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INTRODUCTION

Vedanta is the culmination of the Vedas. It is entering into the study of Brahman. It is the science which raises man above the plane of worldliness. It is the rational method of meditating on the Supreme Absolute, the Eternal, the Infinite. Vedanta is the culmination of human experience and is the end of the faculty of thinking. It is the greatest and the highest knowledge. This wisdom was revealed to the ancient sages.

The Rishis and sages of yore have made experiments and researches in meditation and given to the world their spiritual experiences. These are all authoritative. You must not spend much time in making the preliminary experiments once more. Your whole life-time is not sufficient for making these experiments and researches. The experiences of sages are like ready-made compressed tablets. You will have to simply follow their instructions implicitly with perfect, unswerving faith and devotion. Then alone can you make any progress in the spiritual path and attain the goal of life.

In order to practise Sadhana for the attainment of absolute freedom, you should know in the beginning itself its technique and method. You should know the nature of bondage, the cause of bondage and the way of getting rid of bondage. You have to make a searching study of life and know its mysteries.

Karma

You are born on this earth-plane on account of your Karmas (actions) done in previous births. This body and this condition of mind are both the results of effects of past Karmas. What is Karma?

A Vasana or desire arises. Then you exert to possess the object. This is Karma. Thought itself is the real Karma. Physical action is only its manifestation. Then you enjoy the object. This is Bhoga. This Bhoga strengthens and fattens the Vasana. The Chakra or wheel of Vasana, Karma, Bhoga, is ever revolving. Give up Bhoga. Practise renunciation, discrimination and dispassion. Destroy the Vasanas by eradicating ignorance (Ajnana) through Brahma-Jnana, the Knowledge of the Imperishable. Then alone the wheel which binds a man to this Samsara will stop revolving. Then alone you become an Atmavan or Knower of the Self.

Who Is A Killer Of Atman?

Forgetting the Self by indulging in sensual pleasures, is killing of Atman. Even after somehow getting this rare human birth, with an innate tendency for Nivritti, he who does not strive for the liberation of his soul, is a killer of Atman. He is not an Atmavan but an Atmaha.

Renunciation

The Atman can be realised only through renunciation. You have enjoyed sensual objects in millions of births. You have enjoyed sensual objects for so many years in this birth. If there has not come satisfaction in you till now, when will it come, then? Do not run after the mirage of sensual

PHILOSOPHY OF RAGA-DVESHA

Raga and Dvesha (likes and dislikes) only constitute this Samsara or this world of phenomena. It can be totally destroyed by knowledge of Brahman.

Raga-Dvesha is a Vasana. It has four states. Raga-Dvesha, Vasanas, Samskaras and Gunas are intertwined. They co-exist. The seat of Raga-Dvesha is the mind and the senses. Destruction of one will lead to the destruction of others. But the destruction of the source, Avidya or Ajnana, the seed of Samsara, through Brahma-Jnana will destroy everything to the very root.

The cultivation of virtues like Maitri (friendship), Karuna, (mercy), Mudita (complacency) and Upeksha (indifference) can thin out or attenuate Raga-Dvesha. This is the Pratipaksha-Bhavana method or cultivation of the opposite positive qualities, of the Raja Yogins.

Destruction of Avidya will lead to the destruction of. Raga-Dvesha. Raga and Dvesha are the modifications or effects of Avidya or ignorance.

The fire of devotion also can burn in toto Raga-Dvesha.

The practice of Nishkama Karma Yoga or disinterested selfless service can thin out Raga-Dvesha to a very great extent.

Kill Raga (attachment) by the sword of Vairagya (non-attachment or dispassion or indifference to sensual objects) and Dvesha by developing cosmic love.

