

Swami Pratyagbodhanandaji's camp at AVG, Saylorsburg

(August 31 - September 3, 2018)

The following is an extract from one of Swami Pratyagbodhanandaji's classes on a mantra from Mundaka Upanishad.

Om sahana bhavatu... mantra is chanted followed by Purnamadah.... Along with other vedic mantras.

Pariksha lokAn karmacitAn brahmanah nirvedam AyAt nAsti akrtah krtena.

TadvigyAnArtham sa gurumevAbhigacchet smitpAnih srotriyam brahmanistham .

Certain area of bhasham I will read. You also can read after me. Very interesting. As Kaupeji brought out very beautifully, how you should assimilate the mantra. First this word meaning and vidpithi artha anvAya. Then as the sampradAya brings out the meaning. All these mantras are done only by a sampradAya vit. They give a certain vision through this mantra. I require some 15 days to talk about this mantra, so much is there.

So here, I will be going through the commentary. Who has the Adhikara, readiness, for Brahma Vidya? Everybody wants freedom. There is no heart who does not seek freedom. We are always fighting against any form of bondage: physical bondage, emotional bondage, a sense of bondage. A bird is trapped in a cage and wants to get out: physical bondage. Because of visa problem you can't come out of India, you are trapped in India. That is also bondage. You get attached to some person and can't stay without that person emotionally, you are bound. You have to come out of it.

So any bondage makes you sad, makes you suffer. Release from bondage is a great relief for the person. Therefore, what Vedanta says about bondage is that a sense is there, but there is no real bondage. If bondage is real then you would have to be really freed from that bondage, and again you would get bound because the bondage was real. If bondage is false, as though it is there, once you are released from that by knowing the whole thing is a bluff, you can never be tied down again. That is why Vedanta's only upadesa is that you already are free. You are free from mortality.

"I am mortal" is sensed. I see people dying. Then I think, I will also die. It is purely notional. One thing you better understand: nobody has ever experienced death. If you have experienced death, one, you will not be sitting here and listening to this class, correct? That you are still alive and kicking shows that death has never touched you.

There is a very beautiful area for moksha because everybody wants moksha, freedom, but people don't employ a proper means for moksha. It is because of ignorance there is a bondage. And moksha can be gained only by knocking off the ignorance.

I am free, I am that unlimited, Brahman. That knowledge, that fact, is not known to me. Nobody knows that. And because of this ignorance of this fact, there is a sense of bondage, that I am a limited, and I want to get rid of limitation. You are not limited, you are limitless. I just said in the morning class, in deep sleep the time collapses. Space collapses. Individuality goes away. You are limitless, only you don't recognize that you are limitless.

Now I want you to enjoy a little bit this bhashyam, amrtam it is called, like a vartika amrtam. Bhashya is gam, prasana gambhitya. It is very deep; every word is highly loaded, and also, it produced happiness, cheerfulness, once you understand the meaning of this word. Keep your page open. I'll be going through that.

Bhagavan Shankaracharya said: Ata idanim asmat, satya-sadhana rupa. Sarvasmat, samsarat viyatpasya tasyam vidyAyAm adhikarah. Pradasyamartham idam ucchate pariksyah. You see such a small sentence. He goes on and on. This samsara is sadya-sadhana rupa, means and ends. Different means are there. Different ends are there. And we employ all these means and ends. One who is not interested in any means nor any end is the person called virakta. He is qualified to gain this knowledge. Viraktasya parasyam vidyayam adhikarah. To show that he is ready for this knowledge, here he says: yad etad rudvedyadi, aparavidyasyaam. The rukveda said aparavidyA sadhana sadhya lakshanasya sadyani. It showed that and one who has ignorance has desire, avidya kama karma doshavat purusa anushteyam. Avidyadhi doshavan eva purusham eti vedatvat. I don't know myself as limitless. I want to enjoy also. I wanted limitless; I don't know I am limitless. And to gain limitless he has certain desires. "By fulfilling this desire, I will become total; I will be free from limitation." Therefore he performed different forms of activity. For this type of people Shastra only says: If you want to fulfill desire, these are the actions to be done. Following this ritual you will gain heaven. Following this ritual you will get a son, putrakamesthi, svargakamoyuje. All this is there. Vididatvat, learn this. AnustAna karya bhutas ca, and it is to be very well performed.

