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na vinā sādhanaṁ devo
jñāna-vairāgya-bhaktibhiḥ
ddadāti sva-padaṁ śrīmān
atas tāṁi budhaṁ śrayet

“The glorious Supreme Personality of Godhead does not give residence in His abode to they who do not follow the path of devotion, knowledge, and renunciation. Therefore the wise should take shelter of that path.”

The previous two Adhyāyas explained the truth that the entire Vedānta philosophy describes the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is the only creator of the material world, completely faultless, a jewel mine of transcendental virtues, eternal, full of knowledge and bliss, the supreme person, meditated on by they who seek liberation. In those chapters all opposing views were refuted, and the real nature of the Supreme was described.

This third Adhyāya describes the spiritual practices that should be followed in order to attain the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The most important of these are thirst to attain the Supreme Lord, and a disinterest in what has no relation to the Lord. That is explained in the first two pādas.

In the First Pāda, the various defects of material existence are explained to show that one should renounce the world. In this connection the description of the soul’s travels from one kind of material body to another kind of material body are quoted from the Pañcāgni-vidyā chapter of the Chāndogya Upaniṣad. In the Second Pāda, the Lord’s many glories and virtues will be described to show that one should love the Supreme Lord.

Adhikaraṇa 1: The Soul’s Departure from Earth

Viṣaya [thesis or statement]: The Pañcāgni-vidyā portion of the Chāndogya Upaniṣad [Adhyāya 5, khaṇḍas 3-10] describes the individual soul’s departure for another world and return to this world. The whole passage is given below for reference:

Śvetaketu Āruṇeya went to an assembly of the Pañcālas. Pravāhana Jaibali said to him: “Boy, has your father instructed you?” “Yes, Sir,” he replied.

“Do you know what place men go to when they leave this world?” “No, Sir,” he replied. “Do you know how they return again?” “No, Sir,” he replied. “Do you know where the path of the devas and the path of the forefathers diverge?” “No, Sir,” he replied.

“Do you know why the world never becomes full?” “No, Sir,” he replied. “Do you know why the fifth libation of water is called man?” “No, Sir,” he replied.

“Then why did you say you had been instructed? How could anybody who did not know these things say that he had been instructed?” Then the boy went sorrowfully back to the place of his father and said, “Though you had not instructed me, you said that you had instructed me.”
“That Rājanya asked me five questions, and I could not answer one of them.” The father said: “As you have told me these five questions of his, I do not know any one of them. If I knew them, how should I have not told you?”

Then Gautama went to the king’s place, and when he had come to him, the king offered him proper respect. In the morning the king went out on his way to the assembly. The king said to him, “Sir, Gautama, ask a boon of such things as men possess.” Gautama replied, “Such things as men possess may remain with you. Tell me the answers to the to the questions you addressed to the boy.”

The king was surprised and said to him, “Stay with me for some time. As to what you have asked me, Gautama, this knowledge did not go to any brāhmaṇa before you, therefore this knowledge belonged to the kṣatriya class alone.” Then he began:

“O Gautama, the altar on which the sacrifice is offered is the world of heaven; its fuel is the sun itself, the smoke his rays, the light the day, the coals the moon, the sparks the stars. On that altar the devas (or the prāṇas represented by Agni, etc.) offer the śraddhā libation consisting of water. From that oblation arises the sparkling soma.

“O Gautama, the altar is Parjanya (the deva of rain). Its fuel is the air itself, the smoke the clouds, the light the lightning, the coals the thunderbolt, the sparks the thunder. On that altar the devas offer the sparkling soma; from that oblation arises rain.

“O Gautama, the altar is the earth. Its fuel is the year, the smoke the sky, the light the night, the sparks the intermediate quarter. On that altar the devas (prāṇas) offer rain; from that oblation arises food, corn, grains, etc.

“O Gautama, the altar is man; its fuel is speech, the smoke the breath, the light the tongue, the coals the eye, the sparks the ear. On that altar the prāṇas offer food; from that oblation arises semen.

“O Gautama, that altar is woman; on that altar the prāṇas offer semen; from that oblation arises the embryo.

“For this reason the water of the fifth oblation is called man. This embryo, gestating in the womb for nine months, more or less, is born. When born, he lives whatever the length of his life may be. When he has departed, as appointed in the scriptures, his friends carry him to the funeral pyre, from whence he came, from whence he sprang.

“Those who know this, even though they may be grhastras [householders], and those in the forest who follow faith and austerity, the vānaprasthas and the parivrājakācāryas who do not yet know the Supreme Personality of Godhead, go to light; from light to day, from day to the śukla-pakṣa [bright fortnight of the Moon], from the śukla-pakṣa to the uttarāyana [the six months when the Sun travels in the north], from the uttarāyana to the year, from the year to the Sun, from the Sun to the Moon, from the Moon to the lightning. There is a person there who is not human; he leads to the Brahman. This is the path of the devas.

“Those who, living in a village, practice a life of sacrifice, works of public utility and live by begging alms, go to the smoke, from the smoke to the night, from the night to the krṣna-pakṣa [dark fortnight of the Moon], from the krṣna-pakṣa to the daksināyana [the six months when the Sun travels in the south]; but they do not reach the year. From the months they go to the world of the forefathers, from the world of the forefathers to the ether, from the ether to the moon. That is the sparkling soma. Here they are eaten by the devas; yes, the devas eat them.
"Having dwelt there until their good *karma* is consumed, the return again the way they have come, to the ether, to the air. Then the sacrificer, having become air, becomes smoke; having become smoke, he becomes mist. Having become mist, he becomes a cloud; having become a cloud, he rains down. Then he is born as rice and corn, herbs and trees, sesame and beans. The escape from there is beset with great difficulties. For whichever persons eat that food and beget children, he takes birth among them and becomes like them.

"Those whose conduct in his previous lives has been good will quickly attain some good birth, like that of a *brāhmaṇa*, *ksatriya* or *vaśya*. But he whose conduct has been evil will quickly attain an evil birth: a keeper of a dog, keeper of a hog or even a *caṇḍāla* [dog-eater].

"There are many small creatures—flies, worms, etc.—which do not travel on either of these paths, but who constantly die and are reborn. Theirs is a third world. Therefore the world never becomes full. Thus let a man take care to live a pious and holy life, and thus the following *śloka* is said:

“A man who steals gold, who drinks alcohol, who dishonor’s his *guru’s* bed, who kills a *brāhmaṇa* or who associates with such people, falls down into the animal species; but he who knows the five sacrificial fires is not defiled by sin, even though he associates with sinners. He who knows is pure, clean, and attains the worlds of the blessed, yea, he attains the worlds of the blessed.”

*Saṁśaya* [doubt]: When the individual soul goes to the next world does he take his subtle body with him or not?

*Pūrvapakṣa* [the opponent speaks]: The soul does not take the subtle body with him.

* Siddhānta* [conclusion]: In the following words the author of the *śūtras* gives His conclusion.

**Sūtra 3.1.1**

*tad-antara-pratipattau raṁhati sampariṣvaktah praśna-nirūpanāḥbhyaṁ*

*tat – of that; antara – of another; pratipattau – in the attainment; raṁhati – goes; sampariṣvaktah – embraced; praśna – from the questions; nirūpanāḥbhyaṁ – and answers.*

*In going to another body, the soul is embraced [by the subtle body]. This is so from the questions and answers [in the above-quoted passage of the Chāndogya Upaniṣad].*

Here *tad* means “the body.” That meaning is taken from the word *mūrti* in Sūtra 2.4.20. When the soul leaves one gross material body and enters another, he takes the subtle body with him. How is that known? It is known from the questions beginning in Chāndogya Upaniṣad 5.3.3 and answers beginning in 5.4.1. Here is the gist of that passage:

A king named Pravāhaṇa, who was the ruler of Pañcāla-deśa, asked five questions of a *brāhmaṇa* boy named Śvetaketu who had come to his court. These questions concerned:

1. The destination of they who perform pious deeds,
2. The way these persons return to the earth,
3. They who do not attain that world,
4. How the path to the *devas* and the path to the *pitās* are different paths, and
5. The question expressed in these words [Chāndogya Upaniṣad 5.3.3]:

vettha yathā pañcanayāṁ āhutāv āpah puruṣa-vacaso bhavanti

“Do you know why the fifth libation is called puruṣa?”

Unhappy because he did not know the answer to these questions, the boy approached his father, Gautama Muni, and expressed his sorrow. The father also did not know the answers and, wishing to learn them, approached Pravāhaṇa. Pravāhaṇa wished to give wealth to his guest, but Gautama begged from him the alms of the answers to the five questions.

Answering the last question first, Pravāhaṇa described [Chāndogya Upaniṣad 5.4.1] the five fires: 1. heaven, 2. rain, 3. earth, 4. man, and 5. woman. Then he described the five libations for these fires: 1. śrāddha, 2. soma, 3. rain, 4. food, and 5. semen. The priests offering all these libations are the devas. The homa [yajña] here is the devas’ throwing of the spirit soul, which is enveloped in its subtle body, up to the celestial worlds [dyuloka] so he may enjoy celestial pleasures.

The devas here are the senses of the soul who has passed through death. These devas offer śrāddha in the fire of the celestial world. That śrāddha becomes a celestial body named somarāja, a body suitable for enjoying celestial pleasures.

When the time of enjoyment is over, the devas offer a yajña where this body is placed in the fire of parjanya and transformed into rain. The devas then offer a yajña where that rain is placed in the fire of earth and transformed into grains. The devas then offer a yajña where those grains are placed in the fire of a man’s food and transformed into semen. The devas then offer a yajña where that semen is placed in the fire of a woman’s womb and transformed into an unborn child. In that way the question was answered with the words [Chāndogya Upaniṣad 5.9.1]:

iti tu pañcamyāṁ āhutāv āpah puruṣa-vacaso bhavanti

“Thus the fifth libation is called puruṣa.”

In this sequence it is seen that in the fifth libation semen is offered in the fire of a woman’s womb, and the result is a material body, which is thus called puruṣa. That is the meaning.

In this description it is thus seen that the soul leaves one gross material body accompanied by the subtle material body, goes to the celestial world, falls from there, and again enters a woman’s womb still accompanied by the same subtle material body.

Here someone may object: “The word āpah [water] is used here with the word puruṣa. How, then, can it be that the soul is accompanied by all the elements of the subtle material body?”

In the following words the author of the sūtras answers this objection.

Sūtra 3.1.2

try-ātmakatvāt tu bhūyastvāt

tri-ātmakatvāt – because of being threefold; tu – but; bhūyastvāt – because of being prominent.

But because of being threefold and because of being prominent.

The word tu [but] is used here to dispel doubt.
The other elements go because the water here is threefold, a compound of three elements. Because the semen, which is the seed of the material body, is primarily water, therefore it is proper to call it water. In the Smṛti-śāstra it is said:

\[
tāpāpanodo bhūyavstam ambhaso vṛttayas tv imāḥ
\]

“Because it has the power to remove heat, water is said to predominate.”

In this way the water is prominent.

**Sūtra 3.1.3**

\[
prāṇa-gateś ca
\]

\[
prāṇa – of the pranas; gateḥ – of the departure; ca – and.
\]

Also because of the prāṇas’ departure.

When the soul enters another material body the prāṇas also come. This is described in Brhad-āranyaka Upaniṣad [4.4.2]:

\[
tam utkṛṇamantāṁ prāṇo ‘nūtṛāmati prāṇam anūtṛāmantāṁ sarve prāṇāḥ anūtṛāmantāṁ.
\]

“When the soul departs, the principal prāṇa follows. When the principal prāṇa departs, the other prāṇas follow.”

The prāṇas cannot exist without taking shelter of a maintainer. They take shelter of the elements of the subtle material body. Therefore it must be accepted that the subtle material body accompanies the soul. That is the meaning.

**Sūtra 3.1.4**

\[
agny-ādi-gati-śruter iti cen na bhāktatvāt
\]

agni – fire; ādi – beginning; gati – going; śruteḥ - from the Śruti-śāstra; iti – thus; cet – if; na – not; bhāktatvāt – because of being a metaphor.

If it is said that the Śruti-śāstras describe the departure of fire and other elements, then I reply: It is not so, because it is a metaphor only.

Here someone may object: “Is it not so that in the Brhad-āranyaka Upaniṣad it is said:

\[
yasyāsyā puruṣasya mṛtasyāgniṁ vāg apy eti vātam prāṇaṁ cakṣur ādityaṁ manasa candraṁ diśaṁ śrotām prthivīṁ śarīram ākāśam ātmāsaśdhir loṁāṁ vanaspatīṁ keśā apsu lohitam ca retaś ca nidhiyate.
\]

“When a person dies his speaking power enters the fire, his breath enters the wind, his eyes enter the sun, his mind enters the moon, his ears enter the directions, his body enters the earth, his soul enters the ether, the hairs of his body enter the plants and herbs, the hairs of his head enter the trees, and his blood and semen enter the waters.”

Therefore the speech and other faculties enter the fire and other objects. They cannot possibly accompany the departing soul. That is the verdict of the Śruti-śāstra.”
If this is said, then I reply: No. It is not so. Why not? The sūtra explains: bhāktatvāt [because it is a metaphor only]. It is not directly seen that “the hairs of the body enter the plants and herbs, and the hairs of the head enter the trees,” as this passage declares. Therefore this passage’s description of the entrance into fire and other elements is a metaphor only. Because all these are placed together in a single passage it is not possible to say one part is metaphor and another part is not metaphor. It is not seen that the bodily hairs jump from the body and enter the plants and herbs. Therefore at the time of death the voice and other faculties temporarily cease being useful to the soul, but they do not leave. They accompany the soul. That is the conclusion of the Śruti-śāstra.

Sūtra 3.1.5

_prathame ‘śravaṇād iti cen na tā eva hy upapatteḥ_

_prathame – in the first; aśravaṇāt – because of not being described in the Śruti-śāstra; iti – thus; cet – if; na – not; tāḥ – they; eva – indeed; hy – indeed; upapatteḥ – because of being appropriate._

_If it is said that in the beginning there is no description, then I reply: It is indeed that, because that is appropriate._

Here someone may object: “If the five libations were all water, then it would be possible to say that in the fifth libation the soul departs accompanied by water. However, this is not so. It is not said that in the first libation water is offered into fire. There it is said that śraddhā is offered. It says:

_tasminn agnau devāḥ śraddhāṁ jahuvi_

_“The devas offer a yajña, placing śraddhā in the fire.”_

The word śraddhā [faith] refers to a particular state of mind. It never means water. The word soma and other words may be interpreted to mean water, but is it not possible to interpret the word śraddhā to mean water. Therefore the departing soul is not accompanied by water.”

If this is said, then I reply: No. It is not so. The śraddhā offered into fire in the beginning here is indeed water. Why is that? The sūtra explains: upapatteḥ [because it is appropriate]. It is appropriate in the context of this question and answer. The question here is: “Do you know why the water in the fifth libation is called puruṣa?” From this is is seen that all the offerings into the fire here are water. Then, in the beginning of the reply it is said: Śraddhā is offered into the fire.” If the word śraddhā here does not mean water, then the answer does not properly reply to the question. That is the meaning. Water is offered in these five libations. Because water is clearly offered in the last four, it is appropriate that it also be offered in the first. It is seen that the offerings of soma, rain, and the others are clearly all caused by śraddhā. Because the cause must be like the effect, therefore, the offering of śraddhā must also be water. Therefore the word śraddhā here means water. The Śruti-śāstra [Taittirīya-saṃhitā 1.6.8.1] explains:

_śraddhā vā āpaḥ_

_“The word śraddhā means water.”_

Therefore the word śraddhā here does not refer to a condition of the mind. The meaning of a condition of the mind is not appropriate in this context of offering yajñas. In this way it is shown that the departing soul is certainly accompanied by water.

Here someone may object: “In this part of the Śruti-śāstra it said that the water departs, but it is not said that the soul departs. The soul is not mentioned in this passage.”
To remove this doubt the author of the sūtras gives the following reply.

Sūtra 3.1.6

aśrutatvād iti cennā istādi-kārināṁ pratīteḥ

aśrutatvāt – because of not being described in the Śruti-śāstra; iti – thus; cet – if; na – not; istādikārināṁ – by they who perform pious deeds; pratīteḥ – because of the understanding.

If it is said that this is not proved in the Śruti-śāstra, then I reply: No, because this is understood to be about they who perform pious deeds.

The word aśrutatva here means “unproved.” The passage in the Chāndogya Upaniṣad describes the travel to the moon of they who perform pious deeds. The passage states [Chāndogya Upaniṣad 5.10.3-4]:

atha ya ime grāme īṣṭāpūrte dattam ity upāsate te dhūmam abhisamviṣanti...ākāśac candramanas eṣa somo rājā.

“They who perform pious deeds in their village enter the smoke, ... and then they go from the sky to the moon planet, where the become the king of soma. In this way they who perform pious deeds go to the moon and become known as Somarāja [the king of soma].”

About the fire and Devaloka it is said [Chāndogya Upaniṣad 5.4.2]:

devaḥ śraddhāṁ juhvati. Tasyāḥ āhuteḥ somo rājā sambhavati.

“The devas offer śraddhā in sacrifice. From that offering he becomes a king of soma.”

In this way śraddhā-śarīra [a body made of śraddhā] and somarāja [the king of soma] both refer to the same thing. They both mean a body, and in this context the word body means the individual spirit soul, because the soul takes shelter of a body. In this way it is understood that the departing soul is accompanied by water.

Here someone may object: “Is it not so that in the Chāndogya Upaniṣad [5.10.4] it is said:

eṣa somo rājā devānām annaṁ taṁ devā bhakṣayanti

“That king of soma is the devas’ food. The devas eat it.”

Because the Śruti-śāstra thus says that this king of soma is eaten by the devas it is not possible that the phrase ‘king of soma’ here refers to the individual spirit soul, for no one can eat the soul.”

If this is said, then the author of the sūtras gives the following reply.

Sūtra 3.1.7

bhāktaṁ vānātmava-vittvāt tathā hi darṣayati

bhāktaṁ – metaphor; vā – or; an – not; ātma – the soul; vit – knowing; tvāt – because of the condition; tathā – so; hi – indeed; darṣayati – shows.

Or it is a metaphor, because of ignorance of the Supersoul.

The word vā [or] is used here to dispel doubt. The word somarāja here refers to the individual spirit soul. The description that he becomes the devas’ food is only a metaphor. The soul is said to be the
devas’ food because the soul serves the devas and thus pleases them. That is the meaning. The do this because they are ignorant of the Supersoul. The Śruti-śāstra shows that they who are ignorant of the Supersoul become servants of the devas. In Brhad-aranyaka Upaniṣad [1.4.10] it is said:

\[ \text{atha yo 'nyāṁ devatāṁ upāste anyo 'sāv anyo 'ham asmīti na sa veda yathā paśur eva sa devānām.} \]

“A person who thinks, ‘I am different from the demigods’ worships the demigods. He becomes like an animal in the demigods’ service.”

Here is the meaning of this. It is not possible that the devas eat the individual souls. The meaning here is that the souls please the demigods and in this way become like food for them. They please the demigods by serving them. It is said:

\[ \text{viśo 'nnaṁ rājñāṁ paśavo 'nnaṁ viśām} \]

“The vaisyās are the kṣatriyas’ food, and the cows are the vaisyās’ food.”

In this passage it is clear that the word ‘food’ is not used literally. It is used to mean ‘servant.’ If the word food were used in the literal sense, then the rules of the jyotistoma and other yajñas would all be meaningless. If the devas ate whomever went to Candraloka, why would the souls be so eager to perform yajñas and go there? In this way it is proved that the departing soul is accompanied by water.

**Adhikarāṇa 2: The Soul’s Return to the Earth**

Viśaya [thesis or statement]: Following Chāndogya Upaniṣad 5.10.3, which describes how the soul that has performed pious deeds travels by the smoke and other pathways, attains Svargaloka, stays there for some time, and then again returns to the earth, is this passage [Chāndogya Upaniṣad 5.10.5]:

\[ \text{yāvat sampātum uṣītvāḥaitam evādhvānāṁ punar nivartate.} \]

“After staying there for some time his karma is exhausted and he again returns.”

Samśaya [doubt]: When he leaves Svargaloka, does the soul bring his past karma or not?

Pūrva-pakṣa [the opponent speaks]: The soul stays in Svargaloka for as long as he has the results of past karma. This is described in Brhad-āranyaka Upaniṣad [4.4.6]:

\[ \text{prāpyāntaṃ karaṇaṇaṃ tasya} \]

“He stays there until he reaches the end of his karma.”

This shows that the soul only falls when his past karma is completely exhausted. The word sampāta [karma] is derived from the verb sampat [to ascend], as in the words sampatantya anena svargam [the instrument by which the souls ascend to Svargaloka]. The word anuśaya [which also means karma] is derived from the verb śiṣ [to remain] and means “that which remains after one has enjoyed.” It means “that which remains and pushes the soul to experience certain results.” In Svargaloka one uses up all his past karma, and therefore no further karma remains.”

Siddhānta [conclusion]: In the following words the author of the sūtras gives his conclusion.

**Sūtra 3.1.8**

\[ \text{kṛtātyaye 'nuśayavān dṛṣṭa-smṛtibhyām} \]

kṛta – of what is done; atyaye – at the end; anuśaya – karma; vān – possessing; dṛṣṭa – from the Śruti-śāstra; smṛtibhyām – from the Smṛti-śāstra.
At the end there is still *karma*, because of the statements of Śruti- and Smṛti-śāstras.

When the good *karma* of pious deeds performed to enjoy in Candraloka is exhausted, the enjoyment ends and the soul attains a new body to enter flames of suffering. In this way, when his good *karma* is exhausted, he falls down. How is that known? The sūtra explains: *dṛṣṭa-smṛtibhyām:* “By the statements of Śruti- and Smṛti-śāstras.” The Śruti-śātra [Chāndogya Upaniṣad 5.10.7] explains:


> “When one acts piously, he attains a good birth. He is born as a brāhmaṇa or a kṣatriya or a vaiṣya. When one acts sinfully, he attains a sinful birth. He is born as a dog, a pig, or an outcaste.”

Here the words *ramaniya-carana* means ‘pious deeds.’ This refers to pious *karma* remaining after one has enjoyed pious *karmas*. The word *abhyāsa* means ‘repeated practice.’ This word is formed from the verb *as*, the preposition *abhi* and the affix *kvip*. The meaning of the word *ha* [indeed] is obvious. The word *yat* means ‘when.’ In this passage there are when-then clauses.

In the Smṛti-śāstra it is said:

> iha punar-bhave te ubhaya-śeśābhyāṁ niviśanti.

> “Accompanied by the remnants of their good and bad *karma*, they again enter the world of repeated birth.”

In this way it is clear that the soul falling from Svargaloka still has past *karma*. This does not contradict the description in Chāndogya Upaniṣad 5.10.5 because that passage described only the exhaustion of the specific *karmas* that brought the soul to Svargaloka and not the exhaustion of other *karmas*.

Now the author of the sūtras describes the method of the soul’s descent.

**Sūtra 3.1.9**

> yathetaṁ anevam ca

> yathā – as; itam – departed; an – not; evam – thus; ca – and.

> Also, not as he went.

The soul, who still has *karma*, does not descend from Candraloka in the same way he rose to Candraloka. The words *yathā itam* mean ‘as he arrived.’ The word *an-evam* means ‘in a different way.’ The soul descends by the path of smoke and the path of ether. These paths were also traveled in the ascent. However, in the descent there is no mention of the night or other paths used in the ascent. Also, in the descent there is mention of the cloud and other paths not used in the ascent. Therefore the descent is not like [*anevam*] the ascent.

**Sūtra 3.1.10**

> caraṇād iti cen na tad-upalakṣaṇārtheti kārṣṇājiniḥ
caraṇāt – by conduct; iti – thus; cet – if; na – not; tad- upalakṣaṇa-arthā – that meaning; iti – thus; kārṣṇājiniḥ – Kārṣṇājini.

If it is said to be by conduct, then Kārṣṇājini replies: No. Here it has the same meaning.

Here someone may object: “It is not so that the soul fallen from Svargaloka attains a new birth according to his past karma? The passage quoted here from the Śruti-śāstra uses the word ramaṇīya-caraṇa [good conduct]. The word caraṇa means ‘conduct.’ It has not the same meaning as anuśaya [karma]. The difference of the two words is seen in the following statement of Brhad-āranyaka Upaniṣad:

yathācārī yathākārī tathā bhavati
“As one performed caraṇa, and as one performed karma, so one attains an appropriate birth.”

To this I reply: There is no fault here to interpret the word caraṇa as a synonym of karma. Kārṣṇājini Muni affirms that in this passage of Chāndogya Upaniṣad [5.10.7] the word caraṇa means karma. This is also true because the Śruti-śāstras affirm that karma is the origin of conduct. That is the meaning.

Sūtra 3.1.11

ānarthakyam iti cen na tad-apekṣatvāt
ānarthakyam – meaninglessness; iti – thus; cet – if; na – not; tad- apekṣatvāt – because of being in relation to that.

If it is said that it has no meaning, then I reply: No. Because it is in relation to that.

Here someone may object: “If karma is indeed the source of all that is good, then good conduct is useless and the rules of good conduct are also useless.”

If this is said, then the author of the sūtras replies: No. It is not so. Why not? The sūtra explains: “Because good karma itself is created by good conduct.” One cannot attain good karma without performing good conduct. The Śruti-śāstra explains:

sandhyā-hīno ‘śucir nityam anarhaḥ sarva-karmasu
“A person who is impure and does not chant the Gāyatrī prayer is not qualified to perform any pious karmas.”

Therefore, Kārṣṇajini Muni explains, because good conduct is the cause of good karma, the word caraṇa in this passage means karma.

Sūtra 3.1.12

sukṛta-duṣkrte eveti tu bādariḥ
sukṛta – pious deeds; duṣkrte – impious deeds; eva – indeed; iti – thus; tu – but; bādariḥ – Bādari.

But Bādari Muni indeed thinks it means pious and impious deeds.
The word *tu* [but] is used here to begin a refutation of the previous argument. Bādari Muni thinks the word *caraṇa* here means ‘pious and impious deeds.’ An example of this is the sentence *punyam karmācarati:* “He performs pious deeds.” In this sentence the verb *carati* is used to mean ‘performs karmas.’ If a word’s primary meaning is possible, then it is not appropriate to accept the secondary meaning. Therefore the word *caraṇa* here means *karma,* and any other interpretation of it is meaningless.

*Caraṇa* [good conduct] is merely a specific kind of *karma.* *Caraṇa* and *karma* are thus different in the same way the Kurus and Pāṇavas are different. The word *eva* [indeed] hints that this is also the opinion of the author of the *sūtras.* Therefore, since *caraṇa* is a specific kind of *karma,* it is proved that the soul departing from Svargaloka is accompanied by the remainder of his *karma.*

### Adhikarana 3: Do the Impious Also Go to Candraloka?

*Viṣaya* [thesis or statement]: Thus it has been said that a person who performs pious deeds goes to Candraloka and then again returns with the remainder of his *karma.* Now will be discussed whether sinners who perform no pious deeds also go and return in the same way. In *Īsopaniṣad* [3] it is said:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{āsūryā nāma te lokā} \\
\text{andhena tamasāvrtāḥ} \\
\text{tāṁs te pretyābhigacchanti} \\
\text{ye ke cātma-hano janāḥ}
\end{align*}
\]

“The killer of the soul, whoever he may be, must enter into the planets known as the worlds of the faithless, full of darkness and ignorance.”

*Samśaya* [doubt]: Do the sinners go to Candraloka or Yamaloka?

*Pūrvapakṣa* [the opponent speaks]: The opponent gives his opinion in the following *sūtra.*

#### Sūtra 3.1.13

*aniṣṭādi-kārinām api ca śrutam*

*an* – not; *iṣṭa* – pious deeds; *ādi* – beginning with; *kārinām* – of the performers; *api* – also; *ca* – and; *śrutam* – in the Śruti-śāstra.

The *Śruti-śāstra* declares that it is also so for they who do not perform *iṣṭa* or other pious deeds.

The *Śruti-śāstra* declares that they who perform *iṣṭa* and other pious deeds, as well as they who do not perform *iṣṭa* and other pious deeds, both go to Candraloka. This is explained in the *Kauśītaki Upaniṣad* [1.2]:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{ye vai ke casmāl lokāt prayāṇti candramasam eva te sarve gacchanti}
\end{align*}
\]

“All who leave this world go to Candraloka.”

Since with these words the *Śruti-śāstra* declares that all, without distinction, go to Candraloka, then sinners are also included in that all. This being so, the words of *Īsopaniṣad* are only an empty threat to frighten the sinners from acting badly. In truth the pious and the sinner both attain the same result.”

*Siddhānta* [conclusion]: To this I reply: No. It is not so. The sinner does not enjoy happiness. In the following words the author of the *sūtras* gives His conclusion.
Sūtra 3.1.14

samyamane tv anubhūyetāreśām ārohāvarohau tad-gati-darśanāt

samyamane – in Samyamani Puri; tu – but; anubhūya – experiencing; itareśām – of others; āroha – ascent; avarohau – descent; tat – of them; gati – travel; darśanāt – by the Śruti-śāstra.

But the others go to and return from Samyama-pura. The Śruti-śāstra describes this as their travels.

The word tu [but] is used here to begin the refutation of the pūrvapakṣin. The word itareśām [of the others] here means ‘of they who did not perform iṣṭa and other pious deeds.’ The word samyamane means ‘in the city of Yamarāja.’ That is where they go. There they are punished by Yamarāja and then sent back to the earth. Their departure and return is like that. Why do we say that? The sūtra explains, tad-gati-darśanāt: “Because Śruti-śāstra describes this as their travels.” In the Kaṭha Upaniṣad [1.2.6] Yamarāja explains:

na samparāyāḥ pratibhāti bālam
pramādyantāṁ vitta-mohena mūḍham
ayam loko nāsti para iti mānī
punaḥ punar vaśam āpadyaṁ me

“The path to liberation does not appear before a childish fool intoxicated by the illusory wealth of this world. He who thinks, ‘This is the only world. There is no world beyond this,’ falls into my control again and again.”

In this way the Śruti-śāstra explains that the sinners are punished by Yamarāja. That is the meaning.

Sūtra 3.1.15

smaranti ca

smaranti – the Smṛti-śāstra; ca – also.

The Smṛti-śāstras also affirm it.

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam [3.30.23] explains:

tatra tatra patan chrānto
mūrchitaḥ punar utthitaḥ
pathā pāpīyasā nītas
tarasā yama-sādanam

“While passing on that road to the abode of Yamarāja, he falls down in fatigue, and sometimes he becomes unconscious, but he is forced to rise again. In this way he is very quickly brought to the presence of Yamarāja.”

In the Smṛti-śāstra it is also said:

sarve caite vaśam yānti yamasya bhagavan

“O Lord, all sinners come under Yamarāja’s control.”

In this way the sages and Smṛti-śāstras affirm that the sinners come under Yamarāja’s control.
Sūtra 3.1.16

api sapta

api – also; sapta – seven.

There are seven and others also.

In the Mahābhārata it is said:

rauravo ‘tha mahāṁś caiva vahnir vaitaranī tathā
kumbhīpāka iti proktāmy anitya-narakāni tu

tamisras cāṇḍa-tāmiso dvau nityau samprakīrtītau
iti sapta pradhānāni bālīyas tūttarottaram

“The temporary hells named 1. Raurava, 2. Mahān, 3. Vahni, 4. Vaitaranī, and 5. Kumbhīpāka, as well as the permanent hells named 6. Tamisra, and 7. Andha-tamisra, are said to be the seven most important hells, each one more horrible than the last.”

Thus the Smṛti-śāstra explains that sinners are punished for their sins in these hells. These hells are the places where sinners go. The word api [also] is used to indicate that in the Fifth Canto of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam other hells are also described.

Here someone may object: “Does this description of Yamarāja’s punishment of sinners not contradict the scriptures’ declaration that the Supreme Personality of Godhead is the supreme controller of everything?”

The author of the sūtras now answers this objection:

Sūtra 3.1.17

tatrāpi ca tad-vyāpārād avirodhaḥ

tatra – there; api – even; ca – also; tat – of Him; vyāpārāt – because of the activities; a – without; virodhaḥ – contradiction.

There is no contradiction, for He also acts there.

The word ca [and] is here used for emphasis.

Yamarāja and others punish sinners by the command of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. This does not contradict the scriptures’ description of the Lord’s supremacy. That is the meaning. The Purāṇas affirm that, on the Supreme Lord’s order, Yamarāja and others punish sinners.

Here someone may object: “It must be that, after receiving punishment from Yamarāja, sinners also ascend to Candraloka. This must be so, for the Kauśitaki Upaniṣad affirms that all who leave this world travel to Candraloka.”

To refute this misconception the author of the sūtras speaks the following words.

Sūtra 3.1.18

vidyā-karmaṇos tv iti prakṛtatvāt
vidyā – of knowledge; karmanoḥ – of action; tu – but; iti – thus; prakṛtatvāt – because of being the topics.

But because pious deeds and knowledge are the topics.

The word tu [but] is used to begin the answer to the previous objection. The word na [it is not so] is to be understood in this sūtra. Sinners do not go to Candraloka. Why not? The sūtra explains that only they who perform pious deeds or are situated in true knowledge [vidyā-karmaṇoḥ] travel to the worlds of the devas and pitās. That is the description of the scriptures [prakṛtatvāt]. In the Chāndogya Upaniṣad [5.10.1] it is said that they who are situated in knowledge travel on the path to the devas. In Chāndogya Upaniṣad [5.10.3] it is said that they who perform pious deeds travel on the path to the pitās. Thus when it is said that all [sarve] go to Candraloka, the meaning is that all who have qualified themselves in these ways go to Candraloka.

Here someone may object: “Is it not so that without first going to Candraloka it is not possible for sinners to attain a new material body? This is the reason: Because [without first going to Candraloka] it is not possible to offer the fifth libation [by which one attains a new body]. Therefore, in order to attain a new material body, all must first go to Candraloka.”

If this objection is raised, then the author of the sūtras gives the following reply.

Sūtra 3.1.19

na tṛṭiyē tathopalabdheḥ
na – not; tṛṭiyē – in the third; tathā – so; upalabdheḥ – because of the perception.

Not so in the third, for it is so perceived.

In the third place there is no need to offer the fifth libation to attain a new material body. Why not? The sūtra explains, tathopalabdheḥ: “Because it is so perceived.” This means: “Because the Śrutī-śāstra affirms that it is so.” In the Chāndogya Upaniṣad the following question is posed:

yathāsau loko na sampūryate

“Do you know why the world never becomes filled?”

The answer is given [Chāndogya Upaniṣad 5.10.8]:

athaitayoḥ pathor na katarēṇa ca tānimbāni kṣudrāṇy asakrd avṛttīni bhūtāni jīvantā jāyasva mriyasvety etat tṛṭiyāṁ sthānam. Tenāsau loko na sampūryate.

“There are these two paths and there is also another path, where many tiny creatures live, and where they are ordered: ‘Now you must be born.’ and ‘Now you must die.’ It is because of this third place that the world never becomes filled.”

Aside from the worlds of the devas and the worlds of the pitās, there is another, a third world, the home of tiny creatures like mosquitoes, insects, and worms, creatures who do not go to the higher worlds, but are simply again and again ordered: “Now you must be born,” and “Now you must die.” In this way they are born and die again and again. That is the meaning. Their abode is this third world. It is said that sinners take birth in the bodies of these insects and other lower creatures. Their place is the third world because it is different from the first and second worlds: Brahma-loka and Dyuloka.
Because they have not attained true knowledge and thus become able to travel to the world of the devas, and because they have not performed pious deeds and thus become able to travel to the world of the pīṭās, they become tiny creatures like mosquitoes and insects and they stay in a third world. That is why the other worlds do not become filled to overflowing. These creatures neither rise to nor descend from the celestial worlds of Brahmaloka and Dyuloka, and for that reason Dyuloka does not become overfilled. They stay in a third world, where they do not offer the fifth oblation in order to attain a new body.

Sūtra 3.1.20

smaryate ‘pi ca loke
smaryate – affirmed in the Śmṛti-śāstra; api – and; ca – also; loke – in the world.

The Śmṛti-śāstras affirm that it is also in this world.

In this world also some pious persons, Droṇa and Dhṛṣṭadyumna are two examples, also attain new bodies without offering a fifth oblation. This is described in the Śmṛti-śāstras. The words api ca [and also] hint that there are other examples also.

Sūtra 3.1.21

darśanāc ca
darśanāt – from seeing; ca – also.

From seeing also.

In the Chāndogya Upaniṣad [6.3.1] it is said:

Teṣāṁ khalv eśāṁ bhūtānāṁ tṛīṇy eva bījāni bhavanti. Aṇḍa-jam jīva-jam udbhij-jam.

“Living beings are born in one of three ways. Some are born from an egg, some are born live, and some are plants sprouting from a seed.”

The Śruti-śāstra affirms that plants sprouting from a seed and tiny creatures born from perspiration take birth without the fifth oblation. They neither ascend to nor descend from Candra-loka. They are born from water without the fifth oblation. This view is not contradicted by the scriptures.

Here someone may object: “The passage you quoted from Chāndogya Upaniṣad mentioned three kinds of birth but did not mention birth from perspiration.”

The author of the sūtras now gives his answer to this objection.

Sūtra 3.1.22

tṛīya-śabdāvartoradvahaḥ saṁśoka-jasya
tṛīya-śabda – word; avarodhaḥ – description; saṁśoka – from grief; jasya – born.

The grief-born is included in the third word.
The perspiration-born creatures, here called grief-born, are included in the description of plants born from seeds. Because they are both born by bursting forth, one bursting from earth and the other bursting from water, they are considered in the same class. They differ in that the perspiration-born creatures have the power to move about, and the plants do not. In this way it is proved that they who do not perform pious deeds do not go to Candraloka.

Adhikaraṇa 4: The Soul Does not Become Ether

It has already been shown that the soul who performs pious deeds goes to Candraloka accompanied by his subtle material body, and after some time, again descends to the earth accompanied by the remnant of his karma. The way this happens is described in Chāndogya Upaniṣad [5.10.5]:

\[
\text{atītāma evādvānām punar nivartaṃ yathetām ākāśasān ākāśād vāyūḥ bhavati vāyur bhūtvā dhūmo bhavati dhūmo bhūtvā abhraṁ bhavaty abhraṁ bhūtvā megho bhavati megho bhūtvā pravṛṣati}
\]

“He returns by this path. First he becomes ether. From ether he becomes air. Having become air he becomes smoke. Having become smoke he becomes mist. Having become mist he becomes a cloud. Having become a cloud, he becomes rain.”

Saṁśaya [doubt]: Is the descent literally like this, or is it not like this?

Pūrvapakṣa [the opponent speaks]: This account of the descending soul becoming ether and other things is to be accepted literally. During its descent does the soul become completely identical with these various things, or does it become only similar to them? If the soul becomes only similar, then a secondary interpretation of the passage must be accepted. For this reason it should be understood that the soul becomes completely identical with these different things.

Siddhānta [conclusion]: In the following words the author of the sūtras gives His conclusion.

Sūtra 3.1.23

\[
tat-svābhāvyāpattir upapatteḥ
\]

It is similar to them, for that is reasonable.

This passage should be interpreted to mean that the soul becomes similar to these things. Why is that? The sūtra explains, upapatteḥ: “For that is reasonable.” On Candraloka the soul attains a body suitable for enjoyment. However, when the time for enjoyment comes to an end, that body perishes in the fire of grief, just as mist perishes in the sunlight. Thus deprived of its external body, the soul becomes like ether. Then the soul comes under the control of air. Then the soul comes into contact with smoke and the other things. That is a reasonable explanation of these events. This is so because it is not possible for one thing to become another, and also because if it did indeed become ether or these other things, it would not be possible for the soul to continue its descent.

Adhikaraṇa 5: The Passage from Ether to Rain is Quick

Saṁśaya [doubt]: Is the soul’s descent from ether to rain accomplished quickly or slowly?

Pūrvapakṣa [the opponent speaks]: No outside force pushes it, so the soul must proceed very slowly.
Siddhānta [conclusion]: In the following words the author of the sūtras gives His conclusion.

**Sūtra 3.1.24**

naṭi-cireṇa viśeṣat

na – not; ati – very; cireṇa – for long; viśeṣat - because of something specific.

Not for very long, because of something specific.

The soul’s descent from ether and the other things does not take a long time. Why is that? The sūtra explains, viśeṣat: “Because of something specific.” The specific thing here is a specific statement that the passage through rice and other grains is very difficult. Because this part of the passage is singled out as especially difficult, it may be inferred that the other parts of the passage are quickly accomplished.

**Adhikaraṇa 6: The Descending Soul Does not Take Birth Among the Plants**

Viṣaya [statement]: The passage after entering rain is described in the following statement of Śruti-śāstra:

> ta iha vrīhi-yavā ausadhi-vanaspatas tīla-māśā jāyante

“The descending souls then take birth as rice, barley, plants, trees, sesame, and beans.”

Saṁśaya [doubt]: Do the souls literally take birth as rice or these other species, or is this description metaphorical?

Pūrvapakṣa [the opponent speaks]: The text says jāyante [they take birth]. This is should be taken literally.

Siddhānta: In the following words the author of the sūtras gives His conclusion.

**Sūtra 3.1.25**

anyādhiśthite pūrvavad abhilāpāt

anya – by an other; adhiśthite – occupied; pūrva – before; vat – like; abhilāpāt – because of the statement.

In what is occupied by another because of a statement like the previous.

Because the bodies of the plants and other beings are already inhabited by other spirit souls, the description here is metaphorical. The descending souls are not born in those species to experience their karma. Why not? The sūtra explains, pūrvavad abhilāpāt: “Because of a statement like the previous.” As it was previously said that the descending soul does not become ether, or the other things in its descent, but merely comes into contact with them, so the fallen soul merely comes into contact with the rice and other species. That is the meaning. As when it enters the ether the descending soul is not yet experiencing the specific results of various pious and impious deeds, so when it falls down in the rain the soul is also not yet experiencing the results of specific deeds. This the scriptures say. In Chāndogya Upaniṣad [5.10.7] it is said: “They who act piously attain an auspicious birth. They who do not act
piously attain a birth that is inauspicious.” Therefore the description here that the descending souls take birth in this way is metaphorical. It is not literal.

Here someone may object: “It is not at all logical to say that the scriptures’ statement that the descending soul, accompanied by the remnant of his karma, takes birth in the body of a rice plant or similar species, is only a metaphor, and the soul does not really take birth in those species, for the soul has no remaining karma to push him into that birth. The so-called pious deeds performed to attain residence in Svargaloka are actually impure. This is because the Agnisomīya-yajña and other yajñas like them involve violence to animals. The scriptures give the following prohibition:

\[ \text{mā hiṁsyāt sarva-bhūtāni} \]

“No never commit violence to anyone.”

Therefore, by performing these yajñas there is a pious portion, which sends the performer to Svargaloka, and also an impious portion, which forces him to take birth as a rice plant or similar species. In the Manu-saṁhitā [12.9] it is said:

\[ \text{śarīra-jair karma-doṣair yāti sthāvaratāṁ naraḥ} \]

“A person who sins with his body becomes an unmoving plant.”

Therefore the statement that the descending soul takes birth as a rice plant or similar being should be taken literally.”

**Sūtra 3.1.26**

\[ \text{aśuddham iti cen na śabdāt} \]

aśuddham – impure; iti – thus; na – not; śabdāt – because of Śruti-śāstra.

**If it is said to be impure, then I reply: No, for that is the statement of the Śruti-śāstra.**

If this is said, then the sūtra replies, na: “No. It is not so.” Why not? The sūtra explains, śabdāt: “Because that is the statement of the Śruti-śāstra.” The Vedas order:

\[ \text{agnisomīyaiḥ paśum ālabheta} \]

“One should sacrifice an animal in an agnisomīya-yajña.”

Because piety and impiety is known only from the Vedas’ statements, the Vedas’ order to commit violence must be understood to be actually kind and pious. Therefore the orders of the Vedas are never impure. The prohibitions “Never commit violence to anyone,” and “Violence is a sin,” are the general rules decreed by the Vedas; and the statement, “One should sacrifice an animal in an agnisomīya-yajña,” is an exception to that general rule. A general rule and a specific exception to that rule need not contradict each other. There is scope for each. For these reasons, therefore, the scriptures’ description that the fallen soul takes birth as a rice plant or similar being is metaphorical and not literal.

What follows in this sequence is described in the next sūtra.

**Sūtra 3.1.27**

\[ \text{retah-sig-yogo ‘tha} \]

retah – semen; sik – sprinkling; yogah – contact; atha – then.
Then there is contact with the male that sprinkles the semen.

After entering the rice-plant or other plant, the fallen soul, accompanied by the remainder of his *karma*, enters the semen of a male. In the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* [5.10.6] it is said:

\[
yo\ yo\ 'nnam\ atti\ yo\ retaḥ\ śiṅcati\ tad\ bhūya\ eva\ bhavati
\]

“A male eats that grain and then sprinkles semen. From that semen the fallen soul takes birth. He becomes just like his father.”

The statement that the soul becomes just like the father should not be taken literally, for one thing cannot have exactly the same form as another. In truth, if the offspring were completely identical with the father, and there were no difference at all between them, then the soul would not actually attain a new material body. Therefore this statement should be taken metaphorically. As the soul merely comes into contact with the rice plant or other vegetation, so the soul comes into contact with the father. The soul does not become identical with the father in all respects.

**Sūtra 3.1.28**

\[
yoṣeḥ\ śarīram
\]

\[
yoṣeḥ\ –\ from\ the\ womb;\ śarīram\ –\ a\ body.
\]

The body comes from the womb.

The word *yoṣeḥ* here is in the ablative case. The soul departs from his father’s body and enters his mother’s womb. In this way, so it may experience the fruits of his *karma*, the soul attains a new material body. In the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* [5.10.7] it is said:

\[
tad\ ya\ iha\ ramaṇīya-caraṇāḥ
\]

“They who perform pious deeds attain an auspicious birth. They who sin attain an inauspicious birth.”

In this way the soul’s entrance into the series of things beginning with ether and the series of things beginning with a rice-plant or other vegetation is described. The conclusion is that a person who is actually intelligent will renounce this material world, a world filled with sorrows, and place all his thoughts on Lord Hari, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is filled with transcendental bliss.
Vedānta-sūtra

Adhyāya 3: Devotional Service

Pāda 2: Glories and Virtues of the Lord

vittir viraktiś ca kṛtānjaliḥ puro
yasyāḥ parānanda-tanor vitiṣṭhate
siddhiś ca sevā-samayaṁ praṭīkṣate
bhaktiḥ pareśasya punātu sā jagat

“May devotion to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, devotion that is filled with transcendental bliss, devotion before whom knowledge and renunciation stand, their hands folded with respect, devotion that mystic power yearns to serve, purify the entire world.”

Devotional service, by performing which one falls in love with the Supreme Personality of Godhead and attains His association, will be described in this Pāda. In order to strengthen the soul’s love and devotion for the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the Lord’s glorious creation of dreams and other states of being, the Lord’s identity with His many incarnations, His appearance as the all-pervading Supersoul, His non-identity with His worshipers, who are still one with Him in quality, His being attained only by devotional service, His appearance in both spiritual and material worlds, His transcendental blissfulness, His coming before His devotees according to the devotees’ love for Him, His supremacy over all, His supreme generosity, and a great host of the Lord’s other virtues and glories will also be described here. When a person desires to love, the beloved’s glories must be understood. Otherwise there can be no love.

The beginning of this Pāda describes the Lord’s creation of the world in a dream. The idea that someone other than the Supreme Lord had created the material world contradicts the scriptures’ statement that the Lord is the creator of everything. If the Lord is the creator of only some parts of the world, then it is not possible for the devotee to have full love for Him. For this reason now will be shown the glory of the Lord as the creator of all.

Adhikarana 1: The Supreme Personality of Godhead Creates Dreams

Viśaya [thesis or statement]: In the Brhad-āranyaka Upaniṣad [4.3.10] it is said:

na tatra rathā na ratha-yoga na panthāno bhavanty atha rathān ratha-yogān pathaṁ srjate. na
tatrānandā mudah pramudo bhavanty athānandān mudāḥ pramudāḥ srjate. na tatra veśantāḥ
puṣkarināḥ sravantāḥ srjate sa hi kartā.

“In that place there are neither chariots nor animals yoked to chariots. He creates the chariots and animals yoked to chariots. In that place there are neither happiness, nor pleasures, nor bliss. He creates the pleasures there. In that place there are neither streams nor ponds nor lotus flowers. He creates them. He is the creator.”

Saṃśaya [doubt]: Is the creator of this dream world with chariots and other things the individual spirit soul or the Supersoul?
Pūrvapakṣa [the opponent speaks]: The individual spirit soul is the creator. In Chāndogya Upaniṣad [8.7.1] Prajāpati declares that the individual soul has the power to create by willing.

Siddhānta [conclusion]: In the following words the author of the sūtras gives His conclusion.

Sūtra 3.2.1

sandhye śṛṣṭir āha hi
sandhye – in the junction; śṛṣṭir – creation; āha – says; hi – indeed.

Indeed, it says that in the junction there is creation.

The word sandhya [junction] here means dream. In the Śruti-śāstra it is said:

sandhyam tṛṭiyaṁ svapna-sthānam
“The third state is sandhya, or dreaming.”

Dreaming is called sandhya [junction] because it stands in the junction between wakefulness and dreamless sleep. The Supersoul creates the chariots and other things present in dreams. Why is that? The Śruti-śāstra explains:

sa hi kartā
“He is the creator.”

Thus the Śruti-śāstra affirms that the chariots and other things present in dreams are created by Him. The meaning is this: To give the results of very insignificant karmas, the Lord creates the chariots and other things present in dreams, things seen only by the dreaming person. The Lord, who has the inconceivable power to do anything by merely willing it be done, thus creates the things in dreams. In the Kaṭha Upaniṣad [4.4] it is said:

“A wise man, aware that whatever he sees in dreams or awake is all the Supreme Personality of Godhead and His potencies, never laments.”

In the liberated state the individual spirit souls also have the power to do anything by merely willing it be done, but what they create with that power is not a dream.

Sūtra 3.2.2

nirmātāraṁ caike putrādayaṁ ca
nirmātāraṁ – the creator; ca – and; eke – some; putra – sons; ādayas – beginning with; ca – also.

Others [say] that He is the creator. Sons and others also.

The Kaṭha Upaniṣad affirms that the Supersoul creates the objects of desire seen in dreams and other situations. It says [Kaṭha Upaniṣad 5.8]:

ya eṣu supteṣu jāgarti kāmaṁ kāmaṁ puṛuṣo nirmimāṇa
“Remaining awake, the Supreme Personality of Godhead creates the objects of desire seen in dreams.”
Here the word *kāma* refers to good sons and other blessings that the individual soul may desire. The word *kāma* is used in this way in *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* [1.1.25]:

> sarvān kāmān chandataḥ prārthayasva
> “You may ask for whatever you wish.”

In *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* [1.1.23] it is said:

> śatāyuṣaḥ putra-pautrān vṛṇiṣva
> “You may choose many sons and grandsons that live for a hundred years.”

In the *Śruti-śāstra* it is said:

> “From the Supreme Personality of Godhead a good son is born. From Him a brother appears. From Him a wife appears. From Him these things appear in a dream.”

In the next passage the author of the *sūtras* describes the instrument the Supreme Personality of Godhead employs to create dreams.

**Sūtra 3.2.3**

>māyāmātraṁ tu kārtyenānabhivyakta-svarūpatvāt

*māyā –* the *māyā* potency; *mātraṁ –* only; *tu –* but; *kārtyena –* completely; *an –* not; *abhivyakta –* manifested; *svarūpatvāt –* because of the condition of having a form.

**But it is the māyā potency only, because the forms are not completely manifested.**

The Lord’s inconceivable *māyā* potency is the creator of what is seen in dreams. What is seen in dreams is not made of the five gross material elements, neither is it created by the demigod Brahmā. Why is that? The *sūtra* explains, *kārtyenānabhivyakta-svarūpatvāt*: “Because the forms are not completely manifested.” This means that they are not seen by everyone. In this way it is proved that the Supersoul is the creator of what is seen in dreams.

**Adhikaraṇa 2: Not All Dreams Are Illusions**

*Sāṁśaya* [doubt]: Are dreams reality or illusion?

*Pūrva-pakṣa* [the opponent speaks]: When a person wakes up he immediately knows that what he dreamed was an illusion. Therefore dreams are all illusions.

*Siddhānta* [conclusion]: In the following words the author of the *sūtras* gives His conclusion.

**Sūtra 3.2.4**

>sūcakāsaḥ ca hi śruter ācaksate ca tad-vidah

*sūcakas –* an indicator; *ca –* and; *hi –* indeed; *śruter –* of the *Śruti-śāstra*; *ācaksate –* declare; *ca –* and; *tad –* that; *vidah –* they who know.

**It gives omens. The Śruti-śāstra and the experts affirm it.**
Dreams show good and bad omens. They also reveal mantras and other things. Therefore dreams are reality. Why is it that dreams reveal these things? The sūtra explains, ġṛteḥ: “The Śruti-sāstra affirms it.” The Chāndogya Upaniṣad [5.2.9] affirms:

\[
\begin{align*}
yadā karmasu kāmyeṣu \\
striyaṁ svapne 'bhipaśyati \\
samṛddhim tatra jāṇīyāt \\
tasmin svapna-nidārśane
\end{align*}
\]

“If, when the auspicious rites are completed, one sees a woman in a dream, he should know that the rites were successful.”

In the Kauśītaki-brāhmaṇa it is said:

\[
\begin{align*}
atha svapne puruṣaṁ kṛṣṇaṁ kṛṣṇa-dantaṁ paśyati sa enaṁ hanti
\end{align*}
\]

“If in a dream one sees a black man with black teeth, that man will kill him.”

The word tad-vidaḥ here means “they who know how to interpret dreams.” These persons affirm that dreams reveal omens of good and evil. For example, a dream of riding on an elephant is a good omen, and a dream of riding on a donkey is an omen of misfortune. In dreams one may also receive prayers. The Smṛti-sāstra affirms:

\[
\begin{align*}
ādiśnāvān yathā svapne \\
rāma-rakṣāṁ imāṁ haraḥ \\
tathā likhitavān prāṭaḥ \\
prabuddho buddha-kauśikah
\end{align*}
\]

“He, Lord Śiva appeared in a dream and taught him the Rāma-rakṣā prayer. Waking up in the morning, Buddha Kauśika at once wrote it down.”

Therefore, because in dreams one sometimes receives omens, prayers, medicines, and other things; and because sometimes a person will actually appear in a dream, therefore sometimes dreams are as real as what is seen in the waking state. That is the conclusion of Śruti-sāstra.

Here someone may object: “Is it not true that after waking up a person becomes convinced that what he saw in a dream was false? This proves that all dreams are unreal.”

In the following words the author of the sūtras answers this objection.

**Śūtra 3.2.5**

\[
\begin{align*}
parābhidhyānāṁ tu tirohitain tato hy asya bandha-viparyayau
\end{align*}
\]

para – of the Supreme Personality of Godhead; abhidhyānāṁ – by the will; tu – indeed; tirohitain – withdrawn; tato – from Him; hi – indeed; asya – of him; bandha – bondage; viparyayau – release.

By the will of the Supreme Personality of Godhead it is withdrawn. Indeed, bondage and liberation also come from Him.

Because they are created by the will of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, chariots and other things seen in a dream are not unreal. They are not like the illusion of silver seen on a seashell. The Supreme Personality of Godhead is the cause of bondage and liberation for the individual spirit soul. This is described in Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad [6.16]:
saṁsāra-mokṣa-sthiti-bandha-hetuh

“The Supreme Personality of Godhead is the master of this cosmic manifestation in regard to bondage, the conditional state of material existence and liberation from that bondage.”

The Lord brings liberation from the bondage of repeated birth and death. Therefore it is not surprising that He has the power to bring dreams to their end. That is the meaning. Therefore it should be understood that dreams are manifested by Him and withdrawn by Him also. In the Kūrma Purāṇa it is said:

svapnādi-buddhi-kartā ca
tīraskartā sa eva tu
tad-icchayā yato hy asya
bandha-mokṣau pratiṣñhitau

“The Supreme Lord creates and ends dreams and other states of being. By His will both bondage and liberation are manifested.”

Therefore dreams are real, because they are created by the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

**Adhikaraṇa 3: The Supreme Personality of Godhead Creates the Waking State**

*Viṣaya* [thesis or statement]: Now will be explained that the Supreme Personality of Godhead is the creator of the waking state also. In the Kaṭha Upaniṣad [2.1.4] it is said:

svapnāntaṁ jāgaritāntam
cobhau yenānupaśyati
mahāntam vibhum ātmānaṁ
matvā dhīro na śocati

“Aware that the all-powerful Supreme Person creates all that is seen in both waking and dreaming states, a wise man never laments.”

*Saṁśaya* [doubt]: Does the Supreme Personality of Godhead create the waking condition of the individual spirit souls, or not?

*Pūrvapakṣa* [the opponent speaks]: The waking state is not created by the Supreme Personality of Godhead, for it is seen that the waking state is under the control of time and other factors.

*Siddhānta* [conclusion]: In the following words the author of the sūtras gives His conclusion.

**Sūtra 3.2.6**

deha-yogād vā so ‘pi
deha – of the body; yogād – from contact; vā – or; so – that; api – even.

That also from contact with the body.

As explained in *Katha Upaniṣad* 2.1.4, the waking state, which occurs when the soul is in contact with the body, is manifested from the Supreme Personality of Godhead. This is so because time and the other factors are only inert matter. The word *api* [also] in this *sūtra* hints that the state of dreamless sleep and fainting are also created by the Supreme Personality of Godhead. This is so because the Śruti-śāstra affirms that the Supreme Personality of Godhead is creator of everything.
Adhikaraṇa 4: The Supreme Personality of Godhead is the Creator of Dreamless Sleep

Viśaya [thesis or statement]: Now the condition of dreamless sleep will be considered. The Śruti-śāstra describes the state of dreamless sleep in the following passages. In the Chāndogya Upaniṣad [8.6.3] it is said:

āsu tadā nādīsu supto bhavati
“Entering the nādīs, the soul sleeps.”

In the Brhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad [2.1.19] it is said:

tābhīḥ praty avasṛpya purī-tāti śete
“Entering the membrane surrounding the heart, the soul sleeps.”

In the Brhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad [2.1.17] it is said:
yā eso ‘ntar hṛdaya ākāśas tasmin śete
“Entering the sky of the heart, the soul sleeps.”

Many other like verses may also be quoted. The “sky in the heart” here is the Supreme Personality of Godhead. In this way the Śruti-śāstra explains that dreamless sleep is manifested when the soul enters the nādīs, the membrane surrounding the heart, and the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Sāṁśaya [doubt]: Does the soul enter any one of these three places, or does the soul enter all of them?

Pūrvapakṣa [the opponent speaks]: The soul may enter any one of these places. This is so because these three places are equally able to be the place where the soul sleeps. The Nyāya-śāstra explains:

tulyārthas tu vikalperaṁ
“A list of things equally suitable for a certain thing indicates the option of choosing from them.”

Siddhānta [conclusion]: In the following words the author of the sūtras gives His conclusion.

Sūtra 3.2.7

tad-abhāvo nādīsu tac chruter ātmanī ca

tad – of that; abhāvo – the absence; nādīsu – in the nādīs; tat – that; śruter – from Śruti-śāstra; ātmanī – in the Supreme Personality of Godhead; ca – also.

Its absence occurs in the nādīs and the Supreme Personality of Godhead. This is so because of the Śruti-śāstra.

The word ca [and] here hints the inclusion of the membrane surrounding the heart. The word tad-abhāvo [its absence] means “the absence of wakefulness and dream.” Thus it means “the state of dreamless sleep.” Dreamless sleep occurs in the nādīs, the membrane surrounding the heart, and the Supreme Personality of Godhead collectively. Why is that? The sūtra explains, tac chrutel: “This is so because of the Śruti-śāstra.” Thus the Śruti-śāstra declares that they are all, taken collectively, the place of dreamless sleep.

The idea that there is an option here, and that to perform the activity of deep sleep the soul chooses one of these places, is an idea that contradicts the statements of Śruti-śāstra. In the scriptures’ description
of dreamless sleep, it is seen that the nāḍīs and prāṇas are described together. In the Kauśītaki Upaniṣad [4.19] it is said:

\[ tāsu tada bhavati. yadā suptāḥ svapnaṁ na kancana paśyaty athāsmīn prāṇa evaikadhā bhavati. \]

“All the soul enters the nāḍīs. When sleeping, the soul does not see any dream. Then the soul becomes one with the prāṇas.”

The explanation that the soul has an option of one of these three places does not apply here, for if that option were to apply, then these three places would have to be equally suitable for the action of dreamless sleep, but the truth is they are not.

What occurs is the soul passes through the door of the nāḍīs, enters the palace of the membrane surrounding the heart, and sleeps on the bed of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. In this way all three places are involved in the activity of dreamless sleep, but the Supreme Personality of Godhead is the actual place where dreamless sleep occurs. The word purītat here means “the membrane surrounding the lotus of the heart.”

**Sūtra 3.2.8**

\[ atas prabodho ‘śmāt \]

\[ atas – therefore; prabodho – waking; asmāt – from Him. \]

**Therefore the waking state is from Him.**

Because the Supreme Personality of Godhead is the actual place where dreamless sleep occurs, and the nāḍīs and other things mentioned here are merely doors through which the soul passes in order to rest on the Supreme Personality of Godhead, therefore the waking soul rises from the bed of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. In the Chāndogya Upaniṣad it is said:

\[ satas cāgatya na viduḥ sata āgacchamahe \]

“All we had departed from the Supreme Personality of Godhead, although we could not understand that we had departed from the Supreme Personality of Godhead.”

In this way the idea that sometimes the soul sleeps in the nāḍīs, sometimes in the membrane surrounding the heart, and sometimes in the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is disproved. It is not like that. Therefore the soul sleeps on the bed of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

**Adhikaraṇa 5: The Same Person Returns to the Body**

**Viśaya [thesis or statement]:** In the Chāndogya Upaniṣad it is said:

\[ satas cāgatya na viduḥ sata āgacchamahe \]

“We had departed from the Supreme Personality of Godhead, but we did not know we had departed from the Supreme Personality of Godhead.”

**Saṁśaya [doubt]:** Is the person awakening from the bed of the Supreme Personality of Godhead the same person who first went to sleep there, or is he a different person?
Pūrvapakṣa [the opponent speaks]: It is not possible that the soul, having attained the Supreme Personality of Godhead, would again return to the same material body. Therefore it must be a different soul that awakens.

Siddhānta [conclusion]: In the following words the author of the sūtras gives His conclusion.

*Sūtra 3.2.9*

sa eva tu karmānusmṛti-śabda-vidhibhyāḥ

saś – he; eva – indeed; tu – but; karma – karma; ānusmṛti – memory; śabda – of the Śruti-śāstra; vidhibhyāḥ – from the instructions.

*It is he, because of the karma, the memory, the Śruti-śāstra and the teachings.*

The word tu [but] removes the doubt. The same person who had gone to sleep arises from it, and no one else. The reasons are four: First, he finishes the work that he had begun before going to sleep. The world karma in the text means ordinary worldly work. Second, he has memory in the form “I am the person who went to sleep and have now awakened.” Thirdly, the text of Chāndogya Upaniṣad [6.9.3] states:

> Whatever these creatures are, whether a tiger or lion, or a wolf or a boar, or a worm or an insect, or a gnat or a mosquito, that they become again and again.”

This means that on awakening, the creatures come back into the same body they had before then went to sleep. Fourthly, scriptural injunctions like ātmānām eva lokam upāsīta: “One should worship with the aim of attaining the spiritual kingdom” [Brhad-āranyaka Upaniṣad 1.4.15] show that one should make efforts directed at attaining release. If everyone who went to sleep got liberation, then these injunctions about mokṣa would be redundant.

When it is said that a jīva enters into Brahman during sleep, what is meant is like a sealed jar of salt water being plunged into the Ganges. When he awakens, it is like the same jar taken out of the river with the same water in it. In the same way the jīva, covered by his desires, goes to sleep and for the time being puts aside all his sensory activities and goes to the resting place, namely the Supreme Brahman, and again comes out of it to get further experience. By this resting in Brahman he does not become similar to Brahman, as a person who has obtained mokṣa; therefore for these four reasons, the same person who had gone to sleep wakes up again into the same body.

**Adhikaraṇa 6: The State of Swoon**

*Viśaya* [thesis or statement]: Now we shall consider the state of swoon, which is similar to the state of sleep.

*Samśaya* [arises of doubt]: Does the jīva fully attain to Brahman in swoon, or only partially attain to Him?

Pūrvapakṣa [antithesis]: Swoon being a special kind of deep sleep, the soul attains to Brahman fully, as in deep sleep.

Siddhānta [Vedic conclusion]: The next sūtra sets aside this view.
Sūtra 3.2.10

mugdhe'rdhasampattiḥ pariśeṣāt

mugdhe – in the swooning person or state; arddha – half; sampattiḥ – combination or attaining; pariśeṣāt – on account of the remaining.

In the swooning condition, the jīva is in half combination with Brahman, because the rule of the remainder shows this.

When a man is in a swooning or stunned condition, he is in half combination with Brahman, because of the rule of the remainder. In this condition the jīva soul does not reach Brahman fully as in deep sleep, because he is conscious of pain. Nor is there total lack of attaining Brahman, as in the waking state, because the soul is unconscious of external objects. Thus by the rule of the remainder, we conclude that there is half combination. We find this described in the Varāha Purāṇa:

“When the soul is at a distance from the Supreme Lord in the heart—that is, when he is in the eyes—then he is in waking consciousness. When he is nearer to the Lord—that is, in the throat—then he is in the dream consciousness. But when he has entered into the Lord, then he is in deep sleep. Therefore these are the three states; but swoon is an intermediate state, in which there is half combination with Brahman, because on recovery, there is memory of the consciousness of pain.”

An objector says, “These books describe only three states: waking, dreaming and deep sleep. Where do you get this fourth state called mugdha [swoon]? This is not a new state, but one of the above three.”

To this objection we reply that it is a separate state altogether. It is not the waking state, because external objects are not perceived through the senses. Nor is it the dreaming state, because the person is unconscious. Nor is it the deep sleep state, because the peaceful look of the face and stillness of the limbs are absent. Moreover it is a well-known state, recognized by physicians and the wold. Therefore it is a different state and is to be inferred by the rule of the remainder.

