

Thus, through constant practice, you will come to experience this ‘contact with the Higher’. An individual, who has with discrimination thus understood the cause for all his pitfalls and sorrows, must strive to withdraw himself from all his mental entanglements and be released from its usual conditionings. Then he can feel himself ushered into a greater ambit of freedom, a greater fullness of existence.



बाह्ये निरुद्धे मनसः प्रसन्नता
मनःप्रसादे परमात्मदर्शनम्।
तस्मिन्सुदृष्टे भवबन्धनाशो
बहिर्निरोधः पदवी विमुक्तेः ॥ ३३६ ॥

*bāhye niruddhe manasah prasannatā
manahprasāde paramātmadarśanam,
tasminsudṛṣṭe bhavabandhanāśo
bahirnirodhaḥ padavī vimukteḥ. (336)*

336. When the objective world is shut out, the mind becomes quiet, and in the quiet mind arises the vision of the Paramātman. When ‘That’ is perfectly realised, the chain of births and deaths is broken. Hence the shutting out of the external world is the initial step for reaching Liberation.

This is an answer to a possible doubt in the minds of the students; the students may feel, ‘Why are you insisting upon withdrawal from the outer world? What is wrong with it? Can we not enjoy the good things of the world and perform also our sādhanā? Why this negative advice to withdraw from the world? If by deliberately withdrawing from the outer world of objects and by contemplating upon the Self, we reach Paramātman, then that Paramātman will be ‘caused by’ sādhanā. So from a finite activity we must expect infinite results! Absurd! With the finite activity, how can we achieve the Infinite? By an action initiated by us how can we gain the Truth? Even if by this effort we reach any truth, it must also be finite, because

finite activity can create only finite results. Therefore, O Vedāntin! your logic is not acceptable to us. Besides it is very inconvenient to ‘withdraw’, for we don’t want to withdraw completely from the sense objects, as they have got an enchanting store of pleasure, all of their own...’

Now the Teacher of Vedānta answers, ‘This withdrawal is not the direct cause for the realisation of the supreme Infinite. It sets in motion a series of consequences which ultimately lead the seeker to Liberation.’

‘The earth revolves around the sun and, therefore, there are the rains’ – this statement may look illogical, but it is true in its sequence. The earth is going round the sun, and therefore, the waters of its oceans come under the sunlight. Sunlight has got heat, and with the heat the water evaporates. The evaporated water goes up, and as it goes up, it cools. As it gets cooler and cooler it condenses. The condensation increases and hence it becomes more and more dense. The denser drops come down and hence there is rain.

Now, supposing the earth was not going round the sun, there would not be any rain. Because the portion of the earth facing the sun would have scorched itself to be a desert, and on the other side there would not have been any sunlight at all, and so it would have become an eerie land of barren snow. Rain is, therefore, possible only because of the earth revolving round the sun. Thus, as a series of consequences, the statement becomes true.

Here in this verse, the sequence of thought development for the assertion of Vedānta is exhaustively enumerated.

When the mind is held back from rushing into the world of objects, it becomes calm and serene (mana-prasāda). Mind is agitated because of its instinctive habit of gushing into the world of objects. When the mind is constantly contemplating upon the ‘profits not yet gained’ or ‘profits that it might lose’, or ‘the objects and pleasures that can be gained’, or ‘the pleasures that might have