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Oneness of Vedanta Philosophy

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Abstract

Vedanta is the philosophy of Oneness which simply means that the entire existence is one, we all are part of a single cosmic being, we all are illumined by the only one consciousness which pervades...(to be continued in expression)

Keywords:- Vedanta, Oneness, Existence, Consciousness

Expression:-

All the underlying religious philosophies and seers and mystics in the history of humanity proclaim through various mediums be it poetry, any piece or art, any magical harmony on a lute that reality is only one. All the Krishnas or Jesuses or Zarathustras or Mohammadas or Buddhas or Einsteins or Mahaviras or Maharshi Ramans or Kabirs or Khalil Gibrans or Meeras or Matreyies say that there is only one reality.

In this philosophy, the nature of ultimate reality is explored and it is said to be Brahman or Atman, and Vedanta proclaims that it is infinite, inexpressible, imperishable, and unthinkable. Its concept cannot be framed in thinking, it cannot be expressed through linguistic help, and it can only be realized or experienced. The very Self is Brahman, as far as an individual's identification with the self is body-identified he is living in ignorance and as he goes deeper into his own identification then he gradually intensifies to become soul-identified.

It is for an individual to go deeper and unfold the realms of consciousness. The entire world which we see in front of our eyes, it is Brahman alone at the base of the world. Even our own individual consciousness is only a relative reality or Shankaracharya says that it is Maya or simply an appearance '*Brahm satyam jaganmithya*' but we are in the darkness of ignorance, and it is Brahman which lies at the root of our consciousness which is our true identity. It simply means that we, right at this moment are Brahman or pure consciousness itself, and we can rejoice in the supreme bliss of being Brahman if we can break out of our individual identity which is material-or-body-identified. This is to be done through Yoga. And yoga means not physical exercise but really a conscious one, it means to be absolutely aware and alert and remain a witness to whatever happens outside. We can then achieve an awakening and realize the Truth of our existence.

Vedanta philosophy is based on the Upanishads which are the crux of Vedic wisdom; it has three main schools or ways defining the truth in different manner. , Dvaita, Vishista– dvaita and A–dvaita. All these three schools are based on the Upanishads, and derive their difference because they interpret the verses or the hymns or sutras of the Upanishads differently yet all saying the same thing in a different manner, different narrative, with a different picture bearing a different landscape. The various ways lend themselves to different interpretations, and hence we have these three schools of Vedanta philosophy, all of which through different gestures indicate the same truth.

According to this particular philosophy the only reality that exists is Brahman. This does not mean that the world does not exist, but it is just an appearance like a mirage in desert. In Vedanta philosophy, the world exists, but it exists only with ambiguous reality, and it has its existence in Brahman at its root. Hence the true reality of the world or the universe is Brahman and the reality that we see around us is just a shadow or reflection of reality. So the world is really Brahman or only Brahman 'is', that which is not Brahman has only relative reality or a transient one like waves, there might be a thousand and one waves out there in the ocean, but it is only ocean which is waving, waves are just appearance, the only reality is of ocean only.

It can be understood through a very simple analogy of ornaments, all the ornaments are just gold appearing in different forms and shapes but the common and underlying reality is gold only or an analogy of a burning candle as it transforms to smoke, ash and finally into energy in the form of light and heat. Verily we see that as the candle burns, it transforms so that it exists as candle in the beginning, as wax, energy and smoke in the middle and as ash and dissipated smoke and energy at the end. Since the candle changes its physical form or physical reality in this way, there must be something which is common to all the three forms, something which can exist as the candle alone or as ash, smoke and energy also. Through science we understand that which is common to all these forms is the matter–energy combination.

Matter in the form of molecules and atoms of wax combined with energy and existed as the candle in the beginning, and in the other forms like ashes, smoke and heat and light at the end. So for this change, it is matter – energy which formed the absolute reality and the candle, etc. were just forms of this. Again, we know from $E=MC^2$ that matter and energy are also part of a spectrum and matter can be expressed as energy and vice versa. Plato called it concept, knowing about the chair is not knowing at all rather knowing the chariness is verily knowing. So there must be something which exist not but only which only 'is', which is common to both, something which can exist either in the form of matter or in the form of energy. So, debating in this way, we can see that all that exists in this world are but forms and have only relative reality and there must be something which is Absolute beyond all this. This Absolute beyond the world is declared to be Brahman in Vedanta philosophy. Similarly, for our consciousness also, when we examine our individual consciousness, our thoughts, ego and sensations etc. we find that we cannot assign an absolute reality to any of them. They all have an ephemeral reality only and none can be said to have a unique or sole identity. Yet there can be no doubt that 'I' exist, that this I, my individuality, exists. This existence cannot rest on any individual thoughts or sensations, since they are all temporary. There must be something which has absolute reality, something which is unchanging and which is the root of our awareness. This unchanging root of our consciousness is declared to be Brahman by Vedanta.

When we ask the question, ‘who am I’, we would be conditioned to identify with our individual self, our ego in this world. But Vedanta philosophy says that this individual consciousness is not our true reality, since it is only an appearance having a practical or relative reality, and our true identity is the root of our consciousness, the Brahman or the cosmic consciousness. So when we go deeper and enquires that, ‘who am I’, the answer according to Vedanta philosophy is, *Aham Brahmasmi* i.e. ‘I am Brahman’

If we investigate the flow of our thoughts and sensations, we will find that they are very transient and if we consider this to be our identity, our identity too would be fragile. Vedanta teaches us our true identity which is Absolute or Brahman which lies at the base of existence and illuminates all. Once we become merely a witness to this incessant flow, our identification with our individual consciousness will also cease and we will exist as the Absolute Brahman, which was always our true Self.

There are four main ‘Mahavakyas’ or great epical statements or sayings of Vedanta philosophy. They are (1) Pragyana Brahman – Consciousness is Brahman or say the highest level of conscious; (2) Aham Brahmasmi – I am Brahman; (3) Tat Tvam Asi – That Thou Art; (4) Ayam Atma Brahma – This Self is Brahman. These are the fundamental tenets of this philosophy.

The essence of all these abovementioned statements is the same that I myself am Brahman or Atman or the pure consciousness or Oneness. Brahman or Oneness is not something to be looked for outside. It is within being, within an individual, within me, or rather it is me myself.

Thus the teaching or path of Vedanta philosophy is to have an incessant and rigorous inquiry into I, it is to quest for this root of oneself which is Brahman. This is all that ever was, it is only because the scarcity of true appreciation, a total acceptance, a total sense of awareness; that we think of ourselves as other than Brahman. This is the teachings of truth or pure consciousness or love by Vedanta philosophy.

It’s a dialogic monologue.

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