

Sādhana-pañcakam
Pujya Swamiji's transcribed talk

This is the ninth part of the serial article, continuation from October 2021 newsletter.

EQUATING JĪVA AND ĪŚVARA

The word *tvam* means *jīva*, the doer and enjoyer, which is you. Who is that you? When I say 'you,' I do not mean *satyam jñānam anantam brahma*, limitless Brahman. I mean the person who comes to me to learn. That is the person to whom I am talking. In this instance, 'you' means the person who is sitting here. That person, that *ahankāra*, ego, listening to me, is the one who looks upon himself or herself as a doer and enjoyer, as happy or unhappy, a listener, a thinker, etc. That is 'you,' whoever that 'you' is. Thus there are many yous. Any 'you' can be told, 'You are Īśvara,' whether the 'you' is big or small; whether it is Lord Indra himself or a local somebody. You can even say '*tat tvam asi*' to a mosquito! The mosquito does not need to hear it in this lifetime because it does not have an I-sense. It does not have the problem of *samsāra*, like thinking, 'I am happy, I am unhappy' and so on. No teaching is necessary for a mosquito. The teaching is for the one who says, 'I am bound, I am limited,' the one who is always struggling, trying to prove him or herself to be somebody. This person, the *jīva*, is equated to Īśvara. Who is Īśvara? He is *parokṣaḥ*, remote. Who is this *jīva*? He or she is *aparokṣaḥ*, self-evident. Look at the difference. It seems that before you go to a teacher and learn Vedānta, you are *aparokṣa-ātmā*, known directly to yourself as someone who is sometimes happy and sometimes unhappy. You are a doer and an enjoyer. All this is known to you. Then you go to a teacher, and he says, 'You are *parokṣa* Īśvara.' So *aparokṣa-jīva* becomes *parokṣa* Īśvara. What was self-evident becomes remote. This means you are a remote Īśvara, you are not here and now anymore, unless either Īśvara is yourself or *aparokṣa-jīva* is Īśvara. If *aparokṣa jīva* is Īśvara, then Īśvara becomes a mere *jīva*. In other words, you simply have another name. You thought you were only Mr. So-and-so, and now you are told you are Īśvara. So just one more name and you are still only 5'9" tall.

But the *śruti* does not say that. It has already described Īśvara as *jagat-kāraṇam*, the cause of the world. Only one, non-dual *satyam* was there before. Before the creation, this entire *jagat* was *satyam*. Here again there is apposition. The *upaniṣad* says, 'This *jagat* was *satyam* before.'⁵¹ This means that the cause of the world is *satyam*, and from *satyam* alone the creation has come. Thus *satyam* means Īśvara, there is no doubt here. Īśvara is that *satyam* and that *satyam* is Īśvara. *Śāstra* makes it very clear.

REALITY IS ONE

Therefore, when *śāstra* says, 'By knowing that, everything becomes known',⁵² it is the original *pratijñā*, statement. In Chāndogya Upaniṣad, in the sixth chapter, young Śvetaketu comes home after twelve years of study, and his father Uddālaka asks him, 'Did you ask your teacher for that knowledge, gaining which everything is as well known?' Śvetaketu says, 'I don't think my teacher knew that.' Then Śvetaketu himself asks this question, 'Is there such knowledge?' And his father teaches him, 'Yes, there is such knowledge, gaining which everything is as well known. Anything born of clay will be as well known to you once you know what clay is.'⁵³ Everything else is but word and meaning, clay alone is the truth.⁵⁴ Only *mṛttikā*, clay, is *satyam*, existent.' Everything else is *nāma-rūpa*, word and meaning, let them differ. *Nāma* and *rūpa*, name and form imply function.

RESOLVING THE CONTRADICTION

So all of them are *nāma-rūpas*. If you know the cause of everything, which is *satyam*, then you have known everything. This is the original statement of Uddālaka. Śvetaketu is then told, 'You have to know only one thing.' That one thing is everything, and that *satya-vastu*, that *ekam eva advitīyam*, one non-dual Brahman, is what you are. Brahman is *ātmanā*.

⁵¹ सदेव सोम्येदमग्र आसीदेकमेवाद्वितीयम् (Chāndogyaopaniṣad 6.2.1)

⁵² येन विज्ञानेन सर्वं विज्ञातं भवति (Chāndogya & Muṇḍakopaniṣad)

⁵³ यथा सोम्यैकेन मृत्पिण्डेन सर्वं मृन्मयं विज्ञातं स्यात् (Chāndogyaopaniṣad 6.1.4)

⁵⁴ वाचाऽऽरम्भणं विकारोनामधेयं मृत्तिकेत्येव सत्यम् (ibid.)

Everything else is *nāma-rūpa*. Therefore you have no other choice here, except to understand what the *śruti* says. When it is said that you are *Īśvara*, then between the meanings of the words 'you' and '*Īśvara*', there is an apparent relationship between the qualifier and the qualified.⁵⁵ Here again, there is a problem because the words in apposition are contradictory. It is very easy to qualify a pot or a lotus by saying the pot is blue or the lotus is white, but can you say that a *parokṣa* *Īśvara* is yourself?

There is a statement in *śāstra* that says '*vajra-hastaḥ purandaraḥ.*' *Purandaraḥ* means Indra. Indra is in heaven. And he has a big weapon in his hand, a *vajra*, thunderbolt.

Now suppose I say, 'You are Indra.' '

Which Indra? Indra is in heaven.'

'Yes, you are that Indra in heaven.'

'But Indra is *parokṣa*, you say. How can I be that Indra?'

This is a contradiction, so you just walk away. Even for discussion, there has to be some basis.

Īśvara is *parokṣa*, you are *aparokṣa*. Where is the comparison? If not even comparison is possible, then identity is definitely going too far. Moreover, if you take into account that he is the creator of the *jagat*, etc., then you are finished. So this placing of words in apposition itself is a problem. But it is used. And we use a method of inquiry and analysis that helps you to discover exactly what the vision of the *śāstra* is. We will discuss this method later. Therefore, we do not have any problem with what the *śruti* says.

What is the meaning of these words *tvam* and *tat*? One of them, *tvam*, means *jīva*, the doer-enjoyer person, that is the meaning of the word 'you.' And the other word, *tat*, means *Īśvara*, someone who is *sarvasya kartā*, the creator of all. He may be a doer-enjoyer, and he is an enjoyer of *ānanda* all the time. But you are someone who is *sukhī-duḥkhī*, sometimes happy, sometimes sad, experiencing the results of *karma*. He is the giver of those results, whereas you are a helpless person. In fact, everyday you pray to him; 'You are everything, oh Lord.' So how can this Lord be yourself? It is just not acceptable.

To be continued...

⁵⁵ विशेषण-विशेष्य-भाव