

Similarly, in order to recognise the Ātman in me, 'as the Self present everywhere', I must look at It from my spiritual standpoint. Only when I withdraw myself into my spiritual personality and then look out, shall I recognise the entire world as the spiritual Reality, the Self. Therefore, one who has transcended the body, mind and intellect, meaning, all the 'conditionings', alone can come to experience the nature of the Self, as the unbroken, immutable, one homogenous, Reality.

He who thus comes to experience this infinite Consciousness, where there is no longer any separateness 'within' and 'without', when there is no longer a perceived world of plurality, as all of them have now dissolved into this one experience of infinitude, is said to be 'liberated' from all the natural limitations of his body, mind and intellect.



सर्वात्मता बन्धविमुक्तिहेतुः
सर्वात्मभावान्न परोऽस्ति कश्चित् ।
दृश्याग्रहे सत्युपपद्यतेऽसौ
सर्वात्मभावोऽस्य सदात्मनिष्ठया ॥ ३४० ॥

*sarvātmataḥ bandhaviṃmuktihetuḥ
sarvātmabhāvanāna paro'sti kaścit,
dṛśyāgrahe satyupapadyate'sau
sarvātmabhāvo'sya sadātmaniṣṭhayā. (340)*

340. To recognise the entire universe as the Self is the means of release from all sense of bondage. There is nothing higher than realising the 'universe as the Self'. One realises this state by excluding the objective world through steadfastness in the eternal Ātman.

To expand oneself in spiritual vision and experience the totality as one's own Self is 'sarvātma-bhāva', the recognition of the 'universe as the Self'. At present, our personality is extremely egocentric.

We fail to recognise or to identify with our country or state or community or even beyond our own terrible attachments to our body and possessions. In fact, beyond these attachments we have no other personality. From this self-centred, extremely limited, supremely circumscribed, frog in the well experience, we have to grow, expand and gain the vision of ‘the entire universe as the Self in us’.

Expand to realise that ‘all is the Self’. Try to find accommodation for everyone in your compassion and in your love for the world around you. Recognise that all things are creation of Nārāyaṇa. Then recognise that things are only Nārāyaṇa Himself, His various divine forms, as such they are all the moving temples of the Lord. Therefore, Lord alone exists. Ultimately when you come to experience that the ‘Self in me is the Self everywhere’, then alone there is total Liberation from the bondage of the mortal. There is nothing superior to this experience of the oneness in everything; this is the highest experience (na-paro-asti-kaścit).

When once this experience is gained, we get completely rooted in the spiritual experience of the Supreme. The perception of plurality ceases, meaning, no more do we see the objects as distinctly separate, but in that new light of wisdom, all of them coalesce to be the one, shining in their new garment of beauty, peace, truth. The names and forms are there, but in and through them all, we come to see the Truth, the Reality, everywhere.

In our spiritual sādhanā, a stage comes, when nothing of the outer world is experienced – neither the objects, emotions, thoughts, nor the body, mind, intellect. Within and without, there is nothing but the blinding flash of Reality. That state, in which there is nothing but Consciousness, and perceptions of the body, mind and intellect have totally ended, is the experience of the ‘whole universe as the Self’ (sarvātma-bhāva).

The spiritual apprehension is in fact entirely different from all the intellectual and logical conclusions arrived at by our sages.