

# Nimbarka Philosophy.

( *Dwaitadwaita-Siddhanta* )

By Swami Paramananda Das.

**O**f the four religious sects that are prominent and prevalent in India the Nimbarkists are one. Their religion also like that of most of the Vaiṣṇavites and Sannyāsīs is based on Vedānta. They teach nothing which is not contained in Vedānta and never follow any mode of worship that will not lead to the aim Vedānta points out. The celebrated Vedānta-Siddhānta known as Dwaitādwaita (the theory that is monistic as well as dualistic) was preached in this land by Bhagavān Nimbārka. A strong feeling of *Bhakti* or divine love and a fear of the dangerous consequences of the doctrine of *Māyā* or illusion are among the guiding principles of this development. Bhagavān Nimbārka is said to have been a Tailanga Brahman by birth and to have lived in a village called Nimba. His father's name was Jagannātha and his mother's, Sarasvati. Nimbārka composed the *Vedānta-ḥārijāta-saurabha*, which is a short commentary on the *Brahma-Sūtras*, and also a small work, containing ten stanzas, of the name of *Siddhānta-ratna*, usually called *Daśaśloki* from the number of the stanzas contained in it.

Vedānta or the *Brahma-Sūtras* tell us of *Brahma (Para Brahma)*, the Supreme Cause of this movable and immovable world. From Him emanated this universe, in Him it is established and in Him it will be dissolved. In His real aspect, *Para Brahma* is, on the one hand, devoid of all distinguishing qualities, All-pervading, Complete, Non-dual, Unchangeable and, on the other, Omniscient, Omnipotent, the Creator, Protector and Destroyer of the Universe, manifested in diverse forms, the Dweller in the hearts of all, and the Guide. With the immanence of God is associated

His transcendence also. As the earth in this world is transformed into trees, creepers, plants, fruits, flowers, flesh, bone, and various other forms, and these trees, plants, creepers, fruits and flowers, etc., falling on the ground, take in time the form of earth, merging the differences in them, so also this universe with various names and forms originates from *Brahma* with whom it will remain in Oneness after the Dissolution, devoid of all distinctiveness. The Immutable Supreme Reality (*Aṅsara Brahma*) is *Sat, Chit, Ananda* (Existence Absolute, Knowledge Absolute and Bliss Absolute).

Śrutis describe *Brahma* as *Sat, Chit, Ananda*. In the Śrutis we have:—

"He practised penance and knew *Brahma* as *Ananda* (Bliss). From *Ananda* issue these beings. Having emanated from *Ananda*, they subsist on *Ananda* and after death they enter into *Ananda* again."<sup>1</sup>

*Taittirīya Upaniṣad, Bhṛgu-Valli.*

"He is *Rasa* (Enjoyment). Getting *Rasa* one becomes blissful himself. Had there been no *Ananda* in this universe (or in the sky of one's own heart), then who would have lived or engaged in activities? This alone (this *Brahma* who is Bliss) gives enjoyment."<sup>2</sup>

*Ibid., Brahmānanda-Valli.*

- 1 'स तपस्तप्त्वा'.....आनन्दो ब्रह्मेति व्यजानात् ।  
आनन्दाद्भवेव खल्विमानि भूतानि जायन्ते ।  
आनन्देन जातानि जीवन्ति । आनन्दं  
प्रयन्त्यभिसंविशन्ति ।'
- 2 'रसो वै सः रस ह्येवायं लब्ध्वानन्दी भवति ।  
को ह्येवान्वात् कः प्राण्वात् । यदेष आकाश  
आनन्दो न स्यात् । एष ह्येवानन्दयति ।'

“*Brahma* is Truth and Knowledge, and Unlimited, too.<sup>3</sup>”

*Ibid.*, *Brahmānanda-Valli*.

The Śrutis speak of *Brahma* as *Ananda*. Unless *Brahma* is One and All-pervading, He cannot be bliss in reality. If there be a second thing, *Brahma* becomes separated, being limited by the second thing which is not pervaded by Him. In *Sruti* it is said:—

“That which is *Bhūmā* (Limitless Vastness), is Enjoyment; there is no enjoyment in limitation, *Bhūmā* is enjoyment.<sup>4</sup>”

“That which is *Bhūmā* is Immortality that which is little is prone to death.<sup>5</sup>”

Hence the Śrutis point out that from the Blissfulness of *Brahma* is proved His singleness and All-pervading nature.

