

## **Vivekachudamani**

(Adopted from “The Collected Works of Sri Ramana Maharshi” and sub-titled to suit the Audio files of this Work)

### **Prayer, Introduction:**

Rejoice eternally! The heart rejoices at the feet of the Lord, who is the Self, shining within as ‘I-I’, knowing neither night nor day and putting to flight the ignorance of ego.

This work by Sri. Shankaracharya, together with the Drik Drishya Viveka, was translated into Tamil prose by Bhagavan while he was still living in Virupaksha Cave around the year 1904-05.

### **Introduction by Sri Bhagavan**

Every being in the world yearns to be always happy and free from the taint of sorrow, and desires to get rid of bodily ailments, etc., which are not of its true nature. Further, everyone cherishes the greatest love for himself, and this love is not possible in the absence of happiness. In deep sleep, though devoid of everything, one has the experience of being happy. Yet, due to the ignorance of the real nature of one’s own being, which is happiness itself, people flounder in the vast ocean of material existence, forsaking the right path that leads to happiness, and act under the mistaken belief that the way to be happy consists in obtaining the pleasures of this and the other world.

Unfortunately, however, there is no such happiness which has not the taint of sorrow. It is precisely for the purpose of pointing out the straight path to true happiness that Lord Siva, taking on the guise of Sri Shankaracharya, wrote the commentaries on the Triple Canon (**Prasthanam Traya**) of the **Vedanta**, which extols the excellence of this bliss; and that he demonstrated it by his own example in life. These commentaries, however, are of little use to those ardent seekers who are intent upon realizing the bliss of Liberation but have not the scholarship necessary for studying them. It is for such as these that Sri Shankara revealed the essence of the commentaries in this short treatise, **The Crown Gem of**

**Discrimination**, explaining in detail the points that have to be grasped by those who seek Liberation, and thereby directing them to the true and direct path.

Sri Shankara begins by observing that it is hard indeed to attain human birth, and that, having attained it, one should strive to achieve the bliss of Liberation, which is really only the nature of one's being. By **jnana** or spiritual knowledge alone is this Bliss to be realized, and **jnana** is achieved only through **vichara** or steady enquiry. In order to learn this method of enquiry, says Sri Shankara, one should seek the grace of a Guru; and he then proceeds to describe the qualities of the Guru and his disciple and how the latter should approach and serve his master. He further emphasizes that in order to realize the bliss of Liberation one's own individual effort is an essential factor. Mere book-learning never yields this bliss; it can be realized only through Self-enquiry or **vichara**, which consists of **sravana** or devoted attention to the precepts of the Guru, **manana** or deep contemplation and **nidhidhyasana** or the cultivation of equanimity in the Self.

The three bodies, are non-self and are unreal. The Self, that is the **Aham** or 'I' is quite different from them. It is due to ignorance that the sense of Self or the 'I' notion is foisted on that which is not Self, and this indeed is bondage. Since from ignorance arises bondage, from Knowledge ensues liberation. To know this from the Guru is **sravana**. The process of **manana**, which is subtle enquiry or deep contemplation, consists in rejecting the three bodies consisting of the five sheaths (physical, vital, mental, intellectual, and blissful), as not 'I' and discovering through subtle enquiry of 'Who am I?' that which is different from all three and exists single and universal in the heart as *Aham* or 'I', just as a stalk of grass is delicately drawn out from its sheath. This 'I' is denoted by the word *tvam* (in the scriptural dictum '*Tat-tvamasi*', That thou art). The world of name and form is but an adjunct of *Tat* or *Brahman* and, having no separate reality, is rejected as reality and affirmed as nothing else but

*Brahman*. The instruction of the disciple by the Guru in the *Mahavakya* 'Tat tvam asi', which declares the identity of the Self and the Supreme, is this *upadesa* (spiritual guidance). The disciple is then enjoined to remain in the beatific state of *Aham-Brahman*, (I—the Absolute). Nevertheless, the old tendencies of the mind sprout up thick and strong and constitute an obstruction. These tendencies are threefold and ego is their root. The ego flourishes in the externalized and differentiating consciousness caused by the forces of projection due to *rajas* and veiling due to *tamas*. To fix the mind firmly in the heart until these forces are destroyed and to awaken with unswerving, ceaseless vigilance the true and cognate tendency which is characteristic of the *Atman* and is expressed by sayings: 'Aham Brahmasmi' (I am *Brahman*), and 'Brahmaivaham' (*Brahman* alone am I) is termed *nidhidhyasana* or *Atmanusandhana*, that is constancy in the Self. This is otherwise called *bhakti*, *yoga* and *dhyana*. *Atmanusandhana* has been compared to churning curds in order to make butter, the mind being compared to the churn, the heart to the curds, and the practice of concentration on the Self to the process of churning. Just as butter is made by churning the curds and fire by friction, so the natural and changeless state of *nirvikalpa samadhi* is produced by unswerving vigilant concentration on the Self, ceaseless like the unbroken flow of oil. This readily and spontaneously yields that direct, immediate, unobstructed, and universal perception of *Brahman*, which is at once knowledge and experience and which transcends time and space. This perception is Self-realization. Achieving it cuts the knot of the heart. The false delusions of ignorance, the vicious and age-long tendencies of the mind which constitute this knot are destroyed. All doubts are dispelled and the bondage of *karma* is severed.

Thus in this *Crown Gem of Discrimination* Sri Shankara has described *samadhi* or spiritual trance which is the limitless bliss of liberation, beyond doubt and duality, and at the same time has indicated the means for its attainment. To attain this state of freedom from duality is the real

purpose of life, and only he who has done so is a *jivanmukta*, liberated while yet alive, not one who has a mere theoretical understanding of what constitutes *purushartha* or the desired end and aim of human endeavour. Thus defining a *jivanmukta*, Sri Shankara declares him to be free from the bonds of threefold karma (*sanchita*, *agami* and *prarabdha*). The disciple attains this state and then relates his personal experience. He who is liberated is indeed free to act as he pleases, and when he leaves the body, he abides in Liberation and never returns to this birth, which is death. Sri Shankara thus describes Realization, that is Liberation, as twofold, *Jivanmukti* and *Videhamukti*, as explained above. Moreover, in this short treatise, written in the form of a dialogue between a Guru and his disciple, he has considered many other relevant topics.

### **Invocation**

Rejoice eternally! The heart rejoices at the feet of the Lord, who is the Self, shining within as 'I-I' eternally, so that there is no alternation of night and day. This will result in removal of ignorance of the Self.

### **Praise to the Guru**

Sri Shankara Jagadguru shines as the form of Lord Siva. In this work, *Vivekachudamani*, he has expounded in detail the heart of *Vedanta* and its meaning in order that the most ardent of those qualified for liberation may acquaint themselves with it and attain immortality. Homage to the ever blissful Sri Govinda *Sadguru* who is to be known only by the ultimate truth of *Vedanta* and not by any other standard.

### **The Text**

#### **Need of Sadhana:**

(Summary for the Sanskrit Verses: 1 to 17 and the Tamil Poems: 1 to 20) It is indeed very difficult to obtain a human body. Even though one does, it is very difficult to become a *brahmin*. Even if one becomes one, it is still more difficult to walk in the path of *vaidika dharma* in which the Vedas are chanted. Still more difficult is it to become a perfect scholar, and more difficult again to undertake enquiry into the Self and the non-Self. Yet more difficult than all this is to obtain wisdom

born of experience of the Self. Liberation in the form of abidance as the Self, born of that wisdom, is not to be attained except as a result of righteous actions performed throughout countless crores of births. However, even though all the above qualifications may not be obtained, liberation is assured through the grace of the Lord if only three conditions are obtained: that is a human birth, intense desire for liberation, and association with sages. If, by some great penance, that rarity, a human body is obtained, with its ability to understand the meaning of the scriptures, and yet, owing to attachment to insentient things, effort is not made to attain the immutable state of liberation, which is one's own true state, then indeed one is a fool committing suicide. What greater fool is there than one who does not seek his own good?

Liberation is not to be achieved through endless cycles of time by reading the scriptures or worshipping the gods or by anything else than knowledge of the unity of *Brahman* and *atman*. Wealth or actions made possible by wealth cannot produce the yearning for liberation. Therefore the scriptures have rightly declared that action can never produce liberation.

In order to obtain liberation one must heroically renounce even the very desire for the pleasures of this world. Then one must seek the perfect guru who is the embodiment of peace and must concentrate one's mind and meditate ceaselessly on that into which one is initiated. Such meditation leads to abidance in the wisdom of the experience obtained. Embarking in that ship of wisdom, one must ferry over to the shore of liberation that Self which is immersed in the ocean of *samsara*. Therefore the courageous aspirant should give up attachment to wife, sons and property and give up all activity. By so doing he should free himself from bondage to the cycle of birth and death and seek liberation.

Actions are prescribed only for purification of the mind, not for realization of the Self. Knowledge of the truth of the Self is obtained only by Self-enquiry and not by any number of actions. One who mistakes a rope for a serpent is cast into fear thereby and his fear and distress can be removed only by the knowledge that it is a rope. A friend who knows this tells him so and he investigates and finds that it is so. There is no other way. Similarly, knowledge of Brahman is obtained through initiation by the Guru and enquiry into Truth. That Truth cannot be realized through purificatory baths, offerings, breath-control, or any other practice. He who seeks liberation through knowledge of the Self must enquire into the Self with the help of the perfect Guru who, being free from desires, is a knower of *Brahman* and an ocean of grace. It is mainly through enquiry that he who is competent achieves knowledge of the Self; circumstance, time, and the grace of the Lord are but aids to the quest. In order to be qualified for enquiry into the Self, a man must have a powerful intellect and ability to seize the essential and reject the inessential besides the various qualities enumerated in the scriptures.

**Four types of Sadhanas, Need of the Guru:**

(Sanskrit Verses: 18 to 49 and Tamil Poems: 21 to 57) What are these? He must be able to discriminate between the real and the unreal. He must have an unattached mind. He must ardently desire liberation. And he must be tireless in practice. Only such a one is qualified to enquire into *Brahman*. The qualifications are enumerated as follows:

1. *Nitya-anitya vastu vivekam* - Discrimination between the real and the unreal. 2. *Ihamutrarta palabhoha viragam* - Disinclination to enjoy the fruits of one's actions either in this or in any further life. 3. *Samadhi shatka sampati* - The six virtues of tranquillity, self-control, withdrawal, forbearance, faith, and concentration of the Self. 4. *Mumukshutvam* - Intense yearning for liberation.

The aspirant must indeed have these qualities in order to attain abidance in the Self; without them there can be no realization of the Truth. Let us see what these are:

1. Discrimination between the real and the unreal is the firm conviction that *Brahman* alone is the Truth and that the world is unreal.

2. We both observe and learn from the scriptures that all pleasures experienced by animate beings, from Brahma downwards, are transient and impermanent and involve sorrows and imperfections; giving up the desire for them is *vairagya* or non-attachment.

3. (a) Tranquillity implies fixing the mind upon its target by meditating frequently on the imperfections of things and becoming dissatisfied with them.

(b) Self-control means controlling the outer and inner sense organs and fixing them in their respective centres.

(c) Withdrawal means giving up all outer activity by fixing the mind on its target so firmly that it is not led by its previous tendencies to dwell on objects.

(d) Forbearance means the endurance of any sorrows that may befall without trying to avoid them.

(e) Faith, which is the cause of Self-realization, is the outcome of firm conviction of the truth of *Vedantic* scriptures and of the words of the Guru.

(f) Concentration is making every effort to fix the mind on the pure *Brahman* despite its wandering nature. These are said to be the six qualifications needed for the practice of *samadhi*.

4. Intense yearning for liberation arises from the desire to free oneself by realizing one's true nature, attaining freedom from the bondage of the body and ego which is caused by ignorance. This yearning may be of different grades. It may be only dull or medium, but it may be highly developed by means of the six qualifications mentioned above, and in this case it can bear fruit. But if renunciation and yearning are weak, the result may be mere appearance like a mirage in the desert.