Plus it gives different types of ends. You can go to the airline's office. A good travel agent will have a ticket only for New York to Mumbai, correct? Or will you have a ticket for all over the world? All over the world. Similarly, if you go to the Veda, it has all the different ends and different means. Karma gives rise to this if you do lokA daksina utara marga. This is a way of presenting. South means those are lower. North means higher. Bhur bhuvahsvamah janatah tapa, all these lokas. Like if they say we want to go out of India, which is the first country they will choose? I am only asking people from India. When I go back they ask me, where did you come from? If I say from Canada, they are not impressed. If I say from US, then they say, you have gone somewhere. So Indians have the highest value for what? America (USA). If you allow them to come here, they will scream and come. They want to come here, country of opportunity loka. This is called one loka. Then Canada. Then Australia. Then Europe. All different lokas. Or Indonesia, you go there also, a lower loka. Daksina Utara marga laksina, para bhutaye ca. How did you go there? Not by your wish, your action, what is to be done, done properly; what is not to be done also done properly. We are very interesting people. Certain action which is vihita, akarana pratishedha atikrama dosa satya. And there are lokas, where what I should not do, I'll be doing there as a punishment. I have to go to certain places called Naraka. Naraka means what? A place for making your pakoda. In a big caldron they'll make pakoda out of you. This is called Naraka.

There is a description of Naraka, hell. One is Indian hell. Another is England hell, Europe hell, American hell. People who were papis were given all these choices. "You can go to any one of them." There was a big cue for Indian hell. But there was no cue for American hell. In American hell, what was there? Hundred times they will beat you. They will make you lie down on a bed and on the top of it they put a board with sharp nails and press very hard on the top of it. And third, they will take you to an electric chair, make you sit and turn on the high electrical voltage. This is the North American hell. Europe hell is also the same. For the Indian hell there was a big cue. Do you know why? Same thing was there in India also. But what happened, the person who was supposed to whip you hundred times, comes and signs his register and goes away. He is not on the job. And the people who were to lie down on the nail bed, every nail they would remove so hardly any nails were there. Electric chair punishment was there. There was no power. Correct?

Another guy told me a nice joke. A person was given capital punishment by being sent to the electric chair. And the executer asked, "What is your last wish?" He said, "I'm so scared of the whole procedure, can you hold my hand during the procedure?"

Now look at the bhashya. Vihita akarana pratishedha atikramadosasaadhyaa Naraka tiryaka (tiryaka means animals) preta (ghosts) laksana stan itaan. You can go up to the heaven, bur buva sva and go low to the hell also. All because of what? Self-ignorance, ignorance-born desire, desire-born, sa kama karma. And mishida karma. They take you after death whether you like it or not you have to suffer through all these things. Here the word pariiksyah was there. Kalpeshji very well brought out the word pari plus iksha, having examined, tva, two actions done by the same person one after another, mukta gaccati like. That is tva - having examined, what the person is going to do.

Examination is purely in your mind. There is nothing physical. My teacher Swami Dayananda ji said it is called viveka. Viveka is purely cognitive. Two things are there. One looks like the other, the other looks like one. They are to be separated mentally, like hot iron ball, fire in the hot iron ball. Both are separate. To see them separately, you need not separate them. That is called viveka. That is called seeing, pariksha.

