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... Tattva Bodha ...

By Acharya Tadanu

## AI Summary – Class 46

Jun 1, 2025

### Questions before the class

## Handling Violent and Vile People

### Sophie's Question

Sophie raised a fundamental question about how to perceive ātmān in violent and vile people, noting the difficulty of seeing the divine consciousness in such individuals.

### Acharya Tadanu's Response: The Nature of ātmān

Acharya Tadanu explained that ātmā is **never an object of perception** - it is always the subject, never the object. This means:

- ātmā is the perceiver, not the perceived
- It is impossible to perceive ātmā as an object of experience
- ātmā is ever the subject of all experience

### The Three guṇas Framework

Acharya Tadanu introduced the concept of guṇas (qualities) that predominate in human beings, which will be studied in detail in Chapter 13 of the Bhagavad Gita:

#### Sattvic guṇa (Purity)

- Characterized by selflessness
- Pure thoughts, behaviors, actions, and words
- Highest level of spiritual development

#### Rajasic guṇa (Activity/Passion)



- Characterized by selfishness with some concern for others
- Highly active and action-oriented
- Most people fall into this category
- Still engage in lying, manipulation, cheating, and omission
- Have varying degrees of concern about impact on others

### **Tamasic guṇa (Darkness/Inertia)**

- Outrageously selfish
- No care or regard for others' suffering
- Most destructive and harmful behaviors

### **Living in Kali Yuga**

Acharya Tadanu explained the current age according to Vedic cosmology:

#### **Characteristics of Kali Yuga**

- Backstabbing and corruption
- Wars and disagreements
- Racism and dislike
- Outrageous selfishness
- Abusive behavior
- Less conducive environment for spiritual pursuits
- Adharma (unrighteousness) governs and rules the world

*Note: Some teachers suggest we are transitioning to Dvapara Yuga, though this is debatable and debated.*

### **Practical Strategies for Dealing with Difficult People**

#### **Personal Level**

1. Remain as aloof as possible
2. Avoid falling into the trap of criticism and lamentation
3. Understand that worrying won't change circumstances
4. Criticizing only adds fuel to the fire
5. Accept reality objectively: "This is what it is"

#### **Action Level**



1. Change yourself first
2. Impact near and dear ones
3. If you have the personality and capability, act on larger scales:
  - Set up NGOs
  - Become involved in politics
  - Join decision-making organizations
  - Work with organizations like the United Nations

### **The Bank Robber Example**

Acharya Tadany used the example of a bank robber to illustrate an important point:

- Society easily labels people based on their worst actions
- Even a bank robber is not robbing banks 24/7
- The same person may be a son, daughter, father, mother, grandfather, or grandmother
- Behind every individual committing wrongdoing, there is still the Jīvātmā (individual consciousness)
- This perspective reduces anguish and dissatisfaction
- This example is not to be understood as a justification for wrong actions.

### **The Principle of ahimsā (Non-violence)**

Acharya Tadany shared a story about Pujya Swamiji Dayananda being asked about non-violence:

**Question:** If someone slaps you on the face, what would you do? Should you turn the other cheek (as per Christian doctrine)?

#### **Swamiji's Response:**

- "First of all, I see no reason why anybody would like to slap me on my face"
- "But if somebody does, it's my responsibility to make sure that the person doesn't do that again"

### **Key Principles**

- The Vedas do not require passive acceptance of abuse
- You must set boundaries when faced with abuse
- If possible, defend and protect yourself
- Sometimes you cannot set boundaries and must learn to endure
- But whenever possible, prevent the same situation from recurring



## Spiritual Practice (sādhana) in Difficult Times

Acharya Tadany emphasized the importance of maintaining spiritual equilibrium:

- Look at abusive and destructive situations objectively
- Remain as aloof as possible when you cannot change circumstances
- Avoid the endless loop of criticism and lamentation
- Recognize that most people are actually good
- We are simply bad at voting for good people



## Summary

Jīva and Īśvara

### Introduction to Key Concepts

This class introduced three fundamental concepts:

1. Jīvaḥ (individual consciousness)
2. Īśvaraḥ (universal consciousness)
3. The relationship between Jīva and Īśvara

### Terminology Clarification

Sanskrit Term	Common Translation	Acharya Tadany's Preference
Jīvaḥ	Individual living beings	Use Sanskrit term directly
Īśvaraḥ	God, Godhood, Lord	Use Sanskrit term directly
Brahman/ātmān	Universal consciousness	Original consciousness (OC)

### Original Consciousness (OC)

Previously called "universal consciousness," now termed "original consciousness":

#### Characteristics

- Always there, eternally present
- All-pervading
- Pervades and enlivens the body
- Makes the inert body (Jadam, Acetanam) into a functioning body

#### What Original Consciousness Does

When original consciousness pervades the body, it creates:

- Self-awareness
- Self-reflection capability
- Self-growth capability



- Self-strengthening capability
- A functioning, operating, working body

**Critical Distinction:** Self-awareness does NOT belong to the physical body. The body itself is inert (Jadam, Acetanam) and cannot generate consciousness. This is why a dead body cannot move or function - the consciousness has departed.