Thus the purport of this Adhikaraṇa is that the Lord Hari alone must be worshiped and served with devotion, for His glory is such that He is the maker and controller of everything, even the conditions of consciousness such as waking, dreaming and the rest.

Adhikaraṇa 7: The Lord is One

Viṣaya [thesis or statement]: The preceding passages have shown the glory of the Lord as the creator and controller of everything. Now His inconceivable nature, whereby He retains unity in Himself, although appearing manifold in many different places. Though in Sūtra 2.2.44 described that the powers of the Lord are mysterious, yet no reconciliation has been made in these sūtras of the paradoxical statement that the Lord, though one, appears simultaneously in many forms, which are apparently different from each other. That reconciliation will now be made through the doctrine of inconceivability.

The Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad [3.2] confirms this inconceivable potency of the Lord as follows:

eko 'pi san bahudhā yo 'vabhāti

Although the Lord is one, He is present in innumerable hearts as many.

Similarly, in the smṛti-śāstra it is said:
“Viṣṇu is one, and yet He is certainly all-pervading. By His inconceivable potency, in spite of His one form, He is present everywhere, as the sun appears in many places at once.”

Samśaya [arival of doubt]: Are the various forms of the Lord found in different places mutually different from each other or not?

Pūrvapakṣa [antithesis]: The difference of locality presupposes the difference in the objects occupying those localities; substances occupying different places cannot be identical, for the quality of being in different places separates them from one another. The above text is merely a general statement, and does not mean that One Lord exists in different places. Therefore, the fact is that there are many gods, occupying different places and having different jurisdictions. Thus the gods being many, there cannot exist that one-pointed devotion to one God, which you are trying to establish.

Siddhānta [Vedic conclusion]: God is one only, and not many, as will be shown by the next sūtra.

Sūtra 3.2.11

na sthāṇato’piparyobhayaliṅgam sarvatra hi

na – not; sthāṇataḥ – on account of location; api – even; parasya – of the Highest Lord; ubhaya-liṅgam – nondifferent on account of locality; sarvatra – everywhere; hi – because.

The essential nature of the Supreme Lord, [though differentiated] by space, does not undergo any change of characteristics, because [He exists simultaneously] everywhere.

There is no change of nature in the adorable Supreme Lord by the mere fact of His existing simultaneously in many places. Though there is a difference of locality, there is no difference in the substance occupying those locations, because His essential nature simultaneously manifests itself in every place by His inconceivable power. The word sthāṇataḥ [localities] signifies the centers where the Lord manifests His glory, where He displays His līlā [sportive pastimes]. These sacred places are also called the Śamvyoma, or the highest abode of the Lord.

The devotees of the Lord are also of various kinds [bhāvas]. For example, some worship Him as servants to the perfect Master, others as His beloveds, and so on. In all these various locations and with all His devotees, the Lord, though manifesting different aspects, is essentially one and the same. He undergoes no change in His essential qualities because of location.

Sūtra 3.2.12

na bhedāditićcena pratyekamatadvacanāt

na – not; bhedāt – on account of difference; iti – thus; cet – if; na – no; pratyekam – distinct; atad – the absence of that; vacanāt – on account of the statement.

If it be said, “This is invalid because of the statement of difference,” we reply no, because [with reference] to every statement [declaring difference there is always] a counter-statement declaring nondifference.
The objector says, “The statement made in the previous sūtra that the Lord remains one in all His manifestations is unreasonable. For in reality, these different manifestations are different entities, and cannot be called one. In fact, there is bheda or difference in the Lord.” This objection is raised in the first part of the sūtra and answered in the second part. With regard to every one of these manifestations, the texts take the precaution of saying that the Lord is one. Thus in Brhad-āranyaka Upaniṣad [2.5.19] we read the following:

Verily Dadhyañca [Dadhīci] proclaimed this nectar to the two Aśvins, and seeing this a Rṣi said, [Ṛg Veda 6.47.18]:

“And an image of the Lord is in everyone of the forms in which the jīva is embodied, for every jīva has an image of the Lord in him. That image is for the sake of seeing and worshiping by that particular jīva. The Lord appears in multi-forms through His energies. Therefore it is right to say that these unlimited forms called Hari are all His. This Brahma is verily these Haris; this Brahma is the ten avatāras such as Matsya, etc.; this Brahma is the thousand avatāras of Viṣṇu such as Viśva, etc.; this Brahma is the Many, such as Parā, etc.; this Brahma is the Endless, such as Ajita, etc. This is the Brahma, without cause and without effect, besides whom there is nothing and outside whom there is nothing. This Ātman is Brahma, omnipresent and omniscient. This is the teaching of the Upaniṣads.”

This text of the Brhad-āranyaka Upaniṣad shows that every form of the Lord abiding in different individuals is the full and entire Supreme Brahma, and not a portion of Him, for an Infinity can have no parts.

Sūtra 3.2.13

api caivameke

api - also; ca - and; evam - thus; eke – some.

And also some teach thus: [that the Lord is one though multi-form].

The words api ca [and also] mean “moreover.” Thus in the Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad we read:

“He who knows the omkāra as partless and yet full of an infinity of parts, as the destroyer of all false knowledge and as blissful, he is verily a sage and no one else.”

These texts teach that the Lord is one partless whole, having an infinity of parts, each one of which is a whole infinity. The word ‘partless’ means devoid of differences in itself. ‘Infinity of parts’ means having innumerable parts, each of whom is a complete infinity [svāṁśa]. It is thus written in the Matsya Purāṇa:

“The Supreme Viṣṇu is undoubtedly one only, though existing everywhere. He has one form, though through His glory, He appears as many, like the sun.”

The sense is this: as a prismatic crystal, though one only, appears to emit different colors to the eyes of the spectators when viewed from different angles, or as an actor on the stage appears playing different parts in different acts of the drama, while he remains one and the same, though expressing diverse emotions appropriate to the parts he is enacting for the time being; so the Lord Hari never abandons His essential unity of nature, though He appears as many, according to the different ideas or mental attitudes [bhāva] of His devotees meditating on Him, or according to the nature of His different pastimes or the works He is engaged in accomplishing. Thus in the Viṣṇu Tantra:
“As a prismatic crystal when looked at from different sides appears to possess blue, yellow, etc. colors, so the unchangeable Lord gets different forms in the eyes of His devotees, according to the different forms of meditation.”

And in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam [8.18.12]:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{yat tad vapur bhāti vibhūṣaṇāyudhair} \\
\text{avyakta-cid-vyaktam adhārayad dhariḥ} \\
\text{babhūva tenaiva sa vāmano vaṭuḥ} \\
\text{sampaśyator divya-gatir yathā nātah}
\end{align*}
\]

“The Lord appeared in His original form, with ornaments and weapons in His hands. Although this ever-existing form is not visible in the material world, He nonetheless appeared in this form. Then, in the presence of His father and mother, He assumed the form of Vāmana, a brāhmaṇa-dwarf, a brahmacārī, just like a theatrical actor.”

Thus that one reality, the Supreme Brahman, having inconceivable powers, and being the substrate of all contradictory attributes, simultaneously becomes many in His manifestation. This gives rise to the notion of His possessing paradoxical qualities; and instead of detracting from His greatness, this strengthens the love of His devotees for Him, the Lord of inconceivable powers. Thus bhakti towards the Lord increases by such contemplation of His contradictory attributes.

**Adhikarana 8: the Form of Brahman**

**Viṣaya [thesis or statement]:** Now the author establishes that the Lord’s body is pure spirit [ātman]. If the body of the Lord were separate from His Self [ātman], then ātman being a subordinate member, the devotion toward it would also be of a subordinate kind, and not a primary bhakti. But this is not the case; for devotion for the form of the Lord is felt, or rather experienced, as if it were drawn towards the primary object. The attraction the devotee feels for the beautiful form of the Lord is not secondary but primary. It therefore follows that the form of the Lord is the very Self of the Lord, the Lord Himself. The form of the Lord thus differs from other forms. Generally, the form embodies the soul, but the form of the Lord is the very Self or soul of the Lord; otherwise there would not be such an attraction for Him. *Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad* states:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{iśvaraḥ paramaḥ krṣṇah} \\
\text{sac-cid-ānanda-vigrahaḥ} \\
\text{anādir ādir govindaḥ} \\
\text{sarva-kāraṇa-kāranam}
\end{align*}
\]

“Obeisances to Kṛṣṇa, the destroyer of pain, whose transcendental form is being, knowledge and bliss.”

“Kṛṣṇa who is known as Govinda is the Supreme Godhead. He has an eternal blissful spiritual body. He is the origin of all. He has no other origin and He is the prime cause of all causes.”

[Śrī Brahma-saṁhitā 5.1]

**Samśaya [arising of doubt]:** Does Brahman have any form, or not?

**Pūrva-pakṣa [antithesis]:** Brahman has a form, which consists of the very subtle matter of being, intelligence and bliss The phrase sac-cid-ānanda-vigrahaḥ is a bahuvṛtihi compound, meaning “He whose form is being, intelligence and bliss.” Therefore He has a form.

**Siddhiṁta [Vedic conclusion]:** The Lord has no form distinct from His Self, as is shown in the next sūtra.
Sūtra 3.2.14

arūpavadevahi tatpradhānātvāt

arūpavat – without form; eva – indeed; hi – because; tat – of that; pradhānātvāt – because of being the Supreme Soul.

Indeed, Brahman has no ordinary form, because as the Supreme Soul, His form is His Self.

Brahman has no rūpa [form] or vigraha [shape]; hence He is called arūpavat [without form]. The word eva [indeed] is used to refute the argument of the pūrvapakṣin. Why do we say so? Because His form is His very Self. In ordinary cases, the form is always subordinate to the ātman or soul it embodies. But in the case of Brahman the Supreme Lord, the form is the ātman. Thus there is no difference between the form and self of Brahman—they are identical. The form of the Supreme Brahman possesses all the attributes of Brahman: all-pervading [vibhu], the knower [jñātṛtva], the Supersoul [paramātmā], etc. His form is both the substance and the attribute of the Supreme.

An objector may say, “But it is a well-known fact that by meditating on Brahman, the Supreme Self and substance, knowledge and bliss, one loses consciousness of its opposite, namely prakṛti, which is inert and painful by nature. How is it then possible that the author of the sūtras would predicate a form with regard to such a Brahman, for all form is a limitation of life, and inconsistent with the true conception of Brahman as set forth above: that He is without form?” This objection is answered in the next sūtra.

Sūtra 3.2.15

prakāśavaccāvaiyarthyāt

prakāśavat – in the same way as the sun consists of light; ca – and; avaiyarthyāt – on account of the lack of meaninglessness.

And [the conception of form in relation to Brahman] is not meaningless, just as the idea of a form with regard to the sun, which is pure light.

The word ca [and] in the sūtra is employed to remove the doubt expressed above. The suffix -va in prakāśavat has the force of iva [like] and it is added to the word prakāśa in the locative case. Thus as in the case of the sun, whose single form is pure light, a form is conceived for the purpose of meditation, and as such a conception is not without purpose, as it helps concentration of the mind; similarly in the case of Brahman, who is conceived to have an eternal transcendental form of knowledge and bliss, is conceived to have a form to facilitate meditation on Him, for meditation is impossible without concentrating on a form. The word dhyāna [meditation] is always used in conjunction with some form; as in the sentence, “The wife, separated from her husband, meditated on his form pictured in her mind.”

Nor must be thought that this mental picture of a form visualized for the sake of meditation is unreal, and actually Brahman has no form, because there is evidence of His having a form.

Sūtra 3.2.16

āha ca tanmātram
āha - the Śruti declares; ca - and; tanmātram - consisting of the essence of His Self.

The Śruti declares, however, that the form of the Supreme consists of the very essence of His Self.

The force of the word mātra is to denote exclusiveness. Since the scriptures declare this transcendental form of the Lord to be the Supreme Self, this form is a real entity, and not simply the imagination of the devotee. In the Atharva Veda, the Lord is thus described [Gopāla-tāpanī Upanisad, Pūrva 12]:

\[
\begin{align*}
sat-puṇḍarīka-nayanam \\
meghābham vaidyutāmbaram \\
dvi-bhujaṁ mauna-mudrāḥyaṁ \\
vana-mālīnāṁ iśvaram
\end{align*}
\]

“The Supreme Lord, appearing in His two-armed form, had divine lotus eyes, a complexion the color of a cloud, and garments that resembled lightning. He wore a garland of forest flowers, and His beauty was enhanced by His pose of meditative silence.”

In this description, attributes like ‘lotus-eyed’ etc. are shown to be the essential qualities of the Lord. The Lord and His form are clearly identical, for this form is called the Lord in the above-quoted verse. So also in the Padma Purāṇa we read:

“In every other being, the form embodies the life, but in the case of the Lord, the form is the life, directly manifest. In other words, the body of the Lord is the Lord Himself.

Sūtra 3.2.17

darśayati cāthopi smaryate

darśayati - the Śruti shows; ca - and; atho - fully; api - also; smaryate - the Smṛti declares.

Moreover, the scripture also fully shows this, and the tradition also declares it.

In answer to the question “How did Gopāla, the Supreme Self, who is above all prakṛti, descend on this earth and incarnate Himself in matter?” the Śruti describes the form of the Supreme Lord, and shows that His form is identical with His Self. The name Gopāla is primarily applied to the Lord’s most attractive form, with beautiful face, hands, feet and exquisite features of the entire body, which is the color of a blue raincloud. In the Gopāla-tāpanī Upanisad, Pūrva 12, the sages ask Lord Brahmā the following question: “What is the form of the Lord, what is His sacred formula of worship, and what is the method of His worship? Please tell this to us who are anxious to know.” Lord Brahmā replies:

“He who meditates in his heart on Kṛṣṇa as described below is freed from rebirth. The Supreme Lord, appearing in His two-armed form, has divine lotus eyes, a complexion the color of a cloud, and garments that resembled lightning. He wears a garland of forest flowers, and His beauty is enhanced by His pose of meditative silence. He is surrounded by cows, gopas and gopīs, underneath a desire-tree, adorned with divine ornaments, seated on a throne inlaid with jeweled lotuses, and fanned by the cool breezes resonant with the music of the waves of the River Kālindī.”
The Smṛti also declares that the form and Self of the Lord are identical:

िस्वराह परमाह क्रष्णाः
सच-चिद-अनंदा-विग्राहाः
अन्तिदिदिर गोविन्दाः
सर्व-कारणांकारणम्

“Kṛṣṇa who is known as Govinda is the Supreme Godhead. He has an eternal blissful spiritual body. He is the origin of all. He has no other origin and He is the prime cause of all causes.”

[Śrī Brahma-saṁhitā 5.1]

Thus it is established that the form of the Lord is His Self. Though the usual concept of ātman as pure being logically excludes the idea of form, revelation is our sole guide in matters of transcendence; therefore we have to simply accept that Brahman’s form is identical with His Self. There is no room for argument with the inconceivable truths known only through Vedic revelation, so one must not doubt how the Lord’s form can be His very Self. It is one of the mysteries of Godhead, revealed by Śruti and confirmed by the experience of the self-realized souls. That transcendental form is perceived by the heart when it is purified by love, just as the form of music is perceived by the ear trained to perceive musical form. Therefore bhakti for the form of the Lord is not an inferior form of bhakti, for the form of the Lord is the Lord Himself.

If the Lord were formless, then the Śruti texts like vijñāna-ghana [form of intelligence] ānanda-ghana [form of bliss] would become meaningless, for they employ the word ghana [form]. Thus the form of the Lord is not only unlimited, being, knowledge and bliss, but also possesses all His transcendental qualities, such as being all-pervading and the Supersoul of all beings. To have any other conception of His form would be wrong and based upon error. As the Lord Himself says to Nārada in the Mokṣa-dharma:

“O Nārada, do not think that ‘I see this form because everything that has a form is visible.’ This form is not like other forms, because merely by willing, in a moment I can become invisible to you. For I am the Lord, and the teacher of the world by being the inner guide of all.”

Adhikarana 9: The Worshiped is Different from the Worshiper

Viṣaya [thesis or statement]: Now the author establishes the difference between the worshiper and the worshiped, between the jīva and Brahman. For if the worshiper were identical with the worshiped—the result of the advaita notion “I am That,” then bhakti would not arise, for no sane person entertains the notion that his own self is fit for his adoration, for bhakti is by nature offered to a being of superior nature to oneself. Though the author has repeatedly established the proposition that the jīva is different from the Lord, he again reverts to that topic, dealing with it from a different point of view, to enlighten those misguided souls who are deluded through false teachings into the idea that they themselves are the Supreme Brahman, and therefore prayers and pūjā are useless to them.

Saṁśaya [arise of doubt]: The Śruti says,

“Just as many images of the sun are seen in various vessels of water, so in this world the various selves are to be considered reflections of the Supreme Self.”

Or as stated in the Brahma-bindu Upaniṣad:

“The Bhūta-ātman is indeed one, existing in every being. He appears as one or as many, like the reflection of the moon of water.”
Now arises the doubt. It has been demonstrated before that the Supreme Self is the very form of bliss and knowledge. Does that Supreme Self become the \( \text{jīva} \) under certain circumstances, or is He always separate from the \( \text{jīva} \)?

**Pūrvapakṣa** [antithesis]: The Supreme Self Himself becomes the \( \text{jīva} \). For a \( \text{jīva} \) is nothing but the reflection of the Supreme in material energy or nescience. A reflection is identical with the original, for it exists as long as the original exists, and vanishes when the original ceases to exist. Therefore it has been said, “If a person looks at a mirror in front of him he sees his own face, but if he turns away, he sees nothing.” Therefore the Supreme Self, by its conjunction with nescience, has become the \( \text{jīva} \).

**Siddhānta** [Vedic conclusion]: The \( \text{jīva} \) is not a reflection of Brahman; this view is set aside by the next \( \text{sūtra} \).

**Sūtra 3.2.18**

\[
\text{ataeva copamā sūryakādivat}
\]

\[
\text{atah eva – for this very reason; ca – and; upamā – absolute identity; sūryakādivat – just as between the sun and its images.}
\]

Therefore the simile of the sun and its reflection applies to the \( \text{jīva} \) and the Supreme Self as showing difference.

Here is the meaning of the \( \text{sūtra} \): Because the \( \text{jīva} \) is separate from the Supreme Self, therefore he is spoken of figuratively like the reflection of the sun. For the relationship of the original and the reflected cannot exist for two substances that are identically one. For if the reflection were identically the same as its source, then the reflection of fire would burn things, and the reflection of a sword would cut. But there is no such identity, for the original and the reflection are different. The word \( \text{ca} \) [and] in the \( \text{sūtra} \) indicates that there are other sources of difference as well. Therefore, it follows that the \( \text{jīva} \) is different from the Supreme Self.

**Adhikaraṇa 10: The Jīva is not a Reflection of God**

**Viṣaya** [thesis or statement]: The \( \text{jīva} \) is not a reflection of God.

**Samśaya** [arises of doubt]: Admitted that, on account of the above simile, the \( \text{jīva} \) is different from the Supreme. But the very same simile, however, shows the \( \text{jīva} \) to be a reflection, at least, of the Lord’s consciousness.

**Pūrvapakṣa** [antithesis]: As the reflection of the sun in water is called \( \text{sūryaka} \), so the reflection of the Supreme in avidyā [nescience] is called \( \text{jīva} \). What is the harm of this understanding?

**Siddhānta** [Vedic conclusion]: This doubt is also set aside by the next \( \text{sūtra} \).

**Sūtra 3.2.19**

\[
\text{ambuvadagrahaṇāttu na tathāttvam}
\]

\[
\text{ambuvat – like the reflection of the sun on water; agrahaṇāt – in the absence of perception; tu – but; na – not; tathāttvam – that state.}
\]

The \( \text{jīva} \) is not a reflection of the Supreme, like the sun reflected in water, because it is not so perceived.
The similarity of the sun and water does not hold here. The sun is at a distance from the water, and so it is possible for its reflection to exist in the water; but the Supreme Self is all-pervading, so no object can be at a distance from Him. Thus the term ‘reflection’ is meaningless when applied to the Supreme. So the similarity of the sun reflected in water does not apply to the Self and the ātman. Therefore the ātman cannot be a reflection of the Supreme Self.

The Śruti also says, “He is colorless, reflectionless.” [Praśna Upaniṣad 4.10] On the other hand, the ātman is an intelligent entity like the Supreme Self. The Śruti says, nityo nityānāṁ cetanaś cetanānāṁ: “He is the chief eternal among the eternals; the chief conscious entity among all conscious entities.” [Katha Upaniṣad 2.2.13]

This refutes the illustration taken from the reflection of space found in some commentaries. Space has no reflection; the so-called reflection of space seen in water is actually a reflection caused by the rays of the sun in particular limited portions of the sky. The ‘reflection of space’ is a wrong notion of the ignorant, otherwise one would also see the reflections of the directions, such as north, east, etc. Nor are the sound and its echo a proper illustration, because an echo is simply the reflection of the original sound, and that the Lord and the ātman are different was already proved above.

Sūtra 3.2.20

vrddhihrāsabhāktvamantarbhāvādubhayasāmañjasyādevam

vrddhi – increase; hrāsa – decrease; bhāktvam – being admitted of the difference; antarbhāvāt – because of being included in that; ubhaya – towards both; sāmañjasyāt – because of the appropriateness; evam – thus.

[The comparison is not appropriate in its primary sense, but in its secondary sense] of participating in increase and decrease; because [the purport of the scripture] is fulfilled thereby, and thus both comparisons become appropriate.

The comparison of the sun and its reflection does not hold in its primary sense, but it is a good illustration in its secondary sense of showing the increase of one—the greatness of the Supreme Lord—and the decrease of the other—the smallness of the ātman. The sun is great and powerful and so is the Supreme Lord, and the reflection is small and weak, and so is the ātma. Taking the illustration in this light, it holds good. Why do we say so? Because antarbhāvāt: the sense of the scriptures is fully satisfied by this mode of interpreting the simile. By explaining it thus, reconciliation between both the illustration and the object of illustration, and the standard of comparison and the subject of comparison, takes place.

The sense is this: In the preceding sūtra, the comparison of the sun and its reflection was set aside in its ordinary sense, but that same comparison was accepted in its secondary sense, namely, having regard to the attributes found in the sun and its reflection. Therefore it is to be understood in this way: the sun participates in increase; it is a large luminary, untouched by the limitations of the water in which it is reflected. It is independent and unvarying. Its reflections, the sūryaka [smaller suns] participate in decrease, for they are smaller than the original, and they vary in size according to the surface on which the reflection is made. They are also limited by the size and reflectivity, etc. of the reflecting surface, therefore they are not independent like the sun, but depend on the conditions of the reflecting surface.

Thus the Supreme Self is all-pervading, untouched by the attributes of prakṛti [matter], and independent. The ātman, which are His aṁśas [parts], are not all-pervading but atomic, and because they
are affected by the material environment in which they exist, they are joined with the attributes of prakṛti, and are therefore not independent. Thus the comparison of the sun and its reflections to the Lord and the jīvas holds in that it illustrates the differences between the Lord and the jīvas, the subordination of the jīvas to the Lord, and also the similarity between them, inasmuch as both are conscious. However the simile fails if it is taken in the sense that the jīvas are identical with Brahman in the same way as the reflection is identical with the source. Therefore the Pāṅgalopaniṣad says that the jīva is a reflection, but without any upādhi [designation or medium]:

“The reflection is of two kinds: limited by upādhi and not so limited. The jīva is a reflection of the Lord, but not in any upādhi; just as the rainbow is a reflection of the sun, but not in any upādhi [like water, oil etc.]”

Sūtra 3.2.21

darśanācca
darśanāt – because it is seen; ca – and.

Moreover, it is thus seen [in the world that comparisons are taken in the secondary sense.]

In similes like “Devadatta is a lion,” we find that the ordinary worldly usage is in favor of taking the comparison to apply only as far as it applies or is relevant. In other words, we accept the simile “Devadatta is a lion” only in terms of Devadatta’s courage; we do not accept it to indicate that he has claws, fur, etc. Therefore, the scriptural texts of comparison between the Lord and the jīva should be taken in the sense of a simile, only as far as they apply appropriately to the actual characteristics of both.

Adhikaraṇa 11: The “Neti-Neti” Text Explained

Here someone may object: “It is not true that the individual spirit soul is a separate conscious person in some ways like the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The individual soul is only a reflection of the Supreme.”

In the Brhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad [2.3.1] it is said:

dve vāva brahmaṇo rūpe mūrtāṁ caivaṁmūrtāṁ ca

“The Supreme has two forms: the subtle and the gross.”

After dividing the five elements into two categories, the Upaniṣad declares that all are forms of the Supreme. Then the Upaniṣad [2.3.6] declares:

tasya haitasya puruṣasya rūpaṁ yathā mahārajanaṁ vāso yathā pāṇḍva-āvikāṁ yathendragopo yathāṅgya-arcir yathā puṇḍarikāṁ yathā sakṛd vidyutaṁ sakṛd vidyutaiva ha vā asya śrīr bhavati ya evāṁ veda.

“That person’s form is like gold, like white wool, like an indragopa, like a burning flame, like a white lotus, like a lightning flash. He who understands this becomes splendid like a lightning flash.”

Then, having described this person splendid like gold, the Upaniṣad [2.3.6] declares:

athāta ādeśo neti neti. na hy etasmād iti. nety anyat param asti. atha nāmadheyam satyasya satyam iti. prāṇa vai satyam teṣāṁ eva satyam.
“This is the teaching: No. No. Not than Him. Nothing is greater than Him. Nothing is greater than Him. His name is the truth of the true. He is life. He is truth. He is truth.”

The meaning of this passage is this: the Supreme is greater than all the subtle and gross things in the material world. No person or thing is greater than Him. That is the meaning of the words, “No. No.” in this passage. The words No. No.” therefore mean “Not than the Supreme Personality of Godhead.” The word “no” is repeated twice to mean, “the material elements and material desires are not greater than Him” or to mean, “inanimate matter and the conscious living beings are not greater than Him”, or to mean “other groups of two are not greater than Him.” Thus he speaks the teaching [ādeaśa]: “No” [na]. In this way he says, “No person or thing is greater than the Supreme Personality of Godhead.”

Here someone may object: “Is it not so that this passage means, ‘As the material world does not exist in reality, so the Supreme Personality of Godhead also does not exist in reality? That is the meaning of the Upaniṣad’s assertion no.’ The form of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, which is eternal and spiritual, and which ends all illusions, is not different from the visible material world. This also means that the individual spirit soul is also not different from the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The spirit soul is a reflection of the Supreme. The individual spirit soul, who is atomic, and the Supreme, who is all-pervading, are not different. They are like the air in a pot and the air in the great sky. Therefore it is not correct to say that they are different.”

If this objection is raised, then the author of the sūtras gives the following reply:

Sūtra 3.2.22

prakṛtātāvattvam hi pratiśedhati tato braviṭi ca bhūyaḥ

prakṛtā – the topic under discussion; etāvattvam – being like that; hi – indeed; pratiśedhati – denires; tataḥ – then; braviṭi – says; ca – and; bhūyaḥ – more.

The previous statement denies that He is like them. It affirms that He is greater.

This passage of Śruti-śāstra does not teach that the one Supreme has no qualities. It teaches only that the Supreme is not like other persons. It teaches that the Supreme is superior to all others. In this way the Śruti-śāstra affirms that the Supreme is not like other persons or things. The Brhad- āraṇyaka Upaniṣad’s [2.3.1] statement that the subtle and gross elements of the world are forms of the Supreme does not mean that the Supreme is like the things of this world. The forms of the Supreme are not material. Therefore it is said that the Supreme is superior to everything in the material world and therefore He has the name “the truth of the true.” That is the teaching here. He is more than the forms of this world.

Because His form has no limit, therefore the Upaniṣad declares, “No. No.” that is the meaning here. The meaning is that the form of the Lord is not like the subtle and gross forms of the material world. He is not like them because His form is eternal and true, and therefore He has the name “the truth of the true.” This is what the Śruti-śāstra teaches. Then the scriptures affirm, na hy etasmāt: “No person or thing is greater than Him.” Because nothing is greater than Him, therefore He has the name “the truth of the true.” That is why the text here says, “No.” By this explanation of a small part of the Lord’s nature, the Lord’s nature as a whole may be understood.

Now the word nāmadheyam will be explained. The Lord’s name here is satyasya satyam: “The truth of the true.” This name describes the form of the Supreme. Then the text declares that the Supreme is prāna. Prāṇa here means “the life of all that live.” In this way the Lord’s forms are superior to all others. This proves that the Lord’s form is better than all other forms, either spiritual or material. No
other form is better than His. In the material world the material forms are of two kinds: subtle and gross. That the Supreme Lord’s forms are not material is explained in *Brhad-āranyaka Upaniṣad* [2.3.6].

Then the text declares that the Supreme is the truth of life. Because both the Lord and the individual spirit souls are not made of the material elements, which begin with ether, therefore they are both called truth. However, unlike the individual spirit souls, the Supreme is not subject to the different transformations of the material nature, which grant and remove true knowledge in different circumstances. Thus the individual spirit soul is certainly spiritual and conscious.

However, the Supreme Personality of Godhead is superior to the individual souls for the Supreme Lord has limitless auspicious qualities. When they are understood, then devotion for the Lord naturally develops. Thus the Śruti-śāstra does not deny the existence of the Lord’s form, for in *Brhad-āranyaka Upaniṣad* [2.3.6] the Lord’s spiritual form was described. Only a madman would state one thing and then immediately contradict his own words.

Therefore the author of the *sūtras* says that “the Supreme is not like that.” The author does not say “the Lord has no form at all.” Thus the proper explanation is given.

**Adhikaraṇa 12: The Form of the Lord**

*Viṣaya* [thesis or statement]: Now it will be proved that the Supreme Lord’s form is spiritual and not perceivable by the material senses. This must be so, for if the Lord were not spiritual—that is if he were an ordinary, common, easily available material object, like a pot or something of that nature—then it is not possible that there should be love and devotion for Him. The Śruti-śāstra also affirms this, for it says:

\[\text{sac-cid-ānanda-rūpāya krṣṇāya}\]

“I offer my obeisances unto the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, who is the eternal blissful form of knowledge” [*Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad* 1.1]

*Samśaya* [doubt]: Is the Supreme Lord’s form spiritual, and thus beyond the understanding of the material senses, or is it material, and thus easily seen by the material senses?

*Pūrvapakṣa* [the opponent speaks]: “The Lord’s form must be material, for many demigods, demons, and human beings have certainly seen Him.”

*Śiddhānta* [conclusion]: In the following words the author of the *sūtras* gives His conclusion.

*Sūtra 3.2.23*

\[\text{tad avyaktam āha hi}\]

* tat – that; avyaktam – unmanifest; āha – said; hi – indeed.

*Scripture says it is unmanifest.*

The Lord can be seen only by spiritual senses. This is described in *Katha Upaniṣad* [6.9]:

\[\text{na sadrśe tiṣṭhati rūpam asya na cakṣuṣā paśyati kaścanainam}\]

“The Supreme Lord’s form is not like that. Material eyes have never seen His form.”

In *Brhad-āranyaka Upaniṣad* [3.9.26] it is said:
The Supreme Personality of Godhead is not perceived by material senses.”

In the Bhagavad-gīṭa [8.21] it is said:


“They say He is unmanifest and infallible. They say He is the supreme destination.”

**Adhikaraṇa 13: The Supreme Personality of Godhead Can Be Seen**

Viṣaya [thesis or statement]: Now will be revealed the truth that although the Supreme Lord is spiritual by nature, still He can be seen by them who have love, devotion, and spiritual wisdom. If the Supreme Personality of Godhead were always invisible and never to be seen, then it would not be possible to have love and devotion for Him. In the Kaivalya Upaniṣad [2] it is said:

śraddhā-bhakti-dhyāna-yogād avantii

“One who has faith and devotion, and who meditates on Him, can see the Supreme Personality of Godhead.”

In this way it is explained that a faithful devotee who meditates on Lord Hari attains the direct sight of Lord Hari.

Saṃśaya [doubt]: Is the Supreme Lord seen by the mind or by the eyes and other senses?

Pūrvapakṣa [the opponent speaks]: The Supreme Lord is seen by the mind. This is described in Brhad-āranyaka Upaniṣad [4.4.19]:

manasaivānudraṣṭavyam

“The Supreme Personality of Godhead is indeed seen by the mind.”

Siddhānta [conclusion]: In the following words the author of the sūtras gives His conclusion.

**Sūtra 3.2.24**

api samrādhane pratyakṣa-numānābhīyaṃ

api – certainly; samrādhane – in worship; pratyakṣa – by the Śruti-śāstra; anumānābhīyaṃ – by the Smṛti-śāstra.

Certainly it is in worship because of the Śruti-śāstra and Smṛti-śāstra.

The word *api* [certainly] is used here to mock the *pūrvapakṣa* [opponent]. When one has sincere devotion [samrādhane] with one’s eyes and other senses one can directly see the Lord. Why is that? The sūtra explains, pratyaksānumānābhīyaṃ: “Because of the Śruti-śāstra and Smṛti-śāstra.” In the Kaṭha Upaniṣad [2.4.1] it is said:

parāṇci khāni vyatṛṇat svayambhūs
tasmāt parān paśyati nāntarātman
daścid dhīrah pratyag ātmānam aikṣad
avṛta-caḵṣur amṛtatvam icchan
“The Supreme Personality of Godhead made the conditioned souls gaze at external things and not at what is within the heart. A rare saint who yearns for liberation will look inside his heart and see the Supreme Lord staying there.”

In the *Mundaka Upaniṣad* [3.1.8] it is said:

\[jñāna-prasādena viśuddha-sattvas
tatas tu tam paśyati niṣkalam dhyāyamānaḥ\]

“In the course of his meditation a pure-hearted saint will become enlightened. Then he sees the perfect Supreme Lord directly.”

In the *Bhagavad-gītā* [11.53-54] The Lord Himself declares:

\[nāhaṁ vedair na tapasā
na dānena na cejyayā
śakya evam-vidho draṣṭuṁ
dṛṣṭavāṁ asi māṁ yathā\]

“The form you are seeing with your transcendental eyes cannot be understood simply by studying the Vedas, nor by undergoing serious penances, nor by charity, nor by worship. It is not by these means that one can see Me as I am.”

\[bhaktyā tv ananyayā śakya
aham evam-vidho ‘ṛjuna
jñātuṁ draṣṭuṁ ca tattvena
praveṣṭuṁ ca parantapa\]

“My dear Arjuna, only by undivided devotional service can I be understood as I am, standing before you, and can thus be seen directly. Only in this way can you enter into the mysteries of My understanding.”

In this way it is proved that with the aid of devotional service one can see Lord Hari directly. Thus with the aid of the eyes and other senses one can perceive the Lord directly. Thus the Lord can be perceived by the senses. Thus the word *eva* [indeed] in *Brhad-āranyaka Upaniṣad* [4.4.19] does not hint that one cannot see the Lord with the aid of senses.

**Sūtra 3.2.25**

\[prakāśādi-vac cāvaiśesyāt\]

*prakāśa – fire; ādi – beginning with; vat – like; ca – and; na – not; vaiśesyāt – with differences.*

He is [not] like fire or other things, for He has no such different features.

The word *na* [not] should be taken from a previous *sūtra* [3.2.19] and placed here also.

Here someone may object: “As fire has two forms: subtle and gross, the subtle form invisible and unmanifest, and the gross form visible and manifest, so does the Supreme Lord also have two forms in the same way.”

If this objection is stated, then I reply: “No. It is not so.” Why not? The *sūtra* explains: “Because He is not subtle and gross like fire.” The *Brhad-āranyaka Upaniṣad* [3.4.4] explains:

\[asthīlam anāny ahrasvam\]
“The Supreme Personality of Godhead is neither subtle, nor gross, nor short, nor tall.”

In the Garuḍa Purāṇa it is said:

\[
\text{sthūla-sūkṣma-viśeṣo 'tra} \\
\text{na kaścit paramēśvare} \\
\text{sarvatraiva prakāśo 'sau} \\
\text{sarva-rūpesv ajo yataḥ}
\]

“Because He appears everywhere and in every form, the distinctions of subtle and gross do not apply to the unborn Supreme Personality of Godhead.”

Here someone may object: “Is it not so that the Supreme Lord does not always appear before the devotees when they worship Him with devotion. For this reason it must be true that the Lord does not always appear when He is worshiped with love.”

Fearing that someone may doubt in this way, the author of the sūtras gives the following explanation.

**Sūtra 3.2.26**

\[
\text{prakāśaś ca karmany abhyāsāt}
\]

\text{prakāśah} – appearance; \text{ca} – and; \text{karmaṇi} – in activity; \text{abhyāsāt} – by repetition.

And when the activity is repeated, then He appears.

The word \text{ca} [and] is used here to dispet doubt.

When activities like meditation and worship are repeated, then the Lord appears. In the Dhyāna-bindu Upaniṣad [18] it is said:

\[
dhyāna-nirmathanābhyaśād \\
\text{devaṁ paśyen nigūḍhavat}
\]

“By repeated meditation one is able to see the Supersoul hidden in the heart.”

By repeated meditation one develops love for the Lord, and at that time one is able to see the Lord. However, in the Brahma-vaiśvarta Purāṇa it is said:

\[
\text{na tam ārādhayitvāpi} \\
\text{kaścid vyaktī-kariṣyati} \\
\text{nityāvyakto yato devaḥ} \\
\text{paramātmā sanātanaḥ}
\]

“No one, simply by engaging in worship, can force the Lord to become visible. To a person who tries to force Him in this way, the eternal Lord is always invisible.”

The worship described here is worship performed without sincere love for the Supreme Lord.

Here someone may object: “Is it not true that the Supreme Lord is present within everything? If He is present within, then it is a contradiction to say that He can come out. He remains within and He does not come out. Therefore the statement that the Supreme Lord comes out and becomes directly visible is a collection of meaningless words, words that contradict the truth that the Lord is always present within everything.”

If this objection is raised, then the author of the sūtras gives the following reply.
Sūtra 3.2.27

\[ \text{ato 'nantena tathā hi liṅgam} \]

\[ \text{ataḥ – therefore; anantena – by the infinite; tathā – so; hi – indeed; liṅgam – evidence.} \]

\[ \text{It is so by the infinite. There is evidence.} \]

There is evidence to support both ideas: that the Supreme Lord is present within everything, and that the Supreme Lord becomes visible to those who meditate on Him. The unlimited Supreme Lord, pleased by His devotees’ worship of Him, shows His own form to them. He does this by His inconceivable mercy. That should be accepted. How is this known? The sūtra explains, liṅgam: “There is evidence.”

In the Atharva Veda it is said:

\[ \text{vijñāna-ghanānanda-ghana-sac-cid-ānandaīka-raso bhakti-yoge tiṣṭhāti} \]

“The Supreme Personality of Godhead, whose sweet form is eternal and full of bliss and knowledge, becomes visible when He is worshiped with devotion.”

This means that by His mercy the Lord appears before they who worship Him with devotion. In the Nārāyanādhyātma it is said:

\[ \text{nityāvyaktā 'pi bhagavān} \]
\[ \text{īkṣate nija-saktītāḥ} \]
\[ \text{tāṁ rte paramāṁnaṁ} \]
\[ \text{kāḥ paśyetāṁ itāṁ prabhum} \]

“Although He is always invisible, the Supreme Personality of Godhead becomes visible by His own power. Without first obtaining His mercy, who can see Him?”

This means that the Lord becomes visible by His own wish. The Supreme Lord Himself declares [Bhagavad-gītā 7.24]:

\[ \text{avvyaktasena vyaktim āpannaṁ} \]
\[ \text{manyante māṁ abuddhayaḥ} \]
\[ \text{paraiṁ bhāvam ajānanto} \]
\[ \text{mamāvyayam anuttamam} \]

“Unintelligent men, who do not know Me perfectly, think that I, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, was impersonal before and have now assumed this personality. Due to their small knowledge, they do not know My higher nature, which is imperishable and supreme.”

Because the Lord becomes visible in response to His devotees’ love, that does not mean that He is not also all-pervading, present within everything. He does both these actions by the power of His own internal potency. However, to those who do not love Him, He presents only a reflection or a shadow of Himself. The Lord Himself affirms [Bhagavad-gītā 7.25]:

\[ \text{nāhaṁ prakāśaṁ sarvasya} \]
\[ \text{yogamāyā-samāvṛtaḥ} \]

“I am never manifest to the foolish and unintelligent. For them I am covered by My internal potency.”

Therefore, even though He is full of transcendental bliss and other auspicious qualities, He appears terrible and ferocious to those who have no love for Him. Therefore to those who do not love Him He remains invisible.
**Adhikaraṇa 14: The Lord’s Qualities Are Not Different From His Self**

*Viśaya [thesis or statement]:* Now will be proved the truth that the Lord’s qualities are not different from His self. If the Lord’s qualities were different from His self, then His qualities would be secondary and unimportant, and thus love for the Lord, love inspired by those qualities, would also become secondary and unimportant. However, love for the Lord is not secondary and unimportant. It is clearly seen that love for the Lord is of the greatest importance. The Lord’s qualities are described in the Śruti-śāstra:

\[
\text{vijñānam ānandam brahma}
\]

“\text{The Supreme Personality of Godhead is full of knowledge and bliss.}”

\[
yāḥ sarva-jñāḥ sarva-vid
\]

“\text{The Supreme Personality of Godhead is all-knowing.}”

\[
ānandam brahmaṇo vidvān
\]

“A wise man knows that the Supreme Personality of Godhead is full of bliss.”

*Samśaya [doubt]:* Is the worshipable Supreme Truth the actual qualities of bliss and knowledge themselves, and thus impersonal, or is the Supreme Truth a person who possesses the qualities of bliss and knowledge?"

*Pūrvapakṣa [the opponent speaks]:* Because both ideas are described in the scriptures it is not possible to come to a final conclusion.

*Śiddhānta [conclusion]:* In the following words the author of the śūtras gives His conclusion.

**Śūtra 3.2.28**

\[
\text{ubhaya-vyapadeśāt tv ahi-kuṇḍala-vat}
\]

*ubhaya* – of both; *vyapadeśāt* – because of the description; *tu* – indeed; *ahi* – the snake; *kuṇḍala* – and the coils; *vat* – like.

**Because indeed there is description of both, He is like a snake and its coils.**

The Supreme Personality of Godhead is the qualities of knowledge and bliss themselves, and He is also a person who possesses the qualities of knowledge and bliss. He is like a snake and its coils. As a snake both is and possesses its coils, so the Supreme Personality of Godhead both is and possesses His qualities. How is this known? The śūtra explains, *ubhaya-vyapadeśāt*: “Because there is description of both.” The Śruti-śāstra describes both. That is the meaning. The word *tu* [indeed] here hints that the passages of the Śruti-śāstra have a single meaning. The meaning here is that the Lord is inconceivable. The Lord is not divided. It is not that these two kinds of explanations of the scriptures mean that one part of the Lord has one nature and another part of Him has a different nature. He is not divided into parts in that way.

**Śūtra 3.2.29**

\[
\text{prakāśāśrayavad vā tejastvāt}
\]

*prakāśa* – of light; *āśraya* – the shelter; *vat* – like; vā – or; *tejastvāt* – because of being splendid.

**Or, because He is effulgent He is like an abode of light.**
Because the Supreme Personality of Godhead is effulgent, that is to say because He is full of consciousness, therefore He is the abode of light. That is the conclusion. As the effulgent sun is the abode of light, so the all-knowing Supreme Personality of Godhead is the abode of knowledge. That is the meaning. The word *tejah* is defined to mean either “the destroyer of ignorance” or “the destroyer of darkness.”

**Sūtra 3.2.30**

*pūrvavad vā*

*pūrva* – past; *vat* – as; *vā* – or.

*Or, as the past.*

As it is said that time both possesses the past and also is the past itself, so the Supreme both possesses knowledge and bliss and also is knowledge and bliss. Thus the Supreme is both the quality and the possessor of the quality. In the *Brahma Purāṇa* it is said:

ānandena tv abhimnena
vyavahārah prakāśavat
*pūrvavat vā yathā kālah*
svāvecchedakatāṁ vrajat

“As the sun is not different from its light or time is not different from its quality of the past, so the Supreme is not different from His bliss.”

In this series of analogies [Sūtras 28-30] each analogy is more subtle than the one before it.

**Sūtra 3.2.31**

*pratiśedhāc ca*

*pratiśedhāt* – because of denial; *ca* – also.

*Also because it is denied.*

The word *ca* [also] is used here for emphasis. In the *Katha Upaniṣad* [2.4.11 and 14] it is said:

*manasaivedam āptavyaiṁ*
*neha nānāsti kiñcana*
*mṛtyoh sa mṛtyum āpnoti*
ya iha nāneva paśyatī
dharmān pṛthak paśyaṁ
*tāṁ evāṁ uvidhāvatī*
“One who thinks the Lord and His attributes are different falls into hell as rainwater glides down a mountain peak.”

In the Nārada-pañcarātra it is said:

\[nirdoṣa-pūrṇa-guṇa-vigraha ātma-tantro
niścetanātmaka-śarīra-gunaiś ca hīnaḥ
ānanda-mātra-kara-pāda-mukhodarādiḥ
sarvatra ca svagata-bheda-vivarjītātmā\]

“The Supreme Personality of Godhead is independent, faultless, filled with virtues, not residing in a material body, untouched by the modes of nature or a material body fashioned of inanimate matter, but still possessing a face, belly, hands, feet and other features of a spiritual body filled with bliss. He is not different from His various limbs, features, and qualities.”

Because in this way the scriptures deny that the Lord is different from His attributes, therefore the Lord is not different from His attributes. Therefore the word Bhagavān [the all-opulent Supreme Lord] is defined in terms of the Lord’s knowledge and other attributes. In the Viṣṇu Purāṇa it is said:

\[jñāna-śakti-balaiśvarya-
vīrya-tejāṁsy aśeṣataḥ
bhagavac-chabda-vācyāni
vinā heyair gunādibhiḥ\]

“The word bhagavān means ‘He who has all knowledge, strength, wealth, power, heroism and splendor, but no faults’.”

Although the Lord and His attributes are actually one, they are spoken of as being two in the same way that a body of water and its waves are spoken of as being two. The Lord is blissful. He is also bliss itself. Therefore His form is full of bliss. Because the Lord’s activities are eternal, therefore the Lord’s form is also eternal. However, for the sake of ordinary dealings a pretended distinction is made between the Lord and His attributes, even though there is in truth no distinction at all.

If this is not done then it would not be possible to speak tautological sentences like, “Existence exists,” “Time is always,” and “Space is everywhere,” statements that are useful in ordinary discourse. Nor are statements like “Existence exists” foolish illusions. They are meaningful statements, as the sentence “The jar exists” is a meaningful statement. These statements are not metaphors like the sentence “Devadatta is a lion”, for the statement “Existence does not exist” can never be truthfully said. Nor do these statements hint that attributes do not exist, for in the previously stated example of water flowing from a mountain peak there are certainly attributes. However, the idea that the Supreme Lord is different from His attributes is certainly denied here. In this way the Supreme Personality of Godhead is not different from the attributes He possesses.

**Adhikarana 15: The Supreme Personality of Godhead Experiences the Highest Bliss**

*Viṣaya* [thesis or statement]: Now will be described the truth that the bliss and other attributes of the Lord are all of the highest nature. If the bliss and other attributes of the individual spirit souls were equal to the bliss and attributes of the Lord, love and devotion for the Lord would not be possible. Now will be discussed the texts that describe these attributes of the Lord.

*Samśaya* [doubt]: Are the bliss and other attributes of the Supreme Lord greater than the bliss and other attributes of the individual spirit souls, or are they not greater than them?
Pūrvapakṣa [the opponent speaks]: Because the bliss of the Supreme Personality of Godhead is described in the same terms used to describe the ordinary bliss of the material world, therefore the Lord’s bliss is not greater. After all, when one speaks the word ‘jar’ one doesn’t mean something greater than a jar.

Siddhānta [conclusion]: In the following words the author of the sūtras gives His conclusion.

Sūtra 3.2.32

param atāḥ setūṁmāṇa-sambandha-bheda-vyapadeśebhyāḥ

param – greater; atāḥ – than this; setu – of a bridge; unmāṇa – immeasurable; sambandha – relationship; bheda – difference; vyapadeśebhyāḥ – from the descriptions.

It is greater because of the statements about a bridge, immeasurability, a relationship and a difference.

The bliss and other attributes of the Supreme Personality of Godhead are greater than the bliss and attributes of the individual spirit souls. Why is that? The sūtra declares, setūṁmāṇa-sambandha-bheda-vyapadeśebhyāḥ: “Because of the statements about a bridge, immeasurability, a relationship and a difference.” The statement about a bridge is given in the Chāndogya Upaniṣad [8.4.1], where the bliss of the Supreme Lord is described in these words:

eṣa setur vidhṛtiḥ

“It is the highest bridge.”

The statement about immeasurability is given in the Taittirīya Upaniṣad [2.4.1]:

yato vāco nivartante

“Unable to describe the immeasurable bliss of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, words return and become silent.”

The statement about a relationship is given in the Brhad- āranyaka Upaniṣad [4.3.32]:

etasyaivānandasyāṇī bhūtaṁ mātram upajīvanti

“The bliss of the Supreme Personality of Godhead is the highest. All others experience only a small portion of that bliss.”

The statement about a difference is given in the following words:

anyaj jñānaṁ tu jīvānāṁ
anyaj jñānaṁ parasya ca
nityānandāvayaṁ pūrṇaṁ
paraṁ jñānam vidhiyate

“The knowledge possessed by the individual spirit souls is one thing and the knowledge possessed by the Supreme Personality of Godhead is another. The perfect, complete, blissful, and immutable knowledge possessed by the Supreme Personality of Godhead is higher.”

The bliss and other attributes described in these statements are not at all like the ordinary bliss and other attributes found in this world.

Here someone may object: “Still, what is described with the word ‘jar’ cannot really be different from a jar.”
To answer this objection the author of the sūtras speaks the following words.

**Sūtra 3.2.33**

sāmānīyāt tu

sāmānīyāt – because of resemblance; tu – but.

**But because of a common quality.**

The word *tu* [but] is used here to dispel doubt. As the word ‘jar’ is used to describe many different kinds of jars, which all have a single quality of ‘jarness’ in common, so the word ‘bliss’ describes many different kinds of ordinary and extraordinary bliss, which all have a single quality of ‘bliss-ness’ in common. However the different kinds of bliss and other attributes are not alike in all respects. Therefore it is said:

\[
\text{para-jñānamayo ‘sadbhir nāma-jāty-ādibhir vibhuḥ na yogavān na yu kto 'bhūn naiva pārthiva yokṣyati}
\]

“The Supreme Personality of Godhead has the highest transcendental knowledge. He never is, was, or will be touched by the temporary names and forms of the material world.”

It this way it is demonstrated that the knowledge possessed by the Supreme Personality of Godhead is superior to the knowledge possessed by the individual spirit souls.

Here someone may object: “If the Supreme Personality of Godhead is actually superior to the individual spirit souls and to the inanimate material world, then why does the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* [3.14.1] declare:

\[
sarvaṁ khalv idaṁ brahma taj jalān iti śānta upāsīta
\]

“Everything is the Supreme. Everything is manifested from Him. A peaceful sage should worship Him.”

In the following words the author of the sūtras answers this objection.

**Sūtra 3.2.34**

buddhy-arthaḥ pāda-vat

buddhi – of understanding; arthaḥ – for the purpose; pāda – foot; vat – like.

**It is for understanding, like the word ‘foot.’**

This teaching is meant to increase understanding. The understanding here is that everything belongs to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. This is like the explanation of the word ‘foot’ in the scriptures. In the *Rg Veda* [10.90.3] it is said:

\[
pādo ‘sy a viśvā bhūtāni
\]

“The entire material universe is His one foot.”
By understanding that the entire material universe is a single foot of the Supreme, a person no longer hates anyone, and then his heart becomes devoted to the Lord. This does not mean, however, that one should become attracted to everything, for that would bewilder the intelligence.

Adhikarāṇa 16: The Supreme is Not Devoid of Variety

Viṣaya [thesis or statement]: Now will be explained the truth that because there is a great variety of kinds of love and devotion for Him, worshipable Lord Hari assumes a great variety of forms. If this were not so, then many kinds of love for the Lord would be thwarted. These many forms of the Lord are all beginningless and eternal. In the Śruti-śāstra it is said:

\[ekọ ˈpi \text{ san bahudhā yo ˈvabhāti}\]

“Although He is one, He appears in many forms.”

Thus the one Supreme Personality of Godhead appears eternally in many different places.

Sāṁśaya [doubt]: Are there varieties of greater and lesser in these forms, or not?

Pūrvapakṣa [the opponent speaks]: Because these forms are all equally the Supreme Lord, therefore they are all the same and they are not different.

Siddhānta [conclusion]: In the following words the author of the sūtras gives His conclusion.

Sūtra 3.2.35

\[sthāna-\text{višeśāt prakāśādi-vat}\]

\[sthāna – of places; \text{višeśāt – from the variety; prakāśa – light; ādi – beginning with; vat – like.}\]

Like light and other things, so He also is different in different places.

Although the Supreme Personality of Godhead is one, nevertheless in different places and before different devotees He manifests different kinds of opulence, power, and sweetness.

In this way, in the presence of devotees in the various mellow, such as the mellow of peacefulness, servitude, and friendship, the Lord manifests many different kinds of forms. He does this in the same way as light or other things also manifest many different kinds of forms. As the light of a lamp appears clear or red when reflected from crystals or rubies set in a temple’s walls, and as sound, although originally one, appears different when sounded by a conchshell, mṛdaṅga, flute, or other musical instrument, so the Supreme Personality of Godhead manifest sweetness and other attributes according to the different circumstances. That is the meaning. When the Lord manifests His great opulence, He is worshiped by the rules and regulations of vidhi-bhakti. That manifestation is compared to the light reflected from crystal.

When the Lord manifests His great sweetness, He is worshiped by the spontaneous love of ruci-bhakti. That manifestation is compared to the light reflected from rubies. In this way the Lord’s many manifestations in different abodes and in relation to the different kinds of devotion of different kinds of devotees, are basically of these two kinds [opulence and sweetness].

Sūtra 3.2.36

\[upapateś ca\]
Also because it is reasonable.

This is also described in *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* [3.14.1], which explains: “As one has faith in the Lord, so one is rewarded.” It is not otherwise. As there are different kinds of love for the one Supreme Lord, so the one Lord expands into many different forms.

**Adhikaraṇa 17: The Lord is the Highest**

*Viṣaya* [thesis or statement]: Now will be explained the truth that the Supreme Lord is the highest. If anyone were superior to the Supreme Lord, then it would not be possible to develop love and devotion to Him. *Śvetāsvatara Upaniṣad* [3.4] clearly states that the Lord is the greatest. However, *Śvetāsvatara Upaniṣad* [3.10] describes something superior to the Supreme Lord.

*Samśaya* [doubt]: Is there a person or thing greater than the worshipable Supreme Lord, or is there not?

*Pūrvaṇa* [the opponent speaks]: There is something greater than the Supreme Lord. This is clearly described in *Śvetāsvatara Upaniṣad* [3.10].

*Siddhānta* [conclusion]: In the following words the author of the *sūtras* gives His conclusion.

**Sūtra 3.2.37**

\[
\text{tathānaya-pratiṣedhāt}
\]

\[
\text{tathā – so; anya – of another; pratiṣedhāt – because of the denial.}
\]

**It is so, for another is denied.**

Nothing is greater than the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Why is that? The *sūtra* explains, *anya-pratiṣedhāt*: “for another is denied.” In the *Śvetāsvatara Upaniṣad* [3.9] it is said:

\[
yasmāt param nāparam asti kīcic
yasmān nānīyo na jyāyo 'sti kīcic\]

“There is no truth superior to that Supreme Person because He is the supermost. He is smaller than the smallest, and He is greater than the greatest.”

In this way the scriptures deny the existence of anything greater than the Supreme Lord. That is the meaning here. In *Śvetāsvatara Upaniṣad* [3.8] it is said:

\[
vedāham etaṁ puruṣam mahantam
āditya-varṇaṁ tamasaḥ parastāt
tam eva vidītvāt mṛtyum eti
nānyaḥ panthāḥ vidyate 'yanāya
\]

“I know that Supreme Personality of Godhead who is transcendental to all material conditions of darkness. Only he who knows Him can transcend the bonds of birth and death. There is no way for liberation other than knowledge of that Supreme Person.”

After thus teaching that no path but knowledge of the Supreme Person leads to liberation, the *Śvetāsvatara Upaniṣad* [3.9] explains:
yasmāt paraiṁ nāparam asti

“There is no truth superior to that Supreme Person.”

In this way is proved that there is no truth superior to the Supreme Lord. In Śvetāsvatara Upaniṣad [3.10] it is said:

tato yad uttarataraṁ
tad arūpam anāmayam
ya etad vidur amrītās te bhavanỹty
athetare duḥkham evāpi yānti

“They who know that the Supreme Personality of Godhead is greater than the greatest, and has no material body and no faults, become immortal. They who do not know Him suffer.”

In this way the scriptures declare that there is no truth superior to the Lord. In this way the false idea of our opponent is disproved. In Bhagavad-gītā [7.7], the Supreme Lord Himself declares:

mattaḥ parataṁ nānyat
iṁcīd astī dhanañjaya

“O conqueror of wealth, there is no truth superior to Me.”

Adhikaraṇa 18: The Lord is All-pervading

Viṣaya [thesis or statement]: Now, to show that the object of worship is always nearby, the truth that the Supreme Lord is all-pervading will be described. Otherwise, if the Supreme Lord were not always nearby, then there would not be enthusiasm to love the Lord, and love for the Lord would become slackened. In the Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad it is said:

eko vaśī sarva-gaḥ kṛṣṇa Ṛṣyaḥ

“Lord Kṛṣṇa, the supreme controller and the supreme object of worship, is present everywhere.”

Saṁśaya [doubt]: Is Lord Hari, the supreme object of meditation, all-pervading, or does He stay only in one place?

Pūrvapakṣa [the opponent speaks]: Because the Lord is of moderate height, and because He stays aloof from the material world, the Lord cannot be everywhere and does not go to every place. Therefore the Lord is not all-pervading.

Siddhānta [conclusion]: In the following words the author of the sūtras gives His conclusion.

Sūtra 3.2.38

anena sarvagatatvam āyāma-śabdādibhyah

anena – by Him; sarva – everywhere; gata – going; tvam – the state of being; āyāma – all-pervasiveness; śabda – Śruti-śāstra; ādibhyah – beginning with.

He is everywhere, for the Śruti-śāstra and other scriptures declare that He is all-pervading.

Even though His form is of a moderate height, the Supreme Personality of Godhead is all-pervading. Why is that? The sūtra explains, āyāma-śabdādibhyah: “The Śruti-śāstra and other scriptures declare that He is all-pervading.” Here the word āyāma means ‘all-pervading.’ The word ādi [beginning with] here means “Because He has inconceivable potencies.”
In the *Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad* it is said:

\[ \text{eko vaśī sarva-gaḥ krṣṇa īḍyaḥ} \]

“Lord Krṣṇa, the supreme controller and the supreme object of worship, is present everywhere.”

In the *Taittirīya Aranyaka* it is said:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{yac ca kiñcij jagat sarvaṁ} \\
\text{drśyate srūyate 'pi vā} \\
\text{antar bahiś ca tat sarvaṁ} \\
\text{vyāpya nārāyaṇah sthitāḥ}
\end{align*}
\]

“Lord Nārāyaṇa is present everywhere. He is within and without everything. He is within everything that has ever been seen or heard.”

In this way it is declared that, even though He has a form of moderate height, the Supreme Personality of Godhead is certainly all-pervading. Because of His inconceivable potencies the Lord is greater than all and present everywhere, even though His form is of a moderate height. In *Bhagavad-gītā* [9.4-5], the Supreme Lord Himself declares:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{mayā tatam idaṁ sarvaṁ} \\
\text{jagad avyakta-mārtinā} \\
\text{mat-sthāṇi sarva-bhūtāṇi} \\
\text{na cāhaṁ teśv avasthitāḥ} \\
\text{na ca mat-sthāṇi bhūtāṇi} \\
\text{paśya me yogam aśvaram}
\end{align*}
\]

“By Me, in My unmanifested form, this entire universe is pervaded. All beings are in Me, but I am not in them. And yet everything that is created does not rest in Me. Behold My mystic opulence!”

Because the Supreme Lord is different from matter does not mean that He cannot be all-pervading within the material world, for the Śruti-śāstra clearly declares that He is certainly present within and without. The scriptures also affirm that as oil is present in sesame seeds and as butter is present in yogurt, so the Supreme Lord is present everywhere. In this way it is proved that worshipable Lord Hari is present everywhere. This is clearly shown in His Dāmodara pastime. Even though He was a small child, still He displayed His power of being all-pervading.

**Adhikaraṇa 19: The Supreme Lord Awards the Fruits of Action**

*Viṣaya* [thesis or statement]: Now will be described the truth that the Supreme Lord awards all the fruits of action. Otherwise, if He did not award the fruits of action, or if He awarded only some of the fruits of action, it would be difficult to develop love for Him because of His miserliness. In the *Praśna Upaniṣad* [3.7] it is said:

\[ \text{puṇyena puṇyaṁ lokaṁ nayati} \]

“The Supreme Lord takes the pious to the world of the pious.”

*Saṁśaya* [doubt]: Are the pious results that begin with entrance into Svargaloka attained by performing *yajñas* and other pious deeds, or are they attained by the sanction given by the Lord?

*Pūrvapakṣa* [the opponent speaks]: These results are caused by performance of *yajñas* and other pious deeds. The Supreme Lord has nothing to do with it.

*Siddhānta* [conclusion]: In the following words the author of the sūtras gives His conclusion.
Sūtra 3.2.39

phalam ata upattec

phalam – fruit; ataḥ – from Him; upattec – because it is reasonable.

The result is from Him, for that is reasonable.

The attainment of Svargaloka and other pious benefits, benefits attained by performing yajñas and other pious deeds, are actually awarded by the Supreme Lord Himself. Why is that? The sūtra explains, upattec: “for that is reasonable.” In this way it is shown that the eternal, all-knowing, all-powerful, and supremely generous Lord, when He is worshiped by the performance of yajñas and other pious deeds, after some time has elapsed grants the rewards of these pious deeds. The deeds themselves, which are only inert matter and which perish in a moment as soon as they are performed, do not grant these rewards. That is the meaning.

In the next sūtra the author gives the proof of this.

Sūtra 3.2.40

śrutatvāc ca

śrutavāt – because of being described in the Śruti-śāstra; ca – also.

Also because it is affirmed by the Śruti-śāstra.

In the Brhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad [3.9.28] it is said:

vijñānam ānandaṁ brahma rātir dātuḥ parāyaṇam

“The Supreme Personality of Godhead is full of knowledge and bliss. It is He who gives the fruits of actions to they who perform yajñas.”

In the Brhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad [4.4.24] it is also said:

sa vā eṣa mahān aja ātmā annādo vasu-dānaḥ

“The unborn Supreme Personality of Godhead gives the fruits of work.”

These two passages explain that the Supreme Lord gives the fruits of action. The word dātuḥ means “of the performer of yajña,” and rātiḥ means “the giver of the results.”

Sūtra 3.2.41

dharmāṁ jaiminir ata eva

dharmam – piety; jaiminiḥ – Jaimini; ataḥ – from Him; eva – indeed.

Jaimini affirms that piety comes from Him.

Jaimini holds that piety comes from the Supreme Lord. The pious deed that gives an auspicious result itself comes from the Supreme Lord. In the Kauṭīṭaki Upaniṣad [3.8] it is said:

eṣa eva sādhu karma kārayati
“The Lord engages the living entity in pious activities.”

According to Jaimini, the Supreme Lord does not give the results of actions, either directly or indirectly. The Lord creates only the actions themselves and the results are given by the actions.

Here someone may object: “Is it not so that actions are over in a moment, whereas there is often a great lapse of time before actions bear their karmic result? If the actions quickly cease to exist they cannot create the karmic results, for something that has ceased to exist cannot create something new.”

To this objection Jaimini may reply: “No. It is not so. Even though the action itself comes to an end, it leaves behind a potential result. Only when this result is fulfilled is the action actually completed. Even if there is a considerable lapse of time, the action itself gives the result to the person, a result appropriate to that particular action. Thus actions are the givers of results.”

In the following words Śrīla Vyāsadeva, the author of the sūtras, gives His opinion.

Sūtra 3.2.42

purvaiṁ tu bādarāyaṇo hetu-vyapadeśāt

purvam – previous; tu – but; bādarāyaṇaḥ – Vyāsadeva; hetu – of the cause; vyapadeśāt – from the description.

But Vyāsadeva holds the previous view, for the Lord is described as the cause.

Here the word tu [but] is employed to dispel doubt. Vyāsadeva holds the previous view, that the Supreme Personality of Godhead awards the fruits of action. Why so? The sūtra explains, hetu-vyapadeśāt: “for the Lord is described as the cause.” In the Praśna Upaniṣad [3.7] it is said:

punyena punyaṁ lokāṁ nayati pāpena pāpam

“The Supreme Lord takes the pious to the world of the pious and the sinful to the world of the sinful.”

In this way the scriptures teach that the Supreme Lord awards the results of action. That is the meaning. Because they already have ceased to exist, the actions themselves cannot be the cause of the karmic results. Also, it is the Supreme Lord Himself who is the creator of karma, for the scriptures say:

drayāṁ karma ca kālaś ca

“The Supreme Personality of Godhead is creator of matter, karma, and time.

In this way it is proved that the Lord is the creator of karma. The idea that actions leave behind a potential result is a lame and foolish idea. Actions are inanimate and unconscious. They are like a block of wood or a stone, and therefore they have no power to award the results of actions. Also, the Śruti-sāstra never describes them as awarding the results of actions.

Here someone may object: “Is it not so that the demigods are worshiped in the performance of yajñas, and it is the demigods themselves who give the results of these yajñas?”

If this is said, then I reply: It is by the sanction of the Supreme Lord that the demigods are able to give these results. This is clearly described in the Antaryāmi Brāhmaṇa. Therefore the Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself awards the results of actions. The lotus-eyed Supreme Lord Himself affirms this in the following words [Bhagavad-gītā 7.21-22]:
“I am in everyone’s heart as the Supersoul. As soon as one desires to worship some demigod, I make his faith steady so he can devote himself to that particular deity.”

“I am in everyone’s heart as the Supersoul. As soon as one desires to worship some demigod, I make his faith steady so he can devote himself to that particular deity.”

“In this way worshiped by the performance of yajña, the Supreme Lord Himself gives the auspicious results to the worshiper. When He is thus pleased by devotion, the Supreme Lord will give everything, even Himself to His devotee. This will be described later on with quotes from the Śruti-śāstra.

