc. which appear in the dream are seemingly belonging to us only during that dream period, the moment we wake up we determine that they truly are not related to us in the least, is it not? Similarly, the relationship that appears to exist herein in the waking too is a mere appearance; it is not real at all. In this way, we have to determine and conclude.

(F) 'I am Saakshi, Eternal, Pratyagaatman or the Innermost Self'

Now, another question will arise. If this phenomenon of 'I' which we utilize in our day-to-day transactions is none among the body, the senses, the mind etc. nor is it the *Ahamkaara* going by the concept or notion of 'I', then quite apart from and beyond all these which is that entity that is our essential nature of Being? How at all can we determine that it exists?

It is to be said that those who raise this above question are the ones who have a pronounced proclivity and predilection towards the external *Anaatman* alone. For, the body, the senses, *Praana*, the mind, the intellect and the ego—all these are objects, cognizable things; the cognizing essential nature of Being-Consciousness is distinctly different or separate from these, and this truth has been reiterated previously. It being so, merely on the count of a statement that—"None of the cognized objects like the body, the senses is myself"—how can it be justified or established that the cognizing 'I' itself does not exist?

Objection: Even if we accept the fact that there is no consciousness or sentience in the body and the senses all of us have to per force admit that in our *Antahkarana* there exists consciousness; for, without using the *Antahkarana*

we have never gained any cognition. It being so, if we discard *Ahamkaara* in the form of which it is the substrate for cognition and say that there exists yet another essential nature of Being, how at all can we determine its existence? Further, how at all is it possible for us to determine that in that particular entity there exists cognitive consciousness. The statement of yours that this *Ahamkaara* of the form of 'I' does not exist in deep sleep is true; but then we do not also have any cognition or consciousness. On the basis of that experience (of the deep sleep) too it amounts to concluding that higher than or superior to the *Antahkarana* there does not exist any entity whatsoever.

Consolatory Explanation: It is true that it appears to us that there exists consciousness in our *Antahkarana*. But we cognize our *Antahkarana*, we make it appear to our Intuitive experience (*Anubhava*). Therefore, *Antahkarana* also has become an object; in addition, it is established that our essential nature of Pure Being or *Swaroopa* is separate from it. Because of the reason that *Antahkarana* or 'I' notion cognizes external things or objects, if it is being argued that in it (*Antahkarana*) alone there exists consciousness, then because the senses cognize the external objects why should it not be determined that in them only there exists consciousness? If it is contended that—"Because of the reasons that—(a) the senses are objectified by the *Antahkarana*; (b) the functions of these senses 'cognizing' and 'not cognizing' are also dependent upon and associated with *Antahkarana* alone—the consciousness that exists in them is, in truth, that of *Antahkarana* alone"—then it becomes thereby established that because of the reason that *Antahkarana* also is objectified by our essential nature of Pure Being or *Swaroopa* the latter, which cognizes the functions of the *Antahkarana* itself like 'cognizing' and 'not cognizing', should necessarily be separate and different from *Antahkarana*; as also the consciousness or the faculty of cognizing that exists in the *Antahkarana*, being associated

with and dependent upon that *Swaroopa* alone, in truth, belongs to or is that of our *Swaroopa* indeed. Then it evolves from this line of Intuitive reasoning that *Chaitanya* or Pure Consciousness alone is our *Swaroopa* or essential nature of Being.

This *Chaitanya* which is our *Swaroopa* is 'Saakshi' or the Witnessing Consciousness. It means, It is capable of cognizing the whole gamut of *Anaatman* or not-self directly, Intuitively (to wit, It does not need any mediate means). The mind and the senses etc. (to wit, mind, intellect—these words in addition to their being interpreted as *Antahkarana Vrittis*, are also used with the meaning of the whole *Antahkarana*. In this treatise we have used the word '*Manas*' or mind to mean *Antahkarana*) do not cognize their respective objects directly, Intuitively. Only if they have some external help they are capable of cognizing. For instance, if the mind has to cognize a beautiful picture or scenery, it needs the help of the seeing sense (*Indriya*) and this latter sense has to have the sense organ, viz. eyes; these eyes need further the help of light. Thus all other cognizing subjects (*Vishayis*) are able to cognize by having some sort of an interval or recess in between them. But this our *Swaroopa* does not cognize, Intuit either the *Antahkarana* or, for that matter, the whole of *Anaatman* in this manner at all; It illumines whatever object presents itself before It without any *Vyavadhaana* or interval or recess as well as without desiderating any *Karana* or means, instrument of cognition, directly, Intuitively.

Because of this reason It is Nitya or eternal, perennial. *Nitya* means being without the limitations or restrictions of time, which is nothing but a particular thought-construct which flashes to our intellect in our waking. Because of the reason that all the objects which appear to us in the waking have invariably to appear within the time (frame) we have to reckon them to be unreal objects restricted by time. But our *Swaroopa*, which illumines by means of Its *Chaitanya* the

whole gamut of *Anaatman* associated with time, is not touched or tainted by time and hence time cannot limit or restrict It. Therefore, this *Chaitanya* cannot undergo any changes whatsoever like the objects which are tied down to and restricted by time. For this reason, *Chaitanya* is also called Kootastha. 'Koota' means a substance which is a huge mass like a mountain; (the analogy is taken from the fact that) just as a mountain does not move or quiver a wee bit even when a big storm hits it, similarly this our *Chaitanya*, which happens to be our very *Swaroopa*, does not undergo any change or mutation whatsoever in its core or essence of Being. The word 'Nitya' conventionally (in common parlance) has another meaning. That thing, though it is undergoing changes continuously, which exists in time alone, is also addressed by us as *Nitya*. For example, we have believed this our earth to have existed like this for a long, long time, is it not? But (it is found out by our geologists that) the earth which existed a thousand years ago has not remained as it was without any change whatsoever; further, after another thousand years it would not exist as it is now. Even so, in the form of earth it is called *Nitya* or eternal to that extent. According to the viewpoint of the empirical or physical sciences, *Dravya* or matter never gets destroyed; it may undergo changes, mutations, transformations etc. but not that its very essential nature or core of existence in the form of nuclear particles never becomes non-existent. According to this theory, even if we say or believe that our earth gets completely destroyed, its matter or very essence of Being has per force to exist in some other subtle, imperceptible form indeed. Therefore, it amounts to saying that earth or its very core matter is a changing eternal (*Nitya*) entity. Such entities are called 'Parinaami Nitya'. But when we say our *Chaitanya* which is our *Swaroopa* is *Nitya*, it is not meant in this sense; for, It does not 'exist' in time; nor does It undergo any *Parinaama* or transformation, mutation whatsoever. It is Nirvikaara, meaning It is a Kootastha Nitya Vastu, not being within the purview or ambit of any change whatsoever.

Apart from this, this *Chaitanya* alone is *Pratyagaatman*, meaning that real *Swaroopa* of ours which exists innermost in all of us. As already described, on certain occasions we transact that we are the body. Sometimes we transact that we are the senses. But the existence of the body is always associated with the sense knowledge, and hence we can think or imagine that the senses are the essence of existence internal to or inner than the outer body, meaning comparatively between the two the senses are our real essential nature of Being or *Swaroopa*. In the same strain, we may carry on this deliberation and can conclude on that basis that *Praana* or the vital force or energy, *Manas* or the mind, *Buddhi* or the intellect and *Ahamkaara* or the ego ('I' notion or concept)—in this order are, in a more profound sense, our inner *Swaroopa*; for, we come to Intuit that—"If we leave one and go to the next (inner) constituent, the latter is endowed with a superior existence than the former (to wit, in the above list, between *Praana* and *Manas*, the latter appears to be of superior existence than *Praana*; similarly *Buddhi* has superior existence or Being than *Manas* and *Ahamkaara* has superior existence than *Buddhi*). Further, we come to cognize the fact that the existence of the latter constituent is dependent upon the other constituent. But even after reaching up to *Ahamkaara*, it does not appear that we have reached our real *Atman*, meaning our real Absolute *Swaroopa*. This is because, as depicted above, *Saakshi* has illumined all the constituents from *Ahamkaara*, up to the body by Its *Chaitanya*, It has lent 'existence', as it were, to this subtlest of those in the list of constituents, viz. *Ahamkaara*. Therefore, this *Saakshi Chaitanya* Itself is our innermost essence of Being as *Atman*; from the *Paramaatha Drishti* or the viewpoint of the Absolute, Ultimate Reality, that *Saakshi Chaitanya* alone we should truly call 'I'. In truth, the divine light of *Saakshi Chaitanya* is shed in bits in all these constituents like *Ahamkaara*, *Buddhi*, *Manas*, etc. and for this reason alone they too have become fit to be addressed as 'I' in our day-to-day transactions. If we observe Intuitively, these *Ahamkaara*, *Buddhi*, *Manas* etc. are not our

real *Atman*. They are reckoned to be our *Atman* through misconception, wrong knowledge. Therefore, *Saakshi Chaitanya*, which is innermost to all these phenomena like *Ahamkaara*, *Buddhi*, *Manas* etc. and which is, in truth, the *Atman* of all of them, is Itself our *Paramaatman*, meaning, (Intuitively speaking or in the ultimate analysis) more than all these misconceived *Atmans* the really real *Atman*, who is *Pratyagaatman*, our innermost Self.

(F) 'I am Shiva'

Those who in this manner carry out the Intuitive deliberation distinguishing between *Atman* and *Anaatman* and cognize their *Pratyagaatman*, do not get deluded by the false notions like— "We exist in this world"; "These bodies which appear within the world are indeed ourselves"; "Like us there exist many others in this world and among them there are people about whom we entertain opinions like—some are friends, some are foes and some others are those towards whom we have to be indifferent". They have realized in their Intuitive experience that — "We are really of *Shiva Swaroopa* alone which is the substratum for all these phenomena but which is not tainted or touched in the least by any of them." Only to these holy men accrues the superlative. Intuitive Knowledge of identity with *Ishwara* or the Lord Creator of the universe as propounded in the *Shwetaashwatara Upanishad* 6-11, viz. "*Eko Devaha Sarvabhooteshu Goodhaha; Sarvavyapee Sarvabhootaantaraatmaa; Karmaadhyakshaha Saakshea Chetaa Kevaloa Nirgunashcha*"—meaning, "One divine Being inheres in all creatures. He is the innermost dweller in all the creatures; He is the Lord commander or controller of all actions; One who has settled down residing in all creatures, the Witnessing Principle, of the very essence of *Chaitanya* or Pure Consciousness; One who is non-dual without anything second to Him; One who is not in the least related to or associated with any *Guna* or quality whatsoever" (to wit, the ultimate goal of all human existence is to realize here and now in this life-span that this 'I' notion in us is, in the

ultimate Intuitive analysis, identical in all aspects with our *Shiva Swaroopa*, but just now as it appears it is a mere misconception or a superimposition on our *Swaroopa*).

The word '*Shiva*' means the essential nature of auspiciousness or *Mangalashwaroopa*. *Parameshwara* or the Supreme Lord who is our *Atman* alone is of the very essence or embodiment of extreme, supreme Bliss, Prosperity; there do not at all exist any trace of blemishes or shortcomings which bring in their wake misery or retrogression. He is always the support or substrate for prosperity or blissful nature. All that is believed to be beneficent, blissful in this world is indeed supported by and dependent upon Him only. For, He alone is its *Atman* or core of Being. Those who remember Him or surrender unto Him with full faith get all their desired objectives fulfilled; for, only when we attain to our *Aatma Swaroopa* or the essential nature as the innermost Self and get set or established in that Intuitive experience we can claim that *Purushaartha* or the goal of human existence is achieved. (Then alone we can say confidently that we have attained the *Purushaartha* or that we have become *Kritakriya*). From all these reasons that *Parameshwara* is called or addressed as '*Shiva*' in all the *Shrutis* (*Upanishads*) and *Smritis* like *Geeta* etc. Those who have Intuited this *swaroopa* so as to culminate in their own experience here and now this *Aatma swaroopa* as depicted in this above *Shruti* verse realise that they are no other than that *Shiva swaroopa* and live without any trace of anxiety or grief.

