Swamiji: Okay, what's going on?

(Laughter)

Radha: Chuck had a question, Swamiji, and I think others of us have had questions too. So we can start with Chuck.

Chuck: Start with me…ah. I’m wondering, Swamiji, what…what happens to māyā at pralaya[dissolution of creation]? You know, when everything is rolled up. Is māyā always there with brahman, all times, even when there is no creation?

Swamiji: Yeah.

Chuck: How…

Swamiji: So the…as long as the jévas continue…

Chuck: Yes

Swamiji: māyā will be there. This is our, ah…we have to…we have to accept that because as long as the jévas are there. One jéva gone, and then there’s no māyā. There’s only brahman. Then the other jévas, from their standpoint, māyā is there. Māyā is there. Then for them māyā is there.

Th-n, even from brahman’s standpoint…You are brahman now. From your standpoint, your standpoint. It becomes no more brahman’s standpoint. It is your standpoint. And your standpoint, the māyā-upādhi [māyā-conditioning adjunct] is there. And so…so you become Éçvara. So that will continue because the jévas are countless, and so the cycle keeps on going. The cycle…

Chuck: Yeah

Swamiji: that’ll keep going.

Chuck: No, I understand that. I’m just ah…I guess I’m confused.

Swamiji: No, no when ah…but the māyā is a vibhūti[glory]. It’s not an issue. For brahman māyā is…is a vibhūti. See, there’s only brahman. Māyā also is brahman.

Chuck: Right

Swamiji: As long as the jévas are there, then the infrastructure called ‘jagat’ [world]
must be there. Jéva’s çaréra [body] must be there. Order, laws, everything must be there. Écvara continues. That’s why Çaikara always uses the word ‘Écvara’ for jagat-kāraëam [cause of the world]. Even the definition of brahman is taōañöa. yato vā imāni bhūtāni jāyante--. From which all these have come, by which all these are sustained, unto which all these go back, that is brahman. The definition itself is like that, so taōañöa. Even though in brahman you don’t see jagat, but the lakñaëa [accurate description] is taōañöa [the property of a thing that is distinct from its nature and yet is a property by which it is known].

Chuck: Yeah. I…I mean I’m just a little worried about what…what happened, you know if…if there’s pralaya [dissolution], the whole creation…

Swamiji: Yeah, all unmanifest, then māyā is there.

Chuck: Unmanifest is a seed or something.

Swamiji: Yeah. Yeah.

Chuck: It has to be there, potentially.

Swamiji: Yeah. It’ll be there. That’s the cycle, so unmanifest, then manifest, unmanifest, manifest.

Chuck: And so that potential māyā, or potential creation, whatever you want to say…

Swamiji: Will always be there. Always be there as long as jéva…You have to put one ‘as long’ as for safety, as long as jévas are there. Then afterwards we say, jévas will always be there, because they are countless. Yeah.

(Laughs)…countless…Some people get worried. If all get enlightened…so if all the jévas get enlightened, what will happen to… (Laughter.) So they should have some cause to really worry about

Durga: Swamiji. Swamiji. I have a question that troubles me a little bit because we say ‘when the creation is unmanifest,’ and we say ‘when.’ But my understanding is time itself is part of the creation. So how can we say ‘when the creation is unmanifest,’ cause there is no time…

Swamiji: No. That’s upacāra [figurative]. That’s upacāra. That’s not ah…there’s no ‘when’ or anything. ‘When it is unmanifest,’ we have to say, because we are dealing with manifest. So it becomes unmanifest. Even…it becomes unmanifest, you have to add ‘when’…when it becomes unmanifest. Then there is no time there. Then…then we’ll not…we’ll not bother about that, because when it is manifest it comes with…along with time and space, like sleep.

We are dealing with it all the time. When you go to sleep there is no time. That’s only
language, because there is such a thing called ‘sleep.’ It begins at a given time. Therefore ‘when’ is not an inappropriate word. Hah. Hah. And it breaks at a given time. So when it begins and it breaks, then ‘when’ is not an inappropriate word.

Jagadisha: Swamiji, why is the våtti [thought mofication] ‘I am limited,’ why is that våtti so strong?

Swamiji: It’s that…the våtti is as good as limitless.

Jagadisha: But the våtti ‘I am just this…’

Swamiji: No, no, våtti cannot stay because våtti is only when it is…We call it a våtti only when it is an object. Then evident is limitless what våtti will be there? And the limitless is self-revealing, I have already told. This is a modern problem.

Jagadisha: But the våtti…ah….ah…

Swamiji: Resolves

Jagadisha: Yes, but…but the truth is I am…I am the whole, and there is a våtti that says, ‘I am limited,’ and that våtti, ‘I am limited,’ is very strong.

