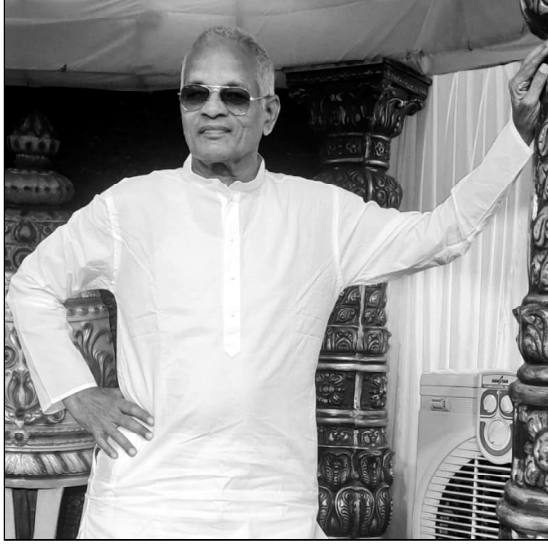


Sri Adi Shankaracharya's
Brahman Means?

Explanation by:
Brahmarshi Tatavarthy Veera Raghava Rao



Shankaracharya's Brahman means?



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Shankaracharya's Brahman means?

Shankaracharya explained many things about Brahman and the greatness of Brahman.

Naturally, we consider many things in this creation to be “great,” but understand how great the Brahman is, the One who created such a vast creation. Not only did he create, not only governing it, He is the foundation of this creation. Meaning, if He exists, the creation exists; if He does not exist, the creation disappears.

He pervades everything and everywhere. The soul present in everyone's body is that Supreme Brahman. The same one is called with different names such as the Creator, Allah, the Father, God.

Such a Supreme Being was explained deeply and elaborately by Shankaracharya. When this is understood, we also show interest in Brahman meaning, interest in the soul. When this interest develops, we meditate with more interest, sincerity increases. In a way our life will be blessed. It means we will attain what should be attained. Everyone should know that only by realising that Brahman, one attains liberation.

Therefore, Shankaracharya described the greatness and characteristics of Brahman. Let us know about them.

“Everything we see or hear is not separate from Brahman. Once soul-knowledge arises, the entire world appears as the non-dual Brahman - pure Existence, Consciousness, and Bliss.”

Here, we are seeing many people and many things. As far as our sight goes, we see many worlds like the sun, the moon, the stars, the nine planets, and much more. At the same time, we are

also knowing that “there are many things we cannot see.”

All these are not different from Brahman. We must know that “everything is He.” Whatever you are seeing, everything is Brahman. Everything we see has arisen from Brahman; meaning, He only created.

If it is from Him, it means they are part of Him. There is nothing separate, nothing has come from somewhere else. A spider builds its web from itself; it doesn’t bring material from outside. It builds from what has come from itself. In the same way, from Brahman, from the soul itself, all the worlds, all forms of creation, and all living beings have arisen. None of these are separate from Brahman. That is why elders say, “Everything is God! All is God! There is nothing that is not Him.”

Whatever we consider great, whatever we hear, know everything is Brahman. Humans are studying so much to know the Brahman deeply. Shankaracharya said: “Whatever you hear, my child, all of that is Brahman! There is nothing apart from Him. Once soul-knowledge arises, the entire world appears as the non-dual Brahman - pure Existence, Consciousness, and Bliss.”

Ordinary people may not understand this. They keep thinking, “This is different, that is different, this fellow is different, that fellow is different, this animal is different, that animal is different.” Because of this feeling of separateness, they express hatred, jealousy, anger, and selfishness. But when you attain soul-knowledge, you will know: “Everything is that very form of Sat-Chit-Ananda - the non-dual Brahman, which is Truth, Consciousness, and Bliss, which is not separate.” you will continue taking births until you reach this state. Therefore, to stop the cycle of births, one must know about Brahman and the greatness of Brahman. Therefore, until wisdom arises, everything feels separate. After attaining wisdom, one understands that “All is One!” He further said,

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“Brahman cannot be examined through ordinary worldly characteristics, for it is beyond all such attributes. Without Brahman, nothing in this world can exist. If anything appears to be separate from Brahman, it is as false as water seen in a mirage.”

Why should we know all this? To develop our wisdom! To become wise! To come out of sorrow! As long as you feel “this is separate, that is separate,” you remain in sorrow. Nothing is actually different from you. The moment you feel something is “separate,” sorrow begins. That is why Patriji said, **“Even if a trace of sorrow exists in you, it means you are still in ignorance.”** Whenever you act with the feeling of separateness, you will always experience sorrow as a result.

Therefore, he said, “Brahman cannot be examined with ordinary worldly characteristics.” When everything is Him, what will you compare Brahman with? How can you know the Brahman with your limited knowledge?

Thus, one must acquire that wisdom. Without Brahman, nothing exists in this world and if anything appears to exist apart from Brahman, it is as false as water seen in a desert mirage. If you see anything that is not Brahman, then you must think.

Search everywhere, travel the whole world, look in the oceans, in the sky, on the earth, on the moon, on the sun. If you find anything separate from Brahman, it will only be as false as the water of a mirage.

When you see a mirage from a distance, it looks as if there is water. But when you go near, there is nothing. Still, we think “There is water.” Meaning, we assume something exists when it actually does not. In the same way, Shankaracharya said, “If

anything appears to be different from Brahman, it is just like a mirage!”

If you understand this and if you can behave accordingly, you will have no more births. But we are only talking about it, reading about it, and knowing about it, but we fail to put it into practice.

Once, after taking a bath in the Ganga, Shankaracharya was returning then a dalit (chandala) appeared on the path. His disciples said, “Move aside! The Guru is coming!” Shakaracharya also said, “Move aside!” The dalit asked, “What are you asking to move aside? This body? Or something else? And in what way are you greater than me?”

He continued, “The same five elements of nature that formed your body also formed mine. The same soul that is in your body is in mine. Then why do you think you are superior? Superior in what?” Hearing this, Shankaracharya understood, “This man is not an ordinary person.” He thought, “Until now I believed he is different and I am different. But he is also none other than Brahman. How can he be lesser than me?” Understanding this, he prostrated at the dalit’s feet.