Now, if we think deeply, we shall find that there can be no existence of *Ananda* (enjoyment) without knowledge. If one cannot feel the enjoyment that is in him, then that enjoyment has no existence so far as he is concerned. Sugar cannot enjoy its own sweetness. Men enjoy it and call it sweet. So sweetness is an object of Knowledge. Had there been no perceiver, the sweetness of sugar could not have been known. But *Brahma* is second to none, hence He is Himself the Enjoyer of His own enjoyment. Thus we know Him as possessed of *Chit*, (Knowledge) by which He enjoys the enjoyment that is inherent in Him. Hence *Brahma* is called *Sachchidānanda*.

Bhagavān Nimbārka-chārya has in his teachings prescribed ways by following which we may attain that fitness

which will enable us with loving hearts to merge ourselves in the Vastness of His Reality like rivers flowing into the ocean, for the attainment of Absolute Bliss (which is ever unchangeable). As the created are the forms of the Creator, one is to perceive and visualize God in every being, remaining aloof from malice, untruth, quarrels and infliction of injuries on others, so as to become pure at heart and free from egoism. This purity alone will bring peace eternal. The four aspects of *Dwaitādwaita-Siddhānta* are being described as follows:—

(1) The universe, the object of sight (*Dṛśyasthānīya Jagat*);

(2) The individual Egoes, who see the things of the world separately (*Draṣṭā Jīva-Samūha*),

(3) *Īśwara*, who ever sees the things of the creation simultaneously and in full (*Niyantā Īśwara*—God, the ordainer);

(4) The Immutable Supreme Reality who is without form or name (*Sachchidānanda Brahma* or *Akṣara Brahma*). He is Ever-existent, Unchangeable, the Perceiver of *Ananda* (Enjoyment). The Śrutis speak of Him as *Akṣara* (the Immutable).

This fourth aspect—*Anandarūpī Brahma* (Bliss Absolute)—is possessed of a power named *Māyā*, inherent in Himself. *Prakṛti* (the Primordial Unmanifested Nature) is her another name. Though *Brahma* is One Undivided Whole, and always Unchangeable, this *Māyā* causes the *Ananda* (enjoyment) inherent in *Brahma* to be felt in endless distinct forms, *i. e.*, Bliss Absolute comes to be the object (*Viśaya*) of Knowledge Absolute (*Chit-Sakti*), being manifested into plurality. In other words, the Bliss which is inherent in *Brahma* is possessed of such a capacity that while remaining as an Undivided whole, He will manifest Himself into diversity (*i. e.*, the Bliss will be perceived—seen and enjoyed in endless forms by His own *Chit* or Knowledge.) This capacity or *Māyā* (मीयते अनया—that which measures

<sup>3</sup> ‘सत्यं ज्ञानमनन्तं ब्रह्म ।’

<sup>4</sup> ‘यो वै भूमा तस्सुखं, नात्पे सुखमस्ति । भूमैव सुखम् ।’

<sup>5</sup> ‘यो वै भूमा तदमृतम् । अथ यदल्पं तन्मर्त्यम् ।’

the Immeasurable), as it is called, is a power inhering in Him.

The endless forms that are the manifestations of God are summed up as the Universe. It is an object of cognition through His knowledge. The name *Īśwara* (the Ordainer) is attributed to this "power of perception" which sees simultaneously all the objects in creation in full. So *Īśwara* is Omniscient. *Īśwara* is termed as *Jiva* (the individual Ego) while seeing the things one after another. So *Jiva* is limited in its perception, not being a seer in full. *Īśwara* and *Jiva* both are, in different aspects, the manifestations of the Knowledge Absolute (*Chit*) which is embodied in *Brahma*. These are both ever-existent. The Universe also is without beginning and everlasting in the sense that all the forms, that were manifested in the past, are manifested in the present or will be manifested in the future, lie in the knowledge of *Īśwara*. As *Īśwara* is Omniscient, He is above time (कालेति) and there is no law of succession in His Knowledge. But *Jiva*, being distinct in nature from *Īśwara*, has a defective vision, seeing one after another the things that ever lie in the knowledge of *Īśwara*. Hence the things of the world enter the knowledge of *Jiva* one after another and appear as born, living and dead. So, in the knowledge of *Jiva*, the world is ever-changing, has no stability, but nothing, surpassing that which lies in the knowledge of *Īśwara*, the Omniscient, can appear in the knowledge of *Jiva* the ill-seer. Hence *Jiva* is ever dependent on *Īśwara*, the Ordainer of all of his activities.

