Satsang with Swami Dayananda Saraswati in Saylorsburg

August 21, 2007

Radha: Swamiji, to continue on with the series, I was wondering if Swamiji could talk about the teaching methodology today, and involved with that would be what is the sequence that Swamiji goes through in making the student understand this knowledge, the attitude for listening, what goes on in the mind, *akhaṇḍākāravṛtti*—what exactly that means. But my basic interest at the beginning was for Swamiji to go through the actual teaching methodology and then take it from there with some additional questions.

Swamiji: The subject matter and the means of knowledge between the *pramāṇa* [means of knowledge]and the *viṣaya* [subject matter], what is the relationship?   That settles everything, sets up everything. So, the *viṣaya* is oneself; the *jīva* [the transmigrating individual], the *pramātā* [the knower], is non-separate from *Īśvara* [the Lord]. *Jīveśvara-aikyam* [the identity between the individual and the Lord]. *Jagat kāraṇam Brahman*—the cause of the world that is *Brahman*—is myself.   So, that's the meaning of *tattvamasi* [that thou art]. So, *tattvamasi* is the teaching, the subject matter is the *pramātā* [the knower]. *Pramātuḥ svarūpam* [the true nature of the knower]. The *pramātā's*, the knower's, *svarūpa* [nature].

So, the *svarūpa* of the knower is self-evident. So, being self-evident, that which can deny its status, that the self-evident being is *asaṁsārī Brahman* [the infinite Self that is not subject to transmigratory existence]. What can deny this? It is self-evident. So, if there is a situation where the *svarūpa* of the self-evident being is *ajñāta* [not known], then we have to accept it is not known, means being self-evident, it is known, and also it is not known. In other words, it is known enough to commit a mistake. It becomes the locus of mistake. If there is no self-evident status for the self, one cannot commit any mistake. If the self is to be discovered, totally, then there is no correction of error—there is discovery of an object that is unknown to me.   No villager knows there are pancreas. Then the fellow has found he is fitter than what he is supposed to be, then they tell him that there are pancreas, the blood sugar, for you they don't work. This is unknown pancreas, but existence, and they are brought to light. It is a

different type of knowledge. The fellow has not mistaken the pancreas for something else. It is not known, and that is known.

But here, being self-evident, the self has to be construed as it is or whatever that one can, whatever one does, whatever one takes oneself to be. That really implies the presence of *ajñānam* [ignorance]. Like every other *ajñānam* [ignorance], this is also uncreated. Self-*ajñānam* is also uncreated—you cannot create *ajñānam*. So, like any other *ajñānam*, it is also uncreated *ajñānam*. It has to go. And it goes in the wake of *samyagjñānam* [clear knowledge], knowledge—knowledge of the self, all about the self. You have to accommodate the *jagat* [world] also. *Īśvara* also, in that self-knowledge. The individual, the *pramātā* [the knower]—everything has to be accommodated and explained away. That is called self-knowledge.

What is the *pramāṇa* for this knowledge? Once knowledge is involved, you can't have any knowledge without an appropriate means of knowledge. I am a *pramātā*, the knower. With me are a few *pramāṇas* [means of knowledge]— *pratyakṣa*, direct perception, *anumāna* [inference], *arthāpatti* [postulation]. These are my *pramāṇas* [means of knowledge]. One-step inference, more than one-step inference. *Anumāna* [inference] is one-step, *arthāpatti* [postulation] is more than one step. So, these are the *pramāṇas* [means of knowledge] I have. I have a *pramāṇa* to appreciate the absence of a thing. That I don't have a flower in my hand—absence [called *anupalabdhi*, noncognition]. Then you have *upamāna* [comparison]—an example. That can give you indirect knowledge of an object. So, what is already known becomes the basis for you to gain a proximate knowledge, indirect knowledge of another thing, similar. These are the means of knowledge I have. They are useless. These are all in the hands of *pramātā*. I want to know the *svarūpa* of the *pramātā* [true nature of the knower], which happens to be the *svarūpa* [true nature] of everything. That everything is to be understood.

The cause of this everything, whom we say all-knowing, *Īśvara*, that *Īśvara* is you. So, that's a very big equation. Being an equation, there is some seeming difference, essential non-difference. If there is no seeming difference, you don't need an equation. So there should be seeming

difference and there should be essential non-difference. Then you have this equation. In this, to arrive at *Īśvara*, you have no means of knowledge. You cannot prove *Īśvara*. No way you can arrive at him. Logic will give up. Maximum you can think of by logic, *aneka-īśvarāḥ* [many gods] *yatkāryaṁ tat sakartṛkam, kāryatvād ghaṭavat* [that which is created has a creator, because of being created like a pot]. It is the logic, *Naiyāyika's* logic. What is created has a *kartā*, a maker—being created, visualized and created, like a pot. Therefore, *idaṁ jagat* [this world], this *jagat sakartṛkam karyatvād ghaṭavat* [this world has a creator, because of being created like a pot]. This entire *jagat* [world] has a maker, being created, like a pot. Big extension. Then we say, *sakartṛkam* [having a creator] you can establish; *ekakartṛkam* [one creator] you cannot establish. *idaṁ jagat anekakartṛkam* —this *jagat* is created by a number of makers. Why? *Anekātmakatvāt* [Because of being many]. Being one consisting of lot of things. *Prāsādādivat* [like a mansion, etc]. Take a mansion. A mansion consists of a lot of things. Therefore, there are carpenters, masons, cement manufacturers, brick layers, brick manufacturers— hundreds of people are involved. *anekātmakatvāt* [because of being many] not like a *ghaṭa* [pot]. *Prāsādādivat* [like a mansion, etc.] It is *anekātmakam idaṁ jagat* [this world has many parts]. Your own body you take, it is *anekātmaka* [has many parts]. So, *anekātmakatvāt sakartṛkam api*—so even if you accept *sakartṛkam* is logically arrived at, to some extent you can do that, ut *ekakartṛkam,*[one creator] *abhinna nimitta upādānam*, [the material and efficient (cause) are not separate] for this you require a *pramāṇa* [a means of knowledge]. For which a *pramātā* [knower] cannot look at his *svarūpa* [own nature], that all these are one, and that one is myself. There is no way. So, you require a *pramāṇa* [a means of knowledge]. Suppose you accept Veda as a *śabda-pramāṇa* [the means of knowledge called testimony], the *jñānam* [knowledge] becomes *śābdam* [[produced by words (testimony)], *śābda-jñānam* [knowledge born of words].

So, the teaching of Vedanta becomes a means of knowing, *śābdam jñānam* [knowledge born of words]. *Śabdād jātam* [knowledge born of words]. Here there is a certain discussion. Any knowledge born of *śabda*, words, is indirect. It cannot be direct knowledge, being one of words. We used to tell in the village, you know, this fellow wants to buy a water buffalo—a typical village example. This water buffalo he wanted to see. That went

into a pond. And it went into a pond; only the horns are visible. And the whole water buffalo is inside the pond. Now, he says, "those horns—that is my buffalo. What will you pay? What will you give me for my buffalo?" What can you do? You have to let the buffalo come out. I would like to see whether it is a healthy buffalo. It is under water. How to talk of its price, etcetera, let it come out. [Swamiji is speaking in Tamil.] And that doesn't come out at all. How are you going to estimate its health, etcetera. Then I give a description. Its height is this much. It gives so much milk. Its age is only, it is five year old. All that you give in different words, descriptive words. Born of words is knowledge and that knowledge is indirect. Descriptive words reveal indirect knowledge, give you indirect knowledge. Like the Vedic words talk about *puṇya* [merit], talk about *pāpa* [sin]—no one can see any of them. Talk about *svarga* [heaven]. You can't see them, but they are knowledge. You can give the status of *pramāṇa* [means of knowledge] for the Veda. They all become *parokṣajñānam* —indirect knowledge. Therefore, Vedas also, talking about this oneness of *jīvesvara* [the individual and the Lord], being words, will give indirect knowledge. This is the stand, the general stand.

