

Discussion Summary – September 6, 2015

Continuing his overview of Part 2, Cantos 2, Mantra # 5 again, Swamiji says, Atma alone blesses life. Sukshma Sharira allows this body to live. Prana is within Sukshma Sharira. As such, superficially, it appears as if Prana is the basis for life. Yama says, both Prana and Sukshma Sharira are Jadam (inanimate) as such they cannot give life. It is Atma alone that blesses the body with life.

Describing the mechanics of this: Jada Prana is able to borrow life from Atma and thus become sentient. This sentient Prana blesses the body with consciousness. Giving example of a mirror, it reflects sunlight to lighten a dark room. When mirror is removed, the room becomes dark again. The mirror is not the one illuminating, though.

The sun, while it illuminates, it cannot illuminate the room because of walls. The mirror borrows from sun and lightens the room.

Mantra 6: Hereon Yama discusses the very subtle topic of Brahman. He also describes what happens to an ignorant Jivatma after death. In a wise person, the Karana Sharira , Sthula Sharira and Jivatma, all dissolve in Ishwara. He is called a Videhimukta.

Mantra 7: This mantra is important because it discusses rebirth as well as what happens to an Agyani Jivatma after death. Swamiji says science has found no evidence of rebirth, to date. He says, as per Shastras, rebirth is an Aupurusheya subject. Shastras only provide supporting evidence, not direct evidence. So, when an Agyani dies the

Sthula Sharira mingles with Pancha Bhutam. His Jivatma also cannot travel. The subtle and invisible Sukshma Karana Sharira alone survives. It can travel. It travels to another body. The

type of body it gets depends on its punya papa Karmaphalani. God does not determine our rebirth, says Swamiji. The body may get its rebirth as a Superior one, such as Devas; as an inferior one such as Plants or animals; or Medium one, such as a Human being. The Sukshma Karana Sharira gets an appropriate body to exhaust its karma phalas. Even to experience a body in the dream state, a physical body is required, says Swamiji. It is not possible to predict the time of another birth, as time cannot be measured and it is relative. As an example, Swamiji says, in a dream we can experience a whole lifetime.

Birth is not an accident. Laws of Karma determine it. We may not remember our previous birth, but God remembers everything, says Swamiji. Our rebirth depends on our Upasana. Upasana here means the topic we dwell on or think of most of the time. He reminded us that: Thought>Action> Habit>Character>Destiny (or destination). Everything begins with thought, says Swamiji.

Mantra 8:

What is Brahman is the topic of this mantra. It is the Consciousness that resides in every being that is also called Purushaha. Puru-Shaha or In-Dweller. Consciousness is always awake, even in our sleeping state. It is the one that illumines the blank mind in sleep state.

Essence of Brahman

“I did not know anything in sleep” is a declaration. Swamiji asks who is this “I” who did not know anything in sleep? “I” am the eternal illuminator of the waking and sleep state of mind. “I” know, when the mind knows and “I” also know, when the mind does not know. “I” am also the creator, as I like, of my inner universe, through my Vasanas. I am also the creator of the external universe, during the waking state. “I” the illumining consciousness is ever pure. This consciousness is

Brahman. This "I" is "in" the body as well as "outside" the body. Like space it is all pervading. It is immortal and does not die, when body dies. Swamiji now says, "All bodies" are in this consciousness. Thus, "in" our body is consciousness. Nothing exists beyond this consciousness. That Atma is you, declares Swamiji. The whole world is in me; it arises in me and dissolves in me. We constantly think of ourselves as "in" this world and are buried with our worries and problems. Swamiji asks us to change our perception to: "The World is in me".

Take away from today's discussions:

Suggested Practice:

1. Constantly be aware of the eternal "I" within us. This is the greatest Upasana we can perform.
2. Essence of Brahman described above, try to understand it and internalize it.

With my good wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

Discussion Summary July 26, 2015

Discussing part 2 Cantos 1, Shlokas 6,7, 9 and 8, Swamiji continued the discussion of the Atman or Consciousness. The subtle universe was born out of Causal universe (the seed). The Causal universe was always there even before creation. He compares the Causal Universe to the state before the big bang.

Thus: Karana Sharira (Causal)>Sukshma Sharira (Subtle also

called Ishwara) > Hiranyagarbha (first born). Ishwara through tapas creates Hiranyagarbha. Tapas is the mere wish of Ishwara.

Thus, the one Samanya Chaitanya, general consciousness, expresses itself in micro and macrocosm. It expresses itself in the three pairs:

1. The Physical body, we all can experience it.
2. The Subtle body, that only I can experience and not others.
3. The Causal Body, that remains dormant and can be experienced only when it manifests itself. This is the subtlest stage of inner material.

And correspondingly we have:

1. Waker consciousness
2. Subtle body consciousness
3. Causal body consciousness

The total deity is born as Hiranyagarbha. Hiranyagarbha consists of the 17 Tatvas or elements They are: 5 organs of perception (Ear, Eye, Tongue, Skin and Nose), 5 organs of action (Speech, Hand, Leg, Excretion and Genital), 5 Vital air's (Prana, Apana, Vyana, Udana and Samana), the Mind (manaha) and Intellect (budhi).

Swamiji says for each of the 17 Tatvas or elements there is a corresponding Devta. Prana Devta is most important, as without him we cannot survive. All Devtas are born, maintained and resolved in Hiranyagarbha, in its cycle of creation, maintenance and destruction.

Swamiji says Agni Devta represents Vishwavidya or Stula Prapancha. Virat- Agni is worshiped by a group of people by lighting the sacred fire. Rubbing two pieces of wood called Arani lights the sacred fire. Another form of Agni called Vaishwanar-agni (our internal digestive power) is also

worshiped by some. All of them, says Swamiji, represent our one consciousness, the Atman.

The take away from this session was the idea of a Yagna is making an offering to God. In the same spirit we should offer every action of ours as an offering to our Atman. Discussing Karma Yoga, Swamiji says “And when I perform the actions out of Ishvara Arpana Bhaṅana, and when I receive the processed Karma in form of Phalam, I don't call it Karma Phalam, but I call it Iṣhvara Prasaḁaha.”

With my good wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy

New Year Discourse by Swami Paramarthanada

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