Raga-Dvesha assumes various forms. You like certain foods and dislike certain other foods. You like certain clothing and dislike certain other clothing. You like certain persons and dislike certain other persons. You like certain places and dislike certain other places. You like certain sounds and dislike certain other sounds. You like certain colours and dislike certain other colours. You like soft things and dislike hard things. You like praise, respect, honour, and dislike censure, disregard, dishonour. You like a religion, view, opinion and dislike other religions, views and opinions. You like comforts, pleasures, and dislike discomforts and pain. Thus there is no peace of mind for you as the mind is ever restless and agitated. The waves of Raga-Dvesha are ever disturbing the mind. One wave of Raga-Dvesha arises in the mind and subsides after some time. Again another wave rises, and so on. There is no balance of mind. There is no peace. He who has destroyed Raga-Dvesha will be ever happy, peaceful, joyful, strong and healthy. Only he who is free from Raga-Dvesha will have a long life. Raga-Dvesha is the real cause for all diseases (Adhi and Vyadhi).

Wherever there is pleasure, there is Raga; wherever there is pain, there is Dvesha. Man wants to remain in close contact with those objects which give him pleasure. He shuns those objects which give him pain.

Though the objects that give pain are far away from you, the memory of the objects will give you pain. It is only the removal of the currents of Dvesha that will give you happiness. It is the Vritti or thought-wave that gives pain but not the objects. Hence try to destroy the current of Dvesha by

developing cosmic love and Brahma-bhavana or Isvara-bhavana in all objects. Then the whole world will appear to you as the Lord in manifestation. The world or the worldly object is neither good nor bad, but it is your lower instinctive mind that makes it good or bad. Remember this point well, always. Do not find fault with the world or the objects. Find fault with your own mind.

Destruction of Raga-Dvesha means destruction of ignorance or mind and the idea of the world.

No meditation, no peace, no Samadhi is possible for a man who has not removed these two currents two foes of peace, knowledge and devotion. He who says “I enter into deep meditation. I have attained Self-realisation and Samadhi. I can also help you to enter into Samadhi” is a confirmed hypocrite. If you find in him Raga-Dvesha, attachment, hatred, prejudice, intolerance, anger, irritability, know him to be a Mithyachari. Shun his company. Remain at a respectable distance from him, because you also will catch the infection or contagion from him. Beware. Beware. Be cautious, friends!

ADHYAROPA OR SUPERIMPOSITION

Adhyaropa is superimposition! This is one of the fundamental principles of Vedanta. You cannot proceed with the study of Vedanta without understanding Adhyaropa. In reality, this world was never created. This world is superimposed on Brahman. This world is imagined where there exists only Brahman. This is Adhyaropa. This superimposition is sublated through the Yukti called Apavada.

You want to meet your friend Sri Rampratap. When you go to his house, he is not there. Somebody tells you that he has gone to a particular shop in the bazaar. You wait at his door and in a short time you see someone coming, who looks like Rampratap. From a distance you determine in your mind that the person coming is none but Rampratap. But after some time when he actually comes near you, you find that he is not Rampratap but Krishnagopal. You have superimposed Rampratap on Krishnagopal. This is Adhyaropa.

Even in case the person coming is Rampratap himself really, you think, sometimes, that the person coming is somebody else, but when he comes nearer, he happens to be Rampratap himself. This is another kind of negative superimposition. The instance in the previous case was one of positive superimposition. In each of these cases, there has been a mistaken notion that one thing is another. This is called Adhyaropa or superimposition.

Adhyaropa is the result of ignorance of the real object. Generally people mistake a rope for a snake, a post for a man, the mother-of-pearl for silver, the mirage for water, etc. In hazy light of dusk you mistake a rope to be a snake. You are terribly afraid of it. But a friend of yours who comes with a light assures you that it is only a rope. Now you look at the supposed snake once again and find it to be unmoving and that it is really a rope and not snake. Now the Adhyaropa vanishes. In this instance there was no snake at all. It was only the rope that appeared as a snake. The snake was not there in the past, is not in the present and will not be there in the future (three periods of time), i.e.,

‘I’ IS THE SOUL AND NOT THE BODY

A sense is not soul, because you can apprehend an object through any other sense, e.g., “Previously I saw a tree and now I touch it;”—such an expression will be meaningless if ‘I’ is not different from the eye which cannot touch, and from the skin which cannot see. The ‘I’ or the Soul is distinct from the senses.