II. DISSOLUTION OF THE DELUSION OF JEEVATWA

If we are truly *Shiva Swaroopa* or of the very essence of auspiciousness and Absolute Reality; then how come this

belief that we are *Jeevas* or transmigratory souls arise in us? What is the reason for the appearance of *Sukha* and *Duhkha*, which do not at all exist in *Shiva Swaroopa*, as if they really exist? If it is affirmed that these do not at all really exist, then what is the reason for these to appear to be really existing to all the people? When even the Vedantins who propound that —“They are not *Jeevas*; *Jeevatwa* itself is misconceived”—are carrying on the day-to-day transactions just like the others, what evidence (*Pramaana*) is there to affirm that—“*Jeevatwa* is destroyed or sublated”? Such a doubt may arise in the minds of some of us, if not all, is it not? As a solution for this inquiry this second verse states:

2. *Rajjwajnaanaadbhaati Rajjou Yathaahihi, Swaatmaajnaanaadaatmanoa Jeevabhaavaha; Aptoaktyaa Hi Bhraanti-naashe Sa Rajjurjeevoa Naaham Deshikoaktyaa Shivoa-(s)ham.*

Meaning: Just as because the rope is not correctly cognized as the rope, in it a snake appears to manifest, similarly because our *Atman* is not Intuited, cognized as He really is in Him this *Jeevatwa* appears (to exist or manifest). Just, as when the knowledgeable people help cognize the object in front to be a rope it is cognized to be a rope alone, similarly when a *Sadguru* or a true, genuine preceptor teaches (the *Shishya* realises that) ‘I am not a *Jeeva*, but am verily *Shiva* alone.

Commentary: Because of the reason that we have not cognized our true essence of Being we are stricken with a *Bhraanti* or delusion of the type—“We are *Jeevas*”. When we Intuit our true essence of Being, this delusion disappears. An illustration can be adduced here. We all have, some time or the other, the experience of mistaking a rope lying on the ground, in poor light, to be a snake; in this case, is it not true that because we have not cognized the real nature of the rope alone, that delusion has arisen? As long as the delusion persists it appears as if it is a snake and a snake only. But the moment we have the cognitive experience that

it is a rope alone that delusion disappears totally (without any trace even of a snake anywhere and at any time). Just as in the illustration the snake is appearing as a result of delusion, in the illustrated teaching *Jeevatwa* is merely an appearance (also because of a subtle delusion). This is the spiritual instruction (*Siddhaanta*) of Vedanta.

Let us deliberate upon the above illustration in some more detail. Which is that thing that has appeared as 'snake' in the rope as a result of *Bhraanti*? Is that thing different from the rope? No. For, when the correct cognition or knowledge accrues, then the perceptual experience (*Pratyaya Anubhava*) of the type— "This is a rope alone, not a snake"—ensues. No one ever assumes that a real snake alone appears during our *Bhraanti*; for, when that delusion is removed, no one can possibly find out where the snake has gone or disappeared. No one has seen or heard that— "Such and such a person died as a result of a rope-snake bite." Even when any person steps on a rope (by chance) and is afflicted by the false belief that— "I have stepped on a snake; it has bitten me and as a result the poison has affected me" — and then might have even died; even so, we never reckon that for his death a (real) snake bite was responsible. Even the logical argument that during that time our mental feeling or belief itself got transformed as a snake is not acceptable to any one of us; for, no one gets the cognitive experience of the type— "My mind had itself got transformed into a snake". In truth, the cognitive knowledge that is engendered in the manner— "There did not exist a snake at all in this instance; it was truly, actually a rope alone"— is enough proof to convince us that during the delusion there did not at all exist any kind of a real snake. Especially, to think or infer that during the time of the delusion the rope itself had got transformed into a snake would be the height of indiscretion indeed; for, if things were to give up their respective essential natures of Being by themselves and beget by themselves the essential natures of Being of other different things, then in this world no

empirical dealings worth the name would have been carried out (In fact, there would have been utter chaos). In that event, there would not have been a rule of law that from 'milk alone' curd is produced; nor there would have been a rule of law to the effect that from milk 'curd alone' can be produced. On certain occasions, then, water too could have become curd; and on certain other occasions, even the milk mixed with a fermenting agent for obtaining curd could have become water too! If such were the conditions and a total state of chaos existed, then how could human beings carry on their daily routine and based on such faith how at all can they transact? Can we assume that in the rope there existed a small part or taint of a snake and that itself, when we were deluded, appeared as a snake? This is an opinion which no one can ever accept or entertain. Besides, no wise or intelligent person can ever possibly examine and demonstrate in the manner— "Because such and such a thing is tainted with a bit of a substance of such and such a thing, that small part of the tainted substance may at any particular time or occasion as a result of delusion appear in a distinct manner." Especially to aver that— "At that particular time (of *Bhraanti*) a snake actually was born or came into being and as soon as the delusion disappeared the snake died"—is grossly contradictory to universal experience. If it is contended in the manner—"Which is that snake? I had merely a delusion—in this way we say when we see a snake, is it not? Then why not we infer that— 'When we see a rope, because of the reason that we remember a snake we say that a snake appeared?' — even then, it is not a proper conclusion; for, there is no cause or room whatsoever for a snake to appear as if it actually exists in front of us just because we remember a snake. Apart from this, merely on remembering a snake why should the rope disappear? For this question the proponents of the above theory or concept cannot possibly give a convincing reply. Instead of saying— "I remembered a snake"— we experience in the manner— "I saw or perceived a snake"— and this experience is opposed to the former inference or mere figment of imagi-

nation. In any case, in this illustration there does not exist a real or an actual snake at all; neither there exists any memory of it. Even so, under the spell of delusion we have the common experience of having seen a snake, is it not? How to unravel this problem?

Our answer to this problem is: In the illustration a snake having come into being is false; in poor light to those who have not cognized a rope correctly as a rope, that rope alone appears as a snake and not that there actually exists a snake in the rope. In delusion the snake does not at all come into being or is born; and after the correct knowledge or cognition is gained it (snake) does not really disappear.

This spiritual teaching of the *Shaastra* is substantiated, supported by everyone's knowledge or understanding, rather conviction, to the effect that—"I had mistaken or misconceived a rope itself to be a snake." Therefore, the 'snake' was a mere belief—the rope alone was the reality. Only this much can be pertinently said; but to seek a cause for the snake projected by *Bhraanti* is not in the least rational or proper.

[Some present-day Vedantins aver: A certain power called *Avidyaa* or *Ajnaana* is supported or sustained by *Atman*. Each object that exists in *Vyavahaara* or our workaday world dealings is covered up by one each part of this *Avidyaa*. If a particular object is known (by means of *Jnaana*) that mask or covering power disappears. The reason for the rope appearing as a snake due to *Bhraanti* is: At that moment the part of *Ajnaana* existing in the rope gets transformed or metamorphosed into a snake; the *Ajnaana Amsha* or part of ignorance existing in the seer or onlooker gets converted into the *Jnaana* or knowledge of the snake. The *Avidyaa* that is mentioned in this theory is not to be found in anybody's experience; it is not at all mentioned anywhere in Adi Shankara's *Bhaashyas*. Because of the reason that the rope-snake that is referred to by these proponents who have

already acknowledged the theory that — “*Avidyaa* covers up or envelops *Atman*” — is not universally accepted, that illustration (with their interpretation given above) is not a valid, pertinent one in the present context. Because this is a highly controversial topic in Vedantic circles, in this elementary treatise written mainly for the guidance and benefit of common *Jijnaasus* or seekers, that controversy is not touched upon at all. But those who are interested in knowing it properly and thoroughly can find elaborate explanation of this topic in the Sanskrit text called “*Moolaavidyaaniraasa*” published by Adhyaatma Prakaasha Karyaalaya, Holenarsipur, Hassan District, Karnataka.] In the same way, we must understand or interpret the illustrated (to wit, when we try to understand the *Adhyaasa* or misconception, we have to discern that it exists naturally due to *Bhraanti* or delusion with regard to our *Atman*). That we are *Jeevas* is merely a *Bhraanti* indeed. Because of the reason that we do not know our *Swaroopa* this *Bhraanti* exists, persists and not that in reality or actually *Jeevatwa* exists or is caused. That we are always, eternally of *Shiva Swaroopa* alone is the correct knowledge.

Here one objection can be raised: To say that the rope is an object for cognitive consciousness, while the snake merely appears is not proper; the rule of law here is that which appears is itself an object; hence it seems that here in this instance to assume that some particular snake alone appears is the correct thing to do. Otherwise, if universal experience is discarded and if it is contended that it can also be like—“The appearing phenomenon or object is one and the actual object is another”—then, when we see a man we may see a river; when we see a hill we may see a city and when we see an elephant we may see a chicken. But in our experience it is not like this anywhere or at any time.

A Consolation for this: There is no rule of law that always we have an experience of an object as it is. To explain, if we dip one hand in cold water and dip the other in hot water and then taking out both the hands if we dip them together

in lukewarm water, then to the hand which was dipped in cold water it appears as if the (lukewarm) water is hot and to the hand which was dipped in hot water it appears as if the water is cold. Because of the reason that one and the same water at one and the same time cannot possibly have different degrees of heat, although that (lukewarm) water was actually with one temperature, due to *Bhraanti* we have to believe that it appears to exist in different degrees of heat. Those who are obstinate in asserting that as it appears distinctly an object should invariably exist will have to imagine that actually in one and the same water there exist different degrees of heat. This proposition or theory is not acceptable to any one at all. Apart from this, it is in everyone's experience that—"In cognition there are two types, viz. correct cognition and wrong cognition; further, in the correct cognition the object appears as it is and in the wrong cognition it appears in a different form." It being so, to imagine or infer in the manner—"It is not correct; in reality or actually it should be like this"—quite against universal experience can never be proper or justifiable. Hence the contention that—"The rope itself appears to be a snake due to misconception"—is itself the correct conclusion.

Objection: How can it be said to be wrong if during the time of the appearance of the snake we believe that a snake actually existed? If it is wrong, then when the rope appears, during that time what evidence can be adduced to assert about the real existence of the rope?

Solution: To this we have already given an answer indeed. Although during the spell of delusion it appears in the manner — "This is a snake" — when the correct cognition accrues we get the clear conviction born out of experience in the manner—"This is a rope alone; in it there never existed a snake at all; the experience of having seen a snake was truly a delusion." But the cognition of the rope is not like that at all; no one ever gets the experience to the effect—

“This is not a rope.” Therefore, it is the correct experience alone. That experience which is sublated or falsified can never be real.

Objection: What about the case in which one delusion is cancelled or falsified by another delusion? For instance, from a distance a man thinks or imagines that in the ground there exists a crevice, fissure and when he approaches he decides it is only a stick; but when he still further approaches the spot he finally decides it is truly a rope. In this example, the cognition of the stick sublated or falsified the cognition of the crevice; even so, the former was not real. How do you explain or solve this problem?

Consolatory Solution: The example that you have mentioned also supports the doctrine that—“That which is sublated or falsified is not real.” That the cognitive knowledge which sublates another should always be real is not a rule of law, it is true; but at the same time, it cannot be averred from this that people in general have never acknowledged the existence of an object that is never sublated. In the illustration although the snake appearing in the rope is ‘actually’ a snake due to delusion to one person, but to all others it is appearing as a rope alone; after it is examined and observed even to that person who had wrongly cognized it as a snake the object now appears as a rope alone. Thus in our empirical transactions because of the reason that both the rope and the cognition that it is a rope are never sublated, people in general have acknowledged it as a correct, proper knowledge or cognition. Assuming the cognition of the rope as real in consonance with this acceptance by all people, here in this context we have given the illustration of the rope—snake, but it is not at all our opinion that the rope (knowledge) is really, i. e. in the ultimate analysis, *Abaadhya* or inviolable, never to be sublated. In fact, for Vedantins who affirm or propound that—“*Atman* alone is absolutely, ultimately real; in Him

only both *Jeevatwa* (soulhood) and Jagat (world of duality) are misconceived”—if it is contended that — “The rope which is the support or substrate for the snake is also unreal” —there is no harm or threat posed to their teaching; in their ultimate spiritual teaching or *Siddhaanta*, because of the reason the whole world of duality itself is *Mithyaa* or unreal, false, even the rope which is included in that world is also *Mithyaa* indeed. Even so, the rope is a *Vyaavahaarika Satya* or empirical reality. But the snake which appears in it due to *Bhraanti* is not like that at all. Between these two, i. e. the rope and the (appearance of a) snake, this difference or distinction will always continue to exist.

(H) 'Because Atman is not Cognized, Jeevatwa is Appearing'

Now, let us turn our attention towards the illustrated (*Daarshtraantika*). Because we have not cognized as to what is the essential nature of our *Atman* or Self, we are having *Jeevatwa* or soulhood; to wit, just as in darkness the rope is not cognized as it is, the people have wrongly conceived (misconceived) it to be a snake; similarly because we have not cognized our *Shiva Swaroopa*, in It this *Jeevatwa* is appearing.

