

THE IDEA OF GOD IN SAIVA - SIDDHANTA

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IN

SAIVA – SIDDHANTA

(Sri-la-Sri Arulnandi Sivacharya Swamigal Sivajnana-Siddhiyar Endowment Lectures, 1953)

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With a foreword

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FOREWORD

I have carefully perused Dr Mahadevan's epitome of the Saiva-Siddhanta philosophy and consider that he has done adequate justice to the claims of a characteristic and indigenous development of thought and speculation which have not always been fully recognized. The preponderant influence exercised by the Advaita and the Visishta-Advaita systems and the circumstance that Saivism has been mainly developed in Kashmir in the North and in the Tamil country in the South have, perhaps, been responsible for the comparative neglect of the Saiva Agamas. They are remarkable both for the elimination of all class and sex distinctions and for the combination of a rigid appreciation of the central reality with the successful reconciliation of the ideas of God as the efficient cause of the world and Maya on whom God acts through the Sakti and of God's grace as a prime factor.

There is another reconciliation which the Saiva-Siddhanta affords, namely, the conjoint utilization of several disciplines commencing from external acts of worship and culminating in ultimate *jnana*.

Especially at the present moment when antagonisms are stimulated as between Sanskrit and Tamil influences, the importance of Saiva-Siddhanta cannot be over estimated and I congratulate Dr Mahadevan on having, in his Tiruppanandal lectures, produced a handy synthesis of the system.

Banaras
December 6, 1955

C. R. RAMASWAMI AIYER.

PREFACE

The following pages contain the substance of four lectures delivered under the Sri-la-Sri Arulnandi Sivacharya Swamigal Sivajnana-Siddhiyar Endowment in the year 1953. The first was given at Allahabad University on November 27, 1953, and the other three at Banaras Hindu University on November 30, and December 1-2, 1953. The first lecture gives a brief survey of the essentials of Saiva-Siddhanta. The other three deal with the Idea of God as envisaged in the system.

Although my main field of study has been Advaita – Vedanta, I have had earlier opportunities of writing on Saivism. I have contributed the sections on Saivism to the volumes of *The History and Culture of the Indian People* being published by Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay, and the chapter on the Saiva-Siddhanta, besides the one on the Upanishads, to *History of Philosophy, Eastern and Western* sponsored by the Ministry of Education, Government of India. So, I am glad to have had this additional opportunity afforded to me by Annamalai University of making a study of one of the most absorbing doctrines of Saiva-Siddhanta, viz., the doctrine of God.

My thanks are due to the Authorities of Annamalai University for inviting me to deliver these lectures in 1953, to Dr. C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar who was then the Vice-Chancellor of the University and who has kindly contributed a Foreword, and to the present Vice-Chancellor Sr. T. M. Narayanaswami Pillai. I am grateful also to the Professor in charge of publications, Sri J. M. Somasundaram.

To my colleagues of the philosophy departments of Allahabad University and Banaras Hindu University, who entertained me during my visit to these two seats of learning, and who organized these meetings, I am deeply indebted.

Madras

December 10, 1955

T. M. P. MAHADEVAN

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LECTURE ONE

A Bird's Eye View of Saiva-Siddhanta

Saiva-siddhanta is the name by which the school of Southern Saivism is known. Its primary sources are in Tamil – the devotional outpourings of the saints and the systematic writings of the teachers. The basic authority for all these works is said to be that of the Saiva Agamas which are all in Sanskrit. The Vedas too are authoritative for the Saiva-siddhantin. Only their appeal is general, while that of the Agamas is special. There is a happy blend of Tamil and Samskritic influences in the literature of Saiva-siddhanta, as in that of Southern Vaisnavism. This accounts for the wide popularity of these schools, and for the allegiance of the great masses of the people to the truths they teach.

Just as the Upanishads constitute the foundation texts for the Vedanta schools, the psalms of the Saiva saints form the basic material for the Siddhanta. Philosophy has to work on the intuitions of the saint and the sage; it cannot function in a vacuum. Before systematization could begin, there must be something which has to be systematized. What philosophy does is to bring to a system the experiences of God-men and Truth-seers. The Saiva tradition of the South records the appearance of a series of saints. There are as many as sixty-three of them who are referred to as *nayanmars* or *adiyars*. One of the earliest of these was Tirumular whose *Tirumandiram* is a classic in mystic poetry. Four among the nayanmars are specially referred to as the teachers of the Saiva religion (*samayacaryas*). They are Appar, Tirujnana-sambandhar, Sundaramurti, and Manikkavacakar. In the *Tevaram* of the first three and the *Tiruvacakam* of the last we have hymns of exquisite beauty singing the praise of God and calling all human beings to take refuge in him.

The philosophers of Saiva-siddhanta who are styled *santana-acaryas* followed the saints. The most important of them are four: Meykandadeva, Arunandi-sivacarya, Marai-jnana-sambandha and Umapati-sivacarya. Meykanda's *Siva-jnana-bodham* (ca. first half of the 13th century A. D.) is the basic text of the Siddhanta. It is a concise statement, in twelve aphorisms, of the cardinal doctrines of the system. According to tradition, now questioned by some scholars, the *Siva-jnana-bodham* was rendered into Tamil with the addition of a short commentary (*varatika*) by Meykanda from the *Raurava-Agama*, the rendered portion being the Pasavimocana section. Arunandi-sivacarya was the chief of Meykanda's disciples. His *Siva-jnana-siddhiyar* is justly famous for its systematic and detailed exposition of the Siddhanta. Its author was a great scholar of his time. He was the preceptor of Meykanda's own parents, and was known as Sakalagamapandita. Realizing the spiritual heights the youthful Meykanda's had scaled, he became his pupil, and wrote the *Siddhiyar* explaining the Bodham. The third of the teachers, Marai-jnana-sambandha, is not known to have written any work. But the fourth, Umapati who was his pupil, has contributed as many as eight books to the Siddhanta literature. The best known of these is the *Sivaprakasam*.

The three categories of Saivism are *pati*, *pasu* and *pasa*. *Pati* is God, the supreme lord of all beings. Though it is not possible to comprehend his nature fully by the intellect, we may

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attempt to understand his greatness. God is Siva, the auspicious. He is superior to the Hindu Trinity, Brahma, Vishnu and Rudra, though he is often identified with the last. Even when he is thus identified with the Destroyer, Rudra, it may well be shown how he is superior to the other two. For, at the time of the cosmic dissolution (*pralaya*), it is Rudra alone that stands unaffected, while Brahma, the Creator, and Vishnu, the Preserver, are resolved into him. The world should come out of him in whom it had earlier resolved. So, Siva is the sole cause of creation. The gods like Brahma are his deputies with the appropriate powers delegated to them. Siva is the great God (Mahadeva), the God of gods (Devadeva).

Eight qualities are attributed to Siva: independence, purity, self-knowledge, omniscience, freedom from *mala* (defilement), boundless benevolence, omnipotence, and bliss. Siva, in fact, is the home of all auspicious attributes. There is no limit to his greatness. The most comprehensive terms that may be employed to indicate his nature are *sat* and *chit*. As *sat*, Siva is the plenitude of being, and is incomprehensible. As *cit* or intelligence, we can know him. As *cit* or intelligence, we can know him. *Sat* and *cit* are like the sun and its light. From these two characteristics the other attributes may be derived. The names such as 'Siva' and 'Hara' are themselves supremely significant. As I have already stated, 'Siva' means the auspicious, the source of all bliss. And, 'Hara' indicates the redemptive nature of God. He removes all the impurities of the soul and redeems it from *samsara* (transmigration). Although the masculine form 'Sivah' is generally used, God is not male and the distinctions of sex do not apply to him. We speak of him as 'he' only in accordance with a convention. But he may be referred to as 'he', 'she' or 'it' – the three forms in which the world appears. He is Sivah (m), Siva (f), and Sivam (n). All the names of God may be rendered thus in the three genders. Manikkavacakar declares: 'He is the male and the female and the neuter.'

It is true that the scriptures say that God is *nir-guna*. But this term does not mean that God is 'attributeless.' It only means that he is not affected by the *gunas* of *prakrti* which is primal matter. He is above *prakrti*; and so *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*, the *gunas* of *prakrti*, are not his constituents, as they are of all finite entities. As Tirumular teaches, he is free from the three *gunas* (*mukkuna-nirgunam*).

Siva is immanent in the universe as well as transcendent to it. He is *visvamaya* (of the form of the universe) and also *visvadhika* (more than the universe). He is described as pervading the earth, water, air, ether, the sun and the moon, and egoity and the jiva. These constitute his eight-fold form (*astamurta*). But these do not exhaust his nature. He exceeds the universe, while being its ground. As thus exceeding, he cannot be perceived and cannot be comprehended by thought. He has no name, and no form. There are no identifying marks setting limits to him.