*Īśwara* and *Jiva* are immutable and transcendent. Both are of the nature of *Chit* (Knowledge) and are seers. This *Chit* is ever Unchangeable. The forms that are seen by *Jiva* always undergo changes, so they appear to be changeable. *Jiva*'s and *Īśwara*'s nature as Knowledge (*Chit*) never undergoes a change, so they are both without decay and without any

change. But the forms in the world being without number, the seers of these forms are also numberless. But the *Chit* termed as *Īśwara*, being All-pervading, is *Bhūmā* (Vast, Limitless) in nature, while *Jiva* is an atom, who, remaining as the dweller in every form, makes it an object of perception. But, just as the tiny flame of a lamp brings the places spreading far around within the reach of its illumining power, so also *Jiva*, though atomic in size, makes the things spreading to a great distance its object of sight. Unlike *Īśwara*, *Jiva* cannot comprehend the whole universe at the same moment. *Ananda* (Bliss), which is perceived by the fourth aspect, viz., the Supreme Reality, is ever transcendent, ever unchangeable. There is manifestation of distinct forms in Him. So singling this fourth aspect, *Sruti* has termed Him as *Akṣara* (the Immutable).

The conclusion arrived at from the above exposition is that the universe is a part of *Brahma*. In the knowledge of *Jiva* it is changing (संस्तम्भ) and is endowed with endless forms. *Jiva* also is a part of *Brahma*, is immutable (*Akṣara*), and atomic in size and there are countless such *Jivas*. *Jivas* and the universe both are dependent on *Īśwara*. The universe lies in the knowledge of *Īśwara*, who is ever Omniscient, the One, the Limitless, the Immutable, and the Sustainer and Protector of it. He is also the Ordainer of *Jivas*. Being only a seer in nature, He is without form and beyond the universe of forms,—is self-existent. As constant and Immutable, *Brahma* is beyond everything, is All-Bliss, and All-Knowledge, in entirety without a form and there lies no knowledge of any distinct form in Him; truly, He is called *Parabrahma*. But *Īśwara*, *Jiva* and *Jagat* (the universe) lie in Him—are His manifestations. In the seventh chapter of the sixth part of *Viṣṇu-ṣurāṇa* the four aspects of *Brahma* have been described in a slightly different way, viz.,

आश्रयश्चेतसो ब्रह्म द्विधा तच्च स्वभावतः ।  
भूप मूर्तममूर्तं च परं चापरमेव च ॥४७॥  
अमूर्तं ब्रह्मणो रूपं यत्सदित्युच्यते बुधैः ॥६९॥  
समस्ताः शक्तयश्चैता नृप यत्र प्रतिष्ठिताः ।  
तद्विश्वरूपवैरूप्यं रूपमन्यद्वरेर्महत् ॥७०॥  
समस्तशक्तिरूपाणि तत्करोति जनेश्वर ॥७१॥  
एतत् सर्वमिदं विश्वं जगदेतच्चराचरम् ।  
परब्रह्मस्वरूपस्य विष्णोः शक्तिसमन्वितम् ॥६०॥

\* \* \* \* \*

एतान्यशेषरूपाणि तस्य रूपाणि पार्थिव ।  
यतस्तच्छक्तियोगेन युक्तानि नभसा यथा ॥६८॥  
द्वितीयं विष्णुसंज्ञस्य योगिध्येयं महामते ॥६९॥

“O king! the support (the object of meditation) of the mind (of a devotee of Viṣṇu) is naturally *Brahma*. He is two-fold in nature—*Mūrta* (with form) and *Amūrta* (without form). These two aspects are again sub-divided into *Para* (the Supreme) and *Apara* (the lower).”

“The Reality of *Brahma*, which is named as *Sat* by the wise, is without form. *Mahat*, which embodies all manifested powers, is another expression of the All-pervading *Hari*. O king! all the forms endowed with power evolve out of that.”

“The whole of this universe, the whole of the movable and the immovable creation, is endowed with the power of Viṣṇu, who is *Parabrahma*.”\*

\* The world, the object of cognition, is called inanimate (*Jada* or a *chit*) as a definition. No part of it is altogether without consciousness (*chit*).