Here in this context there exists a great deal of similarity between the illustration and the illustrated. For, one who reckons (misconceives) *Atman* to be a *Jeeva* (transmigratory soul) invariably and innately believes that he is intimately related to the body, *Praana* or vital force, the mind, the intellect and the ego. Just like the indiscreet person, without knowing or cognizing the rope as it really is, imagines in it a hood, a tail and a crooked or coiled form etc. and then becomes afraid thinking that it is a snake, similarly the ignorant person imagines having an intimate relationship with the body, the vital force, the mind etc. and entertaining various misconceptions in the manner—“I am born, I grow, I grieve, I die and again am born”—and is suffering. If observed incisively, just as there does not exist a wee bit

of a taint of a snake in the rope, similarly in *Atman*, who is the Witnessing Principle the very essence of *Chaitanya* or Pure, Absolute Consciousness, there is not the least taint of *Jeevatwa* at all. Just as the person who carries out a thorough examination or scrutinization of the object before him and attains the correct knowledge of the rope, the real object, and thereby gets rid of the fear of the (imagined) snake, similarly the *Jijnaasu* by dint of his Intuitive knowledge of *Shivatwa* gets rid of his apparent *Samsaaritwa* or transmigratoriness.

Objection: If the cognition to the effect—"I am a *Jeeva*"—is *Bhraanti*, then what *Pramaana* or proof can you adduce to assert that the cognition of the type—"I am *Shiva*"—is not a *Bhraanti*? Just as the cognition of *Jeevatwa* is falsified by means of deliberation, similarly the possibility of the cognition of *Shivatwa* also being rendered false will invariably be there, is it not?

Solution: There is no scope whatsoever for such a fear. For, the cognition that one is a *Jeeva* is the result of believing the innate relationship with (the adjuncts like) the body, the senses, the vital force, the mind etc. which appear in one particular state of consciousness (say, waking or dream) as the *Paramaartha* or the Absolute, Ultimate Reality. But the Intuitive Knowledge or cognition that—"I am *Shiva* or the *Chaitanya Swaroopa*"—is born out of the Intuitive experience (*Anubhava*) of the *Kootasthanitya Chaitanya*, which is devoid of any relationship with any state of consciousness nor with any restrictions of time. In the case of an object restricted by time there exists the fear or anxiety that it may completely change its very essence of Being; but who can ever assert that for the *Paramaartha Swaroopa* which is beyond time such a change or mutation can possibly be there?

(I) 'By the Spiritual Instruction of a Sadguru the Shiva Swaroopā can be Cognized'

Here yet another point of deliberation remains. When even the Vedantins who are affirming that—"I am not a *Jeeva*" — are carrying on their day-to-day transactions just like the others, what clinching evidence (*Pramaana*) is there to assert that — *Jeevatwa* disappears and *Shivatwa* comes into Being"—?

The solution for this doubt is: In the illustration of the rope-snake we have very clearly delineated that the snake did not exist in the beginning (i. e. even when the person was under the spell of the delusion) and after the correct knowledge of the reality of the rope was gained also the snake did not really go away. In the same way, we have affirmed that *Jeevatwa* is caused by misconception and it really does not exist at all, as also *Shiva Swaroopā* alone is the Absolute Ultimate Reality. It being so, what is meant by saying — *Jeevatwa* goes away or disappears, *Shivatwa* comes into Being"? We are always of *Shiva Swaroopā* — and this alone is the Ultimate Truth.

There is no need of a *Pramaana* to say that — "We are of *Shiva Swaroopā*" — for, our *Swaroopā* (essence of Pure Being-Consciousness) is not a matter or an entity that can ever be hidden or unknown. In poor light to a person who has misconceived a rope to be a snake if the knowledgeable person who knows the reality of the rope instructs or guides him in the manner — "This is a rope, not a snake"— immediately the doubt or misconception that it was a snake vanishes; but in that illustration even after some one else has instructed about the real object the person under the spell of misconception or doubt will necessarily have to get convinced that it is a rope alone either by touching and examining the object or with the help of a light. It is not so in the case of our *Aatma Swaroopā*;

in order to Intuit It directly (i. e. without any mediate *Pramaana*) there is no need for anything else at all. It is by Itself of the very essence of *Chaitanya Prakaasha* or self-illuminating Pure Consciousness. It being so, if the spiritual preceptor instructs in the manner — “You are not the body, the senses, the mind etc.; in truth, or in the ultimate analysis, you are of the *Parama Shiva Swaroopa*” — it is enough; one who is a *Jijnaasu* merely by such pointed instruction, as it is elucidated in the previous verses, the Intuitive experience of the type — “The *Saakshi Chaitanya* which directly cognizes the body, the senses, the mind etc. is Itself I am” — accrues instantaneously, as it were.

Many people who profess and call themselves Vedantins usually utter that “I am not the body, the senses etc. but am of *Shiva Swaroopa*”; but theirs is merely a belief that they have in the *Shaastra* or scriptural texts as also in the traditional methodology of teaching and nothing else. However, by the grace bestowed upon by a spiritual preceptor those who have in reality attained to the Intuitive experience of *Atma Swaroopa in esse* their case is not like that. Unlike the *Shraddhaa Vedantins* of the former class, the latter do not have or entertain excessive sense of identification with or pride in *Samsaara*; hence, unlike others they do not get afflicted or affected by *Shoaka* (grief, misery), *Moaha* (attachment, delusion). Not only that. Even those to whom such *Jnaanias* expound the *Tattwa* (Ultimate Reality of *Atman*) they too Intuit the Reality and as a result get rid of their *Shoaka* and *Moaha*. Here, those who merely quote parrot-like the *Shaastra* statements should not be taken as the proper examples; only those holymen who have themselves Intuited the Ultimate Reality of *Brahman - Atman* and, in addition, who are capable of inducing others too to Intuit the *Aatma Swaroopa* and further who are engrossed in the work of enabling others to attain the Intuitive experience (*Tattwa Saakshaatkaara*) should be emulated or followed. Such great personalities are called “Aapta”.

Just as in the illustration the *Aapta Vachana* or statement by a well-wisher who knows the reality as the rope is the *Pramaana* for removing, rather for falsifying, the rope-snake as well as its fear, in the same way the *Aapta Vachana* of a *Sadguru* who is established in the Intuitive experience of the *Paramaatha Swaropa* becomes the valid means for teaching our *Shiva Swaropa*, which is *Nitya Siddha* or eternally self-established, as also for removing the fear about *Samsaara*.

Objection: Many people have listened to the spiritual instructions like — “You are verily *Ishwara*, not a *Jeeva*”— by great souls. Even so, they are not rid of the delusion of *Samsaara* how come?

Answer: It amounts to our having already given an answer to this query. For, just as there is a rule of law that those who propound the *Tattwa* have per force to have Intuited It, in the same way there is a rule of law that those who listen to the exposition of the Ultimate Reality also should necessarily possess the proper qualifications. Apart from this, *Vedanta Shravana* or listening to Vedantic discourses is not merely hearing Vedantic sentences or statements on a couple of occasions. Just as in our workaday world those who aspire to know a particular topic or thing and pursue this knowledge assiduously to its fruition culminating in the removal of all doubts and cognition of its very essence, in the same way here in this context too it is quite essential for the true seeker to be endowed and equipped with *Shraddha* or steadfast, unflinching dedication to it, *Tatparata* or ability to direct all efforts and energies towards it, and for him to listen to the spiritual instructions of the *Sadguru* with reverence and respect and then for him to Intuitively deliberate upon them and imbibe their true import or purport.

Even when the knowledgeable persons affirm in the manner — “This is a rope indeed” — if a person whose mis-

conception to the effect—"This is truly a snake only"—is deep-seated and on that count if he does not at all direct his eyes towards the object, then how at all can there be any scope for his cognizing it to be a rope? Similarly, for those who keep on listening to Vedantic sentences, on the one hand, and keep on feeding the mind with thoughts which strengthen the belief that — "The world is real and this alone is correct" — the real fruit of *Vedanta Shravana* can never accrue. Even these Vedantic sentences being heard by them casually may give rise to some benefit or the other from time to time; but such perfunctory listening to Vedantic sentences can never produce the immediate, instantaneous fruit (i. e. here and now in this very life) of the attainment of the essential nature of *Aatma Saakshaatkaara* or getting established in the Intuitive experience of Pure Consciousness. Because of the reason that the fact that we are all of *Shiva Swaroopa* is an Absolute truth, it is quite certain that it can be attained exclusively and inviolably by *Jnaana* or Intuitive Knowledge alone. But those who have not practised or observed the spiritual disciplines like *Shraddha, Tatparata, Indriya Nigraha, Guru Seva, Tattwa Vichaara* etc. can never attain *Jnaana*. Therefore, it must be believed that if one who is a *Mumukshu* (one desirous exclusively of attaining Liberation, Beatitude here in this very life-span) having acquired all the qualifications of a cleansed pure heart or mind, undergoes a course of training by listening to the *Upanishadic* sentences and imbibing their true import, then surely this fruition of *Aatma Jnaana* will be achieved.

III. DISSOLUTION OF THE DELUSION ABOUT THE WORLD

The impediment in our path of Intuiting or cognizing the truth that—"We are verily of the essential non-dual nature

(*Adviteeya*) of *Shiva*”—is not only our *Jeevatwa*; the world that is being perceived by all of us is also a hurdle to be got over for attaining that Intuition. The problematic thought or idea that—“If we are all of the very essence of *Adviteeya* or non-dual *Chaitanya Swaropa*, then how at all did this world of duality full of gross insentient things come into being?”—poses a threat to our *Shiva Bhaavana* or belief of our being of the essential nature of non-dual Reality. The doubt that—“Here there exist many *Jeevas* like us; all of them along with us are living in this world and like us they too are having *Sukha* and *Duhkha*. How did this manifoldness of *Jeevatwa* come about? Somehow we can reckon that *Jeeva* is *Chaitanyaropa*; but how at all can we realize that the gross, inanimate insentient things in this external world—which are being perceived by the *Jeevas*, which are appearing to be desirable and undesirable to them, which are of utility as and when the *Jeeva* uses them and which exist for the sake of another external entity (*Paratantra*)—such gross insentient things are of the essence of *Chaitanya*?”—bothers us a lot. Therefore, as a solution for this haunting doubt the next verse which mentions another illustration is quoted:

3. *Aabhaateedam Vishwamaatmanyasatyam Satyajnaana-
nandaroope Vimoahaat; Nidraamoahaat Swapnavat Tanna
Satyam Shuddhaha Poornoa Nitya Ekaha Shivoa(s)ham.*

Meaning: All this unreal world of duality, just as the dream appears because of the attachment for sleep, appears because of misconception, delusion. Therefore, it is not real. I am *Shiva*, who is pure, consummate, eternal and non-dual alone.

(J) ‘Doubt with regard to the Illustration of the Rope-Snake’

If we consider the illustration of the rope-snake mentioned in the previous verse, then some doubts arise: As in the illustration, if it is contended that in *Ishwara* this *Jeevatwa* is misconceived, then the following objections arise:

(i) Both the rope and the snake are objects which we have seen. Hence when we see in poor light a rope and do not cognize it as a rope, we may be deluded in the manner—"This is a snake"—as a result of our having a *Samskaara* or latent impression of our earlier cognition of a snake. But if we are (actually) of *Shiva Swaropa*, then how at all is it possible for either the latent impression of *Samsaara* or transmigratory life or the delusion that may be produced as a result of that *Samskaara* getting stimulated or activated?

(ii) In the illustration first the experience of a real snake accrues; as a result of its *Samskaara* the delusion (*Bhraanti*) of the snake results. Apart from this, the phenomenon of *Bhraanti* is one which accrues only if there exists a real experience. Therefore, if *Samsaaritwa* is a *Bhraanti*, then a real *Samsaaritwa* should necessarily exist. In the spiritual teaching of *Adviteeya Chaitanyavaada* or the theory of non-dual Pure Consciousness how at all can this *Samsaaritwa* fit in? If it does not, how at all can we believe that *Samsaaritwa* is a *Bhraanti*?

