

FAQ

Advaita, Vishistadvaita and Dvaita

1.

How did the three systems of Vedanta philosophy, namely Advaita, Vishistadvaita and Dvaita come about?

2.

What is the Bheda sruti?

3.

What are the passages in the Vedas which come under the category of bheda sruti?

4.

What is Abheda sruti?

5.

What are the passages in the veda that describe the Abhedasruti?

6.

What is Ghataka sruti?

7.

Name the passages from the Vedas, which are in the nature of Ghataka sruti?

8.

Why is this called Antaryami Brahmana?

9.

Why are the above passages of the Vedas called ghataka sruti?

10.

How do we then interpret the abheda sruti?

11.

Explain a little more on Abheda Sruti?

12.

So, what is the final conclusion on Abheda Sruthi?

13.

What is the meaning of the word "Advaita"?

14.

What is the meaning of the word "Visishtadvaita"?

15.

What is the meaning of the word "Dvaita"?

16.

How do the Advaitins explain the various passages in the Vedas, which do not support their philosophy? In other words, how do they explain the bheda srutis which say that Jivatma and Paramatma are different?

17.

How do Vishistadvaitin's rebut the argument of Advaitins that abheda srutis supersede the bheda srutis?

18.

How do the Dvaitins explain the abheda srutis, which are against their philosophy - that Jivatma and Paramatma are eternally different?

19.

What is Vishistadvaitins answer to this argument?

20.

So, what is the speciality of Visishtadvaita vis-a-vis Advaita and Dvaita?

21.

What does the term 'maya' mean?

22.

But certainly, one is seeing the world; and one sees the various things in the world, with our eyes. Then how can this world be called an illusion?

23.

What are the three types of reality - according to them?

24.

What is the second category of reality, according to Advaitins?

25.

What is the third category of reality, according to them?

26.

Please sum up the Advaitins' view point on Maya and Reality.

27.

What is the stand point of Visishtadvaitins on this?

28.

What is our argument to say that the world is real?

29.

What do the Vedas say about the reality of the world?

30.

Then how do the Advaitins say that they have also the authority of the Upanishads, for the world being an illusion?

31.

Any other quotations from the Upanishads which describes "BRAHMAN"?

32.

Apart from the Upanishads, what do the Smritis say?

33.

What are the arguments of Advaitins to say that the world is not real?

34.

How do we get over this Objection?

35.

Do the examples given in the Chandogya Upanishad, of mud and mud pot, gold and jewels, iron and knife, justify that the world is real?

36.

what is the explanation for , some of the Upanishads saying that the world is an illusion?

37.

How does one justify the reality of the world?

38.

What is the explanation of the dreams that one sees in his sleep?

39.

Can the jivatma create the objects in the dream?

40.

What are the reasons for the creation of these objects in the dream, which give us pain or pleasure?

41.

What are the reasons for the creation of these objects in the dream, which give us pain or pleasure?

42.

What is the difference between these two Brahmins according to The Advaitins?

43.

What is our philosophy in this regard?

44.

What about the identity of Jivatma and Brahman?

45.

How can one say that Brahman has all auspicious qualities?

46.

What passages in Upanishads support this argument?

47.

How can the passages saying Brahman has no qualities can be interpreted?

48.

The Advaitins say that the words "Tattavamsi" proves the identity of Jivatma and Paramatma". How can we interpret this?

49.

Chandogya Upanishad says that Brahman was the only one. There was no second. Does this mean that the world is not real; that the Jivatmas are not real; that everything except Paramatma is unreal?

50.

Does it mean that the Jivatma does not have all these good qualities like Brahman and that he is fully or mostly all evil?

51.

What are these auspicious qualities?

52.

What is the concept of liberation or salvation, according to Advaita?

53.

Then, is it possible for salvation in this world itself, according to Advaita?

54.

Is there the concept of Sri Vaikunta or Paramapada, in Advaita?

55.

In the Upanishads, the journey of Jivatma to paramapada is described in detail. How does the Advaitin explain this?

56.

What is our concept of salvation?

57.

What are the "great sentences" (maha vakyas) in the Vedas?

58.

What are these sentences?

59.

How do we interpret these sentences, as supporting the Visishtadvaita philosophy?

60.

How can these "maha vakyas", be interpreted on the basis of body/soul relationship?

61.

The Advaitins say that the Upanishad sentence "Neti, Neti" ('not so', 'not so') shows that God has no attributes (nirguna). How do we explain this text in the Upanishad?

62.

What are the seven inconsistencies (anupapatti)?

63.

In the Dvaita system of philosophy, who is accepted as the supreme deity or Paramatma?

64.

Is He having attributes or qualities? Or, is He without attributes, Nirguna?

65.

Who creates and destroys this world?

66.

Do they accept the body also for Brahman?

67.

Do they accept the avataras of Narayana?

68.

What is the position of Lakshmi, according to Dvaitins?

69.

Is Lakshmi's soul atomic or vibhu - all pervading?

70.

Does the Dvaita system accept the reality of the world?

71.

What about the Jivatmas?

72.

What is their view, regarding salvation?

73.

Is their concept of moksha the same as for -Visishtadvaitins?

74.

What are the means for attaining salvation?

75. What is the relationship between Jivatma and Paramatma?

FAQ

Advaita, Visishtadvaita and Dvaita

1. The question can be answered with a little bit of background on the Upanishads. The Upanishads are of three types namely bheda sruti, abheda sruti and ghataka sruti.

2. There are many passages in the Vedas, which clearly and categorically state that Brahman or Paramatma is different from Jivatma. These are called bheda sruti, because they show the difference between Paramatma and Jivatma. Bheda in Sanskrit means difference.

3. The following are some of the quotations. 1) 'Two birds with similar qualities and attached to each other, reside in the same tree. One of them (Jivatma) eats the fruit (the results of his karma), whereas the other (Iswara or Brahman) shines, without eating the fruit.' 2) "The Jivatma realises that the supreme self or Brahman directs him and he is the object of direction". 3) "He, the Jivatma, is different from Brahman. By winning the grace of Brahman, the Jivatma attains salvation". 4) "The three-fold nature, can be simply put as follows (1) who experiences pleasure and pain; (2) the object of such experiences and (3) He, the Brahman who directs all". 5) "He is the lord of Matter and Jivatma and the possessor of qualities". 6) "Brahman is the ruler whose knowledge has no limits. The Jivatma has his knowledge limited". 7) "The Brahman is different from Matter or Achetana and is greater than the Jivatma." 8) "He is different and He rules over the Jivatma and the Matter." 9) "The knower of Brahman attains the supreme." 10) "He reaches the other side of samsara and reaches the Paramapada of Vishnu". 11) "I belong to the Brahman and I will not leave Him". 12) "All these

are born out of Him and because of Him they live and they go back to Him." 13) "The brahmins understand Him, by learning the Vedas, by doing penance, by giving donation and by doing yagas." 14) "The Brahman cannot be attained by reading the scriptures, by intelligence,..." 15) "He is the lord of all. He is the ruler of all". 16) "There are two eternal, permanent things. One is Brahman, knowing everything and all powerful. The other is with limited knowledge and powerless, namely, Jivatma." 17) "The Jivatma enjoys the Paramapada along with Brahman." So, the above are a few examples of bheda sruti. These are some of the passages from the Vedas, which clearly show that the Jivatma is different from Paramatma. There are innumerable such passages in the Vedas.

