

Tridandisvami Sri Srimad Bhaktivedanta Narayana Maharaja

# Defeating Mayavada

Houston, Texas: May 14, 2006

[Sri Narayana Maharaja was in Houston for a few days recently, from May 11 to May 17. On Sunday May 14, he spoke on a very popular radio station there. His talk was given in Hindi, and upon his request the Hindi transcription will appear in the magazine called Gaudiya Patrika. His Hindi talk was translated into English by Sripad Visnudasa Adhikari. :]

Today, I am telling something about advaitavada and mayavada. In the modern day, some people think that the real meaning of the Vedanta-sutra is the advaitavada or mayavada\* [see endnote 1], as preached by Sripad Sankaracarya. Sankaracarya's commentary is called Sariraka-bhasya\* [See endnote 2], and many people think that the philosophy expounded by him is the real meaning of the Vedanta-sutra (or Brahma-sutra)\* [See endnote 3]. They think that his commentary is the authentic commentary of Vedanta-sutra, and that the other commentaries are not authoritative at all. However, this is a misconception.

Sri Vyasadeva, the compiler of the original Veda, divided the Vedas into four parts according to their subject matter.\* [See endnote 4]. Then, to reconcile the apparent differences between the mantras of the different Vedas and to show that there is no conflict between them, he composed the Brahma-sutra (or Vedanta-sutra). Then, since the Brahma-sutra was difficult to understand for the ordinary people, he composed the Puranas. He composed the Puranas and the Mahabharata, the 5th Veda, for the women and the less intelligent people, to make them easily understand the difficult message of the Vedanta-sutra.

Still, Sri Vyasadeva's mind was very disturbed; he was not happy. At that time, Sri Narada Rsi came to his asrama and said, "You have described dharma (religion), artha (economic development), kama (sense gratification) and moksa (liberation), but you have not described the sweet pastimes of the Supreme Lord. It is for this reason that your mind is disturbed and you are not happy. By samadhi-yoga\* [see endnote 5] you should meditate on the pastimes of the Lord, and then you should describe them."

Sri Vyasadeva followed the orders of his spiritual master, and he saw in his samadhi the various pastimes of the Lord. He then described those pastimes for the benefit of the general populous, and this description is called Srimad-Bhagavatam.

In the Puranas, the Srimad-Bhagavatam is glorified as follows:

artho 'yam brahma-sutranam  
bharatartha-vinirnayah  
gayatri-bhasya-rupo 'sau  
vedartha-paribrmhitah

purananam sama-rupah  
saksad-bhagavatoditah  
dvadasa-skandha-yukto 'yam  
sata-viccheda-samyutah  
grantho 'stadasa-sahasrah  
srimad-bhagavatabhi

[“The meaning of the Vedanta-sutra is present in Srimad-Bhagavatam. The full purport of the Mahabharata is also there. The commentary of the Brahma-gayatri is also there and fully expanded with all Vedic knowledge. Srimad-Bhagavatam is the supreme Purana, and it was compiled by the Supreme Personality of Godhead in His incarnation as Vyasadeva. There are twelve cantos, 335 chapters and eighteen thousand verses. (Hari Bhakti Vilas, 10.394 / Garuda Purana, as quoted in Sri Caitanya-caritamrta, 25.143-144)]

This Srimad-Bhagavatam is the meaning of Brahma-sutra. It is the conclusive meaning of the Mahabharata. It is the commentary of gayatri and it explains and enhances the meanings and import of the Vedas. Therefore Srimad-Bhagavatam, written by Sri Vyasadeva himself, is the real and transcendental, unprecedented, natural commentary of the Sutras, and it is accepted by all spiritual authorities as the commentary of the Brahma-sutra.

In various places in the Srimad-Bhagavatam, the concept of mayavada or advaitavada has been defeated. I will explain a few of the points that are discussed therein.

