

Ch. 7

Akṣarabrahman

किंस्विद् वनं कउ स वृक्ष आस यतो द्यावापृथिवी निष्टतक्षु।

मनीषिणो मनसा पृच्छतेदुः तद् यदध्यतिष्ठद् भुवनानि धारयन् ॥ ४ ॥

ऋग्वेद 10.81.4.

‘Ask yourself with concentration of mind which was the woods (Jungle) and which was the tree that was cut to create the sky and the earth ? Where stands the creator of this world and which is its foundation ?’

ब्रह्म वनं ब्रह्म स वृक्ष आसीद् यतो द्यावापृथिवी निष्टतक्षु।

मनीषिणो मनसा वि ब्रवीमि यो ब्रह्माध्यतिष्ठद् भुवनानि धारयन् ॥ ७ ॥

तैत्तिरीयब्राह्मण 2.8.9.6

‘It was the Brahman that was the woods and the tree that was cut and carved to fashion the earth and sky. The creator of the world stands on the earth. Brahman is his base and support.’ These hymns clearly indicate that the Parabrahman and Brahman are two separate entities. The first is the Creator and the second is under him.

Akṣara, *Brahman* and *Akṣarabrahman* are terms that really exemplify ‘Open Texture’ which was mentioned in the beginning of this thesis. It is indeed very interesting to know how many meanings this term carries. Professor (Dr.) P.M. Mody wrote a very interesting thesis on this topic in Germany nearly 75 years ago. The title of the thesis is ‘*Akṣara : A Forgotten Chapter in the History of Indian Philosophy*’ (1932). He tried to find out exact connotation of the term as used in the Upaniṣads

and the Bhagavadgītā. He was not satisfied by the explanation offered by Śrī Śankara and felt that the explanation of this term as offered by Śrī Vallabha was nearer to the meaning as used in the Upaniṣads and the Bhagavadgītā, especially the latter.

Let us see in how many ways this term Akṣara is used as given by N. N. Bhattacharya in his 'A Glossary of Indian Religious Terms and Concepts (Page 13).'

'Akṣara is (1) One of the forms of Brahman, (2) Others forms are 'Kāla', 'Karma' and 'Svabhāva' according to the Vallabhites, (3) It appears in the form of Prakṛti, (4) It is also used in the sense of Puruṣa (Tattvārthadīpa I.94 II.86), (5) It is identical with the Puruṣa with which the creation starts (Muṇḍaka II.1.1), Creation is thought to be as an emanatory process in Muṇḍaka I.1, II.1, III.2., (6) It is the first cause, the immutable which is identical with Puruṣa in as much as the distinction between the subject and the object does not hold good prior to creation.

Even these six meanings are only representative. There are other properly derived meanings of this term. As a matter of fact, 'there is always the possibility of some unforeseen kind of case in which it is not clear whether, or how, the concept should be applied !

Akṣara or Brahman as a Reality, separate and independent from Parabrahman (Īśvara) and Jīva is not accepted by Śrī Rāmānujācārya. In Śrī Swāminārāyaṇa's 'darśana' or philosophy, this term Akṣarabrahman is extremely important, next only to Parabrahman, as was shown earlier.

Let us now discuss this concept in some details. In the Bhagavadgītā Chapter 8th the very first question of Arjuna in the very first śloka is 'Kīmtad brahma', i.e., 'What is that Brahman?' Lord Kṛṣṇa says : *akṣaram brahma paramam*, i.e., Akṣara is Brahman or Brahman is Parama Akṣara, which is the Supreme and Imperishable Self (Swāmī Ādidevānanda 2001 : 271).

Śrī Rāmānujācārya calls this Brahman, as *paramam akṣaram, prakṛti vinirmuktātmaswarupam* i.e. The Brahman is Akṣara or Supreme Imperishable

Self, separated from Prakṛti). In the Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad it is stated :
'*akṣarāt sambhavati iha viśvam* / 'The entire world is created from Akṣara'.
(B.Up. III : 8-9) Thus Akṣara is considered to be the cause of creation.

Now we shall consider certain statements both in the Gītā as well as in the Muṇḍaka and other Upaniṣads that state that there is something, someone different from and beyond this Akṣara or Brahman.

- (1) *Tad dhāma paramam mama* - That (Akṣara) is (my) best (Highest) residence (Bh.G. VIII : 21)
- (2) *Brahmaṇo hi pratiṣṭhā'ham* - I am the foundation of even Brahman (Akṣara) (Bh.G. XIV : 27)
- (3) *Brahmavid āpnoti param* - The knower of Brahman Attains the Highest (Parabrahman) (Taittiriya Upa. II : 1)
- (4) *Akṣarāt parataḥ paraḥ* - Paramātman (Parabrahman) is above Akṣara which itself is above everything. (Muṇḍaka II : 1-2.)

These statements themselves are very clear. In other statements the position of those who have attained this Brahman is described.

- (5) *Brahmabhūtaḥ prasannātmā* - A brahmanised person is a happy soul or blissful person. (Bh.G. XVIII : 54)
- (6) *Eṣā brāhmī sthitiḥ Pārtha* - This is the Brāhmī state
Naināṃ prāpya vimuhyati / O Arjuna ! One who attains this, will never be deluded. (Bh.G. II : 72)

Here are the statements about those aspirants who initially were ordinary people, then they reached the state of Brahmanhood and became happy, blissful and beyond delusion.

Thus, we have clear references to Akṣara or Brahman

- (1) As the cause of the world (*jagat-kartā*)
- (2) It is possible for Jīva to reach the condition of Brahman that gives joy.

(3) There is an indication that there is something beyond even the Highest Akṣara. This is Parabrahman.

Without taking help from any commentary of any ācāryas these statements, can be read or understood as follow:

- ♦ there is the Reality called Akṣara or Brahman, which is the cause of the world.
- ♦ its position and status are very high but there is something even beyond this high Akṣara.
- ♦ it is possible to attain condition similar to that of Akṣara.
- ♦ after attaining 'Akṣara' state, becoming blissful-prasannātmā, an aspirant achieves the highest state of devotion to God.

*Brahmabhūtaḥ prasannātmā na śocati na kāṅkṣati
samaḥ sarveṣu bhūteṣu madbhaktim labhate param*

(Bh.G. XVIII: 54)

Śrī Swāminārāyaṇa gives a very similar explanation of this concept of Akṣarabrahman. In HVSS Taranga 136, this Brahman is described as *nirvikāram* (immutable or non-changing), *niraṁśam* (impartite), *sarvarupam* (having all forms), *nāmadheyādhāra-sarvakāryātmaka*, (being the cause of all and foundation of everything). It should not be understood that this Brahman itself has undergone modification and has resulted in *cara* (living) and *acara* (non living) :

निर्विकारं निरंशं च ब्रह्मास्ति श्रुतिवर्णितम्।
कथं तत्सर्वरूपं स्यात्सर्विकारपदार्थवत् ॥ ३१ ॥

HVSS : 136 / 31

अत्रैवम्भूतोपनिषत्सिद्धान्तशैल्यस्ति। पुरुषोत्तमः श्रीहरिः। स्वोपासनासम्प्राप्त-
स्वान्तर्यामित्वेनाक्षरब्रह्माख्येन महापुरुषेण महामायां प्रबोध्य तद्वारानेकाण्ड-
सर्गादिव्यघादित्येवं सत्यप्यतिमूढा आत्मज्ञानिन आत्मशब्दवाच्यपुरुषोत्तमस्य
श्रीहरेरज्ञानात्तमेवाक्षरब्रह्माख्यपुरुषं बुद्ध्वा तं च सर्वरूपं बुद्ध्वा संसरन्त्यतो
यथार्थात्मज्ञानिभिर्भक्तैः स्वमोक्षाय निजात्मानमक्षरब्रह्मरूपं विभाव्य पुरुषोत्तमस्य
श्रीहरेर्भक्तिः कार्येत्याह षड्भिः। निर्विकारमिति। ब्रह्माक्षरब्रह्माख्यपुरुषरूपम्।
निर्विकारम्। निरंशं चेति। श्रुति वर्णितम्। अस्ति। तथा च श्रुतिः। 'निर्विकारं निष्कलं
निष्क्रियं शान्तं' मित्यादिः। तत्र निर्गतो विकारः स्वरूपपरिणामादिर्यस्य तत्। निर्गतो
निवृत्तः अंशः कलाशब्दाभिहितो विभागो यस्य तदिति निर्विकारनिरंशबोधार्थः। तदेवंविधं