And by three means of knowledge: pratyeksya, anumana, agama ihi. In the morning I gave the example for pratyeksya. What is pratyeksya? Born in time is gone in time. The example was gatah. Yat kritakam tat anityam. Anything created is always non-eternal. Gatavat. The body is also created in time and anityameva nasvara. Pratyaksa, anumanah. You can use the same. Anumana is what? Linga paramasya. Paravatvamaniman. How do you know? Yatra yatra dumah tatra tatra vani is called anumana. I used anumana. And from anumana as the things in this world done by any action come to an end, similarly action done in another loka or the result of action done in this loka will perish in the other loka also. All are anitya (non-eternal) only. Even heaven, as this is called in vedic knowledge, is non-eternal. Heaven is not a permanent place for you to go. You can't become a citizen of heaven because there is no citizen there. Everybody is on temporary visa. They go and come back.

And Agama says hine punye marta lokam visyanti - they are born of action, action comes to end. You stay in a beautiful loka. That also will perish. Therefore the means used to know this is anumana. Pariksha. Sarvato yaathaatma ye naavadhaarya, not something subjective, but objectively understanding the realities. One thing is there: I never come across anything which is eternal. All that I come in contact with, the contact itself is sanyoga, and sanyoga is viyoganthah. Sanyogaha viyoganthaha. Any association converts into the dissociation. Any going will become coming back in time.

Therefore, lokan. Therefore, money I may also get, millions of dollars I get, but that money will be spent away. There will be a time when I will have no money. I know the person in USA who had millions of dollars. Now the person is living on Medicare in a nursing home and has no money. Whatever money can get exhausted. That is karma. Lokan pariksha, this is non-eternal. Yathatmyenaavidharya lokaan, and one more thing: Swamiji you're very negative. Even though they are temporary, I can get temporary happiness. Correct? Some kick is there or not? Shankaracharya said no. Samsara gata locaan, samsara gati bhutaan. Avyaktaadi sthaavaraantan avyaktaavyakrtalaksyanam they are all non-eternal. They are from unmanifest to manifest, manifest to unmanifest. How? Bija ankura vata now it is sprout, now it is a seed, now it is a tree, again becomes seed. And he said: itaretara utpati nimittaan you don't know who is the cause, who is the effect. One swami gave me logic: the son is born first or father is born first? Both are born together. When the boy is born do you become father or before his birth you become father? Who made you father? So he came first. And without you being there he cannot be son also. Both are together only. No generation gap. Therefore itaretara. Samsari gata bhutan bijjaankurabat itaretara utpatti nimittaan.

And also they are fraught with lot of affliction. Aneka anartha shatasahasra samkulaam. Anything you gain, you think everything is beautiful, but when you analyze and when you go into it, it is fraught with problems. I was so surprised, I go to houses sometimes, big nice houses, and one day I find they sold the house and when to a condo or something. Hey, what happened to you? Such a beautiful house you have. "Swamiji, you don't know the problem with the big house. To move the snow itself, all my back problem is due to moving the snow and you don't know how many problems are added to that." Therefore, any accomplishment has a lot of limitation. Therefore, Bhagavan Sankaracharya uses his own language. He said, aneka anartha shatasahasra samkulaam kadali karbavat asanam. If you analyze them, is an iota of happiness there? You keep peeling, nothing is there. And he gives the example: if you take a banana tree and you keep peeling that banana bark, what happens? Nothing is inside. Somebody gave me the example, Akanandaji Maharaj gave me the example. A person married a very good girl, but she had never cooked in her life. The first day he brought gobi, cabbage. And nothing was cooked. He asked, "Did you not cook cabbage?" She said, "I was peeling, nothing came out. There is no vegetable inside." Good for vairagya. So cudali garba asAram, Shankaracharya gives one example: MAYA. I wish that in Shankaracharya's time the TV was there, all channels were there. You see so many things. It is only MAYA. Gandarbha Nagari. In the cloud you see a big city but when you analyze only clouds are there. And you say, Akaran, svapna. It is like a big beautiful dream only. Jela bud bhuta penabata, all the budbhut, if you analyze, they are only hollow. Only water is there.

