

Jaiṅva Dharma

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Chapter Eighteen

Nitya-dharma: Sambandha,
Abhidheya and Prayojana

Q-7

Vrajanātha, “Are there scriptural evidences repudiating the māyāvāda school of thought?”

A-7

Raghunātha dāsa Bābājī, “The entire Vedic scriptures present strong proofs denouncing māyāvāda philosophy.”

After scouring the Vedas, the torchbearers of the māyāvāda school have come up with just four seemingly substantive statements, which they have inventively labelled as mahā-vākya, great dictums:

“Firstly, in the Chāndogya Upaniṣad, 3.14.1:

sarvaṁ khalv idaṁ brahma

“The phenomenal world is an external manifestation of Brahman and is non-different from Him.’

“And also in the Brhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad, 4.4.19, and the Katha Upaniṣad, 2.1.11:

neha nānāsti kiñcana

“Brahman is free from any material distinctions.”

“Secondly, in the Aitareya Upaniṣad, 1.5.3:

prajñānam brahmā

“Prajñā, pure knowledge, is transcendental and is of the same spiritual substance as Brahman.”

“Thirdly, in the Chāndogya Upaniṣad, 6.8.7:

tat tvam asi śvetaketo

“O Śvetaketo, you are that, Brahman.’

“Fourthly, in the Bṛhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad, 1.4.10:

aham brahmāsmi

“I, the jīva soul, am of the same nature as Brahman.’

“According to the first mahā-vākya, this material world and the jīvas are all Brahman—nothing exists outside Brahman.

The nature of Brahman has been described in the Svetāśvatara Upaniṣad, 6.8, as follows:

na tasya kāryam karam ca vidyate
na tat-samaś cābhyadhikaś ca dṛśyate
parāsyā śaktir vividhaiva śrūyate
svābhāvīkī jñāna-bala-kriyā ca

“The Supreme Lord never requires the assistance of material senses to accomplish His works because He neither possesses a material body, nor material senses.

His body is completely spiritual.



Therefore, His physical presence is not limited like a material body—He is simultaneously present everywhere with His beautiful spiritual form.

He is in Vṛndāvana, His beauty blossoming in fresh youthfulness, dallying in eternal pastimes, and, at the same moment, He is fully present throughout His creation.

②

Nothing or no one is equal to or greater than He is, because He is full of acintya-śakti. His potency is defined as acintya because the human intellect is unable to fathom Her position.

Parā-śakti, His supreme absolute potency, is another designation for His acintya-śakti.

Although this acintya-śakti is one, She is nevertheless manifest in manifold magnificence, known as jñāna, cognition; bala, power; and kriyā, activity.

“Brahman and His energies are one, as substantiated in this verse.

Here śakti is described as svābhāvikī, an effortless and inherent part of the Supreme Lord, though it is also vividha, variegated.

Since, śaktimān, the possessor of potency, i.e. Brahman, and śakti, the potency of Brahman, are defined as non-different, this certainly implies that everything is one with Brahman.

However, when we exclusively examine the material world, Brahman and His śakti apparently have two separate identities, and thus variety becomes prominent.

Therefore, the Kaṭhopanīṣad, 2.13, and Svetāśvatara Upanīṣad, 6.10, comment:

nityo nityānām cetanaś cetanānām
eko bahūnām yo vidadhāti kāmān

“The Supreme Lord is eternal and the other living beings are eternal. The Supreme Lord is cognizant and the other living beings are cognizant. The difference is that the Supreme Lord is supplying all the necessities of life for the many other living entities.”

“This verse of the śruti, the Vedas, confirms the eternal diversity of Brahman and His numerous eternal expansions.”

“Now let us examine the second so-called mahā-vākya statement of the śruti, Aitareya Upaniṣad, 1.5.3:

...prajñānam brahman...

“Prajñā, pure knowledge, is transcendental and is of the same spiritual substance as Brahman.”

“This verse equates the prajñānam with Brahman, however the śruti, Bṛhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad, 4.4.21, clarifies by defining prajñānam as prema-bhakti, as noted in this verse:

tam eva dhīro vijñāya prajñām kurvīta brāhmaṇaḥ

“An intelligent equipoised person who has realized Brahman must endeavour to know the Supreme Absolute Truth, the Personality of Godhead, and surrender unto Him with loving devotion.”

③

“Now the third mahā-vākya of the Chāndogya Upaniṣad, 6.8.7:

...tat tvam asi śvetaketo...

“O Śvetaketo, you are that.”

“This statement teaches that Brahman is equal with śakti.

The Bṛhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad, 3.8.10, elaborates upon this subject:

yo vā etad akṣaram gārgy aviditvāsmāl lokāt praiti sa kṛpanah
ya etad akṣaram gārgi viditvāsmāl lokāt praiti sa brāhmaṇah

“The twice-born brāhmaṇa who after receiving the sacred thread does not
immerse himself into the study of the Vedas, but busies himself with less
important texts and subject matters, will very soon in this life-time along with
his family acquire the lowly qualities of a śūdra.’

“A person who realizes the actual truth of tat tvam asi ultimately attains devotional service to the Supreme Lord and becomes a true practising brāhmaṇa.

④

“Now the fourth mahā vākya of the Brhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad, 1.4.10:

...aham brahmāsmi...

“I, the jīva soul, am of the same nature as Brahman.’

“The knowledge displayed in this text if misused and not dovetailed to seek out the Supreme Lord and surrender unto Him is severely castigated in the Īsopaniṣad, verse 12:

andham tamaḥ praviśanti ye 'sambhūtim upāsate
tato bhūya iva te tamo ya u sambhūtyām ratāḥ

“Those who are engaged in the culture of nescient activities shall enter into
the darkest region of ignorance. Worst still are those, who are engaged in the
so-called culture of knowledge, māyāvāda.’

“The purport is that a person who is ignorant of his spiritual identity as a
result of engrossment in nescient material activities and sensual pursuits is
cast into the darkness of ignorance.

However, others, even after having dissipated such nescience, who do not realize that the soul is the servitor part and parcel of the Supreme Transcendence and thus foolishly consider themselves as Brahman, the Supreme, are hurled down to an even worse and darker hell.

“The Vedas are immensely voluminous.

Their exact essence can only be extracted by scrutinizing every single śloka from each of the Upaniṣads, Purāṇas, and so on.

Isolated and out-of-context statements cannot present a clear picture, but rather distort the real meaning.

Ultimately, therefore, Śrī Caitanya tooth-combed the entire Vedic literature and formulated His most sublime transcendental teachings, presenting the most elevated philosophy of acintya-bhedābheda, that the jīva and matter are simultaneously one with and distinct from the Supreme Lord, Śrī Hari.”

Vrajanātha, “Master, kindly substantiate how this philosophy of acintya-bhedābheda is properly rooted in the Vedas.”

Raghunātha dāsa Bābājī, “First of all, here is a collection of ślokas from the Vedas describing the abheda, inherent similarity, between the Supreme Lord and His śakti, in the Chāndogya Upaniṣad, 3.14.1: