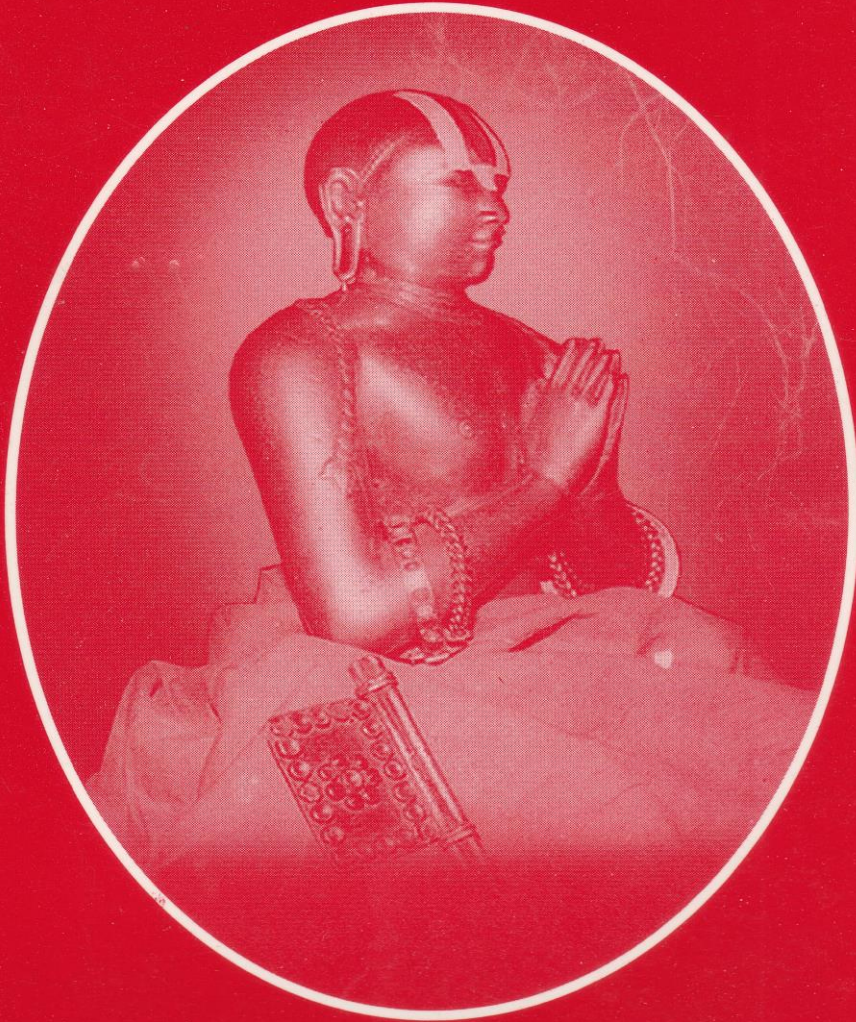


BHAGAVAN RAMANUJA

(Compendium or scholarly articles on Visistadwaita
and Srivaishnavism in English and Kannada)



SOUVENIR

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**SRI
SRIMATHE RAMANUJAYA NAMAHA**

Foreword

I am immensely delighted to place this volume 'BHAGAVAN RAMANUJA' in the hands of the devotees on this auspicious occasion. In fact the members of Vivekollasini Sabha have to be congratulated for giving me an opportunity to bring out a volume containing several articles of reputed scholars highlighting the different aspects of Vishishtadvaita philosophy. The scholars who have contributed their articles are worthy of emulation and this Sabha owes much to those scholars for their priceless contribution.

Though, originally it was planned to bring out this volume earlier it was purposely delayed just to publish it on the eve of the 960th Birth day of Acharya Ramanuja as a fitting tribute to his magnanimous personality and catholic outlook. I request the readers to avail of this opportunity to go through this volume and reap the rich harvest of the toils of great scholars who have contributed their articles to this volume.

I will be failing in my duty if I do not acknowledge my deep debt of gratitude to Sri S. S. Sharma B.A., president of the Sabha who gave all the facilities and encouragement in publishing this volume. I am also thankful to the other members of the Sabha for their active co-operation. This volume would not have found the light of publication without the substantial contribution from the Endowment Department and the Advertisers. I am very much grateful to the Honourable Commissioner for Endowments and Advertisers for their help. Finally I also thank Sri Jaggu Shelvappillai who helped me to read the proofs.

Editor

M. A. Lakshmithathachar.

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SRI RAMANUJA

BY

SWAMI ADIDEVANANDA

To realise the significance of Sri Ramanuja's advent in the *milieu* of the 11th Century A.D. in the South, a knowledge of the antecedent conditions is necessary. When Hinduism became weak by the evils of blind ceremonialism and petrified formalism in their ugly forms, Buddhism and Jainism appeared on the scene as reformational movements. These were met by an orthodox reaction, result of a national counter-revolution, which transfused fresh blood into the decaying limbs of the Hindu society. Though the anti-Vedic movements had developed subtle systems of scholastic philosophy, they seemed barren and sceptical to the orthodox Hinduism and could not satisfy it spiritually. Hence Hinduism, once again drawing inspiration from the moving hymns of the Rgveda and the upasanakanda of the Upanisads, offered new pathways for the spiritual life in fervid devotion to God. The early centuries of the Christian era were coeval with the advent of the great mystics in the south who poured forth soul-stirring rhapsodies in Tamil. The Pallava epoch saw the rising importance of the alvars as well as tremendous activity in temple-building which laid emphasis on the worship of image as permanent Incarnation of God. These alvars, who were steeped in God-consciousness, betook themselves to serving God by meditation. The greatest among the alvars, and the most attractive of them, was Nammalvar or Sathakopa, the author of a thousand hymns known as Tiruvaymoli. The alvars rendered yeomen service in reclaiming innumerable people to the faith by their exemplary life and music of words.

The alvars were succeeded by a different type of teachers known as acaryas who were essentially mystics of action. The acaryas showed great eagerness and fervour in organizing communities of devotees for preserving the vision, ecstasies and doctrines of the alvars. An important task of the acharyas was to support their system by refuting those of others. The need to defend the theistic Vedanta had already arisen by affirming the reality of the individual self and the world. Another danger had sprung into existence to shake the comparative security of the Bhagavata society. The imperial Colas of the day seemed to have taken an inquisitorial attitude towards Vaisnavism. The early acaryas were helpless. Nathamuni, the first acarya, born about 916 A.D., was a great mystic, the author of a lost work on yoga, the Yogarahasya, and Nyayatattva, a work on Visistadvaita. He not only succeeded in rescuing the Prabandhams, the 4000 hymns of the alvars, from oblivion but also popularised them in the Visnu shrines of the country. He was succeeded, after two brief periods of apostleship by Pundarikaksa and Ramamisra by his grandson Yamunacharya or Alavandar. Yamuna was a worthy predecessor of Ramanuja in every respect. He combined in himself the fervid mystical experience of alvars with a prodigious Knowledge of Vedanta. In his Siddhitraya, he has elucidated the cardinal tenets of Visishtadvaita. In his Agamapramanya, he has justified the orthodoxy of the Pancaratra system. in his Gitartarthasangraha, he has summarised the main teachings of the Bhagavadgita that came down to him through an unbroken succession of ancient teachers. In praise of Sri, the Divine Mother of the universe, he composed an exquisite poem of four stanzas, which furnishes the basis for the cult of Sri. That Yamuna, a great leader of men, who anticipated most of the basic arguments of Visistadvaita in his works, was unable to establish the claims of theistic Vedanta on a firm footing, is indeed a mystery. To get a worthy successor, who would complete his work and

carry on the torch, he constantly prayed to the Lord of Srirangam.

The prayer was answered. To the Bhagavata society which had firm faith in the redeeming words of Sri Krishna, the birth of Ramanuja, when he was most wanted, was not accidental. A grandson and a disciple of Yamuna, Srisailapurna by name, had settled with his sisters at the holy mount of Tirupathi. One of the sisters, Kantimati, was married to a great Vedic Scholar, Asuri Kesavasomayaji of Sriperumbudur, a village not far off from Kanci, then the seat of a Cola Viceroy. The pious lady gave birth to a boy who received the name of Ramanuja. The traditional date of Ramanuja's birth is 1017 A. D. Srisailapurna who came to see his newly-born nephew told Kesavasomayaji: 'Friend, I have seen the blessed child. He is above his kind. The light in his face indicates this. He possesses, in embryo, all the qualities which make him a sage, learned and wise.'

Ramanuja was as handsome as he was intelligent. Under the able guidance of his scholarly father, the performer of many vapas, he mastered the traditional lore of the day. His father passed away soon after his marriage when he was seventeen. He then left Kanci in search of a competent teacher who would teach Vedanta and found one in a distinguished professor named Yadavaprakasa. This Yadavaprakasa was a bold and independent thinker. He had rejected the pure Advaita and offered an alternative system called Bhedabheda, identity-indifference. It was during this period Yamuna felt a longing to see Ramanuja whose name and fame had already reached his ears. Yamuna came to Kanci, and while he was in the temple of Varadaraja, Yadava came on a visit to the temple, with his entourage. Seeing this group, Yamuna asked who among the students was Ramanuja. They pointed him out and said, 'That bright and glorious central figure, possessing those fine shoulders, broad and long like Rama Himself—this is Ramanuja.' It is touchingly recorded that Yamuna went up to

the sanctum sanctorum and prayed that: 'O Lord, grant me a boon, for Thou art Varada, the Boon-giver. Grant me then, that this Ramanuja shall become the bearer of Torch of the Faith.'

The studies under Yadavaprakasa continued for some time, during which the relations between the teacher and the disciple were strained. The reason was the brilliance and independence of the disciple, who now and then challenged the teacher's interpretation of the Upanisads. One day, Yadava interpreted the Taittiriya text, *satyam jnanam anantam brahma* in terms of absolute identity; the disciple did not accept this interpretation, but gave a different meaning by saying that Brahman is not only Truth, Existence and Knowledge, but has them as His essential attributes. At another time, the teacher's interpretation of the Upanisadic description of the lotus to which the beautiful eyes of Lord were compared—by rendering that expression in a coarse manner brought hot tears of grief to Ramanuja. When asked by the teacher to give his own explanation, Ramanuja gave the meaning of the term as the fully developed lotus that blossoms at the rise of sun. The angry and jealous Professor arranged for a pilgrimage to Kasi with the evil design of getting rid of the disciple. On the way, when Ramanuja came to know of the conspiracy, he escaped from the undesirable company hiding himself in the wilderness. Weary and foot-sore, he could not find his path. Just then a hunter and his wife met him and offered to take him to Kanci, which was their destination too. When they were near Kanci, the hunter couple suddenly disappeared, according to one tradition, after asking Ramanuja for a little water. He walked some distance and saw a garden, a well and lofty towers. Ramanuja suddenly realised that he was in the environs of Kanci and his deliverers were none but Lord Varadaraja and His Consort. At this time, Ramanuja came under the spiritual influence of a disciple of Yamuna, Tirukacci Nambi, who was in constant communion with God.

The ageing Yamuna at Srirangam sent Mahapurna to fetch Ramanuja from Kanci. Ramanuja immediately obeyed. Unfortunately he was not destined to meet Yamuna. He met the funeral cortege of Yamuna on the outskirts of Srirangam. Deeply disappointed and grieved, he returned to Kanci to qualify himself for the great tasks which he knew would devolve on him. From five of Yamuna's disciples he learnt the esoteric knowledge of Srivaisnavism: He learnt the dvaya-mantra from Mahapurna, rahasyarthas from Gosthipurna, Srimadrāmayana from Srisailapurna and Tiruvaimoli from Tirumalaiyandan and Alavandar alvan. The doctrines of Visistadvaita communicated by Lord Varada to Tirukacci Nambi were also imparted to him: 'I am the supreme Truth, the Way and the Goal. The world of souls is different from Me and depends on Me as its source and sustenance. Self-surrender is the way to salvation.'

Thus equipped with the authentic tradition of Visistadvaitic Vaisnavism, Ramanuja became qualified to tread the path of ancient acaryas for spreading the gospel and to become a world teacher. To dedicate himself wholly to the cause of spirituality and service, he made the great renunciation before Sri Varadaraja himself and received the insignia of sanyasa. His age at the time renunciation was probably thirty. From that time Ramanuja became famous as Yatiraja, the prince of ascetics, on account of his exemplary ascetic life. Then he settled down at Srirangam and began his long spiritual leadership which extended to over seven decades. It is said that Ramanuja till the last day of his earthly life remained in full possession of physical and mental powers and discharged his spiritual duties.

There is reason to believe that before the advent of Ramanuja the great Visnu temples in the country were in a disorganized state and had ceased to attract the spiritual

seekers. Ramanuja's first task was to reform the temple worship and to make them once more the spiritual centres. He accomplished this difficult task with thoroughness which was characteristic of all he did. The next and perhaps the most important task was to provide a powerful array for his system with a philosophical literature that could compare well with similar works of the past. The writings of Ramanuja are systematic, unambiguous and profound. One cannot pass over in silence a remarkable quality of his words—they haunt the reader with a mystic timbre. Sri Vedantadesika, the poet-philosopher, it may be noted, repeatedly refers in his Yatiraja-saptati to the immortal vak, sukta, ukti, prabandha, gira and bharati of Yatisvara. Ramanuja systematizes in his works the entire teaching of Visistadvaita in its philosophical, ethical and aesthetic aspects. In his Vedarthasangraha, he harmonizes the apparently conflicting texts of the Upanisads by his basic conception of sarira—saririn relation. The Vedantasara and the Vedantadipa are masterly compendia of his Sribhasya, the great commentary on the Brahmasutras. His synoptic commentary on the Bhagavadgita is an expansion of the Gītarthasangraha of Yamuna and explains the Gita in a coherent and integrated manner. His magnum opus, the Sribhasya, was the result of mature thought and a work of years. To impart authority to the central doctrines of the commentary, he dug into the past and utilized the works now lost, but then available—of Vrttikara Upavarsa-Bodhayana. Bhasyakara Dramidacarya, the Vakyakara Tankacarya Brhmanandin and others. The Sribhasya explains the Sutras as sariraka-sastra in the literal sense of the term. Besides these, he composed his litany, the gadya-traya consisting of Saranagati-gadya, Sriranga-gadya and Vaikuntha-gadya, which are the rapturous outpourings of his devotional fervour. For the guidance of the community, he prepared a code of Srivaishnavism called Nityam. He perpetuated Parasara's name by calling on Bhatta, a young disciple, to compose a commentary on the Visnusahasranamam. Under his command,

his disciple Kuresa composed the first commentary on the Tiruvaimoli of Nammalvar, as expounded by him.

The profound effect of his life, works and exposition of the scripture was felt by one and all. His large followers were drawn from different strata of society. It is said that 12,000 disciples, 700 monks and 74 special leaders formed his entourage. He built a spiritual empire without distinction of high and low. At this time occurred the persecution of Srivaisnavism by Kulottunga Cola I. Ramanuja fled to the uplands of Karnataka, where a new power, under the Hoysala prince, Bittideva was rising. Before the magnetic personality of Ramanuja, Bittideva surrendered and became his disciple, receiving the name of Visnuvardhana. Karnataka under Visnuvardhana became strong and prosperous; the stage was set for a renaissance. Great Visnu shrines, which are lyrics in stone, were dedicated, including the one at Belur. Ramanuja himself renovated the Narayana temple at Melkote. Looking at the contemporary inscriptions it is difficult to believe that there has been any persecution of Jains. Queen Santala consort of Visnuvardhana, remaining a Jain, continued to adore Visnu. After the death of Kulottunga in 1118 A.D., Ramanuja returned to Srirangam to resume his ministry, till his passing away in 1137.

Ramanuja's work was over. Suffering and persecution had given spiritual strength to the community, which in quantity and quality was stronger than before. Every Vishnu shrine resounded with the benediction: "May the divine commands of Sri Ramanuja ever increase in strength." ² It only remained for the acarya to fix the time for his final departure to the eternal Abode. He consoled the sorrowing disciples that they will lose nothing by losing him, as the Supreme Lord is ever present and never leaves any one. He gave his last blessings, and withdrawing himself peacefully he closed his eyes; he rested on the lap of Embar with his feet

2 Ramanujarya-divyajnya vardhatam abhivardhatam,

placed on the lap of Andhrapurna. While Srotriyas were singing the brahmavalli and bhruguvalli of the Vedas, he reached the feet of the supreme Purusa whose love and reality were more palpable to him than anything else in this world. This was a fitting end for a life of divine communion and dedicated service.

It is rather difficult to appraise the life and work of Ramanuja, which has inspired every subsequent theistic movement in India for the last nine hundred years. As the exponent of Vedanta, he reconciles the claims of philosophy with the demands of religion. Chronologically as well as philosophically he takes a middle position between Sankara and Madhva. With his innate ethical idealism and doctrine of indwelling Self in all, he insists on the equality of all souls without in any way violating the Gita ideal of varnasarama-dharma. He was not only the representative of his age which required a new orientation of truth but also a philosopher for all time.

Now let us consider the philosophical aspect of Ramanuja's teaching. No more than Sankara did he invent a new system. He merely emphasised certain elements of the Vedic teachings and formulated them in a coherent and integral manner. Ramanuja interpreted the theory of Advaita allowing the differentiation of Reality or God through his modes without implying any difference in the Reality itself. He accepts as ultimate and real the three categories of matter, soul and God (acit, cit and Isvara). Matter and souls are absolutely dependent on God the dependence being similar to that of body upon soul. Whatever is, constitutes the body of God and He is the soul of not only insentient matter but also the conscious souls. It is in this connection Ramanuja formulates his famous theory of inseparability (aprthak-siddhi), which exists between substance and attribute. The relation may be described as the pivot on which his whole system revolves.

The relation between body and soul brings out clearly its intimate character. Body is defined as that which a soul supports and controls for its own purposes. Similarly matter and souls, being the body of God, are directed and sustained by Him, and exist entirely for His purpose. The ultimate oneness and reality of the Absolute is recognized in the inseparable unity of *acit*, *cit* and *Isvara*. Since Ramanuja compares the relation here involved with that between body and soul, his conception of the Absolute may be characterized as that of an organic unity in which, as in a living organism, one part dominates over and controls the rest. The subsidiary parts are termed as *visesanas* (attributes), and the predominant one *visesva* (substantive). Since the attributes cannot by themselves exist separately, the complex whole (*visista*) in which they are necessarily included is described as a synthetic unity. Hence the term *Visistadvaita*.

Soul is of the nature of consciousness and has attributive knowledge always associated with it. The soul is not merely a hypothetical unity of individual experiences, but an eternal entity. In its natural state of freedom, its consciousness flows out without any obstacle, comprehending everything. In the condition of transmigratory existence though consciousness is never absent, it is more or less contracted. Though soul itself apart from its consciousness; is viewed as of atomic size, it reaches the ends of space through its attributive knowledge. The soul is not only consciousness it is also of the nature of bliss *ananda*. *Ananda* is obscured in worldly life, but fully manifests itself in the state of liberation. Man with his physical body derived from the nature, the *prakṛti*, on the one hand, and God for his inner Self on the other hand, presents the dual nature and conflicts of human life. The souls are infinite in number. In addition to those who have become free or who are in bondage, *Visistadvaita* recognizes a third category of perfect souls called *nityas* who have never been subjected to transmigratory existence. Though each soul is a doer (*kartr*) and experiencer (*bhoktr*), God who is its inner ruler (*antaryamin*)

controls it without interfering with the freedom which is innate to it.

God too is of the nature of consciousness and unsurpassed bliss. The term *Isvara* stands for the entire universe with its cit—and acit—elements included in it. In this sense, God is both the cause and the effect. In dissolution (*pralaya*) He subsists as the cause with the whole universe latent in Him; in what is called creation (*srsti*), what is latent becomes manifest. Subtle matter becomes gross, and souls, expanding their attributive knowledge, enter into physical bodies according to their previous karma. Since the causal form includes within itself everything that is required for the creation, God becomes the whole and cause for it. Since God grows as the cosmos, He is called *Brahman*. The so-called change in *Brahman* is to be understood only in a secondary sense. He does not suffer any transformation in Himself, but only through the modes comprehended in the whole of which He is the inspiring principle. God is not only the Absolute, but He is also the inner ruler that dwells within everything, souls or matter.

One the side of religion, the Absolute, which is the only Reality, is conceived as completely personal. God therefore enters into personal relation with the soul. This relation in a way corrects the fatalistic tendency of pantheism. He is the god of love and abode of all excellent and unsurpassable attributes. His love for the devotees far exceeds their devotion for Him. He is known as *Narayana*, the final resting place of souls. As the Supreme (*Para*) He is specially manifest in *Vaikuntha*, which is His eternal manifestation without any limitation. He manifests Himself in various ways to redeem the devotees. One of the most important ways is known as *vyuha*. Another way in which the Supreme Person manifests Himself is as *Vaibhavas*, which are well-known in the avatars of Sri Rama, Sri Krishna, etc. Still another manifestation is known as the *antaryamin*, the inner Self of all souls. The last of the manifestations called *arcavatara* manifests in holy

consecrated images in sacred places.

In studying the psychology of mystic experience, one cannot overlook the duality between self-effort and divine grace. This distinction marks the difference of bhakti and prapatti. The practical discipline begins with Karmayoga in the Gita sense, which purifies the mind and enables the aspirant to know the Truth. After one achieves success in Karmayoga, he is qualified to enter upon the path of Jnanayoga in which he realizes that the soul is different from matter. The discipline does not come to an end with Jnanayoga; the aspirant might have realized his self in relation to his physical environment; but there yet remains the task of discovering the soul's relation to the Divine, the highest Reality. Man's knowledge of himself is not perfect unless he knows God.

Bhakti here is identical with upasana or meditation taught in the Upanisads. Bhakti is not merely austere contemplation on the Supreme Persons.³ It is meditation that is suffused with love for God. When Bhaktiyoga is carried to fruition, the discipline terminates in the attainment of the beatific vision of the Divine. Ultimate liberation is not freedom in embodiment but freedom from embodiment. It is the intuition of the Supreme as well as its attainment. The individual remains, but the fetters of individualism are removed.

Another important feature of Visistadvaita is that the obligation to perform karma is not the condition of the preparatory stage only. It continues even when one progresses in spiritual life. Man should never abandon karma of the nitya variety, unconditional duties, for he will be then disobeying what is enjoined in the Vedas. And so karma, with its purpose transformed, continues till the final emancipation. Karma, according to Visistadvaita, it is interesting to note, is not only whatever is prescribed in the Veda, but also prayer and devotional worship.

Bhakti in the form of meditation is the classical means to release. In prapatti, the soul surrenders its will absolutely to the Lord and His grace. It is atma-samarpana, the dedication of the self itself to the Lord who is its master and is therefore a direct means to realization. The word prapatti is derived from prapd 'to take refuge with' or 'to piously surrender.' Prapatti indicates that release is obtained through Divine Grace. A single act of abandonment in all sincerity and seriousness is sufficient to draw the Divine Grace. The Prapanna experiences a deluge of divine grace flooding his entire being. The Lord pours Himself fully into the Lord. An essential element of prapatti is the belief that God must be looked upon as both the means and the end of salvation. Though the realization of God is the end of all aspirants' a prapanna differs from others in praying that God alone should deliver him from samsara, as and when He pleases. Even the petulant charge of petitionary prayer fails with the prapanna who leaves it to God to dispose of him as He pleases.

Ramanuja's gospel of divine love, which gave a wide scope for the uplift of lower classes, is of great value in the social history of India. The idea of God, who can be approached by the humblest without a long and laborious process of discipline, unfolded a limitless tolerance which never recognized the barriers of caste and creed. Ramanuja's life itself is full of incidents which indicate that lovers of God, irrespective of their social position, belong to one community which overrides every other consideration.

The influence of Ramanuja on other systems of philosophy in India is indeed enormous. The bhakti movement in the North is traced to Ramananda (1300-1411), who was influenced by the teachings of Ramanuja and was initiated into the teachings of Visistadvaita. His twelve disciples spread the faith by their life and teaching. Any philosophy which emphasizes identity, while admitting differences, can be ulti-

mately reduced to the three-fold category of Ramanuja, cit, aeit and Isvara. In the Dvaitadvaita of Nimbarka. Suddhadvaita of Vallabha and Acintyabhedadheda of Caitanya, one can recognize the ultimate bases of Visistadvaita indifferent names and forms.

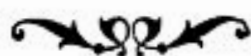
Far back down the corridor of time we see the picture of Ramanuja,—like his bronze image—calm and serene, encrusted with legends. Even these owe their lustre to the five within, to the seraphic saint that, even afles 900years, shines with the radiance of a star. For his iife is that of Yatiraja, the Prince among monks, the apotheosis of renunciation, the triumph of abnegation.



Love of God unto death

It is now shown that if saintly men be not admitted as *immediate* Saviours,—as illustrated above by the curative power of their Holy foot-dust—they are at least efficient functionaries for performing mediatorial offices between souls and God. In other words, they do possess the power of vicarious pleading with God, and procure for souls their redemption. There lived a saint by name Tiruk-kanna-mangaiyandan remarkable for his ardent love of God, and who worshipped at the Adorable Shrine of Lord Pattaravi (=The life of lovers). He was so far risen in holiness as to put entire trust and confidence in God, so much so that he entirely abandoned his soul unto His keeping, and ceased from every activity which may savour of trust in self, and of distrust in God. He laid himself down at door of the Sanctuary of the Lord prepared to die for Him, and thus exemplify his whole-hearted love and trust in Him! His disciple ran to him and weeping, prayed to him thus:—"God-Sire! after thy departure, what hope is there for me?" The master consoled him thus:—"Son! remain by my side, that is enough for thee." The disciple carried out this command to the very letter and expiring even before the master, mounted to the abode of the Blessed. Three days after, the Master winged his flight to the regions of glory. [The disciple's incident also illustrating that the mere act of acceptance of a disciple by his godly master secures a passport to Heaven].

[Bhag ; Vish ; Vol. IV. p. 1844, "Vedam" iv-6-8].



Sri Ramanuja's Indebtedness TO SRI YAMUNA

BY

Dr. M. Narasimhacharya, M. A., Ph.D.,

Sri Yamunacharya, known as "Alavandar", was Ramanuja's grand teacher (paramacharya). He and his grandfather Nathamuni, the first Srivaishnava teacher of the South, are accorded the central position in the galaxy of Srivaishnavacharyas. Nathamuni wrote in Sanskrit, works like the Yogarahasya and the Nyayatattva, but we do not have any of them now. As such, our knowledge of the Vaishnava school in Sanskrit commences with Yamuna only. He wrote the Chatusshloki (Sristuti), Stotraratna, Gitarthasangraha, Agamapramanya, Siddhitraya (consisting of Atma, Isvara and Samvit-siddhis), Purushaniraya and Kashmiragamapramanya. Of these, the last two are not available. Yamuna is said to have been born in 918 A.D. and passed away in 1038 A.D.

The great position that Ramanuja attained as the Bhashyakara of this school led to the comparative neglect of the contributions of his great predecessor, Yamuna. In this paper is given a brief account of Ramanuja's indebtedness to Yamuna, as could be gathered from their works.

Siddhitraya, Agamapramanya and Sribhashya :

A close comparison of Sribhashya of Ramanuja with the Siddhitraya of Yamuna reveals that the latter was the source of the former. The opening verse of the Sribhashya (viz., akhila-bhuvanajanma, etc.) runs almost like the opening verse of the Atmasiddhi (i. e., Prakritipurushakala etc.). The establishment that the soul (atman) is the entity called 'Aham', the knower, is done by Ramanuja on the model of Atmasiddhi. Sopassagesem

of this Siddhi like 'shantangara iva' and 'vyangyavyanktritvam' are actually quoted by Ramanuja. Several other passages of this siddhi are paraphrased by Ramanuja with slight modifications. The 'sastrayonitva'-section of the Sribhashya (1.1.3) follows almost verbatim the Isvarasiddhi. It has to be pointed out that the Siddhitraya has gaps in all its three sections. The available text of the Isvarasiddhi sets forth the purvapaksha-view of the Mimamsakas and Naiyayikas regarding the existence of God, and ends some what abruptly. There must have originally existed a further portion giving the author's own view (siddhanta) on the matter. The siddhanta-view given by Ramanuja in his Sribhashya in this regard throws light on what Yamuna himself might have said on this. The passages of the Samvitsiddhi are also adopted by Ramanuja to refute the Advaitic view of Samvid-advaita, Sad-advaita, Maya, Moksha, etc.

The basic tenet of the Visishtadvaita is that the Brahman is One (advaita) and that It is qualified (visishta) by the sentient (cit) and insentient (acit) entities which form Its modes. This system derives its very name from this concept, called by Ramanuja as Sharira-Shariri-bhava or Shesha-Sheshi-bhava. Brahman is the Soul of which the animate and the inanimate form the body. This concept is found in its rudimentary form in the Samvitsiddhi of Yamuna. This is clearly analysed and adopted by Ramanuja later.

The explanations offered by Ramanuja in his Sribhashya on the Pasupata (2. 2. 36-39) and the Pancharatra sections (2. 7. 40-43) are based on the interpretation of these given by Yamuna in his Agamapramanya.

Siddhitraya and Vedarthasangraha :

The introductory verse of Ramanuja's Vedarthasangraha (viz., param brahmaivajnam) acknowledges the greatness of Yamuna as his predecessor in the field. The refutation of the explanation offered by the Advaitins for the Mahakavya

“tattvamasi” (Chandogya Up. VI. viii-6.) found in the Samvitsiddhi, finds its echo in the Sribhashya and Vedarthasangraha. That the secondary significance (lakshana) of words is applied only to one of the two terms appearing in samanadhi karanya-statements like the above one; and the same entity can be treated as being different (bheda) as well as non-different (abheda) according to factors like time and place, which are referred to by Yamuna in the Samvitsiddhi briefly, are set forth in great detail by Ramanuja in his Vedarthasangraha and Sribhashya-

Another important tenet of Ramanuja's philosophy is that knowledge is an eternal and invariable attribute (dharmavishesha or prakara) of the soul. It is technically known as Dharmabhutajnana. This concept has its basis in the Atmasiddhi of Yamuna.

On the authority of Vedanta Desika we know that the portion of Ramanuja's Vedarthasangraha dealing with the supremacy of Vishnu is based on the Purushanirnaya of Yamuna, which, however, is not available.

Stotras, Gitarthasangraha and Gadyatraya, Gitabhashya

Tradition records that Ramanuja was attracted to Yamuna after listening to his Stotraratna, particularly the verse “svabhavika-anavadhika” etc.

The Vaikuntha and the Sharanagathi Gadyas of Ramanuja are inspired and guided by the Stotraratna and the Gitarthasangraha of his predecessor. The commentary on the Gita by Ramanuja is chiefly based on the Gitarthasangraha.

The opening verse of the Vaikuntha Gadya (viz., yamunarya-sudhambhodhim, etc.) makes it clear that Ramanuja followed Yamuna in forming the concept of Bhakti. The passage at the beginning of the Sharanagathi Gadya, referring to Sri (viz., Om bhagavannarayanabhimata, etc.) is influenced by

Yamuna's Chatusshloki regarding the Doctrine of Surrender (Sharanagati or prapatti) to Sri.

It may therefore be stated in conclusion that Sri Yamuna was mainly responsible for the building up of the system of thought later characterised as Visishtadvaita, and that the task of promoting it as a regular school of thought was carried out by Bhagavan Ramanuja with remarkable success. The devotion and regard which Ramanuja had for this great teacher are recorded in traditional accounts and hagiological works like the Divyasuri Charita and prapannamrita. The following verse ascribed to Ramanuja himself, gives expression to the esteem in which the eminent paramaguru was held by him :

“yat padambhoruha-dhyana-vidhvasta-asesha-kalmashaha
vastutam upayatoham yamuneyam namami tam”

Fear of God how converted to Love of God.

Nanjiyar :—“A certain Prince saw a garden but feared to enter it. But as soon as some one said ‘This garden belongs to my father, the king,’ all fear vanished; he entered, roamed and enjoyed there at pleasure. So doth our fear to approach the Almighty vashni as soon as we realise that we are His Children (or natural objects of His boundless love)”.

[Bhag : Vish. Bk. I, p. 214. “Adanga” I. 2.7]

Ramanuja's Influence

on

TEMPLE AND RELIGIOUS WORSHIP

by

Tirumalai Nallan Chakravarty

Dr. Venkatadriagaram Varadachari

The worship of God in the form of idol has been in vogue from ancient times. Icons of deities are installed in temples where they are worshipped, while they and or Salagrama receive worship in the houses. Temples of varying extent are found all through India. Many people of diverse tastes and of different outlook in life are attracted by the temples and quite often, they mingle freely on occasions of the celebration of festivals.

The idol, which is also called by the name *archa*, represents the finitized form of God whose nature could not be determined in spatial, temporal and objective aspects by the instruments of finite nature. God takes this form for the well-being of people. The idols are varied in their forms and it is held that God takes those forms which His devotees wish Him to take and present Himself before them. The Lord thus satisfies the desires of His men. This is indicated by Himself in the Gita:-

“As they worship (approach) Me, so do I reciprocate or receive them. O Arjuna, all men every where follow My path”. (1) According to Ramanuja's commentary on this '*shloka*,' the Lord means that He fulfills the desires of His devotees by descending down taking the forms of gods and men. He does not stop with it. In accordance with the wishes of those who resort to Him, He shows Himself to them. His devotees also get the experiences with Him which

1. IV. 11

satisfy their wishes following the course taken by Him. Ramanuja means here that the devotees get the experiences to their full satisfaction through the various forms which they wish Him to take. The *archa* form is meant here. Poyhai Alvar's song echoes this spirit. Vide: "The Lord who holds the discus takes the form which His devotees cherish, assumes the names which they like and acts in the manner liked by them."

The idols are made up of several materials like stone, wood or metal. The *Agamas* lay down the rules and procedures for the making of the idols out of these materials and for installing them in temples. The principal idol is called Dhruvabera or Mulabera and that which is taken out in processions is called utsavabera. The Alvars have made the outstanding contribution in showing the worship of *archa* as the easy and practicable method. Their compositions contain much reference to the *archa* form of God in the well-known shrines in South India. The *Mudal Tiruvandadi* of Poyhai Alvar (2) mentions in the same stanza the deities at Tiruvengadam, (Oppiliyappan Koil, near Kumbakonam, Tiruvehka (Yathoktakari temple at Kanchi) and Tirukkoilur as of standing, sitting, lying and moving postures respectively. The *Nanmuhan Tiruvandadi* of Tirumazhishai Alvar refers to the lying postures of deities in the same stanza, as available in temples like Tirukkudandai (Kumbakonam), Tiruvehka Tiruwallur, Tiruvaram, Tirupper-nagar (near Srirangam) and milky ocean. (3) The *Tiruchchandaviruttam* (4) of the latter refers to the deities at Uraham, Padaham and Vehkanai (Yathoktakari) as of standing, sitting and lying postures.

The compositions of the Alvars also indicate that festivals were conducted in certain shrines and the car festival in particular is suggested to be taking place in some others. The reference to the conduct of festivals is available in the *Periya Tirumozhi* while describing the deity in Tirunaraiyur (5) identified with Nacchiyar Koil near Kumbakonam. The same

composition contains suggestions to the conduct of the car festival in the temples at Tiruvazhundur (6) and Tiruvali Tirunagari. The Alvars are only recording what was available in these places at the time of their visit. It is evident from this, the temples had besides the Dhruvabera, the utsavabera as well.

The Agamas should have been guiding the conduct of daily worship and festivals on occasions in these temples. The absence of such references to all other temples should not be pressed to prove that either the utsavabera was not installed in most of the other shrines or festivals were not conducted at all.

People at large and the Alvars, in particular, had then taken to the worship of the *archa* form of God. It is said that grave sins are quickly destroyed of him who beholds Vishnu from the foot-stead up to the crest and that it is needless to say that minor kinds of sins are also destroyed thereby. From the context, the word *vishnu* is to be taken to mean the idol of Vishnu. (8) Another passage tells that sight of the Lord (Lord's idol) by accident destroys the wrong residues, defective intellect bad reasoning and bad arguments of men whose minds are confused. Bad dispositions and heterodoxy (irreverence to traditions) also get eradicated. (9)

These passages cited above, are only two among many others which are sufficient to prove that idol worship has been the only method of adoring God even before the period of the Alvars who added strength to the need for maintaining the mode. There is therefore nothing surprising when it is noted that Tiruppanalvar sang in praise of the Lord of Srirangam and Tondaradippodi Alvar reared a garden to flowers to be strung into a garland for the same deity. Periyalvar, whose real name was Visnuchitta, strung garlands for the deity at Srivilliputtur.

Thirumangai Alvar attended to the additional constructions in the temple at Srirangam.

6—7—5—5— 7—3—6— 6 8. Sandilya Smriti 2.98.

9. *Pauskara samhita*.

None of the Alvars had forgotten to mention the names of shrines and the postures assumed there by the Mulabera. It is their soulstirring appeals to God to whom they were drawn by insatiable love, and depictions of the greatness of the *archa* forms in many of the temples that have given an individualistic stamp to Vaisnavism of the South. It is their compositions that attracted the attention of Nathamuni (9th century A. D) who took deep interest in them and arranged for the rendering of them in temples, prescribing the musical setting for them. Yamuna (10th century A. D), the grand-son of Nathamuni took Srirangam as his headquarters which became later as the most important and foremost among the Vaisnava shrines in India.

Ramanuja (1017-1137 A. D), who came in the line of spiritual inheritance of the Alvars and Acharyas, was, even before he became the disciple of Mahapurna, a firm believer in the *archa* form of worship. His aspirations were to place on solid and stable foundations the theistic Vedanta, the principles of which were handed down to him by his master Mahapurna. These principles have been preached by the Alvars, Nathamuni and Yamuna. Therefore he devoted his attention and energy to achieve this end. Yet, he did not ignore the necessity for preaching the significance of the worship to the *archa* form of God. Not much was left by him in writing on this but his unique contribution thereon is evidenced by what is obtained in practice both in the temples and homes of the Vaisnavite community.

His commentary on the passage of the *Bhagavadgita* (IV. 11), throws abundant light on his concept towards the *archa* form of God. He writes there that His men enjoy, with their own material senses the form of God according as they wish and in all possible ways. That form is beyond the reach of thought and speech. Even the Yogins take much delight to

enjoy this experience. While giving an exposition of this comment, Vedantadesika remarks that yogins have the experience of the supreme form (*pararupa*) of God even in the *archa* form. The all possible ways (*sarvaprakara*) shall be taken to mean adorning God with ornaments, festive marches (*yatrotsava*) and rendering service. Ramanuja must have found an authority in this passage of the *Bhagavadgita* for the worship of the *archa* form of God. It is also worthy to note that no other commentator on the *Bhagavadgita* even though the *archa* form of worship was adopted by him, attempted to find God's statement here in favour of this practice.

A perusal of the life of Ramanuja reveals that he devoted to God in *archa* form and worked for the maintenance of the various shrines. Many of these shrines won high repute only because of his personal interest evinced in their maintenance and the steps he took to attend to the administration of those temples.

While he was studying under yadavaprakasa at Kanchi, his superior skill in the interpretation of the passages of the *Upanisads* caused concern to the master. The latter found it difficult to get on with the pupil. Thereupon he undertook a pilgrimage to Kashi along with all his disciples. At the advice of his step brother and co-pupil Govinda who warned Ramanuja of the master's intention to do away with him Ramanuja left the party at night under some pretext. He was in a dense jungle and was perplexed to get to the way for returning to Kanchi. A hunter and his wife appeared there before him and lead him on their way reaching the outskirts of Kanchi in the early morning. showing him the further road to the town they disappeared when he was sent away by them to fetch water for drinking. Realizing that the escorts were none other than Sri Varadaraja and Mahadevi, Ramanuja undertook to serve them every day by bringing a pitcher filled with water from the well wherefrom he was asked to bring

10. Śrappadi Guruparampara, p. 114.

Yatirajavaibhava 24-28.

water. This water was to be used for the worship of the Lord. 10 This is the first example of Ramanuja's services rendered to the *archa* form of God.

Ramanuja left off his study under Yadavaprakasa and was not in a position to find what he should do next. Kanchipurna, who enjoyed the confidence of Sri Varadaraja, and who had the good fortune of talking to that deity, ascertained from Him the course which Ramanuja had to pursue. Six points were offered by God to Ramanuja. The Lord declared that He is the ultimate Reality with Sri. The self is distinct from God. Self-surrender is the means of obtaining moksha. There is no need for the self to remember God on the eve of its leaving the mortal coil. Moksha is assured for the self. Mahapurna is the Acharya for Ramanuja. 11 This illustrates how Ramanuja obtained guidance from God in *archa* form.

While Mahapurna was giving instructions to Ramanuja on religious truths, the overbearing attitude of the pupil's wife forced Mahapurna and his wife to leave Kanchi for Srirangam. Ramanuja thereupon resolved to assume the order of ascetics. He took the order, along with the triple staff and robes from Sri Varadaraja. 12

Then he proceeded to Srirangam where he took his permanent abode. He was offering worship to the idol of Sri Varadaraja ever since he started living at Kanchi and continued that worship till the very end of his life. 13 On one occasion, he had to enter into a debate with the Advaitin Yajnamurti for reestablishing the genuine worth of his system of thought. He prayed earnestly to the idol of Sri Varadaraja and Vanquished the rival who became his disciple assuming the name Arulalap-perumal Emberumanar. 14 Thus the *archa* form of Sri Varadaraja stood by his side at all times guiding his life.

1) Sriman Param tatvamaham mato me prapapattirnirapaya navashyaki hetuh Smrtirantyakale moksho mahapurna iharyavaryah-Yatiraja vaibhava 40.

12. *ibid.*, 50

13. *ibid* 89.

14. *ibid* 86.

