

Ch.3

Tattvapañchaka

The basic tenet of Śrī Swāminārāyaṇism is that there are five ontological realities all of them are eternal and separate though Paramśevara controls the remaining four as described in HVSS : 233/29

जीवा ईशा ब्रह्मा माया परमेश्वर इत्यमी।

अनादयो भवन्त्येव पञ्च चापि न संशयः ॥ २९ ॥

HVSS 233 : 29

जीवा इति। जीवाः। ईशा वैराजपुरुषादयः। ब्रह्माक्षरपुरुषः। माया तदङ्गना मूलप्रकृतिः। परमेश्वरो जीवादिचतुरुपासनीयः पुरुषोत्तमः। इत्यमी पञ्चापि। अनादयो नित्यसिद्धा एव भवन्ति। न संशयः ॥ २३३-२९ ॥

In this philosophy, the relation between the highest ontological reality namely Parabrahman, Paramśevara, and remaining four - Brahman (Akṣara) Māyā, Íśvara and Jīva as well as between the second highest reality Brahman or Akṣara or Akṣarabrahman and the remaining three Māyā, Íśvara and Jīva-is both causal and conceptual. He has accepted body-soul relationship of Śrī Rāmānujācārya and then modified as per His own view.

It is stated in HVSS 12 : 3 that the knowledge of this five eternal realities and creation is necessary for salvation.

पुरुषं प्रकृतिं कालं तत्त्वानि च यदा पुमान्।

वेत्ति स्वरूपतः सम्यक् तद्वन्धात्तर्हि मुच्यते ॥ ३ ॥

HVSS 12 : 3

पुरुषमिति। पुमान्मुमुक्षुः। यदा यर्हि। पुरुषं मूलप्रकृत्यधिष्ठातारम्। प्रकृतिं मूलमायाम्। इमौ प्रधानप्रकृतीनां तदधिष्ठातृपुरुषाणां चोपलक्षणम्। कालं प्रकृतिसाम्यावस्थाचालकम्।

तत्त्वानि महदादीनि च। स्वरूपतस्तु तद्यथाविधस्वरूपतया। सम्यग्यथार्थतः। वेत्ति
साक्षाद्भगवतद्भक्तमुखाज्जानाति। तर्हि। तद्वन्धादनादिकालतः स्वनिष्ठात्कार्यकारणरूप-
मायाख्याद्वन्धनात्। मुच्यते। एतेषां वेदनपूर्वं साक्षाद्भगवदेकान्तिकभक्त्याचरणेन ततो विमुक्तो
भूत्वा ब्रह्मात्मना तत्सेवायां सदावस्थितो भवतीत्यर्थः ॥ १२-३ ॥

When an aspirant understands correctly the nature of *Puruṣa*, *Prakṛti* (*Mula Puruṣa* and *Mula Māyā*, as well as *Pradhāna* or lower *Prakṛti* and *Puruṣa*) Kala and the elements (twenty four including the *Mahat*) then only he is released from the bondage (of *Māyā*). The author of *Setumālā* adds that the proper knowledge of these five basic realities, the creation along with that of the highest bhakti to the manifest human God, understood from the true devotee, will lead to final liberation.

In Indian philosophy the importance of ontological or metaphysical 'Real' or 'Realities' is indeed very high. Those who do not accept any ontological reality like certain schools of Buddhism or heterodoxical schools or those who accept only one reality like Śrī Ādi Śaṅkarācārya, by necessity have to resort to many unusual arguments to explain various basic philosophical entities. They find it very hard to explain the objective world.

Śrī Ādi Śaṅkarācārya rejects both pluralistic realism and subjective idealism. He seeks to show manifold world of change to be neither real nor unreal but as indescribable (अनिर्वचनीय). He has to explain the physical world as practically real (*vyāvahārika*) or relatively real, not actually real and hence only temporary and transient, but not ultimately real (*pāramārthika*).

To him the existing physical world is a dream-like superimposition, or like superimposition of a serpent on a rope, projected due to lack of knowledge and/or light, on pure unobjectified consciousness. This consciousness is the only reality behind plurality, which is the veil of ignorance. He was forced to postulate the entire 'world of real' as illusion, which is to be removed by true knowledge of the self, which is identical with the Supreme Self.

Wherever in the *Śruti*, the concept of Akṣara, as an imperishable entity occurs, it creates the problem for all those ācāryas, like Śrī Śaṅkarācārya, who do not accept it as separate from the Highest Ontological Reality on one hand and individual soul on the other.

Let us take one example from the Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad. We have the statement here about the highest knowledge or *Parā Vidyā* by which the Akṣara can be known. ‘परा यया तदक्षरमधिगम्यते (I.1.5) and thereafter there is a statement दिव्यो ह्यमूर्तः पुरुषः स बाह्याभ्यन्तरो ह्यज । अप्राणो ह्यमनाः शुभ्रो ह्यक्षरात्परतः परः ॥ II.1.2 Śrī Śaṅkarācārya is forced to change the meaning of the same concept of Akṣara occurring in the same context. This is because he accepts only one Reality.

In the first instance he understands the Highest, Paramēśvara by the term Akṣara, to be achieved by परा विद्या (परा यया तदक्षरमधिगम्यते). The Ultimate Reality called Akṣara is Paramātmā. योऽयमदृश्यत्वादिगुणको भूतयोनिः स परमेश्वर एव स्यान्नान्यः इति । कथमेतदवगम्यते ? धर्मोक्तेः । परमेश्वरस्य हि धर्म इहोच्यमानो दृश्यते यः सर्वज्ञः सर्वविद् इति । ब्रह्मसूत्र शांकर भाष्य १/२/२१.

In the second reference of Akṣara i.e., अक्षरात् परतः परः । he understands the same term Akṣara as Māyā, ‘undifferentiated power (*śakti*) of God’. क्षरात्परतः परः इति । अक्षरमव्याकृतं नामरूपबीजशक्तिरूपं भूतसूक्ष्मम् । ब्रह्मसूत्र शांकर भाष्य १/२/२२. This is because he cannot accept more than one Reality i.e., Brahman or Akṣara and that there is something different from and above Akṣara.

Similarly Śrī Rāmānujācārya who accepts only one Sentient Reality (*Īśvara*) higher than soul (*Cit*) and matter (*Acit*), explains Akṣara in the first case as ‘Paramātmān’ in his Śrībhāṣya. (I-2-22) and in the second case as *Bhūtasūkṣma*, ‘*Acetana-śakti*’ or ‘*Parāśakti*’ of *Īśvara* in the same Śrībhāṣya. (I-2-23)

Likewise, Nimbārkaācārya understands Paramēśvara, Paramātmān by the first Akṣara and Pradhāna by the second. परतः स्वशक्तेः प्राधानाच्च परः (वेदान्तकौस्तुभः १/२/२२)

Śrī Madhvācārya understands Lakṣmī by the second Akṣara. Of course, by first Akṣara everybody understands Paramātmān.

Thus, all who postulate only one meaning for Akṣara Metaphysical Reality have to resort to questionable means of interpretation to explain the same term Akṣara (Brahman) in the same sense throughout the explanation. Unfortunately they are unable to do so. Unlike them Śrī Swāmīnārāyaṇa has specially coined the term Akṣara.

He has accepted five basic Ontological Realities: *Jīva*, *Īśvara*, *Māyā*, *Brahman* & *Parabrahman*. All are real. *Jīva*, *Īśvara*, *Brahman* and *Parabrahman* are *Cetanatattva*. They have *Svayamprakāśatva* and *saccidānandatva* in common but in different degrees. *Parabrahman* controls *Jīva*, *Īśvara*, *Māyā* and *Brahman* all four. They constitute the body of *Parabrahman*. Both *Jīva* and *Īśvara* are under *Māyā*. The first has limited power and knowledge, the second, being ruler in his own world, has much more power, strength and knowledge than *Jīva*.

The specialty of Śrī Swāmīnārāyaṇa philosophy is that both *Akṣarabrahman* and *Parabrahman* are the controllers of the first three, both are beyond *Māyā* and therefore are always beyond the clutches of her action and always remain taintless even when they incarnate in the world in human form.

Sādhū Śrutiprakāśadāsaji has given very clearly and briefly the essence of *Tattvapañchaka* in his unpublished thesis *Brahmasūtraparyālochanam*.

तत्त्वमीमांसायां जीव-ईश्वर-माया-ब्रह्म-विशिष्टं परब्रह्मतत्त्वं निरूपितम्। परब्रह्मण एव विशेषत्वेऽपि शरीरविधया तत्त्वचतुष्टयं सम्मील्य नित्यं तत्त्वपञ्चकं स्वीकृतम्॥ तदाह — जीवा ईशा ब्रह्म माया परमेश्वर इत्यमी। अनादयो भवन्त्येव पञ्च चाऽपि न संशयः।

जीवस्वरूपवर्णनम्

प्रकृतिस्तत्कार्य-ईश्वर-ब्रह्म-परब्रह्मभिन्नः, अनाद्यज्ञानरूपेण कारणदेहेन परिवृतः, हृत्स्थोऽणुसूक्ष्मः, अच्छेद्यादिनिर्विकारित्वलक्षणः, ज्ञानशक्त्या सामान्यात्मना सम्पूर्णशरीरे व्यापकः, स्वरूपेण विशेषात्मना हृत्स्थः, सच्चिदानन्दादिरूपः, ज्ञाता, भोक्ता, ब्रह्म-परब्रह्मशरीरः, परब्रह्मभक्तियोग्यः, इति जीवलक्षणम्। ते च जीवा अनेकाः ब्रह्म-विष्णु-शिवानन्तरम् आरभ्य स्तम्बपर्यन्ताः, चतुरशीतिलक्षयोनिप्रकाराः, अनादित जीवा एव किन्तु च्युतभावं प्राप्य अंशांशिभावेन वा न परब्रह्मविकाराः परब्रह्माधीनकर्मफलभोक्तार इति।

Jīva

Jīva is different from *Parabrahman*, *Akṣarabrahman*, *Īśvara*, *Prakṛti* and its effects (As explained below in HVSS 7 : 8, 9), without a beginning, enveloped by *Māyā*, real, of the form of existence, subtle like an atom, residing in the heart, pervading the entire body by its power of knowledge.

विशेषसत्तया जीवो हृत्स्थः सामान्यसत्तया।

व्याप्तोऽस्ति करणान्येष बाह्याभ्यन्तराणि च ॥ १३ ॥

HVSS 118 : 13

विशेषेति। हे मुने!! जीवः। विशेषसत्तया विशेषतो विद्यमानतया। हृत्स्थो हृदयमध्यावस्थितः। अस्ति। एष जीवः। सामान्यसत्तया। बाह्यानि। करणानि चक्षुरादीनि। आभ्यन्तराणि। करणानि मनआदीनि च। व्याप्तः। अस्ति ॥ ११८-१३ ॥

जीवानां वृत्तयस्त्रेधा कथ्यतेऽतो महर्षिभिः।

स्वकीयांश्चान्तःकरणानुगाश्चेन्द्रियगा

इति ॥ १५ ॥

HVSS 118 : 15

जीवानामिति। अतो हेतोः। जीवानाम्। वृत्तयः। स्वकीयाः। अन्तःकरणानुगा अन्तःकरणानुसारिण्यः। इन्द्रियगा इन्द्रियानुसारिण्यश्च। इतीत्यम्। त्रेधा त्रिप्रकाराः। महर्षि-भिर्हिरण्यगर्भादिमुनिभिः। कथ्यते ॥ ११८-१५ ॥

It is both *Jñānavān* and *Jñānaswarūpa* i.e. it has consciousness in the form of knowledge and knower, *Jñātā*, characterised by the qualities, such as indivisibility, impenetrability, etc. of the form of joy, non-aging, immortal and indestructible. All the three words, *Jīva*, *Ātman*, and *Jīvātman* represent this reality. *Jīvas* are many. They attain the form of *Brahman* by coming in contact with the *Satpuruṣa* or God - Realised saint. This is the exposition of the way and means for liberation of soul (*mukti*) in the *Vacanāmṛtam* and *Śrī Harivākyasudhāsindhu*.

Śrī Swāminārāyaṇa has stated his principle of the *Jīvātman* to be different from :

- (1) That of the Advaita by stating it to be eternal reality
- (2) As different from that of the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika as it is being of the form of knowledge
- (3) Different from that of the Sāṃkhya-Yoga, as it is knower

- (4) As different from all those systems of philosophy that take it to be pervasive by believing it to be in the heart and then pervading the whole body through the power of knowledge.
- (5) In the HVSS 118, he has stated his principle to be different from that of the Jainas who consider it to be medium-sized.
- (6) As different from that of the philosophers who call it mutable by calling it to be immutable.

ईश्वरनिरूपणम्

ईश्वराश्च जीवापेक्षया स्वतन्त्राः, सर्वज्ञाश्च ब्रह्माण्डापेक्षया, पञ्चभूताभिमानिन इन्द्रियाद्यभिमानिनश्च, अनाद्यज्ञानबद्धाः ऐश्वर्यवत्त्वादीश्वराः ब्रह्माण्डानां रक्षण-पालन-संहारादिक्रियासु नियुक्ताः। भगवद्भक्तियोग्याः, अनेके परस्परं तास्तम्यवन्तश्च। ईश्वरेषु वैराजपुरुषश्च विराट्-सूत्रात्म-अव्याकृतशरीरयुक्तः इतीश्वरस्वरूपलक्षणवर्णनम्।

Īśvara

The conscious realities right from Pradhāna Puruṣa to Brahmā, Viṣṇu, and Maheśa are called *īśvara* having similar states or conditions like *Jivas*.