Thus, in these first two Pādas of the second Adhyāya has been seen:

1. The fault of the material world, which is an abode of many sufferings, beginning with repeated birth and death,
2. The faultless glories of the Lord,
3. The Lord’s being the controller of all,
4. The Lord’s form of pure spirit, and
5. The Lord’s being not different from His attributes.

By hearing of these things one develops a great thirst to attain the Lord’s association and a great disgust for all that is far from the Lord. In this way one comes to attain the Lord. That is what was revealed in these two Pādas.
Vedānta-sūtra

Adhyāya 3: Devotional Service

Pāda 3: Worshipping the Lord’s Attributes

parayā nirasya māyāṁ guna-
karmādīni yo bhajati nityam
devaś caitanya-tanur manasi
mamāsau parispuratu krṣṇaḥ

“May Lord Kṛṣṇa, who with the aid of His transcendental potency pushes aside the influence of māyā, who has a host of transcendental virtues eternally, who enjoys eternal transcendental pastimes, and who has now appeared as Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, appear in my heart.”

In this Pāda will be revealed the way of worshiping the Lord’s transcendental attributes. As in a vaidūrya jewel many splendid colors are always manifest, so in the Supreme Personality of Godhead many different transcendental forms, all perfect and without beginning, are also manifest eternally.

Understanding that the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is supremely perfect, complete and pure, has many different forms, a devotee becomes attracted to one of the Lord’s forms and directs his worship to that form. If the various scriptures describe transcendental virtues present in that form of the Lord, all those virtues may also be ascribed to that single chosen form. Thus a person who worships the Supreme Personality of Godhead as present in His powers and opulences, such as the mind and the other powers of the world, should review the scriptures’ descriptions of the various qualities of these forms, but not of other forms of the Lord.

Others, however, speak in the following way: “The one Supreme Personality of Godhead assumes different forms as an actor assumes different roles on the stage. In this way the Lord has many different names and abodes. For this reason all the qualities and pastimes of the different forms of the Lord, as described in the scriptures, may be ascribed to any one of the Lord’s forms.”

Here someone may object: “Is it not so that many of the qualities of many of the Lord’s forms, qualities described in the scriptures, cannot be properly ascribed to all of the Lord’s forms? Is it not so that sweetness, opulence, peacefulness, austerity, ferociousness, and other qualities may be mutually contradictory, and it may also be contradictory to ascribe the features of having a horn, tail, mane, tusk, or other features appropriate to the Lord’s forms like Varāha and others to the Lord’s human-like forms, which carry a flute, conchshell, bow, arrows, and other paraphernalia? Therefore in the Mahābhārata it is said:

yo ’nyathā santam ātmānam
anyathā pratipadyate
kim tena na kṛtaṁ pāpaṁ
cau renātmāpahārīnāḥ

“A person who ascribes to the Supreme Lord qualities that the Lord does not actually possess is a thief who robs himself. Does he not sin with his words?”
Therefore, because of both the injunction of *Smṛti-śāstra* and the experience of the wise sages, one should not ascribe the qualities of one of Lord’s forms to another of the Lord’s forms.”

If this is said, then the following reply may be given: The qualities of one of Lord’s forms may be ascribed to another of the Lord’s forms only when the qualities are appropriate to that particular form. Ascribing the qualities of one of Lord’s forms to another of the Lord’s forms is of two kinds: 1. *cintana*, and 2. *dhī-mātra*. They who perform this first kind of meditation are called *sva-niṣṭha*, and they who perform the second kind of meditation are called *ekāntī*. In the next Pāda three kinds of wise devotees, headed by the *sva-niṣṭha* devotees, will be described. The *sva-niṣṭha* devotees have equal love for all the Lord’s forms. They see all the qualities of all the Lord’s forms present equally in each of the Lord’s forms. They do not see anything improper in ascribing many contradictory qualities to each of the Lord’s forms. They consider that the Lord by His great potency may possess many mutually contradictory qualities, just as a *vaidūrya* jewel may display many different colors.

The *ekāntī* devotees, who are divided into two groups: *pariniṣṭita* and *nirapekṣa*, do not have equal love for all the Lord’s forms. They meditate only on the qualities of one form the Lord, the form they have chosen. They see the qualities of this form alone. Even though they are well aware of the Lord’s other forms, they do not meditate or gaze upon them. On His part, the Lord generally does not reveal His other forms to these devotees. This will be revealed in another Adhikāra. As for the passage quoted from the *Mahābhārata*, its true meaning is that it is a rebuke hurled at the impersonalists, who claim that the Supreme is consciousness and nothing else. The truth that the Supreme certainly does have qualities, and therefore the Lord’s qualities should be sought out by they who seek liberation, is described in *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* [8.1.1-6]. It is also said, in the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* [2.4.1]:

ānandam brahmaṇo vidvān na bibheti kutaścana

“He who knows that the Supreme Personality of Godhead is full of bliss never fears anything.”

This means that they who understand the qualities of the Supreme become free of fear. In this way the scriptures affirm that the Supreme certainly does have qualities. The impersonalists claim that the Lord’s qualities are either falsely ascribed to Him or else are accepted only because of the material traditions of this world. However, because many of these qualities are present in the Lord alone and no one else, it cannot be said that these qualities are falsely ascribed to the Lord, and it cannot be said that the qualities of the Lord are accepted only because of the material traditions of this world, because the revelation of scripture does not describe them as such. They who claim that the qualities of the Lord are imagined to facilitate worship of the Lord, as in the statement, “Imagining the goddess of speech to be a cow, one should worship her,” are all fools. Their idea is destroyed by the simple statement of the scriptures:

satyam etyopāsīta

“Approaching the Supreme Reality, one should worship Him.”

Even the impersonalists, in their commentaries on *Sūtras* 3.3.12 and 3.3.38, affirm that the Supreme is bliss and there is no qualitative difference between the individual souls and the Supreme. In this way they accept the idea that the qualities of the worshipable Supreme are real and not metaphors. When the scriptures say that the Supreme has no qualities [*nirguna*], the intention is that He has no material qualities. Because it is clearly stated that the Lord is not different from His qualities, this objection of the impersonalists should not be taken seriously. For the purpose of meditation the Lord’s qualities should be understood to be of two kinds: *āṅgi-niṣṭha* [general qualities] and *āṅga-niṣṭha* [features of the Lord’s form]. It is said that one may collect from all the different parts of the *Vedas* descriptions of the Lord’s qualities.
**Adhikarana 1: The Lord Should Be Sought**

_Vişaya_ [thesis or statement]: To understand the Lord’s qualities one should search all the texts of the _Vedas_.

_Saṁśaya_ [doubt]: Should one learn about the Supreme by studying the branch [şākha] of Vedic texts in one’s own community, or should one study all the branches of the _Vedas_?

_Pūrvapaksa_ [the opponent speaks]: Because all the branches of the _Vedas_ are different, one should study only one’s own branch of the _Vedas_.

_Siddhānta_ [conclusion]: In the following words the author of the _sūtras_ gives His conclusion:

**Sūtra 3.3.1**

`sarva-vedānta-pratayayāṁ codanādy-aviśeṣāt`

_sarva_ – all; _veda_ – _Vedas_; _anta_ – end; _pratayayam_ – meaning; _codana_ – injunctions; _ādi_ – beginning with; _aviśeṣāt_ – because of not being different.

**Because the Vedic injunctions and all other sources of real knowledge are not genuinely different, therefore knowledge of Him is the conclusion of all the _Vedas_.**

The word _anta_ [end] here means the conclusion. The word _anta_ is also used in this way in _Bhagavad-gītā_ [2.16]:

`ubhayor api dṛṣṭo 'ntaḥ`

“This they have concluded by studying the nature of both.”

Thus knowledge of the Supreme Personality of Godhead is the final conclusion taught by all the _Vedas_. Why is that? The _sūtra_ explains, _codanādy-aviśeṣāt_: “because the Vedic injunctions and all other sources of real knowledge are not genuinely different.” The ‘other sources of real knowledge’ here refers to logic. In the _Brhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad_ [1.4.7] it is said:

`ātmety evopāsīta`

“One should worship the Supreme.”

These words, as well as the promptings of logic, confirm the truth that these statements and many others like them in passages of all the _Vedas_, all describe the same Supreme Lord. The same Supreme Lord is described in the same way in the _Kaṇva_, Madhyandina, and other recensions of the _Vedas_.

Here someone may object: “In one part of the _Vedas_ [ _Brhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad_ 3.9.28] it is said:

`vijñānam ānandam brahma`

“The Supreme is knowledge and bliss.”

However, in another part of the _Vedas_ [ _Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad_ 1.1.9] it is said:

`yah sarva-jñaḥ sarva-vit`

“The Supreme knows everything.”

Because in this way each branch of the _Vedas_ speaks differently of the Supreme, they do not all describe the same object as the Supreme.”

If this is said, the author of the _sūtras_ gives the following reply.
Sūtra 3.3.2

*bhedād iti cen naikasyām api*

*bhedāt* – because of difference; *iti* – thus; *cet* – if; *na* – not; *ekasyām* – in one; *api* – also.

If it is said, “because they are different,” then I reply, “It is not so, for it is also in one.”

It is not so. That is so because these differences are seen even within the same branch of the *Vedas*. An example of this is the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad*, which gives the following two statements:

* satyaṁ jñanam anantām brahma
  “The limitless Supreme is both knowledge and truth.”

* ānando brahma
  “The Supreme is bliss.”

In this way the many different branches of the *Vedas* describe the same form of the Supreme Lord. They do not contradict each other at all.

Sūtra 3.3.3

*svādhyāyasya tathātvena hi samācāre ‘dhikārāc ca*

*svādhyāyasya* – of Vedic study; *tathātvena* – by being so; *hi* – indeed; *samācāre* – in Vedic rituals; *adhiκārāt* – because of being qualified; *ca* – also.

**Because of being qualified to study the *Vedas* and to perform rituals.**

In the *Taittirīya Aranyaka* [2.15] it is said:

*svādhyāyo ‘dhyetavyaḥ*

“One should study the *Vedas.*”

In this way one is ordered to study all the *Vedas*. In the *Smṛti-śāstra* it is said:

*vedaḥ kṛtsno ‘dhigantavyaḥ sa-rahasyo dvijanmanā*

“A brāhmaṇa should study the entire *Veda*, including even its confidential portions.”

The word *samācāre* in this sūtra means “because all are qualified to perform all pious rituals.” The *Smṛti-śāstra* confirms this in the following words:

* sarva-vedokta-mārgena karma kuryaṁ nityaśaḥ
  “Following the path of all the *Vedas*, one should regularly perform pious rituals. The result attained by this is bliss. The *Veda* was divided into different branches because the people were not able to perform all the pious deeds described in the *Veda*. That is why Vyāsa divided the *Veda* into many branches and the one collection of pious rituals into many collections.”*
Therefore, if a person is able to do so, he may understand the Supreme by performing all the spiritual practices described in all the branches of the Vedas. In the next sutra the author gives an example of indirect reasoning leading to the same conclusion.

**Sūtra 3.3.4**

\[sava-vac ca tan niyamah\]

sava – yajñas; vat – like; ca – and; tat – that; niyamah – rule.

**That rule is like the yajñas.**

The savas here are the seven yajñas beginning with the saurya-yajña and ending with the šataudanayajña which, because they are performed with only one fire, may be performed only by the followers of the Atharva-Veda. The worship of the Supreme Lord, however, can performed by the followers of all the Vedas.

The word salīla-vat [like water] is an alternate reading of the first word in this sutra. If this reading is accepted, then the sutra means, “As all waters flow, without restriction, into the sea, so all the statements of the Vedas describe the Supreme Personality of Godhead, to the degree they have the power.” In the Agni Purāṇa it is said:

\[yathā nadināṁ salīlam\]
\[śaktyā sāgaratāṁ vrajet\]
\[evaṁ sarvāni vākyāni\]
\[puṁ-śaktyā brahma-vittaye\]

“As the water of rivers, as far as it has the power, always enters the sea, so all words should be employed to understand the Supreme Lord, as far as their speaker has the power.”

**Sūtra 3.3.5**

\[darśayati ca\]

darśayati – reveals; ca – also.

**It also reveals it.**

In the Kaṭha Upaniṣad [1.2.15] it is said:

\[sarve vedā yat-padam āmananti\]

“All the Vedas describe the Supreme Personality of Godhead.”

This means that the Supreme Lord is known by all the Vedas, or, in other words, the Vedas reveal the truth of Lord Hari. The word ca [and] in this sutra hints, “as far as one has the power.” They who have the power may worship the Supreme Lord by performing the pious rituals described in all the branches of the Vedas. They who do not have the power must worship the Supreme Lord by performing the pious rituals described in their own community’s branch of the Vedas. The conclusion is that the Supreme Lord is the final object of knowledge sought by all the branches of the Vedas. This truth was also described in the very beginning of Vedānta-sūtra [1.1.4]:

\[tat tu samanvayāt\]
“But that [Lord Viṣṇu is the sole topic of discussion in the Vedas] is confirmed by all scriptures.”

This truth is thus repeated here in the discussion of the properness of studying the different qualities of the Supreme Lord. Because this repetition strengthens the argument here, there is no fault in it.

**Adhikaraṇa 2: The Lord’s Qualities are Described in Many Scriptures**

**Viṣaya [thesis or statement]:** Now the author of the sūtras will show that the many qualities of the Lord may be understood by studying all the Vedas. For example, in the Atharva-Veda’s Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad [1.8], the Supreme Lord is described as a cowherd boy dark like a tamāla tree, dressed in yellow garments, decorated with a Kaustubha jewel, wearing a peacock-feather, playing graceful melodies on a flute, and surrounded by gopas, gopīs and surabhi cows. He is the Deity of Gokula. In the Rāma-tāpanī Upaniṣad, however, He is described as the Lord whose left side is decorated by Jānakī-devī, holding a bow, the killer of Rāvana and a host of demons, and the king of Ayodhyā. In the Rāma-tāpanī Upaniṣad it is said:

\[
\text{prakṛtī sahitaḥ śyāmāḥ} \\
\text{pīta-vāsā jaṭā-dharah} \\
\text{dvi-bhujaḥ kuṇḍalī ratna-} \\
\text{māli dhīro dhanur-dharah}
\]

“Decorated with earrings and a jewel necklace, His complexion dark, His garments yellow, and the hair on His head matted, saintly, two-armed Lord Rāma is accompanied by Goddess Sītā.”

In the scriptures the Lord’s form as Nṛsiṁha is described as having a frightening face and filling His enemies with fear. The word bhiṣāna [frightening], which occurs in Lord Nṛsiṁha’s mantra, is explained in the following words of the Nṛsiṁha-tāpanī Upaniṣad:

\[
\text{atha kasmād ucyate bhiṣānam iti. yasmād yasya rūpaṁ drṣṭvā sarve lokāḥ sarve devāḥ sarvāṇi} \\
\text{bhūtāni bhītyā palāyante svayam yataḥ kutaścin na bibheti. bhīṣāsmād vātaḥ pavate bhīṣodeti} \\
\text{sūryaḥ. bhīṣāsmād agniś cendraś ca mṛtyur dhāvatī pañcamah.}
\]

“Why is the Lord called frightening? Because when all the demigods, all the worlds, and all living entites see His form, they all flee in fear. He fears no one. Out of fear of Him the wind blows and the sun rises. Out of fear of Him fire, the moon, and death all flee.”

The Lord’s form as Trivikrama is described in the Rg-Veda [1.154.1]:

\[
\text{viṣṇor nu kaṁ vīryāṇi prāvocāṁ yaḥ pārthivāni vimame rajāṁsiyo askambhayad uttaram} \\
\text{sadhasṭhaṁ vicakramāṇas tredhorugāya}
\]

“How can I describe all the glories and powers of Lord Viṣṇu, who created the heaven and earth, established the worlds above and below, and with three steps passed over all the worlds?”

Therefore, like the yajñas, which are different because they are offered to different demigods, so the method of worship to be offered to the different forms of the Supreme Lord are all different because the qualities of the Lord’s different forms are different.

**Saṁśaya [doubt]:** Should the Śruti-śāstra’s description of the Lord’s qualities in one kind of worship be added in another kind of worship, or not?

**Pūrvapakṣa [the opponent speaks]:** The Śruti-śāstra’s description of the Lord’s qualities in one passage should be heard. One should not mix that description with other descriptions of the Lord in other passages.
Siddhānta [conclusion]: In the following words the author of the sūtras gives His conclusion.

Sūtra 3.3.6

\[
\text{upasamāhāro 'ṛthābhedād vidhi-śeṣa-vat samāne ca }
\]

\[\text{upasaṁhāraḥ – combination; artha – of meaning; abhedāt – because of non-difference; vidhi – of duties; }\]
\[\text{śeṣa – remainder; vat – like; samāne – in being the same; ca – also.}\]

In what is common there may be combination, for the meaning is not different. This is like what is appropriate for the rules and regulations.

The word ca [and] is used here for limitation.

When the method of worship is the same, when the pure Supreme Personality of Godhead is the object of worship, and when the Lord’s form is the same, then the qualities described in different places may be combined together. Why is that? The sūtra explains, arthābhedād: “For the meaning is not different.” This means because the worshipable qualities of the Supreme Lord are in all respects not different, that is because they are one, or harmonious. Here the sūtra gives an example: “This is like what is appropriate for the rules and regulations.” Descriptions of the rules for performing a yajña may be collected from different passages because the ritual of a yajña is everywhere the same. In the Atharva Veda’s Rāma-tāpanī Upaniṣad it is said:

\[
yo vai śrī-rāmacandraḥ sa bhagavān ye matsya-kūrmādy-avatārā bhūr bhuvah svas tasmai namo namah.\]

“bhūr bhuvah svah. Obeisances to Śrī Rāmacandra, the Supreme Lord who descends in a host of incarnations, such as Lord Matsya and Lord Kūrma.”

In this passage the forms of Lord Matsya and other incarnations are brought into a meditation on Lord Rāmacandra.

In the Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad it is said:

\[
eko ‘pi san bahudhā yo ‘vabhāti\]

“Although He is one, He appears in many forms.”

In this passage the forms of Lord Rāmacandra and other incarnations are brought into a meditation on Lord Kṛṣṇa. In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam it is said of Lord Kṛṣṇa:

\[
namas te raghu-varyāya rāvaṇāntakarāya ca\]

“Obeisances to You, the best of the Raghus and the killer of Rāvaṇa.”

Many other passages may be quoted to show meditations where descriptions of different forms of the Lord are brought together.

Here someone may object: “In the Brhad-āranyaka Upaniṣad [1.4.7] it is said:

\[
atmety evopāśīta\]

“One should worship the Supreme.”

Therefore one should worship the Lord alone and not bring other forms into one’s method of worship.”

If this is said, then the author of the sūtras gives the following reply.
Sūtra 3.3.7

anyathātvāṁ śabdād iti cen nāviṣeṣāt

anyathātvam – otherwise; śabdāt – because of the Śruti-śāstra; iti – thus; cet – if; na – not; aviṣeṣāt – because of the lack of something specific.

If someone says, “It is otherwise because of the Śruti-śāstra”, then I reply, “It is not so, for there is nothing specific.”

If someone claims that Brhad-āranyaka Upaniṣad [1.4.7] refutes the idea of thus bringing together the Lord’s qualities, then I reply: No. It is not so. Why not? The sūtra explains, aviṣeṣāt: “For there is nothing specific.” This means that no scriptural passage declares, “The Lord’s qualities should not be worshiped together.” The word eva [indeed] in Brhad-āranyaka Upaniṣad [1.4.7] means that one should not worship what is not the Supreme Lord. It does not mean that the Lord’s qualities cannot be worshiped together. If it is said, “The king alone is seen,” that does not mean that the king’s royal parasol and other royal paraphernalia were absent.

It is said:

tasmād yathā-śakti-guṇāś cintyāḥ

“Therefore, as far as one is able, one should meditate on the Lord’s various transcendental qualities.”

In this way it is proved that one may bring together the various qualities of the Lord. As a vaidūrya jewel manifests many different colors, so the Supreme Lord manifests many different forms. Each of these forms is the same perfect, complete, and pure Supreme Lord. In some forms the Lord displays all His qualities, and other forms the Lord does not display all His qualities. Therefore a wise devotee may meditate on all the Lord qualities, as described in the scriptures, as being present in the particular form of the Lord that is chosen for worship.

Adhikaraṇa 3: The Ekāntī Devotees do not Meditate on all the Lord’s Qualities

Viśaya [thesis or statement]: Although they are learned in the many branches of the Vēdas, still the ekāntī devotees meditate only the Lord’s qualities as revealed in their own Upaniṣads, which they have carefully studied. Even though they are aware of other qualities, they do not meditate on them. In this way there is an exception to what was previously described. The subject matter here is a passage of Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad.

Saṃśaya [doubt]: In the worship performed by the ekāntī devotees, should all the qualities of the Supreme Lord be brought together or not?

Pūrvapakṣa [the opponent speaks]: Because the Lord’s qualities are to be praised, the ekāntī devotees should meditate in this way, if they are able.

Siddhānta [conclusion]: In the following words the author of the sūtras gives His conclusion.

Sūtra 3.3.8

na vā prakaraṇa-bhedāt paro varīyāstvādi-vat
Certainly not. Because of the differences in devotion. Like the Parovariya and others.

The word vā [or] is used in the sense of “certainly.” The ekāntī devotees do not bring the qualities of the Lord’s other forms into the specific form they have selected to worship. In this way the ekāntī devotees who are exclusively devoted to Lord Kṛṣṇa do not think of Lord Nṛsiṁha’s mane, teeth, fearsomeness, and other qualities as present in Lord Kṛṣṇa. In the same way the ekāntī devotees who are exclusively devoted to Lord Nṛsiṁha do not think of Lord Kṛṣṇa’s flute, stick, peacock feather and other qualities as present in Lord Nṛsiṁha. Why is that? The sūtra explains, prakaraṇa-bhedāt: “Because of the differences in devotion.”

The word prakaraṇa here means “the most exalted [pra] activity [karaṇa].” Therefore the word prakaraṇa here refers to devotional service. The word bhedāt here means “because of the differences.”

Because it is more intense and deep, the devotion of the ekāntī devotees is more exalted than the devotion of the sva-niṣṭha devotees. Here the author of the sūtras gives and example. He says: “Like the Parovariya and others.” This means that the ekāntī devotees who are exclusively devoted to the Lord’s form as the Hiranya Puruṣa in the sun planet do not ascribe to their object of worship the qualities of the Lord’s form as Parovariya, a form worshiped by the worshipers of Udgītha. The word Parovariya means “greater than the greatest.” The example here is of the worshipers of Udgītha in relation to Parovariya.

Here someone may object: “Is it not so that the ekāntīs and sva-niṣṭhas are both called devotees of the Lord and therefore they must both meditate on all the Lord’s qualities just as they who call themselves brāhmaṇas must all meditate on the Gāyatrī mantra?”

If this is said, then the author of the sūtras gives the following reply.

Sūtra 3.3.9

samjñātaḥ cet tad uktam asti tu tad api

samjñātaḥ – by the name; cet – if; tat – that; uktam – spoken; asti – is; tu – but; tat – that; api – also.

If it is because of the name, then I reply, “But it was already said. That also.”

The word tu [but] is employed here to dispel doubt. If it is said that all who worship the Supreme must meditate on all His qualities, then the answer was already given in the previous sūtra: “Certainly not. Because of the differences in devotion.” Although they are certainly included in the general category of the Lord’s devotees, the ekāntīs are the best of the devotees, and therefore they do not meditate on all the qualities of the Lord.

If it were otherwise then they would not be the best of the devotees. Because the ekāntī devotees are passionately devoted to one particular form of the Lord, they are superior to the sva-niṣṭha devotees who are in a general way devoted to all the forms of the Lord. Also, even the sva-niṣṭha devotees are not able to meditate on every single one of the Lord’s qualities. In the Rg Veda [1.154.1] it is said:

viṣṇor nu kaṁ vīryāṇi prāvocāṁ

“How can I describe all the glories and powers of Lord Viṣṇu?”
In the *Smṛti-śāstra* it is said:

\[
\text{nāntaṁ guṇānāṁ aguṇasya jagmur}
\]
\[
\text{yogeśvarā ye bhava-pādma-mukhyāḥ}
\]

“Even Brahmā, Śiva, the demigods, and the masters of *yoga* could not find the end of the transcendental qualities of the Lord, who is beyond the touch of the modes of matter.”

The *sūtra* explains, *asti* [it is that], which here means, “the idea that all devotees are exactly alike because they all bear the name ‘devotee’ is the logical fallacy called ‘hetor anvaya-vyabhicāra’.” As the worshipers of the Parovarīya form of the Lord and the worshipers of the Hiraṇmayā form of the Lord have different conceptions of the Lord, even though both are considered worshipers of the Udgītha, in the same way the *svaniṣṭha* and *ekāntī* devotees also have different conceptions of the Lord, the *svaniṣṭha* devotees meditating on all the Lord’s qualities and the *ekāntī* devotees meditating only on the qualities of the particular form of the Lord they have chosen to worship. That is the conclusion of these two Adhikaraṇas.

**Adhikaraṇa 4: The Lord’s Childhood and Youth**

*Viṣaya* [thesis or statement]: Now the author begins a discussion of bringing together in meditation the Lord’s qualities in His childhood and other ages. In the *Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad* it is said:

\[
\text{krṣṇāya devakī-nandanāya oṁ tat sat. bhūr bhuvah svas tasmai vai namo namaḥ.}
\]

“oṁ tat sat. bhūr bhuvah svaḥ. Obeisances to Lord Kṛṣṇa, the son of Devakī.”

The author of *Nāma-kaumudī* defines the name Kṛṣṇa in the following way:

\[
\text{krṣṇa-sābdas tu tamāla-nīla-tviṣṭa yaśodā-stanandhaye rūḍhiḥ}
\]

“The word Kṛṣṇa means: Yaśoda’s infant son, who is dark like a *tamāla* tree.”

In the *Rāma-tāpanī Upaniṣad* it is said:

\[
\text{oṁ cin-maye ’smin mahā-viṣṇau}
\]
\[
\text{jāte daśarathe harau}
\]
\[
\text{raghoḥ kule ’khilaṁ rāti}
\]
\[
\text{rājate yo mahi-sthitah}
\]

“oṁ. Born as Daśaratha’s son in King Raghu’s dynasty, the spiritual Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is known as Maḥa-Viṣṇu and Hari, was splendidly manifested on the earth. He delighted everyone.”

In this way the *Śruti-śāstra* describes the qualities of the Supreme Lord in His childhood and other ages. Many similar descriptions are also found in the *Smṛti-śāstra*.

*Sanśaya* [Doubt]: Should one meditate on these descriptions of the Lord in His childhood and other ages, or should one not meditate on them?

*Pūrvapakṣa* [the opponent speaks]: One should not meditate on the form of the Lord in His different ages, for then the Lord’s form would be sometimes large and sometimes small. This would contradict the *Śruti-śāstra*’s advice that in one’s meditation the features of the Lord should be harmonious.

*Siddhānta* [conclusion]: In the following words the author of the *sūtras* gives His conclusion.
It is proper to meditate on the Lord in His childhood and other ages because the Lord is all-pervading and because the Lord is not limited to His features in His different ages. In Sūtra 3.2.38 the Lord’s all-pervasiveness was confirmed. The Lord’s so-called ‘birth’ is not in reality a change of condition for Him. In the Puruṣa-sūkta prayer it is said:

ajāyamāno bahudhā vijāyate

“Although He is never born, the Lord takes birth again and again in many different forms.”

Therefore the word ‘birth’ here means the appearance of the Supreme Lord, who never really takes birth. The word ca [also] in this sūtra means, “also because He is the reservoir of transcendental mellows.” This is confirmed in the Taittirīya Upaniṣad [2.7.1]:

raso vai saḥ

“The Supreme Personality of Godhead is the reservoir of transcendental mellows.”

By His inconceivable potency, the Supreme Lord appears in a particular form appropriate to the mellows and pastimes His devotees desire. This is perfectly proper. The Lord has numberless devotees, beginning with the liberated souls. This is described in the Rg Veda [1.22.20]:

tad viṣṇoh paramaṁ padaṁ
sadā paśyantī sūrayah

“The wise and learned devotees always see the supreme abode of Lord Viṣṇu.”

The Supreme Lord, who is always one, simultaneously appears in His different ages before His different devotees. Something similar is seen in Brhad-āranyaka Upaniṣad [5.2.1-3], where the syllable da was interpreted in three ways by the demigods, human beings, and demons. In this way, because the Supreme Lord is all-pervading and because the Lord always remains one, one should certainly meditate on the Lord’s pastimes of childhood and other ages.

### Adhikaraṇa 5: The Lord’s Activities are Eternal

Pūrva-pakṣa [the opponent speaks]: “Because the Supreme Lord is by nature eternal, it may be said that His activities performed with His associates in His childhood and other ages are also eternal. In this way His many different activities, from beginning to end, may all be considered to be eternal. However, it is illogical to say that there can be an eternal previous action that is followed by another action. If the previous action is followed by a subsequent action, then the eternality of the previous action is destroyed. If one action is eternal then any subsequent action must be performed by a different person. To say that the subsequent action is performed by the same person contradicts both scripture and direct experience. Every action has a beginning and an end. Without beginning and end no action can be brought to completion, and without such beginnings and ends there can be no experience of the nectar of transcendental mellows [rasa]. For these reasons, how can it be possible that the Lord’s activities are eternal? If the Lord’s activities were eternal they would be still and unchanging, like a painted picture. If it is said that the same actions are repeated again and again and in that way they are eternal, then I say that there are bound to be times when the beginning of the action is different, and
thus the subsequent actions will become changed, and the action would then not be repeated in the
same way as before. Therefore, how can it be that the activities of the Lord are eternal? Therefore it
should not be accepted that the activities of the Lord are eternal.”

Śiddhānta [conclusion]: In the following words the author of the sūtras gives His reply to this idea.

Sūtra 3.3.11

sarvābhedād anyatre
er
sarva – all; abhedāt – because of non-difference; anyatra – in another place; ime – they.

Because of complete non-difference they are in another place.

Both Lord Hari and His associates are the same persons in both previous and subsequent actions. Why
is that? The sūtra explains, sarvābhedād: “Because of complete non-difference.” This means that
because there is no difference in their personalities, the same Lord Hari and the same associates present
in the previous actions are also present in the subsequent actions. That Lord Hari remains one even
though He expands into many forms is confirmed in the Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad in these words:

eko ‘pi san bahudhā yo ‘vabhāti

“Although He is one, the Supreme Lord appears in many forms.”

Also, in the Smṛti-śāstra it is said:

ekāneka-svarūpāya

“Although He is one, the Supreme Lord appears in many forms.”

This is also true of the Lord’s liberated associates, who remain one even though they appear in many
forms. In the Bhūma-vidyā [Chāndogya Upaniṣad 7.26.2] this is said of the liberated souls. In the
Smṛti-śāstra this is also said in the description of the Lord’s marriage with many princesses and in
other pastimes also. In this way the Lord and the liberated souls can, retaining their identities, expand
themselves to be present eternally in different places in time. The sentence “It was twice-cooked” is
understood by an intelligent person to mean that one thing was cooked twice, not that two separate
foods were separately cooked. In the same way the sentence, “He called out the word ‘cow’ twice,”
means that one cow was addressed twice, not that two cows were addressed. In this way Lord Hari, His
eternal associates, and His transcendental abodes all retain their identities even though they are
manifested in many different places and perform activities that are all eternal even though their
activities have a beginning and an end. In this way it is said that a wonderful variety of transcendental
mellows are manifested by this sequence of eternal events. It is not that these ideas do not have their
root in the descriptions of scripture. In the Brhad-āranyaka Upaniṣad [3.8.3] it is said:

yad bhūtāṁ bhavac ca bhaviśyac ca

“The Supreme Personality of Godhead exists in the past, present, and future.”

In the Atharva Veda it is said:

eko devo nitya-līlānuraktah

“The one Supreme Personality of Godhead is eternally engaged in many, many transcendental
forms in relationships with His unalloyed devotees.”

The Supreme Lord Himself affirms [Bhagavad-gītā 4.9]:
janma karma ca me divyam

“One who knows the transcendental nature of My appearance and activities does not, upon leaving the body, take his birth again in this material world, but attains My eternal abode, O Arjuna.”

Only a person who has attained the Supreme Lord’s mercy can understand and accept all of this, as the Supreme Lord Himself declares [Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 2.9.32]:

yāvān aham yathā-bhāvo yad-rūpa-guṇa-karmakaḥ tathaiva tattva-vijñānam astu te mad-anugrahāt

“All of Me, namely My actual eternal form and My transcendental existence, color, qualities, and activities, let all be awakened within you by factual realization, out of My causeless mercy.”

In this way it is proved that the Lord’s activities are eternal. However, only the actions that the Lord performs with the help of His spiritual potency are eternal, and the actions that the Lord performs with the help of His material potencies and material time are not eternal, for if the Lord’s creation of the material universes were eternal then the eventual dissolution of the universes could not occur.

**Adhikaraṇa 6: Meditation on the Lord’s Qualities**

**Viśaya** [thesis or statement]: Now the author of the sūtras discusses the following point. In the Vedānta scriptures the Lord’s blissfulness and other transcendental qualities are all described.

**Saṃśaya** [doubt]: Should all the qualities of the Lord be combined together in the devotees’ meditation, or should they not be combined in that way?

**Pūrvapakṣa** [the opponent speaks]: The qualities of the Lord should not be combined in meditation, for there is not evidence to say that this should be done. Because it is not said in scripture that all the qualities of the Lord should be combined in meditation, therefore they should not be so combined.

**Siddhānta** [conclusion]: In the following words the author of the sūtras gives His conclusion.

**Sūtra 3.3.12**

ānandādayaḥ pradhānasya

ānanda – bliss; ādayaḥ – beginning with; pradhānasya – of the Supreme.

Of the Supreme those qualities that begin with bliss.

The transcendental qualities of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, such as His bliss and knowledge, and His paternal affection for they who take shelter of Him, are all described in the Śruti-śāstra. These qualities should all be combined in the devotees’ meditation, for all together they increase the devotees’ thirst to attain the Lord.
Adhikarana 7: The Supreme Lord Is Full of Bliss

Viśaya [thesis or statement]: In the Śruti-śāstra it is said that the blissful Supreme Personality of Godhead has a head and other limbs that are composed of transcendental pleasure. In the Taittirīya Upaniṣad [2.5.1] it is said:

\[ \text{tasya priyam eva śirah} \]

“The Supreme Personality of Godhead is like a bird whose head is composed of transcendental pleasure.”

Saṃśaya [doubt]: Are the qualities of the Supreme Lord to be remembered in every meditation, or are they not to be remembered in every meditation?

Pūrvapakṣa [the opponent speaks]: It has already been explained that the Lord’s bliss and other qualities should be brought together when there is meditation on the Lord. Because the Lord’s pleasure, as described here in the Taittirīya Upaniṣad, is not really different from the Lord’s bliss mentioned before, therefore it should be included in all meditations on the Lord.

Siddhānta [conclusion]: In the following words the author of the sūtras gives His conclusion.

Sūtra 3.3.13

\[ \text{priya-śirastvāy-aprāptir upacayāpacayau hi bhide} \]

priya – pleasure; śirah – the head; tvā – the state of being; ādi – beginning with; aprāptih – non-attainment; upacaya – increase; apacayau – and decrease; hi – indeed; bhide – in the difference.

There is not attainment of the qualities that begin with His head consisting of pleasure. In the difference there is increase and decrease.

The truth that the Lord’s head is composed of pleasure, as well as other qualities of the Lord, are not to be employed in every meditation without exception. Lord Viṣṇu, who is full of transcendental bliss, has the shape of a human being, not the shape of a bird, as described in this passage of Taittirīya Upaniṣad.

Furthermore, the bird described in this passage of Taittirīya Upaniṣad is composed of happiness and joy that increase and decrease. Thus there is a difference. The Lord is not like that. His happiness never increase or decreases. Thus the qualities described in this passage of Taittirīya Upaniṣad should not be included in every meditation on the Lord.

Sūtra 3.3.14

\[ \text{itare tv artha-sāmānyāt} \]

itare – others; tu – but; artha – of result; sāmānyāt – because of equality.

But others because of the sameness of the result.

However other passages of Taittirīya Upaniṣad, such as 2.5.1 [tasmād vā etasmāt... “The Supersoul is full of bliss. From Him this world has come.”], 2.6.2 [so ‘kāmayata... “The Supreme Personality of Godhead desired: I shall become many. I shall father many children.”], and 2.8.1 [bhīṣāsmāt... “Out of fear of the Supreme Lord the wind blows and the sun rises.”], which appear both before and after
Taittirīya Upaniṣad 2.5.1, and which describe the Supreme Personality of Godhead’s all-pervasiveness, spiritual bliss, creation of the material universes, supreme power and opulence, and many other of the blissful Supreme Lord’s transcendental qualities, may be included in the devotees’ meditations. Why is that? The sūtra explains, artha-sāmānyāt: “Because of the sameness of the result.”

Meditation on the Lord’s qualities, such as His supreme power, His opulences, His friendliness to all, His being the shelter of all, and His granting liberation, qualities described in the Vedānta scriptures, brings liberation as its result. Therefore one should meditate on these qualities of the Lord.

Here someone may ask: “Why is the Supreme Personality of Godhead described as a bird in Taittirīya Upaniṣad 2.5.1?”

In the Kaṭha Upaniṣad it is said:

ātmānāṁ rathinam viddhi

“Know that the soul is the chariot driver.”

In this way the soul is described as the chariot driver and the material body is described as the chariot. The purpose of this little parable in the Kaṭha Upaniṣad is to teach that the devotees should diligently control their senses. However, in this parable of the bird in Taittirīya Upaniṣad 2.5.1 no purpose is anywhere to be seen. What is the purpose then? The Vedas do not speak parables without a purpose behind them.

Fearing that someone may speak these words, the author of the sūtras next proceeds to explain the meaning of this parable of the bird.

Sūtra 3.3.15

ādhyānāya prayojanābhāvāt

ādhyānāya – for meditation; prayojana – other purpose; abhāvāt – because of the absence.

Because of the absence of another purpose, it is for meditation.

This sūtra means, “This parable is meant for meditation. This is so because of the absence of another purpose.” The word ādhyāna here means meditation. This is the meaning. In Taittirīya Upaniṣad [2.1.2] it is said:

brahma-vid āpnoti param

“One who knows the Supreme attains the Supreme.”

The Supreme is manifested in two ways: 1. in His original form, and 2. in the forms of His pastime incarnations. In His original form the Lord has the names Nārāyaṇa, Vāsudeva, Saṅkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna, and Aniruddha.

They whose intelligence is firmly anchored in the world of matter find it very difficult to meditate on the Lord, who is spiritual, blissful, and all-pervading. Therefore, in order that the conditioned souls may more easily understand the Lord, the Taittirīya Upaniṣad describes the blissful Lord in this parable of “a bird whose head is pleasure.” In this way the conditioned souls attain elevated spiritual intelligence and are able to meditate on the Supreme directly.

Meditation on the annamaya-puruṣa feature of the Lord is given in Taittirīya Upaniṣad 2.1.2. Meditations on the prāṇamaya, manomaya, and vijñānāmaya-puruṣas are given in Taittirīya Upaniṣad 2.2.1, and meditation on the Ananadamaya-puruṣa feature of the Lord is given in Taittirīya Upaniṣad
2.5.1. These five aspects of the Supreme need not always been included in every meditation on the Supreme.

Here someone may object: “The Supreme is one. There is no basis for your statement that the Supreme is five.”

To this objection the answer is given: In the Gopāla- tāpanī Upaniṣad it is said:

\[
\text{ekō ‘pi san bahudhā vibhāti}
\]

“Although He is one, the Supreme Lord appears in many forms.”

In the Śruti-śāstra it is said:

\[
\text{ekaṁ santāṁ bahudhā drśyamānam}
\]

“Although He is one, the Supreme Personality of Godhead is seen to be many.”

In the Catur-veda-śikhā it is said:

\[
\text{sa śīrah sa dakṣiṇah pakṣaḥ sa uttara-pakṣaḥ sa ātmā sa pucchaḥ}
\]

“He is the head. He is the right wing. He is the left wing. He is the Self. He is the tail.”

In the Bṛhat-saṁhitā it is said:

\[
\text{śīro nārāyaṇaḥ pakṣo dakṣiṇah savya eva ca pradyumnaś cāniruddhaś ca san deho vāsudevakāḥ nārāyaṇo ‘tha san deho vāsudevaḥ śiro ‘pi vā pucchaṁ saṅkarṣaṇaḥ prokta eka eva ca pañcadhā aṅgāṅgitvena bhagavān krīḍate puṟuṣottamaḥ aiśvaryān na viroḍhaḥ ca cintyas tasmin janārdane atarkye hi kutas tarkas tv apramaye kutaḥ pramaḥ}
\]

“Nārāyaṇa is the head. Pradyumna and Aniruddha are the right and left wings. Vāsudeva is the torso. Or, Nārāyaṇa is the torso, and Vāsudeva is the head. Saṅkarṣaṇa is the tail. In this way the one Supreme Personality of Godhead is manifested in five ways. In this way the Supreme Personality of Godhead enjoys pastimes as both the limbs and the possessor of the limbs. The Lord’s power and opulence have no limit. He is inconceivable. How can mere logic grasp Him? He is immeasurable. How can He be measured?”

Sūtra 3.3.16

\[
\text{ātma-śabdāc ca}
\]

\[
\text{ātma – ātmā; śabdāt – from the Śruti-śāstra; ca – also.}
\]

Also because the Śruti-śāstra employs the word ātmā.”

In Taittirīya Upaniṣad 2.5.1 the bird is described as ātmā [the Supreme]. For this reason the bird here cannot be an ordinary bird with wings, a tail, and other like features. The bird here is a parable.

Sūtra 3.3.17

\[
\text{ātma-gṛhītir itara-vad uttarāt}
\]
ātma – ātma; grhītiḥ – understanding; itara – others; vat – like; uttarāt – from the following.

Ātmā here means “consciousness.” Because of the following it is like the others.

Here someone may object: “In the Tañtirīya Upaniṣad [2.2.3] it is said:

anyo ‘ntara ātām vā prāṇamayaḥ

“The ātma within is the prāṇamaya.”

The word ātma is used to mean dull matter and it is also used to mean the individual spirit souls. In Tañtirīya Upaniṣad [2.5.1] it is said:

anyo ‘ntara ātāmnandamayaḥ

“The ātma within is the Ānandamaya.”

Since the word ātma is thus used for these different puruṣas, how can it be said that the word ātma means the all-pervading, all-knowing Supreme Personality of Godhead?”

To this I reply: The word ātma here means the all-pervading, all-knowing Supreme Personality of Godhead. This is so because this word is used in that way in many other passages of scripture. For example, in the Śruti-śāstra it is said:

ātma vā idam eka evāgra āśīt

“In the beginning only the Supreme Personality of Godhead [ātma] existed.”

Why does the word ātma here refer to the Supreme Personality of Godhead? The sūtra explains, uttarāt: “Because of the following.” This description of the bird is followed by these words [Tañtirīya Upaniṣad 2.6.2]:

so ‘kāmayata bahu syām

“The Supreme Personality of Godhead desired: ‘I shall become many.’ ”

Thus this passage, which follows the parable of the bird, proves that ānandamaya bird in that passage is certainly the Supreme Personality of Godhead. In this way it cannot be that the bird in that parable is not the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Therefore the purpose of that parable is to assist the meditation on the Supreme Lord. This must be so, for that is the appropriate explanation.

Sūtra 3.3.18

anvayād iti cet syād avadhāraṇāt

anvayāt – because of the connotation; iti – thus; cet – if; syāt – may be; avadhāraṇāt – because of the understanding.

If it is said, “This inference cannot be made,” then I reply, “It is right, for that is the understanding here.”

Here someone may object: “It is not possible to conclude, merely on the strength of the following passages, that the word ātma here refers to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. After all, in the previous passages the word ātma referred to inanimate matter as well as the individual spirit souls.”
If this is said, then the sūtra replies, syāt: “It is right.” This means: “It is right that the word ātmā here refers to the all-pervading, all-knowing Supreme Personality of Godhead.” Why is that? The sūtra explains, avadhāranāt: “For that is the understanding here.” In the previous passages the word ātmā clearly referred to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. There it was said [Taittirīya Upaniṣad 2.5.1]:

tasmād vā etasmād ātmanāḥ

“The Supersoul is full of bliss. From Him this world has come.”

To interpret the word ātmā in any other way would do violence to the meditation described in this passage about the ānandamaya-puruṣa. In this passage, passing over the prānāmaya-puruṣa and the other puruṣas, one comes to rest at the description of the ānandamaya-puruṣa, who is certainly the Supreme Personality of Godhead. As one may point to the star Arundhatī by first pointing to other stars as reference points, so the description of these other ātmās is meant to lead the reader to the ānandamaya-puruṣa, who is the Supreme. Thus the passages that precede and follow the parable of the bird clearly show that the ātmā here is the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Thus it is proved without doubt.

**Adhikaraṇa 8: The Supreme Personality of Godhead is the Father**

*Viṣaya* [thesis or statement]: Here the author of the sūtras begins his description of other qualities of the Supreme Lord, such as the Lord’s being the father of all. In the Śruti-śāstra it is said:

mātā pitā bhṛatā nivāsaḥ śaraṇaṁ suḥṛd gatir nārāyaṇaḥ

“Lord Nārāyaṇa is our mother, father, brother, home, shelter, friend, and goal.”

In the *Jitānta-stotra*, Chapter One, it is said:

pitā mātā suḥṛd bandhur
bhṛatā putras tvam eva me
vidyā dhanaṁ ca kāmaś ca
nānyat kiñcito tvaya vinā

“O Supreme Lord, You are my father, mother, friend, kinsman, brother, son, knowledge, wealth, and desire. I have nothing else but You.”

In the *Jitānta-stotra*, in the middle and end, it is said:

janma-prabhṛti dāso ’smi
śiśyo ’smi tanayo ’smi te
tvaṁ ca svāṁi gurur mātā
pitā ca mama mādhava

“O Lord Mādhava, from the time of my birth I have been Your servant, disciple, and son. You are my master, guru, mother, and father.”

*Sāṁśaya* [doubt]: Should the devotees meditate on the Lord as their father, son, friend, and master, or should they not meditate in that way?

*Pūrvapakṣa* [the opponent speaks]: The Śruti-śāstra explains:

ātmety evopāśita

“One should worship the Supreme Lord.”

That is how one should meditate on the Lord. One should not meditate on Him as one’s father or in these other ways.
Siddhānta [conclusion]: In the following words the author of the sūtras gives His conclusion.

Sūtra 3.3.19

cāṇyākyanād apūrvaṃ

cāṇya – result; ākhyānāt – because of the statement; a – like; pūrvaṃ – what was before.

Because of the description of the result it is like the former.

Here the word pūrva means “the previous qualities, such as being full of bliss.” The word apūrva means “the qualities, such as being the father, that are like these previous qualities.” The devotees should meditate on these qualities. Why? The sūtra explains, cāṇyākyanāt: “Because of the description of the result.” The result here is the result attained by worshiping the Lord with love. This is explained in Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad [5.14]:

bhāva-grahyam anīḍākhyam

“The spiritual Supreme Personality of Godhead is attained only by love.”

The Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself declares [Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 3.25.38]:

yeśāṁ aham priya ātmā sutaś ca
sakā guruḥ suhṛdo daivam īṣṭam

“Because the devotees accept Me as their friend, their relative, their son, preceptor, benefactor, and Supreme Deity, they cannot be deprived of their possessions at any time.”

Therefore, as the devotees meditate on the Lord as full of transcendental bliss, so they should also meditate on Him as their father or other relative. The idea that the Śruti-śāstra’s declaration ātmety evopāśīta [One should worship the Supreme Lord] means that one should not think of the Lord as one’s father has already been refuted in this book.

Adhikaraṇa 9: One Should Meditate on the Transcendental Form of the Supreme Personality of Godhead

Vīṣaya [thesis or statement]: Now begins a discussion of the truth that one should meditate on the Supreme as having a form. In the Brhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad [1.4.7] it is said:

ātmety evopāśīta

“One should worship the Supreme Lord.”

In the Brhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad [1.4.15] it is also said:

ātmānam eva lokam upāśīta

“Everyone should worship the Supreme Lord.”

In the Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad [1.8-10] it is said:

tad u hovāca hairanyo gopa-veśam abhrābham taruṇaṁ kalpa- drumāśritam. tad iha ślokā bhavanti. sat-puṇḍarīka...

“Brahmā said: ‘The Supreme Personality of Godhead is a cowherd boy. His complexion is like a monsoon cloud. He stays under a desire tree. The following verses describe Him: His eyes are like lotus flowers...’ ”
After thus describing the form of the Supreme Lord, the Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad [1.10] concludes:

\[\text{cintayamś cetasā kṛṣṇāṁ mukto bhavati saṁśreḥ.}\]

“Meditating on Lord Kṛṣṇa in this way, a person becomes free from the cycle of repeated birth and death.”

Samśaya [doubt]: Does one attain liberation by worshiping the Lord in His formless feature or by worshiping the Lord in His feature with a form?

Pūrvapakṣa [the opponent speaks]: One should worship the Lord in His formless feature. Only in that way will one attain liberation. Only by meditating on the Lord with undivided attention does one attain liberation. Because in the form of the Lord there are eyes and many other different limbs and features of the Lord it is not possible to give undivided attention to any of them, and therefore it is not possible to attain liberation by meditating on the form of the Lord.

Siddhānta [conclusion]: In the following words the author of the sūtras gives His conclusion.

\[\text{Sūtra 3.3.20}\]

\[\text{samāna evam cābhedāt}\]

\[\text{samānah – equal sentiment; evam – thus; ca – although; abhedāt – because of not being different.}\]

\[\text{Although it is not divided in that way, because of non-difference.}\]

The word ca here means ‘although.’ Although the Lord’s eyes and other bodily features and limbs are all different, still they leave the same impression on the mind. The features of the Lord are like golden statues, which although present in a great variety of forms, still, because they are all made of gold, leave the same impression on the mind. Why is that? The sūtra explains, abhedāt: “Because of non-difference.” This means, “Because the Lord’s eyes and other features and limbs are not different from His soul or Self.” For this reason, by worshiping the form of the Supreme Lord one attains liberation. If this were not so, then the description in Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad [1.10], \[\text{cintayamś cetasā kṛṣṇāṁ mukto bhavati saṁśreḥ}\]—“Meditating on the form of Lord Kṛṣṇa in this way, a person becomes free from the cycle of repeated birth and death”—would not be true. In the Smṛti-śāstra it is said:

\[\text{satya-jñānāntānanda-mātraika-rasa-mārtayāḥ}\]

\[\text{“The forms of the Supreme Lord are undivided. They are all full of eternity, knowledge, infinity, and bliss.”}\]

In this way it is said that although the Lord’s forms present a very wonderful variety, still They are all one in essence. Although this truth was also described in Sūtra 3.2.14, the merciful teacher of Vedānta repeats the same teaching so this very difficult topic may be clearly understood.

In this section the truth that one should meditate on all the qualities of the different forms of the Lord has been explained. Now will be considered the nature of the qualities the Lord manifests in His āveśa incarnations, where He gives special powers to certain individual souls. In the Chāndogya Upaniṣad [7.1.1 and 3] it is said:

\[\text{adhiḥī bhagavan iti hopasāśa da sanat-kumāraṁ naradas taṁ hovāca... taṁ māṁ bhagavān śokasya pāraṁ tārayatu.}\]
“Nārada approached Sanat-kumāra and said, ‘O master, please teach me... O master, please take me across this ocean of grief’.”

Sanat-kumāra and some other individual spirit souls are śaktyāveśa-avatāras of the Lord. This means that the Lord has empowered them with knowledge or certain other virtues. That is why Sanat-kumāra is here addressed as bhagavān [master].

Saṁśaya [doubt]: Should one meditate on these great devotees as having all the transcendental qualities of the Supreme Lord, or should one not meditate on them in that way?

The author of the sūtras here considers this question; first He gives the positive view.

Sūtra 3.3.21

sambandhād evam anyatṛāpi
sambandhāt – because of the touch; evam – thus; anyatra – in others; api – also.

Because of His touch it is like this in others also.

All the qualities of the Lord are present in the four Kumāras and the other śaktyāveśa-avatāras. Why is that? The sūtra explains, sambandhāt: “Because of His touch.” As fire transforms an iron rod, so the touch of the Supreme Lord transforms these great devotees.

Now the author of the sūtras gives the negative view.

Sūtra 3.3.22

na vāviśeṣāt
na – not; vā – or; aviśeṣāt – because of non-difference.

Or not, because of non-difference.

One should not meditate on all the qualities of the Supreme Lord being present in the śaktyāveśa-avatāras. Why not? The sūtra explains, aviśeṣāt: “Because of non-difference.” This means that even though the Lord has given them special powers, they remain individual spirit souls. They are not fundamentally different from other individual spirit souls. The word vā [or] here hints that because they are very dear to the Lord, these souls should be treated with great respect.

Sūtra 3.3.23

darśayati ca
darśayati – reveals; ca – and.

It also reveals it.

This truth is revealed in the Chāndogya Upaniṣad [7.1.3], for Nārada Muni, who is here seeking the truth, is himself a śaktyāveśa-avatāra. In this way it is clear that all the qualities of the Lord are not present in the śaktyāveśa-avatāras.
Sūtra 3.3.24

sambhṛti-dyu-vyāpty api cātāḥ
sambhṛti – maintenance; dyu – in the sky; vyāpty – spreading; api – also; ca – and; atāḥ – thus.

Therefore maintenance and being present everywhere in the sky also.

In this sūtra the words sambhṛti and dyu-vyāpty are brought together in a samāhāra-samāsa. These two qualities should not be attributed to the śaktyāveśa-avatāras. The reason has been given in the previous sūtra. The reason is the śaktyāveśa-avatāras are individual spirit souls [jīvas]. In the Eṇāyanaṇya recension of the Vedas it is said [Taittiriya Brāhmaṇa 2.4.7.10]:

brahma jyeṣṭhā vīryā sambhṛtāni brahmāgre jyeṣṭhaṁ divam ātatāna. brahma bhūtānām prathamāṁ tu jajñē. tenārhati brahmaṇā spardhītuṁ kaḥ.

“The Supreme Personality of Godhead possesses all powers. The Supreme Personality of Godhead is present everywhere in the great sky. The Supreme Personality of Godhead is the first of persons. Who can rival the Supreme Personality of Godhead?”

In these words the glories of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, beginning with His maintenance of all and His being present everywhere in the great sky, are described. These qualities cannot be ascribed to the individual spirit souls, for they are qualities of the Supreme Personality of Godhead alone.

Now the author of the sūtras gives another reason why these qualities cannot be ascribed to the individual spirit souls.

Sūtra 3.3.25

puruṣa-vidyāyām iva cetareśāṁ anāmnānāt
puruṣa – of the Supreme Personality of Godhead; vidyāyām – in the knowledge [the Puruṣa-sūkta prayers]; iva – like; ca – also; itareśāṁ – of others; anāmnānāt – because of not being mentioned.

It is taught of the Supreme Personality of Godhead in the Puruṣa-sūkta prayers, and it is not mentioned of others.

In the descriptions of the four Kumāras and other śaktyāveśa-avatāras there is no description of their being the creator and controller of all or of having other qualities that belong to the Supreme Lord alone. For this reason all the qualities of the Supreme Lord should not be ascribed to them.

Giving an example of the difference between the individual souls and the Supreme Lord, the sūtra explains, puruṣa-vidyāyām: “It is taught of the Supreme Personality of Godhead in the Puruṣa-sūkta prayers.” The word ca [and] here hints, “and in the Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad and other scriptures also.”

These qualities of the Lord are mentioned in the descriptions of the Lord in these places but they are not mentioned in the descriptions of Kumāras and other śaktyāveśa-avatāras.

The śaktyāveśa-avatāras may be compared to iron rods heated by a fire. As iron rods heated by a fire have two natures, so the śaktyāveśa-avatāras may have two natures also. One nature is like the heat generated by the fire. That nature is the specific qualities with which the Lord has empowered the śaktyāveśa-avatāra. They who meditate on these qualities in the śaktyāveśa-avatāra may thus meditate on all the qualities of the Supreme Lord. The other nature is like the iron rod itself.
That is the nature of the individual spirit soul who is empowered to be a śaktyāveśa-avatāra. They who meditate on his qualities may not ascribe to him all the qualities of the Supreme. However, they may meditate on the śaktyāveśa-avatāra's possessing the qualities of a great devotee, such as his being very dear to the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Because He dearly loves them, the Lord accepts the śaktyāveśa-avatāra devotees as His personal associates. That is why in the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam and other scriptures these great devotees are respectfully addressed as bhagavān [lord]. However, because they are individual spirit souls, the śaktyāveśa-avatāras are all humble and lowly in comparison to the Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself. This is the proper understanding of their nature.

Adhikaraṇa 10: The Ferocity of the Supreme Personality of Godhead

Viṣaya [thesis or statement]: It has been said that one should meditate on the Supreme, especially by thinking of the Lord’s qualities as described in one’s own branch of the Vedas. However, it is said that they who desire liberation should not meditate on certain of the Lord’s qualities. In the Atharva Veda [8.3.4 and 17] it is said:

\[\text{agne tvam yatudhānasya bhindi}\]

“O fiery Lord, please cut Yātudhāna into pieces!”

and

\[\text{tam pratyañcam arcīśa bidhya marma}\]

“O Lord, with Your flames please break open Yātudhāna’s heart!”

Saṁśaya [doubt]: Should one meditate on the Lord as one who cuts others to pieces, or should one not meditate on Him in this way?

Pūrva-pakṣa [the opponent speaks]: Because the Lord becomes violent only to stop the demons, therefore it is proper to meditate on the Lord in this way.

Siddhānta [conclusion]: In the following words the author of the sūtras gives His conclusion.

Sūtra 3.3.26

\[\text{vedhādy artha-bhedāt}\]

vedha – cutting into pieces; ādi – beginning with; artha – of result; bhedāt – because of difference.

[Not] cutting into pieces and other violent acts because of a different result.

The word na [not] should be understood in this sūtra. One should not meditate on the Lord as the punisher who cuts others into pieces and performs other violent acts. Why not? The sūtra explains, atha-bhedāt: “Because of a different result.” The word artha here means result. The saintly devotees renounce violence and other negative qualities. That is the meaning here. The Lord Himself declares [Bhagavad-gītā 8.8]:

\[\text{amānitvam adambitvam ahiṁsā kṣāntir arjavam}\]

“Humility, pridelessness, nonviolence, tolerance, and simplicity... all these I declare to be knowledge.”
Also, in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam the Lord says:

\[ \text{nivṛttatāṁ kṛma seveta pravṛttatāṁ mat-paras tyajet} \]

“My devotee should renounce materialism and cultivate renunciation.”

**Adhikaraṇa 11: Meditation on the Supreme Personality of Godhead**

**Viṣāya** [thesis or statement]: In the Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad [1.11] it is said:

\[ \text{jñātvā devaṁ sarva-pāśāpahānīḥ} \\
\text{kṣīṇah kleśair janma-mṛtyu-prahānīḥ} \\
\text{tasyābhidhyānāṁ tṛtiyāṁ deha-bhede} \\
\text{viśvaiśvaryaṁ kevala āpta-kāmaḥ} \]

“By understanding the Supreme Personality of Godhead, a person becomes free from all material bondage, his sufferings perish, and he escapes the cycle of repeated birth and death. By meditating on the Supreme Lord, when one is finally separated from the material body he enters the opulent spiritual world and attains a spiritual body where all his desires are fulfilled.”

This verse means that by understanding the Supreme Personality of Godhead a person cuts the ropes of false possessiveness that make him think that his body, house, and other things are all his property. Here the scripture glorifies knowledge of the Lord, saying that knowledge destroys the sufferings of repeated birth and death. By understanding the Lord and always meditating on Him, a person becomes free of both gross and subtle material bodies, travels beyond Candra-loka and Brahma-loka, and enters the third realm, the realm of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. What is that realm of the Lord like? The scripture explains: it is viśvaiśvarya [full of spiritual opulences], it is kevala [untouched by matter], and it is āpta-kāma [all desires are fulfilled there]. Here it is clearly said that this abode is attained by understanding the truth of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, truth taught in the revealed scriptures.

**Saṁśaya** [doubt]: Is meditation mandatory or optional?

**Pūrvapakṣa** [the opponent speaks]: Meditation is mandatory, for it increases faith and thus fixes the mind on the Lord.

**Siddhānta** [conclusion]: In the following words the author of the sūtras gives His conclusion.

**Sūtra 3.3.27**

\[ \text{hānau tu pāyaya-śabda-śeṣatvāṁ kuśācchanda-stuty- upagānava tu tat uktam} \]

\[ \text{hānau – in destruction; tu – indeed; upāyana – approaching; śabda – statement; śeṣatvāṁ – because of being a supplement; kuśā – kuśa grass; ācchanda – according to desire; stuti – prayer; upagāna – song; vat – like; tat – that; uktam – said.} \]

But in liberation because of approaching, because of the Śruṭi-śāstra, and because of the means to the end it is like voluntary kuśa grass, prayers and hymns. This is said.

The word *tu* [but] is used here to begin the refutation of the opponent’s argument. When, by understanding the truth of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, a person becomes free from the ropes of matter, such a wise devotee falls in love with the Supreme Personality of Godhead. In that condition he spontaneously meditates on the qualities of the Lord as they are described in the revealed scriptures. He does this as a person voluntarily takes kuśa grass, recites prayers, and sings hymns.
As a student, when his daily studies are completed, may of his own accord take kuśa grass in his hand and then recite prayers and sing hymns, so the liberated souls of their own accord meditate on the Supreme Personality of Godhead. This is hinted by the use of the word abhidhyāna.

The reason for this is given in the word upāyana: “He has approached the Supreme Lord.” The word upāyana means that he loves the Lord and he has approached the Lord. The word śabda means “words of instruction.” The word śeṣatvāt means “because all these words are the means to attain a specific end.” This is described in Brhad-āranyaka Upaniṣad [4.4.21]:

\[
\text{tam eva dhīrāḥ...}
\]

“A wise man, aware of the Lord’s true nature, should engage his intelligence in the Lord’s service. He should not meditate on other things. He should not waste many words speaking of other things.”

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam [3.9.41] the Lord Himself says:

\[
pūrtena tapasā yajñair
dānair yogaih samādhiṇā
brāhmaṇi niḥśreyasāṁ puṁsāṁ
mat-prītiḥ taittavin-matam
\]

“It is the opinion of expert transcendentalists that the ultimate goal of performing all traditional good works, penances, sacrifices, charities, mystic activities, trances, etc., is to invoke My satisfaction.”

For this reason the liberated souls of their own accord meditate on the Lord. That is the meaning. It is very difficult to understand the truth by studying the difficult Vedas and following the difficult path of logic, for there are many branches of the Vedas and many complicated arguments in logic.

One whose heart is softened with love for the blissful Supreme Lord is not attracted to follow the path of the Vedas or the path of logic, for these paths only make the heart harder and harder. There are times, however, where these two paths can be employed to increase one's love and devotion to the Lord. In the following words the author of the sūtras gives the reason and evidence for all of this.

Sūtra 3.3.28

sāmparāye tartavyābhāvāt tathā hy anye

sāmparāye – in love for the Supreme Personality of Godhead; tartavya – of bondage; abhāvāt – because of the non-existence; tathā – so; hi – indeed; anye – others.

When there is love for the Supreme Personality of Godhead, because of the absence of bondage. So the others indeed.

The word sāmparāya here means the Supreme Personality of Godhead, because all truths meet in Him. Sāmparāya is therefore said to mean “love for the Supreme Personality of Godhead.” This word is formed by adding the affix an [Pāṇini’s Āṣṭādhyāyī 4.4.21].

For one who loves the Lord, meditation on the Lord is spontaneous and not ordered by rules. Why is that? The sūtra explains: tartavyābhāvāt: “Because of the absence of bondage.” This means, “Because there is nothing to cross beyond,” or “Because there are no ropes of bondage that must be severed.”

The Vājasaneyīs [Brhad-āranyaka Upaniṣad 4.4.21] explain:
tam eva dhīro vijñāya prajñāṁ kurvīta brāhmaṇaḥ. nānudhyāyed bahūn śabdān vāco 
vigāpanaṁ hi tat.

“A wise man, aware of the Lord’s true nature, should engage his intelligence in the Lord’s service. He should not meditate on other things. He should not waste many words speaking of other things.”

The Lord Himself explains [Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 11.20.31]:

tasmād mad-bhakti-yuktasya 
yogino vai mad-ātmanaḥ
na jñānaṁ na ca vairāgyaṁ
prāyaḥ śreyo bhaved iha

“For one who is fully engaged in My devotional service, whose mind is fixed on me in bhakti-yoga, the path of speculative knowledge and dry renunciation is not very beneficial.”

Adhikāraṇa 12: The Way to Attain Liberation

Viśaya [thesis or statement]: Thus it has been explained that one should worship and meditate on the Lord as a person who possesses qualities. Now will be described two different ways to worship the Lord. In the Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad it is said:

tad u hovāca hairanyo gopa-veśam abhrābham...

“Brahmā said: The Supreme Lord appears like a cowherd boy, and His complexion is like a monsoon cloud.”

In the Rāma-tāpanī Upaniṣad it is said:

Prakṛtyā sahitaḥ syāmaḥ...

“Decorated with earrings and a jewel necklace, His complexion dark, His garments yellow, and the hair on His head matted, saintly, two-armed Lord Rāma is accompanied by Goddess Sītā.”

In the Bṛhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad [4.4.22] it is said:

sa vā ayam ātmā sarvasya vaśi sarvasyeśāṁh.

“The Supreme Personality of Godhead is the master and controller of all.”

By meditating on the Lord’s sweetness one attains the Lord. This method is called ruci-bhakti [the path of spontaneous love]. By meditating on the Lord’s glory and opulence one also attains the Lord. This method is called vidhi-bhakti [the path of following rules and regulations].

Samāśaya [doubt]: Of these two kinds of meditation which is the best?

Pūrvapākṣa [the opponent speaks]: Because the result of both these kinds of meditation is uncertain, one should not desire to perform either of them.

Siddhānta [conclusion]: In the following words the author of the sūtras gives His conclusion.

Sūtra 3.3.29

chandata ubhayāvirodhāt

chandataḥ – by the will; ubhaya – of both; avirodhāt – because there is no contradiction.