*Chit* (Consciousness or Knowledge) lies embodied in each portion of it and is called *Purusa* (पुरि शेते इति पुरुषः—the self living in an abode). Thus the whole of the universe is full of egos. The part that is seen is called the body, and *Chit* which lies embodied in it is called *Purusha*. In fact, the body and consciousness always remain together. The consciousness that remains in the whole of the universe taken as a body is called *Hiranyagarbha* (the Golden Source or Intelligence). He is the manifestation of God in form. The common individuals are the dwellers in the different parts of His body. As a soul is the dweller in the whole a body and yet there are numberless small souls dwelling in the various

“Oh king, all these forms (*Jivas*) are manifestations of the all-pervading Viṣṇu. As the whole world is pervaded by ether, so also are all these pervaded by the power of Viṣṇu. This is the second form of Viṣṇu to meditate upon.”

From the above it is clear that *Brahma* has four aspects:—

(1) *Para Amūrta*, viz., the Supreme Immutable Reality.

(2) *Apara Amūrta*, viz, *Īśwara*, the Omniscient, the main source of every phase of power.

(3) *Para Mūrta* (also called *Hiranyagarbha* or *Mahat*)—the form that comprises the whole universe in a collective way, the direct source of every manifestation.

(4) *Apara Mūrta*—the endless distinct forms called *Jivas*.

Thus *Brahma* is monistic as well as pluralistic (*Dwaitādwaita*). Between *Jiva* and *Brahma*, there exists the relation of part and whole (अंशश्चित्तम्). The inanimate world, the individual soul and God are distinct from one another as well as identical. Identical they are in the sense that the first two have no independent existence, but are dependent on God (out of whom they evolve) for their existence and action. The soul and God are not distinct personalities as “You” and “I” are. We can understand the relation of part and whole from the following examples:—

parts of that very body, so also are there endless souls as dwellers in the different parts of the vast body of *Hiranyagarbha*. The world and the egos are the manifestations of His power called *Prakṛiti*, as described in the *Bhagavadgita*:—

‘भूमिरापोऽनलो वायुः खं मनो बुद्धिरेव च ।  
अहंकार इतीयं मे भिन्ना प्रकृतिरष्टधा ॥  
अपरेयमितस्त्वन्यां प्रकृतिं विद्धि मे पराम् ।  
जीवभूतां महाबाहो ययेदं धार्यते जगत् ॥’

If we look at a pillar standing near by, we shall take it as a whole. But, if we think deeply, we shall find that the knowledge of the different aspects of the pillar arises in our mind simultaneously with the knowledge of the pillar as a whole. The knowledge of the various aspects of the pillar, *e. g.*, of its being white in colour, round or square in size, hard, made of stone, etc., and the difference of one part from another lies in the knowledge of the pillar as a whole. Thus the sight of a part lies in the sight of the whole. The individual in his own plane feels himself as an undivided whole. He has hands, legs and other limbs, yet the reality he feels is the conscious soul. In the functions of going, seeing, doing, etc., the soul remains in full with every action. When one goes, we do not say a portion of him goes; when one sees a thing, he sees it as an undivided whole. But these functions are the manifestations of the various powers inhering in the individual. When one shuts his eyes, he sees nothing; but this does not mean that he has lost the power of sight: it only means the power is not being used. Thus, though one is an undivided whole, various powers lie in oneness with him, merging up their differences, and are manifested at the time of separate functions, taking different names such as the power of seeing, the power of doing, the power of going, etc. Yet are these powers not the parts of the individual? Of course, they are. Though the individual is an undivided whole, yet, pointing out his particular functions, we say of him as possessed of the power of seeing or doing or going, and so on. These powers are distinct from one another. Behind these distinct powers remains as their substratum the individual as an undivided whole. So also is the case with *Brahma*. He is an Undivided Whole (*Akhaṇḍa*) and is always Full in His nature (स्वरूपतः पूर्ण), and yet He is always possessed of endless powers. These powers are His parts. Though every power is distinct

from another, yet they are all in oneness with Him. Each power has two aspects—to lie in oneness with *Brahma* is one and to lie manifested with name and form is the other. *Brahma*, the Supreme Reality, being possessed of various distinct powers, manifests Himself into distinct endless forms with particular names. The power that cognizes all these forms at the same moment is called *Īśvara* and the powers that cognize one thing after another are called *Jivas*.

