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... Tattva Bodha ...

By Acharya Tadany

AI Summary – Class 51

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Before Class

Sanskrit Pronunciation: The Five Places of Sound Production

Before beginning the main teaching, Acharya Tadany provided a detailed explanation of the Sanskrit pronunciation system, emphasizing its systematic nature. He explained that Sanskrit sounds are produced from five distinct places in the mouth:

- **Labial sounds** (produced by the lips): pa, ma
- **Dental sounds** (tongue touching teeth): da, na
- **Lingual sounds** (tip of tongue touching roof of mouth): ṭa, ḍa
- **Palatal sounds** (tongue touching palate): ca, ja
- **Guttural sounds** (from the throat): ka, ga

Additionally, Acharya Tadany distinguished between soft and hard consonants. In transliteration, an "h" following a consonant indicates the hard pronunciation. For example:

- sthūla (not "stula"—the "h" makes it a hard "th" sound)
- abhimānī (not "abimani")
- bhavati (not "bavati")

He also explained that vowels can be short or long, with a macron (horizontal line) above the letter indicating length: ā, ī, ū. This systematic approach helps students chant Sanskrit verses correctly and understand the precision of the language.



Summary

The Three Bodies: Temporary Reflecting Mediums

Acharya Tadany began the main teaching by referencing the Bhagavad Gītā, Chapter 2, where Lord Krishna compares the physical body to clothing. Just as we wear clothes that gradually wear out and must eventually be discarded and replaced, so too do we "wear" physical bodies that are subject to birth, aging, and death. The key teaching is that just as we never confuse a piece of clothing with our true self, we should not identify the body as our real nature.

This principle extends beyond the physical body to include:

- **Sthūla śarīra** (physical body): Subject to birth and death, it is temporary and not our true nature. We should care for it appropriately but not become over-attached or over-identified with it.
- **Sūkṣma śarīra** (subtle body): The world of emotions, memories, feelings, and knowledge. Though it lives longer than the physical body, it too is impermanent and will be discarded at the time of pralaya (cosmic dissolution).
- **Kāraṇa śarīra** (causal body): Even this body is temporary and will be discarded at the time of mokṣa (liberation).

All three bodies function as **reflecting mediums (RM)** that produce **reflected consciousness (RC)**. Since all reflecting mediums are temporary and subject to being discarded, they cannot be our true nature.

Original Consciousness: The True Nature of Ātmā

Acharya Tadany emphasized that our real nature is not the reflecting medium (RM) or the reflected consciousness (RC), but the **Original Consciousness (OC)**—the eternal, immutable ātmā. This was established at the beginning of Tattva Bodha in the definition:

sthūla-sūkṣma-kāraṇa-śarīra-vyatiriktaḥ pañcakośātītaḥ yaḥ avaśiṣṭaḥ san avasthātraya-sākṣī sat-cit-ānanda-svarūpaḥ yaḥ sa ātmā

"That which remains after separating from the physical, subtle, and causal bodies; that which transcends the five sheaths; that which witnesses the three states of consciousness; that which is of the nature of existence-consciousness-bliss—that is ātmā."



As spiritual seekers, our journey is to shift our identification from "I am the body" or "I am the reflected consciousness" to "I am the Original Consciousness." This is not a physical journey but a journey of knowledge and understanding.

The Wave and Ocean Analogy: Understanding Jīva and Īśvara

To illustrate the relationship between the individual (jīva) and God (Īśvara), Acharya Tadany used the powerful analogy of a wave and the ocean. Imagine that the ocean is sentient, meaning the wave has self-awareness:

When the wave identifies as "I am a wave," it experiences constant worry and anxiety. As it approaches the shore, it fears its imminent destruction. The wave is subject to arrival, existence, and eventual death when it reaches the shore.

However, when the wave discovers that its true nature is *water*—and that being a wave is merely a temporary, incidental status—it becomes immortal. The form of the wave comes and goes, but the essential nature as water is eternal. The wave can then say:

asato mā sad gamaya|
tamaso mā jyotir gamaya|
mṛtyor mā amṛtaṁ gamaya

"Lead me from the unreal to the Real,
from darkness to Light,
from death to Immortality."