You must rise to this level in your practice. If still these six inner enemies, these characteristics, qualities arise in you, if you still compare people, judge them, criticize them, saying “he is greater, he is lesser,” or deciding “these people are like this” then it can be considered that you still did not understand the Brahman. It means you have not yet evolved, your practice has not reached that level, and your wisdom has not expanded. Therefore you must evolve to that state.

There is nothing in this world that is separate or different

from Brahman. Everything is one! You must reach the state where you feel, “Whatever I am, everything else is the same!” Your meditation and your wisdom must be at that level.

Patriji also said the same. If you continue thinking, “This fellow is different, that fellow is different,” and show jealousy towards one and hatred towards another, what have you understood? What wisdom do you have? How foolish is that? It is natural before coming into this, but if you still express hatred, jealousy, anger and narrowness even after coming into Patriji’s path, it can be understood how much ignorance you are in.

Not just in this country, not just in this world, wherever you go in creation, whatever you may be knowing, “Everything is Him!” Forms may be many, but all are Him. Pots are different, but all are clay. Ornaments are different, but all are gold. This is what we must know. When we know the greatness of Brahman, our behaviour will completely transform.

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“Just as when the fire heats an iron ball until it glows red, fills it with radiant light, the Brahman pervades both the outer and inner worlds in the same way illuminating the entire creation with His presence.”

Now see, before shaping iron into different tools like axes, blades, or various forms, it is first heated until it glows red. When it is fully heated, the iron becomes soft and can be shaped in many ways. But when you look at a red-hot iron ball, you will notice how brightly it shines from within.

Ordinary iron is dark and dull, but when heated, it glows with intense brightness. Similarly, Shankaracharya said, “Brahman pervades and illuminates not only what is visible externally but also what is hidden internally.”

Meaning, Shankaracharya is saying that the radiance behind everything seen or unseen is His light only. Look at the sun, without it, the world would be filled with darkness. When the sun rises, everything becomes bright. The sun is that luminous. But what should be noticed here is that even the sun’s brightness comes from Brahman. The sun shines as it shines because of the Brahman.

If a single sun is so radiant, think about the radiance of a million suns together! That is the radiance of Brahman! He is infinitely luminous, beyond description. Such a radiant Brahman, the soul, is present in all beings. The soul is ever-shining, and therefore it is compared to light. The soul has endless radiance.

That is why, in temples, the eternal light (akhanda jyoti) is kept burning continuously. People say it must never be extinguished, and consider it inauspicious if it goes out. The main reason for this is: The temple is a reflection of the human body.

The structure of a temple is designed in a way that reflects the human body. This body is compared to a temple, and the divinity inside the body meaning, the Brahman who illuminates everything, the soul is compared to the eternal light.

Therefore, a light is always kept in the temple. When the light of the soul in the body goes out, we say, “He has died.” Hence, that light is never allowed to go out. That light was placed there only to tell us not to let that happen. Likewise, the sound of Om that vibrates inside the body is represented in the temple by the ringing of the bell. Like that, this human body is a reflection of the five elements of nature.

Bones represent earth, heat in the body represents fire, the body contains about 75% water, breath is air and the mind represents space. It means the temple is built as a counterpart to the human body. The soul within the body is represented by the idol placed inside the temple. Temples were created in this way so that future generations would never forget this. This is the only reason for building temples.

Otherwise, how would people know who God is and where He resides? It would be very difficult to know. So, that kind of physical form was created with human intelligence. Thus, isn't it said:

“Deho devalayo proktah, jivo devo sanatanah”?!

It means, it is said that “The living being dwelling within the temple called ‘body’ is God.” Therefore, we must know the matters of such a great Brahman.

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He further said, **“Know this: The very light by whose consciousness the sun and all luminous worlds shine, the one whom even the sun cannot illumine, and the one by whose consciousness the entire universe shines that alone is Brahman.”**

Because of whose light consciousness, the sun and all worlds shine, without Him, nothing will have the radiance of their own. It means, the sun and all of these are illuminating because of Him. Without him, these don't have the radiance and they cannot illuminate Him either.

Also, Shankaracharya said, “The entire universe shines only because of that Brahman.” Worshipping that Brahman is equal to worshipping all the gods in all the worlds. That is why it is said, “Know that by knowing which nothing else remains to be known.”

So, what should we know? We should know about Brahman. Brahman means the soul. Where is the Soul? Within. What should be done to know the soul within? To know the Soul within, we must go inward. How to go inward? The path to go inward is the “observation of the breath meditation” that Patriji taught us.

Now, we understood the greatness of Truth. Therefore, we must definitely take refuge in the soul, the truth because only Brahman exists; only truth exists, and nothing else. All that which are non-souls eventually disappears. Only Brahman is true. None is more fortunate than those who take refuge in that truth. That is why Patriji said, “Do not worship idols; worship the Truth.” Nothing is greater than Truth; everything arises from it. That Truth is the soul!

The path to take refuge in the soul is “observation of the

breath meditation.” Here, a human being means three: 1) Body, 2) mind, 3) soul. To take refuge in the soul, one must first close the eyes. Then you will be with the mind inside the body, and immediately thoughts appear. When you cut the thoughts and observe the breath, the thoughts stop. Like that, in the state where the mind is no longer active, you will be with the soul. That means, you took refuge in the soul.

In music meditation and guiding meditation, people close their eyes but thoughts arise. If music is played, the mind remains active. So, one stops at the mind only. Even in guiding meditation, one stops at the mind only. In any other type of meditation one stops at the mind only, they cannot take refuge in the soul. Therefore, the only path to take refuge of that great Brahman is “observation of the breath meditation.”

If this is understood, one will only do ‘observation of the breath meditation.’ In a way, even those who are considered as “senior masters” do not have the understanding of the Truth. If they have that understanding, they would not speak like that or make people do like that. They simply make people close their eyes, but they do not make them close their mind. Only if the mind is closed, one can understand Brahman.

Therefore, each and every one must know: The Sun and all the worlds shine only because of Brahman. The Moon shines by the Sun’s light. The earth rotates on its axis and revolves around the sun. The side facing the sun experiences day; the side away from the sun experiences night.