(iii) The rope and the snake of the illustration are both separate things apart from the seer; they are objects for him. No human being reckons or assumes himself to be a snake. But in the illustrated you are stating that — "I am a *Samsaari*" — purporting to mean that we have reckoned the seer, the subject, himself as the *Samsaari*. Therefore, this aspect too did not fit in with the illustration.

(iv) No one ever wrongly believes a rope to be two; no one gets deluded to think that a rope lying in one particular place to exist in another place; no one misconceives in a rope things like a metallic vessel etc. which are not at all having any resemblance or similarity whatsoever with the form of a rope. But the Vedantins affirm in the illustrated that in one *Shiva* — (a) there has occurred a de-

lusion about many *Jeevas*; (b) the world which is an object for *Atman* and which is external to Him is misconceived in Him; (c) further, the world, which is full of gross things which are not at all similar to *Shuddhaatma Swaropa*, is misconceived in It. This tenet too does not agree with the rope-snake illustration.

It being so, how can we at all believe that we are of *Shiva Swaropa* and in that essential nature of Pure Being-Consciousness Itself we have misconceived *Jeevatwa* and *Jadatwa* which never exist in It?

(K) 'All this World of Duality is Appearing in Atman alone due to Misconception'

For the objections mentioned above we will now state *Solutions* one by one:

(i) The first objection is: "How at all could either the *Samskaara* of *Samsaaritwa* which we never before had any experience or its offshoot of *Bhrama* or delusion arise?"— is it not?

But there does not exist any rule of law whatsoever that — "The experience akin to *Bhraanti* or delusion should have previously occurred." In the rope, of the illustration, there was never any 'experience' of the type — "This is a snake," — even so, there exists a *Bhraanti* of the type — "This is a snake." Similarly, in the illustrated we may plausibly believe the *Bhraanti* of *Samsaaritwa* has accrued.

(ii) The second objection is: "Because of the reason that only after we have actually seen a real snake its *Bhrama* has taken place; only after seeing a real *Samsaari* the *Samsaaritwa Bhrama* should come into being, is it not?"

But there does not exist any rule of law whatsoever that only after seeing actually a real snake its delusion should

occur. Let us assume that two persons — one who has not seen a snake right from his childhood and the other who has seen it — after seeing a rope from a distance, because it was poor light they had not cognized it as a rope. In that event, if the one who has previously seen a snake points out in the manner — “Look, there is a snake”— the other (who has never seen a snake before) will gain the knowledge that it (the object) is a snake. Although the latter learns from the former, who exclaims in that manner, the name ‘snake’, the fact that a thing which is not of the form of the rope is misconceived in the rope is common to both. After this incident the second person, one who had never seen a snake before in his life, because of this *Samskaara* of a snake may misconceive another rope to be a snake alone, is it not? In that case, a real snake which is the cause for *Bhraanti* will not be there at all!

Objection: This is not proper. For, in the illustration between the two one has the cognitive knowledge of a real snake. But in *Samsaara* no one has the real *Samsaara*. In case in the beginning if any one had got *Samsaara*, then this illustration would have been acceptable to say that the others get it due to delusion. But it is not so. Apart from this, when the correct cognition of the rope ensues, it occurs in the manner — “This is a rope alone; needlessly I got deluded to take it to be a snake., But in the illustrated, for such an experience to accrue there is no scope whatsoever. For, as in the illustration, just as the rope has been first seen, no one has first seen *Atman*; if any one has, then there is no cause for delusion to occur at all. Or, in the alternative, if there is a cause for such an event, even then if we cognize *Atman* by means of *Vedanta Jnaana*, again this delusion may reappear or recur. Thus to affirm that *Samsaara* is a delusion the illustration of the rope-snake does not seem to be in the least agreeable or suitable.

Consolation: There is no need for the illustration to be identical in all respects or aspects with the illustrated. If both the illustration and the illustrated are identical in all aspects, then we cannot distinguish between the two and say distinctly in the manner—“This is the illustration, and this is the illustrated.” In the present case, from the illustration of the rope-snake what we have to discern is the fact that—“Just as we misconceive a rope to be a snake, we have, in truth, misconceived *Atman* as *Anaatman* or not—self.” Therefore, to the extent of demonstrating or elucidating the fact that—“There is no rule of law that only to a person who has first seen *Samsaaritwa* should invariably get the delusion of *Samsaaritwa*” — the above-mentioned illustration is relevant and proper.

(L) ‘*Atman is Satchidaananda Swaropa*’

Objection: Let it be. Should we first cognize *Atman* or not? The one who has not cognized the essential nature of the rope itself cannot possibly get the experience of the type — ‘I have misconstrued the rope itself as a snake’— is it not? If this is true, then to us who have not cognized *Atman* a question like — “How at all did this *Anaatma Bhrama* or delusion of the not-self occur?”— can reasonably be asked, is it not?

Consolation: There are no persons who have not cognized *Atman*. Every one, whosoever he may be, has cognized his *Atman* in the form of — ‘I’ ‘I’.

Objection: In that case, it amounts to saying that the fact of this ‘I’ itself being *Atman* is known to everyone. Then, where is the necessity of *Vedanta Shaastra* at all to help us cognize or know *Atman*? If it is the case that those, who have cognized *Atman* also get deluded, then what utility or benefit is there at all from *Aatma Jnaana*?

Consolation: All of us have known *Atman* in the common form of 'I'; but we have not cognized in the manner—*Satya Jnaana Aananda Roopa Shiva* (meaning, the Absolute Reality of the very essence of Truth, Pure Consciousness and Pure Bliss) *Itself am 'I'.*" When we misconceive a rope to be a snake, because of the reason that what we have objectified or seen in the common (genus) form as 'this' we have not cognized in the distinct (particular) form as a 'rope' — we get deluded in thinking it to be a 'snake' or a 'chink' in the ground etc., is it not? Similarly, i. e. here in this present context too we have to discern accordingly. When it is said that — "Our *Atman* is *Satya*" — it purports to mean — "Our essential nature which abides or subsists always, eternally as it is"; when it is said that— "Our *Atman* is *Jnaana Swaroopa* alone" — it purports to mean — "One who is of the very essence of Pure, Absolute Consciousness, Intuition"; when it is said that— "Our *Atman* is *Aananda Swaroopa*" — it means — "One who is of the essential nature of Pure Bliss or Happiness." This subtle teaching we have to cognize Intuitively. Evidently, this teaching is expounded by *Vedanta Shaastra*.

Objection: If '*Satya*' means 'that thing which exists as it is', then a stone, a tree etc. are also existing as they are, is it not? If they are *Atman* in those forms, then it amounts to saying that all of us are knowing already that we are all *Satya Swaroopa*, is it not?

Consolation: Not so. Really no object exists as it is. Even stones, rocks etc. undergo great changes from time to time (according to geologists). They get smashed up into smithereens and may finally become converted into sand. If rocks remained as they were, then how could such vast changes take place, ? Hence, it has to be said that they are undergoing mutations, stage by stage, spread over thousands of years. Even so, in our workaday world to our common

gross perception certain things appear to exist as they are; for instance, though from clay many objects like pots, pitchers, drums, lids and ladles etc. are prepared, yet clay remains as clay alone. Therefore, in this manner if we see from one particular viewpoint we can say that even such things too are *Satya* or real. But when we say that — “*Atman* is *Satya*” — we do not mean that He is real in this manner in our workaday world. He is absolutely, in the ultimate analysis too, real.

Apart from this, there is no rule of law that those things which are empirically real should necessarily or invariably be endowed with *Jnaana* or Consciousness or sentience. For instance, stone, sand etc. do not possess consciousness. Therefore, they are called *Jada Vastu* or gross, inanimate, insentient things. But our *Atman* is *Jnaana Swaroopa* or of the very essence of Pure Consciousness. We have the experience of Consciousness in the manner — “I know or cognize this object”; but *Atman's Jnaana* is not of this type or form. The cognition or knowledge that we observe in this manner is in respect of a particular object as also it comes into being and disappears too; therefore, it is not — as stated above — *Paramaartha Satya* or Absolutely or Transcendentally real. *Atman* is *Satya* as well as *Jnaana*; therefore, *Atman's Jnaana* which is nothing but His essence of Being is not — like the empirical knowledge or cognition — consciousness or knowledge which comes into being for some time and then disappears. He exists in the essential nature of *Kootastha Jnaana* or immutable Absolute Consciousness devoid of any change or mutation whatsoever.

Another point. If we have to gain any external knowledge we have to strain our intellect and after ratiocinating with a one-pointed intellect only we have to get this knowledge. But in the essential nature of Pure Being-Consciousness of *Atman* there does not exist any strain or stress, nor is there any grief or sorrow. He is of the

very essence of Aananda or Absolute Happiness or Bliss. For this reason too, this knowledge that we gain is not *Atman*. When we enjoy external objects we get a kind of pleasure or happiness, is it not? But when it is said that—“*Aatman* is *Aananda*”—it does not have any meaning of this type. The happiness or pleasure born out of the enjoyment of external objects is of a transient nature as it is born and later on disappears; besides, it is dependent upon something extraneous (to wit, it is thereby a resultant, caused thing); but *Atman* is perennially of unitary, independent, self-effulgent essence of Bliss alone.

Thus when we observe certain objects in the external workaday world from our *Sthoola Drishti* or gross empirical viewpoint it appears as though these terms like *Satya*, *Jnaana* and *Aananda* are appropriate for them, but if we examine with Intuitive insight no object or phenomenon which is not *Atman*— whatsoever it may be and howsoever subtle it may be — in the Absolute sense is none of these *Satya*, *Jnaana* or *Aananda* at all. Only if this really real or Transcendental essence of Being - Consciousness-Bliss of *Atman* is Intuited, the *Jeeva-Jagadroora* or I-world dichotomy misconceived in Him gets sublated or falsified.

(iii and iv) Now let us examine the third and the fourth objections together. It is quite possible for imagining, misconceiving in a rope which is a separate object other than oneself, a snake, which is also an object, but is it possible to get deluded to consider or misconceive oneself alone to be of another form? How can we believe the veracity of the statement that—“All people have (universally) misconceived in the non-dual *Shiva Swaropa* many *Jeevas* as well as the manifold gross objects?” How can we believe also that—“Apart from *Atman*, in front of Him a world which is of the form of *Anaatman* is misconceived”? —None of these teachings suits the illustration of the rope-

—snake, is it not? This, in a nut-shell, is the purport behind those two objections. Further, in the objection raised by its proponent the opinion to the effect that—“If *Atman* is *Satya Jnaana Aananda Swaroopa*, how come in Him the world replete with *Asatya* or unreality or false appearance, *Jada* or gross, *Duhkha* or sorrow or misery is misconceived?”—is also included.

(M) ‘Just as Dream Appears Because of the Delusion of Sleep, the World is Appearing’

Before we proffer a solution to these objections we have necessarily to mention a subtle fact. That is: Having totally relied on the illustration of the rope - snake, the proponent of these objections has believed in the manner — “Just as a person misconceives a snake in a rope at a particular moment of time, *Atman* has misconceived in Himself the world of duality at a particular moment of time. “Hence in his method or system of reasoning so many difficulties or discrepancies have arisen. But if we observe it Intuitively, as in the illustration, no one has at any moment of time imagined or misconceived in the *Shiva Swaroopa*, which is the Ultimate Absolute Reality, *Samsaaritwa* as well as the world of duality. Observing it from a particular viewpoint one gets the belief that — “I am a *Jeeva*; I exist or live in a world which comprises many *Jeevas* like me as also many gross, insentient things totally different from and queerer than me”; observing it from another viewpoint we get the feeling that — “I am verily the *Adviteeya* or non-dual Absolute *Atman*, devoid of any *Jeevatwa* whatsoever, but who is of *Satya Jnaana Aananda Swaroopa*.” In these two beliefs, the second one is correct. For, as soon as that feeling or belief accrues we realize or cognize Intuitively that *Samsaaritwa* as well as the world of duality is *Asatya* (unreal, false). Only to drive home this truth the illustration of the rope-snake is mentioned or adduced, and not with any purport whatsoever to the effect that all

aspects of the illustration completely fit or agree with the illustrated. Therefore, herefore another suitable illustration for the purpose of solving the third and the fourth objections mentioned above may be adduced. To wit, as a result of the lethargy or dullness of sleep if a person gets a dream, just examine what kind of various, bizarre spectacles are seen ! He completely forgets his own nature and, in addition, appears to be of a totally different form; though he is alone, he witnesses as if there exists a world full of many human beings, creatures, plants and trees and gross insentient things like stones, sand etc. in front of him and also he reckons that he is one among many people in it. Even so, what is the reality? Both the dream world and the form in which the person (dreamer) appears to be therein are *Asatya* or unreal, false; because of the reason that merely on his waking up it has disappeared, all that amazing spectacle seems to be an existence which is well within his purview or control. In this illustration none of us deliberately imagines the dream; it by itself appears, but it is not real. Similarly, the *Jeevatwa* and the *Jagat* of the apparent nature of reality in the waking can be said, without any objection or hindrance, to be imagined or misconceived in our *Atman*, of the essential nature of *Satya Jnaana Aananda*.