ब्रह्म। सविकारपदार्थवन्मृदादिविकारवत्पदार्थ इव। सर्वरूपम्। कथम्। स्यात्।
न भवेदेवेत्यर्थः ॥ १३६-३१ ॥

यत्त्वस्य सर्वरूपत्वं कथितं निगमेऽस्ति तत्।

न विकारितया किन्तु हेतोः कार्यात्मकत्वतः ॥ ३२ ॥

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यदिति। अस्य ब्रह्मणः। यत्। सर्वरूपत्वम्। निगमे सर्वं खल्विदं ब्रह्मेत्यादिवेदवचने।
कथितम्। तत्तु। विकारितया। न कथितम्। यथा मृद् घटशरावादिरूपेण परिणाम्यानेकरूपेण
जायते न तथेदं जीवाद्यनेकरूपेण जातं सत्तथोक्तं भवतीत्यर्थः। किन्तु कार्यात्मकत्वतः। हेतोः
कथितम्। कार्यात्मतया कार्यप्रकारं ब्रह्मैवाभिधीयते इत्यर्थः ॥ १३६-३२ ॥

सर्वकारणता सर्वाधारता ब्रह्मणोऽस्ति हि।

पृथग्नाधेयमाधारात्तिष्ठेत्कार्यं च कारणात् ॥ ३३ ॥

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एतदेव स्पष्टमाह। सर्वेति। ब्रह्मणः। सर्वकारणता सर्वान्तर्यामित्वेन सर्वहेतुत्वम्। सर्वाधारता
सर्वाधिकरणत्वं च अस्ति। आधेयम्। आधारात्। पृथक्। न तिष्ठेत्। कार्यम्। कारणाच्च।
पृथक्। न तिष्ठेत्। कार्यस्य कारणसत्तया सद्रूपत्वादाधेयस्य कार्यास्याधारेण कारणेनावस्थानार्हत्वाच्च
कार्यमेव कारणाख्यया श्रुत्याऽभिधीयते इत्यर्थः ॥ १३६-३३ ॥

Parabrahman or Paramātmā or Puruṣottama or here called kṛṣṇ is
different, separate and is above the Brahman.

Those who understand thus and identify themselves with this Akṣara
Brahman and worship God (Parabrahman, Kṛṣṇa) as His servants-devotees,
only they reach the highest stage.

अक्षरस्यापि कृष्णस्तु कारणं चाश्रयो मतः।

प्रेरकश्चाऽत एवाऽसौ सर्वसेव्य उदीरितः ॥ ३५ ॥

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अक्षरस्येति। कृष्णः स्वयं श्रीहरिस्तु। अक्षरस्यापि। कारणमुक्तरित्या हेतुः।
आश्रय आधारः। प्रेरको जगत्सर्गादिकार्ये नियोजकश्च। मतः। अतो हेतोरेव। असौ कृष्णः।
सर्वसेव्यः। उदीरितः ॥ १३६-३५ ॥

एवं ज्ञात्वा तु ये कृष्णं ब्रह्मीभूतात्मना सदा।

प्रीत्या भजन्ति ते तूक्ताः प्राप्ता एव महद्गतिम् ॥ ३६ ॥

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एवमिति। एवममुना प्रकारेण। ये आमज्ञानिनः। कृष्णम्। ज्ञात्वा। ब्रह्मीभूतात्मना
ब्रह्मभावापन्नेन स्वात्मना। सदा। प्रीत्या। भजन्ति। ते तु। महद्गतिं भगवदेकान्तिकप्राप्त्या-
मक्षरधाम्नि श्रीहरिपार्षदतारूपामुत्तमगतिम्। प्राप्ता एव। उक्ताः ॥ १३६-३६ ॥

निर्विघ्नमेते यांत्येव धाम मुख्यं रमापतेः।

ज्ञेयो वर्त्मद्वयस्येत्यं गतिभेदो मुमुक्षुभिः ॥ ३७ ॥

HVSS : 136 / 37

निर्विघ्नमिति। एते एवंभूताभक्ता एव। रमापतेः श्रीहरेः। मुख्यं गोलोक-
वैकुण्ठादिष्वग्र्यम्। धामाक्षरब्रह्मपदम्। निर्विघ्नं यथातथा। यान्ति। इत्थममुना
प्रकारेण। वर्त्मद्वयस्य रसिकभक्त्यात्मज्ञानलक्षणद्विविधपथस्य गतिभेदः। मुमुक्षुभिर्भवद्भिः।
ज्ञेयः ॥ १३६-३७ ॥

The ācāryas, who have not postulated Akṣara as an independent ontological reality i.e., as separate from that of Parabrahman, on the one hand, and Jīva on the other, find it very difficult to explain the term consistently throughout the same section, chapter or discussion on the same texts.

Let us take only one example and see how ācāryas of many schools are forced to change the meaning of the same term 'Akṣara' while explaining the same topic in the same Upaniṣad, namely Muṇḍaka. The topic being discussed by the sage Aṅgīrasa with Śrī Śaunaka is of *Vidyā* or knowledge, which is of two types namely *Aparā Vidyā*, and *Parā Vidyā*. The first includes all worldly learning including Ṛgveda and other Śruti literature etc. The second is *Parā Vidyā* that leads to the attainment of that Akṣara or *para* entity. It is stated, '*atha parā yayā tad akṣaram adhigamyate* / (Mu.Up. I : 1-5) *Parā Vidyā* is that by which an aspirant reaches that Akṣara. This *Parāvidyā* is called *sarva-vidyā-pratiṣṭhā-rupā, brahmavidyā* that takes its students to Akṣara because it is the foundational study of all the branches of learning, viz., *vidyā* or knowledge of Brahman. All the ācāryas including Śrī Śaṅkarācārya, Śrī Bhāskarācārya, Śrī Rāmānujācārya, and Śrī Madhvācārya understand Akṣara to mean Paramātmān. Śrī Śaṅkara while explaining the sūtras *adrśyatvādiguṇako dharmokteḥ* (I : 2.21) writes, *yo'yam adrśyatvādiguṇako bhutayoniḥ sa paramśevara eva*. (Swami Vireswarananda 1962 : 75)

Śrī Rāmānujācārya also takes it to mean Paramātmān there. While giving his own explanation on the same sūtra (I : 2.22) His sutra no is different from that of Śrī Śaṅkara he states the higher knowledge is that by which the Imperishable (Akṣara) is known. Quoting Muṇḍaka I : 1.9 twice and I : 1.5-6 he concludes, 'for all these reasons it is clear that the Supreme Self is referred.' (Swami Vireswarananda 1986 : 140)

But when these ācāryas immediately come across the same term Akṣara again in the same Muṇḍaka (II : 1.2), all of them change its meaning. They call it subtle seed, Prakṛti, Jīva etc. The verse that contains this word states :

Divyo hy amūrtah puruṣah sa bāhyābhyantaro hy ajah /
Aprāṇo hy amanāḥ śubhro hy akṣarāt parataḥ paraḥ //

‘Divine and formless is the Person. He is without and within unborn, without breath and mind, pure and higher than the highest immutable. (Rādhākrishnan 1995 : 686)’

Śrī S. Rādhākrishnan here calls ‘akṣara’ as the immutable, unmanifested (with small ‘i’ and small ‘u’ to indicate that ‘akṣara’ is not the highest reality while in Mu.Up. I : 1.5 he translates ‘akṣara’ as the ‘Undecaying’ to show that it is Highest principle. He translates even the word ‘Puruṣa’ here as the ‘person’ with small ‘p’. So even he translates ‘akṣara’ differently.

Hume translates ‘Divya Puruṣa’ as Heavenly Person with capital ‘P’ and ‘akṣara’ as Imperishable in Mu.Up. II : 1.2 as well as in Mu.Up. I : 1.5. Thus he is consistent in his explanation of ‘akṣara’ and Puruṣa in both places. (Hume 1991 : 367-370)

Here in this śloka Śankara changes meaning of Akṣara, he calls it : “*akṣaram avyākṛtam nānārūpa-bīja-śaktirūpam bhūta-sūkṣamam /*” He calls Akṣara Brahman as undifferentiated, subtle seed, capable of creating modification by way of name and form (B.S. I : 2.21, 22).