If that is true, the teaching methodology is entirely different. There is nothing to teach, really speaking. There is information. There is *ātmā* [Self]. That *ātmā* is the cause of everything. That is the truth of everything, and you have to realize. That's only information. There is no teaching. There is *svarga*, heaven, and if you do these things you can reach there and you can see for yourself when you go there. A non-verifiable belief, really speaking. Even though you call it indirect knowledge, it is non-verifiable belief. This may be a verifiable belief, because you are talking about me. It may be a verifiable belief, but it is a belief . Therefore, there is no teaching. The very word "teaching", *upadeśa*, is just meaningless. There is only just information. "There is body, mind, intellect, and beyond that is consciousness, *ātmā*." It has no meaning. "You have to experience that." So, that would be true only if the Self is not self-evident. I don't need any *pramāṇa* [means of knowledge] to know I am existent, that I am a conscious being, that I am existent. I am already a *pramātā* [knower]. And I say I am a *saṁsārī*, in one word, *saṁsārī*. Subject to *sukha-duḥkha* [pleasure-pain]. Extend it further: *sukha, duḥkha, kartṛ, bhoktṛ* [pleasure, pain, doer, enjoyer]—I am the doer, I am the experiencer. I am subject to

4

guilt, I am subject to hurt, I am subject to all the *bhāva-vikāras*, all the modifications that the body is, any organism is, subject to. So that's the conclusion for which the *pramātā* [knower] has a certain basis. The *pramātā* [knower] operates from the confines of this body. He doesn't exist beyond the body. Between the fingers, there is no *aham* [I], there is no "me." Only the fingers, me. Even a bullet goes between fingers and they have fever for three days, but that is not due to anything happen to my body. And so, this is what I will conclude, *"aham saṁsārī."* [I am a transmigrating individual] There is nothing more to conclude. I am born with that notion—born in the sense that there is *ajñānam* [ignorance] about me. This is me. Individually, it is true. The *sūkṣma-śarīra* [subtle body], that is why it's so important, does not extend beyond the anatomy. So, from this universe, you have a carved out location; you have your own location. Each one is an island in space. So this is a unit, one unit, the individual. But this person is a *saṁsārī*. If the *saṁsāritvam* [being a limited time-bound individual] is true, there is nothing to teach. If the *saṁsāritvam* is not true, there is nothing to teach.

But if this person doesn't like to be a *saṁsārī*, wants to be free from being a *saṁsārī*, struggles hard all the time, there is an unacceptable status for this peson. So, *asaṁsāritvam* is sought after. *Saṁsāritvam* is the status. That *asaṁsārī Brahman* [the limitless Self who is not limited] *jagatkāraṇam* [cause of the world], limitless *satyam jñānam anantam* [existence, consciousness, limitless], that *Brahman*, is the Self. I am *ātmā-brahman*. This self-evident Self is *Brahman*. That is the teaching. That means the teaching doesn't have a problem to solve. The teaching is meant only to negate the confusion, resolve the confusion by pointing out, "this is you." And that is not negatable. Therefore, words give rise to direct knowledge if the object of knowledge is evident already. Like in front of you, somebody is there, but who is that you don't now, then someone can introduce, "this is that person you wanted to see." "O-o-o-o-h." *so'yam* [This is he]. This is that person whom you wanted to meet. Here is the person. Here I have to believe this fellow's words. He is outside me. I need to verify also, because both of them can conspire and take me for a ride. But that is not the case for the self-evident. *Abādhitam*--it is not negatable.

