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... Tattva Bodha ...

By Acharya Tadany

AI Summary – Class 38

Mar 16, 2025

Question before class

Bhagavad Gītā Memorization Technique

Context and Request

Student 1 inquired about finding and memorizing specific verses from the Bhagavad Gītā, specifically Chapter 2, ślokas 12-25. She mentioned finding an online chanting recording but expressed interest in learning the traditional method.

Acharya Tadany's Memorization Method Offer

Acharya Tadany offered to create a recording demonstrating the authentic traditional memorization technique taught in the Vedāntic tradition. This method is highly systematic and designed for effective retention.

The Traditional Memorization Process

1. Each śloka(verse) contains four statements (pādas)
2. Each statement contains 8 syllables
3. The memorization follows this precise sequence:
 - Repeat the first syllable/word three times
 - Move to the next syllable/word and repeat three times
 - Combine the first two parts and repeat three times
 - Continue this additive process through the entire line
 - Repeat the complete first line three times
 - Apply the same process to the second line
 - Combine both lines and repeat three times
 - Continue building upon previously memorized sections systematically



The Pedagogical Principle

This method works on the principle of progressive accumulation - each new segment is added to what has already been internalized. The brain gradually builds the complete verse through repetition and integration, making it easier to retain long passages.

Student 1 noted her need for constant repetition to internalize the verses, which aligns perfectly with this traditional method that emphasizes repetitive practice.

Summary

From Vyaṣṭi to Samaṣṭi

The Shift in Focus

Acharya Tadany explained the significant transition in the teaching:

- **Previous Study:** Vyaṣṭi (individual/microcosm) - the study of the individual self, the three bodies, and personal consciousness
- **Current Study:** Samaṣṭi (totality/macrocosm) - the study of the entire universe, cosmic principles, and universal consciousness

The Fundamental Rationale

Acharya Tadany established the philosophical foundation for studying cosmology:

The Two Primary Aspects of Life

1. The Subject (I/Self) - the experiencer, the conscious being
2. The Object (World/Universe) - everything that is experienced, perceived, or interacted with

Core Principle: All of life, from waking until sleeping, consists entirely of interactions between these two components. Every single experience, emotion, perception, and thought arises from this subject-object relationship. (Acharya Tadany)

The Necessity of Both Components

Examples of Subject-Object Interactions

Acharya Tadany provided an extensive list of experiences that require both subject and object:

- Love
- Worry
- Happiness
- Courage



- Fear
- Loneliness
- Hatred
- Empathy
- Sympathy
- Joy
- Sorrow
- Depression
- Motivation
- All sensations and perceptions

Each of these experiences requires:

1. A conscious subject who experiences
2. An object or situation that is experienced
3. An interaction or transaction between them

The Absence of Either Component

If the Subject is Absent:

- Without "I" (the conscious individual), there is no question of life
- No experiences can occur
- No perception of reality is possible

If the Object is Absent:

- Without the world (objects, people, situations), there are no transactions
- No interactions can take place
- Life as we know it cannot exist

The Example of Deep Sleep (suṣupti avasthā)

Acharya Tadany used deep sleep as a perfect illustration:

- During deep sleep, the aware, willful individual is not present (functionally)
- The world is not available for perception
- Therefore, no transactions or interactions occur
- There is no manifest happiness, sadness, tiredness, or any expressible form of life
- Deep sleep is "as good as there is no life" in terms of conscious experience

In suṣupti avasthā, neither the functioning individual nor the perceived world exists, so there are no manifest experiences. This demonstrates that both subject and object are necessary for life as we experience it. (Acharya Tadany)

The Inert Nature of Both Components

A crucial philosophical point Acharya Tadany emphasized:

- Both the individual (subject) and the world (object) are **Jadam** (inert) by themselves



- Neither has intrinsic life or consciousness
- Both require the consciousness principle (ātmā/Brahman) to function
- This was established in previous sessions when studying the individual

The Fundamental Law: Conservation of Matter and Energy

The Scientific Foundation

The Law of Conservation: Matter can never be created, and matter can never be destroyed. This is the law of conservation of matter and energy, which both science and Vedānta agree upon completely.