It is to stress the transcendent nature of Siva that he is regarded in the Siddhanta as the operative cause along of the world. The instrumental cause is Siva's *Sakti*, and the material cause is *maya*. It is from *maya* that the world evolves, and the souls are provided with the locations, instruments and objects of experience. But *maya* is inert and, therefore, requires an intelligent guide and director. The guidance and direction come from Siva. In order to safeguard the immutability of Siva, the Siddhanta says that Siva does not act on *maya* directly,

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but through his *Sakti*. Siva remains unaffected even when evolution takes place. Just as wind causes disturbance only to a part of the sea, evolution relates but to a portion of Siva's *Sakti*. Just as the sun is impartial and the same to all things, although these things derive their sustenance in diverse ways from him, so also is Siva in relation to the evolutes and the souls

Siva has five directions. They are: *tirodhana* (obscuration) *srsti* (creation) *sthiti* (preservation), *samhara* (destruction) and *anugraha* (bestowing grace). Of these, the first four have as their end the last one. The grand plan of the universe is the liberation of the soul through a shower of God's grace. Siva hides the truth from the soul and projects the world in order that he may save the soul through his grace. The world process is Siva's *lila*.

For Siva there is no incarnation (*avatara*). What brings about incarnation is *karma*. For Siva there is no *karma*. There is no need for him either to be born as mortals are born, and to live as they do. He has no birth and death, because he is the death of death. He is not caught in the time-stream because he is the time of time. This, however, does not mean that he does not appear in visible form. He takes on the form in which he is worshipped by his devotees. He assumes various shapes in order to protect and save his children. He comes as the preceptor (*guru*) in order to instruct and teach. All such forms and shapes are not made of matter (*prakrti*); they are concretizations of Siva's grace. Out of his unbounded love he becomes tangible to the terrestrials. *Anugraha* is his nature. Love is his being. Tirumular declares that there is no difference between God and Love.

I have now stated, in brief, the Siddhanta view of the nature of *pati*. Before proceeding to explain the other two categories, let me discuss the nature of the world and its evolution – the world in which the career of the soul is cast.

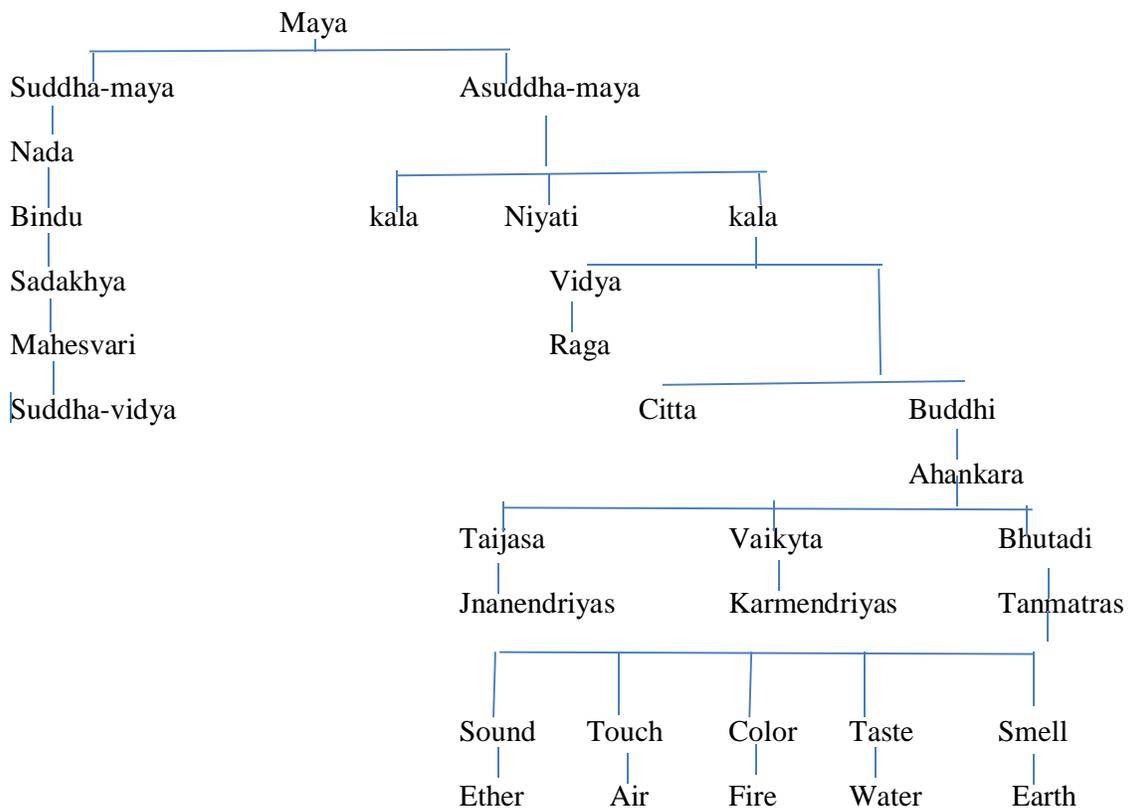
We have already seen that *maya* is the material cause of the world. *Maya* is two fold, pure and impure, *suddha-maya* and *asuddha-maya*. *Suddha-maya* is directly acted upon by Siva through his Sakti in its threefold aspects, viz., *iccha* (desire), *kriya* (will) and *jnana* (knowledge). From it are evolved what are known as the *siva-tattvas*: *nada*, *bindu*, *sadakhya*, *mahesvari*, and *suddha-vidya*. These serve a double purpose of providing locations for the divinities that are directly responsible for the course of evolution from *asuddha-maya*, and also of serving as stages for the return of souls to Siva. These five evolutes together constitute the *preraka-kanda* (the section of evolution which sets the direction for *asuddha-maya*).

The space-time universe and the psycho-physiological factors are evolved out of *asuddha-maya*. Because of its impurity, Siva does not act upon it directly, but only through the divinities who belong to the realm of *suddha-maya*. At first three principles emerge from *asuddha-maya*, viz., *kāla* (time), *niyati* (necessity), and *kalā* (particle). From the last of these arise *vidyā* (knowledge) and *raga* (attachment). These five serve as envelopes (*kancukas*) to the soul. As conditioned by these, the soul becomes the *purusa-tattva*, the transmigrating individual. The counter part of *purusa* is *prakrti* which evolves out of *kalā* through another process. The five envelopes together with *purusa* and *prakrti* form the *bhojayitr-kānda* (the section of the evolution which makes for experience). They are also called *vidyā-tattvas*.

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From *prakrti* onwards, the evolutionary scheme is more or less the same as that of the *Sankhya* system. *Citta* and *buddhi* (intellect) first come out of *prakrti*. From *buddhi* emerges *ahankara* (individuality). *Ahankara* is threefold, *taijasa*, *vaikrta*, and *bhutadi*. In these three, *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas* are dominant respectively. From the first evolve *manas* and the organs of knowledge; from the second, organs of action; and from the third *tanmatras* (subtle essences of sound, touch, color, taste, and smell). And, from the *tanmatras*, the five elements, ether, air, fire, water, and earth arise. Here the primary evolution stops. It consists of thirty-six *tattvas*, the largest number recognized in any system. Out of the evolutes of *prakrti*, each souls is endowed with a psycho-physical organism, and instruments and objects of enjoyment. This area of *prakrti* is called *bhogyakānda* (what is experienced or enjoyed).

A BIRD'S EYE VIEW OF SAIVA SIDDHANTA



Pasu which is the second category in *Saiva-siddhanta* means soul. Souls are by nature infinite, all-pervading and all-knowing. But because of association with impurities, *malas*, they become finite, limited and ignorant. The impurities, which are three in number constitute the *pasas* (bonds) of the soul, which are the third category in the *Siddhanta*. The three bonds are *anava*, *karma*, and *maya*. *Anava-mala* is a connate impurity. It is that which atomizes, as it were, the infinite soul. Like *avidya* in Advaita, *anava* is a beginningless positive entity, blinding the soul's vision. It is the impurity of darkness (*irulmalam*), deluding the soul. *Karma-mala* is the bond forged by the soul's deeds. Being deluded, the soul falls into the transmigratory tract. It acts merit and demerit which condition its birth and enjoyment. *Maya-mala* is the impurity called *maya*, which we have taken note of already. It is that which is responsible for cosmic

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evolution, serving as its material cause. It provides the soul with location, instruments and objects of experience. The three *malas* bind the soul, being in beginningless association with it. They are compared to the bran, husk, and sprout of paddy. Just as these condition the growth of paddy, the three impurities are responsible for the transmigration of the soul.

There are three classes of soul: *sakala*, *pralayakala*, and *vijnanakala*. The *sakala-jiva* is the full fledged empirical soul, endowed with all the three *malas*. The *pralayakala* is the soul as it exists in the state of cosmic dissolution. It is then free from *maya-mala*, the matrix of evolution. When there is fresh evolution, it becomes *sakala* again, being prompted by *karma*. The *vijnanakala* is the soul which is conditioned only by *anava-mala*. Through spiritual disciplines it has risen above the spheres of *karma* and *maya*, and has arrived in the region of *suddha-maya*. Having reached here, it does not return to empirical existence. It has become mature and fit for the final operation of Siva's grace. And, when this divine act takes place, *anava* too is removed, and the soul is released. The conditions of being of the three classes of souls are called, respectively, *sakala-avastha*, *kevala-avastha*, and *suddha-avastha*.

