

indulgences and enjoyments. Anxiety for the body is an expression of our identification with it. This can come only when, in our delusion, we have totally forgotten our essentially divine nature.

Ignorance and knowledge cannot exist at the same place and the same time. Where the ghost is recognised, there the post is non-existent, and one who recognises the post, to him the ghost is not available at all. Similarly, one's beloved in a dream is non-existent in the waking state.

So, he who is attached to his body and is wasting his time and energy nourishing and fattening it is indeed a fool. He is as far removed from the goal as the recognition of the rope is from one who is dying in delusion of being bitten by a serpent.



मोह एव महामृत्युमुक्षोर्वपुरादिषु ।  
मोहो विनिर्जितो येन स मुक्तिपदमर्हति ॥ ८५ ॥

*moha eva mahāmṛtyurmumukṣorvapuraḍiṣu,  
moho vinirjito yena sa muktipadamarhati. (85)*

85. For a student seeking Liberation, infatuation with the body and so on, is a 'tragic death'. He who has totally conquered this attachment deserves the state of Liberation.

To him who is aspiring to rise above the fascination of the sense organs for the sense objects and the calamitous confusions of emotions and thoughts, it is indeed a dire tragedy, if he were to allow himself to be tempted, by the fields of immediate pleasures which the body experiences in the midst of objects. To turn our attention away from the sense world and to seek diligently the experience of the Transcendental is the path by which the Higher can be unfolded. Prompted by his vāsanās, the individual might meet situations and moments when he is irresistibly jerked out of his contemplative moods to fulfil the demands of the world

around him. This will destroy the equipoise of the seeker and so Śaṅkara characterises it as a ‘dire death’ (mahā mr̥tyu).

On the other hand, he who has won a victory over his own delusory misconceptions (moha) and is not tempted by the outer world, discovers in himself a steadiness of contemplation with which he can certainly learn to withdraw himself from the whirlpools of matter and come to experience the pure Self. This is the condition of utter liberation from the entanglements and fascinations of one’s matter vestures.



मोहं जहि महामृत्युं देहदारसुतादिषु ।  
यं जित्वा मुनयो यान्ति तद्विष्णोः परमं पदम् ॥ ८६ ॥

*moham jahi mahāmr̥tyum dehadārasutādiṣu,  
yam jitvā munayo yānti tadviṣṇoḥ paramam padam. (86)*

86. Conquer this great infatuation for your body, wife, children and so on. By conquering these, sages reach the supreme state of Lord Viṣṇu.

Explaining the great ‘tragic death’ of the seeker, Śaṅkara pinpoints what exactly this death is. Infatuation with the body, no doubt, makes the seeker constantly search for more and more sense objects in the world outside, so that he may discover a greater fulfilment and happiness in life. The body here may be considered as indicating all the layers of man’s gross as well as subtle personality.

Wife (dāra) is to be understood as not only the wedded partner in life. In philosophy, the word often indicates all those on whom you depend for your happiness and sons (suta) stand for all those who depend on you. In the world of mutual relationships, each individual is but a link, holding all the other parts of the chain in position. As an individual I exist in society looking up to people who make me happy and look after