It means that the previous explanation of and position on Akṣara totally changes. In the earlier Mantra Śrī Śankara states Akṣara as Parabrahman in the next text of the same Upaniṣad he takes Akṣara to mean subtle Prakṛti. How can a scholar like him change the meaning of the same term in same section of the same Upaniṣad ?

Similarly, Śrī Rāmānuja calls first Akṣara as Paramātmā, and in the second Akṣara as non-sentient - Prakṛti.

Vigñānabhikṣu takes the Akṣara mentioned as Parabrahman, the second as Jīva.

Thus both the founders, of Kevalādvaita and Viśiṣṭādvaita give different meanings to the same Akṣara. This is against all rules of explanation as per the Upakrama to Upasamhāra method.

This, it seems, has happened because Śrī Śankara and Śrī Rāmānuja have fixed and limited number of ontological realities. The former has only one namely one - Brahman, the latter has only three namely Cit, Acit and Íśvara. Akṣara, as different and independent from Brahman – Ultimate Reality or Íśvara, is not one of the categories in ontology of either.

Now let us look at the Gītā.

- (1) *Eṣā brāhmī sthitiḥ Pārtha (II : 72)*
- (2) *Brahmārpaṇam brahma-haviḥ Brahmagnau Brahmanā hutam
Brahmaiv tena gantavyam Brahma karma samādhinā (IV : 24)*
- (3) *Yānti Brahma sanātanam (IV : 31)*
- (4) *Yogayukto munir brahm nacireṇā dhigacchati (V : 6)*

The term Brahman is employed differently by Vyāsa and is variously explained. Is this Brahman Prakṛti or Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself? He is the highest goal, the ultimate target of human endeavour, the best way for infinite joy as described in the same text: '*brahma-saṁsparsam atyantam sukham aśnute*' (VI : 28), all the devotees (yogis) experience the boundless bliss in the form of touch of Brahman.

On the other hand, Brahman may not be the Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself because it is stated '*jarāmaraṇa mokṣāya māmāśritya yatanti ye, te brahma tad viduh kṛtsnam adhyātmam karma cākhilam*' (VII : 29), i.e., Those who take refuge in Me, and strive for deliverance from the old age and death, only they know Brahman (or Absolute) entire (they know) the self and all about action. Brahman is definitely different from Śrī Kṛṣṇa here. Brahman and Parabrahman or Paramātmā are certainly separate. It becomes abundantly clear when Brahman is called '*mama yoni*' - source of all my creation.

The term *Brahman* is so difficult to understand that Arjuna says that even a faithful (*śradhyopetāḥ*) follower or student would be confused in

the path leading to Brahman. '*Vimūḍho brahmaṇaḥ pathi.*' (Bh.G. VI : 37-38) When he is not supported 'apratīṣṭo'.

Therefore, in the very beginning of the eighth chapter Arjuna asks a pointed question about this most complex term, which has remained abstruse, and enigma for centuries in Indian Philosophy. He asks '*kim tad brahma ?*' (VIII : 1) and the Lord replies, with introduction of this term Akṣara as a synonym of Brahman, 'Brahman is the Great Akṣara' (*Akṣaram brahma paramam*) (VIII : 3) and then differentiates it from Himself by saying in the same place that '*adhiyajño ham evā*' (VIII : 4) I am the Adhiyajño 'sacrifice' i.e., one who is to be propitiated in sacrifices.

He states in the same adhyāya: "*Avyakto 'kṣara etyukastamāhuḥ paramam gatim / Yam prāpya na nivartante taddhāma paramam mama* / (VIII : 21.)

This unmanifest has been called (*Avyakta*) Imperishable (*Akṣara*). He is declared as the highest goal. He is my highest abode, those who attain (*akṣara*, my residence) do not return (to *saṁsāra*). Even in the fifteenth chapter he repeats: *Yadgatvā na nivartante taddhāma paramam mama* / (XV : 6). This is my Supreme abode from which those who reach it never return.

At the end of the fourteenth chapter, Śrī Kṛṣṇa states: *Brahmaṇo hi pratiṣṭhāhamamṛtasyāvyayasya ca / Śāśvatasya ca dharmasya sukhasyaikānikasya ca* // (14. 27). I am the ground of Brahman which is Immortal and Immutable". Naturally the ground and the supporter of the ground are distinct and different. And, as if to remove all doubts about the perishable (*kṣara*), imperishable (*akṣara*) and the Supreme Personal God (*Puruṣottama*) and their differences he declares:

Dvāv imau puruṣau loke kṣaraś cā 'kṣara eva ca
Kṣaraḥ sarvāṇi bhūtāni kūṭastho'kṣara ucyate XV.16

"There are two kinds of persons in this world, the perishable (*kṣara*) and the imperishable (*akṣara*). The perishable is all beings (existences) and the unchanging (*kūṭastha*) is called the imperishable (*akṣara*)."

*Uttamaḥ puruṣas tv anyah paramātmē 'ty udāhṛtaḥ
Yo loktraym Vedyā bibharti avyaya īśvaraḥ ̐LXV.17*

There is the Supreme Person other than these (kṣara, akṣara) known as Paramātmān – Supreme Self in all the Vedas. He, who as the Immutable One and the Lord, entering the threefold world, supports it.

Thus, the Supreme Person – Paramātmān is different from immutable, imperishable (*kūṭastha*) imperishable (*akṣara*) as well as all perishable (*kṣara*). The Gītā exalts the conception of the personal God who is above the timeless Imperishable (*akṣara*) and all temporal existences (*kṣara*) and supports it.

Here as given in the above-mentioned statements, *Akṣara* is the residence or Dhāma, it is immutable and imperishable, and it is also called Puruṣa, is different from and inferior to God, the Supreme Person. In addition to that, we have also the explanation about of *Akṣara* in the following verses of the Gītā.

- (1) In the Gītā VIII : 11 it is termed as the 'Goal' or the place / state to reach for the knower of the Vedas and ascetics – “*yad akṣaram vedavido vadanti*”.
 - (2) In the Gītā XII : 1 it is called *avyakta*: ‘*akṣaram avyaktam*’, *Akṣara* is the unmanifest.
 - (3) In the Gītā XII : 3 it is spoken of as indefinable ‘*akṣaram anirdeśyam*’.
- ◆ Śrī Śaṅkara while explaining *Akṣaram brahma paramam* (VIII.3) understands *Akṣara* to be *Paramātmā* or *Parabrahma*.
 - ◆ Śrī Rāmānuja in his commentary here (VIII.3) says : ‘*paramam akṣaram prakṛti-vinirmuktātma-svarupam*’.

The supreme *Akṣara* is the essential form of the Self, separate from *Prakṛti*. He also calls it “*kṣetrajñam smaṣṭirūpam*, i.e. *Akṣara* means all souls taken together, the totality of all individual selves.” (Śrī Rāmānujagītābhāṣya p. 271)

- ◆ Śrī Vallabhācārya calls *Akṣaraḥ Paramātmānaḥ Guṇatītānandaḥ* / this bliss of Akṣara is limited against the unlimited bliss of Paramātmā or Supreme God.
- (1) When Śrī Śaṅkara proceeds further in this very eighth adhyāya and when he encounters the verse stating: *Avyaktoakṣara.... taddhāma paramam mama* (VIII.21), he changes the meaning of Akṣara given in VIII.3 quoted above. There he had explained Akṣara as Paramātmā and Parabrahma. Here VIII.21 he explains it as ‘*Mama Viṣṇoḥ paramaṁ padam* / ‘Akṣara is my (Viṣṇu’s) highest abode. Thus, the Paramātmā of the Gītā VIII.3 becomes His residence in VIII.21.
- (2) Śrī Rāmānuja who had explained Akṣara as ‘*prakṛtvinirmuktātma-svarūpam*’ and ‘*jīvanamuktaḥ*’ earlier, now explains it here as ‘*ityatra paramagatiśabdanirdiṣṭaḥ akṣaraḥ prakṛti-saṁsarga-viyukta-svarupeṇa avasthitātmā etyarthah*’ / VIII.21.

