

but the Upaniṣads are without exception striving to point out the one supreme Reality.

Śaṅkara concludes his discussion and says that the perceivers of plurality (the dvaitins) quote passages from Upaniṣad that sanction the prārabdha theory to prove that even the Man of Realisation has body consciousness and, therefore, there exists a world of matter other than Brahman. Śaṅkara, here, takes away the very plank from under the feet of the dvaitins. He says that the Upaniṣads condescend to recognise the play of prārabdha only out of their infinite grace to accommodate fools in their early stages of unpreparedness, that they may later accept the total vision of the Absolute. The Ācārya says that any student of the Upaniṣads can easily understand that, by and large, the anxiety of the scriptures is to communicate to him the one Reality, the Brahman.¹

Now follows a team of seven verses, all of them repeatedly declaring the nature of the Ātman to be the one, immutable, undecaying, infinite, eternal substratum for the universe. Śaṅkara, when he talks of the supreme Reality, forgets the audience he is addressing and gets irresistibly carried forward by the impulsive joy of the Infinitude. He waxes eloquent upon the nature of the Self that he himself is living vitally in his own heart.

¹ *asaṅgo'haṁ asaṅgo'haṁ asaṅgo'haṁ punah punah, saccidānandarūpo'haṁ ahamevāhamavyayaḥ.* – Māṇḍūkya kārikā-2.32

In the final analysis,

Gaudapāda also comes to declare this universal Truth –

na nirodho na cotpattirna baddho na ca sādhakah,

na mumukṣurna vai mukta ityeśā paramārthatā – Māṇḍūkya-upaniṣad-2.32

