

॥सनत्सुजातीयम्॥

॥तृतीयोऽध्यायः॥

sanatsujAtiyam

(Translated by S.N.Sastri)

(Based on the bhAshya of Sri Sankara bhagavatpAda)

Chapter 3

Realization of identity with brahman, which is the goal of the spiritual aspirant, is explained in chapters 3 and 4.

धृतराष्ट्र उवाच---

सनत्सुजात यदिमां परार्थां

ब्राह्मीं वाचं वदसि हि विश्वरूपाम् ।

परां हि कार्येषु सुदुर्लभां कथां

प्रब्रूहि मे वाक्यमेवं कुमार ॥१

dhRtarAshtra said---

sanatsujAta yadimAm parArthAm

brAhmIm vAcam vadasi hi viSvarUpAm |

parAm hi kAryeshu sudurlabhAm kathAm

prabrUhi me vAkyamevam kumara || 1

1.O sanatsujAta, you have been telling me about the various means of attaining brahman, which is the highest goal of human life, in words which are very lofty and convey many meanings. It is very difficult even to get an opportunity to hear these in this world of objects. Please tell me now about brahman itself.

सनत्सुजात उवाच--

नैतद्ब्रह्म त्वरमाणेन लभ्यं

यन्मां पृच्छस्यभिषङ्गेण राजन् ।

बुद्धौ प्रलीने मनसि प्रचिन्त्या

विद्या हि सा ब्रह्मचर्येण लभ्या ॥२

sanatsujAta said—

naitad brahma tvaramANena labhyam

yanmAm pRcchasyabhishangeNa rAjan |

buddhau praline manasi pracintya

vidya hi sA brahmacaryeNa labhya || 2

2. O king, this brahman about which you are asking me with such eagerness cannot be attained by a person who is in a hurry. This knowledge is to be meditated upon by the intellect in which the mind has merged, i.e., when the cogitating mind has been withdrawn from all

external objects and has become fixed on the Self. This knowledge which is to be meditated upon can be attained only by the practice of 'brahmacarya'.

आद्यां विद्यां वदसि हि सत्यरूपां
या प्राप्यते ब्रह्मचर्येण सद्भिः ।
यां प्राप्यैनं मर्त्यभावं त्यजन्ति
या वै विद्यागुरुवृद्धेषु नित्या ॥३

AdyAm vidyAm vadasi hi satyarUpAm
yA prApyate brahmacaryeNa sadbhih |
yAm prApyainam martyabhAvam tyajanti
yA vai vidyAguruvRdheshu nityA ||3

3. You are asking about the knowledge of that uncaused Truth which is beyond this unreal universe. It can be attained only by the wise who practise brahmacarya. On attaining that one sheds the notion of being a mere mortal. This knowledge reposes in one to whom it has been imparted by his guru.

धृतराष्ट्र उवाच---
ब्रह्मचर्येण या विद्या शक्या वेदितुमञ्जसा ।
तत्कथं ब्रह्मचर्यं स्यादेतद्विद्वन्ब्रवीहि मे ॥४

On hearing this dhRtarAshtra said---
brahmacaryeNa yA vidyA SakyA veditum anjasA |
tat katham brahmacaryam syAd etad vidvan bravIhi me ||4

4. O wise one, please tell me about that brahmacarya by means of which this knowledge can be attained.

सनत्सुजात उवाच---
आचार्ययोनिमिह ये प्रविश्य
भूत्वा गर्भं ब्रह्मचर्यं वदन्ति ।
इहैव ते शास्त्रकारा भवन्ति
विहाय देहं परमं यान्ति सत्यम् ॥५

sanatsujAta said---
AcAryayonimiha ye praviSya
bhUtvA garbham brahmacaryam vadanti |
ihaiva te SAstrakArA bhavanti
vihAya deham paramam yAnti satyam ||5

5. Those who enter the womb of a guru, i.e., approach a guru in the prescribed manner, become his disciples and serve him, become learned in the scriptures in this world itself. Then, by the practice of reflection and contemplation they attain the supreme Being who is of the nature of

Truth when they cast off their bodies on the exhaustion of their prArabdha karma.

