



ĪSVARA & RELIGIOUS DISCIPLINE

PŪRNA VIDYĀ VEDIC HERITAGE TEACHING PROGRAMME

VALUES
TRUTHFULNESS

SATYA or Truthfulness

- Is a universal value - no one wants to be lied to!
- This basic value, which seems to be uncultivated, does not change over time
- This basic value does not vary from person to person

SATYA or Truthfulness

- When a child asks a question he/she expects that it will be answered truthfully – until at some point he/she detects inconsistencies in what is being told to him/her
- When the child witnesses this behavior from elders around him/her, then he/she might think that it is OK to tell a lie
- If this is unchecked, then the child may begin to tell lies to get out of unpleasant situations or to avoid punishment

Why is a person untruthful?

- To draw attention to oneself
- Because it might get a more desirable outcome than by telling the truth
- Has not assimilated the value of Satya in his/her personality

SATYA – Ādi Śaṅkara

- In his commentary on Gita 16.2, Ādi Śaṅkara defines truthfulness as:

“apriya-anṛtavarjitam yathābhūtārtha vacanam”

- Speech that is in keeping with what is
- Speech that is free from hurt
- Speech that is free from falsehood

SATYA – Ādi Śaṅkara

- To be truthful
 - What one says must be aligned with one's thoughts
 - What one thinks must also be correct
- Sometimes we can say what is aligned with our thoughts but our thinking itself might be incorrect!
- Can you think of some situations?

SATYA – Ādi Śaṅkara

“apriya-anṛtavarjitam yathābhūtārtha vacanam”

- *satya* refers to one’s understanding of truthfulness
- *ṛta* refers to one’s assimilation of truthfulness in keeping with what is true (e.g., seeing things “as they are” and not “what we want them to be”)

SATYA – Ādi Śaṅkara

- Sometimes in the name of being truthful, one feels justified in speaking harsh words irrespective of the effect on others. How one speaks is as important as what one says!
- How does this relate to the value of ahimsa?
- The value of *satya* includes sensitivity towards others
- What one says must also be useful to that person

SATYA – Vak tapas

- We can think of three filters when we speak
 - Is what we are saying in keeping with what actually is?
 - Is what we are saying useful to the other person?
 - Is what we are saying causing pain to the other person?
- If anything we say does not pass these three filters - it is not worth saying!

Value for the value of SATYA

- Speaking is an action and the speaker is the doer
- At the same time one is a knower also! The knower knows what one is saying
- If the doer routinely ignores the knower, then the doer will begin to think that he/she is incapable of following through on decisions
- If there is such a split between the doer and the knower, conflict will arise in the mind and agitate him/her



Discussion

- How can we protect ourselves from falling into this doer-knower trap?
- What should we do if we are able to recognize that we have already fallen into the trap?
- Can we help others who have fallen into this trap?
- Story of Yudhiṣṭhira in the Mahabharata war
- Examples in the news

DEVOTION - REVIEW

Devotion

- What are the four types of bhaktas (Gita 7:16)?
- In Gita 7:18, Lord Krishna says “*jñānī tu ātmaiva matam*”: I regard the wise person to be my very self
- Narada bhakti sutra described bhakti as “*asmin parama-prema-rūpā*”: an ardent love with reverence for the Lord
- It is very difficult to love and revere something that is unknown; so, it is necessary to understand the Lord as the cause for the entire creation (including oneself)

SURRENDER



Surrender

- To whom are we surrendering?
- What are we surrendering?
- What does Namah mean? In combination with the name of the Lord its translation is “salutation or surrender to the Lord”

Surrender: Two orders of reality

- There are two orders of reality in one's perception of the world
 - It IS and therefore one sees/senses it (sound indicates that there is a source for the sound - true)
 - One SEES (or senses) it and therefore it is (one sees a blue sky and may conclude that there is a blue ceiling over the earth's atmosphere – false)

