

In the study of Vedānta it is not sufficient that a student very seriously reads the text, verse by verse. He must also note the arrangement of ideas, as this in itself has a voiceless content which clears many of his doubts. In this text also, first the qualities of a Guru and a disciple were explained. It was dramatised how a perfect Master and a perfect student meet and when they meet what were their respective duties.

Then the discrimination between Ātman and anātman was taken up. Next, the Ātman, the Self, was explained, followed by the description of the anātman, the not-Self. Here, again Śaṅkara emphasises how the nature of the Ātman gets veiled from our cognition and how the rajas and tamas qualities condemn an individual.

When so much has been explained, there will still be a vestige of doubt in the minds of the students who have followed the arguments closely. It has been said that in all our sufferings we are not aware of the Reality in us because It is lying veiled from our vision by avidyā, how can this be? How can my ignorance of a thing give me solid, perceptible sorrows? The following verse gives the answer in the form of an example –



भानुप्रभासज्जनिताभ्रपङ्क्तिः भानुं तिरोधाय विजृम्भते यथा ।
आत्मोदिताहङ्कृतिरात्मतत्त्वं तथा तिरोधाय विजृम्भते स्वयम् ॥ १४२ ॥

bhānuprabhāsañjanitābhraṇṅktiḥ
bhānum tirodhāya vijṛmbhate yathā,
ātmoditāhaṅkṛtirātmataṭṭvaṁ
tathā tirodhāya vijṛmbhate svayam. (142)

142. As the formations of clouds generated by the sun's rays come to veil the very same sun and appear clearly manifested in the sky, so too, the ego arisen from the Self covers the Reality of the Self and expresses itself in full manifestation.

Had there been no sunlight and no sun's heat, there would have been no clouds. The arrays of clouds born out of the sunlight cover it and vividly manifest themselves. Similarly, the ego – the PFT – born out of Om, the Reality, says, 'I alone am.' When the Consciousness functions through the equipment of BMI, the concept of PFT¹, the doer-enjoyer feeling, is born. Thereafter, this ego appears and starts saying, 'Where is God? I am the only Truth. What is there besides me?' Out of this psychological phenomenon are born all the sufferings of man.

This is exhaustively explained in the following verse.

¹ ibid. verse – 124 (footnote)

