

Moksha - Talk by Swami Paramarthanandaji

I am very, very happy to be here with all of you on this concluding day of your 108 day course. Sw Sadatmanandaji has designed this course very well and as per plan he has conducted it in a perfect manner and this is very, very clear from the responses of the students themselves. So I am very, very happy for you. On this occasion I will share some thoughts with you.

Adi Shankaracarya in all his bhashyams introduces vedanta in a particular manner. Whether it is Gita Bhashyam or Upanishad Bhashyam or Sutra Bhashyam, he follows a pattern of introduction. First he points out that the entire veda should be treated as two separate branches of science. Even though veda book is one, the entire veda is given by Bhagavan, the entire Veda is valid *apaurusheya pramanam*, but still we have to treat the veda as two different shastram. The first one corresponds to *veda-purva-bhaga* which has been analyzed by Jaimini through his Purva mimamsa sutras. The second part is *veda-anta-bhaga* which has been analyzed by Vyasacarya through his Uttara mimamsa shastram.

First Sri Shankarcarya establishes that there are two distinct shastrams in the vedas. In his later commentaries there are so many objections raised with regard to this because many people claim that Vedas should be treated as one shastram. So there is a debate whether it is sastra *ekatva-vadah* or *dvitva-vadah* ie, whether veda is single shastram or veda should be two shastrams. Shankaracarya firmly establishes that veda is two shastram. The main argument he uses for that is any shastram deserves to be a distinct shastram, if it has got a distinct *anubandhacatushtayam*.

Anubandha for the *veda purva-bhaga* is different from *anubandha* for *veda-anta*. Here, I am not going into the *anubandha-catushtayam* of *veda purva-bhaga*. The *anubandha-catushtayam* (4 introductory factors) of Vedanta you must be remembering because the very Tattva Bodha begins with that only – *Sadhana Catushtaya SampannadhikAriNAm..*

I don't know whether getting Tattva Bodha by-heart is part of your course or not, but learning it by-heart is very, very useful. So the beginning of the text is—

sAdhanacatushtayasampanna-adhikAriNAm mokshasAdhana bhUtam tattvaviveka prakAram vakshyAmah.

So there itself the *anubandhacatushtaya* is indicated. Those candidates who have got this 4 fold qualifications (SCS), is adhikari. Adhikari is the first factor in the *anubandha-catushtayam*. Prayojam - benefit of Vedanta sastra is moksha and visaya—subject matter

is *tattva-viveka-prakaram* i.e, the method of differentiating tattvam from atattvam i.e, any thing other than tattvam. You can say differentiating satyam and mithya. So *adhikari, prayojanam, visaya* - all these three are given and only one more factor of *anubandha* is left out which is not mentioned, but which we have to add. The fourth factor is *sambandha*—relationship. The question is, always relationship is between two members. You cannot talk about relationship with only one member. When you say I am related, then the next question will be, related with whom or what ?

Therefore, sambandha is between any two things according to the context. It can be between any pair- *adhikari & prayojanam, adikari and visaya, visaya & prayojanam*, etc.

One pair which is important is the relationship between the jnanam attained by the study and the prayojanam of this study which is moksha. Here alone we talk about the uniqueness of Vedanta. Jnanam alone can directly give us *moksha-phalam* without requiring any intermediary step.

Jnanam and *moksha* are directly connected -*sAkshAt sambandhah*. Whereas in the veda *purva-bhaga* called *karma kAnDam*, which is full of varieties of karma, when we get karma jnanam and the phalam of svarga or anything is mentioned, this jnanam will not directly produce benefit. Suppose there is a ritual like Jyotishtoma for reaching heaven and I get the knowledge of the ritual, that knowledge will not give the benefit. It requires some intermediary factor. Can you guess what is the intermediary factor ?

After getting knowledge of ritual, the performance of the ritual is involved.

