

just one body. Each one has his own body, different from all others. How then can this be the Ātman, which is one without a second?

The body by itself is inert. It is not conscious. My clothes move where I move but they have no independent movement. When the individuality presiding over the body's activities departs, it perishes. Like a pot or a jar, it is an object of perception. It has no knowledge or Consciousness of its own. It is not the perceiver but as an object of perception, it is the perceived. It merely helps Consciousness to be conscious of the world of objects through it. It is only an instrument for Consciousness to function through. Just as a telescope by itself cannot see distant objects, but an intelligent observer alone can see them through the telescope, similarly, Consciousness functions through the body.

How then can this inert body be the Consciousness, which is the knower of all thoughts and thought modifications? In this verse, we have arguments to indicate that the body cannot be the Self for indeed, it is nothing but a cancerous growth on the Paramātman.



पाणिपादादिमान्देहो नात्मा व्यङ्गेऽपि जीवनात् ।
तत्तच्छक्तेरनाशाच्च न नियम्यो नियामकः ॥ १५६ ॥

*pāṇipādādīmāndeho nātmā vyaṅge'pi jīvanāt,
tattacchakteranāśācca na niyamyō niyāmakah. (156)*

156. The body which is made of arms, legs and so on, cannot be the Ātman, for even if these organs are amputated or removed, it continues to function efficiently. It is thus subject to the rule of another and cannot be the Ātman, the ruler of all.

This body is constituted of limbs such as the hands, the feet. Even if the limbs are amputated, the body continues to live. The life is not hands and legs. The functions of the limbs are specific. Normally one limb cannot perform the function of another. Eating food with

the legs or moving about on the hands is not possible but the Self is omnipotent. This body is regulated and controlled by the subtler personalities of man. That which is controlled by the other cannot be the Ātman, the controller of everything.

Here then, are more arguments to reflect upon, to realise that 'I cannot be this body'.



देहतद्धर्मतत्कर्मतदवस्थादिसाक्षिणः ।

सत एव स्वतःसिद्धं तद्वैलक्षण्यमात्मनः ॥ १५७ ॥

*dehataddharmatatkarmatadavasthādisākṣiṇaḥ,
sata eva svataḥsiddham tadvailakṣaṇyamātmanah. (157)*

157. *It is self-evident that the Ātman is the enduring Reality, that It is different from the body and its characteristics, its states and activities, that It is a witness of them all.*

The Ātman is the witness of the body, its nature, its activities, its states and so on. That which is the witness of a thing cannot itself be the thing observed. The seer is always something other than the seen. Therefore it becomes clear that the Ātman is something other than the body, and that the body is not the Self – this is yet another argument to prove it.



शल्यराशिर्मांसलितो मलपूर्णोऽतिकश्मलः ।

कथं भवेदयं वेत्ता स्वयमेतद्विलक्षणः ॥ १५८ ॥

*śalyarāśirmāṁsalipto malapūrṇo'tikaśmalaḥ,
katham bhavedayaṁ vettā svayametadvilakṣaṇaḥ. (158)*

158. *How can the self-existent Ātman, the Knower, ever be the body which is a packet of bones, covered with flesh, full of filth and extremely impure? – for It is always distinct from it.*