(N) 'The World is not Real'

Objection : Merely on the ground that — “A snake is misconceived in a rope; in the dream a non-existing world of duality appears” — can it be justifiably said that this present waking world of duality and the *Samsaara* that exists within it are misconceived phenomena ? The statement that the empirical world is a mere appearance cannot at all be established by adducing a couple of illustrations. Merely on the basis of a statement that — “Look at the donkey, how harshly, jarringly it is braying! He too is doing similarly” — it does not amount to establishing a musician's

note is a donkey's harsh note; on the other hand, merely on the wonderful comparison of the type — "Aah, what a melodious cuckoo-like voice!" — a hoarse-throated woman's speech which was very unpleasant to hear cannot at all by any stretch of imagination be decided to be very pleasing and voice sweet. Let the rope-snake be an appearance and let the dream also be a mere appearance; merely on that count, in what manner can they affect the real empirical world?

Consolation: Just as the objects of mere appearance appear, in the same way the empirical world too appears; just as by means of the correct knowledge or cognition the misconception to the effect — "They are real" — is sublated or falsified, in the same way the misconception about the empirical world being real is sublated by means of the correct knowledge. Therefore, there is no difference whatsoever between those objects of mere appearance and this empirical world of duality (which is also susceptible to be sublated by the true knowledge of the Absolute Reality of *Atman*). For instance, look at the world that appears in a dream. Just like the waking world, that dream world too is appearing to be sprawling in front, of us indeed; just as in the waking world many human beings, animals and birds appear to be existing, there in the dream world too many human beings, animals and birds 'are' existing; just as in the waking world the *Jeevas* are born, carry on transactions for a while and then finally die, in the same way in the dream world too we entertain a belief or feeling that *Jeevas* are born, transact for a while and eventually they die; just as we have transactions in contact with other *Jeevas* and gross objects here in the waking world, in the same way therein in the dream world too we have transactions in contact with other *Jeevas* and gross objects. Why talk more? During that period of time the dream phenomenon is totally believed, nay realized, by all of us to be 'waking' alone in all respects. Thus when there

does not exist any special or specific hallmark whatsoever in it to demonstrate the state, which we now call 'waking', is not a dream, then there does not exist any valid means or evidence to demonstrate or establish the truth that — "The world in the waking state only and exclusively is real." Therefore, the illustration of the dream experience is not a vain or shallow example at all; in fact, it is an adequate universal experience, an Intuitive cognition, to convince everyone that — "The waking empirical world is unreal, false" — as well as the truth that — "The waking world is misconceived in *Atman* (of the very essence of Pure Being Consciousness-Bliss)."

Objection: This does not appear to be correct. For, only after the dream goes or disappears and the waking comes, the dream appears to be false or unreal. But after the waking disappears which is that real state, when it comes into being, this waking is rendered false? Is it proper, nay rational, to affirm, being in the waking alone, that the waking and the world before us, that is in it, are both false?

Consolation: The fact that after coming to waking from dream, the latter is cognized as false is not important; we have now to deliberate upon the question — "Whether that knowledge is correct or not?" It is correct indeed; for, in the waking the dream - world does not exist anywhere. If the dream - world were true, then it would have been possible for us to imagine that it might be even now existing somewhere or the other; but it is not so in our experience; we have determined that the dream - world does not exist whatsoever either during the dream period of time or now at the present waking time. Therefore, the dream and its world are both false only, meaning a mere appearance which manifested itself at that period of time. In the same way, when we are in the dream where does the waking world exist? That does not exist anywhere

at all. Even the belief that it exists somewhere is itself not there in us in our dream. If we say that—“When we are seeing the dream our waking—world—meaning that world which can manifest itself only when we are awake—exists”—then, it amounts to saying that we experience both dream and waking states at one and the same time alone. This statement is self-contradictory. Therefore, we have per force to aver that the waking—world too, like the dream—world, is *Asatya* indeed. In any case, because of our emerging out of dream and coming to another state the dream is not rendered false; only after deliberating upon its essential nature we have concluded that it is not real. In the same way, if we deliberate upon the ‘essential nature’ of waking, it also is cognized to be not real. In order to determine in this manner there is no need whatsoever to go or migrate to any other state of consciousness.

Objection: Let us assume that just like the dream—world the waking—world also is a mere appearance. But what evidence is there to substantiate the tenet that—“This appearance is misconceived in *Atman* who is of *Satya Jnaana Aananda Swaroopa*. Where is the experience for us by dint of which we can say that—“Our *Atman* is of *Satya Jnaana Aananda Swaroopa*”—?

Consolation: For this observe the experience of deep sleep. Although in the waking as well as in the dream both *Jeevatwa* and the world of duality are seen in us, we exist indeed in deep sleep. Thus because of the reasons that in the waking, in the dream and in the deep sleep our *Aatma Swaroopa* invariably, perennially exists and it is not possible even to imagine that It does not exist—it evolves from this that *Atman* is *Satya Swaroopa*; because of the reasons, that *Atman* is cognizing in the form of *Saakshi* or the Witnessing Consciousness all the *Jeevas* and the gross inanimate world both in the waking and in the dream, and He is experiencing in the same Witnessing Consciousness form the deep sleep state which is devoid of any trace of the world of duality—

it evolves that He is *Jnaana Swaroopā*; because of the reasons that whatever object that appears in the waking and in the dream it is desired to be acquired or possessed for Himself and in the deep sleep, although there does not exist any external object, *Atman* provides the experience of happiness or bliss exclusively by His Pure, Absolute existence alone—it evolves that He is *Aananda Swaropa*. From this Intuitive deliberation alone it evolves further that—“Thus in the perennially existing *Satya Jnaana Aananda Swaropa* (of *Atman*) the world of duality which manifests only in the waking and in the dream states is misconceived—meaning, apart from that *Atman* the world of duality does not exist independently at all.”

(O) ‘I am Pure, Full, Eternal, Non—dual’

On the whole, from the deliberations carried out so far what has been established? It is this: Our *Atman* is **Pure (Absolute)**; in Him neither the impurities or blemishes of *Samsaara* nor the impurities or blemishes of the insentient gross world of duality exist even the least bit. There are no valid means or evidence to affirm that: (a) He is confined to, or restricted by, the three states of waking, dream and deep sleep; (b) their relationship is tagged on to Him; for, although these states of consciousness are coming into existence and going out of existence, this *Atman* exists, subsists as He is (without any mutation or transformation whatsoever). He is **Poorna or Full, Consummate**; the belief that He exists in some particular part of the world and being caught in the dragnet of time and space He is suffering all kinds of miseries of life is a wrong concept. Observed from the Transcendental viewpoint of *Saakshi Chaitanya* (i. e. Intuitive experience or *Poorna Anubhava*), there does not exist any spot whatsoever where He does not exist; since even this concept of a spot also is imagined or conceived in this *Atman* Consciousness (Pure Being-Consciousness), this

concept of spot or a part of space does not agree with Him in the least. In the same manner, He is not restricted by any measure of time; for, the time category is also misconceived in Him. Anything that is restricted by time and space categories gets its very essence of being destroyed at a particular point of time either because of the destruction of its parts or organs or their separation; but since *Atman* is not at all anything that can be restricted by any measure of time and space He is *Nitya* or eternal. For all these reasons He is **Eka or one alone (Non-dual)**; meaning, an Entity not having any *Jeeva* or *Jada Vastu*, meaning animate or inanimate entity, which can be called a second entity to Him. It has already been shown that even during the time when the *Jeevas* and *Jada Vastus* are appearing they are mere appearances alone; especially, in deep sleep there is no taint or trace whatsoever of these phenomena. Just as even when the dream disappears the 'dreamer' who has witnessed the dream remains or subsists, and when the appearance due to delusion goes the rope etc. which was the substratum for the delusion, alone subsists, in the same way in deep sleep without anything of the waking and the dream being there this *Atman* alone subsists therein; therefore, *Atman* alone is the essential nature or quintessence of those phenomena. Thus *Atman* in all respects and ways **Eka** or one alone, *Adviteeya* or non-dual Entity indeed.

(P) 'I am Shiva'

Hence, the teaching that — "I am *Shiva*" — is the Ultimate, Absolute Truth or Reality is determined. Just as it is enunciated in the *Shaastras* or scriptures that *Parameshwara* is the cause for the creation, sustenance etc. of the world of duality, in the same manner our *Aatma Swaropa* is the substrate or cause for the entire universe that is born, is sustained and then finally is dissolved. Just as it is propounded that *Parameshwara* alone has become everything (i. e. He pervades everything), in the same way

our *Aatma Swaropa* has become everything. Just as it is described in the *Shaastras* that *Parameshwara* is, in truth, of *Nitya Shuddha Buddha Mukta Swabhaava*, in the same manner the truth that our *Aatma Swaropa* too is of *Nitya Shuddha Buddha Mukta Swaropa* is established by means of *Yukti* or reasoning or dialectic based on the strength and support of *Anubhava* or universal Intuitive experience. Therefore, it is now established that *Atman* of all of us is **Shiva** alone as depicted in the *Shaastras*.

IV. DISSOLUTION OF THE DELUSION OF STEADFAST DUALITY

To some people it may appear that the two previously mentioned illustrations of rope-snake and dream are not the proper ones in a comprehensive sense for the delusion of external gross, insentient things. For, even after attaining the knowledge of *Atman* the world of duality repeatedly keeps on appearing. But in the case of the rope-snake, as soon as the essential nature of the reality of the rope is cognized it disappears; in the case of the dream, as soon as we wake up the dream world becomes extinct. If the Vedantins (on the basis of these two illustrations) assert that after the *Aatma Jnaana* is attained the world of duality actually, really becomes extinct, it cannot be proper at all. For, since from the viewpoint of one who has attained *Aatma Jnaana* there is no one else at all, he cannot possibly preach the spiritual truths to others, his followers or devotees. In that event, the empirical transactions between the preceptor and his disciple will be rendered false. In order to solve this doubt the next verse is quoted:

4. *Mattoa Naanyatkinchidatraasti Vishwam, Satyam, Baahyam Vastumaayoapakliptam; Aadarshaantarbhaasamaanasya Tulyam Mayyaadvaite Bhaati Tasmaatchivoa(s)ham.*

Meaning: Apart from me there does not exist a real world of duality whatsoever. Whatever exists externally is misconceived or imagined because of *Maayaa*. This appears in Me who is non-dual, just like a reflection appears in a mirror. Therefore I am *Shiva*.

(Q) Apart from Me there does not Exist a World which is Real

To the Vedantic teaching that — “*Atman* is *Adviteeya* or non-dual “ — there is one main objection, and that is: When the world of duality is very clearly visible or perceptible, can it be reasonably said that it does not exist? If it exists, then how can it be asserted that — “*Atman* is *Adviteeya*, i. e. One without anything second to Him” — ?

Consolation: To believe that along with *Atman* there exists a world of duality is wrong. For, apart from *Atman* (of the very essence of Pure Being-Consciousness) independently the world does not exist at all. There is no scope to conceive of two numerical entities (*Vastus*) in the manner — “*Atman* is one; the world is the second.” For, these two, viz. *Atman* and the world, are not two individual or separate things belonging to one and the same genus (*Jaati*). Unless they belong to the same genus, the numerical ‘two’ cannot be used. To wit, if a chair is added to another chair, we say — “Two chairs”. If to a chair a bench is added, we say — “Two wooden articles of furniture”. But in that sense, if we raise the query — “If along with *Atman* the world is counted, what will be the two things called?” — there is no answer whatsoever.

Objection: Why do you say there is no answer? We can definitely say that by conjoining *Atman* and the world there are two entities!