4. There are also passages in the Vedas, which show, on the face of it, that Paramatma and Jivatma are one and the same.
5. The following are some of the passages:- "You are that (Brahman)". "I am Brahman". "Everything here is Brahman". "All the things here are Brahman". "There are no different things". "There is only one".a>
6. The third type of sruti, ghataka sruti, describes the relationship between Brahman and Jivatma and Matter, as that of the soul and the body (body/soul relationship).
7. The passages from the Antaryami Brahmana of Brihadaranyaka Upanishad and Subala Upanishad which explains the body-soul relationship. These are called Ghataka sruti

8. This is called so, because this talks about the Iswara being the soul or antaryami of Jivatma and the matter. 'Antaryami' means "One who controls from inside".>
9. They are so -called, because they join or synthesise the apparently contradictory passages in the Vedas. They give "the proper to abheda srutis, which seem to state there is no difference between Jivatma and Paramatma.
10. By using this body/soul relationship, which has been shown above in the ghataka sruti, one can give proper interpretation to the abheda sruti.
11. When we say Rama, we mean the body of Rama, as well as the soul of Rama. We say Rama has a fair skin. We mean Rama's body has a fair skin. Similarly, the word "Rama" means his soul also. By the extension of the same principle, it also means the soul of Rama's soul, i.e., Iswara or Narayana. We have just seen that the individual soul or Jivatma is also the body of Iswara. In other words, Iswara is the soul of the individual soul, namely Jivatma. So, when we say Rama, this refers grammatically to 1) Rama's body, 2) Rama's soul, 3) Rama's soul's soul, i.e., Brahman or Iswara. With this understanding, if one reads the abheda sruti, the meaning will be quite clear. 2) One passage says "you are that", Now what this means is that your soul's soul is Iswara or Brahman, i.e., Brahman is also your soul's soul. 3) The passage "All this is Brahman" is also correct, because all Matter and Jivatma have Brahman as their soul and Brahman has all of them as His body. Hence naturally all this is Brahman. 4) The passage "I am Brahman" is also correct, because my soul's soul is Brahman. In other words, I am myself Brahman. Thus, by applying the body/soul relationship between Jivatma and Paramatma, all the passages in the Vedas, which appear like saying identity of Jivatma and paramatma, will be properly explained.
12. The basic principle has been established that Brahman or is the soul of Jivatma and I Matter and all its

variations. So, the Jivatma and Matter and its variations are all the body of Brahman. As mentioned earlier, this is the fundamental doctrine of Visishtadvaita philosophy.

13. "Advaita" means "Not Two". The advaitins say that Jivatma and paramatma are not two (i.e., different) but they are One, i.e., identical. Hence this system of philosophy is called Advaita. The founder of Advaita philosophy is Adi Sankara.

14. "Visishtadvaita" means "Not Two-in a special way" or "Only one - in a special way". We say that Jivatma and paramatma are different and yet not different. They are different, as we have shown from the bheda sruti. Jivatma is the body and paramatma the soul. The soul is different from the body. This way, the paramatma is different from the Jivatma. They are not different because of the body-soul relationship, as explained in ghataka sruti. We call both Rama's body and Rama's soul, as Rama. Rama's body and soul together, are called as "Rama" only. So, Rama is only one. Similarly, Jivatma (the body) and Paramatma (the soul), can be called as only one - in a special way, because of the body/soul relationship. So, Jivatma and Paramatma can be called two-in-one or one-in-two. Hence our system of philosophy is called "Visishtadvaita". This system was perfected by Ramanuja.

15. "Dvaita" means Two. Dvaitins say that Jivatma and Paramatma are eternally different, i.e. they are two and not one. They do not accept body/soul relationship. Hence this system of philosophy is called "Dvaita". The exponent of Dvaita philosophy is Madhva.

16. The Advaitins argue that abheda srutis, which say that the Jivatma is identical with Paramatma, supersede the bheda srutis. So, they do not accept the validity of bheda srutis. In other words, they accept only abheda srutis as authority.