Of all the means leading to liberation, *bhakti* or devotion is the best; and this *bhakti* means seeking the truth of one's own Self — so say the sages. The aspirant who possesses the necessary qualifications and wishes to undertake Self-enquiry must seek a Sadguru and bow down to him with humility, awe and reverence and serve him in various ways. The Sadguru is one capable of destroying the bondage of those who adhere to him. He is an ocean of immutable wisdom. His knowledge is all-comprehensive. He is pure as crystal. He has attained victory over desires. He is supreme among the knowers of *Brahman*. He rests calmly in *Brahman* like a fire that has consumed its fuel. He is an endless reservoir of mercy. There is no explanation why he is Merciful; it is his very nature. He befriends all *sadhus* who adhere to him. To such a Guru the disciple appeals: 'I bow down to you, my Master, true friend of the helpless! I pray you to help me cross the terrible ocean of bondage into which I have fallen and by which I am overwhelmed. A mere gracious look from you is a raft that will save me. Oh flowing stream of Grace! I am shaken violently by the winds of a perverse fate. I do not know which way to turn. I am tormented by the unquenchable fire of *samsara* that burns around me. I continually pray to you to calm me by the nectar of your grace. *Sadhus* such as you who abide ever in peace, are great and magnanimous and constantly benefit the world, like the season of spring. Not only have they themselves crossed the ocean of *samsara*, but they can calm the fears of others. Just as the world after being heated by the burning rays of the sun is calmed by the cool and gracious rays of the moon, so also it is in your nature to give protection for no reason whatever to people like me who have taken refuge with you from the ocean of *samsara*. Indeed, being helpless and having no other refuge, I have cast on you the burden of protecting me from this *samsara* of birth and death. Oh Lord! The flames of the conflagration of individual

being have scorched me; cool me through the outpouring of your gracious words. Your words bring peace, being born of your experience of divine bliss. Blessed are they that have even received your gracious glance. Blessed are they who have become acceptable to you. How shall I cross the ocean and what means is there? I do not indeed know what is my fate. You alone must protect me, setting me free from this sorrow of *samsara*.'

**Means of Sadhana:**

(Sanskrit Verses: 50 to 71 and Tamil Poems: 58 to 81) The disciple thus takes refuge with the Guru, as enjoined by the scriptures. He waits upon the Guru, unable to bear the burning winds of *samsara*. His mind grows calm through following the Guru's bidding. The teacher, that is, the knower of *Brahman*, casts upon him his gracious glance and touches his soul inwardly, giving him assurance of protection. My learned disciple, have no fear. No harm shall come to you hereafter. I will give you a single mighty means by which you can cross this terrible, fathomless ocean of *samsara* and thus obtain supreme Bliss. By this means, world renouncing *sadhus* have crossed it and your bondage also shall be destroyed here and now. The scriptures declare: 'The means of liberation for seekers are faith, devotion, meditation, and *yoga*.' You too shall obtain these means, and if you practise them constantly shall be set free from the bondage to the body caused by ignorance. You are eternally of the nature of *Paramatma* and this bondage of *samsara*, of non-Self, has come upon you only through ignorance. It will be utterly destroyed by knowledge born of enquiry into the Self.

Gazing on the Guru who says this, the disciple asks: Oh Master, what is bondage? How did it come, how does it survive, and how is it to be destroyed? What is the non-Self? And what, indeed, is the Self? And what is discrimination between Self and non-Self? Graciously bless me with answers to these questions, so that by hearing your replies I may be blessed.

To this request of the disciple the Master answers: Dear soul! If you have felt the desire to be the Self, free from the bondage caused by ignorance, you are indeed blessed. You have achieved life's purpose. You have sanctified thereby your whole line. Just as sons and other relations pay off the debts of a father, so there are others who will free one from bearing a burden on one's head. But the distress caused by hunger can be cured only by eating for oneself, not by others eating for one. And if you are sick you must take medicine and keep a proper diet yourself; no one else can do it for you. Similarly, bondage comes to you through your own ignorance and can only be removed by yourself. However learned a man may be, he cannot rid himself of the ignorance born of desire and fate, except by realizing *Brahman* with his own infinite knowledge. How does it help you if others see the moon? You must open your eyes and see it for yourself. Liberation cannot be obtained through *sankhya*, *yoga*, ritual, or learning but only through knowledge of the oneness of *Brahman* and *atman*. Just as the beautiful form of the *veena* and the music of its strings only give pleasure to people, but confer no kingdom on them, so also plausible words, clever arguments, ability to expound the scriptures, and the erudition of the learned only give pleasure for the moment. Even study of the scriptures is useless since it does not give the desired result. Once one knows the truth of the Supreme, study of the scriptures becomes unnecessary because there is nothing more to be gained. Therefore one must pass over the great forest of the *sastras*, which only yields confusion of mind, and must instead actually experience the Self through the Guru, who is a knower of Reality. To one who is bitten by the serpent of ignorance, salvation can come only from the elixir of Self-knowledge and not from the Vedas, scriptures, incantations, or any other remedies. Just as a person's sickness is not removed without taking medicine, so too his state of bondage is not removed

by scriptural texts such as ‘I am *Brahman*’ without his own direct experience of the Self. One does not become a king by merely saying, ‘I am a king’, without destroying one’s enemies and obtaining the reality of power. Similarly, one does not obtain liberation as *Brahman* itself by merely repeating the scriptural text ‘I am *Brahman*’, without destroying the duality caused by ignorance and directly experiencing the Self. A treasure trove hidden under the ground is not obtained by merely hearing about it, but only by being told by a friend who knows it, and then digging and removing the slab that hides it and taking it out from below the ground. Similarly, one must hear about one’s true state from a Guru who knows *Brahman*, and then meditate upon it and experience it directly through constant meditation. Without this, the true form of one’s own Self, that is hidden by *maya*, cannot be realized through mere argumentation. Therefore, those who are wise themselves make every effort to remove the bondage of individual existence and obtain liberation, just as they would to get rid of some disease.

Beloved disciple, the question that you have put is of the utmost importance and acceptable to realized souls well versed in the scriptures. It is like an aphorism bearing a subtle meaning and understandable to him who craves liberation. Listen to this reply with a calm and undisturbed mind and your bonds will be cut asunder at once. The primary means of obtaining liberation is *vairagya* (dispassion). Other qualities such as tranquillity, self-control, forbearance, and renunciation of activity can come later, later again the hearing of *Vedantic* truth, and still later, meditation on that truth. Finally comes perpetual and prolonged meditation on *Brahman*. This gives rise to *nirvikalpa samadhi*, through which is attained the strength for direct realization of the supreme Self. This power of direct realization enables the discriminating soul to experience the bliss of liberation here and now. Such is the

*sadhana* leading to liberation. Now I shall tell you about discrimination between Self and non-Self. Listen and keep it firmly in mind. Of these two I shall speak first about the non-Self.

**Meanness of Physical Body:**

(Sanskrit Verses: 72 to 91 and Tamil Poems: 82 to 105) The brain, bones, fat, flesh, blood, skin, and semen are the seven factors that constitute the gross body. So say those who know. The feet, thighs, chest, shoulders, back, head, etc, are its members. People regard it as 'I' owing to the mind's attachment to it. It is the primary attraction to all, and the most obvious. It is made up of ether, air, fire, water, and earth which, as the subtle essences, form sense objects, and the groups of five such as sound, touch, sight, taste, and smell. The ego (*jiva*) being intent on pleasure, regards these as means of enjoyment. Foolish and ignorant persons are bound to sense objects by the rope of desire, attracted according to the power of their *karma* which leads them up and down and causes them to wander in distress. The serpent and deer die through attachment to sound, the elephant through attachment to touch, the fish through attachment to taste, and the bee through attachment to smell. If these die through attachment to a single sense, what must be the fate of man, who is attached to all five? The evil effects of sense objects (*vishaya*) are more harmful than the poison (*visha*) of the cobra, because poison only kills him who takes it, whereas sense objects bring destruction to him who sees them or even thinks of them.

He alone obtains liberation who, with the sharp sword of detachment, cuts the strong rope of love for sense objects and so frees himself from them. Otherwise, even though a man be well versed in all the six *sastras*, he will not obtain liberation. Desire, like a crocodile, instantly seizes the aspirant after liberation who tries to cross the ocean of *samsara* and reach the shore of liberation without firm detachment, and straightaway drags him down into the ocean. Only that aspirant who kills the crocodile with the keen sword of detachment can cross the ocean and safely reach the

shore of liberation. He who, lacking good sense, enters upon one path after another of attachment to sense objects, experiences ever greater distress until he is finally destroyed. But he who exerts control over himself, walks on the path of discrimination laid down by the Guru and attains his goal. This indeed is the truth. Therefore, if you really want liberation cast away the pleasure of sense objects as though they were poison. Hold firmly to the virtues of contentment, compassion, forgiveness, sincerity, tranquillity, and self-control. Give up all actions performed out of attachment to the body and strive ceaselessly for liberation from the bondage caused by ignorance. This body is finally consumed, whether by earth, fire, beasts, or birds. He who, forgetting his real nature, mistakes this body for the Self, gets attached to it and cherishes it and by so doing becomes the murderer of the Self.

He who still cares for the body while seeking the Self, is like one who catches hold of a crocodile to cross a river. Infatuation with the body is indeed fatal to the aspirant after liberation. Only he who overcomes this infatuation attains liberation. Therefore, you too must overcome infatuation for the body and for wife and children. Then you will attain liberation, i.e., the supreme state of Vishnu which the great sages have attained. This gross body is very much to be deprecated, consisting as it does of skin, flesh, blood, arteries and veins, fat, marrow and bones, and is full of urine and excreta. It is produced by one's own past actions out of the gross elements. The subtle elements unite together to produce these gross elements. Thus it becomes a habitation for the enjoyment of pleasures by the ego, like his home for a householder. It is in the waking state that the ego experiences the gross body. It is in this state alone that it can be experienced, when the Self, though really separate from it, is deluded into identifying itself with it and, through the external organs, enjoys the various wonderful gross objects

of pleasure such as garlands, sandal paste, woman, etc. Know that the whole of outward *samsara* comes upon the spirit (*purusha*) through the medium of the gross body. Birth, growth, old age, decay, and death are its characteristics. Childhood, boyhood, youth, and old age are its stages. Castes and orders of life are ordained for it. It is also subject to different modes of treatment, to honour and dishonour, and is the abode of various diseases.

**Sukshma Deham (Subtle body) and its Limitation:**

(Sanskrit Verses: 92 to 107 and Tamil Poems: 106 to 124) The ears, skin, eyes, nose, and tongue are organs of knowledge because they enable us to cognize objects. The vocal organs, hands, feet, etc., are organs of action because they perform their respective modes of action. The internal organ (mind) is single in itself but is variously named mind, intellect, ego, or desire (*chitta*). Mind is the faculty of desire or repulsion. Intellect is the faculty of determining the truth of things. The ego is the faculty which identifies itself with the body as self. Desire (*chitta*) is the faculty that seeks for pleasure. Just as gold and silver are shaped into various forms, so the single life breath becomes *prana*, *apana*, *vyana*, *udana*, *samana*. The group of five elements (ether, fire, water, air, earth), the group of five organs of knowledge (ears, eyes, skin, nose, tongue), the group of five organs of action (vocal organs, hands, feet, anus, genitals), the group of five vital airs (*prana*, *apana*, *vyana*, *udana*, *samana*), the group of four internal organs (*chitta*, *manas*, *buddhi*, *ahankara*), all these together compose the subtle body called the city of eight constituents. Being possessed of desires, it is produced out of the elements prior to their sub-division and mutual combination. The soul has brought this beginningless superimposition upon itself by its actions. This state of experience is the dream state. In this state the mind functions of its own accord, experiencing itself as the actor, due to its various tendencies and to the effect of

experiences of the waking state. In this state the Self, shining with its own light, is superimposed upon the mind without being attached to its actions and remains a mere witness. Just as the axe and other tools of the carpenter are only the means for his activities, so this subtle body is only the means for the activities of the Self which is ever aware. The internal organs perform all their actions owing to the mere proximity of the Self, whereas the Self remains unaffected and untouched by these actions. Good or bad eyesight is due to the state of the eyes, deafness to the ears, and so on; they do not affect the Self, the knower. Those who know say that inhalation, exhalation, yawning, sneezing, etc, are functions of the life-breath, as also are hunger and thirst. The inner organ (mind), with the light of reflected consciousness, has its seat in the outer organs, such as the eye, and identifies itself with them. This inner organ is the ego.

The ego is the actor and enjoyer, identifying itself with the body as 'I'. Under the influence of the three *gunas* it assumes the three states of waking, dream and deep sleep. When sense objects are to its liking it becomes happy, when not, unhappy. Thus, pleasure and pain pertain to the ego and are not characteristics of the ever-blissful Self. **Objects appear to be pleasant because of the Self and not because of any inherent bliss that is in them.** The Self has no grief in it. Its bliss, which is independent of objects, is experienced by everyone in the state of deep sleep and therefore it is dear to everyone. This is borne out by the authority of the *Upanishads* and by direct perception, tradition, and inference.

