CHAPTER - V

BRAHMAN
In the bhāṣya on the first Brahma Sūtra it has been said by Śaṅkara that he who desires to know Brahman must undertake an inquiry concerning Brahman, following the study of the Upaniṣadic texts. But Brahman is not known in any other way, except through the Veda. Why will then anyone desire to know Brahman? If Brahman is known from the Upaniṣadic sentences, he who studies them will know it and then he will have no further desire to know it. On the other hand, if anyone has not studied the Vedānta, then Brahman remains unknown to him and nobody can yearn after the unknown.

Attempts to answer this question are made in the following manner by the Advaitins. It is true that without the Upaniṣads nobody could know Brahman. Similarly, the Mīmāṃsā school also would have to accept that nobody knows anything about heaven through empirical experience; yet when we come across the words 'heaven' or 'sacrificial post' (yūpa) in the Veda, we guess their meaning from the context in which they occur. In the same way, when we first come across the word 'Brahman', we assume it to have some meaning or other, as the sentences in which it occurs do not seem to be those of a lunatic. Its meaning becomes clearer when we observe the syntactical
connection of this word with other familiar words in the vedic sentences. Etymology and grammar also come to our aid. For instance, an Upanisadic text says, 'Reality, Knowledge and Infinity are Brahman'. The first Brahma-sūtra says, 'Then, therefore, the desire to know Brahman' (Athāto Brahma-jiñāsa). We cannot understand the word Brahman here unless we take it to mean that it is a real thing which is of the nature of consciousness, free from all limitations and which is to be known because it is the highest End. Etymologically, Brahman is derived from a root which signifies 'greatness', because no other word limits that sense. So we further know that Brahman is free from the limitations of space, time and things.

Through the amplification of this meaning known from etymology, the Advaita says, we begin to know more and more about Brahman. We find greatness predicated of persons who excel others in genius or power and are free from the shortcomings of others. Brahman being the greatest thing of all, cannot have any defects such as 'limited substantiality', 'inertness' etc., and is the highest End. Thus when we come across the word Brahman, with the help of etymology, we can attach some meaning
to it, and later can amplify this meaning.

It may be that a conception so arrived at through etymology shows only that the existence of such a thing is possible and does not establish that there is such a thing. But if we once know that the existence of such a thing is possible, then we can begin an investigation about it. Inquiry or discussion is possible about a conceivable thing only. A self-contradiction, such as 'the barren woman's son', is inconceivable and no discussion can proceed about it. As the conception of Brahman involves no self-contradiction, its possibility is shown.

To the criticism that an unknown thing could not be discussed, since no one would desire to know it, the Vedānta replies that Brahman is not an 'obscure thing'; for the Upaniṣad says that 'Brahman is this self' and in the form 'I am', the self is evident to the whole world. As Brahman is not entirely unknown, it can form a topic for discussion. It cannot be said that because Brahman is the Self which is universally known, it needs no discussion. Everyone has a notion of 'I', but its specific nature is not generally known. The materialists say that 'I' refers to the body and
its functions there being nothing else. The nihilists say that 'I' is a void, while subjective idealists say that it is a stream of momentary cognitive states. To decide which of these several views is true and maintained by the Veda, inquiry is necessary. So the Advaitins conclude, though the Upanishads tell us about Brahman, inquiry is necessary in order to refute contrary views and dispel doubts.¹

The conclusion that Brahman can never be described, but can only be shown somehow approximately is clearly brought out by Śaṅkara. He says that Brahman is so unique that no words at all are appropriate for denoting it; but since somehow it must be talked of terms drawn from the commonsense and philosophical levels of language have to be used. 'Being' and 'knowledge' are terms drawn from language at the philosophical level, while terms such as 'cause' and 'source' are drawn from the scientific level. But as any one of these terms by itself is misleading and does not give a complete idea, they are used conjunctively, such that one term serves as an adjective of another or in other words qualifies the other. They either

