

before the pot was made. When the pot is made, the pot which was hitherto unmanifest is now manifest. Now when was the potential pot born in the mud? The possibility of the pot in the mud was beginningless (anādi). The possibility of the pot in the mud was born when the mud was born, nay when the earth was born, nay it was in the very essential nature of the earth. When the pot is made, the potential pot has become manifest. When a pot has manifested, its beginningless ‘potential’ condition has ended. Before (prāk), its actual manifestation, the manifested pot was not there (abhāva). The moment it manifested, its potential state which was beginningless, ended. So this ‘previous non-existence’ (prāk-abhāva), is an example given to illustrate a beginningless thing coming to an end. Ordinarily, that which is beginningless must be endless. But Vedānta says that it is possible for a beginningless thing to end, how? Like the ‘previous non-existence’ of a pot. When the pot has manifested, its ‘unmanifest condition’ which was beginningless has ended.

The Guru says, “Similarly, even though avidyā is beginningless, it ends with the apprehension of Reality (vidyā), therefore, though your question is beautifully put, please understand that it is not a great question after all.”



अनादेरपि विध्वंसः प्रागभावस्य वीक्षितः ।  
यद्बुद्ध्युपाधिसम्बधात्परिकल्पितमात्मनि ॥ २०० ॥

*anāderapi vidhvamśah prāgabhāvasya vikṣitah,  
yadbuddhyupādhisambamdhātparikalpitamātmani. (200)*

जीवत्वं न ततोऽन्यत्तु स्वरूपेण विलक्षणः ।  
सम्बन्धस्त्वात्मनो बुद्ध्या मिथ्याज्ञानपुरःसरः ॥ २०१ ॥

*jīvatvam na tato'nyattu svarūpeṇa vilakṣaṇah,  
sambandhastvātmano buddhyā mithyājñānapurahsaraḥ. (201)*

200 & 201. Although it is beginningless, 'former non-existence' is found to have an end. So too, the jīvahood which is imagined to be in the Ātman, through its apparent conditioning in the superimposed attributes like the intellect, is not real. But the other, the Self, is intrinsically different from it (jīvahood). The relation between the Ātman and the intellect is due to the 'false knowledge'.

The concept of individuality has arisen because of the Consciousness identifying with or reflecting in the intellect. 'Intellect' is used here because the mind and the sense organs are incorporated in the subtle body. This jīva-bhāva, the individuality, in its essential nature, is nothing other than the Ātman but because of the conditionings, the Self, the Om, appears to be the PFT, the jīva. If I can understand myself to be of the nature of the Self, the sorrows that are supplied to me through the body, the mind and the intellect can be ended. Thus, though this avidyā is beginningless, it has an end, as in prāk-abhāva, as in the example of the 'beginningless non-existence of the pot in the mud ending in the production of the pot from the mud'. If this avidyā has an end, O Teacher! tell us how it can be ended. What is the secret technique?

This jīva-bhāvanā has come about because of the intellect and so through the same intellect it should be ended. The intellect turned outward towards the OET creates the jīvahood. When the same intellect is turned inward towards the Om, the awakening of the Ātman, the Self, takes place. At this moment the intellect is functioning, turned entirely outwards and is fully engaged in its busy preoccupations with the fascinating world of OET. The worlds of experiences in the OET are all delusory misconceptions born out of the non-apprehension of Reality. Hence the intellect at this moment is full of wrong notions, misconceptions and false knowledge (mithyā-jñāna). Due to the ignorance of the Self, the misconceptions, 'I am the body, I am the mind, I am the intellect' have arisen, and thereafter, considering myself to be the limited ego and thinking that my happiness depends upon the world of objects, I find no way to gain real and lasting happiness. All this