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## Jivanmukti As Holiness In Hinduism

Is there a definition or description of holiness which can embrace all of Hinduism regarding sanctity? Perhaps the most comprehensive description might be the following:

The condition of holiness is the perfect transparency of the Supreme in a human being. The saint is one who is completely integrated in the Absolute and is aware of his oneness with God and creation; his behaviour will be, necessarily, the consequence of his realization.

### Holiness and Jivanmukti

Regarding the relationship between holiness and *jivanmukti*, let us first of all, ask ourselves whether these two terms are interchangeable. One is tempted to respond negatively since several celebrated Hindu philosophers deny the possibility of being liberated in life. According to Rāmānuja, for instance, there are saints, but not *jivanmukta*. If liberation means complete freedom from *samsāra* (the cycle of birth, death, and rebirth) and, therefore, from all conditioning limitations, how can a man in this world even if he is a realized being, be totally devoid of human conditioning? But, if we consider what realization is according to the Advaitic-Upanisadic texts, we shall have to acknowledge that to reach complete realization is the same as to obtain liberty. To begin with, let us take the *Muṇḍakōpaniṣad* III, 2, 9: Here we learn that “he who knows the supreme becomes Brahman. . . overcomes sorrow and sins; liberated from the knots of the cave (of the heart) he becomes immortal.” While commenting on this passage Sankara<sup>1</sup> underlines the fact that *even in this world* one may know Brahman and, even when alive (*jivannēva*), he overcomes sorrow and goes beyond *dharma* and

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1. Sri Sankarabhagavatpada's *Upanisadbhāṣyam* (Varanasi: Mahesh Research Institute, 1979, vol. I), p. 26.

*adharmā*, or, as the sub-commentary explains, goes beyond *punya* and *pāpa* (virtue and vice). The assertion does not mean, of course, that the knower of Brahman does not care any longer for virtue or vice, but simply signifies that he is already beyond the stage in which one has to struggle to acquire virtue and to avoid vice; the stage of *dharma* and *adharmā* is that of duty, of ethical injunctions, constituting but a preliminary step in the ascending scale towards ultimate spiritual freedom.

In the same *Upaniṣad* II, 2, 8, we read also that “when one sees the higher and the lower, the knot of the heart is cut, all doubts are solved and all deeds become dissipated.” The meaning is: all ties are released, everything becomes clear and past actions no longer have any importance; because one who understands the difference between the higher and the lower spheres, between God and the world, is Free. Freedom in life is equal, then, to being rid of past conditioning even during the ordinary demands of life. Moreover, in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, IV, 2, 4, Yājñavalkya says to Jānaka: “Verily you have reached the state of fearlessness” and the *Īśopan-ṣad*, 7, echoes: “What sorrow, what delusion can there be to him who sees the oneness?” Hence the realised man, free from doubts, sorrow and delusion has no anxiety because he beholds the unity of all beings who are *Ātman* alone.

The passage from the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* IV, 4, 7, is also significant: “When all the desires that dwell in the heart are cast away, then does the mortal become immortal, then he attains Brahman here (i. e., in this very life).<sup>2</sup>

The above *Upaniṣadic* quotations have to be separated from the doctrine of *karman* elaborated in subsequent systems of Philosophy. Freedom-in-life, even if the word *jīvanmukti* does not yet occur in the *Upaniṣad*, means immortality achieved in this world; an awareness of the eternal nature of the *Ātman*-Brahman dwelling within the heart of man.

Sankara, in his commentary to *Brahmasūtra* IV, 2, 8, stresses the fact that “he who knows Brahman reaches immortality, does not depend on a change of place.” The explanation given by Sankara and

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2. Translation by S. Radhakrishnan, *The Principal Upaniṣads* (London: G. Allen and Unwin, 1953), p. 273.

other Advaitins for this equation between realization and *jivanmukti* is that there is no duality between this world and the transcendent. The ontological foundation for the doctrine of *jivanmukti* is that Ātman and Brahman are one. In this truth lies the basis for individual salvation. In every person, in every thing, there is the perennial and immutable presence of God; no person or thing is detached from the source, from the root of being. Why then, is the realized man, the only one, who seems to be immortal and free? (Immortality is here defined as not to be born again and, therefore, not to die again). The realized person is one who is conscious that he will not in the future be bound by temporal and bodily conditions; he is one with God. In terms of Sankara's Advaita, the realized person is aware that all limitations are unreal.