यथा जीवात्मनोऽवस्था जाग्रत्स्वप्नसुषुप्तयः।

तथा स्थित्युत्पत्तिलयास्तस्यावस्था अपीरिताः ॥ १० ॥

HVSS 164 : 10

यथेति। यथा। जीवात्मनः। जाग्रत्स्वप्नसुषुप्तयः। अवस्थाः। सन्ति। तथा। तस्य वैराजपुरुषस्य। स्थित्युत्पत्तिलयाः। अवस्थाः। अपि। ईरिताः ॥ १६४-१० ॥

स्थूलं सूक्ष्मं कारणं च जीवस्येति वपुस्त्रयम्।

विराट्सूत्राव्याकृताख्यं वैराजस्य वपुस्त्रयम् ॥ ११ ॥

HVSS 164 : 11

स्थूलमिति। जीवस्य स्थूलम्। सूक्ष्मम्। कारणं च। इत्येवंविधम्। वपुस्त्रयम्। अस्ति। वैराजस्य। विराट्सूत्राव्याकृताख्यम् वपुस्त्रयम्। अस्ति ॥ १६४-११ ॥

वैराजस्यापि देहस्तु तत्त्वैर्हि महदादिभिः।

स्वस्वांशैरेव रचितो भवतीश्वरनोदितैः ॥ १२ ॥

HVSS 164 : 12

वैराजस्येति। वैराजस्यापि। देहो विराट्शरीरं तु। ईश्वरनोदितैः परमेश्वरेणान्तर्यामिशक्त्या प्रेरितैः। महदादिभिः तत्त्वैः। स्वस्वांशैरेव। रचितः। भवति ॥ १६४-१२ ॥

सजीवेऽप्यस्य देहे च करणैः सह देवताः।

प्रविष्टा गोलकान्सर्वान्नोदतिष्ठत्तदाऽपि सः ॥ १३ ॥

HVSS 164 : 13

सजीव इति। सजीवे स्वकीयक्षेत्रज्ञसहितेऽपि। अस्य वैराजपुरुषस्य। देहे विराट्शरीरे।
करणैरिन्द्रियैः सह। देवताः। सर्वान्। गोलकान्। प्रविष्टाः। तदापि। स वैराजः पुरुषः।
नोदतिष्ठन्नोतस्थौ ॥ १६४-१३ ॥

यदा सद्गुरुवाक्येन स्वस्वरूपं ततः पृथक्।
ब्रह्मैवेति विनिश्चित्य मननं कुरुते भृशम् ॥ १८ ॥

HVSS 164 : 18

यदेति। यदा। जीवः। सद्गुरुवाक्येन साक्षाद्भगवदुपासकैकान्तिकसाधूपदेशवचनेन।
स्वस्वरूपम्। ततो देहादितः। पृथक्। ब्रह्म ब्रह्मरूपमेव। इतीत्यम्। विनिश्चित्य। भृशमत्यन्तम्।
मननम्। कुरुते ॥ १६४-१८ ॥

वैराजोऽप्येवमेवास्ति द्विपराद्वाविधि स्वके।
देहे बद्धो वासुदेवध्यानान्मुक्तिमुपैति च ॥ २२ ॥

HVSS 164 : 22

वैराज इति। एवमुक्तविधजीववदेव। वैराजोऽपि द्विपराद्वाविधि द्विपराद्कालपर्यन्तम्।
स्वके। देहे विराट्संज्ञे। बद्धः। अस्ति। वासुदेवध्यानात्। मुक्तिं च। उपैति ॥ १६४-२२ ॥

सङ्कर्षणमुपास्तेऽसौ प्रलयेऽथ स्थितावपि।
प्रद्युम्नं च तथोत्पत्तावनिरुद्धाख्यमीश्वरम् ॥ २३ ॥

(HVSS 164 : 23

सङ्कर्षणमिति। असौ वैराजः। प्रलये प्रलयावस्थायाम्। सङ्कर्षणम्। उपास्ते अथ च।
स्थितौ स्थित्यवस्थायामपि। प्रद्युम्नम्। उपास्ते। तदा। उत्पत्तावुत्पत्त्यवस्थायाम्।
अनिरुद्धाख्यम्। ईश्वरम्। उपास्ते ॥ १६४-२३ ॥

सङ्कर्षणादयस्तिस्त्रो वासुदेवस्य मूर्तयः।
गुणात्मिका भवत्येव त्रिवर्गफलसिद्धिदाः ॥ २४ ॥

HVSS 164 : 24

सङ्कर्षणेति। वासुदेवस्य। सङ्कर्षणादयः। तिस्रः। मूर्तयः। गुणात्मिकास्तम आदिगुण-
त्रयात्मिकाः। त्रिवर्गफलसिद्धिदा धर्मादित्रिवर्गव्युष्टिनिष्पातिप्रदा एव। भवन्ति ॥ १६४-२४ ॥

उत्पत्त्यादिकार्यसिद्धिस्तदुपासनयाऽस्य तु।
भवत्यथो मोक्षसिद्धिर्वासुदेवैकचिन्तनात् ॥ २५ ॥

HVSS 164 : 25

उत्पत्तीति। अस्य वैराजस्य। उत्पत्त्यादिकार्यसिद्धिस्तु। तदुपासनया सङ्कर्षणाद्युपासनेन।
भवति। अथो अथ च। मोक्षसिद्धिस्तु। वासुदेवैकचिन्तनात्। भवति ॥ १६४-२५ ॥

वासुदेवोपासनं च वैराजस्य न दुष्करम्।
शुद्धान्तःकरणत्वेन तत्सान्निध्यस्य सम्भवात् ॥ २६ ॥

HVSS 164 : 26

वासुदेवेति। किञ्च। वैराजस्य। शुद्धान्तःकरणत्वेन हेतुना। तत्सान्निध्यस्य
वासुदेवसमीपत्वस्य। सम्भवाद्विद्यमानत्वात्। वासुदेवोपासनाम्। दुष्करं दुःसाध्यम्।
नास्ति ॥ १६४-२६ ॥

According to the above statements the Vairāja Puruṣa, the presiding gods of all external and the inner organs as well as Aniruddha-Pradyumna-Saṁkarṣaṇa, too are included in the reality called *īśvara*. These *īśvaras* are bound by *Māyā*, but are omniscient and independent in relation to their own *Brahmāṇḍas*. They are endowed with supremacy compared to the *jīvas*. The *īśvara* in the form of the Vairāja Puruṣa is Universal Being. All *īśvaras* possess three bodies, namely *Virāt* (gross) *Sūtrātmā* (subtle) *Avyākṛta* (causal). They are engaged in the task of creation-preservation-destruction of the cosmos. Generally, these *īśvaras* bear the similarity with the qualified Brahman delineated by the *Advaitins*. This reality of *īśvara* is inferior to that of Paramśvara and Akṣarabrahma, as been clearly stated.

३. मायास्वरूपनिरूपणम्

त्रिगुणवती, जडा, भगवच्छक्तिः, तमोरूपा, विकारजननी जीवस्याहंममताहेतुः, अनन्तकोटिब्रह्माण्डोपादानकारणभूता, आत्यन्तिकप्रलये जीवेश्वराणां स्वगर्भस्थत्वेन हेतुना चिदात्मिका इति।

Māyā

Māyā is attachment to the body and the body-relations. When this sense of deep attachment to one's own body and kith and kin is given up then only *Māyā* is overcome. *Māyā* is power of *Bhagwān*, is different from ontological realities of *Jīva*, *īśvara*, *Brahman-Parabrahman*, is inert, comprising three qualities, is in the form of darkness, is the material cause of the innumerable cosmoses, and accommodates conscious *jīvas* and *īśvaras* inside itself. This *Māyā* is to be removed either at present or in future. Then only a person will be happy. Removing this attachment to body and relatives, deep and steady love is to be cultivated in God. That is essence of all scriptures and that is what the great devotees like Hanumān and Nārada did. They always ask to God to protect them from *Māyā* by giving them company of God's real *Bhaktas*.

माया तु देहेऽहंबुद्धिर्ममता दैहिकेष्विति।
विज्ञाय सा प्रयत्नेन हातव्या साधुसेवया ॥ ५ ॥

मायेति। देहे। अहंबुद्धिः दैहिकेषु। ममता ममत्वबुद्धिः। माया। इतीत्यम्। विज्ञाय। सा माया। तु। साधुसेवयाऽहंममत्वरूपमायावर्जितसाधूनां निश्छद्य संसेवनेन। प्रयत्नेन प्रहातव्या ॥ २६२-५ ॥

अद्य कालान्तरे वापि यदैवं यः करिष्यति।

तदा सुखी स तु पुमान्भविष्यति न चान्यथा ॥६॥

HVSS 262 : 6

अद्येति। अद्य साम्प्रतम्। अथवा। कालान्तरेऽपि। यदा। यो भक्तः। एवमहंममत्वमायापरित्यागपूर्वं श्रीहरिप्रीतिं सम्पादनमित्यर्थः। करिष्यति। तदा। सः। पुमान् भक्तः। सुखी। भविष्यति। अन्यथैवंकरणमन्तरा। न च नैव सुखी भविष्यति ॥ २६२-६ ॥

मायामपास्य सततं प्रीतिर्भगवति स्थिरा।

कार्येति सर्वशास्त्राणां सिद्धान्तोऽस्ति सतां मतः ॥ ४ ॥

HVSS 262 : 4

मायामिति ॥ हे सन्तः! मायाम्। अपास्य। भगवति साक्षाच्छ्रीहरौ। सततम्। स्थिरा दृढा प्रीतिः। कार्या। इत्येवंविधः। सतां मतः सकलसाधुसम्तः। सर्वशास्त्राणाम्। सिद्धान्तः। अस्ति ॥ २६२-४ ॥

हनुमन्नारदाद्यैश्च महाभागवतैरपि।

इयमेवोज्झिता माया कृता प्रीतिर्दृढा हरौ ॥ ७ ॥

HVSS 262 : 7

एतदेव सदाचारेण द्रढयति त्रिभिः। हनुमदिति। महाभागवतैर्भगवदेकान्तिकभक्तैः। हनुमन्नारदाद्यैश्चापि। आद्यशब्देन प्रह्लाददेर्ग्रहणम्। इयमहंममत्वरूपा। मायैव। ऊज्झिता त्यक्ता। हरौ। दृढा। प्रीतिः। कृता ॥ २६२-७ ॥

याचितं तैर्हरिश्चापि मायाया निजरक्षणम्।

निर्माय भगवद्भक्तप्रसङ्गश्च निरन्तरम् ॥ ८ ॥

HVSS 262 : 8

याचितमिति। तैर्हनुमदाद्यैर्महाभागवतैरपि। मायाया देहाहंममत्वरूपमायातः सकाशात्। निजरक्षणम्। हरेः सकाशात्। याचितम्। निरन्तरम्। निर्मायभगवद्भक्तप्रसङ्गश्च। याचितः। चकारात्तस्मिन्प्रीतिश्च याचितेति। बोध्यम् ॥ २६२-८ ॥

४. ब्रह्मणोस्वरूपनिरूपणम्

ब्रह्म, अक्षरम्, अक्षरब्रह्मेत्यादिपदवाच्यं तत्त्वम्, भगवद्भामस्वरूपम्, प्रकृतिपुरुषादेः शरीरित्वे इति नित्यपरब्रह्मसेवा-निमग्नम्, एकमपि कार्यभेदेन चतुःस्वरूपम्, तत्रैकं धामस्वरूपम्, औपनिषदिकब्रह्मधामपदवाच्यम्। द्वितीयं भगवद्भाम्येव भगवत्सेवायां स्थितम्, दिव्यकरचरणाद्याकृतिमत्, मुक्तानामादर्शस्वरूपम्। तृतीयं नैककोटि ब्रह्माण्डेषु व्यापकम् अणोरणीयः, प्रकाशस्वरूपं लोकानामाधारभूतं चिदाकाशपदवाच्यं सर्वत्र व्यापकत्वेन प्रतिजीवं हृदयाकाशे स्थितं दहरपदवाच्यं दहराकाशम्। चतुर्थं प्रतिब्रह्माण्डं परब्रह्मपुरुषोत्तमाज्ञानुसारं नैककोटिजीवेश्वरादीनामात्यन्तिकनिःश्रेयसार्थं सततं विचरन् मनुष्यस्वरूपं परमैकान्तिकं एकान्तिकधर्मधारकं पोषकञ्च सत्पुरुषपदवाच्यं, भगवान् एव सत्पुरुषे ब्रह्मणि सम्यक् स्थित्वा स्वैश्वर्यं सम्यक् प्रकाशयेह भूमौ, जीवानां निःश्रेयसं करोति। स्वरूपचतुष्टयमपि परब्रह्मणोऽत्यन्तसन्निकटं परब्रह्मवन्नित्यमुक्तं

परब्रह्मतुल्यात्यन्तिकनिःश्रेयसप्रदं, नित्यपरमस्नेहेन भगवति प्रविष्टमिव भगवता सहैकीभूतमिव स्थितम्, गुणातीतानन्दस्वामीति नाम्ना भगवता सहाऽऽगतम्, परम्परया च जीवमोक्षप्रदम्।

Brahman or Akṣarabrahman

Brahma is the reality, which can be called the fourth one in the serial order of *Jīva*, *Īśvara* and *Māyā*. This reality is well known by the names *Akṣara* or *Akṣarabrahman*.

नित्यमप्राकृतं दिव्यं सच्चिदानन्दमक्षरम्।
ब्रह्माख्यं धाम तत्प्रोक्तं कृष्णस्यानन्तमुज्ज्वलम् ॥ ४७ ॥

HVSS 12 : 47

नित्यमिति। हे मुने!! कृष्णस्य तत्त्वत्पृष्टम्। धाम। नित्यं सनातनम्। अप्राकृतममायिकम्। दिव्यमतिरमणीयम्। सच्चिदानन्दं सच्चिदानन्दधर्मवत्। अक्षरं क्षरणधर्मवर्जितम्। अनन्तं देशकालाद्यपरिच्छिन्नम्। उज्ज्वलं प्रकाशमयम्। ब्रह्माख्यं ब्रह्मनामकम्। प्रोक्तं श्रुतिस्मृतीतिहासपुराणैः कथितम् ॥ १२-४७ ॥

This Akṣarabrahman is the place or residence of *Puruṣottama Nārāyaṇa*, wherein infinite Muktas that have attained qualitative similarity with *Brahman* also reside. That is cause of creation, governance and dissolution of infinite universes.