Ever since he settled at Srirangam, his endeavours were directed at the proper and effective administration of the temple there and of the perfect attendance to the daily worship of the *archa* form of God under the name Sri Ranganatha. ¹⁵ He was unexcelled in the sphere of Vedanta and also a selfless religious reformer. His amazing skill in temple administration is revealed in the changes which he introduced there. His zeal for raising the standard of the common man in the sphere of religion, his anxiety that the procedural details concerning the daily worship for the *archa* form of God in the temple should not be affected on any account and his realization that the members of the community should be made to realize their duty in rendering service to God according to their mental and physical equipment gave him enough strength to build and develop their religious affiliations of people in and around the temple at Srirangam. It is no exaggeration to admit that the achievements, which would require a period of thousand years for a legislative institution through enactment of laws and regulations and proper implementation of them, had been brought into effect by Ramanuja, a single dynamic religious administrator within his own life time. The laws enacted in the legislatures are found to have shortcoming necessitating frequent and subsequent amendments and changes from time to time. In the long run, most of these laws have a bearing on the original rules only in name, their contents having changed thoroughly. Administrative rules which Ramanuja introduced in the temple at Srirangam have not been so far found to be wanting in any of the major items, although slight changes could have been effected in very minor issues in consonance with changes in the cultural affinities of the Vaishnava community. For approximately a thousand years, the system has been working well and is being followed in the temple to the full satisfaction of the community. No other temple of Vishnu has an administrative system of this kind and a meticulous adoption of the procedural details of the system

¹⁵ *ibid.* 56

of worship as has been in vogue here. The entire credit is due to Ramanuja and Ramanuja alone.

The koil Olugu, which is a chronicle of the Srirangam temple, and which has an English version by Dr. V. N. Hari Rao, gives all the available information regarding the administration of the Srirangam temple before the period of Ramanuja and during and after the periods of Ramanuja. This work contains an account of Ramanuja's contribution.

In brief, the following may be taken as the main features of the Temple administration introduced or governed by Ramanuja.

Kurattalvan, whose name is Srivatsankamisra, was appointed by Ramanuja to have control over the religious codes in the temple. Mudaliyandan, whose name was Dasarathi, had to take charge of the inner organization of the temple. Akalanka Nattalvan, probably a cola chieftain, who became Ramanuja's disciple, was entrusted with the work of managing the temple lands. The temple servants, who were till then of five groups were classified into ten groups with specific duties assigned to each. The *Vaikhanasa* system of worship, which was being practised during that period, was replaced by the *Pancaratra* system. Those who were exercising their authority in the temple were asked to use the seals of Garuda, Shankha and Chakra as marks of authorization. Adhyayanotsava, for the celebration of which objections were raised in some quarters, was arranged on a sound basis, after the objections were ruled out. For this purpose, the images of Nammalvar and other saints were installed. Arrangements were also made to have the *Nalayira Divyaprabandha* recited on all the twenty days of this festival, according to the code drawn by Nathamuni. For a permanent and regular supply of milk for the Lord, a *goshala* was started and his disciple Garudavahanapandita was placed to take charge of this service.

Ramanuja had to leave Srirangam apprehending Chola persecurion and lived in Mysore for twelve years. It is said that the utsava bera in the temple at Melkote was not then there, having been carried away by the Muslim king to Delhi for the sake of his daughter. On hearing the whereabouts of the idol, Ramanuja went to Delhi and brought the image and installed it at Melkote in 1098 A. D. Ramanuja acalled the utsavabera to come to him when he visited the court of the Muslim king. The deity came to him accordingly and Ramanuja received Him endearingly calling Him as his wealthy child (Sampatkumara). From that time, the utsavabera there is called Sampatkumara.¹⁷ Ramanuja's close association with the Yadugiri, also called as Narayanagiri and Daksinabadarikasrama drew admiration from the community which chose to call Yadugiri also by another name yatigiri:¹⁸ Vedantadesika calls this place as the place where Ramanuja won high eminence and reputation (samyami-sarvabhaumavijayasthana - Samkalpasuryodaya 6. 50).¹⁹ Ramanuja's activities in Melkote also called as Yadugiri and Tirunarayanapuram reveal how much he was interested in making arrangements for the continuation of idol worship there.

Ramanuja undertook a pilgrimage to the various holy places in North India and on his return journey visited the Tirumalai temple.

There was then raging a controversy between the Vaisnavas and Saivas regarding the identity of the deity²⁰ Venkatesvara. The Vaisnavas held that the deity is or' visnu refuting the contention of the Saivites that the deity is Siva. The Saivites disputed this and contended in favour of identity of the deity with Siva. Ramanuja was requested to settle this dispute by the rules of the land who is stated to be Tondamana in the Guruparamparas. He arranged for bringing the emblems and weapons dear to both Visnu and Siva and placed them before

16 Koil olugu P. P. 44. -46.

18 ibid. 103

17 Yatirajavaibhava 100

19 ibid 103

God. The doors of the temple were closed for the night, in the next morning, priests, who open the door found the emblems of Visnu taken by the Lord in His hands and those of Siva left aside broken to parts. Then the deity was proclaimed to be Visnu and non-else. 20 .

Venkatachala Itihasamala, which contains seven sections,, describes the Vaisnava character of the idol of Sri Venkatesvara. The remaining four chapters describe Ramanuja's contribution to the temple at Tirumalai. Some of the prominent aspects are as follows. After declaring the identity of the deity with Visnu, Ramanuja had the purificatory rites performed to the deity and temple and enjoined the Vaikhanasa mode to be adopted there. The Anandanilaya Vimana was repaired by him. A necklace with the figure of padmavati was prepared and was put by Ramanuja around the neck of the idol of Sri Venkatesvara. Ablution was to be given every Friday to the deity and the *tilaka* (*urdhvapundra*) made of camphor was to adorn the forehead of the deity. The idol was to be decorated every Thursday with plenty of garlands. 21.

To what extent all these arrangements were made by Ramanuja himself is open to doubt, as some of these could have been made later by others.

One thing however must be stated here. Not only did Ramanuja proclaim Sri Venkatesvara as Visnu but delivered a discourse in the presence of that deity on the contents of the *Vedas* and this was compiled in the form of a work called *Vedarthasamgraha*. This is evident from the introductory verse of *Sudarsanasuri* to his commentary *Tatparyadipika* on the *Vedarthasamgraha*. Vide:- *Sribhahyakrdupanyastah yassrisailapatchpurah*

Vedarthasangrahasyasya Kurmastatparyadipikam

Ramanuja returned to Srirangam after the passing away of Kulottunga I Later he heard that the idol of Sri Govindaraja at Chitrakuta (same as chidambaram) was thrown into the sea by 20. *ibid.* 90-92.

(21. T.T.D. Epigraphical Report 1930, PP.86-89.)

the Chola king who was preaching against the creed of Visnu. Ramanuja arranged to have a temple built at the foot of the Tirumalai hills and this idol of Sri Govindaraja was enshrined there. Ghattidevayadavaraya was responsible for building this temple and at the instance of Ramanuja, a small shrine for Andal was also built there. 22

It is thus seen that Ramanuja was himself the adorer of God in *archa* form and therefore promoted this kind of worship in temples. There two aspects of his contribution to the temple worship which require some explanation. One is the change of the mode of worship at Srirangam from the Vaikhanasa to the Pancaratra. The criticism is levelled against Ramanuja by the followers of the Vaikhanasa code for having effected this change. The Pauskarasamhita, which glorifies the Srirangam temple and the paramesvarasamhita which is based upon it bear ample testimony that the pancaratra system to which these two texts belong was adopted in the Srirangam temple from very early times. The Vaikhanasa mode could have been adopted for reasons and circumstances, the nature of which is not now known. If Ramanuja had been in favour of the pancaratra system, he could have enforced this mode of worship in the Tirumalai temple where the deity was proclaimed by him as Visnu and the Vaikhanasa mode of worship was introduced by him. The charge of having effected 'A change is thus baseless.

The other aspect is in regard to the declaration made by Ramanuja to the effect that the deity at the Tirumalai Hills is Visnu. Ancient Tamil literature has frequent references to the hills as belonging to Visnu. The *Silappadhikaram* (8.1) which is an ancient text written about the first or second century of the Christian era, may be cited here. Another evidence is from the absence of reference to this shrine in the works of the

22. History of Tirupati, VOL. I by Dr. S. Krishnaswamy Iyengar, PP. 288-297.

Saivite Nayanmars, who have not left a single shrine of Siva unsung. While Kalahasti, which is adjacent to the Tirumala hills, gets its proper place in the songs of the Nayanmars, who were interested in their exclusive adoration of Siva, the non-mention of these hills, if they had been devoted to Siva, is surprising in their works. Ramanuja was therefore following the time honoured tradition. Besides, Tirumalai Nambi, his uncle was rendering service to the deity in the hills. His ancestors-before Nathamuni were the devoted worshippers of this deity as Visnu. From the account given above regarding his endeavours to maintain and safeguard the *archa* from of worship in temples, it must not be concluded that he was not interested in private worship, that is worship of the deity in individual houses. His *Nitya* is an important work on the procedure of worshipping God in the houses.

This work *Nitya* bears influence of the Pancaratra Agamas which prescribe away of religious life for a devotee of Visnu. The Vaikhanasa Agama could not be followed by him or recommended to any body and every body, as it is to be adopted only by the adherents of the Vaikhanasakalpa sutra. In the work *Nitya* Ramanuja recounts the procedure of the routine life of a Vaisnava. How a Paramaikantin, that is, one who has no personal element in him but looks upon God as the be-all and end-all, should worship God is described here. The deity is to be offered six seats (*asana*), namely, Mantrasana, Snanasana, Alamkarasana, Bhojyasana, Mantrasana and Paryankasana for God to receive the various offerings made such as bath, decoration, food-offerings, bed etc. In this, Ramanuja's treatment bears the influence of Ch. 39 of the *Lakshmitantra* and Ch. 28 of the *Ahirbadhnyasamhita*. Curiously enough, there is no specific reference to the mode of having *Mantrapushpa* which is now in vogue among the Vaishnavas. He uses the words *anyaishca bhagavanmantraih*, which could be taken to stand for the passages now recited from the *Itihasas*, *Puranas*, the works of *Acharyas* and those of the *Alvars*.

With the present state of knowledge, it is not possible to state whether he owed in writing this work to his predecessors or evolved a system based on what he received from his *Acharyas* as part of the tradition and improved upon it under the influence of the *Pancharatra Agamas* and the *Bhagavadgita* which he commented upon. His earnestness that others too should prosper with God's grace is best revealed here.

There is one important matter which *Ramanuja* is held by his immediate disciples to have communicated to them. This is likened by them as his commandments which are hailed as helpful for all the worlds. They are, as the prayer goes, to extend to all times and places.

Vide :- Sarvadeshadashakaleshvavyahata Parakrama Ramanujarya divyajna Vardhatamabhivardhatam| Ramanujaryadivyajna prativasaramujvala Digantavyapince bhuyat sa hi lokahityshin|

What these commandments are is not explained anywhere, though the interpretations offered to them at the present day are highly ingenious.

In this context the following incidents deserve consideration. One of them relates to the inclusion of Ramanuja Nutrandadi within the *Naladiyadivya prabandham*. Periya Koil Nambi, the high priest of the Srirangam Temple, became the disciple of Kurattalvan and composed the hundred stanzas in praise of Ramanuja. Ramanuja permitted this composition to be recited after the *Iyarpa* thus giving a high status to this. Thence forward Periya Koil Nambi came to be known as Tiruvarangattu Amudanar. According to the Guruparampara of Trtiya Brahma-tantra Parakalasvamin, this was eulogised as the divine command of Ramanuja. Ramanuja himself prayed to god that the glory of Srirangam must increase day by day.

Vide :- Sreemannah Sreerangashriyamanupadravamanudinam Samvardhaya|

Vide :- Sreemannah Sreerangashriyamanupadravamanudinam Samvardhaya|

Apart from this explanation, two other incidents are noted in the *Guruparamparas* when Ramanuja issued certain instructions to his pupils. Both belong to the same occasion, though they are different in contents.

The disciples of Ramanuja felt very sad as Ramanuja was getting more and more aged and trying to leave off the mortal coil. To them, Ramanuja offered two instructions. In the first of them, he asked them to follow the six points, choosing, in the descending order, the succeeding point, when they felt that the preceding one was found difficult by them for practice. The six points are: (1) They should study the *Sribhashya* and propagate it. (2) If they found themselves unfit for it they have to evince interest in the compositions of *Nammalvar*. (3) Thus in the same way, they could live in a place where the temple of the Lord is situated. (4) They can render some kind of service to Him. (5) They shall reflect upon the essence of the *Dvaya* mantra and (6) They shall serve any *prapanna* (one who has surrendered himself to Him).²³

These six statements indicate Ramanuja's eagerness to keep the traditional learning in practice and also provide those who are not fit for that, with the means connected with temple worship.

Ramanuja is stated to have given at this juncture another discourse as to how his followers should conduct themselves in the world. For the proper understanding of this, he classified people as favourable, unfavourable and neither favourable nor unfavourable. Those who are favourable are those who are devotees of Vishnu. One shall have a pleasant feeling at the sight of these persons. Those who hate Vishnu are to be treated

23 Pathitva bhashyam tatpravachanamashaktau Shatharipugiri Shraddha Vasah Prabhuparichitasthana Nivahe, Prabhoikainkarye va Prapadanamano-rarthamnanam Prapannanam va me bhavatu Paricharya Parichayah. Arayirappadi Guruparampara P-242

as unfavourable. They are to be treated as if they are serpents. Those who are not interested in giving a religious way of life being devoted to neither Vishnu nor shiva but intend to pursue their life here are to be treated neither as favourable nor unfavourable. Such persons are to be ignored.

These two utterances and the inclusion of Ramanuja Nutrandadi at the end of the *Iyarpa* could have claims for being referred to as the command of Ramanuja. It is not however clear whether all the three or any one of these are meant by the commandment of Ramanuja.

Society exists outside the temple also, though the temple was aimed by Ramanuja as the centre of religious activity. Ramanuja's contribution to the temple worship resulted in the rise of activities which actively helped the running of the temple administration and also became helpful for those who are connected with the temple worship in some form or other. These activities may be named as religious in character. Some of them have a direct bearing on temple administration while others are not practised in the temple proper but wherever they are practised they have an indirect impact on temple worship.

Firstly, the *Ahnika Jarika* of Vangi Vamsesvara, the immediate disciple of Ramanuja, is a magnificent production of the routine life which a *Prapanna* is to lead. This was written on the basis of Ramanuja's *Nitya* and as such deserves more credence. It is not unlikely that this work served as a model for the writing of similar manuals in later years by different writers. More than that, this work has undoubtedly influenced the routine of the Vaishnava community.

The items which are claimed to represent Ramanuja's commandments suggest that every member of the society, without any distinction of caste or sex, is given the occasion and scope for fulfilling his or her spiritual aspirations in accordance with his or her fitness and qualification. This is the

second noteworthy nature of Ramanuja's contribution.

Thirdly, a flower garden came to be nurtured for preparing garlands to be offered to God near whose shrine it gets situated. Anandalvan, one of the direct pupils of Ramanuja, attended to this work in the Tirumalai Hills.

Fourthly, the Alvars became deified in temples and received worship like the principal deity. Festivals are conducted on a large scale, next in importance only to that of the chief deity. After Ramanuja, Ramanuja and in later days, the Acharyas also were installed in the shrines of God and also separately and festivals are conducted annually and occasionally also.

The institution of religious centre came into being under the name *Matha*. In fact, this institution took its rise during the period of Ramanuja himself. An Acharya of great repute was treated as the head of each one of them. Generally, a *sanyasin* was looked upon as the chief of the *Matha*. Quite often branches of the *Matha* arose in important places all over India, the head quarters being located in a particular place.

Sixthly, the line of *Acharya purushas* became systematized by Ramanuja. These men were numbered as seventy four and called Simhasanadhipatis. They are all householders and were invested by Ramanuja with the powers to do *Panchasamskara* to those who seek them for spiritual progress. Some of them offer quite independent of *Panchasamskara*, the burden of their pupils at the feet of the Lord, this act being called *sharanagati prapatti*. Some of these *Acharyapurushas* had the special credit of receiving honours in the important temples.

Seventhly, Ramanuja kutams arose to serve the needs of the pilgrims visiting the holy places where these are situated. The pilgrims who are Vaishnavites are attended to here for their boarding and lodging.

Eighthly, the Tamil compositions of the Alvars were given a place along with the *Vedas* during temple worship and private

worship. They are to be recited daily in temple and houses during worship. On special occasions they are required to be recited in full. The select portions are required to be sung both in marriage and the obsequies. On occasions of temple processions, they are to be recited by those learned in them and leading the procession. The following *shloka* in the *Rahasyatrayasara* of Vedantadesika may be taken to speak well of this practice

Karmabrahmatmakam Sastre Kautaskutanivartakam

Vande hastigirishasya Vithishodhaka Kinkaran

One noteworthy feature that is found both in temple and house worship is the recitation of the two shlokas commencing with the words

Sarvadeshadashakaleshu and Ramanujarya Divyajna
to be followed by Ramanuja's utterance:

Srimannah sriranga sriyamanupadravamanudinam samvardhaya,

addressed to God at Srirangam. This is recited before all other deities. Ramanuja appealed to Sri Ranganatha to attend to the growth of the glory of Sriranga day by day without any hitch. When this is uttered before any other deity, it may mean that what applies to *Sri Ranganatha* by way of appeal may be taken to apply to the particular deities as well before whom this passage is uttered. Or, the request may be taken to be made to other deities also for the well being of the glory of *Sriranga*.

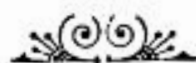
Ninthly, the *Adhyayanotsava*, which was well planned and arranged for celebration by *Ramanuja* at *Sriranga*, came to be celebrated in every shrine during the same period when it is celebrated at *Srirangam*. 24

Lastly, *Ramanuja's* way of life and preachings have exerted profound influence on the Vaishnava community in creating in

24. According to the *Yatirajavaibhava* (106) Ramanuja arranged for the installation and worship of Andal in Various Shrines in South India.

them an earnest desire to live near a temple all through life or at least spend their last days there. *Ramunuja* refers to *Sri Ranganatha* instructing him to live only in *Srirangam*. According to scholars, one of the six points which *Ramunuja* made out to his pupils on the eve of his leaving the mortal coil refers to the need for having at least a hut in the *Yadavadri*, that is, *Melkote*. Therefore, we find even now people choosing not only to visit holy places but take their abodes near the holy shrines.

Thus *Ramunuja's* contribution to the temple and religious worship is invaluable and his influence on them is stupendous. Not only is the system of *Vishishtadvaita* known as *Ramunuja darshana* but his greatness has overshadowed that of the *Acharyas* both before and after him with possible exceptions.



SRI RAMANUJA ON THE GITA

BY

M. R. Sampatkumaran, M. A.

Commentaries on the *Bhagavadgita*, both ancient and modern, are legion. Perhaps the deceptive simplicity of its style and diction tempt even those with inadequate learning to try their wits on it. Perhaps, because Arjuna represents the human predicament, his doubts and questions and searchings of heart come home to everyone whose thoughts soar above mere eating, drinking and pleasure-seeking. The fact remains that the *Gita* is the best-known classic of Indian philosophy and religion both in India and abroad.

Sri Sankaracharya, the earliest commentator whose work survives intact, in his introductory remarks, refers to several earlier annotators who sought to explain the *Gita* critically, sentence by sentence and word by word, leaving however the general impression on the students of the sacred text that it teaches many extremely contradictory doctrines. (This incidentally is a charge repeatedly levelled against it by both Indian and foreign critics, notwithstanding the efforts of Sri Sankaracharya, Sri Ramanujacharya, Sri Madhvacharya and others to reveal its unity of them and purpose.)

The names of these earlier commentators are not mentioned. But Sri Sankara occasionally controverts certain interpretations after stating them, and in some contexts these have been attributed by Anandagiri to a *Vrittikara* (i. e., the writer of a short commentary, presumably on the *Gita*). It is likely that at least one other commentator is referred to and refuted in the *Sankarabhashya*. A list of seven commentators, in addition to Sri Sankara, is given by Sri Vedanta Desika, Pisacha, Rantideva, Gupta, Yadavaprakasa, Bhaskara, Narayanarya and

Yajnasvamin. We do not know whether any of them preceded Sri Shankara. These names are said to be merely illustrative of more than a hundred writers on the *Gita*. That Sri Vedanta Desika had access to at least parts of some of the commentators mentioned by him is shown by his quoting additional stanzas accepted by them outside the canonical seven hundred. He also gives a few variant readings and some instances of splitting up or linking up words in different ways. What is noteworthy however is his considered opinion that all the earlier commentators, though belonging to different schools of thought, agree in holding the essential teaching of the *Gita* to be that the Lord is the Supreme Reality and that the highest duty of men is to resort to Him alone, without relying on anything else and in such ways as to suit their capacities and temperaments.

All this presupposes a long, continuous, detailed study of the *Gita* for over two thousand years at least. As in the case of the *Upanishads* and the *Brahmasutras*, the different interpretations must have fallen in to certain patterns, later developing in to the points of view of *advaita*, *Visishtadvaita*, *Bhedabheda*, *Dvaita* and other well defined schools of thought. A careful study of extant commentaries reveals traces of earlier attempts to press the *Gita* into the service of different traditions in the *Vedanta*. Sri Sankara's commentary, in the introduction to the third chapter, seeks to controvert the claim by an earlier writer, presumably the *Vrittikara*, that *Jnana-karma-samuchchaya* (or the combination of knowledge and works) is the means to final release. At least two points in which the *Ramanujabhashya* differs from Sri Shankara (Vide III-42 and XIII-12) can be traced back to earlier times.

Thus, it is reasonable to suppose that the interpretation of the *Gita* found in Sri Ramanuja's commentary has behind it a long history and a well-settled tradition. No doubt, his immediate authority is Sri Yamunacharya's *Gitarthasangraha*. But this brief work of thirtytwo stanzas offers such a detailed and

coherent analysis of the *Gita* that we have to infer a clear and definite interpretation, handed down by tradition, for every stanza if not for every word. (Actually, a brief commentary on the *Gita*, attributed to Sri Yamuna, was printed in part by Yogi Parthasarathi Aiyangar towards the end of the last century. It is a pity that the printing stopped abruptly and that no study was made of the work or the manuscripts on which it must have been based.) According to Sri Vedanta Desika, the *Sangraha* was composed by Sri Yamuna, after having been taught the purport of the *Gita* by Sri Ramamisra, a disciple of Sri Natha-muni who had it confirmed in his experiences as a *yogin*.

Be this as it may, the *Gitarthasangraha* could not have been written without a settled interpretation of the *Gita* as a whole and in detail. Sri Yamuna must have had a clear view not merely of the general drift of the teachings, but also of the way in which every chapter and stanza contributed to them. The *Sangraha* opens with the statement: "In the authoritative religious treatise known as the *Gita*, Narayana who is the Supreme *Brahman*, is declared as attainable only through the help of devotion (*bhakti*) which is to be developed by the performance of one's duties and rituals, knowledge (of the nature of the individual self as utterly dependent on the Lord) and lack of attachment (to all things other than the Lord)." This implies that the Lord has auspicious qualities and that He responds to devotion: that attaining Him is the supreme objective of life; and that it is achieved through devotion to Him, fortified by the performance of duties and rituals and by knowledge about what the nature of the soul is and how it is related to the Lord and the world.

These implications are worked out in the *Sangraha* which goes on to give summaries of the three groups of six chapters and of each chapter, and then describes the three disciplines of *Karma-yoga*, *Jnanayoga* and *Bhakti-yoga* and their interrelations with one another. Finally, the best type of devotee is directed to perform all things from his own duties to the prac-

tice of devotion solely through love of God. He must not regard anything that he does as the means to redemption; God alone is the means of attaining Himself. This is the main teaching of the *Gita*, according to the *Sangraha*, and the *Gita* is primarily intended for such a devotee.

It is easy to conceive how such a tradition of interpretation as is embodied in Sri Yamuna's synopsis could have evolved through the ages. The *Gita* has long been a sacred text to be studied by those seeking spiritual advancement. Though not technically part of the revelation of the *Veda* and hence nominally inferior in authority, it has a special distinction in being the word of God incarnate. It is one of the three pillars supporting the religion and philosophy of all the schools of *Vedanta*. The study of the *Vedanta*, is deemed incomplete if the *Gita* is left out- it has been prescribed for daily study and also, of course, for being learnt with reverence from a preceptor. Its theory is to be grasped intellectually, and the spiritual exercises recommended in it adopted in practice.

The *Gita* in other words has continued to be a work giving inspiration and guidance from generation to generation. Naturally, no Indian teacher has looked at it from the point of view of the Western Sanskritist, interested in its historical context or philological curiosities or alleged inconsistencies and ambiguities. To find fault with our great *acharyas* for treating the *Gita* as a life-giving and creative work is like blaming the son for not botanising over his mother's grave. After all, if Shakespeare or Homer can be studied for aesthetic enjoyment, why should not the *Gita*, or for the matter of that, the Bible be studied as a work to inspire and illumine?

Sri Ramanuja wrote on the *Gita* in the light of the tradition that came to him from Sri Yamuna through the latter's disciples. To doubt whether Sri Ramanuja has correctly interpreted the *Sangraha* throughout - as Dr. van Buitenen does in the case of the summary of Chapter IV citing it as an illustration—is to

claim that we in the twentieth century can understand Sri Yama better than his own disciples did. But, of course, Sri Ramanuja brought to the task also the vision and equipment of one who had evaluated-critically the philosophy of the *Upanishads*, produced a magnificent commentary on the *Brahma-sutras*, and carried in his mind and heart the uplifting hymns of the *alvars* recording and interpreting a wide range of mystical experiences. Filling in the outlines of the *Sangraha*, he commented on every stanza so as to create a classical *bhashya*. Of the commentaries that have come down to us from the great *acharyas* it is undoubtedly the fullest. Sri Ramanuja has taken pains to indicate the transitions not merely from chapter to chapter or from topic to topic, but also from stanza to stanza. The *Gita* is shown to be not a random heap of disconnected or contradictory ideas, but a careful account of the instruction given by an omniscient master to an earnest student. In the result, the *Ramanuja-bhashya* can be claimed to be clear, consistent and coherent.

In form, the *Gita* is a dialogue, and that too one between a teacher and a pupil. As Professor Rangacharya points out: "The dialogue offers innumerable opportunities for interesting and dramatic exposition and ... the *Gita* has not been remiss in taking advantage of these. At the same time, of course, repetitions cannot be avoided, and we have to go backwards and forwards before we reach the end." It brings before us vividly the interplay of mind and mind, with questions and answers and further questions, and arguments and counter-arguments. The teacher sometimes states his position and then elaborates it. Frequently, he derives a conclusion through a series of steps. Sri Ramanuja carefully follows the continuity of thought in the *Gita* and, if I may quote what I have said elsewhere, "give an effective demonstration of interpreting the *Gita* in the light of the *Gita* itself." His comments take note of earlier and later statements.

In his introductory remarks, he sums up the purport of the *Gita*. "Under the pretext of encouraging the son of Pandu to fight, He (Sri Krishna) promulgated the way of realising God through love (*bhakti-yoga*), which is fostered by (the ways of) knowledge and works (i. e., *jnana-yoga* and *karma-yoga*), which has Himself for its object and which is declared in the *Vedanta* as the means for the attainment of the emancipation of the soul, the highest of human ends". The teaching itself is a minor consequence flowing from the Lord incarnating Himself as Sri Krishna through an act of grace. "Under the pretext of removing the burden of the earth, (but really) for the purpose of becoming the object of refuge even to (unworthy) people like ourselves, He descended to the earth and made Himself visible to the eyes of all men."

Arjuna who furnishes the 'pretext' for the teaching, tempts us to identify ourselves with him. But Sri Ramanuja is careful to point out that he has some necessary qualifications to profit from the instruction given. Magnanimous, compassionate, full of affection for kinsmen and friends, he finds himself involved in a genuine moral dilemma on account of a situation arising where he confounds what is duty for what is sinful. Sri Krishna shows that his doubts arise from failure to distinguish the body from the self, to realise how duty is determinate, and to understand how God governs and rules everything. At the end, when Arjuna exclaims that his delusion has gone and that he has gained true knowledge, Sri Ramanuja explains for our benefit the transformation brought about by the teachings of Sri Krishna.

Arjuna's delusion mistook the self, a knower subservient to God, as the body; failed to recognise God who is full of auspicious qualities and opposed to all that is evil, as the soul of all things, sentient and insentient; regarded the performance of ritual and duty not as the worship and means of attaining Him, but as tending to bind. The knowledge gained was that God could be attained through worship taking the form of devotion,

and arising from self-control, the giving up of forbidden actions and the performance of obligatory duties and rituals for the sole satisfaction of God.

This clearing up of Arjuna's doubts and difficulties involves the analysis of the universe into God, individual souls and matter, defining their qualities and inter-relationships, determining the highest good and discussing the ways and means of attaining it after overcoming the obstacles. Among these, it is the way of realisation with which the *Gita* seems to be primarily concerned. Nevertheless, other topics are also dealt with adequately. Sri Ramanuja's view that the individual self and matter are modes of God, forming the body, as it were, of which He is the soul, gets ample support from the *Gita*: We have the famous simile of all beings being like the gems of a necklace of which God is like the string. Then we have the reference to the two *Prakritis* of God, the higher consisting of the selves and the lower of matter. Seeing the universal form of the Lord, Arjuna says, "You are all things because you pervade them all." Sri Ramanuja brings out the full significance of such passages and stresses, wherever necessary, the nature of the ultimate categories and the relations in which they stand with one another.

As regards the way of realisation, Sri Ramanuja shows how the three or four disciplines that seem to be enjoined are interrelated. At first Arjuna is taught the imperative need to perform his duty. This involves an exposition of *karma-yoga* and *jnana-yoga*. To do one's duty and perform rituals, bearing in mind that the immortal self is different from the mortal body, is *Karma-yoga*. This destroys the sins that stand in the way of realising the nature of the self and leads to the practice of *Janaa-yoga* as the next step in spiritual progress. One who takes it up has to reflect constantly on the nature of the self, as it will be, when free of the trammels of the body. Engaging in it, one can become a *Sthita-Prajna*, the man of steady

wisdom, and in due course realise the self as knowledge and bliss.

Another kind of *Karma-Yoga* which leads directly to self-realisation, is also taught as an alternative. Here, while engaged in the performance of duty without regard for fruits, one is called upon to meditate on the self as not the agent of actions, either because actions are prompted by physiological impulses or needs, or because God is the agent of all actions. To seek self-realisation, this *Karma-Yoga* is recommended in preference to the *jnana-yoga* succeeding the elementary *karma-yoga* are taught in Chapter IV. in all of them there is performance of duty or ritual, along with contemplation of the nature of the self. As the crowning stage of *jnana-yoga* or the *karma-yoga* where a profounder knowledge of the self is required, the aspirant should practise the *yoga* of concentrated meditation. The technique is described in Chapter V and the direct experience of the self resulting therefrom in the next chapter. Sri-Ramanuja sums up the nature of this experience as consisting in the realisation that all souls, being of the nature of knowledge, are similar; that, when purified of the effects of *karma*, they attain most of the attributes of the Lord; that they are inseparable modes of the Lord; and that each of them should be affected by the pains and pleasures of others as much as by those resulting from his own embodiment.

The next stage is redemption from *samsara*. This is attained according to Sri Ramanuja, in two ways. One who has realised the nature of his self may be content to attain a state when, freed from the body, the self revels in its own knowledge and bliss. This is an inferior type of *moksha* known as *kaivalya* (or 'aloneness'). Alternatively, he can proceed to the higher *moksha* of God-attainment. Though there are differences among the later *acharyas* about whether or not the state of *kaivalya* is final, they agree that one cannot return from it to *samsara* and that it is inferior to God-attainment.

Both the goals (and even worldly prosperity including rising to the status of the gods) need *bhakti-yoga*. This is loving contemplation of God's beautiful form and auspicious qualities, performing rituals and carrying out one's duties under the influence of the devotion and making life itself God-oriented. Dr. J. A. van Buitenen whose study of Sri Ramanuja's commentary on the *Gita* offers more bouquets than brickbats, writes thus of *bhakti* as conceived there: " It is man's participation of God, at once 'intellectual' and devotional. It is the constant memorization of the *atman's* total subservience to God, inspired and animated by a perfect love of worship in which the knowledge of God as the possessor of all perfections, as the merciful saviour and as the sole cause of the universe completely terminates. It culminates in a mystic ecstasy of love so ardent that the aspirant cannot live for a moment separated from God: and his happiness depends on his contact with God; his most humble act is an expression of his all-pervading love for God. " *Bhakti* is knowledge coloured by devotion and prompting worship and service. "

Professor S. S. Raghavachar succinctly sums up: The principal factor in *bhakti* is contemplation, and that should be characterized by love, should induce love and should culminate in total surrender. The devotee should find it impossible to live without Him and must cling to Him as the sole basis of life. " Of such a devotee, it has been said (VII. 17) that his love is beyond description. Sri Ramanuja comments that even omniscient God cannot describe it, because it is infinite. And that devotee is hailed by Sri Krishna as His own self: God cannot sustain Himself without him. Professor Raghavachar explains: "Such a devotee is regarded by God as His own soul, for in him He too finds His life. That God is the soul of all is a metaphysical truth, while that the true lover of God is the soul of God is a truth of love. "

Incidentally, it may be noted that stages are implied in the evolution of *bhakti*. The initial stage is obviously different

from the final one. When it is declared by Sri Krishna that except by exclusive *bhakti* one cannot know, see or enter into God (XI. 54), obviously three stages have to be understood. And in the concluding chapter (XVIII. 54-56), the three stages seem to be suggested of *para-bhakti*, *para-jnana* and *parama-bhakti* which Sree Ramanuja mentions in his prose hymn of self-surrender-eminent devotion, vision arising therefrom and the supreme love which cannot brook any separation from the Lord and which immediately precedes final release.

Bhakti-yoga as thus described with its preparatory stages is obviously the *vidya* set out in the *Brahma-sutras* as the means for salvation. It presupposes study of the *Vedas*, as well as a discontent that urges the spiritual quest. Though it has been declared as easy to adopt on account of the element of love in it (IX. 2), none the less it is an arduous discipline. Apart from the requirements of temperament and character, it also entails the qualification to study the *Vedas*. But Sri Krishna indicates in the *Gita* a path of devotion open to all, irrespective of caste or sex. He declares (IX. 32) that women, members of the fourth caste and those of sinful birth may resort to Him with devotion and obtain the summum bonum. Under XII 20 Sri Ramanuja explains that Sri Krishna recommends to one unable to concentrate his mind on God such activities as building temples, planting and tending flower gardens therefor, performing various services there and reciting the divine names. Here is a type of *bhakti* which can be practised by all. Similarly, in the last chapter also (XVIII. 44-45) men of all castes are assured of the highest good if they are devoted to their duties. It is amusing to find Dr. van Buitenen and Dr. Zaehner putting limits to God's grace and Sri Ramanuja's concern for the spiritual welfare of all. The former thinks that IX. 29-34 may refer to salvation through a series of births. Dr. Zaehner accuses Sri Ramanuja (and Sri Sankara as well) of giving a humanitarian twist to VI-32 under which it is explained that others' sorrows should affect the perfect *yogin* as his own.

The question whether devotion is exclusively man's effort, or whether it is an endeavour in which there is responsive cooperation from God, or whether it is the result of God's grace and an end in itself, has been debated at length by later teachers. In the *Gita*, there are hints that God's grace has an important role to play in the redemption of man. This leads us to a consideration of *prapatti* or self-surrender as a way of liberation.

prapatti is no doubt mentioned in the *Gita* more than once. Arjuna seeks instruction as a *prapanna* at the feet of God (II. 7). The *maya* consisting of the three *gunas* can be grouped only by those taking refuge in Him. The path of self-surrender has been known from the remote past. (XV. 4). And Arjuna is called upon at the very end to give up all duties and seek refuge with God (XVIII. 66). In the *Gita*, *prapatti* is generally interpreted by Sri Ramanuja as an ancillary to *bhakti* as helping in overcoming obstacles thereto. But, when even *karma-yoga* and *bhakti-yoga* can be open to all, how can *prapatti* be confined only to those engaged in the arduous *brahma-vidya* of the *Upanishads*? If *prapatti* can be a substitute for expiatory rites needed to destroy the sins standing in the way of adoption of *bhakti-yoga*, it can be a substitute for *bhakti-yoga* itself. It can function as an independent means to salvation. Or rather it shows that God is the only means to *mukti*. Sri Ramanuja hints at this in the *Sribhashya* (III, 2.34) and makes it clear in his *Sharanagati-gadya*. Here, again, needless controversies have been raised by certain Western scholars, like Dr Lester and Dr Van Buitenen about Sri Ramanuja's authorship of the *Gadya* on which we have the old commentaries of Sri Periyavachchan Pillai, Sri Sudarshana Bhatta and Sri Vadanta Desika, the last of whom mentions a still older commentary by Sri Vishnuchitta now not available.

Sri Ramanuja then presents the *Gita* as a manual of devotion to God who is both lovable and loving and who is the soul of our souls. It is an uplifting and clarifying experience to

understand the Song celestial as explained by him. Minor ambiguities are resolved and we are helped to realise the purpose of Sri Krishna's teaching. All that is required of us is the reasonable assumption that the Teacher knew His mind and that the disciple understood Him. The modern scholar, having his own fancies about the primitive mind and its inability to reason clearly, cannot concede this. The *Gita* is for him confused, veering between pantheism, monism, monotheism and what not. That it may be so profound and suggestive as to justify at least to some extent many approaches, seems to him an irrational presumption. But, if we become 'irrational' for the nonce, we gain from the profound philosophical and religious insights offered by the *Gita*. And if we frankly regard the *Gita* as worthy of being studied over and over again, understood and followed in the light of our own ideals and aspirations, there can be no more helpful guide than Sri Ramanuja who seems to be able to see his way clearly through the varied strands of thought in it without indulging in any unnecessary polemics or digressions or far-fetched explanations. Even those who differ from him can start with his commentary so as to get a clear idea of the points at issue. For he writes with the serene wisdom and unpretentious scholarship of a philosopher and the fervour of a philosopher and the fervour of a devotee making an offering to God and inviting all to share in the quest for emancipation.

Dr. Van Buitenen who finds that he has to differ from Sri Ramanuja in regard to the purport of almost every stanza is forced to concede that "he has been truer to the spirit of *Gita* than modern scholarship could ever be." The final tribute is given that Sri Ramanuja has completed the task which the poet of the *Gita* had begun, the reconciliation of thought and religion ". It may be added that in this Sri Ramanuja has been a true representative of the Indian tradition which, except for a few apparent aberrations, has never suffered from the radical dichotomy between philosophy and religion which has plagued Europe ever since the Renaissance.

Sri Ramanuja's refutation of other Systems

[AKKARAKKANI SAMPATHKUMARACHARYA,
VIDWAN, M.A.]

Sri Ramanuja has composed nine works—three commentaries on the BrahmaSutras, a commentary (Bhashya) on the Bhagavad-gita, Vedartha Sangraha (a lecture on the upanishads), three Stotras (collectively called gadya-traya) and Nitya-grantha (which describes the mode of daily worship). The last four are meant, not for the scholar, but for the devotee, to be used at the time of his daily meditation and worship. Among the three commentaries upon the Brahma sutras, the Sri Bhashya is the most elaborate one and the other two, Sri Vedanta Dipa and Sri Vedanta Sara are its abridged editions. So, Practically not fresh ground is covered, by them. We say practically because, in a few places Vedanta Dipa explains certain points more clearly than the Sri Bhashya and gives some alternative constructions also, but this has no significance for our present purposes. So, we are left with just three works, the Sri *Bhashya*, *Gita Bhashya* and Vedartha sangraha, which are the most important ones, wherein, Sri Ramanuja not only explains and establishes the greatness and flawlessness of his own system, but also refutes rival theories. Among these three, the *Gita Bhashya* criticises rival systems in a very few places only and even there, the arguments advanced, are taken from the *Sri Bhashya*. Of course, it differs from other commentators while explaining many texts (*Gita-Slokas*) but never criticises others, openly. In a few places criticism is just implied or hinted at. According to Sri Ramanuja, the *Bhagawad Gita* is not a terse exposition of dry philosophy, but is a juicy, loveable guide-book on practical devotion to the loving Lord, replete with heart-touching, beautiful ideas. It has to be enjoyed, mostly, by the

heart. So he has taken care to avoid gross philosophical debates, as far as possible and goes on describing the greatness and auspicious and lovable qualities of the Lord, whichindle klove and respect in our hearts,

The Vedartha Sangraha is a very beautiful work and can be called a primer of Visishtadvaita. Tradition says that it is the reproduction of a series of lectures delivered by Sri Ramanuja in the august presence of the Lord of the Seven Hills. It explains all the essential features of Visistadvaita and discusses many subjects, untouched in his other works. It was definitely written prior to the Sri Bhashya, as it is expressly mentioned in the latter.

prarpanchitaschayamarthah vedarthasangrahe (srutighatta-1-1-)
Ayamrthah Vedartha sangarabe Samarthitah (Nivartakanupa-
patti Ghatta 1.1.1)

Sri Ramanuja did not comment upon the upanishads, as such, but wrote the Vedartha sangraha to explain the purport of those sacred revelations. He has clearly established in this work that the Upanishads teach Visistadvaita and not Advaita Dvaita, as claimed by others. Having established this fact, he thought it unnecessary to write a seperate commentary upon the upanishads, because the student can easily understand their verbal or general meaning by going through Sankarabhashya, the controversial texts having been explained in the Vedartha-sangraha. So naturally, this work refutes many rival schools like the Vedanta schools of Sankara, Bhaskara and Yadava and some other non-vedanta schools, such as that of the Mimamsaka.

As the Advaitins claim that the famous sentence 'Tatvamasi' occurring in the Sad-vidya(chapter VI of the Chandogya-upanishad) is one of the four "Maha-vakyas", which postulates Advaita, Sri Ramanuja begins the Vedartha sangraha with a detailed study of the Sadvidya. There are two benedictory verses in the beginning of this work, the second of which is a salutation to the great teacher, Sri Yamunacharya, who had bestowed his

benign blessings upon Sri Ramanuja. In this verse Sri Ramanuja says that Sri Yamunacharya dispelled the deep darkness (ie. misconception) of the three systems of Sankara, Bhaskara and Yadava, which are different types of Advaita. The main thesis underlying these systems is that there are not, in reality, two or more different entities called Brahman, Jiva and matter, but only one, i.e. Brahman and everything else is illusory. But this theory, though simple to enunciate, does not withstand criticism. The ancient Advaitins realised this difficulty and tried to solve it in different ways, thereby giving rise to the above-mentioned three different schools. Sri Ramanuja shows that none of these systems satisfies either the vedic texts or logic.

Beginning an analysis of the Sad-vidya, Sri Ramanuja points out that the *Ekavijnanena Sarvavijnana Pratijna* or the proposition of knowing everything from knowing a particular thing and the illustration shown can never fit with the theory of a Nirvisesha (attributeless) Brahman and an illusory world. It is not right to say that by knowing a real thing, you can know the unreal ones too. The illustration of mud and the jar does not envisage that only mud is real and that the jar is unreal or illusory. The jar is only transitory but not illusory, because it is definitely as real as mud itself. Ah! this much is certain, namely, the jar is the effect of mud and is therefore, ultimately mud and not any other material like stone or iron. So this illustration is not helpful to the Advaitin.