¹ VPS, pp. 635-640.
elevate our conception of Brahman or remove from our conception all finiteness and limitation e.g. 'infinite' is used in conjunction with 'knowledge' and 'knowledge' in conjunction with 'reality' and 'pure' in conjunction, with 'being'. The phrase 'eternal infinite knowledge' is a logical impropriety and by this very impropriety it serves to show the logical uniqueness of Brahman, by its striking oddness the phrase preserves as well as reveals to some extent the great mystery of Brahman. It preserves the mystery because we have no idea as to what 'eternal knowledge' is, though we know what 'knowledge' is; and it reveals, because the uniqueness of Brahman from all 'objects' and all empirical 'subjects' is effectively shown. So it is a nivartaka and fulfilment of this function i.e. to distinguish a thing from all other things is the aim of a definition. It is however, Śaṅkara's opinion that the best way of speaking about Brahman is the Netivāda for the logic of Netivāda does not involve any superimposition.

More light on this problem is thrown by what Vidyāranya has said about it. He introduces the problem in this way. Many of the other schools of Hindu philosophy maintain that all sentences are relational.
For example, the sentence 'bring the cow' relates to an act and an agent; the sentence 'sacrifice with ghee' is based on the expectancy of some unseen result (heaven) and the sentence 'the lotus is blue' posits the difference and non-difference of a quality and what possesses it. Even in the case of sentences, which have for their content a single thing, gender and number are unavoidable. Then how can be there any sentence about Brahman, which has no attributes, action and relations?

Vidyāranya, while accepting that sentences are relational, maintains that Upanisadic sentences are able to posit the one indivisible substance either directly or by implication or through positing of adjuncts. Some examples will illustrate this. There is a text which says 'Brahman is pure cognition and bliss'. Now cognition and bliss are mental modes, but we cannot understand Brahman to be a mental mode, because another sentence maintains its eternity. Since phases of the mind cannot be eternal, we must here understand Brahman to be of the essence of consciousness and 'desirable'; for the text 'Brahman is bliss' implies that Brahman is 'desirable'. Thus to some extent directly and also by implication, these sentences

1. VPS, p.748.

2. किन्त्रेविश्वायः तत्त्वयोगिष्ठ्याः वासुकिमकर्मावत्र जगत्क्रेकर्मसंयुक्तविन्यासं शतिपाद्योऽधि।

ibid, p.748.
indicate Brahman. Words like 'one', 'real', 'infinite', when applied to Brahman, imply the negation of internal variety, illusoriness and finitude. Brahman, together with the adjunct of the phenomenal world, which is not describable, may be spoken of as 'omniscient' and 'omnipotent'. The words 'reality', 'knowledge', and 'infinity' have, no doubt, different meanings, but they refer to one indivisible thing, because their purport is unity. Each of them respectively negates unreality, materiality and multiplicity. The negation of multiplicity does not raise any problem, because multiplicity, which is not describable either as real or unreal cannot affect the absolute reality of non-duality.

Vidyārāṇya poses another question. Why should not the text 'Brahman is consciousness and infinity' be taken to mean that Brahman has these qualities? He replies that it cannot mean that because in Brahman there is no distinction of substance and attribute, nor has Brahman any internal variety.

Now Vidyārāṇya takes up the other problem already mentioned, namely, how are Brahman sentences non-relational? He says that sentences such as 'Brahman is reality,

1. VPS, p.749.
2. न जस्मिन्दोयण्यवर्धेन तद्भवेन वा परमार्थ-ममस्म अद्वैतम् खलिते बोलिते। ibid, pp. 749-750.
3. ibid, p.757.
knowledge, and infinity* are meaningful and refer to one indivisible thing, because they are definitions like the sentence 'the most shining (thing) is the moon'. At night, any one who does not know the denotation of the word 'moon' may ask another, pointing to the sky, 'which among these shining objects is called the moon?' The other man, desiring only to state the word's denotation may reply, 'The most shining one is the moon.' These two words - 'shining' and 'most' - explicitly mean 'shining' and 'superlativity' but in the present case they secondarily imply an individual thing - the moon. The general explicit meaning of both these words is excluded and an individual shining object to which these terms are secondarily applicable is shown to be the present explicit meaning of the word 'moon'. Thus for all the three words - 'most', 'shining' and 'moon' - there is an identical sense. Both the words 'shining' and 'most' are necessary; the former to exclude things such as the clouds and the latter to exclude the stars, which shine, but not so brightly. Vidyāranya says that in sentences such as: 'Reality, knowledge and infinity are Brahman', the words 'reality' etc. have their own different general meanings, but as used here all of them have one impartite sense.

