

Siddhanta-lesa-sangraha

Chapter 1

Topic 2. Discussion of the definition (lakshana) of Brahman.

This discussion is connected with the 'janmaadi' sutra.

1. The meaning of the second sutra is that each of the descriptions, as creator, sustainer, and dissolver is by itself a definition of Brahman because these cannot apply to any other entity. This is the view of the Kaumudikara.

2. The three, creation, sustenance and dissolution together form the definition (and not individually) because only then Brahman becomes the nimitta as well as upadana karanam. Only such a definition can indicate non-dual Brahman by the implied sense, by excluding everything else. Each of these cannot be independently the definition because creation and sustenance indicate only that it is a nimitta karanam, and dissolution indicates only that it is the upadana karanam. This is the view of others.

By the definition of parinama and vivarta it is shown that Brahman is the vivarta-upadana karanam and the effect, universe, is mithya, in the commentary.

The transformation of a thing into another form with the same level of reality is parinama, like milk becoming curd. The transformation into a form of a different level of reality is vivarta, like a rope appearing as a snake. Another definition is- when the effect is of the same nature as the cause it is parinama. When the effect is of a different nature from the cause it is vivarta. Or, parinama is when the effect is non-different from the cause. When the effect, even without being non-different from the cause, cannot be said to exist apart from the cause, it is vivarta. For example, the snake is not non-different from the rope, i.e., it is different, but it has no existence apart from the rope. Thus there are three levels of reality—Brahman is paramarthika, the world is vyavaharika and the snake is pratibhasika.