**Kaarana Deham (causal body) and its Limitation:**

(Sanskrit Verses: 108 to 123 and Tamil Poems: 125 to 145) The Supreme (*Brahman*) has a wonderful *shakti* (power or energy) known as 'the undifferentiated', 'ignorance', '*maya*', etc. She is of the form of the three *gunas*. Her existence is inferred by those of understanding from the effects produced

by her. She is far superior to all objectivity and creates the entire universe. She is neither being nor non-being, neither does she partake of the nature of both. She is neither composed of parts nor indivisible nor both. She is neither form nor formless nor both. She is none of these. Such as she is, she is indescribable. She is also beginningless. Yet just as the deluded fear of a snake in a piece of rope is removed by recognizing the rope as such, so too *maya* may be destroyed by integral knowledge of *Brahman*. She has her three *gunas* which are to be known from their effects.

***Rajas***, whose colour is red, is of the nature of activity and is the power of projection. It is the original cause of all activity. From it arise the mental modifications that lead to desires and sorrows. Lust, anger, grasping, pride, hatred, egotism are all tendencies characteristic of *rajas*. This projecting power is the cause of bondage because it creates outward or worldly tendencies.

***Tamas***, whose colour is black, is the veiling power. It makes things appear other than what they are. Through its alliance with the power of projection, it is the original cause of man's constant rebirth. He who is enveloped by this veiling power, wise or learned though he may be, clever, expert in the meaning of the scriptures, capable of wonderful achievements, will not be able to grasp the truth of the Self, even though the Guru and others clearly explain it in various ways. Being under the sway of that veiling power, he esteems things which bear the imprint of delusion and ignorance and achieves them. Even though he is taught, he who is enveloped by this veiling power still lacks the clear knowledge and understanding without which it cannot be removed; he always remains in doubt and comes to decisions contrary to the truth. At the same time, the power of projection makes him restless. Ignorance, indolence, inertia, sleepiness, omission of the discharge of duties, and stupidity are the characteristics

of *tamas*. One who has these qualities does not comprehend anything but is like a sleeping man or a stone.

Now, coming to *sattva*, whose colour is white: although this is quite clear like pure water, yet it gets murky if mixed with *rajas* and *tamas*. The Self shines through *sattva* just as the sun illumines the entire world of matter. Even from **mixed** *sattva* virtuous qualities result, such as modesty, *yama* and *niyama*, faith, devotion and the desire for devotion, divine qualities and turning away from the unreal. From the clarity of **pure** *sattva* results Self-realization, supreme peace, never failing contentment, perfect happiness, abiding in the Self which is the fount of eternal bliss. The undifferentiated power which is spoken of as a compound of the three *gunas* is the causal body of the soul. Its state is that of deep sleep in which all the sense organs and functions of the mind are at rest. In this state all perceptions cease and the mind in its subtle seed-like form experiences supreme bliss. This is borne out by the universal experience, ‘I slept soundly and knew nothing.’

The above is a description of the non-Self. These things do not pertain to the Self: the body, the sense organs, the mind, the ego and its modes, happiness due to sense objects, the elements from ether downwards, and the whole world up to the undifferentiated *maya*. All this is non-Self. From *mahat* (cosmic intelligence) down to the gross body, everything is the effect of *maya*. Know these to be the non-Self. These are all unreal like a mirage in the desert.

**Paramatma Swarupam:**

(Sanskrit Verses: 124 to 136 and Tamil Poems: 146 to 158) Now I am going to tell you about the real nature of the supreme Self, by realizing which, man attains liberation and is freed from bondage. That realization of ‘I’ is indeed the Self which is experienced as ‘I-I’ shining of its own accord, the absolute Being, the witness of the three states of waking,

dream, and deep sleep, distinct from the five sheaths, aware of the mental modes in the waking and dream states, and of their absence in the state of deep sleep. That Self sees all of its own accord but is never seen by any of these. It gives light to the intellect and ego but is not enlightened by them. It pervades the universe and by its light all this insentient universe is illumined, but the universe does not pervade it even to the slightest extent. In its presence the body, senses, mind and intellect enter upon their functions as if commanded by it.

By that unbroken knowledge, all things from the ego to the body, objects and our experience of them, occur and are perceived. By it life and the various organs are set in motion. That inner Self, as the primeval spirit, eternal, ever effulgent, full and infinite Bliss, single, indivisible, whole and living, shines in everyone as the witnessing awareness. That Self in its splendour, shining in the cavity of the heart as the subtle, pervasive yet unmanifest ether, illumines this universe like the sun. It is aware of the modifications of the mind and ego, of the actions of the body, sense organs and life-breath. It takes their form as fire does that of a heated ball of iron; yet it undergoes no change in doing so. This Self is neither born nor dies, it neither grows nor decays, nor does it suffer any change.

When a pot is broken the space inside it is not, and similarly, when the body dies, the Self in it remains eternal. It is distinct from the causal *maya* and its effects. It is pure knowledge. It illumines Being and non-being alike and is without attributes. It is the witness of the intellect in the waking, dream, and deep sleep states. It shines as 'I-I', as ever present, direct experience. Know that supreme Self by means of a one-pointed mind and know 'This 'I' is *Brahman*'. Thus through the intellect you may know the Self in yourself, by yourself, and by this means cross the ocean of birth and death and become one who has achieved his life purpose and ever remain as the Self.

**Bhandam, Anatma:**

(Sanskrit Verses: 137 to 153 and Tamil Poems: 159 to 180) Mistaking the body or not-I for the Self or I, is the cause of all misery, that is, of all bondage. This bondage comes through ignorance of the cause of birth and death, for it is through ignorance that men regard these insentient bodies as real, mistaking them for the Self and sustaining them with sense objects and finally getting destroyed by them, just as the silkworm protects itself by the threads that it emits, but is finally destroyed by them. For those who mistake the rope for a serpent, the integral pure effulgence of the pristine state is veiled by *tamas*, just as the dragon's head covers the sun in an eclipse, and as a result, the spirit (*purusha*) forgets his reality. He is devoured by the dragon of delusion and, mistaking the non-self for the Self, is overpowered by mental states and submerged in the fathomless ocean of *samsara* full of the poison of sense enjoyments, and, now sinking, now rising, he finds no way of escape. Such are the torments caused by the projecting power of *rajas* together with the veiling of *tamas*.

Just as the layers of clouds caused by the rays of the sun increase until they hide the sun itself, so the bondage of ego caused by ignorance in the Self expands until it hides that very Self. Just as frost and cold winds torment one on a wintry day when the sun is hidden by clouds, so too when *tamas* covers the Self, the projecting power of *rajas* deludes the ignorant into mistaking the non-Self for the Self and torments them with many sorrows. So it is by these two powers alone that the Self has been brought into bondage.

Of this tree of *samsara*, *tamas* is the seed, the 'I am the body' idea is the shoot, desire is the young leaf, activity the water that makes it grow, the body the trunk, a man's successive lives the branches, the sense organs the twigs, sense objects the flowers, and diverse sorrows caused by activity the fruit. The ego is the bird sitting in the tree and enjoying its fruit.

This bondage of the non-Self, born of ignorance, causing endless sorrow through birth, death, and old age, is without beginning, yet its complete

destruction can be brought about in the way that I will tell you. Have faith in the Vedas and perform all the actions prescribed by them without seeking for any gain from doing so. This will give you purity of mind. With this pure mind, meditate incessantly and by doing so you will directly know the Self. This Self-knowledge is the keen sword that cuts asunder the bonds. No other weapon or contrivance is capable of destroying them, nor wind nor fire nor countless actions.

The Self is covered over by the five sheaths caused by the power of ignorance. It is hidden from sight like the water of a pond covered with weeds. When the weeds are removed the water is revealed and can be used by man to quench his thirst and cool him from the heat. In the same way, by process of elimination, you should with keen intellect discard the objective five sheaths from the Self as 'not this, not this'. Know the Self distinct from the body and from all forms, like a stalk of grass in its sheaths of leaf. Know it as eternal, pure, single in its essence, unattached, with no duties to perform, ever blissful and self-effulgent. He who is liberated realizes that all objective reality, which is superimposed on the Self as the idea of a serpent is on the rope, is really no other than the Self, and he himself is the Self. Therefore the wise aspirant should undertake discrimination between the Self and the non-Self.

**Anna, Prana, Mano- maya kosam:**

(Sanskrit Verses: 154 to 183 and Tamil Poems: 181 to 211) Of the five sheaths (food, life-breath, mind, intellect, and bliss), the gross body (**annamaya kosa**) is created out of food, increasing by eating it and perishing when there is none. It is the sheath of food. Compounded of skin, blood, flesh, fat, marrow, excreta, and urine, it is most filthy. It has no existence before birth or after death but appears between them. It undergoes change every moment. There is no set law governing that change. It is an object, like a pot, is insentient and has a variety of forms. It is acted upon by other

forces. The Self, on the other hand, is distinct from this body and is single, eternal, and pure. It is indestructible, though the body with its limbs is destroyed. The Self is the witness who knows the characteristics of the body, its modes of activity and its three states. It is self-aware and directs the body. Such being the contrast between the body and the Self, how can the body be the Self? The fool thinks of it as the Self.

The man of wise action with some measure of discrimination, takes body and soul together for 'I', but the really wise man who conducts the enquiry with firm discrimination knows himself always as the Supreme *Brahman*, the Being which is of its own nature. The 'I am the body' idea is the seed of all sorrow. Therefore, just as you do not identify yourself with your shadow body, image body, dream body, or the body that you have in your imagination, cease also to associate the Self in any way with the body of skin, flesh, and bones. Make every effort to root out this error and holding fast to the knowledge of reality as the absolute *Brahman*, destroy the mind and obtain supreme peace. Then you will have no more births. Even a learned scholar who perfectly understands the meaning of *Vedanta* has no hope of liberation if, owing to delusion, he cannot give up the idea of the non-existent body as the Self.

Now we come to the vital body (*pranamaya kosa*), which is the life-breath with the five organs of action. The aforementioned sheath of food enters upon its course of activity when filled by this vital force. It is nothing but a modification of air, and like air it enters into the body and comes out of it. It does not know its own desires and antipathies or those of others. It is eternally dependent on the Self. Therefore the vital body cannot be the Self.

The mental sheath (*manomaya kosa*) is the mind with its organs of knowledge. This is the cause of the wrong concept of the Self as 'I' and 'mine'. It is very powerful, being endowed with diversity of thought-forms, beginning with the 'I-thought'. It fills and pervades the vital sheath. The ever-blazing fire of the mental sheath is consuming this whole world, lit by the

five sense organs as sacrificial priests, fed by sense objects as the fuel, and kept ablaze by the latent tendencies. There is no ignorance apart from the mind. It is the cause of the bondage of birth and death. With the emergence of the mind everything arises, and with its subsidence everything ceases. In the dream state, in which there are no objects, the mind creates its dream world of enjoyers and others, by its own powers. Similarly, all that it perceives in the waking state is its own display. It is the experience of all that nothing appears when the mind subsides in deep sleep. Therefore the bondage of *samsara* is only superimposed on the Self by the mind. Actually it has no reality.

Just as the wind gathers the clouds in the sky and then disperses them, so the mind causes the bondage but also causes liberation. The mind first creates in man an attachment to the body and to all sense objects, with the result that he is bound by his attachment like a beast tethered by a rope. Under the influence of *rajas* and *tamas* it is enfeebled and entangles man in desire for the body and objects, but under the influence of *sattva* it breaks away from *rajas* and *tamas* and attains to non-attachment and discrimination and rejects sense objects as though they were poison.

Therefore, the wise seeker after liberation must first establish himself in discrimination and desire-less-ness. The mind is a great tiger roaming wild in the huge jungle of sense objects. Therefore aspirants should keep away from it. It is only the mind that conjures up before the Self subtle and gross objects and all the variations of body, caste, and station in life, qualities and action, causes and effects. So doing, it tempts and deludes the Self, which is really unattached pure intelligence, binding it by the qualities of body, senses, and life and deluding it with the idea of 'I' and 'mine' in the fruits of action that it creates. By means of

this false representation, the mind creates the myth of *samsara* (bondage) for the spirit. This is the primal cause of the sorrow of birth and death which binds those who are subject to the faults of *rajas* and *tamas* and lack discrimination.

Just as cloud masses revolve through the air, so does the whole world revolve through the delusion of the mind. Therefore, those who know reality declare that the mind is ignorance. He who seeks liberation must examine his mind by his own efforts and once the mind is purified by such introspection, liberation is obtained and appears obvious and natural. Out of desire for liberation you should root out all other desires, renounce activity and take to perpetual preoccupation with Truth (*sravana manana*) which will lead on to perpetual meditation (*nididhyasana*). Then alone can the waves of the mind be stilled. Therefore even this mind sheath cannot be the real Self, since it has a beginning and an end, and is subject to modifications and characterized by pain and grief, and is an object of perception.