## Empirical Consciousness vs. Original Consciousness

### *Original Consciousness (OC)*

- The eternal, all-pervading consciousness
- Called Brahman (macrocosmic) or ātmān (microcosmic)
- Unchanging and independent

### *Empirical Consciousness (EC)*

- The functioning consciousness that makes the body operate
- Original consciousness as it manifests in a medium
- Temporary and dependent on the medium

## The Reflection Analogy

### *Mirror Reflection (Pratibimba)*

When you stand in front of a mirror:

- Your reflection appears in the mirror
- This reflection is called **Pratibimba**
- Face reflection = **Mukha Pratibimba**

### *Moon and Sunlight*

A more elaborate example:

- The moon is non-luminous (does not produce its own light)
- Sunlight reflects on the moon
- This reflected light makes the moon appear bright
- We call this reflected sunlight "moonlight" for convenience
- But in reality, moonlight is **Surya Pratibimba** (reflection of sunlight)
- The moon needs to be present as a medium for reflection
- When alignment is correct, the light gets reflected



## Brahma Pratibimba (Reflected Consciousness)

Similarly, original consciousness gets reflected in living beings:

### *The Process*

1. Original consciousness pervades and illumines every living being
2. When reflected in the body, it's called **Brahma Pratibimba**
3. Can also be called **ātmā Pratibimba** or **Caitanya Pratibimba**
4. This reflected consciousness is limited to the body (not all-pervading)
5. Requires a medium (the body) to exist

### *Definition of Jīvaḥ*

#### **Jīvaḥ = Brahma Pratibimba**

Jīvaḥ is the original consciousness reflected in individual beings. It is Brahman reflected in the śarīra (body - physical, subtle, and causal).

Alternative terms:

- **Jīvaḥ** or **Jīvātmā** (both mean the same)
- Original consciousness reflected in the sthūla-sūkṣma-kāraṇa śarīra (physical-subtle-causal body)

## Īśvaraḥ (Universal Consciousness)

The same original consciousness that creates Jīva also pervades the entire universe:

### *The Cosmic Organism*

The universe functions as a cosmic organism because:

- Original consciousness pervades the entire universe
- It pervades the physical universe (sthūla prapañca)
- It pervades the subtle universe (sūkṣma prapañca)
- It pervades the causal universe (kāraṇa prapañca)



*Universal Harmony and Natural Laws*

The universe works in harmony through natural laws:

**Scientific Perspective:**

- Science has discovered many natural laws
- Science continues to upgrade understanding of these laws
- New theories propose possible future laws
- All scientific theories are possible because the universe works in harmony

**Key Insight:** The theory of harmony precedes the theory of evolution. Without harmony, you cannot create a pattern of evolution.

*Examples of Natural Laws*

**Human Body Systems:**

System	Governed by Laws
Digestive System	Works automatically without conscious intervention
Respiratory System	Continuous automatic function
Circulatory System	Heart beats consistently: lub-dub, lub-dub

**The Heart Example:**

- Beats 24/7 without missing
- Functions whether you're happy or sad
- Continues while awake or sleeping
- Works like clockwork
- If there's disharmony (malfunction), medical intervention is needed

*The Heart Surgeon and Mechanic funny Story shared by Acharya Tadanu*

A heart surgeon went to a mechanic with car trouble. The mechanic opened the hood, diagnosed the problem, replaced parts, and charged a fee.



The mechanic said to the doctor: "We both do the same thing - I fix the engine (heart of the car), you fix the human heart. I charge one amount, you charge twenty times more. Why?"  
The doctor replied: "I agree with you, but try to do that with the engine functioning."

### *Moral Laws (Dharma)*

Beyond natural physical laws, there are moral laws:

- Called the **Law of Karma**
- Unbiased and impersonal
- Functions perfectly according to karmic principles
- Will be studied in detail at the end of Tattva Bodha

### *The Law of Karma*

Every action produces results:

- Mental actions produce results
- Verbal actions produce results
- Physical actions produce results
- Right actions produce Punya (merit)
- Wrong actions produce Papa (demerit)

According to accumulated Punya and Papa:

- The entire cosmos is manifested
- Human existence is manifested
- The cycle of birth and death continues: *Punarapi Janam, Punarapi Maranam*

### *Definition of Īśvaraḥ*

**Īśvaraḥ = Consciousness pervading the entire universe**

Īśvaraḥ is the original consciousness that pervades and governs the entire cosmos, maintaining all natural and moral laws.

## **The Complete Framework**

### *Microcosmic Level (Individual)*

- **With medium (body):** Jīvaḥ/Jīvātmā - consciousness pervading the individual
- **Without medium:** ātmā - original consciousness



- **Function:** Maintains individual laws (body systems, personal karma)

#### *Macrocosmic Level (Universal)*

- **With medium (cosmos):** Īśvaraḥ - consciousness pervading the universe
- **Without medium:** Brahman - original consciousness
- **Function:** Maintains universal laws (natural laws, cosmic order)

#### *The Analogy Summary*

Original	Medium	Reflection	Without Medium
Sunlight	Moon	Moonlight	Sunlight
Original Consciousness	Individual Body	Jīvaḥ	ātmā
Original Consciousness	Entire Cosmos	Īśvaraḥ	Brahman

### Key Distinctions

#### *Empirical vs. Original Consciousness*

- **Empirical Consciousness:** Temporary, dependent on medium, functions in time and space
- **Original Consciousness:** Eternal, independent, beyond time and space

#### *Jīvaḥ vs. Īśvaraḥ*

- Both are reflections of the same original consciousness
- Both are empirical (temporary) consciousness
- Jīvaḥ is limited to individual body
- Īśvaraḥ pervades entire cosmos
- Both maintain their respective domains through natural laws

#### *The Underlying Unity*

When you remove the individual body, Jīvaḥ becomes ātmā.  
When you remove the entire cosmos, Īśvaraḥ becomes Brahman.  
ātmā and Brahman are one and the same original consciousness.  
Therefore, Jīvaḥ and Īśvaraḥ are ultimately non-different - they are the same consciousness reflected in different mediums.



अद्वैत वेदान्त -

advaita vedānta

Acharya Tadany

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