By His will [it is not so], for in these two there is no contradiction.
As a frog jumps from far away, so the word *na* [not] should be brought to this *sūtra* from *Sūtra 22*. The word *chandataḥ* here means, “by the Supreme Lord’s will the way of devotion is divided into two paths.” How is that? The *sūtra* explains, *ubhayāvirodhaḥ*: “For in these two there is no contradiction.” This means that the descriptions of these two paths do not exclude each other.

The beginningless and eternally perfect way of devotion flows like a heavenly Ganges river from the Lord’s personal associates to the newest beginners in devotional service. Lord Hari wishes that all the spirit souls in the material universes associate with His devotees and voluntarily follow the path of devotion to Him. By following that path they can attain Him. To attain this end one should seek the mercy of a kind *madhyama-adhikārī* devotee. The *madhyama-adhikārī* devotee is described in the following words:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{iśvare tad-adhīneṣu} \\
\text{bāliśeṣu dviṣatsu ca} \\
\text{prema-maitrī-krpāpeksā} \\
\text{yaḥ karoti sa madhyamaḥ}
\end{align*}
\]

“A person who loves the Supreme Lord, befriends the devotees, is merciful to the people in general, and ignores the demons, is a *madhyama-adhikārī* devotee of the Lord.”

In this way it is clearly shown that Lord Hari is not cruel, unfair, or unkind.

**Sūtra 3.3.30**

\[
gater arthavattvam ubhayathānyathā hi virodhaḥ
\]

*gateḥ* – of the goal; *arthavattvam* – attainment; *ubhayathā* – on both; *anyathā* – otherwise; *hi* – indeed; *virodhaḥ* – contradiction.

**In both ways the goal is attained, for otherwise there would certainly be a contradiction.**

Both paths lead to the goal. By the path of meditating on the Lord’s sweetness and also by the path of meditating on the Lord’s glory and opulence, one may attain the goal. The word *arthā* here means “the goal of life.” The attainment of the Supreme Personality of Godhead is the highest goal of life.

That is the meaning. To say this is not so is to contradict the scriptural texts that describe these two paths. The word *hi* [certainly] in this *sūtra* is evidence that both paths are equal. One cannot quote *Sūtra 3.3.6* to say that the methods of these two paths should be combined. These two paths are like the path of the *ekāntī* devotees, who do not wish to see in the Lord qualities other than those manifested by the Lord’s form they have chosen to worship. This will be described in *Sūtra 3.3.56*.

**Adhikaraṇa 13: The Path of Spontaneous Love**

*Viṣaya* [thesis or statement]: Here the author of the *sūtras* proves that *ruci-bhakti* [the path of spontaneous love] is the best.

*Sainśaya* [doubt]: Who is best: one who follows the path of spontaneous love [*ruci-bhakti*] or one who follows the path of following rules and regulations [*vidhi-bhakti*]?

*Pūrva-pakṣa* [the opponent speaks]: Because he carefully follows all the rules, one on the path of *vidhi-bhakti* is the best.
Siddhānta [conclusion]: In the following words the author of the sūtras gives His conclusion.

Sūtra 3.3.31

upapannas tal-lakṣaṇārthopalabdher lokavat

upapannah – best; tat – of that; lakṣaṇa – characteristic; artha – of the goal; upalabdheḥ – because of attainment; loka – in the world; vat – like.

It is best, because of attainment of the goal that is He who has that nature, as in the world.

A person who worships Lord Hari by following the path of ruci-bhakti is the best, or is the one who has attained the goal of life. Why is that? The sūtra explains, tal-lakṣaṇārthopalabdheḥ: “For it brings the goal that is He who has that nature.” The phrase “He who has that nature” here means, “He who loves His devotees.” This refers to the Supreme Personality of Godhead when He manifests His quality of sweetness. Here the word upalabdheḥ means “Because of independently attaining.” Then the author clarifies this by giving an example, lokavat: “As in the world.” The Lord is like a great king who himself comes under the control of an expert and devoted servant.

This nature of the Lord does not in any way diminish His supreme independence. This is so because the Lord’s being controlled by the love of His devotees is actually a great virtue on His part. The Supreme Personality of Godhead is attracted by the love of His devotees, and He reveals His own sweetness to the devotees that love Him. Seeing His sweetness, the devotees love Him all the more, and they respond by offering themselves to the Lord. The Lord accepts this offering, and by doing that, He sells Himself to His devotees in exchange for their love.

In this way the Lord makes His devotees very exalted and important so they can directly associate with the Lord. Without this it would not be possible for the devotees to see the Lord and associate with Him. Śrīmān Śukadeva Gosvāmī explains [Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 10.9.21]:

nāyaṁ sukhāpo bhagavān
dehināṁ gopikā-sutah
jñānināṁ cātma-bhūtānāṁ
yathā bhaktimatāṁ iha

“The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, the son of mother Yaśodā, is accessible to devotees engaged in spontaneous loving service, but He is not as easily accessible to mental speculators, to those striving for self-realization by severe austerities and penances, or to those who consider the body the same as the self.”

Although the Lord is controlled by all His devotees, He especially places Himself under the control of the devotees filled with spontaneous love for Him. Therefore the path of spontaneous love [rci-bhakti] is the best of all paths and the devotees who follow this path are the best of all devotees.

Adhikaraṇa 14: The Methods of Devotional Service

Viśaya [thesis or statement]: Now the author of the sūtras shows that there are two kinds of devotional service, one kind having a single part, and another kind having many parts.

In the first chapter of the Atharva Veda’s Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad the eighteen-syllable mantra is described. There it is said [1.6]:

yo dhyāyati rasayati bhajati so ‘mṛto bhavati
“One who meditates on the Supreme Personality of Godhead, glorifies Him, and worships Him, becomes liberated.”

Sāṁśaya [doubt]: Can one attain liberation by performing only one of these three, or must one perform them all?

Pūrvapakṣa [the opponent speaks]: The Upaniṣad names all three of them, and, after naming them, says that then one becomes liberated. Therefore one must perform all three in order to become liberated.

Siddhānta [conclusion]: in the following words the author of the sūtras gives His conclusion.

Sūtra 3.3.32

aniyamaḥ sarveśām avirodhāc chabdānumānābhyyām
aniyamaḥ – without a rule; sarveśām – of all; avirodhā – because there is no contradiction; śabda – Śruti-śāstra; anumānābhyyām – and Smṛti-śāstra.

There is no rule for them all, for there is no contradiction with the Śruti-śāstra and Smṛti-śāstra.

No rule declares that meditation, glorification, and worship must all be performed in order to attain liberation. Any one of them is sufficient for liberation. Why is that? The sūtra declares, śabda-Śruti-śāstra: “For there is no contradiction with the Śruti-śāstra and Smṛti-śāstra.” Later in the Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad [1.10] it is said:

cintayayi cetasa kṛṣṇaṁ mukto bhavati saṁśrteḥ
“By meditating on Lord Kṛṣṇa a person becomes liberated from the cycle of repeated birth and death.”

In the Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad [1.12] it is also said

pañca-padaṁ pañcāṅgaṁ japaṁ dyāvābhūṁī sūryācandramasau sāgni
“By chanting these five names one attains the Supreme Personality of Godhead, whose potencies are manifested as the heavenly planets, the earth, the sun, the moon, and fire.”

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam [12.3.51] it is said:

kīrtanād eva kṛṣṇasya mukta-saṅgah param vrajet
“Simply by chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa mahā-mantra one can become free from material bondage and be promoted to the transcendental kingdom.”

It is also said:

eko ’pi kṛṣṇāya kṛtaḥ pramāṇo
daśāśvamedhāvabhīthair na tulyāḥ
daśāśvamedhī punar eti janma
kṛṣṇa-pramāṇī na punar-bhavāya
“Ten aśvamedhāvabhīthas are not equal to once bowing down before Lord Kṛṣṇa. One who performs ten aśvamedhās again takes birth. One who bows before Lord Kṛṣṇa never takes birth again.”
These passages do not in any way oppose the statement of Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad [1.6]. If this were so then each scriptural statement affirming that liberation is attained by performing a certain kind of devotional service would have to be rejected. Therefore the statement of Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad [1.6] “He becomes liberated,” must be considered to be connected individually to each of the statements, “He who meditates on the Supreme Personality of Godhead,” “He who glorifies the Supreme Personality of Godhead,” and “He who worships the Supreme Personality of Godhead.”

The meaning here is, “If even only one of the many kinds activities of devotional service brings liberation, then how much more effectively will the performance of many kinds of activities in devotional service bring one to liberation?” This is a hint pointing to the nine activities of devotional service, beginning with hearing and chanting about the Lord.

Here someone may object: “Is it not so that the Śruti-śāstras teach that liberation is attained by meditation alone? In the Brhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad [4.5.6 and 2.4.5] it is said:

ātmā vā are draṣṭavyaḥ

“In a trance of draṣṭavyaḥ

Therefore how can it be said that liberation is attained by other methods, such as chanting the glories of the Lord?”

To this I reply: Chanting the glories of the Lord and the other activities of devotional service are woven together with meditation on the Lord. They are not separate. Therefore when one chants the Lord’s glories or performs other activities of devotional service, meditation on the Lord is also present, and when one meditates on the Lord, chanting the Lord’s glories and the other activities of devotional service are also present.

Here someone may object: “It is not correct to say that one can attain liberation simply by understanding the truth about the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Although they are perfect in knowledge of the Lord, Brahmā, Śiva, Indra, and the other demigods still remain in the material world. Indeed it is even seen that sometimes they oppose the Lord’s desires.”

If this is said, then the author of the sūtras gives the following reply.

Sūtra 3.3.33

yāvad-adhikāram avasthitir ādhikārikāṇām

yāvat – as long as; adhikāram – the post; avasthitih – the situation; ādhikārikāṇām – of they who hold the posts.

The office-holders stay for the duration of their terms in office.

We do not say that everyone who has perfect knowledge of the Supreme Personality of Godhead at once attains liberation.

However, their accumulated past karma is all destroyed by their knowledge of the Lord, and their present actions also bear no karmic result. When the term of life in their present body is exhausted, then they will attain liberation. Because they hold posts in the management of the universe, Brahmā and the other demigods do not become liberated until their terms of office expire. This is so even though their past and present karmic reactions are already destroyed.

When their terms of office expire, then they become liberated and enter the supreme abode of the Lord. This should be understood. The demigod Indra and the others like him that have relatively short terms
of office go, at the end of their terms, to the demigod Brahmā, whose term of office is much longer. When Brahmā attains liberation they all attain liberation with him. The author of the sūtras will describe this later in Sūtra 4.3.10.

As for the demigods opposing the Lord’s desires, they do this only in conformance with His wish, to assist the Lord’s pastimes. These demigods may appear to be materialists engaged in sense gratification, but that is only a false show. In truth they are transcendentalists fixed in knowledge of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Therefore, when their terms of office expire, they all attain liberation. Of this there is no doubt.

**Adhikaraṇa 15: Meditation on the Qualities of the Supreme Personality of Godhead**

*Viṣaya* [thesis or statement]: Now will be discussed the truth that qualities such as being neither great nor small should be attributed to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. In the Brhad-āranyaka Upaniṣad [3.8.8] it is said:

\[ etad vai tad aksaram gārgi brāhmaṇā abhivadanty asthūlam anava-hrasvam \]

“O Gārgī, the brāhmaṇas say that the Supreme Personality of Godhead is neither great nor small, tall nor short.”

It is also said:

\[ atha parā yayā tad aksaram adhigamyate yat tad adreśyam agrahyam agotram avarṇam acakṣuḥ-śrotram \]

“Please know that the Supreme never wanes nor does He ever die. The Supreme is never seen nor is He ever grasped. He is never born in any family. He cannot be described in words. The eyes and the ears cannot know Him.”

*Saṁśaya* [doubt]: Should these qualities of the Lord, where He is considered imperishable and neither great nor small be included in every meditation on Him, or should they not be included in every meditation on Him?

*Pūrvapakṣa* [the opponent speaks]: In Sūtra 3.3.20 it was said:

\[ samāna evam cābhedāt \]

“Although it is not divided in that way, because of non-difference.”

These words are understood to mean that the Supreme certainly does have a form. However the previous description [of the Lord as being imperishable and neither great nor small] cannot be considered to be a description of a being with form.

*Śiddhānta* [conclusion]: In the following words the author of the sūtras gives His conclusion.

**Sūtra 3.3.34**

\[ aksara-dhiyāṁ tv avarodhaḥ sāmāṇya-tad-bhāvābhhyāṁ aupasada-vat tad uktam \]

*aksara* – imperishable; *dhiyāṁ* – in the idea; *tu* – but; *avarodhaḥ* – acceptance; *sāmāṇya* – equality; *tat* – of Him; *bhāvābhhyāṁ* – with the qualities; *aupasada* – the Aupasat mantra; *vat* – like; *tat* – that; *uktam* – spoken.

**But because** He has the same qualities the idea of imperishability should be accepted, as in the Aupasat mantra. This has been explained.
The word *tu* [but] here begins the refutation of the opponent’s argument. The idea that the imperishable Lord is neither great nor small should be included in all meditations on Him. Why is that? The *sūtra* explains, *sāṁyata-tad-bhāvābhyaḥ*: “Because He has the same qualities.” The *Kātha Upaniṣad* [1.2.15] explains:

\[
\text{sarve vedā yat-padam āmananti}
\]

“All the Vedas glorify the Supreme.”

The worshipable Supreme is always the same. Therefore these features are present even though He has a form. Therefore the qualities like being neither great nor small are also present in the Lord’s form. This is the meaning. *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* [1.11] affirms that by understanding the Supreme Personality of Godhead one attains liberation. The knowledge here is knowledge of the Supreme as an extraordinary being, not as an ordinary being. To posit anything else is illogical and an insult to the Supreme. Therefore the qualities like being neither great nor small should be included with the qualities like being all-pervading, all-knowing, and full of bliss. In this way there is the knowledge that the Supreme is an extraordinary being. From this it may be inferred that the Supreme is different from all other persons. In this way it is proved that the form of the Supreme is free from anything that is bad or to be rejected. In *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* [8.3.24] it is said:

\[
\text{sa vai na devāsura-martya-tīryaṁ}
\]

\[
\text{na strī na śaṅdo na pumān na jantuḥ}
\]

\[
\text{nāyaṁ gunah karma na san na cāsan}
\]

\[
\text{niśedha-śeṣo jayatād aśeṣah}
\]

“He neither demigod nor demon, neither human nor bird nor beast. He is not woman, man, nor neuter, nor is He an animal. He is not a material quality, a fruitive activity, a manifestation or non-manifestation. He is the last word in the discrimination of ‘not this, not this,’ and He is unlimited. All glories to the Supreme Personality of Godhead.”

Prayed to with these words, which describe a being neither great nor small, the Supreme Personality of Godhead personally appeared in His transcendental form, a form that must be the same as the being described in these prayers. That appearance is described in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* [8.3.30]:

\[
\text{harir āvirāṣī}
\]

“The then the Supreme Personality of Godhead personally appeared.”

In this passage Gajendra prayed to the Lord, addressing Him in a certain way, and the Lord reciprocated by appearing in the form that was described in the prayers. If those prayers were not appropriate to the form of the Lord, then the Lord would have appeared only as a vague impersonal knowledge in Gajendra’s heart. In this way the idea that the Supreme Lord is a material demigod or some other kind of material being is clearly disproved. However, the Lord does appear in a form like that of a demigod or a human being, but these are His own forms and they are not material.

With the words *aupasada-vat* the *sūtra* gives an example to show that secondary features inevitably follow primary features. The word *upasat* here refers to a specific *mantra* in a specific Vedic ritual. When in its chanted in the Jamadagnya ceremony where *purodasa* cakes are offered with the *mantra* *agnier vai hotram*, the *upasat mantra* is chanted in the Sāma *Veda* style. However, when it is chanted in a *Yajur Veda* ceremony, the *upasat mantra* is chanted in the *Yajur Veda* style. In this way the secondary nature follows the primary nature. Thus the secondary qualities of the Lord must be understood according to His primary qualities. This is described in the *Vidhi-khaṇḍa* in the following words:
guṇa-mukhya-vyatikrame tad-arthatvān mukhyena veda-saṁyogaḥ

“When primary and secondary meanings are in conflict, the primary meaning should be accepted.”

Here someone may object: “The nature of the Lord’s form is described in the following words:
sarva-karma sarva-gandhaḥ

“The Supreme does everything. The Supreme possesses all fragrances.”

For this reason all meditations on the Lord should include a meditation on His doing everything and possessing all fragrances.”

If this is said then the author of the sūtras gives the following reply.

Sūtra 3.3.35

iyad āmananāt

iyat – this; āmananāt – by the description.

It follows the description.

The word iyat means “in that way.” In that way one should always meditate on the qualities of the Supreme Lord’s transcendental form. In what way? The sūtra explains, āmananāt: “Following the description.” This means, “Following the description of the Lord’s primary qualities.” Meditating on the Lord’s primary qualities are compulsory in meditation on Him. Therefore it is not necessary that in every meditation on the Lord one must meditate on His doing everything or possessing all fragrances.

Adhikaraṇa 16: The Lord’s Transcendental Abode

Viṣaya [thesis or statement]: Now it will be explained that one should meditate on the transcendental abode of the Lord. In the Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad [2.2.7] it is said:

yah sarva-jñāh sarva-vid yasyaiṣ mahimā bhuvi sambabhūva divye pure hy eṣa saṁvyomṇy ātmā pratiṣṭhitaḥ.

“The all-knowing Supreme Personality of Godhead, whose greatness is seen everywhere in the world, resides in His own effulgent city in the spiritual sky.”

However, it is also said [Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad 2.2.10]:

brahmaivedam viśvam idaṁ varisṭham

“The Supreme Personality of Godhead is present everywhere in the material world.”

Samśaya [doubt]: Is the description of the Lord’s city in the spiritual sky merely an allegory to describe the Lord’s glories, or is there in truth such a city with many wonderful palaces, gateways, surrounding walls, and other like features?

Pūrvapakṣa [the opponent speaks]: What is the answer? The answer is that these words are an allegory to describe the Supreme Lord’s glory. In the Chāndogya Upaniṣad [7.24.1] it is said:

sa bhagavaḥ kasmin pratiṣṭhitāḥ iti. sva-mahimni.

“Where does the Supreme Personality of Godhead reside? He resides in His own glory.”
In this way the Śruti-śāstra describes the Lord’s glory.

Therefore the spiritual sky described before is in truth the Lord’s glory. It is not any other thing. Therefore it is not possible that the Supreme Lord has an abode in a specific place. This is confirmed by the passage beginning with the words brahmaiva.

Siddhānta [conclusion]: In the following words the author of the sūtras gives His conclusion.

Sūtra 3.3.36

antarā bhūta-grāma-vat svātmanah

antarā – within; bhūta – made of material elements; grāma – city; vat – like; svātmanah – of himself.

Within it is like a material city to His own.

To His own that place in the spiritual sky is like a great city. The phrase “to His own” means “to His own devotee.” In the Śruti-śāstra [Munḍaka Upaniṣad 3.2.3 and Kaṭha Upaniṣad 1.2.23] it is said:

yam evaiśa vrūnte tena labhyah

“The Supreme Personality of Godhead is attained only by one whom He Himself chooses.”

Although everything in that city is perfectly spiritual, still it appears like a city made of earth and the other material elements. The word vat [like] used in the sūtra refutes the idea that this city is actually material in nature. The sūtra says that it is svātmanah: “Manifested from Himself.” In the Munḍaka Upaniṣad [2.2.11] it is said:


“The Supreme is eternal. He is in the east and the west. He is in the south and the north. He is below and He is above. He is everywhere in the universe. He is the greatest.”

As the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is full of transcendental knowledge and bliss, has a wonderful variety of features, such as His hands, feet, nails, and hair, so the Lord’s transcendental abode, which is manifested from His own personal form, also has a wonderful variety of features, such as the different forms in its land and water. Even though they are all spirit and nothing else, still they manifest a great variety, like a peacock feather or other colorful object.

Sūtra 3.3.37

anyathā bhedānupapattir iti ctenopadeśāntara-vat

anyathā – otherwise; bheda – difference; anupapattiḥ – non-attainment; iti – thus; cet – if; na – not; upadeśa – teaching; antara – another; vat – like.

If it is said, “It is otherwise, for there is no difference”, then I reply: No. It is not so. For it is like other teachings.

If it is said, “It is otherwise, for if there is no difference between them, then there must be no difference between the creator of the abode and the abode itself,” then the sūtra replies, “No. This is not a fault.”
Why is that? The sūtra replies, upadeśāntara-vat: “For it is like other teachings.” In the Taittirīya Upaniṣad it is said:

ānandaiḥ brahmaṇo vidvān

“A wise man knows the bliss of the Supreme.”

In this and other teachings it is said that even though the Supreme is one with His attributes, still He is also different from them. That is the meaning.

Here the opponent claims that because the Lord is not different from His transcendental abode, therefore it is not possible for the Lord to dwell in that abode, for He is not different from it. This is refuted by the scriptures’ assertion that the Lord is also different from His attributes, including His transcendental abode.

Sūtra 3.3.38

vyatihāro viśiṁśanti hītara-vat

vyatihāro – changeable; viśiṁśanti – distinguish; hi – indeed; itara – others; vat – like.

Like others, they say they are interchangeable.

In the Brhad-āranyaka Upaniṣad [1.4.15] it is said:

ātmānam eva lokam upāśīta

“One should worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead as identical with His spiritual abode.”

This passage of the Śrutī-śāstra clearly shows that the Supreme Personality of Godhead is identical with His spiritual abode and the spiritual abode is identical with the Supreme Personality of Godhead. In this way it is proved that they are mutually identical. The Supreme Personality of Godhead is the same as His spiritual abode, and the spiritual abode is the same as the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

In the Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad, in the passage beginning sat-pundarīka-nayanam, as well as in the passage beginning sāksāt prakṛti-paro ‘yam ātmā gopālaḥ, the Śrutī-śāstra clearly explains that the form of the Supreme Personality of Godhead is identical with the Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself, and the Supreme Personality of Godhead is identical with His own form. Thus the Supreme Personality of Godhead, whose form is full of knowledge and bliss, manifests Himself, by the agency of His inconceivable potency, as His own spiritual world, which He reveals only to His devotee and to no one else. In this way it is proved that as one meditates on the Supreme Personality of Godhead, so one should also meditate on the Supreme Personality of Godhead’s spiritual abode.

Adhikaraṇa 17: The Qualities of the Supreme Personality of Godhead

Viśaya [thesis or statement]: To confirm what has already been said, the following explanation is now begun. Many texts that describe the specific features and qualities of the Lord are the subjects of discussion [viśaya] here.

Saṃśaya [doubt]: Are the features and qualities of the Lord spiritual realities or are they material illusions?

Pūrva-pakṣa [the opponent speaks]: In Brhad-āranyaka Upaniṣad [4.4.19] it is said:
nehā nānāsti kiñcana

“Variety is not present in the Supreme.”

In Brhad-āranyaka Upaniṣad [2.3.6] it is said:

athā ādeśo neti neti

“This is the teaching: It is not this. It is not this.”

In this way the Śruti-sāstra teaches that the Supreme has neither features nor qualities.

Siddhānta [conclusion]: In the following words the author of the sūtras gives His conclusion.

Sūtra 3.3.39

saiva hi satyādayah

sā – she; eva – indeed; hi – indeed; satya – truth; ādayah – beginning with.

Indeed, she is those that begin with truth.

In the Śvetāsvatara Upaniṣad [6.8] it is said:

parāsyā śaktih

“The Supreme has a potency that is spiritual.”

In the Viṣṇu Purāṇa [6.7.61] it is said:

viṣṇu-śaktih parā

“Lord Viṣṇu has a potency that is spiritual.”

This potency is clearly different from the illusory material potency [māyā]. As heat is to fire, so this personal, spiritual potency is to the Lord. This potency is called parā śakti [spiritual potency] or svarūpa śakti [the Lord’s personal potency]. Because this spiritual potency manifests itself as the truthfulness and other qualities of the Lord, these qualities are not material or illusory. They are the actual qualities of the Lord. Two arguments proving that the Lord’s truthfulness and other qualities are manifestations of this spiritual potency will be given later. The neti neti passage quoted by the pūrvapaksin has already been refuted in Sūtra 3.2.22.

The word ādi [beginning with] should be understood to imply the Lord’s other qualities, such as His purity, mercy, forgiveness, omniscience, omnipotence, bliss, handsomeness, and many others. That is why Parāśara Muni defines the word bhagavān as “The Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is supremely pure, filled with spiritual good qualities, and the master of great potencies.” Then Parāśara Muni explains that the Lord has many transcendental qualities, such as His being the maintainer of all, the master of all, the master of all opulences, possessing all intelligence, and many other qualities also.

In the Viṣṇu Purāṇa [6.5.72-75] Parāśara Muni says:

śuddhe mahā-vibhūty-ākhye
pare brahmaṇi śabdyaṃ
taitreya bhagavac-chabdah
sarvā-kāraṇa-kāraṇe

“O Maitreya, the word bhagavān means ‘The Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is supremely pure, who is the cause of all causes, and who is the master of great potencies.’
sambharteti tathā bhartā
bha-kāro 'rtha-dvāyānvitaḥ
netā gamayitā sraṣṭā
ga-kārārthas tathā mune

“The syllable bha means ‘the maintainer of all’ or ‘the protector of all’. O sage, the syllable ga means ‘the leader’, ‘the savior’, or ‘the creator’.

aiśvaryasya samagrasya
vīryasya yaśasah sriyah
jñāna-vairāgyayos cāpi
śaṅnāṁ bhaga itiṅganaḥ

“Full wealth, strength, fame, beauty, knowledge, and renunciation: these are the six opulences of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

vasanti yatra bhūtāni
bhūtāmany akhilāmanī
sa ca bhūteṣv aśeṣeṣu
vakārārthas tato ’vyayah
jñāna-sakti-balaiṣṭvarya. . .

“The syllable va means ‘the Supreme Personality of Godhead, in whom everything abode, and who Himself abides in all beings.’ Therefore the word bhagavān means ‘The Supreme Personality of Godhead, who has all knowledge, power, and opulences’.”

Therefore the Supreme Personality of Godhead’s truthfulness and other qualities are not different from Him. In this way it is proved that one should meditate on the Supreme Personality of Godhead as being not different from His qualities.

**Adhikaraṇa 18: The Goddess of Fortune**

*Viṣaya* [thesis or statement]: Now will be explained the truth that the goddess of fortune is the best of the Lord’s qualities. In the Śukla Yajur-Veda [31.22] it is said:

śrīś ca te lakṣmīś ca patnyau

“O Supreme Personality of Godhead, Śrī and Lakṣmī are Your wives.”

Some say that Śrī is Ramā-devī and Lakṣmī is Bhāgavatī Sampat. Others say that Śrī is Vāg-devī and Lakṣmī is Ramā-devī. In the Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad [.141] it is said:

kamalā-pataye namaḥ

“Obeisances to Lord Kṛṣṇa, the goddess of fortune’s husband.”

In the Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad [1.42] it is also said:

ramā-mānasa-hamsāya govindāya namo namaḥ

“Obeisances to Lord Kṛṣṇa, who is the pleasure of the cows, the land, and the senses, and who is a swan swimming in the Mānasa lake of the goddess of fortune’s thoughts.”

In the Rāma-tāpanī Upaniṣad it is said:

ramādhārāya rāmāya

“Obeisances to Lord Rāma, on whom the goddess of fortune rests.”
Saṁśaya [doubt]: Is the goddess of fortune material, and therefore not eternal, or is she spiritual, and therefore eternal?

Pūrvapakṣa [the opponent speaks]: In Brhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad [2.3.6] it is said:

\[ \text{āthāta ādeśo neti neti} \]

“This is the teaching: It is not this. It is not this.”

These words show that, ultimately, the Supreme has no qualities and therefore it is not possible that the goddess of fortune can be His wife. The goddess of fortune is a material illusion, a manifestation of the material mode of pure goodness. Therefore the goddess of fortune is material and not eternal.

Siddhānta [conclusion]: In the following words the author of the sūtras gives His conclusion.

Sūtra 3.3.40

\[ \text{kāmādi-ītara tatra cāya-tanādībhyaḥ} \]

\[ \text{kāma – desires; ādi – beginning with; itaratra – in otherplaces; tatra – there; ca – also; āya – all-pervasiveness; tana – givingbliss and liberation; ādībhyaḥ – beginning with} \]

Because She is all-pervading, the giver of bliss, and the giver of liberation, and because She has many other virtues, She is the source of what is to be desired, both there and in other places also.

The words sā eva [she indeed] are understood from the previous sūtra. The “She” here is the transcendental goddess of fortune, who in both the spiritual sky [tatra], which is untouched by matter, and also in the world of the five material elements [itaratra], fulfills the desires of her Master. She is the eternal goddess of fortune. The word kāma here means “the desire for amorous pastimes.” The word ādi [beginning with] here means “personal service and other activities appropriate for these pastimes.”

In this way the goddess of fortune is transcendental. Why is that? The sūtra explains, āya-tanādībhyaḥ. The word āya means “all-pervading.” The word tana means “giving liberation and bliss to the devotees.” In these two ways She is like the Lord Himself, who possesses truthfulness and a host of other virtues. The word ādi [beginning with] here hints that she is spiritual in nature. The statement of Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad [6.8] also affirms that she is spiritual. In this way she is spiritual and all-pervading. She has knowledge, compassion, and a host of other virtues, and she is also a giver of liberation. In these ways the goddess of fortune is not different from the Supreme Personality of Godhead. In the Viṣṇu Purāṇa it is said:

\[ \text{nityaiva sā jagan-mātā viṣṇoh śrīr anapāyinī} \]
\[ \text{yathā sarva-gato viṣṇus tathaiveyaṁ dvijottama} \]

“The goddess of fortune is the eternal companion of Lord Viṣṇu. She is the mother of the universe. O best of the brāhmaṇas, as Lord Viṣṇu is all-pervading, so is She also.”

It is also said in the scriptures:

\[ \text{ātma-vidyā ca devi tvam vimukti-phala-dāyinī} \]

“The goddess of fortune, You are the Lord’s spiritual knowledge. You are the giver of liberation.”
If the goddess of fortune were not spiritual it would be improper to ascribe these two qualities [all-pervasiveness and giving liberation] to Her. That the goddess of fortune is spiritual is described in the following words of the Viṣṇu Purāṇa:

pracyate paramēṣo yo
yaḥ śuddho 'py upacārataḥ
prasīdatu sa no viṣṇur
ātmaḥ yaḥ sarva-dehinām

“May supremely pure Lord Viṣṇu, who is the Master of the spiritual goddess of fortune and the Supersoul of all living entities, be merciful to us.”

The word para-mā in this verse means “the spiritual [para] goddess of fortune [mā].” Because the goddess of fortune has been described as being all-pervading and having other spiritual attributes, it is not possible that She is material. In this way it is proved that the goddess of fortune is not material. For these reasons the goddess of fortune is spiritual and eternal.

Here someone may object: “Is it not so that if the goddess of fortune is the spiritual potency of the Lord, which is not different from the Lord, then it is not possible for her to have devotion for the Lord? After all, it is not possible for a person to have devotion to himself.”

If this objection is raised, then the author of the sūtras replies in the following words.

Sūtra 3.3.41

ādarād alopāḥ
ādarāt – because of devotion; alopāḥ – non-ending.

Because of devotion it does not cease.

Although in truth the goddess of fortune is not different from the Lord, still, because the Lord is a jewel mine of wonderful qualities, and also because He is the root of the goddess of fortune’s existence, the love and devotion that the goddess bears for Him never ceases. The branch never ceases to love the tree, nor the moonlight the moon. Her love and devotion for the Lord is described in many places in the Śruti-śāstra. In the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam [10.29.37] it is said:

śrīr yat-padāmbuja-rajaś ca kame tulasyā labdhvāpi vakṣasi padaṁ kila bhṛtya-juṣṭam

“Dear Kṛṣṇa, the lotus feet of the goddess of fortune are always worshiped by the demigods, although she is always resting on Your chest in the Vaikuṇṭha planets. She underwent great austerity and penance to have some shelter at Your lotus feet, which are always covered by tulasī leaves.”

Here someone may object: “Is it not true that amorous love is possible only when there are two: the lover and the beloved? If there is no difference between the lover and the beloved, then love is not possible between them.”

If this is said, then the author of the sūtras gives the following reply.

Sūtra 3.3.42

upasthite 'tas tad-vacanāt
upasthite – being near; atāḥ – thus; tat – of that;vacanāt – from the statement.
It is in His presence. It is so because of the statement.

The word upasthite means “nearness.” Even though the Lord’s potency and the Lord Himself, the shelter of that potency, are one, still, because the Lord is the best of males and His potency is the jewel of young girls, when They are together there is naturally the perfection of blissful amorous pastimes. How is that known? The sūtra explains, tad-vacanā: “Because of the statement.” In the Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad [2.25] it is said:

yo ha vai kāmēna kāmān kāmayate sa kāmī bhavati. yo ha vai tv akāmēna kāmān kāmayate so ‘kāmī bhavati.

“He who lusts after pleasures is lusty. He who enjoys without material lust is not lusty.”

In these words the amorous pastimes of the Lord are described. The word a-kāmēna here means “with something that bears certain similarities to lust.” This thing with some similarities to material lust is the Lord’s pure spiritual love. That is the meaning. With spiritual love He enjoys the goddess of fortune, who is actually Himself. In this way He finds pleasure and fulfillment. For this there is no fault on His part. By touching the goddess of fortune, who is actually Himself, the Lord enjoys transcendental bliss. It is like a person gazing at his own handsomeness [in a mirror]. That is what is said here.

Different from His spiritual potency [parā-śakti] is the potency of the Lord’s form [svarūpa-śakti]. The Śruti-śāstras and other scriptures explain that through the svarūpa-śakti the Supreme Lord manifests as the best of males, and through the parā-śakti the Lord manifests His various transcendental qualities. It is through the parā-śakti that the Lord manifests His knowledge, bliss, mercy, opulence, power, sweetness, and other qualities.

It is also through the parā-śakti that the Vedic scriptures are manifested. In the same way is manifested the earth and other places. Manifesting as the Lord’s pleasure potency [hlādinī-śakti], the parā-śakti appears as Śrī Rādhā, the jewel of teenage girls. Although the Lord and His parā-śakti are not different, still, for enjoying different pastimes, They are manifested as different. In this way the Lord’s desires are perfectly and completely fulfilled.

These manifestations of the parā-śakti, beginning with the manifestation of the Lord’s qualities, are not manifested only recently. They are beginningless and eternal. They will never cease to exist. Therefore the devotees should meditate on the Supreme Personality of Godhead as accompanied by the goddess of fortune.

Adhikaraṇa 19: The Many Forms of the Supreme Personality of Godhead

Viṣaya [thesis or statement]: In the Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad [1.54] it is said:

tasmāt eva kṛṣṇah paro devas tam dhyāyet tam raset tam bhajet taṁ yajet. iti. oṁ tat sat.

“Therefore, Lord Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead. One should meditate on Him, glorify Him, serve Him, and worship Him. oṁ tat sat.”

Saṁśaya [doubt]: Must one always worship Lord Hari as Kṛṣṇa, or is it possible to worship Him in another form also?

Pūrvapakṣa [the opponent speaks]: Because this passage ends the Upaniṣad, the proper interpretation is the worship of Lord Hari must always be directed to the form of Lord Kṛṣṇa alone.

Siddhānta [conclusion]: In the following words the author of the sūtras gives His conclusion.
Sūtra 3.3.43

tan nirdhanāniyamās tad drṣṭaiḥ prthag ṣrtyaḥ apratibandhaḥ phalam

_tat_ – of that; _nirdhara_ – of determination; _a_ – not; _niyamah_ – rule; _tat_ – that; _drṣṭaiḥ_ – by what is seen; _prthak_ – distinct; _hi_ – indeed; _a_ – not; _pratibandhaḥ_ – obstruction; _phalam_ – fruit.

There is no restriction in that regard. It is different because of what is seen. Non-obstruction is the result.

There is no rule that says one must worship Lord Hari in His form as Kṛṣṇa only, and not in His form of Lord Balarāma or any of His other forms. Even when He is a tiny infant as Yaśodā’s breast, Lord Kṛṣṇa is always all-pervading, all-knowing, and full of bliss. How is that known? The _sūtra_ explains, _tad-drṣṭaiḥ_: “Because of what is seen.” In _Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad_ [2.48] it is said:

_yatrāsau saṁsāritaḥ kṛṣṇas_  
_trībhiḥ śaktyā samāhitāḥ_  
_rāmāniruddha-pradyumnai_  
_rukminīyā sahitō vibhūḥ_  
_catuḥ-śabdoh bhaved eko_  
_hy oṁkāras hy aṁśakaiḥ kṛtaḥ_

“Lord Kṛṣṇa, accompanied by His three potencies and by Balarāma, Aniruddha, Pradyumna, and Rukminī, stays in delightful Mathurā Pūrī. These four names are identical with the name _oṁ_.”

Lord Balarāma and the other incarnations are all forms of Lord Kṛṣṇa and so They also should be worshiped. That is the meaning.

Here someone may object: “If that is so then the phrase _kṛṣṇa eva_ [Kṛṣṇa indeed], emphasizing Lord Kṛṣṇa would become meaningless.”

To this objection the _sūtra_ replies: _prthak_ [it is different]. This means, “the result is different.” What is that different result? The _sūtra_ explains, _apratibandhaḥ_: “Non-obstruction is the result.” This means, “The removal of the obstructions to the worship of Lord Kṛṣṇa, obstructions caused by thinking any other form is the highest form of the Lord.” Therefore, if one is able and if one is so inclined, he may worship other forms of the Lord, which are all non-different from Lord Kṛṣṇa.

Adhikaraṇa 20: The Spiritual Master

_Viṣaya_ [thesis or statement]: Now will be explained the truth that Lord Kṛṣṇa is attained by one who approaches a genuine spiritual master. In its description of transcendental knowledge, the _Śvetāsvatara Upaniṣad_ [6.23] explains:

_yasya deve parā bhaktir_  
yathā deve tathā gurau  
tasyaite kathitāḥ hy arthāḥ_  
_prakāsante mahātmanaḥ_

“Only to those great souls who have implicit faith in both the Lord and the spiritual master are all the imports of Vedic knowledge automatically revealed.”

In the _Chāndogya Upaniṣad_ [6.14.2] it is said:

_ācāryavān puruṣo veda_
“One who approaches a bona fide spiritual master can understand everything about spiritual realization.”

In the Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad [1.2.12] it is said:

\[ \text{tad-vijñānārthaṁ sa gurum evāḥbhiṣaccheta} \]

“To learn the transcendental subject matter, one must approach a spiritual master.”

Saṁśaya [doubt]: Is the result obtained merely by hearing the scriptures from the spiritual master, or must that hearing be accompanied by the attainment of the spiritual master’s mercy?

Pūrvapakṣa [the opponent speaks]: The result is obtained merely by hearing the scriptures. Why would one need to attain the spiritual master’s mercy?

Siddhānta [conclusion]: In the following words the author of the sūtras gives His conclusion.

\textbf{Sūtra 3.3.44}

\[ \text{pradāna-vad eva tad uktam} \]

\[ \text{pradāna – gift; vat – like; eva – indeed; tat – that; uktam – said.} \]

\text{It is like a gift. That is said.}

When the spiritual master is pleased with a person, that person is able to hear the scriptures and follow the path of spiritual advancement. In this way one attains the Lord. But one will not be able to attain the Lord by merely hearing the scriptures and following the spiritual path. Therefore it is said that the spiritual master’s mercy is essential. The prefix \text{pra} in this sūtra hints at the word \text{prasāda} [mercy]. The lotus-eyed Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself explains in the Bhagavad-gītā [13.8]:

\[ \text{ācāryopasaṇam śaucam} \]

\[ \text{“Knowledge means to approach a bona fide spiritual master and become pure.”} \]

In this way the scriptures explain that the Supreme Personality of Godhead is attained by the mercy of the spiritual master.

\textbf{Adhikaraṇa 21: The Spiritual Master’s Mercy}

Saṁśaya [doubt]: Which is more important: one’s own efforts or the spiritual master’s mercy?

Pūrvapakṣa [the opponent speaks]: If one does not endeavor on one’s own part, then the spiritual master’s mercy will not be effective. Therefore one’s own effort is more important.

Siddhānta [conclusion]: In the following words the author of the sūtras gives His conclusion.

\textbf{Sūtra 3.3.45}

\[ \text{liṅga-bhūyastvāt tad dhi balīyas tad api} \]

\[ \text{liṅga – of indications; bhūyastvāt – because of an abundance; tat – that; hi – indeed; balīyaḥ – more powerful; tat – that; api – also.} \]

\text{Because of many symptoms it is more powerful. That also.}
Even though some demigods assuming the forms of a bull and other creatures had already taught him the truth of the Supreme, the disciple Śatyakāma nevertheless requested his spiritual master [Chāndogya Upaniṣad 4.9.2]:

\[bhagavāṁs tv eva me kāmaṁ brāyāt\]

“O master, please teach me the truth.”

In the same way Upakośala [Chāndogya Upaniṣad 4.10.1- 4.14.3], even though he had already attained spiritual knowledge from the sacred fires, nevertheless approached his spiritual master for instruction. In these two passages of the Chāndogya Upaniṣad it is clearly seen that the mercy of the spiritual master is the most important.

Here someone may say: “If that is so, then what is the need of doing anything at all? One should not think in that way. One should still study the scriptures and follow the spiritual path.”

In the Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad [6.23] it is said:

\[yasya deve parā bhaktih\]

“One should engage in devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead.”

In the Śruti-śāstra it is said:

\[śrotavyaḥ mantavyaḥ\]

“One should meditate on the Supreme Personality of Godhead and hear His glories.”

In the Smṛti-śāstra it is said:

\[guru-prasādo balavān
na tasmād balavattaram
tathāpi śravanādiś ca
kartavyo mokṣa-siddhayā\]

“The spiritual master’s mercy is most important. Nothing is more important. Still, in order to attain liberation one should certainly hear the glories of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and serve Him in many ways.”

**Adhikaraṇa 22: The Supreme Personality of Godhead and the Individual Spirit Soul are not Identical**

**Viśaya** [thesis or statement]: In this way it is proved that by attaining the spiritual master’s mercy and by worshiping the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who has the most glorious transcendental qualities, one attains the desired result. Now an apparent contradiction will be resolved.

In the Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad the sages ask Brahmā questions beginning with, “Who is the supreme object of worship?” Brahmā answers that Lord Kṛṣṇa is the supreme object of worship, and devotional service is the way to attain Him. However, in the Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad [2.49] it is also said:

\[tasmād eva paro rajasa iti so ‘ham ity avadhārya gopālo ‘ham iti bhāvayet. Sa mokṣam aśnute sa brahmatvam adhigacchati sa brahma- vid bhavati\]

“One should think, ‘I am the Supreme Lord beyond the passions of the material world’. One should think, ‘I am Lord Gopāla.’ In this way one attains liberation. In this way one attains the state of being the Supreme Lord. In this way one understands the Supreme.”
The words so ‘ham [I am He] clearly show the idea that the Supreme Personality of Godhead and the individual spirit souls are not different.

Saṁśaya [doubt]: Do the words so ‘ham [I am He] here teach the doctrine that the Supreme Personality of Godhead and the individual spirit souls are identical, or do they teach some aspect of the doctrine of devotional service, a doctrine already been described in this book?

Pūrvapakṣa [the opponent speaks]: The natural meaning of the words here is that the doctrine of oneness is the way to liberation.

Siddhānta [conclusion]: In the following words the author of the sūtras gives His conclusion.

**Sūtra 3.3.46**

*pūrva-vikalpaḥ prakaraṇāt syāt kriyā-mānasa-vat*

*pūrva – previous; vikalpaḥ – concept; prakaraṇāt – from the context; syāt – may be; kriyā – actions; mānasa – mind;vat – like.*

*Because of the context it is like what goes before. It is like the thoughts and deeds.*

The declaration so ‘ham [I am He] in the Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad should be understood according to the passages that precede it. Why is that? The sūtra declares, prakaraṇāt: “Because of the context.” In the beginning of Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad [1.14] it is said:

*bhaktir asya bhajanaṁ tad ihāmūtrapādhi-nairāsyenāmusmin manāḥ kalpanam etad eva naiśkarmyaṃ.*

“Without any desire for material benefit in this life or the next, one should engage in devotional service to Lord Kṛṣṇa. That will bring freedom from the bonds of karma.”

Devotional service is also described at the end of the Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad in these words:

*sac-cid-ānandaika-rase bhakti-yoge tiṣṭhati.*

“One should engage in devotional service, which is eternal and full of knowledge and bliss.”

The middle portion of the Upaniṣad cannot deal with a topic different from what is discussed in the beginning and end. Here the sūtra gives an example, kriyā-mānasa-vat: “It is like the thoughts and deeds.” The deeds here are the activities of devotional service, which begin with worship of the Lord. The thoughts here are meditation on the Lord.

Devotional service was described in the beginning and end of the Upaniṣad. Therefore the declaration so ‘ham [I am He] should be understood as a description of some feature of the same devotional service already described in the preceding passages. Pushed by intense love or fear, a person may sometimes call out, “I am he!” In this way a person may sometimes call out, “I am Kṛṣṇa!” or “I am that lion!”

In beginning of the Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad [1.2] the question is asked:

*kah paramo devaḥ* 

“Who is the Supreme Personality of Godhead?”

In that passage the sages asked Brahmā about the identity of Supreme, who is the supreme object of worship, the deliverer from the world of repeated birth and death, the shelter of all, the first cause of all causes. Brahmā replied:
śrī-krṣṇo vai paramaṁ daivatam

“Lord Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead.”

Then, to help enable meditation on the Lord, Brahmā described Lord Kṛṣṇa’s various qualities. Then Brahmā says [Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad 1.6]:

yo dhyāyati . . .

“One who meditates on Lord Kṛṣṇa, glorifies Him, and worships Him, becomes liberated. He becomes liberated.”

Thus Brahmā shows that by meditating on Lord Kṛṣṇa, chanting mantras glorifying Lord Kṛṣṇa, and engaging in other activities of devotional service, one becomes liberated from the world of birth and death. The again it is said [Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad 1.7]:

te hocuh kim tad-rūpam

“The sages said: What is His form?”

This question is about devotional service and the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is worshiped in devotional service. Brahmā answered this question in these words [1.8]:

tad u hovāca hairanyo gopa-veśam abhrābham

“Brahmā said: He is a cowherd boy. He is dark like a monsoon cloud.”

Then, after describing Lord Kṛṣṇa’s form, Brahmā describes the mantra to be chanted. He says [1.11]:

ramyaṁ punā rasanam

“Lord Kṛṣṇa’s mantra should chanted repeatedly.”

Then Brahmā describes devotional service in these words [1.14]:

bhaktir asya bhajanam

“One should engage in devotional service to Lord Kṛṣṇa.”

Then Brahmā describes the mantra one should chant in order to see Lord Kṛṣṇa’s form. Brahmā says [1.24]:

oṁkāreṇaṁantaritāṁ yo japati . . .

“To one who chants this mantra beginning with oṁ, Lord Kṛṣṇa reveals His own transcendental form.”

Then, in Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad 1.38 [tam ekam govindam], Brahmā describes Lord Kṛṣṇa’s transcendental form, which is full of knowledge and bliss. Finally Brahmā concludes [1.54]:

tasmāc chṛī-krṣṇa eva paro devaḥ

“Therefore Lord Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead.”

In the second chapter of Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad it is said that the gopīs, after enjoying pastimes with Lord Kṛṣṇa, and after asking Him questions, and after attaining His permission, presented a great feast before the sage Durvāsā. Pleased, the sage blessed them. When they asked him about Lord Kṛṣṇa, the sage described to them in the passage beginning with the words śrī kṛṣṇah the extraordinary nature of Lord Kṛṣṇa’s pastimes. He told them that Lord Kṛṣṇa is the first cause of all causes, that He is conquered by the pure love of His devotees, that He is dear to His devotees, and many other glories of Lord Kṛṣṇa. Then in the passage beginning with the words sa hovāca, Durvāsā is asked about Lord Kṛṣṇa’s birth, activities, mantra, and abode. In the passage beginning with the words sa hovāca tām the
sage answered the question by recounting a conversation of Brahmā and Lord Nārāyaṇa. In that account he explained that Lord Kṛṣṇa is perfect and complete, and he also explained that Lord Kṛṣṇa is the savior from the world of birth and death. Then, in the passage beginning with the words vanair anekair uḷlasat, Brahmā described the Lord’s spiritual abode named Mathurā, which is protected by the Lord’s cakra and which is splendid with many forests. At this point the so ‘ham passage occurs [Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad [2.49]:

\[
\text{tasmād eva paro rajasa iti so ‘ham}
\]

“One should think, ‘I am the Supreme Lord beyond the passions of the material world’.”

In this way it is said that the condition of thinking oneself non-different from the Lord is the cause of liberation.

Because devotional service was described previously in this Upaniṣad as the cause of liberation, the oneness with the Lord here must but a certain feature of that devotional service. It must be a symptom of ecstatic love, like the shedding of many tears or other symptoms of ecstatic love. The passages aham asmi [I am He], brahmāham asmi [I am the Supreme], and other similar passages in the Taittirīya Upaniṣad and other scriptures, passages declaring the oneness of the individual soul and the Supreme, should all be taken as expressions of persons overwhelmed with ecstatic love, expressions that are actually proof that the individual souls and the Supreme are indeed different persons and are not at all identical. This truth has already been explained in this book.

In the following sūtra will be presented further proof that the words so ‘ham [I am He] are indeed a symptom of devotional love, and do not at all mean that the individual souls and the Supreme are identical.

**Sūtra 3.3.47**

atideśāc ca

atideśāt – by comparison; ca – and.

**Also by comparison.**

In the Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad [2.63] Lord Nārāyaṇa tells Brahmā:

\[
yathā tvaiḥ saha putraṁ ca
\]

\[
yathā rudro gānaiḥ saha
\]

\[
yathā śriyābhīyukto ‘ham
\]

\[
tathā bhakto mama priyaḥ
\]

“Anyone who becomes My sincere devotee becomes very dear to Me. As dear as you and your sons are, as dear as Lord Śiva and his associates, as dear as the goddess of fortune.”

In this verse it is seen that as Brahmā is accompanied by his sons, so Lord Kṛṣṇa is always accompanied by His devotees. The word ca [and] is explained in the following words of Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad [2.91], where the Supreme Personality of Godhead declares:

\[
dhyāyen mama priyo nityāṁ
\]

\[
sa mokṣam adhigacchati
\]

\[
sa mukto bhavati tasmāi
\]

\[
svātmānām ca dadāmi vai
\]
“One who meditates on Me is eternally dear to Me. He attains liberation. He becomes liberated. I give Myself to him.”

In these words the Lord declares that the devotees are eternally dear to Him and He also declares that he gives Himself as a gift to His devotees. If the individual souls and the Supreme Lord are ultimately one, these two statements cannot be at all possible. Therefore the scriptures’ statement so ‘ham [I am He] should be understood as the description of a specific symptom of ecstatic love. The statement so ‘ham, when found in the Rāma-tāpanī Upaniṣad and other Upaniṣads, should also be explained in this way.

In conclusion, it is said that one attains liberation by the mercy of the spiritual master and by devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. There is no fault with that statement.

**Adhikaraṇa 23: Spiritual Knowledge Brings Liberation**

**Viṣaya [thesis or statement]:** True knowledge is defined as the scriptures’ description of devotional service. That knowledge leads to liberation. Here begins an elaborate description of that truth. In the Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad [3.8] it is said:

- tam eva vidītvāti mṛtyum eti
- nānyah pānthā nvidyate ˈyanāya

“I know the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is transcendental to all material conceptions of darkness. Only he who knows Him can transcend the bonds of birth and death. There is no way for liberation other than this knowledge of that Supreme Person.”

In the Puruṣa-sūkta prayers of the Ṛg Veda it is said:

- tam eva vidvān amṛta iha bhavati

“A person who knows the Supreme attains liberation.”

**Samśaya [doubt]:** Is liberation caused by the performance of Vedic rituals [karma], by spiritual knowledge [vidyā], or by rituals and knowledge together?

**Pūrvapakṣa [the opponent speaks]:** How is liberation attained? It is attained by performing Vedic rituals. This is proved in Śūtras 3.4.2-7. Or, if there must be some knowledge, then Vedic rituals and knowledge should be combined together to bring liberation. In the Śruti-śāstra it is said:

- tad-dhetor na tu tayor ekataram tam vidyā-karmanī

“Vedic rituals and spiritual knowledge must be combined together to bring liberation. Either of them alone is not enough.”

It is also said:

- ubhābhyaṁ eva paksābhyaṁ
- yathā khe paśiṇo gatiḥ
- tathaiva karma-jñānābhyaṁ
- mukto bhavati mānavaḥ

“As a bird needs two wings to fly in the sky, so a man needs both Vedic rituals and spiritual knowledge to attain liberation.”

Or, perhaps spiritual knowledge alone is in truth the cause of liberation. After all, the Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad [3.8] declares:

- tam eva vidītvāti mṛtyum eti
“Only one who knows the Supreme Personality of Godhead can transcend the bonds of birth and death.”

After all is said and done, it is not possible to reach a final conclusion in this matter.

Siddhānta [conclusion]: In the following words the author of the sūtras gives His conclusion.

Sūtra 3.3.48

vidyaiva tu tan-nirdhanaṇāt

vidyā – knowledge; eva – indeed; tu – certainly; tat – of that; nirdhanaṇāt – because of the conclusion.

It is knowledge indeed, for that is the conclusion.

The word tu [indeed] is used here to dispel doubt.

Spiritual knowledge, and not Vedic ritual, is the cause of liberation. Neither is it necessary that spiritual knowledge be combined with the performance of Vedic rituals in order to bring liberation. Why is that? The sūtra explains, tan-nirdhanaṇāt: “For that is the conclusion.” The conclusion is given in Śvetāsvatara Upaniṣad [3.8]. The word vidyā [knowledge] here means “the knowledge that leads to devotional service.” In the Brhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad [4.4.21] it is said:

vijñāya prajñāṁ kurvīta

“One should understand the Supreme, and thus become wise.”

The wisdom here is clearly devotional service. In the Smrī-śāstra the word vidyā is used in both these senses. One example is in the following words:

vidyā-kuṭhāreṇa śitena dhīraḥ

“With the sharpened ax of knowledge a wise person cuts asunder the darkness of ignorance.”

Another example is in Bhagavad-gītā [9.2]:

rāja-vidyā rāja-guhyam

“This knowledge is the king of education, the most secret of all secrets.”

The word vidyā may be interpreted in two ways. It is like the words kaurava and mīmāṁsā. The former may mean either the Pāṇḍavas or the sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra, and the latter may mean either “the knowers of Vedic rituals” or “the knowers of the Supreme.”

Liberation is thus attained by knowledge, knowledge here being the direct perception of the Lord standing outside the heart. The author of the sūtras declares this in the following words.

Sūtra 3.3.49

darśanāc ca

darśanāt – by seeing; ca – also.

Also by seeing.

In the Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad [2.2.8] it is said:
bidyate hṛdaya-granthiḥ
chidyante sarva-saṁśayāḥ
kṣīyante cāṣya karmāṇi
tasmin drṣṭe parāvare

“Thus the knot in the heart is pierced, and all misgivings are cut to pieces. The chain of fruitive actions is terminated when one sees the Supreme Personality of Godhead.”

The meaning here is that one becomes liberated by seeing the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Here someone may object: “Do the scriptures not say, ‘One attains liberation by performing Vedic rituals’? Do the scriptures not say, ‘One attains liberation by performing Vedic rituals and attaining spiritual knowledge’? These words of yours contradict the scriptures.”

If this is said then the author of the sūtras give the following reply.

Sūtra 3.3.50
śruti-ādi-balīyastvāc ca na bādhaḥ
śruti – the Śruti-sūtras; ādi – beginning with; balīyastvāt – because of being stronger; ca – and; na – not; bādhaḥ – refutation.

Also, it is not refuted, for the authority of the Śruti-sūstras and other scriptures is greater.

The Śruti-sūstra’s declaration, “liberation is attained by transcendental knowledge” cannot be refuted by our opponent’s two scripture quotes. Why is that? The sūtra declares, śruti-ādi-balīyastvāt: “For the authority of the Śruti-sūstras and other scriptures is greater.” This means, “for the authority of Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad 3.8 and other passages of the Śruti-sūstras and other scriptures is greater.” The word ādi [beginning with] here means that there are also passages where this truth is hinted or explained indirectly. In the scriptures it is said:

indro ‘śvamedhāc chatam īṣtvāpi rājā brahmāṇam īdyain samuvaṁcospasannah na karmabhīr na dhanair nāpi cānyaś paśyeta sukham tena tattvam brahviṁ

“After performing a hundred aśvamedha-yajñas, King Indra approached the demigod Brahmā and said, ‘Neither Vedic rituals, nor giving charity, nor any other thing has made me happy. Please tell me how I may see happiness.’ “

In the scriptures it is also said:

nāstya akṛtaḥ kṛtena

“He who was never born is not attained by Vedic rituals.”

As for the six sūtras [3.4.2-7] quoted by the opponent, the author of the sūtras Himself will refute them in Sūtras 3.4.8-14. The word ādi [beginning with] means that many other scriptural passages may also be quoted. The word ca [also] again means that many more statements of scripture may be quoted to prove that spiritual knowledge uproots all past karmic reactions. The passage beginning with the words tam vidyā and the other passages quoted by our opponent will all be refuted in Sūtra 3.4.11 by the author of the sūtras Himself. In this way it will be proved that spiritual knowledge is the true cause of liberation.
Adhikarana 24: Worshiping the Saintly Devotees

Viṣaya [thesis or statement]: Now will be discussed the truth that liberation is attained by worshiping the saintly devotees. In the Taittirīya Upaniṣad [1.11.2] it is said:

atithi-devo bhava
“Treat a guest as if he were a visiting demigod.”

Saṃśaya [doubt]: Is the worship of saintly devotees a cause of liberation or is it not?

Pūrva-paśa [the opponent speaks]: Liberation is already available by the mercy of the spiritual master and the worship of the Supreme Lord. What need is there to worship the saintly devotees?

Siddhānta [conclusion]: In the following words the author of the sūtras gives His conclusion.

Sūtra 3.3.51

anubandhādibhyah

anubandha – repeated instructions; ādibhyah – beginning with.

Because of many instructions.

The word anubandha here means, “because of many instructions declaring that one should worship the saintly devotees.” The Taittirīya Upaniṣad’s phrase, “treat him as if he were a visiting demigod” means “worship him.” This is so because by the mercy of great devotees one attains liberation. If this were not so then the Taittirīya Upaniṣad would not have spoken in this way. Many great sages who know the truth have also taught this in the Śrītaśāstra. In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam [5.12.12], Jaḍa Bharata explains:

rahūgaṇaṅitata tapasā na yāti
na cejyāvā nirvapanād grhād vā
na cchandasā naiva jālāgni-sūryair
vinā mahat-pāda-rajo-‘biśekam

“My dear King Rahūgaṇa, unless one has the opportunity to smear his entire body with the dust of the lotus feet of great devotees, one cannot realize the Absolute Truth. One cannot realize the Absolute Truth simply by observing celibacy [brahmacarya], strictly following the rules and regulations of householder life, leaving home as vanaprastha, accepting sannyāsa, or undergoing severe penances in winter by keeping oneself submerged in water or surrounding oneself in summer by fire and the scorching heat of the sun. There are many other processes to understand the Absolute Truth, but the Absolute Truth is only revealed to one who has attained the mercy of a great devotee.”

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam [11.12.1-2], Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself explains:

na rodayati māṁ yogo
na saṁkhyāṁ dharma uddhava
na svādhiyāya tapas tyāgo
neśṭa-pūrtaiṁ na dakaśiṅā

vratāṁ yajñās chandāṁsi
tīrthaṁ niyamām yamāṁ
yathāvarundhe sat-saṅgaḥ
sarva-saṅgāpahā hi māṁ
“My dear Uddhava, neither through asṭāṅga-yoga [the mystic yoga to control the senses], nor through impersonal monism or an analytical study of the Absolute Truth, nor through study of the Vēdas, nor through practice of austerities, nor through charity, nor through acceptance of sannyāsa, nor through many pious deeds, nor through giving daksīṇā, nor through following vows, nor through performing many yajñas, nor through chanting Vedic hymns, nor through visiting holy places, nor through controlling the senses can one bring Me under his control as much as one can by associating with saintly devotees. Their association frees one from the touch of matter.”

Here Lord Kṛṣṇa personally teaches the importance of associating with saintly devotees. The Lord here teaches a great secret of how to engage in devotional service. The word ādi in this sūtra indicates that one should also visit holy places of pilgrimage and one should avoid they who commit blasphemy. In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam [1.2.16] it is said:

> śuśrūsoḥ śraṇḍadhānasya
> vāṣudeva-kathā-rucih
> syān mahat-sevayā viprāḥ
> puṇya-tīrtha-niṣevanāt

> “O twice-born sages, by serving those devotees who are completely freed from all vice, great service is done. By such service one gains affinity for hearing the message of Vāṣudeva.”

In the Padma Purāṇa it is said:

> harir eva sadārādhyāḥ
> sarva-devēsvaṁsvaroḥ
> itare brahma-rudrāyāḥ
> nāvajñeyā kādadācana

> “Lord Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the master of all the demigods, and He should always be worshiped. Still, one should never disrespect Brahmā, Śiva, and the other demigods.”

Here someone may object: “The mercy of the spiritual master and the association of saintly devotees are both attained by the mercy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Therefore the real cause of liberation is His mercy. Even good fortune does not happen independently. That also is caused by the Lord’s mercy. Indeed, all actions are caused by the Lord’s mercy, as was explained in sūtra 2.3.39. Therefore it is not right to say that liberation is caused by the mercy of the spiritual master or by any cause other than the mercy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.”

To this objection I reply: Even though they are themselves caused by the Lord Himself, still the spiritual master’s mercy and the other causes like it are also causes of liberation in their own right. This was already explained in the passage beginning with Sūtra 2.3.40. The truth is that the Supreme Personality of Godhead becomes conquered by His devotees and He gives them the power to grant His own mercy to others. In this way the devotees are independent agents who can deliver the Lord’s mercy to others. When the devotees give their mercy to someone, then the Supreme Lord also gives His mercy to that person. In this way all seeming contradictions and the different passages of the scriptures are all resolved.

**Adhikarāṇa 25: The Liberated Souls Have Different Relationships with the Supreme Personality of Godhead**

*Viṣaya* [thesis or statement]: In the Chāndogya Upaniṣad [3.14.1] it is said:
atha khalu kratumayaḥ puruṣo yathā kratur asmil loke puruṣo bhavati tathetaḥ pretya bhavati sa kratuṁ kurvīta.

“Man is meant to worship the Supreme Lord. As one worships the Lord in this life, so one will attain Him after death. Therefore one should worship the Lord.”

Samśaya [doubt]: The worship of the Supreme Lord is naturally accompanied by the worship of the spiritual master and the saintly devotees. This worship is of many kinds, some higher and some lower. Does the higher or lower level of one’s worship lead to a higher or lower result, or does it not lead to a higher or lower result?

Pūrvapakṣa [the opponent speaks]: In the Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad [3.1.3] it is said:

nirāṅjanaḥ paraṁ samyam upaiti

“Liberated souls are all equal.”

In this way the Śrutī-ṭḥāstra affirms that different levels of worship do not lead to different results. Travelers who enter a city by different paths do not enter different cities. They enter the same city. In the same way, although they have attained Him by different paths, the liberated souls see the same Supreme Lord.

Siddhānta [conclusion]: In the following words the author of the sūtras gives His conclusion.

Sūtra 3.3.52

prajñāntara-prthaktva-vad dṛṣṭiḥ ca tad uktam

prajñā – knowledge; antara – other; prthaktva – variety; vat – possessing; dṛṣṭiḥ – sight; ca – and; tat – that; uktam – said.

As there are differences of knowledge, so also there are differences in sight. That is stated.

In the Brhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad [4.4.21] it is said:

vijñāya prajñāṁ kurvīta

“One should understand the Supreme, and thus attain wisdom.”

Here are the words understanding and wisdom. The meaning of the first is straightforward, but the second really means devotional service to the Lord. As there are different kinds of knowledge, so also the devotees see the Lord in different ways.

The sūtra explains, tad uktam: “That is stated.” These words mean, “It is stated that according to the devotees’ different kinds of worship different higher and lower results are obtained.” Thus according to the way the Lord was worshiped in their sādhana, the devotees see the Lord in different ways. This is reflected in their liberation. The sameness described above means that the liberated souls see the same Supreme Lord.

Here someone may object: “That may be. However, you say that without knowledge one cannot see the Lord and without first seeing the Lord one cannot attain liberation. Both statement are illogical. When the Supreme Lord was personally present on the earth many persons who had no knowledge nevertheless saw Him and many who saw Him did not attain liberation.”

To this objection the author of the sūtras gives the following reply.
Sūtra 3.3.53

na sāmānyād apy upalabdher mṛtyu-van na hi lokāpattiḥ

na – not; sāmānyāt – ordinary; apy – even; upalabdheḥ – of perception; mṛtyu – death; vat – like; na – not; hi – indeed; loka – of the world; āpattiḥ – attainment.

Not by ordinary vision, as not by death. Indeed not. There is attainment of that world.

The word api [also] is here used for emphasis.

As merely dying does not bring liberation, in the same way ordinary seeing of the Lord also does not bring liberation. What then is the result obtained by ordinary seeing of the Lord? The sūtra explains: lokāpattiḥ: “There is attainment of that world.” This is like the Vidyādhara Sudarśana and the king Nṛga, who both attained ordinary sight of the Lord and from that attained the higher material worlds.

Here someone may object: “Did they not attain liberation?”

If this is said, then the sūtra replies, na hi: “Indeed not.” They did not. They attained a higher world. That is the meaning. In the Nārāyaṇa Tantra it is said:

sāmānya-darśanāḥ lokā muktiḥ yogyātmā-darśanāḥ

“By seeing the Supreme Lord with ordinary vision one attains the higher material worlds. By seeing the Lord with spiritual vision one attains liberation.”

This is the meaning here. There are two ways of seeing. One is covered by matter and the other is not covered by matter. The first way of seeing the Supreme Personality of Godhead is attained by many pious deeds. It brings one to Svargaloka and the other higher material planets. The second way of seeing the Supreme Personality of Godhead is attained by understanding the truth of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. This way of seeing destroys the subtle material body [of mind, intelligence and false ego], gives one a spiritual body filled with bliss, and makes one a dear associate of the Lord. In this way it brings liberation. In this way everything is explained.