However, apart from Sankara's strict interpretation of the theory of liberation in life, there is a possibility of an Advaitic doctrine of experience, which allows the individual to enter the realm of God. God being pure, bliss and peace. To be one with Brahman or Ātman, is to be free from doubt and fear. To see the *Ātman* in everything and everything in the Ātman is not, however, a mere intellectual apprehension, but a way of being and living, a complete transformation of the individual.

### The Possibility of Jivanmukti

The possibility of liberation in life is a vital truth; for it represents the special presence of God in the life of the realized. Holy men can be found in many places and in different traditions, but not all the saints are *jivanmukta*. There are several stages of holiness including beginners and advanced persons in a path leading to full realization. Only those who are completely purified can reach that perfect transparency and the freedom which belong to the *jivanmukta*.

In Indian literature there are several texts which define the spiritual portrait of a *jivanmukta*. A number of these are quoted in the *jivamuktiviveka* by Vidyāranya (XIV C.A.D). Some of the characteristics of the liberated person are the following: The *jivanmukta*<sup>3</sup> is one "who is awake though asleep, who knows no

3. For the theory of *jīvanmukta*, see the following articles, by J. F. Sprockhoff, published in the *Wiener Zeitschrift fuer die Kunde Sued und ostasiens*, vol. VI, pp. 151-178; vol. VII, 1963, pp. 190-206, vol. VIII, 1964, pp. 224-267; vol. XIV, 1970, pp. 131-159.

waking, and whose knowledge is entirely free from any *vāsanā*.<sup>4</sup> Vidyāranya comments on this passage that “he is awake because all his senses, beginning with the eyes, exist in their proper places and have not ceased to act. He is asleep because his mind knows no transformation...”<sup>5</sup> Again in the *Yogavāsīṣṭha* “He is the real *jīvanmukta* whose real nature is not influence by egotism and whose mind is not subjected to attachment, whether he remains active or inactive.”<sup>6</sup> ... “He is the real *jīvanmukta* who, though deeply immersed in all things, remains cool (*śītaḥ*) just as one would when engaged in attending to another’s affair; and whose self is contentful (*pūrṇtamā*).<sup>7</sup> The latter quotation suggests a saint who may be engaged in worldly life, who feels no joy or sorrow in the face of either prospective of gain or loss.

The *jīvanmukta* is then compared to the *sthītaprajña* of the *Bhagavad Gīta* (II, 55–64), that is, to the man “satisfied by the Ātman in the Ātman”, and “whose mind is free from anxiety amid pains, is indifferent amid pleasure, and is detached from passion, fear and anger...”, “moving among sense objects with senses free from attraction and repulsion, mastered by the Ātman, reaching the state of *prasāda*.”

The *Bhagavad Gītā* (XIV, 21–26) mentions also the traits of the man who has transcended the sphere of the *guṇa-s*; Vidyāranya identifies him with the *jīvanmukta* stating that being beyond the *guṇa-s* is the condition of being out of *Samsāra*.<sup>8</sup> The *guṇātīta* does not belong to the world of *samsāra* insofar as he is not affected by the three constituents of nature or, as the *Gītā* says in verse XIV, 23, the *gunātīta* is “one who, sitting apart, is unshaken by the constituents; who, saying ‘*guṇa-s* act’ stands firm and does not move.” Is this the same *Jīvanmuktiviveka* who will be called a *brāhmaṇa* (in the sense of

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4. The quotation is given in *Jīvanmuktiviveka* by Vidyāranya. I have used the edition with English translation by Pandit Subrahamaṇya Śāstri and T. R. Srinivasa Ayyangar, The Adyar Library and Research Centre, 1978 (reprint from the first ed. of 1935), The quotations from the *Yogavāsīṣṭha* have been edited on the basis of the readings of the *Laghu-Yogavāsīṣṭha*. The above corresponds to the latter work, 5, 92.
  5. *Jīvanmuktiviveka*, *op. cit.* p. 206.
  6. *Ibid.* p. 207.
  7. My translation is slightly different from that given on p. 209 of our text and which corresponds to *Laghu-Yogavāsīṣṭha* 5, 97.
  8. *Jīvanmuktiviveka*, *op. cit.* p. 26 : *gunātītavam asamsāratvam*.