There is a fixed relation between the senses and their objects, e.g., between the eye and colour, the ear and sound, and so on. It is the eye and not the ear that can apprehend colour, and it is the ear and not the eye that can apprehend sound. If a sense were the Soul, it (the Soul) could apprehend only one object, but the ‘I’ can apprehend many objects; the ‘I’ can see colour, hear sound, and so on. Therefore, the ‘I’ or the Soul which confers unity on the various kinds of apprehension is different from the senses, each of which can apprehend only one object.

If we do not admit a permanent Soul beyond our frail body, we shall be confronted with many absurdities such as loss of merited action (*Kritahani*) and gain of unmerited action (*Akritabhyagama*). A man who has committed a certain sin may not suffer its results in this life, and unless there is a Soul continuing in the next life, he will not suffer them at all. This is loss of merited action. Again, we often find a man suffering the results of actions which he never did in this life. This would be a gain of unmerited action, unless we believe that his Soul did exist previous to this life and that he did the action in his previous life.

A thing seen previously by the left eye is recognised now by the right eye. This would have been impossible if the Soul were identical with the left eye alone or the right eye alone, on the principle that the seat of recognition must be the same as the seat of perception. Hence we must admit that there is a Soul which is distinct from the left and right eyes and which is the common seat of perception and recognition.

The Soul is distinct from the senses, because there is an excitement of one sense through the operation of another sense. When you see a mango fruit or lime pickle, there is salivation in our mouth. The sense of taste is excited. There is an excitement of the sense of taste on account of the operation of the sense of sight. This would be impossible unless there is a Soul distinct from the senses and uniting the senses. The Soul sees the fruit or the pickle and remembers its properties. The remembrance of the properties of the object excites the sense of taste.

You can remember only that object which you have seen. You remember the smell of an object by seeing its colour. This would be impossible if remembrance is a quality of a sense, e.g., the eye, which has never smelt the object. Therefore, remembrance must be admitted to be a quality of a distinct entity called the Soul which is the common seat of perception of colour and smell. The Soul is the absolute Seer and is Consciousness in nature, whereas all other things,—objects, body, senses, Pranas, mind, intellect, etc., are the seen and are inert in nature. The Soul is the Imperishable Reality, while everything else is perishable and false.

ILLUSTRATIONS IN VEDANTA

(Nyayas)

The Vedanta Philosophy is best taught through practical illustrations of daily life, because its abstract truths cannot be understood by the finite intellect very easily. The main purport of Vedanta is that Brahman alone is real and the whole world of appearance is unreal, and that the Jiva is nothing but Brahman Itself. This abstruse theory cannot be comprehended by ordinary men of small understanding, who are immersed in the life of relativity and ignorance. They are taught this sublime Truth by means of illustrations suitable to them, so that they may fix their minds on the Reality through various angles of vision.

Section I

1. Rajjusarpa-Nyaya

In the twilight a man treads upon a rope, and mistaking it for a poisonous snake, jumps in hurry, and cries out in fear. His heart throbs quickly. But when a light is brought by a friend of his, he finds that it is not a snake but only a rope, and then all his fears vanish. This is to illustrate the unreality of the world and its superimposition on the supreme Brahman. Brahman is the Reality and the world is only a superimposition on Brahman just as the snake is a superimposition on the rope.

2. Mrigatrishna-Nyaya

In the desert a traveller sees at noon a mirage where water, meadows, trees and mansions are seen. He believes the sight to be a true one and pursues the spot. The nearer he thinks he is to the spot the further it retreats from him. He leaves his way out far and wanders in the desert. Then he realises that he has done a mistake in straying away from his path in search of this false appearance of water. He once again does not get deceived by this kind of mirage. This is given, in Vedanta, to illustrate the falsity of the universe which appears to give pleasure, with objects for indulgence, to the wanderer, the Jiva. When the Jiva realises through Jnana or Knowledge of the Self, that this world is unreal and that he had done a mistake in turning away from the true path leading to his original State of Perfection or Svarupa, he stops from running after the false mirage of this life of sensual pleasure on earth. The world is only an appearance, just like a mirage which is only an appearance of sun's rays.