तत्र स्थितोऽस्ति भगवान्सर्वकारणकारणम्।
अनेककोटि ब्रह्माण्डोत्पत्तिस्थितिलयक्रियः ॥ २१ ॥

HVSS 51 : 21

तत्रेति। तत्राक्षरब्रह्माख्ये स्वधामनि। भगवान् श्रीकृष्णः। स्थितः। सर्वदावस्थितः। अस्ति। तं विशिनष्ट्येकपादोद्वाभ्याम्। सर्वकारणकारणम् सर्वकारणस्याक्षरब्रह्मणोऽपि कारणभूत इत्यर्थः। अनेककोटिब्रह्माण्डोत्पत्तिस्थितिलयाः क्रिया यस्य तथाभूतः ॥ ५१-२१ ॥

दिव्यसिंहासनारूढं नैकमुक्तगुणैर्वृतम्।
अतितेजस्विदिव्याङ्गं दिव्यवासोविभूषणम् ॥ २५ ॥

HVSS 122 : 25

यथादृष्टं तमेव विशेषयन्नुक्तार्थमेव स्फुटमाह द्वाभ्याम्। दिव्येति। दिव्यसिंहासनारूढमपाराक्षर तेजोमध्यगतातिदिव्यमन्दिरान्तःस्थचतुष्कावस्थितातिदिव्यसिंहासनाधिष्ठितम्। नैकमुक्तगुणैरक्षरब्रह्म-भावापन्नानन्तमुक्तवृन्दैः। वृतं सर्वतः परिवेष्टितम्। अतितेजस्वीन्यक्षरतेजसोप्यधिकतेजोयुक्तानि दिव्यान्यपारसौन्दर्याण्यङ्गानि पादादिमूर्धान्ता अवयवा यस्य तम्। दिव्यानि वासांसि परिधानीयादिवस्त्राणि विभूषणानि कटक केयूराद्यलङ्काराश्च यस्य तम् ॥ १२२-२५ ॥

It comprises of extremely luminescent light i.e. mass of Brahma-jyoti or homogeneous light.

This Akṣaradhāma or Brahmadhāma is distinct and beyond Goloka, Vaikunṭha, Śvetadvīpa, and other divine abodes. It is both with form and without form.

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

HVSS 21 : 22

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

All the *muktas* who reside in Brahmadhāma enjoy the pleasure of serving Parabrahman, after getting the divine body like that of Akṣarabrahman reality (*brāhmītanu*).

अन्तर्बहिश्च तं व्याप्य स्थितं तत्कृष्णधाम च।
कोटिसूर्येन्दुसङ्काशं सच्चिदानन्दलक्षणम् ॥ १९ ॥

HVSS 51 : 19

अन्तरिति। कृष्णधाम। कोटिसूर्येन्दुसङ्काशम्। सच्चिदानन्दलक्षणम्। तदक्षरम्।
तमहापुरुषम्। अन्तः। बहिश्च। व्याप्य। स्थितम् ॥ १९-१९ ॥

एवं ज्ञात्वा तु ये कृष्णं ब्रह्मीभूतात्मना सदा।
प्रीत्या भजन्ति ते तूक्ताः प्राप्ता एव महद्गतिम् ॥ ३६ ॥

HVSS 136 : 36

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

Since Brahmadhāma is sentience, the *brāhmītanu* is also called the *caitanyamayatanu*, *Para-Prakṛti*, and etc. These bodies acquired by the released souls (*muktas*) are devoid of male-female characteristics. In this Akṣaradhāma or Brahmadhāma, the *muktas* obtain the boundless happiness and joy by the mere glimpse of Parabrahma Nārāyaṇa; the desire for various pleasures or enjoyment does not arise at all. And, therefore, the occasional description of the garden, palace, fountain, etc., should be taken as but the capability or potential only. Since the bodies of the *muktas*, the lion-seat of Parabrahma Nārāyaṇa and etc., are created from

the Akṣarabrahma Tattva or sentient substance only, there is no scope at all for the imagination of additional eternal divine supernatural element called Nitya Vibhūti in Śrī Swāminārāyaṇism.

This reality of Akṣarabrahman, in the manifest human form, possesses the emotional unity with Parabrahma Nārāyaṇa as His servant having deep feeling of supreme affection; there is really great distinction between them. This difference is not merely like that between a quality (viśeṣaṇa) and the qualified, (viśeṣya) between generality and specialty, but is as real as would be between two substances. Bhagwān Swāminārāyaṇa says that Parabrahma Nārāyaṇa is distinct from Akṣarabrahman, and He is also even the cause of, and the supporter as well as the inspirer of Akṣarabrahman.

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 ॥

एवं हि सर्वरूपत्वं तस्य निश्चित्य शास्त्रतः।
सेव्यः कृष्णः परस्तस्मात्तदैक्यप्रापितात्मना ॥ ३४ ॥

HVSS 136 : 34

एवमिति। एवममुना प्रकारेण। तस्य ब्रह्मणः। सर्वरूपत्वम्। शास्त्रतः। निश्चित्य।
तस्माद्ब्रह्मणः। परः स्वरूपस्वभावादिभिरत्युत्कृष्टः। कृष्णः साक्षाच्छ्रीहरिः। तदैक्यप्रापि-
तात्मनाऽक्षरब्रह्मणासहैक्यं नीतेन स्वात्मना। सेव्य एकान्तिकभावेनोपासनीयः ॥ १३६-३४ ॥

अक्षरस्यापि कृष्णस्तु कारणं चाश्रयो मतः।
प्रेरकश्चाऽत एवाऽसौ सर्वसेव्य उदीरितः ॥ ३५ ॥

HVSS 136 : 35

अक्षरस्येति। कृष्णः स्वयं श्रीहरिस्तु। अक्षरस्यापि। कारणमुक्तरीत्या 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 ॥

HVSS 136 : 36

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

Without taking into consideration the importance of Parabrahma Nārāyaṇa, even *Akṣara* could not be called as Bhagwān as mentioned below in.

स्वावासमक्षरमपि प्रत्याकृष्यात्मनि स्वयम्।
निजशक्त्यैव तान् धर्तुं स्वतंत्रः क्षमतेऽखिलान् ॥ ३४ ॥
एवंभूतेन हरिणा साम्यं जानन्ति येऽधियः।
अक्षरस्य च मुक्तानां ते त्वज्ञाः पापरूपिणः ॥ ३६ ॥
तं विना त्वऽक्षरस्यापि भगवत्त्वं न विद्यते।
कुतस्तरां विरिंचादेः सनकादेः कुतस्तमाम् ॥ ३९ ॥

HVSS 121 : 34,36,39

These references show the greatness of *Akṣara* as much as that of Parabrahma Nārāyaṇa but to use the Naiyāyika terminology, there is as much difference between them as the one between one substance and another. While describing the difference between the light of Parabrahman and that of *muktas* of *Akṣaradhāma*, Śrī Swāminārāyaṇa says they all would be merged in His own light and He alone would remain.

In *Akṣaradhāma* all *muktas* worship Parabrahman on getting the bodies similar to that of Akṣarabrahman. In spite of their having attained the qualitative similarity with Brahman, they can be said to be different due to the absence of the qualities like supporting the infinite cosmoses both internally and externally.

अन्तर्बहिश्च तं व्याप्य स्थितं तत्कृष्णधाम च।
कोटिसूर्येन्दुसङ्काशं सच्चिदानन्दलक्षणम् ॥ १९ ॥

HVSS 51 : 19

अन्तरिति। कृष्णधाम। कोटिसूर्येन्दुसङ्काशम्। सच्चिदानन्दलक्षणम्। तदक्षरम्।
तमहापुरुषम्। अन्तः। बहिश्च। व्याप्य। स्थितम् ॥ ५१-१९ ॥

अनेककोटिब्रह्माण्डाधारोऽनन्तमनादि च।
तदीयदृष्ट्या त्वस्त्येकं ब्रह्मेव न तु पूरुषः ॥ २० ॥

HVSS 51 : 20

तदेव विशिनष्टि अनेकेति। अनेककोटिब्रह्माण्डाधारः। अनन्तमन्तवर्जितम्।
अनादिनित्यसिद्धं च। अस्ति। तदीयदृष्ट्या महापुरुषकारणाक्षरब्रह्मभावापन्ननेत्रेण तु।
एकं केवलम्। ब्रह्माक्षरमेव। अस्ति। पूरुषो महापुरुषः। न तु नैव। अस्ति ॥ ५१-२० ॥

Puruṣottama Nārāyaṇa is not present in the same measure in *Prakṛti Puruṣa (mukta)* as He is in *Akṣara* as explained below in HVSS 41:16,23)

प्रवेश्य पात्रानुगुणं तत्रापि ज्ञेयमस्य च।
तारतम्यं दारुयोगाद्भेदिरिव न वस्तुतः ॥ १६ ॥

HVSS 41 : 16

प्रवेश्येति। दारुयोगाद्दीर्घकुटिलकुब्जादिधर्मवत्काष्ठसम्बन्धात्। बहेस्तदन्तरावस्थित-
स्याग्नेरिव। अस्य श्रीकृष्णस्य। तत्र तेष्वक्षरादिष्वपि। प्रवेश्य पात्रानुगुणं
प्रवेशार्हाक्षरादिभा-जनानुरूपम्। तारतम्यं न्यूनाधिकत्वम्। ज्ञेयम्। वस्तुतः स्वरूपतस्तु।
न च तारतम्यं। नैवज्ञेयम् ॥ ४१-१६ ॥

तत्तत्प्रकाश्यानुरूपं स्वप्रकाशप्रदर्शनात्।
तारतम्यं च तस्योक्तमिति बोद्धव्यमञ्जसा ॥ २३ ॥

HVSS 41 : 23

तदिति तानि तानि जीवेश्वरादीनि यानि प्रकाशार्हाणि वस्तूनि तेषामनुरूपमनुगुणं
यथातथा। स्वप्रकाशप्रदर्शनात्स्वसामर्थ्यसन्दर्शनात्। तस्य श्रीकृष्णस्य। तारतम्यम्। उक्तम्।
इतीत्यम्। अञ्जसा तत्त्वतः। बोद्धव्यं ज्ञेयम् ॥ ४१-२३ ॥

It follows from these references that Parabrahman resides in *Akṣara* fully and His presence becomes restricted from *Prakṛti Puruṣa (mukta)* to each and every a product in the world.

The *muktas* are never termed *Akṣarabrahman*. They are called *Akṣaramuktas* but Śrī Gopālānanda Swāmī says in his *Gītā-Bhāṣya* 8/3 : ‘*Akṣara-sādharmyād Akṣarabrahmasañjñakam*’, i.e., since they have attained the similarity with *Akṣarabrahman*, they are, in some places, called *Akṣarabrahma* but it should be reconciled and understood in this way.

While endowed with the divine hands and feet, etc., *Akṣarabrahman* himself is in the service of Parabrahma Nārāyaṇa, and provides to the *muktas* an ideal of highest loving serviceful devotion.

द्वेधोक्तमक्षरं ब्रह्म मूर्त्तं चामूर्त्तमित्युदः।
मूर्त्तं तत्रास्ति कृष्णस्य सेवायां दिव्यविग्रहम् ॥ २२ ॥

HVSS 21 : 22

द्वेधेति। अद एकान्तिकप्राप्यम्। अक्षरं ब्रह्माक्षरब्रह्माख्यं धाम। मूर्त्तं दिव्यावय-
विशिष्टत्वान्मूर्त्तिमत्। अमूर्त्तं कृष्णधामत्वादनन्तमुक्ताधारत्वाच्च साकारं सदपि
निरवयवत्वेनामूर्त्तवत्प्रतीयमानं च। इत्यमुना प्रकारेण द्वेधा द्विविधम्। उक्तम्। तत्र
तयोर्मूर्त्तमूर्त्तयोर्मध्ये। मूर्त्तं तु। दिव्यविग्रहं रूपानुरूपकरचरणाद्यवयवविशिष्टत्वेनाति-
सुन्दरपुरुषाकारमूर्त्तिमत्। कृष्णस्य ततोऽप्यतिनिरतिशयशरीरशोभावतः स्वेष्टदेवस्य
श्रीकृष्णभगवतः। सेवायाम्। अस्ति दासवत्सदा वर्तते ॥ २१-२२ ॥

Akṣarabrahman in its formless presentation is all pervasive in each and every atom as the Chidākāśa. It is present in infinite cosmoses. With the grace of God (Kṛṣṇa) as aspirant gets *Daharavidyā*, he can see that Brahman, Chidākāśa everywhere.

स पदार्थस्तु नास्त्येव न व्याप्तस्तेन योऽभितः।
यत्सूक्ष्मेऽणौ च तद्भागेऽप्यस्ति सोन्तश्च तद्बहिः ॥ ९ ॥

HVSS 46 : 9

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

श्वासोच्छ्वासविमोकोऽपि देहिनां तेन जायते।
अतोऽसौ जगदाधारः प्रकाशात्मक उच्यते ॥ १४ ॥

HVSS 46 : 14

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

कृष्णप्रसादात्तदृष्टिं विद्यां दहरसञ्जिताम्।
प्राप्नुयाद्यः स तु पुमान् सर्वं ब्रह्मैव पश्यति ॥ २१ ॥

HVSS 46 : 21

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

We now summaries all the essential characteristics of Akṣarabrahman as given in HVSS 175:7,8,9,11,14 along with the Setumala comantary.