**Vijnana, Aanada-maya kosam:**

(Sanskrit Verses: 184 to 211 and Tamil Poems: 212 to 243) The intellect with the five organs of knowledge is the *vijnana maya* sheath and is also the cause of bondage for the spirit. It is a modification of the un-manifest beginning less Self which has assumed the form of the ego and conducts all activities through the reflected light of consciousness. It is the conscious agent of activity and its attributes are intelligence and actions. It regards the body and senses as 'I' and their mode of life, duties, actions, and qualities as 'mine'. It performs good or evil actions as dictated by its previous tendencies, and as a result of these actions attains to higher or lower regions and wanders there until it is attracted to re-birth in some enticing womb.

It experiences the states of waking, dream, and deep sleep and the pleasant and painful fruits of its actions. Within this sheath of knowledge,

the Self throbs as the self-effulgent light, the supreme soul, homogeneous, the Truth, all pervasive, complete, immutable, the supreme Lord. Yet the Self assumes limitations through the false superimposition of the intellect on it in this sheath, because this is close to it, and in fact the closest of its adjuncts. As a result it is deluded into thinking that it is this sheath. Just as a pot might seem to be different from its clay, so it imagines itself to be different from itself, to be the agent and the enjoyer, and seems to be limited in such ways, although it is like the fire in a ball of hot iron, unaffected by the shape of the ball.

In answer to the Guru, the disciple says: Master, I accept your statement that, whether through delusion or not, the Supreme Self has come to regard itself as the ego. But since this superimposition of the ego-concept is beginningless it cannot be supposed to have an end either. How, then, can there be liberation? But if there is no liberation the ego-concept becomes eternal and bondage also becomes eternal. Pray enlighten me on this point.

To this the Master replies: That is a good question, my learned disciple. Now listen with one-pointed mind to my explanation. Whatever has been conjured up by delusion must be examined in the pure light of reason. Things appear real as long as the delusion lasts and perish as unreal and non-existent as soon as it passes, just like illusion of a serpent seen in a piece of rope and appearing real as long as the illusion lasts.

Really the Self is unattached, actionless, characterless, immutable, formless, Being-Consciousness-Bliss, the inner witness. It has no sort of relationship with anything. To think that it has is a mere delusion like the appearance of blue in the sky. The false attitude of the ego to the Self is due to the relationship with the beginningless false vehicle, but even this sense of relationship is the result of delusion. Although this attitude of the ego to the Self is without a beginning, that does

not make it real. Just as water becomes clear as soon as the dirt is removed from it, so is it with the Self when the effects of the ego and its false adjuncts are dropped from it and ignorance disappears through discrimination between Self and non-Self. Then appears the true self-effulgent knowledge of the oneness of God and Self.

The discarding of the beginning less ignorance with its cause and effects and bodies and states, is like the ending of the beginning less non-existence, or the ending of a dream when the waking state supervenes. Liberation from the bondage of the false ego concept can never come about except through knowledge acquired by discrimination between the Self and the non-Self. Therefore you also must discriminate in order to remove the non-existent ego. Even this intellectual sheath is subject to change, insentient, a part of a whole, and an object of perception and therefore it cannot be the *Atman*. Can the non-eternal ever become eternal?

Coming now to the sheath of Bliss (*anandamaya kosa*): this is only a modification of ignorance on which the Supreme Self is reflected. It reveals itself at will in all three states, waking, dreaming, and deep sleep, and yields the different modes of bliss from perceiving, obtaining, and experiencing things. It is experienced effortlessly by all to some extent in deep sleep, but *sadhus* who have practised discrimination, experience the bliss of it perpetually without effort and its fullness in the deep sleep state. However, even this sheath of bliss cannot be the supreme Self, since it is subject to change and possesses attributes. It is the effect of past good deeds and a modification of *prakriti* and it abides in the other sheaths which are themselves also modifications.

If, by the rejection of false ideas, all five sheaths (Anna, Prana, Mano, Vijnana and Ananda- maya kosas - five sheaths) are eliminated, the Self alone is experienced as 'I-I'. It alone remains, whole and Self-aware,

distinct from the five sheaths, the witness of the three states, self-effulgent, immutable, untainted, everlasting Bliss. It is like Devadatta who neither is the pot nor partakes of its nature but is only the witness. The Self is not the five sheaths, which are objects, nor does it partake of their nature, but is a mere witness of them.

**Vijneyam, Jagat Mitya Tattvam:**

(Sanskrit Verses: 212 to 236 and Tamil Poems: 244 to 273) To this the disciple replies: Oh Master, after rejecting the five sheaths as unreal, I find nothing remaining except the void, so what is there to be known as 'I-I', as the truth of the Self? The Guru replies: Oh learned one, you are skilful in discrimination and have spoken the truth. The rule of enquiry or perception is: **'That which is perceived by something else has the latter for its witness. When there is no agent of perception there can be no question of the thing having been perceived at all.'** Accordingly, the Self, as awareness, cognizes not only itself but also the existence of the ego with its various modifications of the transient names and forms and their nescience. Therefore it is the Self which is their witness. Beyond it there is nothing to know. It is aware of itself through its own effulgence and so is its own witness. It is single and immutable in the waking, dream, and deep sleep states. It makes itself known as Being-Consciousness-Bliss and is self-effulgent in the heart as 'I-I'. Through your keen intellect, know this eternal blissful awareness to be the Self or 'I'.

The fool takes the reflection of the sun in the water of a pot to be the sun; the wise man eliminates pot, water, and reflection and knows the sun in the sky as it really is, single and unaffected, but illuminating all three. In the same way the fool, through error and misperception, identifies himself with the ego and its reflected light experienced through the medium of the intellect. The wise and discriminating man eliminates body, intellect, and reflected light of consciousness, and probes deeply into his real Self which illuminates all three, while remaining uniform in the ether of the heart. Thereby he realizes the eternal witness

which is absolute knowledge, illuminating all. It is subtle and all-pervasive, neither being nor non-being, with neither inside nor outside, and is self-effulgent. Realizing this, he is set free from the impurities of the ego. He has no more birth or death. He is free from sorrow and becomes the immutable essence of established Bliss.

The *jnani* who, through experience, has realized his Self to be the *Brahman* as it really is, as Truth, Knowledge, endless Bliss, the single essence, eternal, boundless, pure, unattached, and indivisible, not only does not return to bondage but is that *Brahman* itself, the *advaita*. That is to say that knowledge of the identity of *Brahman* and Self is the prime cause of release from bondage. For him who aspires after liberation there is no other way of release from bondage but knowledge of the identity of *Brahman* and Self. Therefore you too, by your own experience, know your Self as always 'I am *Brahman*', '*Brahman* am I', '*Brahman* alone am I'.

Since there is nothing other than *Brahman*, it is the supreme *advaita*. The pot which is made of clay, has no other form than that of the clay. No one can show the pot except by means of the clay. The pot is only a delusion of the imagination and exists only in name, since it has no other reality than that of the clay. Similarly, the whole universe is a superimposition (of form) on the *Brahman* although it seems to be separate from it. The substratum of *Brahman* appears through the delusion of the superimposition. The latter is really non-existent, like the serpent seen in the rope. The manifest is only an illusion. The silver seen in the substratum of the mother-of-pearl has no existence apart from it but is the mother-of-pearl itself. Similarly, **manifestation has no existence apart from its substratum of *Brahman*.**

**Brahma- Swarupam, Bhavana, Dhyana:**

(Sanskrit Verses: 237 to 267 and Tamil Poems: 274 to 311) Whatever, oh *sadhu*, appears to the deluded as the manifested world of names and forms, on account of their ignorance and wrong knowledge, whatever objectivity appears as real, all this, when truly realized as it is, is the effect of

*Brahman*, and is superimposed on the substratum of *Brahman*. Only owing to delusion it appears to be real and it is *Brahman*, its substratum, which appears to be superimposed on it. Really all these **names and forms are nothing at all. They are a myth pure and simple and have no existence apart from their substratum of *Brahman*.**

They are nothing but the Being-Consciousness-Bliss which neither rises nor sets. If it were contended that the manifested world has any existence apart from *Brahman*, that would impair the infinity of *Brahman*. It would also contradict the authority of the *Atharva Veda* which declares in unequivocal terms ‘All this world is indeed *Brahman*’. It would also make out the omniscient Lord as having uttered a falsehood when He said: ‘All these elements are not in Me. I, the Indivisible Whole, am not in them’. The *mahatmas*, who are true *sadhus*, would not countenance these contradictions. Furthermore, the outer world does not exist in the state of deep sleep, and, if investigated, it is seen to be unreal, like the dream world. Therefore any such statement made by fools as that the manifested world has its own existence apart from its substratum of *Brahman*, is as false as the idle words of a man talking in his sleep. It is *Brahman* itself which shines everywhere, uniform and complete. This truth the enlightened (*jnanis*) known as the One without a second, formless, inactive, unmanifest, never to be destroyed, having no beginning or end. It is Truth, absolute purity, the essence of pure Bliss. It contains none of the internal differences which are the creation of *maya*. It is eternal, continuous, immaculately pure, spotless, nameless, undifferentiated, self-effulgent, beyond the triads of knower-knowledge-known, absolute, pure, unbroken Consciousness, ever-shining.

My beloved disciple, this Self can neither be held nor given up. It is beyond perception and utterance. It is immeasurable without beginning or end. This infinity of *Brahman* is my Self and yours and that of other individuals.

Great texts such as ‘*Tat-tvam-asi*’ - ‘That thou art’ reveal the identity between the *Brahman* known as ‘That’-‘Tat’ and the individual known as ‘thou’ –‘Tvam’. The identity is not shown by the literal meaning of

‘that’ and ‘thou’. The literal meaning of ‘that’ is *Ishvara’s maya* which is the cause of the universe, and the literal meaning of ‘thou’ is the five sheaths of the ego. These are non-existent superimpositions, the cause and effect of non-existent phantoms. Their qualities are opposite to each other, like the sun and the glow-worm, the king and the slave, the ocean and the well, Mount Meru and the atom. There can be no identity between *Brahman* and the individual in the literal sense of ‘that’ and ‘thou’, and it is not in this way that the scriptures postulate the identity.

[The science of the secondary meaning of words is called *lakshana* and is of three kinds. It is called 1. *jahat*-2. *ajahat*-3. *Jahat-ajahat lakshana*. In the first, the primary sense of a term is rejected and the secondary retained; in the second, the primary sense is retained and the secondary rejected; in the third, the primary sense is only partly rejected and partly retained.] Of these three, we can omit the first two as being of no use for our purpose and take the third. According to this, in a text such as ‘He is that Devadatta’ we eliminate the contradictory aspects of Devadatta manifested at different places and times, and concentrate on the identity of Devadatta himself irrespective of place and time. Similarly, in the text ‘*Tattvamasi*’ - ‘That Thou Art’ in question, we eliminate the non-existent, objective, contradictory attributes of ‘that’ (the Maya aspect of Iswara) and ‘thou’ (the limitation aspect of jiva) as ‘not this, not this’. You can do this on the authority of the Vedas which reject the duality superimposed on *Brahman*, and also by your own intelligence. If attributes such as a shield for a royal person and a badge of ownership for a slave are removed, both alike belong to the genus man. Similarly, the text (about ‘that’ and ‘thou’) declares the natural identity between *Ishvara* and the individual in their residuary aspect of Consciousness apart from the forms of *Ishvara* and individual. There is no contradiction in this, since Consciousness is the unbroken, single essence of both. Through the touch of the *mahatmas*, know this blessed identity of *Brahman* and Self by rejecting as ‘not I’ the non-existent body. Know by your own clear intellect that *Brahman* is your Self, self-existent, subtle as the ether, ever radiant, true, awareness, bliss, indivisible and whole.

Truly 'thou art That', the Self that is non-dual *Brahman*, pure and exquisitely serene, the Truth apart from which nothing is. This is so because, even in this waking state, the world and the body with its sense and the ego which, owing to ignorance, seems to be separate from the Self, and the life breath are pure myth. 'Thou art That' because in the dream state, time, space and objects and the knower of them are all created by sleep and are purely illusory. 'Thou art That' because this whole world emanates from *Brahman*, which alone IS, and is *Brahman* itself, just as pots come from clay and are clay itself and indeed are made of clay.

