

Yoga Vasistha - The Art of Self Realization



Yoga Vasistha - The Science of Self Realization

PREFACE

One of the greatest spiritual classics ever recorded, the Yoga Vasistha is a mind blowing account of a detailed conversation between Sri Rama and his Spiritual teacher Vasistha Maharshi. The book goes into great detail surrounding the subtle intricacies of the mind, unraveling the multitude of layers to our very existence along the way.

Much of the text is told through parable stories, which hold many hidden depths within them. The ongoing theme throughout the book revolves around the notion of worldly miseries being caused by our own illusion of the world, and how whatever we perceive on the outside is merely a reflection of how we feel inside. Moving beyond these temporary illusions is the path to true enlightenment and Vasistha Maharshi goes into great depth as to how such a journey can be undertaken.

Yoga Vasistha contains a system of ancient philosophical thought unique in its kind. Those whose minds are turned away from the worldly desires and have become indifferent towards the objects of this world and those who are longing for liberation will be really benefited by this book.

The nature of the stories and their deep rooted philosophies are designed to open our levels of awareness, and legend states that those who complete the book will have their spiritual growth significantly accelerated. Yoga Vasistha is the essence of all the Hindu Philosophical texts – Bhagawad Gita, Vedas and Upanishads.

The nature of the ParaBrahma, Supreme God consciousness and the methods to attain Self Realization are vividly described in this book.

"This Atman (Eternal Self) is certainly different from the body, senses, mind, and prana. It is blissful, supreme, non-dual, permanent, formless, sinless, and pure. The moment this realization comes to you, you are liberated."

"If you constantly think of the Atman, your mind will be purified and your ignorance will be uprooted along with the past tendencies, just as your ailments will completely disappear by your taking medicine daily. When the mind is pure, you will get unalloyed bliss."

"When one realizes the truth of the unity between the Jivatma (soul of man) and the Paramatma (God) whether by instruction from the guru or from spiritual texts, that every moment the source of ignorance, along with the cause and effect, will mingle with Paramatma. The state mentioned above is called moksha (liberation). The self is ever-free."

[Vasistha to Rama:]

When the mind is at peace and the heart leaps to the supreme truth, when all the disturbing thought-waves in the mind-stuff have subsided and there is unbroken flow of peace and the heart is filled with the bliss of the absolute, when thus the truth has been seen in the heart, then this very world becomes an abode of bliss. (II:12) **Aum Namoh Narayana**

Aum Loka Samastha Sukinou Bhavantu

May all the beings in all the worlds be happy;

Peace, peace and peace be everywhere.

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INTRODUCTION

THE YOGA-VASISTHA is a popular text on Non-dual God, Ancient in form and philosophical in content. It is also known by other names like Knowledge Vasistha, Maha Ramayana, Vasistha Ramayana and Vasistha and is ascribed to Sage Valmiki himself. It is in the form of replies given by Vasistha to Sri Rama's queries regarding philosophical problems of life and death, and human suffering, and treats the essentials of Advaita Vedanta.

Yoga Vasistha, written by Sage Valmiki, is the spiritual teaching imparted by Sage Vasistha to Sri Rama. Yoga Vasistha is also known as the Maha Ramayana, the Uttar Ramayana and the Vasistha Ramayana. It describes how Rama's knowledge, wisdom and understanding evolved and progressed throughout the different stages of his life. Yoga Vasistha is an elaborate work, consisting of 32,000 verses and 64,000 lines.

The main theme of Yoga Vasistha is that the soul is undergoing a dream from which it must awake. This dream represents our association and identification with the world. The fact that it is described as being a dream means that whatever is in it has to be false. Nothing in a dream can be true. Waking up from that dream is the ultimate goal, Self-realization. People who are interested in Self Realization can also study the more comprehensive Brihat Yoga Vasistha book and the smaller one, Laghu Yoga Vasistha. The term Brihat means great, while Laghu signifies small.

The sum total of pleasures of the whole world is a mere drop when compared to the bliss of Moksha. When all the desires are destroyed, the extinction of the mind where Mind becomes "No-Mind" is Moksha. If the illusory I-ness or Ego perishes, the end of thoughts to the Maya is Moksha. Extinction of all Psychological conditioning constitutes Eternal Liberation of the Self. Self Knowledge is the realization that the Self is in reality not bound, but always pure and free. Realize that you are the immortal all pervading Self and become free. This is the goal of our life and the goal of our existence.

The book deals with six major sections – 1. Dispassion or indifference 2. Longing for liberation 3. Origin 4. Preservation 5. Quiescence of mind 6. Liberation

There are four gate-keepers at the entrance to the Realm of Freedom. They are **Santi (self-control or quietness of mind)**, **Vichara (spirit of inquiry)**, **Santosha (contentment)** and **Satsanga (good company)**. The wise seeker should diligently cultivate the friendship of these, or at least one of them.

This World-appearance is a confusion, even the blueness of the sky is an optical illusion. I think it is better not to let the mind dwell on it, but to ignore it. (1:3)

OM Namō Narayanaya

What are the four Gatekeepers (Pillars) to Freedom?

[Vasistha:]

There are four gate-keepers at the entrance to the Realm of Freedom. They are **Santi (self-control or quietness of mind), Vichara (spirit of inquiry), Santosha (contentment) and Satsanga (good company)**. The wise seeker should diligently cultivate the friendship of these, or at least one of them.

When the mind is at peace, pure, tranquil, free from delusion or hallucination, untangled and free from cravings, it does not long for anything nor does it reject anything. This is self-control or conquest of mind.

All that is good and auspicious flows from self-control. All evil is dispelled by self-control. No gain, no pleasure in this world or in heaven is comparable to the delight of self-control. The delight one experiences in the presence of the self-controlled is incomparable. Everyone spontaneously trusts him. None (not even demons and goblins) hates him.

Self-control, O Rama, is the best remedy for all physical and mental ills. When there is self-control, even the food you eat tastes better, else it tastes bitter. He who wears the armour of self-control is not harmed by sorrow.

He who even while hearing, touching, seeing, smelling and tasting what is regarded as pleasant and unpleasant, is neither elated nor depressed — he is self-controlled. He who looks upon all beings with equal vision, having brought under control the sensations of pleasure and pain, is self-controlled. He who though living amongst all is unaffected by them, neither feels elated nor hates, even as one is during sleep — he is self-controlled.

Inquiry (the second gate-keeper to liberation) should be undertaken by an intelligence that has been purified by a close study of the scripture, and this inquiry should be unbroken. By such inquiry the intelligence becomes keen and is able to realize the supreme; hence **inquiry alone is the best remedy for the long-lasting illness known as samsara (repeated births)**.

Valmiki

The wise man regards strength, intellect, efficiency and timely action as the fruits of inquiry. Indeed kingdom, prosperity, enjoyment, as well as final liberation, are all the fruits of inquiry. The spirit of inquiry protects one from the calamities that befall the unthinking fool. When the mind has been

rendered dull by the absence of inquiry, even the cool rays of the moon turn into deadly weapons, and the childish imagination throws up a goblin in every dark spot. Hence, the non-inquiring fool is really a storehouse of sorrow. It is the absence of inquiry that gives rise to actions that are harmful to oneself and to others, and to numerous psychosomatic illnesses. Therefore, one should avoid the company of such unthinking people.

They in whom the spirit of inquiry is ever awake illumine the world, enlighten all who come into contact with them, dispel the ghosts created by an ignorant mind, and realize the falsity of sense-pleasures and their objects. O Rama, in the light of inquiry there is realization of the eternal and unchanging reality; this is the supreme. With it one does not long for any other gain nor does one spurn anything. He is free from delusion, attachment; he is not inactive nor does he get drowned in action; he lives and functions in this world and at the end of a natural life-span he reaches the blissful state of total freedom.

The eye of spiritual inquiry does not lose its sight even in the midst of all activities; he who does not have this eye is indeed to be pitied. It is better to be born as a frog in the mud, a worm in dung, a snake in a hole, but not be one without this eye. What is inquiry? To inquire thus: "Who am I? How has this evil of samsara (repetitive history) come into being?" is true inquiry. Knowledge of truth arises from such inquiry; from such knowledge there follows tranquillity in oneself; and then there arises the supreme peace in the Self and the ending of all sorrow.

Contentment is another gate-keeper to liberation. He who has quaffed the nectar of contentment does not relish craving for sense-pleasures; no delight in this world is as sweet as contentment which destroys all sins.

What is contentment? To renounce all craving for what is not obtained unsought and to be satisfied with what comes unsought, without being elated or depressed even by them — this is contentment. As long as one is not satisfied in the self, he will be subjected to sorrow. With the rise of contentment the purity of one's heart blooms. The contented man who possesses nothing owns the world.

Satsanga (company of wise, holy and enlightened persons) is yet another gatekeeper to liberation. Satsanga enlarges one's intelligence, destroys one's ignorance and one's psychological distress. Whatever be the cost, however difficult it may be, whatever obstacles may stand in its way, satsanga should never be neglected. For, satsanga alone is one's light on the path of life. Satsanga is indeed superior to all other forms of religious practices like charity, austerity, pilgrimages and the performance of religious rites.

One should by every means in one's power adore and serve the holy men who have realized the truth and in whose heart the darkness of ignorance has been dispelled. They who, on the other hand, treat such holy men disrespectfully, surely invite great suffering.

These four — contentment, satsanga, the spirit of inquiry, and self-control — are the four surest means by which they who are drowning in this ocean of samsara can be saved. Contentment is the supreme gain. Satsanga is the best companion to the destination. The spirit of inquiry itself is the greatest wisdom.

And, self-control is supreme happiness. If you are unable to resort to all these four, then practice one: by the diligent practice of one of these, the others will also be found in you. The highest wisdom will seek you of its own accord. Until you tame the wild elephant of your mind with the help of these noble qualities, you cannot have progress towards the supreme, even if you become a god, demi-god or a tree.

Therefore, O Rama, strive by all means to cultivate these noble qualities. He who is endowed with the qualities that I have enumerated thus far is qualified to listen to what I am about to reveal. (II:11)

When the mind is at peace and the heart leaps to the supreme truth, when all the disturbing thought-waves in the mind-stuff have subsided and there is unbroken flow of peace and the heart is filled with the bliss of the absolute, when thus the truth has been seen in the heart, then this very world becomes an abode of bliss. (II:12)

Inspirational Verses from Yoga Vasistha

[King Janaka:]

O unsteady mind! This worldly life is not conducive to your true happiness. Hence, reach the state of equanimity. It is in such equanimity that you will experience peace, bliss and the truth. (V:11)

Rooted in equanimity, doing whatever happens to be the appropriate action in each given situation and not ever thinking about what has thus befallen you unsought, live non-volitionally — doing yet not doing what has to be done. Consciousness minus conceptualization is the eternal Brahman. (V:13)

[Bhaktha Prahlada to Lord Vishnu:]

Whatever comes, let it come; whatever goes, let it go. Let notions of diverse experiences either arise or set in the body: I am neither in them nor they in me.

Even as steel cuts the steel-beam which has been heated, I have subdued the mind with its own purified state. I have cut asunder cravings, ignorance and foolishness by their opposites. Egolessly, my body functions with its inherent energy. The past tendencies, mental conditioning and limitations have been completely destroyed.

I begin to wonder: how was it that for such a long time I was caught up in the trap of ego-sense! Freed from dependency, from habits of thought, from desire and cravings, from deluded belief in the existence of the ego, from the coloring of pleasure-seeking tendency and from revelry — my mind has reached a state of utter quiescence. With this all sorrow has come to an end and the light of supreme bliss has dawned! (V:35)

[Lord Vishnu to Bhaktha Prahlada:]

Even though you are in the body, since you do not have the body, you are bodiless. You are the observer which is immaterial intelligence: just as, though air exists in space it is not attached to space, and hence it is free from spatial limitation.

Enlightened men, though they be constantly engaged in activity, do nothing: it is not by means of inaction that they reach the state of non-action! This very fact of non-action frees you from experiences: for there is no harvest where there is no sowing. When thus both notions of I do and I experience have ceased, there remains only peace; when that peace is firmly grounded, there is liberation. (V:40)

Without self-inquiry and the consequent inner tranquillity, neither devotion to Lord Vishnu nor self-knowledge is possible. Hence resort to self-inquiry and the practice of the End to distraction and thus adore the Self: if you are successful in this, you have attained perfection; if not, you are no more than a wild donkey.

Lord Vishnu in fact dwells as the innermost being of all; they are surely the worst among men who, abandoning the indweller, seek Vishnu outside. (V:43)

The Story of HastAmalaka

HastAmalaka's parents lived in a village called Srlbali, near gokarNa (Karnataka). He was born already Self-realized. His behavior as a child caused his parents a lot of concern, because the young boy would remain dumb and completely unaffected by happenings around him. The troubled parents brought him to Adi Sankara, who asked him who he was. The boy replied in verse, describing his essential nature as the non-dual Atman.

Sankara realized that this seemingly dumb boy was actually like the vedic Rishi vAmadeva, and asked the parents to leave the boy with him as a sannyasin, who was then called hastAmalaka. This name comes from a well-known metaphor. The words hastAmalaka and karatala-Amalaka are often used in advaita writings, when the immediate knowledge of the Atman is said to be grasped as if it were the gooseberry (Amalaka) fruit in one's hand (hasta). As such, the name hastAmalaka denotes this disciple's depth of AtmIgnorance. His dialogue with Sankara came to be known as the hastAmalaklya Sloka.

When Shankara, the Guru of the world, was travelling in the western parts of India and overcoming in debate the expounders of the various schools of thought, he once came to a village known as Srivali. When a brahmin inhabitant of the village named Prabhakara heard about his arrival he went to him with his thirteen year old son. He prostrated before Sankara and made his son also prostrate. He then explained that the boy had been dumb from his childhood, that he had no likes and dislikes, nor a sense of honour and dishonour, and that he was completely inactive. The Guru then raised the boy up and asked him as follows in a cheerful tone:

1. 'Who are you? Whose child are you? Where are you bound? What is your name? When have you come? Oh Child! I should like to hear your reply to these questions.' Thus spoke Sri Shankaracharya to the boy, and Hastamalaka replied as follows.
2. I am neither man, God, yaksha, brahmin, kshatriya, vaisya, sudra, brahmachari, householder, forest-dweller, nor sannyasi; but I am pure awareness alone.
3. Just as the sun causes all worldly movements, so do I -- the ever-present, conscious Self -- cause the mind to be active and the senses to function. Again, just as the ether is all-pervading, yet devoid of any specific qualities, so am I free from all qualities.
4. I am the conscious Self, ever-present and associated with everything in the same manner as heat is always associated with fire. I am that eternal, undifferentiated, unshaken Consciousness, on account of which the insentient mind and senses function, each in its own manner.
5. I am that conscious Self of whom the ego is not independent as the image in a mirror is not independent of the object reflected.
6. I am the unqualified, conscious Self, existing even after the extinction of Intellect, just as the object remains ever the same even after the removal of the reflecting mirror.

7. I am eternal Consciousness, dissociated from the mind and senses. I am the mind of the mind, the eye of the eye, ear of the ear and so on. I am not cognizable by the mind and senses.
8. I am the eternal, single, conscious Self, reflected in various intellects, just as the sun is reflected on the surface of various sheets of water.
9. I am the single, conscious Self, illumining all intellects, just as the sun simultaneously illumines all eyes so that they perceive objects.
10. Only those eyes that are helped by the sun are capable of seeing objects, not others. The source from which the sun derives its power is myself.
11. Just as the reflection of the sun on agitated waters seems to break up, but remains perfect on a calm surface, so also am I, the conscious Self, unrecognizable in agitated intellects though I clearly shine in those which are calm.
12. Just as a fool thinks that the sun is entirely lost when it is hidden by dense clouds, so do people think that the ever-free Self is bound.
13. Just as the ether is all-pervading and unaffected by contact, so also does the ever-conscious Self pervade everything without being affected in anyway. I am that Self.
14. Just as a transparent crystal takes on the lines of its background, but is in no way changed thereby, and just as the unchanging moon on being reflected on undulating surfaces appears agitated, so is it with you, the all-pervading God.
15. As this stotra reveals the Self as clearly as the amalaka fruit placed on the palm of the hand (hasta), it received the name Hastamalaka Stotra. Moreover, the boy, eminent in Knowledge, came to be praised by all people of this world as Hastamalaka.

Para Pooja

When the indivisible, eternally blissful, free from transition or change, and induplicate gets stationary (or understood) in mind, then tell me how can I do the prayers! What should be used to invoke the complete and what should be used as a seat for the One Who is the supreme pillar of existence? Where is the way to clean the feet of the spotless and where is the way to purify the pure.[1—2]

Of what use is a sacred thread to One Who has no caste or creed? What is the use of fragrance for the One Who cannot be applied, and what is the use of garland for someone Who cannot wear? What is the use of jewellery for One without discrimination and What will be an adoration for the formless?[3—4]

What will a dispassionate One, Who is omnipresent, do with dhūpa and dīpa? And of what use will be savory sweet for that Who is satisfied in One's own bliss. What is the point in offering tām̄būla (betelnut) to the Father of the bliss of the world, Who is self-luminous, Who is the universal spirit, and Who shines forth the sun, the moon and others.[5—6]

How is circumambulation of the infinite, Who is induplicable, possible? How do we eulogize an entity Who is beyond the scope of the sentences of the Veda. How do we offer light to the resplendent self-luminous One? And how do we dress someone Who is complete in every way?[7—8]

This is the only Parāpūjā that should be kept without doubt, in every age, by those who know the Brahman.[9]

O Śambhu! You are my Ātman, Girijā is my mind, Your accompaniments are my life-forces, Your body is my residence. My various enjoyment and constructions be Your prayer. My sleep be the state of meditation. My walking be Your circumambulation and my spoken words be Your eulogies. And whatever I do, that all may be Your adoration.[10]

Rama and Dispassion

Rama wanted to visit all the sacred places of pilgrimages. He got permission of his Guru and his Father and set out on his journey to all the Holy Places in India. He visited all the Holy Places and returned to Ayodhya. Rama is fifteen years old at that time and his body gradually emaciated. Rama becomes utterly disillusioned after experiencing the apparent reality of the world touring the country.

This worries his father, King Dasaratha. The King expresses his concern to Sage Vasistha, upon his arrival. Sage Vasistha consoles the king by telling him that Rama's dispassion (vairagya) is a sign that the prince is now ready for spiritual enlightenment. He says that Rama has begun understanding profound spiritual truths, which is the cause of his confusion and he just needs confirmation.

Sage Vasistha asks king Dasaratha to summon Rama. Then, in the court of king Dasaratha, the sage begins the discourse to Rama which lasts for several days. The answer to Rama's questions forms the entire scripture that is Yoga Vasistha.

Rama replied Respected Sage, Please hear me.

"Paramatman (God) alone is real; This world is unreal. The latter appears as real in man's vision, hearing and thoughts, but it lasts only as long as the things seen in a dream last. There is not even an iota of happiness in this world. Men are born to die and they die to be born again. Therefore all are illusory in this world."

I have developed **discrimination** and discarded all thoughts of sensual enjoyments. One should know about the deceptive nature of the mind. The mind pictures the world as if it is real. I am trying to find out means which will relieve me from the pains of repeated births. This thought consumes me like a wild fire"

Wealth – Wealth cannot give happiness. It is a source of misery. It is temporary and unsteady. It moves from one to another. It makes people evil by tempting them into sin. It hardens the heart of men. It destroys all our good qualities and gets caught us in a trap of desires. The fire of desires has burnt us.

Body – This body is composed of flesh, bones, fat, nerves, tendons and blood. It is a home to various diseases and is filled with impurities. Ego lives in this body as the master with greed as the mistress. It is being bitten by the serpent of the ever-increasing desires of the five senses. People without this true Knowledge begin to droop in their minds and thus shorten their lives. I do not rejoice in this life of mine which darts like a flash of lightning in the cloud of delusion and ignorance. The body is like a bubble that will burst at any time. The shining skin is subject to wrinkles in old age. There is nothing so hurtful as this life which is perishable and temporary in nature."

Ego – I am much afraid of this Ego which generates actions, desires, pains and is the source of all evil. Ego is illusory and deludes people. Ego is nothing, but it is everything for the worldly people. Ego is born of ignorance. Pride nurtures it. There is no enemy greater than Ego. Ego has its seat in the mind. Ego makes man commit evil and wrong actions. Ego is a disease. Pride, lust, anger, delusion, greed, jealousy,

love/hate are the servants of this Ego. Therefore the real secret lies only in the renunciation of this Ego. Teacher of Great wisdom – Please bless me so that I may free myself from this Ego.”

Mind – Mind arises only through Ego. Mind (mind) is tossed about in objects of love and hatred, like a storm. It ever whirls far and wide in vain in sensual objects away from the association with the wise like a strolling dog ; but no results accrue therefrom. This baneful mind does not hold the joy (or enjoy the happiness) within, but whirls at the sight of the superficial outward appearances. This ferocious dog of mind follows its desires and preys upon ignorant. This monster of a mind is more terrible than fire itself, more insurmountable than mountains and more obdurate than a huge diamond. All pains are generated by mind. If this mind is annihilated through discrimination and Spiritual Enquiry, all pains and the illusory world will vanish”

Desires – Desire is the enemy of peace. The pack of owls called passion and anger play in the Ether of Consciousness during the night of restless desires enveloped with the intense gloom of dire delusion. Being without a mind of Atma Knowledge, I am enmeshed by them, like a bird caught in a trap and droop thereby. The fire of desires has burnt us. The desires follows people in the hope of inciting them to earn wealth but in vain.

Like a dancing woman who, though enfeebled by age, dances in vain without true joy, all my desires (play in me in a similar manner and) afflict me. They will try to encompass things beyond their reach; but even if such things are within their grasp, they will pass over and again long for happiness in other things . Like monkeys, they roam about without any fixed seat..

“This body which is composed of the cool intestines, muscles and is subject to changes, being at one time fat and at another time lean, shines in this mundane existence simply to undergo pains.

What more palpably fruitless, painsgiving and degraded thing could be conceived of than this body which oscillates with pains or pleasures through the increase or decrease of the experiences of objects ?

Infancy - The child is in a helpless condition. He cannot convey his ideas. He weeps for nothing. He is ignorant. This period is ever attended with dangers from fire, water, etc. He is easily irritable. How can ignorant childhood be said to be happy state of life?

Youth – At this period, the young man is a slave to lust. His mind is filled with evil thoughts. He commits various sins. His good qualities vanish. The period of youth passes away quickly. The foolishman who rejoices in his temporary youth, is no more than a human beast.

Lust – What beauty is there in a woman who is composed of is composed of flesh, bones, fat, nerves, tendons and blood? A woman is charming for a short while. She is the cause of delusion. Where is the beauty in an old woman with wrinkled skin? Women destroy the life of men by causing lust and clouding the power of discrimination. I long only yo attain that state of Supreme Bliss which will put an end to repeated births.

Old Age – drives away the beauty of people. The old man is treated with contempt by the members of his family. He is helpless and his senses are powerless. He cannot satisfy his desires. He has no good memory. He suffers from various diseases. There is an insatiable desire for enjoyments but he has no capacity to enjoy. What is the good of this miserable routine life subjected to decay and old age?

Time – Time is the rate that cuts off the thread of life in the universe. There is nothing in this world that time will spare. The king called Death with the armies of mental and physical diseases march in procession in this world. What bliss can we expect to derive from association with this the old grey hag of

dire dotage ? It is very difficult to do away with the desires of old age by getting rid of the three kinds of desires (of son, wife and wealth) very easily.

All the pleasurable objects of enjoyment in this world arising through Ignorance in the series of re-births take leave with the arrival of Yama (Death or Time), like a thread nibbled by a rat. There is nothing in this world which is not devoured by time. What is the good of this miserable mundane life which is subject to decay and old age?

In enjoyment there is fear of disease; in social position, the fear of falling off; in wealth, the fear of (hostile) Governments; in honour, the fear of humiliation; in power, the fear of enemies; in beauty, the fear of old age; in scriptural erudition, the fear of opponents; in virtue, the fear of traducers; in body, the fear of death. All the things of this world pertaining to human beings are attended with fear; renunciation alone stands for fearlessness.

Does this supreme state exist? Is, there not the seat of quiescence? O Respectable Sage! Teach me so that I may become free of grief, fear and worldly troubles and may have the light of truth! Show me the way to attain everlasting peace, eternal bliss and immortality.

Bhagawad Gita Chapter 2, Verse 71

vihaya kaman yah sarvan

pumams carati nihsprah

nirmamo nirahankarah

sa santim adhigacchati

A person who has given up all desires for sense gratification, who lives free from desires, who has given up all sense of proprietorship and is devoid of false ego--he alone can attain real peace.

Bhagawad Gita Chapter 5, Verse 29

bhoktaram yajna-tapasam

sarva-loka-mahesvaram

suhrdam sarva-bhutanam

jnatva mam santim rcchati

The sages, know the Supreme ParaBrahma as the ultimate purpose of all sacrifices and austerities, the Supreme Lord of all the Worlds, the benefactor and well-wisher of all living entities. They attain eternal peace from material miseries by renouncing the fruits of their actions to the Supreme Lord.

Bhagawad Gita Chapter 9, Verse 27

yat karosi yad asnasi

yaj juhosi dadasi yat

yat tapasyasi kaunteya

tat kurusva mad-arpanam

O son of Kunti, all that you do, all that you eat, all that you offer and give away, as well as all austerities that you may perform, should be done as an offering unto Lord. Thus, it is the duty of everyone to mold his life in such a way that he will not forget Supreme God in any circumstance. Everyone has to work for maintenance of his body and soul together, and God recommends herein that one should work for Him.

Story of Suka – How Suka attained the Highest State of Bliss

Raja Rishi Viswamitra said to Lord Rama: "You know all that should be known. You and Rishi Suka are full of spiritual wisdom. Both of you have attained equally the highest wisdom, but you need to acquire the state of quietness and stillness."

Lord Rama: "O, please inform me how Brahm Rishi Suka achieved wisdom without quiescence of mind, and how he secured that blissful state?"

The Master: "Rishi Suka had absolute spiritual wisdom which is the only sword to cut the rope of re-birth. Once he tried to inquire of the origin of things, as you are doing, and he then became doubtful of his wisdom. The object of his mind became disturbed, but he was free from sensual desires. Rishi Suka went to the Himalaya Mountains to his father, who was one of the Masters there, and asked for instruction that he might not lose his faith.

Thus he said to his father: 'O Father, from whence came all this Maya (illusion), which produces misery and darkness? How did it originate? How may it be destroyed?' What part does it play in the origin of the universe?' His father replied with wisdom, as he did unto all others, but his answer did not dispel his son's doubt. Suka said to his father: 'I know all that'. And alas! his father was unable to remove his doubt. His father then requested him to go to King Janaka, who was the highest being in spiritual wisdom of his time.

"Rishi Suka left the Himalaya Mountains and later approached the golden gates of the King's palace. Although the King was aware of Brahm Rishi's (Suka) arrival, he refused to go forth and meet him. He requested that the Rishi should not be admitted into his palace, as he wanted to test the sincerity of his mind. Rishi Suka waited full seven days at the golden gate.

At last he was conducted into a magnificent hall where beautiful women were indulging in worldly enjoyments. But Suka's mind did not lose its balance. He was not affected by the unjust act of the King in making him wait seven days at his gate, nor was he moved by the disgraceful conduct of worldly association.

The King came and addressed him thus: 'O, Brahm Rishi (there are three kinds of Rishis), you have reached the highest state. The worldly joys and sorrows do not affect thee. I beseech you to tell what has brought you here?' Rishi Suka asked: 'What has caused my illusion? How does it generate? How can it be destroyed? Please instruct me.' The King gave him the same explanation that his father had given him.

Rishi Suka returned: 'I know that, and my father gave me the same information. If Maya (illusion) which is produced by a differentiation of one Atma as breath, etc.) and merged again into the Atma, then no benefit can be derived from this perishable Maya (illusion). O Highest Guru, You are able to dispel this delusion of my mind! Please enlighten me on this matter.'

"The King: 'You have known what should be known, but still you ask me—although your father has instructed you aright. The enlightenment we have given to you is the real one. Atma alone, is that which is

everywhere, just as the ether pervades all space and atmosphere. Wisdom is bound by naught else but its own thought. Freeing yourself from sensual thoughts, is freeing yourself from bondage. You have clearly realized the Atmic wisdom for you have given up all longing for sensual objects. You have by thine own efforts, through the higher mind, reached the highest Brahmic State; you have become a Jivanmukta (the state of emancipated embodiment).

But one thing you have yet to accomplish—that of giving up the delusion of the illusion which has arisen through doubt in your mind. When you have accomplished this, then you will be free.' King Janak thus initiated Rishi Suka into the Atmic mysteries, where he acquired the highest state of wisdom, and was freed from all misery, doubt, death and rebirth. He lived for 1000 years, then merged into that higher wisdom, which is Brahm. As water returns to the ocean, so the light which departs from the "I", returns to the higher light (Atma), and becomes Brahm. Thus Rishi attained that liberation, which is above all else. O Ram, you should follow the same path.

"To become a slave of desire is bondage; to master it, is liberation. Master your desires and become indifferent to worldly enjoyments; become a Jivanmukta (emancipated embodiment), without the assistance of austerities of religions; follow the path of wisdom and you will realize the reality. O Ram, there is but one person who can remove the doubt from your mind, and that is the Omniscient Vasistha, who knows the past, present, and the future. He is the Guru (spiritual teacher) of all mankind."

Persons qualified to read this work called Vasistha (the work of Vasistha) should not be Ajnanis (the ignorant or the worldly wise), but only those who, conscious of being under bondage, long after freedom from it, and are in that vacillating position, from which they contemplate attaining Moksha.

When the notion of (empirical) self is destroyed by the withdrawal of the fuel of ideas from the mind, that which is, is the infinite. (III:10)

The world exists because consciousness is: and the world is the body of consciousness. There is no division, no difference, no distinction. Hence the universe can be said to be both real and unreal: real because of the reality of consciousness which is its own reality, and unreal because the universe does not exist as universe, independent of consciousness. (III:14)

Death is but waking from a dream. (III:19)

Direct inquiry into the movements of thought in one's own consciousness is the supreme guru, the greatest teacher. (III:75)

Eternal Brahman, pure existence, is known when the three-fold modifications known as waking, dreaming and deep sleep cease and when the mind-stuff is rid of all movement of thought. It is expressed in silence when the known comes to an end.

This Self can be attained by a hundred ways and means; yet when it is attained, nothing has been attained! It is the supreme Self; yet it is nothing [no-thing]. One roams in this forest of samsara, or repetitive history, till there is the dawn of that wisdom which is able to dispel the root-ignorance in which the world appears to be real. But the truth is that it is the infinite consciousness that perceives the universe within itself, through its own power known as Maya. That which is seen within also appears outside.

The seer is the sight only, and when latent psychic impressions have ceased, the seer regains its pure being; when the external object is imagined, a seer has been created. If there is no subject, there is no

object either. Because the subject (seer) is pure consciousness, he is able to conjure up the object.

This cannot be the other way round; the object does not give birth to the subject. Therefore the seer alone is real, the object being only name and form. As long as the notions of the object persists, the division between the seer and the seen also persists. When self-knowledge arises and the name and form of objects ceases to be, the seer (subject) is realized as the sole reality. (III:81)

What are the impediments of Yoga? How to abandon them?

One should seek to acquire this Knowledge by abandoning those five impediments of Yoga which are known to the wise, viz., desire, wrath, cupidity, fear and sleep.

Wrath is conquered with tranquillity of disposition. Desire is conquered by giving up all purposes. By reflecting with the aid of the understanding upon topics worthy of reflection, one endowed with patience succeeds in abandoning sleep. By steady endurance one should restrain one's organs of generation and the stomach (from unworthy or sinful indulgence). One should protect one's hands and feet by using one's eyes. One should protect one's eyes and ears by the aid of one's mind, one's mind and speech by one's acts. One should avoid fear by heedfulness, and pride by waiting upon the wise. Subduing procrastination, one should, by these means, subdue these impediments of Yoga.

One should pay one's adorations to fire and the Teachers (Enlightened Souls), and one should bow one's head to the deities. One should avoid all kinds of inauspicious discourse, and speech that is fraught with malice, and words that are painful to other minds.

Meditation, study, gift, truth, modesty, simplicity, forgiveness, purity of body, purity of conduct, subjugation of the senses, these enhance one's energy, which when enhanced destroys one's sins. By behaving equally towards all creatures and by living in contentment upon what is acquired easily and without effort, one attains to the fruition of all one's objects and succeeds in obtaining Self knowledge.

Eight limbs of Meditation

1. Yama (The five "abstentions"): non-violence, non-lying, non-covetousness, non-sensuality, and non-possessiveness.
2. Niyama (The five "observances"): purity, contentment, austerity, study, and surrender to god.
3. Asana: Literally means "seat", and in Patanjali's Sutras refers to the seated position used for meditation.
4. Pranayama ("Suspending Breath"): Prana, breath, "ayama", to restrain or stop. Also interpreted as control of the life force.
5. Pratyahara ("Abstraction"): Withdrawal of the sense organs from external objects.
6. Dharana ("Concentration"): Fixing the attention on a single object.
7. Dhyana ("Meditation"): Intense contemplation of the nature of the object of meditation.
8. Samadhi ("Liberation"): merging consciousness with the object of meditation.

Greatest Verses from Yoga Vasistha

When the truth is known, all descriptions cease, and silence alone remains. (III:84)

Only when one severs the very root of the mind with the weapon of non-conceptualization, can one reach the Absolute Brahman which is omnipresent, supreme peace.

First destroy the mental conditioning by renouncing cravings; and then remove from your mind even the concept of bondage and liberation. Be totally free of conditioning.

Ideas and thoughts are bondage; and their coming to an end is liberation. Therefore, be free of them and do whatever has to be done spontaneously. (III:111)

That mind is pure in which all cravings are in a state of quiescence. Whatever that pure mind wishes, that materializes.

The mind is purified by persistent contemplation of truth. Only when the mind is totally purified of all conditioning does it regain its utter purity; that pure mind experiences liberation. (IV:17)

Bondage is none other than the notion of an object. The notions of I and the world are but shadows, not truth. Such notions alone create objects; these objects are neither true nor false. Therefore abandon the notions of I and this and remain established in the truth. (IV:21)

It is only when the mind has become devoid of all attachment, when it is not swayed by the pairs of opposites, when it is not attracted by objects and when it is totally independent of all supports, that it is freed from the cage of delusion. (IV:22)

Wealth is the mother of evil. Sense-pleasure is the source of pain. Misfortune is the best fortune. Rejection by all is victory. Life, honor and noble qualities blossom and attain fruition in one whose conduct and behavior are good and pleasant, who is devoted to seclusion and who does not crave for the pleasures of the world, which lead to suffering. (IV:32)

O Rama, I shall declare to you the quintessence of all wisdom: listen and let it perfume your whole life. **Bondage is the craving for pleasure; and its abandonment is liberation. (IV:35)**

O Rama, the mind itself is the Individual Self; the mind experiences what it itself has projected out of itself. By that it is bound. It is the state of the mind that determines the nature of the reincarnation of the Individual Self.

When in a pure mind there arise concepts and notions, the world appearance comes into being. But, when the mind gives up the subject-object relationship it has with the world, it is instantly absorbed in the infinite.

When you are free from all concerns about the objects of the world, you will be established in non-dual consciousness, and that is final liberation. Live without being swayed by likes and dislikes, attraction and aversion, without any desires or cravings. Constantly seek to discover the supreme peace.

Rama, you are already a liberated being: live like one. (IV:62)

One should enjoy the delight that flows from peace. The man whose mind is well-controlled is firmly established in peace. When the heart is thus established in peace, there arises the pure bliss of the Self without delay. (V:8)

Consciousness free from the limitations of the mind is known as the inner intelligence: it is the essential nature of no-mind. That is the reality, that is supreme consciousness, that is the state known as the supreme self, that is omniscience. (V:50)

O mind, abandon this perception of diversity and realize the unreality of your own independence from the infinite consciousness: this is liberation. (V:52)

He is a sage liberated while living who has abandoned all motivated actions, who is free from conditioning and who has given up all desires and hopes. O Rama, abandon all desires and remain at peace within yourself. When you perceive the truth that the self alone is all this and that diversity is just a word without substance, you will become totally free from desire or hope.

Free from the least attachment he enjoys whatever comes to him unsought, even as the eyes perceive their objects without desire or aversion. (V:74)

He whose mind is firmly established in peace through the practice of yoga has the right vision of the truth. To see that the supreme self is without beginning or end, and that these countless objects are in fact the self and no other, is the right vision. Erroneous vision leads to rebirth; right vision ends rebirth. In it there is no subject-object (knower-knowable) relationship; for the self (consciousness) is the knower, knowledge and the knowable, too, and the division is ignorance. (V:79)

The state of mind of the liberated ones who are still living and who see both the supreme truth and the relative appearance, is known as satva (transparency). It is improper to call it the mind: it is really satva. These knowers of truth are mindless and are in a state of perfect equilibrium: they live their life here playfully. They behold the inner light all the time, even though they seem to be engaged in diverse actions. Concepts of duality, unity or such others do not arise in them, for there are no tendencies in their heart. **The very seed of ignorance is burnt in the state of satva and it does not again give rise to delusion. (VI.1:2)**

The wise ones say that one is established in pure being or Brahman only after one has investigated the nature of the truth as expounded in the scriptures, in the company and with the help of enlightened sages. (VI.1:10)

Death does not wish to kill one who does not have raga-dvesa (attraction and aversion) nor false notions and mental habits. Death does not wish to kill one who does not suffer from mental illness, who does not entertain desires and hopes which give rise to anxieties and worry, who is not poisoned by greed, whose body and mind are not burnt by the fire of anger and hate, who is not churned and ground by the mill of lust, who is firmly established in the pure awareness of Brahman and the absolute and whose mind is not distracted like a monkey.

O sage, these evils do not even approach one whose heart has found the state of utter quiescence and tranquillity. Nor do illnesses of the body and the mind affect him. His awareness neither rises nor sets either in deep sleep or in the waking state. He whose mind and heart are established in supreme peace is not touched by the blinding evils born of lust and hate. He neither seeks nor does he spurn, neither gives up nor gathers, though he is constantly engaged in appropriate action. None of the evil forces afflict him. All joy and happiness and all auspicious qualities flow towards him.

Hence, O sage, one should remain firmly established in the imperishable and eternal self which is free from nescience and from all seeking. One should slay the ghost of duality or division and fix the heart on the one truth, which alone is sweet in the beginning, in the middle and in the end.

The best of all states, O sage, is indeed the vision of the one infinite consciousness. Even the contemplation of the self which is infinite consciousness banishes sorrow, terminates the long-dream vision of the world-appearance, purifies the mind and the heart, and dispels worries and misfortunes. That contemplation of the self is devoid of mentation. (VI.1:23)

If one practices kumbhaka (suspension of breath) after exhaling the prana to a distance farther from where the apana rises (the twelve finger-breadth distance), he is not subject to sorrow any more.

Or, if one is able to see the space within oneself where the inhaled breath turns into the impulse for exhalation, he is not born again. By seeing where the prana and apana terminate their motions and by holding fast to that state of peace, one is not subject to sorrow again.

If one keenly observes the place and the exact moment at which the prana is consumed by the apana, he does not grieve.

Or, if one keenly observes the place and the exact moment at which the apana is consumed by prana, his mind does not arise again.

Therefore, behold that place and that moment at which prana is consumed by apana and apana is consumed by prana inside and outside the body.

For that precise moment at which the prana has ceased to move and the apana has not begun to move, there arises a kumbhaka which is effortless: the wise regard that as an important state.

When there is effortless suspension of breath, it is the supreme state. This is the self, it is pure infinite consciousness. He who reaches this does not grieve.

I contemplate that infinite consciousness which is the indwelling presence in the prana but which is neither with prana nor other than prana.

I contemplate that infinite consciousness which is the indwelling presence in the apana but which is neither with apana nor other than apana.

That is the middle between prana and apana — I contemplate that infinite consciousness. I contemplate that consciousness which is the prana of prana, which is the life of life, which alone is responsible for the preservation of the body; which is the mind of the mind, the intelligence in the intellect, the reality in the ego-sense.

I salute that consciousness in which all things abide, from which they emerge, which is all and everywhere and which is meritorious.

I salute that consciousness in which prana ceases to move but apana does not arise and which dwells in the space in front (or, at the root) of the nose.

I salute the consciousness which is the source for both prana and apana, which is the energy in both prana and apana and which enables the senses to function.

I salute that consciousness which is in fact the essence of the internal and the external kumbhakas, which is the only goal of the contemplation of prana, which enables the prana to function and which is the cause of all causes. I take refuge in that supreme being.

By the regular and systematic practice of pranayama as described by me, I have gained the state of purity and I am not disturbed even when the mount Meru (or the north pole) is shaken. This state of samadhi or total equanimity is not lost whether I am walking or standing, whether I am awake, asleep or dreaming.

With my vision turned upon the self, I rest in the self, with the self in all conditions of life, whatever changes may take place in the world or in the environment. Thus have I lived right from the time of the previous cosmic dissolution.

I do not contemplate either the past or the future: my attention is constantly directed to the present. I do what has to be done in the present, without thinking of the results. Without considerations of being or non-being, desirable and undesirable, I remain in the self: hence I am happy, healthy and free from illness.

My state is the fruit of contemplation of the moment of union of the prana and the apana (when the self is revealed); I do not entertain vain notions like, I have obtained this and I shall gain that, too. I do not praise nor do I censure anyone (neither myself nor others) or anything at any time; my mind does not exult on gaining what is considered good nor does it become depressed on obtaining what is considered evil; hence my state of happiness and health. I embrace the supreme renunciation, having renounced even the desire to live;

Thus my mind does not entertain cravings but is peaceful and balanced. I behold the one common substratum in all things (a piece of wood, a beautiful woman, a mountain, a blade of grass, ice and fire and space) and I am not worried by thoughts like What shall I do now? or What shall I get tomorrow morning? I am not bothered by thoughts of old age and death, or by longing for happiness, nor do I regard some as mine and others as not-mine. I know that everything at all times, everywhere, is but the one cosmic consciousness. These are the secrets of my state of happiness and health. I do not think I am the body, even while engaged in physical activity as I know this world-appearance to be illusory and live in it as if fast asleep.