The most surprising thing is that such a great Vaiṣṇava scholar, devotee and ācārya does not explain *taddhāma paramam mama* as God’s highest abode or residence, but as an individual ātman !

- (1) Śrī Śaṅkarācārya explains *Brahman* in *Brahmaṇo hi pratiṣṭhā’ham*. (XIV.27) as *pratyagātmā* or individual self.
- (2) Śrī Rāmānuja and Śrī Vedānta Deśika also explain *Brahman* similarly as ‘*śuddhātmāsvarūpaḥ*’.
- (3) Śrī Madhva sometimes call *akṣara* the effulgence (*teja*) of God (Paramātmā) : *Dhāma-svarūpam teja-svarūpam* (VIII.21) and here he explained *Akṣara* as *Māyā*. (XV.27)

But the most important and varied explanations of *Akṣara* are found in the fifteenth Adhyāya where we have following interpretations :

- (1) Śrī Śaṅkarācārya explains *Akṣara* as *Kūṭastha = amāyika-jīva*.

- (2) Śrī Rāmānujācārya understands *Akṣara* as *Acit-saṃsarga-viyukta-jīvātma*.

Thus, *Akṣaraiś* in real sense a term with 'Open Texture'.

Śrī Swāminārāyaṇa has accepted *Akṣara* or Brahman or *Akṣarabrahman* as the fourth ontological reality. Therefore, He finds it very easy and natural to explain this term everywhere it occurs in the *Gītā* in the sense of *Dhāma* or residence, as *Puruṣa*, as *Avyakta*, *Anirdeśya*. But he adds many more meaning or explanations of *Akṣara*.

- ♦ *Akṣara* or *Akṣarabrahman* is both with form and without form.
- ♦ *Akṣara* is the unique divine *puruṣa* in *akṣaradhāma* is ideal devotee of God Swāminārāyaṇa in the sense Lakṣmī, Sītā, Rādhā, Pārvatī, Naraṇṣi are the ideal devotees in *Paramadhāma* of Nārāyaṇa, Rāma, Kṛṣṇa and Śiva. Like God, *Akṣara* always remains in *paramapada* called.
- ♦ *Akṣara* as a divine, ideal, devotee is always present on earth also help and guide devotees. He is manifested as only one at a time.

Let us see how he explains these meanings of *Akṣara* or Brahman or *Akṣarabrahman*.

- (1) *Akṣara* as the most powerful controller and supporter of all except *Puruṣottama*. But he is His *sevaka*, devotee of the highest level. (HVSS 7 : 12 given below also 63 : 49)
- (2) *Akṣara* as the *Dhāma* or residence of God. (HVSS 63 : 48)
- (3) *Akṣara* as *Avyakta*, *Anirdeśya* (Unmanifested, Indefinable) and he adds that this *Akṣara* is always present. (HVSS 63 : 48)
- (4) On the earth he is the *Satpuruṣa Guruhari*, the Teacher, God in human form, to liberate souls – *Jīvas*.

पुरुषस्य च मायायाः सूर्यादीनां प्रशास्तृता।

नैकाण्डाश्रयतेत्युक्तं ब्रह्मणोऽन्वयलक्षणम् ॥ १२ ॥

HVSS : 7 / 12

पुरुषस्येति। पुरुषस्य पुरुषशब्दवाच्यस्य महापुरुषस्य तथाविधानां

प्रधानपुरुषाणां च। मायाया मायाशब्दवाच्याया महामायायाः तथाविधानां प्रधानाख्यमायानां च। सूर्यादीनां च। आदिशब्देन विद्युच्चन्द्राग्न्यादीनां ग्रहणम्। प्रशास्तृता प्रेरकत्व नियामकत्वादि। नैकाण्डाश्रयताऽनेककोटिब्रह्माण्डाधारत्वम् इत्येतत्। ब्रह्मणोऽक्षरब्रह्मणः। अन्वयलक्षणमन्वयभावेन लक्षणं उक्तम् ॥ ७-१२ ॥

Brahman rules, controls, inspires and supports (Muḷa-Mahā) Puruṣa, Māyā, the Sun, and other gods, it is his Anavaya or immanent form.

सर्वत्र व्यापकत्वेपि व्योमवत्तदसङ्गिता।
कृष्णस्यानुगधामत्वं व्यतिरेकोऽस्य गद्यते ॥ १३ ॥

HVSS : 7 / 13

सर्वत्रेति। सर्वत्र मूलप्रकृतिपुरुषतत्कार्येषु। व्यापकत्वेऽपि प्रशास्तृतया वर्तमानत्वेऽपि। व्योमवदाकाशवत्। तदसङ्गिता। आकाशो यथा वाय्वादिपृथिव्यन्तभूतेष्वस्थितोऽपि तत्सङ्गवर्जित एव तिष्ठति। तथा मूलप्रकृतिपुरुषतत्कार्येष्ववस्थितत्वेऽपि तत्सङ्गवर्जितत्वमित्यर्थः। कृष्णपरमात्मनः। अनुगधामत्वं सेवकभावेन धामभावेन चावस्थानत्वं च। अस्याक्षरब्रह्मणः। व्यतिरेको व्यतिरेकभावेन लक्षणम्। गद्यते कथ्यते ॥ ७-१३ ॥

When Brahman pervades everything and yet remains untouched like ether, space and attends upon the Lord (Kṛṣṇa) as his servant it is his independent or Vyatireka form.

द्वेधोक्तमक्षरं ब्रह्म मूर्तं चामूर्तमित्युदः।
मूर्तं तत्रास्ति कृष्णस्य सेवायां दिव्यविग्रहम् ॥ २२ ॥

HVSS : 21 / 22

द्वेधेति। अद एकान्तिकप्राप्यम्। अक्षरं ब्रह्माक्षरब्रह्माख्यं धाम। मूर्तं दिव्यावय-
विशिष्टत्वान्मूर्तिमत्। अमूर्तं कृष्णधामत्वादनन्तमुक्ताधारत्वाच्च साकारं सदपि
निरवयवत्वेनामूर्तवत्प्रतीयमानं च। इत्यमुना प्रकारेण द्वेधा द्विविधम्। उक्तम्। तत्र
तयोर्मूर्तमूर्तयोर्मध्ये। मूर्तं तु। दिव्यविग्रहं रूपानुरूपकरचरणाद्यवयवविशिष्टत्वेनाति-
सुन्दरपुरुषाकारमूर्तिमत्। कृष्णस्य ततोऽप्यतिनिरतिशयशरीरशोभावतः स्वेष्टदेवस्य
श्रीकृष्णभगवतः। सेवायाम्। अस्ति दासवत्सदा वर्तते ॥ २१-२२ ॥

That Akṣarabrahman has two forms, abstract and concrete, the former is in the form of residence of God and the latter is in the form of His servant with beautiful body.

प्रकाशकानां सर्वेषां तदेवास्ति प्रकाशकम्।
कारणानां कारणं च सच्चिदानन्दमव्ययम् ॥ ३० ॥

HVSS : 63 / 30

प्रकाशकानामिति। तदक्षरं ब्रह्म। सर्वेषाम्। प्रकाशकानां सूर्यसोमादीनां
जगत्प्रकाशनकर्तृणाम्। प्रकाशम्। अस्ति। 'तज्ज्योतिषां ज्योतिरिति श्रुतेः। 'यद्भासाभासितः सूर्यो
बहिरिन्दुश्च तारकाः। भासयन्ति जगत्सर्वं स्वत्प्रकाशं तथाऽमृतमिति स्कान्दोक्तेश्च। सर्वेषाम्।
कारणानाम्। कारणम्। चास्ति। 'तदाहुरक्षरं ब्रह्म सर्वकारणकारणमिति श्रीभागवतोक्तेः। तदक्षरं
ब्रह्म। सच्चिदानन्दम्। अव्ययमविनाशि चास्ति ॥ ६३-३० ॥

That Akṣara is the illuminator of all the light-givers, the cause of all causes and his essential form is of existence, consciousness, and bliss.

