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... Tattva Bodha ...

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AI Summary – Class 17

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Quick recap

Acharya Tadany taught the concept of ātmā as a stable internal power source that provides a constant presence in life. Acharya Tadany explained the distinction between ātmā and the 11 components of human experience, including the three bodies, the five personalities, and three states of experience. He emphasized the importance of understanding these concepts for spiritual pursuit and recommended memorizing the definition of ātmā for future reference.

Summary

Discriminative Knowledge and Self-Inquiry

Acharya Tadany discussed the concept of discriminative knowledge, or vivekah, which involves distinguishing between truth (ātmā) and untruth (anātmā). He explained that since truth and untruth are mixed throughout the universe, one must develop discriminative knowledge to understand reality. Acharya Tadany suggested using oneself as the basis for analysis, as individuals are a mixture of both ātmā and anātmā, making self-inquiry an effective method for discerning the truth.

Understanding Self Through Light and Hand

Acharya Tadany taught the concept of observing a hand through light, emphasizing the need to distinguish between the light and the hand. He explained how this observation relates to understanding the self, comparing the self to a mixture of light and hand, and how to analyze these components. Acharya Tadany explained that the Guru begins teaching about the self by discussing the body-mind-sense complex, introducing the concept of the 11 constituents of Anātmān, or the untruth, as a way to understand the subtle nature of ātmān.



Concepts of Bodies and Transformation

Acharya Tadany discussed the concept of the three bodies: the gross physical body, the subtle body, and the causal body. He explained that these bodies have different characteristics and can be experienced in different states of consciousness. Acharya Tadany also introduced the concept of Pancha-kosha, which divides the bodies into five layers based on personality traits. He concluded by mentioning that all these bodies undergo constant change and transformation.

The Nature of the Physical Body

Acharya Tadany discussed the nature of the physical body, comparing it to a temporary office space used for transactions and interactions in the world. He explained that the body is made up of the five gross elements (space, air, fire, water, and earth), which are common to all bodies but vary in their arrangement due to karma, or the good and bad actions performed in previous lives. Acharya Tadany also described the sixfold changes that occur in the body: potential existence, birth, growth, stability, decline, and death. He emphasized that the human body is considered superior because it allows for free will and the opportunity to learn and practice dharma, making it possible to neutralize karma from past lives.

Detailed Notes - with Acharya Tadany

Core Concepts of Vivekah

Understanding Vivekah (Discriminative Knowledge)

Acharya Acharya Tadany explains that "tattva vivekah" means the discriminative knowledge of truth or reality. This discrimination is necessary because truth (ātmā) and untruth (Anātmā) are mixed throughout the universe. The purpose of this knowledge is to separate ātmā from Anātmā through careful analysis and discernment.

According to Vedanta, nowhere in the universe can one find pure truth or pure untruth in isolation - everything is a mixture of both. This is why discrimination becomes essential for spiritual understanding.

Key point: "Whatever changes is Anātmā (untruth). Whatever is eternal and unchanging is ātmā (truth)."

Self-Inquiry as the Method

Acharya Tadany suggests using oneself as the basis for analysis (Jiva Vichara) because:

- The individual is readily available for observation
- The individual is part of the universe and therefore also a mixture of ātmā and Anātmā
- Self-inquiry is the most direct path to understanding reality



This approach is practical because one doesn't need to search elsewhere - the truth and untruth are present within oneself.

The Light and Hand Metaphor

Acharya Tadany uses a powerful metaphor to illustrate how truth and untruth are mixed:

When we see a hand, we are never seeing just the hand alone. We are seeing the hand illuminated by light. The experience is always a mixture of both hand and light.

In this metaphor:

- The hand represents the changing, material aspect (Anātmā)
- The light represents the unchanging, conscious aspect (ātmā)
- Our experience is always a combination of both

Just as we tend to notice the moving hand but take the ever-present light for granted, we notice the changing aspects of ourselves while missing the unchanging consciousness that illuminates all experience.

