

Report : National Webinar on Avaranvada

Shri Shankar Shikshayatan organised a national webinar on Pandit Madhusudan Ojha's Avaranvada on April 30, 2021.

Avaranvada is one of the ten books authored by renowned Vedic scholar Pandit Madhusudan Ojha, examining various causes of Creation. Inspired by nasadiya-sukta of the Rigveda, Ojhaji explored brahman-granthas, aranyakas and other vedic texts to understand how the Creation came about.

Avaranvada has 145 verses. In his another book, dasavada-rahasya, there are 18 verses related to avaranvada and in Brahmavinaya eight verses. The seminar was an effort to understand Ojhaji's explanation of avaranvada in all his works.

In Avaranvada, Ojhaji has given a simple explanation of vaya, vayun and vayonadha. He has explained vaya and vayonadhya forms of prana, relationship of vayonadha with chhanda and similarity of prana and chhanda. In another section on prana, there is an explanation of prana as the element that covers or encircles the universe. The entire creation exists in prana. Discussions on pervasiveness of prana, lokpala and ishvar-tattva and saur-brahmanda (solar universe) are some of the subjects included in the book. In the third section of the book, there are descriptions of different dimensions of chhanda and manifestation of creation through chhanda.

Prof. Rajdhar Mishra of Jagadguru Ramanandacharya Rajasthan Sanskrit University said the book, Avaranvada, explores avarana or envelopment as the cause of creation. Ojhaji called his work by different names--chhandovada, vayunvada, pranavada and vayovada. He has made references to this in his another book, Dasavada-rahasya:

``avaranvada eva chhandovadashcha vayunvadascha
sa pranavada eva vayovadascha shakyathe vaktum.``

“आवरणवाद एव च्छन्दोवादश्च वयुनवादश्च ।
स प्राणवाद एव वयोवादश्च शक्यते वक्तुम् ॥”

Avarana means covering or envelopment or encirclement. As the sun gets covered by clouds, and fire by smoke, the entire universe is covered with avarana-tattva. The term avarana has several synonyms--avartha, acchanna, veshtith etc. Pandit Ojha has given several other synonyms for the term, like achadana, avarti, samvriti, avachithi, mithi, chandan, tantrana, nirbandhan and haridana.

``Achhadanam chavriti-samvriti ava-
Chithimirthischandan-tantrane tatha.
Nirbandhanam va haridanamityapi
Prayah samanarthataya nirupitaha.``

“आच्छादनं चावृत्ति-संवृत्ती अव-
च्छीतिर्मितिश्चन्दन-तन्त्रणे तथा ।
निर्बन्धनं वा हरिदानमित्यपि
प्रायः समानार्थतया निरूपिताः ॥”

Terms like vayun, vaya and vayonadh have been explained in the book. Vayun is all pervasive and vaya and vayonadh exist within it. This entire universe is vayun. All the materials in the world are vayun. म

Prof. Lalit Kumar Gaur of Kurukshetra University pointed out that there was vivid description of chhanda in the book. Chhanda is vayonadh and from chhanda the universe becomes. The food we eat is enveloped by chhanda. Gayatri-chhanda is the manifestation of Brahma's energy. Ushnik-chhanda is the manifestation of ayu or age. Anushtup-chhand is the manifestation of svarga and brihati-chhanda of sri and yash or fame.

Dr Pavan Kumar Pandey of Kumar Bhaskar Varma Sanskrit and Ancient University, Assam, said prana was vayonadh and it is not different from vaya. Prana takes the form of vayonadh and vayun. Ojhaji has explained that it was the first prajapati's son, rishi Patang, who explained the subject of prana-vayonadha. From him, maharshi Deergatma learnt all the dimensions of prana. There is a reference to the term `gopa` in the Rigveda. According to maharshi Tittiriya, it meant the sun. Maharshi Aitareya said `gopa` meant inner prana. In other words, the term and its explanation showed the relationship between prana and the sun. Prana is akshara tattva, prana is veda, and without

prana there cannot be life. Prana is bhoota, rishi and deva. Prana is the sun of praja.

``pranoksharam, prana ime cha vedaha
Pranadhyate nama n hi kimchidasti
Bhutani deva rishaya sa eva
Pranah prajanamayamasti surya.``

“प्राणोऽक्षरं, प्राण इमे च वेदाः
प्राणादृते नाम न हि किञ्चिदस्ति ।
भूतानि देवा ऋषयः स एव
प्राणः प्रजानामयमस्ति सूर्यः ॥”

On behalf of Shri Shankar Shikshayatan, the webinar was conducted by senior research fellows, Dr Mani Shankar Dwivedi and Dr Lakshmi Kant Vimal.