

The course on *Hastāmalaka-stotram* comprises 4 lessons. A detailed description of the topics covered in each lesson is provided below.

### **Lesson 1: Introduction and Vastu-saṅgraha-vākya [Verses 1–2]**

- Introduction to *Hastāmalaka-stotram* and brief background history of Hastāmalakācārya
- Bhagavān Śaṅkarācārya's five questions to Hastāmalakācārya
- Niṣedha – negation of upādhi, varṇa, āśrama
  - Elaboration on varṇa and āśrama – The nature, duties and gains in terms of spiritual evolution at each stage of life is explained

### **Lesson 2: Hastāmalakācārya's Response to "Kastvam" [Verses 3–4]**

- Consciousness is the nimitta for pravṛtti of mind, eyes, etc.
- Analysis of Consciousness as nijabodha-rūpaḥ
- Example of space
  - Asaṅga aspect of space signifies viśuddha aspect of Consciousness
- Example of sun and heat to show the nature of the Self
  - Consciousness is the enabler in the functioning of manaḥ-ādi and cakṣuḥ-ādi by its mere presence as the sun energises all beings by its mere presence.
  - Just as heat is inherent to fire, sentiency is the very nature of Consciousness – the factor that enlivens all faculties to function
- Analysis of Consciousness and sentiency
  - Subtle body is required for reflecting Consciousness.
  - Reflecting medium is the key factor for sentiency to manifest.
- Consciousness is niṣkampa
- Consciousness as all-pervasive

### **Lesson 3: Hastāmalakācārya's Response to "Kasya," "Kutaḥ-āgatosi" and "Kuto'si-gantā" [Verses 5–8]**

- Example of a face reflected in the mirror to show the real nature of the jīva
  - The jīva is only an appearance of the ultimate Reality through the example of one face many reflections
  - Cit alone is real just as the face alone is real in the many reflections seen in the mirrors
  - The ultimate goal to realise the Self. When the reflecting medium, the dhi, ceases, pure Self reveals, which is to be ultimately realised
- What is mithyātva?
- Analysis of bondage and where bondage exists
- Since Cidābhāsa is false, bondage and Liberation are also false
- Consciousness is the ultimate Seer different from the seen and never becomes the seen.

- Nature of Consciousness explained by reflection of the sun in various pots of water
  - Consciousness is one, but appears as many, like the reflection of the sun in the vessels of water.
  - The nature of the reflecting medium does not affect the effulgence of the Consciousness.
- Consciousness is the ultimate seer and ‘svataḥ śuddha-cetāḥ’ shines independently untouched by the seen.

#### **Lesson 4: Final Thoughts and Response to “kiṁ nāma te?” [Verses 9–14]**

- Just as the one sun enlivens all eyes at one go, Consciousness enlivens the intellect of all beings at one go.
- Nature of adhiṣṭhāna-devatās
  - Sūrya-devatā illuminates the individual eyes, which in turn is illuminated by Cit.
  - The Cit that illuminates the Sūrya-devatā is my essential nature. Hence, there is identity between the individual and adhiṣṭhāna-devatā.
- Just as the one sun appears as many in reflected water, the One Self appears as many in variegated intellects.
- Due to ignorance, one imagines the Self to be bound and suffering, and as going through joys and sorrows.
- The one whose vision is veiled by ignorance opines that there is no sun with the means of the very light of the sun.
  - Similarly, one feels one is ignorant in the very pristine awareness of the Self.
  - Due to ignorance, one imagines the Self to be bound and suffering, and as going through joys and sorrows.
- Just as space pervades all objects, the Self pervades each and every object.
  - Space remains immaculate as clouds cannot touch it. Similarly, the Self remains pure and pristine.
- The name of the Self as Viṣṇu
  - ‘Viṣṇu’ as “vyāpakatvāt viṣṇuḥ” – the all-pervasive Consciousness.