

Brahmasutra 1.1.4- तत्तु समन्वयात्।

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In this adhikarana there are two varnakas. In the first varnaka the objection of the Bhatta school of Mimamsa is refuted. In the second varnaka the objection of the Prabhakara school of Mimamsa is refuted. This is how this adhikarana has been explained by Brahmavidyabharana. Previous commentators have taken the view that, while the Bhatta view is refuted in the first varnaka, it is the view of the Vrittikara that is refuted in the second varnaka.

The objection of the Bhattas is that there is no such entity as Brahman. The Vedas consist only of injunctions and prohibitions and they cannot be the pramana for any entity called Brahman. The statements in the sruti referring to Brahman are intended only as praise of the jiva.

The Prabhakaras accept nirguna Brahman, but they say that direct knowledge of Brahman cannot by itself give liberation. Liberation is attained only by upasana which is an action.

Only by refuting these views it can be established that the Sastra is the pramana for realization of Brahman.

The objection that the Vedas cannot be the pramana for Brahman is based on Jaimini sutra I.ii.1¹, which says that, since the intention of the Vedas is to enjoin action, those statements in the Vedas which do not enjoin any action do not serve that purpose. The statements in Vedanta are of this nature and so it is claimed that they do not serve the purpose of the Vedas directly. At the same time, since Vedanta is also part of the Vedas, these statements cannot be rejected outright as purposeless. They become purposeful when they are read as supplementary to injunctions, by way of eulogizing the actions enjoined by the injunctions, as stated in Jaimini sutra I.ii.7². A person will not perform a yajna for attaining

¹ आमनायस्य क्रियार्थत्वात् आनर्थक्यं अतदर्थानाम् ।

² विधिना त्वेकवाक्यत्वात् स्तुत्यर्थेन विधीनां स्युः ।

heaven unless he knows that he has a self different from the physical body, which will go to heaven, since the physical body perishes here and cannot go to heaven. The knowledge of such a self is acquired only from Vedanta. Moreover, Vedanta instructs him also about the nature of the deities to whom he has to offer oblations and on whom he has to meditate. Thus Vedanta serves only as a supplementary to the injunctions regarding yajnas and upaasanaa, both of which are actions, upaasanaa being a mental act.

Another objection is that what is already existent can be known by other pramanas also. Brahman being an existing entity, it can be known by other pramanas. If the Vedas reveal only what can be known by other pramanas, then they cease to be the sole means of knowledge of Brahman. Moreover, no purpose is served by the Vedas revealing what can be known by other pramanas. There is nothing to be accepted or rejected in respect of an existing thing and so there is no human goal to be attained by mere statements about an existing thing.

The answer to these objections is that the purport of all the upanishads, as determined by applying the six indicatory signs, is Brahman. (This is dealt with in detail below). Although statements in the nature of arthavada (eulogy) become meaningful only when associated with injunctions, the same cannot be said about statements in the upanishads about Brahman because the knowledge of Brahman does culminate in liberation. Therefore Brahman is known from the upanishads alone.

Vedanta cannot be supplementary to injunctions, but it is actually opposed to the performance of rituals. This is clearly evident from the statement, "Then by what and whom could one see, etc.," (Br.up. II.iv.13) which refutes action, performer and result.

Brahman cannot be known through pramanas such as perception since it has no form, quality, action, etc. It can be known only through the mahavakyas in the upanishads. Though Brahman is not something that can be accepted or rejected, that is no defect because the direct realization of

Brahman itself destroys all sorrow along with its cause. Thereafter there is nothing more to be known.

Prakatarthakara deals with another possible objection. We experience the world as real through perception. The statements of Vedanta are opposed to this experience and so they cannot be valid. The answer is that what is known through perception is not necessarily true. One example is the snake which appears as true until it is realized that there is only a rope. Here a subsequent perception nullifies the earlier one. The moon looks very small, but we know from science that it is very big. The later pramana nullifies what was known by an earlier pramana. This is known as 'apacchedanyaya'³. Thus sruti nullifies what is known by perception.

