

Chapter 2. The Fourteen Worlds

Q. I have heard it said that the worlds (*lokas*) are all in the body of people! Some experienced people and some who are learned in the scriptures (*sastras*) have said so. Is that true? What are those worlds? Where are they situated?

A. Yes. They are: the earth in the feet, the atmosphere in the genitals, heaven in the navel, the great world in the heart, the world of good people in the throat, the world of virtue in the brow centre, and the realm of truth on the crest of the head. These worlds, called the upper worlds, are all situated in the body of people. There are also lower worlds. (The upper worlds, in the order given above, are the *bhu-loka*, *bhuvan-loka*, *swar-loka*, *mahar-loka*, *jana-loka*, *thapo-loka*, and *sathya-loka*.)

Q. What are the lower worlds? Where do they exist?

A. The bottomless region in the soles of the feet, the depth of hell on the nails, the great depth in the heels, the bottomless pit in the hip, the infernal region in the knees, the great pit in the thighs, and deepest hell in the anus. (The lower worlds are the *athala*, *vithala*, *suthala*, *thalaathala*, *rasathala*, *mahathala*, and *patala*.)

Q. If all worlds are in the body—the five elements being the components—what happened to the seven legendary seas? Are they also in the body or mind?

A. When the body is the residence for all the worlds, how could only the seven seas have a separate existence? They are also “in” the body. The Seas of Salt (urine), Cane-juice (perspiration), Wine (senses), Ghee (semen), Buttermilk (mucus), Milk (saliva), and Pure Water (tears).

Q. You spoke of several types of fire (*agni*). What are they, and how are they named?

A. They are called the five fires, because there are five in all: the fire of time, the fire of hunger, the cold fire, the fire of anger, and the fire of knowledge.

Q. Where do these reside?

A. In the feet, navel, stomach, eye, and heart.

Q. Besides these, there seem to be varieties of sound. I have heard some talk of them.

A. Yes, there are.

Q. Are they also in the body? How many types are there? And their names?

A. There are ten types, all in the gross body itself. They are the sounds of clapping, kettle-drum, insect, drum, bell, cuckoo, small bell, flute, bee, and finally, *Om* (*pranava*). These are the varieties of sound.

Q. If all creation is subsumed in this composite of the five elements, the body, please explain the words *anda-anda*, *pinda-anda*, and *Brahma-anda*.

A. *Anda-anda* means all this creation, liable to evolution and involution; the movable and immovable nature, as it is often called.

Pinda-anda is the name for the inner principle of all this duality, the seer and the seen, the doer and the deed, etc. It is duality that produces birth after birth, according to the *karma* of the birth.

Brahma-anda means the collection of the inner forces of the five great elements: *Atma*, related to the ether; soul (*jivatma*), connected with wind; the inner *Atma* (*Prathyagatma*), arising out of fire; Universal Soul (*Chaith-*

anya-Brahma), associated with the water element; and Highest *Atma (Paramatma)*, attached to the earth element. These are all covered by that conception of *Brahma-anda*. This Force makes the elements operate; beyond them is the Uncognizable or Unmanifest Absolute.

Q. Swami! I don't clearly understand this rather complex subject. Please explain it to me by means of some simple illustration.

A. Well, creation (*anda-anda*) is like the black retina of the eye, the inner principle is like the inner circle within it, and the inner forces of the five elements (*Brahma-anda*) is the light that shines therein. The splendour of that light is Brahma.