

Similarly, we, asleep to the supreme state, know only the body and its ego and all our experiences are ‘meaningless prattling,’ says the Man of Realisation (jñānī), Ācārya Śaṅkara.



ब्रह्मैवेदं विश्वमित्येव वाणी
श्रौती ब्रूते॒थर्वनिष्ठा वरिष्ठा ।
तस्मादेतद्व्यग्नमात्रं हि विश्वं
नाधिष्ठानाद्विज्ञता॑रोपितस्य ॥ २३१ ॥

*brahmaivedam viśvamityeva vāṇī
śrautī brūte' thorvaniṣṭhā variṣṭhā,
tasmādetabrahmamātram hi viśvam
nādhiṣṭhānādbhinnatā''ropitasya. (231)*

231. *Truly, this entire universe is Brahman – this is the declaration of the Atharva-veda. Therefore, this universe is Brahman alone, for a superimposition has no existence independent of its substratum.*

‘Brahman alone is this universe’ (Brahma-eva-idam viśvam)
– This is the declaration we find in the *Muṇḍakopaniṣad*¹ which belongs to the *Atharva-veda*. The entire world of names and forms we perceive is nothing but Brahman.

Not only do we find by analogy that the effect is nothing but the cause in another form, but also, this conclusion is supported by the scriptures (Śruti). The Upaniṣads too, declare the same Truth. Therefore, Brahman alone is this world of plurality that is around us.

The ultimate reality of a superimposition is its own substratum. The ‘ghost’ cannot be anything other than the post nor can the ‘serpent’ be different from the rope. While the delusion lasts, we are subject to the ‘vision’ of the superimposition and we suffer all the consequences thereof. When Realisation (bodha)

¹ *Muṇḍakopaniṣad* – 2.2.11