

Similarly, we, at the moment, under the influence of the opium of avidyā, non-apprehension of Reality, considering ourselves to be the body-mind-intellect are supremely confused by the objects perceived, emotions felt and thoughts entertained. We cry out, “O Lord! O Teacher! Take me home. Give me peace. Make me happy!” Take you where? Give you what? In reality you are the Self but due to avidyā, you live and behave as though you are an ego.

‘Take me to myself. Give me my own Self.’ You are already in Om, which is your home. Your home is really Om. Never were you out of Om, your home. Hurry home! Hari Om!

You ask, “Then why am I suffering?” All, on account of this opium, the avidyā, which is within you. The Guru, the Teacher, will give you the buttermilk of the ‘study of the śāstras’, ‘spiritual discipline’ and so on, all these for what? To take you home which is Om, where you already are.

Lack of correct thinking produces misconceptions. Think rightly, all misery will end. The text that teaches us to think correctly and discriminate properly is the *Vivekacūḍāmani*, the Crest Jewel of Discrimination.



शुद्धाद्वयब्रह्मविबोधनाश्या सर्पभ्रमो रज्जुविवेकतो यथा ।
रजस्तमःसत्त्वमिति प्रसिद्धा गुणस्तदीयाः प्रथितैः स्वकार्यैः ॥ ११० ॥

*śuddhādvayabrahmavibodhanāśyā
sarparahramo rajjuvivekato yathā,
rajastamahsattvamiti prasiddhā
guṇāstadiyāḥ prathitaiḥ svakāryaiḥ.* (110)

110. By realisation of the pure, non-dual Brahman, māyā can be destroyed, just as the illusion of the snake is removed by the discriminative knowledge of the rope. Its guṇas are rajas, tamas and sattva, distinguished by their respective functions.

The mighty power of delusion can be destroyed through the direct experience of the pure Brahman, the one without a second, just as the illusion of the serpent can be destroyed by the knowledge of the rope, which is the reality behind the delusion. When the non-apprehension of the real substratum ends, the objects of illusory perceptions created by it called ‘misapprehension’, also end.

When the Reality, the Brahman is realised, the confusions that ‘I am the body’, ‘I am the mind’, ‘I am the intellect’ also end, just as the illusory serpent disappears totally on cognition of the rope.

This great avidyā or non-apprehension has sattva, rajas and tamas as its guṇas or properties, they are so named after their functions. The functions of māyā-śakti fall under these three kinds. The guṇas determine the landscapes of the mind and appear different, as of summer and winter the landscape appears different. What will be the individual landscape under the influence of the guṇas is described in the following verse –