Surrender: Apparent Duality

- Nearly always when a devotee thinks of the Lord, there is a separation between the devotee and the Lord (two separate entities) – discuss
- There is a natural tendency to believe that there is a perceptible world, but the Lord is separate because he created the world – this is incorrect thinking

Surrender: Apparent Duality

- Śruti reveals that the Lord is both the material and the intelligent cause for the created world – let us examine what this means
- The pot and pot-maker example is not valid because that suggests that there is a world and world-maker, which make creation unnatural (because we do not see a “world-maker” like we see a pot-maker)

Surrender: Apparent Duality

- How can we establish that this world is created?
- The world is empirically true and has an objective order of reality
- It IS, therefore I see
- The body, mind, senses are all put together intelligently
- It follows that that there must be a creator who has the knowledge and power to create whatever is being created

Surrender: Apparent Duality

- Creation presupposes knowledge, which always rests on a conscious being
- In this creator of all creation (known and unknown to us) must rest all the knowledge and power
- Whatever one knows also includes what one does not know! If I say “I don’t know” it means that I know that I don’t know.

Surrender: Apparent Duality

- Creation must necessarily come from a conscious being
- Scriptural statements like “that saw” or “he desired” or “he created” support this

Lord is the maker and material

- Śruti (scripture) reveals that the Lord is both the material and the intelligent cause for the created world – let us examine what this means
- Let us look at this closely again
- Anything that must be created must have a material – where does it come from?

Lord is the maker and material

- Where does this material come from?
- Even space does not exist without creation coming into being!
- Therefore the material for creation has to come from the creator himself!

Example of dream world

- We can understand this through the example of sleep followed by a dream
- In sleep there is no time, space, world or sense of individuality
- Then we have a dream
- Time comes, space comes, things are created and appear

Example of dream world

- There is no sequence in things created
- They all spontaneously arise at once!
- We can create the dream world but we know it is false – it only has a subjective reality

The world is put together

- Śruti (scripture or Veda) reveals that the basic constituents of the world are the five elements (space, air, fire, water and earth) at subtle (*sukśma*) and gross (*sṭhula*) levels
- The Vedic model of the universe is that it is composed of these five elements, which are put together intelligently
- What happens if they are not put together intelligently?
What happens when there is no order?



Where is the Lord?

- The body is an assemblage of the five elements intelligently assembled together
- The Lord is the creator and the material for the entire universe (seen and unseen)
- The more appropriate question is “where is the Lord not?” because the very space which holds creation came from the Lord!

What can we surrender?

- Ignorance (or *avidya*) can be surrendered
- The notion that “this is mine” can be surrendered because one can claim ownership only when one is its sole author
- Let us think about this notion of “this is mine”
- Everything is given (hands, legs, brain, mind, intellect, etc.)



What is mine?

- What is “mine”?
- Our body (hands, legs, brain, mind, intellect, etc.) is given
- Do we really own anything?
- When we start believing the notion “this is mine” we create problems for ourselves in our minds with insecurities, etc.
- Examples

What can we surrender?

- The notion that “this is mine”
- Recall that “namaḥ” in combination with the name of the Lord means “salutation or surrender to the Lord”
- When one says “namaḥ” one is only asserting a fact and the individual is surrendered to the empirical which is Isvara
- *Om Nārayanāya namaḥ!*



Homework

- Reflect on the following:
 - How can we understand that the Lord is the creator of the world?
 - What is meaning of “namah” in combination with the name of the lord?
 - What are we surrendering?

Concluding Śānti Mantra

ॐ पूर्णमदः पूर्णमिदम् पूर्णात् पूर्णमुदच्यते
पूर्णस्य पूर्णमादाय पूर्णमेवावशिष्यते ॥
ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥

- Om pūrṇamadah pūrṇamidam pūrṇātpurṇamudacyate
pūrṇasya pūrṇamādāya pūrṇamevāvaśiṣyate ॥
Om śāntiḥ śāntiḥ śāntiḥ ॥

That is fullness, this is fullness. From that fullness this fullness came. From that fullness (when) this fullness (is) removed, what remains is fullness. Om peace, peace, peace