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1. Devoted Dedication

सर्ववेदान्तसिद्धान्तगोचरं तमगोचरम् ।
गोविन्दं परमानन्दं सद्गुरुं प्रणतोऽस्म्यहम् ॥ १ ॥

*sarvavedāntasiddhāntagocaram tamagocaram,
govindam paramānandam sadgurum praṇato'smyaham. (1)*

1. My salutation to Śrī Sadguru Govinda who is of the nature of Bliss Absolute, who can be known only through the import of the essence of Vedānta and who is beyond the reach of the known instruments of perception.

It is very well-known that Śrī Śaṅkarācārya was a disciple of Śrī Govindapāda, who is traditionally believed to have been the disciple of Śrī Gauḍapāda of the *Kārikā* fame. Here, in the opening verse, Śaṅkara prostrates to his Master, Ācārya Govindapāda.

The verse can be interpreted in two possible ways. As a mortal's physical act of prostration unto a finite Guru, it has already been interpreted. It can also be understood to mean the 'spiritual salutation' of a Man of Wisdom to the supreme Truth. When thus interpreted, the word 'aham' meaning 'I', should indicate the subject as dissociated with the body, mind and intellect. This ego centre in the seeker comes to seek its identity with the Real and discovers for itself that the supreme Govinda, the essence in all literature of Vedānta, beyond the perception of the sense organs, human emotions and reasoning intellect, can be experienced as the ego's own real nature when contemplation takes place along the lines of discussion indicated in the scriptures.