Jnanam anushtAnadvAra eva prayojanam dadAti – By performance of karma, one gets the benefit. It can never give benefit directly. So between *veda-purva-bhaga* and *veda-antabhaga*, there is a very big difference in the relationship. There in *Karma*, you have to know, do and benefit. Whereas in Vedanta we have to know only, nothing to do and benefit. So *adhikari, prayojana, visaya* and *sambandha* - all the four *anubandha*, we learn in Tattva Bodha. Thus between veda *purva-bhaga* and Vedanta *anubandhacatushtaya-bhedAt sAstra bhedah*. This Sri Sankaracarya establishes in all his introductory bhashyam which is very, very important. This is called shastra *dvaya-vadah*.

Once he establishes the two shastrams, the next question is what is the relationship between the *purva-mimamsa shastram* and *uttara-mimamsa shastram* i.e, *karma shastram* and *Brahma shastram* what is the relationship? This also he wants to make very clear and the relationship he reveals is *upaya-upeya sambandhah*. *Upaya* means *sadhana* or means and *upeya* means *sadhya* or end i.e, *sadhana-sadhya sambandhah*.

That means first we have to go through *karma khanda*, prepare the mind i.e, get *jnana yogyata*. When we use *karma khanda* for getting *jnana-yogyata* or *sadhana catushtayam*, it is called *karma yoga*. After *jnana yogyata*, we go to *jnana yoga* or *veda-anta bhaga*.

Thus, the spiritual journey is – *Karmayogena, sadhanacatushtaya-sampatti- praptih* or *jnana-yogyata praptih*. *Jnana yogena, jnana praptih*. *Jnanena moksha praptih*. So *upaya- upeya sambandha* is what he gives. Thus, all his introductions are *sastra dvaya-vadah*, then *sastradvaya sambandha-siddhih*.

Once we know that they are connected as means and end, Sri Shankaracarya says both of them are equally important for all of them. Because without *karma yoga, jnana yogyata* is not possible. Without *jnana yogyata, jnana yoga* is not possible and without *jnana yoga, jnanam* is not possible. Without *jnanam, moksha* is not possible.

Thus, they have to be sequentially practiced. So the language used is—*karma yoga* and *jnana yoga* are not simultaneously practiced. First I should get *jnana yogyata*. Thereafter only, I should go to *jnana yoga*. Therefore, there should be not *sama samuccaya*, but there is *krama samuccaya*. Which means that first you go through *karma yoga* and prepare the mind. Then go through *jnana yoga* and get *jnanam* and get *moksha*. This is the message of Vedanta.

Thereafter, the next question is what do you mean by *moksha* ?

A person will come to Vedanta shastram only if he is interested in *moksha* which is the benefit. If I should desire or seek *moksha*, I should know what is the definition of *moksha*? *Moksha* can be defined in several ways.

The classical definition of *moksha* is –

Atyantika dukha nivrittih, Atyantika sukha praptih. *Atyantika sukha praptih* means getting absolute or permanent *Ananda* or happiness.

Similarly, *atyantika dukkha nivrittih* means absolute elimination of sorrow, total and permanent freedom from sadness.

In fact, I jocularly tell that many people write a word in English language because they don't know Sanskrit script, so they write the word 'sadguru' spelt as 's a d g u r u' and after some time when they read their notes, they read 'sad guru'. I hope you got it ! If Guru himself is sad, what can he transfer to his disciples !

Therefore remember, *moksha* is total freedom from sorrow. Therefore, *moksha* is getting permanent happiness and getting permanent freedom from sorrow. When Vedanta promises this, we should ask a question from what standpoint?

Because when we study Vedanta we come to know that we are all mixtures of two things. Pujya Swamiji says all of us are mishras whether we belong to Orissa or not. One is Atma and another is anAtma. We are all mixtures of atma and anAtma.

So when shastra talks about total freedom from sorrow and the attainment of permanent happiness - Is this from anAtma angle or atma angle ? If this clarity is not there we may be disappointed after the study of Vedanta. We should remember from the anAtma angle, there is no question of permanent happiness and permanent freedom from sorrow. It is not possible because anAtma will have to go through its *prarabdha*. Therefore, anAtma will have both ups and downs whether it is at the body level or whether it is at mind level. Because of vasanas mind would go through fluctuations as you would have learnt in the Bhagavad Gita.