Lord Brahma says in his glorification of Lord Sri Krsna,

jnane prayasam udapasya namanta eva  
jivanti san-mukharitam bhavadiya-vartam  
sthane sthitah sruti-gatam tanu-van-manobhir  
ye prayaso 'jita jito 'py asi tais tri-lokyam

[“Those who, even while remaining situated in their established social positions, throw away the process of speculative knowledge, and with their body, words and mind offer all respects to descriptions of Your personality and activities, dedicating their lives to these narrations which are vibrated by You personally and by Your pure devotees, certainly conquer Your Lordship, although You are otherwise unconquerable by anyone within the three worlds.” (spoken by Lord Brahma in Srimad-Bhagavatam 10.14.3)]

Only after removing the conception of nirvisesa-brahma (the idea that the Supreme Truth is without form or qualities), rising above the efforts of trying to understand the Supreme by speculative knowledge, one should offer obeisances unto that Supreme Lord and respectfully hear His sweet pastimes. That Supreme Lord, who is beyond anyone's control, will come under the control of such a devotee.

Lord Brahmaji further says:

sreyah-srtim bhaktim udasya te vibho  
klisyanti ye kevala-bodha-labdhave  
tesam asau klesala eva sisyate  
nanyad yatha sthula-tusavaghatinam

["My dear Lord, devotional service unto You is the best path for self-realization. If someone gives up that path and engages in the cultivation of speculative knowledge, he will simply undergo a troublesome process and will not achieve his desired result. As a person who beats an empty husk of wheat cannot get grain, one who simply speculates cannot achieve self-realization. His only gain is trouble." (Srimad-Bhagavatam 10.14.4)]

Devotion to the Supreme Lord is the most beneficial path, for it is capable of giving love for the Supreme Lord. Leaving such transcendental devotion, one may take shelter of concepts such as "atma is brahma and brahma is atma (the individual living entity is God)", or "this world is false and the jiva is brahma." For a person who preaches in such a way and who makes efforts to realize the Supreme Absolute Truth through such conceptions, his efforts are useless labor without any substantive gain, just as beating empty husks of grains (to get grains) is useless labor. The husk has no actual grains.

Srimad-Bhagavatam (1.7.10) further says,

suta uvaca  
atmaramas ca munayo  
nirgrantha apy urukrame  
kurvanty ahaitukim bhaktim  
ittham-bhuta-guno harih

["All different varieties of atmaramas (those who take pleasure in atma, or spirit self), especially those established on the path of self-realization, though freed from all kinds of material bondage, desire to render unalloyed devotional service unto the Personality of Godhead. This means that the Lord possesses transcendental qualities and therefore can attract everyone, including liberated souls.]

When self-realized munis, who are completely absorbed in the impersonal Spirit, hear the sweet pastimes of the Supreme Lord, they also become attracted by those pastimes. They leave their path of speculative knowledge and take shelter of pure devotional service.

ye 'nye 'ravindaksa vimukta-maninas  
tvayy asta-bhavad avisuddha-buddhayah  
aruhya krcchrena param padam tatah  
patanty adho 'nadrta-yusmad-aighrayah

[Someone may say that aside from devotees, who always seek shelter at the Lord's lotus feet, there are those who are not devotees but who have accepted different processes for attaining salvation. What happens to them? In answer to this question, Lord Brahma and the other demigods said: O lotus-eyed Lord, although non-devotees who accept severe

austerities and penances to achieve the highest position may think themselves liberated, their intelligence is impure. They fall down from their position of imagined superiority because they have no regard for Your lotus feet. (Srimad-Bhagavatam 10.2.32)]

This verse refers to those who consider themselves liberated or almost about to reach the stage of liberation. Since they are offenders of the Supreme Lord by saying He has no form or qualities, and by saying that only the impersonal form of the Lord is worshipable, they fall down from that stage of so-called liberation.

The main goal of the mayavadis is sayujya mukti (impersonal liberation). Regarding such liberation, it is stated in Srimad Bhagavatam:

salokya-sarsti-samipyā-  
sarupyaikatvam apy uta  
diyamanam na grhnanti  
vina mat-sevanam janah

[A pure devotee does not accept any kind of liberation – salokya, sarsti, samipyā, sarupya or ekatva – even though they are offered by the Supreme Personality of Godhead. (Srimad-Bhagavatam 3.29.13)]

Even if the Supreme Lord offers these four kinds of liberation – salokya (facility to live on the same planet with the Lord), sarsti (possession of opulence equal with the Lord), samipyā (association with the Lord), sarupya (bodily features similar to those of the Lord), and sayujya (to become one with the Lord), the devotee doesn't accept them. This is because these have no value to them without personal, intimate service to Him.

vadanti tat tattva-vidas tattvam yaj jnanam advayam  
brahmeti paramatmeti bhagavan iti sabyate.

["Learned transcendentalists who know the Absolute Truth call this non-dual substance Brahman, Paramatma or Bhagavan." (Srimad-Bhagavatam 1.2.11)]

Those who know all tattvas (established philosophical truths) – those who know brahma-tattva, bhakti-tattva, para-tattva and other transcendental truths – say that Lord Sri Kṛṣṇa only is advaya-jnana-para-tattva (one-without-a-second Absolute Truth). When the same Kṛṣṇa is worshipped by others through jnana (speculative knowledge), He is called brahma. That advaya-jnana Bhagavan (Supreme Lord) residing in our hearts as a witness is only a partial manifestation of Bhagavan (sat-cit). The word Bhagavan is used only for Sri Kṛṣṇa, who is Bhagavan Himself.

ete camsa-kalah pumsah  
kṛṣṇas tu bhagavan svayam  
indrari-vyakulam lokam  
mṛdayanti yuge yuge

["All of the above-mentioned incarnations are either plenary portions or portions of the plenary portions of the Lord, but Lord Sri Krsna is the original Personality of Godhead. All of them appear on planets whenever there is a disturbance created by the atheists. The Lord incarnates to protect the theists." (Srimad-Bhagavatam 1.3.28)]

When the Lord is seen from a great distance or by those who are not very mature in their transcendental realization, they see only the light coming from the nails of His lotus feet. The effulgence coming from His nails is called nirvisesa-brahman\* [See endnote 7]. In Gita-upanisad (Bhagavad-gita), the essence of all Upanisadas, Lord Krsna says:

brahmano hi pratisthaham  
amrtasyavyayasya ca  
sasvatasya ca dharmasya  
sukhasyaikantikasya ca

["And I am the basis of the impersonal Brahman, which is immortal, imperishable and eternal, and is the constitutional position of ultimate happiness. (Bhagavad-gita 14.27)]

Sri Krsna says, "I am the basis of Brahman. Brahman is the light of My limbs, the light emanating from the nails of My toes. If My body is not there, how will the light of My body be there? Not only this, I (Sri Krsna) am the basis of immortality, transcendence, eternal peace, eternal dharma and bliss."

Sri Brahma-samhita states:

yasya prabha prabhavato jagadanda-koti-  
kotisv asesa-vasudhadi-vibhuti-bhinna  
tad-brahma niskalam anantam asesa-bhutam  
govindam adi-purusam tam aham bhajami

["I worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead, by whose personal effulgence the unlimited brahma-jyoti is manifested. In that brahma-jyoti there are innumerable universes, and each is filled with innumerable planets." (Brahma-samhita. 5.40)]

In his prayers, Lord Brahma says that nirvisesa (without material specialities), nirakar (without material form), nirguna (without material qualities) Brahman is nothing but the light emanating from the limbs of the Supreme Lord Govinda. In the Upanisadas \* [see endnote 8] it is stated clearly that there is a difference between jiva (the minute living entity) and brahma (the complete spirit). The jiva can never become brahma.

nityo nityanam cetanas cetananam  
eko bahunam yo vidadhati kaman.

"Among all the eternally conscious beings there is one supreme eternal living being who is supplying the needs of all the innumerable others." (Katha Upanisad 2.1.12).

The Supreme Spirit Whole is the supreme eternal among all eternal entities and the supreme conscious among all conscious entities. It is He who fulfills the desires of every living entity. Only those who worship Him are intelligent and attain eternal peace.

The jiva is part and parcel of the Supreme Lord. How is it possible then that he can merge with the Supreme Lord?

In Bhagavad-gita Lord Krsna says:

mamaivamsa jiva-loke  
jiva-bhutah sanatanah  
manah-sasthanindriyani  
prakrti-sthani karsati

["The living entities in this conditioned world are My eternal fragmental parts. Due to conditioned life, they are struggling very hard with the six senses, which include the mind." (Bhagavad-gita 15.7)]

Lord Sri Krsna says, "The jiva is My eternal part and parcel." Jivas come from His marginal potency. The jivas are His eternal part and parcel. Therefore, they can never merge in brahma and become one with Him.