1. ibid, p.757.
2. रूढ़ सत्यानात्मकाके स्वभावतात्त्व योजनीया। ibid, p.757.
(b) **Brahman: Essential and Accidental Characteristics.**

A thing may be defined in two ways. We may state its essential nature or we may distinguish it from the rest by mentioning its accidental attributes. A house may be defined in terms of its essential character; or it may be demarcated from the rest by the accidental qualification of a crow perching on its roof. That is the essential nature (**svārūpa-lakṣaṇa**) of a thing which is present in that thing so long as it lasts and distinguishes it from the rest. And that is the qualification per accident (**tāṭastha-lakṣaṇa**) of a thing which remains in that thing only for a time and distinguishes it from the rest.

Brahman, the absolutely real is defined in both the ways. The essential characteristics of Brahman are asserted by the Śrutis, 'Brahman is truth, knowledge, infinite'; 'knowledge is bliss'; 'what is infinite is bliss, there is no bliss in the finite'. The causality of the universe is the qualification per accident of Brahman. Brahman is the cause of the origination, sustentation and dissolution of the universe. Vidyāraṇya says, 'Being the creator, maintainer and destroyer of the world is an essential characteristic of Ṣiva but

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1. VF, p. 281.
2. ibid, p.281.
4. VPS, p.643.
5. Tait. Up.III.1,4, Brahmāsūtra, I.1.2.
an accidental characteristic of pure Brahman.¹

Vidyāraṇya further maintains that the nature of Brahman cannot be known through its accidental characteristics alone without its essential characteristics. Creation, maintenance and destruction of the world are the effects of Brahman, the cause. It is shown by its essential and accidental characters. Creation and the like are related to Īśvara or Brahman, the cause qualified by Māyā, since they are not related to pure Brahman.² The Śrutī says, "Brahman resolved, 'I shall become many". The first part of it proves Brahman to be the efficient cause and the second part proves It to be the material cause of the world.

Bhāskara maintains that there is no substance devoid of attributes. Vidyāraṇya criticizes Bhāskara's view. Let there be no substance devoid of attributes. But Brahman is not a substance, for there is no evidence for it. The argument that Brahman is a substance, because It is an inherent cause of the world is invalid, since this view is the Nyāya view (āraṃbhavāda) which is rejected by the Advaita Vedāntin. The argument that Brahman is a substance because It is the material cause of the world is false.

1. Śrīla Vidyāraṇya. VPS, p.643.
2. VPS, p.645.
since in that case a quality and the like would be the material cause of their properties of being known, being expressed by words and the like. It is contended that the attribute is a property and that there is no entity without a property. This contention is false since the Advaitin admits the attribute of consciousness to be devoid of a property. If consciousness had a property, it would lead to infinite regress. So Bhāskara's denial of a substance devoid of attributes is nothing but intolerance of the Advaitin's view. Hence Brahman is of the nature of knowledge and bliss. This view is proved by Vedic testimony.¹

Vidyāranya shows that Brahman is partless (Niṣkala). If it has parts, he asks whether both parts and whole Brahman are self-manifest or whether either of them is self-manifest. In the first alternative, both of them not being objects of each other's knowledge, neither can know Brahman to be composed of parts. In the second alternative, Brahman can not be said to be a whole of parts like the Self and a jar. It is contended that Śrutis assert Brahman to be both devoid of parts and action and also possessed of action because of Its controlling the

¹ VPS, p.680.
individual souls. The contention is false, because though Brahman is really inactive, its activity is due to Māyā. So partless Brahman is not modified into the world, but appears to be the world appearance because of Māyā.

The Śruti says, "Ātman is unborn, ubiquitous and eternal." Mutability is contradictory to eternity. Brahman is immutable, for It is partless.