आद्यं तत्रास्त्यमूर्त्तं तु धाम तेजोमयं तथा।
मूर्त्तं पुरुषरूपं च सर्वाधारं द्वितीयकम् ॥ ७ ॥

HVSS 175 : 7

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

आद्यं निर्गुणमित्युक्तं सगुणं च तथेतदत्।
अनिर्देश्यमिति प्रोक्तं द्वेधा शक्तियुतं तु तत् ॥ ८ ॥

HVSS 175 : 8

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

एकैकरोम्णि तस्यैव संत्यंडान्यणुवन्मुने।
नैतावता तु ब्रह्माण्डगोलसूक्ष्मत्वसम्भवः ॥९॥

HVSS 175 : 9

एकेति। हे मुने!! तस्याक्षरब्रह्माणो महत्तमरूपस्य। एकैकरोम्णि। अण्डान्यगणित-
ब्रह्माण्डानि। अणुवद्गवाक्षगतमूर्यमयूखपतद्दृश्याणुसमानानि। 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 अष्टाचरणसहिता एव। भवन्ति ॥ १७५-१० ॥

ब्रह्माणोऽतिमहत्त्वेन तदणूपमतोच्यते।
रैवताद्रेर्यथा मेरोः पुरतस्त्वस्ति सूक्ष्मता ॥ ११ ॥

HVSS 175 : 11

ब्रह्मणि इति। ब्रह्मणः सर्वाधारपुरुषाकृतिरपाक्षरब्रह्मणः। अतिमहत्त्वेन। तदणूपमता
ब्रह्माण्डानामणुसादृश्यम्। उच्यते। एतदेव दृष्टान्तप्रदर्शनेन द्रढयनि सार्द्धद्वाभ्याम्। यथा।
मेरोः। पुरतः। रैवताद्रेरसूक्ष्मस्यापि रैवनाचलस्य। सूक्ष्मता मेरुमहत्वापेक्षया सूक्ष्मत्वम्।
अस्ति ॥ १७५-११ ॥

अतितेजोमये स्वीये धाम्नि ब्रह्मणि सर्वदा।
कृष्णोऽक्षरात्मभिर्मुक्तैरास्ते सेवितपङ्कजः ॥ १४ ॥

HVSS 175 : 14

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

Akṣarabrahman himself comes to every world or cosmos with Parabrahma Nārāyaṇa, and by providing the ideal of service to Him leads numerous souls to the state of being Brahmarūpa and freedom. After the return of Parabrahma Nārāyaṇa to his Dhāma, this Akṣarabrahman leads the aspirants on the path to supreme bliss in the form of god realised Satpuruṣas who are like the submarine fire, *Vadvānaḥ Agni*.

They are so important they should be served like God with food and everything. Such a devotee is the best.

भगवन्तमिव प्रीत्या सदनैस्तांश्च भोजयेत्।
द्रव्यव्ययं च कृष्णार्थमिव कुर्यात्तदर्थकम् ॥ ३५ ॥

HVSS 205 : 35

भगवन्तमिति। किञ्च। भगवन्तमिव। तानुत्तमभक्तान्। सदनैः परमान्नादिभिः
सद्भोज्यैः। प्रीत्या भोजयेत्। कृष्णार्थमिव। तदर्थकमुत्तमभक्तार्थम्। द्रव्यव्ययं च।
कुर्यात् ॥ २०५-३५ ॥

एवमुत्तमभक्तानां सेवनं कृष्णवत्तु यः।
अतिप्रीत्याऽऽचरेन्नित्यं सोऽत्रैव स्यात्खलुत्तमः ॥ ३६ ॥

HVSS 205 : 36

एवमिति। यः कनिष्ठभक्तः। एवममुना प्रकारेण। कृष्णवत्कृष्णस्य यथा।
उत्तमभक्तानाम्। सेवनम्। अतिप्रीत्या। नित्यम्। आचरेत्। सः। अत्रास्मिन् जन्मन्येव।
उत्तमः। स्यात्। खलु ॥ २०५-३६ ॥

Although ontologically the fourth reality of Śrī Swāminārāyaṇism has been described by the word Brahman or Akṣarabrahman it is also employed for Parabrahman's *sevaka* or devotee called *anugah* in the *Vacanāmṛtam*. Even then in the *Śāstra*, the word is also found to have been used for Parabrahman, likewise it is used for the effulgence of God-Śrī Swāminārāyaṇa.

परब्रह्मस्वरूपनिरूपणम्

सर्वशेषित्वे सति सर्वकर्मफलप्रदं, सदा साकारं, द्विभुजं, रामकृष्णाद्यनेकावतारेभ्यो, लक्ष्मीनारायणादिदेवेभ्यश्च भिन्नत्वे सति तेषां कारणम्, करुणावात्सल्यसौशील्याद्यनेककल्याण-गुणयुक्तत्वेन महतो महीयस्त्वेन च सगुणम्, मानुषमायिकगुणरहितत्वेन निर्गुणम्, सर्वान्तर्यामिशक्तिमद्, अन्तर्यामिशक्त्या नैकब्रह्माण्डस्थत्वेन व्यापकम्, सर्वप्रेरकम्, अनन्तकोटिब्रह्माण्डानां नियामकम्, सर्वज्ञम्, सर्वकर्तृ, अतितेजस्विस्वरूपम्, दिव्यं, मनोहरम्, सच्चिदानन्दस्वरूपम्, भूमपदवाच्यम्, आनन्दमात्रम्, जीव-ईश्वर-माया-अक्षरब्रह्माणो नियामकम्, एतेभ्यः स्वतन्त्रम्, एकदेशस्थत्वेऽपि सर्वदेशस्थम्, इह मर्त्यलोके अलौकिके ब्रह्मधाग्नि च समानम्, एकान्तिकधर्मप्रवर्तकं, पृथिव्यां स्वयमथवा अक्षरब्रह्मस्वरूपपरमैकान्तिकपात्रद्वारा नैकजीवमोक्षप्रदम्, स्वामिनारायणः, सहजानन्दस्वामी, श्रीजीमहाराज इत्यादिनाम्ना लोके प्रसिद्धम्। इति तत्त्वपञ्चकनिरूपणम्।

Parabrahman

Parabrahman identified with Śrī Puruṣottama Nārāyaṇa is the Highest Reality. He is Doer of everything, Creator of all *Brahmāṇdas*, He is

beyond Akṣara. He comes as a Human Being in this world and yet remains in His Akṣardhāma separately and independently along with his *muktabhaktas* (the released souls). Without His desire the wind-god cannot move even a leaf. He bestows the fruits of all actions.

त्राकृतिर्योऽत्र भगवान्स एवाऽस्त्यक्षरात्परः ।
नैकाण्डकोटिजन्मादिहेतुश्च पुरुषोत्तमः ॥ ४९ ॥

HVSS 78 : 49

साम्प्रतं साक्षाद्भगवन्माहात्म्यवेदनप्रकारमाह षड्भिः । त्राकृतिरिति । अत्रास्मिन् लोके वर्तमाने सत्सङ्गे । यः । त्राकृतिर्मनुष्यसमानाकारः । भगवान् । अस्ति । स एव । अक्षरादक्षरब्रह्मणः । परः । नैकाण्डकोटिजन्मादिहेतुः मूलप्रकृतिपुरुषद्वारानैक-ब्रह्माण्डसर्गादिकारणमित्यर्थः । पुरुषोत्तमश्च । अस्ति ॥ ७८-४९ ॥

सर्वकर्ता च सर्वत्रान्वयेन परमाश्रयः ।
व्यतिरिक्तश्च सर्वेभ्यो रमतेऽक्षरधामनि ॥ ५० ॥

HVSS 78 : 50

सर्वेति । सर्वकर्ता नैकाण्डकोटिब्रह्माण्डोत्पत्त्यादिहेतुमूलप्रकृतिपुरुषाविर्भावहेतुत्वादेवंविधः । सर्वत्र मूलप्रकृतिपुरुषयोस्तत्कार्यभूतेषु प्रधानपुरुषादिषु सकलेषु । अन्वयेन स्वकीयाधार-शक्तिसमन्वयेन । परमाश्रयोऽनुत्तमाधारभूतः । सर्वेभ्यः सकार्यप्रकृतिपुरुषादिभ्यः । व्यतिरिक्तः स्वरूपस्वभावादिभिरर्थान्तरभूतः सन् । अक्षरधामनि स्वकीयाक्षरब्रह्मपदे । रमते ब्रह्मभावापन्नपार्षदमुक्तकोटिभिः सह सम्यग्विहरते ॥ ७८-५० ॥

प्रत्यक्षं वीक्ष्य ते यादृक्तादृगेव स ईशिता ।
स्थावरे जङ्गमे चास्ति स्थूले सूक्ष्मे नियामकः ॥ ५१ ॥

HVSS 78 : 51

प्रत्यक्षमिति । ईशिताऽक्षरकालादिनियन्ता । स एवंविधमहिमो भगवान् । यादृग्यथाविधः । प्रत्यक्षं यथा तथा । वीक्ष्यते भक्तजनैर्दृश्यते । तादृक् तथाविध एव । स्थावरे स्थितिशीलेषु भूधरवृक्षादिषु । जङ्गमे गतिशीलेषु मनुष्यपश्यादिषु । स्थूले कार्ये । सूक्ष्मे कारणे च । नियामकोऽन्तर्यामिशक्त्या नियमनशीलः सन् । अस्ति वर्तते ॥ ७८-५१ ॥

न तदिच्छां विना पर्णचालनेपि क्षमो मरुत् ।
शुभाशुभानां सर्वेषां कर्मणां फलदश्च सः ॥ ५२ ॥

HVSS 78 : 52

नेति । पर्णचालने पक्षस्यापि न्यग्रोधादिपत्रस्य पातने इत्यर्थः । क्षमः समर्थः । नास्ति । स भगवान् । सर्वेषाम् जनानाम् । शुभाशुभानाम् । कर्मणाम् । फलदो यथायोग्यं फलसम्प्रतिपादकः । अस्ति ॥ ७८-५२ ॥

Śrī Swāminārāyaṇa says that every one of his devotee and follower should know the most important principle and the purpose for which he is born as a man among human beings. He is the God who is in the brilliant light of Aksaradhama with totally divine body and He himself is

know present as human being for his devotees. He is the source and the cause of incarnations like *Rāma*, *Kṛṣṇa*, *Caturvyūhas*, and all others.

एषा वार्ता दृढं सर्वैर्घरिणीया सदा हृदि।
एतां बोधयितुं सम्यङ्ममैवेदं जनुर्नृषु ॥ ६१ ॥

HVSS 146 : 61

प्रकरणार्थं निगमयति त्रिभिः। एषेति। हे सन्तः!! एषा। वार्ता। सर्वैर्भवद्भिः। हृदि स्वस्वमनसि। दृढं यथातथा। सदैव। धारणीया। एतां वार्ताम्। सम्यक्। बोधयितुं युष्मान्सर्वान् ज्ञापयितुमेव। नृषु इदम्। मम। जनुर्जन्मास्ति ॥ १४६-६१ ॥

भूरितेजसि यः प्रोक्तो भगवान् दिव्यविग्रहः।
सोऽहमेव भवाम्यत्र स्थितो दिव्यनराकृतिः ॥ ६२ ॥

HVSS 146 : 62

भूरीति। भूरितेजसि अत्र पूर्वमभिहितेऽक्षरब्रह्मरूपप्राज्यतेजसि। दिव्यविग्रहः। यः। भगवान्। प्रोक्तः। स भगवान्। अत्र लोके। स्थितः। दिव्यनराकृतिः। अहमेव। भवामि ॥ १४६-६२ ॥

रामकृष्णादयः सर्वेऽवताराः संत्यतो हि मे।
पुरुषोत्तमस्य वित्तेत्येतत् सत्यं ब्रवीमि वः ॥ ६३ ॥

HVSS 146 : 63

रामेति। अतो हेतोः। रामकृष्णादयः। सर्वे। अवताराः। पुरुषोत्तमस्य। मे मम। सन्ति। हि। इतीत्यम्। वित्तं यूयं जानित। अहम्। वो युष्मभ्यम् एतत् सत्यं यथार्थमेव। ब्रवीमि ॥ १४६-६३ ॥

Then out of consideration for the lay followers, who could find this statement difficult to understand and digest, He state 'If it is not possible for you to understand this, at least know for certain, that I see that Parabrahman Puruṣottama Who is in that brilliant Akṣaradhāma. If you know this fact you will have love for me and knowledge of my true form. That will help you a lot.' To assure them about His statement, He further says: 'this is the fundamental principle of all the scriptures. I have the experience of this and there is no doubt about it.'

ज्ञातुमित्थं न शक्येत यदि कैश्चन तर्हि तैः।
ज्ञेयस्तदेकद्रष्टाऽहं तेनापि स्याद्रतिर्मयि ॥ ६४ ॥

HVSS 146 : 64

ज्ञातुमिति। इत्थममुना प्रकारेण। यदि। कैश्चनैतत्सभानिषण्णैर्यथार्थतया मत्स्वरूपानभिज्ञैः कैश्चिज्जनैः ज्ञातुम्। न शक्येत। तर्हि। तैर्जनैः। अहम्। तदेकद्रष्टा तस्य भगवतः स्वरूपस्य यथार्थतयाऽनन्यसमीक्षकः। ज्ञेयः। तेन तथाविधेन मत्स्वरूपज्ञानेनापि। मयि। रतिः प्रीतिः। स्यात् ॥ १४६-६४ ॥

सर्वसच्छास्त्रसिद्धान्तो वार्त्तैषाऽस्ति मया कृता।

साक्षात्स्वेनाऽनुभूतैव ततो नास्त्यत्र संशयः ॥ ६७ ॥

HVSS 146 : 67

सर्वेति। मया। कृता। एषा। वार्ता। सर्वसच्छास्त्रसिद्धान्तः। अस्ति। स्वेन मया। साक्षात्प्रत्यक्षतया। अनुभूतैव। अस्ति। ततो हेतोः। अत्रास्यां वार्तायाम्। संशयः। नास्ति ॥ १४६-६७ ॥

He is endowed with the divine body though He is born on this earth as a human being. He is to be known as free from all defects all i.e., He is bereft of all negative qualities. Thus He is having no qualities of *Māyā*. Thus, knowing Him will make aspirants free from fetters of *Māyā*. This is the *Niṣhā* or firm conviction that is required for final liberation.