Prakatarthakara refers to an objection raised by one Kesava that pratyaksha pramana which is free from defect should not be rejected. The answer to this is that the objector himself considers the notion 'I am a man' to be an illusion though it is also supported by perception. The same argument applies to the notion 'I am a doer, enjoyer, etc.' which is contradicted by sruti which, being apaurusheya, is totally free from defect and is not dependent on any other pramana. The description of various devatas is no doubt for the purpose of meditation, but on that account it cannot be said that Brahman is also meant for meditation. Meditation is a mental act and it involves duality. But Brahman is only one and it can neither be accepted nor rejected. After duality has been destroyed by the knowledge of Brahman it cannot arise again. The knowledge that destroys an illusion destroys also the samskara which caused the illusion. For example, after a person has known that what is in front is only a rope, he will no longer even think of a snake as being there. So after the rise of knowledge of Brahman upaasanaa, which involves duality, is not at all possible. Though in other parts of the Veda the statements are authoritative only in association with an injunction, the knowledge of the Self itself culminates in the fruit and so the authoritativeness of the statements giving such knowledge

³ अपच्छेदन्याय

cannot be disputed. Valid knowledge (prama) is defined as that knowledge which has for its object something that is not already known and is uncontradicted (anadhigata-abaadhita-arthavishayaka-jnaanam)⁴. These conditions are clearly fulfilled with regard to statements about the Self and so they are authoritative. The means of knowledge called inference is not resorted to here and so there is no need to depend on an example seen elsewhere. Thus the objection that Brahman is not the purport of Vedanta is refuted.

The fact that Brahman is the purport of the Upanishads is established by applying the six indicatory signs (lingas). These are: (1)the beginning and the conclusion, (2)repetition, (3)originality, (4) benefit, (5)eulogy and (6) logicality. The Sanskrit terms for these are, respectively, *upakramopasamhaara*, *abhyaasa*, *apuurvataa*, *phala*, *arthavaada*, *upapatti*. Out of these six, three relate to the subject-matter and three to the words used. In the first category fall originality, benefit, and logicality. Originality means that it should not be known by any other pramana. Benefit means that there should be some benefit to be attained by this knowledge. Logicality means that that the conclusion arrived at must stand the test of logic. These three are essential ingredients for knowing the purport. The second category consists of the other three, namely, the beginning and the conclusion, repetition, and eulogy. The conclusion should be the same as the proposition enunciated at the beginning. For example, in Pratardana adhikaranam it is said at the beginning, Pratardana asked for the most beneficent for men. At the end are the words 'Bliss, free from aging, immortal'. Thus the beginning and the end show that the purport is Brahman. By repetition the essential teaching is emphasized, as in the repetition of the mahavakya 'Tat tvam asi' which is repeated nine times in Chandogya upanishad. Eulogy indicates that the subject is worth knowing. However, all these three need not be there in every case.

⁴ अनधिगताबाधितार्थविषयकज्ञानं प्रमा ।

Thus the Bhatta view has been refuted and it has been established that the Sastra is the pramana for Brahman. The first varnaka ends here.

In the second varnaka the objection of the Prabhakaras is taken up. They accept attributeless Brahman, but say that knowledge of Brahman cannot by itself remove bondage which is real. Bondage can be removed only by upaasanaa on nirguna Brahman which produces an unseen result.

Sentences are of two kinds: those which enjoin some action, and those which merely describe an existing entity or fact, such "Vayu is the swiftest god". The Prabhakaras say that sentences which merely describe what already exists are not authoritative by themselves, but become purposeful only if they are associated with another sentence enjoining an action. So sentences like 'Brahman is truth, consciousness and infinite' become authoritative only if they are considered as meant for describing Brahman for the purpose of upaasanaa. This is because the object of the Sastra is to instruct people to perform a certain action or to refrain from performing a particular action. So they say that Vedanta enjoins upaasanaa of nirguna Brahman. By this upaasanaa dharma (punya) is attained and this leads to liberation. Just as the Vedas describe the sacrificial post and the ahavaniya fire as a subsidiary of yajna, they describe Brahman as a subsidiary of upaasanaa which is a mental act. Those who know the purport of the Vedas say that the purport is to instruct about action. Therefore it is reasonable to hold that, just as the performance of sacrifices such as agnihotra is laid down as the means for attaining heaven, the performance of upaasanaa on Brahman is laid down as the means for attaining immortality.