That *Brahman* is untouched by the six-fold changes of birth, youth, growth, old age, decay, and death. It has no caste or custom, tribe or family, name or form. It is without attributes. It has neither merit nor demerit, neither mental nor physical afflictions. It is free from the six evils of hunger, thirst, sorrow, delusion, old age and death. It has no time, space or objectivity. It cannot be described by words. The gross mind cannot reach it. It can be comprehended only by the eye of wisdom and experienced in the heart of the *yogi*, in his very being, not by the use of any organ. It is the substratum of the illusory world that seems to be superimposed on it. It is the cause of the emanation, preservation, and re-absorption of the world. It is the supreme cause, which itself has no cause; all the worlds of name and form are its effects, and yet it is distinct from cause and effect.

It is distinct from being and non-being. (Although, owing to delusion gold appears like ornaments, in its varying aspects of name and form and its modifications, yet gold has no name or form, no attributes or modifications.) It contains no disequilibrium. It is still, like a waveless ocean. It is eternal, formless, spotless, incomparable, ever free, indestructible, pure, without beginning. It is that beyond which there is nothing. It is complete, not compounded of elements or of parts. It is Being-Consciousness-Bliss, uniform, indivisible Bliss. It is single in essence. That *Brahman* which is all this.

That thou art'. Meditate on the truth of this in your heart continuously, without break, calmly, with reason and keen intellect. Thus you will obtain essential knowledge free from doubt, as clear as water in the palm of the hand. Knowledge in the body with its faculties is like a king in the midst of his vast army, and that knowledge is the Self and is *Brahman*. Know this by discrimination. Regard all other separate things as This Itself and remain ever as this Self. Thus remaining, you will attain Bliss and peace of Being.

In the cavity of the intellect is the single truth of *Brahman*, distinct from being and non-being. He who remains eternally as that Truth itself is never drawn back again to birth in the body.

Although a man knows this to be true, the feeling of 'I am the doer', 'I am the enjoyer' arises strongly in him owing to the bondage (*samsara*) caused by the mighty, beginningless *vasanas* (innate tendencies) which often obstruct him. Curb these tendencies the moment they arise, by your own efforts, by abiding firmly in the Self, by a vision of the Self. Sages such as Vasishtha have declared that the withering of the *vasanas* is indeed liberation.

**Deha Abimaana Tyaagam:**

(Sanskrit Verses: 268 to 292 and Tamil Poems: 312 to 341) Realization of the Self as it is does not come through tendencies to worldly or sense activity or through prolonged study of the scriptures. To those who seek deliverance from the prison or ocean of *samsara*, the above threefold tendencies are iron fetters say those who are realized. Therefore, attachment to the world, the scriptures, and the body must be given up and it must be fully realized that the body is sustained by the force of *prarabdha* (past *karma*).

You should, therefore, courageously renounce these attachments and strive energetically to overcome *tamas* by the power of *sattva* and *rajas*, then *rajas* through mixed *sattva*, then mixed *sattva* through pure *sattva*. You should do this with a firm and calm mind, helped by the great texts such as '*Tatvamasi*'- 'That thou art' which proclaim the identity between the individual self and *Brahman*.

Seek by reasoning and experience to get rid of the *vasanas* so that you may have firm faith in *Brahman* and completely root out from the body and senses, the feeling of “I” and “mine” which constantly appears as a result of the superimposition. This is to be done by firm abidance in the one indivisible Self in the Heart and by meditating on the unceasing experience of knowledge of the unity of *Brahman* and Self thus: “I am not the ego. I am the unceasing perfection of *Brahman* experienced as I, the witness of thought forms.” This meditation must be persisted in until the ego sense is completely rooted out from the body without a vestige, and the world of individuals appears like a dream. He who meditates has no work to do except beg and perform his natural functions. He must never forget the Self by giving room for worldly speech and sense objects. Sandalwood is fragrant by nature, but its fragrance is masked by a bad smell when it comes into contact with water and is revealed when it is rubbed. Constant practice of meditation is this rubbing. The latent tendencies of the mind are removed, only to the extent to which it abides in the Self. It is by such constant abidance in the Self that the mind of the *yogi* is destroyed. And by the destruction of the mind the outer non-self-tendencies of the heart are utterly eradicated. Then the experience of the supreme Self, which was formerly veiled by the magic of the *vasanas*, shines forth of its own accord like the fragrance of uncontaminated sandal-paste.

In whatever way it may be examined, the ego with all its faculties turns out to be unreal, a momentary limitation, inert, insentient and incapable of realizing the One. The Supreme Self is different from both gross and subtle bodies. It is the witness of the ego with its faculties and exists always, even in deep sleep. The texts say: “It is birthless and deathless.” It is immutable and distinct alike from being and non-being. The ego can never be the real Self, the true meaning of ‘I’. Keep aloof from this impure body as you would from an outcaste.

Give up the sense of 'I' in the gross body and all attachment due to the mind, attachments to name and form, tribe and family, caste and social order. Give up also the attachment to the subtle body and its nature and sense of being the doer. Find the feeling of 'I' in the Self, which is Truth, knowledge, and eternity. Just as the air in a pot is part of the air outside, so conceive of the Self as that self-effulgent *Brahman* which is the substratum of all, in which the world is seen reflected like a city in a mirror or like shadows cast. Think of yourself as "That I am", without parts, without form, without activity, without duality, unending, Being-Consciousness-Bliss. Know the Self as it really is. Give up this false physical self just as an actor gives up his role and remains himself. By knowledge acquired through Self-enquiry discard both microcosm and macrocosm as unreal and, abiding in the unbroken stillness, remain ever at rest in the perfect Bliss as unqualified *Brahman*. Thus obtain supreme peace, which is the purpose of life.

#### **Ahankara Nindha:**

(Sanskrit Verses: 293 to 319 and Tamil Poems: 342 to 365) Though various obstacles contribute to the bondage of the soul, the primary cause of them all is the rising of the false ego-sense. It is through the superimposition of the ego on the Self that this bondage of birth, death and sorrow has come upon you who are by nature Being-Consciousness-Bliss, of boundless glory, eternal, single in essence, unchanging. By nature you have no such bondage. Just as there can be no sound health so long as the effect of a little poison in the body continues, so there can be no liberation so long as identification with the ego continues. Knowledge of the identity of the Self with *Brahman* is clearly revealed as soon as the ego is completely destroyed without residue, together with the illusion of multiplicity caused by the veiling of *tamas*. Therefore, by investigation into the nature of the unattached Self, discover the Truth of your own Self, complete, perfect, self-effulgent and ever-blissful. He who is freed

from the ego shines eternally as the Self, like the full moon, radiant when delivered from the dragon's head (of eclipse).

In the field of the heart the terrible cobra of the ego is coiled round the Bliss of the Self to which it denies access with the threefold hood of the *gunas*. These three fearful heads of the serpent of ego are to be severed, in accordance with the scriptures, only by great courage with the mighty sword of actual experience of the Self. He who has thus destroyed the three-hooded serpent can obtain and enjoy the vast treasure of the Bliss of *Brahman*. Therefore you, too, give up the 'I-sense' in the ego, which appears like being and assumes that it is the doer, whereas it is only the reflected light of the Self. Turn inwards all the thought-forms that adhere to the ego. He is an enemy of yours, so kill him with the sword of knowledge. He has been harming you like a thorn in your throat while eating. Give up all desires in order to realize your state as the Supreme Self. Enjoy the kingdom of the Self, be perfect, be still in the stillness of the immutable state of *Brahman*.

The ego may in this way be killed, but if thought is given to it even for a moment it revives and engages in activity, driving a man before it as the wind drives winter clouds. Remember that he who associates the 'I-sense' with the body and its faculties is bound while he who does not is liberated. Thoughts of sense objects create a sense of differentiation and thereby cause the bondage of birth and death. Therefore no quarter should be given to the ego, who is the enemy who has such thoughts. Just as a withered lime tree puts out new leaves if watered, so the ego revives through thoughts of sense objects. The increase of effects makes their seed or cause flourish, while the decay of effects destroys their cause also; therefore you should first destroy the effects. If thoughts, which are the effect, flourish, the ego with its tendencies,

which is the cause, also flourishes. From thoughts, outer activities arise, and from these two together the tendencies develop and create the bondage to which souls are subject. In order to escape from this, thoughts, activity, and tendencies must all three be abolished. The best way of doing this is to hold firmly to the view that: ‘All this that appears as separate names and forms is *Brahman* itself.’ This view must be held to at all times and places and in all states. Firm holding to this attitude reduces activity, and this results in a decline of thoughts, which in turn destroys the latent tendencies. Destruction of the latent tendencies is indeed deliverance. Therefore develop this helpful tendency to regard everything as *Brahman*. The result will be that the frail tendencies of the ego will disappear like darkness before the sun. Just as darkness with all its dismal effects disappears before the rising sun, so bondage with all its sorrows will pass away without a trace when the sun of *advaitic* experience rises.

**Pramaada in Atma Nishta is death:**

(Sanskrit Verses: 320 to 347 and Tamil Poems: 366 to 396) Therefore, regard all objective manifestation as *Brahman* and hold firm in a state of peace (*samadhi*) and inner and outer beatitude (*nischala bhava*) as long as the bondage due to your past destiny (*karma*) lasts. While doing so, always remember: ‘That immovable Bliss of *Brahman* itself am I.’ This abidance as *Brahman* must never be relaxed, for if it is, a false notion of Truth will result which is indeed death, as says Bhagavan Sri Sanatsujata, the son of Brahma. Such a false notion of truth due to swerving from the state of abidance in Truth introduces delusion; from delusion arises the attribution of ‘I’ to the ego and its objects, from this bondage, and from bondage sorrow. Therefore there is no greater misfortune for the enlightened than wrong understanding and swerving from reality. Just as water plants, though removed from a pool of water, do not stay at the side but cover it over again, so if a man is exteriorized, even though he may be enlightened, if *maya* (illusion) once begins to shroud him he

will be swayed in numerous ways by the false intellect. This is due to his lapse from watchfulness, his forgetting of his true state, his going out towards sense objects. He is like a man swayed and dominated by a lewd woman, of whom he is enamoured. If, through wrong understanding and swerving from reality, a man's consciousness slips even the least bit from the target of his own Self, it will enter into outer things and leap from one to another as a ball slips from your hand and rolls down a flight of stairs. It will begin to consider outer experiences good for it and thence will arise the desire to enjoy them. That will lead to participation in them, which in turn will destroy his abidance in the Self, with the result that he will sink into depths from which he can never more arise and will be destroyed. Therefore there is no greater danger in *Brahman*-consciousness than wrong understanding, which means swerving from one's true state. Only he who has the eternal state of consciousness (*nishta*) obtains realization (*siddhi*) and so renounces the manifestation (*sankalpa*) born of *pramada* (wrong understanding) and of relaxation from practice. Such wrong understanding is the cause of all spiritual decline (*aratha*). Therefore be the *swarupa nishta* who abides ever in the Self.

He who has attained liberation in the state of *Brahman* while still alive will shine so in his bodiless state also. It says in the Yajur Veda: 'He who has even the slightest sense of differentiation is always afraid!' He who sees any attributes of differentiation, however small, in the absolute *Brahman*, will for that reason remain in a state of terror. He who locates the 'I-sense' in the insentient body and its objects, so despised by the various scriptures and their commentaries, will experience sorrow after sorrow like the sinner who commits unlawful acts. We can see from the discrimination between thieves and honest men that he who is devoted to truth escapes misfortune and achieves success, while he who is devoted to

falsehood perishes. We also see that shutting out external objects gives the mind a clear perception of the Self, which in turn results in the destruction of the bondage of *samsara*. Therefore the abandonment of all objective reality is the way to deliverance. If a man discriminates between Truth and non-truth in quest of liberation and discovers the Truth of the supreme Lord through the authority of the scriptures, will he then, like a child, run after non-existent chimera, knowing them to be the cause of his destruction? None would do so. Therefore he who discriminates must also renounce and cease to seek after externals which feed those lower tendencies that cause bondage. He should erase all sorrows due to ignorance by the experience 'I am that Supreme *Brahman* alone, which is Being-Consciousness-Bliss' and should abide ever in his true state, which is Bliss. One who is in the waking state is not dreaming and one who is in the dream state is not awake; the two are mutually exclusive. Similarly, one who is not attached to the body has deliverance and one who is has not.

A liberated being is one who sees himself as single and the witness both within and without the world of things moving and unmoving, as the substratum of all. By his universal consciousness experienced through the subtle mind, he has removed all the vehicles and he remains as the absolute whole. Only such a one is liberated, and he has no attachment to the body. There is no other means of liberation than this blessed realization that 'All is one Self'. And this 'All is one' attitude is to be obtained by perpetual abidance in the Self and rejection of objects without attachment to them.