I am disturbed neither by prosperity nor by adversity when they are granted to me, as I regard them with equal vision (even as I look upon both my arms as arms). Whatever I do is untainted by desire or the mud of ego-sense; thus I do not lose my head when I am powerful or go begging when I am poor; I do not let hopes and expectations touch me and even when a thing is old and worn out I look upon it with fresh eyes as if it were new. I rejoice with the happy ones and share the grief of the grief-stricken, for I am the friend of all, knowing I belong to none and none belongs to me. I know that I am the world, all the activities in it and its intelligence. This is the secret of my longevity. (VI.1:25)

Indeed only that cid-akasha (the infinite consciousness), which alone exists even after the cosmic dissolution, exists even now, utterly devoid of objectivity. The concepts and notions that are illumined by the consciousness within itself shine as this creation, on account of the movement of energy within consciousness, precisely as dreams arise during sleep. Otherwise, it is totally impossible for an object of perception to exist outside of the omnipresent infinite consciousness.

Even as the duality experienced in dream is illusory, the duality implied in the creation of the world is illusory. Even as the objects seem to exist and function in the inner world of consciousness in a dream, objects seem to exist and function in the outer world of consciousness during the wakeful state. Nothing really happens in both these states. Even as consciousness alone is the reality in the dream state, consciousness alone is the substance in the

wakeful state too. That is the Lord, that is the supreme truth, that you are, that I am and that is all.
(VI.1:29)

[Lord Shiva:] It is the mind alone that is the root-cause of experiencing the world as if it were real; but it cannot be truly considered such a cause since there can be no mind other than pure consciousness. Thus, if it is realized that the perceiving mind itself is unreal, then it is clear that the perceived world is unreal too.

Consciousness does not truly undergo any modification nor does it become impure. The impurity itself is imaginary; imagination is the impurity. When this is realized, the imagination is abandoned and impurity ceases. However, even in those who have realized this, the impurity arises unless the imagination is firmly rejected. By self-effort this imagination can be easily rejected: if one can drop a piece of straw, one can with equal ease also drop the three worlds! What is it that cannot be achieved by one's self-effort?

This infinite consciousness, which is devoid of concepts and extremely subtle, knows itself. In self-forgetfulness this consciousness entertains thoughts and experiences perception, though all this is possible because of the very nature of infinite consciousness: even as one who is asleep is also inwardly awake! (VI.1:31)

[Lord Shiva:] Then the mind which is pure abandons conjuring up images of objects. It attains a **state like deep sleep or the consciousness of homogeneity**, thus going beyond the possibility of birth again. It rests in supreme peace. This is the first state.

Now listen to the second state. **Consciousness devoid of mind is all-light**, free from darkness and beautiful like space. The **infinite consciousness frees itself totally from all modification or duality** and remains as if in deep sleep or as a figure in uncut marble. It abandons even the factors of time and space and transcends both inertness and motion; it remains as pure being beyond expression. It transcends the three state of consciousness and remains as the fourth or the state of undivided infinite consciousness.

Now comes the third state. This is beyond even what is termed Brahman, the self, etc. It is sometimes referred to as turiya-atita (beyond the fourth or turiya state). It is supreme and ultimate. It defies description, for it is beyond the practices which are described by those who undertake them.

O sage, remain forever in that third state. That is the real worship of the Lord. Then you will be established in that which is beyond what is and what is not. Nothing has been created and there is nothing to vanish. It is beyond the one and the two. It is the eternal, beyond the eternal and the transient; it is pure mass of consciousness. In it there is no question of diversity. It is all, it is supreme blessedness and peace, it is beyond expression. **It is purest OM. It is transcendent. It is supreme.** (Valmiki said: Having said this, the Lord Shiva remained in silent and deep contemplation for some time.) (VI.1:34)

[Lord Shiva:] Now listen to the ways in which he is to be worshipped. First of all, one should abandon the body-idea (the notion that I am this body). **Meditation alone is true worship. Hence one should constantly worship the Lord of the three worlds by means of meditation.**

How should one contemplate him? He is pure intelligence, he is as radiant as a hundred thousand suns risen together, he is the light that illumines all lights, he is the inner light, the limitless space is his throat, the firmament is his feet, the directions are his arms, the worlds are the weapons he bears in his hands, the entire universe is hidden

in his heart, the gods are hairs on his body, the cosmic potencies are the energies in his body, time is his gate-keeper, and he has thousands of heads, eyes, ears and arms. He touches all, he tastes all, he hears all, he thinks through all though he is beyond all thinking. He does everything at all times, he bestows whatever one thinks of or desires, he dwells in all, he is the all, he alone is to be sought by all. Thus should one contemplate him.

This Lord is not to be worshipped by material substances but by one's own consciousness. Not by waving of lamps nor lighting incense, nor by offering flowers nor even by offering food or sandalpaste. He is attained without the least effort; he is worshipped by self-realization alone. This is the supreme meditation, this is the supreme worship: the continuous and unbroken awareness of the indwelling presence, inner light or consciousness. While doing whatever one is doing — seeing, hearing, touching, smelling, eating, moving, sleeping, breathing or talking — one should realize one's essential nature as pure consciousness. Thus does one attain liberation.

Meditation is the offering, meditation is the water offered to the deity to wash his hands and feet, self-knowledge gained through meditation is the flower — indeed all these are directed towards meditation. The self is not realized by any means other than meditation. If one is able to meditate even for thirteen seconds, even if one is ignorant, one attains the merit of giving away a cow in charity. **If one does so for one hundred and one seconds, the merit is that of performing a sacred rite. If the duration is twelve minutes, the merit is a thousand fold. If the duration is of a day, one dwells in the highest realm.** This is the supreme yoga, this is the supreme kriya (action or service). One who practices this mode of worship is worshipped by the gods and the demons and all other beings. However, this is external worship.

I shall now declare to you the internal worship of the self which is the greatest among all purifiers and which destroys all darkness completely.

This is of the nature of perpetual meditation — whether one is walking or standing, whether one is awake or asleep, in and through all of one's actions.

One should contemplate this supreme Lord who is seated in the heart and who brings about, as it were, all the modifications within oneself. (VI.1:38)

[Vasistha:] This world-illusion has arisen because of the movement of thought in the mind; when that ceases the illusion will cease, too, and the mind becomes no-mind. This can also be achieved by the restraint of prana. That is the supreme state. The bliss that is experienced in a state of no-mind, the bliss which is uncaused, is not found even in the highest heaven.

In fact, that bliss is inexpressible and indescribable and should not even be called happiness! The mind of the knower of the truth is no-mind: it is pure satva. After living with such no-mind for some time, there arises the state known as turiya-atita (the state beyond the transcendental, or the turiya state). (VI.1:44)

Sri Rama asked: If Brahman does not undergo any modification at all, how does this world-appearance, which is and is not real, arise in it?

Vasistha replied: True modification, O Rama, is a transformation of a substance into another; like the curdling of milk, in which case the curd cannot once again return to its milk-state. Such is not the case with Brahman which was unmodified before the world-appearance and which regains its unmodified state after the world-appearance. Both in the beginning and in the end, it is unmodified homogeneous consciousness. The momentary and apparent modification in this is but a mild disturbance of consciousness, not a modification at all. In that Brahman there is neither a subject nor an object of

consciousness. Whatever a thing is in the beginning and in the end, that alone it is. If it appears to be something else in the middle, that appearance is regarded as unreal. **Hence, the self is the self in the beginning and in the end and therefore in the middle, too! It never undergoes any transformation or modification.**

Rama asked again: In that self which is pure consciousness, how does this mild disturbance arise?

Vasistha replied: **I am convinced, O Rama, that that infinite consciousness alone is real and that there is no disturbance at all in its nature. We use words like Brahman just for the sake of communication or instruction, not to raise notions of one and two. You, I and all these things are pure Brahman: there is no ignorance at all. (VI.1:49)**

Rama said: **This fullness is filled with fullness. Fullness is born from fullness. Fullness fills fullness. In fullness fullness is ever established.** However, for the further expansion of awareness, I ask again: pray bear with me. The sense-organs are obviously present in all: yet how is it that the dead person does not experience sensations, though while living he experiences their objects through those organs?

Vasistha continued: **Apart from the pure consciousness there are neither the senses, nor the mind, nor even their objects. It is that consciousness alone which appears as the objects in nature and as the senses in the person.** When that consciousness has apparently become the subtle body (puryastaka), it reflects the external objects.

The eternal and infinite consciousness is indeed free of all modifications; but when there arises the notion of I am in it, that notion is known as the Individual Self.

It is that Individual Self that lives and moves in this body. When the notion of I arises, it is known as egosense (ahamkara). When there are thoughts (manana), it is known as mind (manas). When there is awareness (bodha), it is intelligence (Intellect). When seen (drs) by the individual soul (indra) it is known as the sense (indriya). When the notion of body prevails it appears to be body; when the notion of object prevails it appears to be the diverse objects. However, through the persistence of these notions, the subtle personality condenses into material substantiality. The same consciousness thereafter thinks I am the body, I am the tree, etc. Thus self-deluded it rises, until it attains a pure birth and is spiritually awakened. Then by being devoted to the truth, it attains self-knowledge. (VI.1:50)

Lord Krishna instructs Arjuna: Brahman is empty within and empty without (undifferentiated and homogeneous). It is not an object of observation, nor is it different from the observer. The world-appearance arises in it as an infinitesimal part of it. Because the world is in fact only an appearance, it is in reality emptiness, void and unreal.

Mysteriously, there arises in all this a feeling I which is infinitesimal compared even to the world-appearance! The infinite is undivided by any of this, yet it appears to be divided on account of this I-feeling. Even as the I is non-different from the infinite consciousness, even so material objects like a pot and living beings like a monkey are non-different from one another. Who would like to hang on to this I? Why not cling to the infinite consciousness, which alone appears as all this by its own mysterious energy? Such an understanding, and the consequent absence of craving for the enjoyment of the fruits of one's natural activities, is known as renunciation (sanyasa). Renunciation is renunciation of hopes and aspirations. **When one feels the presence of the Lord in all appearances and modifications and**

when one abandons all delusion of duality, that is regarded as surrender to the Lord, or offering of self and all to the Lord.

The inner light that shines as pure experiencing in all beings, that alone is the self which is indicated by the word I: this is for certain. (VI.1:53)

[Vasistha:] **It is wrong perception that sees a bracelet in gold. The mere appearance becomes the cause for such wrong perception. This Maya (unreal appearance) is but a figure of speech, the appearance has the same relation to the supreme self that a wave has to the ocean. When one sees this truth, the appearance ceases to be a delusion. It is on account of ignorance that this long-dream world-appearance appears to be real: thus does the Individual Self come into being. But when the truth is realized, it is seen that all this is the self.**

Whatever be the notion that one entertains, it is the self alone that appears as that notion. This universe is the result of the notions thus entertained by countless such individuals. The original notion entertained by one attains the purity of consciousness similar to that of Brahma, one sees all this as a long dream. (VI.1:67)

Valmiki - They who are fully awakened and who are constantly engaged in samadhi and who are thoroughly enlightened are known as samkhya-yogis. They who have reached the state of bodiless consciousness through pranayama, etc., are known as yoga-yogis. Indeed, the two are essentially the same. The cause of this world-appearance and bondage is indeed the mind. Both these paths lead to the End to the mind. Hence, by the devoted and dedicated practice of either the End to the movement of prana or the End to thought, liberation is attained. This is the essence of all scriptures dealing with liberation.

Rama asked: O sage, if the End to the movement of prana is liberation, then death is liberation! And all people attain liberation at death!

Vasistha replied: O Rama, when prana is about to leave the body it already makes contact with those elements with which the next one is to be fashioned. These elements are indeed the crystallization of the vasanas (psychological conditioning, memory-store, past impressions and predisposition) of the Individual Self, the reason why the Individual Self clings to those elements. When the prana leaves the body it takes with it all the vasanas of the Individual Self.

Not indeed until these vasanas have been destroyed will the mind become no-mind. The mind does not abandon the life-force till self-knowledge arises. By self-knowledge the vasanas are destroyed and thus the mind, too; it is then that the prana does not move. That indeed is the supreme peace.

It is by self-knowledge that the unreality of the concepts concerning worldly objects is realized. This puts an end to vasanas and to the link between the mind and the life-force. Vasanas constitute mind. Mind is the aggregate of the vasanas and naught else; if the latter cease, that itself is the supreme state. Knowledge is the knowledge of the reality. Vicara or inquiry itself is knowledge.

Total dedication to one thing, restraint of prana and the End to the mind — if one of these three is perfected, one attains the supreme state. The life-force and the mind are closely related like a flower and its fragrance, or sesame seed and oil.

Hence, if the movement of thought in the mind ceases, the movement of prana ceases, too. If the total mind is one-pointedly devoted to a single truth, the movement of mind and therefore of life-force ceases.

The best method is by inquiring into the nature of the self which is infinite. Your mind will be completely absorbed. Then both the mind and the inquiry will cease. Remain firmly established in what remains after that.

When the mind does not crave for pleasure it is absorbed into the self, along with the life-force. Ignorance is non-existence: self-knowledge is the supreme state! Mind alone is ignorance when it appears to be a reality; **the realization of its non-existence is the supreme state.**

If the mind remains absorbed even for a quarter of an hour it undergoes a complete change, for it tastes the supreme state of self-knowledge and will not abandon it. The very seeds of samsara (world-appearance or cycle of birth and death) are fried. With them, ignorance is dispelled and the vasanas are utterly pacified; one who has reached this is rooted in satva (truth). He beholds the inner light and rests in supreme peace. (VI.1:69)

Rama, expand the mind with the mind. Remain at peace within your self, seeing the one infinite being in all. Like the king Bhagiratha you will achieve the impossible if you are able to remain firm in your knowledge of the truth and if you engage yourself in appropriate action in a life characterized by effortless experiencing of the natural course of events. (VI.1:73)

He (King Bhagiratha) approached his guru Tritala and prayed, Lord, how can one put an end to this sorrow and to old age, death and delusion which contribute to repeated birth here?

Tritala said: Sorrow ceases, all the bondages are cut and doubts are dispelled when one is fully established in the equanimity of the self for a long time, when the perception of division has ceased and when there is the experience of fullness through the knowledge of that which is to be known. What is to be known?

It is the self which is pure and which is of the nature of pure consciousness which is omnipresent and eternal.

Bhagiratha asked: I know that the self alone is real and the body, etc., are not real. But how is it that it is not perfectly clear to me?

Tritala said: Such intellectual knowledge is not knowledge! **Unattachment to wife, son and house, equanimity in pleasure and pain, love of solitude, being firmly established in self-knowledge — this is knowledge, all else is ignorance! Only when the egosense is thinned out does this self-knowledge arise.**

Bhagiratha asked: Since this egosense is firmly established in this body, how can it be uprooted?

Tritala replied: By self-effort and by resolutely turning away from the pursuit of pleasure. And by the resolute breaking down of the prison-house of shame (false dignity), etc. If you abandon all this and remain firm, the egosense will vanish and you will realize that you are the supreme being. (VI.1:74)

Story of Lila

Vasistha said - Rama, in order to relieve you from this dubious predicament of yours and to attain quiescence of mind, I shall tell you a story about king named Padma.

He rejoiced in the possession of piousness and ripe discrimination. On his arms rested Vijaya-Lakshmi (or the Goddess of Victory). His royal partner went by the name of Lila and had the good qualities of strictly conforming to her husband's mind. She lived inseparable from him, like his shadow and mind.

A thought flashed across her mind to adopt some means by which she could ever perpetuate the youth of her lovely lord, free from old age and death and so enjoy his company always. For this purpose, she consulted with the Brahmins well versed in all the ancient four Vedas. They were unable to hit upon any means of arresting death in this world; Japas (utterances of Mantras), Tapas (religious austerities) provide Siddhis (psychical powers). Thereupon Lila thought within herself thus * If I should die before my lord, then I shall enjoy Nirvanic bliss unattended by any pains. But if he should die before me, I can be happy only in the event of his Jiva living in my house and casting its gladsome glance on me.

I shall worship Goddess Saraswati. So without appraising her Husband of her intentions, she was engaged in meditation for ten months, when Saraswati overjoyed (at her meditation), appeared visibly before her and asked " Oh Lila, what is your desire ?"

Please grant me the two boons 1. To allow my husband's Self to remain in my house, even after his death, and 2. That you will appear before me whenever I should think of you.

Goddess Saraswati granted her the boons. Then the wheel of time rolled on rapidly and King Padma died. Goddess Saraswati told Lila to "Cover up her deceased husband's body with flowers. Then the flowers only will fade and not the body."

The king's Self without quitting the body will rest in the golden harem. Then resting on the arms of the king, you can overcome your grief." So saying, Saraswati vanished from view. Lila buried her husband's body in flowers.

Lila addressed Saraswati thus " I can no longer endure the parting from my King; thou should take me soon to where he is."

Thereupon Saraswati said thus " Of the three kinds of Akasa, viz., Chid-Akasa, (Spiritual Ether), Chitta-Akasa, (or mental Ether) and Bhuta-Akasa (or elemental/gross ether), Chitta akasa is that intermediate state in which the mind is, when it flits from one object to another in the elemental Akasa of objects. When the hosts of Sankalpas (thoughts in us) perish, then it is that the light of Chit (Consciousness) which will shine in us which is quiescent and immaculate and manifests itself as the universe. If one becomes convinced of the unreality of the visible objects, then, through that Self Knowledge, he will attain at once Chidakas.

May you attain through my grace that Chidakas (Supreme Consciousness)." Through this blessing, Lila went into Nirvikalpa Samadhi and was able to escape out of her body by becoming desireless, egoless and with quiescence of mind. There in the heart of Jnana-Akasa (or Chidakas), she saw, in a large town, a valiant prince sixteen years old. Having recognized him to be her dear husband, she entered the king's palace. She visited many temples and holy places in this Kingdom and then returned to her home. She entered her body lying beside her husband, and she prayed for Goddess Saraswati.

Having saluted Saraswati, Lila questioned her - How is it that my husband even after his death, has subjected himself to another Amurtha (formless) creation which is as illusory and bondage-giving as the present state? Please remove my doubts with reference to this, so that I may know the real truth."

To which Saraswati replied thus “ The original evolution of the supreme ParaBrahma (Infinite Consciousness) differentiated out of the one Jnana-Akasa. Due to the delusion of mind (mental) the wave which belongs to the ocean identifies itself as a wave. Similarly, the Jiva instead of identifying with the Supreme ParaBrahma, identifies with the lower Self. Hence King Padma is created. Similarly your husband now has a second birth as Viduratha.

Therefore after giving your ears to what I am going to relate to you, you shall have your doubts cleared. In the stainless and immaculate Spiritual Ether, there is, on one side of it, an illusory dome. This vault is covered by the infinite consciousness.

It resounds with the never ceasing sound arising out of the strife between Devas and Asuras, due to great egoism. It is, in such an incomparable Universe, that there was a town called Girigrama in the midst of a certain tract on one side and that, in a certain spot of that dome. That town was a fertile tract boasting of the possession of hills, rivers and forests. There lived in it a great Brahmin householder called Vasishta.

He had a pious, obedient, well mannered and beautiful wife who went by the name of Arundhati. “While this Vasishta, the lord of the above mentioned Arundhati, was residing with her in the valleys, a crowned king came to the forest there on a hunting excursion along with his retinue. The Rishi saw them and reflected within himself. When shall I be able to be the ruler of the earth with retinues encircling me with people ? When shall I be able to reign triumphant as a monarch, having all under my sway with beautiful women around me ? From that day forward, Vasishta was seized with intense desires and though, in eager anticipation of the realization of such desires, he went on performing Karmas regularly.

His lady implored me for aid like yourself and was blessed by me with the similar boon of her husbands Jiva (Ego Self) not leaving her house. The Brahmin, Vasishta expired thus with his longing after regality ungratified. Thus was he of the nature of Jiva-Akas in his house.

“Through the Sankalpa of the mind which led, into the pleasures of regality, Vasishta who was originally of the nature of the Jnana Akas, he became a King.

In that state, after his wife found him dead she left her gross body and joined him in his subtle body. While the Brahmins sons, house, lands, forests, mountains, and others were thus (in the gross state), his Jiva was living separate for about 8 days and was of the nature of Chidakas (Mental Ether) in that very house. In your former birth, this Brahmin is your husband.

Then you were his wife, going by the name of Arundhati. Both of you lived together as husband and wife, like the loving Parvati and Parameswara. Living on the left side of the earth are no other than Arundhati and Vasishta. The first creation as a Brahmin and also the creation of King Padma are all illusory.

Even the third creation of Viduratha birth which you were a witness of, is also unreal, like the reflected image in water.” So said Goddess Saraswati, the worlds mother.

On hearing these words, Liia questioned her - You have uttered untruth only. How can your words hold ? Where is the Jiva of the Brahmin that lived in this house? Where did we, who separated here, meet together? How did those who were in the other world as well as its hells, the ten quarters* and others join together and come to this pleasant habitation of ours ?

Is it possible to bind the infuriated Indras elephant within a part of a mustard seed ? Will the Mahameru mountain enter a lotus seed and be crushed by a small bee sitting over it? Will the lions be vanquished in a war with the angry ants and then enter an atom ? All your words are as incredible as these and will not fit in with truth."

To which the Goddess replied thus "I never told you an untruth. I will now explain you how my words are true. Persons like myself will never derogate from the laws of ParamEswara but will hold to them as the true ones. The Brahmins Jiva lives invisibly in his own house in the city. All his kingdom and Padma creation are of the nature of Jnana-Akasa only. Now, Oh Lila, Vasishtha of the nature of Chidakas, when he became overjoyed (with the sight of the king), saw all these things in the Manas Akas. All these are different modifications of the one infinite consciousness.

This old thought (or creation) of Vasishtha without manifesting itself as such to you now appears to you as different (as Padma creation). Just as the many events of the Jagrata (waking) state are not enacted in the dreaming state, Padma creation and its thoughts do then predominate without the reminiscences of the Vasishtha state.

Out of the above mentioned all-pervading Jnana-Akas shining through Sat which is its own power and form part essence of that (JnAna)Akasa arose this terrible universe through the thought of the mind, like an image reflected in a glass. All the shining universes will be latent as light within the Jnana Reality which is the illuminated in the supreme Atom (ParaBrahma). Therefore it is that the abovementioned earth and others of the Brahmin will manifest themselves in (and out of) Jnana. Now you know all these directly." So said Saraswati.

Lila asked her " It was stated by you, that the Brahmin expired on the eighth day. That period passed with me as milleniums. Please explain this to me."

Then the goddess continued thus "Just as space is nothing but a play of infinite consciousness, time and space is unreal. In the dream state consciousness what appears like a lifetime is nothing but 1 hour in waking state consciousness. What appears like 1 year in one World is 1 day in a different World. There are Worlds within Worlds. Just as a man can experience dream, waking and deep sleep states of consciousness. The Jnana light alone devoid of the modifications of Maya, that manifests itself as time and space, hence there is no such thing as the limit of time or space. Through the illusion of death, the body became entranced for a moment and the Jiva parted from it.

Becoming oblivious of all the thoughts of its former body, it is filled with the thoughts of this life only. It is only when the Jiva revives from the fatal trance of such false conceptions, only then that the Jiva will begin to know its real state. Therefore you forgot all about your former birth, remembering only this birth."

After Saraswati had finished these words, Lila said " Having been blessed by you with Divine vision, I have understood all things truly. Now to gratify my desires, please show me the abode of Vasishtha and others."

To which Saraswati of the form of Vedas thus said " This gross body of yours bred out of Karmas is an impediment in the way of your getting such knowledge. You need to become entirely oblivious of your body (by becoming bodiless) and know yourself as distinct from it. You will then become of the nature of Pure Bliss Enjoyer that is also Jnana light and Sat after being cleansed of all Maya impurities. You will then be able to visit the hallowed Seat. Then you will know, with delusions off your mind, that Brahman only is yourself and all the universe, like one gold converted into many ornaments."

It is not the worldly desires but the pure Vasanas that tend to develop the true Jnana (Self Knowledge). You are still attached to the desires for worldly objects. Therefore it is not possible for you to attain it. Persons like myself can easily get into the pure Brahman. But those who are like you, have a subtle (lunar) body of the nature of mind, replete with desires and hence it, in turn, generates the gross body.

Just as a snow ball melts with the rays of the sun and is converted into water, so your gross body will be changed permanently into the subtle body through development of the true Jnana (Self Knowledge) and the abandoning of the Vasanas (Psychological Conditioning of the Mind). This is the Jivanmukti state.

Then the all-full Jnana alone will prevail in you. Therefore you will have to perceive the former creation through your original subtle body (of Adhivahya).”

Lila asked Saraswati as to the efforts that should be made to realize that end.

To which Saraswati replied thus “Those only can cognize experimentally the higher states who have developed in themselves the processes of Sravana (hearing and study of spiritual books), Manana (contemplation) and Nidhitya- sana (reflection from all standpoints), uninterrupted bliss arising through concentration upon that ancient (one) Principle, renunciation of all, non- desires, and the intense reasoning practice followed through the path of Vedas that this great world is not ever-existent.

Those only are in that path of Brahman, who are ever engaged in the intense practice of deriving bliss through the certain knowledge that the universes, which are no other than “I” or “It”, do not really exist. They did not exist from the very beginning. People who are engaged in liberation, through such Knowledge, free from the knower and the known and from the enemies of love and hatred.

One needs to be convinced that knowledge which renders itself free of all the visibles (duality) is the true one. The obtainer of Atma, with ceaseless endeavours in the certainty of Brahman is alone Salvation. With such a practice, the pure Jnana (Self Knowledge) will dawn.”

Saraswati and Lila who had thus conferred together that night, went into Swarupa Samadhi free from the trammels of their body and remained motionless. In this state, Saraswati shining with her former Jnana body along with Lila with her newly assumed Jnana one, rose up high in the Sky of ether.

Having penetrated far into the Ether which is like an ever-ebbing great ocean at the time of deluge, they observed there the following. In the immeasurable, transparent and subtle Chidakas replete with the bliss, there were to be found the hosts of Siddhas who journeyed fleetly than wind.

They passed through diverse places for the immeasurable distance, some replete with petrified sable gloom inaccessible to any and many others. Thus waded they through the Akasa of the three worlds, wherein the myriads of Jivas created by Brahma buzzing like the swarms of flies collected in a ripe fig fruit.

Then contemplating upon reaching their longed-for place they crossed numerous worlds and reached Girigrama in the Loka where Vasishtha lived. As the new arrivals were invisible to the menials, relatives and offsprings of the Brahmin suffering from dire pains. Lila, of Satya-Sankalpa willed that the inmates of the house should see her and her co-mate. Thereupon taking these two, who were like Lakshmi and Parvati, to be some goddesses, her kids worshipped them and paid them proper respects.

Of these, the eldest son addressed them thus “ You should enlighten us of the load of grief under which we are groaning ever since the demise of our parents. Oh ladies of great knowledge, are there any

results not attainable through the visits, of great personages like yourselves?” There upon the effulgent, Lila touched their forehead and relieved them of their grief.

Lila asked Saraswati. “ How come that during our Samadhi, the persons seated in the regal assembly were unable to see me whilst those in the beautiful house alone were so able ?”

Saraswati replied “It is only through the development of Jnana that all the dual substances in this world will become non-dual. You were in possession of Jnana (knowledge) but not freed from the thoughts of “ I” (or individuality), the true Sankalpa did not arise in you. Hence it was that all those in the royal assembly were not able to see thee. But then in the second case, with the possession of the true Self Knowledge and without the thoughts of individuality (you versus I), through your own Sankalpa (determination) your sons could see you.”

Then Lila overjoyed gave vent to the following words “ Through your grace, Oh Saraswati, I have known all my former births as clear as daylight. I have cleansed myself of all sins arising from the three gunas.

After being differentiated as a separate entity out of the one Brahman, I have undergone different births in 800 bodies. Like bees in a lotus flower, I have been inhabiting the many worlds created through Maya-Vikalpa (or the modifications of Maya). I was born as a Vidyadhara lady and then as a human being through the force of Vasanas. In another loka of Maya-Vikalpa, I went through a series of births in the different bodies of Indrani, a huntress clad in leaves, a bird rending the snare it was enmeshed in, a king of Soudashtra country and a mosquito. Thus have I been whirling in many births, and having been tossed too and fro in the clutches of Maya, like a straw in ocean waves, I have now been landed safely on the shore of Mukti (Salvation) through your aid.” Thus did Lila eulogise her and both then mounted up the Sky.

Passing through the Sky by the dint of Yoga power, they went to where Padma was and saw his body. After that was over, they went to where the king Viduratha was, who was the second incarnation of king Padma. At this juncture, both these ladies observed the incomparable king of Sindhu of tremendous prowess march against Viduratha.

A fierce war was waged between the two armies, striking terror into the heart of Death even. Vidurathas innumerable army was reduced by the enemy to an eighth of its original number. Then the sun disappeared from view, as if afraid of either this terrible war. With the setting in of intense darkness, both the armies ceased to battle.

With the disappearance from the field of the enemies hosts, king Vidu-ratha returned with a broken heart along with the shattered remnants of his army to his own palace. Whilst he rested upstairs in sleep, Saraswati and Lila came up to where he lay. Being quite refreshed by their Tejas (radiant effulgence) he saluted and eulogised the ladies.

Saraswati, in order to enable the king to easily know the events of his former births through his Jnana (spiritual) vision, touched lovingly, with the palm of her hand, the kings head and blessed him with Divine vision. Whereupon the gloom of Maya that had obscured his mind disappeared and he was able to recognise himself in the previous body of king Padma sporting with Lila.

Then the pleasant sensation of marvel and joy arose in him, the former on account of the diverse workings of Maya, and the latter, since the knowledge of Maya he derived through the grace of the Goddess Saraswathi. He said “In the one day that passed from the extinction of my former body up to now (as seen through my Divine vision), I have spent 70 years with this my present body. I have also

known all the events that transpired during that period. Whence are all these curious anomalies of Maya?"

Thereupon Saraswati replied - "The trance called Death is always accompanied at that very spot and in that very instant, by the great delusion of re-births (and vice versa). Now the conception of the duration of 70 years arose only through the delusion of the Karmas performed by you while in life. Know therefore and perceive for yourself that when your mind was rendered immaculate like Akasa free from all illusions, such conceptions of time vanished.

All conceptions of time arise through the vikalpas of the mind only. The events of 70 years are only like long-drawn dreams of many events enacted in one Muhurta (48 minutes). Even our life during the waking state appears prolonged in diverse ways through the many unreal events performed. To tell you truly,

there is no such thing as births or deaths to thee. All is true Self Knowledge alone. You are the eternal supreme Seat. Hence though seeing the whole universe, you see it not.

Being of the nature of all, you are shining through your wisdom in the Atmic Reality. To the ignorant, the universe appears to be real. Persons ignorant of gold will assert an ornament made of gold to be the former alone and not the latter. Likewise, persons devoid of spiritual vision will maintain this universe to be the inert one only, (and not spirit, the seer free from the seen).

Know also all the universes, arising through the egoism of "Time and Space" and "mine," etc, to be nothing but a dream and the different objects seen therein to be as illusory as things in a dream. Such objects and universes are no other than of the nature of that Jnana (Reality) which is all permanent actionless, full, vast and immaculate.

It is the one reality which, being all and having all with the different Saktis (potencies), manifests itself, without being diminished thereby, in different forms according to the fructification of time and Karmas (Actions performed with the Ego Self). Through Lila, I have initiated you into the mysteries of the true Jnana (Self Knowledge) state. your mind has been illumined through the undecaying Tatwa (Truth). Therefore we shall depart."

Viduratha remarked thus "Even persons coming to me for aid are accustomed to receive at my hands whatever they long for. Therefore is it surprising for me to attain any object of my quest at the hands of you both who are like fresh Chinthamani? When shall I be able to resume my former body of Padma?" To which Saraswati replied thus "You will perish in this war and with your death, you will resume your Padma body."

Here a messenger came in with the following announcement to the king. "An ocean of army is discharging showers of arrows at us, and our town is reduced to ashes through the enemys flames."

Now Lila, the spouse of Padma was extremely surprised to find Lila, the spouse of Viduratha, an exact counterpart of herself, like an image reflected in a glass. Thereupon she queried Saraswati as to how it was she was re-duplicated afresh ?

Saraswati cleared her doubts in the following manner "Due to excessive love towards you your husband Padma thought, at the moment of death, of enjoying your company without being ever separated. Accordingly he was able to get you here. Whatever is thought of by one at the time of his agonizing death, that will be realized by him afterwards.

Will a glass reflect other than that which is placed before it? Death, birth, mental delusion, the waking, dreaming and dreamless states are all one, each of them not having another as the cause, all things that are and that are not, are of the nature of delusion only and hence increase beyond number.

Now the stainful enjoyments are of two kinds. Some experiences arise as the result of former ones. Others arise newly, being entirely different from the previous ones. Hence, as in the former case, the new Lila with all your former form, observances, race and conduct of life, appeared not different from you like your shadow. It was through the thought of the king, that she was molded into her present form like yourself. Vidti-ratha will perish in this war and then assume the body of Padma.”

So said Saraswati, when the new Lila submitted thus “ Please confer on me the boon that, in the event of my partner perishes in this war, I may live in this body of mine along with him wherever he is.” To which Saraswati nodded assent.

Again the old Lila questioned the Mother of Vedas thus “How was I able to journey to the higher Loka and the supreme Girigrama with the aid of Adibhoutika body only and not with the Adhivahika body (while the new Lila was blessed otherwise) ? * To which the goddess replied thus “ I never give anything (without any cause) to any person. People get all things according to their thoughts. You thought of (acquiring) Jnana before and implored me for it and I gave you therefore the Divine Vision longed for by you. This Lila, your shadow, prompted by excessive desire asked of me another boon which was, as promptly, granted.

All men through my grace get what ever their minds long after.”

Both the Lilas of undying affection for their King and yet in anticipation of his death addressed Saraswati thus * Oh mother, how comes it that in spite of our Lord s dauntless courage and your grace, our husband should die so soon in this war ?”

Saraswati replied “ As the learned Viduratha longed after the higher spiritual state, he has to merge secondless into the supreme Seat.

The King of Sindhu prayed for Victory in the War, while your Husband prayed for Enlightenment. This king of Sindhu in accordance with my mandates at his propitiation of myself and will become a king.”

While these were discoursing thus, the day broke and the battle started. King Vidiiratha was felled by the enemies arrows and fell flat upon the ground.

Whereupon the new Lila addressed her of the white lotus thus “My husband is about to breathe his last; please allow me to join my husband,” Saraswati having prepared the way for it, the new Lila became light and ascended the Akasa.

Having crossed one after another the different worlds which exist in one another (in different planes of consciousness), she reached soon the immeasurable and endless Reality of Chi-dakas at last. There she went to the place where Padma s dead body was lying, after crossing the Jnana-Akas. Concluding that the dead body covered up with flowers, was her Lords and that some how, through Saraswatis grace, she came ahead of him, she sat beside his body and fanned it gently.

Saraswati, removed the grip she had on the Jiva of Viduratha which therefore entered into the nasal orifice of Padma s body in the form of Prana and permeated the whole parched up body. Whereupon

blood began to circulate freely throughout and the deceased king woke up, rubbing his eyes. Padma woke up and asked who they were. The old Lila prostrated herself before the king and saw that she herself was the wife congenial to him, that the new Lila was the offspring of his mind which thought of a form similar to hers and came to enjoy with him, and that the third person was the immaculate Saraswati.

After she had pronounced these words, Padma fell at the feet of Saraswati who, laying her beautiful hands on the head of Padma, blessed him with a long life with his wives, an exalted fame and an ever increasing wealth in order to render people happy. Then the Emperor Padma along with his wives wielded the sceptre over the earth for 80,000 years. With the blessing conferred by Saraswati, he shortened then and there the seven kinds of births and attained on earth the Jivanmukta State. At last he attained the state of Videhamukti which never perishes, even though great Kalpas come to an end.

Story of Son of Indhu (Moon)

The mind alone is the universe. The Non-dual Brahmic Reality is the only Truth. All the visible objects do not really exist. The mind alone shines as the cause of all the manifold created objects. To illustrate this (last proposition that it is the mind which makes the universe), I shall relate to you, Oh Rama, a story you shall hear. You will be impressed with the firm conviction that the potency of Mind which alone manifests itself as this universe.

This puerile Mind which ever rises and falls with the ebb and flow of desires, fancies this illusory universe to be true through its ignorance ; but if it should be informed of the real nature of this world, then it will cognize it to be Brahman itself and pains will bid adieu to such a mind. Should the mind be subject to the trammels of the heterogeneous modifications of love and other desires, then it tends to rebirth, but a freedom from this is emancipation.

Once upon a time, Lord Brahma rose up at dawn of day wishing to generate afresh a new creation, after having been refreshed by his sleep over a night (of his). He saw a creation already made while he was sleeping. He surveyed the Akasa which began to pervade every where through his mind ; and that Akasa became filled with all kinds of creations. Marvelling over the event and longing to know its creator, he pointed his finger at one of the suns therein to approach him and inquired of him as to the creator of himself and all the universe.

Where upon the sun paid due respects to Brahma, and said thus "If even you Brahma, the cause of this endless universe, do not know it, I shall try to give it out as far as I can. There is a noble country of Suvarnathala in a part of the extensive Jambhu-dwipa situated on the Kailasa hills. It abounds with creations that are all your offspring. In it, there lived a noble Brahmin rejoicing in the name of Indhu (the moon) and tracing his lineage to Kasyappa, the Rishi. Not blessed with any offspring, he and his spouse with an agitated heart resorted to Kailasa, the abode of Parameswara and underwent severe Tapas, tasting water alone and being as fixed as a tree.

Where upon Paramasiva was greatly pleased with them and having approached them, demanded of them what they wanted. With head prostrated on the ground, they entreated to be blessed with ten erudite sons to free them from all pains. The boon having been granted, both the husband and wife lived in joy and were blessed with 10 goodly babies.

These babies grew up with age, well versed in all departments of knowledge. In course of time, the parents died and their sons retired to the Kailasa hills where they began to soliloquise within themselves thus " Shall we, to relieve ourselves from this pain which is afflicting us, become a leader of men ?

As even this situation is but a paltry one to become a king or rather an emperor ruling over all worlds. Even this is insignificant, when compared with the status of Gods. This too will not suffice us. Therefore let us become the Brahma the Creator wherein we can enjoy all kinds of stainless wealth.”

With this fixed resolve, all the ten personages seated themselves in Padma posture and with one concentrated and same purposed mind were engaged in a non-fluctuating meditation thus “We alone are Brahma; all the creations are out of ourselves only.” Thus did they pass long kalpas of time, oblivious of their body and immovable as a wood. When thus their minds thought of (were perfected and) all the ten became Brahma himself. Then the ten lokas were created.

Ten kinds of creations were generated by these ten personages in their Mental Ether (Mind). Out of the ten creations of ten Suns. I am one.” So saying, he (the sun) vanished out of sight.

Said Vasishta to Rama As all the visible universes are existent only through the expansion of this crass mind, that Brahma created, in accordance with this law, all the worlds are through his mind only.

The Story of deceitful Indra

The universe is nothing but the mind manifesting as such only through the potency of Brahman, the fact that the body with its organs is no other than mind.

The mind contemplating upon the body, becomes the body itself and then (enmeshed in it), is afflicted by it. The all-full Jnanis through the contemplation of Brahman within, are never affected by the pains assailing this body of nine gates. So indeed were, in days of yore, Indra and Ahalya who were guilty of illicit behavior.

Here Rama asked Vasishta who these two were. On which Vasishta continued thus In former times, there lived a King by the name of Indradyumna reigning over the country of Magadha. The lady that ministered to his enjoyment like his Prana, was called Ahalya. In that town abode a person named Indra. True to the tradition of the incestuous intercourse which occurred in former times between the once Ahalya and Indra which the present couple of the same name had heard, the living couple began to have criminal intimacy with one another. Like two lovers who come in contact after long parting, she passed some days alone in the enjoyment of the company of her paramour.

The Kings subjects who were eye witnesses to this scandalous affair reported it to the just King. On hearing which, he waxed exceedingly wroth and caused the stray couple to be sunk into deep waters. Finding that this did not affect them in the least, he caused them to be subjected to many ordeals, such as trampling them with elephants of fierce tusks, bathing them in flames of fire and beating them with hammers. In spite of the infliction of all tortures, they did not evince the least symptoms of pain but merely laughed at them, eying one another with one-made mind as they sat opposite.

Extremely bewildered at the marvelous manner in which all his attempts to make them feel pain failed. He asked them how they endured all tortures. At which, the pair breathed the following words “Our eyes are enjoying themselves with the sweet nectar of one another's face, we revel, within, unimpeded bliss and hence are entirely oblivious of our body. How then can we feel any pain or see our body? We never experience the slightest pain, even when the body is ripped open. When the mind is intensely fond of anything, there will be no perception of pain, even when destruction awaits the body. When the mind is completely drowned in any object, who else is there to observe (and feel from) the actions of the body ?

Even the curses of Munis and the many Karmas will not be able to divert that mind from its beloved seat within. There is no end to the bodies which perished, beyond number, but in vain (in the many previous births.) All these bodies have their seat in the mind only. Without water, can a forest exist? It is the mind which transacts all business and is the highest of bodies. Even should this gross body be dissolved, the mind will assume fresh bodies to its liking, as speedily as actions done in dreams. Should this mind be paralysed, then the body will not evince any intelligence.”

So said the adulterous couple, on hearing which, the King eyed them with pleasure. Muni Barata close by him remarked that the two gave vent to words of wisdom, notwithstanding their minds being under the urge of passions. Therefore he banished them both from his realms, so that they might enjoy themselves in foreign lands.

Story of Mind

The mind manifests itself as the external world in the shape of pains or pleasures. The mind subjectively is consciousness while objectively it is this universe.

All persons have two bodies, a subtle one suitable to the mind and a gross one. The mind performs all actions very speedily in this mental body and fluctuates thereby. But the gross body knows not anything and is inert. At these words of Vasishtha, Rama asked to be enlightened as to the nature of this inert and formless body of the mind.

To which, Muni Vasishtha replied “The form which the Supreme Self (of infinite consciousness) assumes through determination is Mind. All conceptions associated with actions arising out of that (real)state which is intermediate between the powerful Sat and Asat are nothing but the forms of the mind. No matter where that mind proceeds or what form it manifests itself with, if it is made to tread the path leading to Moksha or to merge into ParamAtma (Supreme Self) then it will be conducive to its progress.