3. Shuktirajata-Nyaya

This is similar to 'Akashanilima-Nyaya' or 'Stambha-Nara-Nyaya' (Man in the post). These are also similar to Rajjusarpa-Nyaya. These illustrate the superimposition of the unreal on the real. The mother-of-pearl is mistaken for pure silver, the attributeless sky appears blue, the post is mistaken for a man at night. The knowledge of the Supreme Brahman, the Reality, comes after proper understanding, through discrimination, patience, endurance, renunciation and meditation. The world is an appearance of Brahman, just as the man in the post is only an appearance of the post, and the silver in nacre an appearance of nacre.

13. Silk-Worm And The Cocoon

The silk-worm projects forth a certain thread from its mouth and then binds itself within a cocoon. Similarly, the Jiva binds itself through ignorance and attachment, and suffers from the bondage of embodied life through births and deaths.

Om Shanti! Shanti! Shanti!

SIVA-VIDYA

Khanda I

Nature Of Brahman

Om! Brahman or Siva or the Impersonal Absolute is the Source and Substratum for the world of phenomena. He is the Source of the Vedas. From Him this world proceeds. In Him it lives. In Him it gets dissolved. He is Eternal, Self-existent, Self-luminous and Self-contained. He is all-Full. He is beyond Time, Space and Causation. He is birthless, deathless and decayless.

Khanda II

Contradictions Reconciled

He moves and moves not. He moves in His manifested or Saguna aspect. He moves not in His transcendental aspect. He is smaller than the smallest and greater than the greatest. He is smaller than the smallest because He is the Soul of even the ant, the mustard and the atom, and He is extremely subtle. He is greater than the greatest because He is the Soul of this entire universe and extends beyond this universe, also and He is Infinite. He is nearer than the nearest and farther than the farthest. He is nearer to the thirsty aspirants, but He is farther to those who are worldly-minded. He is nearer than the nearest because He is the Inner Soul of everything. He is farther than the farthest because He is Infinite. He is beyond the reach of the mind and the senses (Avangmanogochara). He cannot be reached by people of gross mind and outgoing senses. But He can be attained by that aspirant who is endowed with a subtle, sharp, one-pointed intellect (Manasaivaanudrashtavyam), and who is equipped with four means, and the grace and the instructions of a Brahma-Srotri, Brahma-Nishtha Guru, in Tat-Tvam-Asi Mahavakya.

Khanda III

Vision Of A Sage And Of A Worldly Man

Brahman is the only Reality. He is the only living Truth. The Liberated Sage or Jivanmukta beholds Brahman only everywhere. There is no world for him in the three periods of time. But the ignorant man sees only the five elements and the forms. The world of names and forms only is real for him. He denies Brahman altogether.

PSEUDO-VEDANTIC STUDENT

A young aspirant says: “I have taste for Vedanta only. I do not like either Bhakti or Karma Yoga. They are far inferior to Vedanta. Only Vedanta elevates me. Only Vedanta inspires me and raises me to the magnanimous heights of Divine Splendour and Glory.”

This foolish Vedantic student is like the greedy typhoid patient with ulcers in his bowels, who wants to eat and says, “I have taste for sweetmeats. I want to eat them now.” What will be the result if he eats Rasagullas and Laddus at this stage? The bowels will rupture and he will die of bleeding from the bowels or intestinal haemorrhage immediately.

He is also like the patient who selects himself a medicine from the almirah, Liquor Arsenicalis or Tr. of Opium, and says, “I like this medicine only. I want to taste this now.” What will happen if he tastes this medicine without consulting the doctor? He will die of arsenical or opium poisoning. He does not know the dose of the medicine. Instead of taking a few drops he may take them in a large quantity and give up his vital breath at once. It is the doctor alone who can select the right medicine for the patient.

Everybody cannot want to become a Commissioner or District Collector or Governor without possessing the necessary qualifications. Can anyone become an M.A., Ph.D., without undergoing the course for Matriculation, F.A. and B.A.?

It is the Guru alone who can select the right type of Yoga for the aspirant and right kind of books for him. He knows the degree of evolution of the student and he alone can chalk out the right path for the aspirant. He will ask him to study first Atma-Bodha, Tattva-Bodha, Atma-Anatma-Viveka. But the raw self-willed student goes to the library and at once takes up the highly advanced books, Yoga-Vasishtha and Brahma-Sutras, for his study! He becomes a pseudo-Vedantin or lip-Vedantin within six months and enters into discussions with elderly aspirants.

