

those who are looking up to me for their comforts. In the language of the spiritual Masters, ‘wife and children’ is an idiom that includes all these relationships.

In the midst of all these webs of relationships an individual exists, maintaining different types of intimate attachments which have a knack of expanding their thrall. Suffocated by these, he gets exhausted. This is the death of all spiritual aspirations of the seeker.

Men of reflection (*munayah*) conquer this meaningless infatuation; victoriously rise, above the hungers of the flesh and come to experience the bliss of the supreme state. Here the word ‘Viṣṇu’, the ‘long strident’ stands for the ‘all-pervading’.

A spiritual seeker has a healthy attitude towards things and he keeps a balanced relationship with every thing around him in life. He loves all and he fulfils his duties towards them. But he never allows the world of relationships around to bind him and loot him of his freedom to grow. He keeps ample elbowroom to wage war against his own lower nature. Such an individual, intelligently organising his connections with the world will certainly run fleet footed towards the goal to enter the state of freedom and experience supreme Viṣṇuhood.





## 20. Gross Body Condemned (87-91)

त्वद्मांसरुधिरस्त्रायुमेदोमज्जास्थिसङ्कुलम् ।  
पूर्णं मूत्रपुरीषाभ्यां स्थूलं निन्द्यमिदं वपुः ॥ ८७ ॥

*tvañmāṁsarudhirasnāyumedomedomajjāsthisāṅkulam,  
pūrṇam mūtrapurīṣābhyaṁ sthūlam nindyamidam vapuh.* (87)

87. *This gross body is most offensive as it is composed of skin, flesh, blood vessels, fat, marrow and bones and also it is ever filled with urine and faecal matter.*

In order to create the necessary sense of detachment from and in order to wean the mind from all its infatuation with the body, Śaṅkara brings the seeker's scientific attention to focus completely on the composition of his own physical body. Infatuation can arise only through hasty, immature observations but when the nature of the thing becomes fully evident through close scientific study, this infatuation must lift and right understanding dawn. For this purpose, the human physical body is fully dissected in its biological composition in this verse.

The body is made up of unholy things which by themselves cannot endanger any fascination in a thoughtful man. Sometimes, it happens that the container may be ugly yet the contents can enrich it. Even this is not the case for our physical body, a filthy container containing nothing but gallons of filth. It is this filth packet that man hugs to himself, panting to experience peace and happiness through it. When we realise the folly of loving a thing which is so abominable, our endless attachment and attraction for it will cease.