Now listen to a story told by Brahma. There was a great forest of dire illusion and replete with dire pains. A fractional part of its upper most limit measured many trillions of miles. In that forest lived a Purusha (personage) with infinite eyes and hands. He had a mind which roamed everywhere. He had the form of Ether. He would lash himself, and with self inflicted pains he would yell, and then he would run in all directions without having any mastery over himself. Dashing himself against all objects in intense gloom, he would precipitate himself down the deep and desolate well of terrific sins and there would be eking out a life of misery.

Then emerging out of that well, he would, as before, lash his body and scream out and keep running as before. In his haste, he would entangle himself in a forest of trees and with wounds all throughout the body, would flutter like the moth in a flame. Then running to a beautiful plantain garden, he would run to the other extreme of intense exultation. Again and again would he recur from this pleasurable garden to the previous thorny forest and then into the well and back again, finding pleasure in none.

Seeing him reel thus giddily many times, Brahma caught him under his grip to free him from all fears and questioned him thus. * Who are you? Why are you hurting yourself and groaning under pains? what are you doing here? and what is your intention?”

To which that person replied thus “All persons having the concept of I (and other differences) are non-existent to me. I have not been able to find any actions for me to perform in this world. I am quite pained

by the heterogeneous differentiations set up by you. You are my enemy. It is only through you, that I have identified myself with the pains and pleasures, I have been suffering from.”

Having said so, he looked at his body. His heart began to melt and he cried aloud. He again looked with his eyes over his beautiful form and laughed aloud for a long time. Then, in my very presence, he freed himself from the many fat bodies he had assumed (in the many births).

Through the force of dire destiny, another person was born in another spot. Like the former person, he appeared before us in a plight similar to the other and hurt himself, when I consoled him as previously. Then this person passed along his path and gave up that body. Again did he come in another guise and in this life of his, he fell into that deep unfrequented well. We did not see him emerge out of that well for a long time. Then there appeared on the stage of this ever perturbed forest (this person as) another who, though he was greatly checked in his path and shown the road to true knowledge by us, spurned our advice and still persisted in his obstinate course of lashing himself as he went along.

Even now do such ferocious persons exist suffering under great pains and dwelling in such dire forests replete with sharp-pointed thorns and enveloped in such a thick gloom as to instil fear into all hearts. But wise men, even should they live in the midst of a fiery burnt-up forest, will regale and rejoice in it as in a cool flower garden wafting sweet odors.

Here Rama asked Rishi Vasishta to give the underlying meaning of this story. At which the great Muni thus continued.

(1) The infinite forest referred to in the story is nothing but this Samsara (repeated rebirths) which is without a beginning, middle or end. It is associated with Maya (or is illusory) and is lofty, dire and replete with excessive illusions.

(2) The person residing in this forest of the universe filled with the vapor of fiery ire stands for the mind whirling with pains.

(3) He who checked the impetuous passage of the mind represents the incomparable discrimination.

(4) The mind attained through its enemy of discrimination the quiescent state of ParaBrahma (the infinite consciousness).

(5) The mind at first turned its back upon discrimination and hence entangled itself in the folds of Vasanas of objects.

(6) The well into which the egos sink after hurting their bodies is hell ;

(7) The plantain garden symbolises Heaven which is full of enjoyments.

(8) The forest of trees abounding with thorns is the Earth filled with the beings of extreme desires.

(9) Then the person who fell into the well and was unable to rise from it for a long time and entered a different city (by rebirth), stands for the mind not yet freed from its sins.

(10) The long-pointed thorns represent the males and females of this world full of desires. The words You are my enemy is the Mind with which the Ego Self has identified its pains and pleasures. I have been suffering from are the outbursts of the mind in its last gasp of death through discrimination.

(12) The cry set up is when the desires are sought to be annihilated.

(13) The calling for help through the pains represents the mind with half-developed Self Knowledge when it starts letting go desires.

(14) The final cool joy and the laugh consequent upon it, is the bliss arising from the mind merging into the stainless Jnana.

(15) And the real bliss is that one which arises when the mind, becoming desireless through Self Knowledge, destroys its subtle form.

(16) The bridling of the mind (overpowering), refers to the concentration of the same through initiation into Self Knowledge.

(17) The scourging of the body refers to the pains created through the excessive misconceptions of the mind.

(18). The person over a vast field represents roaming the world, unconscious of the Reality. Only through the mastery of the perishable Vasanas which a man generates, can he free himself from bondage.

All become subject to bondage through their own Sankalpas and Vasanas like a a silk-worm in its cocoon. Having delved into your mind through your stainless mind and thoroughly sifted it, may you destroy your stainful mind.

The infinite consciousness manifests itself as the many. Out of the infinite potencies in it, arises at one time one potency. This Jnana Sakti of the stainless Brahman then manifests itself as in the perishable bodies.

They appear in different forms like the plants, animals, humans etc., on this earth at a certain time, space. It is only the Brahmic Reality that is always and everywhere. It is only that Brahman which manifests itself as Mind through determination or as an Individual gets into bondage or as the emancipated Paramatma (Supreme Soul) as well as the universe and the many Energies in it.

The world seems to be as real to ignorant men just like a small child believes everything his mother said is true. Vasishtha, began this story of minds illusions.

A certain small ignorant child prayed to his mother to tell a tale for his diversion. She told the following story. Once upon a time three princes of bravery and good qualities resided in an empty city. Of these three, two were never born and the third never went into any womb to be generated. These princes rested in the forest of SKy, which has no trees. The plucked countless fruits and having satisfied their keen hunger by feeding themselves upon the delicious fruits therein, went on their way up.

There they witnessed three rivers with dashing waves, winding their way on the out-skirts of that forest. Of these three rivers, two had no water in them, while the third river is filled with dry white sands. In this last river they bathed and drank its waters. At sun set they retired to a non-existent town and there they built three houses. Of these three houses, two did not exist at all. The third one build a huge palace without any materials. The three princes went to reside in these three houses without any walls.

These three persons who lived in the three buildings in an invisible town in the Akasa, cooked rice equal to 6 measures minus 10 measures and cooked the same. Having done so, they gave their food out to countless people. After the people had thus filled their stomach, the three princes ate the remaining meal as a God-send.

Then delighting themselves with hunting and other pursuits, they spent their time most joyfully there. When the mother thus concluded her story, her innocent child rested in the profound belief of the genuineness of the mothers tale. Similarly do the ignorant conceive and observe this world to be really existent.

The expansion of this mind alone is Sankalpa (Determination); and Sankalpa, through its power of differentiation, generates this universe. Therefore, Oh Rama, may you divest yourself of all Sankalpas and be a Nirvikalpa.

Story of Karkati

VASISTHA continued: In connection with this, O Rama, there is an ancient legend which i shall now narate to you.

There once lived to the north of the Himalaya mountain a terrible demoness known as Karkati. She was huge, black and dreadful to look at. This demoness could not get enough to eat, and she was ever hungry.

She thought, "If only I can eat all the people living in Jambudvipa-continent in one meal, then my hunger will disappear even as a mirage disappears after a heavy rain. Such a course of action is not inappropriate, since it is appropriate to preserve one's life. However, since the people of Jambudvipa are pious, charitable, devoted to god, and endowed with a knowledge of herbs, it is inappropriate to harass these peace-loving people.

Let me engage myself in penance, for through penance is attained that which would otherwise be extremely difficult to attain."

Karkati then went up one of the snow-peaks and commenced her penance, standing on one leg. She was as firm as a marble statue and did not even notice days and months pass by. In course of time, she had grown so thin that it looked as if she was a skeleton clad in transparent skin. Thus she remained for one thousand years.

After a thousand years had passed, the creator Brahma appeared before her, pleased with her penance: She thought, "I shall request that I should become a living steel pin (Sucika), an embodiment of disease. With this boon i shall simultaneously enter the hearts of all beings and fulfil my desire and appease my hunger." When Brahma said to her, "I am pleased with your penance; ask a boon of your choice," she expressed her wish.

BRAHMA said: So be it; you shall also be Visucika. Remaining a subtle thing, you will inflict pain on those who eat the wrong food and indulge in wrong living, by entering their heart.

VASISTHA continued: Immediately, O Rama, the demoness with the mountainous body began to shrink gradually to the size of a pin. She became so subtle that her existence could only be imagined. The demoness roamed the world afflicting all the people.

Sucika entered into the physical bodies of people who, on account of previous illness had been greatly debilitated or had become obese, and transformed herself into Visucika (cholera). Thus, the demoness roamed the earth for many many years. She was quiet satisfied and her hunger was gratified.

VASISTHA continued: After living in this manner for a long long time, the demoness Karkati was throughly disillusioned and repented her foolish desire to devour people, which entailed severe penance

for a thousand years and the degraded existence as a needle (and cholera virus). She bewailed her own self inflicted misfortune. Let me become an ascetic again and perform penance as I did before.”

At once Karkati abandoned all wish to devour living beings, and went to the Himalayas for doing intense penance again. Standing as if on one foot, she began her penance. The fire of penance generated smoke from the crown of her head, and that too became another Sucika, a helpmate. Her shadow became yet another Sucika, yet another friend.

Thus she stood for seven thousand years, utterly motionless, unmoved by wind, rain, or forest-fire. Karkati's whole being became completely purified by this penance. All her sinful tendencies had been washed away by the penance and she gained the highest wisdom.

Brahma said to her, “Ask a boon” (though since she had no sense organs, she experienced this within herself). She reflected within herself in response to this: “I have reached the realisation of the absolute; and there are no doubts or wants in me. What shall I do with boons? When I was an ignorant girl, I was haunted by the goblin of my desires; now, through self knowledge, that ghost has been laid.”

Brahma said: “The eternal world-order cannot be set aside, O ascetic. And it decrees that you should regain your previous body, live happily for a long time and then attain liberation. You will live an enlightened life, afflicting only the wicked and the sinful, and causing the least harm- and that too only to appease your natural hunger.” Sucika accepted what Brahma had said and soon her needle-body grew into a mountainous body.

VASISHTA continued: Though she had regained her former demonical form, Karkati remained in the superconscious state for a considerable time, devoid of all demoniacal tendencies. She remained in the same place, seated in the lotus posture of meditation. After a period of six months she became fully aware of the outside world and her body. Immediately, she experienced hunger; for as long as the body lasts it is subject to its own physical laws, including hunger and thirst.

Karkati reflected: “What shall I eat? Whom shall I devour? Destruction to other living beings for the sake of prolonging one's life is condemned by wise sages. Hence, if while not consuming such forbidden food, I have to give up this body, I see no harm in it. Unwholesome food is poison. Moreover, to an enlightened person like me, there is no distinction between physical life and death.”

As she was reflecting thus, she heard an aerial voice say: “O Karkati, approach ignorant and deluded people and awaken wisdom in them. This indeed is the only mission of enlightened beings. One whom you thus endeavour to enlighten but who fails to awake to truth is fit for your consumption. You shall incur no sin by devouring such an ignorant person.”

Hearing this, Karkati got up and descended from the mountain. She entered a dense forest where hill-tribes and hunters dwelt. Night fell over the earth. In that region, there was a king of the hunters known as Vikram. As was his custom, this king, along with his minister, went out into the dense darkness of the night to protect his subjects by subduing robbers and decoits. Karkati saw these two brave and adventurous men who were just then offering their prayers to the tribal demi-gods of the forest.

Seeing them, Karkati reflected: “Surely, these two men have come here to appease my hunger. They are ignorant and therefore a burden on earth. Such ignorant people suffer here and hereafter; suffering is the only mission in their life! Death, unto them, is a welcome release from such suffering and it is possible that after death they will awake and seek their salvation. Ah, but, it may be that they are both wise men, and I do not like to kill wise men. Let me therefore test their wisdom. If they are wise I shall not harm them. Wise men, good men, are indeed great benefactors of humanity.”

VASISTHA continued:

Having decided to test the king and his minister, the demoness Karkati let out a piercing cry and roared. Then she shouted: "Hey you two little worms roaming this dense forest! Who are you? Tell me quick or else I shall devour you."

The king replied: "O ghost, who are you and where are you? I only hear you; let me see who you are." Hearing this calm and cool reply of the king, the demoness felt that his answer was appropriate and made herself visible to him.

The king and the minister then beheld her dreadful form, and without being perturbed in the very least, the minister said to her: "O demoness, why are you so angry? To seek food is natural to all living beings; and in performing one's natural functions one need not be bad-tempered. Even selfish ends are gained by the wise by appropriate means and proper behaviour or action, after they give up anger and mental agitation, and resort to equanimity and clear mind.

We have seen thousands of insects like you and have dealt justly with them, for it is the duty of a king to punish the wicked and protect the good. Give up your anger, and achieve your end by resorting to tranquility. Such indeed is appropriate conduct-whether one is able to achieve one's ambition or not, one should remain peaceful. Ask of us what you will have; for we have never turned a beggar away empty-handed."

Karkati retorted: "O king, you do not seem to have a wise minister! A good minister makes the king wise; and as is the king so are his subjects. Lordship and equal vision accrue from the kingly science (of self knowledge); he who does not possess this is neither a good minister nor a wise king. If you two are men not possessed of self-knowledge, then in accordance with my inherent nature, I shall devour you both. In order to determine this, I shall ask you some questions. Give me the right answers: this is only thing I ask of you."

THE DEMONESS asked:

(1) What is that atom which is the cause of the origin, preservation and destruction of the myriads of heterogeneous universes springing up like so many bubbles on the surface of the ocean?

(2) What is that which is Space and yet is not?

(3) What is that which, though it is unlimited, has yet a limit?

(4) What is that which though moving, yet moves not?

(5) What is that which, though it is, yet is not?

(6) What is that, which manifests to itself as Chit (consciousness) and is yet a stone (or inert)?

(7) What is that which portrays pictures in the Ether?

(8) What is that atom in which are latent all the micro cosms, like a tree in a seed?

(9) Whence do all things originate, like volatility in water, being non-different from that cause like the tidal foams in the ocean?

(10) And in what will these two (volatility and water) become merged as one?

O king, to save yourself from certain death, answer these questions. By the light of your wisdom dispel this darkness of doubt in me. He is not a wise man who is unable, when questioned, to cut at the very root of ignorance and doubt.

If, however, you are unable to uproot this ignorance in me and to answer these questions, you will appease my hunger today.

THE MINISTER replied:

I shall surely answer your questions, O lady! For that which all your questions refer to the supreme self.

That self is subtler than even space since it has no name and cannot be described; and neither the mind nor the senses can reach it or comprehend it. It is pure consciousness. The entire universe exists in the consciousness that is atomic, even as a tree exists with the seed: but, then the universe exists as consciousness and does not exist in the universe. That consciousness exists however, because such is the experience of all, and since it alone is the self of all. Since it is, all else is.

That self is empty like space; but it is not nothingness, since it is consciousness. It is: yet because it cannot be experienced by the mind and senses, it is not. IT being the self of all, it is not experienced (as the object of experience) by anyone. Though one, it is reflected in the infinite atoms of existence and hence appears to be many. This appearance is however unreal even as 'bracelet' is an imaginary appearance of gold which alone is real. But, the self is not unreal. It is not a void of nothingness: for it is the self of all, and it is the very self of one who says it is and of one who says (or thinks) it is not! Moreover, its existence can be experienced by its fragrance. It alone is the self of all as consciousness; and it alone is the substance that makes the world-appearance possible.

In that infinite ocean of consciousness, whirlpools known as the three worlds arise spontaneously and naturally, even as whirlpools are caused by the very nature of the running water. Because this consciousness is beyond the reach of the mind and senses, it seems to be a void; but since it can be known by self-knowledge, it is not a void. On account of the indivisibility of consciousness, I am you and you are me; but the indivisible consciousness itself has become neither I nor you! When the wrong notions of 'you' and 'I' are given up, there arises the awareness that there is neither you, nor I, nor everything; perhaps it alone is everything.

The self being infinite moves not though moving, and yet it is for ever established in every atom of existence. The self does not go nor does it ever come: for space and time derive their meaning from consciousness alone. Where can the self go when all that is is within it? If a pot is taken from one place to another, the space within does not move from one place to another, for everything is for ever in space.

THE MINISTER continued: The self which is of the nature of pure consciousness seems to be inert and insentient when it is apparently associated with inertia. In infinite space, this infinite consciousness had made infinite objects appear; though all this seems to have been done, such effect being a mere fancy, nothing has been done. Hence, it is both consciousness and inertia, the doer and the non-doer.

The reality in fire is this self of consciousness: yet, the self does not burn nor is it burnt, since it is the reality in all. and infinite. It is the eternal light which shines in the sun, the moon, and the fire, but independent of them. It shines even when these have set: it illumines all from within all.

It alone is the intelligence that indwells even trees, plants and creepers, and preserves them. That self or infinite consciousness is, from the ordinary point of view, the creator, the protector and the overlord of all; and yet from the absolute point of view, in reality, being the self of all, it has no such limited roles.

There is no world independent of this consciousness: hence, even the mountains are in the atomic self. In it arise the phantasies of a moment and of an epoch: and these appear to be real time-scales, the twinkling of an eye there exists an epoch, even as a whole city is reflected in a small mirror. Such being the case, how can one assert the reality of either duality or non-duality? This atomic self or infinite consciousness alone appears to be a moment or an epoch, near and far, and there is nothing apart from it; and these are not mutually contradictory in themselves.

As long as one sees the bracelet as a bracelet, it is not seen as gold; but when it is seen that 'bracelet' is just a word and not the reality, then gold is seen. Even so, when the world is assumed to be real, the self is not seen: but when this assumption is discarded, consciousness is realised. It is the all; hence real. It is not experienced; hence unreal.

What appears to be is but the jugglery of Maya which creates a dream-city. It is neither real nor unreal, but a long-standing illusion. It is the assumption of division that creates diversity, right from the creator Brahma down to the little insect. Just as in a single seed the diverse characteristics of the tree remain at all times, even so this apparent diversity exists in the self at all times, but as consciousness.

KARKATI said: I am delighted with your minister's answers, O King. Now I would like to hear your answers.

THE KING said: Your questions, O noble lady, relate to the eternal Brahman which is pure existence. It is known when the threefold modification known as waking, dreaming, and deep sleep cease and when the mind-stuff is rid of all movements of thought. The extension and withdrawal of its manifestation are popularly regarded as the creation and the dissolution of the universe. It is expressed in silence when the known comes to an end, for it is beyond all expression. It is the extremely subtle middle, between the two extremes; and that middle itself has two sides. All these universes are but its playful but conscious projection. As the diversity of this universe, it seems to be divided in itself; but truly, it is undivided.

When this Brahman wishes, wind comes into being though that wind is nothing but pure consciousness. Similarly, when sound is thought of, there is a fanciful projection of what sounds like sound: but being pure consciousness, the reality is far from what is thought of as sound and as its meaning or substance.

That supreme subtle atomic being is all and is nothing; I am that yet I am not. That alone is. By its omnipotence all this appears to be.

This self can be attained by the hundred ways and means; yet, when it is attained, nothing has been attained! It is the supreme self; yet it is nothing.

One roams in this forest of samsara, or repetitive history till there is the dawn of that wisdom which is able to dispel the root-ignorance in which the world appears to be real. Just as the ignorant man is attracted by the perception of water in the mirage, this world-appearance attracts the ignorant man.

But the truth is that it is the infinite consciousness that perceives the universe within itself, through its own power known as Maya. That which is seen within appears also outside, like the hallucination of one who is mad with lust.

Though the self is extremely subtle and atomic and of the essential nature of pure consciousness, by it the entire universe is wholly pervaded. This omnipresent being by its very existence inspires the world-appearance to 'dance to its tunes'. That which is thus subtler than a hundredth part of the tip of a hair is yet greater than the greatest, because of its omnipresence.

THE KING continued:

The light of self-knowledge alone illumines all experience. It shines by its own light. What is the light by which one 'sees' (knows), if all the lights in the world from the sun onwards become inert? Only the inner light.

This inner light appears to be outside and to illumine external objects. The other sources of light are indeed non-different from the darkness of ignorance and only appear to shine: though there is no essential difference between fog and cloud (both of which veil objects), it is often seen that fog seems to radiate light, while cloud seems to obscure it.

The inner light of consciousness shines for ever within and without, day and night; mysteriously, it illumines the effects of ignorance without removing the darkness of ignorance. Just as the very-luminous sun reveals its real nature with help of night and day, even so the light of the self reveals its real nature by revealing both consciousness and ignorance.

Within the atomic space of consciousness, there exist all the experiences, even as within a drop of honey there are the subtle essences of flowers, leaves and fruits. From that consciousness all experiences expand, for the experiencing is the sole experiencer (which is consciousness). Whatever may be the particular description of the experiences, they are all encompassed in the one experiencing of consciousness.

Indeed, this infinite consciousness alone is all this: and all the hands and eyes are its own, though being extremely subtle, it has no limbs. In the twinkling of an eye this infinite consciousness experiences an epoch within itself, even as in the course of a brief dream one experiences youth and old age and even death.

All these objects which appear in consciousness are indeed non-different from consciousness, even as a sculpture carved of stone is nothing but stone. Just as the whole tree with all its future ramifications is in the seed, the entire universe of the past, the present and future is contained in the atom of infinite consciousness.

Therefore, though the self is neither the doer or actions and the experiencer of all experiences: there is nothing apart from it. Within the atom of the infinite consciousness and doership and the experiencer are inherent.

The world, however, has never really been created, nor does it disappear: it is regarded as unreal only from the relative point of view; from the absolute point of view it is non-different from the infinite consciousness.

THE KING continued: Sages only speak of the inner and the outer, which are but words with no corresponding substance: it is meant to instruct the ignorant. The seer, himself remaining unseen, sees himself; and the seer does not ever become an object of consciousness.

The seer is the sight only, and when the latent psychic impressions have ceased, the seer regains its pure being; when the external object is imagined, a seer has been created. If there is no subject, there is no object either: it is the son that makes a man 'father'.

Again, it is the subject that becomes the object; there is no object (sight) without a subject (seer), even as without a father there is no son. Because the subject (seer) is pure consciousness, he is able to conjure up the object. This cannot be the other way round: the object does not give birth to the subject. Therefore the seer alone is real, the object being hallucination: gold alone is real, the bracelet is a name and a form.

As long as the notion of bracelet lasts, the pure gold is not apprehended; as long as the object persists, the division between the seer and the seen also persists.

But, just as because of the consciousness in the bracelet, gold realises its goldness, the subject (seer) manifesting as the object (the seen) realises subjectivity (consciousness). One is the reflection of the other: there is no real duality.

The seer does not see himself as he sees the object: the seer sees himself as the object, and therefore does not see – though he is the reality, yet he appears to be unreal. However, when self-knowledge arises and the object ceases to be, the seer (subject) is realised as the sole reality.

The subject exists because of the object, and the object is but a reflection of the subject: duality cannot be if there is not one, and where is the need for the notion of 'unity' if one alone exists? When thus real knowledge is gained by means of right enquiry and understanding, only that remains which is not expressible in words. Of that it cannot be said that it is one or that it is many. It is neither seer nor seen, neither subject nor object, neither this nor that.

Neither unity nor diversity can be truly established as the truth: for every thesis gives rise to antithesis. Yet, one is not different from 'the other': just as the wave is not other than water, bracelet is not different from gold. Even so, division is not a contradiction of unity! All this speculation concerning unity and diversity is only to overcome sorrow: that which is beyond all this is the truth, the supreme self.

VASISTHA continued: After listening to these wise words of the king, Karkati became tranquil, and her demonical nature left her. She said to them: "O wise men, you are both fit to be worshipped by all and to be served by all. And, I have been thoroughly awakened by your holy company. One who enjoys the company of enlightened men does not suffer in this world, even as one who holds a candle in his hand does not see darkness anywhere. Pray, tell me what I can do for you."

The grateful KING said to Karkati: "O kind lady, now you have become my friend. Friendship is valued by good people. Pray, assume a gentle and smaller form, and come to my palace and live as my guest. You need not afflict good people at all. But I shall feed you with sinners and thieves."

Karkati agreed. She became a charming young woman and accompanied the king to live as his guest. He entrusted killers, criminals and sinners to her. At night every day she resumed her demonical form and consumed them. During the day-time she continued to be a charming woman- the friend and guest of the king. After her meal she would often go into samadhi for a few years at a time, before returning to normal consciousness and normal life.

VASISTHA continued: In essence, even as the ramifications of the tree (with its leaves, flowers, fruits, etc.) extend from the seed in which there is no such diversification, the universe of diversity extends from the infinite consciousness.

O Rama, by merely listening to my words you will be enlightened, there is no doubt in this. Know that the universe has arisen from Brahman and it is Brahman alone.

RAMA asked: If oneness alone is the truth, why then do we say, "By this, that is attained"?

VASISTHA replied: Rama, in the scriptures words have been used in order to facilitate the imparting of instruction. Cause and effect, the self and the Lord, difference and non-difference, knowledge and ignorance, pain and pleasure – all these pairs have been invented for the instruction of the ignorant. They are not real in themselves. All this discussion and argumentation take place only in and because of ignorance; when there is knowledge there is no duality. When the truth is known, all descriptions cease, and silence alone remains.

Then you will realise that there is only one, without beginning and without end. But as long as words are used to denote a truth, duality is inevitable; however, such duality is not the truth. All divisions are illusory.

I shall give you another illustration. Listen very carefully. By means of the potent medicine of my explanations, you will surely overcome the illness that afflicts your mind. This samsara (world appearance) is nothing but the mind filled with likes and dislikes; when it is free of them, the world-appearance too comes to an end.

The consciousness in the mind is the seed of all substances; and the inert aspect of the mind is the cause of the illusory appearance of the world. Because of the omnipresence of consciousness, the mind takes the form of the knowable and thus becomes the seed of the universe; the mind, like a child, imagines the existence of the world. When the mind is illumined it experiences the infinite consciousness within itself. I shall presently explain to you how this subject-object division arises.

VASISTHA continued: Once I asked the creator Brahma to tell me how this universe was first created. And he gave me the following reply.

BRAHMA said: My child, it is only mind that appears as all this. I shall tell you what happened to me at the beginning of this epoch. At the end of the previous epoch there was the cosmic night, and as soon as I woke at the end of that night I offered my mornings prayers and looked around, wishing to create the universe. I beheld the infinite void which was neither illumined nor dark.

In my mind there was the intention to create; and in my heart I began to see subtle visions. There in my mind and with my mind I saw several seemingly independent universe. In them all I also saw my own counterparts-creators. In those universe I saw all kinds of beings, as also mountains and rivers, oceans and wind, sun and heavenly beings and the netherworld and the demons.

In all these universes I also saw scriptures and moral codes which determine good and evil and heaven and hell; as also the scriptures that lay down the path to pleasure and the path to liberation. And I saw people pursuing all these different goals.

I saw seven worlds, seven continents and also oceans and mountains, all of them inexorably heading for destruction. I saw time and its divisions, right down to days and nights. I saw the holy river Ganga as it knit together the three worlds- the celestial region, the atmosphere, and the earth.

Like a castle in the air, this creation shone extensively with its sky, earth and oceans. Looking at all this I was wonderstruck and puzzled: "How is it that I am seeing all these with my mind in the great void, even though I have not seen them with physical eyes?" I contemplated this problem for a considerable time

and eventually I thought of one of the suns in one of the solar systems and requested him to come to me. I asked him the quest that was engaging my attention.

THE SUN replied: O great one, being the omnipotent creator of all this you are indeed the Lord. It is the mind alone that appears as all this ceaseless and endless creative activity, which, on account of nescience, deludes one into thinking that it is real or that it is unreal. Surely you know the truth, Lord: yet since you commanded me to answer your query, I say this.

Story of King Janaka

Vasistha said: Rama, Know that this world is illusory. The universe is of the nature of Self Knowledge only. Men of action and ignorance are deluded by the idea of births and deaths. Men with purity and transparency lay aside this deep rooted illusion and be ever free from the apprehension of births and deaths. Learn to discriminate between real and unreal. Through the association with the wise (Satsang), study of scriptures (Vicara), practice of right conduct (Self Control) and endowed with insight, discrimination and right understanding (Contentment), you will attain eternal peace (Santi).

That which is not there before, nor will be in the end, is no reality at all. It is the mind that creates the world. Dispassion, association with the Sages and Self Knowledge by inquiry about Spirituality will destroy the illusion created by the mind. Pleasure and pain, birth and death, heat and cold, gain and loss, praise and censure and respect and disrespect are imaginations of the mind.

There are two paths for the salvation of the souls. The first path is where the student follows where closely the instructions of the teacher. Salvation will result either in the very birth or in some succeeding births. The second path is the attainment of knowledge by self culture. Knowledge arises spontaneously in a man like a fruit falling from heaven. I will recite a story in which Self Knowledge arose in one like a fruit falling from Heaven.

Over this universe, ruled once a King of kings Janaka. He wielded the sceptre over a country called Videha which had not the least taint of jealousy or envy.

This king rejoiced in the possession of good qualities transcending the ocean and befitting him to protect his subjects like Vishnu. In the beautiful season of spring, this king with a great joy of heart stepped into his Elysian garden redolent of sweet smelling flowers, whilst his courtiers, armies and others were stationed outside the garden.

Walking in the garden alone, the king heard the songs of Siddhas whose minds had attained to the one Chit. Now, oh Rama, listen attentively to the songs containing the experiences of the Siddha hosts residing on the fragrant hills and withdrawing themselves from all pleasures of the visibles and heard by Janaka.

They are "That Knowledge-bliss which arises out of the commingling of the knower and the known is of Atma- Knowledge. And it is this Self Knowledge bliss, that should be longed after." So said one Siddha. Another Siddha said " After eradicating the seen and the visual with their Vasanas, one should contemplate upon Atmic Reality which is the primeval Light to the eagle vision (of high spiritual personages).

Another Siddha remarked : "After having become all- pervading like that One which occupies the neutral centre between Sat and Asat, we should ever be contemplating upon Self Knowledge, that eternal Light which illuminates all other lights. "

Another Siddha remarked: "We will contemplate upon that effulgent Self Knowledge which always calls itself I in all Individuals."

Other Siddhas also remarked thus "To look for the God without, relinquishing the God within, is like going in quest of conch shells after giving up the Kousthubha gem on hand.

Atma can be attained only by those who have destroyed completely the forest of the lilies of desires.

Those persons who, in spite of their knowledge of the non-existence of happiness both in the past and the present in the baneful objects (of the world), do yet entangle themselves in them with their thoughts clinging to them, deserve the appellation of an ass, if not a worse one.

The serpents of Indryas (organs) which ate hissing again and again, should be slain in the seat of the mind by the rod of firm discrimination, just as Indra reduced to dust the mountains through his adamantine Vajra (thunderbolt).

A mind, devoid of pains, which has developed an equal vision over all, through quiescence, will attain the state of its Atmic Reality which is the plenum of complete bliss. This is Moksha."

So said many Siddhas. Having heard clearly these indubitable words of sage counsels emanating from the Siddhas,

Janaka was deeply moved by the songs of the Siddhas. He at once left the garden, sent away his ministers and attendants and shut himself in a quietroom in the topmost room of his Palace.

He began to contemplate deeply upon the true significance of the words given out by the Siddhas. Observing the actions of the world where men and others ever flutter like birds always on their wings and then perish, he could no longer contain himself and cried out the following words.

I am ever whirling with delusion and afflicted with pains, like dusts of sand floating in the midst of a large stone. Now reflecting upon Time which is eternal (in its true nature), how is it I estimate my life greatly and fall into all sorts of despondencies through my powerful desires ? Who is there so debased in life as myself, who am spoiled through my gross mind ?

Comparing this earth over which I rule to the countless universes, I cannot but consider it as an atom. It is really surprising that I should rate high this universe full of pains. Indeed I am unable to find one object in this archaic universe which is uncreate and sweet and beneficent for one twinkling of the eye at least. While so, it is really marvellous to see the heterogeneities of the universe. Even the greatest of persons will in course of time become the lowest of the low.

Oh, my mind which fancies as real the temporary wealth of this world, when did these illusory thoughts of yours come?" All enjoyments and many great men have disappeared in former times. Where then is the guarantee of existence of objects now ?

The innumerable earths with their rulers and their wealth, have all perished like fine sands ; Oh afflicting mind, where then are all the objects that have vanished out of sight? Where then is the permanency of your existence? It is only by bestowing my desires on the illusion of the long dream of bodily delusion in the night of the unreal Maya that I have debased myself to this ignorant state. Enough, enough with all the deaths I had undergone in previous times.

I have never been able to find that beneficent Kala (time) which does not put an end to any object. Not one beneficent object exists on this earth, either in the beginning, middle or end, Are not all created objects coated over with the varnish of destruction ?

The ignorant, every day of their lives, perform sinful acts, painful deeds and vices. In youth, they will be enveloped with Ignorance ; in adult age, they are entangled in the meshes of women ; in old age, groaning under the burden of Samsara (Repeated births), they die. Being thus always occupied, when will they find time to devote themselves to the commission of virtuous deeds ? How came this Maya to play and dance in this world ? This ghost of my mind dances in the theatre of this universe to the music of the organs.

Ignorance is perched on the crown of Truth. Similarly pains is ever seated on the crown of pleasures in this universe. If pains are seated on the crown of pleasures, how can we discriminate them? If in the opening and the closing of the eyelids, many Brahmas are created and destroyed, what am I, a puny self, before them ?

A rare marvellous wealth becomes a source of pains with the affliction of the mind ; even an object of infinite danger is the source of great happiness through the mind rightly directed. It is only the Samsaric life that is the source of all pains. How can happiness be generated in those lives that are drowned in Samsara ?

The mind of delusion constitutes the root of the tree of Ignorance which ramifies in all directions. It is this mind which is called thought. With the destruction of thought, the mind will be also destroyed easily. The baneful root of mind being destroyed, the tree of birth and death will also be destroyed. Oh, I have detected the thief who robbed me of my Atmic Jewel, viz., my Self.

His name is Mind. I have been long suffering through this villain. I will make him die. I have learnt it all through the omniscient Siddhas, as my Guru. I am now in the enjoyment of that bliss which pertains to the pure Brahman. I have gradually dispelled from my mind such unrealities as I, you and other differences of conception. I am now victorious in the conflict with my great adversary of the mind which spoiled my Self Knowledge. I have completely divested myself of all the pains which afflicted me. I have attained the life of quiescence. Oh, discriminative Knowledge which uplifted me to this lofty state, I adore thee.”

Thus did king Janaka remain statue-like in Samadhi, after having destroyed all fluctuation of mind. After being in it for a long time, he returned from it and then surveyed the universe through his quiescent mind, his impure mind having been destroyed past resurrection, with the following remarks.

What object is there in this world for me to encompass? What is illusory? To my present scrutinizing eye, all is pure Knowledge only. I cognize nothing but the one immaculate Self Knowledge my own Reality. I will never long for any object, I do not come across ; nor will I evince any dislike towards any object that I do not come by. I will remain immutably fixed in my own Self of Self Knowledge. Things will happen as pre-ordained. I am desireless. I am egoless. I have equal vision to all. I possess equanimity at all times. So saying the king was absorbed with Brahmic bliss in the non-dual state.

Janaka contemplated upon performing, without any desires, all actions of his life which crop up spontaneously every day. So never for a moment ruminating upon the past or future, productive as they are of evil, he began to perform his present duties with a full heart.

Only through the Self enquiry created by the words of the Siddhas, did Janaka attain quiescence of mind and Self Knowledge. The supreme seat of Self Knowledge can be attained only through the Self enquiry and discrimination.

The worldly-inclined cling to sensual objects; but the longing after the extraordinary enjoyment of spiritual bliss is only through previous efforts of Self Inquiry. Therefore one should destroy Ignorance, which is the source of dangers and all kinds of pains.

Should one aspire for the supreme Brahmic Seat, he should previously have killed out all desires, cravings and ego in his mind. Is not grain obtained, only after previously ploughing the field on this firm earth.

Those who are acute enough to always discern the unreality of this universe will, like king Janaka, cognize through their subtle intelligence the non-dual Paramartha (Reality) at the proper time.

When attraction and repulsion (towards objects) become of the nature of the mind (and commingle with it), it alone is bondage and nothing else. Having avoided all desires and pains arising through the ripened love and hatred towards objects, may you be immovable, devoid of attraction or repulsion towards them.

The great Vasanas (psychological conditioning) are the net composed of the string of powerful thoughts due to ignorance. Having cut asunder, with the sword of Knowledge, the net of Vasanas, may you be with your mind as still as the clouds unaffected by the winds. After having destroyed the impure mind through your pure mind like a tree felled by an axe, may you be firmly seated in the supreme ParaBrahma (infinite consciousness).

Dispassion joined with the knowledge of unity, melts down the substance of the mind and confers the best and highest state of happiness and rests in the Supreme Self. Now Rama, reflect and meditate on the Self like King Janaka and attain Atma Jnanam (Self Knowledge).

“There are two paths by which the Vasanas can be destroyed. Instead of thinking with certainty as we do now we live for objects or the objects live for us ; or in the absence of these invaluable objects, the I does not exist or these objects do not exist in the absence of I.”

One should, through pure enquiry, differentiate himself (as separate) from the objects, with the idea the I does not belong to the objects or the objects do not belong to the I ; and his mind should give up all Vasanas. This is what is called renunciation of that fit to be given up.

Then having destroyed the Vasanas and looking with an equal vision over all, if one should abandon this burden of the body, then such an extinction of Vasanas constitutes the stainless renunciation of the Known. Those only are the wise who have given up all the Vasanas which have concreted themselves into the tangible shape of the body of Ego.

Those sturdy persons who come under the first category are called Jivanmuktas ; while those who come, under the second heading, after destroying to the root all Vasanas and actions and rendering their mind completely quiescent, are called Videhamuktas. Oh victorious Rama, these two kinds of renunciation resemble one another. They pertain to Jivanmuktas and Videhamuktas respectively. They lead one to Brahman, free him from the trammels of pains and enable him to attain Moksha.

May you, Oh Rama, be immovable like an ocean without foams or waves.

Listen attentively to what I am now going to give out to you. In the case of the stainless enquirers after Atma, there are four kinds of certitudes.

The first kind is that where the “ I ” identifies itself with this body from head to foot and thinks itself to be no other than the one generated by the parent. As this idea is not real, this certainty leads to dire bondage.

The second kind arises when the “ I” finds itself to be above and other than all (gross) objects and to be more subtle than the tail end of paddy. This certainty when attained leads to Moksha and arises in the case of the wise.

The direct cognition within, without doubt, that all the universes are no other than the modes or aspects of I and that the I is indestructible is the third kind of certitude. This is the Moksha lacking nothing.

The fourth kind of certainty arises when the perishable universe and the knower are cognized to be unreal and all the four ever are, like the Ether pervading everywhere.

This is the incomparable and supreme Moksha. Of these, the first kind of certainty is ever associated with bondage. But the other three being associated with the emancipated and pure God Consciousness, is to be found in Jivanmuktas only.

Those persons who, being above all, concentrate their attention upon the supreme Seat with a cool mind unaffected by pleasures or pains will never subject them selves to the trammels of re -births.

Those persons following the footsteps of the ancients who shew the same leniency and mercy towards both their friends of virtuous deeds and their enemies of vicious deeds will never render themselves liable to the trammels of re-births.

Such persons will never think of nobility or lowness ; will never have love or hatred ; will not have actions to do or not to do ; will not associate them selves with re-birth. Shining with divine effulgence, they will speak lovingly to all. Having known the true proper ties of all objects, they will be ignorant of re-birth.

Therefore, oh Rama, ever sport in this world attaining the Atmic Reality in a state of Jivanmukti when the Dheya Vasanas are given up and the illuminated vision takes place.

Story of Bali

There once lived a matchless king of Asuras named Bali who reigned over Patala as an emperor over it. He made the whole world tremble underneath his potent arms and was able to overpower and humiliate even Eswara, Vishnu and others. He was the son of the noble Virochana and reigned powerfully for ten crores of years.

Having ascended the topmost story of his palace he gave vent to the following train of reflections with a mind disgusted with material pleasures and contemplating upon Samsara (this mundane existence).

Of what avail to me is this undisputed sovereignty of mine which has enabled me to enjoy from a long time the wealth of all these three incomparable worlds ? When I begin to contemplate upon the pleasures of wealth which flit away at once, wherever and whosoever enjoyed in the past, I find I am but repeating the same actions as yesterday, yielding but momentary happiness. Enjoyed things do recur again. Things seen yesterday do again present themselves today.

Through what shall I be able to come into the indubitable possession of that, after which I shall be action-less? What is that path which will enable me to go higher up to “ That” which is free from the illusory sensual objects ?”

“Formerly I enquired of my father, the omniscient Virochana in this very spot and about this very point. He then explained to me the manner in which I can remove my doubts. I questioned my father thus what is that incomparable seat where all the illusions of pleasures and pains and other heterogeneities fade away? What is that seat where the mind's delusions will wear away? What is that seat where all desires are eradicated to their root? Please enlighten me with answers to these questions.

Again what is that quiescent seat which is free from desires and mental dependencies? What is that seat which is permeated right through by Absolute bliss? Please, oh you, who have cognized the Supreme, throw light upon the means by which I can free myself from the pains and excruciating doubts I am suffering from.”

To which my father replied thus Now listen to my words. A beautiful country there is which is illimitable, all-pervading and without any precincts. That is the source from which all mundane things arise and into which all are absorbed. In this country, there exist neither the grand five elements, nor hills, nor forests, nor holy places, nor the pure Gods, nor the other ancient souls. Great Luminosity is the name of the king existing therein alone.

He is omniscient, all-pervading, the cause of all and stably quiescent and all full. He is Silence itself. He will without fail cause all acts to be performed through the minister appointed by him. The moment the minister thought of a thing, such an idea though non-existent, arose instantaneously as a tangible thing; it, though existent, disappeared as mysteriously. This minister has not the power to enjoy any thing through his own right; nor does he know anything through himself. As he acts always in concert with the king, he is able to do all things.

Though the minister does all acts in the presence of the king, yet the latter is always alone.” So said the father to his son. At which the son heard with an exulting heart all that his father had told him and then questioned him thus “What is the nature of the resplendent country which is without mental disease and all-pervading? What are the means by which it can be reached? Through what, can it be attained? Who is the imperishable king in that country? and who is the minister? And who is that potent king with his minister that cannot be controlled by my puissant arms which brought under my subjection, as in sport, all the earths in this universe?”

