

PRACTICAL ASPECTS OF VEDANTA PHILOSOPHY

4th February, 2019

Satyawati College, University of Delhi, New Delhi

A symposium was jointly organised by Wider Association for Vedic studies (WAVES) and Department of Sanskrit, Satyawati College, University of Delhi in auditorium of Satyawati College. Programme started with the invocation done by students of Sanskrit Department of Satyawati College. Dr Anju Seth, Associate Professor, Sanskrit Department, Satyawati College welcomed the speakers and guests of the Symposium. **Dr. Shashi Tiwari**, President, WAVES introduced the speakers. The session was chaired by **Prof. Bhu Dev Sharma**, Founder President, WAVES.

Dr. Sudhir Kumar, Associate Professor, Sanskrit Department, Jawaharlal Nehru University said Vedic and Post Vedic literature are soul of Indian culture and tradition. Four *Varṇas*, four *Āsramās* and sixteen *Saṃskāras* are the essence of this culture. By the grace of god everyone is blessed with same five *Jñānedriya*, five *Karmedriya*, *Mana*, and *Bhudhi* but still thinking and behavioural pattern is different in each and every individual. Desire to live for 100 years is the main practical aspect of Vedantic philosophy. By '*Jīvem Sharadaḥ Shatam*', this has been confirmed by many Vedic texts. Wish to have '*Puruṣārtha*' is also one of the practical side of Vedānta. Along with this, '*Atithi Devo Bhav*' and '*Mahāmṛtyunjaya mantra*' can also be treat as an example of practical application of Vedanta philosophy in Indian culture.

Dr. M.D.Thomas, Founder and President, Institute of Harmony and Peace, Delhi has described '*Niṣkāma Karma*' as the root of the practical aspect of Vedantic philosophy. He read few recitations from Śrīmad-bhagwad-gītā and compared those to Bible. Describing *Karma* as *Sādhanā*, Spirituality and life, he talked about three-dimensional union of *Karma*, i.e., from God, from oneself, and from others. While performing *Karma* one should be free from emotional bondage.

On the basis of Upanishads, **Shri Rajender Nath Pandey**, Writer, Ghaziabad narrated the basic elements of Vedānta to reach the highest goal of life. These elements are *Viveka* (discrimination), *Vairagya* (detachment), *Śradhā* (devotion), *Jijñāsā* (curiosity), *Viśvāsa* (faith), *Sadāchāra* (good conduct), *Dhairya* (patience), *Brahmacharya*, *Samatva* (equality), and *Kripā* (kindness). There is no ascending or descending order of these elements. By quoting the sentences from various Upanishads, Shri Pandey explained the relevance of above mentioned elements and their practical application as per Vedanta philosophy.

Dr. Awadhesh Pratap Singh, Assistant Professor, Sanskrit Dept., University of Delhi on the basis of Brahma-sūtra conveyed the practical side of Vedānta Darshan. There is a difference in knowledge and science. This science is a subject matter of Vedānta philosophy. He took examples from *Advaita* Vedānta. To attain salvation, three paths are there- *Jñāna*, *Bhaktī* and *Karma*. Out of these, path of *Jñāna* (Knowledge) is longest but other two *Bhaktī* (Devotional) and *Karmic* (action) are most accessible routes. Brahma is Supreme, one should always be aware of this. He quoted Māndukya Upanishad for understanding principles of Vedānta.

Dr. Ramnath Pandey, Senior Research Fellow, M.S. University of Baroda gave various illustrations on Vedānta philosophy through his power point presentation. He said all Upanishads talk about philosophy. Many types of Vedanta philosophy is there such as *Advaita*, *Viśiṣṭha -Advaita*, *Dwaita*. After attaining purification of mind where no doubt is left then *Mokṣa* (liberation) is achieved. By quoting the Brihadāranyaka Upanishad, he clarified

the relation of soul, Brahma and Māyā. Love and sensitivity towards nature is the biggest practical aspect of Vedānta philosophy. By practicing *Bhūdhī* (intellect), *Satya* (truth), *Anuśāsana* (discipline) and *Anāsakti* (detachment) in daily life one can practically apply Vedānta philosophy. *Ekatvabhāva* should always be one's priority. After various talks by eminent speakers, the symposium turned lively due to interaction among speakers and audiences. Few comments were made by Dr. Chand Bhardwaj, Member, WAVES; Dr. Ramkaran Sharma, Lecturer, University of Delhi etc. In his presidential address, Prof. Bhu Dev Sharma explained the practical aspect of Vedānta philosophy by sharing his personal experiences throughout his life.

Dr. Abha Mathur, Principal-In-charge, Satyawati College graced this occasion with her presence. Program was attended by faculty members and students of Sanskrit Department, Satyawati College along with WAVES members such as Dr. Dharma, Sh. Y.K. Wadhwa, Dr. Asha Lata Pandey, Sh. Vidya Sagar Verma, Dr. Shakuntala Punjani, Dr. R.S. Kaushal, Dr. Savitri, Dr. Supriya Sanju, Sh. T.R. Arora, Dr. Aparna (Dhir) Khandelwal and others. Dr. Ranjit Behara conducted the whole program. Dr. Ajay Jha, Assistant Professor, Sanskrit Department, Satyawati College thanked the organizers, learned speakers and guests.