The *Dwaitādwaita-Siddhānta* is supported by a number of aphorisms of the *Vedānta-Sūtras*, a few of which are quoted below:—

‘अंशो नानाव्यपदेशादन्यथा चापि दाशकित-  
वादित्वमधीयत एके ।’

(II. iii. 43)

*Jiva* is a part of, as well as is in oneness with *Brahma*. As a part, it is described in the *Śrutis* as ‘ज्ञाज्ञौ द्वावजावीशानी’, ‘अंशो द्वेष परस्य’, ‘एष परस्य शक्तिर्जावोऽल्पशक्तिरस्वतन्त्रः’, ‘य आत्मानमन्तरो यमयति अन्तःप्रविष्टः शास्ता जनानाम्’. The identity is described in the *Śrutis* as ‘तत्त्वमसि’, ‘अयमात्मा ब्रह्म’, ‘अहं ब्रह्मास्मि’. A section of the followers of the *Atharva Veda* expressed the identity in the following:—A *Dāsa* (fisherman) is *Brahma*, *Dāsas* (the servants) are *Brahma*, and *Kitavas* (the knaves) are *Brahma*.

‘मन्त्रवर्णात्’

(II. iii. 44)

That *Jiva* is a part of *Brahma* is proved by the *Mantra* of *Sruti* ‘पादोऽस्य विश्वा भूतानि’. The totality of *Jivas* constitutes one leg (or portion) of this thousand-headed *Puruṣa* (Person).

‘अपि च स्वर्यते ।’

(II. iii. 45)

That the *Jiva* is a portion of *Brahma* is remembered in the verse ‘ममैवांशो जीवलोके जीव-  
भूतः सनातनः ।’ (An eternal portion of Myself

is manifested as *Jiva* in this world of life.) of the *Smṛti*, i. e., *Srīmad Bhagavadgītā* (XV. 7).

‘उभयव्यपदेशात्त्वहिकुण्डलवत् ।’  
( III. ii. 27 )

The universe in a subtle or gross form exists with its material cause, *Brahma*, related as one and also as separate. The *Śrutis* speak of this relation as:—

‘यतो वा इमानि भूतानि जायन्ते, यः पृथिव्यां तिष्ठन्’, ‘पृथगात्मानं प्रेरितारं च मत्वा’, ‘ब्रह्मैवेदं सर्वम्’, ‘सर्वं खल्विदं ब्रह्म ।’

While a snake remains coiled, parts of his body cannot be seen, but its hood, tail, etc. are visible when it stretches itself; so also, at the time of Destruction, the universe remains absorbed in *Brahma* out of whom it evolves at the time of creation.

‘तदनन्यत्वमारम्भणशब्दादिभ्यः ।’  
( II. i. 14 )

The effect is in oneness with its material cause. There is not much of separation between the cause and the effect. The *Śruti* says:—

‘वाचारम्भणं विकारो नामधेयं मृत्तिकेत्येव सत्यम् ।’  
‘ऐतदात्म्यमिदं सर्वम्’, ‘तत्सत्यं तत्त्वमसि’, ‘सर्वं खल्विदं ब्रह्म ।’

‘जन्माद्यस्य यतः ।’  
( I. i. 2 )

“*Brahma* is known, as He is the cause of creation, preservation and destruction of this world.”

‘शास्त्रयोनित्वात् ।’  
( I. i. 3 )

“We know of *Brahma* as the origin of the *Śāstras* ( the Holy Scriptures ).”

‘तत्तु समन्वयात् ।’  
( I. i. 4 )

“The *Śrutis* are consistent with one another in associating *Brahma* with immanence and transcendence both.”

‘प्रकृतिश्च प्रतिज्ञादृष्टान्तानुपरोधात् ।’  
( I. iv. 23 )

“*Brahma* is the material as well as the instrumental cause of the universe. This is proved by *Pratijñā* ( the statements of *Śruti* such as ‘तमदेशमप्राज्ञो येनाश्रुतं भुतं मन्वत्यमतं मतं मन्वत्यविज्ञातं विज्ञातं सवति ।’ and *Dr̥ṣṭānta* ( example ) such as ‘यया सोमैकेन मृत्पिण्डेन सर्वं मृन्मयं विज्ञातं स्यात् ’

‘योनिश्च हि गीयते ।’  
( I. iv. 27 )

The “*Śrutis* speak of *Brahma* as the cause of everything;” hence we arrive at the conclusion that *Brahma* is also the material cause of the universe.