The illusion (of the world) is said to be caused by avidya, or ajnana (nescience); but whose ajnana? Since there is no other entity except Brahman, this nescience must be attributed to it. Is it not absurd to say that nescience can cover and obscure self-luminous (*Sath-Chith-Ananda-Svaroopi*) Brahman? If it is assumed that nescience is so powerful as to cover even the luminous Brahman, then, how on earth, can it be destroyed at all? Sri Ramanuja shows seven different incengruencies in this theory of Avidya, which are called Sapta-vidha-anupapatti

Of course, the Vedartha Sangraha does not describe all these: it is only the Sri Bhashya that does full justice to this subject. We shall now describe them, one by one, as described in the latter work.

(1) *Asrayanupapatti*: As described above, it is difficult to find an *asraya* or substratum, wherein this *Avidya* can reside and cause illusion. The *Visistadvaitin*, too, accepts the existence of an *avidya*, but it does and can reside in the individual soul. But the *Advaitin* cannot say so, because, the individual soul comes into existence, only after *Avidya*. In other words, there is no individual soul except Brahman, which, out of ignorance, considers itself to be a *jiva*. So *ajnana* must reside in Brahman itself, which is, on the very face of it, untenable. Among the *Advaitins* themselves, there are two schools, which are called *Brahmajnanavadins* and *Jivajnanavadins*. This fact is sufficient to prove that they are not quite sure about locating their *ajnana*.

(2) *Tirodhana-anupapatti* : How can an unreal entity, *Avidya*, conceal Brahman, which is essentially luminous and as such, cannot be Concealed? Moreover Brahman is not considered to be an object possessing luminosity, but as luminosity itself. Therefore, the concealment of luminosity tantamounts to the extinction(or destruction) of Brahman itself.

(3) *Swarupa-anupapatti* : Is this *Avidya* a real entity like the Brahman or an unreal one, like the cosmic world? It cannot be the former case, because, it would then amount to accepting two real entities. If it is considered unreal, then, it cannot be the cause of the cosmic world, for it must depend upon another *Avidya* for its very existence; because an illusory object must be caused by *Avidya*.

(4) *Anirvachaniya-anupapatti* : To avoid the difficulty pointed out just now, the *Advaitins* postulate that their *Avidya* is neither real nor unreal, i.e. indescribable, Sri Ramanuja

refutes this contention by pointing out that every conceivable object is either real or unreal only and a third category is unthinkable and hence non-existing.

(5) **Pramana-anupapatti:** Sri Ramanuja next points out that we could have accepted this bewildering Avidya of the Advaitins, if any positive proof could be adduced to prove its existence. He discusses this point rather deeply and points out how perception, inference and scripture, the three fundamental means of knowledge cannot, at all, prove the existence of Avidya as propounded by the Advaitins. In this connection Sri Ramanuja discusses many Vedic texts, containing such words as Avidya, Ajnana and Maya and shows that they do not mean the Advaitin's Avidya.

(6) **Nivartaka-anupapatti:** The Advaitins claim that this Avidya is removed by the knowledge of Nirvisesha Advaita Brahman. Sri Ramanuja shows that as Brahman is not, in fact, really attributeless and unqualified, there can be no such thing as a nirvisesha-advaita-brahma-jnana. In this connection, he examines many scriptural texts, which describe Brahman as definitely possessing auspicious qualities and many desirable attributes.

(7) **Nivrittyanupapatti:** Sri Ramanuja points out that being real, bondage cannot be removed by mere knowledge which itself is considered to be unreal.

(8) Next, Sri Ramanuja examines (in his Vedartha sangraha) the systems of Bhaskara and Yadava and refutes them. Bhaskara postulates an upadhi or conditioning factor (like the body or mind), which limits the Brahman and makes it appear to be a suffering soul. Sri Ramanuja points out that this assumption does not improve matters. The main problem is to define the person that feels himself to be a jiva and undergoes the various ordeals of mundane-existence, surely, upadhi itself cannot be the jiva and no other entity except upadhi and

Brahman is accepted. So it, amounts to saying that Brahman itself becomes the jiva and undergoes all the suffering. This goes directly against the vedic text, which proclaim that Brahman is devoid of all impurity and is an abode of pure knowledge, joy and other auspicious traits. Again, Brahman is motionless, being all-pervasive, and the upadhi, the condition, is, by nature, constantly moving about. Therefore, when it moves about, it contacts different parts of Brahman. When one part is thus given up by the upadhi, it would amount to say that part has been liberated and a new one has been shrouded and become a jiva-surely a ridiculous situation, tantamount to alternative bondage and liberation.

(9) Yadaya's system is called Bhedabheda-vadin. It accepts both the bheda and abheda (difference and identity) of the individual soul with Brahman. that is, the soul is different from Brahman while in its mundane existence, but becomes identical with it after liberation. Sri Ramanuja points out that this theory also does not solve the basic problem and protect Brahman from all the inauspiciousness of a jiva, because, in reality, Brahman itself must be supposed to have become the jiva. To suppose that one part of Brahman becomes the soul (or souls), while another part remains pure, is ridiculous. It amounts to saying that one half of your body is anointed with scent and decorated with ornaments and garlands, while the other is put to torture by cutting, burning and so on therefore, Sri Ramanuja comments that this system is worse than the regular Brahmajnana-vada

If however it is declared that, that part of Brahman, which forms jiva, is different from the other pure part, we are only accepting the Visistadvaita theory, that the jiva, though actually a distinct entity, is said to be Brahman itself, because it is an inseparable part, namely a body of Brahman. This removes the stain from Brahman.

Sri Ramanuja casually criticises the outright Dvaitins also

in a general way, though the actual Dvaita system of Sri Anandatirtha was a later one and there were no other definite Dvaitins at that time. Sri Ramanuja points out that absolute Dvaita cannot be accepted because, that runs against the Abhedha Srutis.

After thus refuting the other systems of pure Advaita and Dvaita, Sri Ramanuja next develops the theory of Bhakti, by pointing out that different Vedic texts refer to Bhakti alone, and not mere knowledge, as the means of salvation. Incidentally, he refutes the contention that such passages as *Brahma veda Brahmaiva Bhavati* (He who knows Brahman becomes Brahman itself) refer to mere, scriptural knowledge. He points out that in that case, other Vedic texts, which commend dhyana, upasana (meditation, worship) etc, become meaningless. This also is one of the points of contention between the Advaitin and Visistadvaitin. This theory of Bhakti has been thoroughly discussed in the Sri Bhashya, in the opening section of the fourth chapter. The main argument advanced here is, that the Vedic texts describe not only jnana (or knowledge) as the means of salvation but meditation and worship as well. Therefore to satisfy all these texts, we must concede that all these refer to Bhakti under different names, jnana, dhyana, upasana etc. Dhyana or meditation is the continuous flow of knowledge and worship means meditation with love and respect. This is Bhakti. Therefore the word jnana refers to knowledge developed upto meditation, worship and so on.

At the end of these discussions, Sri Ramanuja explains his own Visistadvaita in detail and says "By these explanations all the different anti-vedic and vedic systems like those of the materialistics, Bauddhas, Vaisheshikas, Naiyayikas, Jains, Kapilas (Sankhyas), Patanjalas (Yoga) etc, stand refuted. Of course, he does not refute these systems individually. This topic is fully discussed in the Sri Bhashya.

There are many other rival theories (and not complete systems) , which are also incidentally refuted in the Vedartha sangraha and we will satisfy ourselves by mentioning just a few of them.

There is a theory called the Vyomatitavada which states that such passages as *Daharosminnantara akashastasminyadan-tastadanveshtavyam* etc, speak of an Akasha and a mysterious entity in it which should be the object of meditation. It is not clear whether there were really any followers of such a system; nevertheless, this theory has been actually discussed by various philosophers, Sri Ramanuja points out that we need take no pains to find out what this entity residing in the Akasha is because Vedic text itself clearly mentions that the Akasha referred to above is Brahman and the residing entity is its numerous auspicious qualities. It is also a definite command of the Vedas that a devotee should meditate upon not only Brahman, but also upon its auspicious qualities and that after final liberation, he enjoys both :-(The liberated soul enjoys all the auspicious qualities along with Brahman) etc. This is a very important point accepted by the Visistadvaitin, because it stresses the fact that Brahman is not a colourless, odour-less attributeless abstract entity, but a personal Lord, who possesses every conceivable auspicious trait, such as knowledge, power, magnanimity, compassion and so on. This fact has been emphatically laid down by numerous Vedic texts, including the present one.

The Shaivas, on the basis of certain Vedic texts, claim that Siva is the deity, described in the Vedas as the sole Lord of the universe. Sri Ramanuja discusses these and similar texts in some detail and proves conclusively that it is Lord Sriman Narayana, that is referred to by the various terms, Shiva, Shambhu etc.

Incidentally Sri Ramanuja discusses some other Vedic text, which say that Vishnu was also born, just like Brahma and Shiva

and thus pave the way for the theory that ultimately, Brahman is different from and superior to the Trinity, Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva, who naturally should take the place of inferior gods. This theory is called the Uttirnavada or Trimurthyuttirnavada. Sri Ramanuja refutes this theory, by examining various Vedic and Puranic texts and pointing that Vishnu, included in the galaxy of Trimurtis is an incarnation of the Supreme Brahman, just like the well-known Rama, Krishna and other Avatars.

Next, Sri Ramanuja examines the purva Mimamsaka theory of Karyarthavada in some detail and squarely refutes it. This topic is discussed in the opening section (Adhikarana) of the Sri Bhashya also. In fact, the main opponent (purva-pakshin) in that section is the Karyarthavadi Mimamsaka. So we shall now discuss this topic, briefly. This is a very subtle topic, discussed by many philosophers, including the followers of Purva-mimamsa, the Vedantins, the Naiyayikas (logicians) and Vaiyakaranas (grammarians), because it concerns them all. The actual problem to be solved here is to fix the exact meaning of individual nouns. The Purva-mimamsakas-the Prabhakaras, to be more correct-state that, when we learn the meaning of a word (i.e. a noun), it is only by listening to such commands, such as, "Bring a jar." From this sentence, we form the idea of a Jar, necessarily connected with the action of bringing. On the other hand, we cannot make out the meaning of the same word, jar, by listening to an ordinary statement (without a command) such as, "There is a Jar upon the table." Surely, a person ignorant of the meanings of the words, 'jar' and 'table' cannot make them out from hearing this statement. Therefore, every word means one object connected with an action and there can be no possible exception to this rule. Now, Brahman is supposed to be an object unconnected with any Kind of action and therefore, it cannot be denoted, at all, by any word. Therefore, the Prabhakara claims, that the Upanishads, which treat of the supposed Brahman can convey no meaning at all and as such, it is futile to study them. On the other hand, it is

necessary and sufficient to study the karma-kanda, which describes many sacrifices, all of which are connected with action and gaining heaven by performing them.

Sri Ramanuja refutes this theory in many ways. Firstly, he points out that the meaning of a word can evidently be understood by listening to mere statements, too. Secondly, even if it is granted, for argument's sake, that in the initial stage, the meaning of a word is learnt only as connected with an action, this connection has to be deleted later on, because there is the predicate to denote action, and the proximity with that word establishes the connection. Thirdly, when elders teach their children the names of surrounding object by pointing to them individually, the question of action does not at all arise. There are certain passages in the Upanishads, too, which actually connect Brahman with action, just as the self, i.e. Brahman, has to be perceived, heard, reflected and steadily meditated upon etc. Many such texts have been discussed in the first section (Avrtyadhikarana) of the fourth chapter of Sri Bhashya. We shall also refer to this again when we describe the dhyana-niyoga-vada, presently.

The mimamsakas, who are staunch devotees of karmakanda and cannot peep into the Vedanta beyond it, make every effort to discredit it. After arguing invain, as shown above, that every word connotes an article connected with an action only, They proceed to say that the sole purpose of the Vedas being to make injunctions, as 'do this' and 'don't do that', any sentence which is not in the form of an injunction, makes no sense at all and therefore, the Upanishads such as 'Satyam Jnanam Anantam Brahma' which contain no injunction, are meaningless for all practical purposes and so, are not worthy of study. This objection is raised in the samanyadhidikarana wherein Sri Ramanuja explains the views of different followers of Advaita, who have tried, in their own peculiar way to meet this objection and has shown that none of their

Atma va are drastayah srotavyah mantavyala nididhya sitavyah.

arguments holds the ground against the Mimamsaka. The following four theories are thus discussed in this connection-(1) Nishprapanchi-karana-niyoga-vada, (2) Dhyana-niyoga-vada, (3) Maya-vada and (4) Bhedaabheda-vada. The first two of these schools try to pacify the Mimamsaka by accepting his theory of Niyoga-vada, i.e., that every Vedic sentence must necessarily have an injunction, and claiming that the Upanishads dealing with Brahman, too, satisfy this condition. The other two schools refute the Niyoga-vada, out-right and yet try to establish the authority of the Vedanta. All these four schools have been refuted either by one another among themselves, or by the Mimamsaka. Thus, Samanvayadhikarana-Bhashya presents the picture of, a vast, confusing battle field, filled with the weapons of arguments and counter-arguments. We shall now explain some of these arguments concisely.

(1) Nishprapanchi-karana-niyoga-vada - It has been stated that Brahman alone is real and the phenomenal world is unreal, or illusory. The Vedanta texts lay down that we should try and destroy this illusion of the world. The dissolution of the illusion is itself pure Brahman. In this way, Brahman becomes the subject of a Vedic injunction. This is what is called Nishprapanchi-karana-niyoga. This theory is refuted by the Mimamsaka by saying that a Vedic injunction contemplates many things such as, a person carrying out the injunction, qualifications of the person, the object, the means, mode of procedure and so on. The Advaitins cannot find out all these things, because, according to them, everything except Brahman is unreal.

(2) Dhyana-niyoga-vada:-As already stated in another context, certain Vedic texts enjoin the dhyana or meditation of Brahman. So, the Dhyana-niyoga-vadin says that Brahman can be understood as the object of this dhyana-niyoga. This theory is refuted by the Mimamsaka claiming that the object of meditation need not necessarily be true, because, sometimes,

meditation upon unreal things also results in positive benefits. It is to be noted that Sri Ramanuja emphatically denies this claim and asserts that the object of meditation ordained in the Vedas can never be unreal, because, in that case, the very purpose of meditation is destroyed. But, the Mayavadin does not admit that meditation can be the direct cause of liberation, because, according to him, liberation which is Brahman itself in the ultimate analysis cannot be the product of any cause.

(3) The standard Mayavadin is refuted by the dhyana-niyoga vadin by saying that it is not possible to claim the destruction of illusion by mere knowledge, because the illusion is actually perceived by the senses, scriptural knowledge, which is after all indirect cannot be powerful enough to overcome it. It is true that the rope-snake, i.e., the illusion of a snake in a rope, is destroyed by the mere knowledge that the object of fear is only a rope. But even here it has to be noted that when a person who mistakes a rope lying in semi-darkness for a snake and runs away from it, he does not cast his fear off, immediately on hearing from a friend that it is after all a rope; but slowly returns back examines the object from a distance and casts his fear off only after perceiving that it is not a snake. In other words, perception is stronger than indirect knowledge. Therefore Salvation can never result from mere scriptural knowledge.

(4) The Bhedabhedavada is dismissed by pointing out that the relationship between any two given things can either be bheda or abheda and never a mixture of the two.

Sri Ramanuja's answer to the mimamsaka's objection is that it is meaningless and against our daily experience to claim that a sentence can have a useful meaning only if it is in the form of an injunction; because the mere knowledge of Brahman, which is sat, Chit, Anamdarupi and full of auspicious qualities, is an end (Purushartha) by itself. Is it not a happy news to learn that there is a treasure hidden below the hearth of our house? Do we not feel exalted when we learn that a near relation of ours

whom we mistook to have lost long ago, is to be found really living in a distant land? Of course, our happiness will complete when we actually get at the hidden treasure or meet the last relative. But, that does not detract from the joy we get by merely hearing that the cherished object is actually existing. Similarly the mere knowledge of Brahman is an end in itself, to gain which, we should study the upanishads.

the second quarter of the second chapter of the Brahmasutras is called Tarkapada, because, therein the Sutrakara argues with alien systems of philosophy and squarely refutes them. Tarka means argument. Of course, every section (Adhikarana) of the Sutras refutes a rival theory with the help of tarka, i.e., arguments and counter-arguments. But rival systems, as a whole, are discussed and refuted only in this Particular Pada, whereas only rival interpretations of certain important Vedic texts, have been refuted in the other sutras and Padas. So, there is no repetition. while opening this Pada, Sri Ramanujacharya asks, "Is it not enough to examine the Vedic texts and establish the true meaning? Is it not going rather out of the way, to refute other systems of philosophy? Why does the Sutrakara undertake this unnecessary task?" This is answered thus:-"No doubt, the true meaning of the upanishads has been established in the first chapter and many rival interpretations negated there and in the first quarter of the second chapter; But still, it is necessary to demolish these systems outright because, otherwise, ordinary people might mistake them to be authoritative too, and indulge in them, than shaking their faith in the Vedanta. Faith is the important qualification of the Sadhaka, without which, he cannot gain spiritual progress. Therefore it is quite necessary for him to clearly understand the untenability of other systems, in order to have unshakable faith in his own system."

The opening section of this quarter deals with the Sankhya system, which is very much akin to the Vedanta school and is therefore most likely to be confused as being an authentic

one. The main drawback of the Sankhyas is that they are atheists and postulate that the soul has no action, has in reality, no bondage and consequently is not really liberated at all. But, then it is impossible to conceive how an inanimate entity, that their Prakriti (matter) is, can create the universe, without being Prompted by an intelligent agent. Again, if the Purusha or soul, is really untouched by either bondage or liberation, what on earth, is the purpose of his existence at all? It is as good as the outright denial of his existence. To say that the creation and destruction of the universe is natural and that the creatures of the world enjoy pleasure and pain in accordance with an undefinable entity called merit (or karma) is meaningless, because the orderly creation etc., of the universe must be due to the will of an intelligent creator and merit can be nothing more than this pleasure or displeasure, as mentioned in the Vedas. Moreover there are many mutual contradictory concepts in this system; it is claimed, on the one hand, that the soul is pure, devoid of all activity and the means of bondage as well as release are the attributes of prakriti; on the other hand, they say that the motive for the prakriti for its various actions is to cause bondage and liberation to the soul! Showing the example of the lame and the blind, they state that Prakriti and Purusha, when they come to each other's contact, work together to create the universe and free the soul from bondage etc., in the same breath they maintain that Purusha is ever unchanging, inactive and isolated! Sri Ramanuja points out many more such contradictions.

Next, the yoga system, which is often called Sehvara Sankhya, because it concedes the existence of an Ishvara or God, has to be considered. But this system has already been dispensed with in the first quarter of this chapter, in what is called the *Yoga-Pratyukti-Adhikarana*, and is therefore left out here. The acceptance of God and yoga or meditation, are the merits of this system. But alas! God is considered to be only the operative cause, whereas matter, independent of Him is supposed

to be the material cause. He is said to be devoid of all auspicious qualities and is not related to the soul in the form of its antaryami (or inner soul). These theories are all against the Vedanta.

The next topic discussed is the paramanu-karana-vada of the Vaiseshikas. This theory postulates four kinds of paramanus or atoms, pertaining to the four elements, earth, water, air and fire, akasa or ether being supposed to be infinite and as such eternal and unbreakable into atoms. These atoms are supposed to be eternal and to create the gross universe. But it is difficult to answer the question, Do these atoms have any size or not? If they have, they can be further broken into tinier bits. If otherwise, even a million of them cannot produce any size in the product. Again, it is not right to believe that the inanimate atoms, can create, by themselves, the universe. In other words, all the inconsistencies pointed out in the Sankhya system are common to this system also. No doubt, the Vaiseshikas can claim that they accept an Isvara or God, who is the operative cause of the universe, and that this differentiates them from the Nirisvara Sankhyas. But this does not solve the problem, because the God inferred by the Vaiseshika cannot be assumed to possess all the qualities of the Vedic Brahman, Who alone can be the satisfactory (threefold) cause. Moreover, the theory of samavaya, which is supposed to be the connection between two inseparable entities, is a meaningless invention and does not stand scrutiny. It was stated above that certain theories of the Sankhyas like the satkaryavada are accepted by the Vedantin; but no theory, of any importance, of the Vaiseshika can be accepted. therefore this system deserves to be rejected outright.

After dismissing the Vaiseshikas, the sutrakara takes up the case of the Saugatas or Buddhists, Who are divided into four main sects-Vaibhashika, Sautrantika, Yogachara, and Madhyamika. The first set accepts the existence of the atoms of the four elements-earth, water, air and fire, which are called

external entities, and the mind and consciousness (Vijnana), all of which can be actually perceived. The second sect accepts all these entities, but claims that they are not perceptible, but can only be inferred. The third sect states that only consciousness is real and everything else is unreal. The fourth sect, is nihilist and dispenses with vijnana also and says that nothing exists really; everything is void. This is called sunya-vada. The first three sects postulate that the entities accepted by them are all momentary and that our conception of their being otherwise is a mere illusion. The most important objection against the first and second of these sects is that if the atoms are supposed to have only a momentary existence, then, they cannot be conceived, by any stretch of imagination, to produce any effect, i.e. the phenomenal universe. How can an atom, which dies the moment it is born, mix with other similar atoms and produce a gross body? It is meaningless to claim that avidya (nescience) produce the effect, because the avidya resting in the soul cannot, in any way, be the cause of a physical product. Moreover, avidya and its substratum are also supposed to be momentary. In short, it results that there is no cause and no effect, because everything dies in the second moment of its birth and so, can create nothing. It is also wrong to say that when a thing destroyed, nothing remains of it, because we actually find that in every case of destruction, the thing destroyed does not actually melt into nothing, but is only changed to a different, subtler form. The continuity of existence, which we are experiencing, cannot be explained, satisfactorily by the Saugata. It is also meaningless to claim that external objects are not perceptible at all? The third theory that external object, being illusory, do not exist at all, is also untenable because all illusions are superimposed upon existing entities only and as such, if nothing exists, there can be no illusion, too. It is also impossible to equate the dreaming with the waking state, because, we do actually find the two states, to be quite different from each other. In fact, Sri Ramanuja has pointed out during the discussion of Sat-khyati (in 1-1-1) that

the objects perceived in the dream are not non-existent, but temporarily existent. The nihilist's system does not stand scrutiny, because it is not possible to prove a no'thing' by any means, which is by its very nature, connected with existing entities only.

Then follow the Jainas, whose famous Sapta-bhangi is criticised as a set of meaning-less words. Is it not insanity to call a thing as simultaneously existing, non-existing, existing cum non existing and so on? Another theory of the Jainas, namely that the size of the soul is that of the body it takes is also meaningless, because, since they too accept the theory of transmigration of the soul, what happens to the soul of an ant, leaving that body and becoming an elephant in the next birth, or vice-versa? What will be its size during liberation?

The pasupatas are taken to task in the next section. They postulate a personal God, called pasupati, who is to be inferred as the operative cause of the universe and to attain whom, various rites are prescribed which are all avaidik, ghastly for the most part and obscene. Sri Ramanuja has established in the Sastra-yonitva-adhikarana (1-1-3) the God should be understood only through the Vedas and no other means, including inference, because inference has its own limitations and an inferred God can not be even satisfactory operative cause, let alone a material cause. The prakriyadhikarana (1-4-23) definitely proves that Brahman is also the material cause of the universe. So, any system, which does not accept this point, cannot be an authentic one. Moreover the vedas proclaim that sriman Narayana is over lord of the universe and the pasupata's attempt to dethrone him and seat Pasupati on his throne is deplorable.

The last system discussed in this pada is the pancharatra school and this section is called utpattigasambhavadhikarana or Sri Pancharatradhikaran. On the face it, it would appear that Sutrakara is refuting this system also, because, as already stated

stated above, he devotes this whole pada to refute the rival schools. Accordingly, many Bhashyakaras have stated that the Pancharatra school is refuted in this section. Sri Madhvacharya, who accepts the sanctity of the Pancharatra, states that the Sakta system is refuted here. But Sri Ramanujacharya states that the Pancharatra school is not refuted, but vindicated in this section. The Sakta school has been dealt with in the previous section itself and there is no necessity to repeat it here. When the student finds that the Sutrakara refutes every other system, the question naturally arises in his mind, whether the Pancharatra system also is to be refuted or not. The points in favour of Pancharatra are that it accepts the Vedic Narayana to be the triple cause of the universe, describes in detail, the modes of His worship, as explained in the Vedas and does not preach anything that is anti-vedic. The main charge against it is, that it states that the soul called Samkarshana is born of Vasudeva (God-head), which in its turn creates mind or Aniruddha, and from the latter is born Ahankara, called Pradyumna; to say that the soul is born and that it creates the mind and through it ahankara, clearly avaidic. Sri Ramanuja explains that this objection is not a serious one, because such statements occur even in the Vedas. The Lord, who is unquestionably beginningless, is said to be born in various forms which are called avataras or incarnations. (*Ajayamano Bahudha Vijayate*) Another Vedic text, *Toyena Jeevan Vyasasarja Bhomyam* states that the Lord created the creatures (souls) on the earth from water. Similarly certain texts state that the soul is born as a god, man, plant etc, according to his merits. The Vedantin explains such texts as meaning that the soul is said to be born when it takes a new body: that is' it is only the body that is actually born and not the soul. The same explanation holds good in the case of Pancharatra, also. So, Sri Ramanujacharya rightly points out, that the Sutra-kara does not refute the Pancharatra, but only defends it, by removing the seeming incongruity. Even Sri Sankaracharya, who tries to refute some incorrect theories of the Pancharatra, is unable to

point out any serious flaw in it. In fact his criticism is very feeble and half-hearted. Perhaps, he was working under the impression that is being discussed in this pada, the Pancharatra had to be necessarily refuted. It is more likely that he did not like the tapta-chakra-ankana, or the marking of a Vaishnava's body with the symbols of the Lord's Shankha and chakra, which is recommended in this system.

Some people raise a great hue and cry that the Pancharatra belittles the Vedas, when it claims that "Shandilya learnt, at the first instance, all the four Vedas and not being able to find out the truth from them, studied the Pancharatra and got what he was seeking." Certainly this is an outright condemnation of the Vedas. Sri Ramanuja replies that the idea of the author of this statement is to point out that the Pancharatra explains more clearly, that truth, which is not so clearly mentioned in the Vedas, that is, it explains the Vedic truth more clearly, elaborately and in unambiguous terms; it does not intend to decry the Vedas. This is what is called *Nahi Nindanyaya*. Sometimes we belittle a certain person or thing, in contrast to another person or thing, not with any malice towards the former but only with an idea to show the greatness of the latter. As an example of this the Bhumavidya occurring in the seventh chapter of the chandogya upanishat, describes Narada as saying that he could not realise the Atman even after studying the four Vedas and all other branches of learning. Surely, the Upanishad does not intend to decry or belittle the Vedas and the other branches of learning! What is meant to be conveyed here is the greatness of the Bhumavidya and nothing more. In the same manner, the Pancharatra is praised as explaining the many subtle points, which are not clearly described in the Vedas.

Therefore it has to be understood that this Pada deals with the Pancharatra system, only incidentally. Such digression is not new to the Sutrakara. The Devata, Madhu and Apashudra Adhikaranas occurring in the third quarter of the first chapter

incidental (*Prasāngika*) and not directly connected with the subject matter on hand. The Sutrakara has praised the Pancharatra in his Mahabharata and it is meaningless to believe that he refutes the same in the Brahmasutras.

In this connection, Sri Ramanuja quotes certain Verses from Mokshadharma in the Mahabharata and explaining their meaning points out that even Sankhya, Yoga and Pasupata shastras need not be rejected outright, but only to be modified. The Vedantins do accept the twentyfive tatvas (or entities) of the Sankhyas and the Ashtanga yoga of Patanjali with this correction that the twentyfive tatvas form the body of Brahman. Yoga, describes the method of meditating upon Him and the other rituals explained in other Shastras as the different modes of His worship. As for the Pasupata doctrine, the existence of Pashupati is not negated; only he was not accepted as the Supreme Being. Lord Narayana Himself has explained all these truths in the Pancharata sastra and as such, it contains nothing anti-vedic.

Thus it is clear that Sri Ramanuja does not condemn his opponents outright and in harsh words, but tries to correct and accommodate them as far as possible. We have shown earlier that even Advaita, every part of which has been criticised by him in the Mahasiddhanta and numerous other places, has been, in the final analysis just modified to make Vishishtadvaita some times, even his words of criticism, though apparently harsh contain many gems of thought. According to the opening sentence of the Mahasiddhanta "This theory of Mayavada has, been fabricated by people, who are ignorant of the essential nature of perception and other means of knowledge and the means of determining their true import, such as sound logic. It is founded upon fallacious arguments, that do not stand the test of rigid scrutiny. They are devoid of that Personal quality, which makes a person worthy of the choice of the Upanishadic Lord and therefore their wisdom has been wiped off by their beginningless sins. Therefore people who understand the true

purport of texts, perception and other means of knowledge, assisted by sound logic, should discard this theory." On the face of it, these observations seem to abuse the mayavadins as sinners devoid of all merit and other means of knowledge and who do not know how to apply the rules of logic to these means. These remarks appear to be unnecessarily harsh and uncalled for. But Sri Ramanuja does not really mean to abuse the Adwaitins, but only pities them. It cannot be seriously denied that the mayavadins are great scholars, well-versed in the Vedas grammar, logic, mimamsa and other branches of learning. But alas! with all this equipment, they have failed to grasp the true meaning of the Vedas, to understand the true nature of the things that can be known by direct perception or inference and the right way to apply the principles of logic. This is because they are wanting in just one thing devotion to the Lord, in the absence of which, their wisdom remains clouded (like that of any other human being). Only the Lord's grace can remove this sin and unfortunately they have not been able to gain that grace because they are devoid of devotion! There are many texts in the upanishads, the Bhagavadgita and other spiritual works, which proclaim that the Lord cannot be understood in his true aspects let alone be perceived and reached, without devotion towards Him. A mere study of the scriptures or performance of meritorious deeds, such as penance, charity, sacrifices etc, without devotion, do not, in the least, help one to realise Him, in His true nature. Devotion leads one to the Lord's grace, which repels the devotee's sins and helps him to understand the true nature of the Lord, as revealed by the scriptures. Alas! all the other qualifications of the Mayavadins have become useless, in the absence of this one trait, viz, devotion! The Lord Himself proclaims, "I choose them, that love me (ie. is devoted to Me). Sri Ramanuja had to discard the mayavada, because it does not fit into his bhakti-marga. Surely *Dasoham* and *Soham* cannot go hand-in-hand,

It is to be note dthat in this sentence, Ssi Ramanuja dose

not use the exact word, bhakti (devotion). but refers to it in a round-about way-*Parama Purusha Varaniyata-hetu bhutatma-guna visesha!* Many students of Sri Bhashya fail to understand his lengthy word, which simply means bhakti, which is the cause of divine grace and (through it) the removal of all sins, which cloud the vision and the consequent dawning of true knowledge of the Scriptures. This, the purport of this long sentence is to emphasise the part of Bhakti, not merely in attaining salvation, but even in understanding the true meaning of the Sastras.

All glory to the blessed feet of Sri Ramanuja.



Redemption according to Ramanuja

Dr. M. N. Narasimhan

In the opening verse of his polemical work *Sribhashya* Acharya Ramanuja acknowledges his gratitude to several preceptors of the past. Particularly Yamuna to whom he credits the merit of dispelling the delusion caused by the false interpreters of the Vedantic doctrines has summed up his Philosophy of the Finite self in his work *Atmasiddhi*. The latter describes the same as different from the body, the senses and mind and vital breath, sentient, eternal and not momentary, unproduced, free from changes, different from Brahman, not a product of *ahamkara*, not mere consciousness but a conscious subject existing in sleep & liberation, many and not one, atomic, a doer and a part of Brahman. Ramanuja closely follows the trend of his master while expounding his notion of the Finite being.

Of the several characteristics attributed by Yamuna to the soul, Ramanuja considers the last that is the *Jiva* is an *amsha* of the Lord as paving the way for a consistent philosophy of its redemption. In his *Suthrabhashya* he makes clear that the Finite is not a mere figment of the mind to be annulled with the apprehension of the Absolute. It is not a mere mirage of metaphysics, but is as real as Brahman that is its metaphysical and moral bedrock. Not only does it derive substantiality from the Lord, but it is related to Him as *aprithagvisheshana*. The relation between the Creator and the created, thus is one of co-ordination not contradiction, internal and organic and not external. As a mode of the Divine the *Jiva* is the *prakara* of *Ishvara* that can only be distinguished but not separated from Him

Such an explanation makes way to regard earthly existence not as a punishment of the Supreme Lord for some inexplicable cosmic ignorance which disappears with the dawn of the Knowledge of Brahman but as the glorious invitation of the Divine to participate in the riches of creation and fulfil its mission on earth. This means that the Finite is sent by the Lord to earth as His messenger to do what it is ordained. The question then would be 'where does it exist Prior to creation? To this the Acharya replies 'in the Lord Himself, Before the Lord creates, both the Finite and the world of matter exist in Him in a subtle unmanifest form devoid of all qualities. In fact in their evolved form they appear so radically different that one often doubts whether they really existed so in Brahman. Creation causes such a transformation.

No doubt there is a change of states. But such change is not of the type that pots and jars undergo. It means only the contraction or expansion of its intelligence. Prior to creation the Finite exists in the Absolute with its intelligence contracted. The Lord conjoins them to the material principle. Thenceforth evolution proceeds due to influence of matter & soul under the guidance of the Supreme Divine. One may question the reason for such a disturbance of 'the sleeping soul'. The Acharya replies it is to provide opportunity to the Jiva to suffer punishment or to enjoy reward and thus become fit for final release. 'It is the avowed decision of the Lord in Heaven' writes he in his Sutrashashya, 'ever to increase the happiness of the Jiva to the highest degree and to this end He should reprove intolerableness of sins and endless aeons and check the tendency on its part to transgress His laws.' Creation, then, is not an accidental mishap but the dayakarya of the Hound of Heaven. During the process, the self gets connected with a body suited to wear out its past deserts. In its essential nature, it is akin to the Lord. It possesses all the auspicious qualities of Brahman. But when conjoined to matter, its past deserts conceal its real nature. Contact with matter gives it name and form and thus

begins the cycle of endless births and deaths. Though it's essential nature is not affected, yet it's knowledge and bliss get contracted. It suffers evil in the world and being subject to all states-waking, dreaming, deep sleep and swoon, subject to karma, mistakes and misuses the freedom given to it by the Lord, for licentiousness and indulges in the fleeting frivolities of life and thus becomes a willing victim to sense inclination.

Ramanuja recognises four kinds of souls. They are :

1. The celestial or the superhuman beings consisting of demigods, demons, ghosts, such as the deva, asura, gandharava siddha, kinnara, vidyadhara, yakshas, rakshasas and pishachas.
2. The human beings.
3. The animals including beasts & birds crawling and creeping insects and the like.
4. Stationary beings.

Though description of the other species other than that of the human is not given in great detail, the latter are described as possessing a body, five fold breath and eleven organs. The first of these is made up of all the five elements in which water preponderates. Though breath is regarded in essence the same as mind, yet it is mind existing in a different condition and is not to be considered as mind itself or as a function of it. Further it is not an element of the material world but an instrument of the soul like the eye or the ear. Each of the five fold breaths has its name though in reality all of them constitute the breath. They are named Prana, Apana, Vyana, Udana and Samana. The five organs for doing work, the five outer organs of sense and the inner organ Manas constitute the eleven organs. The five organs of work do function like seizing, going and so on. The five outer organs of sense are concerned with functions like seeing hearing etc. The outer organs give rise to knowledge when they contact the external objects. Manas gives rise to the knowledge of inner states like pleasure, pain etc.

Though it does not have the knowledge of the external world, it has the three functions of consciousness of the self, reflection and decision, with reference to these three, it is called ahankara, citta and buddhi. These are material in character and are the products of transmutation of matter. The organs of sense as well as manas are all atomic in size. Each one of them is ruled by a Deity. Speech is ruled by Fire, eye by the Sun, breath by mind and so on. The deities are controlled by the individual selves. But this does not make the Finite all powerful as both the deities and the self have their origin in the will of the Lord.

The Jiva is also subject to several states like waking, sleep, dream, deep sleep and swoon. In the state of dream the self lies in the vein called Hita. Experiences of this state are said to forebode the good or ill to come. They are considered as retribution for acts of minor importance. In deep sleep free from dream the self disconnects itself from the body and gets a glimpse of the Absolute. In 'far deep sleep' it gets into the state similar to release. Only it does not become 'all-knowing' and enjoy everlasting bliss as after sleep it wakes up and returns to samsaric experience. The seeds of Avidya are responsible for such a return. For Advaita Avidya is a soul and world negating principle. But for Ramanuja it is the Maya or lila (sport) of the Divine Lord. It is the Lord's power by which the evilwayward will of the Jiva forgets its home in the Absolute and enticed by prakriti gets itself caught in the cycle of births and deaths, pleasure and pain. Such a fall from the spiritual gathers momentum and makes it pay the penalty of endless suffering. Avidya generates abhimana. The latter gives rise to action, the desire and the consequent struggle for worldly pursuits. The latter in turn generate anger and hatred. The result is the loss of reason and this tethers the Jiva to samsara. Such failure to accomplish the satisfaction of the sense inclinations and the consequent enragement and loss of balance of perspective according to the Acharya is the greatest catastrophe that can

befall the Jiva. Commenting on the said condition, writes he in the Gitabhashya that such a despicable mood is the cause for the finite's suffering and misery. Confusion feeds confusion and the end is the moral and spiritual death of the individual. From cradle to coffin, the Jiva's mind gets haunted by fear and a sense of insecurity. The rosy romance of the youth fades and gives way to the gloom of old age and death. Disappointments increase and the instability of worldly phenomena induce a mood of sick-mindedness in the Jiva. Life loses its zest and the feeling of world weariness creeps on the soul. The Acharya holds that such a feeling of despondency need not and should not despair one. They are indeed the preplanned sport of the Cosmic-Designer. Even then the All loving Father does not force His presence on the individual self, not yet ripe to receive Him. With infinite patience He waits and watches the struggle of the self in samsara since the struggle is necessary for the full unfoldment of its faculties. The souls are thus 'deliberately made to suffer pleasure and pain of the most dreadful kind. No doubt the Lord is their Father. No doubt He creates them. But at the hour of creation itself he has given them not only body and senses to act but also has given them a code of conduct explaining the 'dos' and 'the don'ts'. This He does to enable them to exercise their free choice, to apply their wish to work their good or bad. This means ultimately not the Lord, but the Finite acts and consequently becomes responsible for the consequences too.

One may question at this point whether the individual is free to go his way. The Acharya replies 'no'. He draws attention to the Gita that says 'He dwells in the heart of all the beings; moving and not moving. As their indweller, He directs them from within, as if mounted on a machine'. All activity thus proceeds from the Lord. The Jiva is free to act only to the extent to which volition is needed for any action. The privilege of sanctioning permission to act or not is left to the mercy of the Lord.

Following the Svetasvatara, Ramanuja holds that the real way for release from all fetters of worldly existence is by obtaining knowledge of Brahman. Scripture, according to him, is the only means for such knowledge. Even in it, the Karma Kanda portion enjoins works that bear fruits limited and passing. Only the study of Sariraka Mimamsa can seek deathlessness. It should not be knowledge of the negative type that which establishes that the world is unreal. It must engender in one the sense that immanence is a reality. Instead of making him flee away from it, it must enable him to live in it and realise Brahman through it.

The Acharya distinguishes between two interpretations of the Vedantic texts - knowledge of vedantic texts as a means to release and knowledge of Brahman Himself. He prefers the former sense and quotes profusely from the texts of the past to establish the view that knowledge enjoined as a means to release is of the nature of meditation.

Meditation means to Ramanuja steady remembrance. As the upanishads explain it is "uninterrupted remembrance of the type of the flow of oil". Such steady remembrance is otherwise designated 'Bhakti'. In the mangalasloka of his Suthrabhashya, he describes the latter as knowledge fructified into intense devotion. In his other work Vedarthasangraha also he explains it as a particular kind of knowledge of which one is infinitely fond of and which leads to the extinction of all other interests and desires. Such knowledge grows day by day and becomes constant and intense by repetition. To accomplish the same religious duties are enjoined to be performed without the desire for reward and with the sole object of propitiating the Lord. The Acharya considers this to be the true import of the text that says '..... they seek to know through sacrifice'.

Following the Vakyakara, he lays down

(1) Viveka-keeping the body clean and unpolluted,

- (2) Vimoha-absence of attachment,
- (3) Abhyasa-repeated reflection,
- (4) Kriya-performance of religious works,
- (5) Kalyana-good conduct,
- (6) Anavasada-freedom from dejection,
- (7) Anuddharsha-freedom from exaltation.

as necessary for meditation. The same are said to deepen devotion and enhance the intense love of the Finite for the infinite. In the latter conditions the true devotee feels it difficult and almost impossible to live even for a moment without singing His holy names and prostrating before Him. Writes the Acharya in the Gita Bhashya "The devotee repeats and calls up on the names that connote the different distinguishing attributes of the Lord's nature". His frame quivering and hairs bristling with joy, his voice thrilled in holy excitement utter broken speech and constantly repeat in yearning notes such names as Narayana, Krishna Vasudeva, with equal zeal they prostrate in united concentrated devotion and worship. Ever and incessantly Praying eternally to be united to the Lord, they meditate on Him and worship Him with the vivid and fervent appeal that in holy service that they may realise their true atman, namely complete abnegation and abacement of the ego. Such intense devotion purges the Jiva of all its egoity, generates humility and a sense of duty the feeling that it lives not for itself but for the Lord. It kindles in the Jiva the sense that it is really not the author of any action but is only a servant of the Lord doing works not for any extraneous rewards or threat of punishment but because it is his nature and end to do so. In his Gadya the Acharya makes clear that serving him alone eternally constitutes the sole purpose of its existance. All actions of the Finite are directed only towards one goal. That is to please the Master. Only such an attitude is conformity with its true nature. Anything contrary is detrimental to its svarupa. To such a one writes he in the Gitabhashya 'He gives Himself'.

