

504. *How can there be merits and demerits for me who have no sense organs, no mind, who am without modification and form, who am the realisation of absolute Bliss? In the passage, 'not touched' and so on, Śruti also mentions this.*

How can I have puṇya and pāpa? Neither have I commission nor any omission. I am pure Consciousness.

How can one who has no sense organs and no mind, who is without modification and form, have merits and demerits? A blind man lying totally paralysed cannot be accused of having kicked me on my nose.

The first line of the verse is in the language of negation and explains what I am not and what I have not. My nature is positively the essence of unbroken Bliss. How can I be accused of having merits and demerits? In support of his statement, Śaṅkara quotes from Śruti. 'Untouched by merit, untouched by sin, he is then in deep sleep, gone beyond all mental agitations.'¹ This is the description of the individual who is in the deep sleep state. In *Bṛhadāraṇyaka-upaniṣad*, Yājñavalkya, the Teacher, says so while explaining the sleeper.

In sleep, the individual is in deep ignorance (mūla-ajñāna). On waking up, his desires will sprout again; so will his thoughts and actions, faithfully, as the same species of his vāsanās. When you are in the causal body there is no sorrow. It is only in the realm of effect that there is sorrow. How can there be sorrow for the individual who has gone beyond his vāsanās to Om? When you are in avidyā you are a potential puṇyavāna or pāpī. But once you have gone beyond avidyā into vidyā, how can there be any merit or demerit? When the non-apprehension of Reality has ended in Its apprehension, how can there be any misapprehension?



¹ *ananvāgatam puṇyena – Bṛhadāraṇyaka-upaniṣad – 4.3.22*