The sages say that they who are killed by the Lord see the Lord at the moment of their death and in this way they also become liberated. This occurs because the splendor of the Lord’s cakra or other weapon destroys their subtle material body [of mind, intelligence, and false ego]. It should be understood that by seeing the Lord these persons attain love for Him. To say otherwise would contradict many statements of the scriptures.

Adhikaraṇa 26: How to Attain Liberation

Viṣaya [thesis or statement]: This section is begun to give firm proof that by seeing the Lord with eyes of spiritual knowledge, one attains liberation. In the Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad [3.2.3] and Kaṭha Upaniṣad [1.2.23] it is said:

nāyam ātmā pravacanena labhyo
na medhayā na bahunā śrutena
yam evaiśa vṛṣute tena labhyas
tasyaiś ātmā vīrvṛṣute tanuṁ svāṁ

“The Supreme Lord is not attained by expert explanations, by vast intelligence, or even by much hearing. He is attained only by one who He Himself chooses. To such a person He manifests His own form.”
Saṁśaya [doubt]: Does the Lord appear before a person only because the Lord chooses to appear or does He appear because of a specific person’s devotion to Him and renunciation of the material world?

Pūrvapakṣa [the opponent speaks]: the Lord appears only because He chooses to appear, for that is what the scripture says.

Śiddhānta [conclusion]: In the following words the author of the sūtras gives His conclusion.

Śūtra 3.3.54

pareṇa ca śabdasya tādvidhyam bhūyastvāt tv anubandhaḥ

pareṇa – by what follows; ca – also; śabdasya – of the word; tādvidhyam – being like that; bhūyastvāt – because of being more important; tu – indeed; anubandhaḥ – what corresponds.

According to what follows, it is the same. It is because of being more important.

The statement here that the Lord appears before one whom He chooses is actually the same as the statement that the Lord is attained by devotional service. This is clearly stated in the verse that immediately follows this statement. Therefore the meaning is not that the Lord appears only because He chooses to appear. Here is the verse that immediately follows [Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad 3.2.4]:

nāyam ātmā hala-hiṇena labhyo
na ca pramādāt tapaso vāpy ailingāt
etair upāyair yatate yas tu vidvān
tasyaiś ātmā viśate brahma-dhāma

“The Supreme Lord is not attained by one who has no spiritual strength, who is wild or careless, or whose austerities are not appropriate. The Lord appears before a person who strives by right means to attain Him. Such a person enters the spiritual world.”

The ‘right means’ are described in the beginning of this verse. They are spiritual strength, sober carefulness, and appropriate austerities. The word ‘spiritual strength’ here means devotional service. The Supreme Lord Himself explains:

vaśe kurvanti māṁ bhaktyā sat-striyāḥ sat-patīṁ yathā

“As faithful wives control their saintly husband, so My devotees bring Me under their control.” [Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 9.4.66]

In the Bhagavad-gītā [8.22], it is said:

puruṣaḥ sa parah pārtha bhaktyā labhyas tv ananyayā

“The Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is greater than all, is attainable by unalloyed devotion.”

Here is the verse immediately following the nāyam ātmā pravacanena verse when it appears in the Kātha Upaniṣad [1.2.24]:

nāvirato duścaritāt
nāśanto nāsamāhitaḥ
nāśanta-mānasas vāpi
prajñānenainam āpnuyāt
“Neither a person who has not abandoned sins, nor a person who is not peaceful, nor a person who does not strive to attain Him, nor a person who does not control his mind can, even though he may be very intelligent and learned, attain the Supreme Lord.”

A person who controls his senses, acts in a saintly manner, and meditates on Lord Hari becomes able to see Lord Hari directly. Therefore one should engage in the activities of devotional service. In this way the first and second statement together mean that the Supreme Lord chooses to reveal Himself to they who engage in His devotional service.

The first statement is that the Lord chooses who will attain Him. The Lord chooses they who please Him and are dear to Him. He does not choose they who do not please Him. He is pleased by they who engage in His devotional service. He is not pleased by they who do not engage in devotional service. He personally explains [Bhagavad-gītā 7.17]:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{teṣāṁ jñānī nitya-yukta} \\
\text{eka-bhaktir viśīṣyate} \\
\text{priyo hi jñānino 'tyartham} \\
\text{ahaṁ sa ca mama priyaḥ}
\end{align*}
\]

“Of these, the one who is in full knowledge and who is always engaged in pure devotional service is the best. For I am very dear to him, and he is dear to Me.”

In the Kaivalya Upaniṣad [2] it is said:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{śraddhā-bhakti-dhyāna-yogād avehi}
\end{align*}
\]

“With devotion, meditation, and faith one should try to understand the Supreme.”

If it were not true that the Lord reveals Himself to they who love and serve Him, and if instead it were true that He reveals Himself only on a whim to people chosen at random, and if He thus did not care for the love and devotion of they who serve Him] then one might justly become angry with the Lord and claim that He is unfair.

Here someone may object: “If this is so then why does the scripture explain that the Lord reveals Himself to those whom He chooses?”

To this objection the sūtra replies, bhāvyastvāt: “Because of being more important.” The word tu [indeed] in the sūtra is used for emphasis. The meaning here is that the Lord’s choosing is the most important aspect in His directly appearing before a person. Actually the Lord’s choosing is the last of a chain of causes. Here is the sequence of events: First there is association with saintly devotees and service to them. By that service one learns the truth of the Supreme Lord and also about one’s own self. Then one becomes disinterested in whatever has no relation to the Lord. Then one develops devotion and love for the Lord. That love pleases the Lord and makes one dear to the Lord. Then the Lord chooses to reveal Himself to that person.

**Adhikaraṇa 27: The Supreme Lord Resides in the Bodies of the Conditioned Souls**

**Viśaya** [thesis or statement]: They who with the mellows of servitude, friendship, or other mellows, from the beginning worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead who always stays in the spiritual sky, will attain that spiritual sky and there they will directly see their Lord. It is seen that some others, who are situated in the mellows of neutrality [śānta-rasa], worship the Supreme Lord as present in their bellies and in other parts of their bodies.
Viṣaya [thesis or statement]: Many statements in the scriptures describe this worship of the Supreme Personality of Godhead as present in the devotee’s stomach and other bodily organs.

Sāṁśaya [doubt]: Should one worship Lord Hari as present in one’s belly and other bodily organs, or should one not worship Him in this way?

Pūrvapakṣa [the opponent speaks]: One should not worship Lord Hari as present in one’s belly and other bodily organs, for these things are all material. However one should worship the Lord as eternally present in the spiritual sky.

Siddhānta [conclusion]: In the following words the author of the sūtras gives His conclusion.

Sūtra 3.3.55

eka ātmanah śarīre bhāvāt

eke – some; ātmanah – of the Supreme Personality of Godhead; śarīre – in the body; bhāvāt – because of existence.

Some because of the Lord’s existence in the body.

Here the word eke [some] means “some followers of the Vedas.” The word śarīre means “in the body”; that is, “in the belly, the heart, and the brahma-randhra.” The word ātmanah means “of Lord Viṣṇu.” The phrase “the worship of Lord Viṣṇu should be performed” is understood here. Why is that? The sūtra explains, bhāvāt, which means “Because He exists there.” In the Nyāya-śāstra it is said:

akke cen madhu vindeta kim arthaṁ parvataṁ vrajet

“If one finds honey in a nearby tree, why should one search for honey in a faraway mountain?”

The meaning here is that when the Lord is pleased when one worships Him as present in the devotee’s body and He will give the devotee residence in His own abode. In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam [10.87.18] it is said:

udaram upāsate ya rṣi-vartmasu kūrpa-dṛśaḥ
parisara-paddhatim hrdayam ārunayo daharam
tata udagād ananta tava dhāma śirah paramaṁ
punar iha yat sametya na patanti kṛiṇānta-mukhe

“Among the followers of the methods set forth by great sages, those with less refined vision worship the Supreme as present in the region of the abdomen, while the Aruṇiṣ worship Him as present in the heart, in the subtle center from which all the prāṇic channels emanate. From there, O unlimited Lord, these worshipers raise their consciousness upward to the top of the head, where they can perceive You directly. Then, passing through the top of the head toward the supreme destination, they reach that place from which they will never again fall to this world, into the mouth of death.”

Adhikarāṇa 28: Different Mellows in the Spiritual World

Viṣaya [thesis or statement]: In Chāndogya Upanisad 3.14.1 and in other places in the scriptures, the worship of the Lord in sweetness [mādhurya] and the worship of the Lord in opulence [aiśvarya] have been described. Also it has been shown that the living entities, by engaging in devotional service and associating with saintly devotees, by the Lord’s will attain Him as he appears in a specific form with
specific qualities, a form chosen by the devotee. In this way it is shown that these two features of the Lord [sweetness and opulence] are not incompatible with each other.

Saṁsāya [doubt]: When the devotee worships the Lord as having certain qualities, does the devotee attain a form of the Lord having those qualities alone or does he attain a form of the Lord having other qualities also.

Pūrva-pakṣa [the opponent speaks]: Whether the devotee meditates on the Lord in sweetness or opulence, the devotee will meet a form of the Lord who has all the qualities of both sweetness and opulence. This is so because whether meditated on in sweetness or opulence, the Lord remains one person.

Siddhānta [conclusion]: In the following words the author of the sūtras gives His conclusion.

Sūtra 3.3.56

vyatirekas tad-bhāva-bhāvitvān na tūpalabdhi-vat

vyatirekah – difference; tat – of that; bhāva – of the nature; bhāvitvāt – because of the being; na – not; tu – indeed; upalabdhi – of the understanding; vat – like.

Not different, because of the nature of the meditation. Indeed, it is like knowledge.

The word tu [indeed] is used here to dispel doubt.

The sūtra declares that other qualities are not manifested. Why is that? The sūtra explains, tad-bhāva-bhāvitvāt, which means, “Because of the nature of the qualities that were the object of meditation.” This means that when one attains the Lord, the Lord appears in the same form as was the object of the devotee’s meditation. The word upalabdhi-vat means “like knowledge.” This means, “One meets a form of the Lord like the form one knew in his meditation on the Lord.”

Even though the meditator is aware that the Lord has many other qualities, still when the devotee meets the Lord, the Lord will manifest only the qualities that were included in the devotee’s meditation and not the Lord’s other qualities. In this way the description in Chāndogya Upaniṣad 3.14.1 is not contradicted.

In the following sūtra the author gives an example to show that the devotee meets a form of the Lord corresponding to what had been the object of the devotee’s meditation.

Sūtra 3.3.57

āṅgāvabaddhas tu na śākhāsu hi prativedam

āṅga – parts; avabaddhaḥ – connected; tu – indeed; na – not; śākhāsu – in the branches; hi – indeed; prativedam – according to the Vedas.

Indeed, each has his part according to the different branches of the Vedas.

The performer of a yajña assigns different priests to perform the different parts of the yajña. The priests are thus named according to the function they fulfill in the yajña. The performer of the yajña thus tells the priests, “You become the adhvaryu priest. You become the hotā priest. You become the udgātā priest.” In this way a certain priest, even though he is expert in performing all the different functions, accepts the limited role in the yajña. He does not perform all the functions in the yajña. It is not
possible for him to perform all the functions in all the different branches of the Vedas. The duties are distributed among the different Vedas. The hotā priest chants mantras of the Rg Veda, the adhvaryu priest chants mantras of the Yajur Veda, the udgātā priest chants mantras of the Sāma Veda, and the brahmā priest chants mantras of the Atharva Veda.

In this way, according to the wish of the person performing the yajña, the different priests accept different roles in the yajña and different priestly rewards [dakṣiṇā] also. In the same way, according to the wish of the Supreme Lord, the individual living entities accept different roles in their service to the Lord and they also meet the Lord in different ways according to the roles they play.

Now, to explain the mellows of mixed emotions, which were displayed by Uddhava and others, and which are less pleasing, the author of the sūtras gives another example.

**Sūtra 3.3.58**

\[\text{mantrādi-vad vāvirodhaḥ} \]

\[\text{mantra – mantras; ādi – beginning; vat – like; vā – or; avirodhaḥ – not a contradiction.} \]

Or, there is no conflict, as in the case of mantras and other things.

The Lord’s desire here is to increase devotion of various kinds. It is like mantras. As one mantra may be used in many rituals, another mantra may be limited to two rituals, and another mantra used in one ritual only, so the Lord engages His devotees to worship Him some in many ways and some in one way only.

The word ādi [beginning with] in this sūtra means “time and action.” As at any given time some trees may be sprouting leaves and flowers and other trees may be shedding their leaves, and as at any given time one person may be an infant, and another a teenager, so at any given time the different devotees may serve the Lord in many different ways, each person acting differently according to the Lord’s wish.

The sūtra explains, vāvirodhaḥ: “Thus there is no conflict.” Thus after liberation a person will attain the same relationship with the Lord that the person desired while worshiping Him before he became liberated. In this way it is proved that qualities the Lord manifests to the liberated soul are not different from the qualities the soul meditated on before attaining liberation.

**Adhikaraṇa 29: The Different Features of the Supreme Personality of Godhead**

Viśaya [thesis or statement]: Now the following texts from the Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad will be considered:

\[\text{eko ‘pi san bahudhā yo ‘vabhāti} \]

“Although He is one, Lord Kṛṣṇa appears in many forms.”

\[\text{ekaṁ santain bahudhā drṣyaṁānām} \]

“Although He is one, the Supreme Personality of Godhead appears to be many.”

\[\text{atha kasmād ucyate brahma} \]

“Why is He called the Supreme?”
He Supreme Personality of Godhead has many very different forms. In this way He is like a vaidūrya jewel. Although He is one, He has many different forms and many different qualities.

_Saṁśaya_ [doubt]: Should one meditate on the fact that the Supreme Personality of Godhead has many different forms and many different qualities, or should one not meditate on this fact?

_Pūrvapakṣa_ [the opponent speaks]: The Lord’s blissfulness and other like qualities should always be the object of meditation [as was explained in _Sūtra 3.3.12_. However, the plurality of forms contradicts the Lord’s oneness. Therefore the Lord’s plurality of forms should not be an object of meditation.

_Siddhānta_ [conclusion]: In the following words the author of the _sūtras_ gives His conclusion.

**Sūtra 3.3.59**

\[
\text{bhūmnaḥ kratu-vaj jāyastvam tathā hi darśayati}
\]

\[
\text{bhūmnaḥ – of the plurality; kratu – yajña; vat – like; jāyastvam – pre-eminence; tathā – si; hi – indeed; darśayati – shows.}
\]

Like a _yajña_, plurality is most important. So, indeed, it reveals.

The Lord’s plurality of forms is His most important feature. As _yajñas_ should always be performed, so the Lord’s plurality of forms should always be an object of meditation, for this plurality is an essential feature of the Lord.

As in an _agniṣṭoma-yajña_, from its beginning until the _avabhṛta_ ceremony at its end, it remains always a _yajña_, in the same way among all the qualities of the Lord, His plurality of forms is always present and of prime importance. The evidence for this is given in this _sūtra_ in the words, _tathā hi darśayati_: “So, indeed, the scriptures reveal.” In the _Chāndogya Upaniṣad_ [7.23.1] it is said:

\[
\text{bhūmaiva sukham nālpe sukham asti}
\]

“The bliss of the Supreme Personality of Godhead is in His abundant variety. His bliss is not present in a lack of variety.”

Thus the Lord’s bliss and other qualities are present in great abundance and great variety. They should be meditated on in this way. The scriptures reveal this of them. The word _darśayati_ in this _sūtra_ means, “They teach this in every circumstance.” Without accepting the Lord’s plurality of forms, it is not possible to accept that His actions are all eternal.

**Adhikaraṇa 30: Different Meditations on the Lord’s Different Forms**

_Saṁśaya_ [doubt]: Are these many forms of the Lord worshiped in one way only or are there many ways to worship them?

_Pūrvapakṣa_ [the opponent speaks]: Because the object of worship certainly remains one, there must be only way way to worship Him.

_Siddhānta_ [conclusion]: In the following words the author of the _sūtras_ gives His conclusion.

**Sūtra 3.3.60**

\[
\text{Nānā śabdādi-bhedāt}
\]

\[
nānā – variety; śabda – words; ādi – beginning; bhedāt – because of the difference.
\]
They are different because of different words and other things.

There are different kinds of worship for the different forms of the Lord. For each form there is a different kind of worship.

Why is that? The *sūtra* explains, *śabdādi-bhedā*: “Because of different words and other things.” This means, “Because the names of Lord Nṛśimha and the Lord’s other forms are different, the *mantras* for worshiping these forms are different, the forms themselves are different, and Their activities are also different.” In the *Smṛti-śāstra* it is said:

\[
\begin{align*}
kṛtaṁ tretā dvāparaṁ ca \\
kalir ity eṣu keśavah \\
nānā-varnābhidhākāro \\
nānaiva vidhinejyate
\end{align*}
\]

“*In the Satya, Tretā, Dvāpara, and Kali yugas, Lord Kṛṣṇa appears in different forms with different colors and different names, forms that are worshiped in different ways.*”

In this way it is proved that the Lord’s different forms are worshiped in different ways.

**Adhikaraṇa 31: The Steadfast Worship of the Lord**

*Viśaya* [thesis or statement]: That the forms of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, beginning with the form of Lord Nṛśimha, should be worshiped in ways that are different for each form has thus been described.

*Saṁśaya* [doubt]: Must the worshipers of these various forms meditate on all the Lord’s forms together, or is such meditation only optional?

*Siddhānta* [conclusion]: In the following words the author of the *sūtras* gives His conclusion.

**Sūtra 3.3.61**

\[
\begin{align*}
vikalpo 'viśiṣṭha-phalatvāt \\
vikalpaḥ – option; aviśiṣṭha – not better; phalatvāt – because of the result.
\end{align*}
\]

It is optional, for a better result is not obtained.

They have an option. One should worship the Supreme Lord according to the truths taught by a particular community of saintly devotees. One should remain steadfast in that form of worship and not leave it. Why is that? The *sūtra* explains, *aviśiṣṭha-phalatvāt*: “For a better result is not obtained.” This means that of all the ways to worship the Lord no one way is better than the others. They are all equal. They are all said to bring the same result, which is that liberation where one directly associates with the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

If by following one such method of worship one attains perfection, what is the need of accepting another method of worship? The lesson taught in the *sūtra* that begins with the words *tad viduṣām* should not be forgotten. Therefore, in order to give more evidence to the truth that the *ekānti* devotees are the best, this instruction is repeated. There is no fault in this.
Adhikaraṇa 32: Worshiping the Lord To Attain a Specific Benediction

Viśaya [thesis or statement]: The different kinds of worship of the Lord’s different forms, such as the form of Lord Nṛsiṁha and the other forms, all bring liberation as their result. Therefore these activities of worship should be regularly performed by the ekānti devotees. However, in the Bhad-āranyaka Upaniṣad and other scriptures are also described other kinds of worship of the Lord, kinds of worship meant for attaining fame, followers, victory, wealth, and other like benedictions.

Saṃśaya [doubt]: May one choose any form of the Lord for such worship, or must one direct this kind of worship to one’s chosen deity alone?

Pūrvapakṣa [the opponent speaks]: Because the worship of any form of the Lord brings the same result as the worship of any other form of the Lord, one should direct this worship to one’s chosen Deity alone, as was previously explained.

Siddhānta [conclusion]: In the following words the author of the sūtras gives His conclusion.

Sūtra 3.3.62

kāmyās tu yathā-kāmāṁ samuccīyeyan na vā pūrva-hetv-abhāvāt

kāmyāḥ – for the objects of desire; tu – but; yathā – as; kāmāṁ – desire; samuccīyeyan – may collect; na – not; vā – or; pūrva – previous; hetu – reason; abhāvāt – because of the non-existence.

For attaining a desire one may accept another or not, as one wishes, for the previous reason is now absent.

To fulfill desires other than direct association with the Supreme Lord, desires like the attainment of fame in this world, one may worship any form of the Lord, as one wishes, or one need not worship another form of the Lord, and may instead to continue to worship one’s own chosen Deity. Why is that? The sūtra explains, pūrva-hetv-abhāvāt: “For the previous reason is now absent.” This is so because the result to be obtained is different. When there is a desire to attain these various material benedictions, then one may worship any form of the Lord. When one does not desire these material benefits, one may not adopt the worship of forms of the Lord other than one’s chosen Deity.

The meaning here is that if one who desires liberation also desires some material benediction, then he should worship Lord Hari alone in order to attain it. He should not worship the demigods to attain his desire. This is explained by Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam [2.3.10] in the following words:

akāmaḥ sarva-kāmo vā
mokṣa-kāmā udāra-dhīḥ
tīvrena bhakti-yogena
yajeta puruṣāṁ param

“A person who has broader intelligence, whether he be full of all material desire, or desiring liberation, must by all means worship the supreme whole, the Personality of Godhead.”

Thus have been explained the various kinds of worship of the Lord, beginning with the chanting of the ten-syllable mantra. As explained before, this worship should be directed to one’s chosen Deity.
Adhikaraṇa 33: Meditation on the Form of the Supreme Personality of Godhead

Viśaya [thesis or statement]: In the previous passages meditation on the Lord’s qualities and virtues has been described. Now will be described meditation on the Lord’s bodily limbs and features. In Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad [1.38], the demigod Brahmā explains:

\[
tam ekaṁ govardham sac-cid-ānanda-vigrahaṁ pañca-padaṁ vṛndāvana-sura-bhūruha-talāśinaṁ satatāṁ sa-marud-gaṇo 'ham paramāyā stūtyā toṣayāmi.
\]

“With eloquent prayers I and the Maruts please Lord Govinda, whose form is eternal and full of knowledge and bliss, who stays under a desire tree in Vṛndāvana, and who is this five-word mantra.”

In the verses that follow Brahmā speaks prayers describing the gentle smile, merciful glance, and other features on the Supreme Lord’s face, eyes, and other parts of the body.

Samśaya [doubt]: Are the gentle smile and other features on the Lord’s face and the other parts of His body to be meditated on or not?

Pūrvapakṣa [the opponent speaks]: Because by meditating on the Lord’s general qualities and virtues one attains the goal of life, and because that goal thus attained is so great and exalted, there is no need to meditate on the features of the Lord’s body.

Siddhānta [conclusion]: In the following words the author of the sūtras gives His conclusion.

Sūtra 3.3.63

\[aṅgeṣu yathāśraya-bhāvah\]
\[aṅgeṣu – on the limbs; yathā – as; āśraya – shelter; bhāvah – nature.\]

Appropriate meditation on the limbs.

One should appropriately meditate on the Lord’s mouth and the other parts of His body. This means that one should meditate on the qualities that have taken shelter of the parts of the Lord’s body. Thus, on the Lord’s mouth there are a gentle smile and sweet words, on His eyes there is a merciful glance, and on the other parts of His body there are other features.

Sūtra 3.3.64

\[śiṣṭaiś ca\]
\[śiṣṭaih – by the disciples; ca – and.\]

Also by the disciples.

In the Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad [1.51] it is said:

\[atha haivaṁ stutibhir ārādhayāṁ tathā yūyāṁ pañca-padaṁ japantāṁ kṛṣṇāṁ dhyāyantāṁ samsṛtiṁ tarisyatha.\]

“Brahmā said: As I worship Him, so should you. Chanting this five-word mantra, and meditating on Lord Kṛṣṇa, you will transcend the world of birth and death.”
In this way Brahmā teaches his disciples to meditate on the qualities present in Lord Kṛṣṇa’s form. That is the meaning.

Here someone may object: “In the Chāndogya Upaniṣad [1.6.7] it is said:

\[ \text{yathā kapyāsai puṇḍarīkam evam ākṣinī} \]

“The Supreme Lord’s eyes are like lotus flowers.”

Here there is no mention of the Lord’s merciful glance or His other features.”

If this is said, then the author of the sūtras gives the following reply.

**Sūtra 3.3.65**

\[
\text{samāhārāt}
\]

\[
\text{samāhārāt – because of being collective.}
\]

**Because of being together.**

The word *na* [it is not so] should be added here from three sūtras previous. The word applies to both sūtras. In this passage of Chāndogya Upaniṣad many other features of the Lord’s body are implied. This passage does not mean that the Lord has only lotus eyes and no other bodily features.

Here someone may object: “The idea that one should meditate on the parts of the Lord’s body as having only certain attributes and not others is wrong.”

I refute it with the following words.

**Sūtra 3.3.66**

\[
\text{guṇa-śādhāranya-śruteś ca}
\]

\[
\text{guṇa – of qualities; śādhāranya – commonness; śruteḥ – from the Śruti-śāstra; ca – also.}
\]

**Also because the Śruti-śāstra declares that the qualities are held in common.**

In Bhagavad-gītā [13.14] it is said:

\[
\text{Sarvataḥ pāṇi-pādam tat}
\]

“Everywhere are His hands and legs.”

This passage shows that one should meditate on the parts of the Lord’s body as all having the same qualities in common. In Brahma-saṁhitā [5.32] it is said:

\[
\text{āṅgāni yasya sakalendriya-vṛttimanti}
\]
\[
\text{paśyanti pāṇi kalayantī tathā jagantī}
\]

“Each of the limbs of the Lord’s transcendental figure possesses in Himself the full-fledged functions of all organs and eternally sees, maintains, and manifests the infinite universes, both spiritual and mundane.”

In this way the scriptures declare that each part of the Lord’s body has all the qualities of all the other parts.
In the following words the author of the sūtras refutes this idea.

**Sūtra 3.3.67**

\[ \text{na vā tat-saha-bhāvāśruteḥ} \]

na – not; vā – or; tat – that; saha – together; bhāva – being; a – not; śruteḥ – from the Śruti-śāstra.

Or not, for the Śruti-śāstra does not declare that they have the same nature.

The word vā [or] is used here for emphasis. One should not meditate on the different parts of the Lord’s body as all having the same features in common. Why is that? The sūtra explains, tat-saha-bhāvāśruteḥ: “For the Śruti-śāstra does not declare that they have the same nature.” This means that the Śruti-śāstra does not declare that the qualities of one part of the body are present in the other parts. So, one should not meditate on the parts of the Lord’s body as having the same qualities as the other parts. The descriptions in Bhagavad-gītā 13.14 and other passages in the scriptures should be understood to mean that the Supreme Personality of Godhead, being all-powerful, can do anything with any part of His body. That is the meaning.

**Sūtra 3.3.68**

\[ \text{darśanāc ca} \]

darśanāt – from seeing; ca – also.

By seeing also.

Therefore the Lord’s gentle smile should be understood to be present in His face and His other qualities to be present in the other parts of His body, each in its appropriate place. In this way it is both seen and described.
Śrī Vedānta-sūtra

Adhyāya 3: Devotional Service

Pāda 4: Transcendental Knowledge is Independent of Vedic Rituals

śraddhāveśa-manyāstrte sac-chamādyair
vairāgyodvittisimhāsanādhye
dharma-prākārāṇcitesarva-dātri
preśṭhaviṣṇorbhātvidyēsvāriyam

“In the temple of faith, which is surrounded by the great walls of religion, sitting on the throne of renunciation and surrounded by courtiers of self-control and other virtues, transcendental knowledge, which is very dear to Lord Viṣṇu, shines with great splendor.”

The previous Pāda revealed the various aspects of transcendental knowledge, which were there called meditation, worship and other names. This Pāda will reveal the truths that transcendental knowledge is independent of Vedic rituals; that Vedic rituals are merely one subordinate aspect of transcendental knowledge; that persons who have attained transcendental knowledge are divided into three classes, and other similar truths.

According to their different kinds of faith there are three kinds of seekers of transcendental knowledge, described as follows:

1. They who, desiring to see the wonders of the higher planets, faithfully perform the duties of varṇāśrama-dharma, are called sa-niṣṭha.

2. They who, desiring to enjoy the things of this world, faithfully perform the duties of varṇāśrama-dharma, are called pariniṣṭhita. They who are in these two classes are all followers of varṇāśrama-dharma.

3. Others, purified by truthfulness, austerity, japa, and other spiritual practices, have no material desire, are called nirapekṣa. They are in this class are not followers of varṇāśrama-dharma. In this way there are three kinds of seekers of transcendental knowledge.

Adhikaraṇa 1: Transcendental Knowledge

Viśaya [thesis or statement]: First will be explained the truth that transcendental knowledge is independent of other things. In the Chāndogya Upaniṣad [7.1.3] it is said:

tarati śokam ātma-vit

“One who knows the Supreme crosses beyond grief.”

In the Taittirīya Upaniṣad [2.1.1] it is said:

brahma-vid āpnoti param
“One who knows the Supreme enters the spiritual abode.”

In the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* [1.2.16] it is said:

> etad dhy evākṣaram jñātvā yo yadīcchati tasya tat

“By understanding the immortal one attains whatever he desires.”

_Samśaya_ [doubt]: Does transcendental bring only liberation, or can it also bring elevation to the higher material planets?

_Pūrvapakṣa_ [the opponent speaks]: A person wise with transcendental knowledge has no material desires. For this reason transcendental knowledge brings only liberation.

_Siddhānta_ [conclusion]: In the following words the author of the *sūtras* gives his conclusion.

### Sūtra 3.4.1

> puruṣārtho 'taḥ śabdād iti bādarāyaṇaḥ

_puruṣārthah – the four goals of life; ataḥ – from this; śabdāt – from the Śruti-śāstra; iti – thus; bādarāyaṇaḥ – Vyāsa._

_The fulfillment of human aspirations comes from it, for this is said in the Śruti-śāstra. That is Vyāsa’s opinion._

All the goals of human life are attained by transcendental knowledge. That is the opinion of Lord Vyāsa. Why is that? The _sūtra_ explains, _śabdāt_: “For this is said in the Śruti-śāstra.” These scriptural texts have been quoted in the previous paragraphs. Pleased by His devotee’s attainment of transcendental knowledge, the Supreme Personality of Godhead gives Himself to His devotee. Pleased by His devotee’s attainment of transcendental knowledge, which is like a companion to the rituals of the _Vedas_, the Supreme Personality of Godhead also fulfills the material desires of they, like of Kardama Muni and others, who have such desires.

In the next _sūtra_ Jaimini Muni raises an objection.

### Adhikaraṇa 2: Jaimini’s Opinion that Transcendental Knowledge is Subordinate

### Sūtra 3.4.2

> śeṣatvāt puruṣārtha-vādo yathānyesv iti jaiminiḥ

_śeṣatvāt – because of being subordinate; puruṣa – of the people; artha-vādaḥ – words; yathā – as; anyeṣu – in others; iti – thus; jaiminiḥ – Jaimini._

_Because it is subordinate, the words about human aspirations are only words of praise, like praises of other things also. That is Jaimini’s opinion._

Knowing the relationship between himself and the Supreme Personality of Godhead as a relationship between the worshiper and the object of worship, the individual living entity voluntarily engages in the activities of worship that have already been described here. As a result of these activities the individual
living entity becomes free of sin and attains liberation by entering the spiritual world. Some examples of words of exaggerated praise are given in the following words of the Jaimini-sūtra:

\[\text{yasya parṇamayī juhur bhavati na sa pāpam ślokam śṛṇoti yadāṅkte cakṣur eva bhratṛvyasya vrñkte}\]

“He whose sacrificial ladle is made of parṇa never hears sinful words. He whose eyes are anointed is protected from his enemies.

\[\text{yat-prayājānuyājā īyante varma vā etad yajñasya}\]

“He who makes the prayājā and anuyājā offerings is protected by an armor of yajña.”

Jaimini gives this description of these words of praise:

\[\text{dravya-sanśkāra-karmasu parārthatvāt phala-śrutir artha-vādaḥ syāt}\]

“But because they are actually meant to describe other things, the description of benefits obtained from sacrificial paraphernalia and sacrificial actions are in truth only empty praises.”

The Śruti-śāstra explains that a householder who throughout his entire life is self-controlled and virtuous and who regularly performs yajñas and other spiritual duties, at the end attains the Supreme Personality of Godhead. This is described in the following words of Chāndogya Upaniṣad [8.15.1]:

\[\text{ācārya-kulād vedam adhīya yatha-vidhānam guroh karmātiśeseṇābhisamāvṛtya kuṭumbe śucau deśe svādhyāyam adhiyāno dharmikān vidadhātmani sarvendriyāni sampratisṭhāpyāhiṁsān sarva-bhūtāny anyatra tīrthebhyaḥ sa khalv evainī varśatan yāvad āyuṣāṁ brahma-lokam abhisampadyate na ca punar āvarthe.}\]

“From the ācāryas one should learn the Védas. One should perform his duties and also offer dakṣīṇā to his spiritual master. Then one should accept household life, live in a pure way, study the Védas, perform his religious duties, engage all his senses in the Supreme Lord’s service, not harm any living being, and go on pilgrimage to holy places. A person who passes his life in this way goes to the spiritual world. He does not return to this world of repeated birth and death.”

In the Viṣṇu Purāṇa [3.8.9] it is said:

\[\text{varṇāśramācāravaṭā}\]
\[\text{puruṣeṇa parah pumān}\]
\[\text{viṣṇur ārādhyate panthā}\]
\[\text{nānyat tat-toṣa-kāraṇam}\]

“The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Viṣṇu, is worshiped by the proper execution of prescribed duties in the system of varṇa and āśrama. There is no other way to satisfy the Supreme Personality of Godhead. One must be situated in the institution of the four varṇas and āśramas.”

Many other scriptural passages may also be quoted to prove this point. Scriptural passages that encourage renunciation of Vedic rituals and pious deeds are meant for they who are crippled and thus unable to perform these deeds.

In the next sūtra Jaimini affirms that transcendental knowledge is a subordinate aspect of Vedic rituals and pious deeds.

**Sūtra 3.4.3**

\[\text{ācāra-darśanāt}\]
ācāra – of deeds; darśanāt – because of seeing.

Because such deeds are seen.

In the Brhad-āranyaka Upaniṣad [3.1.1] it is said:

janako vaideho bahu-dakṣiṇena yajñeneje

“Janaka, the king of Videha, performed a great yajña and gave very opulent dakṣiṇā.”

In the Chāndogya Upaniṣad [5.11.5] it is said:

yakṣamāno ha vai bhagavanto ‘ham asmī

“The saintly king said: Soon I shall perform a great yajña.”

In this way it is seen that even great saints learned in transcendental knowledge still had to perform Vedic yajñas. Therefore transcendental knowledge alone is not sufficient to bring the perfection of life. Here the adage, “If honey is found in a tree in one’s own courtyard, why should one travel over mountains searching for it?” is appropriate.

Sūtra 3.4.4

tac chruteḥ
tat – that; chruteḥ – because of the Śruti-śāstra.

It is so because of the Śruti-śāstra.

In the Chāndogya Upaniṣad [1.1.8] it is said:

yad eva vidyayā karoti śraddhayopaniṣadā tad eva vīryavattaram bhavati

“When one worships the Lord with transcendental knowledge, with faith, and with the teachings of the Upaniṣads, his worship becomes very powerful and effective.”

Because it is here said “with transcendental knowledge,” the subordinate nature of that knowledge is clearly seen.

Sūtra 3.4.5

samanvārambhaṇāt

samanvārambhaṇāt – because of being together.

Because of being together.

In the Brhad-āranyaka Upaniṣad [4.4.2] it is said:

tāṁ vidyā-karmaṇī samanvārabhete pūrva-prajñā ca

“At the time of death a person’s knowledge, deeds, and concept of life combine to determine his future.”

This passage shows that knowledge and pious deeds both together determine the soul’s future.
Sūtra 3.4.6

tadvato vidhānāt

tadvataḥ – like that; vidhānāt – because of the rule.

Because of a rule like that.

In the Taittirīya-samhitā it is said:

brahmisṭho brahmā darśa-paurṇamāsāyos tam vṛṇīte

“To perform the darśa and paurṇamāsa rites, he chooses a priest learned in the science of the Supreme.”

Thus it is clearly seen that transcendental knowledge is only a subordinate part of the Vedic rituals, for such knowledge only qualifies one to be a priest.

Sūtra 3.4.7

niyamāc ca

niyamāt – because of a rule; ca – also.

Also because of a rule.

In the Isopaniṣad [Mantra 2] it is said:

kurvann evaḥ karmāṇi
jijīvīcch cchaṁ samāḥ
evāṁ tvayi nānyatheto 'sti
na karma lipyate nare

“One may aspire to live for hundreds of years if he continuously goes on working in that way, for that sort of work will not bind him to the law of karma. There is no alternative to this way for man.”

This verse gives the order that even a man wise with transcendental knowledge should perform Vedic yajñas and pious deeds for as long as he lives. This verse clearly refutes the statements that encourage the renunciation of Vedic rituals or that claim that one has the option to perform or renounce Vedic rituals. This is so because scriptural statements encouraging renunciation are meant for those who are crippled or otherwise unable to perform Vedic rituals. In the Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa it is said:

vīrahā vā esa devānāṁ yo ‘gnim udvāsayate

“He who does not offer oblations in the sacred fire for the demigods becomes sinful like a man who kills his own children.”

In this way renunciation of Vedic rituals is forbidden. In these words the idea that because it is a subordinate part of Vedic rituals, transcendental knowledge is not independent is giving spiritual benefit is advanced.

This is the opinion of Jaimini and the karma-mīmāṁsā school. The author of the sūtras refutes this idea in the following words.
**Adhikaraṇa 3: The Superiority of Transcendental Knowledge**

**Sūtra 3.4.8**

\[ \text{adhikopadeśāt tu bādarāyaṇasyaivām tad-darśanāt} \]

\[ \text{adhika – more; upadeśāt – because of the teaching; tu – but; bādarāyaṇasya – of Vyāsa; evam – thus; tat – of that; darśanāt – because of the revelation of scripture.} \]

**But because Vyāsa teaches that it is more important and also because of the scriptures’ revelation.**

The word *tu* [but] is used here to begin the refutation of the *pūrva-pāśīn*. The truth is that transcendental knowledge is more important than Vedic rituals. Why is that? The *sūtra* explains, *upadeśāt tu bādarāyaṇasyaivām*: “Because Vyāsa teaches that it is more important.” Vyāsa’s opinion here cannot be uprooted, for the *sūtra* explains, *tad-darśanāt*: “Also because of the scriptures’ revelation.”

In the *Brhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad* [4.4.22] it is said:

\[ \text{tam etat vedānubhāvacena brāhmaṇā vividhiṣanti brahmacaryena tapasi śraddhayā} \]
\[ \text{yajñenānāśakena caitam eva viditvā munir bhavaty eva eva pravrājino lokam abhīpsantaḥ pravrajante.} \]

“By Vedic study, celibacy, austerity, faith, *yajña* and fasting, the *brāhmaṇas* strive to understand Him. One who understands Him becomes wise. Desiring to travel to His transcendental world, the *brāhmaṇas* become wandering *sannyāsīs.*”

This passage shows that Vedic rituals bring the result of transcendental knowledge, and when that knowledge is attained, the Vedic rituals are abandoned. Because the method of attainment [Vedic rituals] here is abandoned at a certain stage, therefore the result [transcendental knowledge] these methods bring is more important than the methods themselves.

\[ \text{śreyān dravya-mayād yajñāj} \]
\[ \text{jñāna-yajñāḥ parantapa} \]
\[ \text{sarvāṁ karmākhilaṁ pārtha} \]
\[ \text{jñāne parisamāpyate} \]

“O chastiser of the enemy, the sacrifice of knowledge is greater than the sacrifice of material possessions. O son of Pṛthā, after all, the sacrifice of work culminates in transcendental knowledge.” [*Bhagavad-gītā* 4.33]

Here someone may object: “It is seen than many saints who are most wise with transcendental knowledge still perform Vedic rituals. Therefore transcendental knowledge and Vedic rituals are both equally important.”

In the following words the author of the *sūtras* refutes this idea.

**Sūtra 3.4.9**

\[ \text{tulyaṁ tu darśanam} \]

\[ \text{tulyam – equal; tu – but; darśanam – scriptural; revelation.} \]

**But the same thing is seen in the scriptures.**
The word *tu* [but] here is used to begin the refutation of the idea that transcendental knowledge is an inferior byproduct of the performance of Vedic rituals. The *sūtra* explains that there is equal scriptural evidence to show that transcendental knowledge is not subordinate to Vedic rituals. In the *Brhad-āranyaka Upaniṣad* it is said:

> etad dha sma vai vidvāṁsa āhur rṣayaḥ kārayeyāḥ kim arthā vayaṁ adhyesvāmahe kim arthā vayaṁ yaksāmahe etad dha sma vai pūrve vidvāṁso ‘gni-hotraṁ juhavāṁ ca kriye etam vai tam ātmānam vidītvā brāhmaṇaḥ putra-pauṣāyāś ca vitteṣaṇāyāś ca lokaiṣaṇāyāś ca vyutthāya bhīkṣā-caryāṁ caranti.

“The wise sages asked, ‘Why do we study the Vedas? Why do we perform *yajñas*?’ Then the sages stopped performing *agnihotra-yajñas*. Learning the truth about the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the *brāhmaṇas* renounced all desire to attain sons, grandsons, wealth, or anything else in this world. They became *sannyāsī* beggars traveling here and there.”

In many places the scriptures describe many great souls learned with transcendental knowledge who renounced all Vedic rituals. These statements of scripture do not contradict the descriptions of great souls performing Vedic rituals, for many great souls performed Vedic rituals, either to purify themselves or to set a good example for the world to follow.

In the next *sūtra*, Vyāsa refutes the argument given in *Sūtra* 3.4.4.

**Sūtra 3.4.10**

> *asārvatrīkī*

> *asārvatrīkī – not universal.*

It is not universal.

The passage [*Chāndogya Upaniṣad* 1.1.8] referred to in *Sūtra* 3.4.4 does not have all transcendental knowledge as its scope. It specifically refers to the *udgītha-vidyā* [the Vedic hymns]. Therefore all transcendental knowledge is not a subordinate aspect of Vedic rituals.

In the next *sūtra* Vyāsa refutes the argument given in *Sūtra* 3.4.5.

**Sūtra 3.4.11**

> *vibhāgah śata-vat*

> *vibhāgah – division; śata – a hundred; vat – like.*

The distribution is like a hundred.

The results of Vedic *yajñas* and transcendental knowledge, as described in *Brhad-āranyaka Upaniṣad* 4.4.2 [quoted in *Sūtra* 3.4.5], are actually different. Transcendental knowledge brings one result and Vedic *yajñas* bring a different result. In this *sūtra* the example of a hundred is given. A cow and a goat may be purchased for a hundred coins. The cow cost ninety coins and the goat cost ten coins. The cost was not equally divided with each costing fifty coins. In the same way transcendental and Vedic *yajñas* combine to determine the future of the individual soul, but they do not have the same influence in determining it.
In the next sūtra, Vyāsa refutes the argument given in Sūtra 3.4.6.

Sūtra 3.4.12

adhyayana-mātra-vataḥ

adhyayana – study; mātra – only; vataḥ – of one who possesses.

Of one who has merely studied.

The passage from the Taittirīya-saṃhitā quoted in Sūtra 3.4.6 states that a person who has studied the Vedas should be chosen as a priest. It does not mean that the priest must be advanced in transcendental knowledge of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and therefore transcendental knowledge is a subordinate part of the Vedic rituals. The word brahmīṣṭha in that passage means, “One who is learned in the Vedas.” It does not mean “one who is wise with transcendental knowledge of the Supreme Personality of Godhead,” for the Śruti-śāstras declare that a person fixed in transcendental knowledge of the Supreme renounces Vedic rituals.

Transcendental knowledge of the Supreme Personality of Godhead is not like ordinary religious or academic knowledge; it means direct consciousness of God. Therefore a person who properly studies the Vedas, does not misinterpret their words, and does not desire to gain anything material as a result of his study, is said to be brahmīṣṭha [learned in the Vedas]. The affix īṣṭha has that meaning here. Some claim that the word means that the priest must be a knower of the Supreme and therefore this passage is meant to praise the glories of Vedic yajñas. But according to the author of the sūtras, this is not the case.

Here someone may object: “One who has simply studied is not qualified to perform Vedic yajñas. One must have wisdom also. Studying the Vedas does not mean simply reading them. It means understanding them. Because the Upaniṣads are parts of the Vedas, it must be understood that one who understands the Vedas understands the transcendental knowledge of the Supreme Personality of Godhead also. In this way it is proved that transcendental knowledge of the Supreme Personality of Godhead is only one subordinate aspect of the Vedic yajñas.”

If this objection is raised, then I reply: One is not situated in transcendental knowledge merely by understanding the meanings of the words in the Vedas, but only when one directly sees the Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself. Merely by understanding the meaning of the sentence “Honey is sweet,” one does not have direct perception of its sweetness. If this were so, then merely by understanding these words one would be able to taste honey. Of course one does not taste honey in this way. Once, when asked, Nārada Muni declared that, even though he knew the Rg Veda and many other scriptures, still he did not understand the Supreme. He said:

so ‘haṁ mantra-vid evāsmi nātma-vi

“I know many mantras, but I do not know the Supreme Personality of Godhead.”

Realization of the Lord is something different from mere academic knowledge of the Vedas. Therefore genuine transcendental knowledge means direct perception of the Lord, a perception attained by engaging in devotional service. This knowledge brings with it the attainment of the real goal of human life. In the Taittirīya Aranyaka [Mahā-Nārāyaṇa Upaniṣad 10.6, and Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad 3.2.6] it is said:

vedānta-vijñāṇa-suniścitārthāḥ
sannyāsa-yogāt yatayah suddhavāḥ
te brahma-loke tu parānta-kāle
parāṁṛtā parimucyanti sarve

“Wise with the knowledge taught in the Vedas, renounced, and pure in heart, the great souls go to Brahmaloka. When the time comes for the universe’s end, they all become liberated and go to the spiritual world.”

Therefore renunciation of the world and academic knowledge of the Vedas are both subordinate parts of transcendental knowledge of the Supreme. In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam [1.2.12] it is said:

tac-chrodadhānā manayo
jñāna-vairāgya-yuktayā
paśyanty ātmani cātmanam
bhaktī śruta-grhītayā

“The seriously inquisitive student or sage, well equipped with knowledge and detachment, realizes the Absolute Truth by rendering devotional service in terms of what he has heard from the Vedānta-ṣruti.”

Here someone may object: “The activities of devotional Service employ the body, words, and mind. In the trance of meditation it is possible to directly see the Supreme Lord with the mind, but how is it possible to directly see the Lord when the body and words are engaged in worship, japa, or other similar activities?”

If this objection is raised, then I reply: Devotional service is naturally filled with transcendental knowledge and bliss. In the Śruti-śāstra it is said:

sac-cid-ānandaika-rase bhakti-yoge tiṣṭhati

“Devotional service is eternal and full of transcendental knowledge and bliss.”

If this were not so, then devotees would not have the power to conquer the Supreme Lord and bring Him under their control. The activities of devotional service invoke the appearance of the Lord, who comes in His spiritual and blissful form, with the graceful hair on His head and the other features of His body. In the nyāya-śāstra it is said:

śrutes tu śabda-mūlatvāt

“The Supreme Personality of Godhead, being inconceivable to an ordinary man, can be understood only through the evidence of the Vedic injunctions.”

In this way it is shown that the Supreme is extraordinary, inconceivable, and beyond the limits imposed by the material world and mental processes. He cannot be understood by material logic, but only by His self-revelation to the self-realized soul.

Sūtra 3.4.13

nāviśeṣāt

na – not; aviśeṣāt – because of being not specific.

No. For it is not specific.

The Śruti-śāstra does not order that a person wise with transcendental knowledge of Supreme must perform Vedic rituals throughout his entire life. Why is that? The sūtra explains, aviśeṣāt: “For it is not specifically stated.” In the Mahā-Nārāyaṇa Upaniṣad of the Taippiya Aranyaka 10.5 it is said:
na karmaṇā na prajayā dhanena tyāgenaikē amṛtatvam ānaśuḥ

“By performing Vedic rituals, fathering good children, or giving wealth in charity one does not attain liberation. It is by renunciation that one attains liberation.”

In this way there is no specific order that one must always perform Vedic rituals. The Śruti-śāstra gives different instructions about Vedic rituals, sometimes encouraging and sometimes discouraging them, because these instructions are intended for different āśramas.

After thus refuting these objections, the author of the sūtras proceeds to explain the real purpose of the Śruti-śāstra’s description of Vedic rituals.

Sūtra 3.4.14

stutaye ‘numatir vā
stutaye – for praise; anumatiḥ – permission; vā – or.

Or, the permission is for praise.

The word vā [or] is used here for emphasis.

Īśopaniṣad’s permission that one may perform Vedic Rituals throughout one’s entire life is given so that one may glorify transcendental knowledge. This passage praises transcendental knowledge, for it is a person who has transcendental knowledge who may thus perform Vedic rituals throughout his life and not be touched by karmic reactions. Īśopaniṣad [Mantra 2] explains:

evāṁ tvayi nānyatheto ‘sti

“That sort of work will not bind him to the law of karma. There is no alternative to this way for man.”

In this way is refuted the idea that transcendental knowledge is a subordinate aspect of Vedic rituals.

Adhikaranaṇa 4: The Glories of Transcendental Knowledge

Viśaya [thesis or statement]: Now that the independence of transcendental knowledge has been explained, the great glory of transcendental knowledge will be described. In the Vājasaneyī-śruti [Brhad-āranyaka Upaniṣad 4.4.23] it is said:

esa nityo mahimā brāhmaṇasya na karmaṇā vardhate no kanīyān

“Karma can neither lessen nor increase the eternal glory of one who understands the Supreme.”

Samāśaya [doubt]: Do they who are situated in transcendental knowledge have the right to act in any way they please, or do they not have that right?

Pūrvapakṣa [the opponent speaks]: By abandoning prescribed duties one commits a sin. Therefore a person in transcendental knowledge does not have the right to act as he pleases.

Siddhānta [conclusion]: In the following words the author of the sūtras gives His conclusion.

Sūtra 3.4.15

kāma-kāreṇa caike
kāma – desire; kāreṇa – by doing; ca – and; eke – some.
Also, some say he may act as he pleases.

To show mercy to the people of the world a person situated in transcendental knowledge may sometimes voluntarily perform Vedic rituals, even though he gains no personal benefit by performing them, and neither is he faulted if he does not perform them. His glory is eternal, as is explained in Brhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad 4.4.23 [quoted in the previous purport]. Therefore a person situated in transcendental knowledge can act as he likes and he is never touched by sin.

Here the word brāhmaṇa means “he who has directly seen the Supreme Personality of Godhead.” Such a person does not become virtuous by performing Vedic rituals, and neither does he do anything wrong by failing to perform them. As a lotus leaf is untouched by water, so he is untouched by the good karma generated by Vedic rituals. As a handful of straw is at once consumed by a blazing fire, so all his sins are at once burned to ashes. All of this shows the great power of transcendental knowledge. This is further explained in the following sūtra.

Sūtra 3.4.16

upamardain ca
upamardam – destruction; ca – also.

Destruction also.

In the Mundaka Upaniṣad it is said:

bhidyate hṛdaya-gantīś
chidyante sarva-saṁśayāḥ
kṣiyante cāsyā karmāṇi
tasmin drṣṭe parāvare

“The knot in the heart is pierced, and all misgivings are cut to pieces. When one sees the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the chain of fruitive actions is terminated.”

In Bhagavad-gītā [4.37] the Supreme Personality of Godhead Explains:

yathaiḍhāṁsi saṁiddho ‘gnir
bhasmasāt kurute ‘rjuna
jñānāgniḥ sarva-karmāṇi
bhasmasāt kurute ‘rjuna

“As blazing fire turns firewood to ashes, O Arjuna, so does the fire of knowledge burn to ashes all reactions to material activities.”

These verses show that transcendental knowledge destroys the reactions of past fruitive deeds. Because transcendental knowledge thus destroys all karmic reactions, whether partially experienced or waiting to be experienced in the future, a person situated in transcendental knowledge is not at fault of he renounced the fruitive actions of Vedic rituals. This is not very surprising.

Here someone may object: “Is it not so that past karmic reactions are destroyed only by experiencing them?”

If this is said, then I reply: Although transcendental knowledge has the power to burn away all past karmic reactions, by the Lord’s desire, in order to preserve the appearance of the ordinary workings of
karma, transcendental knowledge does not completely burn away all the karmic reactions created in the present body.

In this way the karma of a person situated in transcendental knowledge is like a cloth that has been singed by fire. That is what is meant by the scriptures’ statement that karmic reactions are destroyed only by experiencing them. This will be further explained in Sūtra 4.1.15.

Sūtra 3.4.17

ūrdhva-retahsu ca śabde hi
ūrdhva – up; retaḥsu – semen; ca – and; śabde – in the Śruti- śāstra; hi – indeed.

In the Śruti-śāstras indeed among the celibates.

The pariniṣṭhita devotees, and especially the sannyāsīs and other celibates advanced in transcendental knowledge are especially free to act as they like. This truth explained in the Śruti-śāstra again confirms the truth that transcendental knowledge is independent of the Vedic rituals. The scriptural passage referred to in this sūtra is from the Brhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad [3.5.1] and is given below:

tasmād brāhmaṇāḥ pāṇḍityaṁ nirvidya bālyena tiṣṭhāset. Bālyaṁ ca pāṇḍityaṁ ca nirvidyātha munir amaunaṁ ca maunaṁ ca nirvidyātha brāhmaṇaḥ kena syād yena syāt tenedṛśaḥ.

“A brāhmaṇa should then renounce scholarship and become like a child. Then he should renounce both scholarship and childlike simplicity and become a silent sage. Then he should renounce the stance of either being or not being a silent sage. Then he becomes a brāhmaṇa, a person who directly sees the Supreme Personality of Godhead. When he attains this stage he may act in whatever way he likes.”

In Bhagavad-gītā [3.25] the Supreme Personality of Godhead explains:

saktāḥ karmaṇy avidvāṁso
yathā kurvanti bhārata
kuryād vidvāṁs tathāsaktaś
cikrṣur loka-saṅgraham

“As the ignorant perform their duties with attachment to results, the learned may similarly act, but without attachment, for the sake of leading people on the right path.”

In the next sūtra Jaimini Muni gives a different opinion.

Sūtra 3.4.18

parāmarśaṁ jaiminir acodanā cāpavadati hi
parāmarśaṁ – favorable idea; jaiminiḥ – Jaimini; acodanā – not ordering; ca – and; apavadati – criticizes; hi – because.

Jaimini favors it. It is not ordered, and because indeed it is forbidden.

A person situated in transcendental knowledge has the freedom to perform prescribed Vedic rituals and duties in whatever way he likes. That is the meaning of the Śruti-śāstra’s explanation that he may act as he likes.
The word *hi* here means “because.” The word *parāmarśam* means that the Śruti-śāstra orders that even one situated in transcendental knowledge must perform Vedic rituals, and the word *apavadaṭi* means that the Śruti-śāstra forbids that he stop performing Vedic rituals. The word *acodanā* means that a person situated in transcendental knowledge may renounce those activities not prescribed by the scriptures. That is the meaning here.

*Iṣopaniṣad Mantra 2* and the passage from *Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa* [quoted in the purport of *Sūtra 3.4.7*] both forbid the renunciation of Vedic rituals. They do not say that one should renounce Vedic rituals. Therefore there is a contradiction, with some texts encouraging performance of Vedic rituals and some encouraging renunciation of Vedic rituals. It is not that the texts encouraging renunciation are wrong. These texts are intended for persons who are crippled, mute, or in some other way unable to perform Vedic rituals. Therefore even they who are situated in transcendental knowledge should continue to perform Vedic rituals.

The words *kena syāt* in the passage from the *Brhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad* [3.5.1, quoted in the previous Purport] mean, “a person situated in transcendental knowledge must perform Vedic rituals, but he has some freedom to perform them in the way that pleases him.” It does not mean that he has the right to renounce Vedic rituals altogether. This is the opinion of Jaimini.

Thus Jaimini believes that this passage orders the performance of Vedic rituals. In the following words the author of the *sūtras* gives His opinion, which is that the person situated in transcendental knowledge really does have the right to act in any way he likes.

**Sūtra 3.4.19**

\[ anuṣṭheyaṁ bādarāyaṇaḥ sāmya-śruteḥ \]

\[ anuṣṭheyaṁ \] what should be practiced; \[ bādarāyaṇaḥ \] Vyāsa; \[ sāmya \] equality; \[ śruteḥ \] from the Śruti-śāstra.

*Vyāsa* says it may be done because the Śruti-śāstra describes equality.

The words *anuṣṭheyaṁ bādarāyaṇaḥ* here mean, “Vyāsa thinks that a person situated in transcendental knowledge may perform Vedic rituals, or not, as he chooses.” Why is that? The *sūtra* explains, *sāmya-śruteḥ*: “Because the Śruti-śāstra declares that whether he performs these rituals or not it is the same.”

The words “When he attains this stage he may act in whatever way he likes,” of *Brhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad* 3.5.1 quoted in the purport of *Sūtra 3.4.17* mean that a person situated in transcendental knowledge may act in any way, but the result he obtains is always the same. Jaimini’s opinion is that this description of the actions of a person situated in transcendental knowledge are only words of empty praise, for one must perform Vedic rituals completely in order to get a good result. If a person renounces some part of the Vedic rituals he is not equal to a person who performs all rituals perfectly.

Vedic rituals should be performed by a *svanīṣṭha* devotee. The statement that a person who neglects Vedic rituals becomes sinful like a person who kills his own children [*Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa* quoted in the purport of *Sūtra 3.4.7*] applies only to a person who is not situated in transcendental knowledge. In this way the seeming contradictions are reconciled. Jaimini’s theory that all scriptural passages encouraging renunciation are intended for they who are crippled or somehow unable to perform Vedic rituals is refuted by the passage of *Mahā-Nārāyaṇa Upaniṣad* quoted in the purport of *Sūtra 3.4.13.*
Sūtra 3.4.20

vidhir vā dhāraṇa-vat
vidhiḥ – rules; vā – or; dhāraṇa – studying; vat – like.

Or, the rule may be like studying.

The words vidhir vā mean that the statement “He may act in whatever way he likes,” of Brhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad 3.5.1 [quoted in the purport of Sūtra 3.4.17] refers only to a person situated in transcendental knowledge. The sūtra explains, dhāraṇa-vat: “It is like studying.” This means that “as the three higher castes are eligible to study the Vedas and others are not eligible, in the same way only a self-realized pariniṣṭhita devotee situated in transcendental knowledge is allowed to act in whatever way he likes.” Others are not allowed. In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam the Supreme Personality of Godhead explains:

śaucam ācamanaṁ snānaṁ
na tu codanayācaret
anyāṁśa ca niyamāṁ jñānī
yathāhaṁ līlayeśvaraḥ

“As I, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, voluntarily enjoy transcendental pastimes, so the person situated in transcendental knowledge performs snāna, ācamana, śauca, and follows a host of other rules voluntarily, and not because he is ordered to do so.”

In the next sūtra an objection is raised and then answered.

Sūtra 3.4.21

stuti-mātram upādānād iti cen nāpūrvatvāt
stuti – praise; mātram – only; upādānāt – because of reference; iti – thus; cet – if; na – not; āpūrvatvāt – because of newness.

If it is said to be merely empty praise, then I say no, for it is something new.

Here the objector says: “These words are merely empty praise. They do not speak what is really true. As a lover tells the beloved, ‘You are free to do anything you like,’ but does not really mean that the beloved can do exactly anything, in the same way it is said that the person situated in transcendental knowledge may do whatever he likes.

If this is said, then the sūtra replies, na: “No. It is not so.” Why not? The sūtra explains, apūrvatvāt: “For it is something new.” Because the statement that a person who directly sees the Supreme Personality of Godhead may perform Vedic rituals as he wishes is a new teaching, it cannot be mere empty praise of something already described. That is the meaning.

Sūtra 3.4.22

bhāva-śabdāc ca
bhāva – love; śabdāt – because of the Śruti-śāstra; ca – also.

Also because the Śruti-śāstra describes love.
In the Muñḍaka Upaniṣad [3.1.4] it is said:

prāṇo hy eṣa sarva-bhūtair vibhāti
vijānan vidvān bhavate nāti-vādī
tāma-krīḍa tāma-rāthi kriyāvān
eṣā brahma-vidāṁ variṣṭāḥ

“The Supreme Personality of Godhead is the life of all. He is the Supersoul splendidly manifest in all living beings. One who knows Him becomes wise. That person turns from the logicians’ debates. He meditates on the Lord’s pastimes. He loves the Lord. He serves the Lord. He is the best of transcendentalists.”

This verse clearly describes the devotees’ love for the Lord. The word rātiḥ here means love. The words bhāva, rati and prema all mean love. A pariniṣṭhita devotee who has fallen in love with the Supreme Lord has not the time to perform Vedic rituals very completely, although for the sake of the people in general he may sometimes perform them to a certain extent. In this way it is seen that transcendental knowledge is independent of Vedic rituals.

Fearing that another objection may be raised, the author of the sūtras gives the following reply.

Sūtra 3.4.23

pāriplavārthā iti cen na viśeṣatvāt
pāriplava – restless; arthāḥ – meanings; iti – thus; cet – if; na – not; viśeṣatvāt – because of being specific.

If it is said that they are pāriplava stories, then I reply No, for those are specific.

In the Brhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad [4.5.1] it is said:

atha ha yājñavalkyasya dve bhārye babhuvatur maitreyī ca kātyāyanī ca

“Yājñavalkya had two wives: Maitreyī and Kātyāyanī.”

In the Taิตtirīya Upaniṣad [3.1] it is said:

bhṛgur vai vāruṇir varuṇaṁ pitaram upasasāra adhiḥi bhagavo brahmeti

“Bhṛgu approached his father, Varuṇa, and asked, O master, please teach me about the Supreme.”

In the Kauśīkī Upaniṣad [3.1] it is said:

pratardano ha vai daivodāsir indrasya priyāṁ dhāmopajagāma

“Divodāsa’s son Pratardana approached King Indra’s abode.”

In the Chāndogya Upaniṣad [4.1.1] it is said:

jānaśrutiḥ ha pautrāyaṇaḥ śraddhodayo bahudāyī bahupākya āśa

“Jānaśruti Pautrāyaṇa was very faithful and generous.”

The Śruti-śāstra teaches the science of transcendental knowledge in these and other stories. Here someone may doubt: “Are these stories meant to teach transcendental knowledge or are they merely
pāriplava [stories recited at a rājasūya-yajña to appease the restless mind]?” Someone may claim that these are merely pāriplava stories to appease the mind. After all, the Śruti-śāstra declares:

sarvāny ākhvānāni pāriplave śaṁsanti

“All are pāriplava stories meant to appease the restless mind.”

In pāriplava stories the literary skill is most important and any philosophical instructions are all secondary. Therefore the Vedic rituals are what is really important and the transcendental Knowledge contained in the stories of the Upaniṣads is not very important.

If this is said, then the sūtra declares, na: “No. It is not so.” Why not? The sūtra explains, višeṣatvāt: “For they are specific.” Only certain specific stories are pāriplavas.

It is said that on the first day of the yajña the story of Vivasvān’s son King Manu should be recited, on the second day The story of Vivasvān’s son King Indra should be recited, on the third day the story of Vivasvān’s son King Yāma should be recited. In this way only certain specific stories are employed for pāriplava. If all stories were equally appropriate for pāriplava, then it would make no sense to assign specific stories to specific days.

When the scripture says “All stories should be recited as pāriplava,” the meaning is that “All stories in the chapter of pāriplavas should be recited.” Therefore the conclusion is that the Upaniṣad stories that teach transcendental knowledge are not pāriplava stories.

Sūtra 3.4.24

tathā caika-vākyatopabandhāt
tathā – so; ca – and; eka – one; vākyatā – statement; upabandhāt – because of the connection.

It is also so because of the unity of the statements.

Because they are not pāriplava stories, it should be understood that the stories of the Upaniṣads are meant to teach transcendental knowledge. Why is that? The sūtra explains, eka-vākyatopabandhāt: “Because of the unity of the statements.” Thus in the story beginning with the description of Yājñavalkya and his wives it is said [Brhad-āranyaka Upaniṣad 4.4.22]:

ātmā vā are draṣṭavyāḥ śrotavyah

“One should hear of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. One should gaze upon Him.”

It this way it is seen that because of their context these stories are meant to teach transcendental knowledge. As the story beginning with the words so ‘rodī is a story meant to teach Vedic rituals and is not a pāriplava story, so the stories of the Upaniṣads are meant to teach transcendental knowledge. That is the meaning.

Because it teaches the supreme goal of life, transcendental knowledge is independent of Vedic rituals. Great saints therefore strive to attain transcendental knowledge. The stories of the Upaniṣads give concrete examples of the truths of transcendental Knowledge. For example, they will give concrete examples to show the truth of the Śruti-śāstras’ statement [Chāndogya Upaniṣad 6.14.2]:

ācāryavān puruṣo veda

“One who approaches a bona fide spiritual master can understand everything about spiritual realization.”
In this way also it is seen that transcendental knowledge is independent of Vedic rituals.

**Sūtra 3.4.25**

*ata eva cāgniṇḍhanādy-anapekṣā*

*ataḥ eva – therefore; ca – also; āgni – fire; indhana – igniting; ādi – beginning with; anapekṣā – no need.*

**Therefore also there is no need to light the fire or perform other duties.**

Because it is thus independent of Vedic rituals, transcendental knowledge does not need the help of the lighting of the sacred fire or the other activities of those rituals to give its result. Thus the idea that transcendental knowledge and the performance of Vedic rituals must be combined in order to bring liberation is refuted.

**Adhikaraṇa 5: The Person Qualified to Attain Transcendental Knowledge**

*Viṣaya [thesis or statement]: Now will be described the characteristics of a person qualified to learn transcendental knowledge. In Brhad-āranyaka Upaniṣad [4.4.22] it is said:*

*tam etaṁ vedānvacanena vividīṣanti yajñena dānena tapasānaśakena*

“The brāhmaṇas strive to understand the Supreme Personality of Godhead by study of the Vedas, by yajña, by charity, by austerity and by fasting.”

In Brhad-āranyaka Upaniṣad [4.4.23] it is said:

*tasmād evam-vic chānto danta uparatas titikṣuḥ śraddhā-vitto bhūtvātmmany evātmānam paśyet*

“A person who is wise, peaceful, self-controlled, free from material desires, tolerant and forgiving, and whose wealth is faith, is able to see the Supreme Personality of Godhead present as the Supersoul in his heart.”

In this way it is seen that there are two lists of qualifications to understand the Supreme Personality of Godhead. One list begins with Vedic yajñas and the other with peacefulness.

*Sāṃśaya [doubt]: Are both sets of qualifications necessary or not?*

*Pūrvapakṣa [the opponent speaks]: In the Chāndogya Upaniṣad [6.14.2] it is said:*

*aścāryavān puruṣo veda*

“One who approaches a bona fide spiritual master can understand everything about spiritual realization.”