तदक्षरं ब्रह्म ततो महदेवेति कीर्तितम्।
तद्वैभवं वर्णयितुं सहस्रास्योऽपि न क्षमः ॥ ४३ ॥

HVSS : 63 / 43

तदिति। तत्तथाविधम्। अक्षरं ब्रह्म। ततो वैराजपुरुषेभ्यः। महदेव। इतीत्यम्। कीर्तितम्
'अणुवत्परिवर्तन्ते यत्र ब्रह्माण्डकोटयः' इत्यनेन मयात्रैव पूर्वमभिहितमस्ति। तद्वैभवमक्षर-
ब्रह्मैश्वर्यमहत्त्वम्। वर्णयितुम्। सहस्रास्यः शेषोऽपि। क्षमः समर्थः। नास्ति ॥ ४३-४३ ॥

From him the creation started with 'Mahat' the great first evolute. His greatness is difficult to describe even by the great 'śeṣa' with his thousand mouths.

अतोऽरूपमलिङ्गं च निराकारं तदुच्यते।
मूर्तं च कृष्णधामत्वान्मुक्ताधारतया च तत् ॥ ४८ ॥

HVSS : 63 / 48

अत इति। अतो हेतोः। तदक्षरम्। अरूपं कस्यापि समानतया निरूपयितुमशक्य-
त्वात्कस्मिंश्चिच्छास्त्रेऽरूपमिति। उच्यते। अलिङ्गं प्राकृतेन केनापि लिङ्गेन वक्तुं न शक्यतेऽतः
कस्मिंश्चिच्छास्त्रेऽलिङ्गमिति। उच्यते। निराकारं मूलप्रकृतिपुरुषकार्ये यदाकारसमानाकारा-
भावात्तदाकारावलोकनदृष्टिमप्राप्तैः कुत्रचिच्छास्त्रे निराकारमिति च। उच्यते। तदक्षरम्।
कृष्णधामत्वाद्यथानृपधाम्नस्तत्प्रजासहितनृपतेर्भोग्यभोगोपकरणभोगस्थानादिमत्त्वेन धामत्वं तथास्य
स्वभक्तमुक्तसहितश्रीकृष्णस्य दिव्यभोगस्थानादिमत्त्वेन धामत्वाद्धेतोः। मुक्ताधारतया यथा
नृपतिसभामध्यवर्तिसिंहासनालङ्कृतस्तम्भादिमण्डित स्वावस्थितजनाधारो भवेत्तथास्य
मध्यवर्तिश्रीकृष्णदिव्यसिंहासनान्वितदिव्यस्तम्भात्यादिविराजितसभावस्थितानेकमुक्ताश्रयत्वेन हेतुना
च। मूर्तं साकारम्। तेजोमयं कोटिकोटिचन्द्रसूर्यप्रकाशं च। उच्यते ॥ ४३-४८ ॥

Therefore Akṣara is called formless and featureless. But his concrete form is as the supporter of all the released souls as the Dhāma.

तेजोमयं तत् कृष्णस्य सेवकत्वाच्च साकृति।
क्वचिद्व्यैरवयवैः पाणिपादमुखादिभिः ॥ ४९ ॥

HVSS : 63 / 49

तेजोमयमिति। किञ्च। तदक्षरम्। कृष्णस्य। सेवकत्वान्मुखपरिचारकत्वाद्धेतोः।
दिव्यैरतिमनोहरैः। पाणिपादमुखादिभिः। अवयवैः प्रतीकैः उपलक्षितत्वात्। साकृति पुरुषाकारमपि।
क्वचित्कस्मिंश्चिच्छास्त्रे। उच्यते इति द्वयोरेकान्वयः ॥ ४३-४९ ॥

Brilliant akṣara as the servant of Śrī Kṛṣṇa is endowed with beautiful limbs like the hands feet, face etc. In short he is having human form.

- ♦ Akṣara has divine qualities similar to *Parabrahman*, both being the controllers and above Jīva, Īśvara and Māyā and all evolutes of Prakṛti-Puruṣa.

- ◆ Both have capacity to create worlds.

But the most important characteristics of *Akṣara* or *Akṣarabrahman* in the philosophy and theology of Śrī Swāminārāyaṇa, totally accepted and implemented by BAPS, the new school of one hundred years existence, are the following :

These four explanations are sufficient to give adequate meaning to all references to *Akṣara* and *Brahman* in ancient upniṣads.

It is clear that Śrī Swāminārāyaṇa presents a synthetic view of *Akṣarabrahman* on the basis of critical examination and reconciliation of the statements of Śrutis, Smṛtis, and Purāṇas. Śrī Swāminārāyaṇa makes one thing clear that the interpretations of *Akṣara* as *Māyā*, *Prakṛti*, *Puruṣa*, *Jīva*, *Mukta*, or *Parabrahman* are improper and farfetched.

Akṣara cannot be equated with *Prakṛti* of Sāṃkhya, because *Prakṛti* undergoes expansion and contraction at the time of evolution and dissolution of the universe. *Prakṛti* is subject to change and transformation. On the other hand, *Akṣara* is described as stable (*kūṭastha*) and steadfast (*dhruva*) in upniṣads and the Gītā. *Prakṛti* is a triad of three guṇas (*triguṇātmikā*) while *Akṣara* is *triguṇatī*.’

Akṣara cannot be described as *mukta* or a released soul, because *mukta* too was once upon a time *Jīva*, the *kṣara* being. It is through *sādhana* or spiritual efforts and attainment of perfection that it becomes *mukta*, a free soul. In other words, *Jīva*, the *kṣara* being, through the process of spiritual transformation became *mukta* (free soul) by the grace of God. On the other hand, *Akṣara* is described always as stable (*kūṭastha*) and steadfast (*dhruva*), who is not subject to change and transformation. In addition to this, *Akṣara* is described as an object of meditation as well as the goal to be achieved; while *mukta* (released soul) is not so described.

Some scholars interpret the term *Akṣara* to mean the quality of imperishability, unchangeability, and indestructibility. This is not correct. Gītā and Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad describe *Akṣara* as *puruṣa*. The term *Akṣara* is used not to mean the quality of imperishability, nor as an

adjective, but as a noun qualified by the attributes of stability (*kūṭasthatva*), unmanifest state (*avyaktatva*), steadfastness (*sthīratva*) etc. In this connection, the interpretation offered by Dr. Barnett is significantly worth noting. He says that Parabrahman is the supreme person *Puruṣottama*, while Akṣara is a *Puruṣa* subservient to Him. Both of them are distinct metaphysical realities. On the other hand, the *Kṣara* beings are subservient to *Akṣara* too. Thus, *kṣara* beings, *Akṣara* and *Puruṣottama* - are all realities distinct from each other. Prof. Barnett does accept the personal aspect of *Akṣara* as an object of meditation as well as *Akṣara* in its impersonal aspect as the abode of God.

Some equate Akṣarabrahman with the lower Brahman (*apara brahman* or *saguṇa brahman*). This again is not acceptable. Because the knowledge of *Apara Brahman* is not truly *Parāvidyā* from the transcendental point of view. Secondly *Apara Brahman* has only the empirical existence (*vyāvahārika-sattā*) but not the ultimate existence. In Śaṅkara from the ontological point of view, (*pāramārthika dṛṣṭi*), *Apara Brahman* does not exist, for it is just an appearance. On the other hand, upniṣads clearly speak of the knowledge of Akṣarabrahman as *parā vidyā*, *Gītā* and upniṣads make clear statements that one who attains *Akṣara*, attains the supreme (*Brahmavid āpnoti param*). The attainment of *Akṣara* is the attainment of the final release or *parama pada*.

One cannot equate Akṣarabrahman with Parabrahman, nor can one say that the Akṣarabrahman is an expression of Parabrahman because *Puruṣottama* is described as the ātman of Akṣarabrahman. Parabrahman is described as distinct from and 'superior' to *Akṣara*. Parabrahman is also described as *Puruṣottama* or the supreme person. Therefore, the claim of Śrī Vallabhācārya, that, Akṣarabrahman is the *ādhidaivika* expression of Parabrahman (*Puruṣottama*) in another form, is not acceptable because many statements of Śruti and Smṛti contradict such a proposition. In addition to this, Śrī Vallabhācārya further claims that, from Akṣarabrahman, the *Jīva* emanate like the sparks from fire. This again is unacceptable, because it goes against the unchangeability (*aparivartanīyatva*),

steadfastness (*sthira*), indivisibility, (*akhaṇḍatva*), and stableness (*kūṭasthatva*) of Akṣarabrahman. Therefore, to identify Parabrahman (Puruṣottama) with Akṣarabrahman, or to call the latter as the expression of the former is improper and unacceptable. On the contrary, when Arjuna asked, 'who is that Brahman (Akṣara)? How is that? At that time, Śrī Kṛṣṇa does not reply that, 'I am that Brahman' but He says, that Brahman is Akṣara'; because Śrī Kṛṣṇa is Parabrahman, Paramātmā and Puruṣottama. And, Puruṣottama is described as distinct from (*anya*), superior to (*uttama*), and transcendent (*sarvoparī*) to Akṣara.