A little knowledge is a dangerous thing. After studying Yoga-Vasishtha and the Karikas on Mandukya Upanishad for six months, he says: “There is no world in the three periods of time. Aham Brahma Asmi—Sivoham—Sivah Kevaloham.” He is puffed up with empty pride, vanity and hollowness, and walks in the streets with his head erect. He will never make any prostration to elderly Sannyasis and Sadhus, but chant the formula very often, “Sivoham, Sivoham.”

Such aspirants are formidable Asuras on this earth. They are a great burden on this earth. They pollute the atmosphere and create dissensions and quarrels everywhere, by entering into heated debates with sincere devotees and Karma Yogis. They cannot prosper in the spiritual path.

Vedanta in the hands of raw and unregenerate persons who lack purity and devotion and who have not removed the impurity of their hearts through untiring selfless service with Atma-Bhava and Kirtan and prayer, is perilous. It is like a sharp razor in the hands of a child. Instead of expanding their hearts the Vedantic study will thicken and fatten their egoism. They fall into the deep abyss of ignorance. There is no hope, for them, of being lifted up, as their heart is filled

with foolish, Tamasic, obstinacy, false Vedantic pride and self-superiority and false Tushti (satisfaction).

May this land be free from such impotent, pseudo lip-Vedantins! May this world abound with real Vedantins like Dattatreya, Yajnavalkya and Sankara!

SIVA-JNANAMRITA UPANISHAD

ॐ भद्रं कर्णेभिः शृणुयाम देवाः

भद्रं पश्येमाक्षभिर्यजत्राः ।

स्थिरैरङ्गैस्तुष्टुवांसस्तनूभिः

व्यशेम देवहितं यदायुः ॥

ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः

OM bhadrāṃ karṇebhiḥ śṛṇuyāma devāḥ
bhadrāṃ paśyemākṣabhiryajatrāḥ |
sthirairāṅgaistuṣṭuvāṃsastanūbhiḥ
vyaśema devahitaṃ yadāyuhḥ ||
OM śāntiḥ śāntiḥ śāntiḥ

Om! O gods! may we, with our ears, hear what is auspicious! O ye, fit to be worshipped! May we, with our eyes, see what is auspicious! May we enjoy the life allotted to us by the gods, offering our praise with our bodies strong of limbs!

Om Peace Peace Peace!

Mantra 1

यदेतत्रामरूपात्मकं जगत् तदाभासमात्रम् ।

न तद् ब्रह्मणः पुरस्तात् प्रतितिष्ठति ।

रज्जुसर्पन्यायेन ब्रह्मणि जगतोऽध्यासः देहाध्यायसञ्च ॥१॥

yadetatrāmarūpātmakeṇ jagat tadābhāsamātram |
na tad brahmaṇaḥ purastāt pratitiṣṭhati |
rajjusarpanyāyena brahmaṇi jagato.adhyāsaḥ dehādhayāyasaṅca || 1 ||

BASES OF VEDANTA

Introduction

The purpose of life is the realisation of one's own essential nature. It is to know that you are the pure ever-free Atman. The Vedanta expounds the great truth that Atman alone is real, the phenomenal world is unreal. You are Atman, but you forget your real Svarupa due to identification with the body. This is called Deha-Adhyasa. This is the greatest obstacle to Self-Knowledge or Atma-Jnana. To get over this delusion of identification with body the Vedantic Seers have made a detailed analysis of the different bodies, gross and subtle, and systematically proved that the Jiva is not the body but is identical with the Paramatman. The study of the three bodies, the five sheaths and the three states of waking, dream and deep sleep, helps man to understand that he is different from all these diverse modifications and that he is the unchanging, constant, witness of all these. This helps him to feel that he transcends the three states, the three bodies and the Panchakoshas.

