

## SWAMI SAKSHIJI'S CAMP AT AVG

Swami Sakshatkritanandaji conducted a camp at AVG, Anaikatti from Dec 25, 2017 to Dec 31, 2017. The subject was Brihadaranyaka Upanisad Chapter Two. 120 students participated. The uniqueness of the camp was Swamiji taught all the Mantras with Sankara bhasyam from memory without referring to any book or even paper. It was also a get together of AVG Anaikatti alumnis of 2010-13 batch.



A summary of the class is presented.

**AN OVER VIEW OF BRIHADARANYAKA UPANISAD:** Brihadaranyaka Upanisad occurs in Sukla Yajur veda. It appears in Brahmana section of Vedas. Isavasya Upanisad appears in Samhita section of Vedas. Brihadaranyaka Upanisad is considered as a commentary of Isavasya Upanisad. It has three sections- Madhu kanda, Muni kanda and Khila kanda.

Sri Sankara has written bhasyam for kanva shaka. This bhasyam is one of his best works. Sri Sureshvaracharya's vartika of 12,000 verses on Sankara bhasyam is popular. Sri Vidyaranya's Vartika Sara on Suresvaracarya's Vartikam and Vidyaranya's commentary on Madhyantina shaka are other works on Brhadaranyaka. Sankara bhasyam is also read with Sri Ananda Giri's tiika and Swami Vishnudevananda's tippanis on all the commentaries.

**MEANING OF BRIHADARNYAKA UPANISAD:** Upanisad means brahmavidya which is arrived from the root sad with the prefixes upa and ni and the meaning is appropriate because this knowledge destroys samsara totally. Brihad means big in size. Aranyaka means that which is studied in the forest. Upanisad means Brahma Vidya that is the destroyer of ignorance.

**SAMBANDHA BHASYAM:** Bhashyakara writes a commnetary known as sambandha bhashyam that gives the connection between karma kanda and jnana kanda portion of the Vedas. Sri Sureshvaracarya writes more than 1,136 verses on sambandha bhashyam alone. The main idea conveyed in the sambandha bhashya is that karma kanda also accepts siddha vastu, viz atma that is different from the body, (dehavyatirikta atma), though impliedly, as subject matter of karma kanda and hence brahman also can be the subject matter of Vedanta pramana. The implication is that many upayas revealed by karma kanda are meant for gaining the desired ends in the next janma which can be possible only when atma that is different from the body. Having said this, bhashyakara presents karma kanda as means for preparing the mind and creating vairagya for the world here and hereafter including the position of Brahmaji, the highest end that a human being can achieve so that one can seek knowledge of the self and gain moksha.

**SANTI MANTRA:** The santi mantra ‘purnamadah purnamidam’ contains the essence of Vedanta. The ultimate reality is purnam Brahman. The jagat comprising name and form is also purnam and has come from that purnam brahma. When you remove jagat-purnam from the cause that is purnam brahma, purnam brahma alone remains which reveals jagat as mithya and atma as satyam.

#### **MADHU KANDA: FIRST CHAPTER:**

The first chapter essentially deals with adhyaropa, superimposing the namarupa jagat on brahma and also the karanatvam of jagat. There are two important crucial mantras in the first chapter on which bhashyakara has written elaborate commentaries.

Mantra 1.4.7 in which occurs vidyasutram - ‘atma iti eva upasita’. This vidya sutram reveals that atma is whole and one should know atma as caitanyam, as one whole free from parts. One who knows seer alone as atma or hearer alone as atma or thinker alone as atma.... does not know atma and atma is more than that. Atma pevades all of them and yet free from them. It is adhishtana of all of them. Mantra 1.4.10 in which occurs avidyasutram - ‘yonyam devatam upaste anyosau anyohamasmi iti na sa veda’. Even though the famous mahavakya ‘aham brahmasi’ occurs in the first part of this mantra, the second part does criticism of bheda buddhi. These two mantras together point out that the vishaya for first chapter is predominantly avidya and vishaya of second chapter is vidya. This has been said by bhashyakara in his introduction to the second chapter.

#### **MADHU KANDA: SECOND CHAPTER:**

There are six brahmanas or sections in second chapter. The first three brahmanas deal with apavada. The fourth brahmana is a commentary on vidya sutram. The fifth brahmana deals with jaganmithyatvam and sarvatmabhava of atma. The sixth brahmana deals with Guru Sishya parampara.