Thus, when we examine the Śruti passages, critically interpret them, and try to reconcile them to have a synthetic doctrine of Akṣarabrahman, we find that, Śrī Swāminārāyaṇa seems to be the most innovative, creative and acceptable, logical and comprehensive in his approach.

It is for this reason that in the Śrī Swāminārāyaṇism, the *upāsana* of Puruṣottama through or with the help of Akṣarabrahman or Akṣaraguru is advocated. Thus, an aspirant having earnest desire for liberation must seek refuge in the feet of Akṣaraguru. In the company of such a Guru he must attain identity / similarity with Him i.e. Akṣarabrahman and thus worship the supreme Lord Parabrahman. This is the goal that one can attain in an embodied state of life. This is *Jīvanmukti*, the freedom from ignorance and cycle of births and deaths while alive. Such a Brahmanised Self (*Jīvanmukta*), at time of giving up physical body, is given the divine body by God Himself and goes directly into the highest abode of God to serve and worship Him eternally. This is known as the disembodied state of liberation or *videha mukti*.

अत्रेमे सन्दर्भाः

निर्विकारं निरंशं च ब्रह्मास्ति श्रुतिवर्णितम्।

कथं तत्सर्वरूपं स्यात्सर्विकारपदार्थवत् ॥ ३१ ॥

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अत्रैवम्भूतोपनिषत्सिद्धान्तशैल्यस्ति। पुरुषोत्तमः श्रीहरिः। स्वोपासनासम्प्राप्त-
स्वान्तर्यामित्वेनाक्षरब्रह्माख्येन महापुरुषेण महामायां प्रबोध्य तद्वारानेकाण्ड-
सर्गादिव्यघादित्वेवं सत्यप्यतिमूढा आत्मज्ञानिन आत्मशब्दवाच्यपुरुषोत्तमस्य

श्रीहरेरज्ञानात्तमेवाक्षरब्रह्माख्यपुरुषं बुद्ध्वा तं च सर्वरूपं बुद्ध्वा संसरन्त्यतो यथार्थात्मज्ञानिभिर्भवतैः स्वमोक्षाय निजात्मानमक्षरब्रह्मरूपं विभाव्य पुरुषोत्तमस्य श्रीहरेर्भक्तिः कार्येत्याह षड्भिः। निर्विकारमिति। ब्रह्माक्षरब्रह्माख्यपुरुषरूपम्। निर्विकारम्। निरंशं चेति। श्रुति वर्णितम्। अस्ति। तथा च श्रुतिः। 'निर्विकारं निष्कलं निष्क्रियं शान्तं' मित्यादिः। तत्र निर्गतो विकारः स्वरूपपरिणामादिर्यस्य तत्। निर्गतो निवृत्तः अंशः कलाशब्दाभिहितो विभागो यस्य तदिति निर्विकारनिरंशशब्दार्थः। तदेवंविधं ब्रह्म। सविकारपदार्थवन्मृदादिविकारवत्पदार्थ इव। सर्वरूपम्। कथम्। स्यात्। न भवेदेवेत्यर्थः ॥ १३६-३१ ॥

यत्त्वस्य सर्वरूपत्वं कथितं निगमेऽस्ति तत्।

न विकारितया किन्तु हेतोः कार्यात्मकत्वतः ॥ ३२ ॥

HVSS : 136 / 32

यदिति। अस्य ब्रह्मणः। यत्। सर्वरूपत्वम्। निगमे सर्वं खल्विदं ब्रह्मेत्यादिवेदवचने। कथितम्। तत्तु। विकारितया। न कथितम्। यथा मृद् घटशरावादिरूपेण परिणाम्यानेकरूपेण जायते न तथेदं जीवाद्यनेकरूपेण जातं सत्तथोक्तं भवतीत्यर्थः। किन्तु कार्यात्मकत्वतः। हेतोः कथितम्। कार्यात्मतया कार्यप्रकारं ब्रह्मैवाभिधीयते इत्यर्थः ॥ १३६-३२ ॥

सर्वकारणता सर्वाधारता ब्रह्मणोऽस्ति हि।

पृथग्नाधेयमाधारात्तिष्ठेत्कार्यं च कारणात् ॥ ३३ ॥

HVSS : 136 / 33

एतदेव स्पष्टमाह। सर्वेति। ब्रह्मणः। सर्वकारणता सर्वान्तर्यामित्वेन सर्वहेतुत्वम्। सर्वाधारता सर्वाधिकरणत्वं च अस्ति। आधेयम्। आधारात्। पृथक्। न तिष्ठेत्। कार्यम्। कारणाच्च। पृथक्। न तिष्ठेत्। कार्यस्य कारणसत्तया सद्रूपत्वादाधेयस्य कार्यास्याधारेण कारणेनावस्थानार्हत्वाच्च कार्यमेव कारणाख्यया श्रुत्याऽभिधीयते इत्यर्थः ॥ १३६-३३ ॥

अवस्थानं ब्रह्मतया मायातीतत्वमस्य च।

लक्षणं नित्यमुक्तत्वं व्यतिरेकेण कीर्तितम् ॥ ११ ॥

HVSS : 7 / 11

अवस्थानमिति। ब्रह्मतया ब्रह्मात्मभावेन। अवस्थानम्। मायातीतत्वं मायामयविराडादिदेहत्रयात्पृथग्भावेन वर्तनम्। नित्यमुक्तत्वमहं नित्यमुक्त एवास्मीति भावनयाऽवस्थानत्वं च। अस्य वैराजाख्येश्वरस्य। व्यतिरेकेण व्यतिरेकभावेन। लक्षणम्। कीर्तितम्। अत्रापि श्लोकद्वये ईशस्येति जात्यभिप्रायमेकवचनम्। ब्रह्माण्डानेकत्वेनेश्वरानेकत्वस्य सकलपुराणादिषूक्ते ॥ ७-११ ॥

पुरुषस्य च मायायाः सूर्यादीनां प्रशास्तृता।

नैकाण्डाश्रयतेत्युक्तं ब्रह्मणोऽन्वयलक्षणम् ॥ १२ ॥

HVSS : 7 / 12

पुरुषस्येति। पुरुषस्य पुरुषशब्दवाच्यस्य महापुरुषस्य तथाविधानां प्रधानपुरुषाणां च। मायाया मायाशब्दवाच्याया महामायायाः तथाविधानां प्रधानाख्यमायानां च। सूर्यादीनां च। आदिशब्देन विद्युच्चन्द्राग्न्यादीनां ग्रहणम्। प्रशास्तृता प्रेरकत्व नियामकत्वादि। नैकाण्डाश्रयताऽनेककोटिब्रह्माण्डाधारत्वम् इत्येतत्। ब्रह्मणोऽक्षरब्रह्मणः। अन्वयलक्षणमन्वयभावेन लक्षणं उक्तम् ॥ ७-१२ ॥

सर्वत्र व्यापकत्वेऽपि व्योमवत्तदसङ्गिता।

कृष्णस्यानुगधामत्वं व्यतिरेकोऽस्य गद्यते ॥ १३ ॥

HVSS : 7 / 13

सर्वत्रेति। सर्वत्र मूलप्रकृतिपुरुषतत्कार्येषु। व्यापकत्वेऽपि प्रशास्तृतया वर्तमानत्वेऽपि। व्योमवदाकाशवत्। तदसङ्गिता। आकाशो यथा वाय्वादिपृथिव्यन्तभूतेष्वस्थितोऽपि तत्सङ्गवर्जित एव तिष्ठति। तथा मूलप्रकृतिपुरुषतत्कार्येष्ववस्थितत्वेऽपि तत्सङ्गवर्जितत्वमित्यर्थः। कृष्णपरमात्मनः। अनुगधामत्वं सेवकभावेन धामभावेन चावस्थानत्वं च। अस्याक्षरब्रह्मणः। व्यतिरेको व्यतिरेकभावेन लक्षणम्। गद्यते कथ्यते ॥ ७-१३ ॥

