

THE MAHAVAKYAS
Of the
UPANISHADS
(The Great Spiritual & Universal Truths)

English Exposition by:-

Ajai Kumar Chhawchharia

Ayodhya (Faizabad, U.P.)

Full address of Author—36-A, Rajghat Colony, Parikrama Marg,
P.O.—Ayodhya, Pin—224123
Distt.—Faizabad, U.P. India.

Mobile: +919451290400, +919935613060

Website: < www.tulsidas-ram-books.weebly.com >

Email of Author: (i) < ajaichhawchharia@gmail.com >

(ii) < ajaikumarbooks@gmail.com >

Facebook ID < www.facebook.com/ajaikumarchhawchharia8 >

Linkedin: www.linkedin.com/AjaiKumarChhawchharia

Archive.org: https://archive.org/details/@ajai_kumar_chhawchharia

Goodreads:

https://www.goodreads.com/author/show/991710.Ajai_Kumar_Chhawchharia

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CONTENTS

1. Dedication:	=Page 6
2. Preface:	= Page 7
3. Chapter 1: What is the Upanishad?	= Page 10
4. Chapter 2: The MAHAVAKYAS	= Page 20—116
Section 2(A):--	= Page 20
Mahavakyas of the Rig Veda Upanishads:	
2(A)(i) Atmabodha Upanishad, Canto 1, verse nos. 2, 4	= Page 22
2(A)(ii) Mudgal Upanishad, Canto 3, verse nos. 1-3	= Page 22
Section 2(B):--	= Page 24
Mahavakyas of the Sam Veda Upanishads:	
2(B)(i) Chandogya Upanishad, Canto 6, section 16, verse no. 3	= Page 24
2(B)(ii) Sanyas Upanishad, Canto 2, verse no. 48	= Page 25
2(B)(iii) Yogchudamani Upanishad, verse nos. 82-83	= Page 25
Section 2(C):--	= Page 27
Mahavakyas of the Shukla Yajur Veda Upanishads:	
2(C)(i) Paingal Upanishad, Canto 3, verse no. 2-5, and Canto 4, verse nos. 23-28	= Page 27
2(C)(ii) Mandal Brahmin Upanishad, Brahman 2, section 2, verse no. 5; Brahman 2, section 4, verse no. 4; Brahman 3, section 1, verse no. 6; Brahman 3, section 2, verse no. 2	= Page 33
2(C)(iii) Adhyatma Upanishad, verse nos. 2, 10, 30-31	= Page 34
2(C)(iv) Subaal Upanishad, Section/Canto 6, verse nos. 2-7	= Page 36
2(C)(v) Ishavasya Upanishad, verse nos. 4-6	= Page 40
2(C)(vi) Brihad Aranyaka Upanishad, Canto 4, Brahman 4, Verse nos. 22, 24-25	= Page 43
Section 2(D):--	= Page 47
Mahavakyas of the Krishna Yajur Veda Upanishads:	
2(D)(i) Shuk-Rahasya Upanishad, verse no. 22	= Page 47
2(D)(ii) Kaivalya Upanishad, verse nos. 16, 18-19	= Page 48
2(D)(iii) Sarwasaar Upanishad, verse no. 12-14	= Page 49
2(D)(iv) Varaaha Upanishad, Canto 4, verse nos. 32, 37	= Page 51
2(D)(v) Avadhut Upanishad, verse no. 2	= Page 57
2(D)(vi) Tejobindu Upanishad, Canto 3, verse nos. 60-74	= Page 58

2(D)(vii) Tejobindu Upanishad, Canto 5, verse no. 5	= Page 63
2(D)(viii) Panch Brahm Upanishad, verse no. 28	= Page 63
2(D)(ix) Brahm Bindu Upanishad, verse no. 8	= Page 64
2(D)(x) Brahm Vidya Upanishad, verse no. 34, 78-79	= Page 65
2(D)(xi) Yogshikha Upanishad, Canto 1, verse nos. 131-133	= Page 66
2(D)(xii) Katha Upanishad, Canto 1, Valli 3, verse nos. 14-15; Canto 2, Valli 3, verse no. 9	= Page 67
Section 2(E):--	= Page 69
Mahavakyas of the Atharva Veda Upanishads:	
2(E)(i) Atma Upanishad, especially verse no. 1-C, 1-D, 1-E, 2-3, 8, and 22-25	= Page 69
2(E)(ii) Tripadvibhut Maha Narayan Upanishad, Canto 5, paragraph no. 15; Canto 6, paragraph no. 22; Canto 8, paragraph no. 5	= Page 75
2(E)(iii) Ram Rahasya Upanishad, Canto 5, verse nos. 13-14	= Page 77
2(E)(iv) Ram Purva Tapini Upanishad, Canto 3, verse no. 2	= Page 79
2(E)(v) Ram Uttar Tapini Upanishad, Canto 3, verse no. 9	= Page 81
2(E)(vi) Annapurna Upanishad, Canto 5, verse nos. 2, 8, 20-21, 57, 65, 74, 95	= Page 83
2(E)(vii) Mahavakya Upanishad, verse nos. 6-9, 11	= Page 86
2(E)(viii) Hayagriva Upanishad, verse no. 15	= Page 89
2(E)(ix) Narad Parivraajak Upanishad, Canto 6, paragraph nos. 3-4	= Page 89
2(E)(x) Narad Parivraajak Upanishad, Canto 7, verse no. 8	= Page 97
2(E)(xi) Param Hans Parivraajak Upanishad, paragraph nos. 3-4	= Page 99
2(E)(xii) Tripura Tapini Upanishad, Canto 5, verse no. 20	= Page 102
2(E)(xiii) Manduk Upanishad, verse nos. 1-7	= Page 102
2(E)(xiv) Mundak Upanishad, Mundak 2, Section 1, verse nos. 1-10; Mundak 3, Section 2, verse nos. 6-9	= Page 110
5. Chapter 3: Thoughts of a Spiritually Enlightened & Self-realised Person	= Page 117—200
Section 3(A):--	= Page 117
Upanishads of the Rig Veda:	
3(A)(i) Atmabodha Upanishad, Canto 2, verse nos. 1-31	= Page 117
Section 3(B):--	= Page 123
Sam Veda Upanishads:	
3(B)(i) Sanyas Upanishad, Canto 2, verse nos. 47-54, 63-73	= Page 123
3(B)(ii) Maitreyu Upanishad, Canto 1, verse nos. 15-18;	

Canto 3, verse nos. 1-25	= Page 127
Section 3(C):--	= Page 135
Shukla Yajur Veda Upanishads:	
3(C)(i) Brihad Aranyaka Upanishad, Canto 4, Brahman 4, verse no. 23	= Page 135
3(C)(ii) Ishavasya Upanishad, verse no. 7	= Page 136
Section 3(D):--	= Page 138
Krishna Yajur Veda Upanishads:	
3(D)(i) Kaivalya Upanishad, verse nos. 19-23	= Page 138
3(D)(ii) Varaaha Upanishad, Canto 2, verse no. 38	= Page 139
3(D)(iii) Varaaha Upanishad, Canto 3, verse nos. 3, 8, 10	= Page 140
3(D)(iv) Tejobindu Upanishad, Canto 3, verse nos. 1-51, 60-74	= Page 141
3(D)(v) Tejobindu Upanishad, Canto 4, verse nos. 2, 12-30, 45	= Page 162
3(D)(vi) Tejobindu Upanishad, Canto 6, verse nos. 31-34, 44-45, 58-64, 68-72, 107	= Page 168
3(D)(vii) Avadhuta Upanishad, verse nos. 24-25	= Page 174
3(D)(viii) Kaivalya Upanishad, verse nos. 19-23	= Page 175
3(D)(ix) Katho-panishad, Canto 2, Valli 3, verse no. 10	= Page 176
Section 3(E):--	= Page 177
Athara Veda Upanishads:	
3(E)(i) Atma Upanishad, verse nos. 2, 8, 10-13, 19-22	= Page 177
3(E)(ii) Pashupat Brahm Upanishad, Canto 2, verse nos. 21-25, 31-46	= Page 182
3(E)(iii) Mahavakya Upanishad, verse no. 11	= Page 195
3(E)(iv) Annapurna Upanishad, Canto 5, verse nos. 59-61, 91-93	= Page 195
3(E)(v) Mundak Upanishad, Mundak 3, Section 2, verse nos. 3-4	= Page 198
6. About the Author:	= Page 201

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DEDICATION

THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED TO MY BELOVED LORD RAM

I dedicate this Book to Lord Sri Ram who is my dearest of dear, most beloved, the essence of my life and being, and for whom, and for whose pleasure, and on whose behest, and on whose divine mission, this book is dedicated.

Nothing that I write is of my own creation. It is the Lord who is getting it done. So I deserve no credit. However, being an ordinary man like the rest of us, I may have committed errors, and for those I beg forgiveness. I hope this book will help to continue the great tradition of singing the glories of the different aspects of same indivisible one Divinity in order to meet diverse needs of the Soul, the Spirit, one such being to find peace and happiness amidst the surrounding turmoil of the world by being able to spend some time in the thoughts of the Divine Being, the same 'Parmatma', the same Lord known by different names in different tongues.

No creature is perfect; it's foolhardy to claim so. The best of paintings cannot replace the original; the best of words cannot express the original emotions and sentiments. Even the Lord was not satisfied by one flower or one butterfly—he went on endlessly evolving and designing newer forms. So, I have done my best, I have poured out my being in these books. Honestly, I am totally incompetent—it was the Lord who had done the actual writing and had moved my fingers as if they were merely an instrument in his divine hands. But nonetheless, it's a tribute to the Lord's glory that he does not take the credit himself, but bestows it to them whom he loves as his very own. And to be 'his very own' is indeed an unmatched honour. However, I still beg forgiveness for all omissions, commissions and transgressions on my part that I may have inadvertently made. It's the Lord's glories that I sing, rejoice in, write on and think of to the best of my ability. I hope my readers will also absorb the divine fragrance effusing from the flowers representing the Lord's books, enjoy the ambrosia pouring out of them and marvel at the Lord's stupendous glories.

I submit this effort at the holy feet of my beloved Lord Ram whom even Lord Shiva had revered and worshipped. And surely of course to Lord Hanuman who was a manifestation of Shiva himself. Finding no words to express my profound gratitude to Ram, I just wish to remain quiet, and let my silence do the speaking and praying on my behalf.

I hope the reader will find my book useful and interesting. Since English is an international language, this book will help the English speaking world to access this masterpiece of classical Indian scriptural text.

“He leadeth me! O blessed tho't!
O words with heav'nly comfort fraught!
What-e'er I do, wher-e'er I be,
Still 'tis God's hand that leadeth me!” [A Hymn]

Ajai Kumar Chhawchharia
Author

THE MAHAVAKYAS of the UPANISHADS

(The Great Spiritual & Universal Truths)

PREFACE

In this book we shall read about the great Spiritual Truths, known as the ‘MAHAVAKYAS’ (pronounced as “MAHĀVĀKYA”; *Mahaa-vaakyaas*), that are enunciated, expounded, elucidated and proclaimed by the magnificent great scriptures of India known as the Upanishads which have been inspiring the seekers of the Truth and the Reality of life and existence since the dawn of civilization.

“Mahaa” means ‘great’, and “Vakya” means a ‘word’ or ‘saying’. Hence, ‘Mahavakya’ is a “Great Spiritual Absolute Truth that is universal and irrefutable”, or a “Great Saying” that has been proclaimed in a given Upanishad. These Mahavakyas are not exclusively present in any one Upanishad, but are spread over different Upanishads belonging to different Vedas.

In this book we shall be reading all the Mahavakyas as they appear in different Upanishads. I had been diligently collecting and noting them down during the course of my doing of English commentary on the all 108 Upanishads which belong to the Vedas. When I was finished I decided to present this collection as an independent book because the Mahavakya is the essence of the Upanishad, and is therefore like its nectar. These Mahavakyas have been collected and explained in as simple English as was possible.

The main text of this Book is in three Chapters, and each chapter has many sections. Each of these sections is dedicated to the Upanishads of a particular Veda, and its sub-sections narrate the Mahavakyas of these individual Upanishads. This layout plan for this Book will be very clear by perusal of the Contents page.

Since the ‘Mahavakyas’ are incorporated in the main text and body of the Upanishads and are an integral and inseparable part of the latter, it is very essential to first know what these Upanishads are. Hence, Chapter 1 is exclusively dedicated to explaining the meaning, the importance and the significance of the Upanishads.

This is followed by Chapter 2 which constitutes the main body of this Book. It is titled THE MAHAVAKYAS. As these Mahavakyas are an integral part of the Upanishads, and since these Upanishads are themselves an integral part of the Vedas which incidentally are in five divisions, this chapter no. 2 is divided into five Sections, viz. sections 2(A)—to section 2(E). Each section deals with the Upanishads of a particular Veda. Further, under each ‘section’ there are a number of sub-sections, each quoting the Mahavakyas as they are proclaimed and enunciated in a particular Upanishad of the relevant Veda.

For instance, Chapter 2 has five Sections, from section 2(A)—to section 2(E). Section 2(A) has the Upanishads of the Rig Veda, and there are two sub-sections in this section, viz. (i) and (ii). Each of this sub-section has the Mahavakyas of a particular Upanishad of the Rig Veda which has been quoted in full.

Since this Book is primarily aimed for the common English reader who is more interested to be acquainted with these great spiritual and metaphysical Truths and Saying as enunciated and proclaimed by the timeless and ageless Upanishads, rendered in a simple language that is free from intriguing complexities of the original texts, and is unable to read the Sanskrit of the texts nevertheless, only English has been used in this Book.

It ought to be noted here that all due diligence, effort and care has been taken by me, the Book's author, to ensure that the English rendering is as near and close to the original text, and it faithfully and truly conveys the original message of the Mahavakyas as was envisioned by the ancient seer who propounded them.

Since my aim was not simply to present an English translation of the Mahavakyas but to explain the text elaborately simultaneously in simple language so that the common and lay reader can also benefit from its reading, as would be noted by any causal reader as well, not only too much of concern with strict technicalities and literal meaning is avoided but the verses that are quoted in this Book are also bit long and in a narrative style. Otherwise, it would have been difficult to make an abstract theme comprehensible for the uninitiated. [It ought to be noted also that all the Upanishads quoted or cited here are part of this author's magnum opus on the 108 Upanishads that have been published in book form by a reputed Indian publisher in five thick volumes which run into about 16-17 parts. All these traditional format of the author's books have the original Sanskrit text, followed by their Roman Transliteration and then full English rendering in smooth language.]

Chapter 3 is titled 'Thoughts of a Spiritually Enlightened & Self-realised Person'. As the name itself suggests, this chapter describes, again by direct quotes from the Upanishads, how a person who has understood the true meaning of the Mahavakyas, feels, thinks and behaves in life. This chapter no. 3, like its predecessor chapter no. 2, once again has five sections, and many sub-sections. Each section deals with the Upanishads of a particular Veda, and the various sub-sections quote the individual Upanishads.

Finally, at the end is an Appendix that gives a brief introduction of the author of this Book "Mahavakya" and the other books of his that are available in both digital as well as printed format.

I hope that this book will be interesting and of great value to all those who wish to be acquainted with and read about 'the Great Spiritual Truths', the "Mahavakyas", as enunciated and elucidated in the Upanishads because of the simple reason that herein one will find all the Mahavakyas, that are spread over so many Upanishads, collected and presented in simple English under one single cover.

Meanwhile, I bow my head with all humility and with the greatest of reverence and thanks-giving before my beloved Lord God, Lord Ram, that he has made it possible for me to present these spiritual gems to the world at large, for it is indeed a gigantic task to

sift through huge Upanishadic tomes to cull out and collect these Mahavakyas at one place, and it's not possible without the Lord's grace to accomplish this task.

Date: 30th March, 2016.

Place: Ayodhya (India)

Authored and presented in English by:

Ajai Kumar Chhawchharia

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THE MAHAVAKYAS of the UPANISHADS

(The Great Spiritual & Universal Truths)

Chapter 1

THE UPANISHADS

In this Chapter we shall read about what the Upanishads are, as this is important in the context of the main theme of this book called the “Mahavakyas” because these Great Spiritual Universal Truths known as the Mahavakyas are a part of the Upanishads, and once we note the importance and significance of the Upanishads we will automatically understand the immensity of metaphysical and spiritual import of the Mahavakyas as well as the value of what they proclaim in unison.

The word ‘Upanishad’ is composed of three Sanskrit syllables—‘up’ (pronounced as in *full + pen*), ‘ni’ (as in *none + if*) and ‘shad’ (as in *shun + then*). (a) The word ‘up’ means ‘come near, sit down, benevolent, worship, destroy, cure/remedy, to be free from disease or fault, enjoy, without hindrance’. (b) The word ‘ni’ means ‘not, night, darkness, ignorance, special, and complete or full’. (c) The word ‘shad’ means ‘6 schools of thought, knowledge; to teach, to learn, to calm down, to destroy’.

Hence, the composite word Upanishad means :- (i) to come and sit down quietly before the wise and learned teacher to remove the darkness of spiritual ignorance; (ii) to sit quietly or become quiet and calmed-down after having acquired truthful knowledge about the reality; (iii) to calm down all agitations and dispel all confusions and doubts; (iv) to remove the darkness of ignorance by the light of knowledge; (v) the spiritual endeavour that removes or dispels the darkness of ignorance and enhances and propagates light of true knowledge; and (vi) to find a remedy for the spiritual disease or illness represented by this world that afflicts a creature.

(vii) While defining the word Upanishad, the great Indian spiritual teacher and philosopher Adi Sankaracharya, who was a renowned exponent of Vedanta and espoused its philosophy of Advaita or non-duality of spiritual truths, says—‘Seekers of emancipation... deliberate on it (i.e., the knowledge that is called Upanishad) with steadiness and certainty’ (8 Upanishads, Advaita Ashram, Cal., 1989, p. 99-100). He says that the Upanishads, like a mother, never tire of reminding us of our true nature. The Atma, which is the focus of the Upanishad, is pure bliss, is eternal and is synonymous with the cosmic soul called Brahm’.

The term Upanishad implies that an initiated disciple sits down before his wise teacher for the purpose of confidential communication of the secret doctrine called Rahasya concerning the relationship between the creator and the created individual. This knowledge can be communicated to only the deserving candidates and not to all and

sundry because not only will they ridicule it but also because it would be a waste of time and energy.

The Upanishads, therefore, set at rest ignorance by revealing the knowledge of the sublime and enigmatic entity known as the ‘Supreme Spirit’. They reveal and explain the esoteric mystery which underlines the truth that rests underneath the external system of things. They are profound doctrines having mystical and mysterious meaning. They are a class of philosophical writings whose main aim is the exposition and elucidation of the secret meaning of the Vedas, and they are regarded as the source of Sankhya school of Indian philosophy and are synonymous with Vedanta.

The Upanishads are also known as Vedanta, which literally mean the ‘end or summarised version or the essence of the Vedas’. The chief Upanishads are part of and incorporated in the main text of the Vedas in their Sanhitas, Brahmins and Aranyak sections.

The Upanishads propound and enunciate upon that pristine knowledge about spirituality, metaphysics and divine philosophy which makes Hinduism so unique and spiritually refined—an all-inclusive, open-ended, pluralistic approach which is tolerant, non-dogmatic and non-fanatical and non-bigot. They are unbiased and highly evolved intellectual exercises involving multidimensional logic, skillful rational thinking, high erudition and excellent scholarship laced with traditional wisdom and spiritualism. They are not blind and abstract dogmas but practical philosophies and guidelines to enlighten a man on his true nature and goal in life. The same basic truth has been expounded from various angles such that an aspirant or learner can understand the concept one way or the other according to his mental caliber. The various paths are open to him according to his individual temperaments and needs.

The primary purpose of the Vedas was the spiritual welfare of the man and to ensure that he breaks free from the endless cycle of birth and death (or transmigration) and find his ultimate peace and rest. This was not possible in other forms of life in this creation simply because in the entire scheme of creation it was only the man who was given the needed intelligence and decision making authority and powers to decide what is correct and good for himself and his soul. But being shrouded in the labyrinth of rituals and complicated verses which were so abstract, mystical and esoteric, the real intention was forgotten and the entire exercise was reduced to learning by rote of the thick and dense texts which became beyond the reach and comprehension, because of their complexity, of even those few who were sincerely inspired to unravel their secrets and inclined to break free from the cycle of transmigration.

Then came the legion of enlightened and wise men who had extraordinary intelligence and a laser-sharp mind with an amazing ability to peep deep inside and behind the external façade of this world, which apparently looks true but is actually not, to unravel the secrets that lay behind this smokescreen. They had a deep insight into what constitutes the ‘Truth and Reality’ of existence, and the necessary mental acumen and intellectual faculty to unravel this mystery and understand its implications for the soul, the true ‘self’ of the living being. Not only this, they also had the divine gift of the language to make the secrets that they unraveled known to the rest of the world for the general spiritual benefit of the human race. They learnt and became enlightened about the fundamental philosophical dimension of these Vedas, unraveled their basic ideas and intentions by deep ponderings and contemplation, proposed and then tested hypothesis,

applied variables, corrected any errors they discovered in their thinking, retraced their steps and moved ahead on the new path which stood the test of methodical, scientific and empirical experimentations. When a successful method evolved, they preached it to their disciples in the words of the Upanishads. The profound and magnificent spiritual doctrines enshrined in these texts are therefore a result of extensive and industrious labour, insight and research; they are distilled products of thinking and experimentation by exceptionally erudite, highly learned, very wise and intelligent men who told the 'truth' without favour and bias.

These great exponents of Upanishadic philosophy have indeed tried to explain their precepts in scientific ways. The readings of these texts have had a profound psychological impact on generations after generations of the human race. They have tried to present a spiritual remedy to a world overwhelmed by constant cycle of misery, pain, grief and tumult.

These genius sages and seers liberally explained the great spiritual secrets to their disciples in as many ways as there were sages and seers. They lived separately in seclusion, or in grouped hermitages such as monasteries, and spent their entire lives meditating, contemplating and teaching these profound spiritual truths to their disciples.

The Upanishads represent the highest citadel of philosophical evolvement of human kind. The canons of the Upanishads are essentially teachings of ancient savants, seers and sages who were erudite and sagacious, genius and enlightened, and had scholarly acumen. They had enunciated the principles of the Ultimate Truth and Reality about this existence and the forces governing it both in philosophical as well as in metaphysical terms. These treatises were not merely hypothetical but empirical as well; they were the result of deep investigative minds which delved deep into the reaches of the unknown and after thorough exploration, investigation, examination, experimentation and application, they arrived at irrefutable, incontrovertible conclusions. They were pioneers in this field as much as they delved into hitherto unknown realm of metaphysics and, therefore, can be called the forefathers of constructive and logical thinking as well as spiritual scientists.

They learnt spiritual disciplines, proposed and tested hypothesis, applied variables, corrected any errors they discovered in their hypothesis, retraced their steps and moved ahead with the new path which stood the test of methodical, scientific and empirical experimentations. When a successful method evolved, they preached it to their disciples in the words of the Upanishads. These doctrines enshrined in these texts are therefore a result of extensive and industrious labour, insight and research. These doctrines are practical and modern day. Exponents of Upanishadic philosophy have indeed tried to explain their precepts in scientific ways. The readings of these texts have had a profound psychological impact on generations after generations. They have tried to present a remedy to a world overwhelmed by misery and tumult.

These sages/seers concluded, inter alia, that the physical world perceived through the sensory organs was not the real world; it did not provide peace and happiness to the creature. Since everyone wants peace, tranquility, bliss and happiness, there must be something other than this physical world that was the 'truth' which can, and will, give eternal peace and bliss to the tormented creature yearning for rest from the constant buffeting that he has been subjected to over uncountable generations. This 'truth' and

‘reality’, they realised, was to be found by turning inwards and searching it in one’s inner-self, rather than in any entity or any place in the outside world.

The ‘Truth’ is always the same, and it is unchanging. Since the world continuously changes, therefore it cannot be the ‘Truth’. So what is this ‘Truth’, they wondered? The answer that they found was named ‘the Atma’ which is nothing but pure, sublime and subtle Consciousness. This ‘Consciousness’ is known as Brahm (or Brahmn) at the macrocosmic level of creation, and the Atma at the microcosmic level of the individual creature. It is an eternal, constant and universal divine entity that remains the only constant and unchanging factor in the otherwise ever-changing creation. Therefore, this Consciousness is the grand ‘Truth’ that the scriptures talk about for the simple reason that Truth always remains the same and does not change under any pretext or circumstance. ‘Truth’ always is universal and uniform notwithstanding the fact that the ignorant man is unable to fathom it or know it, and in his gross ignorance of its existence regards the pseudo-Truths as the ‘real Truth’.

To give a name to this universal constant supreme Truth, known as the cosmic Consciousness which is extremely sublime and subtle so much so that it can be known, experienced and witnessed by a sharp intellect and deep contemplation but cannot be taught and known by any of the gross methods known to human kind, the wise and enlightened sages and seers coined the term ‘Brahm (or Brahmn)’. Where is Brahm seated? ‘Brahm is a sublime and subtle entity that is hidden in the heart, and can be known by the pointed and subtle intellect instead of the gross organs of the physical body’ (Katha-Upanishad, 1/3/12) and ‘The immortal Brahm alone is before and behind, to the right and left, above and below. This world is verily the supreme Brahm’ (Mundak Upanishad, 2/2/12). Thus they concluded that true bliss, peace and tranquility comes by searching these fabulous virtues in one’s own ‘self’ rather than expecting them from the outside world—because this world is like an untruth mirage seen in a hot desert, and which wise man can expect his thirst to be quenched by the water present in it?

The creature, they concluded, was not the physical, perishable and tormented body, but the pure, indestructible Atma (soul). This Atma (soul) is pure consciousness, eternal, peaceful, happy and blissful. This awareness was self-realisation. How is it obtained? ‘Self is attained by practice of truth, austerity, right knowledge and continence, self control and abstinence’ (Mundak Upanishad, 3/1/5). The laboratory was their mind-intellect apparatus; the chemical for the various tests was their power of intellectual discrimination, and penetrating insight was their microscope. The fact that they obtained peace, tranquility, happiness and bliss as well as contentedness proved the fact that their theory was indeed correct, that it was indeed the ultimate Reality which mankind sought for. Their dedicated and focused understanding, outstanding research, analytical thinking, surgical precision and superb examples to illustrate their observances resulted in the pronouncement of doctrines having wide ramification and tremendous import. They disbursed this vast ocean of knowledge for the benefit of their disciples (i.e. seekers/aspirants/students), and through them, to the humanity as a whole. These doctrines, which are absolute Truths or irrefutable axioms, have been condensed for posterity in the form of Upanishads. These most venerated books are expositions of superb minds with matured thinking, striking in their clarity of thought and expression, are precise and clinical, have a strong fundamental basis that can be experimented by

serious seekers as to their veracity and practicability, and have had a tremendous impact on western scholars who chose to study them.

Man can't achieve happiness through mere physical enjoyments. Absolute happiness can result only from liberation, and it follows therefore that spiritual enlightenment alone, which frees the Atma from all delusions, can provide liberation and deliverance from the unending cycle of deeds/action and their results. Unfulfilled desires and yearnings to fulfill them further propel the creature towards more deeds/action and their newer results. This cycle causes a hurdle for the unification of the Atma with the supreme Brahm which is called true and ultimate emancipation and salvation, liberation and deliverance of the creature.

Deussen has expressed the fundamental ideal of the Upanishads in the following words, 'The Brahm, the power which presents itself before us has materialised in all existing things, it creates, sustains, preserves and receives back into itself again all the worlds, this eternal, infinite, divine power is identical with the Atma which, after stripping off everything external, we discover in ourselves as our real, most essential Being, our individual self, the soul/spirit. This doctrine has found expression most pointedly and clearly in the Upanishad's dictum which later became the confession of faith of millions of Indians in the word 'That art thou' (i.e., the cosmos is Brahm) and 'the world exists only in so far as thou (Brahm) are conscious of it'.

Therefore the main thrust of the Upanishad is to light the candle of knowledge so as to dispel the darkness of ignorance of the disciple. To do this, a clear, coherent and cogent language and format is used— usually in the form of question and its pertinent answer. This knowledge, which the Upanishad tries to disburse, is about the supreme Truth or absolute Reality which it calls the Brahm, which in turn is treated as being synonymous with the knowledge about the soul/Atma of the creature, the Nature (cosmos, universe, world), the very basic and primary forces that govern the operation of this vast and multifarious cosmos, and the irrefutable truth that everything emerged from and will ultimately collapse into Brahm in the final analysis.

Upanishads in Hindu philosophy are called the Vedanta. The Vedas are divided into 3 parts according to their subject matter—Karma (rituals), Upasana (worship, devotion, contemplation, honour and reverence) and Gyan (acquisition of truthful knowledge about the eternal, universal and essential Truth and Reality about existence). The 'Karma' section involves doing rituals and taking actions such as the various fire sacrifices, observance of sacraments, following of various dos and don'ts to prepare one for the next step which involves worship, devotion and contemplation upon his chosen deity which represents divinity and ideals selected by him. These two phases lead to the third phase—acquisition of 'Truthful Knowledge' about a person's true-self as well as about the supreme truth and the absolute reality of this existence. The main focus of this third stage is Brahm and its counterpart, the Atma, residing in the individual creature, and these two entities are the focus of the Upanishads.

According to 'Advaitya school of thought', which incidentally is the approach of the Upanishads, the Jiva or creature is covered or veiled or masked by three sheets of Avidya or ignorance and delusions.

The Upanishads prescribe methods or paths for overcoming all these hurdles to spiritual elevation of the creature. The Upanishads advise mankind to turn away from the

illusionary and transient benefits that the world appears to offer and instead aspire for spiritual perfection and elevation. The Upanishads' main subject matter is the essential nature of the world, the individual self and the supreme Self and their inter-relationships. The seeker begins to see things in a homogenous way in a different perspective which is rational, empirical and well thought of.

The Upanishads are like the laser rays—powerful, precise, penetrating and effective. They are forceful, powerful, stupendous, magnificent and eloquent statements made in response to pointed questions by the disciples (seekers/aspirants) who were themselves Rishis of repute. They emphasize the knowing of the ‘truth’, investigating and discussing it, constantly contemplating upon it and putting them into practice to redefine oneself. They have wide ramifications and transcend all religious and cultural boundaries. The Upanishads are divine words which reflect the glory of the intellect and the depth and width of the knowledge of India's ancient sages and seers. They can be read, thought over, taught and re-written in the form of translations in different languages (while still retaining their originality). They are not lifeless alphabets as such. They are synonymous with the supreme light of knowledge that dispels darkness of ignorance and is symbolic of life. Since the vehicle for transmission of the profound truths are words, the Upanishads emphasis, like the Bible and the Guru Granth Sahib (the scripture of the Sikh religion) that the ‘word’ is the truth, the reality, the equivalent of the Lord, the God, the Brahm, the cosmic ‘Naad’ (sound), OM, the very essence of life. The Bible explicitly says— ‘(a) In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God (gospel of St. John, 1/1), (b) And the word became flesh and dwelth among us— full of grace and truth (John, 1/14)’. How stupendous, how magnificent, how profound, how succinct, how lively are these words indeed! Therefore, the Upanishads are not lifeless books but ‘the body’ of knowledge, ‘the abode’ of knowledge. The quest for truth is the spark that injects vitality and vibrancy to a bunch of alphabets which lead the path to enlightenment.

The knowledge of the Upanishads frees the creature from the fetters shackling it to this world and provides it with deliverance and liberation even as a bird finds freedom from a cage and flies off into the vast sky. This liberation provides immense joy and exhilaration to the creature because it finds itself liberated much like the caged bird.

Remaining oblivious of the teachings of the Upanishad would be spiritual deprivation of the worst kind for a person walking on the path of spiritual upliftment and enlightenment. The Upanishads are a complete compendium for an enlightened way of life.

A reader of Upanishads is expected to have broader perspective of what consists of religion, metaphysics, theology and philosophy. He is expected to rise above sectarian narrow-mindedness and see the ‘beauty of the truth spoken in whatever tongue’.

The so many Upanishadic texts are not meant to confound and confuse the reader or the seeker of the truth in any way, but they only highlight the pluralistic approach of ancient sages to reach a single point called Brahm at the cosmological level (macro level) and the Atma at the temporal level (micro level). The reason for variations in narration is due to the fact that they were conceived and narrated by a long chain of sages and seers over a long period of time and spread over a large and diverse geographical area because they usually used to stay far away from one another, and their message was spread by

wandering disciples and minstrels who would obviously employ their own language and style to elucidate and expound what they had learnt from their teachers.

Further, these seers and sages had different personal experiences of the same universal Truth (about Brahm and Atma, about consciousness and life), and therefore they did not hesitate to put forth the Truth as it was revealed to them or as they had understood it. Their personal experiences and the contexts varied, the language used varied, the intellectual caliber of the disciple varied, and the most important factor in so much variation in the narrations of the Upanishads is the fact that this knowledge was verbally transmitted with no authentic written referral text to be used as standard. Verbal transmission has its own pitfalls, such as its reliance on words and memory besides on the mastery of the narrator on the language and his competence and skills to elucidate and explain the concepts threadbare.

This is also the reason for repetition and overlapping of the texts. Since each teacher had a long chain of disciples who themselves started their own lineage, and since the same teacher had explained the same concept on various occasions, there is bound to be variations; this is very practical and acceptable as long as the facts are not changed and the truth is not tinkered with.

Furthermore, the brightest, the most brilliant and the most fascinating aspect of the teaching of the Upanishads is that a follower of any religious dispensation can benefit from them and their profound teachings, the universal Truth that they espouse, the ‘philosophy of the Truth’ that they expound and elucidate upon. They aren’t a set of meaningless rituals and dogmas limited to any given religious beliefs or cults, but proven metaphysical and spiritual truths that have been subjected to rigorous experimentations, and have undergone refinement without prejudice, so that they can benefit any individual who wishes to seek the real Truth and find eternal spiritual peace for himself. The divine teachings of the Upanishads act like a remedy for the umpteen numbers of spiritual maladies that afflict an individual in this tumultuous world, robbing him of his peace and happiness.

If implemented in practice, the refined advice given by the Upanishads can bring a sea-change to an individual’s approach to life and its problems. The same life which made him miserable and agitated would turn into an ocean of peace and tranquility. He will realise the futility of worldly pursuits, of craving for the world and its material objects, of attempting to find peace and happiness in anything related to them; they are all entrapping and ensnare the creature in a bog of unhappiness and miseries. The alternative that the Upanishads prescribe on the other hand is uplifting for the individual and a provider of eternal peace, happiness and bliss for him. These doctrines do not come in the way of his day to day work of life, but only makes the same life better for him to live in and enjoy.

To quote Swami Vivekanand—‘Whenever you hear that a certain passage of the Vedas come from a certain Rishi (sages/seers), never think that he wrote it or created it out of his mind; he was the ‘seer’ of the thought which already existed; it existed in the universe eternally. This sage was only the discoverer’ (Complete Works, 3 (1970)/119).

Swami Vivekanand says—‘The theme of Vedanta is to see the Lord in everything, to see things in their real nature, not as they appear to be (Complete Works, 2 (1968)/312). Vedanta says that you are pure and perfect, and that there is a state beyond

good or evil and that is your own true nature. It is higher than Good. We have no theory of evil... we call it 'ignorance' (Complete Works, 5 (1970)/282).'

It would be relevant to quote Swami Vivekanand here. He declared—'And so many rivers having their source in different mountains roll down, crooked or straight, and at last come into the ocean— so, all these various creeds and religions, taking their start from different stand points and running though crooked or straight courses, at last come into Thee' (Swami Vivekanand, Complete Works,1 (1970)/390). 'Without knowing him we can neither live nor move, nor have our being; without knowing this Lord of all, we cannot breathe or live a second' (-do-, Complete Works, 2 (1968)/305). 'It is through the Self that you know anything.... It is in and through the Self that you are known to me, that the whole world is known to me' (-do-, Complete Works, 2 (1968)/305).

The profound importance and significance of the Upanishadic teaching is again highlighted by the Swami, for he says—'We are taken, as it were, off from the world of the senses, off even from the world of intellect, and brought to that world which can never be comprehended, and yet which is always with us' (Swami Vivekananda, Complete Works, 3 (1970)/385).

The Upanishads, as we have seen, are based on sound, logical, rational, experienced and empirical thoughts and debates. They present not any religious dogmas but verifiable, empirical truths. Though the language may seem outdated in the present context of the modern world, but gold nevertheless remains gold no matter what dialect is used to name it. They present a body of standard, time-tested knowledge, a knowledge that is in the verifiable realm, empirical experience and rational thoughts. The so many Upanishadic texts are not meant to confound the reader or the seeker in any way, but they only highlight the pluralistic approach of ancient sages to reach a single point called Brahm at the cosmological level (macro level) and the Atma at the temporal level (micro level).

The benefit derived from the study of the Upanishad is that the creature realises his true and essential form and nature. He comes to comprehend the essence of the vast cosmos of which he is a part. The resultant awareness fills him with bliss and happiness, contentedness and satisfaction. The Upanishad emphasizes the importance of acquisition of truthful knowledge of the attribute-less and infinite, but attainable and absolute Reality and Truth which it calls Brahm. The knowledge of Brahm leaves nothing more to be learnt.

Let us read some of the verses of the Holy Bible in the context of what has been said about the Upanishads above. 'Therefore, whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth (i.e., trusts them, implements them), I will take him unto a wise man which (who) built his home upon a rock' (Bible, gospel of St. Matthew, 7/24). Then, such a person becomes 'ye are the light of the world' (Bible, St. Matthew, 5/14), obtains eternal life and bliss— 'I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish' (Bible, gospel of St. John, 10/28), finds salvation— 'The Lord redeemeth the soul of his servants' (psalms, 34/22), and such a person becomes one with the Lord— 'believe me that I am in the father and the father in me' (Bible, gospel of St. John, 14/11). This is the final aim of the Upanishads— to ignite or kindle the process of self-realisation in the seeker/aspirant and lead him to the ultimate Truth and Reality.

The purpose and importance of truthful knowledge about the 'Reality and Essence' of everything, which the Upanishads strive to enumerate and expose in detail, is

also succinctly proclaimed by the Bible:- (i) Fools die for want of wisdom (Proverb, 19/2), (ii) They know not, neither will they understand, they walk on in darkness (Psalm, 82/5), (iii) They will be blind leaders of the blind, and if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall in the ditch (Gospel of St. Matthew, 15/14), (iv) (Therefore), understanding is a wellspring of life (Proverbs, 2/6), (v) The heart of him that hath understanding seeketh knowledge (Proverb, 15/14), (vi) By knowledge shall the chambers be filled with all precious and pleasant riches (Proverb, 24/4), (vii) Your testimonies are also my delight, and my counselors (Psalm, 119/24), (viii) Through your precepts I get understanding (Psalm, 119/104).

The fruit of knowledge is:- (i) For the fruit of the spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth (Ephesians, 5/9), (ii) Acquaint now thyself with Him and be at peace (Job 20/21). [Really indeed! This last quotation is the real fruit of self-realisation and is affirmed emphatically by the Upanishads.]

The Bible further says:- (i) The Lord is my light and my salvation (psalm, 27/1), (ii) God is light and in him there is no darkness at all (St. John, 1/1/5), (iii) The Lord is a God of knowledge and by Him actions are weighed (1 Samuel, 2/3), and where is this God? The Bible says, (iv) The kingdom of God is within you (Gospel of St. Luke, 17/21), (v) In him we live and move and have our being (Acts, 17/28).

Regarding this 'truth' factor, the Bible says— (i) I am the way, the truth, and the life (gospel of St. John, 14/6), (ii) Send out thy light and thy truth. Let them lead me (psalm 43/3), (iii) Thy word is the truth (gospel of St. John 17/17). (iv) The truth is great unto the clouds (psalms, 57/10), (v) That was the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world (Gospel of St. John, 1/9), (vi) Teach me your way, o Lord, I will walk in your truth (Psalm, 86/11). Understanding the truth is the wellspring of life unto him that hath it; the Lord giveth wisdom. Out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding (Proverb, 2/6). Send out thy light and thy truth and let them lead me (Proverb, 43/3). Thy word is Truth (St. John, 17/17).

'Bear with me a little, and I will show you that there are yet words to speak on God's behalf. I will fetch you my knowledge from afar, for truly my words are not false. Behold God is almighty. He is mighty in strength of understanding' (The Holy Bible, Job 36/2-5). 'With Him is wisdom and strength; He has counsel and understanding' (Bible, Job 12/13). 'Behold God is great, and we do not know Him' (Bible, Job 36/26). 'For who is God except the Lord?' (Bible, 2 Samuel 22/32). 'And He shall be like the light of the morning when the sun rises, a morning without clouds, like the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain' (Bible, 2 Samuel 23/4).

'Lord, you are my lamp, Oh Lord; the Lord shall enlighten my darkness' (Bible, 2 Samuel 22/29). 'Remember His covenant always, the word which He commanded, for a thousand generations' (Bible, 1 Chronicles, 16/31-33). 'Remember to magnify His work, of which men have sung' (Bible, Job 36/24). 'As for God, His way is perfect; the word of the Lord is praised; He is a shield to all who trust in Him' (Bible, 2 Samuel 22/31).

'God is my strength; and He makes my way perfect' (Bible, 2 Samuel 22/33). 'Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad, and let them say among the Nations, 'The Lord reigns'; Let the sear roar, and all its fullness; let the field rejoice, and all that is in it. Then the trees of the woods shall rejoice before the Lord---' (Bible, 1 Chronicles, 16/15).

'Behold, this we have searched out; it is true. Hear it, and know for yourself' (Bible, Job 5/27); know that 'The Lord is God; the Lord is One' (Bible, Deuteronomy

6/4), and ‘The Lord is within you while you are with him. If you seek Him, He will be found by you’ (Bible, 2 Chronicles 15/2).

‘The Lord redeems the soul of his servants and none of those who trust in him shall be condemned’. (Bible, Psalm 34/22).

‘You have also given me the shield of your salvation, and your gentleness has made me great. You enlarged my path under me, so my feet did not slip’ (Bible, 2 Samuel 22/36-37). So, ‘the Lord lives! Blessed be my Rock (of my emancipation and salvation, my liberation and deliverance). Let God be exalted, the Rock of my salvation’ (Bible, 2 Samuel 22/47).

And, how the redeemed Spirit yearns to meet the Lord? Well, the answer is—‘For I know that my Redeemer lives, and He shall stand (by me) at last on earth, and after my skin is destroyed (and I am dead by the body), this I know that in my flesh (Spirit) I shall see my God, whom I shall see for myself, and my eyes shall behold and not another. How my heart yearns within me!’ (Bible, Job 19/25-27).

For has it not been said—‘*The Lord is within you while you are with him*. If you seek Him, He will be found by you’ (Bible, 2 Chronicles 15/2). ‘But now ask the beasts, and they will teach you; and the birds of the air, and they will tell you; or speak to the earth, and it will teach you; and the fish of the sea will explain to you; who among all these does not know that the hand of the Lord has done all this, in whose hand is the life of every thing, and the breath of all mankind?’ (Bible, Job 12/7-10).

‘You, O Lord, are a shield for me, my glory and the One who lifts up my head. I cried to the Lord with my voice, and He heard me from His holy hill’. (Bible, Psalm, 3/3-4.) ‘Now, therefore, I pray, if I have found grace in Your sight, show me Your way, *that I may know You* and that I may find grace in Your sight’. (Bible, Exodus, 33/13). The Lord said, ‘My presence will go with you, and *I will give you rest*’. (Bible, Exodus, 33/14). He (Moses) said, ‘Please show me Your glory’. (Bible, Exodus, 33/18). The Lord replied, ‘I will make all my goodness pass before you, and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before you. I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and I will be compassionate to whom I will have compassion’. (Bible, Exodus, 33/19).

So we can finally conclude by quoting the sacred text of the Holy Bible—“‘Oh Lord! I have uttered what I did not understand, things too wonderful for me which I did not know’ (Bible, Job 42/2), but ‘must I not heed to speak what the Lord has put in my mouth?’ (Bible, Numbers 23/12), for ‘the Spirit of the Lord spoke by me, and His word was on my tongue (when I spoke what I said)’ (Bible, 2 Samuel 23/2).”—which implies that whatever the great sages and seers, or should we call them the ‘prophets or apostles of the Lord’, said and taught us were not their own creations but the divine Word of the Lord God made known to the human race through the mouth, through the medium of these great souls.

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THE MAHAVAKYAS of the UPANISHADS

(The Great Spiritual & Universal Truths)

Chapter 2

THE MAHAVAKYAS Of The Upanishads

The “MAHAVAKYA” (singular; pronounced as “MAHĀVĀKYA”; *Mahaa-vaakya*) is the great “universal Spiritual Sayings and Proclamations of the Upanishads that are profound and Absolute Truths”. They are the irrefutable and ultimate truths proclaimed by the Upanishads. They are the great declarations, the divine commandments, the spiritual tenets, and the incontrovertible axioms and maxims of the Vedas and the Upanishads which are Absolute Truths, and they sum up the essence of their teachings. They all refer to the universal spiritual truth known as the ‘pure Consciousness’ which has been named as the supreme Brahm in the context of the creation as a whole, and the Atma in the context of the individual living being.

A simple parable would illustrate the essence of the Mahavakyas. Once a teacher asked his disciple—‘Son, do you see anything?’ The disciple answered—‘Yes sir, I see’. The teacher—‘By what light do you see?’ The disciple—‘Sir, by the light of the sun in the sky during the day time, and by the light of the lamp during the night’. The teacher—‘By what light do you see these lights?’ The disciple—‘Sir, by the light present in my eyes’. The teacher—‘By what light is the eye enabled to see?’ The disciple—‘Sir, by the light provided by the mind’. The teacher—‘By what light do you know the mind, or what lights up your mind and enables it to see and interpret the sight?’ The disciple—‘Sir, by the light provided by my self, for no one else outside can empower my mind to think for me’. The teacher—‘Well, there you are. You are the light of lights’. The enlightened disciple exulted—‘Yes indeed sir, that is I; that indeed is me’.

Who can preach the Mahavakyas—The *Naradparivrajak Upanishad*, Canto 7, verse no. 8 says that only certain types of Sanyasis are authorised to preach the Mahavakyas. To quote—“The three types of Sanyasis such as the Turiyatit, the Avadhut and the Paramhans are the only ones who have the authority to preach the great sayings or the Mahavakyas of the scriptures such as ‘Tattwamasi’ (that essence and principle is you), ‘Ayamaatma Brahm’ (my Atma is Brahm) etc.

The other three types of Sanyasis such as the Kutichak, the Bahudak, and the Hans are not authorized to preach the Mahavakyas (8).”

These Mahavakyas are as follows—(i) ‘Brahm Is Consciousness’ (Pragnanam Brahm) appears in Aiteriya Upanishad of the Rig Veda. It means that

Atma/consciousness, which gives life to the material layers consisting of the five sheaths of the creature, is the same as the Supreme Reality/Truth behind the entire universe/creation called by the name of Brahm; (ii) 'That Thou Art' (Tat Twam Asi) is found in the Chandogya Upanishad of the Sam Veda. It means that the infinite, all-pervading, omniscient Supreme Truth/Reality is the consciousness or pure self in you. It is also called a statement of advice to the seekers in as much as it contains advice addressed to the seeker that the supreme reality is the self within him; (iii) 'This Self Is Brahm' (Ayam Atma Brahm) is found in the Mandukya Upanishad in the Atharva Veda. It means that the Atma which is self illuminated and the Supreme Reality/Truth are one and the same (i.e. identical); (iv) I Am Brahm (Aham Brahm Asmi) is found in the Brihadaranyak Upanishad of the Yajur Veda. It proclaims that the conscious principle/element in an individual is nothing other than the total consciousness. This is the statement made by the seeker after attaining self realisation.

There are a number of Upanishads that describe these great sayings, the Mahavakyas, of the Vedas:--

- (A) Rig Veda—*Atmabodha Upanishad*, Canto 2, verse nos. 2, 4; *Mudgal Upanishad*, Canto 3, verse nos. 1-3.
- (B) Sam Veda—*Chandogya Upanishad*, Canto 6, section 16, verse no. 3 (Tattwamasi); *Sanyas Upanishad*, Canto 2, verse no. 48; *Yogchudamani Upanishad*, verse nos. 82-83.
- (C) Shukla Yajur Veda—*Paingalo-panishad*, Canto 3, verse no. 2-5; Canto 4, verse nos. 23-28; *Mandal Brahmin Upanishad*, Brahman 2, section 2, verse no. 5; Brahman 2, section 4, verse no. 4; Brahman 3, section 1, verse no. 6; Brahman 3, section 2, verse no. 2; *Adhyatma Upanishad*, verse nos. 2, 10 (So-a-Ham), 30-31 (Tattwamasi); *Subal Upanishad*, Section/Canto 6, verse nos. 2-7; *Ishavasya Upanishad*, verse nos. 4-6; *Brihad Aranyaka Upanishad*, Canto 4, Brahman 4, verse nos. 22, 24-25.
- (D) Krishna Yajur Veda—*Shuk-Rahasyo-panishad*, verse no. 22; *Kaivalya Upanishad*, verse nos. 16, 18-19; *Sarwasaar Upanishad*, verse no. 12-14; *Varaaha Upanishad*, Canto 4, verse nos. 32, 37; *Avadhut Upanishad*, verse no. 2 (Tattwa-masi); *Tejobindu Upanishad*, Canto 3, verse nos. 60-74; Canto 5, verse no. 5; *Panch Brahm Upanishad*, verse no. 28 (So-a-ham); *Brahm Vidya Upanishad*, verse no. 34, 78-79; *Brahm Bindu Upanishad*, verse no. 8; *Yogshikha Upanishad*, Canto 1, verse nos. 131-133; *Katho-panishad*, Canto 1, Valli 3, verse no. 15; Canto 2, Valli 3, verse no. 9.
- (E) Atharva Veda—*Atma Upanishad*, specially verse no. 1-C, 1-D, 1-E, 8, and 22-25; *Naradparivrajak Upanishad*, Canto 7, verse no. 8; *Tripadvibhut Maha Narayan Upanishad*, Canto 5, paragraph no. 15; Canto 6, paragraph no. 22; Canto 8, paragraph nos. 5-6; *Ram Rahasya Upanishad*, Canto 5, verse no. 13-14; *Ram Purva Tapini Upanishad*, Canto 3, verse no. 2; *Ram Uttar Tapini Upanishad*, Canto 3, verse no. 9; *Annapurna Upanishad*, Canto 5, verse nos. 2, 8, 20-21, 57, 65, 74, 95; *Mahavakya Upanishad*, verse nos. 6-9, 11; *Hayagriva Upanishad*, verse no. 15; *Narad Parivrajak Upanishad*, Canto 6, paragraph nos. 3-4; Canto 7, verse no. 8; *Param Hans Parivrajak Upanishad*, paragraph nos. 3-4; *Tripura Tapini Upanishad*, Canto 5, verse no. 20; *Manduk Upanishad*, verse nos. 1-7; *Mundak Upanishad*, Mundak 2, Section 1, verse nos. 1-10.

Now, we will read what the different Upanishads say in relation to the great Mahavakyas. For this purpose, all the verses referred to above are quoted one by one to see how they explain the great spiritual truths known as the Mahavakyas.

Section 2(A)

Mahavakyas of the Rig Veda Upanishads

2(A)(i) Atmabodha Upanishad, Canto 1, verse nos. 2, 4:--

“Canto 1, Verse no. 2—This heart of a living being is the lotus which is called the divine abode of Brahm—i.e. Brahma-pur. [The word ‘pur’ in Sankrit means an abode or a habitat.]

It is the only place which glows like the illuminated lamp (because it is the habitat of the self-illuminated Atma which is an enlightened sublime entity, an entity which is nothing but pure consciousness and is a microcosmic form of the cosmic Consciousness known as Brahm). [In other words, the individual’s Atma and the cosmic Atma known as Brahm are the same thing. The only difference is the plane of their existence—while the Atma is an entity that relates to the microcosmic level of creation and pertains to an individual creature, the term Brahm refers to the same entity at the macrocosmic and universal level of existence.] (2).

“Canto 1, Verse no. 4—The supreme, absolute and the ultimate Brahm inherently resides in all the basic elements of life (such as earth, fire, water, air and space as their integral part). He is the supreme Purush called Narayan who has no cause or reason for his own existence (or for coming into being), but who is the cause of the rest of the creation [The word Purush refers to the male aspect of Nature or cosmos] (4).

2(A)(ii) Mudgal Upanishad, Canto 3, verse nos. 1-3:--

“Canto 3, Verse no. 1—That Lord, who himself is without a birth, has revealed himself in myriad forms and pervaded all of them. These forms are as variable as the vastness of the creation. He keeps on taking birth in different forms again and again in this world (because the possibilities of permutations and combinations are immense) (1).

“Canto 3, Verse no. 2—The same Lord (known in his cosmic form as the ‘Viraat Purush’ (literally meaning the vast and all-incorporating form of the primordial Male aspect of creation) has been worshipped by all the exalted ones in the form of ‘Fire God’. Those who perform the fire sacrifice according to the process prescribed in the ‘Yajur Veda’ (or use the Yajur Veda as a text to do the sacrifice according to its procedures and follow its

doctrines) consider that Lord as an embodiment and manifestation of the Veda itself. They deploy this concept while actually performing the sacrifice and the rituals associated with it. [That is, they revere and honour the Yajur Veda as an embodiment of the ‘Viraat Purush’, perform the sacrifice by invoking him and do it according to his instructions. The offerings to the fire sacrifice pit are also symbolically made to him in his manifestation as the ‘Fire God’.]

Those who chant or sing the hymns of the ‘Sam Veda’ think that the Lord is the hymns or stanzas of that Veda personified. [That is, they regard the hymns or verses of the ‘Sam Veda’ as one of the various manifestations of the supreme Lord.] Verily, he is present everywhere (even in the form of the letters of the hymns of the Sam Veda).

The serpent accepts him as poison while the wise and erudite ones see a living being in that serpent. The Gods accept him in the form of ‘Amrit’ (elixir of eternity and bliss) while ordinary mortals regard him as their wealth which sustains them in their life. The non-Gods (i.e., demons, spirits, phantoms) regard him as ‘Maya’ (the power to create illusions or delusions), the ‘Pittars’ (spirit of dead ancestors) regard him as the ‘Swadha’ (food offered to dead ancestors), and devotees and worshippers of various deities and Gods perceive him as their respective objects of worship, adoration and devotion. The ‘Gandharvas’ (celestial musicians, dancers and singers; a form of demi-God) recognise him as beauty and glamour while the ‘Apsaras’ (celestial courtesans) treat him as the Gandharvas (i.e., as their celestial male partners) (2).

“Canto 3, Verse no. 3—That supreme Truth and absolute Reality assumes a form, a meaning, a connotation, an interpretation, an existence and a countenance according to the requirements, perceptions, emotions, desires and needs of those who seek him, worship him and adore him with a given set of subtle or physical, intellectual or mental variables and circumstances. Hence, those who are wise, erudite and enlightened should realise and come to the conclusion in their hearts that the complete, whole, immutable and un-fractionable supreme ‘Purush’ is none other than the seeker/aspirant himself. [That is, there is no distinction between the truthful identity of the seeker/aspirant, which is his soul/Atma/spirit, and the supreme entity which pervades the whole cosmos. It is from this supreme entity that the cosmos has emerged and shall fall back into once again at the end of its tenure, and which is known by the name of Brahm. There is no scope of any duality between the ‘self’ and the myriad world seen/perceived around the seeker/aspirant, a world which is but a varied manifestation of the single, truthful identity called Brahm. And since a man is an image of the ‘Supreme Purush’, there is no duality between them.]

With this realisation, and by being steadfast and consistent in it, the seeker/aspirant attains that supreme form in due course of time (because ‘you become what you think’). Any person who understands this mystery becomes similar to that supreme Truth known as Brahm, the cosmic reality and pure Consciousness (3).”

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Section 2(B)

Mahavakyas of the Sam Veda Upanishads

2(B)(i) Chandogya Upanishad, Canto 6, section 16, verse no. 3:--

[The *Chandogya Upanishad* of Sam Veda tradition describes the great saying 'Tattwamasi' in great detail in its Canto 6, sections 1-16 with numerous examples when Uddyalak, son of Aruni, taught this great axiomatic maxim of the Vedas to his son Shwetketu. It winds up the exposition with the final declaration of 'Tattwamasi', 'that art thou', in verse no. 3, section 16 of Canto 6.

In this Canto of the Chandogya Upanishad, the learned father, the great sage named Uddalak, teaches his son Shwetketu about the truth and reality of the divine and sublime entity known as the Atma, the pure consciousness that resides in the bosom of all living beings as their 'true self'. Verse nos. 1-2 prepares the ground for the final conclusion that is known as the Mahavakya which is enunciated in verse no. 3. We will now read all these three verses to derive the best benefit from them.]

"Canto 6, verse no. 1—[Shwetketu's father Uddalak explained to his son with the example of a thief—] 'Oh gentleman! A person suspected of theft is shackled and brought by royal guards to court officials for punishment. They say, 'Heat the axe; he has committed the crime of theft'. If that accused has actually done the crime and tries to conceal his misdeed by telling lies, then he dies when the hot axe touches him (1).

"Canto 6, verse no. 2—If the accusation is false and the man is not a thief, he remains unscathed when touched by the heated axe, thereby proving his innocence. He covers himself with the 'armour of truth' and catches hold of the axe without any fear of getting burnt. He remains unharmed. When he is not hurt or burnt by the red-hot axe, he is released and allowed to go scot-free as being innocent (2).

"Canto 6, verse no. 3—Even as that truthful man isn't scarred in the least and remains unharmed by that red hot iron axe, a wise, erudite, scholarly, sagacious and learned man too obtains liberation and deliverance, emancipation and salvation from the cycle of transmigration once he has attained or realised the supreme, essential, sublime and subtle element called the universal Truth and Reality. This whole world is an embodiment of that eliminatory Truth. Or in other words, the whole world has that supreme, fundamental Truth pervading throughout it uniformly. [That is, if the Truth or Brahm is removed from the world, nothing is left behind. Whatever is left is the 'non-truth' which is synonymous with illusions, falsehoods and deceptions, for the essence is 'not what is the apparent' but that 'which is not apparent'!] That essence and truth and reality is the Atma or soul (), and that is you, oh Shwetketu'.

Shwetketu was finally enlightened. He said jubilantly in exultation and full of felicity, 'I have realised that essence; I have come to know about that essence; I have become realised and enlightened about the Truth' (3).

2(B)(ii) Sanyas Upanishad, Canto 2, verse no. 48:--

“Canto 2, verse no. 48—I am an image and a manifestation of that supreme entity, and am beyond alternatives, doubts and confusions. I am ‘that’, and ‘that’ is also ‘me’. [That is, I and the supreme Brahm are the one and the same; there is no duality between us; we are one and uniform.]

I pay my obeisance and respect to my pure and true self. You and I are infinite and endless; you and I or Me are both eternal and infinite, enlightened and conscious ‘souls’ called ‘Chidaatma’. [Here ‘you’ refers to ‘Brahm’, and ‘I’ or ‘me’ to the pure consciousness residing in the inner-self as the Atma, the soul, the true self of the enlightened person.] Honour and respect to both of us (48).”

2(B)(iii) Yogchudamani Upanishad, verse nos. 82-83:--

[“Tat”—that; “Twam”—you. That is, the supreme Truth is your own ‘self’, the pure consciousness that resides in one’s inner-self as the Atma, the Soul, and the divine Spirit.]

“Verse nos. 82-83— The ‘Hans’ (literally meaning a divine Swan) resides gloriously and majestically in the center of the 2 eyes of a creature during the waking state of consciousness, known as the Jagrat state. The letter ‘Sa’ of the Hindi/Sanskrit alphabet represents the ‘Khechari Mudra’ of the Yogi which is certainly the personification or the image of the word ‘Twam’ (82).

The letter ‘Ha’ of the word Hans represents the supreme Lord of creation, called ‘Parmeshwar’ which is certainly symbolized or represented by the word ‘Tat’. [That is, the two syllables of the word ‘Hans’, meaning the divine swan, are ‘Han’ and ‘Sa’ which stand for the two words of metaphysics which have profound impact—the 2nd word is ‘Twam’ and the 1st is ‘Tat’ corresponding to these two syllables respectively. See note below.] Any person who concentrates his mind and attention, and contemplates and meditates upon the letter ‘Sa’ shall surely become akin to, or equivalent to the form or the image represented by the letter ‘Ha’. This is called contemplating upon and practicing of the twin tenets of ‘So-a-ham’ and ‘Tattwa-masi’ (83) [82-83].

[Note :- The Upanishadic sage establishes uniformity and oneness with the two great philosophies and metaphysical concepts of the scriptures — ‘So-a-ham’ which means ‘that is me’, and ‘Tattwa-masi’ which means ‘the essence is pure consciousness and it is me’. The word ‘that’ refers to Brahm which is the universal and absolute Truth and Reality about the existence, and has the qualities, inter alia, of enlightenment, of being eternal, omnipotent, universal, omnipresent, immanent, omniscient etc.. When the seeker/aspirant focuses his attention on the self represented by the letter ‘Sa’ (self) and the ‘Khechari Mudra’ (when he is unconscious of the external world and focuses his

attention on the glorious supreme entity present in the center of his eyebrows as described in previous verses pertaining to this Mudra), he realises the truth of the maxim 'So-a-ham'. When he opens his eyes of wisdom, the truth of the 2nd tenet 'Tattwa-masi' dawns on him. Put simply, it means that the creature realises that 'he is the same as the supreme Brahm who resides in his Atma/soul present in his bosom/heart'. At the same time, 'the external world seen through this eye of wisdom symbolized by the presence of the divine swan in his eyes is the same Brahm who has revealed himself in this multifarious, diverse and myriad world'. This is the essential truth, or 'Tattwa'.]

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Section 2(C)

Mahavakyas of the Shukla Yajur Veda Upanishads

2(C)(i) Paingal Upanishad, Canto 3, verse no. 2-5, and Canto 4, verse nos. 23-28:--

Now let us see what this Upanishad says in connection with the Mahavakyas.

“Canto 3, verse no. 2—‘The great sayings, or the universal spiritual Truths, known as the Mahavakyas are the following—(a) ‘Tattwamasi’—that essence or Tattva is you; (b) ‘Twam-Tadasi’—you are that; (c) ‘Twam-Brahmaasi’—thou art Brahm; and (d) ‘Aham-Brahmaasmi’—I am Brahm. One should research and contemplate upon them; one should constantly ponder upon them (2).

“Canto 3, verse no. 3—In the great saying ‘Tattwamasi’, the two letters of the word ‘Tat’ are indicative of the omniscient and all-knowing glorious virtues of Brahm, are empowered with the stupendous glories of Maya (the delusion creating powers of Brahm), and are indicative of the other characteristic virtues of Brahm as being eternally blissful and being the cosmic womb or incubator in which the whole cosmos was conceived and developed (i.e. the divine entity which is the cause of all creation, in which the entire cosmos was envisioned and conceived, where it was nourished and sustained, and from where it finally emerged in the form as it is known now). This word ‘Tat’ is therefore indicative of the supreme, transcendental, eclectic and divine entity known as Brahm who is ‘Avyakta’, i.e. one who is without any manifest and visible attributes, one who is invisible and indefinable, and one who cannot be comprehended and visualised.

When that all-pervading and ubiquitous but invisible supreme Lord assumes different forms by residing in the bosom of individual creatures of infinite variety as their inner self, then he appears to be in different forms according to the body of the creature in which he has taken up his residence. Therefore, to identify that Brahm in the individual creature the word ‘Twam’ is used. In other words, this word Twam, meaning ‘you’ is indicative of the fact that the truthful person who is being addressed is not the external body of the individual creature whom the ignorant world regards as the identity of the creature, but the ‘real self’ of the creature which is its truthful identity, and this identity is Brahm. In other words, the address ‘Twam’ (you) refers to ‘Tat’ (Brahm) that resides in the creature and forms his true identity.

[The creature looks apparently different from the cosmic entity; the creature has its own limitations that are not applicable to the almighty Lord. Therefore, when the Lord assumed the form of a creature, it created an illusion of two different entities having separate existence. But this is basically a misconception based on ignorance.]

When Brahm is separated from its misleading title of Maya (deluding power) which causes so much mischief and fraud, and the creature is freed from its own misleading snare created by Avidya (ignorance), then the two words ‘Tat’ and ‘Twam’ indicate the

same supreme, immutable and universal truthful entity called Brahm which is non-separable from the living creature's Atma. In other words, the invisible Brahm which is the Atma of the cosmos is visible in the form of the creature whose Atma is that same Brahm. There is no difference between the two (3).

“Canto 3, verse no. 4—To discuss and hear about the meaning of the two great sayings ‘Tattwamasi’ (you are that essence) and ‘Aham Brahmaasmi’ (I am Brahm) is called Srawan, or to hear and pay attention to what is being said.

To research, deeply ponder upon, to reflect and think about, to contemplate and meditate upon the real meaning, profound significance and immense import of these great sayings while staying in a serene, lonely and secluded place so that there are no disturbances and proper attention can be paid to understand their meanings, as well as research their truth first hand so as to remove all doubts and confusions about them, is called Manan.

To firmly fix the mind and intellect on the conclusion arrived at after such deep research and ponderings is called Nidhidhyaasan. It refers to that situation when one repeatedly thinks about any subject and repeatedly comes to the same conclusion, without leaving any iota of doubt as to its veracity, truthfulness and authenticity.

When the intellect and mind rids themselves of their restless nature, when the tendency of the Chitta (the sub-conscious mind) become steady and focused on the object of contemplation and meditation just like the light of a lamp remains un-flickering and steady in the absence of wind, then that state is called Samadhi (4).

“Canto 3, verse no. 5—In that state of Samadhi, the various Vrittis (inherent tendencies of a creature), which are basically imaginations of the Atma based on the powers of memory of the mind, first appear and then gradually disappear. Countless deeds done by the creature in as many lives of the past, and their accumulated effects are burnt or annihilated during this state. [This is because the mind ceases to function, and the memory is a function of the mind. Once the memory is defunct, the creature sincerely does not remember its past, and as such it does not worry about what unfulfilled tasks are left for it to do in the present, and neither does it worry about the impending punishments and misfortunes that howl at him due to its past misdeeds. This situation gives the creature peace of heart and soul.]