Consolation: Should not say like that. For, *Atman* is not an object or substance. The word '*Padaartha*' connotes 'that thing which is meant by a *Pada* or word'; that thing which can be conceived of or grasped by the mind, that phenomenon can be cognized by means of a word; that thing is said to be the object meant or pointed or specified by the *Pada* or the word. But *Atman* cannot be objectified or conceived by the mind at all. In fact, *Atman* Himself illumines the mind. Therefore, *Atman* is not a '*Pada Artha*'. For this reason alone, by "*Atman is Shiva*", and such other *Padas* which the Vedantins utilize no coherent or intelligible meaning is grasped by others (who are not familiar or initiated into the Vedantic teachings and pedagogics). Merely on the ground that *Atman* is not the *Artha* or object meant by any *Pada*, it cannot be concluded that *Atman* Himself does not exist; for, *Atman* manifests Himself as *Anubhava* or Intuitive experience, and on the strength of this *Anubhava* (which is *Saavatrika* or universal as well as *Poorna* or consummate, plenary) of *Atman* alone we all cognize not only the mind but also the rest of the world which is conceived or perceived by the mind.

Objection: All right, let it be that *Atman* is not a *Padaartha*; is it not determined by this Intuitive experience of the type—"*Atman and Prapancha*"—that there are two things?

Consolation: No, not at all. For, if we have to count in the manner—'one, two, three...'—they should necessarily be objects which exist in one and the same region or in one and the same period of time. If they are not at all existing in time or not existing in any region whatsoever, or they are not any *Padaarthas*—as understood in common parlance—then how at all can any numericals in the manner—"*Atman is one, world is two*"—can be applied to them?

Objection: If there are no two things separate from each other, how could this usage of words be possible?

Consolation: Because of the reason that one and the same entity can be viewed in two ways, we are using two words; from the viewpoint of *Jnaanis* or people who have realized the Ultimate Reality of *Atman*, the entity is *Atman*, but the same is perceived as the world from the viewpoint of the *Ajnaanis* or ignorant people who are predominantly extroverted and materialistic in their outlook and approach. [In truth, that which the *Ajnaanis* are calling '*Prapancha*' or world of duality, diversity is really (in the ultimate analysis based on Intuitive experience) *Atman* alone.

Objection: If one *Atman* alone appears in two kinds, why cannot we say that both of them are *Satya* or real only?

Consolation: We have already given an answer to this query. The world of duality or diversity does not exist in the Absolute sense. It is, in truth, *Asatya* or unreal, false and has been misconceived by the *Ajnaanis* in *Atman*, the Ultimate non-dual Reality.

Objection: If *Prapancha* is unreal, then why is it visible or appearing to even those who have Intuitively known *Atman*? Just as when we wake up the dream world vanishes into thin air (like *Maayaa* or magic), why does not this waking world vanish?

Consolation: If we incisively cognize it (the world actually) vanishes into thin air indeed. Or, alternatively, instead of saying that after *Jnaana* accrues it vanishes, to say that the world of duality or diversity never at all existed is itself a correct statement. Therefore, world that has to vanish or become extinct does never exist at all.

Objection: If so, why does the world appear at all?

Consolation: There is no need for adducing or providing a cause or reason for this question as to why does it appear. It is enough if it is discerned that it is not real; it is merely an appearance.

Objection: Let it be merely an appearance; even so, after the reality is known, cognized why should even this appearance not disappear, vanish just like a dream ?

Consolation: There is no rule of law that all appearances should per force vanish once the reality behind them is cognized. When we get the cognition of the type — “This is really not such and such a thing; merely it appeared like a thing” — only the stamp or significance of reality that we had given to it, due to, or out of, *Bhraanti* or delusion, vanishes. This rule of law is applicable generally to all appearances.

Objection : When both *Atman* and the world are appearing, what is the reason or justification for formulating a rule of law that — “Only the world is an appearance, but *Atman* is not an appearance”—?

Consolation : The world does not appear apart from *Atman*; but *Atman* especially, without being tied down to the world always, exists independently. For instance, *Atman* invariably exists in deep sleep; then the world of duality or diversity does not at all exist— even the least bit of it. Therefore, the world by itself alone is not real apart or separate from *Atman*. Further, it becomes determined that the existence of the world is based on or caused by *Atman's* Pure, Absolute existence alone. Just as the world's existence is sublated or falsified, *Atman's* Absolute existence (Pure Being) does never get sublated anytime or anywhere; in fact, such an event or contingency is not possible at all. Hence, *Atman* is Absolutely real indeed and the world is a mere appearance alone.

Objection : As soon as we wake up from sleep the world appears in a flash, as it were, spontaneously. A world that does not exist in sleep cannot once again appear

and hence it should necessarily exist somewhere in deep sleep, is it not ?

Consolation : This surmise is not proper. Where does the world exist in sleep ? In our deep sleep especially it does not at all exist; if it existed, then it should have appeared even therein.

(Some present-day Vedantins erroneously have conceived that in deep sleep the world exists in the form of '*Moolaavidyaa*'. That this is merely a wild imagination becomes clear if we examine the Intuitive experience of deep sleep which is universal. This illogical, dogmatic theory is refuted in the Sanskrit treatise entitled '*Moolaavidyaa Niraasa*')

If it is contended that—"Can it not exist outside (when we are asleep)?"—the answer is: The statement—"Outside sleep"—has no meaning at all.

Objection: Why there is no meaning? If a particular person is asleep, are we not seeing the whole world existing outside that sleeping person ? In the same way, even when we ourselves are asleep why cannot any other person (who is not sleeping) be seeing the world outside? If observed from this viewpoint it appears that though the world is not visible to us, it may exist by itself aloof in our sleep also, is it not ?

Consolation: To determine that another person is sleeping we do not have any experience which can substantiate it. Just as the *Sukha* and *Duhkha* of others cannot be directly experienced by us, in the same manner the sleep of others is a phenomenon which is beyond our experience. In our dream it may appear that many people are sleeping, but now (in our waking) we do not at all determine or decide that they were really or actually sleeping. In the waking too, this truth holds good; that they are sleeping has to be per force decided or inferred by imagination only. Therefore, the direct (Intuitive) experience of our sleep

has necessarily to accrue in our sleep alone. The sleep of others, which appears to us in our waking and those others—both these phenomena are included within the waking world alone, and hence it would be unreasonable or illogical to reckon that these others can exist beyond our waking. Therefore if we say—“We are asleep”—it means that—“Then our waking world does not exist at all. For, if we say that—“Our waking world exists in our sleep”—it amounts to saying that—“At one and the same time we are sleeping as also we are awake”. This is a ridiculous statement. Hence, the conclusion that—“In our sleep the waking world does not exist in the least”—is itself the correct one.

(R) The External Thing is Caused by Maayaa

Objection: In that case, how did the external world appearing to us come into being? Because of the reasons that as soon as we wake up from sleep this world of duality or diversity as a rule appears and that it exists unfailingly in the waking and in the dream, a particular essential feature in it, must necessarily be there, is it not? What is that essential feature?

Consolation: The question as to how did the world come into being is not a proper one at all; for, even after it is being reiterated that—“The world is not *Satya*, it is a mere appearance”—to inquire about a cause for it is illogical indeed. Because of the reasons that apart from *Atman* it can never appear and that *Atman* can exist apart from it or devoid of it, it becomes established that—“For that appearance the real substratum is that *Atman* alone; in truth, *Atman* Himself is its essence.” If it is questioned—“How did the queer form of the world which did not exist in *Atman* come into being in between?”—we say—“It is caused by *Maayaa* or magic.”

Objection: What is meant by *Maayaa*? When it is questioned as to how did that happen, merely by mentioning a newly-coined name what does it amount to saying?

Solution: *Maayaa* means—“A phenomenon for the appearance of which there is no logical device whatsoever; further, it is an appearance which is the object for a misconception alone.” What we have stated is not a mere name. The world of duality is caused, rather projected, by *Maayaa*; it means, it is an appearance seen in *Atman* because of misconception; it is our opinion that no one can ever explain as to how it came into being in consonance with any *Yukti* or logical device. The following four features can be said to be *Maayaa* only: (a) From the non-dual *Atman* the world, comprising manifoldness or multiplicity, being created; (b) in Pure *Atman* the impure world of duality appearing; (c) from the *Kootastha Atman* the world, which is *Parinaami* being caused; (d) from the full, consummate Infinite *Atman* the world which is full of finite and partible matter or things and which is confined to one state of consciousness; meaning, it is opposed to *Yukti* or logical dissertation. No one can possibly make it comply with logical devices whatsoever.

Objection: Because the opinion that the world is caused by *Atman* is opposed to logical devices, why cannot it be stated that—“The world is not created by *Atman*; it exists by itself just like that”—?

Consolation: Having examined the experiences of the three states of consciousness, we have shown on the strength of universal experience that—“*Atman* is *Nishprapancha* or devoid of the world of duality; ni Him only, this waking world is appearing.” Any logical device—whatsoever it may be—if it is opposed to *Anubhava* or universal, plenary experience (Intuitive experience) it cannot, by any means, be said to be a strong one capable of invalidating such an experience; therefore, any logical device of this type or nature (which calls into question or challenges the veracity of such Intuitive experiences utilized by the scriptures solely and deliberately for the purposes of spiritual instruction alone about *Atman*) is, in truth, the outcome of the

functioning of the *Antahkarana* or mind which appears only in the waking; and so, we have to console ourselves by the Intuitive reasoning of the type—"To *Atman* who is beyond all the three *Avasthas* these logical devices (confined to and operative within the waking state alone) cannot be applicable"—and not merely saying that—"This proposition is opposed to *Yukti*"—we can afford to refute or rescind such universal experience (*Anubhava*) or any form of logical device based on or in consonance with Intuitive experience.

Objection: Let there not be an existence to the world equal to that of *Atman*; even though the world exists along with *Atman* always, at least in its own time, is it appearing or not? To that extent should we say it is real or not?

Consolation: If we observe from the *Paramaarthic Drishti* or viewpoint of the Absolute, Transcendental Reality, it is not possible to say that the world is real at all; hence how and wherefrom has a different or separate existence accrued to it? If it is contended that an existence that is well within the command and control of *Atman* is different, then it is like assuming the sweetness of sugar is different and the sweetness of a kind of liquid pudding mixed with sugar is different. If we observe incisively with insight, the sweetness of the liquid pudding means the sweetness that appears in the liquid pudding by virtue of and within the control of the sugar (present in a dissolved form); the fact that it is truly the sweetness of the sugar alone and not anything else is known to all of us. In the same way, it is quite rational if it is concluded that the existence of the world which is within the control and which is dependent upon *Atman* is, in reality, that of *Atman* alone and not anything else. If we call *Atman's* Pure Existence alone as the real existence, it is not possible to say by any means that any existence less

than or inferior to that is 'existence' at all; for, if existence is affected or damaged, so to speak, it has necessarily to come to nought or has to be negated and it is never possible to measure out or stipulate degrees of existence in the manner — half existence, quarter existence etc.

Objection: In that case, in our workaday world transactions people say — "The house exists: the Math exists" — is it not? If the world has no existence whatsoever, how was it that for the common run of people this phenomenon of 'existence' appears in these things?

Consolation: For this we have already given an answer. In the statement — "The house exists" — the phenomenon of 'house' is an *Amsha* or part of the world caused by or projected by *Maayaa* and the phenomenon of 'exists' is a part of *Atman* who is the Absolute, Ultimate Reality (*Paramaarthā Satya*). In our workaday transactions the common people are blending both those parts invariably and then are saying — "The house exists". Because of the reason that they do not know *Aatma Swaroopa*, on their part the world's existence (which is *Maayic* in content) has itself become the 'real existence'. From the viewpoint of *Jnaanis*, although the world's existence is no existence whatsoever, till the real nature of Pure Existence is cognized the commonplace, conventional usage of the word 'existence' as world's existence is tentatively accepted and this the *Jnaanis* (as also the *Shaastras*, on the basis of *Adhyaaropa* or deliberate superimposition) have called '*Vyaavahaarika Satya*' or empirical reality or existence.

Objection: If the entire world which appears in our workaday and empirical transactions (*Vyavahaara*) is itself unreal, false, what is the cause for people to believe that certain things in that world to be real and certain other things to be unreal?

Consolation: This too is happening due to misconception alone. In the game of chess some of the pawns that are used are signified or symbolised as elephants and some others as horses; but even so, actually all these pawns are made out of wood alone, is it not? In the same way, people are transacting with regard to certain things as real; for their existence as mentioned above the name given is *Vyaavahaarika Satya* or empirical reality; people are also carrying on empirical transactions with regard to certain other things as *Asatya* or false, mere appearances; their existence is named '*Praatibhaasika Satya*' or delusive, misconceived existence. In the illustration of the rope-snake, the snake which we have reckoned as a mere appearance is imbued with *Praatibhaasika Satya*, while the rope which is the substratum or support for that appearance is imbued with *Vyaavahaarika Satya*. But if we thoroughly examine or observe, both these are one and the same; both have existence in the form of *Atman*, but in their respective forms they do not possess any existence at all. Both are caused by *Maayaa* indeed.

