

Swami Dayananda Saraswatiji's satsang speech

at Arsha Vidya Gurukulam, Anaikatti, Coimbatore, India, on 29-1-2001.

This is an answer by Swami Dayananda Saraswati stemming from a question about Determinism and Freewill, wherein he weaves the topic into a succession of connections arriving to a profound vision of reality. He links up analogies like alphabet soup, the behaviour of particles, and quotes from Shakespeare's Hamlet. Brilliant!.....Swamini Vilasanda

Punya papa are gathered by your freewill. So when you gather punya papa by freewill, then you cannot say it is all deterministic. Because freewill means it is non-deterministic. So you cannot commit a murder of somebody and say, "I am destined to commit the murder and this fellow was destined to die. We are both brought together by a deterministic law." Then, the judge has to say, "I am also brought into the picture in order to give you a hanging order." So it is only changing the language.

So this determinism is not acceptable where there is freewill. And then, if you look into this freewill, you will find that the will is not that free either. Because you find you are driven to make a conclusion all the time. Even sanyasa is considered to be by freewill, but if you consult an astrologer, he says you were already determined to be a sanyasi. In other words, you are unfit for anything else. That is exactly what my horoscope tells.

Now you can see here, you do not seem to have a free will. You were driven to make decisions. Therefore, we find that it is very nebulous. You cannot say that there is no freewill. You cannot say that there is all the freewill. So that is the reason why the samsara is a chakra (disc, wheel). Even this particular point of our inability of determining the starting point shows that there is no starting point. That is the problem. It is a chakraatmika. So when it is chakra there is no starting point. What is the starting point of a circle? There is no starting point. Every starting point is the end point. Any point you take, it is a starting point and end point, too.

And therefore, there is no starting point in a circle; it is chakraatmika. This is what we say anadhi. Once it is anadhi neither you can say it is deterministic, because there is no starting point, nor you can say by the same thing, being anadhi pravaha, you are being pushed. Therefore, there is deterministic tendency also in the system, because you are pushed.

It is something like taking a bath in Kumbhamela. The first time I went to Alahabad for a kumbhamela, that was my first and last, I tell you. Then I stayed in a small hotel in Alahabad. I did not know the roads from the city and I asked somebody, "How to reach the Ganga?" That fellow laughed. He said, "You do not reach Ganga. You will be led to Ganga. You join the group, that is enough." Really, afterwards, when I joined this group, then, people from behind push you, the whole thing, nobody knows where they are going. Only in the front one fellow knows. And you cannot do anything else, also. It is such a big crowd. You are in the middle of the milling crowd. You are just driven to the Ganga. That man was telling, "There is no way of your not entering into Ganga." That is how you are led. That is a pravaha.

So this pravaha is what we call anadhi pravaha. That means there is a certain push already, which you cannot avoid. And this is what we try to figure out in Astrology. And the factors are too varied to control. That is why non-predictability. And your will, also, is involved, and therefore, non-predictability. You can blow it because of your will. The freewill is there. And therefore, your freewill can also interfere.

And you cannot really measure the degree of freewill. There is no way of measuring, even though they try to measure. By seeing the position of the Guru (Jupiter) and seeing the position of Moon, they try to find out how much freewill you have got. The Moon is in a strong position, and then the Sun, also, they take into account, and Jupiter into account. Taking all these into account, they think that you will have will. The problem is Shani (Saturn) is looking at the Moon. So, what kind of aspecting it is, from which position he is aspecting? What is the strength of the Saturn itself? How much strength he has got in that position? It is a lot of work. There are too many factors, so you have to give up. Same thing.

So you cannot definitely say. It becomes non-linear. So even the will, how much will you have got, you cannot determine. And will determined, how the fellow will go, you cannot determine. That is why psychology cannot be considered a science, even though they are all clamouring to be accepted as science. And still, people who are classical scientists will not accept. They say it is too nebulous, too many factors.