Without Brahman, there is no creation. We think, “there are many things in this world.” But only He exists, nothing else. Therefore, Everything is created, illumined, and governed through His involvement.

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Shankaracharya said, “One should meditate upon Brahman that which is neither subtle nor gross, neither short nor tall, unborn, unchanging, formless, attributeless (without qualities), without color, and without name.”

Here, he said to meditate upon the Brahman who is the source of creation, the foundation of creation, and the one who governs creation. Shankaracharya mentioned the characteristics of that Brahman. Is Brahman subtle? He is not subtle; for how can that which pervades the entire creation be subtle? Is it gross? He is not gross; but he exists in an extremely subtle, unperceivable manner within every body, even finer than the smallest particle.

Not short - it is never short.

Not tall - is it tall? Not tall.

It is birthless - is it born from anything? Or does it take birth in anyone? it is not born to anything or anyone. It does not have birth only.

It is unchanging - it undergoes no kind of transformation. In one in childhood, another way in youth, and like another in old age, Brahman has no change. It is unchanging in the beginning, in the middle, and at the end. It means, it has no transformation before creation, during creation, and even after the creation dissolves. This was taught by Lord Sri Krishna to Arjuna in Chapter 10, verse 20 of Bhagavad Gita.

**Shlok|| aham atma gudakesha sarva-bhutashaya-sthitah
aham adish cha madhyam cha bhutanam anta eva cha
(B.G. 10-20)**

“Arjuna, I am the soul. Abiding (ever- present) in all beings. I existed before this creation came into being, I exist while the creation is ongoing, and I will continue to exist even after creation ends,” He said. Therefore, He has no change of any kind. No childhood, youth, adulthood or old age.

It is formless - there is no kind of form at all. If we want to decide, “It looks like this,” but He has no form. He cannot be compared with anything. That is why elders say, “He cannot be described; it is extremely difficult.”

It is impossible to know Brahman through human sense organs. People in the world try to know Him with these senses, but the human senses, the five sense organs, the five motor organs, and even the inner sense, the mind do not have that power.

The eyes cannot see it. It is not available to touch. Is it audible? It means, nothing can be heard. Even if one wants to listen about Him through anyone’s words, it is impossible! At least even if one wants to know it through the mind, even the mind can’t know it.

Therefore it is said, “To know the Brahman, one must reach a state that is beyond the senses.” One cannot and it is impossible to know the Brahman in the sensory state. Then how does one reach the state that is beyond senses meaning, the state where the senses do not function? The path for that is the ‘observation of the breath meditation’ given to us by Patriji.

When we sit for meditation, we withdraw the motor organs and the sense organs. We lock the hands and legs, close the eyes and mouth and by observing the breath, even the inner organ,

the mind, is locked. Here, where the mind is not functioning, we will be with the soul. In that state, we will be experiencing the soul which is Brahman.

When a person can remain in that state for some days and even for years, they will definitely attain the experience of the soul, there is no doubt about it.

But if one practices guiding or music meditation, they will listen to someone's words or to music while closing their eyes. Since a sense organ called the mind is active, Brahman cannot be known; it is impossible! That is why it is said that only 'observation of the breath meditation' is great.

He is transcendent, he is not available for senses! We can only have his vision in a state beyond the senses. When we practice intense meditation by restraining all the senses, even though these two physical eyes do not function, the divine eye, it means the third eye opens. Through that, we can know the Brahman, the soul; only it has that power.

That is why, in the Vishvaroop Darshana Yoga of the Bhagavad Gita, Lord Krishna shows Arjuna His true form. "What you are seeing now is not my real form. I will show you my original form, look!" He revealed himself. Then Arjuna was unable to see that radiance and light; it felt as though his eyes were gone.

We are unable to even look at the light of the single sun which is miles away. How can we see the Brahman, the soul who is as radiant as a million suns? That is why Arjuna said, "Krishna! I cannot bear it, I cannot see!" Then Krishna granted Arjuna the divine eye (third eye). He could only see with that divine eye.

Therefore, it must be known that the Brahman cannot be seen with the physical eyes and even the mental eye.

It has no color - there is nothing like, "it is black or white."

It has no name - Brahman has no particular name at all. Hence, people create names they like. Hindus call Him Parabrahman, Muslims call Him Allah, Christians call Him the Father. Each and everyone gives a different name and calls him only. Because the names differ, people think "their God is different from ours." But these are only the names given by these people. He has no name at all.

He has no qualities - not tamasic, not rajasic, not sattvic. These qualities are present in humans, but not Him.

That is why Shankaracharya said, "Meditate on such a Brahman, who is so great." Meditation means being attentive. Wherever you place your attention, you are considered that you are attentive in that. If you are listening to music, your attention is on the music; if you are listening to words, your attention is on the words; if you chant a mantra, your attention is on the mantra; if you repeat a name, your attention is on the name.

How will we attain the Brahman if we keep our attention on these? Hence, Shankaracharya clearly said, "That which alone exists, the Brahman, meditate on That." If we really deeply understand everything that Shankaracharya taught about Brahman, we would do nothing other than 'observation of the breath meditation.'

Meditation means focusing on the divine himself. We are all doing that only. Senior Masters in our PSSM society itself are

playing music, making people meditate and are justifying it. They are saying, “Patriji also made us meditate on music, right?” In this way, giving some excuse, people are holding on to everything except Brahman.

Those who want money do ‘money meditation.’ Those who want relief from diseases set an intention in meditation. Everyone is doing as they like. But Shankaracharya described all the characteristics of Brahman and said, “Meditate only on Him.”

He said, “He is not subtle, not gross, not short, not tall, has no birth, no change, no form, no qualities, no color, and no name.” See how many characteristics did Shankaracharya told us so that we can recognise and know him!

Most people show no interest when we speak about Brahman, but if we talk about some physical benefits, they become very enthusiastic. Therefore, those who always keep their attention on Brahman attain only Brahman, while those who keep their attention on various other things keep getting various other types of things.

That is why, in the Yoga Vasishta as well as in the Bhagavad Gita, it is said: “Recognize what is the greatest and meditate only on that.” What is the greatest in this creation? There is nothing else other than Brahman! So, through ‘observation of the breath meditation’ all of us are keeping our attention only on that Brahman.

**Shlok|| antavat tu phalam tesham tad bhavatyalpa-medhasam
devan deva-yajo yanti mad-bhakta yanti mam api**

(B.G. 7-23)

Meaning:- The results obtained by people of limited knowledge are only temporary. Those who worship the deities go to the realms (worlds) of those respective deities, but my devotees reach Me only.

In Yoga Vasishtha

**Shlok|| devandho varuchoyanthi yaksha yaksha sravajanthihi
brahma brahmayajo yanthi nadhamacham thadhprayeth**

Meaning:- Those who meditate on the deities attain the deities; those who meditate on the yakshas attain the yakshas. Likewise, those who meditate on Brahman attain Brahman. Therefore, one should try to attain that which is the greatest.

Therefore, nothing is greater than the Brahman. Hence, one must try to attain Brahman. It means one must try to attain the soul. That very path is the “observation of the breath meditation” given by Patriji.

Therefore, meditate by observing the breath and attain the Brahman.

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“Butter is pervading throughout milk (it means butter is present throughout the milk). Similarly, Brahman pervades everything. All objects are pervaded by the Brahman. All actions are happening through that Brahman.”

To the question, where does Brahman exist? Shankaracharya said: Butter is present throughout milk. If you take a pot of milk, you may not see the butter on the surface, but it appears when you churn it. It means even if the butter is not visible, it pervades the entire milk, it appears when you churn it a little.

Where is the butter in that milk? It is not located in just one corner, at the top, or at the bottom, it is spread everywhere in it. Any portion of the milk you take contains butter. Likewise, the Brahman, God pervades the entire creation. He is present everywhere. Where is He not there? In which part is He absent? He is present in what is good and also in what is not good. There is nothing where He is not present.

To make them understand, a guru once while teaching this spiritual truth to his disciples wanted to see how much they had learnt, so he decided to test them. He called four disciples, gave each one a banana and said, “Eat this where no one can see you.”

All four went off saying “okay!” One went into a dark cave and ate it there, saying, “No one is here.” Another went to an open place, looked around, and seeing no one, he ate it. The third one went inside a house, closed the doors, ensured no one was there, and ate it. But the fourth one returned without eating it.

The next day the guru asked, “Did you eat it?” One by one, the disciples came forward and said, “I ate it there,” “I ate it

here,” each mentioning the place where he had eaten the banana. But one disciple had not eaten it. When the guru asked “why?” He replied, “You yourself said that God is all-pervading, present everywhere. If there is no place where He is absent, then where could I eat it without Him seeing? That is why I could not eat it.”

The guru then praised him saying, “You have understood the message I taught.”

Who are true devotees? Those who know the presence of God. If observed, many people behave very sacred when they go to a temple. Their speech and actions are very different. But once they step outside, that sacredness disappears. They shout, scold, criticise, and do many things. This means they are of the belief, “God is only inside the temple.” But if God is all-pervading, where is He not there?

If He is everywhere, we should remain sacred everywhere. If you are sacred in one place but not sacred in another, what did you understand about God?

Similarly, some people fold hands before an idol, pray and express their desires. This means they think, “God is only in the idol.” Is He present only in the idol? Is He not there anywhere else? In what is He absent? Think about it. Once this is understood, you will understand that wherever you may speak, God will know it.

That is why anyone who loves God must first try to know about God. Without knowing about God, whatever types of worship they perform will not be of any use. When they do not understand about God, all their actions look strange.

Therefore, Shankaracharya very clearly said: “Just as butter is spread throughout milk, Brahman is all-pervading. God

is present everywhere, in every atom.”

When we say, “God is everywhere,” people question saying, “If He is everywhere, why can’t I see Him? I looked at that hill, I didn’t see Him, I looked at that tree, I didn’t see Him.” If you observe, just as butter is present in milk but is visible only when the milk is churned, the God who is within your body can be perceived (seen) only when you churn yourself through intense “observation of the breath meditation.” Then, He reveals Himself.

Meaning, only when we put in some hard work butter appears from milk; likewise, only when you work hard in meditation practice, God is obtained. That is why I say, “Come to Bhimavaram.” In whom God is not there? He is in everyone. You cannot go inside everyone, but you can surely go inside yourself. You cannot see the God within everyone, but you can see the God within you through the path of ‘observation of the breath meditation.’

There is fire in the wood. Is it visible? No. When is it visible? Only when the wood is rubbed intensely. During yajnas and Yagas, the brahmins rub the wood to produce fire. Just like fire will not appear unless the wood is rubbed, and butter will not appear unless milk is churned, God within the body cannot be seen by anyone if they do not do meditation.

People question, “Where is He?” You meditate and you will obtain Him. Those who do not know this truth end up doing things that seem strange and even humorous. If we observe, we will understand this clearly.

Look, people set up loudspeakers, play huge sounds, and sing songs.

When asked, “Why?” They say, “It’s for God.” But if God is everywhere, is it not audible for Him? Why can’t He hear? When people face difficulties, they pray, “We have this problem... Please remove it!” Think a little, if God pervades your entire body, would He not already know the difficulty you are facing? Why tell Him again separately? Can He not know? If you feel the need to inform God about your problems, it can be understood that you have not yet understood about God.

Whatever it is, we are fortunate if we have the right understanding about God. There is nothing other than Brahman. Knowing this truth, all of us are practicing “observation of the breath meditation.” Without “observation of the breath meditation,” it is impossible to reach the God who resides within this body.

We are progressing day by day because we are doing this. Your sincerity is the only reason for your progress. If you observe yourself once, you will clearly know how much transformation has happened from your past to your present, how much you have progressed, how much wisdom you have acquired, and how much you have blossomed your intellect.

Likewise, if you are still fidgeting (making nervous movements), unable to speak, or unable to evolve, the reason is your lack of sincerity. Generally, when a Guru teaches, people listen but that is not enough. Whatever you hear must be revised again and again. Only then, you will understand. Your wisdom will not develop without doing anything and you cannot reach a higher state. Before I entered this path of meditation, I used to practice yoganāsanas (yoga postures). There, the teacher would make us do the postures for one hour in the morning and send us home.