knower of Brahman) and *ativarṇā-śramina* (beyond *varṇa* and *āśrama*) a *sannyasin*? Is becoming *jivanmukta* the same as being a *sannyāsin*, a renouncer, one who will no longer be engaged in worldly affairs? In the first part of the *Jivanmuktiviveka* the author distinguishes two kinds of *sannyāsa*: that of the seeker (*vividiṣā-nyāsa*) and that of the knower (*vidvadnyāsa*): the former being the cause of liberation after the dissolution of the body (*videhamukti*) and the latter the cause of *jivanmukti*. The renunciation of the one who knows the supreme Truth, obtained through study, reflection and contemplation (*śravaṇa*, *manana* and *nididyāsana*) calls to mind the ideal of Yājñavalkya. In this connection the author mentions the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* III, 5, 1, which reads: “having realized the *Ātman*, the *brāhmaṇa-s* renounces all desire for sons, wealth and the world and go about as mendicants.” This sort of renunciation follows realization and leads to *jivanmukti*. May a *sannyāsin* of this kind become a *jivanmukta*?

The *vidvat-sannyāsa* is indeed the ideal and the aim of the man who aspires to perfect holiness, but it is not a means for reaching the Absolute; it is a *mark* of the Absolute. The man who is realized, as described in the Gita XVIII, 17, is, paradoxically, “he who is free from egotism and whose mind is not defiled; though he kills all (the creatures) of these worlds he does not kill and is not bound.” This paradox explains the particular condition of one who is beyond the individual realm or as Sankara states, beyond the realm of *avidyā* (ignorance); the *sannyāsins* renounce, in fact, “all *avidya-generated* actions.”<sup>9</sup> No action can properly be attributed to the *Ātman*, which is immutable and free by nature; identity with *Ātman* is, therefore, a transcendent dimension. The paradox of the realized who is not bound even by evil deeds has to be understood in the light of a radical distinction between the human domain and the realm where human categories and actions do not exist. *Ātman*, the *Sākṣin* (witness) should not be mistaken for intellect (*buddhi*), bought about by beginningless ignorance.<sup>10</sup> The relationship between *avidyā* and *Ātman* is complex. In Vidyāranya’s metaphysical context *avidyā* belongs to matter: It is *Prakṛti* (*aviśuddhi sattva*) and, therefore, affects human nature.

9. The *Bhagavad Gītā* with the commentary of Sri Sankarācharya, translated from Sanskrit into English by A. Mahādeva Sāstri, Madras, 1961 (Fifth ed.), p. 49.

10. *Jivanmuktiviveka*, *op. cit.* p. 192.

Although in *Prakṛti* there is the reflection of Brahman-Ātman,<sup>11</sup> *Prakṛti* is not *Ātman*.

The *jivanmukti* is also called *bhagavad-bhakta*,<sup>12</sup> devoted deeply to God; that is, in an atheistic context, the *jivanmukta* is totally united with God, showing his sanctity and his devotion in every aspect of life.

### Truth - Perception of the Jivanmukta

Knowledge of truth (*tattva-jñāna*) is a necessary prerequisite for becoming a *jivanmukta*. But *tattva-jñāna* cannot be considered apart from two other conditions which are called *mano-nāsa* and *vāsanā-kṣaya*, that is, “suppression of mind” and “destruction of latent inclinations.” There is a reciprocal relationship between these three means (*sādhana*) which, according to the *Jivanmuktiviveka*, lead to liberation in life. Such an interconnection of functions explains how perfect holiness is impossible without yogic practices. Indeed these cannot be a destruction of *vāsanā* without *mano-nāsa* (suppression of the mind), nor can there be *mano-nāsa* as long as *vāsanā* is not destroyed. Moreover, “the reciprocal casual relationship between *tattva-jñāna*” and the “dissolution of the mind” is thus described in *Yogavāsiṣṭha*: “Whence could there be rest for the mind (*cittasama*) so long as there is no wisdom (*tattva vijñāna*). And wisdom too is impossible as long as the mind is not entirely at rest.”<sup>13</sup>

Terms such as mind (*manas* or *citta*) have to be understood in the sense of *antahkaraṇa*, or inner psychic sense, having the following four functions: sensation, perception, volition and reason. These functions do not belong to the Spirit (*Ātman*) as such, for the Spirit is pure and immutable light as well as pure bliss and intelligence

