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THE BRAHMASŪTRA-SVĀMINĀRĀYAṆABHĀṢYA— A NOVEL READING ACCORDING TO THE TEACHINGS OF BHAGAVĀN SVĀMINĀRĀYAṆA

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About the author: Dr. Sadhu Bhadreshdas is a profound scholar. I am proud to announce that he was a student at our Karnataka State Open University, Manasagangotri, Mysore. He completed his MA in Sanskrit and received First class honours for his accomplishments. Thereafter, under my guidance he pursued his doctorate degree, Ph.D., on the subject: "Paramātma-pratyakṣa-svarūpa-yoga: Śrīmadbhagavadgītā-Śrīvacanāmṛta-saṃdarbhayoḥ Tulanātmakādhyayanam." Dr. Sadhu Bhadreshdas produced an exceptional thesis. He placed tremendous effort in its creation. He presented it in lucid Sanskrit and received great appreciation by the examiners of his work.

I whole heartedly congratulate him and wish him much success in producing many such scholarly works, which enrich knowledge and benefit all of mankind.

I am delighted to know that Sadhu Bhadreshdas recently authored the unique and profound *Svāmināràyaṇabhāṣya* on Bādarāyaṇa's *Brahmasūtras*.

About the work: The *Brahmasūtra-Svāmināràyaṇa-Bhāṣya* is a commentary that explains the philosophy of Bhagavān Śrī Swaminarayan (Svāmināràyaṇa). It is a very informative and authoritative commentary.

The *Brahmasūtra* is a great work of Bādarāyaṇa that discusses the knowledge of *brahman*. All Vedānta *ācāryas* have authored commentaries on it along with the following two important sacred texts: the Upaniṣads and the *Śrīmadbhagavadgītā*. These three sacred texts are collectively known as the *Prasthānatrayī*. The great *ācāryas* authored commentaries on these works and established their own *darśanic* positions by interpreting these three sacred texts. The *Brahmasūtra-Svāmināràyaṇa-Bhāṣya* is created according to the Svāmināràyaṇa tradition and its philosophical principles. Dr. Sadhu Bhadreshdas' hard work, his meticulous study, and the blessings and inspiration

from his guru Pramukh Swami Maharaj culminated into in the impressive creation of the *Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣya*.

The commentary is authored according to the Akṣara-Puruṣottama doctrine. Among other things, it is unique because of its extraordinary quality. Its every word presents unseen treasures hidden within Vedic principles. The text will help scholars study classical Vedānta texts under a new light. It possesses the potential to elevate the individual and take Vedānta philosophy to a greater heights. The commentary's stylistic elements reflect those of the classical and authoritative style of the renowned *ācāryas*. Dr. Sadhu Bhadreshdas substantiates his explanations of the aphorisms within the text by quoting several readings from the Upaniṣad and other sacred texts. The work reveals hidden principles of the *śrutis* and demonstrates readings from a larger, inclusive perspective. An in-depth study of this commentary will surely elevate one's understanding of Vedānta. This *bhāṣya* convincingly explains and establishes the eternal truth of Vedic philosophy revealed by Bhagavān Śrī Swaminarayan. It is immensely useful for understanding Indian philosophy. It is an unbiased work and does not discredit any other tradition (*saṃpradāya*) of Indian philosophy. The text offers interesting expositions on all aspects of the Svāminārāyaṇa tradition and brings forth its novel features. For this reason, it is an indispensable guide to students of Śrī Swaminarayan philosophy and may be used in curriculums where this philosophy is studied. By studying it, one concludes that the Svāminārāyaṇa *saṃpradāya* and the Akṣara Puruṣottama Siddhānta is an independent tradition that is based on ancient Vedic principles. The tradition's principles greatly differ from Rāmānuja's Viśiṣṭādvaita, Vallabhadeva's Śuddhādvaita and the philosophy of Madhva, Nimbārka, and other Vedānta *darśanas*. The *Svāminārāyaṇabhāṣya* effectively brings forth the tradition's and its *siddhānta*'s distinctive features and principles.

By composing this text according to the eternal Vedic principles conveyed by Bhagavān Śrī Swaminarayan and the teachings of the enlightened guru-*paramaparā* (lineage of gurus that succeeded Bhagavān Swaminarayan), the author of this commentary has performed a great service. I hope that the author of this work continues to produce additional scholarly works and, in doing so, enlighten all those who seek knowledge from its pages.