In due course of time, when diligent practice makes the seeker mature in his spiritual pursuits, he experiences a spray of bliss showering upon him like rain water. That is why those who are expert in practicing Samadhi call it ‘Dharma Megh’, or the rain of righteous and auspicious feeling or being.

It is due to the good effects of Samadhi that all the bad effects of the various Vasanas (worldly desires, passions, yearnings and greed) are annihilated. All types of effects of deeds—whether good or bad—are completely destroyed from their roots. [That is, the seeker becomes neutral; he reverts back to his original status that existed before he had allowed himself to get trapped in the web of deeds by erroneously thinking that ‘he’ was the doer of those deeds, and therefore was entitled to enjoy their fruits. He forgets that his true self is the Atma and not the body that was doing any deed. This fallacious thinking is at the root of all his worldly problems. All creatures have a natural affinity for comfort zones and they seek things that give them pleasure, happiness and joy of the

senses. That is the primary reason why the creature had turned towards this material world in the first place. But now during the state of Samadhi, he finds that the bliss which he gets here is more enduring and of a higher quality than the one he got from remaining involved with the world. This is because the happiness got out from the world had its own set of problems besides being temporary, while the bliss that is obtained during Samadhi gives a sooth massage to the Atma and provides for a long lasting and enduring bliss. Having tasted something better, the creature would lose all interests in the world and its illusive charms. In other words, his Vasanas would be trounced.]

With this enlightenment, what was understood theoretically earlier in relation with the saying ‘Tattwamasi’ (you are that) is now realised first hand. That is, now the seeker understands the true import of this statement; he realises that the word ‘that’ which refers to the ultimate Truth of creation which is pure conscious Atma or Soul known as Brahm is the same as the one that resides in his own bosom. And therefore all the grand and honourable epithets, the glorious virtues and benefits which are applicable to ‘that’ (i.e. Brahm) are also applicable to him (i.e. ‘you’). This profound realisation or awakening makes him truly liberated even while he is alive and has a physical body with which he interacts with the world in an ordinary way—a state called ‘Jivan Mukti’¹ (5).

[Note—¹As a *Jivan Mukta* person who is freed from the fetters of ignorance while he is alive, now his views have undergone a sea change; now he does everything with dispassion and detachment; now he treats everything as Brahm and each deed as an offering to that Brahm; now he realizes that it is his body which is doing the deed and not his Atma, his pure self, and therefore he does not get mentally or emotionally involved in them so much so that he is blessed with the great qualities of equanimity, equality and forbearance, being equal and tolerant towards all, treating any circumstance on its merit and not judging it with any vested interests at work, and becoming an exemplary benchmark of righteousness and auspiciousness. This lends a selfless, holy and pious dimension to anything that he does. All his actions become one big holy sacrifice and a play of Dharma (something that is righteous and auspicious; that is noble and proper).

The word “Jivan” means ‘life’ and “Mukti” means ‘freedom and liberation’. A person who has the grand, noble, righteous and virtuous characteristics as well as is enlightened and self-realized about the ultimate truth of this creation becomes totally detached from this artificial, mundane and illusionary world even while he physically lives in it, has a body, and goes about his routine duties and chores and does his assigned jobs in this world. But with erudition and truthful knowledge he has realised the futility of this world, and therefore he remains completely dispassionate and detached from it just like a dew drop lying on the petal of a lotus flower. He does not get the least agitated or affected or passionate by any set of circumstances, whether adverse or favourable. He remains aloof and unruffled. That is being equivalent to becoming free from all the mental, emotional and physical uneasiness created by the turmoil of this world. It is deemed that such a person has obtained virtual deliverance from the shackles of this entrapping world, a condition called ‘being emancipated and delivered while still alive’; this phrase explains what constitutes Jivan Mukti.

The Jivan Mukti state refers to freedom from being mentally engrossed in this delusory and artificial world and becoming free from the shackles that tie a person to the cycle of transmigration in this world while he still physically lives in it and carries out his assigned and designated duties and works with dispassion and detachment. This enables

the creature to be free from any mental bondage that tie it to the ensnaring world; it is tantamount to be liberated from the shackles of this world while still living in the world with a body and going about one's daily chores in a routine manner. After all, the very existence of the world is due to the mind; if the mind does not think that the world has any relevance, then it loses all pertinence and relevance for the creature.

It would be relevant to point out here that without the control of the Mana (mind) and Indris (sense organs) it is practically impossible to dissociate oneself from the world. The mind and the sense organs of a man are inherently very restless. Their control is called 'Nigraha'. The word 'control' implies that both of them are reined in and prevented from recklessly following their usual sense objects of the material world, seeking comfort and pleasure from them. To do this we have to set a goal, and then focus them on these goals, for then, their energy and agility would be diverted towards that goal. For this purpose the goal would be spiritual and that would mean self knowledge and self realization. Once this spiritual goal is set, the Ahankar or self esteem, pride and ego inherent in a man will take care of the rest—for now he would do his best not to fail in his endeavour which he has set for himself by himself. A focused mind and sense would help the man to control them, for now they would find no time and energy to go berserk and have to live up to their expectations.

Another method is to focus the mind on one thing at a time—and this time it is self knowledge. Once the mind is focused on this target, it would try to find out how to achieve it, and then actually implement that method.

These methods are positive and are more helpful as compared to methods used to suppress the mind and sense organs, because then they would feel like being trapped under duress and would try to break free at the first opportunity, creating greater distress to the seeker.]

“Canto 4, verse no. 23—A wise and erudite man must understand that the ‘truth’ is imperishable, and that one should always strive to have access to the truth as well as to things which are imperishable and eternal (as opposed to things that are false, transient and perishable). A man’s life is short, transient and mortal; he does not have the luxury to spend endless time in reading voluminous scriptures, or to first try out all the other things before embarking upon the search of truth. Being short of time, he should not fritter it away, but whole heartedly pursue the ‘imperishable truth’, called ‘Akshar’¹.”

This Akshar is Brahm. Therefore, he should not allow himself to be entangled in the endless web weaved by myriad versions and interpretations of the same ‘truth’ as described in the numerous scriptures and their branches, but instead concentrate his mind and energy on the underlying fundamental principle expounded by all of them. This basic principle of all spiritual and metaphysical teaching is what is known as Akshar—i.e. the imperishable and eternal Truth known as Brahm. This Brahm is the Principal Authority of creation This is the only thing or knowledge that is worthy of being pursued, honoured and praised by all spiritual aspirants. The rest is a waste of time and energy (23).

[Note—¹There is a clever play upon words here. The word “Akshar” means (a) the alphabet or the letter, and (b) something that does not decay, diminish and perish. The scriptures are written words, but who would read them and preserve them when the human race would be no longer here one day! A man’s life is transient and mortal; he is not certain of the next moment. So this verse basically emphasises that it is futile

pursuing and getting too obsessed about anything consisting of letters that is itself perishable in due course of time. Life is a short affair, the scriptures are vast and fathomless, and so if one wishes to master them all in one life then it is just impossible. Further, the main goal of these scriptures is to make a man realise the truth; their main aim is to show him the light of spiritual wisdom, to inculcate in him noble virtues and auspicious qualities that would make him a real human and not an animal in the guise of a man. For it must be understood that the scriptures and their letters are not meant for animals for the obvious and simple reason that animals don't read!

So this verse advises mankind to concentrate its energy in pursuance of what is the truth, and not to get mired in literary debates and one-upmanship, trying to brag one's scholarship and scriptural knowledge if he is not able to actually implement them in practice in his own life. In fact, this 'implementation' aspect is of greater importance than simple literary knowledge. For example, what good is a medical book telling the actual truth of a disease and its cure if the doctor who is supposed to know this book backwards and forwards and be an expert in this book is not able to deliver to the patient, or even follow the regimen of good diet himself?

The knowledge contained in the scriptures is about the supreme Truth which is indeed imperishable. So one is advised to concentrate upon researching this 'truth' instead of wasting his time in reading about this truth again and again in numerous scriptural texts if even one has the potential to tell him about it!

These observations should be taken in the correct perspective. They are being addressed to a 'wise and enlightened person' who is expected to have realised the truth but fails to do so. It is to guide him that this verse is intended. This does not mean that one should not study the scriptures, or that one should throw the scriptures to the winds, or insult them in any way; no never in the least. This study should be continued till the time one does not get sufficiently knowledgeable about the Truth, but once that stage is achieved, then the scriptures would have served their purpose and now the time has come to implement that knowledge.]

“Canto 4, verse no. 24—Various righteous and religious duties and sacraments—such as doing ritualistic bathing, doing Japa (repetition of holy words or Mantras), doing Yagya (fire sacrifices and other religious activities), going on pilgrimage to holy sites, etc. are needed and useful only till the time the essential sought after objective is not achieved (24).

[Note--And what is that objective? It is the realization of the essential emancipation and salvation of the soul which translates into 'self-realization'. This is because once self is realized, then there is no need of the scriptures, there would be no need for these physical exercises as listed in this verse.]

“Canto 4, verse no. 25—‘I am Brahm’—this is the basic, truly spiritual notion, the fundamental premise for the liberation and deliverance of the soul of exalted people who are adroit, enlightened, erudite and wise.

‘This is mine’—this fallacious notion is the cause of all fetters that shackle a man. ‘This is not mine’—this notion, on the other hand, is liberating and delivering for the soul of the man (25).

“Canto 4, verse no. 26—The notion of ‘this belongs to me’ puts a man in the snare that ties him to this deluding world of perishable material things, while ‘this is not mine’ sets him free from it; he is liberated from all worldly bondages¹. When the mind, intellect and the heart become indifferent to such notions, then the view of ‘duality’ vanishes²; everything becomes reduced to one and same immutable and indivisible essential entity that is the ultimate Truth (26).

[Note--¹This happens because when one thinks that a particular thing is his, he begins to worry about it, he becomes attached to it at an emotional level. This creates a bond between the two, thereby hooking the man to that thing which he begins to love. By and by he becomes so attached to it that he would weep if that thing is snatched away from him. He forgets what he has learnt from the study of the scriptures that the world and its objects are perishable, that all his relationships with the world and its objects are limited to the body and not his pure self, and therefore there is no cause for lamentations. On the contrary, a wise man must realise and understand that all these relations of the world that are established with the body are incidental for him due to fact that the soul is on its journey through this world riding in this body just like one rides a train or a motor vehicle. The body is only a temporary abode, a transit point for it. With this wisdom, all his illusionary attachments are dispelled.

²This happens because in such a situation everything becomes one for the man. Such a man has equanimity and evenness of thoughts and perceptions, and such dispassion is only possible when the man sees the same underlying ‘truth’ everywhere and in everything in existence. Further, wisdom and enlightenment kindles honest renunciation towards worldly things in him, and he begins to treat them all alike.]

“Canto 4, verse no. 27—When a person becomes dispassionate and detached from anything pertaining to this materialistic world and remains indifferent to them, it is only then that he can attain the supreme, transcendental state of realisation called the ‘Param Pad’, or literally the stature which is the most exalted and the pinnacle of spiritual attainment. When such a state is achieved, then wherever the Mana (mind and heart) goes, wherever the mind fixes its self and the heart finds peace for its self, that place is the Param Pad for the person. [That is, during such a state of existence, wherever the man stays, in whichever state he lives, whatever he thinks, anything he does—all become equivalent to being in a state of eternal peace and bliss. None of them cause any restlessness in a self-realised person’s mind and heart; he always remains unruffled and unaffected; he treats everything and every circumstance with equanimity and equality. Refer verse nos. 7-8 in this context.] (27).

“Canto 4, verse no. 28—The supreme transcendental Brahm is established here, there and everywhere. A person who does not realise the profound truth of the statement ‘I am Brahm’ is not able to find liberation and deliverance, emancipation and salvation in the true sense. All his efforts go in vain just like a person who is trying to punch the sky with a clinched fist, or a hungry person who tries to beat empty husk to extract rice grains from it. (28).

[Note—There is no use to vent one’s anger at the sky by punching it, for it is sheer madness to do so for no one can punch against a vacant space to cause harm to it. Similarly, what is the sense of beating dry and harmless husk with the intention of getting rice grains from it because the grain has already been taken out from that husk. So a person who does not realize the great implication of the tenet ‘I am Brahm’ spends his life searching that eternal Truth which is present inside his own bosom as his own illuminated Atma which is pure consciousness. If he is foolish enough to try to find that Brahm in those things of the illusionary world that are perishable instead of in his Atma which is imperishable, then he is like that fool who is vainly trying to punch the sky and trying to find rice in dried out and empty husk.]

2(C)(ii) Mandal Brahmin Upanishad, Brahman 2, section 2, verse no. 5; Brahman 2, section 4, verse no. 4; Brahman 3, section 1, verse no. 6; Brahman 3, section 2, verse no. 2:--

“Brahman 2, section 2, verse no. 5— To be steady and unwavering in one’s spiritual path (progress) is akin to doing circumambulation or circumnavigation of the worship altar, the sacrifice place and the deity. The eclectic notion of ‘So-A-Ham’, i.e. ‘that is me’ (or the supreme truth is me), is tantamount to bowing and offering obeisance to the worshipped deity.

[The self realized ascetic will never be haughty and arrogant when he makes this statement which is one the greatest truths propounded by the scriptures. When he says that he is that Supreme Being personified, he is actually only affirming that truth, and not boasting about himself. He is just stating that he has finally realized the truthful form of his own self. After all, the ultimate form of emancipation and salvation is when no distinction remains between the individual creature and the source from where the creature came from, i.e. the merger of the individual Atma of the creature with the supreme Atma of the creation, which is Brahm.]

“Brahman 2, section 4, verse no. 5—But now with the dawn of truthful realisation of the Atma, I am convinced that ‘I am only one’ (and all the forms that I had thought I had were actually not the correct description of my true self). All those different forms in which I had been were due to the different circumstances and states in which my body and its conscious level existed. In essence, I am only one and not changing; there was no other thing but ‘me’ or ‘I’. Once this wisdom and erudition dawns upon a creature, he begins to appreciate the truthfulness of the statement ‘I am the pure and non-dual Brahm’, as a result of which all notions of duality and differences of perceptions are dispelled for good.

“Brahman 3, section 1, verse no. 6—When the aspirant is initiated into the path of Brahm realisation through the great saying (truth) ‘Tattwa-masi’, and after he has realised the truthfulness of this saying through the process outlined above in these verses, he becomes firmly convinced of the fact that ‘I am indeed the eternal and infinite, pure and uncorrupt

Parmatmam or the supreme Soul of creation personified'. With this realisation, all distinctions are eroded; he becomes convinced of and firmly believes in the veracity of the fact that 'you are I' and 'I am you', i.e. there is no difference between you and me.

[This is because the same Atma resides in all the creatures as their essential consciousness, life and identity, and this Atma is a miniature personification of the supreme Atma of the entire creation. Since the basic factor, the underlying principle is the same in all the myriad forms in which this vast existence exists, the essential and unique identity and individuality of all the creatures is the one and the same; there is no duality and dichotomy. Since the creation is a varied manifestation of the same Brahm, it follows that the spiritual aspirant or the ascetic who has become convinced of the truth of the saying 'Tattva Masi' becomes himself a personification of Brahm as much as the other person standing in front of him. This is the great non-dual principal of Vedanta.]

This path which has no confusions and doubts leads to uninterrupted peace and bliss. When a spiritual aspirant finds this path, he feels fortunate and blessed, he feels accomplished and fulfilled, he gets the satisfaction of success that one gets in any noble and auspicious endeavour (6).

“Brahman 3, section 2, verse no. 2—‘The supreme transcendental Parmatma and the Atma of the individual is the same’—a wise and self-realised teacher who is teaching this principle to his disciple must also be a firm believer of what he is teaching or preaching. Therefore, the Purush present in the ‘Aditya Mandal’ (here referring to the divine Spirit who was preaching Yagyavalkya in the form of the Purush present in the splendorous disc of the Sun) embraced sage Yagyavalkya as he proclaimed—‘You are me!’”

[This statement is the other way of saying 'I am Brahm' or 'I am you' with the only difference that here the Supreme Being is addressing the individual creature with this truthful statement instead of the other way round. This verse indicates that the glory of the Lord descended from heaven in the form of a splendorous and radiant halo of light and enveloped sage Yagyavalkya as he stood in a meditative posture in rapt attention, listening to the disembodied voice of Brahm preaching him the tenets of this revealed Upanishad. This divine shaft of spiritual energy virtually came and rested upon the sage, zapping him so that for a moment he must have felt as if he was struck by some high-voltage eclectic discharge from heaven. The result was that now sage Yagyavalkya himself acquired that high-powered divine and mystical energy as well as was charged by the 'spirit of the Purush' who had descended from heaven and symbolically entered Yagyavalkya just like a discharge of lightening that streaks down from the clouds and vanishes in the earth below.]

2(C)(iii) Adhyatma Upanishad, verse nos. 2, 10, 30-31:--

[The *Adhyatma Upanishad* of the Shukla Yajur Veda tradition, in its verse nos. 2, 10 describe the great saying 'So-a-Ham', i.e. 'that essence is me', and in verse nos. 30-31 describe the other great saying 'Tattwamasi', i.e. 'that essence is you'.]

“Verse no. 2—A wise seeker should endeavour to know about himself, about his truthful identity which is the Atma. He should experience and witness and perceive its sublime presence first hand. This Atma is only a witness to what the intelligence does and what the various Vrittis (inherent tendencies, inclinations, temperaments and nature) of a creature inspires it to do. [That is, an enlightened and wise person is one who understands instinctively that his Atma or soul or the ethereal spirit is his ‘true self’, that the Atma does not actively participate in the deeds and actions of the gross body that it does under the instructions of the mind tampered and conditioned by the various ‘Vrittis’ inherent to a creature.]

‘That Atma is me’—being firmly convinced of this supreme axiomatic tenet of the holy Vedas, he should disassociate himself from all material objects of the artificial and deluding world, and concentrate his energy on his ‘true conscious self’, which is the Atma [2].

“Verse no. 10— Oh the righteous, auspicious and sinless one! Just like the case when one can see the large scene of a city as a reflection in a mirror held in the hand, you should endeavour to see your ‘true self’ as the reflection of the supreme Brahm (in the mirror of your intellect held in the hand of your wisdom and enlightenment). This divine and ethereal view would make you feel overwhelmed with contentment and fulfillment. [10].

“Verse no. 30— The supreme entity that has a mysterious form and which is a maverick player that can assume any form or shape it wishes, and hence is honoured by the title of ‘Maya personified’, the entity that is the cause of this entire creation and nourishes it in its womb, the entity that has the virtue of being, inter alia, omniscient and all knowing as well as being omnipresent and all pervading, the entity that is cognizable and apparent everywhere, is evidently almighty, strong, potent and powerful, and the entity which is unequivocally truthful and absolutely real—such an exalted and unique entity is identified by the general word ‘Tat’ or ‘that is’ or ‘it is’¹. (This entity is known as Brahm.) [30].

[Note—¹The word *is* indicates the assertive presence of an entity which is attempted to be described by using such attributive words as Maya personified, the cause of creation, omniscient and omnipresent, almighty, truthful and real etc. The word *it* indicates a neuter gender, for that supreme entity has no gender. It is an abstract entity, an intangible and neutral entity which is difficult to understand and comprehend by the mind and intellect complex. “It” indicates the entity which is the object of spiritual quest as well as the subject matter of scriptural study; “is” implies that it is not hypothetical or imaginary, but real and true, and *that* points to the entity about which the Upanishads are talking about, the entity which is supreme and the object of all spiritual pursuit, i.e. ‘Brahm’ which is the universal Consciousness and the very essence of life and existence. “That” Brahm is the Supreme Entity which possesses all the glorious virtues enumerated by all the scriptures, and is beyond the purview of the mind and intellect to grasp. Actually, that transcendental Supreme Being is nothing but the cosmic Consciousness that has no defining names and attributes and forms. Brahm is all-pervading and all-encompassing, it is the absolute truth that cannot be denied because one cannot comprehend or analyze it.

Hence, Brahm is the Truth that can only be accepted as a matter of fact and truth, a matter of belief, faith and conviction.]

“Verse no. 31—The phrase ‘It is me’ is meant to indicate the presence of that supreme entity (as described in verse no. 30, and which is known as the universal Truth called Brahm in the shape of pure consciousness that pervades throughout the length and breadth of the entire creation) in the bosom of the individual creature, but without proper enlightenment and erudition this may appear to be a lopsided notion, creating an erroneous (and often times haughty) perception of what actually constitutes the ‘self’. On the other hand, when true enlightenment dawns about the presence of that supreme all-pervading entity in the inner self of the creature, marking its ‘true self’ or ‘truthful identity’, it is only then that the real meaning of the term ‘Twam’, or ‘that is you’, is made known to the spiritual aspirant [31].

[Note—In simple terms it means that when a creature identifies himself using the words ‘I’ and ‘me’, which are first person pronouns, he has a wrong notion about himself, for in this case he thinks that his gross body is his true self, his own self. Even in the case when he is better evolved in wisdom and says ‘my soul or Atma’ is ‘me’, he is again wrong, because the word ‘me’ entails some vestige of pride and ego of being of some importance, having some identity indicated by an entity identified as ‘me’. On the contrary, the correct description would be to use the second person pronoun ‘you’, because the Atma is an image of Brahm, and the same Atma also resides in the other person whom one calls ‘you’ and not ‘me’. To address one’s own self as ‘you’ sounds ridiculous and absurd from worldly perspective, but that is the truthful recognition of the self; the true self is Brahm, and that Brahm is also the true identity of the other person. This is true renunciation when the aspirant seeker loses attachment with even his own self, even his own body and becomes as humble as to regard himself as of no consequence and compared to the other person. When a man does not even consider himself as his own, how can he ever regard the outside world as belonging to him! Aside of this, ‘Twam’ tells him that the supreme Brahm is residing in his own bosom and so he be careful in all his thoughts and emotions, in his deeds and behaviour, as the almighty Lord is closely monitoring him from up close.]

2(C)(iv) Subaal Upanishad, Section/Canto 6, verse nos. 2-7:--

“Verse no. 2—The eyes, the faculty of sight, and the object of sight (the things that are seen by the eyes) are Narayan¹. Similarly, the ear, the faculty of hearing, and the things that are heard are all a revelation of the same Narayan. The nose, the faculty of smell, and the things that are smelt are all the different manifestations of Narayan. The tongue, the faculty of taste, and the things tasted are nothing but Narayan. The skin, the faculty of touch and feeling, and the things felt are all Narayan. The mind, the faculty of thought, and the things thought about are all Narayan. The intellect, the faculty of reasoning, intelligence and discrimination, and the object of the application of these faculties are all Narayan.

Likewise, the inherent quality known as Ahankar (pride and ego; vanity, arrogance and haughtiness), the trait of having Ahankar, and the objects and things that cause or create the element of Ahankar in a creature—all are nothing but Narayan in this form.

Chitta (the faculty of reasoning and thought, the conscious intellect, the powers of discrimination, understanding, paying attention, memorizing, and the ability to recollect and store information that are characteristics of the conscious powers exhibited by the mind and intellect apparatus, the sub-conscious and memory; the ability to concentrate and focus the mind on anything), the stupendous and magnificent powers that are exhibited by Chitta, and the object of application of Chitta—all are manifestations of the same Narayan.

Speech, the faculty that controls speech, the words spoken, and that which is the subject matter of speech, they are all Narayan. Similarly, the hands, the ability of the hands to hold anything, and the objects that are held by the hands—are all Narayan. The legs, the powers of the legs to move, and the places the legs visit—all are the different manifestations of the same Narayan. The anus, the power to expel, and the matter expelled are all Narayan. The genitals, the powers to recreate, and the bliss and ecstasy obtained by their use are all revelations of the same Narayan.

Verily, Narayan is the bearer, sustainer and nourisher (called ‘Dhata’), he is the one who determines destiny (hence is called ‘Vidhata’), he is the doer of all things and taker of all actions (hence called a ‘Karta’), he is the specialist and expert of all deeds done and actions taken in the world (hence called ‘Vikarta’), and he is the only majestic, glorious, magnificent and splendorous, supreme divine entity which is the one of its kind and most exalted [2].

[Note—(i)¹This is because that sublime, transcendental entity was the supreme Authority, called Narayan here, was the one from whom the rest of the creation came into being. Rather, it would be more appropriate to say that that supreme, sublime and subtle force of creation revealed itself into myriad forms while exercising control over each revelation by holding the reins in its own hand. And how was it made possible? That primary force known as Narayan subtly and imperceptibly injected himself as the Atma of every thing that was created. This Atma was the life and the vitality of all that came into being; it represented consciousness that is inherent in every life form that exists. This same Atma assumed different roles and performed different jobs depending upon the needs of the circumstances. For example, when the need arose to see, it assumed the form of the eye, and the faculty of sight that would enable the inert instrument of the eye to see and make a sense of what was being seen. At the same time, since everything is the Atma, the thing that the eye sees is also one of the various forms of the Atma.

This leads us to a very interesting conclusion—it is the Atma (in the form of the consciousness and the faculty of sight having its controlling centre in the brain) that sees its own self (as the object that is seen) by its own self (as the instrument of the eye). This applies to all the other organs and virtues that are mentioned in this verse.

The word *Narayan* is used in the Purans to mean Lord Vishnu from whose forehead Lord Shiva was said to be created, while Brahma the creator emerged atop a divine lotus that sprouted from Vishnu’s navel. This Brahma created the Vedas and the rest of the visible creation. According to this lore, Vishnu is the father of both Shiva and

Brahma. Vishnu is also depicted as the sustainer and nourisher and protector of the creation created by Brahma. According to the Upanishadic lore, he is the Viraat Purush, which means that he is the sum-total of all the gross bodies in this creation. Simply put it means that the Viraat incorporates in his body all the gross forms that this creation has taken. In other words, Lord Vishnu as Viraat represents at the macro level what the individual creature is at the micro level.

(2) This verse essentially says that all forms of creation, the gross as well as the subtle, the microcosm as well as the macrocosm, the lowly as well as the high, the good as well as the bad—in fact everything without exception is a revelation of the one and the same Brahm or Atma known as Narayan. This is the non-dual view of creation and the world. See also canto 7, verse no.1 in this context.]

“Verse no. 3—Aditya (the Sun God), Rudra (Lord Shiva; the angry form of God who oversees the conclusion of the creation), Vayu (the Wind God), Vasu (the patron God of worldly assets needed to sustain normal life in the world), and Ashwini Kumars (the twin sons of the Sun God who are regarded as the physician of the Gods), the three Vedas—the Rig, the Yajur and the Sam along with their hymns called Mantras, Agni (the Fire God), and the offering of Ghee or clarified butter that is made to the sacred fire—all of them are the same Narayan in different forms.

It is from this Narayan that everything that exists has risen. He is radiant and splendid, stupendous and magnificent, divine and sublime, eclectic and ethereal. He is one and the only one. He is one and the only Lord. [3]

“Verse no. 4—Narayan is the mother, he is the father, he is the brother, he is the dwelling for the creature and the rest of the creation; he is the solace and the succour, the reprieve and the relief, and he is the friend as well as the destination or final resting place for the creature and the rest of the creation. [4]

“Verse no. 5—There are many Naadis (veins and nerves) in the body, and it is the radiant and glorious Narayan who has revealed himself as the consciousness, the vital spark of life which flows and vibrates through these Naadis. Some of the names of these magnificent and glorious Naadis are the following—Viraja, Sudarshan, Jita, Somya, Amogha, Kumara, Amrita, Satya, Madhyama, Nasira, Shishura, Asura, Surya, and Bhaswati. [5]

[Note—The consciousness that keeps the Naadis alive and active is the supreme force called Narayan. Earlier, canto 5 has asserted that it is the Atma that flows and empowers these Naadis; it is the Atma that is their prime energy and life giving and sustaining vital force or factor. Now this verse says that it is Narayan. Therefore we deduce that Atma and Narayan are synonymous and one and the same entity having two names. While Atma is basically a term preferred by the Upanishads, Narayan is preferred by the Purans.

This canto has a great significance in as much as it establishes a bridge between the Upanishads and the Purans; it establishes the non-duality of Brahm. It unequivocally shows that the scriptures talk about the same entity when they refer to ‘the supreme and transcendental One’, though the terminology used to refer to that ‘One’ differs from text to text.]

“Verse no. 6—That which thunders and rumbles (in the clouds), that which sings or is sung (e.g. the hymns of the Vedas that are recited by scholars), that which flows or blows (e.g. the water and the wind), that which falls (as rain), that which takes the form of Varun (the patron God of water), that which takes the form of Arayama (i.e. the Sun God), that which takes the form of Chandrama (the Moon God), that which takes the form of Kaal (the patron God of death; death and end of anything personified), that which takes the form of a Kavi (literally a poet, but here meaning one who is skilled with words and literature; hence the word refers to wise and scholarly people who are good orators and preachers as well), that which takes the form of a Dhata (a caretaker, sustainer, nourisher, mother), that which takes the form of Prajapati (the lord and master of the subjects of a kingdom; the king and guardian of people; here referring to the different celestial Gods who were assigned the duty to look after the subjects of Brahma’s creation), that which takes the form of Brahma (the 4-headed creator of the gross, visible world and the pronouncer of the Vedas), that which takes the form of Maghava (the Lord of clouds and rain; here referring to Indra, the king of Gods), that which takes the form of a Day and a Half-Day (i.e. a short period of time), that which takes the form of various Kalaas¹ (referring to the sixteen virtues and qualities present in a creature), that which takes the form of Kalpa (a long period of time; a sacred performance; a specific process of medical treatment or spiritual attainment; a manner to remove doubts), that which takes the form of higher and sacred aspect of anything, that which takes the form of various directions called ‘Dishaas’, and that which takes the form of the rest of everything else that exists—verily, all of them are nothing but Narayan. [That is, all the entities listed here are the various manifestations of the same immutable, ubiquitous, supreme and transcendental Authority known as Narayan.] [6]

“Verse no. 7—All that is happening now, or all that exists now in the present, all that had happened and existed in the past, and all that would happen and exist in the future—verily, they are all manifestations of the divine Purush. [The word Purush refers to the primary Male who is also known as the Viraat Purush as well as Vishnu.]

He is the supreme and transcendental Lord of the immortal world (i.e. the heaven). He is also the Lord of all the mortal creatures who sustain and develop themselves relying upon the strength provided by the food eaten by them (and as a natural corollary die in the want of food). [That is, the mortal creatures of the world have no strength of their own; they depend on food for survival and development; they perish when the food is not made available to them. This is not the case with the supreme Lord who is ‘eternal and self sustaining’.]

Wise, erudite and scholarly persons always focus their attention on the divine, eclectic, ethereal and glorious abode of Lord Vishnu that is radiant, bright and splendorous as the Sun.

The Sun is like the ‘celestial eye’ which helps the entire creation to ‘see’ with its bright light¹.

Those senior wise men who are never angry and spiteful, who always remain alert and careful, are able to experience and witness it (i.e. they can perceive that glorious heaven where the Viraat has his residence). That which they experience, witness and

realise as the supreme abode or destination of the soul is the divine and sublime abode of Lord Vishnu, and it is called the 'Param Pad'².

This is the profound tenet which describes the path of emancipation and salvation. This is the axiom and maxim postulated in the canons of the Vedas. This is their teaching. [7]

[Note--¹Here the *Sun* is used as a metaphor for the eye of the Viraat Purush, because the Sun lightens up the realm and enables all the creatures to see everything for themselves. The individual creature is a microcosm of the Viraat Purush. That is why the patron God of the eyes is the Sun God. When the creation came into being, the Sun God took up residence in the eye of the man to enable him to see the world around him. Even as the eye is the light of the body of a man at the micro level, the heavenly sun is the eye of the Viraat Purush at the macro level.

²This destination is the supreme state which a spiritual aspirant aspires to achieve. It is not any physical place known as 'heaven' as such, but it is a symbolic destination whereby the soul of the individual creature reaches the citadel of spiritualism where the soul becomes one with its primary source, the supreme cosmic Soul, by merging with it. This is its final destination, and is called emancipation and salvation. The devotee reaches the destination which he aspires for. For example, devotees of Vishnu find an abode where that Lord resides, and that abode is called Vaikunth. Those who worship Viraat Purush reach Brahma Loka. Those who worship Brahm also reach Brahma Loka, but this abode is a symbolic heaven, for the worshippers of Brahm, there is no return to this mundane world as they would have merged their souls with the cosmic Soul known as Brahm. An entire Upanishad is dedicated to Lord Narayan. It is called 'Narayano-panishad', and it belongs to the Krishna Yajur Veda tradition. Another Upanishad dedicated to this theme appears in the Atharva Veda, and it is called 'Tripadvibhut Maha-Narayan Upanishad'.]

2(C)(v) Ishavasya Upanishad, verse nos. 4-6:--

4. [The following verses enumerate the attributes or qualities which are special and exclusive to 'Ishwar'--] 'He' is stable, he is the only one, he has swiftness which surpasses the agility of the mind, he was present before anything came into being(existence), i.e. he existed in the beginning, he is an embodiment of Gyan (truthful knowledge, enlightenment, wisdom and erudition), he is all-pervading, omnipresent, omniscient and all-knowing, he is beyond the comprehension of even the Gods such as Indra etc., he can overtake others who are running fast even though he does run or move himself a bit, and it's by relying upon his powers and authority that the various Gods such as the Wind-God are successfully able to do deeds such as producing rain and enabling the mortal creature to have life, to live and bear the Pran (the spark of life and the vital winds that sustain life in a creature).[4]

[Note—“Ishwar” is the only authority worthy of adoration and reverence. He is the only one who can be worshipped. ‘There is no God but one God’, it essentially says. Then verse no. 3 warns about the hellish consequences for not heeding this advice. Now verse no. 4 to 8 expound upon the stupendously magnificent and glorious virtues and characteristics of that Lord. Some of the Upanishads of the Shukla Yajur Veda that elaborately describe some of the Lord’s virtues and glories are the following:--(a) Brihad Aranyaka Upanishad, chapter 2; (b) Subaal Upanishad, chapter 6; (c) Mantriko-panishad, chapter 7; (d) Niralamba Uanishad, chapter 8; and (e) Adhyatma Upanishad, chapter 15.]

5. He (the supreme Lord of the creation) walks or moves about at will anywhere he wishes, and at the same time, he does not walk or move about anywhere¹. He is further away from the farthest point, but at the same time, he is nearer than the nearest point at any given time². He pervades this whole cosmos or universe from within and without. He is present uniformly and universally inside the world, encompasses it or surrounds it from the outside, and is present even beyond its limit³. [5]

[Note—This verse is a typical example of the paradox presented by the creation—‘this as well as that; neither this nor that’. We find three sets of opposites here; now let us examine them one by one.

¹The Lord walks and does not walk at the same time—such a stupendous feat can be achieved by someone who has powers which are phenomenal, supernatural and beyond comprehension. This is the very reason that ‘Ishwar’ is called the ‘supreme Lord’ of all. There are certain divine characteristics, majestic authorities and supernatural and mystical powers that are exclusively possessed by him and no one else. This is the majesty and glory of him who is incomprehensible. These contradictions, though appearing to be outlandish on the surface, are indeed feasible, possible and verifiable even in our day to day life—for example, we have a magnet. Its south and north poles are diametrically opposite in their magnetic powers, but they co-exist in the same piece of magnet. Life and death, construction and destruction, night and day—all coexist in this world.

Another connotation of ‘moving and not moving’ is this—when the invisible and imperceptible Lord manifests himself as an incarnation on the earth, he moves around like an ordinary creature or a human being, but at the macro level, he remains serene, detached, tranquil, equanimous and quiet; he is unmoving and unwavering.

²Similarly, the supreme, transcendental Lord, though being all-pervading, omnipresent and immanent everywhere, is so miniscule and subtle that he cannot be perceived, seen or observed by non-believers, or by those who lack spiritual insight, or are not wise and enlightened enough. The same Lord can be easily perceived, experienced, witnessed, observed and realised by those who are wise and enlightened, as well as by his ordinary devotees who can realise the Lord by their tearful and earnest prayer. Also, since Brahm and Atma are one, and Atma resides in the bosom of every creature, the Lord is very near to all of us, while trying to measure him or know him by logic and debate is as futile as trying to drink the water of the whole ocean!

³The third mysterious attribute of the Lord is that he is present inside as well as outside. This is quite easy to understand if we take the example of an earthen pot. The space or air present inside the cavity of the pot is the same as the one outside it. The space also fills the minute pores of the pot. When the pot is broken, the two spaces merge indistinguishably with one another, leaving no trace of any earlier deceptive distinction that existed between the space present inside and outside the body of the pot. So is the essential case with Brahm or the supreme Lord. Since he is immanent, all-pervading and all-encompassing, he is present both within and without everything.

Further, this illustration also explains the above two attributes of the Lord—when we move the pot from one place to another, the space inside it also moves along, but the space outside remains where it was though there is no difference between the two spaces. Similarly, the space within the cavity of the pot is within our reach, but the space in the far corner of the atmosphere cannot be touched by our hands while standing on the surface of the earth, what to talk of the far reaches of the cosmos. So, Brahm is near as well as far from us, as it were.

The basic idea in this verse is the fact that man made logic and rationale cannot be made applicable to an entity that is beyond comprehension of the intellect of a mortal creature's thinking capabilities. No one should disregard the greatness of his father for the simple reason that had it not been for the father, the man would not have been here in the first place to question the greatness of the father! It is because of the father that a man is born. Similarly, it is because of the cosmic father that we are here to enjoy the world; we should not sweep this fact under the carpet in our enthusiasm to pretend to appear to be intelligent and rational in our thinking and outlook. We must realise that there is some stupendously powerful authority that governs all the physical forces of Nature. There is much to be learnt for us before we can say 'I know'. And when that knowledge dawns, there will be no need to teach 'who' and 'what' is Brahm; this is Brahm realisation and true enlightenment.]

6. Hence, once a person acquires wisdom and begins to constantly see all the individual creatures of the creation as being inherently and subtly present in a microcosmic form in the supreme, transcendental, macrocosmic divine Being (i.e. are able to visualise the invisible Brahm in the composite form of the visible world), and at the same time see that supreme Lord as being inherently present in a subtle form as an integral part of all the individual creatures (as their Atma), he never hates anyone or has any kind of ill-will, malice, jealousy and animosity with them.[6].

[Note—This is an obvious extension of what has been said in the previous verse nos.1 and 5. The supreme Lord, here represented by the Atma, is present everywhere; he pervades everything. That Lord revealed himself as the Atma of each and every part of creation. The entire creation is the Lord's body, while the Atma of each individual being is the microcosmic form of the macrocosmic Soul of the divine Lord. Upanishads have persistently emphasised the 'non-dual' nature of creation vis-à-vis the supreme Brahm. A wise, erudite, enlightened and self-realised man understands the import of the three fundamental principles—that the divine Atma is his true identity, that the same divine Atma which resides in him also resides uniformly in the rest of the creation, and that this Atma is the supreme, transcendental, glorious and almighty Brahm personified. Then it is

easy to infer the meaning of this verse—a man becomes jealous of others, but how can a man hate and be jealous of his own self, especially when he realises that his ‘self’ is not the body but the Atma which is a manifestation of the Lord. If that is the case, how can he logically be hateful and jealous of others when he has already realised the fact that the Atma living in him also lives in the other person; this makes the other person as dear to him as his own self.

The natural corollary of this holistic approach and eclectic perception of creation is freedom from fear, for from whom shall a man fear when he has no enemy, when all are alike for him, and when his love and generous behaviour has even made those who had any kind of ill will against him retrace their steps and refrain from harming one who is a friend of all.]

2(C)(vi) Brihad Aranyaka Upanishad, Canto 4, Brahman 4, Verse nos. 22, 24-25:--

22. [Like verse no. 5, this verse describes the glorious virtues and divine attributes of the supreme Atma.]

That stupendous, magnificent and majestic entity known as the enigmatic and divine Atma is most exalted and great, without a birth or a beginning, and is an embodiment or fount of knowledge, wisdom, erudition, sagacity and enlightenment.

It resides (or sleeps, reclines) in the subtle sky or space present in the heart, called the ‘Hridyakash’. It keeps everything that exists under its control and command, and is the unquestioned Lord and Master of all.

It neither gets any kind of further enhancement in its exalted stature by doing righteous and auspicious deeds, nor does it get demoted by doing any unrighteous and inauspicious deeds. [This is because it is never involved in doing any deed; it is the body that does them. The Atma is a neutral and dispassionate observer of everything being done in this world by the creature’s body.]

It is the supreme Lord of all living beings; it is their God (i.e. it is honoured, revered and worshipped by them), and it is their well wisher, protector and sustainer.

In order to maintain the balance between the various forces of Nature, to restrict the individual units of creation from going out of hand and becoming wayward, to maintain propriety and probity of thought and conduct, to enforce truthfulness, auspiciousness and righteousness in this creation, to maintain dignity, decorum, rank and status of all individual entities of this creation, to ensure that the creature can find a means to cross over from this mundane existence and reach its ultimate resting place with the supreme Brahm, to enable the supreme Authority (i.e. Brahm) to exercise its control and command over each individual creature of this creation, and to act as a medium between the individual and the Supreme Emperor of creation (i.e. Brahm), this Atma acts like a bridge.

[That is, the Atma, which is the pure consciousness residing in all living beings, helps to link the two ends of the creation, one end consisting of the mundane, mortal, artificial, deluding and perishable, and the other end consisting of the ethereal, sublime, truthful, imperishable and eternal. It enlightens the inner self of the creature and provides

it with bliss and happiness; it removes the cause of darkness which creates all the unhappiness and miseries for the creature.]

Brahmins, or those who are learned, erudite, sagacious and well versed about Brahm, come to know or realise this Brahm by studying the Vedas, by doing various fire sacrifices, by giving charities and alms, by doing selfless service, and by doing Tapa (i.e. by observing austerity, doing penances and living a life of rigour and sufferance) without any desires, hopes, expectations and yearnings. It is the awareness or knowledge or realisation of the Atma (as a personification of Truth and as a fount of eternal bliss and felicity which is synonymous with Brahm realisation) that elevates them to a higher stature of being a 'Muni' (i.e. a person who is pious and religious; a holy man; a saint, a hermit or an ascetic).

It is for this exalted stature which bestows eternity and blissfulness that truly renunciate people renounce everything in this world and accept the path of 'Sanyas' (which is the path of total renunciation and detachment from this mundane materialistic and perishable world of falsehoods and sorrows, and instead spending time in contemplation upon the Atma and meditation upon the pure self and the Truth). This is the reason that in ancient times, those who were self-realised, wise and learned never desired to have children or did any deed with any kind of expectation for favourable result; they were never attached to this mundane world of sense objects, and whatever they did was like an offering to the fire sacrifice, which ensured that their entire life became one big religious sacrament. They remained indifferent to their worldly activities which they did with total dispassion, thinking that the true fruit of any deed is obtaining eternal and truthful contentedness and happiness, and not that which is temporary and perishable. They had realised that what is perceived as happiness and joy in this materialistic world was actually an illusion like the presence of water in a desert mirage, and it is therefore futile wasting their energy and time pursuing it. Instead, they pursued the path leading to the ultimate Truth and Reality which would give eternal and everlasting peace, happiness and rest for their souls. They were enlightened and wise enough to realise that this world is perishable and non-eternal, and that their truthful identity is not this body but their pure conscious Atma or soul which by the way was a manifestation of the supreme Lord of this creation known as Brahm. With this erudition, they never felt the need to indulge in the false world and never felt inferior to anyone. Since the Atma is the same in all the living beings, they treated all with equanimity and equality, being full of compassion and love for everyone because each and every creature was a manifestation of Brahm in their view. They never thought themselves to be superior to others and therefore they never were arrogant, haughty, egoistic and unduly proud. Realising that Brahm, the supreme transcendental Authority of creation, is omnipresent and almighty, they desisted from anything unrighteous and inauspicious. Taken all in all, the life of such ancient people was marked by piety, humility, righteousness and auspiciousness—i.e. they were 'Dharma' personified.

They remained free from the three types of aspirations, ambitions, desires, yearnings, hopes and expectations that ordinary mortals are bogged down by—that pertaining to a son, that pertaining to wealth and property, and that pertaining to the world. Being freed from these fetters, they roamed around without any worries and attachments of any kind, subsisting on alms and begging for food just enough to carry their Atma in their body till its journey in this world is complete.

Attachments with the son creates attachment with money (because one wishes to provide comfort to his children, and money plays an all-important role in the comfortable maintenance of the family and its material well being), and this leads to the necessity of having some kind of favourable interaction with the world which can be conducive to the achievement of this goal (because money comes with commerce, industry or as a result of largesse from rich people, and for this a person must be social and friendly towards other people in this world, because if a man is not friendly towards others it would be difficult for him to accumulate wealth as not only would he be unsuccessful in business but he would also gather many enemies around him who would create hurdles in his financial growth).

Wise, erudite and learned people describe about the Atma using the words ‘Neti-Neti’ (i.e. not that not this), because it is something which transcends comprehension; it is beyond the grasp of intelligence and understanding. [Refer Canto 4, Brahmin 2, verse no. 4, and Canto 2, Brahmin 3, verse no. 6.]

The Atma desires no company and it is completely detached from everything; it is a perfect and dispassionate renunciate. It cannot be killed or harmed in any way. It has no fetters shackling it to anything. It is fully free and liberated. It is without any miseries, sufferings, torments and anguish. It is imperishable, infinite and eternal. It is capable of transcending both the righteous as well as the unrighteous (i.e. it is neutral and full of equanimity) because it does not get involved in doing anything, it never gets attached to any deed, whether righteous and unrighteous, and therefore it is not affected by the consequences of these deeds (22).

24. This great, majestic, magnificent and supreme Atma is the one which does not take birth, is the one entity that eats and digests food, and is the authority that gives rewards or punishments for the deeds done by a creature/person. A wise person who knows this Atma in the way described above is deemed to have successfully acquired the fruitful rewards of all deeds done by him (24).

[Note--This is because the ultimate aim of doing various auspicious deeds is to obtain some kind of comfort, happiness, joy and peace. Worldly happiness and peace which are limited to the body have no substance and permanence; it is the realisation of the absolute ‘truth’ about the actual ‘reality’ that gives a man permanent peace in this life, because the entity which is ‘realised’ is imperishable and eternal, and consequently the peace and bliss are also imperishable and eternal.

The Atma lives in the body that takes a birth. This happens because the creature had erroneously thought in its earlier body that the body in which it lived then was its true self instead of the Atma. This basic misconception led it to fall prey to the trap in which it got mentally and emotionally involved in the various deeds done by that body. Since every action has a reaction, the deeds also created their respective results which had to be borne by the ‘doer’ of those deeds. No one else suffers for the crime committed by an individual; he has to suffer the punishment himself. Likewise, when the Atma of the creature accepted that it had done deeds and therefore got entangled in them by voluntarily becoming their ‘doer’, it had to suffer from the consequences of those deeds. It had therefore to take a body to live out the results of those deeds. Further, when the creature was deluded into believing that the world was real, it developed numerous desires and yearnings pertaining to its materialistic comforts and pleasures, and not all

were successfully accomplished by it. So the creature assumed another body to complete its unfinished tasks or enjoy the world which it could not fully do in its previous birth. The Atma unwillingly becomes a part of this vicious game because it is the truthful identity of the creature. So, when realisation dawns upon the living being who it actually is, it distances itself from this world and the trap of falsehood so that it does not have to repeat the mistake of its previous life and come back again to suffer in this deluding world. This is the beneficial effect of self-realisation.

While residing in the body, the Atma of the creature does many deeds and eats food because the body does many deeds and eats food. But the realised and enlightened view is that this body is perishable and has taken a birth, while the Atma is imperishable and eternal and it neither takes a birth nor dies. Therefore, there is a difference between the entity that eats and does deeds but dies and the entity that eats and does deeds but does not die! Herein lies the great secret of liberation and self-realisation—contemplation and meditation and research reveals that the former is the perishable gross body which is the temporary habitat and identity of the creature, but its actual habitat and truthful identity is the Atma and not the body.

Therefore, it is the Atma residing in the body that actually empowers the body to eat, drink and do deeds, and therefore the food eaten, the liquid drunk and deed done are all meant for this Atma and not the body. Since the Atma is a personification of Brahm, who is the supreme authority in creation, it is the Brahm that awards the man for his good deeds and punishes him for his bad ones.

When this astounding awareness enlightens the inner self of the creature, it is deemed that it has done all the deeds—i.e. it has found complete contentedness and absolute fulfillment obtained by doing all deeds completely and successfully so much so that nothing more is left to be done.]

25. This supreme Atma is unborn and eternal; it does not become old and decrepit; it does not decay or die; it is a fount of bliss and eternity, called Amrit; it is fearless and without any consternations and perplexities. That which is fearless is indeed Brahm. A person who knows this becomes one like the fearless Brahm!’ (25).

[Note--The last verse shows how one can become fearless once he realises that the world is an image of his own Atma, and therefore he would have no enemy from whom to fear. He will have no ill-will against anybody, and he roams around freely, spreading love and compassion liberally for all. Naturally, such a man would be loved, honoured and respected by all, he would be welcomed everywhere, and naturally he would have no fear from any quarter. That is why ancient sages could live in dense forests amidst wild animals fearlessly because these animals had nothing to fear from them. In fact, the divine halo effusing from the holy bodies of these sages and seers glowed like a burning fire and it helped to keep the animals at bay.]

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Section 2(D)

Mahavakyas of the Krishna Yajur Veda Upanishads

2(D)(i) Shuk-Rahasya Upanishad, verse no. 22:--

“Verse no. 22— Now in this verse, the four great maxims and axioms of the Vedas, called the ‘Maha Vakyas’, or the great sayings which form their fundamental teaching and are the essence of their doctrines, are being enumerated. (1) ‘OM Pragyana Brahman’. [OM salutations! The truthful and pristine pure knowledge which is all-inclusive, most sublime and eclectic in nature is Brahman personified.] (2) ‘OM Aham Brahmasmi’. [OM salutations! Indeed, I am Brahman.] (3) ‘OM Tattwamasī’. [OM salutations! That Brahman is you; that Principal Absolute and essence is you; it is you; or ‘that art thou’.] (4) ‘OM Ayamātma Brahman’. [OM salutations! This Atma, the pure conscious soul or ‘self’ of the creature, is Brahman.]

Out of these profound statements, the word ‘Tattwamasī’ establishes the oneness between the individual creature and the cosmic supreme Brahman. It is the statement of great metaphysical import and spiritual significance as it establishes the doctrine of ‘non-duality’.

[It essentially states that whatever that exists in this living creation is an image of Brahman, it is a manifestation of Brahman, it is none but Brahman. When the spiritual aspirant sincerely understands the import of this eclectic statement, he exults in joyous abandon because he would have understood the essence of the teaching of the Vedas that proclaim unequivocally that the creature is a revealed form of Brahman that resides as the Atma or pure consciousness of the former. This Atma is the ‘true self’ of all living beings. Since the Atma is the same in all of them, and since this Atma is the cosmic Brahman in a microcosmic form, it follows that all the living beings are a personification of the same divine entity known as Brahman. This Brahman is one, non-dual, eternal, immutable and constant. The importance of this Maha Vakya ‘Tattwamasī’ has been elaborately elucidated in verse nos. 40-41 below.]

A wise, erudite and enlightened spiritual aspirant who meticulously contemplates and deeply meditates upon this one ‘Maha Vakya’ (Tattwamasī) and understands the profound metaphysical implication of its doctrine, obtains the grand and glorious reward of attaining the ‘Sayujya’ from of Mukti by becoming one with Lord Shiva.

[In other words, he becomes as wise, enlightened and self-realised as well as spiritually untainted, auspicious, holy and divine as the greatest God known as Lord Shiva who personifies these divine and glorious virtues all at once. The aspirant realises the non-dual, pristine pure conscious nature of his Atma which is the microcosmic form of the cosmic supreme transcendental Consciousness known as Brahman. Since this Atma is the true identity of the aspirant vis-à-vis the body, the uniformity, inseparability, indivisibility and oneness between him and the supreme Brahman is a forgone conclusion.] (22).”

2(D)(ii) Kaivalya Upanishad, verse nos. 16, 18-19:--

[Verse no. 16 of the Krishna Yajur Veda tradition, the Mahavakya is ‘That Brahm is you; you are it’.]

“Verse no. 16— That supreme transcendental absolute Brahm which is the pure conscious Atma of all the living creatures, that Brahm which is the fundamental basis of the entire world revolving around the principle theory of ‘cause and affect’, that Brahm which is most miniscule and atomic (i.e. which is extremely subtle and sublime, most imperceptible and most difficult to ascertain with certainty), that Brahm which is eternal, ever-present, infinite and most ancient—verily, that essential and fundamental entity in creation which is the foundation, the pillar, the support, the dwelling, the cause as well as the affect, the origin as well as the end of whatever that exists in this creation, both the visible as well as the invisible, is known as Brahm. That Brahm is you; you are it (16).

“Verse no. 18— There is something that is more quaint and extraordinary, that is most remarkable and exceptional, that is most stupendous and astounding and very dissimilar to what exists as the ‘Bhokta’ (one who enjoys or consumes), the ‘Bhogya’ (one that is the object of enjoyment and consumption), and ‘Bhog’ (the process of enjoying or suffering or consuming) in all these three states of existence of the deluded consciousness (i.e. the waking state, the dreaming state, and the deep sleep state).

That ‘something’, which is distinct and more magnificent than the rest, is known as ‘Sada-Shiva’—i.e. one that is eternally beautiful, eternally truthful, eternally wise and enlightened, and eternally peaceful and blissful. This astonishing and fascinating entity is the witness to all, i.e. it just watches the trio of Bhokta, Bhogya and Bhog as a neutral observer, but nothing can be hidden from this observer however. This entity is Consciousness personified (18).

“Verse no. 19—‘I am that supreme transcendental Brahm personified. Everything that exists has its origin in me (because Brahm is the cause of the origin of everything, and I am a living embodiment of Brahm—refer verse no. 16), everything is established in me (because I am the fundamental support and foundation and basis of all that exists in my manifestation as the macrocosmic Brahm—refer verse no. 17), and it is in me that everything collapses and vanishes at the time of its conclusion (because everything merges, at the time of conclusion, into Brahm from where they had originated at the time of creation—refer verse no. 14).

Verily, that non-dual, supreme and transcendental Brahm, the cosmic Soul and pure cosmic and universal Consciousness is none other than ‘me’ (19).

[Note—On the face of it these statements smack of arrogance, pride, haughtiness, hypocrisy and egotism. But it is not so because these are pronounced by a self-realised holy man who has distanced himself from all worldly praises and has renounced all his connections with this materialistic world. Therefore there is no question of making such haughty statement for self-praise in order to gain some material benefit. Rather, it’s a

spontaneous outburst of exultation at discovery of the grand Truth, much like Archimedes, the legendary Greek inventor and mathematician, running out of his bath, half naked, shouting ‘Eureka’ when he discovered the famous laws of buoyancy named ‘the Archimedes Principle’ after him.]

2(D)(iii) Sarwasaar Upanishad, verse no. 12-14:--

[‘Tat’ and ‘Twam’.]

“Verse no. 12—This divine, holy, sublime and eclectic entity known as the Antaryaami is the pure conscious Atma or soul of the creature. It is an embodiment of Satya (something that is an irrefutable and unequivocal truth), Gyan (knowledge in all its sublime connotations) and Anand (bliss and cheerfulness); it is devoid of all definable attributes, has no specific defining characteristics, and has no titles and epithets appended to it; it is not bound by any fetters or shackles symbolised by the bracelet or bangle or armlet or the metal ring fitted on the tusk of an elephant (called a ‘Katak’), and neither does it need any honour symbolised by a crown and a tiara (called a ‘Mukut’) worn by an emperor to establish its authority and sway.

In other words, it does not need extraneous appendages to prove its value, magnificence and authority much like pure gold which does not need extra titles to establish its importance and worth.

This Atma or Antaryaami is the richest treasury of Gyan (knowledge in all its glorious forms) as well as an embodiment of pure consciousness called Chaitanya (literally meaning an entity that perceives everything, is sensitive, observant, alert, cautious, attentive, wide awake, most rational, discriminating, intelligent, analytical and understanding, as well as is supreme and beyond comprehension).

When the wise and enlightened creature is able to perceive this Atma in this form, when the Atma’s existence is experienced and witnessed in this divine and eclectic form, it is then honoured by the exalted title of ‘Twam’, or ‘thou art’ or ‘you are’. [That is, when the spiritual seeker realises that the Atma is an embodiment of pure consciousness and a microcosmic form of the supreme transcendental cosmic Consciousness of creation known as Brahm, that this Atma is the person’s true and real identity, he exults and suddenly exclaims ‘You are That’, or ‘Oh Lord, it is You!’. This ‘you’ is the supreme Brahm in the form of the Atma or true ‘self’ of the spiritual seeker; the ‘self’ of the person is none but ‘that’ supreme Brahm in the form of the Atma residing in his own bosom and no where outside of him. He therefore need not search for the ultimate ‘truth’ and his ‘roots’ outside his own self, but turn inwards to find them concealed inside his own bosom. It is like a great discovery for him, and he feels exhilarated and ecstatic at this discovery, making him proclaim ‘Twam’ spontaneously. It is like the case when children play hide and seek, and one child suddenly discovers the other concealed under the blanket of his own bed while he was being searched everywhere else in the house.]

Brahm is said to be an embodiment of ‘Satya’ (profound, irrefutable, unequivocal and absolute ‘truth’), ‘Anant’ (one which has no end; an infinite and imperishable entity), and ‘Gyan’ (truthful knowledge about the reality; knowledge in all its sublime

connotations; knowledge in all its glorious forms; a comprehensive knowledge which does not leave anything to be known; knowledge that can help the seeker obtain liberation and deliverance for his soul from the fetters have been shackling it to ignorance and delusions).

That which does not decay and perish is the ‘Satya’ or the absolute and imperishable truth.

That which survives and outlasts everything that is subjected to the affects of circumstances, time and age is called ‘Avinaashi’ or that which does not perish.

The fundamental body of knowledge that is of a universal and uniform nature and dimension, which neither decays, diminishes or gets old with time nor created anew, which is neither enhanced nor revived in any form, which lasts even after the last vestiges of the present creation come to an end and before the next cycle of creation starts, that knowledge which is untouched by the dimensions of time, age, circumstance and geographical or cosmic distances is called the real and truthful ‘Gyan’.

That universal Truth in the form of pure consciousness uniformly pervades throughout the entire creation in an undiluted and untainted form, forming its basic texture and constituent, its basic ingredient and identity without which this creation would not have been in existence in the first place much like the presence of clay in a clay-pot, gold in all golden ornaments, and cotton in all cotton clothes or fabrics made from cotton thread. This universal and all-pervading authority is known as ‘Anant’ or that which has no end. [This is because the creation has no end too, for it is an infinite and fathomless entity that continuously oscillates between decay and resurgence. If one corner of the universe is dying, there is another corner where another nascent universe is taking shape.]

That which is an embodiment of ‘Sukha’ or happiness and joys, as well as of comforts and pleasures, that which is an embodiment of ‘Chaitanya’ or pure consciousness that is enlightened, wise, erudite and wide awake, that which is a fathomless ocean of infinite ‘Anand’ or bliss and ecstasy, and which personifies the pristine form of beatitude and felicity that remains after all artificial happiness and joys are eliminated—such an eclectic and magnificent entity is known as ‘Anand’ or an entity that personifies true and purest form of bliss (12).

“Verse no. 13—The eclectic, sublime, divine, holy and supreme entity which possesses these four magnificent and glorious virtues (of Satya—truth, Gyan—knowledge, Anant—eternity, and Anand—bliss and joyousness), and which remains uniform and unchanging in all circumstances and in all times and eras, is known by the epithet ‘Tat’, meaning ‘That Thing’ or ‘The same thing’ or simply ‘It’.

This entity known by the name of ‘Tat’ is the supreme transcendental Brahm who is the Supreme Being and the only Truth in creation as it is Absolute (13).

[Note—When the two observations or statements, i.e. ‘Tat’ of verse no. 13 and ‘Twam’ of verse no. 12 are taken together, the meaning becomes abundantly clear. It refers to the Atma as a personification of the supreme Brahm, and vice versa. This combined phrase is one of the great sayings of the Vedas, and it implies that the spiritual aspirant has realized the basic spiritual truth about himself and the rest of the creation.]

“Verse no. 14—Both these titles of ‘Tat’ and ‘Twam’ indicate the same exalted and eclectic entity which is non-dual, supreme, transcendental and ultimate in creation though they are used separately and have different literal meanings. The entity which is indicated by these two words is the most subtle and sublime Authority which is all-pervading, all-encompassing, omnipresent, uniform and universal like the sky element. This eclectic entity is therefore known as the supreme transcendental Brahm (14).

2(D)(iv) Varaaha Upanishad, Canto 4, verse nos. 32, 37:--

[‘I am Shiva’. The word ‘Shiva’ refers to the supreme transcendental and quintessential Brahm which is the cosmic Absolute, the universal Truth and the only Reality in creation. The word ‘Shiva’ itself means ‘one who is pure, auspicious, truthful, holy, divine, beautiful, renunciate, most wise and enlightened’.]

“Canto 4, verse no. 32—[And who is that Brahm; or what is the other name of Brahm? This question is answered here—]

Shiva is the eternal Guru (moral preceptor, teacher and spiritual guide); Shiva is the Vedas personified; Shiva is revealed in the form of all the Gods; Shiva is the supreme Lord. [These stanzas can be interpreted as follows—the Guru is a manifestation of Shiva; the Vedas are embodiments of Shiva; the Gods are none other than Shiva revealed in their forms. Indeed, Shiva is the supreme Lord, the Supreme Being of creation.]

Since everything is Shiva, I too am Shiva. [That is, I am an embodiment of Shiva—the truthful one, the auspicious one, the beautiful one, the wise and enlightened one, the one who is renunciation personified, the eternal and infinite one, the Supreme Being himself in my form.] (32).

“Canto 4, verse no. 37— The great sayings which are universal truths called the ‘Mahavakyas’ as pronounced by the creator Brahma should always be kept in mind and continuously meditated and pondered upon even while one studies the tenets of Sankhya Shastra¹, Yoga² and Samadhi³. [This ensures that the main target of all spiritual practices—which is to establish oneness of the individual creature’s Atma or soul with the cosmic Atma or the Consciousness and Truth known as Brahm—is not lost in the winding alleys of scriptures and the catacomb of their numerous interpretations. That is like not losing sight of the tree while roaming in the dense forest!]

Understanding the real meaning and spiritual import of the great sayings called the Mahavakyas incorporated in the Vedas by the creator who had created the Vedas themselves is the prime aim of all spiritual practices such as the study of the philosophy of Sankhya Shastra, Yoga and Samadhi. If this objective is not fulfilled then the entire exercise goes in vain (36).”

[Note—¹What is “Sankhya Shastra”?

References—(i) Krishna Yajur Veda’s Varaaha Upanishad, Canto 2, verse no. 55, and Canto 4, verse no. 35; Shwetashwatar Upanishad, Canto 5-6; Pran Agnihotra, verse no. 1. (ii) Shukla Yajur Veda’s Brihad Aranyak Upanishad, Canto 2, Brahmin 5, verse

no. 14; Mantriko-panishad, verse no. 14. (iii) Atharva Veda—Sita Upanishad, verse no. 33; Annapurna Upanishad, Canto 5, verse nos. 49-50.

This is one of the six great schools of Indian philosophy. It was first propounded by sage Kapil as ‘Sankhya Sutras’. [Refer Bhagwata 3/25-33, and Canto 5-6 of Shwetashwatar Upanishad of the Krishna Yajur Veda tradition.]

Sage Kapil was the celebrated sage who is regarded as the fifth incarnation of Lord Vishnu (Bhagavata, 1/3; 3/24). He is compared to Lord Krishna in Bhagavata (10/26). He was the brother-in-law of sage Vashistha, being the brother of his wife Arundhati, and the only son of sage Kardama and his wife Devahuti. He taught even his mother spiritual wisdom in Bhagavata, and hence this part of this scripture is called ‘Kapil Gita’ in which the sage has expounded upon the philosophies of Sankhya Shastra, Ashtanga Yoga (the eight-fold path of Yoga) and Bhakti-yoga (the path of devotion for and submission to the Lord) (3/25-33).

Sage Kapil is however renowned for one of the six schools of Indian philosophies known as Sankhya Shastra.

The word *Shastra* means any body of knowledge which has been deeply researched and then systematically codified and made useful in a meaningful way.

The word *Sankhya*, according to some scholars, refers to the ‘number’ or ‘numeral’ that it refers to, because it says that there are twenty five elements or ‘Tattwas’ in creation. However, there are some others who assert that it refers to ‘Gyan’ or acquisition of truthful knowledge of the reality behind the façade of illusions. It stresses on Gyan or truthful knowledge as the only path leading to liberation and deliverance of the soul from this world, and its attaining final emancipation and salvation riding on the boat of knowledge.

Therefore, the combined word *Sankhya Shastra* refers to the philosophy that endeavours to unravel the great secrets of creation based on sound knowledge and rational logic. It has six chapters and contains five hundred twenty six Sutras or keys or codes that unlock the profound treasure of knowledge pertaining to who the creature actually is, how has he come to be what he is at present, and how he can be freed from this vicious cycle of birth and death. Only when one understands the beginning can he understand the end, because this so-called ‘beginning’ has its origin in the previous ‘end’. That is, only after something ends and carries forward certain baggage with it does a new beginning can start. After all, this is based on the fundamental tenet of Nature that ‘nothing can start from nothing; there must be something from which anything starts’. That is why we say that there cannot be smoke without a fire.

Now, if one goes back to the ‘very beginning of creation’ when there wasn’t any prior life from which any new life could be born on the principles of ‘deeds and their consequences’, i.e. the theory that when a creature does any deed in this life then he would have to take a new birth to suffer the consequences of these deeds because they cannot be wished away, the question arises ‘what started this creation then?’ The Sankhya Shastra endeavours to answer precisely this question in a very logical and systematic manner.