To which the father was pleased to reply thus “Who will be able to over-step the rigorous law of the speedy and powerful minister? Even should countless hosts of Gods and Asuras league together to over-power him, they will never be able to do so. Even though such rare weapons as discus, spear and others be hurled at him, their powers will be deadened like flowers aimed at a stone. When overpowered by the King, the minister will pay obeisance to him. Otherwise one can more easily move the mountains of Mahameru than this person. He will never be completely subdued otherwise than through an intelligence of much experience and skill.

If you long to get at the minister, he will hiss at you like an angry serpent and burn you. In order to remove the doubts under which you are laboring, I will now proceed to state what the king, his minister, country, etc do symbolize.

The country represents the incomparable and eternal Moksha. The king mentioned is the Atmic Reality inseparable from Moksha. The creation of his, minister typifies the mind (or intelligence). The real supreme skill lies in the thorough eradication of sensual pleasures and the complete development of dispassion and detachment. When the mind is overpowered by non-desires, what remains of it is Peace attained by No-mind.

Through a determined subjugation of desires, Atmic enquiry is induced; and this Atmic enquiry breeds again renunciation of desires. They are both mutually dependent upon one another, like the full ocean and the clouds. Having earned, in proper ways, wealth for his people without violating the rules and observances of a country, one should then resort to the wise and attain dispassion through which he should develop Atmic enquiry. When thus he is illumined with true Self Knowledge through Atmic enquiry, then Moksha is attained.”

Thus did my father enlighten me before. Through divine grace, I have been able to remember now all that my father told me and attain Knowledge thereby. Having been freed from the longing after enjoyment and coming into the possession of the wealth of non-desires, I have been rendered cool with supreme bliss, through the ambrosia of the quiescence of mind.

Oh, I have been in complete ignorance of this, my present blissful enjoyment for so long a period. How shall I describe it in words ? This is the seat where all thoughts are absorbed and where all persons suffering from the effects of pleasures and pains do find an end of all their sufferings.

This is the seat reached by all those who lead their lives in Atma. This is the glory of all-quiescence.” He began to think in his mind over the questions who am I ? and what is my real nature ? Then he reflected for a moment and concluded that if he should invoke and salute his guru Sukracharya his Guru.

Thereupon Sukracharya came to see the King told thus “All the manifestations here before us are Knowledge only ; all that are now external to us (or above our present perception) are Knowledge only ; that which is conditioned is Knowledge ; that which is not conditioned is Knowledge also ; The I that speak am Knowledge ; you that hear are Knowledge only ; and all the universe is nothing but the all-full Knowledge only. This in brief is the Truth.”

Sukracharya continued “Being impressed with this firm conclusion in your mind, may you meditate upon the one Reality of Knowledge with the intelligence that is requisite for it. If without any modifications of the mind, you cognize and perceive it, then you will attain your goal of the supreme seat”.

Thereafter, the king fell to meditating upon the universe and became convinced of the truth of the words of his Acharya exclaiming thus “This supreme earth is no other than Knowledge ; the three Lokas are Knowledge ; my real nature is Knowledge ; all the ordained Karmas are Knowledge only. I have now become that resplendent Brahmic One which shines in its real nature, devoid of the visibles and the visual. I have now become that all-full Principle which, being of the nature of Knowledge without any objects to bind it, pervades all objects at one and the same time and is the quiescent Knowledge-Akas and intelligence, itself.”

Then contemplating upon {or uttering} Pranava (Om) mentally which is the real significance of the Absolute-Knowledge, he entered trance-like into Dhyana (meditative) state and then freed from Sankalpas, karmas, the three kinds of desires (for wife, sons and wealth), doubts, contemplation, intelligence and objects as well as their substratum the knower, he was statue-like in Sama- dhi for a long period.

Thus did the Emperor Bali remain immobile like the light of a lamp in a windless place. And .since he shone as the Absolute Truth without the stains of love and hatred and with a replete mind, such a state can best be likened to a clear sky in the autumnal season, when no clouds mantle it.

After spending a long time in in Nirvikalpa Samadhi, he awoke and began to perform the regal duties with a mind free from desires and egoism. Through his stainless mind, he was never flurried in adversity or

prosperity ; neither did he sink nor swim amidst pleasures or pains. Thus was he with an equal eye over all.

However unlimited were the armies of good and bad thoughts that cropped up unceasingly in his mind, however countless were the objects, imaginary. and real that manifested themselves before him, yet he was able to control them all in one centre. So also, shall you, oh Rama, control your mind, roving amidst the pleasures of this world and the higher, in the centre of your heart.

In whatever places your mind totters like a child and sinks into sensual objects, from that place shall the mind have to be lifted up to the partless Knowledge and be made to attain it. Having reduced this to a regular practice, may you bind this terrible elephant of mind so as to be untrammelled by pains and enable it to reach Moksha through discrimination.

Story of Prahlada

Bhaktha Prahlada attained the true Self Knowledge through his intelligence. After his father Hiranyakasipu, the King of Danavas, expired, the sore-grieved son gave vent to the following words with a palpitating heart.

Countless were the numbers of Danavas born in my race, such as my father and others. They had bodies which cast into insignificance even Mahameru itself. They were able to do or undo even the lotus-born Brahma with his powers. But before Vishnu wearing the Tulsi garland, they fell easy victims to his fiery ire, like cotton before the wind.

There is none now who is not afraid of Vishnu. There is only one means of conquering the effulgent Vishnu, my enemy, wearing the discus. Think however we may, there is no higher goal than this. The real refuge can be sought only in Vishnu residing in the ocean of milk. Therefore let my mind from this moment seek an asylum in the seat of Narayana (Vishnu).

May I through devotional meditation, be " He" and inseparable from Him. May the Maha Mantra ***AUM NAMOH NARAYANAYA*** which confers upon its devotees whatever they long for, be inextricably interwoven and commingled within me, like the Ether pervaded by the wind. Those who salute and worship Vishnu will be able to attain their desired results of emancipation, only when they contemplate upon Vishnu as themselves. Otherwise such results will not accrue. Following that path, I will worship and meditate upon Vishnu as myself.

This body is no other than the form (or manifestation) of Vishnu. He who is bound by this body in the form of Prana-Vayu is Vishnu, the supreme of the supreme. That which goes before Prana-Vayu abides externally as the second Vishnu. Therefore collecting mentally all articles of worship, I shall always worship Vishnu as above.

With this purpose in view, he created, through his mind articles of worship and then worshipped with them, Lord Vishnu with true love in his divine place.

From that time forward, he began to ever worship the feet of Vishnu, the one partless Brahman. Thereafter, all the bad people bearing axes began like Prahlada to be the slave of Hari (Vishnu), abandoning all their bad qualities. Are not thus the qualities (good or bad) of a king imbibed by his subjects ?

Indra and the other Gods marvelled with fear at this unprecedented event and were sceptical as to how these vicious personages were able to secure the love of Vishnu. Therefore they went to Vishnu, sleeping his long (Yoga) sleep in the sea of milk and having seen and eulogised him, addressed him thus : “

If all the Daityas of fiery nature after meditating upon you become merged in thee, then there cannot be but Maya everywhere. These words of the Gods were replied to by our Lord Vishnu thus, “ Oh Gods, do not be afraid. The victorious Prahlada has rendered himself no more liable to re-births. Freed from his murderous propensities, he has reached Moksha through his Tatwa Knowledge vision.

Therefore do not suppose that there is any deception practised by him. If good persons incline their minds towards vice, then manifold evils will ensue ; but if the vicious incline towards the virtuous path, then incalculable good will result. Therefore may all of you fare well.”

Through the steady application, Prahlada’s worshipped with supreme discrimination, bliss and indifference towards objects, etc.. With the development of the four means (of salvation), all his minds attractions towards sensual objects ceased. Therefore his mind became quiescent, without sinking into sensual objects.

The mind of Prahlada was oscillating like a cradle between the cognition of the all-full Reality and the enjoyment of sensual pleasures. Prahlada then prayed to Lord Vishnu thus“Oh you, the original seat of all rare things in the incomparable mansion of the three worlds ; Oh you, the ever-resplendent Brahman without the dawning and the setting of the sun in you ; Oh you who are the eye of mercy to all the votaries, salutation, salutations, a thousand salutations to thee.

Oh you who are the Tatwa (Reality , the prototype of all grace and the lord of all earths, salutations, salutations, a thousand salutations to thee. O : you, who are the sun to the full blown lotus of Gods walking in the path of the Vedas ; Oh you, who are the Lord of all souls, salutations, salutations, a thousand salutations to thee.”

Lord Vishnu spoke to him thus * Oh Prahlada of true love, you are free to demand of me a boon which will not make you be subject to the trammels of re-births.”

To which Prahlada said thus * O you Supreme Principle who resides in the hearts of all, please vouchsafe to confer on me that bliss wherein there are no pains.”

Thereupon Vishnu blessed him by laying his lotus-like hand upon his head with these words : ** May the final Atmic enquiry arise in you in order that you may attain quiescence in the Brahmic bliss of the pure ParaBrahma, after your mind is freed from the delusions of the world.”

The incomparable Lord has deigned to bless me with the Atmic enquiry enabling one to overcome re-birth. Let me cogitate upon the questions, whom am I? What was I before? What is the nature of this “ I” which identifying itself with the paraphernalia of this world (and body) stays and runs, cries and laughs, exults and is afflicted ? I am not this diverse world. How can this inert world be called the “I, “as the former is external to the latter and is composed of hills, stones, preity things, earth, trees and others ?

Neither can the temporary body be called the “I,“. Nor is the inert property of form this “ I,“ which dies in the “knower” who though acting in this perishable world and sight is yet no participator in it. Now have I cognised my Reality as shining both within and without, as the one pure Knowledge of pure Sat and without re-birth, being freed from all ideas of “I” and “mine,“ from all Sankalpas and from all the delusions of the five organs, without the least despondency of heart. This is perfectly certain.

Ha, Ha, now have I known my true Self. Is this the Atmic Reality which shines, in the path of spiritual knowledge, in the intelligence of one divested of all diversities? In the one Tatvva Knowledge which is no other than the "I" pervading everywhere without fluctuation, all the universes from the sun down to a pot shine.

Like sparks of fire which shine through the heat in the burning fire, so I find, in my present illuminated state, that all the organs performed diverse actions through me only. All Individuals from Brahma downwards will shine as my Reality alone in the one space at the end of a Kalpa when all the universe goes into Pralaya;

How then can exist the ideas of "I" or "he" which pertain to the mind? How can "I" which now shines as the one full Knowledge throughout this infinite universe, possess the modifications of this reasoning mind, with a seat allotted to it in the body. Therefore my spiritual vision of quiescent Knowledge which is eternal, blissful and incomparable is in all the worlds.

All the manifested appearances are only the spiritual vision of the one subtle ideation. As all Individuals are no other than "I", the invisible Knowledge and Pratyagatma that has no other object than itself to lean upon, I offer salutations to them all on account of (their non-divisibility from) my own Self.

Out of the differenceless Knowledge which has no thoughts other than its Self, which is pure, equal in all, without difference, beyond and without the three divisions of time past, present and future arose the diverse transcendental (Sakthis) potencies.

The non-dual Knowledge without attractions to any is equal unto itself alone. As it is above all words, a principle equal unto Self Knowledge cannot be found in words. If the imperishable non-desires should become replete in one, which are invisible and pure and yet like the illusory worldly things, then there will remain equal vision overall, like a waveless ocean. But a mind whirling in actions associated with activity and passivity will be bound, like a bird caught in a net.

Therefore all persons who are afflicted with love and hatred and are thereby dizzy in mind, cling to this earth like poison.

O you illuminated dweller in the mind of all souls, I have been able to attain You only after a very long period. You are fit to be enquired into through the holy sentences of the Vedas and Gurus. You shinest as of the nature of Self Knowledge which is pure bliss.

Many salutations to You who are "That" into which all things merge. You are the Eternal Knowledge wherein "I" am "thou" and "Thou" are "I". Prostrations to you my Lord, the ParaBrahma, the infinite consciousness.

Prostrations to myself which has attained its Reality, shining as itself in a blissful state and as the one Consciousness without any thoughts. Though seeming to be mobile or immobile or quiescent, it is yet without such actions. Though performing all actions, it is yet without desires therein.

It is He who is sought after by the bodies and organs. It is He who is praised by the organ of speech. It is He who is meditated upon by the mind. It is He who causes birth and death to be bridged over. It is He who can be easily attained to. It is He who can cognize all.

I have no love or hatred towards sensual enjoyments. Let me attain those things, I am destined to get; let me not long after those things, I am not destined to get. Originally I became oblivious of discrimination and other blissful things through my inimical Ignorance.

Now I am in possession of Self Knowledge, Having destroyed my mind sunk in Samsara with my discrimination that had labored hard in the Spiritual Inquiry, having freed myself from all the painful Ego, having annihilated all conceptions of duality by meditating upon non-duality, I am now the incomparable ParaBrahma (infinite consciousness) in an immovable state.

Victory to thee, imperishable God. Victory to thee, the seat of final quiescence. Victory to thee, beyond the reach of all Vedas.

Victory to Thee, the source of all Vedas. Victory to thee, the cause of creation. Victory to thee, the causeless cause. Victory to thee, the perishable cause. Victory to thee, the imperishable cause.”

Thus did the noble son of Hiranya meditate through his pure mind and enjoy bliss in the supreme differenceless Nirvikalpa Samadhi of great omniscience. As he seated him self statue-like in Nirvikalpa Samadhi for 5000 years and remained steadfast in one vision (or thought) only, there prevailed anarchy in his Kingdom.

The stainful Danavas who are the night-rovers bearing axes have ceased to exist, all the Gods are deprived of war in their absence and will become quiescent and attained Moksha.

With the quiescence of Gods, all the Yajnas done on earth in their honor as well as Tapas, will be barren of results, and therefore fade away from earth. With the cessation of the laborious performance of these Yajnas, and other actions, the universe will have to come to a stand still.

And then all created objects will cease to exist. Should all the created objects such as the sun, moon, etc, disappear, then we shall have to give up this form of ours and reach the non-differentiated state of * That* ParaBrahma. Were all the archaic universes to perish before their allotted time, then no real benefit (or law) will reign in this world.

The beneficent Vishnu caused his Panchajanya (conch) to be sounded in order to intimate to Prahlada his arrival. Through the terrible reverberating sound which pierced the earth, the skies and the quarters, Prahlada who was merged in the primal seat of “That”, slowly recovered consciousness on this plane.

The Chaitanya Sakti (or consciousness potency) issuing first out of Brahmarandhra pervaded, as before, the Nadis to all the parts of his body and when it got to the nine apertures of the body, Prahlada became conscious of this (physical) plane.

Then his Chaitanya (consciousness) began to perceive material objects, only after it shone as the reflection in the glass of the internal Prana. Hence that intelligence of his which manifested itself in objects, may be compared to the reflected image in a mirror and thus assumed the attributes of Manas. As he recovered consciousness little by little like a lotus unfolding its petals gradually, his beautiful eyes opened. Then the beneficent Prana and Apna began to percolate all throughout his Nadis (nerves) and organs, thus producing a complete perception of the world. Like a lotus fanned by the mild zephyrs, Prahlada began to move in his position. In the twinkling of an eye, his mind became gross and his eyes, mind, Prana and body began to glow with life with their respective functions.

Thereupon Vishnu eyed, with great grace, Prahlada and blessed him thus “Oh immaculate Prahlada, go and look after your Kingdom which is praised and coveted by Indra, the lord of Devas. Also look after your body. Why do you think of abandoning this, your body at such a premature period as this ? So long as you are not haunted by the San- kalpa of attraction and repulsion towards objects, what matters it whether your body exists or not ?

Now get you up from Samaddhi. May you, O Prahlada, be in the Jivanmukti state. May you, until the end of this Kalpa, administer due justice in this world with this body of yours in the Jivan mukti state, but yet without groaning under the load of Samsara. Why do you now in vain die (or disappear from this world), when neither the fires nor the twelve suns burn the universe out of existence (and the Kalpa has not yet closed) ? The lives of those only are blissful, who, having mastered egoism and desires, do cast their eyes equally upon all, which vision confers infinite bliss.

The lives of those only are blissful who, devoid of love and hatred and having rendered their minds cool, are witness to all actions, though performing them. He who is attracted towards objects as well as the objects themselves are both bondage-giving ; the severance (of the mind) from objects constitutes quiescence. It is only when this quiescence is mastered that Moksha is attained. Now in as much as you have reached that state, you should seat yourself on your victorious throne (of the quiescent mind) and reign over your kingdom. May you reign till the end of this Kalpa.”

With these words Vishnu disappeared in a moment with all the Deva hosts, like the instantaneous disappearance of a false Mayavic creation.

At these words of Vasishta, Rama questioned him thus “ How did the king of the Asuras, after attaining Knowledge and becoming merged in the true Brahman, return (unto the normal state) at the conch-sound of Vishnu ? In the case of all Jivanmuktas without the load of Samsara in whom the pure Vasanas are like a burnt seed, such a seed in their heart will never be productive of re-birth. But these pure Vasanas inasmuch as they are pure, all-pervading, subject to manifestation, origin, &c., associated with Satwaguna, full of the pure Atmic-Dhyana (contemplation), and without beginning will always be in Jivanmuktas like Vasanas in Sushupti.

Even after the lapse of a thousand years, so long as the body is in existence, the pure Vasanas will be latent in the heart and will melt away gradually. It is only through these pure Vasanas that Jivanmuktas are awakened to an external perception of objects.”

Story of Gadhi

An excellent Brahmin, by name Gadhi lived on earth in the country of Kosala. With some object in view, he abandoned his relatives for the forest. There whilst he was performing a goodly Tapas for about eight months by stand ing throat-deep in the midst of the waters of a tank, the gracious Vishnu deigned to pay a personal visit to the Brahmin and asked him to state the object of his Tapas.

Thereupon the latter quitted the waters and having reached the bank, fell prostrate at the feet of Vishnu and praised him thus “ Oh ParaBrahma that is inseparable from the lotus heart of all souls, Oh Achyuta (the indestructible), Oh Ananta (the endless), I wish to merge in the immaculate Brahman. Therefore be pleased to enable me to visit (or know) directly the true nature of Maya which you hast created and which has wrought the miracle of these universes full of birth and death.”

To this request Lord Vishnu acceded in the follow ing words “ You shall be able to see Maya (Illusion). You shall, after personally seeing it, be able to free yourself from its yoke.” With these words, Vishnu disappeared.

Thereupon the Brahmin was filled with a perennial bliss at having come in contact with the incarnation of the divine grace and spent some days in Tapas in that forest when there recurred to his memory the blessed sentences of Vishnu on his way to the lotus-filled tank to bathe. Dipping his head into the water,

he forgot to perform the recitation of the Vedic Mantras and Dhyana (meditation) which it was his wont to do, while in the process of bathing.

And lo ! he saw himself dead of a disease in his own house with his relatives gathered together, weeping by the side of his body, while his wife cried bitterly at his feet ; and his mother prompted by sheer maternal love was embracing her son, as if she was again suckling him and writhing with pains, drooped senseless like one who had trodden the fire.

In this state of affairs, the weeping relatives began and finished the subsequent post mortem rites and kindled the funeral pyre for cremation. The body was disposed of in the burning ground by being soon reduced to ashes. Thus did Gadhi, in the midst of the waters in the tank, see through his mind the illusory actions that were performed by himself through himself.

Gadhi found himself reincarnating in the womb of a lady like a jet-black picture who belonged to the degraded caste of dog-eaters. With great travail, she brought him out into this world as a male child. After being fondled as a baby, he grew up to manhood with a body quite sable like a cooled charcoal. With none to equal him in the degraded caste he was in, he married a girl of the same caste and with her lived in great joy and had children.

Some time elapsed, the God of Death stepped in to relieve all of them except the husband. Being tired of incessant wailing and solitude, his mind became dizzy ; he became sick with desires and began to rove through different places. At last he reached the country called Keera where justice was administered duly and was passing through one of the golden streets of that city where its king had died.

As he left no heir, the people in accordance with the immemorial custom of the choice of a king, bedecked the state elephant with gold and precious gems and let it loose to go its own way and select a king. The elephant selected the chandala (low caste) to be the King. Thereupon all the people of the palace lavished all their skill in adorning their newly-made king.

The old courtiers and the commander-in- chief began to obey his orders. Gavala was the name as given to the new king befitting his position as the wise and just protector of the earth. He reigned over his earth, seated on the splendid bejewelled throne loved by all the court ladies shining with their scarlet lips.

After 8 years elapsed thus, the king one day doffed all his ornaments from his person and alone was perambulating on foot the street beside his palace with all the appearance of a true Neecha, when he saw before him a group of out- castes of the caste of dog-eaters.

The oldest of the throng of blood-shot eyes and black colour, having observed the present king of Keera and recognised him, approached him with true love and spoke to him.

Meanwhile the ladies of the harem were observing from the balcony all that had passed between the king and the low caste men ; quite surprised, they appraised the minister of the occurrence.

This lord of earth, our king, belongs to the lowest class of Chandalas. How shall we act now ?" Unable to find any way out of the scrape, they were stunned, perplexed, and morose. Where as the king, nothing daunted by all these, seated himself on the throne as before, as if nothing fresh had transpired. But the ladies, courtiers and others who had before approached him, stood immoveably at a distance from him like a dead animal unfit to be touched by the hands.

Then all the subjects held a meeting in which they came to the following conclusion “We have contaminated ourselves with grave sins through association with this Neecha, our king. Therefore we shall all purify ourselves by entering into fire.”

With this resolution, all the subjects from the eldest down to babies flocked together, and fell into a large fire-pit reared up for the occasion, like swarms of flies buzzing in a Champaka flower. Thereupon the king wanted to give up his body as well. With this purpose of giving up his life, he allowed himself to be devoured by the flames.

While the body of Katanja was being burnt by fire, like tender leaf exposed to the flames, the body of Gadhi that had taken its plunge into the waters of the tank began to palpitate and quiver. In four Ghatikas, Gadhi's mind became cleared up of all obscurations of Maya and began to ruminate upon who he was, and what he saw and did in that state.

Then came he from the waters to the bank of the tank ; and then after having meditated upon the similar manner in which all Individuals in this world run about greatly agitated in their mind, like an angry tiger ever chafing in a forest, was (temporarily) relieved at heart, (in spite of his lingering doubts).

With these thoughts in his mind, he passed some days in his hermitage, when there came upon the spot a guest who was heartily regaled with honey and fruit. At the time of Sandhya when the sun set in, they both performed their daily Karmas and returned to their respective seats of rest, where they were engaged in Self Knowledge stories. At this time, Muni Gadhi enquired of the stranger the cause of the extreme emaciation of his body.

To which the guest replied thus At the request of my beloved relatives, I spent a month in the famous country of Keera. While I was there, I chanced to come in contact with a person therein who related the following anecdote. A king ruled over that country without any split or dissension for about eight years after which the true status of the king as belonging to the lowest class of Neechas, the dog- eaters, was brought to light.

With this discovery, all the Brahmins and others went into the fire ; and the king followed suit. Hearing that horrid fate of the Brahmins, I quitted that country and took a pilgrimage to Prayaga (Allahabad) of waters with seething waves in order to wash off all my sins.

At these words of the guest, Muni Gadhi was surprised and internally convinced that it was his own history that was referred to by the stranger. Therefore to verify for himself the truth of the events of his previous Neecha life, he travelled to the Kingdom where he saw his birthplace and the other places he dwelt in. Is this the Maya that Vishnu acquainted me with ? Through the wonderful seed of my intelligence, I have been able to observe all these.

With these thoughts in his mind, he at once reached the slopes of a great hill and became an incomparable Tapaswin. A rare Tapas was there performed by him to gladden Vishnu, with a handful of water as his food. Lord Vishnu appeared and said “ You have seen the glory of Maya in its true colors, What more do you want ? Why do you perform this true Tapas on the hill side here ?”

I have known vividly the nature of Maya, the result of Karma, as you were pleased to show me. But I am yet ignorant of Maya in its latent innate state. How came this delusion to manifest itself as real ?

Vishnu replied thus Oh Brahmin, this earth and other things of the universe, have for their substratum the mind and do not exist at any period apare from the mind. Almost all persons in this world, walking in the path of this universe of dreams, delusion and egoism look upon it as real and enjoy it.

It is only in Consciousness (the flitting mind) that the universe rests. Why should you be surprised, if this mind of yours, which contains (potentially) in itself all the Universe, should bring into objectivity your life of a Neecha (which is but an insignificant part of the whole).

The excessive one- thoughtedness (or ideation) of your mind reflected itself in the life of a Neecha which reflection was then known. This reflection was caught up by the guest who came in subsequently and saw as real all these delusions.

Like the analogy of a crow and palmyra fruits, the ideation of the Neecha's life reflected itself also in the minds of all who lived in Huna and Keera. Thus did these two kinds of ideations lend increased Reality to the minds of all creatures.

Truly marvellous are the effects or manifestations of the mind, like the analogy of a crow and the palmyra fruits. Thus do diverse persons view the one dream (of the universe) in various ways. With one sport, many boys divert themselves in different ways."

Just as the cause of the fall of ripe palmyra fruits is wrongly attributed to a crow which perches upon the tree at the time of their fall, so the universe is thought to be real though it is merely the creation of the mind.

In similar manner was the Neecha born in Huna-Mandala in the habitation prepared for him by the mind. Likewise with the death of his relatives, he reached a foreign country. There he reigned over the country of Keera with his white victorious parasol overshadowing his subjects and there allowed himself to be devoured by flames. It was only the ideation of your supreme mind thinking about the Neecha's life that brought about the reflection which afterwards assumed a reality.

The ignorant who are impressed with the idea of the differentiations of He, you, I, this, that, mine, etc., will ever be sunk in the mire of pains ; but those who have cognized earth and other things of the universe as no other than " I " will never despond under grief.

With a mind distinct from and having no longing towards all the things of this earth, their firm intelligence will never cling to desires. Knowers of Tatwa Knowledge will never render themselves liable to the delusions of Ignorance.

As you have not cognized Knowledge fully, you have not rid yourself of all your mental delusions and quitted them all as degrading. Therefore you have completely forgotten yourself in a moment through your delusions.

To this wheel of the grand Moha (delusions), Mind is the axle. If by dint of discrimination, your mind be destroyed, then illusion will not afflict you. Now rise up from here and retire into the caves of this hill and perform Tapas there for ten years. Then will the eternal and true Knowledge dawn in thee fully.

With these words, (the abovementioned) manifested form of Vishnu disappeared at the very spot where it appeared. Thereupon the stainless Muni Gadhi, freed of all dire delusions, was devoid of attachments and underwent a rare Tapas. After a course of ten years, he lived replete with true Knowledge.

Then having attained the incomparable Seat of Sat (Truth), devoid of fear, pains, and longing for objects and shone in his real quiescent state as a Jivanmukta ever of the nature of bliss and with a mind as full as the full moon.

Story of Uddhalaka

The entire freedom from the bondage of Mind leads to the unveiled cognition of truth, the auspicious Siva, the Brahmic state, the omniscient, the all-full bliss and the stainless. May you, my child, after destroying Ignorance, associate your mind with the stainless Self Knowledge with true belief ;

May you live with bliss without any care or worry as the Absolute Consciousness itself, though ever engaged in actions as a doer, yet as a non-doer.

May you live in your God Consciousness as Brahman itself, severing mentally all your connections with the senses, outward appearances, purging your mind of all thoughts and destroying the desires.

May you live as Brahman itself, the quintessence of all Knowledge without being invaded by love or hatred producing fluctuation of mind or by the poisonous desires for objects, pleasurable or otherwise.

May you, O Rama live immutably as the absolute Sat and Chit by attaining quiescence through the meditation that there is non-dual ParaBrahma alone without the countless conceptions of I, he, it and other diversities.

May you cognize personally that non-dual state of Self Knowledge like an adamant pillar denuded of all conceptions of duality or meum and tuum.

The moment you rest in that stainless and all- full Knowledge without any conception of separate existence, that moment will all conceptions of duality, the root of all delusions of re-birth, be effaced off your mind. If you allow your (lower) mind to get pampered (with earthly things), then true Knowledge will go away from you.

So long as there is the centering of affection on this body which is non-Self and the mistaken identification of it with Self, so long will the mind grow fatter and fatter in its association with the Samsara of wife, children, &c.

The mind waxes stronger and stronger also through its egoistic sports (or actions) and the dualities of conception arising through Ahankara. O my son Raghava. With every birth, the mind grows through the mental disease (of objects) getting more and more prevalent in it and the consequent tenacity of mundane existence and efforts directed towards the gain or loss of objects in the same.

Of course, when women, wealth, gems, and other objects are longed after and acquired, such gain or the greed arising out of the gain produces for the time being pleasure and seems to be productive of good to him. But such good tends only to glut the mind.

Like Muni Uddhalaka of old, having pulverized all the five Bhutas (elements), you shall set about enquiring- through your non-painful mind. At which, Sri Rama asked Vasishta thus “ How did Muni Uddhalaka, manage to destroy the five Bhutas (elements) and to introspect within himself?”

Vasishta replied “Though Atmic enquiry, Oh graceful Rama, did Muni Uddhalaka conquer the five Bhutas and reach Brahman, the non-dual state. His story I shall now proceed to relate. He was a stainless Muni of great intelligence and enquiring spirit. But he had not yet reached that quiescent Plenum in which all pains are destroyed, though he had purged his mind free of all impurities.

With the following of a virtuous course, the due performance of a Nish- kama Tapas (or a Tapas without the longing after fruits), a right understanding of the significance of the spiritual books and a proper

observance of Yama and Niyama, an unsullied discrimination set in upon Uddhalaka's mind and he began to meditate thus-wise.

“ What is that seat which is the safe asylum without pains? What is that imperishable state without the pang of re-births? Is it not this, that above all should be soon sought after? When shall I be able to secure and rest for a long time in that non-dual immaculate Brahmic seat without any Sankalpa of the mind, like clouds in the top of the Mount Mahameru ?

When shall I be able to rid my mind of the wealth of material enjoyments, which mind after having exhausted one, yet craves for another in an agitated state? When shall I be able to cross, through the instrumentality of the vessel of my intelligence, this ocean of my desires with its seething billows of the mind with its egoism ?

” Thus did Uddhalaka contemplate in his mind and becoming ecstatic within, resolved upon the mastery of Brahma Dhyana. But the monkey of his mind perched speedily from one branch to another of sensual objects ; and therefore he was not able to master Samadhi which lands one in the ecstatic realm of Reality.

In forests, he roamed without any settled mind : at another time being freed from all external vision, his mischievous mind went into Samadhi with great difficulty. Thus was he whirling his days in various ways in the mountains. Muni entered a cave alone one day; he sat on the ground and having through his discriminative mind lessened the actions of his mind, he began to contemplate like Buddha. With his face towards the north, he seated himself in Padma posture and saluted Brahman ; and having concentrated his mind whirling through Vasanas, began to meditate thus, in order to develop Nirvikalpa Samadhi.

Oh, my ignorant mind, of what avail are all your illusory lives ? Will the wise ever involve themselves in actions generating pains. Those who, not caring for the insatiable nectar of quiescence, long for material objects, resemble persons who give up beautiful garden with good fragrance in favour of a poisonous and hot oasis.

Whether Brahma-loka or Patalaloka is reached by one, he will never be able to attain Nirvanic bliss without this supreme nectar of quiescence. All these vain actions which are of the nature of the mind within, are productive of intense pains and are never pleasurable. Oh ignorant and idiotic mind of mine why do you subject yourself to pleasures or pains ? Why is it, you are not able to fix yourself in the state of quiescence ?

Oh my ever-expanding foolish mind, do not die. Like the deer, through associating yourself with sound, the property of the organ of hearing. Neither by running after the property of touch arising from the skin, like a male elephant. Nor should you, O mind, associate yourself with sight of the eye, like a moth in the light of a lamp. Nor should you, O mind, associate yourself with taste, like a fish caught by a bait. Nor should you, O mind, be bound by odor, like bees in quest of honey.

Here the deer, elephant, moth, fishes, and bees die through their attraction to their senses of sound, touch, form, taste and odor respectively. But if you are afflicted with all the five senses combined together, then where is true bliss to you ?

Oh you stainful mind, if these Vasanas of objects are mastered, then you have scored a tremendous victory. What for do I address you here. In those wise persons in whom Atma- Knowledge enquiry is fully developed, there exists not the (lower) mind.

How is it possible for the all-pervading eternal Knowledge, subtle as it is, to exist in the mind ? Can an elephant enter a Bilva fruit ?

The ideation of I pervades every where. I shall look upon this universe as the supreme Knowledge itself, pervading all the quarters, being invisible with out fluctuation and self shining. In that Knowledge, I do not find names or forms, dualities or non-dualities, smallness or great ness or any other characteristics. As I am myself the true Knowledge, you alone, oh mind of mine, that have generated all differences in this world are the cause of pains. I shall promptly destroy you through the dint of Knowledge developed through discrimination.

This you shall presently witness. How can I be the flesh, blood, bones, Prana composed of Vayu or any other thing pertaining to this body. While so, how can it be applied to them ? How can it be applied to the eyes, skin, fat ears, nose or the moist tongue ? The I is all-pervading one. Not even in the slightest degree can I exist in objects? This is the true vision (of knowledge). There is no other path ; Oh ignorant and artful mind of mine, you hast beguiled and intimidated me in all manner of ways me who am the stainless Knowledge itself, like wild dogs frightening a cow s calf.

I have, through divine laws, now discovered that villain of Ignorance who took out of my hands the jewel of Self Knowledge. Never hereafter shall I have to do anything with him.”

The five organs, though free from Vasanas, do yet incline towards their respective external objects. The Vasanas are not the cause of ail the organs. Therefore, oh ignorant five organs, if after purging the stains within you should perform all actions, there is no pain. Oh you mind, the seat of all Indryas (organs), may you cognize the Reality of Knowledge with the Indryas perfectly under your control. May you permanently attain Knowledge of non-dual Nirvanic bliss without any attractions (towards objects).

Having without any the least stains given up all Vasanas of I which is attended by its poisonous disease of objects and having overcome re-births through the means of the Mantra of non-desires, may you, oh mind, become of the nature of the No-Mind (Supreme Lord) and reach that state of infinite consciousness from where there is no return.

I shall disport myself in this long Knowledge state, having disentangled myself from this forest of I, wherein Sankalpas are the trees and desires are the plants. Amusing myself according to my free will and pleasure, I have now reached the Brahmic seat. I am alone. I am a victor. I have here become of the nature of Moksha. I am actionless, differenceless and seatless.

Then he began (to calm himself and) meditate powerfully through his all-pervading mind now brought into subjection without any fluctuation ; seated in Padmasana with his eyes partially opened like a half-blown lotus, this su preme personage uttered Pranava (Om) without any difficulty and with its appropriate high-sounding intonation. Then Muni Uddhalaka who uttered Pranava of the nature of Knowledge began to cognize Brahman.

But when he intoned the first pare or Akara of Aum and raises one by itself without any support to the transcendental Knowledge that is all-pervading and stainless, all the noble Pranavayus shone with effulgence in his body, producing and raising sound in it.

Then did the process of Rechaka (expiration) arise in the whole body exhaling the Pranavayu without. Like Muni Agastya who sipped with one sip the whole ocean and rendered it void of water, his whole body was rendered void of Pranavayu which lifted itself up to the regions of partless Knowledge essence.

The great Agni (or Knowledge) pervaded the whole body and burnt it up (within). This is the first stage of Pranava. This stage of Rechaka shines or (arises) not through Hatayoga. For does not Hatayoga generate dire pains ?

Then in the equil- librated stage of the second, viz., Ukara of the noble Pranava, the immoveable Kumbhaka (cessation of breath) was induced in the Pranavayus which pervaded the whole body, The non- agitated Pranavayus were then full both externally and inter nally, high and low and in the quarters and the Akas, like bellows stuffed with air. In an instant, the Agni which burnt the body in the previous stage was now extinguished, like a flashing- lightning.

The body became snow-white like the burnt white ashes, thereby revealing within it bones, muscles and other things in regular order. All the net- work of bones appeared in a regular gradation, as if sleeping in a bed of camphor. With Vyu, these white ashes were raised up in the air and in a moment permeated the whole Ether. All these collected themselves in one place like wintry clouds. Thus was the second stage of Pranava attained, wherein he was till his longed*for required time.

Then in the third quiescent stage of Pranava, vis., Makara, the Pranavayus reached the stage called Puraka on account of their Purna fullness). In that painless stage, all the Pranas entered the nectar of intelligence. All the Pranavayus which were cool, as if drenched in snow, became the Mandala (sphere) of the moon in the midst of the Ether, like the evaporated smoke in the atmosphere transmuted into the cool clouds.

Then the PrAnas laden with the nectary showers descended down from the Ether and soaked the bodily ashes lying below. The strong resplendent body of Muni Uddhalaka glowed like the form of Vishnu with the four arms and the lustre of the moon stainlessly through the ambrosial draughts as of the divine Ganges flowing from the head of Siva All the Pranas satu rated with nectar, permeated the whole body and saluting Kundilini Sakti (in the navel), circumambulated it.

Thus did the Muni Uddhalaka seated in Padma posture render his body proof against destruction: and then forcibly controlled his mind which whirled like an intoxicated bee. Preserving silence, he calculated the speed of the soft Pranas and Apanas and gradually controlled them. With great difficulty, he separated the Indryas (organs) from the objects to which they clung He severed himself completely from all external objects.

With a firm mind free from all attrac tions, he rendered non-existent all objects that arose in his mind through his firm vision. In order to prevent the exit of Pranavayu, he closed first the primal avenue and thereby all the nine avenues of the body just as a house, when its front gate is closed, prevents ingress into the minor gates within.

Having thus captured and stowed away his mind like a rutting elephant in a mountain pitfall, his mind became as clear as a placid sky and was devoid of all Vikalpas which are but the reflexions (of the Truth – Like a champion killing with his sword his foes who rise against him again and again, he destroyed, as they arose, all thoughts of objects. With the extinction of all Vikalpas, he destroyed through his discrimination that (mental) darkness which intervened between himself and the spiritual Sun in his heart as sable as collyrium.

With the internal disappearing-, he saw before him a radiant light which the Muni tided over. In that stage, the mind of the Muni began to whirl and daze away as in the dead of night. This dizziness being over, void Ether was known by him, and then came Moha (delusion). Even this Moha was dispelled off his mind by this Muni of blissful vision, like dark ness disappearing at the approach of the sun in this world.

Passing thus through the stages of darkness, light, sleep, and Moha, the Muni at last reached the stage of Nirvikalpa Samadhi when his mind enjoyed quiescence for one moment (at least). With freedom from all pains, he attained the real Knowledge shining everywhere as all forms, like water which when clammed up fills up all the previously unfilled spots.

Through long practice and cognition of his true Knowledge, his mind became of the nature of It, like gold converted into an ornament. Being deprived of its attributes of hardness, it became Chit (Consciousness) itself, like a pot amidst clay. Being divested of all visions of objects, it contained Consciousness proper, like an ocean in its ordinary equilibrated state without the disturbance of waves.

The Muni freed from all attractions towards objects, became of the nature of Prana Ether pervading everywhere and being the substratum of all the mundane egg. He was drowned, as in an ocean of nectar, in the practical enjoyment of the great bliss where the seer alone exists without the visual or the sight. He reached that Knowledge-state which is above all and in which nothing but truth exists and became the ocean of eternal Knowledge and the all-pervading Absolute Consciousness. The (Hamsa) swan of intelligence of this Brahmin began to disport itself in the permanent pool of spiritual bliss.

Thus did the Muni rest in Jivanmukti state, wherein the supreme Trinity, Gods, Siddhas and others abide which state is above all, being ever full and replete with bliss. This state can be stated to be both with full bliss and without it.

Whether the wise rest in that Brahmic state for one moment or a hundred years, they will never afterwards long for the sight of objects which are the generators of re-birth.

The Muni enjoyed Nirvanic bliss as long as he willed, in this forest and amidst the company of the true devotees of the Lord. He would spend in one sitting days, months, and even years in deep Samadhi and then would wake up. From that time forward, he was ever engaged in Nirvikalpa Samadhi, when his mind reached the non-dual state. He was full everywhere, like the sun rays pervading the whole world.

Through the long unintermittent practice of merging in the Sat Chit Ananda (or the one Universal Consciousness), he reached the Satta-samanya (or the Universal Be-ness).

Here Sri Rama interrupted Vasishta with the question "What is Satta-Samanya ?" To which Vasishta replied thus:

When ones mind being deprived of all false thoughts, becomes of the nature of the all-pervading Chit-Samanya, and when all thoughts are lessened gradually, then this Chit-Samanya is itself Satta-Samanya. When all the visibiles vanish away from ones mind as unreal as the horns of a hare, and when Vritti-Knowledge (the actions of the lower mind) is merged into Supreme Infinite Consciousness, then this Consciousness is itself Satta-Samanya.

When all external and internal objects as well as diverse things and bodies are annihilated (off the mind) and when the mind exists as Consciousness itself, then this Chit-Samanya is Satta-Samanya. Without any thought of the visibles though they appear before him, such an ego is Satta-Samanya. That supreme vision in which the transcendental Jivanmuktas and Videhamuktas are, is the Satta-Samanya.

It is also termed the state of Turyatheetha. This divine vision arises in those who have developed Samadhi through knowledge and discrimination or arises voluntarily in persons through the memory of previous workings ; but not in the case of the ignorant. Such a divine vision is inseparable from Jivanmuktas like the wind and atmosphere or the earth and odor. It is this divine vision that the Trimurti and

other Gods attained as well as Rishis Narada,, myself and others. It is this Satta-Samanya, the abode of the world that Uddhalaka lived in, as long as he liked, free from all variegated states.

With the lapse of a long period, this Muni resolved upon becoming a Videhamukta and abandoning his body in the beautiful caves of Gandhamadana hills. So he seated himself again in the beneficent Padma posture. With his eyelids half open, he blocked the front gate of the body and there by all its nine internal avenues. Then he reduced through his mind, organs and objects into one and meditated upon his all-full Knowledge as still as an ocean without waves, having previously controlled the speed of PranaVayu with his body and neck erect and thrust the tip of his tongue below the base of the uvula.