Vācaspatai Miśrä avers that Ātman or Brahman Itself is the ontological reality of all phenomenal appearance. The world appearance and empirical selves are shown by the beginningless nescience. They are ontologically unreal. It is contended that the Śrutis assert Brahman to be the omniscient, omnipotent cause of the world, Supreme Self of all, all-knowing, all-experiencing, all-desiring, all-tasting, all-smelling, and the like and that therefore, the world is real. Vidyāranya urges that the contention is false, because all are conditioned by the adjuncts of false appearances and indefinable. The immanent (Saguna) Brahman as the Supreme Self of the world appearance is asserted by the Śruti to imply that the worship of such Brahman will

1. ˈतं क श्रव्यं भ्रूम न परस्यात्, के तु विविधते हृतं \(\text{स्दुर्भौं} \) \(\text{पशौं} \) श्रीमक्षुः। \(\text{ibid, p.681.}\)

2. \(\text{र्म जया ममानू एतु} \) \(\text{र्तिर्ज्ञात्यं परशामानिविश्वेऽ} \) \(\text{केरस्प्रविधायाना} \) \(\text{कूटस्थल्यं व भ्रूमेष निरस्थवतस्यायनं त्रू} \) \(\text{ibid, p.674.}\)

3. \(\text{सत्कायं के पृष्ठक्षत्यं भ्रूमेव तत्वमात्मा} \) \(\text{पृष्ठक्षत्यादति} \) \(\text{विद्यायनसेवं} \) \(\text{परमार्थसनं} \) \(\text{Bhāmatī, I.iii.4.}\)
ultimately lead to the immediate experience of the transcendent (nirguna) Brahman. The immanent Brahman as the omniscient and omnipresent cause of the world is the form attributed to the transcendent Brahman. The Śrutis regarding saguna Brahman do not conflict with those concerning nirguna Brahman, because the latter do not prove the existence of saguna Brahman. The two sets of Śutus do not contradict each other, because the Śrutis asserting Brahman invested with attributes are intended for those aspirants’ worship of saguna Brahman who are incapable of worshipping nirguna Brahman and because they do not at all prove Its existence. The words ‘omniscience’, ‘omnipotence’, and the like signify attributes limited by the adjuncts of phenomenal appearances which are indefinable and unreal.

The Śruti says, ’Brahman is different from being known and from being unknown’. So it denies the knowability of Brahman. But, though Brahman is unknowable, according to Vidyārānya, It is said to be knowable in a secondary sense by the intuitive knowledge produced by the vedic testimony associated with the consciousness manifested by a mode of the internal organ modified into the form of

1. VPS, p.331.
2. न व ब्रह्मात्र निम्तुप्रतिपादनेन सप्तर्थाभाष्यातः प्रायोगिकोऽत्वतः तद्भ्रामनाध्येयवाचात्। ibid. p.334.
3. VPS, p.749.
Brahman or infinite consciousness and bliss, which destroys Avidyā and its effects. The Śruti says, "Brahman ought to be seen or intuited by the manas alone". "This subtle Ātman ought to be known"; "Know the Self declared by the Upaniṣads". These texts assert the knowability of Brahman by intending Brahman to be the object of the mental mode modified into the form of one infinite consciousness and bliss by Its mere proximity to the mode imparting Its form to it, as a jar imparts its form to a mental mode which is modified into its form. An insentient object (e.g. a jar) can be invested with a peculiarity (atiśaya) in the form of manifestation produced by a pramāṇa and be an object of knowledge in this sense. But Brahman, being self-manifest, cannot be invested with a peculiarity in the form of manifestation produced by a pramāṇa. So Brahman is not the object of knowledge in the sense that It is not pervaded by the result of knowing. So the Śruti says, 'Brahman is not expressed by words'. But there is no absolute absence of the result of knowing in Brahman because the consciousness of Brahman Itself through the limiting adjunct of manifestation by a mental mode is figuratively said to be the result of knowing. In a jar also the
manifestation of the consciousness of Brahman through the adjunct of a mental mode modified into its form is said to be the result of knowing. Thus Brahman is not knowable in a primary sense but It is knowable in a figurative sense.¹ 