Therefore, pratikshana pradvam samanah. Whatever you gain, it is going away every minute. It is ksanikam eva. You feel now young, energetic and bright. How long? In no time, kalo bhaksati, the kala destroys everything in time. In no time you are old, then disease and death also. Therefore, I am not interested in a limited thing. With so much effort I gain all the accomplishments, but they are all time bound. Therefore, look at a very important thing that Shankaracharya said: Padvam prsthakatva. Here he said, showing prsthakatva, anAgratva. I am not interested in all those things. In all the means and ends, I am not interested. Security, I am not interested. Pleasures, I am not interested. Any punya and punya-born loca, I am not interested. Then, in what are you interested, Sir? He said, krtvaa avidyaa karma kama dosha pravartitha. Karmacitaan. Krstaka krtvaa, they are born of ignorance and they are karmacitan. Dharma adharma nivartitan, born of pApa and punya. Iti etat brahmanasya abhisesadikara. The word Brahmana has so many meanings. One of the meanings was beautifully brought out by Kalpeshji. He is one who is interested in studying Veda, or one whose disposition is predominately sattvik, contemplative. Rajas and tamas is reduced so much that one who is that type of Brahmana who can do this viveka, sarvatyaguena brahmavidyayaam adhikara Brahmana grahanam. He can give up everything.

I remember a nice example. In Ramayana one person who has Rama totally is Hanumanji. Sita also knew how Hanumanji saved her life. When the war is over they were all there in Ayodya to honor Hanumanji. Sita gave her beautiful mala, real pearl mala, to Hanumanji. Then Hanumanji was breaking each pearl. She asked, what are you doing? He said, I am breaking the pearl and looking to see whether my Rama is there or not, whether happiness is there or not. Happiness is not there in the pearl. Where is that Rama? Then he opened his chest and showed, Rama is within me. And this Brahmana gains vairagya.

In Vedanta, the first thing is viveka. Nitya anitya vastu vivekaha. Nitya ekaha Brahman. Tat anitya sarvam. Iha para loka bhogesu viragaha. That vairagya is taught here. What is the scale by which you measure viragya? Sa vairagya prakarah pradasyate. He gets vairagya, this Brahmana. How come I don't get it? That is also shown here, nir vairagya. Beautiful. Now you can read one sentence after me. Iha samsare naasti kaschit api akrita padartah. In this nama rupa kriyatmaka prapancham. In this world, vishwam, na asti, nothing is there, akrita padartah, uncreated, unborn. Everything has a manufacturing date and an expiry date. This body, does it have an expiry date or not? Yes. Who reads that? Yama. Nothing is permanent. I don't want anything which is non-eternal and there is nothing in this world which is eternal. Sarva evahi lokaha karmacitaha. All the lokas in the three worlds, any place you go, they are born of your action. You in India put so much effort, gained so much education, so much you did to reach the land of opportunity called America. Am I right? This loka became what? Karmacitan. Swamiji, I did very hard work. So much I prepared for interview also. I know one guy in Bombay who only prepares you for interview. So much other paperwork I also did to come here. To build a factory there is so much work. Karmacitan. But here is said, sarva loka karmacita karmactattvat anityaha - because of being born of action, they are non-eternal. Na nityam kincit asti iti api praya - there is nothing eternal which I know of. I don't know anything else. I keep doing, thinking there are eternal, sukha will come out, but from non-eternal how can eternal come out? It is not possible.

My teacher Swami Dayananda ji loves this area very much. Please repeat after me two sentences. This is Shakara bhasya and other places I am quoting. Param cet nyatavyam aparam cet praptavyam. If it is param, limitless, it can be gained in terms of knowledge. If it is aparam, non-eternal, limited can be gained in terms of action. When limitless is there, action cannot help you to gain limitlessness. Param cet, you have to recognize the param. Param cet na tavyam. Now we have been performing action for different results. We can do only 4-fold action, not the fifth one. Look at this. Yas mat caturtvam eva hi sarvam karma kaaryam utpadyam aapyam samskaryam vikaryam va, na atah param karmanah vishesa asti. There is nothing beyond this thing for. We all perform action constantly. What are they for? He said, number one is utpadyam. The whole agriculture is what? You produce something. Sow the seed, put the water and manure and there is a big harvest. That is called utpadya, you produce something.