So in that form is the teaching.   And therefore, the teaching has to be taken as even my eyes are a *pramāṇa* [means of knowledge]. My eyes are a *pramāṇa* for

direct perception. You can't say, "I infer I see you." You can't tell. I ask, "Do you see me?" You say, "I infer I am seeing you." I say, "Hey, you are seeing me." On no, "I make an inference." What do you infer? You see me. Direct perception. Similarly, words have to reveal what the self-evident Self is. Have to reveal. Direct perception. More than direct perception. Here at least, you require eyes, you require ears. You require senses. They can be defective. You can begin commiting mistakes. Not here. We are talking of the self-evident being. You cannot even deny what is being said. You don't have the power to deny. There is nothing to deny. Unless there is a some psychological issues. And without addressing those issues, the person tries to listen to this, naturally, the inner child will be protesting. It doesn't want to solve the problem because it wants you to solve its problem. In that model, the child-adult model. The child wants you to solve the child's problem first. Afterwards, you solve. So that's an issue that should be taken seriously. Otherwise, it won't let you cross.   It will be questioning everything that is said.

And therefore, the responsibility of the teaching is to make you see this is the truth. This is what I am. That is the job of the teaching.   The teaching has to use words. You can't use your eyes; you can't use your ears. So, you can't say, the teaching cannot say, "Now, turn your eyes inside." You can't give instructions. "Listen to the inner vibrations." There are fellows like that. The words have to fix up all the notions, correct all the notions, by using the method of *reductio ad absurdum*. Then, point out. The words, already words. We have to use certain words that are known to us. Unknown words cannot convey. Known words are not going to convey because this is unlike anything I know. My known words are all words culled from my experienced world. Even if you say "it's a reality" it has got its own meaning. "Real," the word, does not really mean anything. Everything is real. The word "real" the table is real, the paper is real. Everything is real. So that is all what we have. The word, that is the reality. So with those words you are not going to convey. You can't use words that are unknown to the person to communicate. So, known words are not appropriate. Unknown words are useless. What are you going to do?

That's where we have…one beautiful thing here is, this is the truth of the teaching, and that is: there is no word which is unconnected to yourself. No word. There is no experience that is unconnected to what we are talking about. Therefore, if everything happens to be the Self, everything is a point, a window

to look at myself. Only if you know how to look at it, how to handle those words. In fact, what is there is only a bunch of words. The Self plus a few words, that is all that is there. And all those words mean meaning; it is all knowledge. So, in the knowledge what is the *vastu* [the reality]. Therefore, we have the whole method of looking at these words, handling these words.   It's a method.

Vedanta is not solving a problem. Therefore, it is not a system. It is not a school. It is pointing out the truth that there is no problem. Therefore, the job is entirely different. It is an accomplished job. So, it is not mission to be accomplished. It is a mission accomplished. It is something like that fellow who took some drugs, whatever, and he is in his own apartment. And he says to his friend, "Please take me to my apartment." "This is your apartment." "No, no, I am in a very strange place. This is not my place. Please take me to my apartment." Then he has to take him out one or two blocks, and then bring him back. Then the fellow says, "Thank you!" So, we are pointing out what is a complex.   Therefore, it is more a method than a system. Like therapy. You can't write a book on therapy. "This is how you should do therapy" and all that. It won't work. It will never work. The person has to undergo therapy. And when he undergoes therapy, then he understands what is therapy. How did it grow upon him. How did the therapist handle situations, how he brought out everything, helped the person process. And that is how it grows upon him. One method. That is the *parampara* [the teaching tradition].

Here also, *parampara*. The whole method grows up on you. It is a method. When I am not proposing a system, a school of thought, what else is there but a method? All that is there is just method. That's why I'm afraid of all the systems. Even though we have a lot of *prakriyās*. That is why we use the word "*prakriyā*." P*rakriyā* is a method. We use *prakriyās*, methods, of arriving at. It has got to be adequate. So it's a (?), because the knowledge has to accommodate, explain away, the situation, explain away the *nānātvam, bhinnatvam, tāratamyatvam*---the manifoldness, differences, and the comparative situations, always need to be explained. The complexity of the *jagat*[world] has to be explained away. The *śāstra* is adequate for all that. It is complete. Therefore, a person becomes inevitable. A teacher becomes inevitable, he is not a book.   If that is so, why don't you say "teaching"?   We say go to a teacher. But we have to tell who is that teacher, what makes the person a teacher. So, what makes the

