

SWAMI PARAMARTHANANDA'S VISIT TO AVG

Swami Paramarthananda visited AVG, Anaikatti on April 28, 2016 and blessed the long term course students with a talk.

Swamiji said that it was the first time he was visiting Anaikatti after Pujya Swamiji's Mahasamadhi and that we miss his physical form but he continues to bless us in the form of Lord Dakshinamurthy himself.

Swamiji's talk was based on the text 'Vakya Vritti' by Sri Adi Sankara.

Below is a summary of the talk:



Swamiji being received with Pornakumbham

Vakya Vritti is a brief commentary on the Mahavakya. It covers all important aspects of Vedantic teaching. We have to understand the meaning of the individual words and the sentence to grasp the teaching.

First 'tvam' pada is analysed. Tvam means you, the jivatma. It is analysed using drg drsya viveka, avastha traya viveka and pancha kosha viveka.

Secondly 'tat' pada is analysed. Tatpada may refer to saguna Isvara or nirguna Isvara according to the context. Tvam and tat are analysed in Upanisads through various avantara vakyas - secondary statements to understand the Mahavakya.

Finally 'asi' pada is analysed. The tatparya of all Upanisad mantras is to teach the great equation between Jiva and Isvara. If we take the primary meaning, it will not be meaningful to equate Jiva and Isvara. So we have to take the secondary meaning by the means of bhaga-tyaga-lakshana. We have to negate the upadi and arrive at chaitanyam to understand the equation.

The teaching of 'Aham Brahmasmi' is received and analysed until it becomes firm conviction. The knowledge is fruitful only when there is conviction.

Sravana is the primary means for knowledge. Sravana, manana and nididhyasana are the steps towards jnana. Travel from ajnana to jnana is quicker. But the arduous journey with full of pitfalls is from jnana to jnana-nishta (conviction) or from prajna to stithaprajna.

What obstructs conviction is the inadequacy of sadana chatustayam. When obstacles become lesser, the knowledge becomes brighter. Moon becomes brighter, late in the evening, when sunlight's intensity reduces. Although there is no increase in moon light, it appears brighter. Similarly when obstacles reduce, the knowledge becomes clearer.

There are two obstacles to knowledge- samsaya and viparyaya. Samsaya means doubt in the message of the Sastra. The doubts can be based on interpretation or logic. The student is not convinced in what the Guru and Sastra say. Doubtful knowledge is as good as ignorance. It can only perpetuate samsara. Studying the same Sastra, Sri Ramanuja and Sri Madhva came to different conclusions. On the basis of the sthanu nikhanana nyaya, the understanding is shaken with different interpretations of Sastra and finally the Student is convinced about the tatparya of the Sastra.



Swamiji at Puja Swamiji's kutia

Viparyaya means habitual thought pattern called jiva-bhava. When the student is asked "What is satyam, jnanam and anatham", if he answers "Brahman", then it means he is not fully convinced. When he answers it is Me, then it means he is fully convinced. He will feel that Vedanta class is his auto-biography. Then the new perspective of myself becomes well entrenched in the conscious and sub-conscious mind. When one invokes brahma-bhava, jiva-bhava gets displaced.

When one practices niddidhyasana with sama, he will be able to master the mind. All the involuntary thoughts of fear, worry, anxiety and emotional disturbance will be greatly reduced. Mind will remain in its proper place as an instrument and will not be a doer. Everything can be seen as proper and as per Isvara's order.

Later a group of students had Satsang with Swamiji. He patiently answered and clarified many doubts raised by the students. Swamiji said that when he was a long term course student, Pujya Swamiji advised that during the course the students should not study any other text or book of any other author, other than what is taught in the course. Even after the course, the students should study only what is taught in the course for next five years. Then the knowledge will be set. Then if the student wishes, he can study from any other author or book, as his knowledge will be firm and cannot be disturbed. Swamiji summed up with the teaching that owning up infinitude (Brahman) is by disowning finitude (body, mind, sense complex).

The students were inspired by the simplicity, depth of knowledge and communication skills of the Great Master Vedantin.



Swamiji addressing the students.

-Report by N. Avinashilingam