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11. See *Pancadaśī* I, 15 Both *māyā* and *avidyā* belong to *Prakṛti* and both derive from the constituent of *Prakṛti* and are called respectively *suddhi-sattva* and *aviśuddhi-sattva*.
  12. *Jīvanmuktiviveka*, *op. cit.* pp. 16 and 25-26. The true devotee of the Lord is described by Lord Kṛṣṇa in the XII chapter of the *Bhagavad Gītā*. In this connection the author quotes not only verses from the *Gītā* but also Sureśvara's *Naiskarmyasiddhi*, 4, 69. “Absence of hatred and other qualities come without any effort of his own to one on whom has dawned the light of the Self, and not as means to an end” (italics are mine).
  13. I follow the translation given in the above quoted edition of *Jīvanmuktiviveka*, p. 235.

(*cit.*). Therefore, all exercises designed to put the mind at rest must be interpreted in the spirit of the *Yogasutrā* or Patanjali III, 9, cited by Vidyāraṇya.<sup>14</sup>

Several other texts may be cited to illustrate the reciprocal causal relationship leading to liberation in life. In the *Kathopanīṣad* III, 12, the “concealed Self of every being, never manifest, is seen with the *one-pointed subtle intellect* by the seers of the subtle.”<sup>15</sup>

Suresvara, in his *Naiskarmyasiddhi* 2, 18, asks: “Wherefore can the man of discrimination find cause for anger, when he sees the identical Ātman pervading his foes, kinsmen and himself, alike even as It does the limbs of his body?” This should be the constant thought of anyone willing to overcome all the *unconscious impulses* which hinder peace of mind and harmony with the whole of creation, “the frequent remembrance of the sublime Truth through whatever means.”<sup>16</sup>

The evil *vāsanā-s* born of the ‘life of the lower self’ inherent in one from birth and running counter to the teachings of sacred texts, are overcome by the good *vāsanā-s*, from the life of the higher self, accompanied by personal effort and carried on in accord with the word of the scripture. The *higher* and the *lower* self in this translation of the *Bhagavad-Gītā* correspond respectively to *daiva-sampad* and *asura-sampad* described in Chapter XVI. These same terms may be translated literally as “divine state” and “demoniac state” or “divine nature and demoniac nature.” In the created sphere two opposite human tendencies are named *devas* and *asuras* following the ancient Indian symbolism. This opposition seems similar to the ontological dualistic metaphysics of the Persian lore, suggesting predestination. But, even from Advaitic perspective, each person is destined for divinization and, even if he is born with “evil *vāsanā-s*” (*durvāsanā*) and is psychologically inclined to act immorally, one may cancel-out these bad tendencies by moving into the realm of light. Everyone has within himself the two kingdoms of light

14. *Op. cit.* p. 38, translation, p. 234.

15. Vidyāraṇya comments upon this *Śruti* asserting “as only that transformation of the mind which has attuned itself to the oneness of the Self can see that the destruction of all other transformations is . . . the only cause of proper Gnosis.” *Jīvanmuktiviveka*, *op. cit.* p. 237.

16. *Op. cit.* p. 242.

and darkness ; yet everyone is destined for divinization and final release. The tension between good and evil belongs to the present world which precedes the *jīvanmukta* state. Various mythological symbols and the derived moral qualifications express the bipolarity of human passions and the differences among men in *samsāra*.

The *Yogavāsīṣṭha* speaks also of pure (*śuddha*) and impure (*malinā*) *vāsanā* : the latter is created by intense ignorance and brings about birth and death in succession. Ignorance, as Vidyaraṇya states, is that which veils the distinction between the five *kośas* (sheaths) of reality comprising the physical body (*annamaya*) and others and the transcendent Witness of them all, that is, *cit-ātman*.<sup>17</sup> Sheer ignorance refers to the series of delusions brought about by *vāsanā*.<sup>18</sup> The “demoniacal men declare the universe to be without truth (*jagat asatyam*), that is, without what is recognized by the authoritative scriptures, namely, the *Veda-s*. Hence they deny the creation and the direction of the universe by *Īśvara*.<sup>19</sup> The pure *vāsanā* is of that kind which knows the thing to be known”<sup>20</sup> : That is to be known as the supporter of being; That devours and That generates. That, the light of all lights, is said to be beyond darkness ; Wisdom, the object of Wisdom, by Wisdom to be reached, seated in the hearts of all.<sup>21</sup> This simple and clear consideration has to be kept in mind for it contains the wisdom which enables man to orientate their lives and keep their minds in constant light. This truth derives from faith in authoritative scriptures; such faith suggests, if I may be allowed to cite a celebrated Latin phrase, *fides quaerens intellectum*. The whole history of the Vedānta philosophy shows how Truth revealed in *Sruti* demands exploration by intelligence. Thus nothing is properly negated in the path of holiness : both faith and reason function until the supreme experience of *jīvanmukta* is achieved.

