

He himself will no more be anxious to get anything. Whatever is given to him – sometimes forced upon him – by others, objects of utter necessity, he will accept and use.’ His way of enjoying these objects supplied to him by others unasked, is also clearly brought out when the Ācārya says that he is like one who is sleeping (nidralu), or like a baby (bāla).

When, for instance, you sleep in winter and others seeing the blanket off your back put it back on you, no doubt, the sleeping body is warmer than before, but you the sleeper are not even conscious of it. Similarly, a child is fed by the mother. The child is not conscious that it is being fed regularly and properly, it just takes the feed for granted.

There is yet another significance concealed in the choice of these examples. In a sleeping man, there is total cessation of any awareness of the outer world.¹ Similar is the case of a Man of Realisation. He is unconscious of the outer world and at that time if others help his physical existence, he remains totally unconscious of the solicitude he has received.

The example of a child indicates, in its depths, that like a child, a Man of Realisation also has no self-consciousness or vanity.² A child is not at all aware of itself or its hunger, nor is it aware of the mother feeding it. It has no abhimāna of itself. A Man of Realisation is much the same.

Now the question is, does such a Man of Perfection experience the outer world at all? Yes, he does. Now and then. At certain moments he vaguely recognises the existence of the world around. Śaṅkara here indicates that the perceived world for the Man of Perfection is like the world seen in a dream. Thus, the Man of steady Wisdom does recognise the world around, but at all such moments, he is conscious of the non-existent illusory nature of the world interpreted by him through the play of his mind and intellect due to his prārabdha.

¹ *bāhirmukha abhāvāt.*

² *nirābhimānitā.*