The answer to the above objections is that it has already been pointed out that there is a difference between what is desired in the karma kanda and in Vedanta. In the former dharma which is yet to come into being is the object desired, while in the latter the object to be known is Brahman which is always existent. The fruit of the knowledge of dharma, for attaining which action is necessary, is also different from the fruit of the knowledge of Brahman.

The opponent says that it cannot be so, because there are instructions for meditation on Brahman such as, “The Self is verily to be seen”, “Contemplate on the Self alone”, etc. By such meditation there will ensue liberation which is an unseen result. If there is no injunction and if there are only statements of fact such as, “The earth has seven islands”, “The king is going”, etc., they will be futile, since there is nothing to be accepted or rejected.

The Advaitin answers: It is seen that by the mere statement, “This is not a snake, but only a rope”, the fear generated by the illusion is removed. Similarly, here also the wrong notion that one is a transmigrating individual is removed by the statement, “You are not a transmigrating individual”, and thus the statement becomes fruitful.

To this the opponent replies that it is not so, because even those who have heard Vedanta are seen to experience joy, sorrow, etc. Moreover, the sruti says that after hearing one should reflect and meditate. Therefore it follows that sruti is authoritative only as laying down the injunction of meditation on Brahman.

The answer to this is: The fruit of the knowledge of dharma and the fruit of the knowledge of Brahman are quite different. Dharma is action by body, speech and mind as laid down by the sruti and smriti. Adharma is also described in order that it may be avoided. The fruit of the injunctions relating to these is happiness and sorrow which are perceptible and are experienced by the body, speech and mind through the contact of the sense-organs with objects. This is common to all living beings. There are also gradations in happiness, depending on the capacity and the effort put in by each person. Similarly there are gradations in suffering depending upon the extent of unrighteous acts performed by each person. So the sruti says that there can never be cessation of the experience of pleasure and pain as long as there is identification with the body. On the contrary, neither pleasure nor pain touches one who has given up such identification. It therefore follows that liberation, which is non-identification with the body, cannot be the result of the performance of dharma which is the content of injunctions. If non-

identification with the body were the fruit of dharma, the denial of the experience of pleasure and pain in such a state would not be logical. Non-identification with the body is the natural state, as evident from the sruti statement, “The wise man, knowing that the self is not embodied in the body, as permanent in the transient, as great and all-pervasive, does not grieve”. Thus non-identification with the body, which is called liberation, is totally different from the fruit of dharma which involves the performance of rites laid down, and it is eternal.

Upaasanaa has been described in many places in the Brahmasutras, but it is not mentioned at all in the purvamimamsa sutras or even in the Sankarshakanda of Jaimini. So the question arises, how can it be said that upaasanaa is part of Dharmajijnaasaa? This has been answered by Chitsukha thus: Jaimini has not specifically mentioned upaasanaa because it, being a mental act, is also covered by the word ‘dharma’. Jaimini has not spoken about every rite, but only about some as examples. His object was to lay down general principles for interpreting the statements containing injunctions. These principles apply to upaasanaa also. In Brahmasutras upaasanaas are mentioned only to state their subject and method of performance. They do not have prominence here.

Some things are changefully permanent, that is to say, though they are subject to change, the cognition “This is that” continues unaffected. Examples are the earth, etc., for those who hold the universe to be eternal, and the gunas for the Sankhyas. Brahman is, however, absolutely and immutably eternal, all-pervasive, free from all modifications, not dependent on any thing, without parts, self-luminous, not affected by dharma or adharma or their fruit, and cannot be specifically related to any of the three periods of time because of being ever existent.

If liberation were to be attained through any action, including mental action, it would be impermanent. Moreover there would be gradations in the result, depending on the nature and extent of the action. But liberation is accepted by

all to be eternal. So it does not stand to reason that Brahman is taught in the scriptures as a subsidiary to action.

Many statements in the Upanishads such as, “He who knows Brahman becomes Brahman itself”, etc., show that liberation is attained simultaneously with the knowledge of Brahman and that no action is necessary in between. Liberation cannot be termed the ‘fruit’ of knowledge of Brahman, in which case it would be impermanent like any other fruit. What knowledge does is only to remove the obstacle because of which one thinks that he is in bondage. In reality every one is always free from bondage, but wrongly thinks that he is bound. The identity of the individual self and Brahman is realized when the wrong knowledge is removed.

