



## 56. Condemnation of the Ego (298-309)

सन्त्यन्ये प्रतिबन्धाः पुंसः संसारहेतवो दृष्टाः ।  
तेषामेकं मूलं प्रथमविकारो भवत्यहङ्कारः ॥ २९८ ॥

*santyanye pratibandhāḥ puṁsaḥ saṁsārahetavo dr̥ṣṭāḥ,  
teṣāmekam mūlaṁ prathamavikāro bhavatyahankāraḥ. (298)*

298. It is observed that there are other obstacles also which hurl man into a whirl of births and deaths. Their one root, for the reasons given above, is the ego, the first modification of ignorance.

The superimpositions of the not-Self on the pure and then a firm identification with the gross and subtle bodies are not the only obstructions in man's attempt to realise his peaceful Self. There are other causes too, like desires and so on, which bring about mental agitations causing the perception of the pluralistic phenomenal world. Desires, passions, lust, greed, jealousy and so on, are all causes for more and more sorrows of man. They tie him firmly to the rack of change, to the wheel of births and deaths.

The root cause of all these is the ignorance of Reality. The very first modification of spiritual ignorance is the ego sense in us. Had 'I' not been there, there would not have been any sorrow. If 'I' am not there, nothing else can be. As long as this 'I' exists, everything else exists. This 'I' is the very first effect of ignorance, most appropriately called 'nescience'.

Ignorance expressed in the body and mind is called 'I'. Therefore, the renunciation of this 'I' is insisted upon. Then the individual is liberated from the bondage of his vāsanās. There are