The Three Bodies (śarīra Trayam)

1. Gross Physical Body (Sthūla śarīram)

Characteristics:

- Visible to oneself and others
- Made of the five gross elements (Panchikritha Panchamahabhuta)
- Space (Ākāśa), Air (vāyu), Fire (Agni), Water (Jalam), Earth (Prithvi)
- Undergoes six-fold changes (ṣaḍ-vikārāḥ)

2. Subtle Body (Sūkṣma śarīram)

Characteristics:

- Experienced by oneself but not visible to others
- Made of subtle elements
- Associated with the dream state

3. Causal Body (kāraṇa śarīram)

Characteristics:

- Not directly experienced by oneself or others
- The finest layer of Anātmā
- Associated with deep sleep state



The Five Sheaths (Pancha koṣāḥ)

The same three bodies can be viewed as five layers of personality:

- Physical/anatomical personality
- Physiological personality
- Emotional personality
- Intellectual personality
- Bliss personality

These five koṣāḥs are different ways of understanding the same three bodies from a personality-based perspective.

The Three States of Experience (avasthāḥ)

The three bodies correspond to three states of experience:

- Waking state - associated with the gross body
- Dream state - associated with the subtle body
- Deep sleep state - associated with the causal body

Detailed Analysis of the Physical Body

The Body as a Temporary Office

Acharya Tadany describes the physical body as "āyatanam" - an abode or office room that we have temporarily leased for transacting with the world. This office allows for three types of transactions:

Pramatā (The Knower)	Kartā (The Doer)	Bhoktā (The Experiencer)
Learning and acquiring knowledge	Acting and earning in the world	Enjoying experiences and pleasures

When all transactions are complete, we vacate this "office" (the body dies), but the subtle body continues its journey and sets up in another "office" (rebirth).

Composition of the Physical Body

The physical body is composed of the five gross elements:

- Ākāśa (Space) - The body occupies space
- vāyu (Air) - Breathing system, oxygen
- Agni (Fire) - Internal thermostat, body warmth
- Jalam (Water) - Two-thirds of the body is liquid
- Prithvi (Earth) - Solid parts of the body



Why Bodies Differ: The Role of Karma

If all bodies are made of the same five elements, why do they differ? Acharya Tadany explains:

While the elements are the same for all bodies (sāmānya kāraṇam), the specific differences between bodies (viśeṣa kāraṇam) are determined by karma - the good and bad actions performed in previous lives.

This karma determines whether one gets a human body, animal body, male or female body, healthy or diseased body, etc. The human body is considered superior because it allows for free will and the opportunity to learn and practice dharma, making it possible to neutralize karma from past lives.

The Six-fold Changes of the Physical Body (ṣaḍ-vikārāḥ)

1. Asti	Potential existence (in the womb or as a seed)
2. Jayate	Birth (coming into manifest existence)
3. Vardhate	Growth (development after birth)
4. Viparinamate	Transformation/stability (plateau period of adulthood)
5. Apakshiyate	Decline (aging, deterioration)
6. Vinashyati	Death (dissolution of the physical form)

Acharya Tadany vividly describes the aging process (Apakshiyate) with examples like difficulty getting up from sitting positions, the body making cracking sounds, changes in skin texture and hair color, and the need for geriatric medicine that often advises "learn to adjust yourself" to the inevitable changes of aging.

The Nature of ātmā

In contrast to the ever-changing Anātmā, ātmā is described as:

- Eternal and unchanging
- Not bound by time and space
- The transcendental reality
- The truth of our existence
- Of the nature of Sat-Chit-ānanda (Existence-Consciousness-Bliss)

Despite being our true nature, we tend to miss this changeless reality because we are naturally drawn to whatever is changing and moving, while taking the unchanging for granted - just as we notice the moving hand but not the ever-present light that illuminates it.