That is why psychology goes on growing. Everybody has got his own theory. More and more they find; they make a rule and they get stumped by a new case. It is a classical case, and the background etc. is there and therefore, this person should be like this. But that person is not like this. So what happens to psychology? It is all chaotic. Everywhere.

Therefore, there is only one paramartikam vastu. That is why I always say, what is mithya does not lend itself for any explanation, for any definition. Any definition is going to be like this. Only vyavahara we can conduct, and that too with whatever, so it's OK. That is why grace is required. Even if you want something, and in between that something that you want and your effort and yourself, there can be a number of factors over which I have no control, nor I know them all. Even if I know them, I cannot control. Now the scientists say it is going to be up to April, the earthquake tremors will be there. Now up to April, people have to be in the street or what? It is just ridiculous. So, we all know, what can you do? So knowledge itself is not enough. That is why Shakti is also required. So, therefore, that shaktimathvam is a very big thing. Anyway, what I say, you are helpless. The variables are too many over which you have no control, much less you have knowledge of. And therefore, only grace can keep it going.

Therefore, you cannot explain any of this properly. It is all within certain area we can. Only thing you can communicate is the vastu. Now the modern Vedanta says vastu cannot be explained. (laughter) Vastu alone can be talked about – that too because it happens to be you, self-evident you. That alone we can really meaningfully talk about – and of course if you know what you talk about. The paramarthika vastu alone, because it happens to be the self-evident you, we can knock off the notions that you have about yourself. For which it is (various notions of one-self) enough because it is avichara. It is all avichara siddha. So, vicharam (inquiry) it cannot stand. So it falls apart. The neti indicates only vichara. The conclusion of the vichara is neti (not this). Starting point is iti. And the endpoint of the vichara, neti, that is all.

The beauty in this, is even at the quantum level the unpredictability is very big. We say, everything is relative to the speed of light, all motion, velocity etc., but then the electron is at the same time in two places. First you think it is here, it is gone. At the same time elsewhere. They experiment all that and they find out. It does not take time. So, if it does not take time then is it faster than what? Can you say? It is faster than what? You cannot say it is faster than light, because everything is faster within the fast, faster etc., within the speed of light of 180,000 miles per second.

Within that we are talking about. And that itself is unpredictable. If you want to know the position, you do not know the velocity. If you want to know the velocity... See if you want to know the position, the electron behaves in a certain way as a particle. If you want to determine the speed, the velocity, it becomes wave. It is its behaviour, you know.

It is like when the person is in uniform, he is very strict. Even to his son he is very strict. And once he is not in uniform even the mosquitoes make a ride of him. It is different. It is amazing. How people look at you, also, determines the person's behaviour.

I mean the position, under some conditions behaves a certain way, in another conditions a different way. Here I decide to look at the electron to know the position. I decide, it behaves differently. As a particle it behaves. Then, I want to know the velocity, then it lends itself for me to measure it in the form of wave. Wave means it is everywhere. It is entirely different behaviour.

Now the quantum physicists say, we heard our Ravi Gosswami, and some books and all that are there now, they all say, first what was there, one pure of matter and it is billions of degrees of centigrade – hot. So hot. These immutable forces, they are called immutable forces. One is called nuclear force, strong force. That is the force that brings about all this, the beginning of formations of the basic particles etc., the quarks and gluon. Then, you have the electromagnetic force which makes clusters and nucleus and Suns and all the stars and whatnot, the whole system. Then, the gravitational force, it takes all this moving away. It's called grand scale movement. Then there is an entropy there and there is a radiation and all that, that's the weak force.

Now they say these four forces are immutable. They are always there. The universe is not there – these forces also are not there! But how do you say immutable? They are un-manifest. Correct. Time is un-manifest. Space is un-manifest. Jagat is un-manifest. Un-manifest what? One puree of matter.