Second is what? Apya. All the airlines are constantly working. All the cars are constantly driving around. For what? To make you reach from place P1 to place P2. Travel all the time. You always do driving, flying, you go from one place to another. Look at the birds, how they do migration, north to south, south to north. That bird migration is amazing. Apyam means to reach.

Third is called samskaryam. Every week you do laundry. That is samskaryam. Vacuuming your house, samskarya. Polishing the house, samskarya, polishing the car, samskarya. Taking shower, samskarya. Putting something on the body to make it look shiny, samskarya.

Forth is vikaryam. Vikaryam is modification. Just changing. Best example is milk becoming yogurt, curd. You add to milk a little yogurt which totally changes its property. All the bugs are used in pharmaceutical products to make different medicines. That is also called vikarya. Cooking is also vikarya only. Totally changes. You can't bring yogurt back to milk afterwards.

Now this AtmA which is nitya, which is shastritam purnam, cannot be gained by these four-fold actions: utpadyam, apyam, samskaryam, vikaryam. They are called cooperative endeavor, all loaded together. Everybody should remember these four. You produce, you reach, you polish or purify, or you modify. All these four can never help you to gain moksa. Why? AtmA cannot be produced, utpadyam. It is already there. Nityatvat you can't produce. Can you reach AtmA? It is vyapakatvat. Can you reach space? No. It is vyapakatvat. You can't reach it. Can you purify it? Suddhatvat. It is only one, asanga, so it doesn't get sullied by anything. Suddhatvat, asangatvat, it can't be purified also. Can you make some vikarya? Avikaryoyam uchate. Niravayavatvat, remember the logic here. AtmA is niravayava, free from any limbs. I can break this book. It has pages so you can tear them out. Avayava is there. It has no handle. That which is free from any limb cannot be destroyed. Therefore, nityatvat, vyapakatvat, suddhatvat, asangatvat, niravayatvat. All the four actions which I perform cannot help me to gain moksa, the limitless.

Therefore, what should I do? Hay, don't do anything! All actions will not help you to gain this. Now one more, this one is from bhashya. Param cet. Jñatavam. What is Param Brahma, purnah complete whole, may be gained in terms of knowledge.

One thing we have to understand: when we knock off the ignorance, we never produce anything. We only come to know what is. Penicillin was there or was it created? A simple question. It was there in the fungus. We did not make it, it was already there. Now the Shastra give the story of the 10th man. You know the story. Ten sishyas go for a pilgrimage, one of them is the leader. They crossed the river and went to the other side. The leader does the counting to make sure they are came across. He is counting everybody and finds only nine sishyas are there. They are all worried, we lost one guy. They were crying and they don't remember the face of the tenth man also. At that time a sadhu comes. He saw that these 10 brahmacharis were very upset. He said, "Dasimo asti, 10th is there." "Where? Svarga, Narake?" "No here." "Are you going to produce him?" "No he is already here. You stand there, I will count. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, the leader was not counting himself. You are the tenth man." What knowledge gives you is always a fact which is already there.

My Swami Dayanandaji gives another example. A person went to buy donkeys from Bardoli, Gujarat, near Surat. He purchased 13 donkeys. Returning, he was mounted on one of the donkeys. When he came near his home, he was counting only 12 donkeys. He was worried. "Where did the donkey get away?" When he reached Surat, he called his wife Kalyani and Kalyani comes out. "I see only 12 donkeys, 13th one is missing. Where did this donkey get away? I am worried." And Kalyani, covering her head, counted with her eyes. And she said, "But I see 14 of them." Somebody was chasing me after class, "How?" Don't ask this question. Now tell me, you are sitting on the donkey, looking for donkey. You are the infinite asking me, "where is limitless?" Limitless is asking, unless and until you are shown by some external agency, that what you are searching for is yourself, you will never come to know yourself. It is very beautiful. My teacher Swami Dayanandaji brings out that the means of knowledge is required, but knowledge is like a mirror. In a mirror you see yourself very clearly. You bring a mirror not to look at the mirror, but to look at yourself. Similarly, words are the means of knowledge. I look at words in order to look at me very clearly. A mirror is presented by the teacher, that is called shabdha pramanam, means of knowledge using words. And to gain that knowledge of myself, what is the locus for that? Sarvam tu karma anityasyaiva saadhanam. Yasmaat caturvidham eva hi sarvam karma kaarya mutpadyam (1. produce something) aapyam (2. travel to reach) samskaaryam (3. Cleaning house etc.) vikaarya (4. modification) vaa, naatahparam karmano vishesha asti. The next sentence is: Aham ca nityena amrtena abhayena kuutasthena acalena dhruvenaarthenaarthii na tadvipariitena. Beautiful sentence. Nobody is interested in anything which is non-eternal. We are not interested in anything mortal. We want something immortal.