भूत्वा नराकृतिर्भूमौ चरत्यद्भुतचेष्टितः।

नृनाट्यं विदधानं तं निर्गुणं दिव्यविग्रहम् ॥ ३३ ॥

HVSS 103 : 33

भूत्वेति। नराकृतिर्मनुष्यसमानाकारः। भूत्वा। अद्भुतदिव्यविग्रहममायिकसुन्दरशरीरम्। तं साक्षाद्भगवन्तम् ॥ १०३-३३ ॥

एष एव हि वेदान्ते मायिकं जीवबुद्धिगम्।

भावं सम्यग्निराकर्तुं निर्गुणोऽरूप उच्यते ॥ ३५ ॥

HVSS 103 : 35

एष इति। जीवबुद्धिगं भगवत्स्वरूपाज्ञानिजनबुद्धिं प्राप्तम्। मायिकं भगवत्स्वरूपमपि मायामयमित्येवंरूपम् भावमभिप्रायम्। सम्यक्। निराकर्तुंनिषेधितुम्। वेदान्ते उपनिषत्सु। एष नराकृतिर्भगवानेव। निर्गुणो गुणातीतः। अरूपो मायामयाकारवर्जितत्वान्निराकारः। उच्यते वस्तुतस्तु दिव्यगुणयुक्तत्वादिव्यरूपवत्त्वात् सगुणसाकारश्चास्तीति भावः ॥ १०३-३५ ॥

स्वातन्त्र्येणाखिलाण्डानाम् उत्पत्तिस्थितिनाशकृत्।

एष एवेति या निष्ठा श्रेय आत्यन्तिकं हि तत् ॥ ३६ ॥

HVSS 103 : 36

स्वातन्त्र्येणेति। अखिलाण्डानामनेककोटिब्रह्माण्डानाम्। स्वातन्त्र्येण। उत्पत्तिस्थिति-विनाशकृत्। एषः प्रत्यक्षतया मां मिलितोमनोहराकृतिः श्रीहरिर्वास्ति। इत्येवंविधा। या। निष्ठा साक्षाद्भगवत्स्वरूपज्ञानस्थितिः। तत्। आत्यन्तिकम्। श्रेयः। ज्ञेयम्। हि। भगवत्यचल्यैवंभूतनिष्ठया तमेकान्तिकभावेन भजतो ब्रह्मात्मना भगवत्सेवाप्राप्तिलक्षणात्यान्तिक-कल्याणसत्त्वात्तादर्थ्यात्ताच्छब्दमितिन्यायेन निष्ठैवात्यन्तिकनिःश्रेयसरूपोक्तेति भावः ॥ १०३-३६ ॥

एतस्याः पक्वतां सिद्धिं प्राप्ताः स्युर्ये तु ते नराः।

दृग्गोचरे सदेक्षन्ते तमेव पुरुषोत्तमम् ॥ ३७ ॥

HVSS 103 : 37

एवमात्यन्तिकनिःश्रेयसस्वरूपमुक्त्वा तत्सिद्धलक्षणमाह। एतस्या इति। ये। नरा भगवद्भक्तजनाः। एतस्या उक्ताया निष्ठायाः। पक्वतां पक्वतारूपम्। सिद्धिम्। प्राप्ताः। स्युः। ते भक्तजनास्तु। दृग्गोचरे यो यो दृग्विषयः पदार्थस्तस्मिंस्तस्मिन्नित्यर्थः।

पुरुषोत्तममक्षरब्रह्मस्थं सकलैश्वर्यसम्पन्नम्। तं नराकृतिं श्रीहरिमेव। सदा। ईक्षन्ते
साक्षात्पश्यन्ति न तु तं तं पदार्थमित्यर्थः ॥ १०३-३७ ॥

Thus, He is, the controller of *Jīva*, *Īśvara*, *Māyā* and *Akṣarabrahman*, different from all and independent. He is located in one place *Akṣaradhāma* and at the same time in all the places is shining equally in the mortal world as well as in the *Brahmaloka* is ever present on the Earth Himself or through a *Parama Ekāntika Satpuruṣa*.

In this way, in the *Vacanāmṛtam*, there is very clear delineation pertaining to the nature of *Paramātmān*. By the use of the terms like *Śrī Kṛṣṇa*, *Śrīhari*, *Prabhu*, *Bhagwān*, *Paramśevara*, *Puruṣottama*, *Nārāyaṇa*, *Pragat Puruṣottama*, *Akṣarātīta*, *Parabrahman*, *Paramātmā*, and such others, the Supreme Reality is described as a distinct from and higher than all the incarnations. Any devotee who considers *Puruṣottama Nārāyaṇa* equal to other incarnations betrays the *Parabrahman*. He is called *drohī*. This has been clearly described. As stated above, *Bhagwān Swāmīnārāyaṇa* clearly mentions that He Himself is the cause of the incarnations like *Śrī Rāma*, *Śrī Kṛṣṇa* and others.

Even then, it is possible that there may arise a doubt about the utterance of the word 'Kṛṣṇa'. *Bhagwān Swāmīnārāyaṇa* Himself as *Śrī Kṛṣṇa*.

स यदा कृपया जीवकल्याणाय धरातले।
प्रत्यक्षो जायते नृणां धृतदिव्यनराकृतिः ॥ २४ ॥

HVSS 51 : 24

स इति। स एवंभूतः श्रीकृष्णः। यदा। कृपया। जीवकल्याणार्थम्। धरातले।
धृतदिव्यनराकृतिः सन्। नृणाम्। प्रत्यक्षः। जायते साक्षाद्दृश्यो भवतीत्यर्थः ॥ ५१-२४ ॥

तदा कृत्वा सतां सङ्गं तस्य माहात्म्यमीदृशम्।
अवगत्याश्रय सम्यग्ये कुर्वन्ति नरा इह ॥ २५ ॥

HVSS 51 : 25

तदेति। तदा। इह लोके। ये। नराः। सतां साक्षाद्भगवन्तं समाहात्म्यज्ञानं प्राप्तानां
तदेकान्तिक-साधूनाम्। सङ्गम्। कृत्वा। तस्य साक्षाद्भगवतः। ईदृशमुक्तविधम्। माहात्म्यम्।
सम्यक्। अवगत्य ज्ञात्वा। आश्रयं तदीयैकशरणम्। कुर्वन्ति ॥ ५१-२५ ॥

On the contrary, in the *Vacanāmṛtams* and others He also describes Himself as the Supreme Reality, the cause of the incarnations like *Śrī Rāma*, *Śrī Kṛṣṇa* as mentioned above. Moreover, the divine worlds

(dhāma) like Goloka-Vaikunṭha, etc., the residences of Śrī Rāma, Śrī Kṛṣṇa and others are described as below Akṣaradhāma, and having different and less bliss than it.

In the Rāmānuja Sampradāya, too, Śrī Vedānta Deśika has described in his Rakṣāgrantha, the higher and lower forms of Viṣṇu. In the Gītā also there is a difference between Vāsudeva Śrī Kṛṣṇa (X : 37) and Śrī Kṛṣṇa as Sarvāvatārī, i.e., incarnating in all forms (XV : 4). So, there is no fault in stating that for the followers of Śrī Swāminārāyaṇa he is the highest God and the Ultimate Reality in the same way.

Theanthropic Sphere

Like ‘Open Texture’ another important concept for my Thesis is ‘Theanthropic Sphere’. It refers to an important teaching of Hinduism and especially Śrī Swāminārāyaṇa. It means that the most exalted of the manifestations of god are in human form. Śrī Swāminārāyaṇa taught that god is in human form in his eternal abode.

तस्माद्कृष्णो नित्यसिद्ध दिव्यावयववानिति।
ज्ञात्वोपास्यः सदा भक्तैः सिद्धान्तो मन्मतोऽस्त्ययम् ॥ १९ ॥

HVSS 45 : 19

एवं सदा दिव्यतनुं हरिं ज्ञात्वा मुमुक्षुभिः।
तस्याश्रयो दृढतरः कर्तव्यः श्रेयसे ध्रुवम् ॥ १३ ॥

HVSS 143 : 13

स्वयमेवं तु विदधदन्यं कृष्णाश्रितं नरम्।
बोधयेत्परमप्रीत्या ह्येवमेव च सादरम् ॥ १४ ॥

HVSS 143 : 14

This teaching is based on the traditional theory of avatāravāda. It state that God Himself (not his son or messenger) Incarnates on earth, in different forms arranged in a hierarchic pattern with those in fully human form in the superior position.

According to the traditional teaching of Bhagavadgītā IV : 7 whenever there is a great need, god manifests of his own free will on earth in the created order to assist men. Whereas other creatures take birth as compelled by karmic law, god acts of his own will. The manifestation of

god occurs freely when needed, and there may be more than one in one single age. Śrī Rāmānuja gave the classic statement of the reason why god takes the form of an avatāra while explaining Bhagavadgītā IV : 7.

यदा यदा हि धर्मस्य ग्लानिर्भवति भारत।
अभ्युत्थानमधर्मस्य तदात्मानं सृजाम्यहम् ॥ ७ ॥

Bh.G. IV : 7

न कालनियमः अस्मत्सम्भवस्य, यदा यदा हि धर्मस्य वेदेन उदितस्य चातुर्वर्ण्यचातुराश्रम्यव्यवस्थया अवस्थितस्य कर्तव्यस्य ग्लानिः भवति, यदा यदा च तद्विपर्ययस्य अधर्मस्य अभ्युत्थानं तदा अहम् एव स्वसङ्कल्पेन उक्तप्रकारेण आत्मानं सृजामि ॥ ७ ॥

परित्राणाय साधूनां विनाशाय च दुष्कृताम्।
धर्मसंस्थापनार्थाय सम्भवामि युगे युगे ॥ ८ ॥

Bh.G. IV : 8

साधव उक्तलक्षणधर्मशीला वैष्णवाग्रेसरा मत्समाश्रयणे प्रवृत्ता मन्नामकर्मस्वरूपाणाम् अवाङ्मनसगोचरतया महर्शनाद् ऋते स्वात्मधारणपोषणादिसुखम् अलभमाना अणुमात्रकालम् अपि कल्पसहस्रं मन्वानाः प्रशिथिलसर्वगात्रा भवेयुः इति मत्स्वरूपचेष्टितावलोकनालापादि-दानेन तेषां परित्राणाय तद्विपरीतानां विनाशाय च क्षीणस्य वैदिकधर्मस्य मदाराधनरूपस्य आराध्यस्वरूपप्रदर्शनेन तस्य स्थापनाय च देवमनुष्यादिरूपेण युगे युगे सम्भवामि। कृतत्रेतादियुगाविशेषनियमः अपि नास्ति इत्यर्थः ॥ ८ ॥

‘I am born from age in the forms of gods, men, etc., for protecting them by giving them opportunities of seeing, talking about, and doing similar things in regard to my body and my activities : (I am born) also for the destruction of those who are the opposite of these : and for the firm establishment, when in decline, of the Vedic dharma, which is of the nature of worship of myself, by showing my form which is adorable (Śrī Rāmānuja 1969 : 117).’

Śrī Swāminārāyaṇa goes one step further. According to him God does not Incarnate himself only when there decline of Dharma. Because in the present time frame, in the Kaliyuga, there is continuous decline of the Dharma. Therefore, he states, God’s incarnation is always present in the Bharatakhanda as long as there is human existence or life of man or earth. God himself his present here or he is present through his is God realised brahmanised saint. (VVS 19, HVSS 219 : 4-5)

Śrī Swāminārāyaṇa also taught that no limit exists in principle on the number of manifestations. Just as Kṛṣṇa assumed as many forms as the number of maidens (gopīs) with whom he danced, so god can manifest himself simultaneously in his divine form in each and every universe whenever he desires (Vacanāmṛtam, Gadhadā II, 42), (HVSS 175 : 15-16). He agreed with traditional Vaiṣṇava teaching that ten major avatars of Viṣṇu or Nārāyaṇa have appeared, some in human and others in animal form, and this ten were given priority by Śrī Rāmānuja because they came with three general purpose : to protect the devotees, to destroy evil-doers, and to establish the rule of sacred law. But there is a basic difference of the purpose of incarnation according to Śrī Rāmānuja given above and Śrī Swāminārāyaṇa who states that God incarnation on the earth basically to fulfill the desires of devotees who want to enjoy the physical company of God as a human being (VKS 5, HVSS 101 : 8-12).

Human incarnations are the superior manifestations (purnāvatāra) of the supreme god Nārāyaṇa. Fourteen partial avatars (amśāvatāra) also appear in literature. Other avatāras have come as well, and the list grows very long (for traditional stories about manifestations of Viṣṇu and Kṛṣṇa (see Sādhu Śrutiprakāśadāsa, 2005 : 11-22).

Thus, Śrī Swāminārāyaṇa supported the general Vaiṣṇava tradition when he affirmed that there have been many avatars. He told his followers to revere all the manifestations of god, but to give primary worship only to images in human form. Of these, Śrī Rāma and Śrī Kṛṣṇa are preeminent, and Śrī Sahajānanda followed the example of most of the Vaiṣṇava Ācāryas in the worship of Śrī Kṛṣṇa in a variety of forms.

Difficulties arose in the conversation between Bishop Heber and Śrī Swāminārāyaṇa when the latter identified the god who was to receive primary worship as Śrī Kṛṣṇa and when he offered as a gift to Heber the large picture of that god with two female attendants. Heber admitted that he did not understand clearly of Śrī Swāminārāyaṇa's teaching regarding the God he was talking about. Heber can be excused because the correct

interpretation of Śrī Swāminārāyaṇa's teaching about avatāras and about the relation of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and himself has remained a matter of serious discussion among his followers to the present day. At least three different interpretations exist about the position of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Śrī Swāminārāyaṇa in the faith.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa as manifestation of god

A few followers hold the position that Śrī Swāminārāyaṇa taught that Śrī Kṛṣṇa was the highest manifestation of Parabrahman or Puruṣottama Nārāyaṇa and that He is the only appropriate object of worship, devotion and meditations. Hence, the Śrī Swāminārāyaṇa religion is sometimes identified, somewhat inexactly, as a Kristine sect of the Gujarat (Mallison 1974 : 437-471). There is, one must admit, considerable support for this identification in the old literature, temples, and rituals of the fellowship satsaṅg. In general, all the Vaiṣṇavas in Gujarat are worshipers of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Bishop Heber understood him to say that Śrī Kṛṣṇa was the avatāra of Parabrahman for the Hindus. Śrī Swāminārāyaṇa had a distinct preference for the manifestations in the human forms and thought that spiritual advancement comes mainly from meditating on the human God with divine form who manifests himself on earth. Thus, he praised both Rāma and Śrī Kṛṣṇa as forms of god and said that devotees should meditate on that form of god who has assumed human form and has become visible before them (VLS 11, HVSS 119 : 12-15).