One may ask why the Lord should deliver Himself and become easily accessible. It is the unstinted, unbounded and unfailing love of the Hound of Heaven for the struggling souls in samsara. For Ramanuja creation, as already noted, is not an accidental mishap but essentially the dayakarya, the preplanned sport of the Divine. The Lord rejoices in creating and sporting with His creatures. He likes to be near them. But His compassion is not conditioned by the Finite's action. Karma according to the Acharya is not something that binds the individual to the endless cycle of births and deaths but is the chief operative principle-The Divine command operating in the world governing the deliberations of the Finite in mundane existence. Writes he in his Suthrabhashya 'What the Lord Himself aims at is to increase ever the Jiva's happiness to the highest degree and to this end it is instrumental that He should reprove and reject the infinite and intolerable mass of sins. This means that the Jiva's karmas are not opposed to the Lord's kripa. Instead it becomes the sadhana or means through which the latter operates to enable the Finite to work out its end.

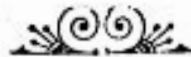
When devotion deepens, it engenders in the Jiva the desire for communion with the Supreme. The thirst for such communion becomes intense and the Finite feels separation from the Husband of the universe unbearable. Realising its utter weak nature, unworthiness and helplessness, it readily sacrifices all egoity, resoures all desires for worldly pursuits and amusemens and dedicates itself solely and entirely to the service of god and the godly. It realises that the sole purpose of its existence is such dedicated and devoted service. In the language of Poet Tagore 'it begs the Lord to give it the strength to submit it's will to His will'. Ramanuja terms such humility, complete abnegation and resignation and surrendering to the Almighty (Prapatti.) Arthapanchaka, a work by a later disciple of Ramanuja, Pillailokacharya defines prapatti as the way of unreservedly placing the self in the hands of the Lord

and ridding oneself of all notions of securing salvation by self-effort. It is the Finite's 'attitude of entire resignation to the Lord's will.' For Ramanuja it signifies the frame of mind whence the Finite realises that 'it is not the Lord but His eternal servant, not 'soham' but 'dasoham; effaces himself whence every thought, every word and deed is transformed into Kainkarya.

The Acharya holds that in moksha the Finite does not lose itself and become one with Brahman. As Prof. Srinivasachari observes 'Mukti is a return from the becoming of Samsara to the being of Brahman. . . . is a removal of the empirical process due to the complex of avidya, Karma and the infinite progress of causality. In this new state the Jiva does not lose its personality. Instead its qualities of intelligence, bliss and other essential features that were obscured and contracted by Karma expand and manifest themselves when bondage passes away 'even as the lustre of the gem is not created by the act of polishing it.' Moksha, then, is only putting off the imperfection that will have veiled the Divine nature of the Finite and checked the free expression of its potentialities. In such a blissful state the Jiva does not become Brahman but only becomes like Brahman. In his Suthrabhashya the Acharya makes clear that the Finite becomes akin to the Lord in almost every respect with the exception of world creation and destruction. Writes he 'the released soul freed from all that hides its true nature possesses the power of intuitively beholding the pure Brahman but does not possess the power of ruling and guiding the different forms of motion and rest belonging to animate and inanimate nature.

To the question whether the Finite has a return to samsaric life after release, the Acharya answers in the negative. The released will have freed itself from all fetters of bondage and attained supreme bliss. It will have nothing to long for. Evidently it will not enter or engage itself in any activity particularly of the mundane type. So the possibility of its

return to worldly existence is completely ruled out. Such freedom and individuality enjoyed by the Jiva does not conflict with the universality of the Lord. The Jiva as prakara of Isvara is most dearly loved and ruled by him. As it is privileged to enjoy His company and August presence the fear of its return to earthly existence is ruled out. In the Acharya's own words 'Co-operating with the will of the Supreme, dwelling eternally in loving contemplation of Him, revealing within itself the perfections of His nature, who animates and maintains it and bears infinite love for it' constitutes its true condition of the Finite in the state of final release.



Sri Ramanuja-Darsana

The opportunity to elucidate the philosophy of Ramanuja in a brief compass is a blessing and to be able to utilise it worthily can only be through the inspiration furnished by the great theme.

The exposition will acquire intelligibility if prefaced by an indication of the central orientation of Ramanuja's standpoint. There are about three possible standpoints in history of philosophy. There is the initial philosophy of the first look, the Naturalistic or Materialistic standpoint for which reality is exhaustively constituted of the data of sense-experience and the edifice of empirical science built on it. This outlook limits reality to realm of mundane consciousness. There is the antithesis to this view illustrated in many transcendental philosophies of the East and West, according to whom the empirical reality is beyond it in every significant sense. Human consciousness should ascend to the apprehension of this reality through a radical negation of this misleading veil of appearance. The third point of view emerges out of the rejection of these two and construes reality as transcending the empirical order undoubtedly but also as appropriating it as a subsidiary aspect of its infinite expanse. The transcendent includes the empirical in its amplitude. The naturalistic negation of the transcendent and the transcendentalist negation of the empirical are discarded. The outcome is the philosophy of a comprehensive Absolute, which is at once transcendent and immanent and which negates all negations. This is a standpoint positive through and through.

It is the last point of view to which Ramanuja subscribes. It is worthwhile taking note of his immense literary heritage as his philosophy takes shape within this wide sweep of a spiritual tradition. The Vishishtadvaitin confidently traces his philosophy to the Vedas. There is no doubt that primordial body of scriptures contains definite indications of the Philosophy. The universally venerated Purushasukta speaks of the Supreme Being as expressing Himself through the Cosmos and also as surpassing it immeasurably. The vision of this reality is said to be the only pathway to immortality. This vision of God-head is magnificently conveyed in the sacred Savitri. It is a prayer addressed to the resplendent creator and nourisher of all existence, whose splendour is truly adorable. His grace is invoked for the Supreme gift of spiritual illumination. The most sacred syllable of the Vedic tradition is the Pranava ¹ and according to the Vishishtadvaitic tradition it signifies the individual soul's exalting self-surrender to the supreme. In a way it foreshadows the chariot of Arjuna, in which Nara seeks refuge with Narayana. There are thus countless passages in the early vedic scripture that go to build up the philosophical super-structure.

When we come down to the upanishads, these fundamental intimations receive fuller articulation.

Passing by the smaller upanishads such as Isha, Mundaka and Shvetashvatara, which are frankly theistic in temper and style, the major texts such as Taittiriya, Chandogya and Brihadaranyaka contain the specific doctrines of Ramanuja. The Taittiriya names Brahman the blissful Sharira, the Chandogya explicates the immanence of the transcendent in the central Dahara-vidya, which connects itself with the Dahara-vidya, of the Brihadaranyaka. Without resorting even to the Antaryami Brahman of the Brihadaranyaka, it is easy to discern in the major upanishads the Ramanujite conception of Brahman and the doctrine of Divine grace is definitely enunciated in Katha and Mundaka ². But the Antaryami

Brahman is a key dialogue of Yajnavalkya and it affirms every cardinal metaphysical principle of Ramanuja. It brings together in an illuminating synthesis all the scattered and apparently divergent declarations of the upanishads about ultimate reality.

The next vedantic document is certainly the Gita. Its dominating concept of God as the Purushottama, its picture of the pathway to God as culminating in Bhakti and its pervasive emphasis on prapatti are treasures beyond comparison from the standpoint of Ramanuja. The Brahmasutra is certainly obscure and difficult for philosophical identification. But the verdict of impartial scholars 4 and the admission on the part of Advaita that the major portion of it deals with Saguna Brahman indicate the general philosophical direction of the treatise. It is well-known that Vachaspati makes Shankara supersede Badarayana in the Anandamayadhikarana and Madhusudana in his Siddhanta-Bindu places Shankara and Suresvara above Badarayana.

In the realm of the Itihasa, the Ramayana has entered deeply into the thought of Vishishtadvaita so much so that all problems of metaphysics and spiritual life are referred to the Ramayana for final solution. In addition, it has enriched the language and style of the writers in Vishishtadvaita in a conspicuous measure, imparting a poetic flavour. The fervent Vishishtadvaitin habitually lives in the world of Ramayana.

Ramanuja quotes frequently some prominent smritis, such as that of Manu, Apastamba and Yajnavalkya, where the latter deliver themselves of philosophical doctrines. Among the puranas, the Vishnu purana receives great homage. Sri Yamuna calls it purana Ratna 5. This is a purana, which is brief, moves more in the realm of ideas than mythology and has suffered least interpolation. It is used as authority by such ancient philosophers as the Commentator, Vyasa, on Patanjali's Yoga-Sutra, Sri Sankara, Vachaspati Misra and Vivaranakara.

Its acceptance was ancient and universal. It promulgates the doctrines of Ramanuja in terms that become standard technical expressions in later Vishishtadvaita.

Not so universally accepted was the Pancharatra Agama. Yamuna and after him, Ramanuja took special pains to demonstrate its basic conformity to the Vedas. In this tradition the levels or forms of Divine manifestation, Para, Vyūha, Vibhava and Antaryami, the metaphysical attributes of God such as Jñāna, Bala, Shakti and the detailed programme of spiritual life such as Abhigamana, Upadana, Ijya Svadhyaya and Yoga are elaborately dealt with. It is a distinct supplement of a practical nature to the theoretical philosophy of Vedānta. This entire philosophy of Pancharatra stands incorporated, in principle, in Vishishtadvaita.

Ramanuja inherited not merely this huge body of Sanskrit vedānta, but was also an heir to a profound spiritual tradition represented by the Alvars. These God-intoxicated seers lived in the presence of God and they have poured forth in immortal verse their spiritual abundance. Nammalwar, like Chaitanya and Sri Rāma Krishna, was an incarnation, as Parashara Bhatta says,⁷ of the passion for the Divine. His poetry, at once philosophical and intense, is said to reach the highest standard of mystic song. Andal represents the ardour of bridal mysticism in its purest altitude. Tiruppani symbolizes high devotion marked by the inherent social gospel of Vaishnavism. The Divya-prabandham, as Vedānta Desika says,⁸ solves many a problem left over by Sanskrit Vedānta.

This is the immense two-fold literary inheritance of Ramanuja.

This inheritance is largely scriptural, bequeathed by the Rishis and Alvars. For it to acquire the status of Darshana, intellectual treatment of the rich Revelation-material was necessary. The non-vedic schools of thought were glorying

in their rationalism. The semi-vedic philosophers such as the Naiyayikas, Sankhya-yogins, and the meemamsakas were seeking to build up reasoned structures of philosophy. Sri Shankara accomplished this intellectualisation of Vedanta in a masterly manner. This inaugurated the age of the Acharyas.

The first Acharya in Vishishtadvaita is Nathamuni. The two works ascribed to him have perished, though some 9 verses are quoted from them. His influence, nevertheless, is pervasive. He seems to have consolidated the literature of the Alvars. The next Acharya is Yamuna. Some of his works are¹⁰ available wholly' some are found in fragments and one is completely lost. He was a vigorous intellectual and had a clear vision of the complete system of philosophy. Unfortunately he could not accomplish all the necessary literary tasks, though, he laid firm foundations for both Vishishtadvaita metaphysics and devotionism. Ramanuja's veneration for the Acharya¹¹ is profound. The third Acharya in the line is Ramanuja.

He is the greatest Acharya in Vishishtadvaita. His commentary on Brahma-sutra, the celebrated Sri-Bhashya, that on the Gita and the Vedartha sangraha elucidating the controversial issues in upanishadic philosophy are pivotal treatises. In depth of logical penetration, thoroughness of execution and the total scope of vision he is the Vishishtadvaita Acharya par Excellence, whatever be his reverence to the ancients. He is never satisfied with piece-meal and slender work. This is exemplified in his great examination of Advaita, the Mahasiddhanta¹². In the constructive building of the system, he comprehends the entire scriptural inheritance, utilises a rare mastery of current Darshanas and imparts dialectical and constructive completeness and finality to it. In the art of philosophical exposition, in clarity and grandeur, he is the greatest writer in the tradition. Even Vedanta Deshika, a great favourite of Hayagriva, says¹³ that his style overcame its blemishes and acquired grace through a life-long study of

Ramanuja's writings. His personality as preserved in the fond words of the disciples and devout biographies show some marked characteristics. One such trait is his independence of Spirit. Not merely did he break away from his preceptor, Yadavaprakasa, on grounds of intellectual conscience but also dissented from some current elucidations of the Alvars by elder¹⁴ Sri Vaishnavas. All his work in life and thought was inspired by over-mastering Bhakti. It is for Bhakti he prays in the opening verse of the Sri Bhashya. This possessed him so much that even in argumentative contexts he breaks forth into rapturous adoration of God. Naturally in his purely devotional compositions, the Gadyatraya and Nitya-grantha, he lets himself go. Parashara Bhatta says¹⁵ that with the single talisman of Bhakti, the master annihilated the dark powers of Kali. Dasarathi¹⁶ says that his Acharya was a lion of Bhakti, and even as insects sticking to a lion are carried from peak to peak as the lion leaps, the disciples of Ramanuja can encompass all in spiritual life. Kuresha, than whom there was no greater disciple of Ramanuja, says¹⁷ that his master had three points of greatness. He was infatuated (Vyamoha is the word used) with his God, Achyuta. This was his Supreme purushartha and no mere Sadhana. This led him to regard all other values as trivial. He was, further, an ocean of compassion. There is an occult link between Bhakti and Daya. It is exemplified in the historic acts of compassion on the part of Ramanuja. Lokacharya says¹⁸ that the age of 'Audarya', Large-heartedness, in Srivaishnavism was inaugurated by Ramanuja. It is but proper that the Darshana came to be designated Ramanuja-Darshana.

II

The distinctive character of a Darshana is that it seeks authentic knowledge of reality and is no mere faith. It has to build up its structure of ideas on the nature of things on faultless and legitimate foundations. There is thus a necessity for a critical consideration of the sources and ways of knowing.

The necessity arises from the fact that contradictory notions or impressions do arise on a given matter and without an examination of evidence the contradictions cannot be resolved. Hence Visistadvaita like other Darsanas has a well-formed theory of knowledge.

There are three basic tenets concerning knowledge.

(a) All knowledge (19) consists of judgements which predicate of a subject certain characteristics. The subject-predicate situation is fundamental. 'Idam ittham', 'This is such', is the form of all understanding. Mere awareness of a subject is just the beginning of the knowing process and mere entertainment of ideas of possible predicates without asserting them of anything is no knowledge but day-dreaming. There must be, in technical language, a prakari and prakara in all acts of understanding. From this follows the basic contention of Ramanuja that all knowledge is of a determinate character, it being the assignment of a predicate to a subject. Even in a negative proposition the law holds. It discerns in the subject features contradicting some attributions. The basis of the negation must be a positive discernment.

(b) The process (20) of knowing presupposes that fundamentally there is a natural rapport between knowing and being and that error is an accident generated by factors external to the apparatus of knowledge. Thought when it operates by itself unimpeded by alien forces issues in authentic apprehension of reality. This is the principle of svatah-pramanya championed by the Meemamskas and all Schools of Vedanta. Rejection of the principle leads to total scepticism, which in itself is self-contradictory.

(c) In fulfilment of the logical requirements of Swatah pramanya Ramanuja advances a specific theory of error (21). It is agreed on all hands that an erroneous judgement is not erroneous in respect of its subject but is so in respect of only

its predicate. 'Sarvam Jnanam Prakarini Abhramtam'. Even in respect of the predicate, can it be wholly a fabrication? If external forces can make the knowing mind manufacture an utter unreality, the trust in the basic realism of thought is damaged. There is no end to what it can lead to. If the impending force is assigned only obstructive power and not that of distortion, that could go well logically with thought-reality rapport. Errors there are, but they are all errors of negation and not errors of commission. The straight stick immersed in water appears bent. This is an illusion in ordinary parlance. But when the entire machinery of visual perception is known it will be found that the straight stick and the Laws of Optics determine its presentation as bent. There is no misconstruction in the situation. On the contrary it would have been an illusion if the stick appeared straight in the circumstance. The only lapse in the perceptual knowledge of the bent stick is that it overlooks the conditions of the phenomenon and attributes to it completeness. The ignoring of the limitations of the phenomenon is the substance of the error. Hence error is also truth but a fragmentary truth unaware of its fragmentariness.

The entire evolution of human knowledge is pictured, on the basis of these principles, as an ascending order of apprehension completing itself in progressive enlargement of scope. There is no total error at any point of the movement and there can possibly be no completion, if reality be inexhaustible in its attributes. We can see the panorama of human knowledge from this perspective.

The familiar perceptual knowledge is true in so far as it goes. Even perceptual error has limited truth. The perception conventionally regarded as true is wider in its scope and is more true from the standpoint of the width of reality it covers. There is no point in discarding all sense-perception as deceptive (22). It contains a glimpse, an authentic glimpse, of the real. Perception in the earlier phase is Nirvikalpaka (23) and in the

developed stage it is Savikalpaka. Nirvikalpaka is so called because of the incompleteness of determination and not because it is the grasp of the attributeless. No such grasp is an epistemological possibility.

But pratyaksha as a whole is a highly limited mode of knowledge. It confines itself to sensed particulars. Pervasive and supersensuous realities are beyond its range. The Charvaka School pinned its faith to the narrowest species of knowledge.

Anumana, or inference though rooted in perception, ascends beyond it in range. It brings about the apprehension of universal connections and apprehends in reality coinherent predicates [24].

There is no meaning in discarding intellectualism as a whole. The paradox is that reasoning has to be discredited through reasoning itself. That would be merely a natural process of reason correcting itself. A total repudiation of the intellect is a blunder according to Ramanuja. He says 'Srutopapattayepi Anupapannam Viruddham Cha Na Kalpaneyam' [25]. Visistadvaita incorporates into Anumana Arthapatti, Upamana and Abhava in so far as they are valid and cannot be accommodated within pratyaksha (26). The trend is not to multiply pramanas beyond logical necessity. Verbalization of inference, the so-called pararthanumana, is not accorded any speciality in Visistadvaita [27]. On substantial technical grounds, the type of inference called Kevala-vyatireki is discarded [29]. The result is a full conception of inference, positive and valid as a mode of knowledge arising from perception and surpassing it in range of generality and the consequent scope of apprehension.

But even knowledge by inference has its own inherent limitations. In the first place, it arises as a corrective to the limitations of perceptual knowledge. A flawless and perfect perceiver of all that exists would not resort to the laborious process of ratiocination for reconstructing reality.

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But even knowledge by inference has its own inherent limitations. In the first place, it arises as a corrective to the limitations of perceptual knowledge. A flawless and perfect perceiver of all that exists would not resort to the laborious process of ratiocination for reconstructing reality.

It can never be, in the second place, autonomous, in its approach to reality. Factually it is rooted in perception and it advances on the strength of the antecedent knowledge of the laws of inference in general and also of the established connections between co-inherent predicates. Its conclusions are mediate and lack the wholeness they would have if they were immediate. Lack of immediacy is an undoubted limitation in scope. Further, Ramnuja demonstrates that reason is incapable of arriving at a decision on the most fundamental question of the existence of God. It cannot prove His existence as Nyaya Philosophers fallaciously formulated it. It cannot disprove His existence as the Sankhya and other atheists argued equally fallaciously [30]. When a vital philosophical subject receives no illumination from inference, it proves that the mode of knowledge it compasses must be surpassed, in our search for final truth.

This dissatisfaction with reason necessitates the consideration of revelation, the revelation embodied in the impersonal scripture, the Sruti, and particularly the Upanishads.

The question has been raised by the ancients anticipating the modern predicament as to why the Sruti be accorded recognition as a legitimate source of knowledge.

The vedantic answer to this is simple [31]. If the sruti contains coherent and co-ordinated intimations of reality, not accessible by way of perception and inference based on it, and is not in contradiction with those other sources of knowledge it is logically untenable to reject it. Aprapti and Abadha, Novelty and non-contradiction, are unfailing guides in the realm of knowledge. There is the further consideration that sruti solves riddles and uncertainties left over by other sources of knowledge. It is a genuine puraka an amplification and fulfilment of the self-completing, pilgrimage to truth. In fact, the other pramanas are also admitted more or less on the same

grounds. The conclusion is further reinforced by the fact systems of thought that exclude the affirmation of the sruti are hopelessly muddled and self contradictory. This logical impossibility of the opposite is a powerful weapon in the hands of Badarayana. Total epistemological Nihilism is the only alternative to vedanta based on sruti. The argument contains the significant import that even as inference carries forward the findings of perception, sruti carries the findings of both to a higher altitude of comprehension, conserving and completing them. It is the crowning pramana (32). The central principle of Ramnuja's logic can be restated. All knowledge is a determinate characterization of reality, with which the human intellect is in fundamental rapport. The logic of progression in knowledge may be termed the logic of amplification. Perceptual error is corrected by being amplified in completer perception. Indeterminate perception is taken up and completed in determinate perception. Perceptual knowledge is taken up and enlarged in the inferential reconstruction of reality. The conclusions of these processes of knowledge are appropriated by sruti and are subjected to correction by way of amplification. Understanding grows by progressive enlargement of consciousness. There are no negations at any transition except of the nature of negation of antecedent negation.

This procedure in the process of knowledge is pervasively and dominantly adopted in the interpretation of the upanishads. The sruti posits Brahman, the Supreme reality.

Brahman is the substantive principle. It abounds in perfection of attributes. The Saguna texts are fundamentally true. The Nirguna texts are also true. They do not cancel the Saguna texts but add a supplement to them by way of denying imperfections named gunas in the Sankhyan terminology. Brahman transcends the cosmos even as the substance transcends the qualities. But it is also immanent in it, as the substance constitutes the sustaining ground of the qualities. The monistic tests are true as the central reality is one, the Brahman, holding

within it all finite entities and imparting being and intelligibility to them by its immanence. The texts that distinguish the world and God are correct, for however much He may dwell in it, He surpasses it immeasurably. Neither transcendence nor immanence is to be discarded. The two truths are well presented in the explanatory texts such as the *Antaryami Brahmana*. It is a magnificent venture to take the *sruti* in its entirety and to furnish an integrated elucidation amplifying all the divergent currents of the *upanishadic* intuitions. Ramanuja takes particular pleasure in dwelling on the organic unity of the *upanishadic* conception of Brahman.

But this understanding of Brahman through the *sruti* is lower knowledge. It is scripture-generated understanding. The higher knowledge would be direct vision of the Supreme through the process of *Dhyana* or *Bhakti*. The latter is the *para-Vidya*(31) [b] of the *Mundaka upanishad*. At the summit of this *para-vidya* the seeker realizes that there are immensities lying beyond his comprehension. This realization is the acme of wisdom. This is what is stated in such final pronouncement as 'Yato Vacho Nivartante, Aprapya Manasa Saha', 'Neti, Neti', (32) [B] *Vijnatam Avijanatam*'. They signify not the impossibility of knowledge but the impossibility of exhaustive comprehension. This is a negation in words only but a triumphant affirmation of the infinitude of Brahman. Such in brief is the epistemological frame-work of *Visistadvaita*.

III

There is a tradition in *visistadvaita* of dividing the scope of philosophy into inquiries into *Tatwa*, *Hita* and *Purushartha*. The scheme neatly corresponds to the three components(33) of the great *Mantra*, *Astakshari*. The first department of study constitutes what is generally named *Metaphysics*. In this again there are three spheres concerned with *Achit*, *Chit* and *Iswara* corresponding again to the chariot, *Arjuna* and *Sri*

Krishna in the celebrated chariot of Kurukshetra. Achit is the collective designation of Nature, the totality of being inherently devoid of consciousness.

(a)

Ramanuja's philosophy of Nature avoids the two aberrations of Metaphysics, Illusionism and Naturalism. Nature for him is real but it is not the whole of reality. Chit or the spiritual world is no part of it and is not just its product. There is no philosophical reason in pronouncing it an illusion, for illusions can arise only in a materially conditioned consciousness(34). Illusionism in all its forms is the completest anti-thesis of the philosophy of Ramanuja. Hence his repeated refutation of it in his works.

In the detailed working out of the conception of Nature, Ramanuja avoids the extreme temporalism of early Buddhism and the extremism of the static Sankhya prakriti. Nature has enduring substantial being and bears attributes and passes through dynamic transformations. In the conception of primordial nature Ramanuja adopts the unitary conception of Sankhya and avoids the pluralism of Vaiseshika Atomism. Nature is the unfolding of a single primordial prakriti. It has three qualities Satwa, Rajas and Tamas. In so far as it has Satwa it does not constitute the principle of evil or corruption in relation to spirits. It can facilitate spirituality. In so far as it has Tamas, it is not an unmixed blessing, not wholly an unresisting instrument of the Spirit. Much discrimination is called for in a sober attitude to Nature. The evolving process of nature is construed more on the lines of Sankhya than on those of Buddhism or even Nyaya-vaiseshika. There is continuity in spite of emerging novelties, which are nothing but the revelations of the endless potentialities in the primordial substance of physical reality. All this is conventional Sankhya with considerably sobering sophistication.

The greatest point in Ramanuja's philosophy of Nature is yet to be enunciated. That Nature is not the originating matrix of spirits has already been noted. It may also be noted that its qualities can be rendered intelligible only in relation to spirits. To this extent it is not the Nature of naive Naturalism.

The further and paramount proposition is that it is not an autonomous reality. In its primordial being, in its dynamic productivity of new forms of itself and in its final contribution to the emergence of values, it is the vehicle, medium or instrument of the Supreme Being. It subsists (35) in Him, operates through His actuating energy and fulfils His Cosmic designs. Existentially, operationally and teleologically it belongs to the Deity. The being of nature is a part of the being of God. It is not that Nature is an alien material system which He manipulates through His overruling powers but constitutes one of his infinite powers (36). It is His Sakti. In it is discernible, though under limitations, God's infinite splendour. Hence the concept of Nature as a Vibhuti of God. The aesthetic glory of Nature is real but is the self-disclosure of the Divine through Nature. Even as a great poet's final import lies beyond the ostensible meaning of words, the beauty of Nature is an intimation of the paramatman in and through nature.

This is veritably the 'Natural Super-naturalism' of the Idealistic Carlyle.

(b)

The second great department of metaphysics is the inquiry into the nature of the finite self such as we are. The self is a self-conscious or self-identifying entity (38). It presents itself as the 'I' to itself and is thus a subject-object entity. It is the continuous self-identity of this principle that renders unification essential to knowledge possible. It is this immediate self awareness and abiding self-identity that makes the materialistic and Buddhist account of the self as identical with the composite

and mutable physical organism untenable (39). The self is a substantive ego that exercises consciousness and is not itself the abstract attribute or function of consciousness (40). It is the subject of knowledge and not the mere knowing. In this sense it is personal or individual. It is the 'Ahamartha' (41). It is not to be confused with the mundane sense of the 'I' involving the identification of self with the non-self (42). It is the metaphysical 'ego' and not the morally degenerate self-identification with the body.

The self so constituted exercises a two-fold consciousness. It is immediately aware of itself through no instrumentality of pramanas and acquires knowledge of the entire realm of the rest of reality through the recognised modes of knowledge (43). These two modes of awareness are described as Swaroopabhuta, Jnana and Dharmabhuta-Janana. This is an important doctrine. The latitudinal-consciousness may express itself through cognition, Jnatrtwa, volition, Kartrtwa and enjoyment, Bhoktrtwa. These three are real modes of the self's reality. They are not unreal impositions. In view of the variety of experiences and operations in these modes, the plurality of finite selves is a metaphysical fact, however much the selves may be alike in their fundamental character [44]. In this the School departs violently from the Advaitic position and in positing the swaroopa-dhuta Jnana, it separates itself from Buddhism and Nyaya-vaisheshika. There is a speciality in the volitional self-expression of the self. It has autonomy of initiative [45]. Though this autonomy does not amount to self-sufficiency, [46], there is enough of it to invest the self with moral responsibility. The individual self is neither mechanistically determined to action by nature, nor is it over-ruled in the moral sphere by the omnipotence of God. It is a centre of spontaneity. This circumstance has a notable bearing on the problem of evil. The metaphysical status of the finite self must be clearly discerned. The realm of nature is irreducibly real, not being a creation of its illusion. The plurality of self is also an irreducible verity. Within the individual self itself,

there is the disclosure of its insufficiency. It is liable to diminution and expansion of life. This is the phenomenon of imperfection. The self is not in eternal actuality all that it has in it to be. Even the theory of the singleness and absoluteness of the Jivatman must accommodate the phenomenon of self-misconstruction. This liability to error is a basic insufficiency (47). Upanishads declare that the finite self suffers self-diminution to the point of virtual annihilation (48) 'Mahatee Vinastihi in so far as it ignores the paramatman. It grows into plenitude of being in proportion to its affirmation of Him. It is by the exercise of consciousness by way of the apprehension of Brahman that it acquires fullness of life. God-negation is self-attenuation and God-affirmation is the attainment of the amplitude of personality.

This consideration that the individual spirit reaches self-fulfilment in Brahman, leads us on to the inquiry into the latter, for surely what could impart sufficiency to that spirit must be the Supreme reality. The being, progress and destiny of the finite self inescapably involves its status as an 'Amsa' of the Supreme (49). It enjoys superiority over Nature in being and conscious 'Amsa' or 'Vibhuti' of God. It pertains to Him as a self-conscious dimension of His glory.

(c)

The entire metaphysics of Ramanuja reaches its culmination in the doctrine of Brahman. Brahman is the Supreme reality, even as the scriptural testimony is the Supreme source of knowledge. It is significant that the Supreme reality is accessible only to revelation, however much reason may facilitate the elucidation of the scripture. Ramanuja says that the Para-Brahman is definitively revealed in the upanishads in contrast to the veiled intimations in the earlier vedic literature and this theme constitutes the central import of those peak utterances of the vedas. Brahman is "sruti-sirasi-vidcepta" (50).

The glory of Brahman is the perennial fascination for the upanishads (51). The charge of dogmatism stands dispelled by the epistemological vindication of *sruti* as the all-completing consummation of human understanding.

In the characterization of the nature of Brahman, there are some basic assertions.

Brahman is the Supreme self or *purushottama* (52). Being a *purusha* it has the self-identical and self-distinguishing nature of spirit. It does not have the fluctuating and composite character of matter. Its consciousness is all-comprehending and as such transcends the finite self whose area of consciousness is subject to attenuation and expansion. It is infinite as it transcends temporal and is also surpassingly perfect. By virtue of this infinity, it abides in all existence and is devoid of a counter entity not owing its existence to the sustaining presence of Brahman within itself. Thus Brahman transcends materiality, fluctuations of consciousness and every possible mode of limitation. All this lead up to the crowning characterisation of Brahman as Ananda. Brahman is Ananda in a two-fold manner. Being devoid of the internal distinction of what is and what ought to be, it is perfect and such perfection is substantive Ananda. Being the all-inclusive whole of reality it fully meets the demands of the quest for reality on the part of the finite spirit and thereby fills it with the ecstasy of self completion. Brahman is perfect and imparts perfection to its knower.

With this enunciation of the substantive nature of Brahman as Satya, Jnana, Ananda, Nirmala and Ananta (52) [b] we can go forward to its attributes.

There is no meaning in the position that Brahman has no attributes. Such an entity is a logical impossibility as all thought and experience consists of the discernment of the right attributes of the real. An error is just insufficient attribution

and truth is the completing of the process of cognitive attribution. To say that attributive determination in so far as it may involve the exclusion of opposite attributes implies limitation is right. But to exclude the exclusion, the method is not that of excluding all attribution in which case the exclusion would amount to complete negation. Rather the limitation of attributes must be corrected through a process of amplification. If the opposite excluded is of the nature of deficiency, the exclusion constitutes no limitation, as it would be simple negation of negation. If the opposite is a positive excellence, the coherence-theory of excellence would prove that the opposition is not genuine but a result of incomplete insight. In fact all contradiction issues out of partial characterisation of the real. Reasoning consists fundamentally in completing initial affirmations through an affirmation of their implications. When the upanishads declare Brahman as attributeless they just mean to deny of Brahman deficiencies and imperefection, as they themselves often clarify, in supplementation of the ardent affirmation of attributes. This is the working of the twin Nyayas of utsargapavada and samanya-vishesha (53). The conception of reality as characterised by attributive determination is ultimate and Brahman is the central and infinite of infinite predicates (54). The upanishads revel in the glorification of the attributes of the Supreme. The pancharatra organized these as six-fold consisting of Jnana, Bala, Aiswaraya, Virya Sakti and Tejas. These constitute one set of attributes displaying the munificence and majesty of Brahman, the paratwa. Brahman is truly parat-para. The Bhakti literature in general and the passages of the upanishads laying the foundation of that trend pay adoration to the love and compassion of God, His soulabhya. Both the sets of attributes are ultimate. Paratwa without soulabhya is not adequate even as paratwa and mere soulabhya would reduce the deity to finitude. Consequent on these two sets, arises the aesthetic characterisation of Brahman. For Ramanuja, as for Vaishnavism in general, the beauty of God is not just a metaphor but an ultimate truth. He is not merely satyasy satyam, not merely Nivasah, Saranam, Suhrit, gati but also

Bhuvana sundara, Sakshat-manmatha-manmatha, so much so that all empirical beauty is a dim intimation of Him. While the upanishads establish this aesthetic approach to God, the Alvars were the Specialists in the worship of God as beauty (55).

These attributes of God manifest themselves in specific way in relation to the Cosmos. He is the creative source of all being, the sustaining in-dweller of all and the final resort of the world-process. He is "Akhila-Bhuvana-Janma Sthema Bhangadi-Leela" (56).

In relation to the finite self He is the Supreme goal of all endeavour, parama-prapya, and the complete object of his love and delight. He is the paramabhogya, such that the love call^s for utter self-dedication, Atma-Nivedana. If He is the ultimate good thus, He is also the ultimate power making for the finite soul's attainment of Him. His grace, by his Omnipotence, Omniscience and boundless compassion effectuates the Soul's redemption to the final blessedness. He is the upaya or prapaka (57). This in reality is the import of the declaration of the Gita, "Vasudevah Sarvam" (58), not superseding the metaphysical proposition 'sarva m samapnoshi tatosi sarvah' but adding to it the axiological climax. He is metaphysically all in all and also all in relation to human perfection.

We have postponed so far the discussion of the crucial problem of the relation of the one and the many, the Infinite and the finite, Brahman and the prapancha. Ramanuja has renounced the tempting solution of dismissing the finite individual and nature as illusory or phenomenal. He upholds their irreducible reality. He abandons with equal disfavour the Yoga and Nyaya Vaisesika Theism to which God is a reality among three realities, somewhat impotent but not all-comprehending(59) It is an imperfect theism which proclaims an Iswara but denies him centrality of metaphysical significance. Ramanuja is for an Iswara, who is Brahman as well, a Supreme personality

absolutely commanding the riches of the Cosmos in its entirety and depth. He appropriates masterfully the intuitions of the upanishads and the later scriptures in all their abundance and propounds his illuminating thesis that Brahman owns the Cosmos of finite selves and Nature as its Vibhuti, Viseshana, Prakara, Amsa or Sakti. The culminating conception is that the realm of the finite reals is the 'Sarcera' of Iswara, as it is His Adheya, Niyamya and Sesha and He is its Atman as He is its inseparable Adhara, Niyanta and Seshi (60). This involves a truly philosophical definition of the body-soul complex, which maintains unity in and through diversity. The vexed question of the finite limiting the Infinite does not arise, as the finite is a real part of the splendour of the infinite. God's powers are not frustrated by the world, for the world itself is a power of God [61]. This is the significance of the term 'Visistadvaita', the sole and secondless unity of the Infinite substance shining forth through an infinity of attributes (62).

The world is neither an unhappy hallucination, nor an alien entity confronting the Deity from outside with existence and powers not derived from the Divine source. It stands assimilated into the infinite expanse of Divine attributes. While the aesthetic attractiveness of the thesis is evident, its logical weight demands equal appreciation. This marks off Ramanuja's philosophy, as Vedanta Desika maintains, from every other system of Theism and Absolutism (63).

There is one minor question that merits consideration at this juncture. Ramanuja cannot resort to the hypothesis of unreality with regard to evil, as he upholds all experience as true. Neither matter nor the self has an autonomous being, so that evil could be neatly allocated to it without damaging the unsullied perfection of God. On the contrary they form His integral parts. So, in this conception of Brahman embodied in the world of finites evil should affect Brahman itself. This is a conceivable objection to the philosophy of Visistadvaita.

A diffused notion of evil does not serve the philosophical purpose. It has to be cornered, as it were, to see possibilities of solution.

In the substantive nature of God and His qualities there is no evil whatever. He is ubhaya-linga, as the Brahma-sutra describes Him according to Ramanuja (a). Matter as such, in Itself, is no evil or no source of evil (b). In no state does it constitute an imperfection by itself. The individual soul, the Jiva, is the Jewel, Koustubha, on the bosom of Shouri, as Vedanta Desika puts it (c). The individual in his state of perfection is contributory to the quality of joy in the Divine scheme of reality. Even the bound and imperfect soul, is precious from the point of view of its perfectibility through divine grace. Where exactly does evil lie? However real it be, it must fall within the circle of the life of the finite self [64]. Principally it has two forms, suffering and sin. The problem of suffering gets explained in terms of the extended perspective of the law of Karma. It is a consequence of a God-negating life (65). In it lies a negative demonstration of the truth that all joy and upfilment spring from God. That ignoring of Him causes affliction is natural, for He is the sole good and Ananda. In Him is to be found all delight, life and power. Far from conflicting with the goodness of God, suffering in a Godless life constitutes a solid proof of it. Ramanuja quotes a beautiful verse from a Rishi "yanmuhurtam kshanam vapi vasudevo na chintyate, sa hanih tanmahachchidram sa bhrantih sa cha vikriya" (66). Now the problem is shifted to sin. The essence of sin, from which proceeds the evil of suffering, is God-negation. Why should it arise in the finite self, which is in essence and

[a] *Sri Bhashya—3-2-11*

[b] *Sri Bhashya—3-2-12*

[c] *Rahasyatraya Sara— I Chapter.*

actuality a part or adjective of God? God cannot be altogether perfect, if what belongs to Him so intimately and inseparably can exercise itself in the evil of God-denial and bring upon itself all the consequent calamity.

Nothing contributes to the solution of a problem so much as such a clarification of the problem. God's immanence and sustaining presence within the finite does not mean a curtailment of the being of the finite. Such an idea would amount to illusionism in disguise. Rather the immanence is the positive source of that being and the creative spring of the powers of the finite (67.) Immanence is a positive relation and not a subtractive pervasion. The message of the Vibhuti-yoga of the Gita is that fuller penetration by the divine presence makes for greater range of being and powers in the pervaded vibhuti. This principle automatically signifies that the finite individual receives its powers of initiative and spiritual creativity from the very immanence of the Divine. This derived creativity constitutes the freedom of the individual in all spheres of its authentic self-expression. As such if it chooses to deny God, it is exercising a real power planted in it by Him. This specific direction of its use of that power is entirely its own, if freedom is a fact. This is the essential defence of moral freedom in spite of Divine immanence. That immanence would stand impoverished if the creature led a mechanical and wholly predetermined life.

Now, moral freedom is a blessing' however we may view it. In the pursuit of spiritual values freedom is a fundamental requirement. There can be no 'imposed' perfection, if it means self-unfoldment. The lower hedonistic values can overtake a passive agent, but inward development of spirit can arise only from self-initiated effort. Even Divine grace, therefore, awaits the devotee's invocation. We must 'choose' even to be 'chosen, [68]. Even the possibility or the actuality of a misuse of freedom is a blessing, for it is through only that hard way a deliberate choice of God is rendered possible. In the experimental quest after

perfection on the part of the finite, every error entails a consequent enhancement of sure wisdom and decisive formulation of purpose. The structure of life shaped by God is such that it contains infallible correctives for spiritual deviations. The falling creature is taken care of and thrown back through violent operations of the law of Karma to a renewed opportunity for a redirection of life (69). Hence the evil choice and its evil results are incidents, passing contingencies, in the evolution of the creature. There are no final disasters and no evils, from which spiritual enlightenment will not issue. If the span of vision is enlarged enough, the cosmic scene in which the creaturely career is to be worked out is seen to be the expression of Divine love. God is deeply concerned with the creature. As Vedanta Desika says the Lord is *Baddhadara* (70), tenderly concerned about the destiny of the bound souls. Moksha is good but the field of preparation for it also is good being as it should be. For a large and profound enough Theism the phenomenon of evil presents no intractable problems. While optimism can descend to stupidity as caricatured by Voltaire, a final pessimism is a symptom of arrested vision. Even Schopenhauer could not be a consistent pessimist. A conception of the world as an expression of Divine joy and love, fully aware of the arduousness of the search for God can be a triumphant declaration of the ultimate goodness of reality.

Thus we come back to the transcendent-immanent Reality of Brahman with all its substantive nature, attributes and Cosmic embodiment. This is the final metaphysics for Ramanuja. He and his School contend that the entire metaphysical truth is enshrined in the concept of Narayana, reverentially advanced by the upanishads such as Maha Narayanopanishad, Mahopanishad and Subalopanishad. The Purusha-sukta contains it in implication. Visistadvaita earnestly maintains that a comprehension of the significance of the concept of Narayana is the completion of all Vedanta.★ This is no Sectarianism. Vaishnavism starts shedding its sectarianism as it begins reading metaphysical import into its designation of the Supreme

As it progresses in this direction and incorporates all its metaphysics in the elucidation of the concept of Narayana it transmutes itself into a pure and universal philosophy of the Supreme Spirit. Perhaps the most expansive transmutation is achieved by Vedanta Desika in his classic, *Rahasya-Traya-Sara* (71).

Ramanuja's philosophy is no mere account of reality, even if such a thing were conceivable. It is a philosophy of value, concerning itself with the *Summum bonum* of life. Its idea of the supreme goal of life directly emanates from its doctrine of Reality. As man is spirit and not matter, no merely material and earthy well-being can constitute his final good. What proceeds from a wrong conception of man cannot bring him lasting and complete peace and fulfilment. He is spirit and his real well-being must be conceived in spiritual terms. But he is finite: an individual self living, moving and having his being in the Supreme spirit. His frustrations and agonies arise out of his not raising himself to an acknowledgment of this fact of facts. Isolation from God in his attitude is veritably self-alienation almost amounting to self-annihilation. There is the further fundamental consideration. The essential nature of the self is cognitive consciousness and when that is not exercised properly and adequately the self is mutilated, as it were, into insufficient existence. The Proper and adequate employment of the power to know is to know the infinite Reality, the *Bhuvan* and that, as the *Chandogya* proclaims, is the ultimate and most exalted self-fulfilment and bliss for the self (72). Hence the final goal of the attainment of God by way of *Jnana*, which in its final form is *Darsana* or immediate vision of God; That is the most intrinsic and all-inclusive value: As this knowledge is of the nature of fruition of the life of the *Jiva*, constituted as it is fundamentally of the power of knowledge, it cannot but be of the nature of Joy, *Ananda* or love, *priti* another expression for the same attainment.