How can a man reject objective reality if he has the 'I am the body' idea and is attached to outer things and always performing actions dictated by them? It is impossible. Therefore renounce all actions based on *karma* and *dharma* and, with knowledge of the *tattva*, abide permanently in the Self. Prepare your mind for immersion in

perpetual Bliss. This effort will enable you to reject objective reality. It is in order to obtain this *sarvatmabhava* (attitude that all is the Self) that the scriptural text '*Shanto dantha*' (calm and self-controlled) prescribes *nirvikalpa samadhi* (ecstatic trance) for those seekers who have taken a vow of *chandrayana* and have also performed *sravana* (hearing of the text 'That thou art'). A scholar who has not had a firm experience of *nirvikalpa samadhi*, however learned he may be, will not be capable of destroying the ego and its objective reality together with all the accumulated tendencies of his previous births. It is the projecting power of *maya* together with its veiling power which unites the soul with the ego, the cause of delusion, and, through its qualities, keeps a man vainly dangling like a ghost. If the veiling power is destroyed the Self will shine of itself, and there will be no room either for doubt or obstruction. Then the projecting power also will vanish, or even if it persists, its persistence will only be apparent. But the projecting power cannot disappear unless the veiling power does. Only when the subject is perfectly distinguished from objects, like milk from water, will the veiling power be destroyed.

Pure discrimination born of perfect knowledge distinguishes the subject from the object and destroys the delusion due to ignorance. The man of discrimination distinguishes the real from the unreal, reasoning as follows: 'Like iron combining with fire, the intellect combines with ignorance to obtain a fictitious unity with the Self which is Being, and projects itself as the world of seer, sight, and seen. Therefore, all these appearances are false, like a delusion, dream or imagination. All sense objects from the ego down to the body are also unreal, being modifications of *prakriti*, subject to change from moment to moment. Only the Self never changes. The Self, distinct from the body, distinct from being and non-being, the witness of the intellect and the meaning implied by the 'I-sense', single, eternal, indivisible, is indeed the Supreme Self of eternal Bliss incarnate.'

In this way he discriminates between Truth and untruth and, in doing so, discovers the true Self. With the eye of illumination, he obtains actual realization of the Self and experiences this 'I' as the indivisible knowledge of absolute *Brahman*. Thereby he destroys the veiling power and the false knowledge and other sorrows that have been created by the projecting power, just as the fear of a snake falls away as soon as one perceives the reality of the rope (that one took to be a snake). Being freed from these ills, he obtains abidance in a state of perfect peace.

Thus, only when one obtains realization of the supreme identity through *nirvikalpa samadhi* will ignorance be destroyed without vestige and the knot of the heart loosed. How can there be any seed of *samsara* still remaining in the liberated soul who has realized the supreme identity with the utter destruction of the forest of ignorance by the fire of knowledge of oneness of Self and *Brahman*? He has no more *samsara*, no more rebirth and death. Therefore, the discriminating soul must know the *atma tattva* in order to be freed from the bondage of *samsara*.

**Adhishtana, Samadhi- Nirupanam:**

(Sanskrit Verses: 348 to 368 and Tamil Poems: 397 to 419) All forms of creation and imagination appearing as you, I, this, etc., are a result of the impurity of the intellect. They seem to exist in the absolute, attributeless supreme Self, but in the state of absorption (*samadhi*) and experience of *Brahman* they cease to exist. Also the Self seems to be divisible owing to differences in the vehicles, but if these are removed it shines single and complete. Perpetual concentration is necessary in order to dissolve these differentiations in the Absolute. The wasp's grub that renounces all activity and meditates constantly upon the wasp becomes a wasp, and in the same way the soul that longs for *Brahman* with one-pointed meditation becomes the Supreme Self through the power of its meditation and perpetual abidance in *Brahman*, in the absolute stillness. So persevere constantly in meditation on *Brahman*, and as a result the mind will be cleansed of the stain of the three *gunas* until it becomes perfectly pure and resumes its state, when it is ripe for dissolution in *Brahman* like salt

in water. It is like gold being cleansed of its alloy and returning to the purity of its true state through being put in a furnace. Only in such purity of mind can *nirvikalpa Samadhi* be obtained, and there with the essential bliss of identity.

Through this *samadhi* all the knots of the *vasanas* are loosened and all past *karmas* destroyed so that the Light of the Self is experienced without effort, inwardly and outwardly, and at all places and times. Thus the subtle *Brahman* is experienced in the single and subtle mental mode of *samadhi* by those of subtle intellect, and in no other way, by no gross outlook, can it be experienced. Similarly, the sage who has inner and outer senses controlled, in solitude and equanimity, obtains experience of the all-pervading Self through perpetual concentration and thus, getting rid of all mental creations caused by the darkness of ignorance, becomes actionless and without attributes and remains eternally in the Bliss of *Brahman* himself.

Only he is liberated from the bondage of *samsara* who, having obtained *nirvikalpa samadhi*, perceives the mind, senses, and objects, the ears and sound, etc, to inhere in the Self, and not he who speaks only from theoretical wisdom. *Brahman* can be clearly experienced without any barrier only through *nirvikalpa samadhi*, for apart from that the mental mode always fluctuates, leading from one thought to another. Therefore, control the senses and mind and abide firmly in the Self. Utterly destroy the darkness of ignorance and its cause through experience of the one Self and abide ever as the Self. Reflection on truth heard is a hundred times more potent than hearing it, and abiding in it is a hundred thousand times more potent than reflection on it. What limit, then, can there be to the potency obtained through *nirvikalpa samadhi*?

Restraint of speech, not accepting anything from others, conquest of desire, renunciation of action, continence, and solitude are all aids in the early stages of this *samadhi* yoga. Solitude helps to quieten the senses, and thereby the mind also. Stillness of mind destroys the tendencies and thereby gives perpetual experience of the essential Bliss of *Brahman*.

### Vairagyam, Dhyanam, Dharsanam:

(Sanskrit Verses: 369 to 394 and Tamil Poems: 420 to 450) Therefore the *yogi* must always exert himself to restrain the mind. The breathing must subside into the mind, the mind into the intellect, the intellect into the witness, and by knowing the witness as the fullness of the unqualified Supreme Self perfect peace is obtained. He who meditates becomes that aspect of his being to which the consciousness is drawn; if to the body, he becomes body, if to the senses he becomes senses, if to the life-breath, he becomes that, if to the mind or intellect, he becomes mind or intellect. Therefore, rejecting all these, the consciousness should subside and obtain peace in *Brahman*, which is eternal Bliss. He who, through desire for liberation, has attained perfect freedom from desires is able to abide in the Self and get rid of all attachments, inner as well as outer, and he alone achieves inner and outer renunciation. Moreover, it is only he who is without desires, who has perfect non-attachment and so obtains *samadhi* and through *samadhi* the certainty that he has won to *tattva jnana*, which brings liberation. He who has attained liberation has attained eternal Bliss. Therefore, complete nonattachment is the only path for him who aspires to the bliss of union with the bride of liberation.

Non-attachment combined with Self-knowledge wins the kingdom of deliverance. Non-attachment and knowledge are like the wings of a bird needed for ascending the mount of deliverance, and if either of them is lacking it cannot be attained. Therefore renounce the desire for things, which is like poison; give up attachment to caste, group, social position, and destiny, cease to locate the 'I'-sense in the body; be ever centred upon the Self; for in truth you are the witness, the stainless *Brahman*. The Self in the form of *Brahman*, witness of all finite beings, self-effulgent, shines eternally as 'I-I' in the sheath of *vijnana*, distinct from the five sheaths. Being experienced as 'I', it shines as the true form of the Self, the direct experience of the great texts. Fix your heart constantly on this *Brahman*, which is the goal. Let the senses remain in their centres, keep the body steady by remaining indifferent to it; and practise

the meditation “I am *Brahman*, *Brahman* am I”, allowing no other thoughts to come in. Gradually still the mind by practice of the unbroken flow of beatitude. Realize the identity of Self and *Brahman* and drink the nectar of *Brahman* Bliss in eternal joy. What use are base thoughts of body and world, which are non-Self? Give up these non-Self thoughts, which are the cause of all sorrow. Hold firm to the Self, the seat of Bliss, as ‘I’ and no longer ascribe the ‘I-sense’ to the ego and its attributes. Be absolutely indifferent to them and meditate perpetually on the Self, which is the cause of liberation.

A pot, a huge earthen jar for storing grain, and a needle are all separate things, but when they are cast away there remains only the single expanse of ether. Something which is falsely imagined to exist on the substratum of something else has no reality apart from the real thing, just as a snake imagined in a piece of rope has not. Wave, foam, bubble, and whirlpool if examined are all found to be simply water. Pots of various sizes and shapes are nothing other than clay, and in fact are clay. Similarly, you should reject the limitations of body, senses, life-breath, mind, and ego, which are merely illusory. Only fools perceive and speak of ‘I’, ‘you’, ‘it’ and so forth out of delusion and folly, being drunk with the wine of illusion (*maya*). Even their perception of multiplicity is contained in Being-Consciousness-Bliss, in the perfect purity of Self which, as *Brahman*, shines as one indivisible whole, like the vast ether. All superimpositions such as body and ego-sense, from *Brahman* down to a boulder, which are perceived as the world, are really nothing other than the one Self. They are merely the display of *prakriti* and the Self as pure Being. The one supreme Self, unbroken and homogeneous, exists as east, west, south and north, inner and outer, up and down, everywhere. He himself is Brahma; he himself is Vishnu, Siva, Indra, gods and men, and everything. What more is there to say?

Everything from (the threefold appearance of) personal God, individual being, and world down to the minutest atom is merely a form of *Brahman*. In order to remove the superimposition of *mithya* (the false), the scriptures declare ‘there is no duality at all’ (*Brahman* is one without a second); therefore you yourself are the non-dual *Brahman*, spotless like the ether, without inner or outer, without attributes, changeless, timeless, without dimensions or parts. What else is there to know? The scriptures declare: ‘So long as the individual regards the corpse of his body as ‘I’ he is impure and subject to various ills such as birth, death and sickness.’ ‘Remove all objective reality superimposed on the Self by illusion and know yourself as pure, immutable Siva; then you will become liberated, the *Brahman* which is without action and is indivisible perfection.’ The enlightened who have attained supreme knowledge shine as Being-Consciousness-Bliss, homogeneous *Brahman*, having utterly renounced objective reality.

**Deha Anusandhana Tyaagam:**

(Sanskrit Verses: 395 to 418 and Tamil Poems: 451 to 478) Therefore you too, reject your gross, impure and the subtle bodies (*stula* and *sukshma sarira*) that wavers like the wind and the ‘I’-sense in them and regard yourself as Being-Consciousness-Bliss, as declared by *Vedanta*, and thus remain forever as the very *Brahman*.

The scriptures declare that: ‘Duality is of the nature of illusion (*maya*) and only non-duality is the Supreme Truth.’ It is our experience that the diversity created by the consciousness ceases to exist in deep sleep in which the consciousness is absorbed in bliss. Those who are wise and discriminating know that the proverbial serpent has no existence apart from the substratum of the rope, nor the water of a mirage apart from the barren ground. It is our experience that when the mentality assumes the nature of the Self and becomes one with the attribute less supreme Self, mental manifestation ceases. All these magical creations which the illusion of the mind sets forth as the universe are found to have no real existence and become untrue when the Truth behind them is realized as *Brahman* itself. In the non-dual *Brahman* the threefold reality of seer,

sight, and seen does not exist. It is the substratum into which ignorance, the root cause of the illusion of multiplicity, is absorbed, like darkness into light. Like oceans that endure to the end of the cycle of time, the Truth of *Brahman* remains single, complete, absolute purity, inactivity, unqualified, changeless, formless. Where, then, can be talk of duality or diversity in the homogeneity of *Brahman*?

When in a state of *samadhi*, the enlightened *jnani* experiences in the heart as 'I-I' the homogeneous completeness of that *Brahman* which is eternal, the bliss of knowledge incomparable, unattached, formless, inactive, unqualified, immutable, characterless, nameless, and free from bondage. It is still, like the ether — and yet nothing can be compared to it. It has no cause and is not an effect. It is beyond imagining. It is to be achieved only through realization on the authority of the *Vedanta*. The truth of it abides in the heart and is experienced constantly as I. It is free from birth, old age, and death. In itself it is eternal. It is eternal, tranquil, and undifferentiated; it is vast and still like a calm ocean without a shore.