Śrī Swāminārāyaṇa told his disciples, "Out of the various incarnations emanating from Nārāyaṇa, Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the dearest to me. And I feel that this incarnation is the greatest of all the incarnations and the most powerful. It is the source out of which the other avatāras emerge" (VLS 14, HVSS 122 : 23).

सदा मङ्गलरूपो हि श्रीकृष्णो भगवान् स्वयम्।
अवतारावतारित्वभेदो नैवाऽत्र विद्यते ॥ २३ ॥

HVSS 122 : 23

यद्यपि स्वयं ब्रह्मपुराधीशोऽवतारी पुरुषोत्तमोऽनन्ताक्षरमुक्तोपासित-
चरणाब्जोऽस्त्यथापि नृनाट्यशोभनायेष्टदेवत्वेन श्रीकृष्णस्य स्वेन स्वीकृतत्वात्तस्य

सर्वावतारमहत्त्वाच्च स्वकीयं पुरुषोत्तमत्वं तत्रारोप्योपासनाप्रदर्शनार्थमाह। सदेति।
स्वयम्। श्रीकृष्णः। भगवान्। सदा। मङ्गलरूपः। अस्ति। हि। अत्र श्रीकृष्णे।
अवतारावतारित्वभेदः। नैव। विद्यते॥ १२२-२३॥

In this preferential order of avatāras, Śrī Kṛṣṇa is supreme because he reveals the divine nature to the highest degree.

Śrī Swāminārāyaṇa continued the use of the Śrī Kṛṣṇa mantra, *Śrī Kṛṣṇaḥ śaraṇam mama*. “Śrī Kṛṣṇa, is my refuge,” at the time of initiation, and the mantra is still used in the rituals of Ahmedābāda and Vadatāla where the rituals and ceremonies highlight the events from the career of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, especially as portrayed in the tenth chapter of the Bhāgavata Purāṇa.

Śrī Swāminārāyaṇa as manifestation of Śrī Kṛṣṇa

At present among the followers more acceptable view is that Śrī Swāminārāyaṇa is was a manifestation of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Bishop Heber understood him to be saying that Śrī Kṛṣṇa was the form of god, which the group worshiped, “adding something like a hint, that another avatāra of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, had taken place in Himself” (R. Heber 846 II: 110). Śrī Kṛṣṇa is thought to have taken many different forms in the various worlds and at different times for the benefit of men in this world. Most of the followers believe that there is no essential difference between Śrī Swāminārāyaṇa, called Śrī Hari in his exalted role, and Śrī Kṛṣṇa. He manifested himself in one form as Śrī Kṛṣṇa at a particular time and in another form as Śrī Swāminārāyaṇa, it being the latest of the manifestations.

During Śrī Swāminārāyaṇa’s lifetime there was a growing acceptance of his divinity. We have mentioned three important events of his divinity under the topic of The Master: Introduction of His Mantra, Mūrti and Ārāṭikyam of chapter-1.

- 1) He employed Śrī Swāminārāyaṇa Mantra
- 2) He installed his own image in the Vadatāla Temple
- 3) A prayer cum - ārāṭikyam was composed in His name by Mukṭānanda Swami which is recited everyday in every Swāminārāyaṇa Temple.

As early as A.D.1804 Śrī Swāminārāyaṇa was described as a manifestation of god in a work called *Yama-Danda*, a work of great historical value because it is the first work written in the sect. Niṣkuḷānanda Swami, an important author of twenty-four poetic works, believed that emancipation would come from Śrī Swāminārāyaṇa, who is the perfect teacher and manifestation of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Whoever comes to him is promised salvation from miseries. Even at this early date in Śrī Swāminārāyaṇa's career, some followers believed that at the death of followers who have faith in him, Śrī Swāminārāyaṇa will come to transport them to his abode called Akṣaradhāma where they will reside as released souls, for ever enjoying the divine company of Śrī Swāminārāyaṇa. The last chapter, we must remember, of *Yama-Danda*, is a song of thanksgiving for the one who brings this emancipation.

At several points during his preaching followers came to the realization that Śrī Swāminārāyaṇa was a manifestation in human form of god. So, it is said: "The sādhus and devotees seated in the assembly realized that the form of Śrī Kṛṣṇa described as remote in Akṣaradhāma had manifested before them presently as Śrījī Mahārāja, son of Mother Bhakti and Father Dharmadeva. No one transcends Him. He is the Divine Form for our worship and He is our preceptor also" (VVS 18, HVSS 218 : 49). The development of insight to recognize this mystery was the path of spiritual development followed by a number of his disciples. Some were aided by being placed in a trance state in which they were enabled to "see" the truth, and these events are the most characteristic of the miracles attributed to Śrī Swāminārāyaṇa during that period. Those who had not advanced to that point of spiritual insight often opposed the doctrine.

There are many stories about the birth work and miracles of Śrī Swāminārāyaṇa, which are similar to that of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. The Brahmin parents of Śrī Swāminārāyaṇa were given the names Dharma and Bhakti, and images of them, along with his to brothers, like the images of Śrī Vāsudeva, Devakī and Balarāma are found in the Swāminārāyaṇa temples.

Thus, many satsangis consider Śrī Swāminārāyaṇa to be equivalent to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and this equivalence is demonstrated in many myths, symbols, rituals and festivals.

Śrī Swāminārāyaṇa as the Supreme Person

In the final stage of development of the concept of God as Śrī Swāminārāyaṇa, followers of especially those of Śrī Guṇatītānanda Swāmī, Śrī Prāgañī Bhakta and Śrī Yajñapurusaḍāsa who founded BAPS believe that Śrī Swāminārāyaṇa, is the single, complete manifestation of Puruṣottama Nārāyaṇa or the Supreme Person and as such, is superior in power and efficacy to all other manifestations of god, including that of Śrī Rāma and Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

According to those who hold this position, Śrī Swāminārāyaṇa was not an incarnation of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, as some believed, but was the full manifestation of Puruṣottama, the supreme person himself i.e. Avatārī. Among them it is thought to be incorrect to equate Śrī Swāminārāyaṇa with other avatars. They quote ‘Moreover, one should only meditate on the form of God that one has attained, not on the forms of the previous avatāras’ (VLS 11, HVSS 119 : 14).

Thus, a priority is given to the human form of God in front of devotees. The deities like Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Maheśa, (Iśvaras) are involved in the functions of creation, sustenance, and destruction of the universe. They are involved in the flux of the world (māyā) because they are attached to the activities of cosmic creation. Puruṣottama Nārāyaṇa, Śrī Swāminārāyaṇa, has sent the avatāras into the world, and they manifest themselves at His will. His powers emanate through the avatāras for the execution of assigned duties for human emancipation. Not all avatāras manifest the same level of perfection of the Supreme Person.

Śrī Puruṣottama is the supreme person, and here, as in the teaching of Śrī Rāmānuja, Puruṣottama is both a divine name and a metaphysical definition of god (Carman 1974 : 159). Śrī Rāmānuja accepted three eternal entities: the self (Jīva), the deity (Iśvara), and the principle of flux

(Māyā). Śrī Swāminārāyaṇa said five eternal entities exist: self, deities, māyā, Akṣara and Puruṣottama (the Supreme Person). He taught that the Supreme Person is the only unconditioned ultimate reality and that all other entities, though separate realities, are contingent on the will of the Supreme Person. He added that Akṣara (the abode of god) and Parabrahman, Puruṣottama (the Supreme Person) are the only realities that transcend the flux of the world (Māyā) and are unaffected by it.

Śrī Swāminārāyaṇa along with all the ācāryas of Bhakti Vedānta School is against theory of Śankara that the Supreme Person is formless. In fact, he taught that god always has a divine form, and that to deny that god has a form is to commit the unredeemable sin of blasphemy (VGS I : 71, HVSS 71 : 9, 12). Indeed, his eternal form is that of a divine human being. The advantage to the devotee of the divine reality in human form is that he is always available for worship as well as for meditation. A famous passage records the description of the form of Puruṣottama given by Śrī Swāminārāyaṇa :

Amidst that divine light I see the extremely luminous form of God. The form is *dark*, but due to the intensity of the light, it appears to be rather fair, not dark. The form has two arms and two legs, not four, eight or a thousand arms; and its appearance is very captivating. The form is very serene; it has a human form; and it appears young like a teenager. Sometimes the form in the divine light is seen standing, sometimes sitting, and at other times, it is seen walking around. It is surrounded on all four sides by groups of *muktas* (released souls), who are seated facing Him, and who are engrossed in looking at that form of God with a fixed gaze. (VGMS II: I3, HVSS 146: 25)

तत्तेजःपुञ्जमध्यस्थ एवाऽद्याहं वदामि च।

युष्मानपि च पश्यामि निषण्णास्तत्र सर्वशः ॥ २५ ॥

HVSS 146 : 25

तदिति। अहम्। अद्यास्मिन्दिने। तत्तेजःपुञ्जमध्यस्थ उक्तविधाक्षरब्रह्ममहश्चय-
मध्यावस्थित एव। वदामि युष्मभ्यं कथयामि। सर्वशः सर्वान्। युष्मानपि। तत्राक्षरब्रह्मतेजसि।
निषण्णानुपविष्टान्। पश्यामि ॥ १४६-२५ ॥

Those in the fellowship, who believe in the identity of Śrī Swāminārāyaṇa with Puruṣottama, follow the logic to affirm the identity of the human form of Śrī Swāminārāyaṇa, as perceived by the wise devotee, with the form of Puruṣottama in Akṣaradhāma.

As mentioned above, emancipated souls also secure for themselves a similar divine body. The fundamental difference between these two kinds of bodies is that the limitations and imperfections essential to the human body are not attached to the divine body of the God. Therefore he should be worshipped even when in human form with utmost attention and total concentration. The goal in the sect is to realise that the god who manifests himself on earth in the human form of Śrī Swāminārāyaṇa is the highest Supreme Reality and that he is the cause of all avatāras. Śrī Swāminārāyaṇa himself state in HVSS 146: 61, 63.

एषा वार्ता हृदं सर्वैर्घरिणीया सदा हृदि।
एतां बोधयितुं सम्यङ्ममैवेदं जनुर्नृषु ॥ ६१ ॥

HVSS 146 : 61

प्रकरणार्थं निगमयति त्रिभिः। एषेति। हे सन्तः!! एषा। वार्ता। सर्वैर्भवद्भिः। हृदि स्वस्वमनसि। हृदं यथातथा। सदैव। धारणीया। एतां वार्ताम्। सम्यक्। बोधयितुं युष्मान्सर्वान् ज्ञापयितुमेव। नृषु इदम्। मम। जनुर्जन्मास्ति ॥ १४६-६१ ॥

रामकृष्णादयः सर्वेऽवताराः संत्यतो हि मे।
पुरुषोत्तमस्य वित्तेत्येतत् सत्यं ब्रवीमि वः ॥ ६३ ॥

HVSS 146 : 63

रामेति। अतो हेतोः। रामकृष्णादयः। सर्वे। अवताराः। पुरुषोत्तमस्य। मे मम। सन्ति। हि। इतीत्यम्। वित्तं यूयं जानित। अहम्। वो युष्मभ्यम् एतत् सत्यं यथार्थमेव। ब्रवीमि ॥ १४६-६३ ॥

According to the teaching of Śrī Swāminārāyaṇa, god even in human form is totally divine and bereft of all human instincts. There is total divinity in his human form having the bliss as His main material of body. (VPS 7, HVSS 133 : 35,36)

एवं प्रतापो भगवानानन्दवनविग्रहः।
आस्ते नराकृतिः साक्षात्स्वेच्छयैश्वर्यमैक्षयन् ॥ ३५ ॥

HVSS 133 : 35

एवमिति। एवंप्रताप इत्थंभूतानुभावः। आनन्दविग्रहो निरवधिकातिशयानन्दाधारैकमूर्तिः। नराकृतिः। साक्षात् प्रत्यक्षः। भगवान्। स्वेच्छया। ऐश्वर्यम्। ऐक्षयन्स्वभक्तान्समंततः प्रदर्शयन्सन्। आस्ते विराजते ॥ १३३-३५ ॥

चिदानन्दे भगवति त्याज्यभागो न विद्यते।

यथा दृष्टः स सेव्योऽतस्तत्परोऽन्यो न हीश्वरः ॥ ३६ ॥

HVSS 133 : 36

चिदिति। चिदानन्दे चिदानन्दधनमूर्तौ। भगवति श्रीहरौ। त्याज्यभागः शर्करासप्रतिमायामिव त्यजनीयांशः। न विद्यते नास्त्येव। अतो हेतोः। स प्रत्यक्षः श्रीहरिः। यथादृष्टो यथास्वेक्षितः। सेव्य उपास्यः। हि यतः। तत्पस्तद्भिन्नः। अन्यो द्वितीयः। ईश्वरः परमेश्वरः। नास्त्येव ॥ १३३-३६ ॥

The common illustration is that when God manifests himself on earth in human form it seems that he is supported by earth but in reality he actually supports the earth. The devotees who see this have come to true knowledge.

तिष्ठन् पृथिव्यामपि पृथ्वीं शक्त्या धृत्वा स तिष्ठति।

चन्द्रार्काग्नि - प्रकाश्यान्गोऽप्यस्तीन्द्रादि - प्रकाशकः ॥ ५३ ॥

It follows that god is not attracted to the world and he would not care to remain in it even for an hour except for his concern to save his devotees. A problem is caused, however, when god in human form exhibits such human instincts as passion, anger, and enjoyment of taste, affection, valor, hunger, and partiality. He had received many expensive ornaments, dresses, and vehicles from his followers. Anticipating such doubts about him he declared : 'I display the feeling of affection for you all, accept the various sumptuous meals that are offered by you, sit on high pedestals, accept the rich dresses, ornaments and garlands of flowers all this I do, not for any enjoyment for me, but for your emancipation only' (VGFS I8, HVSS 18 : 60-62).