★ Sri Bhashya-3-3-43. *Vedantha sangraha*-page 208 to 268. Tirupati edition.

This constituent should be super-added to the cognition of the nature of Darsana. This is joyful vision of loving apprehension. There is a further constituent of the ultimate Ideal. It is no apprehension of God as an object set against the subject. The subject cognizes God as inclusive of infinite glories, within which the subject is also included. It is a unitive vision in which God is apprehended as holding within Himself the cognizing subject also as a part of His inseparable splendour (73). There is no radical dualism in the final experience. But it should be clarified that we have here only the experience of the infinite whole of reality and the cognizing ego is not obliterated therein. There is no dissolution of individuality (74). On the contrary there is maximization of the effective personality of the individual experient (75). This is a state of union and not of unity implying the dissipation of either the object or the subject. In this union, finding his God, man finds soul too as lodged in the enriching expanse of God. The word love or priti is rather a weak word in the context, as is sometimes utilized to describe even self-centred attachments. The nature of the rapturous absorption in God is such that it is object-centred and seeks not the appropriation of the object by the ego, but yearns for the appropriation of the ego by the object. It is Atma-Nivedana or Kainkarya (76). Thus Moksha, according to Ramanuja, is the Anubhava of Brahman issuing in priti inducing unitive adoration of the nature of Kainkarya. This is life eternal and life abundant. Ramanuja articulates in glowing words his idea of Moksha in gadya-traya, the crescendo of his personal prayer in all its completeness (77).

(V)

The goal of the finite life so presented requires to be realized as a reality in life through a process of Sadhana called in Visistadvaita the Hita or Upaya also.

(a) As a preliminary to the consideration of sadhana, it is necessary to distinguish two factors in sadhana.

There is the factor of resource or already existent fact which facilitates the realization of the end. This is called Siddhopaya. The Second factor is what has to be accomplished by human endeavour through a utilization of the existent resource. This is Sadhyopaya. The Ramanujite School maintains that the Siddhopaya for attaining God is God Himself (78). That is a great principle, that the infinite end that man aspires after, has to be accomplished through the instrumentality of the infinite itself. The principle is luminously set down in the famous upanishadic declaration, "Yameva Esha Vrinute Tesa Labhyah" God is the end, no doubt, but He is also the means. Here we have the fundamental doctrine-grace.

But is not Siddhopaya by itself sufficient for effectuating man's emancipation? Ramanuja holds that grace operates only in response to human invocation of grace. This is necessary, for the finite self is a self, its personality carries freedom as an essential ingredient. The end sought is self-perfection, the unfoldment of the self's spiritual potentialities. An imposed perfection on undesiring creatures does not have the character of value, a purushartha (79). God looks forward to, as an ancient text tells us, the aspiration of the aspirant. 'Rakshyapeksham partikshate' (80). The grace of God does not work towards perfection when perfection is sought after. Even surrender is an act of will, the voluntary abnegation of self-effort for one's perfection. The habitual metaphor used of God in the context is that of a gardener and not that of a mechanic. 'Krisheevala' (81). is the term used by Vedanta-Desika. Human effort is indispensable. God's compassion may be an eternal actuality but it operates in response to the free quest of the soul to be redeemed.

But this requirement does not reduce God's role to that of equality in importance with human initiative. The human effort is a sahakari karana and God's grace is pradhana karana. In fact, man's search for salvation furnishes just an occasion, or opening to the operation and flow of the ever-waiting

compassion of God. It is comparable to the Calf's work in getting its feed of milk from the cow⁽⁸²⁾, in the apt description of Vedanta-Desika. Human effort is indispensable but only accessory. The primary power working out man's attainment of God is Himself. The initiative of the infinite is the redeeming power.

(b) It is a basic tenet of Ramanuja that the Sadhyopaya for achieving liberation is Bhakti. Bhakti is defined as loving meditation, or Jnana that has taken on the character of intensely loving meditation⁽⁸³⁾. If in the summit of meditative love the seeker decisively and with his whole soul, hungers and thirsts for the blessedness of the vision of God, grace operates to bring about that consummation. It is to be noted that the Bhakti that could accomplish this Supreme end must be the outcome of knowledge and no mere emotionalism or ritualism. It must be Supreme Bhakti, being the maturation of Supreme Knowledge. Supreme knowledge and supreme Bhakti coincide here, each imparting elevation to the other.

(c) It is an open secret that Bhakti of this high altitude is no matter for easy attainment. That the search for God is the Supreme concern of life can be comprehended by one who has comprehended his own nature perfectly⁽⁸⁴⁾. The human soul in its essential nature is such that it can reach no lasting and complete good except in the realization of God. This truth should be realized before the love of God can spring to effectual actuality. This stage of self-knowledge preparatory to Bhakti is called Jnana-yoga.

(d) The Jnana-yoga is a matter of the cultivation of self understanding culminating in absolute self-intuition. This requisite self-discrimination is impossible of Rajas and Tamas. To eliminate that pressure karma-yoga, as explained in the Gita, must be ardently and systematically practised⁽⁸⁵⁾. The essence of karma yoga is the renunciation of the ego, is

respect of fruits of action, of the idea of doership in relation to action as a whole (86). The action must be consecrated as flowing from God, as belonging to Him and as leading to His gratification. The life of action must be spiritualised or devotionalised.

The ladder of Sadhana is clearer now. Karma-yoga prepares for Jnana-yoga and Jnana-yoga leads to Bhakti. Bhakti renders the liberating grace of God operative.

(e) As is evident, in this account there are four innovations in the philosophy of Sadhana, two major and two minor.

1. Ramanuja is the first Darsanika who held God as the principal means for man's God-realization. This he accomplishes without sacrificing the factor of human effort in the process.

2. He is the first philosopher in the world of Indian Darsana who affirmed Bhakti as the means of salvation. In his conception of Bhakti there is substantial intellectualization of Bhakti. While the element of knowledge elevates Bhakti, Bhakti also elevates Jnana and renders it Raja-vidya. This double elevation is a distinctive contribution to our idea of spiritual life.

3. As a preparation to Bhakti, he is the first to emphasize the element of self-knowledge. It is only the self that knows itself in accurate self-perception that could form the right resolve to seek God as the final destination of spiritual endeavour.

4. There is a complete analysis of the elimination of the ego involved in karma-yoga. What is just implicit in the Gita is elaborated into a complete philosophy of consecrated action.

[f] The element of the greatest importance in Ramanuja's theory of Sadhana is prapatti(88). It is no invention of

Srivaishnavism or Pancharatragrma as it is popularly held by the critics or the followers of Ramanuja. It is there in fundamental in the ancient upanishads such as Isa, Katha, Mundaka Chandogya, Taittiriya and Swetaswara. It dominates the Gita from Arjuna's initial prayer to the final exhortation of Lord Krishna. It enters to the core of Karma-yoga, Jnana-yoga and Bhakti yoga. The Ramayana celebrates it. The great puranas such as Vishnu and Bhagavata are full of it. No single Vedantic Acharya discounterances it. In all these general acknowledgements and valuation of prapatti it is treated as an integral part of the central pathway of Bhakti (88).

The uniqueness of Ramanuja's teaching of prapatti in his Gadyas lies in the fact that he holds it to be capable of being a sufficient means of the summum bonum. Vedanta Desika Claims that it is the 'Simhi-stanya' (89) of the tradition. It is accorded central role in the elucidation of great Mantras, Astakshari and Dvaya, and in the exposition of the culminating verse of the Gita. It is not that Bhakti is discarded (90). It is admitted as the general background of prapatti as constituting Prapyaruchi, and is also taken up as falling within the ideal of Moksha itself. But prapatti is affirmed as the sole means, the selfsufficing and never-failing means.

Its essence lies in profound dissatisfaction with one's ability in the matter saving Bhakti and throwing oneself on the mercy of God for accomplishing, through His abundance of knowledge, power and grace, for the aspirant, what Bhakti, adequate, would have accomplished. It is substituting the infinite power of God for the uncertain and insufficient endeavour of man. That the Siddhopaya may expand and do the work of Sadhopaya also is the prayer of the prapanna. His effort or initiative terminates in the transfer of all efforts and initiative to the Lord. This transfer is no doubt an act of will and is the minimal Sahakari karana. This is Bhara-Samarpana, total surrender of responsibility and spiritual burden to Him.

After this surrender is consummated the Almighty mercy of God is the entire operative force in the situation and the aspirant rests in expectant passivity. God becomes all in all in the Sadhaka's life, when the Sadhaka reduces himself to nothing having thrown all his cares to the care of his Lord. This passivity can achieve infinitely more than the best efforts of man. **Man secures the Highest when the Highest is the sole agent and active power in the situation.** For this blessedness to materialize human will has to will itself away at the feet of Narayana.

No more fitting enunciation of prapatti can be imagined than the opening words of the vaikunthagadya of Ramanuja. "Swadheena Saranam Anuvrajat"(92).★

IV

APPENDIX

A brief account of the literary and cultural consolidation of the work of Ramanuja in the subsequent periods may be attempted, Among his immediate disciples, Kuresha has

★ ಸ್ವಾಧೀನತ್ರವಿಧಚೇತನಾಚೇತನಸ್ವರೂಪಸ್ಥಿತಿಪ್ರವೃತ್ತಿಭೇದಂ ಕ್ಲೇಶಕರ್ಮಾ
ದ್ಯುಲೇಷದೋಷಾಸಂಸ್ಪೃಷ್ಟಂ, ಸ್ವಾಭಾವಿಕಾನವಧಿಕಾತಿಶಯಜ್ಞಾನಬಲೈಶ್ವರ್ಯ ವಿರೈ
ಶಕ್ತಿತೇಜಃ ಪ್ರಭೃತ್ಯಸಂಖ್ಯೇಯಕಲ್ಯಾಣಗುಣೌಘಮಹಾರ್ಣವಂ, ಪರಮಪುರುಷಂ,
ಭಗವಂತಂ ಶ್ರೀಮನ್ನಾರಾಯಣಂ ಸ್ವಾಮಿಶ್ವೇನ ಗುರುಶ್ವೇನ ಚ ಪರಿಗೃಹ್ಯ, ಏಕಾಂತಿ
ಕಾತ್ಯಂತಿಕ- ತತ್ಪಾದಮ್ಬುಜದ್ವಯಸಂಚರೈಕಮನೋರಥಃ, ತತ್ಪಾಪ್ತಯೇ
ಚ ತತ್ಪಾದಮ್ಬುಜದ್ವಯ ಪ್ರಪತ್ತೇರನ್ಯನ್ಮ ಮೇ ಕಲ್ಪಕೋಟಿರಹಸ್ರೇಣಾಪಿ ಸಾಧನ
ಮಸ್ತೀತಿ ಮನ್ನಾನಃ, ತಸ್ಯೈವ ಭಗವತೋ ನಾರಾಯಣಸ್ಯ, ಅಖಿಲಸತ್ತ್ವದಯೈಕ
ಸಾಗರಸ್ಯ, ಅನಾಲೋಚಿತ ಗುಣಗಣಾಖ್ಯಾಜನಾನುಕೂಲ ಮರ್ಮಾದಾಶೀಲವತಃ,
ಸ್ವಾಭಾವಿಕಾನವಧಿಕಾತಿಶಯ ಗುಣವತ್ತಯಾ ದೇವತಿರ್ಯಜ್ಞನುಷ್ಠಾದ್ಯಖಿಲಜನಹೃದ
ಯಾನಂದನಸ್ಯ, ಅಶ್ರಿತವಾತ್ಸಲ್ಯೈಕಜಲಧೀಃ, ಭಕ್ತಜನ ಸಂಕ್ಷೇಪೈಕಭೋಗಸ್ಯ,
ನಿತ್ಯಜ್ಞಾನಕ್ರಿಯೈಶ್ವರ್ಯಭೋಗಸಾಮಗ್ರೀಸಮೃದ್ಧಸ್ಯ, ಮಹಾವಿಭೂತೇಃ ಶ್ರೀಮಚ್ಚ
ರಣಾರವಿಂದಯುಗಲಮನನ್ಯಾತ್ಮ ಸಂಜೀವನೇನ ತದ್ಗತಸರ್ವಭಾವೇನ ಶರಣಮನು
ವ್ರಜೇತ್ ||

poured forth his devotion and his masterly understanding of Ramanuja's philosophy in his great stāvas. Pillan has composed a dignified and perceptive commentary on the Thiruvai noli of Parankusa. Parasara Bhatta has summed up the philosophy in his illuminating Sri Ranga Raja Stava and also his fascination for the Deity at Sri Rangan. He has produced a master-piece of a commentary on Vishnu-Sahasra-Nama. The next age produced the greatest commentator on Sri Bhashya, Sudarsanasuri, who elucidated the Vedārtha Saṅgraha also. Vedānta Desika, a junior contemporary of his, produced works of great magnitude and variety in substantiation of Viśiṣṭādvaita. In range and quality his contribution is Supreme in the post-Ramanuja literature and one can hardly mention his counter-part in any other School of Indian philosophy. In addition to this purely interpretative and defensive writing, works arose in the tradition expounding older classics. Govinda Raja wrote an extensive and fine gloss on the Rāmāyana, Sudarsana suri and Vira Raghava wrote glosses on the Bhāgavatam. An older writer, Viśnuchitta had already written a gloss on Vishnu purāṇa. Ramanuja had not left detailed commentaries on the upanishads. Ranga Ramanuja accomplished this task completely working on the lines of interpretation laid down by Ramanuja, Sudarsana suri and Vedānta Desika. The purely metaphysical and epistemological problems of philosophy were handled in a non-exegetical manner by Vedānta-Desika in his Tattva-muktākalapa, Sarvārtha-siddhi, Naya-Siddhanjana and Nyaya-parisuddhi. This work of independent exposition was masterly and thorough. Along with this purely Sanskrit writing a great literature arose on the compositions of the Alvars in Tamil on the lines laid down by Pillan. This body of writing has come to be collectively described as Bhagavad-Vishayam. The great names in this branch are Nanjiyar, Periavachchan pillai and Vadakku Tiruvidi pillai. Prapatti, as we have seen, is a great spiritual force in Viśiṣṭādvaita and this centres round the great Mantras, Astakshari and Dvaya and the final teaching of the Gita called the charamasloka. An extensive literature in Tamil has

developed on this exegetical and expository theme, named Rahasyas. The greatest writers in this field are Pillai Lokacharya and Vedanta-Desika. Varavara Muni is the distinguished commentator on Lokacharya. Vedanta Desika has Sanskrit treatises also in support and they are usually called Rakshas. The whole literature owing its thought-pattern and inspiration to Ramanuja is vast and substantial.

Ramanuja's influence on the Bhakti philosophy of all types in the later ages was profound and far-reaching. Nimbarka and Vallabha drew heavily from him in their Vedantic writings. Sankara Deva of Assam and Sri Chaitanya of Nava-Dvipa came under his influence. Jeeva Goswami, the leading writer on the thought of Chaitanya, explicitly acknowledges his authority in his Tatwa-Sandarbha. Saint Ramanada carried Ramanuja's teaching to the North and he was the Guru of Saint Nanak and Saint Kabir. Tulasi Das has the distinct flavour of Ramanuja's Srivaishnavism and addresses Sri Rama as sir Ranga, a name specifically promulgated in the Ramanujite tradition. (Ra. Chari. manasa. uttar kanda). The Vaishnavas on the banks of Tamraparni and Kauveri receive special commendation in the Srimad bhagavatam. The Dvaita tradition of Vedanta has some sharp differences from Visistadvaita but the Haridasas of Karnataka, such as Purandara Dasa and more especially, Kanaka-Dasa, have fruitful Ramanujite learnings. There is thus, no doubt, that Ramanuja was a dominating shaping force in the spiritual life of Medieval India.

One of the services of Ramanuja was to revitalize the centres of Vaishnava worship, such as Sri Rangan, Tirumalai and Kanchi. He did this by the systematic introduction of the Science of Agamic worship and also by inculcating the spirit of devotion released by the Alvars. The greater temples acquired the status of Seats of learning and authority in Vedanta and SriVaishnavism. They also added colour and beauty to the life of the devoted public. It is also significant that in temples where Ramanuja had a free hand, such as Melkote

and Belur, he breathed a liberal spirit and accorded a share in worship to the lower castes down to the Harijans, whom he seems to have named Tirukulattar. There is nothing strange in this, as one of the great Alvars, Tiruppani actually hailed from this caste.

The philosophy of Ramanuja percolated into Telugu and Karnataka literature in abundance. Karnataka rendered a distinct service to the faith. Ramanuja was received by the Hoysala King, Vishnu Vardhana, at a critical time and Ramanuja lived and worked in Tiru Narayanapuram (Melkote) for atleast about twelve years. Karnataka became a second home of the Acharya and his hallowed association is cherished ever afterwards both in Karnataka history and Sri Vaishnava tradition. After the sack of Sri Rangam by the vandals of Mallikafar, it was restored and re-established in its former glory by Gopanarya, a Vijayanagaram Chieftien. The kings of the Yadava dynasty at Mysore, in a subsequent age, adopted the faith consistent with royal catholicity, and patronized Vaishnava literature and the great Vaishnava temples. It is also noteworthy a great ascetic of the parakala Math was invited to become the Raja Guru, the spiritual preceptor of the Royal family. Since then the successive occupants of this Seat of Sri Vaishnavism exercised ceremonial and sometimes real spiritual authority over the kings of the Yadava dynasty. A great king of the Yadava dynasty, Chikkadeva Raya, was devoted to Sri Vaishnava philosophy deeply and wrote and caused to be written many works in propogation of this philosophy. The munificence of the kings to temples and learned men was phenomenal. The impact was equally deep and permanent on the masses of Karanataka.

In the recent past the vigorous vindication of Karma-yoga on the part of Tilak has affinities with Ramanuja's position. The message of Sri Ramakrishna contains Visistadvaita as a marked constituent. Swami Vivekananda found in some Sri

Vaishnavas of Madras his most active supporters and workers. Swami Ramakrishnananda wrote a moving life of Ramanuja in Bengali. Swami Brahmanada was positively affected in his role as a spiritual preceptor by the example of Ramanuja's largeheartedness. Sir Aurobindo's interpretation of the Gita emphasized just the principles fundamental to Ramanuja's interpretation such as the ultimacy of the concept of purushotama and the Gospel of devotion and surrender. Mahatma Gandhi's work in the emancipation of the Harijans is a completion of the liberalisation initiated by Ramanuja. Dr. S. Radhakrishnan's interpretation of vedanta is Advaitic in profession but moves in the direction of Vishistadvaita as remarked by more than one critic. Tagore's final philosophy has a great deal in common with the spiritual fundamentals of Srivaishnavism. Thus the philosophy of Ramanuja has exhibited stamina for self perpetuation and expansion, in new forms, in new climates of thought and life.

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ರಾ ಮಾ ನು ಜ ದ ಶ ಫ ನ ದ ಸೂ ಕ್ಷ್ಮ ಪ ರಿ ಚ ಯ

ಲೇಖಕರು-ಶ್ರೀಮತಿ ವೇದವಲ್ಲಿ

[' ವಿಶಿಷ್ಟಾದ್ವೈತ ಸಿದ್ಧಾಂತ ' ಎಂಬ ಅನರ ಕೃತಿಯಿಂದ ಆಯ್ದ ಕೆಲವು ಭಾಗಗಳನ್ನೊಳಗೊಂಡಿದೆ.]

ಭಗವದ್ರಾಮಾನುಜಾಚಾರ್ಯರಿಂದ ಪ್ರತಿಪಾದಿತವಾಗಿರುವ ಸಿದ್ಧಾಂತಕ್ಕೆ ವಿಶಿಷ್ಟಾದ್ವೈತಸಿದ್ಧಾಂತ ಎಂದು ಹೆಸರು. ಇದನ್ನು ತ್ರಿನೈಷ್ಠವಸಿದ್ಧಾಂತ ಎಂದೂ ಕರೆಯುತ್ತಾರೆ.

ನಮ್ಮ ದೇಶದಲ್ಲಿ ಅನೇಕ ಸಿದ್ಧಾಂತಗಳಿವೆ. ಅವುಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಮುಖ್ಯವಾದವು ಚಾರ್ವಾಕ, ಜೈನ, ಬೌದ್ಧ, ಸಾಂಖ್ಯ-ಯೋಗ, ನ್ಯಾಯ-ವೈಶೇಷಿಕ, ಪೂರ್ವಮೀಮಾಂಸೆ ಮತ್ತು ಉತ್ತರಮೀಮಾಂಸೆ ಅಥವಾ ವೇದಾಂತ. ಅವುಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಚಾರ್ವಾಕ, ಜೈನ ಮತ್ತು ಬೌದ್ಧ ದರ್ಶನಗಳು ವೇದ ಪ್ರಮಾಣವನ್ನು ಒಪ್ಪುವುದಿಲ್ಲ. ಇವುಗಳಿಗೆ ನಾಸ್ತಿಕ ಸಿದ್ಧಾಂತಗಳೆಂದು ಹೆಸರು. ಸಾಂಖ್ಯ-ಯೋಗ ಮತ್ತು ನ್ಯಾಯ-ವೈಶೇಷಿಕ ಸಿದ್ಧಾಂತಗಳು ವೇದಪ್ರಮಾಣವನ್ನು ಸಂಪೂರ್ಣವಾಗಿ ಅಂಗೀಕರಿಸದೆ ಪ್ರತ್ಯಕ್ಷ ಮತ್ತು ಅನುಮಾನ ಪ್ರಮಾಣಗಳಿಗೆ ಅನುಕೂಲವಾಗಿರುವ ವೇದ ಭಾಗಗಳನ್ನು ಮಾತ್ರ ಪ್ರಮಾಣವಾಗಿ ತೆಗೆದುಕೊಂಡಿವೆ. ಆದ್ದರಿಂದ ಇವುಗಳಿಗೆ ಆಸ್ತಿಕ-ನಾಸ್ತಿಕ ಸಿದ್ಧಾಂತಗಳೆಂದು ಹೆಸರು. ಪೂರ್ವ ಮೀಮಾಂಸಾ ದರ್ಶನ ಮತ್ತು ವೇದಾಂತದರ್ಶನಗಳು ವೇದ ಪ್ರಮಾಣಕ್ಕೆ ಹೆಚ್ಚಾದ ಪ್ರಾಮುಖ್ಯವನ್ನು ಕೊಟ್ಟಿರುವುದರಿಂದ ಇವುಗಳಿಗೆ ಆಸ್ತಿಕ ಸಿದ್ಧಾಂತವೆಂದೂ ವೈದಿಕ ಸಿದ್ಧಾಂತವೆಂದೂ ಹೆಸರು. ವೇದಾಂತಿಗಳು ವೇದವನ್ನು ಅಪೌರುಷೇಯವೆಂದೂ, ಅನಾದಿಯೆಂದೂ ಪರಿಗಣಿಸಿ, ವೇದ ವಾಕ್ಯಗಳ ಆಧಾರದ ಮೇಲೆಯೇ ತಮ್ಮ ತಮ್ಮ ಸಿದ್ಧಾಂತಗಳನ್ನು ಸ್ಥಾಪಿಸಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ವೇದಾಂತದಲ್ಲಿ ಅದ್ವೈತ, ವಿಶಿಷ್ಟಾದ್ವೈತ ಮತ್ತು ದ್ವೈತವೆಂಬ ಮೂರು ಮುಖ್ಯವಾದ ಸಿದ್ಧಾಂತಗಳಿವೆ. ಈ ಸಿದ್ಧಾಂತಗಳೆಲ್ಲವೂ ಒಂದಕ್ಕೊಂದು ವಿರೋಧವಾಗಿರುವಂತೆ ನಮಗೆ ತೋರಿದರೂ ಚೆನ್ನಾಗಿ ಪರಿ

ನೀಲಿಸಿನೋಡಿದರೆ ಅಬೆಲ್ಲವೂ ಒಂದರಿಂದ ಒಂದು ಪರಿಷ್ಕೃತವಾಗಿರುವಂತೆ ಕಂಡುಬರುತ್ತದೆ. ತ್ರಿಮಾನುಜಾಚಾರ್ಯರ ಕಾಲದಲ್ಲಿ ಅದ್ವೈತ ಸಿದ್ಧಾಂತವು ಪ್ರಚಾರದಲ್ಲಿದ್ದುದರಿಂದ ವಿಶಿಷ್ಟಾದ್ವೈತವನ್ನು ತಿಳಿಯ ಬೇಕಾದರೆ ಮೊದಲು ಅದ್ವೈತ ಸಿದ್ಧಾಂತವನ್ನು ತಿಳಿಯಬೇಕು. ತ್ರಿಕಂಕರಾಚಾರ್ಯರ ಕಾಲದಲ್ಲಿ ಬೌದ್ಧರ ಶೂನ್ಯಸಿದ್ಧಾಂತವು ಪ್ರಚಾರದಲ್ಲಿದ್ದುದರಿಂದ ಅದ್ವೈತ ಸಿದ್ಧಾಂತಕ್ಕೆ ಹಿನ್ನೆಲೆಯಾಗಿ ಮಾಧ್ಯಮಿಕರ ಶೂನ್ಯವಾದವನ್ನು ತಿಳಿಯಬೇಕು ಮತ್ತು ಭಾರತೀಯ ಸಿದ್ಧಾಂತಗಳೆಲ್ಲಾ ಪ್ರತಿಪಕ್ಷವಾಗಿರುವ ಚಾರ್ವಾಕ ಸಿದ್ಧಾಂತವನ್ನು ಮೊದಲು ತಿಳಿಯಬೇಕು.

ಚಾರ್ವಾಕ ಸಿದ್ಧಾಂತ:- ಇದು ಜನ ಸಾಮಾನ್ಯರಿಗೆ ತಿಳಿದ ಸಿದ್ಧಾಂತವಾಗಿದೆ. ಸಾಮಾನ್ಯ ಮನುಷ್ಯರಿಗೆ ಇಂದ್ರಿಯಗಳ ಮೂಲಕ ಪ್ರತ್ಯಕ್ಷವಾಗಿ ಗೋಚರವಾಗುತ್ತಿರುವ ದಿನವಹಿ ಅನುಭವಗಳನ್ನು ಮಾತ್ರ ಇವರು ತಿಳಿಸಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ಇವರು ಕೇವಲ ಪ್ರತ್ಯಕ್ಷಪ್ರಮಾಣವನ್ನು ಮಾತ್ರ ಅಂಗೀಕರಿಸಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ಅನುಮಾನ ಪ್ರಮಾಣವನ್ನೂ, ವೇದಪ್ರಮಾಣವನ್ನೂ ಇವರು ಒಪ್ಪುವುದಿಲ್ಲ. ನಮ್ಮ ಇಂದ್ರಿಯಗಳಿಗೆ ಗೋಚರವಾಗುತ್ತಿರುವ ಈ ಜಗತ್ತು ಮಾತ್ರ ಸತ್ಯ. ನಮ್ಮ ಕಣ್ಣಿಗೆ ಕಾಣುತ್ತಿರುವ ಈ ಪ್ರಪಂಚವಲ್ಲದೆ ಬೇರೆ ಏನೂ ಇಲ್ಲ. ಪ್ರತ್ಯಕ್ಷಕ್ಕೆ ನಿಲುಕದ ಆತ್ಮವೆಂಬ ವಸ್ತುವಿಲ್ಲ. ಈಶ್ವರನಿಲ್ಲ. ಆದುದರಿಂದ ಯಾವ ಜೀವಂ ಸುಖಂ ಜೀವೇತ್ ಬದುಕಿರುವವರಿಗೆ ಸುಖವಾಗಿಜೀವಿಸಬೇಕು ಎಂಬುದೇ ಇವರ ಉಪದೇಶ.

ಬೌದ್ಧ ಸಿದ್ಧಾಂತ:- ಮಾಧ್ಯಮಿಕರಶೂನ್ಯವಾದ:- ಚಾರ್ವಾಕ ಸಿದ್ಧಾಂತವನ್ನು ಬೌದ್ಧ ಸಿದ್ಧಾಂತವು ಪರಿಷ್ಕರಿಸಿ ಮುಂದುವರಿಸಿದೆ ಎನ್ನುಬಹುದು. ಚಾರ್ವಾಕರು ಹೇಳಿರುವಂತೆ ಜಗತ್ತಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಕೇವಲ ಸುಖಾನುಭವಕ್ಕೆ ಪ್ರಾಮುಖ್ಯ ಕೊಟ್ಟು ಅದಕ್ಕಾಗಿ ಶ್ರಮಿಸುತ್ತಾ ಹೊರಟರೆ ಕೊನೆಗೆ ಸಿಕ್ಕುವುದೇನು? ಬರೀ ದುಃಖಮಿಶ್ರವಾದ ಅಲ್ಪಸುಖವಲ್ಲದೆ ಏತನೋ ಇಲ್ಲ. ಆದ್ದರಿಂದ ಜೀವನವು ದುಃಖಮಯ. ದುಃಖಕ್ಕೆ ತೃಪ್ತಿ ಅಥವಾ ಆಸೆಯೇ ಮೂಲ ಕಾರಣ; ಮೈರಾಗ್ಯ ಹೊಂದಿ ಆಸೆಯನ್ನು ನಿರ್ಮೂಲ ಮಾಡಿದರೆ ದುಃಖ ನಿನಾರಣೆಯಾಗುತ್ತದೆ; ಆರ್ಯ ಅಷ್ಟಾಂಗಿಕ ಮಾರ್ಗವೇ ದುಃಖ ನಿವಾರಣೆಗೆ ಮಾರ್ಗ ಎಂಬ ಈ ಘಾಲ್ತು ಆರ್ಯ ಸತ್ಯಗಳನ್ನು ಗೌತಮ ಬುದ್ಧನು ಉಪದೇಶ ಮಾಡಿದನು. ವಸ್ತುಗಳ ಕೊನೆಯ ಸ್ವಭಾವವನ್ನು ನೋಡಿ ಬುದ್ಧನು ಸಮಸ್ತ ಪದಾರ್ಥಗಳೂ ಸ್ಥಿರವಲ್ಲ ಎಂದು ಬೋಧಿಸಿದನು. ಇದು ಮುಂದೆ ಅವನ ಶಿಷ್ಯರುಗಳಿಂದ ವಿಧವಿಧವಾಗಿ ಪರಿಷ್ಕರಿಸಲ್ಪಟ್ಟು ಕೊನೆಗೆ ಶೂನ್ಯ

ವಾಡವೆಂಬ ಒಂದು ಸಿದ್ಧಾಂತವೇ ಆಯಿತು. ಈ ಸಿದ್ಧಾಂತದ ಪ್ರಕಾರ ಜಗತ್ತಿ-
ನಲ್ಲಿ ಪ್ರಮಾಣವಾಗಲಿ, ಪ್ರಮೇಯವಾಗಲಿ, ಪ್ರಮಾತೃವಾಗಲಿ ಯಾವುದೂ
ಇಲ್ಲ. ಅಂದರೆ ನಾವೂ ಇಲ್ಲ; ಈ ಜಗತ್ತು ಇಲ್ಲ; ಬ್ರಹ್ಮನೂ ಇಲ್ಲ; ಎಲ್ಲವೂ
ಶೂನ್ಯ; ವೇದವು ಪ್ರಮಾಣವಲ್ಲ. ನಮ್ಮ ಕಣ್ಣಿಗೆ ಕಾಣುತ್ತಿರುವ ವಸ್ತುಗಳು
ಕೊನೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ನಾಶವಾಗಿ ವಾಯುವಾಗುತ್ತಿರುವವನ್ನು ನಾವು ಪ್ರತ್ಯಕ್ಷವಾಗಿ
ಕಾಣುತ್ತಿದ್ದೇವೆ. ಇಂದು ನಾಶವಾಗುವ? ಇಂದು ವಸ್ತು ಮುಂದೆ
ಕಾಲಾನುಕಾಲದಲ್ಲಿ ನಾಶವಾಗುತ್ತದೆ ಎಂಬುದು ಅನುಮಾನದಿಂದ ಸಿದ್ಧ-
ವಾಗಿದೆ. ಆದ್ದರಿಂದ ಸಮಸ್ತವಸ್ತುಗಳ ಕೊನೆಯ ಸ್ವಭಾವವೇನಾಯಿತು ?
ವಿನಾಶವೇ ಅಲ್ಲವೇ. ಹೀಗೆ ಸರ್ವವೂ ಶೂನ್ಯತೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಪರ ವಸಾನಗೊಳ್ಳುವುದ
ರಿಂದ ' ಸರ್ವಂ ಶೂನ್ಯಂ ' - ಸರ್ವವೂ ಶೂನ್ಯ ಎಂದ ಇವರು ವಾದಿಸಿದ್ದಾರೆ.

ಶ್ರೀಶಂಕರಾಚಾರ್ಯರ ಅದ್ವೈತಸಿದ್ಧಾಂತ:- ಮಾಧ್ಯಮಿಕರ ಶೂನ್ಯವಾದ
ಶ್ರೀಶಂಕರಾಚಾರ್ಯರ ಕಾಲದಲ್ಲಿ ಪ್ರಚಾರದಲ್ಲಿದ್ದಿತು. ಈ ಶೂನ್ಯವಾದವನ್ನು
ಅವರು ವಿಚಾರಮಾಡಿ ಪರಿಷ್ಕರಿಸಿದ್ದಾರೆ ಎನ್ನಬಹುದು. ಸಮಸ್ತವು ಶೂನ್ಯ
ವೆಂದು ಹೇಳುವುದಾದರೆ ನಾವು ಈಗ ಪ್ರತ್ಯಕ್ಷವಾಗಿ ಕಾಣುತ್ತಾ ಅನು-
ಭವಿಸುತ್ತಿರುವ ಜಗತ್ತಿನ ಗತಿ ಏನು ? ಎಂಬ ವಿಷಯವನ್ನು ಶ್ರೀಶಂಕರಾ-
ಚಾರ್ಯರು ಈ ರೀತಿ ಪರಿಷ್ಕರಿಸಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ಈ ಶೋಧಿಕೆಯ ಜಗತ್ತು ಮಿಥ್ಯೆ
ಅಂದರೆ ಈ ಜಗತ್ತು ಈಗ ಪ್ರತ್ಯಕ್ಷವಾಗಿ ಯಾವ ರೀತಿ ನಮಗೆ ಕಾಣುತ್ತಿ-
ದೆಯೋ ಅದೇ ರೀತಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಅದು ಇಲ್ಲ ಎಂಬುದನ್ನು ನಾವು ಒಪ್ಪುತ್ತೇವೆ.
ಆದರೆ ಈ ಜಗತ್ತಿಲ್ಲಾ ಬರೀ ಶೂನ್ಯ ಎಂಬುದನ್ನು ನಾವು ಒಪ್ಪುವುದಿಲ್ಲ. ಈ
ಜಗತ್ತು ಜಗತ್ತಿನ ರೂಪದಲ್ಲಿ ನಮಗೆ ಕಾಣಿಸ ಬೇಕಾದರೆ ಅದಕ್ಕೆ ಯಾವುದು
ದಾಖಲೆ ಒಂದು ವಸ್ತುವಿನ ಅಧಾರವಿದ್ದೇ ಇರಬೇಕು. ಹೇಗೆಂದರೆ ಒಂದು
ಹಗ್ಗವನ್ನು ನೋಡಿ ಅದು ಹಾಸೆಂದೂ ಒಂದು ಕಪ್ಪೆಯ ಚಿಪ್ಪನ್ನು ನೋಡಿ
ಅದು ಬೆಳ್ಳಿಯೆಂದೂ ನಾವು ಭ್ರಮಿಸಬಹುದು. ಆದರೆ ಹಾವು ಮತ್ತು ಬೆಳ್ಳಿ
ಎಂಬ ಈ ಭ್ರಮೆಗಳು ನಮಗೆ ಉಂಟಾಗಬೇಕಾದರೆ ಮೊದಲು ಒಂದು ಹಗ್ಗ
ವಾಗಲಿ, ಕಪ್ಪೆಯಚಿಪ್ಪಾಗಲಿ ಅಲ್ಲಿ ಇದ್ದೇ ಇರಬೇಕಲ್ಲವೆ. ಹಗ್ಗವಾಗಲಿ,
ಕಪ್ಪೆಯಚಿಪ್ಪಾಗಲಿ ಅಲ್ಲಿ ಇಲ್ಲದೇ ಇದ್ದರೆ ಹಾವಿನ ಭ್ರಮೆಯಾಗಲಿ, ಬೆಳ್ಳಿ-
ಯಭ್ರಮೆಯಾಗಲಿ ನಮಗೆ ಬರಲಾರದು. ಆದ್ದರಿಂದ ಹಗ್ಗವು ಹಾವಿನ
ಭ್ರಮೆಗೆ ಅಧಿಷ್ಠಾನವಾಗಿದೆ. ಮತ್ತು ಕಪ್ಪೆಚಿಪ್ಪು ಬೆಳ್ಳಿಯ ಭ್ರಮೆಗೆ ಅಧಿ-
ಷ್ಠಾನವಾಗಿದೆ. ಅದೇ ರೀತಿ ಈ ಜಗತ್ತಿನ ತೋರುವಿಕೆಗೆ ಅಧಿಷ್ಠಾನವಾಗಿ
ಒಂದು ಸತ್ಯವಾದ ವಸ್ತು ಇದ್ದೇ ಇರಬೇಕು. ಅದೇ ಬ್ರಹ್ಮವು, ಈ ಬ್ರಹ್ಮ

ತತ್ತ್ವದ ಗೆ ಮತ್ತೂ ಕನ್ನೆಯ ಚಿಪ್ಪಿನಂತೆ ಸತ್ಯವಾದ ತತ್ತ್ವ; ಜಗತ್ತು ಹಾವು ಮತ್ತು ಬೆಳ್ಳಿಯಂತೆ ಬ್ರಹ್ಮನ ಅಧಿಷ್ಠಾನದ ಮೇಲೆ ಒಂದು ತೋರುವಿಕೆ, ಭ್ರಮೆ; ಮಿಥ್ಯೆ ಅಥವಾ ಮಾಯೆ ಎನ್ನಬೇಕು. ಆದ್ದರಿಂದ ಅಧಿಷ್ಠಾನವಾದ ಬ್ರಹ್ಮ ತತ್ತ್ವ ಒಂದೇ ಸತ್ಯವೆಂದೂ, ನಮಗೆ ತೋರುವ ಈ ಜಗತ್ತೆಲ್ಲವೂ ಮಿಥ್ಯೆ ಅಥವಾ ಮಾಯೆ ಎಂದೂ ಅವರು ವಾದಿಸಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ಇದೇ ಅದ್ವೈತವು. ಅಂದರೆ ತತ್ತ್ವ ಒಂದೇ, ಎರಡನೆಯ ವಸ್ತುವಿಲ್ಲ. ಈ ಸಿದ್ಧಾಂತವನ್ನು ಬ್ರಹ್ಮ ಅಧಿಷ್ಠಾನತತ್ತ್ವವೆಂದೂ, ಮಾಯಾವಾದವೆಂದೂ ಕರೆದಿದ್ದಾರೆ.

ಶ್ರೀ ಶಂಕರಾಚಾರ್ಯರ ಬ್ರಹ್ಮ ಅಧಿಷ್ಠಾನವಾದದಿಂದ ಮಾಧ್ಯಮಿಕರ ಸರ್ವ ಶೂನ್ಯವಾದವು ಪರಿಷ್ಕರಿಸಲ್ಪಟ್ಟು, ಸತ್ಯವಾದ ಬ್ರಹ್ಮ ತತ್ತ್ವ ಒಂದು ಇದೆ ಎಂಬುದು ಸಿದ್ಧವಾಯಿತು. ಆದರೆ ಬ್ರಹ್ಮತತ್ತ್ವವನ್ನು ಕೇವಲ ಪ್ರತ್ಯಕ್ಷ ಅನುಮಾನಗಳಿಂದ ಸಾಧಿಸುವುದಕ್ಕೆ ಆಗುವುದಿಲ್ಲ; ಶಬ್ದ ಪ್ರಮಾಣವೇ ಅದಕ್ಕೆ ಮುಖ್ಯವಾದ ಆಧಾರವೆಂದು ಶ್ರೀ ಶಂಕರಾಚಾರ್ಯರು ಸ್ವೀಕರಿಸಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ಅನಾದಿಯೂ, ಅಪೌರುಷೇಯವೂ ಆದ ಶ್ರುತಿನಾಕ್ಯಗಳ ಆಧಾರದಿಂದಲೇ ವೇದಾಂತ ಸಿದ್ಧಾಂತವು ಸಾಫ್ಫಿತವಾಗಿರುವುದು.