Both the Katha Upanisad and Svetasvatara Upanisad confirm this:

"Dva suparna syuja-sayuja sakhaya, samanam vrksam parisavajate": two birds sit on the same tree as friends. One bird eats the fruit of the tree, and the other simply observes. This observing bird is always present as a friend to the eating bird and giving him remembrance of things he wanted to do. If we take into account the Supreme Personality of Godhead in our daily affairs, we can see Him everywhere.

samane vrkse puruso nimagno  
'nisaya socati muhyamanah  
justam yada pasyaty anyam isam asya  
mahimanam iti vita-sokah

["Although the two birds are in the same tree, the eating bird is fully engrossed with anxiety and moroseness as the enjoyer of the fruits of the tree. But if in some way or other he turns his face to his friend who is the Lord and knows His glories-at once the suffering bird becomes free from all anxieties."(Svetasvatara Upanisad, 4.6-7; Mundak Upanisad, 3.1.1-2)]

Jiva and Paramatma are separate. In this body, the jiva is enjoying the fruits of his past activities, and Paramatma is observing him as a witness. The Paramatma makes the jiva taste different fruits according to his past deeds. Therefore, jiva and brahma can never become one. This idea is only imagination.

In the Brahma-sutra (1.1.12) it is stated: ananda-mayo 'bhyasat – "By nature the Lord is always joyful." At other places in Vedanta and Upanisadas, it is said: "Anandam braham – the supreme is the form of bliss." The Supreme has a form; His form is bliss and nothing else. Without having a form, how can there be bliss? And, where would His other qualities reside? Therefore, He is the condensed form of bliss.

While giving his commentary, called the 'Sarirak Bhasya', on the Brahma-sutra, Sripad Sankaracarya was unable to explain "ananda-maya" according to his philosophy. Because he could not explain it, he said that his Guru, Srila Vyasadeva, was misguided. How can one who says that his own Guru is misguided explain the Brahma-sutra written by him (his Guru)?

Thus, the Brahma-sutra commentary written by Sankaracarya is absolutely imagination. There is no truth in it.

mayavadam asac-chastram  
pracchannam bauddham ucyate  
mayaiva vihitam devi  
kalau brahmana- murtina

["Lord Siva informed the Goddess Durga, the superintendent of the material world, 'In the Age of Kali I take the form of a Brahmana and explain the Vedas through false scriptures in an atheistic way, similar to Buddhist philosophy.' (Padma Purana, Uttara-khanda 62.31).]

Here, Mahadeva Sankara is saying to Parvati-devi that mayavada or advaitavada philosophy is not correct. It is asat-sastra (false). It is a hidden form of Buddhism. Sankara (Lord Siva) said, "To hide the truths of devotional service from unqualified people, I will manifest in Kaliyuga in the form of a Brahmana, as Sankaracarya. I will do this to fulfill the desire of the Lord." It is only by Lord Sri Krsna's order that Mahadeva came as Sankaracarya to preach Mayavada and thus hide bhakti.

We can understand by logic also. Please consider this. Everyone accepts that this world is manifested from the Supreme Lord.

yato va imani bhutani jayante, yena jatani jivanti,  
yat prayanty abhisamvisanti, tad vijijnasasva, tad brahma.

["This entire cosmic manifestation is made possible by the Absolute Truth, the Supreme Personality of Godhead."(Taittiriya Upanisad 3.1.1)]

The One, from whom this world is manifested and maintained, is Parambrahma (the Supreme Absolute Truth). The entire world is manifest from Brahman. In this creation all the living entities have bodies. Therefore, according to the theory of cause and effect, if different forms are seen in this world then the source cause of all these forms - Brahman - must also have a form. If Brahman doesn't have form, how can these other forms

manifest from Him? Where will all the different forms that exist in this world come from? Therefore, the Supreme Brahman has form.

The analogy may be given of a mango tree. The mango tree grows from the mango seed. Present in the seed is the full form of the mango tree – the leaves, fruits, flowers, etc. Therefore, the tree can manifest from the seed. Something cannot come from nothing. From nothing how can anything or something be created? We should understand this.

