

Swami Sakshatkritananda ji's Address to Students at AVG Anaikatti on 4th September 2019

Swami Sadatmanananda the acharya of gurukulam introduced Swami Sakshatkritanandaji to the students. He said Swamiji is one of the senior disciples of Pujya Swamiji and for last four decades he is teaching. He is known for his saintliness, composure and intense devotion to Pujya Swamiji. He is a great Mahatma and is a role model for many. I thank him having accepted my invitation to address all of us.



Swami Sakshatkritanandaji started his talk acknowledging Swami Sadatmanananda and whatever was told in praise of him, he transferred it to Pujya Swamiji. He continued.....

All of you are very blessed to be a part of this course, and all of you are in safe hands! You will get the purest of Vedanta. Whatever he said of me is applicable to him also, I won't repeat them, I will say that that it belongs to him also! So I wish you all a great time here, and I will say a few things which will be useful, you must have come across them, just to remind them. Useful things for completing the course successfully.

We have many Upanishads in the tradition that are taught, one Upanishad is the Kaivalya Upanishad. *Kevalam* is one without a second, so an Upanishad that talks about *kevala vastu*, is Kaivalya Upanishad, a very beautiful Upanishad. Student of the Upanishad is not one of us, an ordinary student, he is a great sage, Ashvalaayana, he is the student, a Rishi, a sage.

He goes to Brahmaji, says ' *adeehi bhagavo* ' please teach me Brahman!

adeehi bhagavo brahmavidyaam varishThaam,

sadaa sadbhihi sevyamaanaam nigooDhaam,

yayaa chiraat sarva paapam vyapohya

paraatparam purusham yaati vidvaan

brahma vidyaam adheehi! Please teach us *brahma vidya*, and what kind of *brahma vidya*? *sadaa sadbhihi sevya maanaam*.....that which is sought after by great people - *sadbhihi nigooDhaam* - it is not available freely, it is hidden, it is a secret, secret because the *vastu* is yourself, therefore it is a secret. Because it is you, you can never doubt, that I could be the truth that I am searching for!

NighooDhaam.....*yayaa chiraat sarva paapam vyapohya*... by knowing which one crosses all *paapas*, all *karmas*, all sorrows... *paraatparam purusham yaati vidvaan*.....one gains the ultimate, this is Aashvalaayana's prayer to Brahmaji.

Brahmaji gives three *upaayas* for gaining the knowledge: *shraddha, bhakti, dhyaana, yogaat avaihi*. He does not give the knowledge immediately, he gives 3 *upaayas*: *shraddha, bhakti, dhyaana yogaat*, very good to assimilate these three. *shraddha yogaat avaihi, bhakti yogaat avaihi, dhyaana yogaat avaihi*.....*avaihi* means understand, come to know with the help of these three *yogas*. If these three are there *shravaNam* will be fruitful. *shravaNam* will give whatever you expect from it. The freedom from all *paapas* like Aashvalaayana said, one will be free from all *paapas*, all *karmas*. Let us see what are these three *upaayas*...what is *shraddha*, what is *bhakti yoga*, and what is *dhyaana yoga*.

Shraddha yoga, Swamiji calls *shravaNam*, how is this *shravaNam*? You have to understand the meaning. If *Shraddha* is there, one has made it. *Shraddha* is translated as trust, not faith, sometimes also as belief. *Shraddha*, I have belief in you...I believe in you...I have *Shraddha in you*... I have trust in you...and here what is the trust? *Guru vedanta vaakyeshu vishvaasa* ...trust in the words of *shaashtra*, and *guru*. How to get this *shraddha*...for *shaashtra* and *guru*, because we are listening to them, through a *guru*. So we should know. This *shraddha* is looking at *shaashtra* as valid means of knowledge, *pramaaNam*.

Shaastra is *pramaaNam*. This is very important to know. What is the means of knowledge; *pramaaNam*. That which gives knowledge is *pramaaNam*. When you open eye you see variety of colors and forms, open your eyes you get knowledge. Eyes are means of knowledge for form and color. Mind has to be behind the eyes. Eyes are a means of knowledge. We don't have any doubt...you see the color that is conclusive knowledge...there is no doubt.

