

Brahma Sūtra Class at AVG

Pujya Swami Dayanada Sarasvati taught Brahma Sūtra to the students of the fourth long-term course at Anaikatti. He kept the students spell bound by elucidating the Brahma sūtra as per sampradāya. Based on Vaiyāsika Nyāyamāla, a succinct presentation of the classes held in July and August 2013 is made.

Śaṅkara bhāṣya is prasanna gāmbhīra and unparalleled and unique in detailed analysis of the śāstra. In order to appreciate the Sūtra, in correct perspective Śaṅkara bhāṣya analyses the Sūtra by giving saṅgatiḥ, viśaya, saṁśaya, purvapakṣa and siddhānta.

Jijñāsā Adhikaraṇam:

First Sūtra: ATHĀ' TO BRAHMAJIJÑĀSĀ:

Meaning: Thereafter, therefore one desires to know Brahman.

Upaniṣad Mantra: Vyāsa had in his mind the Taittiriya Upaniṣad mantra 3.1.1 "yato va imāni bhūtani jāyante yena jātani jīvanti yatprayantya abhisamvisanti tadvijijñāsasva" for this Sūtra as indicated by the word vijijñāsasva.

Saṅgatiḥ: Being the first sutra, there is no adhikaraṇa saṅgatiḥ

Viśaya: Vedānta śāstra

Saṁśaya: Whether Brahman is subject matter of enquiry or not?

Pūrvapakṣa: Adhyāsa not established. Hence problem cannot be solved by mere knowledge. There is no benefit of this knowledge

Siddhānta: adhyāsa is there in terms of aham buddhi. This adhyāsa is due to ajñāna.

Whereas śāstra says Brahman/ Ātma is asanga. Mokṣa is the benefit of knowing the Brahma ātmā. Hence śāstra has to be enquired into.

Janmādhyadhikaraṇam:

Second Sūtra: Janmādhyasya yataḥ

Meaning: Brahman is the cause from which the jagat has come, by which the jagat is sustained and to which the jagat goes back.

Upaniṣad mantra : Vyāsa had in his mind the underlying mantra for this Sūtra as indicated by the word yataḥ. Taittiriya Upaniṣad mantra 3.1.1 "yato va imāni bhūtani jāyante". This sūtra gives the tatastha lakṣaṇa of Brahman. This is only an incidental feature of Brahman from the stand point of the jagat. Later in the Taittiriya Upaniṣad mantra 3.6.1, going through vicara the student concludes "anado brameti vyajanath", which gives the swarupa lakṣaṇa.

Saṅgatiḥ : Brahman is to be known. It is ākṣepa saṅgatiḥ in terms of Brahma lakṣaṇa.

Viśaya: Brahma lakṣaṇa

Saṁśaya: Brahma lakṣaṇa is possible or not?

Pūrvapakṣa:: There is no lakṣaṇa for Brahman.

Siddhānta: There is lakṣaṇa for Brahman. Brahman is the cause from which the jagat has come, by which the jagat is sustained and to which the jagat goes back.

Acetana pradhānam, prakṛti, śūnya or svabhāva cannot be the cause of the jagat.

Yataḥ means from which cause, all these take place. The focus is on upādāna kāraṇa. The mention of anandam Brahman in the

Upaniṣad implies abhinna nimitta upādāna kāraṇa

ŚĀSTRAYOINTVADHIKARANAM:

Third Sūtra: ŚĀSTRA YONITVĀT:

In the sampradāya, this sūtra is read twice. This is because the sūtra can be interpreted in two ways.

First Interpretation:

Meaning: Brahman is cause of the Veda.
Upaniṣad Mantra: Vyāsa had in his mind the underlying mantra for this Sūtra. Brahadaranyaka Upaniṣad mantra II.iv.10 “*asya mahato bhutasya nihsvasasitam eta dyad rg vedah*”

Saṅgatiḥ: Sarvajnatva Brahma lakṣaṇā not clear.

Viṣaya: Veda karana

Samśaya: What is karana of Veda?

Pūrvapakṣa: Brahman is not the cause of the Veda. Veda is nitya.

Siddhānta: Brahman is cause of the Veda. Brahman revealed the Veda effortlessly like breathing. Brahman manifested the Veda along with the jagat at every cycle of creation.

Veda reveals many Viṣaya. Writer of a book knows more than what he has written. Hence Veda karta Brahman is sarvajna.

Second Interpretation:

Meaning: Śāstra alone is the pramāṇa for knowing Brahman.

Upaniṣad Mantra: Vyāsa had in his mind the underlying mantra for this Sūtra. Brahadāranyaka Upaniṣad mantra III.ix.26 “*taṁ tvaupaniṣadm̐ puruṣaṁ prcchāmi*”.

Saṅgatiḥ: In the previous sutra, Brahma lakṣaṇā is presented. In this sūtra the basis for arriving at pramāṇa for Brahman is presented.

Viṣaya: Pramāṇa for Brahman

Samśaya: Is śāstra the only pramāṇa for Brahman?

Pūrvapakṣa: Brahman being a siddha vastu can be known through other pramāṇa
Siddhānta: Śāstra alone is the pramāṇa for Brahman. We cannot prove by reasoning eka karta. Unlike a pot, Brahman is not an object. Hence śāstra is the only pramāṇa.

Samanvayādhikaraṇam:

Fourth sūtra: Tattusamanvayāt

Meaning: Brahman is consistently the central theme of Vedānta Śāstra

Upaniṣad Mantra: Vyāsa had in his mind the underlying mantras for this: Chāndogya mantra II.ii.1 “*sadeva somyedamagra asīt ekamevādvitīyam*”. Aitreyā mantra II.iv.11 “*ātmā vā idam eka evāgra āsīt*”. Brahadāranyaka mantra II.v.19 “*tat etat brahma purvam anaparam anantaram abahyam, ayamātmā brahma sarvānubhuḥ*”. Mudaka mantra II.ii.12 “*brahmaivedam amṛtam purastāt*”.

Saṅgatiḥ: It is ākṣepa saṅgatiḥ in terms of kriya paratvam of Veda vakya

Viṣaya: Vedānta śāstra

Samśaya: Whether Vedānta vakya reveal Brahma-atma aikyatvam independently or connected to Karma or Upasana?

Pūrvapakṣa: Karmaparam is tātparyā of Veda. Siddhabodaka vedānta vākyas have to be connected to karma bodhaka vākyā or taken for upāsana .

Siddhānta: Vedānta śāstra is Brahma param having Brahma-Ātma aikyam as its central theme. It is not connected to karma or upāsana.

Brahma param is established by the following six lingas in the Vedānta Śāstra: introduction and conclusion, repetition, non availability in any other pramāṇa, benefit, praise of the knowledge and being logical. The anubandha catuṣṭayam for Pūrva mīmāmsa and Uttara mīmāmsa are different.

Report by N. Avinashilingam