

॥ विवेकचूडामणिः ॥

# VIVEKA CHOODAMANI

PART 7 of 9

## *The Crest Jewel of Discrimination*

PART 7: JIVANMUKTI – Liberation While Living

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***“THE SANDEEPANY EXPERIENCE”***

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TEXT

**11.7**

Reflections by  
**SWAMI GURUBHAKTANANDA**



## ***Sandeepany's Vedanta Course***

### ***List of All the Course Texts in Chronological Sequence:***

<b>Text No.</b>	<b>TITLE OF TEXT</b>	<b>Text No.</b>	<b>TITLE OF TEXT</b>
1	<i>Sadhana Panchakam</i>	24	<i>Hanuman Chalisa</i>
2	<i>Tattwa Bodha</i>	25	<i>Vakya Vritti</i>
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4	<i>Bhaja Govindam</i>	27	<i>Kaivalya Upanishad</i>
5	<i>Manisha Panchakam</i>	28	<i>Bhagavad Geeta (Discourse -- )</i>
6	<i>Forgive Me</i>	29	<i>Mundaka Upanishad</i>
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10	<i>Bodha Sara</i>	33	<i>The Mahavakyas, Panchadasi 5</i>
<b>11.7</b>	<b><i>Viveka Choodamani – Part 7/9</i></b>	34	<i>Aitareya Upanishad</i>
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13	<i>Drig-Drishya Viveka</i>	36	<i>Taittiriya Upanishad</i>
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17	<i>Manah Shodhanam</i>	40	<i>108 Names of Puja Gurudev</i>
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***Sandeepany Sadhanalaya*** is an institution run by the Chinmaya Mission in Powai, Mumbai, teaching a 2-year Vedanta Course. It has a very balanced daily programme of basic Samskrit, Vedic chanting, Vedanta study, Bhagavatam, Ramacharitmanas, Bhajans, meditation, sports and fitness exercises, team-building outings, games and drama, celebration of all Hindu festivals, weekly Gayatri Havan and Guru Paduka Pooja, and Karma Yoga activities.

This series is an effort to promote the learning of Vedanta; it does not replace Course, but hopes to inspire young people to spend two years of their life for an experience that is sure to make a far-reaching spiritual impact on their personal lives. Sandeepany is an all-round spiritual course that gives proper direction to the youth and to those approaching retirement. Hinduism is in dire need of a band of systematically trained teachers or Acharyas who can serve this Eternal Religion.

***– Swami Gurubhaktananda, 18<sup>th</sup> July 2018, Auspicious Birthday of Acharyaji***

Om Namah Shivaaya!

Text  
**11.7**



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## VIVEKA CHOODAMANI – Part 7

*“Jivanmukti – Liberation While Living”*

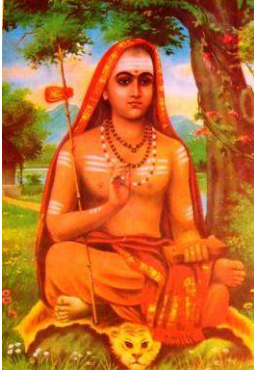
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Part 7 of 9: (Verses 426-479 of 581)

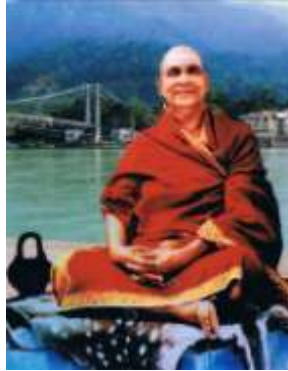
Reflections by

**SWAMI GURUBHAKTANANDA**

on the 109 Lectures by **Swami Advayanandaji & Swami Nikhilanandaji**  
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from January 28<sup>th</sup> to July 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2012



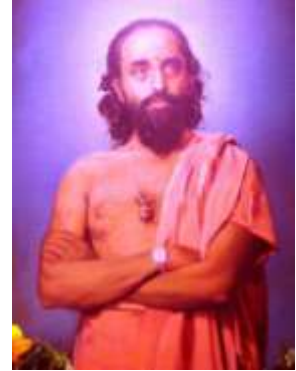
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## **Personal Dedication**

### **1. To my Parents, Smt Sharadaben & Sri Ratilalbhai Kapitan**

*who inspired me to study in life, to stick to the path of Dharma and pursue the highest ideals; and swamped me with their abundant Love;*

### **2. To Pujya Sri Swami Vimalanandaji Maharaj**

*the President of the Divine Life Society of Rishikesh, Uttarakhand, India, who constantly encouraged and supported this effort;*

### **3. To Pujya Sri Swami Tejomayanandaji (Guruji)**

*for his boundless vision and inspiration to create a vibrant organisation;*

### **4. To Sri Swami Advayanandaji and Sri Swami Sharadanandaji**

*my Acharyaji and Upa-Acharyaji at Sandeepany, who imparted their bountiful knowledge and wisdom with rare selfless Divine Love, just as the Rishis of yore would wish to see them do.*

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**THE GANGA RIVER**  
*at Vasishtha Guha*



॥ विवेकचूडामणिः ॥

## ***VIVEKA CHOODAMANI – Part 7***

***“Jivanmukti – Liberation While Living”***

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**VIVEKA CHOODAMANI**  
"The Crest-Jewel of Discrimination"

## **GENERAL INTRODUCTION**

**P**UJYA SWAMI CHINMAYANANDAJI writes the following in his Introduction to his book on the *Viveka Choodamani*:

"Vedanta is truly the Science of Life. Sri Shankara, the great interpreter of Vedanta, not only gave us his commentaries on the Upanishads, the Brahma Sutras and the Bhagavad Gita, but also many primary texts which introduce the seeker to the joys of Vedanta. One of the greatest texts he has written as an introduction to Vedanta, is the *Viveka Choodamani*, which means, 'The Crest-Jewel of Discrimination'.

"A careful study of these verses with the full freedom to enquire will give any student a correct understanding of the entire theory of Vedanta and he can, even without a very serious study of the scriptures, start his daily practices with tremendous benefits.

"There are hundreds of seekers who, without understanding the fundamentals, are aimlessly struggling along a so-called spiritual path. Naturally, they suffer agonies of painful disappointment, although they have behind them years of painstaking practices. An exhaustive and careful study of this text helps to avoid all the pitfalls on the way to progress. It is my intention to bring forth from every verse not only its obvious meaning, but also its hidden import which gives out a wealth of information and helpful suggestions to ensure a steady progress."

The *Viveka Choodamani* is a prime text in the **Vedanta Course** at Sandeepany.

Bondage is caused by a lack of enquiry, and ceases only by making an enquiry. If we turn to differentiate Self from the non-Self, if we shift our attention from the world of names and forms to their substratum Brahman, then we can arrive at the final goal quickly.

The *Viveka Choodamani* is a Prakarana Grantha. Its theme is: DISCRIMINATION.

It is a very famous text of Bhagavan Sri Shankaracharyaji. It has great poetic beauty.

Swami Chinmayanandaji has said, "This text is sufficient to lead the spiritual life."

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## VIVEKA CHUDAMANI – Part 7

Verses 426-479, 54 Verses

### JIVANMUKTI – Liberation While Living

#### 7.1 HALLOWED GROUNDS OF SAINTHOOD

(Verses 426 – 445, 20 No.)

**WE NOW HAVE WHAT** promises to be the ‘**Guided Tour**’ of our lives. We are about to visit the hallowed grounds of Sainthood. It is the lighthouse that attracts all spiritual seekers to the sacred, divine path. No spiritual aspirant would want to miss joining Bhagavan Shankaracharyaji on the tour he is about to take us.

In the next 20 verses, we get a comprehensive idea of what we are all striving for in the spiritual life. Sri Shankaracharyaji clarifies all misconceptions we may have of the supreme state of Sainthood. In these verses we realise how lofty a state it is, and what a grand goal Vedanta places before us.

All that has been said about the Reality so far, and the Path by which it may be reached, is to be recalled as we begin this tour. This entire chapter has to be seen as the culmination of the 425 verses which precede it. It is the grand teaching contained in all the prior verses that has made this state possible.

It is the toil and struggle of the dark night that has to be remembered before we can appreciate the beauty and majesty of the rising sun! Sainthood is the sun that arises out of that darkness. Unless we see this as the background of the state of a realised saint, we will never fully appreciate the signs we are about to be shown of his life.

Sainthood is something we all have to strive hard to earn. It does not come without paying the full price for it. That hard struggle is to be seen in every verse prior to this one. We are now seeing the fruits of that struggle. The very first line of the first verse reminds us of the Source of Sainthood – being anchored in the Truth.

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**Verse 426:**    *Who is a Jivanmukta?*

ब्रह्माकारतया सदा स्थिततया निर्मुक्तबाह्यार्थधी-  
रन्यावेदितभोग्यभोगकलनो निद्रालुवद्वलवत् ।  
स्वप्नालोकितलोकवज्जगदिदं पश्यन्वचिल्लब्धधी-  
रास्ते कश्चिदनन्तपुण्यफलभुग्धन्यः स मान्यो भुवि      ॥ ४२६॥

1	<i>brahmaakaaratayaa sadaa sthitatayaa, nirmuktabaahyaarthadheeh</i>	On account of <u>absorption in Brahman</u> , on account of the constancy of that abidance, freed from the sense of reality of external objects;
2	<i>anyaaveditabhogya- bhogakalanah, nidraaluvat baalavat;</i>	When objects are offered by others, the saint only seemingly enjoys them – i) like one who is <u>sleepy</u> ; ii) like a <u>baby</u> ;
3	<i>svapnaalokita-lokavat jagat idam, pashyan kvachit labdhadheeh</i>	or, iii) as though the world were just <u>a dream</u> – this is how he perceives the world to be, recognizing that it is now here and now not;
4	<i>aaste kashchit ananta-punya-phala-bhuk, dhanyah sah maanyah bhuvi.</i>	Such a man is rare indeed. Being the enjoyer of fruits of untold merits, he is truly blessed and <u>most revered on earth</u> .

### Absorption in Brahman

**1** At the outset, we are given the foundation of the saint's experience. He is rooted through and through in the Reality, Brahman. Absorption in Him is the foundation of the life of a saint. That is the sole source of the saint's extraordinary life. Whatever description follows of his life, should be seen against this basic fact.

Sainthood does not come in any other way. There is no "easy way" to Divinity. When all the Sravana, Manana and Nididhyasana is done to perfection, the reward is Sainthood.

What is the price we have to pay for it? That is also stated at the outset. The price is to renounce something most difficult for the ordinary man. We are asked *not to see the objects of the world as being real*.

### Saint's View of the World

**2** Shankaracharyaji has taken great pains thus far to teach us to see the world as Unreality. He is not asking us to renounce the world, but to renounce seeing it as reality. The Reality is Brahman, not the world. We should be able to see Brahman in the world. Then alone is it possible to *"only seemingly enjoy them."*

That is the bottom line of Vedanta. That is the unique vision offered to us by Vedanta. This is the meaning of **Renunciation**, the primary value that Vedanta stands for.

Three similes attempt to explain the saint's attitude towards the world:

i) Like one in Sleep: To one who is asleep, the world is not there, it is as good as not existing. To a saint, this is the case even in his waking state!

ii) Like a Child: Every mother knows how much she has to struggle to feed a little child. The child's mind is just not on the food; it is elsewhere. The mother tries all her tricks to draw the child's attention to the food. A saint is like that towards the world – indifferent to it because his mind is 'elsewhere' – dissolved in God.

iii) Like a Dream: When we wake up from our dream, do we not laugh it away even if we dreamt being a king. So too, the saint laughs away his experience of the world, however tempting, cynical, critical, painful or kingly his experiences with it have been. They are all just considered to be a dream.

What examples to illustrate a saint's attitude after realization! A picture of carefreeness. To care for such childlike saints, God sends special envoys of people who take care of these 'divine children' to do the needful to keep their body and soul together.



### The Ephemeral World

**3 Kvachit:** “*now and then*”. There is a reason why the saint is able to have such an attitude towards the world. We already know that he sees the world as being unreal. But why is it considered to be unreal? The reason is now given – it is because it is ephemeral.

The world and its objects come and go. Wealth comes today and goes tomorrow. Nothing remains with us forever. The most dear object decays and dies one day.

### The Rarity of Saints

**4 Kaschid:** “*someone; such a person*”. The point about such a saint is that it could be anyone, from any part of the world – from any religion, from any caste or creed, from any country. There are no physical limitations for such great liberated beings. Wherever they arise, they are a true blessing to the whole world – indeed, the whole universe!

Liberation is, indeed, a universal phenomenon, bringing universal benefits. A liberated being is blessed, and he is a blessing to all others. He reveres all and all revere him.

We have taken pains over this verse as it lays the foundation for this chapter. It is the perfect ‘Announcement’ or ‘Advertisement’ for the long tour that we are to take into the saint’s kingdom.

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## 7.1.1 FOUR ASPECTS of a Jivanmukta (Verses 427-431, 5 No.)

### Verse 427: The Four Aspects

स्थितप्रज्ञो यतिरयं यः सदानन्दमश्नुते ।  
ब्रह्मण्येव विलीनात्मा निर्विकारो विनिष्क्रियः ॥ ४२७॥

1	<b><i>sthitaprajnah yatih ayam</i></b>	i) He is one of <u>steady wisdom</u> and master of his senses;
2	<b><i>yah sadaanandam ashnute;</i></b>	ii) He enjoys everlasting <u>Bliss</u> ;
3	<b><i>brahmani eva vileenaatmaa</i></b>	iii) He has <u>merged</u> himself in Brahman alone;
4	<b><i>nirvikaarah vinishhkriyah.</i></b>	and iv) He is free of all <u>modifications</u> and activities.