17. We say that the Vedas as a whole are authority. So, why should the Vedas mention the bheda passages, if

- they are to be superseded. No sensible person will make a statement, if it is false and if it is to be superseded. Unless a statement is specifically mentioned as opponents point of view, it has to be taken as correct. Nowhere in the Vedas, it has been stated that the bheda passages represent opponents point of view. Hence the bheda srutis have to be taken as correct; and have to be properly synthesised with the other passages in the Vedas. Thus, we do not accept the Advaitins' argument.
18. Dvaitins do not accept the abheda srutis as authority (pramana). Their argument is that abheda srutis are very few. They are very much less in number, as compared to bheda srutis, Hence, the small number of abheda srutis must be ignored.
 19. Vishistadvaitins do not accept this view of Dvaitins. They say that all-passages in the Vedas are authority. We have to properly interpret the various passages in the Vedas, so that any apparent contradictions are resolved. Hence, Vishistadvaitin makes use of ghataka sruti, to resolve the apparent differences between bheda srutis and abheda srutis.
 20. As mentioned above, the Advaitins are not able to properly explain bheda srutis. Dvaitins are not able to properly explain abheda srutis. Visishtadvaita is the only system, which is able to explain properly both the Bheda srutis and Abheda srutis, with the help of Ghataka srutis.
 21. The Advaitins say that everything, other than the Paramatma, is 'maya' or illusion. For Advaitins, the world itself is an illusion.
 22. For this, the Advaitins have got three types of reality. They say that the Brahman is the only real thing or the ultimate reality; and everything else is illusion or maya.
 23. We see a shell from a distance and we think it is silver. Only when we go near and examine, we find that it is really shell. 2) Similarly, from a distance we see a rope and mistake it to be a serpent. 3) Again, in a hot

- summer, on a tar road, we see at some distance water on the road, which is not actually so. It is only the reflection of the sun on the tar road. So, such illusions, as explained in the three cases above, fall into the first category, according to the Advaitins. These are called "Apparent Reality" (Pratibhasika Sat). In these cases, we are able to realise ourselves, at a later stage, that what we saw first was only an illusion. For example, thinking as silver, whereas it was only shell; similarly, thinking as serpent, when it was only a rope, is only an illusion.
24. The second category of reality is called by Advaitins as "Relative Reality" (Vyavaharika Sat). In this category come the world, air, sky, water, and so on. All these things are there and still, ultimately, they are only an illusion according to Advaitins. But, for all practical purposes, world, air, water and other elements are real things. So these things are called "Relative Reality" and form the second category.
25. The third category of reality, is the "Absolute reality" (Paramarthika Sat). This is Brahman.
26. The Advaitins classify all things into three types of realities, as follows: 1) Apparent reality (Pratibhasika Sat) – like mistaking shell as silver; mistaking rope as serpent. 2) Relative reality (Vyavaharika Sat) - like world, sky, fire, water. 3) Absolute reality (Paramarthika Sat) - This is Brahman. So, according to them, except for item (3) above, Brahman, everything else is maya (illusion).
27. The theory of Visishtadvaitins is exactly the opposite. We say that everything is real. There is no maya or illusion. The world is very much real. The Jivatma is very much real. In fact, we also say that, even the objects which we see in a dream are also real. Of course, the dream objects are purely temporary and are seen only by the person who dreams.
28. We say that this world is not an illusion. We mistake shell for silver. We mistake brass, or bronze for gold.

We mistake a rope for a serpent - These are actually illusions. The world is not such an illusion. Whatever materials we find in this world, we are making use of them. The silver which we see, we make vessels out of it. We keep water in the silver vessel. Similarly, the gold which we see, we make jewels out of gold, and we wear them. So, the world, the materials, the objects which we see in the world, are all real.

29. The Vishistadvaitis have full support from the Upanishads. It has been explained earlier about the process of creation, starting from matter. How from matter comes mahat, how from mahat comes ahankara and so on. I have also explained about the quintuplication, three-fold division and seven-fold division. The Upanishads have thus explained in detail the process of creation. So, the world and the objects and materials of the world are all the results of creation. When Upanishads take so much pains to explain the process of creation, is it correct to say that the whole thing is an illusion? There is no need for the Upanishads to describe in great detail the process of creation, if the whole thing is an illusion. Further, the Upanishads do not state anywhere that the world is an illusion.
30. The Upanishads say that the Lord, Brahman creates the world out of maya. So the Advaitins interpret the word maya as illusion. But we interpret the world maya as matter (prakriti). The Upanishads themselves say that maya is matter. So, apart from other reasons, we interpret the word 'maya' as matter. From matter, the process of creation starts. But taking the meaning of 'maya' as illusion, the Advaitins say that the whole world is an illusion.
31. At many places, several Upanishads categorically declare that Brahman creates this world. "Brahman creates beings, starting from Brahma, as before". "Brahman creates the beings, like sun and moon, as before". Unless the world, sun and moon, and other