The next day again, the teacher would make us do the

same postures. They said, “If you can stay steady in one posture for half an hour, you have attained mastery over that posture”

But to stay in the same posture for half an hour or one hour without moving is very difficult. You cannot remain even for five minutes. I wondered, “If I just go in the morning, sit for a few minutes in that posture as the teacher says, is that enough?” So after going home, I used to try to remain in each posture for as long as possible. By doing the same posture for one month or two months, I could sit in that posture not just for half an hour but even for one hour.

Did the others also sit like that? No, they couldn't sit. The only reason I succeeded is because of the practice I continued at home every afternoon after returning from the teacher. One who does not practice keeps fidgeting and struggling. One who practices will achieve it. That is why within 2 months, I myself became a teacher. I would do all that my teacher used to do. I myself started teaching everyone. Why couldn't others grow while I did? Because I didn't stop with what I did there, I practiced at home.

If you are asked to take a class, you take it whenever you get the opportunity. Then again after two or three months, when another opportunity comes, you take it again. How will you grow like that? Think about it! When you say “They teach so well!”, “These people teach so well!”, will we be able to see the effort, the determination, the sincerity they put in?

Some people also have past-life impressions (samskaras). Those also give them greater results in less time. Therefore, understand this, put in some effort. Don't be careless after coming into such a great path. As you develop your intellect, you will understand whether what you are doing is great or not.

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He said, “Even all the gods starting from Brahma experience only a small portion of that infinite bliss, the essence of Brahman! Each according to their eligibility.”

Akhanda-ananda means the embodiment of endless bliss, something that cannot even be described. Here, Shankaracharya explains Brahman as the embodiment of bliss. His very nature is bliss, infinite bliss. It cannot be explained as “this much” or “that much.”

When he says “Brahmadi devatas,” it doesn’t mean only Brahma, Vishnu, and Maheshwaras. It includes Indra, Varuna, Yakshas, Kinnaras, Kimpurushas, and also the Rishis, Maharshis, Yogis, Siddhas, Avadhutas, and even seekers like us. All of them are attaining bliss through their respective practice that they are doing.

They experience that bliss according to the practice they do and the level they reach. One may take as much bliss as they wish, but they receive only according to their eligibility and their practice. That bliss never diminishes, never gets exhausted, it flows endlessly.

Now look, we are meditating. When we meditate, we are closing the eyes first. As soon as we close our eyes, thoughts are coming. When thoughts are arising, we are cutting them off and observing the breath. As we keep doing this, over time, the thoughts stop. When thoughts stop, what remains there? The soul, Brahman. Who is Brahman? His nature is only bliss. It means, in that state, you are with that bliss-nature, in that bliss, absorbing it meaning,

experiencing it.

One who sits in that state for five hours experiences five hours of bliss. One who sits for three hours experiences three hours of bliss. One who sits for two hours experiences two hours of bliss.

How do we know whether we experienced that bliss or not? When you sit in that state where there are no thoughts and the mind is not functioning, time is not known. If you sit for five hours, it feels like five minutes. It doesn't even feel like you are sitting. Why? Because you are absorbed in the bliss.

Avadhutas will remain in that state for days and months. Bala yogis will stay in that state for years. Even in the Bhimavaram three-day class, there are people who sit for three hours, some for four hours, and some even for five hours. Each one sits according to their level.

How long they stay in that state is exactly how much bliss they experience. Lord Shiva remains absorbed in that bliss. One who tastes that bliss cannot leave it.

That is why Ramana Maharshi remained in that state for years, he was experiencing a bliss far greater than anything the world could offer, so he could not get up. This state is called "samadhi". People struggled a lot to bring him back to a normal state.

It means, when we are with Brahman, we experience such immense bliss. Every one is experiencing only a small portion of that bliss according to their level of practice.

Here, we fix a time, "I will sit for two hours or three

hours.” When you decide a fixed time, you can sit only for that duration. You cannot sit beyond that, you get up.

Because there is a saying, “as you think, so it becomes.” (“yad bhavam tad bhavati”) If you keep thinking “I must sit for this long,” then it stops there. If you don’t think that way, you continue experiencing that bliss. For such people, years pass like minutes. Bliss is that great.

People are thinking that all kinds of comforts in the world contain happiness, so they are trying to experience and attain them. But they are not knowing that if we take refuge in Brahman, the bliss we receive is indescribable.

Even our seekers are experiencing bliss according to their level. Here, the number of hours you sit is not important; what matters is how much bliss you experience while sitting.

Now take Hanuman or anyone else, they don’t come out of meditation. Whoever sits like this, will experience that bliss over time. Such bliss cannot be found anywhere in the material world, not in family life, not in wealth, not in luxuries. Even if you get it somewhere, it is only temporary!

That is why we compare meditation to deep sleep. In deep sleep also, we are with Brahman. Both the mind and awareness are absent in deep sleep whereas in meditation, the mind is absent and awareness is present. In deep sleep, bliss comes effortlessly whereas in meditation, it must be acquired through effort.

As bliss is His very nature, we are attaining it when we take refuge in that Supreme Brahman through this “observation of the breath meditation.” See, comfort and happiness are different.

Comfort and happiness are related to the body and mind, they are temporary. But bliss is related to the soul and it is permanent! Everyone is trying to attain that bliss only.

Every day we are trying to stay with the Supreme Brahman. “Supreme Brahman is none other than the soul.” This is what Patriji taught, right? Every day we are staying only with the soul for hours together. When we close our eyes and thoughts arise, we are cutting them off and are observing the breath. Through “observation of the breath,” the influence of thoughts weakens and what remains there is only the soul! So, when we continue to stay with the Supreme Brahman, we ourselves will eventually become the Supreme Brahman.

Why put in so much hard work? To evolve to that state! As humans, we must gradually remove all human negative traits and develop divine qualities within us. That is the purpose of this meditation. No transformation happens all at once. A human does not become divine in a single day, the change happens slowly.

We always discuss the logic of the wasp and the insect (Bhramara-kitaka nyaya). The wasp brings an insect into its nest and continuously buzzes in front of it. By hearing that sound again and again, after some time the insect also becomes a wasp. If an insect can become a wasp, why can't a human become madhava (Brahman)?