This verse is of the nature of a “CONTENTS” page for the whole Chapter. Each Pada covers an aspect of a liberated person. There are four aspects:

i) **1 Sthithaprajnah:** “*firmly established*”. This word is used in the Bhagavad Gita where it refers to the sage of steady wisdom, firmly established in God-consciousness. (428)

ii) **2 Sadaanandam:** “*always in bliss*”. He is immersed in undying divine Bliss. This is the hallmark of the state of liberation. (429)

iii) **3 Vileenaatmaa:** “*the dissolution of individuality*”, the God-intoxicated state wherein there is no individuality or ego left. It has merged completely in Universality. (430)

iv) **4 Nirvikaarah:** “*free of all modifications*”, where there are no fluctuations of thoughts in the mind. The mind has completely dissolved. (431)

Then, we have the well-known eleven “*Jivanmukta Lakshana*” verses (432-442), followed by three verses (443 – 445) that emphatically conclude on the most important qualification for Jivanmukti – namely, Dispassion.

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**Verse 428: 1. The Man of STEADY WISDOM**

ब्रह्मात्मनोः शोधितयोरेकभावावगाहिनी ।  
निर्विकल्पा च चिन्मात्रा वृत्तिः प्रज्ञेति कथ्यते ।  
सुस्थिताऽसौ भवेद्यस्य स्थितप्रज्ञः स उच्यते ॥ ४२८॥

1	<i>brahmaatmanoh shodhitayoh</i>	<i>Between Brahman and the Self, a thorough differentiation or <u>analysis</u></i>
2	<i>eka bhaava avagaahinee;</i>	<i>brings one to see the <u>Oneness</u> between them.</i>
3	<i>nirvikalpaa cha chit maatraa</i>	<i>Free from limitations and duality, and concerned only with pure knowledge –</i>
4	<i>vrittih prajnaa iti kathyate;</i>	<i>such a state of mind is defined as “<u>Illumination</u>”.</i>
5	<i>susthita saa bhavet yasya</i>	<i>One who is steady in this state of illumination –</i>
6	<i>sthitaprajnah sa uchyate.</i>	<i>such a one is known as “<u>a man of steady wisdom</u>”.</i>

It is very rare to find a verse such as this in which the Master has crammed so much information on the loftiest part of Vedanta, describing the very fundamental characteristics of a **Sthithaprajna** within the space of a single verse.

**1-2 Eka Bhaava:** “single idea”. The first condition to be a Sthitaprajna is to attain the Knowledge that admits only the identity of the Self with Brahman. This is the highest state possible in a man. In the mind of an ignorant man, every thought contains the Ahamkara Vritti or the thought of the Ego. In the mind of a God-realised sage, every thought contains the Brahmakara Vritti, the thought that “I am Brahman”. This thought is the opposite of the Ego-thought.

**3 Nirvikalpa:** “free from all duality or limitations”. The Knowledge of Brahman is unique compared to all other knowledge, and hence it is usually written with a capital letter. Nothing else is as all-inclusive as Brahman. When one has this thought in his mind, then nothing can be left out of it, since Brahman is all that exists.

**Chinmaatra (Chit + Maatra):** “Pure Knowledge”. This is not knowledge about something; it is Knowledge itself – it includes the knower, the object to be known and the means of knowing it. It is the solution to all the differences we see in the world. When every thought processed in the mind passes through this thought, a unified, integrated thought emerges. The sage alone has the ability to integrate all castes, sects, religions, etc.

**4 Vritti:** Although it literally means “thoughts or mental activity”, here it has to be taken to mean “the state of mind” which enshrines only Prajna, the thought or Knowledge whose sole object is Brahman. This is a single thought which is also called the Brahmakara Vritti. The Knowledge referred to here has been described in the earlier lines of the verse.

**5 Susthita:** “steadiness”. One more condition has to be added to the above. The state described has to be steadily maintained for a long period. Only then can it be said that it has been perfectly established. The sign of its steadiness is that the sage who possesses it is always at equilibrium under all conditions. He never wavers from Truth.

**6 Sthithaprajna:** When all the above conditions are met, the person can be given the description of being a Sthithaprajna, the sage of steady wisdom.

**Verse 429: 2. Experienter of ENDLESS BLISS**

यस्य स्थिता भवेत्प्रज्ञा यस्यानन्दो निरन्तरः ।

प्रपञ्चो विस्मृतप्रायः स जीवन्मुक्त इष्यते

॥ ४२९॥

1	<i>yasya sthita bhavet prajnaa</i>	<i>He in whom this illumination is very steady;</i>
2	<i>yasya aanandah nirantarah;</i>	<i>for such a one the <u>experience of Bliss</u> is endless;</i>
3	<i>prapanchah vismritapraayah</i>	<i>For whom the phenomenal world is as good as forgotten or non-existent –</i>
4	<i>sa jeevanmukta ishhyate.</i>	<i>such a one is considered to be a <u>Jivanmukta</u>.</i>

**1-2** Being immersed in unending Bliss is the main point of this verse. The condition for this experience is to be firmly established as a Sthitaprajna.

**3-4** The Bliss is so intoxicating that the world is ‘**as good as forgotten**’. That it is not *completely* forgotten is to our benefit. Otherwise how would we have got the knowledge of Vedanta? How will the Parampara have continued to this day if the realized sages had completely forgotten this world?

**Verse 430: 3. The Death of EGOISM**

लीनधीरपि जागर्ति जाग्रद्धर्मविवर्जितः ।

बोधो निर्वासनो यस्य स जीवन्मुक्त इष्यते

॥ ४३०॥

1	<i>leenadheeh api jaagarti</i>	<i>To have an intellect merged in Brahman, even though he may be in the waking state,</i>
2	<i>jaagrad-dharma-vivarjitah;</i>	<i>is most uncharacteristic of being in wakefulness!</i>
3	<i>bodhah nirvaasanah yasya</i>	<i>The mind of a sage surely has to be free of all desire –</i>
4	<i>sa jeevanmukta ishhyate.</i>	<i>he alone can be considered to be a <u>Jivanmukta</u>.</i>

This verse describes the third aspect seen in a Jivanmukta, namely, the complete absorption of the intellect in Brahman. How can such a state be identified by others?

**1-2** Always the previous aspects are to be included in the present one, i.e. the four aspects are not independent of each other but one in essence. The third characteristic under focus is that the sage gets totally dissolved or merged in God-Experience.

Absorption in Brahman is usually considered possible while one is in deep meditation. It is true that meditation is where this aspect is best nurtured. However, there comes a stage when the Jivanmukta remains absorbed in Brahman even when he is not meditating. Even in the waking state, he is fully aware of being in Brahman. This is an unusual occurrence not seen in normal experience.

**3-4** Such absorption brings about the following three changes in one’s personality:

i) **End of Individuality.** Firstly, individuality does not exist any longer. It is like a salt crystal that completely dissolves in water and cannot be traced again. All sense of individuality vanishes beyond any trace by the Jivanmukta’s absorption in Brahman.

ii) **End of Egoism.** Secondly, we know that Egoism arises from individuality. The destruction of individuality means that Egoism dies a natural death also.

iii) **End of Desire.** Thirdly, from Egoism arises Desire. Desire also dies when ego is destroyed. Desire lies at the head of a long chain that leads all the way to Sorrow. The whole chain simply disappears.

All this is the result of being totally merged in God-consciousness, the third aspect.

Up to this point, it may be misunderstood that the realized sage is not interested in the world and its progress at all, that he becomes useless to the world, perhaps even a burden to the world. This is certainly not so. The verses on “Jivanmukta Lakshana” that soon follow, give precise clarification on that point.

**Verse 431: 4. Free of All MODIFICATIONS**

शान्तसंसारकलनः कलावानपि निष्कलः ।

यस्य चित्तं विनिश्चिन्तं स जीवन्मुक्त इष्यते

॥ ४३१॥

1	<i>shaanta-samsaara-kalanah</i>	i) His concern for the <b>world</b> has become stilled;
2	<i>kalaavaan api nishhkalah;</i>	ii) Though having a <b>body</b> consisting of parts, yet he is identified with the ‘Partless’ in himself;
3	<i>yasya chittam vinishchintam</i>	iii) His <b>mind</b> is free from all anxiety –
4	<i>sa jeevanmukta ishhyate.</i>	such a one is considered to be a <b>Jivanmukta</b> .

Finally, we come to the fourth aspect of a sage – the fact that he is free of all the modifications, especially those that relate to his mind, i.e. the thought modifications.

**1** Here it is important to note that externally, nothing is expected to change for the sage. He encounters the same world and objects that we do. The only difference lies in his attitude towards the world. The sage’s mind is calm and still. Hence he reacts differently to worldly concerns from the way we do. He is calm even when the world around him is buzzing with activities, problems, trials and difficulties.

**2 Kala:** “the various parts of the body”. The body is introduced here as a simile for the sage’s attitude. The way the sage looks upon the world is compared to how we look towards our own body. Our body has many parts, but we do not feel that they are in conflict with each other. If our teeth bite the tongue, we do not get upset with them.

The sage sees the world as his Body. He sees all the happenings in the world with perfect balance of mind. He remains cool and calm whatever comes to him from the world.

**Kalaavan:** The word can also mean “someone who has many Kalas” or rays which emanate from the Prana or Life principle. The more rays one manifests, the more semblance there is to the full power of the cosmic life-force. More Kalas means more talent, wisdom and intelligence. The Jivanmukta is seen as a very talented magnetic personality with many Kalas in him. In spite of that, because he has no ego he does not take the credit for these talents. He feels that the Lord is manifesting them through him.

**3** The broad attitude towards the world frees the sage from all anxiety. He is not anxious about his own security, nor is he anxious about the world. In a deep way, he knows that everything will happen for the best. He remains unperturbed by worldly events.



### The Sage in General

From the four aspects we have looked at, we can come to the following overall assessment of a sage in relation to the world.

With his mind rooted in the Lord, the sage is still alert to the needs of those who are interested in what he stands for in the field of spirituality. He does not pay attention to the world in the way that a worldly-minded person does – that is the main difference. His attention is focused on the presence of God in the world, and thus he is able to truly help improve the world. He assists others who are striving to reach the spiritual height that he has already scaled.

As Acharyaji said, “Because his mind is on Brahman, we must not think that we can make a fool of him. His Jagrat state is a thousand times more intense than ours. Others walk on the two legs of Raga and Dwesha (likes and dislikes) in their worldly business. The sage barely ‘touches’ the world when he walks – it is as if he *walks on air!* This means he does not disturb or agitate the world by his actions, nor is he agitated or disturbed by the world.”

The sage’s action does not add Vasanas to his mind. He does not judge others into categories the way we do.

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### **7.1.2 The “JIVANMUKTI LAKSHANA” Verses (Verses 432-442, 11 no.)**

The following eleven verses **JL-1** to **JL-11** (JL = Jivanmukti Lakshana) describe the sage from the standpoint of the world. They form one of the most well-known groups of verses in the book. They point out the key characteristics found in a sage.

Comments are kept to a minimum since most of these qualities have already been dealt with elaborately earlier in the text.

#### **Verse 432: JL-1: Beyond the Body Idea**

वर्तमानेऽपि देहेऽस्मिञ्छायावदनुवर्तिनि ।  
अहन्ताममताऽभावो जीवन्मुक्तस्य लक्षणम् ॥ ४३२॥

1	<i>varutamaane api dehe asmin</i>	Even when the <b>body-idea</b> persists,
2	<i>chhaayaavat anuvartini;</i>	it exists only as a <b>shadow</b> following him;
3	<i>ahantaa-mamataa abhaavah</i>	there is an absence of the <b>‘I’ and ‘my’</b> concepts –
4	<i>jeevanmuktasya lakshhanam.</i>	This is an indication of the state of a <b>Jivanmukta</b> .

The **Body-idea** is not associated with ‘I’ and ‘mine’. The body is a mere shadow – like a *printout* from a computer which does not affect the files in the computer.

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#### **Verse 433: JL-2: Constancy in a Sage**

अतीताननुसन्धानं भविष्यदविचारणम् ।  
औदासीन्यमपि प्राप्तं जीवन्मुक्तस्य लक्षणम् ॥ ४३३॥

1	<i>ateeta ananusandhaanam</i>	<i>Having no thoughts of enjoyments of the <u>past</u>,</i>
2	<i>bhavishhyat avichaaranam;</i>	<i>no thought of anticipation of the <u>future</u>;</i>
3	<i>audaaseenyam api praaptam</i>	<i>and indifference to <u>present</u> accomplishments –</i>
4	<i>jeevanmuktasya lakshhanam.</i>	<i>This is an indication of the state of a <u>Jivanmukta</u>.</i>

The **Constancy** of a sage is being highlighted. He is constant; Time keeps changing.

**1** For the past he holds no regrets, nor does he ruminate over his enjoyments. He does not brood over what he did not do or what he did which he should not have.

**2** The future holds no anxieties or worries for him as he has no expectations.

**3** Whatever comes to him in the present moment he surrenders himself to it, accepts it as it is, without reacting against it or favouring it. This makes him 'carefree' towards his experiences in the present.

