

## Ātmānaṁ ced vijānīyāt Puṅya Swamiji's transcribed talk

*This is the eighth issue of the serial article, continuation from Sep 2020 newsletter.*

Suppose, there is a God, and he is another person, he also becomes *anātman*. Being *anātman* he is also *anitya*. He does not become worshipful as one who is eternal. You dismiss him like any other object. Bhagavān becomes an object dismissed and you become the one who dismisses. You, however, do not get dismissed in the process; you become *nitya*.

One cannot dismiss oneself. One continues to remain as the one who dismisses everything, including one's thoughts. When one dismisses all thoughts one goes to sleep or one is in *nirvikalpa-samādhi*. There is not much difference between the two. In deep sleep the mind is not awake. In *samādhi* the mind is awake, but not enlightened. All thoughts have gone away. Absence of all thoughts does not mean enlightenment. If 'no thought' is enlightenment you will get enlightened between two thoughts. If you say, "When I go to sleep or when I am in *samādhi* I do not exist, "it is not right. If you do not exist in sleep, how do you come back in the morning? Is it a new person who comes back? No. You are there very much in deep sleep. Only your mind does not function.

It is very clear, therefore, you cannot dismiss yourself. All dismissals take place in you. Now it is there, now it is not there, now it is in this form, now it is not in the same form—that is all dismissal is about. Any dismissal is always with reference to an object existing at two points of time. Here is an object 'o' at time 't'. It is not the same at time t1. Now, you see me at time 't'. Again you see me; it is time t1. I am not the same at time t1. At time t, whatever existed is gone. What is at time t1 is entirely different. This is the nature of *anātman*. You dismiss the objects in time.

If *ātman* is within time you can dismiss it also. But it is not so. In fact, you dismiss the very time in deep sleep, in that you do not experience any time in sleep. The time series is different in different experiences, which is why it

keeps changing from time-to-time. When you wait for someone, time hangs on. When you listen to a talk, with absorption, time flies. Time is an object. It does not mean that time has a form. When I say that time is an object, I mean that you objectify time. You are aware of time, the time is not aware of you. If time is aware of you, time becomes *ātman* and you become *anātman*. But it is not so. You are aware of time. You are self-evident. What is self-evident is the only thing that is timeless. It is totally free from time.

If everything including time is *anātman* what is left out now is only *ātman*; since time is also dismissed, *ātman* is *nitya*. *Nitya* means freedom from time; it is timelessness. *Nitya* does not mean continuity in time; it is not permanence in the sense that we usually understand it. 'Now' is equal to *nitya*; it is an equation. Let us now analyze the 'now'. 'Now' can be the present century. But in one century there are so many years. 'Now' can be the present year. But in one year there are so many months. Again in one month there are so many days; in one day there are so many hours; in one hour there are so many minutes and in one minute there are so many seconds. All these are 'now' only. This second is 'now'. This microsecond is 'now'. In one microsecond, there are so many pico seconds. As long as you can mathematically conceive certain length of time you are yet to arrive at 'now'. I say mathematically because experientially it is not possible. What is 'now' then?

'Now' is when there is no length of time. There is no event there nor is there any thought process either. I am not creating a state here for experience. I just use words to reveal a fact. It is for you to know the self in this form. When no length of time is there, what is there? When the time concept itself is not there, whatever remains is the essence of the time, which is nothing but 'I' the self-evident awareness, '*ayaṁ pūruṣaḥ*'. You are the self-evident self, not bound by time; you are 'now' which is eternity, and which is the nature of yourself. You take the self to be mortal, etc., whereas timelessness is the nature of the self and it is in the form of awareness. It is not even an awarer, but it is awareness. Awarer is with reference to what one is aware of. Awareness is the content of the awarer, it is called *caitanya*, and it is *nitya*. Awareness, 'I' is *akṛta*, time-wise limitless.

If I have to arrive at *nitya* I cannot search in the *anātman*. Nor can I search in the *ātman*. *Nitya* is *ātman*. It can only be *ātman* and it is a matter for knowing. The self is already self-evident, and about this self-evident self, you have made a mistake. To correct the mistake, the *upaniṣad* is the only *pramāṇa*. And to know what is said in the *upaniṣad*, one has to approach a *guru*. The word ‘*cet*’ in this *vākya* indicates you must have proper *guru*.