A mango tree cannot manifest from a tamarind seed.. Thus, this creation did not manifest from nothing. The Lord is not zero (nothing). He is not formless, or without transcendental qualities. Therefore, in our Vedas, it is stated:

om purnam adah purnam idam  
purnat purnam udacyate  
purnasya purnam adaya  
purnam evavasisyate

[“The Personality of Godhead is perfect and complete, and because He is completely perfect, all emanations from Him, such as this phenomenal world, are perfectly equipped as complete wholes. Whatever is produced of the complete whole is also complete in itself. Because He is the complete whole, even though so many complete units emanate from Him, He remains the complete balance.” (Sri Isopaninad, Invocation)]

If you add or subtract from the Complete Whole, the result is still Complete Whole. Infinity – Infinity = Infinity and Infinity + Infinity = Infinity. In this way, the Lord is complete. It is said in Srimad Bhagavatam:

aho bhagyam aho bhagyam  
nanda-gopa-vrajaukasam  
yan-mitram paramanandam  
purnam brahma sanatanam

[“How greatly fortunate are Nanda Maharaja, the cowherd men and all the other inhabitants of Vrajabhumi! There is no limit to their good fortune, because the Absolute Truth, the source of transcendental bliss, the eternal Supreme Brahman, has become their friend.” (Srimad-Bhagavatam 10.14.32)]

Oh, all the residents of Nandagaon are very fortunate. Nanda Maharaja's son, Sri Krsna is the friend of them all, and He is the form of supreme eternal bliss (Purna-Brahman).

There is another point we should consider. In the scriptures we hear words like nirguna (without qualities), nirakara (without form or substance), arupa (without form or beauty) and avyakta (unmanifest). These are root words. From guna (quality), nirguna (without quality) comes. From visesa (speciality or uniqueness), nirvisesa (without speciality) comes. From akara (form and substance), nirakara comes. From form, formlessness occurs. Formlessness comes from form. From the manifest, the unmanifest occurs.

The Lord has qualities and a special form, and He comes in that form from the spiritual world to this world for the benefit of all living entities. He's not formless. Nirguna (without quality) doesn't mean that He doesn't have qualities. The meaning of nirguna here is that He doesn't have any material qualities. If He doesn't have ANY qualities, how can He be merciful? How can He fulfill all of our desires? What is the use of such a Brahman? So nirguna means that He doesn't have any material qualities. He is the embodiment of all transcendental qualities.

Those who are Vedanta-vit, learned transcendentalists, those who are great acaryas – like Srila Ramanujacarya, Srila Madhvacarya, Srila Nimbadiya, Srila Visnusvami and Srila Baladeva Vidyabhusana Prabhu – have written commentaries on Brahma-sutra, and they have defeated the theories of mayavada and advaitavada and have established savisesavada. All these (commentaries) are authentic and authoritative. Therefore, Advaitavada or Mayavada is pure imagination, it has no basis, and therefore Vaisnavas do not believe in it.

This is my commentary in brief.

Radio Show Host: The mayavadis also do 'Bhagavat-katha'. Is their commentary on Bhagavatam authentic? Please throw some light on this matter.

Srila Maharaja ji: The explanation of Srimad Bhagavatam by the mayavadis is not as per the philosophy of Srila Vyasadeva. By twisting the meanings of various words, they have tried to expound 'sayujya mukti' (merging into the Supreme) as the highest. However, in Srimad Bhagavatam, Srila Vyasadeva's own viewpoint is clearly that of Bhakti. 'krsnastu bhagavan svayam' – Sri Krsna, the son of the King of Vrindavan – Nanda Maharaja, is the Supreme Lord Himself. How can they misinterpret this?

'Bhagavatam pramanamalam yat vaisnavanam priyam' – Srimad Bhagavatm is dear to the Vaisnava devotees. This is not a scripture of the mayavadis. Their philosophy is defeated in it. Therefore, the explanation of Srimad Bhagavatam by the mayavadis is not authentic.

Radio Show Host: What is your instruction for our audience?