आद्यं तत्रास्त्यमूर्त्तं तु धाम तेजोमयं तथा।

मूर्त्तं पुरुषरूपं च सर्वाधारं द्वितीयकम् ॥ ७ ॥

HVSS : 175 / 7

आद्यमिति। तत्राक्षरस्य द्वयो रूपयोर्मध्ये। आद्यं सूक्ष्मरूपं तु। अमूर्त्तं धामत्वान्निखयवम्। धामानन्तकोटिब्रह्मात्मकमुक्ताधारत्वादामरूपम् तथा। तेजोमयं 'तस्य भासा सर्वमिदं विभाती'तिश्रुतेः सर्वेषां तेजस्विनां प्रकाशकत्वातेजःप्रचुरम्। अस्ति। द्वितीयं महत्तमरूपं तु। पुरुषरूपं पुरुषाकारम्। अत एव। मृते नावपवम्। सर्वाधारमेकैकरोम्यनैकब्रह्माण्डानामेकाश्रयभूतं च। अस्ति ॥ १७५-७ ॥

आद्यं निर्गुणमित्युक्तं सगुणं च तथेतरत्।

अनिर्देश्यमिति प्रोक्तं द्वेधा शक्तियुतं तु तत् ॥ ८ ॥

HVSS : 175 / 8

आद्यमिति। किञ्च। आद्यमक्षरस्य सूक्ष्मरूपम्। निर्गुणं स्वस्य मायिकगुणातीतत्वात्तथा-विधमुक्ताधारत्वाच्च निर्गुणम्। इतीत्यम्। उक्तम्। तथा। इतरदक्षरस्य महत्तमरूपम्। सगुण स्वस्य गुणातीतत्वेऽपि गुणमयान्तकोटिब्रह्माण्डाधारत्वान्सगुणम् इत्युक्तम्। इत्यमुना प्रकारेण। अनिर्देश्यं निरुपमम्। तदक्षरं ब्रह्म। द्वेधाशक्तियुतं शक्तिद्वययुक्तम्। प्रोक्तम् ॥ १७५-८ ॥

एकैकरोमिणि तस्यैव संत्यङान्यणुवन्मुने।

नैतावता तु ब्रह्माण्डगोलसूक्ष्मत्वसम्भवः ॥ ९ ॥

HVSS : 175 / 9

एकेति। हे मुने!! तस्याक्षरब्रह्मणो महत्तमरूपस्य। एकैकरोमिणि। अण्डान्यगणित-ब्रह्माण्डानि। अणुवद्गवाक्षगतमूर्यमयूखपतददृश्याणुसमानानि। सन्ति वर्तन्ते। एतावता तत्राणुवत्प्रतीयमानत्वेन। ब्रह्माण्डगोलस्य सूक्ष्मत्वसम्भवोऽणुतापतिः। नैवास्तिः ॥ १७५-९ ॥

यावत्प्रमाण उदितः शास्त्रे ब्रह्माण्डगोलकः।

स तावानेव भवति तद्विधा अपरेऽपि च ॥ १० ॥

HVSS : 175 / 10

यावदिति। किन्तु। ब्रह्माण्डगोलकः। शास्त्रे श्रीमद्भागवतादिसच्छास्त्रे। यावत्प्रमाणो दशोत्तराधिकाष्टाचरणसंमितः। उदितः। स ब्रह्माण्डगोलकः। तावांस्तत्परिमाण एव। भवति। अपरे तदन्येऽगणिताण्डगोलकाश्चापि। तद्विधा अष्टावर्णसहिता एव। भवन्ति ॥ १७५-१० ॥

ब्रह्मणोऽतिमहत्त्वेन तदणूपमतोच्यते।

रैवताद्वैर्यथा मेरोः पुरतस्त्वस्ति सूक्ष्मता ॥ ११ ॥

HVSS : 175 / 11

ब्रह्मणि इति। ब्रह्मणः सर्वाधारपुरुषाकृतिरपाक्षरब्रह्मणः। अतिमहत्वेन। तदणूपमता
ब्रह्माण्डानामणुसादृश्यम्। उच्यते। एतदेव दूटान्तप्रदर्शनेन द्रव्यनि सार्द्धद्वाभ्याम्। यथा।
मेरोः। पुरतः। रैवताद्रेरसूक्ष्मस्यापि रैवनाचलस्य। सूक्ष्मता मेरुमहत्वापेक्षया सूक्ष्मत्वम्।
अस्ति ॥ १७५-१९ ॥

अनितेजोमये स्वीये धाम्नि ब्रह्मणि सर्वदा।

कृष्णोऽक्षरात्मभिर्मुक्तैरास्ते सेवितपङ्कजः ॥ १४ ॥

HVSS : 175 / 14

अथ द्वितीयप्रश्नोत्तरमाह चतुर्भिः। प्रतीति। अनितेजोमये। स्वीये। ब्रह्मयक्षरब्रह्माखेय।
धाम्नि। कृष्णः। अक्षरात्ममिरक्षरभावापन्नैः। मुक्तैः। सेवितापत्कजो नानोपचारैः
परिचरितपादपङ्कजः सन्। सर्वदा। आस्ते ॥ १७५-१४ ॥

अब्धौ नद्येव दहने सत्येव शलभेन च।

शूरेणेव रणे स्वात्मा ब्रह्मण्यस्ति मया हुतः ॥ ४ ॥

HVSS : 183 / 4

अब्धाविति। अब्धौ समुद्रे। नद्येव। दहनेऽग्नौ। सत्या पतिव्रतयेव। शलभेनेव च। रणे
सङ्ग्रामे। शूरेण शौर्यवता जनेनेव। मया। स्वात्मा। ब्रह्मण्यक्षरब्रह्मणि। हुतो लीनतां गमितस्तदात्मतां
प्रापित इत्यर्थः। अस्ति ॥ १८३-४ ॥

तादात्म्यं तेन सम्प्राप्य निषेवे कृष्णमेव हि।

तेजोमयेऽक्षरे तस्मिन् धाम्नि दिव्यतनुं प्रभुम् ॥ ५ ॥

HVSS : 183 / 5

तादात्म्यमिति। अहम्। तेनाक्षरब्रह्मणा। तादात्म्यं तदेकभावम्। सम्प्राप्य।
तेजोमयेऽनवधिकातिशयप्रचुरतेजसि। तस्मिन्। अक्षरे। धाम्नि। दिव्यतनुं रमणीयरूपानुरूप-
सनातनमूर्तिम्। प्रभुमक्षरादिसकलनियमनसमर्थम्। कृष्णमेव। निषेवे। हि ॥ १८३-५ ॥

तमुवाच हरिर्ब्रह्मंस्त्वत्प्रश्नस्योत्तरं शृणु।

अवकाशात्मकः प्रोक्तः आकाशो जगदाश्रयः ॥ ५ ॥

HVSS : 46 / 5

तमिति। तमेवं पृच्छन्तं माहेश्वरविप्रम्। हरिः। उवाचः। हे ब्रह्मन्! त्वत्प्रश्नस्य। उत्तरम्।
शृणु। आकाशः। अवकाशात्मकश्छिद्रप्रदातृत्वस्वरूपः। जगदाश्रयः सकलजगदाधारः।
प्रोक्तः ॥ ४६-५ ॥

स पदार्थस्तु नास्त्येव न व्याप्तस्तेन योऽभितः।

यत्सूक्ष्मेऽणौ च तद्भागेऽप्यस्ति सोऽन्तश्च तद्बहिः ॥ ९ ॥

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स इति। यः। पदार्थः। तेन चिदाकाशेन। अभितः। न व्याप्तः। स तादृशः पदार्थस्तु।
नास्त्येव यद्यस्मात्कारणात्। स चिदाकाशः। सूक्ष्मे। अणौ सूक्ष्मपरिमाणवति द्व्यणुके इत्यर्थः।
तद्भागेऽण्वर्द्धभागे परमाणौ चापि। अन्तरन्तःप्रदेशे। तद्बहिः। अस्ति ॥ ४६-९ ॥