Therefore to attain transcendental knowledge one need only find a spiritual master. Nothing else is required.

*Siddhānta [conclusion]: In the following words the author of the sūtras gives his conclusion.*

**Sūtra 3.4.26**

*sarvāpekṣā ca yajñādi-śrutir āśva-vat*

*sarva – of all; apekṣā – need; ca – also; yajña – yajnas; ādi – beginning; śrutiḥ – the Śruti-śāstra; āśva – horse; vat – like.*
Also, all are needed. The Śruti-śāstra mentions yajñas and other things. They are like a horse.

Although transcendental knowledge does not need anything else to bring its results, still yajñas and all kinds of pious deeds are needed in order to attain transcendental knowledge. That is the meaning. Why is that? The sūtra explains, yajñādi-śrutiḥ: “The Śruti-śāstra mentions yajñas and other things.” The two passages from Brhad-āranyaka Upaniṣad [4.4.22 and 23] quoted at the beginning of this Adhikaraṇa give two lists of qualifications for one who would seek transcendental knowledge, one list beginning with performance of yajñas and the other list with peacefulness.

The sūtra then gives an example, aśva-vat: “They are like a horse.” To travel somewhere a horse is needed, but someone who has already attained his destination no longer has need of a horse.

Here someone may object: “If transcendental knowledge may be attained by one who has the qualifications of the first list, which begins with yajñas, then what is the need of attaining the qualifications of the second list, which begins with peacefulness and self-control?”

If this question is raised, then the author of the sūtras gives the following reply.

Sūtra 3.4.27

śama-damādy-upetas tu syāt tathāpi tu tad-vidhes tad-aṅgatayā teśām avaśyānuṣṭheyatvāt
śama – peacefulness; damā – self-control; ādi – beginning with; upetaḥ – possessing; tu – indeed; syāt – should be; tathāpi – nevertheless; tu – but; tat – of them; vidheḥ – because of the rule; tat – of that; aṅgatayā – because of being parts; teśām – of them; avaśya – needed; anusṭheyatvāt – because they should be practiced.

But one must nevertheless certainly have peacefulness, self-control and other virtues, for that is the rule. Because they are parts they must be attained.

The two appearances of the word tu have the meanings of giving certainty [certainly] and dispelling doubt [but]. Although the qualifications of the first list, which begins with yajñas, are sufficient for attaining transcendental knowledge, nevertheless a person who seeks transcendental knowledge should also attain the qualifications of the second list, which begins with peacefulness.

Why is that? The sūtra explains, tad-vidhes tad-aṅgatayā: “For that is the rule. Because they are parts they must be attained.” This means that peacefulness and the other virtues mentioned here are parts of transcendental knowledge and therefore they must also be attained.

The qualities given in both lists must be attained. The qualities on the first list, which begins with yajñas, are external qualities, and those on the second list, which begins with peacefulness, are internal qualities. In this way they are distinguished. The word ādi [beginning with] here means that truthfulness and many other qualities are also to be added to these lists.

Adhikaraṇa 6: A Person Situated in Transcendental Knowledge is not Free to Sin

Viṣaya [thesis or statement]: Now will be explained the truth that a person situated in transcendental knowledge should not commit forbidden acts. In the Śruti-śāstra it is said:
yadi ha vāapy evam-vin nikhilaṁ bhakṣayītaivam eva sa bhavati

“If a person situated in transcendental knowledge eats anything impure he remains pure nevertheless.”

Saṁśaya [doubt]: Do these words order a person situated in transcendental knowledge that he must eat any and all foods, or do they merely give permission that he may eat any food he wishes?

Pūrvapakṣa [the opponent speaks]: No argument has the power to refute that this is an order. The person situated in transcendental knowledge is therefore ordered that must eat any and all foods.

Siddhānta [conclusion]: In the following words the author of the sūtras gives His conclusion.

**Sūtra 3.4.28**

sarvāṇnumatī ca prāṇātyaye tad-darśanāt

*saṛva – all; anna – food; anumatiḥ – permission; ca – and; prāṇa – of life; atyaye – at the end; tat – that; darśanāt – because of revelation of Śruti-śāstra.*

Also, permission to eat all foods is given when life is in danger, for that is the revelation of scripture.

The word *ca* [also] is used here for emphasis. When proper foods are not available and there is danger that life may come to an end, then permission is given to eat any and all foods. Why is that? The sūtra explains, *tad darśanāt:* “For that is the revelation of scripture.” In the Chāndogya Upaniṣad [1.10.1-4] it is said:

maṭacī-hateṣu kurusvāṭikā yaha jāyayoṣastir ha cākṛāyaṇa ibhya-grāme pradrāṇaka uvāsa. sa hebhyam kulmāṣăn khadantām vibhikṣe taṁ hovāca. neto ‘nye vidyante yac ca ye ma imā upanihītā iti. etesāṁ me deḥīti hovāca tān asmai pradaṇḍau hāntāṇupāṇam ity ucchiṣṭān vai me pītaṁ syād iti hovāca. na svidete ‘py ucchiṣṭa iti na va aśvīṣyāmimāṁ akhadann iti hovāca kāmo me uḍā-pāṇam iti.

“A poor man named Uṣasti Cākṛāyaṇa lived with his wife Atīki in the village of Ibhya-grāma in the country of the Kuru. One year there was a famine and the crops were destroyed by hailstones. Uṣasti begged food from a rich man who was eating beans. The rich man said, ‘All I have is these beans. I have nothing else.’ The poor man said, ‘Please give me that.’ So the rich man give his remnants to him. Then the rich man said, ‘Here is something to drink.’ The poor man replied, ‘You have already drunk some of that and therefore I should not drink it.’ The rich man said, ‘Is it not that I have also eaten some of these beans?’ The poor man replied, ‘Without eating these beans I would not be able to remain alive, but drinking water I do not need. I can drink any time I wish.’ ”

The truth is thus seen in this story of Cākṛāyaṇa. In order to save his live the saintly sage named Cākṛāyaṇa ate the remnants of beans eaten by a rich man, but fearing that he was accepting the remnants of another, he was not willing to drink the water offered by the rich man, for he could easily obtain water whenever he wished. On the following day the sage ate the leftovers of those beans, thus eating his own remnants. This story is also recounted in other places in the scriptures.

**Sūtra 3.4.29**

abādhāc ca
abādhāt – because of being no impediment; ca – also.

Also because there is no impediment.

In times of emergency one has permission to eat any food, and such eating does not contaminate the heart and the mind. The sūtra explains that this eating does not present an impediment to attaining transcendental knowledge.

Sūtra 3.4.30

api smaryate

api – also; smaryate – in the Smṛti-śāstra.

Also in the Smṛti-śāstra.

In Manu-saṁhitā [10.104] it is said:

jīvitātyayam āpanno
yo ’nnam atti yatas tataḥ
lipyate na sa pāpena
padma-patram ivāmbhasā

“One who in an emergency, in order to save his life, eats whatever is available is not touched by sin. He is like a lotus leaf untouched by water.”

Only in an emergency, and not at other times, is one allowed to eat anything that is available. Therefore the meaning here is that the person situated in transcendental knowledge has permission to eat any food in certain circumstances, not that he is ordered that he must eat any food. The scriptures clearly forbid the eating of impure foods when there is no emergency.

Sūtra 3.4.31

śabdaś cāto ‘kāma-cāre

śabdaḥ – Śruti-śāstra; ca – and; atah – therefore; a – not; kāma – desire; cāre – acting.

Scripture says it should not be done by one’s own wish.

Thus when there is an emergency one has permission to eat any food, but otherwise, during ordinary times, a person situated in transcendental knowledge will not of his own wish disobey the orders of the scriptures. In Chāndogya Upaniṣad [7.26.2] it is said:

āhāra-śuddhau sattva-śuddhiḥ sattva-śuddhau dhruvā smṛtīḥ smṛti-lambhe sarva-granthīnāṁ vipramokṣaḥ

“By performance of yajña one’s eatables become sanctified, and by eating sanctified foodstuffs, one’s very existence becomes purified. By the purification of existence finer tissues in the memory become sanctified, and when memory is sanctified one can think of the path of liberation.”
In this way the Chāndogya Upaniṣad forbids acting whimsically and doing whatever one wishes. Thus, although in times of emergency one has permission to eat any foods, in ordinary times one must follow the rules given in the scriptures.

**Adhikaraṇa 7: The Svaniṣṭha Devotee and Varṇāśrama-dharma**

**Viśaya** [thesis or statement]: In the beginning of this Pāda three kinds of devotees were described, beginning with the svaniṣṭha devotee. Now will be considered the following question: Should they who have attained transcendental knowledge continue to perform the duties of varṇāśrama-dharma? First we will consider the situation of the svaniṣṭha devotees. In the Kauśārava-śruti it is said:

\[\text{paśyann apīmam ātmānāṁ} \]
\[\text{kuryāt karmāvīcārayan} \]
\[\text{yadātmanāḥ su-niyatam} \]
\[\text{ānandotkarsam āpnuyāt} \]

“Even when one directly sees the Supreme Personality of Godhead one should continue to perform Vedic rituals, for in this way one attains great bliss.”

**Saṁśaya** [doubt]: Should a svaniṣṭha devotee who has attained transcendental knowledge still perform Vedic rituals or should he not?

**Pūrvapakṣa** [the opponent speaks]: The purpose of Vedic rituals is to attain transcendental knowledge. When the end is attained the means may be abandoned. For this reason there is no reason that he must continue to perform Vedic rituals.

**Siddhānta** [conclusion]: In the following words the author of the sūtras gives His opinion.

**Sūtra 3.4.32**

\[\text{vihitavād āśrama-karmāpi} \]
\[\text{vihitavāt – because of being ordered; āśrama – of the asramas; karma – the duties; api – also.} \]

The duties of the āśramas also, for they are ordered.

The word *api* [also] here means that the duties of the varṇas are also included. This means that the prescribed duties of varṇāśrama-dharma should be performed. Why is that? They should be performed in order to increase transcendental knowledge. This is so because it is the order of the scriptures.

Here someone may object: “Here it is said that Vedic rituals should continue to be performed even after one has attained transcendental knowledge. How can this not mean that transcendental knowledge and Vedic rituals must both be performed together to bring the desired result?”

If this is said, the author of the sūtras gives the following reply.

**Sūtra 3.4.33**

\[\text{sahakāritvena ca} \]
\[\text{sahakāritvena – as helpful; ca – also.} \]

Also, as helpful.
Vedic rituals should be performed, not because they are in themselves the cause of liberation, but because they are helpful in attaining transcendental knowledge. Transcendental knowledge is the real cause of liberation, as is explained in Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad [3.8].

In the beginning the svanīṣṭha devotee performs his prescribed duties of Vedic rituals in order to please the Supreme Personality of Godhead. In that way he attains transcendental knowledge. Then, although in this way he has already attained transcendental knowledge, in order to increase that transcendental knowledge, he continues to perform these prescribed duties of Vedic rituals. Transcendental knowledge does not cause the cessation of Vedic rituals, for the two of them are not opposed to each other.

Generally a person performs Vedic rituals in order to attain a great wonder of delights in Svargaloka and other heavenly places. In the Brhad-āranyaka Upaniṣad [1.4.15] it is said:

\[\text{na hāsyā karma kṣiyate}\]

“The pious deeds of a person situated in transcendental knowledge never perish.”

The svanīṣṭha devotee does not perform Vedic rituals to experience various delights in Svargaloka. He has no such desire. The svanīṣṭha devotee situated in transcendental knowledge goes to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and in the course of his going he may pass through Svargaloka and the other heavenly planets. It is like a person who, while walking to a village, touches some grass on the way.

With the help of her assistant, who is Vedic rituals, transcendental knowledge presents the experience of Svargaloka before the svanīṣṭha devotee who yearns to attain the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Then transcendental knowledge personally carries the devotee to the abode of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. This is explained in Kaṭha Upaniṣad 2.3.17. The desire in the devotee’s heart is also explained in this way.

Also, transcendental knowledge may carry the devotee to Svargaloka only to test whether the devotee has actually renounced all material desires. The Śruti-śāstra describes this in the passage beginning with the words, sarvān ha paśyāḥ paśyati. This does not mean that they who are not svanīṣṭha devotees do not go to Svargaloka.

For the svanīṣṭha devotee transcendental knowledge destroys all karmic reactions, except for the past and present lives’ karma that specifically brings elevation to Svargaloka. For the pariniṣṭhita devotee transcendental knowledge destroys all karmic reactions, except for the past lives’ karma that specifically brings elevation to Svargaloka. For the nirapekṣa devotee transcendental knowledge destroys all karmic reactions from all past and present lives. In this way it is proved that transcendental knowledge is independent of Vedic rituals. Vedic rituals act as assistants to transcendental knowledge.

Adhikaraṇa 8: The Pariniṣṭhita Devotee may Renounce Ordinary Duties

Vīṣṇa [thesis or statement]: Now the situation of the pariniṣṭhita devotees will be examined. In the Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad [3.1.4] it is said:

\[\text{ātma-krīḍa ātma-ratih kriyāvān}\]

“He meditates on the Lord’s pastimes. He loves the Lord. He serves the Lord. He performs his prescribed duties. He is the best of transcendentalists.”

Thus for the sake of the people in general the pariniṣṭhita devotee should perform the duties of varṇāśrama, and out of love for the Supreme Lord the pariniṣṭhita devotee should engage in the various activities of devotional service, which begin with hearing of the Lord’s glories.

Sañāśya [doubt]: Should the pariniṣṭhita devotee perform his varṇāśrama and devotional duties simultaneously, or should he perform one first and then the other?
Pūrvapakṣa [the opponent speaks]: The simultaneous performance being impossible, and the abandonment of prescribed duties being sinful, there is no certain and definite rule as to the performance of these duties.

Śiddhānta [conclusion]: In the following words the author of the sūtras gives His conclusion.

**Śūtra 3.4.34**

sarvathāpi tatra coblāyā-liṅgāt  

- sarvathā – in all circumstances;  
- api – indeed;  
- tatra – there;  
- ca – and;  
- ubhaya – of both;  
- liṅgāt – because of the signs.

Also, indeed, it is in all circumstances because of signs from both.

The word *api* [indeed] is used here for emphasis.

The word *sarvathā* means, “in all circumstances, even if one must abandon one’s *varṇāśrama* duties.” This means that the *pariniṣṭhita* devotee should always in engage in devotional service to the Supreme Lord. In his spare time, perhaps, the devotee may perform a little something of his *varṇāśrama* duties. Why is that? The *sūtra* explains, *ubhaya-liṅgāt:* “Because of two signs.” The sign from the Śruti-śāstra is this [Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad 2.2.5]:

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tam evaiṁ jānatha  
“Place your thoughts on the Supreme Lord alone.”
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The sign from the Smṛti-śāstra comes from the Supreme Lord Himself [Bhagavad-gītā 9.13-14]:

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mahātmānas tu māṁ pārtha  
daivīṁ prakṛtim āśritāh  
bhajanty ananya-manaso  
jñātvā bhūtādīm avyayam  
“O son of Pṛthū, those who are not deluded, the great souls, are under the protection of the divine nature. They are fully engaged in devotional service because they know Me As the Supreme Personality of Godhead, original and inexhaustible.”
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satataṁ kīrtayanto māṁ  
yatantaḥ ca drāḍha-vrataḥ  
namasyantaḥ ca māṁ bhaktyā  
nitya-yuktā upāsate  
“Always chanting My glories, endeavoring with great determination, and bowing down before Me, these great souls perpetually worship Me with devotion.”
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In the following words the author of the *sūtras* confirms this with more evidence.

**Śūtra 3.4.35**

anabhibhavaṁ ca darśayati  

- anabhibhavaṁ – not defeated;  
- ca – and;  
- darśayati – reveals.

It reveals that he is not defeated.
In *Brhad-āranyaka Upaniṣad* [4.4.23] it is said:

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sarvam pāṃpānāṁ tarati. naiva pāṃmā tarati. sarvam pāṃpānaṁ tapati. naiva pāṃmā tapati.
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“He defeats all sins. Sins do not defeat him. He burns away all sins. Sins do not burn him.”

If, absorbed in chanting the glories of the Supreme Lord, a parinīṣṭha devotee neglects his varṇāśrama duties, that neglect is not a sin on his part. That is why the *sūtra* declares, “It reveals that he is not defeated.” The meaning here is that it is right for a devotee to neglect the duties of devotional service to the Supreme Lord.

In *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* 3.8.9 [quoted at the end of the purport to *Sūtra* 3.4.2] it is the devotee’s worship, not his performance of varṇāśrama duties, that satisfies the Lord. In a preceding passage of *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* [2.13.9-11] are these words of King Bharata, who had faith in devotional service alone:

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yajñeṣācyuta govinda
mādhavānanta keśava
krṣṇa viṣṇo hṛṣīkeśety
āha rājā sa kevalam
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“Again and again King Bharata would chant the Lord’s Holy Names: O Yajñēśa, O Acyuta, O Govinda, O Mādhava, O Ananta. O Keśava, O Kṛṣṇa, O Viṣṇu, O Hṛṣīkeśa!”

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nānyaj jagāda maitreya
kiṁcit svapnāntareṣv api
etat param tad-arthaṁ ca
vinā nānyad acintayat
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“O Maitreya, awake or asleep the king would not say anything else. He would not think of anything but the Lord and His service.”

```
samit-puspa-kuśādānam
cakre deva-kriyā-krte
nānyāni cakre karmāni
niḥsaṅgo yoga-tāpasah
```

“Practicing austere yoga, he stayed alone. He gathered firewood, flowers, and kuśa grass for the worship of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. He did not perform any other duties or rituals.”

Thus has been shown 1. the way that transcendental knowledge is manifested among they who are within the varṇāśrama institution and 2. the results that knowledge brings to such persons.

**Adhikaraṇa 9: The Nirapekṣa Devotee**

*Viṣaya* [thesis or statement]: Now will be shown the way these two are manifested among the nirapekṣa devotees, who are above the varṇāśrama institution. In the *Brhad-āranyaka Upaniṣad* [3.4.1] is the following passage about Gārgī, who was enlightened with transcendental knowledge and above the varṇāśrama institution:

```
atha vācaknavy uvāca brāhmaṇā bhagavanto hantāham enam yājñavekṣyantam dvau praśnav prakṣyāmi
```

“Gārgī said: O exalted brāhmaṇas, now I will place two questions before Yājñavekṣa.”
Saṁśaya [doubt]: Is it possible that transcendental knowledge may be present in they who do not take part in the varnāśrama institution, or is it not possible?

Pūrvapakṣa [the opponent speaks]: Transcendental knowledge is never manifested to they who are outside of the Vēdas and the varnāśrama institution.

Siddhānta [conclusion]: In the following words the author of the sūtras gives His conclusion.

Sūtra 3.4.36

antarā cāpi tu tad drṣṭaiḥ

antarā – outside; ca – and; api – indeed; tu – but; tat – that; drṣṭaiḥ – by what is seen.

But certainly outside also, because of what is seen.

The word tu [but] is used here to begin the refutation of the idea that Vedic rituals are mandatory. The word ca [also] is used here to present the final conclusion.

The word antarā here refers to those persons who, although in this life not following varnāśrama-dharma, in their past lives practiced truthfulness, austerity, japa and other pious deeds, and therefore in this life were born both pure and renounced. It is said that in such persons transcendental knowledge is manifested. Why is that? The sūtra explains, tad drṣṭaiḥ: “Because of what is seen.” This means that the scriptures show Gārgī as an example of such a person. The meaning is this: They who in their previous life properly performed their duties but died before they could reap the result of their actions, in the next life are born very pure in heart because of their previous pious deeds. The contact of sincere devotees quickly turns them into great renounced saints.

In the next sūtra the author explains that the association of devotees is very powerful. By that association one becomes free from material desires and attains transcendental knowledge.

Sūtra 3.4.37

api smaryate

api – also; smaryate – in the Smṛti-śāstra.

Also in the Smṛti-śāstra.

In this sūtra the word api [also] is used in the sense of joining things together.

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam [2.2.37] it is said:

pibanti ye bhagavata ātmanaḥ satāṁ
kathāṁṛtaṁ śravana-puteśu sambhytam
puṇaṁte viśaya-vidūṣitāśayāṁ
vrajanti tac-caraṇa-saroruhāntikam

“Those who drink through aural reception, fully filled with the nectarean message of Lord Kṛṣṇa, the beloved of the devotees, purify the polluted aim of life known as material enjoyment and thus go back to Godhead, to the lotus feet of Him [the Personality of Godhead].”

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam [5.12.12] it is said:
“My dear King Rahūgaṇa, unless one has the opportunity to smear his entire body with the dust of the lotus feet of great devotees, one cannot realize the Absolute Truth simply by observing celibacy [brahmacarya], strictly following the rules and regulations of householder life, leaving home as vanaprastha, accepting sannyasa, or undergoing severe penances in winter by keeping oneself submerged in water or surrounding oneself in summer by fire and the scorching heat of the sun. There are many other processes to understand the Absolute Truth, but the Absolute Truth is only revealed to one who has attained the mercy of a great devotee.”

Sūtra 3.4.38

viśeṣānugrahaḥ ca
viśeṣa – special; anugrahaḥ – mercy; ca – also.

Special mercy also.

In Bhagavad-gītā [10.9-10], the Supreme Personality of Godhead personally declares:

mac-cittā mad-gata-prānā
bodhayantaḥ parasparam
kathayantaś ca māṁ nityam
tusyanti ca ramanti ca

“The thoughts of My pure devotees dwell in Me, their lives are fully devoted to My service, and they derive great satisfaction and bliss from always enlightening one another and conversing about Me.”

teṣāṁ satata-yuktāṁ
bhajatāṁ priti-purvakam
dadāmi buddhi-yogam tāṁ
yena māṁ upayānti te

“To those who are constantly devoted to serving Me with love, I give the understanding by which they can come to Me.”

To such devotees it is seen that the Lord gives special mercy. By engaging in devotional service in this way one attains renunciation of the world.

Adhikaraṇa 10: Renunciation

Viśaya [thesis or statement]: The situation of Yājñavalkya and others who are within varṇāśrama, as well as the situation of Gārgī and others who are not within varṇāśrama have been seen here.

Saṁśaya [doubt]: Who are better: they who are within varṇāśrama or they who are not within it?

Pūrvapakṣa [the opponent speaks]: Because they perform the duties of varṇa and āśrama and also worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead, they who are within varṇāśrama are better.

Siddhānta [conclusion]: In the following words the author of the sūtras gives His conclusion.
Sūtra 3.4.39

\[
\text{atas tv itarat jyāyo liṅgāc ca}
\]

\begin{itemize}
  \item atah – from that;
  \item tu – indeed;
  \item itarat – the other;
  \item jyāyaḥ – better;
  \item liṅgāt – by the sign;
  \item ca – indeed.
\end{itemize}

**But indeed the others are better, for there is a sign.**

The word *tu* [but] is used here to dispel doubt. The word *ca* [indeed] is used here for emphasis. The word *itarat* [the others] here refers to they who are other than the followers of *varṇāśrama*, namely they who do not follow *varṇāśrama*. The word *jyāyaḥ* means “Their method of attaining transcendental knowledge is better.” Why is that? The sūtra explains, *liṅgāt*: “For there is a sign.” The sign here is the Śruti-śāstra’s explanation that Gārgī was very wise with transcendental knowledge.

This is the meaning: The scriptures prescribe the duties of the āśramas in order to restrict the seemingly endless materialistic desires of the conditioned souls. Therefore the purpose of *varṇāśrama* is not to give facility for material desires, but rather gradually to restrict them. At a certain stage, however, the duties of *varṇāśrama* become obstacles to attaining love for the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

They who have become free of material desires and who place their love in the Supreme Personality of Godhead alone gain no benefit from the duties of *varṇāśrama*. Therefore they who have risen above *varṇāśrama* are better. In the Jābāla Upaniṣad it is said that one may progress through the asramas one after another, or if like Sānvartaka Muni and others, one becomes completely devoted to the Supreme Personality of Godhead alone, one may renounce everything and accept *sannyāsa* at once, at any time.

The scriptural injunction, “A brāhmaṇa should not pass even one day outside of the duties of *varṇāśrama*,” is meant only for ordinary people.

Here someone may object: “That may be. Still, the sannyāsīs, who are outside of the *varṇāśrama-dharma* and who are solely devoted to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, are not better, for they may fall down and again become materialistic. When a sannyāsī falls down and again accepts the life of a householder, his action is condemned by the scriptures. Also, one who accepts sannyāsa, but then again faithfully accepts the glorious *varṇāśrama-dharma*, must tend to so many *varṇāśrama* duties that the single-pointed service to the Lord that was the advantage of *sannyāsa* life becomes lost for him. On the other hand, they who accept the duties of *varṇāśrama* gradually make more and more progress in spiritual life.”

If this is said, then the author of the sūtras gives the following reply.

Sūtra 3.4.40

\[
tad-bhūtasya tu nātad-bhāvo jaiminer api niyamātad-rūpābhāvebhhyah
\]

\begin{itemize}
  \item tat – that;
  \item bhūtasya – become;
  \item tu – but;
  \item na – not;
  \item a – not;
  \item tat – that;
  \item bhāvah – being;
  \item jaimineḥ – if Jaimini Muni;
  \item api – even;
  \item niyama – rule;
  \item a – not;
  \item tat – that;
  \item rūpa – form;
  \item a – not;
  \item bhāvebhhyah – because of being.
\end{itemize}

**But one who becomes that does not cease to be that, even according to Jaimini. This is because of restraint, not being like that, and cessation.**

The word *tu* [but] is used here to dispel doubt.
“One who becomes that,” that is to say, one who becomes a genuine nirapekṣa sannyāsī sincerely devoted to the Supreme Lord “never ceases to be that,” that is, he never falls from his devotion to the Lord. “That is the opinion of Jaimini, and it is also the opinion of Me, Vyāsa.” Why is that? The sūtra explains, niyamātad-rūpābhāvebhyaḥ: “Because of restraint, not being like that, and cessation.” The word niyama here means “Because they thirst to attain the Supreme Personality of Godhead, their senses are naturally controlled.” The word rūpa here means desire. Because they have no desire but to attain the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Gārgī and other renunciants decline to accept the order of householder life or any of the other orders of varṇāśrama-dharma. That is the meaning here. In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 7.15.35 it is said:

\[
\begin{align*}
kāmādibhir anāviddham \\
priśāntākha-lā-vṛtti yat \\
cittaṁ brahma-sukha-sprṣṭam \\
naivottīṣṭheta karhicīt
\end{align*}
\]

“When one’s consciousness is uncontaminated by material lusty desires, it becomes calm and peaceful in all activities, for one is situated in eternal blissful life. Once situated on that platform, one does not return to materialistic duties.”

Even Jaimini, who considers Vedic rituals most important, admits that the Śruti-śāstra declares this of the nirapekṣa devotees. The conclusion therefore is that the sincere renunciant must have performed all other duties in his previous births. That is why he is now pure in heart and free from the need to perform them any longer.

In the next sūtra will be shown the truth that the nirapekṣa devotee is better than the svanīṣtha devotee. Here someone may object: “Is it not so that the scriptural text beginning with the words sarvāṁ paśyāḥ paśyati shows that transcendental knowledge brings even the nirapekṣa devotee to Svargaloka and the other higher material realms, and that when they enter the realms of Indra and the other demigods the devotees become attached to the material enjoyments there, and thus their unalloyed devotion to the Supreme Personality of Godhead becomes broken?”

Fearing that someone might raise this objection, the author of the sūtras gives the following reply.

**Sūtra 3.4.41**

\[
na cādhikārikam api patanānumānāt tad-ayogāt
\]

\[
na – not; ca – also; adhikārikam – status; api – also; patana – falling; anumānāt – from the inference; tat – of that; a – not; yogāt – from contact.
\]

**And not that status even, for fear of falling and for lack of interest.**

The word ca [and] is used here for emphasis. The word api [even] is used here to include all the pleasures present in the material world. The word adhikāri means “the posts of Indra and the other demigods.” The nirapekṣa devotee does not desire their posts. Why is that? The sūtra explains, patanānumānāt: “For fear of falling.” This is explained in Bhagavad-gītā [8.16], where Lord Kṛṣṇa explains:

\[
ābrahma-bhuvanāl loke punar āvartino ‘rjuna
\]

“For from the highest planet in the material world down to the lowest, all are places of misery wherein repeated birth and death take place.”
Also, the nirapekṣa devotees have no desire to enjoy the material pleasures of the higher planets. Descriptions of these truths can also be found in many places in the Smṛti-śāstra. For example:

\[
\text{nātyantikaṁ viganayanto api te prasādaṁ}
\]
\[
kimv anyad arpaṁ-bhayam bhruva unmayais te
\]
\[
ye ṇga tvad-āngriḥ-śaraṇā bhavataḥ kathāyāh
\]
\[
kīrtanya-tīrtha-yaśasaḥ kuśalā rasa-jñāḥ
\]

“Persons who are very expert and most intelligent in understanding things as they are engage in hearing narrations of the auspicious activities and pastimes of the Lord, which are worth chanting and worth hearing. Such persons do not care even for the highest material benediction, namely liberation, to say nothing of other less important benedictions like the material happiness of the heavenly kingdom.” [Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 3.15.48]

Thus, even though the glory of transcendental knowledge may carry him to the realms of Indra and the other demigods, because he has no desire to enjoy the material pleasures available in those worlds, the nirapekṣa devotee finds that his unalloyed love and devotion for the Supreme Lord remains unbroken.

In the next sūtra the author shows that the nirapekṣa devotees are superior to the pariniṣṭhita devotees also.

**Sūtra 3.4.42**

\[
\text{upa-pūrvakam api tv eke bhāvam āsana-vat tad uktam}
\]

\[
\text{upa – with the prefix upa; pūrvakam – beginning [upāsanā, or devotional service]; api – even; tu – but; eke – some; bhāvam – devotion; āsana – food; vat – like; tat – that; uktam – spoken.}
\]

**But some even that which begins with upa. The perfect stage of devotion is like food. This is said.**

The word api [even] is used for emphasis. The word tu [but] is used to begin the refutation of the opponent’s idea. The word eke [some] means “the followers of the Atharva Veda.” The nirapekṣa devotees desire to engage in devotional service. The word upa-pūrvam [the word that begins with upa] here means upāsanā [devotional service]. The word bhāva here means “the perfect stage of devotion.” That perfect stage is like food [āsana-vat] for the nirapekṣa devotees.

This the scriptures say. In Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad [1.14] it is said:

\[
\text{bhaktir asya bhajanaṁ tad ihāmutra}
\]

“Devotional service to Lord Kṛṣṇa is performed when the heart no longer desires any material benefit to be obtained in this life or the next.”

In the Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad it is also said:

\[
\text{Sac-cid-ānandaika-rase bhakti-yoge tiṣṭhati}
\]

“Devotional service is eternal and full of knowledge and bliss.”

Wherever they may gone, the devotees worship Lord Hari. This is evidence that the devotees are always happy. The Śruti-śāstra declares:

\[
\text{so śnute sarvān kāman}
\]

“The devotee enjoys. All his desires are fulfilled.”
Thus, even though he may be residing in the material world, the devotee experiences bliss equal to the bliss of the spiritual world. Many quotes to corroborate this may be found by searching the Śrīti-śāstra. For example:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{samprasanne bhagavati} \\
\text{puruṣaḥ prākrtaṅ gunaṅ} \\
\text{vimukto jīva-nirmukto} \\
\text{brahma nirvāṇam rcchati}
\end{align*}
\]

“One who actually satisfies the Supreme Personality of Godhead during one's lifetime becomes liberated from the gross and subtle material conditions. Thus being freed from all material modes of nature, he achieves unlimited spiritual bliss.” [Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 4.11.14]

In the next sūtra the author shows us another reason why the nirapekṣa devotees, even without endeavoring to attain them, easily attain sālokya [residing on the same planet with the Lord] and sāmīpya [staying near to the Lord] liberation.

**Sūtra 3.4.43**

\[
\begin{align*}
bahis tūbhayathā smṛteṛ ācārāc ca \\
bahih – outside; tu – indeed; ubhayathā – both ways; smṛteḥ – because of Smṛti-sastra; ācārāt – because of conduct; ca – also.
\end{align*}
\]

**Certainly outside in two ways because of Smṛti-śāstra and conduct.**

The word *tu* [certainly] is used here for emphasis. The word *bahih* [outside] here means that although the nirapekṣa devotees seem to reside within the confines of the material world, in truth they are really outside that world. Why is that? The sūtra explains, *ubhayathā* [in two ways].

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam [11.2.55] it is said:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{visṛjati hṛdayāṅ na yasya sāksād} \\
\text{dharī avasābhīhito ’py aghaṁga-nāśah} \\
\text{puraṇaya-rasanayā dhṛtāṅghri-padmaḥ} \\
\text{sa bhavati bhāgavata-pradhāna uktah}
\end{align*}
\]

“They are so kind to the conditioned souls that if they call upon Him by speaking His Holy Name, even unintentionally or unwillingly, the Lord is inclined to destroy innumerable sinful reactions in their hearts. Therefore, when a devotee who has taken shelter of the Lord’s lotus feet chants the holy name of Kṛṣṇa with genuine love, the Supreme Personality of Godhead can never give up the heart of Such a devotee. One who has thus captured the Supreme Lord within his heart is to be known as bhāgavata-pradhāna, the most exalted devotee of the Lord.”

The word *ācārāt* [because of conduct] here means that the relationship of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and His devotees is like that of a master and servant, or like a jewel set in gold. This is explained in the Smṛti-śāstras. In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam [11.14.16] the Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself declares:

\[
\begin{align*}
nirapekṣaṁ muniṁ śāntaṁ \\
nirvairaṁ sama-darśanam \\
anuvrajāmy ahaṁ nityaṁ \\
pūyeyet anīghri-reṇubhiḥ
\end{align*}
\]
“With the dust of My devotees’ lotus feet I desire to purify the material worlds, which are situated within Me. Thus, I always follow the footsteps of My pure devotees, who are free from all personal desire, rapt in thought of My pastimes, peaceful, without any feelings of enmity, and of equal disposition everywhere.”

In these two ways it is shown that the Lord and His devotees Are always together, whether they are within the material world, or outside the boundaries of the material world. Thus enmity to the Lord is the cause of repeated birth and death in the material world, and destruction of those feelings of enmity to the Lord is the cause of spiritual perfection.

**Adhikaraṇa 11: The Supreme Personality of Godhead Protects and Maintains the Nirapekṣa Devotee**

*Viṣaya* [thesis or statement]: In the previous passages the *nirapekṣa* devotees’ disinterest in the pleasures available in Brahmaloka and the other higher worlds was described. Now will be described the *nirapekṣa* devotees’ disinterest in the pleasures presently available in this world. In the *Taittirīya Aranyaka* [3.14.1] it is said:

\[
\text{bhartā san bhriyamāṇam bibharti}
\]

“The Supreme Lord maintains His devotees.”

*Saṁśaya* [doubt]: Does the Supreme Personality of Godhead Personally maintain the *nirapekṣa* devotees, or must the devotees struggle to maintain themselves?

*Pūrvapakṣa* [the opponent speaks]: The Lord does not maintain His devotees. The devotees must struggle to maintain themselves.

*Siddhānta* [conclusion]: The author of the *sūtras* gives His conclusion in the following words.

**Sūtra 3.4.44**

\[
\text{svāminaḥ phala-śruter ity ātreyah}
\]

\[
\text{svāminaḥ – from the Lord; phala – result; śruteḥ – from the Śruti-śāstra; iti – thus; ātreyah – Dattātreya Muni.}
\]

*From the Lord come results, for that is heard in the Śruti-Śāstra. That is Dattātreya’s opinion.*

The bodily needs of the devotee are supplied by the Supreme Personality of Godhead [svāminaḥ]. Why is that? The *sūtra* explains, *phala-śruteḥ*: “For that is heard in the Śruti-Śāstra.” In *Taittirīya Aranyaka* [3.14.1] the Supreme Personality of Godhead is described as the maintainer of the devotees. This is also the opinion of Dattātreya Muni. In *Bhagavad-gītā* [9.22], Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself declares:

\[
\text{ananyāś cintayanto māṁ}
\text{ye janāḥ paryupāsate}
\text{teṣāṁ nityābhiyuktānāṁ}
\text{yoga-kṣemāṁ vahāmy aham}
\]

“But those who always worship Me with exclusive devotion, meditating on My transcendental form, to them I carry what they lack, and I preserve what they have.”

In the *Padma Purāṇa* it is said:
By vision, by meditation, and by touch only do the fish, the tortoise, and the birds maintain their offspring. So do I also, O Padmaja.”

The devotees do not wish to trouble the Lord for their maintenance. Still, because the Lord’s every desire is automatically fulfilled, He maintains His devotees without any trouble on His part. Thus, when the devotees serve the Lord they are automatically maintained by the Lord. This is explained in Taittiriya Aranyaka [3.14.1].

In the next sūtra the author gives an example to show that the Lord is determined to maintain His devotees.

Sūtra 3.4.45

ārtvijyam ity auḍulomis tasmai hi parikrīyate

ārtvijyam – the rtvik priest’s work; ity – thus; auḍulomiḥ – Auḍulomi; tasmai – for that; hi – indeed; parikrīyate – is purchased.

Auḍulomi says He is like a rtvik priest. He sells Himself for that.

The word iti is used in the sense of similarity. Thus the Supreme Personality of Godhead acts like a rtvik priest, for the Lord maintains the nirapekṣa devotees. Because He has been purchased by their devotional service, the Lord fulfills the bodily needs of His devotees. In the Viṣṇu-dharma it is said:

tulasī-dala-mātreṇa
jalasya culukena ca
vikrīṇīte svam ātmānaṁ
bhaṅkete bhaṅkta-vatsalaḥ

“The Supreme Personality of Godhead, who dearly loves His devotees, sells Himself to them in exchange for a tulasī leaf and palmful of water.”

The rtvik priests are purchased for a certain task by the yajamāna’s payment of dakṣinā. Being an impersonalist, Auḍulomi equates devotional service with buying and selling. For these reasons the nirapekṣas are the best of the devotees.

Sūtra 3.4.46

śruteḥ ca

śruteḥ – from the Śruti-śāstra; ca – also.

From the Śruti-śāstra also.

In the performance of yajña the rtvik priest gives his blessing to the performer of the yajña [yajamāna]. In the Chāndogya Upaniṣad [1.7.8-9] it is also said:

tasmād u haiyam-vid udgātā brūyāt kam te kāmam āgāyāṇi
“Then the learned udgātā priest says: ‘Of what desire shall I sing?’ 

In this way the rtvik priest gives the result of the yajña to the yajamāna. As the rtvik priest thus maintains the yajamāna, so the Supreme Personality of Godhead maintains His devotee.

**Adhikaraṇa 12: Meditation on the Supreme Personality of Godhead**

*Viṣaya* [thesis or statement]: Now the author of the sūtras will reveal the activities of the devotees after they have attained transcendental knowledge of the Lord. In the *Brhad-āranyaka Upaniṣad* [1.4.23] it is said:

\[\text{tasmād evam-vic chānto dantah... ātmā vā are draṣṭavyāḥ} \]

“One who knows the Supreme Personality of Godhead becomes peaceful and self-controlled... Then he gazes on the Supreme Personality of Godhead.”

*Sāṁśaya* [doubt]: Here it is said that one who desires to attain the Supreme Personality of Godhead should also attain a long list of virtues, beginning with being peaceful and culminating in being rapt in meditation on the Lord. Must the nirapekṣa devotee develop all these virtues, or may be merely become rapt in meditation on the Lord’s form, qualities, and pastimes?

*Pūrvapakṣa* [the opponent speaks]: Although one may have attained transcendental knowledge, that knowledge does not become stable without the development of peacefulness and a host of other virtues. Therefore the devotee should endeavor to attain all these virtues.

*Siddhānta* [conclusion]: In the following words the author of the sūtras gives His conclusion.

**Sūtra 3.4.47**

\[\text{sahakāry-antara-vidhiḥ pakṣeṇa tṛtiyāṁ tadvato vidhy-ādī-vat} \]

sahakāry – helping; antara – another; vidhiḥ – rule; pakṣeṇa – in one sense; tṛtiyāṁ – the third; tadvataḥ – like that; vidhi – rule; ādī – beginning; vat – like.

Different from the helpful rules is the third. It is like the rules and other things.

The *sahakāry-antara* [helpful rules] here are the two sets of virtues: 1. those beginning with peacefulness, and 2. those beginning with Vedic *yajña*. These two sets of virtues have already been discussed [in the purport of *Sūtra 3.4.26*].

These rules [vidhiḥ] are here considered in a new and different way. These rules must be observed by the followers [pakṣeṇa] of varnāśrama-dharma, but they need not be observed by they who are not followers of varnāśrama-dharma, for such persons already possess these virtues naturally. Therefore these persons are ordered to meditate on the Lord’s form, qualities, and pastimes.

Then the *sūtra* explains, *tṛtiyāṁ tadvataḥ*: “There is a third thing like that.” Desiring only to attain the Lord’s mercy, the nirapekṣa devotee engages his mind in thinking about the Lord. That is the “third rule” [*tṛtiyām*]. This is described in the following statement of Śruti-śāstra:

\[\text{manasaivedam āptavyam} \]

“Engaging his mind in thinking of Him, the devotee attains the Lord.”
Hearing about the Lord is done with the body and chanting mantras glorifying the Lord is done with the voice. Meditating on the Lord is done with the mind. Thus meditation is the third of these three processes.

To show that meditation must be performed, the sūtra gives the example of rules and other things [vidhy-ādi-var]. As the followers of varṇāśrama must perform sandhyā-upāsanā and other rituals, so the nirapekṣa devotees who have attained transcendental knowledge should meditate on the Supreme Lord’s form, qualities, and pastimes.

This does not mean that the nirapekṣa devotees should not perform japa, worship, and other spiritual activities, for by engaging in these other activities one also meditates on the Lord. However, for the nirapekṣa devotee, meditation on the Lord is most important. In this way three, kinds of devotees situated in transcendental knowledge have been described.

Adhikaraṇa 13: The Different Āśramas

Viṣaya [thesis or statement]: That transcendental knowledge is attained by three kinds of devotees, beginning with the svaniṣṭha devotees, has already been explained. Now will be explained the way to make that transcendental knowledge very steady and secure. At the end of the Chāndogya Upaniṣad [8.15.1] it is said:

ācārya-kulād vedam adhiyāya yathā-vidhānaṁ guruh  
karmātiṣeṣeṇābhisamāvṛtya kuṭumbe śucau deśe  
svādhīyāyaṁ adhyāyāṁ dharmikāṁ vidadhātmāni  
sarvendriyāṁ sampratisthāpyāhiṁśān sarva-bhūtānī anyatra  
tīrthebhyaḥ sa khalv evam vartayan yāvad āyuṣaṁ  
brahmalokam abhisampadyate na ca punar āvartate.

“From the ācāryas one should learn the Vēdas. One should perform his duties and also offer dakṣinā to his spiritual master. Then one should accept household life, live in a pure way, study the Vēdas, perform his religious duties, engage all his senses in the Supreme Lord’s service, not harm any living being, and go on pilgrimage to holy places. A person who passes his life in this way goes to the spiritual world. He does not return to this world of repeated birth and death.”

Samśaya [doubt]: Are they who are not in the grha-āśrama able to attain transcendental knowledge, or are they not able to attain it?

Pūrvapakṣa [the opponent speaks]: Here and there the scriptures may say that the sannyāsīs are able to attain transcendental knowledge, but this is only flattery, only empty words of praise. These passages merely mean that one should renounce everything for the sake of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The conclusion is that in order to attain the Supreme Personality of Godhead one must accept the grhaṣṭha-āśrama. That is the teaching of the scriptures.

Siddhānta [conclusion]: In the following words the author of the sūtras gives His conclusion.

Sūtra 3.4.48

krtsna-bhāvāt tu grhinopasamhāraḥ  
krtsna – of all; bhāvāt – because of the existence; tu – but; grhiṇā – by the grhaṣṭha;  
upasamhāraḥ – the goal.

But because of all the goal is by a grhaṣṭha.
The word *tu* [but] is used here to dispel doubt.

This passage from the scriptures declares that the goal is attained by a *grhastha* not because only they can attain liberation but because everything else [*kṛṣna-bhāvāt*] is contained in *grhastha* life. This means that all the duties of all the *aśramas* are in some way included in the duties of *grhastha* life. Therefore the duties of other *aśramas*, such as nonviolence and sense control, are duties for the *grhastha* also. In fact no duty in any other *aśrama* is incompatible with *grhastha* life. In the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* it is said:

*bhikṣā-bhujāś ca ye kecit*
*pārivṛddh brahmacārinah*
*te 'py atraiva pratiśṭhante*
*gārhashthyaṁ tena vai param*

“*Sannyāsīs, brahmacārīs, and all others who eat the food of begging depend on the grhasthas. Therefore the grhastha-aśrama is the best of aśramas.*”

Because the *Śruti-śāstras* declare that the followers of the other *aśramas* may also attain liberation, if it is said that the followers of the *grhastha-aśrama* attain the goal of life it is because that *aśrama* contains the duties of all the other *aśramas*. This is explained in the following *sūtra*.

**Sūtra 3.4.49**

*mauna-vat itareśāṁ apy upadeśāt*

*mauna* – silence; *vat* – like; *itareśāṁ* – of others; *api* – also; *upadeśāt* – from the teaching.

**Because there is teaching of others like a silent sage.**

The words *mauna-vat* here refer to the spiritual perfection already described. In the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* [2.23.1] it is said:

*trayo dharma-skandhā yajña ‘dhyayanaṁ dānam iti prathamas tapa eva dvitiyo brahmacyācārya-kula-vāsī trītīyo ‘tyantam ātmānam ścārya-kule ‘vasādayan sarva ete punya- lokā bhavanti brahma-saṁsthō ‘mṛtatvam eti*

“Religious life has three branches. The first branch is *yajña*, Vedic study, and charity. The second branch is austerity. The third branch is living as a *brahma-cāri* in the home of the spiritual master. By staying as a *brahma-cāri* in the home of the spiritual master, everyone becomes saintly and pious. However, only he who takes shelter of the Supreme Lord becomes immortal.”

In the *Brhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad* [4.4.22] it is said:

*etam eva viditvā munir bhavaty etam eva pravrājino lokam abhīpsantaḥ pravrajanti*

“One who understands the Supreme Personality of Godhead becomes wise. Desiring to travel to His transcendental world, the *brāhmaṇas* become wandering *sannyāsīs.*”

In this way it is seen that the scriptures teach that the wandering *sannyāsīs*, the *naisthika-brahmacārīs*, and the followers of the other *aśramas*, all can attain liberation. This is described in this *sūtra* by the words, *itareśāṁ apy upadeśāt*. The word *itareśāṁ* is in the plural because the duties of the different *aśramas* are very many. The four *aśramas* are described in the following words of the *Jābāla Upaniṣad*:
brahmacaryāṁ samāpya grhī bhavet. grhīḥ bhūtvā vanī bhavet. vanīḥ bhūtvā pravrajet. yadi vetarathā brahmacaryād eva pravrajed grhād vā vanād vā. atha punar avraṭī vā vratī snātako vāsnātako votsannāṅgir anagniko vā yad ahaṁ eva virajyet tad ahaṁ eva pravrajet.

“When one completes his studies as a brahmaṁca, a man should become a grhaṁca. After he has been a grhaṁca he may become a vānapraṣṭha. After he has been a vānapraṣṭha he may become a wandering sannyāsa. Or, leaving brahmaṁca life he may at once become a wandering sannyāsa. Or, leaving grhaṁca life he may directly become a sannyāsa. Or, leaving vānapraṣṭha life he may become a sannyāsa. They who have followed vows or not followed vows, become a snātaka or not become a snātaka, carefully kept the sacred fire, or not kept it.”

In the Jābala Upaniṣad passage beginning with the words Paramahamsānāṁ, the nirapekṣa devotees are specifically described. When the grhaṁcas are singled out it is because the duties of the other āśramas are all contained in the grhaṁca-āśrama. Still, the Upaniṣad clearly says, “On the day one turns with distaste from the world, on that day one should become a wandering sannyāsa.” This means that when one sincerely renounces the world one should at once accept sannyāsa. In this way the idea that the grhaṁca-āśrama is the only proper āśrama is refuted. Whether one should accept the grhaṁca-āśrama or the sannyāsa-āśrama is determined by whether one still has material desires or one has lost all taste for material things. Still, when a person has peacefulness, self-control, tolerance, and other virtues, whether he is within the varṇāśrama-dharma, or above varṇāśrama-dharma, he will certainly attain transcendental knowledge. This has been clearly explained.

**Adhikaraṇa 14: The Secret of Transcendental Knowledge**

**Viśaya** [thesis or statement]: Now it will be said that transcendental knowledge is a great secret. In Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad [6.22] it is said:

> vedāntē paramam guhyāṁ
> purā-kalpe pracoditam
> nāpraśāntāya dātavyāṁ
> nāputrāyāśiṣyāya vā

> “This, the supreme secret of Vedic literature, should not be spoken to one who is not peaceful or in control of his senses, nor to one who is not a dutiful son or an obedient disciple.”

**Saṁśaya** [doubt]: Should transcendental knowledge be taught to everyone or should it not?

**Pūrvapakṣa** [the opponent speaks]: Out of compassion the teacher does not distinguish between who is fit and who is not fit to receive transcendental knowledge. He reveals the truth to all.

**Siddhānta** [conclusion]: In the following words the author of the sūtras gives His conclusion.

**Sūtra 3.4.50**

> anāvīṣkurvann anvayāt
> anāvīṣkurvan – not manifesting; anvayāt – because of tradition.

> **He does not reveal, because of the disciplic succession.**

Here the word anāvīṣkurvan means, “He does not teach the transcendental knowledge.” Why is that? The sūtra explains, anvayāt: “Because of the disciplic succession.” This is declared in the previous
quote from the Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad. The lotus-eyed Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself declares it in these words [Bhagavad-gītā 18.67]:

\[
\text{idāṁ te nātapaskāya} \\
\text{nābhaktāya kadācana} \\
\text{na cāśuṣrūṣave vācyāṁ} \\
\text{na ca māṁ yo 'bhayasāyati}
\]

“This confidential knowledge may never be explained to those who are not austere, or devoted, or engaged in devotional service, nor to one who is envious of Me.”

When it is given to those who are fit to receive it, transcendental knowledge bears fruit, but when it is given to persons who are not fit to receive it, it does not bear fruit. This is explained in Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad [6.23]:

\[
\text{yasya deve parā bhaktih...}
\]

“Only unto those great souls who have implicit faith in both the Lord and the spiritual master are all the imports of Vedic knowledge automatically revealed.”

In the Chāndogya Upaniṣad [8.7.1-8.15.1] the story of how Indra and Virocana were both taught transcendental knowledge. However, because Virocana was not a fit student, he could not understand it. Therefore transcendental knowledge should be taught to those who are able to understand it. It should not be taught to those who are not able. Those who are faithful and accept the scriptures are able to understand.

**Adhikaraṇa 15: Attaining Transcendental Knowledge in this Lifetime**

*Viśaya* [thesis or statement]: Now will be considered the time when transcendental knowledge is manifested. The stories of Naciketa, Jābāla, and Vāmadeva will be discussed here.

*Sāṁśaya* [doubt]: Is transcendental knowledge manifested in this life or the next?

*Puṟvapakṣa* [the opponent speaks]: It is manifested in the very lifetime that one strives to attain it. This is because a person striving for knowledge thinks, “Let me attain it in this lifetime.”

*Siddhānta* [conclusion]: In the following words the author of the sūtras gives His conclusion.

**Sūtra 3.4.51**

\[
\text{aihikam aprastuta-pratibandhe tad darśanāt}
\]

aihikam – in the present life; aprastuta – not manifested; pratibandhe – impediment; tat – that; darśanāt – from seeing.

**In the absence of obstacles it is in this life. That is so because of scriptural revelation.**

When there is no obstacle, transcendental knowledge is manifested in this lifetime. When there is an obstacle it is manifested in another lifetime. Why is that? The sūtra explains, *tad darśanāt*: “That is so because of scriptural revelation. In Katha Upaniṣad [2.3.18] it is said:

\[
\text{mṛtyu-proktāṁ naciketo ‘tha labdhvā} \\
\text{vidyāṁ etāṁ yoga-vidhiṁ ca kṛtsnam} \\
\text{brahma-prāpto virājo ‘bhūd vimṛtyur} \\
\text{anyo ’py evaṁ yo vidadhyaṁm eva}
\]
“Learning from Yamarāja the truth of transcendental knowledge and yoga practice, Naciketa attained the Supreme Personality of Godhead. He became free of the contamination of material life. He became free from death. Anyone else who truly knows the Supreme Personality of Godhead also becomes like Naciketa.”

This text shows that transcendental knowledge can be manifested in one lifetime. Sometimes, however, a person strives for transcendental knowledge but attains it only in another lifetime. An example of this is seen in Brhad-āranyaka Upaniṣad [1.4.10]. When the obstacles are not great and the endeavor is very powerful, one can attain transcendental knowledge in one lifetime. Naciketa and the king of Sauvīra are examples of this. But when the obstacles are very powerful, then transcendental knowledge may have to wait for another birth, even though one may have performed great yajñas and austerities, given charity, and developed peacefulness, self-control, and a host of other virtues. This is confirmed in the following words of Bhagavad-gītā [6.37-45]:

“Arjuna said: O Kṛṣṇa, what is the destination of the unsuccessful transcendentalist, who in the beginning takes to the process of self-realization with faith but who later desists due to worldly-mindedness and thus does not attain perfection in mysticism? O mighty-armed Kṛṣṇa, does not such a man, who is bewildered from the path of transcendence, fall away from both spiritual and material success and perish like a riven cloud, with no position in any sphere? This is my doubt, O Kṛṣṇa, and I ask You to dispel it completely. But for You, no one is to be found who can destroy this doubt.”

The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: “Son of Prthā, a transcendentalist engaged in auspicious activities does not meet with destruction either in this world or in the spiritual world. One who does good, My friend, is never overcome by evil. The unsuccessful yogī, after many, many years of enjoyment on the planets of the pious living entities, is born into a family of righteous people, or into a family of rich aristocracy. Or [if unsuccessful after long practice of yoga] he takes his birth in a family of transcendentalists who are surely great in wisdom. Certainly, such a birth is rare in this world. On taking such a birth, he revives the divine consciousness of his previous life, and he tries to make further progress in order to achieve complete success, O son of Kuru. By virtue of the divine consciousness of his previous life, he automatically becomes attracted to the yogic principles, even without seeing them. Such an inquisitive transcendentalist stands always above the ritualistic principles of the scriptures. And when the yogī engages himself with sincere endeavor in making further progress, being washed of all contaminations, then ultimately, achieving perfection after many, many births of practice, he attains the supreme goal.”

Therefore it is not an unfailing rule that one always attains transcendental knowledge in one lifetime. A wise man agrees, “I may attain transcendental knowledge in this lifetime or in another lifetime.” That is the description in the scriptures. Therefore one may attain transcendental knowledge in this lifetime or in another lifetime. If there are obstacles, that knowledge may have to wait for another lifetime.

**Adhikaraṇa 16: Transcendental Knowledge and Liberation**

**Viṣaya [thesis or statement]:** Now will be shown the truth that liberation inevitably follows the attainment of transcendental knowledge. In the Brhad-āranyaka Upaniṣad [4.4.17] it is said:

\[
\text{tam eva vidvān amṛta iha bhavati}
\]

“He who understands the Supreme Personality of Godhead becomes immortal.”

In the Śvetāsvatara Upaniṣad [3.8] it is said:
tam eva viditvāti mṛtyum eti

“Only he who knows the Supreme Personality of Godhead can transcend the bonds of birth and death.”

Śaṁśaya [doubt]: Does a person situated in transcendental knowledge attain liberation when he leaves his material body, or must he take another birth and then become liberated?

Pūrva-pākaśa [the opponent speaks]: Because the effect must follow the cause, such a person attains liberation the moment he leaves his material body.

Siddhānta [conclusion]: In the following words the author of the sūtras gives His conclusion.

Sūtra 3.4.52

evaṁ mukti-phañīyamas tad-avasthāvadhrtes tad-avasthāvadhrteḥ

evam – thus; mukti – of liberation; phala – the result; a – not; niyamaḥ – rule; tat – of that; avasthā – state of being; avadhrteḥ – because of the determination.

In the same way there is no specific rule about liberation, for it depends on the circumstances.

As there is no rule about transcendental knowledge, so there is no rule that a person situated in transcendental knowledge and striving for liberation must attain liberation in the same lifetime. When there are no longer any obstacles, then a person situated in transcendental knowledge attains liberation when he dies. This means when there are no longer any past karmic reactions. When there are no karmic reactions remaining, then one attains liberation at the moment of death. When there are karmic reactions remaining one does not attain liberation at the moment of death. Why is that? The sūtra explains, tad-avasthāvadhrteḥ: “For it depends on the circumstances.” In the Chândogya Upaniṣad [6.14.2] it is said:

ācāryavān puruṣo veda tasya tāvad eva ciraṁ yāvan na vimokṣye atha sampatsye

“One who approaches a bona fide spiritual master can understand everything about spiritual realization. When his past karmic reactions are exhausted he at once attains liberation.”

In this way the Chândogya Upaniṣad affirms that one attains liberation when his past karmic reactions are exhausted. In the Nārāyaṇādhyātma it is said:

vidvān amṛtam āpnoti
nātra kāryā vicāraṇā
avasannaṁ yadārābdham
karma tatraiva gacchati
na ced bahūṁ janmāṁ
prāpyaivānte na saṁśayaḥ

“A person situated in transcendental knowledge attains liberation. Of this there is no doubt. But if his past karmic reactions are not destroyed, many births may pass before he finally attains liberation at the end. Of this there is no doubt.”

Although transcendental knowledge certainly destroys all past karmic reactions, still, by the Supreme Lord’s will a certain portion of past karmic reactions may remain. This will be explained later in this book. The last word of the sūtra is repeated to indicate the end of the chapter.
Epilogue

janayītvā vairāgyaiṁ
gunair nibadhnaṁi modayaṁ bhaktaiṁ
yais tair baddho 'pī guṇair
anurajyai so 'stu me hariḥ preyaiṁ

May Lord Hari, who gives renunciation of the world to His devotees and delights by binding them with the ropes of His glorious qualities and who is Himself bound with the ropes of His devotees’ glorious qualities, be the object of my love and devotion.
Śrī Vedānta-sūtra

Adhyāya 4: The Results of Transcendental Knowledge

Pāda 1: The Glories of Transcendental Knowledge

dattvā vidyauṣadhaṁ bhaktān
niravadyān karoti yaḥ
dṛk-pathaṁ bhajatu śrīmān
prītyātmā sa hariḥ svayam

“May Lord Hari, who is glorious, handsome, blissful, and filled with love, and who cures His devotees by giving them the medicine of transcendental knowledge, enter the pathway of my eyes.”

This Adhyāya will consider the topic of the results obtained by one who has transcendental knowledge. Although some of the sūtras discuss the methods by which transcendental knowledge is obtained, because most discuss the results obtained by transcendental knowledge, this Adhyāya bears the title “The Results of Transcendental Knowledge.”

Adhikaraṇa 1: One Should Always Engage in Devotional Service

Viṣaya [thesis or statement]: In the Brhad-āranyaka Upanīṣad [4.5.6] it is said:

ātmaḥ vā are draṣṭavyaḥ

“One should gaze on the Supreme Personality of Godhead.”

Saṁśaya [doubt]: Must spiritual practices, such as hearing about the Lord’s glories, be performed repeatedly, or is it acceptable they be performed only once?

Pūrvapakṣa [the opponent speaks]: As an agniṣṭoma-yajña and other yajñas need be performed only once in order to grant residence in Svargaloka, in the same way spiritual practices like hearing about the Lord’s glories need be performed only once for the worshiper to directly see the Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself.

Siddhānta [conclusion]: In the following words the author of the sūtras gives His conclusion.

Sūtra 4.1.1

āvṛttir asakṛd upadeśāt

āvṛttih – repetition; asakṛt – many times; upadeśāt – because of the teaching.

It is repeated many times, for that is the teaching.
The various activities of devotional service, which begin with hearing the glories of the Lord, should be repeated many times. Why is that? The sūtra explains, asakṛt: “Many times, for that is the teaching.” In the Chāndogya Upaniṣad [6.8.7] it is said:

\[
\text{sa ya eso 'nimā. etad ātmyam idaṁ sarvam. tat satyam. sa ātmā. tat tvam asi.}
\]

“He is the resting place. Everything comes from Him. He is the supreme reality. He is the supreme person. You are like unto Him.”

In these words Śvetaketu was instructed nine times. It is illogical to say that if the scripture mentions an activity once then there is no need to perform that activity many times. This may apply to an activity where the result is not directly seen, but for an activity that has the direct perception of the Supreme Personality of Godhead as its result, a result that is clearly seen, the activity must be repeated until the result is obtained.

śrī-bhagavān uvāca
animitta-nimittena
sva-dharmeṇāmaṁalātmanā
tīvrayā mayi bhaktiyā ca
śruta-sambhrtyā cīram

The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: “One can get liberation by seriously discharging devotional service unto Me and thereby hearing for a long time about Me or from Me. By thus executing one's prescribed duties, there will be no reaction, and one will be freed from the contamination of matter.” [Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 3.27.21]

This is like threshing rice, where the activity must be continued until the husk is removed. Therefore the devotional activities that begin with hearing the Lord’s glories should be performed again and again until the result is obtained.

**Sūtra 4.1.2**

liṅgāc ca
liṅgāt – because of a sign; ca – also.

Also because of a sign.

In Taittirīya Upaniṣad [3.2] Bhṛgu Muni repeated a spiritual activity many times. By this sign [liṅgāt] the importance of repetition is proved. It is understood that repetition is necessary for the conditioned souls, who have committed offenses.

**Adhikaranaṇa 2: Meditation on the Supersoul**

Viṣaya [thesis or statement]: Now another topic will be considered.

Saṁśaya [doubt]: Should one meditate on the Lord as the supreme controller or as the all-pervading Supersoul? Pūrvaṇa [the opponent speaks]: In the Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad [4.7] it is said:

\[
\text{juṣṭaṁ yadā paśyaty anyam tīsam}
\]

“He sees the Lord as the supreme controller.”

Therefore one should meditate on the Lord as the supreme controller.
Siddhānta [conclusion]: In the following words the author of the sūtras gives His conclusion.

Sūtra 4.1.3

ātmeti tūpagacchanti grāhayanti ca

ātmā – the Supersoul; iti – thus; tu – indeed; upagacchanti – know; grāhayanti – teach; ca – also.

Indeed, they know and teach that He is the Supersoul.

The word tu [indeed] is used here for emphasis. The Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is both the supreme controller and the all-pervading Supersoul, should be worshiped. They who know the truth understand that the Supersoul is the first cause of all causes. In the Śruti-śāstra it is said:

yeśāṁ no 'yam ātmāyam lokaḥ

“He is the Supersoul, present in everyone’s heart.”

They also teach this truth to their disciples. In the Bṛhad-āranyaka Upaniṣad [1.4.7] it is said:

ātmety evopāśīta

“One should worship the Supersoul.”

tasmin nirmanuṣe 'raṇye
pippalopastha āśritaḥ
āmanātmānam ātmasthaṁ
yathā-śrutam acintayam

“After that, under the shadow of a banyan tree in an uninhabited forest I began to meditate upon the Supersoul situated within, using my intelligence, as I had learned from liberated souls.”
[Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 1.6.15]

The word ātmā here should be understood to mean “the all-powerful Supreme Personality of Godhead, whose human-like form is full of knowledge and bliss.” Some claim that the word ātmā means “He who gives Himself to create the living beings and who therefore is the Person from whom the living beings are manifested.” The word ātmā however does not mean that when he is freed from illusion the individual spirit soul becomes the Supreme. That is a false idea, as we have already explained.

Adhikaraṇa 3: The Supreme Lord is not the Mind

Viṣaya [thesis or statement]: The worship of the Lord is described in the following words of Chāndogya Upaniṣad [3.18.1]:

mano brahmety upāśīta

“One should worship the Supreme as the mind.”

Saṁśaya [doubt]: Should one meditate on the mind as being identical with the Supreme Personality of Godhead?

Pūrvapakṣa [the opponent speaks]: Because the scriptures affirm that the mind and the Supreme Personality of Godhead are not different, therefore this kind of meditation should be done.

Siddhānta [conclusion]: In the following words the author of the sūtras gives His conclusion.
Sūtra 4.1.4

na pratīke na hi saḥ
na – not; pratīke – in the part; na – not; hi – indeed; saḥ – He.

Not in the part. It is not He.

One should not think that the mind or other things that are only parts are identical with the Supreme Lord Himself. This is because the Supreme Lord is not identical with His parts. Rather, the Supreme Lord is the support and the resting place of the mind. In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam [11.2.41] it is said:

khaṁ vāyum agniṁ salilāṁ mahūṁ ca
jyoṭiṁśī sattvāṁ dīśo draumādīn
sarīt-samudrāmīś ca hareḥ śarīrāṁ
yat kiṁ ca bhūtaṁ praṇamed ananyāḥ

“A devotee should not see anything as being separate from the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa. Ether, fire, air, water, earth, the sun, and other luminaries, all living beings, the directions, trees and other plants, the rivers and oceans, and whatever a devotee experiences he should consider to be an expansion of Kṛṣṇa. Thus seeing everything that exists within creation as the body of the Supreme Lord, Hari, the devotee should offer his sincere respects to the entire expansion of the Lord’s body.”

In this situation the nominative case should be understood to have the force of the locative. That is the conclusion here.

Adhikaraṇa 4: The Impersonal Brahman

Viṣaya [thesis or statement]: It has already been shown that one should think of the Supreme Personality of Godhead as the all-pervading Supersoul, because the descriptions of the impersonal Brahman are not like the descriptions of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Saṁśaya [doubt]: Should one think of the Supreme Personality of Godhead as the impersonal Brahman, or should one not think of Him as the Brahman?

Pūrvapakṣa [the opponent speaks]: The Supreme Personality of Godhead should not be considered identical with the impersonal Brahman, for it has already been confirmed that He is identical with the all-pervading Supersoul.

Siddhānta [conclusion]: In the following words the author of the sūtras gives His conclusion.

Sūtra 4.1.5

brahma-drśṭir utkarsāt
brahma – of Brahman; drśṭih – sight; utkarsāt – because of being exalted.

He is seen as impersonal Brahman, for He is most exalted.