The soul is said to take on the nature of that with which it is associated, even as certain insects, birds and animals take after the coloration of their environment. When in association with *mala*, it becomes *asat* (evil); and when it gains union with Siva, it becomes *sat* (good). While it is transmigrating, it moves between these two ends, and is therefore said to be *sad-asat*. The true nature of the soul, however, is to be in union with Siva. The *Siddhantin* calls this relation *advaita* which does not mean non-difference but non-separateness. Even in the state of release, the soul is entitatively different from God. But, it, then, shares in the nature of Siva; it becomes similar to God in that it regains its infinitude, pervasiveness and omniscience.

There are four courses of disciplines which a soul has to follow in order to attain perfection. They are *carya*, *kriya*, *yoga*, and *jnana*. The first stands for external acts of worship like cleaning the temples, gathering flowers for the Deity, etc. This is called *dasa-marga*, the path of the servant; Appar was the exemplar of this path; its proximate goal is *saloka*, residence in the realm of God. The next stage which is *kriya* is marked by acts of intimate service to God. Although these acts are also external in character, they are accompanied by a sense of intimacy such as a son may claim with his father. This path is known as *sat-putra-marga*, the path of the good son; the saint who set the example in this path was Sambandhar; and the objective of this discipline is *samipyā*, attaining the nearness of God. The third discipline is *yoga* which means union, and here it stands for contemplation and internal worship. Here the devotee becomes more intimate with God, as a friend with his friend. The path, therefore, is called *sakha-marga*, the path of friendship; Sundarar demonstrated the efficacy of this method, whose aim is *sarupyā*, gaining the form of God. The three disciplines I have explained so far constitute the preparatory stages in the pilgrim's progress to perfection. They make one fit for taking the last leap which is *jnana*, knowledge or wisdom. This path is termed *san-marga* because it takes the soul straight to *Sat* which is God; Manikkavacakar is the ideal for the one who has arrived at this stage; its fruit is the ultimate human goal which is *sayujya*, union with God.

Saiva-siddhanta literature abounds in details as regards the disciplines in spiritual life. The soul's progress is from *pasa-jnana* and *pasu-jnana* to *pati-jnana*. Step by step stage by

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stage, the soul proceeds from the domain of ignorance to the glorious heaven of wisdom. It has first to learn to equate empirical good and evil, merit and demerit. This is called *iruvinaiyoppu*. Repetition of the sacred Siva-mantra, contemplation of the Holy of holies, with the consequent transformation of one's life, and a benignant attitude towards the world, rid of all attachment and aversion, make one fit to receive the highest wisdom. Now, the anava-mala becomes mature and fit for the divine surgeon's operation. God appears as *guru*; and through grace he removes the scales that had hitherto blinded the soul's vision. The soul, thenceforward, sees through the eye of God. It knows no longer through the pasas or through its pasu nature, but through Siva. This is *Siva-jnana*. The shower of grace (*sakti-nipata*) from God has made this possible. The soul is bathed in the eternal rays of God's light, and it becomes totally washed of all its impurities. This is release. The body may continue for a while longer because of the residue of *prarabdha-karma*. But that does not affect the perfection of the released soul. Such a one is a *jivan-mukta*. And when the body too falls, its momentum being spent, one attains *videha-kaivalya*. The spirit has escaped, once for all, from its cage; it can no longer be caught and bound.

LECTURE TWO

God as Creator

God, in Saiva-siddhanta, as in every other theistic school, is the central reality around which all other entities revolve. He is called *pati* or lord, because he is the president of soul (*pasu*) and their bonds (*pasa*). He is the sole independent substance on whom all other substances depend. He is the creator, preserver and destroyer of the universe. He is the moral governor in respect of the actions of the souls. He is their enchanter and redeemer. He is the ground of all that exists, and the goal of all that strives. He is the beginning and end of all things.

Doctrinally, Saiva-siddhanta has many things in common with the other schools of Indian theism. It has also certain unique features. In this system, God is only the efficient cause of the world; the material cause is *maya*. Even on *maya*, God does not act directly, but through his *sakti* which is the instrumental cause. The Siddhanta believes that God is revealed through Scripture, as do all the orthodox systems which are theistic. Reasoning, however, is not without its use. Especially in refuting the doctrines that do not accept the authority of Scripture, there is no point in quoting Scriptural texts. So, the Siddhantin formulates arguments for the existence of God. In fact, the very first Sutra of the Siva-jnana-bodham contains the cosmological argument.

The cosmological argument seeks to show that there must be an efficient cause for the universe as a whole – which cause is God. The universe is a pluralistic whole. The particulars constituting it may be classified in different ways. The most convenient, perhaps, is the classification on the principle of gender. On this principle, we speak of the particular regalia as ‘he’, ‘she’, or ‘it’. This itself shows that there is regularity or order in the universe. There must be a reason why a ‘he’ must be a ‘he’, a ‘she’ a ‘she’, and an ‘it’ an ‘it’. If there is regularity or order, as there is, there must be a regulator or orderer. Moreover, the universe as a whole undergoes regulated changes. It comes into being (*srsti*), stays for sometime (*sthiti*), and disappears (*samhara*). And, this process is repeated. Since the universe is subject to regulated changes, it cannot be self-caused and self-established. It is evidently a product; a product requires to be produced, which implies a producer, which implies a producer. Who is this producer? That cannot be anything that is inert for efficient causality cannot belong to anything that is devoid of intelligence. Nor can that be the soul possessing finite intelligence, for that is unequal to the task of producing the universe with its regulated men, women, and things. So there must be postulated an infinite, omniscient and omnipotent being as the efficient cause of the universe. That is God. And, that is Siva or Hara. Hara is God as the destroyer of the universe. It is only out of him that the universe can come. A thing can emerge only from that into which it had earlier resolved. At the time of *pralaya* when everything is destroyed, Siva or Hara alone stands without a second. So, it is from him that creation must proceed.

After setting forth this argument as found in the *Bodham*, the Siddhiyar proceeds to establish it through a progressive criticism of the *prima facie* views.

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The first to be examined is the Lokayata view. The Materialist may say that the universe is neither created nor destroyed, that, in fact, it is permanent. Obviously, he cannot justify this view even on the evidence of perception, which is the only evidence he recognizes. Perceptual experience reveals nothing in the world that is permanent. The component parts of the universe have, each of them, a beginning and an end. The Lokayata may shift his position to suit his purpose and say that, while admitting creation, he maintains the view of natural creation. But, what does this phrase 'natural creation' mean? If it means 'nature becomes nature', it carries no sense at all. If it be said that nature changes because its nature is so, then there will be nothing called nature. What the Lokayata means by nature is the four elements – earth, water, fire, and air. He be sense-perceived. If the four elements constitute nature, according to the Lokayata, and they undergo change, there must be admitted an efficient cause which makes them change; for, what are inert cannot change of their own accord. To avoid the need for an efficient cause, the origin, etc. of the four elements may be explained cause, the origin, etc. of the four elements may be explained thus: Air produces the other three elements; fire destroys the other elements; water contains them all; and so on. As the elements themselves cause these changes through a system of distributed labor as it were, no efficient cause is necessary. In reply to this, it has to be pointed out that the Lokayata has not counted the cost. He imagines that one element leads to another or is resolved into another. But what happens is that all the elements emerge together and are destroyed together. In order to account for this fact, we must postulate an efficient cause which has neither a beginning nor an end.

The Sautrantika-Bauddha believes that there is no need for a first cause, as he regards the world process as a successive chain of events. Each event is the product of its immediately preceding event, and the present of its immediately succeeding event. Nothing says even for two consecutive moments. There is a constant coming into being and ceasing to be. Just as seed and sprout are perpetual, so are all events that are related as cause and effect. So, why then postulate a God who is superfluous? The Sautrantika view which has just now been set forth is refuted even by another school of Buddhism, viz., the Madhyamika. The question to be asked of the Sautrantika is: What is it that appears? Does it exist prior to its appearance, or not? If it exists, there is no need for it to appear. If it does not exist, it cannot appear. What exists need not be produced; what does not exist cannot be produced. So, the Madhyamika would say that what appears is indeterminable.