ೞಿ ರಾಮಾನುಜಾಚಾರ್ಯರ ವಿಶಿಷ್ಟಾದ್ವೈತ ಸಿದ್ಧಾಂತ:-

ಈ ಬ್ರಹ್ಮ ಅಧಿಷ್ಠಾನ ತತ್ತ್ವವನ್ನು ಶ್ರೀ ರಾಮಾನುಜಾಚಾರ್ಯರು ಇನ್ನೂ ಮುಂದುವರಿಸಿ ವಿಶಿಷ್ಟಾದ್ವೈತ ಸಿದ್ಧಾಂತವನ್ನು ಸ್ಥಾಪಿಸಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ಮಾಧ್ಯಮಿಕರ ಸರ್ವಶೂನ್ಯವಾದವನ್ನು ಪರಿಷ್ಕರಿಸಲು ಉಪಯೋಗಿಸಿದ ವಾದಸರಣಿಯನ್ನೇ ಇವರು ಮುಂದುವರಿಸಿ ವಾದಿಸಿದ್ದಾರೆ:- ಹಗ್ಗವು ಸತ್ಯ, ಹಾವು ಭ್ರಮೆ; ಕನ್ನೆಯ ಚಿಪ್ಪು ಸತ್ಯ, ಬೆಳ್ಳಿಯು ಭ್ರಮೆ ಎಂದು ಹೇಳುವುದು ಹೇಗೆ ಸಾಧ್ಯ? ಜಗತ್ತಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಹಾವೆಂಬ ಒಂದು ಸತ್ಯವಾದ ವಸ್ತು ಇಲ್ಲದೇ ಇದ್ದರೆ ಹಗ್ಗದ ಮೇಲೆ ಹಾವೆಂಬುದು ಹೇಗೆ ಆರೋಪಿತವಾಗ ಬಲ್ಲದು? ಅದೇ ರೀತಿ ಬೆಳ್ಳಿ ಎಂಬ ಒಂದು ಸತ್ಯವಾದ ವಸ್ತು ಇಲ್ಲದೇ ಇದ್ದರೆ, ಕನ್ನೆಯ ಚಿಪ್ಪಿನ ಮೇಲೆ ಬೆಳ್ಳಿ ಎಂಬುದು ಹೇಗೆ ಆರೋಪಿತವಾಗ ಬಲ್ಲದು? ಹಾವಿನ ಕೆಲವು ಗುಣಗಳು ಹಗ್ಗದಲ್ಲಿಯೂ ಇರುವುದರಿಂದಲೇ ಹಗ್ಗವು ಹಾವಾಗತೋರಬಲ್ಲದು. ಅಂದರೇನು? ಹಗ್ಗವು ಹಾವಿನಂತೆ ಉದ್ದವಾಗಿಯೂ ಗುಂಡಾಗಿಯೂ ಇದೆ; ಇದರಿಂದ ಕೆಲವು ವೇಳೆ ನಮ್ಮ ಕಣ್ಣಿನ ದೋಷ ದಿಂದಲೋ ಸಾಯಂಕಾಲದ ಮಸುಕಾದ ಬೆಳಕಿನಿಂದಲೋ ಅದು ಹಾವಿನಂತೆ

ನಮಗೆ ಕಾಣಿಸುತ್ತದೆ. ಇದೇ ರೀತಿ ಕನ್ನೆಯ ಚಿಪ್ಪು ಬೆಳ್ಳಿಯಂತೆ ಬಿಳಿ ಬಣ್ಣವನ್ನು, ಹೊಳಪನ್ನೂ ಹೊಂದಿರುವುದರಿಂದಲೇ ಅದು ಬೆಳ್ಳಿಯಂತೆ ನಮಗೆ ಕಾಣಿಸುತ್ತದೆ; ಅದ್ದರಿಂದ ಹಾವು ಮತ್ತು ಬೆಳ್ಳಿಯೆಂಬ ವಸ್ತುಗಳು ಸತ್ಯವಾಗಿ ಜಗತ್ತಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಇದ್ದೇ ಇರಬೇಕು. ಇಲ್ಲದೇ ಇದ್ದರೆ ಅವುಗಳ ವಿಷಯವಾದ ಭ್ರಮೆಯು ಎಂದಿಗೂ ಉಂಟಾಗಲಾರದು. ಅದ್ದರಿಂದ ಹಗ್ಗವೂ ಸತ್ಯ ಮತ್ತು ಕನ್ನೆಯ ಚಿಪ್ಪೂ ಸತ್ಯ ಬೆಳ್ಳಿಯೂ ಸತ್ಯ. ಇದೇ ರೀತಿ ಬ್ರಹ್ಮನೂ ಸತ್ಯ, ಜಗತ್ತೂ ಸತ್ಯ, ಜಗತ್ತಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಜೀವ (ಚಿತ್ತು) ಮತ್ತು ಪ್ರಕೃತಿ (ಅಚಿತ್ತು) ಎಂಬ ಎರಡು ತತ್ತ್ವಗಳಿವೆ. ಈ ಎರಡು ತತ್ತ್ವಗಳೂ ಸತ್ಯ, ಬ್ರಹ್ಮನೂ ಸತ್ಯ ಎಂದು ವಾದಿಸಿದ್ದಾರೆ.

ಅದ್ದರಿಂದ ಈ ಸಿದ್ಧಾಂತದ ಪ್ರಕಾರ ಒಟ್ಟು ಮೂರು ತತ್ತ್ವಗಳಿವೆ-ಜೀವ ತತ್ತ್ವ, ಪ್ರಕೃತಿತತ್ತ್ವ ಮತ್ತು ಈಶ್ವರತತ್ತ್ವ. ಶ್ರೀ ಶಂಕರಾಚಾರ್ಯರು ಬ್ರಹ್ಮತತ್ತ್ವ ಮಾತ್ರಸತ್ಯ; ಅದಕ್ಕೆ ರೂಪವೂ ಇಲ್ಲ; ಗುಣಗಳೂ ಇಲ್ಲ. ಅದು ನಿರ್ವಿಶೇಷವಾದ, ನಿರ್ಗುಣವಾದ ಜ್ಞಾನತತ್ತ್ವ; ಗೋಪುರ ಪ್ರಕಾರ ಗೋಮನುಷ್ಯಾದಿ ಸಕಲ ಪದಾರ್ಥಗಳೂ ಅವಿದ್ಯಾ ಕಲ್ಪಿತವಾದ ಮಿಥ್ಯಾ ಪದಾರ್ಥಗಳಾಗಿರುವುದರಿಂದ ಈ ಜಗತ್ತು ಇಲ್ಲ; ಚಿದ್ವಸ್ತುಗಳೂ ಇಲ್ಲ; ಅಚಿದ್ವಸ್ತುಗಳೂ ಇಲ್ಲ; ಇವುಗಳೆಲ್ಲಾ ಮಾಯೆ ಎಂದು ವಾದಿಸಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ಶ್ರೀ ರಾಮಾನುಜಾಚಾರ್ಯರು ತಿಳಿಸಿರುವುದೇನೆಂದರೆ ಬ್ರಹ್ಮತತ್ತ್ವವಿದೆ; ಅದಕ್ಕೆ ರೂಪವೂ ಇದೆ; ಗುಣಗಳೂ ಇವೆ; ಜಗತ್ತೂ ಇದೆ; ಅಚಿದ್ವಸ್ತುಗಳೂ ಇವೆ; ಚಿದ್ವಸ್ತುಗಳೂ ಇವೆ. ಆದರೆ ಈ ಜಗತ್ತು ಬ್ರಹ್ಮನಿಂದ ಪ್ರತ್ಯೇಕವಾದ ವಸ್ತುವಾಗಿರದೆ ಬ್ರಹ್ಮನಿಗೆ ಶರೀರದಂತೆ ಸೇರಿಕೊಂಡಿದೆ. ಹೀಗೆ ಜೀತನಾಚೇತನ ವಸ್ತುಗಳಿಂದ ಕೂಡಿರುವ ಜಗತ್ತನ್ನು ವಿಶೇಷಣವಾಗಿ ಹೊಂದಿರುವ ಬ್ರಹ್ಮ ತತ್ತ್ವವು ಒಂದೇ ಆಗಿದೆ; ಅದು ಕೇವಲ ನಿರ್ವಿಶೇಷನಿರ್ಗುಣಬ್ರಹ್ಮನಾಗಿರದೆ ಸವಿಶೇಷಚಿದಚಿದ್ವಿಶಿಷ್ಟ ಬ್ರಹ್ಮನಾಗಿದೆ ಎಂದು ವಾದಿಸಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ಜೀವಾತ್ಮನು ಕೈಕಾಲು ಮುಂತಾದ ಅವಯವಗಳಿಂದ ಕೂಡಿರುವ ಈ ದೇಹವನ್ನು ಶರೀರವಾಗಿ ಹೊಂದಿ, ಅದರೊಂದಿಗೆ ಸೇರಿಕೊಂಡು ಒಂದೇ ವ್ಯಕ್ತಿಯಾಗಿರುವಂತೆ, ಬ್ರಹ್ಮನು ಚಿದ್ವಸ್ತುಗಳಿಂದ ಕೂಡಿರುವ ಜಗತ್ತನ್ನು ಶರೀರವಾಗಿ ಹೊಂದಿ ಅದರೊಂದಿಗೆ ಸೇರಿಕೊಂಡು ಒಂದೇ ಒಂದು ತತ್ತ್ವವಾಗಿದ್ದಾನೆ.

ಹೀಗೆ ಶರೀರ - ಶರೀರಿಭಾವವನ್ನು ಪ್ರತಿಪಾದಿಸುವುದರಿಂದ ಇದಕ್ಕೆ ವಿಶಿಷ್ಟಾದ್ವೈತ ಎಂದು ಹೆಸರಾಗಿದೆ. ಇದಕ್ಕೇ ವಿಶಿಷ್ಟಸ್ಯ ಅದ್ವೈತಂ, ಎಂದು

ವಿಗ್ರಹವಾಕ್ಯ ಮಾಡಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ವಿಶಿಷ್ಟಸ್ಯ ಅಂದರೆ ಚಿದ ಚಿದ್ವಸ್ತುಗಳನ್ನು ಶರೀರವಾಗಿ ಹೊಂದಿರುವ ತತ್ತ್ವ ಅದ್ವೈತಂ ಅಂದರೆ ಎರಡಿಲ್ಲದಿರುವಿಕೆ; ಅಂದರೆ ಚಿತ್ ಮತ್ತು ಅಚಿತ್ ತತ್ತ್ವಗಳು ಬ್ರಹ್ಮನಿಗೆ ಶರೀರವಾಗಿರುವುದರಿಂದಲೂ, ಅವನನ್ನು ಬಿಟ್ಟು ಇರಲಾರದುದರಿಂದಲೂ, ಶರೀರದಂತೆ ಅವನ ಭೋಗಕ್ಕೂ, ಅಧೀನಕ್ಕೂ ಆಳ್ವಿಕೆಗೂ ಒಳಪಟ್ಟಿರುವುದರಿಂದಲೂ ಇವು ಮೂರು ತತ್ತ್ವಗಳೂ ಸೇರಿ ಒಂದೇ ವಿಶಿಷ್ಟ ತತ್ತ್ವವಾಗಿರುವುದೇ ವಿಶಿಷ್ಟಾದ್ವೈತ ತತ್ತ್ವವು. ಹೀಗೆ ಪರಬ್ರಹ್ಮ ತತ್ತ್ವಕ್ಕೆ ವಿಶೇಷಣಗಳಿವೆ ಎಂದ ಮೇಲೆ ಅದಕ್ಕೆ ರೂಪವೂ, ಗುಣಗಳೂ ಇದ್ದೇ ಇರಬೇಕೆಂಬುದು ಸಿದ್ಧವಾಯಿತು. ಶ್ರೀ ಶಂಕರಾಚಾರ್ಯರಿಂದ ಮಾಧ್ಯಮಿಕರ ಶೂನ್ಯವಾದವು ಪರಿಷ್ಕರಿಸಲ್ಪಟ್ಟು ಬ್ರಹ್ಮತತ್ತ್ವ ಒಂದು ಮಾತ್ರ ಇದೆ ಎಂಬುದು ಸಿದ್ಧವಾಯಿತು. ಅದರೊಂದಿಗೆ ಶ್ರೀ ರಾಮಾನುಜಾಚಾರ್ಯರು ಬ್ರಹ್ಮನೊಂದಿಗೆ ಚೇತನಾಚೇತನಾತ್ಮಕವಾದ ಜಗತ್ತು ಇದೆ; ಅವನು ಜಗತ್ತನ್ನು ಶರೀರದಂತೆ ವಿಶೇಷಣವಾಗಿ ಹೊಂದಿರುವ ವಿಶಿಷ್ಟ ಬ್ರಹ್ಮನಾಗಿದ್ದಾನೆ ಎಂಬ ಸಿದ್ಧಾಂತವನ್ನು ಸಾಬೀಪಡಿಸಿದರು. ಮತ್ತು ಕೇವಲ ಜ್ಞಾನಾರ್ಜನೆ ಮಾತ್ರ ಸಾಲದು; ನಮ್ಮ ಜ್ಞಾನಗಳೆಲ್ಲಾ ಭಗವಂತನಲ್ಲಿ ಭಕ್ತಿರೂಪವನ್ನವಾಡ ಜ್ಞಾನವಾಗಬೇಕು ಎಂದು ಉಪದೇಶ ಮಾಡಿ ಭಕ್ತಿಗೆ ಹೆಚ್ಚು ಪ್ರಧಾನವೆ ಕೊಟ್ಟಿದ್ದಾರೆ.

ಶ್ರೀ ರಾಮಾನುಜರು ಇತರ ಆಚಾರ್ಯರುಗಳಂತೆ ಪ್ರಸ್ಥಾನ ತ್ರಯೀ ಅಂದರೆ ಉಪನಿಷತ್ತು, ಬ್ರಹ್ಮಸೂತ್ರ ಮತ್ತು ಭಗವದ್ಗೀತೆ ಎಂಬ ಮೂರು ಗ್ರಂಥಗಳಿಗೂ ವಿಶದವಾಗಿ ವ್ಯಾಖ್ಯಾನಗಳನ್ನು ಬರೆದಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ಅವರು ಬರೆದಿರುವ ಉಪನಿಷದ್ವಾಕ್ಯಗಳ ವ್ಯಾಖ್ಯಾನಕ್ಕೆ ನೇದಾರ್ಥ ಸಂಗ್ರಹವೆಂದೂ, ಭಗವದ್ಗೀತೆಯ ವ್ಯಾಖ್ಯಾನಕ್ಕೆ ಗೀತಾಭಾಷ್ಯವೆಂದೂ ಹೆಸರು. ಬ್ರಹ್ಮಸೂತ್ರಗಳಿಗೆ ಅವರು ಮೂರುವ್ಯಾಖ್ಯಾನಗಳನ್ನು ಬರೆದಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ಬಹಳ ಸಂಕ್ಷೇಪವಾಗಿ ಬರೆದಿರುವ ವ್ಯಾಖ್ಯಾನಕ್ಕೆ ನೇದಾಂತಸಾರವೆಂದೂ, ಸ್ವಲ್ಪ ವಿಸ್ತಾರವಾಗಿ ಬರೆದಿರುವ ವ್ಯಾಖ್ಯಾನಕ್ಕೆ ನೇದಾಂತ ದೀಪವೆಂದೂ, ಮತ್ತು ಬಹಳ ವಿಶದವಾಗಿಯೂ ಅತ್ಯಂತ ವಿಸ್ತಾರವಾಗಿಯೂ ಬರೆದಿರುವ ವ್ಯಾಖ್ಯಾನಕ್ಕೆ ಶ್ರೀಭಾಷ್ಯವೆಂದೂ ಹೆಸರು. ಈ ಗ್ರಂಥಗಳನ್ನು ಅವರು ಬಹಳ ಸೊಗಸಾಗಿ ಬರೆದಿದ್ದಾರೆ ಮತ್ತು ಅವುಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಬಹಳ ಸ್ವಾರಸ್ಯವಾಗಿ ವಾದಮಾಡಿ ವಿಷಯಗಳನ್ನು ತಿಳಿಸಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ಅವರ ಶ್ರೀಭಾಷ್ಯಗ್ರಂಥವನ್ನು ವ್ಯಾಸಂಗ ಮಾಡಿದರೆ ವಿಶಿಷ್ಟಾದ್ವೈತ ಸಿದ್ಧಾಂತವನ್ನು ಸಂಪೂರ್ಣವಾಗಿ ತಿಳಿದುಕೊಂಡು ಅನುಭವಿಸಬಹುದು.

ಶ್ರೀವರವರಮುನಿಗಳಿಂದ ಅನುಗೃಹೀತವಾದ

ಆ ರ್ತಿ ಪ್ರ ಬಂ ಥ

(ಸಾಹಿತ್ಯ ವೇದಾಂತ ವಿದ್ವಾನ್ ಜಗ್ಗು ಸುದರ್ಶನಾಚಾರ್ಯ)

ವಿಶಿಷ್ಟಾದ್ವೈತ ಪ್ರಾಧ್ಯಾಪಕರು.

ಈ ಪ್ರಪಂಚದಲ್ಲಿ ಪ್ರತಿಯೊಬ್ಬ ಮಾನವನೂ ಒಂದು ಪ್ರಯೋಜನವನ್ನು ಉದ್ದೇಶಿಸಿಯೇ ಒಂದು ಕೆಲಸವನ್ನು ಮಾಡುವನು. “ಪ್ರಯೋಜನ ಮನುದ್ದಿಶ್ಯ ನ ಮಂದೋಪಿ ಪ್ರವರ್ತತೇ”-ಮಂದಮತಿಯೂ ಕೂಡ ಫಲದಲ್ಲಿ ದೃಷ್ಟಿಯಿಲ್ಲದಿದ್ದರೆ ಒಂದು ಕೆಲಸದಲ್ಲೂ ಪ್ರವರ್ತಿಸಲಾರನೆಂಬುದು ಅನುಭವದ ಮಾತು. ಹೀಗೆ ಫಲವೆನಿಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳುವುದರಲ್ಲಿ ಮುಖ್ಯವಾಗಿ ಪರಿಗಣಿಸಲ್ಪಡುವುದು ನಾಲ್ಕು. ಅವೇ ಧರ್ಮ, ಅರ್ಥ, ಕಾಮ, ಮೋಕ್ಷಗಳೆಂಬುವು. ಇವಕ್ಕೇ ಪುರುಷಾರ್ಥಗಳೆಂದೂ ಹೆಸರು. “ಪುರುಷೈಃ ಅರ್ಥೈಃ ಇತಿ ಪುರುಷಾರ್ಥಃ” ಚೇತನರಿಂದ ಅಪೇಕ್ಷಿಸಲ್ಪಡತಕ್ಕದ್ದೆಂದರ್ಥ “ಧರ್ಮವೆಂದರೆ ವೇದದಲ್ಲಿ ಹೇಳಿರುವ ಸ್ವರ್ಗಾದಿಫಲಗಳಿಗೆ ಸಾಧನವಾದ ಕರ್ಮಗಳು. “ಅರ್ಥ”ವೆಂಬುದು ಧರ್ಮಾಚರಣೆಗೆ ಅವಶ್ಯಕವಾದ ಹಣ. “ಕಾಮ” ಮೆಂಬುದು ಈ ಮನುಷ್ಯ ಎಂದರೆ ಮನಸ್ಸನ್ನು ಕಡೆದು ಅಲ್ಲೋಲ ಕಲ್ಲೋಲ ಮಾಡುವ ಆಸೆ. ಈ ಕಾಮಕ್ಕೆ ವಿಷಯ-ಸೃಷ್ಟಿಕಂದನವನಿತಾದಿಗಳಾಗಲಿ ಪರಬ್ರಹ್ಮವಾಗಲಿ ಯಾವುದಾದರೂ ಆಗಬಹುದು. ಅಂತೂ ಇದರ ವ್ಯಾಪ್ತಿ ಎತ್ತಲೂ ತಡೆಇಲ್ಲದುದು. ಇದನ್ನೇ ಇಂದ್ರನು ಕಾಮನನ್ನು ಕೊಂಡಾಡುವಾಗ ಹುರಿದುಂಬಿಸಿ ಹೇಳುವನು “ವಜ್ರಂ ತಪೋವೀರ್ಯಮಹತ್ಸು ಕುಂತಂ ತ್ವಂ ಸರ್ವತೋಗಾಮಿ ಚ ಸಾಧಕಂಚ” “ನನ್ನ ವಜ್ರಾಯುಧವು ಮಹಾತಪಸ್ವಿಗಳೆಲ್ಲೂ ಮಹಾಪರಾಕ್ರಮಿಗಳೆಲ್ಲೂ ಕೆಂದುವುದಿಲ್ಲ. ನೀನು ಸರ್ವವ್ಯಾಪಕ ನಾಗಿದ್ದು ಹೋದೆಡೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ನಿನ್ನ ಕೆಲಸವನ್ನು ಸಾಧಿಸುವಿ” ಎಂದು. ಬ್ರಹ್ಮಜ್ಞಾನಿಗಳೆಲ್ಲೂ ಪರಬ್ರಹ್ಮವಿಷಯಕವಾದ ಆಶೆ ತುಂಬಿರುವುದರಿಂದ ಕಾಮನಿಲ್ಲದ ಸ್ಥಳವೇ ಇಲ್ಲವೆಂದು ತಾತ್ಪರ್ಯ. ಇನ್ನು ನಾಲ್ಕನೆಯದು ಮೋಕ್ಷ. ಈ ಮೂರು ಪುರುಷಾರ್ಥಗಳೂ ಅಲ್ಪ ಮತ್ತು ಅಸ್ಥಿರಗಳು ಎಂದು ತಿಳಿದು, ಇವುಗಳ ದೊಷಗಳನ್ನುಕಂಡು ಬೇಸತ್ತು, ನಿತ್ಯಾನಂದವಾದ ಶಾಶ್ವತವಾದ ಸುಖವನ್ನು ಪಡೆಯಬೇಕೆಂದು ಹಂಬಲಿಸುವವರಿಗೆ ಇದು ಫಲವಾದುದು.

ಈ ಚತುರ್ವಿಧ ಪುರುಷಾರ್ಥಗಳನ್ನೂ ಕೇಳಿಕೇಳಿದವರಿಗೆ ಆಗಾಗಲೇ ಒಂದೇ ಸಲಕ್ಕೆ ಕೊಡುವ ಉದ್ದೇಶ್ಯದಿಂದಲೇ ಭಗವಂತನು ಚತುರ್ಭುಜ ನಾಗಿರುವನು. “ಚತುರ್ಣಾಂ ಪುರುಷಾರ್ಥಾನಾಂ ದಾತಾ ದೇವಶ್ಚ ತುರ್ಭುಜಃ” ಅದರೆ ಕಾಲಕ್ರಮದಲ್ಲಿ ಜನಕ್ಕೆ ಧರ್ಮ ಮೋಕ್ಷಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಪ್ರವೃತ್ತಿಯು ತಪ್ಪಿ ಹೋಯಿತು. ಅರ್ಥಕಾಮಗಳಲ್ಲೇ ನಿಂತರು. ಆಗ ಭಗವಂತನೂ ಎರಡೇ ಕೈಗಳಿಂದ ಅವತರಿಸಿ ರಾಮಕೃಷ್ಣಾದಿ ರೂಪೇಣ ಕಂಗೊಳಿಸಿದ. ಇದನ್ನೇ ಅನುಭವ ಪ್ರವಾಹದಲ್ಲಿ ಮುಳುಗಿರುವ ಭಕ್ತರು ಸರಸವಾಗಿ ಅನುಭವಿಸಿ ಪಾಡುವರು. “ಕೇಟ್ಮಾಲುಂ ನಾಲಿಲುಳ್ಳಿರಂಡೇ ಕೇಳ್ವಾರ್ ಮಾನಿನೈ ಕರುಮತ್ತಾಲ್, ನಾಟ್ಮಾರಿಂಗೈನ್ನವತರಿತ್ತಿರುತೋಳಾಲ್ ನಂಬಿರಾಲ್” ಧರ್ಮ, ಅರ್ಥ, ಕಾಮ, ಮೋಕ್ಷಗಳೆಂಬ ನಾಲ್ಕರಲ್ಲಿ ಒಳ ಎರಡು ಪುರುಷಾರ್ಥಗಳನ್ನೇ ಜನ ಕೇಳುವರು; ಇದು ಅವರಪಾಪಫಲ. ಇರಲಿ. ಆದಕಾರಣ ಅವನೇ ಎರಡು ಕೈಗಳಿಂದವತರಿಸಿದನು ಎಂದಿದ್ದಾರೆ. “ಉದಾರಾಸ್ಸರ್ವ ಏವೈತೇ” ಫಲವು ಅಲ್ಪವೋ-ಮಹತ್ತೋ, ಯಾವುದಾದರೂ ಸರಿ. ನನ್ನಲ್ಲಿ ಬಂದು ಕೇಳುವವ ನೀಗ ಉದಾರಿ. ದೇವತಾಂತರಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಹೋಗಿ ಬೇಡದೆ ನನ್ನ ಕೊಡುಗೆ ಯನ್ನು ಎತ್ತಿ ಹಿಡಿದು ನನ್ನನ್ನು ಉದಾರನೆನಿಸಿದವನು ಉದಾರನೆಂದು ಗೀತೆ ಯಲ್ಲಿ ಹೇಳಿರುವನು.

ಹೀಗಿಲ್ಲದೆ ಮೊದಲ ಮೂರನ್ನೂ ಬಿಟ್ಟು ಪರಮಪುರುಷಾರ್ಥವಾದ ಮೋಕ್ಷವನ್ನೇ ಫಲವನ್ನಾಗಿ ಅಪೇಕ್ಷಿಸುವವರು ಬಹಳ ಮುಂಚೆ ಭಗವಂತನ ಮೋಕ್ಷ ಪುರುಷಾರ್ಥವನ್ನು ಪಡೆಯಬೇಕಾದರೆ ಕರ್ಮಯೋಗ, ಜ್ಞಾನ ಯೋಗ, ಭಕ್ತಿಯೋಗ, ಗಳೆಂಬ ಮೂರು ಯೋಗಗಳು ಸಾಧನಗಳಾಗಿವೆ. ಈ ಮೂರೂ ಕೂಡ ಸ್ವಪ್ರಯತ್ನ ಸಾಧ್ಯವಾದುದರಿಂದಲೂ, ಶೇಷತ್ವ ಸಾರ ತೃತ್ಯಗಳನ್ನೇ ಸ್ವರೂಪವಾಗಿ ಪಡೆದಿರುವ ಜೀವಾತ್ಮನಿಗೆ ಸ್ವರೂಪ ವಿರುದ್ಧ ವಾಗಿರುವುದರಿಂದಲೂ. ಪ್ರಾಪ್ಯನಾದ ಭಗವಂತನಿಗೆ ಸರಿತೂಗಲಾರದುದರಿಂದ ಬಹಳ ಕೆಳಮಟ್ಟದ ಸಾಧನಗಳಾದುದರಿಂದಲೂ, ಪ್ರಾಪ್ಯನಾದ ಭಗವಂತ ನನ್ನು ಪಡೆಯಲು ಸರಿಯಾದ ಉಪಾಯವಾಗಲಾರವು. ಆದುದರಿಂದಲೇ ಅಶ್ವಾರುಗಳೂ ಆಚಾರ್ಯರುಗಳೂ ಭಗವಂತನನ್ನು ಸೇರಲು ಸಿದ್ಧೋಪಾಯ ನೆನಿಸಿಕೊಂಡಿರುವ ಭಗವಂತನನ್ನೇ ಉಪಾಯ (ಸಾಧನ) ವಾಗಿ ಸ್ವೀಕರಿಸಿ ದರು. ಈಗ ಫಲ ಸಾಧನಗಳಿಗೆ ಸರಿಸಮಾನತೆ ಬಂದಂತಾಯಿತು.

ಈ ರೀತಿ ಭಗವಂತನನ್ನು ಪಡೆಯಲು ಭಗವಂತನನ್ನೇ ಉಪಾಯವಾಗಿ ನರಿಸುವುದೇ ಪ್ರಪತ್ತಿ-ಶರಣಾಗತಿ ಎನಿಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳುವುದು. (ಇದು ನಾಲ್ಕನೆಯ

ಯೋಗ.) ಇದನ್ನು ಉಪಾಯವೆಂದು ವ್ಯವಹರಿಸಿದರೂ ಕೂಡ ಇದರ ಸ್ವರೂಪ ವಿನೇಚನೆ ಮಾಡಿದಲ್ಲಿ ಇದು ಉಪಾಯವಾಗಲಾರದು. ಇದೂ ಕೂಡ ಸ್ವತಂತ್ರನಾದ ಭಗವಂತನ ವಿಷಯದಲ್ಲಿ ಮಾಡುವುದಾದ್ದರಿಂದ ಸ್ವತಂತ್ರನಾದ ಅವನು ಸ್ವೀಕಾರ ಮಾಡಿದರೂ ಮಾಡಬಹುದು. ಮಾಡದಿದ್ದರೂ ಇರಬಹುದು. ಈ ಪ್ರಪತ್ತಿಗೆ “ಮಹಾವಿಶ್ವಾಸ” ಬೇಕು. ಅದರಲ್ಲಿ ಸ್ವಲ್ಪ ನ್ಯೂನತೆ ಬಂದರೂ ಫಲ ಸಿಗಲಾರದು. ಅದ್ದರಿಂದ ಈ ಪ್ರಪತ್ತಿಯನ್ನೂ ವಿಚ್ಛಿ ಎವನೆಯ ಉಪಾಯವನ್ನು ಆಚಾರ್ಯರುಗಳು ಬಲವಾಗಿ ಹಿಡಿದರು. ಆ ಉಪಾಯವೇ “ಆಚಾರ್ಯಾಭಿನಾನ-ಚರಮೋಪಾಯ-ಅನ್ತಿಮೋಪಾಯ; ಎಂದೆನಿಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳುವುದು. ಇದು ಎರಡು ವಿಧ. “ಆಚಾರ್ಯರೇ ನಮಗೆ ಉಪಾಯವೂ ಮತ್ತು ಫಲವೂ” ಎಂದು ಶಿಷ್ಯನು ಭಾವಿಸಿರುವುದು ಒಂದು. ಆಚಾರ್ಯನೇ ತಾನಾಗಿ “ಇವನು ನನಗೆ ಸೇರಿದವನು” ಎಂದು ಅಭಿಮಾನಿಸುವುದು ಮತ್ತೊಂದು. ಇದರಲ್ಲಿ ಎರಡನೆಯದೇ ಉತ್ಕೃಷ್ಟವಾದುದು.

ಈ ರೀತಿ ಆಚಾರ್ಯಾಭಿನಾನಕ್ಕೆ ಪಾತ್ರರಾದವರು “ಮಧುರಕವಿ” ಮತ್ತು “ರಾಮಾನುಜರು”. ಆಚಾರ್ಯ ಸ್ಥಾನವನ್ನು ಪಡೆದಿರುವ ೫ ನಮ್ಮಾಚಾರ್ಯವರು “ತೇವು ಮಾತ್ತ ರಿಯೇರ್” ಎಂದು ಹೇಳಿದ ಮಧುರಕವಿಗಳನ್ನು ಸಾಕ್ಷಾತ್ತಾಗಿ ಕಟಾಕ್ಷಿಸಿರುವರು. “ಮಾರನಡಿಪನಿನ್ನು ಯನ್ದವ್” ಎಂಬಭವಿಷ್ಯದಾಚಾರ್ಯರಾದ ೫ ರಾಮಾನುಜರನ್ನು ತಮ್ಮ ಪಾತುರಮುಖೇನ ಸೂಚಿಸುವ ಕ್ರಮದಿಂದಲೂ ಸಹ ಕಟಾಕ್ಷಿಸಿರುವರು. ಇದೇ ರೀತಿ ಶ್ರೀ ರಾಮಾನುಜರೂ ಸಹ ೫ ಮುಣವಾಳಮಾಮುನಿಗಳನ್ನು “ಯತೀಂದ್ರಪ್ರವಣ” ಎಂದು ಪ್ರಖ್ಯಾತಿಯನ್ನೇ ಪಡೆಯುವಂತೆ ಮಾಡಿರುವರು.

ಶ್ರೀಯಃ ಪತಿಯಾದ ಸರ್ವೇಶ್ವರನು “ತಿರುವಾಲದಿಯಾರ್” ಲಕ್ಷ್ಮೀ ಪತಿಯ ಪಾದಸೇವಕರು ಎಂದು ಹೇಳಲ್ಪಡುವ ಆಶ್ರಿತರಿಗೆ ಸದಾಚಾರ್ಯನನ್ನು ಕೊಟ್ಟು ಪರಭಕ್ತಿ ಪರಜ್ಞಾನ ಪರಮಭಕ್ತಿಗಳೆಂಬ ಭಕ್ತಿಯ ಮೇಲ್ಮಟ್ಟಗಳನ್ನುಂಟು ಮಾಡುವನು. ಇವು ಭಗವಂತನ ಪ್ರಾಪ್ತಿಗೆ ಸಾಧನವಾದ ಅವಳಿಗಳು. ಈ ಅವಸ್ಥೆಗಳುಂಟಾಗಬೇಕಾದರೆ ಮೊದಲು “ಪ್ರಾಪ್ಯರುಚಿ” ಪ್ರಾಪ್ಯನಾದ ಭಗವಂತನ ವಿಷಯದಲ್ಲಿ ಆಸೆಬೇಕು. ಅದನ್ನೂ ತಾನೇ ಉಂಟುಮಾಡುತ್ತಾನೆ. ಇದಾದ ಮೇಲೆ ಈ ಪ್ರಾಪ್ಯರುಚಿಯೇ ಹಿಂದೆ ಹೇಳಿದ ಪಕ್ಕದಜಿಗಳನ್ನು ಪಡೆಯುವುದು. “ಪರಭಕ್ತಿ” ಯೆಂದರೆ ಭಗವಂತನನ್ನು ಕಾಣದೆ ಕಾಣಬೇಕು ಕಾಣಬೇಕು ಎಂದು ತವಕಿಸುವುದು.

“ಪರಜ್ಞಾನ” ನೆಂಬುದು ವರ್ತಿಸಿದ ಭಗವಂತನೊಡನೆ ಕಲೆತು ಅವನನ್ನು ಅನುಭವಿಸಬೇಕೆಂಬ ಹಂಬಲ. ಆ ಭಗವಂತನನ್ನು ಅನುಭವಿಸಿ, ಅವನು ಬೇರೆ ತಾನು ಬೇರೆ ಎಂಬ ಸ್ಥಿತಿಯನ್ನೇ ಮರೆಯುವ ಅವಸ್ಥೆಯಿಗಾಗಿ “ಪರಮ ಭಕ್ತಿಯೆನಿಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳುವುದು. ಈ ಸ್ಥಿತಿಯನ್ನೇ ಭಗವಂತನು ಆಳ್ವಾರೊಬ್ಬರಿಗೇ ಈ ಪಾರ್ಥಿವ ಶರೀರದಲ್ಲಿ ಅನುಗ್ರಹಿಸಿದನು. ಅದನ್ನೇ ಅವರು “ಮಯ ವರ ಮದಿನಲ ಮರುಳಿನ” ಎಂದು ಆರಂಭಿಸಿ “ಅವಾವತ್ತುವೀಡುಪೆತ್ತ” ಎಂದು ಪ್ರಬಂಧದ ಕೊನೆಯವರೆಗೂ ಅನುಭವಿಸಿ ಪಡೆದವರು. ಪ್ರಪನ್ನ ಜನಕೂಟಸ್ಥರಾದ ನಮ್ಮಳ್ವಾರ್ತರಿಂದಲೇ ಈ ಪ್ರವಾಹ ಅನುಸ್ಮೃತವಾಗಿ ಬಂದಿರುವುದು.

ಈ ಆಳ್ವಾರ್ತುಗಳಂತೆಯೇ “ಕರೈಕನ್ನೋರ್” ಎಂಬಂತೆ ಮುಕ್ತರಾಗಿ ಈ ಆಳ್ವಾರ್ತುಗಳ ಜೊತೆಗೆ ಸಾಲಾಗಿ ಸೇರಿಸುವಂತಹ ಮಹಾನುಭವಿಯನ್ನು ಹೊಂದಿರುವ ಶ್ರೀರಾಮಾನುಜರ ವಿಷಯದಲ್ಲಿಯೇ ಈ ವರವರಮುನಿಗಳು ಈ ಭಾವ ಬಂಧಗಳನ್ನೆಲ್ಲಾ ಪಡೆದಿರುವರು. ಈ ರಾಮಾನುಜರು ಇವರಿಗಿಂತ 3-4 ಶತಕಗಳ ಹಿಂದೆಯೇ ತಮ್ಮ ಅವತಾರಕಾರ್ಯಗಳನ್ನು ಮುಗಿಸಿ ಪರಂಥಾಮ ಹೊಂದಿದವರಾದ್ದರಿಂದ ಅವರ ಸಾಕ್ಷಾತ್ಸಂಭವ ಸಿಗದೆ ಬಳಲಿ ಬೆಡಾಗಿ, ನಮ್ಮಾಳ್ವಾರ್ತು ಭಗವಂತನ ಅರ್ಚಾವತಾರದಲ್ಲಿ ಭಾವ ಬಂಧವನ್ನು ತಳೆದಂತೆ, ಇವರೂ ಈ ರಾಮಾನುಜರ ಅರ್ಚಾಮೂರ್ತಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಭಾವಬಂಧವನ್ನು ತಾಳಿ ಅನುಭವಿಸಿರುವರು. ಈ ಭಾವಬಂಧವು ಮೇರೆಮೀರಿ ಶ್ರೀ ರಾಮಾನುಜರನ್ನು ಸೇರಿ ಅನುಭವಿಸಿದ ಹೊರತು ಪ್ರಾಣವೇ ನಿಲ್ಲುವುದಿಲ್ಲವೆಂಬ ಅವಸ್ಥೆ ಪ್ರಾಪ್ತವಾಗಿ, ಮೈಯೆಲ್ಲಾ ಬಿಳಿಚಿಕೊಂಡು ಪ್ರಾಪ್ತವಸ್ತುವಿನಲ್ಲಿ ತ್ವರೆಯುಂಟಾಗಿ ಆ ಅನುಭವ ಹೊರಹೊಮ್ಮಿದ ಪ್ರಬಂಧವಾಗಿದೆ ಈ ಆರ್ತಿ ಪ್ರಬಂಧ.

“ಪರಮಾಪದಮಾಪನ್ನಃ” “ಮುಡಿನ್ದವವಾ” ಎಂಬಂತೆ ಗಜೇಂದ್ರನೂ ನಮ್ಮಾಳ್ವಾರ್ತು ಭಗವದನುಭವಾಲಾಭದಿಂದ ಕ್ಲೇಶ ಮೇರೆ ಮೀರಿ ಹೋದ!” ಎಂದು ವೈಕುಂಠದಲ್ಲಿರುವವರೂ ತಲ್ಲಣಿಸುವಂತೆ ಕೂಗಿಕೊಂಡರಲ್ಲ! ಹಾಗೆಯೇ ಇವರೂ ಪರಮಾಪದದಲ್ಲಿ ನಿತ್ಯ ಸೂರಿಗಳಾಗಿ ನಿತ್ಯಕೈಂಕರ್ಯವನ್ನು ನಿತ್ಯವಾಗಿ ಮಾಡುತ್ತಿರುವ ಈ ರಾಮಾನುಜರೂ ಕಳವಳ ಗೊಳ್ಳುವಂತೆ ತಮ್ಮ ಅನುಭವಾಲಾಭದಿಂದುಂಟಾದ ಕ್ಲೇಶ (ಆರ್ತಿ)ವನ್ನು ತೋಡಿಕೊಳ್ಳುವ ಪ್ರಬಂಧನಾದ್ದರಿಂದ ಇದಕ್ಕೆ ಆರ್ತಿ ಪ್ರಬಂಧವೆಂದೇ ಹೆಸರಾಯಿತು. ಈ ಆರ್ತಿಯುಂಟಾಗಲು ಕಾರಣಗಳಿರಡು. ಒಂದು-ಬೆಂಬುದಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಬೇಯುವಂತಿರುವ ಸಂಸಾರದಲ್ಲಿಯ ಕ್ಲೇಶಗಳು. ಮತ್ತೊಂದು ಭಗವದ್ಭಾಗವತರ

ಅನುಭವಾಲಾಭದಿಂದಂಟಾದ ಕ್ಲೇಶವು. ಇವರಿಗೆ ಈ ಎರಡನೆಯ ಕ್ಲೇಶವೇ ಹೆಚ್ಚಾಗಿ ಈ “ಅರಿ ಪ್ರಬಂಧ” ಅವತರಿಸಿದೆ.

ಶ್ರೀ ರಾಮಾನುಜರು “ಅಹಂ ಸರ್ವಂ ಕರಿಷ್ಯಾಮಿ” ಎಂದು ಲಕ್ಷ್ಮಣ ಸಂತೆ ಭಗವತ್ಪೀಷತ್ಪ್ರಕಾರ್ಯವಾದ ಕೈಂಕರ್ಯವನ್ನು ಸರ್ವದೇಶ ಸರ್ವಕಾಲ ಸರ್ವಾವಸ್ಥೆಗಳಲ್ಲೂ ಭಗವಂತನಲ್ಲಿ ಪ್ರಾರ್ಥಿಸುವರು. ಇವರು “ಶತ್ರುಘ್ನೋ ನಿತ್ಯ ಶತ್ರುಘ್ನಃ” ಎಂಬ ಶತ್ರುಘ್ನಸಂತೆ ಭಾಗವತರ (ಆಚಾರ್ಯರ) ವಿಷಯದಲ್ಲಿ ಈ ಶೇಷತ್ವ ಕಾರ್ಯವಾದ ಕೈಂಕರ್ಯವನ್ನು ಪ್ರಾರ್ಥಿಸುವರು. ಇದನ್ನೇ ಮುಂದೆ ಯೂ ವಡುಹನಂಬಿ “ತನ್ನಿಲೈಯೈ ಯೆನ್ನ ನಕ್ಕು ನೀತನೆ ತಿರಾಶಾ! ಪೆನ್ನಳು ಮುನ್ನ ನಕ್ಕೇಯಾಳ್ ಕೊಳ್ಳುಪನ್ನು” ಎಂದು ಪ್ರಾರ್ಥಿಸುವರು.

ಈ ಭಾವ ಬಂಧಗಳು ಅವತಾರ ವಿಶೇಷಗಳಾದ ಈ ಮೂರು ವ್ಯಕ್ತಿಗಳಿಗೇ ತಕ್ಕವು. “ಮುಹಿಲ್ವಣ್ಣ ನಡಿಯೈಯೆಡೈನ್ನು ಯ್ನ್ದ” ಎಂಬ ಶ್ರೀ ನಮ್ಮಾಳ್ವಾರೊಬ್ಬರು. “ಮಾರನಡಿಪಣೆನ್ನು ಯ್ನ್ದ” ಶ್ರೀ ರಾಮಾನುಜರು ಮತ್ತೊಬ್ಬರು. “ತಸ್ಮಾದನನ್ಯ ಶರಣೋ ಭವತೀತಿ ಮತ್ಪಾ” ಎಂಬ ಶ್ರೀ ವರವರಮುನಿಗಳು ಮೂರನೆಯವರು. ಇವರು ಪ್ರಸನ್ನ ಜನ ಕೂಟಿಸ್ತರಾದ ನಮ್ಮಾಳ್ವಾರ್ ವಿಷಯವನ್ನು “ತಿರುವಾಯ್ಮೊಳಿನೂತಂ ದಾದಿಯೆಂಬ ಪ್ರಬಂಧದಲ್ಲೂ, ಮಿಕ್ಕ ಆಳ್ವಾರ್‌ಗಳು ಮತ್ತು ರಾಮಾನುಜರ ವೈಭವವನ್ನು “ಉಪದೇಶರತ್ನಮಾಲೆ” “ಯತಿರಾಜವಿಂಶತಿ” ಎಂಬ ಗ್ರಂಥಗಳಲ್ಲೂ ಅನುಭವಿಸಿರುವರು. ಅದರಲ್ಲೂ ಈಗ್ರಂಥದಲ್ಲಿ ರಾಮಾನುಜರ ವಿಷಯದಲ್ಲಿ ತಮ್ಮ ಪೂರ್ಣವಾದ ಅಭಿನಿವೇಶನೆಲ್ಲಾ ಹೊರಹೊಮ್ಮುವಂತೆ “ಶದಹೋರ್ಪ ತೇ ಮಲರ್‌ತಾಳ್‌ಕ್ಕೇಯ್‌ನ್ನಿನಿಯ ಪಾಡುಕಮಾ ಮೆನ್ನೈಯಿರಾಮಾನುತರ್” ಎಂದು ಅಂಕುತದಲ್ಲಿ ತಿವಿದ ಸಲಗದಂತೆ ಘೀಳಿಟ್ಟಿರುವರು.

