

Prasna Upanishad, Class 8

Questions:

1. What are the principles sustaining the body: Gyanendriyam, karmandhriyam panca boodha and andhagraganam (intellect.). 19 principles and 24 including panca pranas. But pranas are excluded as they will be introduced as the most superior.
2. Who all glorify themselves. All 19 principles (except panca prana) glorify themselves.
3. Among all the sustaining principles which is most powerful – varishtaha.

The first two questions are answered in verse 2. To answer the third question, a story is told, personifying all tatvas or principles.

Verse 3

One day prana called all 19 principles. Don't get deluded regarding the glory of who sustains the body, because I the prana alone divide into five, prana (respiratory), apana (excretory) , vyana (circulatory), samana (digestive) and udhana (reversing), and sustain the whole individual. However, the 19 principles did not believe because of their vanity.

Verse 4

To prove the point, Prana pretended to go out. As prana started to leave other principles also followed prana because their very existences dependent on Prana. And prana came back and all the 19 principles came back. This is the direct proof that all principles are dependent on prana sakthi. The 19 principles were pleased as the Prana did not go away permanently. Swamiji gave the example of Queen Bee, where the entire beehive follows the Queen Bee without any question.

Similarly, the 19 principles followed Prana without any question. With this the 19 principles understood the glory of prana.

The rest of the section is prana sthuthi by the 19 principles.

Verse 5

In this verse, prana is glorified at micro and macro levels.

Glorification at individual level – prana sakthi gives power to eyes, ears etc. At the cosmic or macro level, hiranyagarba alone appears as burning power of agni, appears as light energy in sun. Similarly, Indira, Vayu, Earth, Moon are all powered by Prana sakthi. Prana sakthi broken down is all Murtha (formed) and amurtha (formless) vasthu (objects).

Verse 6

All the vedas, yagyas, warriors, brahmanas, the whole creation is based on prana. Without prana nothing can survive. In a wheel, the outer rim appears to be supported by spokes, but in reality, the spokes are supported by the hub. The whole wheel supported by the hub. Similarly all principles are supported by prana sakthi. In this example, each spoke can be taken as different principle; the wheel as the whole creation and prana as the hub.