Is the Madhyamika position intelligible? What is this category which neither 'is', nor 'is not', nor 'both is and is not', nor 'neither is nor is not'? Such a category defies all attempts at understanding. That a thing is – we can understand. That a thing is not – yes. But the other alternatives do not seem to have any meaning, and violate the laws of logic. The Madhyamika teaches Sunya-vada. He seems to believe that the world comes out of nothing, that 'nothing' is ultimate. But such a view is untenable. Even to speak or think of 'nothing' is to deny the ultimacy of 'nothing'. *Ex nihilo nihil fit.*

The Jainas believe in the multiple nature of things. A thing that is produced cannot be characterized simply as existing or non-existing. It has the nature of existing and non-existing, and the various combinations of these. The doctrine which is known as *anekanta-vada* and *syad-vada* gives formulation to the view of identity and difference. The Siddhantin's criticism

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of the Jaina doctrine is that by no trick can the logical law of non-contradiction be set aside. How can one and the same thing be identical and different, existent and non-existent? The Jaina may say that a thing exists as cause and non-exists as effect. This statement too is unintelligible, because there is no difference in substance between cause and effect. The Siddhantin, who advocates *satkarya-vada*, maintains that the effect is pre-existent in the cause. For him, the view that the effect is non-existent in the cause is not acceptable.

The Mimamsaka holds the view that the universe is eternal, and therefore does not find any need for postulating a creator. While parts of the world may come and go, the world as a whole persists and remains always the same. There is a saying to the effect: 'Never was the world otherwise than what it is' (*na kadacid anidarsam jagat*). There is neither *srsti* nor *pralaya*. The world is a going concern. There is no need for an agent either for its inception or for its destruction. The Siddhantin's reply is based on the evidence of Scripture, perceptual experience, and reasoning. There are Scriptural texts which declare the origin of the universe and its destruction; and the Mimamsaka accepts Scripture as the highest authority. Even if the texts be set aside or interpreted otherwise, there is the evidence of perceptual experience as well as that of reasoning by parity. It is not true to say that only individuals come into being and go out of existence. There are seasonal fruits, for instance, which appear in the appointed season and disappear all together at the end of that season. Similarly, it is intelligible that the world as a whole appears and disappears at fixed times. There must be an efficient cause which produces and destroys the world periodically.

The Kalavadin (Time-Philosopher) admits that the world is produced and destroyed periodically. But, he urges that what effects production and destruction is Time, and not God. If the expression of 'God' is to be used at all, let us call Time God. The Siddhantin has no difficulty in showing that the Kalavadin's thesis is untenable. Time is inert and unintelligent. It cannot, therefore, be the efficient cause of the universe. True it is that time produces changes. But it does so only as impelled by God. Time is the instrumental cause. God alone is the efficient cause.

The Naiyayika traces the origin of the universe to the atoms and their coming together in various ways. Destruction of things means their reduction to atoms. When the world of things has been destroyed, again after a time the atoms come together, and the world is formed. God is only one of the causes like karma and time. It is the collocation of the atoms that is the distinctive cause of creation. The criticism advanced by the Siddhantin against the Kalavadin holds good here also. The atoms are inert, and are not ultimate. They cannot take the initiative in world production, and do not possess a sense of direction. Moreover, at the time of *pralaya* the atoms themselves are destroyed and resolved in their cause, *maya*. The Naiyayika may argue that, if the atoms are destroyed, it is not possible for the world to emerge again. But that argument, does not take account the existence of *maya* even in the absence of the atoms. It is from *maya* which is eternal that the world re-emerges. *Maya* is the material cause of the universe. As energized by *cit-sakti*, it produces the world. The atoms cannot be the ultimate causes of creation, they are effects. That they are effects is evident from the fact that they are many and have parts. The atoms are not without parts. If they had no parts, how is it that they

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combine and give rise to things that have parts? *Maya* has no parts, and is indestructible. It is *maya* that is the primal material cause of the universe.

According to Scripture, *maya* is the prius of creation, and God is the wielder of *maya*. Even if we analyze common usage, it will be clear that there is the widespread belief in *satkarya-vada*. It is said, for instance, that the tree with its branches, etc. is contained in the seed in a subtle form, and that if it were not so, the tree would not come out of the seed. The world in the seed-form we call *maya*. If it be urged that the leaves, etc. that fall from a tree are not seen to go back to their source, the reply is that when the leaves, etc. are reduced to their primal condition, they will, again, shoot into a tree, given the time and the other auxiliary causes. Similarly, when the world is retracted into its primal source at *pralaya*, again after some time, it is re-produced, and we call that *srsti*.

Maya alone will be incapable of producing the world, for it lacks intelligence. The individual soul (*jiva*) cannot provide *maya* with the intelligent guidance it needs, for the soul becomes intelligent only when in association with a psycho-physical organism, and that organism itself is a product of *maya*. So, neither *pasa* (*maya*) nor *pasu* (*jiva*) can serve as the efficient cause of the universe. By elimination, we must say that *pati* (God) is the efficient cause. For the production of a pot, for instance, three kinds of causes are required: the material cause, viz. clay; the auxiliary causes, such as the wheel, the stick, etc., and the efficient cause, viz. the potter. So also, for the world, the material cause is *maya*, the auxiliary or instrumental cause is *Sakti*, and the efficient cause is *Siva*. The Sankhya view which dispenses with God and seeks to account for the universe in terms of *prakrti* and *purusa* alone, is therefore unsatisfactory.

Although God is the efficient cause of the universe, he does not undergo any change on account of this process. He is like the sun in whose presence the lotus blooms, sways its proud head for a time, and then withers away. The analogy may be pushed even a little further. In the presence of the sun, various processes take place – some of them diametrically opposed to one another. The lotus blooms, the burning-glass emits fire, and the water in the earth evaporates. So also, the reality of God makes possible the divergent cosmic processes such as creation and destruction, and the varied activities of phenomena.

There are also other analogies given to show that nothing happens to God, although everything happens on account of his efficient causality. Words and ideas arise in the mind, stay there for some time, and get resolved in it. But the mind substance is the same. Experiences of waking, dream, and sleep appear and disappear in the self. But the self remains substantially the same. Similarly, the worlds and their things emerge from and dissolve in God. But these and similar analogies cannot fully explain the mystery of God's creation. It is not possible to understand God's nature in terms of anything that we experience in this world. Though we have compared God to the potter, where is the potter and where is God? Even the sun, the mind, and the soul are insignificant in the presence of the all-transcending Deity.

Why does God create the universe and retract it after a time in order to create it again? He could have nothing to accomplish for himself through creation. What has he, the all-in-all,

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to gain from the world process? We can only say that creation is his play (*lila*). Or, from our standpoint, the standpoint of the *pasu*, we may say that the grand drama he enacts is for effecting the release of souls. The world is 'a vale of soul-making.' God creates the universe in order that the soul may eat the fruit of its past karma and acquire the necessary means for release. He destroys the universe in order to give rest to the soul. Just as sleep refreshes the individual, *pralaya* affords rest to all the souls. Again, at *srsti* the process of purgation starts. By trial and error, and by the grace of God, the souls get rid of their impurities (*malas*) and attain release.

God has five functions – creation, maintenance, and destruction of the world, veiling the truth (*tirodhana*), and bestowing grace (*anugraha*) on the soul. The first four have for their end the last one which is redeeming the soul through grace. The world process serves to discipline the soul and make it mature. Obscuration has the same purpose. As the Tantrikas say, through *maya*, *maya* has to be transcended. And, this is accomplished through divine grace.

It may be asked: how can God who is formless produce the world of forms? The reply is that, just as from the formless ether the other elements having form arise, so from the formless God the world of forms appears. And, it is not as if the formless God cannot assume forms. Nothing is impossible for him. He is with form, without form, and with and without form. He is one with the world, different from the world, and one-with-and-different from the world. He is perfectly free and unfettered, and can assume any form at his will. Even as the *siddhas*, i.e. *yogins* with super-normal powers, assume different forms, God takes on several forms. The difference is that while the *siddhas* owe their powers to God's grace, God is the only independent and unconditioned being. And, his forms are not fashioned out of *maya*. Our bodies, including those of the *siddhas*, are the products of *maya*. Not so are the forms which God takes. They are the manifestations of his *cit-sakti*. God is the only free creator of forms; and so, these do not bind or limit him. To hold that he is without form is to include him in one of the categories of creation – the category to which ether belongs. So, it must be admitted that God can take any form he likes, using *cit-sakti* as the channel. In order to assume forms God need not go through the evolutionary process. Being the author of this process, he is not a victim thereof. His forms are non-material, and so they are not made of *maya*.

That from our point of view it is necessary that God should assume forms can easily be shown. If God did not assume forms, the Vedas and the Agamas would not be revealed to man, and there would be no path open to him for release from bondage. It is God who has to reveal these Scriptures. It is God who has to show us the path. And, it is God who has to appear as the *guru* and help the soul reach its destiny. How can all this be done if God did not assume form?