**Verse 434: JL-3: The Eye of Equanimity**

गुणदोषविशिष्टेऽस्मिन्स्वभावेन विलक्षणे ।  
सर्वत्र समदर्शित्वं जीवन्मुक्तस्य लक्षणम्

॥ ४३४॥

1	<i>gunadoshha-vishishhte asmin</i>	<i>In a world riddled with objects having <u>defects</u></i>
2	<i>svabhaavena vilakshhane;</i>	<i>which by nature are <u>different</u> from each other,</i>
3	<i>sarvatra samadarshitvam</i>	<i>the sage looks upon all with an <u>eye of Equanimity</u> –</i>
4	<i>jeevanmuktasya lakshhanam.</i>	<i>This is an indication of the state of a <u>Jivanmukta</u>.</i>

**1** The defects in objects lie in the fact that they are transitory, not permanent. In a world where everything comes and goes, joys and sorrows also come and go.

**2** The differences lie in one's circumstances. They are tailor-made for us by our Karma. In God's eyes there is no injustice in varying the circumstances for different people. Just as no two thumb prints are alike, so also no two persons have the same circumstances.

**3** The sage, however, sees both – objects and his circumstances – with **Equanimity**, and remains unaffected by them.

**Verse 435: JL-4: Even-Minded & Unperturbed**

इष्टानिष्ठार्थसम्प्राप्तौ समदर्शितयाऽऽत्मनि ।  
उभयत्राविकारित्वं जीवन्मुक्तस्य लक्षणम्

॥ ४३५॥

1	<i>ishhta anishhta artha sampaaptau</i>	<i>Whether things are <u>pleasing or painful</u> – when confronted with either of these,</i>
2	<i>samadarshitayaa aatmani;</i>	<i>he maintains in his mind an <u>equal attitude</u> to both;</i>
3	<i>ubhayatra avikaaritvam</i>	<i>and remains <u>unperturbed</u> in both cases –</i>
4	<i>jeevanmuktasya lakshhanam.</i>	<i>This is an indication of the state of a <u>Jivanmukta</u>.</i>

**1-3** The quality of **Equipoise** is glorified here. Praise and censure, heat and cold, joy and sorrow – the pairs of opposites – have no power to perturb the sage of balanced mind. This is the most outstanding characteristic of a *Sthithaprajna*. He is able to remain calm and steady under the most fluctuating circumstances. This indicates how well-rooted he is in the Self.

These descriptions do not mean that he is an inert statue. This attitude arises from the fact that his mind is ever fixed on higher things, so much so that petty things of the world cannot disturb his peace of mind. His mind is anchored beyond their reach.

**Verse 436: JL-5: Beyond Within & Without**

ब्रह्मानन्दरसास्वादासक्तचित्ततया यतेः ।

अन्तर्बहिरविज्ञानं जीवन्मुक्तस्य लक्षणम्

॥ ४३६॥

1	<i>brahmaananda-rasa aasvaada</i>	Taking delight in tasting the <b>Bliss of Brahman</b>
2	<i>aasakta chitta tayaa yateh;</i>	due to a mind constantly <b>soaked</b> in it, the Sannyasi who has mastery over his senses
3	<i>antar-bahir-avijnaanam</i>	entertains <b>no distinctions</b> within or without.
4	<i>jeevanmuktasya lakshhanam.</i>	This is an indication of the state of a <b>Jivanmukta</b> .

**1-3** The Jivanmukta is “soaked” in **Bliss** – Bliss that totally satisfies, the Bliss of God. Only such a person can be a master of his senses. Only such a person is able to see no distinctions, either within himself or in others.

**Verse 437: JL-6: An Attitude of Utter Detachment**

देहेन्द्रियादौ कर्तव्ये ममाहम्भाववर्जितः ।

औदासीन्येन यस्तिष्ठेत्स जीवन्मुक्तलक्षणः

॥ ४३७॥

1	<i>deha indriya aadau kartavye</i>	Concerning the body, sense organs and one’s duty,
2	<i>mama-aham-bhaava varjitah;</i>	he is free of the idea of <b>“I” and “mine”</b> ;
3	<i>audaaseenyena yah tishhthet</i>	he remains with an <b>attitude of indifference</b> .
4	<i>sa jeevanmukta lakshhanah.</i>	This indicates the state of a <b>Jivanmukta</b> .

**1-3** Whilst fully conscious and acting with perfection, yet the liberated sage is free from any sense of doership or enjoyership. He puts in his best, but the motivation is not selfish; rather, it is a selfless **Detachment**.

**Verse 438: JL-7: Freedom from Transmigration**

विज्ञात आत्मनो यस्य ब्रह्मभावः श्रुतेर्बलात् ।

भवबन्धविनिर्मुक्तः स जीवन्मुक्तलक्षणः

॥ ४३८॥

1	<i>vijnaatah aatmanah yasya</i>	He has <u>deep-rooted knowledge</u> in respect of the Self;
2	<i>brahmabhaavah shruteh balaat;</i>	He feels that he is <u>identical with Brahman</u> , which is in accordance with scriptural assertions;
3	<i>bhava-bandha-vinirmuktah</i>	he is completely free from the bondage of <u>rebirth</u> .
4	<i>sa jeevanmukta lakshhanah.</i>	He indicates the state of a <u>Jivanmukta</u> .

**1-3** The keynote of the Upanishads (Shrutis) is the attainment of Oneness with Brahman. The sage is defined as one who is One with God. Such a person has all his Karmas annulled as a result of this Oneness. Hence, there is **no rebirth** for him hereafter.

**Verse 439: JL-8: Beyond All Trace of Individuality**

देहेन्द्रियेष्वहम्भाव इदम्भावस्तदन्यके ।  
यस्य नो भवतः क्वापि स जीवन्मुक्त इष्यते ॥ ४३९॥

1	<i>deha indriyeshhu aham-bhaavah</i>	With regard to the body and sense organs, having a sense of <u>"I"-ness</u> ;
2	<i>idam-bhaavah tadanyake;</i>	Or having a sense of <u>"this"-ness</u> with regard to other things;
3	<i>yasya no bhavatah kvaapi</i>	he for whom both these feelings are always absent –
4	<i>sa jeevanmukta ishhyate.</i>	he indicates the state of a <u>Jivanmukta</u> .

**1-3** Here the facet we consider is the sense of "I"-ness or **Individuality**. He who has no trace of this sense of Individuality, is a sage.

**Verse 440: JL-9: Identity of Jiva & Ishwara**

न प्रत्यग्ब्रह्मणोर्भेदं कदापि ब्रह्मसर्गयोः ।  
प्रज्ञया यो विजानिति स जीवन्मुक्तलक्षणः ॥ ४४०॥

1	<i>na pratyag-brahmanoh bhedom</i>	Seeing no distinction between the <u>Jiva and Brahman</u> ,
2	<i>kadaapi brahmasargayoh;</i>	nor at any time between <u>Creation and Brahman</u> ;
3	<i>prajnayaa yo vijaaniti</i>	he who, <u>through realisation</u> , knows this to be true –
4	<i>sa jeevanmukta lakshhanah.</i>	he indicates the state of a <u>Jivanmukta</u> .

**1** The **Jiva** represents creation at a microcosmic or individual level. The individual is in essence Brahman, the Reality. It looks different from Reality due to its Upadhi or conditioning of Avidya, which makes it appear as a mere shadow of Brahman.

**2** On the other hand, **Ishwara** represents creation at a macrocosmic or universal level. Ishwara, too, is in essence Brahman seen through the pure Upadhi of Maya, which makes it appear omniscient, omnipotent and omnipresent.

**3** Realising the **Identity** of Ishwara and Jiva is the message of "Tat Twam Asi".



**Verse 441: JL-10: Receiving Worship or Torture Alike**

साधुभिः पूज्यमानेऽस्मिन्पीड्यमानेऽपि दुर्जनैः ।

समभावो भवेद्यस्य स जीवन्मुक्तलक्षणः

॥ ४४१॥

1	<i>saadhubhih poojyamaane asmin</i>	Though he may be <u>worshipped</u> by the virtuous,
2	<i>peedyamaane api durjanaih;</i>	or <u>tortured</u> by those who are wicked;
3	<i>samabhaavah bhavet yasya</i>	he who receives both of these with <u>equanimity</u> –
4	<i>sa jeevanmukta lakshhanah.</i>	he indicates the state of a <u>Jivanmukta</u> .

**1-3** Worship and torture are two extremes in one's experience. By choosing these extremes, **Equanimity** is taken to rare heights in this verse. The sage does not see people as being wicked or virtuous. Those are labels the world puts on people.

**The Story of Paravaliyar Swami**

Acharyaji went to great lengths to explain this verse with a beautiful story:

In Tamil Nadu in a small village called Topur in Tirunelveli en route to Rameswaram, there lived a saint named Paravaliyar Swami. The name means "It's O.K., all is well, thank you. Hari Om!" He used to utter this word no matter what happened. He did not know any Tamil so he used to say "Paravaliyar" to anyone for anything. That is how he got his name.

Once he sat on the roadside in Samadhi for about 5 days. Curious people gathered around him after the first day, growing in number by the fifth day. There were both critics who said he was pretending, and devout people who revered him. When he came out of meditation, the second group invited him to their homes, treated him well, fed him nicely, etc., and decided to build an Ashram for him in the village.

The Jamindar or landlord of the village was his main host. His family took care of him. Soon, quite unexpectedly, the Jamindar's daughter, unmarried, was carrying a child. The mother pressurised her to tell the truth. The frightened daughter said it was Paravaliyar Swami. This inflamed the Jamindar and the rest of the village.

All of them went to the Ashram with sticks. Paravaliyar Swami was meditating at the time. They shook him up, saying, "Enough of your pretence. You had better get out of here." Then they gave him a good beating. All the time the saint kept saying, "Paravaliyar". Every stone that hit him bounced back with the name "Paravaliyar".

The saint was given the girl to look after. Soon the child was born. Now there was no food, since the villagers had abandoned him. Paravaliyar Swami went to work to earn money to maintain the mother and child. But how long could the girl remain quiet? She went to her mother one day and confided to her everything. She said her association was with the neighbour's son. The embarrassed parents went back to the Ashram and begged the Mahatma's pardon.

The Jamindar said, "Please, Mahatmaji, I have made a big mistake. Cut off my hands!" The saint stood by unaffected. "Paravaliyar" was all he kept saying. When the hospitality and reverence returned, the saint was as balanced as ever. It meant nothing to him. They said they will take the daughter and child back. The saint said she was always theirs only. Such is the state of a true Nirvikari Mahatma!

**Verse 442: JL-11: True Sannyasa & Liberation**

यत्र प्रविष्टा विषयाः परेरिता  
नदीप्रवाहा इव वारिराशौ ।  
लिनन्ति सन्मात्रतया न विक्रियां  
उत्पादयन्त्येष यतिर्विमुक्तः

॥ ४४२॥

1	<i>yatra pravishhtaa vishhayaah para eeritaa</i>	<i>He In whom enter the sense objects channelled by others,</i>
2	<i>nadee-pravaahaa iva vaariraashau linanti;</i>	<i>just as flowing rivers enter the ocean and merge into it;</i>
3	<i>sanmaatrataayaa na vikriyaam</i>	<i>This is due solely to his <b>absorption in the Absolute</b>; there is absolutely no change</i>
4	<i>utpaadayanti eshhah yatih vimuktah.</i>	<i>produced in a person of such realisation. He is a true <b>Sannyasin</b>; he is truly <b>liberated</b>!</i>

This is the last verse of “Jivanmukta Lakshana”. After baking the cake, Sri Shankaracharya now places a cherry at the top! He finds the perfect simile that sums up the sage. In addition, **Equanimity** emerges as the ‘winner’ among all the Jivanmukta’s qualities.

**1-2** The waters of rivers are like sense objects. They flow ceaselessly towards the ocean. The ocean represents the Jivanmukta. The ocean is unaffected by the rivers that empty themselves into it. So also, the Jivanmukta is unaffected by the objects which are offered to him by those who take care of him. He is also unaffected by the insults that are hurled on him by others. In the face of both he maintains his serenity.

**3** The lesson is, of course, Equanimity: The saint is so firmly anchored in the Truth that he is unshaken by whatever he encounters on the surface of life. Whether waves are dashing upon him, or flowers are being offered to him – it is all the same to him.

The absence of ‘I’ makes him internally independent; the absence of ‘mine’ makes him externally independent. He is always anchored in the Truth that never fluctuates. He sees himself as this changeless Truth, his very essence. This is called ‘**Brahma Bhava**’.

Thus, we come to the end of the description of a realized saint as seen from the standpoint of the world. The characteristics described are identical to those given in the Bhagavad Geeta. Shankaracharya has always stood in support of the scriptures; these verses stand together as a pillar upholding the scriptures.

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**7.1.3 DISPASSION – the Acid-Test of Jivanmukti (Verses 443-445, 3 no.)**

In these final three verses, Sri Shankaracharya sums up the state of Jivanmukti. In unambiguous terms he holds aloft the most essential qualification of Dispassion.

**Verse 443: Realisation – Not an Outer Show!**

विज्ञातब्रह्मतत्त्वस्य यथापूर्वं न संसृतिः ।  
अस्ति चेन्न स विज्ञातब्रह्मभावो बहिर्मुखः

॥ ४४३॥

1	<i>vijnaata-brahma-tattvasya</i>	<i>For him who has realized the Essence of Brahman,</i>
2	<i>yathaa poorvam na samsritih;</i>	<i>as explained above, there is no reaching out for <b>the sense objects</b>;</i>
3	<i>asti chet na sa vijnaata</i>	<i>In the case where there is, know that there is no</i>
4	<i>brahmabhaavo bahirmukhah.</i>	<i>realisation of Brahman, but just its <b>outer show</b>!</i>

**1-2** The Sthithaprajna does not hanker after sensual pleasures anymore. An amateur musician may find it hard to play the correct note; the professional musician will find it hard to play the wrong note! A realized saint will find it impossible to enter into sensual grooves that have been renounced.