As He is considered identical with the all-pervading Supersoul, so the Supreme Personality of Godhead should also be considered identical with the impersonal Brahman. Why is that? The sūtra explains,
utkarsāt: “For He is most exalted.” This means “For He is the abode of limitless transcendental qualities.” In the Brhad-āranyaka Upaniṣad

[2.5.19] it is said:

ayam ātmā brahma sarvānbhūtiḥ

“He is the all-knowing Supersoul and He is also the impersonal Brahman.”

This is also confirmed by the text that begins atha kasmād ucyate brahma.

Adhikarāṇa 5: The Creator of the Sun

Vīṣaya [thesis or statement]: In the Puruṣa-sūkta prayer [Ṛg Veda 10.90] it is said:

candrāmā manaso jātaś
caṅkuṣāḥ sūryo ‘jyataḥ
śrōtrād vāyuḥ ca prānaś ca
mukhād agnir ajāyata

“These from His mind the moon was born. From His eye the sun was born. From His ear the wind and the life breath were born. From His mouth fire was born.”

Here the Supreme Lord’s eyes and the other parts of His body are described as the causes of the sun and other parts of the world.

Saṁśaya [doubt]: Should they be thought of caused in this way or not?

Pūrvapakṣa [the opponent speaks]: The Lord’s eyes and the other parts of His body are said to be soft and delicate like lotus flowers and other soft things. That is why they cannot be the cause of things that are harsh, rough, and very powerful [like the sun].

Siddhānta [conclusion]: In the following words the author of the sūtras gives His conclusion.

Sūtra 4.1.6

ādityād-matayaḥ cāṅga upapatteḥ

āditya – the sun; ādi – beginning with; matayaḥ – conception; ca – and; aṅge – in the limb; upapatteḥ – because of being reasonable.

Also, the idea of the sun and other things is in the limb, for that is reasonable.

The word ca [also] is used here to begin the refutation of the opponent’s argument. This kind of meditation on Lord Viṣṇu’s eyes and the other parts of His body should be performed. Why is that? The sūtra explains, upapatteḥ: “For that is reasonable. This meditation is proper for it shows the Lord’s greatness. It is by the Lord’s greatness that His eyes are the creator of the sun and the other parts of His body are the creators of other great things. In this way it the scriptures prove that the parts of the Lord’s body are transcendental. They are not like anything in the material world. It is stated in Śvetāsvatara Upaniṣad [6.7-8]:

apāṇi-pādo javano grahītā
paśyaty acaksuḥ sa śṛṇoty akarṇaḥ
sa vetti vedyaṁ na ca tasya vettā
tam āhur agryaṁ puruṣaṁ purāṇam
“He does not possess bodily form like that of an ordinary living entity. There is no difference between His body and His soul. He is absolute. All His senses are transcendental. Any one of His senses can perform the action of any other sense. Therefore, no one is greater than Him or equal to Him. His potencies are multifarious, and thus His deeds are automatically performed as a natural sequence.”

Adhikaraṇa 6: Āsanas and Meditation

Viṣaya [thesis or statement]: In the Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad [2.8] it is said:

\[
\begin{align*}
trir-unnataṁ sthāpya samaṁ śarīraṁ \\
hṛdindriyāṁ manasā sanniveśya \\
brāhmaṇudupena pratareta vidvān \\
srotāṁsi sarvānī bhayāvahāṁ
\end{align*}
\]

“With the neck, head, and back straight, and with all powers of concentration, one should meditate on the Supreme Personality of Godhead staying in the heart as the Supersoul. Traveling in the boat of the Supreme Lord’s mercy, the learned Devotee crosses the raging fearful waters of the cycle of repeated birth and death.”

Samśaya [doubt]: When meditating on the Lord is it compulsory that one adopt the āsana [yoga sitting-posture] described here, or is it not compulsory?

Pūrvapakṣa [the opponent speaks]: Meditation is performed in the mind. Therefore the adoption of a particular posture of the body is not compulsory.

Siddhānta [conclusion]: In the following words the author of the sūtras gives His conclusion.

Sūtra 4.1.7

\[
\begin{align*}
āśīnāḥ sambhavāt \\
āśīnāḥ & – sitting; sambhavāt – because of possibility.
\end{align*}
\]

 sided, for then it is possible.

One should adopt an āsana [yoga sitting-posture], and then meditate on the Lord. Why is that? The sūtra explains, sambhavāt: “For then it is possible.” When one is reclining, standing up, or walking, the mind is liable to be distracted and then meditation is not possible. In Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad [1.3] it is said:

\[
\begin{align*}
te dhyāna-yogānugataṁ apaśyan
\end{align*}
\]

“Sitting in a yoga posture, and rapt in meditation, the sages gazed at the Supreme Personality of Godhead.”

In this way they who desire to meditate on the Lord are described. Therefore one should adopt the āsana posture; otherwise meditation is not possible.

Sūtra 4.1.8

\[
\begin{align*}
dhyānāc ca \\
dhyānāt & – because of meditation; ca – also.
\end{align*}
\]
Also because of meditation.

Meditation is defined as thinking of one thing only, and not thinking of anything else. This kind of thinking is not possible when one is reclining or in any posture but the yoga āsana. Therefore one should sit in the yoga āsana.

Sūtra 4.1.9

acalatvāṃ cāpeksyā
acalatvam – stillness; ca – and; apeksya – in relation to.

Also because it is related to stillness.

The word “ca” [also] is used here for emphasis. In the Chāndogya Upaniṣad the word dhyāna [meditation] is used as a synonym of stillness. There it is said [Chāndogya Upaniṣad 7.6.1]:

dhyāyatīva prthivī

“The earth is still, as if it were rapt in meditation.”

This also hints that meditation should be performed when one is sitting in a yoga āsana. Even in the mundane affairs of the world the word dhyāna is used in this way, as in the sentence, dhyāyati kāntam prośita-ramañi: “The girl is still, rapt in meditation on her absent beloved.”

Sūtra 4.1.10

smaranti ca

smaranti – the Smṛti-śāstra; ca – also.

The Smṛti-śāstra also.

In Bhagavad-gītā [6.11-14] Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, states:

śucau deśe pratiṣṭhāpya sthiram āsanam ātmanah
nāty-ucchritam nāti-nīcam cailājina-kuśottaram

tatraikāgraṁ manah kṛtvā yata-cittendriya-kriyāḥ
upavīṣṭāsane yeṣyāḥ yogam ātma-viśuddhayey

samaṁ kāya-śiro-grīvaṁ dhārayann acalam sthirah
sampaṃṣya nāṣikāgram svāṁ diśaṁ cānavalokayan

prasāntāmā vigata-bhūr brahmācāri-vrate sthitah
manah saṁyamya mac-citto yukta āśīta mat-paraḥ

“To practice yoga, one should go to a secluded place and should lay kuṣa grass on the ground and then cover it with a deerskin and a soft cloth. The seat should be neither too high nor too low and should be situated in a sacred place. The yogī should then sit on it very firmly and practice yoga to purify the heart by controlling his mind, senses and activities and fixing the mind on one point. One should hold one's body, neck and head erect in a straight line and stare
steadily at the tip of the nose. Thus, with an unagitated, subdued mind, devoid of fear, completely free from sex life, one should meditate upon Me within the heart and make Me the ultimate goal of life.”

In this way the Smṛti-śāstra explains that they who meditate should keep their bodies, senses, and minds still. Such stillness is not possible without adopting the yoga-āsana. Therefore a person engaged in meditation should adopt the yoga-āsana.

**Adhikaraṇa 7: The True Nature of Meditation**

*Viṣaya* [thesis or statement]: Now another point will be considered in relation to Brhad-Āranyaka Upaniṣad [4.5.6]:

ātmā vā are draṣṭavyaḥ

“One should gaze on the Supreme Personality of Godhead.”

*Saṁśaya* [doubt]: In worshiping the Lord are there restrictions of direction, place, and time to be observed, or are there no such restrictions?

*Pūrvapakṣa* [the opponent speaks]: In Vedic rituals there are such restrictions. Because worship of the Lord is also described in the Vedas, these restrictions must also apply to worship of the Lord.

*Siddhānta* [conclusion]: In the following words the author of the sūtras gives His conclusion.

**Sūtra 4.1.11**

yatraikāgratā tatrāvิśeṣāt

*yatras* – where; ekāgratā – single-pointed concentration; *tatra* – there; avišeṣāt – because of not being specific.

Where is single-pointed concentration, there because nothing is specific.

This *sūtra* means, “In whatever direction, place, or time [*yatras*] there is single-pointed concentration [*ekāgratā*] of the mind, in that [*tatra*] direction, place, or time one should worship Lord Hari.” The meaning here is that in the worship of the Lord there is no restriction of direction, place, or time. Why is that? The *sūtra* explains, avišeṣāt: “Because there is nothing specific.” This means “Because the scriptures give no specific instruction in this matter.” In the Varāha Purāṇa it is said:

tam eva deśaṁ seveta
taṁ kālaṁ tāṁ avasthitim
tāṁ eva bhogāṁ seveta
mano yatra prasādati
na hi deśādibhīṁ kaścid
viśeṣāṁ samudīritah
manah-prasādanārthaṁ hi
deśa-kālādi-cintanam

“One should seek a place, time, situation, and sensory environment where the mind becomes peaceful and cheerful. Other than that there is no specific instruction about place or environment. Place, time, situation, and sensory environment should be chosen to facilitate a peaceful and cheerful mind.”
Here someone may object: “Is it not so that there are actually rules regarding the place of worship? For example, in the Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad [2.10] it is said:

\[\begin{align*}
\text{same śucau śārkara-vahni-vāluka-} \\
\text{vivarjite śabda-jalāśrayādibhiḥ} \\
\text{mano-‘nukūle na tu caṣu-piḍane} \\
\text{guhā-nivātāśrayane niyojayet}
\end{align*}\]

“One should practice yoga is a solitary place with level ground free from pebbles and stones, free from winds, clean and pure, pleasing to the mind, not unpleasing to the eyes, secluded, and far from noisy bathing places.”

Also, one should meditate in a holy place, for holy places bring liberation.”

If this is said, then I reply: Yes. It is true. Still, there may be an unfortunate situation where one is not able to take shelter of a holy place, although of course, if there is no such misfortune, one should stay in a holy place and worship the Lord there. Still, the final conclusion is given here in the words mano-‘nukūle [one should find a place that is pleasing to the mind].

**Adhikaraṇa 8: Devotional Service Continues After Liberation**

**Viṣaya** [thesis or statement]: In the Praśna Upaniṣad [5.1] it is said:

\[\text{sa yo haitad bhagavan manuṣyeṣu prāyaṇāntam oṁkāram abhidhyāyita}\]

“O master, what world is attained by a person who up to the end of his life continues to meditate on oṁ?”

In the Nṛsiṁha-tāpanī Upaniṣad [2.4] it is said:

\[\text{yaṁ sarve devā namanti mumukṣavo brahma-vādinaś ca}\]

“All who are demigods, all who are philosophers, and all who yearn to attain liberation worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead.”

In the Taittirīya Upaniṣad [3.10.5] it is said:

\[\text{etat sama-gayann āste}\]

“They sit down and chant the Sāma Veda to glorify Him.”

In the Rg Veda [1.22.20] it is said:

\[\text{tad viṣṇoḥ paramaṁ padaṁ sadā paśyanti sūrayaḥ}\]

“The wise and learned devotees always see the supreme abode of Lord Viṣṇu.”

In these verses it is said that devotional service both leads to liberation and also continues after liberation.

**Saṁśaya** [doubt]: Is devotional service performed only before liberation, or is it not?

**Pūrvapakṣa** [the opponent speaks]: Because liberation is the goal to be attained by performing devotional service, therefore devotional service is performed only as long as one is not liberated.

**Siddhānta** [conclusion]: In the following words the author of the sūtras gives His conclusion.

**Sūtra 4.1.12**

\[\text{āprāyaṇāt tatrāpi hi drṣṭam}\]
ā – until; prāyanāt – liberation; tatra – there; api – even; hi – indeed; dṛṣṭam – seen.

Until liberation. Even there it is seen.

Devotional service should be performed both before and after liberation. Why is that? The sūtra explains, hi dṛṣṭam: “Because it is seen in the Śruti-śāstra.” In the Sauparṇa-śruti it is said:

\[
\text{sarvadainam upāṣīta yāvad vimuktiḥ. muktā api hy enam upāsate}
\]

“Before attaining liberation the great souls always worship the Lord. After attaining liberation they continue to worship Him.”

In this way it is said that the Lord is worshiped in both circumstances.

Here someone may object: “The liberated souls do not worship the Lord. This is so because they have no goal to attain by such worship and because the scriptures do not order such worship.”

To this I reply: That is true. Still, even though there is no scriptural order to compel them, the liberated souls nevertheless worship the Lord because they are attracted by His transcendental handsomeness. Also, a person who has jaundice eats sugar candy as medicine, but when he is cured he also continues to eat sugar. In the same way the liberated souls continue to worship the Lord. In this way it is proved that the great souls worship the Lord both before and after they attain liberation. Bhagavad-gītā [9.2] states:

\[
rāja-vidyā rāja-guhyāṁ
pavitram idam uttāmam
pratyakṣāvagamāṁ dharmyaṁ
su-sukhaṁ kartum avyayam
\]

“This knowledge is the king of education, the most secret of all secrets. It is the purest knowledge, and because it gives direct perception of the self by realization, it is the perfection of religion. It is everlasting, and it is joyfully performed.”

### Adhikaraṇa 9: Transcendental Knowledge Destroys Past Sins

**Viṣaya** [thesis or statement]: The way to attain transcendental knowledge having already been considered, now will be considered the results of that knowledge. In the Chāndogya Upaniṣad [4.14.3] it is said:

\[
yathā puṣkara-palāśa āpo na śiśyante evam eva vidi pāpaṁ karma na śiśyate
\]

“As water does not touch a lotus leaf, so sin does not touch a person situated in transcendental knowledge.”

In the Chāndogya Upaniṣad [5.24.3] it is said:

\[
tad yatthaiṣīkā-ṭīlāṁ agnau proteṁ pradāyetaivaṁ hāsyā sarve pāpmānaḥ pradāyante
\]

“As a blade if īṣīkā grass is at once consumed by a fire, so are consumed the sins of a person situated in transcendental knowledge.”

**Saṁśaya** [doubt]: Must one experience the results of past and present sinful deeds to become free from the karmic results, or are such results destroyed and nonexistent for a person situated in transcendental knowledge?
Pūrvapakṣa [the opponent speaks]: One cannot become free from karmic reactions in any way other than experiencing their results. This is described in the following words of the Śruti-śāstra:

nābhuktaṁ kṣīyate karma
kalpa-koṭi-śatair api
avaśyam eva bhoktavyaṁ
kṛtaṁ karma śubhāśubham

“Even after millions of kalpas one does not cannot become free from karmic reactions in any way other than experiencing their results. Therefore one must experience the results of good and evil deeds.”

This being so, all scriptural passages declaring otherwise should be understood to be merely empty flattery offered to they who are situated in transcendental knowledge.

Siddhānta [conclusion]: In the following words the author of the sūtras gives His conclusion.

Sūtra 4.1.13

tad-adhigama uttara-pūrvāghayor aśleṣa-vinsāśau tad- vyapadeśāt
tad-adhigame – in the knowledge of Him; uttara – after; pūrva – and before; aghayoḥ – of sins; aśleṣa – not touching; vinsāśau – destruction; tat – of that; vyapadeśāt – because of the teaching.

When knowledge of Him is attained, then there is destruction and not touching of past and present sins, for that is the teaching.

The word tad-adhigamaḥ here means “knowledge of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.” When such knowledge is present, then a person is no longer touched by sinful reactions to present deeds, and all accumulated past karma is destroyed. Why is that? The sūtra explains, tad-vyapadeśāt: “For that is the teaching.” This teaching has already been shown in the two passages of Chāndogya Upaniṣad quoted in the introduction to this Adhikaraṇa. No one has the power to refute the clear meaning of these two passages of Śruti-śāstra. The passage declaring that one does not become free from karmic reactions in any way other than experiencing their results is meant to refer only to persons not situated in transcendental knowledge.

Adhikaraṇa 10: Transcendental Knowledge Destroys Past Pious Karmic Reactions

Viṣaya [thesis or statement]: In Brhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad [4.4.22] it is said:

ubhe u haivaiṣa ete taraty amṛtaḥ sādhv-asādhunī

“He crosses beyond all karmic reactions, both good and evil, and he becomes immortal.”

In this way it is said that he crosses beyond the karmic reactions to both sins and pious deeds.

Samśaya [doubt]: Do the reactions of past pious deeds meet the same fate as the reactions of past sins, that is, are the past pious deeds destroyed and the present pious deeds unable to touch the person performing them, or is this not so?

Pūrvapakṣa [the opponent speaks]: This is not the fate of past and present pious deeds, for such deeds are not performed in disobedience to the teachings of the Vedicas. Therefore one does not become free
from karmic reactions to such deeds in any way other than by experiencing their results. Therefore it is not right to say that a person situated in transcendental knowledge can attain liberation as long as the obstacle of past good karma is still present.

Siddhānta [conclusion]: In the following words the author of the sūtras gives His conclusion.

**Sūtra 4.1.14**

\[
\text{itarasyāpy evam aśleṣah pāte tu}
\]

\[
\text{itarasya – of another; api – also; evam – thus; aśleṣah – not touching; pāte – in destruction; tu – indeed.}
\]

Indeed, when it is destroyed the other ceases to touch.

This sūtra means that when transcendental knowledge is present, then the other [itarasya], which here means the past and present karmic reactions of pious deeds, is destroyed and ceases to affect the soul. Thus happens in the same way it happens to past and present sinful reactions. It is not that because they are prescribed by the Vedas, material pious deeds do not obstruct transcendental knowledge. The result brought by material pious deeds is an obstacle impeding the result brought by transcendental knowledge. In truth, material pious deeds are not pure and spiritual. In the Chāndogya Upaniṣad [8.4.1] it is said:

\[
\text{sarve pāpmāno ‘to nivartante}
\]

“All sins are then destroyed.”

In this context, the word “sins” includes material pious deeds also. In Bhagavad-gītā [4.37] the Supreme Personality of Godhead affirms:

\[
\text{yathaidhāṃsi samiddho ‘gnir}
\]

\[
\text{bhasma-sāt kurute ‘ṛjuna}
\]

\[
\text{jñāṇaṇānih sarva-karmāni}
\]

\[
\text{bhasma-sāt kurute tathā}
\]

“As a blazing fire turns firewood to ashes, O Arjuna, so does the fire of knowledge burn to ashes all reactions to material activities.”

In this verse the destruction of karmic reactions is described. In these general worlds all karmic reactions, past and present, sinful and pious, are included. The author of the sūtras describes this here in the words pāte tu: “Indeed, when it is destroyed.” The word tu [indeed] is used for emphasis. In this way there is nothing wrong with the statement that liberation is attained when one’s karmic reactions are destroyed.

**Adhikaraṇa 11: Arabdha-phala and Anarabdha-phala Karmic Reactions**

Viṣaya [thesis or statement]: Past pious and sinful karmic reactions are of two kinds: 1. anārabdha-phala [where the reactions have not yet begun to manifest], and 2. ārabdha-phala [where the reactions have begun to manifest]. In the passage from Brhad-aranyaka Upaniṣad [4.4.22] quoted in the beginning of Adhikaraṇa 10, it is clearly said that both kinds of karmic reactions are destroyed. In this way it is clear that transcendental knowledge completely destroys both kinds of karmic reactions.
Saṁśaya [doubt]: Does transcendental knowledge destroy both kinds of past karmic reactions, or does it destroy only the anārabdha-phala karmic reactions?

Pūrvapakṣa [the opponent speaks]: If transcendental knowledge causes the destruction of all past pious and sinful karmic reactions, then it would automatically bring with it the liberation of the soul, and with that the sudden death of the material body. This clearly does not happen, and therefore what has been said about transcendental knowledge cannot be true.

Siddhānta [conclusion]: In the following words the author of the sūtras gives His conclusion.

Śūtra 4.1.15

anārabdha-kārye eva tu pūrve tad avadheḥ

anārabdha – not begun; kārye – effect; eva – indeed; tu – but; pūrve – previous; tat – that; avadheḥ – of the duration of time.

But only anārabdha-phala karmic reactions, for that is the time limit.

The word tu [but] is used here to dispel doubt.

Only the anārabdha-phala past pious and sinful karmic reactions, reactions that have not yet begun to bear fruit, are destroyed by transcendental knowledge. The ārabdha-phala karmic reactions, which have already begun to bear fruit, are not destroyed in that way. Why is that? The sūtra explains, tad-avadheḥ: “For that is the time limit.” In Chāndogya Upaniṣad [6.14.2] it is said:

tasya tāvad eva ciraṁ yāvan na vimokṣye

“One cannot attain liberation as long as his past karmic reactions persist.”

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam [10.87.40] the personified Vedas pray to the Supreme Personality of Godhead:

tvad-avagamī na vetti bhavad-uttha-śubhāśubhayōḥ guṇa-viguṇānvayāṁs tarhi deha-bhrītāṁ ca girāḥ

“When a person realizes You, he no longer cares about His good and bad fortune arising from past pious and sinful acts, since it is You alone who control this good and bad fortune. Such a realized devotee also disregards what ordinary living beings say about him.”

In this way the scriptures explain that, by the Supreme Lord’s will, the living entity remains in his material body until his ārabdha-phala karmic reactions are destroyed. Transcendental knowledge is very powerful. It can at once burn away all past karmic reactions, leaving behind no remainder. In this it is like a blazing fire that at once burns up any kind of fuel that may be supplied.

Although these statements of scripture should be accepted, still it is seen that many great sages, wise with transcendental knowledge, still remain living within material bodies. In that situation it should be accepted that, by the will of the Lord, these sages stay in this world, their ārabdha-phala karmic reactions not yet exhausted, for the purpose of teaching the truth of spiritual life to the others. As a jewel or other impediment may stop the burning of a fire, so transcendental knowledge’s power to burn away all karmic reactions may be stopped in certain circumstances like this.

Here someone may object: “Without taking shelter of a series of past karmic reactions, transcendental knowledge does not become manifested. Those karmic reactions may be compared to a potter’s wheel. As, once begun to spin, the potter’s wheel gradually stops of its own accord, so past karmic reactions gradually come to a stop.”
To this objection I reply: No. It is not so. Transcendental knowledge is very powerful. It can at once uproot all karmic reactions. It is only the will of the Supreme Lord that stops transcendental knowledge. When a heavier stone is placed on a spinning potter’s wheel, the wheel comes to an abrupt halt. Transcendental knowledge stops all karmic reactions like that. Therefore what was said in the beginning about transcendental knowledge is right and true.

Adhikaraṇa 12: Regular Duties and Karmic Reactions

Viśaya [thesis or statement]: Here someone may say: “It has been said that transcendental knowledge destroys all past pious karmic reactions. Therefore transcendental knowledge destroys all kāmya-karma [reactions to pious deeds performed to attain specific desires] as well as all nitya-karmas [karmic reactions to regular pious duties].”

To refute this idea the present Adhikaraṇa is begun.

Saṁśaya [doubt]: Brhad-āranyaka Upaniṣad [4.4.22] explains that transcendental knowledge destroys all past pious and sinful karmic reactions. Does this mean that, as kāmya-karma reactions are destroyed by transcendental knowledge, the reactions to nitya-karma activities, such as the performances of agnihotra-yajñas, are also destroyed in the same way, or are they not also destroyed?

Pūrṇapāka [the opponent speaks]: It is the nature of transcendental knowledge to destroy all karmic reactions. Because it cannot abandon its own nature, transcendental knowledge must destroy the reactions of nitya-karmas also.

Siddhānta [conclusion]: In the following words the author of the sūtras gives His conclusion.

Sūtra 4.1.16

agnihotrādi tu tat kārṇyaiva tad-darśanāt

agnihotra – agnihotra-yajña; ādi – beginning with; tu – but; tat – that; kārṇya – for an effect; eva – indeed; tat – that; darśanāt – because of revelation.

But agnihotra-yajnas and other rituals have that as their effect, for that is the revelation.

The word tu [but] is used here to dispel doubt.

The daily agnihotra-yajña and other nitya-karmas performed before transcendental knowledge is manifested have the manifestation of transcendental knowledge as their karmic reaction. Why is that? The sūtra explains, tad-darśanāt: “For that is the revelation.” In the Brhad-āranyaka Upaniṣad [4.4.22] it is said:

tam etain vedānuvacanena

“By studying the Vedas they come to understand the Supreme Personality of Godhead.”

This means that transcendental knowledge is the karmic result of nitya-karmas, such as study of the Vedas. Transcendental knowledge, then, destroys all past pious karmic reactions except for those of nitya-karma duties, such as the performance of daily agnihotra-yajñas. That is the meaning of the sūtra.

Transcendental knowledge does not destroy the karmic reactions of nitya-karma duties, for the attainment of transcendental knowledge is itself the karmic reaction these duties produce. When a house is set afire some seeds within it may become heated but not destroyed. Such grains can never be
sown, for they will never sprout into plants. In the same way the reactions to nitya-karma activities are not destroyed, although they will not sprout into future material bondage. In the Brhad-āranyaka Upaniṣad it is said:

\[
\text{karmanā pitṛlokaḥ}
\]

“This by performing nitya-karma duties one goes to Pitṛloka.”

This shows that sometimes nitya-karma duties bring the attainment of Svargaloka as their karmic reaction. These reactions all become destroyed.

**Adhikaraṇa 13: Some Fine Points of Karmic Reactions**

*Viṣaya* [thesis or statement]: It has been shown that by the Lord’s will the ārabṛtha-phala pious and sinful karmic reactions of they who are enlightened with transcendental knowledge remain and are not destroyed. The Lord does this so the enlightened souls may stay in the material World for some time and teach the spiritual truth to the people in general. Now it will be shown that for some niraṇeva devotees the Lord at once destroys their ārabṛtha-phala karmic reactions. Thus these devotees do not have experience these karmic reactions. In the Kaśṭikī Upaniṣad [1.4] it is said:

\[
tat-sukṛta-duṣkrte vidhunute tasya priyā jñātayah sukṛtam upayānty aprīyā duskṛtam
\]

“His pious and sinful karmic reactions are removed. His pious reactions are given to his friends and kinsmen. His Sinful reactions are given to his enemies.”

In the Śātyāyani-śāstra it is said:

\[
tasya putrā dāyam upayānty suhṛdaḥ sādhu-kṛtyāṁ dviṣantaḥ pāpapā-kṛtyāṁ.
\]

“His children claim their inheritance, and his friends claim the reactions of his pious deeds. His enemies must take the reactions of his sins.”

*Sāṃśaya* [doubt]: Are the ārabṛtha-phala karmic reactions Sometimes destroyed without the person having to experience their results, or is this never so?

*Pūrvapakṣa* [the opponent speaks]: Without experiencing Them, ārabṛtha-phala karmic reactions are never destroyed.

*Siddhānta* [conclusion]: In the following words the author of the sūtras gives His conclusion.

**Sūtra 4.1.17**

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{ato `nyāpi hy ekeśām ubhayōḥ} \\
\text{ataḥ – then; anyā – another; api – also; hi – indeed; ekeśām – of some; ubhayōḥ – of both.}
\end{align*}
\]

Therefore there is another also. Of some there is both.

For some niraṇeva devotees who are very ardently devoted to the Lord, their pious and sinful ārabṛtha-phala karmic reactions are removed without their having to experience the results. The reason for this is given in the word anyā: “There is another also.” This means “There is another scriptural quote, a quote revealing that by the Supreme Lord’s will ārabṛtha-phala karmic reactions are sometimes also destroyed.” The other scriptural quote is the passage from Kauśīṭikī Upaniṣad previously quoted, and the passage from the Śātyāyana-śāstra also.
This is the meaning: In one place the scriptures say that ārabdhā-phala karmic reactions are destroyed only when the person experiences them, and in another place the scriptures say that transcendental knowledge can destroy ārabdhā-phala karmic reactions. If these two statements are not to be thought of as contradicting each other, they must be considered to apply to different circumstances. These scriptural statements do not apply to kāmya-karma activities, for Sūtras 4.1.13 and 14 stated that all pious and sinful karmic reactions are destroyed, and because sins are by definition not kāmya-karma activities.

Therefore, for some very dear devotees, who ardently yearn to see the Lord and who are no longer able to bear separation from Him, the Supreme Lord takes away their ārabdhā-phala karmic reactions, and distributes them to those persons who are close to those devotees. This will be further described in another Adhikaraṇa. Thus the devotee’s ārabhā-phala karmic reactions are experienced by these people. In this way the rule the Lord has decreed for ārabdhā-phala karmic reactions is maintained.

Here someone may object: “Karmic reactions are formless, and therefore it is not logical to say that they can be given to others as if they were tangible objects.”

If this is said, then I reply: That is not true. Because He is all-powerful, the Supreme Lord can do anything He wishes, even if what He does is different from what you think is logical. Therefore the Supreme Personality of Godhead can remove the ārabdhā-phala karmic reactions of some great devotees who ardently yearn to see Him.

In the next sūtra the author refutes the claim that the karmic reactions of one person cannot be given to another.

Sūtra 4.1.18

\[\text{yad eva vidyayeti hi} \]
\[\text{yad eva vidyayā iti} – \text{Chāndogya Upaniṣad 1.1.10}; \text{hi} – \text{because.}\]

Because of Chāndogya Upaniṣad 1.1.10.

\[\text{Chāndogya Upaniṣad 1.1.10 shows the power of transcendental knowledge, even when it is only knowledge of the individual spirit soul. The word } hi \text{ in this } sūtra \text{ means “because.” This means that because transcendental knowledge cannot be stopped by any obstacle, and because the Supreme Personality of Godhead in these circumstances gives His own mercy, sometimes the living entity does not have to experience his ārabdhā-phala karmic reactions. No one should be surprised at this.}\]

What happens then? The author of the sūtras gives the following explanation.

Sūtra 4.1.19

\[\text{bhogenā tv itare kṣapayitvātha sampadyate} \]
\[\text{bhogenā – by enjoyment; tu – indeed; itare – the other; kṣapayitvā – leaving; atha – then; sampadyate – obtains.}\]

Renouncing the two others, he enjoys.
This śūtra means, “leaving behind the gross and subtle material bodies [the two others], and attaining the body of a personal associate of the Lord, the liberated devotee enjoys transcendental bliss.” This is described in the following words of Taittirīya Upaniṣad [2.1.1]:

\[
\text{so śnute sarvān kāmān}
\]

“Then he enjoys the fulfillment of all his desires.”

That is the meaning of the śūtra’s word sampadyate: “He enjoys transcendental bliss.”
Śrī Vedānta-sūtra

Adhyāya 4: The Results of Transcendental Knowledge

Pāda 1: How a Person with Transcendental Knowledge Leaves his Material Body

*mantrād yasya parā bhūtāḥ*
*parā bhūtādayo grahāḥ*
*naśyanti sva-lasat-ṛṣṇah*
*sa krṣṇaḥ śaraṇaṁ mama*

“When May Lord Kṛṣṇa, who is radiant with the thirst to be reunited with His devotees, and whose *mantras* exorcise the ghosts and demons of repeated birth in the material world of five elements, be my shelter.”

In this Pāda will be described the way the soul travels to the world of the demigods, and the way a person enlightened with transcendental knowledge leaves his material body.

Adhikaraṇa 1: The Time of Death

Vīṣaya [thesis or statement]: In the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* [6.8.6] it is said:

*asya saumya-puruṣasya prayato vān-manasi sampadyate manah prāṇe prāṇas tejasi tejaḥ parasyām devatām*

“When a good person leaves his material body, the voice enters the mind, the mind enters the life-air, the life-air enters the element fire, and the element fire enters the Supreme Personality of Godhead.”

Samāśaya [doubt]: Does the voice itself enter, or do only the activities of the voice enter?

Pūrvapakṣa [the opponent speaks]: Because the nature of the mind is not like the nature of the voice, and because the voice and other parts of the body are subordinate to the mind, therefore it is only the activities of the voice that enter.

Siddhānta [conclusion]: In the following words the author of the *sūtras* gives His conclusion.

Sūtra 4.2.1

*vān manasi darśanāc chadbāc ca*
*vāk – voice; manasi – in the mind; darśanāt – because of sight; śabdāt – because of sound; ca – also.*

Because of what is seen and heard, voice enters mind.
Voice itself enters the mind. Why is that? The sūtra explains, _darśanāt:_ “Because of what is seen.” This means that even when the external voice is silent, it is seen that the voice is still active in the mind. The sūtra also explains, _sabdāt:_ “Because of what is heard.” In the scriptures [Chāndogya Upaniṣad] it is heard:

_vāṇ manasi sampadyate_

“The voice enters the mind.”

Any other interpretation would do violence to the clear meaning of this quote. No evidence actually supports the idea that only the activity of the voice enters the mind.

Here someone may object: “Because mind does not possess the nature of the voice, voice itself cannot have entered the mind. It is only the activities of one thing that can enter another thing dissimilar in nature. An example of this is the activities of fire, which can thus enter water. This is so, for it is clearly seen.”

If this is said, then I reply: Voice and mind meet. They do not join together and become one. The meaning is that even though their natures are different, the two of them actually do meet.

_Sūtra 4.2.2_

_ata eva sarvāṇy anu_

_ataḥ eva – therefore; sarvāṇi – all; anu – following._

_Therefore they all follow._

Here someone may object: “The voice may enter the mind, but the mind does not enter the element fire.”

If this objection is raised, the sūtra gives the following reply, _sarvāṇi:_ “All.” This means, “The sense of hearing and all the other senses also enter.” The word _anu_ here means, “they all enter, following behind the voice.” In the _Praśna Upaniṣad_ [3.9] it is said:

_tasmād upaśānta-tejāḥ punar-bhavam indriyair manasi sampadyamānair yac cīttaṃ tenaisa prāṇa āyāti_

“When the fire of life is extinguished, the senses enter the mind, and the soul again takes birth. Accompanied by that mind, the soul is born again.”

In the _Praśna Upaniṣad_ [4.2] it is said:

_yathā gārgya marīcayo ‘staṁ gacchato ‘rkasya sarva etasmīns tejo-maṇḍale ekī-bhavati tāḥ punar udayaṁ pracaranty evaṁ ha vai tat sarvāṁ pare deve manasy ekī-bhavati_

“O Gārgya, as the rays of sunlight enter the setting sun only again to emerge from the rising sun, in the same way the senses enter their deity, the mind.”

_Adhikaraṇa 2: The Mind Enters the Breath_

_Viṣaya [thesis or statement]: Now the passage of Chāndogya Upaniṣad [6.8.6] quoted in the beginning of Adhikaraṇa 1 will again be considered._

_asya saumya-puruṣasya prayato vāṇ-manasi sampadyate manaḥ prāṇe prāṇas tejas tejaḥ parasyāṁ devatāyāṁ_
“When a good person leaves his material body, the voice enters the mind, the mind enters the life-air, the life-air enters the element fire, and the element fire enters the Supreme Personality of Godhead.”

**Samśaya [doubt]:** Does this passage mean to say that the mind enters the life-breath, or that it enters the realm of the moon?

**Pūrvapakṣa [the opponent speaks]:** Brhad-āranyaka Upaniṣad [3.2.13] declares:

\[\text{manaś candram} \]

“The mind enters the moon.”

Therefore the mind enters the moon.

**Siddhānta [结论]:** in the following words the author of the sūtras gives His conclusion.

**Sūtra 4.2.3**

\[\text{tan manaḥ prāṇa uttarāt} \]

\[ \text{tat – that; manaḥ – mind; prāṇe – in the life-breath; uttarāt – then.} \]

Then the mind enters the life-breath, because of what follows.

The words \text{tan manaḥ prāṇe} mean, “The mind enters the life-breath, accompanied by all the senses.” Why is that? Because of the statement that follows [uttarāt].

Here someone may object: “This cannot be, for Brhad-Āranyaka Upaniṣad 3.2.13 affirms that the mind enters the moon.”

The author of the sūtras replies to this objection in Sūtra 4.2.4.

**Adhikaraṇa 3: The Life-Breath Enters the Individual Soul**

**Viṣaya [thesis or statement]:** Now will be considered the following words of Chāndogya Upaniṣad [6.6.1]:

\[\text{prāṇas tejasī} \]

“The life-breath enters fire.”

**Samśaya [doubt]:** Does the life-breath, which is by then accompanied by the mind and the senses, enter the element fire, or does it enter the individual spirit soul [jīva]?

**Pūrvapakṣa [the opponent speaks]:** Chāndogya Upaniṣad [6.6.1] says that the life breath enters the element fire, therefore the life-breath enters the element fire.

**Siddhānta [结论]:** In the following words the author of the sūtras gives His conclusion.

**Sūtra 4.2.4**

\[\text{so ‘dhyakṣe tad-upagamādibhyah} \]

\[ \text{saḥ – it; adhyakṣe – to the master; tat – that; upagama – approaching; ādibhyah – beginning with.} \]
That in the master because of the scriptural statements that begin with the descriptions of approaching it.

The word saḥ [that] here means “the life-breath,” and the word adhyākṣe [in the master] here means, “In the individual spirit soul, who is the master of the body and senses.” Thus the life-breath enters the individual spirit soul. Why is that? The sūtra explains, tad-upagamādībhyaḥ: “Because of the scriptural statements that begin with the descriptions of approaching it.” In the Bhād-āranyaka Upaniṣad [4.3.38] it is said:

\[ \text{tad yathā rājānam praiyāsantam ugrāḥ praty enasāḥ sūtā grāmaṇya upasāmyanty evaṁ haivaṁ vidāṁ sarve prāṇā upasāmyanti. yatraitad īrdhvocchvāsī bhavati.} \]

“As bodyguards, warriors, charioteers, and generals gather around a king who is about to depart on a great march, so do all the senses and life-breaths gather around the soul who is about to leave its material body.”

In this way the Śruti-śāstra explains that the life-breath and the senses enter the individual spirit soul. This statement does not contradict the other statement of the Śruti-śāstra that the life-breath enters the element fire, for it may be said that after the life-breath enters the soul the two of them proceed to enter the element fire. This is like saying that the Yamunā, joining with the Ganges, proceeds to enter the ocean.

**Adhikaraṇa 4: The Individual Spirit Soul Enters the Combined Elements**

**Viśaya** [thesis or statement]: Now will be considered the statement that the individual spirit soul enters the element fire.

**Saṃśaya** [doubt]: Do the individual spirit soul and the life-breath enter the element fire, or do they enter all the elements combined?

**Pūrvapakṣa** [the opponent speaks]: The Śruti-śāstra says that the life-breath enters the element fire, therefore the life-breath enters the element fire.

**Siddhānta** [conclusion]: In the following words the author of the sūtras gives His conclusion.

**Sūtra 4.2.5**

\[ bhūteṣu tac chruteḥ \]
\[ bhūteṣu – in all the elements; tat – that; śruteḥ – because of the Śruti-śāstra. \]

**In all the elements, because of the Śruti-śāstra.**

The individual spirit soul enters all the five elements. He does not enter the fire element only. Why is that? In Bhād-āranyaka Upaniṣad [4.4.5] it is said:

\[ jīvasyākāśamayo vāyumayaā tejomayaā āpomayaḥ prthivīmayaḥ \]

“The individual spirit soul enters the elements ether, air, fire, water, and earth.”

In this way the Śruti-śāstra affirms that the individual spirit soul enters all the material elements. A further explanation is given in the next sūtra.
Sūtra 4.2.6

naikasmin darśayato hi
na – not; ekasmin – in one; darśayataḥ – they both reveal; hi – because.

Because they both say it is not in one.

It should not be considered that the individual spirit soul enters into one element, into fire. The word hi here means “because.” This means, “Because this was described in the questions and answers in Chāndogya Upaniṣad Chapter 5, Parts 3-10.”

Adhikaraṇa 5: The Departure of the Enlightened Soul

Viṣaya [thesis or statement]: Now will be considered a doubt that may arise concerning Chāndogya Upaniṣad 6.8.6.

Saṁśaya [doubt]: Does this passage describe the departure from the material body of the soul enlightened with transcendental knowledge, or the soul that is not enlightened?

Pūrvapakṣa [the opponent speaks]: In Brhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad [4.4.7] it is said:

yadā sarve pramucyante
kāmā ye 'syā hṛdi sthitāḥ
atha martyrō 'mrto bhavaty
atra brahma samaśnute

“When his heart is free of all material desires, the mortal becomes immortal. Then he enjoys spiritual life, even in this world.”

There word atra [here in this world] means that the enlightened soul need not leave the material world. Even in this world he enjoys the bliss of spiritual life.

Siddhānta [conclusion]: In the following words the author of the sūtras gives His conclusion.

Sūtra 4.2.7

samānā cāśṛty-upakramād amṛtatvām cānupoṣya
samānā – equal; ca – also; āśṛti-upakramāt – at the beginning; amṛtatvām – immortality; ca – and; anupoṣya – not burning.

Indeed, in the beginning they are the same. Also, immortality is without burning.

The first ca means “indeed.” In the beginning, the enlightened soul and the unenlightened soul depart from the material body in the same way. However, when they reach the nāḍīs [subtle pathways emanating from the heart], their paths diverge. The enlightened soul passes through one of the hundred nāḍīs, but the enlightened soul passes through a different nāḍī. This is described in Chāndogya Upaniṣad [8.6.6]:

śataṁ caikā ca hṛdayasya nādyas tāsāṁ mūrdhānam abhiniḥśṛtaikā. tayordhvam āyann amṛtatvam eti viśvag anyā utkrameṇe bhavanti.
“101 nāḍīs lead away from the heart. One passes through the head and leads to immortality. They others lead to a variety of destinations.”

This is also described in Brhad-ārañyaka Upaniṣad [4.4.2]. The soul endowed with transcendental knowledge departs from the material body through the passage passing through the top of the head. The unenlightened souls depart through the other passages. The scriptural statement [Brhad-ārañyaka Upaniṣad 4.4.7] explaining that the enlightened soul enjoys spiritual life even in this world means that such a soul no longer produces any karmic reactions even though his connection with the material body is not yet burned away.

Sūtra 4.2.8

tad āpīteḥ saṁsāra-vyapadeśāt

tat – that; āpīteḥ – until; saṁsāra – of the world of birth and death; vyapadeśāt – because of the teaching.

That is so, for it is taught that until then there is the world of birth and death.

This describes the immortality of an enlightened soul who is free from sin even though his connection to a material body is not yet burned away. How is that? The sūtra explains, āpīteḥ: “Until then.” Until he attains the direct association of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the individual spirit soul still has a relationship with a material body, and thus he remains in the world of repeated birth and death. The direction association of the Supreme Personality of Godhead is attained when the soul travels to the world of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. That is the conclusion of the Vedas.

Sūtra 4.2.9

sūkṣma-pramāṇataḥ ca tathopalabdheḥ

sūkṣma – subtle; pramāṇataḥ – from the source of knowledge; ca – also; tathā – so; upalabdheḥ – because of being seen.

The subtle, because of authority and direct perception.

In this contact the relationship of the enlightened soul with the material body is not yet burned away. This is because the subtle [sūkṣma] material body still persists. How is that known? The sūtra explains, pramāṇataḥ: “Because of authority.” Even when he travels to the worlds of the demigods, the enlightened soul retains relationship with a subtle material body, as is seen in the words of the moon-god in Kaśītakī Upaniṣad [1.3]. Therefore in the previous passage of Brhad-Ārañyaka Upaniṣad [4.4.7] the immortality described is one where the relationship between the soul and the material body is not yet burned away.

Sūtra 4.2.10

nopamardenātah

na – not; upamardena – by destruction; atah – therefore.

Therefore it is not by destruction.
Brhad-āranyaka Upaniṣad 4.4.7 does not describe the kind of immortality where the relationship of the individual spirit soul and the material body is destroyed.

Sūtra 4.2.11

tasyaiva copapatter ūṣmā
tasya – of that; eva – indeed; ca – also; upapatteḥ – because of being possible; ūṣmā – heat.

It has warmth, for that is reasonable.

The warmth that touches the gross material body while it is alive is manifested from the subtle material body, not the gross body. Why is that? The sūtra explains, upapatteḥ: “For that is reasonable.” When it is alive the gross body is warm, and when it is dead, the gross body is not warm. From this it can be seen that the warmth in the gross body comes from the subtle body.

The word ca [also] here shows another reason also. When he leaves the gross body, the enlightened soul also takes the heat-producing subtle body with him.

Next, fearing that another doubt will be raised, the author of the sūtras speaks the following words:

Sūtra 4.2.12

pratiṣedhād iti cen na śārīrāt
pratiṣedhāt – because of denial; iti – thus; cet – if; na – not; śārīrāt – from the resident of the body.

If someone says that it is denied, then I reply: No. It is not so. Because of the resident of the body.

Here someone may object: “The enlightened soul does not leave the gross material body. This is corroborated by the following words of Brhad-āranyaka Upaniṣad [4.4.6]:

athākāmayamāno yo ‘kāmo niśkāma āpta-kāmo na tasya prāṇā utkramanti brahmaiva san brahmātyeti

“One who does not desire, who has no material desires, and whose desires are all fulfilled, his life-breaths do not leave. He is spirit. He goes to the spirit.”

In this way the scriptures deny [pratiṣedhāt] that the enlightened soul leaves his material body.”

If [cet] this objection is raised, then the author of the sūtras replies, na: “No.” This means that the text of the Upaniṣad does not specifically say that the life-breath leaves the body. The meaning of this text is that the life-breath does not leave the individual spirit soul. After all, it is clearly seen that even enlightened souls leave their material bodies.

Sūtra 4.2.13

spaṣṭo hy ekeśām
spaṣṭāḥ – clear; hi – because; ekeśām – of some.

Because it is clear in some.
In this passage of Brhad-āranyaka Upaniṣad [4.4.6] there is no room for controversy. This is so because [hi] in some [ekeśām] recensions of the Vedas, namely the Madhyandina recension, is seen a clear [spaṣṭah] denial of the idea that the life-breath does not leave the material body. This same passage in the Madhyandina recension reads:

na tasmāt prāṇaḥ utkramanti. atravaiva samavāliyante brahmaiva san brahmātyetyi.

“The life-breaths do not leave him [the soul]. They enter there. He is spirit. He goes to the spirit.”

The word atrā [there] clearly shows that the life-breaths enter the spirit soul.

To this the objector may reply: “In the Kāṇva recension, in Yājñavalkya’s answer to Artabhāga’s question, it is clearly seen that the life-breaths of the soul enlightened with transcendental knowledge do not leave the material body.”

To this objection I reply: This passage describes a special case, where the enlightened soul is very distressed in separation from the Supreme Lord. The impersonalists claim that this passage describes a person who thinks he is one with the impersonal Brahman. They say that for him the life-breaths do not leave the material body.

To this I reply: This is fool’s idea. No words in the text support this interpretation. At any rate, the impersonalist idea has already been clearly refuted.

Sūtra 4.2.14

smaryate ca

smaryate – in the Smṛti-śāstras; ca – also.

In the Smṛti-śāstras also.

In the Yājñavalkya-smṛti [3.167] it is said:

ūrdhvam ekaḥ sthitas teṣāṁ
yo bhittvā sūrya-mañḍalam
brahma-lokaṁ atikramya
tenā yāti parāṁ gatim

“Among all of them, one great soul travels upward. He breaks through the circle of the sun. He passes beyond the planet of Brahma. He enters the supreme destination.”

In the Śruti-śāstra also it is said that the enlightened soul passes through the nādi at the top of the head and thus leaves the material body. In this way it is proved that the enlightened soul certainly does leave his material body.

Adhikaraṇa 6: The Senses Enter the Supreme

Viśaya [thesis or statement]: That the individual spirit soul, accompanied by the life-breath and the senses, enters the element fire and the other subtle elements at the time of death has already been proved, and the fallacious idea that the soul enlightened with transcendental knowledge does not also depart from his body in this same way has been dispelled. Now the following will be considered.
Saṁśaya [doubt]: Do the enlightened soul’s voice and other working senses, life-breath, and elements of the gross and subtle material bodies enter into the material features that are their direct causes, or do they enter into the Supreme Personality of Godhead?

Pūrvapakṣa [the opponent speaks]: They enter into their direct causes. This is described in Brhad-āranyaka Upaniṣad 3.2.13.

Siddhānta [conclusion]: In the following words the author of the sūtras gives His conclusion.

Sūtra 4.2.15

tāṇi pare tathā hy āha

*tāṇi – they; pare – in the Supreme; tathā – so; hi – because; āha – says.*

They [enter] into the Supreme, for thus it says.

In the Chāndogya Upaniṣad [6.8.6] it is said:

*tejāḥ parasyām*

“Fire enters the Supreme.”

In this way it is established that the *tejāḥ*, which here includes the voice and other senses, the life-breath, and the bodily elements, enters the Supreme Personality of Godhead. This is so because the Supreme is the cause and the resting-place of all. Why is that? The sūtra explains, *tathā hy āha*, which means “Because the Śruti-śāstra affirms that it is so.” This is confirmed in the Chāndogya Upaniṣad [6.8.6]:

*tejāḥ parasyām devatāyām*

“Fire enters the Supreme Personality of Godhead.”

Brhad-āranyaka Upaniṣad 3.2.3 should be interpreted metaphorically. This has already been explained in Sūtra 3.1.4.

Adhikaraṇa 7: The Nature of the Senses’ Entrance into the Supreme

Viśaya [thesis or statement]: Now another consideration will be examined.

Saṁśaya [doubt]: When the enlightened soul’s life-breath, voice, mind, and other senses enter the Supreme Personality of Godhead do they merely enter or do they become one with Supreme Personality of Godhead, as is explained in Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad [3.2.8]?

Pūrvapakṣa [the opponent speaks]: Because of the previous statements and because there is no specific statement otherwise, it should be held that they merely enter.

Siddhānta [conclusion]: In the following words the author of the sūtras gives His conclusion.

Sūtra 4.2.16

*avibhāga vacanāt*

*avibhāgaḥ – not divided; vacanāt – because of the statement.*

There is no division, for that is said.
The life-breath and other features of the material body merge into and become one with the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the master of inconceivable potencies. Why is that? The sūtra explains, vacanāt: “For that is said.” In the Praśna Upaniṣad [6.5] it is said:

\[
\text{evam evāsy a paridraṣṭur imāh śoḍaśa-kalāḥ}
\]
\[
\text{puruṣāyaṇāḥ puruṣaṁ prāpyāṁ taṁ gacchanti}
\]

“As rivers merge into the ocean, so do the sixteen elements of the material body merge into the Supreme Personality of Godhead.”

After thus explaining that the life-breath and the other elements of the material body merge into the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the Upaniṣad continues:

\[
\text{bhidyete cāśāṁ nāma-rūpe puruṣa ity evaṁ procyate sa eṣo 'mrto bhavati}
\]

“The elements of the body then lose their names and forms. They are said to become one with the Supreme. When this happens to the elements of his material body, the individual spirit soul becomes immortal.”

Thus the elements of the material body lose their names and forms. This is the meaning: When he leaves the gross material body, the soul enlightened with transcendental knowledge is followed by the now greatly weakened subtle material body. When the soul finally leaves the egg of the material universe behind, the subtle body merges into the eighth covering of the universal shell. Now completely pure and free from any touch of matter, the soul attains a spiritual body and then gains the association of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

**Adhikaraṇa 8: The Hundred-and-first Nādi**

Viṣaya [thesis or statement]: Now will begin a discussion to show one specific aspect of the enlightened soul’s departure from the material body. In Chāndogya Upaniṣad [8.6.6] as well as in Kaṭha Upaniṣad [7.6] it is said that the unenlightened souls depart from the material body by the path of the hundred nāḍīs and the enlightened soul departs by another nāḍī.

Saṁśaya [doubt]: Is this description correct or is it not?

Pūrvapakṣa [the opponent speaks]: Because the nāḍīs are both very numerous and very fine, it is not possible for the spirit soul to distinguish them one from another. Therefore this description is not correct. The scriptures explain:

\[
\text{tayordhvam āyann amṛtatvam eti}
\]

“Going upwards, he attains immortality.”

Therefore going upwards is the important factor, and it is not important which nāḍī the soul enters at the moment of leaving the material body.

Siddhānta [conclusion]: In the following words the author of the sūtras gives His conclusion.

**Sūtra 4.2.17**

\[
tad-oko-’gra-jvalanam tat-prakāśita-dvāro vidyā-sāmarthyāt tac-cheṣa-gaty-anumṛti-yogāc ca hārdānugrhitam satādhikaiḥ
\]

\[
tat – of him; okah – the home; agr – the point; jvalanam – illumination; tat – by Him; prakāśita – revealed; dvārah – the door; vidyā – of transcendental knowledge; sāmarthyāt – by
the power; tat – that; šeṣa – remainder; gati – path; anusmṛti – memory; yogāt – by the touch; ca – and; hārda – He who resides in the heart; anugṛhiṭaḥ – being the object of mercy; śatādhikayā – by the hundred-and-first.

Then the top of his home is illumined and the door is revealed by Him. By the power of transcendental knowledge, by the memory of the path it brings, he attains the mercy of He who resides in the heart. By the hundred-and-first.

The enlightened soul departs by the path of the hundred-and-first nāḍī, which is called Suṣumnā. It is not that the enlightened soul cannot discern where is this nāḍī. Because of the two causes that begin with the power of transcendental knowledge, the soul attains the mercy of He who resides in the heart. This is possible by the power of transcendental knowledge. The effect of transcendental knowledge is that it enables the soul to remember the correct path to take in departing from the body. This soul also obtains the mercy of Lord Hari, who resides in a palace in the heart [hārda]. That is the meaning here.

When, accompanied by the voice and the other senses and elements of the material body, the enlightened soul is about to depart, the top portion [agra] of the heart, which is his home [okaḥ], becomes illuminated [jvalanam]. The door [dvāraḥ] there is not illuminated by the individual spirit soul. It is Lord Hari, who resides in the heart [hārda] who illuminates and reveals [prakāśita] that door. In this way the soul becomes aware of the entrance to the hundred-and-first nāḍī. In this way the enlightened soul departs.

Adhikāraṇa 9: The Path of the Sun’s Rays

Viṣaya [thesis or statement]: In the Chāndogya Upaniṣad [8.6.5] it is said:

atha yatraitasmāt śarīrād utkramatī etair eva raśmīhir ārdhvam ākramate. sa om iti vā hodvā mīyate sa yāvat kṣipyen manas tāvad ādityaṁ gacchaty etad vai khalu loka-dvāraṁ viduśāṁ prapadanaṁ nirodho ‘viduśāṁ tad eṣa ślokaḥ. šataṁ caika ca...

“After he departs from the body, the soul travels on the sun’s rays. Casting off the material mind, and meditating on the sacred syllable oṁ, the soul travels to the sun, which is the doorway to the worlds. They who are enlightened with transcendental knowledge may enter that doorway, but they who are not enlightened are stopped from entering. The following verse describes this: There are a hundred and one nāḍīs. . . .”

This means that after he passes through the nāḍī on the top of the head, the enlightened soul travels on the path of the sun’s rays.

Saṁśaya [doubt]: Must the soul depart from the body during the daytime, or may he also depart during the night and still attain liberation?

Pūrvapakṣa [the opponent speaks]: Because during the night the rays of the sun do not shine, the enlightened soul must depart from the material body only during the daytime.

Siddhānta [conclusion]: In the following words the author of the sūtras gives His conclusion.

Sūtra 4.2.18

raśmy-anusārī
raśmi – rays; anusārī – following.

He follows the rays.
Whenever he dies, the enlightened soul is able to follow the rays of the sun. This is so because the Śruti-śāstra gives no specific instruction in this regard.

Sūtra 4.2.19

niśi neti cen na sambandhasya yāvad deha-bhāvitvād darśayati ca

niśi – during the night; na – not; iti – thus; cet – if; na – not; sambandhasya – of the relationship; yāvad – as long as; deha-bhāvitvāt – because of the existence of the body; darśayati – reveals; ca – also.

If someone says that it is not during the night, then I reply: No. Because the relationship exists as long as the body is present. It also reveals it.

Here someone may object: “Is it not so that because at night the rays of the sun are not present, the soul departing from his body cannot follow them at that time?”

If [cet] this is said, then the sūtra replies, na: “No.” Why is that? The sūtra explains, sambandhasya: “Because of the relationship.” This means that as long as the material body is present there is a relationship with the sun’s rays. Therefore the soul may depart at any time of the day or night and still travel by the path of the sun’s rays.

It is clearly seen that the body remains warm in both the hottest of days and the coldest of nights. If the body had not relationship with the sun this would not be possible. The scriptures also give further proof of the body’s unchanging relationship with the sun. In the Chandogya Upaniṣad [7.6.2] it is said:

amuṣmād ādityāt prayānte tathāsu nāḍīsu sṛptā ābhyo nāḍībhyaḥ prayānte te amusmin āditye sṛptāḥ

“The path of the sun’s rays begins at the sun and ends at the nāḍīs. It also begins at the nāḍīs and ends at the sun.”

In another place in the Śruti-śāstra it is also said:

saṁsṛṣṭā vā ete raśmayaś ca nāḍyaś ca naiśām vibhāgo yāvad idam śarīram ataḥ etaiḥ paśyat etair utkramate etaiḥ pravartate

“The sun’s rays are connected to the nāḍīs, and that connection is never broken as long as the material body is alive. By the sun’s rays the soul sees. By them he departs. By them he performs actions.”

In this way it is proved that the soul enlightened with transcendental knowledge is always able to travel by the path of the sun’s rays.

Adhikaraṇa 10: The Soul’s Departure During the Different Seasons

Viṣaya [thesis or statement]: Now the following will be considered.

Saṃśaya [doubt]: If he dies during the six months when the sun travels in the south, does the enlightened soul still attain the benefit of his knowledge, or does he not?
Pūrva-pakṣa [the opponent speaks]: Both Śruti-śāstra and Smṛti-śāstra affirm that in order to attain the spiritual world one must die during the six months when the sun travels in the north. Also, it is seen that Bhīṣmadeva and other great souls refused to die until that auspicious time had arrived.

Siddhānta [conclusion]: In the following words the author of the sūtras gives His conclusion.

Sūtra 4.2.20

\textit{ataś cāyane ‘pi dakṣine}

\textit{atah – therefore; ca – also; āyane – in the passing; api – also; dakṣine – in the south.}

\textbf{Therefore it is also during the passing in the south.}

Because transcendental knowledge does not bring only a partial result, and also because it removes all obstacles in its path, the enlightened soul attains the fruit of his knowledge even if he dies during the six months when the sun passes in the south. The argument of our opponent is very foolish and slow-witted. As will be explained in the future, the word \textit{uttarāyāna} here does not mean “the six months when the sun passes in the south,” but rather it means “the ātivāhika-devatās, or the demigods that carry the soul to the higher worlds.”

Blessed by his father, Bhīṣmadeva had the power to choose the time of his death. It is either to demonstrate that power, or to show the example of a saintly person that he acted in that way. Therefore there is no disadvantage in dying during the six months when the sun passes in the south.

Here someone may object: “The Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself affirms in Bhagavad-gītā [8.23-26]:

\begin{verbatim}
yatra kāle tv anāvṛttimāvṛttim caiva yoginah
prayātā yānti tam kālaṁ
vakṣyāmi bharataraśabha...
...
šukla-kṛṣne gatiḥ hy ete
jagataḥ śāsvate mate
ekayā yāty anāvṛttim
anyayāvartate punah
\end{verbatim}

“O best of the Bhāratas, I shall now explain to you the different times at which, passing away from this world, the yogī does or does not come back. Those who know the Supreme Brahman attain the Supreme by passing away from the world during the influence of The fiery god, in the light, at an auspicious moment of the day, during the fortnight of the waxing moon, or during the six months when the sun travels in the north. The mystic who passes away from this world during the smoke, the night, the fortnight of the waning moon, or the six months when the sun passes to the south reaches the moon planet but again comes back. According to Vedic opinion, there are two ways of passing from this world, one in light and one is darkness. When one passes in light, he does not come back. But when one passes in darkness, he returns.”

In this passage word “day” and other words denoting time are prominent, and therefore it is clearly shown that time is and important factor for the attainment of liberation. It is also shown that one who dies during the night or during the six months when the sun passes in the south does not attain liberation.”

The author of the sūtras speaks the following words to refute this objection.
Sūtra 4.2.21

*yogināḥ prati śmaryate smāṛte caite*

*yogināḥ* – the yogīs; *prati* – to; *śmaryate* – is remembered; *smāṛte* – the two that are remembered; *ca* – and; *ete* – they.

**It is remembered of the yogīs. Also, two are remembered.**

The yogīs, that is they who are devoted to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, do not take these descriptions of the passing of the moon, the light, and other points in time very seriously. They merely make a mental note of them [*śmaryate*]. The sūtra explains, *ete smāṛte*: “They are remembered.” The Supreme Lord explains in *Bhagavad-gītā* [8.27]:

naite srīḥ pārtha jānan
yogī muhyate kaścana

“Although the devotees know these two paths, O Arjuna, they are never bewildered.”

The conclusion is that a person situated in transcendental knowledge need not be concerned about the specific time of his death. The mention of specific times is not prominent in this passage from *Bhagavad-gītā* [8.23-26]. The passage begins with the mention of fire, which has nothing to do with time. In fact, the different factors mentioned in this passage are all ātivāhika-devatās [demigods that carry the soul from the body]. The author of the sūtras will explain this in *Sūtra* 4.3.2. It is also said:

divā ca śukla-pakṣaṁ ca
uttarāyanaṁ eva ca
mumūrṣatāṁ prasastāṁ
viparītam tu garhitam

“The best times for they who are about to die are the daytime, the bright fortnight, and the six months when the sun travels in the north. The other times are not good.”

This verse describes the condition of the souls not enlightened with transcendental knowledge. They who are enlightened with transcendental knowledge always attain Lord Hari. The time when they leave their material bodies is not relevant.
Śrī Vedānta-sūtra

Adhyāya 4: The Results of Transcendental Knowledge

Pāda 3: The Nature of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and the Path that leads to Him

yah sva-prāpti-pathaṁ devaḥ
sevanābhāsato ‘diśat
prāpyaṁ ca sva-padaṁ preyāṁ
mamāsau śyāmasundaraḥ

“I love handsome and dark Lord Kṛṣṇa, who shows, even to those who have only the dim reflection of devotional service, the path that leads to Him.”

In this Pāda will be described the nature of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and the path that leads to the realm of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Adhikaraṇa 1: Many Paths or One?

Vīṣaya [thesis or statement]: In the Chāndogya Upaniṣad [4.15.5-6] it is said:

atha yad u caivāṃ śavyaṁ kurvanti yadi ca nārciṣam evābhisambhavaty arciso ‘har aha āpūryamānam āpūryamāna- paksād yan sad-udaḍīeti māsān tān samebyāh samvatsaraṁ samvatsarād ādityam ādityāc candramasaṁ candramaso vidyutaṁ tat puruṣo ‘mānaṁ. sa etān brahma gamayaty eṣa deva-patha brahma-patha etena pratipadyamāna imāṁ mānaṁ āvartaṁ nāvartante.

“Whether his final rites are performed or not, the yogī goes to the light. From the light he goes to the day. From the day he goes to bright fortnight. From the bright fortnight he goes to the six months when the sun travels in the north. From the six months when the sun travels in the north he goes to year. From the year he goes to the sun. From the sun he goes to the moon. From the moon he goes to lightning. From there a divine person leads him to Brahman. This is the path to the Lord, the path to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. They who travel this path do not return to the world of human beings.”

In this passage light is the first stage on this path. However, in the Kauṭīkā Upaniṣad [1.3] it is said:

sa etān deva-yānāṁ panthānam āpadyāgni lokam āgacchati sa vāyu lokāṁ sa varuṇalokāṁ sa indralokāṁ sa prajāpatilokāṁ sa brahmalokam

“He travels on the path of the heavenly planets. He goes to Agniloka. He goes to Vāyu-loka. He goes to Varuṇā-loka. He goes to Indraloka. He goes to Prajāpatiloka. He goes to Brahmaloka.”

Here Agniloka is the first stage. In the Brhad-āranyaka Upaniṣad [5.10] it is said:

yadā ha vai puruṣo ‘smāt lokāt praiti sa vāyuṁ āgacchati tasmāi sa tatra vijihīte yathā rathacakraṣya khaṁ tena ūrdhaṁ ākramate sa ādityam āgacchati
“Leaving this world, the soul goes to Vāyuloka. There he passes through the opening of a chariot-wheel. Then the soul ascends to the sun.”

Here Vāyuloka is the first stage on the path. In the Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad [2.11] it is said:

\[ \text{sūrya-dvārena virajāḥprayānti} \]

“Passing through the doorway of the sun, the soul is cleansed of all impurities.”

Here the sun is the first stage on the path. In other scriptures other accounts are also seen.

Saṁśaya [doubt]: Is only one path to the world of the Supreme described here, or are many different paths, beginning with the path that begins with light, described here in these passages of the Upaniṣads?

Pūrvapakṣa [the opponent speaks]: Because these paths are all different there must be many different paths.

Siddhānta [conclusion]: In the following words the author of the sūtras gives His conclusion.

\[ \text{Sūtra 4.3.1} \]

\[ \text{arcir-ādinā tat prathiteḥ} \]

\[ \text{arcir} – \text{light; ādinā – beginning with; tat – that; prathiteḥ – because of being well known.} \]

It begins with light, for that is well known.

The enlightened souls travels to the world of the Supreme Personality of Godhead on a path that begins with light. Why is that? The sūtra explains, tat prathiteḥ: “For that is well known.” In the Chāndogya Upaniṣad [5.10.1] it is said:

\[ \text{tad ya ittham vidur ye ceme 'ranye śraddhāṁ tapa ity upāsate te arcīsam} \]

“This they know: Those who perform austerities and worship the Lord with faith travel on the path that begins with light.”

This passage is taken from the chapter describing the knowledge of the five fires [pañcāgni-vidyā]. Therefore the path that begins with light is traveled even by they who study the fire and other vidyās. In the Brahma-tarka it is said:

\[ \text{dvāv eva mārgau prathitāv} \]

\[ \text{arcir-ādir vipaścitām} \]

\[ \text{dhūmādiḥ karināṁ caiva} \]

\[ \text{sarva-veda-vinirṇayāt} \]

“Two paths are famous. The path beginning with light is traveled by they who are enlightened with transcendental knowledge, and the path beginning with smoke is traveled by they who perform Vedic rituals. That is the conclusion of all the Vedas.”