The same principle was stated by Śrī Kṛṣṇa to Arjuna and is quoted by Śrī Swāminārāyaṇa twice in the Vacanamṛtam (VVS 18; HVSS 143 : 54-58; HVSS 218 : 32-34).

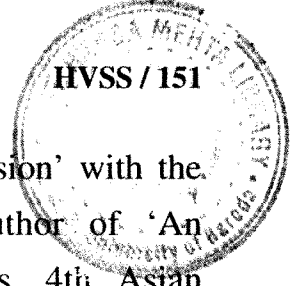
'Even a sinner would perceive divinity in the divine actions of God; a true devotee of God, however, would perceive divinity even when God performs human-like actions. In the Bhagavadgītā, God has said, this verse, which means : 'O Arjuna! My birth and my actions are divine. He who realises them as divine will not take another birth when he leaves his body; rather, he will attain me.' So whenever God performs divine

actions, they appear divine to both a devotee and to one who is not a devotee. However, when God performs human-like actions, a true devotee still perceives divinity in them, but by no means does he perceive flaws in such actions of God. Having such understanding is real bhakti towards God. In fact, only such devotees earn the fruits mentioned in the above verse (VGMS 10).

Since the Supreme Person is not bound to any rule, he can appear in human form directly or he can manifest his powers gradually in chronological order according to his desire. Any perceptions of change from childhood to youth to mature manhood and perceptions of weakness accompanying these changes are illusion. It is this illusion that is removed from those who have come to understand the teaching of the sect that the most perfect manifestation of god is Śrī Swāminārāyaṇa, who appeared as completely human between AD 1781 and 1830 in India. It is said that those who are devoted to Him and meditate on His human form come to see His perfect form in His eternal abode.

Thus we have seen that at least three levels of understanding of the relation of Śrī Swāminārāyaṇa to Puruṣottama Nārāyaṇa and/or Śrī Kṛṣṇa are found in literature of the faith. Those who hold each position claim that it represents the only accurate understanding of Śrī Swāminārāyaṇa's teaching. While it seems clear from the literature that he tempered his teaching to match the receptivity of his followers and devotees, he was not very willing to speak openly and loudly about his identity with Puruṣottama Nārāyaṇa except to his closest disciples.

Members of the BAPS (Bochasanvasi Shree Aksharapurushottam Sanstha, founded by Shastri Yagnapurushdas in 1907 AD) group argue that from the moment of birth Śrī Swāminārāyaṇa, He was the full manifestation of Puruṣottama and should be understood as such. Therefore, they affirm that the difference of interpretation that is observed in the literature was not due to a development in His understanding His teaching from first to last, but was due to a difference in understanding on the part of individual disciples according to their spiritual development.



I would like to end this topic of 'Theanthropic Dimension' with the remark of Prof. Dr. Gavin flood, the well-known author of 'An introduction to Hinduism' (Cambridge University Press, 4th Asian Edition 1994, Page 142).

'An important order developed from the 'Puṣṭi Mārga' in the nineteenth century, the Swāminārāyaṇa Movement, whose followers take refuge in the sect's founder, Swāminārāyaṇa rather than in Kṛṣṇa.'

It clearly indicates two points :

- 1) There closed similarity between religious ideas of 'Puṣṭi Mārga' (Worship of Śrī Kṛṣṇa) and Śrī Swāminārāyaṇa Movement.
- 2) Followers of Śrī Swāminārāyaṇa Movement take refuge not in Śrī Kṛṣṇa but in Śrī Swāminārāyaṇa and this is where this Movement differs fundamentally from Śrī Vaiṣṇavism of Śrī Rāmānujācārya.

Saliant Fetures Of Tattavapancaka And Their Differences

Following are the similar characteristics of all five metaphysical realities.

पञ्चानामपि साधर्म्यं निरूप्यते —

सत्त्व-ज्ञेयत्व-अभिधेयत्व-नित्यत्वधर्मैः पञ्चानामपि साधर्म्यम्।

जीवेश्वरब्रह्मपरब्रह्मणां स्वयंप्रकाशत्वेन सच्चिदानन्दत्वेन साधर्म्यम्।

जीवेश्वरमायाब्रह्मणां परब्रह्मव्याप्यत्वेनाऽऽधीनत्वेन शरीरत्वेन च.....।

मूलमाया-ब्रह्म-परब्रह्मणाम् एकत्वेन स्वसजातीयद्वितीयराहित्येन च.....।

परब्रह्मणो ब्रह्मणो ब्रह्मात्मभावापन्नजीवेश्वरचैतन्यानां मुक्तानाञ्च समानरूपत्वेन कालकर्ममायातीतत्वेन मर्त्यलोक आगमनेऽपि निर्लेपत्वेन च साधर्म्यम्। ब्रह्म-परब्रह्मणोः प्रकृतिपुरुषपर्यन्तानां चिदचिदां शरीरित्वेन, साक्षित्वेन, मोक्षप्रदत्वेन, कर्मफलप्रदत्वेन, सर्वाधारत्वेन, अनन्तकोटिब्रह्माण्डोत्पत्तौ साक्षिभावेन, महापुरुषप्रवर्तयितृत्वेन, नित्यशुद्ध-बुद्ध-मुक्तस्वभावत्वेन च साधर्म्यम्।

Both Jīva Īśvara are similar because both are enveloped in avidyā and are innumerable.

जीवेश्वरयोरविद्याग्रस्तत्वेन अनेकत्वेन च साधर्म्यम्

He then gives dissimilar characteristics of all four metaphysical realities though all of them are sentient.

- अथ वैधर्म्यम्-जीव-ईश्वर-ब्रह्म-परब्रह्मणां स्वप्रकाश-आनन्दादिभेदेन परस्परं वैधर्म्यम्। परब्रह्मणो जीवेश्वरमायाब्रह्मभिः सह शरीरित्वेन कारणत्वेन च वैधर्म्यम्।
- ब्रह्मणः जीवेश्वरमायाभिः शरीरित्वेन कारणत्वेन च.....।
- जीव-ईश्वर-ब्रह्म-परब्रह्मणां मायया सह चैतन्य-जडत्वेन स्वप्रकाशत्व-परप्रकाशत्वेन, कर्तृत्व-कर्मत्वेन द्रष्टृत्वदृश्यत्वेन च धर्मेण वैधर्म्यम्।
- ईश्वराणां जीवैः सह ब्रह्माण्डज्ञत्व-अल्पज्ञत्वेन, देहपोषकपञ्चमहाभूतसंज्ञकदेहवत्त्वेन च वैधर्म्यम्।
- ब्रह्म-परब्रह्मणोः जीवेश्वराभ्यां मोक्षप्रदातृत्वेन मोक्षभाक्त्वेन च.....।
- ब्रह्मपरब्रह्मणोर्नित्यमायापरत्वेन जीवेश्वराणां मायाबद्धत्वे सति ब्रह्मपरब्रह्मसङ्गेन मायापरत्वम्।
- जीवेश्वराणां मायया सह मोक्षभाक्त्वेन साधनत्वेन-प्रतिबन्धकत्वेन वा वैधर्म्यम्।
- ब्रह्मणः परब्रह्मणा सह नित्यपरमस्नैहेक्य-नित्यपरब्रह्मभक्तिमत्त्व-परब्रह्मभक्तियोग्यत्वेन नित्यपरब्रह्मदासत्वेन।
- जीवेश्वराणां ब्रह्मणा सहात्मबुद्ध्या साधर्म्यं प्राप्य दासत्वगुणोद्भूतत्वेन च।
- He then describes the relations between *Māyā*, *Jīva* and *Īṣvara* similar characteristics of all five metaphysical realities.
- मायायाः जीवेश्वराभ्यां नियामक-नियम्यत्वेन च वैधर्म्यम्।
- मायाकृतदेहे ब्रह्माण्डे च जीवेश्वरयोरनुक्रमेण व्यापकत्वं मायायाव्याप्यत्वम्।

The above brief note is based on HVSS 7 : 3-17 which form the very core of the fundamental concept of Reality. With the postulation of five meaningful ontological Realities, Śrī Swāminārāyaṇa is in a much better position to explain the *śruti* and *smṛti* texts which otherwise are very difficult to understand. As mentioned Śrī Harivākyasudhāsindhu in the very beginning has explained the whole matter in very simple yet clear manner in only fifteen *ślokas*. (HVSS 7 : 3-17) As it is very important we give the fifteen *ślokas* along with the Setumālā Tikā.

अध्यात्मवार्ता शास्त्रेषु यत्र यत्रोदितास्ति सा।

तत्र तत्रापि दुर्बोधा विद्यते विदुषामपि ॥ ३ ॥

HVSS 7 : 3

अध्यात्मेति। शास्त्रेषु सोपनिषत्सु श्रीमद्भागवतादिसद्ग्रन्थेषु। यत्र यत्र यस्मिन् यस्मिन्प्रकरणे। अध्यात्मवार्ता आत्मपरमात्मादिस्वरूपबोधनविषया ज्ञानवार्ता। उदिता कथिता। अस्मि। सा अध्यात्मवार्ता। तत्र तत्रापि तेषु तेषु शास्त्रीयप्रकरणेष्वपि। विदुषां पण्डितानामपि। दुर्बोधा दुःखेनापि यथार्थतया बोद्धुमशक्या विद्यते ॥ ७-३ ॥

Whenever in the scriptures, spiritual matter is stated, it is difficult to understand even by the learned scholars.

याथातथ्येन सा ज्ञेया ततो जीवादिलक्षणैः।
अन्वयव्यतिरेकाभ्यां विविच्यैव सुनिश्चितैः ॥ ४ ॥

HVSS 7 : 4

याथातथ्येनेति। ततो हेतोः। अन्वयव्यतिरेकाभ्यां स्वेतरवस्तुव्यापनेन स्वस्वरूपावस्थापनेन च करणेनेत्यर्थः। विविच्य पृथक्पृथक् विभज्य। सुनिश्चितैः सम्यक्कृतनिर्णयैः। जीवादिलक्षणैरेव। आदिशब्देनेन ब्रह्म परब्रह्मणां ग्रहणम्। सा अध्यात्मवार्ता। याथातथ्येन यथार्थभावेन। ज्ञेया ॥ ७-४ ॥

It should be known properly by analysing and knowing the characteristics of *Jivas* and others along with associated (or united) and unassociated or separated forms, they (forms) must be determined resolutely.

जीवादिलक्ष्मसाङ्कर्यभ्रमः स्यात्तेन न क्वचित्।
स्वयंप्रकाशानन्दोऽथ तमपृच्छत्पुरः स्थितः ॥ ५ ॥

HVSS 7 : 5

जीवेति। तेन तथाविधेनाध्यात्मवार्तावेदनेन। जीवादिलक्ष्मसाङ्कर्यभ्रमः जीवादिचर्तुणां यानि लक्ष्माणि लक्षणानि तेषां साङ्कर्यं परस्परप्रवेशरूपा तेन सङ्करता भ्रम इदं जीवलक्षणमीश्वरलक्षणं वेत्यादिभ्रान्तिः। कचित्कदाचिदपि। न स्यात्। अथैवंविधश्रीहरि-वाक्यश्रवणानन्तरम्। पुरःस्थितः श्रीहरेरभिमुखप्रदेशावस्थितः। स्वयम्प्रकाशानन्दो मुनिः। तं श्रीहरिम्। अपृच्छत् ॥ ७-५ ॥

जीवेशब्रह्मणां स्वामिन् कृष्णस्य ते च तत्त्वतः।
अन्वयव्यतिरेकाभ्यां लक्षणानि पृथक्पृथक् ॥ ६ ॥

HVSS 7 : 6

तदाह सार्द्धेन। जीवेति। हे स्वामिन्। जीवेशब्रह्मणां जीवाः प्राणिनश्च ईशा वैराजादयश्च ब्रह्म अक्षरब्रह्म तेषाम्। कृष्णस्य परब्रह्मणः। ते तव च। अन्वयव्यतिरेकाभ्याम्। पृथक्पृथक्। लक्षणानि। तत्त्वतो यथार्थतः। वक्तुमर्हसीत्युत्तरेणान्वयः ॥ ७-६ ॥

वक्तुमर्हसि सर्वज्ञ तद्बुभुत्साऽस्ति मे हृदि।
इति पृष्टः स सर्वेशस्तं जगाद यथागमम् ॥ ७ ॥

HVSS 7 : 7

वक्तुमिति। हे सर्वज्ञ। वक्तुं कथयितुम्। अर्हसि योग्यो भवसि। मे मम हृदि मनसि। तद्बुभुत्साऽस्ति तेषां जीवादिलक्षणानां बोद्धुमिच्छा। अस्ति। इत्यमुना प्रकारेण। पृष्टः स्वयम्प्रकाशानन्दमुनिना कथितः। सर्वेशः सर्वेश्वरेश्वरः। स श्रीहरिः। यथागमं यथाशास्त्रम्। तं स्वयम्प्रकाशानन्दमुनिम्। जगाद ॥ ७-७ ॥

With that perfect analytic knowledge there will be no confusion about *tattvas* due to commingling of the features of *Jīva* and other realities (like *Īśvara*) Then Swayamprakāśānanda Swāmī, who was sitting in front of Him asked O Lord, you should tell me properly and correctly the characteristics of *Jīva*, *Īśvara*, Brahman and O Kṛṣṇa Yourself as well as of *Māyā* independently and separately.

O knower of all I have heartfelt desire to know that. When He, the Lord of all, (Śrīhari) was asked, He answered him as per the scriptures.