Implications for Creation

Acharya Tadany drew several critical conclusions from this law:

1. **The universe cannot be "created"** - Not by anyone, including God, because matter cannot be created from nothing
2. **Anything that manifests must have pre-existed** - In an unmanifest, potential, or seed form
3. **The statement "God created the world" is technically unscientific and illogical** - It violates the law of conservation

The Seed Analogy Revisited

Acharya Tadany used the classic seed-tree example to illustrate manifestation:

The Manifested Tree

- Visible trunk
- Visible branches
- Visible leaves
- Visible flowers
- Visible fruits

The Seed

- None of the above are visible
- Yet all exist in potential form
- The seed contains the entire tree in unmanifest state (Avyakta)
- The tree doesn't get "created" - it evolves from what already existed

Application to the Body

Similarly, our current physical body existed before in potential form as kāraṇa śarīram (causal body). The body wasn't created; it manifested from its causal state.



The Humorous Anecdote: The 6,000-Year-Old Universe

The Story

Acharya Tadany shared an amusing story about a Swamiji (likely Swami Dayananda Saraswati) meeting with a student in California:

The Setup

- A father, who had been studying Vedānta for many years, was concerned about his son
- The son believed God created the universe 6,000 years ago
- This contradicted both scientific evidence and Vedāntic teaching
- The father asked the Swamiji to meet with his son

The Conversation

During breakfast, the young man stated his position:

"I'm very sure and very clear that even though my father says the śāstra, and even science says that the Big Bang took place 14 billion years ago, I think the entire universe was created by God 6,000 years ago."

The Swamiji challenged him:

"What about the dinosaurs? They lived on this planet millions of years ago. There is carbon analysis that can establish how old even a stone is."

The Circular Logic

The young man responded with what he thought was irrefutable logic:

"Swamiji, isn't God Almighty? Omnipotent? So don't you think that God, being all-powerful and all-knowing, couldn't have created a world 6,000 years ago with some bones of dinosaurs already in it?"

The Swamiji's Response

Recognizing the futility of arguing against such circular reasoning, the Swamiji simply asked:

"How would you like to have your coffee?"

The Lesson

Acharya Tadany used this story to illustrate:

- The importance of logical, scientific thinking in spiritual study
- Why the śāstra's approach aligns with the law of conservation rather than creation ex nihilo
- That there's no point arguing with people who use circular logic to defend predetermined conclusions
- The necessity of rational inquiry in understanding Vedāntic principles



māyā: The Unmanifest Universe

Definition and Significance

māyā = The entire universe in its unmanifest, potential, dormant, or seed form. This is one of the most important and significant words in Vedāntic philosophy.

Alternative Names for māyā

kāraṇa prapañca	The causal universe - the universe in its causal, potential state
Avyakta prapañca	The unmanifest universe - the universe before it became perceptible
acetana Tattvam	The inert material principle - emphasizing its non-conscious nature

The Nature of māyā

Key characteristics of māyā:

1. **Non-manifest:** Not available for perception through ordinary means
2. **Potential:** Contains all possibilities of manifestation
3. **Dormant:** In a state of rest, not yet active or expressed
4. **Seed-like:** Contains the entire universe in compressed, unmanifest form
5. **Inert:** Made of matter/energy but without consciousness

Scientific Parallels: Before the Big Bang

What Science Can Explain

Acharya Tadany noted that modern cosmology has made remarkable progress:

- Scientists can explain conditions a millionth of a millionth of a millionth of a second **after** the Big Bang
- The evolution of matter, energy, space, and time after the initial event is well understood
- The formation of particles, atoms, stars, and galaxies can be traced

What Science Cannot Explain

However, there is a fundamental limitation:

- Science cannot explain conditions **before** the Big Bang
- Before the Big Bang, there was no time (time itself originated with the Big Bang)
- Before the Big Bang, there was no space (space itself originated with the Big Bang)
- Before the Big Bang, there were no divisions (state of singularity)



Science's Term: Scientists call the pre-Big Bang state "the state of no information" - they cannot gather or process any information about it using scientific methods. This is precisely what the śāstra calls māyā.

