

All that is here is only Īśvara
Swami Sakshatkritananda

Continuation from previous month...

If God is a reality, then definitely I have to discover that. The Veda tells me, “All this, whatever moves in the world, is to be [understood as] pervaded by Isvara,” Isavasyam idam sarvam yat kinca jagatyam jagat, “All that is here is Isvara,” is the opening sentence of the Isavasya Upanishad, which is generally listed first in the tradition of study. It is not that this UpaniKhad is more important than the others, but the ten Upanishads are usually listed in the order: Isa, Kena, Katha, Prasna, Mundaka, Mandukya, Taittiriya, Aitareya, Chandogya, Brhadaranyaka. Each Upanishad contains a different dialogue, and since they are found at the end of the four Vedas, they are called Vedanta. It is said in the Isavasya Upanishad, Isavasyam idam sarvam, “All that is here is Isvara. Therefore, look at it as such.” For your own sanity, look at all that is here as Isvara. There is nothing other than Isvara. Look at that. The Veda is not saying that there is one God; it says there is only God. If you do not see that, you have to prove that it is not true. It is not a matter of belief.

When I look at this given body/mind/sense complex, I definitely find that what I thought was hardware is nothing but software. This is an amazing thing. When I go to the level of quantum physics, I understand that there is only software—the whole thing is knowledge. When I examine the cell, it just opens up new areas for me to know. This cell is governed by the laws of biology—in fact, the cell is biology, and as such, it has properties in common with all other cells. For instance, there is not a separate, isolated pack of cells for Swami Dayananda. And it is not that the swami’s cells are different, holy cells while the cells of people who are not swamis are unholy cells. There is no such difference. The cells are the same. Even though I am called “His Holiness”, receiving letters addressed to “H.H. Swami Dayananda”, I like to think of ‘H.H’ as meaning “Holy Hobo.” I even have a T-shirt which says “Holy Hobo”. In America, a hobo is a person with no bank account, no job,

no family. Then, how does a hobo live? Like a sadhu, a mendicant. There is nothing special or holy about the cells that make up Swami Dayananda. All cells are governed by the same biological laws. There is no such thing as holy as opposed to unholy. In fact, either everything is holy, or there is no such thing as holy.

Not only is there a commonality, but all the structures I see are intelligently arranged. If I just look at the physical body, I see it consists of parts that are put together intelligently. If I look at a plant or this tent in which we are all sitting, I find they are intelligently put together. If the tent were unintelligently put together, it would collapse. Similarly, a car is a car because its parts are intelligently put together. That is why there can be the commercial, "Have you driven a Ford, lately?" They have been using this commercial for several years. Do you know why? They have supposedly improved the car each year. Thus, even if you drove a Ford last year, you have not driven a Ford lately. The previous year, they said the same thing. It shows that there is always room for improvement. Human intelligence being what it is, human knowledge being what it is, the car can always be better. The new car has some elements that were not incorporated in the previous edition. Leaving aside the question as to whether the change is an improvement or not, the point is that the car is intelligently put together. So, too, my physical body is intelligently put together. No one can simply create a pair of eyes if mine need replacement. While organs cannot be created, some, such as the kidneys, can be replaced through transplantation. Transplantation is a possibility in the scheme of things. This is all intelligently put together, with the possibility of transplantation. Where something is intelligently put together, we don't take it for granted. Even though you don't see the person who has the intelligence which put it all together, you cannot but recognize that there is such a being. For instance, suppose you ask me, "Who put this tent together?" and I tell you, "Oh, yesterday, it just sprang up. We thought it would be nice to have a tent, so we thought of a tent and it sprang up." Perhaps some people may believe that, because anything can pass as truth in this world. However, in this campus, at Arsha Vidya Gurukulum, we don't

let it pass. We question. In studying Arsha-vidya—the knowledge of the Rishis, or seers, we learn to question in order to see the essential truth.

Since we see that the universe, including my body/mind/sense complex, is intelligently arranged, we cannot but appreciate that there is an intelligent being, regardless of whether we think he is here, there, or elsewhere. The physical body is a marvel. It is not meant to give you complexes. It is meant to serve you, but it has become a locus of complexes. That I am black; that I am not blond, may give rise to complexes in certain cultures. Or that I am blonde may be a problem in other cultures. People do have complexes, all because of ignorance. There is a self-judgment because of a certain basic ignorance, which implies the ignorance of God, as well. In fact, the basic ignorance is ignorance of God. This physical body, with the mind and senses organs, with all its faculties, is a marvelous piece of creation. 'Creation' only means that it is intelligently put together. It does not mean that God dropped it down from somewhere else. The fact that it is intelligently arranged implies an intelligent being, a conscious being. That conscious being must have the knowledge of what is going to be created because creation presupposes knowledge. Knowledge has to rest in a conscious being. When we talk about the total creation, then that conscious being must have the knowledge of all; he must be sarvajna, all knowing, sarvavit sarvajnah iti, the one who knows everything (in detail) is sarvajna (omniscient). The Veda tells us that God is all-knowing in terms of all details.

