

**Satsanga with Sri Swami Viditatmananda Saraswati**  
**Arsha Vidya Gurukulam**

**Bhaja Govindam – Verse 6**

The sixth verse is somewhat similar to the earlier verse. It talks about the tremendous attraction or fascination that people have for their body. Śrī Śaṅkarācārya points out that the preoccupation with the body is another obstacle to attaining the goal of life.

यावत्पवनो निवसति देहे तावत्पृच्छति कुशलं गेहे ।

गतवति वायौ देहापाये भार्या बिभ्यति तस्मिन्काये ॥

*yāvātpavanaṁ nivasati dehe tāvatpṛcchati kuśalaṁ gehe,*  
*gatavati vāyau dehāpāye bhāryā bibhyati tasminkāye.*

When one is alive, his family members enquire kindly about his welfare. But when the soul departs from the body, even his wife runs away in fear of the corpse.

*Yāvat* means as long as, and *pavana* means air, breath or life. As long as there is life in the body, *pṛcchati kuśalaṁ gehe*, so long do your loved ones and others enquire after your welfare. You think that people love you; yes they do, but only as long as you are alive.

*Gatavati vāyau*, when this *vāyu* or life departs from the body, *dehāpāye*, the body slowly starts decaying. Then what happens? *Bhāryā bibhyati tasminkāye*. *Bhāryā* means wife. Even the wife that loved the body so dearly is afraid of it. Once life is no more, the body, which has been an object of adoration and love of other people starts decaying or degenerating and becomes an object of fear and contempt.

**Use the body properly to worship Govinda**

Again, Śrī Śaṅkarācārya brings to our attention the inevitable fact of life that a day will come, when life will depart from this body. The body has a place in our life. It is a means for the accomplishment or achievement of our goal, and to that extent, we should give it the importance that is its due, and care for it. However, there are people who spend their whole lives simply looking after the body, feeding, polishing, and decorating it; it is their preoccupation. The body is not everything in life. How long is this body going to remain an object of the

love of others? Only until the day that life departs from the body, and then, no more will it attract anyone. In fact, it then becomes an object of dread.

The body may be kept preserved for a few days with the use of chemicals. However, in India, the body is not kept in the house for more than a few hours. Once the person dies, the next thing that they think of is cremation. That is where the body belongs. Śrī Śaṅkarācārya points out that there is love for a person only as long as the person is alive. The body is a means provided to you, and therefore, use it properly. Use it as an instrument for the worship of Govinda<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Transcribed and edited by Krishnakumar (KK) S. Davey and Jayshree Ramakrishnan.