Various are the forms which God takes. When he grants enjoyment to the souls, he assumes the *bhoga* - form. When he makes them eat their karma, he takes on the *ghora* - form. And, when he imparts perfection to the *yogins*, he appears in his *yoga* - form. The myths and legends of the Puranas, the various representations of Siva in metal, wood and stone – all stand for and indicate the different roles that God plays in his relation with the souls. The world derives its being, light and happiness from God. One of the Puranic stories tells us that when Uma closed the eyes of the Lord with her hands, the entire world became dark, and that because

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of his love for the world, he opened his third eye. He is the light of lights, the ground of existence, and the source of bliss. In one word, he is LOVE.

God is of the form of the universe (*visva-maya*) and is transcendent to it as well (*visvadhika*). No word can adequately describe him, no thought comprehend him. Anything that can be said about him relates only to his nature *per accidens*. Essentially, he is beyond all description and definition. Scripture indicates that true nature by employing negative terms. God has neither form nor no-form. He is neither *cit* nor *acit*. He is no creator, maintainer, or destroyer of the universe. He does not perform any function. He is no *yogi* and no *bhogi*. Although he pervades all things, he is different from these. The world process ought to help us transcend it and realize the true nature of God.

LECTURE THREE

God as Moral Governor

Besides the cosmological argument, the Siddhantin formulates a moral argument for the existence of God. Just as there is order in physical nature, there is order in the moral world also. The moral law is the law of *Karma*. The word *Karma* means 'deed' as well as the 'fruit of deed'. What the law of *Karma* says is that one has to reap the consequences of one's action. Just as you cannot gather figs from thistles or extract oil from sands, you cannot get good results from bad deeds or bad results from good deeds. He who does good becomes good; and he who is the agent of evil actions becomes evil. An act done brings in its appropriate reward, and also affects the character of its agent. As one goes through life, the results of actions get accumulated. As a single life is not enough for exhausting the accumulated results of past deeds, one has to transmigrate from birth to birth. The soul acts in order to enjoy, and enjoys in order to act, and is born repeatedly in order to act and enjoy. This is the story of the soul's empirical course. It gets into body for reaping the consequences of its past deeds. And, in the bargain it does fresh actions and goes on adding to the heap of its *Karma*. From birth and death it is hurled, and back from death to birth, like the shuttle-cock which is tossed repeatedly from one end of the loom to the other.

There are some philosophers who do not accept the law of *Karma* with all its implications. Others there are who think that the law by itself is enough to explain all the facts of morality. The Siddhantin, like the followers of several other theistic and absolutistic schools, holds that there is the need for an ordainer and controller of *Karma*, who is God. Meykanda Deva declares in the *Siva-jnana-bodham* that it is God that makes the souls eat the fruit of their *Karma* by subjecting them to repeated birth and death. Following up this sutra, the author of the *Siddiyar* formulates the moral argument and defends it against opponents.

There are two phases of this argument. (1) A conjunction must be brought about between souls and bodies. This is necessary in order to free the souls from their *mala*. The task of fitting the souls with bodies cannot be performed by inert matter. Nor can the souls choose bodies of their own accord. There must be one who is neither inert nor a helpless victim of *samsara* in order to effect the embodiment of souls. That is God. (2) The souls are governed by the law of *Karma*. But *Karma* cannot operate of itself, for it is non-intelligent. Nor can disembodied souls choose their respective *karmas*. There must be one who is not a creature of *Karma* and who is possessed of intelligence in order to regulate the operation of the moral law. There can be no law without a law-giver. There cannot be the assessment of the soul's deserts without a judge. That law-giver and judge is God.

Just as in the cosmological argument we compared God to the potter, here in connection with the moral argument we may compare him to the king and the physician. The king is the custodian of law. Without a legislative and executive authority, temporal law cannot come into being and function. Similarly, the moral and spiritual law which is called *Karma* requires as its president a God. God can be likened to a physician also. Just as for diagnosing the disease and

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prescribing the proper remedy for it there is the need for a physician, so also there must be one who knows what is wrong with the souls and effect the cure of their disease. Of course, we should not press these comparisons to absurd limits. God is, in truth, incomparable. There is no second to him. All things and beings are finite, whereas he alone is infinite. But we could find analogies only from the field of the finite. If we remember this inherent limitation of the human understanding, there is no harm in comparing God to such limited agents as the king and the physician.

As in the case of the cosmological argument, here in respect of the moral argument also, the Lokayata is the first objector. For him, there is no such thing as the past *Karma* influencing the present life. He does not recognize the soul's pre-existence. In fact, he does not believe in a soul. So, he maintains that our present pleasures and pains are natural to us, and need not be traced to the past *Karma* supposed to have been done by us in a previous life. There is no perceptual evidence of past *Karma* or of an earlier life. Therefore, to believe in them is irrational.

How can both pleasures and pains, we ask the Lokayata, be natural to us? Pleasure and pain are opposed to each other. Such contradictory qualities cannot be natural to a being. In support of his position the Lokayata may point to such experienced facts as water becoming fragrant when flowers are soaked in it, or becoming hot when fire is applied to it. But unfortunately for him, these facts only prove our contention. Water becomes fragrant or hot, not of its own accord, but because of association with other things such as flowers and fire. Fragrance belongs to the nature of flowers, not to that of water. Heat is a quality of fire, and not of water. So, the nature of a thing cannot change; nor can it consist of contradictory attributes. Pleasure and pain are a pair of contradictories. It must be admitted that they arise from different sets of *Karma*. They cannot attach themselves to a non-intelligent thing like the body. They are affections of the soul. And, the fact that they affect differently shows that they function under the ordinance of God.

The Lokayata is not to be silenced so easily. He asks: as it is possible to explain the pleasures and pains of this life in terms of what one does in this life, why should we postulate an earlier life? We see in this world that he who is industrious enjoys, while he who is indolent suffers. Wealth is the fruit of hard work. The wages of laziness is suffering. If it is true that past *Karma* influences the present status of a person, it must be possible for him to come by wealth without effort.

The Siddhantin finds no difficulty in answering this objection. The Lokayata, in spite of his flair for observation, has not observed the facts of life properly. A good portion of the joys and sorrows that come to a person in this life is not merited by what that person has done or not done in this life. Some are born rich, and others poor. Some have congenital defects, while others are free from them. Some have pleasant, and others miserable surroundings. How could these disparities be explained if a previous life is not admitted? Even in this life, it is not always the case that effort receives its appropriate reward. Pay is not equal to toil. Some may work hard for some time, get tired and cease from work, with the result that they do not gain their objective. Some others may toil to the very end, and yet they may not get any reward. Yet

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others may become enormously wealthy through no exertion at all. How to explain these undeniable facts of experience? We cannot deny the moral law and take shelter in caprice. Caprice cannot explain anything. So, the only explanation for the present disparities is that they are deserved by the respective agents in terms of what they did or did not do in their previous lives. If there is no right adjustment of goodness and happiness in any given case, we have to postulate a future life in which this adjustment will be made. Of course, we must distinguish carefully between genuine differences in the deserts of men and artificial differences. Also, we must bear in mind that Karma is not fate, and that there is every room for bettering the lot of oneself as well as of others. Granting all this, we have still to admit that a short sighted view of life leaves many things unexplained. *Karma* and *punar-janma* (rebirth) are twin doctrines. In order to explain one, we require the other. So, we maintain that the seeds of the soul's experiences are already there before it is actually born. Gain and loss, pleasure and pain, honor and dishonor – all these are there potentially in the womb. A child is born with these as its *samskaras*; and as it grows, they manifest themselves. Thus, what was earned in the previous birth fructifies in the present birth. Similarly, the result of those actions of the present body which is not enjoyed in the present life will have to be enjoyed in the next one. In this manner, Karma and rebirth are intertwined. It is not possible to deny *Karma*; and if *Karma* is accepted, *ipso facto* rebirth must be admitted.

It may be asked: if actions are performed by the body, how was the body created? To what does it owe its existence? The answer is: to its past *Karma*; to the *Karma* of the body of the previous birth. The relation between *Karma* and embodiment is like that between seed and tree. Which came first, seed or tree? No one can say. They form a perpetual series. That is why *samsara* is said to be beginningless. From action springs embodiment, and from embodiment action. Just as past actions were responsible for the present life, present actions will determine the future life. The yield of agriculture is used in two ways – as food grains for present enjoyment and as seeds for future fructification. Similarly, the *Karmas* that we do afford enjoyment at present as well as lead to future birth. Thus the transmigratory process goes on.

Karma, as we saw, is twofold – as good and bad. Good *Karma* makes life good, and bad *Karma* bad. What is good *Karma*? And, what is bad *Karma*? What is the principle of goodness? And, what is evil? Moral philosophers have attempted various definitions. It can be said, without fear of contradiction, that the principle of goodness is the Golden Rule, the violation whereof is evil. 'Do unto others as you would wish others do to you'. Every religion and every moral school accept this principle. Do not harm any one; be good to all. Non-cruelty is the supreme virtue. *Ahimsa* is the greatest *dharma*. It is in accordance with the doings of beings that God rewards them. If a person is and does good, God grants him peace and happiness. If a person is bad and does evil, misery becomes his lot. God's justice must prevail. The working of his justice takes the form of the law of Karma. Justice here is not incompatible with mercy or love. God's justice and love are identical. It is out of love that God rewards the good. It is out of the same love that he punishes the wicked. *Danda* is *daya-karya*. If a mother chastises her child, it is for the sake of the child's good. Even so, the punishment that God meets out to a recalcitrant soul is for the sake of the soul's good. God is love; and the principle of *Karma* is the expression of divine love.