In order not to fall back into *samsara*, practise *nirvikalpa samadhi* by concentration on *Brahman*, which is experienced in the heart as our own radiant Self free from all limitations and as Being-Consciousness-Bliss. This will destroy the individual consciousness which is the cause of all error, and thus you can unravel the knot of the heart which causes the ills of birth and death. Thus will you obtain the glory of unbroken bliss, being Self-realized, and by doing so achieve the purpose of human life, a boon so rare to obtain. The Self-realized *yogi*, knowing his true nature, the great *mahatma*, shows his wisdom by rejecting his body, regarding it as a corpse, as the mere shadow of his being, existing only owing to past destiny. Such a great *mahatma* knows himself to be the unbroken bliss of the Self. He has utterly consumed the body and its attributes in the fire of *Brahman*, which is eternal, immutable Truth. Having thus consumed his body and remaining with his consciousness ever immersed in the

ocean of bliss which is *Brahman*, he himself is eternal Knowledge and Bliss. How then should he care to nourish or sustain his body or be attached to it, feeding as he does on the eternal nectar of *Brahman*, inwardly and outwardly? Just as the cow does not care about the garland round its neck, so too he does not care whether the body, bound by the strings of past *karma*, lives or dies. So you too reject this inert, impure body and realize the pure and eternal Self of wisdom. Give no more thought to the body. Who would care to take back what he has once vomited?

Knowledge of a mirage keeps one away from it, and ignorance that it is a mirage leads one to seek it. Similarly, knowledge leads to the path of release and ignorance leads to worldly pursuits. The achievement of Self-knowledge or Self-realization frees a man from the ills arising from error and brings him eternal contentedness and unequalled bliss eternally experienced; ignorance, on the other hand, pushes him into objective experience of error and misery. How then should the wise man, who has severed the knot of the heart with the sword of wisdom, continue to perform the various vain actions which occupied him during the time of his delusion? What cause could induce him to activity?

Knowledge leads to non-attachment; solitude and abandonment of home lead to knowledge; the bliss of Self-experience and tranquillity results from cessation of activity. If these results are not obtained step by step, the previous steps become invalid. The perfection of non-attachment is when previous tendencies to seek enjoyment no longer arise. The perfection of knowledge is when the 'I-sense' no longer pertains to the body. The perfection of solitude is when thoughts subside through perpetual striving and, dissolving in *Brahman*, no longer turn outwards.

**Vairagyam, Muktan Lakshanam:**

(Sanskrit Verses: 419 to 444 and Tamil Poems: 479 to 505) Do not differentiate between Self and *Brahman* or between world and *Brahman*. On the authority of the Vedas realize 'I am *Brahman*'. Attain the pure beatitude of oneness and establish the pure consciousness immovably in *Brahman* so that you

become dissolved in *Brahman*. Being ever *Brahman*, renounce objective reality and let your enjoyments be witnessed or known by others, like the state of sleeping children. Renounce activity and, with the purity of primal Being, abide in eternal enjoyment of pure Bliss. Although your mind is dissolved and you are like one forgetful of the world, remain ever awake, and yet like one who is not awake. Remain indifferent to the body and senses and outer things that follow you like a shadow. Be one who discriminates, free from the stain of *samsara* and from tendencies and sense objects.

Retain consciousness without thought. Retain form, though formless. Have no likes and dislikes in what is experienced at the moment and no thought of what may happen in the future. Give up all thought of inner and outer and concentrate permanently on the blissful experience of *Brahman*. Through the power of knowledge maintain perfect equanimity in the face of all opposites such as vice and virtue, likes and dislikes, or praise and blame whether by *sadhus* or by the wicked.

The dedicated sage is like a river emptied into the ocean, untouched by the attack of sense objects, absorbed in the Self, and it is only such a one who attains realization while still in the body. He alone is worshipful and reaps the reward of worthy actions. All his innate tendencies have been destroyed by his knowledge of identity with *Brahman* and no renewal of *samsara* can be ascribed to him. Just as even the most lustful person never thinks of enjoying his own mother, so the sage who experiences the perfection of *Brahman* never turns back to *samsara*. If he does, then he is not a sage who has known *Brahman* but only an outward-turning fool.

**Prarabhda of Jnani:**

(Sanskrit Verses: 445 to 463 and Tamil Poems: 506 to 526) Identity with *Brahman* is the fire of knowledge which burns up *sanchita karma* (destiny stored up for future lives) and *agami karma* (destiny being created in this life). *Sanchita karma* is destroyed because it can no longer cause birth in higher or lower worlds once the sage has awakened from the illusion of activity in which he harvested merit and demerit through countless ages. And *agami karma* can no longer affect him because he knows himself to be

established as the Supreme *Brahman*, indifferent as the ether to the effects of *karma*. There is ether in a pot containing alcohol, but is it affected by the smell of the alcohol? Not at all.

Having spoken of the *sanchita* and *agami karmas* of the sage, it now remains to explain how his *prarabdha karma* (that part of past *karma* which is to be experienced in this life) is also a myth. Although ever absorbed in his true state, he is sometimes seen to experience the fruits of his past actions or to take part in outer activity; so people say that he is not free from *karma* since he must reap the good and bad effects of past action. Does not the rule that there is fruit of past action where there is destiny and no fruit where there is no destiny apply to the sage also? They argue: if one shoots an arrow at an animal, thinking it to be a tiger, but it later turns out to be a cow, can the arrow be recalled? Once shot, it will certainly have to kill the cow. So too, they say, destiny that started on its course prior to the dawn of enlightenment must produce its effects, so that the sage is still subject to *prarabdha karma* only and must experience its effects. However, the scriptures declare such *prarabdha* to be unreal, because a man who has awakened from a dream experience does not go back into the same dream, or desire to cling to the dream experiences or the body and environment of the dream as 'I' and 'mine'. He is perfectly free from the dream world and happy in his awakened state, whereas a man who retains any attachment to the dream cannot be said to have left the state of sleep. In the same way, one who has realized the identity of *Brahman* and Self sees nothing else. He eats and excretes but as though in a dream. He is beyond all limitations and associations. He is the absolute *Brahman* itself. The three kinds of *karma* do not affect him in the least, so how can one say that only *prarabdha karma* affects him? Is one who has awakened still dreaming? Even if it were said that *prarabdha karma* affects the sage's body, which has been constructed from the result of past *karma*, that would

only affect him so long as he had the 'I am the body' idea, but once that is gone, *prarabdha* cannot be attributed to him, since he is the Self, not born of *karma*, beginningless, pure, and described by the scriptures as 'unborn, eternal, and deathless'. But to attribute *prarabdha* to the body, which is unreal and a figment of illusion, is itself an illusion.

How can an illusion be born, live, and die as reality? It may be asked why, then, should the scriptures refer to a non-existent *prarabdha*? It may also be asked how the body can continue to exist through knowledge after the death of ignorance and its effects. To those who are so misguided and under the influence of false ideas, the explanation is given that the scriptures admit that the sage has illusory *prarabdha* only as a concession for the sake of argument and not to postulate that the sage has a body and faculties.

**Advaita Upadesam:**

(Sanskrit Verses: 464 to 476 and Tamil Poems: 527 to 537) In him is visible the eternally established state of non-dual *Brahman*, beyond mental or verbal description and definition, without beginning or end, integral Being- Consciousness-Bliss, stabilized, homogeneous, never to be rejected or obtained, subtle, inwardly and outwardly complete, with no substratum, beyond the *gunas*, without colour, form, or change, as pure Being. Nothing at all is to be seen there of what obtains here. It is only by knowledge of this oneness in the heart through *atma* yoga, by renouncing enjoyment and the very desire for enjoyment, that dedicated sages who have peace and self-control obtain supreme deliverance.

Therefore, my son, if you too, by the eye of wisdom obtained through unwavering *samadhi*, discover beyond all doubt the supreme Self of perfect bliss which is your original nature, you will no longer have any doubts about what you have heard. Cast out, therefore, the delusion created by the mind and become a sage, a realized man who has attained the purpose of life. The teacher, like the scriptures, gives instructions common to all, but each person must experience bondage and deliverance, hunger and satisfaction, sickness and health for himself;

others can only infer it from him. Similarly, he who discriminates must cross the ocean of birth and death by his own efforts through the grace of the Supreme Lord. Thus obtaining release from bondage, which is due only to ignorance, remain as Being-Consciousness-Bliss. The scriptures, reason, the words of the guru, and inner experience are the means you have to use for this.

(Badha, mithya and pravilapa) Drusti Trayam - not in Sanskrit; Tamil Poems: 538 to 544: The essence of the *Vedantic* scriptures may be condensed into the following points. **First:** In me, the unmoving *Brahman*, all that seems different is utterly without reality. I alone am. This is called the standpoint of elimination (*badha drishti*). **Second:** The dream and all else that appears in me as the result of magic is an illusion. I alone am the Truth. This is called the standpoint of illusion (*mithya drishti*). **Third:** All that appears as form apart from the sea, that is the bubble and the wave, is the sea. All that is seen in a dream is seen in him who sees the dream. Similarly, in me as in the ocean or the man who dreams, all that seems separate from me is myself. This is called the standpoint of resolving the effect into its cause (*pravilapa drishti*).

Reject the outer world by any of these three means and recognize him who sees it to be infinite, pure, homogeneous *Brahman*, who is the Self. He who has thus realized *Brahman* is liberated. Although all three of these viewpoints are aids to realization, the third, in which one conceives everything as one's own Self, is the most powerful.

**Sishya Anubhavam:**

(Sanskrit Verses: 477 to 516 and Tamil Poems: 545 to 590) Therefore, knowing the indivisible Self to be one's own Self, by one's own experience, one must abide in one's own true nature, beyond any mental form. What more is there to say? The whole world and all individuals are really *Brahman*, and abidance as that indivisible *Brahman* is itself deliverance. This is the essence and conclusion of all the Vedas. The scriptures are the authority for this. The disciple realized the truth of the Self through these words of the Guru, through the authority of the scriptures and by his own understanding. He controlled his sense organs and, becoming one-

pointed, remained for a short time absorbed in unswerving *samadhi* in that supreme Self. Then he rose up and spoke thus to his Guru:

Oh Master of the supreme experience, incarnation of the supreme peace, of *Brahman*, of the eternal essence of non-duality, endless ocean of grace, I bow down to you. Then, prostrating, he begins to tell of his own experience:

Through the grace of the blessed sight of you the affliction due to the evil of birth is over and in an instant I have attained the blissful state of identity. By realization of the identity of *Brahman* and Self my feeling of duality has been destroyed and I am free from outer activity. I cannot discriminate between what is and what is not. (This does not imply that the disciple is in a state of ignorance, unable to differentiate between reality and illusion, but, on the contrary, that he is now established in the non-duality beyond all opposites, even the opposite of being and non-being). Like the iceberg in the ocean, I have become absorbed bit by bit into the ocean of the Bliss of *Brahman* until I have become that ocean itself, whose nature and extent my intellect fails to plumb. How can one conceive of the vastness of this ocean of *Brahmic* Bliss full of the divine essence, how to describe it in words?

The world that was perceived a moment ago has entirely vanished. Where has it gone? By whom has it been removed? Into what has it been dissolved? What a wonder is this! In this vast ocean of *Brahmic* Bliss full of divine experience, what is there to reject or accept, to see, hear or know, apart from its own Self? I alone am the Self of Bliss. I am unattached; I have neither a gross nor a subtle body. I am indestructible; I am perfect stillness; I am neither the doer nor the enjoyer; I undergo no change. Action is not mine. I am not the seer or the hearer, the speaker, the doer, or the enjoyer. I am neither things experienced nor things not experienced but he who illumines both. I am the void,

within and without. I am beyond compare. I am the spirit of old. I am without beginning.

There is no creation in me of 'I' or 'you', or 'this' or 'that'. I am both within and without all the elements as the conscious ether in them and also as the substratum on which they are. I am Brahma, I am Vishnu, I am Rudra, I am Isa, I am Sadasiva. I am beyond *Ishvara*. I am the all-comprehensive witness, the indivisible, homogeneous *Brahman*, infinite, eternal, being itself, unbroken whole perfection, existence, eternal, pure, enlightened, liberated, and of supreme Bliss. What were formerly experienced as separate things and as experiencer-experience-experienced I now find to be all in myself. Even though the waves of the world arise owing to *maya*, as a wind rises and subsides, they arise and subside in me who is the unbounded ocean of Bliss.

