

Discussion Summary, August 9, 2015

In Part 2, Cantos 1, Shlokas 11 through 14 respectively, Swamiji continued the discussion of the Atman or Consciousness as Jivatma and Paramatma.

He says shlokas 5 through 10 taught us that the Atma is everything. Anatma, signifying name and form, in reality, does not exist. Giving analogy of jewelry, Swamiji says, from the one gold many jewels are made, with different names and forms, yet, the reality is, it is all made of gold. So also, all Anatma is also made of Atma or Consciousness.

In Mantra # 11, Swamiji now says, this knowledge of Atma is not optional. It is compulsory, as without this knowledge, we cannot obtain peace of mind, feel secure and feel fulfilled. This is the goal of every human being and is called Moksha Purnatvam.

In Shloka # 12, Swamiji now describes Jivatma. This Mantra is also called a Mahavakyam. Swamiji says, The Jivatma is located, seemingly, in the heart of the Sukshma Shariram. It is the Sakshi, witness, of the mind. He describes the heart as the size of a fist. The heart has space inside, the size of an individual's thumb. In this space is located the mind and in this mind is located the Consciousness. So, Consciousness is thought of as the size of a thumb because it is manifest in the mind. Although, in reality, it is the size of the limitless Paramatma.

Giving example of a pot with a limited space within it, Swamiji says, if you inquire into it, you realize that in reality space is also outside the pot. Furthermore, you will also realize that the pot itself is in space and not the other way around. This space is the one Consciousness. Thus, there

is only one Atma; Jivatma and Paramatma are one and same. Once you know this truth, you will not feel insecure anymore, says Swamiji.

Shloka 13, Swamiji says, is another Mahavakyam. Seemingly, Jivatma is confined to the body. So we think it is finite and limited. It is compared to a smokeless flame. It is the Consciousness that illuminates everything including our sense organs. This "Light" within us is both Jivatma and the Paramatma. Even when the brain is gone and when the body is dead, this Consciousness continues on. Yama says, it is eternal.

In Shoka 14, Yama says, Dvaita Darshanam leads to mortality. Swamiji now gives us some examples. Giving example of water flowing down a hill, after heavy rains, that becomes many streams and dissipates in the earth versus becoming one large stream that becomes a mighty river. Giving another example of the Wave feeling it is an individual Wave rather than feeling it is part of the Ocean. So also, the choice before us is, do we feel as an individual Wave or as a part of the Ocean, asks Swamiji. Advaita Darshanam leads to immortality. Citing yet another example, Swamiji says, Jivatma is like a glass of water and Paramatma is the Ocean. Both are water and pure. Once you pour one into another they become one and the same.

So also, through our Vedantic Bhavana, we are pouring Jivatma into Pramatta and the difference disappears. However, Swamiji says, to become one with Paramatma, the Jivatma needs to be pure. The merger of Jivatma and Paramatma is an intellectual event. By right understanding, we become aware that Jivartma and Paramatma are one and same.

Take away from today's discussions:

1. To reach Advaita (one without a second) many of us have to go through Dvaita (plurality). That is the reason we worship so many different gods. However, as wisdom dawns, and

we mature we will see everything is Advaita.

2. Bhakthi is one way to reach Advaita. That is why in Hinduism god is worshipped in many forms such as a child, lover, mother and so on. The devotee is totally immersed in God, in that mode of worship and this eventually leads to the realization of the One truth.

With my good wishes,

Ram Ramaswamy