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The *Mimamsaka* thinks that even without God *Karma* can function. Actions themselves produce their results – good actions good, evil actions evil. When it is possible to account for the facts of moral life in terms of *dharma* and *adharma*, it is illegitimate to posit a God. The obvious objection to the *Mimamsa* view is: How can actions that perish as soon as performed give rise to fruits in the future? The *Mimamsaka* may reply saying that *Karma* produces its result after its own destruction even as manure or medicine perishes and then fructifies. But, is that true? It is not proper to say that manure or medicine perishes in the sense in which an act perishes. Even supposing that manure and medicine perish. Not so is the case with *Karma*. Acts are done in this world – *tarpana* is offered in water, *havis* in fire, and alms given perish even here. How can these acts which are performed in this world and perish as soon as performed give rise to enjoyment in the other world, viz. heaven, at a future date? It may be said that actions leave their impressions in the doer's mind, and that it is from these impressions that the appropriate enjoyments are had later on. If that be the case, heaven, hell, earth, etc., must reside in the mind; for it is in the mind that these enjoyments – heavenly, hellish, etc. – should take place. The *Mimamsaka* will not accept this view, for, to accept it would be to embrace subjectivism. And, if heaven, etc., are imaginations pure and simple, who would perform sacrifices which involve great expense and trouble?

The *Mimamsaka* has not succeeded in his attempt to explain the facts of morality in terms of *Karma* alone. Actions perish with their performance. Why, everything connected with actions perishes – the gift and the giver, the rites and the receiver, all perish. Yet it is undeniable that the law of *Karma* functions. How can it function, if there be not an intelligent guide? There cannot be law, if there be no law-maker. And, law cannot function, if there be no governor of law. So, God exists.

The enjoyments of the soul are conditioned by its conjunction with a body, sense-organs, time, order, action and object. All these are non-intelligent, and cannot choose for themselves a particular soul. A house cannot choose its inmate, nor a mango its eater. Similarly, a psychophysical complex cannot select a soul, nor the space-time world. The finite soul does not have the power to choose its own body, sense-organs, etc.; for, it is a fettered entity and has limited intelligence. Therefore, it must be admitted that God alone administers the law of *Karma*. It is he that brings about the union between the soul on the one hand and the location, instruments and objects of enjoyment on the other. *Karma* functions under his ordinance. It is his will that prevails. There is no place or time where his writ does not run. Nothing can escape him. No one can deceive him.

That the virtuous should be rewarded and the wicked punished is God's law. What is virtue and what is vice? These too have been determined by God. Right conduct, love, grace, pious life, helpfulness, amity, good sense, blameless austerity, charity, reverential attitude, humility, truthfulness, the spirit of renunciation, self-control, wisdom, worship, etc.- these constitute virtue; and what are opposed to these vice. By virtue one acquires merit, by vicious deeds demerit. The crowning glory of virtue is the undivided to God. Without the love of God, the mere forms of virtue are of no avail. Daksa-prajapati was learned in the sacred lore, and he performed sacrifices. But these could not save him, because he had no love for God. What appears to be sinful in form, if motivated by an intense devotion to God, turns out to be a

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meritorious deed. There are stories of saints who even killed a father or a son for the sake of God. These are calculated to impress on us the supreme need of loyalty to God.

In the sacred books, we hear of heaven and hell. Heaven is the place of enjoyment, and hell is the house of correction. It is God's ordinance that the meritorious should go to heaven, after death, and the wicked to hell. Souls suffer pain or enjoy pleasure, being governed by the law of God. Just as the king administers justice and rewards or punishes his subjects according to their deserts, so does God. And, just as the physician prescribes different medicines to effect the cure of diseases, so God treats the souls differently according to their needs. Some prescriptions may be bitter, and others sweet. That does not mean that the physician is partial to some. The enjoyments of pleasure as well as suffering pain is a process of purgation. To remove *mala*, God administers to the soul pain and pleasure. In some cases, the physician may find it unnecessary to prescribe medicine. He may effect a cure by an incarnation or a mere touch. In some other cases he may have to adopt drastic remedies such as cutting and cauterizing. In yet other cases he may ask the patient to drink sugared milk. Similarly, God tackles the souls in different ways. All his actions, however, have the same end in view, viz. to save the souls from *samsara*.

The souls are endowed with different types of body so that they may experience different kinds of joy and sorrow. Just as the body that we have in waking experience is of no use for enjoying or suffering in dream, so also the body of one species is not suitable for the experience of another species. For example, the snake-body is no good for the purpose of having bird-experience, and *vice-versa*. Similarly, the body that is necessary for enjoyments in this world will be inadequate for residence in the other world. So, *Karma* determines the kind of body. It is one of the malas of the soul. It is said to be beginningless, because no one can determine its beginning. Yet, it ought to have had a beginning because all the actions of the soul are performed in time. It must have an end also, and that is when its effects have been suffered fully. At cosmic dissolution, *Karma* becomes united with *maya-mala*; at the beginning of each world-creation it reappears and brings about the union of the souls with their appropriate bodies – bodies fashioned out of *maya*. *Karma* transmigrates along with the subtle body of the soul; it takes different forms, and yet is formless. It functions under the law of God.

It is not necessary that the body of one birth must be the same as that of the previous birth. Migration from one type of body into another is possible. It is wrong to say, as some Mimamsakas do, that grass is reborn as grass, bird as bird, man as man, etc. It is equally wrong to hold, as some Vedantins do, that even in the highest heaven souls enjoy as bird, beast, man, etc. The forms that the soul takes change according to its *Karma*. Ahalya, we are told, turned into a stone, a spider was born as a prince in the solar race, and a rat became Mahabali. It is *Karma* that determines the nature of a soul's birth.

Karma, as we have already pointed out, has not the intelligence to choose a particular soul and endow it with a body. It has to be guided by God. The gross bodies emerge from the subtle body. Though the subtle body is one for each soul, many gross bodies are produced out of it by God, even as from gold different ornaments are made by the goldsmith. It is not that a gross body arises from the destruction of a subtle body. Just as when a tree is cut at the root,

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another shoot comes out of the same root, so when one gross body falls, another springs from the same subtle body. The material cause of the subtle body is *prakrti*. *Prakrti* itself is the effect of *asuddha-maya*. Above this latter is *Bindu* or *Kundali*. Superior to that is *Sakti*, the power of God. As between *Sakti* and Siva, there is no difference.

It is all the play of God. And, God's play is the play of love. Out of love he endows the souls with bodies and makes them eat their *Karma*. The bodies are formed out of *maya*; and *Karma* conditions this formation. One dirt is made to remove another dirt. *Karma-mala* is made use of to rid the soul of the dirt of *maya-mala*; and this latter is employed to free the soul of its root-impurity, viz. *anava*. It is the principle of the fuller's earth that works here. God wants to save the soul; the moral law of *Karma* is the way how he saves it.

LECTURE FOUR

God as Redeemer

World-creation and moral governance, as functions of God, have as their purpose the redemption of souls. As has already been stated, the origination, sustentation and destruction of the universe, and veiling of the truth are for the sake of *anugraha* – bestowal of grace on the souls. Similarly, the regulation of enjoyment and suffering in accordance with desert is for making the souls fit to receive the divine grace. God has nothing to achieve for himself by creating the world or by regulating *Karma*. His cosmic play is for weaning the souls from *samsara*. God alone can save the souls because he has the necessary knowledge and power for that purpose. The eight qualities of God are: (1) independence, (2) purity, (3) self-knowledge, (4) omniscience, (5) freedom from mala, (6) boundless benevolence, (7) omnipotence, and (8) bliss. By virtue of these perfections, God is pre-eminently the universal savior.

It is true that people worship many gods, and each person has his own *ista* (chosen deity). Because of temperamental differences, the form of God that appeals to one may not appeal to another. For that matter, the deific form that fascinates a person at one moment may not exercise that power on the same person at another moment. What has been described as the Vedic henotheism is, in a sense, natural to the human mind. There need be no dogmatism with regard to our conceptions of God. A Rg Vedic seer proclaims: ‘Truth is one; sages call it by various names.’ All the great ones of India are agreed on this point, viz. that there may be as many approaches to God as there are minds. The *Siddhiyar* (ii, 25f) puts the same idea in the following manner: whatever God be the object of your worship, it is Siva that will appear there and accept your devotion. Deities other than the Supreme are, in fact, powerless. They are as helpless as terrestrial creatures are. When they are worshipped, it is not they that reward the worshipper, but the supreme God, the God of gods. When parents are revered and served by their children, for instance, it is not the parents that reward the children in a future state but the good Karma. Various forms of God are, of course, necessary to suit different tastes. Hinduism recognizes this fact. But, it does not follow from this that the Hindu is a polytheist. There is only one supreme God, call him by what name we will. Even where several deities are believed in, they are subordinated to the Supreme. True worship ultimately reaches the ultimate God. He may be worshipped in stationary forms such as the Siva-linga or in moving forms such as his devotees. But, it is he that accepts all this worship and showers his grace on the worshipper. Even to worship him, we have to depend on his grace. He is always intent on saving us, under some pretext or the other.