The four aspects of *Brahma* have been described in the following and other Mantras of the *Śwetāśvataropaniṣad*:—

उद्गीतमेतत् परमं तु ब्रह्म  
तस्मिंस्त्रयं सुप्रतिष्ठाक्षरं च ।  
अत्रान्तरं ब्रह्मविदो विदित्वा  
लीना ब्रह्मणि तत्परा योनिमुक्ताः ॥

“*Vedānta* treats of *Parabrahma*. The three (*Jagat* or the universe, *Jiva* and *Īśvara*) lie in Him well-established ( i.e., ever lie in Him ), and He is at the same time the Immutable. Perceiving all these differences, the knowers of *Brahma* sink in Him and are freed from the cycle of birth and death.”

In this *Mantra* the transcendence of *Brahma* has been clearly mentioned. Besides this, the three other aspects of *Brahma* have also been mentioned. These three aspects are even more clear in the following *Mantra*:—

शाशौ द्वावजावीशानीशा-  
वजा ह्येका भोक्तृभोगार्थयुक्ता ।

अनन्तश्चात्मा विश्वरूपो ह्यकर्ता  
त्रयं यदा विन्दते ब्रह्ममेतत् ॥

“Īśwara ( the Ordainer ) is Jñā (Omni-  
scient ) and Jīva is Anīśwāra ( is ordained  
by God ) and Ajñā ( ill-knower ). Both  
are without birth, ever-existent. Prakṛti  
( Nature ) that provides Jīva ( Bhoktā ) with  
objects of enjoyment, is also without  
birth ( without beginning or end ). When  
Atmā ( the individual ego ) knows Brahma as  
possessed of these three aspects, he  
becomes limitless, omniform, and a non-  
doer ( i. e., he realizes his oneness with  
Brahma ).” Thus Brahma has been described  
as possessed of the four features—Jagat,  
Jīva, Īśwara and Akṣara. And in the Mantra—

ॐ पूर्णमदः पूर्णमिदं पूर्णात्पूर्णमुदच्यते ।  
पूर्णस्य पूर्णमादाय पूर्णमेवावशिष्यते ॥

Brahma is described by Sruti as Ever-  
existent, Ineffable, Full at every  
stage and for all times, though He is  
possessed of the four features. This is  
the Dwāitādwaita-Siddhānta as was  
preached by Bhagavān Nimbārka.  
According to this doctrine Brahma is both  
Nirguṇa ( without attributes ) and Saguṇa  
( with attributes ). As the support of all,  
He is Nirguṇa and, as possessed of the  
various powers, He is Saguṇa.

As the sun rises in the sky his whole  
reflection spreads on all sides and along  
with the reflection numberless rays  
remaining embodied in it also spread,  
so also are the Jivas manifested remain-  
ing embodied in Īśwara. As the know-  
ledge of the various parts of a pillar  
lies in the knowledge of the pillar as a  
whole, so also Jivas lie embodied with  
Īśwara. Thus Jīva is naturally dependent  
on Īśwara. Instances are also not rare  
of a thing presenting two aspects simul-  
taneously. From infancy to old age, a  
man undergoes several changes, yet  
behind each change the person is the  
same. A man lies asleep and at the  
time sees dreams. A seeker after Him  
remains absorbed in the thoughts of

Self-Realization and yet at the same  
time goes on conversing with another.  
The two aspects of a knower of the  
truth are described in *Srīmad Bhagavadgītā*  
as follows:—

नैव किञ्चित्करोमीति युक्तो मन्येत तत्त्ववित् ।  
पश्यञ्शृण्वन् स्पृशञ्छिन्नन्नश्नन् गच्छन् स्वप्ञ्क्षसन् ॥

It is also seen that a person while  
seeing a dream sees himself in diverse  
forms, though he is himself without form.  
Jīva, though without form in reality,  
always feels himself as possessed of a  
form. Brahma, though without form, sees  
His own Self in diverse forms by His  
Chēt-śakti.

But it may be asked here—“If all,  
that was manifested in the past, is  
manifested at present or will be mani-  
fested in future, exists for ever in  
Brahma, then how are all these seen as  
manifested one after another as cause  
and effect ? Every day we find new  
acts being performed and new things  
coming into existence. If these are ever  
existent in Brahma, how can there be any  
possibility of such manifestations ?”

In reply to this it may be submitted  
that like the photographs set in a film,  
the occurrences of the world ( all the  
worldly pictures ) are existent in Brahma.  
Though the photographs are separate  
from one another, yet one after another  
they appear as cause and effect when  
the film is on the screen. In the know-  
ledge of Jīva ( who is in the domain of  
time ) the occurrences of the world  
appear in succession as manifestations  
being conducted by the Māyā-śakti of Brahma.  
If two things are manifested in a partic-  
ular order, the link that is to be found  
between them is named and expressed  
as the relation of cause and effect.  
The different particles of water that  
swiftly run down a river, being linked  
with one another, appear as one river.  
Though changed at every moment, they,  
being perceived in a link, appear as one  
thing.

Śrutis and the sayings of the knowers of *Brahma* are the only proofs beyond argument to show the real nature of *Brahma*. By arguments and gestures we can know the real nature of things that are observed. About mysticism, however, arguments are not sufficient to bring true faith.

Now, the ways that are followed for the realization of the Self according to this doctrine will be described. A main feature of practice is meditation on the All-pervading nature of *Brahma*. One should look upon virtuous persons as well as sinners, nay, even beasts, birds and insects as *Brahma* and should not regard himself as superior to any one. He should try to be void of egoism and should give up all ideas of separateness. That such practices are praiseworthy can be seen from the following Ślokas of the *Bhagavadgītā*—

विद्याविनयसम्पन्ने ब्राह्मणे गवि हस्तिनि ।

शुनि चैव श्वपाके च पण्डिताः समदर्शिनः ॥

( V. 18 )

“The wise look upon a Brahman adorned with learning and culture, a cow, an elephant, and even a dog and a pariah with the same eye.”

आत्मौपम्येन सर्वत्र समं पश्यति योऽर्जुन ।

सुखं वा यदि वा दुःखं स योगी परमो मतः ॥

( VI. 32 )

“He, O Arjuna, who sees equality in all creatures on the analogy of his own self and also views pleasure and pain alike in all, him I hold to be the supreme Yogi.”

यदा भूतपृथग्भावमेकस्थमनुपश्यति ।

तत एव च विस्तारं ब्रह्म संपद्यते तदा ॥’

( XIII. 30 )

“When he perceives the diversified existence of beings as based on One Supreme Being and branching forth from

the same, then he becomes one with *Brahma*.”

From this same practice, as its branches, issue out other practices of their own accord,—practices such as abstaining from cheating, truthfulness, not to find fault with others, not to speak ill of others, not to covet for anything as an object of enjoyment. The idea of enjoyment is based on the idea of duality. However lovely the body of a person may be, no idea ever occurs in his mind of enjoying any part of that very body. Even so, if one can conceive his own soul and the souls of those enjoyed to be in oneness with *Brahma*, the hankering for anything as an object to be enjoyed will disappear. Such practices are named as the practices of devotion. Practising on these lines the devotee becomes void of egoism, perceives in everything the grandeur of *Brahma*, sees everything with the same eye. These are the signs of a *Suddha Sattwa* (an illuminated soul). *Parā Bhakti* (Supreme Devotion) arises in his mind of its own accord. Like the river that flows into the ocean and becomes one with it, merging its name and form, the devotee also feels himself in oneness with Him and is established in his own freed aspect. It is said in the *Gītā*:—

ब्रह्मभूतः प्रसन्नात्मा न शोचति न काङ्क्षति ।

समः सर्वेषु भूतेषु मद्भक्तिं लभते पराम् ॥

भक्त्या मामभिजानाति यावान् यश्चास्ति तत्त्वतः ।

ततो मां तत्त्वतो ज्ञात्वा विशते तदनन्तरम् ॥

“Becoming one with *Brahma*, one remains satisfied in his own Self and mourns for nothing, nor doth he feel any want; the same to all beings, he obtains supreme devotion unto Me.”

“By devotion he knows Me in truth as to what is My nature and who I am; thereafter, having attained full knowledge of Me, he enters into Me.”