Objection: In our workaday world the division or distinction as real and false should be reckoned to be one which is real, and to say that people have merely for namesake conceived of them it does not seem to be proper, correct. If what they have conceived were itself true, it would not have been possible for a thing which was real for one person would not have appeared to be real for everyone and similarly it would not have been possible for a thing which was unreal for one person would not have appeared unreal for everyone!

Consolation: When the deliberation with regard to the question — "Is this world, full of many people, real or unreal?" — is going on, there is no scope for an objection of this type. For this the illustration of a dream can be adduced. In a dream one particular thing appears to have

been believed to be real by many people; but in reality (i. e. from the viewpoint of the waking) those many people, that particular thing and their belief are all caused by *Maayaa* alone.

(S) 'Just like a Reflection in a Mirror the World is Appearing in the Non-dual Atman'

Objection: If the cognition of the world is merely *Maayika* or illusory, as soon as the cognition of *Atman* accrues just like the rope-snake it should not appear, is it not?

Consolation: To this query already we have given a consolatory answer from the *Paramaartha Drishti*. Now assuming that the world existing really appears and that it is empirical, we will give another consolatory solution. An appearance which does not have any real existence may plausibly keep on appearing even after the really real entity is cognized. For instance, look at the reflection of a man appearing in a mirror. Children believe their own reflections appearing in the mirror to be another child alone; after some years when they grow up a little they cognize the truth in the manner—"This is a reflection; actually, there is no other child in the mirror." Even after this correct cognition has dawned, the reflection continues to appear, is it not? Similarly, even after the cognition of the type — "The world has no other existence, its existence is truly *Atman's* existence alone" — the world may continue to appear.

Objection: When the mirror is there in front the reflection appears, but when it is not there the reflection does not appear; similarly, there are these two phenomena like 'the world appearing' and 'the world not appearing' in *Atman*?

Consolation: Yes, there are these two aspects. In the waking and the dream the world appears, while in the deep sleep it does not appear. But whether the reflection

appears or not, just as the mirror remains as it is, in the same way *Atman* is one alone, non-dual, i. e. one without anything second to Him. Even when the reflection is appearing in the mirror or even when it is not appearing the mirror remains in its clean, pure form alone; in the same manner whether the world appears or not, *Atman* is not affected even a wee bit by these two events and exists perennially as the non-dual Absolute essence of Being alone.

Objection: Even when the differences like objects, body, senses, *Praana* or vital force, mind, intellect and ego are all there and when cognizing the external objects through the senses and experiencing the resultant *Sukha and Duhkha*, is *Atman* non-dual?

Consolation: All the divisions or different parts mentioned above are akin to the reflections in the mirror. Hence *Atman* is non-dual alone. Although in the dream it appears as if we are cognizing a thing, performing an action and experiencing *Sukha* and *Duhkha*, there is no change whatsoever in us in reality; in the same way even when the *Triputis* or triads like *Jnaatru* (cognizer), *Jneya* (the object cognized) and *Jnaana* (cognition); *Bhoaktru* (enjoyer), *Bhoagya* (the object enjoyed) and *Bhoaga* (enjoyment) — are appearing in us in the Absolute, really real sense, this duality of the triads does not at all exist in our *Atman*; He subsists as non-dual alone.

Objection: To the extent that — in one state witnessing a *Maayika* or illusory duality, diversity and in another state not witnessing such duality or diversity — is there some change in *Atman* or not? To that extent at least does it not amount to saying that within Himself *Atman* is of an essential nature of duality or diversity?

Consolation: No. Even the statements that — “*Atman* has these states of consciousness” — is made from the *Vyaavahaarika Drishti* alone. From the Absolute Intuitive

experience viewpoint, apart from *Atman*, of the essential nature of Witnessing Pure Being-Consciousness (*Saakshi Chaitanya*), there does not exist any state whatsoever independently by itself; even these *Avasthas* as phenomena in the Absolute sense are *Atman* alone.

Objection: In the illustration which you have mentioned the mirror exists apart from us and in it our reflection is projected; for *Atman* without anything second to Him, in which thing should His reflection appear or be projected?

Consolation: The mirror of the illustrated is not any other thing. *Atman* alone is here the mirror. In *Atman* alone the reflection of the world is projected or appearing.

Objection: In that case, because *Atman* is *Nitya* or eternal the *Prapancha Bhraanti* or delusion of the world of duality also becomes *Nitya*, is it not? Or, in the alternative, because it is always existing why can it not be said that it is not *Bhraanti* at all?

Consolation: Not so. The statement that — “In *Atman* the world always appears” — is also made from the *Vyaavahaarika Drishti* which exists in the waking state only. If we observe Intuitively from the Absolute viewpoint, transcending the three states of consciousness, then there does not at all exist a reflection of any world whatsoever. Apart from this, in the illustration of the mirror the real entities like the face, the head etc. corresponding to the reflection exist invariably externally to the mirror. But here for the reflection of the phenomenon called ‘the world’ a corresponding real *Bimba* or object does not exist at all. Just as a reflection which is not existing really is appearing in the mirror, in *Atman* the world is merely appearing; although children reckon the reflection appearing in the mirror, elders determine it to be a mere

appearance alone. In the same way, this world of diversity which is appearing to be real to the ignorant people, though it appears to the *Jnaanis*, they determine it to be an appearance alone without any content or substance. It is our opinion that in so many aspects alone there is comparison between the reflection and the world.

(T) 'Therefore I am Shiva'

Hence what is determined by all the deliberations carried out so far amounts to: If we observe Intuitively from the *Jnana Drishti* as stated above, then we are in the Absolute sense eternally *Adviteeya Chaitanya Swaroopas* alone who are *Nitya Shuddhe Poorna Swaroopas*. In this our *Swaroopa* though from the *Vyaavahaarika Drishti* the *Jeevatwa* (soulhood) and *Jagat* (the world of diversity) appear they are not *Paramaartha* or Absolute Ultimate Reality.

Objection: Only that person who has Intuitively cognized that he is himself of such an essential nature of non-dual Being-Consciousness should instruct or expound to others this *Advaita Tattwa* or non-dual Reality of *Atman*, is it not? But because one who has realized himself to be non-dual cannot possibly entertain any *Satyatwa Buddhi* or idea or belief of reality with regard to the duality, how at all can he instruct to others? If such people cannot carry out this spiritual instruction, how at all can the *Guru-Shishya Parampara* or the long tradition of propagation through the teacher and the taught be maintained with regard to this *Advaita Shaastra*?

Consolation: This doubt arises in the minds of those people who do not have the discrimination with regard to the *Vyaavahaarika-Paaramarthika Drishtis* delineated above. For, even after cognizing the truth that the rope cannot be a snake, there may be a cognition that—"The rope is appearing as if it is a snake"; even after waking up, there

may be a cognition to the effect that—“To me then the dream was appearing as if it was waking”; even after the cognition of the type—“The reflection appearing in the mirror is real only”—is sublated, the cognition of the type—“When I was a child the reflection itself was appearing as if it was real”—may subsist. In the same manner even after the *Advaita Jnaana* is attained the cognition of the type—“To the common run of people the world appears as if it is real”—may subsist. Just as in the illustration one who has cognized the respective *Vastu Swaropa* in the manner—“This is a rope, not a snake”; “Although the dream appears just like the waking, it is without any content or substance”; “What appears in the mirror is merely a reflection and not a real object”—can instruct others about those truths, in the same manner here too that one who knows Intuitively the Ultimate Reality of *Atman* may instruct the ignorant common run of people in the manner—“You are *Satya Jnaana Aananda Swaropas*; neither *Jeevatwa* nor *Jagat* does exist in you”; all this is mentioned from the *Vyaavahaarika Drishti* alone. In fact, from the *Vyaavahaarika Drishti* the distinctions of *Shaastra*, *Shishya*, *Guru* will invariably be there. The *Guru-Shishya Bhaava* or concepts of preceptor and pupil are real from that *Vyaavahaarika Drishti* alone, but not from the *Paaramaarthika Drishti*. If we observe Intuitively from the latter *Drishti*, because neither the *Jeevatwa* nor the *Jagat* can exist, the distinctions of the type—*Shaastra*, *Guru*, *Shishya*—also invariably do not exist at all; just as if we say—“A hare’s horns”—it is tantamount to our uttering a few words of misconception devoid of any substance whatsoever, in the same manner from the *Paaramaarthik Drishti* the distinctions of *Guru-Shishya* etc. are mere misconceptions alone. In the ultimate analysis, or in the Absolute sense, *Adviteeya Atman* alone is the Absolute Reality.

Objection: The *Dvaitins* can confront *Advaitins* with a legitimate doubt of the type—“Because for us *Dvaita* is real we can raise a doubt with you; but because for you *Dvaita* is unreal, to whom can you narrate a solution?”—is it not?

Consolation: Let them raise such a doubt. From this the *Advaitin* does not face any hurdle or harm to his spiritual teaching. In fact, it amounts to these illogical-minded opponents or doubting Thomases accepting the Vedantic tenet that — “From the *Dvaita Drishti* the objections, the consolations etc. are real; but from the *Advaita Drishti* they are all unreal.” It becomes quite evident now that — “After accepting *Advaita* no one can ever raise any doubt whatsoever.” Therefore, the *Jijnaasu* or one who is desirous of *Aatma Jnaana* — who is bent upon Intuiting the *Tattwa* or the Ultimate Reality — can very well decide or determine without any shadow of a doubt that — “I am *Shiva* alone who is *Satya Jnaana Aananda Swaroopa*.”

V. BENEFIT ACCRUING FROM VEDANTA JNAANA

Vedanta Jnaana may be quite logically correct; but it may seem to many people that by such a *Jnaana* we may not get any benefit whatsoever in our empirical life. For the consolation of such people this following verse is mentioned:

5. *Naaham Jaatoa Na Pravridhdha Na Nashtoa Dehasyoaktaaha
Prakritaaha Sarvadharmaha;
Kartrutwaadishchinmayasyaasti Naahamkaarasyaiva Hyaat-
manoa Me Shivoa(s)ham.*

Meaning : “There is nothing like my being born, growing and dying. All these qualities or characteristics of *Prakriti* or primordial matter which appear to be in me are in truth belonging to the body. *Kartrutwa*, *Bhoakrutwa* etc. are belonging to *Ahamkaara* alone and not to Me who is *Chinmaya* or of the very essence of Pure Consciousness. I am of *Shiva Swaropa* alone.”

Commentary: Those who ask the question — “What is the benefit accruing from *Vedanta Jnaana*?” — should first deliberate upon the question as to what they have anticipated or assumed to happen to them from such *Jnaana*. Those who hanker after food and clothes, wealth, to live in style etc. (in other words, being too materialistic and self-centred) should never think that even if they do not pursue any vocation fit to obtain such material benefits they would get them all by means of this *Vedanta Jnaana*. As mentioned or narrated in a mythological anecdote: “One *Satrajit* possessed a magic jewel called *Syaamantakamani* and it was stated that whenever he worshipped that jewel, merely as a result of that about eight big ingots of gold were yielded by it” — this *Vedanta Jnaana* does not yield any such material benefits or profits. Even so, seen from another viewpoint we can very well say that *Vedanta Jnaana* is truly like a kind of *Chintaamani* or magic jewel alone. For, all the *Anartha* or miseries or life’s problems which are confronted by those people who have not attained this *Jnaana* are removed as if by magic as a result of this *Jnaana*. The common people entertain a deep-seated belief of the type — “I am born in this world, I grow up, I died in my previous birth and now I am again born; in future too after this span of life is exhausted I will again die.” As a result of this belief they are experiencing the sorrow in the manner — “I am having the grief that is associated with birth; I am also having the grief associated with growing up and eventually I am having the unavoidable greatest misery that is there in death.” They will be

searching for various devices or methods of avoiding these miseries after thinking about problems like: The painful birth of a child after being in the form of a foetus in the womb of a woman and eventually emerging from a reprehensible part of her body; the grief-stricken, difficult task of growth of that body by enhancing or boosting the energies of the body, the senses, the mind and the intellect, as also preserving all of them and the dreaded end called 'death' which is the culmination of the process of sapping or siphoning out of all those energies and of emaciation. When their devices succeed they get elated and when they fail they despair and get dejected. There are some people belonging to this type; there are some others who believe that these miseries are part and parcel of our destiny and as such we are helpless and cannot avoid them; there are also a few idiots who deride and denounce *Ishwara*, the Lord Creator, saying: "Why did God send me to this miserable human birth?" Lastly, there are quite a number of indiscreet people who think — "Let there be some defects, but because many other good qualities exist in human birth we are ourselves fortunate" — and who allow their mind to be whisked away by sensuous enjoyments and pleasures which are like drops of ambrosia mixed with poison to be found within this ephemeral human existence; they are devoid of any forethought and behave fanatically as they like.