Swamiji: No. No. It’s a…it’s a våtti that resolves into self-revealing limitless consciousness. So all that is there is one caitanya [consciousness]. So then, even when there is a våtti that limitless is…ignorance is not there. We don’t need a våtti for it. There is no ignorance, that’s it.

Jagadisha: But

Swamiji: Even there is subject object it is limitless. We don’t need a våtti.

Jagadisha: Swamiji, I understand, but ‘I am the whole’ is the truth. Okay, so maybe the word ‘våtti’ is not great. Maybe, why is the conviction that we feel, ‘I am limited’ that…why is that conviction strong enough to overcome the truth that ‘I am the whole?’

Swamiji: Limitless whole is all one and the same, you know. And ah…this is a question of ‘What is this knowledge?’ This question you have to understand, but ah, the answer to this question…Question needs to be reshaped. How does the knowledge take place? How does the knowledge of limitless take place?

Is there a våtti, ‘I am limitless?’ There is a våtti. It’s called akhaëòa-äkära-våtti. The jéva and Éçvara are one and the same. That akhaëòa-äkära-våtti, the contradictions resolve. Jéva is individual. Éçvara is all. So the all includes individual. How individual can be all? That is a contradiction. This contradiction gets resolved when we understand these both are non-separate from self-revealing limitless consciousness, which is satyam [real, true]. And with that, våtti goes. Removing that confusion the våtti goes.
Jagadisha: Swamiji, I can understand all that.

Swamiji: Yah, then what else?

Jagadisha: The question is…ah, I know that I’m the whole, but there is a våtti, ah, a conviction that I am a limited jëva. That conviction, that våtti sometimes is there. Now if the truth is ‘I am the whole,’ and I know the truth, the våtti, ‘I am limited’ also is there.

Swami Vagishänanda: Swamiji, I think he’s talking…if I am correct, I think he’s talking about the viparita-bhävana [erroneous Self-identification], or the habitual identification with the body.

Swamiji: Eh?

Swami Vagishänanda: I think…I think he’s talking about the habitual identification with the body, even though ‘ahaà brahmäs̄mi’ [I am Brahman] is understood. Still the habit of identification with the body continues. Um, and is it correct?

Jagadisha: Yes. Why…why does that happen?

Swamiji: Therefore what?

Swami Vagishänanda: What …what is the reason of that?

Jagadisha: Yes, what is?

(Laughter)

Swamiji: That’s orientation. The whole, we have been talking about that. That is the orientation, old orientation.

Jagadisha: Ah ha, just old habit.

Swamiji: Yeah

Jagadisha: Old habit. Ah ha. Om.

Swamiji: You said it, habitual, yeah. So, it’s not that ah…it’s unlike any knowledge. Any knowledge is…is knowledge of an object, to which you are related as a knower. So, it’s different. It’s one-time knowledge. Ignorance is gone, and you have knowledge. And therefore, unless you forget or something, because of some hemorrhage or damage, there’s no…there’s no…there’s no question of again ignorance coming back. Here also, ignorance doesn’t come back.

Jagadisha: Hmmm, understood. Now…
Swamiji: Experientially if you find (yourself) estranged, or as though you lost it. It’s all as though. dhyāyati iva [as though he contemplates], leläyati iva [as though he trembles] As though it is lost, and as though it is gained again. And you do dhyänam [meditation]. That’s the contemplation. dhyāyati iva --You as though contemplate, because as though lost, and as though contemplate. And you begin and it is…it ends, because ah, you do use your will at that time to sit in contemplation. Afterwards then…then take care of a word, or whatever, so. Knowledge takes care of it, yeah.

Durga: Swamiji, in satsaïg someone asked you the question, “What did hariù om mean?” And…in satsaïg one time, somebody asked you, what did hariù om mean, what the meaning was. And you gave the meaning, but I believe you also broke down the word hariù into separate Sanskrit words, but I didn’t hear Swamiji translate those words. Did that happen? I’m not sure.

Swamiji: No. No. hariù is haratì [he removes], harati päpäni [he removes sins] duùkhäni [sorrows] duùkha-hetu [the cause for sorrow]. And ah…the one who removes the päpa. Päpa means duùkha, all forms of pain, causes of pain. And ah, either you are invoking Éçvara in the form of remover of pain, when you say ‘Hara,’ or ‘Hari.’ Only pratayaya [grammatical affix] is different. And ah, root is the hà root, har. Then Om is avati, rakñati [he protects, does good to] The one who is…one who…one who blesses. So, source of blessing, source of sustenance, that which sustains everything. That is Om. I don’t know what connection I gave. So there is no connection between that, even though rakñaëam [protecting] is one thing, haraëam [removing, taking away] is another. By…by removing…ah…” hariù om,” I said that. I remember that. By removing all the causes for duûkha, Om rakñati, protects, blesses. hariù om. For that I gave the answer, yeah.

