



ĪSVARA & RELIGIOUS DISCIPLINE

PŪRNA VIDYĀ VEDIC HERITAGE TEACHING PROGRAMME

INTRODUCTION TO ĪSVARA

Who is Īśvara?

OBJECT	INTELLIGENCE
BRIDGE	CIVIL ENGINEER
TRACTOR	MECHANICAL ENGINEER
POEM	POET
ROBOT	ELECTRICAL ENGINEER
PAINTING	ARTIST

**Every object is made or designed by someone or some “intelligence”
Here the above objects are all made by a human being**

Who is Īśvara?

OBJECT	INTELLIGENCE
LIVING CREATURES	?
GALAXIES	?
FLOWERS & FRUITS	?
WATER & LAND	?
CHANGING SEASONS	?
MOUNTAINS	?

What is the intelligence behind their creation?

Who is Īśvara?

OBJECT	INTELLIGENCE
SPACE	?
WIND	?
FIRE	?
WATER	?
EARTH	?
UNIVERSE	?

What is the intelligence behind their creation?



Who is Īśvara?

- Did these marvels happen by accident? Was this order created by chance?
- There is such order and beauty in creation that it is reasonable to acknowledge and accept the presence of an intelligent cause for creation
- We call this intelligent cause “Īśvara”

Īśvara creation and Man's creation

Īśvara creation	Man's creation
BIRD IN FLIGHT	AIRPLANE
HUMAN BRAIN	COMPUTER
EYES	?
FISH	?
SUNLIGHT	?
RIVERS AND STREAMS	?

Where did the material come from?

- For anything to be created, there is a need for two things
 - Intelligence
 - Material
- In Sanskrit
 - material cause is called “upādāna kāraṇa”
 - intelligent cause is called “nimitta kāraṇa”
 - “kāraṇa” means cause
- Can you come up with some examples?

Intelligent Cause & Material Cause

Object	Material Cause	Intelligent Cause
Clay Pot	Clay	?
Brick Wall	?	Mason
Cotton Cloth	?	Weaver
Gold necklace	?	Goldsmith
Book	Paper	?

Select from: Author; Potter; Yarn; Gold, Bricks

Material & Intelligent Cause

- Sometimes the material cause is different from the intelligent cause – we just saw some examples (e.g., pot-clay-potter, wall-brick-mason, etc.)
- Sometimes the material cause and the intelligent cause are the same!
 - Spider and the web
 - Dreamer and the dream

Material & Intelligent Cause

- Do you have to see something for it to exist?
- What is the cause the bulb to light up?
- What is the cause for the fan in our room operate?
- What is the cause for the computer to display this presentation on the screen?

Material & Intelligent Cause

- Even though we don't see the electricity, we understand that it is the cause for all the operations mentioned above
- We can see it function in so many different ways even if you cannot see it
- We therefore do not doubt that it exists

Material & Intelligent Cause

- Īśvara is like the example of electricity which the cause for many different appliances to work!
- We can understand Īśvara's presence because his presence is in everything that is manifest

Is Īśvara a male or female?

- Story of Ardhanariśvara
 - Parvati playfully covered Lord Shiva's three eyes
 - Whole world was plunged into darkness
 - Parvati decided to atone by performing tapas
 - Lord Shiva appeared and asked her to stop tapas and gave her a boon
 - She asked to be merged into Lord Shiva

Is Īśvara a male or female?

- We understand the whole creation as an expression of Īśvara
- We do not see Īśvara as an object in creation
- Therefore, we cannot assign a gender to Īśvara

Where is Īśvara?

- Story of Birbal and Akbar where Birbal says that Akbar is greater than God because Akbar can throw Birbal out of his kingdom but God cannot throw Birbal out of His kingdom!
- Īśvara is not in any part of creation but in all of creation
- Īśvara is the all-knowing, conscious being who has the power and skill to create

Vedic & Other Traditions

- Vedic tradition is different from other traditions (sampradayas) because it enquires into the nature of the creator!
- In most traditions, the creator is presented as one who is beyond the realm of human understanding

Vedic Tradition

- In the Vedic tradition, the Śāstra becomes the pramana (means) for revealing the nature of Īśvara as one who is available to the human intellect:
 - By virtue of the essential identity of the individual (jiva) with the total (Īśvara)
 - By virtue of being available to the individual as the manifest creation

Vedic Tradition

- We do not say there is a God
- We say there is God
- The difference is that there is nothing other than God
- God is the material cause and the intelligent cause for creation
- We worship God in many forms

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