God saves us by imparting to us divine wisdom. It is not only the saving knowledge that we owe to God’s grace, but also the ordinary knowledge that we acquire in the empirical world. Nothing can move or function without God. We cannot see if God’s light were not there. We may imagine, in our ignorance, that it is we that know. But, in reality, it is God that knows in us and through us. Just as the senses perceive only as informed by the soul, so the soul knows only as impelled by God. God is the soul of souls. He is the inner immortal ruler, the indwelling

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power that moves all beings and makes all things keep their places. God is omniscient; he alone knows all and enables the souls to know.

If God is the giver of all knowledge, it may be asked, why should some know less and some more, some rightly and some wrongly? The answer to this question is that the differences are due to *karma*. Each soul knows and enjoys according to the merits and demerits of its past deeds. God dispenses justice; but this dispensation, as we have seen already, is the expression of God's love.

Without the aid of God, the soul cannot know anything. That it is dependent on so many factors in order to know something is well known. In external perception, it requires the help of instruments like sense-organ and auxiliaries like sun-light. So, it is clear that the soul is not self-luminous; it cannot serve as its own light. God alone is self-luminous; it cannot serve as its own light. God alone is self-luminous (*svaprapakasa*), and, therefore, is the source of all knowledge. It is he that imparts knowledge to the soul, out of his grace, by means of the organs of sense and sensations, by means of the luminaries like the sun and the moon, and by means of time, *karma*, and the bodies, by means of books on logic and metaphysics, and finally in the form of the *guru*. Both secular and sacred knowledge have their origin in God. He is the source of the arts and the sciences, of philosophy and faith. The Veda is his Word; the Agamas are his teachings. He himself knows without any aid. Neither sense organs, nor the luminaries, nor the factors like time, *karma* and body, nor the books does God require as aids to knowledge. He creates all these for the sake of the soul, in order that the soul may know.

Why does God endow the soul with the instruments of knowledge, etc.? Why should he make it migrate from body to body, suffering all the ills that embodiment is heir to? The Saiva-Siddhantin's reply is that all this travail is necessary before the soul becomes fit for release. It is God that joins the soul with an appropriate body, makes it to know, act, enjoy and suffer, in order finally to save it by imparting to it the higher wisdom. All this is God's act of love. God's power is his grace. Except as love and grace, there is no God. The souls have their illusion removed, and they gain the supreme bliss by the power of God's love. Just as the sun, by his light, dispels the darkness that shrouds the eyes, so God, the light of lights, destroys the soul's ignorance by blessing it with the vision of truth.

How are we to know God before he can redeem us? If he is unknowable, we can derive no benefit from him. It would mean that he is not pervasive of us. If that were so, we can attain no union with him even in *moksa*. If God is unknowable and non-pervasive of us. If that were so, we can attain no union with him even in *moksa*. If God is unknowable and non-pervasive, he cannot perform the five cosmic functions that are ascribed to him. There would be the persistent doubt whether he exists or not; and even in he exists, so far as we are concerned, it would be the same as if he did not exist. God would then be as useless and unsubstantial as sky-flowers and ropes made of tortoise hair. What answer has the Siddhantin for this objection?

God, says the Siddhantin, remain unknown only till his grace is not bestowed on the soul. Surely, with our finite powers of knowledge we cannot know him. Even to know empirical objects, we saw, the grace of God is required. How much more so for knowing God?

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It is only with his grace that we can know him – know him as non-different (*ananva*). The soul attains union with Siva, in *moksa*, though even then it is entitatively distinct. This, according to the Siddhantin, is true *advaita* (non-duality). The *advaita* realization is not *pasu-jnana*, but *pati-jnana*. That is, the soul then knows, not through its empirical instruments, but through God. It sees not through its physical or mental eye, but through the divine eye, the eye of God.

The ordinary yogins do not have this vision. Depending on the strength of their own will-power, they hope to realize God. They expect to see God, and meditate on him. But, God is not an object either of the senses or of the mind. Even if God is contemplated as that which transcends the senses and mind, of what use is such contemplation? For, that contemplation would necessarily involve conceptualization; and God is not a concept. The same defect would persist, even if God is contemplated as being beyond contemplation. ‘Being-beyond-contemplation’ is also a concept. If God is contemplated as identical with oneself, even then God is not realized. In fact, by the individual effort of mind and will the truth is not grasped. The only way to know God is by getting his grace. All that the soul has to do is to earn God’s grace. If only the soul will place itself in God’s good care, all will be well with it. Even as a prodigal, if man returns to the house of his Father, he will be feasted and fed, and will be finally saved.

The story is told of a prince who grew as a savage among savages. While quite young, the prince was lost or abandoned in a forest. He was found by a savage who adopted him as his son. The prince, of course, did not know that he was a prince. He led a savage life, believing himself to be a savage. After several years, the king, his father, got news of his whereabouts, went there, separated the prince from his savage associates and reclaimed him as his son. The prince regained his princely status, and was honored even as his father was honored. The soul’s story is similar to that of the prince. It is divine by nature; but is *samsara* it gets lost to the senses and their objects. The senses entice it and nourish it as if it was their own. In such a situation, the soul forgets its own nature, and even imagines that its captivity is its freedom. The Lord saves the soul from its pitiable plight by his grace, frees it from its inert association, washes it clean of its accumulated dross, and accepts it as his own. It is by God’s grace, then, that the soul is dissociated from the world of *acit* (inert things), and is made to regain its nature as *cit* (intelligence).

There are three classes of souls – *vijnanakala*, *pralayakala*, and *sakala*. Of the three *malas*, the *vijnanakalas* have *anava* alone, the *pralayakalas* *anava* and *karma* and the *sakalas* all the three, viz. *anava*, *karma*, and *maya*. The *vijnanakalas* are the comparatively pure souls, with only the root-*mala* to be removed by Siva. The *pralaya-kalas* are the souls in the state of *pralaya* or world-dissolution. Since there is no evolution of *maya* in that state, the souls are rid of *maya-mala*. But the merits and demerits of past deeds still persist, and it is they that endow the soul with body, etc., at the beginning of the next evolution. So the *pralayakalas* have *karma* besides *anava*. The *sakalas* are the souls coursing their way in the transmigratory tract. They have the full complement of impurities.

Siva saves these three classes of souls in different ways, bringing them succor according to their needs. The *vijnanakalas* Siva instructs from within, residing in their intelligence. To

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the *pralayakalas* Siva appears in a superhuman form, initiates them and removes their impurities. For saving the *sakalas* God has to appear in the form of a guru. While to the first two classes of souls Siva reveals his *niradhara* form, to the third he has to show his *sadhara* form.

It is the 'descent of God's grace' (*saktinipata*) upon the soul that rids it of *mala*. The more intense the descent, the quicker is the *mala* removed. The pure crystal of the soul is rubbed clean of the dirt of *mala* by the entry into it of the light of grace. But before this can happen, the soul of all classes should become fit for receiving grace. The intensity of the descent of grace will depend on the relative fitness of the soul, in other words, on the relative ripeness of *mala*. The descent of Siva's sakti comes in four grades: *manda*, *mandatara*, *tivra*, and *tivratara*. The divine power that is said to be *manda* (slow) is the *nivr̥tti-sakti* (the removing power). With its onset the soul begins to discriminate between the eternal and the non-eternal. Thus the removal of ignorance starts; the clouds that were hiding the sun of truth begin to lift. As a result of discrimination, there develops in the soul dispassion for sense-objects. The next stage is *mandatara* (less slow) where the discrimination and the detachment get confirmed. The *sakti* here is called *pratistha-sakti*, the power-that-makes-firm. The *sakti-nipata* that is of a higher grade is *tivra* (intense). Here it is the *vidya-sakti* (wisdom-power) that functions. In the place of the earlier *pasa-jnana* and *pasu-jnana*, *siva-jnana* shines. The final stage is reached when the soul enjoys the bliss of Siva, freed from all its trials and tribulations. The *sakti* here is *santi* (peace), and the descent of grace is *tivratara* (very intense). When this happens, the veil of ignorance (*tirodhana*) is completely removed and the soul having received back its innate vision longs for the sight of the Lord. This longing is fulfilled by the *guru* who initiates the soul and enables it to have a vision of the Lord.