Do we doubt after we see form and color? If we keep doubting then we cannot live. Every time I see something and I get a doubt...is this right? Is this the same person I saw one hour before...you can't recognize your spouse, or children...if you doubt, (so eyes are) conclusive knowledge, doubt free knowledge, error free knowledge, vague free knowledge (for form and color).

Ears also, with reference to all sounds ears are a means of knowledge, every sense organ is a *pramaana*, means of knowledge, having its exclusive subject matter and object. So these are all very important. Exclusive means if knowledge. You cannot corroborate with other means, eyes you see the colour, if I have doubt do I use my ears to see whether the color is what I thought? You have to know the colour only by using your eyes, not by any other means.

The entire world of objects we can know through sense organs, and sense organ based and knowledge based other means, like inference etc. It covers the entire world. There is an inner world also, inner world also I can know directly. You come to know all the emotions inside, knowledge inside, whatever I know I know, whatever I feel I feel, I know, whatever I remember I know, the whole world of inner world of objects I can know. That is also objects. We have means of knowledge for everything on this earth - external and internal - which are objects of knowledge.

Shaastra talks about one who wields all this means of knowledge...the knower. The knower who wields all the means of knowledge at his disposal, to know everything on this earth. The subject matter of *shaastra* is who is that knower? We don't have means of knowledge. All means of knowledge can know what is objectified, but what is the means of knowledge for the one who objectifies? One thing you have to know there is no other means of knowledge available at my disposal to know the knower. Second thing to know is that means of knowledge has to come from outside only, knower cannot know himself.

Knower can't know himself. How can knower know himself, for knower to know himself, he has to objectify the knower, then who is the objectifier? If he objectifies himself who will know, who is the subject to know? I cannot be both subject and object. Therefore to know myself, the means of knowledge has to come to me from outside. That is what we call words of Upanishad, it comes from outside, and is handled by the teacher. Then only it can come from outside, if I read myself, then I am the knower who is reading, therefore the knower gets more and more strong.

Whereas the truth of the knower is the reality. The knower is resolved by knowledge. Truth of knower is not known by retaining the knower, but by resolving the knower. The knower has to be resolved. Knower is not known retaining the knower. The truth of the knower is *sat chit ananda aatma*. The knower is resolved as even I hear the words of Vedanta. *shravaNam* will resolve the knower, it has to come from outside and be an independent means of knowledge.

Vedanto naama upanishad pramaaNam. Vedanta Saara's first sentence is this, it reveals the importance of this. Therefore I have to look upon Upanishad as an independent means of knowledge. So we arrive at this: words are means of knowledge. They can give two types of knowledge. Words can give indirect knowledge if the object is not in front of you - it is indirect knowledge. For example, if I describe Flower Valley, I describe it elaborately - Flower Valley, giving elaborate knowledge about Flower Valley, where is it, what is it, when you should visit etc. You have got clean knowledge which you can share with others. What is this knowledge, indirect knowledge which becomes direct knowledge when you go to Flower Valley, and experience Flower Valley. This is the conversion, indirect knowledge becoming direct knowledge. Words give indirect knowledge when the object of knowledge is away from you.

Suppose the object is in front of you? Imagine I am holding a fruit in my hand. Now this fruit is in front of you, it looks like Jackfruit. I say it is not Jackfruit. It appears like Jackfruit, and has a very strong smell, one who is not used to the smell cannot sit in class with it, you have fruit *ajnaanam* now, you want to know what is this fruit? Where is this fruit from? This is called Dorian, it is special fruit from Malaysia. Taste will be similar to Jackfruit, you did not know what it was when I described it, you get the total picture only when object is in front of you, you can even taste and see. Words can give you get direct knowledge when object is in front of you, you don't have to go anywhere, fruit is in my hand. Direct knowledge.