Somebody asked what is ‘Hari Om?’ hariù om …same. Om is Hari. First, remover, remover of duûkha. That’s all what you require. Remover of duûkha means all smallness has to go, ignorance has to go, confusion has to go. It’s all sab haratì [he removes everything] So what is left out is Om. Then you can also invoke as, ‘Oh Remover, and bless.’ The one who is a source of blessing. So hariù om, that’s the meaning you can give.

We use these two words all the time, hariù om. In the Veda also, while chanting also hariù om. But you have to say, ‘hariù om.’ The visarga [the affix ù] remains before Om. Ahhh.

Radha: Om always remains untouched.

Swamiji: Ah. It doesn’t ah jell with any. It stands out. (Laughs) Om. So the…the respect for Om.

Radha: Swamiji, could Swamiji talk about pratibandhaka-jïänam [knowledge with obstacles] a little bit? There’s different standpoints that Swamiji’s taken. And also
Çaìkara has spoken of it. So I’d like to hear some of those different ways of viewing it, and how Swamiji would translate it also.

Swamiji: Yeah. Sapratisbandhaka-jiìäm [knowledge with obstacles]. So, sapratisbandhaka-jiìäm, mean jiìäm with pratibandhaka. Pratibandha means obstacle. Some obstacles, inhibiting factors are there. This…this pratibandhas are generally called ävaraëa [covering] and vikñepa. So, ävaraëa-vikñepa, these are the pratibandhakas. Main pratibandhaka is ävaraëa and vikñepa.

So this ävaraëa is removed. Ävaraëa is cover, not knowing. So this…for want of a pramäëa [means of knowledge], ävaraëa continues. For want of pramäëa, there is no knowledge, and for want of knowledge continuity of ävaraëa. Ävaraëa cannot go. How will it go? In the wake of knowledge, it’ll go. And for the knowledge you require pramäëa. Pramäëa is Çästra. Çästra exposure you require.

And when the Çästra exposure is there, adequate exposure, and Çästra handled by a teacher, because it’s purely handling. It is something like therapy. It’s purely handling. Suppose there is a book on therapy. You read a book, you don’t get therapy. (Laughter) Yeah. It means, you can say, ‘that I…I read all the therapy books three times, enough.’ You don’t get therapy.

So similarly also this teaching is a super therapy, because therapist also doesn’t do any thing, doesn’t create anything new, confusion removes. Whatever the confusion is there that has to go. And to some extent it goes. They shift from the self-blaming to the people who are to blame, a shift. That’s a very big thing. It’s a…it’s a…at least you are not blaming. It’s not you. So that’s a freedom. So freedom from self-blaming, self-loathing.

Then, then we…we can go one step further. Say, not only you are not to blame, even you mother is not to blame, and your father is not to blame. Nobody is to blame. There is an order in all this. And therefore you go one step further, and then one more step further, that you are unaffected and all that. That is the teaching.

So, you bring in Éçvara, and then you are validated. Éçvara is infallible, or infallible is Éçvara. And because he’s in the form of order, Éçvara in the form of order and all my lot is by Éçvara’s law. My own capacity to change also is within the law. All that we have…appreciate, and therefore there is some kind of a therapy. And it has to be done, and done only by a teacher. It’s no…no question of reading a book and getting anything. It’s a therapy.

It’s a reorientation, complete reorientation, opposite, centered on ‘I,’ not an object. So, this ah…being ‘I’ centered, you require that kind of reorientation. If it is object centered knowledge, you don’t need orientation, you don’t need therapy.

I have to understand how to make cheese. (Laughter) So…so I don’t need any therapy, so, cheese therapy. (Laughter) It’s a reorientation. You don’t need. But then if you think, ‘I am cheese,’ then you require a lot of therapy. (Laughter)
Therefore, the…you require a teacher. Alright, teacher is there, and it’s a…and it’s a proper teacher. That also I have to add. All this you have to make pakka. The…the requirement is to be made…made tight. So, the teacher is there, teaching is there, pramāṇa [means of knowledge] is available. Therefore, there should be no reason for the person who is exposed to the teaching not to know. There is no reason, unless somebody is damaged cognitively.

If there is a cognitive damage, then it is a problem, because understanding won’t take place. Cognitive damage takes place because of too many issues to be processed. So that unless they are processed they are not going to allow you to solve the problem, because it is a self-addressed. And there is something there to be processed, and that is not yet processed, that is the self you have got. That is the ego. Unconscious is not an object. It is centered on ego. It is the other side of the ego, flip side of the ego. How will it allow? It won’t allow. It’ll stand like a block. It’ll not allow. It will find out enough reasons to deny what you…what you think you know is not true. It’ll deny. It’ll protest.

All piurvakānas [opposing positions]…I consider all the ācāryas [teachers] are there because of…because of psychological problems. Different schools of thought all because of needs. Needs, they want somebody to be there to save. It’s all…it’s all unconscious problems. They can’t accept mithyā, even these people who don’t accept pramāṇas also have got father issue, authority issue, from Buddha onwards, authority issues. So all schools of thought are born out of emotional needs.

We interpret everything in such a way, or deny everything. Deny means authority. I say this. I’m not going to accept anybody. This is not acceptance of anybody. That is not understood. I’m not going to use my eyes for seeing. (Laughter) That’s…that’s why I…that’s how I go about. Then what you are going to use? I use my ears. (Laughter) And to hear you say this, I will use my eyes, okay? To hear you say this, I will use my eyes. ‘Get lost,’ that’s the meaning for that. And therefore… (Laughter)…so this…

So, I…I am very definite about this, even though I can’t talk for…for civility, for not hurting people. But I am hundred percent sure, not I have a theory. I see it. It’s all due to issues. Viçiṇādvaitam, Dvaitam, all these theologies, serious psychology. Somebody must be there to save. All savior religions are like that. How anybody can deny? It’s all needs.

So even…even some people say ah, ‘There’s no guru. You are your own guru.’ You have been fifty-five years, and so nothing has happened. [Tamil] Even now, buddhi [understanding] doesn’t come. (Laughs) All funny people, and ah, it’s not authority, it’s a…it’s a means of knowing.

So, they will…they will protest. When issues are there inside they will protest and make sure…Because they have issues they will go to spirituality. They will go to spirituality, but they will not…they will not be able to see. They will try to prove they are wrong, because it’ll solve the problem. And also, I become lovable. I am not lovable. That is
definite. The child knows I am not lovable. And you say, ‘You are lovable.’ That is bluff. That is bluff.

It has to prove. It has to set up. It has to create a theology. And if there is some education and intelligence is there, all that is available will be used to prove that I need to be saved.

Question: Swamiji. Swamiji, can one say jéva’s problems are really emotional problems and Vedanta is a cognitive solution to the emotional problems of the person?

Swamiji: That…so, we…we are cognitive of that also. We…we take into cognition.

Question: That is…Swamiji, but the fact that if the person has emotional problems, and he doesn’t have the cognition to...available to that person, therefore it becomes difficult.

Swamiji: That’s a…Yeah. It is difficult. That’s why we have got adhikäritvam [status of being a qualified student] We have got adhikäritvam proper. So, that our…the lifestyle that is ah…that is advocated, and the values, attitudes…Values are easy. Attitudes are difficult. Values are easy for a person who understands values. It’s not very difficult. Values are easy, not to tell a lie, not to cheat anybody, not to take advantage of. It’s all…it’s all simple for any mature person. It’s not a very big thing, it is. Most of them are like that. That’s how society running, because people follow all these values.

Attitudes are…nobody talks about attitude. Whole life is attitude. Attitude towards yourself, attitude towards others, attitude towards money, attitude towards power, attitude towards health, all attitude…attitude towards the world, attitude. And therefore, so much understanding is necessary to have a healthy attitude. Healthy attitude is an attitude born of understanding of what is. That’s how Éçvara comes into the picture.

And so this ah…enough exposure is there, there is no damage done to the cognitive skills, there’ll be knowledge. You cannot say, ‘He’s a abrahmavit [one who doesn’t know brahman].’ You cannot say. Suppose I ask anyone who was exposed…were exposed to this teaching for a length of time, teaching with me. (Laughter) Really, you can’t assure for others, I know. So you are exposed to me, ‘cause I am sure what I am doing, and exposed to me for a length of time. And that person, suppose I ask a question, “So, are you ignorant of brahman, or are you…are you free from being ignorant?”

No one can say, “I am ignorant.” Everybody will say, “I know but…” (Laughter) Hah! This ‘but’ is called pratibandhaka [obstruction]. (Laughter) That is the pratibandhaka. The ‘but,’ something is there, and that is pratibandhaka. (Laughs) Whatever he says, that is pratibandhaka. And that comes from whatever is the background. And so, Çaikara accepts, in the 18th Chapter of the Gétä, jïäna-niñöha. He talks about niñöha. And also the second chapter there is a sthita-prajïaû. Prajïa is enough, and sthita-prajïaû. sthitā prajïā sthirā prajïā yasya whose prajïa, whose knowledge is sthira [firm, steady].
Then we say ‘firm knowledge.’ There is no firm knowledge. There is no wobbly knowledge. (Laughter) But knowledge can be vague, very hazy. So, still it is knowledge, hazy knowledge. Therefore, we need to use an adjective to knowledge, because there is growing clarity. This growing clarity is two-fold. Growing clarity implies a reorientation to the old orientation, reorientation of this knowledge, in terms of this knowledge, against old orientation.

Old orientation means you have nurtured that. You have gathered so much guilt and so much hurt because of that old orientation, and you are saying that I am brahman, I am the whole, I am asaïga, I am uninvolved, I am untouched, I’m always nitya-çuddha [eternally pure], nitya-buddha [eternally knowledge]. All these words are only pointing out sapratibandhaka-jiñānam. Otherwise you don’t need çuddha, nitya çuddha, nitya-buddha, nitya-mukta [eternally liberated]. Why? Because I am bound and I am impure. All these words are there, therefore here is a pile up of words.

It’s not that ätmä [the Self]is found out with all these embellishments of çuddha, sitting here, buddha, sitting there. They are not…they’re not adjectives, qualifying the vastu [that which actually is], some kind of a necklace, so many precious stones. One stone is çuddha. (Laughter) One is buddha. One stone is mukta. One…one stone is asangha [unattached]. It’s not like that.

All the words are only pointing out what is. But we need all these words because pratibandhakas, guilt, hurt, pratibandhaka. That is the impurity. We have to say ‘nitya-çuddhaù.’ By saying, it doesn’t go. So, nitya-çuddha will become a superimposed concept upon guilty. Or if you have got sufficient exposure and insight is complete, then you can highlight the meaning of the word çuddha by contemplation. And that should…that should slowly filter into the guilt itself. That should filter into the guilt itself, and swallows that, devour that, make it mithyä.

These are all…these are all ah…kärya [the effect], mithyä. So you have to make the mithyä, mithyä. And look at that guilt. Face…face the guilt with the çuddha-buddhi [pure mind]. With the çuddha-buddhi you face the guilt, not get away from the guilt. That’s called satyam mithyä. Face the guilt, and make it çuddha. There is duûkha [suffering]. Face duûkha and…with the buddhi of änanda [fullness]. So that which sustains duûkha is änanda. In duûkha-vattī [sorrowful] itself you see änanda, caitanya [consciousness], limitless.

So, that is why we have many words. Otherwise we don’t need all these words. Ones who have done the job and they go away. Words we bring in only to communicate. Words we don’t need to remember ätmä [the Self]. People come and say, “Swamiji, I forget the ätmä.” (Laughter) So that you know that you have forgotten is the ätmä. Because of what you know that you forgotten, that is ätmä. So, this is a common expression, common…

And therefore, there is growing clarity. And whatever that was obstructing, we are facing
We learn to face them in contemplation. And if it is little too much, we bring in more Ėçvara into one’s life, and face them through Ėçvara. Afterwards it’s easy, only Ėçvara is, Ėçvara saccidänanda [existence-consciousness-fullness], so.

This…in ‘Aparokñänubhuti said, ‘Kāryam is the käraëatvena dāsyya [the effect should be seen as the cause],’ very beautiful paçya [may you see]. The last few verses, the kärya [effect] should be seen, should be faced as käraëam [cause], like a wave is seen as water. Every våtti [thought modification] is myself. The contemplation is depending upon what is the problem. We have to discern that. What kind of problem I have? This is all truth, and then what is the problem I have? And then, you address that problem with the understanding, the same way. Therefore, there is sapratibandhakajïänam [knowledge with obstacles]. And the pratibhandha keeps going.

If there is cognitive problem, then some kind of therapy will be better, yeah. That is also sādhana, so, without condemning the person. So therapy is not… that’s also some kind of a spiritual process, sādhana. I can say that therapy also as a spiritual sādhana. For somebody it is necessary, it is necessary, because it’s addressing the problem. Therapy means a spiritual person is one who doesn’t blame the world and… and addresses the problem. I define like that. I define my own spirituality. I don’t use the word ‘spiritual,’ because everybody has his own definition. And therefore, I don’t use that.

One fellow told me, “I am spiritual.”

So I said, “What…what…what is it that you do? Do you have any practice like this?”

“Every evening I drink.”

(Laughter)

“And drink is spirit.”

So, that’s enough?

Radha: Thank you, Swamiji.

Swamiji: Okay.