The State of Singularity

Acharya Tadany explained this crucial concept:

- Singularity means a state where no divisions have yet arrived
- Without space, there can be no divisions (divisions require spatial separation)
- Without time, there can be no sequence or change
- This is the state of pure potential, undifferentiated existence

Why māyā is Important to Understand

Acharya Tadany emphasized that people often use the word "māyā" very loosely and casually, but it has a precise technical meaning:

- māyā represents everything that existed before manifestation
- It is the material cause of the entire universe
- Understanding māyā helps us understand the nature of the manifest world
- It establishes that the universe evolved rather than being created

Brahman: The Consciousness Principle

The Two Inseparable Principles

Before the universe manifested, two principles coexisted:

māyā	Brahman
acetana Tattvam	caitanya Tattvam
The inert material principle	The consciousness principle
The unmanifest universe	The eternal awareness
Potential matter and energy	Pure consciousness
Subject to change and evolution	Unchanging and eternal
Temporary and ephemeral	Exists in all three periods of time

ātmā vs. Brahman: A Matter of Perspective

Acharya Tadany clarified an important distinction that often confuses students:



The Same Consciousness, Different Names

- **ātmā**: The consciousness principle viewed from the individual/micro perspective (Vyāṣṭi)
- **Brahman**: The consciousness principle viewed from the cosmic/macro perspective (Samaṣṭi)
- The consciousness itself is identical - only the angle of observation changes

The Geographical Analogy

Acharya Tadanu used a brilliant analogy to explain this:

The neighborhood where I live is called Viman Nagar. When talking from the perspective of the city, the city is called Pune. From the standpoint of the state, we refer to Maharashtra. From the standpoint of the country, we refer to India. From the standpoint of the continent, Southeast Asia, and so on.

The key insight:

- The physical location remains exactly the same
- Only the perspective or standpoint changes
- We give it different names based on the scale of reference
- Someone in Pune asking "Where do you live?" gets the answer "Viman Nagar"
- Someone in America asking the same question gets "India, Maharashtra, Pune"

Similarly:

- When discussing the individual, we call consciousness "ātmā"
- When discussing the totality, we call the same consciousness "Brahman"
- The consciousness principle itself never changes

The Eternal Nature of Consciousness

Consciousness is Sat

Acharya Tadanu reminded students of a principle established in previous sessions:

Sat = That which exists in all three periods of time (past, present, and future). Consciousness is Sat - it is eternal existence itself.

Key Characteristics of Consciousness

1. **Never manifested**: Consciousness didn't come into being at the Big Bang or any other time
2. **Has no beginning**: There was never a time when consciousness didn't exist
3. **Has no middle**: Consciousness doesn't undergo transformation or change
4. **Has no end**: Consciousness will never cease to exist
5. **Pervades all**: Consciousness is present everywhere, in everything

Consciousness and Birth

Acharya Tadanu explained a subtle but crucial point:



- When a body is born (thousands of babies are being born at this very moment), consciousness doesn't originate
- Consciousness simply manifests in that particular form
- The consciousness that manifests in a newborn body has no beginning
- That same consciousness existed before the Big Bang
- That same consciousness will exist after the universe dissolves

Birth is not the creation of consciousness but the manifestation of eternal consciousness in a new form. Death is not the destruction of consciousness but the withdrawal of consciousness from that particular form. (Acharya Tadanu)

Brahman Before the Big Bang

The śāstra clearly establishes:

- Before the Big Bang (before the universe manifested), māyā existed
- But māyā was not alone - Brahman (consciousness) also existed
- These two principles coexisted in an inseparable relationship
- māyā is the material cause; Brahman is the conscious principle that pervades it

The Three Levels of Universe

Parallel Structure: Individual and Universal

Just as the individual has three bodies, the universe exists in three corresponding states:

Individual Level (Vyaṣṭi)	Universal Level (Samaṣṭi)	Description
kāraṇa śarīram	kāraṇa prapañca	Causal/potential form - the seed state
sūkṣma śarīram	sūkṣma prapañca	Subtle form - not yet physical but more defined than causal
sthūla śarīram	sthūla prapañca	Physical/gross form - the manifest, perceptible universe

The Evolution Process

The manifestation follows a specific, orderly sequence:

1. **Stage 1:** Avyakta (unmanifest/māyā/kāraṇa prapañca) evolves into sūkṣma prapañca (subtle universe)
2. **Stage 2:** sūkṣma prapañca evolves into sthūla prapañca (physical universe)
3. **Important Note:** This is an evolutionary process, not a creation process



Why "Evolution" Not "Creation"

Acharya Tadany emphasized avoiding the word "creation" as much as possible because:

- "Creation" implies making something from nothing, which violates the law of conservation
- "Creation" leads to questions like "Who is the creator?" and "Who created the creator?" (infinite regress)
- "Evolution" correctly implies unfolding or manifestation of what already existed in potential form
- The śāstra uses terms like "manifestation," "evolution," and "unfolding" rather than "creation"