objects are real, there is no need to create them. This clearly shows that the created world is real. Of course, the Jivatma and Matter are eternal (nitya). At the time of pralaya, Matter and Jivatmas take very subtle (sukshma) form and merge with the Lord. Again, the process of creation starts, after pralaya. Thus we say that everything is real.

32. The Bhagavad Gita says: "I, who am the ultimate cause of this world, join the Jivatma with Matter. Thus, all beings come out of this union". There are several such passages in Vishnu Purana and other Sastras which go to show that the world is indeed real.

33. They say that many objects in the world are not permanent. For example, there is a mud pot now; after some time it gets broken and it is destroyed. Similarly there is water in the river now. But in summer, the water gets dried up. Thus water is no longer there. Thus, nothing is real, because they are not there permanently at all times. This is one of the arguments of the Advaitins.

34. We agree with them on the facts. But we say that these facts only show that objects are not permanent. It does not follow that the objects are not real. In other words, even though the objects are not permanent, they are real. We have to distinguish between a real thing and a permanent thing. Taking the example of the mud pot, the mud is there, which the potter makes into a pot. Again, after some time, the pot gets broken, and we come back to the mud. So, mud is there although mud pot gets broken. Just because something is not permanent, we cannot say that it is not real. The mud pot is not permanent. Mud is real and also permanent. Similarly jewels are not permanent. We can melt them into gold and re-make some other jewel. So the jewels are not permanent, but the raw material, gold is permanent. But both gold and jewels, made out of gold, are real. We make use of the jewels. We wear the jewels. So, we cannot say

that jewels are not real. Mud is real and mudpot is real. Gold is real and gold jewel is real. These examples are given in Chandogya Upanishad to discuss the relationship between Brahman and the world. So, Brahman is real and the world is also real. Thus the argument of Advaitins that just because something is not permanent, it is not real, (but an illusion) is not correct.

35. We are seeing the world. We make use of the things in the world. We enjoy them. So this has to be real. The above examples clearly show that the world which has come out, in the above examples are real. If the Vedas wanted to show that the world is unreal, they need not have given the above examples. Instead, the Vedas could have given the examples of mistaking a rope for a serpent, mistaking a shell for silver and so on. But instead of giving such examples, which suggest illusion, the Vedas have given examples of reality. From this also, it is clear that the world and everything else is real. Further, if the world and its beings are only an illusion, where is the question of the Lord protecting and destroying the world?.. All these activities of creating the world, protecting the world and destroying the world will have no meaning if the world is not real. The world is destroyed at the time of Pralaya. So the world is not eternal or permanent. It is in this meaning that sometimes it is mentioned that the world is not real.

36. The basic axiom that the Vedas as a whole , are the fundamental authority. So , there cannot be any inconsistency or difference between the different passages. If there is an apparent contradiction or inconsistency between two different two different portions of Upanishads, these have to be suitably reconciled or synthesized. 2.) The normal logic is that if the majority of the portions mean one thing and a small number of portions apparently mean something else, then these minority portions will have to be

