

sorrows of my shadow. Even if ten thousand elephants pass over it, I shall still smile and be happy for I know that no matter how much my shadow is trampled upon, it cannot bring me any pain.

‘Śama’ means calmness. This and associated qualities will be taken up by Śaṅkara in the coming verses and we shall be going into them at length there. For the time being, suffice it to understand that these are the mental values in life, which should be cultivated by a healthy man with an evolutionary urge. Success in any creative thinking will be directly proportional to the amount of these qualities in an individual. Even in the material world, an individual’s success can be increased if only he develops these qualities in himself.

Last but not the least of four qualifications mentioned here is ‘mumukṣutva’ means a burning desire for Liberation. This, in its old drapery, may have the ugly look of an impracticable idea. Liberation is, by and large, understood to be a gain, post-mortem, which the seeker will enjoy only after his death. This is not a sufficient inducement to the modern man, full of impatience and with an unquenchable thirst for practical gains.

These are days when we want immediate gains. No one is ready to invest anything in the expectation of an immense gain promised in the future. This being the attitude of the age, we find that this promise of Vedānta, in its obsolete explanation, does not appeal to us. In its subtler implications, ‘mumukṣutva’ indicates an immediate benefit, which is directly proportional to the amount of effort invested.

Mumukṣutva is a deep desire to rid oneself of one’s limitations, felt and experienced during one’s intercourse with the world, whether it be through one’s body, mind or intellect. A true seeker gets impatient with these physical, mental and intellectual limitations in living a full life and he who has come to protest vehemently against life’s limitations and who is struggling earnestly to overcome them, is the mumukṣu. The spirit of revolt against one’s self shackling weaknesses is the spirit absolutely necessary in order to set forth in seeking new powers and gaining new strength.





## 7. The Four Qualifications (18-30)

साधनान्यत्र चत्वारि कथितानि मनीषिभिः ।  
येषु सत्स्वेव सन्निष्ठा यदभावे न सिध्यति ॥ १८ ॥

*sādhanānyatra catvāri kathitāni manīṣibhiḥ,  
yeṣu satsveva sanniṣṭhā yadabhāve na sidhyati.* (18)

18. Great sages have spoken of four qualifications for attainment, which when present', one succeeds in the realisation of Brahman and in the absence of which the goal is not gained.

The four prerequisites described in the previous verses are the determining factors in a seeker which ensure success. To the degree in which these four are present in a sādhaka, to that degree his success in spiritual endeavours is assured. Whenever a seeker struggling on the path does not make a definite progress, he should look within himself for the absence of these qualifications.

Śaṅkara is emphasising that a seeker must, first of all, try to see that he is fully equipped with these qualifications; and at all periodical reverses in spiritual progress, the sādhaka, instead of despairing, must intelligently evaluate himself and detect his own deficiencies.

When a patient looks pale, the doctor will immediately examine him for deficiencies. To make up the deficiency, he will supply him with the necessary ingredients. Similarly, when a spiritual seeker is fagged out, it is never due to an external obstacle as people generally complain, but always because of a serious deficiency in his spiritual constitution.

