



4. Miseries of The Unspiritual Man (4-7)

लब्ध्वा कथश्चिन्नरजन्म दुर्लभं तत्रापि पुंस्त्वं श्रुतिपारदर्शनम्।
यस्त्वात्ममुक्तौ न यतेत मूढधीः स ह्यात्महा स्वं विनिहन्त्यसद्ग्रहात्॥ ४ ॥

*labdhvā kathañcinnarajanma durlabham
tatrāpi pumstvam śrutipāradarsanam,
yastvātmamuktau na yateta mūḍhadhīḥ
sa hyātmahā svām vinihantyasadgrahāt.* (4)

4. Is there a man, who having somehow gained a human embodiment and there having a masculine temperament and also a complete knowledge of the scriptures, foolish enough not to strive hard for Self-realisation? He verily commits suicide, clinging to things unreal.

This verse declares that having been born in a human form, and possessed of the necessary masculine qualities of the head and heart, when such an individual has also made a thorough study of the deep significances of scriptural techniques, if he has not the enthusiasm to walk the sacred path and reach the divine goal of self perfection, such an individual, alas, commits suicide. Having got such a rare chance, a chance in a million, if he is not ready to take hold of it and use it in a profitable manner, he is indeed, committing hara-kiri and such a squanderer of human birth is very fittingly termed by Śaṅkara as a dull fool – ‘mūḍhadhīḥ’.

How does a person commit this senseless suicide? By his false attachments with the objects of the world, as he looks out from the parapets of his body and his mind, forgetting his own real nature, which is all-pervading Consciousness, he comes to misunderstand himself to be the matter envelopments, which are nothing but thought created encrustations around the Divine in

him. Perceiving through the prism of the body, mind and intellect, he sees the Truth splashed and splintered into endless plurality and the objects give a delusory enchantment to the senses and the mind. To satisfy these urges of his body and his mind, the individual runs after the objects. Necessarily, such a deluded person, having misunderstood his real nature, becomes the samsārika ego centre, a victim of his own ignorance. This fall of the Self to be the selfish ego is spiritual suicide.

There is no real suicide possible for the Ātman. No danger can come to me simply because I dream the greatest of dangers, even though the dreamer in me suffers all the dangers of my dream. The moment I wake up I realise that the dangers as well as the dreamer, who suffered them, were all my own mental creations only in an unsubstantial dreamworld.

So, from the standpoint of Reality, there is no suicide; but Śaṅkara comes down to our level to help us discriminate between the Real and the unreal, in and through our day-to-day life and it is in this sense that he says we commit suicide. It is not the destiny of the Self to suffer but it is the lot of the ego, the ego that strives in this world to be the sacred and the divine.



इतः कोन्वस्ति मूढात्मा यस्तु स्वार्थे प्रमाद्यति ।
दुर्लभं मानुषं देहं प्राप्य तत्रापि पौरुषम्॥ ५॥

*itah konvasti mūḍhātmā yastu svārthe pramādyati,
durlabham mānuṣam deham prāpya tatrāpi pauruṣam. (5)*

5. Is there a greater fool than the man who, having got the rare chance of a human birth and there too, the masculine qualities of the head and heart, falls short in his efforts to rediscover himself?

All creatures must wait for millions and trillions of years until nature takes them up step by step and moulds them into greater