- explained in keeping with the majority version. 3.) While the world is mentioned as real in innumerable places and the process of creation is described in detail, in a few places it is mentioned that the world is not eternal or everlasting. The world will be destroyed at the time of pralaya. What is meant is that all the chetanas and achetanas merge in the Lord, in a very subtle form, at the time of pralaya.
37. The three reasons to show why the world is real: 1.) The Vedas describe Brahman thus: Brahman is that, from whom all these beings are born; by whom all these beings live; in whom all these beings rest, after death. From the above description, it can be seen that all these beings have to be real. 2.) Brahman is the material cause of the world. He therefore evolves into the world. So how can the world which has been created by Brahman, be unreal? Thus we say that the world and all the beings in it are real.
38. A. The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad clearly says that: " In this dream world, there are no chariots. There are no horses to draw the chariot. There are no roads on which the chariot can go. Then the Brahman creates chariots. He creates horses to draw the chariot and He Creates roads. In this dream world, there are no joys or delights or raptures. Again, Brahman creates joys , delights and raptures. In the dream world, there are no pools, no tanks and no rivers. Again, Brahman creates pools, He creates tanks and He creates rivers. Indeed Brahman creates all these, in the dream – world".
39. A. The jivatma is not capable of creating the various objects in the dream. He does not have the power of creation because of his natural powers are restricted, as long as he is in this world. 2.) We also see many bad things in the dream. We are afraid to see such terrible things in our dreams. We often wake up with a start whenever we see bad things in the drea. If the Jivatma creates these objects, naturally he will create such bad things, such bad objects, which give him pain in his

- dreams. If the Jivatma creates these objects, naturally he will only create good and pleasant things in the dream. Since the dream consists of bad things also, it is clear that jivatma does not create the objects in the dreams. Only Iswara creates objects in the dream.
40. The reason is simple. The Jivatma does some small good things and some small bad things. These are not big enough, or significant enough. As a reward for small good things done, God gives him pleasure and good things, in the dream. So, he is happy during the duration of the dream , enjoying pleasant things. Similarly the Jivatma does small bad things, which are not very significant. Then a very mild punishment is given by the Lord, for those small bad things. This is by making the Jivatma feel the pain, by dreaming bad things or shocking news. So he is made to experience pain and sorrow during the duration of the dream.
41. There are several passages in the Vedas, which declare that there is only one supreme Lord or Brahman. The advaitins also agree that there is only one Brahman, the Para Brahman. However for purposes of worship, they accept a lower Brahman. This lower Brahman, is , according to them, not real ultimately, but is only Vyavaharika sat.
42. They say that 1.)The Para Brahman has no attributes or qualities.(Nirguna) 2.)It has no form. (Niravayava Brahman) According to them 1.) The lower Brahman (Apara Brahman) has good qualities (Saguna Brahman), 2.) It has a form (body). The lower Brahman can be worshipped as a Vishnu and so on. They further say as follows: "After worshipping the Brahman, in a form with qualities, like Vishnu, a person develops sufficient maturity of knowledge and viveka. Then he understands the real Brahman, which is without attributes. Then he also realizes that he is not different from the real Brahman or Paramatma. In other words, he ultimately realizes that the Jivatma and Paramatma are one and the same.

43. We do not accept that there are two Brahmans. There is no question of one Brahman being higher and another Brahman being lower. There is only one Brahman. The Brahman has all the auspicious qualities. That Brahman is free from all evil. The Brahman has also got a form – a beautiful and auspicious body, with four arms and sankha and chakra. Further the Brahman has Jivatma and matter as His Body.
44. There is no question of Jivatma being identical with Paramatma. But Jivatma has Paramatma as its soul; and Jivatma is the body of the Paramatma. Thus both the Jivatma and Paramatma are one in the sense, that they form together the body and soul. So, they are 2-in-1. That is why our philosophy is called as Vishistadvaita.
45. At several places, the Vedas say that He has many auspicious qualities, attributes. In a few places, they say that Brahman is without attributes. We have to interpret this, in keeping with the majority portions. So when the Upanishad says "without Attributes" we interpret this as "without bad attributes" i.e., "with only good qualities". This interpretation is necessary; to resolve the apparent contradiction between the portions saying Brahman has many auspicious qualities and the portions saying that Brahman is without attributes. If we stick on saying that Brahman is without qualities, then all the portions mentioning about the good qualities of Brahman will have no meaning.
46. In many places the Upanishads mention that Brahman is the Lord. He is the protector, and the world and the Jivatmas are protected by Him. Again the Upanishads talk about Bhakti, about 32 vidyas or methods of doing