**3-4** *If he still does, then he is not a realized sage.* This is categorically clear with Bhagavan Shankara. If there is still the outgoing tendency in the person, then it means he is not a Jivanmukta, but only pretending to be one. There is no second opinion on this matter.

**Verse 444: No Excuse for Attachment**

प्राचीनवासनावेगादसौ संसरतीति चेत् ।  
न सदेकत्वविज्ञानान्मन्दी भवति वासना

॥ ४४४॥

1	<i>praacheena vaasanaa vegaad</i>	<i>“Because of the momentum of past impressions” –</i>
2	<i>asau samsarati iti chet;</i>	<i>if this reason is put forward for <b>attachment</b> to objects,</i>
3	<i>na sadekatvavijnaanaan</i>	<i>(we answer) <b>No!</b> When there is realisation of the Truth,</i>
4	<i>mandee bhavati vaasanaa.</i>	<i>the <b>Vasanas become weakened</b> (and soon die away).</i>

**1-2** If the person trots out the typical explanation – “It is only my Prarbdha which is playing itself out, nothing more serious,” – know that to be merely another excuse. It is a product of his self-delusion, his resistance to transform his inner nature.

**3-4** There can be no possibility of returning to sense gratification for one who has attained Liberation. On the contrary, one’s desires should be getting weaker, certainly not stronger.

**Verse 445: Even a Sensualist Can Check Himself!**

अत्यन्तकामुकस्यापि वृत्तिः कुण्ठति मातरि ।  
तथैव ब्रह्मणि ज्ञाते पूर्णानन्दे मनीषिणः

॥ ४४५॥

1	<i>atyanta kaamukasya api</i>	<i>Even in the case of a <b>downright rake</b> (sensualist),</i>
2	<i>vrittiḥ kunthati maatari;</i>	<i>those propensities get checked in a <b>mother’s presence</b>.</i>
3	<i>tathaa eva brahmani jnaate</i>	<i>So too, in the <b>presence of Brahman</b> after realisation,</i>
4	<i>poornaanande maneeshhinah. (vrittiḥ kunthati?)</i>	<i>why can’t he, who is <b>illuminated</b> and in Absolute Bliss, (check his propensities for objects of enjoyment)?</i>

**1-2** Sri Shankaracharyaji gives a strong example to illustrate his point. He takes the case of a “down-right rake”, one given totally to carnal lust, and tells us that even such a one feels ashamed of indulging in lust in the presence of his mother. If such is the case with the most lusty person, then what to speak of a “realized saint”; what excuse can he have for *not* checking himself!

**3-4** Brahman is surely superior to one’s mother. If a mother’s presence is a strong enough deterrent for the most lustful person, how much more deterred would a “sage” be who is in the presence of Brahman! The shameful of returning to worldly ways for one who considers himself a sage, is clearly brought out, perhaps with the sting of intentional sarcasm.

### **The Problem of Self-Delusion**

Sometimes it happens that an aspirant prematurely thinks that he has realized the highest state. This can happen to anyone. Acharyaji says that the biggest delusion in spiritual life is to think that we have reached the realized state!

***Shankaracharya is a Master of self-interrogation; he will not allow us to become victims of self-delusion!***

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To cross over Samsara is no mean task. There should be no ups and downs in the mind. The mind should remain equipoised under all circumstances.

These observations are given not for us to judge others, but to judge ourselves to see how far we have reached. It is impossible to judge another. For example, Swami Chinmayanandaji used to express ‘anger’ when people came in late to the class. Some people would then foolishly judge this and say, “See, he is not a Mahatma!” A saint operates under many parameters, particularly in running an organization. He has to see that organizational discipline is not flouted. If he does not do his duty in this manner, he will be failing his organization.

From one saint to another there are certainly differences, but these are not due to Vasanas. Each saint has his own operating limitations. A Krishna is not a Rama. A Shiva cannot be a Narayana. A Ramana Maharshi cannot be a Ramakrishna Paramahansa. But their differences have nothing to do with Vasanas. There are other reasons which differentiate one saint from another. When it comes to Vasanas, there is no leeway for differences. All saints are uniformly free from attachment to sense pleasures.

In the next section, we shall examine the main reason for such differences. It forms an interesting subject in its own right.

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## 7.2 HOW A SAINT HANDLES KARMA

(Verses 446-464, 19 No.)

THE SCRIPTURES RECOGNIZE that in the case of some saints, their nature to do work draws them to outer associations. Karma Yoga is welcomed by the scriptures. The Geeta also says that performance of such actions should not be abandoned. In general, one's actions and interactions with the world are attributed to "**Prarabdha Karma**".

Actions due to one's Karma and actions due to desire for sensual indulgence are two very different sources of actions. The previous Chapter drew the curtains on actions performed with a desire to indulge. In this Chapter, we consider the valid and approved actions of sages who may feel the compulsion to act in the world in the spirit of Karma Yoga, with all moral rules and restraints being followed thoroughly.

For example, Swami Vivekananda felt a divine call to spearhead a movement to spread Vedanta in the West and to work towards the freedom of India. Nothing could stop him from the dynamic work he undertook. The results of his activity speak for themselves. The whole country salutes him for laying the foundation of its freedom struggle. And the whole world salutes him for what he has done to share India's age-old wisdom. Were it not for the work he did, Hindus within India would not have mobilised themselves to unite for the common cause. His was a truly nation-building task done to perfection.

### Verse 446: *A Saint's Dealings in the World*

निदिध्यासनशीलस्य बाह्यप्रत्यय ईक्ष्यते ।  
ब्रवीति श्रुतिरेतस्य प्रारब्धं फलदर्शनात्

॥ ४४६॥

1	<i>nididhyaasana-sheelasya</i>	Take the case of one who is <b>an adept in meditation</b> .
2	<i>baahyapratyaya eekshhyate;</i>	He, too, is seen to still have <b>external dealings</b> .
3	<i>braveeti shrutih etasya</i>	In his case, the scriptures declare,
4	<i>praarabdham phaladarshanaat.</i>	"It is due only to his <b>Prarabdha</b> (remaining Karmas)."

### Verse 447: *The Law of Karma in a Nutshell*

सुखाद्यनुभवो यावत्तावत्प्रारब्धमिष्यते ।  
फलोदयः क्रियापूर्वो निष्क्रियो न हि कुत्रचित्

॥ ४४७॥

1	<i>sukhaadi anubhavah yaavat</i>	As long as there is the experience of happiness, etc.,
2	<i>taavat praarabdham ishhyate;</i>	so long the work of Prarabdha is seen to persist.
3	<i>phala-udayah kriyaa-poorvah</i>	<b>Every result</b> manifests due to a <b>preceding action</b> ;
4	<i>nishhkriyah na hi kutrachit.</i>	How can there be a result independent of action?



## THE GENERAL LAW OF KARMA

The Law is universal and applies to all mankind. There are no exemptions to the Law of Karma. We are talking of people in general, but even realised sages are not exempt from the Law. Only an extremely self-willed person will not believe that such a law exists.

Vedanta urges us to uphold and obey the Law at all times. It guides us as a mother and advises us to live within the moral parameters of the Law. We may do whatever we like; the Law sees to it that we get what is fitting and deserving!

We begin with the verse **447** that lays out the basics of the Law in three Rules:

**Rule 1. Joy and Sorrow:** How do we know we still have Karma in us? By the experience of these two. These are the fruits of Karmic reactions. As long as we experience them, know for certain that Karma is active, that it is still present and working itself out.

**Rule 2. Preceding Cause:** Every effect must have a Preceding Cause. This is a very powerful part of the Law. It tells us that nothing happens by chance, bad luck or good luck. There's a reason behind every occurrence.

**Rule 3. Personal Responsibility:** The preceding cause lies in us, not somebody else. We are fully responsible for what we experience in life. Everything that comes our way is well deserved. We have earned it, good or bad. Others are only the instrumental causes.

*[From this point, readers can refer to the diagram “Karma in Different Stages” on the next page, which depicts the one full lifespan of a human being, from birth to death.]*

### A. Karma as it Operates in Common Man

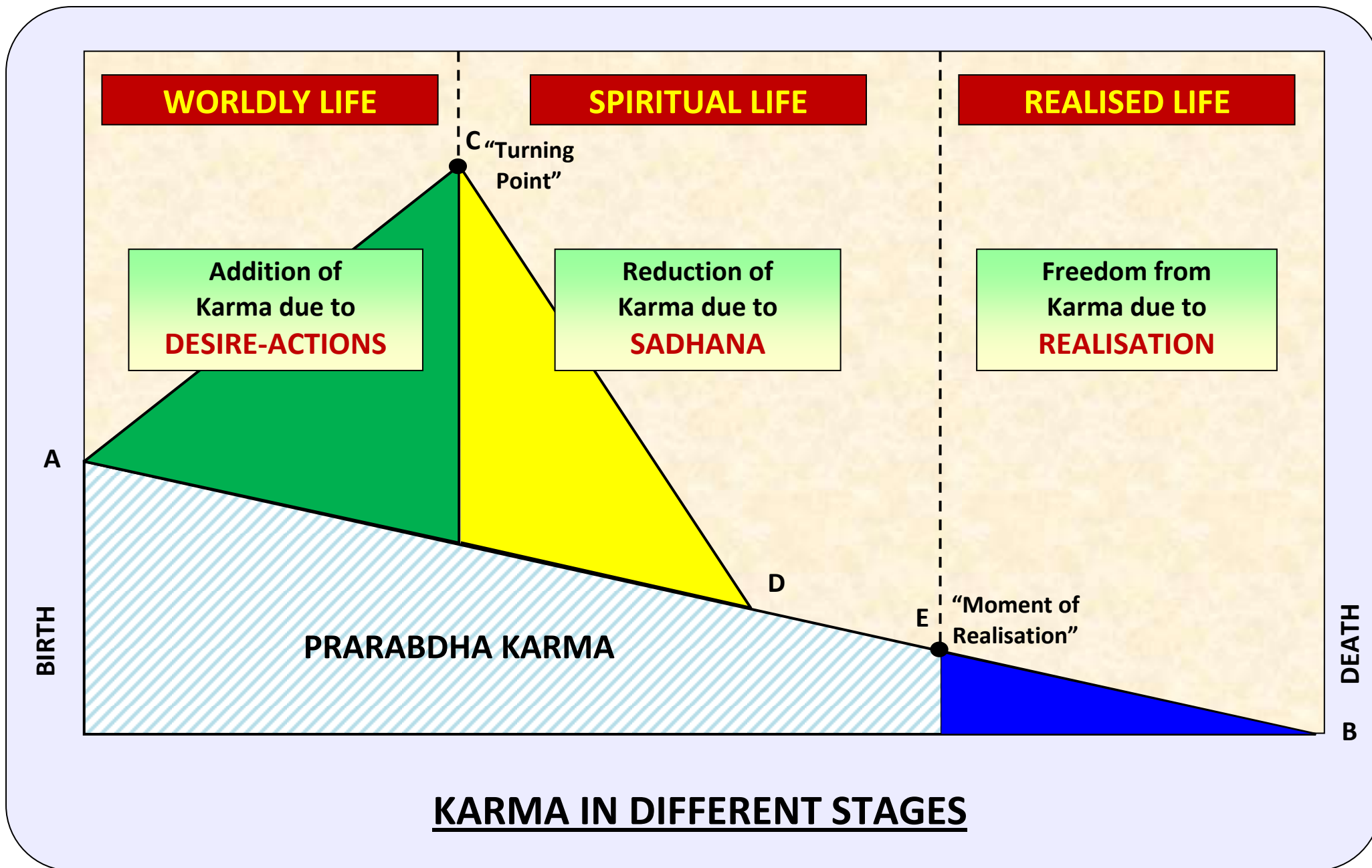
The full Karmic History, known as **Sanchita Karma**, is not shown in the diagram. We do not know this history, but it extends over an unknown period which may be numerous births. The joy or sorrow of today was produced at some distant unknown time in the past. More on Sanchita Karma in a saint's life is covered later.

**Prarabdha Karma** is the portion of Sanchita which has been allotted to this birth by the wisdom of the Creator, Ishwara. It is the producer of this birth. We are all born with a Prarabdha, which is the height of point **A**.

Ideally, if we lead a simple life of innocence and obedience to the Law, we move straight from point **A** to **B** – this is the “Prarabdha Line”. By doing only Nitya and Naimittika Karmas, our prescribed Duties, we go down this line. However, in practice, due to the performance of actions that are not in line with our spiritual purpose of life, we incur new Karma. The actual passage of our life goes through three phases, and is described as follows.

**1. WORLDLY LIFE:** *[the green phase]* Worldly Life is life lived in ego-centredness. In practice, we do Kamya and Nishiddha Karmas also, prompted by Desire and Greed. These are Karma-producing actions that make us follow line **A-C**. At the time of death, instead of departing at point **B**, we depart much higher on the Karma scale. That height is the **Agami Karma** we have gathered in this birth and which gets carried forward into Sanchita.