स्थूलादिदेहत्रितये तादात्म्येन त्ववस्थितिः ।
जीवस्य सोऽन्वयः प्रोक्तस्तस्य येनाऽस्ति संसृतिः ॥ ८ ॥

HVSS 7 : 8

अथ द्वाभ्यां द्वाभ्यां श्लोकाभ्यां जीवादीनामन्वयव्यतिरेकभावेन लक्षणान्याह स्थूलेति ।
हे मुने स्थूलादिदेहत्रितये स्थूलसूक्ष्मकारणदेहाख्ये त्रिके । तादात्म्येन तैरेकभावेन ।
एतान्येवाहमित्यनाद्यज्ञानजन्याहंभावेनेत्यर्थः । अवस्थितिर्यत्सर्वदाऽनुकालत एव
विद्यते ॥ ७-८ ॥

(Śrīhari replies) 'When the Jīva behaves, as if, it is united with three physical bodies gross (*sthūla*) subtle (*sūkṣma*) and causal (*kāraṇa*) it is anvaya or unitary/associated form of Jīva. This belief of Jīva is the cause of birth and rebirth i.e. bondage.

चिद्रूपस्वप्रकाशत्वे अच्छेद्यत्वादि चाऽस्य तु ।
व्यतिरेको निगदितो यत्स्थितिर्मुक्तिरुच्यते ॥ ९ ॥

HVSS 7 : 9

चिदिति । चिद्रूपश्चैतन्यरूपश्च स्वप्रकाशः स्वतःप्रकाशरूपश्च तयोर्भावौ तत्त्वे ।
अच्छेद्यत्वमादिर्यस्य देहभावविलक्षणत्वसन्मात्रत्वादेस्तच्च । अस्य जीवस्य । व्यतिरेको
व्यतिरेकभावेन लक्षणम् । निगदितः प्रोक्तः । यत्स्थितिः साक्षाद्भगवत्तत्जनसम्प्राप्तज्ञानबलेन
स्थूलादिदेहत्रितयतो येन व्यतिरेकभावेनावस्थानम् । मुक्तिः । उच्यते । तथा चोक्तं
श्रीमद्भगवते 'मुक्तिर्हित्वाऽन्यथा रूपं स्वरूपेण व्यवस्थिति'रिति । (भा.पु. 2/10/6)
श्लोकद्वये जीवस्येति जात्यभिप्रायमेकवचनं श्रुत्यादिषु तदनेकत्वोक्तेः ॥ ७-९ ॥

When Jīva considers itself as separate (from the above mentioned three bodies) and is characterised (known) by the qualities of consciousness, self-illumination, and being impartite etc. it is its *Vyatireka* or independent form. This (knowledge) results into liberation (for Jīva).

विराडादिषु तादात्म्यं देहेष्वीशस्य तु त्रिषु ।
लक्ष्माऽन्वयेन गदितं तथोत्पत्त्यादिकर्तृता ॥ १० ॥

HVSS 7 : 10

विराडिति । विराडादिषु विराट् सूत्रात्माऽव्याकृताख्येषु । त्रिषु । देहेषु । तादात्म्यं
तदेकभावेन वर्तनम् । तथा । उत्पत्त्यादिकर्तृता जगत उत्पत्तिस्थितिप्रलयकर्तृत्वम् । ईशस्य
वैराजाख्येश्वरस्य । अन्वयेनान्वयभावेन । लक्ष्म लक्षणम् । गदितम् ॥ ७-१० ॥

When Īśvara is considered to be united with three bodies *Virāt* (*Sūtrātmā*, *Avyākṛta*) etc., and being the cause of creation (governance, destruction) etc. That is its *Anvaya* or united form.

अवस्थानं ब्रह्मतया मायातीतत्वमस्य च।
लक्षणं नित्यमुक्तत्वं व्यतिरेकेण कीर्तितम् ॥ ११ ॥

HVSS 7 : 11

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

When Īśvara is Brahmanised, crosses Māyā and realises himself to be ever free that is his independent or distinct form.

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 ॥

When Brahman is considered to be the controller of (Mula) Puruṣa, (Mula) Māyā, the sun etc and the support of innumerable worlds (Brahmāṇḍas) it is its *Anvaya* or united form of Īśvara.

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, even though pervading everything, remains untouched/untainted like space and is considered to be the attendant and the residence of Parabrahman/Śrīkrṣṇa it is His independent, *Vyatireka* form.

क्षराक्षराणां सर्वेषां हृदि साक्षितया स्थितिः।
पुरुषोत्तम - पर्याय - कृष्णस्याऽन्वय - लक्षणम् ॥ १४ ॥

HVSS 7 : 14

क्षरेति। सर्वेषाम्। क्षराक्षराणां प्रधानपुरुषतत्कार्याणामक्षराणामक्षरब्रह्म
तत्स्थमुक्तमहापुरुषादीनां च। हृदि हृत्पद्मे। साक्षितयाऽन्तर्यामितया। स्थितिरवस्थानम्।
पुरुषोत्तमः पुरुषोत्तमाख्यः शब्दः पर्यायो यस्य स चासौ कृष्णः श्रीकृष्णपरमात्मा
तस्य। अन्वयलक्षणमन्वयभावेन लक्षणम्। गद्यते इतिपूर्वश्लोकादनुवर्तनीयम्॥ ७-१४॥

When Puruṣottama alias Kṛṣṇa remains in the heart of all sentient and non sentient things as the witness it is his united or *Anvaya* form.

लीलाविहरणं राधादिभिः परमधामनि।
तिरोभावेऽपि कालादेर्व्यतिरेकोऽस्य चोदितः ॥ १५ ॥

HVSS 7 : 15

लीलेति। कालादेः कालस्य तन्नियम्यस्य कार्यमूलप्रकृतिपुरुषस्य च। तिरोभावेऽपि
स्वेच्छयाऽदृश्यत्वेऽपि। परमधामनि अक्षरब्रह्माख्ये स्वस्थाने। राधादिभिः
राधालक्ष्म्यक्षरभावापन्नमुक्तकोटिभिः सह। लीलाविहरणं विलासविहाराचरणम्। अस्य
श्रीकृष्णस्य। व्यतिरेको व्यतिरेकभावेन लक्षणम्। उदितः कथितः ॥ ७-१५ ॥

When there is dissolution of *Kāla* (in the *Ātyāntika Pralaya*) etc. the presence (of Puruṣottam) in his highest abode, cheerfully moving around in the company of Rādhā etc. is the independent or solo form of *Parameśvara*.

अन्वयव्यतिरेकाभ्यां विविच्येत्यं हि तत्त्वतः।
जीवादीनां लक्षणानि ज्ञातव्यानि मनीषिभिः ॥ १६ ॥

HVSS 7 : 16

अन्वयेति। इत्थममुना प्रकारेण। अन्वयव्यतिरेकाभ्याम्। विविच्य विवेचनां कृत्वा।
तत्त्वतः। जीवादीनाम्। लक्षणानि। मनीषिभिर्बुद्धिमद्भिर्भगवद्भक्तैः। ज्ञातव्यानि। हि ॥ ७-१६ ॥

In this way intelligent people should know the characteristics of *Jiva* (*Īsvara*, Brahman and Parabrahman) by separating and analysing both their associated/united and separated/independent modes or manifestations.

जीवेशब्रह्मकृष्णानां मायायाश्चापि वास्तवः।
अस्त्यनादिरयं भेद इति जानीहि निश्चितम् ॥ १७ ॥

HVSS 7 : 17

जीवेति। जीवा असुभृतश्च ईशा वैराजादयश्च ब्रह्माक्षरब्रह्म च कृष्णः श्रीकृष्णपरमात्मा
च तेषाम्। मायाया द्विविधायाः प्रकृतेश्च। अयं पूर्वोक्तः। भेदः स्वरूपतः परस्परभिन्नत्वम्।
वास्तवः सत्यः। अनादनिर्नित्यश्च। अस्ति। इतीत्यम्। निश्चितमेव। जानीहि। अत्र
जीवाद्यन्वयव्यतिरेकभावेन लक्षणोक्तौ मायायास्तदनुक्तत्वेऽपि एषां पारमार्थिक भेदोक्तौ मायाया
गणनादनुक्तमपि अस्याः कार्यकारणरूपेणान्वयव्यतिरेकभावतो लक्षणं ज्ञातव्यम् ॥ ७-१७ ॥

Know it for certain that there is an eternal and real distinction between (the ontological realities of *Jiva*, *Īsvara*, *Māyā*, Brahman and Kṛṣṇa (Parabrahman)).

Thus, a brief explanation is given above of each of the five ontological realities both with connectivity and independently.

Exposition of Reality

Thus, by taking the HVSS as generally faithful in representing the views of Śrī Swāminārāyaṇa as expressed in the *Vacanāmṛtam* as the most important spiritual authority, we have the following the special features of the philosophy of Śrī Swāminārāyaṇa.

Although the scriptures like the Śikṣāpatrī, Satsaṅgijīvanam and others have been composed while Bhagwān Swāminārāyaṇa was alive, they are the religious works, books of conduct, for followers and for that reason they have not been regarded as mainly authentic in matters philosophical.

Since Bhagwān Swāminārāyaṇa has discussed only the three realities, viz., *Jīva*, *Māyā* and *Īśvara*, in the Śikṣāpatrī, somebody might raise a doubt about the authenticity of the five realities delineated in HVSS and *Vacanāmṛtam*. But, one can clearly understand the delineation of the reality of Brahman as different from those of *Jīva* and *Parabrahman* in the verse of SP : 121 तत्र ब्रह्मात्मना कृष्णसेवा मुक्तिश्च गम्यताम्। तत्र means in the divine residence of God, released souls offer the service to Śrī Kṛṣṇa because they have acquired the virtues or qualities of Brahman. This is called *mukti* or liberation. Here *Mukta Jīvas* have to be *Brahmarūpa* and perform *sevā* or service of Parabrahma - Śrī Kṛṣṇa. So the *Jīvas* who have crossed *Māyā* and reached holy abode of God, have to obtain the spiritual status of Brahman (ब्रह्मात्मना) in order to serve Parabrahman (कृष्णसेवा). So Parabrahman, Brahman and *Jīvātman* are clearly separate and independent even in the abode of God (तत्र).

Similarly in S.P. 116 निजात्मानं ब्रह्मरूपं देहत्रयं विलक्षणम्। विभाव्य तेन कर्तव्या भक्तिः कृष्णस्य सर्वदा॥ Śrī Swāminārāyaṇa states that an aspirant should consider oneself as different from three (physical) bodies and contemplate himself to be of the form of Brahman and perform continuously devotion of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Here the word कृष्णस्य indicates Parabrahman's Bhakti i.e. devotion to First/Highest ontological reality. The term निजात्मानं means individual self or

the reality of *Jiva*. The expression देहत्रय refers to the reality of *Māyā*. But what does the epithet ब्रह्म (included in the word ब्रह्मरूप) stand for? Obviously it is absolutely different from: (1) देहत्रय or माया (2) निजात्मानं one's oneself -जीवात्मन् (3) कृष्ण or परब्रह्मन् or परमात्मन्, the Highest Reality.

It is essential and mandatory to know and understand what this Brahman is. And what it is to be like Brahman. Then only one can worship Parabrahman and get *Mokṣa*. So there has to be माया-देहत्रय, जीवात्मन्-निजात्मानं, ब्रह्मन्-ब्रह्मरूप, परब्रह्मन्-कृष्ण. Now in the S.P.107 while giving the definition of *Īśvara*, Śrī Swāminārāyaṇa states :

हृदये जीववज्जीवे योऽन्तर्यामितया स्थितः । ज्ञेय स्वतन्त्र ईशोऽसौ सर्वकर्मफलप्रदः ॥ (S.P.107)

The description here is of the God, who resides in soul just as soul resides in body. He should be known as independent dispenser of fruits of all types of actions-*Karma*. Here obviously the description is of the Highest Ontological Reality who is अन्तर्यामि and सर्वकर्मफलप्रद. But the most important adjective is स्वतन्त्र, independent. This God is absolutely independent. If this God or ईश द्वह स्वतन्त्र, obviously there must be other gods who are not स्वतन्त्र. They are according to the philosophy of Śrī Swāminārāyaṇa Virajā to Brahma. As per the *Nyāya* सम्भवव्यभिचाराभ्यां स्याद् विशेषणमर्थवत्, the adjective must have the possibility to remain meaningful independently and with the noun. The adjective स्वतन्त्र for *Īśvara* means that there are अस्वतन्त्र *Īśvaras*. Above them there is the स्वतन्त्र *Īśvara*, who is *Paramśevara*. Thus there are five independent ontological realities namely *Jiva*, *Īśvara*, *Māyā*, *Brahman*, *Parabrahman* (*Paramśevara*) even according to the Śikṣāpatrī.

Moreover, in general, two types of scriptures are found in all the *Sampradāyas*, viz., the *Sadasyagranthas*, i.e., general works meant for common followers, and the *Rahasyagranthas*, i.e., the special works, treating the secrets of the faith, and the founder, meant for the selected, initiated disciples only. In the former works, i.e., the *Sadasyagranthas*, the delineation is such that people can easily digest it. It is done in the simple manner on the basis of the well-known books already accepted by people, as for instance, the delineation of the worship of Nārāyaṇa as per the work of the Alvaras for lay members of Śrī Vaiṣṇavism.

In the *Rahasyagranthas*, however, very subtle topics are discussed. The highest philosophical truth can be grasped from their study only. In Śrī Vaiṣṇavism the works of Śrī Rāmānujācārya and Śrī Vedāntadeśika are the *Rahasyagranthas*.

Among the works of Śrī Swāmīnārāyaṇa, the *Śikṣāpatrī*, the Satsangijīvanam, and the *Bhāṣyas* and the *Tīkās* on them are the *Sadasyagranthas*. They are meant for laity.

On the other hand, the *Vacanāmṛtam*, its *Sanskṛta translation*, *Śrī Harivākyasudhāsindhu*, and the *Setumālā* commentary on it. As well as the *Vedarasa* and the discourses of the contemporary saints Śrī Guṇātītānanda Swāmī and Śrī Gopālānanda Swāmī, known as ‘Swāmīnivāto’ reveal the secret teaching of the founder. Thus, they are *Rahasyagranthas*. *Sadasyagranthas*, like the *Śikṣāpatrī* and others, have been regarded as the helpful authorities, rather than as the fundamental ones.