Srila Narayana Maharaja: According to all our scriptures, the Supreme Lord is omnipotent (all powerful). He is very merciful. His mercy is causeless. And He is the embodiment of all transcendental qualities. He has invested all His powers, His causeless mercy, and His qualities in these sixteen names. These names (Mahamantra) are so powerful that they fulfill all the desires of any sadhaka-jiva who chants them with great devotion. The holy names can take away endless miseries of endless births and deaths. And the names of Krsna can give love of Krsna. They can give anything that an aspiring devotee desires. Therefore, all of you must always chant this Mahamantra:

Hare Krsna Hare Krsna Krsna Krsna Hare Hare  
Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare Hare

[\*Endnote 1:

"So these facts pertain to a higher standard of understanding. Only a devotee can understand that to become one with God is not a sublime idea. In Vrndavana the devotees want to become the father or mother of God – to control God with love. This fact the Mayavadis, or Advaitavadis, cannot understand. Only pure devotees can understand these things. What is the benefit of becoming one with God?" (Civilization and Transcendence Ch. 11 – lectures by Srila Prabhupada Bhaktivedanta Svami Prabhupada)

"Mayavada philosophy tries to designate the Lord as contaminated by a material body when He accepts forms of incarnation. This sort of interpolation is completely denied herein by the explanation that the Lord's position is pure and unalloyed in all circumstances. According to Mayavada philosophy, the spirit soul, when covered by nescience, is designated as jiva, but when freed from such ignorance or nescience he merges in the impersonal existence of the Absolute Truth" (Srimad-Bhagavatam 2.6.40)]

[\*Endnote 2:

"Mayavadi sannyasis accept that the commentary by Sri Sankaracarya known as Sariraka-bhasya gives the real meaning of the Vedanta-sutra. In other words, Mayavadi sannyasis accept the meanings expressed in the explanations of the Vedanta-sutra by Sankaracarya, which are based on monism. Thus they explain the Vedanta-sutra, the Upanisads and all such Vedic literature in their own impersonal way." (Caitanya-Caritamrta Adi 7.101 purport)

"Factually, the devotional service of the Lord is described in the Vedanta-sutra, but the Mayavadi philosophers, the Sankarites, prepared a commentary known as Sariraka-bhasya, in which the transcendental form of the Lord is denied. The Mayavadi philosophers think that the living entity is identical with the Supreme Soul, Brahman. Their commentaries on the Vedanta-sutra are completely opposed to the principle of devotional service. Caitanya Mahaprabhu therefore warns us to avoid these commentaries. If one indulges in hearing the Sankarite Sariraka-bhasya, he will certainly be bereft of all real knowledge. (Caitanya-caritamrta Madhya 6.169 purport)]

[\*Endnote 3: "The Vedanta-sutras, or the Brahma-sutras, were compiled by Vyasadeva with a view to presenting just the cream of Vedic knowledge. Srimad-Bhagavatam is the natural commentary on this cream." (Srimad-Bhagavatam 1.2.3 purport)

[Sri Narada Muni told Srila Vyasadeva] "You have fully delineated the subject of impersonal Brahman as well as the knowledge derived there from. Why should you be despondent in spite of all this, thinking that you are undone, my dear prabhu?  
PURPORT "The Vedanta-sutra, or Brahma-sutra, compiled by Sri Vyasadeva is the full deliberation of the impersonal absolute feature, and it is accepted as the most exalted philosophical exposition in the world. It covers the subject of eternity, and the methods

are scholarly. So there cannot be any doubt about the transcendental scholarship of Vyasadeva. So why should he lament?"(Srimad-Bhagavatam 1.5.4, verse and purport)]

"Vyasadeva personally wrote the Vedanta-sutra under the instructions of Narada, his Guru Maharaja (spiritual master), but still he was not satisfied. That is a long story, described in Srimad-Bhagavatam. Vedavyasa was not very satisfied even after compiling many Puranas and Upanisads, and even after writing the Vedanta-sutra. Then his spiritual master, Narada, instructed him, "You explain the Vedanta-sutra." Vedanta means "ultimate knowledge," and the ultimate knowledge is Krsna. Krsna says that throughout all the Vedas one has to understand Him: vedanta-krd veda-vid eva caham. Krsna says, "I am the compiler of the Vedanta-sutra, and I am the knower of the Vedas." Therefore the ultimate objective is Krsna. That is explained in all the Vaisnava commentaries on Vedanta philosophy.