Ontologically one may be saved here and now if given all the necessary conditions<sup>22</sup> – the very *experience of unity* – or oneness –

17. *Op. cit.* p. 257.

18. *Ibid.* See also *Bhagavad Gītā*, XVI, 7-12.

19. *Ibid.* p. 258. See also *Bhagavad Gītā*, XVI, 13-16.

20. *Ibid.* pp. 259. Cfr. *Bhagavad Gītā*, XIII, 12-17.

21. *Bhagavad Gītā* XIII, 17 b-18.

22. I would suggest that such status is comparable to what in Christian tradition is called the condition of being “confirmed in Grace.”



with God is the same for the realized in this world and beyond it. Knowledge and bliss may be fully accomplished only when spatio-temporal boundaries vanish in final release. This is a way to reconcile the views of those who assert the possibility of *jīvanmukthi* and those who deny it; perfect holiness and salvation are not necessarily to be identified with fullness of knowledge and bliss. To state that knowledge, followed by experience of the Supreme, may be attained in this life is contrary to the *vāsanā* of learning,<sup>23</sup> for the knowledge of the *Ātman* “never comes from the study of books alone to him who has not developed the faculty of introspection, nor obtained the grace (*kāruṇya*) of a *guru*.”<sup>24</sup> *Ātmavidyā* requires learning, but in a particular way, under the guide of a compassionate *guru* and with inner insight. In this connection note the famous verse of *Katopaniṣad* I, 2, 23: *Ātman* is not realizable by interrelation (*pravacanēna*) and not even by intelligence (*medhaya*) nor by such listening (*Śrutena*) but by him whom the Supreme *Ātman* chooses” (*Kath. Up.* I, 2, 23). Yet it is not in contradiction with what was prescribed by the three means for arriving at the experience of supreme Truth: namely: *śravaṇa*, *manana* and *nididhyāsana*. In fact, *śravaṇa* is not enough without *manana* (reflection) and *nididhyāsana* (contemplation); the latter represents the highest result of an interiorized search for God. Thus intelligence is not excluded, although it is inadequate for perfect realization. Sanctity does not exist without knowledge of the Truth; and if much learning is not necessary, inner insight is indispensable even if it is attained “by him whom the supreme *Ātman* chooses” (*Kath. Up.* I, 2, 23).

The importance of knowledge (*jñāna*) is particularly stressed in the fourth chapter of *jīvanmukthiviveka*, where the *jñāna-bhūmi*, or stages of wisdom, are described in the light of the teaching of *Yogavāsīṣṭha*.<sup>25</sup> These stages are worth recalling, for, they are also steps to holiness. They are seven in number:

(1) *śubha-icchā*, the desire for the good, derived from detachment, with the help of study, company of the good people.

23 Pride of learning is one of the impure *vāsanā* (*sāstra-vāsanā*). Cf. *Jīvanmukthiviveka*, pp. 57 and 262.

24 *Ibid* p. 263.

25. *Jīvanmukthiviveka*, *op. cit.* pp. 134-35.

(2) *vicāraṇa*, or inquiry, consisting of the application of the mind deriving from study, company of the wise and exercise in the practice of detachment.

(3) *tanumānasa* is the thinness of the mind due to the wearing away of the attachment to sense objects related to the efforts of *vicāraṇa* and *subha-icchā* (corresponding to the first two stages).

(4) *sattvāpatti*, is the attainment to *sattva* (purity, light) when the mind has found complete rest.

(5) *asamaśakti*, is the loss of any contact with the objective sphere as a result of passing through the preceding four stages.<sup>26</sup>

(6) *padārtha-abhāva*, is the stage in which there is absence of concepts, by virtue of the complete fusion of the objective with the subjective world.