We don't want fear. We want freedom from fear. As long as duality is there you cannot put an end to the fear. Dvaita hi bhayam api - as long as dvaitam is there, we all want freedom from fear. Listen to this mantra very clearly. My teacher Swami Dayananda ji makes it so clear. It is not from duality that the fear is there. Duality does not create fear. The fear is from what? Duality is different from me. That creates fear. Even your own shadow can create fear, if you understand the shadow to be different from your shadow. Suppose the first time a child looks into a mirror and thinks there is another boy there inside or girl inside, the child will be scared of it. Therefore, a dog goes into the mirror room and what happens? It is very dangerous for the dog, because he finds there another dog. He is highly territorial. He can't handle that. Dvitiyat hi bhayam bhavati. Therefore, duality is not different from me, it is non-different from me. If it is one with me, there is no fear. That's what I wanted.

The next sentence is: kuutasthena acalena. I want something which is acala, which is firm, which is dhruvena, which is time-free. Dhruvam is definite, is like a sthalu acala. I was teaching Dhruvacharita two days back, very interesting it is. Arthad na tad vipariitena. Now I want this. If anybody gives me this, this is what I wanted. The only person who can help me to gain this knowledge is a wise person. So he said: Atha kim krutena karmana? If karmas cannot deliver this that I want, what will I do with this action? Ayaasabahulena You look at the schedule we have. The moment we get up from the night, we go to sleep. We work and work. So much work we do. What for? Actions will not produce what you want. That is already very clear. Then why do I work so hard? He said, Krutena karmana ayaasabahulena anaartha saadhanena iti- What I get at the end of the road also is affliction only. Therefore, nirvinah, disgusted totally. What I want: abhayam shivam akrtam, that which is uncreated, that which is all-auspiciousness, nityam, that which is eternal, padam. And I know very well, see one thing is there. Here comes a very important topic, which I am going to talk tomorrow morning. A big change in us - this is a real change - from seeker of freedom to become seeker of knowledge. This is the greatest thing to happen in anybody's life. Ananda we want. Freedom we want. There is no heart, which does not want freedom, and we respect freedom also. But how to gain the freedom? It can only be in terms of knowledge, not in terms of action. Action makes me more fearful, feel smaller. Therefore, the only way out is to understand limitless cannot be away from you. If limitless does not include me, it becomes limited. You study something called ananta, it should include me. It cannot be away from me, separate from me. How come I don't know? Because of ignorance. How can ignorance go away? By knowledge. To gain that knowledge, that knowledge will put an end to my seeking, struggle, tad vignanaartam visheshena aadigamaartham sa nirvinah brahmanah. One who is disgusted with any pursuit, in Upanisad it is said, utpreshanaayaasca, viteschanaayaasca, lokeshanaayaasca, byutyaaya ata bhiksyasabdamsaranti. He is giving up all the desire for putra, son, progeny, money, vichechana, loke-shana etc. He has grown out of it. Ata bhiksaaryam caranti. He lives a life of minimum requirement. Pariaparigraha. He goes to the teacher and says: AtmA hare drastavya shrotavya. One needs to listen about that. The word sravanam is not hearing only. Sadlingaihi tad padya nisca sravanam ucate. .

concluded