This secret was revealed, according to the of the Krishna Yajur Veda tradition’s Shwetashwatar Upanishad, 5/2, to sage and seer Kapil who was the first person to whom the esoteric secrets of creation were unraveled by the Supreme Being (Brahm) himself. In

fact, the whole of Cantos 5 and 6 of this Upanishad are dedicated to this philosophy of Sankhya Shastra.

Other Upanishads where it is explicitly referred are the following—(i) Krishna Yajur Veda's Varaaha Upanishad, Canto 2, verse no. 55, and Canto 4, verse no. 35; Pran Agnihotra, verse no. 1. (ii) Shukla Yajur Veda's Brihad Aranyak Upanishad, Canto 2, Brahmin 5, verse no. 14; Mantriko-panishad, verse no. 14. (iii) Atharva Veda—Sita Upanishad, verse no. 33; Annapurna Upanishad, Canto 5, verse nos. 49-50.

It was propagated by Kapil's disciple Aasuri, and then by the latter's disciple Pancha-shikaa.

This philosophy accepts only three basic yardsticks or valid sources of knowledge—viz. 'Pratakshya' or direct perception or cognition of anything such as directly seeing a thing for one's self, 'Anumaan' or implied knowledge or deduction of anything entails inference of something based on some other first hand knowledge, and 'Shabda' or the word affirming this knowledge which is like a testimony of some witness or any dependable source.

So this philosophy adopts the approach of reaching the unknown from what is known. It has reduced all that can be experienced in this world to two fundamental units of creation—the Purush (the Supreme Being; Brahm; cosmic Self) and Prakriti (Nature; the invisible matrix of all forms of natures and temperaments that characterize this creation). The basic argument of this philosophy is that 'nothing can be produced from nothing'. In other words, if the creation has come into being, then there must be something that pre-dates this present creation. If this creation is the effect of some past deed, then obviously there must have some occasion when certain deed was done which resulted in the present. It states that 'Karya (the result) pre-existed (had a truthful existence) in the Kaaran (the cause of the result)'. Suppose we have an earthen lamp. This lamp, made of clay or mud, was inherently present in the un-moulded lump of clay or mud before it was shaped. Had it not been so, the clay or mud could not have been moulded into the shape of the lamp.

When this argument is applied to the experience of the world, one observes that there are three basic qualities exhibited by all things—one that gives pleasure and happiness, the other which is just the opposite, and the third which does not effect us at all, i.e. we remain neutral to it. Sankhya philosophy states that there are three 'Gunas' or basic virtues and qualities in creation which determine these three responses as well as the characters of things which evince these responses. These three Gunas are Sata which produce positive responses of happiness and bliss, Raja which create negative response of pain and sufferings, and Tama which generates neither.

In more physical terms, Sata Guna means pure and holy, and it is conducive to knowledge marked by these characteristics. The Raja Guna produces desires and ambitions which create restlessness in their wake. Tama Guna is meanest of them all, for it creates a tendency for resistance and inactivity. A man having the Tama Guna in excess would not do anything himself and neither would he allow others to do their duties.

It should be noted here that there is a situation when all these three Gunas can theatrically exist in perfect balance—this situation is the ideal situation and is synonymous with Prakriti at the cosmic level. This Prakriti, therefore, becomes perfectly 'neutral' and self centered; it is the perfect example of grossness because it remains in a state of perpetual coma or paralysis because of this balance. It is when this perfect

balance is disturbed that it starts stretching and yawning like a man waking up from a deep slumber.

An example would illustrate. An electrolyte works when there is a difference of potential between the two electrodes—i.e. the cathode and the anode. A neutral solution having the same electrodes dipped in it would not perform the function of electrolysis.

On the other hand, the Purush is the cosmic Consciousness or the Atma or cosmic Soul.

The *evolution of the creation* starts when a union is established between this Purush known as 'Brahm' who is pure cosmic Consciousness and the most sublime aspect of creation, and 'Prakriti' or cosmic Nature which is Brahm's grosser aspect.

There arises a question here. Brahm or the Purush is neutral and absolutely unattached to anything, while Prakriti is gross and lifeless. How is their cooperation possible? Well this is illustrated by the example of a physically handicapped but intelligent man who has lost the leg and cannot walk, and a blind man who cannot see but can walk. The blind can carry the lame on his back, and under the latter's guidance, can reach the destination. In this mutual cooperative way they both fulfil their desires and obligations.

It is a spontaneous cooperation and flows naturally. It is like the case of milk flowing from the udder of a cow when she sees its calf.

Now let us move to the next step and see how the creation evolved from the Purush or Brahm.

From Brahm (or Purush), the first entity that was created is Prakriti (the cosmic or primary Nature). It ought to be noted here that there are two levels in creation, viz. the 'macrocosmic level' that is all encompassing but invisible and subtle, and the 'microcosmic level' at the level of the visible aspect of creation, such as the individual creature, that is gross. At the cosmic level we have Brahm also known as the 'Purush' or the cosmic Male, and Prakriti, which is its other half, the Mother Nature.

The word 'Prakriti' at the cosmic level means Mother Nature, and it includes all that exists in this physical world, such as the entire animal and plant kingdom as well as the numerous variations in the landscape that forms a part of the physical world. On the other hand, at the microcosmic level it means individual's primary 'nature' or his fundamental inclinations, basic or inherent features, qualities, characters etc. that distinguish one person from another. But the underlying principles remain the same and are applicable at both the subtle level as well as the gross level.

Now, since Sankhya Shastra deals with evolution of the 'living world', it postulates that the 'nature' of the entire living world, i.e. its 'Prakriti', is governed by the mixing of the three basic 'Gunas' or fundamental qualities in creation, viz. Sata Guna, Raja Guna and Tama Guna, in various permutation and combination.

It ought to be noted here that 'Sata Guna' stands for all that is pure and good; 'Raja Guna' stands for activity that expresses dynamic energy to do something; and 'Tama Guna' indicates inactivity and everything that opposes the Sata and Raja Gunas.

The first product of this mixing of the Gunas at the macrocosmic level of Prakriti (Mother Nature) is the 'Buddhi' (the cosmic intellect). From that comes into being 'Ahankar' (cosmic ego; the individualism marked by the word "I" or "Me").

From the 'Satvic Guna' part of Ahankar emerged the 'Mana' (the cosmic mind) + the five 'Gyan Indris' (the five organs of knowledge or perception—viz. eye, ear, nose,

tongue and skin) + the five 'Karma Indris' (the five organs of action—viz. hand, leg, mouth, excretory and genital).

From the 'Tama Guna' part of Ahankar emerged the five 'Tanmatras' (the five subtle perceptions of sight, hearing, smell, taste and feeling), and from these further developed the five 'Bhuts' or grosser elements (such as the sky, air, fire, water and earth).

Therefore, we have the following cosmic Primary Elements of creation—

1 Prakriti (Nature) + 1 Buddhi (mind with its intellect quotient) + 1 Ahankar (ego and pride of individualism) + 1 Mana (mind with its emotional quotient) + 5 Gyan Indris (5 organs of perception—eye, ear, nose, tongue and skin) + 5 Karma Indris (5 organs of action—hand, leg, mouth, excretory and genital) + 5 Tanmatras (5 subtle perceptions of sight, hearing, smell, taste and feeling) + 5 Bhuts (such as the sky, air, fire, water and earth) = Total 24 'primary elements of creation', or 'primary units of creation' or 'principles of creation'.

However, if we add the very first and the basic 'Truth' of existence, i.e. the 'Brahm' or the cosmic subtle Consciousness, to this list, it comes to $24 + 1 = 25$ elements.

This inclusion of 'Brahm' or the 'cosmic Absolute Truth' or the 'cosmic pure Consciousness' as one of the 'first and primary of the elements' of creation, without which the rest of the elements won't exist or become redundant to begin with, fits in very well with the primary definition of Sankhya Shastra. The word 'Sankhya' means 'number' as well as a 'comprehensive knowledge', which incidentally is also the purpose of the 'Shastra' or a body of knowledge. Therefore, that knowledge that teaches the ultimate "Truth" of creation is known as 'Sankhy Shastra'.

The above unfolding of the creation and its fundamental elements is at the 'macrocosmic level'. The same process is followed to interpret the evolution at the microcosmic level—the level of the individual creature.

So we have the origin of the cosmos from Brahm, the 'Supreme Being' who created the macrocosmic first Male called 'Purush' who was Brahm's image, and his female counterpart, the 'Prakriti' (Mother Nature). Their union—or the bringing together of Brahm and Prakriti, the cooperation between them—became the basic cause of this vast and myriad creation coming into being. The individual male and female creatures, or all living beings for that matter, had evolved from this union.

In other words, the individual creatures therefore were the 'microcosmic forms' of the Purush and the Prakriti that existed at the 'macrocosmic level of creation'.

The result of the union of Purush and Prakriti were the following entities in this sequence—'Buddhi' (intelligence, wisdom, mind), 'Ahankar' (pride, ego), the mind-heart complex called the 'Mana', the five perceptions (of smell, hearing, touch, taste and sight) together forming the "subtle body" of the creature, the five Bhuts or elements (space, wind, fire, water, earth from which the gross body was moulded), the ten sense organs (five organs of perception—ear, nose, tongue, eye and skin, and five organs of action—hand, leg, mouth, anus and genitals), which together formed the "gross body" of the creature, the individual creature's Atma (pure consciousness that represents Brahm, the cosmic Consciousness) and its Prakriti (the 'nature' of the individual creature that corresponds to the cosmic Prakriti with the three Gunas affecting its primary character) both of which are invisible and subtle.

Therefore, according to this interpretation, we have 1 Purush + 1 Prakriti + 1 Buddhi + 1 Ahankar + 1 Mana + 5 Perceptions + 5 Bhuts + 10 Indris (5 sense organs of perception and 5 of action) = 25 Principal Elements at the macrocosmic level of creation. All these elements are invisible and subtle by nature.

At the level of the individual creature who has a visible gross body, the same elements exist in their grosser form and with a slight variation as follows—

1 Atma (or soul of the individual creature) + 1 Nature (or the individual's unique character) + 1 Buddhi + 1 Ahankar + 1 Mana + 5 Perceptions + 5 Bhuts (that moulds the creature's gross body) + 10 Indris (5 sense organs of perception and 5 of action) = 25 Principal Elements at the microcosmic level of creation.

It further postulates that Brahm created Nature (cosmos) because it allowed itself to be covered or mired by the three Gunas—'Sata' meaning righteousness and virtuousness which are the best and noblest of qualities, 'Raja' meaning worldly passions and desires which are the medium or mediocre qualities leading to worldly desires, and 'Tama' meaning evils, sins and other mean mentalities leading to perversions and vices. The Purush, though he remains aloof, still gets shackled or attached to Prakriti, the creation, because of these three Gunas which act as ropes or strings that tie him down. This fact has been very stated in Shwetashwatar Upanishad, 5/10-12 and 6/10.

Breaking one's habits is tantamount to liberation and deliverance from this bondage, and it is called Mukti. The three Gunas are the causes of the myriad temperaments, natures, thought patterns and behaviours of all the creatures, because they have all these three qualities or virtues in them, though they vary in ratio or proportion. These three Gunas are also present in Mother Nature, giving rise to a populace which is so varied and diametrically opposite to each other, even virtually getting at each other's throat, because of the infinite possibilities created by their mixing in different proportions to mould the innate nature, inclinations and temperaments of a creature.

This school of philosophy says that there are five elementary 'Bhuts' in this creation—they are the earth, water, fire, wind and space which, in different permutations and combinations, form all the creatures who have a gross body. A creature, it says, has eleven organs— five organs of perception (ears, nose, eyes, tongue and skin), five organs of action (hands, legs, mouth, anus and genitals) and one organ called the Mana (mind and heart).

According to Mahopanishad, 1/4 – 6 of Sam Veda tradition, these twenty-five elements or Tattwas are the following—five organs of perception (ear, nose, tongue, eye, skin) + five organs of action (hand, leg, mouth, genitals, excretory) + one Mana (mind) + one Ahankar (ego, pride, arrogance) + one Pran (the vital life-giving breath; the essential vibrations of life; the rhythm and essential functions pertaining to life) + one Atma (soul) + one Buddhi (intelligence, wisdom, discrimination) + five Perceptions (sight, smell, hearing, taste, touch) + five Bhuts (earth, water, fire, air, space) = twenty-five elements. The *Annapurna Upanishad* of the Atharva Veda tradition, Canto 5, verse nos. 49-50 assert that those ascetics who see only one non-dual entity known as the supreme transcendental Brahm or cosmic Consciousness in this ever-changing and multifarious creation are the ones who are truly knowledgeable of the essence of the Sankhya Shastra.

²“Yoga” means ‘meditation’ in its usual meaning, but its deep meaning is to ‘bring about a union between two entities that appear to be separated only due to delusions about their

reality'. In the spiritual context it means to bring about a union between the individual 'Atma' or the soul of a living being and the 'Parmatma' who is the universal Soul of this creation. In other words, all delusions and misconceptions that has created a chasm, a dichotomy, between the Atma and the Parmatma are removed so as to unite them into 'one supreme entity'—an entity that is nothing but pure Consciousness and the Absolute Truth about the identity of the individual being.

³“Samadhi” is a state of transcendental existence of the 'self' that is attained in the higher levels of Yoga when one is successful in practicing it, and it is marked by a state of trance when one is unaware of the surrounding gross world of sense objects and its impulses because he remains perpetually submerged in the bliss obtained by realization of the highest Truth as enunciated in the Mahavakyas.]

2(D)(v) Avadhut Upanishad, verse no. 2:--

['Tattwamasi'.]

“Verse no. 2—‘An Avadhuta¹ is an exalted and realised person who has the following eclectic qualities and divine virtues ingrained in him—he firmly believes in the concept of the imperishability of the soul, the pure conscious Atma, as well as in the divine entity that has this unique characteristic, i.e. on the supreme transcendental Brahm; he is worthy of being accepted and honoured as a realised and enlightened soul (i.e. he is pious, holy and divine by nature and behaviour, and is worth emulating and looking up to); he is free from all the fetters that are represented by the various aspects of this entrapping world of ignorance, artificiality and delusions; and he is one who visibly exemplifies or personifies the great tenets of the scriptures such as ‘Tattwamasi’—‘that supreme essence and truth is you’¹ (2).

[Note—¹The word “Avadhuta” is an acronym derived from the first letters of the following words—the letter ‘A’ from Akshar meaning imperishable, eternal and infinite; the letter ‘Va’ from Varenya meaning worthy of accepting and honouring; the letter ‘Dhu’ referring to the worldly deceit and conceit known as Dhut; and the letter ‘Ta’ from the word Lakshaya meaning aim or target—referring to the person who moves straight to his aim of life, which is self-realization, truth-realization, liberation and deliverance of the soul from the cycle of transmigration and worldly miseries, and obtaining eternity and peace without getting entangled in the cobweb-like world and without having any of the evil characteristics and negative attributes that veil an ordinary man who is less wise and enlightened in this world.

²The life and thoughts, the behaviour and temperaments of such a realised and enlightened Avadhut Sanyasi showcase in practical terms what is meant by this ‘Tattwamasi’ and other great sayings of the scriptures that basically teach that each individual creature, including the Avadhuta, is an image of the one and non-dual supreme transcendental Lord known as Brahm, that there is no distinction between two

individuals, and that the ubiquitous Atma residing inside all living beings is essentially one and the same; it is a non-dual divine entity that is universal, uniform, immanent, quintessential and personified Consciousness. Hence, there is no cause for any kind of distinction and dichotomy to exist in this world.]

2(D)(vi) Tejobindu Upanishad, Canto 3, verse nos. 60-74:--

["I am Brahm".]

“Verse no. 60--‘I am Brahm’—this is the most eclectic of all the Mantras¹. It is potent enough to eliminate all the evil effects of all kinds of misconceptions and misdeeds (called ‘sin’ because they mislead and inspire the creature to violate the sanctity of truthful way of life by pursuing falsehood in the misplaced belief that what the creature is doing is the truthful way of life, thereby causing the creature to commit so many sins and errors in its wake that breach the sacrosanct codes of moral and righteous conduct, inviting punishment). It is potent enough to eclipse all other Mantras as it is the culmination of the spiritual aspirant’s endeavour towards realising the ultimate ‘truth’ and find eternal and infinite fountain of beatitude and felicity (60).

[Note—¹The statement ‘I am Brahm’ or ‘Aham Brahmaasmi’ is not contradictory to the other statement ‘I am the Atma’ because Atma is the microcosmic counterpart of the macrocosmic Brahm. It is cosmic transcendental Consciousness known as Brahm that has revealed itself as the pure consciousness known as the individual Atma of the individual creature to live inside the latter’s body. Refer also Shuk-Rahasya Upanishad, verse no. 22 in this connection.]

“Verse no. 61—‘I am Brahm’—this is the eclectic Mantra that can eliminate all the faults that arise due to the presence of the gross body. [That is, as soon as the spiritual aspirant realises the truthfulness of this statement, he becomes enlightened of the fact that his true self is a much higher and senior authority which is far more sublime and subtle and very different from the grossness that marks this body.]

‘I am Brahm’—this eclectic Mantra eliminates all the sins committed over different births. [This is because the aspirant has become enlightened enough to realise that sins are committed by the body and not the soul, and since his ‘true self’ is the soul or Atma and not the physical gross body, the very cause that commits sins is removed.] (61).

“Verse no. 62—‘I am Brahm’—this eclectic Mantra eliminates all the fetters that are represented by the fear of death. [This is because the aspirant realises that he would not die like ordinary mortals. ‘Death’ occurs to the body and not to the Atma which is eternal, imperishable and infinite.]

‘I am Brahm’—this eclectic Mantra eliminates the cause of all the mental and spiritual perplexities and their attendant sorrows and miseries arising out of the sense of duality in this creation¹ (62).

[Note--¹It is only when the aspirant thinks that the other person is different from his own self does he begins to have some kind of emotions towards him, for example he might either hate him or love him as his rival and enemy or his friend and companion. But when he removes this sense of duality and sees the other man as another form of the Supreme Being, all sense of dichotomy are removed and this helps to spread the culture of universal brotherhood. Similarly, such a Brahm-realised man would remain satisfied with whatever is available to him for he would treat everything and every circumstance with equanimity and in the same manner. This removes all cause of ill-will and animosity as well as of all sorrows and vexations that arise due to unresolved desires and unfilled aspirations. Duality causes doubts and confusions as to what is the truth and what is not, and removal of this notion creates a sense of uniformity and universality which gives peace and calmness of demeanours.]

“Verse no. 63—‘I am Brahm’—this eclectic Mantra eliminates the cause of all dichotomy created by the sense of existence of differences between any two given entities which are fundamentally the same (because the same Brahm prevails uniformly in the entire creation, and therefore these two apparently different entities are factually two views of the same Brahm revealed in their forms).

‘I am Brahm’—this eclectic Mantra eliminates the cause of all worries and sorrows that accompany them¹ (63).

[Note--¹For example, when a man begins to treat all people alike, there would be no from whom he has to fear. Similarly, when he begins to treat two opposing circumstances alike, there would be no cause for him to get uneasy in one set of situation or feel eclectic in another. He would remain calm, placid, unruffled and steady under both the circumstances. This would give a steady evenness to his mind and profound calmness to his demeanors, removing the major irritating cause of all miseries and torments that generally afflict the creature.]

“Verse no. 64—‘I am Brahm’—this eclectic Mantra eliminates the cause of all problems arising out of a faulty, defective and deluded intellect.

‘I am Brahm’—this eclectic Mantra destroys all the fetters created for a creature by a deluded ‘Chitta’, i.e. a misguided and hallucinating mind-intellect complex leading to flawed reasoning and inability to pay proper attention and fix concentration, which in their wake create an imperfect memory, faulty recollection and misplaced interpretation of truth and reality (64).

“Verse no. 65—In fact, the eclectic Mantra ‘I am Brahm’ is potent enough to destroy all ailments and torments that might afflict the spiritual aspirant in this world.

‘I am Brahm’—this eclectic Mantra eliminates the cause of all sorrows, grief, distresses and miseries of the creature¹ (65).

[Note--¹This is because a creature feels sorrow or grief and experiences distress and miseries only till the time it relates itself with the body and the world outside. Once he is able to understand the basic spiritual truth that his ‘true self’ is not the body but his pure conscious Atma, and this Atma is eternally free from all fetters caused by worldly

delusions and ignorance, as well as is perpetually in a blissful state of existence, then all causes of sorrows and miseries are dispelled automatically because they are related to the mortal body and the mortal world. The Atma is immortal, imperishable and eternally blissful unlike the body and the world.]

“Verse no. 66—‘I am Brahm’—this eclectic Mantra eliminates the cause of different distresses, such as Kaam (worldly desires, passions, lust and yearnings) etc. [This is because for an enlightened man the world does not have any meaning, and he has no interest in its illusive charms. Thus, there is no basis on which Kaam can breed and entangle him in its deluding and entrapping web.]

‘I am Brahm’—this eclectic Mantra vanquishes Krodh (anger, indignation and wrathfulness)¹ (66).

[Note--¹This Mantra enlightens the creature about his true self as being the Atma which exists in an eternal state of calmness and tranquility. It has no enemy and no desires unfulfilled. It is full of equanimity and benevolence, being compassionate and gracious to the hilt. Anger and frustration come from unrequited desires and unfilled wishes, as well as from inability to successfully accomplish one’s objectives, complete one’s desired tasks, obtain one’s goals in life, and reach one’s chosen destination because of real or imaginary competition, rivalry or hurdles created by the other person, or even by adverse circumstances. This causes ill-will, jealousy, hatred, animosity and a tendency for vengeance, which in their wake breed wrathfulness and anger.]

“Verse no. 67—‘I am Brahm’—this eclectic Mantra eliminates all the various ‘Chitta Vrittis¹’ that form road-blocks in the spiritual liberation of the creature.

‘I am Brahm’—this eclectic Mantra helps to eliminate all the different ‘Sankalps²’ etc. that the creature makes along with their perpetual attendant problems (67).

[Note—¹The numerous “Chitta Vrittis” are the different states of existence or conditions of the mind-intellect complex of any given living being along with the various tendencies and natural inclinations that it possesses and exhibits. These Chitta Vrittis determine how the individual thinks, how he reacts to a given circumstance, and how his mind-intellect interprets a given set of inputs. If the mind-intellect has a basic propensity for being attracted to the charms and pleasures of the world, unmindful of their truthfulness and permanence, it would have a natural affinity to the material objects of this artificial world so much so that it would sweep aside any hint of doubt about their pitfalls and warning about the dangers that they portend. On the other hand, if the mind-intellect has a higher degree of wisdom and enlightenment ingrained in it then it would see the trap that these false worldly charms pose for the Spirit and would endeavour to avoid them.

So we observe how different shades of the various inherent tendencies and natural propensities of the mind-intellect complex, its level of enlightenment, wisdom, sagacity and erudition, along with the way it is able to absorb and adapt its self to newer information and circumstances depending on its willingness to learn and rectify that would determine the creature’s overall personality and behaviour, how he reacts to a given set of circumstances and how he interprets a set of inputs or stimuli originating in this world.

²“Sankalp” literally refers to the resolve, a solemn promise, a firm vow, a will and determination that a creature makes. The word also incorporates in its ambit all the ambitions, aspirations and volitions that he has, leading him to make necessary efforts to fulfill his dreams and accomplish success in his efforts. But in the process he forgets that he is pursuing an imaginary dream in an equally imaginary world. The material world is impermanent, transient, mortal and perishable, so how can anyone expect eternal peace, bliss and happiness in this setup? The entire arrangement is a creation of his deluded mind, described as the misguided Chitta Vritti, which impels him towards pursuing a mirage which can never give him eternal peace and happiness. This is because even if he successfully manages to accomplish one dream, another more charming than the first would crop up suddenly from nowhere creating new desire to pursue it while efforts have to be made continuously to retain and protect the gains of the first dream. ‘Sankalps’ are like a misguided creature running determinedly behind the sun moving towards the western horizon with an ambition to catch it! What more stupidity can he show?]

“Verse no. 68—‘I am Brahm’—this eclectic Mantra helps to destroy countless faults and shortcomings in the creature that create as many hurdles in his spiritual elevation and enlightenment.

‘I am Brahm’—this eclectic Mantra helps to eliminate all dependency upon others¹ (68).

[Note--¹This is because when the creature realizes that his true self, his Atma, is as powerful and authoritative as the supreme transcendental Brahm, the almighty and omnipotent Lord of the entire creation, he feels that he is like an emperor who does not depend upon others for anything. The Atma is sublime and subtle unlike the gross body which needs so many props and support to physically survive in this world. The creature in his gross form as the body is dependent upon all others in this world, because the latter is an interactive society where all individuals are interdependent not only amongst themselves but also upon the numerous things and objects that exist around them. But this does not apply to the pure conscious Atma as it is ethereal and without forms like the air and sky elements which do not need any base or support for their own survival.]

“Verse no. 69—‘I am Brahm’—this eclectic Mantra helps to abolish all ignorance and delusions, thereby kindling the light of wisdom and enlightenment marked by certitude about the real Truth and absolute Reality in creation.

‘I am Brahm’—this eclectic Mantra helps to bestow the Atma with the honour of being a conqueror of the entire world (69).

[Note--¹This is because as soon as ignorance and delusions pertaining to unreality and imaginary truth are vanquished, the spiritual aspirant is able to stand upon a high moral and spiritual ground from where he can intelligently and wisely look upon this world and survey its truthfulness and worthiness vis-à-vis its falsehoods and vanity. He becomes independent of all delusions and their accompanying sycophantic worldly charms, material comforts and sensual pleasures. This is tantamount to his conquering this world because these worldly attractions are such baits that are almost impossible to resist, they present such temptations that defy being overcome easily by an ordinary mortal creature.]

“Verse no. 70—‘I am Brahm’—this eclectic Mantra is a provider of eternal and truthful happiness and joy to the spiritual aspirant. It bestows eternal beatitude and felicity to him.

‘I am Brahm’—this eclectic Mantra helps to eliminate all forms of grossness, indolence, lethargy and inertia (because it makes the aspirant realise that he is not something gross like this body and the world, but something as exalted and sublime as the ethereal Spirit) (70).

“Verse no. 71—‘I am Brahm’—this eclectic Mantra helps to subdue and conquer this demon-like world¹.

‘I am Brahm’—this eclectic Mantra helps to reduce to rubble the great mountain representing all that is non-truth and characterized by falsehoods and delusions (71).

[Note—¹The world is likened to a demon because it is betraying, merciless, selfish to the core, uncompassionate and cruel. It would bite the hands that feed it. It sucks the blood out of the creature and then relegates it to a small space in a page of some history book.]

“Verse no. 72—‘I am Brahm’—this eclectic Mantra helps to abduct and imprison all ‘demonic and evil forces’ in this creation.

‘I am Brahm’—this eclectic Mantra is the provider of supreme emancipation and salvation to the creature’s Atma, called attainment of ‘Moksha’. This achievement gives immense and immortal beatitude and felicity to the aspirant as it marks the culmination of his spiritual pursuit. [This ‘Moksha’ is attainment of Truth which is synonymous with self-realisation and Brahm-realisation. It helps the aspirant to break free from the seemingly endless cycle of birth and death.] (72).

“Verse no. 73—‘I am Brahm’—this eclectic Mantra blesses the spiritual aspirant with a sublime happiness along with a sense of fulfillment and contentedness obtained when one has obtained the best form of knowledge and wisdom which he had been pursuing for so long and which had eluded him till now.

There are seven ‘Koti’ (1 Koti = 10 million) other great Mantras¹, but all of them keep the creature trapped in an endless cycle of countless birth and deaths as none of them show him the path of self-realisation that enlightens him about the eternal truth of the pure conscious Atma which is his truthful ‘self’, and point out to him its parity with the supreme transcendental Brahm, the Supreme Being who is the Lord Master of this entire creation (73).

[Note—¹This observation should not be taken too literally but its true spirit must be grasped. The numeral 7 times ten millions is just a figure of speech to emphasise that they are countless paths which promise liberation and deliverance to the spiritual searcher, but only the true understanding of what is meant by the Mantra ‘I am Brahm’ can actually lead to eternal peace and bliss obtained by reaching one’s true destination and discovering one’s roots. It fills one with a sense of immense ecstasy and profound elation which cannot be described in words. Once one reaches one’s destination, there is no need of the chariot, and similarly when one has realised the ultimate ‘truth’ there is no more need of Mantras and performance of elaborate rituals with these Mantras.]

“Verse no. 74—Therefore, a wise seeker should discard all other Mantra and concentrate only upon this single Mantra ‘I am Brahm’. This concentration on one Mantra speeds up the process of reaching one’s spiritual goal and obtain ‘Moksha’, i.e. liberation and deliverance from ignorance and delusions about the ‘factual and real ‘truth’ as opposed to ‘imaginary or perceived truth’, which in turn opens the gate for the Spirit’s or Atma’s emancipation and salvation.

There is not even a fraction of doubt in it (74).”

2(D)(vii) Tejobindu Upanishad, Canto 5, verse no. 5:--

“Canto 5, verse no. 5— The Atma is beyond the purview of such notions as something being peaceful and calm and something being not¹. It has no end. It is like the cosmic Naad which is eternal and imperishable; it is the light of consciousness that is ever present in the bosom of all creatures; it is an image of light and illumination that is eternal and infinite

It is the essential meaning of the great sayings of the scriptures called the Maha Vakyas; these axiomatic maxims have this Atma as their object and point towards it in their proclamations. One such Maha Vakya is ‘Aham Brahmaasmi’ or I am Brahm personified. But the Atma is such a great and enigmatic entity that merely this statement is insufficient to completely describe it; it is only one of the ways to look at it, and not the complete and comprehensive narration of its truthful being as there are other Maha Vakyas too in this direction and none of them can individually describe the Atma fully (5).

[Note—¹This situation arises in the case of an entity that changes, that is emotionally and mentally unsteady and impressionable, that is exposed to external influences which affect it emotionally and sentimentally. Only such entity can be upset one moment, getting agitated and perplexed under one given situation, and become calm and quiet the other moment under different situation. The Atma is eternally stable and steady, not at all influenced by external impulses of any kind, and therefore such emotional criterion as being calm, peaceful, tranquil and serene, or being restless, agitated and fidgety does not apply to it.]

2(D)(viii) Panch Brahm Upanishad, verse no. 28:--

[‘So-a-ham’.]

“Verse no. 28— Hence, if a wise, erudite and enlightened man is able to decipher the basic secret behind the enigmatic form of Brahm known as ‘Panch Brahm’, he determines that this vast creation is quintessentially a uniform manifestation of this single universal cosmic Divinity known as Brahm who is non-dual, supreme and transcendental. Therefore he concludes that his own body consisting of the five elements is also like the

Panch Brahm, and his ‘self’ that resides in this physical body as the pure conscious Atma, is Brahm personified. [The gross body of the creature is constituted of the five primary elements—viz. earth, water, fire, air and sky. Since each of these elements are manifestations of the single Brahm, it is natural to deduce that anything made from these elements would also be a revelation of Brahm. Therefore, the gross body is the external form of Brahm. The Upanishads describing the genesis of creation describe how the gross body of the creature is a microcosmic form of the macrocosmic Supreme Being—refer Aiteriyo Upanishad of the Rig Veda tradition. The pure consciousness that resides in this body is the counterpart of the cosmic Consciousness called the supreme Atma, the ‘Parmatma’, and therefore the former is called the Atma, the microcosmic counterpart of the cosmic Parmatma.]

That is, he is convinced about the truth of the spiritual doctrine taught by the scriptures, which is ‘So-a-ham’—i.e. ‘that is me’, or ‘it is I’. [In other words, an enlightened and self-realised man understands that his ‘true self’ known as the Atma is none but this Brahm. His body made up of five elements is but a manifestation of the Panch Brahm, whereas the essential thing in this body, i.e. the consciousness residing inside it, is the Brahm whose manifestations are each of these five elements that constitute his body and mark his physical worldly existence. This realisation is the climax of spiritual enlightenment.]

When he has attained this exalted state of wisdom and understanding, he is able to taste the nectar called Amrit that drips from Brahm—i.e. he is able to enjoy the spiritual bliss and ecstasy, the sense of beatitude and felicity that comes with attaining the highest eclectic state of Brahm-realisation (28).”

2(D)(ix) Brahm Bindu Upanishad, verse no. 8:--

“Verse no. 34— When the wise and enlightened aspirant realises the fact that this Brahm is he himself, when he sincerely understands the profound spiritual import of the truthful statement of the scriptures regarding the true identity of the creature when they describe the creature as ‘I am Brahm’, he (the spiritual aspirant) indeed becomes one with Brahm. There exists no distinction between such a self-realised aspirant and the supreme Brahm¹ (8).

[Note—¹When the aspirant realizes that his own truthful identity is not the body but the pure conscious Atma or soul residing in his own bosom, and that this Atma is a microcosmic form of the supreme Consciousness known as Brahm that exists in the macrocosmic scale of creation, he is indeed speaking the truth when he affirms that ‘I am Brahm’. He has understood the truth of the statement that everything that has consciousness in this creation is nothing else but the same universal non-dual supreme transcendental divine Brahm or Cosmic Consciousness revealed in that specific form which is one amongst other such myriad forms of Consciousness.

This statement ‘I am Brahm’ is one of the great truths expounded by the scriptures.]

2(D)(x) Brahm Vidya Upanishad, verse no. 34, 78-79:--

["Hans-Hans"; "So-a-Ham".]

"Verse no. 34— A wise and enlightened man who remains engrossed in repeating the eclectic and divine Mantra 'Hans-Hans' (i.e. '*So-a-Ham' meaning 'that essence or Truth or Brahm is me') is indeed an auspicious personification of the Trinity Gods, i.e. of Brahma the creator, Vishnu the sustainer and protector, and Shiva the concluder. He can be successful, by the grace and blessing of his enlightened Guru, in becoming aware or realising the ubiquitous supreme Brahm who all-pervading, all-encompassing and all-incorporating (34).

"Verse nos. 78-79—78-79. All spiritual aspirants who have a gross body (and of course are wise and enlightened) should constantly contemplate upon and visualise the ubiquitous presence of the supreme Lord who is faultless and immaculate, who is all-pervading, all-encompassing and omnipresent in this creation. While doing this, he should constantly repeat the divine eclectic Mantra 'Hans-Hans'. [In other words, the aspirant should constantly remind himself that the he is no one else but the supreme Brahm himself personified. This is because another form of the Mantra is 'So-a-Ham', meaning 'that is me'.]

This type of Japa (repetition of the Mantra) done constantly and involuntarily is called 'A-Japa Japa', i.e. repetition of the Mantra in an involuntarily way and without being consciously aware of it being done at all¹.

This type of Japa involves a coordination of the Pran and Apaana winds. [This is because inhalation of breath during the Purak phase is known as the Pran, while the exhalation done during the Rechak phase is called Apaana.] Since a man breathes roughly twenty one thousands time during the course of a day, this is the number of times this Mantra 'So-a-Ham' is automatically repeated (78-79).

[Note—¹It is called 'A-Japa Japa' because this repetition is done involuntarily and without any special effort or attention paid to its repetition. The practitioner is not even aware that he is repeating any Mantra because it is directly linked to the normal breathing process which is an involuntary and an automatic biological process done constantly and without break, even while a person sleeps or goes about his daily chores of life—refer verse no. 16 and its note. The prefix 'A' indicates negation, and therefore this repetition of the Mantra Hans is not regarded as doing a Japa in the conventional sense when special attention is focused on repeating any Mantra during some religious ritual or practicing Yoga. It is automatic and involuntary. So when the spiritual aspirant has risen to a level of awareness and enlightenment when he becomes aware of the spiritual importance of each breath that comes in and goes out of his body as representing the two limbs of the Mantra for Brahm, i.e. the letters 'Ha' and 'Sa' or the combined word 'Hans', he is deemed to have become Brahm-realised. Only then can he say that he is repeating the Mantra 'So-a-Ham' meaning 'that Brahm is me as my true self known as the pure consciousness or Atma'.]

2(D)(xi) Yogshikha Upanishad, Canto 1, verse nos. 131-133:--

[‘So-a-ham, So-a-ham’]

“Canto 1, verse no. 131—Usually, everyone uses the Mantra ‘Hans-Hans’ to do Japa (repetition). But by the grace of a wise teacher the ascetic realises that the real Mantra that ought to be repeated during the course of Yoga in which the wind rises up in the Sushumna Naadi is ‘So-a-ham, So-a-ham’ (131).

[Note—A ‘Mantra’ is a divine spiritual formula. Briefly this Mantra means ‘That is me’; or ‘that supreme transcendental entity in none but me’. The word ‘me’ refers to the awareness of the pure consciousness and does not refer to the physical gross body of the ascetic. The word ‘Hans’ literally means a Swan which is considered as the wisest bird and is used as a metaphor for something that is extremely pure and divine. Hans is the vehicle of Saraswati, the goddess of wisdom and knowledge, as a symbolic iconographic depiction of the fact that the auspicious virtues of enlightenment, wisdom, erudition and possession of truthful knowledge of the reality are borne by an entity that is called Hans. In the realm of metaphysics, this Hans refers to the Atma, the pure and conscious ‘self’ of the creature. That is why this Mantra ‘Hans-Hans’ is same as ‘So-a-ham’; the latter is the implied and essential meaning of the Mantra ‘Hans’. Since a Yogi is expected to choose the best and leave aside the not-so-important aspect of anything, he chooses the Mantra ‘So-a-ham’ over the Mantra ‘Hans’.]

“Canto 1, verse no. 132—[This verse describes what is known as Mantra Yoga.]

The Yoga done with the aid of this eclectic Mantra ‘So-a-ham’ is the one which is called ‘Mantra Yoga’. The divine affects of this Mantra is witnessed through the ‘Paschim Dwaar’, the left nostrils (from where the elixir of bliss and happiness, called Amrit, drips and tasted by the ascetic) (132).

“Canto 1, verse no. 133—[This verse describes what is known as Hath Yoga.]

‘The letter ‘ha’ of the Mantra So-a-ham stands for the sun and its divine glories. The letter ‘Sa’ of the Mantra So-a-ham stands for the moon and its divine glories’—when the ascetic does the full exercise of Yoga with this eclectic understanding and faith, he symbolically establishes a union between these two divine entities because they are part of the same Mantra. Such Yoga is called ‘Hath Yoga’ (133).

[Note—The letter ‘Sa’ is a silent sound made while one draws in breath, i.e. does Purak, and since this is done through the Ida Naadi, also called the Moon Naadi passing thorough the left nostril, it represents the Moon God. On the other hand, the letter ‘Ha’ is the silent sound made while exhaling breath through the Pingla Naadi, called the Surya Naadi passing through the right nostrils, and hence it stands for the Sun God. In other words, the letter ‘Sa’ is the Mantra for the Moon God and ‘Ha’ is the Mantra for the Sun God. During the Kumbhak phase of Pranayam, both exhalation and inhalation are stopped and a mixing of the air takes place inside the body. This would be tantamount to

bringing together of the Moon and the Sun. The Sun is hot while the Moon is cool; therefore this process neutralizes them both and brings about evenness and homogeneity. All restlessness, agitation, state of flux and fidgeting are stopped. A state of profound calmness and serenity is established. This process of doing Pranayam by inhaling through the left nostril symbolising the Moon God and exhaling through the right nostril symbolising the Sun God has been outlined in Krishna Yajur Veda's Yog Kundali Upanishad, Canto 1, verse nos. 9-17. It is called 'Saraswati Chaalan'.]

2(D)(xii) Katha Upanishad, Canto 1, Valli 3, verse nos. 14-15; Canto 2, Valli 3, verse no. 9:--

Canto 1, Valli 3, verse nos. 14-15—

14. [This is a general call for spiritual awakening and acquisition of truthful knowledge.]
 'Oh ignorant men! Wake up from the sleep of ignorance and shed your delusions. Go to the learned ones and acquire knowledge about the Truth'.

Those who are well versed in the scriptures and the essence of the profound Truth assert that this path leading to the acquisition of knowledge of the Truth is as difficult and intractable as the sharp edge of a knife¹ (14).

[Note--¹In other words, only a razor sharp and intelligent mind can enable the man to access this majestic and magnificent knowledge about the Atma. Any slip or carelessness would cut and bleed him seriously much like playing fools with the knife would cause a deep wound and might even prove fatal for him. That is why it is said that the path of 'Gyan', or pursuing the 'truth' by following the path of knowledge acquisition, is very difficult, daunting, hazardous and exceptional. It is full of pitfalls and very arduous to tread upon.]

15. [This verse enumerates some of the uncountable virtues of the Atma.]

That which is beyond the reach of words (i.e. which cannot be described in words), that which is beyond the reach of touch (i.e. which cannot be verified by touching and feeling to establish its truthfulness), that which is without a form and shape (i.e. which has no fixed physical identity and contour, no physical attributes of colour, shape and texture that can be seen), that which is imperishable and does not decay or diminish, that which is beyond the purview of taste and is therefore bland or neutral (i.e. which has no attributes, characteristics and qualities), that which is eternal, constant and omnipresent, that which is without any smell (i.e. that which has no 'stink' emanating from it indicating its divinity and holiness; that which is beyond the purview of the perception of smell and related to this gross world because smell originates in things that grow on earth), that which has no beginning or end, that principal which is beyond (superior to) the definitions of majesty, grandeur and magnificence, and that which is steady, unchanging, immutable, indivisible and eternally truthful—verily, by being acquainted with such an eclectic, divine, holy and astoundingly magnificent entity known as the Atma, a man is freed from the mouth (clutches or fear) of death' (15).

[Note—This eclectic state of existence can be achieved only by the man who is wise and self-realised because he has come to understand the metaphysical truth about his own self that his true identity is the Atma which has the stupendous qualities mentioned in this verse, and that this Atma is no ordinary entity. Besides this fact, he also becomes aware of the fact that the body is not his true self and its decay or sufferings should not affect him in any way. It is the body that dies and suffers, and not the Atma because the latter is an eternal and blissful entity. This fundamental realisation frees him from all causes of fear of death.]

Canto 2, Valli 3, verse no. 9—

9. [This verse defines what the Atma representing the supreme Brahm is like.]

It is not possible to physically see the form of the supreme Brahm represented by the pure conscious Atma or the soul of a creature. It cannot be seen by the physical gross organ of sight in the body known as the eye. It can only be perceived by constant meditation and contemplation which envisages a diligent and sincere coordination between the discerning, wise and intelligent mind that has been trained to be under control, and the heart that has unflinching faith and steadiness of conviction about that Brahm firmly engrained in it.

Those who have witnessed and experienced the supreme Brahm in the form of the pure consciousness called the Atma are able to obtain eternity as well as everlasting beatitude and felicity (9).

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Section 2(E)

Mahavakyas of the Atharva Veda Upanishads

2(E)(i) Atma Upanishad, specially verse no. 1-C, 1-D, 1-E, 2-3, 8, and 22-25:--

This Upanishad is entirely dedicated to the realisation of the spiritual truth about the 'self' known as the Atma. Special mention can be made here to verse nos. 1-C, 1-D, 1-E, 2-3, 8, and 22

Now, let us read what these verses say.

“Verse no. 1-C— Now, the subtle form of the same Atma which is distinct from its gross form is being described. It is called the ‘Antaraatma’ or the ‘inner Atma’, the ‘inner-self’.

[The word ‘inner-self’ has two components—viz. ‘inner’ which literally refers to Atma that resides in the gross body as described in verse no. 1-B, and ‘self’ which refers to the fact that the Atma is the true identity of the creature. This Antaraatma is invisible as it is extremely subtle, and is hidden inside the grosser physical aspect of the Atma represented by the gross body. It represents all the subtle virtues and characteristic qualities that are inherent in any creature, and which together determine his overall personality and character. The Antaraatma defines the inherent and basic nature, inclination, temperament and thought processes of any given creature that mark the latter’s subtle level of existence that is invisible to the naked eye as opposed to the gross aspects of his personality and characteristic features defined by the physical body that is visible.]

The ‘Atma’ is an all-pervading universal entity known as the ‘cosmic Consciousness’ that uniformly permeates throughout this creation and the living world. It gives life in the form of consciousness to all living beings, whether they live on the earth or in the sky. [The Atma is at the core of life, and in this sense it is like the atom in the physical sciences.]

The ‘Antaraatma’ is that aspect of the same cosmic Consciousness that resides inside the gross body of all living beings as their ‘inner self’. This Antaraatma is the one that inspires or motivates the creature to do or not to do anything, and thereby regulate all his activities and deeds.

The Antaraatma is the Atma (pure consciousness) that lives in the subtle space of the gross body of the creature, a body that is made up of the ‘earth element’.

It is the Antaraatma that exhibits emotions of either happiness or sorrows.

It is the Antaraatma that exhibits such characteristics as having Kaam (passions, lust, desires, yearnings) and Moha (attachments, infatuations, delusions).

It is the Antaraatma that has doubts and confusions, and it is the one that engages in debates and arguments. [This is because the Antaraatma is the ‘true self’ of the

creature who has any doubt or confusion, or who engages in debates and discussions, and not the physical gross body which is not his ‘true self’].

It is the Antaraatma that has a memory of past events, and is able to recall them. [Again this is due to the same reason that the Antaraatma is the ‘true self’ of the concerned creature who remembers anything of the past. The actual living entity that is recognized as the ‘creature’ is his Antaraatma, and not the physical body which harbours the mind and the sub-conscious that are merely instruments that the Antaraatma employs to remember and recall.]

It is the Antaraatma, as the living entity known as the creature, which distinguishes between a male and a female.

It is the Antaraatma that either makes a person magnanimous and charitable, or makes him miserly, of a selfish disposition, and greedy so much so that he has no regrets for usurping things belonging to others.

It is the Antaraatma that makes a man speak in different languages, and in different tones and tenors of speech. It makes him speak in different ways—such as in a whisper, speaking sweetly, softly and mildly, or in a shrill voice having a high pitch, or a voice that is grave and baritone, or in an irritable and angry voice full of rancour and spite, or scream either in pain or revulsion. It is the Antaraatma that expresses its feelings and emotions by way of the spoken word of grief, anguish, despair or sorrows on the one hand, and of cheerfulness, ecstasy, happiness and joy on the other hand.

It is the Antaraatma that makes a creature feel depressed or dejected on the one hand to such an extent that he sulks and loses all interest in life, or makes him exuberant, excited, exhilarated and ecstatic on the other hand so much so that he dances and sings with merriment and joyous abandonment.

It is the Antaraatma that thinks that it has an end, a beginning, and a course of growth and development. [This is because the Antaraatma, which is actually the pure conscious Atma that is the true self of the individual creature, becomes so much deluded by the virtue of its close association with the perishable and mortal gross body of the creature that it begins to identify its ‘self’ with the body, and in this process it forgets that it is the entity known as the Atma which is eternal, which remains steady, and which is unchanging. The Atma does not take a birth nor does it die because it is eternal and imperishable. The Atma is the spiritual ‘Truth’ of existence, and ‘Truth’ is something that remains steady, constant and eternal. Therefore, this statement that the Antaraatma thinks that it dies or has an end, that it takes a birth or has a beginning, and that it changes or grows and develops refers to the Atma that lives inside the gross body of the creature and has assumed the characteristics of the body. The very fact that the Atma begins to think that it has an end, it has a beginning, and it undergoes a change shows that it has undergone some sort of metamorphosis and has lost its pristine purity. This is because it becomes associated with the gross body which takes a birth, which develops and grows, and which dies.]

It is the Antaraatma that hears, smells, tastes, thinks, learns and knows, and does various deeds. [This statement reinforces the logic about the Antaraatma being that aspect of the Atma that has abandoned its subtle and sublime form as a pristine nature entity that is an ethereal Spirit and the cosmic Consciousness. Instead, it has assumed a grosser form of a body, the primary reason why the Atma is called the Antaraatma in the first place,

and therefore begins to carry out the functions of the body—such as hearing, smelling, tasting, thinking, learning and doing deeds.]

In spite of all these shortcomings, the Antaraatma is known as the ‘Vigyan-Atma’—literally meaning the knowledgeable Atma, the Atma that is wise, all-knowing, omniscient, and enlightened. It is the one that not only hears but understands the real meaning and the intention of what he hears. It is the one that not only thinks but thinks wisely, righteously, intelligently and rationally. It is the one that not only reads the scriptures but understands their hidden meaning and intention. [This virtue of the Antaraatma of being wise and learned is due to the basic nature of the Atma which is nothing but pure and un-adulterated Consciousness. It is this aspect of the Atma that an ascetic or a wise man wishes to realise when he studies the scriptures, especially the Upanishads, and does meditation and contemplation. It is this aspect of the Atma that is understood and known by a self-realised and enlightened man. It is this aspect of the Atma that distinguishes an ordinary creature from a highly wise and enlightened man.]

This wise, erudite, sagacious and intelligent aspect of the Antaraatma is the one which studies all the different scriptures and become learned in their philosophies and doctrines. It is the one that studies and learns the various branches of the scriptures—such as the Purans (ancient history), Nyaya (laws of conduct), Mimansa (thorough discussion and commentaries on the scriptures) and other limbs of scriptural study. It is this aspect of the Atma that actually hears them, understands them, accepts them and believes in them. It is the wise and intelligent Antaraatma that accomplishes stupendous feats in this life.

The Antaraatma is that aspect of the otherwise neutral and dispassionate Atma that develops some kind of attraction towards anything, or is inspired to do a thing because it finds it attractive and interesting (1-C).

“Verse no. 1-D—That aspect of the Atma which is supreme and transcendental is known as the Parmatma. It is synonymous with Brahm which is ‘Akshar’—i.e. a divine entity that is imperishable and eternal, as well as the one that is represented by the monosyllabic word OM that is known as the ‘Akshar’. [‘Akshar’ means a letter as well as something that is imperishable.] It is this aspect of the Atma that is worthy of worship and honour.

This cosmic form of the Atma, the pure Consciousness, is known or attained by the means of the eight-fold path of Yoga (meditation). These eight means are the following—Pranayam (breath control), Pratyahar (control of the mind), Dharna (firmness of conviction and remaining steady in one’s chosen path), Dhyana (contemplation and meditation on a chosen object), Samadhi (the trance-like state of transcendental existence), Yoga (physical exercises of meditation that bring about a coordination between the various vital winds, and helps one to establish a union between his individual ‘self’ with the cosmic Self known as Brahm), Anuman (imagination and deduction arrived at by analysis of available facts), Atma-Chintan (introspection, contemplation and deep pondering).

This cosmic form of the Atma is known as the Parmatma or the supreme Atma. It is also known as Brahm, the supreme transcendental Consciousness. It is as small as the seed of the huge banyan tree, is like a small grain of rice as compared to the whole crop, and is smaller than the hundredth-thousandth fraction of the tip of a hair follicle.

[In other words, the 'Consciousness' that is known by various names such as the Atma, Antaratma and Parmatma is as small as the atom of an element in the field of physical science. The atom is the basic unit of all the elements in existence, and though it is itself extremely small and microscopic in form, it reveals itself in the form of huge things having magnificent and myriad shapes and sizes. The cosmic Consciousness known as Brahm is compared to the seed of the huge banyan tree because the tree is hidden inside the seed in a most subtle and microscopic form, and emerges from it in the form of a huge structure known as the banyan tree which finally perishes to leave its genes hidden inside the seed that produces a new generation of the banyan tree. Similarly, this creation has its subtle presence in Brahm, it emerges from Brahm, has the genes of Brahm in its every pore, and at the time of its conclusion it merges into Brahm, only to re-emerge from the same Brahm.

Just like the seed and the tree being intricately and inseparably related to each other, the cosmic Consciousness and the individual creature's 'self', the supreme transcendental Brahm and the individual's Atma, the Parmatma and the Atma of creation are also inseparably linked with each other.

Again, the individual Atma (soul) of a creature is a representative of the cosmic Atma that lives in all the living beings in this creation. This universal truth is explained by the analogy of the Atma being like single grain of rice of a whole crop. All grains are alike; all the creatures are also alike because it is the same Atma that lives in them. The entire crop consists of individual units of the rice grain; the entire creation too consists of the individual creatures having the same Atma being present in them.

The Atma is miniscule and microscopic; it cannot be physically seen or measured or given a dimension just like the tip of the hair follicle.]

The irony is that while this Brahm is easily accessible to or attained by one person, it remains totally inaccessible to or unattained by another person inspite of the latter making the best of efforts to realise Brahm.

Brahm is never revealed in physical form, and hence it never dies. [Only things that are born or that make their presence in physical terms are destined to come to an end. Anything that is not born need not die.]

Brahm is neither dry nor succulent. It neither moves nor remains static. It does not shake or vibrate. It does not break up into parts. It is free from any specific Gunas (attributes, virtues, characteristics and qualities).

Brahm is the universal benchmark for Absolute Truth and Reality, and it cannot be measured against or compared with anything else. It is therefore one of its own kind, being matchless and unparalleled.

Brahm is the primary and most pure form of all the elements (Bhuts) in creation.

Brahm is a personified form of purity and immaculacy.

Brahm is the cosmic Atma or the universal Spirit or Soul that has no forms and attributes.

Brahm is one of its only kind, being non-dual and unparallel in creation.

Brahm is highly subtle, miniscule, microscopic and atomic in form.

Brahm is absolutely immaculate and pristine pure.

Brahm is faultless, taintless, uncorrupt, and without any blemishes and shortcomings.

Brahm has no word or sound by which it can be heard and known. Similarly, it cannot be felt by touching, cannot be seen because it has no physical gross form, cannot be perceived as some kind of taste, and has no smell that can be smelt.

Though Brahm is an eternal fount and an embodiment of Gyan (knowledge, wisdom, erudition and enlightenment), it is so neutral that it is deemed to exhibit no signs of Gyan.

Brahm is beyond the reach of imagination and thoughts.

Brahm has no desires, aspirations and expectations (because it is eternally fulfilled and contented).

Brahm is all-pervading, all-prevailing and omnipresent.

Brahm is an entity that is beyond comprehension; it is beyond the reach and purview of the mind and intellect. It is a supreme transcendental Atma about which nothing can be specifically or assertively said or ascertained.

Brahm is so holy and divine that it makes others, that are not holy and divine but with which it comes in contact, also holy and divine.

Brahm does no deeds.

This supreme Brahm (the cosmic Consciousness, the all-pervading Atma or the Supreme Being known as the Lord of creation called the Parmatma) has no world of its own (because it is formless and all-pervading; the entire creation is its abode). [The Sanskrit word for world is ‘Sansar’—literally meaning something that is always on the move and is ever-changing. Therefore, Brahm has no Sansar in the sense that it is steady, unchanging and uniform.] (1-D).

“Verse no. 1-E—This Brahm is a synonym of the Atma, the cosmic Consciousness. It is most immaculate and pristine pure. It is auspicious and a provider of all goodness and auspiciousness to others. It is only one and non-dual, being unparallel and without a second in creation. It is the universal and uniform Brahm which is all-pervading, all-encompassing and all-inclusive that is also known as the Atma, and vice versa (1-E).

“Verse no. 2—It is Brahm that is manifested or revealed or visible in the form of this creation or world. Indeed, whatever is perceived, seen or known either out of wisdom and knowledge, or out of ignorance and delusions is nothing but this single Brahm in all these forms. Whatever distinctive forms that this basically uniform creation takes, distinctions that are created out of ignorance of the reality, or created out of wisdom when one is able to separate truth from falsehood, are nothing but Brahm (2).

“Verse no. 3—It is Brahm that is visible in the form of a disciple as well as a teacher. [This is because the Atma in both of them is the same.]

In reality and truth, whatever that is seen, whatever that exists here, there and everywhere else, are nothing but the same Brahm in each of these individual and collective forms (3).

“Verse no. 8— When a self-realised person who has understood the truth of Brahm, the supreme transcendental cosmic Consciousness, as well as the truthful nature of his own Atma which is the same Consciousness residing in his inner-self, a person who has become fully enlightened and spiritually attained by experiencing the presence of Brahm

within his own inner-self as the pure consciousness known as the Atma declares 'I am Brahm', it is deemed to be his honest and sincere statement of what he has personally experienced and witnessed.

[In other words, when a self-realised man says 'I am Brahm', he is referring to the fact that he has indeed realised the truth that his 'self' known as the Atma is none else but the supreme Brahm itself. The Brahm that resides in his body as his Atma becomes his Antaraatma, his truthful inner-being, his truthful inner-self. To put it differently, the Antaraatma is the microcosmic form of the cosmic Atma that is known as the Parmatma, the supreme Atma, the supreme transcendental cosmic Consciousness known as Brahm. Such a wise and enlightened man is not referring to the gross physical body when he uses the pronoun 'I' to mean Brahm.

The two factors of creation—the first being the individual unit known as the creature, and the second being the all-encompassing and all-inclusive aspect known as Brahm—have the Atma or the cosmic Consciousness as the common denominator. The former is known as the Antaraatma while the latter is known as the Parmatma.

Therefore, the term 'I' would refer to the Antaraatma, and the term 'Brahm' would refer to the Parmatma. Both have the common factor of the Atma, the cosmic Consciousness, as the unifying element. Hence, basically both are the same.]

Even as the entire world is illuminated by the light of the single sun, the whole creation is also illuminated or made live and conscious by the light and consciousness effusing and radiating out from a single, non-dual Brahm (8).

“Verse no. 22—A person who knows, understands and realises the true form and nature of Brahm indeed becomes a personified form of Brahm. [Refer verse no. 8 above. He understands that his 'true self' is the pure conscious Atma that is another form of the cosmic Consciousness known as Brahm. He understands that the body is only the temporary habitat of the Atma, and that it is not his truthful self.]

He appears distinct or different from Brahm only due to the gross form of the body in which he (i.e. his Atma, which is his true self) lives. He, in fact, is no one else but Brahm (because his 'true self' is the pure consciousness known as the Atma which is a microcosmic form of the cosmic Consciousness known as Brahm or the Parmatma).

It is like the case of the air trapped inside an empty clay pitcher assuming the form, shape and size of the body of the pitcher, but when the pitcher is broken this air merges completely and seamlessly with the outer atmospheric air, without any effort. [Here, the air inside the pitcher is the Atma, the body of the pitcher is the gross body of the creature, and the atmospheric air is Brahm. The breaking of the pitcher is like death of the physical body when the Atma merges with the cosmic Atma known as Brahm.] (22).

“Verse no. 23-25—A person who is fully Brahm-realised and truly enlightened becomes one with Brahm. He becomes a personification of Brahm when all extraneous factors and gross considerations are eliminated.

Just like two separate samples of milk, oil and water become one and indistinguishable from one another when these two samples are mixed together, the condition of a self-realised ascetic who has experienced the Atma and who knows the truth of the Atma as well as his own 'self' is also the same. That is, there is no distinction

left between him and his conscious Atma. His ‘true identity’ is no longer the physical gross body, but the pure consciousness known as the Atma.

Having attained this eclectic and the most exalted spiritual state of existence when he has risen above the limitations imposed by the gross body, and stops being known or identified by the virtue of his gross body, the self-realised and Brahm-realised aspirant is said to have attained Videha Mukti which is equivalent to Kaivalya Mukti. Videha Mukti is freedom of the ‘self’ known as the Atma from the fetters of the gross body known as the Deha. Kaivalya Mukti is so-called because it is a unique and matchless form of liberation and deliverance in the sense that when this sort of Mukti is obtained there is no fear or chance of ever getting trapped and shackled again. It is final emancipation and salvation of the soul. A person who obtains Kaivalya Mukti as a result of Videha Mukti does not have to take birth again in this world.

All forms of Avidya (delusions and ignorance) that act as causes which result in re-birth are burnt by him in the fire of knowledge and enlightenment that comes with realisation of the Atma, the pure consciousness (23-25).”

2(E)(ii) Tripadvibhut Maha Narayan Upanishad, Canto 5, paragraph no. 15; Canto 6, paragraph no. 22; Canto 8, paragraph no. 5:--

[*Tripadvibhut Maha Narayan Upanishad*, Canto 5, paragraph no. 15—“So-a-Ham”; Canto 6, paragraph no. 22—“Twam Brahmaasmi”; “Aham Brahmaasmi”; “Twamewaaham”; “Ahamev Twam”; Canto 8, paragraph no. 5—“Brahmaasmi” or I am Brahm; “Ahamasmi” or Indeed it is I/me; “Brahmahamaasmi” or I am indeed Brahm; “Yoahamasmi” or That is I/me; “Brahm-Aasmi” or Brahm is I/me; “Ahamevaaham” or I am indeed I/me—that is, there is no doubt that I am the reality and the truth.]

Now, let us read these paragraphs in detail.

“Canto 5, paragraph no. 15— The devotee focuses his attention on the Lord and contemplates that his inner self, his ‘true self’, is nothing but the ‘Atma-Tattva’ (i.e. the essential element of life and existence which is pure consciousness) that is present in the subtle space of his Lotus-like heart (which is compared with a divine Lotus to indicate its purity and immaculacy).

With this eclectic and enlightened view about himself, the devotee worships and honours the Lord. He worships and honours the Lord internally by offering his ‘true self’ at his service. [That is, he does not offer any form of external worship or offers verbal prayers or physical oblations as is usually done during formal process of worshipping. Instead, he prays and worships the Lord internally. This is the most sincere, highly evolved, most extolled and a true form of worship because it involves one’s inner being, one’s ‘true self’, one’s Atma, one’s subtle body, and excludes the gross body and the fallacious notion of it being the ‘self’ who is worshipping the Lord. The latter is a false form of worship because the instrument used for worship—i.e. the gross body—is false!]

Then he continues to say the ‘Hans Mantra’—which is ‘So-a-Ham’¹ (literally meaning ‘That essence and truth is me’—while he exercises full control over all his sense

organs and their natural tendency to be extrovert (i.e. run towards their respective sense objects in the material world) and tames the mind. At the same time, silently pronounces the divine Mantra of Pranav (Brahm) which is OM and focuses his mind on it. While doing this he also simultaneously but gradually controls and harnesses the vital winds in the body called Prans (by practicing Pranayam or breath control, Bandha or closure of all the subtle apertures of the body, etc.), and diverts them upwards. He (here meaning his 'true self', his Atma, his pure 'consciousness', his vital life forces) moves up with the Pran and ultimately makes his exit from the gross body through the Brahm-Randhra² present on the top of the head. [Yoga Upanishads describe in graphic detail how the Pran makes its exit through the Brahm-Randhra which is a hair-like slit on the top of the head on the cranium. The Atma rides piggy back on the Pran and escapes from the body along with the Pran. This form of Mukti is described as Kaivalya Mukti³ because once the Pran escapes in the outer atmosphere, it merges with the parent air element and never re-enters the body. The rest of the body disintegrates into its other components—the earth, water, fire and sky.]

“Canto 6, paragraph no. 22— The anointed devotee is then honoured and worshipped as a living embodiment of Lord Adi-Narayan when the Lord himself offers to him and adorns him with all the visible signs that are unique to the Lord.

Then the Lord, accompanied by all the other exalted Souls attending this auspicious occasion, goes around him ceremoniously, bows before him, and unanimously proclaims in front of the august gathering ‘You are Brahm (‘Twam Brahmaasmi’). I am Brahm (‘Aham Brahmaasmi’). There is no difference between you and me (‘Aavayorantaram Na Vidyate’); You are Me (i.e. you are my form and equivalent to me—‘Twamewaaham’); and I am you (i.e. I am also one with you; there is no difference between you and me; both of us are indeed one and the same—‘Ahamev Twam’).

“Canto 8, paragraph no. 5—While specially meditating and contemplating upon this universal and uniform Truth (i.e. Brahm or the Supreme Being; here referring to the cosmic Consciousness also known as the Atma) that is Advitya by nature, he is filled with an immense sense of spiritual fulfillment and bliss. This divine experience that comes with being realised and enlightened is very dynamic and vibrant, and it drowns the aspirant in nectar of ‘Bodhaanand’—i.e. fills him with extreme Anand (bliss, ecstasy, beatitude, felicity and joys) that come with Bodh (enlightenment, wisdom and awareness of the Truth). [This is because the spiritual aspirant has finally attained his much cherished dream and objective in life.]

Being thus self-realised, Brahm-realised and enlightened about the Truth, he repeatedly remembers the Maha Vakyas (the great sayings of the Vedas and the Upanishads) and exclaims or proclaims—

‘Brahmaasmi’ or I am Brahm; ‘Ahamasmi’ or Indeed it is I/me; ‘Brahmahamaasmi’ or I am indeed Brahm; ‘Yoahamasmi’ or That is I/me; ‘Brahmaamaasmi’ or Brahm is I/me; ‘Ahamevaaham’ or I am indeed I/me—that is, there is no doubt that I am the reality and the truth.

[These statements obviously establish the fact that the spiritual aspirant has become steeped in the eclectic philosophy of Advaitya Vedanta which stresses on the non-duality and uniformity between the individual ‘self’ or the Atma and the cosmic

‘Self’ or the Brahm. This is because both are ‘consciousness’ existing in different planes of existence, one is known as the Jiva and the other is called Brahm. Fundamentally there is no difference between the two.]

‘I am burning ‘Ahantaa’ (the false notion of duality and distinction between two aspects of the same thing) by offering it to the sacred fire. Swaha!’ [The word ‘Swaha’ is uttered when one makes offerings to the fire during formal fire sacrifices. Here, the aspirant is eliminating all his doubts and confusions about Brahm by symbolically burning doubts and confusions in the fire.] (5).

“Canto 8, paragraph no. 6—When the spiritual aspirant is firmly established in the belief that ‘I am Brahm’, it is then that he is filled with immense Anand, is spiritually cleansed, and is fully contented and fulfilled. In that event, he is naturally attracted towards ‘me’ and finally merges in ‘me’ who am the supreme Brahm in the form of Narayan.