Fools who are condemned for their errors wrongly ascribe body and other ideas to me who is formless and immutable. It is like dividing illimitable, formless time into parts such as year, half-year and season. Just as the earth is not made wet by the waves of mirage, so destruction cannot touch me in any way, for I am unattached like the ether, separate from all that I illumine, like the sun, motionless as a mountain, boundless as the ocean. Just as the ether is unaffected by the clouds, so am I by the body; how then can it be my nature to wake up, dream, and sleep, as the body does? It is only the bodily limitations (upon Being) that come and go, act and reap the fruits of action, that are born, exist and dissolve. How can I perform *karma*, choose activity or withdrawal, reap the fruits of merit or demerit, I who am like the fixed mountain mentioned in the *puranas*, who is ever motionless, indivisible, complete and perfect, like the ether, who is one perfect whole without senses, consciousness, form, or change? If a man's shadow is cold or hot or has good or evil qualities, that does not affect the man at all; and in the same way I am beyond virtues and vices. The scriptures also declare this. Just as the nature of a house does not affect the light within it, so too,

objective characteristics cannot affect me who is their witness, distinct from them, changeless, and untouched. Just as the sun witnesses all activity, so am I the witness of this whole objective world. Just as fire pervades iron, so do I permeate and enlighten the world; and at the same time I am the substratum on which the world exists like the imaginary serpent in a piece of rope. Being the self-effulgent 'I', I am not the doer of anything nor he who causes it to be done.

I am not the eater nor he who causes anything to be eaten; I am not the seer nor he who causes anything to be seen. It is the superimposed adjunct that moves. This movement of the reflected consciousness is ascribed by the ignorant to the consciousness itself. So too, they say that I am the doer, the enjoyer, that I, alas, am them. Being inactive like the sun (in causing growth upon the earth), being the Self of the forms and elements, I remain untouched by the reflected light of consciousness.

It makes no difference to me if this body drops down on earth or in water. The qualities of the reflected light of consciousness no more affect me than the shape of a pot affects the ether inside it. States and functions of the intellect such as doing, enjoying, understanding, being dull-witted or drunk, bound or liberated, do not affect me since I am the pure non-dual Self. The duties (*dharmas*) arising from *prakriti* in their thousands and hundreds of thousands no more affect me than the shadow cast by clouds affect the ether. I am that in which the whole universe from *prakriti* down to gross matter appears as a mere shadow, that which is the substratum, which illumines all, which is the Self of all, is of all forms, is all pervasive and yet distinct from all, that which is all void, which is distinct without any of the attributes of *maya*, that which is scarcely to be known by the gross intellect, which is ether itself, which has neither beginning nor end, which is subtle, motionless, formless, inactive, immutable, that pure *Brahman* in its

natural state, unbroken, eternal, true, aware, endless, self-subsistent Bliss, non-dual *Brahman*

Master, I was perplexed in the nightmare forest of *samsara*, of birth, old age, and death, caused by *maya*, distressed by the tormenting episodes in it and terrified by the tiger of the ego. You awakened me from that nightmare by your grace and saved me, bringing me supreme Bliss. Great Master! By the glory of your grace even I have obtained the empire of real Being. I have become blessed and have accomplished the purpose of this life. Redeemed from the bondage of birth and death, I realize the reality of my being, which is the entire ocean of Bliss. Oh, it is all the glory of your grace, Oh supreme Master! Obeisance again and again to your blessed feet which, being in the form of the pure bliss of consciousness, are seen as the whole of creation. Obeisance for ever and ever!

**Punar Upadesam:**

(Sanskrit Verses: 517 to 575 and Tamil Poems: 591 to 650) The supreme Master is thus addressed with jubilant heart by the disciple who bows at his feet after realizing the truth of the one Being, the supreme Bliss. He replies: Just as he who has eyes has nothing to do but delight in forms, so he who knows *Brahman* has no other satisfying use for his intellect than experience of the *Brahman* reality. Who would care to look at a painted moon when the full moon shines in all its splendour for our delight? No one who has true knowledge can give up the essence to find delight in what is unreal. There is neither satisfaction nor banishment of sorrow in the experience of unreality, therefore a man must make every effort to see with the eye of realization and with the mind in a state of perfect peace to see his own Self as *Brahman*, as the truth of non-duality shining as the Self of the whole universe. He must meditate on this and concentrate ceaselessly on the Self. Then he will enjoy unbroken experience of essential Bliss and this alone will satisfy him. It is the intellect which causes restlessness, appearing as a city in the clouds in the attributeless whole of the conscious Self, and so the intellect must achieve absolute stillness and this will give eternal bliss and serenity in *Brahman*.

When stillness and silence have been attained there will be contentment and peace. Perfect silence free from latent tendencies is the only means of experiencing eternal bliss for the *mahatma*, for he who knows *Brahman*, who has realized the Self and experiences unbroken bliss. The sage who has thus realized the supreme *Brahman* will ever delight in the Self with unobstructed thought-current. He comes and goes, stands, sits, and lies down, performs whatever actions he will, with no need to observe place, time, posture, direction, rules of *yama* or other stages of yoga or positions for concentration. What need is there for rules such as *yama* for realizing one's Self?

No external discipline is needed to know one's Self as 'I am *Brahman*', just as 'Devadatta' needs no outer technique to know himself as such. This ever existent Self shines of its own accord when the mind is pure, just as a pot is naturally seen when the eyesight is not defective. There is no need to consider the purity of place or time for abiding in the Self. Just as the world is illumined by the sun, so all the universes and the Vedas, *Sastras*, *Puranas* and various elements are illumined by *Brahman*, who is also consciously self-effulgent. How can this *Brahman* be illumined by any low non-existent non-self?

This supreme Self is self-effulgent with manifold powers (*shakti*), incapable of being known by anyone, and yet is experienced by everyone as the 'I-I' in the heart. It is in realizing this *atman* that the knower of *Brahman* is released from bondage, and when released he knows the contentment of experiencing the essence of eternal Bliss. This perfection of his beauty is beyond imagining. He feels no happiness or sorrow on account of outer conditions, whether agreeable or disagreeable, and has no likes or dislikes. He accepts like a child all conditions that surround him owing to the desires of others.

Just as an innocent boy is absorbed in his game without worrying about hunger, thirst, or physical distress, so is the sage absorbed in the play of his own Self without ego-consciousness and delights permanently in the Self. Ascending in the chariot of his body, he who enjoys the wide

expanse of pure consciousness begs his food without any thought or feeling of humiliation, drinks the water from rivers, wraps himself in clothes that have not been washed or dried, or in the bark of trees, or goes naked. No code or rule of conduct binds him, for he is permanently free. Although sleeping on the ground like a child or madman, he remains ever fixed in *Vedanta*. Mother Earth is the flowery couch on which he lies. He sleeps without fear in the forest or cemetery, for his sport and pleasure are in *Brahman*.

He who is the universal Self assumes at will countless forms and has countless experiences. In one place he behaves like an idiot, in another like a learned man, and in third like one deluded. Again, in one place he moves about as a man of peace, in another as a king, in another as a beggar eating out of his hand for want of a bowl. At one place he is seen to be adored, at another decried. Thus he lives everywhere and the Truth behind him cannot be perceived by others. Although he has no riches he is eternally in bliss. Although others may not help him he is mighty in strength. Although he may not eat, he is eternally satisfied. He looks on all things with an equal eye. Though acting, it is not he who acts; though eating, it is not he who eats; though he has a body, he is bodiless. Though individualized, he is the One Indivisible whole. Knowing *Brahman* and liberated while yet in the body, he is not affected by likes and dislikes, joys and sorrows, auspicious and inauspicious things, natural to the common man who is attached to the body. Although the sun is never really caught by the dragon's head (in an eclipse), it seems to be, and fools who do not know the truth say: 'Look! The sun is caught!' Similarly they say that he who knows *Brahman*, has a body, but that is their delusion, because although he seems to have a body he is in no way affected by it. The body of the liberated man, although free from bondage, exists in one place or another, like the sloughed skin of a snake.

The body of a liberated man, like a log of wood tossed up and down by the current of a river, may sometimes be immersed in pleasure owing to his *prarabdha* but even though this is so, due to the effects of latent

tendencies in *prarabdha*, as with the body of a worldly person, he still remains the witness in his state of inner silence, free from desire and aversion and utterly indifferent. He neither attaches the senses to the objects that give pleasure nor detaches them. The fruits of his actions do not affect him in the slightest, since he is completely drunk with the unbroken experience of the nectar of bliss. He who knows *Brahman* is the absolute Self, the supreme Lord, with no need for special forms of meditation. Of this there is no doubt.

He who knows *Brahman* has achieved the purpose of life and is eternally liberated as *Brahman*, even though living in the body and using its faculties. Indeed, he realizes the state of *Brahman* even with the destruction of the body and its adjuncts. It is like an actor on the stage who is the same individual whether he wears a mask or not. It makes no difference to a tree whether the place where its dead leaf falls is auspicious or not, whether it is a river, a canal, a street, or a temple of Siva. Similarly, it does not affect the sage where his body, already burnt in the fire of knowledge, is cast away. The Being-Consciousness-Bliss of the Self does not perish with the body, breath, intellect, and sense organs any more than a tree does with its leaves, flowers, and fruit. The scriptures also declare: ‘Only that which is finite and mutable can perish,’ and also: ‘The Self, which is established consciousness, is Truth and is imperishable.’ The sage is *Brahman* in the perfect Bliss of non-duality; he is established in Truth, which is *Brahman*. How then can it matter where and when he sheds his body, which is a vehicle of skin, flesh and impurities? Getting rid of the body, the staff and the water-pot (of the mendicant) is not really liberation; liberation as understood by the sages really means losing the knot of ignorance in the heart.

Just as a stone, a tree, a straw, grain, a mat, pictures, a pot and so on, when burned, are reduced to earth (from which they came), so the body and its sense organs, on being burnt in the fire of knowledge, become knowledge and are absorbed in *Brahman*, like darkness in the light of sun. When a pot is broken the space that was in it becomes one with space; so too when

the limitation caused by the body and its adjuncts is removed, the sage realized during life, shines as *Brahman*, becoming absorbed in the *Brahman* he already was, like milk in milk, water in water, or oil in oil, and is radiant as the one supreme Self. Thus, when the sage who abides as *Brahman*, which is pure Being, obtains his disembodied absolute state he is never again reborn.

How can there be rebirth for a sage who abides as *Brahman*, his body and its limitations burnt by the fire of knowledge, the identity of individual and Supreme? The existence of all that is either affirmed or denied in the one substratum of the indestructible, unattached, non-dual, absolute Self depends only on the mind, just as the appearance or disappearance of the imaginary snake in a piece of rope has no basis in reality, Bondage and liberation are creations of *maya*, superimpositions upon the *Brahman* imagined by the mind without any existence in reality. It is a fool who blames the sun for his own blindness.

It is impossible to argue that bondage (*samsara*) is caused by the veiling power (*tamas*) of *maya* and liberation by its destruction, since there is no differentiation in the Self. Such an argument would lead to a denial of the truth of non-duality and an affirmation of duality. This would be contrary to the authority of the scriptures. How can there be any display of *maya* in non-dual *Brahman*, which is perfect stillness, one whole like the ether, spotless, actionless, unstained, and formless? The scriptures even proclaim aloud: **‘There is in truth no creation and no destruction; no one is bound, no one is seeking liberation, no one is on the way to deliverance. There are none liberated. This is the absolute truth.’**

My dear disciple, this, the sum and substance of all the *Upanishads*, the secret of secrets, is my instruction to you. You also may impart it to one who aspires after liberation, only be careful to examine him several times to make sure that he has real detachment and is free from all the sins and impurities of this dark age.

### Arpanam - Dedication:

(Sanskrit Verses: 576 to 580 and Tamil Poems: 651 to 662) On hearing these words from the Guru, the disciple bows down to him several times and then takes leave and goes home in a state of Bliss. The Master also, immersed in the ocean of Bliss, wanders about the land in order to purify it. Thus has been revealed the true nature of the Self in the form of a dialogue between the Guru and his disciple, as any who seek liberation can easily understand. May these useful instructions be followed by those who have faith in the authority of the scriptures and who aspire after liberation, by those advanced seekers who perform their prescribed duties without caring for the fruits of their actions and have thus cleansed themselves of mental impurities, who are not attached to the comforts of *samsara* and who have attained a state of equanimity.

Souls wandering about in the wild and terrible forest of *samsara* are oppressed by the torment of thirst caused by the terrific heat of the threefold evil, (*adhyatmika, adhibhoutika, adhidaivika*) and are then deluded by the mirage of water. The great Master Shankara Bhagavatpadacharya wishes to inform them of the existence close at hand of an ocean of sweet water, the bliss of non-duality, so that they may obtain relief, and has blessed them with his *Vivekachudamani*, 'The Crown Gem of Discrimination' which will confer on them the eternal bliss of liberation. This is beyond doubt.