श्वासोच्छ्वासविमोकोऽपि देहिनां तेन जायते।

अतोऽसौ जगदाधारः प्रकाशात्मक उच्यते ॥ १४ ॥

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श्वासेति। देहिनां प्राणिनाम्। श्वासोच्छ्वासविमोकोऽपि अनुलोमप्रतिलोमभावेना-
सुप्रवर्तनमपीत्यर्थः। तेन चिदाकाशेन। जायते। अतो हेतोः प्रकाशात्मकः। असौ चिदाकाशः।
जगदाधारः। उच्यते ॥ ४६-१४ ॥

कृष्णप्रसादात्तद्दृष्टिं विद्यां दहरसञ्ज्ञिताम्।
प्राप्नुयाद्यः स तु पुमान् सर्वं ब्रह्मैव पश्यति ॥ २१ ॥

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कृष्ण इति। यः पुमान् भगवद्भक्तयोगी पुरुषः। कृष्णप्रसादादेकान्तिकभक्तिप्रसादित-
श्रीकृष्णभगवदनुग्रहात्। तद्दृष्टिं सर्वत्र चिदाकाशदर्शनहेतुभूताम्। दहरसञ्ज्ञिताम्। विद्याम्। प्राप्नुयात्।
स पुमांस्तु। सर्वं सकारणब्रह्माण्डजातम्। ब्रह्मचिदाकाशरूपमेव। पश्यति। चिदाकाशमयदृष्टित्वाद्भस्तुतः
सदपि सकारणब्रह्माण्डादिकं किमपि न पश्यतीति भावः ॥ ४६-२१ ॥

समाधौ जीववृत्तीनां प्रातिलोम्येन वर्तने।
जायमाने भगवति ब्रह्मतेजोविलासिनि ॥ २६ ॥

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एतदेव स्पष्टमाहचतुर्भिः समाधाविति। समाधौ। ब्रह्मतेजोविलासिनी
तेजोमयब्रह्मधामस्थानेकमुक्तसभायां विराजमाने इत्यर्थः। भगवति श्रीकृष्णे विषये।
जीववृत्तीनां मनःप्राणेन्द्रियप्रकाशकानां जीवस्य वृत्तीनाम्। प्रातिलोम्येन। वर्तने। जायमाने
सति ॥ ४६-२६ ॥

We give below the statements about Akṣaradhāma as the residence of
Śrī Swāminārāyaṇa in different scriptures including the tīkā of HVSS,
Setumālā, of Śrī Swāminārāyaṇism.

- ◆ धाम गोलोकमध्यावस्थिताऽक्षरपदम्। (श्रीहरिवाक्यसुधासिन्धु, सेतुमालाटीका १६८/३८)
- ◆ गोलोकाक्षरदिव्यधाम्नि निवसन्। (बुद्धिप्रदीप १)
- ◆ अप्राकृतं च सोऽपश्यद्भाम गोलोकमदभुतम्। अक्षरं धाम तन्मध्ये दिव्यमप्रतिमं शुभम् ॥ (श्रीहरिलीलाकल्पतरु २/५९/४५)
- ◆ ज्योतिर्मयेऽक्षरे धाम्नि स्थितं तं कृष्णमैक्षत। समग्रैश्वर्यसम्पन्नं सपार्षदपरिग्रहम् ॥ (सत्सङ्गिजीवनम् १/३/३६)
- ◆ दर्शयामास तत्रैव गोलोकं धाम चाक्षरम्। श्वेतद्वीपं च वैकुण्ठं सकलैश्वर्यसम्भूतम् ॥ (सत्सङ्गिजीवनम् २/२०/१६)
- ◆ ततस्तत्कृपया प्रापत् समाधिं सोऽपि सत्वरम्। श्वेतद्वीपं च बदरीवनं नूनं ययौ स्वयम् ॥ २७ ॥
वैकुण्ठं चापि गोलोकं ययौ धाम तथाक्षरम्। उत्तमं तत्प्रतापेन ब्रह्माण्डेष्वगमच्च सः ॥ २८ ॥ (श्रीहरिलीलाकल्पतरु ३/१९/२७-२८)
- ◆ मुख्यं गोलोकवैकुण्ठादिष्वयं धामाक्षरब्रह्मपदम्। (श्रीहरिवाक्यसुधासिन्धु, सेतुमालाटीका ४/३७)
- ◆ सर्वपराक्षरधामाधिपस्य ब्रह्मभावापन्नाक्षरधामस्थमुक्तकोटिभिर्यथाकालं समर्चितस्य सर्वकारणकारणस्य, रामकृष्णाद्यनेकावतारहेतोः,
पुरुषोत्तमस्य मम भवतां साक्षात्, सम्बन्धाद् यूयं श्वेतद्वीपादिधामस्थ-सकलभक्तेभ्यो नितरामेवाऽधिकाः स्थेति मद्बचनात्
सत्यमेव मन्तव्यमिति। (श्रीहरिवाक्यसुधासिन्धु, सेतुमालाटीका २२५)
- ◆ अतस्तस्य महत्तां तु शक्ता वर्णयितुं न वै। वेदाः शास्त्रपुराणेतिहासादय इयत्तया ॥ (श्रीहरिवाक्यसुधासिन्धु, सेतुमालाटीका ६३/३२)
- ◆ तदक्षरं कृष्णस्य सेवकत्वात् मुख्यपरिचारकत्वाद् हेतोः दिव्यैरतिमनोहरैः पाणिपादमुखादिभिः अवयवैः प्रतीकैः उपलक्षितत्वात् साकृतिः
पुरुषाकारमपि चंचित्कस्मिंश्चिच्छासे। (श्रीहरिवाक्यसुधासिन्धु, सेतुमालाटीका ६३/४९)
- ◆ दिव्येऽक्षरे लसति धाम्नि राजसे वै। (श्रीहरिलीलाकल्पतरु ६/२८/२४)
- ◆ त्वं वर्तसे ब्रह्मणि धाम्नि भास्वरे। (श्रीहरिलीलाकल्पतरु ६/१७/८)

- ◆ दिव्ये धाम्नि योऽक्षरे परतरे मायापरे राजितो । (हर्याज्ञामृतसिन्धु १/२)
- ◆ अक्षरब्रह्मणोऽनन्ते तेजसि श्रीहरौ स्थिते । (बुद्धिप्रदीप ६७)
- ◆ प्रकृतिपरतरेऽक्षरे स्वकीये निवसति धाम्नि सदाऽनवद्ये । (श्रीहरिलीलाकल्पतरु २/४४/२०)
- ◆ स्वेऽक्षरे धाम्नि दिव्ये आस्से । (श्रीहरिलीलाकल्पतरु २/३७/२३)
- ◆ वसति ब्रह्मणि धाम्नि योऽक्षरे । (श्रीहरिलीलाकल्पतरु २/२१/७०)
- ◆ स्वकीयाक्षरधामवासी । (श्रीहरिलीलाकल्पतरु २/२१/७३)
- अक्षरब्रह्माख्ये स्वधाम्नि मूर्तः हरिः । (श्रीहरिवाक्यसुधासिन्धु, सेतुमाला, १००/१०)
- ◆ अक्षरस्यात्मनां चात्मा भगवान् व्योमनिर्मलः । (श्रीज्ञानविलास २५/१०)
- ◆ निश्चयोऽयमेवाक्षरातीतः पुरुषोत्तमोऽस्तीति निर्णयः । (श्रीहरिवाक्यसुधासिन्धु, सेतुमाला, ९७/५)
- ◆ अहं त्वक्षरमध्यस्थोऽनन्तमुक्तैर्वृतः सदा । सङ्कल्पमित्यहं चक्रे ह्यवतारोऽस्तु मे भुवि ॥ (श्रीहरिकृष्णलीलामृत, ९२/२०)
- ◆ हरिः परब्रह्म मुनेऽक्षरात्माऽवतारमुक्तैरमृताख्यसंस्थैः ।
- साकं सहैश्वर्यमिहाधुनाऽऽविर्भूतोऽस्ति नूनं कृपया स्वयं सः ॥ (श्रीहरिचरित्रम् १/२२/५०)