The whole *śāstra* is in the form of words. It has a vision about the whole. In fact, according to the *śāstra* you are the whole. Now, can the *śāstra* say the whole of this in one sweep of vision, in one sentence? If it does, then you have to understand that. Suppose, the *śāstra* says, “You are *pūrṇa*, the whole,” and you say, “I understand that I am *pūrṇa*, but how can I become *pūrṇa*?” Any becoming is not *pūrṇa*. You do not become *pūrṇa*—you are *pūrṇa*. If you do not understand, then that is exactly the problem. The sentence does not reveal anything to you now. What is said in the *śāstra* has to be unfolded sentence by sentence. The meaning of a given sentence becomes meaningful only when you know the whole. If you do not know the whole, you cannot know the meaning of the sentence. Unless you understand the sentence, you cannot know the whole. Therefore, you require a *guru* who has understood the *śāstra*. When he talks, then you understand what is being said.

Now, how will you find a *guru*? You cannot advertise in the ‘wanted’ column of a newspaper, ‘wanted a *guru* who should be a *śrotriya* and a *brahmaṇiṣṭha*.’ Nor you can expect an advertisement in the newspaper, ‘*guru* available, wanted qualified *śiṣyas*.’

You have to find out whether the person knows the *śāstra*. How do you know that the *guru* knows the *śāstra*? This is what we call the decadence of learning. If, in the society, there are people who have some knowledge about the *śāstra*, then you cannot open your mouth unless you know, because people know. If the people do not know anything, any person will pass as a *guru*. Anything will pass for wisdom. People are gullible. Nobody is to be blamed. You deserve your *guru*. You deserve your leadership also. You deserve it in the sense that you get what you deserve. Some grace of

*Īśvara* is required, especially when there is decadence in scholarship. Only *Īśvara* can help.

*Brahma-niṣṭha* is the one who does not have any other job. Otherwise how do you know he is a *brahma-niṣṭha*? *Tapo-niṣṭha* is one who is committed to *tapas*, *japa-niṣṭha* is one who is committed to *japa*. A *brahma-niṣṭha* is one who is committed to the knowledge of Brahman; a *sannyāsin* is a *brahma-niṣṭha*.

The meaning of the word ‘*cet*, suppose’ covers all these requirements. Suppose you have a good teacher and you have a mature mind endowed with *viveka* and *vairāgya*, then you can know the *ātman*. How is it to be known? *Ātman* has to be known as *ayam aham asmi*, I am this *nitya-aparokṣa-ātman*, the limitless awareness, unfolded above. If you were to know *ātman*, then you would know the nature of the ‘I’ as ‘*ayam aham asmi*, I am this’, the *aparokṣa-caitanya*. *Ātman* was already introduced in the text prior to this mantra. *Ātman* is the *draṣṭṛ*, seer, but *adrṣṭaḥ*, not the object of sight; the *śroṭṛ*, hearer, but *aśrutaḥ*, not the object of hearing; the *manṭṛ*, thinker, but *amataḥ*, never the object of thought, and so on. *Ātman* is always the subject, in the sense that it is not subject to objectification. In fact, *ātman* is not even the subject.

There is nothing other than *ātman*; everything is this *ātman* alone. While *ātman* is independent of everything, everything is *ātman*. This is the revelation. That ‘I exist’ is not a revelation. The existence of the self is not revealed by the *śāstra*. The *śāstra* is a *pramāṇa* only for the revelation—“There is nothing other than the self, while the self is independent of everything.” This is how one has to understand Vedanta.

Vedanta presents everything as *kārya*, effect, depending on the one non-dual self that is the *kāraṇa*, cause, of everything. It is nothing but *kāraṇa-kārya-vāda*, cause-effect exposition. The *śāstra* says, “There is something, knowing which everything is as well known,” and reveals that ‘something’ as the cause of everything.

*To be continued...*