The Pedagogical Methodology

Acharya Tadany explained that the teaching approach mirrors the study of the individual:

1. Start with the unmanifest/causal state (kāraṇa prapañca/māyā)
2. Progress through subtle manifestations (sūkṣma prapañca)
3. Arrive at gross/physical manifestations (sthūla prapañca)
4. Maintain parallel structure between Vyaṣṭi (individual) and Samaṣṭi (cosmic)
5. Use analogies and examples to make abstract concepts concrete

Question after class

Question 1: Consciousness in All Things

Student 2's Understanding

Student 2 asked for clarification on a fundamental point:

"So everything in this universe has... is a combination of ātmā and māyā, right? Which means animals and everything, right? Rocks and plants. Is my understanding correct that only human beings, for some reason... are able to be aware of this ātmā thing? And the others are not. So why is that?"

Acharya Tadany's Correction

Acharya Tadany immediately corrected this misunderstanding:

The answer to the first question is no. ātmā (consciousness principle) is all-pervasive. It's not that ātmā exists only in humans and not in plants or rocks.

The Scientific Perspective on Matter

Acharya Tadany provided a scientific explanation to support this point:

- Even apparently solid, unmoving objects like walls are made of atoms
- Atoms consist of protons, neutrons, and electrons
- Electrons are always moving, constantly, non-stop



- These apparently unmovable, solid objects are made of ever-changing, ever-moving particles
- In order to move, the consciousness principle is necessary
- There is nothing in the universe that is truly static or unchanging

Perceptual Limitations

Acharya Tadany explained why some things appear inert:

- Our perceptions are limited by our sensory capabilities
- With a microscope, we could see bacteria on a wall "preparing for Gudi Padwa" (celebrating)
- What appears solid and motionless is actually teeming with movement and activity at the atomic level
- Consciousness is present everywhere, but our limited perception makes some things appear non-conscious

The Role of Tamo Guna

Acharya Tadany introduced the concept of Gunas (which will be studied in detail later):

- When Tamo Guna (the quality of inertia, lethargy, non-responsiveness) is predominant, consciousness appears non-existent
- This is called "Tama Pradhana" or "Guna Pradhana" manifestation
- In such manifestations, consciousness is present but appears dormant or inactive
- The consciousness principle is still there, but it's as though it's non-existent due to the predominance of Tamas

A rock appears completely inert and unconscious, but at the atomic level, it's full of movement. Consciousness pervades even the rock, but Tamo Guna makes it appear lifeless to our perception.

Question 2: Consciousness Before Human Evolution

Student 2's Second Question

"Before humans evolved, was there nothing in the universe that was aware of ātmā and could attain mokṣa and all of that, you know, like that whole journey?"

The Puranic Perspective

Acharya Tadany answered from the perspective of the Puranas (ancient texts containing stories and teachings):

- According to the Puranas, Bhagavan (the Divine) manifested in various forms (avatars) appropriate to different evolutionary stages
- These avatars appeared in bodies suitable for implementing Dharma at that particular time

The Sequence of Avatars



Acharya Tadany explained the evolutionary significance of the avatar sequence:

Avatar	Form	Evolutionary Stage
Matsya	Fish	Aquatic life - representing the earliest life forms in water
Kurma	Turtle	Amphibious life - representing the transition from water to land
Varaha	Boar	Terrestrial life - representing fully land-based creatures

These were manifestations of the consciousness principle (Bhagavan) implementing Dharma through appropriate bodies at different stages of evolution.

The Universal Perspective

Acharya Tadany broadened the discussion beyond Earth:

- The śāstra doesn't limit conscious beings to Earth alone
- There are billions of planets and billions of galaxies in the universe
- Other forms of conscious life may exist on other planets
- Some civilizations might be in Satya Yuga (golden age) - no bombing, no adharma, harmony in society
- We may be among the lowest in terms of spiritual evolution

Our understanding of reality is outrageously limited to what we know about this planet. The śāstra states that this knowledge applies universally, not just to human evolution on Earth. (Acharya Tadany)

The Humility of Limited Knowledge

Acharya Tadany emphasized:

- From a scientific perspective, we have nothing against the theory that humans descended from primates (Vanara)
- The śāstra's terminology is precise: "Nara" means human being, + "Va", that which you cannot precisely defined as a human being.