

GOLDEN DAWN CORRESPONDENCE COURSE

LESSON 137

**THE TATTWAS: THEIR INFLUENCE ON
HUMAN LIFE AND DESTINY**

THE TATTWAS

The Tattwas are the five modifications of the Great Breath. Acting upon Prakriti, this Great Breath projects it into five states, each having distinctive vibratory motion and performing different functions. The first outcome of the evolutionary state of Parabrahman is the Akasha Tattwa. Following this Tattwa, the other four occur in the order of: Vayu, Tejas, Apas, and Prithivi. They are also referred to as Mahabhutas, this name being a synonym of the word Tattwa.

The word Akasha is generally translated into English, giving the word "Ether". Unfortunately, to modern English science sound is not known to be the distinguishing quality of the ether. Some few might also hold to the idea that the modern medium which transports light is the same as the Akasha. This, I believe, is a mistake. The luminiferous ether is the subtle Tejas Tattwa, and not the Akasha. All of the five subtle Tattwas might be called ethers no doubt, but to use the term ether for Akasha, without any distinguishing epithet, is misleading. In consequence, we might call the Akasha the sonoriferous ether, the Vayu the tangiferous ether, Apas the gustiferous ether, and Prithivi the odoriferous ether. Just as there exists in the Universe a luminiferous ether (by definition, an element of refined matter without which it has been found that the phenomena of light finds no adequate explanation), so do the four remaining ethers exist; elements of refined matter without which no adequate explanation will be found to account for the phenomena of sound, touch, taste, and smell.

The luminiferous ether is supposed by modern science to be matter in a most refined state (Again, see previous Editor's Note in Lesson 136 concerning the modern views of Physics relative to the existence of an ether. Ed. Note). It is the vibrations of this element that are supposed to constitute the phenomena of light. Accordingly, the vibrations take place at right angles to the direction of the wave. The same description corresponds closely to that given the Tejas Tattwa in this book. It therefore makes this Tattwa move in an upward direction, the center of the direction being the direction of the wave. In addition, it states that one complete vibration of this element produces the figure of a triangle. See figure 1.

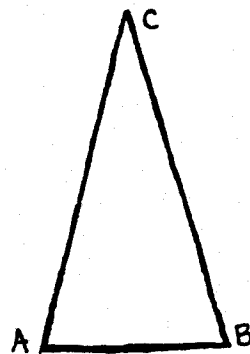


Figure 1

Referring to Figure 1, we see line AB is the direction of the wave; line BC is the direction of the vibration, and line CA is that line along which the vibrating atom must return to its original position on line AB.

The Tejas Tattwa of the ancients is then exactly the luminiferous ether of the moderns, as far as the nature of the vibration is concerned. There are no concepts however concerning the remaining four ethers in modern science. The vibrations of Akasha, the sonoriferous ether,

constitute sound; and it is necessary to recognize the distinctive character of this form of motion.

The experiment of a bell placed in a vacuum illustrates that the vibrations of the atmosphere (air) are responsible for the propagation of sound. It is also known that other medias, such as the Earth and metals, transmit sound in varying degrees as well. There must therefore, be some one thing present in all these substances which gives birth to sound: i.e., that vibration which constitutes sound. That something is considered here to be the Indian Akasha.

But the Akasha is all-pervading, as is the luminiferous ether; this being so, then why isn't sound transmitted to our ears when a vacuum is produced in a bell jar, and a bell vibrated within that vacuum environment? The fact is that we must make a difference between the vibrations of the elements which constitute sound and light and the vibrations of the media which transmit these impressions to our senses. It is not the vibrations of the ethers i.e., the subtle Tattwas, that cause our perceptions: rather it is the ethereal vibrations transferred to different media, which are so many modifications of gross matter, i.e., the Sthula Mahabhutas. In connection with this, we find the luminiferous ether is present as much in a darkened room as in the space without; the minutest space within the dimensions of the surrounding walls is pregnant with it. For all this, the luminosity of the exterior is not present in the interior. Why? The reason is that our ordinary vision does not see the vibrations of the luminiferous ether. It sees only the vibrations of the media which the ether pervades, different

media having different capabilities of being set into ethereal vibrations. In the space outside of the darkened room, the ether brings the atoms of the atmosphere (air) into the necessary state of visual vibration, with one wide expanse of light being presented to our view. The same is the case with every other object that we see: the ether which pervades the object brings the atoms of that object into the necessary state of visual vibration. The strength of the ethereal vibrations which the presence of the Sun imparts to the ether pervading our planet is not sufficient to evoke the same state in the dead matter of the darkening walls: the internal ether, divided from the external one by this dead mass, is itself cut off from such vibrations. The darkness of the room is thus the consequence, notwithstanding the presence therein of the luminiferous ether. The light from an electric spark generated in the vacuum of a bell-jar needs to be transmitted to our eyes, because the glass of the jar which is in contact with the internal luminiferous ether has a certain degree of capability of being put into the state of visual vibration; from here it is transmitted to the external ether, and then to the eye of the observer. The same however, would not be the case if we were to use a porcelain or earthen jar. It is this capability of being put into the state of visual vibration which results in the condition of transparency, as exhibited by glass and similar objects.

To return now to the sonoriferous ether (Akasha). Every form of gross matter possesses what we call auditory transparency. This quality varies with the varying form of the matter in question. As to the nature of

vibrations, two things must be understood. In the first place, the external form of the vibration is similar to the hole of the ear, a simple illustration of which is given in Figure 2.

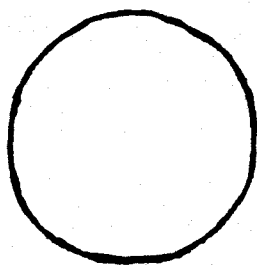


Figure 2

It throws matter which is subject to it into the form as of a dotted sheet. These dots are small points, rising above the common surface, thus producing microcosmic pits in the sheet. See Figure 3

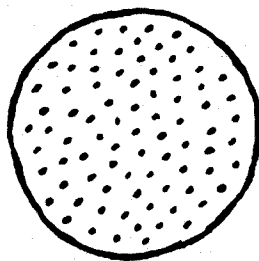


Figure 3

This construct is said to move by "fits" and "starts" (Sankrama), and to move in all directions (Sarvatogama). That means that the impulse falls back upon itself along the line of its former path, which lies on all sides of the direction of the wave. See Figure 4.



Figure 4

It should be understood that these ethers produce vibrations similar to their own in gross media. The form therefore, into which the auditory vibrations throw the atmosphere (air) is a true clue to the form of the ethereal vibration; the vibrations of air discovered by modern science being a close corollary.

We now come to consider the tangiferous ether (Vayu). The vibrations of this ether are described as being spherical in form, with its motion forming acute angles to the wave (Tiryak). Such is the representation of these vibrations on the plane of the paper. See Figure 5. It is worth noting, that the remarks about the transmission of sound in the case of the Akasha apply here too: specifically, *mutatis mutandis*.

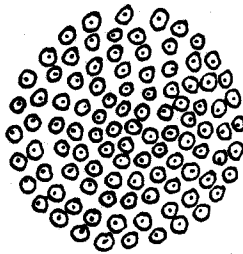


Figure 5

The gustiferous ether (Apas Tattwa) is said to resemble the half-moon in shape. Moreover it is said to move downward, this direction being opposite to that of the luminiferous ether; as such, it causes contraction. The representation of this Apas vibration on the plane of the paper is given in Figure 6.

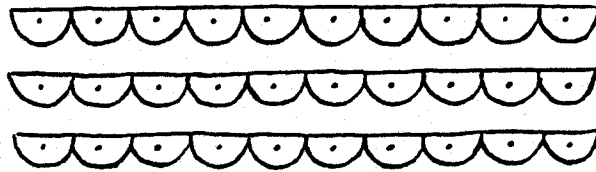


Figure 6

The process of contraction will be considered during our investigations of the qualities of the Tattwas.

The odoriferous ether (Prithivi) is given as having a quadrangular in shape as shown in Figure 7.

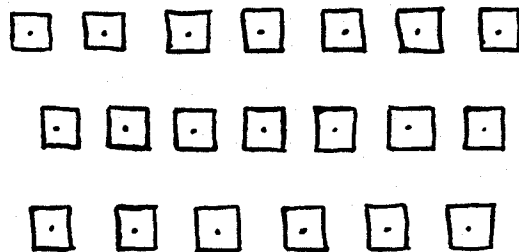


Figure 7

This structure is said to move in the middle. In other words, it moves neither at right angles nor at acute angles; neither upward nor downward. Rather, it moves along the line of the wave, the line and the quadrangle being in the same plane.

These are the forms and modes of motion of the five ethers. Of the five sensations of men, each of these ethers gives birth to one of these senses. The associations are as follows:

<u>TATTWA NAME</u>	<u>ETHERIC NAME</u>	<u>PHYSICAL SENSE</u>
Akasha	Sonoiferous Ether	Sound
Vaya	Tangiferous Ether	Touch
Tejas	Luminiferous Ether	Color (Sight)
Apas	Gustiferous Ether	Taste
Prithivi	Odoriferous Ether	Smell

In the process of evolution, these coexisting ethers, while retaining their general relative forms and primary qualities, contracted the qualities of the other Tattwas. This is known as the process of Panchikarana, or Division into Five.

