



41. Ātman – Unattached (189-191)

योऽयं विज्ञानमयः प्राणेषु हृदि स्फुरत्ययं ज्योतिः ।
कूटस्थः सन्नात्मा कर्ता भोक्ता भवत्युपाधिस्थः ॥ १८९ ॥

*yo'yaṁ vijñānamayaḥ prāṇeṣu hr̥di sphuratyayaṁ jyotiḥ,
kūṭasthaḥ sannātmā kartā bhoktā bhavatyupādhisthaḥ. (189)*

189. *The Ātman, which is Knowledge Absolute, shines within the prāṇas, in the heart.¹ Though It is immutable, It becomes the doer and the experiencer because of its superimposition (the intellectual sheath).*

In Vedānta, it has been constantly asserted that the seat of the intellect is in the heart, that in the 'cave of the heart' is the intellect and in the midst of the intellect is the shining Ātman. This is just a poetic expression. A man with noble emotion is called a man of 'heart', and he who is bereft of emotion is called 'heartless'. The mind full of love is called the 'heart'. When I enter a rocky cave, then above me, below me, to my sides and in front, in fact everywhere there is nothing but rock. In the same way, when I enter the heart-cave, all around me there can only be 'heart'. 'Heart' means 'love', pure love. In such an atmosphere of universal love the seeker's intellect must function. In 'the cave of the intellect' is Brahman, that is, when the intellect is contemplating upon the Ātman in an atmosphere of universal love, it will be able to recognise the Self as the light illumining its meditative, single pointed thought. Therefore, the Teachers of Vedānta say that in the hr̥daya is the buddhi.

The heart agitated with likes and dislikes is called the 'mind'. The mind is the choking cord around the neck of the individual,

¹ The earlier part of this verse is a statement from *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-upaniṣad* – 4.3.7