**AJATA SATRU BRAHMANA:** *Gargya*, a brahmana approached *Ajatasatru*, King of *Kasi* and told him that he would teach Brahman. Even for telling this the King offered him 1000 cows as *dakshina*. *Gargya* taught about brahma with attributes and that one should do meditation on that brahman using various *alambanas* like sun, moon, lighting, various elements and so on as a means for gaining Hiranyagarba which is moksha. Whatever *Gargya* taught the King knew and he knew something more of *saguna* brahma upasana than *Gargya* and also the results of various meditations. *Gargya* did not know about nirguna brahma. Having exhausted his knowledge, he approaches *Ajatasatru* to teach him.

The king told that it was not proper for a kshatriya to teach a brahmin. But he magnanimously agreed to teach Gargya informally. Holding him by his hands, he went to a sleeping person. The king called him by the various names of candra-devata which is part of samashti prana. The sleeping person did not wake up. Then the king shook him with his hands and the person woke up. The action of waking up a sleeping person revealed the fact that prana is not a conscious principle as it did not respond to the calls. Body also did not respond and so body also is not a conscious principle. Jivatma did not respond because of its dis-identification with everything. So the bhokta or conscious principle is jivatma alone. During sleep it remains in its true nature as paramatma free from samsara. The transactions in dream does not disprove this fact because the dream transactions are mithya, and the sruti uses the word iva to point out this. Finally the sruti gives a name to the paramatma as satyasya satyam. The next two brahmanas are meant to explain the name satyasya satyam. The same mantra that gives the name explains the meaning of the word in sixth case as prana, the samashti and vyashti sukshma sariram and the ultimate reality as the truth of this prana.

**SISHU BRAHMANA:** The meaning of prana is given in this section. Prana is called sishu or calf. It is located in the body generally and its specific location in the body is head. It is tied to the strength in the body and the food is the rope as food provides strength. Karana-sanghata, sukshma-sarira is the meaning of the word prana. It is glorified in the rest of the mantras. Even though it is specifically located in the head, its manifestation is maximum in the right eyes and all other devatas worship prana. This worship is revealed by the sruti in the form of pointing out which devata worships from which part in the eye. The red lines indicate Rudradevata's worship, the waters indicate Varunadevata's worship and so on. Then a mantra is quoted in support and the various organs in the head are identified with the names of different rishis. How come this prana is called satya in the sixth case inflected word 'satyasya'. This is said in third brahmana.

**MURTHA AMURTHA BRAHMANA:** The manifest part of the jagat/individual body is called sat which is murtam or having form. The unmanifest part of the jagat/individual body is called tyat which is amurtam or not having form. At samasti level fire, water and earth are murtam and space and air are amurtam. At vyasti level other than prana and inner space are murtam and prana and inner space are amurtam. When sat and tyat are combined we get the word satyam which refer to the perceptible and imperceptible elements. This satyam is prana because prana is product of these five elements. Subtle body at individual and total level includes vasanas also. What is superimposed on atma is this murta-amurta-jagat and it is negated by the sruti by saying neti neti. When everything is negated what remains in non-negatable satyam, the nominative case-inflected satyam. So the final meaning of the name satyasya satyam is paramatma.

**MAITREYI BRAHMANA:** Yajnavalkya wanted to become a jnana nishta for which he wished to take sannyasa. He told his wife Maitreyi of his desire to take sannyasa and his intention is to divide the properties between his two wives. Maitreyi asked whether wealth will give her immortality. Yajnavalkya replied in negative and said wealth will only give comforts and not amrtatvam. Maitreyi told that she did not want the properties but only the knowledge that he knew, that will give immortality.

Yajnavalkya was pleased that Maitreyi had vairagyam and was a jijnasu. He taught her atma vidya. First he pointed out the means for vairagya. Vairagya is the natural consequence when one sees the fact that every love that one gets in the world is conditional love and that love towards oneself is the greatest love. Wife loves her husband for her own sake. Husband loves his wife only for his own sake.