We Gaudiya Vaisnavas have our commentary on Vedanta philosophy, called Govinda-bhasya, by Baladeva Vidyabhusana. Similarly, Ramanujacarya has a commentary, and Madhvacarya has one. The version of Sankaracarya is not the only commentary. There are many Vedanta commentaries, but because the Vaisnavas did not present the first Vedanta commentary, people are under the wrong impression that Sankaracarya's is the only Vedanta commentary. Besides that, Vyasadeva himself wrote the perfect Vedanta commentary, Srimad-Bhagavatam. Srimad-Bhagavatam begins with the first words of the Vedanta-sutra: janmady asya yatah [SB 1.1.1]. And that janmady asya yatah is fully explained in Srimad-Bhagavatam. The Vedanta-sutra simply hints at what is Brahman, the Absolute Truth: "The Absolute Truth is that from whom everything emanates." This is a summary, but it is explained in detail in Srimad-Bhagavatam." (Sri Isopanisad, commentary by Srila Prabhupada Bhaktivedanta Svami Maharaja)

[\*Endnote 4: "Originally the Veda is one. But Srila Vyasadeva divided the original Veda into four, namely Sama, Yajur, Rg, Atharva, and then again they were explained in different branches like the Puranas and the Mahabharata. Vedic language and the subject matter are very difficult for ordinary men."(Srimad-Bhagavatam 1.3.21 Purport)

"Knowledge is sabda-pramana, evidence from Vedic literature. Srila Vyasadeva is called Mahamuni. He is also known as Vedavyasa because he has compiled so many sastras. He has divided the Vedas into four divisions-Sama, Rg, Yajur and Atharva. He has expanded the Vedas into eighteen Puranas and has summarized Vedic knowledge in the Vedanta-sutra. He also compiled the Mahabharata, which is accepted as the fifth Veda. Bhagavad-gita is contained within the Mahabharata."(Caitanya Caritamrta Madhya-lila 20.353 purport)]

[Endnote 5: "This process of turning the senses from material attachment to the loving transcendental service of the Lord is called pratyahara, and the very process is called pranayama, ultimately ending in samadhi, or absorption in pleasing the Supreme Lord Hari by all means."(Srimad-Bhagavatam 1.13.54 purport)

"The inhabitants of Vrndavana were always engaged in thinking of Krsna, in constant meditation on the Personality of Godhead in a particular form of samadhi, or trance of bhakti-yoga. They had no fear of the miseries of material existence. In the Bhagavad-gita it is confirmed that to be in association with the Supreme Personality of Godhead by full surrender in transcendental love frees one from the miseries inflicted by the laws of material nature."(Srimad-Bhagavatam 2.7.31 purport)

[\*Endnote 6: "Whenever we speak of Krsna, we refer to His devotees also, for He is not alone. He is never nirviseṣa or sunya, without variety, or zero. Krsna is full of variety, and as soon as Krsna is present, there cannot be any question of void." (Srimad-Bhagavatam 4.23.35)]

[\*Endnote 7: nirviseṣa-brahma – the impersonal Brahman effulgence]

[\*Endnote 8: "In the same way, one who wants to serve Krsna in conjugal love can also attain a body under the guidance of the gopis. The most vivid example in this connection is those saintly personalities known as srutis, who represent the Upanisads. These srutis understand that without serving Krsna and following in the footsteps of the gopis there is no possibility of entering the kingdom of God. Therefore they engage in spontaneous loving service unto Krsna and follow in the footsteps of the gopis." (Caitanya Caritamṛta Madhya 8.223 purport)

"The Vedic literatures are divided into two parts: the srutis and the smṛtis. The srutis are the four Vedas: Rk, Sama, Atharva and Yajus, and the Upanisads, and the smṛtis are the Puranas like Mahabharata, which includes Bhagavad-gita. The conclusion of all these is that one should know Sri Krsna as the Supreme Personality of Godhead."(Krsna Book vol 2 chap 32)]

"Srila Prabhupada: 'Yes, everything is based on the Srutis. as the Vedanta-sutra says, anavṛtīh sabdat: simply by chanting the Lord's names and instructions – His sound vibration – one becomes spiritually realized. Sabda brahman means "spiritual sound vibration," and as the Vedanta-sutra instructs us, by chanting this spiritual sound vibration – the instructions and holy name of the Lord – one can become liberated. (Civilization and Transcendence Ch. 5 – lectures by Srila Prabhupada)

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