If we take H, P, R, V, and L to be the Algebraic symbol for (1), (2), (3), (4), and (5) respectively, the ethers after Panchikarana assume the following forms:

$$(1) H = H/2 + P/8 + R/8 + V/8 + L/8$$

$$(2) P = P/2 + H/8 + R/8 + V/8 + L/8$$

$$(3) R = R/2 + H/8 + P/8 + V/8 + L/8$$

$$(4) V = V/2 + R/8 + H/8 + P/8 + L/8$$

$$(5) L = L/2 + V/8 + R/8 + H/8 + P/8$$

One molecule of each ether, consisting of eight atoms, has four of the original principal ethers, and one each of the remaining four.

The following table shows the five qualities of each of the Tattwas after Panchikarana.

	<u>SOUND</u>	<u>TOUCH</u>	<u>TASTE</u>	<u>COLOR</u>	<u>SMELL</u>
(1) H	Ordinary
(2) P	Very light	Cool	Acid	Blue of sky	Acid
(3) R	Light	Very hot	Hot	Red	Hot
(4) V	Heavy	Cool	Astringent	White	Astringent
(5) L	Deep	Hot	Sweet	Yellow	Sweet

It might be remarked here that the subtle Tattwas exist now in the Universe on four planes, the higher of which differ from the lower in their frequency, i.e., the number of vibrations per second. The four planes are:

1. Physiological.....Prana
2. Mental.....Manas
3. Psychic.....Vijnana
4. Spiritual.....Ananda

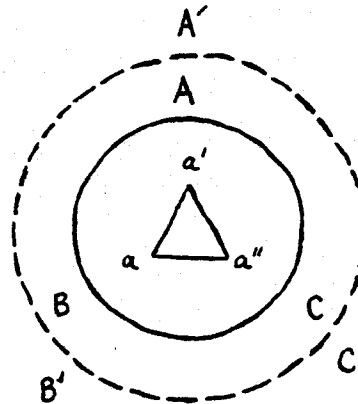
Now we will discuss some of the secondary qualities of the Tattwas.

1. **SPACE.** This is a quality of the Akasha Tattwa. It has been asserted that the vibration of this ether presents a shape like the hole in the ear, and that in the body thereof are microscopic points (Vindus). It follows that the interstices between the points serve to give space to ethereal minima, while offering them room for locomotion (Avakasha).

2. **LOCOMOTION.** This is the quality of the Vayu Tattwa. Vayu is a form of motion itself, as motion in all directions constitutes circular motion. Vayu itself has the form of spherical motion which, when added to by the motion that maintains the form of the different ethers, produces the stereotyped motion of Vayu: locomotion being the result.

3. **EXPANSION .** This is the quality of the Tejas Tattwa. This follows from the shape and form of motion which is given to this ethereal vibration. See Figure 8.

Figure 8



In the above figure, suppose A B C is a lump of metal. If we apply a brand of fire to it, the luminiferous ether in it is set into motion; this drives the gross atoms of the lump into similar motion. Now, suppose a is an atom. This being impelled to assume the shape of Tejas, the vibration radiates toward a', and then takes the symmetrical position of a''. In a similar fashion, every point changes its place around the center of the piece of metal. Ultimately, the whole piece assumes the shape

given by A' B' C' in the Figure. Therefore, the result is expansion.

4. **CONTRACTION.** This is the quality of the Apas Tattwa. As has been remarked previously, the direction of this ether is the reverse of the Agni, and it is therefore easy to understand that contraction is the result of the action of this Tattwa.
5. **COHESIVE RESISTANCE.** This is the quality of the Prithivi Tattwa. It is the reverse of the Akasha Tattwa, as the Akasha provides room for locomotion, while the Prithivi resists it. This is the natural result of the direction and shape of this vibration, as it covers up the spaces of the Akasha.
6. **SMOOTHNESS.** This is a quality of the Apas Tattwa. As the atoms of a body undergoing contraction approach each other and assume the semi-lunar shape of the Apas Tattwa, they must easily glide over each other. The very shape secures easy motion for the atoms.

The previously given ideas and concepts should be sufficient to explain the general nature of the Tattwas. The different phases of their manifestations on all the different planes of Life will be undertaken in their proper places.