

and intellect. We are identified with the anātman. When the spiritual experience comes, there is no identification with matter. There is complete retirement from the concept, 'I am the body, I am the mind, I am the intellect' (asato-nivṛttiḥ); just as, in the waker, there is a total retirement (nivṛtti), from the experiences of the dreamworld.

The result of ignorance (ajñāna) is action (pravṛtti). Ego motivated actions are called 'pravṛtti'. Ego and desire prompted activities are possible in avidyā alone. When I identify with my outer vestures of matter, the egocentric idea of my individuality crystallises. Motivated by my vāsanās, I act in the world. The result of ajñāna is egocentric activity and its consequent sorrows. But when there is knowledge, there is complete detachment from the false world projected by ignorance which is non-apprehension of Reality and the consequent misapprehensions.

These effects are observed in a Man of Knowledge and in a man of ignorance. It can be seen in the reactions of men seeing a mirage. The man, who does not know it is a mirage, runs after it, only to get disappointed, again and again. He who recognises it as a mirage does not move at all, though he sees the delusory appearance of water. He knows that it is an illusion and he enjoys it. The illusion cannot prompt him to activity.

He has already come to apprehend his own real nature and hence, will no more get identified with the BMI and run after the OET. He lives in peace and tranquillity within himself, away from the persecutions of all vāsanās and desires. What else will the Man of Realisation gain?



अज्ञानहृदयग्रन्थेर्विनाशो यद्यशेषतः ।
अनिच्छोर्विषयः किं नु प्रवृत्तेः कारणं स्वतः ॥ ४२४ ॥

*ajñānahṛdayagrānthervināśo yadyaśeṣataḥ,
anicchhorviṣayaḥ kiṁ nu pravṛtteḥ kāraṇam svataḥ. (424)*

424. *When the knots of ignorance in the heart have been totally destroyed, what natural cause can prompt a man who is averse to sense pleasures, to egocentric action?*

‘Ignorance’ (avidyā), ‘desire’ (kāma), and ‘action’ (karma), are the hindrances in our attempt to gain the experience of our real nature. They are considered in Vedānta śāstra, as the ‘knots’ on the heart of man. ‘Heart’, here, does not mean the organ pumping blood, but the ‘personality’ of man. The essential ‘personality’ of man is always tied down by these three knots. When they are completely cut asunder the knowledge of the Self is easily gained. Partial destruction of them we find in deep sleep also; but deep sleep leads to no Realisation. The annihilation of these knots should be total.

When an individual gains the knowledge of the Real, the Infinite, the ignorance of the Self ends. Where ignorance has ended, there desires cannot arise. Where desires are not, there actions cannot be. When the knots of the heart have been cut, why should the individual entertain the OET? You and I do not run after toys because we have no desire for them. But in order to entertain children around us, we may play with them. When we thus play with the toys, that play will be entirely different from how we played when we were children. Then we lived life with ego and egocentric desires. Now there is no ego or egocentric desires to corrupt our play.

In the same way, having gained the knowledge of the Self, an individual may play in the world outside, never involved with the ego and its desires.¹

Since the Man of Realisation has no desires, he does not undertake any ego prompted or desire prompted activity. Ignorance of Reality (avidyā) at the intellectual level is called desire; at the mental level, thoughts; and at the physical level, actions.

¹ *prayojanam anudisya na mando'pi pravartate.* – without an idea upon the result, even an idiot does not act.