

When a snake is seen in place of a rope, the illusory snake form covers the form of the rope and the dharmas of the snake are superimposed. The colour, the shape and the rough surface of the rope are not seen, but the colour, the shape and the smooth surface of the snake are seen instead. When these dharmas of the snake are seen, we say the snake is, the snake exists. In fact, the snake is not and the rope is, but we say the rope is not and the snake is.

Therefore, it is not just a case of the snake lending its dharmas to the rope. But the ‘existence’ in the rope is also temporarily loaned to the snake. Where there is no rope, superimposition of the snake cannot be. Hence the rope lends its ‘existence’ to the snake, and the snake lends its ‘dharmas’ to the rope. When we put the two of them together, we say, ‘This is a snake’. This experience of the ‘existence’ of the snake is the cause of sorrow.

Again, if there be any superimposition, it will always be complete. A ‘half-snake’ – ‘half-rope’ vision or a ‘half-ghost’ – ‘half-post’ vision is not possible either it is a ghost or it is a post. Even when we have a glimpse of Reality, the continuance of samsāra ends, as ignorance completely disappears.

When the mind is predominantly rājasika and tāmasika, it will create superimpositions and will make a fool of the individual, for he will then, start seeing things which are not there. Such a fool is subjected to the sorrows of samsāra. They are birth, growth, disease, decay and death. Nobody can escape them. He who has been deluded by his own superimpositions will have to undergo these sorrows.



अतःप्राहुर्मनोऽविद्यां पण्डितास्तत्त्वदर्शिनः ।  
येनैव भ्रान्त्यते विश्वं वायुनेवाभ्रमण्डलम् ॥ १८० ॥

*ataḥprāhurmano'vidyāṁ paṇḍitāstattvadarśināḥ,  
yenaiva bhrāmyate viśvam vāyunevābhramaṇḍalam. (180)*

180. Hence the mind is considered to be *avidyā* by sages who have discovered its secret. By this alone the universe of experience is tossed around like the clouds by the wind.

Because of the reasons given (vide verse – 174 to 179), the learned ones say that the mind alone is *avidyā*. It is because of the mind that the world and its activities continue. Purposeless knocking about is *bhrāma* – the illusion of purposeless change. ‘*Bhrāmyate*’, means moving about with no aim or goal through a series of profitless changes. Thus the universe and its activities are knocked about by the mind just as the clouds are knocked about by the wind. This jogging alone in the realm of change creates sorrows for man.



तन्मनःशोधनं कार्यं प्रयत्नेन मुमुक्षुणा ।  
विशुद्धे सति चैतस्मिन्मुक्तिः करफलायते ॥ १८१ ॥

*tanmanahśodhanam kāryam prayatnena mumukṣuṇā,  
viśuddhe sati caitasminmuktih karaphalāyate. (181)*

181. Therefore, the mind must be diligently purified by one who seeks Liberation. When the mind has been purified, Liberation becomes as readily available as a fruit in one's own hand.

From the above explanation it is evident that for spiritual realisation the mind has to be purified. ‘Purification’ of the mind means removal of *rajoguṇa* and *tamoguṇa*, meaning, their resultant agitations and veiling from the personality. This is not an easy job because the psychological ‘dirt’ within has been accumulated by us all through past ages. With great effort and intelligent self-control, purification of the mind can be achieved.

No effort can be consistently put in by anyone unless he has seen an inspiring goal. Such an amount of effort to cleanse one's inner equipment can be put in only by him who is inspired by the goal of Liberation from matter vestures.