(7) Finally when the six stages are practised for a long time, the condition of abiding in its own essence (*svabhāva-eka-niṣṭhṭvam*) arises which is the essence of the *Ātman*; the final stage of 'transcendence' (*tureyāgā sthiti*) has been achieved.

It is interesting to note that these seven stages are compared to the *four* conditions of the soul, as put forward in the *Māndūkya Upanisad*: the first three above-mentioned stages correspond to the waking state, for they are only a means to *brahmavidyā* and because in them the sense of separateness is not yet removed. The direct realization of the unity of *Ātman* and Brahman is the fourth stage called *sattvāpatti* and corresponds to dream (*svapna*), because one may look upon the world as a dream and there is no longer the sense of duality.

The fifth and the sixth stages are correlated, respectively, with sleep (*śuṣupti*) and deep sleep (*gāḍḍha-śuṣupti*) because the yogi stands in a non-dual condition and is free from all categories (such as being and non-being, ego and not-ego) and is simultaneously linked to both an empty jar in space, and, a jar filled with water placed in the ocean.

26. *Ibid.* pp. 135-36. The degrees from fifth to seventh arise from the practice of *nirvikalpa samādhi*. As for yoga practice, one has to remember the whole III chapter of *Jīvanmuktiviveka* that we have not considered here for the sake of brevity.

Paradoxically, *sūnya* (empty) and *pūrṇa* (full) express the purity of the soul without attachment, free from all sense of unity and diversity, yet containing being (*sat*), thought (*cit*), and beatitude (*ānanda*). Finally the yogi of the seventh stage represents pure transcendence.

Is the yogi in *samādhi* superior to the ‘knower of truth’ (*tattvavid*)<sup>27</sup> who is still involved in the world ? It seems that there is no difference between the two if we consider their inner peace, for the *Yogavāsīṣṭha* states: “There are some who have gained this pleasant calm within, arising from the conviction ‘I have no intimate connection with the objective sphere’ and remain involved in the world ; there are others who, having attained such composure from the same conviction, choose to shut themselves up in meditation. Both are equally good . . .”<sup>28</sup> Still, in Vidyāranya’s interpretation, if both these are stable in knowledge (wisdom) and devoid of *vāsanā*, *samādhi* of the form of *mano-nāsa* is superior, for it is a good preserver of *jīvanmukti*.<sup>29</sup> This declaration affirms the preeminence of contemplative life ; but does the status of liberation in life need any safeguard or protection ? Contrary to Vidyāranya, I believe that the ascetic life, and the attainment of *samādhi* by a yogi, is a matter of choice, or, of being chosen.<sup>30</sup> One who chooses to remain in the world is not inferior to such a person. As a matter of fact the last three degrees of the path of knowledge are only variants of *samādhi* and sub-divisions of *jīvanmukti*, but they are not, strictly speaking, degrees of holiness. If he who has reached the fourth stage is already a *Brahmavid*, that means, that he has attained holiness ; for a knower or Brahman is one with Brahman.

If we want to compare the path of *jīvanmukti* to other ways of sanctity, how shall we differentiate ? Even if we admit that the top of the ascending scale of holiness must be the same, we have to recognize that our discussion has accented yoga and the personal quest for the purity of mind. Purity of mind is the same as purity of heart, an eradication of the evil inclinations that hinder the attainment of the highest goal of man.

27. *Op. cit.* p. 137.

28. *Ibid.* p. 140-47 and p. 391.

29. *Ibid.* p. 148.

30. Let us recall, in this connection, the already quoted *Kathopanisad* I, 2, 23.

From the Advaitic perspective there is room for grace, if we accept what is called the “compassion” of the *guru* essentially needed for spiritual progress. The help of a *guru* is needed in the beginning of *Jivanmukti*, for it is difficult to discover the proper means for each person desiring sanctity. In a wider context, Advaitism may comprehend theism and embrace a moral and speculative outlook derived from different sources. It is precisely Vidyāraṇya’s Philosophy which suggests a possible universalization of the model of holiness based on an ontology of non-separateness. The Advaitic archetype, which contains the doctrine of *jivanmukti* may, therefore, be interpreted in a universal or all-embracing fashion.

The unique importance of the *Jivanmukti*-doctrine lies in *mukti* viewed eschatologically; not waiting until the end of time for final release to “see” the unwordly happiness and peace of *moksa*. *Jivanmukti* appears as a visible aspect of the invisible God. It is thus a model of “holiness” with universal applicability.