

Shri Shankar Shikshayatan
National Webinar on Ahoratravada
July 30, 2021

Report

Shri Shankar Shikshayatan organised a National Webinar on Ahoratravada on July 30, 2021. It was part of the series of discussions Shikshayatan had been organising on Pandit Madhusudan Ojha's books on the mysteries and process of Creation. In these works informed by the nasadiya sukta of Rigveda, Ojhaji has discussed various reasons for Creation. In Ahoratravada, he focuses on the cycle of day and night to discuss time and space, and their various dimensions, as possible causes of Creation.

His discourse on the subject is premised on the principle of twin-elements. All that we know or are aware of the universe has two elements. We can call them `day` and `night`.

``dwidha dwidha sarvamidham vibhati dvaitam tatah karanamatra vidbham. Dwabhyam babhuvakhil-vishwametatah vidhyadahoratri-padena te dwe.` (Ahoratravada, page 1 verse 2)

He has given a comprehensive explanation of the terms as used in different contexts. For instance, In the sphere of knowledge, jnana is vidhya and vidhya is aha or day and ajnana is avidya and is ratri or night. *``jnanam hi vidhya tadaha prakashojnanm tvavidhyasti tamshcha ratriha``* (-Ahoratravada p1 verse 1)

It is said that all forms in the universe are contained in these elements of darkness and light, day and night. Prakash or light denotes aha and darkness ratri. Sat and asat can also be explained likewise. The universe we know is made up of sat and asat. Sat is aha and asat is ratri. *``yavajjagat tat sadaharvidusthata tamastu ratriyadasatpuroktam, Nabhyam prathak kinchidihastri tasmad vadamyahoratramidam samastam.``* (-Ahoratravada, p 2 verse 4).

The earth is the altar of yajna, or vedi. The fire which accepts all oblations is ahavaniya agni which resides on the western side of the earth. *``iyam hi prithvi prathamsti vedistatapaschime tishtathi griharyapatyah, prachyah dishi tvahaniya aisha prahuyate yatra cha somarashmi``* (-Ahoratra page 48, verse 90),

Speaking on the subject, Dr Chithanarain Pathak of Sampurnanand Sanskrit University said all the activities in this universe take place either in the day or at night and hence these two phases of a cycle can be considered to be the source of Creation. He referred to Ojhaji's explanation of several elements that make up the universe.

Dr Kuldip Kumar of Himachal Central University, Dharamshala, pointed out Ojhaji's discourse on planetary positions, especially the speed and position of the sun and earth. He has propounded four principles in this book--one that the sun remains stationary and the earth along with the moon revolves around it; the second the sun and earth are both mobile but their speeds vary; the third is that the earth revolves around the sun in year and rotates on its axis in a day and the fourth is that day and night is made by the different movement and positions of the sun and earth.

Dr Vishvesh of Mahatma Gandhi Central University, Motihari, Bihar, talked about Ojhaji's two explanations of dhyau. The first is that dhyau is the akash comprising the sun, earth, stars and planets. The second is that dhyau means samvatsar. The distance which the sunlight covers is called saurmandal or solar sphere and this sphere is dhyau.

Dr Praveen Kumar Dwivedi of Prof. Rajendra Singh University, Prayagraj, pointed out Ojhaji's three explanations of jnana in Ahoratravada. In the first place, In the first instance, kshara is the element, in the second it is akshara and in the third nirvishesh. The akshar element is atma, is ishvar and this ishvar is aptakama which means the one who controls all the activities in the universe. Dr Pratibha Arya of Allahabad University, underlined Ojhaji's discourse on kala or time in his book. Brahma is kala or time. The one which has no beginning and end, cannot be counted, cannot be explained and is unborn is Brahma. And this Brahma is kala or time.

Prof. Santosh Kumar Shukla, convener, Shri Shankar Shikshayatan and head of the department, Sanskrit and Ancient Studies department in the Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, who presided over the meetings, said Ojhaji's explanation in the book called for a scientific analysis. He said, according to Ojhaji, there were ten meanings of the term `ahoratra`.--shukla-krishna, prakash-andakar (light and darkness), sarga-pralaya (creation and dissolution), bhav-abhav (existence-non-existence), rita-satya and yajna. The universe is made up of these ten elements. ``ime ahoratre iti jigyasayam granthesmin dashadha ahoratrashabdartho vivartaha``. (Ahoratravada, Introduction p 4).

The programme was coordinated by Dr Laxmi Kant Vimal and Dr Mani Shankar Dwivedi of the Shikshayatan. Teachers and students from different universities across the country participated in the meeting.