¹ VPS, p.797.
Identity between Jīva & Brahman

It may be affirmed that as a matter of fact, there is hardly any philosophical system that assigns to man a higher value than Advaita, while, at the same time, it recognizes, objectively, his existential predicament with all its hazards and limitations. Taken in its entirety, the picture of man unfolded by the Upaniṣads invites attention to his ontological security and integrity. From the point of view of this boundless world, man may appear to be a mere trifle, a veritable nothing and all his strivings for self-realization indiscusly futile. Nevertheless, the character and fruitfulness of his efforts to comprehend the worlds without and within proclaim this spiritual power. Man's ceaselessly expanding and fruitful pursuit of knowledge justifies the application to man himself of the Upaniṣadic dictum satyāṁ jñānaṁ anantāṁ.

In the earlier Upaniṣads such as the Brhadāraṇyaka and the Chāndogya, it is maintained that essentially man and God are identical. This oneness of being is also indicated in the Śruti 'tāt Tvaam āni' & 'aham bhūtah amāni'. The axiom establishes the identity of being and directs us to think of the identity of existence underlying Jīva & Īśvara the words 'tāt', and 'tva.', imply the individual soul and the cosmic

2. Tait. Up. II. 1.1
soul and the word 'asi' points to the identity of their being. The axiom is important in its import in as much as it points to identity exclusive of difference. This does not prove any relation between Divinity and Humanity, nor any particular synthesis, but it seeks to wake us up from the deep slumber to realise the truth of the oneness of existence and shake off the fetters of a false personality due to innate ignorance.

But in the later Upanishads there are passages that set the two apart, as though they are different. How does the Advaitin deal with these dualistic passages which are no less authoritative than those teaching identity? In the Śvetāvatara e.g. in several contexts, God and Jīva are sharply contrasted. Let us consider the celebrated simile of the two beautifully plumed and inseparable birds on the trees of life. One of them pecks at the fruits, sweet and bitter, while the other majestically looks on unconcerned. This seems to represent the normal relation between God and Jīva in empirical life. Here Viśiṣṭādvaita insists that as man alone is the subject of experience, cognitive, conative and emotive, his difference from God is real. Moreover, that they are at once similar and inseparable suits the Viśiṣṭādvaitin for whom God is sinless, whereas man, though capable of ultimate liberation, is parviscient, sinsmitten

and grief-stricken. Saṅkara takes this description as referring not to the ontological status either of God or man, but to the empirical fact of life in embodiment. Man and God having the same conditioning medium of manifestation namely Māyā or Avidyā are present in the living body, but man alone is subject to experiences, pleasant and painful, as he is conditioned by psychological nescience, desire and actions. Eternally pure, aware and free, God is a mere witness of temporal life. Nevertheless, by his mere presence He enables the Jīva to act and experience. This Upaniṣadic passage further points out that while ontically man is divine, in empirical fact he is a bhoktā or subject to vicissitudes. The Upaniṣadic explanation is that the lapse is due to association of the pure spirit with the body and mind. Just as fire and air conform to what they operate on, without suffering any real modification, so the non-dual Spirit remains intact, despite manifold embodiments; as the sun, the eye of the whole world is unaffected by the deficiencies of sight of living beings, so as God unaffected by the finitude of conscious centres or Ātmas.

Apart from these two types of Upaniṣads emphasized

3. B.G.IX.45.
by the Advaitins and Dvaitins respectively, there is a third in which God is represented as dwelling within the Jīva as his immortal, inner, controller. BU III.3-23 describes God as dwelling in all empirical entities including the Jīvas. The Viśiṣṭādvaitins find in this ghaṭakaśruti a clear enunciation of their characteristic doctrine of God being the self and cit and acit, living beings and matter, being his composite body. The Advaitins take it as a statement of the status of God as Sākṣin or the witness-self in every man, inspiring him to lead his empirical life. As a matter of fact, no doubt, man is not aware of his inner controller, his real Self; but this does not imply that there are two kinds of spirits, Jīva and Isvara.

Thus, in the Upaniṣads, there poises of the spirit may be distinguished (i) the unqualified Brahman; (ii) the qualified Brahman or God; (iii) the Jīva involved in actions and subject to their consequences. Now we are to see, how are the God or Brahman and the Jīva related?