“ಆಚಾರ್ಯಾಭಿಮಾನ” ವೆಂಬುದೇ ಕಡೇ ಉಪಾಯವೆಂದೂ, ಆಚಾರ್ಯರೇ ಕಡೆಯ ಪ್ರಾಪ್ತನೆಂದೂ, ಇದೇ ಪ್ರಾಪ್ತ ಕಡೆಯ ಎಲ್ಲಿಯೆಂದೂ ಇದೇ ಕಡೆಯ ನಿರ್ಣಿತಾರ್ಥವೆಂದೂ, ಅದನ್ನೇ ತಮ್ಮ ಕಡೆಯ ಕಾಲದಲ್ಲಿ ಅಂತಿಮ ಪ್ರಬಂಧರೂಪವಾಗಿ ಶ್ರೀಮದಾಚಾರ್ಯರು ಪಾಡಿರುವರು.

ಪ್ರಸನ್ನರಿಗೆ ದ್ವಯಮಂತ್ರವು ಹೇಗೆ ಸರ್ವದಾ ಅನುಸಂಧೇಯವೋ ಹಾಗೆಯೇ ಆಚಾರ್ಯಾಭಿಮಾನದಲ್ಲಿ ನೆಲೆನಿಂತವನಿಗೆ ಈ “ರಾಮಾನುಜದ್ವಯ”

ನೆಂಬ ಮಂತ್ರವೇ ಸರ್ವವಾ ಅನುಸಂಭೇಯವಾದುದು. ಆದರಲ್ಲಿ “ಚರಣೌ ಶರಣಂ ಪ್ರಪದ್ಯೇ” ಎಂಬ ಪ್ರಾರ್ಥನಾಕ್ಕೆ ಅರ್ಥವನ್ನು “ಯತಿರಾಜನಿಂತಿ” ಯಲ್ಲಿ “ರಾಮಾನುಜಂ ಯತಿಪತಿಂ ಪ್ರಣಮಾಮಿ ಮೂರ್ಧ್ನಾ” ಎಂದು ಆರಂಭಿಸಿ “ತಸ್ಮಾದನನ್ಯ ಶರಣೋ ಭವತೀತಿ ಮತ್ಪಾ” ಎಂದು ಕೊನೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಪ್ರತಿಪಾದಿಸಿರುವರು. “ಶ್ರೀಮತೇ....ನಮಃ” ಎಂಬ ಉತ್ತರನಾಕ್ಕೆ ಅರ್ಥವನ್ನು “ನಾಳಿ ಯತಿರಾರ್ತ” ಎಂದು ಆರಂಭಿಸಿ “ಇನ್ದ ವರಂ ಗತ್ತಿರುತಿರು ನೀ” ಎಂದು ಕೊನೆಯಾಗಿ ಈ ಆರತಿ ಪ್ರಬಂಧದಲ್ಲಿ ಪೂರ್ಣವಾಗಿ ವಿವರಿಸಿರುವರು. ಇದರಲ್ಲಿಯೇ ಇವರ ಭಾವಬಂಧಗಳು ನಾನಾ ವಿಧವಾದ್ದರಿಂದ ಅದಕ್ಕೆ ತಕ್ಕಂತೆ ಪದ್ಯಗಳೂ ನಾನಾ ಭಂದಸ್ಪಗಳಿಂದ ಕೂಡಿವೆ.

ಇನ್ನು ಇದರಲ್ಲಿಯೇ ವಿಷಯಗಳನ್ನು ಅನುಭವಿಸಿ ಆನಂದಿಸುವ, ದಂಡಕಾರಣ್ಯ ವಾಸಿಗಳಾದ ಋಷಿಗಳೂ, ಜಟಾಯುವೂ ಕೂಡ ಶ್ರೀರಾಮಚಂದ್ರನನ್ನು ಕಂಡು “ಏಹಿ ಪಶ್ಯ ಶರೀರಾಣಿ” ಎಂದು ತಮ್ಮ ಕಷ್ಟ ಕಾರ್ಪಣ್ಯಗಳನ್ನು ಹೇಳಿಕೊಳ್ಳಲು ಹೊರಟವರು ಆ ಶ್ರೀ ರಾಮಚಂದ್ರನ ದಿವ್ಯ ಮಂಗಳ ವಿಗ್ರಹವನ್ನು ದರ್ಶಿಸಿ, “ಅಯ್ಯೋ! ಇದಕ್ಕೆನು ಅಪಾಯ ಒದಗುವುದೋ! ಇದು ಚೆನ್ನಾಗಿರಬೇಕು”. ಎಂದು ತಮ್ಮ ಕ್ಲೇಶಗಳನ್ನು ಮರೆತು “ಮಂಗಳಾನಿ ಪ್ರಯುಂಜಾಣಾಃ” ಎಂದೂ “ಆಯುಷ್ಯಾಃ” ಎಂದೂ ಮೊದಲು ಅವನಿಗೆ ಪಲ್ಲಾಣ್ಡು ಪಾಡುವಂತೆ, ಅಚಾರ್ಯರೂ ಸಹ ತಮ್ಮ ಪ್ರಕೃತಿ ಸಂಬಂಧದ ಕ್ಲೇಶಗಳನ್ನೂ, ಅವರ ದಿವ್ಯಾನುಭವ ಸಿಕ್ಕದೆ ತೊಳಲಾಡುತ್ತಿರುವ ಕ್ಲೇಶವನ್ನೂ ಸಹ ಮರೆತು, ದಿವ್ಯಮಂಗಳವಿಗ್ರಹದಲ್ಲಿ ಬಿಜಮಾಡಿರುವ (ಅರ್ಚಾಮೂರ್ತಿಯಲ್ಲಿ) ಶ್ರೀ ರಾಮಾನುಜರಿಗೆ “ನಾಳಿ ಯತಿರಾರ್ತ” ಎಂದು ಪ್ರಥಮವಾಗಿ ಪಲ್ಲಾಣ್ಡು ಪಾಡುವರು.

“ನಾಳಿ.ಯತಿರಾರ್ತ ನಾಳಿ.ಯತಿರಾರ್ತ

ನಾಳಿ.ಯತಿರಾರ್ತ ಎನನಾಳ್. ತ್ತುಪಾರ್ ನಾಳಿ.ಯಿನ

ನಾಳ್ತುಪಾರ್ ನಾಳಿ.ಯಿನನಾಳ್ತುಪಾರ್ ತಾಳಿಕ್ಕೈಯಿಲ್

ತಾಳ್ತುಪಾರ್ ವಿಣ್ಣೋರ್ ತಲೈ || ೧ ||

ಯತಿರಾಜರಿಗೆ ಜಯವಾಗಲಿ! ಯತಿರಾಜರು ನೂರಾರು ವರ್ಷ ಬಾಳಲಿ” ಎಂದು ರಾಮಾನುಜರಿಗೆ “ಪಲ್ಲಾಣ್ಡು” ಪಾಡುವರು ಕೆಲವರು. “ರಾಮಾನುಜರಿಗೆ ಪಲ್ಲಾಣ್ಡು ಪಾಡುವವರಿಗೆ ‘ಪಲ್ಲಾಣ್ಡು’ ಪಾಡುವವರು ಮತ್ತೆ ಕೆಲವರು. ಈ ರೀತಿ “ತೃದ್ಭುತ್ಯಭ್ಯತ್ಯ” ಎಂಬಂತೆ ಇಂತಹ ಪಲ್ಲಾಣ್ಡು ಪಾಡುವ

ಕಟ್ಟಿಕಡೆಯ ಭಾಗವತೋತ್ತಮರ ಸಾಧಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ನಿತ್ಯ ಸೂರಿಗಳು ತಲೆಯಿಟ್ಟು
ನಮಸ್ಕರಿಸುವರು ಎಂದು ತಾತ್ಪರ್ಯ.

“ಪಲ್ಲಾಣ್ಣು ಪಲ್ಲಾಯಿರತ್ತಾಂಡು” “ಪೊಲಿಹ ಪೊಲಿಹ” ಎಂದು
ಆಳ್ವಾರ್‌ಗಳು ಮೂರು ಸಲ ಜಯಕಾರವನ್ನು ಮಾಡುವ ಸಂಪ್ರದಾಯ
ದಂತೆ, ಇವರೂ “ವಾಳಿ. ವಾಳಿ. ವಾಳಿ.” ಎಂದು ಮಾನಸ ವಾಚಿಕ ಕಾಯಿ
ಕವಾಗಿ ತ್ರಿಕರಣದಿಂದಲೂ ಪಲ್ಲಾಣ್ಣು ಪಾಡಿರುವರು.

ರಾಮಾನುಜರಿಗೆ ಪಲ್ಲಾಣ್ಣು ಪಾಡುವುದು ಸಹಜವಾದರೂ, ಅವರ
ಸಂಬಂಧಿ ಸಂಬಂಧಿಗಳಿಗೆಲ್ಲಾ ಪಲ್ಲಾಣ್ಣು ಪಾಡುವುದು ಶ್ರೀ ರಾಮಾಯಣದ
ಕಾಲದಿಂದಲೂ ನಡೆದು ಬಂದಿದೆ. “ಜಯತೃತಿಬಲೋ ರಾಮೋ ಲಕ್ಷ್ಮಣಶ್ಚ
ಮಹಾಬಲಃ! ರಾಜಾ ಜಯತಿ ಸುಗ್ರೀವೋ ರಾಘವೇಶಾಭಿಸಾಲಿತಃ” ಯುಷಿ
ಗಳು ಜಯಕಾರ ಮಾಡುವಾಗ ಶ್ರೀ ರಾಮಚಂದ್ರನಿಗೆ ಮಾತ್ರ ಮಾಡುವುದು
ನ್ಯಾಯವಾದರೂ, ಅವನ ಸಂಬಂಧಿಯಾದ ಲಕ್ಷ್ಮಣನಿಗೂ, ಲಕ್ಷ್ಮಣನ
ಮೂಲಕವೇ ವ್ಯವಹರಿಸಿ ಸ್ನೇಹ ಬೆಳೆಸಿದ ಸುಗ್ರೀವನಿಗೂ ಜಯಕಾರವನ್ನು
ಮಾಡುವರು. ಭಗವಂತನಿಗೆ ಮಾಡುವ ಸಕಲವೂ ಅವನಿಗೆ ಸೇರಿದ ಭಾಗ
ವತರಿಗೂ ಸೇರಿದರೇನೇ ಭಗವಂತನಿಗೆ ತೃಪ್ತಿಯಾಗುವುದು. ಅವರೆಲ್ಲರೂ
ಭಗವಂತನಲ್ಲೇ ಅಡಕವಾಗಿರುವುದರಿಂದ ಅವರನ್ನು ಬಿಟ್ಟು ಮಾಡುವುದು
ಭಗವಂತನಿಗೆ ಸೇರಲಾರದು. ಇದೀಗ ಈ ಪ್ರಮೇಯದ ಸಾರಾಂಶ. ಇದನ್ನೇ
ಪೆರಿಯಾಳ್ವಾರ್‌ “ಪಲ್ಲಾಂಡು ಪಲ್ಲಾಣ್ಣು” ಎಂದು ಆರಂಭಿಸಿ, ಭಗವಂತನಿಗೆ
ಸೇರಿದ ಅವನ ಸಾಧಗಳಿಗೂ ಹಾಗೆಯೇ ವಕ್ಷಸ್ಥಲದಲ್ಲಿರುವ ಲಕ್ಷ್ಮೀದೇವಿಗೂ
ರಂಜಿತಕ್ರಗಳಿಗೂ ಪಲ್ಲಾಣ್ಣು ಪಾಡಿ ತೃಪ್ತಿಯಾಗದೆ ಕೊನೆಗೆ “ಅಡಿಯೋ
ನೋಡುಂ ನಿನೋಡುಂ” ನಿನಗೆ ಪಲ್ಲಾಣ್ಣು ಪಾಡುವ ನಾನೂ ನೂರಾರು
ವರ್ಷಕಾಲ ನಿನಗೆ ಪಲ್ಲಾಣ್ಣು ಪಾಡುತ್ತಲೇ ಇರಬೇಕೆಂದು ಹಾರೈಸಿರುವರು.
“ವಣ್ಣುಹಳ್. ನಾರಣ್” ಎಂದು ನಾರಾಯಣ ನಾಮವನ್ನು ಹೇಳಿಕೊಟ್ಟ
ನ ಪೂರ್ವಾರ್‌ “ತೊಳು. ದೆಳೆ. ನ್ನನನೆ” ಎಂದು ಹೇಳಿಕೊಟ್ಟಂತೆ, ಉತ್ತರಕ
ವಾದ ನಾಮವನ್ನು ಈ ಪಾಠದಲ್ಲಿ ಆಚಾರ್ಯರು ವಿನಿರಿಸಿರುವರು.

“ಇರಾಮಾನುತಾಯ ನಮವೆನ್ನಿ ರಾಪ್ಪಹಲ್ ಶಿನ್ದಿತ್ತು
ಇರಾಮಾನುತನೋಡಿಪ್ಪುಪ್ಪೊಳು.ದುಂ,
ಇರಾಮಾನು ಶಿನ್ದಿಪ್ಪಾರ್ ತಾಳಿನ್ನೈಯಿಲ್ ಶೇರ್‌ನ್ನಿರುಪ್ಪಾರ್
ತಾಳಿನ್ನೈಯೈ ವನ್ನಿಪ್ಪಾರ್ ವಿನೋರ್‌ ಹಳ್ ನಾಳು. || ೨ ||

“ಶ್ರೀಮತೇ ರಾಮಾನುಜಾಯ ನಮಃ” ಎಂಬ ಈ ಮಂತ್ರವನ್ನು ಸರ್ವಕಾಲದಲ್ಲೂ ಅನುಸಂಧಾನ ಮಾಡಬೇಕು. ಅದಿಲ್ಲದೆ ಜೀವನವನ್ನೇ ವ್ಯರ್ಥಗೊಳಿಸುವ ಪಶುಪ್ರಾಯರಾದವರ ಸಹವಾಸ ತ್ಯಾಜ್ಯವಾದುದು. ಇಂತಹ ತ್ಯಾಜ್ಯತಾಬುದ್ಧಿಯಿಂದ ಕೂಡಿದವರು ಕೆಲವರುಂಟು. ಅಂತಹ ವರನ್ನಾಶ್ರಯಿಸಿರುವವರ ಪಾದಗಳಿಗೆರಗುವವರು ಮತ್ತೆ ಕೆಲವರು. ಅವರು ನಿತ್ಯಸೂರಿಗಳಿಗೆ ನಿತ್ಯ ಸಂಪತ್ತನ್ನಿಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳುವರು. ಇದರಿಂದ “ಶ್ರೀಮತೇ ರಾಮಾನುಜಾಯ ನಮಃ” ಎಂಬುದೇ ಸರ್ವದಾ ಅನುಸಂಧೇಯವಾದ ಮಹಾ ಮಂತ್ರವೆಂದು ತಾತ್ಪರ್ಯ || ೨ ||

ಈ ರೀತಿ ರಾಮಾನುಜರಿಗೆ ಮಂಗಳವನ್ನು ಕೋರಿ, ಮುಂದೆಲ್ಲಾ ಅಪೇಕ್ಷಿತವಾದ ಸಕಲ ಫಲಗಳನ್ನೂ ಪ್ರಾರ್ಥಿಸುತ್ತಾರೆ. “ನೀನೇ ನನಗೆ ಸರ್ವವಿಧ ಬಂಧನವಾಗಿರುವಾಗ, ಈ ನಿಷ್ಕೆಗೆ ವಿರೋಧಿಯಾದ ಶರೀರಸಂಬಂಧವನ್ನು ತೊಲಗಿಸದಿರಲು ಕಾರಣವೇನು? ಎನ್ನುವರು.

ತನ್ಮೈನಲ್ತಾಯ್ ತಾರಂ ತನಯರೈರುಂಶೆಲ್ವಂ
ಎನ್ನ ನಕ್ಕು ನೀಯೇ ಯತಿರಾಶಾ!
ಇನ್ನ ನಿಲೈಕ್ಕೇರಾದವಿವ್ವುಡಲೈ
ಇನ್ನೇ ಯರುತ್ತರುಳಸ್ವಾರಾದದೆನ್ನೋ ಪಹರ್ || ೩ ||

ಯತಿರಾಜರೇ! “ನೂತಾ ಪಿತಾ ಭ್ರಾತಾ ನಿನಾಸತ್ಪರಣಂ ಸುಹೃದ್ಗತಿ ನಾರಾಯಣಃ” “ತ್ವಮೇವ ನೂತಾ ಚ ಪಿತಾತ್ವಮೇವ ತ್ವಮೇವ ಬಂಧುಶ ಗುರುಸ್ತ್ವಮೇವ| ತ್ವಮೇವವಿದ್ಯಾ ದ್ರವಿಣಂ ತ್ವಮೇವ ತ್ವಮೇವ ಸರ್ವಂ ಮಮ ದೇವ ದೇವ||” “ಶೇಲೇಯ್ ಕಣ್ಣಿಯರುಂ ಪೆರುಂಶೆಲ್ವಮುಂ ನನ್ನಕ್ಕಳುಂ ಮೇಲಾತ್ತಾಯ್ತನ್ಮೈಯುಮವರೇ ಯಿನಿಯಾವಾರೇ” ಎಂಬಂತೆ ತಾಯ್ತಂದೆ ಮೊದಲಾದ ಎಲ್ಲಾ ಬಂಧುವೂ ತಮಗೆ ಭಗವಂತನೇ ಆಗಿರುವಂತೆ ಪ್ರಿಯ ಪತಿಯಾದ ತಾಯಿಯೂ, ಹಿತಪರನಾದ ತಂದೆಯೂ, ಪ್ರೀತಿಪಾತ್ರೆಯಾದ ಕಾನ್ತೆಯೂ, “ಪುತ್” ಎಂಬ ನರಕದಿಂದುದ್ಧರಿಸುವ ಸುಪುತ್ರನೂ, ಸಕಲ ಪುರುಷಾರ್ಥಗಳಿಗೂ ಸಾಧಕವಾದ ಮಹದೈತ್ಯರೈವೂ, ಮತ್ತೆಲ್ಲವೂ ನನಗೆ ತಾವೇ ಆಗಿರುವಿರಿ. ಹೀಗಿರಲು ಈ ನಿಷ್ಕೆಗೆ ವಿರೋಧಿಯಾದ ನನ್ನ ಈ ಶರೀರ ಸಂಬಂಧವನ್ನು ಇನ್ನೂ ತೊಲಗಿಸದಿರಲು ಕಾರಣವೇನು? ಸರ್ವಜ್ಞರಾದ ತಾವೇ ಅಪ್ಪಣೆಕೊಡಿಸಬೇಕು. ಈ ವಿರೋಧಿಯನ್ನು ತೊಲಗಿಸಲು ತಮ್ಮ ಸಂಕಲ್ಪವೇ ಸಾಕಲ್ಲವೇ? ಇನ್ನೂ ಅದನ್ನೇಕೆ ಮಾಡದಿರುವಿರಿ? || ೩ ||

ನನ್ನನ್ನು ಈ ಸಂಸಾರದಿಂದ ದೂರಿಸುವ ಹೊರೆ ತಮ್ಮದೇ ಎಂದರು. ನನಗೂ ನಿಮಗೂ ಸಂಬಂಧವೇನು? ನಿಮ್ಮನ್ನು ಕೈಬಿಡದೆ ಉದ್ಧರಿಸಲು ಅವಶ್ಯವಾದ ಕಾರಣವಾದರೂ ಏನು? ಎಂಬ ಶಂಕೆಗೆ ಉತ್ತರವನ್ನು ನಿರೂಪಿಸುವರು.

ತನ್ನದಲ್ಲದ್ದು ಕೂಡಾನುಲ್ ತಾ ಪುರಿಕ್ಕುಂ ಪೋಹತ್ತಾಲ್
ಇನ್ನುರುಮೋತನ್ನೈ ಕೈತಿರಾಶಾ!
ಉನ್ನುದಲ್ಲನನ್ನೋ ಯಾನುರೈಯಾಯಾದಲಾಲ್
ಉನ್ನೋಹಂ ನನ್ನೋವಿನ್ನೈಯೋಳ್ ನ ನಾಳ್ || ೫ ||

ತನ್ನ ಪ್ರಿಯಪುತ್ರನು ತನ್ನೈಶ್ವರ್ಯದ ಸುಖಭೋಗಗಳನ್ನನುಭವಿಸದೆ ದೇಶಾಂತರಗತನಾಗಿರಲು, ಅವನ ಅಗಲಿಕೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಅನುಭವಿಸುವ ಆ ಐಶ್ವರ್ಯ ಭೋಗಗಳು ತಂದೆಗೆ ಸುಖಪ್ರದವಾಗಬಲ್ಲುವೇ? ಹಾಗೆಯೇ ದಾಸನಾದ ನಾನೂ “ಗರೀಯಾ ಬ್ರಹ್ಮದಃ ಪಿತಾ” ಎಂಬಂತೆ ಬ್ರಹ್ಮಜ್ಞಾನವನ್ನು ಬೋಧಿಸಿದ ತಮಗೆ ಬಿಡಲಾರದ ಮಗನಲ್ಲವೆ? ಇದರಲ್ಲಿ ಸಂದೇಹವಿಲ್ಲವೆಂಬುದನ್ನು ತಾನೇ ಅಪ್ಪಣೆ ಕೊಡಿಸಬೇಕು. ಹೀಗೆ ಪಿತೃಪುತ್ರಭಾವ ಅವರ್ಜನೀಯವಾಗಿರಲು “ಕಟ್ಟಿಳಿಲ್ ವಾನವರ್ ಪೋಹಂ” ಎಂಬ ನಿತ್ಯಾನಂದವನ್ನು ನನ್ನ ಬಿಟ್ಟು ತಾವೊಬ್ಬರೇ ಅನುಭವಿಸಲು ರುಚಿಸಿತೆ? ಆದ ಕಾರಣ “ಯದ್ವಿನಾ ಭರತಂ ತ್ವಾಂ ಚ ಸ್ತಮಿತ್ರೇ ಭುಜ್ಯತೇ ಸುಖಂ” ಎಂಬಂತೆ ನಿತ್ಯಾನಂದವನ್ನನುಭವಿಸಲು ನನ್ನನ್ನು ತಮ್ಮ ಜೊತೆಗೆ ಕರೆಯದಿರುವುದಾದರೂ ಏಕೆ? ಜಾಗ್ರತೆ ಅಪ್ಪಣೆಯಿತ್ತು ಕರೆಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳಬೇಕು. || ೫ ||

ಈ ನಿತ್ಯಾನಂದಕ್ಕೆ ಪ್ರತಿಬಂಧಕವಾದುದು ಹೇಯ ಶರೀರವಲ್ಲವೆ? ಅದನ್ನು ಬಿಡಿಸಲು ನಾನೇನು ಮಾಡಬೇಕು? ನೀವು ಅಜ್ಜರೂ ಅಶಕ್ತರೂ ಆಗಿದ್ದರಲ್ಲವೆ? ಆ ವಿಷಯ ಎಂದರು. ತಾಯಿಯ ಮೊಲೆ ಹಾಲನ್ನು ಕುಡಿಯುವ ಮಗು ತನ್ನ ರಕ್ತಣಿಗೆ ಎಲ್ಲವನ್ನೂ ತಾನೇ ಮಾಡಿಕೊಳ್ಳುವುದು ನಿಮಗೆ ನಿತ್ಯಸ್ತನಂಧಯ ಪ್ರಜೆಯಾದ ನಾನೂ ಸ್ವರಕ್ಷಣದಲ್ಲಿ ಪ್ರವರ್ತಿಸಬಹುದು ಎನ್ನುವರು.

ಅನ್ನೈಕುಡಿ ನೀರರುನ್ನಿ
ಮುಲೈಯೂಣ್ಕುಳವಿ ತನ್ನುಡೈಯ ನೋಯೈತ್ತವಿರಾಳೋ
ಎನ್ನೇ! ಎನಕ್ಕಾವೆತಿರಾಶಾವೆಲ್ಲಾಂ ನೀಶೈಯ್ದಾಲ್
ಉನಕ್ಕದು ತಾಳೋವುರೈ || ೬ ||

ಜಿಷ್ಠಿಯನ್ನೂಡಿಸಲೂ ಸಾಧ್ಯವಿಲ್ಲದ ಮಗುವಿಗಾಗಿ ತಾಯಿಯು ವಾತ್ಸಲ್ಯದಿಂದ ತಾನು ಕಷಾಯಪಾನ ಮಾಡುವಂತೆ, ತಾಯಿಯಂತೆಯೇ ವಾತ್ಸಲ್ಯಯುಕ್ತರಾದ ತಾವು, ತಮಗೆ ಹಾಲುಗೂಸಾದ ನನ್ನನ್ನು ರಕ್ಷಿಸಲು ಸಕಲಾನುಷ್ಠಾನಗಳನ್ನೂ ಮಾಡಿ ಉದ್ಧರಿಸುವುದಾದರೆ, ಅದು ತಮಗೆ ದೋಷವಹವೇ? ಯಶಸ್ಕರವಲ್ಲವೇ? ಈ ವಿಷಯವನ್ನು ಸರ್ವಜ್ಞರಾದ ತಮ್ಮೆದುರು ಅಜ್ಜ ನಾದ ನಾನು ಬಿನ್ನವಿಸಬೇಕೇ? ಏನು ಆಶ್ಚರ್ಯ! ಎನ್ನುವರು. ಈ ವಿಷಯದಲ್ಲಿ “ವಲ್ಲಪರಿಶು ವರುವಿಪ್ಪರೇಲದುಕಾಣ್ದುಮೇ” ಎಂಬ ಆಳ್ವಾರ್ ಶ್ರೀಸೂಕ್ತಿ ಪ್ರಮಾಣವಲ್ಲವೇ? || ೭ ||

“ಪ್ರವೃತ್ತಿ ನಿವೃತ್ತಿಗಳಿಗೆ ಯೋಗ್ಯತೆಯಿಲ್ಲದ ಮಗುವಿನ ರಕ್ಷಣೆ ತಾಯಿಗೆ ಸೇರಿದುದು ಸರಿ. ಸತ್ಯಮಗಳನ್ನು ಮಾಡದೆ ದುಷ್ಕರ್ಮದಲ್ಲೇ ಪ್ರವೃತ್ತಿ ಸುವವರನ್ನು ರಕ್ಷಿಸುವುದು ನಮ್ಮ ಹೊರೆಯಲ್ಲ” ಎಂದಾಗ, ಹಾಗಿದ್ದರೂ “ನೀವೇ ಸಮಯಕಾದು ರಕ್ಷಿಸದಿದ್ದಲ್ಲಿ, ಆ ದೋಷವೆಲ್ಲವೂ ನಿಮ್ಮದೇ ಆದೀತು” ಎಂದು ನಿರೂಪಿಸುವರು.

ತರ್ಕಕುಲವಿ ವಾರ್ತಕಿಣ್ಣಶ್ಚೈಚ್ಚಾರ್ ನ್ನಿರುಕ್ಕಕ್ಕಣ್ಡಿರುನ್ದಾಳ್
ಎನ್ನತನ್ನೋವನ್ನೈ ಪಳಿಯೇರ್ಕ್ಕಿನ್ನಾಳ್.
ನನ್ನಣಿರಿಲ್ ಎನ್ನಾಲೇ ಯೆನ್ನಾಶಮೇಲುಮೆತಿರಾಕಾ
ಉನ್ನಾಲೇಯಾಮುರವೈಯೋರ್. || ೮ ||

ಏದು ನಯಸ್ಸಿನೊಳಗಿನ ಮಕ್ಕಳಿಗೆ ಯಾವೊಂದು ಭರ್ಮರೂ ಮಾಡರೂ, ಅದು ತಾಯಿಯ ಅನವಧಾನತೆಯಿಂದಂಟಾದುದು, ಆ ಕಾರಣ ದಿಂದಲೇ ಆ ದೋಷವೆಲ್ಲವೂ ತಾಯಿಗೆ ಸೇರಿದ್ದೆಂದು ತಾಸ್ಮವಿಧಿಸುತ್ತದೆ. ತಾಯಿಯು ಏನೂ ಅರಿಯದ ಮಗುವು ಆಳವಾಗಿ ಅಗಲವಾದ ಬಾವಿಯ ಹತ್ತಿರ ಹೋದಾಗಲೇ ಅದನ್ನು ತಡೆಗಟ್ಟಬೇಕು. ಹಾಗಿಲ್ಲದಿದ್ದಲ್ಲಿ ಆ ತಪ್ಪಿ ನಿಂದಲೇ “ತಾಯಿಯೇ ಮಗುವನ್ನು ಬಾವಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ತಳ್ಳಿದಳು ಎಂಬ ಅಪ ಪಾದಕ್ಕೆ ಗುರಿಯಾಗುವಳಲ್ಲವೇ? ಅದರಂತೆಯೇ ಪಾಪಗಳೆಂಬ ದೊಡ್ಡ ಬಾವಿ ಯಲ್ಲಿ ಆತ್ಮನಾಶ ಮಾಡಿಕೊಳ್ಳಲು ಹವಣಿಸುತ್ತಿರುವ ನನ್ನನ್ನು ಆ ದಾರಿ ಯಿಂದ ತಪ್ಪಿಸಿ ಸರಿಯಾದ ದಾರಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ನಡೆಸುವುದು ತಾಯಿಯಾದ ತಮ್ಮ ಕರ್ತವ್ಯವಲ್ಲವೇ? “ಇದತ್ತಾಯಿರಾಮಾನುರ್ತ” ಎಂಬಂತೆ ತಾನೇ ತಾಯಿ ಯಲ್ಲವೇ? || ೮ ||

“ನಿಳ. ಉಮಡಿ ತಾರುಮೊನೋ” “ಮೇವಿನೇನರ್ ಪೊನ್ನಡಿ” ಎಂಬ
 ಠಿಸೂಕ್ತಿಗಳಿಗೆ ವಿಷಯವಾಗುವಂತೆ, ನಮಗೆ ಅತ್ಯಂತ ಪರತಂತ್ರರಾಗಿಯೇ
 ಬಾಳುವವರ ಪುರುಷಾರ್ಥವನ್ನು ಆಸೆಪಡುವಿರಲ್ಲ!” ಎಂದರು. “ಆ
 ವಡುಹನಮ್ಮಿಯವರ ನಿಷ್ಠೆಯನ್ನು ನನಗೆ ಅನುಗ್ರಹಿಸಬೇಕು.” ಎಂದು
 ಪ್ರಾರ್ಥಿಸುವರು.

ಉನ್ನೈಯೊಳಿಯವೊರುತ್ತೈಯರ್ ವಂ ಮತ್ತರಿಯಾ
 ಮನ್ನುಪುರುಳ್ ಶೇರ್ ಪಡುಹನಮ್ಮಿ ತನ್ನಿಲೈಯೈ
 ಎನ್ನ ನಕ್ಕುನೀ ತನ್ನಿ ತಿರಾಣಾ
 ಎನ್ನಾಳುಮುನ್ನ ನಕ್ಕೇಯಾಳ್ಕೊಳ್ಳು ಹನ್ನು || ೧೧ ||

ಯತಿರಾಜರೇ! ತಮಗೂ ಉಸಾದೇಯನಾದ ಭಗವಂತನನ್ನು ತ್ಯಜಿಸುವುದು
 ಮಾತ್ರವಲ್ಲದೆ ನಿಮ್ಮ ಅನುಭವ-ಕೈಂಕರ್ಯಾದಿಗಳಿಗೆ ನಿತ್ಯ ಶತ್ರುನೆಂದೂ
 ತಿಳಿದು, ತಮ್ಮನ್ನು ಬಿಟ್ಟು ಬೇರೊಂದು ಪರಾತ್ತರನಸ್ತುವನ್ನರಿಯದವ
 ರಾಗಿಯೂ, ಸ್ವರೂಪಾನುರೂಪವಾದ ಕೀರ್ಮಿಯನ್ನು ಪಡೆದವರಾಗಿಯೂ,
 ಭಗವದ್ಭಾಗವತರಿಬ್ಬರ ಶೇಷತ್ವವೆಂಬ ಎರಡು ದಡವನ್ನೂ ಆಶ್ರಯಿಸದೆ
 ಭಾಗವತಶೇಷತ್ವವೊಂದನ್ನೇ ಅನುಷ್ಠಾನದಲ್ಲಿ ತಂದಿರುವ ವಡುಹನಮ್ಮಿಯ
 ವರ ಚರಮಪರ್ಮನಿಷ್ಠೆ (ಅಚಾರ್ಯನಿಷ್ಠೆ)ಯನ್ನು ನನಗೆ ಅನುಗ್ರಹಿಸಬೇಕು.
 “ಎನಕ್ಕೇಯಾಳ್ ಚೈಯೈಕ್ಕಾಳತ್ತುಂ” ಎಂಬಂತೆ “ಅತ್ರಪರತ್ರಚಾಪಿ”
 ಎಂಬಂತೆಯೂ ಇಲ್ಲಿಯೂ-ಪರಮಪದದಲ್ಲೂ ಸಹ ನಿಮ್ಮ ಸೇವೆಯನ್ನೇ
 ಮಾಡುವಂತೆ ಅನುಗ್ರಹಿಸಿ, ಆ ಕೈಂಕರ್ಯಗಳನ್ನು ನನ್ನಿಂದ ಮಾಡಿಸಿಕೊಂಡು
 ತಾವು ಆನಂದಿಸಬೇಕು. || ೧೧ ||

ಪುಣ್ಯಶಾಲಿಗಳಾದ ಯತಿರಾಜರ ಅಡಿವಾರಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಭಕ್ತಿಮಾಡಿದರೆ
 ಸಾಕು. ಅವರೇ ತಾವಾಗಿ ಎಲ್ಲ ಹಿತ ಪ್ರಿಯಗಳನ್ನೂ ಮಾಡುವರು. ಹೀಗೆ
 ರಲು ಈವರೆಗೂ ಅವರಡಿಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಭಕ್ತಿಯೇ ಉದಿಸಲಿಲ್ಲ! ಎಂದು ದುಃಖಿಸು
 ವರು.

ಎವೈರುಮಾನಾರ್ ತಿರುವಡಿಹಳೇ ಶರಣಂ
 ಎನ್ನದುನೆನ್ನಾ ಪುರೈಕ್ಕುಂ
 ಇತ್ತಾಲೆನ್ನನ್ನ ವರ್ ಪಾಲಿಪ್ಪೋದಳವುಂ ಯಾನೊನ್ನುಂ ಕಾಣ್ಗೆನ್ನಿಲೇರ್
 ಎಪ್ಪೋದುಣ್ಣಾವದಿನಿ || ೧೨ ||

ಹಿಳ್ಳಿ ಕೊಲ್ಲಿಕಾನಲದಾಸರೆಂಬುವರಿಗೆ ಸ್ವರೂಪೋಜ್ಞೇವನಕಾರಿ
ಯಾಗಿಯೂ, ಸೋಮಯಾಜಿಯಾಣ್ಣಾನವರಿಗೆ ನಿತ್ಯಾನುಸಂಧೇಯ
ವಾಗಿಯೂ ಇರುವ “ಎನ್ನೆರುಮಾನಾರ್ ತಿರುವಡಿಹಳೇ ಶರಣಂ” ಎಂಬ
ಮಂತ್ರವನ್ನು ಸದಾ ನನ್ನ ನಾಲಿಗೆ ನುಡಿಯುತ್ತಿದೆ. ಆದರೆ ಅದಕ್ಕೆ ಮೂಲ
ಕಾರಣವಾದ ಮನವಿಲ್ಲ. ಮನದೊಳಗೆ ಭಕ್ತಿಯೂ ಇಲ್ಲ. ಇದುವರೆಗೂ
ಉಂಟಾಗದ ಭಕ್ತಿ ಮತ್ತಾವಾಗ ತಾನೆ ಉಂಟಾದೀತು? ಮನದಲ್ಲಿ
ಭಕ್ತಿ ಮೂಡದೆ ಹೇಳುವ ಕೇವಲ ಮಂತ್ರದಿಂದೇನುಪಯೋಗ? ಎಂದು
ತಾತ್ಪರ್ಯ. ರಾಮಾನುಜದ್ವಯ ಮಂತ್ರದಲ್ಲಿ “ಇರಾಮಾನುಶಾಯ ನಮಃ”
ಎಂದು ಮೊಟ್ಟಮೊದಲು ಉತ್ತರ ವಾಕ್ಯವನ್ನು ಅಪ್ಪಣೆಕೊಡಿಸಿದರು. ಇಲ್ಲಿ
“ಎನ್ನೆರುಮಾನಾರ್ ತಿರುವಡಿಹಳೇ ಶರಣಂ” ಎಂಬ ಪೂರ್ವವಾಕ್ಯವನ್ನು
ವಿವರಿಸಿರುವರು. || ೧೫ ||

ಸಂಸಾರನೆಂಬ ಕಾಳರಾತ್ರಿಗೆ ಸುಪ್ರಭಾತಮಂ ಕಾಣಿಸಬೇಕೆಂದರು.
ಈಗ ಆ ಪ್ರಕೃತಿ ಸಂಬಂಧದಿಂದ ದೇಹಕ್ಕೆ ಅಡಿಯಾಳಾಗಿ ನಿಹೀನ ಕರ್ಮ
ಗಳನ್ನೇ ಮಾಡುತ್ತಿರುವೆನು. ಅದು ತನುಗೆ ಅಪರಾಧವಲ್ಲವೆ? ಎನ್ನುವರು.

ಅಲ್ಲುಂಪಹಲುಂ ಯಾನಾಕ್ಕೈ ವಳಿಯುಳನ್ನು
ಶೆಲ್ಲುಮದು ತೇಶುಕ್ಕುತ್ತಿಲಂಗನ್ನೋ
ನಲ್ಲಾರ್ಹಳ್ ತಂ ತನಯರ್ ನೀಶರಾಳ್ಳಿ ಯ್ಯಚ್ಚ ಹಿಪ್ಪರೋ
ಎನ್ನೈಯೆತಿರಾಶಾವಿಶೈ || ೧೬ ||

ತಮ್ಮ ನಾಮಸಂಕೀರ್ತನ, ಅನುಭವ-ಕೈಂಕರ್ಯಗಳಿಗೆ ವಿಸಾಲಾದ
ಕಾಲವನ್ನೆಲ್ಲಾ “ಅನ್ನಾಳ್ ನೀ ತನ್ನ ವಾಕ್ಕೈಯಿ ವಳಿಯುಳಲ್ವೀ”
ಎಂಬಂತೆ ದೇಹಕ್ಕೆ ಪರವಶನಾಗಿ ಅದರ ಸುಖಭೋಗಗಳಲ್ಲೇ ಕಳೆಯುತ್ತಿರು
ವೆನು, ಇದು ತನುಗೆ ನ್ಯೂನತಾವಹವಲ್ಲವೆ? ಹೇಗೆಂದರೆ ಬ್ರಹ್ಮವಿತ್ತುಗಳು
ತಮ್ಮ ಮಕ್ಕಳು ಅಸತ್ತುಗಳಾಗಿ ನಿಹೀನರಾದ ನೀಚರಿಗೆ ಸೇನೆ ಮಾಡು
ತ್ತಿದ್ದರೆ ಸಹಿಸುವರೆ? ತಾವು ನನಗೆ ತಂದೆಯಾಗಿದ್ದು ಈ ರೀತಿ ದೇಹ
ಪರಾಧೀನನಾಗಿರುವುದನ್ನು ಸಹಿಸಬಲ್ಲಿರಾ? ಒಡನೆಯೇ ಅದನ್ನು ತಪ್ಪಿಸಿ
ತಮ್ಮ ಸೇವೆಯಲ್ಲೇ ನಿರತನಾಗುವಂತೆ ಕೃಪೆಮಾಡಬೇಕು. || ೧೬ ||

“ನನ್ನ ಪಾಪಗಳನ್ನು ನೀಗಿಸಲು ಶ್ರೀ ಭೂ ದೇವಿಯರಿಗಾಗಲಿ,
ಭಗವಂತನಿಗಾಗಲಿ ಸಾಮರ್ಥ್ಯವಿಲ್ಲ. ಅದೆಲ್ಲಾ ತನ್ನೊಬ್ಬರಿಗೇ ಸಾಧ್ಯ
ವಾದುದು.” ಎಂದು ಯತಿರಾಜರ ಸಾಮರ್ಥ್ಯವನ್ನು ಕೊಂಡಾಡಿ, ಅನಂತರ

ಈ ರೀತಿ ನನ್ನ ಪಾಪಗಳನ್ನು ನೀಗಿಸಲು ಪಟ್ಟಿ ಶ್ರಮವೂ, ಪರಮತಗಳನ್ನು
ನಾದದಲ್ಲಿ ಜಯಿಸಿದ ಶ್ರಮವೂ ತೀರುವಂತೆ, ಶ್ರೀಭಾಷ್ಯ ಭಗವದ್ವಿಷಯಾದಿ
ಪ್ರವಚನ ಮಾಡುತ್ತಾ ಬಿಜಯಮಾಡಿಸಿರುವ ಸನ್ನಿವೇಶವನ್ನು ದರ್ಶಿಸಿ,
ಪಾದಾದಿಕೇಶಾಂತ ಅನುಭವಿಸಿ, ಆನಂದಿಸಿ ಆ ಸ್ಥಿತಿಗೆ ಪಲ್ಲಾಣ್ಡು ಪಾಡುವರು.

ಶೀರಾರು ಮೆತಿರಾಶರ್ ತಿರುವಡಿಹಳ್ ನಾಳಿ.

ತಿರುವರೈಯಿಲ್ ಶಾತ್ತಿಯ ಶೆನ್ನು ವರಾಡೈ ನಾಳಿ.

ಎರಾರುಂ ಶೆಯ್ಯವಡಿವೆಪ್ಪೊಳು. ದುಂನಾಳಿ.

ಇಲಂಗಿಯ ಮುನ್ನೂಲ್ ನಾಳಿ. ಯಿಣೈತ್ತೋಳ್ ಹಳ್ ನಾಳಿ.

ಶೋರಾದ ತುಯ್ಯಶೈಯ್ಯ ಮುಹಚ್ಚೋದಿವಾಳಿ.

ತೂಮುರುವಲ್ ನಾಳಿ. ತುಣೈಮಲರ್ ಕಣ್ಣಳ್ ನಾಳಿ.

ಈರಾರು ತಿರುನಾಮಮಣಿನ ವೆಳಿ.ಲ್ ನಾಳಿ.

ಇನಿತಿರುಪ್ಪೋಡೆಳಿ.ಲ್ ಬಾಸ ಮುತ್ತಿರೈ ನಾಳಿ.ಯೇ || ೩೦ ||

ಆಶ್ರಿತರಿಗೆ ಅನುಭಾವ್ಯವಾದ ಸ್ವರೂಪ ರೂಪ ಗುಣಗಳಂತೆಯೇ ಸಕಲ
ಪರಿಪೂರ್ತಿಯುಳ್ಳ ನಮಗೆಲ್ಲಾ ಶಿರೋಭೂಷಣವಾದ ಯತಿರಾಜರ
ಪಾದಾರವಿಂದಗಳಿಗೆ ಪಲ್ಲಾಣ್ಡು. ಉದಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ತೊಡಿಸಿದ ಕಾಷಾಯಾಂಬರಕ್ಕೆ
ಪಲ್ಲಾಣ್ಡು. ಆಶ್ರಿತರಿಗೆ ಧ್ಯಾನಾಲಂಬನವಾಗಿ, ನಿರವಧಿಕ ಸೌಂದರ್ಯದಿಂದ
ಕೂಡಿರುವ ಸುಕುಮಾರ ದಿವ್ಯಮಂಗಳವಿಗ್ರಹಕ್ಕೆ ಪಲ್ಲಾಣ್ಡು. ವೈದಿಕೋ-
ತ್ತಮತ್ವವನ್ನು ಪ್ರಕಾಶ ಪಡಿಸುವ ಬ್ರಹ್ಮಸೂತ್ರವಾಖ್ಯಾತೃತ್ವದ್ಯೋತಕವಾದ
ದಿವ್ಯ ಶುಭ್ರ ಬ್ರಹ್ಮಸೂತ್ರಕ್ಕೆ ಪಲ್ಲಾಣ್ಡು. ಸಂಸಾರಸಾಗರದಲ್ಲಿ ಮುಳುಗಿರುವ
ವರನ್ನು ಕೈಹಿಡಿದು ಮೇಲಕ್ಕೆತ್ತಲು ಸಮರ್ಥವಾದ ಶೋಳಗಳಿಗೆ ಪಲ್ಲಾಣ್ಡು.
“ರೂಪಮೇವಾಸ್ಯೈತನ್ಮಹಿಮಾನಂ ವ್ಯಾಚಷ್ಟೇ” ಎಂಬಂತೆ ಬ್ರಹ್ಮವಿತ್ತ್ವ
ದಿಂದಂಟಾದ ಅಸದೃಶ ಸೌಮ್ಯ ಮುಖಕಾಂತಿಗೆ ಪಲ್ಲಾಣ್ಡು. “ಸವಿಲಾಸಸ್ಮಿತಾ
ಧಾರಂ” ಎಂಬಂತೆ ಆ ದಿವ್ಯ ಮಂದಹಾಸಕ್ಕೆ ಪಲ್ಲಾಣ್ಡು. ಹಾಗೆಯೇ
ಶ್ರೀರಂಗಶ್ರೀಯನ್ನೂ ಶ್ರೀವೈಷ್ಣವ ಶ್ರೀಯನ್ನೂ ನೋಡಿ ಆನಂದಿಸುತ್ತಾ
ಕಾರುಣ್ಯಾವೃತವರ್ಷಿಯಾದ ನಯನ ಕಮಲಗಳು ಹಳಹಳನೆ ನಿಕೃತ್ಯವಾಗಿ
ಪ್ರಕಾಶಿಸಬೇಕು. ಶ್ರೀವೈಷ್ಣವ ಶ್ರೀಗೆ ಪ್ರಕಾಶಕ ವಾಗಿಯೂ, ಮತ್ತೆಲ್ಲ
ಗುಣಾದಿಗಳನ್ನೂ ಪ್ರಕಾಶಪಡಿಸುವ ಉರ್ಧ್ವಗತಿಸೂಚಕವಾದ ದ್ವಾದ
ಶೋರ್ಧ್ವಪುಂಡ್ರಗಳ ಸೌಂದರ್ಯಕ್ಕೆ ಪಲ್ಲಾಣ್ಡು. ಹಂಸಗಳ ಮಧ್ಯೆ ನಿರಾಜಿ
ಸುವ ರಾಜಹಂಸದಂತೆ ಹಂಸರ ಮಧ್ಯೆ ಪರಮಹಂಸರಾಗಿ ಬೆಳಗುವ ಸಮಸ್ತಾ
ಶ್ರಿತ ಶಿಷ್ಯವರ್ಗದೊಡನೆ ಪ್ರಕಾಶಿಸುವ “ಪದ್ಮಾಸನೋಪವಿಷ್ಟಂ,

ಪರತತ್ತ್ವ ಬೋಧಮುದ್ರಂ” ಎಂಬಂತೆ ಪದ್ಯಾಸನಸ್ಥರಾಗಿ ಬಿಜಮಾಡಿಸಿ ಉಭಯವೇದಾಂತಾರ್ಥಗಳನ್ನೂ ವಿಶದೀಕರಿಸುತ್ತಿರುವ ಅರಳಿದ ಕಮಲ ದಂತಿರುವ ಜ್ಞಾನಮುದ್ರೆಯು ಪಲ್ಲಾಣ್ಣು ಪಲ್ಲಾಣ್ಣಾಗಿ ಬೆಳಗಲಿ || ೩೦ ||

ಮತ್ತೂ ಆದರಾತಿಶಯದಿಂದ ಅವರು ಮಾಡಿದ ಬಾಹ್ಯಕುದೃಷ್ಟಿನಿರಸ ನಕ್ಕೂ ಲೋಕೋಜ್ಜೀವನಕ್ಕಾಗಿ ಮಾಡಿದ ಉಪಕಾರಕ್ಕೂ ಪಲ್ಲಾಣ್ಣು ಪಾದುವರು.

ಆರುಶಮಯಚ್ಚ ಡಿಯದನೈಯಡಿಯರುತ್ತಾ ವಾಳಿ.ಯೇ ||
ಅಡರ್ ನ್ನು ವರುಂ ಕುದಿಟ್ಟಿಹಳ್ಳಿಯರತ್ತು ರಣ್ಣಾ ವಾಳಿ.ಯೇ ||
ಕೆರುಕಲಿಯೈಚ್ಚಿ ರಿತುಮರ ತ್ತಿಲ್ಲವಿಟ್ಟಾ ವಾಳಿ.ಯೇ ||
ತೆನ್ನರಂಗರ್ ಕೆಲ್ವಮುತ್ತುಂ ತಿರುತ್ತಿ ನೈತ್ತಾ ವಾಳಿ.ಯೇ ||
ಮರೈಯ್ ದನಿಲ್ ಪೊರುಳನೈತ್ತುಂ ವಾಯ್ತೊಳಿ.ನ್ದಾ ವಾಳಿ.ಯೇ ||
ಮಾರನುರೈಯ್ ದ ತಮಿಳ್ ಮರೈವಳರ್ದೋ ವಾಳಿ.ಯೇ ||
ಅರನಿಹುನಲ್ ಪೆರುಮ್ಬುದೂರವತರಿತ್ತಾ ವಾಳಿ.ಯೇ ||
ಅಳಹಾರುಮೆತಿರಾಶರಡಿಯಿಣೈಹಳ್ ವಾಳಿ.ಯೇ || ೩೧ ||

ಶಾಕ್ಯ-ಉಲೂಕ್ಯ-ಅಕ್ಷಪಾದ-ಕ್ಷಪಣಕ-ಕಪಿಲ-ಪತಂಜಲಿ ಮತಗಳೆಂಬ ಬಾಹ್ಯಷಡ್ವರ್ತನಗಳೇ ದೊಡ್ಡ ದೊಡ್ಡ ಮರಗಳು. ಅವುಗಳ ಮೂಲ ಚೈದನ ಮಾಡಿದವರಿಗೆ ಪಲ್ಲಾಣ್ಣು. ಮೇಲೆ ಬಿದ್ದು ಬರುವ ಕುದೃಷ್ಟಿ ಗಳನ್ನು ವಾಸನೆಯೊಡನೆ ಅಳಿಸಿದವರಿಗೆ ಪಲ್ಲಾಣ್ಣು. ಬಾಹ್ಯಕುದೃಷ್ಟಿ ಮತಗಳು ಮೂಡುವಂತೆ ಮಾಡಿ, ಲೋಕವೆಲ್ಲಾ ವ್ಯಾಪಿಸಿರುವ ಕಲಿಪುರುಷ ನನ್ನು ಧ್ವಂಸ ಮಾಡಿದವರಿಗೆ ಪಲ್ಲಾಣ್ಣು. “ಶ್ರೀಮ್ ಶ್ರೀರಂಗಶ್ರೀಯಮನು ಪದ್ರವಾಮನುದಿನಂ ಸಂವರ್ಧಯ” ಎಂಬಂತೆ ಶ್ರೀರಂಗನಾಥನ ಐಶ್ವರ್ಯವೆಲ್ಲ ವನ್ನೂ ಕ್ರಮವಾಗಿ ಬೆಳಗಿಸಿದವರಿಗೆ ಪಲ್ಲಾಣ್ಣು. ಸರ್ವಪ್ರಮಾಣ ಶೇಷವಾದ ವೇದಗಳಿಗೆ ಇತರರು ಹೇಳಿದ ಅಪಾರ್ಥಗಳನ್ನು ಬುಂಡಿಸಿ ಸಮೀಚೀನಾರ್ಥ ಗಳನ್ನು ಶ್ರೀಭಾಷ್ಯರೂಪೇಣ ನಿರೂಪಿಸಿದವರಿಗೆ ಪಲ್ಲಾಣ್ಣು. “ವಳರ್ತ್ತವಿದ ತ್ತಾಯ್” ಎಂಬಂತೆ ಸಮ್ಬಾಲ್ವಾರ್ ಶ್ರೀಸೂಕ್ತಿಯನ್ನು ಬೆಳೆಸಿದ ತಾಯಿಯಾದ ವರಿಗೆ ಪಲ್ಲಾಣ್ಣು. ತಿರುವಾಯ್ಮೊಳಿಗೆ ಸಾರತಮಾರ್ಥವಾದ ಶರಣಾಗತಿ ಧರ್ಮ ವನ್ನು ಲೋಕದಲ್ಲಿ ಬೆಳಗುವಂತೆ ಮಾಡಲು ದಿವ್ಯವಾದ ಶ್ರೀ ಪೆರುಂಬೂದೂರಿ ನಲ್ಲಿ ಅವತರಿಸಿದವರಿಗೆ ಪಲ್ಲಾಣ್ಣು. ಸೌಂದರ್ಯಾದಿ ಪರಿಪೂರ್ಣವಾದ ಯತಿ ಕಾಜರಾಜರ ಸರ್ವಶರಣ್ಯವಾದ ಅಡಿದಾನರೆಗಳೆರಡೂ ಪಲ್ಲಾಣ್ಣು ಪಲ್ಲಾಣ್ಣಾಗಿ ಬಾಳಲಿ || ೩೧ ||

ಹಿಂದಿನ ಪಾಶುರದಲ್ಲಿ ಶ್ರೀ ಪೆರುಂಬೂದೂರಿನಲ್ಲಿವತರಿಸಿದರೆಂದು ಹೇಳಿದರು. ಹೀಗೆ ರಾಮಾನುಜರು ಅವತರಿಸಿದ ಪವಿತ್ರ ದಿನವನ್ನು ಸಂತೋಷದಿಂದ ಕೊಂಡಾಡುವರು.

ಶಂಕರ ಭಾಸ್ಕರ ಯಾದವಭಾಟ್ಟ ಪ್ರಭಾಕರರ್ ತಂಗಳ್ ಮತಂ
ಶಾಯ್ ಪುರುಷಾದಿಯರ್ ವಾಯ್ ಪುರುಷೆನ್ನು ಶದುಮರೈ ವಾಳ್ ನಿಡುನಾಳ್
ವೆಂಗಲಿಯಿಂಗಿನಿ ವೀರುನಮಕ್ಕಿಲೈಯೆನ್ನು ಮಿಹತ್ತಳರ್ ನಾಳ್
ಮೇದಿನಿ ನುಜುಮೈಯಾರು ಮನತ್ತು ಯರ್ ವಿಟ್ಟುವಿಳಂಗಿಯ ನಾಳ್
ಮಂಗೈಯರಾಳಿ ಪರಾಂಕುಶಮುನ್ನವರ್ ವಾಳ್ ಮುಳ್ಳಿತ್ತಿಡು ನಾಳ್
ಮನ್ನಿಯ ತೆನ್ನರಂಗಾಪುರಿ ಮಾಮಲೈ ಮುತ್ತು ಮುವನ್ನಿಡು ನಾಳ್
ಶೆಂಗಯಲ್ ವಾವಿಹಳ್ ಶೂಳ್ ವಯಲ್ ನಾಳುಂ ಶಿರನ್ನ ಪೆರುಂಬೂದೂರ್
ಶೀಮಾನಿಳ್ಳೆಯಾಳ್ವಾರ್ ವನ್ನ ರುಳಿಯನಾಳ್ ತಿರುವಾದಿರೈ ನಾಳೇ

|| ೩೨ ||

“ನಮಗೆ ಅಪಾರ್ಥ ಮಾಡುವ ಶಂಕರ, ಭಾಸ್ಕರ, ಯಾದವ, ಭಾಟ್ಟ, ಪ್ರಾಭಾಕರರ ಮತಗಳು ಇನ್ನು ನಾಶವಾಗುವುವೆಂದೂ, ವೈದಿಕ ಧರ್ಮವು ತಲೆಯೆತ್ತಿ ನಿಲ್ಲುವುದೆಂದೂ, ನಮಗೆಲ್ಲಾ ಅರ್ಥ ಪೌಷ್ಕಲ್ಯ ನೆಲೆ ನಿಲ್ಲುವುದೆಂದೂ ನಾಲ್ಕು ವೇದಗಳೂ ಅನಂದದಿಂದ ಬೆಳಗಿದ ದಿವಸವಿದು. “ಕಲಿಯುಂ ಕೆಡುಂ” ಎಂಬ ಆಳ್ವಾರ್ ಸೂಕ್ತಿಯಂತೆ ಕಲಿಪುರುಷನು ಇನ್ನು ನನಗೆ ಬಲ ಕುಂದಿತೆಂದು ಬಹಳ ಮನನೊಂದು ಕಾಲ್ತೆಗೆದ ದಿನ. ಭೂಮಿದೇವಿಯು ಇನ್ನು ನನ್ನ ತಲೆ ಭಾರ ಇಳಿಯಿತೆಂದು ತನ್ನ ದುಃಖವನ್ನು ತೋರಿದು ಅನಂದದಿಂದ ಮೆರೆದ ದಿನ. ಅರ್ಚಾವತಾರಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಭಾವಬಂಧವನ್ನು ತಳೆದ ಪರಾಂಕುಶ-ಪರಕಾಲಾದಿ ಆಳ್ವಾರ್ಗಳ ಸಮೃದ್ಧಿಯು ಅಂಕುರಿಸಿದ ದಿನ ಮತ್ತು ಶ್ರೀರಂಗ-ತಿರುಮಲೈ ಮುಂತಾದ ಪ್ರಮುಖ ದಿವ್ಯ ಕ್ಷೇತ್ರಗಳು ತಮ್ಮ ಸಮೃದ್ಧಿಯು ಮುಂದುವರಿಯುವುದೆಂದು ಹರ್ಷಿಸಿದ ದಿನ. ವಾಹೀಕೂಪ ತಟಾಕಾದಿಗಳಿಂದ ಕೂಡಿದ ಬಯಲಿನಿಂದ ಸಮೃದ್ಧವಾದ ಶ್ರೀಪೆರುಂಬೂದೂರಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಶ್ರೀಮಲ್ಲಕ್ಷ್ಮಣ ಯೋಗಿಗಳು (ಇಳ್ಳೆಯಾಳ್ವಾರ್) ಕೃಪೆಯಿಂದವತರಿಸಿದ ಪವಿತ್ರ ದಿವಸ-ಶ್ರೀಮದಾದ್ರ್ವಾ ನಕ್ಷತ್ರ ಕೂಡಿದ ಮಹೋನ್ನತ ದಿವಸ || ೩೨ ||

ಈ ರೀತಿ ಉತ್ತರಕಾಚಾರ್ಯರಾದ ಯತಿರಾಜ ರಾಜರಾದ ರಾಮಾನುಜರ ಮಹಿಮೆಯನ್ನು ಕೊಂಡಾಡಿದ ಮೇಲೆ “ನನಗೂ ನಿಮಗೂ ಬಿಡಲಾರದ

ನಿತ್ಯವಾದ ಶೇಷಶೇಷಿಭಾವ ಸಂಬಂಧವಿರುವಾಗ, ಅನಾದಿ ಕಾಲದಿಂದಲೂ ತಮ್ಮ ಸೇವೆಯನ್ನು ಮಾಡದೆ ನಷ್ಟ ಹೊಂದಿದ ನೀಚ ನಾನು. ಈಗ ತಮ್ಮ ಕೃಪೆಗೆ ಪಾತ್ರನಾದ ಮೇಲೆ ಆಯ್ಯೋ! ಎಂತಹನಷ್ಟವಾಯಿತು? ಎಂದು ಪರಿತಪಿಸುತ್ತಿದ್ದೇನೆ" ಇತ್ಯಾದಿಯಾಗಿ ತಮ್ಮ ನೈಚ್ಯವನ್ನು ಹೇಳಿಕೊಂಡು ಪರಿತಪಿಸುತ್ತಾರೆ. ಮತ್ತೆ ಅವರ ಕೃಪೆಯಿಂದ ಲಭಿಸುವ ಪರಮಪುರುಷಾರ್ಥದ ಮೇಲ್ಮೆಯನ್ನು ಕೊಂಡಾಡುವರು.

ಕನಕಗಿರಿಮೇಲ್ ಕರಿಯ ಮುಹಿಲ್ ಪೋಲ್
ವಿನತ್ಯೆ ಶಿರುವರ್ ಮೇಲ್ಕೊಣ್ಣು, ತನುವಿಡುಮ್ಪೋದು
ಏರಾರರಂಗ ರೆತಿರಾಶರಾಹ, ವಿನಾಲ್
ನಾರಾ ಮುನ್ನಿರ್ಪರ್ ಮಹಿಲ್ ನ್ದು || ೫೨ ||

ಈ ನನ್ನ ಜೀವಾತ್ಮನು ಶರೀರ ಬಿಟ್ಟು ತೆರಳುವಾಗ, “ಕಾಂಚನಸ್ಯ ಗಿರೇಃ ಶೃಂಗೇ ಸತಟತ್ತೋಯದೋ ಯಥಾ” ಎಂಬಂತೆ ಚಿನ್ನದ ಬೆಟ್ಟವಾದ ಮೇರುಪರ್ವತದ ಮೇಲೆ ಮಿಂಚಿನೊಡಗೂಡಿ ಕುಂಗಳಿಸುವ ಕಾರ್ಮುಗಿ ಲಂತೆ ನೀಲಮೇಘಶ್ಯಾಮನಾದ ಭಗವಂತನು ಲಕ್ಷ್ಮಿಯೊಡಗೂಡಿ ಸ್ವರ್ಣ-ವರ್ಣದ ಗರುಡನನ್ನೇರಿ-ಸ್ವಾಮಿ ರಾಮಾನುಜರಿಗಾಗಿ ನಾನಿರುವಲ್ಲಿಗೆ ಬಂದು ನನ್ನನ್ನೆದುರುಗೊಳ್ಳುವನು. ಯತಿರಾಜರ ಕೃಪೆ ಎಂಥದು || ೫೨ ||

ಆಚಾರ್ಯನು ಮಾಡಿದ ಉಪಕಾರಕ್ಕೆ ಕೃತಜ್ಞತೆಯೂ, ಮಾಡಬೇಕಾದ ಅಂಶಕ್ಕೆ ಪ್ರಾರ್ಥನೆಯೂ ಚೇತನನಿಗೆ ಇರಬೇಕಾದುದು. ಅದರಿಂದ ಶ್ರೀರಾಮಾನುಜರು ಮಾಡಿದ ಉಪಕಾರವನ್ನು ಘೋಷಿಸುವರು.

ತೆನ್ನರಂಗರ್ ಶೀರರುಳುಕ್ಕಿಲಕ್ಕಾಹಪ್ಪೆತ್ತೋಂ
ತಿರುವರಂಗಂ ತಿರುಪ್ಪದಿಯೇ ಯಿರುಪ್ಪಾಹಪ್ಪೆತ್ತೋಂ
ಮುನ್ನಿಯಶೀರ್ ಮಾರ್ ಕಲೈಯುಣವಾಹಪ್ಪೆತ್ತೋಂ
ಮದುರ ಕವಿ ಶೊಲ್ಪಡಿಯೇ ನಿಲೈಯಾಹಪ್ಪೆತ್ತೋಂ
ಮುನ್ನವರಾನಂಕುರವರ್ ಮೊಳಿಹಳುಳ್ಳ ಪ್ಪೆತ್ತೋಂ
ಮುಳುದು ನಮಕ್ಕವೈ ಪೊಳುದುಪೋಕ್ಕಾಹಪ್ಪೆತ್ತೋಂ
ಹಿನ್ನೈಯೊನ್ನುತನಿಲ್ ನೆಂಜು ಪೇರಾಮಲೈತ್ತೋಂ
ಹಿರರ್ ಮಿನುಕ್ಕಂ ಪೊರಾಮೈಯಿಲ್ಲಾ ಪ್ಪರುಮೈಯೈಪ್ಪೆತ್ತೋಮೇ
|| ೫೩ ||

ಅದಿ ದಿವ್ಯದೇಶವಾದ ಶ್ರೀರಂಗಕ್ಕೆ ಸ್ವಾಮಿಯಾದ ತ್ರಿರಂಗನಾಥನ ದಿವ್ಯ ಕೃಪೆಗೆ ಪಾತ್ರರಾದೆವು ನಾವು. “ಅಶ್ವೈವ ತ್ರಿರಂಗೇ ಸುಖಮಾಸ್ತ” ಎಂಬಂತೆ ಪರಮಪುರುಷಾರ್ಥವಾದ ತ್ರಿರಂಗದ ನಿತ್ಯವಾಸವನ್ನೂ ಪಡೆದೆವು. ಪರಭಕ್ತ್ಯಾದಿ ಕಲ್ಯಾಣಗುಣ ಪರಿಪೂರ್ಣರಾದ ನಮ್ಮಾಳ್ವಾರರ ದಿವ್ಯ ಪ್ರಬಂಧವನ್ನೇ ಪ್ರಾಣಾಧಾರವಾದ ಊಟವನ್ನಾಗಿ ಪಡೆದೆವು. “ತೇವು ಮಾತ್ತರಿಯೇ” ಎಂಬ ಮಧುರಕವಿ ಸೂಕ್ತಿಯಂತೆ “ಯತೀಂದ್ರಮೇನ ಸೀರಂಧ್ರಂ ಸಿಷೇನೇ ದೈವತಂ ಪರಂ” ಎಂದು “ರಾಮಾನುಜರೇ ಪದೇವತೆ”ಯೆಂಬ ಭಾಗವತ ಶೇಷತ್ವವನ್ನೇ ನೆಲೆಯಾಗಿ ಪಡೆದೆವು. ಸಾರಾರ್ಥವಾದ ಈ ಚರಮಪರ್ಮನಿಷ್ಠೆಯನ್ನೇ ಪ್ರತಿಸಾದಿಸುವ ಪೂರ್ವಾಚಾರ್ಯರ ತ್ರಿಸೂಕ್ತಿಗಳ ರಹಸ್ಯಗಳನ್ನು ಅನುಸಂಧಾನ ಮಾಡುವುದು ಮಾತ್ರವಲ್ಲದೆ-ಅನುಷ್ಠಾನದಲ್ಲೂ ತಂದೆವು. ಅವುಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಆದರಾತಿಶಯದಿಂದ ವಿಷಯಾಂತರಗಳಲ್ಲಿ-ಗ್ರಂಥಾಂತರಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಕಾಲವನ್ನು ಕಳೆಯದೆ ಪೂರ್ಣವಾಗಿ ಪೂರ್ವಾಚಾರ್ಯರ ರಹಸ್ಯಗಂಥಗಳ ಅನುಸಂಧಾನದಲ್ಲೇ ಕಾಲಕ್ಷೇಪವನ್ನು ತಳೆದೆವು. ಇದಾದ ಮೇಲೆ ಬೇರೊಂದು ಗ್ರಂಥಗಳೊಂದರಲ್ಲೂ ಮನಸ್ಸು ಚಲಿಸದಂತೆ ಇದರಲ್ಲೇ ದಾರ್ಢ್ಯವನ್ನು ತಳೆದಿರುವೆವು. ಮನುಷ್ಯನಿಗೆ ಮತ್ತೊಬ್ಬರ ಮೇಲ್ಮೈಯನ್ನು ಕಂಡರೆ ಸಹಿಸಲಾರದ ದುರ್ಗುಣವೊಂದುಂಟು. ಅದನ್ನೇ “ಪರಸಮೃದ್ಧಿ” “ಅಸೂಯೆ” “ಅಸಹಿಷ್ಣುತೆ” ಎನ್ನುತ್ತೇವೆ. ಇಂತಹ “ಕಂಡವರ ಮೇಲ್ಮೈಯನ್ನು ನೋಡಿ ಕರುಬುವುದಿಲ್ಲ” ಎಂಬ ಮೇಲ್ಮೈಯನ್ನು ಪಡೆದೆವು. ಹಿಂದೆ ಹೇಳಿದುವೆಲ್ಲಾ ಒಂದು ಕಡೆ. ಇದೆಲ್ಲದಕ್ಕೂ ಮಿಗಿಲಾದ ಶ್ರೀವೈಷ್ಣವನಿಗೆ ಮುಖ್ಯವಾದ ಮತ್ತೊಂದು ಗುಣವುಂಟು. ಅದು ಸಿದ್ಧಿಸುವುದು ಬಹಳ ಕಷ್ಟ. ಅಂತಹ “ಕಂಡವರನ್ನು ನೋಡಿ ಕರುಬದಿರುವ” ಮೇಲ್ಮೈಯನ್ನೂ ಪಡೆದವಲ್ಲ! ಏನು ಅಶ್ಚರ್ಯ!! ಇದೇನು ಕೃಪೆ!!! ಎನ್ನುತ್ತಾರೆ. || ೫೫ ||

ಇಹಲೋಕದಲ್ಲಿನ ಮುಖ್ಯವಾದ ಪುರುಷಾರ್ಥಗಳು ಲಭಿಸಿದ್ದನ್ನು ವರ್ಣಿಸಿದರು. ಈಗ ಪರಲೋಕದಲ್ಲಿನ ಪುರುಷಾರ್ಥಗಳನ್ನು ಪ್ರಾರ್ಥಿಸುವರು. ಮಧುರಕವಿಯಂತೆ ಆಚಾರ್ಯ ನಿಷ್ಠೆಯನ್ನು ತಾ ಎನ್ನುವರು.

ಉತ್ತಮವಿಮಾನಮೇಯುತ್ತಾರಕಮೆನ್ನು
ಶಿಷ್ಟೈತೆಳಿನ್ನಿರುಕ್ಕಚ್ಚೈಯಾದ ನೀ, ಅನ್ನೋ!
ಎತಿರಾಶಾ ನೋಯ್‌ದಳಾಲೆನ್ನೈ ನಲಕ್ಕಾಮಲ್
ಶತಿರಾಹ ನಿತಿರುತ್ತಾಳ್ ತಾ || ೫೬ ||

ಯತಿರಾಜರೇ! “ತಾವು ನನ್ನಲ್ಲಿ ಮಾಡಿರುವ ಅಭಿಮಾನವೇ ಉತ್ತಾರಕ” ಎಂಬ ಶುದ್ಧ ಜ್ಞಾನವನ್ನು ಅನುಗ್ರಹಿಸಿರುವಿರಿ. ಈಗ “ಸಂಸಾರ ಕ್ಲೇಶದಿಂದ ಜುಗುಪ್ಸಿತನಾಗಿ” “ನೀವೇ ಉತ್ತಾರಕರು” ಎಂಬ ಜ್ಞಾನವನ್ನು ತೊರೆದು ಭ್ರಷ್ಟನಾಗದಂತೆ ಮಾಡಿ ತಮ್ಮ ಪಾದಾರವಿಂದವನ್ನೇ ಅನುಗ್ರಹಿಸ ಬೇಕೆನ್ನುವರು || ೫೬ ||

ಶೇಶಿಕರ್ಹಳ್ಳಿ ಪ್ರೊತ್ತಂ ತಿರುವಾಯ್‌ಮೊಳಿಪ್ಪಿಳ್ಳೈ
ವಾಶಮಲರಾಳಡೈನ್ ವತ್ತುವೆನ್ನು, ನೇಶತ್ತಾಲ್
ಎಫಿಪಿಳ್ಳೈಹಳ್ಳಿ ಕಾಣಾನೆತಿರಾಶರೇ ಅಡಿಯೇ
ಪುಣಪಹರೈಕ್ಕೇಳುಂ ಪೊರುತ್ತು || ೫೭ ||

“ಹೀಗೆ ನೀವು ನನ್ನನ್ನು ಬಲಾತ್ಕರಿಸಲು ಕಾರಣವೇನು?” ಎಂದು ಕೇಳಲು-ತಾವು ಈ ವರೆಗೆ ನನ್ನ ಅಪರಾಧಗಳನ್ನು ಕಡೆಗಣಿಸಿರುವುದು ಸಕಲಾಜಾಧ್ಯರಿಂದಲೂ ಕೊಂಡಾಡಲ್ಪಡುವ ತಿರುವಾಯ್‌ಮೊಳಿಪ್ಪಿಳ್ಳೈಯವರ ತಿರುವಡಿಗಳನ್ನಾಶ್ರಯಿಸಿದವನೆಂದಲ್ಲವೇ? ಈಗ “ಯತಿಶ್ವರತ್ವಣು ಶ್ರೀಮ್” ಎಂಬಂತೆ ನನ್ನ ದೋಷ ಪೂರಿತವಾದ ಮುದ್ದು ಮಾತುಗಳನ್ನು ಕೇಳ ಬೇಕೆಂದು ಪ್ರಾರ್ಥಿಸುವರು.

ತಿರುವಾಯ್‌ಮೊಳಿಪ್ಪಿಳ್ಳೈ ತಿರುವಡಿಗಳನ್ನಾಶ್ರಯಿಸಿರುವುದು ಮಾತು ವಲ್ಲ. ಅವರಿಂದ ಜ್ಞಾನೋಪದೇಶವನ್ನು ಪಡೆದಿರುವ ನನಗೆ ತಮ್ಮೊಂದಿಗೆ ಇರುವ ಶೇಷಶೇಷಿ ಭಾವವೇ ಮುಂತಾದ ಸಮಸ್ತ ಸಂಬಂಧ ಜ್ಞಾನವೂ ಇದೆ ಎನ್ನುವರು.

ಎನ್ನೆ ತಿರುವಾಯ್‌ಮೊಳಿಪ್ಪಿಳ್ಳೈಯಿನ್ನರುಳಾಲ್
ಉನ್ನ ಸುರವೈಯುಣರ್ತಿಯರ್-ಇನ್ನ ಪುಯಿರ್
ಕೈಲ್ಲ ಪುರವುಂ ನೀಯೆನ್ನೇಯೆತಿರಾಶಾ
ನಿಲ್ಲಾ ದದುಣ್ಣೋವೆನ್ನೆಂಜು || ೫೮ ||

ನನಗೆ ಜ್ಞಾನಜನ್ಮದಾತರಾದ ತಿರುವಾಯ್‌ಮೊಳಿಪ್ಪಿಳ್ಳೈಯವರು ತಮ್ಮ ನಿರ್ದೋಷ ಕೃಪೆಯಿಂದ, ಯತಿರಾಜರಾದ ತಮ್ಮ ತಿರುವಡಿಗಳನ್ನು ಇದೇ ನಿನಗೆ ಸರ್ವವಿಧವನ್ನು” ಎಂದು ತಿಳಿಯದಿದ್ದ ವಿಷಯವನ್ನು ಪದೇಶಿಸಿ ರಕ್ಷಿಸಿದ ಮೇಲೂ-ತಿರುವಂತ್ರದಲ್ಲಿ (ಅಷ್ಟಾಕ್ಷರ) ಹೇಳುವಂತೆ ಈ ನನಗೆ ತಮ್ಮೊಡನೆ ನವವಿಧ ಸಂಬಂಧವೂ ಇದೆಯೆಂದು ನಿರ್ಣಯಿಸಿದ ಮೇಲೆ ನನ್ನ

ಮನಸ್ಸು ಚಂಚಲವಾದೀತೆ? “ತಂದೈನಲ್ಲಾಯ್” ಎಂದು ಮೂರನೇ ಪಾತುರದಲ್ಲೇ ಅನುಭವಿಸಿರುವರು || ೫೮ ||

ಎನ್ನೆ ತಿರುವರಂಗ ರೇರಾರ್ ಕರುಡ್ ಮೇಲ್
ವನ್ನು ಮುಹಂಕಾಟ್ಟಿ ವಳಿ ನಡತ್ತ-ಚ್ಚಿ ನ್ನೈ ಶೆಯ್ಯಾದು
ಇಪ್ಪೊಲ್ಲಾ ವುಡಮ್ಮು ದನ್ನೈ ಪ್ಪೋಕ್ಕು ವದೆನ್ನಾಳ್ ಹೊಲೋ
ಶೊಲ್ಲಾ ಯೆತಿರಾಶಾ ಶೂಳ್. ನ್ನು || ೫೯ ||

ಈ ರೀತಿ ತಮ್ಮ ತಿರುವಡಿಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ನವವಿಧ ಸಂಬಂಧವನ್ನು ಭಾವಿಸುತ್ತಿರುವ ನನಗೆ ಹಿತವನ್ನು ಬಯಸುವ ತಿರಂಗನಾಥನು ಲಕ್ಷ್ಮಿಯೊಡಗೂಡಿ ಗರುಡನನ್ನೇರಿ ಬಂದು ದರ್ಶನ ಕೊಟ್ಟು, ಯಾವ ದಾರಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಇವನನ್ನೊಯ್ಯಬೇಕೆಂದು ನಿರ್ಣಯಿಸಿ “ನಿನ್ನ ಹೇಯನಾದ ಮತ್ತು ವಿರೋಧಿಯಾದ ಈ ಶರೀರವನ್ನು ಇಂತಹ ದಿನ ವಿನೋಚನೆ ಮಾಡಿಸುವೆನು” ಎಂದು ಎದುರಿಗೆ ನಿಂತು ಹೇಳುವುದು ಯಾವಾಗ? ಎನ್ನುವರು. || ೫೯ ||

ನಮ್ಮ ಪುರುಷಾರ್ಥಕ್ಕೆ ನಾವು ತ್ವರಿತಗೊಳ್ಳಬೇಕಿಲ್ಲ. ತಿರಂಗನಾಥನು ತಿರಾಮಾನುಜರಿಗೆ ಅನುಗ್ರಹಿಸಿರುವ ಸಕಲ ಪುರುಷಾರ್ಥಗಳೂ-ಅವರ ತಿರುವಡಿಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ನವವಿಧ ಸಂಬಂಧವುಳ್ಳ ನಮಗೆ ದಾಯಪ್ರಾಪ್ತವಾದುದು. ಅದರಿಂದ ನಾವು ನಿರ್ಬಂಧಿಸಬೇಕಾದುದೇನೂ ಇಲ್ಲವೆಂದು ತಮ್ಮ ಮನಸ್ಸಿಗೆ ಹೇಳಿ ಆನಂದಿಸುವರು.

ಇನ್ನೆ ತಿರುವರಂಗತ್ತಿ ನಿತಿರುನೀ ಯೆನ್ನರಂಗರ್
ಎನ್ನೆ ಯೆತಿರಾಶರೀನ್ದ ವರಂ ಶಿನ್ನೈ ಶೈಯ್ಯಲ್
ನಮ್ಮದನ್ನೋ ನೆಂಜಮೇ! ನಲ್ಲಾದೈ ಶೋಂಪುದಲ್ಲರ್
ತಮ್ಮದನ್ನೋ ದಾಯಮುರೈ ತಾ || ೬೦ ||

“ಅತ್ತೈವ ತಿರಂಗೇ ಸುಖಮಾಸ್ತು” ಎಂದು ಹೇಳಿ “ಶರೀರಪಾತಸಮಯೇ ತು” ಎಂದು ಆರಂಭಿಸಿ ನಿತ್ಯಕಿಂಕರೋ ಭವಿಷ್ಯಸಿ” “ಮಾತೇಭೂದತ್ರ ಸಂಶಯಃ” “ಅತಸ್ತಂ ತವ ತತ್ತ್ವತೋಮದ್ಜ್ಞಾನ ದರ್ಶನ ಪ್ರಾಪ್ತಿಷು ನಿಸ್ಸಂಶಯ ಸುಖಮಾಸ್ತು” ಎನ್ನುವವರೆಗೆ ಶರೀರವಿಯೋಗವನ್ನಾರಂಭಿಸಿ ನಿತ್ಯಕಿಂಕರಾಂತ ಫಲಗಳನ್ನೆಲ್ಲಾ ನಾನೇ ಉಂಟುಮಾಡುವೆನೆಂದು ತಿರಂಗನಾಥನು ಶರಣಾಗತಿ ಗಡ್ಯದಲ್ಲಿ ಶ್ರೀ ರಾಮಾನುಜರಿಗೆ ವರವನ್ನನುಗ್ರಹಿಸಲಿಲ್ಲವೆ? ಅದನ್ನು ತಿಳಿದ ಮೇಲೆ ನಮಗೆ ನಿರುಪಾಧಿಕ ತಂದೆಯಾದ ರಾಮಾನುಜರ ಅಸ್ತಿಯೆಲ್ಲಾ ಮಕ್ಕಳಾದ ನಮಗೆ ದಾಯಪ್ರಾಪ್ತ-ಹಕ್ಕು

ಬಾಧ್ಯತೆಯಿಂದ ಬಂದೇ ಬರುವುದಲ್ಲವೆ? ಎಲೆ ಮನವೆ! ಕಾತುರ ಬೇಡ ಎನ್ನುವರು. “ಈ ರೀತಿ ಭಗವಂತನಿಂದ ವರಪಡೆದವರು ಶ್ರೀ ರಾಮಾನುಜರು. ಅವರಿಗೆ ಬಂದ ಆಸ್ತಿಯೆಲ್ಲಾ ಮಕ್ಕಳಾದ ನಮಗೂ ದಾಯಪ್ರಾಪ್ತವಲ್ಲವೆ?” ಎಂದು ಹೇಳುವ ತ್ರಿ ಯತೀಂದ್ರ ಪ್ರವಣರೆಂಬ ಶ್ರೀವರವರ ಮುನಿಗಳನ್ನಾಶ್ರಯಿಸಿರುವ ನಮಗೂ ಅವರ ಆಸ್ತಿಯೆಲ್ಲಾ ದಾಯಪ್ರಾಪ್ತವಾದುದೇ ಸರಿ. ಇದಕ್ಕಾಗಿ ಕಾತುರಗೊಳ್ಳಬೇಕಿಲ್ಲ. ಶ್ರೀವರಮುನಿಗಳ ಕೃಪೆಯಿಂದ ನಮಗೂ ೪ ಮೋಕ್ಷಪುರುಷಾರ್ಥ ಸಿದ್ಧವಾದುದೇ ಎಂದು ನಿರ್ಣಿತವಾಗುವುದು ||೬೦||

ಈ ರೀತಿ ಶ್ರೀವರವರ ಮುನಿಗಳು ತಮಗೆ ಶ್ರೀ ಯತಿರಾಜ ರಾಮಾನುಜರಲ್ಲಿರುವ ಪ್ರತಿಪತ್ತಿ ವಿಶೇಷವನ್ನೂ, ಅವರೇ ಸಕಲವಿಧ ಬಂಧುನೆಂಬುದನ್ನೂ ಅವರೇ ಉತ್ತರಕಾಚಾರ್ಯರೆಂಬುದನ್ನೂ ಅವರ ಸರ್ವವಿಧ ಮೇಲ್ಮೈಯನ್ನೂ, ತಮ್ಮ ನೈಚ್ಛವನ್ನೂ, ತ್ವರೆಯನ್ನೂ ಉಪಾಯಾಧ್ಯವಸಾಯವನ್ನೂ ಪುರುಷಾರ್ಥನಿರ್ಣಯವನ್ನೂ ನಿರೂಪಿಸಿ, ಶ್ರೀ ರಾಮಾನುಜರಲ್ಲಿ ತಮಗೆ ಇರುವ ಪ್ರಾಪ್ತ ಸ್ವಾಪಕ ಭಾವವನ್ನೂ ಸಿದ್ಧಾಂತದ ಉಳಿದ ಸೂಕ್ಷ್ಮಾರ್ಥಗಳನ್ನೂ ವಿವರಿಸಿ-ಅನುಭವಿಸಿ-ಅವರಲ್ಲಿ ತಮಗಿರುವ ಭಾವವನ್ನು 60 ಪದ್ಯಗಳಿಂದ ತಿಳಿಸುವ ಮೂಲಕ “ಚರಮೋಪಾಯ ನಿಷ್ಕೆ”ಯನ್ನು ಚೆನ್ನಾಗಿ ಮನದಟ್ಟಾಗುವಂತೆ ವಿವರಿಸಿರುವರು ಇದೀಗ ಆದ್ದರಿಂದ ಪ್ರಬಂಧ.