Constant remembrance of this and meditation on this knowledge will lead him to the realisation of his Atma-svarupa. Therefore, the study of the Panchakoshas is a valuable aid in the process of disassociating yourself from the bodies and the sheaths. It enables you to rise above body-consciousness, to feel that you are the Atman and thus remain quite unaffected and unattached amidst all distractions and tribulations of life.

I. The Three Bodies

Their Enumeration

(The individual experiencer is a consciousness-centre enveloped by several layers of matter existing as the factors causing objective awareness in it. The analysis of these layers or bodies is necessary to ascertain the nature of the true Self.)

Hari Om. Om Sat-Guru-Paramatmane Namah.

Disciple: How many bodies are there in an individual (Jiva)?

Guru: There are three bodies in every individual (Jiva).

Disciple: Please name them.

Guru: The physical body or the gross body (Sthula Sarira), the astral body or the subtle body (Sukshma Sarira or Lingadeha) and the causal body or the seed body (Karanasarira) are the three bodies.

Disciple: Please illustrate them.

Guru: Sarvadhukhanivritti (removal of all kinds of pain), and Paramanandaprapti (attainment of Supreme, imperishable, eternal Bliss of Brahman).

Disciple: What does Brahmajnana do?

Guru: It destroys Avidya and its effects (Karya), viz., the bodies and the whole Samsara. It frees you from the miseries of birth and death. It makes you absolutely fearless, free and independent. All your doubts like “whether I am body or Prana or Buddhi” will vanish in toto. You will become Anamaya, free from disease, old age and death. You will have no fear of death or enemies. You will shine as the effulgent, resplendent Purusha Supreme.

CATEGORIES IN VEDANTA

Introduction

The Prakriyas or the different categories in the Philosophy of Vedanta are the fundamental rudimentary principles with which its ethics and metaphysics are built up. They take into account both the Unmanifest and the manifest, Brahman, Maya, Isvara, Jiva and the universe. The nature of the Reality, the characteristics of the phenomenal appearance and the constitution of the individual self are the main themes of Vedantic discussion.

Sri Sankaracharya says that one must possess the fourfold qualification of Sadhana before entering into the study of Tattva-Bodha or the Knowledge of the Vedantic Categories and the Nature of the Atman. Sincere aspirants who have an ardent aspiration, faith, perseverance and purity of conscience will find a way of self-transformation through this knowledge. A thorough understanding of these different categories is necessary before starting to study the actual philosophy of the Advaita Vedanta which abounds with severe logic and penetrating reasoning over the eternal verities of existence.

The Categories

1. There are twenty-four Tattvas or Principles of the manifestation of Mula Prakriti:

The five Tanmatras or rudimentary principles of the elements: Sabda (sound), Sparsha (touch), Rupa (form or colour), Rasa (taste), Gandha (smell).

The five Jnana-Indriyas or organs of perception: Shrotra (ear), Tvak (skin), Chakshus (eye), Jihva (tongue), Ghrana (nose).

The five Karma-Indriyas or organs of action: Vak (speech), Pani (hand), Pada (feet), Upastha (genital), Payu (anus).

The five Pranas or vital forces: Prana, Apana, Samana, Udana, Vyana.

TAT TVAM ASI

That Thou Art

Introduction

‘THAT THOU ART!’—Thus the Sruti emphatically and boldly voices forth the highest and most sublime truth that is the essence of all scriptures, nay, that is the goal of all scriptural teachings and assertions.

It is the greatest declaration ever made on the face of the earth. It is the profoundest teaching ever given since the dawn of creation. It is the only way of expressing and indicating the Truth that is beyond the reach of the mind and the senses. It is the one unique teaching that comforts the distressed humanity and infuses inner spiritual strength and courage into them to *pooh-pooh* the miseries and pains of mundane existence and soar high into the realm of non-dual, all-blissful eternal Existence.

If it be simple in the words that it employs, it requires the well-polished sharp intellect of the advanced aspirant to understand the subtlest Truth that it wishes to convey. If it be unostentatious in its expression, it is at once majestic and imperative in its utterance. If it be brief and blunt, aphoristic in its exposition of the highest Truth, it readily gets instilled deep in our hearts and minds, and from within us, it mysteriously raises our consciousness to that non-dual eternal plane of existence.