This identification of Brahman and the individual self is not meditation of the form of ‘sapat’ as in the case of the statement, ‘The mind is infinite, and the Visvedevas are infinite. Through this meditation one wins an infinite world’ (Br.Up. 3.1.9). Nor is it a form of meditation called ‘adhyasa’ as in ‘The mind is Brahman’ (Ch. Up.3. 18.1). In both these cases one thing is imagined to be another by superimposition for the purpose of meditation. In sapat meditation the superimposed object is what is meditated on, while in adhyasa meditation it is the substratum that is meditated on. Thus, in the example of sapat meditation mentioned above, it is the Visvedevas who are meditated on. In the example of adhyasa meditation mentioned above, it is the mind that is meditated on. Om may be meditated on as a symbol (pratika) of Brahman, in which case the meditation would be of the adhyasa type, and the object of meditation (upaasya) is only Om. It is said in Chapter 4 of Brahmasutra that one who meditates in this manner cannot go to Brahmaloaka. (It is to be noted that the word ‘adhyasa’ here has a totally different meaning from what it has in Adhyasabhashya where it stands for delusion. Here it is a deliberate act of looking upon one thing as another). Om may also be meditated on as Brahman itself, in which case it becomes a meditation of the sapat type and the object of meditation is Brahman itself.

Nor is it a meditation on some special activity, as in, ‘Air is certainly the place of merger’ (Ch.Up. 4.3.1). Nor is it like a

purification of some ingredient of a sacrifice, like the sacrificer's wife looking at the oblation for purification. If the identity of Brahman and the individual self is considered to be only a meditation, the statements in the Upanishads such as 'That thou art', 'I am Brahman', etc., will be contradicted. The knowledge of Brahman is not dependent on human action (purushatantra), as in the case of meditation, but it is dependent on the thing alone (vastutantra) like the knowledge of things which are the content of valid cognitions like perception, etc. Knowledge is not a mental act like meditation.

Neither such a Brahman nor knowledge of Brahman can be made subsidiary to any ritualistic action or meditation. Nor can it be said that Brahman can be the object of the act of knowing, because that would contradict the statements, "It is different from the known and also different from the unknown" (Kena. 1.4), "Through what can one know that because of which all this is known" (Br.Up. 2.4.14). There is also a specific denial of Brahman being the object of meditation. In the statement, "That which cannot be uttered by speech, but by which speech is uttered", it is first declared that Brahman is not an object, and then it is said, "Know that alone to be Brahman and not what is meditated on" (Kena. 1.5).

The question arises: If Brahman is not an object, how can it be known at all? The answer is: The scriptures seek only to remove the differences in the form of the triad of 'knower', 'known', and 'knowledge' which are all creations of nescience and do not present Brahman as an object of knowledge. This is proved by the statements such as, "Brahman is known to him to whom it is unknown, while it is unknown to him to whom it is known. It is unknown to those who know and known to those who do not know" (Kena. 2.3), "You cannot see that which is the witness of seeing--- "(Br.up.3.4.2). Therefore liberation is only the elimination of the notion of bondage which is only imagined due to nescience, and the realization of one's natural state. There can therefore be no question of liberation being impermanent. There would be the need for some action, mental, verbal, or physical only if liberation is something to be produced or if it is a modification of something. Being of the nature of one's own self, it is not

something to be attained. Even according to the view held by some other schools that the supreme Self is different from the individual self it is not something to be attained because, being all-pervasive, it is ever attained by all, like ether.

Nor can liberation be the result of purification, which is either the addition of merits or the removal of defects. In the case of an inert object, knowledge has first to remove the covering of ignorance over it and make it shine, since it is not self-luminous. It could therefore be said that knowledge purifies it by making it shine. But the Self is self-luminous and does not need to be made to shine by knowledge. Since Brahman is eternally pure, there are no defects to be removed. So liberation which is of the nature of Brahman is not the result of any act of purification.