person a teacher, you have to say, "*śrotriya*." *Śrotriya* also, *vedānadhīte yaḥ śrotriyaḥ*. The meaning of the word *śrotriya* is the one who studies Veda. The one who studied Veda is called *śrotriya*. But then, the *pūrvamīmāṁsaka* also is *śrotriya*, a *karmata, also, pūrvamīmāṁsaka*, is also *śrotriya*, does *karma*, rituals, etcetera, is very well informed. He is a *śrotriya*. But he has nothing to do with Vedanta. Therefore, one more word: "*brahmaniṣṭhaḥ*" [firmly established in *Brahman*] So, *śrotriyaṁ brahmaniṣṭhaṁ gurumevābhigacchet.* [One should go to a teacher who is well-studied in the Vedas and firmly established in Brahman.] By mentioning *śrotriyaṁ brahmaniṣṭhaṁ*, you maintain the teaching, Vedanta teaching. That is invariable. Whoever is the teacher has to teach as it is taught. Any other way will confuse. You cannot change the method. You can change language, you can't change the method. Even sometimes language is an important part of it, because it is *śābda* [born of words]. Any language you use, you have to convert that language into a medium. The Sanskrit language, how it is handled for teaching this, in the same manner you have to create the language to handle this. You have to make use of available language, but very deftly. So, the deft handling of words is not negotiable. It's a *pramāṇa* [means of knowledge]. Means "eyes," eyes see. There is no choice. The words reveal. They need to. If they don't then they are not handled. They are not handled. Means the conditions that are required for *pramāṇa* to work are not fulfilled, especially when they are words. And the whole thing has to transpire in the *buddhi* [the mind], the meaning, the *buddhi* has to take place here. The *buddhi* has to be ready for it. *Ātmā* [Self] is always ready; you don't need to prepare the *ātmā*. *Buddhi* in the person, *pramātā* [the knower], in terms of his own maturity, is important. Then the words are handled very deftly by the teacher, *jñānam* [knowledge] takes place. There is no let or hindrance. That is why we say, even though *pramāṇa* [means of knowledge] is Vedanta, it has to come through a teacher. Therefore, *śastrajño'pi brahmānuveśanam svātantriyena na kuryāt*. [even a Vedic scholar should not do the inquiry into *Brahman* independently.] Shankara. *śastrajño'pi* – even suppose he is a *paṇḍita*, a scholar, who has studied a lot of disciplines of knowledge, of language, grammar, Veda, etcetera—that is all very good, but *brahmānuveśanam* --inquiry into *Brahman*, *brahmavidyā na kuryāt*, [he should not undertake the knowledge of brahman] *svātantriyena* – independently. And the teacher, how he should be, is said also. *asampradāyavit mūrkhavad upekṣaṇīyaḥ* [a person who does not know the methodology of teaching should be avoided like a fool]— *asampradāyavit*, the one who does not have the *sampradāya*, the methodology of teaching, *dīyate anena iti* [it is given by him], *samyak dīyate* [it is

8

clearly, properly given], *prakarṣena dīyate anena iti sampradāyaḥ.* See, *pradāya* is what is clearly given. But you can't create a *santati*, you can't create a tradition, unless you make sure the other one receives it. And therefore *pradāya* is not enough. *prakarṣena dīyate anena iti pradāyaḥ. Samyak.* When you add one more "*sam*" then you make sure the other fellow also has received it. Then you have created a *sampradāya.* That is the *sampradāya* [the teaching methodology]. The word itself tells everything, what it is all about. Very important here. Therefore, *Bhāṣyakāra* [the author of a commentary, which is a title for Shankara who wrote the commentary on the Brahma Sūtras.] says *asampradāyavit,* the one who doesn't have *sampradāya*, let him be *śastrajña* [a Vedic scholar], let him be anything. *Mūrkhavad upekṣaṇīyaḥ* [he is to be avoided, like a fool]. Very big word. *Mūrkha* means a ruffian, kind of a brute. *Mūrkhavad upekṣaṇīyaḥ.* Just avoid the person. So, the whole thing is dependent upon the *sampradāya* [methodology of teaching]. We will leave it here and pick it up later.