1. Rāmānuja’s bhāṣya on B.S., 1.4.22.
2. सर्वरूप-रूपतंबाल परस्पर पल्लविकर्षित व तदेव बल्ल, न स्वतः। शाकके श्रवणम्
3. Śaṅkara’s bhāṣya on Brh.Up.III.vii.3
Vidyāranya has unmistakably clarified the Advaitic position on the question of the relation between Jīva and Brahman. He refers to the views of Bhāskara, whose metaphysical position may be designated as bhedabhedavada or identity in difference. Bhāskara maintains that the individual soul is both different from and identical with Brahman. Vidyāranya refutes this doctrine by adducing the following arguments against it. The Jīva is not related to Brahman as an individual to a genus or as a quality of a substance or as an effect of a cause or as a qualified state of an essence or as a part of a whole because there is no evidence for it. Difference and identity are nowhere to be found in the absence of these relations. The Bhagavad-gītā asserts the Jīva to be a part of God. But this view is contradicted by the Śruti, 'Brahman is partless'. The Śruti, 'All creatures are a quarter of Brahman', shows the finitude of the souls. Otherwise Brahman, a whole would be produced by its parts, the souls. Bhāskara may argue that Brahman is really partless, but that Brahman limited by the adjuncts of buddhi and the like comes to have parts. This view also does not make the difference

1. VPS, p.790.
2. ibid, p.791.
3. ibid, p.791.
5. Śvet. Up. VI.19.
between the Jīva and Brahman real, for partless ether cannot be cut into parts by the stroke of a sword. If it be argued that the limiting adjuncts of the internal organ and the like can really divide Brahman into parts or Jīvas, then why should Brahman create the limiting adjuncts and bring about an evil? Brahman cannot create the internal organs for the sake of the Jīvas, for the division of It into Jīvas is not possible before the creation of the internal organs and the like. Nor can merits and demerits, potencies of the nescience, divide Brahman into the Jīvas, since Bhāskara admits the internal organs etc. alone to be the limiting adjuncts of Brahman.

It may be thought that difference-cum-non-difference between the Jīva and Brahman are similar to the difference and non-difference that exist between, say, a blue lily and a yellow fruit. Though difference is natural between the lily and the fruit, they are non-different in their generic nature as substances. But this way of thinking is not valid. Between the Jīva and Brahman there is declared apposition in "This Self is Brahman." Such an apposition is not possible between the lily and the fruit. It would be absurd to say "The blue lily is the yellow fruit". However much he may try, the

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1. VPS, p.792.
2. न व जीवार्यं तद्वृद्धः: तद्वृद्धः: ग्रंजीयविभागाविद्यः: ibid.
3. न व क्षेत्रहितं ज्ञात: अतः कर्मधीपमेव जीवविभागाविद्यः: ज्ञात: ibid.
5. VPS, p.792.
bhedabhedavādin will not be able to make his position intelligible. Bhāskara may argue that difference between the Jīva and Brahman is neither accomplished nor beginningless but due to a limiting adjuncts and is manifested in Brahman. Then difference between them is an illusion, an attribution of what does not exist in Brahman. Bhāskara's contention that difference proved by a valid pramāṇa cannot be an illusion, is false. There cannot be real difference between the Lord and the Jīva since perception etc. are not evidence therefor. Perception is not the evidence, since the Jīva and the Lord are Super-sensuous. Perception is dependent on sense-contact and sense-contact is not possible either with the Jīva or with Īśvara. Nor can the mind without the help of sense-contact apprehend the difference between the Lord and the Jīva, since it is an auxiliary to pramāṇa and not an independent means of valid knowledge. Similarly, inference is not an evidence for the difference of the Jīva from the Lord. The Advaitin admits empirical difference caused by nescience; and hence no purpose would be served by an inference which establishes adventitious difference. As for real difference that is not possible to be inferred,

