

## **Satsang with Swami Viditamananda Saraswati** **Arsha Vidya Gurukulam**

*What does ākāśa mean?*

*Ākāśa* means different things in different contexts. *Ākāśa* generally means space. Sometimes it means what is contained in the space. So, it can be even our mind. Sometimes *ākāśa* is even used for *Brahman*. Usually *ākāśa* means space. So what we call the immediate meaning, the literal meaning is space. Implied meaning could be depending on the context in which the word is used. So, in the five elements, (*ākāśa, vāyu, agni, āpaḥ* and *ṛithivī*), *ākāśa* would mean space.

It is like this. You take something solid like earth and then you start heating it. Take a piece of metal for example and you start heating it, then it will get heated and start boiling, so liquid will be formed. So, from earth, the cause is water and then you continue to heat it, vapor will come, that is fire. You continue to heat it, it becomes super heated vapor, that is air or gas. You continue to heat it, then the atoms will ultimately get disintegrated and will reduce to invisible things, space. So, if you apply the energy to anything, you see it being transformed to subtler and subtler states. From solid to liquid, liquid to vapor, vapor to gas and gas to even atomic disintegration. So that way, earth, water, fire, air and space.

In the reverse order would be from space to air, you cool down. That's why scientists explain to us, that, in the beginning of creation there was a tremendous level of energy. So, when you try to recreate, what must be the condition at the time of creation. They cannot quite recreate. What they are doing is that they are applying higher and higher energies. Higher and higher energy levels take you closer and closer to the source. And if you can really create that level of energy, which existed right in the beginning, then you will come to the total source. They get pretty close to that. They get not quite up to that, because exponentially it will increase. The energy requirement, if you go closer, it becomes much higher and higher. They are not able to create that level of energy, but pretty close. So you can go quite close to the point which might have existed soon after the creation process began. That's how they try to understand how the evolution may have taken place.

*What is the significance of worshipping Lord Śiva in the form of dakṣiṇāmūrti?*

*Dakṣiṇāmūrti* represents the manifestation of Lord Śiva as a teacher. Under *dakṣiṇāmūrti*, four sages are shown. They are *Sanaka, Sanadana Sanatsujāta* and *Sanatkumāra*. These four sages are said to have performed a penance for knowledge. Lord Śiva was pleased with them and appeared in this form, in the form of Lord *dakṣiṇāmūrti*. He is facing the south, therefore he is called *dakṣiṇāmūrti* - whose *mūrti* or form is facing *dakṣiṇā* or south, so south facing form.

There is an another meaning of the word, *dakṣiṇāmūrti*. *Dakṣiṇā* also means that certain intellect, means of knowing the Lord. That which is the means of perceiving whom *dakṣiṇā* is certain intellect, the intellect with which you perceive the Lord. And therefore Lord Śiva came to be called *dakṣiṇāmūrti*. Whose *mūrti* or the form requires *dakṣiṇā*, a certain intellect to perceive, therefore is also called *dakṣiṇāmūrti*.

And other meanings are also given. *Amūrti* is formless. *Dakṣiṇā* means *dakṣa*, one who is skilled or capable. One who has the capability of creating, sustaining and dissolving the whole Universe. Himself being formless is also called *dakṣiṇāmūrti*.

The primary meaning of the word *dakṣiṇāmūrti* is the Lord of south facing form. So that the disciples face north and north is an auspicious direction. North signifies knowledge, freedom, evolution. South signifies death, ignorance. Lord *dakṣiṇāmūrti* is facing south, that shows he has conquered death and ignorance. That's why he is called *mṛtyuñjaya* – Lord of Knowledge. And the aspirants face north, because they are desirous of knowledge, freedom and growth. So that is how *dakṣiṇāmūrti* is worshipped here because Gurukulam is a place where Knowledge is pursued and therefore we seek the grace of the Lord in the form of knowledge, in the form of teacher.

*Dakṣiṇāmūrti* is usually in a sitting posture. Posture is one in which we can also see the left foot resting on the right side. That's the posture. Under the right foot, we see a demon being crushed under the foot, the demon who stands for the ego, who has been subdued in the wake of knowledge. There are other postures of *dakṣiṇāmūrti*, but usually sitting. There is *yoga dakṣiṇāmūrti*. The

posture is somewhat different. Then is *veena dakṣiṇāmūrti*, he is holding *veena* in his hand. This is *medhā dakṣiṇāmūrti*. He is holding a book in his hand.