If it is contended that liberation which is one's own real nature remains covered and becomes manifest when the self is purified by some action, just as a mirror manifests its lustre when it is cleaned of dust by rubbing, the answer is, it is not so, because the self cannot be the locus of any act. Any action brings about a change in the locus of the action. If the self changes because of some action it would be impermanent and statements such as 'It is described as immutable' (Gita, 2.25) would be contradicted. Therefore no action is possible on the self. When it is said that the embodied soul is purified by bath, achamana, investiture with the sacred thread, etc., it is not the pure self that is purified but the self associated with the body, mind, etc, which is considered to be the self due to ignorance. When a person who is ill takes medicine it is the body that is cured of the disease and not the self which is not subject to any disease. All actions are performed and the results enjoyed by a person who has the notion 'I am a doer' because of identification with the body, mind, etc. Liberation is identity with Brahman and it is not some thing to be attained though any purification.

Knowledge is not a mental act. A mental act such as meditation is based on an injunction which is independent of the nature of the thing concerned. Meditation is a mental act, because it depends on the will of the person performing it, as for example in such sentences as "When the priest (called

Hota) is about to utter 'vashat', he should meditate mentally on the deity for whom the libation is taken up (by the Adhvaryu)". This is certainly a mental act, since it arises from an injunction alone. But knowledge arises from valid means such as perception, inference, etc and the valid means cognize things as they are. For example, to think of a man or woman as fire, as enjoined in " O Gautama, man is surely fire" (Ch.up.5.7.1) , or in "O Gautama, woman is surely fire" (Ch.up.5.8.1) is certainly a mental act, since it arises from an injunction alone. But the cognition of fire with regard to the well-known fire is not dependent on any injunction or on the will of any man. Meditation is therefore described as *purusha-tantra* (dependent on the person), while knowledge is called *vastu-tantra* (dependent on the object to be known).

Thus the realization of the identity of Brahman and the individual self is knowledge and it is not dependent on any injunction. Though verbs in the imperative mood are found to be used, they become ineffective like the sharpness of a knife when used against a stone. They are aimed at something beyond the range of human effort, since Brahman, which is the object of the knowledge, can neither be accepted nor rejected. These statements which appear to be in the imperative mood are meant to turn the mind away from the natural tendency towards external objects by pointing out that Brahman is worthy of being realized. The ordinary person engages in activity with the object of attaining happiness and avoiding sorrow, but he does not thereby attain the ultimate goal of life. Passages such as "The Self is verily to be realized" turn him away from natural activity and towards his inner self.

The fact that the self is not something that can be either accepted or rejected is, far from being a defect, an ornament. When Brahman is realized as one's own self there is nothing more to be accomplished.

The contention of some persons that there is no portion of the Veda which merely makes a statement about something and does not contain an injunction or a prohibition is not valid, because the self spoken of in the upanishads is not subordinate to anything else. It cannot be said that Brahman

presented in the upanishads, which has no transmigration, which is distinct from the four kinds of products of action, which occurs in a section of the Vedas exclusively devoted to it, and which is not subsidiary to anything else does not exist or is not known, because it is the very self of even the person who denies it.

Now an objection is raised that, since the self is the content of the concept 'I' it cannot be said that the self is known only from the upanishads. This has been refuted by pointing out that the self is the witness of even the concept 'I'. The pure self which is different from the ego which is the agent, is the witness of the concept 'I'; it dwells in all creatures, it is the same in all, it is only one, it is immutably eternal, and it is not known in the section of the Vedas dealing with injunctions or in the works of logicians. So this self cannot be denied by any one, nor can it be subsidiary to any injunction. Being the self of all, it is beyond rejection and acceptance. All modifications are perishable. The self alone is imperishable because there is no cause for its destruction. It is by nature eternal, ever pure, consciousness itself, and ever free from bondage. The texts, "There is nothing higher than Purusha; He is the culmination, He is the highest goal" (Katha, 1.3.11), and "I ask about that self spoken of in the upanishads" (Br. Up. 3.9.26), establish that the self is what is principally revealed in the upanishads. Therefore the claim that there is no section of the Vedas which deals with an existent entity is mere bravado.

As regards the quotation from those who know the purport of the scriptures, "Its purport is indeed seen to be the teaching of rituals", etc., that has to be understood to refer to the teachings about injunctions and prohibitions, since the subject there is enquiry into dharma.

