

That Brahman Art Thou

In verses 254-263 of his Vedāntic masterpiece Vivekacūḍāmaṇi, Śankarācārya elaborates on the Mahāvākya “tat tvam asi.” The following text is from Swāmi Mādhavānanda’s translation of the Vivekacūḍāmaṇi (Advaita Āshrama, Māyavati, 1921).

[1] That which is beyond caste and creed, family and lineage; devoid of name and form, merit and demerit; transcending space, time, and sense-objects—that Brahman art thou, meditate on this in thy mind.

[2] That Supreme Brahman which is beyond the range of all speech, but accessible to the eye of pure illumination; which is pure, the embodiment of Knowledge, the beginningless entity—that Brahman art thou, meditate on this in thy mind.

[3] That which is untouched by the six-fold wave [a]; meditated upon by the Yogi’s heart, but not grasped by the sense-organs; which the intellect cannot know; and which is unimpeachable—that Brahman art thou, meditate on this in thy mind.

[4] That which is the substratum of the universe with its various subdivisions, which are all creations of *māyā* (delusion); which Itself has no other support; which is distinct from the gross and the subtle; which has no parts, and has verily no exemplar—that Brahman art thou, meditate on this in thy mind.

[5] That which is free from birth, growth, development, waste, disease, and death; which is indestructible; which is the cause of the projection, maintenance, and dissolution of the universe—that Brahman art thou, meditate on this in thy mind.

[6] That which is free from differentiation; whose essence is never non-existent; which is unmoved like the ocean without waves; the ever-free; of indivisible form—that Brahman art thou, meditate on this in thy mind.

[7] That which, though One only, is the cause of the many; which refutes all other causes, but is Itself without cause; distinct from *māyā* and its effect, the universe; and independent—that Brahman art thou, meditate on this in thy mind.

[8] That which is free from duality; which is infinite and indestructible; distinct from the universe and *māyā*, supreme, eternal; which is undying bliss; taintless—that Brahman art thou, meditate on this in thy mind.

[9] That Reality which (though One) appears variously owing to delusion, taking on names and forms, attributes and changes, Itself always unchanged, like gold in its modifications—that Brahman art thou, meditate on this in thy mind.

[10] That beyond which there is nothing; which shines even above *māyā*, which again is superior to its effect, the universe; the inmost Self of all, free from differentiation; the Real Self, the Existence-Knowledge-Bliss Absolute; infinite and immutable—that Brahman art thou, meditate on this in thy mind.

[a] The six-fold wave consists of decay, death, hunger, thirst, grief, and delusion, which overtake the body and mind.