Look. Then, for some reason, we do not know. For some reason, it is like an Isvara of pradanavadi, For some reason, the temperature goes down. As the temperature goes down, then the immutable forces first come up. They all come up first. These are the four devatas. First they come up. The chatramukhabrahmaakam. One force in a fourfold way. So, he comes up. Do not get away with all these ideas, do not go and tell Brahmaji is the fourfold way. I do not say that. Just all the four forces come up.

These four forces all begin to function. When they have a role to play, they play. When there is an occasion for any of these forces to play, it plays. The weak force cannot function unless there is a body radiating heat, then it can work, radiation etc. it comes to function, understand now. Yatah sambhavam always, then at the right time the right thing comes. Now all these four forces come to.

The immutable forces were muted. They were dumb, they could not do anything. And they were as un-manifest as the universe. Idam agre asit. What? Nanyat kincanam vishat. What? Only this puree of matter. Hot soup. Look. Then, they say the quarks come up. Two by one and one by two, these quarks come by. Then the particle. The particle, this is the basic thing, and from there alone all other particles, and then afterwards nucleus and all that. So all the forces.

The strong force has to do certain job and then the electromagnetic another job, the gravitational takes them away. So this whole process. And then afterwards what all happened, also. Up to this our solar system and this earth spinning. First there is a split off from the Sun and every split off planet goes round the mother, Amma. These planets also do the same thing. Amma, amma. Go around. Yani kani ca papani. So it goes around because that is the mother. The Moon is born of earth and so it goes round the earth, because earth is the mother. So there is a satellite for everybody.

Anyway, up to this point and further, whatever that we have reached now, the universe, the probability was for not to be there what is there, was more than the probability for it to be there, really speaking.

You know, in the West they have, at home they make this, alphabet soup. In America, I was told, they make alphabet soup. Children are given alphabet soup. Edible letters float on the soup. So before you take the soup, you assemble "mad", "bad", being an American child, a "fish" and all that, even though there is no fish, fish you make, whatever. So they say "egg", "fish", "cheese" and all that you can make, but themselves assembling to become "fish"? Within those 26 letters, what are the permutations and combinations? So how they are going to assemble themselves? How many words? So the probability of assembling themselves to become "biochemistry" is almost nil. "Almost" I have to say. Therefore the probability of the word "biochemistry" or even simple "chemistry" is remote probability. And that means the probability for the chemistry not to be there is more than chemistry to be there, biochemistry not to be there is more than biochemistry to be there, physics not to be there, geophysics, astrophysics, all physics, not to be there, the probability is more. But then these alphabets keep assembling themselves nicely. Therefore, there is an unseen hand putting them together, under the soup.

Suppose, you make a device, magical device, by which when the child is struggling to make a word, there floating, and by the time he puts one here that one goes that way and to put them all together is a struggle, and from inside you have a device to assemble them all nicely. Suppose it wants to assemble "dog", "dog", "cat", "cat", "tree", "apple". "Ahh", "ooh" – who puts them? That's all wonderment. That's what God is about. So there's a certain, there's a method in madness.

Hamlet was reading. Polonius, the minister, told Hamlet's step father and Hamlet's mother, that Hamlet is not well mentally. And he said, you wait here I will talk to him, you will see. Hamlet is reading a book. And Polonius goes to Hamlet. He asks, "What do you read, O Lord?" He said, "Words, words, words." That's not the answer expected. He has to say, "I read Shakespeare," "I read something," he has to say, subject matter, or book, author or whatever. But then, he said, "words, words, words." It is also true. Aside, Polonius says, "It's madness alright, but there's a method in his madness." When there is some truth, it is chaos alright, but still there is a method to the whole thing.

Quotes from Pujya Swamiji's Diary – 1968 June

- * A strong man is one who faces facts. He is weak who wants to escape from them.**
- * A murderer or a man committing suicide is not a strong man. It is out of fear one eliminates, the other escapes.**
- * A rich man is he who feels richer by the very fact he lives. Poor man is one who feels he has life because of possessions.**
- * He is a free man who owns nothing that he cannot dispense with in joy.**