Ramana Maharshi became Ramana Bhagavan, Buddha became Buddha Bhagavan, Hanuman became Anjaneya Swami, The fakir called Shirdi Baba became divine (God), anyone can become! Shirdi Baba himself said, “I stayed with my Guru for 13

years,” meaning, “I stayed with the Supreme Brahman”, he said. If they could become divine (God), why can't we? We will definitely become!

In this effort, without our knowledge, tremendous changes begin to happen within us. First the mind becomes still, then it becomes pure. Slowly the qualities change, intellect blossoms, discernment develops, wisdom also develops, intelligence improves, and unknown changes occur in our behaviour.

Transforming like that, we finally reach that Brahman state. This is natural. If you stay in the company of someone for three months, you start becoming like them. If you stay with a drunkard for three months, you also become a drunkard. We are even told a small story.

In a village, there lived a father and son. The son did not work and spent his time drinking alcohol, the father kept scolding him. No matter how much he scolded or what he did, the son never changed his behaviour. One day, the father shouted angrily, “Will you change your behaviour or do you want me to die?” Then the son said, “I will stop drinking like you said but one condition!”

The father asked, “What is that condition?” The son replied, “Nothing much. For two months from today onwards, you must sit with me and drink every day. I will completely quit drinking after two months.” The father agreed to it thinking, “I must somehow make my son quit this habit.”

From that day onwards, both of them began drinking together. Slowly, two months passed. After two months, the son kept his promise and said, “From today onwards, I will not touch

alcohol.” Then, the father said, “You may quit if you want, but I will not quit.”

The son quit, but the father got used to it. This means, you eventually become that which you make a habit of. In the same way, when we live in the presence of the Supreme Brahman, we also become Supreme Brahman. Now, we are knowing his characteristics to stay with Him.

There is nothing more to know and nothing more to do beyond this. It is only because of the great virtue (punya) earned in some past lifetime that you have come into Patriji’s path and are able to do this practice. This is not simple, one must possess immense eligibility, and you have earned that eligibility.

Therefore, let us now learn more about the characteristics of Parabrahman as taught by Shankaracharya.

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“By using the method of separation - ‘this is not, this is not’, and eliminating all unreal (false) things, whatever remains and is pointed out by the Vedantic scriptures is Brahman. Moreover, one must know that, that which is non-dual, eternally blissful in nature, and absolutely One, that alone is Brahman.”

He said, “By the method of separation.” It means what should be separated? One must be able to distinguish what is eternal and what is non-eternal. In this creation, there exists something eternal, and there exist things that are non-eternal. Human beings do not know which is eternal and which is non-eternal. Because of that, they are taking refuge in the non-eternal things, and are finally getting disappointed and wasting their entire life.

They do not have the knowledge to separate this and that. That is why people end up disappointed. Therefore, in the four-fold spiritual practice (sadhana chatustaya), Shankaracharya taught that one must have the discrimination between the eternal and the non-eternal (nitya-anitya vastu viveka). So, what is eternal? That which is permanent, always exists, never changes, remains the same even when time and ages change is eternal. What is non-eternal? That which does not remain forever, keeps changing, does not always exist, and keeps transforming as time passes is non-eternal.

Not knowing this, human beings think that the non-eternal is eternal; they think that the perishable things are permanent and they are running after them, yearning for them, trying to acquire them and are rejoicing them.

Therefore, one must be able to recognize Brahman by separating Brahman from that which is not Brahman. He also

showed the way for that: By saying, “Not this, not this” and removing every unreal object, it means every impermanent thing. Whatever finally remains is Brahman”, He said.

Just think once! Take your body, is it permanent? We ourselves will say “No!” Why? Because not only our parents, not only grandparents or great-grandparents, countless people came to this earth and then departed. We also will remain only for a few years and then depart.

Why go far? When we were born, we were infants. As time passed, the body kept changing, first childhood, then youth, then adulthood, then old age, and at last the body will disappear. It means that the body is not eternal. Therefore, it is understood that “this non eternal body is not Brahman.”

Then apart from the body, what else is there? There is a mind and intellect. You observe, does the mind of a person function after the soul departs? No, the mind does not function. The mind functions only when the soul is present. The mind does not function if the soul is absent. Therefore, the mind is also not Brahman. Even the intellect! We can think, make decisions when the soul is present. Nothing functions when the soul leaves, it means nothing functions when we depart. It means, know that even intellect is also not Brahman.

If you read what Shankaracharya taught in the “Nirvana Shatkam”, you will understand all this very clearly. In just six verses, everything is explained very concisely: “I am not this, I am not this, I am not this; I am only Shiva, I am only Brahman.” This is what Shankaracharya explained in it.

Therefore, if we read it properly and understand it deeply, we will know the greatness of Brahman. Why must we understand

“Nirvana Shatkam”? Because only the one who has reached that state, who knows that “none of these are me, none of these are related to me”, becomes Brahman.

If you reach that state, it means you have attained liberation. If you identify even with one of those things mentioned in “Nirvana Shatkam” as "I", or if you live thinking, “This is me”, it means you have not yet attained the Nirvana state (state of liberation), and you have not known the Brahman. All that which are mentioned in “Nirvana Shatakam” are unreal. When each one of them is removed, what remains in the end is only Brahman (the Soul).

Likewise, whatever the Vedanta scriptures, it means the Upanishads point to and teach, that alone is Brahman.

He also said, “That which is non-dual.” Meaning, that which is not two. If spoken strongly, there is nothing second to Brahman in this entire creation. We think that many things exist, but it must be known that nothing else exists.

If this is known, we will not give importance to things that do not exist, we will not think about things that don't exist, we will only think about Brahman who exists and remain in a state of eternal bliss. The reason is, the very nature of Brahman is Bliss, everlasting bliss, infinite bliss, inexpressible bliss. We are able to attain that state during meditation.

Look, in meditation, we first close our eyes. There is no body consciousness when the eyes are closed. Then thoughts arise, and at that stage we are with the mind. When thoughts arise in the mind, we cut off them and observe the breath. As we continue doing this, gradually all thoughts stop. When thoughts stop, the mind no longer exists there. What remains is the soul, the Brahman.