Just like the swirling and rapidly flowing water of great rivers gush into the ocean to become one with it, and just like huge dynamic waves that rise from the surface of the ocean with immense force fall back into the same ocean to vanish forever, the self-and-Brahm-realised aspirant enthusiastically exclaims ‘I am a personification of Sachiddanand’ (i.e. I am the truth, consciousness and bliss personified), ‘I am Ajanmaa’ (i.e. I do not have a birth as I am eternal and imperishable), and ‘I am Paripurna’ (i.e. I am fulfilled and fully contented, I have no desires whatsoever left) and sheds his individuality to become one with and indistinguishable from ‘me’, the supreme Brahm known as Adi-Narayan.

When this comes about, the spiritual aspirant turns into an ocean that is calm and quiet, having no surging waves. He becomes an ocean of peace and tranquillity himself.

He becomes a symbolic base and an endless ocean of Advaitya. [That is, he is firmly established in the eclectic notion of non-duality, and no matter how many surging rivers representing different schools of thoughts and philosophies come thundering towards him, they cannot disturb his state of spiritual bliss, peace, tranquillity, quietude and serenity. On the contrary, they themselves undergo a change and lose their various independent identities as distinct philosophies to become ‘Advaitya’ or uniformly ‘one’ themselves. This can be explained by a simple instance—so many rivers come thundering towards the ocean, but when they fall into it they all become one like the ocean. The ocean does not lose its identity, but the rivers do.]

He becomes an ocean of truth, consciousness and bliss—collectively called ‘Sat-Chit-Anand (6).

2(E)(iii) Ram (“Raam”) Rahasya Upanishad, Canto 5, verse nos. 13-14:--

[“Tat Twam Asi” or “That Art Thou”]

“Canto 5, verse nos. 13-14—13-14. The first letter ‘Raa’ of the Lord’s name ‘Ram’ stands for the Sanskrit word ‘Tat’ meaning ‘that entity’ which refers to the ultimate Truth of creation, which in turn is the pure conscious Atma or soul of creation called the ‘Parmatma’.

On the other hand, the second letter 'Ma' of the name 'Ram' stands for the Sanskrit word 'Twam' meaning 'you' which refers to the living creature or the Jiva.

The union between these two fundamentally inseparable units of creation is indicated by the word 'Asi', meaning 'it is'. These three words, i.e. 'Tat', 'Twam' and 'Asi' form the basic tenet of the scriptures, called the 'Maha Vakya'. Hence, the completed Maha Vakya is 'Tat Twam Asi'—that essence is you; or 'that art thou'¹.

That is why those who are experts in this philosophy assert that Brahm represented by the word 'Tat', and the Jiva represented by the word 'Twam' are basically the same universal and uniform non-dual consciousness existing in two different planes, the former at the cosmic level and the latter at the individual level. The bridge between them is established by the third word 'Asi', implying 'it is certainly so'. In other words, the erudite and wise ones unequivocally declare that the individual Jiva (the living being) is no one else but the supreme Brahm, the Supreme Being, in a microcosmic form.

The word 'Namo', literally meaning 'to bow before', of the six-letter Mantra (Raam(g)/Raam Raamaaye Namaha—Raam(g)/Raam + Raa + Maa +Ye + Na + Maha = 6 letters; refer Canto 2, verse no. 16)² refers to the fact that the wise, erudite, learned, enlightened and self-realised spiritual aspirant offers his obeisance and respects to Lord Ram with this firm conviction that the Lord is none but the supreme Brahm personified, and that he is actually honouring this Brahm when he honours Lord Ram. Further, such a wise man also realises that the divinity he is offering his worship to is none but his own truthful 'self' known as the Atma which is pure consciousness and Brahm personified.

The following points are to be specially noted in this verse—(i) The first letter is the monosyllable 'Raam(g)/Raam' which is the Beej Mantra for Lord Ram, and it is a substitute for the ethereal Mantra 'OM' that is universally regarded as the Beej Mantra for Brahm which is always placed as a prefix of all hymns and Mantras to honour the supreme Brahm first before honouring the deity to whom that particular Mantra is dedicated. Refer verse no. 16 of this Canto 5 below. (ii) The second word 'Raamaaye' consists of three letters—viz. 'Raa', 'Maa' and 'Ye'. The first letter 'Raa' refers directly to Lord Ram, the supreme Brahm revealed in his divine form, and therefore it is equivalent to the word 'Tat' of the Maha Vakya 'Tat Twam Asi' cited above. The second letter 'Maa' is equivalent to the English words 'me' or 'I'. In other words, it refers to the fact that Brahm is 'me' or 'I'. It refers to the fact that the spiritual aspirant has realised the eclectic spiritual truth that Brahm is his own 'self', his Atma. Hence, 'Maa' is equivalent to the phrase 'Twam Asi' of the Maha Vakya 'Tat Twam Asi', meaning 'I am' (that Brahm), or (that Brahm) 'is me'.

By extension it means that the spiritual aspirant has become self-realised and discovered that Lord Ram resides in his own bosom as his Atma, and it would mean that the concerned person is a personified form of Lord Ram, possessing all the auspicious and divine virtues that Lord Ram is famous for. This eclectic realisation, this wisdom and awareness is true realisation, and this leads to his truthful Mukti—freedom from all fetters that ignorance of the truth represent, and which tie down a creature to this world of delusions and deceit. A man who is free from the shackle of delusions and who has realised the 'truth' about his 'self' is indeed a spiritually freed man.

The realisation of the truthfulness and personal relevance of the Maha Vakya 'Tat Twam Asi' fills him with extreme ecstasy and bliss of the highest order that comes with self-realisation and a discovery of a great secret. It removes his fear of death and its

accompanying horrors. This happens because the ‘self’, the Atma, is eternal and imperishable; the Atma never dies like the gross body; the Atma is eternally blissful and happy. This awareness instills in him confidence about his eternal and exalted nature and stature, and enlightens him about the great truth about his real and truthful identity as being the conscious Atma that is a cosmic entity and enlightened. The ‘self’ is not that would die and suffer its horrors.

Therefore, this realisation is deemed to have given him eternal Mukti—i.e. it provides him liberation from all bondages created by ignorance of the Truth and its accompanying delusions; it provides him deliverance from all miseries and torments that are consequential to such ignorance and delusions (13-14).”

2(E)(iv) Ram (“Raam”) Purva Tapini Upanishad, Canto 3, verse no. 2:--

[“I am Lord Ram who is Brahm personified; there is no difference between me and Lord Ram”.]

“Canto 3, verse no. 2—‘We bow and pay our respects to the supreme Lord Ram (who is none else but Brahm manifested) who lives in this world and uniformly pervades in it as its ‘Atma’ and its ‘Pran’—i.e. as the creation’s soul and its life, as its essence, as its fundamental basis and its core. [This is the reason why Brahm is called a ‘Purush’—it is because Brahm lives inside every individual creature as his Atma or consciousness, and as his Pran or vital life factors such as his vital winds. In other words, the body of the creature is the divine abode where this Brahm lives. In fact, the word ‘Purush’ means one who lives inside a ‘Pur’ or a city or a dwelling.]’¹”

The spiritual aspirant should think of Lord Ram as the Supreme Being called Brahm himself personified. Brahm is the primary and primordial cosmic Consciousness that prevailed even before this creation came into being or was even conceptualized. This form of the Lord (Ram) transcends even the three Gunas (Sata, Raja and Tama) that helped to determine the nature and texture of the would-be creation. It is this form of the Divinity that is worthy of adoration and paying respects to, and the worshipper should bow his head to it.

He should endeavour to establish oneness between his own ‘self’, i.e. his own Atma, and this supreme Lord, i.e. the supreme Atma. This is called ‘self-realisation’ and attainment of Brahm-hood. When this is achieved, the spiritual aspirant exclaims in ecstasy of having discovered the greatest truth of creation as well as of himself—he says ‘I am Lord Ram who is Brahm’; or ‘There is no difference between me and Ram’. This is the highest level of spiritual attainment and marks the pinnacle of enlightenment and realisation² (2).

[Note—¹Having created this world, the Supreme Lord entered it in the form of the Atma, the pure consciousness. This Atma is the soul, the essence of this creation, for if the core is removed the outer structure would collapse as it would have nothing to support it, or nothing to stand on. In other words, the genes of the supreme Father were transferred to his off spring, the creature at the micro level and the creation at the macro level, in the

form of 'Consciousness', because Brahm is nothing but cosmic Consciousness. Again, since Brahm is the ultimate and absolute Truth of creation, it follows that this Atma representing the supreme Lord is also the Truth in this whole setup. This Atma is the 'true self' of the creature because it represents the supreme Lord, Brahm or Ram, and just like the supreme Lord had allowed himself to be surrounded by Maya (delusions) willingly, and thereby got sucked in the vortex of numerous duties pertaining to his own creation—such as its sustenance, protection, nourishment and regulation etc.—a man also gets sucked in this world if he allows his Atma to be surrounded by delusions and ignorance of its exalted heritage.

Another important component of this creation that infuses 'life' in it is the 'Pran'. The word 'Pran' means 'life that is marked by conscious awareness and activity'. In practical terms, both the terms 'Atma' and 'Pran' co-exist because both are like the two sides of the same coin.

While the word 'Atma' means the soul and the consciousness, the word 'Pran' means the vital winds that govern the vital signs of life in the gross body and its functioning. In practice, both are synonymous with each other. This is because a creature is alive only as long as his body as the Atma as well as the Pran in it. If one leaves the body, the other becomes automatically defunct.

The importance and interdependence of the Atma and Pran on each other can be easily visualized. The Atma in the form of consciousness is said to have its residence in the heart of the creature. It is common knowledge that life remains in the creature and his organs are kept conscious only as long as the heart beats and supplies blood to the different organs of the body. But say how can the heart beat and keep the creature alive if the Pran or the vital winds decide to call it quits and paralyse the rest of the body, preventing the organs to perform their basic functions, such as the blood vessels to carry blood to the heart, and the tissues to produce energy by digesting food?

Similarly, the Pran, in the form of the vital airs or winds, controls all the signs of life in the creature, and keeps all the organs of the body, the external as well as the internal, alive and active. But say how can it do so if the heart stops beating?

The Lord has been conceptualized as a 'Purush'—literally meaning 'one who lives in a Pur, a city or palace'. Refer Brihad Aranyaka Upanishad of Shukla Yajur Veda, Canto 2, Brahman 5, verse no. 18 explicitly as the cosmic all-pervading macrocosmic form of the Supreme Being, called the Viraat Purush, who had entered each and every body of all the creatures and had taken up his residence there. According to the Aiteriyu Upanishad of Rig Veda, Canto 1, verse nos. 3, the supreme Brahm created the vast universe and his image in the form of the Viraat Purush, and the Gods were created from this Viraat—Canto 1, verse no. 4. When the mortal world consisting of the visible world was created, the human body was considered as the best image of the Viraat Purush, and thus all these Gods took up their residence in it—Canto 2, verse nos. 3-5. According to the Brihad Aranyak Upanishad of the Shukla Yajur Veda, Canto 2, Brahman 5, verse no. 18, it was this Viraat Purush himself that entered the body of all the creatures of this creation.

The Mundak Upanishad of Atharva Veda, in its Canto 2, section 1, verse nos. 9-10 clearly affirm that it is the Viraat Purush, the macrocosmic all-pervading gross body of the supreme transcendental Brahm, that resides in the body of all living beings as their Atma.

According to reverend Sankracharya's commentary on Katho-panishad, Canto 1, Valli 3, verse no. 11 and Canto 2, Valli 1, verse no. 12, the word Purush refers to that supreme entity which uniformly pervades in and completely fills everything that exists. It also refers to one who resides inside any place and completely owns that place. Therefore, this word Purush refers to the supreme transcendental Brahm who has taken up residence in the gross body of the creature as the Atma at the micro level of creation, and as the cosmic Atma known as the Parmatma at the macro level. This Brahm pervades throughout them in a uniform way even as the sky and the wind element occupy all available space in the creation. That is also why sky is considered as a nearest analogy of Brahm because even the other all-pervading element, the wind/air, is present in it and not outside of it.

²This realization is the culmination of one's spiritual exercises. It is the pinnacle of self-realisation and attainment of Brahm-hood.]

2(E)(v) Ram ("Raam") Uttar Tapini Upanishad, Canto 3, verse no. 9:--

["So-a-Ham; Atma-Ram".]

"Canto 3, verse no. 9— The true understanding of the divine nature and cosmic nature of the Atma/soul or the pure consciousness is possible with the advice and guidance given by self-realised, wise, erudite and enlightened teachers as well as ancient scriptures. It can be understood, comprehended and grasped only with the aid of an uncorrupt, unbiased and sharp mind that is analytical, rationale, intelligent and receptive.

This Atma/soul is eternally self-luminous, brilliant, radiant and splendorous—i.e. it is always enlightened and wise, it is self-realised and all-knowing, it is free from ignorance and its accompanying darkness.

It is free from the tainting affects of Avidya or lack of true knowledge—i.e. the Atma, left to its own devices, would never do anything that is in-auspicious, unrighteous, unholy, improper and unscrupulous. [From the practical point of view we can regard it as the inner voice that invariably warns a person by ringing a bell inside his inner self whenever he is about to commit anything that is wrong. His 'conscience' would immediately object. This first objection that arises from the inner self is the voice of the Atma that resists all unrighteous deeds and thoughts. That the man overlooks them and continues nevertheless with his evil designs is the reason why the Atma—which is the man's 'true self'—is forced to suffer from the misdeeds done by the body and the mind. Had the man listened to his inner voice he would not only have prevented himself from much physical sufferings but would also have given his Atma true peace. But unfortunately this does not happen—because the allurements of the physical world and the desire to gratify the sense organs of the body, the various inherent Vasanas or worldly passions and yearnings, and Vrittis or tendencies and habits that are part of his nature, and such other elements are too strong to be easily overcomes.]

All actions and deeds that have their genesis in ignorance and delusions, or those which are done or inspired by ignorance and delusions due to lack of wisdom, truthful

knowledge and awareness of the reality, cast their negative shadow on the otherwise immaculate nature of the Atma. [The Atma is pure consciousness that remains free from being attached to the body that actually does the deeds. When the creature comes under the influence of delusions, he thinks that his body is his true 'self' instead of the Atma. This is due to ignorance about the reality and the truth, making the creature erroneously think that it is the Atma that does the deed, whereas in fact it is the body that is actually involved in doing any deed.]

The devotee prays to and worships Lord Ram so that the Lord eliminates such negative aspects of his Atma, and removes the darkness of ignorance as well as its deluding effects that shackles the person in its vice-like grip.

The Atma (pure Consciousness; the Soul) is 'Advaitya'—i.e. it is eternally one, without a second, unique, non-dual, indivisible, immutable and peerless.

It (the Atma or consciousness) is an embodiment of supreme, absolute and universal 'Anand'—i.e. it is always in a state of bliss, happiness, peace and tranquility.

It (the Atma or consciousness) is the foundation and the resting place for all that exists.

It (the Atma or consciousness) is the only majestic authority and the supreme power in existence.

It (the Atma or consciousness) does not have any trace of the spiritual darkness created by Avidya (ignorance about the spiritual truths) and Moha (attachments and longings for this material world and the body that are accompaniments of Avidya). [The Atma is not attracted to the fascinating charms of this world, nor does it have any desire to enjoy them or hoard them because it is well aware of their perishable nature and the web of entanglements that they create in their wake. It is neither interested in the body because it is aware of its imperishable nature too. It keeps a safe distance from both the world as well as the body, both of which are gross, perishable and ensnaring by nature. The Atma is a separate entity distinguished from the gross body as well as the equally gross world, and it is merely a witness to what is happening around it. Neither does the Atma suffer from anything in this world nor does it feel happy from anything. When a wise and intelligent person understands this, he is said to have reached the 'Turiya state'—for now he lives in this world with complete detachment and indifference. This provides him with bliss so characteristic of the Turiya state. No problems of the world worry him or disturb him any longer.]

In other words, if a man comes to realise what his 'true self' is, if he understands it to be the pure Atma which is consciousness personified, hence an image of Brahm, the cosmic Consciousness, all darkness in the form of Avidya and Moha are immediately dispelled. He is filled with the light of spiritual realisation; he is illuminated with the brilliant light of enlightenment. Obviously, where there is light there cannot be darkness!

With this enlightenment and wisdom, the spiritual aspirant would realise that 'he', i.e. his 'true self', is the same Atma that is endorsed by all the scriptures as being the supreme Atma of creation, and which is described by the name of 'Ram' in this Upanishad. This Atma of the individual creature and the cosmic Atma of the whole creation is the same Brahm who has revealed himself as Lord Ram.

Lord Ram is none but the self-illuminated and brilliant cosmic transcendentqal Authority known as Brahm. He is the Supreme Being himself personified. There is no

duality or distinction between any of the three entities known as the Atma, Brahm and Ram. Knowledge of this is true enlightenment and erudition.

Lord Ram is as indefinable and incomprehensible as is the supreme transcendental Brahm. [In earlier part of this Upanishad it has been asserted that Lord Ram is no ordinary human being but Brahm, the Supreme Being himself personified. Since Brahm is synonymous with the Atma, and since the Atma resides in the subtle heart of all living beings as their ‘pure self’, it follows that when a spiritual aspirant truthfully becomes ‘self-realised’ he would see that ‘he’ (as his Atma and not the gross body) and ‘Ram’ (the divine Brahm and not the gross body of a prince of Ayodhya) are one and the same holy, sublime and divine entity called the ‘Advaitya Brahm’—the non-dual Brahm.

When this actually happens, it is said that such a person has reached the pinnacle of spiritualism, and he is deemed to have attained freedom from the snare created by Avidya (ignorance), Moha (wordly attachments) and Maya (delusions)—that is, he has attained Mukti or Moksha (spiritual liberation, deliverance, salvation and emancipation.)

Such a realised spiritual aspirant should think ‘That is me/I’—‘So-a-Ham¹’. There is no difference between me and the supreme Brahm who has revealed himself as Lord Ram. He thinks of non-duality between his own Atma and the supreme Atma known as the Parmatma in the revealed form of Lord Ram. Therefore, he knows the truth of the eclectic phrase ‘Atma-Ram’. It is this ‘Ram’ that is being lauded and worshipped in the Mantras which address the Lord as Ram Chandra, Ram Bhadra etc.

Lord Ram who is eternally enlightened and self-illuminated, is honoured and recognized by the eclectic but most esoteric terms used to address him, such as ‘OM’ (the Beej Mantra of Brahm and the ethereal word which is said to the parent of all Mantras), ‘Tat’ (that), ‘Sat’ (truth), ‘Yat’ (is), ‘Param’ (supreme).

Indeed, that divine and transcendental Lord Ram who is addressed by these terms and who is beyond the comprehension of the mind and reach of the faculty of speech is no one else but ‘I’ or ‘Me’—i.e. he is ‘Atma-Ram’.

Constant reflection on this eclectic Mantra and keeping the mind focused on the irrefutable truth of this great Maha Vakya (‘So-a-Ham’; ‘Atma-Ram’) would finally establish oneness between the spiritual aspirant and Lord Ram who is none but Brahm personified. In other words, this way of meditation and contemplation would help the spiritual aspirant to establish oneness between himself and the supreme Brahm in the form of Lord Ram. The wise aspirant should endeavour to establish oneness and non-duality between his own Atma and the supreme transcendental Atma of the cosmos known as Brahm or Ram (9).”

2(E)(vi) Annapurna Upanishad, Canto 5, verse nos. 2, 8, 20-21, 57, 65, 74, 95:--

[Canto 5, verse no. 8—“Brahmaasmi—I am Brahm personified”; Canto 5, verse nos. 20—“Brahm is consciousness; Brahm is this entire creation; Brahm is manifested as all the Bhuts (elements; mortal creatures) according to ancient tradition. I am Brahm. Everything is Brahm—therefore even the enemy is Brahm, the friend is Brahm, and this Brahm is also all other kith and kin, all compatriots and relations; Canto 5, verse no.

21—“Everything is Brahm and nothing else”; Canto 5, verse no. 57—“the ‘great and transcendental Authority known as the supreme Brahm is no one else but me (i.e. my ‘truthful self’ which is the pure consciousness called the Atma)””; Canto 5, verse no. 65—“I am indeed Brahm personified”; Canto 5, verse no. 74—“I am Brahm; I am a personification of Brahm”; Canto 5, verse no. 95—“Brahm is none but me; I am no one else but Brahm”.]

“Canto 5, verse no. 2—A man who has become extremely wise, self-realised and enlightened is able to ‘see’ the truth of his own ‘self’ in the ‘light’ of this wisdom and enlightenment. [Even as anything is visible only if there is light, the pure conscious Atma, which is the man’s ‘self’, is only ‘seen’ (witnessed and experienced) in the ‘light’ of truthful knowledge. It follows that if there is no ‘light of knowledge’, this Atma cannot be seen. That is, if there is a thick blanket of darkness symbolizing spiritual ignorance and its accompanying delusions, the consciousness cannot be witnessed and experienced by anyone.]

Such a realised and enlightened man is afraid of none, and neither does he accept anything from anyone (as charity or donation). [He is afraid of none because he has no enemy as he treats everyone alike and like a close friend or brother. He sees the same Atma in all the living beings, and therefore treats everyone as his own image or sibling. He takes nothing from anyone because he has no desires of any kind; he is self-contented and fulfilled.]

He does not live a life of bondages, and neither does he feel humble and lowly. [He is without any bondage because his ‘self’ is not the gross body but the Atma which is eternally free and unshackled. He is not humble because this ‘self’ is the Atma which is an exalted, ethereal and divine entity that represents the supreme Brahm personified in its form. The Brahm is the supreme Authority of creation. How can an entity that is ‘supreme’ and ‘the most exalted’ Spirit be humble and lowly?] (2).

“Canto 5, verse no. 8— Do not be afraid of, bewildered by and amazed at so many changing things and circumstances that are seen in this world in different phases of life and time. They are misleading and deluding. In fact, there is no duality anywhere, for only one non-dual ‘consciousness’ prevails everywhere and under all phases and planes of time. This universal cosmic ‘consciousness’ is known as Brahm, and it is the same consciousness that is also your own truthful ‘self’. Therefore it logically follows that ‘you’ are ‘Brahm’ personified. In other words, be calmed down and feel peaceful in the eclectic thought ‘I am Brahm personified’ (8).

“Canto 5, verse no. 20—Brahm is consciousness; Brahm is this entire creation; Brahm is manifested as all the Bhuts (elements; mortal creatures) according to ancient tradition.

I am Brahm. Everything is Brahm—therefore even the enemy is Brahm, the friend is Brahm, and this Brahm is also all other kith and kin, all compatriots and relations (20).

“Canto 5, verse no. 21—‘Everything is Brahm and nothing else’—a person who develops this holistic and most eclectic view of this creation and the life in it, and is firmly convinced of it, indeed becomes a personification of Brahm himself. [The fragrance and radiance of his enlightenment and spiritual glory effuses from him much like the light

emanating from the glow-worm or the sweet aroma of a flower. It comes automatically, and is a part of his overall personality and being.]

Such a man experiences Brahm everywhere, and his presence too is equivalent to the presence of Brahm there. He remains eternally established in the virtues of being calm, composed, steady, serene, peaceful and blissful; he becomes a personified form of the ‘consciousness’ known as Brahm. [He acquires all the grand and immaculate virtues associated with Brahm—he is enlightened, wise, immaculate, un-corrupt, perpetually calm and blissful, etc.] (21).

“Canto 5, verse no. 57—Oh Nidagh! Be fulfilled by being firmly convinced that the ‘great and transcendental Authority known as the supreme Brahm is no one else but me (i.e. my ‘truthful self’ which is the pure consciousness called the Atma)’.

Do not worry for the future or brood for the past. [That is, live in the present. Since the cosmic Consciousness that Brahm is, is eternal and constant, and since your truthful ‘self’ is this same Consciousness called the Atma, it follows that what you are at present will be the same in the future, and was so in the past. You are stable and steady; you do not change in your essential form, though of course you have to adapt yourself to changing environment, situations or circumstances.] (57).

“Canto 5, verse no. 65—This eclectic and sublime entity (referred to in verse nos. 63-64 above) is ‘one’ and only one of its kind. It is without a beginning or an end. It is pure and undiluted supreme Consciousness personified. It is without any sort of faults, impurities, taints, shortcomings and corruptions. It is vast, universal, all-encompassing, all-pervading and all-inclusive. It is so mysterious that nothing is subtler than it.

It is this divine and holy entity that is known as Brahm. And, indeed, it is ‘me’. I am indeed Brahm personified! There is no trace of doubt or confusion in this fact. [That is, my truthful form called the ‘self’ or the Atma is the same supreme transcendental Brahm or the cosmic Consciousness that possesses the grand, magnificent and majestic virtues enumerated herein above, and that resides in my physical body, giving ‘me’ an identity and personality. ‘I’ am this ‘Brahm’ in its most sublime and subtle form. Of course, this statement should come from the heart to have any meaning; otherwise it is a boastful claim lacking conviction; it would be hollow, and without pith and substance. Refer also to verse nos. 20-21 of the present Canto 5.] (65).

“Canto 5, verse no. 74—Oh Suvrat (one who is steadfast and committed to his chosen path; here referring to sage Nidagh)! Think positively and be firmly convinced in the holiness of your ‘true self’ which is the Atma that is fundamentally divine by nature as it is a personification of the supreme Brahm that is characterized by the grand virtues of being ‘Sat-Chit-Anand’ (i.e. truthful, consciousness, and bliss) and ‘Anant’ (i.e. one that has no end; one that is infinite and eternal). [Refer Canto 4, verse no. 29; Canto 5, verse no. 68.]

Think and believe—‘I am Brahm; I am a personification of Brahm’. I am that Brahm who is so absolutely perfect, immaculate, untainted and pure that there is nothing in him that can be considered as being un-worthy and fit for being got rid of. Such eclectic thoughts and firmness of conviction would pave the way for your permanent

spiritual liberation, deliverance, emancipation and salvation. [Refer Canto 5, verse nos. 8, 20-21, 57 and 65 also.] (74).

“Canto 5, verse no. 95—You (Nidagh) must rise above all mundane and material considerations in this world. Do not harbour any ideas, notions or thoughts that are basically entrapping, erroneous, misleading, gross and deluding. In other words, be blessed with a high degree of equanimity and neutrality of the mind and intellect; be unfazed by the ever-changing nature of the world and its equally transient charms, comforts and pleasures; do not have any emotional attachment with any of the material things of this world of sense objects.

When all delusions, doubts and confusions arising out of a sense of duality are removed, what remains is one single entity that is the ubiquitous and quintessential ‘truth’ which is non-dual, uniform, universal, irrevocable, unequivocal and irrefutable. This eclectic, unique and sublime entity is known as ‘Brahm’.

Think in this holistic way and realise the truth of the statement ‘this Brahm is none but me’, or ‘I am no one else but this Brahm’ (95).

2(E)(vii) Mahavakya Upanishad, verse nos. 6-9, 11:--

[Verse nos. 6-8—“Hans So-a-Ham” or the divine entity known as the Swan is none but me or my truthful form as the Atma; verse no. 11—“So-a-Hamarka” or that essence of creation known as the truth and the supreme consciousness is me.]

“Verse no. 6—The supreme transcendental Brahm (the cosmic Consciousness), which is as life-giving, as splendid and as self-illuminated as the celestial sun, resides in the gross body of every living-being who breathes in the form of the latter’s Atma (soul; the ‘self’). This Brahm (that resides in the creature’s physical gross body as his Atma) is known as the ‘Hans’ (literally a divine Swan).

This ‘Hans’ also refers to the breath that comes in and moves out of the creature’s body while making a subtle hissing sound while doing so.

[‘Ha’ sound is made when one inhales, and ‘Sa’ sound is made when one exhales. This is a continuous process. In Yoga Upanishads it is referred to as the silent, steady and continuous involuntary repetition of the ‘Hans Mantra’ which pertains to the supreme transcendental Brahm. This is sort of involuntary meditation and contemplation done when a spiritual aspirant has accomplished certain level of enlightenment and spiritual achievement. Such an aspirant is not required to specially sit for Yoga at a fixed time or for certain duration of time, as his entire life is spent in meditation and contemplation. He is meditating upon Brahm and the Atma all the time, even when he is asleep or going about his mundane duties in this world. The reason is that each of his breath is a repetition of the ‘Hans Mantra’ related to Brahm; he is always focused on Brahm. In this context, refer to (a) Krishna Yajur Veda—Shwetashwatar Upanishad, Canto 2, verse no. 6; Canto 6, verse no. 15; Tejobindu Upanishad, Canto 1, verse no. 3-4; Dhyan Bindu Upanishad, verse nos. 24, 61-65; Brahm Vidya Upanishad, verse nos. 16, 20-28, 34, 60-64, 78-79; Yogshikha Upanishad, Canto 1, verse nos. 131-132, Canto 2, verse nos. 9-11,

Canto 6, verse no. 20, 35-36, 53-54; Yogtattva Upanishad, verse no. 99. (b) Shukla Yajur Veda—Hanso-panishad is exclusively dedicated to explain the concept of the pure conscious Atma by way of using the metaphor of a Hans. (c) Sam Veda—Yogchudamani Upanishad, verse no. 31-35, 82-83, 93. (d) Atharva Veda—Naradparivrajak Upanishad, Canto 5, verse no. 4; Pashupata Brahm Upanishad, Canto 1, verse nos. 4, 12-22, 26-27; Canto 2, verse nos. 1-3.]

When the spiritual aspirant becomes enlightened and self-realised he becomes firmly convinced that his true identity is the ‘Hans’ that is an acronym for Brahm, the supreme transcendental cosmic Consciousness that is the Absolute Truth of creation. That is, he becomes convinced that the ‘Hans’ is none but his ‘true self’; or that ‘he is the Hans (Brahm) personified himself’. [‘Hans So-a-Ham’.]

Meditating upon this Hans makes him enlightened about the vital winds known as Pran and Apaana (which are the two primary winds in his body, the former moving upwards, and the latter moving downwards in the body). This also enlightens him about the importance of breath and its control.

[This is because only when he concentrates his mind during meditation that he is able to hear the subtle sound of ‘Ha’ and ‘Sa’ being made by the vital winds as they come in and go out of the body in the form of breath. This leads him to discover that his Atma, the pure consciousness residing in his gross body as his true ‘self’, and the Pran, the vital wind that makes the sound of Hans, are synonymous with each other. One can’t exist without the other. If there is no ‘consciousness’ or life-awareness inside the body, the latter would not breathe, and if the breath is stopped the body would die automatically, thereby snuffing out consciousness from it.]

Hence, by constant and persistent practice of this eclectic Vidya (spiritual knowledge that is obtained by steady meditation and contemplation) for a long time does one become aware of the presence of the supreme transcendental Atma known as the ‘Parmatma’, the Supreme Being, that is honoured and eulogized by the epithet ‘Satchidaanand’—one that is ‘Sat’ or truthful, one that is ‘Chit’ or consciousness, and one that is ‘Anand’ or blissful.

In other words, when the spiritual aspirant becomes self-realised, he also becomes Brahm-realised. This results in his experiencing the presence of the truthful, the conscious and the blissful Atma in his own inner-being. He becomes enlightened, and this enlightenment means he has attained knowledge of the Absolute Truth. That is, he has attained true Gyan (6).

“Verse no. 7—When one becomes self-realised and attains the highest echelons of enlightenment (i.e. he becomes a Gyani), he attains a stature of spiritualism that is as radiant and splendid as thousands of suns shining simultaneously; he becomes fulfilled and an ocean of tranquility, bliss and peacefulness like a huge and fathomless ocean whose water is absolutely calm; and he is fully soaked and completely submerged in the eclectic thoughts of the supreme transcendental Brahm with its accompanying bliss, beatitude and felicity.

This eclectic state of being is not Samadhi (the trance-like state); it is not the sign of attaining success in Yoga either. It is not the dissolution of the mind also. Rather, it is a sign of establishment of oneness between the individual ‘self’ known as the Atma with the universal ‘Self’ known as Brahm. In other words, it is the establishment of oneness

between the Jiva, the creature, and the Supreme Being. It is the union of the Atma with the Parmatma, the Supreme Being, that is the final aim of doing Yoga and attaining Samadhi. It is the endorsement and a first hand experience of the authenticity of the great metaphysical quintessential truth of the philosophy of Advaitya Vedanta that deals with the non-dual nature of the Atma and the absolute reality of creation. (7).

“Verse no. 8—This state of existence when one has become self and Brahm realised is beyond the reach and purview of Agyan (ignorance in all its connotations) as well as Tama (darkness in all its connotations). It is, on the contrary, self-illuminated, radiant and splendorous as the Aditya (sun).

Those who are steady and consistent in their spiritual pursuit analyse everything having a name and form, patiently and with due diligence, in order to peer behind the external façade and see the sublime and subtle ‘truth and reality’ that is hidden behind it. It is then that they are able to experience and witness the supreme transcendental Consciousness that is the absolute Truth of creation known as Brahm. It is then that they realise that their own ‘self’ is the same ‘consciousness’ that is known as the Atma at the microcosmic level of existence, and the Parmatma at the macrocosmic level. This leads them to be convinced that there is indeed no difference between Brahm and their individual ‘self’. In other words, they become one like the Brahm; they are fully convinced of the veracity of the statement ‘Hans So-a-Ham’, where the term ‘Hans’ indicates ‘Brahm’, and ‘Ham’ indicates their truthful ‘self’.

[The self-realised man becomes convinced about the truth and the veracity of the doctrine of Advaitya Vedanta, the philosophy of non-duality. It basically states that ‘Truth’ is always one, and it is this single Truth that is revealed in all its myriad forms in this creation. To see the world as distinct from this Truth is Avidya, while interpreting it in the context of the Truth is Vidya. Knowledge of this Truth is Gyan.] (8).

“Verse no. 9—This eclectic state of existence has been endorsed by the creator Brahma as well as the king of Gods known as Indra who is most powerful and the best amongst the Gods.

A wise, enlightened and self-realised person who knows the eclectic, sublime and divine form of Brahm, and who is fully convinced of Brahm’s all-pervading existence and irrefutable truthfulness, is able to attain not only Brahm-hood but also access the Amrit, the elixir of eternity, blissfulness, beatitude and felicity, which accompanies such Brahm-realisation.

This blessed state of spiritual existence is the truthful and correct path leading to one’s spiritual liberation, deliverance, emancipation and salvation, and there is no alternative to it (9).

“Verse no. 11—‘I am that eternal essence known as the ‘Arka’ (literally the juice, the essence, the fundamental principle) that is the basis of everything in creation. [That is, I am Brahm and the cosmic Consciousness personified.]

I am a personified form and the essence that represents the supreme ‘Jyoti’ (literally the ‘light’ representing consciousness and its eclectic knowledge, energy, divinity, sublimity, truthfulness etc.). [In other words, I am the cosmic Consciousness personified. I am fully enlightened and wise. I am truthful and divine.]

I am Shiva personified (i.e. I am most auspicious, beautiful, divine, holy, immaculate, and detached from this deluding creation—the virtues that are encapsulated in the term ‘Shiva’).

I am the Atma which is brilliant and self-illuminated like the sun.

It is me indeed who is the ‘Sukra’ (literally the sperm but here meaning the all-pervading light of consciousness) that infuses life and consciousness in all the creatures of creation.

I am the supreme ‘Jyoti’ (light; consciousness; truth) that illuminates everything in this creation. [That is, I have understood that my truthful form is the Atma which is the pure consciousness that is a universal entity which infuses life in all the living beings in this creation.

I know everything in this world, which is a metaphoric way of saying that the Atma is eternally enlightened and wise, and therefore nothing is hidden from it.]

I am never separate from that supreme Authority characterized by the above virtues; in fact I am that Authority.’ (11).

2(E)(viii) Hayagriva Upanishad, verse no. 15:--

“Verse no. 15— The first Maha Vakya is ‘Tattwamasi’—i.e. that supreme essence or truth is you; the second Maha Vakya is ‘Ayamatma’—i.e. that essence known as Brahm, the cosmic Consciousness, is my own Atma, my own ‘self’; the third Maha Vakya is ‘Brahm Aham’—i.e. Brahm is me; the fourth Maha Vakya is ‘Aham Brahmaasmi’—i.e. I am Brahm. (15).

2(E)(ix) Narad Parivraajak Upanishad, Canto 6, paragraph nos. 3-4:--

[‘Tattwamasi’ (that essence and principle is you), ‘Ayamaatma Brahm’ (my Atma is Brahm).]

“Canto 6, Paragraph no. 3—The daytime is equivalent to the Jagrat or waking state of consciousness, the night is equivalent to the Swapna or dreaming state of consciousness, and the midnight is equivalent to the Sushupta or deep sleep state of consciousness. All these three states of existence are deemed to be included in the fourth state called Turiya, and by the same logic and extension of this phenomenon, these four states are deemed to be included in the last and fifth state of existence called Turiyatit.

[The part of the night post midnight is the period when a man sleeps most soundly and peacefully. It is observed that if one does not sleep during this part of the night, he might not get proper sleep and feels worn out the next day. When a man is fast asleep and totally relaxed, he does not dream. All dreams that a man sees during sleep are bound to create some sort of reaction or response in his sub-conscious mind, though this reaction or response is at the most subtle level as compared to that which is caused in the mind by any event that occurs when the man is awake in this world. The period of sleep implied

here is that when the man does not even dream, but is fast and sound asleep. In physical terms also, the period of the night post midnight is most calm and quiet. This period usually lasts for a few hours post midnight, say till the wee hours of early morning. The best and the most relaxing sleep is obtained during this period. Hence, the Turiya state is regarded as being equivalent to this period of sleep in a metaphoric way to indicate the state of the mind which is completely relaxed and totally detached even from the imaginary world of dreams. This is a state which is most rejuvenating for the Spirit of the Sanyasi.

We can take a simple example to understand this phenomenon. A student who is currently doing his post-graduation in, say, history is supposed to have already done his graduation as well as his earlier schooling. It is absurd and incongruous to say that one has reached the level of post-graduation without having passed his school and completing his graduation? Likewise, when a spiritual aspirant has reached the transcendental state of Turiyatit it is deemed that he must have successively passed through the earlier stages of Jagrat, Swapna, Sushupta and Turiya before he has climbed the steps to reach the pinnacle of conscious existence in the transcendental state.]

Now, the functions of the fourteen instruments of the body that work under the overall control and supervision of the four aspects of the Antahakarans (the inner self) that consist of the Mana (mind), Buddhi (intellect), Chitta (sub-conscious) and Ahankar (ego, pride) are being described¹.

The main function of the eye is to create in a creature awareness of and attraction for visual things in this world that have a charming countenance or external features. The ear has the function of making sounds audible for the creature and making him aware of the existence of words and all other forms of sound that imply the presence of life in the surrounding world (because lifeless and inert entities do not emit sound, and dead creatures do not speak). The tongue has the function of tasting and making a creature aware of the various shades of taste that exist in this world. The nose has the function of smell and making the creature aware of different types of smells that exist in this world. The faculty of speech located in the mouth has the function of speaking and enabling the creature to express himself. The hand has the function of accepting or receiving anything, to give it to someone else, or to lift it and take it to some other place. The function of the leg is to walk and carry the creature's body to different places. The anus has the function of eliminating waste from the body. The genitals have the function of recreating and its associated sexual and sensual pleasures. The function of feeling and touching is carried out by the skin. [These are the gross components of the body.]

[Now the subtle components are being discussed.] The function of the Mana (mind) is to accept the sensory inputs fed in by the sense organs of the gross body as outlined above, and then consult the Buddhi (intellect aspect of the brain) so as to intelligently interpret these inputs given by the various gross organs of the body and then make proper and judicious decisions, and give effect to them so that these instruments can carry out their functions in an organized and auspicious way. The Chitta (the sub-conscious, the memory) helps to keep him conscious and internally aware and updated about the happenings, collecting data and storing them for future retrieval and reference, and generally acting as the quick-referral library for the creature. Finally, the component of Ahankar (ego, pride) makes the creature have a sense of individuality, and a feeling of having an independent existence and personality.

When the transcendental element called Consciousness weaves a web consisting of these fourteen threads or parts or components or aspects, the combined effect is the creation of an imaginary body which would naturally consist of these fourteen components. Consequentially, the Consciousness loses its originality and its pristine nature, and instead gets surrounded by this web of its own creation. The latter eventuality results in the creation of the Jiva—i.e. the result is that the eternally immaculate and transcendental Consciousness that has no physical body assumes for its self a body having various gross and subtle components, and a body that lives, interacts and perceives in this world. [That is why, this ‘consciousness’ or ‘Atma’ living inside the body of its own creation is called a ‘Jiva Atma’ or a consciousness that ‘lives’ (Jiva) in a body as its essence known as the ‘soul’ or the Atma.]

Just like a man living in a house begins to be known as a ‘householder’ because he is the proud owner and lord of this house, the Consciousness living in a body comes to be known as a Jiva—i.e. ‘the living being’².

Inside the gross body is a subtle heart which is like a lotus having eight petals. The Jiva or the ‘true self’ of the creature, i.e. his ‘pure consciousness or self’, resides in this lotus like heart. This Jiva assumes different forms depending upon the perspective with which it is viewed³.

When this Jiva (the Atma or consciousness) living inside this lotus wanders or moves around the eastern petal, it develops a tendency for doing auspicious things. When it turns towards the south-east direction, it develops a tendency of laziness, and feels drowsy and lethargic. When it turns towards the south direction, it develops a tendency of cruelty and lack of compassion. When it turns towards the south-west direction, it develops a tendency for auspicious and correct thinking. When it turns towards the western direction, it develops a tendency of remaining engrossed in sports, plays, actions and other such worldly deeds and activities that need physical effort. When it turns towards the north-west direction, its intellect begins to swerve towards nobler ideas and higher goals of life. When it turns towards the north direction, it experiences profound calmness and develops peace of mind. When it turns towards the north-east direction, it acquires eclectic wisdom and enlightenment. When it remains established in the center of the lotus in its thalamus, it develops great Vairagya or a tendency for renunciation and detachment. And when it enters the tendril of the lotus, the creature becomes aware of its pure conscious form known as the Atma (i.e. he becomes ‘self-realised’).

In this above way, when a wise ascetic becomes aware of this shoot (tendril) from which the lotus flower has emerged and which is the root cause of his existence as an individual person, he is said to be enlightened. He would have become aware of the pure consciousness called the Atma or soul that is the very essence and at the root cause of his being. When this profound truthful spiritual knowledge sprouts in his inner being, he is deemed to have attained the Turiyatit state of existence (3).

[Note—¹Refer Canto 6, verse no. 2, and Canto 5, verse no. 24 of the present Upanishad.

²Krishna Yajur Veda’s Saraswati Upanishad, verse nos. 47-48, and Rudra Hridaya Upanishad, verse nos. 41-45 describe how the Atma, the cosmic Consciousness, becomes a Jiva, and in the process outlines who a Jiva actually is.

³The Dhyān Bindu Upanishad, Krishna Yajur Veda, verse no. 93/1-93/15 also describes this context where the Atma appears to look different when viewed in different perspectives.]

“Canto 6, Paragraph no. 4—The four states in which a Jiva (living being) exists are the following—Jagrat, Swapna, Sushupta and Turiya. The fifth state called the Turiyatit state is beyond these four. [Refer Canto 5, verse nos. 24-26; Canto 8, verse nos. 9-11, 20.]

In other words, the same Atma appears to exist in four different forms depending upon these four states of a creature’s conscious existence. Hence, the Atma that lives in the Jagrat state is called ‘Vishwa’, in the Swapna state it is called ‘Taijas’, in the Sushupta state it is called ‘Pragya’, and in the Turiya state it is called ‘Tathastha’ (literally meaning non-involved, indifferent and completely neutral). The Atma or consciousness that exists beyond these four states, the Atma which exists in the transcendental state called Turiyatit, is known as the ‘Parmatma’—or the supreme Atma or the transcendental Consciousness. Since it is in ‘transcendental’ state of existence which goes beyond all the known states of worldly existence, it is natural that it rises above the gross and the mundane, and instead remains free from all the faults and shortcomings that are associated with worldly existence—i.e. the Parmatma is immaculate and devoid of all taints and corruptions that might have shrouded the Atma when it assumes a gross body while it lives in this world. [This is the reason why the Parmatma is compared to the sky because the sky stays above the gross world known as the earth and does not have any of the physical limitations of the earth.]

Again, since the wise ascetic has already realised that his true ‘self’ is the Atma that lives in the Turiyatit state of existence (refer last paragraph of verse no. 3), it is obvious that he is like this Parmatma. So he exclaims upon this eclectic discovery—‘I am Brahm (the Parmatma)!’

A person who lives perpetually in this Turiyatit state is deemed to be free from the limitations imposed by the other four states of existence. It may be argued that this Turiyatit state incorporates all the other four states of existence (as stated in the opening stanzas of verse no. 3), but in actual practice it is perpetually a completely neutral state, and anything that is profoundly and eternally neutral cannot be said to have bias towards any one or the other thing. Since there is no reversal of this state of Turiyatit, i.e. once a man reaches this transcendental state of existence he would not go back to the other four states of existence, he would not be aware of the gross world and his gross organs as done in the Jagrat state, he would not dream as in the Swapna state, he would not be in the temporary state of rest in the Sushupta state which is a transient state as the creature oscillates between the Sushupta and Swapna states while asleep, and he would not even have any junior level of spiritual evolvement as exemplified by the Turiya state which is higher than the Sushupta state but lower than the Turiyatit state. This is because he has reached the highest point in his spiritual journey and has reached its pinnacle or citadel. There is no existence beyond it; it is the supreme state in which the consciousness can ever expect to exist. Hence, it is honoured by the epithet ‘Param’—one that is supreme and beyond which there is nothing.

Since the eternal and truthful Atma (here referring the cosmic transcendental form of the Atma known as Consciousness, rather than the microcosmic form of the Atma that lives inside the body of the individual creature as its Jiva-Atma) is the only conscious and

living entity that exists in all of these states of existence, it is deemed to be the only one witness of their presence.

[The gross body ceases to exist in the other states except the Jagrat state. The subtle body consisting of the mind ceases to exist in the Sushupta state. The causal body that harbours the individual's Atma ceases to exist when the creature dies and leaves the gross body. So, none of them are eternal. The Atma itself, though it is eternal and immaculate by nature, becomes mired in the delusions of the world, allows itself to be trapped in the web-like snare created out of its own free will as described earlier in verse no. 3, then remains engrossed in doing so many deeds and suffering from their consequences, has various desires and assumes so many roles voluntarily. Hence, it is also not apparently steady. In other words, the Atma that is called a 'Jiva Atma' is influenced by the environment in which it lives; it is tainted by its surroundings. As compared to this situation, the Parmatma is unaffected by worldly things and is beyond the reach or influence of anything gross and mundane that pertains to this creation, whether it is good or bad. Hence, in this scenario, the only entity that remains constant and unchanging is the Parmatma, the supreme form of the individual Atma which is also known as Brahm. That is also why the latter is called the Absolute Truth—because the latter does not change.

A simple illustration will help to clear the idea. The celestial sun is unmoving and shining brilliantly in a uniform manner. But when seen from earth, it appears to move and even change its brilliance depending upon a number of environmental factors such as the presence of clouds, humidity, dust particles etc. in the atmosphere, etc. The sun also appears to rise and set, is hidden from view behind dark clouds, or even disappears during solar eclipses. But even a high school student knows that none of this is true. Similarly, the disc of the moon appears to have its own light whereas it merely reflects the light of the sun, and it also appears to change its contours every night though this is due to the different angles from which it is viewed from earth every night as a result of its revolution around the earth. The same argument applies to the Parmatma vis-à-vis the Jiva Atma. The Parmatma is like the sun, and the Jiva Atma is like the moon that shines in the light of the sun.]

Since the Parmatma represents that superior aspect of the cosmic Consciousness that is absolutely neutral and detached from everything, including Maya (delusions), it is beyond the purview of the four normal states of conscious existence of a creature. The Atma living in the Turiyatit state is called a Parmatma. In this state, it cannot be called a 'Drasta' of anything, or the one who sees anything, observes anything, or is a witness to anything—because this is a completely neutral and detached state of existence in which the mind and all the other faculties are defunct, and in which nothing matters for the super-conscious Atma¹.

In such a case, should one regard the Jiva (the living being) as the Drasta? [That is, if the Parmatma is not the Drasta or the one who sees, observes and witnesses anything because of its sublime cosmic existence and neutral character, then can one treat the creature that has a gross existence in a visible world of material sense objects as the seer, observer and witness?]

No, the Jiva (living being) is also not the Drasta in the true sense because his 'true self' is the Atma that is a most subtle and sublime entity which is really not involved in anything related to the gross body as well as the gross world. This Atma is pure

consciousness like the Parmatma (which is the ‘supreme Atma’ or the cosmic Consciousness which is the macrocosmic form of the individual creature’s Atma). The Atma possesses all the virtues of the Parmatma in the sense that it is equally neutral, dispassionate, detached etc. from anything gross and untrue. The problem arises only when the creature, under the influence of delusions and ignorance, begins to identify himself with the gross body in which this Atma lives and erroneously begins to treat this body as his ‘true self and identity’. This body lives and interacts with the gross material world of sense objects.

So, when the creature begins to identify himself with the body, he becomes a ‘Drasta’ because then he begins to ‘see and perceive’ this world through the organs of perception of the body. Now he becomes someone who ‘sees’, someone who perceives, feels, tastes, touches, smells etc. The world becomes his object of perception or the ‘Drisya’. The Drasta (the seer or observer) is affected naturally by the Drisya (the objects or things seen or observed). The sight influences him and creates either a positive or a negative impression on his sub-conscious and psyche. Such a creature cannot remain immune from, unaffected by or indifferent to his surroundings and what he ‘sees’ simply because his mind and intellect are not attuned to see the ‘truth’. Had they been so, the creature would have realised that the body—which actually does the seeing or perceiving of the objects of the world—is not his truthful identity at all in the first place. The fact that he has not realised what his true nature is becomes the breeding ground for illusions of his being a ‘Drasta’ or the seer. Such a ‘Drasta’ gets embroiled in the affairs of the gross world because he ‘sees’ this world as being true—though this perception is absolutely erroneous.

On the other hand is the person who can be regarded as a ‘neutral Drasta or a non-Drasta’. This wise man knows that his ‘true form’ is not the body but the Atma that lives in this body. Such a wise and erudite man would do things in this world like another ‘ordinary’ man, but with the difference that he does not get involved in anything the body does at the emotional and sub-conscious level. His mind neither gets involved in what his body does, nor does it register or store any information in its memory bank regarding the humdrum affairs of the world.

Therefore it is derived that the same Jiva Atma (a living being) can either be a ‘Drasta’ or a ‘non-Drasta’ depending upon the level of its wisdom and intellectual development in the spiritual sphere. That is, everything depends on the level in which a living being’s Atma or pure consciousness exists in this world. In other words, at the lower level and grosser level of existence of the consciousness, the Jiva becomes a ‘Drasta’, while at the higher level of existence he is a ‘non-Drasta’. A Drasta is involved in and influenced by the world, while the non-Drasta is uninvolved and neutral.

In other words, if the Atma relates itself to the world—whether at the gross level corresponding to the Jagrat state known as the waking state of consciousness in the physical world, or at the lower subtle level corresponding to the Swapna state known as the dreaming state of consciousness in the world of dreams—then this Atma is known as the ‘Drasta’. But when the same Atma lives in the Turiya state of consciousness that transcends these levels of existence of consciousness—when it is completely detached from the world, the physical body and the subtle mind—then it is known as the ‘non-Drasta’.]

Now suppose it is said that the Jiva's (living being's) true nature is not to remain involved in worldly affairs as his 'true form' is the Atma which is pure consciousness that is equivalent to the cosmic Consciousness called the Parmatma, then this logic also does not hold its ground of validity. This is because as soon as the Atma assumes a gross body, it is immediately shrouded by the ego and pride of having a body. It is almost impossible to find a living being or a Jiva who would not accept that he has a body. In fact, the very concept of being a 'Jiva' rests on the premise that the Atma has a body. Therefore, if this notion of being a possessor of a body is done away with, it is only then that the Jiva becomes equivalent to the Parmatma. [The Atma is proud of the body because this body gives the Atma its form, its identity as an individual; it is by the medium of the gross body that the Atma is able to perform stupendous tasks in this world, achieves success in various fields and acquire name and fame; it is the body which helps the Atma to do deeds that are righteous, noble, auspicious and holy. The Atma is only a Spirit without a form, and to be identified it needs a physical form which the body provides. Hence, the Atma is proud of its association with the body. This stokes the ego and makes the Atma possessive of the body.]

In other words, the difference between a Jiva and the Parmatma is just like the difference between the Ghatakash and the Mahakash. [The Ghatakash is the space present inside a hollow pitcher, and the Mahakash is the vast open sky outside the vessel. The Ghatakash is separated from the Mahakash by the physical body of the pitcher. Actually there is no distinction between the space inside and outside the pitcher, for if the vessel is broken the two spaces coalesce instantly and effortlessly.] The two names of the same thing are given only in an abstract manner for the purpose of study, for in actuality there is no difference. So therefore, a Jiva has a distinct existence only as long as it has the body—or is conscious that it has the body, and as soon as this awareness of the body is removed, the two—the Jiva and the Parmatma—become one.

[Another instance is cited now.] The same breath moves out and in the body as exhalation and inhalation. While doing so, it makes two distinct sounds—'Ha' and 'Sa' respectively. That is, while moving out the sound is equivalent to the letter 'Ha' of the Sanskrit language, and when moving in the sound is equivalent to the letter 'Sa'. This forms the Mantra 'Hans', meaning a divine Swan. In other words, the Jiva's Pran or vital winds also display artificial distinction as being exhaled breath and inhaled breath though the air is the same entity that cannot be distinguished and mutated. A wise, self-realised and enlightened ascetic understands the esoteric message encrypted in this sound of Hans. He realises that the breath is telling him that he is like the divine bird Swan which is regarded as the purest and the wisest amongst the birds². So, a wise ascetic always concentrates upon his pure and enlightened form known as the Atma that has no physical body like this wind or air element which too has no physical body. The Atma then becomes equivalent to the Parmatma.

With this sublime and eclectic spiritual view firmly established in his inner self, the enlightened ascetic discards all sense of ego and pride vis-à-vis the body. And when this happens, he becomes one with the Parmatma (as explained above) (4).

[Note—¹The word 'Drasta' (pronounced "Drastaa") means one who sees, observes something. It is the mind that registers any sight that is seen, or any other perception for that matter, in order to enable the man to actually see or perceive the particular thing. For instance, a man might be gazing at something continuously but he might not be actually

seeing it because his mind is lost in some other thoughts. In the present case when we refer to an ascetic in the Turiyatit state of existence we find that he is so much absorbed in meditation and reflection upon the truth of the Atma, his pure consciousness, and remains submerged in its thoughts and the bliss derived from it that he is totally oblivious about the surroundings. So he lives in a perpetual trance, and though he might beg for food or take a bath in the river, actually, at the mental level, he is not doing anything at all. If one asks him anything about his actions, his answer naturally would be in the negative, and in this he would be speaking the actual and sincere truth.

This also explains the difference between the Turiya and the Turiyatit states. The living being who has vestiges of awareness left in him, even of the fact that he is an ascetic or a Sanyasi, or the fact that he is enlightened and wise, may have risen above the rest of the creatures and live in a Turiya state of trance-like existence that resembles Turiyatit state, but he has not achieved truthful success. That comes when he reaches the Turiyatit state of complete unawareness and neutrality—or a state of ‘non-knowledge’. Obviously, a man who has no true knowledge of anything would not be able to see or hear or feel or taste or smell anything, simply because he does not know what these things mean or from where they originate or how to perceive them or distinguish between any two of them. This state is the truthful Turiyatit state. The Atma that lives in this eclectic transcendental state is the superior Atma called the ‘Parmatma’. It is exemplarily neutral and dispassionate. It does not see and bear witness to any thing or event. It is not concerned with anything. Hence it is called a non-Drasta—one who does not see.

²The concept of Hans and the Mantra ‘Hans’ has been described in a number of Upanishads. The enlightened and realised person thinks of himself as a Swan and feels exhilarated that he is not an ordinary man bogged down by worldly fetters, but an exalted soul that is like a Swan.

The bird ‘Swan’ or the ‘Hans’ is considered the most pure, clean, wise, erudite and clever among the birds. It is said to eat pearls, which means it picks up and accepts only the best amid the variety of things available to it in the form of an assortment of various gems and jewels representing the dazzling charms of this world. It is also reputed to drink milk leaving aside the water content in it symbolising its ability to imbibe the essence and the best, and leave the rest aside. It is also the vehicle of Goddess Saraswati, the patron Goddess of knowledge, wisdom, intelligence, speech and learning, indicating that it bears these glorious virtues. Hence, the reference to a swan while describing a creature conscious of the vital wind or Pran passing through him means the basic, inherent and intrinsic tendency of that wisened and intelligent creature is to be the best, most pure and divine, wise, awakened and enlightened, adroit, clever and sagacious like the swan, and pick all the goodness and forsake all that is bad in this world. Saraswati rides on a swan, symbolising the creature’s inborn enlightenment and excellence of his mental caliber. Symbolically, Saraswati resides in his Pran because it rides on the swan, i.e. in his heart, throat and mind—that is, his heart has purity of emotions, he speaks well of all, and his wise words are sought after by all as priceless gems of wisdom, and his mind is intelligent, discerning and noble. A wise man is expected to pick the truth from amongst the basket of assorted charms present in this creation, and leave aside the non-truths.

The alphabet 'Ha' of the word 'Hans' is sounded by the vibration of the exhaled wind passing through the vocal cords present in the throat or the wind pipe which connects to the nose, while the alphabet 'Sa' is sounded by the root of the tongue which opens into the mouth when the breath is inhaled. Both the nose and the mouth open in the same cavity called the throat. Hence, the inter relationship between 'Ha' and 'Sa' is evident. The main objective of this Upanishad is to make the Yogi (a person who follows its tenets of meditation) aware that he is like the divine swan, but he was unaware of his own divinity and sublimity, his exalted and noble stature, till that was pointed out to him. So he must become one like a 'swan', remind himself constantly that he is like a swan, and he must not do anything or act in anyway which is not befitting his exalted and superior status which is equivalent to a wise swan.

During the twenty-four hour period covering a single day and night, a person inhales and exhales, or breathes, roughly twenty-one thousand times, because each cycle of inhalation and exhalation is equivalent to saying one Mantra 'Hans' consisting of the two syllables 'Ha and Sa' (refer Dhyānbindu Upanishad, verse no. 63).]

“Canto 7, Paragraph no. 8—The three types of Sanyasis such as the Turiyatit, the Avadhut and the Param-hans (i.e. those enlightened persons who have completely renounced all falsehoods and delusions associated with this world and all entities that are 'non-Atma' or 'non-spiritual Truths'), are the only ones who have the authority to preach the great sayings or the Mahavakyas of the scriptures such as 'Tattwamasi' (that essence and principle is you), 'Ayamaatma Brahm' (my Atma is Brahm) etc.

2(E)(x) Narad Parivraajak Upanishad, Canto 7, verse no. 8:--

['Tattwamasi' (that essence and principle is you), 'Ayamaatma Brahm' (my Atma is Brahm).]

“Canto 7, verse no. 8— A Hans Sanyasi and a Param-hans Sanyasi should do only Dhyān¹ or focus their mind in deep contemplation and meditation.

A Turiyatit Sanyasi and an Avadhut Sanyasi are required to research upon their Atma, which is pure and enlightened consciousness and a fountainhead of bliss, beatitude and felicity, and do nothing else. [In other words, they do meditation and contemplation like the Hans and the Param-hans Sanyasis, but they have advanced to a higher level as compared to their brethren, the Hans and the Param-Hans Sanyasis. Their focus is on more deep penetration of the numerous layers that shroud the truth about the Atma rather than doing meditation and contemplation as a preparatory ground for self-realisation. In fact, there is not much of a difference between what is prescribed for a Turiyatit and Avadhut Sanyasi on the one hand, and for a Hans and a Param-Hans Sanyasi on the other hand as would be clear by the note appended below. It is actually two ways of saying the same thing. Only the degree and depth of concentration could vary, as can the method employed to carry out Dhyān. But the aim of the exercise in both the cases is to concentrate the faculties of the mind and the intellect to realise the 'ultimate Truth' about

the 'self' which is known as the Atma, and which can provide the Sanyasi the way for his spiritual liberation and deliverance, for his spiritual emancipation and salvation.]

The three types of Sanyasis such as the Turiyatit, the Avadhut and the Param-hans are the only ones who have the authority to preach the great sayings or the Mahavakyas of the scriptures such as 'Tattwamasi' (that essence and principle is you), 'Ayamaatma Brahm' (my Atma is Brahm) etc.

The other three types of Sanyasis such as the Kutichak, the Bahudak and the Hans are not authorized to preach the Mahavakyas (8).

[Note—¹The word "Dhyan" (pronounced as "Dhyaan") literally means 'to think or to cogitate'. It is profound and abstract meditation that revolves around reflection and thoughts that are focused on the Divinity said to be concealed inside the bosom of all the creatures as their pure consciousness that in turn is the supreme cosmic power in creation known as Brahm. Usually the energy of this cosmic Consciousness is lying latent and unused in the own body of the creature simply because it is in a dormant form and unignited much like the fire lying dormant in the firewood or charcoal and needing some prodding to leap back into life with all its glorious potentials and splendour. Dhyan envisages the concentration of the stupendous powers of the faculties of the mind to deeply contemplate and fixedly ponder on the great spiritual truths of creation as envisioned by the scriptures to unravel their enigmatic secrets. This is done by fixing the powerful forces of the mind which is aided by the physical contribution of the body in this auspicious endeavour in the form of various meditative exercises, onto a spot called the 'Bindu', literally the point source of spiritual energy located in the heart as the 'Atma or soul' of the creature, as also in the centre of the eyebrows as 'awareness and enlightenment', from where the great mystical powers in creation spring out and spread into the outside world. It envisions the use of various Yoga techniques to contemplate and meditate upon the various aspects of spiritualism with the objective of unfolding the magnificent treasure of spiritual enlightenment and unleashing of the astounding mystical powers that are inherently present in the Atma but tacitly concealed hitherto, leading to self and Brahm realisation, to the awakening of the universal powers of the Spirit.

Dhyan means both contemplation as well as meditation. The word also means 'attention; focus'. So this word is generally understood in common parlance to be similar to contemplation and meditation, concentration and focusing of the conscious mind. It covers both the terms in its ambit.

The appropriate word for contemplation in Sanskrit would be 'Manan and Chintan' which will roughly mean 'deep thought, reflection, pondering and application of mind'. The Upanishads stress on this 'Chintan-manan' aspect of the mind-intellect when it talks about 'Dhyan'. Greatest of scientific discoveries were made more by intuition than anything else. That is why intuition is closely related to the so-called 'sixth sense' in a man, i.e. a state when the intuitive man knows what is the correct path to chose from a variety of options, and more often than not, he is correct. We can say that this 'intuition' is the guidance provided by the subtle soul/Atma of the creature. Not everybody is equally intuitive by nature; this is because some persons, by virtue of their past actions and deeds have a thicker layer of Vasanas and Vrittis surrounding their Atma while others have a thinner layer so that the voice coming out of the Atma is easily heard in the latter case while it is muzzled and suppressed in the former case.

The great exponent of Yoga, sage Patanjali, in his magnum opus ‘Yog sutra’ has described ‘Dhyan’ as concentration. Dhyan is that state in which the inner mind tries to see the reality behind things. This ‘thinking’ process links it with contemplation while concentration function links it with meditation. According to Agni Puran, contemplation with a calm mind is Dhyan while Garuda Puran has defined it as concentration on the Brahman. Dhyan, therefore, leads to enlightenment. Woodworth, in his book ‘Psychology’, writes that the mind concentrates on one impulse at a time and neglects others. So, Dhyan in this context means ‘to become alert and activated for doing a work or seeing an object exclusively’. Dhyan is momentary in the beginning, but it becomes permanent later on with practice. Sidney Smith defines Dhyan as ‘to forget everything else except the main objective’. Charles Dickens views Dhyan as ‘useful, harmless, definite and a beneficial process of the mind’. According to Bergansa, ‘suppression of external distractions is essential for the deepening expansion of Dhyan’. Edgar Casey says that ‘Dhyan brings to the fore the latent powers of creativity in a person. This creativity improves and enriches his physical, mental and spiritual aspects’. John White in his renowned work ‘The meeting of science and spirit’ has enumerated many benefits of Dhyan— promotion of physical health, reduction of tension, anxiety and aggressiveness, it leads to self realisation and self improvement and development. He further says that the benefits of meditation are the following—feeling of tranquillity, freedom, reduction of tiredness and depression, relief from pains, increase in positive traits such as sympathy and empathy for others, believe in divinity and purity of self etc. Michael Murphy and Steven Donovan, in their research work titled ‘The physical and psychological effects of meditation’ have mentioned that meditation/Dhyan helps to regulate and control electrical and chemical activity of the brain, the rhythm of the heart, regulates blood pressure, the skin’s ability to resist infection and it regulates general metabolism.

The great philosopher sage Sankaracharya has explained that the many Vedic rituals such as sacrifices had been transformed as mental concepts for contemplation and meditation by Chandogya Upanishad because any defect in the performance of a ritual according to the Vedas, however small and inconsequential, could devalue and derail the whole process. Further, elaborate rituals required huge preparation and expenditure. So he prescribed that meditation was far better, safer and surer means of attaining the same benefits that elaborate sacrifices offered. Contemplation and meditation are equally efficient in spiritual pursuit of the aspirant. Nevertheless, the former (contemplation) has intellect and mind as its main focus while the latter (meditation) concentrates on the mind and body to be effective. Sacrifices, as compared to them, are merely physical rituals.

As is evident, the chariot moves in the proper direction when all the horses are controlled simultaneously. So a holistic and an all-inclusive, well synchronised and homogenous approach is needed by a seeker/aspirant to attain success in his endeavour to get liberation and deliverance from the horrible torments agitating him as well as to attain emancipation and salvation for its soul from this world.]

2(E)(xi) Param Hans Parivraajak Upanishad, paragraph nos. 3-4:--

[“Brahm Twam Yagyastwam” or ‘Brahm, you are personified in the form of the sacred fire of the sacrifice; paragraph no. 4—“Tattwamasi”—that essence is you.]