What about the knowledge of Self? For the knowledge of the Self, the *pramaaNam* is words. These are all *laukika* words, we have got now words of the Upanishad, the words are the *pramaaNam* for the Self. Words of Upanishads are handled by the teacher to reveal the Self. Where is the Self? Self is hidden somewhere? You have to go and reach and find out, or you have to dive deep inside and find out? Self is I.

'I' is always evident, not hidden. It is called Self-evident, 'I' the *aatma* is Self-evident. *jaagrat svapna sushuptishussphuTatara...yaa samvit vijrumbhate..* in all the three states waking, dream and sleep *sphuTatara...clearly... vijrumbhatae*. Consciousness I, always evident as 'I'. At no stage is the 'I' hidden. "Swamiji my Self is hidden", whoever says that my Self is hidden, that Self is 'I'. You are talking something else. Walking, talking, eating, gossiping everything, without this 'I' there is no statement. "I" is self-evident. About this self-evident "I", the words of Upanishad reveal this "I". You have mistaken that 'I', and have done a lot of superimpositions on that "I", you have brought (made) that "I" into a *samsaari*. It is a sorrowful "I" due to this confusion. You have to remove the confusions and superimpositions.

Shaastra reveals this I, this knower, it says that the "I" is *sat chidaananda aatma*. What should these words give you? Direct knowledge. It is not even direct knowledge, we don't have words, we call it *aparoksha jnaanam*. Because it is you yourself, not an object on my hand that is being talked about. Thus the words of Vedanta are the means of knowledge for the self-evident "I".

There is no theory, and then experience. Generally people think I will listen to Vedanta, and later practice, what is that practice? What is that practice? I have listened - like a cow. What does a cow do? It eats a lot of grass, then it goes, and sits and brings it all back, and digests. It practices! This is what a cow does. You have to observe, it keeps on munching, quietly sits and munches, digesting all the grass. I have learnt a lot about the *shaastra* Swamiji, so now I have to digest! What will you do to make this into direct knowledge?

This knowledge has to be gained while doing *shravaNam*, afterwards whatever you do means that the knower is doing. Knower can be resolved only in *shravaNam*, after that the knower is there. That knower will do everything. Whatever you do later like *mananam* to remove doubts etc is objectifying the knower. Knowledge takes place only in *shravaNam*, whatever you do later deals with the knower, you are going to objectify the knower afterwards.

We have to do contemplation Swamiji. *nidhidhyaasanam*...meditation..this comes much later after one does a lot of *shravaNam*. People want to experience...this means objectifying the Self then only you can experience. There is no theory and practice. *PramaaNa* gives you *aparoksha jnaanam*. To stay with this knowledge you have to do *nidhidhyaasanam*, where there is no duality.

Shraddha means looking upon words of the *shaastra* as a means for *aparoksha jnaanam*. *Shraddha* is subject to verification. How long should you have *shraddha*? Until I discover myself, and own up this knowledge, until I discover this knowledge, claim this knowledge, own up this knowledge, have clarity. Every other *shraddha* is not subject to verification. Whole *karma kanDa* is not available for verification. It talks about *swargaa*. You have to have belief in that. You can't verify it here. In order to know it you have to die first. You can't go to *swargaa*, and come back to tell about it. Once your puNya is exhausted you have to come back. Whole past is erased. The knowledge of *karma kanda* is *nitya paroksha* ever indirect not available for verification. You have *shraddha*, you do ritual you get *phalam*. If you understand *shraddha* with reference to *aatma*, if you have *shraddha* for this, you will have natural *shraddha* for Vedanta because from *karma kaanDa* alone you have to come to this. You cannot say I have *shraddha* in Vedanta alone not in *karma kaanDa*, one cannot say this. You have to have a Vedic way of life to have *shraddha*. When the vision is Vedic having *shraddha* is easy. *Shraddha yogaad avaihi*. *Shraddha* alone gives you *jijnaasa*, desire to know, so *shraddha* is necessary.