This journey from mortality to immortality is not a physical journey—it is a journey of wisdom. It involves shifting identification from the superficial nature (ahāṅkāra) to the real nature (ātmā). The same analysis applies at the cosmic level: Īśvara's reflecting medium is the three universes (causal, subtle, and physical), which are also temporary. The real nature of Īśvara is also the Original Consciousness.

Therefore:

- The real nature of jīva = Original Consciousness
- The real nature of Īśvara = Original Consciousness
- There is only **one** Original Consciousness, which is all-pervading

From the standpoint of the Original Consciousness, jīva and Īśvara are **one and the same**—just as both the wave and the ocean are water.

Dāsoham to Soham: The Spiritual Journey from Duality to Non-Duality



Acharya Tadany explained that the spiritual journey can be understood as a progression through two Sanskrit expressions:

- **Dāsoham:** "I am a servant of God." This reflects the dualistic perspective where the individual sees themselves as separate from and subordinate to Īśvara. This difference exists from the standpoint of the reflecting medium and reflected consciousness. It is the starting point of the spiritual journey.
- **Soham:** "I am That" (or "I am He"). This reflects the non-dualistic realization that in our true nature as Original Consciousness, the individual and God are one and the same. This is the culmination of the spiritual journey.

Thus:

- We start with **dvaita** (duality) and progress to **advaita** (non-duality)
- We start with **bheda** (difference) and progress to **abheda** (non-difference)
- We start with recognition of the superficial, empirical nature and progress to recognition of the essential, true nature

Saṃsāra: The Cycle of Birth and Death

Acharya Tadany warned that as long as we remain in dvaita (duality) and bheda (difference)—as long as we identify with the reflecting medium and reflected consciousness—we remain subject to **saṃsāra**: the cycle of repeated birth and death.

This cycle includes old age, disease, and a pervasive sense of insecurity. This insecurity manifests as constant worry: "What will happen to me when I grow old? What will happen to my spouse? What will happen to my children when I'm not here?" Even infants demonstrate this innate insecurity by clinging to their parents or their parents' clothing for comfort.

Śaṅkarācārya teaches that saṃsāra—this fundamental sense of insecurity—will never disappear unless we discover our immortal Self. The wise person (jñānī) is one who has discovered the higher, immortal "I" and is therefore willing to accept the loss of the mortal body without fear, because the body is losable and temporary.

Mental Preparation for Loss: The Wisdom of Acceptance

Acharya Tadany emphasized an important teaching: **security means mental preparedness to lose what is losable**. According to Vedānta, everything in the phenomenal world—every blessed thing that has existed, exists, or will exist—is temporary and subject to loss.

True wisdom means:



- Being mentally prepared to let go of what is impermanent
- Welcoming things when they arrive and not holding them back when they depart
- Enjoying what is available while it lasts, with "one foot inside and one foot outside"

Acharya Tadany quoted the principle:

āgataṃ svāgataṃ kuryāt, gacchantam na nivārayet—

"Welcome whoever arrives; do not prevent whoever departs."

Treat guests well when they come and with the same grace when they leave.

He also referenced Bhagavad Gītā, Chapter 2, verse 14:

mātrā-sparśāḥ tu kaunteya śītoṣṇa-sukha-duḥkha-dāḥ|

āgamāpāyino 'nityāḥ tāṃs titikṣasva bhārata

"O son of Kuntī, the contact between the senses and sense objects produces heat and cold, pleasure and pain. They are temporary, with a beginning and an end. Therefore, O Bhārata, learn to endure them."

The contact between sense organs and sense objects will always produce pairs of opposites: favorable and unfavorable moments, joy and sorrow. All such experiences are time-bound. The teaching is to learn to either enjoy or objectively endure them—this is the nature of the world.



Questions after class

Preparing for the Loss of Loved Ones

Sandra asked how to mentally prepare for the loss of parents, acknowledging that while she could accept her own mortality, preparing for the loss of loved ones felt much harder.