Then we may ask where God found the material to make this world. He could not have borrowed from anybody, because there was nobody else to borrow it from—everybody had yet to be created. He has to find the material only in himself. Therefore, in keeping with the nature of the reality of the world, there must be a material cause. We call that material cause prakrti, and it is not separate from the being, purusha. The Lord has to have that power. As to the question of where God abides, there is no 'where' for God. The question of 'where' doesn't come into the picture, because space and time have not yet been created. The fact that the Lord is the one who is the maker as well as the material cause opens up a new vision for me. Anything

created from a material is not going to be independent of that material, like the shirt that you wear. If your shirt is made of cotton fabric, you cannot remove the cotton fabric and still be wearing a shirt. Your clothes are made of the fabric. If you remove the fabric, where are the clothes? Only emperor's clothes may be there. The shirt is fabric, and there is no shirt apart from fabric, much less is there fabric without yarn. There is no yarn without fibers, and there are no fibers without molecules, nor are there molecules without atoms. You can go on and on, but anything created is not separate from the material of which it is made. In the model that is presented by the Veda, the five elements: akasa, space, which includes time; vayu, air; agni, fire; apah, water; and prthivi, earth, subtle and gross, manifested from Isvara and constitute this universe. And this universe includes your body/mind/sense complex. The first of these elements, which manifested from Isvara, the cause, is space. "From that [Brahman] which is this self arose the space," *tasmad va etasmad akasas sambhutam* (TU 2.1.1). That's why space is worshipped. Time, kala, is also worshipped in India. Kala is Lord Yama, and sometimes kala as the Lord himself is worshipped as Kalagni. Thus, all the five elements, which include space and time, are the universe, and the universe is not other than the Lord. The Veda does not say there is one God. It says there is only God.

There is one more thing that is included in this vision—you, the one who is aware of, conscious of, the five elements. That conscious, awareful being is also Isvara, the Lord. And this consciousness, although in and through the universe consisting of the five elements, is of a different order of reality. Everything that is here is Isvara alone; it is not separate from Isvara. Therefore, may you look upon it all as Isvara, *Isavasyam idam sarvam*.

When that is understood, you will find that everything is holy; there is nothing unholy. It is only we who choose to see unholiness in the holy. We are given the faculty of choice. The more we accept Isvara in our life, the more order there will be. Even our jealousy, and other emotions are within Isvara's order alone, and if we see that, even jealousy will disappear. Since all these emotions are within the order, there is no need to condemn yourself.

You will find that your buddhi, your intellect, and manas, mind, are pervaded by order. The outside world, also, is pervaded by order. Everyone is pervaded by order. Everyone's behavior, values, attitudes—all of them—are but expressions of their background, and the order is the connection between the expression and the background. That is the psychological order. Thus, the more you appreciate the order, which is universal, the more you recognize Isvara. In that there is sanity. There you can accept yourself. How can anybody be secure and relaxed without accepting Isvara? Therefore, in the Bhagavadgita and elsewhere, Lord Krishna says, "Those whose minds are in me . . . are always satisfied and joyful," maccittah. . . . nityam tushyanti ca ramanti ca , (BG 10.9); and "Be one whose mind is in me," manmana bhava (9.34; 18.65). In other words, bring more Isvara into your life, for in truth, you are never away from that Isvara. That makes you relax and trust because the one thing that is infallible is the order. Isn't that so? You can trust only this order, because only this order is infallible. This order also provides you with capacities and powers to neutralize the effects of circumstances that are not acceptable to you. Those means are given; they are within the order. Also, I can neutralize my own reactions to situations. So, without condemning myself, I can make my life comfortable and sane.

This all-encompassing order is the only Isvara you can accept. It is folly to accept any other Isvara, yet you need not condemn others for the concepts they hold. I am not at all giving you sanction to condemn anyone because of their beliefs. But then, this is the only God that will withstand scrutiny, when all that is here is this God. I don't have the burden of proving it when the Veda tells me that all that is here is Isvara, and I see it. Although I can prove it is true, you bear the burden of proving it is not true if you don't see it. If you don't understand this, then it is up to you to try to understand and see. Without trying to understand, if you say that there is no such God, then you have the burden of proving that. And I would like to listen to your arguments. Then I can show you where the problem is, because there is nothing to believe here. There is something to know. When I say that all that is here is Isvara, it is something to be understood, not believed. A concept or object that requires your belief need not be real. However, when something

can be understood, when something can be known, there is reality. It is not a matter for speculation.

All that is here is Isvara. The more you recognize that Lord, the more trusting you are. The more trusting you are, the more sane you are. That is to say, you can relax, you can be objective. Your subjectivity, which comes from your fears and insecurity, is lessened. The less subjective you are, the more you are with Isvara and that means you are objective. This is the Vedic vision of God. We can ill afford to miss that vision.

Om Tat Sat

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