**2. SPIRITUAL LIFE:** *[the yellow phase]* If we are fortunate, then at some point **C** we come to realise that we are just getting worse day by day, life by life; we have accumulated Karma that has taken us far above the “Prarabdha Line”. This is the “Turning Point” in life. We then begin living a good, pure life, by eliminating selfish desire. We start doing Sadhana to get back to line **A-B**. This change brings about our spiritual evolution.



## **B. Karma as it Operates in the Realised Sage**

3. **REALISED LIFE:** [*the blue phase*] Saints have eliminated **Desire**. They have closed the tap on new, fresh **Karma**. Saints accept both **Joy & Sorrow** with Equanimity. They live on the “Prarabdha Line” **A-B**. In addition to this, they acquire **Knowledge** of the Self by direct experience. This is the most essential ingredient of sainthood or God-realisation.

4. **ALL THREE COMBINED:** [*the fourth or combined phase*] We have seen three phases, representing Worldly life (green), Spiritual life (yellow), and Realised life (blue). However, the same person can be in all three in one lifetime. Two other factors about Karma help us to understand a saint’s life, and compel us to look at it differently:

### **“Moment of Realisation” – A Point of Reference in Life**

We have already noted the “**Turning Point**” in life (Point **C**) when we take a U-turn from worldly to spiritual life. This point marks the start of **Sadhana** in life. There is also a second point of reference – the “**Moment of Realization**” – between yellow and blue. We have not reached that point yet, but saints have. The Law of Karma applies differently before and after this point of reference.

Returning to the **A-B** line at **D** is a necessary but insufficient condition for realisation. It gives the best circumstances. **Knowledge** is the sufficient condition for realisation, point **E**.

### **The Three “Frames of Reality”**

There are three Frames of Reality:

- i) Pratibhasika Satta: “that which shines for some time”, eg. **dream** or Worldly life.
- ii) Vyavaharika Satta: “Transactional” reality, eg. **waking** or Spiritual life.
- iii) Paramarthika Satta: “Absolute” Reality, eg. the Realised life.

Worldly life is like a dream compared to the awakened spiritual life. There is a change in the Frame of Reality between Sattas. Events in one Satta are not experienced in the same way in another Satta. One can commit vile deeds in worldly life and feel no regret; but the same deeds in spiritual life would fill one with remorse. Similarly, Sadhana in spiritual life requires effort, but in a realised person it is effortless.

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## **7.2.1 SANCHITA KARMA: Past Karma**

(Verses 448-449)

### **Verse 448: *Sanchita is Annulled On Realisation***

अहं ब्रह्मेति विज्ञानात्कल्पकोटिशतार्जितम् ।  
सञ्चितं विलयं याति प्रबोधात्स्वप्नकर्मवत्

॥ ४४८ ॥

1	<i>aham brahma iti vijnaanaat</i>	“I am Brahman” – with this <u>realization</u> ,
2	<i>kalpa-koti-shata aarjitam;</i>	the earnings of a hundred crore cycles of creation,
3	<i>sanchitam vilayam yaati</i>	known as <u>Sanchita Karma</u> , get <u>annulled</u> ;
4	<i>prabodhaat svapna-karmavat.</i>	like the actions in a dream on waking up.

**Verse 449: The Validity of Sanchita Karma**

यत्कृतं स्वप्नवेलायां पुण्यं वा पापमुल्बणम् ।  
सुप्तोत्थितस्य किन्तत्स्यात्स्वर्गाय नरकाय वा ॥ ४४९॥

5	<i>yat kritam svapna-velaayaam</i>	<i>Whatever is imagined to be done <u>in one's dream</u></i>
6	<i>punyam vaa paapam ulbanam;</i>	<i>– whether it be meritorious or intensely sinful –</i>
7	<i>supta utthitasya kim tat syaat</i>	<i>on arising from sleep, can all that <u>dream-Karma</u></i>
8	<i>svargaaya narakaaya vaa.</i>	<i>take one to heaven or to hell?</i>

These two verses sum up the **Sanchita Karma** for a saint.

**1-3** Sanchita is the full bundle of all Karmic results of actions done prior to the *moment of realization*. When the Self is realized, all this past Karma, regardless of how long ago it took place and how much there is, is “wiped out” (**Vilayam Yaati**) according to these verses.

**4-8** There is an appropriate simile given for this – the **dream** experience. The experiences that occur in one's dream do not bind one to any Karmic reactions. No one is answerable for them. This is accepted in our ordinary existence.

The realm of relevance for Sanchita Karma is the relative phenomenal plane, this world, where it was earned. It has nothing to do with the Absolute Reality. To the overwhelming majority of us, every bit of Sanchita is valid.

However, the case is different for the rare soul who gets out of the phenomenal plane and identifies himself with the Absolute plane. His frame of Reality shifts to the Paramarthic level. He is no longer in this Vyavaharic plane of reality in which we live. As far as this world of experience is concerned he is ‘dead’. The person responsible for all those Karmas *does not exist*. His files have to be closed!

To anyone who may think that this is unjust, that the saint is getting away ‘scot-free’, let him undergo the Sadhana that frees him from his Ego, which is the entity responsible for all that Karma. Then he will understand whether it is fair or unfair!

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## 7.2.2 AGAMA KARMA: Future Karma

(Verses 450-451)

**Verse 450: Unattached & Indifferent to Agama Karma**

स्वमसङ्गमुदासीनं परिज्ञाय नभो यथा ।  
न श्लिष्यति च यत्किञ्चित्कदाचिद्भाविकर्मभिः ॥ ४५०॥

1	<i>svam asangam udaaseenam</i>	<i>One's own Self is <u>detached and indifferent</u>,</i>
2	<i>parijnaaya nabho yathaa;</i>	<i>just as the sky, by realising well its own nature;</i>
3	<i>na shlishhyati cha yatkinchit</i>	<i>Never is it concerned in the least about any type or</i>
4	<i>kadaachit bhaavi-karmabhih.</i>	<i>any time of the <u>actions yet to be performed</u>.</i>

**Verse 451: Unaffected by Agama Karma**

न नभो घटयोगेन सुरागन्धेन लिप्यते ।  
तथात्मोपाधियोगेन तद्धर्मैर्नैव लिप्यते

॥ ४५१॥

5	<i>na nabhah ghatayogena</i>	<i>The sky, by its contact with the jar, is not</i>
6	<i>suraagandhena lipyate;</i>	<i>affected by the smell of any liquor in the jar.</i>
7	<i>tathaa aatma upaadhi yogena</i>	<i>Even so, the Self, by its contact with the Upadhis,</i>
8	<i>tat dharmaih na eva lipyate.</i>	<i>can never be affected by the latter's properties.</i>

These two verses sum up the **Agami Karma** for a saint.

**1-4** Agami (pronounced 'Agaami') is the Karmic results of actions that will accrue to us in the future by actions that we do now. Again, as with Sanchita, in ordinary people, for the Karmas we perform now we will become responsible sooner or later in the future.

But in the case of the realised sage, he does not have his consciousness in the relative plane but in the Absolute plane. He is not *here*, but *there*! He only appears to be acting here, but his mind is *there*. *There*, there is no time frame, no future and past. He is not concerned at all about good and bad, nor about time. In other words, he has nothing to do with Karma any more. He remains completely cut off from all Karma.

Technically, the saint is living *after* the 'moment of realisation' reference point. This frees him from all Karmic bonds. Whatever he does, does not create any Karmic bonds. There is no debt incurred, so there is nothing to be paid for!

Here again, we may think that this is pure 'favouritism' in favour of the saint. We have to remember that after realization, the saint is not the limited Ego which we are. He has broken through this barrier.

**5-8** An appropriate simile is given for Agami Karma also – the **sky**. The sky represents the Absolute level of reality. A bottle of wine represents the Relative plane of reality; the smell of the wine represents Agami Karma. The sky says, "Let the smell remain in the bottle. I am untainted by it. It does not affect me."

In short, the saint has no wine of ego in him; he does not live in the Time/Space framework of the relative world. He is no longer a 'human being' trying to live a spiritual life, but 'divine being' trying to live a worldly life!

Now what remains to be explained is *Prarabdha Karma*... the most interesting part.

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**7.2.3 PRARABDHA KARMA: Present Karma (Verses 452-464)**

**7.2.3.1 From the World's Standpoint (Verses 452-454)**

**Verse 452: Prarabdha Has to be Worked Out**

ज्ञानोदयात्पुरारब्धं कर्मज्ञानान्न नश्यति ।  
अदत्त्वा स्वफलं लक्ष्यमुद्दिश्योत्सृष्टबाणवत्

॥ ४५२॥

1	<i>jnaanah udayaat puraa aarabdham karma</i>	The Karma done before the dawn of Knowledge (realisation), due to which this very birth is conjured up,
2	<i>jnaanaat na nashyati;</i>	does not get destroyed as a result of that Knowledge
3	<i>adatvaa svaphalam lakshhyam uddishya</i>	without yielding its fruits (i.e. <u>Prarabdha has to work out</u> ). The target that is aimed at
4	<i>utsrishhta baanavat.</i>	when an arrow is released, <u>has to be reached</u> by it.

**Verse 453: Karma Once Sent, Must Be Spent**

व्याघ्रबुद्ध्या विनिर्मुक्तो बाणः पश्चात्तु गोमतौ ।

न तिष्ठति छिनत्येव लक्ष्यं वेगेन निर्भरम्

॥ ४५३॥

5	<i>vyaaghra-buddhyaa vinirmuktah baanah</i>	Consider this example: Thinking an object to be a <u>tiger</u> , an arrow is shot at it.
6	<i>pashchaat tu gomatau;</i>	Seconds later, when the object is recognised to be a <u>cow</u> ,
7	<i>na tishhthati chhinati eva lakshhyam</i>	the arrow does not simply stop, but does its job – it definitely <u>pierces the target</u> aimed at
8	<i>vegana nirbharam.</i>	without any diminishing of its original force.

**Verse 454: All Three Karmas Become Ineffectual**

प्रारब्धं बलवत्तरं खलु विदां भोगेन तस्य क्षयः

सम्यग्ज्ञानहुताशनेन विलयः प्राक्सञ्चितागामिनाम् ।

ब्रह्मात्मैक्यमवेक्ष्य तन्मयतया ये सर्वदा संस्थिता-

स्तेषां तन्नितयं नहि क्वचिदपि ब्रह्मैव ते निर्गुणम्

॥ ४५४॥

9	<i>praarabdham balavattaram khalu vidaam, bhogena tasya kshhayah</i>	One's <u>present Karma</u> is very powerful, even in the case of a realised man; only by exhausting its fruits can it be destroyed.
10	<i>samyak jnaana hutaashanena vilayah, praak sanchita aagaaminaam;</i>	By the fire of perfect knowledge of the Self, is destroyed all Karma in respect of the <u>past</u> and the Karma in respect of the <u>future</u>
11	<i>brahma aatmaa ekyam avekshhya tanmayatayaa ye sarvadaa samsthitaah</i>	The oneness of Brahman & the Self – whoever thus realise their identity with That, henceforth they ever remain firmly fixed in That.
12	<i>teshaam tat tritayam na hi kvachit api, brahmaiva te nirgunam.</i>	For them, that whole <u>triad of Karmas</u> has, indeed, <u>no effect at all</u> wherever they be, for they are truly the transcendental Brahman!

These three verses tell us what happens in the case of **Prarabdha Karma**.

**1** We are concerned here with the results of all actions done prior to the point of reference, the 'moment of realisation'. By definition it is that portion of the total Sanchita Karma which is responsible for the present birth.

**2** The knowledge of the Self does not destroy this Karma as it does the other two.

**3** Prarabdha has to run its full course. It cannot be retracted. It will have to take its course, whether one is realized or not.



**4 Example 1:** It is like an arrow that has already left the bow. It is destined to hit the target aimed at before it gets exhausted of all its power.

**5-8 Example 1 Extended:** A reason is given for the above example. When the arrow is released, I think that the target is a **tiger**. Seconds after releasing the arrow, I realise that it is actually a **cow**. I regret having shot the arrow, and wish I can pull it back. But it's too late for that. I have to accept that the arrow will hit the 'tiger-cow' in spite of my wish to stop it. Only after hitting the cow will its force be exhausted and it will stop.

**9** So also is it with our Prarabdha Karma. It is an 'arrow' that has been shot and will stop only when this body dies. The very purpose of this body is to work out the Prarabdha.

**10** However, we have seen that the knowledge of the Self has the enormous power to annul Sanchita and Agami Karmas, i.e. past and future actions, but not present Karmas.

**11** The above annulment of Karma is solely dependent on the attainment of Oneness with Brahman. That identity has to be established. That is where the difficulty lies.

**12** However, the sage is so totally fixed in the Self, that all three types of Karmas – past, present and future – have no effect on him whatsoever. What we learn here is that the realized saint raises himself to a realm in which Karmas have no effect.