1. ibid, p.793.
2. ibid, p.876.
since there is inertness as an extraneous adjunct conditioning all inferences formulated for establishing the difference of the self. Nor is presumption an evidence in respect of difference, since there is nothing unintelligible in the absence of real difference. If the Lord were really different from the Jīva, there would result non-selfhood for him. Nor does non-cognition establish the difference of the Jīva from the Lord. For anupalabdhi (non-cognition) to be possible, the mind must have the non-cognition of what is capable of being cognized; but the Lord is not capable of being cognized by the mind. The evidence of scripture is definitely against difference. Śruti condemns difference in such texts like, "Then, he who worships a different God, saying 'He is different, I am different, he does not know,' " From death to death he goes who sees difference here as it were," and "There are no differents whatever here." Bhāskara may contend that difference being stressed makes the distinction between bondage and liberation possible. Then bondage may as well be due to relation of Brahman to the nescience and release may as well be due to the destruction of the relation of

Brahman to the nescience as the Advaita Vedāntin maintains. Bhāskara may argue that the existence and the non-existence of a relation of the nescience to the same entity — Brahman is self-contradictory. This contention is false, for Bhāskara himself admits that difference and identity exist together in the same entity. Bhāskara may maintain that identity is not the absence of difference but that it is some other property. The contention is false, since even then difference and identity are contradictory to each other as they negate each other. If Bhāskara is afraid of contradiction between relation of Avidyā to Brahman and the destruction of its relation to Brahman, he should not admit both difference and identity between the Jīva and Brahman. If he admits difference and identity between them, he should not be intolerant of the Advaitist’s doctrine that the Jīva is a reflection of Brahman, the archetype, in the nescience related to It. Further, there is no example to prove that the Jīva, a part, being bound, Brahman, a whole, remains unbound. When a part of a cloth is polluted by the touch of an impure thing, the whole cloth is polluted.

1. वेदांत भावभावने पौरेक त्वकर्णम् ।

VPS, p.794.
and washed. So Brahman being identical with the Jīvas, cannot remain free from bondage and must be tainted by the flaws of all souls according to Bhāskara. So the attainment of such tainted Brahman cannot be the supreme end of life and scriptural instructions become useless. The limiting adjuncts of some souls are partly annulled by their knowledge and meditation, but all limiting adjuncts cannot be annulled in this way. So Brahman cannot be dissociated from all blemishes of the souls.

According to the Advaita Vedāntin, Brahman is flawless. Dirtiness of a reflection does not taint its archetype. Liberation is attained by a soul when its Āvidyā is destroyed, as all objects imagined in the state of dream are destroyed on waking from sleep. Bhāskara may contend that both difference and identity between the Jīva and Brahman must be admitted because if the Jīva were identical with Brahman the words 'that' and 'thou' in the Śruti "That thou art," would be useless. This argument is false because if that were so, bondage to the body and the senses would not be destroyed by the knowledge of the meaning of this text. Is bondage destroyed by reasoning or by scriptural testimony? The first alternative is

1. नीयथ नीयत्रेव ब्रह्मकेव - - - - - - - - -
   तत्परिधाना ब्रह्मज्ञेयस्मुपयोङ्चित रेते। VPS, p.800.
not possible because according to Bhāskara difference and non-difference between the Īśvara endowed with a body etc. and Brahman are real and because for that reason bondage to a body and the like cannot be destroyed by reasoning about the Śruti "Thou art". Nor is the second alternative possible because the Śruti is a mere eulogy in that it declares identity between the Īśvara and Brahman. Bhāskara may argue that the purport of Vedic testimony here refers to the cessation of bondage to the body and the like in the state of release. Yet if the difference between the Īśvara and Brahman does not cease in the state of release, the adjunct of the body, the senses and the internal organ must be admitted to account for continuity of bondage to them in the state of release. Then this state of release does not differ from bondage. If the difference part of the Īśvara ceases in the state of release, then also it is not terminated by the knowledge of the Reality. Nor can works terminate the knowledge of the difference - part of the Īśvara because it contradicts Vedic testimony and because Bhāskara admits that Vedic testimony proves difference and identity between the Īśvara and Brahman at all times. Nor can
Bhāskara’s doctrine of 'Bhedābheda', explain the meanings of the words 'That' and 'thou' in the Śruti 'That thou art'! Is the Jīva denoted by the word 'thou', the whole made of the parts 'difference' and 'identity', or a collection of the two parts or two parts themselves? In the first alternative, if the identity part is Brahman, then Brahman becomes a part of the Jīva and the Jīva becomes a whole composed of parts. If the identity-part is not Brahman, then there is absolute difference between the Jīva and Brahman. The second alternative is not possible since the Jīva would then be a non-entity in that a collection different from its members can not be ascertained. In the third alternative, the Jīva is either the identity-part itself or it is the difference-part itself or it is each of the two parts. If it is the two parts, they are either non-different from each-other or both different and non-different from each-other. The first subalternative is not possible, because if that were true, Brahman Itself would become the Jīva. The second sub-alternative is not possible since in that case the Jīva would be absolutely different from Brahman. The third subalternative is not possible, because in that case each Jīva would