This being so, it is understood that the scriptures describe a single path for the enlightened souls, and therefore the differences in the descriptions should be reconciled in the same was they were in the case of the attributes of the Lord. This is so because the knowledge to be described here is one, even though the scriptural texts seem to give different explanations. The conclusion, then, is that the path begins with light. Any other interpretation breaks the real meaning of the Vedic texts.
Adhikāraṇa 2: Vāyułoka

Viṣaya [thesis or statement]: Now is begun a new discussion to show that Vāyułoka and other places should be added to the sequence that begins with light. In the previously quoted passage from Kauśītabhāṣya Upaniṣad [1.3] it was said:

sa etaṁ deva-yānaṁ panthāṇam āpadyāgni-lokaṁ āgacchati sa vāyu-lokaṁ

“He travels on the path of the heavenly planets. First he goes to Agniloka and then to Vāyułoka.”

Saṁśaya [doubt]: Should Vāyułoka be added to the path that begins with light, or should it not?

Pūrva-pakṣa [the opponent speaks]: It should not, for the Śruti-śāstra describes these stages in a specific sequence, and because that sequence cannot be changed by someone’s whim.

Siddhānta [conclusion]: In the following words the author of the sūtras gives His conclusion.

Sūtra 4.3.2

vāyuḥ abdād aviśeṣa-viśeṣābhyaṁ

vāyuḥ – Vāyu; abdāt – from the year; aviśeṣa – because of not being specific; viśeṣābhyaṁ – and because of being specific.

Vāyu comes after the year, for it both specific and not specific.

In the path beginning with light, the stage of Vāyułoka should be placed after the year and before the sun. Why is that? The sūtra explains, aviśeṣāḥ: “For it is not specific.” This means that in the passage from Kauśītabhāṣya Upaniṣad [1.3] it was not specifically stated where Vāyułoka comes in the sequence. However, in the passage from Brhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad [5.10] there is a specific statement that Vāyułoka comes before the sun in this sequence. Also, in Brhad-Āraṇyaka Upaniṣad [6.2.15] it is said that after the months, and after Devaloka, the soul comes to the sun. The Devaloka here should be understood to be Vāyułoka. In the scriptures it is said:

yo ‘yam pavana eṣa eva devānāṁ grhaḥ

“Vāyułoka is the home of the devas.”

Therefore, because it is the home of the devas, Vāyułoka is also called Devaloka. Some say that there is a specific planet, Devaloka, which is part of this sequence. If this interpretation is accepted, then Devaloka should be placed after the year and before Vāyułoka. It should not be placed between the months and the year, for that stage in the sequence is well known. Therefore Devaloka and Vāyułoka should both be placed between the year and the sun.

Adhikāraṇa 3: Varuṇaloka

Viṣaya [thesis or statement]: In the Kauśītabhāṣya Upaniṣad [1.3] it is said:

sa varuṇalokāṁ sa indralokāṁ sa prajāpatilokāṁ

“He goes to Varuṇaloka. He goes to Indraloka. He goes to Prajāpatiloka.”

Saṁśaya [doubt]: Is Varuṇaloka one of the stages in the path beginning with light?
Pūrvapakṣa [the opponent speaks]: Because there is no place for it in this path, as there was a place for Vāyu, Varuṇaloka is not a stage in this path.

Siddhānta [conclusion]: In the following words the author of the sūtras gives His conclusion.

Sūtra 4.3.3

\[ \text{taḍito} \ 'dhe varuṇah sambandhāt } \\
\text{taḍītāḥ} – lightning; \ adhi – above; \ varuṇah – Varuṇa; \ sambandhāt – because of the relationship.

\text{Varuṇaloka comes after lightning, for that is their relationship.}

In the Chāndogya Upaniṣad [4.15.5] it is said:

\[ \text{candramaso vidyutam} \]

“He leaves the moon and goes to lightning.”

It is seen that the soul travels from lightning to Varuṇaloka. Why is that? The sūtra explains sambandhāt, which means “For that is the relationship between lighting and Varuṇaloka.” First lightning is manifested, and then comes rain. In the Śruti-śāstra it is said:

\[ \text{yathā hi viśālā vidyutas īvra-stanita-nirghośā jīmūtodare nṛtyanty athāpah prapatanti vidyotate stanayati varṣayati vai} \]

“When brilliant lightning and heavy thunder play among the clouds, water will fall. Lightning, thunder, and rain follow in that sequence.”

Because the rain has a close connection with Varuṇa, there is also a close relation between Varuṇaloka and the realm of lightning. After Varuṇaloka come Indraloka and Prajāpatiloka. Varuṇaloka should be placed there because there is not other place for it, and because it is reasonable to place it there. In this way the path to the spiritual world, a path that begins with the realm of light and proceeds to Prajāpatiloka, has either twelve or thirteen stages.

Adhikaraṇa 4: The Ativāhika-devatā Demigods

Viṣaya [thesis or statement]: Now a certain aspect of the path that begins with light will be considered.

Saṃśaya [doubt]: Are the light and other things landmarks on the path, or are they persons carrying the enlightened soul?

Pūrvapakṣa [the opponent speaks]: They are landmarks, for the text describes them in that way. They are like landmarks people may indicate, just as one may say, “Go to the river. Then there will be a hill, and after that will be a village.” Or they may be persons, for the words could be interpreted in that way.

Siddhānta [conclusion]: In the following words the author of the sūtras gives His conclusion.

Sūtra 4.3.4

\[ \text{ātivāhikās tal-lingāt} \]

\[ \text{ātivāhikāḥ} – Ativahika demigods; \ tat – of that; \ liṅgāt – because of the symptoms. \]

They are ātivāhika demigods, because of their characteristics.
The things beginning with light are demigods appointed by the Supreme Personality of Godhead to carry the soul. They are neither landmarks nor ordinary persons. Why is that? The sūtra explains, tālliṅgāt: “Because of their characteristics.” This means that they have the characteristics of they who carry others. In the Chāndogya Upaniṣad it is said:

\[ \text{tāt-puruṣo 'mānavaḥ sa etān brahma gamayati} \]

“He is a divine person. He brings them to the Supreme Personality of Godhead.”

The divine person described here brings the soul to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The light and other things are His assistants. That is the meaning. That they are neither landmarks nor ordinary persons is corroborated in the following sūtra.

Sūtra 4.3.5

\[ \text{ubhaya-vyāmohāt tat siddheḥ} \]

\[ \text{ubhaya} – both; \text{vyāmohāt} – because of bewilderment; \text{tat} – that; \text{siddheḥ} – because of proof. \]

**It is proved because the other two are untenable.**

Because they who die during the night do not have contact with the daytime and thus cannot have contact with the light and other things on the path, these things cannot be landmarks. Because ordinary persons are not very powerful and therefore cannot carry the soul in this way, the things beginning with light cannot be ordinary persons either. In this way the Śruti-śāstra shows that they can be neither landmarks nor ordinary persons. Therefore they must be ātivāhika demigods. That is the meaning.

**Adhikaraṇa 5: The Divine Person**

Saṁśaya [doubt]: Does the divine person sent by the Supreme Personality of Godhead descend to the plane of light, or does He descend only to the plane of lightning?

Pūrvaṅga [the opponent speaks]: Because the Supreme Personality of Godhead sends His messengers even to the earth to carry back Ajāmila and others, therefore this divine person must descend to the plane of light.

Siddhānta [conclusion]: In the following words the author of the sūtras gives His conclusion.

Sūtra 4.3.6

\[ \text{vādyutenaiva tatas tāt chruteḥ} \]

\[ \text{vādyutena} – by the person situated in light; \text{eva} – indeed; \text{tataḥ} – then; \text{tat} – that; \text{śruteḥ} – from the Śruti-śāstra. \]

**Then by the person in light. This is because of the Śruti-śāstra.**

When he comes to the plane of lightning, the enlightened soul is taken farther by a messenger sent by the Lord Himself. How is that known? The sūtra explains, tāt chruteḥ: “Because of the Śruti-śāstra.” In Chāndogya Upaniṣad [4.15.5] it is said:

\[ \text{candramaso vidyutaṁ tāt-puruṣo 'mānavaḥ sa etān brahma gamayati} \]
“From the moon he goes to the lightning. There a divine person takes him to the Supreme.”

In this way it is shown the Varuṇaloka and the others are the assistants of that divine person. The case of Ajāmila is extraordinary. It is not typical.

**Adhikarana 6: Bādari Muni’s Opinion**

*Viṣaya* [thesis or statement]: Having thus described the path by which the goal is reached, now the author describes the goal itself. The topic here is *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* 4.15.5, which says:

\[ sa etān gamayati \]

“There a divine person takes him to the Brahman.”

In the following section the opinion of Bādari Muni is given first.

*Samśaya* [doubt]: here it is said that a divine person brings the soul to *brahma*. Is this *brahma* the Supreme Personality of Godhead, or is it the demigod Brahmā, who has four faces?

*Pūrvapakṣa* [the opponent speaks]: The word Brahma here must refer to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, for in this passages explains that the soul attains immortality.

*Siddhānta* [conclusion]: In the following words Bādari Muni gives his opinion.

**Sūtra 4.3.7**

\[ kāryaṁ bādārir asya gaty-upapatteḥ \]

*kāryam* – the created being; *bādāriḥ* – Bādari Muni; *asya* – of him; *gati* – attainment; *upapatteḥ* – because of being possible.

**Bādari Muni says it is the created one, for that is the only possible goal.**

Bādari Muni thinks that the divine person takes the soul to the demigod Brahmā. Why is that? The *sūtra* explains, *asya gaty-upapatteḥ*: “For that is the only possible goal.” The demigod Brahmā is situated in a single place, and therefore the soul can go from one place to another in order to meet him. The Supreme Personality of Godhead, however, is all-pervading, always present everywhere. Therefore it is not possible for the soul to go from one place to another in order to meet Him. That is the meaning.

**Sūtra 4.3.8**

\[ viśeṣitaṁ ca \]

*viśeṣitavāt* – because of being specified; *ca* – also.

**Also because it is specifically stated.**

In *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* [7.14.1] it is said:

\[ prajāpateḥ sabhāṁ veśma prapadye \]

“He attains the home of Prajāpati.”

In this way it is specifically stated that he attains the demigod Brahmā.
Sūtra 4.3.9

śāmīpyāt tu tad vyapadeśaḥ
śāmīpyāt – because of nearness; tu – but; tat – that; vyapadeśaḥ – designation.

But that designation is because of nearness.

In the Brhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad [4.2.15] it is said:

sa etya brahma-lokān gamayati tu teṣa brahma-lokeṣu parāḥ parāvanto vasanti. teṣām iha na punar āvṛttaṁ āstī.

“Then he takes them to Brahmaloka. In Brahmaloka they stay for many ages. They do not return.”

Here the explanation [vyapadeśaḥ] is that they do not return. This means that because they are near [śāmīpyāt] to liberation, they will be liberated in the future. This means that the enlightened souls attain the world of the demigod Brahmā. They thus attain liberation along with the demigod Brahmā. In this way they do not return. When does this occur? The next sūtra explains.

Sūtra 4.3.10

kāryātyaye tad-adhyakṣeṇa sahātaḥ param abhidhānāt
kārya – of the creation; atyaye – at the end; tat – of that; adhyakṣeṇa – the ruler; saha – with; atah – then; param – the Supreme; abhidhānāt – because of the explanation.

When the creation is annihilated [the soul goes] with its ruler to the Supreme, because of the explanation.

When the material creation up to the world of four-faced Brahmā is destroyed, they go with the ruler of the material world, the four-faced Brahmā, from that created world to the Supreme Brahmān, who is different from the four-faced Brahmā. The reason for this is given by the sūtra, abhidhānāt: “Because of the explanation.” In the Taittirīya Upaniṣad [3.1.1] it is said:

brahma-vid āpnoti param

“He who knows Brahmān attains the Supreme.”

It is also said there:

so śnute sarvān kāmān saha brahmaṇā

“There, in the company of Brahmān, he enjoys the fulfillment of all his desires.”

The phrase “with Brahmā” here means, “with the demigod Brahmā, who has four faces.” That is the meaning.

Sūtra 4.3.11

smṛteś ca
smṛteḥ – from the Smṛti-śāstra; ca – also.

From the Smṛti-śāstra also.
In the Smṛti-śāstra it is said:

\[ \text{brahmaṇā saha te sarve} \]
\[ \text{samprāpte pratisañcare} \]
\[ \text{parasyānte kṛtātmānāḥ} \]
\[ \text{praviśanti paraṁ padam} \]

“When the material universe is destroyed, they whose hearts are devoted to the Supreme Lord, enter the supreme abode along with the demigod Brahmā.”

In this way the sanistha devotees travel on the path beginning with light, a path that brings them to the demigod Brahmā. That is the opinion of Bādari Muni. In the next sūtra Jaimini Muni gives his opinion.

**Adhikaraṇa 7: Jaimini Muni’s Opinion**

**Sūtra 4.3.12**

\[ \text{paraṁ jaiminir mukhyatvāt} \]

\[ \text{paraṁ – the Supreme; jaiminīḥ – Jaimini; mukhyatvāt – because of being primary.} \]

Jaimini thinks it is the Supreme, for that is the primary meaning.

Jaimini Muni thinks the soul is taken to the Supreme. Why is that? The sūtra explains, mukhyatvāt, which means “for that is the primary meaning of the word Brahman.”

Also, it is not correct to say that it is not possible to attain the Supreme, for He is all-pervading. When the devotees become free from all material designations then they can attain the Supreme Lord, which means then they can perceive His presence.

**Sūtra 4.3.13**

\[ \text{darśanāc ca} \]

\[ \text{darśanāt – because of the sight; ca – also.} \]

Also because it is seen.

In the Dahara-vidyā chapter of Chāndogya Upaniṣad [8.12.3] the goal is clearly described as the Supreme Brahman. This is so because the attributes of immortality are ascribed to this Brahman and also because the soul who travels to this Brahman manifests his own original spiritual form. All these explanations would not be appropriate if the Brahman here were the demigod Brahmā. Indeed, this chapter of the Upaniṣad is not about the demigod Brahmā. It is clearly about the Supreme Brahman, the Supreme Lord.

In the Kaṭha Upaniṣad, in the passage beginning śataṁ ca, the Supreme Brahman is clearly described as the goal of this path. In another place in the Śruti-śāstra, in the passage beginning with the word dharmāt, the goal also must be the Supreme Brahman, for he is described there as immortal. It is also said:
Sūtra 4.3.14

na ca kārye pratipatty-abhisandhiḥ

na – not; ca – and; kārye – in the created; pratipatti – knowledge; abhisandhiḥ – desire.

The desire is not to know the created.

Here the word pratipatti means knowledge, and the word abhisandhi means desire. The soul enlightened with transcendental knowledge does not desire to learn the truth about the demigod Brahmā, for the attainment of that knowledge is not the highest goal of life. However, he does desire to attain knowledge of the Supreme Brahmā, for that is the highest goal of life. One attains the goal he strives for.

This is explained in Chandogya Upaniṣad [3.14]. Therefore the conclusion is that the divine person leads the devotees to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. That is the opinion of Jaimini Muni.

Adhikaraṇa 8: Vyāsadeva’s Opinion

Now the author of the sūtras gives his opinion. He says:

Sūtra 4.3.15

apratikālambanāṁ nayatīti bādarāyaṇa ubhayathā ca doṣāt tat-kratuḥ ca

a – not; pratīka – form; ālambanāṁ – resting; nayati – leads; iti – thus; bādarāyaṇaḥ – Vyāsadeva; ubhayathā – both; ca – and; doṣāt – because of fault; tat-kratuḥ – by the maxim beginning with the words tat-kratuḥ; ca – also.

He leads they who take shelter of the Lord as He who has no material form. That is Vyāsadeva’s opinion. Because both have faults and also because of the maxim beginning with the words tat-kratuḥ.

The divine person leads to the Supreme the sanīṣṭhas and all other devotees who do not think that the Supreme is material. These devotees are different from they who worship the Lord as the names and forms of this world. That is the opinion of Vyāsadeva. He does not accept the view that the divine person leads the worshipers of the demigod Brahmā, nor does he accept the view that the divine person leads all the worshipers of the Supreme. Why not? The sūtra explains, ubhayathā ca doṣāt, which means “because both views contradict the statements of scripture.”

The first view contradicts the following words of Chandogya Upaniṣad [8.12.3]:

param jyotir upapadya

“He meets the effulgent Supreme Person.”

The second view contradicts the description in Chandogya Upaniṣad [5.10] of the goal attained by they who have knowledge of pañcāgni-vidyā and who travel on the path beginning with light. Another reason is given in the maxim of Chandogya Upaniṣad [3.14.1] that declares a person attains a destination appropriate to the nature of his faith. They who identify the Supreme with the words and other things in the material world cannot travel by the path beginning with light, for this would contradict the maxim of Chandogya Upaniṣad. However, in the scriptures it is affirmed that they who
worship the Lord in the words of the Vedic mantras attain their desires independently. In the
Chāndogya Upaniṣad [7.1.5] it is said:

sa yo nāma brahmaṇy upāste yāvan nāmno gataṁ tatrāsyā kāṁ-cāraḥ

“He who worships the Lord as the sounds of the Vedic mantras attains the goal of the mantras.
He attains his desire.”

However, they who are followers of pañcāgni-vidyā travel by the path of light until they reach
Satyaloka. They do this because they worship the Supersoul. When they attain perfect knowledge of
the Supreme, the are able to rise above the realm of Satyaloka. This is so, for the Śruti-śāstra declares
that they who travel on that path never return to the material world.

Adhikāraṇa 9: A Special Situation

Viṣaya [thesis or statement]: Now will be explained the truth that the Lord Himself takes certain exalted nirapekṣa devotees back to His own abode. In the Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad [1.22 and 24] it is said:

etad viṣṇoḥ paramaṁ padaṁ ye
nityodyuktāṁ samyajante na kāmāṁ
teṣāṁ asau gopa-rūpaḥ prayatnāt
prakāśayed ātma-padaṁ tadaiva

“To they who always diligently worship Lord Viṣṇu’s transcendental form, the Lord, in His original form as a cowherd boy, shows His lotus feet.”

omkārenāntaritaṁ ye japanti
govindasya pañca-padaṁ manuṁ tam
teṣāṁ asau darśayed ātma-rūpaṁ
tasmān mumukṣur abhyasen nityāṁ śantyai

“To they who chant the five-word mantra with oṁ and Govinda, the Lord reveals His own form. Therefore, to attain transcendental peace, they who desire liberation should regularly chant this mantra.”

Samāśaya [doubt]: Are the nirapekṣa devotees carried to the spiritual world by the ātivāhika demigods, or by the Supreme Lord Himself?

Pūrvapakṣa [the opponent speaks]: The scriptures affirm:

dvāv eva mārgau

“There are two paths.”

The conclusion is that they who are enlightened with transcendental knowledge travel by the path beginning with light. In that way they enter the spiritual world. That is affirmed by the Śruti-śāstra. That is how the Supreme Lord becomes the cause of their liberation.

Siddhānta [conclusion]: In the following words the author of the sūtras gives His conclusion.

Sūtra 4.3.16

viśeṣaṁ ca darśayati

viśeṣam – special; ca – also; darśayati – shows.
It reveals a special situation also.

The general situation is that the souls enlightened with transcendental knowledge are carried to the spiritual world by the ātivāhika demigods. However, those nirapekṣa devotees who are especially distressed in separation from the Lord are carried there by the Supreme Lord Himself, for the Lord becomes impatient and cannot tolerate any delay in bringing them back to Him. This is a special situation. The Śruti-śāstra reveals the truth of this situation in Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad [1.22 and 24]. The Supreme Lord Himself also explains [Bhagavad-gītā 7.6 and 7]:

\[
\begin{align*}
ye tu sarvāṇi karmāṇi \\
mayi sannyasya mat-parāḥ \\
ananyenaiva yogena \\
māṁ dhyāyanta upāsate \\
teśām aham samuddhartā \\
mṛtyu-saṁsāra-sāgarāt \\
bhavāmi na cirāt pārtha \\
mayy āveśita-cetasām
\end{align*}
\]

“But those who worship Me, giving up all their activities unto Me and being devoted to Me without deviation, engaged in devotional service and always meditating upon Me, having fixed their minds upon Me, O son of Prthū, for them I am the swift deliverer from the ocean of birth and death.”

The word ca [also] in this śūtra means that for the liberated souls there are two paths, one where the material body is cast off, and the other where contact with the material body is maintained. It is not possible to say that the nirapekṣa devotees follow the path that begins in light. Also, in the Varāha Purāṇa the Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself says:

\[
\begin{align*}
nayāmi paramaṁ sthānam \\
arcir-ādi-gatiṁ vinā \\
garuḍa-skandham āropya \\
yatheccham anivāritaḥ
\end{align*}
\]

“My devotees need not follow the path beginning in light. Riding on Garuḍa’s shoulders, I personally take them to My supreme abode.”

In this way the truth has been explained.
Śrī Vedānta-sūtra

Adhyāya 4: The Results of Transcendental Knowledge

Pāda 4: The Glories of the Liberated Souls

akaitave bhakti-save ‘nurajyan
svam eva yah sevakasāt karoti
tato ‘ti-modāṁ muditaḥ sa devaḥ
sadā cid-ānanda-tanur dhinotu

“May the Supreme Personality of Godhead, whose form is eternal and full of knowledge and bliss, and who, pleased with His devotees sincere devotion, gives Himself to them, fill us with transcendental happiness.”

In this Pāda will be described first the original forms of the liberated souls, and then their glory, opulence, bliss, and other features.

Adhikaraṇa 1: The Original Forms of the Liberated Souls

Vīṣaya [thesis or statement]: In the Chāndogya Upaniṣad [8.12.3] the demigod Brahmā explains:

evam evaiṣa samprasādo ‘smāt śarīrāt samutthāya paraṁ jyotir
upasampadya svena rūpenābhinispadyate sa uttamaḥ puruṣaḥ

“By the Supreme Lord’s mercy, the enlightened soul leaves his material body and enters the effulgent spiritual world. There he attains his own spiritual body. He becomes the most exalted of persons.”

Saṁśaya [doubt]: Does the liberated soul attain a body, like the bodies of the demigods, that is different from himself, or does the manifest his original identity, which is not different from himself?

Pūrvapakṣa [the opponent speaks]: He attains a body different from himself. This must be so because the word abhinispadayate [is attained] is employed here. Any other interpretation would make this word meaningless and would also make meaningless the scriptures’ statement that liberation is a benefit attained by the soul. If this form is only the original nature of the soul and it had existed all along, then attaining it would not be a benefit granted to the soul. Therefore this form is newly attained by the soul and is different from the soul’s original nature.

Siddhānta [conclusion]: In the following words the author of the sūtras gives His conclusion.

Sūtra 4.4.1

sampadyāvirbhāvaḥ svena-śabdāt

sampadya – of he who has attained; āvirbhāvaḥ – manifestation; svena – svena; śabdāt – by the word.

Because of the word svena it is the manifestation of he who has gone.
The individual spirit soul who, by means of devotional service accompanied with knowledge and renunciation, attains the effulgent Supreme, becomes free from the bondage of karma and attains a body endowed with eight virtues. This body is said to be the soul’s original form. Why is that? The sūtra explains, svena-śabdāt: “Because of the word svena.” The word svena here means “in his own original form.” For this reason it cannot be said that this passage means “The soul arrives there and then accepts that form, which is an external imposition.” In that way it is proved that the form here is the original form of the soul. This is not contradicted by the use of the word nispadyate, for that word is also used to mean “is manifested.” An example of that usage is seen in the following words of the Śruti-śāstra:

\[ idam ekāṁ su-nispannam \]

“He is manifested.”

Also, it is not that the manifestation of the soul’s original form cannot be a goal of human endeavor, because it already exists. This is so because even though the soul’s original form exists, it is not openly manifested. Therefore it is not useless to say that the soul may endeavor to openly manifest the original form of the soul. Therefore the manifestation of that form can be an object of human endeavor.

Here someone may say: “When the spirit soul is manifested in its original form and it attains the effulgent Supreme, as described in the words param ājyotir upasampadya, the the liberated state thus attained is characterized mainly by the cessation of all material sufferings.”

If this is said, then I reply: No. It is not so. The Śruti-śāstra explains that in the liberated state the soul is filled with intense spiritual bliss. This is described in Taṇṭirīya Upaniṣad [2.7]:

\[ rasaṁ hy evāyaṁ labdhvānandī-ḥavati \]

“When one understands the Personality of Godhead, the reservoir of pleasure, Kṛṣṇa, he actually becomes transcendentally blissful.”

Here someone may object: “How do you know that approaching the effulgent Supreme Lord is true liberation?”

If this is said, the author of the sūtras gives the following reply.

**Sūtra 4.4.2**

\[ muktaḥ pratijñānāt \]

\[ muktaḥ – liberated; pratijñānāt – because of the declaration. \]

**He is liberated because of the statement.**

The liberated soul manifests his original form. Why is that? The sūtra explains, pratijñānāt: “Because of the statement.” The original condition of the soul is described in Chāndogya Upaniṣad [8.7.1]. After that description, the following promise is given [8.9.3]:

\[ etāṁ tv eva te bhūyo 'nvāyākhyāsyāmi \]

“Again I will explain it to you.”

The the demigod Brahmā proceeded to explain that the liberated soul is free from wakefulness, dreaming, and dreamless sleep, the three conditions of material consciousness and also free from the material body, which is created by the karmic reactions of pleasant and unpleasant deeds. The demigod Brahmā described this in order to fulfill the promise he made in 8.9.3. Because this passage explains
that the soul becomes liberated when he is free from the external material body created by karmic reactions, it should be understood that in the liberated state the soul is manifested in its original form. In this way it is proved that Chāṇḍogya Upaniṣad [8.12.3] explains that in the liberated state the soul manifests its original form. Now another point will be considered.

Samśaya [doubt]: Does the word jyotiḥ in Chāṇḍogya Upaniṣad [8.12.3] refer to the sun-globe or to the Supreme Personality of Godhead?

Pūrvapakṣa [the opponent speaks]: It refers to the sun-globe. This must be so for the Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad declares that after passing through the realm of the sun one attains liberation. The sun-globe is also described in that way in the Chāṇḍogya Upaniṣad’s description of the path beginning with light.

Siddhānta [conclusion]: In the following words the author of the sūtras gives His conclusion.

Sūtra 4.4.3

ātmā prakaraṇāt

ātmā – the Supreme Personality of Godhead; prakaraṇāt – because of the context.

It is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, because of the context.

The word jyotiḥ here refers to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. It does not refer to the sun-globe. Why is that? The sūtra explains, prakaraṇāt: “Because of the context.” Although the word jyotiḥ can refer to either, because of the context it refers to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. It is like the word devaḥ, which in the sentence devo jānāti me manah: “Your Lordship knows my heart,” means the Supreme Lord.

The word ātmā in this sūtra means “the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is all-powerful and full of knowledge and bliss.” The word ātmā is derived from the verbal root at. In this way ātmā means “He who is splendidly manifest,” “He who is attained by the liberated souls,” and “He who is all-pervading.” It also means Upaniṣad, and it has many other meanings also. Further, the word ātmā also shows that the Supreme is a person. This is also seen by the use of the phrase uttamaḥ puruṣāḥ in the Upaniṣads and Bhagavad-gītā. In this way it is seen that the paraṁ jyotiḥ in Chāṇḍogya Upaniṣad [8.12.3] refers to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Hari.

Adhikaraṇa 2: The Individual Soul Meets the Supreme Personality of Godhead

Viṣaya [thesis or statement]: Now another topic will be considered.

Samśaya [doubt]: When the liberated soul attains the effulgent Supreme in the spiritual world, is the liberation sālokya [residing on the same planet] or sāyujya [meeting with the Lord]?

Pūrvapakṣa [the opponent speaks]: As a person entering a king’s capitol resides in the same city as the king but does not attain a private audience with the king, so the liberated soul resides on the same planet with the Lord. Therefore the soul attains sālokya liberation.

Siddhānta [conclusion]: In the following words the author of the sūtras gives His conclusion.

Sūtra 4.4.4

avibhāgena dṛṣṭatvāt
The liberated soul is not separated from the Lord. In this way the soul attains sāyujya liberation. Why is that? The sūtra explains, drṣṭatvāt: “For that is seen.” This means, “For this situation is seen in the Śruti-śāstra.” For example, in Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad [3.2.8] it is said:

\[
yathā nadyah syandamānāḥ samudre
\]
\[
astāṁ gacchanti nāma-rūpe vihāya
\]
\[
yathā vidvān nāma-rūpād vimuktāḥ
\]
\[
parāt param puruṣam upaiti divyam
\]

“As flowing rivers abandon their names and forms and meet with the sea, so the enlightened soul, free of what had been his name and form, meets with the effulgent Supreme Person.”

That the word sāyujya means “meeting” is seen in the following passage of the Mahā-Nārāyaṇa Upaniṣad [25.1]:

\[
yā evaṁ vīdvān udag-ayane pramāyaṁ devāṁ eva mahimānāṁ gatvādityasya sāyujyaiṁ gacchati
\]

“The soul that dies during the six months when the sun travels in the north attains the glory of the gods. He approaches the sun and attains sāyujya with it.”

Sālokya and the other kinds of liberation are different varieties of sāyujya. It is not that when they feel the sentiment of separation from the Lord the liberated devotees are not also, at that same moment, meeting with the Lord. This is so because the Lord is always manifested in their thoughts and continues to touch them with His glories.

The example of the rivers entering the ocean given above should not be taken to mean that the liberated souls become identical with the Lord. When water from one place enters water of another place, the two waters do not actually merge and become identical. They remain separate. This is seen in the fact the the volume of water in the ocean increases as the rivers flow into it.

**Adhikaraṇa 3: The Qualities of the Liberated Soul**

**Viṣaya** [thesis or statement]: Now the author will describe the pleasures experienced by the liberated soul. In order to describe these pleasures the author will describe the liberated soul’s spiritual form and its host of advantages, which begin with the blessing at all its desires are at once fulfilled. First the liberated soul’s advantages and virtues will be described.

**Saṃśaya** [doubt]: When he meets the effulgent Supreme Lord, does the individual spirit soul manifest a form glorious with many virtues and advantages, or does the soul manifest a form of spiritual consciousness, or does the soul manifest a form with both virtues and consciousness, for these two can certainly exist together in a single form?

**Pūrvapakṣa** [the opponent speaks]: Here Jaimini Muni gives his opinion.

**Sūtra 4.4.5**

brāhmaṇa jaiminir upanyāsādibhyāḥ
Jaimini Muni thinks it is with what is given by the Supreme Personality of Godhead, for there are references and other proofs.

The liberated soul is glorious with a host of virtues and advantages, beginning with sinlessness and the attainment of every desire, which are all gifts from the Supreme Personality of Godhead. How is this known? The sūtra explains, upanyāsādibhyaḥ: “For there are references and other proofs.” The reference here is to the demigod Brahmā’s description in Chāndogya Upaniṣad 8.7.1 of the individual spirit soul’s virtues. The word ādi [beginning with] refers to the Chāndogya Upaniṣad’s description of the liberated soul’s activities, such as his eating and enjoying pastimes. In this way the liberated soul is by nature filled with glories and virtues. That is the opinion of Jaimini Muni. In the Smṛti-śāstra this is also described in the passage beginning with the words yathā na hṛiyate jyotsnā.

Sūtra 4.4.6

citi tan-mātrena tad-ātmakatvād ity auḍulomiḥ
citi – in consciousness; tan-mātrena – of that only; tad-ātmakatvāt – because of the nature; iti – thus; auḍulomiḥ – Auḍulomi.

It is consciousness alone, for that is its nature. That is the opinion of Auḍulomi Muni.

When its material ignorance is burned away by transcendental knowledge and it attains its spiritual form and meets the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the individual spirit soul is manifested as pure consciousness alone. Why is that? The sūtra explains, tad-ātmakatvād: “For that is its nature.” In the Brhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad [4.5.13], in the second story of Maitreyī, it is said:

sa yathā saindhava-ghano ‘nantaro ‘bāhyah kṛtsno rasa-ghana evaṁ vā are ayam ātmānantaro ‘bāhyah kṛṣṇa-ghana prajñāna-ghana eva

“As salt has neither inside nor outside, but is a mass of taste and nothing else, so the soul also has neither inside nor outside, but is a mass of knowledge and nothing else.”

In this way it is concluded that the soul is consciousness alone and nothing else. The scriptural statements affirming that the soul is sinless and has other virtues are merely meant to teach that the soul has not material qualities, such as material happiness, qualities that are all temporary and subject to change. That is the opinion of Auḍulomi Muni.

Now the author of the sūtras gives His opinion.

Sūtra 4.4.7

evat api upanyāsāt pūrva-bhāvād avirodham bādarāyaṇaḥ
evat – thus; api – even; upanyāsāt – from the reference; pūrva – of the previous; bhāvāt – from the nature; avirodham – not contradicting; bādarāyaṇaḥ – Vyāsa.

Even though there are these references, it does not contradict what was before. That is the opinion of Vyāsadeva.
Even though it is true that the soul consists of pure consciousness, that truth does not contradict the soul’s possession of the eight virtues. That is the opinion of Vyāsadeva. Why is that? The sūtra explains, upanyāsāt pūrva-bhāvād avirodhaṁ: “Even though there are these references, it does not contradict what was explained before.” This means that Auḍulomi’s quote from scripture does not contradict Jaimini’s previous quotation of the words of the demigod Brahmā. The conclusion is that both scriptural statements are clear and without reservations, and therefore both are equally compelling evidence, and therefore both are equally true statements about the liberated soul.

Vyāsadeva certainly accepts the statement of Brhad-āranyaka Upaniṣad [4.5.13] that the soul is consciousness alone, consciousness untouched by material qualities. Indeed, this view does not at all contradict Jaimini’s opinion. The statement that the soul is pure consciousness is meant to show that it has not the slightest trace of matter in its nature. That statement is not at all opposed to the statement that the soul has eight transcendental virtues, just as the statement that a block of salt is taste only does not at all contradict the statement that the block of salt has hardness, a certain shape, and other qualities visible to the eyes and the other senses. In this way it is shown that the soul, which consists of transcendental knowledge certainly possesses the eight virtues, which begin with sinlessness.

**Adhikaraṇa 5: The Soul’s Desires Are Fulfilled**

**Viṣaya** [thesis or statement]: Now the author of the sūtras will describe the truth that all the desires of the liberated soul are at once fulfilled. In the Chāndogya Upaniṣad [8.12.3] it is said:

\[
\text{sa tatra paryeti jakṣan krīḍan ramamāṇaḥ strībhir vā yānair vā jñātibhir vā}
\]

“Laughing and enjoying pastimes, he is happy in the company of wives, relatives and chariots.”

**Saṁśaya** [doubt]: Does the liberated soul’s meeting with his relatives and the others happen because of an endeavor of his part or does it happen spontaneously simply by his desire?

**Pūrva-pakṣa** [the opponent speaks]: In the material world even kings and other powerful people, of whom it is said that their every desire is fulfilled, must still exert some effort to attain that fulfillment. In the same way the liberated souls attain their desires by willing accompanied with action.

**Siddhānta** [conclusion]: In the following words the author of the sūtras gives His conclusion.

**Sūtra 4.4.8**

\[
saṅkalpād eva tac chruteḥ
\]

saṅkalpāt – by desire; eva – indeed; tat – that; chruteḥ – because of the Śruti-śāstra.

Indeed it is by desire, because of the Śruti-śāstra.

The liberated souls attain what they wish simply by willing. How is that known? The sūtra explains, tac chruteḥ: “Because of the Śruti-śāstra.” In the Chāndogya Upaniṣad [8.2.1] it is said:

\[
sa yadi pīṭrloka-kāmo bhavati saṅkalpād evāsya pitaraḥ samuṭṭhanti. tena pīṭrlokena sampanno mahīyate.
\]

“If desires to go to Piṭrloka, simply by his will he finds the pitās standing before him. In this way he finds himself glorified by the residents of Piṭrloka.”

In this way the Śruti-śāstra affirms that he attains his wishes by merely willing that they be fulfilled. Any other view cannot be accepted here. In the previously quoted passage of Brhad-āranyaka
Upanisad [4.5.13], the statement was qualified by other evidence from the scriptures. In this passage, however, we see not other statements of scripture that might qualify or change the clear statement of these words. However, this kind of liberation, where the soul’s own happiness and glory and power are prominent, is not liked by they who are eager to taste the nectar of service to the Supreme Lord. They reject it and they speak many words criticizing it.

**Adhikaraṇa 6: The Supreme Lord is the Master of the Liberated Souls**

**Viṣaya [thesis or statement]:** Now the author the sūtras will show that the liberated soul, whose every desire is fulfilled, takes shelter of the Supreme Personality of Godhead alone.

**Samśaya [doubt]:** Is the liberated soul subject to the orders of anyone other than the Supreme Personality of Godhead, or is the soul not subject to the orders of anyone other than the Supreme Personality of Godhead?

**Pūrvapakṣa [the opponent speaks]:** As a person who enters a king’s palace must obey the orders of many people there, so the liberated soul who has entered the palace of the Supreme Personality of Godhead must also obey the orders of many others.

**Siddhānta [conclusion]:** In the following words the author of the sūtras gives His conclusion.

**Sūtra 4.4.9**

*ata eva cānanyādhipatiḥ*

*ataḥ eva – therefore; ca – also; ananya – without another; adhipatiḥ – master.*

Therefore there is no other master.

Because [ataḥ], by the grace of the Supreme Personality of Godhead all the liberated soul’s desires are at once fulfilled, the Supreme Personality of Godhead is the liberated soul’s only master [ananyādhipatiḥ]. There is no other master for him. Taking shelter of the Supreme Lord, the liberated soul shines with great splendor. If this were not so then there would be no difference between the liberated soul and the soul trapped in the world of repeated birth and death.

By worshiping the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the liberated soul attains the condition where his every desire is at once fulfilled. Feeling merciful to him, the Supreme Lord gives limitless transcendental bliss to the soul who thus takes shelter of Him. In this way the Lord becomes very pleased. That the Lord thus fills the liberated soul with bliss will be explained in Sūtra 4.4.20. It has already been demonstrated that the individual spirit soul is part and parcel of the Supreme Lord, and the Supreme Lord is the supreme controller and enjoyer.

Because the liberated soul is in a position where his every desire is at once fulfilled, his only master is the Supreme Lord. He has no other master. For this reason ordinary prescribed duties and prohibitions no longer apply to him. If they did apply to him he would no longer be in a position where his every desire is at once fulfilled. This view is held by some philosophers.

**Adhikaraṇa 7: The Spiritual Body**

**Viṣaya [thesis or statement]:** Now the author of the sūtras will show that the liberated soul has a spiritual body.
**Saṁśaya [doubt]:** Does the liberated soul who has attained the association of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, as described in *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* [8.12.3], have a spiritual body or does he not? Can he have any body he wishes, or can he not?

**Pūrvapakṣa [the opponent speaks]:** Here Bādari Muni gives his opinion.

**Sūtra 4.4.10**

\[abhāve bādarir āha hy evam\]

\[abhāve – in non-existence; bādarīḥ – Bādari Muni; āha – says; hi – because; evam – thus.\]

Bādari Muni says there is none, for thus it is said.

Bādari Muni thinks that the liberated soul has no body. The body and its paraphernalia are all created by past *karma*. Because he is free from all past *karma*, the liberated soul does not have a body. Why is that? The *sūtra* explains, *āha hy evam:* “Thus it is said.” The word *hi* here means “because.” In *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* [8.12.1] it is said:

\[na ha vai sa-śarīrasya sataḥ priyāpriyavor apahatir asti.\]

\[aśarīrāṁ vāva santaṁ priyāpriye na sprśataḥ\]

“He who has a body cannot become free of pleasure and pain. Only one who has no body is untouched by pleasure and pain.”

This means that as long as the body is present it is not possible to be free of sufferings. That is why the *Upaniṣad* explains:

\[asmāt śarīrāt samutthāya\]

“The soul then leaves the body.”

Also, in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* [7.1.35] it is said:

\[dehendriyāṁ-su-hūnāṁ vaikuṇṭha-pura-vāsinām\]

“The bodies of the inhabitants of Vaikuṇṭha are completely spiritual, having nothing to do with the material body, senses or life air.”

**Sūtra 4.4.11**

\[āha hy evam jaiminir vikalpāmananāt\]

\[āha – says; hi – because; evam – thus; jaiminiḥ – Jaimini Muni; vikalpa – opinion; āmananāt – by thought.\]

Jaimini Muni has that opinion, because it is said thus and because that view is accepted.

Jaimini Muni thinks the liberated soul has a body. Why is that? The *sūtra* explains, *vikalpāmananāt:* “Because that view is accepted.” In the *Bhūma-vidyā* passage of the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* [7.26.2] it is said that the liberated soul can manifest many different bodies simultaneously:

\[sa ekadhā bhavati dvidhā tridhā bhavati pañcadhā saptadhā navadhā caiva punaḥ caikādaśa smṛtaḥ. śataṁ ca daśa caikaś ca sahasrāni ca viṁśatiḥ.\]
“He becomes one. Then he becomes two. Then three. Then five. Then seven. Then nine. Then eleven. He becomes one hundred and ten. He becomes one thousand and twenty.”

Because the individual spirit soul is atomic in nature, it cannot expand itself to become many different bodies, so these bodies must be possessions of the atomic soul. Nor can it be said that this statement of the Upaniṣad is not true, for this is in a passage describing the process of liberation. The body described here must actually exist, and also it must not have been created by past karmic reactions. This will be explained later with a quote from the Smṛti-śāstra. In the next sūtra Vyāsadeva gives His opinion.

Sūtra 4.4.12

dvādaśāha-vad ubhaya-vidham bādarāyaṇo ‘taḥ
dvādaśa – twelve; āha – days; vat – like; ubhaya – both; vidham – kinds; bādarāyaṇah – Vyāsadeva; ataḥ – therefore.

Vyāsadeva says it is of both kinds, like the twelve days.

Lord Vyāsadeva thinks that because the liberated soul’s every desire is at once fulfilled both conditions must be true. This is so because statements describing both conditions are found in the scriptures. Therefore it should be accepted that the liberated soul may have a body, and again he may not have a body. This is like the twelve days. By the wish of the yajamāna, a twelve-day yajña becomes either a satra, which has many yajamānas, or an ahīna, which has a single yajamāna. There is no contradiction in this. In the same way the liberated soul may, by his own wish, either have a body or not have a body. That is the meaning. The truth is that they who by the power of transcendental knowledge have broken the bonds of material existence are in a situation where all their desires are at once fulfilled. Those amongst them who desire to have a body can at once have any body they wish. This is described in Chāndogya Upaniṣad [7.26.2]. They who do have no desire to have a body do not have a body. This is described in Chāndogya Upaniṣad [8.12.1]. They who desire always to employ a spiritual body in the service of the Supreme Lord eternally manifest such a body by their spiritual powers. That is how it should be understood. In the Brhad-āranyaka Upaniṣad [2.4.14] it is said:

yatra tv asya sarvatmaivābhūtvat kena kaṁ paśyet

“Everything there is spiritual. What is the nature of the seer? What is the nature of the seen?”

In the Mādhyaandina-śruti it is said:

sa vā eṣā brahma-niṣṭha idam śārīraṁ martyam atisrjya brahmābhisampadya brahmaṇā paśyati brahmaṇā śruṇoti brahmaṇaṁvedam sarvam anubhavati

“Devoted to the Supreme Lord, the individual soul leaves his mortal body and meets the Lord. By the Lord’s grace he sees. By the Lord’s grace he hears. By the Lord’s grace he perceives everything.”

In the Smṛti-śāstra it is said:

vasanti yatra puruṣāḥ sarve vaikuṇṭha-mūrtayaḥ

“Everyone there has a spiritual form like that of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.”
The spiritual desire of the soul is cultivated from the very beginning of his devotional activities. This is described in the *yathā kratuḥ* maxim, “As a man wills in this life, so he attains in the next,” and also in the following words of the *Smṛti-śāstra*:

\[ \text{gacchāmi viśṇu-pādāḥḥām viśṇu-drṣṭyānudarāḥ} \]

“I walk with Lord Viṣṇu’s feet. I see with Lord Viṣṇu’s eyes.”

In the *Smṛti-śāstra* it is again said:

\[ \text{muktasyaitad bhavisyati} \]

“This is the nature of the liberated soul.”

**Adhikaraṇa 8: The Bliss of the Liberated Souls**

*Viṣaya* [thesis or statement]: Now will be shown the truth that through his spiritual body the liberated soul enjoys spiritual pleasures. That he enjoys spiritual pleasures is affirmed by the following words of *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* [2.1.1]:

\[ \text{so ʻśnute sarvān kāmān} \]

“He enjoys all pleasures.”

Now the author of the *sūtras* begins His explanation that this is so in both situations [possessing or not possessing a body].

*Sāṁśaya* [doubt]: Is it possible for the liberated soul to enjoy pleasures, or is it not possible?

*Pūrvapakṣa* [the opponent speaks]: Because he has neither body nor senses, the liberated soul cannot enjoy any pleasures. If a *yogi* somehow has the power to enjoy pleasures, still he will not do so because, being filled with spiritual bliss, he has no thirst for them.

*Siddhānta* [conclusion]: In the following words the author of the *sūtras* gives His conclusion.

**Sūtra 4.4.13**

\[ \text{tany-abhāve sandhyā-vad upapatteḥ} \]

\[ \text{tānu – of a body; abhāve – in the absence; sandhyā – a dream; vāt – like; upapatteḥ – because of reasonableness.} \]

**In the absence of a body it is like a dream, for that is reasonable.**

Even in the absence of a body pleasure is still possible. The *sūtra* explains, “It is like a dream, for that is reasonable.” The word *sandhya* here means dream. As in a dream one can enjoy pleasures without a body, so the liberated soul can also enjoy pleasures without a body. Thus it is said. Of course, when a body is present the pleasure is much greater. The author of the *sūtras* explains this in the following words.

**Sūtra 4.4.14**

\[ \text{bhāve jāgrad-vat} \]

\[ \text{bhāve – in existence; jāgrat – waking; vāt – like.} \]

**In the existence it is like being awake.**
The word bhāve here means, “when there is a body.” When there is a body the pleasure is like that in the waking state. Our opponent claims that the liberated soul does not desire to enjoy the delicious tastes and other pleasures mercifully offered to him by the Supreme Lord. However, the truth is that the liberated soul, desiring to render devotional service, certainly does desire to enjoy the pleasures that the Lord in His kindness offers. He does this out of love for the Lord. In this way it should be understood.

**Adhikaraṇa 9: The Liberated Soul Is Full of Transcendental Knowledge**

**Viṣaya** [thesis or statement]: Now will be shown the truth that the liberated soul has all transcendental knowledge. In the Chāndogya Upaniṣad [7.26.2] it is said:

na paśyo mṛtyuṁ paśyati na rogaṁ nota-duḥkhitaṁ sarvaṁ hi paśyāḥ paśyati sarvam āpnoti sarvaśaḥ

“The liberated soul does not see death. He does not see disease. He does not see suffering. Still, he sees everything. He attains everything everywhere.”

In this way it is said that the liberated soul has knowledge of everything.

**Samśaya** [doubt]: Is this correct, or not?

**Pūrvapakṣa** [the opponent speaks]: In the Brhad-āranyaka Upaniṣad [4.3.21] it is said:

prājñenatmanā . . .

“Embraced by the all-knowing Supreme Personality of Godhead, the individual soul is oblivious to all that is within and all that is without.”

Therefore it is certainly not correct to say that the individual spirit soul is all-knowing.

**Siddhānta** [conclusion]: In the following words the author of the sūtras gives His conclusion.

**Sūtra 4.4.15**

pradīpa-vad āveśas tathā hi darśayati

pradīpa – a lamp; vat – like; āveśaḥ – entrance; tathā – so; hi – because; darśayati – reveals.

*Its entrance is like a lamp, furthermore it reveals.*

As with its rays of light a lamp enters many places, so with the expansion of knowledge the liberated soul enters many things to be known. Furthermore [tathā hi], the words of Śvetāsvatara Upaniṣad [4.18] give the following revelation [darśayati]:

prajñā ca tasmāt prasṛtā purāṇī

“By the Supreme Lord’s mercy the soul’s ancient knowledge is revived.”

This verse should be interpreted, “By the Supreme Lord’s mercy the soul’s ancient knowledge is revived.”

Here someone may object: “It is not correct to say that the liberated soul is all-knowing. Brhad-āranyaka Upaniṣad [4.3.21] explains that the liberated soul is oblivious to everything and thus does not know anything at all.”

If this is said, the author of the sūtras gives the following reply.
Sūtra 4.4.16

svāpyaya-sampattyor anyatarāpeksyām āviṣkṛtaṁ hi
svāpyaya – deep sleep; sampattyoh – of the moment of death; anyatara – either; apeksyām – in relation to; āviṣkṛtam – manifested; hi – because.

It refers either to dreamless sleep or to the death-swoon, for thus is it revealed.

These words of Brhad-āranyaka Upaniṣad [4.3.21] do not show that the liberated soul is oblivious and has no knowledge at all. Rather, these words refer either to dreamless sleep or to the death-swoon, [svāpyaya-sampattyor anyatarāpeksyām]. The word svāpyaya here means “dreamless sleep,” and the word sampatti here means “the moment of leaving the body.” In the Chāndogya Upaniṣad [6.8.1] sleep is defined in these words:

svam apiṁ bhavati tasmād enam svapīṭiḥ ācaksate

“When one indeed [api] enters [ita] himself [sva], then it is said that he sleeps [svapīṭi].”

In the Chāndogya Upaniṣad [6.8.6] the time of death is described in these words:

vāṁ manasi sampadyate

“At the time of death the voice enters the mind.”

In this way the Śruti-śāstra describes the state of consciousness during dreamless sleep and the moment of death. However, the Śruti-śāstra also explains that in the liberated state the soul is all-knowing. The condition of dreamless sleep is described in these words of the Chāndogya Upaniṣad [8.11.1]:

nāhaṁ khalv ayam evam sampraty ātmāṇi jānāty ayam aham asmīti no evemāṁ bhūtāṁ vināśam ivāpīto bhavati. nāham atra bhogyaṁ paśyāṁ.

“Sound asleep, he does not even know who he is. He cannot say: I am he. His knowledge of everything perishes. I do not see this as a good or pleasant state of being.”

On the other hand, the liberated soul is described in these words of the Chāndogya Upaniṣad [8.12.5]:

sa vā eṣa etena divyena cakṣuṣā manasy etān kāṁāṁ paśyan ramate ya ete brahma-loke

“Seeing with divine eyes the pleasures in the spiritual world, he rejoices in his heart.”

The death-swoon, however, is described in these words:

etebhyaḥ bhūtebhyaḥ samutthāya tāṁ evānuvinaśyatī

“Rising, at the moment of death, from the elements of the material body, the soul suddenly loses all consciousness.

Here the word vinaśyatī means “He cannot see anything.” In this way it is proved that the liberated soul is all-knowing.

Adhikaraṇa 10: The Liberated Soul has not the Power to Create the World

Viṣaya [thesis or statement]: In Chāndogya Upaniṣad [8.1.6 and 8.2.1] it is said:

atha ya iha ātmānam anuvidyā vrajanty etāṁ ca satyāṁ kāmāṁ teṣāṁ sarvesu lokeṣu kāma-cāro bhavati. sa yadi pitṛloka-kāmo bhavati.
“He who knows the truth of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and places his desires in eternal spiritual happinesses may go, when he leaves this body, to any world he wishes. If he desires to create a Pitrloka planet, then that planet is at once created.”

**Samśāya [doubt]:** Does the liberated soul have the power to create a material universe, or does he not?

**Pūrvapakṣa [the opponent speaks]:** Because he is equal to the Supreme Lord, and also because all his desires are at once fulfilled, the liberated soul must also have this power.

**Siddhānta [conclusion]:** In the following words the author of the sūtras gives His conclusion.

**Sūtra 4.4.17**

\[ jagad-vyāpāra-varjyaṃ prakaraṇād asannihitavāt \]

\[ jagat – of the material universe; vyāpāra – creation; varjyaṃ – except for; prakaraṇāt – because of the context; asannihitavāt – because of the absence of nearness. \]

**Except for creating the universe, because of the context and because he is not near to it.**

The creative power of the liberated soul is described in *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* [8.2.1]. However, the liberated soul has not the power to create a material universe. Only the Supreme Personality of Godhead has the power to create, maintain, and destroy the material universes. This is described in *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* [3.1.1]. How is this known? The sūtra explains, \textit{prakaraṇād asannihitavāt}: “Because of the context and because he is not near to it.” From the context it is seen that the Supreme Personality of Godhead is the topic discussed in this passage of *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* [3.1.1]. Neither by a great struggle nor by chanting \textit{mantras} can the individual spirit soul obtain this kind of power. This is corroborated by the explanation given in *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* [2.6.1]. Also, the liberated soul is not the subject of discussion in any passage near to \textit{asannihitavāt} these words of *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* [2.6.1]. If it were otherwise, and the liberated souls had the power to create the material universe, then the author of the sūtras would not have defined the the Supreme Personality of Godhead in these words [*Vedānta-sūtra* 1.1.2]:

\[ janmādy asya yataḥ \]

“That Brahman [the Supreme Spirit] is He from whom the creation, sustenance, and destruction of the manifested universe arises.”

Also, if the liberated souls had the power to create universes, there would be many creators and from that there would arise a great chaos and calamity. Therefore the liberated souls have not the power to create material universes.

Here someone may object: “In *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* 1.5.3] it is said:

\[ sarve ‘smai devā balim āvahanti \]

“All the demigods bring offerings to him.”

Also, in *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* [7.25.2] it is said:

\[ sa svarād bhavati tasya sarveṣu lokeṣu kāma-cāro bhavati \]

“He is independent. He can go to any world.”

In this way it is seen that because he is worshiped by all the demigods, and because he has all extraordinary powers, the liberated soul can certainly create material universes.”
If this is said, then the author of the śūtras gives the following reply.

Sūtra 4.4.18

pratyakṣopadeśān neti cēn nādhikārika-maṇḍalasyokteḥ

pratyakṣa – direct; upadeśāt – because of the teaching; na – not; iti – thus; cet – if; na – not; adhikārika – of great leaders; maṇḍalasya – of the circle; ukteḥ – from the statement.

Someone may say: “No. It is not so. Because there is a direct teaching,” If this is said, I reply: “No. What you say is not true. Because those texts describe great leaders.”

Here someone may say, “It is not correct to say that the liberated souls have no power to create material universes, for many passages of the Śruti-śāstra directly describe that power.” If this is said, then the author of the sūtra replies, “No. It is not so.” Why not? The sūtra explains, adhikārika-maṇḍalasyokteḥ: “Because those texts describe great leaders.” These texts explain how, by the mercy of the Supreme Lord, the liberated soul can travel to the planets of the great demigods, such as that of the four-faced Brahmā, and enjoy many pleasures there. In this way it is said that the great liberated souls, such as Nārada Muni and the four Kumāras can travel to the planets of the demigods, and when the do the demigods there honor them with great respect. These passages of the Upaniṣad mean in truth that by the Supreme Lord’s mercy the liberated souls can travel to many different worlds and feel pleasure by seeing the Lord’s glories and opulences there. These passages should not be wrongly interpreted to mean that the individual spirit soul has the power to create material universes.

Here someone may object: “If the liberated soul is thus an enjoyer of various material pleasures, then he is not different from a conditioned soul, for all material pleasures must come to an end.”

If this is said, then the author of the sūtras gives the following reply.

Sūtra 4.4.19

vikārāvartī ca tathā hi sthitim āha

vikāra – the changes of material existence; a – not; vartī – existing; ca – and; tathā – so; hi – because; sthitim – situation; āha – says.

Furthermore it is changeless, for it describes that condition.

The word vikāra here refers to the six kinds of transformation, beginning with birth, that are present in the material world. These transformations do not effect the liberated soul. Neither do these transformations affect the supremely pure Personality of Godhead, his transcendental abode, or anything else that has transcendental qualities like those of the Supreme Lord. Aware of what is the truth about all these worlds, the liberated soul may observe them but he does not really reside in them. The word hi in this sūtra means because. The true nature of the liberated soul is described [sthitim āha] in the following words of Kaṭha Upaniṣad [2.2.1]:

puram ekādaśa-dvāram ajasyāvakra-cetasahamuṣṭhāya na śocati vimuktaś ca vimucyate

“Although he resides in the city of eleven gates, the city of the unborn and pure-hearted Supreme, he does not lament. He is free. He is liberated.”
Although his spiritual form seems to be covered, the soul enlightened with transcendental knowledge is liberated in truth. Although he seems to reside in the world of the three modes, he is liberated. That is the meaning of this verse. In these two ways he is liberated. He has directly attained the goal of life. The covering of material life is like a garland of clouds. It covers the eyes of the conditioned souls, but it does not cover the Supreme Personality of Godhead. In Śruti-śāstra it is said:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{vilajjamānānāyā yasya} & \\
\text{sthitum īksā-pathe 'muyā} & \\
\text{vimohita vikanthante} & \\
\text{mamāham iti durdhiyāḥ} & \\
\end{align*}
\]

“The illusory energy of the Lord cannot take precedence, being ashamed of her position. But those who are bewildered by her always talk nonsense, being absorbed in thoughts of ‘It is I’ and ‘It is mine’. ” [Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 2.5.13]

Therefore the clouds of material illusion can never really cover the sun of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Here someone may object: “The goal of life is to make manifest the true nature of the individual spirit soul, who is blissful, whose desires are all at once fulfilled, and who has a host of transcendental virtues. That is enough. Why should one labor to understand the Supreme Lord also?”

If this is said, the author of the sūtras gives the following reply.

**Sūtra 4.4.20**

\[
darśayataś caivaṁ pratyakṣānumāne
\]

\[
darśayataḥ – they show; ca – also; evam – thus; pratyakṣa – direct perception; anumāne – and logic.
\]

**Direct perception and logic both reveal it.**

Although he has the transcendental qualities already described, because he is atomic in size the liberated soul does not, by himself, have bliss that is limitless. It is when he associates with the Supreme Personality of Godhead that the liberated soul attains limitless bliss. This is described in Taittirīya Upaniṣad [2.7]:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{rasaim hy evāyaṁ labdhvānandī-ḥavati} & \\
\text{“When one understands the Personality of Godhead, the reservoir of pleasure, Kṛṣṇa, he actually becomes transcendentally blissful.”} & \\
\end{align*}
\]

Also, in the Bhagavad-gītā [14.27], Lord Kṛṣṇa explains:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{brahmaṇo hi pratiśṭhāham} & \\
\text{amṛtaśyāvyāsyasya ca} & \\
\text{śāśvatasya ca dharmaśya} & \\
\text{sukhasyasikāntikasya ca} & \\
\text{“And I am the basis of the impersonal Brahman, which is immortal, imperishable, and eternal, and is the constitutional position of ultimate happiness.”} & \\
\end{align*}
\]

This is like a poor man who takes shelter of a rich man and becomes wealthy.

Here someone may object: “In the Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad [3.1.3] it is said:
nirañjanaḥ paramaṁ sāmyam upaiti

“Freed from matter, the liberated soul becomes equal to the Supreme.”

The Śruti-śāstra thus explains that the liberated soul is equal to the Supreme. Then what is the use of even using the words ‘the Supreme Lord’? The so-called atomic nature of the individual soul is only a figure of speech. The truth is that the individual soul is all-pervading.”

If this is said, then the author of the sūtras gives the following reply.

Sūtra 4.4.21

bhoga-mātra-sāmya-liṅgāc ca

bhoga – enjoyment; mātra – only; sāmya – equality; liṅgāt – by the sign; ca – also.

Also because of the indication that the equality is only in enjoyment.

The word ca [also] is used here for emphasis. As a frog jumps, so the word na [not] should jump into this sūtra from Sūtra 4.4.18. In the Taïtirīya Upaniṣād [2.1.1] it is said:

so ‘śnute sarvān kāmān saha bhramanā vipaścitā

“The liberated soul enjoys all transcendental pleasures in the company of the all-knowing Supreme Personality of Godhead.”

The meaning here is that the Upaniṣad’s statement that the liberated soul is equal to the Lord applies only to the soul’s enjoyment of transcendental happiness. The liberated soul is not equal in nature to the Supreme Lord. That is the meaning. This objection was previously refuted in Sūtra 2.3.19. In this way it is proved that the equality of the Supreme and the individual spirit soul is in the matter of enjoyment only, that their natures are different, and that difference is real.

Adhikaraṇa 11: The Liberated Soul Never Returns

Viṣaya [thesis or statement]: Now will be explained the truth that the liberated soul has the association of the Supreme Personality of Godhead eternally.

Viṣaya [the subject to be discussed]: All scriptural statements describing the soul’s entrance into the spiritual realm of the Supreme Lord are here the subject of discussion.

Samśaya [doubt]: Does the liberated soul stay in the spiritual world eternally, or does he not stay there eternally?

Pūrvapakṣa [the opponent speaks]: The spiritual world is a place like Svargaloka or any other place. As one may fall down from Svargaloka, so one may also fall down from the spiritual world. Therefore the liberated soul does not necessarily stay in the spiritual world eternally.

Siddhānta [conclusion]: In the following words the author of the sūtras gives His conclusion.

Sūtra 4.4.22

anāvṛttiḥ śabdād anāvṛttiḥ śabdāt

an – without; āvṛttiḥ – return; śabdāt – because of the scriptures.

No return, because of the scriptures. No return, because of the scriptures.
A devotee who faithfully worships and serves the Supreme Lord and then goes to the Lord’s spiritual world, never returns. How is that known? The sūtra explains, śabdā [because of the scriptures]. In the Chāndogya Upaniṣad [4.15.6] it is said:

śvetāṣṭra

“Those who enter the spiritual world never return to the world of men.”

In the Chāndogya Upaniṣad [4.15.1] it is said:

sa khalv eva vartayan yāvad āyuṣam brahma-lokam abhisampadyate. na ca punar avartate.

“Leaving this life, he enters the spiritual world. He never returns.”

In the Bhagavad-gītā [8.15-16] Lord Kṛṣṇa declares:

mām upetya punar janma
duḥkhalayam aśāsvatam
nāpnuvantam mahātmānāṁ
samsiddhiṁ paramam ātāṁ
dūḥ-khaṁ lokāṁ
punār āvartino ‘rjuna
mām upetya tu kaunteya
punār janma na vidyate

“After attaining Me, the great souls, who are yogīs in devotion, never return to this temporary world, which is full of miseries, because they have attained the highest perfection.”

ä-brahma-bhuvaṁ lokāṁ
punār āvartino ‘rjuna
mām upetya tu kaunteya
punār janma na vidyate

“From the highest planet in the material world down to the lowest, all are places of misery wherein repeated birth and death take place. But one who attains My abode, O son of Kuntī, never takes birth again.”

Here someone may express the following fear: “Lord Hari is all-powerful, the master of all, perhaps at some point in time He may throw the liberated soul out of the spiritual world. Or perhaps the liberated soul may at some time voluntarily leave the spiritual world.”

There is no need to fear in this way, for Lord Kṛṣṇa has explained in Bhagavad-gītā [7.17]:

priyo hi jiñānino tv artham
ahaṁ sa ca mama priyāḥ

“Of these, the wise one who is in full knowledge in union with Me through devotional service is the best. For I am very dear to him, and he is very dear to Me.”

Lord Kṛṣṇa also declares in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam [9.4.68]:

sādhavo hṛdayāṁ mahayaṁ
sādhūnāṁ hṛdayaṁ tv aham

“The pure devotee is always in the core of My heart, and I am always in the heart of the pure devotee. My devotees do not know anything else but Me, and I do not know anyone else but them.”

In these words the mutual love of the Lord and His devotee is described. In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam [9.4.65] Lord Kṛṣṇa declares:
“Since pure devotees give up their homes, wives, children, relatives, riches, and even their lives simply to serve Me, without any material improvement in this life or in the next, how can I give up such devotees at any time?”

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam [2.8.6] it is also said:

dhautātmā puruṣaḥ krṣṇa-pāda-mūlaṁ na muñcati
mukta-sarva-parikleṣaḥ
panthāḥ sva-śaraṇaṁ yathā

“A pure devotee of the Lord whose heart has once been cleansed by the process of devotional service never relinquishes the lotus feet of Lord Kṛṣṇa, for they fully satisfy him, as a traveler is satisfied at home after a troubled journey.”

In this way the scriptures explain that the Supreme Personality of Godhead will never abandon His devotee and the devotee will always ardently love the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The Supreme Personality of Godhead is always truthful and His desires are always at once fulfilled. He is an ocean of love for they who take shelter of Him. He washes away the ignorance that made His devotees turn from Him. Once He brings back to Himself His dear devotees, who are His parts and parcels, the Supreme Personality of Godhead will not again let them go.

In the same way the individual soul, who had been searching for happiness and who finally has turned from the pathetic, wretched, pale reflection of happiness he had for many births sought in the material world in many ways, and who now, by the mercy of the bona-fide spiritual master has understood the truth of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, of whom he is a part and parcel, who now has no desire apart from the Supreme Lord, who is now purely engaged in devotional service to the Supreme Lord, and who has now attained the Supreme Lord, whose spiritual form is filled with limitless bliss, and who is the merciful friend and master, will never desire to leave such a Lord. In this way the truth is understood from the scriptures. This truth is understood only by taking shelter of the scriptures. The words of the sūtra are repeated to indicate the conclusion of the book.

Epilogue

samuddhrtya yo duḥkha-pankāt sva-bhaktān
nayaty acyutaś cit-sukhedhāmni nitye
priyān gādha-rāgāt tilārdhāṁ vimoktuṁ
na svechaty asāv eva su-jiñair niśevyaḥ

“Let the wise worship and serve Lord Govinda, the infallible Supreme Personality of Godhead, who lifts his devotees from the mud of material sufferings, takes them to His eternal and blissful spiritual abode, and out of deep love for them will not leave them for even half a moment.”

śrīmad-govinda-pādā-ravinda-makaranda-lubdha-cetobhiḥ
govinda-bhāṣyam etat
pāthyam śapatho ‘rpito ‘nyebhyah
“Let they whose hearts are greedy to taste the honey of the lotus flower that is glorious Lord Govinda’s feet study this Govinda-bhāṣya. Let a curse fall on the non-devotees who try to study it.”

vidyā-rūpaṁ bhūṣanaṁ me pradāya
khyātin ninye tena yo mām udāraḥ
śrī-govindaḥ svapna-nirḍīṭa-bhāṣyo
rādhā-bandhur bandhurāṅgam sa jīyāt

“All glories to graceful and handsome Lord Govinda, who is the dear friend of Śrī Rādhā, who kindly gave me the name Vidyābhūṣana, and who spoke this commentary to me in a dream.”

Here ends Śrī Vedānta-sūtra; all glories to Śrīla Prabhupāda!