अस्मिंल्लोके विजयन्तीह कामान्
ब्राह्मीं स्थितिमनुतितिक्षमाणाः ।
त आत्मानं निर्हरन्तीह देहान्
मुञ्जादिषीकामिव धीरभावात् ॥६

asmin loke vijayantIha kAmAn
brAhmIm sthitim anutitikshamANAh |
ta AtmAnam nirharantIha dehAn
munjAdishIkAmiva dhIrabhAvAt ||6

6. They conquer all desires in this world itself. Constantly practising the state of identity with brahman with determination they separate the Self from the body, just as one would separate the stalk from the munja grass. Note. The KaThopanishad, 2.3.17, says: The indwelling Self of the size of one's thumb ever resides in the heart of living beings. That should be separated with determination from one's body in the same way as one separates the stalk from the munja grass. Know that Self to be pure and immortal.

शरीरमेतौ कुरुतः पिता माता च भारत ।
आचार्यतस्तु यज्जन्म तत्सत्यं वै तथामृतम् ॥७

SarIrametau kurutah pita mAtA ca bhArata |
AcAryatastu yajjanma tat satyam vai tathAmRtam ||7

7. O bharata, the father and mother give you this body which is not real (but only mithyA). The birth from the guru as brahman which is existence-consciousness-bliss is real and it is immortal.

Note. The praSnopanishad says: You (guru) are our father who have taken us beyond ignorance.

Apastamba says: The AcArya creates the disciple out of knowledge. That is the highest birth. The parents create only the body.

स आवृणोत्यमृतं संप्रयच्छं-
स्तस्मै न द्रुह्येत्कृतमस्य जानन् ।
गुरुं शिष्यो नित्यमभिवादयीत
स्वाध्यायमिच्छेच्च सदाप्रमत्तः ॥८

sa AvRNotyamRtam samprayaccham-
stasmai na druhyet kRtamasya jAnan |
gurum Sishyo nityamabhivAdayati
svAdhyAyamicchecca sadApramattah ||8

8. He (AcArya) leads the disciple to the attainment of brahman which is immortal. The disciple should never do any harm to his AcArya, knowing

what very great good he has done. The disciple should pay his respectful obeisance to the AcArya every day. He should always be vigilant and eager to learn from the AcArya.

Note. The SvetAsvatara upanishad says: Only that noble soul who has supreme devotion to God and equal devotion to his guru will be able to understand the real purport of these teachings.

Apastamba says: The disciple should never do any harm to his guru who perfects his disciple by imparting knowledge.

Now brahmacarya is described---

शिष्यवृत्तिक्रमेणैव विद्यामाप्नोति यः शुचिः ।

ब्रह्मचर्यव्रतस्यास्य प्रथमः पाद उच्यते ॥९

SishyavRttikrameNaiva vidyAmApnoti yah Sucih |

brahmacaryavratasyAsya prathamah pAda ucyate || 9

9. The disciple who is pure in mind receives knowledge by resorting to a guru in the prescribed manner. This is the first step of the vow of brahmacarya.

यथा नित्यं गुरौ वृत्तिर्गुरुपत्न्यां तथाचरेत् ।

तत्पुत्रे च तथा कुर्वन्द्द्वितीयः पाद उच्यते ॥१०

yathA nityam gurau vRttirgurupatnyAm tathAcaret |

tatputre ca tathA kurvan dvitIyah pAda ucyate || 10

10. The disciple should show the same respect towards the wife and son of the guru as to the guru himself. This is called the second step of brahmacarya.

आचार्येणात्मकृतं विजानन्

ज्ञात्वा चार्थं भावितोऽस्मीत्यनेन ।

यन्मन्यते तं प्रति हृष्टबुद्धिः

स वै तृतीयो ब्रह्मचर्यस्य पादः ॥११

AcAryeNAtmakRtam vijAnan

jnAtvA cArtham bhAvito'smItyanena |

yanmanyate tam prati hRshTabuddhih

sa vai tRtIyo brahmacaryasya pAdah || 11

11. Realizing the great benefit conferred by the AcArya on him, and understanding the ultimate purport of the vedas, considering himself as having attained his natural state of being the non-dual brahman which is existence-consciousness-bliss, he becomes happy and grateful to the AcArya. This is the third step of brahmacarya.

