

# The Philosophy of Madhva.

~~~~~By Acharya Sri Goswami Damodarji Shastri.

अहः संहरदखिलं सकृदुदयादेव सकललोकस्य ।  
तरणिरिव तिमिरजलधिं जयति जगन्मङ्गलं हरेर्नाम ॥

“Victory to the blessed Divine Name, which drives away the whole mass of sins of the entire world as soon as it appears, even as the sun dispels the huge mass of darkness as soon as it makes its appearance on the horizon.”

The world consists of two and only two principles—Matter and Spirit. The branch of knowledge dealing with inert Matter is known by the name of Science or Natural Philosophy, whereas that dealing with Spirit is called *Darśana* or Philosophy. Indian Philosophy has two branches—(1) Vedic and (2) non-Vedic. Each of these classes is subdivided into (1) theistic and (2) atheistic systems. Each of these four classes is again sub-divided into numerous branches. All these philosophical disciplines are fundamentally one and there is no real difference among them.

Of the theistic Vedic systems the Vedānta system or Uttara Mīmāṃsā is, for various reasons, the most prominent. It mainly discusses the nature of *Brahma*. Vedānta is broadly divided into two disciplines: (1) that which treats of *Nirviśeṣa* (unqualified) *Brahma* and is called by the name of *Adwaitavāda*, and (2) that which deals with *Saviśeṣa* (qualified) *Brahma*. The latter class is again subdivided into five branches according as it establishes the supremacy of Viṣṇu, Śiva, Śakti, Sūrya or Gaṇapati. Each of these again has many sub-divisions. The Vaiṣṇava system is divided into four disciplines called by the name of (1) Viśiṣṭādwaitavāda, (2) Śuddhādwaitavāda, (3) *Dwaitādwaitavāda* and (4) *Dwaitavāda* respectively.

Of these the last-named, viz., *Dwaitavāda* was first expounded by *Brahmā*, the Creator of this universe. He was followed by a long line of *Āchāryas*. Of the *Āchāryas* that came in the Kali age, the first of the line was Śrīmat *Anandatīrtha*, better known as Śrī *Madhvāchārya*. He is therefore popularly known as the founder of the *Dwaita* school of Vedānta and it is therefore that this school, though coeval with creation, is known as the *Mādhva* school.

This school has to its credit an elaborate literature composed from time to time by its ancient and modern exponents. We shall, however, content ourselves by quoting and explaining the following verse which gives in a nutshell the principal teachings of the *Mādhva* school. The verse runs as follows:—

‘श्रीमन्मध्वमते हरिः परतरः सत्यं जगत्त्वतो  
भेदो जीवगणा हरेरनुचरा नीचोच्चभावं गताः ।  
मुक्तिर्नैजसुखानुभूतिरमला भक्तिश्च तत्साधनं  
ह्यक्षादित्रितयं प्रमाणमखिलाग्नयैकवेद्यो हरिः ॥’

The above verse embodies the nine principal tenets of the *Mādhva* School, which are as follows:—

(1) *Sri Hari* or *Viṣṇu* is the Highest Reality according to the *Mādhva* School, which divides the Conscious (चेतन) principle into two classes, viz., *Jiva* (the individual ego) and *Īśvara* (the Supreme Self). Both these are of the nature of *Sat-Chit-Ananda* (Truth-Intelligence-Bliss), with this difference only that, whereas the *Jiva* is in the grip of *Māyā* (Illusion) and therefore bound from time without beginning and qualified by several attributes such as ignorance and so on, *Īśvara*, who is known by the name of *Viṣṇu*, is a repository of innumerable Divine Virtues such

as Omniscience, Omnipotence etc, and is therefore superior to *Jiva*.

(2) *The world is real, not false like the snake in the rope; for the Vedas, which are self-authoritative ( सतःप्रमाण ), have characterized God as Satyasankalpa (of true resolution), and that which is created by such a being cannot be false.*

(3) *Diversity is real and not assumed. This diversity is of five kinds, as obtaining between (1) Jiva and Īswara, (2) Jiva and inert matter, (3) God and inert Matter, (4) Jiva and Jiva and (5) one inanimate object and another.*

(4) *All the Jivas are under the control of Īswara; that is to say, they derive their power from God.*

(5) *There are several grades of Jivas, not only those who are subject to birth and*

*death but even those who have been emancipated.*

(6) *The liberation (Mokṣa) of a Jiva consists in the direct and absolute perception of his Blissful nature.*

(7) *The best means of attaining Mokṣa is pure Bhakti, i. e. love of God uncontaminated by the desire for fruit.*

(8) *Viṣṇu alone is the theme of all the Vedas. Although the Vedas seemingly treat of several objects, their main theme is to expound the divine principle, directly or indirectly.*

(9) *Direct perception (Pratyakṣa) Inference (Anumāna) and Verbal testimony (Śabda) are the three means of cognition (Pramāṇa).*



## The Real Brahmana.

Said Yājñavalkya to the Emperor (Janaka):—This has been explained by the *Rik* as well; this, indeed, is the eternal glory of him who has realized *Brahma*. It neither grows nor is diminished by doing or not doing any act, the knower *knows* this very truth. Knowing this, he is not affected by any *Karma* whatever, all being as sin to him. The heat of his senses cools down into that calmness of mind which follows on absence of desire, all kind of latent attachment leaves him, no conditions disturb him, ecstatic trance environs him,—who, knowing thus, sees Self in Self, sees the All as Self. No good or evil touches him, he transcends all good and all evil. The fulfilment or non-fulfilment of any (secular or temporal) act affects him not, he having reduced them all to nothing. He is beyond all form, beyond all desire, beyond all doubt. This is the real *Brāhmaṇa*, this is the real condition of *Brahma*.

—*Brihadaranyaka Upanishad.*