“Paragraph no. 3—After having taken the vows of Sanyas (i.e. a life of total renunciation of the world and all spiritual illusions associated with it) in a systematic manner by offering oblations to the Atma (i.e. worshipping the pure ‘self’ and being firmly convinced that this Atma is the supreme Brahm personified), purging it of all worldly impurities (symbolizing various Vaasnas and Vrittis or worldly desires, habits and obligations pertaining to this world that all human beings have to a greater or lesser degree), and doing the ‘Virja Hom’ (the fire sacrifice done at the time of taking the vows of Sanyas, and offering oblations to the sacred fire) whereby the sacred fire element is established in his own Atma, the aspiring Parivrajak (Sanyasi) should break off all connections with the world by passing on his responsibilities and obligations to his son. [It is like a ceremony of ‘passing the baton’. It is a part of the cycle of creation whereby the old gives way smoothly to the new, and continuity is maintained without a hitch.]

In case a son is not available, then the same procedure should be followed for one’s disciple or follower. If any disciple or follower is not available then the same procedure should followed and the inheritance should be passed on to one’s own Atma. [The Atma is a universal entity as it is pure consciousness that is uniform and universal in nature. The implication here is that in case no specific person is available to accept the inheritance or the legacy being left behind by the Sanyasi, he should leave it to the society as a whole. It is such a grand vision of inheritance envisioned and expounded by Upanishadic thinkers that has the essential idea which says that nothing belongs to a man, he should never think that he has exclusive right to anything because everything is to be left behind when one makes his final exit from this world. Since the Atma is a universal entity and all human beings have equal right over what the Lord has provided in this world, therefore whosoever enjoys the things left behind by the Sanyasi is deemed to be enjoyed by the Atma which is a personified form of the Lord himself. Unless the Sanyasi has developed this holistic, all-inclusive and equanimous view of creation, he has no right to be truly called a Parivrajak!]

He should pronounce the words ‘Brahm Twam Yagyastwam’ (‘Brahm you are personified in the form of the sacred fire of the sacrifice’) and remember Brahm with full devotion and submission.

Then he should make the following declarations which encapsulate the great sayings, called the Maha Vakyas, of the Vedas—viz. ‘Aham Brahmasmi’ (I am Brahm), ‘Tattwamasi’ (You are that essence known as Brahm) etc. He should constantly meditate and contemplate upon these Maha Vakyas and research the Truth about himself. [That is, he must ponder deeply into the hidden meaning of the great tenets of the scriptures and strive to personally witness and experience the application of the truth of the Maha Vakyas. This can be achieved by concentrating upon his inner-self to realise the Atma or the pure consciousness that resides in his bosom.]

“Paragraph no. 4—He should approach a learned Guru (moral preceptor and teacher) to be formally initiated. He should bow before him in reverence and accept the Maha-Vakya (i.e. the great saying of the Vedas) ‘Tattwamasi’ (‘that art thou’; i.e. the Brahm you are seeking is none but you; the essence of creation is you) as a Mantra from the Guru. [At the time of initiation into a religious fold, the Guru gives a certain Mantra to the disciple as a key to his success. Since the candidate in this case is about to take the vows of

Sanyas, the best Mantra is Tattwamasi because it enlightens him about the truth of his own self.]

Once again, this Mantra is prefixed with the divine word OM (to indicate that the teacher is addressing the supreme Brahm when he makes this declaration, and to establish its trustworthiness).

Enlightening himself by acquiring comprehensive spiritual knowledge (got by diligent study of the Upanishads) and treading wisely on the path of Brahm-realisation, he should turn inwards and hide his emotions and feelings within. He should strive to become free from all attachments and affections of all sorts, and instead focus his attention on the Atma, the pure consciousness, by becoming spiritually oriented.

He should abandon the following negative traits—Kaam (worldly passions and lust), Krodh (anger, wrathfulness), Lobh (greed, rapacity), Moha (affections, infatuations, attachments and attractions), Mada (arrogance, hypocrisy, haughtiness), Matsarya (jealously and envy that lead to anger and wrath), Dambha (deceit and conceit, falsehood and lies), Darpa and Ahankar (pride, arrogance, conceit, rashness, boastfulness, false sense of grandiose), Asuya (malice, envy, jealousy, detraction), Garva (same as Ahankar and Darpa), Ichha (aspirations, desires and wants), Dwesh (having animosity, ill-will, jealousy, hatred and malice), Harsha (having joys, feeling happy and exhilarated as from some good news), Amarsh (intolerance and its attendant anger, wrathfulness and jealousy), Mamatwa (to have affections and endearment for anything or anyone; to be emotionally attached with something or someone), and other such worldly traits that are ensnaring by their inherent nature.

Instead of the above negative traits he should inculcate the following positive ones—He should arm himself with the eclectic virtues of Gyan (truthful knowledge, wisdom and enlightenment) and Vairagya (renunciation, detachment and dispassion), should turn his back to material wealth and lust for sensual pleasures, should study all the Upanishads comprehensively with an open and receptive mind, should strictly follow the tenets of Brahmacharya (sexual abstinence as well as exemplary self-control over the sense organs to inculcate self discipline), Aparigraha (giving away of assets or possessions; non-accumulation; renunciation of the highest degree), Ahinsa (non-violence, both physical as well as mental), Satya (truthfulness in a holistic way), and Jitendriya (one who has conquered the wayward tendency, the restlessness and rashness of the sense organs of the body; one who exercises exemplary self control over the gross organs of the body).

He should be free from any kind of ‘Raag’ (having any sort of infatuation, attraction, attachment, affection and favour) for anything or anybody or any situation, both internally (i.e. mentally and sub-consciously) as well as externally (i.e. natural tendency of the sense organs to seek self-gratification).

A wise person who follows this principle develops a sense of equanimity and treats everyone as being equivalent to Brahm; he distinguishes between none, as all are Brahm personified in his view (4).”

2(E)(xii) Tripura Tapini Upanishad, Canto 5, verse no. 20:--

['I am Brahm'.]

“Canto 5, verse no. 20—Focus your attention on the ‘Gyan Netra’.

[This refers to center of the forehead, between the two eyebrows. It is here that ‘Agya Chakra’, or the subtle energy center which control wisdom and learning, is located. Ascetics strive to focus their attention on this spot, and when successfully done it gives them stupendous mystical ability to see and know the unseen and the unknown. This spot and the process of focusing on it are extensively described in the Upanishads dealing with Yoga. Here it means that the preacher, Lord Shiva, teaches his disciples, the Gods, to see the reality with the eyes of wisdom, erudition and enlightenment. Spiritual truths and esoteric realities cannot be seen with the gross organ of sight of the equally gross body, the organ known as the eye. To see the truth that is as enigmatic, mysterious and esoteric as the Atma and Brahm, one need to have the ‘Eye of Gyan’, known as the ‘Gyan (enlightenment and wisdom) Netra (eye)’.]

This will help you to realise the truth of the statement ‘I am Brahm’. [This is because you would have become self-realised; you would have experienced the presence of the self-illuminated Atma, the pure consciousness that pervades in each pore of your existential body. Since this Atma is a personification of Brahm, it is obvious that you would be convinced that you are indeed Brahm personified.]

This Brahm is supreme, great and majestic; this Brahm is the ultimate abode or destination; this Brahm has no parts and is immutable; this Brahm is taintless and immaculate; this Brahm is steady, constant, universal and uniform; this Brahm is absolutely calm, tranquil, peaceful and serene. [20].”

2(E)(xiii) Manduk Upanishad, verse nos. 1-7:--

1. The esoteric, enigmatic, ethereal and sublime ‘Akshar’ known as OM (literally meaning “the word OM”, but also implying an entity that is imperishable and eternal, which is the supreme transcendental Brahm to which OM actually refers) is all there that exists in this creation. All that existed in the past, exists in the present, and would come into existence in the future—they are all manifestations of OM, they are all elaborations of OM because they define and reveal OM in various forms. [This word OM is a sort of name of Brahm; it is a representative of Brahm. Since everything in existence has emerged from Brahm, it follows that everything is a revelation of OM as a representative of Brahm. Therefore, this world reveals and makes the astounding glories and magnificence of OM representing Brahm clear for every creature to see and understand.]

Not only this world but whatever that exists that is beyond its limit and is beyond the imagination of the mind is also OM personified or revealed in that form. [And since OM is a name assigned to the Supreme Being known as the Brahm, the cosmic Consciousness and the Absolute Truth of creation, it follows that this entire creation is Brahm manifested in its form.] (1).

2. Indeed, this entire world is nothing but Brahm manifested in this form. Similarly, the Atma, the pure consciousness or the ‘self’ of the living being, is also nothing but Brahm.

That Brahm (at the cosmic level) and this Atma (at the individual level) both have four aspects called the ‘Paads’ (literally meaning step or foot) (2).

3. [Verse nos. 3-7 describes the four states in which Brahm exists. These are the four ‘Paads’ or literally the legs, aspects or revelations of Brahm. These four states of existence of creation representing the supreme transcendental Consciousness known as ‘Brahm’ have been explained with a different perspective in Sam Veda’s Chandogya Upanishad, Canto 3, section 18, verse nos. 2-6, Canto 4, Section 5, verse no. 2, Canto 4, Section 6, verse no. 3, Canto 4, Section 7, verse no. 3, and Canto 4, Section 8, verse no. 3; and in Krishna Yajur Veda’s Brahm Upanishad, verse no. 1.]

The first ‘Paad’ or aspect of Brahm and Atma is called Vaishwanar¹. This aspect of Brahm known as the Vaishwanar is the revealer and regulator of the visible world as it corresponds to the waking state of consciousness. It is this gross aspect of Brahm that makes the creature’s Atma (i.e. his true conscious self) becomes aware of the visible world. It therefore corresponds to the Jagrat or waking state of consciousness² which makes the creature aware of the external world.

This gross aspect (i.e. gross body) of Brahm (in the form of this vast world) has seven ‘Angas’ or body parts or units or divisions³, and nineteen ‘Mukhas’ or mouths⁴.

This form of Brahm is the enjoyer and consumer of all the material things in this world (because it is able to perceive this world with its material sense objects and get enticed by their charms).

This form of Brahm is called the ‘Vishwa’ or the physical gross and visible world in which the creature lives and with which he interacts. [It is from this word ‘Vishwa’ that the term Vaishwanar is derived.] (3).

[Note—¹The term Vaishwanar in simple words means the form of Brahm that is as large and as vast as the universe, enclosing it from all sides like a moat of a fort, and even existing beyond it. This all-inclusive, all-pervading and all-encompassing macrocosmic form of Brahm is the Vishwa or the vast physical world of infinite dimensions, because this world is a manifestation of Brahm, it is Brahm revealed in its myriad and diverse forms, and it is the glory of Brahm on display. In fact, if one wishes to witness Brahm, he must observe Brahm at play in this world itself. The physical aspect of Brahm in the form of the visible world is equivalent to the Jagrat state of consciousness because it is in this state that the creature sees or perceives the physical presence of the world. Here the word ‘creature’ refers to his Atma or soul which is pure consciousness and his true self. This Atma is called Vaishwanar because, like Brahm, it is manifested as all forms of life in this world.

²The 1st stage is called waking or Jagrat. During this state, a creature’s sense organs that constitute its gross body are active and they receive inputs from the physical material world outside which they in turn transfer to the mind which forms the creature’s subtle body. This mind then filters through the clutter of information, then either orders the organs of action to respond accordingly, or it consults its supervisor, the intellect, for advice. Meanwhile, the mind stores all the information in its data bank for future

reference much like the record room of an office. The true self of the creature, the pure conscious Atma, is like the King in whose secretariat the mind and intellect work, and therefore the Atma is the final Authority which takes the final decision and is responsible for all the things done by each of these individual entities. Even as the King cannot absolve himself for the sins committed by his subjects during his rule or plead ignorance of whatever is happening in his kingdom though he is not directly involved in them or in the day to day routine work of the kingdom as he stays in his palace and cannot be practically expected to control each movement in his kingdom, but he is morally responsible for them and cannot deny this responsibility. Similarly, the Atma of the creature is responsible for each and every thing that the creature does though the Atma is limited to its palace-like residence in the heart of the creature. So, the otherwise immaculate Atma is accused of things that body or mind of the creature does because the Atma is at the helm of affairs.

During this Jagrat state, the Atma interacts with the outside world through the medium of the sense organs of the gross body (i.e. the physical body). The sense organs of perception of the body collect information from the external world and pass them over to the mind, which in turn processes them and passes necessary instructions to the organs of action on the one hand, and files data for future reference in its memory bank on the other hand. The mind would also refer to the intellect those things which are not routine in nature. It is the transcendental state of supreme enlightenment and self-realisation.

The Jagrat state is when the consciousness is aware of the external world of material objects, and this is made possible through the medium of the sense organs of perceptions such as the eye, ear, nose, tongue and skin which enables the creature to respectively see, hear, smell, taste and feel this world. The creature's responses are carried out with the help of the organs of action such as the hands which receive, the legs that take him to the desired place, the mouth that helps him to speak and eat, the excretory organs that helps it to eliminate waste from the body, and the genitals which helps him to recreate and enjoy the sensual pleasures of the world. These organs are located in the gross body, and since the world is experienced through them, the latter is also deemed to be gross. The coordination of all the perceptions and actions is done by the mind-intellect which is the subtle part of the body.

This Jagrat state has been explained in Brihad Aranyaka Upanishad of Shukla Yajur Veda, Canto 2, Brahman 1, verse no. 20; Canto 4, Brahman 3, verse nos. 16-19, 31, 34-35.

³The seven parts of the Vaishwanar Brahm's body have two interpretations. One way of considering them is related to the seven Lokas or subtle worlds that exist. These seven worlds are the following— The seven Bhuvans or Lokas according to the Purans are the following:--According to Brahmaand Puran (BP) and Vaaman Puran (VP) there are the following Lokas-- 'Bhu' or earth [BP-3,4,2-18]; 'Bhuvaha' or the space between the earth and the heaven [BP-3,4,2-19]; 'Swaha' or the heavens known as Brahma's abode; the space beyond the earth's atmosphere; cosmic wind represented by the solar wind blows here [BP-3,4,2-20]; 'Maha' or the world created by Brahma pronouncing the divine word Maha meaning the great heaven or the outer space; it is believed that great sages and seers stay here; it is 1000 Yogans or appx. 8000 miles away from the Swaha Loka [BP-3,4,2-21; VP-52,21-22]; 'Janaha', so called because it was to be inhabited by

the humans and the cows [BP-3,4,2-22; VP-52, 22]; ‘Tapaha’ or the Loka where great amount of austerity and penances are done; it is said to be 60 million Yojans or appx. 60 x 8 million miles away from the Janaha Loka [BP-3,4,2-24; VP-52, 23]; and ‘Satyam’ or the truthful heaven where the supreme Lord has his abode; it is 300 million Yojans or appx. 300 x 8 million miles beyond the Tapaha Loka [BP-3,4,2-25; VP-52, 24].

The seven Bhuvans or Lokas according to the Vedantic view are the following:-- the seven organs of perception situated in the region of the head —viz. the two eyes + two ears + two nostrils + one tongue/mouth = seven. Refer Mundak Upanishad of Atharva Veda, Canto 2, section 1, verse no. 8.

Another way of interpreting the seven parts of the Vaishwanar’s cosmic body are the following units of creation—the Duloka or the heavens is its head, the Sun (representing the fire element) and the Moon (representing light) are its two eyes, the Vayu or the air element is its Pran or vital life giving winds with which it breathes and which infused life in the units of its cosmic body, the Akash or the sky is its abdomen in which all the organs of the Vaishwanar’s body are located just like the man’s abdomen encloses all his organs, the Aapha or water is its fluid part such as its blood, mucous and semen, the Anna or food produced in the world is its intestines and rectum (as it is the food that is digested in the intestines to sustain the body and its residue is collected in the rectum before being expelled from the anus), and the Prithivi or earth is its two legs.

⁴The nineteen mouths of the Vaishwanar Brahm are the following—10 sense organs consisting of five organs of perception (eye, ear, nose, tongue, skin) and five organs of action (hand, leg, mouth, excretory, genitals) + 5 Prans (or the vital winds such as Pran or breath, Apan, Samaan, Vyan and Udaan) + 1 Mana (mind) + 1 Buddhi (intellect) + Ahankar (ego, self pride) + Chitta (sub-conscious) = 19. These are the components through which the creature interacts with the world—or ‘sees’ the visible world during his Jagrat or waking state of consciousness.]

4. The second ‘Paad’ or aspect of Brahm and the Atma is equivalent to the Swapna or the dreaming state of consciousness¹. It is a subtle form of existence of Brahm and it refers to the world that is not visibly manifested and tangible, that has no physical existence but is nevertheless perceived to be there at the mental level just like the world of dreams (which the creature thinks to be real as long as the dream lasts).

Thus, that aspect of Brahm or cosmic Consciousness by which subtle things which are not physically visible or perceptible can become known, or that aspect of existence in which the creature can see and visualise things that have no gross forms, is called the dreaming state of existence. It is also called the ‘Taijas²’ form of Brahm.

(Like the gross form of Brahm as described in verse no. 3—) This form of Brahm also has a body, albeit a subtle one, having seven parts or components as well as nineteen mouths. [These have been enumerated in note of verse no. 3 above.]

Brahm (or the cosmic Consciousness existing at the vast macrocosmic level of creation) and the Atma (or the Consciousness existing at the individual microcosmic level of the individual creature) in this second Taijas form enjoys the material things of the world, but at a subtle level of existence. [This refers to the state in which the creature dreams. For all practical purposes, the world of dreams and its material objects appear to be real for the creature as long as he dreams, and he enjoys them just like he would have

enjoyed them in the world when he was awake. There is no difference between how a creature would respond to a given situation, how he would desire to obtain a particular thing, or how he would enjoy the material things of the world that he encounters while he is awake or while he dreams. The only difference is the level in which the consciousness exists—for in the waking or Jagrat state of consciousness the gross body is active and it helps the Atma of the creature to actually perceive and interact with a gross world having a physical existence, while in the Swapna state the same situation is converted into a subtle level.] (4).

[Note—¹ “Swapna” or dreaming state is the 2nd state of consciousness when the latter has withdrawn its self from being actively involved in the outside world through the medium of the sense organs of perception and action. But the mind does not sleep and remains active as before, though this activity is at the subtle level of the sub-conscious. Here, the consciousness remains active through the medium of the vital winds, called the various Prans present inside the body, and moves in the different Naadis (tubular ducts in the body, such as the nerves and veins etc.) which keep the mind working. Refer Shukla Yajur Veda’s Paingalo-panishad, Canto 2, verse no. 12, and Brihad Aranyaka Upanishad, Canto 2, Brahman 1, verse no. 18; Canto 4, Brahman 3, verse no. 20; Krishna Yajur Veda’s Dhyani Bindu Upanishad, verse nos. 58-60; Rig Veda’s Kaushitaki Brahmin Upanishad of Rig Veda, Canto 4, verse no. 19.

This Pran is deemed to be synonymous with the life factors and consciousness in the body as well as with the latent fire element present inside the body which gives the energy, strength and vitality to the body to live and remain active. If it were not for the fire element (Tej) and the wind element (Pran), the consciousness (Atma, the ‘self’) would have found it difficult to live in the body. In fact, the Prashna Upanishad of Atharva Veda, Canto 4, verse no. 3 clearly states that the Pran in its manifestation as Agni or fire.

Since no external stimuli is being received from the outside world, the mind begins to replay what is stored in its memory bank and uses its stupendous abilities to imagine and recreate situations and circumstances in an imaginary world of dreams. Since the Atma living in the causal body depends upon the mind living in the subtle body to feel or sense anything pertaining to this world, for all practical purposes therefore the Atma begins to live in this new world of dreams conjured up by the mind and gets as involved in it as it was during the waking state. Since the mind is active here, the man remembers some of his dreams even when he wakes up. So as far as the Atma is concerned, the two states of waking and dreaming means the same—the world exists for it in both these two states.

²The word Taijas refers to the inherent light of conscious that is present in an entity that makes it aware of anything because of this ‘light’. Taijas means energy, light, radiance, vigour and vitality. A dead entity would not see and feel anything, and hence a dead body has no Taijas in it. The dreaming state is compared to the Taijas because for all practical purposes the creature’s gross physical body appears to be lifeless and dead from the outside as it shows no sign of life. But this apparent lifelessness is only skin deep as the consciousness is very much alive and active inside the body because the creature is dreaming and actively participating in the world of his dreams. This world is subtle because it has no physical gross existence.]

5. The third 'Paad' or aspect of Brahm and the Atma is equivalent to the Shusupta or the deep sleep state of consciousness¹. It is a subtler form of existence of Brahm or consciousness and it refers to the state when the creature does not even dream. Since in this state of existence the world has ceased to exist and the mind which actually makes the Atma aware of the world and its material objects too ceases to exist, the creature has no desires or wants left in him. This gives the Atma of the creature complete rest, peace and tranquility; it marks the state of existence where there is bliss and contentedness because of the simple reason that there is nothing to disturb the natural state of blissfulness and tranquility that the Atma possesses.

In this third state of existence the creature's Atma, his pure conscious 'self', has nothing to distract it. It exists in its primary form of being enlightened. This is being aware of the highest form of spiritual knowledge of the 'self' in the form of the pure consciousness that wants nothing, that remains ever contented, that is blissful and is at peace with itself.

This eclectic and divine form of the Atma that exists in this third state of Sushupta is therefore ever blissful, contented, tranquil and peaceful. The Atma that is consciousness personified enjoys its natural state of inherent blissfulness and peace.

Since the eclectic Atma becomes aware of its conscious and blissful state of sublime and exalted existence, it is called 'Pragya'—meaning knowing, enlightened and wise. Indeed, this is the third aspect or step of Brahm in which the latter's primary form of being all-knowing and all-wise comes to the fore. [Brahm and the Atma are synonymous with each other—the only apparent difference being in the level in which the cosmic Consciousness exists. If we think of this Consciousness at the level of the individual creature, it is called the Atma, and if we think of it at the vast level of the creation, it is called Brahm.]

The creature comes in close contact with his 'true' form as the enlightened Consciousness when he transcends the first two states of Jagrat and Swapna, and reaches the third state of Sushupta (5).

[Note--¹Beyond the second state of existence of consciousness is the third eclectic state called the "Sushupta" or deep sleep state. This has been elaborately dealt with in the Brihad Aranyaka Upanishad of Shukla Yajur Veda, Canto 2, Brahman 1, verse no. 19; Canto 4, Brahman 3, verse nos. 14-15, 19, 21-30. During this stage the creature does not dream.

The Sushupta or the deep sleep state of consciousness is the 3rd state in which the mind has also become defunct, and the Atma has withdrawn itself into the exclusive domain of the causal body and lives in seclusion, disconnected with the external world because of the non-involvement of either the gross body or the subtle body. Here it is surrounded by the space of the subtle sky around the heart, called the Hridya Akash. During this state of existence, the vital winds, called the Pran or 'life' of the creature, keep on moving in the different Naadis (various ducts such as nerves and veins etc.) as during the dreaming state so as to keep the body alive as is evident from the fact that all the subtle and imperceptible functions of the inner organs of the body such as the liver, kidneys, heart, pancreas, digestive organs, lungs etc. continue uninterrupted as before, because if they cease to function the body would die. It is the mind now that has gone in a defunct state. But this phase is temporary and shows the true nature and fundamental

characteristic of the Atma, which is blissful and peaceful, contented and fulfilled, not feeling restless and perplexed in any manner whatsoever because it is now not being disturbed by the mind's constant nagging. That is why a sound asleep man does not want anything, he does not feel anything, he is not worried about anything, he is not concerned about anything, and he does not remember anything. That is also why one feels very relaxed and refreshed after even a short deep sleep when the mind and the body both find their rest.

The Prashna Upanishad of Atharva Veda tradition, in its Canto 4, verse no. 6, and Varaaha Upanishad of Krishna Yajur Veda tradition, in Canto 2, verse no. 62 describe in clear terms why a creature stops dreaming.]

6. Brahm is the supreme Lord of all, is all-knowing and omniscient, is a resident in the inner self of all living beings as their Atma or their true self, and is not only the primary cause for this creation coming into being but is also the cause for its remaining in existence and for its conclusion. [In other words, being the supreme Lord of the world who knows everything inside out, it is Brahm who decides when to create this world, how to maintain it, and when to conclude it.] (6).

7. That enigmatic, most esoteric and mystical entity which has paradoxical qualities such as it being neither enlightened or aware of anything nor being ignorant or not enlightened about it, an entity that is both enlightened and not enlightened, and hence deemed to be absolutely neutral so much so that it has no concern for or awareness of what is inside or what is outside, an entity that is neither understood or discerned by the organs of perceptions nor approachable or accessible by the organs of action, an entity that does nothing (as it does not need to do anything), an entity that has no parallel and comparisons or symbols, an entity that is beyond the reach of thoughts and speech (i.e. that cannot be thought of, cannot be even imagined, and cannot be spoken about or explained), an entity that is only accessible or witnessed by personal experience, an entity that is the point where everything in existence would ultimately collapse and conclude, an entity that is an embodiment of such divine virtues as being peaceful and tranquil, being auspicious and holy, and being non-dual and unmatched—verily, this entity is known as Brahm, the supreme transcendental Divine Being. And the state of its existence as described herein above, the state in which it exhibits these grand qualities is called the fourth aspect or Paad of Brahm.

This fourth state of existence of the cosmic Consciousness is called 'Turiya'¹—literally meaning the state that transcends the usual three levels in which an ordinary creature lives in this world. Indeed, this is the truthful form of the Atma that is worth knowing (as it represents the real and truthful nature of the soul of the creature). [In other words, the Atma exhibits these characteristics if it is left alone. Since the Atma is the microcosmic form of Brahm, it follows that these eclectic qualities are also the qualities of Brahm.]

Verily, this is the fourth 'Paad' or aspect of Brahm (7).

[Note--¹Then comes the 4th state of existence of the Atma, and it is known as "Turiya" state. This state is reached when the third state becomes a perpetual phenomenon instead of being only a temporary phase. Once this state of Turiya is reached, then even though the man might wake up from sleep and appear to be going about his normal duties in a

routine manner in this world, his 'pure consciousness', i.e. his true 'self', remains aloof and distanced from the sense organs of perception and actions as well as from the mind. This is the 'transcendental state' of existence of consciousness, and it goes beyond the third state of Sushupta or deep sleep state of consciousness. Here the spiritual aspirant lives in a state of perpetual Samadhi. That is, he remains in a constant state of blissfulness and meditation though he lives in this physical world and goes about his normal affairs like an ordinary man.

During this 4th state called 'Turiya', the Atma acquires all the characters of the earlier three stages, viz. the waking, the dreaming and the deep sleeping states in their individual form as well as in a combined and composite way. In this state of spiritual existence, the consciousness exhibits all the traits of the earlier three states at the same time along with the unique traits which would obviously be a net result of the combined affect of all the individual traits that are so unique to each of these three earlier states of existence consciousness—viz. the waking state, the dreaming state, and the deep sleep state.

The 4th state of existence of the consciousness or Atma is also called the 'Turiya Chaitanya state'. In this state, the creature exists in its purest form as the pure consciousness which is undiluted, uninterrupted and unpolluted by any impulses or inputs from the external world. This results in its pristine and immaculate form as 'consciousness' to shine through (much like the flame of the candle which shines with all its brightness and splendour once the tainted glass covering around it is removed). This consciousness is the true 'self' of the creature and its real identity.

Thus, it is the Atma or the pure consciousness as the true 'self' of the creature that is the witness of the existence of the other three states in which the creature lives. This 'self' or Atma is imperishable and without a birth or beginning. This is because the other three states continue to appear and disappear in a rhythmic cycle as the creature wakes up to face the world after his phase of sleep is over, only to go back to sleep again when it is exhausted, and wake up again refreshed and rejuvenated from sleep. But the fourth state is like the Sun in the sky which is steady and shines constantly upon the world and lights it up. This Sun is unaffected by anything happening in this world and to this world, and remains completely dispassionate and detached from anything mundane and terrestrial. Nights and days appear and disappear in a cyclic manner, but the Sun remains the same. During the night it is erroneously assumed that the Sun is no more, but as science has proved the Sun is there in the sky though it might not be visible to the creature during that period of time called the 'night' as it is shining on the outer side of the globe. The day is comparable to the waking state of consciousness, the moon-light night to the dreaming state of consciousness when a man is able to see this world but with a different light, while the dark night when nothing is visible is comparable to the deep sleep state of consciousness when nothing of the external world is visible.

The Varaaha Upanishad of Krishna Yajur Veda, in its Canto 2, verse no. 64, and Subala-panishad of Shukla Yajur Veda tradition, in its Canto 9, verses 1-7 describe what the practical implication of this Turiya state of consciousness is.

According to Brahmo-panishad, verse no. 1 of Krishna Yajur Veda tradition, these four states of existence represent Brahm in his different divine manifestations. The same Brahmo-panishad, in verse no. 21 describes the presence of the Atma in the four states of consciousness.]

2(E)(xiv) Mundak Upanishad, Mundak 2, Section 1, verse nos. 1-10; Mundak 3, Section 2, verse nos. 6-9:--

Mundak 2, Section 1, verse nos. 1-10—

1. Both the Brahm and this world are true just like the raging fire that produces countless sparklers and embers. [The fire is compared to Brahm, and the sparklers and embers to this colourful world showing astounding variety. The fire is the truth because it is burning right in front, and the sparklers and embers are true also because they are springing from the fire on the one hand, and on the other hand they have the same potentials as the parent fire as they can start another fire if they fall on an inflammable object. Similarly, Brahm is the powerful source from which this world of diversity and variety emerged. This world is self-sustaining—i.e. like the sparks and embers that can produce another fire independently after their origin, this world can replicate its self once it was created by Brahm. There can be no sparklers or embers without the fire, and similarly there cannot be a world without Brahm.]

Oh Saumya (a pleasant and dear person; a term of endearment)! It is from this Akshar Brahm, or the imperishable and eternal Divinity, that countless ‘Bhaavas’—i.e. the world with numerous forms and names and myriad characters—is produced. They originate in this Akshar Brahm and ultimately collapse and become one with it in the end¹ (1).

[Note—¹This is like the Sun spreading out its radiant and bright rays at dawn, and withdrawing then into its self at sunset.]

2. This Brahm is self-illuminated, and without any forms and attributes.

Brahm pervades inside and outside of everything in existence as it is omnipresent and all-pervading—there is no spot where Brahm is not present.

Brahm has no birth or precedent.

Brahm has no Pran or vital life sustaining factors because Pran lives in a gross body in order to keep the body alive, and since Brahm has no physical gross body there is no need of Pran for Brahm.

Brahm has no Mana (the thinking mind and the emotional heart) because these are the subtle aspects of the gross body of a mortal creature, but Brahm is none of them.

Brahm is splendidous and radiant as it is self-illuminated.

The eternal and infinite Brahm indeed is far superior to the Atma, the pure consciousness that resides in the gross body of the mortal creature as his self (because the Atma is subjected to the limitations of the gross body in which it lives, and naturally influenced by the latter) (2).

3. It is from this imperishable and eternal Brahm that the Pran (the vital life sustaining forces of creation such as the vital winds), the Mana (the thinking mind and the emotional

heart) and the various Indris (the sense organs—five of perception and five of action) are created.

It is from Brahm that the five primary elements Kham or Akash (sky), Vayu (air or wind), Jyoti (light, implying the fire element), Aapaha (water) and Prithivi (earth) which bears this world are created (3).

4. That whose head or crown is the fire element, the sun and the moon the two eyes, the directions the ears, the famous Vedas the speech, the air or wind the Pran (the vital life sustaining winds that keep the living being alive), the entire world the heart, and from whose legs the earth has been created—verily, that supreme cosmic transcendental Brahm is established as the Atma that resides in the inner self of all living beings in creation (4).

5. It is from this Purush (here referring to the Viraat Purush, the invisible, macrocosmic, all-inclusive gross body of the supreme transcendental Brahm) that the cosmic fire is created.

The Sun is like the Samidha (the firewood used during the fire sacrifice) of this Brahm. [This is because the Sun lights up the entire heavens with its light much like the fire sacrifice ‘lights up’ or opens the gate of heaven for the chief patron of the sacrifice.]

It is from this fire kept burning with the help of the firewood that the nectar-like Soma (the elixir of life) was created. And from this Soma was created the Parjanya or water from the heavens which comes down upon earth as rains. [This refers to the creation of rains due to the heat of the Sun. The rains are produced because the water is evaporated from the oceans due to this heat, and then in due course of time is converted into clouds that shower this evaporated water as rains back upon the earth. It is called Soma or the elixir of life because rains are very essential for crops and for taking water to distant areas of the earth where rivers and their like cannot reach. Rains bring cheer and joy to the creatures on earth who would have died for want of water, and it acts as a lubricant as well as a coolant to protect them against the unrelenting heat of the Sun. Had there been no rain, the earth would have scorched and turned into a parched dry terrain of lifeless rocks and withered shrubs. Hence, the rain is like the Soma that cheers the drinker.]

From the Parjanya (rains) was created the medicinal herbs—plants, trees, shrubs, creepers, and all other forms of vegetation that exist on earth.

These herbs create sperms in a man. When the man irrigates with the help of this sperm, the rest of the subjects (off springs) are produced. [That is, the plants when eaten as food in various forms support life in the man, providing the necessary nourishment, energy, stamina, strength and vitality to him. Even the animals depend upon plants for survival. It is the latent Pran or vital life supporting forces present in the food eaten that are extracted by the man and converted into his own life generating energy that is converted into sperms, the spark of life from which the next generation is born. In effect, the sperm is like the liquid Soma that produces life on earth when it irrigates the latter as rain. Likewise, the sperm irrigates the earth in the form of the female when the man transplants the sperm into the female, and this creates fresh life in the form of the off spring much like the rain creating fresh crops and new generation of plants on earth.] (5).

6. It is from this Viraat Purush that all the Richas (hymns of the Rig Veda), the Sam Veda and the Yajur Veda were created.

It is from him that the investiture and other religious ceremonies were created.

It is from him that the fire and other forms of religious sacrifices, all their accompanying formalities, and the obligatory charities that must accompany such exercises were created.

It is from him that the concept of Samvatsar (one full year consisting of all the seasons) originated. [That is, the entire concept of one cycle of life has its origin in the supreme Brahm. The Samvatsar is a metaphor of one cycle of origin and conclusion of the visible creation.]

It is from him that the Yajmaan (the chief patron on whose behalf the fire sacrifice is done; here also referring to the ancestors called the Prajaptis from whom this human race evolved) and the subjects of the vast kingdom, stretching as far as the rays of the moon go and the energy of the sun heats, were created. [The vast kingdom refers to the world that exists on earth because the rays of the moon are limited to lighting the earth and not the far reaches of the solar system. At the same time, it also includes all the planets of the solar system because all these planets are lighted by the energy of the sun which is transmitted in the form of sunlight. In the context of the fire sacrifice cited herein above, the vast kingdom is a metaphoric way of alluding to the numerous benefits that accrue as a result of successful completion of a fire sacrifice. When this kingdom is seen in the context of the Prajapati as the Yajmaan or the chief patron who presided over this great exercise of creation of this habitable world, it would obviously mean the off springs of Prajapati. These off springs are the living beings that inhabit every corner of this earth. In other words, whatever that exists in this visible world is a manifestation of Brahm in his macrocosmic all-pervading form known as the Viraat Purush.] (6).

7. It is from this Viraat Purush that the numerous Gods as well as the special Gods who are invoked during the fire sacrifices, along with the humans, the animals, the birds, the various life supporting vital winds such as Pran and Apan etc., and the staple cereals such as rice and oat are created.

It is from him that the glorious virtues of Tapa (austerity, penance, sufferance for some noble cause), Shraddha (having faith, conviction and belief), Satya (truthfulness, sincerity and honesty), Brahmacharya (self control over the sense organs; continence and abstinence), along with the various laws and regulations that govern all phases of civil life, its ethics and morality were created (7).

8. It is from him (the Viraat Purush) that the seven grosser aspects of Pran were created. [These seven units of Pran are the two ears + two eyes + two nostrils + one tongue = seven. They are called 'Pran' because it is through them that the man is able to perceive the existence of the world. The ears help him to hear, the eyes to see, the nose to smell, and the tongue to taste.]

It is from these sense organs of perceptions that were produced the seven tongues of fire¹, the seven types of Samidhas or firewood², and the seven types of Homa or the offerings made to the fire sacrifice which are also classified into seven types³.

It is from the Viraat Purush that the seven Lokas or places inhabited by the creatures were created⁴. Besides these, the seven places where the Pran (life

consciousness) finds its playing field, or the places which are kept alive by the Pran and where the Pran roams⁴ are also created from this Viraat Purush.

These seven units of creation are all established in the body of all living beings, and are created by the Purush who lives in its cave-like heart⁵ (8).

[Note—¹The tongues of fire refer to the sense of perceptions that are generated by each of the sense organs listed in this verse. The word 'tongue' has a metaphoric implication because one tastes anything with the tongue. Here it means that the man is able to 'taste' the irresistible charm and fascinating attractions of the material world only through the sense organs of perception. These perceptions light up the world for him and make him aware of its allurements.

²The Samidha is the firewood that helps the fire of the sacrificial pit burning. This in the present context is a metaphor for the objects of the world that are relevant to each sense perception. For instance, the smells of the world are the firewood that keeps the fire of perception called smell burning; the sights of the world are the firewood that keeps the fire of perception called sight burning, and so on and so forth.

The seven types of Samidhas are firewood from seven types of trees are that used for this purpose as follows—Ashvattha (*Ficus religiosa*), Bilva (*Aegle marmelos*), Chandan (sandal wood), Devdaaru (pine), Khadira (*Acacia catechu*), Nayagrodha (Indian fig tree), and Palaas (*Butea frondosa*).

The wood from the following trees are not to be used for the purpose of Samidha—Bibhitak (*Terminalia bellerica*), Kapittha (wood apple), and Neem tree.

Each stick of the firewood should not be thicker than the thickness of the thumb, must have the bark on them, and should not be eaten by wood-worms or insects, or infected by any kind of germs—i.e. should be fresh.

³The Homa and Yagya—During fire sacrifices, Havi is offered to the consecrated sacred fire. This Havi is the material that is put into the consecrated sacred fire as an oblation during fire sacrifices. The process of offering is called Homa. Since Homa and Havi are an integral part of Yagya or the fire sacrifice, the latter is classified into seven types depending upon the type of Havi offered.

The Havis are generally the following things—(a) barley, rice and oat. (b) milk and clarified butter. (c) Juice of the Soma plant. (d) Besides these, animals were also offered as a sacrifice in earlier times.

Classification of Fire Sacrifice or Yagya depending upon the Homa used—

(i) Since doing Homa by the offering of a Havi is an integral part of Yagya or the fire sacrifice, the latter is classified into seven types depending upon the type of Havi offered. If the Havi consists of rice, barley, oat, milk and clarified butter, then the seven types of fire sacrifices are called the following—Agnyaadheya, Agnihotra, Darshapuranmaas (also called the Prakriti or original fire sacrifice), Chaturmaas, Aagrayan, Niruddhapashubandha, and Sautraamani.

All these fire sacrifices are performed in the three main fires—viz. the Garhyapatya, the Dakshinagni and Aahavaniya.

(ii) If the Havi is the juice of the Soma plant, then the fire sacrifice is called the Soma Yagyas—so called because the extract or juice of the Soma plant is offered as an

offering. These seven Soma Yagyas are the following—Agnisthoma, Atyagnisthoma, Ukthya, Shodashi, Vaajpeya, Atraatra, and Aptoryaama.

(iii) Then there are seven special types of fire sacrifices called the seven Paak Yagyas. They are the fire sacrifices done for the purpose of worldly gains and material prosperity. They are also called Kaamyeshthi Yaga, or literally that which is done with the aim of fulfilling some specific desires or aspirations. They are performed in the Garhyapatya Agni or the fire of the household with cooked offerings such as boiled grains mixed with Ghee (clarified butter).

These seven Paak Yagyas are the following—Huta, Prahuta, Aahuta, Shulagava, Baliharana, Pratyavarohana, and Ashtakaahoma.

The Homa in the present context is the knowledge of this world and the belief that it is the reality and one that is worth acquiring. This is likened to the offering made to the fire sacrifice because when one makes such offerings to the sacred fire, he is aware of the results that would accrue to him if the sacrifice is completed successfully. He keeps in mind the objective of making such offerings while going through the elaborate rituals. He is sure that the desires would be fulfilled. Likewise, the knowledge of this world motivates the man to divert his sense organs and their efforts towards his objective—which is getting access to the charms and material benefits that have their presence in the world. He does everything with only one aim in mind, and that is the fulfillment of his desires pertaining to the specific object that he finds charming, attractive and meaningful. This diversion, concentration and putting to use of all available resources towards achieving success in the fulfillment of one's desires pertaining to this material world is like offering Homa or oblations to the fire sacrifice with great devotion and diligence. No efforts are left undone to achieve success in the fire sacrifice.

Since such fire sacrifices are done with the desire of attaining worldly successes, the reward is also commensurate with it. In other words, the reward is worldly prosperity, wealth, fame, name, glory and majesty. In the context of the genesis of creation in which the Viraat Purush was involved, the reward was the creation of the Lokas as mentioned in this verse.

⁴The seven places where the Pran or life consciousness moves are the following—the five organs of action such as the legs, hands, mouth, excretory and genitals, the thinking mind and the emotional heart = seven units. In other words, these organs of action along with the mind and the heart help the man to carry out his desires effectively. Once the organs of perceptions find out about the world and its charms, success in obtaining access to it would depend upon these organs of action aided and abetted by the mind and the heart.

These organs are included in the overall picture of the manifestation of Brahm as the world and its inhabitant creatures because the body of the creature is an image of the Viraat Purush, and as such to limit the existence of the vital life giving consciousness called Pran only to the organs of perception, and excluding the other organs such as the organs of action, the mind and the heart which nevertheless are equally important, would only distort the comprehensive picture of Brahm that the Upanishads attempt to depict.

⁵This 'Purush' is a clear reference to the Atma, the pure consciousness that resides in the subtle space of the creature's heart. Brihad Aranyak Upanishad, 1/4/1 affirms that the Purush is the Atma which is absolutely immaculate and sinless, and in 2/5/18 says that

someone who resides in a 'Pur' or city (the 'body') is called a Purush. This resident is the Atma. Since the Atma is the Sovereign of the body, all the organs of the body and all its activities are like the functioning of the different state organs for the purpose of administration of the kingdom whose king is the Atma. In other words, those who are wise and self-realised do not think that 'they' are the doer of any fire sacrifice or any other form of deed in this world. They firmly believe that it is their Atma that is doing these deeds in order to keep the wheel of creation turning on behalf of Brahm. Here the word 'they' is the plural for the individual person who usually is identified by the physical body in this world which recognises forms, names and attributes as the identity of the creature instead of the Atma.]

9. It is from the Viraat Purush that all the oceans, the mountains and the rivers of different names are created.

It is from him that all the medicinal plants (herbs) and their essence or juices are produced.

It is this Viraat Purush that lives in all the living beings as their Atma that resides in their inner self¹ (9).

[Note—¹Refer Brihad Aranyak Upanishad of Shukla Yajur Veda, Canto 1, Brahman 4, verse no. 1, and Canto 2, Brahman 5, verse no. 18 which also endorse exactly the same idea.]

10. Oh Saumya! The entire Vishwa (universe), all the Karmas (literally meaning the deeds, but here referring to the fire sacrifices), and the Tapa (austerity, penance and suffering of hardship for some noble cause)—verily, all of them are manifestations of the supreme Brahm.

That Brahm is the 'absolute reality' of creation, and is the 'truthful essence' which is like nectar of creation.

A wise and enlightened aspirant who knows that this Brahm is established in the subtle heart of all living beings (as their Atma, their pure conscious self) is able to dismantle all the knots of ignorance in this world. [That is, he attains supreme knowledge of the Truth that is absolute and like nectar.] (10)."

Mundak 3, Section 2, verse nos. 6-9—

6. It is the 'truth' that alone wins, and not 'falsehood'. The path in which the exalted Gods move is marked by 'truth'. [That is, it is the 'truth' that is the characteristic feature of all the auspicious and noble virtues that give glory to the creature. The Gods personify these virtues and the path of truth is what they follow. Therefore, if someone follows the path of complete 'truth' he is no less exalted than any of the Gods.]

By following this path of 'truth', wise and selfless sages and seers reach that exalted abode or attain that auspicious stature which is equivalent to having reached the holy abode of the Supreme Being who is the best example of 'truth'. Indeed, the Supreme Being (Brahm) is the Absolute Truth personified (6).

7. That Brahm (Supreme Being) is most grand, splendourous, majestic, divine, sublime and supreme. He is beyond the reach of normal thoughts and perceptions. He is most subtle, enigmatic and esoteric. He is most miniscule and fine. He is further than the farthest point of creation on the one hand, and on the other hand he is nearer than the nearest as he resides inside the body itself, in its very center in the heart as the pure conscious Atma of the creature.

For those who are truthfully wise, erudite and Brahm realised, Brahm is experienced by them in the cave-like heart as the Atma as well as in the form of the grand faculty known as the 'Buddhi', or the faculty of intelligence, analytical thinking, research, discrimination and rationality etc., that are present in the mind (7).

8. That enigmatic, esoteric and mystical Brahm (and its manifestation as the Atma) is not seen by the eyes (as it does not have any physical form, colour and contour), is not understood or grasped by the speech (i.e. it is not possible to describe or learn about Brahm with words), is not perceived by any of the other sense organs of perception (such as the ear, nose, tongue and skin—i.e. it is not possible to learn about Brahm's existence by hearing Brahm, by smelling Brahm, by tasting Brahm or by feeling or touching Brahm).

That Brahm is not accessible either by doing Tapa (austerity, penance, sufferance) or doing Karma (literally deeds, but here referring to the performance of fire sacrifices—refer Canto 1, section 2, or doing numerous other auspicious deeds such as making charities, going on pilgrims etc.).

[Then, how is it possible to access Brahm? It is being narrated now--] That Brahm who has no attributes and aspects that can be ordinarily discerned is accessible to only those wise ones who have cleansed their inner self of all evils, contaminations and impurities, and then meditate and contemplate diligently and sincerely upon Brahm, the 'Truth', with great conviction, devotion and firmness of faith (8).

9. The subtle form of Brahm called the Atma, the pure consciousness that resides in the body of the creature consisting of the five forms of Prans or vital winds, is known, experienced, witnessed or realised by the medium of the Mana (mind).

It is only when this instrument of the mind is thoroughly cleansed and scrubbed of all taints that the creature is able to witness the presence of the glorious Atma representing Brahm in his inner-self because then this self-illuminated entity begins to shine through. [It is like the case of the mirror being cleaned in order to see one's face. The 'mirror' here would be the mind, and the 'face' would be the reality of one's self as the Atma. The 'shining' would then be equivalent to being aware of or being acquainted with the truth of the Atma and its divine nature which is pure and self-illuminated. It is also like the case of the glass chimney of a wick lantern being cleaned thoroughly, because it is then that the light of the flame can be clearly seen and would properly illuminate its surrounding.] (9).

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THE MAHAVAKYAS of the UPANISHADS

(The Great Spiritual & Universal Truths)

Chapter 3

A Spiritually Enlightened Person's Thoughts

This has been enumerated in a number of Upanishads:—

(A) Rig Veda tradition's *Atma Prabodha Upanishad*, Canto 2, verse no. 1-31.

(B) Sam Veda tradition's *Sanyas Upanishad*, Canto 2, verse nos. 47-54, 63-73; *Maitreyu Upanishad*, Canto 1, verse nos. 15-18; Canto 3, verse nos. 1-25.

(C) Shukla Yajur Veda tradition's *Brihad Aranyaka Upanishad*, Canto 4, Brahman 4, verse no. 23; *Ishavasya Upanishad*, verse no. 7.

(D) Krishna Yajur Veda tradition's *Tejobindu Upanishad*, Canto 3, verse nos. 1-51, 60-73; Canto 4, verse nos. 2, 12-30, 45; Canto 6, verse nos. 31-34, 44-45, 58-64, 68-74, 107; *Avadhuta Upanishad*, verse nos. 24-25; *Varaaha Upanishad*, Canto 2, verse no. 38; Canto 3, verse nos. 3, 8, 10; *Kaivalya Upanishad*, verse nos. 19-23; *Kathopanishad*, Canto 2, Valli 3, verse no. 10.

(E) Atharva Veda tradition's *Atma Upanishad*, verse nos. 2, 8, 10-13, 19-22; *Pashupat Brahm Upanishad*, Canto 2, verse nos. 21-25, 31-46; *Mahavakya Upanishad*, verse no. 11; *Annapurna Upanishad*, Canto 5, verse nos. 59-61, 91-93; *Mundak Upanishad*, Mundak 3, Section 2, verse nos. 3-4.

Section 3(A)

Rig Veda Upanishads

3(A)(i) *Atmabodha Upanishad*, Canto 2, verse nos. 1-31:--

[A seeker/aspirant who has witnessed or experienced his pure-self, i.e., has become enlightened, makes the following statement—] 'All my delusions and ignorances have been dissolved (i.e., removed, eliminated). I am simply an observer of the materialistic world around me (without getting involved in it). All my ego, pride, arrogance and

haughtiness (Ahankar) have been destroyed. I see no distinction between the external world, the supreme Lord of the world and the creature (or all the distinctions have been dissolved into oneness and universal uniformity) (1).

“Canto 2, verse no. 2—I am not separate from the supreme, transcendental and eternal Brahm. For me, all inhibitions and restrictions of worldly, temporal laws cease to have any meaning or relevance. I have risen above the limitations imposed by the 4 time periods in which the life of a person is divided into. I am full of measureless and boundless bliss and happiness. I am an embodiment (i.e., am well aware) of all knowledge, wisdom, enlightenment and laws or tenets of the scriptures (2).

“Canto 2, verse no. 3—I am only a witness to everything in this world (i.e., I am not emotionally involved in them). I have no hopes and expectations. I am steadfast, unwavering and uniformly established in my own glory and majesty. I am without old age, am eternal and immortal as well as non-dual (i.e. I do not have any opposition or competitor to my self which is the supreme Brahm personified) (3).

“Canto 2, verse no. 4—I am an embodiment of the knowledge that is unique, one of its kind and truthful. I personify the essence of that supreme Truth and absolute Reality. I am the only ocean of (i.e. I am full of bountiful) bliss, contentedness, joy and happiness provided by Moksha (liberation and emancipation of the soul from this world). I am subtle and microcosmic. I am imperishable. All my virtues/qualities/attributes which define the creature of the physical world have been eliminated/destroyed/annihilated. I am noting else but the pure Atma called the soul or spirit (4).

“Canto 2, verse no. 5—I am that imperishable supreme state that is beyond the purview of the three qualities, which are called the ‘Triguns’, inherent in a creature of the world. [That is, I have risen above the mundane and have acquired a higher, a nobler and an exalted stature.] In my abdomen (or stomach) there are present many worlds called ‘Lokas’. I am pure and essentially conscious in form and have a conscious nature, am free from any actions/deeds (i.e. I do not allow myself to be emotionally attached or involved in the actions/deeds that I perform in this world), and am devoid of, or free from, all doubts, confusions, debates and discussions (i.e. there is nothing called confusion, there is no doubt in my mind about my truthfulness and there is nothing to be discussed or debated on this aspect or matter) (5).

[Note :- The three qualities are— (i) Sat, i.e., good and noble qualities of righteousness and virtuousness, (ii) Raj, i.e., the second quality of passions and desire to sustain, and (iii) Tam, i.e., the lowest of the three natures of a person leading to inertia, meanness, evils etc.]

“Canto 2, verse no. 6—I am one (i.e. without a second or alternative) and unique in all respects. I am full, whole and complete. I am pure, uncorrupt and pristine. I am an image of deliverance and emancipation. I am free of all encumbrances and coverings representing the various faults and flaws associated with this world. I am without a birth

(i.e. have no beginning, therefore, I am infinite). I am the supreme Truth personified. I am the essence of that truth and absolute reality (6).

“Canto 2, verse no. 7—I am not limited to any time frame, I am self-realised, I am endowed with the best of emotion and thoughts, I am without a duality, I am macrocosmic, vast and faultless, I am without any limitations imposed by space and time, and I personify my pure-self which is called the Atma or soul or spirit (7).

“Canto 2, verse no. 8—I am comprehensible by and realised through the study of the Vedanta (Upanishads). I am worthy of worship, adoration, contemplation and meditation. I am most beautiful in the entire cosmos. I am an image of supreme bliss, contentedness, joy and happiness. I am an image of the only embodiment of supreme ecstasy called ‘Bhuma’ (meaning a great deal, extreme, excessive, abundance of anything. Therefore, that ecstasy which is excessive and extreme is called Bhuma) (8).

“Canto 2, verse no. 9—I am pure, unadulterated, non-dual and eternal Truthfulness personified. I have no beginning. I am free from the limitations imposed by the three apparent aspects of this visible creation— i.e. the Brahm, the creature and the Nature. I am free from all the fetters and ties shackling a creature to this mundane and artificial world. I am the essential entity called Atma (soul or spirit) which has a magnificent, stupendous and remarkable form which is very strange, marvelous and mysterious (9).

“Canto 2, verse no. 10—I am uncorrupt, unadulterated and absolutely pristine pure and divine. I am the spirit called the Atma residing inside the bosom of the creature, and I am the wholesome essence (target and subject) of the eternal, truthful and ancient science of metaphysics. I am the supreme knowledge which is the subject matter of research (i.e., deep insight, contemplation and meditation) in the realm of metaphysics by seekers/aspirants. I am the only image of ‘Bodh’ (truthful knowledge, erudition, wisdom, enlightenment and awakening) and ‘Anand’ (bliss, ecstasy, joy and happiness) (10).

“Canto 2, verse no. 11—I am possessed of wisdom, erudition and intelligence. I know and realise that the entity called the Atma/soul/spirit is ‘Advaitya’, i.e., is basically non-dual, but inspite of that awareness I have ties. I desire emancipation and salvation because I have a physical body.

[That is, though I know that there is no distinction between my soul and the supreme macrocosmic Soul which has manifested itself into so many varieties of creatures in this cosmos, I still have to maintain a façade of worldly formality because I have a physical body, live in a physical world and have to interact with it all the time till I abandon my cage and get liberation from its walls. Till that moment I have to comply with the norms of behaviour as laid down for me while I live in my present abode of this body. So, inspite of knowing all the facts I still have to adhere to the rules and regulation pertaining to my present habitat of the gross body, because breaking of rules is not a good trait.] (11).

“Canto 2, verse no. 12—In my eyes of wisdom, all delusions, ignorance and hallucinations have ceased to exist. But all of them appear to be apparently true to my

gross eyes of perception in the same way that ignorance and illusions make me believe that the rope is a snake. In fact, the only truthful authority is the supreme, transcendental Brahm (12).

“Canto 2, verse nos. 13-14—Illusions and false imaginations are the basis of existence of the present visible world in its current form. Actually speaking, the world, as is visible, has no truthful and real existence. Even as sugar and sweetness are intrinsic to sugar-cane and are inherently and invisibly present in the latter, the non-dual Brahm is present (pervades and permeates) in the whole of the three worlds— the celestial, the terrestrial and the subterranean. It is therefore imaginable that it is present even in such lowly and humble creatures such as insects, flies and worms because they are part of creation (13-14).

“Canto 2, verse nos. 15-17—This world is transient and temporary as the bubble and waves in the ocean. Just like the creature living in the currents and waves arising in the ocean do not wish to have (or yearn for) water, I too do not have any desire or attraction for the pleasures of the objects of this materialistic world because I am an embodiment of supreme joy, happiness and contentedness.

Even as a rich man has nothing to fear from poverty, I have no fear from the objects of pleasure in the world pertaining to my sense organs (that they would somehow trick me into their trap and cause sorrow and misery for me) because I am engrossed in the supreme bliss derived from the knowledge of Brahm. Wise persons abandon poison when they see both the poison and Amrit (elixir of immortality) and have the option to choose between the two (15-17).

“Canto 2, verse nos. 18-19—When I see the Atma, I abandon/forsake all that is not Atma. [That is, when I find the truth, I forsake all that is false and illusionary].

Even as the Sun which shines on a pitcher is not harmed or effected when the latter is broken, the witness-to-all supreme Soul called Parmatma or Brahm does not perish when the body dies. [This supreme soul was present before the body came into existence and will remain even after the body perishes].

I have no shackles tying me down, nothing to be liberated from.

I don't need any scripture or teacher to guide and advise me (18-19).

[Note :- This last sentence does not mean that the seeker/aspirant is arrogant, haughty and proud of his knowledge, wisdom or enlightenment. It simply means that once the purpose of reading scriptures and seeking guidance of teachers is achieved, that is, as soon as the seeker realises his true identity of being the supreme Atma or spirit and not the physical gross body, that this Atma is non-separable from the parent soul called Brahm, that it is eternal and imperishable, then all his ignorance, falsehoods and erroneous perceptions are overcome. He becomes truly enlightened and self-realised. Just like an acclaimed scientist need not go back to school to study science, such erudite and accomplished seeker/aspirant need no further spiritual guidance. But let us beware— this enlightenment precludes falsehoods, pretensions, imposterings, deceits and conceits of all kinds.]

“Canto 2, verse nos. 20-21—All these are myriad variations and extension of ‘Maya’ (delusions, illusion, ignorance, hallucinations) whereas I am the Atma/soul/spirit which is

beyond the purview and reach of Maya. I am non-duality personified. The vital life sustaining wind called ‘Pran’ might leave the body, the mind might get corrupted and ruined due to its wayward tendencies and corrupt desires, but how can I be subjected to miseries and sorrows, torments and tribulations being wholesome as I am in truthful knowledge, wisdom, bliss and happiness? I have come to acquaint myself first hand with the Atma in its pristine form, without any external intervention or any extraneous considerations. Goodness only knows where my ignorance has run away once this truthful knowledge has dawned on me? (20-21).

“Canto 2, verse nos. 22-24—All my emotion that ‘I am the doer’ have been completely eliminated or annihilated, and I have nothing left to complete or do. The feeling of seniority of birth as a Brahmin, having a charming name and a higher caste are limited to the gross body of the creature. Verily, I am absolutely separate from all things gross, and consequentially from such narrow minded outlooks as belonging to higher class or a lower class. The sense of hunger, thirst, blindness, deafness, desires, anger, etc. are all related to the gross body consisting of the sense organs of perception and action. I am free from this body because my true identity is not the body but the Atma. I do not have any of these shortcomings or faults or blemishes in me. It is the gross body that is lowly, humble, gross and inane. To endear, to feel loved and various enjoyments are the functions of the gross body (and not of the subtle Atma) (22-24).

“Canto 2, verse nos. 25-27—My real form and nature are eternal, truthful, flawless and faultless. Hence, the characteristics mentioned in the last sentence above are none of my features. Even as the Sun appears dark to the owl, foolish and ignorant persons see darkness of ignorance even in the self-illuminated supreme bliss symbolised by the Atma and truthful knowledge.

Just like the people erroneously think that there is no Sun in the overcast, cloud-covered sky, stupid people, shrouded in a veil of ignorance, say that (or believe that) there is no such entity as Brahm. Just like Amrit (nectar of life) is a totally different entity (proposition) from poison and is therefore not adversely effected by the latter’s negative traits (of being a ‘killer’ of creatures), I, the Atma, too am distinct from all that is gross and inane. Naturally, therefore, all the faults, flaws, shortcomings and negative attributes associated with ‘all things gross’ do not touch me or affect me at all (25-27).

“Canto 2, verse nos. 28-30—Even as a small light of the lamp can remove the deepest of darkness, the triflest of truthful knowledge has the potential to destroy the gravest of darkness caused by ignorance (i.e., it acts as an antidote to darkness).

Just like there is no snake in a rope in all dimensions of time (i.e., whether in the past, in the present or in the future), the whole world extending from ‘Ahankar’ (pride, ego, haughtiness, arrogance) to this inane and gross ‘body’ has no existence in my pure and truthful form in any given frame of time— i.e., it was not in the past, it is not in the present and will not be in the future. My only truthful form is ‘Advaitya’ (non-dual Brahm). I am an embodiment of pure enlightenment and am pure consciousness personified. Hence there is no grossness, inertia, dullness and stupidity in me whatsoever. I am an image of Truth. Hence there is no falsehood, conceit, deceit and imposter in me. I am a personification of bliss, ecstasy, joy and happiness unbound (28-30).

“Canto 2, verse no. 31—Since I am a personification or an image of ‘Anand’ (joy, happiness, bliss, ecstasy), there is no sorrow, anguish, grief, pain, torment and tribulation in me. All these emotions are of temporal, worldly nature and are felt only out of ignorance and misconceptions. Anyone who witnesses (i.e., comes to know, understands, learns and acquaints himself with) the knowledge enshrined in this ‘Atmaprabodha Upanishad’ does not come back into this world again.

[To wit, an enlightened and wise person will never fall back in the pit representing this world once he has been able to get out of its darkness and has witnessed the sunlight of knowledge propounded by this Upanishad].

Such is this Upanishad and its potential teaching (31).”

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Section 3(B)

Sam Veda Upanishads

3(B)(i) Sanyas Upanishad, Canto 2, verse nos. 47-54, 63-73:--

“Canto 2, verse no. 47—Honour and respect are paid to my true form of the eternal Atma. I, the Atma, am eternal, infinite, universal, most evident and proved, enlightened and wise, as well as am risen, awakened and exalted (47).

“Canto 2, verse no. 48—I am an image and a manifestation of that supreme entity, and am beyond alternatives, doubts and confusions. I am ‘that’ who is indeed ‘me’. [That is, I and the supreme Brahm are the one and the same; there is no duality between us; we are one and uniform.] I pay my obeisance and respect to my pure and true self. You and me are infinite and endless; you and me are both eternal and infinite, enlightened and conscious ‘souls’ called ‘Chidatma’. [Here ‘you’ refers to ‘Brahm’.] Honour and respect to both of us (48).

“Canto 2, verse no. 49—Respects and obeisance are paid to my pure self which is an image of the supreme Lord and Shiva (symbolising wisdom, enlightenment, auspiciousness, truth, beauty, renunciation, simplicity and humility as well as the stupendous powers that can create and annihilate in an instant). This Atma is very unique and paradoxical—it does not remain seated although it sits (in the heart of the creature); it does not wonder about although it never remains at one place; it engrosses or involves itself in various interactions with the world outside although it is at rest and indifferent to it; it does all the works pertaining to this mundane world of activities but it itself remains completely aloof, detached and dispassionate towards it (49).

“Canto 2, verse no. 50—This (Atma) is easily accessible to all who are sincere about seeking it. It is like one’s own dear brother. It is like a bumble-bee in the lotus-like heart of the creature (50).

“Canto 2, verse no. 51—I (the Atma) do not have the desire to enjoy the comforts of the sensual objects of the world or gratification of the sense organs, nor the desires not to do so. [That is, I’m neutral and without any desire.] Whatever comes, let it come; whatever goes, let it go (51).

“Canto 2, verse no. 52—When the intellect is separated from the mind, when the ‘Ahankar’ (ego, pride, haughtiness, arrogance, hypocrisy) is dissipated, and when all emotions and sentiments are destroyed—I am established in my pure and healthy form which is the only one Atma (52).

[Note :- (i) ‘Healthy’ form because all these elements are like a disease for the soul/Atma; it is better they are eliminated at the earliest opportunity. (ii) The difference

between intellect and mind is explained in appendix no. 6 of this book. (iii) The word ‘Keval’ means ‘the only one, the one of its kind, unique, unparalleled’ —these are some of the characteristic features which define the Atma.]

“Canto 2, verse no. 53—I (the Sanyasi) am without any emotions and sentiments, am without any ‘Ahankar’, am with a neutral mind (i.e. am unbiased), and am without any efforts. On the contrary, my true self is the only one of its kind entity called the pristine pure and uncorrupt Atma, which is vibrant and pulsating with life and vitality. In this scenario, how can I have any enemy or opponent anywhere? (53)

“Canto 2, verse no. 54—The bird representing ‘Nirahankar’ (literally meaning lack of pride), which resides in the cage represented by my body, has somehow cut off its fetters or strings symbolising ‘Trishna’ (the ties of desires, greed, avarice, yearnings, ambitions, thirst for the world and its comforts and its sensual objects of gratification), and has flown away somewhere¹ (54)

[Note :- ¹That is, Trishna could not keep ‘Nirahankar’ subdued for a long time. The latter was able to free itself from the former and flee from the person who used this thread or chain of ‘Trishna’ to prevent the bird symbolised by the lack of ‘Ahankar’ from escaping. Put simply it means that as long as a person has worldly desires, he cannot lack pride and ego. It is impossible for him to have any control over his pride, ego, haughtiness, arrogance and hypocrisy if he has worldly greed, avarice, yearnings, desires, ambition, volitions and thirst for gratification of the sensual organs of his body.

Ahankar and Trishna go hand in hand. Trishna for worldly gains inspires a man to make greater efforts to fulfill his desire and achieve success in acquiring the objects of his desire. Once successful, it fills him with pride of success and the pride of having acquired something which he had got out of his own strength and intelligence. Besides this, only a person who is able can even think of acquiring any object of comfort in the world which is rare for his compatriots to have. For instance, only a rich man can hope to acquire, say, a costly gadget which is beyond the reach of an ordinary man. So the very fact that he wants that gadget shows that he has a hidden pride in him that he has the capability, the financial prowess and the wherewithal to acquire it. There is a subtle, concealed ‘Ahankar’ hidden in him that he can do such and such thing, he can acquire and enjoy such and such thing, and he is capable of doing it. It is ‘Ahankar’ that propels him to show the world that he is superior in knowledge, wisdom, scholarship, powers, strength, wealth and prosperity. This ‘Trishna’ for one-up-man-ship is directly proportionate to his ‘Ahankar’.]

“Canto 2, verse no. 63—A Sanyasi should think thus— ‘Though I behave like an ordinary mortal by lamenting or wailing (such as when in anguish or sorrows), by creating and producing, by accepting and rejecting, by momentarily opening and closing the eyes, but still essentially I am contemplative and thoughtful by nature (or I have eliminated or got rid of the restless nature of my mind, or I have conquered and subdued my mind or have rejected its dominance over me). I am an image or embodiment of bliss, happiness and joy, and am the enlightened, wise, erudite and knowledgeable supreme, transcendental entity called the Atma itself (63).