His face began to radiate with lustre with his eye and mind diverted from all objects, external and internal, high and low as well as the void Ether. The speed of PranaVayu being arrested with his two rows of teeth closely set, one over another, his body grew impregnated with Knowledge; and quite exhilarated with joy with his hairs standing on end in his body, he became through practice the Chit-Samanya itself, and through it, Brahmic bliss reigned in his mind. After quaffing fully the ocean of Brahmic bliss, he quitted the Chit-Samanya state for Satta-Samanya seat which being itself infinite is the substratum of all.

In which state he was completely quiescent and free from all the pains of mind. Through this grand bliss far above all measurable bliss, his face was blooming like a fresh lotus. Having reached the stainless state, his mind gradually melted away, all delusions of birth wore away little by little and he became pure Satwa (Transparency) itself and became one with the Brahmic Light.

Story of King Bhageeratha

On this Earth, there lived a king by name Bhageeratha who had cognized the non-dual Principle. He was a just protector over earth. His hand was more liberal than Chinta- mani(gem) itself. He was able through the introduction of the Ganges waters to revive to life his many sires who had been reduced to ashes (through the mere glance of Kapila) in Patala and thus transported them to Satya-Loka, free from the pains of hell. He brought all subjects under the one sway of his parasol white as the moon.

Such a king began in his infancy to observe the ways of the world, teeming with pains. It is indeed passing strange that at such a tender age the subtle enquiry of spiritual things should dawn in his mind with great steadfastness. Therefore he retired into solitude, in order that he might give vent to his thoughts like a flower plant in its congenial soil, he cogitated in his mind upon the real nature of this universe composed of heterogeneous objects utterly disconnected with one another. There is nothing new (under the sun). All things pass away but to re-appear under another form.

Days gone by return again ; nights recur again and again. The same gift and the same alms-giving again and again recur. So are repeatedly performed eating and other Karmas. Persons entangled in delusion perform the same things over and over without in the least being ashamed or tired of such acts. They will ever be immersed in actions which make them droop without conferring any good on them. That is true Karma (action), the performance of which will enable one to attain that stainless One, after which there is nothing more to be longed after ; but all other Karmas which tend to a conception of duality are nothing but poisonous diseases. Ajnanis will ever be repeating the same acts ; but not so the Jnanis.

Bhageeratha whose mind was seized with the fear of worldly things after a proper understanding of their true nature, went in search of a Guru and having found one by name Trithula prostrated himself at his feet and addressed in him thus “ Oh Lord of Munis, is there any limit to the dire pains of mankind by dotage, death, delusion and other fears ? Please enlighten me clearly on this point.”

Trithula said” If you cognizest well your resplendent Self Knowledge, all your pains will at once vanish ; all the bondage of your heart will be severed ; all doubts will be cleared up and all Karmas will be destroyed. Then you wilt become the Chinmatra (Absolute Consciousness) itself that should be known. This Paramatma you shalt hear about from me. This external and all-pervading One is neither capable of repletion or depletion. It is the true Knowledge, quiescent, immaculate, indestructible and without Gunas. Such is the One Principle.”

Bhageeratha said How can one be without any impediment of the nature of Knowledge without perceiving body and other objects which are different from ones Self?

Trithula said “The mind will attain Swarupa Nishta (the meditation of Reality) through its all-pervading intelligence. Then the supreme Individual Self which has become all-forms will never after subject itself to the base re-births.

The wise, having the acquisition of Moksha, do define Knowledge as associated with the characteristics of the giving up of the attractions towards wife, house, &c., indifference towards pleasures and pains and an equal eye over all, the conception of non- duality within though moving in body, love of solitude with out associating with the hosts of mankind, a never-ceasing spiritual contemplation and an intuitive direct perception.

Paths other than these will but breed pains arising from ignorance. The annihilation of the identification of “ I” with this body forms the panacea for the cure of the disease of birth and death generating love and hatred. Then the infinite consciousness will be directly perceived.”

Here Bhageeratha interrupted the Muni thus How is the idea of “ I” to be removed from this body which has been serving long as its seat, like a tree on a rock ?

The supreme Acharya replied thus Should the mind be firmly repressed from entering into objects of enjoyments and be made to rest in the state of the all-pervading Truth, then Ego will cease. If after the destruction of desires and all objects you are in a non-fluctuating state, then the appearance of “ I” will be no more and the non-dual state of Brahman will alone be.

This is the Brahman declared by all Vedas. Having given up all conceptions of differences of caste, orders of life, having assumed poverty without an iota of attraction towards the three kinds of desires (wife, progeny and wealth), having relinquished your wealth in favor of your enemies as well as your Ego and having given up your avocations and living on the alms of your enemies if thus you live without any load on your mind, you may become Brahman, the Supreme of Supreme.

Bhageeratha performed a noble Yajna called Agnishloma ; and all his justly accumulated wealth was spent, after the enquiry of the deserving and the non-deserving who came over there. In three days, he was left with nothing but a single cloth on. He abdicated his beloved country in favor of his enemy and being replete with all the good qualities of a Muni, wandered alone as such a personage. Fearlessly did he rove over old towns, hills and forests wherein the citizens had not known him through his face or name. In a short time, he dispelled all the desires in his heart.

Then he merged into Atma through extreme quiescence of mind. Having ranged the whole earth, he one day entered the country he had abdicated previously in favour of his enemy, and having completely mastered all his organs, he went from door to door to beg alms at the gates of his former ministers and others. Persons, who recognized in him the former crowned king, began to shed tears at his approach.

Filled with bliss through true quiescence of mind and without despondency of heart, he indulged in Self Knowledge. Thus did the Acharya and his disciple left for a foreign country.

The king of that spacious country having died without any male progeny, the ministers therein deliberated upon the nomination of a successor, when the beggar Bhageeratha of graceful mien appeared upon the spot and was pitched upon as a fit successor to the late king. Being anointed a king, he wielded the sceptre over his realm, protected by innumerable hosts of armies.

This news was wafted over to his former country from which the courtiers therein repaired to him and implored him thus “ The king, whom you installed in your stead, has expired. We are left without a ruler. So please accept the responsibilities of ruling over our kingdom too.”

As it is not proper to spurn the wealth which comes to one of its own accord, he assented to their entreaties. So Bhageeratha began to rule over the whole earth. Maintaining a perfect silence (or control over senses), quiescence of mind and an equal vision over all, he was without desires or oscillations to extremes. He performed a faultless Tapas for many years to emancipate his grandsires, brought down on earth the divine river Ganges, and established it there to send his Ancestors into Heaven.

Story of Bilwa fruit

An object which is sweet and pleasant to us at one moment produces pain in another moment. Whoever has not experienced this in this world ? Things, when longed for, are pleasant; but are bitter if not longed for. Hence desires are the cause of pleasures. Pleasures will cease, when satisfaction arises in the same. But if desires cease, all else will be destroyed. Therefore, oh Rama detach yourself from all associations with objects. May you be free from all desires, from all thoughts and from your(lower) mind. If the lower mind is deprived of all psychological conditioning by the yogic practise of pratyahara, meditation and pranayama, then it will be never disturbed from its equilibrium.

The mind has the potency of creating or undoing the whole world in the twinkling of an eye. Therefore may you slay this mind, either through the destruction of the Vasanas or the control of the Prana. The base Avidya (ignorance) has the property of expanding and contracting. Through these two (expansion and contraction), the ever- gyrating Karmas (Actions) do take life and die. Therefore you should annihilate this mind of Ajnana (ignorance) through the power of constant association with Acharyas and Study of Scriptures.

The mind will be destroyed through the control of Prana or the arrest of the fluctuation of the mind Such a distraction is termed by the wise to be the supreme Seat. The Bliss which arises, when the visibles and sight are merged into one (the seer), is the all-pervading Reality. Beyond “ That,” nothing else is. Through such a vision (or direct perception), the mind will be destroyed and will generate infinite bliss. Such a Bliss has no increase or decrease, no appearance or disappearance. The mind of the discriminating Jnanis cannot be termed mind but only Tatwa (Reality).

That which gets differentiated through the diverse objects is the mind. It will become immaculate, like copper transmuted into gold. This Reality of Jnana, having become the mind, will sport once in this universe and then reaching the Turya (fourth) state will become that Eternal Verity which is above Turya.

Hence Brahman can be one as well as many like this cosmos. All are Brahman only. The differentiations of the mind, intellect, ego, etc do not in the least really exist and will appear as so many manufactured illusions of the brain. Now I will illustrate the same. Listen to a small anecdote which will astonish even the learned.

There is a huge and beautiful Bilwa fruit. The fruit is of such huge dimensions that neither trillions nor quadrillions of miles can measure it. It will not decay even when a Maha-Kalpa closes. Though the ancient of ancients, its glory is such that it is more soft and delicious than the moon on the third day of the waxing fortnight. It will remain quite unruffled even amidst the fierce storms and gales at the end of a Kalpa and is the seed of Brahmas egg. It is indeed impossible to set a limit to the number of mundane eggs which generate out of, and are absorbed in, this fruit to which no words can do full justice.

Though ripe ever, it will never decay. It is the quintessence in full of all other fruits. The fleshy part of this fruit is illimitable and typifies but the all- pervading nature of Self Knowledge. The marrow in the fruit is the fluctuating infinite consciousness which produces, through its infinite potencies, the heterogeneities of ether, time, the imperishable Laws, motion, quarters, the dome of Brahmas egg etc., which are represented by the different seats of marrow in the fruit.

Rama said "I have understood thy allegory of Bilwa fruit. Oh Acharya, this Bilwa fruit is no other than the Supreme Seat of the ParaBrahma. Egoand others are no other than the base aspects of Self Knowledge. Self Knowledge which appears as the one and the many, has never any differences per se. It is the all pervading pure intelligence. The rind of the bilwa fruit is the Brahma's egg and all the worlds."

"Brahman is the most delicious spiritual fruit. He is a mass of bliss and knowledge. He who eats or tastes this wonderful fruit attains immortality", concluded Vasistha.

Story of King Sikhidwaja

"Oh may you merge yourself in your all-peaceful Atma, like the King Sikhidwaja who annihilated that Great Bird called mind." So spoke Vasishta to Rama, whereupon the latter questioned him thus: "Tell me, O Guru, who was this King Sikhidwaja, who was absorbed in the ecstatic enjoyment of all-embracing bliss?"

Thereupon the Muni thus replied : "This king who bore the name Sikhid waja was born in the Dwapara Yuga after the seven Manus* who presided over the country like the sun had passed away.

His justice knew no bounds, and he was moreover devoid of the bad qualities arising from desire. For he was replete with the goodness of charity and other virtues, and preserved that silence which avoids the discord born of words. He had cultivated mental and also bodily restraint and other powers of will, and especially delighted in doing good to others.

The partner of his marriage was Chudala born through Tapas in the womb of the Queen of the Sourashtra country, who resembled the peacock in beauty, and could not in the space of the whole world find one to compare with her in her imperishable virtue.

And these two lived together in perfect happiness with their two minds interblended performing all actions without the least difference of opinion, having mastered all the departments of knowledge. Delightfully indeed they passed their youth, as if but one breath of life pervaded in common their bodies. As the years glided by, the desires and attraction for each other faded slowly. All the pleasures that once arose in the body now darted from out it, like arrows from a bow.

Just as a plantain tree grows useless after it has put forth its fruit-bunches, so they became indifferent to worldly actions after tasting of their fruit. In unison of heart they thus both began to contemplate about Self Knowledge.

Coming to the conclusion that re-birth cannot be avoided except through Self Knowledge alone, both betook them selves to such a life, with their minds absorbed in it and with true meditation. And for the attainment of their wish they ever associated with the wise and learned. Thus did they live long together, exulting over their store of accumulated knowledge and leading a practical life of spirituality in accordance with that knowledge.

Then the Lady Chudalai, of true discrimination, having heard and clearly understood the real significance of the Sastras, taught by the wise for the attainment of the different stages leading to the realms of the higher spirituality, thus began to commune with herself:

“ While there exists Atma (as I clearly perceive it), to what do we apply the term I ? Whence is this delusion in the mind ? To whom is it due ? How and whence did it arise ? How can we apply the term I to the body visible to us ? As the body is inert and ignorant, therefore the term I cannot be applied to it. Again, can the term I be applied to the ten organs which vitalise the body ? No, since like a tile which is moved by a rod, the ten inert and separate sense- organs (Indryas) are moved by the flitting mind. Can the term I be applied to the Mind which agitates, through its power of Sankalpa, the organs ?

No, since even the Mind is inert, being goaded on to action by the certainty of Intellect, like a stone flung from a sling. Nor is Intellect, as it is in turn galvanised by Ego Self. Nor is it the baneful Ego which galvanises Intellect, as it (Ego) is the inert seat of Individual Self (the higher ego). Once more, can I be applied to Individual Self which moves Ego ? Being of the nature of actions and Prana, it rests in the heart and there enjoys the bliss of Pratyagatma. Hence Individual Self is not I ; thus I have now learnt through this enquiry that what renders Individual Self blissful is Atma, the true Jnana. Such a Knowledge will never be dimmed by objects, but will ever become clearer and clearer.

My own Individual Self exists only through Atmic reality, the eternal Knowledge. This Knowledge, ensnared by the illusory objects became clouded by ignorance. Thus the present Individual Self became oblivious of its true state. The true infinite consciousness, became the Individual Self. Having become unreal and Tamasic through longing after objects, cognises again its true state through Self Knowledge alone.

This Self Knowledge is known only through oneself and not through another. I have now cognised Atma-Jnana, which can be done only after endless aeons of time. Through the non-cognition of the all-pervading nature of the Supreme Consciousness, there arose in us the six organs, but if that true Chit is thoroughly cognised, then Mind and the others are found to be quite illusory.

The queen enjoyed daily the consciousness of the reality of Atma, and remained steadfast in that condition. Also through the strict performance of her daily actions, without the least longing after their fruits, all her desires and the tendency of her mind towards objects entirely ceased nor was she troubled by the pairs of opposites , or desires, or hatred.

She practiced meditation on the Pure, All pervading Immortal Self. She performed actions without attachment to results, her mind ripened and became the receptacle of bliss. Then through the unceasing practices which developed in her, she attained peace through Self Realization.

King Sikhidwaja noticing the glorious effulgence that shone more and more around the form of his wife, and marvelling to see a glory which surpassed any he had seen before, gave utterance to the following words:

How is it, O beloved one, that you now appear radiant with so much beauty, as if your youth had returned to you, as if you had become as it were the prototype of beauty, had quaffed divine nectar and attained

the Brahmic seat of eternal, heavenly bliss ? How is your mind now blessed with tranquillity, devoid of the desire of enjoyment and free from instability ? By what chance do you possess this perfect beauty of both mind and body ? I desire you to answer me.

To this Chuddlai replied :

“ Having abandoned this universe, which is both rupa and arupa, I attained that mighty and incomparable One which survives the destruction of all things in the universe; hence the radiant glow in my body. I have cognised that which is the substratum of all, being the atom of atoms and the homogeneous whole without creation or destruction ; thus arises this radiant Tejas in my form. Though I do not enjoy objects of the senses, yet do I derive happiness there from without the pains associated with such enjoyment.

Hence do I glory in the possession of contentment and self control. In no way affected by the objects which I perceive by my eyes and through my mind, I realise within myself that Consciousness (Chaitanya) which has not the characteristics of the universe but is un- made. Thus arises my beauty.”

King spoke “How is it possible for you, who revels in the luxuries of regal wealth, to cognise Self Knowledge? Even the greatest of men, who, after giving up this paltry universe, have attained that exalted all-pervading principle, have done so only after disconnecting themselves from this visible universe.”

“How can persons like you of the above class be able to realise the fact that they see Atma within. You are but a fragile creature, without intelligence, unstable, liable to be tossed to and fro by emotion. So saying, he laughed aloud and departed.” At this Chudalai only pitied the ignorance of the king, knowing that the king had not appreciated her words through his conception of the duality of the visible universe.”

Yet this couple continued to live together harmoniously and happily as before. Preserving as she did a perfect equilibrium of mind, the wife had complete mastery over her desires.

This lady tried to give her husband some idea of the bliss-giving Knowledge ; but he was unable to benefit due to his ignorance”

At these words of Vasishtha, Rama questioned him thus:

“ How can others obtain Knowledge, O Acharya, when even King Sikhidwaja failed to do so, notwithstanding the repeated inculcations of it by Chudalai of great Siddhis ? What is therefore the right way of obtaining the true end ?”

To which Vasishtha thus replied: “It is faith in the words of the Guru that paves the way for Brahma-upadesa (initiation into Brahman). The purity of the disciple is alone the means of attaining to the rare Self Knowledge.”

Vasishtha continued thus : * In a certain forest in the Vindhya Mountains, there lived a hunter. One day, having lost a cowrie-shell whilst travelling along a grassy road in the forest, he went in quest of it, filled with grief. Having vainly searched for it three days, he came at last in contact with a gem radiant with the lustre of the full-moon.

But the hunter passed by the gem a gem so invaluable as to purchase even the seven worlds in his anxiety to find the lost cowrie. Similarly, Knowledge will come to a man in due season through the initiation of a Guru. When the mind is concentrated on one thing, there will arise in it, through the action of the Guru, another kind of knowledge, not anticipated.

Though the initiation by an Acharya will not enable a person to obtain Jnana, it is the sincerity and purity of his disciple that enables him to acquire Self Knowledge. “

With this, Vasishtha returned to the story of Sikhidwaja. “ Being without Self Knowledge, the King began to reel under illusion and gave way to grief, regarding the enormous wealth he had so easily acquired as destructive as a great forest-fire. He therefore gave various rare gifts, underwent many religious observances, and bathed in the holy water ; but yet he was not free from the load of grief in his mind. Sorely afflicted at heart, he drew to him his wife Chudalai, and poured forth his heart to her thus :

I have now abandoned all love of sovereignty and wealth, and I desire to enter the forest life. Neither pleasure nor pain, danger nor wealth, will haunt those who live noble lives. Let me no longer associate with the delusions of this earth. A forest life is, in all respects, preferable to the regal one, wherein the longing after life and property do not die.

To this Chudalai replied : Flowers begin to blossom in the spring season, while autumn sees them yielding fruit. Thus do our Karmas begin to fructify in their due time. If the body should begin to droop with old age, when bodily desires subside, then is the forest a fitting abode?

To this the King made answer ; * Do not impede me in my plans. I will go to the forest for solitude ; but as you are young, it is not proper that you should accompany me. You shall reign over the earth unfailingly in my stead. When a husband goes from home, it is the wifes duty to protect those around him, and not to languish at his absence.

He left the Kingdom in the middle of the night when his wife and attendants are sleeping and entered into the forest, crossing, in the course of twelve days, many rivers and hills.

There he erected a hut, and furnished himself with a bamboo- rod, a rosary for recitation of Mantras, a cloth, vessels to hold fruits, and deer skins. Thus did the King started performing Tapas in the Forest.

Chudalai who was sleeping in the palace, awoke; and not finding her husband who had slept beside her, came to the following conclusion : “ It is right that I should take care of the Kingdom and the People in his absence.”

This divine lady gave out to her subjects that her husband had gone to a certain place on matters of a private nature. So she wielded the sceptre alone for eighteen years with true regal justice and an equal eye to all, thus passing her time in her palatial mansion ; while at the same time the King eked out his life of suffering in the forest.

Finding that the time was ripe for her to see her husband, she went forth one night and walked the skies to meet him in the forest.

She did not want to appear as his wife, because he left the Kingdom and wife never to meet them again. So she thought thus “I will assume another form suitable to accomplish my end. Moreover, the King is in a state of mind which permits of his Ignorance (ignorance) being dissipated. At a single word from me, Knowledge will reflect itself in his now ripened mind.”

She appeared in the form of the son of a great Brahmin. The King at once arose, and paid him all due respect. The King showed the newly arrived guest a seat beside him.

The young Brahmin returned the salutations of this royal Rishi of true Tapas, and took a seat by his side ; when the King, with a full heart, thus spoke : It is only now with your advent, son of a Deva, that I have

reaped the fruits of Atma. So saying, he showered on the young Brahmin more devotions, regarding him as his holy tutelary god. The Brahmin, advocating the King, said : Who in the world has the graceful qualities and modesty which you evince ? May you live long ! Did you, with a steadfast mind and with all worldly delusions extinct in you, perform Tapas only for the sake of obtaining salvation ?

Your abode in this forest, after abandoning the state of a King may be compared to Tapas performed on the point of a sword ! At these words of the Brahmin, the King said : Being a god, you well understood my condition. Your knowledge surprizes me ; whose son are you, and what is your name? What occasion has brought you here ? Be pleased to tell me all this.

The Brahmin replied: There was a Brahmin of the name of Narada, like unto the true Knowledge-light, and he sat in a delightful spot on the banks of the Ganges of holy waters, absorbed in Nishta (meditation). In the transition stage from that highest Samadhi down to the normal state, a sportive sound fell upon his ears, and he directed his gaze in the direction whence it came.

There he saw some Deva-girls. Seeing them alone, and not ashamed of their nudity, his Prana began to fluctuate, and he experienced the effects of sensual desire in himself. Having fastened his ever-fluctuating mind to the great pillar of true discrimination with the strong rope of love by the aid of the goad of true intelligence, the Muni Narada produced the embryo.

Having been endowed by Narada with a never-failing wealth of knowledge and other gifts, I, who issued out of the Pot, as the son of Narada, was taken over to the presence of Brahma, who, as in duty bound to me, his own grandson, paved my way to the attainment of the goal of Brahma-Knowledge. Immediately my grandfather called me by the title of Kumbha-Muni, as I was born in a Kumbha (pot).

The noble Saraswati is my mother; Gayatri is my junior mother. I was always engaged in sporting with my friends, the four stainless Vedas. At these words of Kumbha-Muni, the King said that he had reaped great benefit from the Munis present visit to him.

The King replied why he is in sorrow: Being afraid of the worries of existence, I sought freedom from actions in this. I have left my Kingdom, beautiful wife, palace and all the luxuries to live a life of mendicant. I am not happy with my life in the forest and have not attained quietness of my mind.

Then Kumbha-Muni, addressing the King, replied :

There will be true bliss only when the Knowledge instilled into a disciple by the Acharya (Guru) truly fructifies in him. Are not all acts of Tapas simply diversions to while away the time? Oh King, to those without Knowledge, Karma is alone their security. Virtuous actions serve, but to remove the impure Vasanas. Therefore, Karmas are useful only in so far as they confer upon us heavenly and other pleasures. If the impure Vasanas are destroyed, then the effects of all Karmas cease alike, as the effects of one season ceases when another sets in.

If, through the sure conviction that all is Brahma, Ignorance is destroyed, impure Vasanas will never arise. Who is so foolish as to suppose there is water in a mirage? If the Vasanas alone are destroyed, then birth, old age or death, will not affect one, and he will reach the immaculate Brahmic seat.

All minds associated with Vasanas are but differentiated Ignorance itself; but a mind -without them" is the unborn Self Knowledge itself. If through the immaculate Knowledge, the Individual Self (ego) cognizes Brahman, then all births cease. Since even Brahma and the other Great Ones have said that Knowledge alone is the most excellent of all things, how is it that you do not long after it ?

How is it that you do not question yourself as to who you are, whence came the Universe, and into what it will be absorbed ? Why do you repent at your lot like the ignorant ? Why is it, that after having prostrated yourself at the feet of a great Guru, you do not try to understand from him the nature of bondage and Moksha ?

If, approaching those persons who look equally upon all things through their abundant Knowledge you are ceaselessly engaged in the noble pursuits of enquiry, then you will surely gain that Self Knowledge which leads to emancipation !

“ At these words of Kumbha-Muni, the king shed tears of joy and said : Oh Acharya, I have learnt all this (the attainment of bliss through Self Knowledge) by your grace. I am here in this solitary forest, having left the company of great men through Ignorance. I have this moment been released from the pains of existence. You alone are my Teacher, my parent and my friend. Therefore, do I prostrate myself before you as your steadfast disciple.

Please enlighten me upon that One Principle which you cognized as the most bounteous, the One which, if known by a person, relieves him from all pains, and confers the blissful Sat.”

To which Kumbha-Muni replied : I can enlighten you, only if you will concentrate your mind, which now runs quickly from one object to another, without purpose. Otherwise the Gurus words, taken lightly and not conceived and meditated upon, would be of no avail even though heard.

How can the eyes perceive objects in the darkness ? The Muni continued : I have to demand as a first condition that you, O valiant king, will hear my words without interruption, and, in the full belief that they will conduce to your welfare. Therefore, in order to instruct the King, the Muni thus continued : O king, please hearken to a story I shall relate to you, and I will afterwards reveal to you its hidden meaning.

In ancient times, there lived a great man, well-versed in all departments of knowledge, and possessed of great wealth ; but without Self Knowledge. This person pursued the search for Chinthamani, (a gem supposed to yield anything thought of), with much effort. Through the performance of rare Tapas, he came into possession of it after a good deal of trouble ; for what cannot a man attain to if he takes the necessary trouble ?

Now, when the gem appeared to him, shining with the lustre of the moon, he, without bringing it under his grasp, thus thought : * I fear this is not Chinthamani, but only some paltry stone. Can it be otherwise attained than by long and tedious search and when a mans life is nearly spent and his body debilitated by the search ? Sinful persons like myself will never attain it, though they subject themselves to all kinds of hardship.

I am but a man ; my Tapas is very significant, and my powers small. In short, I am poor in all respects. Therefore can it be possible for poor me to behold the rare Chinthamani before me ? I will proceed to make further search for it. And thus saying, he let slip the golden opportunity, and the real Chinthamani vanished from his sight. Shall good ever accrue to the ignorant ? Thus did he again go in search of the gem, with great pains.

After thus wandering in a perturbed state for some days, some Siddhas (persons possessed of psychic powers), intending to befool him, screened themselves from his view, and let drop in his path a broken piece of earthen bracelet, which he no sooner saw than he picked it up. Then, this deluded man, mistaking it for the true Chinthamani, began to exult in its discovery and to marvel over it.

Being in possession of this fake gem, he renounced all his wealth, fully believing that the gem would fetch him anything he wanted, and that his present possessions were superfluous. Therefore, he gave up his country and retired to the forest, believing that happiness could only be obtained there. Thus did this man, who had anticipated the enjoyment of real bliss through this stone, subject himself to all kinds of hardships, and degraded himself to the lowest level.

Hear from me another story which will be of great help to you in the improvement of your knowledge. In the ancient forest, there lived an elephant, the hugest and loftiest of his kind. Certain Mahouts of the forest associated with, and entrapped, this elephant whose tusks were exceedingly long, sharp and strong, and fettered it with strong iron chains.

The Elephant was made to go through all kinds of torture and hardships by the Mahout. Becoming infuriated with its painful fetters, it shook itself free by the aid of powerful tusks. The Mahout, in the howdah above, seeing this, became giddy, and fell to the ground. The tusker, finding him upon the ground, passed by without hurting him.

But the driver, picking himself up with unappeased passion, went again in quest of the elephant, which he found in the midst of the forest. There he dug a trench, covering it up with dry leaves and grass. The elephant, after roaming through the forest, came at length to the place where the trench was, and fell into it.

Instantly the Mahout made it fast. Thus again was the elephant subjected to torture. Had this creature, killed his enemy at the time when the Mahout lay before it, it would not again have fallen into the trap, nor have been thus again agitated. Likewise, those who make no enquiry concerning the good and evil of the future, will come to grief.

When Kumbha-Muni had related this [story, Shikhidwaja asked him to give the reason why he had narrated the incidents concerning Chinthamani and the elephant ; to which Kumbha-Muni thus replied : By the person, who, though acquainted with all the Sastras, yet without the beneficent Knowledge went in search of Chinthamani, I meant only yourself.

For, although well-versed in all book- learning, you have not yet developed an undisturbed equilibrium of mind. What I intended by the story of Chinthamani is this : In order to attain true renunciation devoid of all pain and hypocrisy, you have forsaken your regal office, your wife, and other relatives, wherein there was the true Chinthdmani, and have taken yourself to this forest. While the true renunciation was developing itself little by little in you although in the world, your mind was led astray by undue zeal to a wrong conception of renunciation, and was enveloped by that delusion.

This renunciation of yours is not the true one, generating real happiness, which you lost track of, because you thought that this one of yours, if persisted in sufficiently long, would, at length, give rise to the true one. Having lost the gem of true renunciation, which is in the proper path of life, you have been misled by the false idea of the burnt gemstone of Tapas through your faulty vision, and have, therefore, been greatly afflicted.

The wise say that those who reject the happiness accessible to them in their daily lives, and allow their minds to search after imaginary and strange things without limit, are only self-destructive and of corrupt thought. Through the idea of Tapas as the means of bliss, your ignorant mind acquired that peace it desired, even when the graced and priceless Chinthamani was before you ; nor was there any advantage in the discovery of the bit of earthen bracelet.

Now hear about the elephant. The epithet "elephant," I applied to yourself. The two long tusks are Vairaggya (indifference to pleasure and pain), and Viveka (discrimination). Your Ignorance is the driver who sits aloft upon the elephant and goads it on. Your Ignorance afflicts you in many ways. You are now suffering pains inflicted by Ignorance, like the elephant bound by the Mahout and led by him. The iron chains and fetters are the bonds forged by desires, and you have been bound by them. Know that these desires are stronger and more durable than iron itself.

Iron chains wear out in a length of time, but the desires which prevail grow more and more. The breaking loose of the elephant from its strong bonds stands for your relinquishment of all desires and going into the forest. The fall of the driver from the howdah represents the destruction of your Ignorance through your Vairagya. If once we free ourselves from desires, shall Ignorance and the necessity for re-births exist ?

Should the delusion of wealth be abandoned through sheer asceticism, Ignorance will only be hovering about like a ghost in a tree when it is being felled. But if the delusion of wealth be destroyed through the action of Viveka (Intellect), then Ignorance will take its flight like a ghost from a tree already felled. With the relinquishment of Ignorance, all its retinue will bid adieu. As soon as you reached this forest, all your Ignorance was levelled to the ground like nests of birds in a felled tree.

But you did not chop off the Ignorance with the sharp sword by uninterrupted renunciation of all. You began to groan under the pains arising from the life of an ascetic. Now the excavation of the trench by the elephant-driver refers to the generation of pains in you through the growth of Ignorance. Again, the leaves and dry grass spread upon the pit-fall, refer to your actions during your very painful Tapas. Thus are you suffering from the restraint of your Tapas like the powerful Bali with a fateful sword, but imprisoned in the lower regions of Patala. Why do you grieve and not listen to the words of the delicate Chudalai of infallible utterances ? Why have you rejected the true renunciation of all?

To this the King replied as follows : "I have given up my kingdom, my palace, my wealth, and even my dear wife, Do not all these actions constitute a perfect renunciation ? What more would you have me renounce ?

Kumbha-Muni replied : Though you have given up your kingdom and the rest, that will not constitute the true renunciation. You have yet desires in all objects. It is only by entire rejection of them that you can hope to attain the Brahmic bliss of the wise. Then the King said : If you are pleased to say that the giving up of the many worldly things does not amount to renunciation, and that I have yet desires in me, then what I have left is this forest alone.

Therefore do I now renounce my longing for the forest full of hills and trees. Hence I suppose I have made the true renunciation. Kumbha-Muni then said : Even the abandoning of this hilly and luxuriant forest does not effect the true renunciation. You have yet the painful desires in themselves. Only when they depart from you, can you obtain and enjoy the Supreme happiness. To which the king replied that, if this was not enough, he would lay aside his cloth, Rudraksha (garland), deer-skin, earthen vessels, and wooden-bowl.

So saying, he burnt them all in the fire, and rejoiced in his entirely new appearance. Then turning to Kumbha-Muni of eternal Knowledge with the comment that he had now stripped himself of all desires, the king said : "It is through your divine self alone that I have acquired right understanding, liberated myself from all pains, and freed myself from contamination. Through my Sankalpa I have given up all these things entirely. The innumerable things of this world lead only to bondage which conduces to re-birth.

The enlightened mind receives a degree of bliss commensurate with the loss of desire for objects. I have obtained bliss only through successive victories over my desires. I am free from the bondage of delusion.

I have now attained through your grace the perfect renunciation, and am divested of everything. What else remains to be done, O Muni ?

Kumbha-Muni replied : Alas ! you have not renounced anything. All your delusive renunciations are in vain. On this the King reflected and said : There is left with me only this body composed of white bones and flesh. I shall instantly dispose of it without care. So saying, he ascended to the summit of a high cliff, and was about to cast himself down, when the supreme Kumbha-Muni arrested him with these words : * What is this folly that you are about to do ? How, O ignorant man, did this body of yours hinder your progress?

How will death in any way help you ? Though you should fall down and destroy this body, like a bull that is angry with a tender calf, yet you will not complete the true renunciation. But if you, O King, will but give up that which is the cause of motion in this body, and which yields the seed of all births and Karmas, then true renunciation will be made. This is the unqualified truth.

Then the King asked the Muni to give out the means by which that which is the cause of the motion of the body might be avoided. Thereupon the Muni of transcendent qualities replied thus : The wise say that the mind (manas) which, through its Sankalpa (thought) passes under the different appellations of Individual Self and Prana, is the cause of attachment to delusive objects.

At the same time it is said that this Chitta (the flitting mind), forms the universe as well as the bondage. It is this mind which is the germ of all Karmas of existence and daily agitates this body of ours like a tree when swayed by the wind. Therefore true renunciation, O King, lies in the abnegation of the mind- It is this which leads to Brahmic bliss. All other renunciations cause us sufferings. If, after true renunciation you are illumined in mind, with perfect quiescence, and without hatred, then will the identification of yourself with the Self of Brahman take place, and you will shine with resplendent glory.

Then the King asked the Muni : What is the cause of the mind ? What is its true nature ? How can I destroy it?

To this the Muni replied : The true nature of the mind consists in the Vasanas. The " I," is the seed of the tree of mind. The sprout which at first germinates from this seed of Ego (I-am-ness), originates without form and is ascertainable only by internal experience. This sprout is termed Bud-dhi. From this sprout the ramifying branches called Thought (& Determination) take their origin. Through such a differentiation, the great Mind (of Sankalpa) as also Chitta (Consciousness) and Intellect are but the different names or qualities of the one Ego.

Therefore, daily should you lop off the branches of this dire tree of Manas (Mind), and eventually destroy the tree at its root completely. The branches of Vasanas will naturally produce innumerable crops of Karmas; but if, with the sword of Self Knowledge, you sever them from the roots, they will be destroyed.

They are the true vanquishers of the mind in the heart, who perform their Karmas (Actions) which fall to them ; controlling all thoughts and desires in regard to such. The lopping of the branches is considered only as a secondary thing, the first being the eradication of the tree at its root.

Therefore, if through virtuous actions you destroy the idea of "I" at the root of the tree (mind), then it will not again spring up. At these words of the Muni, the King asked him as to where the fire which destroys the conception of Ego, the seed of the tree, was to be found.

To which Kumbha-Muni replied : " It is Self Knowledge which enquires concerning the true nature of " I" ; that is the fire which destroys the mind.

The King then said : Through my intelligence I enquired into the origin of “ I” in diverse ways. As this world is non-intelligent, it is not “ I,” neither is this body, nor the organs, nor the contemplating Manas, nor Intellect, nor the injurious Ahankara creating egoism. Here Kumbha- Muni interposed and asked him, if the “ I” were not all these, what else was it ?

To which the King thus replied : I am of the nature of that stainless Absolute Consciousness which, having evolved everything, preserves and destroys it. I cannot find out the cause of this “ I,” which is of the nature of Knowledge. I have not been able to find the Ego, which is the seed of the pains.

Kumbha-Muni said : Oh King, no effects can ensue without a cause. Search within to find out the cause of Egoess ever present before you, and tell me what occurs in your mind.

The King replied : The cause of the stainful Ego is Bodha (knowledge). How does Bodha get absorbed here within me ? I droop only when Bodha arises in visible objects- How then am I to avoid these visibles ?

Kumbha-Muni said : If you tell me the cause of know ledge, then I shall throw light upon it.

The King said : Through the existence of such illusory objects as the body, knowledge is induced ; but if they cease to exist, then no knowledge can arise. Then the seed of Mind and Ego will be destroyed.

Kumbha-Muni questioned him thus : If the body, and other objects of sense, do really exist, then knowledge exists; but as the bodies, do not really exist, what then is the basis of knowledge?

The King, in reply, said : But tell me first, Acharya, how this visible body, which enjoys the effects of all Actions performed by the hands and other organs, can be non-existent ?

Kumbha-Muni answered: As this body, arising through Actions, is not itself the Cause, therefore the effect of intelligence is itself non-existent. That intelligence is itself illusory. Hence Ego and other effects which appear through the excessive delusion (of knowledge), are also non-existent. Hence all objects which are not of the nature of the cause are illusory, like the conception of a serpent in a rope.

Then the King asked: There were the many creations of Brahman, who is the primeval one in the universe. How then can you say that Brahman is not the cause of the Universe ?

Kumbha-Muni replied : Prior to (every fresh) creation ParaBrahma alone shines as Sat, which is the non-dual and the quiescent. As That alone is without a second, the Supreme Brahman cannot be the Cause.

The King asked : Then is not ParaBrahma the cause of Brahma ?

And Kumbha-Muni replied : ParaBrahma is that which is emancipation itself, the imperishable, the immeasurable, the immaculate, the birthless and deathless, without pain, without distinctions, having no period, the beginningless and endless, without existence, the non-dual and the ineffable One beyond the reach of thought.

How can ParaBrahma which is unthinkable be the Cause ? How can it be the actor or enjoyer? Therefore this universe is not in the least created by any one, nor is it self-created. The Supreme Sankalpa of that Absolute Consciousness is Brahma. Everything else is but the one true Knowledge, All the created objects out of that Knowledge are said to be no other than the form of that Knowledge. All here are Brahman itself devoid of re-births. Therefore, it is neither an actor nor enjoyer.

Having thus convinced yourself of the one Reality, if you destroy your Ajnana (ignorance) within your heart, then it will cease to have any resurrection. Through no other path than the destruction of these excessive Actions can the delusion, which has become in you a certainty, will vanish.

If the Ignorance in you fades away gradually, then the conception of the certainty attributed to the universe will diminish and the Supreme God Conscious state will be attained. Such a mind through the all-pervading Knowledge, viz., the primeval god, Paramatma, into which it is absorbed, will ever be evolving fresh creations (through its thought). That which is named Brahman is none other than the quiescent (or passive) aspect of this universe.

Here the King said : All that you have taught me is quite reasonable. As prior to creation there is no creator, there is really no Universe. Hence there really does not exist the (objective) vision of all things. Through your clear elucidation I have well understood and have become of the nature of my auspicious Self. Hence, I do not cognize all external objects as really existent. I have worshipped my (real) Self. Through the knowledge derived from the perception of many substances, I have come to perceive them to be unreal. Through this Knowledge, I have become the quiescent without thought.

Then Kumbha-Muni, able to confer Atma (Self) upon the king caused him to cognize it, and said : The true discrimination of space, time, the spacious quarters, mental actions and the rest is only to understand the universe in its differentiated aspects.

Though these distinctions have been existing in you from a remote past, yet they will perish [in you] in a short time. The quiescent and indestructible Brahman will alone be [as you will presently cognize].”

Instantaneously, the king attained Jnna, and shone with it. Thus was he released from the fold of dire Illusion. Then through the grace of the Muni, who was pleased to dispel the delusion from his mind, he was absorbed into the Brahmic state.

The Supreme Muni said : Have you enjoyed to the full, free from all pains, the bliss of Brahmic seat, which is ever the beneficent, the stainless, the pure, the soft, the seat of all Nirvikalpas [non-fancies] and the fulness of all wealth. Have you been illumined with Self Knowledge ? Have you been freed from all delusions ? Have you known that fit to be known ? Have you seen that fit to be seen ?

To these questions the King replied : Oh Lord, through your grace I have been able to cognize that seat of Brahman which remains after all else is over, which confers the divine wealth of bliss, and which is the grandest and the most transcendental of all. How was it not possible for me, your humble servant, to attain this immeasurable supreme nectar before?

Kumbha-Muni said: It is only when there is quiescence in the mind and an indifference in it towards all enjoyments, and when the powerful Indryas (organs) are turned inwards and the Ignorance of the mind is destroyed, that all the noble words of the wise guru will infiltrate and spread in the mind of the disciple.

Otherwise such words will drop down like the impurities of the body or the fruits of a tree. The mere doubt arising in ones mind of the existence of duality or non-duality in this world is Ignorance ; the removal of this doubt constitutes Self Knowledge. That (Knowledge) alone is our highest goal.

Through illumination you have attained Moksha (emancipation). You have levelled down your mind. May you be alone as the great Mouni* after having acquired Divine wealth and given up all the stains of the world. To which the King questioned : Are not the actions of Jivan- muktas performed through the mind ? How can things go on without the actions of the mind? Please inform me on these points.

Kumbha-Muni replied: The mind is no other than the Vasanas generating many re-births. If one knows his own self, then there is no such fears of re-births. In those that have cognized their Self without any obstacles, the pure Vasanas with which they perform Karmas will not entail upon them re-births. Such a mind is called Satwic ; but a mind without Knowledge is generally termed the Manas. A mind of Knowledge is Satwa itself, while persons without Knowledge will act in the path dictated by their minds.

The stainless and wise will always follow the Satwic path. May you become that self-light which shines equally in all. This is your real nature. Without hankering after paltry material things, and causing your mind to fluctuate thereby, may you be immovable as a rock. Those who have no (lower) mind drive away re-births to a great distance. In this spacious earth, no pains will affect them. A mind becomes a prey to fear through its fluctuation. Having commingled motion and non-motion into one, and destroyed fluctuation (of mind), may you be one with Knowledge!

The King then said : How is this identification to be brought about ? How are Motion and non-Motion to be commingled into one ? Kumbha-Muni continued : Like the waters of an ocean, all the Universes are nothing but the non-dual Chinmatra (Absolute Consciousness). When this Chinmatra draws unto itself intelligence, then there is a fluctuation caused, like the wide waters moved by great waves.

But the ignorant without true Nishta (Meditation) regard the Supreme Principle going by the several names of Siva (the auspicious one), Chinmatra, Satya (Truth) and Brahman, as the universe itself. A slight motion in this Chitta (Consciousness) generates this universe. If this visible universe of objects is truly cognized as the Knowledge bliss, then it will die.

But when its real nature is not powerfully grasped, then the visibles are seen as real, as the (misconception of a) snake in a rope. Should the pure mind concentrate itself for some time (steady and pure as the moon) through (a. study of) the visible Knowledge Sastras, the association with the wise and an uninterrupted practice (of Meditation), then in such persons develops Self Knowledge, a divine vision will arise, in which there will be a direct cognition (of the One Reality).