1. Ibid, p. 801.
become two. The fourth alternative is not possible since in that case Brahman Itself would become the Jīva and bondage and release would not be possible.

The fifth alternative is not possible, because it will lead to infinite regress of difference and identity and because scriptural instruction will become useless. The identity part cannot be tainted by the flaw of Avidyā, because it is of the nature of Brahman. So it does not require scriptural instruction. Nor does the difference-part require scriptural instruction because it cannot experience 'I am Brahman'. In the state of release the difference-part cannot be related to Brahman by identity for difference-part cannot have identity in that difference and identity are contradictory to each-other.

The difference part cannot be tainted by the flaw of Avidyā for difference does not exist before the creation of the adjuncts. Bhāskara may contend that the Jīva is by itself a difference part or whole independently of its limiting adjuncts. The contention if false, because that part being destroyed, the Jīva is destroyed and none remains to be instructed by the scripture. The identity-part or Brahman being eternally released, it does not require scriptural instruction. If release also be said to be both

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1. Ibid, p. 802.
different and non-different from Brahman, then this view contradicts the Śruti "The knower of Brahman becomes Brahman Itself", and release does not differ from bondage. Both difference-cum-non-difference between the Jīva and Brahman are not necessary to account for heaven and hell, bondage & release. They can partly be explained by difference. Difference and identity both cannot exist together in the state of release in the same entity. Difference exists in distinct entities possessing difference and cannot exist in one and the same non-different entity. Vedic testimony denies difference-cum-nondifference between the Jīva and Brahman. Besides it condemns difference between them and declares non-difference in such texts like "This is thy self, the internal ruler, immortal."

Discussing the views of the three ancient teachers, Āśmarathya, Auḍulomi and Kāṣakṛtśna on the metaphysical status of man, Śaṅkara affirms that Kāṣakṛtśna represents the right upaniṣadic doctrine viz. man is the embodied paramātman or God. Āśmarathya would introduce a causal connection between God and man while Auḍulomi argues for

2. न व श्रमात्रमडवूँ भक्तिश्रमशास्त्रपने गृहातीतान्वरीत्ये, प्रेमनव ब्रार्तिसद्यः। VPS, p.803.
4. B.S.I. iv. 20-22.
5. B.S.S.B.I. iv.22.
a bhedabheda relation between the two. In truth, the names denoting man and God are synonymous.

In short, we may say that when the identity of God and the individual is spoken of this identity is between the two as conceived of without the limiting adjuncts. When associated with the limiting adjuncts, they differ from each other as much as a servant differs from a king or a well from the ocean or an atom from a mountain. The two are asserted to be non-different only when the limiting adjuncts are completely negated. A man is a king so long as he has his kingdom and a servant is a servant so long as he is in service. When the kingdom and the service are gone, there is neither king nor servant.

Scripture says that the limiting adjuncts are accidental and superimposed on Brahman, so reasoning based on scripture must negate them both. From the standpoint of absolute knowledge there is only one Reality, Brahman and there is no difference between God and the soul.

1. श्रेय शास्त्र नाममात्रचेतन बहुपार्थिवेति | Ibid.
2. V.C. 244.
3. Ibid, 245.
4. Ibid, 247.
5. B.G.S.B. XIII, 2.