“Canto 2, verse no. 64—I have separated/de-linked my self from the mind which experiences, enjoys and collects stimuli (impulses) from the external world in the form of knowledge (perception and information). I have made (trained) the mind to abandon all its desires and wishes, hopes and expectations. I have broken all shackles representing these. I am an image of enlightenment, wisdom, erudition and truthful knowledge (64).

[Note :- Here the pronoun ‘I’ identifies the Sanyasi with the Atma and not with either his gross body or his subtle body consisting of his sense organs and his mind-intellect complex respectively. When he says ‘I’, he means his pure self, which is the Atma or the pure conscious, enlightened and self illuminated soul.]

“Canto 2, verse no. 65—I live calmly and peacefully in a healthy state of existence (fujke;%—literally, a disease free existence) which is free from the ailments represented by the various good or bad ‘Sankalps’ (i.e., ambitions, determinations and volitions). [In the absence of any ambitions and volitions, there is no cause of any restlessness or anxiety to fulfill or anyhow accomplish them. This is like a disease for a creature because it snatches away the creature’s peace and tranquility of mind just like any pain or suffering from an affliction of the body makes a person restless, agitated and anxious.]

Having forsaken the fear of being successful or unsuccessful in any endeavour, being perturbed by the prospect of failure and shame, and being excited at the prospects of success and accomplishments, I live in a state of being ‘enlightened and self realised’ (fully knowing who I am, what is the truth, the futility of pursuing various desires, ambitions, hopes and expectations, and remaining ever contented and satisfied, dispassionate and detached, and free from all encumbrances, delusions and hallucinations arising out of ignorance) (65).

“Canto 2, verse no. 66—Having completely forsaken and discarded all emotions of infatuations, love, endearment, fondness, longings, attachments and attractions as well as of malice, ill-will, animosity and hatred towards this world, or having abandoned differentiating between ‘my and your’ and ‘me and you’. I live in this mortal world firmly established in my Atma, which I treat as my habitat (instead of the external, perishable and artificial world full of faults). This Atma (which is my habitat) is uniform, unbreakable and immutable as well as strong, sturdy, steady, unwavering and firm like the ‘Bajra’ (which is the strongest material in existence). [The word ‘Stambh’ also means a pillar. With this interpretation, the word ‘Bajra’ would mean ‘diamond’, which is the strongest natural material available in nature, and the Atma would then be compared to a ‘pillar’ or rock of diamond. The word ‘pillar’ is a metaphor for strength, support, sturdiness and stability.] I am firmly rooted in my true form which is pure enlightenment, most wise and an erudite entity (66).

“Canto 2, verse no. 67—I have liberated myself from the desire or inclination to make efforts (to achieve success in any endeavour or acquire things that please me) as well as the tendency to be lazy, indolent and lethargic. [That is, I remain neutral and indifferent to everything, to the various activities of the world, to the allurements of the objects of the world as well as gratification of my sense organs. But my indifference should not be

construed as laziness or lethargy, because I remain ever engrossed in contemplation and meditation upon my Atma and Brahm. I am always alert and active in my spiritual pursuits, but I remain aloof from worldly pursuits. See also verse no. 53 and 55.] I have freed myself from either treating anything as contemptible and lowly, or as worthy of acquiring and receiving (because for me, all things are equal —see verse no. 56 and 58 also).

When will I get the contentedness, satisfaction and its consequential peace and tranquility so much characteristic of the Atma? When shall I be established in the abode which is self-illuminated and radiantly splendidous? (67).

“Canto 2, verse no. 68—When will I retire to a cave in a mountain range to calmly contemplate, ponder and meditate? When will I enter the stage of ‘Nirvikalp Samadhi’ and become steady and effortless like a rock? (68).

[Note :- The ‘Nirvikalp Samadhi’ is the trance-like state of ascetics when they lose their individuality and merge with the supreme Soul while still retaining in the physical body. This is generally done in a seclude place like a cave and can last indefinitely.]

“Canto 2, verse no. 69—When will I become so firmly and deeply engrossed in meditating and contemplating upon that Brahm who is without any fraction (i.e., who cannot be partitioned), is immutable and imperishable so much so that I become so steady and unmoving that the cuckoo bird can build its nest on my head (69).

“Canto 2, verse no. 70—I have cut down my various ‘Sankalps’ (determinations, vows, ambitions, volitions) which are like tall trees of a dense forest. I have chopped through the various ‘Trishnas’ (desires, wants, greed, avarice and yearnings for worldly objects and comforts) which are like the creepers twined around those trees. I have succeeded in crossing (overcoming, subduing, conquering) this mind of mine with its myriad wishes, inclinations, tendencies and the host of problems, anxieties and agitations accompanying them, which are all like a dense forest for me.

Having crossed this great and intractable forest (i.e., having conquered and subdued my mind with its varied and myriad ‘Sankalps’ and ‘Trishnas’), I have finally emerged in the open plain beyond (that forest) which is clear from these horrible hurdles. Here, I wander around peacefully and in bliss (without facing any moral obstacles and torments) (70).

[Note :- The allegory of the forest will be best understood by those who have ever had the misfortune of getting lost in one. No sun-light (which is symbolic of knowledge, wisdom and enlightenment) enters or penetrates in a deep and dense forest covered with thick canopy of foliage. The traveler knows not in which direction to proceed because there is no sun to guide him. The dense cover of thick foliage, tall trees and a network of creepers act like a formidable wall for the traveler. [Here, the spiritual aspirant or seeker]. This symbolic forest prevents the traveler (the spiritual seeker or aspirant) from obtaining peace; he is so horrified and trapped in its midst that his mind is too busy, anxious and restless with terror to find a quick way out of the forest than to ever have time for the luxury of peace and tranquility. Once the forest is somehow crossed, the sight of the

welcoming open sun-lit plains beyond fills the traveler with ecstasy and jubilation, the extent of which just cannot be imagined; for all practical purpose, he deems himself to have attained a new life full of bliss and happiness.]

“Canto 2, verse no. 71—I am an embodiment of that imperishable and supreme state called ‘Param-Pad’¹. I am unique, unparalleled and one of my kind. I am victory, triumph and success personified. I personify ‘Nirvan’ (emancipation and ultimate salvation). I am without any ego and pride, am without a fraction or part, and am without (i.e. do not have) any desires, hopes, attachments or attractions of any kind in this delusionary world (71).

[Note :- ¹The Param Pad is a stature in which a creature reaches the supreme Lord and merges his own individual Atma with the Atma of the supreme Being. The word ‘Param’ means the most exalted, supreme, greatest and the ultimate, while ‘Pad’ means feet, state, stature, honour, title etc. That is, the creature is honoured with the highest title obtainable in this creation in the form of salvation and emancipation of his soul. It also refers to achieving the goal of being near to his Lord.]

“Canto 2, verse no. 72—I am pristine pure, uncorrupt and clean, am potent, able and agile, am authoritative, and am an embodiment of Truth as well as of enlightenment and wisdom. I am blissful and happy and have established firm restraint over my sense organs as well as over all the various ‘Vasanas’ (desires, passions, lust). I am always happy and cheerful, fully contented, satiated and fulfilled. I am compassionate, kind, generous, gracious and magnanimous, am truthful, non-dual, un-changeable and uniform, and am the radiant and glorious Supreme Authority’ (72).

“Canto 2, verse no. 73—A Sanyasi should think in the above manner (verse nos. 63-72) and be established in his true self (i.e., he should realise his true identity and be convinced of it, and as a result, obtain peace and tranquility, happiness and joy, felicity and beatitude, emancipation and salvation, liberation and deliverance et al). He should acquire full awareness and knowledge of the state of existence called ‘Nirvikalpa’ (see verse no. 68) and become one like it (73).

3(B)(ii) Maitreyu Upanishad, Canto 1, verse nos. 15-18; Canto 3, verse nos. 1-25:--

Canto 1, verse nos. 15-18:--

15. He, the supreme Lord (Brahm) is eternal, is pure and holy, is an embodiment or image of ‘Gyan’ (wisdom, erudition, enlightenment and knowledge), is independent in his thought and behaviour, is an image and personification of Truth and Reality, is subtle and sublime, is immanent, all pervading, omnipresent and all-encompassing, and is unique, matchless and without a parallel.

The seeker/aspirant who has the truthful knowledge of Brahm should think that he (the seeker/aspirant) is the one who personifies that ocean of supreme bliss and beatitude as well as the virtues and myriad forms in which that Brahm has revealed himself (in the form of this vast, diverse cosmos). The seeker/aspirant should be convinced that there is no doubt about it (15).

16. 'I derive immense bliss which originates in my bosom, and relying on it, I would push the whole devil in the form of hopes and desires away from me. The supreme entity residing in my bosom observes the activities of this whole world like one watches the tricks of a juggler, i.e. it does not get involved emotionally and remains only a spectator, a witness only to the play unfolding around it. That entity does not get emotionally attached to anything and remains dispassionate towards and detached from everything. How can, therefore, sorrows, anguish, agonies, troubles and tribulation of any kind ever find entrance in my bosom? (16)

[Note :- The supreme entity referred here is the Atma/soul of the creature. When the seeker realises that his true identity is the Atma or soul residing in his bosom, and that this Atma is no one else but the supreme Brahma himself, he derives profound peace and bliss. With this enlightenment comes detachment and dispassion to the body and the world. The seeker/aspirant acquires an altitude of a spectator—he just watches and enjoys, and he has nothing to do with the actual play itself, he is not a participant. He loses all hopes and desires, because hopes and desire are made to obtain comfort, peace, happiness and joy. When the seeker/aspirant gets all these in his bosom itself in an eternal form, there is no need to seek them outside in the world in a temporary form. With this state of things, there is no scope of frustration, failures and a sense of dejection and dismay at all. There is no room for sorrows and anguish to make their presence felt in the heart.]

17. Those who are ignorant of the ultimate truth and reality are subject to the rewards or punishment for their deeds which they do while obeying or disobeying the codes of conduct prescribed for the section or class of society to which they belong (called the 4 Varnas), or to the various phases of life as prescribed by tradition (called the 4 Ashrams).

But those who abandon all these superficial segregations and artificial limitations imposed by worldly traditions (in order to regulate the life of an ordinary man in society and to prevent anarchy and chaos), and instead focus their attention on and get firmly established in the superseding Atma (the individual's 'soul' which is pure 'consciousness' and a creature's true 'self') residing in their own bosom, such persons are endowed with full contentedness derived from supreme bliss emanating and radiating out from the Atma (17).

18. All the rules and regulations, tenets and maxims to be followed by (i.e. prescribed for) the various 'Varnas' and 'Ashrams' as well as the different attires and marks on the body and the yoke (responsibility) which it has to carry while belonging to any particular Varna or Ashram—are all like a back-breaking burden for the creature. These have a beginning and an end (i.e. are perishable, temporary, impermanent), they are very painful, burdensome and encumbering for the creature, causing him endless agony and torments.

Hence, one should not be too emotionally attached to one's son and any other person with whom he comes in contact in this world. Instead, he should be firmly rooted in the infinite supreme bliss and felicity that is derived from contact with the Atma, and in being dispassionate, detached and renounced, with no expectations and desires of any kind from this world (18).

Canto 3, verse nos. 1-25:--

[The person who is described here with the pronoun 'I' is a self realised, enlightened Being, and not a haughty, egoist, proud hypocrite who pretends that he is Brahm or is equivalent to Brahm and demands honour, respect, reverence and submission from the world. How can a true ascetic be ever boastful and appear to be saying 'I am Brahm'? At the instant he realises his true self as the pure consciousness, the Atma, he exalts in ecstasy, just like saying 'eureka, I have discovered my self!' It's almost like discovering one's true self which makes a man so joyous that he isn't able to suppress his joy and astonishment. He exclaims aloud in ecstasy, oblivious of the fact that his remarks might be misunderstood and misconstrued by others—he isn't bothered about what others say or think about him in the first place.]

1. "It (the Atma) is me, and that (the transcendental supreme Brahm) is also me. I am Brahm. I am the cause of all creation and am the moral preceptor of the whole world. Whatever there is in this world is me, and nothing but me (as I am the all pervading cosmic Consciousness known as the 'Atma') (1).

2. I am 'Siddha' (successful, accomplished, acclaimed, expert, proven and valid). I am 'Suddha' (pure, holy, un-corrupt, un-polluted, un-adulterated, immaculate and pristine). I am the supreme Truth. I am always present, am constant, perpetual and am eternal. I have no faults, flaws or blemishes in me (2).

3. I am endowed with special and important knowledge, wisdom, sagacity, erudition, scholarship and enlightenment. I am special, important, prominent, pre-eminent and exalted. I am 'Som' (the elixir of eternity and bliss). I am everything indeed. I am auspicious, am without any sorrows, anguish and grief, am full of equanimity and equitability, and it's me who am pure consciousness (called the Atma) and awakened (3).

4. I transcend honours and insults (i.e. they do not effect, move or distract me in anyway), am without attributes or characteristics (i.e. I am neutral), and am 'Shiva' (one who is beautiful, auspicious, enlightened, holy and truthful). I am without any confusion and doubts or bewilderments and perplexities created by the two opposing views of duality and non-duality as well as the tussle and tug-of-war between sorrows and happiness, pains and joys. Such an entity that possesses these qualities is non other than me (i.e. I am Brahm personified, because these virtues are the characteristics of Brahm) (4).

[Note :- The tussle between believing one school of thought that says Brahm is non-dual and one, and the other school that says Brahm and creature are two entities, creates a lot

of confusion, schism, bewilderments and perplexities to the seeker of the ultimate 'truth' which can nevertheless be only one and not two. He is completely confounded and vexed by this debate. So the Upanishadic seer stresses here that there should be no confusion or doubt in this regard, for Brahm is one and not two. This is amply emphasized and repeatedly pointed out.

Similarly, the effect of extremes of emotions, such as having sorrows and happiness, can be visualized by imagining what happens to a man who is subjected to quick changes of temperature—e.g., having a cold shower and then a hot bath and repeating the cycle. He is sure to fall gravely sick soon.]

5. I go beyond emotions (i.e. I have vanquished and conquered them). I am without any imaginations and appearances (i.e., I am not an impostor and a deceitful person). I am light personified; I am its radiance and splendour, its brilliance and brightness, its glory and illumination. I possess all the dual characteristics —such as being 'nothing and void' as well as being 'very gross and grave', and being 'beautiful as well as ugly' at the same time (5).

6. I cannot be compared to anything or anybody, for I am unique, matchless and one of my kind in this creation. I am eternal, perpetual, infinite, universal, pure, un-corrupt and eternally an image of 'Shiva' (beautiful, auspicious, holy, truthful, enlightened, wise, powerful, dispassionate, detached, Lord of all, a perfect renunciate, the most erudite and wise ascetic, and the one who has annihilated all my shortcomings and faults). I am beyond the imagination of all, and at the same time I pervade and encompass all. I am auspicious, uncorrupted, holy and august; I am eternal, always and everlasting (6).

7. I do not have either the attributes of non-duality or that of duality. [That is, I possess the attributes of 'duality' as well as the entire attributes which come under the definition of 'non-duality'. I encompass all.]

I am free from the distinction of being truthfulness and falsehood. [There is no confusion in me as to whether I am true or false. This fact is already established.]

I am free from having all 'Sankalps' (volitions, determinations, ambitions, vows and promises) (7).

8. I am free from variety and having a multiform nature (i.e. I am same everywhere; there is no variability in my existence; I am uniform, one, immutable, indivisible and unchangeable).

I am a personification or image of the uniform, un-breached supreme bliss, happiness and joy. I am neither 'me' (i.e. I lack the ego factor of being so exalted and honourable with all the attributes that I have listed above for myself and my virtues or qualities) nor 'anyone else' (who has this ego factor in him).

[That is, I am neutral. There is no distinction between what I call 'me' and the other person standing in front of me whom I call 'you', because the same Atma resides in both of us. When I say 'I am such and such', I just mean to introduce myself and not to show off my exalted and superior stature. I do not talk about my gross body, but my 'pure self' which is the Atma and which is Brahm and which is humility personified.]

I am free from the limitations, encumbrances and bondages created by any gross form such as that created by a body.

[It's true, because a 'spirit' has no form as such. Spirit is wind, and wind takes the shape of the space where it is present. It is also like water, which is gross and which takes the form and shape and contour of its container] (8).

9. I am free from such mundane needs as having to seek a shelter for myself and neither can it be said that I don't have a shelter for me. I am without a foundation or support or a resting place (because I don't need one). I am also free from all shackles and bondages, and neither do I need 'Moksha' (liberation, deliverance, emancipation and salvation). I am a personification, an embodiment and an image of Brahm himself (9).

10. I am free from the encumbrances created by 'Chitta' (mind and intellect complex) too.

[That is, I do not need the mind and intellect to advise and guide me because I am already enlightened. I am self-realised and truly wise, so I don't need the prop of the 'Chitta'. Again, I have vanquished my wandering and restless mind and have instead focussed it on Brahm and my Atma. For all practical purposes, my mind has been made numb and I have freed myself from the bondages it creates by forcing one to get hooked to objects of sensual gratification, comfort and pleasure in this world.] Indeed, I am the transcendental Brahm. I am deep 'contemplation' as well as 'thoughts' personified, and at the same time, I am beyond their purview (10).

11. I am an image or personification of the three constituent letters of the divine, cosmic word known as 'Pranav' or OM, viz. A, U and M. The word OM is the representative word for the universal, infinite, absolute and eternal Truth. I am beyond the concept of seeker, that which is sought and the process of seeking.

[That is, I am all the three rolled into one—I am the seeker, I am the object sought and the process of seeking that object.] (11)

12. I am complete and wholesome in all respects. I possess all the characteristics and attributes of a person who is totally blissful; one who is blessed with the boon of beatitude and felicity. I am a personification of all the pilgrim holy sites as well as Lord Shiva who is a manifestation of the supreme Lord, and who is a most auspicious provider of wellbeing and welfare (12).

13. I cannot be targeted and I cannot be seen (because I am invisible though I permeate in everything, and I cannot be fixed to a particular spot that can be aimed at). I am the essence that does not dissolve (I retain my originality and do not become extinct or merged with any other entity). I am the proof, I am fit to be used as a universal standard, and I am the witness or prover himself.

[That is, I am the one who has the true knowledge of the reality, I've witnessed it, I've experienced it, I can prove it and at the same time I myself is the poof of that Truth and Reality.]

Therefore, I am an embodiment or image of Shiva (13).

14. I don't see the gross world (i.e. I do not see the 'grossness' of this mundane, artificial, illusionary world; rather I see its subtle and sublime nature). I do not have the eyes and other gross organs of perception (such as the ear, nose, tongue and skin which are restricted to the gross body and not the subtle body of the creature, i.e. I don't have a gross body but only the subtle body).

I develop, progress and enhance my self spiritually. I am wisdom, erudition, knowledge and enlightenment personified. I am happy, joyous and cheerful. I am 'Har' (i.e. Shiva)¹ (14).

[Note :- ¹I am the one who takes away or eliminates all sins and sorrows; the word Har refers to "Shiva" who symbolizes characteristic such as beauty, truth, auspiciousness, holiness, divinity, renunciation, enlightenment and peace; he is an eliminator of this evil world by annihilating it when it is full of sins and perversions, when the balance of evil and sins tilts so much that goodness and righteousness becomes almost negligible. Shiva is also an erudite and most enlightened ascetic, so here the word 'Har' refers to that aspect of enlightenment also. Further, Shiva is called 'Mahadeo', or the great God. He is almighty and omnipotent; so these characteristic or virtues are also present in me. The word 'Har' means to steal, abduct, remove, eliminate, dispel, alleviate. In the present context it means that being enlightened and wise, I have been able to overcome all my sins and misdemeanours and their effects. I have washed away all blemishes and cured all the blights that had been clinging to me.]

15. I do not possess any organs (either of perception or of action, because I do not have a gross body), but still I (miraculously) do all the deeds myself. I have satisfied myself and feel fully contented with what has been said in Vedanta (or, the knowledge given by the Upanishads has fully satisfied me and given rest to my agitated mind and heart; it has calmed all my restlessness and queries, and has given me peace and tranquility of the mind).

I am readily and easily available to all who wish to contact me because I am full of humility and do not have false pretensions or airs about me. That is, I am the one who is easily accessible to one and all (15).

16. I personify both the extremes of joy and sorrows, happiness and anguish, comfort and sufferings. I am the deemed reward of always keeping silent (i.e. not indulging in fruitless chatter, gossip, debates, criticisms etc. Keeping quiet makes a man conserve the energy of his vital winds and remain composed and peaceful).

I am an image and an embodiment of pure, un-corrupt, glorious consciousness as well as of the supreme and absolute Truth and Reality (16).

17. Whatever there is, I am free from it (or I transcend it). I am neither very insufficient or miniscule and micro in nature, nor am I more than enough or huge, vast, colossus and macro. I do not have anything to do with a tissue called heart, but at the same time I reside in the centre of the lotus-like heart of the creature (17).

18. I am free from the so-called 6 faults or flaws associated with a creature¹ as well as the 6 gross features that constitute his body². I also have no fear from the 6 legendary

enemies³ of a creature. I am a resident of the lonely, peaceful, secluded, serene and fortified inner sanctum (called the heart or bosom of the temple known as the body) of the creature (protected from being tormented by all these 6 trouble makers) (18).

[Note :- ¹The 6 faults or flaws are the ones associated with—(i) birth (Janma), (ii) existence and its problems (Astitwa), (iii) development and progress (Vikaas), (iv) various confusions, contradictions, dilemmas and doubts (Viprit Mana), (v) decay and ruin (Kshaya), (vi) complete destruction and annihilation (Vinaash).

²The 6 gross features constituting the body of the creature are the following—(i) skin (Charma), (ii) flesh (Mansa), (iii) blood (Rakta), (iv) veins and nerves (Naadi), (v) abdomen/stomach (Meda), and (vi) bone and marrow (Majja).

³The 6 enemies of a creature are the following—(i) lust, desire, passion etc. (Kaam), (ii) anger, rage, wrath, vehemence etc. (Krodha), (iii) greed, avarice, yearnings etc. (Lobha), (iv) worldly delusions, attachment, attraction, infatuation and endearment etc. (Moha), (v) arrogance, haughtiness, hypocrisy etc. (Mada), (vi) envy, joyously, ill will, malice etc. (Maatsarya).]

19. I transcend and go beyond the limitations imposed by a country having geographical boundaries delineating location and place; at the same time, no destruction or demotion can be imposed on me by time and circumstance. I am naked with nothing to conceal and am an image of bliss and happiness.

‘Not this, not this’ (“neti, neti”)—I am free from this mode of denial, i.e. I am positive and certain about everything I say about myself. I do not deny anything about me and also about what I say or understand about this world (19).

20. I am like the infinite, endless, eternal, uniform, un-fractioned and seamless sky or space. I personify the concept of being infinite, endless, eternal, uniform, un-fractioned and seamless. My mind, intellect and thought processes are beyond the impact and influence of various delusions, hallucinations, impostures, crafts, deceits and cunningness which are generally associated with this maverick world.

I myself am free from all these faults or taints collectively called ‘Prapanch’ of the world (20).

21. I am an image of the all-illuminating ‘light’ and am an embodiment of the light emanating from the pure consciousness or Atma itself. I transcend and go beyond all the three dimensions of time—the past, the present and the future. That is, I am free from the fetters and limitations imposed by the factor of time.

I am also free from ‘Kaam’ etc. (i.e. I am not servile to lust, passions and other worldly entrapments) (see verse no. 18 and its note also) (21).

22. I am free from the limitations of having or not having a gross body. I am without any attributes and characteristics. I am unique, one and the only one of my kind (i.e. I am non-dual).

Though I do not seek or aspire for getting 'Mukti' or 'Moksha' (liberation and deliverance, emancipation and salvation) I am deemed to be always liberated, delivered and emancipated; I have achieved salvation (22).

23. I am beyond the debates of whether it's true or not true. It is only me who is truly present in all the dimensions of time and am not limited to any one dimension or plane.

I do not have to go anywhere because there is no destination where I need to go (simply because I am all pervading, all encompassing, omnipresent and immanent) (23).

24. I am always eternal, same, uniform and universal. I am equitable, changeless, immutable and indivisible. I am peaceful and tranquil, serene and calm. I am the supreme and most exalted 'Purush' (the male aspect of nature; the Lord God Vishnu himself).

He whose characteristic features are marked by all the virtues listed herein before is, verily, 'me'. I am 'He' indeed, and there is no doubt about it (24)."

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Section 3(C)

Shukla Yajur Veda Upanishads

3(C)(i) Brihad Aranyaka Upanishad, Canto 4, Brahman 4, verse no. 23:--

23. This fact has also been endorsed by the sacred hymns called Richas of the Vedas, which say, inter alia, that this magnificent glory, exalted stature and divine virtues of those who are experts in the knowledge pertaining to Brahm, is eternal, uniform and stable. They neither rise or improve in stature, nor are they demoted or downgraded in anyway as a consequence of doing any deed, be it righteous and auspicious, or unrighteous and inauspicious respectively.

One should endeavour to become acquainted with the basic cause of that glory, stature and honour, i.e. one should acquire self-realisation and awareness of the Atma and Brahm that would give them that exalted stature. This knowledge and awareness ensures that such a person would never indulge himself in anything that is unrighteous and inauspicious¹.

A person who has become wisened to the facts and truths about the absolute Reality, which is the immutable and irrefutable Truth of creation as mentioned in this Upanishad and elsewhere, acquires a calm and serene mind; he does severe Tapa; he becomes a renunciate par excellence; he becomes dispassionate and detached from all worldly mundane affairs that act as shackles for an ordinary person; he develops the grand quality known as 'Titiksha' (which means having endurance, patience, forbearance, fortitude and sufferance); and he becomes focused, contemplative and introspective in his mind. He sees the world as nothing else but an image of his own Atma, he realises too that his own true 'self' is none other than that Atma which uniformly pervades everywhere, and therefore his own bosom is the habitat of the world².

Then no unrighteousness, perversion, sins, evils and wickedness can ever affect him; he goes beyond their reach. Such a person become free from all taints and blemishes; he remains sinless and faultless; he has no doubts, confusions and perplexities in his mind. He becomes a true Brahmin³.

Oh king! This state of existence is known as 'Brahm Loka', literally the abode where the supreme, transcendental and majestic Brahm lives. Here it refers to a Brahmin or any other person who has attained that exalted stature which has been described in the forgoing verses, which makes that man as exalted, as praise worthy and as noble and honourable as Brahm himself. Such a person becomes a personification of Brahm. Such a person has realised the true meaning of what constitutes Brahm. You have arrived here in Brahm Loka--i.e. you have realised Brahm, and therefore you have arrived in the realm of Brahm; you have come to know the Truth⁴!

King Janak was overwhelmed with gratitude. He said in thanks giving, 'Oh Lord! I bow before you most humbly and reverentially. I submit myself before you and present myself at your service' (23).

[Note—¹When a man becomes aware of who he actually is, i.e. when he becomes aware that he has a noble and high pedigree, that he is the pure conscious Atma living inside the gross body, that he is already an exalted being in the evolutionary ladder and is just one step away from being finally and eternally freed from the shackle of delusions and ignorance that had been the cause of his endless cycle of birth and death resulting in perpetual sorrows and miseries for him, he would not do anything then that would be demeaning and demoting to his exalted stature, and which would cause an obstacle in the path of his final liberation and deliverance. After all, who would voluntarily wish to be demoted from an already high stature? Who would court troubles and miseries unnecessarily? When one becomes aware of the fundamental ‘truth’, one does not get involved in any unrighteous, unholy, unscrupulous, depraved and denigrating deed because, as stated in the previous verse no. 22, a profound sense of renunciation, detachment and dispassion would sprout in the heart of a self-realised and enlightened person towards this world of falsehood and material comforts which are perishable and non-eternal.

²That is, as pointed out earlier, since he has realised that his Atma and the Atma of the other living creature in this world are one and the same entity, he comes to terms with the fact that the entire world resides in his own bosom where his Atma resides.

³That is, a person who has inculcated these noble qualities in him becomes truly worthy of respect and honour, he becomes truly exalted and enlightened, he becomes worthy of being called a Brahmin who is the senior most member of the society and respected for his erudition, scholarship, wisdom and knowledge, who acts as a guide and teacher for the rest of the society, and who treats everyone with compassion and likeness, because he has realised the true essence of Brahm.

⁴When an enlightened person realises that the supreme Brahm lives in his own bosom as his pure conscious Atma, he understands that ‘Brahm Loka’ is inside him. Similarly, since this entire world around him is a manifestation of Brahm, it obviously becomes a ‘Brahm Loka’. If he is truly Brahm-realised, he would immediately deduce that both these two Brahm Lokas are fundamentally the same—a non-dual view of creation.]

3(C)(ii) Ishavasya Upanishad, verse no. 7:--

7. In that realised and erudite state of enlightenment, when an exalted person becomes acquainted with and convinced of the truth about that supreme, transcendental Lord (that he pervades the entire creation uniformly and universally), all the creatures then become an image of that Supreme Being for him. In that exalted and enlightened state of mind when that person witnesses the Lord everywhere in a non-dual form (i.e. when he sees no distinction between the supreme, almighty, macrocosmic Lord, and the humble, meek and microcosmic individual because both are an image of one another), what delusions and doubts, what confusions and consternations remain for him? [That is, no attachments or infatuations would affect him, and therefore there will be no cause for sorrows,

sufferings and grief on separation from his dear ones, or jealousy and hatred due to worldly mundane causes. He goes beyond such lowly, denigrating, misplaced and ignorance-based emotions. Consequentially, he attains beatitude and felicity; equanimity and magnanimity become his hallmark.] [7]

[Note—A man is engulfed in “Moha” which literally means ignorance-induced delusions leading to worldly attractions, infatuations, attachments and passions, and the ensuing trap that ensnares the creature in its web, and prevents its liberation and deliverance. This happens only till the time he is veiled by ignorance and in his stupidity thinks himself to be wise, and therefore never attempts to find out the truth; he remains contented being ignorant in his fallacious belief that ignorance is bliss! There is no bigger stupidity than this. So a wise person endeavours to understand the real and truthful nature of the world behind the façade which is nevertheless false and misleading. He realises and sees the supreme Brahm everywhere, in all the creatures, and in all the individual units of creation. Consequentially, all become equal in his eyes. He becomes humble and pious; he loses his haughtiness and arrogance; he becomes merciful, gracious and kind towards all.

Secondly, this verse builds upon verse no.1 and 2. A wise person realises the falsehood of this perishable world, the futility of pursuing it blindly. He understands that he is merely a player in the hands of the cosmic Lord. He should concentrate his energy in serving the Lord’s creation selflessly without expecting any return. So, when there is no involvement in the world and the deeds are done without any hopes, all the reasons for agitations and frustrations vanish. There is no fear of failure and there is no competitor to beat. This allays all sorrows, sufferings, grief and miseries that continuously torment a creature who has not overcome Moha.]

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Section 3(D)

Krishna Yajur Veda Upanishads

3(D)(i) Kaivalya Upanishad, verse nos. 19-23:--

“Verse no. 19—‘I am that supreme transcendental Brahm personified. Everything that exists has its origin in me (because Brahm is the cause of the origin of everything, and I am a living embodiment of Brahm—refer verse no. 16), everything is established in me (because I am the fundamental support and foundation and basis of all that exists in my manifestation as the macrocosmic Brahm—refer verse no. 17), and it is in me that everything collapses and vanishes at the time of its conclusion (because everything merges, at the time of conclusion, into Brahm from where they had originated at the time of creation—refer verse no. 14).

Verily, that non-dual, supreme and transcendental Brahm, the cosmic Soul and pure cosmic and universal Consciousness is none other than ‘me’ (19).

[Note—On the face of it these statements smack of arrogance, pride, haughtiness, hypocrisy and egotism. But it is not so because these are pronounced by a self-realised holy man who has distanced himself from all worldly praises and has renounced all his connections with this materialistic world. Therefore there is no question of making such haughty statement for self-praise in order to gain some material benefit. Rather, it’s a spontaneous outburst of exultation at discovery of the grand Truth, much like Archimedes, the legendary Greek inventor and mathematician, running out of his bath, half naked, shouting ‘Eureka’ when he discovered the famous laws of buoyancy named ‘the Archimedes Principle’ after him.]

“Verse no. 20—‘I (the Atma) am smaller than the atom (as the conscious ‘self’ of the individual creature). Similarly, I am larger than the largest entity in existence personified (i.e. I am the Viraat Purush, the macrocosmic gross body of Brahm). The entire colourful and varied world is but my form or revelation. I am the most ancient and primary Purush (i.e. I am the Prajapati Brahma, the creator, from whom the rest of the creation came into being). I am indeed Ishwar (i.e. I am the Lord of the world as well as the Gods). I am the golden hued Hiranyagarbha personified (i.e. I am the macrocosmic subtle body of Brahm from which even the first and primary gross form of the creation as the Viraat had emerged at the very initial phases of this creation). Indeed, I am an embodiment of Shiva (i.e. I am truthful, eternal, beautiful, placid, self-realised, meditative, wise and enlightened like Lord Shiva)’ (20).

“Verse no. 21—‘That Brahm which is constantly on the move though it has no physical limbs, that Brahm which is beyond the scope of comprehension and thought, and that Brahm which is almighty and omnipotent, being an embodiment of all forms of energy, strength, authority, potentials and powers that exist in this creation—indeed that Brahm is ‘me’. I see everything even without any physical eye, and I hear everything even without

the aid of the physical ear. In spite of my being distinct from the subtle body consisting of the mind and intellect complex, I still know everything because I am by nature omniscient and all-knowing. But the astonishing irony is that no one knows about ‘me’ (i.e. my true form).

Verily, I am always in my true form as the pure consciousness and the holy Atma.’ (21).

“Verse no. 22—‘I am the one who is to be known by the study of all the scriptures, such as the Vedas and Vedanta (the Upanishads). I am the one who has created the knowledge contained in the scriptures as well as the object of their study.’ (22).

“Verse no. 23—‘Auspicious or inauspicious deeds, righteous or unrighteous deeds, good or bad deeds—none of them have any affect upon me, they do not taint me, for I am immune to such mundane considerations and beyond their affects. I never decay, get old and decrepit and die, and neither do I have any birth—for I am eternal, infinite and imperishable. I have no gross body and none of its organs such as the gross organs of perception (ears, nose, eyes, tongue and skin) and the organs of action (legs, hands, mouth, genitals and excretory), and neither do I have the subtle body consisting of the mind-intellect complex. None of the five primary elements of creation—such as the earth, water, fire, air and sky—have any relevance for me or define me in the remotest’ (23).

[Note—The Atma is synonymous with Brahm—both are Absolute, Truth and Reality personified in this creation; both are Consciousness personified, the Atma at the level of the individual creature and Brahm at the cosmic level. The creation is so stupendous and varied as pointed out in verse no. 7-9 above that it is impossible to build a comprehensive picture—see also verse no. 24 below.]

3(D)(ii) Varaaha Upanishad, Canto 2, verse no. 38:--

“Canto 2, verse no. 38—“Such a person sees everything in this world as a manifestation of the eternal Truth. [That is, he sees the same universal and truthful Brahm in each unit of creation.]

Therefore, he accepts everything as true¹. This leads him to be convinced of the eclectic truth of the scriptural maxims and axioms that say ‘I am true and truth personified’, ‘I am the supreme transcendental Brahm personified’, and ‘therefore there is nothing beyond me’. [Once he is convinced of the first eclectic statement, the other are natural corollaries. If he is ‘true’ then naturally he is ‘truth personified’ because there can be only one and not two Truths. Since Brahm is the only eternal Truth in creation, it follows that such a person must be ‘Brahm personified’. And finally, since Brahm is all-pervading, all-encompassing and all-incorporating, since everything in creation had emerged from Brahm, and since Brahm forms the outer boundary of creation, it follows that nothing exists beyond Brahm, and therefore, ‘beyond me’, as I am Brahm personified!] (38).

[Note--¹This observation made by a wise and enlightened man should not be confused with an identical statement made by an ignorant man who has no idea of what the 'real truth' is as he is under a thick veil of delusions. Such a man uses this particular statement made by a wise man that 'what is seen by me around myself in this world is true' as an escape route and a proof that he is not doing anything wrong by being indulgent and engrossed in pursuing this world. As is clear here, the wise man's assertion is quite the opposite of the ignorant man's—for while the wise man has developed the divine insight that enables him to penetrate and peer behind the external façade to see the subtle and sublime truth hidden imperceptibly inside, an ability that makes him see the truthful reality of this world and understand the truth of the fact that same cosmic Consciousness that resides in his own bosom as the Atma is also the Atma of the rest of the external world, and that this world is a manifestation of the Supreme Being because nothing exists that is not this Supreme Being, the ignorant man only takes the statement at its face value and finds an excuse in it to become indulgent and engrossed. This man sees only the external façade and treats it as the much flaunted and lauded 'truth' without knowing that he is only cheating himself, that he is calling a shining piece of polished brass as gold by merely relying upon the external glaze and polish of the former that resembles that of the latter. He is a deluded man.]

3(D)(iii) Varaaha Upanishad, Canto 3, verse nos. 3, 8, 10:--

“Canto 3, verse no. 3—‘I am an embodiment of Anand (bliss and happiness). I am uniformly and eternally enlightened. I am the supreme and transcendental principle of creation, i.e. I am the ultimate Truth and the Absolute. I am a treasury from which the eternal light of the self-illuminated consciousness emanates (to illuminate everything around).

Just like the clouds which cannot touch and taint the sky though they live in the sky, I too am untouched by the numerous miseries and agonies that hallmark this deluding and artificial material world of sense objects. [The clouds are present in the sky but the sky is unaffected by them. This is proved when the clouds move away, get dispersed, or pour down as rain and get dissipated. The sky retains its original glory and untainted form. Similarly, the Atma of a realised person is not at all affected by its surroundings.] (3).

“Canto 3, verse no. 8—That Absolute Principle (i.e. the Absolute Truth of the living creation, known as the cosmic Consciousness or the Atma) is unique inasmuch as it possesses the following virtues—it is complete and wholesome; it is non-dual and one; it is un-fractioned, immutable and indivisible Consciousness; and it is free from the distortions and tainting effects created by this multifaceted and oddity-ridden world.

‘I am this unique sublime entity that is supreme, absolute, transcendental, truthful, conscious, formless and attribute-less’. With this firm conviction, a wise and enlightened ascetic or spiritual aspirant becomes silent and calmed down (8).

“Canto 3, verse no. 10—My true form and nature is one which has no attributes and qualifications, which is eternal and infinite, and which transcends even the blissful state obtained during the Sushupta (deep sleep) state of existence¹.

Verily, this sublime and transcendental state is my true and eternal form and nature.’ (10).

[Note--¹This “Sushupta” state is a transitory stage between two phases of sleep. When a man sleeps, he first passes through the dreaming state when his mind remains active, and then when his mind momentarily retires to go to sleep he enters the Sushupta stage. But soon he comes back to the dreaming stage or wakes up directly into the world in the waking state of consciousness. Wise and expert ascetics can practice to make this third stage, i.e. the Sushupta stage, a perpetual state of existence for their consciousness. Since in this stage the mind is asleep, therefore there is no perception of the world, and with the loss of all such perceptions, the world becomes non-existent. And with this defunct world subside all its charms or miseries. With nothing to disturb the tranquility of the consciousness, the latter lies in a perpetual state of eternal and profound bliss and contentedness. This state, if made perpetual and permanent, is called the Turiya state. In this state, even though the ascetic wakes up into this world, he still remains mentally ‘asleep’ and oblivious of this world.

So essentially this verse proclaims that a truly realised ascetic or spiritual aspirant is one who remains permanently in a state of beatitude and felicity notwithstanding the physicality and grossness of his body or whether the body is awake or asleep.]”

3(D)(iv) Tejobindu Upanishad, Canto 3, verse nos. 1-51, 60-74:--

“Canto 3, verse no. 1—Lord Kumar (Shadaanan; Kartikeya) once again asked Lord Shiva (his father) questions regarding the Atma (the pure consciousness and the truthful ‘self’), and how to experience and witness it.

Lord Shiva explained—I¹ am a personification of the supreme transcendental Brahm. I am an embodiment of supreme beatitude and felicity. I am nothing else but Gyan (truthful knowledge, wisdom and enlightenment) personified. I am the Supreme Being personified (1).

[Note—¹The word ‘I’ refers to the untainted, uncorrupt, immaculate, pure and truthful ‘self’ of an enlightened being. When a self-realised person makes this statement, he is not being haughty and arrogant or egoist, but he is simply affirming a spiritual truth that is universal and irrefutable. Kartikeya has asked Shiva to tell him how to experience and witness what Atma is, and the Lord is teaching him what it is. If one sincerely understands that his Atma has the characteristics mentioned here, he would have realised the real meaning of the term ‘pure Consciousness’ as being his true ‘self’. Another point noteworthy here is that Shiva is not talking about himself when he uses the pronoun ‘I’ as it appears to be on the face of it. He is answering Kartikeya’s query, so the word ‘I’ means ‘my true form, my true self’ and it refers to Kartikeya or any spiritual aspirant for that matter.]

“Canto 3, verse no. 2—I am most peaceful and calm, most tranquil and serene. I am nothing else but ‘Chinmaya’—i.e. I am a personification of the all-pervading, all-incorporating and all-encompassing unique entity that is the universal Truth and pure cosmic Consciousness in creation. I am eternal and perpetual; I am universal and uniform; I am permanent and immortal (2).

“Canto 3, verse no. 3—I am an embodiment of eternal and irrefutable Truth which has these (above) eclectic qualities, and anything that is not this ‘truth’ is not me (or, I have discarded all that is not the ‘truth’). I am like the all-encompassing and all-pervading sky element which encloses everything and is present in the subtlest space in the entire creation, but mysteriously remains uninvolved with it, remaining untainted from and unaffected by any of the influences of things which it covers and in which it is present. [That is, like the sky, I too am unattached and uninvolved in anything in this world though I live in this world and do numerous deeds while I live here. I am totally free from all blemishes and faults associated with this world of delusions and artificiality.] (3)

I live in the fourth state of ‘Turiya’, and even transcend this state to exist in the state beyond it, called the ‘Turiya-teet’¹ state. I am only in the form of pure consciousness, and am a personification of eternal blissfulness and happiness, of eternal beatitude and felicity (4).

I have only a subtle form which has no gross body and physical form. As such, I am immaculate, pure, uncorrupt and unadulterated in any form. I am nothing but Gyan (knowledge, wisdom and enlightenment) personified, and therefore I am the only entity worth loving, worth endearing, and worth caring for, an entity that is the most dear for all spiritual aspirants (5).

[Note--¹The “Turiya” state of consciousness is the fourth in which the spiritual aspirant lives in a state of perpetual Samadhi. That is, he remains in a constant state of blissfulness and meditation though he lives in this physical world and goes about his normal affairs like an ordinary man. The fifth state of Turiya-teet is one step further ahead and the last stage in spiritual upliftment when the person crosses the threshold of awareness of this world and he ceases to participate even in his normal functions in this world. He remains like a log of wood, totally uninterested in and completely oblivious of the world around him.]

“Canto 3, verse no. 6—I am one of my own kind because I have no alternatives and parallels (Nirvikalp). I am totally dispassionate and non-desirous of anything (Niriha).

I am spiritually healthy and without any moral or spiritual ailments or tainting affects that are like a disease that might afflict my true self (Niraamaya).

I am alone and remain without any company, being self-sustained and self-sufficient, and needing no support and help from anyone else (Asanga).

I am inculpable, incorruptible and without any faults, taints, defects and shortcomings of any kind (Nirvikar).

I am eternal, unchanging and imperishable; I do not diminish or get degraded or spent (Avyaya) (6).

“Canto 3, verse no. 7—I stay in one uniform form, remaining steady and unchanging in my divine state of existence. I am an embodiment of pure and supreme cosmic

Consciousness that is almighty and all-intelligent, called Chinmaya. I am limitless, undefined, undivided and one single whole (Aparichinna) because by nature I cannot be divided, mutated and broken into parts or divisions or sections; I am that mystical divine Being who is eternal, uniform, universal, everlasting, perpetual and infinite (because by nature I am Akhand) (7).

“Canto 3, verse no. 8—I am an embodiment of Satya (truth) and supreme Anand (beatitude and felicity). I am the supreme transcendental cosmic Consciousness which is characterised by this Anand. As such (i.e. in the form of the cosmic Consciousness—see Canto 2), I live inside as well as outside of everything in existence, both the visible as well as the invisible, including my own body which has visible (the external organs of perceptions and actions) as well as invisible organs (the internal organs and tissues of the body) (8).

“Canto 3, verse no. 9—I am ever submerged in and surrounded by the supreme state of blissfulness obtained by self-realisation of the pure conscious Atma. I remain ever engrossed in contemplating upon this eternally truthful Atma which gives me true happiness and joy. Indeed, I am an image of that supreme Atma. Indeed, that Atma is ‘me’, and it is the eternal form of auspiciousness, blissfulness, wisdom, enlightenment and well being personified by Lord ‘Sada Shiva’.

[The word ‘Sada’ means that which is constant, always, eternal and steady, while ‘Shiva’ stands for auspiciousness, beauty, blissfulness and enlightenment.] (9).

“Canto 3, verse no. 10—I am an embodiment of the light of enlightenment and wisdom, the light of pure consciousness and holiness that is emanating as divine effulgence from the self-illuminated Atma. I represent the brilliant light of the self-radiant and the self-illuminated Atma. I am the essence of this Atma and its glittering light. I have no beginning, no middle and no end, as I am like the eternal, infinite and endless sky (10).

“Canto 3, verse no. 11—I am an embodiment of the eternal, infinite, pure, immaculate, truthful and blissful cosmic Consciousness that is the only almighty and omnipotent Authority having divine powers and potentials in existence. This authoritative Consciousness is imperishable and non-diminishing. It is eternally and perpetually wise, erudite, sagacious and enlightened; it is eternally and perpetually pure, untainted and uncorrupt; and it is eternally and perpetually blissful and happy. I am ‘that’ consciousness (11).

“Canto 3, verse no. 12—I am that eternal and infinite entity which remains or survives after everything else comes to an end. I am beyond all that visibly exists and outlast this visible existence. I cannot be defined by any specific norms or forms having any special characteristics, attributes and qualities, and I am established in my own unique form which is both subtle and sublime. I am a personification of the unique virtues possessed by the great sky extending endlessly to infinity (12).

“Canto 3, verse no. 13—I am a personification of the Supreme Being called ‘Bhuma’, the almighty and omnipotent one, and therefore I have no one as my superior Lord as I am

the greatest amongst all. I personify beatitude and felicity. I cannot ever be described in words. I am the foundation of all else in existence, and therefore need no other support for myself. I am an eternal treasury of pure consciousness (13).

“Canto 3, verse no. 14—I do not consider my body as my self and am indifferent towards the body, because I am not the body (but pure conscious Atma). I do not have any worries of any kind whatsoever (because I am not an ordinary creature tormented by so many problems pertaining to this mundane existence). I am also free from being affected by any of the tendencies and temperaments of the mind and its inherent nature to think about everything that affects the creature and which are related to the latter’s interaction with the world. Instead, I am filled with bliss and happiness that comes with renunciation and enlightenment (14).

“Canto 3, verse no. 15—I am that unique entity that is beyond the purview of the mundane faculty of sight (because I am the subtle and sublime Atma which is microscopic and atomic in nature so that it cannot be physically seen by the naked eye of the gross body), but at the same time I can also be seen (because I have a physical body in which this Atma lives, and this gross body can be clearly seen by the eye).

I am always fulfilled; I am always contented (15).

“Canto 3, verse no. 16—I am Brahm personified. I am pure cosmic Consciousness. I am that Brahm and Consciousness; I am the greatest and supreme; I am what I am. I am like the vast and infinite sky element (16).

“Canto 3, verse no. 17—I am the great Atma. I am the supreme transcendental Authority. Though I am such an exalted and supreme entity, I appear to have a gross physical body (17).

“Canto 3, verse no. 18—I appear to be so ignorant and humble that I become a disciple or a student (because I have to learn so many things in this world when I take a birth here with a body, though I am inherently all-knowing in my ethereal form as the Spirit). I am that Authority which gives support and succour to the three worlds (i.e. I am the supreme Brahm which supports the three units of creation—the terrestrial world of mortal creatures that live on the surface of the earth above water, the nether world of subterranean and aquatic creatures, and the celestial world of Gods and holy Spirits). I am beyond the limitations created by the three phases of time, such as the past, the present and the future (because I am uniform, universal, eternal, imperishable and infinite—therefore such factors as past, present and future do not apply to me). I am the Vedas personified (i.e. I am a fount of all knowledge because I am eternally omniscient and all-knowing, though I appear to be a student and disciple as mentioned above) (18).

“Canto 3, verse no. 19—I am that ultimate Absolute Truth which has been finally determined and affirmed by all the scriptures. I am established as the pure consciousness and the target of the mind’s faculty of concentration and thinking. I have revealed myself as the earth that harbours this world¹, and anything that is not me has no existence (19).

[Note—¹This is a very significant observation by the ancient sage who envisioned this Upanishad. It shows that he was aware of the fact that earth is the only planet that harbours vibrant and colourful life in all its glorious radiance and splendour. Since consciousness is synonymous with life it is apt to liken it with earth.]

“Canto 3, verse no. 20—Be certain about it that there is nothing besides me, because everything in existence is the non-dual Atma. I am indeed Brahm; I am indeed Siddha (the acclaimed one, the mystical one, the attained one, the one with supernatural powers, the one who has successfully accomplished mastery over certain skills and craftsmanship). I am eternally and infinitely pure and immaculate, uncorrupt and unpolluted (20).

“Canto 3, verse no. 21—I have no specific attributes, no particular characteristics and no qualifying qualities that are definable and limiting in their nature (Nirgun), nor do I have any specific contours, forms, shapes and sizes (Nirakar). This is because I am the ethereal, eternal and infinite ‘Atma’ which is beyond the purview of such mundane things.

I am the supreme Brahm personified. I am not liable to decay and come to ruin (Ajar) as I am eternal and imperishable and do not die (Amar) (21).

“Canto 3, verse no. 22—I am always in my own original form (for I have no duplicity and no secondary or parallel forms); I am always established in my own self (without seeking any other assistance). I am the wholesome and healthy Atma. I am the ultimate destination of all spiritual pursuits, and I represent the most exalted state of existence called the ‘Param Gati’ (22).

“Canto 3, verse no. 23—I am the consumer and enjoyer of everything. I am an embodiment and fountainhead of glorious light (representing holiness, auspiciousness, nobility, righteousness, conscientiousness etc.), and all the other virtues that come within the ambit of magnificence and greatness (23).

“Canto 3, verse no. 24—I remain engrossed in my own self and enjoy it myself. I am the seer, and at the same time I see myself everywhere. [This is because ‘I’ am the Atma residing in my own body as well as everywhere outside the body as the cosmic Consciousness and in the body of the person in front of me.]

I am happily and comfortably ensconced in my own self (as the Atma enthroned in the subtle heart). I am the only entity that remains when everything else is eliminated (i.e. I am the remainder that lasts after all other factors in this deluding world are removed, signifying my truthful, imperishable, everlasting and eternal nature) (24).

“Canto 3, verse no. 25—I happily live as an Emperor in my own kingdom in the form of pure consciousness. I am sitting inside my own Atma which acts as my throne, and I do not think of anything other than my own Atma. [That is, my Atma is what gives me my powers and authority, it is therefore useless for me to look anywhere else in search of this power and authority. If I do so, I would be demeaning and in-subordinating my Atma.] (25).

“Canto 3, verse no. 26—I am nothing but pure consciousness personified. I am a personification of the non-dual Brahm who is eternally blissful and truthful. I am a treasure of beatitude and felicity which are the virtues possessed only by Brahm. And, therefore, I am Brahm (26).

“Canto 3, verse no. 27—I am ever present and perpetual. I am like the void or the numeral zero (because I remain free from any contact, attachment or appendage, because I am non-aligned and detached from all emotions and free from all thoughts, because like the zero I give everything its value but remain neutral myself, and because I am like the vacant sky which appears to be a big void but which harbours everything in creation).

I am the Atma that is present in all living creatures. I am an embodiment of Anand (supreme blissful state of existence).

I am eternally in a blissful state of existence. I am that Atma which not only lives in the subtle sky of the heart but has the virtues of the sky (as being all-encompassing, all-pervading and omnipresent in the cosmos).

I am constant and unwavering, steady and perpetual, always present universally and uniformly everywhere in all planes of time (i.e. I am ‘Nitya’) (27).

“Canto 3, verse no. 28—I am the glorious consciousness that illuminates the subtle sky of the heart much like the splendid sun shining brightly in the sky. My form as the Atma is fully contented and fulfilled in its own self. This eclectic form of mine is imperishable, eternal and unchanging; it does not get diminished or degraded or unspent (Avyaya) (28).

“Canto 3, verse no. 29—I cannot be quantified and measured in numbers such as one etc. I am always and eternally liberated and delivered (Mukta). I am subtler than the sky element, and have no beginning and end like it (29).

“Canto 3, verse no. 30—I am an embodiment of divine light and splendour. I am an embodiment of great and immeasurable happiness and joys. I am the only authority in creation. I am a personification of the state which is called the Param Pada which is the final emancipation and salvation of the creature (because I represent the ultimate Truth and cosmic Consciousness which are synonymous with Brahm, and there is nothing beyond me) (30).

“Canto 3, verse no. 31—‘Satya’ (immutable and irrefutable truth) and ‘Anand’ (bliss and happiness) are my true and fundamental forms. [Or, truthful bliss that is real and not artificial is my inherent nature and subtle form.]

Similarly, Gyan (truthful knowledge and erudition, wisdom and enlightenment) and its accompanying Anand (exhilaration, ecstasy and blissfulness that is characteristic of truthful spiritual enlightenment) are my true and real form.

I am an embodiment of pure ‘Vigyan¹’ having unique characteristics. I exhibit signs of truthful Anand that is eternal and infinite (31).

[Note—¹ “Vigyan (pronounced as Vigyaan)”—(a) That empirical body of knowledge which stands the test of proof and verification; scientific and logical form of wisdom and relevant knowledge is called Vigyan. When ordinary ‘Gyan’ is put to test and a rational

body of knowledge is arrived at, when it is witnessed or experienced in practical terms, it is known as 'Vigyan'. It is logical derivation, confirmation and affirmation of certain things known in theory and now ratified as the unequivocal truth and the irrefutable fact, reasoned acknowledgement, or actual witness of facts so that there is no doubt or confusion as to their authenticity, veracity and truth. In other words, Vigyan is experimental Gyan, or Gyan put to practice by following the guidelines of Vedant.

Therefore, Vigyan literally means application of mind, intelligence and rational logic, having in-depth knowledge, intelligent and rational learning or science of anything which can be verified, any knowledge which is empirical, rational, logical, scientific and applicable in practice. Vigyan is analytical and critical intelligence and knowledge obtained as its result.

Besides this, Vigyan is the progenitor, sustainer and concluder of the entire creation. It is obvious deduction because creation is such a complicated process that it requires exceptional intelligence and skills as well as critical ability to use available information to start, sustain and conclude the tremendous explosive potentials of the forces and energy of Nature for constructive purposes, and to keep a strict tab on it so that it does not digress from its mandate and prove counter-productive. Even during the life of a creature, it needs the help from all fields of knowledge in order to meet its daily needs and provide for its material and bodily comforts and well being.

This has been elucidated succinctly in Taittiriyo-panishad of Krishna Yajur Veda tradition, Valli 3, Anuvak 5. Briefly, it says "All the creatures are born out of Vigyan (i.e. special knowledge and skills are needed to set in motion the process of creation); they are sustained by Vigyan (i.e. special knowledge and skills are needed to provide for all the material needs of this living world and take care of its general welfare); and they conclude in Vigyan (i.e. special knowledge and skills are needed even to dispose of the body properly by way of performance of elaborate cremation rites and other rituals, or embalm it before burying).

In short, from conception right up to conclusion creation needs Vigyan at each step of its existence. At the time of death, a wise man benefits from his lifetime of experiences and learning, and detaches himself from this delusory and illusionary world of material objects which are non-eternal and the cause of all miseries because they tend to tie and bog the Atma down to this lowly world of transmigration and prevent its final liberation and attainment of salvation".

'Vigyan' is the wisdom and intellect that is inherent in a man. It is the rational mind that decides what is to be remembered, what is to be thought, what needs attention and concentration of mind, and what is worthy of paying any attention and thought at all in the first place. This selective aspect of the discriminatory intellect is called Vigyan. Any body of knowledge is called Vigyan because it is verifiable and derived at by application of intellect and mind free from any pre-conceived notions and belief. Consciousness is called Vigyan because it is self-sustained, self-enlightened, self-illuminated, radiant and glorious; it is a fount of knowledge and awareness, of wisdom and enlightenment. All other entities in this creation have whatever they have because of the potentials and powers bestowed to them by this consciousness. Their very relevance and importance and significance are there because the consciousness has given them this privilege. These entities are nothing else but a marvelous display of the magnificent majesty and potentials of the consciousness. This realisation is called Vigyan because it is

based on intelligent application of knowledge and wisdom. It is Vigyan because it is empirical and thoughtful; it is rational and logical; it is truthful and real. Vigyan refers to a superior body knowledge that is not based on hearsay or conjectures. It has a solid foundation and steady relevance.

Information and knowledge that stand the test of logic and rationale is called Vigyan; it is this Vigyan that takes a man forward. With knowledge come joy and happiness, satisfaction and a sense of achievement, elation and a sense of fulfillment. In the spiritual realm, this leads to bliss and self-realisation. This realisation pertains to the awareness of the irrefutable and immutable Atma or soul which is consciousness. The macrocosmic counterpart of this individual Atma is known as Brahm. Hence, self-realisation is equivalent to Brahm-realisation.

Consciousness itself refers to the truthful knowledge of anything that is real and true, and not that is hypothetical and imaginary. That is why the Atma or soul is called consciousness and a personification of Vigyan.

(b) Relationship between ‘Gyan (Gyaan)’ and ‘Vigyan (Vigyaaan)’--The difference between ‘Gyan’ and ‘Vigyan’ can be succinctly summed up in the statement—‘Brahm is’ or ‘Lord is’. This awareness and firm conviction of its truth is Gyan, while to say truthfully that ‘Brahm is I’ or ‘Lord is I’ is called Vigyan.

‘Gyan’ and ‘Vigyan’ are closely related to each other. The realisation or awareness that Atma is, inter alia, different from the body, and is the true identity of a creature, is called ‘Gyan’. This Atma is a very unique entity and is called the ‘true self’ of the creature. Gyan refers to self realisation and attainment of enlightenment about the absolute Truth and Reality in this creation. It encompasses a broad swathe of philosophy which is taught by the Upanishads, called Vedanta. When Gyan is put to test and a rational knowledge is arrived at, when it is witnessed or experienced in practical terms, it is known as ‘Vigyan’; it is logical derivation, confirmation and affirmation of certain things known in theory and now ratified as the unequivocal truth and the irrefutable fact, reasoned acknowledgement, or actual witness of facts so that there is no doubt or confusion as to their authenticity, veracity and truth. In other words, Vigyan is experimental Gyan, or Gyan put to practice by following the guidelines of Vedant.

Therefore, ‘Vigyan’ literally means intelligent application of mind; intelligence and rational logic; having in-depth knowledge; intelligent and rational learning or science of anything which can be verified; any knowledge which is empirical; rational, logical, scientific and applicable in practice.]

“Canto 3, verse no. 32—All this around me is Brahm, and nothing but Brahm. Verily, I too am that eternal and universal Sanaatan Brahm (i.e. Brahm who is eternal, perpetual, infinite, everlasting, primary, primeval, most ancient and traditional) who is ever in a blissful state of existence (32).

“Canto 3, verse no. 33—‘You’ (i.e. the second person) and ‘he’ (i.e. the third person)—all the entities indicated by these pronouns are none but Brahm. It is ‘me’ (i.e. the first person) as Brahm in those forms, because there is nothing but Brahm anywhere in existence. I am Shiva¹ (the auspicious, divine, truthful, wise and enlightened One) who is a manifestation of that supreme consciousness known as Brahm (33).

[Note—¹The word “Shiva” has a dual meaning here—one refers to the preacher of this Upanishad who is Lord Shiva as he is the one who has revealed this fine Upanishad as an answer to queries raised by Kartikeya, and the other is a reference to the spiritually enlightened person’s solemn affirmation that he is himself Shiva and that he embodies all the virtues that Shiva stands for.]

“Canto 3, verse no. 34—I have all the eclectic and glorious virtues in me; I am an image of these virtues. I am happy and comfortable. I do not have any of the gross properties of material things in this world, but I am a witness to all the gross things that exist in this world. [That is, inspite of me being in close contact with this materialistic world and witnessing it up close, I am totally detached and disinterested in it and remain unaffected or un-influenced by any of its tainting virtues.] (34).

“Canto 3, verse no. 35—I have a gross body but am not it; instead of it I am the Sanaatan Brahm (the eternal, universal, supreme transcendental Truth in creation) which is pure conscious Atma manifested in my body.

I am the beginning and the end, as well as the remainder. [This word ‘remainder’ indicates that I am eternal and that entity that outlasts the end of the body. I am the universal Spirit which outlives the body, and which was present before the body came into being.] (35).

“Canto 3, verse no. 36—I do not have a name or physical form. I am eternally freed from being limited by such definitions and delineated into different categories. I am an embodiment of beatitude and felicity. In spite of this observation, I appear to have a body with sense organs and exhibit all their characteristic features, attributes, functions and qualities (36).

“Canto 3, verse no. 37—I am without any kind of binds and fetters that can ever shackle me. At the same time, there is no such thing as ‘obtaining liberation and deliverance’ for me (simply because I am not tied with any fetter and shackled to anything, and am an eternally free Spirit).

I am an image of eternal, universal and truthful Anand (ecstasy, exhilaration, bliss, beatitude, felicity, happiness and joys that come with self-realisation). I am the primary and primeval consciousness which is immutable and indivisible (37).

“Canto 3, verse no. 38—The mind and its faculty of speech cannot grasp, understand or know me. [That is, I am beyond the purview of the mind and am so mysterious and enigmatic that I cannot be explained and defined in words.]

I am always in a state of immense blissfulness, joy and happiness.

I am completely wholesome and fulfilled in every way. I am an embodiment of great Anand (blissfulness and ecstasy) (38).

“Canto 3, verse no. 39—I am fully satisfied and contented, and what is known as the essence of Amrit (the divine ambrosia of eternity and blissfulness) is nothing but me.

There is no doubt and confusions about the fact that I am that Brahm who is non-dual and one of his kind (39).

“Canto 3, verse no. 40—I am neutral and devoid of everything like the great void. I cannot be seen or observed visibly¹.

I am already freed from all fetters, and therefore am beyond such situations that would necessitate efforts to obtain freedom. I embody emancipation and salvation; I am an image of happiness and bliss obtained by emancipation and salvation (40).

[Note--¹That is, I exhibit no attributes, no features, no qualities and no characters of any kind as are understandable and grasped by the mind and intellect or perceived by the sense organs. I am much beyond this. I am transcendental and so sublime and subtle that I go beyond the reach of the mind and intellect as well as the sense organs of perceptions.]

“Canto 3, verse no. 41—I am an embodiment of Satya (truth), Vigyan (empirical knowledge) and truthful and eternal Anand (happiness and blissfulness).

I exist in the transcendental state called Turiyateet (the fifth state of consciousness marked by supreme enlightenment and beatitude which is synonymous with the state of Brahm-realisation).

I have no doubts and confusions in me (as I am beyond the purview of worldly considerations) (41).

“Canto 3, verse no. 42—I am eternal and perpetual. I am without a birth. I do not have any of the diseases (a metaphor for physical and spiritual problems) that afflict ordinary mortals in this world. I am therefore honoured by the epithet of Niranjana—one that is faultless, untainted and without any blemishes or flaws.

I am immaculate and uncorrupt; I am erudite, sagacious, enlightened and wise; I am eternal and perpetual; I am the Lord himself (42).

“Canto 3, verse no. 43—I represent the essential meaning of the ethereal word OM¹, and am without any blemishes, aspersion, shame, slander, spot, slur, ignominy, taint, disgrace and other moral, ethical and spiritual faults of any kind (Nishkalank). I am a personified form of OM.

I am an image of pure consciousness. I am so mysterious, esoteric and enigmatic that I am neither this nor that. I am ‘that’ (i.e. Brahm, the Supreme Being) personified (43).

[Note—¹The word OM is a synonym of the supreme transcendental, the cosmic Consciousness from which the entire creation has evolved, and it incorporates the entire spectrum of creation, i.e. its origin, its expansion and its conclusion in its ambit. See also Canto 1 of this Upanishad.]

“Canto 3, verse no. 44—I do not have any specific and tangible form and shape of any kind (as I am the ethereal Spirit and cosmic Consciousness). I have no deeds and actions (i.e. I do not do anything nor do I act in any way, being neutral and detached from this world characterized by deeds and actions).

I have no fractions and divisions in me, and neither is I a fraction or part of anything else (as I am a complete whole, being immutable, indivisible and non-dual Atma). I am beyond perceptions of the mind and sense organs, and neither am I the mind

or sense organs (because I am the pure conscious Atma residing in the causal body of the creature, and the subtle body consisting of the mind as well as the gross body consisting of the sense organs are separate from me) (44).

“Canto 3, verse no. 45—I am not the intellect (the subtler and higher form of the mind) either. I have no alternatives or confusing duality in me. I am independent of the three types of bodies of the creature—viz. the gross body, the subtle body and the causal body. [That is, I am the Atma which resides in the body which has been classified into these three hypothetical divisions for the purpose of metaphysical study only. Being a mere ‘resident’, I am not the ‘body’, but an independent entity quite distinct from it.]