Such is the greatness of this Mahavakya, *Tat-Tvam-Asi*, which the Upanishadic Rishi, Uddalaka, employed to impart Brahma-Vidya to his son and disciple, Svetaketu.

The Means To Realisation

Man is essentially Divine. He is not different from that eternal, non-dual substratum, Existence-Knowledge- Bliss Absolute. He is neither born into this Samsara, nor is he ever in a state of bondage. He is ever free, Nityamukta

His present miseries and sufferings, his pains and limited pleasures, births and deaths, are all due to his erroneous identification with the five sheaths and the three bodies. And, in turn, this erroneous identification is the result of not-knowing of the truth, or the forgetfulness pertaining to it. This ignorance, Causal Ignorance, is at the root of all actions and reactions. Only the annihilation of this ignorance can lead us to our original state of non-dual blissful immortal existence.

This ignorance is not born of anything so that it can be destroyed through some action or other. It is simply a negative aspect. Just as absence of lights brings in darkness, absence of the sun brings in the night, so too, absence of Real Knowledge has brought in this Causal Ignorance.

No amount of fighting with darkness or night will destroy them. But, when the lamp or the sun is there, they disappear into nothingness, without leaving a trace. Similarly, where there is True Knowledge, there exists not even a trace of this Causal ignorance. That True Knowledge is the Knowledge pertaining to our real, eternal, immortal Self which is not touched either by the causal

RIGHT SIGNIFICANCE OF 'TAT TVAM ASI'

A Mahavakya in an Upanishad is a transcendental phrase or a great saying which establishes identity or oneness of the individual soul with Brahman. There are altogether four Mahavakyas in the Upanishads. Each Veda contains one Mahavakya. The four Mahavakyas are:—

1. *Prajnanam Brahma* (Consciousness is Brahman): This is contained in the Aitareya Upanishad of the Rigveda. This is the Svarupa-Bodha-Vakya that explains the nature of Brahman or the Self.

2. *Aham Brahmasmi* (I am Brahman): This is contained in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad of the Yajur Veda. This is the Anusandhana-Vakya or sentence for enquiry.

3. *Tat Tvam Asi* (That Thou Art): This is contained in the Chhandogya Upanishad of Sama Veda. This is Upadesha Vakya uttered by the Guru to disciple.

4. *Ayam Atma Brahma* (This Atman is Brahman): This is contained in the Mandukya Upanishad of the Atharva Veda. This is the Anubhava-Bodha-Vakya that gives expression to the inner intuitive experience of the innermost Self by the aspirant through meditation or Nididhyasana.

Out of the four Mahavakyas we are concerned here with the Upadesha Vakya "*Tat Tvam Asi*" for "Pada-Artha-Sodhana" or an examination into the real meaning of it.

In the Chhandogya Upanishad it is stated that the sage Uddalaka sends his son Svetaketu to Gurukula for learning the Vedas. Svetaketu accordingly spends twelve full years in learning the scriptures and thus returns home with the vanity of being learned. His father asks him: "My dear, why are you so conceited? Have you learnt that, by learning which the unheard becomes heard, the unknown becomes known, the unperceived becomes perceived."

"How is it?" asks Svetaketu, and the father gives the reply: "It is just as by knowing one clod of clay all that is made of clay is known: for whatever the modifications of the effects are, they are only names, and have their origin in speech. One who knows the cause knows all its effects, since the cause and its effects are non-different." Then Uddalaka gives various examples for ascertaining the cause of the universe. His instructions may be summed up as follows:

1. The effect is nothing but the cause. Hence the body is nothing but food, food is nothing but water, water is nothing but fire, fire is nothing but *Sat*. *Sat* alone is true, and *That thou art*.

2. When a man sleeps he becomes one with *Sat* and hence in his case it is said *Svapiti*, which means *he attains his own Self* in sleep. This *Sat* is the real cause of the universe.

3. When a man dies his speech is dissolved in the mind, the mind is dissolved in the Prana, the Prana is dissolved in fire, fire is dissolved in *Sat*. This *Sat* is thy Self—*That thou art*.