आचार्याय प्रियं कुर्यात्प्राणैरपि धनैरपि ।

कर्मणा मनसा वाचा चतुर्थः पाद उच्यते ॥१२

AcAryAya priyam kuryAt prANairapi dhanairapi |
karmaNA manasA vAcA caturthah pAda ucyate || 12

12. He should do whatever is good for the AcArya with his life and wealth, and by deed, thought and word. This is the fourth step.

कालेन पादं लभते तथायं

तथैव पादं गुरुयोगतश्च ।

उत्साहयोगेन च पादमृच्छे-

च्छास्त्रेण पादं च ततोऽभियाति ॥१३

kAlena pAdam labhate tathAyam
tathaiva pAdam guruyogataSca |
utsAhayogena ca pAdamRcchet
SASTreNa pAdam ca tato`bhiyAti || 13

13. The disciple learns one-fourth from the guru, one-fourth by his own effort, one-fourth by discussion with his co-disciples, and one-fourth by the efflux of time. (The expression 'through the Sastra' in the last line means 'by discussion with other disciples' according to Sri Sankara.

ज्ञानादयो द्वादश यस्य रूप-

मन्यानि चाङ्गानि तथा बलं च ।

आचार्ययोगे फलतीति चाहु-

ब्रह्मार्थयोगेन च ब्रह्मचर्यम् ॥१४

jnAnAdayo dvAdaSa yasya rUpam
anyAni cAngAni tathA balam ca |
AcAryayoge phalatIti cAhu-
rbrahmArthayogena ca brahmacaryam || 14

14. The twelve great vows beginning with knowledge of the Reality (mentioned in Sloka 19 of chapter 2) which form his essence, the six kinds of sacrifice (mentioned in Slokas 25, 26 and 27 of chapter 2), the capacity to practise them—all these become fruitful only with the support of the AcArya, it is said. The practice of brahmacarya culminates in the realization of identity with brahman only by the service of the AcArya.

एतेन ब्रह्मचर्येण देवा देवत्वमाप्नुवन् ।

ऋषयश्च महाभागा ब्रह्मचर्येण चाभवन् ॥१५

एतेनैव सगन्धर्वो रूपमप्सरसोऽजयन् ।

एतेन ब्रह्मचर्येण सूर्य अहाय जायते ॥१६

etena brahmacaryeNa devA devatvam Apnuvan |
RshayaSca mahAbhAgA brahmacaryeNa cAbhavan || 15
etenaiva sagandharvA rUpam apsaraso`jayan |
etena brahmacaryeNa sUrya ahnAya jAyate || 16

15 & 16. It is by this brahmacarya that the gods got their godhood, the sages attained greatness, the gandharvas and divine damsels got their beautiful form, and the sun was born to illumine the world. How can brahmacarya produce so many different results? This is being answered---

आकाङ्क्षार्थस्य संयोगाद्रसभेदार्थिनामिव
एवं ह्येतत्समाज्ञाय तादृग्भावं गता इमे ॥१७

AkAngkshArthasya samyogAd rasabhedArthinAm iva |
evam hyetat samAjnAya tAdRgghAvam gata ime || 17

17. Just as people desiring different objects are brought into contact with those objects (by wish-fulfilling gems like chintAmaNi), so also the devas and others, knowing that brahmacarya could fulfill their desires, observed brahmacarya and attained the desired results.

So the spiritual aspirant should observe brahmacarya, living with the AcArya, for attaining the highest goal, liberation.

Is jnAna alone the cause of the supreme goal or is it karma?