I am not any one of the three states in which the consciousness exists in this world—i.e. the Jagrat state (the waking state), the Swapna state (the dreaming state) and the Sushupta state (the deep sleep state) of consciousness (45).

“Canto 3, verse no. 46—I do not suffer from any of the so-called three torments or ‘Taaps’ that afflict all the mortal creatures in this creation¹. And neither do I have any of the three desires².

I am pure consciousness personified as the Atma which does not require any deep thinking and pondering over any subject (to understand its import and fully grasp it) nor does it need to hear anything to learn about it which is not already known to it (because the Atma is all-knowing and omniscient) (46).

[Note—¹The three torments that afflict the creature are the following-- Adhi-bhautik—related to terrestrial creatures such as enemies and animals; Adhi-daivik—related to unfavourable Gods and malignant stars; Adhi-daihik—related to the body such as diseases and horrors of old age etc.

²The three desires are the following—desire for fame, desire for wealth and desire for comfort/pleasure.]

“Canto 3, verse no. 47—I am so detached from the mundane world that I do not have anyone who can be called my clansman, or my kith and kin, or my peer, compatriot and companion. [This is because I am the pure conscious Atma which is an independent entity not related to anybody whatsoever.] At the same time, there is no one who is not related to me. [This is because the pure consciousness known as the Atma, which happens to be my true identity, is the same in my body as it is in the body of the other person. Therefore, we are all ‘one’, or are like siblings of the same cosmic universal Father known as Brahm.]

Indeed, I am far beyond these debates and classifications of relations. [That is, being the truthful cosmic Consciousness personified as the Atma, I transcend worldly classifications of relations such as one person being my father and the other my brother or friend. For me, all are equal and my own image; there is no fundamental distinction or difference between two or more individuals because all have the same Atma in them.] (47).

“Canto 3, verse no. 48—Mana (mind and emotional heart), Buddhi (intellect) and Ahankar (the notion of pride and ego) are all false and imaginary. I have none of them.

[This is because mind and intellect are the subtle components of the creature's physical body, and I have no physical body which would have these subtle components. Since I am without any form of corruptions and flaws in my immaculate character, there is no question of me having such negative traits as ego and pride that would in any way taint my immaculacy and pristine pure form.]

I am Nitya (always, perpetual and ever present); I am Shaaswat (eternal, perpetual, immortal, infinite and permanent); I am Ajaha (without a birth) (48).

“Canto 3, verse no. 49—The three forms of hypothetical bodies¹ that a creature possesses are imaginary divisions of the essentially indivisible eclectic entity (known as the pure conscious Atma) that has manifested itself with a body.

The three planes into which the time element—which is essentially uniform and indivisible—is segregated and divided into are equally artificial and not a true depiction of its real and truthful nature².

Similarly, the three Gunas³ are also not relevant and applicable to me (as I am, in my primary and eclectic form, without any definable attributes and qualifications).

I am truthful and immaculate, untouched by such perplexing subjects (as to what is the actual meaning and form of the three bodies, the three planes of time and the three Gunas; I am unconcerned with them and not affected by them) (49).

[Note—¹The three bodies of the creature are the following—(a) its gross body consisting of the five organs of perceptions—such as eye, ear, nose, tongue and skin which are related to the sense of sight, hearing, smell, taste and feeling respectively, and the five organs of action—such as leg, hand, mouth, genital and excretory which are related to the five functions of the body such as movement, acceptance, eating and speaking, reproduction and excretion; (b) its subtle body consisting of the mind-intellect complex; and (c) the causal body that harbours the pure conscious Atma which is the causative factor for the other two bodies acquiring their importance and relevance as well as making the creature alive and active. Refer also to Canto 5, verse no. 17.

²The three frames of time are the past, the present and the future. It is an artificial division because time always remains uniform, unchanging and indivisible, and this boundary between the past, the present and the future is artificially created in order to understand things that constantly keep on changing. We try to come to grasp with the ever-changing nature and form of things in this world when we compare their present existential form with how or what it was in some hypothetical point of time in the past and what or how would it look like in some equally hypothetical point of time in the future. This situation arises because the object of our research is ever changing. On the other hand, if we consider anything that never changes, time would literally come to a standstill in relation with it; the time would be the same in the past as it is in the present and would be in some abstract point in the future vis-à-vis that thing which is unchanging and uniform over time. This is exactly what is intended here. The ‘Truth’ is the only unchanging and uniform entity that remains steady over a period of time, and for it the time is always the same. On the other hand, all things that are false and illusionary keep on changing every moment depending upon the time and circumstance as well as the perceptive abilities and aptitude of the mind and intellect of the individual.

For example, we say that with each passing moment ‘we’ are coming so much closer to death and go away from birth. This observation is basically faulty because what changes with time is the body and not the ‘soul’ which is the true ‘self’ of ourselves. In order to understand the transient, mortal and ever-changing things in this world as they stand today we imagine what they looked like in some time in the past and what they would look like in the future. This helps us to have a three dimensional view and a perspective of things in this mortal world. But we forget in the process that the basic definition of anything being ‘true’ is that it would remain unchanging, constant, steady and uniform in every plane of time; it would be in the future as it is in the present and was in the past. Everything that is not constant and everlasting is transient and perishable, and as such it cannot be the ‘ultimate truth’. In that case, it has to be false and illusionary, something that is not the ‘ultimate, irrefutable, unequivocal and immutable truth’ but only ‘apparent and conditional truth depending upon how we perceive the world and ourselves’.

The supreme transcendental Consciousness is unchanging in every frame of time, and since the thrust and quest of the Upanishads is to search out that entity which is the ‘real truth’ that remains uniform and untouched with the shifting sands of time, the ‘truth’ that is always the same and not an ‘imaginary truth’ that constantly changes in an artificial division of time that our mind has created in order to justify something that is inherently false as being the truth, it treats the Atma as that ‘truth’ and the ‘indivisible aspect of time’ as representative of this ‘truth’. All the rest is artificial, transient, perishable and deluding.

³The three Gunas:-- The three characteristic qualities inherently present in the creature, in different ratios, are the three thought textures which bombard the mind. These three thought textures are manifestations of the ‘Vrittis and Vasanas’ (inherent tendencies or desires) of the creature which mire its pure conscious Atma or soul as a covering or veil. These three basic qualities or Gunas which are inherent in all the living beings determine their nature, habits, temperaments and inclinations which in turn decide the behaviour, personality and outlook of each individual in this world.

(a) “Sata Guna” or quality is the best quality present in a creature and it is marked by a predominance of auspiciousness, righteousness, virtuousness and noble qualities. It is marked by such high standards of ethical existence that have, as their characteristic features, such qualities as coolness of head, peace, contentedness, humility, devotion, wisdom, mercy, compassion, creativity, selflessness, service, righteousness, virtuousness, holiness and nobility of thought and action etc. As is evident, these qualities are the best qualities that one can have in him; they have a spiritual dimension to them; they are spiritually uplifting and give a divine halo to those who practice them. This quality creates an inherent affinity in a creature towards things in life which are of high moral value and uplifting for the soul rather than things which are demoting and denigrating for the spirit.

The Sata Guna or quality is the veil covering the soul like a smoke covering the fire. A slight breeze will remove this smoke. Similarly a little bit of prayer and meditation will remove the Satwic desires; its removal requires the least effort. It is the foremost and the best amongst the three characteristics of a creature such as good and positive virtuous

such as righteousness, creativity, noble deeds and thoughts, the positive qualities of service, benevolence, mercy, devotion, wisdom, holiness, piety etc.

(b) “Raja Guna” is the medium quality marked by a greater percentage of worldly passions, desires and attachments and their natural offshoots in a creature. It covers such qualities as worldly yearnings, passions, a stormy nature, agitated behaviour, ambitions, desires, selfishness, expansionist tendencies, desire to sustain etc. All these pertain to this materialistic world, and they create an inherent affinity in a creature towards the material world of sense objects and their enjoyments rather than the world of spiritualism. In other words, those creatures who have this quality as a dominant trait are more inclined towards the world as compared to those creatures who have the Sata quality in a greater density. Such qualities give worldly fame and prosperity. If these qualities are judiciously mixed with the Satwic qualities, then they provide the person the better of the two worlds, both in terms of worldly fame as well as spiritual well being.

The Rajsic quality or Guna can be compared to dust on a mirror. In this case some dusting and rubbing is needed to clean the mirror; a greater effort is needed as compared to the case with Satwic quality. Rajsic tendencies are the second best quality which produces worldly desires, ambitions, passions, selfishness, various obsessions, desire to sustain and expand etc.

(c) “Tama Guna” is the third quality which is the meanest and basest of the three types of qualities in a creature. It is marked by evilness, perversions and sinfulness. It is the most degrading, denigrating and contemptible of the three characteristics in a person, leading him to such negative traits as sins, vices, perversions, greed, avarice, haughtiness, pride, lust, attachments, yearnings, intoxication, wild behaviour, promiscuity, evils, utter disregard for anything which is righteous, ethical and noble etc. This quality creates an inherent affinity in a creature towards things which are very mean and lowly, which are totally sensual and pertain to the immediate gratification of the sense urges without any thought to what would be their consequences in the long run. In brief, behaviour which is utterly immoral, denigrating and depraving for the creature, marked by grossness, crassness and recklessness of demeanors. It is the lowest and meanest of the three qualities leading to a person’s downfall, ignominy and ruin.

The Tamsic quality or Guna covering the soul is like a foetus in the womb covered by the embryonic membrane—they cannot be removed easily and require diligence, effort, dedicated and careful handling requiring time and patience. It is the basest and the lowliest of the three characteristics, the worst type to possess, and is marked by such negative traits as sin, evil, perversions, immorality, vices, misdemeanors, anger, inertia, delusions, deception, gloom, ignorance et al.

Since each individual is like an independent piece of mosaic that completes the entire picture in conjunction with other such pieces, this individual creature’s nature and character helps to determine the overall shape of the creation. These Gunas keep the creation in a state of constant change, because numerous creatures die every moment and new ones are born. The Supreme Being has to be constantly on the alert because of this flux.

The various permutations and combinations of these three qualities create a particular ‘nature’ of an individual giving him his individuality and his special characters which are unique to him; they determine his temperament, behaviour, thought process et al. Two individuals having the same external form of the gross body—e.g. two men —

might look very much alike but they vary immensely in their nature, habit, behaviour, thinking, outlook, action and deeds, wisdom and way of living. This is what is meant when it said that a creature has to roam in 84 Lakh wombs or forms of life; it is only a metaphor—it does not mean an actual, countable specific number that there are actually and physically 84 Lakh types of bodies of living beings; it only symbolically refers to the huge possibilities that are possible with these three ‘Gunas’ and their different combinations that can imaginably produce a myriad variety of creation that can be created with these three basic qualities and their various sub classes of qualities.

Upanishads symbolically refer to the three primary colours when they describe these three basic qualities in the creature. They are white for the Sata Guna, red for the Raja Guna, and black for the Tama Guna. Refer—Shwetashatar Upanishad, 4/5.

The Chandogya Upanishad, 3/5/4-3/9 and 6/3-4 uses these three colours to describe the different types of characters called Sata, Raja and Tama defining the three basic types of creatures and their individual personality traits and temperaments that exist in this creation.

The Paingal Upanishad, 1/3-9 of the Shukla Yajur Veda clearly states that these three colours were the ones with which Nature representing creation was born and how the supreme creator had subtly entered the entire creation to be uniformly present in its very minutest of corner.

The concept of Gunas affecting the Atma has been elaborately dealt with in various Upanishads, for example the Maitrayanyu Upanishad, 1/11, 2/5, 3/5, etc. of the Sam Veda tradition.]

“Canto 3, verse no. 50—When I have realised my true form as the pure transcendental consciousness that is a wholesome Truth, all the different bodies of knowledge such as the Vedas etc. become redundant. [That is, knowledge contained in them is relevant only till the point that their objective is not achieved, and that is to awaken self-realisation in a person and enlighten him about the ultimate Truth in creation so that he stops falling prey to falsehood, and instead rise higher from this lowly plane of mundane existence and obtain freedom for himself. Once this noble purpose or spiritual objective is accomplished, there is no further need to study the scriptures.] (50).

“Canto 3, verse no. 51—I—the supreme, transcendental, eclectic and the greatest form of eternal divinity known as ‘Bhuma* Sada Shiva’—am the only auspicious Truth in creation which is absolute, eternal, perpetual, immutable and imperishable, while the rest of this creation, including the Trinity Gods (Brahma the creator, Vishnu the sustainer and protector, and Shiva the concluder), the living creatures, all the primary elements etc., are not the real ‘truth’ (51).

[Note—There should be no confusion here. The phrase “Bhuma Sada Shiva” has three components—(i) “Bhuma”* meaning someone who is the greatest and grandest, the almighty and supreme Authority in creation, (ii) the word “Sada” means always, everlasting, eternal and perpetual, and (iii) “Shiva” refers to that entity that is divine, truthful, auspicious, holy, enlightened and self-realised.

Hence, the phrase ‘Bhuma Sada Shiva’ refers to the Supreme Being known as Brahm who has manifested as the pure and truthful consciousness or Atma or soul of the entire creation. This Atma is most enlightened and wise; it is not only a fountainhead of

all knowledge but knowledge itself personified. This Atma is the ultimate ‘truth’ which has no particular form or attribute; it is universal, immutable and uniform in nature. All the rest of the units of creation have some or the other unique features and virtues characteristic to them. So they might be very powerful and mighty like the three Gods of the Trinity, or they might be the basic units of creation such as the elements, or they might be the visible form of those powers and elements—but they cannot be the supreme Authority from where all of them have got their individual powers and potentials and glory. In fact all of them are merely fractional parts of the vast cosmic scene of which the Supreme Being is the artist and composer, doing specific deeds and carrying assigned duties fixed for them by the ultimate deciding Authority. The units of this cosmic scene or the players of the cosmic drama cannot supersede the master who has conceived the very idea itself, and once the master decides to wind up the game none of them can stop him from doing so, whether it is Brahma, Vishnu or Shiva.

*Let’s have a closer look at the word “Bhuma”. It refers to that which is most and very great, magnificent, glorious, exalted, multifaceted, abundant, vast, ample, ultimate, supreme and immense in every way. ‘Bhuma’ literally means the One who is vast and colossus as the visible world of which he is the undisputed Lord. It refers to the Viraat Purush who is the cosmic gross body of the Supreme Being known as Brahm, and from whom the rest of the visible creation has evolved. The word is often employed to address the supreme Brahm himself because there is only a subtle difference between the Viraat Purush and the Supreme Being known as Brahm. The word implies someone who is the greatest and grandest, the almighty and supreme Authority in creation.]

“Canto 3, verse no. 60—‘I am Brahm’—this is the most eclectic of all the Mantras¹. It is potent enough to eliminate all the evil effects of all kinds of misconceptions and misdeeds (called ‘sin’ because they mislead and inspire the creature to violate the sanctity of truthful way of life by pursuing falsehood in the misplaced belief that what the creature is doing is the truthful way of life, thereby causing the creature to commit so many sins and errors in its wake that breach the sacrosanct codes of moral and righteous conduct, inviting punishment). It is potent enough to eclipse all other Mantras as it is the culmination of the spiritual aspirant’s endeavour towards realising the ultimate ‘truth’ and find eternal and infinite fountain of beatitude and felicity (60).

[Note—¹The statement ‘I am Brahm’ or ‘Aham Brahmasmi’ is not contradictory to the other statement ‘I am the Atma’ because Atma is the microcosmic counterpart of the macrocosmic Brahm. It is cosmic transcendental Consciousness known as Brahm that has revealed itself as the pure consciousness known as the individual Atma of the individual creature to live inside the latter’s body.]

“Canto 3, verse no. 61—‘I am Brahm’—this is the eclectic Mantra that can eliminate all the faults that arise due to the presence of the gross body. [That is, as soon as the spiritual aspirant realises the truthfulness of this statement, he becomes enlightened of the fact that his true self is a much higher and senior authority which is far more sublime and subtle and very different from the grossness that marks this body.]

‘I am Brahm’—this eclectic Mantra eliminates all the sins committed over different births. [This is because the aspirant has become enlightened enough to realise that sins are committed by the body and not the soul, and since his ‘true self’ is the soul

or Atma and not the physical gross body, the very cause that commits sins is removed.] (61).

“Canto 3, verse no. 62—‘I am Brahm’—this eclectic Mantra eliminates all the fetters that are represented by the fear of death. [This is because the aspirant realises that he would not die like ordinary mortals. ‘Death’ occurs to the body and not to the Atma which is eternal, imperishable and infinite.]

‘I am Brahm’—this eclectic Mantra eliminates the cause of all the mental and spiritual perplexities and their attendant sorrows and miseries arising out of the sense of duality in this creation¹ (62).

[Note--¹It is only when the aspirant thinks that the other person is different from his own self does he begins to have some kind of emotions towards him, for example he might either hate him or love him as his rival and enemy or his friend and companion. But when he removes this sense of duality and sees the other man as another form of the Supreme Being, all sense of dichotomy are removed and this helps to spread the culture of universal brotherhood. Similarly, such a Brahm-realised man would remain satisfied with whatever is available to him for he would treat everything and every circumstance with equanimity and in the same manner. This removes all cause of ill-will and animosity as well as of all sorrows and vexations that arise due to unresolved desires and unfilled aspirations. Duality causes doubts and confusions as to what is the truth and what is not, and removal of this notion creates a sense of uniformity and universality which gives peace and calmness of demeanours.]

“Canto 3, verse no. 63—‘I am Brahm’—this eclectic Mantra eliminates the cause of all dichotomy created by the sense of existence of differences between any two given entities which are fundamentally the same (because the same Brahm prevails uniformly in the entire creation, and therefore these two apparently different entities are factually two views of the same Brahm revealed in their forms). [This marks the high watermark, the high citadel of Advaita Vedanta.]

‘I am Brahm’—this eclectic Mantra eliminates the cause of all worries and sorrows that accompany these dichotomies¹ (63).

[Note--¹For example, when a man begins to treat all people alike, there would be no one from whom he has to fear. Similarly, when he begins to treat two opposing circumstances alike, there would be no cause for him to get uneasy or flummoxed or rattled in one set of situation, or feel eclectic, elated or exhilarated in another. He would remain calm, placid, unruffled and steady under both the circumstances. This would give a steady evenness to his mind and profound calmness to his demeanours, removing the major irritating cause for all miseries and torments that generally afflict the creature.]

“Canto 3, verse no. 60—‘I am Brahm’—this eclectic Mantra eliminates the cause of all problems arising out of a faulty, defective and deluded intellect.

‘I am Brahm’—this eclectic Mantra destroys all the fetters created for a creature by a deluded ‘Chitta’, i.e. a misguided and hallucinating mind-intellect complex and its sub-conscious that leads to flawed reasoning and inability to pay proper attention and fix

concentration, which in their wake create an imperfect memory, faulty recollection and misplaced interpretation of truth and reality (64).

“Canto 3, verse no. 60—In fact, the eclectic Mantra ‘I am Brahm’ is potent enough to destroy all ailments and torments that might afflict the spiritual aspirant in this world.

‘I am Brahm’—this eclectic Mantra eliminates the cause of all sorrows, grief, distresses and miseries of the creature¹ (65).

[Note--¹This is because a creature feels sorrow or grief and experiences distress and miseries only till the time he relates himself with the body and the world outside. Once he is able to understand the basic spiritual truth that his ‘true self’ is not the body but his pure conscious Atma, and this Atma is eternally free from all fetters caused by worldly delusions and ignorance as well as is perpetually in a blissful state of existence, then all causes of sorrows and miseries are dispelled automatically because they are related to the mortal body and the mortal world. The Atma is immortal, imperishable and eternally blissful unlike the body and the world.]

“Canto 3, verse no. 66—‘I am Brahm’—this eclectic Mantra eliminates the cause of different distresses, such as Kaam (worldly desires, passions, lust and yearnings) etc. in an instant. [This is because for an enlightened man the world does not have any meaning, and he has no interest in its illusive charms. Thus, there is no basis on which Kaam can breed and entangle him in its deluding and entrapping web.]

‘I am Brahm’—this eclectic Mantra vanquishes Krodh (anger, indignation and wrathfulness)¹ (66).

[Note--¹This Mantra enlightens the creature about his true self as being the Atma which exists in an eternal state of calmness and tranquility. It has no enemy and no desires unfulfilled. It is full of equanimity and benevolence, being compassionate and gracious to the hilt. Anger and frustration come from unrequited desires and unfilled wishes, as well as from inability to successfully accomplish one’s objectives, complete one’s desired tasks, obtain one’s goals in life, and reach one’s chosen destination because of real or imaginary competition, rivalry or hurdles created by the other person, or even by adverse circumstances. This causes ill-will, jealousy, hatred, animosity and a tendency for vengeance, which in their wake breed wrath and anger.]

“Canto 3, verse no. 67—‘I am Brahm’—this eclectic Mantra eliminates all the various ‘Chitta Vrittis¹’ that form road-blocks in the spiritual liberation of the creature.

‘I am Brahm’—this eclectic Mantra helps to eliminate all the different ‘Sankalps²’ etc. that the creature makes along with their perpetual attendant problems (67).

[Note—¹The numerous “Chitta Vrittis” are the different states of existence or conditions of the mind-intellect complex of any given living being along with the various tendencies and natural inclinations that it possesses and exhibits. These Chitta Vrittis determine how the individual thinks, how he reacts to a given circumstance, and how his mind-intellect interprets a given set of inputs. If the mind-intellect has a basic propensity for being attracted to the charms and pleasures of the world, unmindful of their truthfulness and permanence, it would have a natural affinity to the material objects of this artificial world

so much so that it would sweep aside any hint of doubt about their pitfalls and warning about the dangers that they portend. On the other hand, if the mind-intellect has a higher degree of wisdom and enlightenment ingrained in it then it would see the trap that these false worldly charms pose for the Spirit and would endeavour to avoid them.

The word ‘Chitta’ refers also to the sub-conscious mind. A person gathers so many varied experiences during the course of his day to day worldly intercourse and they are all stored in his sub-conscious mind and forms its data bank. These in turn affect his thinking process and overall personality. If the sub-conscious mind is corrupted and tainted, then it is obvious that the entire personality and thinking of an individual would be commensurately affected; his actions, outlook and behavioral patterns are proportionately affected. The entire blame falls upon the Atma because the latter is the sovereign of the entire setup. So the eclectic view-point that ‘I am immaculate, untainted, uncorrupt and holy like Brahm’ has a positive affect on the psychology of the aspirant. It is an instrument of positive thinking and generated positive energy around him. It is ‘auto-suggesting’ oneself that one is good and noble instead of being bad and evil which create negative energy. It is like advising a man under depression and seemingly lost to think high and constructively about himself; to think that he can do everything, that failures are a part of the game, that there is nothing that he cannot do, that he must get up and try again and do it confidently as he is bound to succeed. This helps him to overcome his darkness and depression at failures, and he goes about the unfinished task with renewed vigour and life.

So we observe how different shades of the various inherent tendencies and natural propensities of the mind-intellect complex, its level of enlightenment, wisdom, sagacity and erudition, along with the way it is able to absorb and adapt its self to newer information and circumstances depending on its willingness to learn and rectify that would determine the creature’s overall personality and behaviour, how he reacts to a given set of circumstances and how he interprets a set of inputs or stimuli originating in this world. Refer Canto 4, verse no. 53 also.

² “Sankalp” literally refers to the resolve, a solemn promise, a firm vow, a will and determination that a creature makes. The word also incorporates in its ambit all the ambitions, aspirations and volitions that he has, leading him to make necessary efforts to fulfill his dreams and accomplish success in his efforts. But in the process he forgets that he is pursuing an imaginary dream in an equally imaginary world. The material world is impermanent, transient, mortal and perishable, so how can anyone expect eternal peace, bliss and happiness in this setup? The entire arrangement is a creation of his deluded mind, described as the misguided Chitta Vritti, which impels him towards pursuing a mirage which can never give him eternal peace and happiness. This is because even if he successfully manages to accomplish one dream, another more charming than the first would crop up suddenly from nowhere creating new desire to pursue it while efforts have to be made continuously to retain and protect the gains of the first dream. ‘Sankalps’ are like a misguided creature running determinedly behind the sun moving towards the western horizon with an ambition to catch it! What more stupidity can he show?]

“Canto 3, verse no. 68—‘I am Brahm’—this eclectic Mantra helps to destroy countless faults and shortcomings in the creature that create as many hurdles in his spiritual elevation and enlightenment.

‘I am Brahm’—this eclectic Mantra helps to eliminate all dependency upon others¹ (68).

[Note--¹This is because when the creature realises that his true self, his Atma, is as powerful and authoritative as the supreme transcendental Brahm, the almighty and omnipotent Lord of the entire creation, he feels that he is like an Emperor who does not depend upon others for anything. The Atma is sublime and subtle unlike the gross body which needs so many props and support to physically survive in this world. The creature in his gross form as the body is dependent upon all others in this world, because the latter is an interactive society where all individuals are interdependent not only amongst themselves but also upon the numerous things and objects that exist around them. But this does not apply to the pure conscious Atma as it is ethereal and without forms like the air and sky elements which do not need any base or support for their own survival.]

“Canto 3, verse no. 69—‘I am Brahm’—this eclectic Mantra helps to abolish all ignorance and delusions, thereby kindling the light of wisdom and enlightenment marked by certitude about the real Truth and absolute Reality in creation.

‘I am Brahm’—this eclectic Mantra helps to bestow the Atma with the honour of being a conqueror of the entire world¹ (69).

[Note--¹This is because as soon ignorance and delusions pertaining to unreality and imaginary truth are vanquished, the spiritual aspirant is able to stand upon a high moral and spiritual ground from where he can intelligently and wisely look upon this world and survey its truthfulness and worthiness vis-à-vis its falsehoods and vanity. He becomes independent of all delusions and their accompanying sycophantic worldly charms, material comforts and sensual pleasures. This is tantamount to his conquering this world because these worldly attractions are such baits that are almost impossible to resist, they present such temptations that defy being overcome easily by an ordinary mortal creature.]

“Canto 3, verse no. 70—‘I am Brahm’—this eclectic Mantra is a provider of eternal and truthful happiness and joy to the spiritual aspirant. It bestows eternal beatitude and felicity to him.

‘I am Brahm’—this eclectic Mantra helps to eliminate all forms of grossness, indolence, lethargy and inertia (because it makes the aspirant realise that he is not something gross like this body and the world, but something as exalted and sublime as the ethereal Spirit) (70).

“Canto 3, verse no. 71—‘I am Brahm’—this eclectic Mantra helps to subdue and conquer this demon-like world¹.

‘I am Brahm’—this eclectic Mantra helps to reduce to rubble the great mountain representing all that is non-truth and characterised by falsehoods and delusions (71).

[Note—¹The world is likened to a demon because it is betraying, merciless, selfish to the core, uncompassionate and cruel. It would bite the hands that feed it. It sucks the blood

out of the creature and then relegates it to a small space in a page of some obscure history book.]

“Canto 3, verse no. 72—‘I am Brahm’—this eclectic Mantra helps to abduct and imprison all ‘demonic and evil forces’ in this creation.

‘I am Brahm’—this eclectic Mantra is the provider of supreme emancipation and salvation to the creature’s Atma, called attainment of ‘Moksha’. This achievement gives immense and immortal beatitude and felicity to the aspirant as it marks the culmination of his spiritual pursuit. [This ‘Moksha’ is attainment of Truth which is synonymous with self-realisation and Brahm-realisation. It helps the aspirant to break free from the seemingly endless cycle of birth and death.] (72).

“Canto 3, verse no. 73—‘I am Brahm’—this eclectic Mantra blesses the spiritual aspirant with a sublime happiness along with a sense of fulfillment and contentedness obtained when one has obtained the best form of knowledge and wisdom which he had been pursuing for so long and which had eluded him till now.

There are seven ‘Koti’ (1 Koti = 10 million) other great Mantras¹, but all of them keep the creature trapped in an endless cycle of countless birth and deaths as none of them show him the path of self-realisation that enlightens him about the eternal truth of the pure conscious Atma which is his truthful ‘self’ and point out to him its parity with the supreme transcendental Brahm, the Supreme Being who is the Lord Master of this entire creation (73).

[Note—¹This observation should not be taken too literally but its true spirit must be grasped. The numeral 7 times ten millions is just a figure of speech to emphasise that they are countless paths which promise liberation and deliverance to the spiritual searcher, but only the true understanding of what is meant by the Mantra ‘I am Brahm’ can actually lead to eternal peace and bliss obtained by reaching one’s true destination and discovering one’s roots. It fills one with a sense of immense ecstasy and profound elation at having found the ‘truth’ he has been searching painstakingly for so long. This feeling of jubilation cannot be described in words. Once one reaches one’s destination, there is no need of the chariot, and similarly when one has realised the ultimate ‘truth’ there is no more need of Mantras and performance of elaborate rituals with these Mantras.]

“Canto 3, verse no. 74—Therefore a wise seeker should discard all other Mantra and concentrate only upon this single Mantra ‘I am Brahm’. This concentration on one Mantra speeds up the process of reaching one’s spiritual goal and obtain ‘Moksha’, i.e. liberation and deliverance from ignorance and delusions about the ‘factual and real ‘truth’ as opposed to ‘imaginary or perceived truth’, which in turn opens the gate for the Spirit’s or Atma’s emancipation and salvation.

There is not even a fraction of doubt in it (74).

3(D)(v) Tejobindu Upanishad, Canto 4, verse nos. 2, 12-30, 45:--

“Canto 4, verse no. 2—‘I’ am not the body of the creature, a body that has been hypothetically divided into three sub-divisions—viz. the gross body, the subtle body and the causal body. On the contrary, I am nothing but ‘pure consciousness’ personified. I am therefore Brahm personified¹.

A person who has this holistic and divine view of his own self is deemed to be Jivan Mukta, or freed from all shackles represented by ignorance of the truth, and thereby is deemed to be spiritually delivered even while alive and having a gross body in which his Atma, his ‘true self’ lives in this world (2).

[Note—¹The pronoun ‘I’ refers to the ‘true identity’ of the spiritual aspirant which is his Atma or pure conscious ‘self’ which is different from the gross body in which this Atma lives during its sojourn in this world. The body of any individual creature has been divided into three sub-divisions in order to facilitate its analysis and the understanding of its functioning from metaphysical point of view. These three divisions are the following—(a) The gross body consisting of the five organs of perception such as the eye, nose, ear, tongue and skin which deal with the five sense perceptions such as the sight, smell, hearing, taste and feeling, and the five organs of action such as the hand, leg, mouth, genitals and excretory which deal with the five actions of the gross body such as acceptance, movement, eating and speaking, reproduction and elimination of waste from the body. (b) The subtle body consisting of the mind and intellect which acts as the control and command center of the body. And (c) the causal body which harbours the pure conscious Atma and is so-called because it is due to the presence of this Atma that the body is alive and conscious. This Atma is the ‘cause’ of the entire setup becoming active and alive, and hence the body in which it lives is called the ‘causal body’.]

“Canto 4, verse no. 12—I am not to be sought in this manifested world in any of its myriad forms such as ‘Kaal’ (any existential plane of time, era and circumstance), ‘Desh’ (some specific geographical area or country considered more holy than the other, such as a piece of territory designated as a holy place, a pilgrim city or any other holy place such as a mountain or cave), ‘Vastu’ (any material thing or sense object), ‘Mati’ (the various conceptions of the mind, understanding and thought, the sense, opinion, belief, desires, inclinations, wishes, etc. that any individual creature has developed with relation to the physical world around him), ‘Snaan’ (taking ritualistic purifying baths in the false belief that such activities would provide ‘Mukti’—emancipation and salvation—to the creature), ‘Sandhya’ (the religious sacraments, such as prayers, that are offered three times a day when two periods of time meet each other, i.e. at dawn, at noon and at dusk), Deva (various Gods that are worshipped in holy places as well as to whom offerings are made during religious rituals in the hope that it would provide me with Mukti), and ‘Sthal’ (a particular holy or religious site or location where people offer prayers and do rituals in the hope of attaining salvation). [Refer also verse no. 50 of this Canto.] (12).

“Canto 4, verse no. 13—Similarly, I am not to be found in ‘Tirtha’ (pilgrim places or going on pilgrimage), ‘Sewa’ (service), ‘Gyan’ (acquisition of knowledge, scholarship,

erudition and skills), ‘Pada’ (various honours and titles, different epithets and designations having so many names).

I am not bound by fetters of any kind (as I am eternally free like the ethereal spirit). I have no birth (as I am immortal, imperishable, eternal and infinite). I am not defined by words and am beyond the faculty of speech (a reference to the fact that Atma is such a subtle and sublime entity that no letter, word or phrase can ever hope to describe it). I am not even ‘Ravi’ or Sun (because of the fact that the Sun has a certain life span whereas I am eternal, the Sun is visible and hot while I am invisible and cool, the Sun rises and sets whereas I am steady and constantly shining as the pure conscious Atma in the subtle sky of the heart of the creature) (13).

“Canto 4, verse no. 14—I am not affected by such mundane considerations as ‘Punya and Paap’ (something being auspicious, righteous and good or something being just the opposite of it, that is, it being inauspicious, unrighteous and bad respectively). I do not depend upon Karya (action and deed) and neither do my Mukti (emancipation and salvation) depend upon any auspicious and righteous deed done by me¹.

I am not a Jiva (an ordinary creature with a gross body) as I am the purely enlightened consciousness known as the Atma (which has no form whatsoever). I am beyond the purview and definitions of the three worlds (i.e. the mortal world where mortal creatures live, the celestial world where the Spirits live, and the heaven where the Gods live). This is because I have an independent existence as the unique, most exalted, eternal and non-dual Atma (14).

[Note--¹In other words, my spiritual enhancement and well being, my emancipation and salvation does not depend upon my doing any good deed, and neither would its fall and demotion would dependent upon my doing any bad deed. This is because the deed is done by the body and not the Atma, and the body is not my true identity and as such I am not liable to be either rewarded for good deeds or punished for bad ones.]

“Canto 4, verse no. 15—I do not come within the purview of concepts such as ‘Moksha’ (liberation and deliverance, emancipation and salvation—because I am eternally liberated and delivered, I am forever emancipated and do not need any fresh salvation), ‘Dvait’ (the concept of duality that there are two independent forms in which the creation exists, one is the mortal creature and the other is the immortal creator—because the pure consciousness known as the Atma is the ultimate ‘Truth’, and the latter is a non-dual entity).

I do not need to know the ‘Vedas’ (the body of all available knowledge—because I am all-knowing and omniscient myself, being a personification of the Vedas themselves in my form as wisdom and enlightenment personified) and the different ‘Vidhis’ that these Vedas contain and espouse. [The Vidhis and Vidhans are the numerous doctrines, codes, tenets, maxims and axioms enshrined in the scriptures to guide a person in his day to day life. I do not need them because I am always righteous, noble and auspicious in my actions and deeds.]

I have no end (as I am endless, infinite, eternal and imperishable). I am not far (as the truthful and pure conscious Atma is a resident of the heart of the creature and can be sought inside his own self by meditation and contemplation instead of being somewhere

far off in the heaven where a man can go only after death, or some distant holy place which has to be visited after a long journey).

I am a neutral entity, for I am neither knowledgeable nor ignorant (15).

“Canto 4, verse no. 16—I cannot be limited by specific titles, designations, attributes or qualities and segregated according to them, such as me being a ‘Guru’ (a moral preceptor, a teacher, an expert and a guide, a person who is skilled in any particular field and has an excellent knowledge of a subject), or me being a ‘Sishya’ (a disciple or student who is still ignorant of that knowledge and goes to the Guru to acquire it). [This is because I, as the Atma, am present in both of them besides the fact that there is nothing that this Atma does not know and needs to learn as it is omniscient and all-knowing. Therefore there is no need for creating an artificial segregation between two people as one being a Guru and the other being his disciple. Both are equal from the spiritual perspective.]

In other words, I do not lack in anything and neither do I have anything in bountiful. [The disciple lacks knowledge whereas the teacher has this knowledge. Since the Atma is the same in both of them, such segregations into separate classes as one being more knowledgeable than the other is artificial and man made, and not a correct depiction of the fact.]

I am not Brahma the creator, Vishnu the sustainer and protector, Shiva the annihilator or concluder, or the Moon God (16).

“Canto 4, verse no. 17—I am not any one of the elements such as the earth, water, wind or air, sky or space and fire. I have no ‘Gotra’, i.e. I have no race, caste, clan, family or blood lineage, relations etc. I am not an object that can be physically seen or observed, and neither can I be the target or aim of any material research and treasure hunt. I am beyond such considerations (17).

“Canto 4, verse no. 18—I am not the ‘Dhyata’ (a person who aspires for anything, who seeks and searches for anything; the meditator who meditates in order to attain divine knowledge and mystical powers), nor am I the ‘Dhyea’ (the aim of all search, the spiritual goal or objective in life for which the seeker meditates), or the ‘Dhyan’ (the process of meditation and contemplation, the focusing of the mind on the task at hand and fixedly pursuing it till its successful accomplishment)¹. [Refer verse no. 28.]

I am not the mind that is subjected to such perceptions as hot and cold, or has the feeling of thirst and hunger. [In other words, I do not feel cold or hot, and neither do I have thirst and hunger.]² (18).

[Note—¹In other words, I do not need to pursue anything and think about it, as I am fulfilled and fully contented, not needing anything whatsoever.

²I do not feel such things as I am of an equitable mind, have equanimity of emotions and am full of fortitude and tolerance, treating opposing inputs of perceptions originating in this gross world with stoic indifference and equanimity. This is because I know that such things as hot and cold, thirst and hunger etc. are felt by the physical body which is gross and fickle in nature, but not by the Atma which is sublime and subtle, of a calm and even bearing, stable and poised, and ever contented, fulfilled, satisfied and blissful. The Atma is an ethereal Spirit and not gross like the body. So, there is no question of the Atma ever

feeling the need for drinking water or eating food to quench its thirst or hunger. The Atma is never swayed by external influences which are nevertheless transient and would sooner or later pass away in due course of time.]

“Canto 4, verse no. 19—I am neither a friend of anyone nor am I anybody’s enemy. Similarly, I do not have a friend or an enemy. I have nothing to do with ‘Moha’ (the notion of having attachment and infatuation with anything or anyone in this world; the concept of delusions and misconceptions) and ‘Jaya’ (the idea of victory and success in any worldly endeavour).

I am not limited to and defined by such indicators of directions as western or upper or any other specific direction¹ (19).

[Note--¹In other words, I have no horizontal or vertical dimensions or specific planes of existence. No measurements or yardsticks apply to my exalted being, and there are no specific paths or courses that can or cannot lead to me, or where I am not present. It should be noted here that the pronoun ‘I’ is being applied to the Atma which is the all-pervading and omnipresent ethereal Spirit present as the conscious soul of an enlightened person. ‘I’ does not mean his physical gross body which has a lot of limitations as opposed to the ethereal Atma which has none. Like the sky or air element, this ‘I’ is present everywhere.]

“Canto 4, verse no. 20—I have nothing to say, nothing to hear, no where to go, and nothing to think or contemplate about (20).

“Canto 4, verse no. 21—I do not have to either enjoy or suffer from anything. I do not have to remember anything either (for everything is known to me).

I am not interested in ‘Bhog’ (enjoyments of the material comforts and pleasures of the sense objects in this world) or ‘Raag’ (having mental attachments, desires, love and infatuations with anything or anyone in this world). Likewise, I am not interested in becoming a Yogi (an ascetic, a hermit, a monk, a friar) who has renounced the world along with all its myriad charms and delusions, including the notions of Bhog and Raag mentioned here, nor do I wish to completely renounce and abandon everything and dissolve myself into nothingness¹ (21).

[Note--¹In other words, I have no specific wishes that remain to be fulfilled. If I had wished to become an ascetic then it implies that till date I was not one, and if I desire to vanish from sight and dissolve myself into the elements by leaving this body and allowing it to disintegrate into the elements, it would mean that till date I was having a body which needs to be left and discarded, and myself to be merged into the primary elements of creation which are nothing but my primary forms in Nature. As I am an enlightened being, these assumptions are excluded, and so I do not have any specific wishes, for the very idea of having any wish whatsoever would suggest that I am not fully free from shackling desires and aspirations.]

“Canto 4, verse no. 22—I am not a stupid being of a dull mind-intellect, and neither do I need to cultivate tranquility, calmness and serenity of temperament and demeanors in me¹.

I am, at the same time, not indolent, lethargic and disinterested in everything like an entity which has no life in it (because I am very much active and conscious).

I do not have any kith and kin, any friend and companion. I have no one who is dear to me and who I love (because I am dispassionate and remain detached from this body and am therefore immune and indifferent to the various relationships that exist in this world).

I am not interested in numerous comforts, pleasures and enjoyments that are part of this material world and its sense objects.

I am neither gross nor subtle, nor am I fat or emaciated (because I don't have a physical body which has these characteristics) (22).

[Note—¹In other words, I am not a fool to indulge in senseless gossip, do senseless things, and run aimlessly in search of no fixed target. Similarly, I am already peaceful and calm, so I don't have to inculcate these eclectic virtues afresh in me.]

“Canto 4, verse no. 23—I do not become big or expand in any way, and neither do I become small and diminutive or get reduced in stature and importance. [That is, I do not feel elated and feel puffed up by praises, nor do I feel humiliated and belittled by insults. I am not a giant nor am I a dwarf.]

I do not develop nor do I decay (because I am eternal, even, infinite, constant, steady, imperishable and perpetual).

I do not have anything to do with ‘Adhyaarop’ and ‘Apavaad’ related to the Vedas and their tenets and doctrines¹.

Whether such misconceptions and illusionary ideas are one or many, whether they pertain to one or more than one object—I have got nothing to do with them (23).

[Note—¹ “Adhyaarop” is the erroneous conception of imagining anything unreal in another thing which is real. It is a faulty perception or inference of the truth. It is a false accusation based on erroneous perceptions and defective mind. To wrongly transfer an attribute from one entity to another, thereby creating wrong impression about the latter's true nature and form.

“Apavaad” literally means an exception to the norm. It also means to cause slander, reproach, infamy, aspersion, defamation, accusation, blame. When these two words are applied together in relation to the Vedas it implies that first one wrongly interprets the tenets and doctrines of the Vedas and then he creates an entire body of assumptions and precepts that are totally erroneous and at divergence from the truth, and are therefore very misleading and veritable spiritual black-holes from which a wise one should be wary. Such misrepresentations of the truth and misreading of the maxims and axioms of the scriptures lead to a vicious cycle of delusions, wrong ideas, erroneous theories, and the hordes of problems that follow in their wake.

For example, to visualise that the artificial, fractured, perishable and deluding world exists in the supreme transcendental truthful Brahm which has none of these characters, instead of the other way round—i.e. seeing the universal Brahm in everything in existence as its fundamental building block, its basic unit, and then realising the fact that the unstable form in which this world exists are actually revelations of the one and the same non-dual universal entity known as the cosmic Brahm. It is like the metal ‘gold’

being moulded into numerous ornaments but having worth only because of the presence of gold in them as their primary ingredient.

Misconceived and half-baked knowledge is more dangerous than not having any knowledge at all. A person who knows that he has no knowledge would endeavour to acquire it, and at least would not have false pride of knowledge in him. On the other hand, a person who thinks that he has a correct knowledge would not only fall down the spiritual precipice himself but take others down with him.

“He who knows and knows that he knows is a wise man; seek him. He who knows not and knows that he knows not is a child; teach him. He who knows and knows not that he knows is asleep; wake him. And he who knows not and knows not that he knows not is a fool and ignorant stupid; shun him.”]

“Canto 4, verse no. 24-25—I am not blind, nor am I stupid or clever—because such conditions pertain to the body which I am not. That is also why I am not someone who has a physical gross body consisting of the following seven elements—flesh, blood, abdomen, marrow, bones and skin (and other skeletal structures).

Similarly, I do not have a colour to my complexion, such as white (fair), red (copper colour or tanned skin), purple or dark complexion etc. (simply because only a physical structure such as a gross body can have a colour and complexion) (24-25).

“Canto 4, verse no. 26—I have no torments or miseries affecting me. I have nothing to gain from anything.

I am neither anybody who is honoured as a chief or have any special privileges, nor am I—or can be—sidelined by anyone and relegated to the fringes as being inconsequential and irrelevant¹.

I do not have any doubts and confusions and their accompanying perplexities and vexations in me. I neither roam about nor do I stay put at one place.

I am not something that is a secret and mysterious (because anyone can access me, the pure conscious Atma representing the supreme transcendental Brahm by proper level of enlightenment and self-realisation).

I do not belong to any clan or caste or family (because I am not someone who takes a birth, for I am eternal and universal ethereal Spirit which does not take birth nor does it die (26).

[Note—¹This stanza can be read as follows also—‘I do not regard anyone as important and consequential, nor do I treat anyone as unimportant and inconsequential. I treat everyone with stoic indifference and equanimity’.]

“Canto 4, verse no. 27—I do not regard anything worth discarding or being disinterested about, nor do I treat anything to be worthy enough to being accepted and making efforts to access it or reach it.

There is nothing that I laugh about. [In other words, I do not think anything or any circumstance to be so useless, so funny, so incredulous, so ridiculous, so absurd and so hilarious that I treat it with disdain and laugh at it with contempt at its stupidity and irrelevance.

I do not follow any precepts, tenets, doctrines and principles and neither do I conform to them (because these have been devised as instruments to guide a creature

towards its destination, but I have already reached it and have realised the Truth, so I do not need them any longer). That is also why I do not conform to any preset rules and regulations as well (because I am not a mortal creature of this humdrum world who must be properly trained and regulated in order to keep the society civilized, regularized and controlled).

I do not have any regrets and feel depressed in mind (when I make the above bold observations because of the fear that they might cast me in a bad light as being haughty and arrogant simply because I am sincerely speaking the truth and not deceiving anybody to serve some selfish vested interests of mine). I do not cause any harm to anyone. I do not desire and wish anything from anyone (27).

“Canto 4, verse no. 28—I am not a ‘Gyata’ (an expert and knowledgeable person), nor am I the ‘Gyan’ (the knowledge itself) or the ‘Gyea’ (something worth knowing; the object or aim of knowledge). Actually, I do not know how to describe myself.

You are not for me and neither am I for you. Similarly, neither can I call you mine, nor can you call me yours. [This is because the concept of ‘I’ and ‘you’, ‘my’ and ‘your’, ‘mine’ and ‘yours’—are limited to the gross physical body and not to the ethereal Atma which has no physical relationships with anyone.] (28).

“Canto 4, verse no. 29—I am not old, I am not a child, I am not a youth or an adult. Verily, I am Brahm; I am indeed Brahm; certainly and irrefutably I am Brahm! (29).

“Canto 4, verse no. 30—I am an embodiment of enlightenment and wisdom. I am pure consciousness personified. I am nothing but it—this realisation, when it is heart-felt and sincere, is the state when a spiritual aspirant can say with conviction that he has become ‘Jivan Mukta’, i.e. he has obtained spiritual liberation and deliverance, he has achieved spiritual emancipation and salvation even while living in this world with a physical body, or even while he is still alive and going about his normal duties in this mortal world.

I am indeed Brahm personified. I am indeed no one else—this realisation is Jivan Mukti; it is spiritual liberation and deliverance even while the person is still alive in this world (30).”

3(D)(vi) Tejobindu Upanishad, Canto 6, verse nos. 31-34, 44-45, 58-64, 68-72, 107:--

“Canto 6, verse no. 31—Indeed, everything is Brahm. There is nothing that is not Brahm, i.e. everything is Brahm. Indeed, I (the Atma) am that Brahm too. I am Sanaatan, i.e. I am eternal, perpetual, infinite, everlasting, primary, primeval, most ancient, traditional and universal. [Refer Canto 6, verse no. 66.] (31).

“Canto 6, verse no. 32—I am a personification of Brahm—the Supreme Being, the supreme transcendental eternal and all-pervading cosmic Consciousness manifested as the pure conscious Atma which is my true self—and therefore I am not an ordinary mortal worldly creature.

I am a personification of Brahm—the Supreme Being, the supreme transcendental eternal and all-pervading cosmic Consciousness manifested as the pure conscious Atma which is my true self—and therefore I am not simply the Mana (the subjective mind and the emotional heart) as I am not limited by its meaning and scope (32).

“Canto 6, verse no. 33—I am a personification of Brahm—the Supreme Being, the supreme transcendental eternal and all-pervading cosmic Consciousness manifested as the pure conscious Atma which is my true self—and therefore I am not the gross body.

I am a personification of Brahm—the Supreme Being, the supreme transcendental eternal and all-pervading cosmic Consciousness manifested as the pure conscious Atma which is my true self—and therefore I am not something gross enough to be seen or observed by the organ of the eye and perceived by the sense of sight.

I am a personification of Brahm—the Supreme Being, the supreme transcendental eternal and all-pervading cosmic Consciousness manifested as the pure conscious Atma which is my true self—and therefore I am not the ordinary mortal creature (who has a gross body and who does so many deeds with it in this world as a result of which accumulates so many reactions that become the cause of its taking birth again, and consequentially undergoing all the horrors of the previous life in a modified form).

I am a personification of Brahm—the Supreme Being, the supreme transcendental eternal and all-pervading cosmic Consciousness manifested as the pure conscious Atma which is my true self—and therefore there is no distinction between my various forms in which the cosmic consciousness has revealed itself in this world (33).

[Note—Refer the Holy Bible, 1 Corinthians, 12/3-26.]

“Canto 6, verse no. 34—I am a personification of Brahm—the Supreme Being, the supreme transcendental eternal and all-pervading cosmic Consciousness manifested as the pure conscious Atma which is my true self—and therefore I am not gross and lifeless.

I am a personification of Brahm—the Supreme Being, the supreme transcendental eternal and all-pervading cosmic Consciousness manifested as the pure conscious Atma which is my true self—and therefore I do not die or come to an end at any stage.

I am a personification of Brahm—the Supreme Being, the supreme transcendental eternal and all-pervading cosmic Consciousness manifested as the pure conscious Atma which is my true self—and therefore I am not the entity called Pran (the vital wind force that sustains life in all living creatures; the vital wind is one of the five principal elements in creation—I am not restricted to this meaning).

I am a personification of Brahm—the Supreme Being, the supreme transcendental eternal and all-pervading cosmic Consciousness manifested as the pure conscious Atma which is my true self—and therefore I am ‘Paraatpar’, i.e. I cannot be exclusively called some entity that is only supreme and transcendental because I go much beyond such simple definitions and parameters; I cannot be restricted by attributes and qualities; I cannot be quantified and qualified¹ (34).

[Note—¹The word “Paraatpar” refers to some entity that is supreme and transcendental and beyond reach. Here the self-realised spiritual aspirant who has understood the real meaning of the word Brahm and Atma concludes that this Brahm is not to be thought of as some high God who is beyond the reach of an ordinary man because he remains

ensconced in some high citadel inside some celestial palace in the heavens. This is because this Brahm has revealed himself in even the humblest of creature in this creation; it is equally present as the Atma of even the wild animals of the forest as much as he is in the form of the soul of the wise sage who lives in the same forest to do meditation. Since an entity that is supreme cannot be humble, Brahm should not be given any title whatsoever. This is also the reason why ancient self-realised and Brahm-realised sages, seers, hermits and ascetics could live fearlessly and alone in dense forests, mountain caves etc. which were infested with wild animals. They had no fear from them and neither did these animals fear them.]

“Canto 6, verse no. 44— I (as the pure conscious Atma) am that supreme transcendental Brahm which is beyond the purview and definition of the various Gunas (qualities, virtues and attributes) in creation. I am that Brahm which is supreme and transcendental Divinity¹.

I (as the pure conscious Atma) am that supreme transcendental Brahm; I am the best Guru (moral preceptor and teacher) (44).

[Note--¹That is, “Brahm” has no definable qualities and it has no attributes. It cannot be restricted to certain definitions and ascertained by certain attributes. It is not measurable and quantifiable in any manner. It cannot be judged by and weighed against some precedent and neither can it be debunked as inconsequential in the absence of any criterion. For, if that happens, Brahm would cease to be called ‘supreme and transcendental Divinity’.]

“Canto 6, verse no. 45—I (as the pure consciousness) am the support and foundation of all that exists (because anything that is not conscious has no worth in this world).

I (as the pure conscious Atma) am an embodiment of immense Sukh (pleasures, comforts and happiness). [This is because I lack nothing and yearn for nothing as I am wholesome and fulfilled. As such, there is no reason for me getting restless and feeling deprived of anything due to which I might feel unhappy and miserable.]

The entire infinite and wide world is my form or manifestation (because Brahm has revealed itself as this world, and this Brahm and my Atma are the same pure conscious entity). There is nothing in this wide and vast world which is not my Atma.

Similarly, this Atma of mine is a fountainhead of infinite and measureless Sukh; it is Sukh unbound (45).

“Canto 6, verse no. 58—I (the pure conscious Atma, the true self of the creature) am nothing but ‘Sachiddeenand’, i.e. am an embodiment and image of beatitude and felicity that is eternal, truthful and infinite.

I do not have any birth (as I am eternal and imperishable). I am also not this world or a part of it (because this world takes a birth and comes to an end).

Indeed, I am that Atma which is the supreme Truth personified. Everything else visible in this deluding world of diversities and myriad confusions has no existence and truth in them (58).

“Canto 6, verse no. 59—I (the pure conscious Atma, the true self of the creature) am an image of truthful bliss; I am an image of truth *and* bliss. I am image of eternal consciousness and enlightenment besides embodying bliss.

Indeed, I am an embodiment of supreme bliss and happiness. I am the most exalted and the Supreme Being personified (59).

“Canto 6, verse no. 60—I (the pure conscious Atma, the true self of the creature) am an image and fountainhead of complete Gyan, i.e. knowledge that is eternal, ethereal and divine, knowledge that is enlightening and liberating¹.

When the light of Gyan is lit in my heart, the latter (heart) is illuminated with the divine light of consciousness where no darkness representing delusions and misconceptions can ever hope to survive. This fills the heart with immense contentedness and blissfulness. It effuses out of my being and forms a halo of a divine glow around me. As a result, I become an embodiment of light myself. [That is, this light of ‘Gyan’ completely lights up my inner and outer self, and it radiates out of my heart like the light coming out of the wick of a lighted lamp.]

I represent all the hues and shades of thoughts and emotions that exist in this creation² (60).

[Note—¹Gyan is the truthful knowledge of what constitutes the absolute, eternal, universal, incontrovertible and irrefutable Reality and Truth in this creation. ‘Gyan’ is truthful knowledge about the reality; knowledge in all its sublime connotations; knowledge in all its glorious forms; a comprehensive knowledge which does not leave anything to be known; knowledge that can help the seeker obtain liberation and deliverance for his soul from the fetters have been shackling it to ignorance and delusions.

Therefore, Gyan in terms of metaphysics is spiritual awareness and enlightenment which makes a man have an access to that knowledge about the great Truth of existence that is eternal, ethereal and divine in nature. This knowledge and awareness leaves nothing more to be learnt and pursued by a spiritual aspirant. It is the culmination of his journey of quest of the Truth about himself and about the rest of the creation.

²This is because thoughts and emotions arise in something that is conscious and alive, and not in something that is inert and lifeless. The Atma is the conscious factor in the creature’s body, and therefore all thoughts and emotions that the creature possesses is because of the presence of this Atma in its body.]

“Canto 6, verse no. 61—I am always enlightened and conscious, and therefore I have a truthful existence. [I am not false and illusive.]

Similarly, you too are an embodiment of the supreme transcendental Brahm. You too are an embodiment of eternal enlightenment and knowledge as well as of beatitude and felicity (61).

“Canto 6, verse no. 62—I am of an eternal and infinite form. I am like the eternal and infinite sky which cannot be measured. I am the divine Being who is eternally happy and contented.

I am the Atma, the pure consciousness, and therefore I am not false and illusive. I am known and honoured by the title of ‘Kutastha’ because I am the one who occupies an exalted place or possess a high stature in existence; I am unchanging, unalterable and immutable; I am subtle and sublime; I am hidden and secret; I am steady, constant and immovable. Being such an exalted being, I am the great Guru, the supreme One who removes all darkness of ignorance and delusions by the virtue of his self-originating illumination that takes the form of the light of enlightenment which lights up the entire world for the creature (62).

“Canto 6, verse no. 63—I (the pure conscious Atma, the true self of the creature) am nothing but ‘Sachidnaanand’, i.e. am an embodiment and image of beatitude and felicity that is eternal, truthful and infinite.

I do not have any birth (as I am eternal and imperishable). I am also not this world or a part of it (because this world takes a birth and comes to an end).

The concept of Kaal (ever changing time and circumstances; death of the present life and end of one era) does not apply to me. [This is because I am steady and unchanging; because I am eternal and imperishable.]

This artificial world of delusions also does not exist for all practical purposes for me as it is a creation of Maya¹ (delusions, deceptions and falsehoods) (63).

“Canto 6, verse no. 64—I (the pure conscious and enlightened Atma as a manifestation of the ethereal Spirit and the Supreme Being), in my cosmic form, am the Lord known as Hari (Vishnu, the sustainer and protector of creation). Similarly, I am a personification of Sadaa Shiva (the eternal Lord who is known for his enlightenment, wisdom, truthfulness, sense of dispassion and detachment towards everything worldly and perishable etc.).

Indeed, I am nothing but pure and unadulterated consciousness and enlightenment. I possess all the holy, divine and eclectic virtues in creation; I personify them (64).

“Canto 6, verse no. 68—I (the pure conscious Atma) am a personification of the ecstasy and bliss obtained by doing Yoga (meditation and contemplation).

I am an embodiment of the grandest forms of Anand (beatitude and felicity; ecstasy and exhilaration).

I am a fountainhead of a divine light representing comprehensive knowledge of the Truth that shine in me as eternal source of wisdom and enlightenment. I am an embodiment of Vigyan (knowledge that can be empirically proved and logically and intelligently applied) (68).

“Canto 6, verse no. 69—I (the pure conscious Atma) am like the ethereal divine glow that is witnessed in the highest stage of meditation, the stage known as Turiya. In fact, I am a personification of that light known as Divinity. But I am not to be limited to this exclusive domain of Turiya because I am present in other states of existence also.

I am eternal and imperishable. I am truthful. I am Vasudeo (Lord Vishnu), the Lord who is imperishable, who does not grow old, and who is eternal (69).

“Canto 6, verse no. 70—I (the pure conscious Atma) am a personification of Brahm who is like the ‘Chidakash’—the sky which is eternal and infinite, which is pure and uncorrupt, which is ethereal and uniform.

I am Brahm which is ‘Nitya’—perpetual, eternal and ever-present. I am Brahm which is ‘Niranjan’—the supreme One having no defects, faults, taints, blemishes, shortcomings and scars of any kind; one who is absolutely immaculate and pristine pure; an epithet applied to Lord Vishnu, the sustainer and protector of creation. one whose sublime, subtle, esoteric and mystical form is so microscopic and diffused that it cannot be seen by the naked eyes of the physical gross body, but which can only be perceived by the eye of wisdom, erudition and enlightenment.

I am that Brahm which is ‘Shudh’—pure, uncorrupt, untarnished and immaculate. I am that Brahm which is ‘Buddha’—wise, realised, awakened and enlightened. I am always ‘Mukta’—i.e. I am eternally liberated and emancipated. I do not have a name and physical form (because I am an ethereal and disembodied Spirit) (70).

[Note—In other words, I am that enlightened being who possesses all these divine and eclectic virtues in him as his integral character-determining qualities.]

“Canto 6, verse no. 71—I (the pure conscious Atma, the true self of the creature) am nothing but ‘Sachidnaanand’, i.e. am an embodiment and image of beatitude and felicity that is eternal, truthful and infinite.

I do not have any birth (as I am eternal and imperishable). I am also not this world or a part of it (because this world takes a birth and comes to an end).

Truth is the only entity that is not false; all the rest that is ‘non-truth’ is obviously falsehood, deceptive and illusive. The world has no truthful existence; it has no reality¹. Therefore, all the different Sankalps² that a creature makes vis-à-vis this world are also false and deceptive in nature (71).

[Note—¹The “world” is an imaginative creation of the creative mind. Anything based on imagination and fantasy is not true. The genesis of creation also asserts that the creator had ‘decided’ to create this visible world inhabited by ‘mortal’ creatures, and all decisions are taken by the mind. Once the mind was programmed to imagine the type of world that the creator envisaged to create, the maverick and all-powerful mind, with this brief from the creator, set off to work and set in motion its own expert faculty of imaginative thinking and creative craftsmanship to craft, virtually out of nothing, this artificial but most charming and fascinating world that we see around us. Then it filled it with creatures who were designated the title of ‘mortal’ because the creator knew that since this world is only imaginative it is bound to come to an end sooner or later; the world had no substance and pith in it, and was only like a mirage in the hot desert or a city of dreams created by an expert magician, a city that can vanish in a flash.

On the other hand, the “Atma”, which is the subject matter of this Upanishad, is not imaginative, because it is eternal Consciousness, the Absolute Truth and ethereal cosmic Spirit. It is not gross and subject to decay and perishability. The world presents a sharp contrast to this Atma because the latter is gross, transient and perishable.

²That is, the various “Sankalps”, or ambitions, desires and aspirations that a creature has, and his decision, his volition, his firm determination, the strong vows and resolutions that

he makes in order to be successful in fulfilling them are all deluding for him because the basic premise that this world is not the truth precludes any scope of getting success in getting long-lasting peace and comfort by making any such Sankalps about anything in that is related to this artificial and transient world.]

“Canto 6, verse no. 72—I (the pure conscious Atma) am that Brahm who is the only¹ embodiment of eternal and perpetual ‘Anand’ (pronounced ‘Aanand’; meaning beatitude and felicity; ecstasy and exhilaration; happiness and joys).

I am ‘Anant’ (without an end; eternal and infinite). I am ‘Avyaya’ (That which does not diminish, which does not decay, which is infinite and which has no beginning or end).

I am ‘Shaant’ (peaceful, tranquil, calm, serene and quiet). I have a non-dual existence, having only one ethereal form which has no name and any physical gross form (which can be felt and seen in conventional terms) (72).

[Note--¹In other words, if one were to search for the real source of Anand then one need not go anywhere except Brahm because the latter is the only point where eternal and imperishable bliss and happiness can be found. If one says that he has found Anand in some other thing of this world, and given that there might be some other source of bliss and happiness other than Brahm in this world, then it is an erroneous conception of a deluded mind that is hallucinating under misconceptions and misplaced understanding of the real meaning of Anand. The bliss, pleasures, happiness and comforts that are derived from the material things of the world are temporary, deluding and like a snare spread by a bird catcher to catch the bird. They are not the eternal and pristine pure Anand which is of top notch quality and which is an accoutrement of spiritual liberation, emancipation and deliverance. This ‘false Anand’ which is derived from the world is as illusive and deluding as the world itself; it is misleading and like a mirage seen in a desert; it is but a copycat of the original and can never replace the ecstasy of eternal bliss obtained by Brahm-realisation.]

“Canto 6, verse no. 107—One should not doubt the eclectic truth of the maxim ‘I am Brahm personified’; ‘I am that Brahm who is consciousness personified’. ‘I am nothing but an image of truthfulness and of eternal bliss and happiness’. One should be certain about this truthful statement and never abandon it (107).”

3(D)(vii) Avadhuta Upanishad, verse nos. 24-25:--

“Verse no. 24-25—I (the Avadhut Sanyasi) have done regularly what I was supposed to do according to the mandate of the various scriptures, and I have also got regularly what I was supposed to get (as a result of my deeds and efforts).

Therefore, why should I do anything ordained or prescribed by the scriptures, traditions or any other authority? That is why I do not conform to them, and do nothing.

I do not have any aspirations and desires, nor do I expect anything. So I do not lose sleep over anything; I accept whatever comes my way in the normal course of life and respond normally according to the event (24-25).”

3(D)(viii) Kaivalya Upanishad, verse nos. 19-23:--

“Verse no. 19—‘I am that supreme transcendental Brahm personified. Everything that exists has its origin in me (because Brahm is the cause of the origin of everything, and I am a living embodiment of Brahm—refer verse no. 16), everything is established in me (because I am the fundamental support and foundation and basis of all that exists in my manifestation as the macrocosmic Brahm—refer verse no. 17), and it is in me that everything collapses and vanishes at the time of its conclusion (because everything merges, at the time of conclusion, into Brahm from where they had originated at the time of creation—refer verse no. 14).

Verily, that non-dual, supreme and transcendental Brahm, the cosmic Soul and pure cosmic and universal Consciousness is none other than ‘me’ (19).

“Verse no. 20—‘I (the Atma) am smaller than the atom (as the conscious ‘self’ of the individual creature).

Similarly, I am larger than the largest entity in existence personified (i.e. I am the Viraat Purush, the macrocosmic gross body of Brahm).

The entire colourful and varied world is but my form or revelation. I am the most ancient and primary Purush (i.e. I am the Prajapati Brahma, the creator, from whom the rest of the creation came into being).

I am indeed Ishwar (i.e. I am the Lord of the world as well as the Gods). I am the golden hued Hiranyagarbha personified (i.e. I am the macrocosmic subtle body of Brahm from which even the first and primary gross form of the creation as the Viraat had emerged at the very initial phases of this creation).

Indeed, I am an embodiment of Shiva (i.e. I am truthful, eternal, beautiful, placid, self-realised, meditative, wise and enlightened like Lord Shiva)’ (20).

“Verse no. 21—‘That Brahm which is constantly on the move though it has no physical limbs, that Brahm which is beyond the scope of comprehension and thought, and that Brahm which is almighty and omnipotent, being an embodiment of all forms of energy, strength, authority, potentials and powers that exist in this creation—indeed that Brahm is ‘me’.

I see everything even without any physical eye, and I hear everything even without the aid of the physical ear.

In spite of my being distinct from the subtle body consisting of the mind and intellect complex, I still know everything because I am by nature omniscient and all-knowing. But the astonishing irony is that no one knows about ‘me’ (i.e. my true form).

Verily, I am always in my true form as the pure consciousness and the holy Atma.’ (21).

“Verse no. 22—‘I am the one who is to be known by the study of all the scriptures, such as the Vedas and Vedanta (the Upanishads).

