

**Sādhana-pañcakam**  
**Pujya Swamiji's transcribed talk**

*This is the twenty fourth part of the serial article, continuation from Jan 2023 newsletter.*

**SELF-IGNORANCE IS AN ORIENTATION**

The difference between the correction of a onetime mistake and the correction of an orientation is obvious. A one-time correction is when you mistake the rope for a snake, but then you see the rope and the snake goes away. An orientation is when you do the wrong thing again and again. Suppose a light switch was in a room, on the right side of the door. Then it was changed to the left side. Now when you walk into the room, where will your hand go? To the right side because it takes time to change. Even after a year, you will still reach to the right side. This is what they call orientation. Correcting an orientation means changing something that you have been accustomed to doing over a period of time.

This is a problem with tennis players, for example. Even though they have good strokes, the grip is a problem, and they have to learn how to change it. It is the same thing in cricket. Changing any orientation is a problem, and it does not happen all at once. Even though there are orientation courses for three days, re-orientation does not really take place unless you subject yourself to a particular process for a length of time.

You have the orientation of taking *ātmā* to be the body, up to this point in your life. Then if you take the *pūrva-janma*, previous birth into account as well, this orientation is beginningless. Fortunately, this beginningless orientation is born of *aviveka*, lack of discrimination. Whereas *jñānam*, knowledge is born of *viveka*, discrimination. Therefore, wrong orientation does not require lifetimes for it to go. *Jñānam* is knowledge of the *vastu*, the reality of what is. The other is purely an orientation without the backing of knowledge. Without *jñānam*, you can practice *samādhi* etc. endlessly and nothing will happen.

Here, however, *jñānam*, knowledge has already happened. The student has under-

stood the reality very well, through *śravaṇam* and *mananam*. Things have become very clear to him or her. Thus *nididhyāsanam* is not a new means of knowledge. Meditation or contemplation does not lead you to knowledge at all. They only focus your attention on what you already know. Logically speaking, *nididhyāsanam* does not really work. In fact, it is impossible and is only 'as though.' That is why the *śruti* says *dhyāyati iva, lelāyati iva*.<sup>124</sup> *Nididhyāsanam* helps the person by allowing him to see the whole thing. You must have that kind of familiarity with *pūrṇa-ātmā*. For example, when I say 'pot', you appreciate the pot. In that same way, when I say *pūrṇa-ātmā*, you should be able to appreciate what *pūrṇa-ātmā* is. It should become very clear to you.

#### ABILITY TO BE WITH YOURSELF

As we have seen, this *nididhyāsanam* is done only after *śravaṇam* and *mananam* and takes some time. Therefore, *ekānte sukhamāsyatām*; may you sit in a posture that is comfortable, withdrawing your mind from everything else. *Ekānta* means you are the limit for a place, in other words no one else is there. In a situation where you are *ekānte*, alone, *sukhena āsyatām*, may the body be placed in a comfortable posture. This is *ekānte sukhamāsyatām*.

*Ekānta* also indicates a certain preparation, otherwise *ekānta* will feel frightening and lonely. That *ekānta* itself implies that there should be a certain maturity, an ability to be with yourself. Even if there are a hundred people sitting there in the morning meditation, do you feel that so many people are around you? You have to say, 'No'. Because if you say, 'Yes', that means your meditation is upon the other people. Even though there are many people around you, your mind is elsewhere. Your mind is committed to what you are doing. Actually, the truth is that you are always *ekānta*. The reason why you experience this *ekānta* in meditation, in spite of all the people around, is because everybody is doing the same thing. Suppose one person is reading, one person is chanting, another person is hammering a nail or fixing up varieties of things, with a lot of noise and so on. Then

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124 *dhyāyati iva* = as though meditating; *lelāyati iva* = as though quivering

चड ॥ उभौ लोकावनुसंचरति ध्यायतीव लेलायतीव यच्चहादब्रान्नयाकखपानश्चिद 4.3.7)

an other person is doing yoga *āsanas* and when he stretches, his feet touch you. And yet another person is sleeping. You may think that at least he does not disturb anyone. No, when he starts snoring, it definitely disturbs. Therefore you find that when all the people are doing one thing or another, then naturally there is no *ekānta*, there is only *anekānta*. As long as everyone is doing the same thing, it is *ekānta*. Therefore you do not require to go somewhere else, as long as others are pursuing the same thing. That becomes *ekānta*.

### BRING THE MIND TO THE LIMITLESS

*Paratara cetah samādhīyatām*; may the mind be brought to *paratara*, that which is *param*, limitless. This is a reference to *paraṁ-brahma*, *paramātmani*. As we saw, there are two ways of doing this, *śabda-anuviddha-savikalpa* and *dr̥śya-anuviddha-savikalpa*. The first of these we have already discussed. In the second, *dr̥śya-anuviddha-savikalpa*, you chant *om* or some other chant. You hear *om*, there is awareness of *om*, and that awareness itself is exactly what you are. It is invariable. It has no limitation. It is not *deśa-kāla-paricchinna*, bound by time and space. So this appreciation is there. This means there is no ignorance of the fact that consciousness is not bound by time and space. That is what is called *samādhāna* or *dr̥śya-anuviddha-savikalpa*. Any object perceived by you through a sense organ is called *dr̥śya*. *Dr̥śya* means not only what is seen, but also what is heard, smelt, and so on. And it is not only external, *dr̥śya* can also mean inside.