Up to verse **454**, Sri Shankaracharyaji has placed himself in the shoes of the ordinary man to make him understand the workings of Prarabdha Karma. The position we end with is: ***"Prarabdha cannot be avoided; it has to be exhausted through the body."***

### 7.2.3.2 From a Dreamer's Standpoint (Verses 455-458)

#### **Verse 455: When Prarabdha Becomes Meaningless**

उपाधितादात्म्यविहीनकेवल-  
 ब्रह्मात्मनैवात्मनि तिष्ठतो मुनेः ।  
 प्रारब्धसद्भावकथा न युक्ता  
 स्वप्नार्थसम्बन्धकथेव जाग्रतः ॥ ४५५॥

1	<i>upaadhi taadaatmya viheena kevala- brahma aatmanaa eva</i>	<i>Being free from the limitations of all conditionings, being absorbed in the non-dual Brahman alone –</i>
2	<i>aatmani tishhthatah muneh;</i>	<i>in such a sage, individuality remains only in name.</i>
3	<i>praarabdha sadbhaava katha na yuktaa</i>	<i>Regarding the existence of Prarabdha Karma, there is no question of having any relation to it.</i>
4	<i>svapnaartha sambandha katha iva jaagratah.</i>	<i>It is like one's relationship to <b>dream objects</b> – where is the question when the man gets up?</i>

#### **Verse 456: The "Dream" of a Realised Sage**

न हि प्रबुद्धः प्रतिभासदेहे  
 देहोपयोगिन्यपि च प्रपञ्चे ।  
 करोत्यहन्तां ममतामिदन्तां  
 किन्तु स्वयं तिष्ठति जागरेण ॥ ४५६॥

5	<i>na hi prabuddhah pratibhaasa dehe</i>	Indeed, he who has awakened from sleep, is not, with respect to his <b><u>dream-body</u></b> ,
6	<i>deha upayogini api cha prapanche;</i>	very much connected; nor, for that matter with respect to the <b><u>dream-world</u></b> ,
7	<i>karoti ahantaam mamataam idantaam</i>	does he entertain any idea of "I"-ness, or "mine"-ness, or "this"-ness;
8	<i>kintu svayam tishhthati jaagarena.</i>	for then (i.e. after realisation), he himself ever lives as the ' <b><u>waker-Self</u></b> ', i.e. fully awake to his own Self.

**Verse 457: The Assertion "Dream is Real"**

न तस्य मिथ्यार्थसमर्थनेच्छा  
न सङ्ग्रहस्तज्जगतोऽपि दृष्टः ।  
तत्रानुवृत्तिर्यदि चेन्मृषार्थे  
न निद्रया मुक्त इतीष्यते ध्रुवम् ॥ ४५७॥

9	<i>na tasya mithyaa-artha- samarthana ichchhaa</i>	The <b><u>dream-objects</u></b> of him who has just awakened, are not in need of being proven to be real.
10	<i>na sangrahaah tat jagatah api drishhtah;</i>	So, too, is the continued maintenance of the <b><u>dream- world</u></b> also observed to be (in no need of any proof).
11	<i>tatra anuvrittih yadi chet mrishhaarthe</i>	If however, there is any attempt to hold on to the dream-objects as being real,
12	<i>na nidrayaa mukta iti ishhyate dhruvam.</i>	then, " <b><u>Not yet free from sleep</u></b> " is he emphatically declared to be!

**Verse 458: The Saint Experiences Prarabdha as a Dream**

तद्वत्परे ब्रह्मणि वर्तमानः  
सदात्मना तिष्ठति नान्यदीक्षते ।  
स्मृतिर्यथा स्वप्नविलोकितार्थे  
तथा विदः प्राशनमोचनादौ ॥ ४५८॥

13	<i>tadvat pare brahmani vartamaanah</i>	So too, remaining identified with <b><u>the Reality</u></b> , the awakened man
14	<i>sadaa aatmanaa tishhthati na anyat eekshhate;</i>	always remains in the form of the true Self and does not perceive anything else.
15	<i>smritih yathaa svapna vilokitaarthe</i>	Just as one remembers having seen <b><u>objects in a dream</u></b> ,
16	<i>tathaa vidah praashana mochana aadau.</i>	so too, the realised ones remember the day-to-day acts of <b><u>eating, releasing, etc.</u></b>

**The Revised Standpoint:**

In the above 4 verses, from 455 – 458, we see the author taking us a step beyond the previous, purely Vyavaharic position. He takes us to somewhere midway between the Paramarthic experience of Reality and the Vyavaharic experience of this world.

**1** The shift begins by moving away from the Upadhis, the body-mind complex, which is so vital for the Vyavaharic experience. Long before becoming a realised sage, the spiritual seeker has already begun working on freeing himself from these limitations.

**2** As this negation of the Upadhis progresses, we see the first results in the diminishing of the ego-sense which dominated the earlier standpoint. Individuality starts thinning out. That is the sure sign of spiritual progress.

**3** The Prarabdha may be in operation, but what does it matter to the seeker who is fast heading towards the state of realisation? “Let Prarabdha have its say,” says the seeker. “I have little to do with its play. I have no relation with it. I am detached from it.”

**4** “It is like a **Dream** to me.” In this way, Shankaracharyaji shifts us away from the Vyavaharic and towards the Paramarthic.

### **Prarabdha Experienced as a “Dream”**

**5** Let us first look at how we are connected to our own Upadhis in actual dream. As far as the physical body is concerned, there is as good as no connection; we are not even conscious of the breathing. There is a slight link only; if someone calls us loudly, we may get up. As far as the mind Upadhi is concerned, it is busy but in an uncontrolled way. It produces thought images of its own accord. We are not involved in its workings as we are in the waking state.

**6** Then we have the external Upadhis of the world of objects. Apart from our bed and bedding and perhaps some air-conditioning, we are not connected with the world very much. The whole idea here is to show that the spiritual seeker pays less and less attention to his own Upadhis as well as the world Upadhis.

**7-8** For instance, he certainly does not have a sense of possessing anything in dream. He also has little connection with his individuality. That has gone to sleep as it were. Here the point to bear is that spiritual growth has begun to make us view everything with much less input from the Ego, from the mind, and from the body.

**9-10** Sri Shankaracharyaji, now goes into the content of the dream and the dream world. While we were awake, everything we encountered was important. Everything could be proved by reports from our senses. But in dream, there is no demand for any proof of any matters that arise.

**11-12** We do not pay so much attention to what is going on. Even if we get robbed in dream, or badly insulted in dream, we pass it by the next moment. If the dream-bank fails, it is not such a shock to us when we awaken! If dream experiences do ever become troublesome in the waking state, then it only tells us one thing – that we are still in dream, we have not woken up yet!

### **The Application of the Dream Simile**

**13-14** Just as the act of waking up from a dream causes the dream experience to dwindle away into an airy nothing, so also the act of awakening to our true Self by dint of great spiritual effort (Sadhana), causes us to give only “dream” importance to functions in the external world.

**15-16** By this is meant that we view external encounters with greater detachment. As we begin to get more and more firmly established in the Real spiritual world, we comensurately begin to attribute more and more ‘unreality’ to our outer world. The world experiences take on a “dream-like” reality.

Prarabdha, being the sum total of our world experience, is thus experienced only as a dream. There is no substance in it. It loses its power to take a firm grip on our mind.

Thus we shift to a new viewpoint on Prarabdha. The realized sage has ‘woken up’ from his dream of the world, and has awakened into the Reality of the Absolute. He now experiences the world only as a sort of hazy dream. His daily actions appear to him as though they are a dream; he does not attach much importance to them.

The new position becomes: ***“Prarabdha belongs to the body, not to the Atman. As the person becomes more conscious of his Atman, Prarabdha appears as a mere dream.”***

### **THE ESSENTIAL TRANSMIGRATING JIVA**

What actually transmigrates from birth to birth?

The human being is made up of four Tattwas or Principles: i) the gross body; ii) the subtle body; iii) the causal body; and iv) the spiritual body or soul, which is the Self.

Of these, we know that the **gross body** is destroyed at the time of death. It cannot transmigrate (i.e. take rebirth). We also know that the **Self**, the spiritual body, is indestructible, eternal, and all-pervading and ever-pure. It cannot transmigrate. If it did, then there would never be an end to transmigration! But we know that there is an end to it.

That leaves the **subtle body** and the **causal body** with all its Vasanas. These get ‘packed up’ as it were when the body approaches death and transmigrate at death to resume their work in another body. Of these, the chief item is the Ahamkara, the “I” thought in the mind. It is the essential part that transmigrates.

However, this Ahamkara cannot transmigrate alone, for it is ‘inert’, being made of the subtle elements and having no consciousness. What gives the Jiva its ‘doership’ and ‘enjoyership’? The answer is the **Chidabhasa** or reflected consciousness. Chidabhasa also transmigrates with Ahamkara from birth after birth. This is the *borrowed* light of the Self.

### **TRANSMIGRATING JIVA = CHIDABHASA + AHAMKARA**

With the above background, we move ahead with the discussion on Prarabdha in *Viveka Choodamani*. Other preliminary texts do not explore Prarabdha in the depth that *Viveka Choodamani* does. The detailed account we are encountering on this subject is one of the special features of this book.

All that has been said so far is only to appease the ‘pestering critic’ who keeps asking what the saint’s experience must be like. A man rooted in the Vyavaharic level, needs a Vyavaharic explanation. However, we now move on and raise our standpoint further.

Clearly, Shankaracharyaji seems intent on teaching us something very precious.

#### **7.2.3.3 From the Sage’s Standpoint (Verses 459-461)**

**Verse 459: *Prarabdha Belongs to the Body Only***

कर्मणा निर्मितो देहः प्रारब्धं तस्य कल्प्यताम् ।

नानादेरात्मनो युक्तं नैवात्मा कर्मनिर्मितः

॥ ४५९॥

1	<i>karmanaa nirmitah dehah</i>	<i>The <b>Body</b> has been fashioned by Prarabdha Karma</i>
2	<i>praarabdham tasya kalpyataam;</i>	<i>so its Prarabdha, relating to it, may be accepted.</i>
3	<i>na anaadeh aatmanah yuktam</i>	<i>But, for the beginningless Self, it is not reasonable</i>
4	<i>naiva aatmaa karma nirmitah.</i>	<i>because <b>the Self</b> is never the result of earlier works.</i>

**Verse 460: The Self Has Nothing to Do With It**

अजो नित्यः शाश्वत इति ब्रूते श्रुतिरमोघवाक् ।  
तदात्मना तिष्ठतोऽस्य कुतः प्रारब्धकल्पना

॥ ४६०॥

5	<i>ajah nityah shaashvata iti</i>	<i>The Atman is birthless, eternal and undecaying –</i>
6	<i>broote shrutih amogha vaak;</i>	<i>such is the absolute declaration of the Sruti.</i>
7	<i>tat aatmanaa tishhthatah asya</i>	<i>For one who lives <b>identified with that Self</b> alone,</i>
8	<i>kutah praarabdhakalpanaa.</i>	<i>How can Prarabdha be attributed to such a sage?</i>

**Verse 461: It Affects Only the Body-Conscious Jiva**

प्रारब्धं सिध्यति तदा यदा देहात्मना स्थितिः ।  
देहात्मभावो नैवेष्टः प्रारब्धं त्यज्यतामतः

॥ ४६१॥

9	<i>praarabdham sidhyati tadaa</i>	<i>Prarabdha Karma has validity only so long</i>
10	<i>yadaa deha-aatmanaa sthiti;</i>	<i>as one lives <b>identified with one's body</b>.</i>
11	<i>deha-aatma-bhaavah naiva ishtah</i>	<i>If body identification is <b>not there</b>, why accept it?</i>
12	<i>praarabdham tyajyataam atah.</i>	<i>In such a case, Prarabdha should be rejected.</i>

Firstly, in a philosophic sense the word '**Body**' (with a capital B) stands for all the Upadhis, i.e. the gross body and the subtle mind, intellect and egoism.

Shankaracharyaji now feels he has done enough to appease the ignorant, and he now has to take the serious student ahead to the Truth, which he does very speedily. The new position is: **"From giving Prarabdha just a dream-like reality, he withdraws even that and gives it no reality as far as the realized saint is concerned."**

**Prarabdha is for Body Only**

**1** There is a two-way relationship between Body and Prarabdha. Firstly, the Body creates the Prarabdha, and then Prarabdha creates or fashions the next body.

**2** The point is that Prarabdha concerns the Body only. If Body matters, then Prarabdha also matters.

**3** But if Body does not matter, then Prarabdha has no relevance. This is the case in a sage. The sage does not live in Body-consciousness. So, *only* in his case, Prarabdha theory can be rejected as inapplicable.

**4-6** If the sage is not in his body, where is he? The sage dwells in the Self, his spiritual Body. The Self has nothing to do with Prarabdha. The Self is Eternal, it has no birth and death. It is not in Prarabdha's realm. This is openly declared in all the Upanishads. The Self is the ultimate Reality.

**7-8** Body-identification and Self-identification are two opposites. They cannot co-exist. The sage lives in Self-identification. Prarabdha does not apply to him.

**9-10** Prarabdha pertains only to the body. It is valid only for one who lives in Body-consciousness. “Give to Caesar what belongs to Caesar” – Prarabdha belongs to body.

**11-12** What has the realized saint to do with Prarabdha? He lives his life fully immersed in the Atman alone. Why should he now bother about any Prarabdha? In his case, the attitude towards Prarabdha is quite clear – he should give it no recognition at all as something that pertains only to the body, and he has no business with it!

But Shankaracharyaji is not happy leaving us with a two-sided coin. He wants us to know the actual Truth, and be with the Truth alone. He wants to take us into Non-duality!

In the next three verses, he drops what might be called a *bombshell* by the casual intellect of the worldly person. However, one who is a Jignasu, i.e. someone who is thirsting for spiritual growth, will be inspired and galvanised into more intense Sadhana.

#### 7.2.3.4 From the Absolute Standpoint (Verses 462-464)

##### **Verse 462:** *Prarabdha Itself is an Illusion*

शरीरस्यापि प्रारब्धकल्पना भ्रान्तिरेव हि ।  
अध्यस्तस्य कुतः सत्त्वमसत्यस्य कुतो जनिः ।  
अजातस्य कुतो नाशः प्रारब्धमसतः कुतः । ४६२॥

1	<i>shareerasya api praarabdha</i>	<i>To attribute Prarabdha even to the body</i>
2	<i>kalpanaa bhraantih eva hi;</i>	<i>is itself decidedly an illusionary imagination!</i>
3	<i>adhyastasya kutah sattvam</i>	<i>How can there be existence for a superimposition?</i>
4	<i>asatyasya kutah janih;</i>	<i>How can there be a birth for that which is unreal?</i>
5	<i>ajaatasya kutah naashah</i>	<i>For something never born, how can there be death?</i>
6	<i>praarabdham asatah kutah.</i>	<i>How can there be Prarabdha for something unreal?</i>

##### **Verse 463:** *Prarabdha is Only a Relative Theory!*

ज्ञानेनाज्ञानकार्यस्य समूलस्य लयो यदि ।  
तिष्ठत्ययं कथं देह इति शङ्कावतो जडान्  
समाधातुं बाह्यदृष्ट्या प्रारब्धं वदति श्रुतिः । ४६३॥

7	<i>jnaanena ajnaana kaaryasya</i>	<i>By knowledge, the effects of ignorance,</i>
8	<i>samoolasya layah yadi;</i>	<i>root and all, are destroyed. <b>DOUBT:</b> “If that is so,</i>
9	<i>tishhthati ayam katham deha iti</i>	<i>how does this body continue to remain alive?”</i>
10	<i>shankaavatah jadaan;</i>	<b>ANSWER:</b> <i>To appease those who entertain such gross doubts,</i>
11	<i>samaadhaatum baahyadrishhtyaa</i>	<i>an answer is given from a <b>relative standpoint:</b></i>
12	<i>praarabdham vadati shrutih.</i>	<i>the Shruti hypothesises the <b>theory of Prarabdha.</b></i>



**Verse 464: Prarabdha – Only a Means to Point Out Reality**

न तु देहादिसत्यत्वबोधनाय विपश्चिताम् ।

यतः श्रुतेरभिप्रायः परमार्थैकगोचरः

॥ ४६४॥

13	<i>na tu dehaadi satyatva</i>	<i>Not for proving the reality of body, etc.,</i>
14	<i>bodhanaaya vipashchitaam;</i>	<i>have the men of realisation proposed such theories.</i>
15	<i>yatah shruteh abhipraayah</i>	<i>It is because the Upanishads are, without exception,</i>
16	<i>paramaatha eka gocharah.</i>	<i>striving to point out the one Supreme Reality.</i>

**“ABSOLUTE” BRILLIANCE!**

The Great Master now drives home the absolute Truth in crystal clear terms. All previous theories that were presented step by step to this point get jettisoned. They yield in order to make way for the uncompromised standpoint of Truth. Now, without mincing his words, the Master lays out the bare fact of the matter.

Acharyaji added some spice to the argument, too, saying, “If we are true students of Sandeepany, then for none of these questions will we answer a ‘Yes’. They are rhetorical questions, begging us to see the Absolute for ourselves. This is the mark of a great Teacher – he takes us from the known to the Unknown.”

Acharyaji was at the peak of his own role as an outstanding Teacher. He placed before us the following imaginative flood of words coming to us from Shankaracharyaji. If we were physically in his presence, this is what he would have wanted to tell us:

*“The body is not there. Why are you counting the stripes on a false snake? – First Sanchita, then Agami, then Prarabdha – what is all this? What makes you do this to me? You are merely seeing castles in the air!*

*“Where is birth and death for an unreal, non-existent body? So how can there be any Prarabdha for such a body, if the body itself is not there? Come, my dear students, open your eyes. What are you interested in – stories or the Truth? What is it? Let’s mean business. Forget all about Prarabdha. Get down to something serious.”*

This is how Shankaracharyaji came alive to us through the brilliant effort of Acharyaji. It really was a fitting grand finale that we were approaching as we neared the end of the teaching portion of the book, Part VII. There are many in the class who would have liked that moment to have got frozen and etched into their memories. It was unforgettable to be in the class at that moment! ***Vedanta had come alive!***

**1** When one goes to the mountain top, even huge trucks appear as ants crawling up and down the freeway. In the same way, as we rise to higher standpoints, the concept of Prarabdha changes. It began as a refined philosophical concept to resolve the mystery surrounding man’s destiny. The first change was to see it dwindle down to a “dream”. Next it was relegated to the level of no recognition. Now, from the mountain-top of Absolute Reality, even that is considered too generous. The new position is ***“Prarabdha is now refused even an existence; it is given a status no higher than illusionary imagination”!***

**3-6** A series of searching questions are posed. They do not wait for an answer to come from us. It is almost as if we dare not say “Yes” to these questions; that is the spirit that comes forth from their tone. The Master has no time now to make us linger undecided about the Absolute Truth. He has been yearning to deliver this from the very outset. Now his moment has come.

### **The Hypothesis of Prarabdha**

The moment has arrived for Sri Shankaracharyaji to lift the veil over our intellects.

**7-8** The great Teacher always had a deep faith in knowledge all his life. His life was an exposition of knowledge. To him, it was the only way to deal effectively with ignorance.

**9** This insistence on knowledge and reason sometimes puzzled his opponents. Here, we see a typical reaction of an opponent. He asks, “If knowledge were so powerful, then why can’t it just burn the body itself, so that we do not have to bother about this existence at all?” Sadly, his opponents found the light of his Knowledge too bright to hide their ignorance!

**10-12** The effect of Ajnana has been theorized by the Shastras for those ‘fools’ (like all of us) who wish to hold on to intellectual theories to allay our doubts. The saints allow us to do that to a limited extent, for they know how insidious **DOUBTS** can be to a seeker on the path of Knowledge. They are ready to give us the intellectual pegs to hang our doubts on, as long as we do not hang them there forever. When the time is ripe, they are just as ready to dismantle all those theories in our mind, and plant the seeds of Truth in it.

### **Dismantling the Hypothesis**

**13-14** So, we are asked to dismantle Prarabdha. Why not? The Upanishads did not put forward all these theories just to prove the ‘reality of the body’! That would have been too cheap. It was purely to provide an intellectual crutch for the seeker to lean on. One can see this a great compassion for the student. The theories are an effort to help the disciple out of intellectual ‘traffic jams’.

**15-16** Once that purpose is served, it is time for the bare Truth to be revealed. The sole intention of the Shastras is to lead us to the Truth, coaxingly if possible, but by force if necessary.

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### 7.3 “BRAHMAN ALONE IS THERE”

(Verses 465-471, 7 No.)

WE ARE ALMOST AT the end of the Teachings presented in *Viveka Choodamani*. Sri Shankaracharyaji enters the concluding mode in this monumental work. He now presents seven exquisite verses pointing the way to Unity, which is the climax of his spiritual message to the world. Yul Bruyner and his team may well call it the “**Magnificent Seven**” of Vedanta!

*The Upanishads have only one purpose – to take us from the Plurality that we see, to the Unity that is actually the only thing that is there!*

#### A Tribute to Sri Shankaracharyaji

These seven verses need no elaboration. Acharyaji also did not expand on them, but asked us to chant them with him as our way of paying tribute to the great Master who composed them. Instilling in us love for the great Master of such a unique spiritual classic was always a warm undercurrent in Acharyaji’s words throughout these lectures.

Padas **3-4** are the same in all the seven verses, emphasizing the Non-duality. They also have the effect of being the ‘surname’ for the whole family of verses.

#### Verse 465: Brahman – the Non-dual Reality

परिपूर्णमनाद्यन्तमप्रमेयमविक्रियम् ।

एकमेवाद्वयं ब्रह्म नेह नानास्ति किञ्चन

॥ ४६५॥

1	<i>paripoornam anaadi antam</i>	<i>Infinite, full and complete, without beginning or end,</i>
2	<i>aprimeyam avikriyam;</i>	<i>incomparable and changeless –</i>
3	<i>ekam eva advayam brahma</i>	<i>such is the one and only <b>Non-dual Reality</b> (Brahman);</i>
4	<i>na iha naanaa asti kinchana.</i>	<i>in It there is <b>no duality</b> whatsoever.</i>

#### Verse 466: Absolute Existence-Knowledge-Bliss

सद्धनं चिद्धनं नित्यमानन्दधनमक्रियम् ।

एकमेवाद्वयं ब्रह्म नेह नानास्ति किञ्चन

॥ ४६६॥

1	<i>sad-ghanam chid-ghanam nityam</i>	<i>It is ever the essence of Existence &amp; Knowledge,</i>
2	<i>aananda-ghanam akriyam;</i>	<i>ever the essence of Bliss Eternal, devoid of all activity;</i>
3	<i>ekam eva advayam brahma</i>	<i>there is only the one <b>Non-dual Reality</b> (Brahman);</i>
4	<i>na iha naanaa asti kinchana.</i>	<i>in It there is <b>no duality</b> whatsoever.</i>

**Verse 467: The Subject Within All**

प्रत्यगेकरसं पूर्णमनन्तं सर्वतोमुखम् ।  
एकमेवाद्वयं ब्रह्म नेह नानास्ति किञ्चन

॥ ४६७॥

1	<i>pratyag ekarasam poornam</i>	The <u>subject within all</u> is homogenous and infinite;
2	<i>anantam sarvatah mukham;</i>	It is endless and all-pervading;
3	<i>ekam eva advayam brahma</i>	there is only the one <u>Non-dual Reality</u> (Brahman);
4	<i>na iha naanaa asti kinchana.</i>	in It there is <u>no duality</u> whatsoever.

**Verse 468: Unrejectable, Unreceivable**

अहेयमनुपादेयमनादेयमनाश्रयम् ।  
एकमेवाद्वयं ब्रह्म नेह नानास्ति किञ्चन

॥ ४६८॥

1	<i>ahyam anupaadeyam</i>	It cannot be subtracted from or added to anything; and
2	<i>anaadeyam anaashrayam;</i>	nothing can be added to or subtracted from it; it is the support or Substratum of all;
3	<i>ekam eva advayam brahma</i>	there is only the one <u>Non-dual Reality</u> (Brahman);
4	<i>na iha naanaa asti kinchana.</i>	in It there is <u>no duality</u> whatsoever.

**Verse 469: Without Disturbance or Taint**

निर्गुणं निष्कलं सूक्ष्मं निर्विकल्पं निरञ्जनम् ।  
एकमेवाद्वयं ब्रह्म नेह नानास्ति किञ्चन

॥ ४६९॥

1	<i>nirgunam nishhkalam sookshhmam</i>	Free from qualities and parts; very subtle;
2	<i>nirvikalpam niranjanam;</i>	free from disturbances and taintless;
3	<i>ekam eva advayam brahma</i>	there is only the one <u>Non-dual Reality</u> (Brahman);
4	<i>na iha naanaa asti kinchana.</i>	in It there is <u>no duality</u> whatsoever.

**Verse 470: Incomprehensible, Ungraspable**

अनिरूप्य स्वरूपं यन्मनोवाचामगोचरम् ।  
एकमेवाद्वयं ब्रह्म नेह नानास्ति किञ्चन

॥ ४७०॥

1	<i>aniroopya svaroopam yat</i>	It is incomprehensible with regard to its real nature;
2	<i>mano-vaachaam-agocharam;</i>	It is beyond the reach of mind and speech;
3	<i>ekam eva advayam brahma</i>	there is only the one <u>Non-dual Reality</u> (Brahman);
4	<i>na iha naanaa asti kinchana.</i>	in It there is <u>no duality</u> whatsoever.

**Verse 471: Self-existing, Self-evident**

सत्समृद्धं स्वतःसिद्धं शुद्धं बुद्धमनीदृशम् ।  
एकमेवाद्वयं ब्रह्म नेह नानास्ति किञ्चन

॥ ४७१॥

1	<i>satsamriddham svatahsiddham</i>	<i>Pure Existence, full and infinite, self-evident;</i>
2	<i>shuddham buddham aneedrisham;</i>	<i>Pure, intelligent, unlike anything finite;</i>
3	<i>ekam eva advayam brahma</i>	<i>there is only the one <b>Non-dual Reality</b> (Brahman);</i>
4	<i>na iha naanaa asti kinchana.</i>	<i>in It there is <b>no duality</b> whatsoever.</i>

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## 7.4 CONCLUSION OF THE TEACHING

(Verses 472-479, 8 No.)

IN THIS THE LAST Chapter of Part 7, Sri Shankaracharyaji brings the teaching to a conclusion. He rounds off the Guru's instructions to his student in eight compact verses. These contain the gist of what he has been teaching in the book.

### Guru as Mother: Types of Mothers

Among living beings there are three types of mothers:

i) Kukuta Mother: This is the “**bird mother**”. She lays her eggs and then, getting as close to them as she can, under the loving *warmth* of her body, she hatches them into life.

ii) Matsya Mother: This is the “**fish mother**”. Having laid her eggs, the mother fish swims around and around, sending her loving *looks* on them, till out come the little ones.

iii) Kamatha Mother: This is the “**tortoise mother**”. She places her eggs on the shore, then goes back into the water. But her heart is always on the eggs. She sends her loving *thoughts* to the eggs. With this constant endearing thought, she ‘hatches’ the eggs on the shore with the power of her love!

Acharyaji told us how Pujya Gurudev was an unusual Mother. He used all three methods on them! “He gave us the physical warmth of his love; he kept his watchful eye on us to keep us in line; and when he went on his many tours, he also kept us in his thoughts always, writing back to us quite often.”

