

the Ācārya laboured to point out the truth of this statement by comparing it with the experiences of a waker with reference to the dreamer that he was before. Having quoted that prārabdha cannot be for the Man of Realisation the fact still remains that even after samādhi, he is found to be a member of society, going through the various joys and sorrows of his existence. A Ramakrishna suffers from cancer; a Christ suffers on his cross; one Ācārya is claimed and proclaimed as the greatest and the noblest and, therefore, he lives as a pontiff in luxurious circumstances on a golden throne under the silken umbrellas, while yet another Master seems to live with nothing to clothe him and without assurance of his next supper. How is this explained?

Śaṅkara in this verse gives us the clue. He says, the egocentric, desire prompted deliberate activities of the past leave behind their impressions, and prompted by these impressions (vāsanās), the individualised ego seeks a conducive physical environment where it can live and fulfil its residual vāsanās. Hence he dons an appropriate body and manifests himself under the required environments. Thus the body stems forth from the actions of the past; and since prārabdha is a resultant of past actions, it can be conceded that the body is the product of prārabdha. Therefore, prārabdha belongs to the body alone. It is the destiny of the body – gross, subtle and causal – that it should suffer or enjoy; that it should be in conducive environments or otherwise.

When the Teacher says that prārabdha is not for the Man of Realisation, he means, that there is no prārabdha for the Self, as the Self is not created by past actions. The Self was, is and shall ever be. All actions take place in the Self, with the Self, by the Self and for the Self. Since the Man of Realisation is one who has discovered his perfect identity with this supreme infinite Self, to him indeed, there cannot be any prārabdha. The same idea is expressed so vividly in the *Bhagavad-gītā* when Kṛṣṇa declares the Self to be unborn, eternal, permanent, the most ancient. It gets not killed when the body is killed.¹ In *Kaṭhopaniṣad* also the same idea is expressed.

¹ *ajo nityaḥ śāśvato'yaṁ purāṇo,*
na hanyate hanyamāne śarīre. – Bhagavad-gītā-2.20