

अहंभावस्य देहेऽस्मिन्निःशेषविलयावधि ।
सावधानेन युक्तात्मा स्वाध्यासापनयं कुरु ॥ २८४ ॥

*ahambhāvasya dehe'smīnīḥśeṣavilayāvadhi,
sāvadhānena yuktātma svādhyāsāpanayam kuru.* (284)

284. Till the identification with the body is completely rooted out, with vigilance and concentration, deny entirely all your superimpositions.

'How long should this practice be continued?' This doubt assails all beginners in Vedānta study. Śaṅkara categorically answers this illogical and idle question and says, 'Till the attitude 'I am this body' ends totally with no trace remaining.' The superimposition has to be done away with very carefully, with all vigilance (sāvadhānena).

Try to remove this misconception with great concentration and care, through study, reflection and meditation slowly and calmly.



प्रतीतिर्जीवजगतोः स्वप्नवद्भाति यावता ।
तावन्निरन्तरं विद्वन्स्वाध्यासापनयं कुरु ॥ २८५ ॥

*pratītitirjīvajagatoḥ svapnavadbhāti yāvatā,
tāvannirantaram vidvansvādhyāsāpanayam kuru.* (285)

285. O learned one! As long as even a dreamlike perception of the world of objects and of the experiencing ego (*jīva*) persists; continuously strive to deny entirely all your superimpositions.

There are two interpretations to this verse –

One school of commentators emphasises that till the *jīva* and *jagat* distinctions – the subject-object relationship appears even as a dream, the practice of self withdrawal has to be continued. According to this school, the practice stops when everything

around, including the sādhaka's very individuality appears as a vision in a dream.

The other school says that even if there is a dreamlike perception of the subject-object relationship, the practice of self-withdrawal has to be continued till the sādhaka enters completely into samādhi.

Two types of Men of Realisation are revered and respected in Hinduism. The first type is those who even after Realisation come to work in society.¹ They work because they see the world around them and even while they are working, they are fully aware that the world of plurality is unreal, like a dream. Śrī Rāmacandra, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Ācārya Śaṅkara, King Janaka are examples of this type.

There are the others who turn completely to meditation. They do not experience anything of the world outside. Whenever the perception of plurality occurs, they immediately withdraw their minds and try to remain fixed in Brahman. Both these types are indicated in the sensitivity of this verse.



निद्राया लोकवार्तायाः शब्दादेरपि विस्मृतेः ।
क्वचिन्नावसरं दत्त्वा चिन्तयात्मानमात्मनि ॥ २८६ ॥

*nidrāyā lokavārtāyāḥ śabdāderapi vismrteḥ,
kvacinnāvasaram dattvā cintayāt mānamātmani.* (286)

286. *Without giving even the slightest chance to forget the Ātman because of sleep (unawareness), matters of the world or sense objects, reflect steadily upon the Self in the mind.*

Two forces from within distract men from pursuing their ideal; (a) unawareness and (b) concern for worldly things. It is generally observed that when a man is fired with enthusiasm to dedicate himself

¹ they are called the Kāraka Puruṣas.