Similarly one loves children, money, other worlds, etc for one's own sake. So atma being the dear most, it must be of the nature of ananda and that one should see that atma for which one should know it. After knowledge one should remove all doubts and errors. By knowing this self one becomes all knower. There is only a seeming commandment in the sruti vakya. In jnana kanda 'vidhi' is not possible. Vidhi is meant to draw the attention of a person away from the vishayas and place it in the upayas of knowing the atma.

The right vision is that there is nothing other than atma or the self. The wrong notion is that there is something other than atma. When you know something as other than you, you have rejected that thing and it becomes anatma and love for anatma is not real love. When you have rejected the world, the world also rejects you. Then there is sense of isolation leading to samsara. That phalam of atma jnanam is ananda prapti and sarvajnatva prapti. Ananda prapti is at emotional level and sarvajnatva prapti is at the intellectual level. They are one and the same.

Main teaching in Vedanta is to reveal brahmatma as the intellegent and material cause of this world. If that is so, jagat becomes mithya and brahma is satyam. In this section we see the sruti presenting brahma as srishti-sthiti-laya-karanam through various examples. The manifestation of all the Vedas from brahma through the example of sparks, etc coming from fire, indicates brahma is cause of creation or artha prapanca as word and meaning are inseparable. The drum-conch-veena example reveals sthiti karanam and the various waters resolving in ocean reveals laya-karanam. Atma is samanya sat and cit and every visesha sat and cit cannot be perceived without samaya sat and cit. Every visesha resolves in samanya which is ultimately atma.

**MADHU BRAHMANA:** Madhu is bhogya vastu, a product. Everything in the creation is madhu because everything is an effect or bhogya indicating from one standpoint and cause or bhokta from another standpoint. So the entire jagat is mutually dependent. The entire jagat is classified under three heads - adhibhutam, adhidaivam and adhyatmam both at the total and individual level. All the beings are madhu for adhibhuta and adhibhuta is madhu for all the beings. All the beings are madhu for adhidaiva and adhyatma also and adhidaiva and adhyatma also are madhu for all the beings. Adhibhutam refers to elements and so on. Adhidaivam refers to devatas presiding over adhibhutam. Adhyatmam refers to devatas presiding over various functions at the individual level. All these have mutual interdependence and hence mithya. Only adhisthana atma revealed in Maitreyi brahmana is satyam.

The glory of this brahma vidya is illustrated through a story of Dadyang Rishi teaching Aswini Kumaras. This vidya is gained by student even at the cost of doing cruel karma and this teaching is given at the risk of one's life. That parmatma created this jagat and entered it in order that people can know them through the created jagat. Created jagat being mithya, it becomes the means to know the satyam which is adhisthana of mithya jagat. Brahma alone is in the form of all these names and forms. Its svarupa is sarvanubhuh, that which is the content of every experience.

**VAMSA BRAHMANA:** This Brahmana is meant for glorification of the teaching. This is not a recently originated teaching. It is coming down from beginningless time. It is not born of a given human intellect. It contains the Guru Sishya parampara list. The teaching originated from Hiranyagarbha and has come down to me through the lineage of teachers. The names are listed so that we can chant the same. We get cittasuddhi and the grace of the rishis in the tradition by doing japa of this section.

**SWAMI SADATMANANDA'S CLASS:** Swami Sadatmanandaji taught introduction to Chapter 3 in one class. He explained that Chapter 1 and 2 are Sruti pradhanam and Chapter 3 and 4 are Yukti pradhanam. When studied through Sruti and Yukti, the teaching will be clear like a bel fruit in hand. He briefly taught Yajyavalkya's teaching in the court of King Janaka.



**GURU PADUKA PUJA:** Led by Swami Sakshatji, the students did Guru paduka puja to the padukas and Murti of Pujya Swami Dayananda Saraswati at the lecture hall on the concluding day.

**SWAMIJI'S ADDRESS TO AVG STAFF:** Swamiji appreciated the tireless work done by the staff members towards discharging their duty in general and during camp in particular. He encouraged them in continuing their service as dedication to Pujya Swamiji and get his blessings.

**RELEASE OF PUJYA SWAMIJI'S BIOGRAPHY:** On Dec 25, 2017, Swami Sakshatji released the second edition of 'Pujya Swami Dayananda Saraswati – a brief biography' in English by N. Avinashilingam. Swami Sadatmanandaji received the first copy. Swamiji appreciated the design and contents of the book. The book was distributed to all the campers present.

**Report by N. Avinashilingam**