*Antaḥkaraṇa-vṛtti*, a mind modification, is also *dr̥śya*. Thus you are the *dr̥k*, seer with reference to *dr̥śya* inside and with reference to *dr̥śya* outside. So the attention is towards the *sākṣī*, witness. Being *sākṣī*, which is self-revealing, it is not difficult to be what you are. Your attention is not towards the witnessed. It is withdrawn from the witnessed object. This is what they call 'witness appreciation.' When you withdraw your attention from the witnessed, you are already the self-revealing witness, known as *dr̥śya-anuviddha-savikalpa*. No matter what object you confront, it does not mean anything because you withdraw your attention from the object. Even if you hear someone sneezing, it is not a problem. So you can meditate on a *dr̥śya*, object of perception, or a *śabda*, word or even a *rūpa*, form which means that you can also meditate with eyes open. *Dr̥śya*

really means *rūpa*. So *rūpa* is *dr̥śya* and *śabda* is *dr̥śya*. Even *sparśa*, *rasa*, and *gandha*<sup>125</sup> are *dr̥śya*, so you can practice all of them. This is what is called *dr̥śya-anuviddha-savikalpa-samādhiḥ*. *Samādhiḥ* means meditation, contemplation. It is *savikalpa*, differentiated, because there is a person who is doing all of this with reference to an object. The knower-knowledge-known is there, but attention is withdrawn from the *jñeyam*, the object, to the self. And the self is self-revealing.

This contemplation with *śabda-anuviddha-savikalpa* and *dr̥śya-anuviddha-savikalpa* is possible only because you have done *śravaṇam* and *mananam*. Otherwise it is only a practice of looking at this or looking at that. So until *śravaṇam-mananam* is done, we practice only *dhyānam*. *Dhyānam* at least helps you to enjoy a certain composure and also to get grace through surrender to *Īśvara*. All these things are very beautiful. Therefore, first *dhyānam* and then *nididhyāsanam*. But the latter is only after doing *śravaṇam* and *mananam*.

## SEEING YOURSELF AS FULLNESS

*Pūrṇātmā susamīkṣyatām*; may you see the truth of the self as *pūrṇa-ātmā*, fullness. To achieve this *paratara cetah samādhiyatām*, the author says *pūrṇātmā susamīkṣyatām*.<sup>126</sup> *Samīkṣā* means seeing as it is unfolded by the *śāstra*. *Pūrṇa-ātmā* means any known object is non-separate from you. The knowledge is also non-separate from you. And the knower is yourself. *Jñātr-jñāna-jñeyam*, knower-knowledge-known, all three of them are one and the same, you alone. In this manner, may the *pūrṇa-ātmā* that is unfolded by the *śāstra* and which is completely freed from all doubts through *mananam*, be recognised again with the help of the words of the *śāstra*. In this way, *pūrṇa-ātmā* is seen to be the 'I'. So *pūrṇa-ātmā* is non-separate from you. This *pūrṇa-ātmā* is indeed *paraṁ-brahma*. May you recognize this *brahmātmā*, the limitlessness of the *ātmā*. You are the same *caitanya-ātmā*, *sat-cit-ātmā* alone, both with the world and without the world. Without the world you are *sat-cit-ātmā*. Even when any *vṛtti*, thought, is there, the *caitanya* is your-

<sup>125</sup> *sparśa* = touch, *rasa* = taste; *gandha* = smell

<sup>126</sup> सुष्ठु सम्यक्खे ईक्ष्यतांसुसमीक्ष्यताम्

self and in the *vr̥tti* there is an object. This object is also non-separate from the *caitanya* and the *sadātmā*. Because *pūr̥ṇa-ātmā* is the limitless self, it becomes the *adhiṣṭhānam*, the basis, the truth of the *jagat*, world. Any *jagat* that you confront is the *adhiṣṭhānam* itself, which is you.

#### UNDERSTANDING THE WORLD AS MITHYĀ

In this way, *jagadidaṁ tadbādhitaṁ dr̥śyatām*; may you see the entire *jagat* as *bādhita*, sublated, negated. Negation or sublation is removal of the *satyabuddhi*, the idea that something is real. For example, when you see the pot, there is a perception, a pot perception, 'This is a pot.' If the pot is destroyed, then you have eliminated the pot from your vision. But here, you do not need to remove the pot from your vision at all. Instead, you remove the pot by the appreciation of clay. Before the pot came into existence, it was clay. Even now it is clay. In this way, the pot is sublated by your appreciation of the clay. *Bādhita* means it does not have a reality of its own.

Seeing the pot itself, you sublimate the pot because it has no independent existence. Similarly, seeing the *jagat*, you sublimate it. The world is nothing but yourself. In the first example, clay is separate from you and pot is also separate from you. When seeing the *jagat*, you see that, 'The clay, the pot, everything is myself.' If that is understood properly, then anything you confront is *bādhita*. Now you can understand why you need not be afraid of the world.

There are those who say *duḥkha-ātmakaṁ jagat*, the world is full of pain. Therefore you should go and sit under the Bodhi tree. But the Bodhi tree is also *jagat*. They say the world is *mithyā*, but full of pain because they do not acknowledge *satyam*. However, with the vision of *brahmātmā*, the *jagat* is sublated by the *brahma-buddhi*, which means that you do not need to have a special situation for contemplation. What a beautiful thing. So there is no condemnation of anything. Even New York City is okay. You can do this sublation right in the middle of Manhattan, *jagadidaṁ tadbādhitaṁ dr̥śyatām*.

*To be continued...*