

**Works on Shri Madhwa siddhanta
by
Shri Raghavendrathirtha**

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More than forty works have been ascribed to Shri Raghavendrathirtha. Though some of them, have different names, many of them, have a common name "Bhavadeepa". The following are the works attributed to Shri Raghavendrathirtha.

1. Commentaries on the Teekas on the Prakarana texts of Shri Madhwa.

Among the thirty-seven works of Shri Madhwa, collectively called "Sarvamoola" the ten short monographs are called Dasha-prakaranas. They are the following -

1. Pramaana-lakshana
2. Kathaa-lakshana
3. Upaadhi-khandana
4. Maayaavaada-khandana
5. Mithyaatvaanumaana-khandana
6. Tattva-samkhyana
7. Tattva-viveka
8. Tattvodyota
9. Vishnu-tattva-vinirnaya
10. Karma-nirnaya

The first one, as the very title indicates, deals with the theory of knowledge and various other issues related with it. The second Prakarana deals with the subject of debate, its varieties and the rules and regulations governing its conduct. The next three Prakaranas are devoted for the refutation of certain fundamental theories of the Advaita Vedanta school of philosophy. While the sixth one called the Tattva-samkhyana deals with the ontology according to the Madhwa school of Vedanta, the seventh one namely, Tattva-viveka deals with the same object with some additional points. The Tattvodyota, the next Prakarana contains some of the arguments actually used by Shri Madhwa in his historic debate with Pundarika Puri and Padmatirtha - the two celebrated monks of Advaita Vedanta. The Vishnu-tattva-vinirnaya, considered as the most

important of the Dasha- prakranas, mainly contains a severe criticism of Advaita and interprets the so called Advaita Shrutis on new lines. It also strongly defends the concept of "Bheda". The Karma-nirnaya - the last one of the Prakaranas, is devoted by Shri Madhwa to the exposition of his view that even the so-called Karma-kaanda portion of the Vedas, has the Brahman as its main purport. On the basis of many statements in the Shrutis an the smrtis, Shri Madhwa convincingly establishes here that the entire corpus of the scripture, has the glorification of the Brahman i.e., Naaraayana, as its main objective. Here in Karma-nirnaya, he lays down the general principles of higher interpretation and taking some instances, shows how each and every word of the Shruti conveys the glory of the Brahman.

The ten Prakaranas of Shri Madhwa mentioned above, are, except the Vishnu-tattva-vinirnaya, very short. The language of them, is very though and terse. Shri Naaraayana Panditaachaarya, in his Madhwa-vijaya, describes the Prakaranas, as follows :

Vaadaadayh prakaranasphulingah tanavopyalam.

Vipakshaksham kshinvanti maaruten tvayeritaah.

'Maayaavaada-khandana etc., sparks-like Prakaranas are very small in size. However, O! Madhwa ! being ignited by you Maaruta - the son of wind, they will burn-down the whole of forest-like arguments of the opponents.'

But for the very lucid and excellent commentaries of Shri Jayatirtha, on them, the Prakaranas would have been beyond the reach of even scholars. Fortunately, Shri Jayatirtha has written commentaries on all the ten Prakaranas.

Among the ten commentaries on Prakaranas, by Shri Jayatirtha, the four namely the Maayaavaada-khandana Teeka, the Mithyaatvaanumaana-khandana Teeka, the Upaadhi-khandana Teeka and the Tattva-viveka Teeka are commented by Shri Vyasatirtha - the Vidyaguru of Shri Vijayeendratirtha who was the Paramaguru of Shri Raghavendratirtha. These glosses by Shri Vyasatirtha are, very aptly, named by him as Mandaara Manjari. Omitting the above four, on all the other six commentaries of Shri Jayatirtha, on the Prakaranas, Shri Raghavendratirtha has authored his glosses.

As already state, the main characteristics of the writings of Shri Raghavendratirtha, are 'remarkable clarity of thought, simplicity of expression and compactness'. He always keeps in his mind, the needs of the students who find certain passages in the Teekas very difficult to understand and selecting

them he would elucidate only those points without knowing which the student's understanding of the passage would not be complete.

The following is an instance from his gloss on the Tattvodyota Teeka-

According to the Advaitin, the world, is false and the falsity of it, is established by the inference - '*Vishwam mithyaa drshyatvaat*' i.e., the world is false as it is cognised.

The Advaitin argues here that anything that is an object of cognition, has to be false. He gives the illustration of the Snake (wrongly) perceived in the rope. Madhwa's rejection of the validity of this inference as elaborated by Shri Jayatirtha is as follows:

When we perceive the world as real by pratyaksha, this perceptual cognition is in total contradiction with the inferential cognition derived through the Anumana used by the Advaitin to establish that what is cognised is not real. But a perceptual cognition such as this can not be sublated by any other cognition derived by inference or even Shruti. If this were possible, the cognition that 'Fire is hot' could be countered by an inferential cognition that it is cold – "*Fire is cold, as it is also a substance, like water*" – or by a Shruti statement. No amount of inferential derivations or statements attributed to others will ever make the fire cold, or will any sane person accept such a position.

The above view of the Tattva-vaadin, is again questioned by the Maayaa-vaadin, by drawing our attention to the various perceptual cognitions such as the perceptual cognition of blue color in the sky and the small size of the moon. These perceptual cognitions, as we all know, are contradicted by inferences and scriptural statements, respectively. The perceptual cognition of blue color in the sky, is sublated by the inference that 'the sky is not blue, as it is all-pervasive'. The perceptual cognition of the small size in the moon, also is stultified by several scriptural statements that describe the vastness of the moon. Similarly, the Maayaa-vaadin argues that our perceptual cognitions grasping the world as real, also can be sublated by the anumana put forth by him and several Shrutis such as '*neha naanaasti kichana*'.

Refuting the above contention of the Maayaa-vaadin, Shri Madhwa remarks, tersely- '*Chandrapraadeshatvaadivishayam tu doorasthatvaadidoshayuktatvaadapatu*' - 'The perceptual cognition grasping the small size of the moon etc., is rather weak as it is incapacitated with the defects such as 'grasping a thing that is far away from us'. The significance of this

statement by Shri Madhwa, has been beautifully brought out by Shri Jayatirtha, illustrating the nature of various kinds of perceptual cognitions that happen to us in our day-to-day life. The gloss of Shri Raghavendrathirtha, on the exposition of Shri Jayatirtha, on the present issue, is an illustration of his crisp style, which is amazingly brief, yet inclusive of all the essential points. The following are the words of Shri Raghavendrathirtha, in his Tippani -

'..... *Praadeshikatvajnaanaat praageva
praadeshikatvaabhaavagocharavipareeta-samskaarabhaanaaditi bhaavenaaha-
yaditi. yad yad doorasthatva-atisaameepyaadi-doshasahakrtakaranajanyam tat
tadayatharthamiti vyaapter bhaavaat tanmoolakaanumaanena vaa sahakrtena
saakshinaa doshajanyajnaaneshu apraamaanyasya vishayaapahaarasya
nishchitatvena taadrshasthale jaayamaanam jnaanm shankhapaityajnaanamiva
svarthamanishchaayayadeva jaayata ityarthah.'*