In any case, there is no one in this universe who does not realize that he has these aspects like birth, growth and death; all these are miseries (in the ultimate analysis), is it not? To all such people the genuine and profound benefit that accrues from the Intuitive Knowledge of the spiritual science of Vedanta is: They attain a strong unshakeable conviction that their *Atman*, of the essential eternal nature of Pure Being - Consciousness-Bliss, is never (in the past, at present or in the future) affected or afflicted by any of these features of birth, growth and death.

(U) 'All these Primordial Characteristics belong to the Body'

These three characteristics of birth, growth and death, as described previously, are all seen in the physical body alone and not in *Atman*. We have never witnessed any of these following: Our being born, our growing or our dying. All the transactions like witnessing others getting born, growing and dying are also pertaining to merely the bodies being born or coming into existence, growing or dying or going out of existence only. Even the beliefs that others are observing our birth, growth and death are also similar to this phenomenon only. Therefore, all these characteristics really belong to the physical bodies and not to ourselves.

Objection : The body also is ours only; therefore, its birth, growth and death are also belonging to us alone, is it not ?

Consolation : If we recollect what has been deliberated upon previously, then there is no scope whatsoever for this objection. For, the statement that a particular relationship exists between the body and ourselves can not at all be determined beyond doubt on the strength or support of any kind of '*Anubhava*' or Intuitive experience. Apart from this, if we have one singular body we obtain hundreds of bodies in so many dreams; in which of these bodies can we have or show identification saying — "This alone is mine" —? Even if we wish to assume that—"Because of the reason that the dream bodies are different, the waking body which is always existing singularly is itself ours"—for that assumption too there is no scope whatsoever; for, as we have previously established, because there does not exist any difference or distinction between a dream and the waking, the question as to which exactly is the waking body cannot itself be

determined with certainty. Therefore, it becomes established from all these deliberations that the characteristics like getting born, growing and dying manifest only in bodies of mere appearance and that there does not exist any relationship whatsoever between that appearance of a body and ourselves. Hence it evolves that all the characteristics caused by primordial nature belong to the body alone. Prakriti means *Ajnaana Swabhaava* or essential nature of ignorance; this alone is previously called Maayaa. All these different mutations that we have misconceived due to *Ajnaana* in ourselves belong to this *Maayic* body alone and not that they exist really.

(V) 'Kartrutwa, Bhoakrutwa etc. are the Qualities of Ahamkaara and not those of Atman'

Objection : Saying that there does not exist any relationship whatsoever between the body and ourselves does not seem to be correct; for, between the body and ourselves there exists a relationship of the type of a possession and its lordship or ownership. To wit, the body belongs to us and we are its lords, owners. We utilize the body, the senses etc. and perform actions (*Karma*) and then enjoy their resultant fruits. For the purpose of enjoying the fruits of actions performed previously in earlier births only this body has been endowed to us; in the future too in this manner other bodies in other births may come to us, is it not ?

Consolation : All these concepts like: (i) We have instruments of knowledge or action like the body, the senses and the mind; (ii) using these equipments or tools, so to say, we perform various actions and as a result we acquire *Punya* or religious merit and *Paapa* or religious demerits; (iii) from them we beget future births—are 'real' indeed from the *Vyaavahaarika Drishti*. But what we are following now is the *Paaramaarthika Drishti*. When we observe from

this viewpoint, just like the *Jagat* or the world of duality, the body which exists within it also is *Maayic*; because of the reason that in states like deep sleep etc. we do not at all have any body or any relationship whatsoever with it, we cannot possibly assert that having some relationship with the body is our very essential nature. If we further observe from this very viewpoint, we do not actually have *Kartrutwa* or agentship of action. For, only when we are associated with *Ahamkaara* or ego we have the cognition of the type — “I am doing this (action)”. A hankering after an object, for that purpose having a *Sankalpa* or will, volition; *Nishchaya* or decision; *Karma* or action etc.—all these are dependent, or they rely, upon *Ahamkaara* and not that they are associated with or conjoined with our *Swaroopa* (Pure Being-Consciousness). Because in deep sleep and such other states we do not at all have any relationship with *Ahamkaara* to say that therein there does not exist *Kartrutwa* also is established on the strength of *Anubhava* or Intuitive experience.

Objection: In that case, it amounts to saying that: (a) For the action that we perform we are not responsible; (b) or performing our actions, earning the resultant merits and demerits, and enjoying their fruits—none of these exists. Why all this? It will amount to saying that neither the *Mukti* or Liberation that has to accrue from the study or pursuit of Vedantic science nor the *Bandha* or Bondage that has to be got rid of by means of this Liberation exists at all. Are all these things desirable or congenial to you (Vedantins)?

Consolation: Even this objection has arisen because a distinction between the *Vyaavaharika* and *Pearamarthika Drishtis* has not been realized or reckoned. From the *Vyaavaharika Drishti* because of the reason that we have a relationship with *Ahamkaara* the *Kartrutwa*, *Bhoakrutwa* etc. which are associated with that *Ahamkaara* do appear in

us. If we observe from this empirical viewpoint it is not possible to assert that concepts like *Dharma* or religious righteousness and its opposite of *Adharma* do not exist at all. In fact, assuming this viewpoint alone in our *Shaastras*, *Vidhis* or religious injunctions and *Nishedhas* or religious prohibitions have been enjoined; from this viewpoint none of the concepts like *Punya*, *Paapa*, *Svarga* or heaven, *Naraka* or hell is false. But if we observe Intuitively from the *Paaremaarthika Drishti* we do not at all have any relationship with *Ahamkaara*; nor in us independently there exists any *Kartrutwa* whatsoever. While we cut a tree with an axe, the latter, without being where it is, is moving up and down; in the same way the hand of the cutter too is changing its positions. But we cannot say that just like the axe of the illustration we are using *Ahamkaara* through *Kartrutwa*; for, when performing any action although there are certain changes or mutation in *Ahamkaara* there are no changes whatsoever taking place in our *Swaroopa*. In truth, we are the Witnessing Principle or Consciousness for (i. e. we are objectifying) both the *Ahamkaara* and its mutations. Therefore, the *Kartrutwa* and *Bhoakrutwa* of *Ahamkaara* are superimposed upon or misconceived in us owing to *Bhraanti* or delusion and not that they really exist in our essential nature of Pure Being-Consciousness-Bliss. Now it becomes quite evident or clear for the empirical transactions of *Bandha* and *Moaksha* also. As a result of the relationship brought about by *Avidyaa* between *Ahamkaara* and us (i. e. our essential nature) alone the *Karma Bandha* or bondage to actions of the form or nature of *Kriya* (action), *Kaaraka* (means of action) and *Phala* (result or fruit) as well as *Dvaita Jnaana Bandha* or bondage to the knowledge of duality of the form of the form of *Jnaatru* (knower), *Jnaana* (knowledge) and *Jneya* (the object known)—both these triads of bondage have clung to us; therefore, the Vedantic teaching that—“One should get rid of *Ajnaana* through the attainment of *Jnaana* by means of the *Vedantic Shravana* or listening Intuitively

to the scriptural (*Upanishadic*) texts, *Manana* or Intuitive ratiocination on those *Upanishadic* teachings etc. and thereby the Bondage too has to be got rid of"—is also justified from the *Vyaavahaarika Drishti*. But when observed Intuitively from the *Paaramaartika Drishti* because we do not have any relationship whatsoever with *Ahamkaara* our *Swaroopa* does not have, or is not tainted by, either *Bandha* or *Moaksha* in the least. Hence, even these distinctions of *Bandha*, *Saadhaka* or practitioner, *Saadhana* or spiritual practices, *Moaksha* etc. do not at all exist from the *Paaramaartika Drishti*, and this alone is the *Parama Siddhaants* or the ultimate spiritual teaching of Vedanta. And this profound teaching is not at all undesirable for anyone; for, in the *Paaramaarthika Drishti* nothing of these *Ishta* or desirable objects or fruits, *Anishta* or undesirable fruit etc. exist in the least and *Paramaatman* alone exists exclusively, non-dually in His supreme Glory.

Objection: If you say that *Kartrutwa* and *Bhoaktrutwa* which exist in *Ahamkaara* are, in fact, superimposed upon *Atman*, does it not amount to saying that *Ahamkaara* is conscious or sentient?

Consolation: If we observe analytically, because *Atman* is *Nitya Mukta* in Him there can never exist any *Kartrutwa* at all; similarly, because it is *Nitya Jada* or eternally gross, insentient, *Ahamkaara* too does not have any *Kartrutwa*, *Bhoaktrutwa* etc. at all. Even so, in the *Vyaavahaarika Drishti* when the *Kartrntwa* appears because there are changes only in *Ahamkaara* while in *Atman* there are no changes whatsoever, from the *Sthoola Drishti* or gross viewpoint *Ahamkaara* itself is called here in this context *Kartru*. That is all.

Objection: Is it not true that *Atman* is traversing from one state to another; while He goes to deep sleep He is giving up *Ahamkaara*, *Kartrutwa* etc. and while coming back

to waking He is taking up or assuming them? To that extent, then should you not accept *Kartrutwa* in Him?

Consolation : *Atman* neither goes or travels anywhere nor comes to any state or region; neither does He grasp anything nor give up anything. Just as in the sky or empty space even though clouds come and go the space unto itself remains pure and unpolluted; in the same way although *Ahamkaara*, *Kartrutwa* etc. appear and spread out or proliferate in *Atman* owing to His *Maayaa* He remains extremely Pure and undefiled in His *Chaitanya Swarooma* without undergoing any change whatsoever. We have repeatedly affirmed that neither the *Avasthas* nor the phenomena like *Ahamkara*, *Kartrutwa* etc. appearing within those states of consciousness are absolutely real (i. e. in the ultimate analysis observed from the Intuitive experience standpoint); if we remember and keep this paramount and profound truth looming large before our mind or intellect then no superimposition or delusion of the type of *Kartrutwa*, *Bhoakrutwa* etc. whatsoever appear to be real in *Atman*.

(W) 'Hence I am Shiva'

Thus if we properly, logically adapt the relevance or similarity among the three illustrations of the rope-snake, the dream and the reflection in the mirror, and associating it with *Atman* if we observe from the Intuitive experience viewpoint, then it becomes very clear that in us there is no *Jeevatwa* or that *Jagat*. Proportionate to the degree of steadfastness of this cognition the Intuitive experience or Consciousness of the type — "I am verily *Parama Shiva* alone who is *Nitya Shuddha* (eternally pure), *Paripoorna* (totally consummate, full), *Adviteeya* (non-dual) *Satchidaananda Swarooma* (of the very essence of Pure Being or Existence, Pure Knowledge or Consciousness, Pure Happiness or Bliss)" — becomes rooted in us.

Those who have the backing or strength of this Intuitive experience will get rid of fear and will be buoyant with

courage; will avoid or escape from unrestrained, licentious behaviour; but, on the other hand, they will adopt naturally a religiously righteous behaviour; they will get rid of indiscrimination and will double their discrimination or discretion, in a manner of speaking; sense of injustice, injury, theft etc. will disappear into thin air and, instead, sterling qualities like sense of justice, compassion and interest in the welfare of all the people and creatures will get embedded in his heart; idleness or lethargy will give way to a steady habit of working or toiling for others' benefit or help; nowhere grief is noticed, but wherever they divert their attention they will witness the sport (*Leela*) of *Parabrahman* who is *Satya Jnaana Aananda Swaroopa*. Therefore, this benign, auspicious *Jnaana* to the effect that—"I am verily *Shiva*"—should necessarily be attained by everyone; even if it does not accrue immediately, at least we must attempt to acquire the proper qualification for that benign Self-Knowledge.

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