

Discussion Summary – August 23, 2015

Mantras 1 and 2 Continued:

Continuing his overview of Part 2, Cantos 2, Swamiji says Vedanta has four stages of evolution. The four stages of Vedanta are:

1. First stage is recognizing the separation of Body from Consciousness. This is also called Atma – Anatma Viveka. To be aware of this separation may take a long time even several births.
2. Second stage is to learn to shift the “I” from the body to consciousness, says Swamiji. Become aware that “ I am the consciousness that has incidentally got a body. I may lose this body at any time. I do not know when I will leave this body”.
3. Third stage is becoming aware that “I” the consciousness is not just present in this body alone but in all bodies. I am that space like consciousness present in all bodies. Aham Brahma Asmi. In this stage, I see myself in everything. Swamiji says, at this stage we still are in the Dvaita.
4. Fourth stage brings the question “what is my relationship with matter”? Swamiji says , at this stage you will become aware that “ I am not only operating in every body, but all bodies are my own manifestation. I am Brahman. I am Jagad Karanam. I am myself manifesting as a body as well. I create the body and I choose to transact through these bodies as well”. In this stage, I am conscious that I am in Sarva-atma Bhava.

Swamiji says questions do arise in a devotee’s mind if all above premises are valid. The best example or proof of this is in our ability to create a dream body, within a dream space and dreamtime. You create the dream body; you then see,

through the dream body, the entire dream world. You accept the dream world as an independent reality.

Mantra # 3: Discussing this mantra Swamiji reiterates that it is the Atma as Chiddabasha that animates the physical body. Atma (Blesses)> Reflected Consciousness > (blesses/animates) Physical body.

As long as Reflected Consciousness (RC) is there, body lives and once it quits, the body dies. At death, Swamiji says, mind does not die; it just decides to quit the body. So, once reflecting medium (RM) does not reflect, the Chidabasha also goes or stops blessing the body.

So the definition of death is that when the Mind and Reflected consciousness (RC) separate from physical body, it is death. In a dead body the Original Consciousness is still there, however, it just cannot bless the body.

Describing the Atma, Swamiji says it is present in our heart. It is recognizable in our mind as the Experiencer. Atma is in the temple called body. The five sense organs are like Pujaris making regular offerings to the divine Atma.

Mantra's #4 & # 5:

Swamiji says, when atma is present, body is alive and when it quits the body is dead. At death, the Reflected Consciousness goes away. The Reflecting Medium (Sukshma sharira) also goes away. The most important part of subtle body, the Prana, also goes away. Swamiji says, it is finally the RC that is blessing this body with life and not the Prana.

Take away from today's discussions:

My suggestion:

Many of us are probably in stage one of the Vedantic stages. Our efforts should be directed towards recognizing the separation of Body from Consciousness. We should the keep the

following mantra in our mind at all times. "I am not this body, mind or thought. I just am."

With my good wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy