

Avarans and Vikshepa Shakti

Arlindo Moraes

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AVARANA & VIKSHEPA SHAKTI - "Pleasure and pain are didactic tools that Isvara uses to purify the mind and set Jiva up for inquiry. Wise people don't have expectations, because of the unpredictability of prarabdha; however, they have the power to contribute their actions and can, therefore, enjoy a certain degree of influence over events, but they never worry about what will happen." Ramji

Inquirer: Hi Arlindo, does this mean that the wise get to enjoy their desires without suffering? enjoying the bliss of their fullness ... plus, apparent worldly desires? Win/win?

Arlindo: Hello dear guru-brother. The Jnani is the one who enjoys the quality of dispassion towards objects of experience. Dispassion is not only a necessary qualification for the successful pursuit of self-knowledge, but it is also a natural quality of the Jnani's mind once liberated by firm self-knowledge. As Ramji often puts it; for the Jnani, it is good when it is good and it is also good when circumstances are not good, and why?

Because the Jnani does not depend on favorable experiences in order to enjoy its "inner" security, contentment, joy, peace, etc. These are attributes delivered by the realization of one's nature as "full, whole, complete, limitless pure-consciousness. That is the benefit of Moksha; freedom from experience as a mean to accomplish fullness and satisfaction.

On its own, Self-knowledge provides the satisfaction and the shanti "as" the very nature of the Jivatman. A Jnani is not really attracted to worldly pleasures, although he is not against them. The Jnani knows that true happiness is to be found in the self and self alone.

It is a win-win situation in the sense that whatsoever Isvara presents to the Jnani he/she will, regardless, take as Prasad. The Jnani gratefully appreciates everything coming from the Lord. There is no real suffering for the Jnani, but pain and discomfort will come and go according to one's prarabdha.

Inquirer: "But they never worry about what will happen" ...as taken from your Panchadasi quote above. The test of a true Jnani, one might say. or to quote Ramji, .. "Where the rubber meets the road"!

Totally! Self-knowledge is to be "manifested" in one's life or it remains an intellectual or academic knowledge, which by definition is not self-knowledge. But the problem is that self-knowledge only partially cancels the ignorance produced by Maya. It cancels one aspect of Avidya, but not the totality of Avidya. There are two powers in Maya which are responsible for Avidya; Avarana shakti and Vikshepa shakti. Self-Knowledge, directly and immediately cancels Jiva's Avarana shakti, although Maya's Avarana shakti continue to operate the mind of all samsaris.

Avarana is the concealing power, the power that makes the self "seemingly" believe itself to be the Jiva - the rope, "seemingly" appear as the snake. With Self-knowledge, the Avarana shakti is canceled, but not the Vikshepa shakti. Vikshepa is

the power of projection. Maya's Vikshepa projects Isvara, Jagata, and Jiva's three states. In the waking state Jiva's vikshepa projects Jiva's own subjective superimposition over Maya's Vikshepa.

Vikshepa shakti continue to operate the mind of the Jnani due to the fluctuation of the three gunas. Maya's projection and Jiva's projection continue, even after self-knowledge. Therefore, the Jnani sometimes appears to respond to Samsara as if it is real. That is due to this Vikshepa shakti deeply planted by Isvara in the Jnani's mind.

A classic example is presented by the following story; The Jnani is walking in the forest when a wild elephant begins running after him. After a long and intense run, the Jnani climbs a tree and saves his life. One of his disciples, meditating on a nearby hill watched the entire sight. Later on, upon meeting his guru, the student asked; why did you run so intensely from the elephant? I thought you knew that the elephant belongs to mithya, i.e., not-real!? The Jnani responded; there is no contradiction my dear friend; it was a mithya-jnani, running from a mithya elephant, climbing a mithya tree. Keep your mind in Satya.