Acharya Tadany responded with compassion and clarity:

- The principle is universal—parents are subject to old age and death
- Vedānta does **not** deny our emotional nature or ask us to suppress grief. The pain of losing a parent, child, spouse, or close friend is real and natural
- In Vedic culture, after the physical departure of a loved one, there is a 13-day mourning period where one is strongly encouraged to express grief fully—crying, yelling, even expressing anger at God (who does not take offense). Suppressing emotions can lead to unhealthy manifestations later
- The more one assimilates Vedānta, the more inner space and resilience one develops. While grief will still arise, a Vedāntin recovers much faster than others because they can view the situation objectively
- Additionally, understanding that the physical body dies but the subtle body continues its journey eases the pain. Vedānta does not teach aloofness but provides perspective and faster recovery

Acharya Tadany emphasized that grief and wisdom can coexist. Vedānta provides mental preparation and a shock-absorber effect, but it does not deny the reality of human emotions.

Question and Answer: Karma and Natural Disasters

Sandra also asked about the tragedy in Venezuela where over 40,000 people died, questioning whether this was collective karma.

Acharya Tadany explained:

- Vedānta itself does not analyze specific tragedies—its focus is on revealing the true nature of the Self
- The law of karma, discussed in karma-kāṇḍa (the section of the Vedas dealing with action), involves both **verifiable beliefs** (e.g., "There is a temple with hot springs in Badrinath"—which you can confirm by visiting) and **non-verifiable beliefs** (e.g., "After death, one goes to heaven or hell"—which cannot be empirically verified in this life)
- While the law of karma makes logical sense and helps explain the structure of the universe, it remains largely non-verifiable



- From an objective standpoint, many disasters attributed to "fate" or "karma" are actually the result of **human negligence**—e.g., construction permits issued in seismically active zones without proper infrastructure, buildings erected on flood-prone riverbanks, corruption allowing unsafe development
- When mass casualties occur, from the perspective of karma-kāṇḍa, it could be said that Lord Yama (the deity of death) had all those individuals on the same list and found a way to bring them together. Those meant to depart do so; those meant to survive (sometimes with lifelong scars, as with survivors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki) do so
- Ultimately, from the Vedāntic standpoint, as ātmā, there is no birth or death. This is what Krishna taught Arjuna at the beginning of the Bhagavad Gītā

Student Progress Report: Preksha's Journey

Preksha shared her reflections after nearly a year of studying Tattva Bodha:

- **Reduced fear and anxiety:** She noted a significant reduction in her tendency toward anxiety and fearful thought cycles. Previously prone to imagining worst-case scenarios without logical reason, she now experiences much less fear, even in stressful situations
- **Experience of peace and oneness:** During classes, when Acharya Tadany presents teachings like *soham* and *aham brahmāsmi* (I am Brahman), she experiences deep peace, beauty, and a sense of oneness. This feeling has grown steadily over the year
- **Challenge with logical understanding:** When she is not in class and tries to think through these concepts using her analytical mind, scientific training, and logic, she struggles to rebuild that experiential understanding. She can feel the truth during class but cannot yet independently reconstruct it intellectually outside of class

Acharya Tadany responded with encouragement:

- Everything Preksha described is entirely normal and typical in the spiritual journey
- He shared his own experience: during his time with Pūjya Swami Dayananda Saraswati, classes were held three times daily. The feeling of clarity and peace was powerful in the guru's presence but harder to sustain independently afterward—this is a classic experience for spiritual students
- The guru has clarity and vision; the śāstra (scripture) and paramparā (teaching tradition) have the methodology. Preksha is in exactly the right place and should relax and continue the journey
- The **sādhana**s (spiritual practices) that will help integrate this understanding will be covered extensively in the upcoming Bhagavad Gītā course, which provides practical guidelines for daily life and tools for developing viveka (discrimination), vairāgya (dispassion), śama (control of the mind), dama (control of the senses), titikṣā (endurance), and other qualities



Closing: The Knowledge of Jīva-Īśvara Aikya

Acharya Tadany concluded by emphasizing that the body of knowledge taught in Vedānta centers on **jīva-īśvara-aikya-jñānam**—the knowledge of the oneness between the individual and God. In reality (from the standpoint of Original Consciousness), jīva and Īśvara are one and the same.

This knowledge is called the knowledge of Reality. It is the recognition that the superficial differences between individuals and God exist only at the level of the reflecting medium and reflected consciousness. At the level of our true nature—the eternal, all-pervading Original Consciousness—there is no difference whatsoever.