If observed, when you are in that state, hours pass like minutes. If you do not reach that state, minutes feel like hours. That is why, when someone sits in that state for three, four, or five hours, it feels like only five minutes.

So many people attend our Bhimavaram class. Because of meditating in that disciplined environment there, and reaching that state, no matter how many hours they are made to sit, they don't feel like they are sitting at all. The reason is, there is no distraction, the mind does not wander towards anything else. They listen to the subject, meditate, and eat. There is no chance for the mind to focus on anything else.

Because of such an atmosphere over there, even three days pass just like that without anyone knowing about it. Many people wonder, "What do they listen to for three days? How do they sit?" But only those who sit in Bhimavaram will know it. New people may feel a little discomfort on the first day, but from the second day onwards, no one cares.

The reason for this is that they are not being in the body and mind consciousness both which are impermanent. They stay with the Brahman, in bliss. That is why so many people have been coming to Bhimavaram continuously for years without a break. Why do they come? They come to experience that bliss. A kind of bliss that they had never experienced in their lives, that is why hundreds of people are coming again and again to attain the bliss they are receiving from meditation. Therefore, we must know that Brahman is of so much blissful nature.

Not only that, he also said, "That which is One." Meaning, there is no second thing. Brahman is not two, there is only One. There is nothing else in existence that can be shown apart from

Brahman. Nothing else is eternal. We cannot show another thing which is eternal, it is impossible! If only it existed, right?

Therefore, all of us are extremely fortunate. We are taking refuge in Brahman; we are trying to know Brahman; we are trying to live in the state of Brahman. This is not possible for everyone. It has become possible for us, then we are indeed very fortunate. To put it in a way, this is surely the result of virtues from past lives.

There may be millions of people in the world, but very few show interest in Brahman, it means in the soul, it means in soul-knowledge.

Only those who have passed through 350 to 360 births can develop such interest and we are among those few!

So, Shankaracharya explained about that great Brahman and every aspect of Brahman in a great detail. He has known it, and he taught the same to us. We must also know it, achieve it just like him, and we also must become great. When one stays with Brahman, in the end they also become Brahman. In the world, such people are called “Gods”, temples are built for them, they are worshipped, and many rituals are also performed.

That means, in this creation both false and true coexist. Real and unreal coexist. Demons and divine beings coexist. This creation, this world is that where everything is together.

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“One must know that Brahman is that which, once seen, leaves nothing else to be seen; that which, once attained, removes the need for rebirth; and that which, once known, leaves nothing else to be known.”

Look, there are countless wonders and marvelous things in this creation. If you watch YouTube, you can see things under the ocean, in the mountains, in the snowy peaks, and so many beautiful sights. People specially travel to show various cities and places.

That is why our people also go on tours everywhere and keep watching different places. But if you think about it, how many things exist in the world? How many can we see? For many lifetimes we have been seeing them, but there is always the feeling “I still want to see more.”

But Shankaracharya said, “See that by which there remains nothing else left to see.” Because that is Brahman! One must try to see that Brahman then there is no need to travel around the whole world, no need to roam from country to country or continent to continent. We don’t have to go to one corner of the world or to the other corner, everything is in Him only.

If you see Him, you have seen everything. That’s why when I ask my wife, “Come to America.” She says, “If you want to go, you go. I won’t come.” If someone normally asks, “Will you go to America?” Thinking that they can see everything there, most people would say, “Yes!” But what is really there?! Instead of all this trouble, see the Brahman within your own body, then you will become the one who has seen all.

People are spending thousands and lakhs of rupees and are struggling to see something which is far off. They are yearning thinking that they can see that if they climb this mountain or they

can see this if they climb that mountain. Go within yourself, you can see everything.

When Lord Krishna showed his Vishvaroop to Arjuna, Arjuna could not see it. Then Krishna granted him Divya Netra, the divine vision (third eye). With that divine vision, Arjuna saw Krishna's Vishvaroop, countless worlds, infinite universes, and all varieties of wonders and marvels, everything.

“After seeing that great form, what else is there to see? Everything is contained within It! Nothing else is needed,” said Arjuna. If you travel through space with a rocket, you may see a few worlds. But if you go inside your body, you will see millions of worlds. You keep searching everywhere outside, wandering all over... but you never turn inward.

Likewise, “One must attain that by which there is no need to take birth again,” said Adi Shankaracharya. What should a person try for? One should try to have no rebirth. To become free from rebirth, one should know what must be attained. When one attains the Supreme Brahman, there is nothing more to attain. Ramana Maharshi, Shirdi Baba, Sathya Sai Baba, Patriji, Yogis, Bala Yogis, Rishis, Avadhutas - all of them have known this. All of them tried to attain that Supreme Brahman present within the body.

That is why when many people came to Ramana Maharshi saying, “We will give you thousands, lakhs,” or “We will arrange many comforts for you,” he rejected all of it. They said, “Why are you living like this without any possessions? If you ask, we will bring suits and boots for you.” He replied, “What will I do with all that, my dear? I have attained what must be attained. I don't need these decorations, money, or positions.” He ate whatever food was there, he slept wherever he was staying, he did not care no matter what others said about him, he lived with a simple loin cloth, he attained that Supreme Brahman and ensured that there is no

more birth for him.

Today people say, “If we get Shirdi Baba’s blessings, we can earn crores.” Even though he is no longer with the physical body, people are placing an idol, offering aarti, maintaining the dhuni and asking for many desires.

If just a little grace from him can supposedly bring wealth and pleasures, then why didn’t he experience them? Because he attained what had to be attained. What more is needed? He achieved the Supreme Brahman! He lived in unending bliss! He reached a state of no rebirth.

Likewise, He said, “By knowing what, there is no need to know anything else, that alone must be known.” Then whom should one know? One should know Parabrahman! People keep knowing about this and that, so many different things, but why? Once Parabrahman is known, there is nothing else left to know, because He has everything.

Really, how many hours are we striving hard to see that Parabrahman, to attain Him, to know Him, every single day?! How much effort do we put in?! So many obstacles, so many interruptions, so many problems, so many hardships come, but we are holding firmly and walking on this path. If we are doing all this, how fortunate we are?!

Receiving this “observation of the breath meditation,” which leads us towards Parabrahman, itself is the result of great virtue from past births. Otherwise, it is impossible! So we are truly indebted to Patriji who gave us this path! When we practice “observation of the breath”, it feels like, “Is there such a profound secret hidden in this?” How astonishing! Through this practice of “observation of the breath”, we can know the secrets of the entire creation, and attain the state where there is no more rebirth.

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Shankaracharya said, “One must know that Brahman is that, after attaining which there is no further benefit to be attained; after experiencing whose comfort there is no other comfort to be sought; and after gaining whose knowledge there remains no other knowledge to be attained.”

Here, if Brahman is attained, then there is no other benefit left for you to obtain. Right now you think, “I want this... I want that... I must achieve this... I must earn that...” For all these, you struggle throughout your whole life, work very hard, go through endless troubles. You desire to build a house, so you build it... You want to start a business, so you start it... You want to get a good education, so you study. Even if you obtain everything you wished for, you will leave all of that when you leave the body.

Then you take another birth. You will again want whatever you had achieved earlier. Again, you spend your entire life trying to acquire them and in those attempts, difficulties arise, financial struggles arise, family conflicts arise, problems arise and you die.

Again, the same story continues in another birth. No matter how many births you take, and no matter how much you gain, there will always be more to gain, and you keep trying for them. But Adi Shankaracharya said, “Instead of trying for countless things, try for Brahman. If Brahman is attained, you yourself will say, ‘I need nothing else.’”

Even after 360 births, you are still saying “something is still missing... I still need more...” But through this message Shankaracharya is saying, “When you try for Brahman, and when you attain Him, there is nothing more left to attain in this entire creation, you need no other gain.” Shankaracharya also said, “After

experiencing that comfort, there is no other comfort left to be obtained.”

That means, when Brahman is attained, the bliss obtained is beyond description. Across so many births, no matter how many comforts you experienced, you never felt satisfied. In 360 births, you enjoyed countless comforts, you took birth as a man and experienced the bliss of a wife. You took birth as a woman and experienced the bliss of a husband. In one birth you had sons, and experienced the joy of raising and loving them. In another birth you had daughters, and enjoyed nurturing them, playing with them, pampering them.

In their childhood you experienced different kinds of comforts. You will be overwhelmed seeing the children.

When a male child is born, you celebrate as if you ever had children, they will rejoice so much! And who knows after how many births that joy of having children will finally come to an end?! Some don't stop with children, they even experience the joy of grandchildren. They will rejoice just by hearing the names of their grandchildren as if they didn't have grandchildren in any lifetime! How many births will this desire for such joy continue?

Similarly with wealth! In countless births you enjoyed immense riches.

With wealth you gained all comforts and luxuries and lived happily, but not satisfied. So, you take birth again, you earn again, you enjoy again. Then, one doesn't know how many births it will take to feel satisfied! While trying to gain more each time, in some births you face financial hardships, life gives blows! Each person in a different way.

God knows about comforts! You will be weeping (crying)

the whole lifetime. Why these mistakes? Try to attain Brahman in this lifetime only. If Brahman is attained, you yourself will say, “I want no other comfort.” Adi Shankaracharya said: “The comfort after which no other comfort remains to be obtained - that comfort is attained when Brahman is realized.”

Understand this! Why struggle and run after all those temporary things? In this lifetime, fully try to attain Brahman. You are very fortunate! That is why you have known the path to attain Brahman. Do not be careless or negligent after attaining the path. If you focus, you can make this birth your last birth. Even if one more birth comes, it will surely become your last birth.

Shankaracharya further said, “One must know that Brahman is that, after gaining whose knowledge there remains no other knowledge to be attained.” The knowledge related to Brahman is Brahma-jnana. That is what is called soul-knowledge. The more you know about the Soul, the more wise you become. Once that is known, there is no further knowledge left to gain. In the worldly sense, there are countless types of knowledge, but they are all unreal. Only Brahma-jnana, Soul-knowledge is true knowledge.

If you attain that true knowledge, there is no other knowledge left to attain. That knowledge arises only when you take refuge in Brahman meaning, when you take refuge in the soul. The path to take refuge in the Soul is only the “observation of the breath meditation” taught to us by Patriji. You cannot take refuge in the soul through any other kind of meditation, you cannot take refuge in truth, and you cannot attain that true knowledge. Even if you do guided meditations or sit with music, true knowledge will never arise.

Once you attain Him, there is no benefit left to gain, no comfort left to experience, no knowledge left to acquire, nothing left to see, nothing left to know, and above all, there will no longer be any necessity to take birth again.

That is why, when Adi Shankaracharya's mother said to him, "My son, why don't you get married, have children, and live happily?" he gently replied, "I won't, Mother. I have attained the state of Brahman. All those things are very insignificant to me now. Do you think I have never lived a family life before? Do you think I have never had children before? Do you think I have never earned wealth before? Do you think I have never enjoyed comforts before? I have experienced all of them, Mother. Why would I need them again?"

Not only that, he travelled spreading that wisdom he has attained across the entire country from Kashmir to Kanyakumari 3 times. He left his body just at the age of 32. How great he was! What incredible teachings he gave! How many scriptures did he write in such a short span of time! Then why should we waste our time? Doing useless things, spending time on unnecessary activities. When people get free time, they grow plants, clean the whole house, and keep the house shining like a mirror. But the one that should be kept shining like a mirror is not the house, it is the mind!



Shankaracharya explained many things about Brahman and the greatness of Brahman.

“One must know that Brahman is that which, once seen, has nothing else to be seen, that which, once attained has no necessity for rebirth; and that which, once known, has nothing else to be known”.

“One must know that Brahman is that after attaining which there is no further benefit to be attained; after experiencing whose comfort there is no other comfort to be sought; and after gaining whose knowledge there remains no other knowledge to be attained.”

“One should meditate upon Brahman that which is neither subtle nor gross, neither short nor tall, unborn, unchanging, formless, attributeless (without qualities), without color, and without name.”

“Butter is pervading throughout milk (it means butter is present through the milk), similarly, Brahman pervades everything. All objects are pervaded by the Brahman. All actions are happening through that Brahman.”

Moreover, know that which is non-dual, is of ever blissful nature, and is one - that is Brahman.

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