bhakti to the Lord, for getting salvation. If the Lord has no attributes, no qualities, how can He protect the world? How can He give Salvation or Moksha to the Jivatma? It cannot be said that the Upanishads lay down the methods of Bhakti, for attaining salvation, and then deny these things, by saying that the Lord has no attributes or qualities. Without qualities how can He grant Salvation?

47. We interpret these in two ways: 1.) "Without Qualities" mean "without bad qualities". So, Brahman has all good qualities. 1.) The qualities are three sattva, rajas and tamas. So, "without qualities" can mean "without any of these three qualities". This will mean "suddha, sattva". Thus, we can say that the Brahman has the quality of "Suddha Sattva".
48. The words "Tattvamasi" means "That you there". Here "That" means Brahman. "You" means "Your soul's soul". So the words, "Tattvamasi" mean Brahman is your soul's soul. This is exactly the body / soul relationship. Brahman is the soul of ones soul. ..viz... Jivatma. So, the word, "Tattvamasi" only says that Brahman is the soul of Jivatma. The above is the teaching of the father, to son Svetaketu. When we say Svetaketu, it means his body and his soul. It also means his soul's soul which is Brahman.
49. No, that is not correct. Brahman is eternal. Jivatmas are eternal, Matter (mula Prakriti) is eternal and the Vedas are also eternal. What it actually means is that Brahman has no equal. "He is without a Second" means, " He is without an equal", "He is unparalleled". All this means is that Brahman is Supreme, without any equals. It does not mean that there is nothing else than Brahman; and that everything else is an illusion or unreal. If this vies (that all other are not real) is to be adopted, then let me repeat again that all the Upanishads explaining the process of Creation, explaining the Salvation of the jivatma, will all become meaningless. When we say that the Chola King was

unique and there was no second person, what do we mean? We only mean that, in strength and valor, he had no equals. He had no parallels. It does not mean there was no other person in this world, at that time. Similarly here also, it only means that Brahman has no equals.

50. The Jivatma also, by nature, has all the auspicious qualities and is free from evil, just like Brahman. But unfortunately, these good qualities are not fully exhibited, so long as he is in this world. During the period he is in this world, in this samsara, he is like a diamond, covered with dirt. When he attains salvation and reaches Paramapada, all the auspicious qualities shine in full in him and he is free from all evil. That is, he becomes like a diamond, cleaned from all dirt, and fully shining.
51. Q. They are eight in number: 1. Freedom from evil 2. Freedom from old age 3. Freedom from death 4. Freedom from sorrow 5. Freedom from hunger 6. Freedom from thirst 7. Desiring the truth (Satya kama) 8. Willing the truth (Satya sankalpa). These are apart from the basic nature of the Jivatma, of knowledge, bliss or happiness, and purity and so on.
52. According to Advaita, liberation comes finally, when the Jivatma realizes that he is identical with Brahman or Paramatma. So, it is this knowledge, which leads to salvation..
53. Yes. According to Advaita, even in this world itself, it is possible to attain salvation. They call it Jivanmukti.
54. No. They do not recognize Paramapada, as the ultimate salvation.
55. The Advaitins say that it is only a partial salvation. They call it Krama mukti. They do not recognize Paramapada as the ultimate salvation.
56. Salvation means reaching Paramapada or Sri Vaikunta at the end of this life; and enjoying the Lord Sriman Narayana and being of service to Him and Lakshmi.