The Guru as mother is a perfect depiction of the ideal Guru-disciple relationship. Howevermuch a Guru may touch or not touch, teach or not teach his disciples, it is his **LOVE** that really transforms them into the likeness of Brahman the Supreme.

### Verse 472: Summary of All Yoga Sadhanas

निरस्तरागा विनिरस्तभोगाः

शान्ताः सुदान्ता यतयो महान्तः ।

विज्ञाय तत्त्वं परमेतदन्ते

प्राप्ताः परां निर्वृतिमात्मयोगात्

॥ ४७२॥

1	<i>nirasta-raagaah vinirasta-bhogaah</i>	<b><u>Noble-hearted renunciates</u></b> who are rid of attachments, who have very well given up all sense enjoyments;
2	<i>shaantaah sudaantaah yatayah mahaantah;</i>	who are of calm mind and well-controlled, masters of their senses, identified with the inner Self;
3	<i>vijnaya tattvam param etat ante</i>	having fully realised the Truth principle which is Supreme – such people at the end of this life
4	<i>praaptaah paraam nirvritim aatmayogaat.</i>	gain that <b><u>Supreme One</u></b> (become Him themselves). Complete happiness is the result of their realisation.



All the **Yoga Sadhanas** taught by the Guru are outlined in this verse as a reference:

<u>Karma Yoga</u>	1. Rid of attachments;
	2. Rid of desire for sense enjoyments;
<u>Raja Yoga</u>	3. Of calm and well-controlled mind;
	4. Conquest over senses;
<u>Bhakti Yoga</u>	5. Identified with the inner Self;
<u>Jnana Yoga</u>	6. Knowing fully the Truth principle;
<u>Phala</u>	Attainment of complete happiness, emancipation, liberation.

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**Verse 473: *DISCRIMINATION Destroys Delusion***

भवानपीदं परतत्त्वमात्मनः  
स्वरूपमानन्दघनं विचार्य ।  
विधूय मोहं स्वमनःप्रकल्पितं  
मुक्तः कृतार्थो भवतु प्रबुद्धः

॥ ४७३॥

1	<i>bhavaan api idam paratattvam aatmanah</i>	<i>You, too, O glorious seeker, can attain this the inner Self which is the Truth unsurpassed;</i>
2	<i>svaroopam aananda-ghanam vichaarya;</i>	<i>whose very nature is full of Absolute Bliss. By the application of thorough <b>Discrimination</b>,</i>
3	<i>vidhooya moham svamanah prakalpitam</i>	<i>you can shake off the primal <b>Delusion</b>, which you have created within your own mind.</i>
4	<i>muktah kritaarthah bhavatu prabuddhah.</i>	<i>Thus, being liberated and totally fulfilled in life, O glorious one, may you remain ever illumined!</i>

**1-2** Each of the six Yogas listed in the previous verse has to have one common factor in order to make it successful. That factor is **Viveka** or “**Discrimination**”. This is what the Guru has been teaching consistently in this text, *Viveka Choodamaani*.

**3-4** And what is the object of applying discrimination to every Sadhana we practise? It is to remove the deep-seated **Moham** or “**Delusion**” from every corner of our personality, at all levels and facets of our being.

Thus is the **Purpose of Human Life** (Part 1) attained. By discrimination alone, the student can be totally fulfilled and liberated from all worldly misery, as he had sought in his seven questions in verse **49**.

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**Verse 474: *KNOWLEDGE Removes All Doubts***

समाधिना साधुविनिश्चलात्मना  
पश्यात्मतत्त्वं स्फुटबोधचक्षुषा ।  
निःसंशयं सम्यगवेक्षितश्चे-  
च्छ्रुतः पदार्थो न पुनर्विकल्प्यते

॥ ४७४॥

1	<i>samaadhinaa saadhu vinishchala aatmanaa</i>	Become thoroughly <u>absorbed in the Self</u> by rendering your mind steady and quiet.
2	<i>pashya aatma-tattvam sphuta bodha-chakshhushhaa;</i>	Perceive clearly the nature of the Self with the “ <u>Eye of Knowledge</u> ”.
3	<i>nihsamshayam samyag avekshhitah chet</i>	If, without a <u>trace of doubt</u> and with perfect understanding,
4	<i>shrutah padaarthah na punah vikalpyate.</i>	the declarations of the scriptures are grasped, then never again will there be any more <u>scepticism</u> .

Parts 2, 3, and 4 are covered in this verse – namely, **Sravana, Manana** and **Nididhyasana**.

**1** Absorption in the Self is achieved through Nididhyasana.

**2** Through Sravana, the “eye of knowledge” is opened and the nature of the Self is understood.

**3-4** Through Manana, all doubts are cleared and understanding is rendered perfect.

The Guru is saying, “Well, I have given you everything you need to know. Now you have to work on it and make it your own experience. Destroy all the lurking Vasanas that stand between you and Liberation.”

#### **Verse 475:    *The Means of Self-Realisation***

स्वस्याविद्याबन्धसम्बन्धमोक्षा –

त्सत्यज्ञानानन्दरूपात्मलब्धौ ।

शास्त्रं युक्तिर्देशिकोक्तिः प्रमाणं

चान्तःसिद्धा स्वानुभूतिः प्रमाणम्

॥ ४७५॥

1	<i>svasya avidyaa bandha sambandha mokshhaat</i>	i) The bondage of ignorance related to oneself – when one is <u>permanently released</u> from that bondage;
2	<i>satya jnaana aananda roopa aatma labdhau;</i>	ii) Existence, Knowledge and Bliss – when, in these three forms the <u>Self is fully realised</u> ;
3	<i>shaastram yuktih deshika ukti pramaanam</i>	iii) The scriptures, logical reasoning and the teacher’s utterances – when these are the <u>means followed</u> ; and
4	<i>cha antah siddhaah sva anubhootih pramaanam.</i>	iv) The accomplishment in one’s own mind, the <u>subjective experience</u> of Self - this is the final means.

#### **The Pramana (Means) to be Followed**

Four means are listed that guarantee that the goal is reached. They are:

**1** i) Renunciation of all ignorant attachment to the world that causes bondage.

**2** ii) The realization of the Self as Sat-Chit-Ananda.

**3** iii) The means approved by the Scriptures are meticulously obeyed.

**4** iv) One has the Direct Experience of the Self. This is the best and final means.

The Guru continues: “While the Sadhana is being done, constant referral has to be made to the above four means to ensure realisation. The words of the scriptures are the

highest Pramana or authority to clear your doubts. Ultimately, it is your own experience that really matters. You taste it, and see what it is like! You are the final proof that is needed.

“Now you take the scriptures as your umbrella. When you realize the Truth, you will become the umbrella for the scriptures.”

**Verse 476: Importance of Personal Experience**

बन्धो मोक्षश्च तृप्तिश्च चिन्ताऽऽरोग्यक्षुधादयः ।

स्वेनैव वेद्या यज्ज्ञानं परेषामानुमानिकम्

॥ ४७६॥

1	<i>bandhah mokshhah cha triptih cha</i>	<i><b>Liberation</b> from bondage, together with the <b>contentment</b> that is associated with</i>
2	<i>chintaa aarogya kshhudhaa aadayah;</i>	<i>being free from the <b>anxiety</b> of diseases, hunger and all the <b>afflictions</b> of body and mind –</i>
3	<i>svenaiva vedyaa yat jnaanam</i>	<i>these can be known directly by oneself; hence, they form the primary or <b>direct Knowledge</b>;</i>
4	<i>pareshhaam aanumaanikam.</i>	<i>Others can know of these only indirectly, hence, to them it is mere <b>inferential knowledge</b>.</i>

This verse impresses on the disciple the importance of relying on his own experience, rather than the reports of others. “The proof of the pudding is in the eating.”

**1-2** Liberation is a personal experience. Other personal experiences which are accepted beyond doubt are: feeling of contentment, being free from anxiety, being free from afflictions.

**3** All four of the above are in the category of direct personal experiences. No one else is needed to tell us we are experiencing them.

**4** What others think or say about own experience is just indirect knowledge. It does not have to be given value in our spiritual journey.

Acharyaji said: “Only you can tell when you are feeling sick. Only you can tell when you are hungry. Whether you are contented or anxious is known only to you, not others. Even so only you will know whether you are still in bondage or have become free. That is all that matters to you.”

**Verse 477: Grace & Self-Effort Work Together**

तटस्थिता बोधयन्ति गुरवः श्रुतयो यथा ।

प्रज्ञयैव तरेद्विद्वानीश्वरानुगृहीतया

॥ ४७७॥

1	<i>taTasthitaah bodhayanti</i>	<i>From the shore across, giving <b>directions &amp; knowledge</b>, stand the Gurus and even the scriptures (with help).</i>
2	<i>guravah shrutayah yathaa;</i>	
3	<i>prajnayaa eva taret vidvaan</i>	<i>But only by his own efforts and desire for illumination, does the true seeker cross over (to the other side),</i>
4	<i>eeshvara anugriheetayaa.</i>	<i>invoking all the time <b>the Grace</b> of the Lord.</i>

Another key point to remember throughout our spiritual journey is that our own effort is most important. When we put in our best, then God responds with the necessary Grace to give us a little push.

**1-2 Grace of God:** The actual figure of speech describes the Guru as “standing on the other bank” and calling out to the disciple the instructions on how to steer past the obstacles in the river of Samsara. Help from the Guru and the scriptures are to be considered as signs of God’s Grace. Grace of God is there, but it works commensurate with the self-effort of the disciple.

**3-4** With all the help he gets, it is the disciple who has to make the effort to get across the troubled waters of Life. Of course, it is granted that the effort to call on God for His Grace is also a form of self-effort. But that is not the only form we should use. It has to be accompanied by more concrete forms as well.

Acharyaji remembered Gurudev’s well-known dictum: “*From the alone to the Alone – all alone!*” He added, “This is a private enterprise, not a collective endeavour. Here we cannot delegate Vairagya to one person, Viveka to another, reasoning to a third, and surrender to God to a fourth! All the Sadhana has to be done by the seeker himself. Grace is there, but we have to co-operate fully.”

**Verse 478:     *A Personal “Mirror” to Check Out Realisation***

स्वानुभूत्या स्वयं ज्ञात्वा स्वमात्मानमखण्डितम् ।

संसिद्धः सम्मुखं तिष्ठेन्निर्विकल्पात्मनाऽऽत्मनि

॥ ४७८॥

1	<i>sva-anubhootyaa svayam jnaatvaa</i>	Thus one’s <u>own desire</u> to experience the true Self together with the <u>knowledge</u> (from Guru & scriptures)
2	<i>svam aatmaanam akhanditam;</i>	result in the realisation of one’s Eternal Being.
3	<i>samsiddhah sat mukham tishhthet</i>	The sage of <u>perfect realisation</u> of the Absolute Truth stands face to face before the Atman,
4	<i>nirvikalpa aatmanaa aatmani.</i>	with his mind free from all <u>concepts of dualism</u> .

The closeness to oneself is emphasised beautifully in this simple verse. We are called upon to let go of all our pet ideas and mental dogmas, and stand with a blank mind before God within.

**1-2** This consolidates the ideas on Grace and self-effort of the previous verse.

**3-4** How does one know that he has realised the Self? It is like asking how do I know I am myself? I look into the mirror. The seeker does the same – he stands “face to face” before his own Atman!

There is a more impersonal way offered by Shankaracharyaji. It gives us a second opinion. It is this: We observe the mind carefully and see if it can remain free of all thoughts, free of all concepts. It requires only honesty to oneself to do that. In case we are not sure, one clue to find out is to examine how much we are still in duality. If we see the slightest difference between our Self and any other object or being, then we can conclude that we are in duality. More Sadhana is needed to be totally in Non-duality or Oneness.

**Verse 479: The Conclusion: Be Rooted in Brahman!**

वेदान्तसिद्धान्तनिरुक्तिरेषा  
ब्रह्मैव जीवः सकलं जगच्च ।  
अखण्डरूपस्थितिरेव मोक्षो  
ब्रह्माद्वितीये श्रुतयः प्रमाणम्

॥ ४७९॥

1	<i>vedaanta siddhaanta nirukti eshaa</i>	<i>Of all Vedantic and philosophical discussions the <b>final opinion</b> is this:</i>
2	<i>brahma eva jeevah sakalam jagat cha;</i>	<i>i) Brahman alone is <b>the individual</b> entity as well as the entire manifested <b>world</b>;</i>
3	<i>akhanda-roopa sthiti eva mokshah</i>	<i>ii) To be ever rooted in the indivisible entity alone is called <b>Liberation</b>;</i>
4	<i>brahma adviteeye shrutayah pramaanam.</i>	<i>iii) The statement that <b>Brahman is Non-dual</b> has its authority in the scriptures.</i>

And so the Guru comes to his final sentence to the disciple. With all the strength at his command, he gives the final push to the disciple's boat and sends it away on its journey to the other shore. He does not fail to impart to it the only direction it needs – the Truth. The push is accompanied by the famous Mantra **Tat Twam Asi**, "That Thou Art".

A personal touch is added: "That is the route, my dear son. Keep going straight and don't look here and there. Especially don't turn around and look backwards with longing at what you are leaving. You will surely get there soon. God bless you, O brave one!"

Thus, with tears of joy in his eyes and confidence in his voice, the Guru bids the disciple God-speed in this venture of all ventures. In the next Part, we shall hear a report from the disciple on his adventure along this journey.

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**END OF PART 7**

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