The followers of Bhagavān Nimbārka worship the pair-forms of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and



Śrī Rādhikā as a special mode for the realization of the All-pervading nature of *Brahma*. *Prakṛti* (Nature) has three *Guṇas* (attributes) : viz., *Sattva* (Illumination), *Rajas* (Activity) and *Tamas* (Infatuation). The Supreme One takes recourse to these three *Guṇas* in order to manifest Himself in the forms of Hari, Hara, and Virañchi. The body of Hari (Śrī Kṛṣṇa) is made of *Sattva-Guṇa*. By worshipping *Brahma* in this form, the devotees derive the greatest benefit. It is said in *Srimad Bhāgavata*:—

सर्वं रजस्तम इति प्रकृतेर्गुणास्तै-  
 युक्तः परः पुरुष एक इहास्य घत्ते ।  
 स्थित्यादथे हरिविरञ्चिहरेति संज्ञाः  
 श्रेयांसि तत्र खलु सर्वतनोर्गुणां स्युः ॥

In fact, whenever we take a man to be great, devotion towards him arises of its own accord. In this way, thinking everything to be great and thereby developing the devotion, one finds it easy to look upon all manifestations as *Brahma*. By worshipping one who is possessed of some special power, the seeker after truth finds his devotion naturally developed and those who are worshipped stand by the devotee as helpers and doers of good. Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa says in the *Gītā*:—

ये तु सर्वाणि कर्माणि मयि संन्यस्य मत्पराः ।  
 अनन्येनैव योगेन मां ध्यायन्त उपासते ॥  
 तेषामहं समुद्रतां मृत्युसंसारसागरात् ।  
 भवामि नचिरात्पार्थ मय्यावेशितचेतसाम् ॥

For a further knowledge of the system a few stanzas of *Daśaśloki* ( which contains the quintessence of Nimbārka's system ) are being quoted with translation:—

सर्वं हि विज्ञानमतो यथार्थकं  
 श्रुतिस्मृतिभ्यो निखिलस्य वस्तुनः ।  
 ब्रह्मात्मकत्वादिति वेदविन्मतं  
 त्रिरूपतापि श्रुतिसूत्रसाधिता ॥२॥

“The Knowledge that all things are *Brahma* ( being manifestations of *Brahma* ) is true in accordance with the Śrutis and the Smṛtis. This is also the doctrine of the knowers of the Vedas. The three aspects of *Brahma*, viz., *Prakṛti*, *Puruṣa*, and *Īswara* are also proved by the Sūtras and the Śrutis.”

नान्या गतिः कृष्णपदारविन्दात्  
 संदृश्यते ब्रह्मशिवादिविन्दितात् ।  
 भक्तेच्छयोपात्तसुचिन्त्यविग्रहा  
 दचिन्त्यशक्तेरविचिन्त्यशासनात् ॥८॥

“There appears no way to salvation except the lotus-like feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, which are adored by Brahmā, Śiva and others. At the desire of the devotees He assumes a form easy of meditation, even though His potency is unthinkable and His dominating power cannot be imagined.”

कृपास्य दैन्यादियुजि प्रजायते  
 यया भवेत्प्रेमविशेषलक्षणा ।  
 भक्तिर्न न्याधिपतेर्महात्मनः  
 सा चोत्तमा साधनरूपिकाऽपरा ॥९॥

“His Grace extends to those who have a feeling of helplessness and other qualifications. By His Grace is generated the highest type of *Bhakti* ( devotion ) consisting of special love for Him who is the Supreme Soul and Lord of all. The other kind, known as *Aparā Bhakti*, is that which leads to this highest devotion.”

स्वभावतोऽपास्तसमस्तदोष-  
 मशेषकल्याणगुणैकराशिम ।  
 व्यूहाङ्गिनं ब्रह्म परं वरेण्यं  
 ध्यायेम कृष्णं कमलेक्षणं हरिम् ॥

“I meditate on the Highest *Brahma*, in the person of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who has eyes like the lotus, who is naturally free from all faults, who is the repository of

all beneficent attributes, who has Vyūhas (the four aspects that have been mentioned before) as His body and who is adored by all.’

अङ्गे तु वामे वृषभानुजां सुदा

विराजमानामनुरूपसौभगाम् ।

सखीसहस्रैः परिसेवितां सदा

स्मरेम देवीं सकलेष्टकामदाम् ॥

“I reflect on the daughter of Vṛṣabhānu (Śrī Rādhikā) who shines cheerfully with a corresponding beauty on the left side of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. She is attended on by thousands of female friends and confers all desired objects.’”

This is the *Sanātana Dharma* as taught by Bhagavān Nimbārka.

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