

Swarupa Jnana vs Dharma Bhuta Jnana

In this article, we're going to learn about two terms often used in our literature - **sva:ru:pa jna:na and dharma bhu:ta jna:na.**

Anything in our experience has two components - (1) the essential form (sva:ru:pa) and (2) attributes (dharma). The light or the sun has the flame as its essential nature and effulgence as its attribute. Similarly, sugar has white crystalline rocks as essential nature and sweetness as its attribute. Salt has white powder as its essential nature and saltiness as its attribute. In all of these examples, we see that both of these make up the object, and both exist often as inseparable from each other.

Atma has jna:na (knowledge) as its sva:ru:pam (essential nature) and jna:na (consciousness) as its dharma (attribute). The first component is termed sva:ru:pa jna:na and the second is termed as dharma bhu:ta jna:na.

dharma bhu:ta jnana is the knowledge by which we learn of objects around us. The dharma bhu:ta jna:na of Parama:tma never undergoes any changes. For Him, an object need not be in contact with senses to receive knowledge of the object. He is fully cognizant of all objects at all times to the fullest extent (yah sarvajnah sarvavit). For mukta jivas also, the dharma bhu:ta jnana is fully expanded, unbounded, and illuminates with a full intensity equal to that of Parama:tma. For baddha jivas in the samsa:ra, the dharma bhu:ta jnana becomes covered and the extent to which it gets covered depends on the body they take. The body is made up of senses and it is through the senses that one can perceive things. The body they take depends on their karma.

For baddha jivas however, contact of objects with senses is necessary to perceive knowledge. The knowledge gained is always partial and depends on the limiting ability of the senses. When one is unconscious then one cannot perceive anything. For instance, jivas which get stone or rock as their bodies have their consciousness completely shrunken. Trees have slightly more consciousness, animals have even more

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consciousness and humans have even more consciousness. The de:vata:s have consciousness expanded higher than the humans.

The svaru:pa jnana never undergoes any change either in the bound state or liberated state and remains the same for all atmas. It never undergoes contraction and expansion, is self-luminous and is not dependent on anything. It is concealed in the bound state and illuminates in the liberated state. svarupa bhu:ta jnana is of two types: antaranga and bahiranga. bahiranga is jnana and ananda. antaranga is something that comes into our experience - seshatva pa:ratanrya. jnana and ananda are known through Vedanta. Seshatva pa:ratanrya are known through an a:charya. When one's journey becomes inward, svarupa jnana's maturity takes place.

By increase in sattva guna, one's perception increases and dharma bhuta jnana increases. By eating sattvic food, reading books which inculcate sattvic knowledge, hearing from sattvic sources, we can elevate our mental activities by which dharma bhu:ta jna:na expands.

It is important to note that the svaru:pa jnana and dharma bhu:ta jnana of Paramatma never undergoes any change.