Now an objection of the Prabhakara school of purvamimamsa is taken up and answered. They say that, since the purpose of the Vedas is to enjoin action, statements that do not have that purport are purposeless. The answer is that this cannot apply to statements about Brahman which is eternal. The knowledge of Brahman results in the eradication of nescience which is not real and which is the cause of transmigratory existence. Moreover, if it is said that sentences

which do not contain an injunction are purposeless, then sentences containing prohibitions, such as “A Brahmana should not be killed” will also become purposeless, which is clearly not acceptable to any one. The statements about Brahman are not of the same nature as the arthavadas in the karma kanda which have to be associated with an injunction to become meaningful. Even mere affirmative statements are found to be effective in achieving a useful result. For example, the statement, “This is a rope and not a snake” removes the fear caused by the wrong perception of a rope as a snake. It cannot by any means be said that even after one has realized Brahman he continues to live a worldly life as before. For one who has realized the identity of the individual self and Brahman life cannot continue as before. The upanishad says, “Ideas of something being pleasant and something unpleasant do not at all arise for one who has become un-embodied” (Ch.up. 8.12.1). Being embodied means being identified with the body. Identification with the body is the result of nescience. Once nescience has been destroyed, there cannot be any identification with the body and therefore there can be no fear, sorrow, etc. The self is eternally un-embodied.

If it be said that being embodied is caused by the merit and demerit acquired by the self by the performance of various kinds of action, both good and bad, the answer is, it is not so. All actions are performed by the body. The self does not perform any action. A king is said to have won a battle because of his mere presence even though it is only his soldiers who have fought and won, because a relationship of master and servant has been brought about through the payment of salary by the king to the soldiers. But that analogy cannot apply here because there is no such relationship between the self and the body. The self is considered as an agent and enjoyer only because of wrong identification with the body due to nescience.

Nor can the conceit of ‘I’ in the body be said to be only secondary, as in the case of referring to a student as a lion. Here the difference between the student and a lion is well known, but the student is referred to as a lion only because he is considered to possess some qualities of a lion such as

courage. When a post is mistaken for a man in mild darkness, or when a shell is mistaken for silver, it is a case of illusion. In the same way, the concept of 'I' with respect to the body, etc., because of non-discrimination between the self and the not-self is a case of illusion. Even those who have knowledge of the difference between the self and the not-self fail to discriminate between the two in actual practice. Hence 'being embodied' (sariratvam) is caused by nescience. For the enlightened person, even when he is alive, there is non-embodiment (asariratvam). About the enlightened person it is said, "Just as the lifeless slough of a snake is cast off and it lies in the ant-hill, so does this body lie. Then the self becomes disembodied and immortal, becomes Brahman, the self-effulgent Light" (Br.up. 4.4.7). There is also the statement, "Though without eyes, he appears as if possessed of eyes; though without ears, he appears as if possessed of ears; though without speech, he appears as if possessed of speech, though without mind, he appears as if possessed of mind; though without vital force he appears as if possessed of vital force". The Gita also says that in the case of an enlightened person there is total absence of any connection with any impulsion to work (Gita, ch.2). Therefore a person who has realized his identity with Brahman cannot continue in the worldly state as before. If a person continues in his worldly state as before, it means that he has not realized his identity with Brahman.

The contention that, since reflection and meditation are mentioned after hearing, Brahman must be considered to be supplementary to an injunction is not tenable. Reflection and meditation are also the means to realization. If Brahman had been known through some other source of knowledge and then used in some other act or meditation, then it could have become subsidiary to an injunction, but that is not the case. Just like hearing, reflection and meditation are also meant for attaining realization of identity with Brahman. It there follows that Brahman is presented as an independent entity; for, on a harmonious interpretation of the upanishadic texts, it is seen that their purport is Brahman only. Hence the commencement of a separate scriptural text about Brahman is fully justified. The fact that the subject, competent person and benefit

relating to this topic are different from those for the enquiry into dharma and these have been brought out here, further establishes this point. Once Brahman is realized, there can be no possibility of the persistence of the means of knowledge which become devoid of their objects and subjects. Then the secondary and false selves, such as body, son, etc., cease to exist and there can be no action prompted by injunction or prohibition. The empirical means of knowledge cease to be valid on realization of Brahman.
