

beginning and without end, meaning, it is essentially beyond 'time'. As long as there is the concept of time, the saṃsāra experiences will be there because time is the medium in which saṃsāra is perceived. The moment time is transcended, saṃsāra also must end. 'Beginning' and 'end' are meaningful only in the medium of time.

The sorrows of saṃsāra arising out of this identification with the anātman, unavoidably manifest as the agonies of birth, the pains of growth, the discomforts of decay, the fears of old age, the pangs of disease and the tragedies of death. The cause for all these is ignorance and the consequent identification with the not-Self.

If all the sorrows are to be removed, the cause for them has to be removed. Ignorance can be removed only by the first hand experience of the infinite Reality.





39. Ātman and Anātman – Discrimination (147-153)

नास्त्रैर्न शस्त्रैरनिलेन वह्निना
छेत्तुं न शक्यो न च कर्मकोटिभिः ।
विवेकविज्ञानमहासिना विना
धातुः प्रसादेन सितेन मञ्जुना ॥ १४७ ॥

*nāstrairna śastrairanilena vahninā
chettum na śakyo na ca karmakoṭibhiḥ,
vivekavijñānamahāsinā vinā
dhātuḥ prasādena sitena mañjunā. (147)*

147. Neither by weapons, nor by wind, nor by fire, nor by millions of actions can this bondage be destroyed. By nothing save the wonder sword of Knowledge which comes from discrimination, and is sharpened by the purification of the mind and the intellect, can we end this bondage.

All the sorrows of saṁsāra arise out of the confusion between the Ātman and the anātman, the Self and the not-Self. In order to end these sorrows, this confusion has to be ended. This confusion is called bondage. How can one cut this bondage? How can one destroy and end it?

Weapons of destruction are of two types – (1) when it (the weapon) leaves the hand of the wielder, then whether it strikes the target or not, it never comes back, (2) when it leaves the hand of the wielder, it strikes the target and returns, just like the guided missiles of today. The former type of weapon is called the astra and the latter is known as the śastra. These are the two types of weapons of destruction known to mankind, with which the whole world can be destroyed. But the