57. The Advaitins call some passages in the Upanishads as "great sentences" (Mahavakyas). They say that these great sentences show that Jivatma and paramatma are one.
- 58.No.1 "That you are". No.2" I am Brahman" No.3 " All the things here are Brahman." NO. 4 " There are no several things here".
- 59.The interpretation is very simple, if we apply the body/soul relationship 1) The first sentence is the famous "Tattvamasi". 2) In the same way, the second sentence, "I am Brahman" also is correct. My soul is Jivatma. Jivatma's soul is Brahman. So, my soul's soul is Brahman. Hence "I am Brahman". 3) The third sentence, "All things are Brahman," is also correct. Because, the soul or Atma of all things is Brahman, by the body/soul relationship. So, everything is Brahman, since everything has Brahman for its soul. Brahman has everything for His body. 4) By the same reasoning, the fourth sentence "There are no several things here" is also correct. Because all things have Brahman as their soul. Hence, all things are identified with Brahman, as their soul. Hence there are no several things. All things are Brahman only (as their soul) Thus we interpret the great sentences, in accordance with our philosophy.
60. Apart from these "great sentences", we have many portions in the same Upanishads, which proclaim clearly that Paramatma is different from the Jivatma. So, if "maha vakyas" are interpreted to mean that Jivatma is identical with Paramatma, we find these are followed by passages, saying Jivatma is different from Paramatma, viz., contradicting the identity of Jivatma and Paramatma. There is no need for the Vedas to proclaim something, to be contradicted immediately afterwards. Indeed in some places, the Upanishads give the opponents' view first and then give the correct view. But they clearly say that what was mentioned earlier was not the correct view and then explain or proclaim the correct view. There is no such specific

statement in the Vedas, saying that bheda srutis are incorrect; or that abheda srutis only are correct. So, we say that all are to be interpreted suitably, to avoid any apparent contradiction.

61. We argue that 'Neti, Neti' ('not so\ not so'), in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad only means that Brahman's attributes cannot be limited to what was explained earlier. His attributes are infinite. Therefore, the passage means that the Brahman's attributes are not the only ones, which were mentioned earlier, but they are countless. Our stand is also vindicated by the following:- Immediately after this passage 'not so', 'not so', the Upanishad says that His name is Truth of the Truths. The Jivatmas are true, i.e., real and eternal. The Paramatma is the truth of the truth, i.e., also real and eternal. So, this passage also clearly shows that Brahman has innumerable attributes, i.e., He is not nirguna.
62. While criticizing the Advaita view point, Ramanuja develops subtle arguments and logic, to show that there are several inconsistencies in the Advaita standpoint, regarding the Brahman and the Jivatma. In particular, Ramanuja lists out 7 inconsistencies in the Advaita arguments, which say that Brahman is without attributes, Brahman is without form and the world is unreal.
63. Narayana is accepted as the supreme deity.
64. He is full of good qualities. The Dvaitins do not accept that Brahman is nirguna.
65. According to Dvaitins, Narayana only creates this world, sustains this world and destroys this world.
66. They accept that Narayana has a divine body, a beautiful and shining body.

67. Yes. They accept the avatars like Rama and Krishna as all real.
68. Lakshmi is accepted as Narayana's consort. But, they give her a slightly lower place than Narayana. She also has a divine and beautiful body, like Narayana. However, Lakshmi is considered Jivatma.
69. They state that Lakshmi is also vibhu, like Narayana.
70. Yes. They accept the reality of the world and all beings
71. They say that the Jivatmas are different from one another. The Jivatmas are grouped into two categories, as males and females. The Jivatmas are also atomic in nature.
72. They accept the concept of salvation, viz., moksha and Paramapada. They agree that moksha means liberation from samsara and attainment of Paramapada.
73. No, they have different categories or gradations in moksha, like salokya, sarupya, samipya and sayujya. Depending on their merits (punya), the Jivatmas attain salokya or sarupya and so on.
74. They accept bhakti as the means.
75. The Dvaitins say that Jivatma and Paramatma are always different from one another. They do not accept the concept of body-soul relationship between Jivatma and Paramatma. Since according to them, the Jivatma is eternally different from Paramatma, they are two. So, this system of philosophy is called Dvaita.