Thus have I described to you the truths relating to the origin and destruction of the Universe. Having with true bliss brought these into practice and meditated upon them, may you, tune all your actions of daily life to the attainment of the Brahmic seat.

I shall now go to Swarga-loka the gem of all Lokas (worlds). This is the most opportune time for it. If I do not appear before my father Narada upon his descent from Satyaloka into Deva (or Swar) loka, he will be mightily displeased with me. A loving disciple should never incur the displeasure of his Supreme Acharya.

Oh king, having done away with all differentiation arising through delusion, may you be in the Divine vision (of Nirvikalpa Samadhi). And with the words “ I go away,” the Muni disappeared on the instant.

There after, the king thus thought within himself * Marvellously strange is it that this incomparable state was in myself unobserved by me a state like unto the crystal waters of a fountain, cool, pure and quiescent.

It has enabled me to attain quiescence in the Absolute Sat. Then the king entered the Samadhi state without any pains or fluctuation, without any mobility, with a true mouna (silence) and Nirvikalpa immovable as a stone, tree or forest, without any desires.

Meanwhile Kumbha-Muni resumed his soft tendril-like form of Chudalai and journeying through Ether, reached her chamber in the palace. There she began to rule over her subjects, and protect them as she used to do. Thus she passed three years. After which, she went again in the guise of Kumbha-Muni to the

forest where her husband was, and beheld him as immovable as a pillar in Nirvikalpa Samadhi. Then, in order to acquaint him with his arrival, she made a leonine roar, which even did not wake him up from his trance.

Though she tossed him up and down, no impression was made on him in the least, in spite of his body falling down. Then she thought thus It is certain the supreme King of the form of Kumbha has merged into the Seat of Brahman. Oh this is really wondrous. If, after concentrating my mind on his (subtle) body, I should find any residue of Satwa typifying the seed of intelligence in his heart, I shall join my husband and live with him happily. Otherwise, I shall have to renounce this my present female form, (and myself also) attain the Supreme Seat of Brahman, so that I may not render myself again rebirths.

Having come to this sure determination, she concentrated her mind and cognized through her (spiritual) touch and eyes a residue of unsoiled Satwa in the King s heart, denoting the intelligence yet animating that body.

At these words of Vasishta, Rama questioned him thus :

“ How can there remain a residue of Satwa in those whose minds have been destroyed, and who have merged themselves in their divine inner vision ?”

To which Vasishta Muni, of high intelligence, thus replied : * Like flowers and fruits latent in a seed, a residue of Satwa, the cause of intelligence, rests always in the heart. Even in the case of a Jivanmukta, whose mind is destroyed, the strong body does not perish ; but without being affected by the pleasures or pains, his mind will become inured to them.

Therefore, O Rama, this most Divine lady Chuddlai gave up the Kumbha-Muni form and entering (in a subtle form) into the stainless consciousness (or mind) of the King, devoid of beginning, middle or end, caused that part of it to vibrate which she found had the residue of pure Satwa in it. Then she returned to her stainless body, like a bird returning to its prison of a cage. Afterwards, as Kumbha-Muni, sitting in a certain posture on the earth, she chanted the Sama- Veda songs, as if playing on the Vina.

Thereupon the Satwic intelligence, which now began to manifest itself in the log-like body of the King, heard the Sama- Veda songs and blossomed little by little, like a lotus flower blooming at the sight of the rays of the sun. Then the King's mind became steady (as regards external objects) and he saw Kumbha-Muni before him.

With an enraptured heart, and with the idea that his Lord Guru, who had previously come to him in order to bless him with happiness, had come again of his own accord, he showered on him the choicest flowers, and eulogised him. Whereupon, Kumbha-Muni regarded the Lord of the earth and thus said : * From the day I parted from you up to this very date, my mind has been inseparably blended with yours Even Devaloka is not so pleasant to me as my association with you.

Here the King burst out, saying : O transcendental and holy god, I have attained bliss through your favor, I have liberated myself from all pains through the Samadhi of true bliss. Even in Svarga (Deva- chan) replete with virtuous actions, the bliss of Nirvikalpa Samadhi does not exist. Having attained that incomparable bliss, I shall roam freely in Devaloka and Bhurloka (earth).

Kumbha-Muni then asked : * Have you been enjoying the rare Brahmic bliss devoid of all pains ? Have you annihilated all the pains which are of the nature (or spring from the idea) of heterogeneity ? Are you able to maintain an equal vision over all, after destroying entirely all the pleasures flowing from Sankalpa?

Have you been able to transact all the present duties of life, without in the least being ruffled by objects, being liberated from love or hatred towards them ?

At these questions of the Muni, the King made the following answers : I have powerfully mastered all the (spiritual) benefits that can possibly be derived (by me). There is nothing more for me to long to see or to hear.

Kumbha-Muni, alias Chudalai, addressed the King thus : To-day there will occur a festival remarkable in the annals of Devaloka. I should, without fail, be there in the company of Narada. Who is ever able to overstep the powers of the Supreme Law ? Immediately at sunset, when the sun goes down over the evening hills, I shall be back with you. So saying, he parted from the King, after presenting him with a fragrant bunch of flowers.

Having gone from the King's sight, Kumbha-Muni relinquished the burden of the Muni's body and assumed that of Lady Chudalai, to enter her palace and perform her duties during the day.

In the sunset, Chudalai re-assumed the form of Kumbha-Muni, and descending in that form before her husband, appeared with a dejected countenance. As soon as this Muni, whose mind was (really) free from all pains, appeared before the King with an overcast face the King spoke these words : You seem to be like one afflicted with pains what are they ? May you destroy them ! Never will persons of true Knowledge succumb to despondency or joy.

At these words of the King, Kumbha-Muni related the following amusing anecdote of himself.

Even in the case of Brahma and others, who have Karmendriyas (organs of action) on one side and Jnanendriyas (organs of sense) on the other side of the body, the certain dictates of the imperishable Law demand that they cannot rise above the Avasthas incidental to their body, even though they are illumined in mind.

Now I shall describe to you the pains I underwent in my path. After I gave the bunch of flowers to you, and rose up in the Ether, I went to my all-truthful father in Devaloka, and attended the court of Indra, the Lord of Devas. Then, having in mind to return to this place from there, I descended through the Ether and was in the act of coming over to this earth, when I saw before me the Rishi Durvasa journeying on in the region of clouds. Having prostrated my self before his venerable feet, I addressed him thus You are clad in dark clothes* and are beginning to act like an ill-famed woman longing for her paramour.

Whereupon the omniscient Rishi became incensed at me and with fury cursed me for my impertinent words to be transformed every night into a female wearing beautiful ornaments. Hearing these words, I cried aloud and having contemplated the lotus feet of the Rishi, was going to beg pardon of him, when all at once he disappeared.

With this thought afflicting me very much, I have now come here to you. I shall hereafter every night have to submit myself to this process of transformation into a female. How can I, without being ashamed, be a female every night, moving as I do in the company of my Gurus, Gods, Munis and hosts of others.

But the King solaced him thus : Please, god, do not be afraid. What is the use of giving way to grief? Let come what may through the dire force of the irresistible Law.

This womanhood of thine will, I think, not attach itself to the Ego within, but only to the body without. It behoves you not thus to give way to grief, you who are replete with Jnana. It is only the ignorant that are afflicted in mind.

Then the sun began to set as if to hasten on the wise Kumbha-Muni to assume a female form. With the coming of twilight they performed all their daily religious Karmas. Then the Muni looked into the face of the King, who was sitting before him, and remarked thus in a plaintive tone : To my great shame, be it spoken, King, a female form is enveloping me and my present form is disintegrating- itself.

The significant marks of a female are developing themselves in me. Behold my waist forming itself, the female dress gradually covering my body, and the remainder of the female form appearing in all its entirety. Thus did the quiescent Kumbha-Muni deliver himself, as if in terms of grief.

The King beholding his despondent Guru, thus said : As a Jnani you have known well the true path of Law. While so, do not be afflicted through events which will inevitably come to pass. To which Kumbha-Muni said thus : 4 There is nothing to be done now. Who can surpass the insurmountable Law ? Every night will but entail on me a female form.

So saying, both quietly slept. With early dawn she resumed her Kumbha-Muni form. Thus did Chudalai pass some time, the days in the form of Kumbha-Muni and the nights in the form of a female ; and yet she preserved her virginity.

One noon Chudalai in the guise of Kumbha-Muni addressed thus the King “ Oh King, how long am I to remain in a state of virginity without tasting the pleasures incidental to the female sex ? Therefore I wish to get at a lord for myself. In all the three worlds, Y cannot pitch upon a more affectionate husband than you. You shall accept me as your spouse overnights. If so, you shall have the fear of neither heaven nor hell.” To which the King nodded assent.

Whereupon the Muni remarked :” To-day is a very propitious day for marriage, it being the month of Simha (August September). At moon-rise we shall perform the marriage rites.” Then the beautiful-eyed King fetched from Mahameru rare gems and sandals, bathed in the holy waters and made prostrations to Gods, Munis and Pitris according to Vedic injunctions and got married.

Every three days, while the King was asleep, Chudalai would regularly go to her husband s realm and administer justice there and then would return to her husband s side, as if she had not parted from him.

Then this lady Chudalai, who now passed under her new marriage pseudonym, Madhanika, lived with her husband for some time and reflected thus within herself : The king will never hereafter centre his desires on worldly enjoyments. Therefore I shall test his mind in the enjoyments of Devaloka. I shall, by the force of my yoga practice, through which I have developed wherein Gods will appear with their Lord Devendra at their head.

Accordingly, when Indra appeared before the king, the latter saluted the former, and having paid him all the necessary respects, said O Chief of Gods, I do not know what good Karmas I have per formed to merit this visit of yours to me. To which Indra replied in terms of affection thus : * Attracted by the force of your good qualities, I. have come here along with my reti nues of Devas.

The Devaloka is a fit abode for you alone. The Deva maidens are awaiting your arrival there. May you be pleased to appear there like the Sun, to cause to bloom the lotus-like face of Rambha and other Deva maidens. O King and Jivanmukta, you may stay there for the period of a Kalpa, and plunge yourself in diverse ways in Devalokic enjoyment.

Hearing these strange words of Indra, the noble king said thus: O my parent Deva, I have known all the pleasures of Svarga-loka. I have not even the conception of differences of locality, such as this or that

place. Wherever I am, there is Svarga (heaven) for me, and there it is I enjoy bliss. Therefore I do not long after Svarga pleasures.

Thus did Chudalai observe that the Kings (lower mind had been destroyed, notwithstanding the different trials to which she had subjected him through her powers of Maya. Still she wanted to try him further, and so hit upon another expedient.

One day, while the pure King was performing Japa on the banks of the Ganges, Just at moon-rise, Chudalai entered a thickset bower hard by and having created within it, through her Mayavic power, a lover seated on a pleasant seat of Neerandra flowers, she made a show of embracing him.

After having performed the daily rites and sought in vain for his wife (Madhanika) over all the hills and dales, the king saw on his return his wife and a male figure in a mutual embrace, but was not in the least disconcerted.

Nearly forty-eight minutes after the King, who went away unruffled without evincing the least anger towards Madhanika, disappeared from view, she, in order yet to observe his demeanour appeared before this Rajayogi with signs of her late love tryst still visible in her, such as dishevelled hair, &c., and stood as if penitent in a submissive attitude of great shame.

While Chudalai, surnamed Madhanika, was thus standing as if greatly stricken by grief and remorse, the King returned from Samadhi, and saw her before him. Then, without showing the least symptoms of anger, he said softly the following words with calm deliberation:

How is it you have hurried so and come away so soon as this ? You may, O girl, if you like, still gratify your passion by returning to your lover. At these words of the King, Madhanika said thus : It is the supreme duty of the unblemished to put up with and overlook the faults of the ignorant. The qualities of females are unsteady in diverse ways. Therefore, be pleased to excuse me for my heinous crime.

Thereupon Sikhidwaja of mighty Knowledge said the following words to his wife Madhanika : A tree may grow in the sky, but never will anger rise in me, O lady.

Then Chudalai soliloquised to herself thus : The King has destroyed to the root passion and anger. He will not subject himself to the many enjoyments and the love of transcendental Siddhis, This king of puissant arms has at last attained the end of Knowledge.

Let me no longer pass under false colors. Let me cast aside the body of Madhanika, and assuming that of Chudalai appear before him. With this thought in her mind she transformed herself into Chudalai and presented herself in that true character before him, when the quiescent King eyed her and remarked in wonder thus: * Is it true that I see before me Chudalai with her entire form, speech, modesty of mien and her other inestimable good qualities? O lady who are you ?

To which she replied that she was his lawfully wedded wife and continued : O dearest one, it was I that initiated you into the mysteries of Self Knowledge, assuming the bodies of Kumbha-Muni and then Madhanika. Through such a course, I sounded the depth of your Knowledge by the power of Maya. Now go into Nirvikalpa Samadhi, and you will understand all things truly.

Accordingly the King made his mind merge into the Universal Consciousness, and in that Samadhi surveyed all the events that had happened, from the date of his quitting his magnificent country down to the present period of the appearance of Chudalai (in her real form). After Samadhi, the just King became quite enraptured with joy and having embraced Chudalai, who stood shining before him as the

personation of true love and grace, was struck dumb for a long time, and completely submerged in bliss for a moment.

Then having recovered himself, he seated her on his lap and said to her thus : * You hast, through your vast intelligence, lifted me out of the unfathomable cave of thick darkness that I was entangled in. Who is there to compare to you in all this wide world ? you who have reached the other side of the ocean of Samsara (mundane existence), O you the personation of Justice without any desires, how can I aid you in any way ?

To which the lady replied : Observing you drooping under the many actions of Tapas (penances) in the forest, I came with great effort in quest of you to elevate you above Samsara. Hence there is no necessity for you to eulogise me thus, as I but did my duty. Have you not, O my husband, freed yourself from all petty worldly actions, Sankalpas (thoughts) and Vikalpas (fancies) ?

Then the King said : * All doubts have now vanished out of my mind. I am devoid of desires and the idea of heterogeneity. I have become as immaculate as Ether. I shall never hereafter fall through becoming of the form of (or, thinking about) objects. I have attained the incomparable Samadhi, the highest thing worthy of being attained.

I am free from mental joy or dire pains. I shall never here after shine as this or that (object). I am like the pure light of the resplendent sun's sphere, which does not come into contact with any medium such as a wall, &c., and is therefore subject to no increase or diminution. I am like the Ether which permeates all objects, and is yet un-defiled. I am of the nature of Absolute Consciousness. I can now cognise my Reality to be no other than That. Therefore you are my well-favored Guru. I worship your lotus feet.

At which Chudalai asked him as to his future course of action. To which the King said : I am free from all love and hatred. From this day forward, I shall daily perform my duties strictly according to your dictates, like a crystal tinged with the five colors.

Then Chudalai said thus : If you are willing to act up to what I say, it behoves you then to now give up all your ignorance and resume the regal duties once relinquished by you. Let us both wield the sceptre of our kingdom for some time as Jivanmuktas and then attain Videhamukti, after the body is thrown aside. To this the King acquiesced.

Then Chudalai rose up and, through dint of her concentrated San-kalpa, she acted as follows : She then and there first anointed him by bathing him in jewelled vessels full of the waters of the seven oceans, and then, having installed him on an effulgent throne bedecked with rubies, &c., blessed him with a long life. Then the King and his wife Chudalai, who were both of one mind, mounted upon a decorated elephant and went back to their town with their four-fold army amidst great rejoicings.

As soon as they reached the outskirts of their town, the four-fold army in their town came in advance to meet them. Thus both the armies joined together and went gaily along. There the King reigned with true love along with his wife for 10,000 years, and then attained a disembodied emancipation.

“Thus, Oh Rama, if by associating yourself with the Karmas (Actions) of the world, your quiescent Knowledge is ever developed without the longing after objects, you will be able to enjoy real bliss and emancipation.” So said Muni Vasishta to Sri Rama.

The Story of Kacha

Vasistha said "Follow the same path as the learned Kacha, the son of Brihaspati, the Deva-guru. You should be acquainted with his story also."

Rama asked "Please throw light upon the path through which Kacha came into direct cognition of the Supreme".

Vasistha replied Muni Kacha, the son of Brihaspati, who had known the substratum of all things through a knowledge of the higher seat, approached the Devaguru, his father for enlightenment upon the best means of divorcing the dire elephant of Prana from the Keddha of mundane existence.

Devaguru said thus "This large expanse of the ocean of births, wherein do live the countless hosts of crocodiles, fishes can be bridged over only by the incomparable power of all-renunciation, involving great troubles and responsibilities."

At these words of his father, Kacha abdicated all things and retiring into the forest, lived there 8 years, at the end of which period, he was visited by his father. Having accosted his father with due respects, he asked him the reason why in spite of the renunciation of all for about 8 years, his mental pains had not subsided.

To which his father replied merely that he should give up everything and departed. After the departure of his father, he denied himself of even the barks of trees, cloths, he had on. Again did Kacha visit his father and having prostrated himself lovingly before him, laid before him in plaintive tones the fact of his inability to get quiescence of mind, albeit the complete renunciation of all things.

Thus did he consult his father who gave him the following advice "It is the opinion of the great that the mind is the all-in-all and that its mastery leads to the renunciation of all. Through such a mental renunciation it is, that you will be able to free yourself from ail pains." So saying, Brihaspati (Jupiter) vanished.

Thereupon the resplendent Muni Kacha soliloquised to himself thus "I have been inquiring as to what mind is and have not been able to come to any conclusion. If the body with its parts is different from the mind, then all our efforts to separate them both are useless ; for how can the separation take place between the mind and the body, while they are themselves different from one another?" All his doubts about mind not being resolved, he again asked his father to aid him in the solution of his doubts.

Brihaspati said thus "The wise who have understood what mind is, say that it is no other than Ego (the idea of I-ness). The idea of I existing within all creatures is the stainful mind."

Kacha asked "It; It is indeed difficult to avoid this idea of I . How is this adamant to be splintered to pieces ?"

Brihaspati replied All excruciating pains do not really exist. It is very easy to remove this Ego. The non-dual, the endless, the supreme Knowledge and the immaculate will help you drop the Ego. Meditate upon the Self Knowledge without fluctuation of mind and free yourself from all pain with true calmness of mind.

Being quite unreal, Ego will perish (through efforts). How can EGO grow in the atmosphere of the meditation of the eternal ? Contemplating upon the Eternal, may you be free from the differentiated conceptions of I, he, &c. May you be in this certainty of Atmic Reality."

So gave out Brihaspati the highest of mysteries. May you be, Oh Rama, in that self-same desireless state in which Muni Kacha was, who having abandoned the idea of “I,” “you,” &c., and destroyed all internal attractions, was full of Atmic meditation as a Jivanmukta without any Vikalpas in his mind.

In Kaivalya (or emancipation), this Ahankara (Ego) is nothing but unreal. Therefore do not set your heart upon giving or taking it up. Whoever will ever dream of taking hold of or letting go the horns of a hare which are nothing but unreal.

This story will illustrate the fact that actorship, etc., arise through the idea of “ I”.

Such is the true nature of this universe. It manifests itself out of Self Knowledge, like the misconception of serpent arising in a rope and is no other. To those who contemplate upon the rays of the sun as no other than the sun itself, the sun alone exists.

But if the sun and its rays are considered as two separate ones, then there will appear a diversity between the sun and its rays- Having given up all heterogeneities, may you, oh Rama, be in that direct spiritual experience wherein is not the universe.

Like the wind agitating the waters, Brahman produces the fluctuating motion of Sankalpa (thought). As soon as Sankalpa was set afloat, it expanded itself and differentiated itself into this form-world, when it became the Mind which began to see itself through itself.

Therefore know this universe to be nothing but replete with Sankalpa (thought). This universe is neither real nor unreal ; but it manifests itself like dream creations. Know that the seer, hearer, speaker, feeler, smeller, walker and doer are no new creations ; but are the one Truth.

All acts of yours are no other than the stainless Knowledge itself. As the real nature of Mahat is Brahmic Reality itself, there is really no such thing as the universe. As all things are no other than the aspect of Chit, the universes are no other than the one non-dual Infinite Consciousness.

As the one Chit pervades all objects without any illusion, all objects do not really exist. Where then is Bandha (bondage) or Moksha (emancipation) ?

Having therefore abandoned firmly all the differentiated conceptions of bondage and emancipation and having observed Silence (taciturnity) without the least tinge of Ego, may you, oh Rama, be engaged in the performance of your higher actions without Ego, pride and others. Having cleared up your mind of all doubts arising from illusion, may you live as the great actor and enjoyer, but yet as the great renouncer of all.

Story of Bhringisara

Bhringisara went to the northern summit of Mahameru and having worshipped and eulogised Parameswara who was like Chidakas itself, submitted the following “Moving in worldly delusion and not getting quiescence in Knowledge, I have been living in ignorance. How can I live with a quiescence of mind in this decayed body of the world? Please throw light upon the path of certainty which I can tread without any the least fear ?”

Parameswara deigned to answer in the following terms. If after destroying your doubts, you clingest to Truth, you wilt become the great actor, the great enjoyer, and the great renouncer.”

Bhringisara queried him thus What dost you mean by the great (true) actor, the great enjoyer, and the great renouncer ?

Parameswara replied He is the incomparable great actor who is indifferent to the inevitable fruits or otherwise of dire love and hatred, pleasures and pains, Dharma and Adharma and performs actions in that manner without any desires.

He is the great actor who, being silent, is free from the ideations of “ I” or self-identification with objects. He performs actions without any fear or without any desires in objects so as to be merely a witness to all. He is never affected by fear or happiness. He does not rejoice or regret, through an equal vision over all. Know also that his mind will be undisturbed, whether in birth or death, appearance or disappearance (of objects).

Now to the second. He is the great true enjoyer who does not, through anger, long for or reject anything but enjoys fully only those things that befall him. He will not lose his equilibrium of mind even in the enjoyment of the illusory pleasures and pains productive of excessive fear and no bliss ; He will consider in the same light and enjoy things; he will taste, with neither joy nor sorrow, whether bitter, sour, sharp, or saltish. Like salt, he will associate with both the virtuous and the vicious. Such is the true enjoyer.

Now hearken to the description of the great re-nouncer. You should know that such an intelligent person will abandon, pleasures and pains, birth and death. He will not have even a scintilla of desires, doubts, actions, and certainties. He will also have rooted away from his mind all thoughts of the visibles.

Brahmic reality alone is that which is ever shining, has neither beginning nor end and is immaculate and non-dual.

Nothing else is. Thus shall you contemplate and being filled with bliss, perform all actions, so that the stainless quiescence of mind may be in you and thereby in all. The Self Knowledge alone is which is Brahman, devoid of the pains, the seed of all illusions, Paramatma the great, the grand One in which all thoughts merge. Here there is none else but “That”.

Destroy all Ego with the firm conviction that there is nothing else foreign to “That” and that Sat and Asat will never affect It. Cognize that all is Brahman.

Rama asked When the Egoistic mind is divested of its illusory form and maintains its real state, what is its distinguishing characteristic ?

Vasishta replied Now listen attentively to the characteristics of a mind which has perished, while yet its (spiritual) form survives. No amount of desires, illusions and other stains will unsettle a person who is firmly under the influence of his Self Knowledge. The good qualities of benevolence, will ever sweetly beam in his face. All sins he will destroy ; the bondage of Vasanas will gradually loosen their hold on him. Anger will be slain ; the tendency of the mind towards desires will be lost ; all the bad impulses of Kama(passions) will be dispelled.

The five organs will not be active in the discharge of their functions. Neither pains will arise and afflict him nor pleasures will increase. Through internal contentment and freedom from pains, there will arise in him an equanimity of mind over all and in all places. Even when pains and the rest attaching themselves to his body, exhibit themselves on his face, his mind will never writhe under them.

He will then regard all equally. A perfect harmony and beauty will prevail in him, rendering cool even his very marrow and he will be glorified everywhere.

Story of King Ikshwaku

Therefore, you shall hear from me, how Ikshwaku, the foremost and the first king of your race, managed to attain Knowledge, the Moksha. While the graceful king was ruling over the seeming earth through the path of the ancients, he held secret communion within himself thus “ What is the stainless cause of this world teeming with dotage and death, pleasures and pains, fancies and misconceptions, etc., beyond number ?” In spite of his deep thought over the same, he was unable to solve it.

Therefore having visited and paid due respects to the Lord, the first Manu who came down from Satyaloka, he addressed him thus. Whence the origin of this universe? What is its form ? How long does it last? To whom does it owe its origin ? At what period and through what cause did it arise into existence ? Like a bird getting out of a snare, may I get out of this universe of different gradations?

At these words Manu replied “Very wonderful. Your question arising through your excessive discrimination and extending over long eons of period will (when answered) destroy all Maya(Illusion). All these paltry universes do not exist, appearing like a mirage in an oasis.

It is only Atmic Reality that ever is beyond the reach of the organs, more subtle than Ether, unlimited by space and indestructible. All the visibles of objects composed of the five elements are but reflections in this great mirror of Self (God Consciousness).

Some effulgent Saktis (potencies) arising out of Brahman, commingled together and became of the form of the mundane egg. Some were of the form of Siva hosts. Some assumed the Devalokic form. Thus is the truth about the manifesting Saktis. There is no such thing as bondage or Moksha. Brahman alone is, that is without pains. It is the eternal Knowledge alone, that shines as the world of variegated objects, like waves differentiating the ocean. Everything is but the one Non-dual Brahman.”

“ Having- dispelled the thoughts of bondage and Moksha from arising (in thee) and mastered them, may you be free from all fears and be as firm as a rock. But if you should associate yourself with thoughts of Sankalpa, then the Self Knowledge will reach the state of an Individual Self, like water transformed into waves.

Then the Individuals will ever be whirling in the cycle of re-births, existing from a remote period. All the delusions of pains and pleasures are the attributes of the mind and not of Atma. This Brahman can be directly perceived in its own state through ones Self Knowledge and his intelligence.

It is not proper on your part to love or hate the organs, since the body and other objects, being but the result of Karma, will inevitably come to take shape. Therefore having given them up mentally and made your mind cool (without the feverish thirst for it), may you be Brahman itself.”

“ May you be according to your free will and with great intelligence, having first dispelled, through your intelligence, the countless array of objects such as body, etc., which are non-Atma and as such pertain to the world and being quite humble, through the development of Knowledge.

The self-identification of “ I” with this body, produces the bondage of existence. Like a mother who, utterly unmindful of the child that rests on her lap, searches for her child everywhere, so all people, without cognizing Atma within, suffer the bondage of existence.

Like water which, through agitation in it, generates waves and others, so also through the excess of thoughts, the delusions of Consciousness greatly increases ; but should the stains of thoughts be removed and the expanded Consciousness be concentrated firmly upon Self, you will be able to rule your Kingdom without any fluctuation, even in the tossing waves of (Samsaric) ocean and being immovable in your Atma, to be eternal and blissful. Then Atma, which, remains after all, will through its Sankalpic (or voluntary; potencies create diverse sports like children in this world.”

“ Through its destructive potency, all things will be destroyed and will rest in It. The potency of bondage, also will arise of its own accord in this Atma and will merge into that from which it arose. The destructive potency also will arise voluntarily in this Atma.

To those who have not cognized Atma, this universe will be generative of pains and will appear as if it were not a delusion. Such is the miraculous working of the diversity of Maya.

Though Atma is ordinarily partless and permeates all parts of the body, yet it, (through Maya) deludes men from cognizing their own Atma. After contemplating upon the worlds as the Param-Akas and freeing yourself from all desires, you shall be a jivanmukta of great bliss accoutred with the panoply of Brahman.

After destroying the idea of I, may you contemplate upon all objects through the idea of non-existence as formless, without attraction and as Infinite Consciousness and the quiescent. The mere conception of differentiation that this is good or that is bad, will be the seed of a series of pains.

Should this seed be burnt up by the fire of equal vision, then where will be the room for generation of pains? Gently wear, through diverse human efforts, the sword of Abhava (non-existence) in you.”

“Oh King Ikshwaku sever all (differentiated thoughts) through ParaBrahman (Infinite Consciousness) and attain the supreme seat filled with discrimination. May you merge all the differences of the universe and having crossed all the variety of thoughts, free from the desires, free from the gloom of Ignorance, and free from the idea of I.

This is the true discrimination which will illuminate Brahmic bliss in himself. He alone will be free from pains. May you meditate ever upon that Knowledge Reality which is quiescent, equal in all and immaculate.”

Again Manu continued “First Jnan should be developed through a deep study of Knowledge Sastras and association with the wise. This Subechcha (or good desire) forms the first Bhumika(or stage) of Knowledge. The ceaseless Atma-Vi- chara (Atmic enquiry) constitutes the second stage. Asanga- bhavana is the third. In the fourth stage, Satwaththi will destroy the root of all Vasanas. Ananda- Svarupa (the blissful Reality) replete with the non-illusory and immaculate Knowledge is the fifth stage (of Asamsakti).

This stage in which there is not the Upadhi, (vehicle) of waking or sleeping is the Jivamukti stage. In the sixth stage, it is like the Sushupti state of replete bliss, wherein there is nothing but the nature of non- intelligence (or ignorance). The exalted stage of the seventh is the isolation of Moksha which is part- less, equal in all, immaculate, beneficent, quiescent and the pure Turya. This seventh state free from all objects and replete with bliss is stated by some to be the Turyatheetha seat of Moksha which is Chit itself.

“ Of these seven stages, the three first may be included under Jagrata Avastha (or the waking state). The fourth stage, in which all the universes do appear like a dream, will fall under Swapna (the dreaming state). The fifth stage which is filled with one uniform bliss alone comes under the category of Sushupti. That which is of the nature of bliss with intelligence is the sixth stage coming under the head of Turya. Then” comes the Turyatheetha, the seventh stage which is above the reach of the fluctuating mind and speech, self-shining and of the nature of Sat.

If through the control of Chitta (mind) within the heart, all the visibles are destroyed by one past all resurrection, then there is no doubt that he will be come a Jivanmukta.

Those who have cognized through rare extensive enquiry that Chit (consciousness) pervades everywhere in the world, warp-wise and woof-wise, up and down, are the indestructible Ones.”

“An object enjoyed firmly through ones Vasanas brings immediately its pleasures ; but when it perishes soon with its terrific results, it will be productive of pains. It is indeed a notorious fact that the majority of mankind do not relieve themselves from pleasures or pains. But when Vasanas are either destroyed completely or do decay little by little, no joy will be experienced in sensual objects.

Pleasures and pains are so inseparably interblended that they both manifest themselves together when they originate or disappear together when they perish. When the Vasa-nas of the mind decay, then the Karmas done by it will never generate pleasures or pains, like a burnt seed. Diverse Karmas have arisen through the separate appearance of the body and its organs. Whoever will like to come forward as the cook and the enjoyer therein ?

One who through his great intelligence, is not attracted by the created objects will be of a heart as cool as the moon and of the lustre of the rays of the sun.

Like waters in a full river or ocean, Atma which is of all forms and non-dual will shine in all potencies. Know yourself as that essence which merges all the worlds into the non-dual Sat without the hosts of ceaseless thoughts.”

Again the Muni continued “So long as Atma rests in the desire for sensual enjoyments, so long is it termed Jiva. These material desires arise through Aviveka (non-discrimination) and will not arise voluntarily. Desires will become extinct with the rise of discrimination. When desires cease, Individual Self state becomes extinct and Atma attains the state of the stainless Brahman. This (Jiva) Atma has been going from heaven to hell and vice versa.

But persons who have eliminated from themselves, through their higher intelligence, the diverse delusions of agency and ownership of objects or the differentiation of that person, or this person, I or others are able to journey on to Moksha, the Highest of the highest.”

“ Having a firm grip of your Reality, the self-shining Atma, may you look upon this universe as your all-full form. Only when Knowledge dawns thus in you as non-dual, without any heterogeneities only then can you free yourself from re-births and become Parameswara (the supreme lord) himself. What ever appearances take place at stated times and whatever truths are said to occur therein, all these are no other than the sweet sport of Knowledge. Those who are of a stainless mind and have conquered time (death), having the attribute of Chinmatra, will have none to compare with them in the full bliss they enjoy.”

“ Know that this universe neither exists nor non-exists ; it is neither of the nature of Atma nor non-Atma. When the Reality is reached, Maya existing from the archaic period will perish. But Moksha has neither space nor time in itself; nor is there (in it) any state, external (or internal).

If the illusory idea of I or Ego perishes, then the end of thoughts which is Maya is Moksha. He alone will earn Salvation who does not undergo the diverse pains arising from the study of Sastra. Such a person will ever be in his indestructible and equal Atma and enjoy bliss. He alone will shine as an emperor over all the world, who is indifferent as to what he wears or eats or where he sleeps.

Like a lion escaping from its iron cage, free yourself from the castes, orders of life and the Dharmas of the world, and having lightened yourself of the load of worldly concerns, reach that state which is indestructible and free yourself from re-births, with an incomparable quiescence of mind, like a clear sky. Then you will be like a deep and crystal water in a mountain ravine. Then you will enjoy within yourself the essence of Brahmic bliss without any the least disturbance of the equilibrium of your mind.”

“ Such a person will be indifferent to all fruits of actions. He will be all-full without any deterioration. He will be proof against the attacks of the Vikalpas of actions, virtuous and sinful. His mind will not cling to any.

Such a full-minded person will rest in the Supreme Seat, whether he associates or not with desires, anger, fear and contentment, whether he refrains from being in the state mentioned before or is in a childlike state or whether he dies in Benares or in a Chandalas (the lowest castemen s) house.”

“ Persons should worship this lofty soul, seeing that with the reaching of the Absolute Consciousness in Moksha, he has destroyed his mind and that in as much as bondage is caused by the gloom of Ignorance, he has destroyed this gloom. Therefore it is the duty of those who wish to destroy re-births, to venerate such an exalted personage by ever praising, saluting, worshipping, glorifying and visiting him with entreaties. Not even Yajnas or ablutions, Tapas or gifts will confer, on one, the same effects as those derivable from the services rendered with true love to those who have glorified themselves in a state of never-fluctuating Knowledge, free from Samsaric-existence. “

Having thus taught him with true love, Lord Brahma now passing under the pseudonym of Manu, departed to his effulgent mansion in Satyaloka. Oh Rama, with feet tinkling with bells, thus did the famous King Ikshvaku cling fast to this kind of vision and rest in the Self Knowledge.” So said Vasishtha.

The Story of Muni and a Hunter

On being questioned by Rama as to what the wondrous traits are in those Jivanmuktas who have worshipped the eternal Brahman through their great wisdom (but without the psychical powers of Anima, &c.) Vasishtha said thus The incomparable intelligence of a Jnani will ever find wonders (or delight) in the non-dual Atma. With stainlessness, fullness and quiescence, the Jivanmukta will be in Atma only. What wonder is there in walking in the skies and other psychical powers developed out of Mantras, Tapas and other means? Anima and other powers accrue only to those persons who expand their minds gradually in this world with intense efforts. But Atma-Jnani long not for these Siddhis. There is one thing peculiar to them. They have not the minds of the base.

Their minds are immaculate, being free from desires. Without the characteristics of caste and orders of life and through the freedom from the trammels of the delusion of the longstanding births and deaths, they will be the enjoyers of partless bliss. Besides, desires, anger, pains, greed, accidents, &c., full of Vasanas, will daily dwindle into nothing.

Vasishta continued again : Like a Brahmin who after giving up his noble status, degrades himself into a Sudra, Es a (the Lord) degrades himself into a Jiva. The myriads of Individuals will, at every creation, shine beyond number. Through the flutter of that causal ideation, the Jivic Eswaras will be generated in every stage (of evolution). But the cause is not here (in this world). The Individuals that arise from Eswara and flourish thereby, subject themselves to repeated re births through the Karmas performed by them. This, Rama, is the relationship of cause and effect, (though there is no cause for the rise of Individuals), yet existence and Karmas, are reciprocally the cause of one another. All the Individuals arise, without cause, out of the BVahmic Seat ; yet, after their rise, their Karmas are the cause of their pleasures and pains.

And Sankalpa arising from the delusion of the ignorance of Atm;i is the cause of all Karmas. As thus the cause of bondage is Sankalpa, you should root it away from you as completely as possible. The destruction of this primeval (cause) Sankalpa is itself Moksha. This destruction of Sankalpa should be intelligently practiced. Where there exists the conception of the objects and the enjoyer of the same you shouldst, my son, gradually and at all times destroy this Sankalpa without losing* sight of the same.

Do not become of the form of objects or the knower, enjoying the same. Having destroyed all the slighted Sankalpas, may you become That which remains. When the five organs get into objects (along with the mind), the desires engendered therein do constitute bondage ; but the non-attraction towards them is Moksha. If you are even in the least tinged with the desires of objects, then it will involve you in the meshes of existence. Oh beautiful Rama, if you are not pleased with objects, then you will be free from existence. Do not in the least bestow any desires upon the hosts of objects, movable and fixed, from straw up to gold.

Where there is no desire, what is there to feed upon or to perform or abandon ? You are neither the agent nor the enjoyer. You are alone the quiescent personage with your mind extinct. Again, the wise will never grieve for things past, or about things of the future ; but they will perform their present Karmas duly, and be a master of them. Pride, illusion and desires are so many binding- cords of the mind. Through the discriminative mind, the lower mind is power fully mastered by the wise. Having developed much discrimination, may you destroy the delusions of the heterogeneous mind through the one pointed Mind (mind), like an iron severing another iron.

The intelligent cleanse a dirty cloth with the dirty earth only. A murderous Agni-Astra (missile) is counteracted by Varuna- Astra. The venom of serpent-bite is removed by its antidote of an edible poison. So also is it in the case of Jiva.

The Individual Self has got three forms (or aspects). The first two are the base ones, vts., the gross and the subtle. The third is the supreme Brahman. Having gained this Brahman, may you free yourself from the first two forms. The gross body was designed for the purpose of enjoyment with hands and feet, eyes and the rest. The painful mind which is of the form of Sankalpa and produces the conception of Samsara is the subtle mental body.

The third aspect is, to all Individuals, the Knowledge Reality which is without beginning or end or heterogeneities. Oh Rama with lotus hands, the immaculate Turya seat is above this. Being absorbed in this Turya seat, may you not identify yourself with the first two forms but destroy them both altogether.

At these words of Yasishta, Ragava asked the Muni thus: Please describe to me in detail this Turya or Brahmic state which is higher than the three Avasthas (Jgrata, Swa- pna, and Sushupti). To which Vasishta, with words shed ding ambrosial showers, replied Remaining in the certainty of Atma without

desires and with an equal vision over all, having completely eradicated all conceptions of differentiations of (I or he), existence or non-existence is Turya.

That state of Jivanmukti free from delusions, wherein there is the supreme certainty of Atma, equal vision over all and the witness-ship to all worldly acts is Turya state. Being without the painful Sankalpa, it is neither the waking state nor the sleeping state. Nor is it the ordinary Sushupti state, as there is (in Turya) the absence of the knowledge (of enjoyment). All the world becomes then absorbed in the beneficent Atma. To ripe Jnanis, this world is itself Turya (or they can enjoy the Turya state in this state); but to the ignorant, the universe is their settled abode (or they pinion their minds to the visibles only). If after the idea of "I" vanishes, the mind sees all things equally and performs all actions in such a manner that it cannot be said to perform them, then that is the Turya state to it.

Though you are the prince of men full of Knowledge, please hearken, oh intelligent Rama, to a story that occurred in days of yore. In a spacious forest, a Tapaswin was in a state akin to that of a Moun.* A warlike hunter who was a veteran in archery approached this Muni, and addressed him thus :

"Through the infliction of my arrows breathing fire, a stag ran up to this place. Will you please tell me where it fled to ?" To which the stainless Tapaswin replied thus :

Oh person of good qualities, we are only a band of Tapaswins, tenanting this forest, having equal vision over all. We never involve ourselves in the stainful Ahankara prompting men to worldly actions. Is it not the mind that associates itself with the actions of the organs in objects? It is long since the mind of the form of Ahankara left me truly and completely. I now know nothing of the waking, dreaming, or the sleepless dreaming states. I am now become of the Turya state. All the diverse visibles do not exist in the pure Turya state." The hunter without understanding the disquisitions of the Muni quitted that place.

Therefore please listen to me attentively.

There is no state other than Turya ; Jnana divested of all its stainful diversities is Turya. Nought else is in this world but It. The Jagrata state is coupled with terrible actions ; the dreaming state, with becalmed actions and the dreamless sleeping state, with Ajnana (ignorant) actions. These are the three states of consciousness to a discriminative mind. If the lower mind perishes, it becomes the Sat and the non-dual and the all-equal state. Such a certainty of mind it is, the Jnanis develop and attain. In that Turya state in which the differenceless and ancient Jivanmuktas do abide as the great and the transcendent Rishis without any bondage, may you, my son, ever live firmly without the painful Sankalpas and Vikalpas and free yourself from all pains.

The Conclusion of Nirvana Prakarana

Is it not the certain conclusion of all Self Knowledge that all the world should be seen but as a dream ? Neither Ignorance exists nor the Maya generating the pains of actions. But Brahman alone is, which has not the least iota of pains and is quiescence itself. Diverse Religions interpret the non-dual infinite consciousness differently. Therefore having avoided all things, may you rest in that great silence.

May you rest ever in the full Knowledge of the immaculate Self Knowledge with true introvision which is the liberation the painful Mind, Ego and Intellect. With the growth of the mind, the pains increase ; with its extinction, there will be great bliss. Having lorded over your mind, may you free yourself from this world of perceptions, in order that you may be of the nature of Self Knowledge.

Though surrounded by pleasurable or painful objects to disturb your equilibrium of mind, may you be immovable as a rock, receiving all things equally. So long as you free yourself from the delusions of the endless births, do not, endeavour to attain pleasures or pains, bliss or non-bliss through your efforts.

One whose intelligence is filled with the cool ambrosia, like the moon replete with nectary rays, will enjoy bliss.

Here Rama queried Vasishtha thus: What are the means by which the seven Knowledge states can be cognized? And what are the characteristics of those Jnanis who have cognized them? To which Vasishtha replied thus: There are two classes of Individuals (or egos), those that get under the yoke of (material) enjoyments and that do not do so. Now listen to the characteristics of these two aspirants for enjoyment and Moksha. Not caring for the glorious Moksha, the first class will estimate greatly the worldly path and will perform actions therein with great determination of mind.

Their tendencies will be towards the vast enjoyments of the world. Such a path will render them liable to fresh re-births, generating discrimination to all. Like a tortoise thrusting its neck into the hole of an yoke floating on the surface of an ocean, he incarnates in repeated re-births associated with the dire organs and then through discrimination developed in them, begins to contemplate thus: "These dire re-births have been utterly fruitless. Enough of the (worldly) delusion. Of what avail are these Karmas?"

All my days have been vainly spent in them. If there is a diminution in these excessive Karmas, then all pains will cease." He who has an indomitable heart to find out this seat, will abandon (the world), and become a Nivarta (or freed personage). Engaged in ceaseless enquiry, overcoming all illusions to cross this Samsara, such a person will every moment of his life be engaged in the renunciation of all his desires, without devoting a special day to it.

Ever bent upon the higher spiritual pursuits, such a person will daily revel in the bliss of his own Self. He will perform virtuous actions and will never disclose them to others. He will be engaged secretly in those Actions only which do not bring home fear in the hearts of the worldly. He will shrink from dire ones.

Never will he long for enjoyments. He will utter appropriate words only according to proper time and place and with great love, due respects, much endearment and prodigious intelligence. Such a personage who conducts himself thus will have reached the first stage of Knowledge, vis., Subechcha. Moreover, he will, with his three organs (of mind, speech, and body) at one with one another, long to associate with (and worship) the transcendently wise personages. Being an ardent searcher after knowledge, he will study all spiritual books wherever they are.

Such a personage who enters upon this line of enquiry after resolving, within himself, upon the destruction of this Samsara with which he is connected is indeed a knower of the first stage (or has reached the highest ladder of the first stage). A virtuous person who is thus, is a great one indeed.

The second stage is called Vicharana, free from ignorance. In order to know all about the Dharmas (virtuous actions) in the Vedas, the proper path, Dharana, Dhyanas and good actions, he will sweetly associate with the wisest of great love, that will throw light upon the real significance of the stainless holy Vedic sentences and will, after discriminating between the real and the unreal, know what actions ought to be done and whatnot, like the master of a house acquainting himself perfectly with a knowledge of his domestic affairs.

Those arising through Avidya (ignorance) such as all the perishable pride, envy, ego, desires, delusion etc; will be easily disposed of by him. Such an intelligent person will realize truly the esoteric and mysterious significance of Knowledge-Sastras and of the words of the Sages.

Then the third stage quite free from all attractions, will be reached by him, where he will rest like one in a soft cushion of brand-new flowers.

Such a person, after mastering all the observances inculcated by the Sastras, will spend his life in the hearing of Tatwa-Jnana stories in the abode of the noble Tapaswins and others. Broad slabs of stones will be his abode and resting place. By virtue of the control of his mind and the absence of attractions towards objects of bliss, he will live a nomadic life in the forest with an equal vision over all.

Through a study of Knowledge-Sastras and the performance of good Karmas, a true cognition of the Reality will arise. A person who has reached the third stage and is a knower of the same, can be divided under two heads in reference to their enjoyments without any attraction therein. Now mark well their divisions.

The idea of non-association with objects such as I am neither the actor, nor the enjoyer, nor the learning disciple nor the teaching Acharya. All the pleasures and pains experienced, arise through the old law of Eswara only, who is so pleased as to bless us all. How can agency be attributed to me?

All the injurious excessive enjoyments are but fatal diseases. All our wealth is but a source of infinite dangers. Death is only for birth (again). The staggering pains of keen intelligence are but maladies and obstacles to progress. Yama (Death) will again and again endeavour to destroy the many universes. Therefore thought of objects will arise in their hearts without any desires. Those who thus are ever absorbed in trying to know the underlying significance of the sacred sentences are of the ordinary class.

They are absorbed in the path of non-desires, the association with the wise, the illumination within oneself of the Self-Knowledge, ones supreme efforts and a ceaseless study of the Holy books such as Bhagavad Gita.

This third stage will bring in its train the matchless lotus bud of Knowledge which blossoms through the sun of Viveka (discrimination) arising in the heart and which is at the top of the stalk of the clear mind replete with the thorns of obstacles, arising in the mud of Vasanas.

The first stage of Subechcha arises in the mind, like the analogy of a crow and the palmyra fruit, through the association with the stainless wise and the performance of all virtuous actions without any desires for the fruits thereof. This will irrigate his mind with the waters of discrimination and protect it.

This stage will be developed with non-attractions (or indifference). With the development of this indifference every day through proper efforts, it will be found that the first stage is the substratum of the other stages. A person who has reached this stage will be void of all thoughts.

Here Rama remarked How can salvation be obtained by those who are of degraded family, without intelligence, performing bondage-giving Karmas, of vicious tendencies and without Knowledge? Moreover if a person dies having reached the first, second or third stages, what will be his future fate? Please enlighten me on these points, Oh immaculate Lord.

To which the wise Vasishta replied thus : To the ignorant who are subject to many frailties, there will arise many re-births of diverse kinds. These re-births will not cease till the first Knowledge stage is reached. Besides, if the virtuous path be strode, there will arise the stainless indifference, like the analogy of a crow and the palmyra fruit; or with the association with the wise, this indifference will arise ; and when there is indifference, the Jnana stage will not but be reached. Through it, all re-births will cease. All the significance of the Sastras point to this goal only.

Again, listen to the fates of those who, being in one or other of these Jnana states, breathe their last. Should one satisfy quite the qualifications required of him in the three Knowledge states, then all his former Karmas will cease to exist. Then Gods will conduct him on their divine vehicle to Devaloka and other places, where he will feast his eyes upon the pleasant sceneries of Meru, Elysian gardens, caves and beautiful damsels.

With the expiry of their enjoyment, all the old two-fold Karmas will perish completely, and then they will at once redescend upon earth as Jnanis. They will incarnate in a family of the wise replete with enormous wealth, good qualities and purity of mind and body) and will unerringly follow the path of Self-Knowledge, since they had already subjected themselves to a rigid course of discipline.

As this motley universe is seen without anything special as in the walking state by a Jnani in these three stages, they can well be termed the waking state. It is persons in these three stages that pass for Spiritual Teachers to the work-a-day world.

To the ignorant, they appear like those who have attained Moksha and are extolled. They instill spirit into the ignorant to tread the path of Knowledge. They will do only things fit to be done, and omit to do things which ought not to be done. They will act consistently with the working of nature. Such men alone are the greatest of men. Those only are the Supreme men who load their lives according to the religious observances, the Sastric injunctions and the non-noble actions of the world with firmness.

In the first stage of matchless Knowledge, the nature (or qualities) of an Acharya will germinate ; in the second stage they will bloom ; and in the third stage, they will fructify. Should a Jnani die while in this (last) state, he will remain in Swarga (Heaven), for a long time ;and after satiating himself with the enjoyments therein which perish on account of their Sankalpa(thought), will reincarnate on earth again as a Jnani.

After Ajnana (ignorance of Truth) perishes through the development of these three stages, the exalted Knowledge will dawn fully in his mind and settle itself firmly there as all- pervading and without beginning and end, like the light of a full moon. It is with this mind associated with Knowledge that Yogis shine.

Those who have reached the fourth stage will look steadfastly and coolly upon all things in the universe with an equal eye and like a dream. Oh Rama, all the above three stages can be classified under the Jagruta (waking) state, while the abovementioned fourth can be included under the Swapna (dreaming) state. In this last stage, the mind will perish like the array of clouds in the autumnal season. Then it will remain in the transcendental bliss alone which survives all. With the destruction of the mind, all Vikalpas will be destroyed.

Then passing over to the fifth stage which will come under Sushupti, he will remain in the absolute certainty of non- duality, when all the specialties of gunas will disappear. Such a person will be with full Knowledge shining in the heart and free from the gloom of duality. He will ever remain in the Sushupti state. He will always rejoice in the possession of the matchless introvision. Though engaged in external actions, he will ever be quiescent, as if in a brown study. The sixth stage being reached, the Turya state ensues, in which he will be engaged in the practices appurtenant to that stage, being completely divested of all the regularly accrued Vasa- nas.

Then he spends his time mindless as the Kevala (one) free from all ideas of differences or non-differences, or being or non-being. A Individual Self in this state unaffected by the knot of Ahankara and being neither with the idea (of attain ing) Nirvana nor without it, will be within, like the steady and unflickering light of a lamp. All the worldly creation having then no externals or internals, shines all-full both inside and outside through Brahmic vision, like a pot filled to the brim in the midst of the ocean

seething with waves. This personage, though he, to all appearances, seems to have every thing is really with nothing. Having solitarily passed this sixth stage, the Jivanmukta reaches the seventh stage alone. It is in this seventh stage that disembodied salvation is attained. Thus is the extreme verge of the supreme Jnana stages reached, of pure quiescence and beyond all power of speech.

Having instituted nice enquiries into this seventh stage of Videha-mukti, diverse religionists ascribe different names to this stage, Some say it is Paramaiva, some hold it to be a void ; some hold it to be ViKnowledge ; some say it is kala (time) ; and some Prakriti. Others there are who find it an up-hill work for them, through their Vikalpas and firm idea of differentiation of objects in this world, to cognize and describe this disembodied (or formless) state which, being homogeneous, is beyond the power of speech. If these seven Knowledge stages are crossed in a non-illusory manner, pains will not in the least come in contact with such a person.

There is a mad rutting elephant with tusks, like unto a a white shell, which, showering rutting water as it goes, stalks with a beautiful gait with its long writhing proboscis spotted with white. If this animal which generates never-ceasing pains be slain, then mankind will cross with you all the various stages of the above mentioned Knowledge. So long as this tremendous elephant oozing out rutting water be not slain through one s might, who will become a great warrior in the field of battle (in this universe) replete with pains?

At these words of Vasishtha, Rama of the form of grace accosted him thus What is this powerful elephant you acquainted me with ? where is the field of battle ? how can it be annihilated ? what is the seat of its residence ?

To which Vasishtha replied thus This grand elephant showering rutting water is no other than the pains-genera- ting desires that ever try to appropriate to " I" all the things of the universe and disports itself with great mirth and joy in the spacious forest of the body. It has as its young ones, the dire Indryas (or organs) full of anger and greed. It will articulate through its sweet tongue and perform its actions by being merged into the forest of the mind.

The terrific and dire twin Karmas (good and bad) are its two tusks. The Vasanas are the rutting waters shed by it. It has a body which ranges everywhere and at all times. All the visible objects of Samsara are the battle field wherein the carnage takes place ; the powerful desires being no other, as said before, than the elephant. This rutting elephant of desires which again and again invests persons with victory or defeat, puts an end to the myriads of poor Individuals. All the firm Vasanas having their own modifications, existence, Manas, Intellect, Sankalpa, desires and the rest pertain to Antah karana, the lower mind only.

It is most conducive to the progress of a Jnani to conquer fearlessly by all means and as if in sport, this elephant of desires which is but a combination of all, through sheer might and the arrows of dauntless bravery. If through the imbecility of your mind, it longs after things of the world, please hear from me the means of arresting it. So long as these desires exist in thee, so long will the poisonous disease of Samsara creep upon and affect thee. The mind which expands itself everywhere, thus enmeshing itself in bondage can be called the despicable Samsara itself. Its de truction alone is Moksha. Such is the fact.

If only a disciple whose mind is cleansed of all its illusions which make it real is initiated into the sacred mysteries by a Guru, then it will get quiescence like a drop of oil over a glass surface. Through the illumination of Knowledge. this mind which was originally of the form of the seed of desires gives up all the delusion of re-births ; and there arises in it nothing (of the worldly desires) through its Asamvedana

(non-receptivity). If the desires which bring in their train manifold mis chief arise at any time in you, you should destroy them at once through Asamvedana.

Though a host of desires manifest themselves in you in diverse ways, yet the Vasanas which are inseparably associated with body will never fail to be removed by Asamvedana. Do not fall in love with your desires but regard them in the light of a carcass to be loathed. When the mind, through the powerful Pratyahara mode, hankers not after desires, then the mind will remain still. This effort is called Asamvedana.

The wise say that the ideas of “ mine” and “ thine” are only the foul creations of the mind. If all objects vanish through the contemplation of Knowledge, the wise, oh stainless Prince, say that all the unreal illusions will disappear. The existence of Mind is itself Sankalpa ; but its non-existence is Siva itself (auspiciousness or bliss). The contemplation of feeling and non-feeling after crossing all objects is the true one. May you, after abandoning all ideas of intelligence and non-intelligence and becoming oblivious of all things, remain steadfastly and firmly, like a decayed tree, with great Knowledge and in a state unchanged.

It is only Sankalpa destroyed beyond resurrection that constitutes the immaculate Brahmic seat. Why should not men then contemplate silently and secretly in their hearts upon the destruction of this Sankalpa ? This Brahmic seat is obtained by those only who observe Mouna (silence towards material pleasures). Like a person who journeys on to a great city in complete reverie within himself unconscious of the pains which his feet underwent in the exertion of walking, so an Atma-Jnani performs all Karma, without his being conscious of the performance of them.

Sankalpa only is Samsara ; its destruction is Moksha.

May you be in transcendental bliss, perceiving all worlds to be of the nature of Knowledge which is the one quiescence without parts or end or destruction or fluctuation or Sam sara. That which is described as the imperishable state of quiescent Knowledge is Asamvedana.

Perform all your allotted works, being at the same time in the Knowledge state and without the attracting desires. That Knowledge which tends to the destruction of the mind a great up-hill work truly is Asamvedana.

May you be, through this path, in that state of beatitude, which is the quiescent Knowledge.

Asamvedana will confer upon one Moksha as its result. Whatever is dear to you (or proper in your eyes), that you shall enact. The non-dawning self-light of Siva (the auspicious) is the all-pervading Sat. It alone is the quiescent, auspicious and surpriseless bliss, shorn of all objects. It alone is Jnana of ever-dawning Sat. It is this firm direct cognisance of non-duality that constitutes, Oh Rama, Karma Tyaga or the renunciation of all actions.

OM TAT SAT

SUMMARY OF THE YOGA VASISTHA

[Vasistha:]

There is but one consciousness which is pure, invisible, the subtlest of the subtle, tranquil, which is neither the world nor its activities. It is aware of itself: hence this Individual Self-hood arises.

This Individual Self perceives this unreal body as real. But when the Individual Self perceives it in the light of self-knowledge, this delusion vanishes, and the body also becomes utterly tranquil. Then the Individual Self does not perceive the body. The confusion of the body with the self is the greatest delusion, which the light of the sun cannot dispel.

When the body is considered real, it becomes a real body. When it is perceived with the knowledge that it is unreal, it is merged in space. Whatever notion is firmly held concerning the body, that it becomes.

Rama asked:

Lord, you know all the truths. When the egosense is dissolved in the mind, by what signs does one recognize the nature of satva?

Vasistha said:

Such a mind, O Rama, is untouched by sins like greed and delusion even under the worst of provocation. Virtues like delight (in the prosperity of others) do not leave the person whose egosense has been dissolved. The knots of mental conditioning and tendencies are cut asunder. Anger is greatly attenuated and delusion becomes ineffective. Desire becomes powerless. Greed flees. The senses function on an even keel, neither getting excited nor depressed. Even if pleasure and pain are reflected on his face, they do not agitate the mind which regards them all as insignificant. The heart rests in equanimity.

The enlightened man who is endowed with all these virtues effortlessly and naturally wears the body. Being and non-being (like prosperity and adversity) when they follow each other creating diverse and even great contradictions, do not generate joy and sorrow in the holy ones.

Woe unto him who does not tread this path to self-knowledge which is within reach if he directs his intelligence properly. The means for crossing this ocean of samsara (world-appearance or the cycle of birth and death) and for the attainment of supreme peace are inquiry into the nature of the self (Who am I?) and of the world (what is the world?) and of the truth (What is truth?). (VI.1:115)

The Lord sports in this world-appearance and then withdraws it into himself. The power or energy that creates and brings about bondage is also the power or the energy that dissolves creation and liberates. Just as the tree pervades all its parts and leaves, this infinite consciousness pervades the entire universe. Alas, the ignorant person does not realize it though it is in every cell of his being. He who sees that the self alone is all enjoys bliss.

One should gain this understanding through study of scriptures and company of holy ones. This is the first step. Reflection or inquiry is the second. Non-attachment or psychological freedom is the third. The fourth is snapping of the bonds of vasanas (conditioning and tendencies). The bliss that is derived from pure awareness is the fifth; in it the liberated sage lives as if in half-sleep. Self-knowledge is the sixth in which the sage is immersed in a mass of bliss and lives as if in deep sleep. The seventh state is perfect equanimity and purity. Beyond this (still the seventh state) is the turiyatita which is beyond description. (VI.1:119)

The Lord assumes individuality (Individual Self). The elements arise in the cosmos without any reason whatsoever. The individual which emanated from the Lord experiences the elements (objects) as if they were created by him. Thus do all Individual Selves arise and function for no obvious reason. But from then

on, their own individual actions become the causes for their subsequent experience of pleasure and pain. The limitation of one's own understanding is the cause for the individual's actions.

One's limited understanding and one's own notions are the cause of bondage, and liberation is their absence. Hence abandon all notions (sankalpa). If you are attracted by anything here, you are bound; if you are not attracted at all you are free. Whatever you do and whatever you enjoy, you do not really do, nor do you enjoy. Know this and be free. (VI.1:123)

Only as long as one believes in objective existence does desire arise! This alone is samsara: the feeling This is. Its cessation is liberation (moksha). This is the essence of Knowledge or wisdom. Recognition of objects gives rise to desire. Non-recognition of objects ends desire. When desire ends, the Individual Self drops its self-limitation. The great man therefore abandons all thoughts concerning what has been experienced and what has not been experienced. I declare with uplifted arms that the thought-free, notion-less state is the best. It is infinitely superior to the sovereignty of the world. Non-thinking is known as yoga. Remaining in that state, perform appropriate actions or do nothing! As long as thoughts of I and mine persist, sorrow does not cease. When such thoughts cease, sorrow ceases. Knowing this, do as you please.

Valmiki said to Bharadvaja:

Having heard this quintessence of the highest wisdom and having been overwhelmed by shakti-pata, Rama remained immersed in the ocean of bliss for a while. He had ceased to ask questions, request answers and endeavor to understand them. He had become established in the highest state of self-knowledge.

Bharadvaja asked:

O preceptor! It is indeed a delight to hear that thus Rama attained the supreme state. But how is it possible for us who are foolish and ignorant and who are of sinful disposition to attain that state which is difficult even for gods like Brahma to reach?

Valmiki said:

I have narrated to you in full the dialogue between Rama and Vasistha. Consider it well. For that is also my instruction to you.

This delusion continues till you reach the feet of the enlightened sages and gain the right knowledge from them. Dear one, that which did not exist in the beginning and will not exist in the end does not exist even now. This world-appearance is like a dream. The sole reality in which it appears and disappears is the infinite consciousness. In the ocean of samsara or ignorance there arises the notion of I, on account of the beginningless potential of self-limitation. Thereupon, the movement of thought generates other notions like mine-ness, attraction and repulsion, etc. Once these notions strike root in one's consciousness, one inevitably falls a prey to endless calamities and sorrow.

Dive deep into the inner peace, not in the sea of diversity. Who lives, who is dead, who has come — why do you get lost in such false notions? When the one self alone is the reality, where is room for another? The theory that Brahman appears as the world (just as rope appears as snake) is meant only for the entertainment of the childish and ignorant. The enlightened ones rest forever in the truth which does not even appear to be different.

Ignorant people who dislike seclusion are sunk in sorrow and occasionally they may smile. The knowers of the truth on the other hand are happy and smiling at all times. The truth or the self is subtle and hence it appears to be veiled by ignorance. But even if you believe in the atomic substantiality of the world, the self does not go away. Why then do you grieve? The unreal (ignorance, etc.) does not come into being at any time, nor does the reality or the self ever cease to be.

Be still and witness this cosmic dance! They who are devoted to the gods, to the holy brahMind and to the guru, and who adhere to the tenets of the scriptures, earn the grace of the supreme Lord.

O Bharadvaja, listen to what I am going to say. By merely listening to it you will never again drown in this samsara.

One should be at peace within with the mind under control, having abandoned forbidden and selfish actions and also pleasures which arise from sense-contacts. One should endow oneself with faith. He should then sit on a soft seat in a comfortable posture conducive to equilibrium. He should then restrain the activities of the mind and the senses. He should then repeat OM till the mind gains perfect peace.

Then do pranayama for the purification of the mind, etc. Gently and gradually withdraw the senses from their contact with the external objects. Investigate that method by which you know the source of the body, the senses, the mind, and the Intellect (intelligence) and let them return to their source. First rest in the cosmic manifest being (virat). After this rest in the unmanifest and then in the supreme cause of all. (VI.1:126)

Bharadvaja said:

I am that supreme Brahman which is eternal, omnipresent, pure, peaceful, indivisible and free from motion, which is devoid of gathering and scattering but whose thoughts materialize, which is free from merit and demerit, which is the source of this universe, and which is the supreme light, one without a second.

Thus should one contemplate. Thus does the mind cease to be agitated. When the movement of the mind has ceased the self shines by its own light. In that light all sorrow comes to an end and there is the bliss which the self experiences in itself. There is direct awareness of the truth, There is none but the self.

Valmiki said:

Seeing that Rama had become totally absorbed in the self, Visvamitra said to the sage Vasistha: O son of the Creator, O holy one, you are indeed great. You have proved that you are the guru by this shaki-pata (direct transmission of spiritual energy). He is a guru who is able to give rise to god-consciousness in the disciple by a look, by a touch, by verbal communication or by grace. (VI.1:128)

Rama asked:

O sage, kindly tell me the form, the nature, the location of the Individual Self and its relation to the supreme self.

Vasistha replied:

O Rama, it is the infinite consciousness that is known as the Individual Self when it becomes aware of itself as the object on account of the notion it entertains of itself. It is also known as chit

or pure consciousness. This Individual Self is neither a subatomic particle, nor is it gross and physical, nor void nor anything else. The omnipresent pure consciousness is known as Individual Self when it experiences its own being. It is more minute than an atom and larger than the largest. It is all and it is pure consciousness. That is known as the Individual Self by the wise. Whatever object is experienced here is but its own reflection that it experiences then and there. Such experiencing is the very nature of the Individual Self, even as motion is the nature of wind. When such experiencing ceases, the Individual Self becomes Brahman.

On account of its nature as consciousness, when the Individual Self entertains the notion of egosense, it builds time, space, motion and substance and function in and through the body. It then perceives all these unrealities within itself as if they were real, even as a person dreams of his own death.

Forgetting its true nature, it then identifies itself with its own false notions. It assumes an accidental relationship with the five senses and experiences their function as if such experience were its own. It shines as the purusha (indwelling presence) and virat (cosmic person), endowed with these five faculties. This is still the subtle and mental being and this is the first emanation from the supreme being. (VI.2:19)

Rama said:

I wish to hear from you once again the truth concerning karma or what is known as the divine will (fate).

Vasistha replied:

Divine will and karma are but concepts; the truth is that they are movements in consciousness. When there is such movement, the world-appearance arises; when the movement ceases, the world-appearance also ceases. There is not the least distinction between the movement and consciousness.

There is not the least distinction between a person and his karma (action). A creature is known by its characteristic action and such action reveals the character of the creature: they are inseparable. Hence, the words or concepts divine, action and person are but expression which denote movement in consciousness.

This movement in consciousness, along with the self-limitation in consciousness, serves as the seed for everything, but there is no cause or seed for the movement in consciousness. There is no distinction between the seed and the sprout: therefore all this (body, etc.) is but movement in consciousness. This movement is obviously omnipotent and hence is able to manifest the gods and the demons and other creatures, mobile and immobile, sentient and insentient.

When there is movement in the infinite consciousness, the notions of I and the world arise. These in themselves are harmless if one realizes that in fact they are non-different from the self or the infinite consciousness. But, when they are considered real in themselves and the world is perceived as real then there is great misfortune. (VI.2:31)

The total abandonment of all notions or ideas is liberation and such an abandonment is possible when the pursuit of pleasure is abandoned. Notions and ideas gradually cease to arise and to expand in one who resolutely refrains from associating words with meanings, in his own mind — whether these words are uttered by others or they arise in one's own mind.

The abandonment of egosense is the End to ignorance; this and nothing else is liberation. The fullness of perfection (nirvana) begins with the effectiveness of self-discipline or the abandonment of the pursuit of pleasure. The life stream of the knower of truth flows in harmony, while the life stream of the ignorant is full of whirlpools. (VI.2:33)

That is known as the supreme state in which no desire arises. The sage who is free from desire functions here as if he were made of wood. He experiences pure void within and pure void without; to him the world is like an empty reed. He who is not enamored of this world and whose heart delights in the cosmic being alone, is at peace and he has overcome this ocean of samsara. Having overcome desire and abandoned latent tendencies or mental conditioning, speak what is to be spoken, touch what is to be touched, taste diverse flavors, see diverse scenes, and smell diverse scents.

It is only by thus understanding the essencelessness of the objects of experience that one becomes free from the disease of desire. The arising of desire is sorrow and the End to desire is supreme joy; there is no sorrow and no joy comparable to them even in hell and in heaven. The mind is desire and the End to desire is moksha (liberation): this is the essence of all scriptures. If this desire cannot be overcome by self-effort, then surely it is powerful and no other remedy is of any use! If you cannot overcome desire completely, then deal with it step by step. The wayfarer does not despair at the sight of the long road ahead but takes one step at a time.

Desire alone is samsara or the world-appearance which is an extension or projection of one's desire; its non-cognition is liberation. Hence, one should diligently strive to overcome desire; all else is vain. Why does one vainly study the scriptures and hear the instructions of the preceptors? There is no samadhi without the End to desire! If one finds that it is impossible to overcome desire by his own wisdom, then of what use is the study of scriptures or the instruction of the preceptor? Once this restlessness caused by desire is restrained, then very little effort is needed to attain self-knowledge. Hence, let everyone strive by every means to overcome desire which is the seed for birth, old age and death. With the arising of desire, bondage arises; and with the End to desire, bondage ceases. Let, therefore, the seed of desire be burnt in one's own heart by the fire of peace, equanimity and self-control. (VI.2:36)

Consciousness sees in itself its own self as if it were its own object. Though creation is regarded as twofold — the creation by Brahma and the creation by one's mind — they are essentially the same because both of them spring from the self or infinite consciousness. It is the awareness inherent in consciousness that makes this notion of creation appear to be outside of consciousness. Hence, we see no difference between subjective idealism and absolute idealism. (VI.2:38)

He in whom the veil of ignorance has been rent asunder and in whom there is no desire shines with the light of pure intelligence. All his doubts are at rest and he illumines all around him. He who comes into contact with him who is free from doubt and who is independent (free from all dependence), is also purified and illuminated.

Real peace is attained when one does not apprehend egosense and all the rest of its retinue, including sorrow. In deep sleep there are no dreams; and the state of deep sleep is not experienced during dreams. Even so, the apprehension of egosense, sorrow (born of the notion of world-appearance) and peace (born of nirvana) do not exist at the same time. All these are but notions: in truth, there is neither creation nor nirvana, neither sleep nor dreams. When all these are rejected there is real peace.

Confusion or delusion is unreal and the unreal does not exist. That which is not found on investigation does not exist. What is realized on investigation is one's true nature which alone exists and there is no

diversity in it. When one moves away from one's real nature there is great sorrow; when one rests in the self there is great peace and self-control. (VI.2:39)

When one is spiritually awakened and when one lives with his wakeful state resembling deep sleep (free from psychological distress), the state in which he is, is known as svabhava (self-nature) and this state leads one to liberation. One who is established in Brahman and who does not see a distinction between

Brahman and the world lives in this world, too, without creating a division between subject, object and predicate and therefore without a sense of doership. In his eyes everything appears as it is and there is neither unity nor diversity.

An imaginary city is imagination, not a city. This world-appearance is appearance, not the world. The reality is infinite consciousness or Brahman. (VI.2:41)

The self which is the Lord immediately confers moksha or final liberation when worshipped with inquiry into the nature of the self, with self-control and satsanga (company of the wise).

When the unreality of the objects is understood and it is realized that consciousness is not the object of knowledge, then there is enlightenment which is beyond description. (VI.2:42)

I shall now describe the tree known as samadhana (equanimity) which grows in the forest known as the heart of the wise.

Its seed is a turning away from the world, whether this is caused naturally or otherwise by the experience of sorrow. Mind is a field. It is ploughed by right action, it is watered day and night by right feeling, it is nourished by the practice of pranayama. On this field known as the mind the seed known as samadhi (turning away from the world) falls of its own accord when one is alone in the forest known as wisdom. The wise man should endeavor constantly to keep this seed of meditation watered and nourished by intelligent methods.

One should seek the company of the wise who are one's own real well-wishers and who are pure and friendly. Then one should water the seed of samadhi or meditation by means of hearing, reflecting on and contemplating the scriptures which bring about total inner emptiness and which are full of wisdom, pure and cool like nectar. Being aware of the precious seed of meditation or samadhi that has fallen in the field of one's mind, the wise man should carefully cherish and nourish it by means of austerities, charity, etc.

When this seed begins to sprout, it should be further protected by peace and contentment. At the same time, one should guard it against the birds of desire, attachment to family, pride, greed, etc., with the help of contentment. With the broom of right and loving action the dirt of rajasic restlessness must be swept away, whereas the darkness of tamasic ignorance must be driven away by the light of right understanding.

The lightning known as pride of wealth and the thunderstorm known as pursuit of pleasure strike the field and devastate it. These should be prevented with the trident of magnanimity, compassion, japa, austerity, self-control and contemplation of the significance of the pranava (OM).

If it is thus protected, this seed grows into wisdom. With it the entire field of the mind shines beautifully. The sprout grows two leaves. One is known as study of scriptures and the other is satsanga (company of the men of wisdom). Soon it will grow the bark known as contentment with the sap known as dispassion

or uncoloredness of mind. Fed by the rain of scriptural wisdom, it will soon grow into a tree. Then it is not easily swayed even if it is shaken by the monkeys known as raga-dvesha (attraction and aversion). Then there arise in it the branches known as pure knowledge which reach out far and wide.

Clarity of vision, truthfulness, courage, unclouded understanding, equanimity, peace, friendliness, compassion, fame, etc., are its other branches that arise when one is fully established in dhyana or meditation. (VI.2:44)

The ignorant person cannot meditate: nor is it desirable for him to do so. The enlightened person is already established in the self! He is an enlightened person who is totally disinterested in the objects of perception, but this is not possible for an ignorant person. When the awareness of the object is seen as the pure consciousness which is eternal, it is known as samadhana, the state of equanimity. When the subject and the object merge, the mind is said to be in the state of samadhana. Resting in the self implies the disinterestedness of the self in the objects. On the other hand, ignorance is the movement of the self towards the objects. Surely such movement takes place only in the ignorant: no one who has tasted nectar is interested in bitter things. Hence, in the case of the wise, meditation becomes natural and effortless.

When there is no craving, the self is never abandoned. Or, when the mind expands to include the entire universe, again, the self is not abandoned. This much is certain: until one attains self-knowledge, there is need to strive for samadhi. He who is established in samadhi is Brahman in human form. Salutations to him.

When there is disinterestedness in the objects, not even the gods can disturb one's meditation. Hence, one should cultivate firm meditation (vajra-dhyanam).

The means to this are (1) scriptures, (2) company of holy ones and (3) meditation. Ignorance is not dispelled by half-knowledge, even as there is no relief from cold when one sits near a painting of fire. The ignorant sees the world as a physical reality, the wise as consciousness. To the wise there is neither egosense nor the world. His vision of the world is indescribably wonderful. To the ignorant the world is one of dry wood and stone.

One who is enlightened sees the world as one self; the ignorant does not see it as the one self. The ignorant engages himself in endless arguments. The enlightened is friendly with all. Turiya or samadhi is the natural state which is what exists in and through the wakeful, dream and sleep states. Conditioning alone is the mind, which ceases when inquired into. (VI.2:45)

He who is not swayed by craving for pleasure is known as perfectly enlightened (sambuddha). Such perfect enlightenment arises from complete turning away from the pursuit of pleasure. He who rests in the self does not experience craving at all. Desire for pleasure-experiences only arises when there is movement away from the self. At the conclusion of the study of scripture, japa, etc., one enters into samadhi; after the practice of samadhi, one should study, do japa etc. O Rama, rest in the state of nirvana at all times. (VI.2:46)

Wealth is the source of endless misfortune, prosperity is perpetual adversity, enjoyment of pleasure is enduring disease. All these are misunderstood by the perverse intellect. In this world contentment alone is the best medicine, the best tonic and the greatest good fortune. The contented heart is ready for enlightenment. First turn away from worldliness, then resort to satsanga, inquire into the truth of the scriptures and cultivate disinterestedness in pleasure and you will attain the supreme truth. (VI.2:47)

When the mind is established in dispassion and in holy company, and when through the study of the scriptures there is disinterestedness in the pursuit of pleasure, one does not long for wealth and treats even the wealth that one has as dry dung. He treats his relatives and friends as co-pilgrims and serves them appropriately at the proper times. He is not attached to seclusion, gardens, holy places or his own home, to fun and frolic with friends or scriptural discussions, and he does not spend too much time in any of these.

He rests in the supreme state. The supreme state is that which is. Division in it is created by ignorance and this ignorance is false and non-existent! He who is firmly established in the self and who is undisturbed like a sculpted figure, is not swayed by sense-objects. I and the world time and space, knowledge or void — these, though they may continue to be, are not experienced by the knower of truth.

One should salute that sun in human form whose personality is devoid of rajas (restless action or impurity), who has transcended even satva or purity and in whom the darkness of ignorance has no place at all. The state of one who has transcended all division and whose mind has become no-mind is beyond description. Adored by him day and night, the Lord bestows upon him the supreme state of nirvana.

The Lord is neither far nor inaccessible. One's own illuminated self is the Lord. (VI.2:48)

The world is not material; the void is not seen. The mind has come to naught. What remains is the truth, indescribable not non-being. The intellect is baffled by conflicting statements, but when the truth is investigated by proper methods, it is realized. He whose intelligence is awakened is known as the knower of truth. He is established in non-dual consciousness and he does not perceive the world as the world.

The world-appearance arises only when the infinite consciousness sees itself as an object: it were better that this did not happen. But once this has arisen, it is externalized and materialized. The awareness of the matter is the mind and the mind binds itself to the body. But all these are but notions and verbal descriptions and these distinctions are notional and imaginary. The self which is consciousness does not ever become an object or material. When one is established in self-knowledge even consciousness and unconsciousness become meaningless words. (VI.2:49)

Rama asked:

Consciousness is pure and the cosmic person is but a notion. How does this cosmic person or Brahma come to acquire limbs like earth, heaven and the netherworld?

Vasistha continued:

In the beginning, O Rama, there was but pure consciousness which could not be said to be either existence or non-existence. Within itself it became aware of itself as its object of awareness. Without abandoning its position as the subject it seems also to become the object. That is the Individual Self from which the mind, etc., arises. However, all these are non-different from pure consciousness.

When the mind which is also pure consciousness thinks I am space, it experiences space, though such space is non-existent. The self or pure consciousness is void and immaterial. as long as there is the notion of the physical universe, consciousness experiences it as if it were real; when it so wills it, it winds up this creation which then comes to an end.

Vasana or psychological conditioning, which gives rise to notions and to experiences of all kinds, ceases to be when the vision of the truth or the understanding of the reality arises. There is egolessness and therefore oneness: liberation or moksha alone remains after that.

This is the nature of Brahma. This is how the world exists as the body of Brahma, the cosmic person. The notion that arises in that cosmic person appears to be this universe. It is pure void; in fact, there is no such thing as the world nor what can be regarded as you or I. In pure and indivisible consciousness what is the world, how and by whom is it created and with what materials or co-operating causes? It appears but it is no more than an illusory appearance. It is neither one with the infinite consciousness nor different from it. There is neither unity nor diversity. Infinite, indivisible consciousness alone is the reality. Hence, live free from all conditioning, acting spontaneously and appropriately in each situation. (VI.2:72)

Vasistha said "The upward and downward actions of this Kundalini Sakti can be arrested through the control of Prana and this Prana be made to rest in the heart, then diseases will not affect permanently those having such control."

At these words of Vasistha, Rama interposed and said: "Please enlighten me as to the origin and destruction of mental disease as well as those arising there from.

In answer to this Vasistha thus continued: "The pains that afflict the body are called the secondary diseases, whilst the Vasanas that affect the mind are termed mental (or primary) diseases. We have reached our present state through the absence of the transcendental Knowledge, the want of mastery over our organs and the perpetual growth of desires and egoism in the mind.

And our delusion becomes intensified in us by forgetfulness of the degradation of our state through such causes. With the concretion of such delusion, the mental disease also setting in congeals in us like the plenteous snows of winter. Then when the intense desires of a person begin to manifest themselves externally and the Ignorance in him preponderates, he performs fearful karmas and these in their turn breed bodily diseases. Again, the body is further subject to diseases through such actions as the eating of unwholesome food, living in unhealthy countries, and doing things at unreasonable hours, injuries inflicted, association with the wicked, longing after improper things, evil desires, bad thoughts, the distention and contraction of the orifices of the Nadis in the joints, &c., and the interrupted flow of the beneficial Pranas throughout the body these cause the body to shrink away.

Then these blossom in the form of diseases in the body, waxing and waning- like the floods in a river during the long seasons of autumn and winter. The body attracts to itself effects according to the nature of its count less affinities good or bad, whether in previous births or in the present one. Thus do we see that diseases, primary and secondary arise through the five-fold Bhutas (elements).

Now listen, O Rama, as to the manner in which the two forms of disease, primary and secondary, perish in two ways. The wise say that primary disease has two sub-divisions into SamcInya (ordinary) and Sdra (essential). The former includes the diseases incidental to the body, while the latter the re-birth men are subject to. If the diseases which afflict this body return to their primal source, then they are destroyed. Their primary causes being (bad) thoughts, if these thoughts are destroyed, all bodily diseases will vanish. But the disease of re-birth, coming under the head of Sara, will never perish except through Self Knowledge. Is it possible to suppose that the misconception of a serpent in a rope will be removed except through the discovery of the real rope ?

Here Rama asked Vasistha how mental diseases arise and how they are destroyed. Vasistha thus proceeded "When the fixed Mind is agitated, then this body also follows in its wake. And when the body is agitated, then there is no proper perception on things that are in one's way and Prana flies from its

even path into a bad road : then it will stagger from its proper road like an animal hit by, and reel ing under the wound of, an arrow. Through such an agitation Prana instead of pervading the whole body, steadily and equally, will vibrate everywhere at an unequal rate.

Thereby the Nadis will not maintain a steady position (like elec tric wires, but will quiver). Then to the body which is the receptacle of food digested partially or completely, the Nadis are simply death, through the fluctuation of the Pranas. The food which settles itself down in this body amidst such a commotion is transformed into incurable diseases. Thus through the primary cause (of the mind) is the disease of the body generated. If this primary cause be annihilated at its root then all diseases will be destroyed. Now hear the path by which diseases may be removed by the uttering of mantras.

Like base gold, which when placed in the crucible is transmuted through alchemical processes into pure gold, the mind is unfailingly rendered pure through true, virtuous and pure actions and through dependence upon the wise. In the mind purified thus there will thrill unalloyed bliss. If the mind be- comes purified with true Satwaguna, then Prana-Vayu will begin to circulate freely throughout the body, the food taken in will be digested properly and hence no diseases will arise. I have thus described to you the path through which can be destroyed the two kinds of diseases.”

There is that One Principle which is non-dual, Absolute Consciousness, perfect equality, purity, quiescence, that has no sort of relationship to the things of the universe, the most subtle of all subtle things, which neither is this universe, nor is associated with it.

Through its own Sankalpa, it differentiates (into many units). Then it goes by the name of Individual Self, on account of the many surrounding things which agitate it. This fluctuating Individual Self, subject to the delusions of Sankalpa, regards this illusory body as real, as ghosts are regarded by ignorant lads. The world will judge of this Individual Self by the opinions of the majority of enlightened men in every age, who discern with trained minds.

By contemplating the body, it becomes gross ; and thus also the visible body, through the conception of its unreal nature, again becomes a subtle one, All psychic powers, such as Anima, and others acquired through meditation, are awakened by this course (of Will- Thought) alone. Having by these means developed the powers Chudalai instantaneously moved and disported herself in all the universe for the purpose of bringing home conviction to her husband s mind.

Rama asked:

Who is this Rudra and what are his five faces, ten hands, etc.?

Vasistha continued:

O Rama, he is known as Rudra and he is the egosense. He is devoted to the disturbance of the equilibrium. His form is pure space or void. He is of the form of space and therefore his color is like that of space.

Since he is pure, indivisible (like space) consciousness, he is known as the space-self (akasha-atma). Since he is the self of all and is omnipresent, he is known as the great self or the supreme self. The five senses (of knowledge) are his faces. The five organs of action and their five fields are his ten arms.

Only when the infinite consciousness becomes aware of itself does this form become manifest.

Again, this form as the Rudra is but a small particle, as it were, of the infinite consciousness and hence does not exist as such in reality. The form is but an illusory perception.

He exists as the unfoldment or movement in chidakasha (infinite consciousness) and as air in both the space in creation and in living beings (as the life-breath). In course of time, when all his movements come to an end, he attains supreme equilibrium. The three gunas (satva, rajas and tamas), the three periods of time (past, present and future), the three inner instruments (chitta, Intellect and ahamkara), the three aspects of AUM and the three vedas are the three eyes of Rudra. The trident implies that he holds the three worlds in his hands. Since he is attained by satva or goodness and his very existence is for the good of all, he is known as Shiva. He then attains to the state of supreme peace and is therefore known as Krishna. He himself creates (as kalpana, imagination) the whole universe, and he drinks the one ocean of cosmic being and attains to that supreme peace. (VI.2:80)

The plane (space) of consciousness itself is known as Bhairava or Shiva. Inseparable and non-different from him is his dynamic energy which is of the nature of the mind. Air is seen (experienced) in its motion; fire is known by its heat; the pure consciousness is pure and tranquil and it is known as Shiva. This Shiva is beyond description. It is the dynamic energy of the Lord which executes all his wishes, as it were, and makes the wishes appear as visions. This energy or power or Maya is consciousness. She is a living force and therefore she is called the Individual Self. Since this creation-manifestation is natural to the infinite consciousness, she is known as prakriti or nature. Since she is the cause of all things being seen and experienced, she is known as kriya or action.