I am the one who has created the knowledge contained in the scriptures as well as the object of their study.’ (22).

“Verse no. 23—‘Auspicious or inauspicious deeds, righteous or unrighteous deeds, good or bad deeds—none of them have any affect upon me, they do not taint me, for I am immune to such mundane considerations and beyond their affects. I never decay, get old and decrepit and die, and neither do I have any birth—for I am eternal, infinite and imperishable.

I have no gross body and none of its organs such as the gross organs of perception (ears, nose, eyes, tongue and skin) and the organs of action (legs, hands, mouth, genitals and excretory), and neither do I have the subtle body consisting of the mind-intellect complex. None of the five primary elements of creation—such as the earth, water, fire, air and sky—have any relevance for me or define me in the remotest’ (23).

3(D)(ix) Katha Upanishad, Canto 2, Valli 3, verse no. 10:--

10. [This verse defines the state of ultimate realisation or the attainment of the Absolute which is akin to the state of existence known as Samadhi which is a perpetual state of meditation wherein the man remains in a state of constant bliss and peace.]

That state when all the five organs of perception (eye, ear, nose, tongue and skin) withdraw themselves and forsake their natural propensity to be extrovert and perceive external stimuli, and join the mind and intellect to turn inwards (i.e. when they become calm and focused on doing introspection and meditation), it is only then that the ultimate stable state is reached. This state is called the ‘Param Gati’ or the ultimate state of exalted existence for the creature. This is the Absolute state of existence when no ifs and buts remain. [During this state, the entire edifice of the external world along with its whole gamut of delusions and miseries cease to exist. The only thing that does exist is the conscious presence of the ‘self’ which is the sublime ‘Atma’.] (10).

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Section 3(E)

Atharva Veda Upanishads

3(E)(i) Atma Upanishad, verse nos. 2, 8, 10-13, 19-22:--

“Verse no. 2—It is Brahm that is manifested or revealed or visible in the form of this creation or world. Indeed, whatever is perceived, seen or known either out of wisdom and knowledge, or out of ignorance and delusions is nothing but this single Brahm in all these forms. Whatever distinctive forms that this basically uniform creation takes, distinctions that are created out of ignorance of the reality, or created out of wisdom when one is able to separate truth from falsehood, are nothing but Brahm (2).

“Verse no. 8— When a self-realised person who has understood the truth of Brahm, the supreme transcendental cosmic Consciousness, as well as the truthful nature of his own Atma which is the same Consciousness residing in his inner-self, a person who has become fully enlightened and spiritually attained by experiencing the presence of Brahm within his own inner-self as the pure consciousness known as the Atma declares ‘I am Brahm’, it is deemed to be his honest and sincere statement of what he has personally experienced and witnessed.

[In other words, when a self-realised man says ‘I am Brahm’, he is referring to the fact that he has indeed realised the truth that his ‘self’ known as the Atma is none else but the supreme Brahm itself. The Brahm that resides in his body as his Atma becomes his Antaraatma, his truthful inner-being, his truthful inner-self. To put it differently, the Antaraatma is the microcosmic form of the cosmic Atma that is known as the Parmatma, the supreme Atma, the supreme transcendental cosmic Consciousness known as Brahm. Such a wise and enlightened man is not referring to the gross physical body when he uses the pronoun ‘I’ to mean Brahm.

The two factors of creation—the first being the individual unit known as the creature, and the second being the all-encompassing and all-inclusive aspect known as Brahm—have the Atma or the cosmic Consciousness as the common denominator. The former is known as the Antaraatma while the latter is known as the Parmatma.

Therefore, the term ‘I’ would refer to the Antaraatma, and the term ‘Brahm’ would refer to the Parmatma. Both have the common factor of the Atma, the cosmic Consciousness, as the unifying element. Hence, basically both are the same.]

Even as the entire world is illuminated by the light of the single sun, the whole creation is also illuminated or made live and conscious by the light and consciousness effusing and radiating out from a single, non-dual Brahm (8).

“Verse no. 10-11—Just like a child forgets about his hunger and bodily pains when he is enjoying himself while playing around with attractive things (toys) because he is absolutely engrossed in playing with his toys, a wise and enlightened person who remains engrossed and submerged in the thoughts of Brahm also derives such a high degree of

bliss, ecstasy and spiritual thrill that he remains free or immune from the tainting effects caused on his inner-self by such negative qualities as having any kind of Mamta or Ahankar. [‘Mamta’ = attractions towards and infatuations with anything related to this gross world, along with its uncountable charms and temptations. ‘Ahankar’ = ego, false pride, vanity, arrogance and haughtiness.]

He is naturally inclined to be free from having any kind of desires, longings, yearnings, aspirations and wishes. He prefers to stay alone in a serene environment that is conducive to his spiritual peace and tranquility that comes when one is fully submerged in meditation and contemplating upon Brahm (10-11).

“Verse no. 12—Such an acclaimed, wise, enlightened and self-realised man is contented within and without. He is happy and satisfied in the thoughts of his own Atma that is fully contented and fulfilled. He understands the fact that this Atma, which is his ‘true self’, has risen above the mundane and gross existence that imposes limits on his physical gross body. Therefore he feels always happy and ever-contented because sorrows and dissatisfactions are characteristics of the gross body and not of the subtle and sublime Atma. His ‘truthful self’ transcends the grossness and the shortcomings of the physical body which undergoes sufferings, pains and miseries of various denominations. This ‘truthful self’ known as the Atma is never disturbed by the problems associated with the body as well as the world. Therefore, such a self-realised person enjoys natural happiness, contentedness, peace and bliss of the purest kind.

Hence, a self-realised and enlightened man is always satisfied, and feels himself to be spiritually rich and well provided for inspite of his being poor in material wealth, and not possessing the sense objects of pleasure and comfort in this world. Similarly, even if he is helpless and lacks physical resources, he still regards himself as very powerful and resourceful (12).

“Verse no. 13—Inspite of fasting or not having the opportunity to relish delicious food, or eating with great moderation whatever bland food that becomes available to him, a self-realised man still always feels contented and filled as if he has had a sumptuous meal.

Similarly, inspite of having to externally distinguish between different things, different situations and different creatures due to existential reasons in this world arising out of practical aspects of life, internally he treats them all alike and sees no difference between them. [This is because he has realised that differences and distinctions are limited to the gross physical body which is visible, and which is the one with which one interacts in this gross physical world. But this body is not the ‘true identity’ of the creature; it is the Atma that lives inside this body that is his ‘true self and identity’. This Atma is not only the true identity of all living beings but is also a non-dual and immutable divine entity that is always the same, uniform and unchanging. Therefore, externally he might see physical differences any two given entities, but internally he sees uniformity and universality in creation.]

Externally he does all deeds in the physical world, but internally he is not doing anything at all. [This is because the deeds are done by the gross physical body and not by the sublime and subtle Atma that lives inside the body. Since the Atma is his ‘true self’ and ‘real identity’, it is deemed that ‘he’ remains non-involved in the deeds done by the

body which is only an external covering for the 'Atma'. In simple terms it means that a wise, enlightened and self-realised man is one who does not get attached to deeds, who remains aloof from and indifferent to the deeds, and therefore does not expect any results from these deeds. For all practical purposes, 'he' has not done anything at all. He is merely a neutral and dispassionate observer of what his body does.]

Indeed, he has attained such a high level of equanimity, non-attachment, dispassion, indifference, neutrality and renunciation towards everything in this world that in spite of his appearing to be enjoying one or the other thing, he is deemed to be not enjoying of them from all practical angles. He might be enjoying or suffering in the physical world, but these are superficial emotions limited only to the gross body, and not affecting his 'inner true self' in the least (13).

[Note—This verse essentially describes how a self-realised man who has attained the citadel of spiritual knowledge feels, thinks and behaves.

He remains satisfied with whatever he eats. He treats everything, everyone and every situation with utmost equanimity, fortitude and dispassion though he might have to show preferences for some of them over others, but it is due to the compulsions of existential circumstances that he does so. In fact, he is completely non-partisan in his attitude; he is exemplarily neutral towards and detached from all of them.

Similarly, he goes about his routine life and its affairs in a detached and dispassionate way. This means that externally he appears to act and behave like other ordinary men, but internally he is unconcerned by what his body does and what would be the result of its deeds. This is the basic reason why he neither expects to be honoured for his good deeds, nor is he bothered if he is admonished or reprimanded for his misdeeds; he neither feels happy at being successful, nor is he dismayed at failures. No good results of the deeds done by him are able to tempt him to enjoy them or exult in them—for he knows that the good deed was done by the body and therefore 'he' (i.e. his true self, the Atma) has got no moral right to either enjoy its results or feel exhilarated at the laurels heaped on him. In other words, his Antaratma remains calm and steady under all situations.

Therefore, his 'true self' known as the Antaratma, the subtler form of the cosmic Atma residing in his inner self, has no reason why it should worry about the deeds done by him (i.e. by the enlightened man's body) or why it should be entitled to either enjoy or suffer from the consequences of such deeds. [It is the gross physical body that does anything, and not the Atma. Therefore, there is no reason why the Atma should either be blamed for any misdeeds done by the person or praised for any good deed done by him.]

“Verse no. 19-20—A truly wise, learned and enlightened person understands that whatever circumstances he has to face in this life, both the pleasant and favourable ones as well as the unpleasant and unfavourable ones, are determined by his destiny over which he has no control. This is because the destiny is pre-determined and decided upon by the cumulative results of his past deeds as well as the desires that he had harboured then. He understands that the suffering that his body is being subjected to in the present life or time is not of his present creation, but a punishment or reaction for his past. So he cannot do anything about it, and therefore it is worthless to fret and fume. Instead, he would be wiser to bear whatever comes his way with exemplary calmness, fortitude, forbearance and equanimity because by adopting this attitude he would not lose his

mental bearing and maintain his internal peace and happiness. Fretting and fuming would exhaust him without any positive outcome; feeling helpless and distressed would push him further down in the bog of miseries and grief.

Therefore he neither despairs nor regrets at his present situation or the sufferings he is being subjected to. He maintains his calmness and stoic attitude. He does not even exult or celebrate or feels proud and superior to others for any good happenings or unexpected good fortunes coming his way for the same reason—because he knows that they would have come to him nevertheless, and when the good effects of his past deeds wear off, these good tidings would come to an end inspite of his best of efforts to retain them. Such sorrows and happiness are both transient and unreliable. He would be stupid to feel respectively despaired or exhilarated by them.

Besides this wisdom, he also knows that his ‘true self’ is the Atma, the pure consciousness known as the soul, and that all the sufferings and enjoyments are limited to the gross body and have no bearing upon this Atma. Hence, there is no point or reason to either feel unhappy or happy. All worldly emotions and feelings are limited to the gross body, and the pure conscious Atma has nothing to do with them.

Therefore, a truly wise, enlightened and self-realised person who knows that this ‘true self’ is the pure conscious Atma and not the gross body develops a holistic view of existential life, and remains neutral towards what the body does or does not do. He pays no attention to what is witnessed or experienced by the body in the gross world of material sense objects, such as the feelings of either distress or dismay on the one hand, or of happiness and elation on the other hand, because he understands that whatever the body faces in this life is simply the cumulative result of its past deeds that have determined its fate, lot or destiny. So it is better for him to remain calm and relaxed for he has no control over them because they are past and gone. They can neither be negated nor rectified. Getting restless and peeved by misfortunes, or exhilarated and excited at good fortunes is a misplaced idea and a fallacious notion which only snatches away his mental peace and spiritual bliss without giving any positive results that can be of any help to him.

Such a wise person who develops complete equanimity, neutrality, detachment, dispassion and non-involvement in what is seen, or even with what is not seen but imagined, is the one who is regarded as the most exalted and the best in the community of wise ones known as Brahm Gyanis—literally those who are well-versed in the eclectic knowledge of the mysteries of the enigmatic, esoteric and mystical Brahm. In fact, they are Lord Shiva himself personified.

[This is because Lord Shiva is said to be extremely wise and highly self-realised. He remains in a perpetual state of Samadhi, a spiritual state of higher consciousness when the practitioner is constantly doing meditation and contemplating upon the Truth. Shiva is totally oblivious of the world around him so engaged is he in meditation and contemplation. Therefore he also remains submerged in an ocean of bliss and tranquility because nothing of this world ever disturbs his peace. A self-realised person also attains a similar state of existence which is full of spiritual bliss, mental peace and happiness.]

Such a Brahm-realised person who is deemed to be an image of Lord Shiva is regarded as spiritually liberated and delivered, one who has truly obtained emancipation and salvation though he is still alive and has a gross physical body (19-20).

“Verse no. 21—When all external attributes, qualities, definitions and characteristics of the Atma, which are however absolutely superficial, inadequate and imaginary, are removed, the pristine pure and untainted Atma that remains is nothing but an image of Brahm, the supreme transcendental cosmic Consciousness. Hence, the Atma becomes one with Brahm and indistinguishable from the latter when all external considerations and qualifications which are extraneous to the Atma and not its intrinsic virtue or quality are removed.

[In other words, all the best of adjectives, epithets, definitions and qualifications that are ascribed to the Atma are insufficient to describe what the Atma actually is. They cannot even reflect the surface of the grandness, the magnificence, the divinity and the sublimity of the Atma, what to speak of them being able to describe the Atma comprehensibly. In fact, words which are the medium employed by anyone, even the scriptures, to make an attempt at describing the greatness of the Atma have their own limitations and reach. How can anything (i.e. the words of a language) that is itself limited and has a limited reach be ever able to grasp another entity that is limitless and infinite (i.e. the Atma)? The Atma cannot be butted and bounded within the parameters of words and definitions which are the usual conventional means to speak about and describe any known thing that is the ‘truth’ in this world. The ‘truth’ of the Atma is not the ordinary truth as the word is understood to mean in relation to the mortal things in this world; it is the ‘truth’ about an entity that is immortal and infinite. Just like the principal (i.e. the Atma), this ‘truth’ is also immortal and infinite, and hence indescribable.]

It is like the case of an expert theatre artist who, while on stage, wears colourful costumes and assumes the personality of the character he portrays to such an extent that even his own kith and kin do not recognize him while he enacts his role on the stage. But behind the stage when he dons his own clothes, he reverts back to his original personality that is known to them.

[The Atma lives in a gross body, and for all practical purposes this body becomes its de-facto personality and identity as long as it lives inside it. In other words, like the expert theatre artist, the Atma too plays its role to perfection by adopting the characteristics and personality traits of the body. Since the Atma is the ‘true self’ of the creature, it follows that the latter also becomes identical with and identified by the body in which the Atma lives, instead of the Atma itself.

Being an expert and a perfectionist in whatever it does, the Atma plays its role to perfection, and the result is that even though the man may be internally well learned and enlightened his external behaviour is like an ordinary man.

But when the same Atma leaves the body (as happens in higher states of meditation when the pure consciousness, the Atma, leaves the gross body along with the vital winds known as the Pran through the hair-like slit in the top of the skull, called the ‘Brahm-Randhra’, to merge with the cosmic Consciousness present everywhere), or when it detaches itself from the body (again as it happens when one is highly enlightened, realised, renounced, detached and dispassionate)—it regains its primary form and virtues that are independent from those of the gross body. It is this Atma that is highly pure and enlightened, it is untainted and unshackled, it is unbound and unfettered, it is infinite and limitless, and it is eternal and immortal as opposed to the Atma that had lived in the shadow of the gross body.

The natural form and virtues of the Atma are like the brilliant and self-illuminated Sun, while the Atma that lives inside the gross body is like the Sun seen through a thick bank of clouds or during the solar eclipse.

The Atma with a gross body is known as the ‘Jiva-Atma’, while the Atma without the gross body is the ‘Parmatma’.] (21).

[Note—It is the gross body of the creature which has given some kind of physical identity, countenance, form and contour to the otherwise formless, featureless and attribute-less Atma simply because the latter lives in the former just like air living inside the mud pitcher and acquiring the form and characteristic of the latter as cited in verse no. 22 below. When the body is discarded, either actually by the process of death, or symbolically by not paying any heed to it, the Atma is deemed to be liberated from this shackle. Once this comes about, the Atma is no longer identified with its gross external sheath known as the body which covers it from all sides, but by its own subtle and sublime form which is ethereal and invisible, and which is Consciousness personified.

The Atma with a body is known as the Jiva-Atma, while the Atma without the gross body is the Parmatma. The Jiva-Atma is a mortal being, while the Parmatma is the immortal being. The Jiva-Atma has a number of shortcomings and limitations, while the Parmatma is not subjected to such inhibitions.]

“Verse no. 22—A person who knows, understands and realises the true form and nature of Brahm indeed becomes a personified form of Brahm. [He understands that his ‘true self’ is the pure conscious Atma that is another form of the cosmic Consciousness known as Brahm. He understands that the body is only the temporary habitat of the Atma, and that it is not his truthful self.]

He appears distinct or different from Brahm only due to the gross form of the body in which he (i.e. his Atma, which is his true self) lives. He, in fact, is no one else but Brahm (because his ‘true self’ is the pure consciousness known as the Atma which is a microcosmic form of the cosmic Consciousness known as Brahm or the Parmatma).

It is like the case of the air trapped inside an empty clay pitcher assuming the form, shape and size of the body of the pitcher, but when the pitcher is broken this air merges completely and seamlessly with the outer atmospheric air, without any effort. [Here, the air inside the pitcher is the Atma, the body of the pitcher is the gross body of the creature, and the atmospheric air is Brahm. The breaking of the pitcher is like death of the physical body when the Atma merges with the cosmic Atma known as Brahm.] (22).

3(E)(ii) Pashupat Brahm Upanishad, Canto 2, verse nos. 21-25, 31-46:--

“Canto 2, verse no. 21-22—In this way, it is the ‘light’ (symbolizing the knowledge or awareness of the ubiquitous factor of life known as the consciousness) that is the universal source of illumination (knowledge and wisdom) in this world. [That is, being enlightened about the truth of the Atma as a personified form of the cosmic Consciousness is a spiritually elevating and empowering experience. It not only

enlightens the aspirant about the truth of his own ‘self’ but also illuminates the path of his emancipation and salvation.]

It is wiser and prudent to keep quiet about it instead of speaking something about it (because it cannot be properly and completely described in words, thereby leaving it to be subjected to misinterpretation and misunderstanding, a situation that would be ruinous for the destiny of the hearer). Spiritual truths can only be experienced and witnessed first hand, and not taught or described or illustrated (like some physical experiment in a science laboratory of a college).

A person who is fortunate enough to have voluntarily obtained this eclectic divine knowledge (of Brahm and the Atma) is so unique that he cannot be categorized exclusively as being Brahm (personified divinity), or a Jiva (an ordinary living being), or anyone else in specific terms to the exclusion of others. That is, he is all of them at once; he is the ‘non-dual’ Brahm personified in his form. [Such a man is deemed to have reached the pinnacle of enlightenment and self-realisation. For him, it is the ‘truth’ that matters, and the ‘truth’ is always the same!]

He has no Varna¹ (i.e. he cannot be restricted to any particular class in society), or Ashram² (i.e. he cannot be categorized on the basis of any particular phase of life) (21-22).

[Note—¹The four “Varnas” are (i) the Brahmins or the upper class consisting of learned and wise people who are supposed to give good council to the members of the society; (ii) the Kshatriyas or the warrior class or noblemen who are supposed to give protection to the society by the strength of their arms and look after their welfare; (iii) the Vaishyas or the trading community that takes care of the day-to-day needs of the society; and (iv) the Shudras or the working class who serve the society by taking care of its need for physical labour.

²The four “Ashrams” are (i) the 1st quarter of life known as Brahmacharya or the celibate life of a person when he as a student and spends his time in studying and acquiring skills to face the world when he grows up; (ii) the 2nd quarter of life called Grishatha or a householder’s life when a person marries, raises a family and takes care of it, (iii) the 3rd phase called Vaanprastha or when one withdraws from active householder’s life, transfers his responsibilities to his heirs and prepares to leave home to spend the remaining part of the life in peace and thought of the Lord God; and (iv) the final 4th phase known as Sanyas when he completely snaps all residual contacts with the world and prepares for his peaceful exit from it.]

“Canto 2, verse no. 23-25—Such a spiritually realised man does not fall under the category of either those who obey the laws of Dharma (probity and propriety) or those who do not. Nothing is prohibited for him, nor is anything specially prescribed for him.

When he has developed a holistic view of creation whereby he sees non-duality everywhere in the sense that he sees nothing but Brahm everywhere, there is no question of his having a sense of sorrow or pain in one situation, and of joy and happiness in another situation. [23½.]

Such a highly enlightened and Brahm-realised man does not ‘see’ this world with its myriad forms and variations, a world which is inhabited by diverse species and types of creatures. This is because he sees or observes or perceives only ‘one’ (non-dual)

Brahm everywhere; he sees only one ‘consciousness’ (Atma) lighted in this world in so many varieties and forms. He understands that all that he actually sees in the form of ‘life’ in this world around him with the gross organ of sight known as the eye is only the external façade which hides the reality of ‘truth and consciousness’ behind it. He sees nothing but Brahm in the form of this ‘consciousness and truth’ everywhere.

In this situation, the difference between what is Dharma and what is not do not apply to him (23-25).

“Canto 2, verse no. 31—When a wise and enlightened spiritual aspirant develops this holistic and all-incorporating view of Brahm, he begins to see everything in the context of Brahm. Hence, since Brahm is also reflected in his inner-self as his own Atma, he begins to see the entire creation as it is reflected in his Atma. [A wise and self-realised man becomes enlightened enough to see the ‘truth’ lying hidden behind the veil of delusions in this world. He sees the world as it is; he has developed the high level of wisdom and erudition to sieve through all information so as to separate the grain from the chaff, the truth from the falsehood. Since his Atma has gained its pristine pure form, it is able to reflect the world in its entirety and true form—that is, in the way it actually is just like a clean mirror presents a correct and truthful image of the object viewed in it.]

This all-encompassing and holistic view of Brahm and creation provides equal opportunity to attain Mukti (liberation and deliverance; emancipation and salvation) to the ‘Gyanis’ (i.e. those persons who are wise, erudite, learned, enlightened etc.) as well as to the ‘Agyanis’ (i.e. those who are not Gyanis). [That is, if one becomes enlightened enough about the Atma then it does not matter whether or not he has studied the voluminous scriptures or done Yoga. Knowledge of the ‘self’ is spiritually liberating and emancipating for all, whether the man has formal knowledge of the scriptures or not, whether he has done strenuous meditation exercises or not. In fact, even if he reads the scriptures and does Yoga but does not understand what the Atma is then all his efforts have gone to vain as far as his spiritual liberation and salvation, or his emancipation and salvation are concerned.] (31).

“Canto 2, verse no. 32—This eclectic spiritual achievement that leads to the acquisition of the highest form of knowledge of the supreme Divinity (Brahm and Atma), acquaintance with the ‘truth’ that is beyond doubt and irreproachable, success in doing Tapa (austerity, penance, strict following of the tenets of the scriptures inspite of odds), implementing Brahmcharya (observance of strict self-control over the sense organs and the wayward inclinations of the mind and heart; following the tenets that lead to Brahm-realisation), and other such grand qualities are obtainable only by following the path shown by Vedanta (the Upanishads) (32).

“Canto 2, verse no. 3—Only those whose inner-self has been thoroughly cleansed of all sorts of blemishes, deficiencies, faults and shortcomings (associated with life in this corrupt mundane world which is thickly embedded with delusions and ignorance), and is thereby rendered holy, untainted and pure, are eligible to realise or receive or accept or see or witness and experience the supreme transcendental Divinity (Brahm) which is self-illuminated.

Those who are covered in a veil of Maya (delusions) cannot ever expect to have a divine sight or view of the supreme Lord (33).

[Note—It is like the case of a man whose eyesight is weak, or who wears spectacles with dirty, tinted or cracked glasses, or whose spectacles do not have correct lenses fitted in them. In any of these situations it is obvious that his view of the world would be affected by these anomalies; the distortion in what he sees, or the defect in the view would be in direct proportion to the type and intensity of the anomaly.

On the other hand, if he has normal vision in his eyes, or if his weak vision has been corrected by the use of proper spectacles, then his view of the surrounding world would be natural, truthful and correct; it would be devoid of all artificial distortions, and would make him aware of the things as they actually exist.]

“Canto 2, verse no. 34—A wise ascetic who understands the truth of his real ‘self’ (i.e. of his Atma which is pure consciousness and a personification of Brahm) attains complete fulfillment. He becomes as complete and whole as the Brahm, the Supreme Being, personified in the form of his truthful ‘self’ known as the Atma. As a consequence, he does not have to fall in the trap symbolized by the endless cycle of birth and death. [That is, when an ascetic attains complete spiritual enlightenment, he obtains Mukti or Moksha, which means he obtains spiritual liberation, deliverance, emancipation and salvation. He does not have to take a physical birth in this world again.] (34).

“Canto 2, verse no. 35—Just like the sky that is omnipresent and all-pervading, that is always steady and constant, not moving even the slightest from its present position, neither going anywhere nor coming from anywhere, the wise and self-realised enlightened ascetic who has understood the truth of his own ‘self’ as a personification of the supreme transcendental cosmic Consciousness and Truth known as ‘Brahm’ too does not move from his present position, he too does not have to go anywhere (upon death) nor come here from somewhere else (upon a new birth).

[In short, he neither goes to the heaven or hell, nor does he have to come back in this world from either of these two places to take a birth in the higher echelon of existence or being condemned to a lowly existence as a reward or punishment respectively. He is deemed to be eternally freed from the fetters of ignorance and delusions, he is unshackled and freed from the bondage created by the gross view of creation which has a limited horizon.

Having overcome the delusory effects of ignorance, he is able to reach the citadel of spiritual enlightenment when he becomes one with and inseparable from Brahm, a state of existence which is tantamount to his attaining Mukti or Moksha (freedom and deliverance) from all worldly bondages and spiritual shackles that had acted as fetters for him since time immemorial. That translates into his being eternal and imperishable like Brahm. That implies also that he neither dies nor takes a birth. He does not go to heaven or hell, and neither does he come back to live in a gross body interacting with a gross world. He is beyond such limited conceptions of creation. Like his primary form known as the Atma, which in turn is Brahm personified, he too becomes eternal, imperishable and infinite.] (35).

“Canto 2, verse no. 36—[This verse highlights the importance of eating food obtained by correct or righteous means.]

This exemplary and high degree of equanimity of the mind and thought reflects in his eating preferences when he does not distinguish between what is to be eaten and what is not to be eaten. [That is, he has conquered his taste buds and the natural urges of the tongue; he has controlled his desire for self-gratification. He eats not because something is tasty, but because it is a sort of offering to the Brahm residing in his inner-self. He treats each morsel of food as an oblation made to the symbolic form of the sacred fire burning inside him.]

This helps him to completely clean the mind and the sub-conscious of all impurities because the holiness and purity of the inner-self is directly dependent upon the type of food ingested. Food obtained by unrighteous means corrupts the mind and the inner-self, while food procured by rightful means cleanses them. So, when the food ingested is made pure and uncorrupt, the Chitta is automatically cleansed and made holy (36).

“Canto 2, verse no. 37—When the Chitta (mind and sub-conscious) is thoroughly cleansed of all impurities, faults, blemishes and shortcomings, it is only then that, on the one hand, Gyan (wisdom, erudition, sagacity, enlightenment, truthful knowledge, ability to distinguish between the right and the wrong) is proportionately enhanced, and on the other hand the numerous difficult knots of Agyan (ignorance and delusions), which are spiritual stumbling blocks for the ascetic, are progressively reduced and ultimately eliminated.

[That is, if one is able to control his mind and sub-conscious he is not only able to increase his treasure of right thoughts and wisdom but also get rid of negativity in the same ratio. His spiritual elevation thereby becomes rapid and easy.]

Therefore, only those who are not yet Brahm-realised lay importance on what to eat and what not to in order to keep themselves holy and clean.

[This statement is an indirect indictment of those who are very fussy in matters of eating only ‘religiously sanctified food’ that is cleaned and made holy by meaningless formalities and purification rites. Such things may fool the world into believing that the concerned person is very holy, religious and pious as he eats only clean and sanctified food, but such pretensions of holiness and purity would not actually lead to the cleaning of the inner-self of the person who finds one food as ‘defiled’ and the other as ‘sanctified’ for artificial and whimsical reasons. This is because he still has not become wise enough to understand that no external situation or thing can ever defile the nourishing quality of food that is inherently present in it, nor would any food become worthy of eating simply because some elaborate ritual was performed by it if the food is not good for the body.

The importance of any food lies in what good it does to the body of the creature who eats the food, what basic ingredients it contains, rather than the food’s outer look, its monetary value, or anything else. The body is benefited by the nutrients, such as carbohydrates, proteins, fats, vitamins, minerals, other nutritional elements etc. that are inherently present in the food eaten, and not by its external look, texture, colour or dressing.

For a wise and enlightened man the main objective of eating anything is to extract the vital life-sustaining nutrients contained in the food eaten so as to sustain the body in

which the Atma representing the Parmatma lives. It is like taking proper care of the shrine in which the deity has been consecrated. It is through a well-nourished and healthy body that the Atma can do good and righteous deeds, study the scriptures so that truthful knowledge can be accessed, and so on and so forth. A weak and decrepit body would make the incumbent Atma suffer like hell instead of living peacefully and comfortably.

Besides this, a truly wise man understands that the sacred fire is burning inside his body in a symbolic manner, being supported by the vital winds called Pran that circulate inside the body. Hence, the food eaten is not to satisfy one's taste buds but for offering oblations to this sacred fire. When food is eaten with this grand notion, the entire exercise of procuring, preparing and eating food becomes tantamount to doing a fire sacrifice in which eatables are offered to the raging fire as offerings meant for the divine Gods. In this case, the God is the Atma itself.

Say, how can any food, no matter how impure or unclean it might be, ever make the raging fire impure and unholy? Everything that is put into the fire is reduced to ashes without any distinction and favour. This is also applicable in the case of the food that is eaten by the man. Whatever variety of food one eats—whether it is delicious or bland, whether it is costly food or a staple and cheap food—all of them are reduced to fecal matter of the same type which must be eliminated at the first opportunity lest it would poison the body.] (37).

“Canto 2, verse no. 38—The reason is that the thoughts and approach to life of a true Gyani (i.e. a Brahm-realised person) is vastly different from one who is Agyani (i.e. who is not self and Brahm realised). A Gyani does not have any kind of thoughts that one thing is better than the other, or that one thing is more useful than its counterpart.

[A Gyani has developed a high degree of equanimity and uniformity of vision and thought. Since he is convinced about the truthfulness and the sacrosanct nature of the great declaration made by the Upanishads and other scriptures regarding the Advaitya (non-dual) nature of the ultimate Absolute Truth that is the actual reality of creation, he knows that whatever exists in creation are all fundamentally the same though their exteriors and characteristics may vary widely and extensively.

The notion of one thing being attractive and the other repulsive, one situation being favourable while the other being unfavourable, one creature being a foe while the other being most dear—all such thoughts and deductions or conclusions made by a living being vis-à-vis the gross world are based on the perception of the latter by the equally gross organs of the gross body. Since the thing perceived and the medium of perception are both gross, the perception would naturally be proportionately gross.

The real ‘self’ of the wise, enlightened and self-realised man is not the gross body, but it is the Atma which is most sublime and subtle. This Atma is pure consciousness that resides in the physical body.

So, when the focus of what constitutes the ‘self’ shifts from the gross body to the subtle and sublime Atma, the notion of one thing being good and the other bad becomes redundant. It is the body that abhors certain things or situations in the world because they give pain to its organs, while it longs for others that fulfill its desire for gratification. The Atma is really unconcerned by these dilemmas and perplexities related to the world and the body because it is aloof from both of them; the Atma has the grand virtue of

equanimity towards everything as well as detachment from everything as its characteristic quality.]

A true Gyani is one who regards the 'he' (i.e. the eater) who eats the food as Brahm, and the 'food that is eaten' as also being Brahm in its form.

[Though this statement appears to be ridiculous and most absurd on the face of it but when understood its hidden meaning it becomes an obvious truth. The person who eats the food is not the gross body known to the world as a certain Mr. X. The actual eater is the Atma, the 'true self' that resides in this body, and not the body itself, for if the body was the eater then even a dead body would eat food. The dead body does not eat, but it is the consciousness residing inside it as the Atma that keeps the body alive and enables it to eat anything. The Atma is the cosmic Consciousness known as Brahm that lives in the body of the eater known as Mr. X in the form of his 'true self'; if the Atma leaves the body the latter would be dead, and no dead body eats anything. Hence, the real 'eater' is not Mr. X who is conventionally recognized by his physical gross body, but the real 'eater' is the Atma that is Brahm (Consciousness) living inside the body of Mr. X.

The 'food eaten' also has two components—one that is its gross exterior features or aspects represented by its shape, texture, form, size and colour, and the other is the subtle aspect represented by the nutrients that the food contains. The gross part of the food is worthless as the body automatically eliminates it as stool and urine. It is the subtle part of food that is accepted by the body. This 'subtle' component of food is the basic quality and value of the food; it is what lends the food its energy, dynamism, importance and life-sustaining properties much like the Atma which lends the gross body of the creature its value and importance as well as its life, strength, dynamism, vitality and consciousness. A cow eats grass to produce milk which a woman does by eating everything else *but* grass!

Hence, the inherent basic life-sustaining virtues present in the food are symbolic forms of Brahm who is the 'life and consciousness' of the entire creation. Even as food is absolutely necessary for conception, sustenance and growth of all living beings in this creation, and no life is imaginable without the nutritional abilities of food, no life is tenable without Brahm (or 'consciousness') in this creation.

This visible creation has a gross form like the visible gross form of the food eaten. No one can actually see the nutritional components of the food—such as the various forms of minerals, trace elements, carbohydrates, proteins, fats, vitamins etc.—that are present in it. Likewise, no one is able to see Brahm present uniformly everywhere in this creation.

Again, the scriptures have asserted that the entire creation is a revelation of Brahm, and this creation has a gross aspect that is visible, that has certain limitations and qualifications, that has a certain origin and an end. But the same scriptures have said in the same breath that Brahm is invisible, subtle, sublime, infinite, imperishable, boundless and limitless. So how do we reconcile these two apparent contradictions? Well, this is what makes Brahm so unique and one of its only kind. The truth is that Brahm is both the former as well as the latter—that is, Brahm is both the gross physical world that is visible and which has its own set of characteristics, as well as the invisible subtle world that is sublime and indefinable. It is so because 'everything without exception' is Brahm, and the phrase 'everything without exception' *includes* both the visible and grosser aspects of

creation as well as the invisible and the subtle and sublime aspects! Nothing escapes Brahm; nothing in existence is Brahm-less.] (38).

“Canto 2, verse no. 39—An ascetic who has become Brahm-realised sees all the creatures as a form of Brahm. Therefore, the notion that distinguishes between two human beings, treating one as a Brahmin and the other as a Kshatriya, is meaningless for him. He accepts these artificial distinctions created in this world just like he eats even the grosser parts of the food (such as solid food in the form of various edible roots, stems, leaves, vegetables, whole grain cereals etc., or liquids such as milk, fruit juice etc.), and then eliminates them from his system.

[That is, in order to live in this world he has to accept its norms just like in order to derive benefits from the nourishment contained in any food he has to eat its gross parts as well, because the vital nutrients contained in the food are hidden behind the gross form of the food. For instance, one eats the apple whole to derive benefit from the numerous vital nutritional elements that it contains. But once the nutritional elements are extracted by the body from the apple, the residual part of the fruit consisting of its grosser aspects are eliminated from the body as faecal matter and urine.

Similarly, a man has to interact with all kinds of people in this world; he cannot do without it. But a wise man is one who endeavours to benefit or learn from the auspicious and noble virtues that are present in all the categories of people to a lesser or greater degree. Just like the body extracting things that are of nutritional value from the food eaten and eliminating the rest, a wise man should pick up good and positive qualities from all those with whom he interacts in this world while rejecting their bad and negative qualities.

Further, he recognizes all individuals as one or the other form of Brahm—because he knows that the same Atma resides in their physical bodies which appear to be different from one another. It is just like the case of water contained in different containers of different shapes and sizes—the water assumes the contours of the vessel in which it is held but all the sample of water are the same in ever respect, even chemically.

So, once a wise man has accepted all categories of people as Brahm personified, he gets rid of the artificial classifications that separate them into classes known as Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas etc. just like the case of the body ejecting the gross part of the food as stool and urine after the vital nutrients contained in the food have been extracted and absorbed in the system.] (39).

“Canto 2, verse no. 40—[Verse nos. 40-43 should be read together to understand their true import.]

A wise aspirant who knows Brahm as the Lord for whom ‘death’ is a sort of food (i.e. who brings about the end of everything in this creation; who has no fear from death; who outlives death as he is eternal and infinite; who vanquishes death which is so powerful and formidable that nothing escapes its jaws) also becomes one like Brahm (i.e. he too loses fear of death; he overcomes death).

[Everything in creation collapses into the primary source from where they had originated in the beginning much like waves in the ocean collapsing and merging into the water of the surface of the ocean from where they had emerged. ‘Death’ brings about the end of various units of creation at a given time, but ‘death’ itself is not free from the

cycle of creation and destruction. A time would finally come when the Supreme Being would decide to wind up the creation, and then there would be no use of 'death' as nothing would be left to be ended, nothing would need to die. This means 'death' would become redundant, or that it would 'die' a natural death. This virtually translates into 'death' being devoured by Brahm, the paramount Authority of creation who now has no utility of 'death' when there is no creation that needs to be ended.

But this 'Authority' which empowers and authorizes 'death' to kill and end every unit of creation outlives the end of creation, because the said 'Authority' is eternal, imperishable and infinite. That is why this 'Authority' is honoured by the epithet 'supreme and transcendental'.

So, when the spiritual aspirant becomes Brahm-realised he is transformed from being an ordinary living being to a personality that is Brahm personified himself. Hence, he acquires all the characteristics that are unique and typical of Brahm, including his fearlessness from death, his eternity and infinity. Being Brahm personified, the Brahm-realised person lasts even when everything else is finished in this creation. That is, he becomes eternal, imperishable and infinite like Brahm.]

With this eclectic and holistic vision of creation, the entire world becomes his 'food'—i.e. he begins to treat the whole world as the gross form within which lies its true worth, the 'truth' and 'acceptable essence' known as Brahm. He therefore regards the world as acceptable because it is a manifestation of Brahm, because it is through this world that he can easily recognize and access Brahm just like a wise man who accepts all forms or kinds of food (i.e. who eats a wide variety of food) so that he can derive the maximum benefit from the nutrition contained in all kinds of foods. He pays attention to the nutritional value of the food rather than its exterior form.

[Even as eating a wide variety of food is beneficial for the body as it allows the latter to get wholesome nutrition from a broad spectrum of sources, the wise man is one who interacts with all sorts of people in this world in order to learn something good and auspicious from them. He accepts the positive and rejects the negative.] (40).

“Canto 2, verse no. 41—When the world is known and accepted in its essential and primary form as the Atma (i.e. when one is wise enough to understand that the element that is worth paying attention to in this gross world is the 'consciousness' permeating everywhere in it because it is the only element that has breathed 'life' into the otherwise lifeless entity), the whole gross world is transformed into an acceptable entity in spite of its grossness, its shortcomings, its faults and its corruptions.

[Behind the exterior grossness lies the subtle 'truth' just like the instance of the most ordinary food having its own unique nutritional value and importance.

When one knows that the exterior form of the visible world hides the truthful and uncorrupted Atma inside it, he would not treat the world as something to be abhorred and abandoned. This statement has great practical importance in the sense that a wise man may live like an ordinary man in this world, enjoy its privileges and charms, but at the same time have total disregard to its gross and exterior form. Other ordinary persons might not understand the grand way he thinks and the high level of his intellectual standing, but they rather prefer to treat him as one like them. But this man is widely different from them, and he is not bothered by what they think of him. This is indeed the high water-mark of spiritual evolvement that distinguishes a truly self and Brahm realised

person, a person who can be rightly called wise and enlightened. Such a person has indeed understood the true meaning of the term non-duality, equanimity, dispassion, detachment, non-involvement and renunciation. What is the use of going to the forest as a reclusive hermit or an ascetic if one's mind remains hooked to the world left behind?]

Brahm, who is eternal and imperishable, constantly devours ('accepts') its own self (in the form of this visible world of which the Atma is the essence). In other words, 'Brahm continues to devour this world formed in his own image'.

[The text has the word 'Bhaksha' which literally means to eat or devour. But it does not mean to eat something in the conventional meaning of the term. It implies acceptance of something, taking out from it its essential element and then rejecting the gross and the worthless part just like one eats food, extracts its nutrients, and then ejects the gross and worthless part of the food eaten as stool and urine.

Brahm is an enlightened Being, so he would accept the 'truth' and not the falsehood. From the perspective of the enlightened man, this means that he accepts the world because it is an image of Brahm. Since a wise, enlightened and truly realised man is a personification or an image of Brahm, so when 'he' accepts the world in its true form as the Atma hidden in it, when he accepts the 'truth' that is sublime and absolute while rejecting or discarding the falsehood that is gross and meaningless, it is said that 'Brahm is accepting the world'.

Since such a man willingly grabs everything like a hungry man in order to learn something good and of positive virtue from whatever he can find, before judiciously rejecting the worthless and the gross, he is metaphorically said to be eating or devouring the world just like the case of a man eating all sorts of food items to extract their nutrition before rejecting the grosser part of the food as urine and stool.

From the perspective of the Atma, it means that it accepts the world as it is its own self. From the perspective of the Supreme Being, it means accepting its own creation which has no refuge except for him. And from the perspective of a wise man it means that he accepts all the good virtues present in all its various forms in this world of exceptional diversity, while rejecting the bad.

A wise and Brahm-realised man accepts things of value from this world and rejects what is worthless. But in order this to happen he would have to first accept the world before separating the grain from the chaff. He would have to 'eat' the food to gain nutrition from it. Merely looking at the food would not help him extract nutrition. So, a wise man needs to plunge into this ocean-like world to actually witness the magic of Brahm revealed in the form of the world and put on vivid display!

The assertion made in this verse that 'Brahm continues to devour this world formed in his own image' explains why the physical world continues to die in spite of the fact that it is said to be a visible revelation of the primarily invisible Brahm. 'Devouring' or 'eating' are symbolic terms and used in a metaphoric sense implying accepting something in its gross form only to extract its essence before rejecting its grosser aspects.

The concept of 'Brahm eating his own self' is further explained in verse no. 43 below.] (41).

"Canto 2, verse no. 42—When one becomes enlightened in the aforesaid manner the whole world is acceptable to him just like a hungry man who gladly eats anything that is available to him without bothering about its external appearances, its freshness, its taste

and aroma, or whether the food has been properly purified or sanctified by following elaborate purification rituals.

Such an enlightened man treats the world as personification of the Atma or Brahm, and hence acceptable by all means. Such a broad and holistic vision of the world makes it worthy to be accepted and enjoyed and benefited from just like one accepts and enjoys and benefits from the food eaten by him.

[A wise and enlightened man disregards the gross aspects of the world around him, but rather treats it as manifestation of Brahm, the divine, holy and the perfect One. He accepts the world with its extremes of goodness and badness as a manifestation of Brahm, because Brahm is a term that includes ‘everything’ in creation, and the word ‘everything’ means just that—nothing escapes the parameter of the definition of Brahm, nothing is beyond Brahm; Brahm is invisible as well as visible; Brahm is an ubiquitous entity that is all-inclusive, all-encompassing and all-pervading; Brahm is an entity that permeates uniformly and universally in the entire creation, from the miniscule to the most colossal.

Therefore, if Brahm is invisible, subtle and sublime, then it is also visible, gross and ordinary simultaneously.] (42).

“Canto 2, verse no. 43—‘Brahm devours his own self’ in a symbolic way. The primary reason of this highly paradoxical situation that appears to be incongruous and ridiculous on the face is that nothing exists in this creation that does not have Brahm at its core, or that does not represent one or the other aspect or virtue of Brahm, or that does not reflect Brahm in some way. Everything in existence, including the ‘eater’ and the ‘food eaten’, is a manifestation of Brahm like the rest of the creation. There is, in fact, nothing in this creation that is not Brahm!

[That is, both the thing that is eaten as well as the person who eats it are manifestations of Brahm. This deduction is based on the tenet of non-duality or ‘Advaitya’ which says that there is only one truth in creation, and therefore there cannot be two types of truths. Falsehood can be many, but truth is always one. Since Brahm is the quintessential ‘truth’ of creation, it naturally follows that (i) what ever that exists, such as the food that is eaten and the eater, are the same Brahm existing in these two forms, and (ii) to understand this apparently ridiculous proposition one has to have a well developed intellectual stature and spiritual evolvment.

For instance, it is only when one sees the earth from high up in the sky that one can understand the truth of the statement that the earth is not flat, but is a round ball-like structure hanging without any support in the fathomless void of space. For otherwise, if viewed from the surface, the same earth appears to be flat, with extremely high mountains that rise up to almost touch the sky on the one hand, or with deep chasms or canyons or furrows that go down in its seemingly depth-less bowls on the other hand. In fact, all these three things are true depending upon the level from which one views the earth.

Likewise, only those who have had acquired the depth of spiritual vision, the broadness of spiritual wisdom and a high level of spiritual enlightenment that enables one to see or understand something that is beyond the gross, the ordinary and the mundane aspects of creation, something that is supernatural and transcendental, can understand the

true meaning of the statements associated with Brahm and the Atma. For the rest of the creatures, all these observations seem to be absurd and imaginary.]

The very fact that something exists is a proof of the existence of Brahm. Hence, both the eater and the food eaten are not only proofs of the existence of Brahm but also establishes that Brahm is the ‘eater’ as well as the entity that is ‘eaten’ (43).

“Canto 2, verse no. 44—Any Authority is established by its inherent and intrinsic dynamic powers, strength and potentials. When things are subjected to certain laws and regulations it is a sign that there is some Authority to control and regulate them. In other words, since the creation has an in-built regulatory mechanism that controls each and every phase of existence, it is too obvious to doubt that there is an invisible Authority that gives effect to this control and regulation mechanism. This ‘Authority’ is Brahm. Brahm and Authority are not separable from one another; they are synonymous with each other (just like a king and his royal authority are inseparable from one another and synonymous with each other).

Brahm is the ‘Supreme Authority’ in creation inasmuch there is no Authority beyond Brahm. Brahm is the only Authoritative Being in creation. Brahm is the Authority that has the power and the authority which are inviolable and sacrosanct. The fact is that there is no ‘Authority’ other than Brahm in this creation—and that makes Brahm ‘supreme’.

It is also a fact that Maya (delusions) has no real existence. [Maya is an instrument in the hands of Brahm to exercise his authority over creation. It is Maya that helps Brahm to keep the wheel of creation rotating endlessly by keeping the creatures deluded and trapped. When the time comes for winding up the creation, Brahm exercises his ‘authority’ and removes the smokescreen of Maya. This smokescreen can also be voluntarily removed by Brahm-realised persons because they are themselves Brahm personified!] (44).

“Canto 2, verse no. 45—Wise ascetics realise that Maya is a voluntary creation of the Atma that resides in their inner-self.

[In other words, they realise that no one else is to blame for the web of delusions that they have created around themselves voluntarily. This is because their Atma is their truthful ‘self’, and it is this Atma that has created the Maya.]

However, this Maya and its negative and deluding effects are blocked by the knowledge of Brahm. It then appears only as a neutral entity that is as ineffective as an image or reflection seen in a mirror.

[In other words, those ascetics who are Brahm-realised are not affected by the negative influences of Maya. The latter seems to exist in this world because for the simple reason that the world exists, as without the Maya this world cannot exist. Maya and the artificial world go hand-in-hand; they co-exist. In other word, both the Maya and the world are imaginations of the mind; if the mind so decides, both would vanish. Maya has any relevance only till the time a man acknowledges the presence of the gross world—because the latter is a product of the former. But once he becomes enlightened enough to understand that the world is imaginary and therefore non-truth, it is a natural corollary that the relevance of the Maya is done away with. Instead of delusions, he

begins to see the ‘truth’ everywhere. And this ‘truth’ is Brahm. Therefore, for a Brahm-realised person Maya ceases to exist, and with its cessation the world also ceases to exist.

This is all there is to Maya’s importance and influence; it does not go any further than this point. It does not affect the inner-self of the wise ascetic who is freed from its cunning tricks, who understands that if he so determines he can easily overcome both the delusions and artificiality created by his imaginative mind.

This is why Brahm-realised and self-realised ascetics become enlightened and empowered enough that they can see the secret ‘truth’ in the same world in which other ordinary men cannot!

The reflection of any object that is seen in a mirror appears to be as true and real as the object itself, leading to so perfect a delusion that a man who does not know the real situation would begin to believe, after sometime, that the reflection or the image seen in the mirror is the object itself. This man forgets that what he sees is simply a ‘reflection or an image’ for the simple reason that the medium of seeing the object under question is a ‘mirror’ that has the grand virtue of creating a perfect image of the real thing.

When a wise man sees an image of an object in a mirror he immediately knows that there surely must be the object somewhere in the vicinity. So he looks around to find it, and then he is able to have a sight of the real thing. Say, is it not foolish to run behind the water seen in a mirage during a hot summer afternoon in desert even if one comes across a real source of water close at hand?

Therefore, is it not foolish to run behind the mirage-like world seeking peace and happiness when one knows that it is imaginary and misleading, as well as transient and perishable, instead of attempting to realise the ‘spiritual truth’ that would bestow him with peace and happiness that are not only everlasting but have depth and profundity as well.

The ‘image or the reflection’ seen in a mirror is never the real thing though it appears to be so. Similarly, when the supreme Truth (the cosmic Consciousness revealed in the form of ‘life’ in this creation) is seen against the background of Maya, it appears in the form of the visible gross world. When the same Truth is seen with the eyes of wisdom and enlightenment, it appears in the form of Brahm. Again, while the term ‘Brahm’ refers to the Truth at the macro level of creation, the same Truth is referred to as the ‘Atma’ when considered at the micro level of existence.

Hence, to conclude, a Brahm realised man sees this world as a reflection or an image of Brahm. It is in the mirror of existence that he sees Brahm being reflected. Therefore, even if the world is removed Brahm would still be there—just like the case of an object remaining in place even if the mirror that reflects its image is removed from sight.] (45).

“Canto 2, verse no. 46—In this way, a wise, enlightened and Brahm-realised spiritual aspirant who has acquired a holistic and truthful knowledge of Brahm sees this world that physically appears to be separate and distinct from him. Internally, he never treats it as a separate entity. Rather, he treats this entire world as his own reflection.

[This is because the world is a visible manifestation of Brahm, and the viewer himself is Brahm personified. So in effect it means that the world is his personal image. Or, that there is no difference between his ‘true self’ and the ‘truth of the world’. This implies that he is talking about the subtle aspects of the world rather than its gross

aspects, for the subtle aspect is known as the Atma while the gross aspect is obviously caused by Maya, and therefore is not the reality. The subtle aspect of the viewer's own self and the rest of the creatures is the same divine entity known as the Atma which is non-dual, and therefore they are the same, while the gross aspect is obviously different as each unit has its own gross features that are unique to it and different from the other unit.

For instance, if water is put into containers of different sizes, shapes and colours, none of them would ever change the basic nature, the basic qualities, the chemical formula etc. of water in the least. The water would always remain water irrespective of the vessel in which it is held.]

Verily, this is the great and the grand Truth that this great Upanishad proclaims. Amen! (46).”

3(E)(iii) Mahavakya Upanishad, verse no. 11:--

“Verse no. 11—‘I am that eternal essence known as the ‘Arka’ (literally the juice, the essence, the fundamental) that is the basis of everything in creation. [That is, I am Brahm and the cosmic Consciousness personified.]

I am a personified form and the essence that represents the supreme ‘Jyoti’ (literally the ‘light’ representing consciousness and its eclectic knowledge, energy, divinity, sublimity, truthfulness etc.). [In other words, I am the cosmic Consciousness personified. I am fully enlightened and wise. I am truthful and divine.]

I am Shiva personified (i.e. I am most auspicious, beautiful, divine, holy, immaculate, and detached from this deluding creation—the virtues that are encapsulated in the term ‘Shiva’).

I am the Atma which is brilliant and self-illuminated like the sun.

It is me indeed who is the ‘Sukra’ (literally the sperm but here meaning the all-pervading light of consciousness) that infuses life and consciousness in all the creatures of creation.

I am the supreme ‘Jyoti’ (light; consciousness; truth) that illuminates everything in this creation. [That is, I have understood that my truthful form is the Atma which is the pure consciousness that is a universal entity which infuses life in all the living beings in this creation. I know everything in this world, which is a metaphoric way of saying that the Atma is eternally enlightened and wise, and therefore nothing is hidden from it.]

I am never separate from that supreme Authority characterized by the above virtues; in fact I am that Authority (11).’

3(E)(iv) Annapurna Upanishad, Canto 5, verse nos. 59-61, 91-93:--

“Canto 5, verse no. 59—Be full of the eclectic and glorious virtues of equanimity, steadiness, uniformity and evenness of mind.

Think—‘I do not criticize or demean or insult or cause any kind of slight to myself as well as to anybody else. I do not also praise or honour or laud anyone,

including myself (i.e. I do not boast of my achievements or qualities; I do not feel proud and have any ego in me).

I do not feel exultant or cheerful or lucky or happy and excited when some auspicious or good situation or opportunity appears before me, nor do I sulk or regret or feel bad, dejected, depressed, sad, unfortunate and un-privileged under the opposite set of conditions which ordinarily would give immense sorrows and miseries to a less-enlightened and less-wiser man.'

That is, I have developed stellar spiritual qualities of remaining detached, dispassionate, non-involved and renounced (59).

“Canto 5, verse no. 60—Oh sage! Think that your mind and heart have calmed down and have overcome their natural fickleness, frivolity and unsteady nature. Be free from all regrets, grief and sorrows.

Calm down your tendency of being always on the edge, fidgety and restless, meeting deadlines and being in a tearing hurry, racing against time and always feeling that you have not done enough, or that so much is to be done in so short a time, leaving you agitated, panting, huffy and short of breath. That is, do things at an easy pace; do not get unduly disturbed by the things to be done; do not get emotionally attached to what you do or the results of these deeds. Do not allow yourself to be too much involved in the deeds that you must do while living in this world, though you must do them diligently and honestly nonetheless because of the fact that you live in a world that survives on the philosophy of doing deeds and not remaining idle. You being an honest, noble and conscientious man are expected to be sincere, truthful, honest and diligent in whatever you engage yourself in.

This would help to calm down your mind, make it steady, and give it rest and peace. Think—I have a calm, steady, rested and peaceful mind. Therefore, I do not have any disease! [This is a very pertinent, significant and important observation. All the major ailments that afflict the creature have their genesis in the mind. An agitated, fidgety, upset and restless mind sets off a chain reaction in the body and secretes such chemicals that are injurious to the body's natural healthy condition. This is one of the reasons why a modern man suffers from so many diseases—his mind is never at rest and is in a constant state of flux, is jumpy and fidgety, is full of desires and rapacity, had deadlines to meet, and is bombarded by information from all over the world. Its restless and fidgety nature is further poked by modern technology, such as the tablets and the mobile phones connected to the internet, that a man uses even while he is in bed, and is supposed to give his weary body some rest.

Such a mind is therefore eternally un-contented and eternally restless. This is also the reason why spiritual pursuits, study of the scriptures, meditation and contemplation and other such noble pursuits are beneficial for health and the overall welfare of the aspirant—they calm down the mind and rein it in, they make it focused on the work at hand, and inculcate in it the grand virtues of peacefulness, tranquility, serenity and contentedness.] (60).

“Canto 5, verse no. 61—Oh Brahmin (Nidagh)! Think—‘I do not know the difference between someone being my friend and the other being a stranger. [In other words, all the living beings are the same for me; I treat all alike.]

I do not treat anything as being mine and the other as belonging to someone else. [For instance, I do not treat a person as being ‘my daughter or son’, and the other person as being not mine but someone else’s daughter or son. I do not consider the material things around me as belonging to me exclusively; I do not cling to them and become possessive. I know that all such notions and relations are limited to the gross body and not to the Atma which is free from such fetters of having physical ties or relationships. All are equal in my view, and therefore I do not regard something as being mine and get attached to it at the mental level, or treat it as belonging to someone else and getting jealous about it, because that ‘someone else’ is also another form of the pure consciousness known as the Atma that is also ‘me’. In other words, it is actually ‘me’ in that form which the ordinary world treats as ‘him’ or as the ‘other person’.] In short, I have no sense of duality, or a notion of distinction between ‘this’ and ‘that’ in this world. I treat everything equally, and with the highest degree of equanimity, fortitude, uniformity of view and level-headedness that comes with having an eclectic wisdom and spiritual enlightenment that enables me to see the ‘truth’ and ‘reality’ behind external appearances. This ‘truth’ and ‘reality’ is always the same and uniformly ‘one’, and therefore I do not allow myself to be misled by differing external façades.’ (61).

“Canto 5, verse no. 91. The high level of neutrality and equanimity that a wise, erudite, enlightened and self-realised aspirant develops inspires him to think in these eclectic terms—‘I don’t die or perish, nor do I take a birth and live a mortal life. I am not subject to debates as to whether I am truthful or false. I do not come within any worldly criterions and definitions. I am not anything that can be perceived by the organs of perception or grasped, judged and understood by the various faculties of the mind and intellect.’ [Here, the pronoun ‘I’ refers to the spiritual aspirant’s ‘self’—which is his pure conscious Atma, and not his gross physical body.]

A wise man who has developed these eclectic thoughts and wisdom becomes steady, consistent and unwavering in his calmness of demeanours as well as a composed and well-balanced approach to life and its problems. He is perfectly neutral, indifferent, unattached and dispassionate. He stops thinking about anything at all, and therefore is not subjected to numerous doubts, confusions and delusions that are hallmarks of this mortal and gross material world of ever-changing forms, a world of inconsistencies and delusions (91).

“Canto 5, verse no. 92—He thinks—‘I am not attached to, infatuated with, attracted towards or longing for anything or anyone. I am imperishable and steady, and therefore immune to decay, disintegration, deformation and demotions. I do not have any lust, passion, desire or yearning for anything. All my Vasanas (worldly passions and yearnings) have calmed down and eliminated; I am free from them.

I am not a fraction of anybody else; I am complete and wholesome; I am immutable and indivisible. [That is, I am not a son of any father. I am not a fraction of the cosmic Consciousness, but rather I am this Consciousness entirely in its wholesome form.]

I am like the sky element that cannot be measured or fathomed, that is eternal and infinite, that is immutable, constant and unchanging.’

A person who thinks of himself in the above terms is indeed a spiritually liberated and delivered soul. Such a self-realised, wise and enlightened man thinks of nothing; he is completely neutral and dispassionate. He is not moribund but immortal. He is not gross but sublime and subtle (92).

“Canto 5, verse no. 93—He is free from the mind that is tainted by the notion of ego and pride. He is a person with an immaculate, perfectly clean and uncorrupt mind and intellect. He is indeed wise, enlightened and realised.

He does not come to any sort of demotion and degeneration; he is imperishable and eternal. He remains calm, serene, tranquil and composed. He develops an exemplary degree of equanimity and neutrality towards all things and situations in this world.

A person who has successfully inculcated these eclectic virtues is indeed a spiritually liberated and delivered soul. Such a self-realised, wise and enlightened man thinks of nothing; he is completely neutral and dispassionate (93).”

3(E)(v) Mundak Upanishad, Mundak 3, Section 2, verse nos. 3-4:--

3. When a wise and Brahm realised man is able to see or become acquainted with the supreme Brahm who is the neutral and dispassionate witness to all and everything in this creation, who is self-illuminated, who is the Supreme Being, and who is the supreme creator and the ultimate progenitor of the entire universe, including Brahma the creator (who created this visible world where the mortal creature lives)—it is then that such a wise and enlightened man abandons all sorts of involvements in any kind of thing, whether it is auspicious or inauspicious. [That is, he does not get sucked in the vortex of getting mentally and emotionally involved in doing worldly deeds at all. He does them but with total detachment from them, and with a sense of non-involvement in their fruits or rewards.]

Such a man attains the eclectic stature of being calm and equitable in his approach to life. He becomes pure and untainted as his inner self is not polluted by any of the contaminants or impurities that are by-products of getting engrossed in this world. (3).

4. [This verse clearly asserts that a truly wise and Brahm realised person is one who continues to do his duties in this world without getting involved in them. This gives him honour and an exalted place amongst those who are called Brahm realised.]

The supreme Brahm is the one who is revealed in the form of Pran or life consciousness in all the living beings¹. A person who knows this universal truth has no sense of Ahankar, or ego and self pride in him. [This is because he realises that whatever the body does is not as a result of his own effort but due to the fact that the Pran that lives in this body is making the body do what the latter does, and this Pran is Brahm personified. So, there is no scope of ‘his’ being proud of anything because ‘he’ is not the doer. ‘He’ is not the one who is empowering the body to do anything, but it is some different mystical power that is known as Brahm that empowers the body.]

Such a wise and erudite person who knows the eclectic truth about the Atma, i.e. about the supreme Brahm residing in his own bosom as the pure consciousness and his

true 'self', knows that it is this Brahm in the form of the Atma that drives the body and all its activities². It is the Brahm that is the Pran or life consciousness in the body of all living beings.

Such a person is called 'Brahm realised'. He continues to do his duties in this world and acquires an exalted and honourably position in the society of learned and enlightened men who are categorized as Brahm realised³. (4).

[Note—¹Some of the other Upanishads that affirm that the Pran is a manifestation of Brahm—Brihad Aranyaka Upanishad of Shukla Yajur Veda, Canto 4, Brahman 4, verse no. 17; Taittiriya Upanishad of Krishna Yajur Veda tradition, Valli 3, Anuvak 3.

²It is the reason why the Kosha or cell where the Atma lives in the body, i.e. the subtle heart, is called the 'causal body' because it is the 'cause' of everything in this world.

³That is, a wise person does not run away from the world or from doing his duties, but his attitude changes. Instead of getting neck-deep involved in the deeds and their results, he does them in a dispassionate and detached manner. He does not get hooked to the deeds and their results; he does not bother what the world says or whether or not success is attained. He does the deeds absolutely dispassionately and in a neutral fashion. This is the eclectic theory of selfless and dispassionate Karma.

This concept of Karma or deeds has been explained in a number of Upanishads. For instance, the Saraswati Rahasya Upanishad, verse no. 67 describes succinctly how Karma or deeds and their consequences can be overcome. The Varaaha Upanishad of the Krishna Yajur Veda tradition, in its Canto 2, verse no. 48, and Canto 4, verse no. 35 describe the relationship between the deed, the doer and the cause. The Adhyatma Upanishad of Shukla Yajur Veda tradition describes the concept of doing deeds and its effect on the spiritual liberation or bondage of the creature in fine detail in its verse nos. 49-60.

The Kathrudra Upanishad of Krishna Yajur Veda, in its verse no. 13 asserts that the supreme transcendental Brahm or the quintessential spiritual Truth of creation as well as Mukti or liberation and deliverance is not possible by merely doing various deeds in this mortal world. This same idea is endorsed in Rudra Hridaya Upanishad of Krishna Yajur Veda tradition, in its verse no. 35, which asserts that deeds or Karma do not provide the Atma of the creature with liberation and deliverance from this world, but it is Gyan (truthful knowledge of the spiritual truths) that does so.

The 'Karma Chakra' or the giant wheel of deeds and their consequences has been described in the Shwetashwatar Upanishad of Krishna Yajur Veda, in its Canto 6, verse no. 3. The three Paths followed by a creature according to the deeds done by him are referred to in Shwetashwatar Upanishad, 4/7. The Varaaha Upanishad of Krishna Yajur Veda, in its Canto 2, verse no. 48 describes how one can become free from the fetters created by 'deeds'. The Niralambo-panishad of Shukla Yajur Veda, in its verse no. 11-12 describes the concept of Karma. The Sarwasaar Upanishad of Krishna Yajur Veda, in its verse no. 6 describes the concept of how and why the creature becomes the doer of deeds. What happens to ignorant people after death is explained in Brihad Aranyak 4/4/1. The Trishikhi Brahmin Upanishad of Shukla Yajur Veda tradition, in its Canto 2, verse nos. 23-26 defines what constitutes of true 'Karma Yoga'. The Mandal Brahmin Upanishad of Shukla Yajur Veda, 2/4/2-3 describes the philosophy of Deeds. The Saraswati Rahasya

Upanishad, verse no. 67 describes succinctly how Karma or deeds and their consequences can be overcome.]

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About the Author

Ajai Kumar Chhawchharia left home when he was approximately 29 years of age due to an inner call of his heart that told him to devote his life in the service of his beloved Lord God, Sri Ram. Worldly attractions did not enchant him at all. So, he didn't marry, and after his father's death he came and settled permanently in Ayodhya, the holy town in India associated with Lord Ram.

Presently he works as an honorary manager of a world famous Kanak Bhavan Temple at Ayodhya, and spends his time writing in English so that the world can access the wonderful nectar of metaphysical, spiritual and devotional philosophy that is contained in Indian scriptures for which they are so renowned.

His English Books published separately by a reputed publisher of India, the details of whom can be had by contacting the author on his email given below, include: (i) The series on '108 Upanishads' in five volumes having eighteen parts, (ii) Veda Vyas' 'Adhyatma Ramayan' in two parts, (iii) 'Devi Puran Ramayan', (iv) Valmiki's 'Adbhut Ramayan', and (v) 'Biography of Lord Ram' based on Tulsidas' books.

Genre of Writing: Spiritualism, Philosophy, Metaphysics, Religious, Devotional and Theological.

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Contact details of Ajai Kumar Chhawchharia—

Postal address:-36-A, Rajghat Colony, Parikrama Marg, P.O.—Ayodhya, Pin—224123,
Distt. Ayodhya (Faizabad), U.P. India.

Phone:—(India) +919451290400; +919935613060.

Email of Author: (1) ajaichhawchharia@gmail.com

(2) ajaikumarbooks@gmail.com

Facebook ID: www.facebook.com/ajaikumarchhawchharia8

Linkedin: www.linkedin.com/AjaiKumarChhawchharia

Goodreads:

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