

Prasna Upanishad, Class 3

Greetings All,

Swamiji continued his talks on Prasna Upanishad. He cautioned that the Upanishad in following Shlokas may be a little confusing and that he will try to make it as simple as possible to understand.

Discussing Shloka # 3, Kabandhi Katyayana, wanted to know the order and manner in which creation came out

Shloka # 4: The teacher Pippiladaha answered by introducing Hiranyagarbha. He says, Brahman created Hiranyagarbha. Hiranyagarbha, in turn, created the creation. Hiranyagarbha performed Tapas. Tapas here meant the ability to visualize the previous Srishti or Creation. All Karmas of creatures must be kept in mind including their different fields of activity. This visualization is called Gyana. Here God's Sankalpa is the basis of creation. Thus, Srishti consists of:

Mithuna Srishti

V

Loka Srishti

V

Kal Srishti

V

Anna Srishti

V

Praja Srishti (The final stage of creation of all Beings.)

Swamiji says, this shloka, while discussing creation is also discussing some other things. Shankara's commentary helps us better understand this sholka. Pippilada, while discussing Srishthi, also discusses Karma and Upasana. Those who perform Karma will get Swarga through Krishna Gathi. Those who perform Karma and Upasana will get Shukla Gathi and this will lead them to Brahma Loka. This is

known as Apra Vidya, consisting of Karma and Upasana.

Pippilada brings up Karma and Upasana while discussing Srishti. Why does he do so? What is its benefit? Swamiji says it is discussed for Vigyana Sidhyartham. Both Karma and Upasana do not give Knowledge, while I require knowledge. Moon Srishti is considered Swarga Loka while Sun Srishti is considered Brahma Loka. Dakshinayanam is Krishna Gathi, while Uttarayanam is considered Shukla Gathi.

Mithunum:

Discussing this first of the five stages of creation, Prajapati first created a pair. They are called Rayi and Prana. Rayi and Prana are two concepts. When two things are mutually complementary that pair is called Mithuna. Examples are day and night together make a full day. Utarayana & Dashinayana; Positive and negative charges; thus whole creation is made of such mutually complementary pairs. Life and death is another example that makes up Life. Male and female are also relative pairs.

Introducing concept of Bhoktha (Subject or Experiencer) and Annam (Object or experienced) Swamiji says Subject cannot be complete without an object. This relative concept is created first by Prajapathi. Rayi and Prana is also such a pair created by Prajapathi so that they may create many more living beings for him, the Grand Father (Prajapathi) of all Beings. Thus Rayi can be the egg and Prana the sperm, depends upon which principle predominates.

Shloka # 5:

Loka Srishti:

After Mithuna the next Srishti is Loka Srishti. This will require a pair of Lokas that are mutually complementary. They are the moon and sun loka pair. Day is presided by sun and night by moon, thus a full Day is maintained. This makes life.

Sun presides over activity while Moon presides over rest.
Here Sun is Prana and Moon is Rayi.

Swamiji says the Upanishad now takes a diversion from here up to Shloka # 8. A deep analysis of Rayi and Prana discloses that both are one and the same deep inside. So we can say, everything is Rayi or everything is Prana. This naming is only superficial. Steam and Ice are identical. Both are water in different states. Steam is Amurthy (without form) while Ice is Murthy (with form).

Rayi is essential nature of Prajapathi.
Prana is essential nature of Prajapathi.

Prajapathi has become both or male and female. They, in turn, produced more off springs. Rayi alone is everything. Whatever is Amurthy is Prana, while Murthy is called Rayi. Also, Prana alone is everything, since Surya is Prana.

With good wishes to all,

Ram Ramaswamy

Prasna Upanishad – Class 1

On November 8, 2015, the Vedantic Study Group of HTGC started to listen to Prasna Upanishad by Swami Paramarthananda.

Swamiji started the class with the meaning of Vedanta:

- Vedantaha: Because this comes at the end portion of vedas,
- brahma vidhya because this deals with the knowledge of Brahman
- gyana kandaha: In this part of vedas only knowledge is

discussed and not karma

Then Swamiji discussed different meanings of the word Upanishad :

1. Destroyer of samsara or sorrow;
2. Upani means taking Jivatma near Brahman; Shath means destroys ignorance that causes division between jivatma and paramatma as well as anything born out of ignorance: samsara, (ahangakra, karthrutwam, kama, karma, karma palam punarjenma and suga dhukkam)
3. That which unites paramatma and jivatma and destroys samsara.
4. The word Upanishad or vedanata can refer to the book or the knowledge that born out of the book is also Upanishad. Upanishad as sabtha or sound is Pramanam (means); Upanishads as knowledge is praman (result); the literature or the sound is pramanam and praman the result is gyanam. The knowledge born out of the Upanishad is the primary meaning of the Upanishad.

Prasna upanishad belongs to Atharvana Veda and one of the upanishads commented by Sankarachariyar.

This upanishad is a commentary on Mundaka Upanishad. Apara Vidya and apara vidya is mentioned in Mundaka Upanishads will be elaborated in Prasna upanishad. Condensed version in Mundaka Upanishads are manthro upanishad and elaborated versions in Prasna upanishads are brahmano Upanishads. Brahmno portions in Mundaka Upanishads are elaborated in Prasna upanishads. Chapters elaborated in Prasna Upanishad are:

1. Krishna and chukla Gathi
2. Upasana prana or hiranyagarba
3. Upasana
4. Brahma Vidya through susukthi
5. Om Kara upasana

6. Brahma Vidya through param Brahman

Prasnaha means question; each chapter begins with question and each chapter is answer to that question. Each question is asked by six different students.

Shanthi Pada: My sthula, shuksma sareeram should function in a fitting manner so that I can absorb the teaching. This shanthi pada is same as the one in Mundaka Upanishads and as a result, Swamiji did not elaborate the meaning.

Verse 1

The first two mantras are introductions by way of bringing the teacher and student together. In this mantra six students are introduced. Each student has two names. The first name is an original name and second is based on parampara. They are: Sukesha Bharadvaja, Satyakama Sibi, Surya Garga, Kausalya Asvalayana, Bhargava Vidharbha, and Kabandhin Katya. The names tell us of their great parentage. It informs us that they had good Samskara. Samskaras are there to create Shraddha in Vedas. All of them are well qualified. They are all Gyani's. They have now come for higher knowledge. This mantra also teaches us:

- Upanishads should always be learned from a Guru
- Unlike Science where new or fresh information is constantly sought after, in the area of spirituality, the old and traditional knowledge is prized more. The teacher is thus following tradition. There is no new topic or new method. Thus the glory of Sampradaya is emphasized. While in most sciences, a scholar is recognized by their new contribution, in Vedanta it is important to follow the teachings of previous guru's and teachers.