

## PREFACE

*Avatāravāda* is a unique characteristic of Hinduism. In this way, *Avatārī* Parabrahman Svāminārāyaṇa incarnated in the village Chapīyā in Uttara Pradeśa on 3 April 1781 (*Caitra Śukla 9, Samvata 1837*). In 1792, at the age of 11 years, he left his home and began a seven-year pilgrimage across India. After 7 years and 11 months, he settled in the modern-day Indian state of Gujarāta 1799. In 1800, he was initiated and took *Bhagavatī dikṣā* in the Rāmānanda Svāmī's *sampradāya*. The Guru, Svāmī Rāmānanda, handed over the helm of the *sampradāya* and made him his successor in 1802. During his lifetime, Svāminārāyaṇa preached his unique teachings to his followers. Throughout his travels, he explained the principle of becoming *akṣararūpa* and offering *upāsanā* to Puruṣottama.

He revealed the existence of the following five eternally distinct ontological entities: *jīva*, *īśvara*, *māyā*, Akṣarabrahman, and Parabrahman. He did not encounter a single *sampradāya* that believed in the existence of five eternally distinct entities or the principle of becoming *akṣararūpa* and offering *bhakti* to Puruṣottama. Along with it the form and nature of Akṣarabrahman, *īśvara* as a distinct entity from Brahman and Parabrahman, etc. are the matchless principles found in the history of the Vedānta tradition. Svāminārāyaṇa's teachings were based on the ancient Indian scriptures and he propagated his principles using direct references from these texts. All his teachings were compiled in his time and preserved in a written form. This compilation is known as the *Vacanāmṛta*.

In this manner, Svāminārāyaṇa provides a unique, unprecedented contribution to Vedic knowledge. His successors, Akṣarabrahman Guṇātītānda Svāmī and Brahmasvarūpa Bhagatajī Mahārāja, continued this legacy. Brahmasvarūpa Śāstrījī Mahārāja (Śāstrī Yajñapurūṣadāsa, the third successor of Svāminārāyaṇa) had given the name of Svāminārāyaṇa's teaching as '*Akṣara Puruṣottama Darśana*'. He

propagated this *Darśana* by using terms such as *Akṣara-Puruṣottama Upāsanā* and *Akṣara-Puruṣottama Siddhānta*. In addition to conveying the *Darśana*'s teachings, he also created the *mandiras* in which he consecrated *mūrtis* of both Puruṣottama and Akṣarabrahman. Thereafter, Brahmasvarūpa Yogījī Mahārāja and Pramukha Svāmī Mahārāja spread Parabrahman Svāminārāyaṇa's teaching throughout the world.

In Pramukha Svāmī Mahārāja's time, through his blessings, after two hundred years of Svāminārāyaṇa's time, Bhadreśadāsa a Sādhu has authored a commentary (*Bhāṣya*) on the *Prasthānatrayī*. Today, Pragaṭa Brahmasvarūp Mahanta Svāmī Mahārāja is enriching devotees with these *darśanic* principles. This *darśana* is also known as '*Svāminārāyaṇa Darśana*'. This work is correlating the principles of Svāminārāyaṇa described in the *Vacanāmṛta* with the *Svāminārāyaṇa Bhāṣya*.