

or because of the scriptures, however Teacher, scriptures, sādhanā, study, all help us to withdraw the mind from its preoccupations. The mind withdrawn from its preconceptions and held in attention in full alertness, is the mind that receives intimations from the Infinite. The Infinite is your essential nature. It is an immediate experience.



अनादित्वमविद्यायाः कार्यस्यापि तथेष्ट्यते ।
उत्पन्नायां तु विद्यायामविद्यकमनाद्यपि ॥ १९८ ॥

*anāditvamavidyāyāḥ kāryasyāpi tathesṭyate,
utpannāyām tu vidyāyāmavidyakamanādyapi. (198)*

प्रबोधे स्वप्नवत्सर्वं सहमूलं विनश्यति ।
अनाद्यपीदं नो नित्यं प्रागभाव इव स्फुटम् ॥ १९९ ॥

*prabodhe svapnavatsarvaṁ sahamūlaṁ vinaśyati,
anādyapīdaṁ no nityaṁ prāgabhāva iva sphuṭam. (199)*

198 & 199. So too, *avidyā* and its effects are said to be beginningless. But when there is rise of *vidyā*, then *avidyā*, even though it is beginningless, is destroyed, root and branch, just as dreams are destroyed on waking up. The phenomenal universe is not eternal, it is evident, like the 'former non-existence' (*prāk-abhāva*).

When the cause is beginningless, its effects must also have the same nature. Ignorance, *avidyā*, which is beginningless, must necessarily produce effects which are also beginningless. *Avidyā* is the cause for the very first thought, therefore, it is beyond time. But when true knowledge of the Self is born, when the right apprehension is born, the non-apprehension will have to end. As long as the cause, the non-apprehension remains, its effects, misapprehensions must also remain but there is one solvent for this great cause. The antithesis of ignorance is knowledge. Where there is knowledge, there ignorance cannot be. Where there is light, there darkness

cannot be, light and darkness cannot remain in one and the same place at one and the same time. The moment light is brought into a cave which might have been in darkness from the beginning of time, the darkness, no matter how old or how dense, must immediately vanish. Similarly, when the knowledge of the Self is born, the ignorance with all its effects – non-apprehension with all its misapprehensions will have to end, though it is beginningless.

On waking up, the dream ends fully. Similarly, realising the nature of the Self, the misapprehensions to their very roots, the non-apprehension must end; not only are the misapprehensions eliminated but also their very cause, the non-apprehension. In deep sleep the effects end, but the causal body, the non-apprehension, meaning, the ‘cause’ remains whereas in the final spiritual experience, the cause also ends. Then, never will the fear of misapprehensions rise in us.

When Truth is apprehended, the effects along with their cause, the causal body, ends even though the cause is beginningless (anādi). Though ignorance (avidyā) is beginningless, it is not eternal.¹ That which is born must die and that which is unborn cannot die, but there are exceptions. Avidyā, though it is unborn will end. This peculiar paradox is explained by an example. ‘It is clear, just as prāk-abhāva.’ ‘Prāk-abhāva’ is a technical term used by the Indian logicians (naiyāyikas). In nyāya-śāstra they employ this term freely.

A pot, before it was made, was in the mud. Instead of the pot there was only mud. From the mud the potter cannot make a milch cow nor can he make a succulent apple. He cannot create a wife for himself out of mud. He can only create various kinds of pots. The pot he is going to make must be potentially possible in the mud. In the mud is the potential pot. In the mud is the unmanifest pot. The unmanifest pot was in the mud even

¹ *anādyapīdam no nityam* – through beginningless (anadi-api), this (idam) avidyā is not (no) eternal (nityam).