Diksa (initiation) occupies an important place in Saivism. The bondage of souls is not due to mere absence of knowledge; it is due to *mala* which is a positive entity. For removing it there is required another positive entity; that is the reason for saying that *diksa* is necessary. Since, however, the souls are in different stages of ripeness, the type of *diksa* also varies. It is the teacher that has to decide which type of *diksa* will suit which soul. *Nayana-diksa* is initiation by sight. By a mere look the preceptor may purify the soul. One of the examples given for this type of *diksa* is the drawing off of poison from a person bitten by a snake by the look of one who has achieved identity with Garuda by yogic powers. *Sparsa-diksa* is initiation by touch. Just as base metals are said to be transmuted into gold through processes of alchemy, the *pasu* is made to assume Sivatva by the teacher performing certain rites. *Sastra-diksa* is initiation by teaching the Scriptural texts. Here the preceptor teaches the pupil the significance of the three categories, *pati*, *pasu* and *pasa* and leads him to the goal which is union with Siva. *Yoga-diksa*, is initiation by yoga. Here the pupil is taught to perform *Siva-yoga*. As distinct from the types of *diksa* so far mentioned, there are some in which sacrificial techniques are employed. These are absorbed by the next. The last of these, *kala*, is absorbed by the *tirodhana-sakti*, and this *sakti* in its turn by Siva. When the *tirodhana-sakti* is absorbed, the soul is freed from *mala* and is blessed with the knowledge of Siva.

The purification of the *adhvas* through *diksa* is performed by Siva in the form of the preceptor. The recipients of *diksa*, viz. the disciples, are of three types, *uttama* (high),

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madhyama (middling), and *adhama* (low). These are initiated by Siva either through *jnana* or *kriya*, and thus their *mala* is removed. The removal of *mala* happens this way. Through *diksa*, the accumulated (*sancita*) *karma*, which resides in the six *adhvas*, is destroyed. With the destruction of *karma*, *maya* disappears. And when *maya* goes, *anava* also is removed. The removal of the various *tattvas* is accomplished by the different grades of *diksa*. When the *tattvas* are removed, the soul regains its true nature as the pervasive and omniscient spirit.

Sancita-karma, as we have said, is removed through the purification of the *adhvas* by *diksa*. Siva does this, appearing as the preceptor, by his *kriya-sakti*. He also removes the *agami-karma* and the *anava-mala* by his *jnana-sakti*. *Anava* could be removed only when it becomes ripe. In order to ripen *anava*, Siva makes the souls experience *karma*, enjoy and suffer in accordance with their deserts. In other words, *prarabdha* is destroyed by enjoyment and suffering.

The first five *adhvas* are pervaded by the five *kalas*. The following table gives the details of the total of each *adhva*:

S. No	Kala	Mantra	Pada	Varna	Bhuvana	Tatt3va	Deity
1	Nivrtti	2	28	1	108	1	Brahma
2	Pratistha	2	21	24	56	23	Vishnu
3	Vidya	2	20	7	27	7	Rudra
4	Santi	2	11	3	18	3	Mahesvara
5	Santyatita	3	1	16	15	2	Sadasiva
Total		11	81	51	224	36	

Thus, with the removal of the various types of karma and with the destruction of *anava*, the souls gain union with Siva.

It is only after a long journey that the soul arrives at the goal. A number of births in various locations and conditions precede the status of a human being attained by a soul. There are so many human souls in the world; but not all of them get the facilities for spiritual progress. Rare is the birth of a human soul in a land which is sanctified by the Vedas and the Agamas. Such a birth is the result of great merit. A greater fund of merit is necessary for a soul to be born as an adherent of Saiva-Siddhanta. After wading through alien faiths, after plodding through the orthodox cults, the soul at last enters the haven of Saivism. Within the haven also there are the outer halls and the inner chambers. There are different schools of Saivism. After passing through these, the soul arrives at the central court which is the Siddhanta. This is made possible by the performance of duties pertaining to one's station in life, by the practice of austerities (*tapas*), by the study of the Vedas and the Puranas, and by the acquisition of a clear knowledge of the truths. After one becomes a Saiva-Siddhantin, one has to go through the stages of *carya*, *kriya*, and *yoga*, before one acquires the final means to release which is *jnana*.

The Saiva-Siddhanta, revealed graciously by the supreme Lord Siva, promises sure release for its votary. The Lord himself guides the soul that has taken to the Siddhanta-path, and turns it into a *jivanmukta* by removing its *mala*. The soul is bathed in the divine light, is made to drink the divine bliss, and is admitted to the proximity of the divine Feet. None is equal

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to the Lord. How can any surpass him? He is supremely intelligent, all-powerful, and beneficent. By his omniscience, he reveals the Vedas and the Agamas. By his omnipotence, he makes the soul enjoy and suffer according to its deserts. By his grace, he removes its impurities. There is a master plan behind the Lord's activities – that is, to release the soul from bondage.

There are grades in *mukti*. Through *carya* one attains *saloka*, through *kriya samipya*, through *yoga sarupya*, and through *jnana sayujya*. (Vide Lecture I). The first three are called varieties of *pada-mukti*, graded release; the last alone is *para-mukti*, the supreme or final release. *Carya* is the path of external service to God in his temples. Scrubbing and cleaning the temples, gathering flowers and making them into garlands for adorning the image of Siva, maintaining flower-gardens, lighting the temple lamps, singing the praise of Siva, and doing the behests of his devotees are forms of *carya*. *Kriya* refers to actual modes of worship, such as offering fresh and fragrant flowers to the Lord, waving incense and lamps before the image, bathing the image, offering food, etc., and the other ritual acts connected with ceremonial worship. The performance of *Agnihotra*, etc., also form part of *kriya*. The next stage, *yoga*, is reached when one practices the modes of mind control. Restraining the senses and regulating the breathing-process, one stems the surging waves of the mind and makes it one pointed. The mind thus controlled is fixed on the supreme Light, ever to dwell there. This is the path of *yoga*. The final path is *jnana*. Here, one studies the *Sastras*, grasps firmly the nature of the three categories, realizes the non-distinction of cognizer, cognized object, and cognition, and becomes one with Siva. Thus *jnana* is the direct means to release. Just as before the rising sun darkness flies away, so at the dawn of wisdom ignorance is destroyed, and along with it bondage.

Three stages may be distinguished in the evolution of *Siva-jnana*. Even as the burning glass emits fire in the presence of the sun, the soul comes to have knowledge when the preceptor appears before it. The soul sees *pati* in an indeterminate way, and itself in an indeterminate manner in *pati*; also it beholds in itself the world indeterminately. Then the nature of the Lord as the smallest of the small and the greatest of the great is made manifest. This is the first stage. When *mala* ripens and there is *saktinipata*, the seeker after release reflects on what he has heard from the *guru*. He follows the line of argument indicated by his preceptor, and satisfies himself about the truth of what he has heard, with the help of suitable reasons and examples. As a result of such reflection, he attains a state of equanimity. He no longer has likes and dislikes. To him a potsherd and a piece of gold are the same. He has a vision of Siva which is midway between *savikalpa* and *nirvikalpa*. He and Siva become inseparable, each not leaving the other. Dwelling in Siva, he sees Siva in everything. This is the second stage. At the final stage, both knowledge and ignorance are removed by the grace of the *guru*; and God is realized as both identical with and different from all things. The soul no longer knows through its own instruments; its experience henceforward is through God. God now appears in his true form as *niradhara*. While supporting everything, he stands alone and independent. One who realizes this truth becomes a *jivanmukta*.

The *jivanmukta* has no more birth. Those who have acquired merit go to heaven, and those who have gathered demerit go to hell. The *jivanmukta* has gone beyond both merit and demerit, good and evil. Therefore, he journeys to neither heaven nor hell. He has nowhere to

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go, on departing from the earth; nor does he return to the earth. He is not concerned with anything that happens. Where the sun rises or where it sets is immaterial to him. He has nowhere to go, on departing from the earth; nor does he return to the earth. He is not concerned with anything that happens. Where the sun rises or where it sets is immaterial to him. He has no likes and dislikes; he desires nothing. He is not bound by any rule, sacred or secular. He has no need of performing austerities, observing vows, and doing duties. He is not a slave of his body, mind, and senses. He is above the *gunas* of *prakrti*, has no goals to achieve, and does not belong to any caste. Like children, mad men, and people possessed, he behaves in an unpredictable manner, singing sometimes and dancing too. He is not conditioned by considerations of time, place, etc. He performs actions not for any reward. His mind is steady and constant, unwavering and firm. Whatever be the mode of activity or status of being, he is ever united with the Feet of the Lord. Walking or standing, sleeping or waking, eating or fasting, sitting or lying down, in purity or impurity, in wealth or poverty, in pleasure or pain, in enjoyment or separation, or in any other state, he is constantly aware of the presence of siva. On leaving his body, he enters the fullness of God and becomes one with the All-in-all. Thus the soul finds release by the grace of God. God's supreme act of love is to redeem the soul.