अन्तवन्तः क्षत्रिय ते जयन्ति
लोकाञ्जनाः कर्मणा निर्मितेन ।
ज्ञानेन विद्वांस्तेज अभ्येति नित्यं
न विद्यते ह्यन्यथा तस्य पन्थाः ॥१८

antavantah kshatriya te jayanti
lokAn janAh karmaNA nirmiteNa |
jnAnena vidvAmsteja abhyeti nityam
na vidyate hyanyathA tasya panthAH || 18

18. O kshatriya, by means of karma people attain only the impermanent worlds such as those of the gods and the manes. By knowledge the enlightened person attains that eternal effulgence which is the supreme Self. There is no other path to it.

dhRtarAshtra said---

आभाति शुक्लमिव लोहितमिवाथो
कृष्णमथार्जुनं काद्रवं वा ।
यद्ब्राह्मणः पश्यति यत्र विद्वा-
न्कथंरूपं तदमृतमक्षरं परम् ॥१९

AbhAti Suklamiva lohitaMivAtho
kRshNamathArjunam kAdravam vA |
yad brAhmaNah paSyati yatra vidvAn
katham rUpam tad amRtamaksharam param || 19

19. Is that immortal, imperishable, supreme Being whom the enlightened person realizes white, red, black, bright, or smoky in colour? What is his form? Where is he realized?

sanatsujAta replies—

नाभाति शुक्लमिव लोहितमिवाथो
कृष्णमथार्जुनं वा काद्रवं वा ।
न पृथिव्यां तिष्ठति नान्तरिक्षे
नैतत्समुद्रे सलिलं बिभर्ति ॥२०

nAbhAti Suklamiva lohitamivAtho
kRshNam athArjunam vA kAdravam vA |
na pRthivyAm nAntarikshe
naitat samudre salilam bibharti | |20

20. It does not appear as white, or red, or black, or bright, or smoky, because it has no colour. It is not on the earth nor in the sky. Nor does it reside in the ocean with a body made up of the five elements.

Note. Sri Sankara says that the word 'salilam' in the last line which means 'water' stands for all the five elements. Brahman has no form. It is not confined to any place because it is infinite. It does not have a body made up of the five elements.

नैवर्क्षु तन्न यजुःषु नाप्यथर्वसु
न दृश्यते वै विमलेषु सामसु ।
रथन्तरे बार्हते वापि राजन्
महाव्रतस्यात्मनि दृश्यते तत् ॥२१

naivarkshu tanna yajuHshu nApyatharvasu
na dRSyate vai vimaleshu sAmasu |
rathantare bArhate vApi rAjan
mahAvratasyAtmani dRSyate tat | |21

21. It is not seen in the Rgveda or the yajurveda or the atharva veda or in the pure sAma veda, nor in the sections of sAmaveda known as rathantara or bRhatsAma. It is seen in the self of the person who practises the great vows described earlier.

अवारणीयं तमसः परस्ता—

तदन्ततोऽभ्येति विनाशकाले ।
अणीयरूपं च तथाप्यणीयसां
महत्स्वरूपं त्वपि पर्वतेभ्यः ॥२२

avAraNIyam tamasaH parastAt
tadantato'bhyeti vinASakAle |

aNIyarUpam ca tathApyaNiyasAm
mahatsvarUpam tvapi parvatebhyaH ||22

22. It can never be negated. It is beyond ignorance. At the time of pralaya the universe merges into it. It is subtler than the subtlest and bigger than the mountain.

तदेतदह्ना संस्थितं भाति सर्वं
तदात्मवित्पश्यति ज्ञानयोगात् ।
तस्मिञ्जगत्सर्वमिदं प्रतिष्ठितं
य एतद्विदुरमृतास्ते भवन्ति ॥२३

tadetadahna samsthitam bhAti sarvam
tadAtmavit paSyati jnAnayogAt |
tasmin jagat sarvamidam pratishThitam
ya etaviduramRtAste bhavanti ||23

23. This entire universe shines (appears) only because of the light of this brahman. The knower of the Self sees it through the yoga of jnAna. All this universe is established in it. Those who know it become immortal.

॥इति श्रीमत्सनत्सुजातीये तृतीयोऽध्यायः ॥

End of chapter 3