Why guru is necessary that also we have seen. *Guru* is necessary because he brings the words of Veda to us. Once enquiry about the *guru* is over, then you must have total *shraddha* in *guru*. Here you don't have that problem also as teacher is an established teacher, the vision is also established.

If *shraddha yoga* is there then next you need *bhakti yoga...karma yoga*. *Bhakti yoga* is *karma yoga*. Love for God. Everybody knows what is love, when that love is directed towards the Lord, that is *bhakti*.

Every other love is not *bhakti yoga*. ...Somebody loves you or vice versa, as long as the other person evokes the pleasing Self in you then you love. In his presence I am happy, that means he invokes a pleased Self in you, the moment that does not happen, then the pleased Self dies. So *aatmanastu kaamaaya sarvam priyam bhavati*.

If this love is for Lord it is *bhakti*, love for *ishwara* is based on an understanding who *ishwara* is. He is *sarvajna* you must understand. Understanding *ishwara* means how this world is created you have to understand. That creator must be all knowledge and all powerful and being the material cause, that must be understood, that he is non-separate from creation, and so on. Material is always there in the effect, clay is never away from pot, so too *ishwara* is the material cause, never away from this creation, so all that is here is *ishwara* manifest in the form of the world, he being material cause then the world is nothing but *ishwara*. The world is nothing but name and form of *ishwara*, then *bhakti* for *ishwara* becomes unconditional, you are a *jinaasu* now, you want to know *ishwara* that is your goal, you are no longer an *artharthi*, such *bhakti* Lord also loves....I am in them they are in me. And you have to express that love also, that greeting, this greeting, birthday greeting, for what? What is that greeting? Expressing your love, love has to be expressed, 'I love that person', then you have to express that. All attitudes have to be expressed, all dispositions have to be expressed, then only it stays, every emotion requires a form to be expressed, devotion requires a form to be expressed, therefore you do your prayers, charities, etc.

I love the Lord, so I express gratitude to the Lord by remembering him, therefore I pray. All activities are centered on the Lord, that is what the Lord says, "*manamana bhavaa, madbhakta bhava, madyaaji bhava...*"etc. All your activities may they be centered on me, then every action becomes an act of *bhakti*, and is an *archana*. You don't need a special act.

If every action is *archana* to the Lord, what kind of action should it be, you can't offer something to Bhagavan something that is spoiled. What kind of action can you offer? Right action, actions are right when seen as *archana* to Bhagavan, this is *bhakti yoga*. *Karma* became *bhakti* when centered on the Lord. Everything is for the sake of Lord. Whatever comes you take as *prasaada* of Lord, whatever it is, you don't see what you get, but only that it has come from the feet of the Lord. Your inner dispositions is that anything that comes from there is grace (of the Lord). Not what you get, this too is grace of *ishwara*, whatever happens in life, there is cheerful acceptance, it is *samatvam*, equanimity. This is necessary for *shravaNam*. That is *bhakti yoga*.

One more thing, *dhyaana yogaad avaihi*, this is *upaasana*. *Dhyaana* is required to focus on mind. Mind may be relatively pure but aimlessly wanders all over, you have to focus the mind, *shaastra* gives lots of *upaasanas*...mental *japa*, chanting the name of Lord. Any practice that helps focus. The mind's nature is to go all over, we can't do anything with that. Left to itself it will go, we have to make efforts to bring it back. Mind is not easy to handle, practice, give a job to the mind and keep on doing that. Mind will escape, bring it back, escape again, bring it back, never tire. Without a sense of failure you have to do that, this is the nature of mind.

If you want a focussing mind, practice. Something you have to practice, with repeated practice gradually you are able to hold the mind, this is called attention span. You get only by practice. If all these three (qualities) are there, when you complete the course you will be a *jeevan mukta*, you will walk out freely. You have to work for this: *shraddh bhakti dhyaana* you have to work for this.

I am very happy to share with you all this. I wish you all the best to continue the long term course, if there is space. Benefit from this rare opportunity! Pujya Swamiji used to say opportunity knocks only once! This is that opportunity, all of you put in our best. My best wishes!