Since she manifests great anger towards evil she is known as utpala. She is known as jaya because she is always victorious. She is known as siddha because perfection rests in her. Jaya is also known as jayanti, and also vijaya, all of which signify victory. Since she is unconquerable she is known as parajita.

She is known as durga since her form or real nature is beyond our grasp. She is known as uma because she is the very essence of the sacred monosyllable OM. She is called gayatri because her names are sung by all and also savitri because she is the creatrix of all. She is the expansion of one's vision of all things and hence she is known as sarasvati. Since she is of white (yellow or red) color she is known as gauri. Since she exists as a ray of light in one who sleeps, and in one who has been awakened by the contemplation of the subtle inner vibrations produced by the sound of OM, she is known as indukala (ray of the moon).

Since she and Shiva have space as their real form, their bodies have a blue color. Space is their flesh, bones, everything. They exist in space as space. Her dance with different gestures, etc., symbolized the creation, decay and death of all beings. She is conceived of as having limbs because she creates the worlds by the movement of her energy. This kali invests all things with their characteristics by the power inherent in her own limbs, as it were. But one cannot by any means apprehend her limbs nor can her real nature be described. Just as a motion within space is experienced by us as air, even so the dynamic energy of consciousness is experienced by the action or motion that takes place in that consciousness. However, motion or action cannot be regarded as the quality of consciousness because it has no qualities nor characteristics: consciousness is pure and utterly tranquil, beyond all description. The notion of motion in consciousness is ignorance.

When this dynamic energy of consciousness rests at each place as it is (without becoming something else) that itself is known as Shiva the Lord. That is, the thing in itself is the Lord. The following are the limbs of this dynamic energy of consciousness which have been created as notions in her: all these

created worlds, the earth with all the continents and oceans, the forests and the mountains, the scriptures, the different forms of sacred rites, wars in which various forms of weapons are used and all the fourteen worlds. (VI.2:84)

One should not associate with another who derides and belittles this scripture either through ignorance or through delusion. I know what I am and I know who you all are. I am but your own consciousness, seated here in order to instruct you: I am neither human, nor celestial nor divine. I am here as the fruit of your merit. In fact, I am neither this nor the other.

One should find here in this world the appropriate remedy for the illness known as samsara (world-illusion). Unless one cultivates a disinterest in the objective and material existence of this world, the belief or the notion of its existence cannot be weakened. There is no other means to rid the self of its impurity of self-limitation.

The only way is to weaken the vasana (self-limitation or conditioning or the notion that the world exists). If the object does exist then such a notion of its existence is natural: but it does not, though it seems to be, in the absence of the light of inquiry.

The apparent world-existence has no real cause; how can the effect of an unreality be other than unreal? How can a non-material (spiritual) cause bring about a material effect? How can matter arise in pure consciousness any more than a shadow exists in the sun? It is not correct to say that the world is a pure and accidental combination of atoms: they are inert substances. The world-creation is not the action of ignorance but, on the other hand, if it is the action of intelligence, why will an intelligent being indulge in such futile action, like a madman?

Hence, it is clear that the world is an appearance, and not existence. We appear to exist in pure void, like objects in a dream. The world is but pure consciousness and there is no difference between the two; the one is expressed in two ways like air and motion in space. The infinite consciousness plus the appearance is known as the world; the world minus its form (appearance) is the infinite consciousness (appearance is illusory and illusion does not exist). Just as consciousness creates dreams in a dreamer, it creates the world in the waking state; the two are constituted of the same substance. Where then is the reality of the body even of Brahma the creator? It arose as the first dream-object in consciousness. (VI.2:103)

All the moving and unmoving things are but pure consciousness. When an illusory notion of division arises in it, consciousness comes to be known as the world. A pot is but clay; in the absence of clay there is no pot. All objects are pure consciousness and if consciousness is not, nothing is seen. Water is liquid; minus its liquidity it is not water (what is dehydrated water?). Even so is consciousness. Everything here is pure consciousness; minus pure consciousness nothing is.

The same thing has been given two names for the sake of convenience: the two (waking and dreaming) are the same, like two cups of water. That which is common to them, which is their common substratum, is pure consciousness. (VI.2:105)

The hunter asked:

Lord, who are affected by past karma and who are not?

The sage said:

Water itself takes on the appearance of a whirlpool: Brahman itself takes on the appearance of this creation. This creation is manifest Brahman; it is neither a dream nor a waking state reality. In that case, what is karma, to whom is it and of how many types is it? In truth, there is no karma, no ignorance, no creation: all these notions arise only because of one's own experience.

Brahman alone shines as creation, individual selves, karma, birth and such other notions. Because it is the Lord, it experiences these notions as if they were true. In the beginning of creation, the Individual Self is not subject to any karma; after this, however, it gets involved in karma, on account of the notions it entertains. What is the body or personality of a whirlpool and what is its karma? It is water, and even so is everything Brahman.

The persons seen in a dream have no past karma. Even so, the Individual Selves that arose in the beginning of creation have no karma because they are pure consciousness. It is only when one becomes firmly rooted in the notions of this world-appearance as the reality, that the notion of karma arises. Then the

Individual Selves roam here bound by their karma. If it is realized that this creation itself is no-creation and that Brahman alone exists, then where is karma, whose is karma and who belongs to that karma? Karma exists only in ignorance; the moment right knowledge arises, karma ceases to bind. (VI.2:142)

However carefully we look and investigate, we do not see anything other than the reality. What the ignorant and the foolish see, we do not know. In the enlightened vision of the sage all this is pure, indivisible consciousness; that itself appears to be countless separate objects (both sentient and insentient) in the eyes of the ignorant. The one pure consciousness appears as the diverse dream-objects in a dream. All these millions of objects which appear in the dream become one again in deep sleep. Similarly, when this dream-world appears in the infinite consciousness that itself is called creation; when this itself enters into the equivalent of the deep sleep state, it is known as the cosmic dissolution. This is pure commonsense. (VI.2:143)

No one dies here nor is anyone born: these two notions arise in consciousness and it appears as though death and birth are real. If there is death as the final end in fact and in truth, then it is indeed a most welcome and happy event! But, if one who dies is capable of being seen again, then surely he was alive all the time. Thus, there is no death, and by the same token there is no birth either. The two events appear to be real because of the movement in consciousness; they are otherwise unreal.

If they are thought of as real, they are real; if they are known to be unreal, they are unreal. This means thought alone is real. Tell me if there is any life at all devoid of consciousness. In that pure consciousness there is no sorrow nor death: then, who experiences sorrow and who dies? What a whirlpool is to water, the body is to the supreme truth. The appearance is pervaded by the reality, and the appearance is but an appearance, without a substantiality of its own. There is no division, distinction or contradiction between the two. Yet, the infinite consciousness appears to be this creation full of contradictions — this indeed is a great wonder.

Realize that this world-appearance with all its contradictions is nothing more than appearance which is non-existent. That infinite and indivisible consciousness alone exists as one thing here and as another thing there; therefore, there is neither diversity nor even unity. There is no contradiction nor is there a non-contradiction. They who know the truth realize that it is neither real nor unreal: hence, they realize the truth as utter silence. **What is seen here as the objective universe is in truth the supreme Brahman.**

That Brahman alone entertains various notions which are manifest here as these diverse objects; but in that which entertains these notions there is no division and therefore such division is not real. (VI.2:159)

Realize, I am at peace, I am like the infinite space; abandon the notion that you are the Individual Self. If one cannot thus redeem oneself, there are no other means: for one is one's own friend and one is one's own enemy. Strive to liberate yourself while you are yet young with the help of pure and right understanding, or Intellect. Do it now. What will you do when you are old and senile? Old age itself is a burden; you cannot carry anything more. Both childhood and old age are useless; youth alone is the right time, if you are a wise one, to live wisely. Having come into this samsara where life is so impermanent, one should, through association with holy scriptures and holy men, endeavor to uplift oneself.

Be firmly rooted in the contented state in which you know only that to be yours which is obtained in the course of the due performance of your own appropriate action. He is a man of self-conquest who rests in peace and contentment performing whatever has to be performed and avoiding what should be avoided.

His mind is at rest who enjoys observing or watching himself and is disinterested in external events and observations. When one's awareness is thus firmly held within oneself, the mind abandons its usual restlessness and flows towards wisdom. The wise man attains victory over the senses and does not drown in the waves of vasanas or mental conditioning. He sees the world as it is. Then the illusion of samsara or world-appearance ceases and with it all sorrow comes to an end. (VI.2:162)

Rama said:

Just as memory is at the root of the perception in both the waking and the dream states, it is memory alone that gives rise to the feeling that the external objects are real.

Vasistha continued:

The appearances of diverse objects in the universe arises in the infinite consciousness when it becomes aware of itself — coincidentally (like a ripe coconut falling when a crow alights on it.). Whenever and wherever this consciousness contemplates itself in whatever manner, then and there it appears so, without any cause.

The notions This is waking, This is dream, This is sleep and This is turiya arise in consciousness because they are consciousness. In fact there is neither dream nor waking state nor sleep nor turiya nor something beyond: everything is pure tranquillity and silence. Or, one may say that all this is waking at all times, or dream or deep sleep or turiya. Or we do not know what it is, for everything is experienced to be what it is thought of. Its manifestation and unmanifestation — knowledge or ignorance — are two inherent states — like the movement or non-movement of air.

Therefore, there is no distinction in the states of waking, etc., nor is there anything known as memory or desire. All these are limited vision. When it is only inner experience that shines as external object, where is objectivity or memory? Memory can arise only from experience and experience is possible only if the object is real. The notional appearance of the infinite consciousness becomes later known as the earth, etc.

Let this consciousness shine as it will: it is neither real nor unreal, neither something nor nothing. That itself dwells in the heart as the notion of an object which is conceived to be outside. What is inside or outside? Consider it OM and rest in peace. (VI.2:167)

Without cause this world-appearance arises in consciousness. It is experienced by the consciousness within itself. It is consciousness which considers itself the world and experiences the world. There is therefore no memory, or dream or time, etc. involved in this. That which is a mass of consciousness within appears to be the world outside; however, there is neither an outside nor an inside, nothing whatsoever except the supreme reality. Therefore, just as the infinite Brahman is real, in the same way this observed objective universe is also real. (VI.2:168)

He to whom joy is no joy and sorrow is no sorrow, is a liberated one. He whose heart is not agitated even while being engaged in pleasure is a liberated one.

He is a liberated one who rejoices in pure consciousness itself. As well as in the objective world.

Having roamed this samsara and experienced all kinds of pleasure and pain, the Individual Self has the good fortune to come into contact with a holy man and cross this ocean of samsara. He sleeps in great peace and even without a bed. Though he is engaged in intense activity here, he enjoys the peace of deep sleep. This is a great wonder. This sleep cannot be disturbed by anything. He is truly intoxicated who does not see the world even though his eyes are wide open. He enjoys the bliss of deep sleep. He has dispelled the notions of the world from his heart and he has reached fullness. He has quaffed the nectar and he is at peace. His delight is independent of pleasure. He has turned away from greed. He knows that in every atom there is a universe. He is engaged in diverse and intense activity, though he does nothing. He is aware that this world-appearance has the same reality as a dream, thus he has entered into the peace and the bliss of deep sleep. His consciousness is more expansive than even space. By a supreme self-effort, he has realized self-knowledge and he lives as if he were seeing a long dream in pure space. He is fully awake and enlightened, though he appears to be asleep; he enjoys the greatest delight, though he appears to be asleep. He has reached the highest state. (VI.2:169)

The practice of contemplation in which the mind is restrained from undergoing any modification is as good as supreme inertia; on the other hand, when such modifications exist in the mind, it is the seat of diversity or samsara. By such contemplation a state of equanimity is not attained. If it is claimed that liberation is attained when the mind is forcibly restrained from all modifications, then why is it not attained in sleep?

Therefore, only when it is realized that there is no creation at all, does real self-knowledge arise which leads to liberation. Such liberation is unending, infinite and unconditioned — truly nirvikalpa samadhi (samadhi). In it one remains firmly rooted in self-knowledge, without the least agitation. It is also known as eternal sleep, turiya, nirvana and moksha.

Dhyana or contemplation or meditation is perfect awakening or enlightenment.

The realization that the objective universe does not exist is perfect awakening. It does not resemble a state of inertia, nor deep sleep, nor nirvikalpa samadhi nor savikalpa samadhi, nor is it an unreal imaginary state. In it the universe exists as it is but it is dissolved at the same time. In it there is supreme peace.

That perfect awakening is attained by a careful investigation of this scripture constantly, day and night, not by pilgrimage nor by charity, not by acquiring knowledge nor by the practice of meditation or yoga, not by austerity (penance) nor by religious rites. By none of these methods does illusion come to an end. They only lead to heaven and such other rewards, not to liberation. Delusion ends only when self-knowledge arises in one who has carefully studied and investigated this scripture.

It is by self-knowledge or enlightenment that these three (the mind, the objects of perception and the body) will reach a quiescent state of equanimity, not otherwise. For these three arise from ignorance. By a mere study of this scripture that ignorance is dispelled. The beauty in this scripture is that its student is not abandoned to his despair; if something is not clear in the first instance, a further study of the scripture makes it clear. This scripture dispels delusion and enables you to realize that the ordinary life itself is the supreme state.

Therefore, one should study at least a small part of this scripture daily. If, however, one thinks it is not authoritative because it is of human origin, one can resort to the study of any other scripture dealing with self-knowledge and final liberation. But one should not waste one's lifetime. (VI.2:174)

Kundadanta said:

Conquest of the mind alone is the destruction of all doubts. I have knowledge in which there is no contradiction. All my doubts are at rest. I am firmly established in the supreme state. I have learnt this from you: the infinite self or consciousness alone exists in the infinite space as this world.

Everything exists in everything as everything everywhere forever. It is Brahman or the infinite consciousness alone that appears as all this and is experienced as all this. (VI.2:185)

Vasistha continued: **When knowledge becomes the object of knowing, it is known as bondage. Liberation is when knowledge ceases to be such an object of knowing.**

Rama asked: How does the firm conviction that knowledge is the object of knowing come to an end?

Vasistha said: When there is full awakening, the dullness of intelligence comes to an end. Then liberation which is formless, peaceful and real comes into being.

Rama said: What is that perfect awakening which is perfect knowledge and by which a living being here is freed from bondage?

Vasistha said: **Knowledge does not have an object to know. Knowledge is independent and eternal; it is beyond description and definition. When this truth is directly realized there is perfect knowledge.**

Rama said: What is the division that arises between knowledge and the object of knowing? In what sense do we use the word knowledge?

Vasistha said: **Full awakening or enlightenment is Knowledge or knowledge. Its contemplation is the means to such awakening. There is in reality no division between knowledge and the object of knowing.**

Rama said: If that is so, how has this deluded vision of knowledge and the object of knowing arisen in the first place and become firmly rooted?

Vasistha said: It is on account of the deluded belief that there is something other than knowledge, something outside of itself, that the division has arisen. In fact, there is nothing either inside or outside.

Rama said: All this that seems to be obvious — I, you, etc., and all these elements and the diverse beings that we surely experience — how can it be accepted that they do not exist?

Vasistha said: The cosmic person or virat and the cosmos, etc., did not in fact come into being at the very beginning of creation. Hence, there has never been an object of seeing at any time whatsoever.

Rama asked: This world was, is and will be, and it is experienced every day. How can it be said that it was never created?

Vasistha replied: This world-appearance is unreal even as the following are unreal, though they appear to be real: the dream-objects, water in the mirage, the second moon when one is suffering from diplopia and castles in the air.

Rama asked: What is the mind, how does one inquire into its nature and what is the fruit of such inquiry?

Vasistha replied: Consciousness becoming aware of itself as an object is known as chittam (mind). Inquiry is what you are doing now. By this, mental conditioning comes to an end.

Rama asked: How is it possible for this chittam to be unconditioned so that nirvana may be attained?

Vasistha replied: Surely an object or mental conditioning is not a reality. Hence, the chittam too is not a real entity.

Rama said: But we do experience its existence!

Vasistha replied: The world is not what it appears in the eyes of the ignorant: what is real in the eyes of the enlightened is indescribable.

Rama said: What is the vision of the ignorant? And why is it indescribable in the eyes of the enlightened?

Vasistha replied: The ignorant perceive the world as having a beginning and an end. The enlightened do not see it at all for it has not been created at all and hence does not exist. (VI.2:190)

Rama said:

I am nirvana. I am free from doubt. I am free. I am blissful. I am as I am as the infinite. I am the all at all times or I am nothing and at peace. I am the one reality and I am not. Wonderful is this supreme peace. What is to be gained has to be gained. The perception of the objects has been abandoned. True enlightenment has dawned and it shall never set again.

The awakening or the enlightenment happens by itself, just like the sun's brilliance at noon. All cravings and desires come to an end in the awakened person; therefore nirvana arises in him without his desiring it. He is forever engaged in meditation, he is always established in his own real nature: therefore he does not seek anything or reject anything. Like a lamp in whose light all actions take place and in which the lamp itself is not interested, he lives and acts but is free from volition.

This samsara is full of sorrow; nirvana is absolute coolness. The latter alone is the reality; the former is not. Like the uncarved figures that exist in a piece of wood, this samsara exists in the infinite consciousness — which is indivisible but experienced diversely by diverse beings, each of whom carves out of it, as it were, what he desires — whether it is pleasure or liberation. However, all these are in essence the reality itself, even as the carved figures are in essence non-different from the wood. The life or death of relatives seen in a dream has no effect on oneself after awakening from sleep; even so the enlightened ones are unaffected by the world-appearance.

When all this is seen as the one infinite consciousness, there is no room for delusion. There is End to craving. End to craving intensifies awakening or enlightenment; and the latter intensifies the End to craving. The hall-mark of enlightenment is this End to craving. When the latter is absent, there is no enlightenment but scholasticity which is in fact ignorance or viciousness. If these two do not promote each other, then they are obviously unreal and absent. The perfect End to craving born of the perfect enlightenment, itself is known as liberation. When this is attained, one does not grieve even though continuing to live.

For one who rests in his own self and rejoices in the self, in whom cravings have ceased and egosense is absent, life becomes non-volitional and there is perfect purity. One in millions, however, is able to reach this unconditioned state of pure being. (VI.2:194)

Vasistha said:

Bravo, O Rama, you have attained enlightenment. Your words have the power of enlightenment. The unreality which seems to exist here disappears when it is not conceived or thought of. This supreme peace is nirvana and this is the supreme truth. That state in which the enlightened one exists as if he lives in the very center of a rock, whether he is alone and at rest or engaged in diverse activities — that is the state of purity and that is liberation. We live in that state, O Rama, though we are constantly engaged in diverse activity. You, too, rest in that state and carry on your work.

Now O Rama, please tell me how you realize that this world, though it seems to be so real, is non-existent.

Rama replied:

This world has not been created even at the very beginning. How then can it be considered to exist now? It has no cause: how can an effect be without a cause? Change implies the End to one state and the arising of the subsequent state. This is impossible in the changeless reality. If this world is an illusory appearance that is imagined to exist in Brahman, then it is only an illusion. In a dream a moment is experienced as a lifetime: even so, in this world-appearance time is experienced along with the sun and the moon on which time is based.

In the infinite consciousness, there is this notion of creation with all its corollaries — time, space, etc. This non-entity appears to function and that, too, is false. The accidental arising of this notion appears to persist and become deep-rooted. Or, it has to be considered real. How can the false ever even appear to exist? Or perhaps there is no such thing as the real and nothing as unreal. Whatever is, is. That which is is clear as the sky, full as the center of a rock, silent and peaceful as the stone, and infinite. Such is the creation. For this creation exists in the pure, infinite consciousness which is the reality of all thoughts and concepts which together form the subtle body, as it were, of the infinite consciousness. The pure experiencing of awareness that arises in that body is known as this creation. Thus this creation itself is Brahman.

In the supreme being itself does the other (creation) exist; the latter belongs to the former and is non-different from it. It is therefore supreme peace itself. There is neither a creation nor movement nor activity. When dream is realized as dream, the false notion vanishes. Awareness drops its object (the world) and rests in the infinite consciousness.

Vasistha asked:

Why should we not assume that just as the seed is the cause for the sprout, Brahman is the cause for the creation?

Rama replied:

The sprout in the seed is not seen as sprout, but only as seed. Hence it is only seed. In the same way, if this world exists in Brahman, it is only Brahman and not the world; and Brahman undergoes no change. Since Brahman is unchanging and formless, it is impossible to accept that it gives rise to the world which is changing and which is endowed with form. To say that this creation exists in the indivisible Brahman just as a gem lies in the box, is meaningless prattle. The theory that the supreme Brahman is the support for the universe which has a form is also unacceptable: for that which has a form must perish.

The concept that this world is but the dream-object that has thus materialized is unacceptable, for the dream-objects are those which have been experienced by oneself. However, the waking and the dream realities belong to two different planes: for the person whose death was dreamed of is seen on waking up from dream. Thus the world has not been created even as a dream-object; but just as the dream-object is only consciousness, even so all that is seen as the world is only the infinite consciousness.

This supreme truth is established only in total silence, not by logic, discussion and argumentation. (VI.2:195)

Rama said:

Thus, O sage, it is clear that self-knowledge is beyond the reach of the jugglery of words. How is it attained by the conflicting statements of scriptures? If it is not so attained what is the use of these scriptures? Pray tell me whether self-knowledge follows the instruction of the preceptor and the study of scriptures.

Vasistha said:

It is true, O Rama, that the study of the scriptures is not the cause for the attainment of self-knowledge. Scriptures are composed of diverse expressions; the supreme being is indescribable. However, I shall explain to you how the study of scriptures has come to be associated with self-knowledge.

Not by the study of the scriptures, nor by hearing the instructions of a preceptor, nor by charity nor even by the worship of god is the direct realization of the supreme truth attained. Because that is beyond all these. However, I shall tell you how these, though not the actual means, have come to be regarded as the means to self-realization. By the practice of the precepts of the scriptures, the mind becomes pure and transparent; then without even wishing for it one sees the supreme truth. The scripture promotes the satvika pare of ignorance, which is purity of mind. This purity destroys the tamasic (dull) pare of ignorance.

By its very appearance in the sky the sun is reflected in the ocean, without either of them desiring this. Even so by the simple coming together of the scripture and the seeker, the truth is reflected in the latter. Even so the scripture purifies the mind and the clean mind reflects the truth. There is light everywhere in the sky, but it is only when light meets with an obstruction that it is able to illumine: even so when the scripture (or the guru) meets the seeker there is illumination. Hence, the supreme truth is realized when one contemplates the real meaning of the scriptures with the aid of the words of the preceptor, satsanga, self-discipline and control of the mind. (VI.2:197)

Once again I shall tell you something, O Rama, to which please lend your ear. By repeatedly listening to the truth even an ignorant person is awakened.

To begin with I expounded the sthiti prakaranam in which the truth concerning the creation of this universe was revealed. After that I expounded in the upashanti prakaranam the means by which this world-illusion might be dispelled. After thus getting rid of this world-illusion, one should live here free from all mental agitation and distress.

One should live in the world fully established in the state of equanimity which confers all blessings and which bestows the highest consolation, which is the greatest wealth and which enhances one's good fortune. Equanimity enables purity to grow. All other noble virtues follow this one. None of the blessings and wealth in the world is comparable to equanimity. It puts an end to all sorrow. Rare are those souls who are established in equanimity, to whom all are friends.

To one who is established in equanimity, sorrow is happiness and death is new life. Who can measure the greatness of one who is free from exultation and depression, who does what has to be done when and how it is to be done, and who sees what is to be seen, as it is. Friends and relations, enemies and kings have the greatest trust in one who thus lives a natural life. In the course of such natural living, even if he should become angry, it does not hurt anyone.

The people applaud whatever he does and whatever he eats, even if he overpowers another or reprimands another — for he is established in equanimity. They applaud whatever he does now or whatever he did long ago, whether good or not so good.

They who are established in equanimity do not experience despair, whether they are subjected to happiness or to great unhappiness. Hence one should attain equanimity in all conditions of life, pleasant and unpleasant, in honor and dishonor. (VI.2:198)

In this world there are the fully enlightened ones, unenlightened ones and semi-enlightened ones who abandon right actions, too, and are thus neither here nor there. The forest-life is not essential for liberation, nor living in one's own country nor an ascetic life, nor the abandonment of activity. Liberation is attained by one whose very nature is totally free and unattached. He whose mind is free and unattached does not get involved once again in this samsara. O Rama, you are the supreme state. Remain what you are, free from likes and dislikes, established in the supreme truth. In that Brahman there are no impurities, changes, veils, cravings or aversions. There is nothing more to say. (VI.2:199)

Valmiki said:

Having concluded his discourse on nirvana, the sage Vasistha remained silent. All the members of the assembly were deeply immersed in the highest (nirvikalpa) samadhi or contemplation. The very heavens resounded with the cheers of the assembled sages and perfected ones. The celestials sounded their drums and other instruments. There was a shower of flowers.

The Siddhas (perfected ones) said:

From the beginning of this epoch we have given and heard numerous discourses on the means to liberation, but none like this. Even animals and children will attain enlightenment by listening to the sage's words.

Thus all of them worshipped and glorified the sage Vasistha again and again. (VI.2:200)

Then, Vasistha asked Rama:

O Rama, what else do you want to hear from me? How do you perceive the world-appearance now? What is your inner experience?

Rama replied:

By your grace, I have attained supreme purity; all the impurities have cleared away. All my misunderstandings and delusions have been dispelled. My bondage has been cut. My intelligence is pure like a crystal. My mind does not crave for more instruction.

I have nothing to do with anything — neither instructions nor any objects, neither relatives nor scriptures, nor even renunciation. I behold the world as the pure, infinite, indivisible consciousness. The world is otherwise a void which disappears the moment the illusion vanishes.

I shall do whatever you wish that I should do and I shall live doing whatever I have to do or wish to do, without exultation or depression, for my delusion has been dispelled. Whether this creation becomes something else or whether the winds of cosmic dissolution blow or whether this country be prosperous, I am established in self-knowledge. I am at peace. My vision is clear. It is difficult for my real state to be seen and understood. I am free from hopes and desires. I shall live and rule like the other kings, whether they are enlightened or ignorant, but without mental agitation and endowed with equal vision. As long as this body lasts I shall rule this kingdom, endowed with a pure vision and freed from all doubts concerning the nature of this samsara, just as a child engages itself in play.

Vasistha said:

Bravo, O Rama, you have truly reached the supreme state, beyond joy and sorrow, and you have transcended all that is found in this world and in the next. You will now fulfill the wishes of the sage Visvamitra and rule the kingdom.

After the assembly once again cheered, Rama said:

Lord, just as fire purifies gold, you have purified our hearts. They who consider their body as the all now see the entire universe as the self.

I have attained the plenum of existence. I am free from all doubts. I am full of bliss which is eternal and undiluted. I rejoice in my own heart which has been purified by the nectarine words of supreme wisdom. By your grace I have attained the state in which the whole world itself appears to be the eternal, immortal and infinite reality. (VI.2:201)

Valmiki said:

When the sage Vasistha thus concluded his teaching there was celestial music in the sky. There was a rain of flowers. Everyone in the assembly worshipped the sage with flowers.

Then king Dasaratha said: we have gained perfect knowledge. We rest in the supreme state. Our minds and our hearts have been utterly purified of all delusions and illusions, notions and perversions, by the illuminating teachings of the sage.

Rama said: By your grace, O lord among sages, my delusion has gone and I have attained the supreme state. I am now fully accomplished with my intelligence perfectly clear. I am freed of doubts, I rest in my own natural state as Brahman or in the knowledge of nirvana. I shall do as you

have said. There is nothing for me to gain by doing or by not doing anything. I have no friends or enemy. How can one realize all this except through your grace; how can a little boy cross the ocean without the help of a bridge or boat?

Laksmana said: By the merit acquired by past births, we have heard the sage and are now rid of all doubts.

Visvamisra said: It is as if we had bathed in a thousand sacred Gangas (rivers).

Narada said: We have heard what we have not heard either in heaven or on earth. Hence, we have been completely purified.

Satrughna said: I have gained supreme peace and bliss.

After they had all spoken, the sage Vasistha said to the king: At the conclusion of the recitation of a scripture, the holy ones should be worshipped. Hence, fulfill all the wishes of the brahmanas. You will attain the fruits of this sacred undertaking. Then the king invited ten thousand brahmins from all over the country. He worshipped them. He fed them. He lavished gifts on them. Later, he adored the citizens, the servants, the poor and the crippled ones.

After that there was a great celebration in the capital, which included music concerts and dance performances, recitations of the vedas and other scriptures. Then all these artists were entertained with food and drinks, and lavish gifts of clothes and jewels were bestowed upon them.

The enlightened king Dasaratha celebrated the successful completion of sage Vasistha's teaching for a whole week with a variety of entertainments and religious rites. (VI.2:214)

Valmiki said:

O Bharadvaja, thus did Rama and others attain supreme knowledge and the state beyond sorrow. Even so, acquire this attitude and live as a liberated sage, free from doubt. Truly, by listening to this scripture you are already liberated; you are a "Liberated soul while in Body". Even a young boy listening to this attains self-knowledge. Even the ignorant ones, in whose hearts the bondage caused by cravings is strong and persistent, rise beyond the state of division by a study of this scripture that deals with liberation, even as young boys become mature men. They will never again be involved in samsara.

Even they who recite this scripture without understanding the meaning, they who write this in a book, they who make someone read it or comment upon it, they attain great merit and enjoy life in heaven, and in the third birth attain liberation.

Valmiki said to king Aristanemi: Thus have I told you what Vasistha taught Rama. By this path you will attain the truth. The king said: Lord, by your grace I have crossed this samsara. (To the messenger of the gods, the king said:) You have been a true friend to me. You may now go. I shall contemplate the truth that I have thus heard.

The messenger said to the celestial: I was supremely thrilled to hear all this. I shall now go to the abode of Indra.

The Celestial said: I am truly blessed to hear all this from you, O messenger of the gods. Now you can go to Indra.

Agnivesya said to Karunya: Thus did the celestial remain immersed in contemplation. Have you heard all this well? Karunya replied: Surely. My delusion is gone. I shall now live a life of spontaneous non-volitional activity.

Agastya said to Sutikshna: Thus did Agnivesya instruct his son Karunya. Do not doubt this teaching, for he who doubts this perishes. Sutikshna said: My ignorance has been dispelled and the lamp of knowledge has been kindled. I realize that all these objects of the world exist in the infinite consciousness like waves in the ocean. Hence, I shall live a life of spontaneous non-volitional activity. I am truly blessed. I salute you. For a disciple should adore and serve his guru by thought, word and deed. Lord, by your grace I have crossed this ocean of samsara. I salute the supreme being, contemplating whom one realizes that all this is indeed Brahman, the infinite consciousness. Salutations to the divine preceptor Vasistha. (VI.2:215)

OM TAT SAT

What is Sri Satya Narayana Homam or Puja?

This Puja can be performed on any day for any reason. The best day to perform this Pooja is on the day of Poornima (full moon day). He who seeks Dharma, He who seeks wealth, He who seeks pleasures, He who seeks children, Will all without fail, Get what they want.

The puja starts by a prayer to Lord Ganesha, to remove all obstacles that may occur as a result of incorrectly performing the puja. This is done by chanting all the names of Lord Ganesha and offering prasad (a food offering, usually consisting of one of Lord Ganesha's favorite foods - modak, a sugar and coconut mixture, or ladu) and the showering of flower petals.

Another part of the prayer involves a prayer to the Navagraha's - the nine important celestial beings in the universe.

The rest of the puja consists of worship to Lord Sri Satyanarayana, an extremely benevolent form of Lord Vishnu. First "panchamritam" is used to clean the place where the deity is placed. After placing the deity in the correct position, Satyanaraya swami is worshipped. Names of Satyanarayana are chanted along with offering of a variety of prasad (including a mixture of milk, honey, ghee/butter, yogurt, sugar) and flower petals.

Another requirement of the puja is that the story of the puja be heard among all those observing and partaking in the pooja. The story involves the origin of the puja, the benefits of it, and the potential mishaps that may occur with the careless performance of the puja.

The prayer concludes with an Aarti, which consists of revolving a small fire-lit-lamp in the vicinity of an image of the Lord. After the puja is over, participants and observers of the pooja are required to ingest in the prasad that was offered and blessed by the Lord.

Sri Satyanarayana Swamy Story 1

Shri Sathyanaranayana katha is from Skandha purana, Reva kaanda. Sutha Puraanikji was the narrator of these stories, in Neimishaaranya to the rishis lead by Shounakji who were performing a 1000 year yajna for the benefit of mankind.

Shounakaji and others now ask Suta Puranikji an important question. "When a man has a desire, how can he fulfill that ethically sound desire? By worshipping whom, by what vrta, or tapas? Please let us know.

Sutaji was pleased to know that this question they asked, was for the benefit of the mankind and not for their personal benefit, for, they had abandoned their homes and all desires. Sutaji said " this question was also asked by Devarshi Naradaji once to Lord Narayana Himself; Let me tell you that story.

Once Naradaji was traveling all over the worlds and finally came to Bhuloka, where he found almost everyone was suffering one or the other misery on account of their past Karmas and were not knowing how to extricate themselves from their untold miseries which were multiplying everyday on account of their ignorance. Being a Satjana his heart felt their agonies and immediately he reached Vaikunta, to Lord Narayana to find the right answer for getting the people out of their miseries. But when he sees the Lord, being a great devotee of the Lord, he forgets his purpose and starts praising the Lord. The Lord Narayana smiles at him and asks the purpose of his visit, knowing that normally Naradaji does not visit Him without a purpose. Naradaji tells Him what he saw and requests Him a panacea for all such miseries. The Lord is now happy at this question of Naradaji because of Naradaji's intention of benefiting the world by seeking the right answer. The Lord said:

Yes, there is a vrta called Sri Satyanarayana vrta which is not known to the inhabitants of the Bhuloka. This is a secret and yet since your interest is the benefit of the mankind, I shall narrate to you this vrta. This can be performed by anyone (anyone means it does not need an expert or a priest to worship the Lord - ANYONE of any caste, community, creed can worship the Lord directly) and very easily. One who does this, will get all the benefits and the pleasures of this world and will eventually get Moksha too. Now Narada wants to know more details of this vrta. The Lord says, this can be done any day, in the evening. Gather friends and relatives and perform this vrta with faith and devotion. The night should be spent in Bhajans and praise of the Lord. All those attending Pooja should be given food and respect. Thus the performer will get all his wishes fulfilled.

Aum Namoh Sri Satya Narayanaya Namoh Namoh

Sri Satyanarayana Swamy Story 2

Sri Lord Narayana tells Narada the further story:

There was an old and poor Brahmin in the city of Kashi. He was a man of virtue and yet extremely poor and was always begging for the next meal. Since the Lord is Viprapriya- (Brahmana priya means Lover of Brahmana- Brahmana means anyone on the devotional path) - He came in the guise of an old Brahmin and accosted him " Tell me my friend, what ails you?". The brahmin replied "I am an old and very poor man and I shall be grateful if you can tell me how to get rid of this poverty of mine which does not seem to leave me". The Lord replied "Why don't you perform Sri Satyanarayana Vrita", and He told him how to perform the Vrita.

The poor man now desires to do this vrta and thinking over these thoughts of the Lord he goes to bed. He could not sleep on account of these thoughts. Again in the morning he had same thoughts and he says to himself, "whatever I earn today by begging I shall use it to perform the vrta". Since the Lord likes such feelings, (Bhavana Devam - Lord does not want our material possessions, he is won by the genuineness of our feelings) that day, he got plenty of money while begging and thus pleased, he took the necessary articles and performed the vrta.

Very soon he became rich and had all the things of the world and thereafter he started performing the vrata every month and thus he enjoyed all the pleasures of the world and finally reached the Moksha too.

Now Shaunakji and other rishis want to know how this vrata spread in the world. Also those who have heard the story, what benefits they got.

Sutaji replies:

Once when this brahmin was performing the Sri Satyanarayana Pooja there came to his house a woodcutter. He saw the pooja and wanted to know what it is and what are its fruits. The brahmin said, "This is Sri Satyanarayana Pooja. Whatever desires you have in your mind will be fulfilled by performing this vrata. My own poverty and troubles all ended by my very decision to perform this vrata". On hearing this, the woodcutter prostrates to the Lord, takes prasada, and decides to perform this pooja next day. He thought in his mind, "Whatever amount I get from the sale of the wood tomorrow, I will use it for the performance of the vrata." That day he sold the wood for twice the price. Happily thinking of the Lord Satyanarayana he proceeds to do this pooja, inviting his friends and relatives. Thus performing regularly he became rich and happy and finally reached Satyaloka.

Aum Namoh Sri Satya Narayanaya Namoh Namoh

Sri Satyanarayana Swamy Story 3

Suta Puranikji continues the story:

Once there was a good king called Ulkamukha. He was wedded to truth and sense- control. Everyday he used to go to the temple, worship the Lord, distribute alms to the needy. Once he was performing Sri Satyanarayana Vrata on the banks of a river. At that time there came a merchant in a ship loaded with precious goods. He approached the king and wanted to know the details of the pooja and also its fruits. The king said, "My friend, what we are doing is a vrata called Sri Satyanarayana Pooja. This is done with a desire to have progeny, wealth, property, etc. By this, we are worshipping Lord Narayana or Mahavishnu".

The merchant said, "Please tell me the details as to how to perform this vrata, because I would like to have children whom I have not been fortunate to have till now." The king tells him the details of the vrata and the merchant returns home. He tells the details to his wife and they decide to perform this vrata if they get a child. Sometime later his wife Lilavathi became pregnant and delivered a girl who was named Kalavathi. Lilavathi reminded her husband about the vrata and he kept postponing it, till his daughter grew of age and was ready to be married. The father finds a suitable groom and marries her off and again forgot to perform the vrata although he had decided to do so at the time of marriage of his daughter. The Lord now wanted to remind him.

The merchant and his son-in-law were in a city called Ratnasara where king Chandrakethu was ruling. There was a theft at the palace and the burglars were chased by the police. The running burglar saw these two merchants resting near a tree and they left the booty with them and ran off. The police caught the two merchants with the stolen goods and they were straight away sent to the prison. The king himself overlooked to investigate. It is this time the merchant suddenly realized that this was all on account of his forgetting the promise to the Lord. At about this time, back home both Lilavathi and her daughter Kalavathi lost all their belongings due to thefts at home and were rendered beggars. During one such wandering trying to find some food Kalavathi sees Sri Satyanarayana Pooja being performed at one house. She goes in, hears the story and details and returns to tell her mother what had taken place.

Lilavathi now knows that it is their forgetting to do the Pooja that had created all these problems. Next day she calls her relatives and friends and performs the Pooja, begs for forgiveness. Accordingly, the king had a dream that the merchants were innocent and he releases them on inquiry and gives them lot of wealth.

Aum Namoh Sri Satya Narayanaya Namoh Namoh

Sri Satyanarayana Swamy Story 4

Suta Puranik continues the story:

Thus released from the custody the merchants were returning home. They reached the outskirts of their town in their ship. The Lord in order to test them again comes in the form of an old Sanyasi and inquires as to what the load in the ship is. The merchant bluffs and says that it contains dried leaves. The sanyasi says "Tathasthu". When the merchant returns to the ship he finds that it does contain now dried leaves only. He swoons and when he regains his consciousness he realizes that these are doings of the Sanyasi whom he had cursorily dismissed earlier. He seeks him out and begs for forgiveness. The ever-merciful Lord again forgives him. Now that the merchant was near the town, he sends a messenger in advance to Lilavathi to let her know that they are on their way home. Lilavathi tells her daughter to complete the Satyanarayana pooja they were performing and goes ahead to meet her husband. Kalavathi does the pooja, but in a hurry to meet her husband, she neglects to take the prasada; and when she nears the anchorage, she does not find the ship nor her husband! It looked to her that they both sank/drowned. She swoons and now she decides to die.

The merchant thinks that this must be on account of some fault on their part in ignoring the Lord and then and there he decides to do the pooja as a part of expiation from his side for mistakes of omission or commission. The Lord now pleased makes him realize that it is the daughter's oversight in not accepting the prasada that has created this problem and now if she goes and takes the prasada, everything would be all right.

Kalavathi returned to the altar and took prasada with all faith and reverence. And her husband returned and from then onwards, they all performed Sri Sathyanarayana Pooja regularly till the end of their life and finally after death, they reached Satyaloka.

Aum Namoh Sri Satya Narayanaya Namoh Namoh

Sri Satyanarayana Swamy Story 5

This chapter is important to us as we too tend to behave like the King in this story, in respect of pooja/worship/religion of other people.

In the woods of Nemisharanya, Suta Puranikji continued the story narrating the greatness of this Vrita to Shounaka and other Rishies:

In ancient times, there was a King called Angadwaja. He was good and righteous king {like all of us, good and righteous}; and yet once he ignored the prasada of Sri Satyanarayana Pooja and had to suffer very dearly to that.

Once this king was returning from hunting the wild animals in the forests. He rested under a tree for a while. A few yards away a small group of cowherd boys had gathered to perform Sri Satyanarayana Pooja. They did not have anything except their daily bread they were carrying and a talkative among them

became their priest and they played the game of doing a pooja. At the end of the pooja, they offered the prasada to the king who, out of contempt and pride, left it untouched.

Pretty soon all his wealth was lost; his hundred children died and he now knew, being a good king that this was all on account of his contempt for those children's pooja. Without any delay the king goes to that very spot where the cowherd boys had done the pooja earlier, gathers them all around him performs the Satyanarayana Pooja with all shraddha and bhakthi.

Thus the king again got all his wealth and kingdom and kins.

Suta now tells the Rishis that this Vrita is specially effective in Kaliyuga. This Lord of Lord is called Ishwara, Satyadeva, Sri Satyanarayana and by many other names. He alone has taken names and forms.

One who reads this story and one who hears it will be rid of all woes and difficulties.

Bhagavad-Gita, chapter 18, verse 65.

Man-mana bhava mad-bhakto

Mad-yaji mam namaskuru

Mam evaisyasi satyam te

Pratijane priyo 'si me

Meaning - Absorb your mind and heart in Me, become My devotee, offer propitiation to Me, just give humble obeisance unto Me, and surely you will come to Me. I promise this in truth to you, being very dear to Me.