Prakasanca pravrittinca mohameva ca Pandava. Na dveshti sampravrittani na nivrittani ca kankshati.

AnAtma mind will go through fluctuations subject to the three gunas and therefore the mind, because of the fluctuating *gunas* can go through *prakasha* or brightness and *pravritti* or hyperactivity and *moha* or dullness or low mood.

So anAtma will have to go through fluctuations. If we expect that from the standpoint of anAtma, we will be disappointed and we will think Vedanta has made a false promise. In fact somebody told me I am going to consumer court against Vedanta acaryas for deficiency of service because I thought that after study of Vedanta I will be all the time smiling ! This is not happening. Therefore we should be very clear permanent happiness and permanent freedom from sorrow, Veda promises not from anAtma angle.

But veda promises for a person who has received the message of Vedanta and what is the message of Vedanta ? “You are not anAtma. AnAtma will always have fluctuations. You are Atma.” From atma angle, can we get permanent happiness or not ? What will be your reply? That is a tricky question. If you say ‘yes’ also you will be in trouble and if you say ‘no’ also you will be in trouble.

So the answer is, we cannot get, we need not get because atma happens to be *sat-chit-Ananda-svarupah*. Vedanta helps me claim I am the Atma which is always Ananda, even when anAtma is going through the guna-related fluctuations. As atma, I am permanently free from sorrow, even when anAtma is going through high and low. Therefore, promise of Vedanta can be realized only when I shift my identification from anAtma ahankara to atma. Once I claim the *nitya-ananda-svarupah* as a *jnani*, I acknowledge the fact that

anAtma will have to go through the fluctuation and I accept that fact also.

mAtrA sparshAstu kaunteya shitoshna sukhadukhadah. AgamaAyinah anityah tAn ti-tikshasva, Bharata! This is my favorite verse in Bhagavad Gita Ch 2.

Accept the fluctuations of anatma and claim permanent *Ananda* and permanent freedom from sorrow of I, the Atma. This is *moksha*. At anatma level, *atyantika dukkha nivritti* and *atyantika sukha praptih* both are not possible. Vedanta does not make that promise. Then only you can go to consumer court.

But at anatma level, *apekshika dukkha nivritti* and *apekshika sukha praptih* are possible. *Apekshika* means relatively you can increase the level of happiness and you can decrease the level of unhappiness. At anatma level, it is possible and that method is by increasing *sadhana catushtayam*. When *sadhana catushtayam* is increased, *apekshika sukha vridhhih* and *apekshika dukha nivrittih*, both are possible.

At the mental level, if we have to be happier and happier, we have to focus more and more on *sadhana catushtayam*. At atma level if you have to claim our happiness, we have to focus on *jnanam*.

In Taittiriya Upanishad, Sri Sankaracarya says mental happiness can be increased by increasing *Vairagyam*. In *Ananda mimamsa* section he talks about the different levels of *Ananda*—*te ye satam mAnusha Anandah..* He talks about higher and higher mental happiness in higher and higher lokas and he says the same level of mental happiness we can get here in bhuloka in Coimbatore itself with this heat wave, without going to higher Worlds. *srotriyasya cAkAmahatasya*.

By increasing vairagyam, mental happiness will increase. By gaining *jnanam*, we can claim infinite happiness as our nature. Therefore, what I want to emphasise is that SCS is as important as *jnanam*, especially for mental happiness and mental peace. Generally, what we think is with *Tattva Bodha* our business with SCS is over like giving away our books after we write the examination. Remember even though SCS is lesson one, it has to be focused upon throughout our life because our mental peace and happiness depend upon the degree of SCS we have attained. So just reminding you this particular message of Vedanta and once again expressing my happiness to Swamiji to give me an opportunity to share my thoughts I conclude my talk and I wish all of you all the best in your spiritual journey .

Transcribed by Ms. Padma