

nature of Brahman. In deep sleep ‘objectlessness’ is there, but there is no ‘awareness’ of the Divine.

The equipments of the body, mind and intellect do not function in deep sleep and at that time we burrow into our vāsanās. Though the equipments of experience have been left behind, we are in the causal body – avidyā. That is why we are not able to experience what Om, the pure Self, is. The absence of sorrow which is experienced then is called ‘joy’. This joy experienced during deep sleep is not because of the pillow, nor the cool atmosphere, nor the achievements of yesterday. It is Ātmānanda – the Śruti declare so. It is also evident that such is the direct experience of all people. It has become a tradition among men to accept it. It can also be ascertained by observation and inference (anumāna).

All these evidences compel us to accept that the joy experienced during the deep sleep state is nothing but the distant splendour of pure Consciousness and Its spotless brilliance. Before I slept, I was a miserable creature. When I woke up, I found myself equally miserable. But after I slept and before I awoke, I had no miseries and I was in a state of happiness. This joy was disturbed when the equipments of the body, mind and intellect came into play. Thus, it is established through the words of the scriptures, through direct perception, through tradition and through inference that joy is not in the objects outside, but it is only in the Self within us.

So far, the gross body, the subtle body and the prāṇas have been described and it has been said that these are the vestures of the Ātman. Now the causal body is being explained. In Ātmabodha, it is described as, ‘The indescribable, beginningless ignorance of the spiritual essence.’<sup>1</sup>

The causal body is beginningless, meaning, beyond the pale of time. It is also non-apprehension, the cause because of which

<sup>1</sup> anādyavidyānirvācyā kāraṇopādhirucyate – Ātmabodha-14